

The
Tournament
Player's
Repertoire of
Openings
series edited by
R.D. Keene

The Slav for the Tournament Player

Glenn Flear



COMPETITIVE

THE SLAV FOR THE TOURNAMENT PLAYER

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The Slav for the Tournament Player

GLENN FLEAR

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To my wife, Christine

Acknowledgements

Opening theory develops as the result of the work of hundreds of largely unmentioned players and analysts. A number of important reference works which I used are detailed in the Bibliography, and their authors are acknowledged there or appropriately in the text.

Andrew Martin kindly donated his own work on the Slav, which significantly reduced my workload, and the professional advice offered by various Batsford staff was appreciated by the author.

Most of all I should mention Christine, who typed and proofread some of my scribbling, and who shared the author's frustrations while receiving little of the reward.

I should sincerely like to thank all these people.

1 Introduction

My aim in writing this book is simple—to give readers a thorough grounding in the Slav defence.

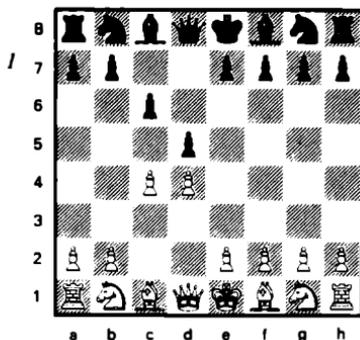
I have tried to avoid the extensive use of symbols, replacing, for example ' \pm ' with an explanation of why White has slightly the better position. However, when necessary I have given some long lines of analysis in the notes. I believe this is necessary to show whether or not an idea is desirable or playable, rather than avoiding the issue.

The book aims to be fairly comprehensive in its coverage without being overwhelming. I have purposely changed the style from chapter to chapter—some variations (for instance the Exchange) are easier to deal with in general terms, whilst others require more complete analysis of move orders and tactical themes.

I hope that all players who read the book will benefit from it—for players of the Black pieces to build a repertoire based on the Slav, and for those with a view to playing against it to generate some ideas with which to enrich their games.

I haven't dealt with the history of this opening to any great degree; this is intentional, as it is not really a history book. Sometimes historically interesting and instructive games have been included, but only where relevant to the text.

I have omitted a detailed discussion of so-called important strategic principles of the opening and restrict myself to one diagram.



2 Introduction

Black's second move 2...c6 (after 1d4 d5 2c4) defends his central d5 square *but leaves the c8-h3 diagonal open*. Black overtly intends to develop his queen's bishop in the early stages of the game. This idea is fundamental to the opening—Black aiming to develop this bishop, usually to f5 or g4, and White aiming to prevent or interfere with this development. There are many examples of this throughout the book. Subsidiary themes are outlined in the relevant chapters in the book. If Black can 'get away' with this bishop development and go on to complete his development safely he is already well-placed to take the initiative in the early middle-game.

2 The Geller Gambit

1	d4	d5
2	c4	c6
3	♗f3	♗f6
4	♗c3	dc
5	e4	

5 a4 is the normal move here. This guarantees the recapture of the gambited pawn on c4 at the cost of a tempo, and a weakening of b4. After 5 a4 ♗f5 White is restrained from occupying the centre with e4.

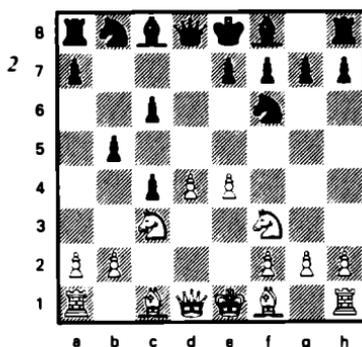
So with 5 e4 White occupies the centre immediately and with a further e5 will engineer attacking chances quickly—this has the drawback of gambiting a pawn on a near permanent basis—so the Geller is a true gambit!

Theory tends to judge a lot of positions as ‘with compensation for the pawn’, which is all very well, but should White players risk this gambit? I recommend this variation for players who like to see their opponents suffer! Black has to defend well to stay in the game.

Although the second player can win by fine defence, I think theory

underestimates White’s attacking chances—so be careful! The variation leads to some fascinating possibilities: Kasparov himself has played this gambit and won fine attacking games with it.

5 ... b5



Black defends his extra pawn on c4. 5 ... ♗g4 6 ♗xc4 ♗xf3 7 gf doubles the White pawns, but White has the bishop pair and a fine looking centre and therefore the advantage.

6 e5

6 ♗c2 is an old idea of Spassky’s, but with sensible development Black can hold on to the extra pawn and achieve a fine

4 The Geller Gambit

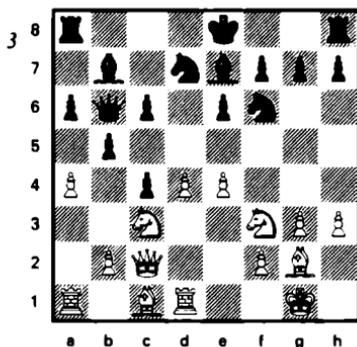
position. eg: 6 ... e6 7 a4 ♖b6 8 ♗e2 ♗b7 9 0-0 a6 10 ♗d1 ♗bd7 (Black has secured the queenside pawn) 11 ♗g5 h6 12 ♗h4 ♗b4 13 ♗e5 0-0 14 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 15 b3 c5! (Spassky-Smyslov, USSR Championship 1960), and having completed his development Black achieves the freeing break ... c5. 16 dc ♗xc5 17 bc ♗xc3 18 ♖xc3 ♗xe4 and 16 bc cd 17 ♗a2 give complications which are, if anything, favourable to Black.

7 ♗e2 ♗b7 8 0-0 ♗bd7 9 ♗g5 h6 10 ♗h4 ♖b6 11 ♗fd1 was Geller-Florian, Helsinki Olympiad 1952, when Black should have played the normal developing move 11 ... ♗e7. Instead Black played too ambitiously: 11 ... g5? 12 ♗g3 ♗h5 13 a4 ♗xg3 14 hg a6 15 d5! 0-0-0 16 dc ♗xc6 17 ab ab 18 ♗d4 ♗c5 19 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 20 ♗a5! (to answer 20 ... ♗xf2+ with 21 ♖f1), and Black's king faces a raging assault.

In Spassky-Bagirov, USSR Championship 1960, White tried a slightly different plan: 7 g3!? ♗b7 8 ♗g2 ♗bd7 9 0-0 ♗e7 10 h3 a6 11 a4 ♖b6 12 ♗d1 (3)

Black has developed his pieces in such a way that White has insufficient compensation for the pawn—Black could play 12 ... 0-0 here, but Bagirov was confident enough to play 12 ... c5!? 13 d5 ed 14 a5 ♖a7 15 ed 0-0 16 d6 ♗d8 17 g4 ♗c6 18 ♗e1 ♖b7, with an unclear position in which

it must be remembered that Black has a pawn more.

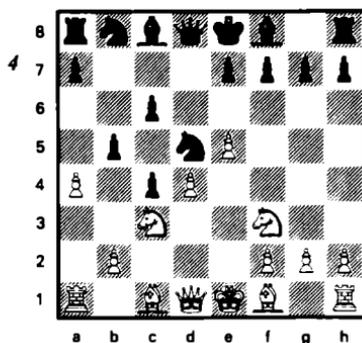


6 ... ♗d5

7 a4

7 ♗g5 is a strange move which might appeal to those seeking off-beat ideas. Again, Spassky has played this so it's not so crazy! Compare the idea with the main line of the gambit.

7 ... f6 8 ♗ge4 f5!? is now worth investigating. If this worries the first player, he can try the same idea with the move order 7 a4 e6 8 ♗g5!? h6 9 ♗ge4. See the final game in this chapter.



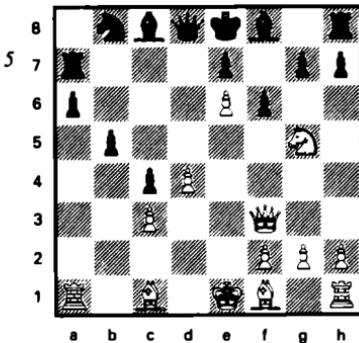
Black's main move here is 7 ... e6. An important alternative is 7 ... a6 which can transpose from the popular gambit against the Queen's Gambit Accepted e.g: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 a6 5 e4 b5 6 e5 ♗d5 7 a4 c6.

The variation leads to remarkable complications. 7 ... e6 seems to be safer as White's attack is rather vicious in the following game (Timoschenko-Kharitonov, Irkutsk 1983). After 7 ... a6:

- 8 ab ♗xc3
 8 ... cb 9 ♗xb5.
 9 bc cb
 10 ♗g5!

The typical attacking idea in this line. Black has a sensitive point on f7, e.g: 10 ... e6? 11 ♗xf7 ♖xf7 12 ♗f3+ wins.

- 10 ... f6
 11 ♗f3 ♗a7
 12 e6



- 12 ... ♗b7

12 ... ♗b6 was played in Sosonko-Rivas, Amsterdam 1978 considered in the next game.

13 ♗f4

Another tactical mess favouring White results from Vaiser's incredible 13 d5!? ♗xd5 14 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 15 ♗e3, when 15 ... fg 16 ♗xa7 ♗c6 17 ♗xa6 ♗xa7 18 ♗xa7 ♗xe6 19 ♗e2 ♗d5 20 ♗f3, recommended by J. Watson, or 20 0-0, both give White a good ending. On 13 ... ♗xd5, 14 ♗e3 threatens 15 ♗xa7 and 15 ♗f7.

13 ... ♗c8

13 ... ♗d6 was tried in Kuzmin-Grigorian, Moscow 1965. Then the critical variation is yet another sharp line: 14 ♗f7 ♗xe6+ 15 ♗e3 ♖xf7 16 ♗xb8 ♗b6 17 d5 ♗a8, and now instead of 18 ♗xa8 ♗xe3+ which is fine for Black in the complications, 18 ♗xf8+ ♗hxf8 19 ♗xb6 ♗xd5 20 ♗a5 is surely better for the piece than the three pawns.

14 d5! ♗xd5

14 ... fg? 15 ♗f7+ ♖d8 16 ♗e3 wins.

15 ♗e3 ♗b7

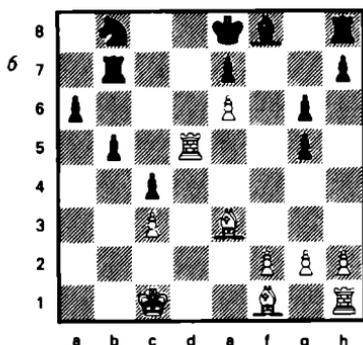
15 ... ♗a8 16 ♗f5 ♗c6 17 0-0-0 g6 18 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 19 ♗xd5 fg 20 ♗c5 wins.

- 16 ♗f5 ♗c6
 17 0-0-0 g6
 18 ♗xd5 ♗xd5
 19 ♗xd5 fg (6)
 20 ♗d4

Even stronger may be 20 ♗c5 ♖d8 21 ♗e2 ♗c7 22 ♗d1+ ♖c8 23 ♗xc7+ ♖xc7 24 ♗d4 (24 ♗xg5 ♗g7 25 ♗xe7 ♗xc3 is unclear) 24 ... ♗g8 25 ♗e5+

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♖c8 26 ♗d5 with a winning attack, e.g: 26 ... ♙g7 27 ♗c5+ ♜b7 28 ♙xg7 ♗xg7 29 ♙f3+ ♜b6 30 ♗c8 winning a piece.



20 ... ♗g8
 21 ♙e2 ♘c6
 22 ♗c5 ♗c7
 23 ♙f3

With the pawn on e6 stuck into the heart of the Black position, the threats of mate are decisive.

23 ... ♘xd4
 24 ♗xc7 ♘xe6
 25 ♗c8+ ♜d7
 26 ♙g4!

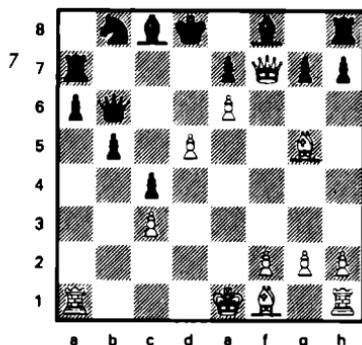
A nice touch, but Black is lost. Notice that Black has yet to develop his king's bishop! The rest of the moves were (for the record):

26 ... ♗h8 27 ♗a8 ♙g7 28 ♗a7+ ♜c6 29 ♗xa6+ ♜c5 30 ♙xe6 ♙xc3 31 ♗d1 ♙d4 32 f3 ♗d8 33 ♜b1 ♗d6 34 ♗xd6 ed 35 ♙g8 h6 36 ♙f7 b4 37 ♙xg6 b3 38 ♗e1 c3 39 ♗e8 c2+ 40 ♙xc2 bc+ 41 ♜xc2 ♙g1 42 h3 h5 43 ♗g8 ♙e3 44 ♜d3 ♙f4 45 g3 Black resigned.

From diagram 4, Sosonko-Rivas, Amsterdam, 1978 went 7 ... a6 8 ab ♘xc3 9 bc cb 10 ♙g5 f6.

10 ... ♙b7 11 e6! is a typical dangerous thrust.

11 ♙f3 ♗a7
 12 e6 ♜b6
 13 d5 fg
 14 ♙f7+ ♜d8
 15 ♙xg5 (7)



15 ♙e3 ♜c7 16 d6 ed 17 ♙xa7 is possible and gives an equally obscure position.

White threatens 16 d6. Black could try 15 ... h6 16 ♙e3 ♜b7 and now 17 ♙xa7 ♜xa7 18 d6 or 17 ♙d4 keeping the bind.

With such unpleasant pressure, Black could try to give the piece back by 15 ... ♘d7? 16 ♗d1! ♘e5 17 ♙f5, but the Black has problems in resisting d6.

However, Senor Rivas found another solution, which is at first difficult to understand.

15 ... ♗d7!?

Giving up the rook to free Black's position.

16 ed ♖xd7

17 ♗e2?

17 ♗d1 with the idea of d6 is better according to J. Watson, e.g: 17 ... ♗g6 18 ♗xg6 hg 19 ♗e2 or 17 ... h6 18 ♗e3 ♗f6 19 ♗e6! with an initiative in the ending or middlegame.

17 ... h6

18 ♗e3 ♗f6

The endgame is promising for Black. He has only one pawn for the exchange, but he has dangerous queenside pawns.

19 ♗xf6 ef

20 ♗g4 ♗b7

21 0-0 ♗d6

22 ♗fd1 ♗e8

23 ♗e6 ♖c5

24 ♗xc5 ♗xc5

25 ♗g4

White's rooks have no play and the queenside pawns will be pushed when Black is good and ready.

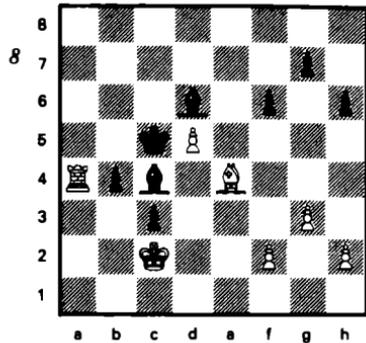
25 ... ♗c7 26 ♗f3 ♗d6 27 ♗f1 ♗b6 28 ♗e1 ♗xe1+ 29 ♗xe1 a5 30 ♗d2 b4 31 cb ab 32 ♗a4 ♗a6 33 ♗e4 c3+ 34 ♗c2 ♗c4 35 g3 ♗c5 (8).

Black wishes to play ... b3+, and requires only one more preparatory move: ... ♗d4 or ... ♗e5, so White tries opposite bishops ...

36 ♗d3 ♗xd5

37 ♗a6 ♗e5

38 ♗a5+ ♗d4



39 ♗xd5+ ♗xd5

40 f4 ♗d6

Black wins as White's kingside pawns are rather weak.

41 ♗g6 ♗c4

42 ♗f7+ ♗d4

43 ♗b3 ♗e3

44 f5 h5

45 ♗f7 h4

46 gh ♗xh2

47 ♗a2

The eagle-eyed reader may have noticed 47 h5 ♗e4 48 ♗g6 as a defence, but Black then wins with 48 ... ♗e5 49 ♗h7 b3+ 50 ♗xb3 ♗d3 and the c-pawn queens.

47 ... ♗d6 48 ♗b1 ♗f4 49 ♗b3 ♗g4 50 ♗c4 ♗xh4 51 ♗c2 ♗g5 52 ♗d5 ♗f8 53 ♗e4 g6 54 fg f5+ 55 ♗e5 ♗g7+ 56 ♗e6 f4 57 ♗f7 ♗h6 White resigned.

Black's alternative from diagram 4 was seen in P. Nikolic-Matulovic, Yugoslavia 1982:

7 ... e6

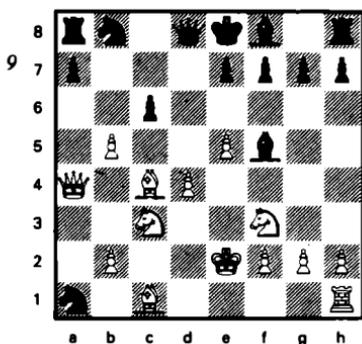
Black's strong point on d5 is supported further, and White is

8 The Geller Gambit

denied the tactical push e6!? which arises if Black errs at this point: 7... ♖b7? 8 e6! f6 (or 8... fe 9 ♗e5) 9 g3 ♗d6 10 ♕h3 ♗a6 11 0-0 (Najdorf-Ojanen, 1952) and Black has a real mess of a position.

7... ♗xc3 8 bc ♕e6 looks more sensible. However, White has the dangerous 9 ♗g5 ♕d5 10 e6! fe 11 ♗g4 with a vicious attack.

Black has one interesting alternative which is quoted by all the theoreticians, but has not been played at Grandmaster level. 7... ♕f5!? the idea is that after 8 ab Black can play 8... ♗b4! (after 8... ♗xc3, 9 bc cb 10 ♗g5! e6 11 g4 ♕g6 12 ♕g2 is better for White who can play for the attack after 12... ♗d7 13 f4! ♕e7 14 ♗f3 (Inkiöv-Padevsky, Pamporovo 1982)). Black single-mindedly attacks the square c2 and White must sacrifice material. 9 ♕xc4 ♗c2+ 10 ♗e2 ♗xa1 11 ♗a4 (analysis by Lilienthal) (9)



In *ECO* Kotov attaches! to the move ♗a4—‘speculative or interesting’— but 11 ♗a4 seems the only sensible move and one can perhaps judge the whole variation as speculative.

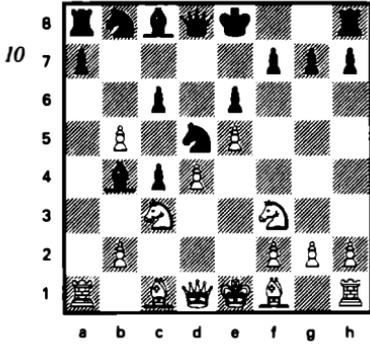
Black has won a rook, but White has a considerable lead in development, a pawn and various attacking schemes as compensation. He threatens to capture the knight on a1 or play bc. Some possible continuations are: 11... ♗d7 12 ♗xa1 ♗b6 13 ♕b3 cb 14 ♗xb5 a6 15 ♗c3 e6 16 ♕d1 ♕b4 17 d5 ♕xc3 18 de! or after 13 ♕b3, 13... e6 14 bc ♕e7 15 ♕d1 0-0 16 d5 with a strong initiative in either case. On 11... cb 12 ♕xb5+ ♕d7 13 e6! fe 14 ♗e5 White’s attack seems very strong.

In any case, no Grandmaster seems tempted by this rook and so 7... ♕f5 has not been seen. However, the diagram is an excellent position to analyze with your friends, and if you can find a satisfactory path for Black through the complications then 7... ♕f5 is worth a try.

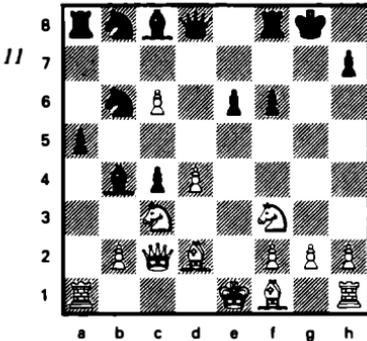
8 ab ♕b4 (10)

An interesting attempt at counterplay, which was successful in our game, but can White improve? See the next two games for 8... ♗xc3.

If 9 ♗c2 cb 10 ♕e2 ♕b7 11 0-0 (White’s idea is ♗e4) 11... ♗c3! 12 bc ♕e7 and White has no compensation for the pawn.



9 ♖a4! is an idea of Peturssen's. 9 ... a5!? (9 ... ♗xc3+ 10 bc ♗xc3 11 ♖xc4 ♗xb5 12 ♖a4 a6 holds for now, but will be uncomfortable for Black on his dark squares) 10 ♗d2 0-0 (10 ... ♗b6?! 11 ♖c2 ♗xc3 12 bc cb 13 ♗g5 ♗c6 gives a sharp position, but White is for preference e.g: 14 ♗e4! 0-0 15 ♗g5! g6 16 h4 b4 17 h5 or 16 ... h5 17 ♗e2 threatening 18 ♗xh5) 11 bc ♗b6 12 ♖c2 f5!? (on 12 ... ♗xc6 White continues the attack with 13 ♖e4) 13 ef gf (11).



White has rather the better of the middlegame to come, Black's pawn structure is inferior, and his

king is a little exposed. Either 14 g3! (to play on the long diagonal and block any g-file counterplay) or 14 ♗e2 ♗xc6 15 0-0 ♗b7 16 ♗ad1, as in the game Peturssen-Valkesalmi, Hamar 1983/4, are promising.

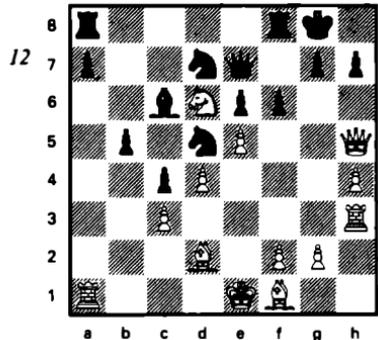
- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 9 | ♗d2 | ♗xc3 |
| 10 | bc | cb |
| 11 | ♗g5 | ♗b7 |
| 12 | h4? | |

12 ♖b1 ♗c6 (12 ... ♖d7 13 ♗e4 0-0 14 ♗c5 ♖c6 15 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 16 ♗xc4) 13 ♗e4 0-0 14 ♗g5! g6 15 h4 gives a dangerous initiative. Black is again very sensitive on the dark squares.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 12 | ... | ♗d7 |
| 13 | ♖h5 | |

Matulovic prefers 13 ♖g4 0-0 14 ♗e2, but why not 13 ♖b1!? with play similar to the last note.

- | | | |
|----|-----|----------|
| 13 | ... | ♖e7 |
| 14 | ♗e4 | 0-0 |
| 15 | ♗d6 | ♗c6 |
| 16 | ♗h3 | f6! (12) |



Hitting back at the White centre. Note that Black's pieces

10 The Geller Gambit

are co-ordinating better than White's rather mixed bunch. Now 17 ♖g3 fe 18 de ♔f4 19 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 looks hopeless for White.

17 ♖e2 fe 18 de ♔c5 19 ♗g4 ♔b3 20 ♗a6 ♔xd2 21 ♗xc6 ♔xf1 22 ♖xf1 ♗f4 23 ♖e2 ♗xh4 24 ♗xh4 ♖xh4 25 ♖f3 ♗f8 26 ♗c8 ♗xc8 27 ♖f7+ ♖h8 28 ♔xc8 ♖h1+ 29 ♖e2 h6 30 ♖f3 ♖d1+ 31 ♖g3 ♖d3+ 32 ♖h2 ♖f5 33 ♖xa7 ♖xe5+ 34 g3 ♖h7 35 ♖d7 ♖f5 36 ♖g1 ♖b1+ 37 ♖h2 ♖f5 38 ♖g1 b4 39 ♔d6 ♖e5 40 ♔f7 ♖e1+ 41 ♖g2 ♖e4+ 42 ♖g1 b3 43 ♖e8 ♔f6 (One final trap: 43 ... b2 44 ♔g5+ hg 45 ♖h5+ is a perpetual.) 44 ♖b8 ♔g4 White resigned.

This game shows a successful new approach, but White players should try out the possible improvements 9 ♖a4 or 12 ♖b1.

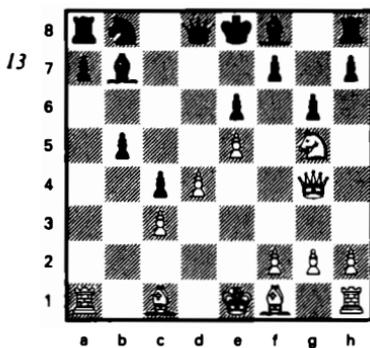
It was interesting to see how the strong German Grandmaster Robert Hübner handled the Black pieces when he was tested in the gambit in a German league game (Reefschlager-Hübner, Bundesliga 1983/4). After 7 ... e6:

8 ab ♔xc3
9 bc3 cb
10 ♔g5 ♗b7
11 ♖h5 g6

For 11 ... ♖d7 see next game.

12 ♖g4 (13)

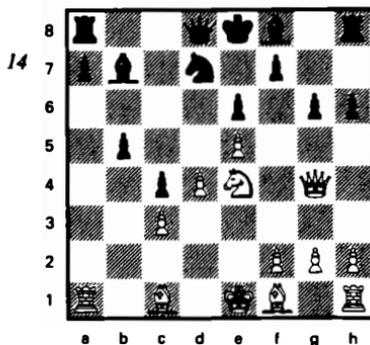
In this position Black can go wrong very easily, e.g. 12 ... ♔a6 13 ♗xa6! ♗xa6 14 ♖f3 wins immediately. 12 ... ♔d7?! 13 ♗b1!



wins back the pawn as 14 ♗xb5 and 15 ♗xc4 are threatened.

If 13 ... ♗c6 14 ♔xe6! or 13 ... ♖a5 14 ♖f4, as pointed out by Watson.

12 ... ♗d5?! 13 ♖f4 ♖d7 14 ♖f6 ♗g8 15 ♔xh7 wins back the pawn under favourable circumstances. 12 ... h6 is reasonable as 13 ♔xe6? ♖d7 wins for Black. So 13 ♔e4 ♔d7 (13 ... ♗xe4 14 ♖xe4 ♖d5 15 ♖f4 ♔c6 16 ♗e2! ♗c8 17 ♗f3 ♖d7 may be playable as 18 d5 ed 19 ♗g4 ♖c7 is not clear) leads us to the next diagram (14).



White wishes to probe Black's weaknesses on the dark squares

and Black's shaky pawn structure. Black has problems completing his development which allows White to play for d5 in the early middlegame. White could try 14 ♖a3 to exchange bishops, but 14 ... ♗a5! 15 ♖b2 ♗b6 looks playable for Black. An untried suggestion of J. Watson is 14 ♗b1 to provoke 14 ... ♙c6, which doesn't allow the following defensive try by Black, who must maintain control of d5 into the middlegame. 14 ♙e2 ♙d5 15 0-0 ♗b6 16 ♙f3 ♗c6! and Black has some central solidity and is ready for ... a5, ... b4, but must pay attention to his king's unsafe position.

12 ... ♙e7
13 ♙e2

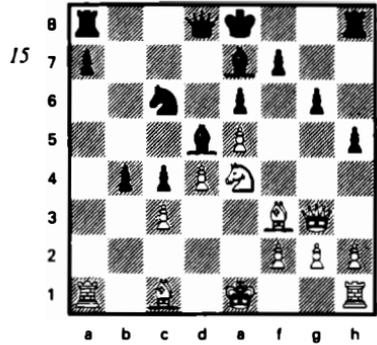
The young Dutch Master Kuijff likes White's position after 13 h4 h5 14 ♗f4 ♙xg5 15 hg but gives no further analysis. If 14 ♗g3 (instead of 14 ♗f4) then 14 ... ♙d5! with strategy very much as in the game.

13 ... ♙d5!

13 ... ♗d7 has been played frequently but Hübner tries a more dynamic approach.

14 ♙f3 h5
15 ♗g3 b4
16 ♗e4 ♗c6 (15)

Black has solidified his hold on d5 and started his counterplay. A correspondence game Shaposhnikov-Sadomsky in 1958 continued 17 0-0 ♗b8 18 ♙g5 ♙xe4 19



♙xe4 ♗xd4! 20 cd ♙xg5 21 d5 with raging complications.

17 ♙g5 ♙xg5
18 ♗xg5 ♗e7

18 ... bc? 19 ♗f4 ♗d7 20 ♗f6 is given by Kuijff, but Black should play 19 ... ♗e7.

19 ♗f4 0-0

This looks risky, but White has only two minor pieces left and 20 ♙xh5 gh 21 ♗h4 f6! refutes the attack.

20 cb ♗b6
21 0-0 ♙xf3
22 ♗xf3 ♗fd8
23 ♗fd1 c3!
24 h3

24 ♗g5 ♗f5 or 24 ♗h6 ♗f5 are not worrying.

24 ... ♗xb4 25 ♗db1 ♗d5! 26 ♗c1 ♗e7 27 ♗b5 ♗g7 28 ♗c5 ♗dc8 29 ♗aa5 ♗ab8 30 ♗h2 ♗xc5 31 ♗xc5 ♗b4. White resigned, as variations such as 32 ♗a5 ♗c7 33 ♗c5 ♗b6 or 33 ♗a2 ♗b6 are very convincing. Note how Hübner's pieces combined defence of his king with a central blockade and queenside expansion.

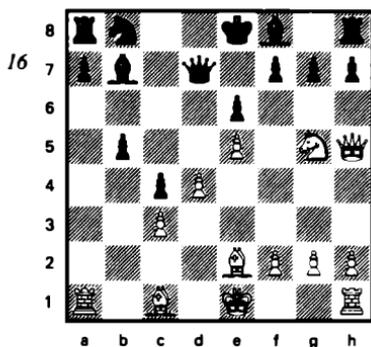
12 The Geller Gambit

sion. This represents an excellent example of how Black should play against the Slav gambit. The next game is Kasparov–Petursen, Malta 1980. Yes, the World Champion himself has toyed with this variation which is not altogether surprising. White obtains a continuing initiative and sets Black lots of practical problems for the sacrificed pawn—very much his style!

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 dc 5 e4 b5 6 e5 ♗d5 7 a4 e6 8 ab ♗xc3 9 bc3 cb 10 ♗g5 ♗b7 11 ♗h5 ♗d7.

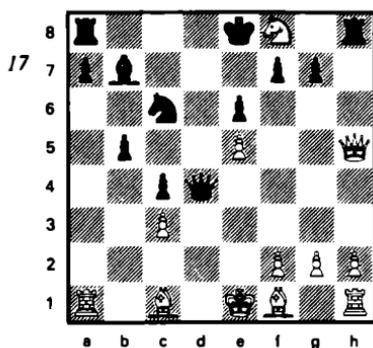
Avoiding or delaying the potential weaknesses of 11 ... g6.

12 ♗e2 (16)



Kasparov–Kupreichik, USSR Championship 1979 went 12 ♗h7!? ♗c6! 13 ♗xf8? ♗xh5? 14 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 15 ♗b1 a6 16 ♗xc4 ♗a5 17 ♗f1 and White eventually won. Kasparov has pointed out that Kupreichik missed 13 ... ♗xd4!! (17)

Now 14 ♗xh8 ♗xc3+ or 14 cd



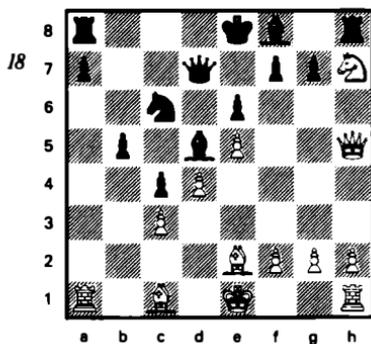
♗xh5 traps the knight. An amazing move!

12 ... h6?!

12 ... ♗a6 13 d5! and now 13 ... ed? 14 e6 or 13 ... ♗c5 14 d6 with a big bind.

12 ... ♗d5 is interesting e.g. 13 ♗f3 g6 14 ♗h3 ♗c6, with play similar to the last game, or 13 ♗xh7! (this crazy move again!) 13 ... ♗c6 and now 14 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 15 ♗g5 a5! 16 ♗xg7 is unclear but very exciting indeed. In Flear–Delaney, Bath Zonal 1987, I introduced 14 ♗f6+ after 12 ... ♗d5 13 ♗xh7 ♗c6 (18).

14 ♗f6+ gf 15 ♗xh8 fe 16 ♗h6! (not 16 ♗a3 b4 17 ♗xb4



♟xb4 18 cb ed 19 ♖xd4 ♕xg2, which is not clear) 16 ... ♗e7 17 de! 0-0-0 18 ♕xf8 ♜xf8 19 ♗f6 ♗xf6 20 ef ♜g8—not 20 ... ♕xg2 21 ♜g1 and ♜g7 followed by the h-pawn push—21 h4! with advantage. Black's pieces are temporarily active but the White h-pawn is too fast.

This was my note for the book written before I played the game, but in fact the variation is far from clear and my opponent missed some opportunities. The game continued 14 ♖f6+ gf 15 ♗xh8 fe (Velickovic in *Informator* 43 recommended 15 ... 0-0-0!, as 16 ♗xf6 ♕xg2 17 ♜g1 ♖xd4!! is better for Black) 16 ♕h6 0-0-0! 17 ♕xf8 ed (Velickovic believes 17 ... ♕xg2 18 ♜g1 ♗d5 to be unclear) 18 ♗g7 d3? (18 ... dc! 19 0-0 f5!! [not 19 ... b4 20 ♕xb4! ♖xb4 21 ♗xc3 with advantage enough to win] and Black with only three pawns for a rook has probably enough competition!—Flear. 19 ♕a3 is perhaps better) 19 ♕d1 d2 20 ♗f1 ♕e4 21 h4! ♕f5 22 ♗g1 ♗d5 23 h5 ♗e4 24 ♕c5 ♖e5 25 ♕e3 ♖g4 26 ♜h4 ♗d3 27 ♜xg4 ♕xg4 28 ♕xg4 ♗c2 29 ♕d1. Black resigned.

A very sharp game which was very unclear, so 12 ... ♕d5 may in fact be better than 12 ... h6?!

13 ♕f3 ♖c6

13 ... g6 was shown to be inferior in Szabo-Orendy, Hungarian Championship 1961: 14 ♗h3 ♖c6

15 ♖e4 ♕e7 16 0-0 a5 17 ♕f4 ♜ad8 18 ♖d6+, which gives White all the play.

14 0-0

14 d5!? is wild e.g: 14 ... ♖xe5 15 de ♖xf3+ 16 ♗xf3! fe 17 ♗h5+ ♗e7 or 14 ... hg 15 dc ♕xc6 16 ♗xh8 ♕xf3 17 gf ♗d3 (Kasparov) (of course 17 ♕a3 is answered by 17 ... 0-0-0).

14 ... ♖d8

15 ♖e4 a5

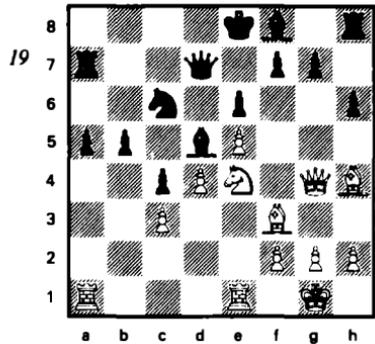
16 ♕g5! ♕d5

17 ♜fe1! ♖c6

Notice Kasparov's smooth build-up. 17 ... ♗b7 18 ♕xd8 ♗xd8 19 ♖c5 ♕xc5 20 ♕xd5 ♗xd5 21 dc is given by him as advantage to White.

18 ♕h4 ♜a7

19 ♗g4! (19)



19 ♖d6 ♕xd6 20 ♕xd5 ♕e7 holds on.

19 ... ♜h7?!

19 ... ♕xe4 20 ♕xe4 ♖e7 21 d5! ed 22 e6! is crushing.

19 ... ♕xe4 20 ♕xe4 g5! is given by Kasparov as a clear ad-

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vantage for White but at least after 21 ♙g3 , 21 ... ♜e7 could be tried, when 22 h4 ♝d5! may be just about playable e.g: 23 ♙xd5 ♜xd5 24 hg hg 25 ♜xg5 ♖d7 with an unclear position aiming for 26 ♜f6 ♞h7 or 26 ♙h4 ♜c6!

Now White broke through with

20 ♝d6+ ♙xd6

21 ♙xd5 ♙e7

21 ... ed 22 ed+ ♖f8 23 ♙e7+ ♖g8 24 ♜f3 picks up the d5 pawn with a winning position.

22 ♙e4 g6

23 ♙f6! ♖f8

23 ... ♙xf6 24 ef ♖f8 25 ♙xc6 ♜xc6 26 d5! ed 27 ♜f4 wins quickly.

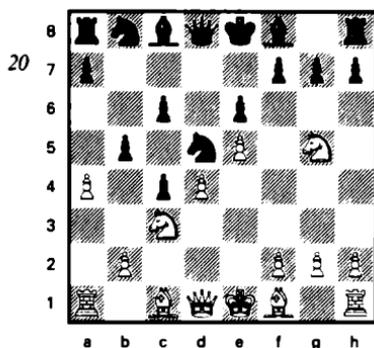
24 ♜f3! ♝d8 25 d5 ed 26 ♙xd5 ♜f5 27 ♜e3 ♞d7 28 ♞ad1 ♙xf6 29 ef ♝e6 30 ♙e4 ♞xd1 31 ♙xf5 ♞xe1+ 32 ♜xe1 gf 33 ♜e5 ♖g8 34 ♜g3+ Black resigned.

This game was extremely unpleasant for Black, but remember not many of your opponents will play like Kasparov so don't despair; Black's defensive task is not impossible! Use the game Reefschlager–Hübner as a model for Black's defence.

The Geller gambit is a variation for those players who enjoy difficult games and I would recommend tactical players who like to take risks to try this variation for White. There are a number of under-analysed and under-played sidelines, which I have highlighted in the notes for players seeking

less well trodden paths. It's not necessary to learn that much theory in order to get fascinating and sharp struggles.

One of these lines, which has suddenly become fashionable, has seen me playing both colours! After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♝f3 ♝f6 4 ♝c3 dc 5 e4 b5 6 e5 ♝d5 7 a4 e6 8 $\text{♝g5!?$ (20). Black normally plays.



8 ... h6

8 ... ♙b4 9 ♜h5 (9 ♜f3 Rajkovic) 9 ... ♜e7 (9 ... $\text{g6!?$ 10 ♜f3 f6 was played in Alburts–Speelman, Subotica International 1987, but I think Botterill's non-weakening move was better) 10 ♙d2 h6 11 ♝ge4 0-0 with an early ... f5 to follow (Flear–Botterill, Bath 1987) and Black seemed fine.

9 ♝ge4 b4

10 ♝b1 ♙a6

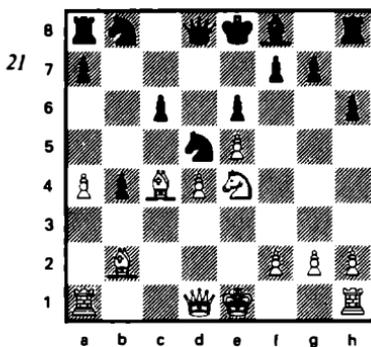
10 ... ♜h4 11 ♜f3 f5 12 ef ♝xf6 13 ♝xf6+ ♜xf6 14 ♜xf6 gf 15 ♙xc4 is slightly better for

White due to Black's inferior pawn structure.

11 ♖bd2 ♘c3

Against Sosonko at Wijk aan Zee I tried a tricky tactical idea, 11 ... ♖f4. However, he refuted this in fine fashion: 12 ♗g4! ♖d3+ 13 ♗xd3 cd 14 ♖d6+! ♗xd6 15 ♗xg7 ♗f8?! (15 ... ♗f8 16 ♗xh8 ♗xd4 17 0-0 ♖d7 18 ♖f3 ♗d5 19 ♗xh6 0-0-0 gave Black some compensation for the exchange) 16 ed ♖d7 17 ♖f3! ♗b6 18 ♗xh6 0-0-0 19 ♗c1! and White has all the play (White won in 34 moves).

12 ♖c4 ♗xc4
 13 ♗xc4 cb
 14 ♗xb2 (21)



The critical position of the variation. White has the two bishops and attacking chances for the sacrificed pawn. The game we follow was a fascinating struggle: Flear-Sadler, London (Lloyds Bank) 1987.

14 ... ♗e7
 15 0-0 0-0

16 ♗g4 ♗c8

The Yugoslav grandmaster Rajkovic is responsible for the popularity of this gambit, and one of his games continued 16 ... ♖d7 17 ♖g3 ♖h8 18 ♗ad1 ♗g8 19 ♗fel (Rajkovic-Meduna, Bad Wörishofen 1987) with continuing pressure for the pawn.

17 ♗ae1 ♖d7
 18 ♗d3? f5!

As this seems to give Black a satisfactory game 18 ♖g3!, as suggested by my opponent, was better.

19 ef ♖7xf6
 20 ♗g6 ♖f4!?
 21 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6
 22 ♗h7+ ♖f7
 23 d5 cd
 24 ♗xf6 ♗xf6
 25 ♗b1

Black has two passed pawns for the exchange, and endgames may even be favourable for Black. In the middlegame, Black's sensitive king and White-squares give White some attacking chances. Prospects are balanced.

25 ... ♗h8
 26 ♗c2 ♗c8
 27 ♗d2 ♗c4
 28 g3! ♖h3+
 29 ♖g2 ♖g5
 30 h4 ♖e4

30 ... ♗c3 31 ♗e3 ♗xel 32 ♗xe1 ♖e4 33 f3 ♖c5 34 ♗c1 wins, but 31 ... ♖e4! 32 ♗xe4 ♗xe4+ 33 ♗xe4 de 34 ♗xe4 gives good drawing chances.

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- 31 ♖xe4 de
 32 ♜d7+ ♝g8
 On 32 ... ♗e7 33 f3! is strong.
 33 ♜b7 ♜d5
 34 ♜xb4 e3+
 35 ♝h2 ef
 36 ♙xf2 ♗d4

I thought that I would struggle to win the ending after 36 ... ♜d4, but in fact the plan of doubling on the seventh rank is decisive, e.g. 37 ♜xd4 ♗xd4 38 ♙c2 e5 39 ♙c7, etc.

- 37 ♙ff1 e5
 38 ♜b1 ♜c4
 39 ♜g6?

Bluff, as 39 ... ♜xa4 is in fact possible; 40 ♙f7?? ♜a2+ wins. The loss of the a-pawn would have significantly reduced White's winning chances, as the only winning idea remaining was a middle-game mate—not very likely.

- 39 ... ♜d5?!
 40 ♙c1 ♙b8

Black offered a draw, but in fact with the White queen on g6, Black has problems to avoid mating tricks.

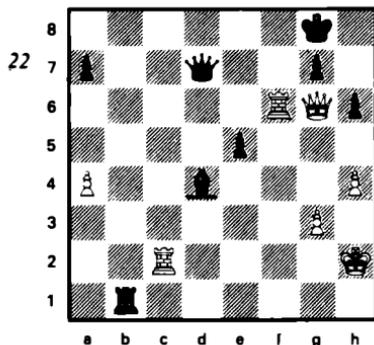
- 41 ♙c2 ♜d7
 42 ♙f6!

There are now too many threats: doubling on the c-file or ♙d6. If now 42 ... ♜e8 43 ♜g4 h5 44 ♜f5 gf 45 ♙c7 or even 44 ♜g6 once the h-pawn is weak.

- 42 ... ♙b1 (22)

White has to be careful; 43 ♙fc6?? allows 43 ... ♙h1+! 44 ♝xh1 ♜h3+ 45 ♙h2 ♜f1 mate!

- 43 ♙e6! ♗g1+



- 44 ♝g2 ♜d5+
 45 ♝h3 ♜d7

45 ... ♜h1+ 46 ♝g4 ♙b4+ 47 ♝h5 ♙xh4+ 48 gh ♜f3+ 49 ♜g4 ♜f7+ 50 ♙g6 wins beautifully!

- 46 ♙c7!

Black resigns, as 46 ... ♜xc7 47 ♙e8 is mate!

8 ♗g5 is a modern way of playing the Geller gambit. Every time I play this gambit I am never quite sure if I have enough compensation or not, but on each occasion I have had a fascinating game. I think Botterill's 8 ... ♗b4 could be the best defence.

This chapter has been very tactical in nature largely because these gambits provoke mind-boggling complications and very difficult games. One reason for renewed interest in these ancient lines is the line 1d4 d5 2 c4 dc 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3!? in the Queen's Gambit Accepted. After 4 ... 6a, 5e4 b5 has generated a following and now this has spilled over into 4 ... c6 (transposing to the Slav) and then 5e4 b5 etc.

3 White's fifth move alternatives

1	d4	d5
2	c4	c6
3	♖f3	♖f6
4	♖c3	dc

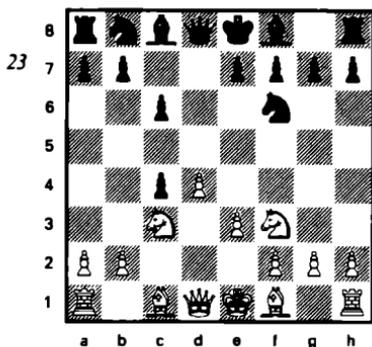
5 a4, which leads to the regaining of the c4 pawn, is normal. Some players prefer not to spend a tempo in order to win back the pawn, and another drawback to a4 is the weakening of b4 which can sometimes be profitably occupied by a Black knight or bishop.

5 e4 is a dangerous gambit which leads to lively positions. This was dealt with in the previous chapter. There are two other rarer ways of White handling the position:

- A 5 e3 (tame) or
- B 5 ♖e5 (over the top)
- A 5 e3 (23)

Although this move has been called the Alekhine variation (after the great combinative World Champion) it is a move with a tame reputation. However, it could catch out an ill-prepared opponent.

5... b5 is best. Bishop developments are inferior as they cede the centre:



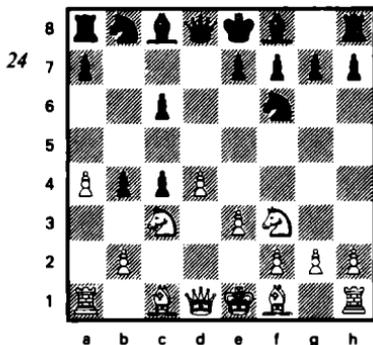
(a) 5... ♗g4 6 ♗xc4 e6 7 h3 ♗h5 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 ♜b3 ♜b6 10 ♖e5 with a slight advantage to White as in Capablanca-Janowski, New-York 1916. 8... ♖bd7 was better when 9 ♜b3 can be met by 9... ♗xf3.

(b) 5... ♗e6 6 ♖e5 ♖bd7 7 ♖xc4 b5 8 ♖d2 g6 9 ♗e2 ♗g7 10 0-0 0-0 was Holmov-Kupreicik, USSR Championship 1967, when 11 ♖de4 was best, reducing Black's chances of getting in an early c5. In the game 11 b3? was an instructive error as after 11... a6! Black was able to free his position with c5 11 b3 weakened the a1-h8 diagonal.

18 White's fifth move alternatives

(c) 5 ... ♖f5 6 ♗xc4 e6 7 0-0 with a fine position for White. Compare this position with the main line 5 a4 ♗f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♗xc4 ♗b4 when White has played the semi-weakening a4.

5 ... b5
6 a4 b4 (24)



White has succeeded in undermining the support of Black's c4 pawn. However, White's knight on c3 must lose time. White can try to redeploy the knight via b1-d2 and perhaps c4, which is a potential strong square for this knight, or alternatively a2-c1-b3, which eyes c5.

7 ♗b1 ♗a6!

The best, frustrating White's attempts to win back the pawn smoothly.

8 ♛c2??

8 ♗bd2 c3 9 bc ♗xf1 10 ♗xf1 bc 11 ♛c2 is about equal: Black is likely to achieve the freeing break c5. Nikolaevski-Platonov, a game played in Russia in 1971 continued 11 ... ♛a5! 12 ♗g3 e6

13 0-0 ♗bd7 14 ♗e2 ♗b4 15 ♗a3 c5 16 dc ♗xc5 with drawish simplification.

8 ♗e2 e6 9 ♗e5!?, as Alekhine played against Euwe in their match in 1935, is interesting. 9 ... ♗e7 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♗xc4 ♗bd7 and ... c5 is the right route to equality.

8 ... b3!

An improvement over the older 8 ... e6 9 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 10 ♛xc4 ♗d5 with equality, as in Stahlberg-Euwe, Stockholm 1937.

9 ♛d1 e6

10 ♗bd2??

10 ♗e5! retaining the option of ♗c3 was better.

10 ... ♛d5

The queen is OK on d5 if White has committed his queen's knight to d2.

11 ♗e2 ♗bd7

12 0-0

12 ♗xb3 cb 13 ♗xa6 ♛a5 + loses a piece.

12 ... ♗b8

Defending b3 and keeping White desperately short of space.

13 ♗b1 ♗e4

14 ♗fd2 ♗df6

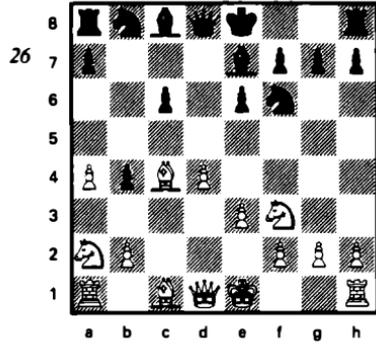
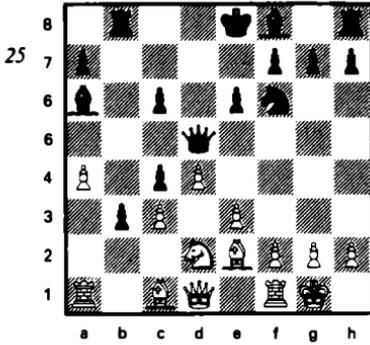
15 ♗c3? ♗xc3

16 bc (25) ♗e7??

16 ... b2 17 ♗b1 ♗a3! wins as 18 ♛c2 bc(♛) 19 ♗xb8 + ♛e7 20 ♗xc1 ♗xb8 comes out a piece up! A terrible miss.

17 ♗b2 0-0

Draw agreed in Adorjan-Torre, Toluca Interzonal 1982.



Black is still much better but Torre had probably realized his oversight and was in shock!

So, against 7 ... Qb1, Slav players should indulge themselves by holding on to the pawn, at least temporarily, as by the time the first player has won it back Black is normally in a position to play c5.

Against 7 ... Qa2, Black should succeed in equalizing by harmoniously developing his pieces and playing a timely ... c5 to free the position. This is a plan relevant to many similar variations in the Slav and Semi-Slav.

7 ... Qa2

This has the advantage of forcing the immediate return of the pawn although I think a2 is a poor square for the knight.

7 ... e6
8 ... Qxc4 Qe7?! (26)

At this point Black's best move order is not that evident.

8 ... Qb7 9 0-0 Qbd7 10 ... Qe2 c5 11 ... Qd1 Qb6 is probably res-

pectable, as White cannot profit from Black's centralized king. ECO recommends 8 ... Qb7 9 0-0 Qe7 10 ... Qe2 0-0 11 ... Qd1 a5 12 ... Qd2 Qbd7 13 ... Qc1 (finally finding a future) 13 ... Qb6 14 ... Qb3 c5 15 ... Qe1 Qfd8, as in Reshevsky-Smyslov, USA-USSR match, 1945. Black's normal plan against 7 ... Qa2 is fairly clear from these examples. 8 ... a5!? is also possible.

9 0-0?!

9 a5!? A strange gambit, recommended by Andrew Martin. Strategically, this dislocates Black's advanced pawn on b4 and White threatens 10 ... Qa4 and the b-pawn will fall.

9 ... Qxa5 10 ... Qd2 (threatening ... Qxb4) 10 ... Qb6 11 ... Qa4 looks better for White as 11 ... a5 12 ... Qxb4! exploits the pin on the rook on a8.

In order to avoid this dangerous idea I recommend players of the Black pieces to play 8 ... Qb7 and only after 9 0-0 then 9 ... Qe7. Tactically, the bishop on b7

20 White's fifth move alternatives

defends a8 and so this gambit now fails to 11 ... a5, defending b4 at the end.

We are following the game Capablanca-Spielmann, Bad Kissingen 1928, which was an impressive win by Black. 9 a5 was missed by Capablanca.

9 ... 0-0

10 b3

Perhaps ♖e2, ♗d2 and ♘a2-c1-b3 was better.

10 ... c5!

The freeing advance; Black has full equality. The knight on a2 is a poor piece.

11 ♗b2 ♗b7

12 ♘c1 ♘c6

13 dc

13 ♘d3 was perhaps best met by 13 ... ♘a5 14 dc ♘xc4 15 bc a5 and c5 will eventually fall. 14 ♘xc5 instead changes nothing 14 ... ♗xc5 15 dc ♘xc4 16 bc leaves White with equality at most.

13 ... ♘a5

13 ... ♗xc5 14 ♘d3 ♗e7 15 ♖e2 helps White develop with gain of time.

14 ♘e5 ♘xc4

15 ♘xc4 ♗xc5

16 ♘d3 ♖d5

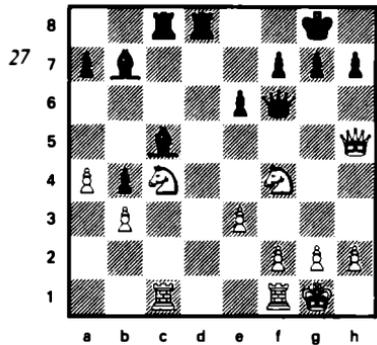
Taking over the initiative. Black's bishops are rather strong and Capablanca now avoids 17 f3, which creates a weakness on e3.

17 ♘f4 ♖g5

18 ♗xf6 ♖xf6

19 ♖c1 ♖fd8

20 ♖h5 ♖ac8 (27)



Spielmann has achieved effective development and has the advantage of two bishops against two knights in an open position.

21 ♘a5 could be met by 21 ... g6 or even the flashy 21 ... ♗a6 when 22 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 23 ♖xc5 ♗xf1 24 ♖xf1 fails to 24 ... ♖a1 + 25 ♖e2 ♖d1 mate.

21 ♖fd1 g6

22 ♖xd8 +

22 ♖e2 was possible, awaiting developments.

22 ... ♖xd8

23 ♖e5 ♗e7

24 h3

24 ♘xe6 fe 25 ♖xe6 + is pointless, as the White knight on c4 is pinned.

24 ... ♖c5

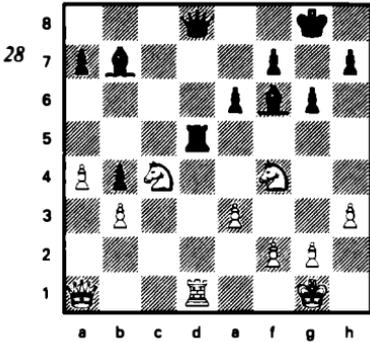
25 ♖a1 ♗f6

26 ♖d1

26 ♖b1 was passive.

26 ... ♖d5! (28)

A big shock. Now 27 ♘xd5 ♗xa1 wins and 27 ♘b2 ♖xd1 + (27 ... ♗xb2 28 ♖xd5 ♖f6 29



♙d8+ ♚xd8 30 ♚xb2 is OK) 28 ♚xd1 ♚xd1 + 29 ♘xd1 ♙e4 and White cannot prevent 30 ... ♙c2 winning.

27 ♚xd5 ed
28 ♘e5?

28 ♘b2 is ugly but gives some hope. Black would probably have played 28 ... d4 with a strong initiative, e.g. 29 ed ♚xd4 30 ♘fd3 ♚xd3! or 29 ♚d1 de 30 ♚xd8+ ♙xd8 31 fe ♙e4 with a good ending.

28 ... ♚d6!
29 ♘fd3 ♙a6
Capablanca must shed a piece.
30 ♚e1 ♙xe5
31 ♘xe5 ♚xe5
32 ♚xb4 ♙d3
33 ♚c5 ♚b8
34 b4
34 ♚d5 ♙c2 was good enough.
34 ... ♚b7
35 b5 h5
36 ♚c3 ♙c4
37 e4 ♚e7
38 ed ♙xd5
39 a5 ♚e4

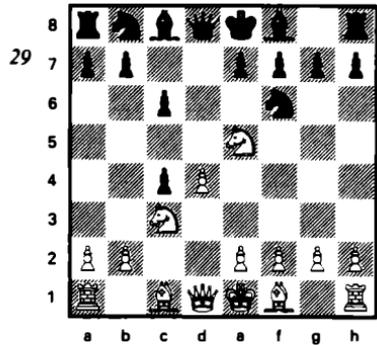
White resigned

A typical example of Black's opportunities in this line. Although White eventually achieved his knight outpost on c4, Black's bishops were the most important factor.

So, Black does best to develop 7 ... ♙a6! against 7 ♘b1 and 8 ... ♙b7! against 7 ♘a2.

B

5 ♘e5!? (29)



A move revived recently by Korchnoi and Miles. White displays his intention to capture on c4 with his knight. This provokes the rather natural 5 ... b5 from Black and then White shows his real idea with 6 g3. The fianchetto of this bishop can lead to threats on the long diagonal.

The play that follows is a new and tricky gambit which I believe is not to be trusted. For those players seeking new paths there may be room for investigation, but I think that Black can diffuse the pressure fairly painlessly.

In the original game, 5 ...

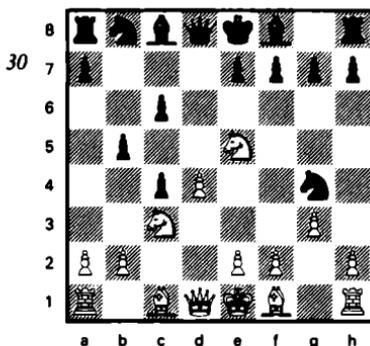
22 White's fifth move alternatives

♖bd7 6 f4!? e6 7 e3 ♜xe5 8 fe
 ♜d7 9 ♖g4 f5 10 ♖g3 b5 11 ♗e2
 g6 12 h4 led to wild play in Torre-
 Levenfish, Moscow 1925. The
 move 5 ♜e5 was revived in the
 game Korchnoi-Torre, Brussels
 1986, a historical accident as the
 two Torres are of course different
 players!

5 ... b5

A natural reaction for serious Slav players! For other moves see the next game.

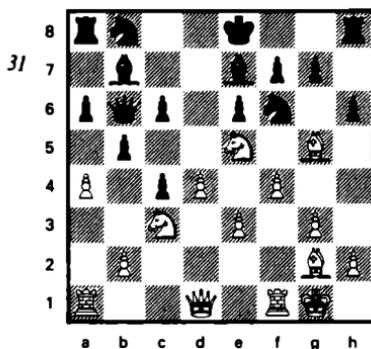
6 g3 ♜g4 (30)



6 ... ♜fd7 7 ♗f4 ♜xe5 8 ♗xe5
 ♜d7 9 ♗g2 ♜b6 8 0-0 e6 9 b3 cb
 10 ♖xb3 ♗d6 11 ♗e3 0-0 12 a4
 b4 was better for Black in Flear-
 Bierenbroodspot, Toulon 1986.
 Of course 9 e4 ♜bd7 10 ♗e3 is a
 more testing set-up as in De Boer-
 Bang, Copenhagen 1986, with

practical compensation for the
 pawn, although after 10 ... ♗d8!
 Black stands well.

The following important game
 seems to vindicate my judgement.
 Timman-Portisch, Tilbung 1986,
 saw 6 ... ♗b7! 7 ♗g2 a6 8 a4 e6 9
 ♗g5 ♖b6 10 0-0 ♗e7 (10 ...
 h6-Portisch) 11 e3 h6 12 f4! (31)



and now 12 ... ♗a7 was inferior
 due to 13 ♗xf6 gf 14 ♖h5! and if
 14 ... fe 15 ♖xe5 forks b8 and h8.
 Portisch had a better continuation
 in 12 ... hg 13 fg ♗f8! 14 gf gf 15
 ♜d3 ♜d7 according to his analy-
 sis. So 6 ... ♗b7 seems to lead to
 unclear complications.

7 ♗f4

7 ♜xg4 ♗xg4 8 ♗g2 is another way of playing the position.

7 ... ♜xe5

8 ♗xe5 ♜d7

9 ♗g2 ♜xe5

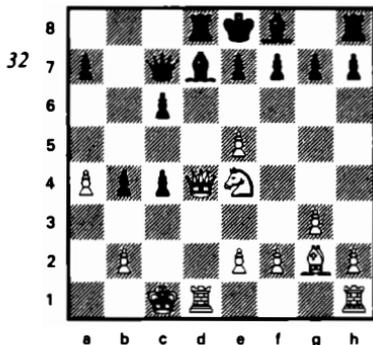
9 ... ♗b7 allows 10 ♜xb5 because of the pin.

10 de ♗d7

11 a4

11 e6 is possible as 11 ... fe bottles Black's pieces up further.

11 ... b4
 12 ♖e4 ♔c7
 13 ♗d4! ♕d8
 14 0-0-0! (32)



White has a crushing position. This is what can happen to a player of the black pieces who lags behind in development. White's pawn minus is almost irrelevant here and Black is a long way from castling. We are following the pretty game Miles-Smyslov, Dortmund 1986.

14 ... ♗e6
 Defending the c4 pawn.
 15 ♗xd8+! ♗xd8
 16 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8
 17 ♖g5!

Miles correctly sees that Black dare not move his bishop and so will end up playing the remainder of the game with his bishop on f8 imprisoned and virtually useless. White is probably already winning.

17 ... ♔c7
 17 ... ♖d7 18 ♕d1+ doesn't help.

18 ♗xe6 fe
 19 h4!
 Restraining Black's kingside.
 19 ... g6
 20 f4 h6
 21 ♖d2 ♗g7
 22 ♕c1 ♕d8+
 23 ♖e3

White's king restrains Black from causing any problems with g5.

23 ... c3
 24 bc b3
 25 ♕b1 ♕b8
 26 ♗e4 g5
 27 h5 b2
 28 ♖d2

Now the king will round up the pawn on b2. Note how Black's bishop on g7 is completely out of play.

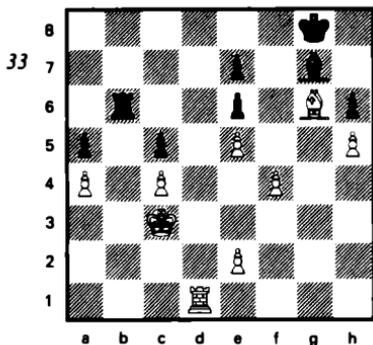
28 ... ♕b3
 29 ♗c2! ♕b6
 30 ♗d3 ♕b3
 31 ♗c2 ♕b6
 32 c4 c5
 33 ♖c3 a5
 34 ♗b3!

White needs to keep the rooks on to be sure of winning.

34 ... gf
 35 gf ♖d7
 36 ♕xb2 ♖e8
 37 ♕b1 ♖f7
 38 ♕g1 ♗h8
 39 ♗c2 ♗g7
 40 ♗g6+ ♖g8
 41 ♕d1 (33)

White will invade with decisive effect, the flashy 41 ... ♕d6 being

24 White's fifth move alternatives



met by 42 ♖b1. Black resigned.

So ♗e5 was good enough to beat a surprised Smyslov. Miles has not repeated this gambit however, which could well be because Black's defensive resources are known to top players. I don't like the time-wasting 6 ... ♗g4 or 6 ... ♗fd7 and prefer to play 6 ... ♗b7, as Portisch did against Timman.

From diagram 29:

5 ... ♗bd7

Recently revived by Welling in the game Langeweg–Welling, Eindhoven 1986. Some other moves have been investigated recently:

(a) 5 ... ♗f5 in Razuvaev–Hubner, Rest of the World v USSR 1984, transposed to the main line of the Slav after 6 a4.

(b) 5 ... ♗e6 may be good, Stohl–Ehlvest, Tallinn 1986 continued 6 e4 b5 7 f4 g6 8 g4 ♗g7 with a wild struggle in prospect (Black won in 33 moves).

(c) 5 ... e6 has also been tried,

with the idea of an early ... ♗b4 and ... ♗d5 or ... c5.

6 f4?

6 ♗xc4 is probably better. 6 ... b5 7 ♗e3 ♗b7 8 g3 doesn't give Black an obvious route to equality. 8 ... b4 9 ♗a4 c5 10 d5 was better for White in J. Piket–Voor­mans, Netherlands 1986/7. Black players should investigate 8 ... e6 9 ♗g2 ♗b6 10 0–0 ♗e7 as a reasonable looking alternative.

6 ... e6

7 e4?

7 e3 of the original game Torre–Levenfish, Moscow 1925, should be answered by 7 ... b5! (instead of 7 ... ♗xe5), as 8 ♗xc6 ♗b6 followed by ♗b7 looks promising for Black, as suggested by Lasker.

7 ... ♗b4

8 ♗f3 c5

9 ♗e3 ♗a5

10 ♗xc4 ♗xc3+

11 ♗f2

White, an experienced IM, probably thought that after 11 ... ♗b4 12 bc ♗xc3 13 ♖cl. White had active play. Unfortunately, Black had seen another possibility ...

11 ... cd!

12 ♗c1?

12 ♗xa5 de+ 13 ♗xe3 ♗xa5 was objectively better, giving Black three minor pieces for the queen. Even so, in such positions the minor pieces are generally better than the queen, particularly as here they are safe from tactical

harassment by the queen. So Black has a clear advantage in view of White's fragile looking king.

12 ... ♖c5

13 ♔d3

13 bc d3+ 14 ♜e3 ♚xc3 is crushing.

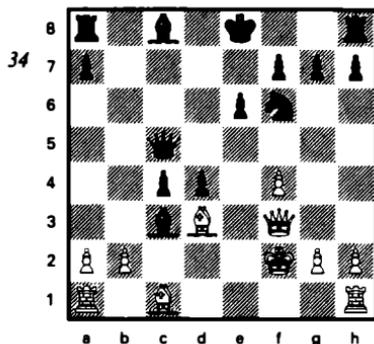
13 ... ♔b5

13 ... ♔a5 is simpler, with a clear piece more.

14 e5 bc

15 ef ♜xf6 (34)

White resigned in view of 16 ♚xa8 cd 17 bc dc+ 18 ♔e3



♜g4+, or 16 ♔e4 d3+ 17 ♔e3 ♔d4 18 ♔xa8 ♔xe3+ 19 ♚xe3 ♜g4+, as pointed out by Well-ing.

4 5a4: Smyslov's system

1 d4 d5
 2 c4 c6
 3 ♖f3 ♗f6
 4 ♗c3 dc
 5 a4

By playing ... dc Black cedes some central territory. As White has both d- and e-pawns remaining (two central pawns) to Black's e-pawn. This gives a clue to White's normal strategy in this and the next three chapters—central pawn expansion.

Black, however, did not play ... dc lightly, as White has some difficulty in recapturing the pawn. He can gambit the pawn, as we have seen in Chapter 2 on the Geller gambit, but that is not without risk, or he could aim to regain the pawn by playing 5a4, which restrains the typical ... b5.

On 5a4, White loses some time and weakens the b4 square, which becomes a permanent hole on the queenside.

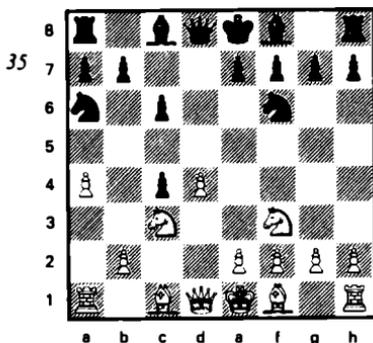
So Black's strategy can be outlined as restraint of White's pawn centre and swift effective development. These two ideas go hand in

hand. Black has earned time enough to develop his queen's bishop outside the pawn chain, one of the advantages of the Slav over the orthodox Queen's Gambit (1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 etc.) and has some hopes of establishing a minor piece on b4.

However, the central pawn advantage should not be underestimated, and Black often aims for ... c5 and ... cd to regain central pawn parity.

These basic strategic ideas become clearer in the chapters that follow.

5 ... ♗a6 (35)



The greedy 5 ... ♗d5 is inappropriate, for after 6 e3 ♗xc3 7 bc

b5 8 ♖e5 ♗d5 9 ab cb 10 ♗e2! ♗f5 11 ♗a5 Black's fragile hold on the extra pawn is broken. The following line is perhaps Black's best: 11 ... a6 12 ♗xc4 ♗xg2 13 ♗xf7+ ♖d8 14 ♖e2!, but White is better in this wild mess of a position.

5 ... ♖a6 develops with the b4 square in mind. A recent try with similar aims is Murey's 5 ... a5!?, which fixes White's a-pawn and will strengthen support for a piece on b4.

Black's position is not bad after 5 ... a5 6 e4 ♗g4 7 ♗xc4 e6 8 0-0 ♗b4 9 ♗e1 (9 d5 ed 10 ed 0-0 looks equal) 9 ... ♗xf3!? 10 gf ♖bd7 11 f4 0-0 and although White has some central space advantage and the two bishops, Black has no real weaknesses and a solid set-up (Sosonko-Murey, New York 1986).

9e5!? is a double-edged move giving away d5 but liberating e4 for the queen's knight. 9 ... ♖d5 10 ♖e4 ♖d7 11 ♗g5 ♗b6 12 ♗e2 h6 13 ♗cl 0-0-0!? 14 ♗d2 f5 15 ef (Geller-Murey, Amsterdam 1986) was prematurely agreed drawn in this interesting position.

So although 5 ... a5 costs one tempo, which could be spent on piece development, the idea is strategically reasonable. Another way of meeting 5 ... a5 is 6 ♖e5, a common enough theme in these ... dc variations of the Slav.

After 5 ... ♖a6 White has three ways of meeting the early knight development;

- A 6 e3
B 6 ♖e5
C 6 e4

A 6 ♗e3

A solid move which with accurate play gives White a slight edge with little risk.

- 6 ... ♗g4
7 ♗xc4 e6

7 ... ♖b4? allows the 'sucker punch' 8 ♖e5! e6 9 ♖xg4 ♖xg4 10 ♗xg4 ♖c2+ 11 ♖e2 ♖xa1 12 ♗e4 and White picks up the cornered knight.

After 7 ... e6 White could play 8 ♗xa6 crippling Black's queen-side pawns, but masters prefer 8 0-0. Why is this? After 8 ♗xa6 ba White will find that he has compensating weaknesses on the White squares and b-file and no realistic plan to win a pawn. If we mentally exchange off White's d-pawn for Black's c-pawn then the doubled a-pawns, ugly as they are, give Black a semi-open b-file such that White's b-pawn is weak.

If we were to consider similar positions with White's a4 pawn still on a2 then ♗xa6 would be more justified as much of Black's counterplay would then disappear.

8 ♗xa6 ba 9 h3 ♗h5 10 g4 ♗g6 11 ♖e5 ♗d6 with the idea 12 ♖xc6 ♗c7, or 8 h3 ♗h5 9 ♗xa6

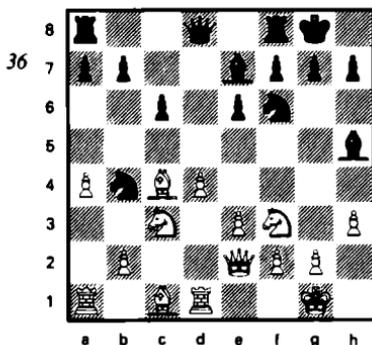
28 5 a4: Smyslov's System

ba 10 ♖e2 a5 11 ♖c4 ♗xf3 12 gf ♗d7 13 e4 ♜b8 are certainly no worse for Black.

8 h3 ♗h5
9 0-0

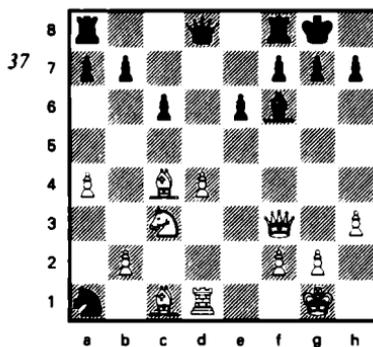
The more direct player may find 9 g4 ♗g6 10 ♖e5 interesting, but Black has counterplay on the black squares to compensate for the two bishops, e.g. 10 ... ♖b4 11 ♖xg6 hg 12 ♖f1 c5 13 ♖g2 cd 14 ed ♗e7 15 ♗e3 a6 16 ♖b3 ♜c8 with equal chances (Uhlmann-Hort, Marianske Lazne 1965).

9 ... ♖b4
10 ♖e2 ♗e7
11 ♜d1 0-0 (36)



White has developed in a natural manner and is ready for expansion. A number of ideas have been tried here:

(a) 12 e4!? ♗xf3 13 ♖xf3 ♖c2 14 e5 with complications (14 ♜b1 ♖xd4! 15 ♖f4 c5 led to a good game for Black in Forintos-Plachetka, Nice 1974). After 14 ... ♖xal 15 ef ♗xf6 (37)



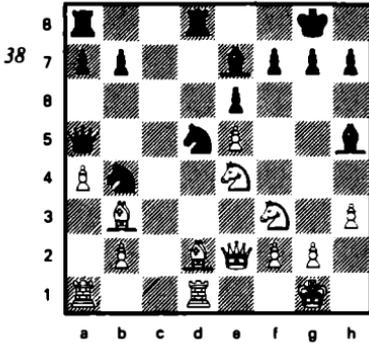
16 ♖d3 ♖xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 18 ♜xd4 ♜fd8 Black has adequate play (Geller-Hort, Moscow 1964).

This tactical line apparently justifies Black's restraint on White's centre. However, *Inter-mator 1* of 1966 believes this line to be good for White, but without giving analysis.

16 ♖e4 can be met by 16 ... ♖b6 and Black prepares 17 ... ♖b3, but a possible try at improvement is 16 ♖e4!? Then Black should side-step the knight with 16 ... ♗e7! and after 17 ♖c3 (intending 18 b3) play 17 ... b5! e.g. 18 ab cb 19 ♗xb5 ♜c8 freeing the knight in all lines.

So this complicated line seems satisfactory for Black, but what if White plays more slowly?

(b) 12 ♗b3 c5! 13 dc ♖a5 14 e4 ♗xc5 15 e5 (15 ♗e3 with an equal game is simpler) 15 ... ♖fd5 16 ♖e4 ♗e7 17 ♗d2 ♜fd8 (38) and Black has an adequate hold onto the central squares (Bolbochan-Smyslov, Mar del Plata 1966).



12 ♖b3 allows the equalizing ... c5 so White can try 12 a5!; this gains space on the queen's wing and stops the manoeuvre ... c5 and ... ♗a5.

- 12 a5 ♗c7
13 e4

We shall follow Krogius-Saidy, Polasica Zdroj 1969. White could try 13 b3 c5 14 dc followed by ♖b2, when he has slightly the more comfortable game.

- 13 ... c5
14 d5!?

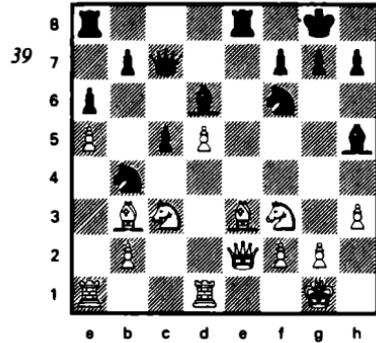
An aggressive approach.

- 14 ... ed
15 ed a6
16 ♖b3 ♖d6
17 ♖e3 ♜fe8 (39)
18 ♜a4?

Black has a sufficient hold on good-looking squares and a secure blockade of the passed d-pawn and must be considered to have equal chances. 18 ♗c4 is playable—the text is an oversight.

- 18 ... ♜d7?

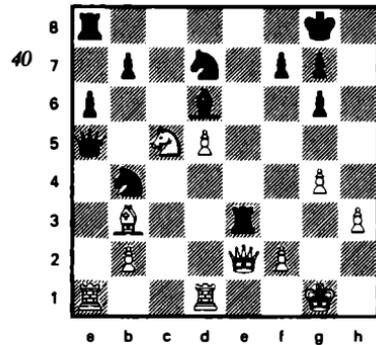
Missing 18 ... ♗xa5 when 19 ♜xc5 ♜xe3! wins material.



- 19 g4 ♖g6
20 ♜h4?

Both moves N-R4 were blunders. This time Saidy seizes his chance.

- 20 ... ♗xa5!
21 ♜xg6 hg
22 ♜xc5 ♜xe3! (40)



- 23 ♜xd7

23 ♜xa5 ♜xe2 24 ♜xd7 ♜xb2 transposes.

- 23 ... ♜xe2

23 ... ♗xa1 24 fe ♗a5 25 e4 ♜d8 26 e5 gives counterplay for White.

- 24 ♜xa5 ♜xb2

25 ♖c4 ♜d8

26 ♗c5 b6!

Saidy correctly notices that White must shed material.

27 ♗a4 ♜c2

28 ♗xb6 ♖c7

29 ♜a4 a5

30 ♖b3 ♜c3

31 ♗c4 ♜xb3

The rest is rather one sided.

32 d6 ♜c3

33 ♜d4 ♖b8

34 ♗xa5 ♗c6

35 ♜dc4

Saidy points out that 35 ♗xc6 ♜xc6 36 ♜a8 ♜b6! does the trick, e.g. 37 d7 ♖f8! with the idea of ... ♖e7.

35 ... ♜xc4 36 ♗xc4 f6 37 f4 ♖xd6 38 ♗xd6 ♜xd6 39 ♖f2 ♜d4 40 ♜a6 ♗b4 41 ♜a8+ ♖f7 42 ♜a7+ ♖f8 43 ♖e3 ♜d3+ 44 ♖e4 White resigned.

In conclusion: White should try 12 a5 ♗c7 13 b3, but this doesn't offer much. A more vigorous approach suggests 12 g4!? ♖g6 13 e4 expanding the centre without allowing unnecessary complications after 12 e4 ♖xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♗c2.

B 6 ♗e5

Given three more tempi White would play f3, e4 and recapture the pawn. Black has, however, a satisfactory way of countering this plan.

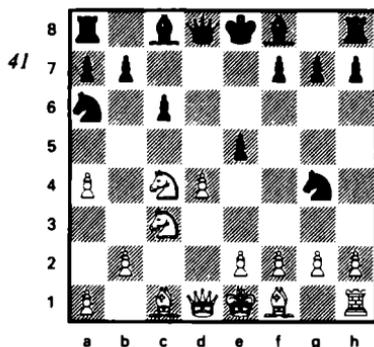
6 ... ♗g4!

7 ♗xc4

7 ♗xg4 ♖xg4 8 f3 ♖e6 9 e4

♗b4 seems to give White no realistic hope of regaining the c-pawn. 7 ♖f4 ♗xe5 8 ♖xe5 f6 9 ♖g3 e5! (intending 10 de ♖e6) gave Black the initiative in Birnboim-Speelman, Beer-Sheva 1987.

7 ... e5! (41)



Vigorous and strong. Black gambits a pawn for quick development.

8 ♗xe5

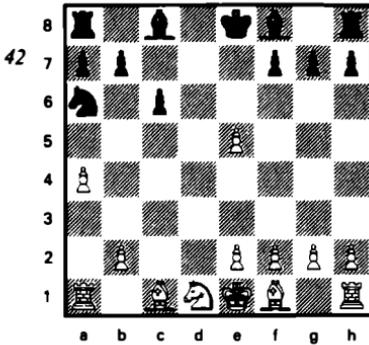
8 d5? ♗xf2! 9 ♖xf2 ♗h4+. 8 de ♗xd1 + 9 ♗xd1 ♗b4 10 ♗de3 ♖e6 is almost winning for Black, as ... ♗c2+ is difficult to stop for long. 8e3 ♗b4! (threatening to take twice on d4, as ... ♗c2+ recaptures the queen), 9 h3 ed 10 hg (10 ed ♗f6 gives White a poor pawn structure) 10 ... dc 11 bc ♗xd1+ 12 ♖xd1 ♗d5 with advantage to Black (Stahlberg-Smyslov, 1962).

8 ... ♗xe5

9 de ♗xd1+

10 ♗xd1 (42)

In Gipslis-Polugaevsky, Jurmala 1969, Black obtained excellent play after 10 ♖xd1 by 10 ...



10 ... ♔e6
 11 ♕e4 0-0-0+ 12 ♖e2 ♗b4
 13 ♙g5 ♜d7 14 ♜d1 ♙c4+ 15
 ♜f3 ♜xd1 16 ♗xd1 ♙xf1 17
 ♜xf1 ♗d3 18 ♜e2, with approxi-
 mately balanced chances.

10 ... ♔e6

We follow the interesting game Ftacnik-Speelman, Luzern Olympiad 1982. White has inferior development and some weaknesses ready to be exploited by Black's knight. This seems to be good practical compensation for the pawn.

11 e4 ♙b4+

12 ♙d2

12 ♗c3 ♗c5 13 f3 ♗b3 14 ♜b1
 ♗xc1 15 ♜xc1 0-0-0 gives excel-
 lent compensation for Black.

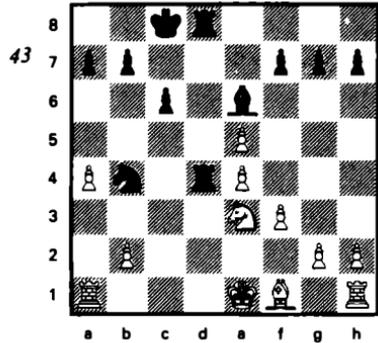
12 ... 0-0-0

13 ♙xb4?

White loses patience, with 13 ♙c3, threatening ♙xa6, Black would have been obliged to play 13 ... ♙xc3+ 14 ♗xc3 ♗c5 or 14 ... ♗b4 with good, but not overwhelming compensation for Black.

13 ... ♗xb4

14 ♗e3 ♜d4
 15 f3 ♜hd8 (43)



White's extra pawn is largely irrelevant. Taking into account such terrible pressure, Black's position is to be preferred.

16 ♜f2 ♜d2+

17 ♜g3 ♜8d4?!

An interesting moment. 17 ... ♜xb2 18 ♗c4! fights back, but the simplifying 17 ... ♗c2 18 ♗xc2 ♜xc2 (exchanging off White's best piece) leaves White with no real defence to doubling on the seventh rank.

18 ♜c1 ♜xb2

19 ♙c4 ♗d3

20 ♜hd1 ♗xc1

21 ♜xd4 ♜c7

22 ♜d1

22 f4 was possible, trying to use the central majority.

22 ... ♗e2+

23 ♜h4

23 ♙xe2 ♜xe2 24 ♜d3 is no improvement; Black's c-pawn is too strong and White's a-pawn too weak.

23 ... ♖c3

24 ♙c1

24 ♙d4 ♙b4 25 ♗xe6 ♙xd4 26 ♗xf7 ♗xe4 27 fe ♙xe4+ 28 ♗g4 ♙xa4 is a wild variation of Speelman's where Black is probably better. Black sacrifices the piece on e4 as White's passed e-pawn is dangerous after e6 and ♗f5.

24 ... ♗xa4

25 f4 ♗xc4

25 ... ♗b6 is perhaps better, but the text is good enough.

26 ♗xc4!? ♙xg2

27 ♖h3 ♙e2

28 ♗d6 ♗b2

The game is still sharp and complicated, but if Black plays with care then his three connected passed pawns will be decisive.

29 ♖g3 ♗d3

30 ♙b1 b5

31 ♙a1 ♖b6

32 ♖f3

32 ♗c8+ ♖c5 33 ♙xa7 ♙e3+ 34 ♖g4 ♙xe4 stops 35 ♙xf7 because of 35 ... ♗xe5+.

32 ... ♙xh2

33 ♗xf7 ♗xf4!

Finally breaking up White's pawns.

34 ♗g5 ♗g6

35 e6 a5

36 ♗f7 a4

37 ♗d6 ♙h3+

38 ♖f2 ♙d3

39 ♗f5

39 ♗c8+ ♖c7 40 e7 ♖d7 41 ♖e2 ♙d4 42 ♖e3 c5 is the end.

39 ... ♙d8

40 ♖e3?

40 e7 ♙e8 41 ♗d6 ♙xe7 42 ♗c8+ ♖c5 43 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 should be easy enough for Black.

40 ... ♙e8

41 ♗xg7 ♙e7

White resigned

A rather untidy game, but a good example of how dangerous 6 ... ♗g4! and 7 ... e5! can be. This variation seems to be good encouragement for Black's system.

C 6 e4

The most direct and perhaps the best—if Black allows immediate occupation of the centre why not profit from this opportunity?

6 ... ♗g4

6 ... ♗e6 is refuted by vigorous play: 7 ♗g5 ♗d7 8 e5 ♗d5 9 ♗xc4 ♗xc3 10 ♗xe6 ♗xd1 11 ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 12 ♗xf7 ♙g8 13 ♗g5! (13 ♖xd1 h6 traps the knight) 13 ... h6 14 ♗e4 ♗xb2 15 ♗xb2, with a clear positional advantage (Cerepkov-Bagirov, USSR Championship 1969).

7 ♗xc4 e6

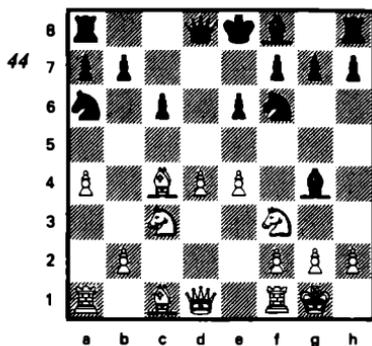
8 0-0 (44)

8 ♗e3 is more normal, but castling generally transposes. One example of Black trying to refute this by pawn-grabbing is instructive.

8 ... ♗xf3?!

9 ♖xf3! ♖xd4?

Black feels honour-bound to



take the pawn. 9 ... ♖b4 10 ♙e3
 ♜c2 11 ♞ad1 ♙e7 12 ♞d2 ♜xe3
 13 ♜xc3 0-0 gives White a
 slightly better position due to his
 centre.

10 ♙xa6 ba

11 ♞d1 ♜c4

11 ... ♜c5 12 ♜d3 threatens
 ♜a6 and ♙e3.

12 ♙g5! ♜c5

12 ... ♙e7 13 ♞ac1 is very
 dangerous.

13 e5! ♜d5

14 ♜xd5 cd

15 ♞ac1 ♜a5

16 ♞c6 ♙e7?

16 ... ♙b4 17 ♞dc1 0-0 18
 ♞c7 and ♜g4, ♙f6 etc, with a
 strong initiative.

17 ♙xe7 ♜xe7

18 ♞dc1 ♞hf8

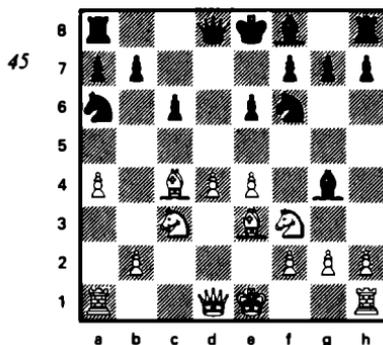
19 ♜b3 ♜e8

20 ♞c7

Black resigned

(Szollosi-L. Roos, Budapest
 1986). Black had terrible prob-
 lems here. 8 ... ♙b4 or 8 ... ♙e7
 transposing are better.

6 e4 ♙g4
 7 ♙xc4 e6
 8 ♙e3 (45)

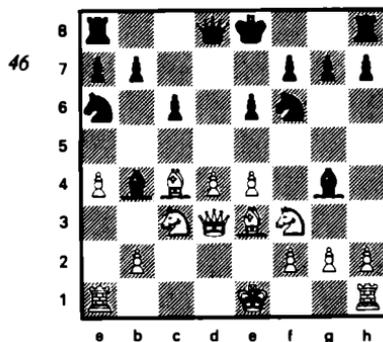


So White has achieved a great
 deal; he has built and supported
 his pawn centre in only eight
 moves. Black, however, can aim
 for counterplay with his fairly ac-
 tive pieces, control of b4 and the
 pin on the d1-h5 diagonal. Even
 so White can probably expect a
 theoretical advantage.

8 ... ♙b4

Threatening the e4 pawn. 8 ...
 ♜b4 is discussed in our next
 game.

9 ♜d3!



This has the advantage over ♖c2 of pressure on a6. 9 ♖c2 ♗xf3 10 gf ♗a5 11 0-0 ♗e7 12 ♖h1 ♗b4 13 ♗e2 h6 14 f4 was also promising for White in Gligoric-Green, Hastings, 1961. White obtained a clear advantage as Black lacked central counterplay. Black does better to play 10 ... 0-0 11 0-0 c5! with counterplay, as in Hübner-Smyslov, Tilburg 1979. Here, 12 ♗xa6 is met by 12 ... cd! 13 ♗xb7 ♖b8 14 ♖fd1 ♖xb7 15 ♖xd4 ♗a5 with adequate play for the pawn.

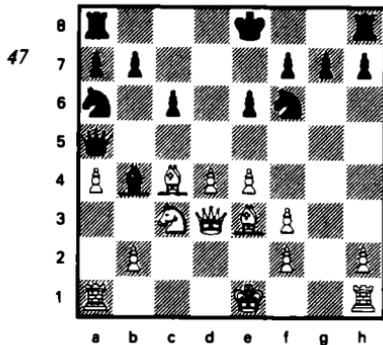
Hübner played 12 d5 and obtained an advantage after 12 ... ♗xc3 13 bc ed 14 ♖fd1 ♖c8? 15 ed ♖h3 16 ♖ab1 ♖xf3 17 ♗e2 ♖h3 18 ♖xb7. After the flashy 16 ... ♗g4!? White should play 17 ♗f4 ♖xf3 18 ♗g3 with threats of ♖xb7 and ♗e2.

Smyslov missed his chance to obtain unclear complications at move 14, when 14 ... ♗c7 15 ♗xc5 ♖e8 16 ♗e3 ♖e5! with the threat to come to h5 gives dangerous counterplay—very sharp and murky, but typical of the richness of Slav tactics.

White could have considered 11 ♖gl as an answer to 10 ... 0-0.

9 ... ♗xf3
10 gf ♗a5 (47)

10 ... ♗c7 11 ♖gl ♗h5 12 ♖e2!? g6 13 d5 ♗d6?! 14 dc bc 15 ♖d4 0-0 16 ♖gd1 ♗xh2 17 ♖xd8 ♖fxd8 18 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 19 ♗xa7 ± (Polugaevsky-Larsen,



Riga 1979). The a-pawn is a dangerous force.

Some improvements are possible in this; 12 0-0-0 is rather more normal of course and later Black could have tried 13 ... ed 14 ed ♖e7 with the idea of castling long, which Polagaevsky thinks is satisfactory.

11 ♖e2!?

This was played in the game Cebalo-Ivkov, Yugoslavia Championship 1981. Of course 11 ♖gl or 11 0-0 are reasonable alternative plans. The king, although unusually placed on e2, is fairly safe there, the rooks are combined along the back rank and the a5-e1 diagonal pin is broken.

11 ... ♗e7
12 ♖hg1 g6
13 ♖g5

White must be slightly better as Black lacks adequate counterplay.

13 ... ♖b4
14 b3 ♗d7

15 ♖g1 ♗d8

16 ♗c2

Avoiding tactics on the d-file and threatening a5 embarrassing the Black queen.

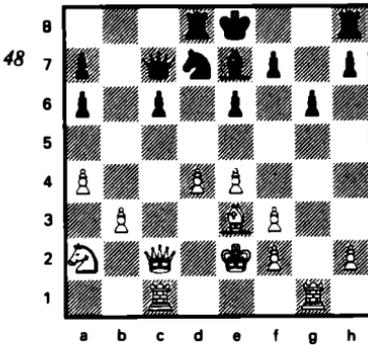
16 ... ♗a5

17 ♘a2 ♗c7

17 ... ♘b4 allows 18 ♗c3! intending ♗d2. White could try to expand with ♖b1 and b4, exploiting the pin theme after 17 ... 0-0.

18 ♗xa6 ba

19 ♖ac1 (48)



Black's play has been rather planless and he has wasted much time. Now Cebalo is in a position to press against Black's queenside.

19 ... ♘b8

19 ... ♗xh2 20 ♗xc6 and the queenside will be digested quickly.

20 ♗c3 0-0

21 ♗h6 ♗f6!?

21 ... ♖fe8 22 d5 ♗f8 23 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 24 dc ♖d6 seems to hold, so perhaps 22 h4! keeping the initia-

tive is more dangerous. If then 22 ... ♗xh4, 23 d5 e5 24 ♘b4 with a big advantage.

22 e5

A practical decision. 22 ♗xf8 ♗xd4! 23 ♗b4 ♗xh2! 24 ♖gf1 a5! 25 ♗xa5 (25 ♗a3 ♗xf2 26 ♖xf2 ♖d2+). 25 ... ♖xf8 gives excellent counterplay.

22 ... ♗g7

23 ♗e3 ♖c8

24 ♘b4

White retains a positional advantage.

24 ... a5

25 ♘d3 ♘a6

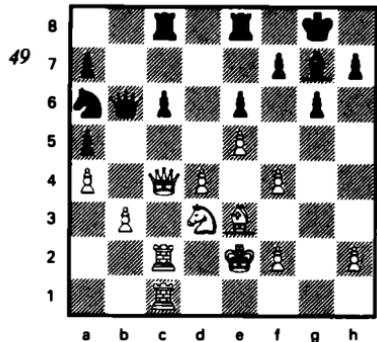
Trying to stop the manoeuvre ♘d3-c5-e4-d6.

26 ♖c2 ♗d8

27 ♖gc1 ♖e8

28 ♗c4 ♗b6

29 f4 (49)



29 ... ♗f8!?

A rather passive move in time-trouble. 29 ... ♗b7 was the most resilient when 30 ♘c5 ♘xc5 31 ♗xc5 ♗a6+ (31 ... ♗xb3 32 ♗xa5) 32 ♗c4 ♗b7 33 ♗d3

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intending ♞c4 and ♜c3 gives White continuing pressure against the weak queenside pawns.

30 f5!

Crashing through.

30 ... ♞b7

30 ... gf 31 ♞g1+ ♜h8 32 d5
 ed 33 ♜h4 ♜d8 34 ♜g3 wins, or
 30 ... ef 31 d5 c5 (31 ... cd 32
 ♜xc8 wins) 32 d6 with a massive
 position.

31 fe fe

32 h4 ♞b4

33 ♞xb4 ♙xb4

34 h5!

Cebalo now has the advantage on both wings and the White king still seems safe on e2.

34 ... ♞f7

35 ♜d3 ♞f8

36 ♜e4 ♙e7

37 hg ♜xg6

37 ... hg 38 ♞g1 ♜g7 39 ♞xc6
 is also decisive.

38 ♜xg6+ hg 39 ♞xc6 ♞xc6
 40 ♞xc6 ♞b8 41 ♞xe6 ♜f7 42
 ♞a6 ♞xb3 43 ♞xa7 Black
 resigned. A game in which Black
 never found an answer to White's
 centre.

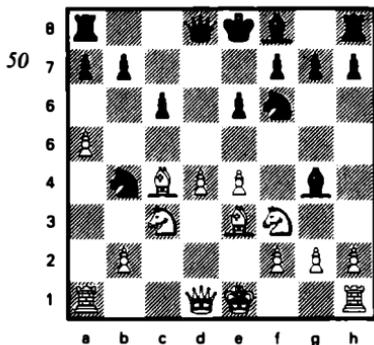
Returning to diagram 45:

8 ... ♞b4

8 ... ♙e7 9 0-0 ♞b4 10 a5! is
 very similar.

9 a5! (50)

A significant move. In my opinion, a5 is the most logical plan. By increasing the space advantage, Black's queen becomes less active. White has the additional plan of



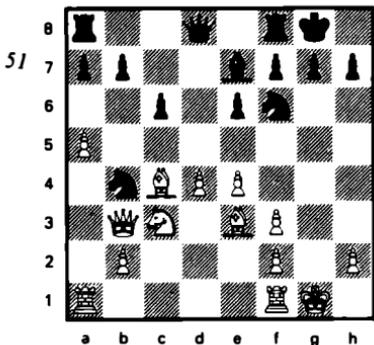
♜b3 and ♞a4 encircling Black's knight on b4 .

9 ... ♙xf3

10 gf ♙e7

11 0-0 0-0

12 ♜b3! (51)



White threatens ♞a4 . Now 12 ... b5 13 ♙e2 should lead to White building up slowly on the c -file and pressurising the weakness on c6 .

12 ... ♜c7 13 ♞e2! ♞d7 14 ♞fcl ♞ac8 15 ♙d2 gave White a clear advantage in Rogers–Hort, Biel 1985. We follow the game Uhlmann–Spiridonov, Zamard 1980.

12 ... b6
 13 ♖e2 ba
 14 ♗a4 ♗b8

14 ... ♗c7 15 ♗xa5 ♗xa5 16 ♗xa5 ♖c2 17 ♗c1 ♖xe3 18 fe will lead to pressure on a7 and c6 after the further ♖d1 defending b2.

15 ♗fc1 ♖d8

15 ... ♖h5 16 ♗xa5 ♖f4 17 ♖f1 ♖bd3 18 ♗d1! leads to favourable complications. 18 ... ♖xb2 19 ♗db1 ♖b4 20 ♗xb2 ♖xa5 21 ♗xb8 ♗xb8 22 ♗xa5 or 18 ... ♗xb2 19 ♗db1! ♖b4 20 ♗xb2 ♖xa5 21 ♗b3 ♖c7 22 ♖a4 both give Black little hope.

16 ♖a2! ♖c7

17 ♖xb4 ab

18 ♖g2!

Very instructive. White has weakened Black's queenside pawns so much that the pawn on c6 must fall—in the meantime he protects his h-pawn as 18 ... ♖xh2? 19 e5 wins.

18 ... ♖f4

19 ♗xc6 ♖xe3

20 fe ♗c8

21 ♗xc8

21 ♖a6 comes into consideration as Black remains in rather a bind.

21 ... ♗xc8

22 ♗xb4 ♗c2

23 ♗c4?!

23 ♖f2! ♗c7 24 ♖g1! is suggested by Uhlmann as better than the game. In practice, it is easier

to win with pawns on both wings.

23 ... ♗xb2

24 ♗xa7

Exploiting the back-rank weakness and coming out one pawn ahead.

24 ... ♗f8

25 ♖f2 h6

26 ♗c7 ♖e8

27 ♗b7 ♗c1

It is better for Black to retain queens as White's king is a little open.

28 e5 ♗h1

29 ♗a8 ♗xh2+

30 ♖e1 ♗h4+

31 ♖d2 g6

32 ♗b4! h5

33 f4 ♖g7?

33 ... ♗h1 34 ♗c8 h4 35 ♗c1 ♗g2 36 ♗b1 is probably only slightly better for White, who hopes to blockade and win the h-pawn.

34 ♗c8 ♗g8

35 ♗b7 ♖f8?

36 ♗xe8+ ♖xe8

37 ♗c8+ ♖e7

37 ... ♗d8 38 ♖b5+ ♖e7 39 ♗c5+ is probably the line of play Black overlooked.

38 ♗c5+! ♖d8

39 ♗d6+

Black resigned

Black made rather a mess of it after getting back into the game, but this illustrates a good practical plan against Black's set-up.

5 ... ♖a6 is worth an occasional try, especially if you don't

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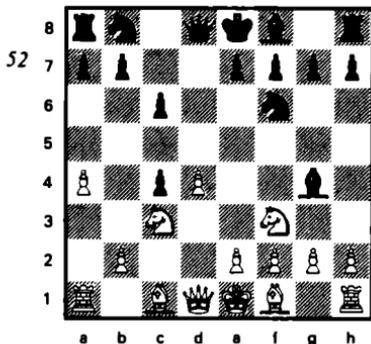
mind your opponent having a pawn centre. 6 e4 seems best, when accurate play probably gives White a small advantage.

5 . . . a5!? is for the real experimentalist, but it does avoid White's plan as seen in the Uhlmann–Spiridonov game.

If players such as Smyslov, Torre, Hort and Speelman have been willing to try this line it probably suggests that it isn't so bad. Black does achieve full development, but White's centre seems to be the factor which tournament players should bear in mind.

5 5 a4: Bronstein's system

- | | | |
|---|-----|----------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | ♟f3 | ♞f6 |
| 4 | ♞c3 | dc |
| 5 | a4 | ♞g4 (52) |



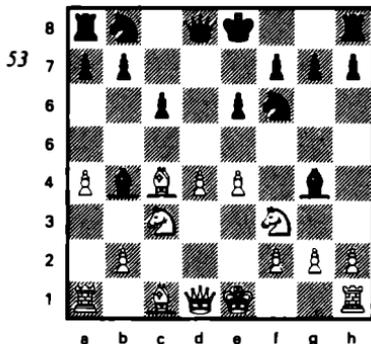
Similar in some respects to the last chapter, with this move Black strives for active pieces and a plan of counter-attacking against the centre. 5 ... ♞g4 has the drawback that 6 ♞e5 is a useful move, and this can be employed with gain of tempo. Lesser moves are 6 e3 or 6 e4, which we consider first.

A 6 e4

In this case, Black can obtain vigorous counterplay against the

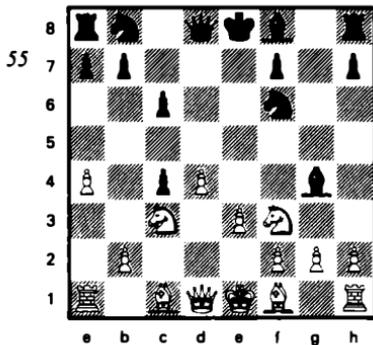
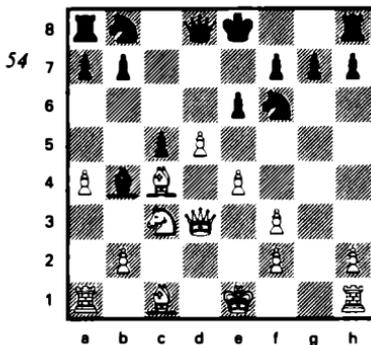
White centre.

- | | | |
|---|------|----------|
| 6 | ... | e6 |
| 7 | ♞xc4 | ♞b4 (53) |
| 8 | ♞d3 | |



A recent try was Lputian-Haïk, Sochi 1985: 8 ♞b3 a5 9 0-0 ♞xf3 10 gf ♞xd4 11 ♞xe6 0-0! (not giving unnecessary attacking chances by capturing the piece) 12 ♞h3 ♞a6 13 ♞e3 ♞e5 14 ♞fd1 ♞c5 15 ♞c4 ♞ad8 16 ♞f5 g6 with the better chances for Black, who has good central squares for his pieces, while White's pawn structure is rather compromised.

- | | | |
|----|---------|------|
| 8 | ... | ♞xf3 |
| 9 | gf | c5! |
| 10 | d5 (54) | |



10 dc was played in Crouch-Flear, Leicester 1986, when 10 ... $\text{c}4$ bd7 11 $\text{g}1$ $\text{e}5$ 12 $\text{e}2$ $\text{a}5$ 13 $\text{b}5+$ $\text{f}8$ was rather unclear. This may represent a playable line for White, as 10 d5 does not have a good reputation.

10 ... ed
 11 ed 0-0
 12 0-0 $\text{c}4$ xc3
 13 bc $\text{c}4$ bd7
 14 $\text{c}4$ f4 $\text{c}4$ h5
 15 $\text{c}4$ g3 $\text{c}4$ f6

gave Black the better of it as in Ogaard-Kupreicik, Dortmund 1975.

6 e4 is less effective against 5 ... $\text{c}4$ g4 than 5 ... $\text{c}4$ a6 because Black is better placed to attack the centre with 8 ... $\text{c}4$ xf3 and 9 ... c5!

B 6 e3 (55)

White aims for solid development, delaying any central expansion until he is better organized. There are good reasons to believe that this may work against automatic moves, a good example

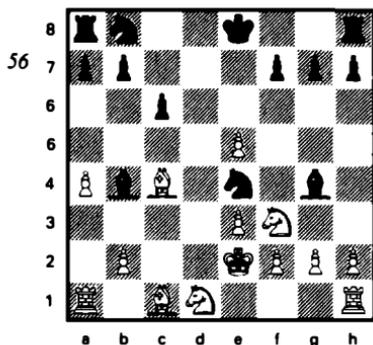
being one of the earliest games in this variation (Hort-Bronstein, Petropolis 1973) which continued 6 ... e6 7 $\text{c}4$ xc4 $\text{c}4$ bd7 8 h3 $\text{c}4$ h5 9 $\text{c}4$ e2 $\text{c}4$ b4 10 0-0 $\text{c}4$ e7 11 e4 (only now!) 11 ... e5 12 d5 a5 13 $\text{c}4$ d1 0-0 14 g4 $\text{c}4$ g6 15 $\text{c}4$ h4. Black had no serious compensation for White's space and central advantages (and, soon to come, the two bishops).

6 ... e5!
 7 de

7 $\text{c}4$ xc4 may be an interesting try as 7 ... ed 8 $\text{c}4$ xd4 $\text{c}4$ xd4 (not 8 ... $\text{c}4$ xf3 9 $\text{c}4$ xf7+!) 9 $\text{c}4$ xd4 seems playable. 7 ... e4 is critical, as 8 $\text{c}4$ xf7+ $\text{c}4$ e7!! may be winning for Black. Hence 8 h3! is probably forced, with interesting complications.

7 ... $\text{c}4$ xd1 +
 8 $\text{c}4$ xd1 $\text{c}4$ e4
 9 $\text{c}4$ xc4 $\text{c}4$ b4 +
 10 $\text{c}4$ e2! (56)

In a recent game, R. Simic played 10 $\text{c}4$ d2 against B. Maksimovic in Vrnjacka Banja 1986. After 10 ... $\text{c}4$ xd2 11 $\text{c}4$ xd2 $\text{c}4$ d7



12 f4 Black could have equalized with 12 ... ♖xd1 13 ♜xd1 ♗c5 14 ♕e2 ♗xa4 as Kondratyev pointed out.

10 ... ♗d7
 11 h3 ♗xe5
 12 ♖xf7+

These complications simplify to an ending in which White has a minuscule advantage. We follow the interesting struggle Forintos-Kirov, Vrsac 1973.

12 ... ♕xf7
 13 hg ♗xg4
 14 ♜h4 h5
 15 ♗e5+!

This tactical move leads to an ending in which White has a passed e-pawn. Although this doesn't guarantee any significant advantage, it does mean White has better central control. Now 15 ... ♕f6 16 ♗xg4 ♕g5 17 ♗f6!! ♗xf6 18 ♜xb4 wins.

15 ... ♗xe5
 16 ♜xe4 ♖d6
 17 ♗c3

ECO considers this position equal but in practice it probably

plays a little more easily for White.

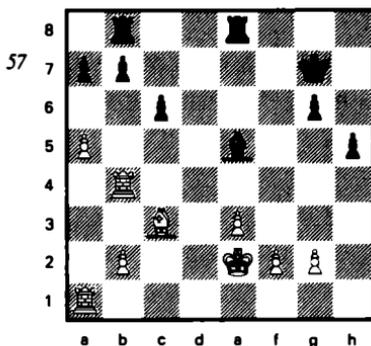
17 ... ♜ad8
 18 ♖d2 ♗d7
 19 ♜c4

19 b4 stops ♗c5 and prepares a queenside minority attack.

19 ... ♗b6
 20 ♜e4 ♜he8
 21 ♜h4 g6
 22 a5 ♗d7
 23 ♗e4 ♖e5
 24 ♖c3 ♗f6

On 24 ... ♖xc3 White could take with the b-pawn, as after 25 bc ♗f6 26 ♗g5+ ♕g7 27 ♜b1 White can get some pressure on the semi-open b-file.

25 ♗xf6 ♕xf6
 26 ♗f4+! ♕g7
 26 ... ♕g5 27 ♜f7 is worse.
 27 ♜b4 ♜b8 (57)



27 ... ♜d7 28 ♜d1! ♜c7 29 ♜e4 ♜ce7 30 ♜xe5! ♜xe5 31 f4 is winning for White. One of the reasons for 26 ♜f4+, Black's king is worse on g7.

28 ♜d1 ♖xc3

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29 ♖d7+ ♜h6!?

29... ♜f6 30 bc ♗e7 is slightly worse for Black. The text leads to complications.

30 bc b5!

31 a6

31 ♗xa7 ♗a8 wins back the pawn since 32 ♗c7 ♗e6 33 ♗d4 ♗xa5 34 f4 ♗a4! restrains 35 ♗dd7 as 35... ♗xf4 is possible.

31 ... c5

32 ♗b2 b4

33 cb?

33 ♜d3 is better, actively using the king as Black's queenside pawns are now rather exposed.

33 ... cb

34 ♗xa7 ♗e6!

Black has lost a pawn but by restraining active play by White he will probably draw. Neither White rook can be activated.

35 ♗b3 ♗c6

36 f4

Giving a loophole to the king, but allowing further pawn exchanges.

36 ... g5

37 ♜f3 gf

38 ef ♗bb6

39 ♗a8 ♗xa6

40 ♗xa6 ♗xa6

41 ♗xb4 ♗a3+

42 ♜e4

In rook endings the f- and g-pawns normally don't win against the h-pawn, but Black must play accurately as there are many tricks.

42 ♜f2 h4 43 ♗e4 (43 ♗b5 is a

better try as 43... h3 44 g4! gives winning chances, but 43... ♗a2+ 44 ♜f3 ♗a3+ is a draw) 43... ♜h5 44 ♗e3 ♗xe3 45 ♜xe3 ♜g4 46 ♜e4 ♜g3 leads to a drawn queen ending.

42 ... ♗g3!

Not 42... ♗a2 43 ♗b6+ ♜g7 44 ♜f3 cutting Black's king off and giving real winning chances.

43 ♗b2 ♜g6

44 f5+ ♜f6

44... ♜g5? 45 ♗b6! is winning, as Black will be cut off from the passed f-pawn, e.g. 45... ♗g4+ 46 ♜e5 ♗a5 47 ♗g6+ ♜h4 48 f6.

45 ♗b6+ ♜f7

46 ♜e5 ♗xg2

47 ♗b7+ ♜g8

48 ♜f6 ♗a2!

A good move, frustrating White's queening attempts. The coffee-house move 48... h4 gives Black more defensive problems after 49 ♗b8+ ♜h7 50 ♗b4, but this should still be drawn with 50... ♗a2.

49 ♜g6 ♗g2+!

50 ♜f6

So ♜xh5 leaves the king cut off on the h-file, and White has no winning attempts left: 50... ♗g7 is simplest as 51 ♗xg7+ ♜xg7 52 ♜g5 ♜f7 53 f6 ♜f8 is drawn.

50... ♗a2 51 ♗g7+ ♜f8 52 ♗h7 ♗a6+ 53 ♜g5 h4 54 ♜xh4 ♜g8 55 ♗b7 ♜f8 56 ♜g5 ♗c6 Draw agreed. Black should leave the rook on the third rank until

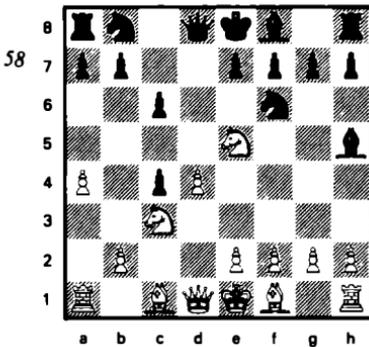
White plays f6 and then he should switch to checks from behind e.g. 57 ♖a7 ♗b6 58 f6 ♗b1! 59 ♜g6 ♗gl +, with a clear draw.

This game suggested that 6 ... e5! gives Black a satisfactory game, although White may retain the smallest of advantages in this ending. 7 ♗xc4!? has not been played and looks very unclear after 7 ... e4 8 h3.

C 6 ♗e5

A logical move, gaining time on the bishop.

6 ... ♗h5 (58)



The White knight on e5 is ready to recapture the pawn on c4 at a convenient moment. White has a choice of two important plans as to how he will develop his kingside. He could fianchetto with 7 g3, or he could expand in the centre with 7 f3 and a quick e4. We will look at both in some detail shortly.

A couple of direct attempts to profit from Black's bishop position have been tried. One is 7 h4!?,

which looks ridiculous, but is hard to refute. In fact, White threatens 8 f3 followed by g4 and h5 trapping the bishop, so this is quite dangerous. In the game Murey–Strauss, London 1986, Black failed to find an answer: 7 h4!? e6? 8 f3! c5 9 dc ♗xd1+ 10 ♗xd1! (defending c2) 10 ... ♗c6 11 ♗xc6 bc 12 g4 0–0–0+ 13 ♗d2 ♗xc5 14 ♗c1 and White won material. 7 h4 should be met by 7 ... ♗fd7, when 8 g4 ♗xe5 9 gh looks rather wild and 8 ♗xc4 e6 9 f3 ♗e7 restrains the White pawns.

Another try is 7 h3 ♗bd7 8 g4 ♗g6 9 ♗xg6 hg 10 e3 a5 11 ♗xc4 e6 12 ♗b3 ♗b6 13 ♗c2 g5 14 ♗e2 ♗d5 15 ♗f3 ♗e7, when Black has sufficient play on the Black squares (Balashov–Bronstein, Moscow, 1971).

The fianchetto

7 g3

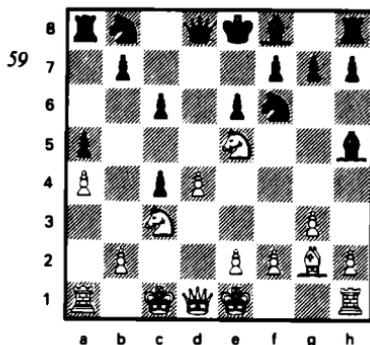
The fianchetto puts the bishop on the h1–a8 diagonal. This reduces Black's chances of counterplay with ... c5.

7 ... e6

8 ♗g2 a5 (59)

Rather an unfashionable system. 8 ... ♗b4 is the more popular, but not necessarily better, move discussed in the next game. Black fixes the b4 square weakness, which he intends to occupy with a knight.

9 0–0 ♗e7



10 ♖xc4 ♜a6

11 h3

Black's pin on the d1–h5 diagonal restricts White's desired e4, f4 expansion. Another idea is 11 ♗d2!? 0–0 12 e4 ♜b4 13 f4. Black should perhaps play as in Rajkovic–Rukavina, Yugoslavia 1974: 13 ... ♜d7 14 b3 ♜b6 15 ♙b2 f5 16 ♜ael ♙f6 17 ♜d1. White keeps a space advantage, but Black is probing from afar with his pieces—very much as in our text game.

11 b3 ♜b4 12 ♙b2 0–0 13 ♗d2 is a sensible way of developing the pieces and aiming for e4.

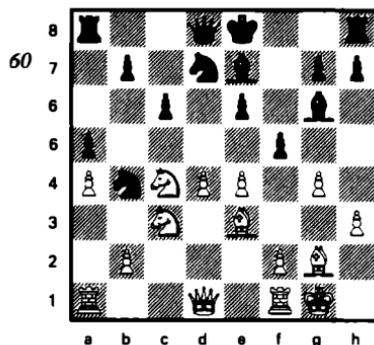
11 ... ♜b4

12 g4 ♙g6

13 e4 ♜d7

14 ♙e3 f5! (60)

An astonishing new idea. (The passive 14 ... f6 had been played in Gavrikov–D. Bronstein, Minsk 1983.) This audacious pawn thrust hopes to establish the d5 square for Black's knights. 15 d5 now is met by 15 ... ed 16 gf (16 ed 0–0 is not clear) 16 ... dc 17 fg



♜e5 giving unfathomable complications. We shall follow the game W. Schmidt–Stempin, Gdynia 1984.

15 ♗e2 0–0

16 f4 ♗c7

17 ♜ad1

Schmidt intends to play 18 gf of 19 e5 and then d5 with a central advantage, so Black gives a little ground. Even so, it's hard to see a clear plan for White.

17 ... fe

18 ♜xe4 b6

19 ♖h1 ♜d5

20 ♜e5 ♜xe5

21 de ♜ad8

White retains his space advantage, but Black restrains any further advances. Note the important knight firmly entrenched on d5.

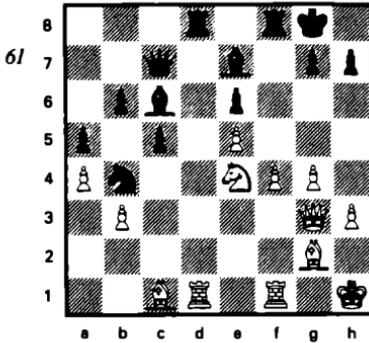
22 ♙c1 ♙e8!

23 ♗e1 c5

24 b3 ♙c6

25 ♗g3 ♜b4 (61)

Black counters with tactics now. 26 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 27 f5 ♜d3 28 ♙f4 (28 f6 ♙xf6! wins at least



a pawn) 28 ... ♖d4! and Black gets there first.

26 ♖c3 ♖c2
 27 ♖b5 ♗b7
 28 ♗xc6 ♗xc6+
 29 ♗g2 ♗xg2+
 30 ♗xg2 g6!

Negating the expansion of White's pawns involving f5.

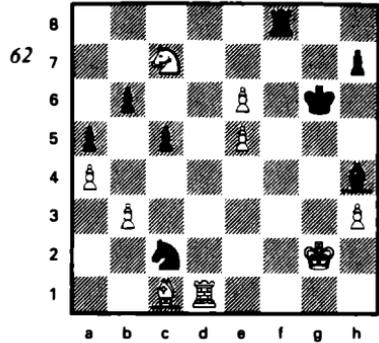
31 ♖c7

Not the best, but Black is preparing to play an eventual ... ♖a1 to hit the b3 pawn and it is difficult to suggest constructive moves. On 31 ♖a7, 31 ... ♖d4.

31 ... ♗f7
 32 f5 gf
 33 gf ♗xd1
 34 fe+ + ♗g6
 35 ♗xd1 ♗h4! (62)

The complications have led to a dangerous attack on White's king: 36 ♗d7 ♖e1+ 37 ♗g1 ♗f2 38 e7 ♖f3+ mates.

36 e7!? ♗xe7
 37 ♖d5 ♗h4
 38 ♖f4+ ♗f5
 39 ♗d7 ♗g5!
 40 ♖e2 ♗xc1



41 ♖xc1 ♖d4

The dominating position of the Black knight gives Black a winning advantage in the ending.

42 e6

42 ♗xh7 ♗xe5 43 ♗h6 ♗f3 44 ♗xb6 ♗c3 picks up the White knight.

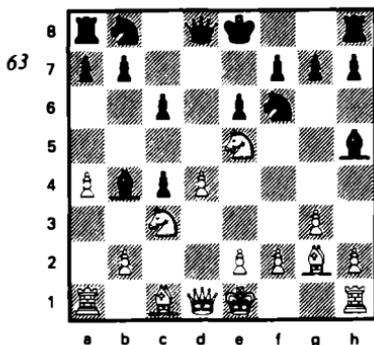
42 ... ♗xe6 43 ♗b7 ♗d5 44 ♗xb6 ♗f3 45 ♗a6 ♗c3 46 ♗xa5 ♖c6 47 ♖e2 ♗c2 White resigned.

A typical win for Black in this variation. It's hard for White to expand his centre without giving targets for Black. Note 14 ... f5, obtaining counterplay.

Returning to diagram 58:

7 g3 e6
 8 ♗g2 ♗b4 (63)
 9 0-0

9 ♖xc4 ♖d5 10 ♗d3!? ♖d7 (10 ... ♗e7 11 0-0 0-0 12 a5 ♖a6 vacating the b4 square for the queen's knight may be better (Vaiser-Huzman, USSR 1986) 11 0-0 (not 11 e4 ♖xc3 12 bc ♖c5 13 ♗c2 ♗xd4! 14 cb ♖d3+ 15 ♗f1 ♗xa1 and Black wins) 11 ... ♗e7 12 e4 ♖b4 13 ♗d2 0-0 14 b3 ♗c7



was played in Cvetkovic–Franke, Lesko 1985. This has led to a type of position already examined in the 8 ... ♗e7 line.

This was an attempted improvement over 10 ♜b3 0–0 11 ♗d2 (11 0–0 ♗xc3 12 bc ♗xe2 13 ♗e1 ♗xc4 wins a pawn, but White's two bishops are probably enough compensation in practice (Lukacs–Utasi, Hungary 1984) 11 ... c5!? with complications as in Ftacnik–Ree, Wijk aan Zee 1985.

9 ... 0–0

9 ... ♗d5 is also possible. Miralles–G. Flear, Clichy 1986/7, continued 10 ♗d2 0–0 11 g4!? ♗g6 12 e4 ♗b6 13 a5 ♗c8 14 ♜a4 ♗a6 15 ♗e3 with a complex struggle favouring White.

10 ♗xc4 a5

11 ♗e5

11 h3 ♗bd7 12 g4 ♗g6 13 ♗g5 h6 14 ♗h4 gave White slightly the better of the struggle in G. Flear–Conquest, London 1985. As we have seen, h3, g4, e4 and f4 gives a space advantage, but is not without risk.

11 ... ♗a6

12 h3 ♗d5

13 ♗d2 f6

This idea, played in Razuvaev–Rogers, Dortmund 1985, pushes the usefully placed knight back and allows the bishop on h5 to retreat. This game is a good illustration of Black achieving a satisfactory waiting position, but being pushed back.

14 ♗f3 ♗d7

Razuvaev considers 14 ... ♗e7 and 15 ... ♗ab4 to be equal. Certainly this set-up proved difficult to over-run in the game Schmidt–Stempin above.

15 e3 ♗fe8

16 ♜e2 ♗b6

Here ... ♗f8 with the follow up ... ♗ab4 is probably OK.

18 ♗fd1 ♗h8

18 e4 ♗f8

A common theme is the trap 18 ... ♗xf3 19 ♗xf3 ♜xd4 20 ♗e3, picking up the knight on b6.

19 ♗e3 ♗d8

20 g4! ♗f7

21 h4

Black's inaccuracies have given the Russian Grandmaster a chance to push forward.

21 ... ♗b4

22 h5 ♗d7

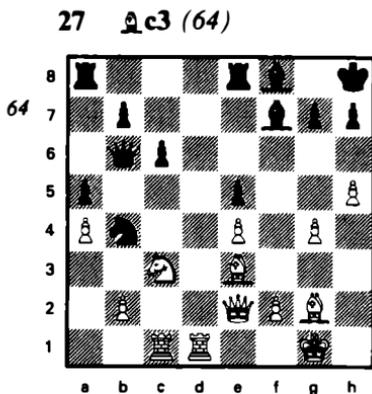
23 ♗f4 ♜b6

24 ♗ac1 e5!?

Trying for some freedom, but this makes his problems worse.

25 de ♗xe5

26 ♗xe5 fe



Black's queen is embarrassed.
27 ... ♖c7 28 ♖d5 or 27 ... ♖c5
28 ♖xc5 ♖xc5 29 ♖d5 are very
strong for White.

27 ... ♖a6

28 ♖f3 ♖b3

29 ♖d7

29 ♖f1 is tempting but 29 ...
♖xd1 30 ♖xd1 b5 escapes with
extra material.

29 ... ♖ad8

30 ♖xd8 ♖xd8

31 ♖g5 ♖e8

32 ♖b5! cb

33 ♖xb3 h6

33 ... ba 34 ♖f7 ♖e6 35 ♖xe6
♖xe6 36 ♖c8 ♖g8 37 ♖f1 wins
as 37 ... ♖c6 gives no respite
after 38 ♖c4+.

34 ab ♖xb5

35 ♖f7!

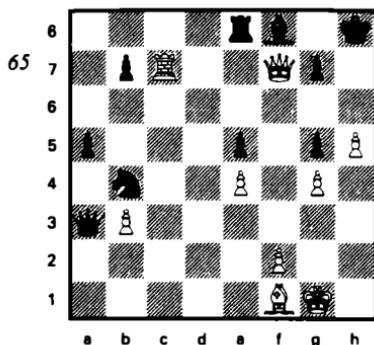
A nice finish to this instructive
game.

35 ... hg

36 ♖f1 ♖a4

37 b3 ♖a3

38 ♖c7! (65)



The clearest. White threatens
39 ♖xe8 and 39 h6.

38 ... ♖d5

39 ed ♖b4

40 ♖xe8

Black resigned

7 g3 has a solid reputation, but
White will find it difficult to over-
run Black's robust set-up. White's
central pawns can expand in this
line, but Black is ready to exploit
any holes that appear.

Immediate central action with 7 f3

7 f3 ♖fd7

7 ... e6? allows 8 g4 when 8 ...
♖g6 9 h4 is very strong and 8 ...
♖xg4 9 ♖xg4 ♖xg4 10 fg ♖h4 +
11 ♖d2 ♖xg4 12 e3 gives Black
insufficient compensation for a
piece.

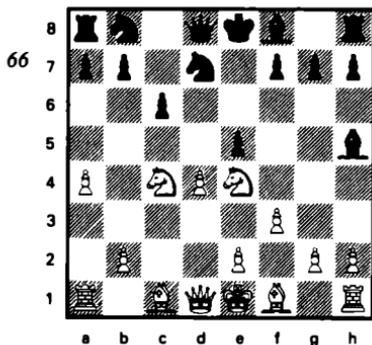
8 ♖xc4 e5!

9 ♖e4 (66)

Considered to be the best move.
White has a number of alterna-
tives.

9 de?? loses a piece to 10 ...
♖h4+.

9 ♖xe5 wins a pawn but after 9



... ♖xe5 10 de ♘d7 11 f4 ♙c5 12 g3 ♙g4 13 ♙g2 ♜b6 14 ♙d2 a5 15 ♘e4 f5 Black had enough compensation (Osnoš-Bronstein, USSR, 1963).

The slightly unusual development 9 ♙e3!? ♙g6 10 g3 ♙b4 11 ♙g2 ed 12 ♙xd4 0-0 13 0-0 ♜e7 gives Black a reasonable-looking position. The fianchetto of the king's bishop combined with f3 looks a little strange.

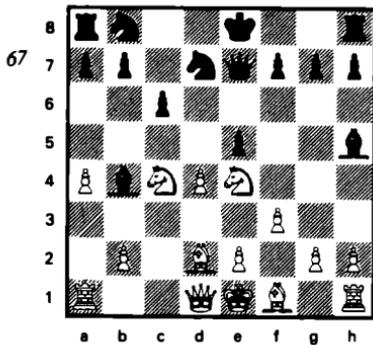
9 ... ♙b4+

White is threatening a deadly check on d6, so Black must act fast

9 ... ♘b6 provokes unfavourable complications, 10 ♘e5 f6 11 a5 fe 12 ab ed 13 ♙xa7 ♙xa7 14 ba ♜a5+ 15 ♜d2 ♜xa7 (15 ... ♙b4 16 ba (♜)+ etc.) 16 ♜g5 ♙g6 17 ♜e5+ ♜d7 18 g3 (Kluger-Flesch, Hungary 1964).

10 ♙d2 ♜e7 (67)

A recent idea is instead to play 10 ... ♜h4+ 11 g3 ♜e7. During the play that follows the significance of whether the g-pawn is on g2 or g3 should be borne in mind.



The advantage of the pawn on g3 for White is that his bishop on f1 can develop to g2 or h3, but the disadvantage is that f3 is weakened in case of an early e3 or e4 by White. I don't like 10 ... ♜h4+ and think the idea is dubious.

In the position of diagram 67 White has a choice between a slightly favourable ending or interesting, but wild, complications.

The ending arises after the following forcing sequence:

11 ♙xb4 ♜xb4+

12 ♜d2 ♜xd2+

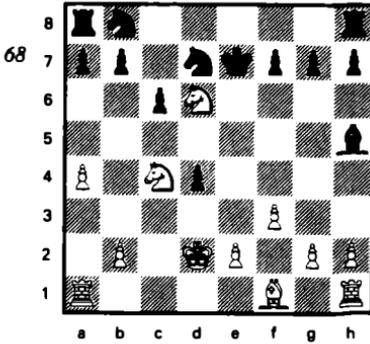
12 ... ♜xc4 13 ♘d6+.

13 ♜xd2 ed

14 ♘ed6+ ♜e7 (68)

15 ♘f5+

An important alternative is 15 ♘xb7 when best is 15 ... ♘a6 (on 15 ... c5 16 g4! ♙g6 17 ♙g2 ♘a6 18 f4 was much better for White in Chekhov-Tischbierek, Rostock 1985. It's better not to open up the h1-a8 diagonal so conveniently for White) 16 ♘ba5 (16 e3 was tried in Adorjan-G. Flear,



Szirak 1986, when 16 ... ♗d5 17 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 18 ♖a5 de+ 19 ♜xd3 ♞he8 was almost equal, but even here White may be very slightly better due to the split nature of Black's queenside pawns) 16 ... ♗b4 17 ♞a3 ♗c5 18 e3! was better for White in Kasparov-Conquest, clock simultaneous game, London 1984. 15 ♗xb7 may be best, as the ending does seem slightly uncomfortable for Black.

15 ... ♜f6

This king does seem unfortunate here in some lines, as the bishop can get rather hemmed in on the kingside and ... f6 may be a useful freeing move at a later date. 15 ... ♜d8 is possible as 16 ♗xg7 ♗g6 traps the knight.

16 ♗xd4 ♗c5

17 ♜c3 ♞d8

18 e4!

This move was played by Polugaevsky against Hübner in Tilburg 1985 and is the game we shall follow. White has completed his development and has calcu-

lated the tactics carefully.

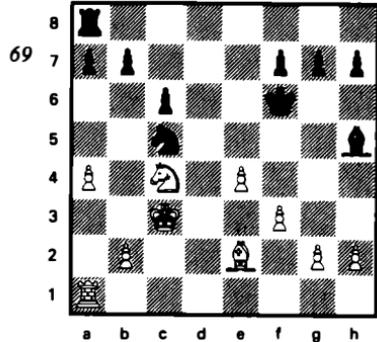
18 ... ♞xd4

19 ♜xd4 ♗b3+

20 ♜c3 ♗xa1

21 ♗e2 ♗d7

22 ♞xa1 ♗c5 (69)



23 e5+

Hübner is rather worse, mainly because his bishop is hemmed in by the White kingside pawn phalanx. 23 g4 ♗g6 24 h4 h6 25 b4 ♗e6 26 ♗a5 is suggested by Polugaevsky as the best way to keep a clear advantage. However, in this position Black could try 26 ... c5!? and if 27 b5 then 27 ... ♗d4 and ... b6, or on 27 ♗xb7, 27 ... cb+, when 28 ♜xb4 ♞b8 is good for Black. So 26 ... c5!? fights back. More convincing is 23 ♗d1! and then 24 ♗c2, which keeps a slight edge.

After 23 e5+ Black's bishop will return to the game on the b1-h7 diagonal.

23 ... ♜e7

24 g4 ♗g6

25 f4 ♗e4!

25 ... f5 26 ♖d6 fg 27 f5 is too dangerous.

26 ♖b4 ♖e6

27 ♙f1 c5!

Now 28 f5 cb+ 29 ♜xb4 ♖d4 is fine for Black.

28 ♖d6 cb+

29 ♜xb4 ♙d5

30 f5 ♖d8

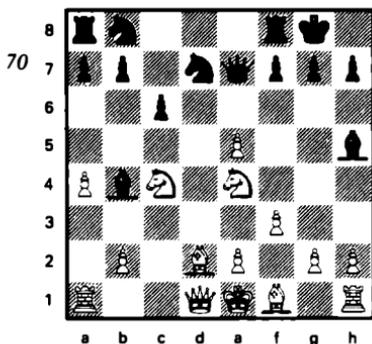
A retreat, but Black is set to play ... f6, undermining the outpost on d6.

31 ♙b5

A draw was agreed here, as 31 ... f6 leaves the position very unclear.

So, one of White's best lines against 5 ... ♙g4 is this ending. White can avoid some terrible complications with the simplifying 11 ♙xb4 and keep an edge; significantly, this was indeed Kasparov's choice.

The main alternative from diagram 67 is 11 de. Black has no real alternative to 11 ... 0-0 (70)



12 ♙c1

This move sets a devilish trap: 12 ... ♙xd2+ 13 ♜xd2 ♖xe5 14

♖xe5 ♜xe5 15 ♙c5 picking up the bishop on h5.

The older 12 ♖g3 is met by the amazing 12 ... ♙d8!! and now 13 ♖xh5 ♖xe5 and White loses material. In the game Van der Sterren-Hartoch, Amsterdam 1985, White successfully tried 13 ♖d6 and won quickly after 13 ... ♙xd2+? 14 ♜xd2 ♖xe5 15 0-0! ♖c4 16 ♖df5 ♖xd2 17 ♖xe7+ ♜f8 18 ♙xd2 Black resigned. However, Hartoch's idea is OK, as after 13 ♖d6 Black plays 13 ... ♖a6. The devilish complications of 14 ♖xh5 ♖xe5! now seem to favour Black; note 15 ♖f5 ♖d3 mate! as one example.

12 ... ♙g6!?

Two other moves seem inferior:

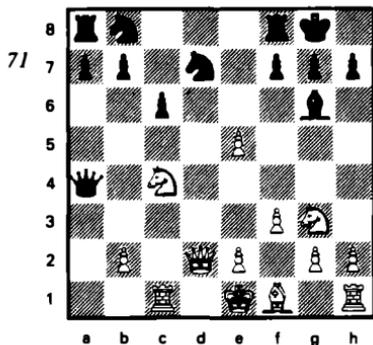
12 ... a5 13 ♙xb4 ab 14 ♖d6 ♙e8 15 ♜xe7 ♙xe7 16 ♖g3 ♙g6 17 f4 (Oll-Yrjola, Tallinn 1985); and 12 ... ♖a6 13 ♙xb4 ♜xb4+ (13 ... ♖xb4 is better) 14 ♖d2 ♙g6 15 ♖g3 ♖dc5 16 ♜xb4 ♖xb4 17 f4 (Rogers-Hartoch, Amsterdam 1985) were both better for White.

The bishop on h5 has both a good and a bad side in this variation. It can get into trouble as White pushes up his kingside pawns, but it has a restraining effect which helps generate counter-tactics.

13 ♙xb4 ♜xb4+

14 ♖d2 ♜xa4

15 ♖g3 (71)



Another complicated idea is 15 $\text{c}2\text{d}6$ b5 16 $\text{c}3\text{a}5$ $\text{c}3\text{xa}5$ 17 $\text{c}2\text{xa}5$ $\text{c}2\text{xe}5$ 18 f4 as in Knaak–Tischbierek, Dresden 1985. Black should play 18 ... $\text{c}2\text{c}4$, as 19 $\text{c}2\text{axc}4$ bc 20 f5 $\text{c}2\text{d}8$, or 20 e4 $\text{c}2\text{d}8$ 21 e5 $\text{c}2\text{d}3$ are far from clear.

15 ... b5!?

This was played in our game Miles–Ree, Ostend 1985. Other ideas are 15 ... h5 or 15 ... $\text{c}2\text{c}5$ allowing the queen's knight to develop and threatening ... $\text{c}2\text{b}3$ in some lines.

16 $\text{c}2\text{d}6$ $\text{c}2\text{a}6$

16 ... $\text{c}2\text{xe}5$ 17 f4 traps the bishop if the knight moves.

17 e4 $\text{c}2\text{ac}5$

18 $\text{c}3\text{c}3$ $\text{c}2\text{e}6$

18 ... b4? allows 19 $\text{c}3\text{e}3$ threatening 20 f4–f5 and 20 $\text{c}3\text{xc}5$.

19 $\text{c}2\text{e}2$ b4

20 $\text{c}3\text{e}3$ $\text{c}3\text{a}2$

21 $\text{c}2\text{c}4$ $\text{c}2\text{b}6$

22 f4 $\text{c}2\text{xc}4$

23 $\text{c}2\text{xc}4$ $\text{c}3\text{xb}2$

Black's ambitious play looks like costing a piece, so he tries to

collect as many pawns as possible.

24 0–0 a5

25 f5 $\text{c}3\text{xe}5$

26 fe fe

27 $\text{c}3\text{xf}8+$ $\text{c}3\text{xf}8$

28 $\text{c}2\text{b}3$

With the Black queenside pawns blockaded the extra piece should give White good winning chances.

28 ... h5

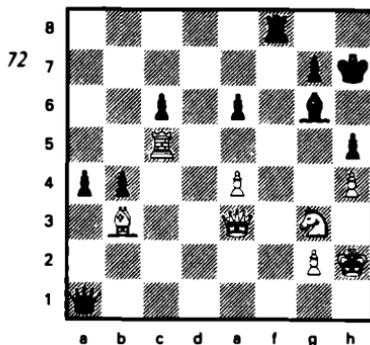
29 h4 $\text{c}3\text{h}7$

30 $\text{c}3\text{c}5$

30 $\text{c}3\text{h}2$ $\text{c}3\text{f}4!$ keeps active.

30 ... $\text{c}3\text{a}1+$

31 $\text{c}3\text{h}2$ a4 (72)



Now Black's pawns are moving it's not clear who's better anymore!

32 $\text{c}2\text{xe}6$ $\text{c}3\text{f}6$

33 $\text{c}2\text{f}5$ $\text{c}3\text{hx}4+$

34 $\text{c}3\text{g}1$ b3

35 $\text{c}2\text{xc}6+$ $\text{c}3\text{xc}6$

36 $\text{c}2\text{f}5$ $\text{c}3\text{g}4$

36 ... $\text{c}3\text{f}6$ allows the neat 37 $\text{c}3\text{xc}6!$

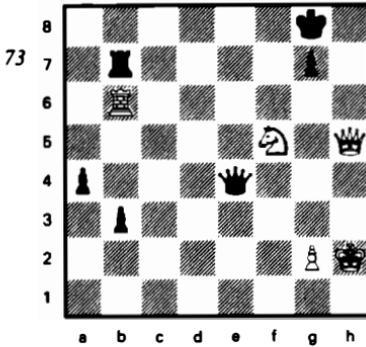
37 $\text{c}3\text{xc}6+$ $\text{c}3\text{h}7$

38 $\text{c}3\text{b}6$ $\text{c}3\text{f}7$

- 39 ♖h2 ♜c7
 40 ♛d2 ♞xe4??

A terrible blunder: 40 ... ♜c2 would have forced White to take a perpetual with 41 ♜h6+ gh 42 ♛xh6+ ♖g8 43 ♛e6+, etc.

- 41 ♛d6! ♜b7
 42 ♛g6+ ♖h8
 43 ♛xh5+ ♖g8 (73)



- 44 ♜g6??

Miles could have won with 44

♜xb7 ♛xb7 45 ♛e8+ ♖h7 46 ♟e7 when 46 ... ♛a6 allows 47 ♛g8+ ♖h6 48 ♛h8+ ♖g5 49 ♛xg7+ ♖f4 50 ♛d4+ ♖g5 51 ♖g3 ♛h6 52 ♛f4+ ♖h5 53 ♛g4 mate. There is no perpetual as 46 ... ♛c7+ 47 ♖h3 ♛c3+ 48 g3 ♛f6 49 ♛g8+ ♖h6 50 ♛h8+ ♖g5 51 ♛h4 is mate.

44 ... b2 45 ♟h6+ ♖f8 46 ♛c5+ ♜e7 47 ♛c8+ ♜e8 48 ♛c5+ ♜e7 49 ♛c8+ Draw agreed. A very exciting game, but one in which White missed his chances.

In my opinion, 5 ... ♗g4 is an interesting and viable line which gives Black a playable game. White's best is the ending arising from 11 ♗xb4 which stops most of Black's tricky tactics and keeps a positional edge.

6 Main line (Czech System):

6 ♘e5 and 6 ♘h4

The most popular move, 5 ... ♗f5 has the immediate effect of restraining White's central expansion by e4. The Euwe, or Dutch, variation, which is featured in the next chapter, commences 6 e3. White intends immediate recapture of the pawn on c4 and early castling before fighting to get in e4.

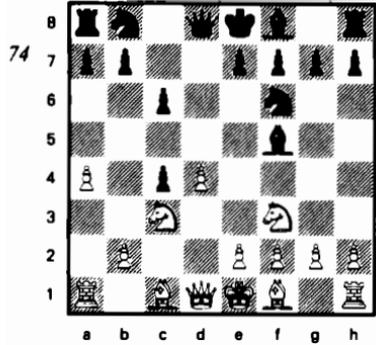
6 ♘e5 is a flexible alternative; White sometimes plays for f3 and e4, has the option of using the knight to recapture on c4 as well as the bishop, and in one important line he even plays g3 and ♗g2!

- | | | |
|---|-----|----------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | ♗f3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♗c3 | dc |
| 5 | a4 | ♗f5 (74) |

An unusual and strange-looking move has been tried in this position.

6 ♘h4!?

The knight looks rather ugly, but White is fighting for the centre by dislodging the bishop. Black's



best is not clear, although six moves have been tried here!

6 ... ♗e6 7 e4 ♗a6 8 ♗e2 leads to gambit play. Black will develop with ... g6 and ... ♗g7.

6 ... ♗c8 (6 ... ♗d7!? is similar but the bishop may be better on c8. No tempo is really lost, as the knight on h4 will probably have to retreat to f3 eventually) 7e4 e5 8 de ♗xd1+ 9 ♗xd1 (9 ♗xd1 ♗g4) ♗b4+ 10 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 11 ♗xd2 ♗xe4+ with adequate counterplay. The tactical player would find himself at home in the critical line 6 ... ♗c8 7e4 e5 8 ♗xc4!? ed 9 e5 dc!! when

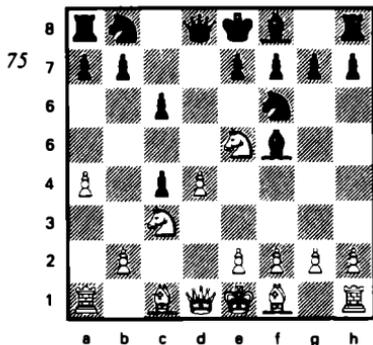
54 Main line (Czech System): 6 ♖e5 and 6 ♖h4

10 ♗xf7+ ♜xf7 11 ♞xd8 11 cb!
 12 ♞c7+ ♜e6! threatens to queen on a1, and also threatens 13 ... ♖a6 14 ♞a5 ♗b4+ (Larsen-Teschner, Wagenigen 1957). Black is perhaps better, e.g. 13 ♞xc8+ ♖bd7!

6 ... ♗g4 seems to give the knight on h4 a useful function: 7 h3 ♗h5 8 g4 ♗g6 9 ♖xg6 hg 10 e3. Black has a solid position, and White has pawn weaknesses, but he does have the two bishops.

After 6 ♖h4, Black has a sufficient choice of reasonable lines to suit most tastes, but this curious move should be taken seriously.

6 ♖e5 (75)



Black has three main moves, each implementing a different plan;

A 6 ... ♖a6 awaiting developments but heading for b4.

B 6 ... ♖bd7 leading to 7 ♖xc4 ♞c7 and an early ... e5.

C 6 ... e6 and after 7f3 ♗b4!

A

6 ... ♖a6

7 e3!

Better than the expansive 7 f3 ♖fd7! 8 ♖xc4 e5! 9 e4 (9 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 10 de ♞xd1+ 11 ♖xd1 ♖b4 12 ♖e3 ♗g6 gives adequate play for the pawn, as White is rather bottled up) 9 ... ed 10 ♖e2 ♗b4+ 11 ♜f2 ♗c5 12 ef d3+ 13 ♜g3! (13 ♗e3 ♞h4+) with wild complications (Kuzmin-Bagirov, Tashkent 1984; drawn in 42 moves).

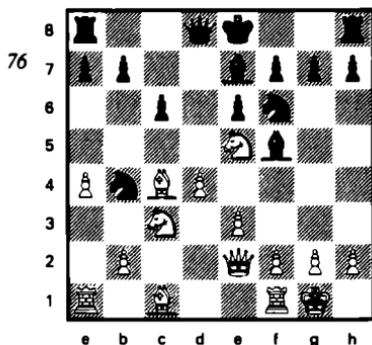
7 ... e6

7 ... ♖b4 8 ♗xc4 ♖c2+ 9 ♞xc2! ♗xc2 10 ♗xf7 mate! This may be obvious to some readers but it is precisely because of this tactic that the simple but strong 7e3 works.

8 ♗xc4 ♖b4

9 0-0 ♗e7

10 ♞e2 (76)



This plan should be compared to positions resulting in the next chapter. The bishop on b4 restrains White's central pawn

expansion better than the knight. In our feature game, Razuvaev–Meduna, Moscow 1982, Black's knight on b4 looked out of play as White broke through—a danger for Black in such positions.

10 ... ♗d7

10 ... h6 11 e4 ♗h7 12 ♗d1 0–0 13 ♗f4 ♗a5 14 ♗b3 ♗ad8 15 ♖c4 ♗h5 16 f3 gave White a pleasant middlegame edge (Smejkal–Torre, Thessaloniki 1984), or 10 ... 0–0 11 e4 ♗g6 12 ♗d1 c5 13 ♖xg6 hg 14 d5 ed 15 e5! with the initiative and the two bishops (Li Zunian–Vaganian, Biel 1985).

11 e4! ♖xe5

12 de ♗g6

13 ♗e3 ♗a5

14 f4

Further expansion with f5 cannot be arrested.

14 ... ♗c5

15 f5

15 ♗ac1 was possible in order to stop the knight coming to c2.

15 ... ♗h5

16 ♗xh5 ♗xe3+

17 ♖h1 ♗xe5

18 ♗f3

The loss of the pawn on e5 has not diminished the problems faced by Black's king.

18 ... ♗d4

19 fe f6

20 ♗g4

Razuvaev thinks 20 ♗h3 g6 21 ♖e2 is even stronger.

20 ... g6

21 ♗ac1 ♗d8

22 ♗h3! ♗h5?

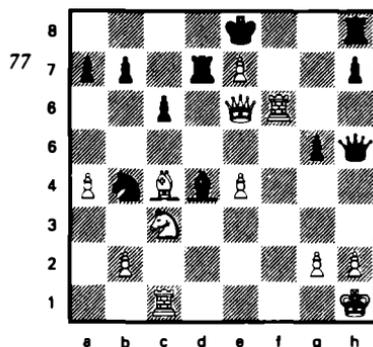
This fails to a crushing tactical blow. Razuvaev suggests 22 ... h5 23 ♖e2 and ♖f4 to follow.

23 e7! ♗d7

23 ... ♗xh3 24 ed(♗)+ ♖xd8 25 gh wins a rook.

24 ♗e6 g5

25 ♗xf6! (77)



Black resigned

Amongst others, 26 ♗f8+ ♗xf8+ 27 ef(♗)+ ♖xf8 28 ♗xd7 is a decisive threat. After 25 ... ♗xf6 26 ♗xf6 the rook on h8 is lost.

The knight on b4 was a spectator in this game. White's natural and effective plan makes 6 ... ♖a6 look a little dubious.

B

6 ... ♖bd7

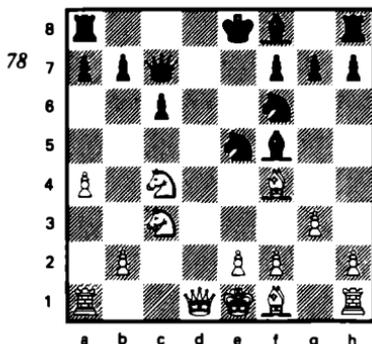
7 ♖xc4 ♗c7

7 ... ♖b6 has been tried, but 8 ♖e5 e6 9 f3 ♖fd7 10 a5! ♖xe5 11 ab ♖d7 12 e4 ♗g6 13 ♗xa7! ♖xb6 14 ♗xb7! ♗a1 probably gives insufficient play for the pawn after 15 ♖f2! (Tukmakov in

ECO), e.g. 15 ... ♗e7 16 ♖b3 ♗xc1 17 ♖xb6.

This line may, however, be worth investigation, as it could surprise the unprepared.

8 g3! e5
9 de ♖xe5
10 ♗f4 (78)



This pin can be a little irritating. Black now has a choice of two main plans: 10 ... ♗d8 11 ♖c1 ♗d6 or 10 ... ♖fd7. In either case the resulting positions can be treacherous, but with best play White seems able to keep the slightly better prospects.

B1

10 ... ♖fd7
11 ♗g2 f6

The prudent move, overprotecting the e5 square. 11 ... ♗e7 would be passive: 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♖c1! (threatening 14 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 15 ♖f4 or 14 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 15 ♖d5) 13 ... ♖b8 14 ♗d1 f6 15 a5 with strong pressure (Koc-Lazarev, USSR 1967).

11 ... ♗e6 is also inferior: 12 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 13 ♖d4! f6 14 a5 a6

15 ♖e4 ♗d8 16 ♖c3 ♗d5 (16 ... ♗e7 17 ♖c5! is no improvement) 17 0-0 ♗xe4 18 ♗xe4 ♗d6 19 ♖c2 with enduring pressure due to the two fine bishops (Torre-Hübner, Tilburg 1982).

12 0-0 ♗d8

Capablanca was one of the first to employ 8 g3, and Alekhine called it the 'Capablanca System'. Some of the earliest games, which took the following route, are still critical: 12 ... ♗e6 13 ♖xe5 fe 14 ♗e3 ♗c5 15 ♖c1 (15 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 16 b4 ♖b3 is only equal (Capablanca-Vidmar, Karlovy Vary 1929) 15 ... ♗xe3 16 ♖xe3 ♖b6, and now 17 a5 ♖xe3 18 fe a6 19 ♖e4 ♖e7 20 ♗a4 (Klein-Capablanca(!) Margate 1935) or 17 ♖d2 0-0 18 a5 ♖c7 19 ♖e3 (Tukmakov in *ECO*) are slightly better for White.

It's interesting to see Capablanca playing this system with both colours, which indicates his willingness to defend this position as Black—so the isolated e-pawn cannot be too serious a weakness (otherwise the great positional player wouldn't have followed a line he helped develop for White).

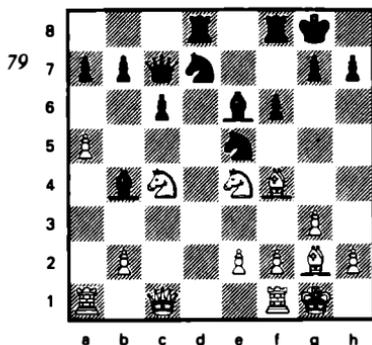
13 ♖c1 ♗e6

14 ♖e4!

To quote Euwe 'By postponing the exchange at e5, White succeeds in taking advantage of the greater freedom of his pieces and is able at least to deprive his opponent of one of his bishops'.

15 ... ♗b4
 14 ... ♗xc4 15 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 16 ♗xc7 ♗c8 17 ♗f4 gives White a nice endgame advantage—two bishops again!

14 a5 0-0 (79)



Tempting, but this allows a break-up of the queenside. On 15 ... a6 16 ♗a4! would harrass Black further.

16 a6 ba?

We are following the game Euwe–Alekhine, 1st Match game, Netherlands 1937. 16... b6 trying to hold the queenside together was better.

17 ♖xe5 ♖xe5

17 ... fe? 18 ♖g5! winning.

18 ♖c5 ♗xc5

18 ... ♗c8 19 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 20 ♗c4 + wins a piece.

19 ♗xc5 g5

After 19 ... ♗b6, 20 ♗c3 retains the advantage as Black's pawns are so fragile, and the bishop pair so strong.

20 ♗e3 ♗d5

21 ♗xa6 ♗xg2

22 ♗xg2

22 ♗xa7? ♗xf1 23 ♗xc7 ♗d1! with a winning attack.

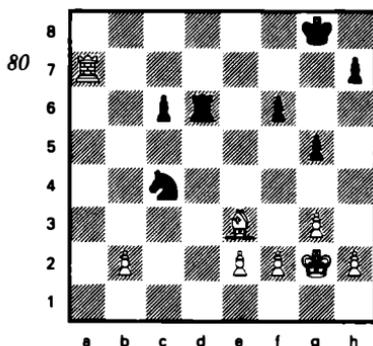
22 ... ♗f7

23 ♗fa1 ♗d6

29 ♗xd6 ♗xd6

25 ♗xa7 ♗xa7

26 ♗xa7 ♖c4 (80)



Black, a clear pawn down in this ending, must try to play actively, but Euwe's technique was sufficient to obtain the full point.

27 ♗c5 ♗e6

28 ♗d4 ♗xe2

29 ♗xf6 g4

29 ... ♖xb2? 30 ♗a2. Now White loses a piece after 30 ♗g7 + ♗f8 31 ♗xg4?? ♖e3 + 32 ♗f3 ♖xg4 33 ♗xe2 ♖xf6.

30 ♗f1! ♗c2

31 ♗g7 + ♗f8

32 ♗xg4 ♖xb2

33 ♗xb2! ♗xb2

34 ♗c4 ♗b6

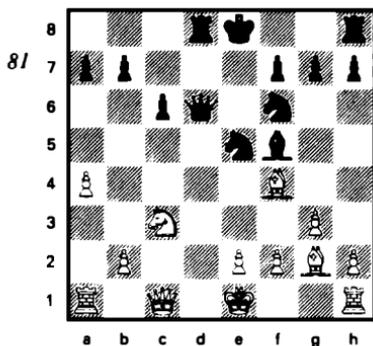
The extra pawn gives White a technical win. Both Black pawns require constant attention, and White has the long-term plan of king and f- and g-pawns moving up the board.

35 ♖e2 ♗f7 36 ♗h4 ♖g6 37 ♗f4
 ♗b3 38 ♗c4 ♗b6 39 ♖e3 ♖f5 40
 g4+ ♖e6 41 f4 ♖d5 42 ♗d4+
 ♖e6 43 f5+ ♖e7 44 ♗e4+ ♖f7
 45 h4 ♗b1 46 ♖f4 ♗c1 47 ♗a4
 h6 48 ♗a7+ ♖g8 49 g5 ♗c4+ 50
 ♖e5! Black resigned.

The plan with 10 ... ♗fd7 is considered too passive. 12 ... ♗e6 may be better, but White's pressure usually gives Black problems.

B2

- 10 ... ♗d8
 11 ♖c1 ♗d6
 12 ♗xd6+ ♖xd6
 13 ♗g2 (81)



The second plan is the more modern way of playing this system. Black gives up the two bishops early in order to concentrate on seeking counterplay.

13 ♖e3 gives Black dangerous counterplay after 13 ... ♗fg4 14 ♖xa7 0-0 15 ♗g2 ♖b4 (A. Rodriguez-Torre, Biel 1985).

- 13 ... 0-0

13 ... ♖e7 relieves the pin and

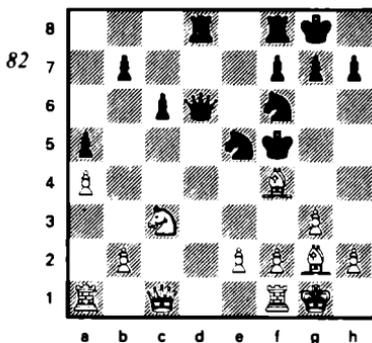
threatens ... ♗d3+, but White will normally play 14 0-0, e.g. 14 ... a5 (to restrain White's a-pawn push, which we have seen can be very dangerous) 15 ♖e3 ♗c4 16 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7 17 e4 ♗e6 18 ♗fe1 h6 19 b3 ♗d2 20 ♗d5+! cd 21 ♗xd2 b6 22 ed ♗xd5 23 ♗ad1! and the two bishops leave White with a small endgame pull. Hort-Mokry, Czechoslovakia 1984, saw the inferior 23 f4 f5! 13 ... a5 is worth considering.

14 0-0

The best move order around here has not been decided upon by the specialists. White can try 14 a5!? here, and if Black fears this then 13 ... a5 14 0-0 0-0 could be used to avoid it.

After 14 a5 ♖e7 (14 ... ♗fe8 15 0-0 ♖b4!? 16 a6 Adorjan-Meduna, Biel 1983) 15 0-0 a6 16 ♗a4 ♗fe8 17 ♗c5 seems to give White a pleasant-looking advantage.

14 ... a5! (82)



We illustrate this tense position with two interesting games. First

we look at Torre–Timman, Hamburg 1982.

15 ♖e3 ♖fd7

15 ... ♖fg4!? 16 ♖b6 ♖b4 17 ♖xb4 ab 18 ♖a2 ♖g6 19 ♖c1 has also been played. Black must always be careful not to get too passive, otherwise the bishops can swamp the knights.

16 ♗ad1 ♖e6

17 ♖a7 ♖c2

18 ♗d2 ♖b3

19 ♗c1

White cannot capture on a5 due to ... ♖c4. 19 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 20 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 21 ♖xa5 ♗e8 picks up the b2 pawn.

19 ... ♖f5

20 ♖xe5?!

Ugrinovic suggested 20 ♖e4!, when 20 ... ♖xe4 21 ♖xe4 ♖xa4 22 ♖f5 gives dangerous threats.

20 ... ♖xe5

21 ♗xd8 ♗xd8

22 ♖xa5 ♗e8

23 ♖d1 ♖g4

24 ♖f1

24 ♖c3 ♖xa4 25 b3 may have been better in view of what happens now.

24 ... f6

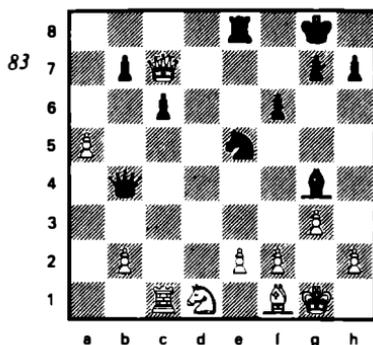
25 ♖c7?!

A lesser evil was 25 ♖e3 when 25 ... ♖xb2 26 ♖c3 or 25 ... ♖e6 are still promising for Black.

25 ... ♖b4!

26 a5? (83)

Torre obviously underestimated the danger. 26 ♗c3 would have kept the queen out.



26 ... ♖e1

27 ♗b1 ♖f3+!

28 ♖g2

28 ef ♖xf1+! 29 ♖xf1 ♖h3+ 30 ♖gl ♗e1 mate!

28 ... ♖xf1+!

White resigned

29 ♖xf1 ♖h3 is mate. This seemed to come from nowhere! A famous combination, showing that Black has counter-chances even in variations considered 'slightly favourable for White'.

Returning to diagram 82, we follow Browne–Kavalek, USA Championship 1981.

15 ♖d1

Attempting to redeploy the knight and free c3 for the queen.

15 ... ♖e6

16 ♖c3

16 ♖e3 ♖e4 17 f3 ♖d5 was murky in F. Portisch–Mokry, Bratislava 1983.

16 ... ♖g6

17 ♖g5 ♖d5!

18 ♖xa5

18 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 19 ♖e3 ♗e5 20

60 Main line (Czech System): 6 ♖e5 and 6 ♗h4

♗xf5 ♙xf5 gives nothing for White.

18 ... f6

19 ♗c1

White can hold on to his pawn by 19 ♗e3. Black should try 19 ... ♗h3 intending pushing the f-pawn after the exchange of bishops. Note that White's pieces lack coordination.

19 ... ♗xe2

20 ♗c3

20 ♗e3 ♗e6 holds everything together.

20 ... ♗h5!?

20 ... ♗c4 21 ♗xd5 cd 22 ♙a3 ♗e4 leaves the position difficult to judge—Black's activity seems to compensate for the bishop pair.

20 ... ♗xc3 21 ♗xf5 ♗d5 22 a5! intending ♙a4 must give White the better prospects; two bishops are almost always preferable in such open positions.

21 ♗xd5 cd

22 ♗xd5 + ♗h8

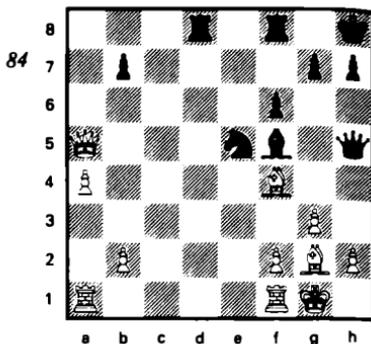
23 ♗g2!

Browne pointed out the trap 23 ♗xb7? ♗e5 24 ♗f4 ♗e4!, e.g. 25 ♗xe4 ♗f3 + 26 ♗xf3 ♗xa5.

23 ... ♗e5

24 ♗f4! (84)

Black has sufficient tactical play for the pawn as there are several traps, easy to fall into; e.g. 24 ♙e1? ♗f3 + 25 ♗xf3 ♗xf3 26 ♗c3 ♙d3 27 ♗c4 ♗h3 or 24 f4? ♗d3 25 fe ♗xf1 26 ♗xf1 ♙d1 27 ♗b4 ♙fd8 28 ef ♙xf1 + or 28 ♗b5 ♙xf1 + 29 ♗xf1 ♙d1.



24 ... ♗d3

Threatening 25 ... ♗f3+ winning the queen as well as the rook.

25 ♗xe5 ♗xf1 26 ♗c7 ♗xa5 27 ♗xa5 ♙a8 28 ♗b4 ♗xg2 29 ♗xf8 ♗c6 Draw agreed. After 30 ♗c5 ♙xa4 31 ♙xa4 ♗xa4 the position is devoid of winning chances.

A fascinating variation, which can lead to intricate positions. At master level White has an edge in theory, but, as we have seen, in practical play Black has good resources.

Nowadays, 6 ... e6 is frequently seen and could represent the best defence.

C

6 ... e6

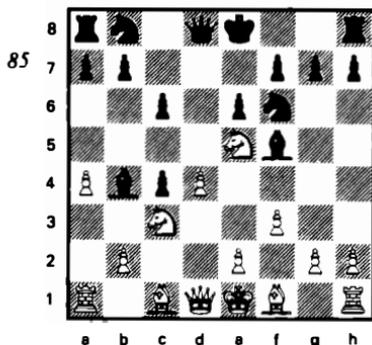
7 f3

7 e3 leads to positions researched in the next chapter.

7 ♗g5 ♗b4 8 ♗xc4 of Alekhine–Euwe, 2nd match game, Netherlands 1937, led to dynamic equality after 8 ... ♗d5 9 ♗xf6 ♗xc4 10 ♗d2 gf 11 e4 ♗b3 12 ef ♗d7 13 fe fe 14 ♗e2 0–0–0 15 0–0

e5. Alekhine suggested 8 ... h6 9 ♗h4 g5 10 ♗g3 ♖e4 as a promising alternative, e.g. 11 ♗c1 c5!

7 ... ♗b4 (85)



7 ... c5 immediately attacking the centre has been played in some of Hübner's games. 8 e4! cd! (8 ... ♗g6 9 ♗e3 sets White no problems and leaves Black's position prospectless) 9 ef ♖c6 (9 ... dc 10 ♗xd8+ ♔xd8 11 ♖xf7+ wins) 10 ♖xc6 bc 11 fe fe 12 ♗xc4 (nobody has tried to hang on to the piece here, but White will have problems to develop after 12 ♖e2?) dc 13 ♗xd8+ ♗xd8 14 bc ♖d5 15 ♗d2 ♗d6 16 0-0-0 (Razuvaev-Hübner, Rest of the World-USSR, London 1984), and White's bishops offer him some winning chances in this position, although the game was drawn after 41 moves.

The pin ... ♗b4 is an attempt at active defence. White intends to expand in the centre with e4, and this and the timing of Black's counter-thrust ... c5, hitting at the d4 square are of paramount

importance to this razor-sharp position.

White has three normal moves here: the provocative 8 e4, the pinning 8 ♗g5 and the prudent 8 ♖xc4.

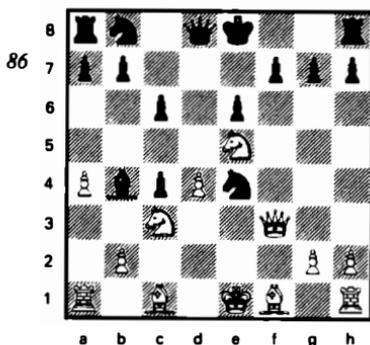
8 e4 ♗xe4!

If Black were obliged to retreat this bishop then White would stand well, but in fact this piece sacrifice gives Black fine play.

9 fe

The counter-sacrifice 9 ♖xf7? is not sound, e.g. 9 ... ♔xf7 10 fe ♖xe4 11 ♗h5+ g6 12 ♗f3+ ♖f6 13 ♗d2 ♗xc3 14 bc ♗d5 15 ♗g3 ♖bd7 (Belyavsky-Peresypkin, USSR 1977) and Black went on to convert his advantage into the full point.

9 ... ♖xe4
10 ♗f3 (86)



10 ♗d2! is the winning attempt. 10 ... ♗xd4 (10 ... ♗h4+ 11 g3 ♖xg3 12 hg ♗xh1 13 ♗g4 0-0 14 0-0-0 gives a strong initiative) 11 ♖xe4 ♗xe4+ 12 ♗e2 ♗xd2+ 13 ♗xd2 ♗d5+ 14 ♔c2

62 Main line (Czech System): 6 ♖e5 and 6 ♖h4

♗a6 15 ♖xc4 and White's extra piece is balanced by Black's three pawns and no pawn weaknesses.

10 ... ♖xd4!

11 ♖xf7+ ♖d8

12 ♗g5+

The first game in this line finished dramatically 12 ♖xg7?? ♗xc3+ 13 bc ♖f2+ 14 ♖d1 ♖xc3 mate! (Przepiorka-Cheron, The Hague 1928).

12 ... ♖xg5

12... ♖c8 is a dubious attempt to avoid the perpetual check that this line leads to. After 13 ♖xe6+ ♖d7 14 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 15 ♖xd7 ♖xc3 16 bc ♗xc3+ 17 ♖d1 ♗xa1 18 ♖c5. The minor pieces are preferable to the rook and pawns and White is better (Sosonko-Torre, Tilburg 1982; White won in 29 moves).

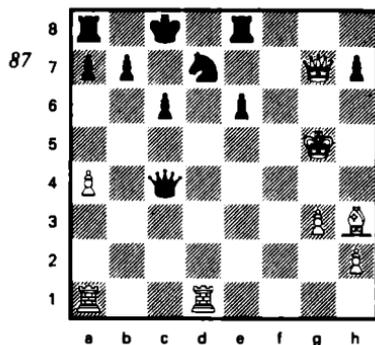
13 ♖xg7 ♗xc3+

14 bc ♖xc3+

15 ♖e2

15 ♖f2 ♖e4+ 16 ♖e2 ♗e8 17 g3 ♖c8 18 ♗h3 ♖d2+ 19 ♖f3 is risky (Moskalenko-Sergeev, USSR 1984), when 19... ♖d5 20 ♗hd1 ♖d2+ 21 ♖f2 c3 22 ♗ac1 ♖d4+ 23 ♖g2 ♖e4+ 24 ♖f2 ♖d4+ is drawn (Sergeev and Bangiev). They suggest 19... ♖g5+ 20 ♖g4 ♖d7! 21 ♖xc4! ♖e2+ 22 hg ♖xc4 23 ♗hd1 as unclear although Tukmakov in ECO prefers Black.

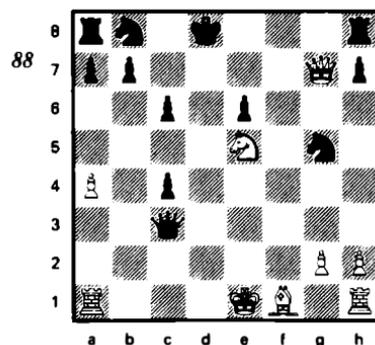
Who is right? Well, actually Tukmakov is; 23... ♖c5+ is strong, e.g. 24 ♖h6 ♗e7 25



♖g8+ ♖c7 26 ♖xa8 ♖e3+ 27 ♖h5 ♖f6+ 28 ♖h4 ♖h6 mate, or 24 ♖h4 ♖e7+, or 24 ♖f4 ♗f8+.

So unless you find something in this crazy variation I suggest the mundane 15 ♖e2 and offer a draw!

15... ♖c2+ 16 ♖e1 ♖c3+ (88) Draw agreed (Belyavsky-Steinberg, USSR 1971)



The variation seems to be played out as neither side can profitably avoid the draw. After 10 ♗d2 Black has adequate counter-chances. This variation is sel-

dom known below master level so don't be surprised if your opponent fails to find the best moves!

Alternatively, in the position of diagram 85 White can try the pinning 8 ♖g5.

8 ... h6!

Now considered best. After the moves 8 ... h6 9 ♖h4 Black has a useful retreat square on h7 for the bishop. The older lines 8 ... c5 9 dc ♖d5 and 9 ... ♖a5 or 9 ... ♖xd1+ have been well analysed, but all fail to equalize and are rendered obsolete by this better move.

9 ♖h4

9 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 10 e4 ♖h7 11 ♖xc4 c5!? 12 ♖b5+ ♖e7 was balanced in Benko-Addison, USA Championship 1962/3. 11 ... 0-0 and a later ... ♖d8 and ... c5 was suggested fifty years ago by the World Champion M. Euwe. 9 ... gf!? 10 ♖xc4 c5 was equal in the first game with 8 ... h6: Euwe-Alekhine, 11th Match game, Netherlands 1937.

9 ... c5

Euwe suggested 9 ... b5 as a possibility, holding on to the c4 pawn. This idea has been ignored by all other sources. Perhaps blatant pawn-grabbing such as this is out of fashion, but I have personally been known to indulge in this activity!

10 dc ♖xd1+

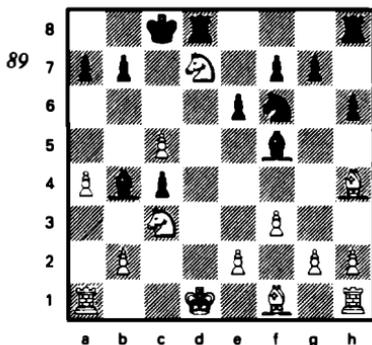
11 ♖xd1

11 ♖xd1 ♖c2 (this common

theme should be compared with similar positions arising from 'the prudent 8 ♖xc4' below, where White has played ♖xc4 and Black has castled) 12 ♖d4 ♖c6 13 ♖xc4 a5 14 ♖xc6 bc is fine for Black who has good practical play—either a4 or c5 must fall.

11 ... ♖bd7

12 ♖xd7 0-0!(89)



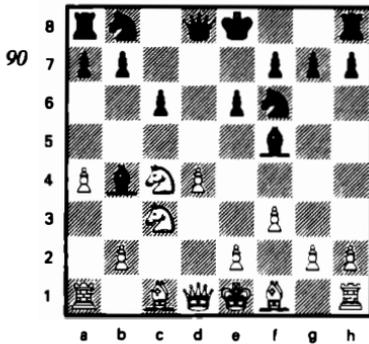
This sharp queenless middle-game offers balanced chances. 13 e4 ♖xd7+ 14 ♖c2 ♖h7 15 c6 (to break up Black's pawn structure) 15 ... bc 16 ♖xc4 ♖d6 17 ♖d3 ♖h5 18 ♖e2 g5 19 ♖f2 f5 was equal in Gulko-Anikaev, USSR Championship 1981.

This sure route to a playable game has made 8 ♖g5 unpopular. The critical line seems to be the prudent 8 ♖xc4.

8 ♖xc4 (90)

White sensibly recaptures the pawn.

Black has now tried four moves 8 ... ♖bd7 (passive), 8 ... ♖d5 (seeking counterplay with piece

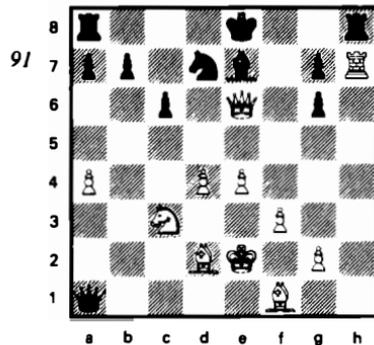


play), 8 ... c5 and 8 ... 0-0 (with a later ... c5. The counter-thrust ... c5, before White can establish his pawn centre, which restricts Black's white-squared bishop, seems Black's best plan).

8 ... ♖bd7 9 e4! ♗g6 (9 ... ♖xe4 10 fe ♗h4+ 11 ♖d2 ♗f2+ 12 ♗e2 ♗d4+ 13 ♖c2 ♗g6 14 ♗e3 ♗f6 15 ♗d1 and Black hadn't enough for the piece (Volonkov-Ignatev, Moscow 1957). In this, 11 ... ♗xe4? 12 ♖d6+ ♗xd6 13 ♖xe4) 10 ♗e2 0-0 11 ♗e3 [or 11 0-0] with a clear advantage. Black should try to avoid his bishop being kept out of play by the e4, f3 pawn-wall.

8 ... ♖d5 9 ♗d2! (Black has a tempting pawn grab in 9 ... ♗h4+ 10 g3 ♗xd4 11 e3, but the complications that result favour White, e.g. 11 ... ♗c5 12 e4 b5 13 ab cb 14 ♖xb5 0-0 15 ♖c3 winning (Gavrikov-Kakageldyev, USSR 1983), or 11 ... ♗f6 12 e4 ♖xc3 13 ♗b3 ♖xe4 14 ♗xb4 ♗d4 15 fe ♗xe4+ 16 ♖f2 ♗xh1 17 ♖d6+ ♖d7 18 ♖xf5 with a

winning attack (Mikenas-Feigin, Kemer 1937). 10 e4 ♗g6 11 h4! with the initiative according to Botvinnik, who gives 11 ... h6 12 ♖e5 ♗h7 13 a5 ♖6d7 14 ♗b3 with advantage. 11 ... ♖xc4 12 ♗xc4 ♗xd4 13 ♗b3! threatens both bishops. The sharp-eyed reader may have noticed a third possibility: 11 ... ♗e7!? ECO gives the following line: 12 h5 (12 g3 is ugly, but avoids the complications) 12 ... ♗h4+ 13 ♖e2 ♖xc4 14 hg fg 15 ♗f4 ♗e7 16 ♗b3 ♗b6 17 ♗xc4 ♗xb2+ 18 ♗d2 ♗xa1 19 ♗xe6 ♖d7 20 ♗xh7 (91)



20 ... ♗xh7 21 ♗xg6+ ♖f8 22 ♗xh7 ♖f6 23 ♗h8+ ♖g8 24 ♖f2 ♗b2 25 ♗c4 ♗xd2+ 26 ♖e2 winning! An amazing line which does look good for White. From an academic interest in such sharp and long variations I always try to find an improvement, for instance in diagram 91 20 ... 0-0-0!? This almost forces 21 ♗xh8 ♗xh8 22 ♗xe7 ♗h1

which seems favourable for White, but is not as clear as the line given by *ECO*, e.g. 23 ♖f4? ♗xf1+, or 23 ♖e1!? ♗b2+ 24 ♖d3! ♗xf1 25 ♖g3 ♗b6! with defensive chances. 23 ♗e8+! ♖c7 24 ♖d5+! cd 25 ♖f4+ ♖b6 26 ♗e6+ ♖a5 27 ♖d2+ ♖xa4 28 ♗xd7+ ♖a3 29 ♗d6+!, with a winning attack.

There is certainly scope for new ideas in such lines, and analysing such variations seriously helps to develop one's tactical ability. However, we can conclude that 8 ... ♖bd7 and 8 ... ♖d5 are insufficient.

8 ... c5

This is similar to the next line: 8 ... 0-0 and ... c5 to follow. These lines should be compared as Black needs to react quickly to White's threatened central expansion.

9 dc ♗xd1+

10 ♖xd1 0-0

11 e4 ♖g6

12 ♖d6!

White has achieved e4 restricting the queen's bishop, and uses his temporary pawn advantage to support the knight on d6. b7 is now under threat.

12 ... ♗d8

13 ♖c2 ♖c6

13 ... b6 14 cb! ♖xd6 15 b7.

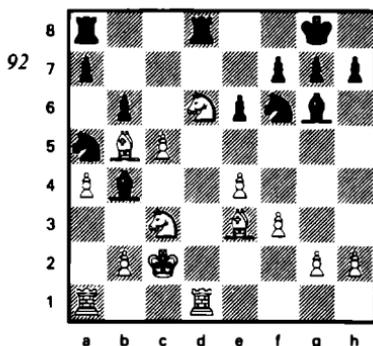
14 ♖e3

14 ♖xb7? ♖d4+ 15 ♖b1 ♗db8 16 ♖a6 ♖xc3 17 bc ♖xe4! is crushing.

14 ... b6

15 ♖b5 ♖a5

16 ♗hd1 (92)



In this chaotic position, *ECO* prefers White slightly, but this has yet to be tested. Note that 16 ♖c4 can be met by 16 ... ♖d5 (actually using the bishop on g6 to pin the e4 pawn) with unclear complications.

This variation seems natural for Black; the required break ... c5 is achieved quickly and the White king is denied the right to castle away from the centre. White has to allow dangerous complications which are certainly playable Black—all for a pawn sacrifice, temporary or otherwise.

10 ... ♖xc5 is inferior, avoiding the loss of a pawn, as 11 e4 ♖g6 12 ♖b5! tangles Black up. Returning to diagram 90:

8 ... 0-0

9 ♖g5

The difference between 8 ... ♖bd7 and 8 ... 0-0 is already evident. 9 e4 is dubious on account of 9 ... ♖xe4 10 fe ♗h4+

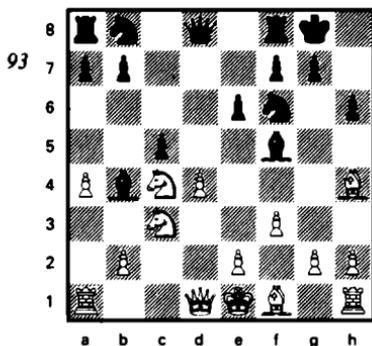
66 Main line (Czech System): 6 ♖e5 and 6 ♖h4

11 ♖d2 ♜xe4 (in this position, if Black had played ... ♖bd7 instead of ... 0-0, then White wins by 12 ♖d6+ (check) ♖xd6 13 ♖xe4. Here this is no longer possible) 12 ♜f3 ♜xd4+ and now Black has *three* pawns and a much safer king for the piece. Black is to be preferred.

9 ... h6

Generally a useful interpolation in these positions.

10 ♖h4 c5 (93)



An important moment. Black must react now to achieve adequate counterplay. The slower 10 ... ♖a6 is instructive: 11 e4 ♖h7 12 ♖e3! to meet 12 ... c5 with 13 d5 ed 14 ♖xf6! ♜xf6 15 ♖xd5 ♜e5 16 ♖c4 ♖a5 17 0-0 ♖b4 18 ♜h1 (Lin Ta-Cernin, Luzern 1985).

As a result of Black delaying ... c5 White had a nice central bind and the bishop pair have no scope. White can try ♜e2 and f4, although Cernin suggests the risky ... g5! for Black.

11 dc ♜xd1+

11 ... ♖xc5 allows White to block out the bishop after 12 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 13 e4 ♖h7 14 ♖f2 (14 e5 g5) with a safe edge.

12 ♜xd1

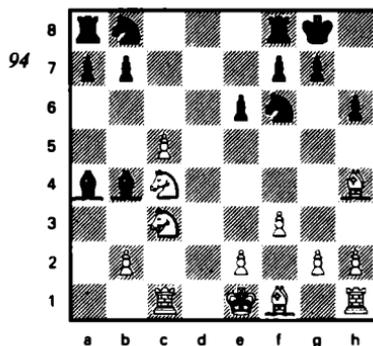
12 ♖xd1 ♜d8+ 13 ♖c1 ♖a6 14 e4 ♖xc5 15 ♖c2 ♖h7 is possible. The bishop can be out of play on h7 but Black has some activity, particularly as White has yet to complete development. This is worth a practical test as the complications following 12 ♜xd1 seems reasonable for Black.

12 ... ♖c2

13 ♜c1

13 ♜d2 ♖b3 14 e4 ♖bd7 is very unclear.

13 ... ♖xa4! (94)



A star new move which may even be better for Black. Ehlvest played this against Bareev in 1986 and then Bareev used this move to beat Belyavsky in that year's Russian Championship. The games are given below.

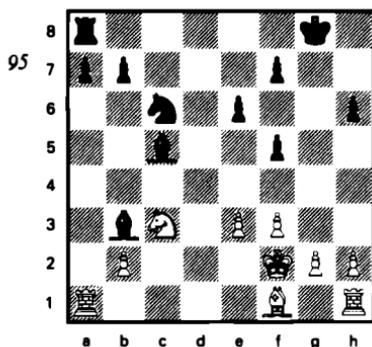
The older 13 ... ♖h7 14 e4

♜c6 15 ♜d6 can be compared to the line starting 8 ... c5!? Here, White has fewer worries about his king and in view of the e4-f3 pawn-wall he is to be preferred.

- 14 ♜xf6 gf
 15 ♜a1 ♜b3
 16 ♜b6 ♜c6
 17 ♜xa8 ♜xa8

So 13 ... ♜xa4 loses the exchange, but Black's bishops and big lead in development give more than sufficient compensation.

- 18 e3 ♜xc5
 19 ♜f2 f5 (95)



Only at this point did the games diverge. First Bareev-Ehlvest, Tallinn 1986:

- 20 ♜a4 ♜b4
 21 ♜b5 ♜d8

21 ... ♜e5 trying to keep the tension was more ambitious.

- 22 ♜xc6 ♜d2+
 23 ♜g3 bc
 24 ♜hc1 ♜c2
 25 ♜c3 a5
 26 ♜b1 ♜e2
 27 ♜c3 ♜d2

Drawn by repetition. Also from diagram 95, Belyavsky-Bareev, USSR Championship 1986:

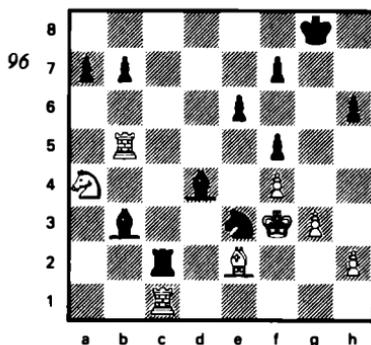
- 20 g3?! ♜d8
 21 ♜e2 ♜d2
 22 f4 ♜b4

With a vicious attack. Black's pieces co-operate excellently. The threats are ... ♜c2 or ... ♜d3. If now 23 ♜a5, Bareev suggests 23 ... a6 24 ♜f3 (24 ♜xc5 ♜d3+) 24 ... b6 forcing the rook back, with a continuation similar to the game (... ♜d5).

- 23 ♜f3 ♜d5
 24 ♜hc1 ♜xe3
 25 ♜a5 ♜d4
 26 ♜b5 ♜xb2
 27 ♜a4

27 ♜xb7? ♜xc3 28 ♜xc3 ♜d5+ wins.

- 27 ... ♜c2! (96)



White resigned, in view of 28 ♜xc2 ♜xc2 29 ♜xb3 ♜e1 mate! The ending after 28 ♜xb3 ♜xc1 29 ♜xe3 ♜xe3 30 ♜xe3 is the best chance, but the rook and

68 *Main line (Czech System): 6 ♖e5 and 6 ♖h4*

three pawns should win comfortably against two minor pieces.

6 ♖e5 leads to exciting games

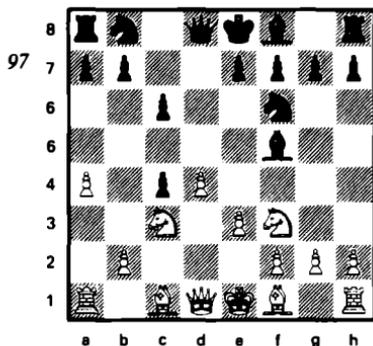
but Black seems to have satisfactory counterplay after 6 ... e6,

which looks like the best plan.

7 (Czech System): Euwe or Dutch Variations

- | | | |
|---|-----|------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | ♘f3 | ♘f6 |
| 4 | ♘c3 | dc |
| 5 | a4 | ♙f5 |
| 6 | e3 | (97) |

This is the start of the Dutch variation.



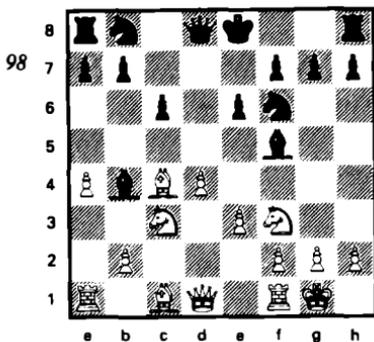
The Dutch variation sees White aiming for early castling and only then the plan of playing e4 to expand the slight preponderance of central pawns and free the queen's bishop. The early stages are perhaps less likely to exhibit bloodthirsty tactical mêlées as in the previous chapter as White

aims to expand calmly with as little risk as possible. Black's set-up seems fundamentally sound and there seems to be adequate counterplay with ... c5 in many lines.

- 6 ... e6

6 ... ♙d3 is inferior; White obtains a central superiority without effort. 7 ♙xd5 cd 8 ♗xd3 e6 9 0-0 ♙e7 10 e4 0-0 11 ♙g5 a5 12 ♜fd1 ♘a6 13 ♜ac1 h6 14 ♙h4 (Scherbakov-Simagin, Moscow 1953).

- 7 ♙xc4 ♙b4
8 0-0 (98)



70 *Main line (Czech System): Euwe or Dutch Variation*

The bishop is well placed in the hole on b4. This helps restrain White's e4 expansion.

Black has two popular moves in this position 8 ... ♖bd7 and 8 ... 0-0. If Black plays both of these moves, then transpositional possibilities should be borne in mind, yet again!

8 ... ♖bd7

Black postpones castling in order to develop his last minor piece. There are three ways for White to try to obtain the initiative. 9 ♖e2, 9 ♖b3 and 9 ♗h4; the same methods have all been tried against 8 ... 0-0, which should be studied alongside the positions resulting from 8 ... ♖bd7, in view of the similar strategic and tactical themes.

After a tame move like 8 h3 then 8 ... h6, protecting the bishop's future could be seriously considered.

A

9 ♖e2 ♗g6

The idea of this move is to preempt a variation such as 10 e4 ♗xc3 11 ef with a strong initiative. 9 ... ♗g4 10 ♗d1 ♖e7 11 e4 e5 12 d5 ♗d8 13 dc bc 14 h3 was pleasant for White in Spasov-Shamkovich, Amsterdam 1979. 9 ... ♗e4 10 ♗d3! is a dangerous gambit, e.g. 10 ... ♗xc3 11 bc ♗xc3 12 ♗b1. b7, f5 and the bishop on c3 are loose, and White has the strategic threat ♗a3. If 10

... ♗xc3 11 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 12 bc 0-0 13 ♗a3 ♗e8 14 ♗d2 White has some initiative.

10 e4!?

In this position this can only be played as a controversial gambit. The simpler 10 ♗d3 ♗xd3 11 ♖xd3 0-0 12 ♗d1 c5! is only equal. Andersson-Ljubojevic, Indonesia 1983, was agreed drawn after 13 d5 ed 14 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 15 ♖xd5 ♗f6 16 ♖xd8 ♗fxd8 17 ♗d2 ♗xd2 18 ♗xd2 ♗d3 19 ♖f1 ♗ad8 20 ♖e2 ♗g4.

10 ... ♗xc3

11 bc ♗xe4

12 ♗a3 ♖c7

Not the greedy 12 ... ♗xc3? 13 ♖b2 ♗d5 14 ♖xb7 with advantage.

Also possible is 12 ... ♗b6 13 ♗b3 ♖c7. Again 12 ... ♗b6 13 ♗b3 ♗xc3? is too greedy 14 ♖b2 ♗cd5 15 a5 ♗d7 16 ♗xd5 cd 17 ♗fcl or 17 ♖xb7, and Black has big problems due to his inability to break the a3-f8 diagonal pressure (Balashov-Matulovic, Moscow 1979).

13 ♗fc1

So White has the bishop pair and some Black squares for a pawn. I, however, prefer Black's chances.

13 ... 0-0-0!?

13 ... ♗d6 is simpler: 14 ♗xe6 0-0! 15 ♗e5!? fe 16 ♗xg6 hg 17 ♖xe6+ ♗f7 18 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 19 ♖b3 ♗e8 with a fine position for

Black (level, according to ECO)
Marovic-Trifunovic, Yugoslavian
Championship 1963.

14 a5 ♖he8

15 ♖a2

15 ♗h4 ♗d6 16 ♗b3 a6 17 c4
or 16 ... ♗b5 17 a6!? with com-
plications is probably better.

15 ... ♗d6

16 ♖e1

If 16 ♗f1 e5! breaks out.

16 ... ♗xc4

17 ♖xc4 e5!

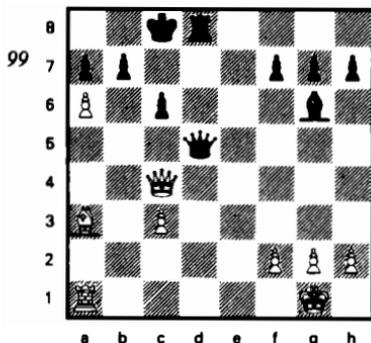
We follow the game Karpov-
Hübner, Tilburg 1986.

18 de ♗xe5

19 ♗xe5 ♖xe5

20 ♖xe5 ♖xe5

21 a6 ♖d5! (99)



Black has successfully released
the pressure on his position, but
will have problems to win in view
of the opposite coloured bishops
and his somewhat open king.

22 ab+ ♖xb7

23 ♖b4+ ♖a8

24 ♖a4 ♖b5

25 ♖h4 f6

26 h3 ♖b3

27 ♗c1 ♖d5!

27 ... ♖xc3 28 ♖a4 would be
too dangerous, as a7 is difficult to
defend.

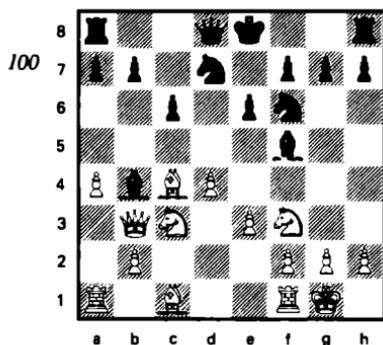
28 ♖g3 ♖b7 29 ♖e3 a5 30
♖e7+ ♖a6 31 ♗e3 ♖d1+ 32
♖xd1 ♖xd1+ 33 ♖h2 ♖d5 34
♖xg7 ♖e5+ 35 ♖g1 ♖xc3 36
♖a7+ ♖b5 37 ♖b6+ ♖a4 38 f3
♗d3 39 ♗f2 ♗b5 (Hübner builds
a bridge to advance his king
further, but the position is very
difficult to win.) 40 ♖a7 h5 41
♖h2 ♖d2 42 ♖g1 ♖b3 43 ♖f7+
♖d5 44 ♖xf6 a4 45 ♖a1! a3 46
♗d4! ♖c4 47 ♖b1+ ♖a4 48
♖d1+ ♖b3 49 ♖c1 ♖d3 50 ♗f6
♗c4 51 h4 c5 52 ♖f2 a2 53 ♖b2
♗b3 54 ♖e2 ♖d6 (Black cannot
win the bishop ending with a- and
c-pawns if White, as here, can get
his king to d2 and leave his bishop
on the long diagonal.) 55 ♖e5
♖b6 56 ♖b2 ♖d6 57 ♖e5 ♖b6 58
♖b2 ♖b5 59 ♖e2 ♗c4 60 ♖d1+
♗b3 (60 ... ♖b3 61 ♖e1 and the
king arrives just in time.) 61 ♖e2
♗c4 Draw agreed.

So Karpov defended this end-
ing, but I'm sure that a lesser
player would have had more
problems. This gambit line is
rather speculative and probably
not quite correct, but dangerous
against inferior defence.

B

9 ♖b3 (100)

72 Main line (Czech System): Euwe or Dutch Variation



Black has to defend the immediate threats against the bishop on b4 and his pawn on b7. We shall examine two moves: 9 ... a5 (solid) and 9 ... ♖b6 (adventurous).

9 ... a5
10 ♖h4

Grabbing the b-pawn leads to an immediate draw: 10 ♖a2 ♖e7 11 ♖xb7 ♖b8 12 ♖a6 ♖a8 13 ♖xc6 ♖c8 Draw agreed (Smyslov-Flohr, USSR Championship 1947).

10 ... ♖g4
11 f3 ♖h5

11 ... ♖d5!? is a common theme against White's ♖h4 method: 12 g3 ♖h3 13 ♖g2 0-0 14 ♖d1. (Novikov-Bagirov, Tashkent 1984) and White is ready for central expansion by e4.

12 g3 0-0
13 e4

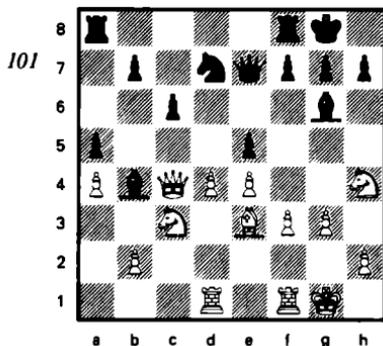
The bishop is better placed on h5 as ♖d1 leaves f3 too weak (13 ♖d1? g5!).

13 ... ♖b6

In view of the threats against c4

and d5, White's central expansion was only possible at the expense of the White-squared bishop.

14 ♖e3 ♖xc4
15 ♖xc4 ♖d7
16 ♖g2 e5
17 ♖ad1 ♖e7
18 ♖h4 ♖g6(101)



(Cebalo-Portisch, Reggio Emilia 1985/86).

Here Black was able to play the pawn break ... e5. Although rarer than ... c5 this is another way of reducing White's lust for expansion. Black has achieved a reasonable position as he has no serious weaknesses.

Chasing the bishop with f3 (and sometimes g4) can be weakening, but this pawn may restrict Black's bishop as f3-e4 keeps the White-squared bishop rather locked out.

Returning to diagram 100:

9 ... ♖b6!?

9 ... a5 is a more secure way of defending the bishop, as the queen may be required elsewhere, and strategically a5 fixes the b4

square for Black's use. As 9... a5 has the slight drawback for tournament players that 10 ♖a2 and 11 ♜xb7 forces a draw, I have included this alternative way of playing the position.

10 e4 ♗g6

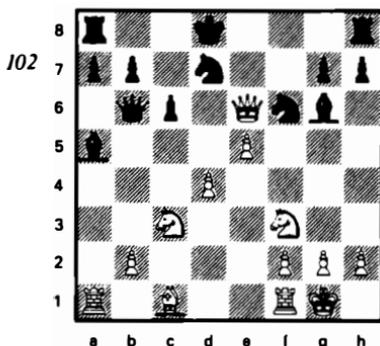
10... ♗xe4 11 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 12 ♗xe6! is too provocative. On 10... ♗g4, 11 h3!? ♗xf3 12 gf is interesting—White has the two bishops, but Black has a better pawn structure.

11 ♗xe6!? fe

12 a5 ♗xa5

13 ♜xe6+ ♖d8

14 e5 (102)



White has a vicious attack and two central pawns for a piece. Black must play precisely to hold the balance.

14... ♗e4!

14... ♗e8 15 ♗g5+ ♖c8 16 ♖a4 ♜c7 17 d5! and 14... ♗d5 15 ♗xd5 cd 16 ♗g5+ are crushing. The old line 14... ♗e8 15 ♜h3 ♗xc3 (15... ♗d5 16 ♗xd5 cd 17 ♗g5+) 16 ef ♗xb2 17

♗xb2 ♜xb2 18 fg ♜b4 19 ♗g5 ♖d6 20 ♗ael ♖c7 21 ♗e6+ (Gavrikov–Dorfman, USSR Championship 1981) was too dangerous for Black: 21... ♖b8 22 f4 ♗f6 23 f5 ♗f7 24 ♜h4 ♗g8 25 ♗g5 ♗xel 26 ♗xel ♖d7? 27 ♗xf7 a5 (27... ♜xf7 28 ♖d8 mate) 28 ♗e5 ♖d6 29 f6! Black resigned (29... ♗xf6 30 ♜xf6! ♜xf6 31 ♗d7+). This new move is yet again a result of the research of young Ehlvest, who attributes the move to Veingold.

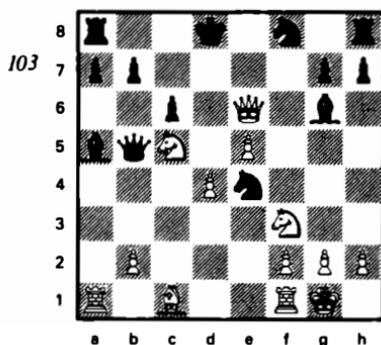
15 ♗a4

15 ♗g5 is suggested by ECO without analysis. 15 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 16 ♗g5 ♗d5 17 ♗f7+ ♖c8 18 ♗d6+ ♖c7 19 ♖e7 ♜xd4 20 ♗xa5 ♜xe5 leaves White a pawn down for no compensation.

15... ♜b5

Ehlvest and Veingold suggest 15... ♖c7 16 ♗c5 ♗b4 as unclear.

16 ♗c5 ♗f8 (103)



In this complicated mess of a position 16... ♗dxc5 17 dc ♗xc5

74 Main line (Czech System): Euwe or Dutch Variation

18 ♖d1+ ♜c7 19 ♗d6+ looks dangerous—Black can perhaps draw by 19 ... ♜c8 20 ♜d4 ♗b6 21 ♜e6 ♜xe6 22 ♗xe6+ ♜b8 23 ♗d6+ ♜c8 (23 ... ♗c7? 24 ♙xa5) 24 ♗d7+ etc.

17 ♗g4?

The tactical blow 17 ♙xa5! is best e.g. 17 ... ♗xa5 18 ♜xb7+ ♜c7 19 ♗e7+ and 20 ♜xa5. Better then is 17 ... ♗xf1+ 18 ♜xf1 ♜xe6 19 ♜xe6+ ♜e7 20 ♜f4 with one pawn for the exchange, but the position remains a mess and is hard to judge.

17 ... ♜xc5

18 dc ♜e8!

A safe enough square. Black is now well-placed to unravel and exploit the extra piece.

19 ♜d4 ♗xc5

20 ♙e3

20 ♜b3 ♗b4 uses the fact that White queen is unguarded.

20 ... ♗b4

21 f4 h5

22 ♗f3 ♙b6

23 ♙ad1 ♙d8

24 ♜xc6?

Rather desperate, but 24 f5 ♙f7 25 ♜xc6 ♙xe3+ 26 ♜h1 bc 27 ♗xc6+ ♜d7 28 e6 ♗b6 defends.

24 ... bc

25 ♗xc6+ ♜e7

26 ♙xd8 ♙xe3+

27 ♜h1 ♜xd8

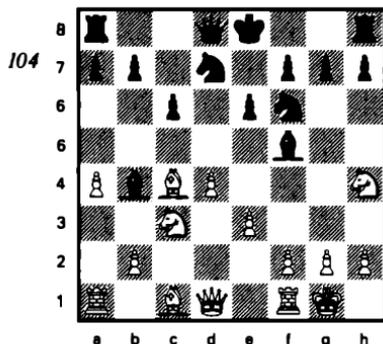
28 ♙d1+ ♙d4

White resigned.

(Novikov–Ehlvest, USSR 1986). White had had enough.

This exciting clash between two theoreticians suggested that the piece sacrifice is dangerous but diffusible. So, against 9 ♗b3, Black has the choice of two playable alternatives 9 ... a5 aiming for a rather strategic game and the wild 9 ... ♗b6!? provoking this dangerous sacrifice.

C 9 ♜h4 (104)



A common theme is the Dutch variation. White harries the bishop, with the hope of exchanging it for the knight and playing e4, opening up the position for the bishop pair.

9 ... ♙g4

9 ... ♙g6 is the alternative. Delaying the capture on g6 is possible, but 10 ♗b3 (yet again combining methods B and C) 10 ... ♗b6 11 g3 a5 12 ♜xg6 hg 13 ♙d1 0–0–0! gives Black an adequate game.

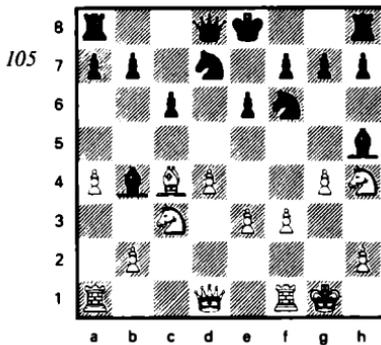
A better method was played by

I. Farago against Pekarek in Warsaw 1987: 10 ♖xg6 hg 11 h3! (to stop any threats against h2) 11 ... a5 and now 12 ♗f3 was possible, with a later e4. Instead Farago played 12 e4!? immediately as a gambit, e.g. 12 ... ♗xc3 13 bc ♖xe4 14 ♗f3 ♖d6 15 ♗a2, and White had compensation for the sacrificed pawn as two bishops v two kings in an open position give Black a difficult defensive task.

10 f3 ♗h5

10 ... ♖d5!? 11 fg ♗xh4 12 ♗f3 ♗e7 (12 ... 0-0) 13 a5 with a slight initiative (Lerner-Mokry, Polanica Zdroj 1986).

11 g4 (105)



White goes for kingside expansion. 11 e4 is of course possible and was seen in Portisch-Smyslov, Amsterdam 1981: 11 ... ♖b6 12 ♗e2 ♖fd7 13 g3 a5 14 ♗e3 0-0 15 ♖g2 f6 gave Black an equal game. The plan with ... a5, to consolidate the queenside, and ... f6, to liberate the bishop, is instructive.

There are some illustrative tactics based on Black trying to win a pawn. 11 ... ♖xe4? 12 ♖xe4 ♗xh4 13 g4! (13 ♗g5 ♗xe4!) 13 ... ♗g6 14 ♗g5 ♗h3 15 ♖f2 wins. 11 ... ♗xc3!? 12 bc ♖xe4 13 ♗e1 gives compensation in those two bishops and the a3-f8 diagonal.

11 ... ♖d5

11 ... ♗g6 12 e4 ♗a5 is an alternative.

In these lines, White's ambitious kingside pawn push is rather double-edged, and although he has the two bishops and a slight space advantage, Black has a solid position and counter-attacking resources. Sometimes castling long at an appropriate moment can confuse the first player. This is one of the advantages of ... ♖bd7 (instead of 8 ... 0-0)—the king can go either way.

12 ♖g2 ♗g6

13 ♖a2 ♗e7

14 e4 ♖5b6

15 ♗b3 a5

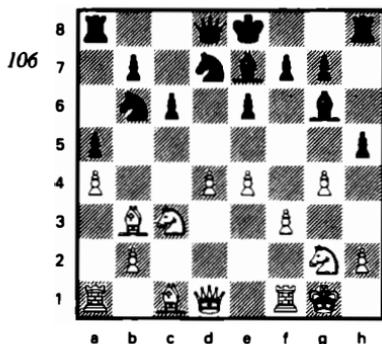
A rather forcing line has given us a sharp position. 15 ... a5 is important to keep some space on the queenside.

16 ♖c3 h5!? (106)

We shall follow a fascinating game between Tukmakov and Ehlvest, two specialists in the Slav. Tukmakov-Ehlvest, Kuibyshev 1986, continued:

17 ♖f4 ♖f8

76 Main line (Czech System): Euwe or Dutch Variation



- 18 gh ♖xh5
 19 ♖e3 ♖d6
 20 ♗d2 g5!?

Black counter-attacks on the kingside. 20 ... ♗h4 and 20 ... ♖g6 are alternatives suggested by Tukmakov.

- 21 ♖d3 ♖e7
 22 f4 ♖g6!
 23 fg ♖h4
 24 ♖e5 ♖xg5!

The battle for control of the kingside is very sharp indeed; both kings look a little bereft of cover.

- 25 ♖d1!
 25 ♖xg5 ♗g8.
 25 ... ♖xe3+
 26 ♗xe3 ♖d7
 27 ♖c4 ♖b6

Black offers a repetition.

- 28 ♖xh5 ♗xh5
 29 ♖e5 f6

White has an edge in the ending after 29 ... ♗g5+ 30 ♗xa5 ♗xg5+ 31 ♖h1 ♗g7 32 ♗g1!

- 30 ♗f2 f5
 31 ♖h1!

Now that White's king has a

certain measure of safety Black has to be particularly careful.

- 31 ... ♗c7?

31 ... ♗f6 was better according to Tukmakov, who gave 32 ♗g3 ♗g5 33 ♗xg5 ♗xg5 34 ♗f4 ♗h5 or 34 ♗g1 ♗xg1+ 35 ♗xg1 0-0-0! (on move 35!).

- 32 ♗ac1 ♗g7
 33 ♗g1 ♗h8
 34 ♗g3 ♗h7

34 ... 0-0-0 35 ♖b5 wins.

- 35 d5! cd
 36 ♖b5 ♖f8
 37 ♗a3+?

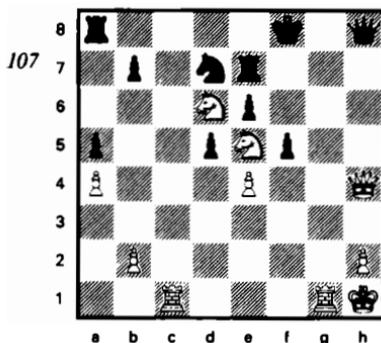
An inaccuracy. 37 ♖c7 with ♖xe6+ to come was crisper.

- 37 ... ♗e7
 38 ♗c3 ♗h5?

38 ... ♗h7 is preferred by Tukmakov, but Black's king is suffering after 39 ef.

- 39 ♗g3 ♗h8
 40 ♖d6 ♖d7
 41 ♗xh4!

Black resigned (107)



On 41 ... ♗xh4 42 ♖g6+ or 41 ... ♗xe5 42 ♗h6+ ♗g7 43

♖h8 + ♜e7 44 ♞xg7 + ♜xd6 45
 ♞xd7 + ♜xd7 46 ♞xe5.

This time Black suffered by keeping his king in the centre, but it was far from clear who won the opening battle.

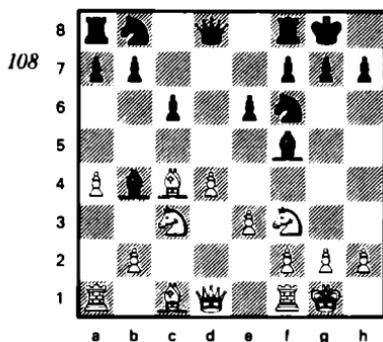
The plan of playing 8 ... ♟bd7 and postponing castling has some benefits. The extra tempo for the minor pieces to restrain central pawn expansion can be useful and White is often tempted to play e4 quickly, even at the cost of a pawn.

The possibility of switching to queenside castling after White has compromised his kingside pawn structure can be useful.

However, some of these pawn and piece sacrifices can be dangerous and are very risky. Such fascinating tussles may not suit all temperaments and those of a quieter disposition may prefer to castle first, which leads to a more strategic type of game.

We now consider Black's alternative in diagram 98:

8 ... 0-0 (108)



We shall examine the same methods of attack as we investigated against 8 ... ♟bd7: 9 ♞e2, 9 ♞b3 and 9 ♟h4. Other less critical plans can usually be countered by an early ... c5 negating any advantage. The following examples are instructive.

9 ♟e5 c5! 10 g4!? ♟g6 11 ♟a2 ♟a5 12 ♟xg6 hg 13 dc ♟c6 14 ♞b1 ♟b4 15 ♟xb4 ♟xb4 with equality (Sämisch-Euwe, Bad Neuheim 1937). The extra pawn is unholdable in view of White's 'stringy' pawn structure and the bishop on c1 locked out of the game in the early stages.

9 ♟d3 ♟xd3 10 ♞xd3 c5 11 ♟d2 ♟c6 12 ♞ad1 cd 13 ed h6 (Jimenez-Sieiro, Havana 1962). White has no serious attacking chances in this 'isolated pawn' position in view of the early exchange of White-squared bishops and Black will have the advantage in endings, bearing in mind his favourable pawn structure.

9 ♟e2 ♟bd7 10 ♟g3 ♟g6 11 ♟h4 c5! 12 ♟xg6 hg 13 dc ♟xc5 14 ♞e2 ♟fe4 with good enough play for equality (Rubinstein-Alekhine, London 1922).

Against unusual plans, Black's ... c5 is adequate. We now turn to more testing methods.

A

9 ♞e2

White intends to follow up with e4. Against 8 ... ♟bd7, 9 ♞e2

♙g6 led to an interesting pawn sacrifice. Here the lack of control of e5 by Black stops him using the pawn in another fashion 10 ... ♗e5! (the point) 10 ... ♗bd7 11 ♗xg6 hg 12 ♙d1 ♖e7 13 e4 e5 14 d5 ♗b6 15 ♙b3, and White has the bishop pair and a passed d-pawn. White is better and Black would do well to seek another idea.

9 ... c5 is dubious after 10 ♗a2 ♗c6!? 11 ♗xb4 ♗xb4 12 ♙d2 ♗c2 13 ♙ad1 cd 14 ♙c3 ♖c7 15 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 16 ♙xd4 and the bishop pair are again useful and give White an edge.

We shall look at two games—the first looks at 9 ... ♗e4, a rather crude attempt to prevent the e4 expansion, and the second 9 ... ♗bd7 which completes the development of Black's minor pieces, but allows e4.

9 ... ♗e4

10 ♙d3!

10 ♗a2 is interesting: 10 ... ♙e7 11 ♙d3 ♗g5 12 ♗e1 (exchanges don't help develop the bishop on c1) 12 ... ♙xd3 13 ♗xd3 ♗e4! 14 ♗c3 ♗f6! and although White can expand on the queenside with 15 b4, this is hardly serious as Black has no weaknesses. White has been prevented from developing his queen's bishop actively.

10 ... ♙xc3

11 bc! ♗xc3

So Black gives up some black

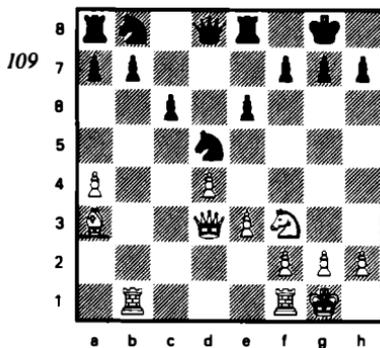
squares for a pawn. You may be wondering if Black could take the pawn in another fashion 10 ... ♗xc3 11 bc ♙xc3 12 ♙xf5! and if 12 ... ♙xa1 13 ♙c2 g6 14 ♗d3, and White will play ♙a3 and ♙xa1.

12 ♖c2 ♙xd3

13 ♖xd3 ♗d5

14 ♙a3 ♙e8

15 ♙ab1 (109)



White has a continual initiative for the pawn; Black's dark squares look rather weak and he will have to defend well to resist White's attack. We follow the game Euwe–Alekhine, 17th Match game, Netherlands 1937.

15 ... b6

16 ♙fc1 a5?

This is too weakening, but Black wanted to play ... ♗b4 to negate the black-square pressure. A more recent game, Polugaevsky–Romanishin, USSR Championship 1978, continued 16 ... f6 17 e4 ♗f4 18 ♖e3 ♗g6 19 h4 h5 20 e5 f5 21 ♙d6 with persistent

pressure, which White eventually converted into the full point. Euwe and Alekhine preferred 16 ... ♖f6 to meet 17 ♗e5 with 17 ... ♗fd7! as 18 ♗xc6? ♗xc6 19 ♙xc6 ♗e5! wins for Black. On 17e4 e5!?

Either move would have been preferable, as Euwe now shows.

17 ♗e5 ♗b4?

Poor. 17 ... ♗c7 holding on to the pawn, however passive, would have offered better chances.

18 ♗xb4 ab

19 ♗xc6 ♗xc6

20 ♙xc6 e5

20 ... ♙xa4 21 ♗b5! would lead to winning both b-pawns, and then the five pawns against four on the same side would give a slow but sure win—but this may have been better.

21 ♙xb4 ed

22 ♙xd4 ♗b8

23 ♗b5

Euwe wrote that 'White, with an extra pawn and attacking possibilities on both wings, has an absolutely won position'. Not everyone, however, has Euwe's technique!

23 ... ♙c8

24 g3! ♙xc6

25 ♗xc6 h6

26 ♙b4 ♙a6

27 ♗b5 ♗a8

Not 27 ... ♙a8 28 a5!

28 ♙d4! ♗c8

Noticing the threat 29 ♗d3!

29 ♙e4 ♗h7

30 ♙e7! ♙a5

30 ... f6 31 ♗d3+ f5 32 ♗d4

♗f8 33 ♗d7 and then ♙f7 wins.

30 ... ♗g6 31 ♗d3+ is hopeless.

31 ♗xb6 ♗c1+

32 ♗g2 ♙f5

33 ♗d4 ♗c2

34 e4 ♙f6

35 ♙e5 ♙c6

36 a5 ♗e2

37 ♗d5!

Squeezing Black out. 37 ...

♙f6 38 ♙f5.

37 ... ♙c1

38 ♗xf7 ♗f1+

39 ♗f3 ♗d1+

40 ♗f4 ♗d2+

41 ♗g4

Black resigned

Euwe had correctly noticed that Black's checks are soon exhausted, e.g. 41 ... ♗d1+ 42 ♗h4 ♗d8+ 43 ♙e7.

Many critical lines were tested in the 1937 Euwe–Alekhine Match. The table below shows

	Slav	Other openings	Total
Alekhine (wins)	3	7	10
Euwe (wins)	3	1	4
Draws	4	7	11

how useful was Euwe's knowledge of the Slav. Without the Slav defence, Alekhine's 10-4 Match win would have been an even more one-sided 7-1(!).

Returning to diagram 108:

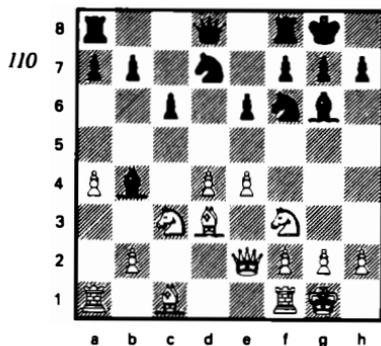
9 ♖e2 ♜bd7
10 e4 ♙g6

Black essentially awaits developments.

10 ... ♙g4 has been tried occasionally. 11 ♜d1 ♖e7 12 h3 (12 e5 ♜d5 13 ♜e4 is interesting, giving a good outpost on d5 for one on e4) 12 ... ♙xf3 (12 ... ♙h5 13 g4 ♙g6 14 ♜h4 e5 15 ♜f5 ♙xf5 16 ef ed 17 ♖xe7 ♙xe7 18 ♜xd4 with the two bishop's and some space on the kingside giving an edge to White) 13 ♖xf3 e5 14 d5 h6 15 dc bc 16 ♜e2 (Polugaevsky-Agzamov, USSR Championship 1983). White has a comfortable advantage: two bishops, better pawns, and the plan ♜g3-f5. Such positions can be miserable and should be avoided by Slav players—Polugaevsky, a great expert on the 6 e3 Slav, won this game and won a fine game against Torre, which we follow as our feature game.

11 ♙d3 (110)

11 e5 d5 12 ♜e4 is tempting, with an exciting game in prospect. Black should counter this plan with 12 ... ♙e7 and a quick ... c5. After 11 e5 ♜d5 12 ♜xd5 cd 13 ♙d3 is sometimes played, but after the exchange of bishops we



have a kind of French Defence where Black has achieved the exchange of his inferior White-squared bishop.

11 ... ♙h5!?

Black has other moves; 11 ... c5 12 e5! leaves Black looking very fragile, e.g. 12 ... ♜d5 13 ♜xd5 ed 14 ♙xg6 hg 15 ♜g5!

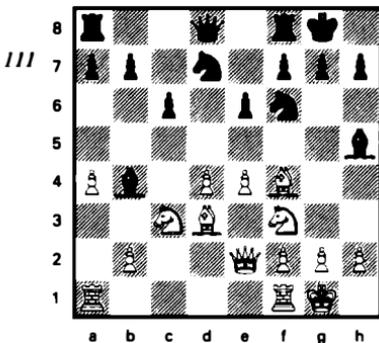
After 11 ... h6 White does best to retain the tension 12 ♙f4 ♖e7 13 ♜a2 ♜h5!? 14 ♙e3 ♙a5 15 ♜e5 and now Black's knight on h5 has problems. Black can then try 15 ... ♜xe5 16 de f5! 17 ef ♙xf5 18 ♙xf5 ♜xf5 19 f4 (19 g4 ♜f4) ♙b6 20 g3 when White was slightly better (Stahlberg-Smyslov, 1954). Black will have to move his g-pawn to retreat the knight, this may leave weaknesses on the kingside.

The simple developing move 11 ... ♜e8 (awaiting developments) could again be met by 12 ♙f4 as recommended by Polugaevsky. White has a pawn centre which yields a space advantage, but Black has no obvious weaknesses.

After 11 ... ♙e8, 12 e5 is more forcing. 12 ... ♟d5 13 ♟xd5 (13 ♟e4 h6 covers the important g5 square; 13 ♟d2 keeping the tension is also possible) 13 ... ed (13 ... cd 14 ♟xg6 fg 15 ♟b5! gives the initiative on the queenside) 14 ♟xg6 hg 15 ♟d2 ♟xd2 16 ♟xd2 ♟f8 17 ♟g5 is considered slightly better for White by Tukmakov. White could consider expanding by f4 with more space and some attacking chances.

The positions resulting from 9 ♟e2 allow White to expand his centre. Black has several development ideas, but in the main he is waiting for White to force the issue. I prefer 11 ... ♟h5, as if White wishes to break the annoying pin h3 and g4 is committal and ♟c3–e2 (or e4) and g3 is slow to organize.

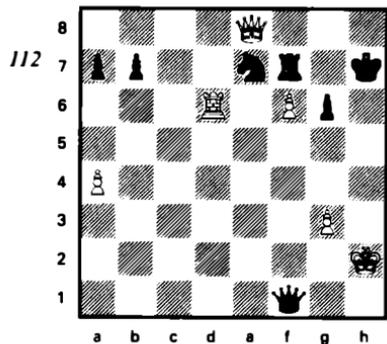
12 ♟f4 (111)



12 e5 ♟d5 13 ♟xd5 cd 14 ♟e3 has also been frequently played 14 ... ♟e7 15 ♟d2 ♟b8 (to come to c6) 16 ♟e1 (16 b4 or 16 a5 intro-

duces an alternative plan—queen-side expansion) 16 ... ♟g6 17 f4 ♟c6 18 g4 f5!? 19 ef ♟xf6 with complications (Vaganian–Cernin, Sochi 1986).

At this point I offer one of my own games to illustrate the double-edged nature of 13 ♟e4!? (after 12 e5 ♟d5). 13 ... ♟e7 14 ♟g3 ♟g6 15 ♟xg6 hg (sometimes fg is worth considering to open the f-file, but here the e-pawn becomes too weak e.g. ♟e4 and ♟g4) 16 ♟e4 c5 17 h4!? cd 18 h5 ♟c5 19 ♟g4 ♟b3 20 ♙b1 ♟xc1 21 ♙axc1 gh 22 ♟xh5 g6 23 ♟xd4 ♙c8 24 ♙fd1? ♙xc1 25 ♙xc1 ♟g5! 26 ♟xe6 fe 27 ♟xe6+ ♟h7 28 ♙d1 ♟b6! 29 ♟d7+ ♟e7 30 ♟f6+ ♟xf6 31 ♙d6 ♟xb2! 32 ef ♟a1+ 33 ♟h2 ♟e5+ 34 f4 (34 other ♙xf6 wins easily) 34 ... ♟xf4+ 35 g3 ♟f2+ 36 ♟h3 ♟f1+ 37 ♟h2 ♙f7 38 ♟e8. (112)



38 ... ♟f2+ 39 ♟h3 ♟f5!! 40 ♟xf7+ ♟h6 White resigned; after 41 ♟f8+ ♟g5, mate is

unavoidable (D. I. Lister—G. C. Flear, Correspondence 1982). One of my most successful postal efforts. In the final position, 41 ♖d3 ♗f1+ 42 ♜g4 draws after 42 ... ♗xd3?? 43 ♗f8+ ♜h7 44 ♗f7+, etc, but Black should play 42 ... ♞e3+!! (instead of 42 ... ♗xd3) and then 43 ♗xe3 ♗f5+ 44 ♜h4 ♗h5 is mate!

We shall follow the brilliancy Polugaevsky—Torre, London 1984.

12 ... ♗e8
13 e5 ♞d5
14 ♞xd5 cd
15 h3

15 ♗e3 a6 (to cut out the potential pin ♙b5) 16 ♗fc1 ♗b6 gave Black a respectable position (Polugaevsky—Portisch, Tilburg 1983).

15 ... ♙e7

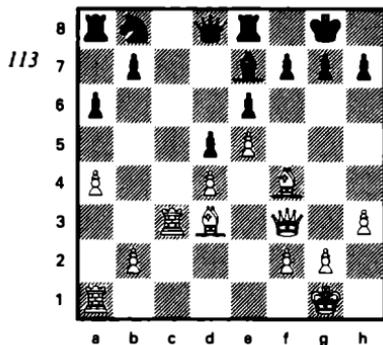
15 ... a6 has been suggested, when White can consider 16 g4 ♙g6 17 h4 with a kingside initiative.

16 ♗fc1 a6

16 ... ♗c8 is already bad. 17 ♗xc8 ♗xc8 18 ♙xh7+ ♜xh7 19 ♞g5+ ♙xg5 20 ♗xh5+ with a strong attack and three pawns for the piece after 20 ... ♙h6 21 ♗c1 ♗d8 22 ♙xh6 gh 23 ♗xf7+ ♜h8 24 ♗g6.

17 ♗c3 ♙xf3
18 ♗xf3 ♞b8?(113)

Now 18 ... ♗c8 would have been better, restricting Black's



disadvantage to a slight positional one.

19 ♙xh7+! ♜xh7
20 ♗h5+ ♜g8
21 ♗g3 g6

21 ... ♙f8 22 ♙g5 ♙e7 (22 ... ♗b6 23 ♙f6 ♞d7 24 ♗xg7+ ♙xg7 25 ♗g5 ♞xf6 26 ef mates) 23 ♙h6 ♙f8 24 ♗xg7+ ♙xg7 25 ♗g4 ♜f8 26 ♗xg7+ ♜e7 27 ♙g5+ wins.

22 ♗xg6+!

Polugaevsky shows no respect for materialism in his efforts to get at Torre's king.

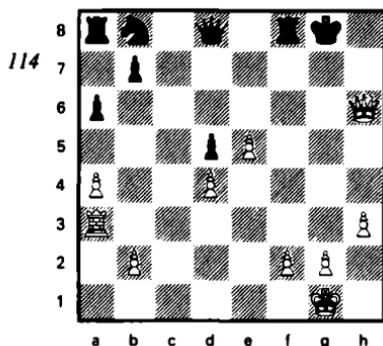
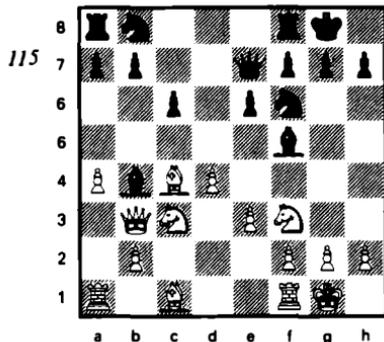
22 ... fg
23 ♗xg6+ ♜h8
24 ♗h6+ ♜g8
25 ♗xe6+ ♜h8
26 ♗h6+ ♜g8
27 ♗g6+ ♜h8
28 ♗h5+! ♜g8
29 ♙h6!

Now Black has no defence to the attack.

29 ... ♙f8
Polugaevsky shows that 29 ...

♖h7 can be met by 30 ♜a3! as 30 ... ♗xa3 31 ♕g5+ ♖g8 32 ♗xd8 ♜xd8 33 ♗g5+ picks up the rook on d8 and then White will pick up the other rook by ♗c8 and ♗xb7.

- 30 ♗g6+ ♖h8
 31 ♗xf8 ♜xf8
 32 ♗h6+ ♖g8
 33 ♜a3 (114)



Black resigned, as 33 ... ♖f7 34 ♜f3+ ♖e7 35 ♗g7+ wins easily. An impressive attack by the specialist of this variation.

Black's position is by no means as bad as Polugaevsky made it look here, but the simple plan of e5 and ♗xd5 yields a slight space advantage which can be used to get things moving on the kingside.

B

- 9 ♗b3

This is much less effective here in view of Black's reply.

- 9 ... ♗e7!(115)

This effective developing move was not available when Black had

played ... ♗bd7 instead of ... 0-0, as the queen didn't then defend b7.

9 ... ♗b6 10 ♗h4 is similar to positions dealt with in the sections on variation C, below, 9 ... a5? 10 ♗a2! and Black's b7 weakness causes problems.

- 10 a5

White tries to use the a-pawn positively. 10 ♗e5 c5! 11 ♗a2 ♗a5 gave Capablanca an equal game against Ragozin in 1937. On 10 ♗d2 c5! is again correct.

- 10 ... c5!

- 11 ♗e5

Simple play is not convincing for White: 11 dc ♗xc5 12 ♗d2 ♜d8 13 ♗a4 ♗d6 14 ♗d4 ♗g6 15 ♗e2 ♗e4 (Spielman-Eliskases, Linz 1932) and Black had no problems.

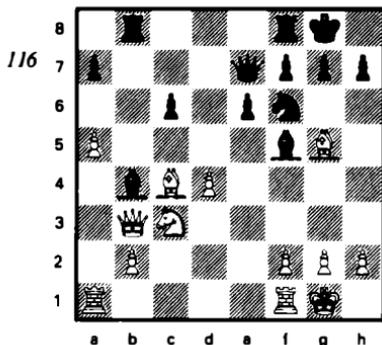
- 11 ... cd!

11 ... ♗c6? Cebado-Kirov, Eksjö 1982, was inferior, as after 12 a6! cd 13 ab ♗xb7 14 ♗a6 ♗c7 15 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 16 ♗xb4 dc3 17 ♗b7 White was winning

84 Main line (Czech System): Euwe or Dutch Variation

material (17... ♖ab8 18 ♗xf8+!
♗xf8 19 ♔xc6).

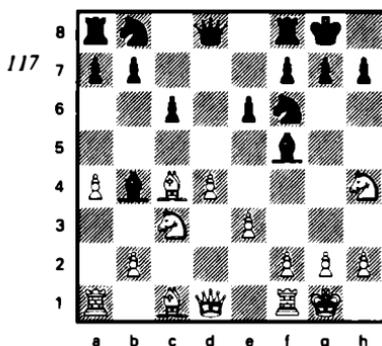
12 ed ♔c6
13 ♔xc6 bc
14 ♔g5 ♖ab8(116)



with adequate counterplay.

The queen is well placed on e7 to defend b4 and b7. If the trap on move 11 is avoided, Black's position should give a promising middlegame.

C 9 ♔h4 (117)



9 ... ♔g4

White puts the question to the bishop and Black replies with the

natural ... ♔g4. Two other moves have been tried, but with good positional play from White he obtains a middlegame advantage.

9 ... ♔g6 (a bit tame) 10 ♔xg6 hg 11 ♗c2 ♔bd7 12 ♖d1 ♗e7 13 ♔d2 (13 g3 ♖fd8 14 ♔f1 e5 15 ♔g2 ed 16 ed is a nice patient way of redeploying the bishop—the two bishops are a positive factor) 13 ... c5 14 a5 ♖ac8 15 ♗b3 a6 (Smyslov prefers 15 ... cd 16 ed ♔b8!? with a reasonable game) 16 dc! ♔xc3 (16 ... ♗xc5 17 ♔xe6 fe 18 ♔a4 is horrible for Black) 17 ♔xc3 ♔xc5 18 ♗a3 ♖c6 19 f3 ♗c7 20 ♔f1 ♔cd7 21 e4 ♖c8 22 ♗e7 ♖e8 23 ♗b4 ♔c5 24 ♔d4 ♔fd7 25 ♖ac1 ♖c8 26 ♔e3 ♗b8 27 ♗a3 Black resigned (Smyslov–Unzicker, Graz 1984).

I was very impressed at how Smyslov seemed to do nothing in particular and suddenly Unzicker had to lose a piece in view of the threat of b4. This should be a warning to players who give up bishops too lightly for knights!

9 ... ♔bd7!? 10 f3 (10 ♔xf5 ef is not so clear: the doubled pawns restrict White's wish to play e4 and the bishop on c1 is not a good piece) ♔g6 11 ♔xg6 hg 12 ♗c2 ♗a5 (12 ... ♖c8 13 ♖d1 with a slow build-up or 12 ... e5? 13 ♗xg6 with a quick pawn grab) 13 ♔a2 ♔e7 14 b4! ♗c7 (14 ... ♔xb4 15 ♔xb4 ♗xb4 16 ♔a3) 15 ♔d2 with a modest edge (Yusu-

pov-Smyslov, Montpellier 1985). The two bishops and space advantage give White all the play, but Black is solid—notice that when White achieves b4 safely, as here, his queenside pawns become a positive force rather than a source of weakness.

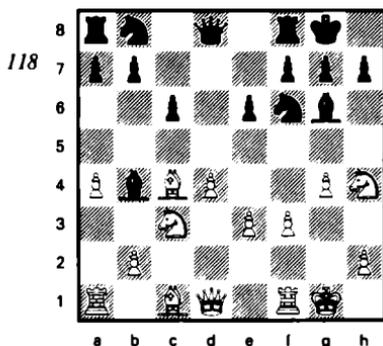
10 f3 ♔h5

The move with the best reputation. 10 ... ♗d5?! 11 fg ♖hx4 12 ♖f3! ♗d7 (12 ... ♗xc3 13 bc ♔xc3 14 ♔a3! is very strong) 13 ♔d2 a5 14 ♗ad1 ♔d6 15 g3 ♖e7 16 ♔d3 ♗b4 17 ♔b1 with somewhat the better position (Tukmakov–Kupreichik, USSR Championship 1981).

11 g4

Consistent.

11 ... ♔g6 (118)



After 11 ... ♗d5 Black is quickly driven back: 12 ♗g2 ♔g6 13 ♗a2! ♔e7 14 e4 and White intends ♗f4. Compared to the position after 9 ... ♔g6, White has played f3 and g4. The moves can be used as part of a central or

kingside advance, but such pawn advances in front of the king give Black some hopes of counterplay.

White has the choice of lopping off the bishop immediately, or delaying or foregoing this capture, which is looked at in the second game.

12 ♗xg6 hg

13 e4 c5!?

An active way of playing. We follow Tukmakov–Ljubojevic, Tilburg 1984.

14 ♗a2 ♖a5!

15 ♗xb4 ♖xb4

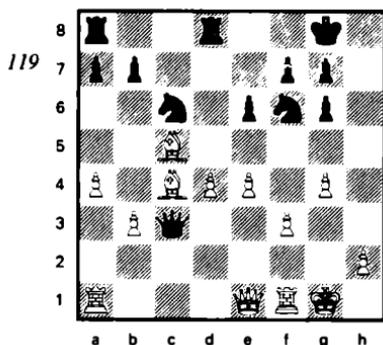
16 b3 ♗d8

White has two bishops for two knights, but his pawn on d4 is under pressure and his pawn structure is prone to weakness.

17 ♔a3 ♖c3

18 ♔xc5 ♗c6

19 ♖e1 (119)



19 ♖c1 may be better, but Black has sufficient activity for the temporary pawn sacrifice.

19 ... ♖xe1

20 ♗axe1 b6

21 ♖a3 ♜xd4
 22 ♖b2 ♜e8
 23 ♜f2 ♜d6!
 24 ♖xd4 ♜xc4
 25 ♜d1!

25 ♖xg7 ♜xg7 26 bc ♜ac8 and Black is highly active and can win back the pawn at leisure.

25 ... ♖a5 26 b4 ♜c4 27 ♖c3 f6 28 ♜e2 ♜f7 29 ♜xd8 ♜xd8 30 ♜d1 ♜xd1 31 ♜xd1 a6 32 ♜e2 e5 33 ♜d3 b5 34 ab ab 35 ♖e1 ♜e6 36 ♖f2 ♜d6 37 ♖c5 ♜f7 38 h4 ♜d8 39 ♖b6 ♜c6 40 ♖c5. The ending offers no winning chances. Draw agreed. Active play by Ljubojevic gave him a reasonable game.

In diagram 118, White can retain the tension on the kingside by

12 e4!?

Now Black has several tempting moves, but probably best is.

12 ... ♜bd7

12 ... ♜xe4? 13 ♜xg6 ♜xc3 14 bc ♖xc3 15 ♜xf8 ♜xd4+ 16 ♜xd4 ♖xd4+ 17 ♜g2 ♖xa1 18 ♖a3 is better for White. Black has three pawns for the piece but is all tied up.

12 ... c5 13 ♖a2 ♜a5 is similar to the Tukmakov-Ljubojevic game, except that White has retained his knight on h4 and left the bishop on g6. This favours White rather, as the White knight on h4 can be redeployed via g2 whereas the bishop on g6 is likely to remain snuffed out of play by the White pawn chain.

12 ... ♜e7 13 g5 ♜fd7 14 ♜xg6 hg 15 f4 e5! 16 fe ♜xe5 17 ♖b3 (17 de ♜c5+) ♜d8 18 ♖e3 favours White as the open lines have opened up the f7 point nicely.

13 g5!

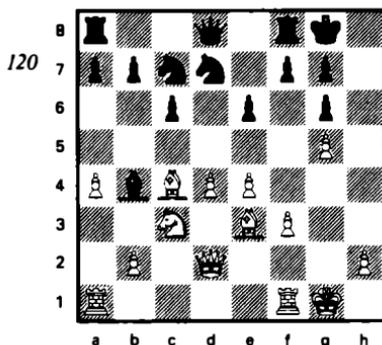
13 ♜g2!? gave White an edge in Portisch-Hort, Petropolis 1973. The bishop can be left rather stranded on g6 in such positions.

13 ... ♜e8

14 ♜xg6 hg

15 ♖e3 ♜c7

16 ♜d2! (120)



We follow the recent game Yusupov-Torre, Leningrad 1987. White's position is promising, Black's knights seem to lack a positive future and White's space advantage and bishops can become overwhelming if Black is not careful. Yusupov says this position is slightly better for White.

16 ... c5

17 ♜ad1 ♜e7?

Better were 17 ... ♜b6 18 ♖b3

cd 19 ♖xd4 or 17 ... cd 18 ♗xd4
 ♜b6 19 ♖b3 ♗xd4 restricting
 White's advantage to a minimum.

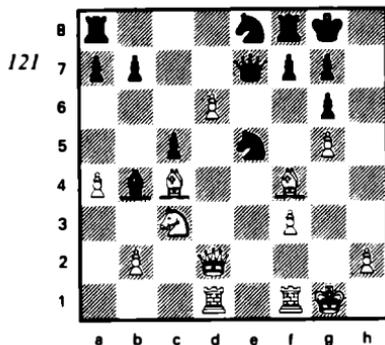
18 d5 ed
 19 ed ♝e8
 20 ♖f4

Not 20 d6? ♜xd6 21 ♗xd6
 ♗xe3+.

20 ... ♝e5

On 20 ... ♜d6 21 ♗fe1 ♜xc4
 22 ♗xe7 ♜xd2 23 ♗xd2 gives
 Black a horrible ending.

21 d6! (121)



Not 21 ♗e2 ♜d6! fighting
 back. Yusupov's move disrupts
 Black badly and gives access to
 the d5 square.

21 ... ♜xd6
 22 ♖a2 c4

Amongst others, 23 ♜d5 ♖xd2
 24 ♜xe7+ and 25 ♗xd2 is a
 winning threat. Yusupov shows

that 22 ... ♜f5 does not defend
 23 ♗del ♗ad8 24 ♖d5! ♜c4 25
 ♖xc4 ♗xd2 26 ♗xe7 ♗xb2 (26
 ... ♗d4 27 ♗e4 keeps the extra
 piece) 27 ♜d1 ♗c2 28 ♖b3 with
 one piece more.

23 ♜d5 ♖c5+
 24 ♗h1 ♗e6
 25 ♖xe5!

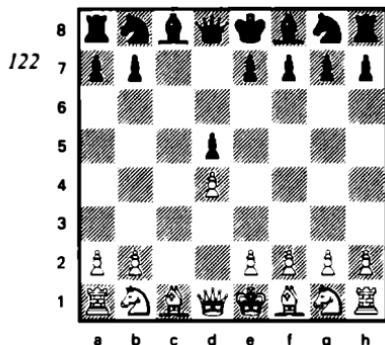
Black resigned

After 25 ... ♗xe5, 26 ♗fe1
 ♗f5 allows 27 ♜e7+. A good
 game by Yusupov; 21 d6 is an
 excellent pawn sacrifice clearing
 lines and squares for White's
 pieces. Black has improvements
 earlier, perhaps at move 17, but
 White's strategy does look like the
 most severe test of Black's set-up.

In practice, Black's results are
 reasonable with this system, but
 at the top level White can keep a
 slight but irritating edge. Against
 8 ... 0-0 9 ♜h4 and 9 ♗e2 are
 promising for White. It's not clear
 if 8 ... 0-0 is better than 8 ...
 ♜bd7, but an enterprising Slav
 player may prefer to keep the op-
 tion of castling long with 8 ...
 ♜bd7! For White players I think
 9 ♜h4 is best against 8 ... ♜bd7,
 but my assessments are rather
 personal and other authors may
 disagree.

8 The Exchange Variation

- 1 d4 d5
 2 c4 c6
 3 cd cd (122)



The first comment to make about this, and in fact all, symmetrical positions is that it isn't so easy to get a draw as Black—if White play good moves then eventually Black will be forced into breaking the symmetry. In fact, the pawn structure rarely remains symmetrical for long.

Strong players with the white pieces often play the exchange variation to win and if the second player is playing only with the idea of exchanging pieces or keep-

ing the symmetry for a draw he can get into trouble.

First, an example to show how even World Champions can get ground down by falling into this trap! (Botvinnik–Tal, World Championship Match, Moscow 1961, 11th game).

- 4 ♖c3 ♗f6
 5 ♗f3 ♖c6
 6 ♗f4 ♗f5
 7 e3 e6
 8 ♗b5 ♗b4

8 ... ♗d7 is correct as recommended by Botvinnik himself, but we will come back to that in a later game.

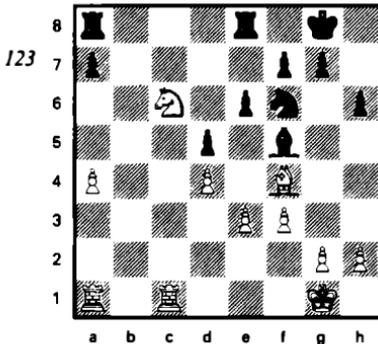
- 9 ♗e5 ♖a5
 10 ♗xc6+ bc
 11 0-0 ♗xc3
 12 bc ♗xc3

Pomar tried to improve against Botvinnik in Amsterdam 1966, with 12 ... ♗c8 13 c4! 0-0 14 g4! ♗g6 15 c5 ♗e4 16 f3 ♗d2 17 ♗f2 ♗c4 18 ♗xc4 dc 19 ♗d6 ♗fe8 20 e4 with a big bind and much the better bishop.

- 13 ♗c1! ♗xc1
 14 ♗fxc1 0-0

Black should on general grounds keep his king in the centre and play 14 ... ♖d7 15 ♗xc6 f6, but 16 ♗xa7 refutes this, as 16 ... ♗xa7 17 ♗c8+ is decisive.

15 f3 h6
 16 ♗xc6 ♗fe8
 17 a4 (123)



Black's a-pawn is a serious weakness—even though we have symmetrical pawns and opposite bishops!

17 ... ♗d7
 18 ♗d6 ♗b6
 19 ♗c5 ♗d3

19 ... ♗c4 20 e4 ♗g6 21 ed ed
 22 ♗e7+ and 23 ♗xd5.

19 ... ♗c8 is very passive, so Tal aims for a blockade on the light squares.

20 ♗xa7 ♗xa7
 21 ♗xb6 ♗a6
 22 a5 ♗c4
 23 ♗a3 f6
 24 e4 ♗f7
 25 ♗f2 ♗aa8

26 ♗e3 ♗eb8
 27 ♗ac3 ♗c8
 28 g4!

Opening up the second front.

28 ... ♗ab8
 29 h4 ♗c6
 30 h5 ♗cc8
 31 e5

White intends to take on f6 and advance f4, g5 etc. to get a second passed pawn.

31 ... g6?!

Losing patience and helping White rather.

32 hg+ ♗xg6 33 ♗3c2 fe 34 de ♗h8 35 ♗h2 ♗bc8 36 ♗d2 ♗b3 37 a6 ♗c4 38 a7 ♗h7 39 ♗a1 ♗a8 40 ♗e3 ♗b7 41 ♗xh6+ ♗g7 42 ♗ah1 ♗b2+ Black resigned.

I am going to recommend a different approach for the second player!

The exchange variation is not always positional; Torre's interesting counter-attack against the exchange is very sharp, as the following game (Partos-Torre, Biel Interzonal 1985) will show.

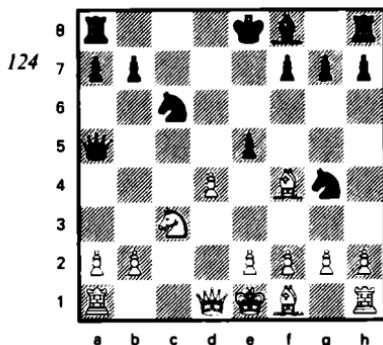
1 d4 d5
 2 c4 c6
 3 cd cd
 4 ♗c3 ♗f6
 5 ♗f3 ♗c6
 6 ♗f4 ♗g4!?
 7 ♗e5

White played in a more restrained fashion in Gheorghiu-Vaganian, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1984; 7 e3 ♗b6 8 ♗b3

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(Gheorghiu recommends 8 ♖b5 but gives no further analysis. Black presumably continues 8 ... e6 9 0-0 ♗e7 or 9 a4!? ♗b4) 8 ... ♜xb3 9 ab ♗xf3 10 gf e6 11 ♗b5 ♝d7 with an interesting endgame in prospect.

7 ... ♜b6
 8 ♖xg4 ♖xg4
 9 ♖xd5 ♜a5+
 10 ♖c3 e5! (124)



Now we have a real fight on our hands! If 11 de ♜b6 12 ♗g3 (12 e3 ♜xb2 threatens 13 ... ♜xf2 and 13 ... ♜xc3) ♜xb2 13 ♜c1 ♗b4 14 ♜d2 ♜a3 gives excellent play for the pawn sacrificed, which must surely be recaptured e.g.: 15 e3 ♜d8 16 ♜c2 0-0 17 ♗d3 h6 or 11 e4 ♗b4! (11 ... ef 12 ♜xg4 ♖xd4 13 0-0-0 or 11 ... ed 12 ♜xg4 dc 13 0-0-0 cb+ 14 ♝b1 look active for White; 11 ... ♗b4 keeps the initiative) 12 ♗d2 ed 13 ♖b1 (sadly for White 13 ♖d5 ♗xd2+ 14 ♜xd2 ♜xd2+ 15 ♝xd2 ♖xf2 16 ♜gl (16 ♖c7+ ♝d7 17 ♖xa8 ♖xh1 probably loses a piece as Black's

knight should escape) 16 ... ♖xe4+ 17 ♝d3 0-0-0 18 ♝xe4 f5+ 19 ♝xf5 ♜xd5+ is a winning advantage for Black) 13 ... ♖f6 (13 ... ♖ge5 is also possible and gives Black some advantage) 14 ♗d3 0-0 15 0-0 ♖e5 with a fine position for Black (Schroer-Torre, New York 1985).

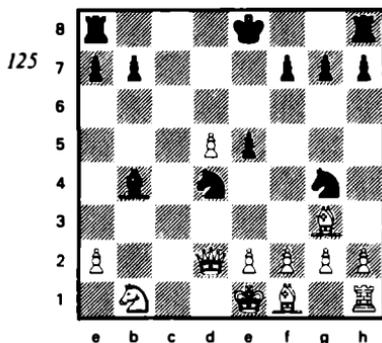
11 d5!? ♜b6
 12 ♗g3 ♜xb2
 13 ♜c1

13 ♜c1 ♗a3 wins.

13 ... ♖d4
 14 ♜d2!

Partos could have tried 14 e3 when 14 ... ♗b4 15 ♜d2 ♜xd2+ 16 ♝xd2 ♖f5 or even 14 ... ♜c8 15 ed ♜xc3 would be possible, e.g: 16 ♜b1 ♜e3+!! 17 fe ♗b4+ is better for Black.

14 ... ♗a3
 15 ♜b1 ♜xb1+!
 16 ♖xb1 ♗b4(125)



So Torre sacrifices his Queen! Partos gave the Queen back here with 17 h3, but why not 17 ♖c3? 17 ♖c3 (17 ♜xb4 ♖c2+ leaves White with no compensation for

the exchange) 17 ... ♖c8 18 ♔d1 (18 ♖g5 doesn't help 18 ... ♗xc3 19 ♔d1 ♗xg3! 20 fg ♖f2+ 21 ♔c1 0-0! with a winning attack) ♗xc3 19 e3 ♖f5 20 ♗b5+ ♔e7 Black has rook and knight for the queen plus the initiative and many tricks, e.g. 21 a3 ♖xg3 22 hg ♗d3! or 21 ♔e2 ♗xe3+ or 21 ♖b2 ♖(either)xe3+ 22 fe ♖xe3+ 23 ♔e2 ♗c2+ 24 ♖xc2 ♖xc2 25 ♗xe5 ♗d6! (25 ... f6 26 ♗b2 ♗a3 27 ♗xa3+ ♖xa3 28 ♗d3 ♗c8 29 ♗xh7 ♔d6 is also better for Black) with a good ending a pawn more for Black. White can also try 21 e4 ♖xg3 22 ♖g5+ (22 hg ♗d3!) ♔d6 23 ♖xg4 ♖xh1 24 ♖d7+ ♔c5 and Black has two rooks and a piece for the queen; 21 ♗f1 (stopping many tricks) 21 ... ♗hc8 (to threaten many more); or 21 d6+ ♔f6 or ♔e6 and White is probably lost as the active Black pieces are too strong for the queen.

- | | | |
|----|-----------|-------|
| 17 | h3 | ♗xd2+ |
| 18 | ♔xd2 | ♖f6 |
| 19 | ♗xe5 | ♖f5 |
| 20 | ♖c3 | 0-0-0 |
| 21 | ♗xf6 | gf |
| 22 | e4 | ♖d6 |
| 23 | ♗d3 | |

White has only one pawn for the exchange, but Black's doubled pawns and White's protected passed pawn help restore the balance. White has enough practical compensation to draw.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 23 | ... | ♔d7 |
|----|-----|-----|

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 24 | ♔e3 | ♗c8 |
| 25 | ♔d4 | ♗c7 |
| 26 | ♗b1 | ♗hc8 |
| 27 | ♗b3 | ♗g8 |
| 28 | g4 | h5 |
| 29 | f3 | |

The Swiss Master had defended coolly until now but he should have sought counterplay with 29 f4 hg 30 e5 g3 31 ♗b1 or 29 gh ♗g2 30 f4 ♗f2 31 ♖e2. The text is too passive.

- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 29 | ... | hg |
| 30 | hg | ♗h8 |
| 31 | a4 | ♗h3 |
| 32 | ♗e2 | ♗h2 |
| 33 | ♔e3 | b6 |
| 34 | ♖b5 | ♗c1! |
| 35 | ♗d3 | |

White's 34th was probably an oversight. 35 ♖xa7? ♗e1 36 ♗b2 ♖c4+ wins and so Black's rooks are both in the White position.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 35 | ... | ♖xb5 |
| 36 | ab | ♗a2 |
| 37 | ♔f4 | ♔d6 |
| 38 | g5 | fg+ |
| 39 | ♔xg5 | ♗f2 |
| 40 | ♔f4 | f6 |
| 41 | ♗a3 | ♗c7 |
| 42 | ♔e3 | ♗b2 |
| 43 | ♔f4 | ♗h2 |
| 44 | ♗a1 | ♗c3 |
| 45 | ♔e3 | |

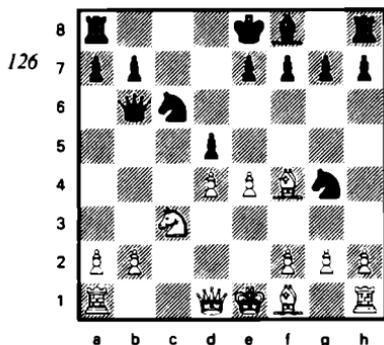
The king is better on f4 and f5, so 45 ♗d1 ♗b2 46 ♔f5! ♗f2 47 ♔f4 is a sterner method of defence.

- | | | |
|----|-----|---|
| 45 | ... | ♗b2 46 ♔d4 ♗cb3 47 ♗d1 ♗a3 48 ♗c1 ♗d2 49 ♗c6+ |
|----|-----|---|

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♖e7 50 ♜c7+ ♔d8 51 ♜c3 ♜xc3 52 ♖xc3 ♜f2 53 e5 fe 54 ♙e4 ♖c7 White resigned. A possible continuation is 55 ♖c4 ♖d6 56 ♖b4 ♜d2 57 ♖c4 ♜d4+ 58 ♖c3 ♖c5. White may have held this ending with sterner defence but it's not so easy to see all of Black's subtle threats, hour after hour. But for us, Torre's innovative opening play was a complete success. It also shows that Slav players can play actively against the Slav Exchange!

Unfortunately Black cannot win in chess without White committing an error. In this case 9 ♗xd5 is too greedy and 9 e4! (126) was better.



In fact, White has the advantage after 9 e4 as the following lines show:

(a) 9 ... ♜xb2 10 ♙d2 ♗xd4 11 ♖a4+ (or 11 ♜c1 ♗f6 12 ♖a4+ ♗c6 13 ed 0-0-0 14 ♜b1 winning—Kuijf) 11 ... ♖d8 12 ♜b1 winning for White (analysis by Dvoretzky; e.g. 12 ... ♗c2+

13 ♖e2 ♖a3 14 ♗xc2 wins a piece, and then 14 ... ♖c5 15 ♙e3! nips any counter-chances in the bud).

(b) 9 ... ♗xd4 10 ♗xg4 ♗c2+ 11 ♖d1 ♗xa1 12 ♙b5+ mates.

(c) 9 ... e5 10 ♙b5! ♙b4 (10 ... ♗f6 11 ♙xe5 ♗xe4 12 ♖a4 ♗xc3 13 bc f6 14 ♙g3 ♙e7 15 0-0 0-0 16 ♜fel with a big positional advantage (Szekely–Van de Oudeweetering, Gröningen 1986)) 11 ♙xc6 ♗xc6 12 0-0 ♙xc3 13 ♗xg4 ♙xb2 (13 ... 0-0 14 ♙xe5 f6 15 ♜acl is a winning advantage) 14 ♗xg7 0-0-0 15 ♗xe5! ♙xa1 16 ed! ♜xd5 (16 ... ♖d6 loses to 17 ♜cl+ and 16 ... ♖c3 to 17 ♖b8+ ♖d7 18 ♗xb7+ ♖e8 19 d6 ♜d7 20 ♖b8+ ♜d8 21 ♖b5+ ♜d7 22 ♖e5+ mating with 23 ♗xh8) 17 ♗xh8 ♜d8 18 ♗xh7 ♙xd4 19 ♜c1 ♙c3 20 ♗h3+ Black resigned (Guseinov–Sideif-Zade, Baku 1986).

So Torre's counter-attack looks suspiciously dubious after 9 e4 unless a resource can be found.

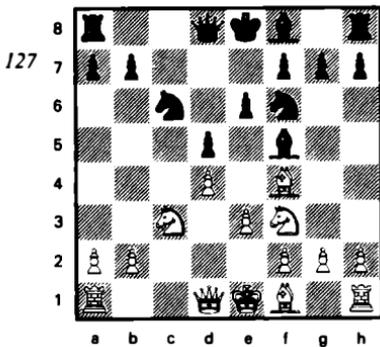
We now turn to a more conventional variation, following the game Kir. Georgiev–Halifman, Plovdiv 1986).

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | cd | cd |
| 4 | ♗c3 | ♗f6 |
| 5 | ♙f4 | ♗c6 |
| 6 | ♗f3 | |

6 e3 delaying the development

of the king's knight has been tried: 6... ♖f5 7 ♜b3 ♜b6 (7... ♘a5 is also playable) and now 8 ♜xb6 ab 9 ♖b5 is preferable to 8 ♜xb6 ab 9 ♖c7 ♙c8 10 ♖xb6 ♘d7 11 ♖c5 (11 ♘d5 e6 12 ♘c7+ ♜e7) ♘xc5 12 dc e6 or 8 ♖b5 e6 9 ♘f3 ♘h5! with counterplay as in the game Gutman–Greenfeld, Israel 1985, and Black was better after 10 ♖e5 f6 11 h3 fe 12 g4 ed 13 ♘xd4 ♖c5 14 ♘xf5 0–0.

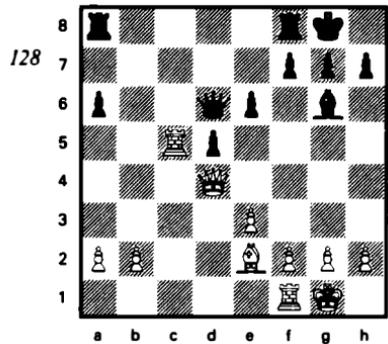
6 ... ♖f5
For 6... e6 see the next game.
7 e3 e6 (127)



The standard position where White chooses his plan. If White is happy with a draw he may play 8 ♖d3 ♖xd3 9 ♜xd3 ♖d6 10 ♖xd6 ♜xd6 11 0–0 with a quick draw offer to follow. This has occurred a number of times at Grandmaster level in games where a draw (or an extra rest day!) may suit the players. We shall concern ourselves with rather more dynamic attempts by White to gain the advantage,

although even here Black is not without chances and players 'playing for a win' with the Black pieces should probably choose 9... ♖e7 (instead of 9... ♖d6) e.g. 10 0–0 0–0 11 h3 ♘d7 12 ♙ac1 ♘b6 13 ♜e2 ♙c8 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5 15 ♖xe5 ♘c4 16 ♖f4 ♜a5 17 b3 ♖a3! with favourable complications (Skembris–Torre, Luzern 1982; Black won in 40 moves).

8 ♘e5 is one of the three main tries for the advantage. After 8... ♘d7 9 ♘xc6 bc 10 ♙c1 ♖e7 11 ♖e2 0–0 12 0–0 c5! Black achieves the logical break, but he must still fight for equality after 13 ♘b5 a6 14 ♘d6 ♖g6 15 dc ♘xc5 16 ♙xc5 ♖xd6 17 ♖xd6 ♜xd6 18 ♘d4 (128)



Black has an isolated a-pawn and the slightly inferior bishop: White's bind on the Black squares gave him a slight advantage in Portisch–Belyavsky, Tilburg 1981 after 18... ♙ac8 19 b4. Another idea is 18... a5 to prevent b4,

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when 19 ♙fc1 keeps the c-file. Andersson–Gligoric, Niksic 1983 showed another plan with 18 ... ♜fd8 19 ♙fc1 e5 20 ♜d2 d4 with a double-edged struggle in prospect. The dangerous passed d-pawn should be sufficient compensation for the loss of the a-pawn after 21 ♜c6 ♜e7 22 ♜xa6 .

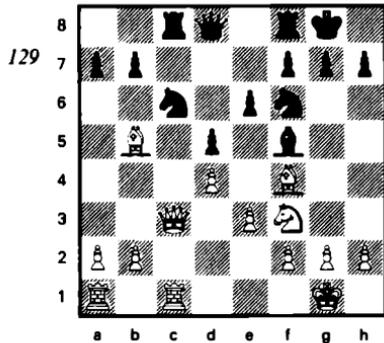
So Andersson should have tried 19 ♙d1 to restrain Black's expansion with ... e5, and could have retained a slight edge after 19 ... a5 20 ♜c3 .

However, Black achieved easy equality in Spraggett–Yusupov, Montpellier 1985. 8 ♞e5 ♞xe5 9 ♙xe5 ♞d7 10 ♙g3 a6 11 ♙d3 ♙xd3 12 ♜xd3 ♙e7 13 0–0 0–0 14 ♙fc1 ♜c8 .

8 ♜b3 is another White try. 8 ... ♜b6 may be playable but White can play 9 ♜xb6 ab 10 ♙b5 with slightly the better chances. So 8 ... $\text{♙b4}!$? is the more interesting move as 9 a3 ♙xc3 + 10 bc 0–0 11 ♜xb7 $\text{♜a5}!$ is better for Black e.g: 12 ♜b2 $\text{♜ab8}!$ (a splendid exchange sacrifice) 13 ♙xb8 ♜xb8 14 ♜c1 ♜b3 15 ♞d2 ♜xc3 16 ♜d1 ♜c2 is given by Trifunovic as good for Black e.g: 17 ♜c1 ♜c3 18 ♜xc2 ♙xc2 19 ♜c1 ♞a5 and ... ♞b3 .

8 ♜b3 ♙b4 9 ♙b5 0–0 10 0–0 (10 ♙xc6 ♙xc3 + 11 ♜xc3 ♜c8 is fine for Black after 12 ♜a3 ♜xc6 13 ♜xa7 ♙d3 or 12 ♞e5 $\text{♞e4}!$) 10 ... ♙xc3 11 ♜xc3 ♜c8 was played in Seirawan–Yusu-

pov, Indonesia 1983 (11 ... $\text{♞e4}!$ has been suggested in this position, gaining a tempo) 12 ♙fc1 (129).



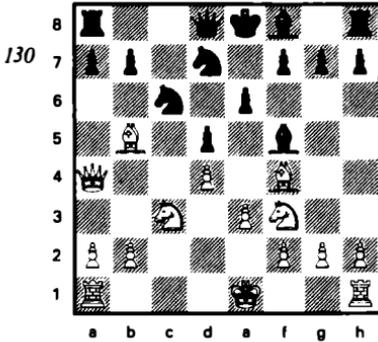
A typical position, where Black can play 12 ... ♞e5 13 ♜a3 ♞xf3 + 14 gf a6 or the risky 12 ... ♞h5 13 ♙g5 f6 14 ♙h4 g5 15 ♙g3 ♞xg3 . In the game, after 12 ... ♜b6 13 ♜c5 $\text{♞xd4}!$? complications erupted. 14 ♜xc8 ♞xf3 + 15 gf ♜xb5 16 ♜c3 ♜e2 17 ♜g2 ♙h3 +! is a mating attack, so Seirawan chose 14 $\text{♜xb6}!$ ♞xf3 + 15 gf ab 16 ♙d6 ♜xc1 + 17 ♜xc1 ♜a8 and had more than adequate pressure (with the c-file and two bishops) for the pawn lost in the complications with 18 $\text{♜c7}!$

White's other alternative is:

8 $\text{♙b5}!$ ♞d7

8 ... ♙b4 continues the symmetry far too long. Black was soon in hot water in Botvinnik–Tal, 1961 (the first game in this chapter).

9 ♜a4 (130)



The most testing move.

9 $\text{c}2\text{e}5$ $\text{c}2\text{xc}5$ 10 $\text{d}2\text{xe}5$ a6 (Petrosian–Donner, Bamberg 1968) was only equal.

9 0–0 $\text{d}2\text{e}7$ 10 $\text{c}2\text{cl}$ $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ 11 $\text{c}2\text{a}4$ 0–0 12 $\text{d}2\text{xc}6$ $\text{c}2\text{xc}6$ 13 $\text{c}2\text{xc}6$ bc 14 $\text{c}2\text{cl}$ $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ 15 $\text{c}2\text{e}5$ $\text{c}2\text{xe}5$ 16 $\text{d}2\text{xe}5$ f6 17 $\text{d}2\text{g}3$ $\text{c}2\text{a}6$ gives Black adequate play (Jimenez–Pomar, Havana 1969).

9 0–0 $\text{d}2\text{e}7$ 10 $\text{c}2\text{cl}$ 0–0 11 h3 (11 $\text{c}2\text{b}3$ $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ or 11 $\text{d}2\text{xc}6$ bc 12 $\text{c}2\text{a}4$ $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ 13 $\text{c}2\text{e}5$ $\text{c}2\text{xe}5$ 14 $\text{d}2\text{xe}5$ $\text{c}2\text{a}5$ 15 $\text{c}2\text{b}3$ f6 16 $\text{d}2\text{g}3$ $\text{d}2\text{d}3!$ 17 $\text{c}2\text{xd}3$ $\text{c}2\text{xa}4$ equalizes (Riskin–Kakageldijev, USSR 1974)) 11 ... $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ 12 $\text{d}2\text{d}3$ $\text{d}2\text{xd}3$ 13 $\text{c}2\text{xd}3$ $\text{c}2\text{b}6$ led to equality in Spassky–Larsen, Malmo 1968.

These lines indicate that if White develops normally then Black catches up. In lines where White plays $\text{d}2\text{xc}6$ Black must react with ... c5 or keep active enough to stop White building up pressure on the c-file.

9 ... $\text{c}2\text{c}8$

9 ... $\text{c}2\text{b}6$ 10 $\text{c}2\text{h}4!$ $\text{d}2\text{e}4$ (10 ... $\text{d}2\text{g}6$ 11 $\text{c}2\text{xg}6$ hg 12 e4 de 13 d5!

or 10 ... $\text{d}2\text{g}4$ 11 h3 $\text{d}2\text{h}5$ 12 e4! with the initiative) 11 0–0–0! $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ 12 f3 $\text{d}2\text{g}6$ 13 $\text{c}2\text{xg}6$ hg 14 $\text{c}2\text{b}1$ a6 15 $\text{d}2\text{e}2$ $\text{d}2\text{b}4$ 16 $\text{c}2\text{cl}$ is a sharp method of playing the position. White has two bishops and, after 16 ... 0–0 17 h4!?, some attacking chances, so I prefer White slightly.

Can Black play 10 ... $\text{d}2\text{d}3!$? anticipating 11 $\text{d}2\text{xd}3$ $\text{c}2\text{xb}2?$ Black seems to weather the storm after 12 $\text{c}2\text{b}1$ $\text{c}2\text{xc}3+$ 13 $\text{c}2\text{e}2$ $\text{c}2\text{a}5!$ However, 11 $\text{c}2\text{xd}5!$ $\text{exd}5$ 12 $\text{d}2\text{xd}3$ is better for White.

10 0–0

10 $\text{d}2\text{xc}6$ $\text{c}2\text{xc}6$ 11 $\text{c}2\text{xa}7$ $\text{c}2\text{c}8$ 12 $\text{c}2\text{a}5!$ is a risky pawn grab. However, White might get away with it! For example 12 ... b6 13 $\text{c}2\text{b}5!$ and 13 ... $\text{c}2\text{xc}3$ 14 bc $\text{c}2\text{xc}3+$ 15 $\text{c}2\text{e}2$ wins for White, or 12 ... $\text{c}2\text{a}6$ 13 $\text{c}2\text{c}7$ $\text{c}2\text{a}8$ 14 $\text{c}2\text{e}5$ $\text{c}2\text{xe}5$ 15 $\text{d}2\text{xe}5$ $\text{c}2\text{c}6$ 16 $\text{c}2\text{b}8+$ (Kuijf). I assume that 16 ... $\text{c}2\text{xb}8$ 17 $\text{d}2\text{xb}8$ $\text{d}2\text{a}3!$ 18 ba (18 $\text{c}2\text{xd}5$ $\text{d}2\text{xb}2!$) $\text{c}2\text{xc}3$ is Black's line, which seems to be enough to draw. Yusupov in *ECO* gives 15 ... $\text{d}2\text{b}4!$ (instead of 15 ... $\text{c}2\text{c}6$) quoting an obscure Polish game and claims an edge to Black. This certainly looks better than Kuijf's move.

10 ... a6
11 $\text{d}2\text{xc}6$ $\text{c}2\text{xc}6$
12 $\text{c}2\text{fc}1$ $\text{d}2\text{e}7$
13 $\text{c}2\text{e}2$

13 $\text{c}2\text{d}1!$? in order to defend b2 looks like no advantage after 13

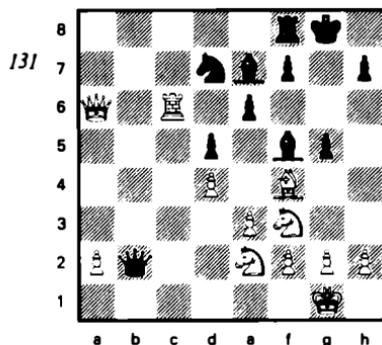
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... ♔d3!? 14 ♙xc6 ♕b5 when White could try 15 ♙xa6 ♕xa4 16 ♙xa4 or 15 ♙xb5!?, but such queen sacrifices are very speculative. A recent Russian game was equal after 13 ... b5 14 ♙b3 ♙b6 (Sabalov-Savcenko, USSR 1988).

13 ... ♙b6
14 ♙xc6 bc
15 ♙c1 ♙xb2

This gives us a very interesting struggle.

16 ♙xa6 0-0
17 ♙xc6 g5! (131)



Just as young Georgiev wins a queenside pawn his Soviet opponent lashes out on the kingside! Now 18 ♕xg5? ♖b8 wins the exchange. 18 ♕e5 g4 19 ♖e1 ♕b4 20 ♙c1 ♖xe5 or 19 ... ♖xe5 20 de ♙xe5 is complicated: White has an a-pawn but Black has the bishop pair.

18 ♕g3 g4
19 ♖e1 ♙d2
20 ♙f1

20 ♙c1 ♖b8 21 ♕xb8 ♙xb8 intending ... ♙b2 is inferior according to Halifman.

20 ... ♖b8

21 ♕xb8 ♕b4!

21 ... ♙xb8 22 ♙c8 + ♙xc8 23 ♙xc8+ ♙g7 24 a4 ♕b4 25 ♙c1 is a shade better for White.

22 ♙c1 ♙xb8

23 ♙a4! ♕a5

24 ♙d1!

24 ♙d1 allows a pretty win 24 ... ♙b1! 25 ♙xd2 ♕xd2 26 f3 (or 26 f4 ♕xel) 26 ... g3! 27 ♖xg3 ♕d3+ 28 ♙g1 ♕xel or 27 hg ♙xel + 28 ♙f2 ♕d3 (Halifman).

Two bishops and a rook will beat the queen and a-pawn.

24 ... ♙xa2

25 ♙a1 ♙d2

26 ♙xd2 ♕xd2

Black's initiative has been nullified, but he has won back the a-pawn leaving an equal looking ending. The two knights, normally inferior to two bishops, are their equal as the pawns are all on one wing.

27 ♖f4 ♙b1

28 ♙xb1 ♕xb1

29 ♙e2 ♕a5

30 ♖ed3 ♕c7

31 ♖h5 ♕xd3+

Exchanging off the 'bad' bishop leads to a drawish position.

32 ♙xd3 f5

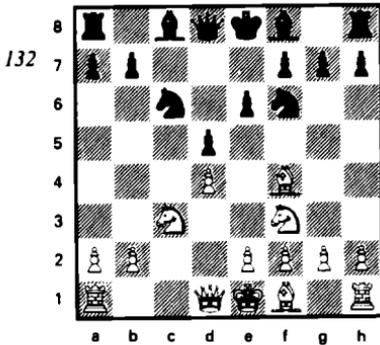
33 ♖f4

33 ♖f6+? ♙f7 34 ♖xh7 ♕d8 wins the knight.

33 ... ♙f7 34 ♙c3 ♕d6 35 g3 ♕xf4 36 ef ♙e7 37 ♙b4 ♙d6 38 ♙b5 ♙d7 39 ♙b6 ♙d6 40 ♙b7 ♙d7 Draw agreed. Black has a

fight on his hands after 8 ♖b5, but seems to be able to hold his own. Our next game is Capablanca–Em. Lasker, New York 1924.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | cd | cd |
| 4 | ♗c3 | ♗f6 |
| 5 | ♗f3 | ♗c6 |
| 6 | ♖f4 | e6 (132) |



Black's bishop is locked inside the pawn chain, but can be a useful defensive piece.

6 ... ♖a5 7 e3 ♗e4 8 ♖b3 e6 9 ♖d3 ♖b4 10 ♗c1 ♗xc3 11 bc ♖e7 12 0-0 0-0 13 c4 dc 14 ♖xc4 gives White rather the better of it. Black's bishop on c8 is likely to have a passive role, while White has a central pawn majority and fairly active pieces.

- | | | |
|---|----|-----|
| 7 | e3 | ♗e7 |
|---|----|-----|

7 ... ♖d6 is a little dull, but 8 ♖d3! 0-0 9 0-0 b6 10 ♗c1 ♖b7 11 a3 ♗c8 12 ♖e2 gives White a persistent albeit slight advantage. If Black captures on f4 then White

will have a strong hold on the square e5 and Black's remaining bishop on b7 looks uninspiring stuck behind the central pawns—something that Black must be careful about after 6 ... e6.

7 ... ♗h5 is another way of playing the variation. 8 ♖e5 ♖e7 9 ♖d3 0-0 10 g4! ♗f6 11 ♗g1 ♖d7 12 h4 ♖b6 13 ♖e2 ♗ac8 14 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 15 g5 ♖e7 (Zilberstein–Polugaevsky, USSR 1974) was interesting and after 16 h5! dangerous for Black's king. 8 ... ♗f6 could be tried, but this compromise of Black's pawn structure is precisely what White is seeking.

8 ♖g5! ♖b6 9 ♖b5 h6 10 ♖h4 g5 11 ♗e5 is suggested by Keene and indeed Black seems to be positionally worse. He is behind in development and his kingside pawn structure is compromised without compensation.

- | | | |
|---|-----|-----|
| 8 | ♖d3 | 0-0 |
| 9 | 0-0 | |

Preserving the bishop with 9 h3 is sensible here. 9 ... ♖d7 10 0-0 ♖b6 11 a3 (defending the b-pawn because of the tactical point 11 ... ♖xb2 12 ♗a4) 11 ... ♗a5 12 b4 ♗c4 13 ♗e5 gave White the initiative in Portisch–Petrosian, Palma de Mallorca 1974. Black is always stuck with his inferior bishop.

- | | | |
|----|-----|-----|
| 9 | ... | ♗h5 |
| 10 | ♖e5 | f5 |

10 ... ♗f6 11 ♗g5!? leads to wild complications; however, the pru-

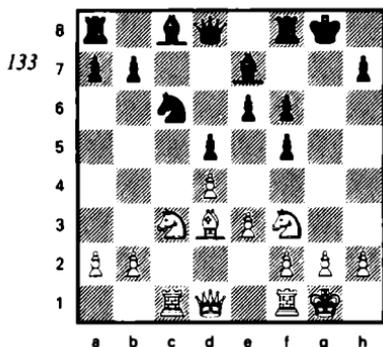
98 The Exchange Variation

dent 11 ♖g3 is more sensible as Black's pawn structure has been compromised.

11 ♖c1 ♘f6
12 ♖xf6

To restrain ... ♗e4.

12 ... ♗f! (133)



12 ... ♖xf6 13 ♖a4 and ♖c5 is too inactive for Black. Lasker anticipates counterplay on the g-line and covers e5. Play now concentrates on the kingside.

13 ♖h4 ♖h8

14 f4 ♖g8

15 ♖f3 ♖d7

16 ♖h3

16 ♖g3 may be possible, Capablanca prefers the menacing h-file posture.

16 ... ♖e8

17 a3 ♖g7

18 ♖g3

White threatens 19 ♖xg7, followed by ♖h1 and g4.

18 ... ♖xg3

19 hg ♖c8

20 ♖f2 ♖a5

21 ♖f3

A poor move: 21 ♖e2 was better.

21 ... ♖c4

22 ♖e2 ♖d6

A solid move defending against potential knight sacrifices.

23 ♖h1 ♖e4+?

23 ... ♖f7 was more flexible.

White now sacrifices a piece for two or three pawns and the initiative.

24 ♖xe4 fe

25 ♖g4 f5

26 ♖xf5 ef

27 ♖xf5 h5

28 g4

Capablanca was wise not to play 28 ♖xd5 ♖c2+ 29 ♖g1 ♖d6 30 ♖xe4 ♖c1+ 31 ♖h2 ♖xh1+ 32 ♖xh1 ♖c6 33 ♖xe7 ♖xd5, as Black is then winning.

28 ... ♖c6

29 g5

Now 29 ♖xd5! is stronger because of 29 ... ♖c2+ 30 ♖g3 h4+ 31 ♖h3.

29 ... ♖g8?!

29 ... ♖d6 holds more comfortably.

30 ♖xd5 ♖f7

31 ♖xe7+ ♖xe7

32 g4 hg?

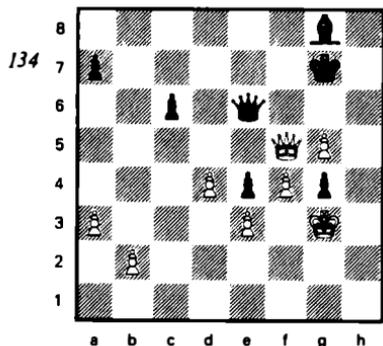
Lasker was still playing for a win, but 32 ... ♖c2+ 33 ♖g3 ♖e2 34 g6 h4+! 35 ♖xh4 ♖xe3+ 36 ♖g2 ♖e2+ 37 ♖f1 ♖e1+! forces a draw.

33 ♖h7+ ♖f8

34 ♖h6 ♖g8

34 ... ♖xh6 35 ♗xh6+ ♕g8 is better and should draw.

- 35 ♗f5+ ♕g7
 36 ♖xc6 bc
 37 ♕g3 ♖e6?(134)



A famous blunder. 37 ... ♔f7 38 ♗xg4 c5 39 f5 ♗d6+ 40 ♗f4 ♗xf4+ 41 ♕xf4 cd 42 ♕xe4 de 43 ♕xe3 ♔b3! and with ... a5, ... a4 Black draws comfortably. Lasker allows a winning continuation. After a long defence he finally cracks!

- 38 ♕xg4 ♗xf5+
 39 ♕xf5 ♔d5
 40 b4 a6
 41 ♕g4 ♔c4

- 42 f5 ♔b3
 43 ♕f4 ♔c2
 43 ... ♔d5 44 ♕e5 and a4, b5.
 44 ♕e5 ♕f7
 45 a4! ♕g7

45 ... ♔xa4 46 ♕xe4 allows three connected passed pawns, which will beat a bishop.

- 46 d5 ♔xa4
 47 d6 c5
 48 bc ♔c6
 49 ♕e6 a5
 50 f6+

Black resigned

A complicated struggle. Perhaps 6 ... e6 is objectively inferior to 6 ... ♔f5 but variations involving ... ♕h5 can be very sharp and double-edged.

When analysing the variations in the Slav Exchange I was surprised how complicated the games were. I hope the ideas suggested and analysed in this chapter will enable both White and Black to play interesting chess and seek the whole point.

9 3 ♘c3: Black avoids 3 ... ♘f6

The most usual move after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 is 3 ♘f3 and after 3 ... ♘f6 then 4 ♘c3. After 3 ♘c3 then Black's normal reply is 3 ... ♘f6, when 4 ♘f3 would represent a transposition.

Some players use 3 ♘c3 to meet 3 ... ♘f6 with 4 e3. This possibility should be borne in mind and is dealt with in the following chapters.

Can Black exploit this irritating move order? Some players have tried to cross White's plans by themselves channelling the opening into some complicated prepared line in which they hope the first player will founder. As the next chapter suggests, after 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e3 the only moves with a reputation for being correct are 4 ... e6 and 4 ... g6, both leading to a type of game rather different from the positions resulting from 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 dc.

So we shall look at Black's attempts to seek alternatives as early as move three.

A 3 ... e6!?

B 3 ... e5 (Winawer Counter-gambit).

C 3 ... dc In the postscript I have briefly mentioned 3 ♘f3 dc for the purpose of comparison.

A 3 ... e6

This can lead to great complications after:

4 e4 de 5 ♘xe4 ♗b4+ 6 ♗d2 ♗xd4! or 4 ♘f3 dc 5 e3 b5 6 a4 ♗b4 (Abrahams variation). 4 e3 f5!?

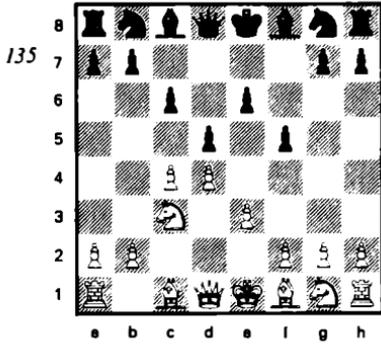
leads instead to difficult manoeuvring in a Stonewall set-up. These positions have been tested by many players and no real conclusion has been reached. Suffice to say that the unprepared should avoid such lines. Tim Harding's *Queen's Gambit Declined: Semi-Slav* deals in depth with the complicated tactical mêlées following 4 e4 or 4 ♘f3.

4 e3

This is really another attempt to get into a Meran after 4 ... ♘f6, which is the usual reply.

4 ... f5!? (135)

This leads us into a Dutch Defence, and normally would be



outside the scope of this book, but the idea has become fashionable in similar positions on the back of the new wave of popularity in the Stonewall. For example: 1 ♘f3 d5 2 c4 c6 3 e3 e6 4 d4 f5 (Korchnoi-Yusupov, Montpellier 1985) which continued 5 ♗d3 ♘f6 6 0-0 ♗d6 7 b3 ♖e7 8 a4 0-0 9 ♗a3 (Drawn in 52 moves) or 1 ♘f3 d5 2 c4 c6 3 d4 e6 4 e3 ♗d6 5 ♘bd2 f5 6 g3 ♘f6 7 ♗g2 0-0 8 0-0 b6 9 b3 (Ftacnik-Klinger, Dubai 1986; Drawn in 30 moves).

Both these recent examples suggest the validity of Black's idea, and interested players should seek out more specialist material on the Dutch Defence, e.g. *The Classical Dutch* by Robert Bellin.

From diagram 135, note that White cannot employ the same methods of development as seen in these examples as the knight is already committed to c3.

5 ♘f3 ♗d6
5... ♘d7 6 ♗d3 ♖f6 7 ♖c2

♘h6 8 0-0 ♗e7 9 b3 0-0 10 ♗b2 is another possibility. Black should generally seek to prepare to meet cd with ... ed, hence the overprotection of the f5 square.

6 ♗d3 ♘h6

On 6... ♘f6 7 ♖c2 White may be threatening cd and so Black is perhaps forced to play 7... ♘e4, when 8 ♘e5 with a quick f3 is critical.

7 ♖c2 0-0

8 b3

This can lead to a double-edged game, but White has not committed himself to castling either side and may be able to castle long with a quick h3 and g4. Such positions are generally considered by masters as slightly favourable for White, but in my experience the player most adept in such positions comes out on top.

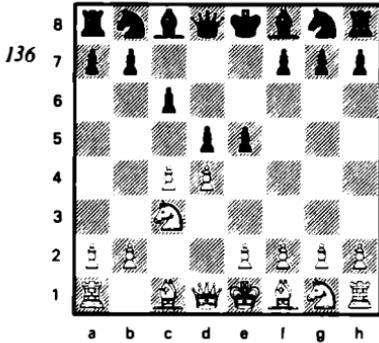
In a book on the Slav I can only whet the appetite for those positions where the Slav can be used as a transpositional medium for the Dutch. This is a good example of how flexible the Slav can be in terms of possibilities available.

B 3 ... e5 (136)

A violent and brave attempt to wrest the initiative. Theory maintains that White can keep the advantage by precise play, but this is not at all clear.

4 cd

Another idea is 4 de d4 5 ♘e4 ♖a5+ 6 ♘d2 ♘d7 (6... ♖xe5 7 ♘gf3 etc.) 7 e6!? fe 8 g3 e5 9 ♗g2



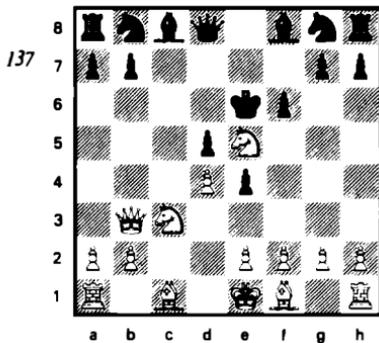
♘g6 10 ♘h3 ♙e7 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♘g5 ♘c5 13 a3 and White is slightly better (Simagin-Nei, USSR Championship 1960). Black will be forced back and White will gain control of e4. 11... h6 is a possible improvement.

4 ... cd
5 ♘f3

Both 5 de d4 and 5 e4!? de 6 ♙b5+ ♙d7 fail to gain the advantage.

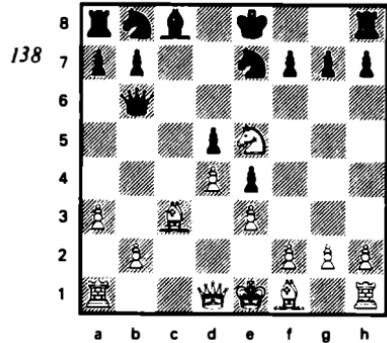
5 ... e4
6 ♘e5 ♘c6

6 ... f6 7 ♖a4+ ♜e7 (7 ... ♘d7 8 ♘g4! ♘e7 9 ♘e3 wins a pawn) 8 ♜b3 ♜e6 (137).



(8 ... fe 9 ♙g5+ ♘f6 10 de wins back the piece with a big initiative) when White can save the piece by 9 ♘g4 or play 9 g3! In either case his attack is very dangerous.

6 ... ♜a5 is tricky and may be best 7 e3 (7 ♙d2 f6! 8 ♘xe4 ♜d8 9 e3 de 10 ♜h5+ is very wild) 7 ... ♙b4 8 ♙d2 ♘e7 9 a3 ♙xc3 10 ♙xc3 ♜b6 (138) was a recent try to improve Black's play (Petursson-Ivanovic, Reykjavik 1986).



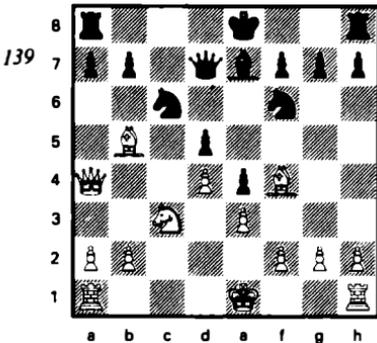
Now 11 ♖a4+ ♜f8 is not so clear as the knight on e5 is trapped e.g. 12 h3 h5! or 12 f3 f6 13 ♘g4 ef 14 gf ♙xg4 15 fg ♜e6 winning a pawn in a murky position. Petursson played 11 ♙b4!? which was also not clear 11 ... a5 (11 ... f6? 12 ♘g4? h5, but 12 ♜h5+ g6 13 ♜h6 when 13 ... fe 14 ♜g7 wins) 12 ♖a4+ ♘ec6 13 ♙e2 ♙d7 14 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 15 0-0 ♙d8 and now 16 ♙c3 maintains the advantage of two bishops over two knights. 16 ♙d6 ♜xb2 17 ♙b5 looks dangerous for the

Black queen. Better is 16 ... ♘xd4 17 ♗xd4 ♗xd6 18 ♗xg7 ♗e5 19 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 with approximate equality.

7 ♗a4 ♔d7

7 ... ♘e7!? does not cede the bishop pair so readily 8 ♔f4 f6 9 ♘xc6 ♘xc6! (9 ... bc leaves Black with permanent weaknesses and further behind in development) 10 e3 (10 ♘b5 ♔b4+ 11 ♗d1 0-0 is fine) 10 ... ♔e6! 11 ♔b5 ♗d7 and Black has a reasonable game. Instead 8 f3 ef 9 ef ♔d7 10 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 11 ♔d3 g6 was satisfactory for Black in Tal-Nei, USSR 1959.

8 ♘xd7 ♗xd7
 9 ♔f4 ♘f6
 10 e3 ♔e7
 11 ♔b5 (139)

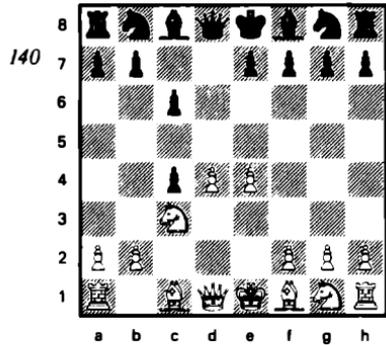


This gives White an edge, according to analysis by Suetin. Play can be like the Exchange Variation, except the e pawn is on e4 instead of e6, which gives Black more space on the kingside but means that the d5 pawn has no

pawn support and must be constantly watched.

The Winawer Counter-gambit is far from refuted and represents a reasonable attempt to confuse for those players seeking to avoid 3... ♘f6.

C 3 ... dc
 4 e4! (140)



4 a4 e5! is already better for Black e.g.: 5 de ♗xd1 + 6 ♗xd1 ♘a6 7 e3 ♔e6 (Fine-Euwe, Zandvoort 1936).

4 e3 b5 5 a4 (5 ♘xb5 cb 6 ♗f3 is tempting. Canal's analysis shows the refutation 6... ♗c7 7 ♗xa8 ♔b7 8 ♗xa7 e5 and White's queen is in trouble) 5... b4 6 ♘a2 e6+ ♔xc4 ♘f6 8 ♘f3 and we have reached a position analysed in Chapter 3.

4 ... b5

4... e5!? is analysed below.

5 a4 b4

5... ♗a5 6 ♔d2 b4 7 ♘a2 e6 8 ♘xc4 ♘f6 9 ♗c2 ♘bd7 10 ♘c1 and White intends ♘b3. Black has some difficulty in achieving c5 and White must be preferred.

6 ♗a2 e5

7 ♗f3

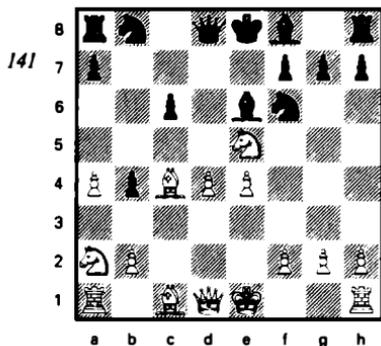
7 ♗xc4 ♖xd4 8 ♖b3 is dangerous but more risky.

7 ... ♗e6

7 ... ed 8 ♗xc4 c5 9 ♗d5 or 8 ... ♗c5 9 ♗e5 ♗e6 ♗xe6 fe 11 ♖h5+ are crushing.

8 ♗xe5 ♗f6

9 ♗xc4 (141)



Black has very bad weaknesses and has fallen behind in development (Addison-Beneditsson, Reykjavik 1986).

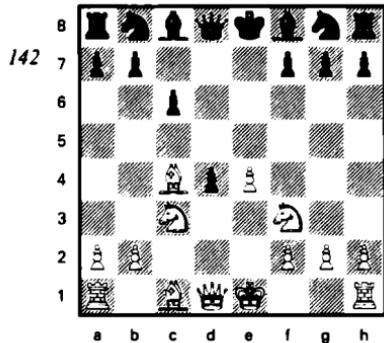
Returning to diagram 140:

4 ... e5

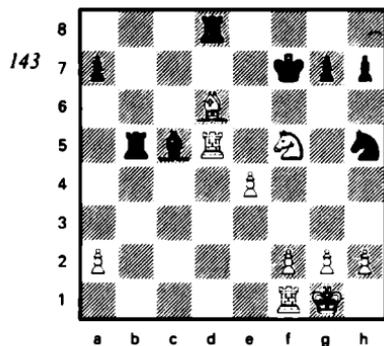
5 ♗f3

White can achieve a riskless endgame edge in this fashion. In Alekhine's day 5 ♗xc4 ed (5 ... ♖xd4 6 ♖b3 ♖d7 7 ♗g5 is crushing e.g.: 7 ... ♗f6 8 ♗d1 ♖c7 9 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 10 ♗d8+ etc) 6 ♗f3 (142) was considered to give a big advantage.

The crushing win Alekhine-Euwe, Sixth match game, Netherlands 1937, illustrates Black's



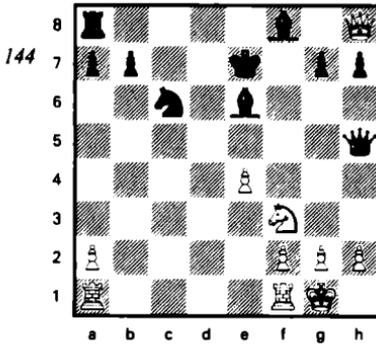
dangers; 6 ... b5? 7 ♗xb5 ♗a6 (7 ... cb 8 ♗d5) 8 ♖b3 ♖e7 9 0-0 ♗xb5 10 ♗xb5 ♗f6 (10 ... cb 11 ♖d5) 11 ♗c4 ♗bd7 12 ♗xd4 and White was winning. 12 ... ♗b8 13 ♖c2 ♖c5 14 ♗f5 (14 ♗xc6? ♗c8) ♗e5 15 ♗f4 ♗h5 16 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 17 ♖xc5 ♗xc5 18 ♗xe5 ♗b5 19 ♗d6 ♗b6 20 b4 ♗d8 21 ♗ad1 c5 22 bc ♗xc5 23 ♗d5! (143) Black resigned.



White wins the exchange.

In fact 6 ... dc! is correct. 7 ♗xf7+ ♖e7 8 ♖b3 cb! (Alekhine gave only 8 ... ♗f6 9 e5 ♗e4 10 0-0! with a strong attack and considered 6 ... ♗c5 to be best) 9

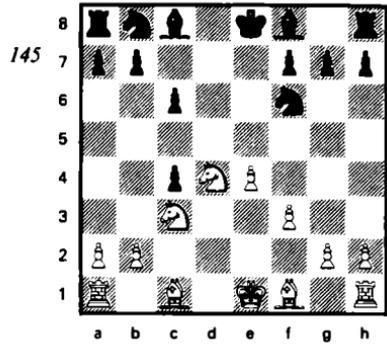
♙xb2 ♖b6! 10 ♙a3+ (10 ♙xg8 ♗xg8 11 ♖xg8 ♖b4+ 12 ♘d2 ♖xb2 is better for Black) 10... c5 11 ♙xg8 (11 ♖d5 ♖a5+) ♗xg8 12 ♙xc5+ ♖xc5 13 0-0 ♖h5! (13... ♗h8? 14 ♗ac1 picks up the bishop on c8 and keeps a strong initiative e.g. 14... ♖b6 15 ♗xc8 ♖xb3 16 ab g6 17 ♗d1 ♙g7 18 ♖c7+) 14 ♖xg8 ♙e6 15 ♖h8 ♘c6 (144) with advantage to Black (analysis by Botvinnik).



Black has two pieces for a rook, but more importantly White's queen is trapped. This fine analysis has not been challenged for many years so it looks like this could be the final word on 5 ♙xc4 which in its time beat a World Champion in 23 moves!

5 ... ed
 6 ♖xd4 ♖xd4
 7 ♘xd4 ♘f6
 8 f3 (145)

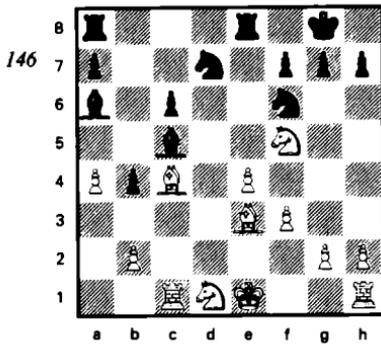
8 ♙xc4 b5! forces the clumsy 9 ♙d3 when 9... b4 frees Black's position significantly. The text is



more accurate. Black now has to decide whether to try to defend the c-pawn by ... b5 or allow White to recapture unhindered. 8... ♙c5 9 ♙e3 ♘bd7 10 ♙xc4 0-0 11 ♖f2 ♘b6 12 ♙b3 was a shade better for White in Portisch-Saidy, San Antonio 1972, although this is not too bad for Black, who has no real weaknesses.

8... b5?! 9 a4 b4 10 ♘d1 ♙a6 is more critical; it is more complex, but if White is able to organize himself to recapture successfully on c4 then Black will probably suffer from his queen-side pawn weaknesses. Present day theory suggests that accurate play will punish Black e.g. 11 ♙f4! ♙c5 12 ♘f5 0-0 13 ♗c1 ♗e8 14 ♙e3 (avoiding any nastiness with ... ♘xe4) 14... ♘bd7 15 ♙xc4 (146) (finally) and Nei-Rojzman, USSR 1964, is judged as a clear advantage for White.

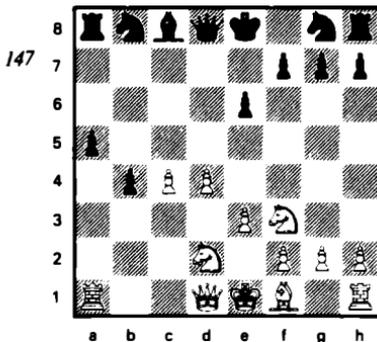
As a Slav player you should not be dismayed by this sad position. 3... dc!? only yields a slight ad-



vantage for White after very precise play and Black can always seek refuge in the Portisch–Saidy endgame, which is probably only slightly preferable for White at master level.

Postscript

After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 dc is less appropriate here as the knight has not been committed to c3. After 4 e3 b5 5 a4 Black's best is 5... e6 6 ab cb 7 b3 ♗b4+ 8 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 9 ♘bxd2 a5 10 bc b4 (147)



This hair-raising position is actually better for White after 11 c5. Black's queenside pawns are only usually a factor in a simplified ending, whereas White's central preponderance is dangerous in the middlegame. The double-edged nature of this position may appeal to some risk-lovers, and a comparison with the sharp Abrahams Variation from the Semi-Slav would be wise.

3... dc 4 e3 ♗g4 5 ♗xc4 e6 is similar to a solid variation of the Queen's Gambit Accepted, where Black's queen's knight will have to develop to the rather passive d7 instead of the normally more active c6; again further reading would be wise before venturing this line.

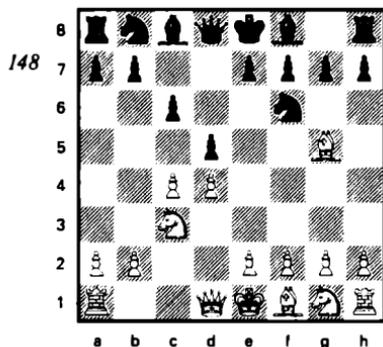
Conclusion

None of the three lines 3... e6, 3... e5 or 3... dc are considered entirely satisfactory for Black, but theory has condemned Black's chances too strongly. The double-edged lines in this chapter are sufficiently testing and should achieve a good practical score at the risk of a slight positional inferiority.

10 3 ♖c3 ♗f6

After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖c3 ♗f6 White normally plays 4 ♗f3. Here we shall examine two alternatives, the second of which is quite important.

A 4 ♗g5 (148)



This can be viewed as an attempt to obtain a favourable Queen's Gambit Declined by 4 ... e6 5 e3 or the sharp Anti-Meran gambit 4 ... e6 5 ♗f3 dc 6e4.

4 ... dc!

4 ... ♗e4 5 ♗xe4 de has been played. Note that 6e3? ♗a5+ wins. 6 ♗d2 ♗f5 7e3 ♗d7 8 f3 h6 9 ♗h4 g5 10 ♗g3 e5! 11 0-0-0! (11 de ♗b6 12 0-0-0 ♗c5 favours Black) 11 ... ♗e7 12 fe ♗xe4 13 ♗d3 was slightly favourable for

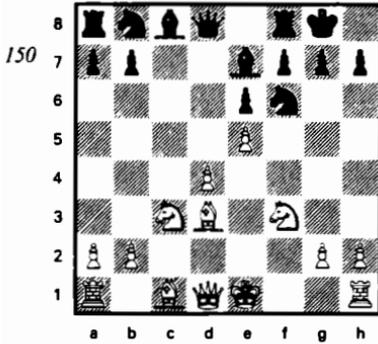
White in Nei-Cikovani, USSR 1967.

5 a4

5 e4 b5 is a gambit that is inferior, from White's viewpoint, to the Anti-Meran gambit (1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♖c3 e6 5 ♗g5 dc 6 e4 b5 where White can force dangerous complications after 7 e5 due to the pin on the queen) as there is no pin on the h4-d8 diagonal. 6 e5 ♗d5 7 a4 h6 leads to interesting complications (Mikenas-Mnacakanjan, USSR 1967).

5 ... ♗a6

This development is reminiscent of 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♖c3 dc 5 a4 ♗a6!? The alternative 5 ... ♗a5 6 ♗f3 ♗e4 7 ♗d2 ♗xd2 8 ♗xd2 g6 gives White a central advantage at the cost of the two bishops, e.g. 9 e3 ♗g7 10 ♗xc4 ♗c7 11 ♗e2 0-0 12 0-0 ♗d7 13 a5, which is slightly preferable for White as counterplay is not so easy for Black, e.g. 13 ... e5 14 d5. 6 ... ♗e6!? has been suggested as a possible improvement.



12 0-0 ♖c6

13 a3!

Taking the b4 square away from Black.

13 ... ♗b6

14 ♖h1 ♗d7

15 ♗e4

Undermining Black's d5 strong point.

15 ... ♗xc3

16 bc ♗a5

17 ♗g5!

Now Black's kingside looks fragile.

17 ... h6

17 ... ♗xg5 18 ♗xg5 ♗c6 19 ♗c2 will soon mate on the Black squares after 20 ♗h5.

18 ♗h7 ♗c6

19 ♗c2!

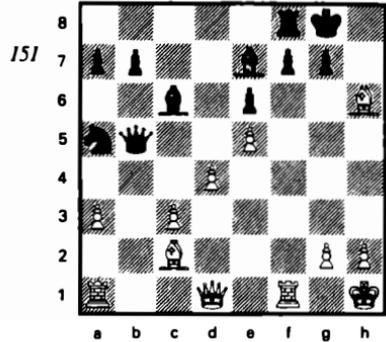
Of course not 19 ♗xf8 ♗xe4 20 ♗d7 ♗c6. After 19 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 20 ♗xf8 ♗f3 White would have technical problems in converting his material advantage into a win.

19 ... ♗b5

After 19 ... ♗f moves 20 ♗g4 and Black is helpless against the many kingside threats.

20 ♗xf8 ♗xf8

21 ♗xh6! (151)



Not entirely necessary, but the attack crashes through in fine style.

21 ... gh

22 ♗g4+ ♖h8

22 ... ♗g5 23 h4 etc.

23 ♗h5 ♖g7

23 ... ♗g5 is not met by 24 h4 because of 24 ... ♗d5, but instead by 24 ♗f6! ♖g7 25 ♗g6+ mating.

24 h4

24 ♗f3 ♗xf3 25 gf ♗h8 and the king escapes.

24 h4 intends ♗f4-g4 without having to worry about ... ♗g5.

24 ... f5?

Lukacs suggests a defence for Black with 24 ... ♗b2! 25 ♗a1 f5 (25 ... ♗c4 26 ♗g4+ ♖h8 27 ♗f4 ♖g7 28 ♗f3 ♗xf3 29 gf and now 29 ... ♗h8 fails to 30 ♗g1+ ♖f8 31 ♗g6) 26 ef+ ♗xf6 27 ♗g4+ ♖h8 (27 ... ♖f8 28 ♗xe6! ♗xc1 29 ♗c8+ wins) 28 ♗e4 but White still keeps a strong initiative.

25 exf6+ ♔xf6

26 ♖g4+ ♜f8

26 ... ♜h8 27 ♔xf6 ♕xf6 28 ♖g6 ♕xg2+ 29 ♜g1 is a pretty win suggested by Lukacs.

27 ♔xf6+ ♕xf6

28 ♖xe6 ♜g7

29 ♖g4+ ♜f8

30 ♖f4

Black resigned as 30 ... ♜g7 31 ♔f1 wins immediately. A fine attacking win illustrating the weakness of 4 ... ♕g4.

Returning to diagram 149:

4 ... ♕f5

This also represents a loss of time, but for a different reason.

5 cd! cd

(5 ... ♖xd5 6 ♕c4 e6 7 ♖ge2 with expansion by e4 to follow).

6 ♖b3 ♕c8

A retrograde step but 6 ... b6? 7 ♕b5+ is worse.

The temporary 'gambit' 6 ... ♖b6 was convincingly shown to be weak by Tal; 7 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 8 ♖xd5 ♖b4+ 9 ♕d2 ♖xb2 10 ♔c1 ♕d7 11 ♖f3 e6 12 ♖c4 ♖c6 13 ♕e2, when White has a strong initiative as he threatens 0-0 and

♔b1 (Tal-Fuchs, Kislovodsk 1964).

7 ♖f3 e6

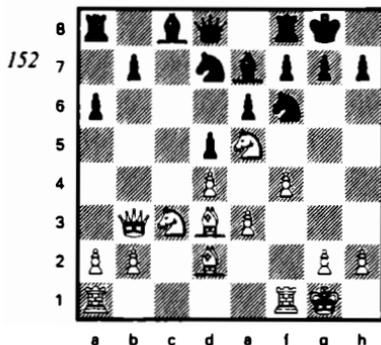
8 ♖e5 ♕e7

9 ♕d3 0-0

10 f4 a6

11 0-0 ♖bd7

12 ♕d2 (152)



With a very pleasant advantage for White (Boleslavsky-Visnjukas, USSR 1971). Black's sortie ... ♕f5 provokes White to play essentially a type of exchange variation, but with two tempi more.

Both bishop developments 4 ... ♕f5 and 4 ... ♕g4 seem dubious. The next chapter deals with 4 ... g6 which is an altogether sounder continuation.

11 The Slav–Grünfeld or Schlechter System

This variation occurs when Black switches openings and plays an early ... g6 and ... ♗g7. Although slightly unusual, it is occasionally employed, particularly against the second of our illustrative move orders.

We shall examine two lines of play:

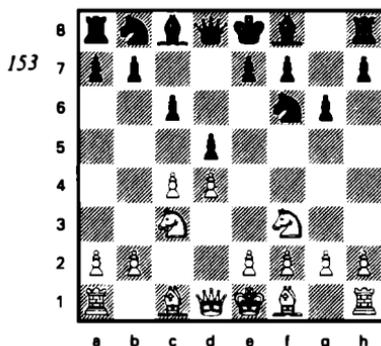
A 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♟f3 ♟f6 4 ♟c3 g6!? and

B 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♟c3 ♟f6 4 e3 g6

Variation A can be thought of as Black avoiding the true Slav, whereas variation B is an awkward move order employed by some masters playing White to avoid the Czech variation (1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♟f3 ♟f6 4 ♟c3 dc 5 a4 ♟f5), which has a solid reputation.

Variation A: Black switches plans

1	d4	d5
2	c4	c6
3	♟f3	♟f6
4	♟c3	g6 (153)



White can play 5 e3, which transposes to variation B. However, he can hope for a slight advantage by successfully developing his queen's bishop outside the pawn chain on f4 or g5. We have two suggestions. First:

5 ♜b3

This move is given an exclamation mark in Kasparov and Keene's classic book *Batsford Chess Openings*.

5	...	♗g7
6	cd	cd
7	♗g5	♟c6
8	e3	e6
9	♗d3	

White has a very comfortable position and Black has some problems, particularly in view of his queen's bishop being locked inside the pawn chain. White is slightly better.

Alternatively, from diagram 153:

5 cd cd

5 ... ♖xd5 6 e4 ♗xc3 7 bc gives us an exchange variation of the Grünfeld where Black should have preferred the more active ... c5 rather than ... c6.

6 ♗f4 ♗g7

7 e3 0-0

8 h3

A dual purpose move, as ... ♗g4 is stopped and the bishop on f4 is protected from a possible ... ♗h5.

8 ... ♗c6

8 ... ♗b6 can be met by 9 ♗b3! ♗xb3 10 ab ♗c6 11 ♗e5 ♗xe5 12 de ♗d7 13 ♗xd5 ♗xe5 and 14 ♗b6 gave White a big advantage in Jimenez-Cobo, Havana 1962.

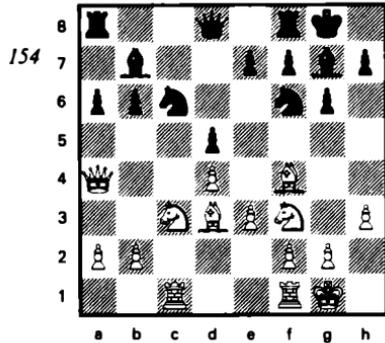
9 ♗d3 b6

9 ... ♗f5?! 10 ♗xf5 gf 11 ♗d3 e6 12 g4! yields the initiative for White (Boleslavsky-Livsic, USSR 1960). Another inferior plan is 9 ... ♗e6 10 0-0 ♗d7 11 ♗c1 ♗f5 12 ♗e5 ♗e6 13 ♗xc6 bc 14 ♗a4, with a clear positional advantage (Najdorf-Balshan, Nethanya 1975).

10 0-0 ♗b7

11 ♗a4 a6

12 ♗ac1 (154)

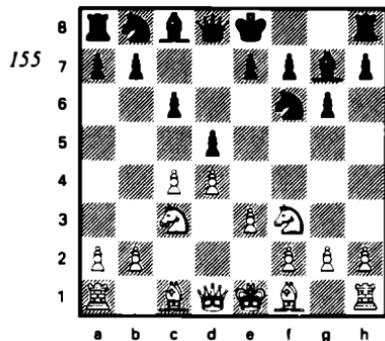


I prefer 12 ♗f1, but White had a small positional advantage in Osnoš-Malich, Zinnowitz 1971.

These variations seem to suggest that White can obtain some advantage against Black's set-up.

Variation B

1 d4 d5
2 c4 c6
3 ♗c3 ♗f6
4 e3 g6
5 ♗f3 ♗g7(155)



Here White no longer has the option of developing his queen's

bishop so actively, and Black's set-up seems more justified. This seems very important, as after White's move order Black is denied the option of the 'Slav Accepted' variations (1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 dc). It seems that he has only two good moves at move four: 4... e6 and 4... g6, as Chapter 10 condemns the moves 4... ♗f5 and 4... ♗g4 as weak. Although 4... e6 is a reasonable enough move this represents a transposition into a Semi-Slav—an opening Black may be unwilling to play. 4... g6 has the advantage of being less well-mapped than 4... e6, and although it lacks the tactical complexity of main line Slavs it is positionally rather sound.

This chapter therefore represents an important option for Slav players unsure of how to meet 3 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 e3.

We shall examine four main variations: A 6 cd, B 6 ♗d3, C 6 ♗e2 and D 6 ♗d3 or 6 ♗e2 met by 6... 0-0 7 0-0 dc, as well as considering E others, e.g. 6 ♗b3, 6 ♗d2 and 6 b4.

A 6 cd

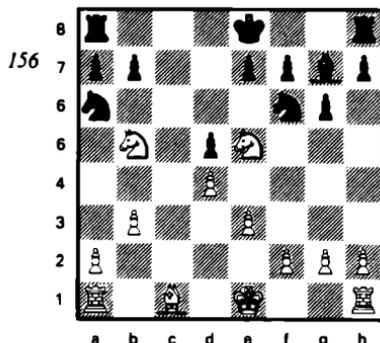
An experiment of the Yugoslav Grandmaster Kurajica.

6 ... cd!

Safest. 6... ♗xd5 7 h4!? ♗g4 8 ♗b3 ♗b6 9 h5 with dangerous attacking chances is also interesting. Kurajica-Yusupov, Sarajevo 1984, led to a better ending for

White after 9... ♗xh5 10 ♗g5 e6 11 ♗xe6 fe 12 ♗xe6+ ♗e7 13 ♗xe7+ ♗xe7 14 f3 ♗8d7 15 g4 ♗xg4 16 fg ♗ae8 17 ♗d2! ♗d8 18 ♗d3 due to the two bishops and central passed pawn.

- 7 ♗b5+ ♗d7
- 8 ♗b3 ♗xb5
- 9 ♗xb5+ ♗d7
- 10 ♗e5 ♗xb5
- 11 ♗xb5 ♗a6
- 12 b3 (156)



White's temporary initiative is repulsed by accurate defence (Kurajica-Djuric, Yugoslavia 1984).

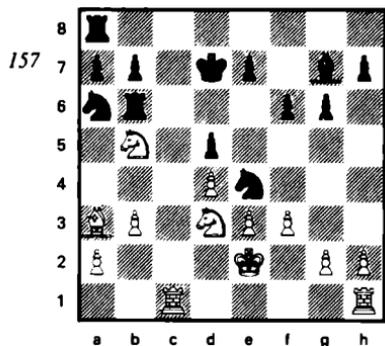
- 12 ... ♗e4
- 13 ♗a3

13 f3 ♗c5 14 ♗e2 ♗e6 15 ♗a3 f6! 16 ♗d3 ♗d7 equalizes. The secret of the position seems to be to aim for the king on d7.

- 13 ... f6
- 14 ♗d3 ♗d7!
- 15 ♗c1

15 f3 ♗c6 seems to be OK for Black, 16 fe de 17 ♗xa7+ ♗xa7 18 ♗f2 ♗c7 prevents 19 ♗xe7 due to 19... ♗d5.

- 15 ... ♖hc8
 16 ♜e2 ♖c6
 17 f3 ♖b6 (157)



An interesting manoeuvre, exploiting the tactical weakness of the knight on b5.

- 18 ♗c7

18 fe ♖xb5 19 ed ♖xd5 with equality seems better.

- 18 ... ♗xc7
 19 fe de
 20 ♗c5+ ♜e8
 21 ♗xe4 ♗d5
 22 ♗c3 ♗xc3+
 23 ♖xc3 ♖a6!

Forcing an embarrassing move:

- 24 b4 f5

25 ... b5 would fix White's pawn on b4 and seriously block in the bishop.

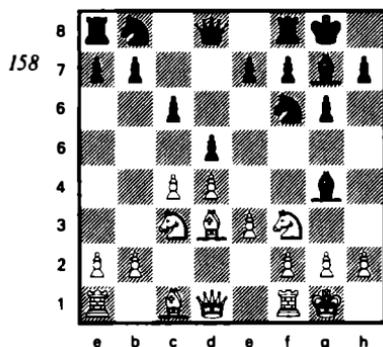
- 25 b5 ♖b6
 26 ♖b1 a6
 27 ♖c7 ♗f6
 28 ♗c5 ♖xb5
 29 ♖xb7!

A draw was agreed, as 29 ... ♖xb1 30 ♖xb1 ♜d7 31 ♖b6 ♜c7 looks rather drawish. 6 cd looks

worthy of further investigation, as Black had to defend imaginatively to equalize.

B

- 6 ♗d3 0-0
 7 0-0 ♗g4 (158)



7 ... ♗a6 or 7 ... ♗bd7 are met by 8 cd as 8 ... cd leaves the knight poorly placed, and 7 ... ♗bd7 8 cd ♗xd5 9 e4 gives a pleasant initiative.

The passive 7 ... e6 doesn't solve the problem of the bishop on c8. This can be well met by 8 b3, e.g. 8 ... ♗bd7 9 ♗a3 ♖e8 10 ♖c1, giving harmonious development for White 10 ... e5?! is then refuted by 11 de ♗xe5 12 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 13 cd ♗xd5 14 ♗e4! ♗f5 15 ♗d6! with unpleasant threats.

For the lovers of new or unusual ideas, Ftacnik-Murey, New York 1987, is for you. 7 ... a6!? 8 ♗d2 b5 9 cd cd 10 ♗e5 ♗b7 11 f4 ♗bd7, with a complicated struggle in prospect. For 7 ... ♗f5 see the next game.

- 8 h3 ♗xf3
 9 ♜xf3 e6

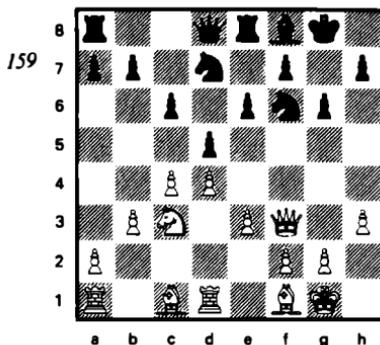
Black bolsters his centre temporarily in order to develop his pieces. This move is a prelude to ... ♖bd7 which loses the d-pawn if played immediately. The imaginative 9 ... ♗d6!? has been tried, to meet 10 ♙d1 by 10 ... ♖bd7 or 10 ♙d2 by 10 ... dc 11 ♙xc4 ♖bd7 and a quick ... e5. One practical example turned out badly for Black, as after 9 ... ♗d6 10 ♙d1 he lost a tempo by 10 ... ♙d8?! (instead of 10 ... ♖bd7!) 11 ♙d2 ♖bd7 12 cd cd 13 ♖b5 ♗b6 14 a4! ♙dc8 15 a5 ♗d8 16 a6 with a strong initiative (Cernin–Drasko, Stary Smokovec 1984).

Smyslov refined this idea against Ribli in game 8 of their match in London 1983; he played 9 ... ♙e8, and after 10 ♙d1 ♗d6. This game continued thus: 11 e4 de 12 ♙xe4 ♖bd7 13 a3?! (13 b3 is a better move according to Ribli) 13 ... ♖xe4 14 ♖xe4 ♗e6 15 b3 b5! and Black may already stand better.

9 ... dc is an alternative strategy discussed in Section D.

- 10 ♙d1 ♙e8
 11 b3 ♖bd7
 12 ♙f1 ♙f8?! (159)

A rather dubious move. Black could well have tried 12 ... e5 as in Ribli–Smyslov, game 6, London 1983, e.g. 13 cd e4 14 ♗e2 ♖xd5 15 ♖xd5 cd 16 ♗b5 ♖b6 17 ♙a3 a6 18 ♗a5 ♙c8 19 ♙ac1 ♗f6 20 ♙c5 ♙f8 21 ♙xc8 ♙xc8



22 ♙c5! and White has skilfully kept a slight edge.

- 13 ♙b2 ♙d6
 14 e4

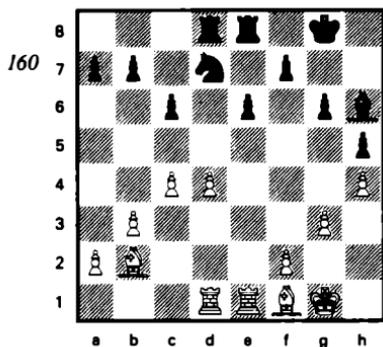
White has the bishop pair and some initiative—Black will also have to be careful about the long Black diagonal.

- 14 ... de
 15 ♖xe4 ♖xe4
 16 ♗xe4 ♗e7
 17 ♙ab1!

White retains the Black-squared bishop in L. Portisch–Hort, Reggio Emilia 1984/5, and as a result Black has some practical problems.

- 17 ... ♙ad8
 18 ♙e1 ♗g5
 19 ♙bd1 h5
 20 h4 ♗h6
 21 ♗f3 ♗f4
 22 ♗xf4 ♙xf4
 23 g3 ♙h6 (160)

Now in the ending 23 ... ♙d6 may have been better. This game is a good illustration of what can go wrong for Black in this variation. He never quite frees



his position and White has the two bishops deep into the ending.

24 d5! ed?

Portisch suggests 24 ... cd 25 cd e5 as a better defence.

25 ♖xe8+ ♗xe8

26 cd c5

26 ... cd 27 ♗b5 wins material.

27 ♗b5 ♗d8

28 ♗c6!

Clever, and forcing a hopeless weakening of the White squares.

28 ... b6

29 ♖g2 ♗g7

30 ♗c1 ♖e5

31 ♗b5 ♖f8

32 d6 ♖d7

33 ♗e1 a6?

Desperation, but 33 ... ♖f6 34 ♗f4 ♖d5 35 ♗g5! f6 36 ♗c1 is strong as 36 ... ♗xd6 37 ♗e8+ ♖f7 38 ♗a8 (threatens ♗xa7+ and ♗e8+) 38 ... f5 39 ♗xa7+ ♖g8 40 ♗c4 with a winning attack.

34 ♗xa6 ♖f6 35 ♗d1 ♖e4 36 d7 ♗d4 37 ♗h6+! ♖g8 38 ♗c8 ♖d6 39 ♗g5 And Hort resigned. 39 ... f6 40 ♗xd4 cd 41 ♗xf6

♗xc8 42 dc (♖)+ ♖xc8 43 ♗xd4 wins easily. A smooth performance by Portisch, but Black became rather passive.

Instead of 7 ... ♗g4, Black can try

7 ... ♗f5

A completely different strategy, which deserves a separate section.

8 ♗xf5

8 b3 allows 8 ... ♖e4!? or the simpler 8 ... ♗xd3 9 ♖xd3 dc 10 bc ♖bd7 11 ♗d1 c5 with equal play (Lisitsin-Zuhovicki, USSR 1947).

8 ... gf

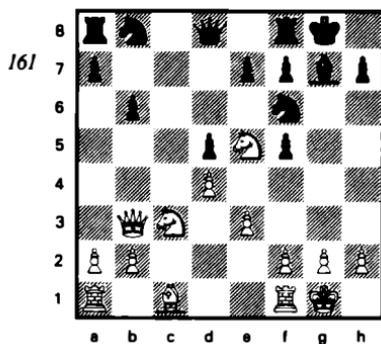
9 cd

9 b3 was Alekhine's suggestion: 9 ... ♖e4 10 ♗b2 e6 11 ♖e2 ♖d7 gives us a pawn structure very much like a Stonewall variation. Black can be reasonably happy with the outcome of the opening (Najdorf-Sanguinetti, Mar del Plata 1957).

9 ... cd

10 ♖b3 b6

11 ♖e5 (161)



In the short-term, Black has slight development problems, but if he can catch up in development then White's remaining bishop is restricted by his pawn structure.

11 ♖d2 ♗c6 12 ♜fcl ♞c8 13 ♞c2 is another way of developing.

11 ... e6
12 ♖d2 ♗fd7
13 ♗d3

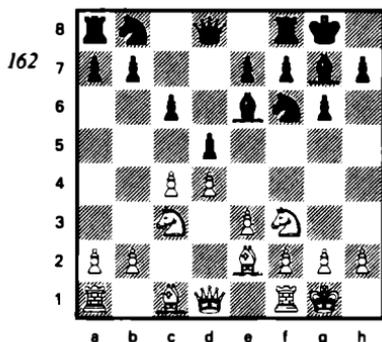
13 f4 is unadvisable as 13 ... ♗xe5 14 fe f6! is promising only for Black.

13 ... ♗c6 and Black has equalized (Petrosian–Botvinnik, USSR Championship 1952).

So against 6 ♖d3 both 7 ... ♖g4 and 7 ... ♖f5 give a solid and satisfactory game with good chances of full equality.

C

6 ♖e2 0-0
7 0-0 ♖e6!(162)



Black has many moves here but this is perhaps the best.

7 ... b6 8 b4 ♖b7 9 ♗b3 ♗bd7

10 a4 ♗b8 11 ♖b2 e6 12 ♜fd1 a5 13 cd cd 14 ♜ac1 gave White a slight but enduring edge in J. Pinter–G. Flear, Szirak 1986.

7 ... e6 8 b4 b6 9 a4 is very similar. White retains a space advantage.

7 ... ♖g4 can be compared to 7 ... ♖g4 in the variation with White's bishop on d3. Now White can feel more secure about playing ♗b3 without risking a compromised pawn structure after ... ♖xf3, e.g. 8 cd cd 9 ♗b3 b6 (a slight concession weakening the White squares) 10 h3 ♖xf3 11 ♖xf3 e6 12 ♖e2! (redeploying the bishop on the f1–a6 diagonal is the most precise) Timman retained slightly the better game against Smyslov, a specialist of the Slav–Grünfeld after 12 ... a6 13 ♖d2 ♗c6 14 ♜fcl ♗a5 15 ♗b4 (Timman–Smyslov, Las Palmas 1984). The two bishops and Black's sensitive queenside pawns may cause him some uneasy moments.

8 b3

8 cd cd 9 ♗e5 ♗bd7 10 ♗d3 (keeping pressure) 10 ... ♖f5 11 ♗b3 is suggested by ECO as favourable to White. On 9 ... ♗fd7 10 ♗d3 ♗c6 11 ♖f3 is awkward.

ECO suggests 8 cd ♖xd5!? (9 ♗xd5 cd allows the queen's knight to come to the best square, c6, and the two bishops are not so effective here) 9 ♗c2 ♖xf3 (other-

wise 10 e4 expanding the centre)
 10 ♖xf3 ♗bd7 11 ♜d1 ♜c7 12 e4
 e5 13 d5 ♞ac8 (Larsen–Smyslov,
 Bugojno 1984). Compare with ...
 ♖g4 and ... ♖xf3 systems.

8 ... c5!?

9 ♖a3

Smyslov equalized easily after
 the less critical 9 ♖b2 ♗c6 10 dc
 dc 11 bc ♗d7 12 ♜cl ♗xc5 13
 ♞d1 ♖d7 (Balashov–Smyslov,
 Moscow 1981).

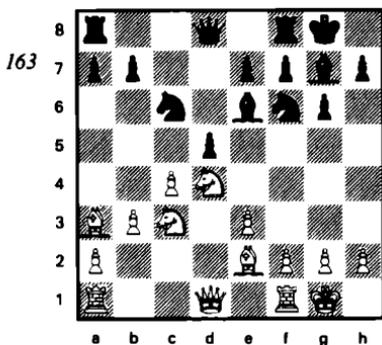
Black's audacious reply 8 ... c5
 (and if 9 dc ♗e4) was seen in Ree–
 Boersma, Netherlands 1981,
 when Black went astray with 9 ...
 dc 10 ♖xc5 ♗a6 11 ♖a3 ♜a5 12
 ♖b2 cb 13 ab ♜b6 14 ♗d2. Black
 had lost control of the centre and
 was forced back.

9 ... cd

10 ed ♗c6

or

10 ♗xd4 ♗c6!?(163)



Black has achieved a dynamic
 development.

D

6 ♖e2

(or 6 ♖d3) 0-0

7 0-0 dc

8 ♖xc4 ♖g4

Many of the lines in the Slav–
 Grünfeld bear close resemblance
 to others and have many similar
 characteristics. The ideas and
 strategies are more important
 than precise move orders. This
 line may appeal to those who like
 a simplified opening repertoire;
 the same strategy can be applied
 against the two main moves 6
 ♖e2 and 6 ♖d3. Black releases
 the tension in the centre, plays ...
 ♖g4 and ... ♖xf3 and follows up
 with ... ♗bd7 and ... e5.

Unfortunately, the open centre
 may favour the side with the two
 bishops and even an interesting
 (and dangerous to the unpre-
 pared) pawn sacrifice is probably
 not quite sound. I recently pre-
 pared and played the gambit line,
 but was disappointed when my
 opponent knew the line and kept
 the advantage.

9 h3 ♖xf3

10 ♜xf3 ♗bd7

11 ♞d1

11 ♖d2 e5 12 ♞ad1 ♜e7 13
 ♖b3 ♞ad8 seems satisfactory for
 Black (Gulko–Geller, USSR
 Championship 1978).

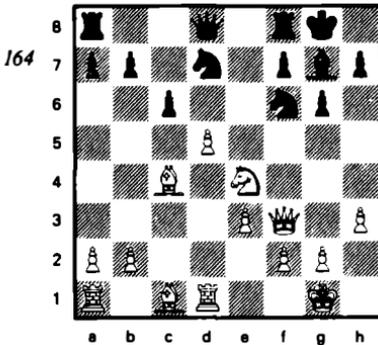
11 ... e5

12 d5

The most testing. 12 de ♗xe5
 13 ♜e2 ♜e7 is fine for Black as
 it's difficult for White to activate
 his bishops.

12 ... e4!?
 12 ... ♖c7 13 dc bc 14 e4 is structurally dubious for Black and 12 ... cd 13 ♗d5! causes problems.

13 ♗xe4! (164)



Black has reasonable play after 13 ♖f4 ♖e7 14 dc bc 15 ♗d2 ♗b6 16 ♗b3 a5!, an idea of Drasko's to improve on 16 ... c5 17 ♗e1 ♗ab8 18 ♗abl ♗fe8 19 ♖d6 of Portisch-Drasko, Sarajevo 1986, with a better ending.

13 ... ♗xe4

13 ... ♗e5 14 ♗xf6+ ♗xf6 15 ♖e2 ♗xc4 16 ♖xc4 cd 17 ♗xd5 ♖b6 is possible. (Henley-Mnakanjan, Tbilisi 1983), when Black has some play for the pawn. Readers should compare with the main line.

14 ♖xe4 ♗b6
 15 ♗b3 cd
 16 ♗xd5 ♗e8
 17 ♖f3

17 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 wins for Black, e.g. 18 ♗xd8 ♗xe4 19 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 or 18 ♖f3+ ♖f6 or 18 ♖xb7+ ♖e7.

17 ... ♗xd5

18 ♗xd5 ♖e7

18 ... ♖f6 19 ♖xf6 ♗xf6 20 ♗d2 ♗ac8 21 ♗b1! and Black is fighting for a draw at best.

19 ♗b1 ♗ac8

20 b3

20 ♗d2 ♗c2 21 a4 ♗xb2 22 e4 ♗e5 (22 ... ♖xe4 loses a piece after 23 ♖xe4 ♗xe4 24 ♗d8+ ♖g7 25 ♗xb2 ♗xb2 26 ♗c3+) 23 ♖b3 ♗c7 24 ♗e3 was better for White in Muresan-Semenova, Bad Kissingen 1983. However, I intended 23 ... ♗ec8!? which is not so clear.

20 ... ♗c2

21 a4 ♗c3

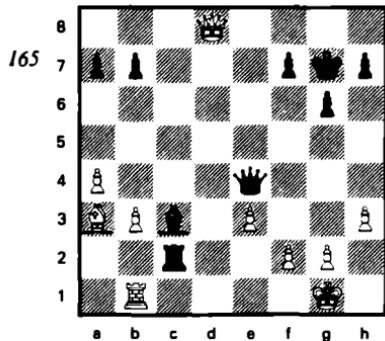
At this point I thought that Black had good counterplay for the sacrificed pawn, but the further course of the game should warn potential gambiteers.

22 ♖d1 ♖e4

23 ♗d8! ♗xd8

24 ♖xd8+ ♖g7

25 ♗a3! (165)



A fine refutation. Black's initiative is extinguished as 25 ...

♙xf2? 26 ♖f8+ ♜g8 27 ♗h6
 mates or 25 ... ♗d2 26 ♜f8+
 ♜f6 27 ♜h8+ ♜g5 28 h4+
 leaves Black's king horribly
 exposed.

- 25 ... ♗b4
 26 ♗b2+ ♗c3
 27 ♗a3 ♗b4
 28 ♗xb4 ♜xb4
 29 ♜d5

White has significant technical difficulties, but has one pawn more and Black has only a depressing defence to look forward to. (Marin-Flear, Szirak Interzonal 1987; White won in 74 moves).

I don't wish to dampen the spirits, but this gambit is not really recommended, as I think that the positions that arise offer few winning (or swindling) chances and with best play White holds on to the pawn or returns it for the initiative as in Muresan-Semenova.

E

Occasionally White tries another strategy. In view of the lack of direct tactical threats (Black is in essence playing a Grünfeld Defence with the slightly tame ... c6), White has a number of other interesting strategic plans. This section is to show that there is scope here for White, but also to prepare the second player to meet these ideas.

6 b4

The Makagonov System. Those

who have read other sections will have already seen this plan of queenside expansion.

- 6 ... 0-0
 7 ♗b2

7 ♜b3 dc 8 ♗xc4 b5 9 ♗e2 a5!
 was already promising for Black (Troianescu-Botvinnik, Budapest 1952).

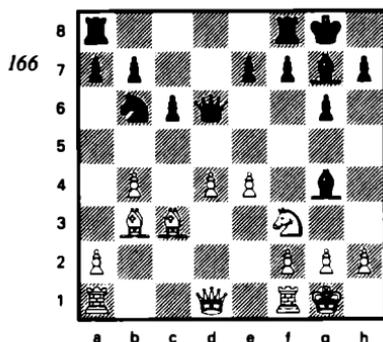
- 7 ... ♗e4
 8 ♗d3 ♗xc3
 9 ♗xc3 dc
 10 ♗xc4 ♗d7
 11 e4

11 0-0 ♗b6 12 ♗b3 ♜d6 13 ♗c1 ♗g4 is similar (Holmov-Korchnoi, USSR Championship 1954). 13 ... ♗e6 was perhaps even better.

- 11 ... ♗b6

11 ... c5!? is suggested by Krogius, exploiting the latent pressure from g7 on the bishop on c3.

- 12 ♗b3 ♗g4
 13 0-0 ♜d6(166)



With satisfactory play, as in Drasko-Gavrikov, Tallinn 1985. Black should not be intimid-

ated by 6 b4, but should instead develop swiftly and keep the White centre under pressure.

6 ♖d2

White just attempts to develop in an uncommittal fashion. This is sometimes associated with Opočensky.

6 ... 0-0

7 ♖d3 ♗e6!?

7 ... dc 8 ♗xc4 ♗g4 or 7 ... ♗g4 8 ♗b3 (8 h3 ♗xf3 9 ♗xf3 dc 10 ♗xc4 ♖bd7 11 0-0 e5 with equal play) 8 ... ♗xf3 should also be considered.

8 ♗g5

8 b3 c5!? looks interesting. See variation C for an analogous position. 8 ♗b3 is another possibility.

8 ... ♗f5

Black is aiming for positions similar to those of variation B, where Black played 7 ... ♗f5. However, here the knight on g5 is slightly misplaced as it normally goes to e5.

In fact, the rather inaccurate 6 ♗d2 (6 ♗d3 or 6 ♗e2 and 7 0-0 seem more natural) can lead to interesting positions which have been poorly investigated.

6 ♗b3

An attempt by the World Champion is always worthy of a mention. We follow the recent game Kasparov-Ljubojevic, Brussels (Swift) 1987.

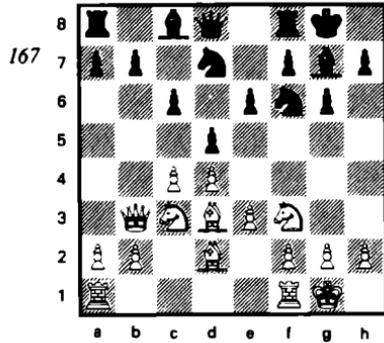
6 ... 0-0

7 ♗d2 e6

8 ♗d3 ♖bd7

9 0-0 (167)

9 ... a5!?



As White is unable to play the space gaining b4, perhaps 9 ... b6 is the most logical way forward, 9 cd ed 10 e4 c5 11 ♖xd5 cd 12 ♖xf6+ ♗xf6 with equal play is then critical.

9 ... c5!? is another idea. Then 10 cd ed 11 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 12 ♗xd5 can be met by 12 ... ♖e5! 13 ♗e4 (13 ♗xd8 ♖xf3+ 14 gf ♗xd8 and d4 falls) 13 ... ♖xf3+ 14 ♗xf3 ♗xd5 15 ♗xd5 ♗d8, as pointed out by Bagirov.

10 ♗fe1

This plan is not effective, and ♗fd1 and ♗ac1 could be preferable in order to reduce Black's chances of successfully playing ... c5 or ... e5.

10 ... ♗e8

11 e4

11 ♗c2 or 11 ♗ac1 are suggested by Nikitin as a shade better for White.

11 ... a4

12 ♗c2

122 *The Slav–Grünfeld or Schlechter System*

12 ♖xa4 d4 13 ♗xc4 b5.

12 ... d4

13 ♖xe4 ♖xe4

14 ♗xc4 c5!

Gaining some breathing space.

15 d5 ♗f6

Draw agreed, although Black has a perfectly satisfactory position as his queen's bishop is about

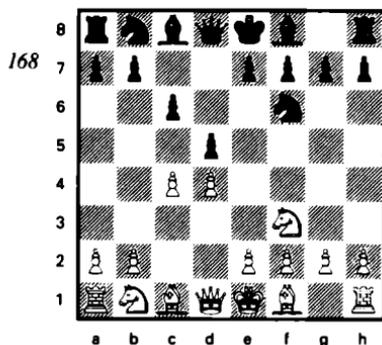
to emerge.

The Slav–Grünfeld is becoming more popular as White players are hoping to force the Meran by means of the tricky move order 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖c3 ♗f6 4 e3 and Black players are hoping to avoid the masses of analysis which follow 4 ... e6.

12 White's fourth move alternatives

A number of players unfamiliar with the main lines will seek a simpler solution to the problem of how to develop. They may decide not to allow Black counterplay by the capture on c4.

We shall examine the position after 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♜f6 (168)



Apart from 4 ♗c3 (Chapters 2–7 and 13) or 4 cxd5 (Chapter 8), White may decide to defend his c-pawn by A 4 ♗c2, B 4 ♗bd2 or D 4 e3. We shall also examine C 4 g3 which can lead to play similar to 4 ♗bd2.

These simple developing moves should be taken seriously, as Black may have problems if he doesn't react correctly.

A

4 ♗c2 g6

Black aims to develop the bishop with gain of time.

4 ... ♗g4 is an interesting alternative. 5 ♗e5 e6 6 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 7 e3 ♗d7 8 ♗c3 f5!? and Black achieves a 'Stonewall-style' set-up (pawns on c6, d5, e6, f5) after exchanging off the inferior White-squared bishop. White retained an edge in Miles–Torre, Bugojno 1984, after 9 f3 ♗gf6 10 ♗d2 ♗d6 11 cd ♗xd5 (11 ... cd 12 ♗b5 ♗b8 13 ♗b4 is irritating) 12 0–0–0, but Torre's idea looks worth a further try.

Without venturing the risky ... f5 Black achieved a solid game in Cserna–Cernin, Copenhagen 1986. 8 ♗e2 (instead of 8 ♗c3) ♗gf6 9 0–0 ♗e7 10 ♗c3 0–0 11 b3 ♗e8 12 ♗b2 ♗f8 and went on to win.

124 *White's fourth move alternatives*

4 ... e6 can lead to a solid but slightly passive Catalan after 5 g3 ♙e7 6 ♙g2 0-0 7 0-0 ♜bd7 etc.

5 ♙f4

On 5 e3 ♙f5 and then 6 ♜b3 ♜b6 gives White nothing.

5 ... ♙f5

See below for the World Champion's choice 5 ... dc.

6 ♜b3 ♜b6

7 e3

The game Lein-Smyslov, Hastings 1981/2, shows a satisfactory Black defence after 7 c5!? That game concluded 7 ... ♜xb3 8 ab ♜bd7 9 b4 ♙g7 10 h3 ♙xb1 (White was preparing ♜b1-d2-b3-a5) 11 ♜xb1 0-0 12 e3 a6 13 ♙d3 ♜e8 14 ♙h2 ♜c8 15 g4!? ♜c7 16 g5 ♙fe8 17 ♜d2 e5 (the natural counter-punch in this type of pawn structure) 18 ♜xe5 ♜xe5 19 de ♙xe5 20 f4 ♙g7 21 h4 Draw agreed, although the final position is far from clear.

7 ... ♜bd7

8 ♜c3 e6

A slight concession, as White threatened the d5 square.

9 c5 ♜xb3

10 ab $\text{♜h5!?$

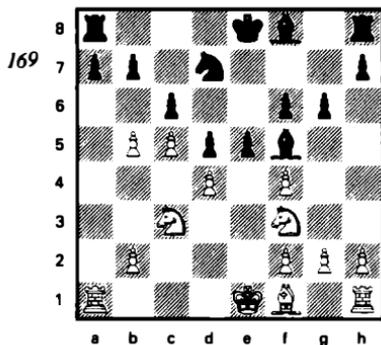
More active than 10 ... a6 11 b4 ♜c8 which was, however, playable and sensible as White is prevented from playing b5.

11 b4 f6

12 b5 ♜xf4

13 ef e5!? (169)

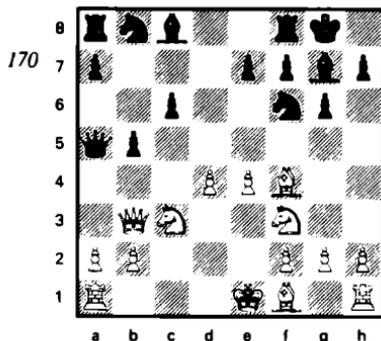
Palatnik-Filipenko, USSR 1979. Black achieves the desired



counter in the centre and has achieved reasonable play in an unclear and complicated queenless middlegame.

A recent game Miles-Kasparov, Match (2) Basle 1986, showed the World Champion trying a different method of defence.

4 ♜c2 g6
 5 ♙f4 dc
 6 ♜xc4 ♙g7
 7 ♜c3 0-0
 8 e4 b5
 9 ♜b3 ♜a5(170)



With an active 'Grünfeld'-looking position for Black. Black had satisfactory counterplay already.

B

4 ♖bd2 ♗f5

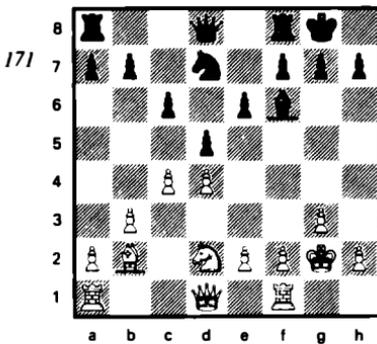
After 4 ... e6 5 e3, 5 ... c5! is instructive. Black spends a tempo to move his c-pawn for the second time as early as move five. However, White's knight is poorly placed on d2 and Black can equalize after 6 ♗e2 ♖c6 7 0-0 cd 8 ed ♗e7.

4 ... ♗f5 is more logical. The knight on d2 exerts no pressure on d5 and so ... ♗f5 can be played painlessly.

5 g3 e6
6 ♗g2 ♖bd7
7 0-0 ♗e7
8 b3 0-0

8 ... h6 could always be played by those fearing ♖h4.

9 ♗b2 ♖e4
10 ♖xe4 ♗xe4
11 ♖d2 ♗xg2
12 ♗xg2 ♗f6 (171)



(Mulo-Timman, Luzern 1982).

Black has no worries.

For plans involving ♖bd2 and e3 compare with line D. A com-

parison with the following section is also useful.

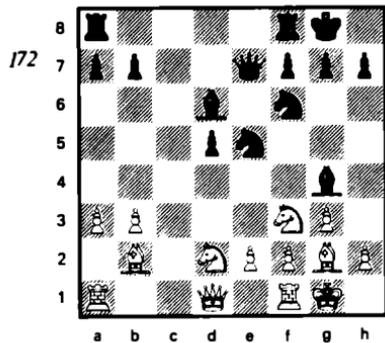
C

4 g3

A hybrid of the Slav and Reti opening as it often results from a 'Reti' move order, e.g. 1 ♖f3 d5 2 g3 ♖f6 3 ♗g2 c6 4 0-0 ♗f5, with a later c4 and d4 to follow.

4 ... ♗f5

Black can also play 4 ... ♗g4. One recent example was 5 ♗g2 e6 6 0-0 ♖bd7 7 b3 ♗d6 8 ♗b2 0-0 9 ♖bd2 ♗e7 (9 ... ♗b8 has also been played intending ... b5, but ... e7 looks a better square as ... ♗a3 could be a useful exchange and the rooks are combined) 10 a3 e5! (10 ... a5 as I have played myself is too slow—11 ♗e1 ♗fd8 12 e4 and White has a slight initiative) 11 cd cd 12 de ♖xe5 (172) 13 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 14 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 15 ♖f3 ♗b2 with adequate play for Black (Plachetka).



A complicated struggle arose after 13 h3 (instead of 13 ♖xe5) 13 ... ♗h5 14 ♖d4 ♖d3! in Kur-

tenkov–Lukacs, Trnava 1986. Positionally, Black has an isolated pawn, but he seems to have sufficient activity for his pieces.

5 ♖g2 e6
6 0-0 ♝bd7
7 ♜c3 h6

On 7... ♗d6 (trying to play as in the note to ... ♗f5) then 8 cd ed 9 ♜h4 can be irritating e.g. 9 ... ♗e6 10 f4 intending f5, with the initiative.

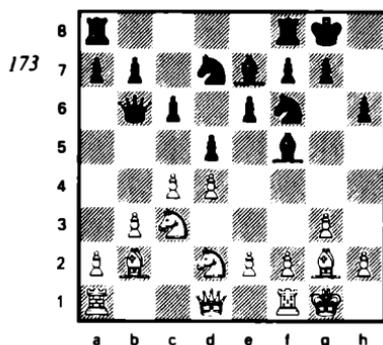
8 ♜d2

8 ♜b3 can be met by 8... ♜b6 and on 9 c5 then 9... ♜xb3 10 ab ♜e4.

8 ... ♗e7
9 b3

9e4 led to drawish simplification is Klamán–Antoshin USSR Championship 1957 after 9... de 10 ♜dx4 0-0 11 ♜e2 ♜xe4 12 ♜xe4 ♜f6.

9 ... 0-0
10 ♗b2 ♜b6 (173)



Black restrains White's central expansion by active means. This position has been seen a couple of

times: Uhlmann–Hort, Halle 1967, continued 11 ♜c1 ♗fd8 (11... ♜xd4 12 ♜xd5 wins) 12 e3 ♗ac8 13 ♗a3 ♗xa3 14 ♜xa3 c5, and Sveshnikov–Smagin, USSR Championship 1984, continued 11 ♗e1 ♗fe8 (11... ♜xd4 12 ♜xd5 ♜xb2 13 ♜xe7+ and 14 ♜xf5 is rather better for White) 12 e3 ♗ad8 13 c5 ♜c7 14 f4 b6 15 b4 ♗b8. Both give Black adequate counterplay.

Compare variation B, which is very similar.

D

4 e3 ♗f5

Black again naturally seeks to develop his queen's bishop actively.

5 ♗d3

There are other systems of development, all of which lead to balanced chances.

5 ♜bd2 e6 6 ♗e2 ♜bd7 7 0-0 (7 ♜h4 ♗e4!) 7... ♜e4 8 ♜xe4 de 9 ♜d2 ♜f6.

5 ♜b3 ♜b6 6 c5 ♜c7! as White cannot develop with gain of time by ♗f4.

5 cd cd 6 ♜b3 ♜c8!? (or 6... ♜b6) 7 ♜c3 e6 8 ♗d2 ♜c6 9 ♗b6 ♗e7.

5 ♜c3 e6 6 ♜h4 ♗e4 (as capturing on e4 embarrasses both the knight on h4 and the a5–e1 diagonal) 7 ♜b3 ♜b6 8 ♜xb6 ab 9 ♗d2 h6.

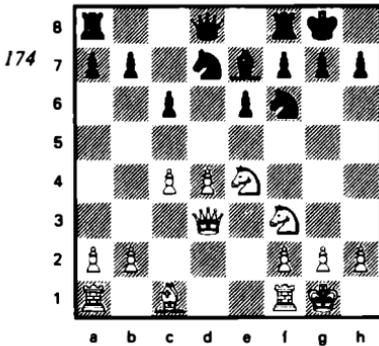
5 ... ♗xd3

Safe but a little dull.

5... e6!? delaying the exchange

for a more favourable moment, and 5 ... ♔g6! are looked at briefly below and may be preferred by those seeking a more complicated game.

- 6 ♖xd3 e6
 7 ♜c3 ♝bd7
 8 0-0 ♔e7
 9 e4 de
 10 ♜xe4 0-0 (174)



10 ... ♜xe4 11 ♖xe4 ♜f6 12 ♖e2 also led to a quick draw in Romanishin-Vaganjan, USSR Championship 1980/1.

- 11 ♔f4 ♜xe4
 12 ♖xe4 ♜f6
 13 ♖e2 ♖a5
 14 ♜e5 ♞ad8
 15 ♞fd1 c5
 16 dc

Draw agreed

(Gligoric-Smyslov, Vienna 1957). Smyslov again shows a safe route to equality.

However, the practical player may prefer a rather more tense struggle than this 'wood-chopping', and he may like to consider the following ideas.

5 ... e6!

6 ♜c3

6 ♔xf5 ef weakens Black's pawn structure slightly, but gives good control of e4 and White's dark-squared bishop may be a long-term problem.

- 6 ... ♔e7
 7 0-0 0-0
 8 b3 ♜bd7
 9 ♔b2 ♖a5!?

And in Milic-Kottnauer, Helsinki 1952, White lost patience and played 10 ♔xf5. I prefer 10 a3.

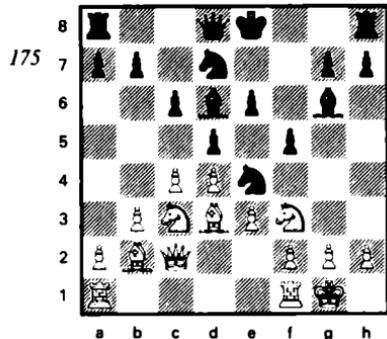
- 5 ... ♔g6!
 6 ♜c3 e6
 7 0-0 ♜bd7
 8 b3

On 8 ♖e2 Black could try 8 ... ♔b4! to restrain the e4 advance.

- 8 ... ♔d6
 9 ♔b2 ♜e4!

9 ... 0-0 allows 10 ♔xg6, when Black's pawn structure is compromised. It is wise not to castle too early after having played ... ♔g6.

10 ♖c2 f5 (175)



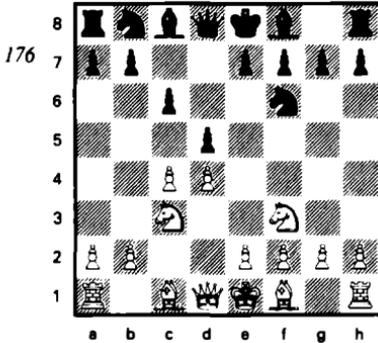
And the Stonewall structure enables Black to get an interesting game.

Gaining equality is not necessarily the problem against these systems; occasionally 'equalizing'

can lead to a dull game. So the slightly riskier but more dynamic 5... e6 and 5... ♗g6 should suit those players who like to play to win as Black.

13 Black's fourth move alternatives

- 1 d4 d5
- 2 c4 c6
- 3 ♗f3 ♗f6
- 4 ♗c3 (176)



In the diagram position we have spent some time studying 4 ... dc (Chapters 2-7). This is known by many names (Pachman calls it 'Alapin's System' for instance) but the most correct name is the 'Slav Accepted'—Black takes a pawn, so he is accepting a gambit, although usually he doesn't keep the pawn for very long.

So what constitutes a 'Slav

Declined' you may ask? Well, presumably all other moves!

The most usual move in this position is 4 ... dc, but some other moves are occasionally played which change the nature and even the name of the opening!

If Black were to try 4 ... g6 and follow up with ... ♗g7 then his set-up is reminiscent of the Grünfeld Defence (1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♗c3 d5). This is dealt with in Chapter 11. By fianchettoing the king's bishop the character of the positions arising is completely changed.

Another move which changes Black's strategy is 4 ... e6, when we have a position which the reader should note can come about in a variety of ways (for instance 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 ♗f3 c6 or 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗c3 e6 4 ♗f3 ♗f6). This is the starting point of the so-called 'Semi-Slav', the main obvious difference being that Black's queen's bishop is unlikely to be developed

outside the pawn chain in the immediate future. This is an opening which can lead to great complications, but which is too difficult in nature to be dealt with here. Tim Harding's comprehensive book entitled *Queen's Gambit Declined: Semi-Slav* published in Batsford's Algebraic Chess Opening series deals with these positions in great detail.

However for the reader who wishes simply to know an effective way of avoiding Black's theory I suggest 5 ♖b3, which both avoids the Semi-Slav and gives the first player good chances of keeping an edge. This is dealt with in Chapter 14.

What about Black's other alternatives? Well, 4 ... ♗f5 and 4 ... ♗b6 have been employed occasionally and could surprise an ill-prepared first player, so these require some further study. The rather fashionable 4 ... a6!? looks surprising, but is probably not bad. I would recommend 4 ... a6 for players wishing to go their own way, as the theory hasn't been that well examined.

Before we examine the reasonable moves we should mention the cross:

4 ... ♗bd7?!

Too passive.

5 cd cd

In an exchange variation Black's queen's knight should be

on c6 but 5 ... ♗xd5 6 e4 is very pleasant for White.

6 ♗f4 e6
7 e3 ♗e7
8 h3 a6
9 a4 0-0
10 ♗d3

Black has a passive position with no redeeming features.

Alternatively:

4 ... ♗g4?

Tactically dubious.

5 ♗e5 ♗f5
6 cd cd
7 e4!

This sharp thrust is based on exploiting Black's weaknesses on b7 and f7.

7 ... ♗xe4
8 ♗xe4 de

8 ... ♗xe4 9 ♗b5+ is worse.

9 ♗b3 ♗e6
10 ♗xb7 ♗d7
11 ♗c6! ♗c8
12 ♗a6

and White wins the exchange (Bondarevsky-Ovanesjan, USSR 1947).

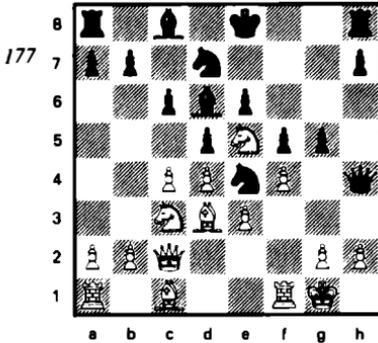
Another possibility for Black is

4 ... ♗e4?!

Black aims for some sort of 'Stonewall' set-up. The Stonewall is a line-up of pawns at c6, d5, e6, f5 and earned its name in view of the wall-like barrier Black constructs. However, it weakens the Black squares, particularly e5.

A game from the turn of the century continued thus;

5 e3 e6
 6 ♖d3 f5
 7 ♜e5! ♜h4!
 8 ♜c2 ♜d7
 9 0-0 ♖d6
 10 f4 g5!? (177)



(Pillsbury–Marshall, Paris 1900). By playing f4, White bolstered his knight on e5 at the cost of giving away e4. Black's bishop on c8 remains hemmed in and White must be better after say 11 ♖d2. However, Black's imaginative play has given him some tactical chances on the kingside.

Inferior but unusual continuations such as this are not to be underestimated. In the game, White won a pawn but the resulting position wasn't that clear after

11 ♜f3 ♜h5
 12 ♖xe4 fe
 13 ♜xg5 ♜f6
 14 ♜e2 ♜g6

Black's next try is

4 ... ♜b6!?

An unusual move revived by

Gheorghiu against Portisch in the 1960s.

5 ♜b3

Also sensible and strong is 5 e3 ♖g4 6 h3 ♖xf3 7 ♜xf3 e6 8 ♖d3 ♜bd7 9 0-0 with a fine looking position and the two bishops (Marshall–Kostic, Chicago 1916).

5 ... ♜xb3

5 ... ♖f5 is perhaps better. This could also arise from 4 ... ♖f5 5 ♜b3 ♜b6.

6 ab ♖f5

7 c5 ♜a6?

7 ... e6 is better, when Portisch could play for an early b4–b5 or simply ♖f4, e3 and h3 with a space advantage.

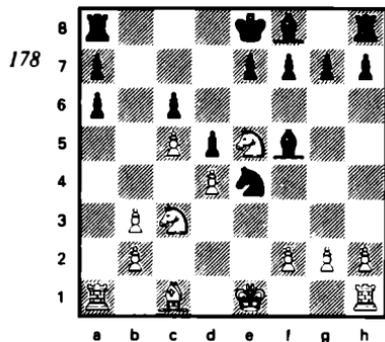
8 e4!

Breaking up Black's pawn structure.

8 ... ♜xe4

9 ♖xa6 ba

10 ♜e5 (178)



With probably a decisive advantage already (Portisch–Gheorghiu, Hamburg 1965).

132 Black's fourth move alternatives

Black has one more possibility, other than 4 ... a6:

4 ... ♗f5

This and 4 ... ♗g4 are attempts to develop Black's queen's bishop outside the pawn chain without giving away the centre. For instance, if White reacts with 5e3 after 5 ... e6 the second player is likely to achieve a playable game painlessly.

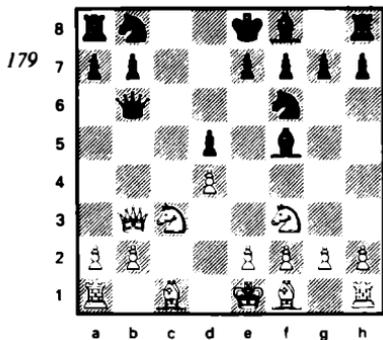
5 cd!

5 ♖b3 is less accurate: 5 ... ♖b6 6 ♖xb6 ab 7 cd ♗xd5 8 ♗xd5 cd 9 e3 ♗c6 10 ♗d2 ♗d7! 11 ♗e2 e6 12 0-0 ♗d6 13 ♗fc1 ♖e7 led to a famous victory for Black in Janowski-Capablanca, New York 1916. Black's isolated b pawns are not easy to get at and Black's rooks have the c- and a-files available to them. Therefore 6 ♖xb6 is not correct, and 6 cd should be tried.

5 ... cd

On 5 ... ♗xd5 6 ♗d2! aiming for e4 is strong.

6 ♖b3 ♖b6!?(179)



The only fighting try for Black, but it's not so easy to refute.

6 ... b6? weakens the White squares horribly. White could then try 7 e4! and Black looks very fragile.

6 ... ♗c8 has been played, but this loss of time allows White to get an advantage by simple development ♗f4, ♗c1, e3 etc.

7 ♗xd5

Taking up the challenge. When I tried this gambit against Darryl Johansen at the Lloyds Bank tournament in 1982 he found a novel idea: 7 ♖xb6 ab 8 ♗b5!? ♗a6 9 ♗d2 ♗e4?! (9 ... e6 was better) 10 e3 e6 11 a3! ♗xd2 12 ♖xd2 ♗c8 13 ♗d3 ♗xd3 14 ♖xd3 f6 15 ♗ac1 and I had a difficult position (Johansen-Flear, Lloyds Bank, London 1982) 8 ♗b5 misplaces the Black knight on the passive square a6.

7 ... ♗xd5

7 ... ♖xb3 8 ♗xf6+ ef 9 ab ♗c2 10 ♗d2! ♗xb3 11 e4 ♗d6 12 d5 with a crushing position (K. Pytel-F. Roeder, Erlangen 1981), which led to an immediate win for White after 12 ... ♗c2? 13 ♗c1 Black resigned (13 ... ♗xe4 14 ♗c8+).

The game that we are following is Pytel-G. Roeder, Erlangen 1981, which represents an improvement.

8 ♖xd5 e6
 9 ♖b3 ♖xb3
 10 ab ♗c2

The difference is that the pawn on e6 is much better than on f6; Black now has more central control.

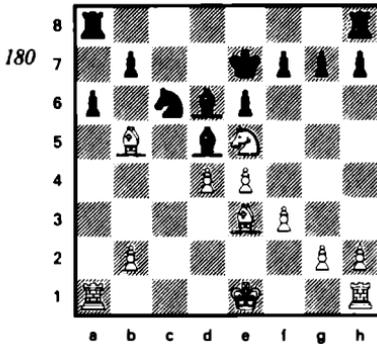
11 e3

11 ♖d2 ♗c6! 12 e3 ♖xb3 is inferior, but 11 ♗d2 ♖b4 12 ♗a4 is better for White, according to an old analysis of Euwe: 12 ... ♗xd2+ 13 ♖xd2 ♖xb3 14 ♗a3 ♗d5 15 f3 f5 16 e3. White's bishops should give him a continuing initiative.

- | | | |
|----|------|------|
| 11 | ... | ♖xb3 |
| 12 | ♖b5+ | ♗c6 |
| 13 | ♗e5 | ♗d5 |
| 14 | f3! | ♖d6 |
| 15 | e4 | ♗e7! |

A good move as 16 de ♗xd4! is good for Black.

16 ♖e3 a6 (180)



17 ♖xc6?

17 ed! ab 18 ♗xa8 ♗xa8 19 dc ♗a1+ 20 ♗f2 ♗xh1 21 cb and 21 ... ♗b1 is suggested by Pytel as being adequate for Black. However, 22 ♖f4!! wins. Black is unable to defend the queening

square for long. So 22 ... ♗d8 (22 ... ♗e8 23 ♗d3) 23 ♗xf7+ ♗c7 24 ♗xd6 ♗xb2+ 25 ♗g3 leaves White with a technical win after 25 ... ♗b1 26 ♗xb5++ ♗xb7 27 ♗d6+ etc. This variation may refute 4 ... ♖f5!

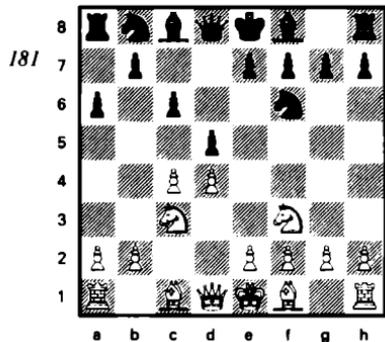
- | | | |
|----|-------|------|
| 17 | ... | ♖xc6 |
| 18 | ♗xc6+ | bc |
| 19 | ♗d2 | ♗hb8 |

Black has no problems in this ending.

20 ♗c2 ♗b5 21 h3 c5 22 ♗hd1 cd 23 ♖xd4 ♖e5 24 ♖xe5 ♗xe5 25 ♗a3 Draw agreed.

So if White has a win at move 17 this variation must be considered dubious. Darryl Johansen's 7 ♗xb6 ab 8 ♗b5 is also slightly uncomfortable for Black.

- | | | |
|---|-----|------------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | ♗f3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♗c3 | a6!? (181) |



What is the point of this mysterious move? Well as this move has achieved a certain degree of popularity it must be considered as more than a joke.

Black has the options of an early ... b5 or of capturing on c4 and bolstering it with ... b5. The queen's bishop still has the option of developing actively, and if White were to play 5 ♖g5 the knight on f6 is not pinned and can jump to e4, 5 ... ♗e4 has in fact been played in this position.

So Black tries to remain flexible in terms of development and is contemplating early queenside action. White's best move is not clear and six have been tried. This variation tends to interest original players such as the young Russian Dreev.

(a)

5 cd cd
6 ♖f4

This has a lot of similarity to the Exchange Variation, when ... a6 is not a bad move.

6 ... ♗c6
7 ♙c1 ♗e4!?

This was tried in Wells–Dreev, Kiljava 1984. 7 ... ♗e4!? is a risky attempt to get an asymmetrical game, whereas 7 ... ♖f5 should be fairly safe.

5 cd is a practical move, trying to exploit the slight loss of time resulting from ... a6, although I personally consider such positions as rather dull.

(b)

5 ♗c2!?

A typical Slav-style gambit.

5 ... dc
6 e4 b5

7 ♖e2 ♖g4
8 a4 ♗bd7
9 e5 ♗d5
10 ab ab
11 ♙xa8 ♗xa8
12 ♗g5!

and White had an adequate initiative for the pawn in Ehlvest–Dreev, USSR 1985.

(c)

5 c5

This worked out well in Lerner–Dreev, Moscow 1985. Perhaps Black should play 5 ... b6.

5 ... ♖g4
6 ♗e5 ♖f5
7 ♗b3 ♗c8
8 f3 g6
9 e4 ♖e6
10 ♗c2 ♖g7
11 ♖e3 0-0
12 ♖e2

Black seems to be suffering from a serious space disadvantage here.

(d)

5 ♗b3 e6

5 ... dc 6 ♗xc4 b5 is another way of reacting to this move.

6 ♖g5 b5
7 cd cd
8 ♙c1 ♖e7
9 e3 0-0
10 ♖d3

and White had slightly the easier development in Polugaevsky–Rivas, Linares 1985.

(e)

5 e3 b5

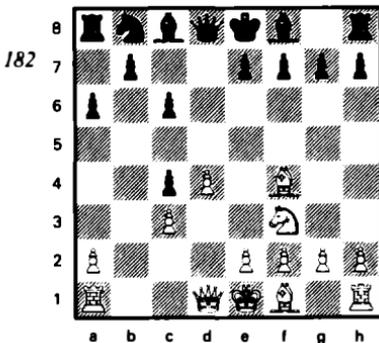
- | | | |
|----|-----|------|
| 6 | cd | cd |
| 7 | ♙d3 | ♙b7 |
| 8 | ♗e5 | ♗bd7 |
| 9 | f4 | e6 |
| 10 | 0-0 | ♙d6 |
| 11 | ♖f3 | |

(Garcia-Palermo–M. Rivas, Benasque 1985). Again White is slightly better; he has some attacking chances and the bishop on b7 can become a problem.

All five of these variations seem reasonable and suggest that Black cannot equalize fully in the accepted sense. The unusual nature of 4 ... a6!? may, however, unnerve the player of the White pieces or suit those Slav players who occasionally like to dabble with the unknown.

The most played move is 5 ♙g5, which leads to sharp and uncompromising play.

- | | | |
|---|-----|----------|
| 5 | ♙g5 | ♗e4 |
| 6 | ♙f4 | ♗xc3 |
| 7 | bc | dc (182) |



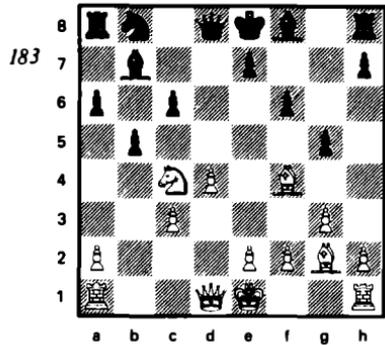
So we have a gambit variation in which Black is well-placed to

defend c4, but is rather behind in development.

8 g3

8 e4 b5 9 ♗e5 g6?! 10 ♖f3 f6 11 ♖g3! gave White a tremendous attack in Zaid–Popov, USSR 1975. Black probably regretted 9 ... g6 and should have tried 9 ... ♙e6 with the idea of ... f6.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----------|
| 8 | ... | b5 |
| 9 | ♙g2 | ♙b7 |
| 10 | ♗e5 | f6! |
| 11 | ♗xc4 | g5! (183) |

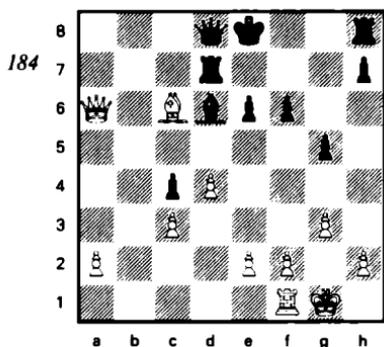


What's this? 11 ... bc 12 ♗b1 e5 (12 ... ♖c8 13 ♖a4 ♗d7 14 0-0 gives terrible pressure) 13 ♗xb7 ef was Tukmakov–Bagirov, USSR 1983. Analysis suggests that 14 ♖b1 (and not 14 ♖a4 as played) is tremendous for White, e.g. 14 ... ♙d6 15 ♗xg7 ♖f8 16 ♗xh7 or 14 ... ♙e7 15 ♖e4 ♗d6 16 0-0 ♗d7 (what else?) 17 ♖xc6 ♖xc6 18 ♙xc6 0-0-0 19 ♗fb1 ♙d6 20 ♗a7 and Black is horribly bottled up and in trouble, even though he has an extra piece.

- | | | |
|----|------|-----|
| 12 | ♙xb8 | bc! |
| 13 | ♗b1 | |

The game we shall follow is the complicated drama Thorsteins-Dreev, Kiljava 1984. Dolmatov suggests 13 ♔e5 fe 14 ♚b1 to break up Black's pawns.

- 13 ... ♚xb8
 14 ♚xb7 ♚xb7
 15 ♔xc6+ ♚d7
 16 ♖a4 e6
 17 0-0 ♔d6!
 18 ♖xa6 (184)



18 ♚b1 ♖e7 19 ♔xd7 ♖xd7 20 ♖xa6 ♚c8 leaves Black a piece up and White has only two pawns. In fact, it is White struggling for a draw as Black seems to have defended accurately.

- 18 ... ♖f7
 19 ♔xd7 ♖xd7
 20 ♖xc4 ♚b8
 21 a4 ♖c8!
 22 ♖d3 ♖g7
 23 f4?

A better try was 23 c4 ♖a6 24 ♚a1 with three pawns for the piece and reasonable chances for a draw.

- 23 ... gf

- 24 gf f5!
 Closing off the lines.
 25 e4!? fe
 26 ♖xe4 ♖xc3
 27 ♖xe6 ♖xd4+
 28 ♖h1 ♚f8

After the sudden opening of both kings Black could have played the prudent 28 ... ♖h8.

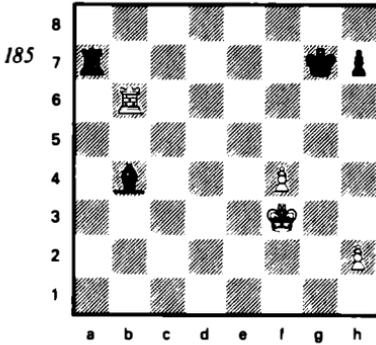
- 29 ♖a2 ♔b4

Similar is 29 ... ♔xf4 30 ♖a1 ♖xa1 31 ♚xa1 ♚a8 which is probably winning, but Black has to be careful after the exchange of queens as his remaining pawn is the so-called 'wrong rook's pawn'. If one were to mentally remove all the pieces from the board except Black's bishop and pawn and put White's king on h1 then the ending is drawn—with a rook each then Black should win but not without some difficulties.

- 30 ♖f2 ♖xf2
 31 ♚xf2 ♚a8
 32 ♚a2 ♚a5!
 33 ♖g2 ♖f6
 34 ♖f3 ♖f5
 35 ♚e2 ♚xa4
 36 ♚e5+ ♖f6
 37 ♚h5 ♚a7
 38 ♚h6+ ♖g7
 39 ♚b6 (185)

White's passed pawn is going nowhere and Black's rounding up of White's remaining pawns shouldn't take long.

- 39 ... ♔c3
 40 ♖g4 ♚a5
 41 f5



After 41 $\text{R}b7+$ $\text{Q}g6$ 42 $\text{f}5+$ $\text{R}xf5$ 43 $\text{R}xh7$ $\text{R}g5+$ 44 $\text{Q}h4$ $\text{Q}f6!$ wins. White's rook next move, except after 45 $\text{h}3$ allowing mate in one.

- 41 ... $\text{R}a4+$
 42 $\text{Q}h5$

'Better to burn out than fade away'. 42 $\text{Q}f3$ $\text{Q}e5$ starts the mopping up operation. The text is

playing for tricks, but walks into a mating net.

- 42 ... $\text{Q}f6$
 43 $\text{R}b7+$ $\text{Q}g8$
 44 $\text{R}b8+$ $\text{Q}f7$
 45 $\text{R}b7+$ $\text{Q}e7$
 46 $\text{f}6$ $\text{Q}xf6$
 47 $\text{R}b3$ $\text{Q}g7$
 48 $\text{R}g3+$ $\text{Q}h8$
 49 $\text{R}h3$

49 $\text{R}g4$ $\text{R}a5+$ 50 $\text{Q}h6$ $\text{Q}f8$ mates.

- 49 ... $\text{R}e4$
 50 $\text{Q}h6$ $\text{R}e5$
 51 $\text{R}f3$ $\text{Q}c5$

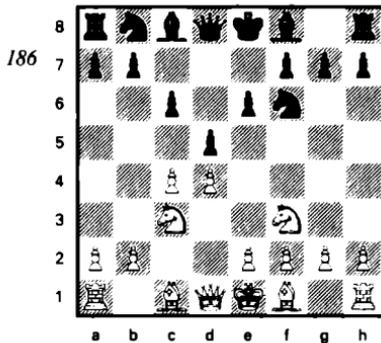
White resigned

Black mates when White's pawn moves have been used up.

5 $\text{Q}g5!$? leads to rather wild complications, which on the basis of this game seem good for Black. White players should choose one of the other five(!) alternatives!

14 Avoid the Semi-Slav!

After 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♖f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3, Black has a number of alternatives. The chapter on the Slav–Grünfeld deals with 4 ... g6, chapters (2–7) with the normal 4 ... dc and all its ramifications and Chapter 13 with unusual moves. but what about 4 ... e6? (186)



This position can arise from other move orders: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 ♗f6 4 ♖f3 c6 or 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♗c3 c6 4 ♖f3 ♗f6 or 1 c4 e6 2 ♖f3 d5 3 d4 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 c6. So beware of your opponent getting to this position when you least expect it!

White can play 5 ♗g5, which can be met by 5 ... h6 or 6 ... ♗bd7 6 e3 ♗a5 (Queen's Gambit

Declined, Orthodox Variation, Cambridge Springs Defence) or more critically by 5 ... dc 6 e4 b5 (Anti-Meran Gambit).

Another frequently seen way of playing the position is 5 e3, and after 5 ... ♗bd7 6 ♗d3 Black can develop simply with 6 ... ♗d6 or seek counterplay immediately with 6 ... dc 7 ♗xc4 b5 (Meran Defence).

For those players who are perfectly happy to meet such variations then this chapter can be avoided, and for those players of the Black pieces who would like to play those positions after ... e6 then I suggest that you obtain more specialized material. Apart from recent publications like *Informator* then the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, volume D, can be useful. In the Batsford Series, *Queen's Gambit Declined: Semi-Slav* by Tim Harding, has many ideas and is fairly thorough in the treatment of the variations.

The Semi-Slav is characterized by this move 4 ... e6, blocking in the queen's bishop and seeking to

develop it later, or sometimes to b7. In the Slav, Black keeps the c8-h3 diagonal open and normally seeks to develop this bishop early in the opening. So the Semi-Slav is really outside the scope of this book, but a chapter on a simple idea or two for White to avoid the effort of learning a new opening could be useful to some players.

One valid enough idea 'to avoid the Semi-Slav' is 5 g3!?, but White has to be prepared to play in gambit style, e.g. 5 ... dc 6 ♗g2 b5 7 0-0 (7 ♗e5!?) ♗b7 8 a4 a6 9 ♗e5, which can be compared to some variations of the Catalan opening (1 d4 ♗f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 etc.) or even the variation 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♗f3 ♗f6 4 ♗c3 dc 5 ♗e5!?, as seen in Chapter 3.

I shall be recommending the reader to investigate the defence of the c4 pawn by 5 ♗b3 or 5 ♗d3. These have been tried on occasion by top players, which suggests their validity, but have not been over-analysed and so retain their freshness and will certainly test an unprepared opponent. So we examine A 5 ♗d3 and B 5 ♗b3.

A
 5 ♗d3 dc
 6 ♗xc4

This position can of course arise from 5 ♗b3 dc 6 ♗xc4.

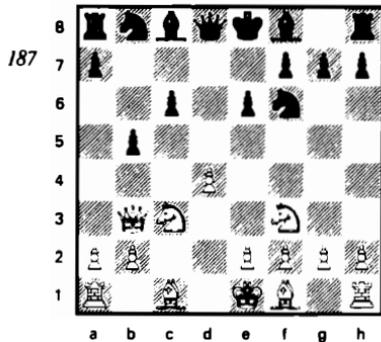
Black can handle the position in different ways:

5 ... ♗bd7 6 g3 ♗e7 7 ♗g2 0-0 8 0-0 b6 and now 9 b3 or 9 e4 with Catalan-style positions, leaving White with more space. 6e4 is an alternative.

5 ... c5!? is a wild move tried in Miles-Lombard, Biel 1977. 6 cd ♗xd5 7 ♗xd5 ed 8 g3 c4 was played in the game, when Black seemed to be OK. 8 dc has been suggested as an improvement, when 8 ... ♗xc5 9 ♗c3! ♗b6 10 ♗xg7 ♗xf2+ 11 ♗d1 with hair-raising complications is interesting.

5 ... b6 6 e4 dc (6 ... ♗a6 is preferred by Harding) 7 ♗xc4 ♗a6 8 ♗b3 ♗xf1 9 ♗xf1 ♗e7 10 g3 ♗bd7 11 ♗g2 0-0 12 ♗e1 (Alburt-Sveshnikov, USSR Championship 1977). White has a minimal space advantage.

6 ... b5
 7 ♗b3 (187)



After 7 ♗d3 Black can play in conventional style with 7 ... ♗bd7 8 g3 ♗b7 9 ♗g2 a6 10 ♗g5 c5 which should lead to equal play. When faced with this posi-

tion (after 7 ♖d3) I played 7 ... ♗a6!?, a new move. The position was soon very unclear and I went on to win an exciting game which remains one of my personal favourites. See Bellon–Flear at the end of the chapter.

7 ... ♗bd7

I went wrong as Black against Damljanovic in Lugano 1984 when I played 7 ... ♗b7 (it's not so good to put the bishop on such an exposed square when the White queen is on b3) 8 g3 ♗bd7 9 ♗g2 ♗e7 10 0–0 0–0 11 ♙d1 a6 12 ♗g5 h6 13 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 14 ♗e5 ♖b6 and now is ♙ac1 with the idea of ♗c3–a4–c5 was better for White. Black always had problems in playing ... c5 and lost this game.

8 g3

Less testing is 8 ♗g5 a6 9 e3 c5 as in Bukic–Bagirov, Banja Luka 1976.

8 ... ♖b4!?

9 ♗a4 ♗a6

10 ♗g5

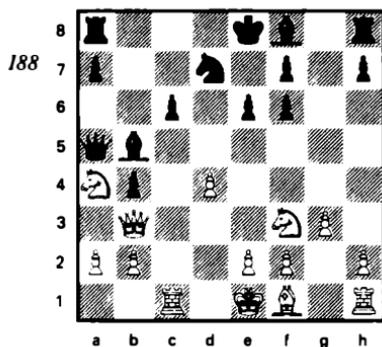
10 ♖c2 has two functions: defending the e2 square and intending ♗c5 and could have been tried.

10 ... ♖a5

11 ♗xf6 gf

12 ♙c1 ♗b5 (188)

Black has an active position after 13 ♗c5 ♗xc5 14 dc 0–0–0 for his somewhat compromised pawn structure (Rubinstein–Sveshnikov, Rio de Janeiro 1985).



The position is unclear.

B

5 ♖b3 ♗bd7

For 5 ... dc see A.

On 5 ... ♗e7 White can try the 'queen's gambit style' 6 ♗g5 when Black's best could be 6 ... dc 7 ♖xc4 0–0 8 e4 b5 9 ♖d3 b4 10 ♗a4 ♗a6 with complicated play (Seirawan–Yusupov, Linares 1983). Alternatively 6 ... ♗bd7 7 e3 0–0 8 ♗d3 dc (8 ... h6 9 0–0 ♗b7 10 ♙fd1 ♖h8 11 ♙ac1 gives White a small but pleasant edge (Korchnoi–Petrosian, Moscow 1971) 9 ♖xc4 ♗d5 10 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 11 ♗xd5! ed 12 ♖c2 ♗f6 13 0–0 with a comfortable edge (Flear–Botterill, Nottingham 1979). See game at the end of this section.

After 5 ... ♗e7 then 6g3 is the other main plan ('Catalan style') 6 ... 0–0 7 ♗g2 ♗e4! (7 ... ♖b6 does not solve Black's problems easily 8 0–0 ♖xb3 9 ab ♗a6 10 ♗d2 ♙d8 11 c5 ♗d7 and now 12 ♙a4! e5 13 e3 was a clear improvement on 12 ♗a4 in Portisch–

Larsen, Poreč 1968) 8 0-0 f5 with an interesting Stonewall position e.g. 9 ♖e5 ♗d7 10 ♗xd7 ♘xd7 11 cd cd (11 ... ed 12 ♗xe4 fe 13 ♗xe4 wins a pawn) 12 ♗f4 g5!?

with some complications (Langeweg-Campora, Dortmund 1981).

6 ♗g5

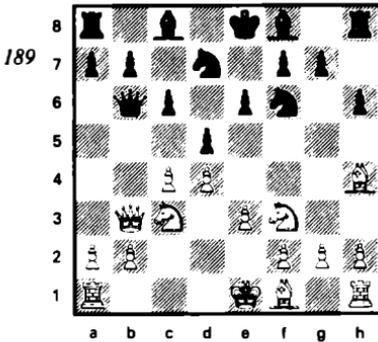
6 g3!? is similar to the note on 5 ... ♗e7 6g3.

6 cd ed 7 ♗f4 ♗h5 8 ♗g3 ♗e7 9 e3 0-0 10 ♗d3 g6 11 0-0 ♗xg3 12 hg ♘b6 13 ♘c2 ♗f6 Draw agreed (Karpov-Ljubojevic, Plovdiv 1983).

6 ... h6

I have tried 6 ... ♘a5!?, but after 7 ♗d2 ♘b6 it's not clear who has gained or lost time.

- 7 ♗h4 ♘b6
8 e3 (189)



Intending harmonious development by ♗d3, 0-0 and rooks to the centre. Black still has to solve the problems of his queen's bishop.

Less logical was the wild 8

♘c2!? g5 9 ♗g3 g4 10 c5 ♘a5 11 ♗d2 ♗h5 12 e4 of Kushnir-Fatalibekova, Berlin 1977.

The theory has not really 'worked itself out' and Black's defences to the infrequently played ♘b3 and ♘d3 are not self-evident. These moves provoke a slightly off-beat struggle and often win time on the clock. I have played 5 ♘b3 several times and have found that even strong international players aren't quite sure how to handle Black's defence and I have won some fine games.

I now include two of my own games as illustrations to show (a) a positional win by White after passive defence by Black and (b) a complicated tussle revolving around Black's counter-thrust ... c5, which in this case was won by Black.

**Flear-Botterill
Nottingham 1979**

At the time I was significantly lower rated than my opponent. However, 5 ♘b3 was met rather tamely by the Welsh No. 1.

- | | | |
|---|------|------|
| 1 | d4 | d5 |
| 2 | c4 | c6 |
| 3 | ♗f3 | ♗f6 |
| 4 | ♗c3 | e6 |
| 5 | ♘b3 | ♗bd7 |
| 6 | ♗g5 | ♗e7 |
| 7 | e3 | 0-0 |
| 8 | ♗d3 | dc |
| 9 | ♘xc4 | ♗d5 |

142 *Avoid the Semi-Slav!*

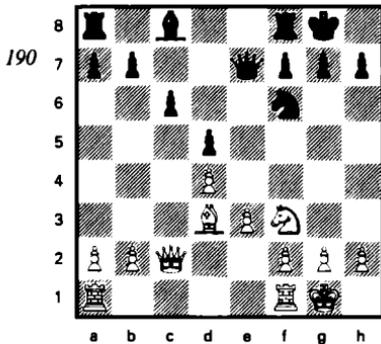
10 ♖xe7 ♜xe7

11 ♟xd5! ed

After 11 ... cd Black's bishop on c8 lacks a promising future.

12 ♜c2 ♟f6

13 0-0 (190)



The pawn structure is similar to a Queen's Gambit Declined, Orthodox, Exchange Variation e.g. 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 cd ed etc, where White has the minority attack as an attractive plan (b4–b5, leaving Black with an inferior pawn structure). Here this is also possible with the added bonus that the double exchange of minor pieces leaves Black with fewer kingside attacking chances, and, worse for Black, he has been unable to exchange his White-squared bishop—his worst piece as his pawns are likely to remain on White squares.

13 ... ♟e4

14 ♖xe4!

White is happy to remain with good knight versus inferior bishop. The position can be con-

sidered already unpleasant for the second player.

14 ... de

15 ♟d2 ♜e8

16 ♜fc1 ♖g4

17 ♜c5 ♜h4

17 ... ♜xc5 18 ♜xc5 followed by a queenside pawn expansion is unenticing for Black, who seeks kingside activity.

18 ♜d6!

Control of b8–h2 ensures a successful defence of the king.

18 ... ♖e6

19 b4 ♖d5

20 a4 ♜e6

21 ♜c7!

Deflecting the rook before coming back to challenge the queen.

21 ... ♜e7

22 ♜g3 ♜h5

22 ... ♜xg3 may have been the lesser evil, at least White's kingside pawn structure will then lack flexibility, but the plan of queenside pawn expansion guarantees an edge for White.

23 ♟f1 f5

24 b5 ♜f8

25 bc ♖xc6

26 ... bc 26 ♜ab1 takes the open b-file and Black is saddled with a permanent weak pawn on c6.

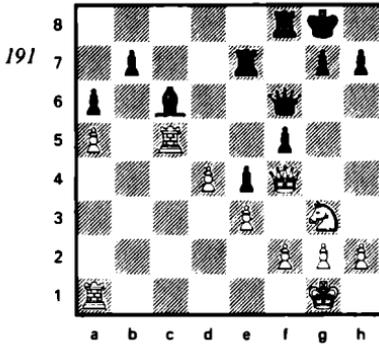
26 ♜c5 ♜f7

27 a5 a6

28 ♜f4 ♜f6

29 ♟g3 (191)

White has a dominating position and is preparing to take the initiative on the kingside as well.



Note that Black's 2-1 queenside majority is practically useless, whereas White has a protected passed d-pawn. After 29 ... g6, 30 h4 was my intention, followed by bringing the queen's rook into play—for instance ♖a1–b1–b6 and then d5. Black has no counterplay and must await his doom.

29 ... g5??

A blunder brought on by frustration.

30 ♖xf5 h6 31 ♖xf6 ♔xf6 32 ♔ac1 ♔d7 33 ♔e5 ♖h7 34 h3 ♜g6 35 ♔cc5 ♔df7 36 d5 Black resigned. Moving the bishop allows 37 ♗xe4.

Bellon–Flear
Graz 1984

I think it is better to play ... dc early, even as early as move five, and seek to equalize by achieving ... c5.

1	d4	d5
2	c4	e6
3	♗c3	c6
4	♗f3	♗f6

5	♖b3	dc
6	♖xc4	b5
7	♖d3	♗a6!?

7 ... ♗bd7 is recommended in the text; see variation A. This is a new idea, to win a tempo immediately for development, but the bishop is probably better placed on b7.

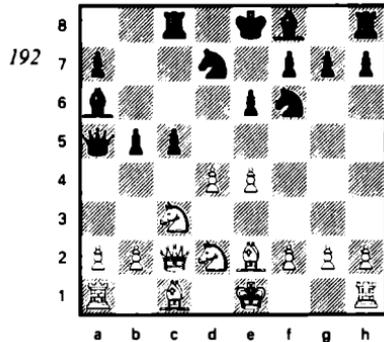
8	♖c2	♗bd7
9	e4	

9 g3 ♔c8 10 ♗g2 c5 is great for Black.

9	...	♖a5
10	♗d2!	♔c8
11	♗e2	

11 a3 ♖b6! Stops the blockading b4 due to the threat to the d-pawn: 12 ♗b3 c5!

11	...	c5! (192)
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Black's original development scheme has finally achieved its aim, the freeing ... c5—the complications that follow are fascinating but unclear.

12	♗b3	♖b6
13	dc	

144 *Avoid the Semi-Slav!*

13 ♖e3 was worthy of consideration.

13 ... ♗xc5

14 ♖e3 b4!?

14 ... ♗b8 15 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 16 ♖xc5 ♗xc5 17b4! fixes the b-pawn on b5 and gives White the better chances.

15 ♗xc5

15 ♗a4 ♗xa4! wins two pieces for a rook. 15 ♗b1 or 15 ♗d1 allow 15 ... ♗xb3 16 ♗xb3 ♗a5, when White has problems castling.

15 ... ♖xc5

16 ♗a4+ ♗e7!

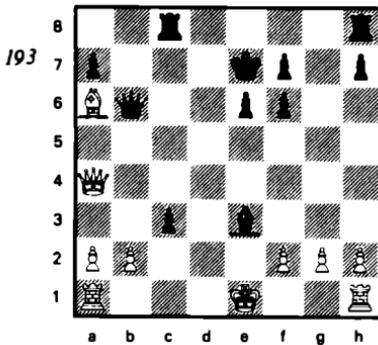
17 e5!?

Throwing fuel on the fire.

17 ... bc

18 ef+ gf

19 ♖xa6 ♖xe3(193)



19 ... cb 20 ♗d1 b1(♗) 21 ♗d7+ ♗f8 22 ♖h6+ ♗g8 23 ♗xc8 mates.

20 ♖xc8 ♖xf2+

20 ♗xb2 21 0-0 or 20 ... cb 21 ♗d7+ ♗f8 22 ♗b1 with a rook more.

21 ♗f1 ♗xc8

21 ... ♗xb2 22 ♗d1! ♗xc8 23 ♗d7+ and 24 ♗xc8+ or after 21 ... ♗xb2 22 ♗d1 c2 23 ♗d7+ ♗f8 24 ♗d8+ ♗g7 25 ♗g4+ ♗h6 26 ♗f4+ drawing by perpetual check.

22 ♗d1

White has two threats ♗d7+ and ♗a3+ followed by capturing on c3. Note that 22 ... cb 23 ♗d7+ ♗f8 24 ♗xc8+ ♗g7 25 ♗c2 is hopeless.

22 ... ♗c5!

Now sometimes ♗f5 is a threat.

23 ♗d7+ ♗f8

24 ♗d8+

24 bc ♗xc3 is better for Black; he has two pawns for the exchange, and a sensitive White king gives Black the initiative.

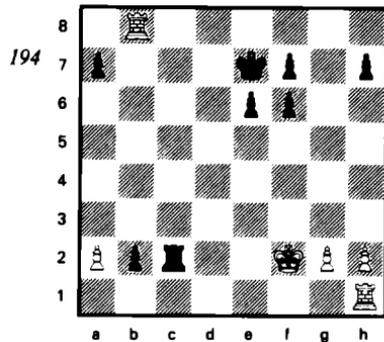
24 ... ♗xd8

25 ♗xd8+ ♗e7

26 ♗b8 cb!

26 ... c2 27 ♗xf2!

27 ♗xf2 ♗c2+!(194)



The move it was necessary to see when playing 22 ... ♗c5.

Note that 27 ... ♖c1?? 28 ♖e1 wins—now it is Black who wins!

- 28 ♖g3 ♖c1
 29 ♖xb2 ♖xh1
 30 ♖b7+ ♖f8
 31 ♖xa7 ♖a1!

Eventually Black's two extra kingside pawns should prove the decisive factor—Black's rook is best *behind* the passed pawn.

- 32 ♖f2 f5 33 g3 ♖g7 34 h4 h6
 35 ♖f3 ♖f6 36 ♖a8 ♖e5 37 ♖a7
 ♖f6 38 ♖a8 ♖g6 39 ♖a7 e5 40
 ♖a6+ f6 41 ♖e3 ♖g1.

The sealed move. Black will force the decisive entry of his king.

- 42 ♖f2 ♖a1 43 a4 ♖a2+ 44
 ♖g1 ♖h5! 45 ♖xf6 ♖g4 46
 ♖g6+ ♖f3 47 ♖f6 ♖xg3 48
 ♖xf5 ♖xa4 49 ♖f1.

49 ♖xe5 ♖a1+ mates.

- 49 ... ♖xh4 50 ♖f6 e4 51
 ♖g6+ ♖f3 52 ♖f6+ ♖e2 53
 ♖g2 e3.

Simplest was 53 ... ♖g4+ cutting off the king. Black can then ditch the h-pawn and march the e-pawn through to queen.

- 54 ♖g3 ♖h1 55 ♖e6 ♖g1+ 56
 ♖f4 ♖f1+ 57 ♖e4 ♖a1 58 ♖f4
 ♖a4+ 59 ♖g3 h5 60 ♖b6 ♖g4+
 White resigned.

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