

GM Alex Lenderman Wins His 4th Eastern Open

by Tom Beckman

Tournament Results: This year 210 players came to play in the 5-section, 7-round, 45th Annual Eastern Open held over December 27-30, 2018. GM Alex Lenderman finished 1st with 6 points but was held to draws by GM Sergey Erenburg and GM-Elect Nicolas Checa. GM Erenburg took 2nd with 5½ points, while GM-Elect Checa nailed down 3rd with 5 points. Section winners were:

Section	Winners	Score
Open	GM Alex Lenderman	6
U2200	Douglas Ulrich & Richard Tan & Evan Ling & Tian Nguyen	5½
U1900	Chen-Chen Ye	6
U1600	Roy Russell III	6
U1300	Duraisamy Parimal & Lang Leo Xiong & Stephen Parsons & Alexander Morton	5½

In addition to the main tournament, a day-long Scholastic tourney drew 38 players in 3 sections, and the Blitz tourney consisted of 18 entrants. A lecture by GM Lenderman on relative piece activity showcased the event. A tournament e-book was sent out to all participants containing over 50 annotated and raw game scores, as well as brilliancies, tactics, and puzzles.

Featured Games from the 2018 Eastern Open:

SEMI-SLAV DEFENSE (D45)

GM Alex Lenderman (2705)

GM Sergey Erenburg (2670)

45th Annual Eastern Open (6),

Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 12.30.2018

Notes by GM Lenderman [AL]

Notes by GM Erenburg [SE]

Notes by Beckman [TB]

[TB] I hope this conversation between two very strong players provides insights into their preparation and thinking during the game. Part of the story surrounding this critical game was the room sharing, preparation, and opposition research. Initially, I had planned to room with GM Alex Lenderman as we had several rooms reserved at the hotel for me and the TDs. Then, I got an email from GMs Lenderman and Erenburg requesting that they wished to room together. I agreed to this, but jokingly "complained" that they weren't willing to share any GM secrets with a patzer...me. Little did I realize the implications of this move until later...

[SE] As far as the preparation for the game against Alex goes, after round 5, we still did not know if we would necessarily play in round 6. However, it was pretty obvious that even if we didn't in round 6, we'd meet in round 7, and Alex would still play with White. The only alternative pairing in round 6 was that I'd play IM Nicolas Checa with White, a second white in a row, which would imply that I'd still have to play Alex with Black in the last round. So, Alex left the room to talk to his coach and was probably away for a couple of hours - by the time he got back, I was already asleep.

I've played Alex multiple times, but typically, I don't manage to predict the line he chooses, so I only briefly looked at some of the games we previously played and made sure I went to sleep early. Although I was half a point behind, I made a conscious decision to play normal chess, since I played with the Black pieces. It has happened to me (and many others) that when you play gung-ho with the Black pieces against strong opponents, the outcome is typically bad. The hope was that Alex would drop half a point in the last round with the Black pieces (yes, I hoped he'd play against IM Tegshsuren Enkhbat) and I'd be able to catch up).

The morning before the game, when it finally became obvious that we would play, I had not done much additional preparation, except to try and get to the game in normal shape by finishing my breakfast about 45 minutes before the game started :). At that point, it became clear that I'd play IM Checa in the last round, and my biggest worry was to make it to the last bus, so I was looking into that in the morning as well.

[AL] I knew after my draw in round 5 against Nico Checa, that I would most likely play Sergey Erenburg in round 6 and I'd be White. Both Nico Checa and Sergey Erenburg had already lost points against lower-rated players in the tournament. I figured that Sergey and Nico would have to still play in the last round, and since I was leading the tournament after 5 rounds, I figured a draw with White against Sergey would be a decent result for me in round 6. Therefore, I decided to go into a relatively forced line that leads to a completely risk free endgame, but one where I can ask a couple of questions.

Regarding preparation, it was slightly awkward since Sergey and I shared a room during the tournament, but I took advantage of the time when Sergey was still busy playing round 5 to decide on which opening line I would play. I wanted to also play something that I knew relatively well. I also stepped out for an hour or so to give Sergey a chance to prepare when I wasn't in the room. In the end it wasn't such an awkward thing :).

1. c4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e3 e6

[TB] Although starting out as an English Opening, the game quickly transposes into the solid Semi-Slav .

5. Nf3 a6

[TB] And this move defines the Chebanenko Slav variation, named after a famous Moldovan trainer.

6. Qc2

[SE] Alex was half a point ahead of me, so in hindsight, his choice of this solid line made perfect sense.

[AL] 6. b3 Bb4 7. Bd2 Nbd7 is also a topical line.

6... c5

[SE] Now the Queenside Knight is going to be developed to c6. I could have avoided long theoretical lines with 6... Nbd7, and after 7. b3, we would get an Anti-Meran with perhaps wasted a7-a6 tempo. Here White is also likely to get a risk free position after 7... Bd6 8. Bb2 O-O 9. Be2 e5 10. Nxd5 Nxd5 11. cxd5 Qa5+ 12. Bc3 Bb4 13. Bxb4 Qxb4+ 14. Qd2 Qxd2+ 15. Kxd2 exd4 16. Nxd4 cxd5 17. Rhc1 [TB] with a very nice White advantage, despite the later draw in Giri,A (2768)-Mamedyarov,S (2764) Tashkent 2014.

[AL] If Black wanted to play for a win he can play 6... Nbd7, but then I feel like White has good chances for an advantage because of 7. b3 Bb4 8. Bb2, and now with my Queen on c2, Black's Ne4 and Qa5 aren't a problem anymore, and my Bishop is much better placed on b2 than on d2.

7. cxd5 exd5 8. Be2 Nc6 9. O-O

[SE] Two years before, in the same tournament, Alex won a game against IM Tegshsuren Enkhbat after 9... cxd4 10. Nxd4 Nxd4 11. exd4 Be7 12. Bg5 Be6 13. Bf3 Qd7 14. Qb3 Rd8 15. Rac1 Ne4 16. Bxe7 Nd2 17. Qd1 Nxf3+ 18. Qxf3 Qxe7 19. Na4 O-O 20. Nc5 and White had a nice advantage. A better plan was played in Ragger,M-Mamedyarov,S Vienna 2015 with 10... Qc7 11. Nxc6 bxc6 12. b3 Bd6 13. h3 O-O 14. Bb2 Re8 15. Rac1 Bd7 16. Rfd1 h6 17. Bf3 Rac8 18. Na4 Ne4 19. Bxe4 Rxe4 20. Nc5 Bxc5 21. Qxc5 +/-.

[AL] Enkhbat played 9... cxd4 against me in the last round of 2016 Eastern Open and I won a nice game to win the tournament.

9... Be6 10. Rd1 cxd4

[SE] Since the world championship match between Anand and Gelfand, this is considered to be the main line, and grants Black equality. 10... Nb4 is also playable, but based on the recent games, White is out of risk here as well after 11. Qd2 Ne4 12. Nxe4 dxe4 13. a3 exf3 14. Bxf3 Nc6 15. d5 Ne5 16. dxe6 Nxf3+ 17. gxf3 fxe6 drawn in 32 moves, Martinovic,S-Banusz,T, Austria 2018.

11. Nxd4 Nxd4 12. Rxd4 Bc5 13. Rd1 Qe7

[SE] Of course not 13... O-O?? 14. Nxd5.

14. Bf3

[SE] White has also tried 14. Na4, but Black seems to have enough resources to equalize after 14... Bd6 (14... Ba7? 15. Bxa6) 15. Nb6 Bxh2+ 16. Kxh2 Qd6+ 17. Kg1 Qxb6 18. Qa4+ Bd7 19. Qf4 O-O 20. b3 Rac8 21. Bb2 [TB] 21... Rc2 N but White still has a small edge as in Aleksandrov,A-Rublevsky,S, Loo 2013.

14... O-O

[SE] This sacrifice of a central pawn for the initiative is a well known theoretical line. White gets a pleasant position after 14... Rd8 15. b3 with the idea to meet d5-d4 with Na4 after 15... O-O 16. Bb2 Rc8 17. Nxd5 Bxd5 18. Bxd5 Bxe3 19. Qe2 Nxd5 20. Rxd5 Bc5 N 1/2-1/2 (29) Lenic,L (2623)-Rublevsky,S (2678) Aix les Bains 2011.

[AL] Black has to sacrifice a pawn here, as after 14... Rd8 15. b3, White has some advantage.

15. Bxd5 Nxd5 16. Nxd5 Bxd5 17. Rxd5 Rac8

[AL] This was all played before in the game Schandorff-Erenburg awhile back, where Black equalized easily. However, in that game, as far as I remember, White played 18. Bd2.

18. Qd3

[SE] White does not return the Pawn, but hopes to gradually neutralize Black's initiative. I am sure Alex was aware of my previous game from 2013, where Black was fine after 18. Bd2 Bxe3 19. Bc3 Bb6 20. Qb3 (or 20. Qf5 Qe6 21. Qf3 f6 later drawn in Gelfand,B-Anand,V, Moscow 2012) 20... Qe6 21. Rad1 (21. Re1?? Rxc3) 21... h6 22. h3 Rfe8 23. Qb4 Rc6 24. Re5 Qc8 25. Rde1 and soon drawn in Schandorff,L-Erenburg,S, Helsingor 2013.

18... Rfd8

[SE] A logical move to take control over the open "d" file. However, 18... Rcd8 is probably more precise, because it keeps the option of the following b7-b6 after 19. g3 b6, [TB] although 19... Rxd5 20. Qxd5 Rd8 21. Qf3 Bd6 22. e4 Be5 may be a slightly better move order.

19. g3!

[SE] Probably the best attempt to fight for an edge.

[AL] White's 18th and 19th moves are not the most common in this position, as far as I know.

19... Rxd5

[SE] Now 19... b6? is a blunder in view of 20. Qxa6 Qe4 21. Rd2!. Another logical attempt to equalize was 19... Bb6!? 20. Bd2 Rxd5 21. Qxd5 Rd8 22. Qb3 Rxd2 23. Qxb6 Qe4, and Black's activity should be sufficient for equality.

20. Qxd5 b6 N

[SE] I decided that it was wise to place the Queenside Pawns on b6 and a5 squares to make sure nothing is hanging there, when and if my heavy pieces get the opportunity to invade into the White camp. Also, this set up secures my Bishop as well. Black did not equalize after 20... Rd8 21. Qf3 Qd7?! 22. b3 f6 23. Kg2 b6 24. Bb2 Qd2 25. Bd4 Bxd4 26. Rd1 Qxa2 27. Rxd4 Rxd4 28. exd4 Qd2 29. Qd5+ Kf8 30. Qd8+ Kf7 31. Qxb6 +/- {1-0 (48) Kovalenko,I-Shimanov,A, Wroclaw 2014.

[AL] 20... Rd8 21. Qf3 Bd6 probably should equalize, but I wanted to play this line since it's completely risk-free and a draw was decent for me at this point in the tournament.

[TB] However, after 20... Rd8 21. Qf3 Bd6! 22. Kg2 Be5 23. e4 Qb4 24. Be3 Bxb2 25. Rb1 b5 26. Bb6 (26. Bc1 Qe1) 26... Re8 27. Qd3 h6, Black has equalized.

21. Kg2

[AL] Now I was on my own. If 21. Qf5 Rd8 22. Qc2 Qd7 23. b3 h5, or if 21. b3 Qf6 22. Rb1 Rd8 23. Qh5 Qg6 24. Qxg6 Rd1+ 25. Kg2 hxg6 26. Ra1 g5.

[TB] 21. Qf5 looks like an improvement after 21... Rd8 22. Qc2 Qd6 23. b3 Qd3 24. Qxd3 Rxd3 25. Kf1 and White has consolidated his extra Pawn.

20... Rd8 22. Qf3 h6

[SE] A good prophylactic move, which allows me to activate my Rook.

[TB] Another option is 22... Qe5 23. Rb1 Qd6.

23. b3 a5

[SE] Black's initiative is quickly neutralized after 23... Qe5 24. Rb1 Qc3, because of the strong 25. Qe4! Qd3 26. Qxd3 Rxd3 27. Rb2 +/- Ba3? 28. Rd2, leaving him short a Pawn.

24. Bb2

[SE] I was mostly worried about 24. Rb1 with the idea to introduce the Rook to the game via b2-d2 route. But then Black has a very strong reply, after which equality is achieved: 24... Rd1!! 25. Qxd1 (25. Ra1 Rd8) 25... Qe4+ 26. f3 Qxb1 27. Qd2 f5.

[TB] 24. h4 is an interesting alternative.

24... Rd2 25. Bc3 Rc2 26. Bd4 Bxd4 27. exd4 +/-

[SE] Although Black's pieces are more active, Black still has to play precisely to keep the balance.

27... Qe2

[SE] Once I saw 29...Rc2 after the trade of the Queens, I was pretty confident that the Rook endgame is drawn. After 27... Rd2, my confidence in an eventual draw was not as high. The engine demonstrates that even here Black is objectively OK, but it requires nerves of steel and a little more time than I had at this point of the game

28. Qxe2 Rxe2 29. Kf3 Rc2!

[SE] In Rook endgames, the activity of the pieces are of the utmost importance. So, it was vital to deny the c6 square from White's King. Worse is 29... Rd2 30. Ke4 Rxf2 31. Kd5 Rxh2?! (31... Rc2 +/- gives Black better chances to survive) 32. Kc6 +/-.

30. Re1!

[SE] Now after 30. Ke4, my King is just in time to meet his colleague in the center to prevent its march farther into the Black camp after 30... Kf8 31. Kd5 Ke7 =.

[AL] The best winning chance. If 30. Ke4 Kf8 or if 30. Ke3 Kf8 =.

30... Rxa2

[SE] Otherwise, White would protect his queenside Pawns after 30... Kf8? 31. Re2 +/-

[AL] If 30... Kf8 31. Re2 +/- and White has excellent winning chances here.

31. Re8+ Kh7 32. Rb8 g6!

[SE] My only problem was my passive King, and this was the most efficient way to bring it closer to the center to help stop the passed "d" Pawn. The drawback of f7-f6 was that once the Black King moved to g6, White could play Rb7, making my King passive once again. The danger of my position is illustrated by the following line: 32... Ra3? 33. Rxb6 a4 34. Ke4 axb3? (34... f5+! might be the last chance; of course not 34... Rxb3?? 35. Rxb3 axb3 36. Kd3 winning) 35. d5 and White wins. During the game it was not obvious to me that Black could hold after 32... Rb2 as well after 33. Rxb6 a4 34. Ke3 axb3 35. d5 Rb1! 36. Kd2 g5! 37. d6 Rb2+ 38. Kc3 Rb1 39. Rb8 Rd1 40. Rd8 Kg7 41. Kxb3 Kf6 42. Kc4 Ke6 43. Re8+ Kd7 44. Re7+ Kxd6 45. Rxf7 Rf1 46. Kd4 Ke6 =.

[AL] A very classy move to bring the King in the game. After 32... Ra3 33. Rxb6 a4 34. Ke4 axb3 (34... Rxb3 35. Rxb3 axb3 36. Kd3) 35. d5 Ra2 36. Rxb3 and White is winning. Here it becomes clear that the black king is too far away to stop the pawn in many lines.

33. Rxb6 Kg7 =

[SE] White can't avoid the exchange of the queenside Pawns, and since the Black King is close to the passed "d" Pawn, this endgame is drawn.

34. d5

[SE] 34. Ke3 does not change much: 34... a4 35. b4 Rb2 36. h4 a3.

[AL] 34. h4 might give a slightly better chance of winning after 34... h5 35. Ke3 Kf8 36. f3 a4 37. bxa4 Rxa4 38. g4 hxg4 39. fxg4 Ra5.

34... a4 35. bxa4

[SE] White could try 35. b4, but once again, Black is fine here: 35... Rb2 36. Ke3 a3 37. Ra6 Rxb4 38. Rxa3 Kf6.

35... Rxa4 36. g4

[SE] White is trying to fix Black's kingside Pawns by preventing h6-h5. However, this leads to immediate draw, because White's Pawns are too vulnerable. 36. Ke3 Kf8 would still lead to a draw.

[AL] After 36. Ke3 Kf8 37. h4 h5 38. Rb7 Ke8 39. f3 Rc4, I couldn't figure out how to make progress in this position.

36... Rd4 37. Rd6

[TB] White could try 37. Rb7 h5 38. h4 Ke8 39. f3 f6 40. d6 Ra6 41. Re7+ Kf8 42. Rd7 Ke8 43. Rg7 Rxd6 44. Rxd6 Kf7 45. Rh6 Rd5 46. Rh8 Ra5 47. Rd8 Ke6, but White can't make further progress. See why I'm glad I didn't spend time studying R+P endings?

Kf8 38. Rd8+ Ke7 39. Rh8 h5!

[SE] I did not feel like playing a 2- vs. 3-Pawn Rook endgame, so I made sure to end the game as quickly as possible. 39... Rxd5 40. Rxh6 is still a draw, but would require a little more time to be spent at the board.

40. gxh5 Rxd5 41. hxg6 fxg6 1/2-1/2

[SE] Even without the g6 pawn, this position is a theoretical draw, so Alex decided not to waste time and agreed to a draw.

[TB] This game won 1st prize for Best Played Game, and 1st prize for Opening Innovation.

SICILIAN DEFENSE, NAJDORF VARIATION (B90)

GM Sergey Erenburg (2670)

Arthur Xu (2160)

45th Annual Eastern Open (3),

Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 12.28.2018

Notes by Erenburg

1. e4 c5 2. Nf3 d6 3. d4 cxd4 4. Nxd4 Nf6 5. Nc3 a6 6. Be3 e5 7. Nf3 This line is a quiet option, which gives White chances for a slight positional advantage. A more aggressive option is 7. Nb3. **7... Be7 8. Bc4 Qc7 9. Bb3 O-O 10. O-O Nc6?! Typically, Black starts with 10... Be6 to cover the d5 square. 11. Bg5! Be6 12. Bxf6 Bxf6 13. Nd5 Bxd5 14. Bxd5** Although Black's position is solid, White has a slight, but a long term advantage, thanks to the d5 outpost and a more active bishop. **14... Rac8 15. c3** Covering the d4 and b4 squares. **15... Rfd8 16. Qd3 Ne7?! As annoying as White's Bishop is, I think that Black should have brought his Knight to c4 with 16... Na5! +/-.** **17. Bb3 Qa5 18. Rfd1 Rd7 19. Rd2** White is already fully mobilized, so the d6-d5 breakthrough is out of question. **19... Qc5** If 19... Rcd8 20. Rad1 +/- **20. Rad1 Rcd8 21. g3 +/-** Beginning a typical plan to deny the g5 square from Black's Bishop. After White plays h2-h4, my Knight will be free to go to d5 via h2-g4-e3 or via e1-c2(g2)-e3. **21... h5?! This further weakens Black's kingside. I would have proceeded with 21... g6. 22. h4 g6 23. Ng5!** It took me a while to convince myself that I should play this. After all, Black's Bishop is so passive and in the long run, my Knight would have made it to d5, but I realized that the pawn structure would change in my favor, making it impossible for Black to defend on the kingside. **23... Bxg5** 23... Nc8 does not

help much after 24. Qf3 Bxg5 25. hxg5 Nb6 26. g4 and White is winning.
23... Rf8? loses right away after 24. Ne6!. **24. hxg5 Nc6** Black tries to block White's Bishop.
24... d5 would not change much either after 25. Qf3. I was expecting 24... Kg7, but
after 25. Qf3 Ng8 26. g4 +-, I would bring my rook to h3 via d3 with
unstoppable attack. **25. Qf3 Na5 26. Bd5 Nc4 27. Qf6!** The whole point of
the plan! White's Bishop is worth more than any of Black's Rooks and White's
attack is deadly. Black was hoping for 27. Re2 Nb6 28. Bb3 Nc4 +/- **27... Nxd2**
28. Qxg6+ Kf8 29. Qh6+ Ke7 30. Qf6+ Ke8 31. g6! Nf3+ 32. Kg2 Re7 33.
gxf7+ Kd7 34. Qf5+ Kc7 35. f8=Q Rxf8 36. Qxf8 The rest needs no comments.
36... Rh7 37. Qxf3 Kb6 38. Qe3 Qxe3 39. fxe3 Rg7 40. Rh1 Rg5 41. Bf7 Kc5 42. Rxh5 Rxh5
43. Bxh5 Kc4 44. g4 Kd3 45. g5 Kxe4 46. g6 Kxe3 47. g7 Kd2 48. g8=Q 1-0
This game won the 1st Place Brilliancy Prize.

SLAV DEFENSE (D11)

GM Alex Lenderman (2705)

Alex Jian (2184)

45th Annual Eastern Open (2),

Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 12.28.2018

Notes by Lenderman

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 Bf5 5. Nc3 5. Bg2 e6 6. Nc3 h6 is solid for black.
5... e6 6. Nh4 Bg4 7. Qb3 Qb6 8. c5 Interesting is 8. h3 Bh5 9. g4 Bg6 10. Nxc6 hxg6
11. Bg2 Na6 12. e3. **8... Qc7?!** Somewhat better is 8... Qxb3 9. axb3 Na6 10. f3 Bh5
11. g4 Bg6 12. Nxc6 hxg6 13. e3 Nc7 =. Very often this is ok if the knight isn't on d7 yet.
9. Bf4 Qc8 10. f3 Bh5 11. g4 Bg6 12. e4 Be7 13. Nxc6 fxc6?!
Somewhat better was 13... hxg6. **14. Bg3** 14. g5 Nh5 15. Bd2 might have been stronger.
14... O-O 15. O-O-O Nbd7 16. Kb1 Preparing g5, so that the pawn on g5 doesn't hang
with check. It's a useful move no matter what. Now black seems to be in trouble
16... g5?! This makes things worse. **17. h4 Ne8 18. exd5 exd5 <Diagram> 19. Nxd5!**
An easy sacrifice to play as Black's pieces are too uncoordinated.
I will get 3 pawns and a massive attack for the piece. Black is losing.
19... cxd5 20. Qxd5+ Kh8 21. hxg5 Qc6 22. Rxh7+! More brilliancy, but
pretty straightforward. **22... Kxh7 23. g6+ Qxg6+** Sadly for Black, this is forced as:
1) 23... Kxg6 24. Qh5+ Kf6 25. Qf5#
2) 23... Kh8 24. Qh5+ Kg8 25. Qh7#
3) 23... Kh6 24. Qh5#.
24. Bd3 Qxd3+ 25. Rxd3 Nef6 26. Qxb7 Bxc5 27. g5 +- Bb6 28. gxf6 Nxf6
29. Be5 Rad8 30. f4 Rd7 31. Qc6 Rdd8 32. Qe6 Rde8 33. Rh3+ Kg6 34. Rg3+ Kh7 35.
Qh3+ Kg8 36. Qh6 Rf7 37. Bxf6 Re1+ 38. Kc2 Rc7+ 39. Kd3 1-0
Accuracy till the end is required, it's still not too late to make your job much more complicated.
Now Black resigned due to Rd1+ Ke2, with a hopeless position for Black.
If 39. Kb3? Re3+, or if 39. Kd2 Ba5+ and Black is still lost, but the game would have
dragged on for a while. This game won a 2nd Place Brilliancy Prize.

For best viewing, please load the following games into a .pgn chess program reader.

[Event "45th Annual Eastern Open"]

[Site "Tyson's Corner, Virginia"]

[Date "2018.12.28"]

[Round "3.12"]

[White "Norman, Dennis"]

[Black "Samuelson, Andrew"]

[Result "0-1"]

[ECO "A43"]

[Opening "Benoni Defense"]

[Variation "Schmidt"]
[Annotator "Samuelson, Andrew"]
[WhiteElo "1997"]
[BlackElo "2324"]
[PlyCount "62"]
[EventDate "2018.12.27"]

1. d4 Nf6 2. Nf3 c5 3. d5 g6 4. Nc3 Bg7 5. e4 O-O 6. Be2 d6 {I recalled seeing some games with b5, but couldn't remember the lines and wasn't sure why it was playable.} (6... b5 7. e5 Ng4 8. Bf4 b4 9. Ne4 d6 10. exd6 exd6 11. O-O Nf6 {This is probably more or less okay for Black, but very complicated and risky.})
7. O-O Na6 {This is the most popular move here, although there are alternatives.} (7... e6 8. Bf4 exd5 9. exd5 Re8 10. h3 Nbd7 11. Re1 Ne4 12. Nxe4 Rxe4 13. Bxd6 Bxb2 {This is probably a little better for White, but messy.}) (7... Bg4 {This is a standard Benoni idea to trade some pieces and prevent e5, although here it may not be ideal.}) 8. a4 Nbd7 9. Be3 Ne8 10. Qd2 Bxf3 11. Bxf3 Qa5 12. h3 a6 {White seems to be better here as Black is struggling to play b5.})
8. Bf4 {Maybe this isn't best as it's hard for White to get a favorable version of the e5 pawn break.} 8... **Nc7 9. a4 a6 10. h3 Rb8** {White prevented the Bg4 idea so now I prepare b5 instead.} **11. a5** {TB: White misses his chance for an edge with} (11. e5 \$1 11... dxe5 12. Nxe5 Nfxd5 13. Nxd5 Nxd5 14. Nxf7 Rxf7 15. Bxb8 Bxb2 16. Rb1 \$14)
11... b5 12. axb6 Rxb6 13. Qc1 (13. Bc1 {White should consider retreating as the bishop ended up loose on the f4 square in the game.}) **13... Rb4 14. Bd3 Re8 15. Re1 Nd7** {Black is fairly active but White may still be a bit better. Compared to a Modern Benoni, the e-file is closed, which may favor White.}) **13... Rb4 14. Nd2** \$2 {A mistake, which runs into a tactical shot as the Bf4 is unprotected.} (14. Bd3 c4 15. Be2 Nxe4 16. Nxe4 Bxb2 17. Qd2 c3 18. Nxc3 Bxc3 19. Qxc3 Rxf4 20. Qd2 Rf5 {Black is probably a bit worse after the tactics, but maybe it's manageable.}) **14... Nfxd5 \$1 15. exd5** (15. Bxd6 {[%t bLon] lf} 15... exd6 16. exd5 Bxh3 17. gxh3 Qg5+ 18. Bg4 f5 19. Nde4 Qxc1 20. Rfxc1 fxc4 21. hxg4 Rxb2 {Black is winning.}) **15... Rxf4 16. Nde4 Be5** {Here there were some much saner and better options, such as:} (16... Bh6 {looked risky during the game, but if} 17. g3 Rh4 18. f4 Rxh3 19. Kg2 Bg7 20. Qd2 Rh6 {and Black is two pawns up.}) (16... Nxd5 {This is also an alternative, but it's complicated and I was worried about Bc4.}) 17. Bc4 Bxc3 18. bxc3 Rxe4 19. Bxd5 Re5 20. c4 {White doesn't have that much compensation for the two pawns.}) **17. g3 Nxd5** {This turns the game into an unbalanced mess, where Black will be down a rook for some pawns, the bishop pair, and an attack!} (17... Bxc3 18. gxf4 Bg7 19. Rd1 Bf5 20. Bf3 Qd7 {This keeps an advantage for Black, who has the two bishops, a pawn, and the superior structure for the Exchange.}) **18. gxf4** {White doesn't have a good alternative to taking the rook, so he goes for it.} **18... Nxf4 19. Qe3** (19. Bxa6 Bxa6 20. Rxa6 Qc8 {forks a6 and h3 and Black wins.}) **19... Bxh3** (19... Nxb3+ {This seems stronger in hindsight, but I wanted to develop another piece.}) 20. Kg2 Nf4+ 21. Kg1 e6 22. Rfd1 f5 23. Ng3 Qg5 24. Kf1 Qh4 25. Bf3 Nh3 26. Ra4 f4 27. Qe2 Bxc3 28. bxc3 Bd7 {White is in trouble. This is one nice line demonstrating Black's attacking chances!}) **20. Rfd1 e6** {Planning to bring the queen into the attack.} **21. Bf3** (21. Ng3 {was a better defense. For example} 21... h5 22. Qxe5 dxe5 23. Rxd8 Nxe2+ 24. Ncxe2 Rxd8 25. Ne4 c4 26. N2c3 Rb8 27. Nd1 Bf5 28. f3 Bxe4 29. fxe4 Rb6 {is not so clear.}) (21. Bf1 {is also interesting.}) 21... Bg4 22. f3 Bf5 23. Ne2 Bxe4 24. Nxf4 Bxc2 25. Qxe5 dxe5 26. Rxd8 Rxd8 27. Ng2 {with an unbalanced endgame where Black has many pawns for the knight but some of them are weak. Black is probably better here though, as 5 pawns is a lot for a piece.}) **21... f5** (21... Qh4 {[%t bLon] A sample alternative was} 22. Ng3 a5 23. Nce2 h5 24. Re1 Nxe2+ 25. Bxe2 Bf4 26. Qf3 Qg5 27. Bf1 Bf5 28. Qg2 Bxc2 29. Ne4 Bxe4 30. Rxe4 d5 31. Qxg5 Bxg5 32. Rea4 Bd2 {is an unclear ending with 5 pawns for the rook.}) **22. Ng3 Qh4** (22... Qg5 23. Ra4 h5 24. Rxf4 Qxf4 25. Qxf4 Bxf4 26. Ra1 Rb8 27. b3 Rb6 {would have

been a bit better for Black, with two bishops and 4 pawns against bishop and two knights.)) **23. Rxa6** (23. Nce2 {This is a tougher defense.} 23... g5 24. Rxa6 Ng6 25. Raxd6 f4 26. Qxc5 fxg3 27. Rd8 Bg4 28. Rxf8+ Nxf8 29. Rd8 Qh2+ 30. Kf1 Bg7 31. Rxf8+ Bxf8 32. Qxg5+ Bg7 33. Qd8+ Bf8 {with a repetition after White's counterattack.}) **23... Nh5** {In a sense, this was both a mistake and the winning move!} (23... Bg4 {was objectively better} 24. Rdx6 Nh3+ 25. Kf1 Bxg3 26. fxg3 Qxg3 27. Ne2 Qxf3+ 28. Qxf3 Bxf3 29. Rxe6 Rf7 30. Ng1 Nxg1 31. Kxg1 {with another fairly unclear ending.}) **24. Bxh5** \$2{White took the wrong way!} (24. Nxh5 {This looked bad during the game due to f4. However, White has resources!} 24... f4 (24... gxh5 25. Raxd6 Bxd6 26. Rxd6 f4 27. Qxc5 Rf5 28. Qc8+ Rf8 29. Qc4 Qg5+ 30. Kh2 Qh4 31. Kg1 {This wins as White's extra material finally has its say.} 31... Qg5+ 32. Kh1 Qh4 33. Rd3 Qxf2 34. Ne4 Qh4 35. b4)25. Qe4 (25. Nxf4 {We both thought this was basically forced.} 25... Bxf4 26. Qe4 Rf5 27. Ne2 Bh2+ 28. Kh1 Qxf2 29. Ng1 Be5 30. Qe2 Qh4 {This really does win for Black, however.})25... Qg5+ 26. Kh1 Qh4 27. Qb7 Bf1+ 28. Kg1 Bxa6 29. Qxa6 Qh3 30. Qc6 gxh5 31. Ne4 Kh8 32. Nxd6 Bxb2 33. Bg2 Qg4 34. Rd3 {This is just winning for White, whose extra piece outweighs the three pawns.}) **24... f4** \$1{This is much better than taking the bishop.} (24... gxh5 25. Rdx6 Bxd6 26. Qxe6+ Kh8 27. Rxd6 f4 28. Qe5+ Kg8 29. Nce4 fxg3 30. fxg3 Qg4 31. Nf6+ Rxf6 32. Rxf6 {and White wins.}) **25. Qe4 Qg5 26. Nce2** \$4{With the time control approaching, White finally cracks.} (26. Qh1 Qh4 27. Qe4 Qg5 28. Qh1 {may be nothing more than a draw.})(26. Ra8 fxg3 27. Rxf8+ Kxf8 28. Qa8+ Kg7 29. Bf3 Qh4 30. Ne4 d5 31. Qa7+ Kh6 32. Nxg3 Bxg3 33. Qxc5 Be5 34. Qe3+ Bf4 35. Qa3 Kg7 {This looks scary but it seems White can defend.}) **26... fxg3 \$19 27. Nxg3 Bxg3 28. fxg3 Qxg3+ 29. Kh1 Rf2** \$1{forcing mate after the checks expire!} **30. Ra8+ Kg7 31. Ra7+ Kf6** \$1{The final finesse, after which White has no good checks.} (31... Kh6 32. Rxh7+ Kxh7 33. Qxg6+ Qxg6 34. Bxg6+ Kxg6 {is a winning ending for Black, but gets no style points. This game won a 2nd Prize for Best Fighting Spirit.}) 0-1

This game won a 2nd Prize for Best Played Game.

[Event "45th Annual Eastern Open"]
[Site "Tyson's Corner, Virginia"]
[Date "2018.12.30"]
[Round "7.2"]
[White "Erenburg, Sergey"]
[Black "Checa, Nicolas D"]
[Result "1-0"]
[ECO "C07"]
[WhiteElo "2589"]
[BlackElo "2508"]
[Annotator "Serge"]
[PlyCount "105"]
[EventData "2018.12.27"]

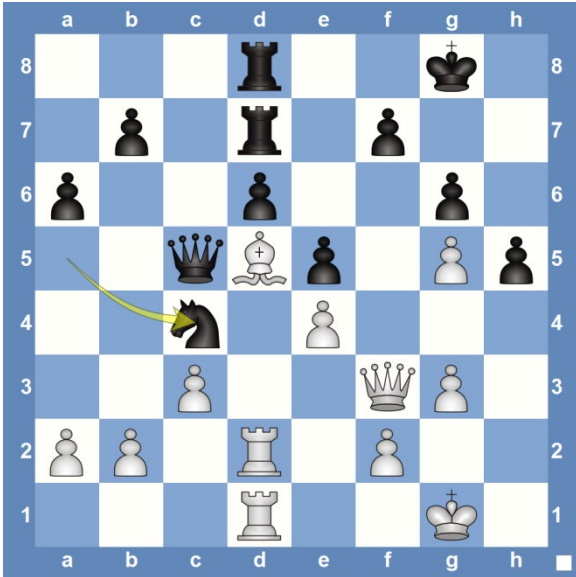
1. e4 e6 2. d4 d5 3. Nd2 c5 4. Ngf3 cxd4 5. Nxd4 Nf6 6. exd5 Nxd5 7. N2f3 Bb4+ \$1 {Forces White to place his dark-squared bishop to an awkward d2 square.} **8. Bd2** (8. c3 \$4 Nxc3 9. bxc3 Bxc3+ 10. Bd2 Bxd4) **8 ...O-O 9. Be2 Bxd2+ 10. Qxd2 Qf6** {Probably the best square for the black queen. In the absence of dark-squared bishops, black queen covers important dark squares.} **11. O-O-O Bd7** {Preparing to complete the development with Nb8-c6.} **12. Rhe1 Nc6 13. Bf1** {Now white is set to take control over the e5 square.} **13 ...Rfd8 14. Qg5** \$14 {/= . I thought it was logical to trade queens, given that my queen was less passive. I thought that I am getting winning chances thanks to the pawn majority on the queenside and a slightly better light-squared bishop.} **14 ...Nxd4 15. Rxd4 Qxg5+ 16. Nxg5 Bc6 17. Nf3** {By playing this move with the rook on e1, I was aiming to bring the knight to e5 and making sure Black can't react with f7-f6.} ({The logical alternative was} 17. Red1 {, but after} Rdc8 {,which threatens Nf6 to cover both f3 and e4 squares.}) **18. Nf3 Ne7 19. Ne5 Bd5** {, Black is threatening f7-f6 and he is just fine.}) **17... Nf6** ({If I played Black, I'd probably prefer} 17... b5 {to keep the f7-f6 option and preventing c2-c4 advance.}) **18. Red1 Rxd4 19. Nxd4 Be8** ({Of course not} 19... Ng4 \$2 20. Nxc6 bxc6 21. Rd6 \$16) {Black is extremely solid, and is ready to bring his king to the center, so I needed to keep my initiative alive by activating my

bishop and securing the d4 outpost for the knight.} **20. Be2 Kf8 21. f4** \$14 {Now White is slightly better. White is going to take control over the long diagonal and is set up for the expansion on the queenside.} **21 ...h6 22. Bf3 Rb8 23. h4** {It was important to prevent g7-g5.} **23 ...h5** {Apparently, my opponent was concerned about the g2-g4-g5 advance, but I don't think Black should place all his pawns on the queenside on the light squares.} ({A reasonable alternative was} 23... Ke7) **24. Rd3** {Adding some options of attacking black pawns on the queenside.} **24 ...g6 25. b4** {, taking control over the c5 square and preparing to advance queenside pawns.} (25. Rc3 {was too early to play.} 25 ...Rd8 26. Nb3 Nd5) (25. c4 {would be premature.} Rc8) **25... Ke7 26. Kd2** (26. b5 {would be too optimistic, because of} a6) **26 ... Nd7** {,preparing the counterplay with e6-e5.} **27. Nb3** {threatening Nb3-a5.} ({Another way to maintain advantage was} 27. c4 e5 28. Re3 Kf6 29. Ne2 \$14) **27... b5** {, preventing c2-c4.} **28. Rc3 Kd8 29. Na5** {Covering the c4 square and threatening with Nc6+ and Nb7+} **29 ...Nb6 30. Ke3** ({Unfortunately, White achieves nothing after} 30. Nb7+ Kd7 31. Rc5 Na4 32. Rxb5 Kc7 33. Re5 Rxb7 34. Bxb7 Kxb7 35. c4 Bc6 36. g3 Bf3 \$13 {, and Black should hold here.}) **30 ... Na4 31. Rc6** {The whole point of my plan! Black can't trade the rooks, as all his kingside pawns will be lost.} **31 ...Rb6** (31... Bxc6 \$2 32. Nxc6+ Kc7 33. Nxb8 Kxb8 34. Bc6 {with following Be8.}) **32. Rxb6 axb6** {Black creates a double pawn barrier to prevent White from getting a passed pawn on the queenside.} ({White is slightly better after:} 32... Nxb6 33. Kd4 Kc7 34. g3 Kd6 35. a3 \$14) **33. Nb3 Kc7** ({Black knight has nowhere to go:} 33... Nc3 34. Kd4 Nb1 (34... Nxa2 35. c3 f6 36. Kd3 \$16) 35. Be2 \$14) **34. Kd4 Kd6 35. Nd2 f6** {Trying to create some counterplay.} **36. Ne4+ Ke7 37. Nd2** {Buying some time to complete 40 moves.} **37 ...Kd6 38. Ne4+ Ke7 39. Nf2** {Now White can play Nd1 to deny any squares from black knight.} **39 ...Nb2** ({White preserves his advantage after} 39... Kd6 40. Nd1 e5+ 41. fxe5+ fxe5+ 42. Kd3 Bf7 43. Be4 \$14) **40. Be2** {Denying the c4 square from the knight and preparing to place my bishop to d3 to aim at the g6 pawn. Now Black has two weaknesses: b5 and g6, which makes his position especially difficult.} **40 ...Na4 41. g3** {Pawns are placed on the dark squares to avoid any "accidents".} **41 ...Bc6 42. Bd3 Be8 43. Ne4 Nb2 44. Be2 Na4 45. c4** {It is time to start creating a passed pawn and undermining black's fortress on the queenside. Now black's knight will be especially vulnerable.} **45 ...bxc4 46. Bxc4 Bc6** (46... Nb2 47. Be2 (47. Bb3 \$2 {gives counterplay after} e5+) 47... Bc6 48. Nc3 Na4 49. Nxa4 Bxa4 50. Bd3 Be8 51. Bc2 Kd6 52. a4 e5+ (52... Kc7 \$5) 53. fxe5+ fxe5+ 54. Ke3 \$18 {with winning endgame.}) **47. Bd3 Be8 48. Bc2 Nb2 49. a3** {I keep placing the pawns on the dark squares, and I knew that e6-e5+ does not help Black. But there was a more convincing way to finish the game, which I noticed only after I played this move:} (49. Nd2 \$1 Kd6 50. b5 \$1 {trapping black's knight.} Bxb5 51. Kc3 Na4+ 52. Kb4 \$18) **49... e5+** ({At this point, I already saw the b4-b5 idea, and would likely finish the game as follows:} 49... Na4 50. Kc4 Nb2+ 51. Kc3 Na4+ 52. Kd4 \$1 Nb2 53. Nd2 Kd6 54. b5 \$18 Bxb5 55. Kc3 Na4+ 56. Kb4) **50. fxe5 fxe5+ 51. Kd5** {Now white's pieces are so active that Black is hopeless.} (51. Kc3 {leads to 51...Bf7:} Na4+ 52. Kc4 Nb2+ 53. Kd5 Bf7+ 54. Kc6 Nc4 55. a4 Ne3 56. Bd3 Be8+ 57. Kxb6 Bxa4 58. b5 \$18) (51. Kxe5 \$2 Nc4+) **51... b5** \$6 ({Black could have put a little more resistance after} 51... Bf7+ 52. Kc6 Nc4 53. a4 Ne3 54. Bd3 Be8+ 55. Kxb6 Bxa4 56. b5 \$18 {But White is winning here as well.}) **52. Nd6 \$1 Bd7 53. Kxe5 1-0**

Terrific Tactics From the Eastern Open

I'll Just Hunker Down And...

27. ??? Sergey Erenburg-Arthur Xu (3)



27. Qf6! The whole point of the plan! White's bishop is worth more than any of black's rooks and white's attack is deadly. (Black was hoping for 27. Re2 Nb6 28. Bb3 Nc4 \$16) **27... Nxd2** (if 27... Kf8 28. Qh8+ Ke7 29. Qg7 and now either:

- 1) 29... Rf8 30. Qf6+ Ke8 31. Bxc4 Qxc4 32. Rxd6
- 2) 29... Rc8 30. b4 Qb5 31. Qxf7+ Kd8 31. Qf6+ Kc7 33. a4 Qxa4 34. Bxc4
- 3) 29... Re8 30. Be6! Kd8 31. Bxd7

28. Qxg6+ Kf8 29. Qh6+ Ke7 (29... Ke8 30. Qh8+ Ke7) **30. Qf6+ Ke8**

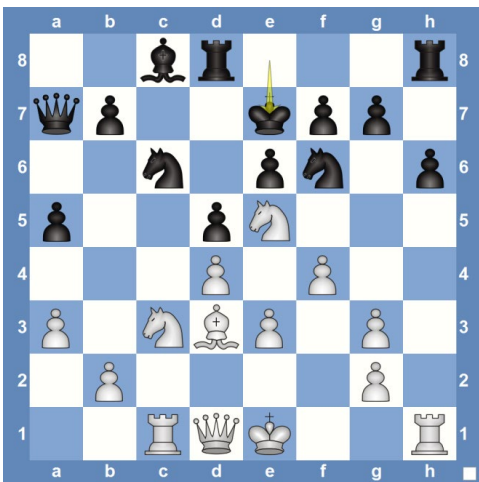
31. g6! Nf3+ (31... Re7 32. gxf7+ Kd7 33. Qf5+ Kc7 34. f8=Q Rxf8 35.

Qxf8 Rd7 36. Rxd2) **32. Kg2 Re7 33. gxf7+ Kd7 34. Qf5+ Kc7 35. f8=Q 1-0**

This game won 1st Brilliancy Prize.

Didn't See That One Coming (RED 2)

20. ??? Alex Lenderman-Dan Lowinger (4)



20. Nxd5!

1) 20... Nxd5 21. Rxc6

a) 21...Bd7 was what I calculated. 22. Rc5 b6 23. Rc1 Nxe3 24. Qe2 Nd5 25. f5
Is something I looked at it and decided that it was too much of an initiative for
black to handle even though I gave up the d5 square. The computer agreed.

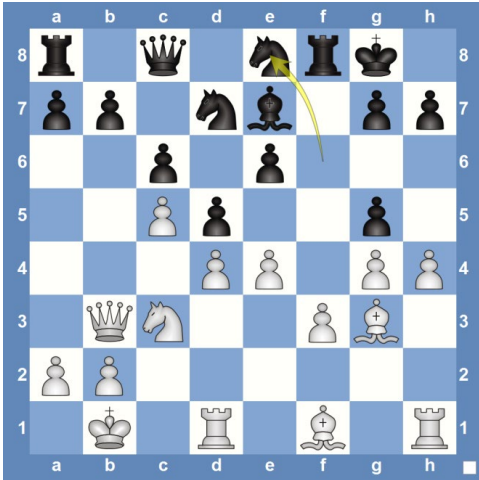
b) 21... Nxe3 22. Rc7+ (or 22. Qh5) 22... Bd7 (22... Rd7 23. Qc1 Qxd4 24. Bb5 \$18) 23. Qa4)

2) 20...Rxd5 was the game 21. Rxc6 Rxe5 22. Rc7+ Kd6 23. fxe5+ Kxc7 24. exf6 gxf6 25. Qf3 Qb6 26. Qxf6 1-0

This game won a 2nd Brilliancy Prize.

How Did I Get Into This Mess?

18. ??? Alex Lenderman-Alex Jian (2)



18. exd5 exd5 19. Nxd5! A very easy sacrifice to play. Black's pieces are too uncoordinated, I'll get 3 pawns and a massive attack for the piece. Black is losing. **19... cxd5 20. Qxd5+ Kh8 21. hxg5 Qc6 22. Rxh7! Kxh7 23. g6+ Qxg6+**
Sadly for Black, forced:

1) 23... Kxg6 24. Qh5+ Kf6 25. Qf5#

2) 23... Kh8 24. Qh5+ Kg8 25. Qh7#

3) 23... Kh6 24. Qh5#

24. Bd3 Qxd3+ 25. Rxd3 Nef6 26. Qxb7 Bxc5 27. g5! Bb6 28. gxf6 Nxf6

29. Be5 (Even better is 29. Bd6) and White wins

This game won a 2nd Brilliancy Prize.

One Clunker and It's All Over

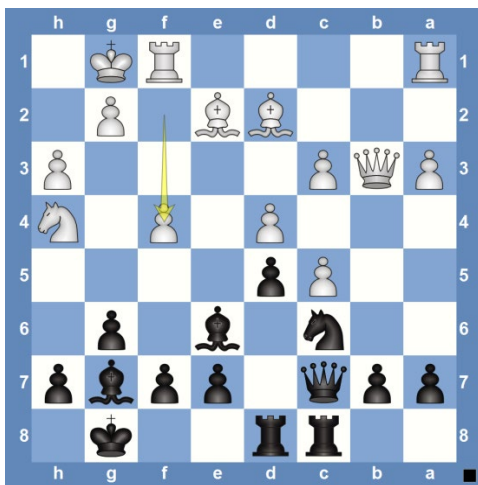
23... ??? Macon Shibus-Merric Hu (1)



23... e6? Too bad! Black was much better after 23... Nb6 24. f4 gxf4 25. Bxf4 Nxa2 +/- 24. Rc7! Nxc7 25. Rxc7 f4 Another defense is 25... Bf6 26. Nd6+ Kf8 27. Nd7+ Kg7 28. Nb6+ Kg7 29. Nxa8 f4 30. Bxf4 gxf4 31. Rxa7 Bxb2 32. Nc7 and White is still winning. 26. Rxc7 f4 27. hxc3 Kf8 28. Rc7 Re8 29. Nd6 Re7 30. Rc8+ Kg7 31. Ne8+ Kh6 32. Nf6 Kg7 33. Nh5+ Kh6 34. g4 Rb7 35. Rf8 Rg7 36. Nxc7 Kxc7 37. Ra8 h6 38. g3 Rh7 39. Rxa7+ Kf6 40. Rxh7 Bxh7 41. f4 1-0
This game won a 2nd Brilliancy Prize.

How Did I Miss That?

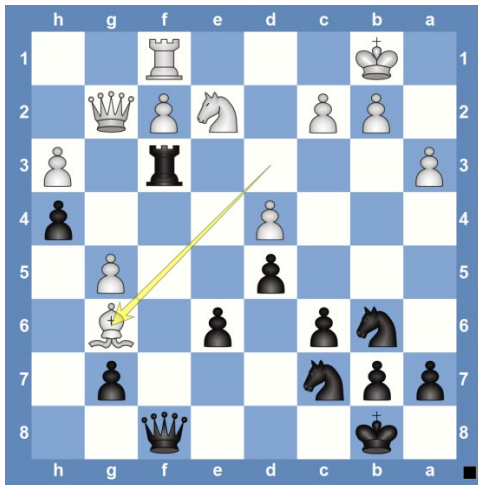
17...??? Johnson Moore-Andrew Samuelson (1)
After 17. f4?! Black played 17... f5?! What did he miss?



17... Nxd4! 18. cxd4 Bxd4+ 19. Kh2 Not 19. Be3? Bxa1 20. Rxa1 d4.
19... Bxa1 20. Rxa1 d4 Or 20... Qxc5. 21. Qg3 d3 22. Bf3
Bd5 23. Rc1 Bxf3 24. Nxf3 Rd5 25. Be3 f6 +/-

Help! It's Lonely Over Here

29...??? Asa Dommalapati-Allan Savage (1)



29... Nc4 30. Bh5 Rxa3 31. Rd1 Qb4 32. b3 Ra1+ 33. Kxa1 Qa3+
34. Kb1 Qb2# 0-1

To Chop or Not to Chop?

27...??? Isaac Chiu-Ryan Luo (2)

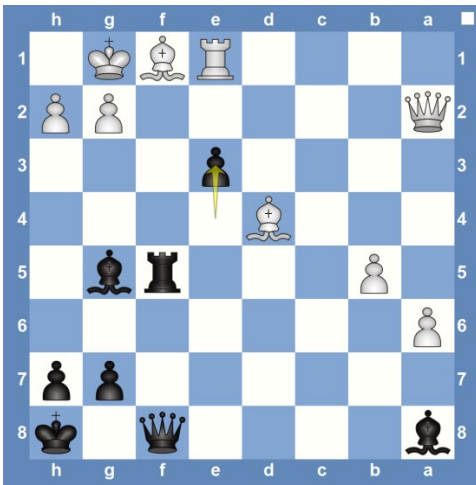


27...Nxg3! 28.g6 Qf4 29.Be6+ Kg7 30.Bxd5 =

In the game, 27...Nfe3? 28.Nh2! Nxf1 29.Rxf1 Qg7 30.Be6+ Kh8 31.Bxd5 +/- was played.

Time Control Blues

40.??? Harry Le-Eshan Guha (2)



All White has to do is hold on for a move or two (possibly in time trouble).

Unfortunately, he played **40.Qc2??** and then instead of **40...Bh4?** when White could equalize with **41.Rc1 Bf2+ 42.Kh1 e2 43.Bxe2 Bxd4 44.Qc8**. Instead, White played **41.Qe2??** and **41...Bf2+** won. Black should have played the crushing **40...Rf2 41.Bxg7+ Qxg7 42.Re2 Bh4** and wins. If **41.Qd3 Rxg2+**.

Can you see the win for White on move 40? Guard f1, get the Q off the 2nd rank, and ?.

40.Qa1! and now either:

40...Bd5 41.b6 (or 41.Re2) 41...Rf2 42.Bxe3 Rxf1+ 43.Rxf1 Bxe3+ 44.Kh1 or

40...Rf2 41.Bxe3, or

40...Bh4 41.g3 Bxg3 42.hxg3 Rh5 43.Bxg7+ Qxg7 44.Qxg7+ or 43...Kg8 44.Bc4+

Opening Innovation:

B76/22-24: Andrew Samuelson-Alex Chen, 45th Annual Eastern Open, Rd 4.8, Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 2018.12.29: **1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 g6 6.Be3 Bg7 7.f3 O-O 8.Qd2 Nc6 9.O-O-O** (9.Bc4 is the most critical line, and 9.g4 is interesting with the following line: 9...Nxd4! 10.Bxd4 Be6 11.0-0-0 Qa5 12.a3 Rab8 13.Kb1 Rfc8 14.g5 and now either:

1) **14...Nh5 15.Nd5 Qxd2 16.Rxd2 Bxd5 17.exd5 a6 18.Rg1 f6 19.Ba7 Ra8 20.Be3 fxg5 21.Bxg5 Rc7 22.Bh3 Rf6 23.Bg4 Nf4 24.h4 h6 25.Bxf4 Rxf4 26.Be6+ Kh7 27.Rg4 Rcc4 28.Rdg2 +.04/29**

2) **14...Ne8 15.Nd5 Qxd2 16.Rxd2 Bxd5 17.exd5 Bxd4 18.Rxd4 Rc5 19.b4 Rc7 20.Bd3 Ng7 21.Kb2 Rbc8 22.Re1 +.22/23.)**

9...d5 10.exd5 (10.Qe1 is fun, and 10.Nxc6 bxc6 11.Bh6 Qc7 =.) **10...Nxd5 11.Nxc6 bxc6 12.Bd4 e5** (Black has a much simpler way to equalize with 12...Bxd4 13.Qxd4 Qb6 {13...Qc7} 14.Nxd5 cxd5 15.h4 Qxd4 16.Rxd4 Bb7 17.c3 a5 18.Bb5 e5 19.Rdd1 Rfc8 20.Kd2 Rab8 21.b3 Kg7 22.Rde1 f6 23.Rc1 Rc7 24.b3 Bc8 -.13/27.) **13.Bc5 Be6 14.Ne4 Re8** (And this is the old tabiya from decades ago when Black was believed to equalize.) **15.h4!** (Almost certainly best.) **15...h6?!** (This move gives White some advantage. Black's best chance is 15...h5! and then either:

1) **16.Bc4 Nf4 17.Bxe6 Nxe6 18.Be3 Qe7 19.Qd6 f5 20.Qxe7 Rxe7 21.Ng5 {21.Nc5 Nxc5 22.Bxc5} 21...f4 22.Nxe6 Rxe6 23.Bc5 a5 24.Rd7 Bf6 25.a4 e4 26.Kd2 e3+ 27.Ke2 Bxb2 28.Rb1 Bf6 29.Rbb7 Re5 30.Bd4 Rf5 31.Bxf6 Rxf6 +.06/33**

2) **16.g4 Nf4**

a) **17.Qe1 Qc7 18.gxh5 Nxh5 19.Qc3 {19.Kb1 Rad8=} 19...Rad8 20.Bc4 Rxd1+ 21.Rxd1 Nf4 22.Bd6 Qb6 23.Kb1 Bd5 +.10/24**

b) **17.g5 Qxd2+ 18.Qb4 {18.Qc3; 18.b3} 18...Qc7 19.Bd6 Qc8**

i) **20.Qa3 a5 21.c4 Bxe4 22.fxe4 Qg4 23.c5 a4 24.Bc4 Bf8 25.Qe3 a3 26.bxa3 Bxd6 27.cxd6 Reb8 +.00/39**

ii) **20.Qa4 a5 21.Kb1 Rd8 22.Bd3 Rd7**

(1) **23.c4 Nxd3 24.cxd5 +.00/22**

(2) **23.Bc5 Qd8 24.Rc1 Nxd3 25.cxd3 Be6 26.Qxc6 Rc8 -.18/22.)**

16.g4?! (16.h5 appears to give a fine advantage after 16...g5 17.c4 Nf6 18.Qe1 Qc7 19.Bd6 Qb6 20.Bxe5 Nxe4 21.Bxg7 Kxg7 22.Qxe4 +.64/30.)

16...Qc7 17.g5 h5 18.Bc4 Red8 19. Qf2 Nf4 20. Bxe6 Nxe6 21. Bd6 Qb6 22. Qxb6 axb6 23. Kb1 Rd7 24. c3 Ra5 25. Nf6+ Bxf6 26. gxf6 Nf4 27. b4 Ra8 28. Bxe5 Nd3 29. Bd4 Nxb4 30. Bxb6 Rb7 31. Rd8+ Rxd8 32. Bxd8 Nd5+ 33. Kc2 Ne3+ 34. Kd3 Nf5 35. Kc4 Rb5 36. Be7 Ra5 37. Rb1 Rxa2 38. Rb8+ Kh7 39. Rf8 Nh6 40.Kc5 Rh2 41. Kxc6 Rxh4 42. Kd5 Rh1 43. c4 h4 44. Ra8 h3 45. Ra2 h2 46. Kc6 Rc1 47. Rxh2 Rxc4+ 48. Kd7 g5 49. Bd6 Kg6 50. Rg2 Rd4 51. Kc6 Kxf6 52. Re2 Nf5 53.Be5+ Kg6 54. Rg2 Rc4+ 55. Kb5 Rh4 56. Kc5 f6 57. Bc7 Rh3 58. f4 Rc3+ 59. Kb6 Ne3 60. f5+ Kf7 61. Rh2 Nd5+ 62. Kb7 Rxc7+ 63. Kb8 g4 64. Rd2 Rc5 0-1

7 Games by Lenderman: Alex was so gracious to annotate all his games for us, that I awarded him a special prize. Please load each game into a .pgn reader.

[Event "Eastern Open"]
[Site "Last"]
[Date "2018.12.06"]
[Round "1"]
[White "Webster, Scott"]
[Black "Lenderman, Alex"]
[Result "0-1"]
[ECO "E06"]
[Annotator "Aleksandr"]
[PlyCount "82"]
[EventDate "2018.??.??"]
[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

{Maybe good fighting spirit, finding a way to create chances in a dead drawn position (but I doubt this game is worthy) :)} 1. Nf3 Nf6 2. c4 e6 3. g3 d5 4. d4 Be7 5. Bg2 O-O 6. O-O c6 7. Qc2 b6 8. Nc3 Ba6 (8... Nbd7 9. Rd1 Ba6 10. b3) 9. Ne5 Nfd7 10. cxd5 cxd5 11. Rd1 (11. Nxd5 exd5 12. Nxf7 Rxf7 13. Bxd5 Nc6) 11... Nxe5 (11... Bb7 12. e4 Nxe5 13. dxe5 d4 14. Ne2 Nc6 15. Nxd4 Nxd4 16. Qc4 Qc8 17. Qxd4 Rd8 18. Qa4 Qc6 19. Qb3) 12. dxe5 Qc8 13. e4 d4 14. Rxd4 Nc6 15. Rd1 Nxe5 16. Bf4 Bf6 17. Rac1 Rd8 18. Qa4 Qc4 19. Qa3 Rxd1+ 20. Rxd1 Qc8 21. Bxe5 Bxe5 22. f4 Bxc3 23. bxc3 Bb7 24. Qe7 Bc6 25. e5 h6 26. Bxc6 Qxc6 27. Rd7 Rf8 28. Rc7 Qe4 29. Rxa7 Qe1+ 30. Kg2 Qxc3 31. a4 Qc2+ 32. Kh3 Qe2 33. Rd7 Qf1+ 34. Kh4 (34. Kg4) 34... Qg2 35. Rd8 Qxh2+ 36. Kg4 Qe2+ 37. Kh3 Qf1+ 38. Kg4 (38. Kh2) 38... Rxd8 (38... Kh7 39. Qxf8 (39. Rxf8 Qd1+ 40. Kh3 Qh1+ 41. Kg4 h5+ 42. Kg5 Qf3) 39... Kg6) 39. Qxd8+ Kh7 40. Qxb6 (40. Qa8) 40... h5+ 41. Kh4 Qh1+ {White resigned because of Kg5 Qd1 with unstoppable mate.} 0-1

[Event "Eastern Open"]
[Site "Last"]
[Date "2018.12.06"]
[Round "2"]
[White "Lenderman, Alex"]
[Black "Jian, Alex"]
[Result "1-0"]
[ECO "D11"]
[Annotator "Aleksandr"]
[PlyCount "77"]
[EventDate "2018.??.??"]
[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 Nf6 4. g3 Bf5 5. Nc3 (5. Bg2 e6 6. Nc3 h6 {Is solid for black}) 5... e6 6. Nh4 Bg4 7. Qb3 Qb6 8. c5 (8. h3 Bh5 9. g4 Bg6 10. Nxc6 hxc6 11. Bg2 Na6 12. e3) 8... Qc7 {Maybe inaccurate.} (8... Qxb3 {Very often this is ok if the knight isn't on d7 yet.}) 9. axb3 Na6 10. f3 Bh5 11. g4 Bg6 12. Nxc6 hxc6 13. e3 Nc7) 9. Bf4 Qc8 10. f3 Bh5 11. g4 Bg6 12. e4 Be7 13. Nxc6 fxc6 \$6 (13... hxc6) 14. Bg3 (14. g5 {This might've been stronger.} Nh5 15. Bd2) 14... O-O 15. O-O-O Nbd7 16. Kb1 {Preparing g5, so that the pawn on g5 doesn't hang with check. It's a useful move no matter what. Now black seems to be in trouble.} g5 \$6 {Making things worse.} 17. h4 Ne8 18. exd5 exd5 19. Nxd5 \$1 {A very easy sacrifice. Black's pieces are too disorganized, I'll get 3 pawns and a massive attack for the piece. Black is losing.} cxd5 20. Qxd5+ Kh8 21. hxc6 Qc6 22. Rxc6+ \$1 {Many brilliancy, but pretty straightforward.} Kxc6 23. g6+ Qxc6+ {Sadly for black, forced.} (23... Kxc6 24. Qh5+ Kf6 25. Qf5#) (23... Kh8 24. Qh5+ Kg8 25. Qh7#) (23... Kh6 24.

Qh5#) 24. Bd3 Qxd3+ 25. Rxd3 Nef6 26. Qxb7 Bxc5 27. g5 \$18 Bb6 28. gxf6 Nxf6
29. Be5 Rad8 30. f4 Rd7 31. Qc6 Rdd8 32. Qe6 Rde8 33. Rh3+ Kg6 34. Rg3+ Kh7 35.
Qh3+ Kg8 36. Qh6 Rf7 37. Bxf6 Re1+ 38. Kc2 Rc7+ 39. Kd3 {Accuracy till the end,
it's still not too late to make your job much more complicated. Now black
resigned due to Rd1+ Ke2 with a hopeless position for black.} (39. Kb3 \$2 Re3+
{And black is still lost but the game drags on for a while now.}) (39. Kd2 Ba5+
) 1-0

[Event "Eastern Open"]
[Site "Last"]
[Date "2018.12.06"]
[Round "3"]
[White "Johnston, Daniel"]
[Black "Lenderman, Alex"]
[Result "0-1"]
[ECO "A46"]
[Annotator "Aleksandr"]
[PlyCount "38"]
[EventDate "2018.???.?"]
[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. g3 b5 3. Bg2 Bb7 4. O-O
e6 5. d4 d5 6. b3 c5 (6... Nbd7 7. Bb2 c5 8. c4) 7. c4 bxc4 8. bxc4 dxc4 9.
Qa4+ (9. Bb2) 9... Nbd7 10. Qxc4 Rc8 11. Rd1 \$6 (11. Nbd2) 11... cxd4 12. Qxd4
Bc5 13. Qh4 Qb6 14. e3 Ne4 \$5 {Prophylaxis against Nbd2 due to Nxf2 ideas. Now
white has to play very careful in his piece development. His harmony is
disturbed.} 15. Rxd7 \$6 {Falling into my trap.} (15. Nbd2 Nxf2 (15... Nc3 16.
Re1 Bd5 \$17) 16. Nc4 Nxd1 17. Nxb6 Nxb6 \$44) (15. Ba3 Bxa3 (15... Nxf2 16. Rxd7
\$1 (16. Bxc5 Nxc5) 16... Bxa3 17. Nxa3 Nh3+ 18. Kh1 Nf2+ \$11) 16. Nxa3 Bd5 \$15)
15... Kxd7 16. Ne5+ Ke8 17. Bxe4 \$2 (17. Nd2 {Still kept white in the game due
to some counterplay.} Be7 (17... Nxd2 \$4 18. Qa4+ \$18) 18. Qf4 Nf6 {And while
white has come compensation, it's probably not enough.}) 17... Be7 \$19 {
The point.} 18. Bc6+ Rxc6 19. Qa4 Qa5 0-1

[Event "Eastern Open"]
[Site "Last"]
[Date "2018.12.06"]
[Round "4"]
[White "Lenderman, Alex"]
[Black "Lowinger, Daniel"]
[Result "1-0"]
[ECO "D10"]
[Annotator "Aleksandr"]
[PlyCount "59"]
[EventDate "2018.???.?"]
[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. cxd5 \$5 {I didn't expect the Slav,
but I know Daniel is a creative aggressive player so I wanted to bore the game
a bit. Sure enough though, Daniel created good chances for me later which I
was able to seize.} cxd5 4. Bf4 e6 5. Nc3 Bd6 6. Bg3 Bxg3 (6... Ne7 7. e3 Nf5 {
Would be my choice with black.}) 7. hxg3 Qb6 8. Qd2 Nf6 9. e3 Nc6 10. Nf3 (10.
Bd3 e5) 10... Bd7 (10... Ne4 11. Nxe4 dxe4 12. Ng5) 11. Bd3 Rc8 12. Rd1 {
Too deep.} (12. Rc1 {Maybe this was better.} Nb4 13. Bb1 Ne4 14. Nxe4 Rxc1+ 15.
Qxc1 dxe4 16. Ne5 {Was good for me, I miscalculated this line.}) 12... Rd8 \$6 {
This was a bit odd.} 13. a3 a5 \$6 (13... Ne7 14. b4 h6) 14. Rc1 {I go to c1
now since Nb4 isn't an idea anymore.} Qa7 15. Nb5 Qb6 16. Nc3 Qa7 17. Qd1 {

I decided to repeat once to give Daniel a choice after Nb5 and shed some time off his clock.} h6 18. Ne5 Bc8 \$6 (18... Qb8) (18... Kf8) 19. f4 Ke7 20. Nxd5+ \$5 {Maybe brilliancy?} Rxd5 (20... Nxd5 21. Rxc6 Bd7 {Was what I calculated.} (21... Nxe3 22. Rc7+ Bd7 (22... Rd7 23. Qc1 Qxd4 24. Bb5 \$18) 23. Qa4) 22. Rc5 b6 23. Rc1 Nxe3 24. Qe2 Nd5 25. f5 {Is something I looked at it and decided that it was too much of an initiative for black to handle even though I gave up the d5 square. The computer agreed.}) 21. Rxc6 Rxe5 22. Rc7+ Kd6 23. fxe5+ Kxc7 24. exf6 gxf6 25. Qf3 Qb6 26. Qxf6 Rd8 27. Qe5+ Rd6 28. O-O Qxb2 29. Rxf7+ Bd7 30. Bb5 1-0

[Event "Eastern Open"]
[Site "Last"]
[Date "2018.12.06"]
[Round "5"]
[White "Checa, Nico"]
[Black "Lenderman, Alex"]
[Result "1/2-1/2"]
[ECO "A40"]
[Annotator "Aleksandr"]
[PlyCount "52"]
[EventDate "2018.??.??"]
[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

1. d4 e6 2. c4 b6 3. Nf3 Bb7 4. g3 Bb4+ 5. Bd2 Bxf3 6. exf3 Bxd2+ 7. Qxd2 Nf6 8. Nc3 d5 9. cxd5 Nxd5 10. Bg2 Nc6 {I saw this idea based on a recent Anish Giri game.} 11. f4 Nce7 12. O-O c6 13. Rac1 O-O {Black has solved his problems and got a solid position.} 14. Nd1 \$5 Qd6 15. Ne3 Rac8 16. Rfd1 Rfd8 17. Qe2 g6 18. a3 Qb8 19. Be4 Nf6 20. Bf3 Rd7 21. b4 Rdc7 22. Nc4 Rd8 23. Ne5 Rd6 24. Nc4 (24. Qb2 {White is not better but could've kept the game going but he was lower on time and was ok with a draw. I was ok with a draw since I was black and the tournament situation was good for me.}) 24... Rd8 25. Ne5 Rd6 26. Nc4 Rd8 1/2-1/2

[Event "Eastern Open"]
[Site "Last"]
[Date "2018.12.06"]
[Round "6"]
[White "Lenderman, Alex"]
[Black "Erenburg, Sergey"]
[Result "1/2-1/2"]
[ECO "D45"]
[Annotator "Aleksandr"]
[PlyCount "82"]
[EventDate "2018.??.??"]
[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

1. c4 c6 2. d4 d5 3. Nc3 Nf6 4. e3 e6 5. Nf3 a6 6. Qc2 c5 7. cxd5 exd5 8. Be2 Nc6 9. O-O Be6 (9... cxd4 {Enkhbat played this against me in the last round of 2016 Eastern Open and I won a nice game to win the tournament.}) 10. Rd1 cxd4 11. Nxd4 Nxd4 12. Rxd4 Bc5 13. Rd1 Qe7 (13... O-O 14. Nxd5) 14. Bf3 O-O {Black has to sacrifice a pawn.} (14... Rd8 15. b3 \$14) 15. Bxd5 Nxd5 16. Nxd5 Bxd5 17. Rxd5 Rac8 18. Qd3 Rfd8 19. g3 {Moves 18 and 19 are not the most common in this position as far as I know.} Rxd5 20. Qxd5 b6 (20... Rd8 21. Qf3 Bd6 {Probably should equalize but I wanted to play this line since it's completely risk-free and draw was decent for me at this point in the tournament.}) 21. Kg2 {Now I was on my own.} (21. Qf5 Rd8 22. Qc2 Qd7 23. b3 h5) (21. b3 Qf6 22. Rb1 Rd8 23. Qh5 Qg6 24. Qxg6 Rd1+ 25. Kg2 hxg6 26. Ra1

g5) 21... Rd8 22. Qf3 h6 (22... Qe5) 23. b3 a5 24. Bb2 Rd2 25. Bc3 Rc2 26. Bd4 Bxd4 27. exd4 Qe2 28. Qxe2 Rxe2 29. Kf3 Rc2 30. Re1 \$1 {The best winning chance.} (30. Ke4 Kf8) (30. Ke3 Kf8) 30... Rxa2 (30... Kf8 31. Re2 \$16 {White has excellent winning chances here.}) 31. Re8+ Kh7 32. Rb8 g6 \$1 {A very classy move to bring the king in the game.} (32... Ra3 33. Rxb6 a4 34. Ke4 axb3 (34... Rxb3 35. Rxb3 axb3 36. Kd3) 35. d5 Ra2 36. Rxb3 \$18 {Here it becomes clear that the black king is too far away to stop the pawn in many lines.}) 33. Rxb6 Kg7 34. d5 (34. h4 {Might give a slightly better chance.}) h5 35. Ke3 Kf8 36. f3 a4 37. bxa4 Rxa4 38. g4 hxg4 39. fxg4 Ra5) 34... a4 35. bxa4 Rxa4 36. g4 (36. Ke3 Kf8 37. h4 h5 38. Rb7 Ke8 39. f3 Rc4 {I couldn't figure out how to make progress in this position.}) 36... Rd4 37. Rd6 Kf8 38. Rd8+ Ke7 39. Rh8 h5 40. gxh5 Rxd5 41. hxg6 fxg6 1/2-1/2

[Event "Eastern Open"]

[Site "Last"]

[Date "2018.12.06"]

[Round "7"]

[White "Clancy, Daniel"]

[Black "Lenderman, Alex"]

[Result "0-1"]

[ECO "D00"]

[Annotator "Aleksandr"]

[PlyCount "94"]

[EventDate "2018.??.??"]

[SourceVersionDate "2019.01.01"]

1. d4 Nf6 2. Bg5 c6 3. Bxf6 exf6 4. e3 d5 5. c4 dxc4 6. Bxc4 Bd6 7. Nc3 O-O 8. Nf3 Nd7 9. O-O f5 10. Qc2 Nf6 11. Rfd1 a6 (11... Qe7 12. d5 c5 13. Nb5) 12. a4 Qe7 13. d5 c5 14. Bd3 g6 15. a5 Bd7 16. Nd2 Ng4 17. g3 Ne5 18. Be2 Rfe8 19. Re1 f6 20. Na4 (20. f4 Nf7 21. Bd3 \$16) 20... Bxa4 21. Rxa4 Rad8 22. f4 Nf7 23. Bf3 Qc7 24. Nc4 (24. e4 Bf8 25. Re2 \$14) 24... Bf8 25. Raa1 Nd6 26. Nxd6 Bxd6 27. e4 fxe4 28. Rxe4 Rxe4 29. Qxe4 Kg7 30. Qe1 c4 31. Qc3 Re8 32. Re1 Rxe1+ (32... Qc5+ 33. Kg2 Rxe1 34. Qxe1 Qb5 35. Qc3) 33. Qxe1 b5 34. Qe6 b4 35. Bd1 c3 36. bxc3 bxc3 37. Bc2 f5 38. Kg2 Qd8 (38... Qe7 39. Qxe7+ Bxe7 40. Kf3 Bb4 41. Ke3 Kf6 42. Kd4 Ke7 43. Kc4 Bxa5 44. h3 {Not sure if this is winning, probably not.}) 39. h3 Qc7 40. Kf3 Qd8 41. Ke2 (41. Kg2 Qe7 {I probably would've had to try this and hope for best.}) (41. g4 fxg4+ 42. hxg4 {Should just be a draw.}) 41... Qb8 42. Qd7+ Kh6 43. Kf3 Qb4 44. Qd8 \$4 {Finally my opponent blundered.} (44. Qc6 \$11) (44. Qa4 {Is still equal though at this point I was getting more optimistic.}) 44... Qc5 \$1 \$19 45. Qg8 Qg1 46. Bxf5 Qf1+ 47. Ke3 Bc5+ {And with mate next move, white resigned. I tried to exhaust any possible opportunity but of course I couldn't have won this game without my opponent's help. I got outplayed early in the game.} 0-1

5 Games by Tom Beckman:

A03/6: Roger Pauley(2230)-Tom Beckman(2014/1917F), 2018 Eastern Open, Rd 1.12, Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 2018.12.27: **1.f4 d5 2.Nf3 Nf6 3.e3** (There are 3 Bird variants: Classical {here}, Stonewall {with d4}, and Leningrad {with g3}.) **3...g6 4.b3** (The engines prefer 4.c4 Bg7 5.cxd5 0-0 6.Nc3 Nxd5 7.Qb3 Nb6 =.) **4...Bg7 5.Bb2 O-O 6.Be2 c5** (Or 6...Bf5 7.0-0 c5 8.Nc3 Ne4 9.d4 Nxc3 10.Bxc3 -.08/22.) **7.O-O Nc6** (Now we have a Queen's Indian Defense Reversed with f4. Note the continuing weakness of the e3 square.) **8.h3?!** (This weakens the K-side. Somewhat better is 8.Ne5 and then either:

1) 8...Nxe5 9.Bxe5 {9.fxe5 Ne4} 9...Be6 10.Bf3 Qd7 11.d3

a) 11...Rac8 12.Qe1 b6 13.Nd2 Rfd8 14.Rd1 +.00/41 Ne8 15.Qh4 f6 {15...Bxg7} 16.Bb2 Nd6 17.e4 d4 18.a4 Nf7 19.Qg3 or 19.Be2 Rf8 =

b) 11...Rad8 12.Qe1

i) 12...b6 13.a4 Ne8 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 {14...Nxxg7 15.Nd2 f6 16.Qf2 Qc7 17.Rae1 =}

ii) 12...Ng4 13.Bxg7 Kxg7 14.Nd2 Nf6 15.a4

2) 8...Qc7 9.Na3 a6 10.c4 Rd8 11.Nxc6 Qxc6 12.Bf3 Be6 13.d4 Qd6 14.Qc1 -.01/22 or 13.Qe2 Qd7 14.Rad1 Bg4 -.08/22.)

8...d4!? (Most popular and possibly best, but after 8...b6 {Stockfish first prefers 8...Bf5} there is lots of fun:

1) 9.c3 Ne4 10.Qe1 Bb7 11.d4 Rc8 12.Nbd2 Nd6 13.Rc1 e6 14.Bd3 Na5 15.Ba3 Re8 16.Be2 Qc7 -.31/24

2) 9.Bb5 Bb7

a) 10.c3 Ne4 11.Qe1

b) 10.Na3 Ne4 11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.Qe1 f6 13.d3 Nd6 14.c3 a6 15.Bxc6 Bxc6 16.c4 e6 17.Rc1 a5 18.d4 a4 19.b4 cxb4 -.50/24

c) 10.Qe1 Nb4 11.Na3 d4 12.exd4 {12.c3} 12...cxd4 13.Nxd4 Qd5 14.Nf3 Nxc2 15.Nxc2 Qxb5 -.65/25

d) 10.a4 d4 11.Na3 Nh5 12.Kh2 {12.g4 Ng3 13.Re1 h5} 12...Qc7 13.Nc4 Nb4 14.Nce5 Rad8 15.Qc1 Bxe5! 16.Nxe5 f6

i) 17.Nd3 Nxd3 18.Bxd3 e5 19.g3 -.66/22

ii) But not 17.Bc4+? Kh8

iii) 18.Nf3 g5! -.1.35/26

iv) 18.Nf7+? Rxf7 19.Bxf7 e5! {or 19...e6 20.Bxe6 Qc6} 20.Bc4 exf4 21.exf4 Nxf4 22.g3 Nh5 23.Rg1 f5 24.Qf1 Nxc2 25.Rc1 f4 26.Qf2 fxg3+ 27.Rxg3 Qd6 28.Rf1 {28.Rxc2 Rf8} 28...Bd5! 29.Bxd5 Nxxg3 30.Qxxg3 Qxd5 31.Kg1 Re8 -.3.18/24

3) 9.d3? Ng4! 10.Bxg7 Nxe3 11.Qc1 Nxf1 12.Bxf8 Ng3 13.Qe1 Kxf8 -.1.29/29.)

9.Bb5 (Surprisingly, moving the B a 2nd time could be the best move! Another option is 9.Na3 Nd5 10.Qc1 dxe3 11.Bxg7 Nxf4 12.Bb5 {12.Bc4} 12...Kxg7 13.dxe3 Nh5 14.Bxc6 bxc6 15.Qe1 Qc7 16.Ng5 Qe5 17.Nf3 Qg3 -.54/24.) **9...Qc7** (I had intended to continue with 9...Nd5, but changed my mind as I didn't like 10.Bxc6. It looks like 9...Nd5 is about as good as the move played after:

1) 10.Bxc6 bxc6 11.Re1 Rb8 12.Ne5 Qc7 13.Na3 Ba6 14.Qf3 Rbd8 15.Qf2 f6 16.Nf3 e5 17.fxe5 fxe5 18. -.40/24

2) 10.Qc1 Na5 11.c3 a6 12.Be2 Nc6 13.Re1 Bd7 14.Bc4 Nc7 15.a4 b5 16.axb5 axb5 17.Rxa8 Qxa8 18.Bf1 Rc8 19.Na3 Qb7 -.43/23

3) 10.Re1 Bd7 11.c3 a6 12.Bc4 Nb6 13.Bf1 Rc8 14.Na3 Qc7 15.Nc4 Nxc4 16.Bxc4 dxe3 17.dxe3 e5 18.Qd2 Rcd8 19.Qf2 exf4 20.exf4 Qxf4 -.63/26.)

10.Bxc6 Qxc6?! (Too stereotyped. Good is 10...bxc6! and now:

1) 11.Na3 Ba6 12.Re1 Nd5 13.Ne5 Rad1 14.Qf3 f6 15.Nd3 Bxd3 -.56/34

2) 11.c3 dxe3 12.dxe3 Nd5 13.Re1 Rd8 14.Qc2 Ba6 15.a4 c4 16.b4 Qb6 17.Qf2 Rab8 18.Ne5 f6 19.Nf3 f5 20.Ne5 Bxe5 21.fxe5 f4 22.e4 Nc7 23.Na3 g5 or 23...Ne6 -.68/25.)

11.exd4! Nd5? (Again stereotyped. Here Black gets sucked into a weak move. Better is 11...Nh5 12.Ne5 Qe4 13.Qf3 -.11/23 as to not block access to the d4 square.) **12.Ne5!** (Having outplayed my opponent, now my opponent outplays me!) **12...Qc7** (Slightly better is 12...Bxe5 +.64/22.)

13.Na3? (Too passive and it ignores my "threat"! The more I looked at the position, I thought I was in big trouble after 13.c4 Nb4 14.a3 Bxe5 15.fxe5 Nd3 16.Qc2 +.74/24, and I would have been.) **13...cxd4 14.Qf3?!** (White realizes that he has lost control, and tries to complicate as

14.Bxd4 Nxf4 15.Nb5 Qa5 -.14/24 leaves Black slightly better.) **14...Be6?** (A horrible move demonstrating how badly I played the entire tourney. Simply 14...Nxf4 15.Qxf4 Bxe5 -.56/23 as planned was better.) **15.Bxd4 Rfd8?!** (15...Rad8 -.52/22 was somewhat better.) **16.Bb2?** (16.c4 is the move, after which I'm busted.) **16...b5** (I looked at 16...g5, but couldn't bring myself to play it after 17.f5 Bxe5 18.Bxe5 Qxe5 19.fxe6 f6 +.22/22. My move is slightly weaker.) **17.c4?!** (White should have taken with 17.Nxb5 Qc5+ 18.Rf2 Qxb5 19.c4 +.32/22.) **17...bxc4 18.Naxc4 Nb6?!** (This misplaces the N. 18...f6 19.Ng4 a5 +.12/23 was indicated.) **19.Rac1?!** (Too fancy. 19.Ne3 +.53/23 was better.) **19...Nxc4 20.Nxc4 Bxb2**

21.Nxb2 Qb6+ (21...Qa5 is =, but not after White's next move!) **22.Qe3??** (A comedy of errors. Game over. White is slightly better after 22.Rf2 Rac8 23.Rxc8 Rxc8 24.Na4 {perhaps White missed this?} 24...Rc1+ 25.Kh2 Qd4 26.Qe3 +.16/24.) **22...Rxd2 23.Qxb6 axb6 24.Na4 b5 25.Nc3**

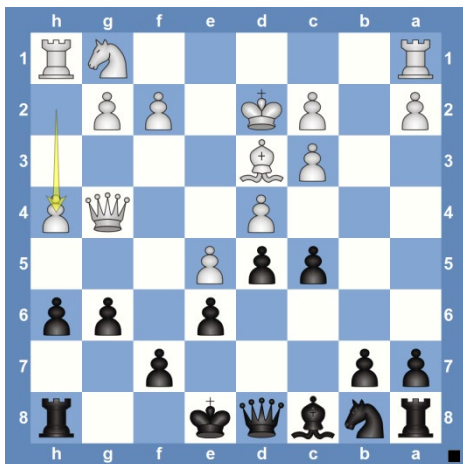
b4 26.Na4 Rxa2 27.Nc5?! (27.Rf3 -.2.53 is somewhat better.) **27...Bd5 28.Rf2 Rxf2 29.Kxf2 Ra2+ 30.Ke3 Rxxg2 31.Kd4 Rd2+ 32.Ke3**

Rh2 33.Kd4 e6 34.Ke5 Kg7?! (Somewhat better to keep munching with 34...Rxxh3.) **35.Nd7?!** (35.Nd3 is somewhat better.) **35...Rxxh3 36.Nf6**

Rc3 37.Ra1 Bxb3?! (Less exciting and somewhat better is 37...Bc6.) **38.Ne8+ Kf8 39.Ra8 Ke7 40.Nf6 Re3+ 41.Kd4 Re1 42.Nxxh7 Bd5**

43.Ra7+ Kd6 44.Ra6+ Kc7 45.Kc5 b3 46.Nf6 Rc1+ 0-1 My opponent was just returning to tournament chess; I had no such excuse!

C12/8 n53c: Macon Shibut-Tom Beckman, 45th Annual Eastern Open, Rd 3.13, Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 2018.12.28: **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.Bg5 Bb4 5.e5 h6 6.Bd2** (6.Be3 is the modern treatment.) **6...Bxc3 7.bxc3 Ne4 8.Qg4** (Or 8.Nf3 or 8.Bc1.) **8...g6** (8...Kf8 is the alternative, but getting the KR into play is a real problem.) **9.Bd3** (An alternative is 9.Qd1 to avoid losing the castling privilege, or 9.Nf3.) **9...Nxd2 10.Kxd2 c5 11.h4** (11.Nf3 is the other main option.)



11...Nc6 (There are two other options:

1) **11...Qa5!** 12.dxc5

a) 12...Nd7! 13.h5 g5 14.f4 Rg8 15.Ne2 Qxc5! 16.Rhf1 Nb6! 17.fgx5 Rgx5 18.Qf4 Qe7 19.g4 Bd7 20.Rab1 0-0-0 21.Nd4 Be8 -.06/25.

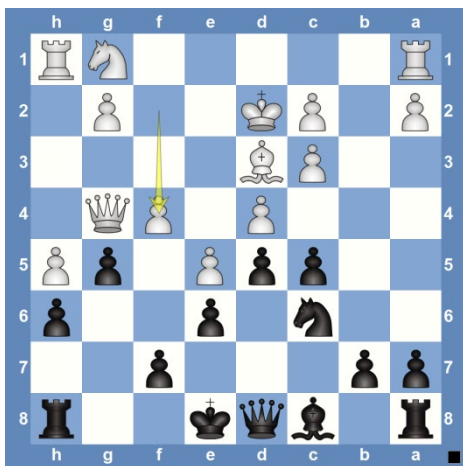
b) Slightly weaker is 12...Nc6 13.Qf4 Qxc5 14.Ne2 Bd7 15.Qf6 Rg8 16.h5 g5 17.Rhb1 b6 18.a4 Rc8 19.a5 bxa5 20.Rb5 Qe7 21.Rb7 Qxf6 22.exf6 Kd8 23.Nd4 +.09/27

2) **11...c4?!** {this move is often dangerous in these lines, despite what Stockfish thinks} 12.Be2 Nc6 13.Nf3

a) 13...Bd7 14.Qf4 Bd7 15.Qf6 Qxf6 16.exf6 Kd8 17.Rab1 Rb8 18.Ne5 Nxe5 19.dxe5 Kc7 20.Ke3 Rg8 21.g4 Kc6 22.Kd4 Rb6 23.a3 Ra6 +.31/33, but a fortress?

b) 13...Qa5 14.Qf4 b5 15.a3 a6 16.Nh2 Bd7 17.Ng4 0-0-0 18.Nxh6 Nxd4 19.Qxd4 Rxh6 20.g4 Rdh8 21.h5 R6h7 22.f4 +.45/25.)

12.h5?! (Somewhat better is 12.dxc5 Qa5 transpo to above note.) **12...g5 13.f4** (Slightly better is 13.Bb5 cxd4 14.Bxc6 bxc6 15.Qxd4 0-0 16.Nf3 Ba6 17.Nh2 c5 18.Qa4 Bb7 19.Ng4 d4 -.71/24.)



13...cxd4 (Weaker is 13...Qa5?! 14.dxc5 Qa4 15.Nf3 -.06/25.) **14. cxd4 Nxd4?** (Much better is 14...Qa5+! 15.Kd1 Qc3 16.Rb1 Qxd4 17.Ne2 Qa4

18.Qg3 Rg8 19.Rf1 a6 20.Rb2 b5 21.f5 Qa3 22.fxe6 Bxe6 23.Kc1 Qc5 24.Rf6 d4 25.Rxh6 Nxe5 26.Kb1 Rc8 -.83/22.) **15.fgx5 Qxg5+?!**

(Somewhat better is 15...Qa5+ 16.Kd1 Nf5 17.Qf4 {17.Bxf5 exf5 =} 17...Qc3 18.Rb1 hxg5 19.Qxg5 Qxe5 20.Bxf5 Qxf5 =.) **16.Qxg5 hxg5 17.Nf3**

Nxf3+ 18.gxf3 f5? (Blockade is called for with 18...Rh6! 19.Rag1 Ke7 20.Rxg5 Bd7 21.f4 Rc8 +.24/23.) **19.Rag1?** (Odd that White didn't open

lines where he is attacking with 19.exf6 Kf7 20.h6 Bd7 21.Rag1 +1.22/22.) **19...Bd7 20.Rxg5 Kf7 21.f4** (21.Ke3 Rh7 +.46/22.) **21...Rag8** (Or

21...Bc6 +.49/23.) **22.Be2** (Slightly better is 22.Ke3 +.53/22.) **22...Be8?!** (Somewhat better is 22...Rxg5 23.fgx5 Rc8 +.45/22.) **23.Ke3 Kf8**

(Slightly better is 23...Bc6 24.Rg3 Rg7 +.72/22.) **24.Rh3** (Stockfish prefers 24.c4 dxc4 25.Bxc4 Bc6 26.Rh3 +.72/22.) **24...Rh7** (Slightly better is

24...Rg7 25.Rxg7 Kxg7 +.53/23.) **25.Kd4** (Or 25.c4 dxc4 26.Rxg8+ Kxg8 27.Bxc4 Bf7 +.68/22.) **25...Rc7?!** (Somewhat better is 25...b6 26.c4 Rd7

+ .69/22.) **26.c4 Bc6** (26...Rd7 +.94/22.) **27.Rhg3** (Winning is 27.h6 +1.15/22.) **27...Rh8?** (Wrong time to hunker! 27...Rxg5 +1.25/21 is better but

still losing.) **28.Rg6 Re7 29.h6 Ke8?** (29...dxc4 loses more slowly.) **30.Rg8+ Rxg8 31.Rxg8+ 1-0** More pathetic play in the middle and

end games after getting a nice edge out of the opening.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 Nf6 4.e5 Nfd7 5.f4 c5 6.Nf3 Nc6 7.Be3 cxd4 8.Nxd4 Bc5 (I had prepared both this line and 8...Qb6 for stronger players, as 8...Qb6 is rather drawish.) **9.Qd2 a6 10.O-O-O O-O 11.g4** (More popular are 11.Qf2, 11.Kb1, 11.Nb3, and 11.h4.) **11...Bxd4** (Black must choose between 11...Nxd4 and 11...Bxd4. Often both minor pieces are traded off.) **12.Bxd4 b5 13.Qf2** (13.Kb1 = Bareev from Hodgson-Bareev, Sochi 1987, 44/345.) **13...b4 14.Ne2** (White can also try 14.Na4 Nxd4 15.Bxd4 Qa5 16.b3 Bb7 17.Kb1 Rfc8 18.Rd2 Bc7 19.Nb2 Bb5 {19...Qa3} 20.Nd3 Bxd3 21.Bxd3 but Black is significantly better after:

- 1) 21...Qc7 22.Qxb4 Rab8 23.Qd4 Qa5 24.Rc1 Nc5 25.c3 Rxb3 26.axb3 Nxb3 27.Ra2 Qxa2+ 28.Kxa2 Nxd4 29.Bxa6 Rc6 30.Bd3 g5 31.fgx5 Kg7 32.Kb2 Rb6 33.Ka2 Nf3 34.Be2 Nxe5 -.63/31
- 2) 21...Rc7 22.f5 Qc5 23.Qxc5 Nxc5 24.Rc1 {24.h4; 24.Rf2; 24.Rf1} 24...Rac8 25.Rcd1 a5 26.h4 a4 27.Rf2 Ra8 {27...g6; 27...a3} 28.Rf4 Rb7 29.Kb2 Rc8 30.h5 a3+ 31.Kc1 Rbc7 32.Kb1 Rb8 33.Rd4 Rd7 -.19/25.)

14...a5 (And here is the secondary tabiya. Practically speaking, Black's attack seems more dangerous than White's.)

15.???



15.Be3 (White's intent is to continue with 16.Nd4, and surprisingly, this seems better than the alternative line with 15.h4 Ba6 16.h5 Qc7 -.94/23 17.h6 g6 18.Kb1 -.80/28 {18.Rh3} 18...Rfc8 19.Rc1 {19.g5} 19...a4 20.Rh3 -.93/24 Qa5 21.f5 Rab8 -.94/26 22.c3 {22.Qf4} and now either:

- 1) 22...Bc4! -.96/22 23.Nf4 {23.Rd1; 23.fxe6} 23...a3 24.b3 Bxb3 25.axb3 Nxd4 26.Qxd4 bxc3 27.Nxd5 a2+! 28.Ka1 Nc5 29.Bc4 Rxb3 30.Rhxc3 Qa3 31.Nf6+ Kh8 32.Qd2 Rb1+ 33.Rxb1 axb1(Q)+ 34.Kxb1 Rb8+ 35.Kc2 Rb2+ -.7.03/30
- 2) 22...Bxe2 23.Bxe2 Nxd4 24.Qxd4 Nc5 25.cxb4 Rxb4 26.Qd1 -.63/29 a3 27.b3 Rb7 28.Qe1 Qxe1 29.Rxe1 Rbb8 30.Bd3 Nd7 31.Bf1 {31.Be2} 31...Rb4 {31...Kf8} 32.Rf3 g5 {32...Rd4} 33.Ba6 Ra8 -.39/24.)

15...f6! (I got seduced by the opportunity to open the f-file against the White Q at f2. Strategically, Black's play is on the Q-side, but 15...f6 yields interesting play and is slightly better than 15...Ba6. There are several alternatives:

- 1) 15...Ba6 16.Nd4
 - a) 16...Nxd4 17.Bxd4 Qc7 {17...a4} 18.Kb1 Rfc8 19.c3 bxc3 20.Rc1 Qb7 21.Rxc3 Rxc3 22.Bxc3 Rc8 23.Bd4 Nb8 24.h4 Bxf1 25.Rxf1 Qb5 26.Rd1 a4 27.h5 -.33/30 Rc4 28.Qf3 Nc6 29.Bc3 Re4 30.Rc1 h6 31.g5 hxg5 32.fgx5 Qe2 33.Qxe2 Rxe2 34.g6 fxg6 35.hxg6 Ne7 36.Rg1 Re4 -.36/31
 - b) 16...Qc7 -.62/31 17.Kb1 a4! 18.h4 Nxd4 19.Bxd4 Rfc8 {19...Bxf1 20.Rhxf1 Rfc8 21.Rc1 -.30/35} 20.Rc1
 - i) 20...b3 {20...Qa5; 20...Qb7; 20...Bxf1} 21.a3 Qa5 {21...Qb7} 22.Bxa6 Qxa6 23.Rhd1 {or 23.c3 Rc4 or 23...Qb5} 23...bxc2+ 24.Rxc2 -.18/33
 - ii) 20...Qb7 21.Bxa6 {21.f5; 21.h5} 21...Qxa6 22.Qe3 Qc4 23.Rhd1 Nc5 24.Bxc5 Rxc5 25.f5 a3 26.b3 Qc3 27.Qxc3 Rxc3 28.Rd4 Rb8 29.Rd3 Rbc8 30.Rd4 Rh3 31.fxe6 fxe6 32.h5 Rb8 33.Rf1 Re3 34.Kc1 Rxe5 35.Kd2 Rg5 36.Rff4 e5 37.Rxb4 {37.Rxd5} 37...exf4 38.Rb8+ Kf7 39.Ra8 Rxc4 40.Rxa3 Rg2+ 41.Kd3 g5 42.hxg6+ hxg6 43.Ra7+ Ke6 44.a4 g5 45.a5 f3 46.Ra8 Rg2 47.Ke3 g4 48.a6 d4+ 49.Kf2 = Of course, all R+P endings are drawn! ;~)
- 2) 15...a4 16.Nd4 Nxd4 17.Bxd4 Ba6 18.Kb1 Qb8 {18...b3; 18...Qa5} 19.h4 Rc8 20.Bxa6 Rxa6 21.h5 b3 22.Rc1 Qb5 23.a3
 - a) 23...Rxc2 24.Rxc2 bxc2+ 25.Qxc2 Rc6 26.Qd2 Qb3 27.Qd1 Rc4 28.Qxb3 axb3 29.Rd1 h6 30.Rd3 g5 31.hxg6 fxg6 32.Be3 g5 33.fgx5 hxg5 34.Bxg5 Rxg4 35.Bc1 Nxe5 36.Rxb3 Kf7 -.15/24
 - b) 23...bxc2+ 24.Rxc2 Qd3 25.Qe2 Qxe2 26.Rxe2 Rac6 27.Ree1 Rc4 28.Rc1 f6 -.17/28.)

16.exf6 Nxf6 17.Qh4?! (After this move, Black is winning. Somewhat better is 17.Bb6 Nxc4 18.Qc5 Qd7 19.Rg1 Nf6 20.Nd4 Nxd4 21.Qxd4 Qc6 22.Kb1 Rf7 23.Bd8 {23.Be2; 23.Qe3} 23...Ne8 24.Re1 Nd6 25.Be2 Nf5 26.Qb6 Qxb6 27.Bxb6 g6 28.b3 -.50/24.)

17.???



17...e5?? (A blunder. Black loses his winning advantage and is close to losing. Black should continue his Q-side play after 17...a4! 18.g5 Ne4 19.Bg2 Qe7 20.Kb1 b3 21.cxb3 axb3 22.a3 Nb4! 23.Bxe4 dxe4 24.Qe1 Nd3 25.Qd2 Bb7 26.g6 hxg6 27.Bd4 Rfc8 28.Qe3 Rxa2 or 28.Nc3 Rc4 or 28.Bc3 Nf2 -2.50/25.) **18.g5! exf4?** (Black makes another bad decision and is totally lost. 18...Ng4 19.Bc5 exf4 20.Bxf8 Qxf8 21.Bg2 f3 22.Rhf1 Qc5 23.Rxf3 Ne3 +1.15/25 may hold.) **19.Nxf4 Qe7 20.Re1! Ng4 21.Nxd5?!** (Crunchy and even better is 21.Bd3! g6 22.Nxd5 +4.30/25 and Black could resign.) **21...Qd6 22.Bc4 Kh8 23.Nb6?** (White lets Black back in the game! Retaining the B is winning easily after 23.Bb6! Bf5 24.h3 +3.40/22.) **23...Nce5?** (I deserved to lose, but this silly move? Black must remove the strong B with 23...Nxe3 24.Nxc8 {24.Rxe3 Qc5} 24...Rxc8 25.Rxe3 Ne5 =.) **24.Rd1! Qe7?!** (Somewhat better is 24...Qg6 25.Bc5 Nxc4 26.Nxc4 +1.82/23.) **25.Bd4** (White saves his important B.) **25...Nxc4!?** (Somewhat better is 25...Nf3 26.Rhe1 Qxe1 27.Rxe1 Nxe1 28.Nxa8 Ng2 +2.34/35.) **26.Nxa8** (Or 26.Rhe1 Qf7 +2.81/26.) **26...Nce3?!** (Somewhat better is 26...Qf7.) **27.Rhe1 Bf5 28.Rd2?** (Better is 28.Bxe3 +3.45/22.) **28...Rxa8?!** (Somewhat better is 28...Qf7 29.g6 Bxg6 +2.42/22.) **29.h3?!** (29.Bxe3 is crushing.) **29...Qc7 30.Bxe3 Ne5?!** (Better is 30...Nxe3.) **31.Bf4 Qc4 32.b3 1-0**
 Fur sur the worst game I played this year! I wish I could say it was the only one! Well, at least I learned something about this variation and will definitely keep playing it!

E18/1; E06/4 n19, Tom Beckman-Tom Rehle, EO Rd 6.20, 12-30-18: **1.d4 Nf6 2.Nf3 e6 3.g3 d5 4.Bg2 Be7 5.O-O O-O 6.c4 b6 7.Nc3** (One way to try and punish Black's move order is supposedly 7.cxd5 exd5 8.Ne5 Bb7 9.Nc3 Na6
 1) 10.Bf4 c5 11.Rc1 Nc7 12.dxc5 bxc5 13.Nc4 Rb8 14.Bxc7 Qxc7 15.Nxd5 Bxd5 16.Bxd5 Rfd8 17.e4 Nxe4 18.Qf3 Rxd5 19.Qxe4 Rd4 20.Qf3 Bg5 +.08/25
 2) 10.Bg5 c5 11.e3
 a) 11...Ne4 12.Bxe7 Qxe7 13.Nd3 Nxc3 14.bxc3 c4 15.Nf4 Nc7 16.h4 Qa3 17.Qc1 Qa4 +.11/23
 b) 11...Nc7?! 12.dxc5 bxc5 13.Qa4 Qd6 14.Nc4 Qe6 15.Na5 +.60/25.)
7...Bb7 (Another try is 7...Nbd7 {to stop Ne5} 8.cxd5 Nxd5 9.e4 Nxc3 10.bxc3 Bb7 11.Re1 c5 12.d5 c4 13.d6 Bf6 14.Qc2 Qc8 15.a4 Rd8 16.Ba3 g6 17.Rad1 Bg7 18.Nd2 = or 17.Bb4 e5 18.Nd2 Qc6 19.Bf1 a5 20.Ba3 Ba6 21.Rd1 Rab8 -08/24.) **8.Qc2?!** (White sleepwalks in this game and doesn't see his opponent's play. Equal is either:
 1) 8.cxd5 Nxd5 {for 8...exd5, see move 7} 9.Re1 c5 10.e4 Nc3 11.bxc3 Nd7 12.d5 c4 see 7...Nbd7 above
 2) 8.Ne5 Nbd7 9.Bf4 c5 10.e3 Rc8 11.Nxd7 Qxd7 12.cxd5 exd5 13.Rc1 -.06/24.)
8...dxc4! 9.e4 (Slightly better is 9.Qa4 Nbd7 10.Qxc4 -.29/22.) **9...Nc6 10.Rd1 Nb4 11.Qe2 Nd3 12.h4?** (White's optimism is unbounded. He must remove the obnoxious N on d3 with 12.Ne1 Nxe1 13.Qxe1 Qd7 14.Bf4 a6 15.Qe2 b4 16.b3 b4 17.e5 Bxg2 18.exf6 Bxf6 19.Kxg2 -.50/24.) **12...a6?** (Too slow! Winning is 12...Ng4! 13.Rf1 h5 14.b3 Ba6 or 14.Bg5 c5 15.d5 exd5 -1.30/26; or 13...c5 14.d5 exd5 15.Nxd5 Bd6 -1.26/23.) **13.Bg5?** (Again 13.Ne1 -.61/23.) **13...b5?!** (Again, somewhat better is 13...Ng4 14.Bxe7 Qxe7 15.Nfd2 Ndxg2 -1.32/25.) **14.e5?!** (Again, 14.Ne1 is somewhat better.) **14...Nd5 15.Ne4 h6?!** (Better is 15...f6 16.exf6 Nxf6 17.Bxf6 Bxf6 18.Ne1 Bxd4 -1.06/23.) **16.Bxe7 Qxe7 17.b3?!** (Where is White's play? Then why play on the Q-side? Again, 17.Ne1 is somewhat better.) **17...Rab8!** (Good move, protecting the B and anticipating an opening of the b-file. 17...f5 -.70/22 is also good.) **18.Nh2?!** (Guess what move is better.) **18...f5!** (Excellent move...White is busted.) **19.exf6 Nxf6 20.Nxf6+ Qxf6 21.Bxb7** (Or 21.Ng4.) **21...Rxb7 22.Ng4 Qf5!** (Slightly weaker is 22...Qxd4.) **23.f4?!** (23.Ne5 Nxe5 24.dxe5 c3 -.91/24 may hold.) **23...Qd5?!** (23...Rd8 -1.52/22 is crushing.) **24.Qe3 Rb6?** (Too slow! 24...Rd8 is close to winning.) **25.Ne5** (Now White can almost equalize.) **25...Nxe5 26.dxe5 Qc6 27.Rac1 Rbb8 28.Rd4 1/2-1/2** And White should draw. Why am I playing the Catalan? 6...b6 with Bb7, and Na6 or Nbd7 seems fine. Why am I playing chess? I played one decent game out of 7. Disgusting!

C03/4 n19: Harry Le-Tom Beckman, 45th Annual Eastern Open, Rd 7.20, Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 2018.12.30: **1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Be7** (The Romanishin Variation.) **4.Ng3 Nf6 5.Bd3 c5** (White is playing in purely classical style.) **6.exd5** (This is harder to equalize against than 6.dxc5 or 6.e5.) **6...Nxd5** (Of the three recaptures, this is likely weakest! I couldn't remember my prep here, which starts with 6...Qxd5. I remember Kaufman losing a game after playing I think 6...Nxd5 and asking me what I thought was best. Unfortunately, I had formed no opinion at the time.

Black can reach a sterile near equality with 6...exd5 7.dxc5 Bxc5 8.Nb3 Qe7+ 9.Qe2 Qxe2+ 10.Kxe2 Bb6 11.0-0 0-0 12.a4 Re8 13.a5 Bc7 14.Re1 Nc6 15.c3 a6 16.Bg5 Ne4 17.Be3 Bf5 18.Bb6 Bxb6 19.axb6 Rad8 20.Bd3 Bg6 21.Bc2 +.12/27. Compare this with 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.Bb5+ where White is a tempo ahead of the game. For the best 6...Qxd5, see analyses below.) **7.dxc5 Nb4?** (I saw that 7...Nd7 8.Nb3 0-0 9.Qe2 a5 10.a4 Nxc5 11.Nxc5 Bxc5 12.0-0 Qc7 13.Rd1 +.22/32 was the main approach, but I got "creative.") **8.Nb3?** (Retaining the B and avoiding the backward dP was much better after 8.Bb5+ Bd7 9.Bxd7+ Nxd7 10.a3 Nc6 11.b4 0-0 12.0-0 a5 13.Rb1 axb4 14.axb4 +1.06/31.) **8...Nxd3+** **9.cxd3** (Slightly better is 9.Qxd3 Qxd3 10.cxd3 +.20, but White wants to complicate.) **9...???**



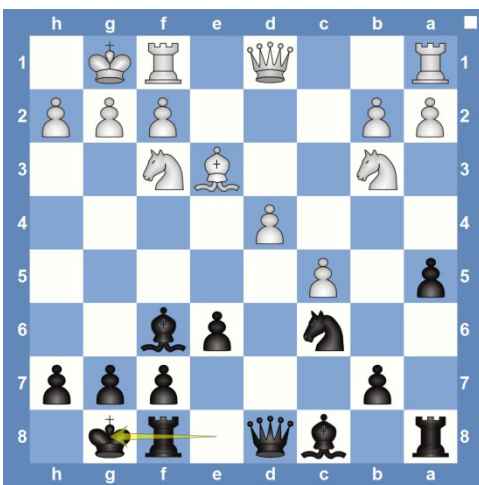
Please list the primary Candidate moves and why Black should choose each one:

- 1) _____ 2) _____
 3) _____ 4) _____

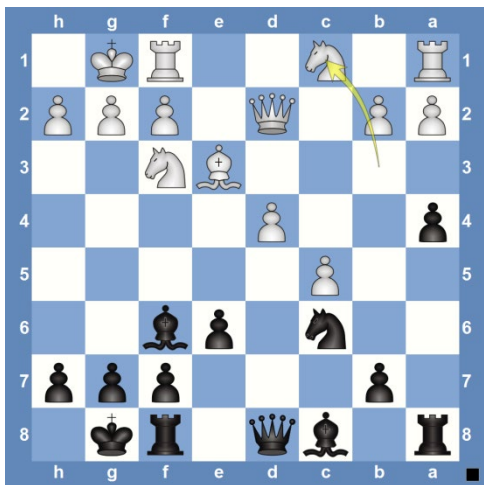
9...Nc6 (I considered 9...b6, but couldn't get over the fact that it gives up a P. Silly, huh? Especially since the backward dP at d3 or d4 is worth very little. Black has several excellent options:

- 1) **9...b6!** with 2 active Bs {this is a great example of piece activity as comp for a P} and then either:
 a) **10.Be3 Qd5!** {a strong square for the Q, and Black attempts to force cxb6 so that his KB can check at b4}
 i) 11.0-0 Nd7 12.Rc1 Bb7 13.d4 0-0 14.Rc3 Rfd8 15.Qc2 bxc5 16.Nxc5 Nxc5 17.dxc5 Bc6 18.Re1 a5 19.Rc4 e5 -.11/25 {Black has blockaded White's 3-1 P majority on the Q-side, and he has active pieces and 2 Bs as comp for the P}
 ii) 11.cxb6 axb6 12.Bxb6 Bb4+ 13.Nd2 Nd7 14.Bd4 e5 15.Be3 Ba6 {15...Qxd3 =} 16.0-0 Bxd3 17.Qb3 Qxb3 18.axb3 0-0 19.Rxa8 Rxa8 20.Rc1 f6 -.16/24
 b) **10.cxb6?! axb6** {turns the a1/2 P into a whole P and opens lines for Black's B and R} 11.Be3 Nc6 12.0-0 0-0 13.a3 Bb7 14.Rc1 Bf6 15.Nbd2 Bxb2 -.30/24
 2) **9...0-0 10.d4** {10.Be3 b6 will like transpo to above} 10...b6 11.0-0 Bb7 12.Be3 Qd5 13.Rc1 Rd8 14.Qc2 Nc6 15.Rfd1 Rac8 16.Qb1 g5-.22/24
 3) **9...Bxc5???** 10.Nxc5 Qa5+ 11.Bd2 Qxc5 12.Rc1 at least I did see this.)

10.Be3 (Or 10.Bf4; 10.0-0 =.) **10...Bf6** (Slightly better is 10...0-0 11.0-0 b6 12.Qc1 Bb7 13.Qc4 Bf6 14.d4 Rc8 15.Rfe1 Ne7 =.) **11.d4 a5?!** (Weakening the Q-side. Black still doesn't get it. Better is 11...b6 12.0-0 Qd5 13.Re1 0-0 14.Bf4 Ba6 +.15/22.) **12.O-O O-O** **13.???**



13.Qd2?! (Somewhat better is 13.Qc1 Bd7 14.Nbd2 Ne7 +.67/22.) **13...a4 14.Nc1** **14...???**



14...Qd5? (I have no idea why I didn't immediately play the thematic 14...e5! 15.Ne2 a3! 16.b3 Bg4 17.Nxe5 Nxe5 18.f3 Nxf3+ 19.gxf3 Bh3 20.Rf2 Re8 21.Bf4 Rxe2 22.Qxe2 Bxd4 23.Rd1 Qf6 =.) **15.Ne2 Rd8 16.Rfd1 e5** (Now, it's too late for this move. Slightly better is 16...h6 +.93/22.) **17.dxe5** (Slightly better is 17.Nxe5.) **17...Qxd2 18.Bxd2 Nxe5 19.Nxe5 Bxe5 20.Bc3 Bc7** (Black barely holds on.) **21.Rxd8+** (Or 21.Be5 Rxd1+ 22.Rxd1 Ba5 +.82/26.) **21...Bxd8 22.Rd1** (Slightly better is 22.Nf4 Bd7 +.66/22 and perhaps Black can hold.) **22...Be6 23.a3 Be7 24.Bb4 Kf8?** (Somewhat better is 24...Bb3! 25.Rd7 Rd8 +.53/22 and Black should hold. Getting rid of White's active R is key to the defense.) **25.Nf4** (Slightly better is 25.Nc3 Ke8 26.f3 Bb3 27.Re1 Kd8 27.Re3 Bf6 28.Rd3+ Kc8 29.Kf2 +.71/22.) **25...Rc8?!** (Avoiding the weakened P structure is key to defending after 25...Bc4 26.Rd7 Rc8 27.Rxb7 Bxc5 28.h4 h6 29.h5 +.66/28.) **26.Nxe6+ fxe6 27.Rc1** (Slightly better is 27.g3 +.76/25.) **27...Ke8** (27...Kf7 +.55/22 is slightly better.) **28.g3** (28.Kf1.) **28...Rc6** (I was proud of this move, but 28...Bf6 +.60/22 is slightly better.) **29.Rc4!?** (Or 29.g3.) **29...b6?!** (Huh?? Black should be hunkering down, and 29...g6 is called for.) **30.Rg4 bxc5 31.Bc3 Bf6 32.Rxa4 Kd7** (And now White is winning, although 32...Bxc3 +1.00/22 is slightly better.) **33.Kg2 Kd6** (All R&P endings are drawn? Oh, there are Bs...) **34. Ra7 e5?** (Remember hunkering? 34...c4! 35.Kf3 Rb6, or 34...h5 35.a4 Bxc3 26.bxc3 Kd5 +1.01/22, or 34...Rb6 35.Bxf6 gxf6 36.Rxh7 may hold.) **35.a4** (Or 35.Kf3.) **35...h5?!** (36...e4 +1.45.) **36.a5 h4?!** (36...Kd5 +1.78.) **37.a6?!** (37.Kf3 +2.53.) **37...hxg3 38.hxg3?!** (38.fxg3 +2.23 has to be better.) **38...e4** (Or 38...Rc8.) **39.Bxf6** (39.f3 +2.05.) **39...gxf6 40.Rf7 Ke6 41.a7 Ra6 42.Rc7 Kd6 43.Rb7 Kc6 44.Rf7 Kd5 45.Kf1 Kc4 46.Ke2 Kb3** (46...Kd5 47.Ke3 Ke5 +1.99/34.) **47.Rb7+ Kc4 48.Ke3 f5 49.Kf4 Kd3 50.Kxf5 Ke2 51.Kxe4 Kxf2 52.Kd5** 1-0 I played most of the tourney in a fog. There were plenty of chances to get a decent game here.

Tarrasch Roman.121 – 6.exd5: 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nd2 Be7 4.Ngf3 Nf6 5.Bd3 c5 6.exd5 Qxd5 (6...Nxd5 7.dxc5 Nd7 8.Nb3 0-0 9.0-0 a5 10.a4 Nxc5 11.Nxc5 Bxc5 12.Qe2 Qc7 13.Qe4 f5 14.Qe2 Bd6 15.Re1 Bd7 16.Bd2 Rae8 17.Ne5 Bc6 18.h3 Re7 19.b3 Bc5 20.Rac1 +.38/22) **7.dxc5**

Tarrasch Roman.1211 – 7...Nbd7: 7...Nbd7

Tarrasch Roman.12111 – 8.b4: 8.b4 a5

Tarrasch Roman.121111 – 9.Bc4: 9.Bc4! Qh5 10.c3 axb4 (10...Nd5 also equalizes) 11.cxb4 b6

- **12.a4!** Bb7 13.Bb2 bxc5! 14.b5 g5! 15.a5 g4 16.Ne1 Rg8 17.g3 Rg6 18.h4 gxh4 19.Qxh5 Nxh5 20.Kh2 Bd6
 - **21.Ra3** Nhf6 22.Nef3 Ng4+ 23.Kxh3 Nxf2+ 24.Rxf2 Rxf3+ 25.Kh4 Nf6 26.a6 Rg4+ 27.Kh3 Rg3+ perp
 - **21.Rg1** Nhf6 22.Be2 Bd5 23.f4 e5 24.Nc4 Bxc4 25.Bxc4 exf4 26.gxf4 Ng4 27.Kxh3 Nf2+ 28.Kh2 Ng4+ perp
 - **21.a6?** Nxg3 22.fxg3 Rxf3 23.axb7 Rf3+ 24.Kh1 Rxf1+ 25.Bxf1 Rxa1 -1.84/24
- **12.0-0** Bb7 13.a4 bxc5 14.b5 g5 15.a5 g4 16.Ne1 Rg8 17.a6 (or 17.g3) 17...Rg6 18.Ra3 (or 18.Nb3 =) 18...Bd6 19.h3 Bxg2 20.Nxg2 gxh3 21.Qxh5 Rxf2+ 22.Kh1 Rh2+ 23.Kg1 Nxh5 24.Ne4 Rg2+ perp
- **12.Bb2** (12.cxb6?! Nxb6) 12...Bb7 13.0-0 bxc5 14.b5 Nb6 -.05/27

Tarrasch Roman.121112 – 9.bxa5: 9.bxa5 Nxc5 10.Nc4

• **10...Bd8** 11.0-0 Bxa5 12.Nxa5 Nxd3 13.cxd3 Qxa5 14.Bd2 Qa4 15.Qxa4 Rxa4 16.Rfb1 Nd5 17.Ne5 0-0 18.Nc4 f6 19.f4 Ra6 -.12/25

• **10...0-0** 11.0-0 Bd8!

- **12.Ba3** Bxa5 13.Nxa5 Rxa5 14.Bb4 Ra4 15.a3 Bd7 16.Be2 Rc8 17.c4 Qf5
 - 18.Nd4 Qf4 19.Nb5 Ra6 20.Ra2 Bc6 21.Nd6 Rb8 22.Qd2 Qxd2 23.Rxd2 b6 24.f3 Raa8 +.13/24
 - 18.Rb1 b6 19.Qd4 Ra7
 - 20.Rb2 Qe4 21.Re1 Qxd4 22.Nxd4 h6 23.g3 +.05/25
 - 20.Rfe1 Ba4 21.Bc3 Rd7 22.Qe5 Qxe5 23.Nxe5 Rd6 +.00/26
- **12.Bd2** Nxd3 13.cxd3 Bc7 14.Qb3 Rd8 15.Be3 Bxa5 16.Rfb1 Bc7 17.Bb6 Bxb6 18.Nxb6 Qxb3 19.Rxb3 Ra5 20.Nxc8 Rxc8 21.g3 (21.Rxb7 Rxa2) 21...Ra7 22.Rab1 +.00/25

Tarrasch Roman.12112 – 8.Others:

• **8.Nb3** Nxc5 9.Nxc5 Qxc5 10.Qe2 0-0 11.0-0 +.00/25

• **8.0-0** Nxc5 9.Bc4 Qc6 10.Nb3 (10.b4) 10...0-0 11.Re1 Rd8 12.Qe2 Qc7 13.Nxc5 Bxc5 14.Bg5 b6 15.c3 h6 16.Bxf6 gxf6 17.Rad1 +.00/40

Najdorf Smoothie: Gary DeFotis makes this positional crush look easy.

SICILIAN DEFENSE (B90)

Luke Ye

Gary DeFotis, Gary

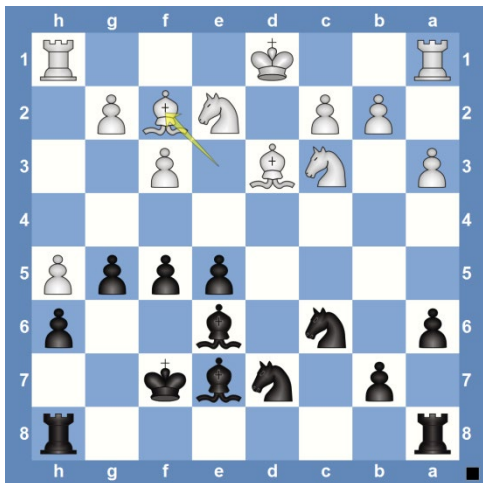
45th Annual Eastern Open (5),

Tyson's Corner, Virginia, 12.29.2018

Notes by DeFotis

[TB] Comments by Beckman

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.f3 e5 6.Nb3 d5 (6...d5 is definitely better than allowing White's c4 with a good version of the Maroczy bind. [TB] Black can also play 6...Be6 7.c4 a5 8.Be3 a4 9.N3d2 Nfd7 =) **7.exd5** (The mainline goes 7.Bg5 Be6 8.Bxf6 gxf6 9.exd5 Qxd5 =.) **7...Qxd5** ([TB] 7...Nxd5 8.c4 Bb4+ is slightly better.) **8.Nc3?!** (8.Nc3 with the intent to recapture with the king is probably not best. [TB] Somewhat better is 8.Bd3 Be6 9.0-0 =.) **8...Qxd1+ 9.Kxd1** ([TB] 9.Nxd1 may be slightly better.) **9...a6?!** ([TB] Black should skip the restraint and continue developing with 9...Be6! 10.Nb5 Kd7 11.Be3 Nc6 12.Ke1 b6 13.Kf2 -/= and you can see the White K wandering around.) **10.Bd3 Nc6 11.a3 Be6 12.Be3 Nd7** (12...Nd7 guards black squares and allows for the K-side majority to be mobilized. [TB] 12...0-0-0 may be even better.) **13.Nd2?!** (The plan White adopts is plausible but maybe not best. [TB] Oddly, 13.Ne4 equalizes.) **13...Be7 14.Nde4** ([TB] And here, 14.Nce4 is slightly better. White's pieces are not in harmony.) **14...h6 15.Ng3 g6** ([TB] Even better is 15...Nc5, and Black is close to having a decisive advantage.) **16. h4 f5 17.Nge2** (17.h5 f4 does not appear to give enough for the piece.) **17...Kf7 18.h5 g5 19.Bf2** ([TB] White's hapless K in the center and rearrangement of his pieces has resulted in a lost game.)



19...Nc5 20.Bxc5 (20.Bxc5 is a big concession, but the N on c5 is formidable.) **20...Bxc5 21. Ng3 Ne7** (Of course not 21...Kf6 22.Ne4+.) **22. Ke2 Rac8** (22...Rac8 now allows ...Kf6 and means ...Bxa3 is a threat under the right conditions.) **23. Rab1 Kf6 24. Kd2** (24.Na4 allows the ...e4 which follows, but white is without a good plan now.) **24... Rhd8 25. b4 Bd4 26. Nce2 Bb6 27. Nc3 Bc4 28. Na4 Bf2 29. Nf1 e4 30. fxe4 fxe4 31. Ke2 exd3+ 32. Kxf2 dxc2 33. Rc1 Bb5** (33...Bb5 puts the bishop on its best square, eyeing e2 and gaining a tempo.) **34. Nc5 b6 35. Ne4+ Ke5** (35...Ke5 since white is disorganized and the king can aid his army!) **36.Nfd2 Rf8+ 37.Kg3 Nf5+ 38.Kh2 Nd4** (38...Nd4 threatens to go to e2 next.) **39. Rhe1 Kd5 40. Ng3 Rf2 41. Nde4 Nf3+ 42. Kh3** (42.Kh1 is no better.) **42... Bd7+ 43. Nf5 Bxf5+ 44. Kg3 Bxe4 0-1** [TB] A wonderful positional crush by Gary.

[Event "45th Annual Eastern Open"]

[Site "Tyson's Corner, Virginia"]

[Date "2018.12.27"]

[Round "1.5"]

[White "DeFotis, Gary"]

[Black "Gorti, Akshita"]

[Result "1/2-1/2"]

[ECO ""]

[Opening "Queen's Gambit Declined"]

[Variation "3...a6 Variation"]

[WhiteFideld ""]

[BlackFideld ""]
[WhiteElo "2121"]
[BlackElo "2367"]
[PlyCount "91"]
[EventDate "2018.12.27"]

1. d4 e6 2. c4 d5 3. Nc3 a6 4. cxd5 exd5 5. Nf3 Nf6 6. Bg5 Be6 7. e3 Nbd7 8.
Bd3 Bd6 9. O-O h6 10. Bh4 O-O 11. Rc1 c6 12. a3 Bg4 13. Bg3 Bxg3 14. hxg3 Re8
15. Qc2 Qe7 16. Na4 Ne4 17. Rfe1 Qf6 18. Bxe4 Rxe4 19. Nd2 Re7 20. Nc5 Nxc5 21.
Qxc5 Rae8 22. b4 h5 23. a4 h4 24. gxh4 Qxh4 25. Qd6 Re6 26. Qh2 Qg5 27. Qg3 Qh5
28. Nf3 Rh6 29. Kf1 Rg6 30. Ke2 Qf5 31. Kd2 Bxf3 32. Qxf3 Qg5 33. g3 Re4 34.
Kc3 b6 35. Rb1 Qe7 36. Rh1 Rf6 37. Qe2 b5 38. a5 Ree6 39. Rh2 Rh6 40. Rbh1 Rxh2
41. Rxh2 Qd8 42. Qf3 Qf6 43. Qh5 Qh6 44. Qxh6 gxh6 45. Rh4 Kg7 46. Kd3 1/2-1/2

- a. 4.cxd5 makes sense vs black's unusual third move, especially if one favors the exchange variation anyway, since in some lines of the latter black does better to avoid ...a6.
- b. With 8...Bd6 black's set-up is more aggressive than usual.
- c. White thought that a normal 11.Qc2 invited 11...Rc8 and a quick ...c5. However, black obtained good chances as played.
- d. If 24.Nf1 h3 weakens the light squares around white's king, but black gets attacking chances in any case.
- e. White was also concerned about 28...Rg6, worried that 29.Ne5 allowed an exchange sacrifice on e5, However, white's defenses based on Qb8+ and Qh2 are adequate against that.
- f. The alternative 35.Kb3 to discourage ...c5, allows 35...a5 when the weak b4 square which black's Q can access makes the position more dangerous for white.
- g. 38.a5 keeps files near white's king closed.
- h. 42.Qf3 threatens Qh1.
- i. Now 43.Qh1 can be met by 43...g6.
- j. 44...Rxh6 yields an ending where white has more winning chances given the king side majority.
- k. With 46.Kd3 white offered a draw, believing winning chances were too slight against such a player as Gorti (whom he'd be happy to draw in general), AND that going to bed was better than playing another hour.