A CHESS OPENING REPERTOIRE FOR BLITZ AND RAPID

Sharp, Surprising and Forcing Lines for Black and White

Evgeny & Vladimir Sveshnikov
Contents

Preface
Explanation of Symbols
Foreword by Evgeny Sveshnikov

Section 1: A Black Repertoire for Blitz and Rapid

Part I Alekhine’s Defence

Chapter 1 1.e4 ¼f6 2.d3; 2.¼c3 d5 3.e5
Games 1-3 Games 4-6

Chapter 2 1.e4 ¼f6 2.¼c3 d5 3.exd5
Game 7 Game 8

Chapter 3 The Vienna system 1.e4 ¼f6 2.e5 ¼d5 3.¼c3
Game 9 Game 10

Chapter 4 The Chase Variation 1.e4 ¼f6 2.e5 ¼d5 3.c4 ¼b6 4.c5
Games 11-12 Games 13-14

Chapter 5 The Four Pawns Attack 1.e4 ¼f6 2.e5 ¼d5 3.c4 ¼b6 4.d4 d6 5.f4
Games 15-16 Games 17-18

Chapter 6 The Exchange Variation 1.e4 ¼f6 2.e5 ¼d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 ¼b6 5.exd6 exd6
Games 19-21 Games 22-25

Chapter 7 The modern system 1.e4 ¼f6 2.e5 ¼d5 3.d4 d6 4.¼f3
Games 26-27 Games 28-30

Part II The Queen’s Gambit Accepted

Chapter 8 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4
Games 31-32 Games 33-35

Chapter 9 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 ¼e6
Games 36-37 Games 38-39

Chapter 10 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.¼c3 c6
Game 40 Games 41-42

Chapter 11 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.¼f3 c6 4.a4/4.e4 b5
Games 43-44 Games 45-46

Part III The Réti and English Openings

Chapter 12 1.¼f3 and 1.c4
Games 47-50 Games 51-54
Section 2: A White Repertoire for Blitz and Rapid

Part IV The Sicilian Defence

**Chapter 13** Sicilian with 2.b3: 2...g6, 2...b6, 2...d6, 2...Nf6
  Games 55-56 Games 57-59

**Chapter 14** 1.e4 c5 2.b3 e6 3.Nf3
  Games 60-65 Games 66-71

**Chapter 15** 1.e4 c5 2.b3 d6 3.Nb5 d5, 3...e5
  Games 72-74 Games 75-76

Part V The Caro-Kann Defence

**Chapter 16** 1.e4 c6 2.d4 c3 d5 3.Nf3 dxe4; 3...Nf6
  Games 77-79 Games 80-82

**Chapter 17** 1.e4 c6 2.d4 c3 d5 3.Nf3 g4 4.h3 h5
  Game 83 Game 84

**Chapter 18** 1.e4 c6 2.d4 c3 d5 3.Nf3 g4 4.h3 xf3 5.exf3
  Games 85-88 Games 89-92

Part VI The Vienna Game

**Chapter 19** 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Bc5
  Games 93-95 Games 96-98

**Chapter 20** 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 c6 3.e4
  Games 99-101 Games 102-104

**Chapter 21** 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 f6 3.f4
  Games 105-106 Games 107-108

Part VII The French Defence

**Chapter 22** 1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c3
  Games 109-110 Games 111-113

**Chapter 23** 1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.c3 f6 4.e5 Bd7
  Games 114-115 Game 116

Index of Games
Index of Variations
Explanation of Symbols

The chess board with its coordinates:

- ♜ King
- ♛ Queen
- ♜ Rook
- ♜ Bishop
- ♜ Knight

! good move
!! excellent move
? bad move
?? blunder
!? interesting move
?! dubious move

± White stands slightly better
鼐 Black stands slightly better
± White stands better
鼐 Black stands better
+- White has a decisive advantage
+- Black has a decisive advantage
= balanced position
∞ unclear
⇒ counterplay
≡ compensation
# mate
corr. correspondence
jr junior
sr senior
The idea for this book belongs to Evgeny Ushakov, a great lover of chess. And what is it about? The reader can probably answer this question without any difficulty: it is about the opening stage in chess. Then another question arises: what is the opening? And what is the main difference here between a grandmaster and an amateur? This is an important question, because the book is aimed at a wide audience, mainly of amateurs.

Somehow the words of the great Soviet fictional comic hero, Ostap Bender, come to mind: ‘Everything depends on each individual separately. For example, this blond in the third row, we can say plays well. But this brunette, let us assume, plays worse. And no amount of lectures is going to change this relationship of strength, unless each individual trains permanently…’ But how should one train, if one has limited time and desire to study, but very much wants to be able to beat stronger players? The aim of this book is to help players improve their results, as a result of studying the opening. And we will try to approach this subject in the way that professional grandmasters do, with the sole difference that we understand that the amateur has limited time available. Therefore, we will try to choose opening systems not on the basis of which are objectively strongest, but on the principle of which are the most practical.

So what are the differences between grandmasters and amateurs? Firstly, in order to play chess well, a person needs various qualities:

1. He must be physically able to carry on the battle over the board for several hours. This requires a physically trained body, but general health is also vital.
2. He must have great chess knowledge, because chess is not only a sport, but also a science! This applies most of all to the endgame.
3. He must be able to calculate variations well, have good combinative vision, and know typical plans in various middlegame positions.
4. He must set himself a clear goal, towards which to strive.

In regard to the question of the comparison of grandmaster and amateur, it is far from always the case that the grandmaster has better combinative vision or ability to calculate variations, or even better knowledge of the endgame – especially younger GMs – than older amateurs. And the physical condition of many GMs leaves something to be desired. So in what does the GM’s superiority over the amateur usually reside?

Above all, the GM’s experience allows him to take the correct strategic decisions very quickly, even automatically. In this respect, one can compare a GM with a skilled craftsman. Here, one can recall Kortchnoi’s comment on Tal, whom he described as ‘a player of great routine’, but then added that he meant this as a compliment. I agree with Viktor Lvovich on this: what for many players was a piece of creativity, such as a piece sacrifice for the attack, or even just getting control of squares like d5 or f5, was for Tal just routine technique. It is well known that Tal was one of the best blitz players in the history of chess, and in 1988, became the first official World Blitz Champion, ahead of Kasparov and Karpov.

In general, practically all World Champions were brilliant blitz players, especially in their best years. Why especially when they were at their peak? Because at that time, when they were playing World Championship matches, they had an ideally worked-out opening repertoire (without which it is impossible to fight for the crown). An excellent repertoire and plenty of new ideas allowed them quickly and confidently to play the initial stage of the game.

I played a great many blitz games against Tal and Karpov. In the 1970s and 80s, it was impossible to compete with Karpov at blitz. One of his trainers, for example, was Sergey Makarichev, a strong GM and theoretician, but Karpov regularly crushed him in blitz matches, with scores such as 9-1 not being anything unusual. I was pretty good at blitz; for example, at Hastings 1977, I beat Petrosian (admittedly, Tigran Vartanovich was then almost 50, while I was half his age). I played masses of games against Tal, with only a small advantage on his side. But against Tolya, I regularly
used to lose by an average of about 3-7. Admittedly, I did once win a 12-game match against him by a score of 6½-5½, but this was a thematic match, in which in every game we played the Sicilian Defence. With white I played 2.c3, and as Black the Chelyabinsk Variation. I knew these lines better than Karpov and thanks to that, I won. This was in 1986, at a training camp.

Of course, there have been brilliant blitz players who have not achieved any special successes at classical chess. For example, Genrikh Chepukaitis. I played a match of five-minute chess against him in 1977, and won without any special trouble. But if we had played with less than five minutes on the clock, the result could have been different. Thus, in 1992, I played a 100-game match against Valentin Arbakov, in which he gave me odds of two minutes against three. He won by plus-4. Immediately prior to this, I had beaten World Championship candidate Nigel Short 2-0 in classical chess. This was probably the moment when I was at my strongest. At that time, Arbakov was without doubt the de facto World Champion at blitz with a time control of 2-3 minutes and nobody could compete with him, so I consider my own result against him to be quite fair. Ognen Cvitan was also very strong, but Arbakov was stronger. I am convinced that, at that time, if Arbakov and I had played at five-minute chess, he would have had no chance, because he was weaker than me as a chess player in general. But he had a brilliantly worked out opening repertoire and various tricks specially developed for blitz (I mean perfectly legal tricks, not such stuff as castling and putting the rook straight on e1, or anything like that). Such special blitz techniques are discussed in Chepukaitis' book *Sprint at the Chessboard*, and I will not speak about them here; after all, I am an opening theoretician, not a blitz expert. I want to share with the reader only pure chess opening knowledge.

The main thing that distinguishes the grandmaster from the amateur is a deep knowledge of the opening stage of the game, which allows the former to study middlegame plans more easily, and, with the modern-day approach to opening study, even to penetrate to the study of typical endgames. In this book, we will study a concrete repertoire, geared towards the specific goal of achieving better practical results at the board in blitz and rapid chess. At the same time, one should appreciate that the repertoire takes into account the strength of one’s opponents. Because this is aimed at a wide audience, principally of amateurs, we have tried to keep it as narrow as possible, so as to reduce the number of typical positions and structures resulting, and study them in more detail. In doing so, we should appreciate that we are taking a certain degree of risk, insofar as concerns the search for the objectively best move. We have set ourselves a different goal – to achieve practical results, which requires searching for more purposeful, practically favourable moves. We only need to find the levels of risk which allow one to play successfully against players of first category, candidate-master, master and GM levels.

I will remind you of the principles for playing the opening. There are eight of them, four for White and four for Black.

When playing White:
1) seize the centre,
2) develop pieces,
3) safety,
4) attack weaknesses.

For Black the principles are similar, but are formulated differently and are in a different order of importance:
1) fight for the centre,
2) safety,
3) develop pieces,
4) defend and don’t create weaknesses.

Note: White in the opening tries to *seize* the centre, and Black *fights* for it, so as to try to prevent the opponent from carrying out his plans. White should attack weaknesses, Black strives *not to create* such weaknesses in his position.

This is the theory, but no grandmaster in the world plays purely theoretically, employing only the best moves. Everyone,
even a World Champion, establishes their opening repertoire according to practical considerations, taking account of their physical condition, their ability to attack and defend, or to play the endgame. One must also decide what to strive for: a long positional struggle, or an attempt to test the opponent’s knowledge of a sharp opening variation. And, of course, you must take into account concrete tasks in the tournament and in each game, and understand not only your own strengths and weaknesses, but also those of the opponent. It is very important to choose the right opening variation, in order to bring about a position that suits you and is unpleasant or inconvenient for the opening; and it is also very good if the opponent’s knowledge of the line chosen is inferior to your own.

The tenth World Champion, Boris Spassky, several times said that a knowledge of the opening can compensate for several other weaknesses. So, let us proceed to the matter in hand.

The tasks of White and Black in the opening are somewhat different, especially for professionals. Players usually start studying the opening with black, because a mistake for him is much more serious – a mistake can be equivalent to defeat, whereas the price of a mistake by White (I am not talking about blundering a piece or even a pawn) can be just a loss of the opening advantage. Professionals often study their black openings all the way into the ending. We will try to come close to this approach, at the cost of serious concessions, namely restricting the repertoire to something very narrow, but in return, studying our chosen systems very deeply. And since most players start with black, we will also adopt this order in this book: first a Black repertoire, then a White repertoire.

In choosing a white repertoire, we must understand that choosing only the best lines is too complicated, for example the Spanish 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5!, because this requires too much time.

Thus, as Black against 1.e4, we base our repertoire on Alekhine’s Defence 1…Nf6!?. I myself have never played this, but my son Vladimir plays it very successfully. When Volodya was very young, we often used to speak with Grandmaster Bagirov, who lived close to us. Vladimir Konstantinovich told us that a fortune-teller once told him that he would become famous thanks to the fourth World Champion, Alexander Alekhine. He then decided to become an expert on Alekhine’s Defence and he wrote a monograph on this opening. This book was a major breakthrough in the theory of the opening at the time, and even today, some 30 years later, it remains very interesting. Of course, many of the theoretical recommendations have aged. But we can still recall Bagirov’s general conclusions. I played about 35 games against him in Alekhine’s Defence (mainly rapid games) and Vladimir Konstantinovich made a small plus score, even though he was Black. I often managed to pose him problems in the opening, but he successfully solved them. He knew and understood the Alekhine better than anyone in the world!

To my mind, it is a little strange that this opening should bear the name of the fourth World Champion. Alexander Alekhine made great contributions to opening theory, but mainly in classical, solid openings. For example, he brilliantly handled the extended fianchetto system in the Queen’s Gambit, successfully employing it in his World Championship match against Capablanca; it would be quite logical to call that the Alekhine System. In the Queen’s Gambit, there is already a Lasker and a Capablanca system, and it would be sensible to name this system after Alekhine. It is true of course that Alekhine made some contribution to the development of the defence 1.e4 Nf6, but he did not really take the line very seriously, unlike Bagirov, for whom it was his main opening weapon.

Almost half a century ago, in 1967, I discussed Alekhine’s Defence with Vladas Mikenas, a great lover of the opening. He said: ‘Alekhine’s Defence would not be a bad opening, if it were not for the Four Pawns Attack. There Black has big problems.’ Some 30 or 35 years later, I heard the same from Bagirov. However, Bagirov explained why the Four Pawns did not bother him. The truth is that, in this variation, Black has no fewer than eight possible continuations, in every one of which White, if he plays the wrong move, risks not only losing his opening advantage, but even standing seriously worse. On the other hand, a white player of 1.e4 will only meet Alekhine’s Defence once or twice in every hundred games. He mainly studies the Sicilian and Spanish (or Scotch), and also needs constantly to refresh his knowledge of the French and Caro-Kann. He just never gets around to Alekhine’s Defence! Studying this variation usually only gets as far as the variation 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 d5 3.d4 d6 4.Bf3 – a solid, quiet but very small plus. But one must understand that after this continuation, White loses part of his opening advantage, and, in addition, falls into well-prepared analysis. Black will know better the methods, devices, concrete variations, and will have more experience in
playing the resulting positions. Therefore, as a rule, Black immediately finds himself enjoying a superiority in knowledge.

I myself, out of practical considerations, chose a different line – the Chase Variation 1.e4 \( \text{\textit{N}} \text{f6} \) 2.e5 \( \text{\textit{N}} \text{d5} \) 3.c4 \( \text{\textit{N}} \text{b6} \) 4.c5. From the viewpoint of opening principles, it is not bad. In some cases, play can transpose to a 2.c3 Sicilian or a Scotch Gambit Declined, but Black has a number of other possibilities and can obtain sharp play. As we will see, White has no advantage in this line, only practical chances. And in the Four Pawns, various new ideas have been found, with the result that in this line too, it is not so simple for White to break through. In general, computers have greatly widened our understanding of which positions can be defended.

So why have we chosen Alekhine’s Defence 1…\( \text{\textit{N}} \text{f6} \), and not, say, the Scandinavian 1…d5, which is also a forcing and strategically dangerous opening? We have done so out of practical considerations – because the Scandinavian has been played by a great many GMs and some variations have been analysed out right to the ending. On the other hand, 1…\( \text{\textit{N}} \text{f6} \) is now quite unpopular, somewhat undeservedly so.

Amongst those players who have played Alekhine’s Defence, we should also mention Rafael Vaganian and Ljubomir Ljubojevic, but I do not think that either of them studied the opening very deeply – in the main, they improvised at the board. Alexander Baburin has a different approach, and has studied the opening, using the computer. We will use many of his games in our book.

The chess content of this book is mainly the analyses of my son. My task has been to identify and assess the critical positions. Vladimir Sveshnikov (1986) is already a very strong theoretician. For example, I have never in my life had a trainer, but nowadays, I often get from Volodya interesting new ideas, which work really well in practice. They say ‘Teacher, develop your pupil, so you will have someone to learn from!’ And I have developed my own trainer! He played for the Latvian team at the Olympiad in 2010 in Khanty-Mansiysk and now he is one of the main specialists (along with Tiviakov and myself) in the c3-Sicilian. Volodya is great at using computer information and can generate new ideas.

And now a few words about what we suggest as Black against 1.d4. At the end of the 1990s, I wrote an article about an opening repertoire against closed openings. It was based on one main idea: in reply to 1.d4 or 1.\( \text{\textit{N}} \text{f3} \), Black puts his pawn on d5 and, at the first convenient moment, takes on c4 and starts trying to hang onto the pawn, so as to create counterplay on the queenside. Yes, in order to do so, we have to concede ground in the centre and we may come under attack, but if we manage to survive to an endgame, then our queenside pawns will promote. I have won dozens of games myself like this, including against even such a giant as Geller. Efim Petrovich attacked me in the centre and on the queenside, but in the end, I managed, by returning the extra pawn, to take play into an endgame, where my distant passed pawns on the queenside won the game.

But my repertoire never included the Queen’s Gambit Accepted (QGA) 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4. Why? Because I believed that after 3.e3 White would recapture on c4 in one move, since Black cannot defend the pawn by means of ...b7-b5. Frankly speaking, the move 3…\( \text{\textit{B}} \text{e6} \)!? never entered my head. It was suggested by Volodya, using the latest researches in this opening. This scheme has become a complete opening in my overall repertoire. Of course, Black is taking a definite strategic risk, but from a practical viewpoint, this is a good opening. It is employed quite often, for example, by the Latvian grandmaster, Ilmar Starostits. Immediately, we narrow White’s choices down as far as possible, and forcing play begins, which we have studied at home. And what should White do when faced with this surprise? He needs to regain the pawn, but how?

The size of the book does not permit us to examine every possible white continuation, so we have concentrated mainly on 1.e4 and 1.d4, which occur in about 80% of games. Even so, we do speak briefly about other schemes: 1.c4 and 1.\( \text{\textit{N}} \text{f3} \), so that the reader will at least have an impression of the direction his work on these openings should take.

These and other variations are examined on the basis of concrete games, which we give in full. The book begins with a brief theoretical overview, in which Vladimir Sveshnikov explains the basic ideas of Alekhine’s Defence and the QGA. Amateurs should at first just read these introductory pages and then go through the main games, after which they can already employ the openings in practice. But gradually you will probably wish to deepen your knowledge, and then it
will make sense to analyse carefully the games suggested by the authors and also to consult the database. I hope this book will also be useful to professionals, because it contains many interesting analyses and novelties.

Why a repertoire for blitz? Because we are ready in the opening to take some risk, counting on the opponent not being able or ready to play the best moves. For best results, it is very good to have two variations in your repertoire as Black, so the opponent’s preparation will be more difficult. In addition, you can choose the character of battle in your preparation, and will have the opportunity to choose: against one opponent, a sharp variation, against another, a boring endgame. You will also be able to make a choice, based on your physical condition, and coordinate this choice with plans for a concrete game.

One of the main aims of this book is to acquaint the reader with my methods of creating an opening repertoire, so that you can then yourself independently add to and perfect it.

But this is not the only task. The authors have also tried to utilise a great deal of professional work on these openings. In addition, we have tried to find new ideas and concrete novelties. We have also tried to explain it all in plain language, with explanations and variations which are understandable to the amateur. How well we have succeeded is for the reader to decide.

In conclusion, we would like to extend our thanks to International Master Vladimir Barsky for his great help in working on this book.

Evgeny Sveshnikov
Riga, October 2015
Section 1 – A Black Repertoire for Blitz

I should like to start this survey with an appeal: do not be afraid to try new openings, even if you are not confident you can remember all the variations perfectly. Your opponent will have the same problem! It is impossible to keep in one’s head every confusing variation, and an understanding of the main ideas will help you find the right move in practically any situation. And with every game you play, you will accumulate experience, which will help you in the future.

And now a small piece of advertising. In working on this book, we have used the largest databases, including games played by correspondence; all analyses have been checked using modern programs, running on a powerful computer. Using huge databases has its subtleties. Firstly, one must use only games played by good players in recent years, when engines have become really strong. In addition, many players are quite cunning: they set up additional online accounts for themselves and in training games, they deliberately lose in certain variations. Inexperienced players see the statistics, see that White wins all the time in a certain line, and assume it is good. In reality, it can sometimes be that White is simply losing in such a line and in an important tournament game, the trickster demonstrates the correct path. The hunter becomes the hunted!

And now onto the chess content of this book. Some 5-6 years ago, I started playing Alekhine’s Defence against 1.e4, and I liked this opening very much.

It turned out that nobody knew how to get an advantage as White, and I hardly ever reached bad positions. When I did experience problems, it was because I myself had mixed something up, forgot my analysis, etc., and not because my opponent had hit me with some strong new idea. Admittedly, as well as the Alekhine, I also play the Sicilian and Caro-Kann defences, in order to make it harder for my opponents to prepare. But Alekhine’s Defence is nonetheless the main defence in my repertoire, and in rapid events, I answer 1.e4 with 1...\texttt{Nf6} in eight or nine cases out of ten. In classical events, where it is possible to study the opponent’s repertoire, I look at his games and then make my choice. But in rapid and blitz, there is usually no time to prepare and then I give my preference to Alekhine’s Defence.

As I have already said, an important plus for this opening is that hardly anyone knows it. In general, it is met relatively rarely, and so one almost immediately has an advantage over one’s opponent in terms of experience and familiarity. I play Alekhine’s Defence to win, even against grandmasters. For example, in games against my father, after 1.e4 \texttt{\texttt{Nf6}} I believe that I am, at a minimum, not worse. In our most recent blitz games, my father has refrained from 1.e4.
Most often in practice, White chooses the variation 1.e4 \( \text{d}f6 \) 2.e5 \( \text{d}5 \) 3.d4 d6 4.\( \text{d}f3 \). After 4...\( \text{dxe5} \) 5.\( \text{dxe5} \) I have several times played 5...\( \text{d}7 \), but I do not like the sacrifice 6.\( \text{d}xf7 \), after which White can immediately force a draw; weaker players somewhat take advantage of this possibility. Therefore it seems more promising to me to play the relatively new move 5...c6, which is analysed in detail in this book.

Black’s plan is to bring his bishop out to f5 and then play ...\( \text{d}7 \), driving the enemy knight from e5. If Black plays ...\( \text{d}7 \) on move 6, with the bishop still on c8, then White moves the knight away from e5, and Black suffers because of his blocked queen’s bishop: in order to develop it, he needs to play ...\( \text{d}f6 \). Ideally, Black wants to exchange one pair of minor pieces, so his position ceases to be cramped, and then to advance in the centre with ...c6-c5 or ...e7-e5.

The resulting positions remind one of a favourable version of the Caro-Kann or Scandinavian for Black: he has no pawn weaknesses and no bad pieces either. In rapid and blitz, Black’s game is even the more pleasant to play, because he knows what to do. For example, I have had many games where White has ‘gone solid’ and defended the d4-pawn with c2-c3. Then Black plays ...c6-c5 and after the exchange on c5, he begins a minority attack with ...b5-b4. On the other hand, if White plays actively and drives the knight from d5 with the move c2-c4, then we have many different possible retreats: to b4, c7, f6 or e7 (if the e-pawn is already on e6); sometimes it is even possible to jump to f4. The game might go as follows: 6.\( \text{d}e2 \) \( \text{f}f5 \) 7.0-0 \( \text{d}7 \) 8.\( \text{f}3 \) (harmless is 8.\( \text{d}xd7 \) \( \text{xd}7 \), and then Black brings his rook to d8) 8...e6 9.a3 \( \text{d}6 \) 10.c4, and here Black has a pleasant choice between 10...\( \text{d}f4 \) and 10...\( \text{d}e7 \).

Another very popular variation is 1.e4 \( \text{f}6 \) 2.e5 \( \text{d}5 \) 3.d4 d6 4.\( \text{b}6 \) 5.\( \text{e}6 \). Now after 5...\( \text{c}6 \) White has a clear scheme with \( \text{c}3 \), \( \text{e}3 \), \( \text{c}1 \), b2-b3; this is what he is usually striving for, when he does not know concrete variations: he wants to obtain a simple position with a small advantage. Therefore we recommend the recapture 5...\( \text{e}6 \).
followed by ...\textit{\textit{c}}\textit{7} and \textit{...0-0}. Then Black brings his bishops to \textit{f5} and \textit{f6}, plays \textit{...d6-d5} and tries to set up pressure against the pawn on \textit{d4}. One important nuance is that Black should not hurry to bring his knight to \textit{c6}, because of the following sample variation: – 6.\textit{\textit{c}}\textit{3} \textit{\textit{c}}\textit{6} 7.\textit{\textit{e}}\textit{3} \textit{\textit{e}}\textit{7} 8.\textit{\textit{f}}\textit{3} 0-0 9.d5 \textit{\textit{e}}\textit{5} (well, we do not wish to retreat to \textit{b8}!) 10.\textit{\textit{d}}\textit{x}5 \textit{\textit{d}}\textit{e}5. Positions of this sort are clearly better for White, as Black still has a bad knight on \textit{b6} and White can adopt a scheme like \textit{\textit{d}}\textit{3}, \textit{\textit{c}}\textit{2}, 0-0-0, \textit{f2-f3} and prepare an attack on the kingside. Therefore, it is better for the time being to keep the knight on \textit{b8} and first complete the development of the kingside. After this, various development possibilities are available: the knight can come out to \textit{a6} or \textit{c6} and various possible plans for Black are considered in this book. Usually, players who play this line as White only really know the first ten or so moves, and then play by ear, hoping that their small space advantage will give them an opening initiative. But in reality, Black has many active ideas and many cunning move-orders, and often, thanks to his greater experience and understanding of the positions, he succeeds in gaining the advantage.

Several years ago, the computer firmly recommended after \textbf{1.e4} \textit{\textit{f}}\textit{6} 2.e5 \textit{\textit{d}}\textit{5} the move \textbf{3.\textit{\textit{c}}\textit{3}??} with the idea of \textbf{3...\textit{\textit{d}}\textit{x}3} \textbf{4.dxc3} (the recapture \textit{4.bxc3} is somewhat passive – White shuts in his bishop).
In return for slightly spoiling his pawn structure, White opens lines for his pieces and hopes to exploit his lead in development, whilst the pawn on e5 cramps the black pieces. Black needs to get rid of this pawn as soon as possible, and it is even possible to sacrifice castling rights to do so: 4...d6 5.Nf3 dxe5! 6.Qxd8+ Kxd8 7.Nxe5 Ke8. As a result, Black has an extra pawn on the kingside, and his further task is to exchange off all the pieces and win the pawn ending. Objectively, the position after the seventh move is still slightly better for White, but he needs to play very carefully and avoid exchanges wherever possible. Black will gradually extinguish his opponent’s initiative and complete his development; with the queens gone, the loss of castling rights is not so important.

Now let us move onto the so-called Chase Variation: 1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 Nd5 3.c4 Nb6 4.c5 Nd5 5.Nc3 (the other possibility is 5.Bc4).

White seizes space with tempo and tries to ensure his pieces free development. On the other hand, the pawns on e5 and especially c5 become convenient objects of attack for Black. Thus, after ...e7-e6 the c5-pawn is immediately attacked,
and sometimes it is also attacked by means of...b7-b6, and after the exchange on b6, the a-file is opened for the black rook. Thus, this plan is a double-edged sword: at first, White gains several tempi, but then he has to give them back. In several variations, White sacrifices the c5-pawn, so as to use the e5-pawn as the basis for an attack on the kingside, for which purpose he brings his queen out to g4. A lively struggle begins, in which Black’s chances are objectively no worse.

It is important to note that in this variation, White gives his opponent the square d5, on which Black can cement his knight. Events may develop as follows: after Bf1-c4 e7-e6, White exchanges on d5 and Black takes with the pawn. Then Black plays...b7-b6 and after...b6xc5 d4xc5 he plays...c7-c6, obtaining a protected passed pawn on d5. Of course, in a sharp middlegame, this is not such a huge factor, but in the further struggle, every exchange will bring Black closer to a favourable ending.

Many amateurs, and not just them, choose the move 2.Nc3 and after 2...d5 either exchange pawns or play 3.e5. In these variations, White has only a symbolic advantage, and in addition, the character of the play is quite simple, and so the risk of obtaining a strategically bad position is not great.

In the event of 3.exd5 Qxd5 4.Qxd5?! Qxd5 Black is already slightly better – he has a favourable version of the Scandinavian, because his queen is well placed in the centre of the board and it is not easy for White to drive it away, after the exchange of knights. Of course, White does better not to exchange knights, but to play 4.Qc4. After 4...b6 5.Qb3 Qc6 6.Qf3 e6 7.d4 Qa5 Black exchanges the light-squared bishop, obtaining a roughly equal position.

In my games, I have more often met 3.e5, after which I play 3...d4. A more complicated game arises after 3...Qd7 with French Defence motifs. There is also the jump in the centre with 3...Qe4, which I personally do not like, but is playable – there are a great many possibilities for both sides there. This was often played by Grandmaster Lev Alburt, a great lover of Alekhine’s Defence, but I personally do not greatly like the positions which arise after 4.Qe2.

After 3.e5 d4 4.Qe2 a roughly equal position results from 4...d3; there is also a move leading to a complicated struggle – 4...Qg4. Against me, opponents have more often chosen 4.exf6 dx3 5.fxg7 cxd2+ 6.Qxd2 (for some reason, nobody has ever taken with the bishop here against me, although it leads to very sharp and interesting variations; Black would do well to know these thoroughly) 6...Qxd2+ 7.Qxd2 Qxg7 8.0-0-0.
Formally, this ending is slightly better for White, but there is nothing too terrible for Black here. For example, he has the interesting move 8...\texttt{Bg4}!? with the idea of provoking f2-f3 and at the same time depriving the \texttt{Ng1} of its best development square. And if White instead replies 9.\texttt{Nf3}, then Black exchanges the knight, spoiling his opponent’s pawn formation. And then White has to find a way to exploit his two bishops – good luck! Black has a very solid position, and White’s pawn weaknesses on the kingside may have their say later.

In the variation \texttt{6.Bxd2 Bxg7 7.Qh5}

Black, of course, should not fall for the elementary trap 7...\texttt{Bxb2}? 8.\texttt{Qxb5+}. It is important to remember the following rule of thumb: if White brings out his queen to h5 or f3, then Black should develop his own queen to d4 or d6. Our kingside is weakened, but the king will be safe on c8. Very often, the queens are exchanged, and we reach a standard, roughly equal (strictly speaking, very slightly better for White) ending. I recommend playing it out in training games, so as to develop a feeling for where to develop one’s pieces and pawns, and what to strive for. I have already played
such endings so many times that I now play them for a win, and I frequently succeed.

The most principled line for White is regarded as being the Four Pawns Attack: 1.e4 \( \mathcal{Q} \)\textit{f6} 2.e5 \( \mathcal{Q} \)d5 3.d4 d6 4.e4 \( \mathcal{Q} \)b6 5.f4, but here Black has a great many possibilities.

For example, GM Alex Baburin successfully relies on the move 5...\( \mathbf{f5} \), and nobody has managed to prove an advantage against him. There is also the interesting plan 5...g6, although Vladimir Bagirov once wrote in his book that this is not in the spirit of the opening. The most popular line is 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 \( \mathcal{Q} \)c6 7.\( \mathbf{e} \)e3 \( \mathbf{f} \)f5 followed by \( ...\mathcal{d}d7 \) and \( ...0-0-0 \), or \( ...e7-e6 \), \( ...\mathbf{e}7 \) and \( ...0-0 \); here there is a lot of theory.

But we will examine the immediate central blow: 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 \( c5 \)!

Probably, White can count on an advantage here, but to do this, he needs to learn and then reel off 20-25 best moves (finding all these at the board without knowing them is simply unrealistic). And since any inaccuracy transfers the initiative to Black, those wishing to play this line as White, especially in rapid or blitz, are few in number.
In reply to 1.d4, we recommend the Queen’s Gambit Accepted: 1...d5 2.c4 dxc4.

The principle is the same as that after 1.e4: to settle the character of the opening as quickly as possible and to limit the opponent to concrete variations, not allowing him to play ‘out of general considerations’. We immediately get ‘our position’ and immediately let the opponent suffer and try to remember the variations!

Black takes the pawn on c4 and begins to try hanging onto it, sometimes with the move ...b7-b5, and sometimes by bringing his bishop to e6. So as to re-establish material equality, White has to spend several tempi and also weaken the square b4, by playing a2-a4. As a rule, we reach complicated, fighting positions, with play for all three results, which is exactly what we want in rapid and blitz! White has no time to rack his brains to remember the variations, he needs concrete knowledge, but ours should be greater, thanks to our experience and purposeful preparation. And if White wants to get a quiet position, then in almost every variation, he has to abandon the fight for the initiative.

Very sharp positions arise after 3.e4 e5.
The immediate clash in the centre means that the position will assume an open character, and the cost of every move will be very high. Both with and without queens on the board, one cannot afford to relax. It is worth remembering that the ending arising after 4.dxe5?! $\text{Qxd1} + 5.$\text{Kxd1} $\text{Nc6}$ is in Black’s favour and he also has no problems after 4.$\text{Bxc4 Qxd4}$. Meanwhile, if White avoids the exchange of central pawns with 4.$\text{d5 Nf6} 5.$\text{Nc3}, then 5...$\text{b5}!$ is very strong.

The main position in this variation arises after 4.$\text{Nf3 exd4} 5.$\text{Bxc4 Nc6} and in this book it is examined in great detail.

After the careful 3.$\text{e3}$ we recommend the relatively new move 3...$\text{Bc6}$.

As we said in the Foreword, for a long time players refused to take this ‘unaesthetic’ move seriously. However, it achieves something significant – without further ado, Black defends his extra pawn. White needs to regain it, but how?

Of course, Black is taking some strategic risk, but from a practical viewpoint, this is a good variation. It is played quite often, for example by Latvian GM, Ilmars Starostits. We immediately restrict White’s choice as much as possible, and begin precise forcing play, which we have prepared at home. And for White this can easily be an unpleasant surprise.
We should immediately point out a small, but extremely significant tactical nuance: after 4.\textit{\textit{\textit{\textit{f3}}}} \textit{\textit{c6}} the bishop on e6 cannot be chased by 5.\textit{\textit{\textit{g5}}}? because of 5...\textit{\textit{a5+}}.

There is one other interesting line – 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.\textit{\textit{c3}} \textit{\textit{c6}}.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chess_diagram1.png}
\end{center}

Once again, Black plays to hold the pawn on c4 – he wants to defend it with the move ...b7-b5. Now 4.a4 offers few prospects because of the central blow 4...e5!. A critical position for the variation arises after 4.e4 \textit{\textit{b5}} 5.a4 \textit{\textit{b4}}, and now both 6.a2 and 6.\textit{\textit{ce2}} deserve serious attention.

In the QGA, White also has the following cunning move-order: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.\textit{\textit{f3}} \textit{\textit{c6}} 4.a4.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{chess_diagram2.png}
\end{center}

By defending against both ...e7-e5 and ...b7-b5, White now wants to regain the c4-pawn at his convenience. But a surprise awaits him in this variation too: we suggest the rather rare move 4...\textit{\textit{g4}}!?.

And ‘for dessert’, we offer for the reader’s attention the head-spinning variations arising after 4.e4 \textit{\textit{b5}}. Exactly what is
needed at blitz: an open struggle, full of tactics. But do not forget that Black has an extra pawn!

In the concluding section of section one, we deal with how Black should reply to the moves 1.\textit{Nf3} and 1.\textit{c4}. As already pointed out in the Foreword, we have concentrated our efforts mainly on 1.e4 and 1.d4, which occur in about 80\% of games. The schemes after 1.c4 and 1.\textit{Nf3} are covered briefly, but even so, after reading this chapter, we hope that the reader will have a clear impression of how he should play and in which direction he should work further on the opening.

\textit{Vladimir Sveshnikov}

\textit{Riga, October 2015}
Part I
Alekhine’s Defence

Chapter 1
1.e4 \(\mathcal{N}f6\) 2.d3; 2.\(\mathcal{N}c3\) d5 3.e5

1.e4 \(\mathcal{N}f6\)

So, Alekhine’s Defence, although a more suitable name might be Alekhine’s Counterattack. The idea is simple: the knight is brought into play immediately, and Black provokes his opponent to advance his central pawns, seizing space with tempi. After this, as in the Pirc/Modern Defence, Black starts attacking the centre with all his might.

A serious argument in favour of Alekhine’s Defence is that at fast time controls, it is important to pose the opponent problems. The move 1...\(\mathcal{N}f6\) is fairly rare, and almost always White will be less well prepared for it than for the main opening lines (1...c5, 1...e5, 1...c6, 1...e6). A typical picture is that in reply to 1...\(\mathcal{N}f6\) White knows the next few moves, but has only a hazy idea of what to do beyond those.

The defensive move 2.d3 is met fairly rarely; with the help of such a modest continuation, White can obviously not hope for an advantage. As to how Black should react, we will rely on the game Fedorov-Kovalenko, Samara 2012, after which we will begin examining the so-called Scandinavian system, 2.\(\mathcal{N}c3\) d5. This is quite a regular guest in events of all levels, but most of all, of course, in mass events. White shows that he does not pretend to very much, whilst Black, by contrast, immediately tries to break the symmetry and complicate the battle. Such a situation often arises in those cases where the white player is an amateur and Black a professional, or simply a stronger player.

In view of its importance and popularity, we will continue to study the Scandinavian system in the second chapter also.
But in the first, we will concentrate on the position arising after 3.e5 d4.

Here White has a choice: to take the knight on f6 or retreat his own knight to e2. In both cases, Black needs concrete knowledge – if he plays ‘by ear’, he can soon find himself facing difficulties.

**Game 1**

*Alexey Fedorov* 2562  
*Igor Kovalenko* 2556  
Samara 2012 (7)

1.e4 Nf6 2.d3

Naturally, White can scarcely pretend to an advantage with the help of this passive move.

2...e5

Another good plan is 2...d5 3.e5 Nfd7 4.f4 c5, reaching a position of a French type, but with the c8 still having the possibility of developing to f5 or g4. After the text move, we reach a Philidor position with colours reversed.
3. \( \text{Nf3} \)

Little is promised by 3.\( \text{f4} \) exf4 4.\( \text{Bxf4} \) \( \text{Nc6} \); Black advances his development without hindrance and prepares the thrust \( \ldots \text{d7-d5} \). Note that the immediate 4...d5? would be met by 5.e5, and because there is no knight on f3, the white queen controls h5. Black should await the move 5.\( \text{Nf3} \) and only then play 5...d5, and after 5.\( \text{c3} \) he pins the white knight. This is how events might develop:

A) 5.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{b4} \) 6.a3 \( \text{a5} \) (Black is also better after 6...\( \text{xc3}+!? \) 7.bxc3 d5 8.e5 \( \text{g4} \) 9.d4 f6) 7.\( \text{e2} \) 0-0 8.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{e8} \) 9.\( \text{g5} \) h6 10.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) – White’s pieces are rather passive and Black has the initiative, Vorotnikov-Malaniuk, Moscow 1995;

B) 5.\( \text{f3} \) d5 6.e5 \( \text{h5} \) 7.\( \text{g5} \)

7.\( \text{c3} \) d4 8.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{f4} \), Juhar-Kantorik, Slovakia tt 2007/08 – Black’s chances are superior, but possibly 8...\( \text{c5} \) is even more accurate, preparing short castling.

7...\( \text{e7} \)

Also good is 7...\( \text{f6}! \)? 8.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) with a very attractive position for Black.

8.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 9.\( \text{d4} \) 0-0

Even stronger is 9...\( \text{g4}! \), after which White’s only defence is 10.\( \text{b5} \) (he loses after both 10.c3 \( \text{f6} \), and 10.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{f4} \) 11.0-0 \( \text{xe2}+ \) 12.\( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{xd4} \)) 10...\( \text{b4}+ \) 11.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{xb2} \) and Black’s chances are superior.

10.\( \text{e2} \)

White can maintain the balance with 10.\( \text{c3} \), e.g. 10...\( \text{g4} \) 11.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{d8} \) 12.c4 \( \text{f6} \) 13.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{fxe5} \) 14.0-0 \( \text{e4} \) 15.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{xf1}+ \) 16.\( \text{xf1} \) \( \text{xe2} \) 17.\( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{f6} \) 18.\( \text{xf6}+ \) \( \text{xf6} \) 19.d5 \( \text{e5} \) 20.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{f8} \= \).

10...\( \text{d4} \) 11.0-0 \( \text{g4} \) 12.c3 \( \text{f6} \) 13.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{xe2}+ \) 14.\( \text{xe2} \) \( \text{fxe5} \) 15.\( \text{dxe5} \) \( \text{xf3} \) 16.\( \text{xf3} \) \( \text{xe5} \), and White resigned, Kuusik-V. Sveshnikov, Tallinn 2015.
3...e6 4.e2 d5

The most ambitious: White’s set-up is passive and so Black himself seizes the centre. But also good is 4...c5 5.0-0 d6 or 4...e7, in both cases with fully adequate play.

5.bd2

If 5.exd5 cxd5 we reach one of the main lines of the Philidor, but with colours reversed. The extra tempo promises White an equal game, but no more than that.

5...e7

Black also has at his disposal the more active continuation 5...c5, but then the bishop can be attacked by c2-c3 with the idea of b2-b4 or d2-d4; in addition, after the exchange on d5, the white knight has the possibility of coming to e4 with tempo.

6.0-0 0-0 7.b3

Practice has also seen 7.c3 a5 8.e1 e8 9.f1 f8 10.b3 d4 11.cxd4 cxd4 12.b2 xf3+ 13.xf3 g4 14.h3 xf3 15.xf3 c5, Rossi-Miles, England tt 2000. White already faces some problems: his opponent wants to exchange dark-squared bishops, leaving White with his bad light-squared bishop.

7...e8 8.b2 f8 9.e1 a5 10.a3 d4

Fighting for an advantage: Black closes the centre, limiting the activity of the white pieces (especially the b2 and f3).

11.g3

The start of a bad plan. White intends to transfer the knight via h4 to g2, and then play f2-f4, but this requires four whole tempi, as well as worsening the position of White’s own knight.
If 11.c3, with the idea of trying to gain more space for the white pieces, then after 11...dxc3 12.\textit{B}xc3, Black should play by analogy with the Miles game quoted above, with 12...\textit{B}g4 followed by ...\textit{c}5, ...\textit{xf}3, ...\textit{d}6, ...\textit{ad}8, creating pressure down the d-file and weakening the dark squares in the enemy camp. Therefore White should probably go on the defensive 11.h3, 12.\textit{N}f1 and wait to see what his opponent does.

11...g6

This is a useful move for Black: he takes control of the square f5, where the white knight might try to jump from h4, and also allows the black bishop to come out to h6. The move also has a certain waiting character.

12.\textit{Ah}4

White carries out his plan, and Black in his turn creates counterplay on the other wing.

12...a4 13.\textit{Ag}2

On 13.b4 there is the unpleasant 13...\textit{a}7, and the knight transfers to b5.

13...\textit{a}7 14.f4

White has finally realised his plan, but with such passive pieces, it can scarcely promise much. Black simply exchanges on f4 and activates his forces.

14...exf4 15.\textit{Af}4 \textit{b}5

Threatening 16...axb3 and the capture on a3.

16.b4 c5

Now there follows a breakthrough from the other side.

17.bxc5 \textit{xc}5 18.\textit{Ag}2

A dubious decision, but White’s position was already not very pleasant.

18...\textit{a}6

A strong move: Black brings new reserves into play.

19.\textit{f}3

White tries to do the same.
19...h5

Black’s first inaccuracy in the whole game. Clearly stronger was 19...\(\text{c3}\) 20.\(\text{c1}\) g5 or 20.\(\text{xxc3}\) dxc3 21.\(\text{c4}\) g5, developing his initiative over the whole board.

20.\(\text{c4}\) h4

Consistent at least, but objectively stronger here was 20...\(\text{c3}\), retaining a small advantage.

21.e5 g5?!

Black has lost the thread of the game. Better was 21...\(\text{h7}\) with mutual chances.

22.exf6 gxf4 23.\(\text{xe8}\) + \(\text{xe8}\) 24.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{d7}\) 25.\(\text{h5}\)

White errs in turn: after the simple 25.gxf4 \(\text{xf6}\) 26.\(\text{h1}\) he obtains the advantage.

25...\(\text{h3}\) + 26.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{hxg3}\) 27.\(\text{g5}\)+ \(\text{f8}\) 28.\(\text{xc5}\)+ \(\text{d6}\) 29.\(\text{xd4}\)

A terrible blunder, losing at once. He could maintain the balance with 29.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 30.\(\text{e5}\).

29...\(\text{xd4}\)+

White evidently thought he could take the rook, missing that Black takes the bishop with check. Therefore White resigned.

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**Game 2**

Alexey Fedorov 2560

Vladimir Sveshnikov 2395

Riga 2014
1.e4 d6 2.Nc3 d5 3.e5

3...d4

The most precise path to equality; the only drawback of this move is that White can simplify the position if he wishes. A more complicated battle with mutual chances arises from 3...Nd7 4.f4 c5. Black also has the knight jump in the centre with 3...Ne4, but after 4.Nc2!? (avoiding the exchange) White can count on an advantage.

4.exd6 dxc3 5.fg7

This is the main continuation, but 5.bxc3 and 5.fxe7 have also been seen:

A) 5.bxc3 exf6
This recapture is better than 5...gxf6. Black now has very simple play: ...\textit{d6}, ...0-0, ...c7-c5, ...\textit{c6} or ...\textit{d7} followed by ...f6-f5 and ...\textit{f6} or ...\textit{b6}, ...b7-b6, ...\textit{c7}.

\textit{6.\textit{f3}} 6.d4 \textit{d6} 7.d3 0-0 8.\textit{e2} c5 with an equal position, Kamsky-Nakamura, Odessa 2006. \textit{6...\textit{d6}} 7.d4 7.\textit{c2} 0-0 8.0-0 \textit{e8} (the immediate break 8...c5 is also worth considering) 9.d4 c6, Gashimov-Suleimanov, Adana 2006; Black has wrongly kept the pawn back from c5, although even in this position, White can hardly claim a serious advantage. \textit{7...0-0} 8.\textit{d3}?! A dubious decision. Better is 8.\textit{e2}, although here too, after 8...c5, as in the postal game Dunne-Jacubowski, 1998, Black has a good position. It is also possible not to hurry with the move ...c7-c5, as 8...b6!? is worth considering. 8.\textit{e8}+ 8...c5?! 9.\textit{e3} \textit{f4} 10.\textit{e2} \textit{xe3} 11.\textit{fxe3} \textit{e7} 12.e4 \textit{g4} 13.0-0 c5 14.h3 \textit{xf3} 15.\textit{xf3} \textit{c6} 16.\textit{f2} \textit{ad8} 17.d5 \textit{e5}. The computer shows full equality, although in practice, such positions are easier to play as Black.

B) 5.\textit{xe7}
analysis diagram

5...cxd2+

More complicated play results from 5...\texttt{Qxe7}+!?\, but there seems no reason to block the \texttt{Qf8} without necessity.

B1) 6.\texttt{Qxd2 Qxe7}:

B11) 7.\texttt{c3 0-0 8.\texttt{Bxd8 Bxd8 9.d3 c6} Forgach-A.G.Panchenko, Bad Zwesten 2001; Black’s chances are at least equal;

B12) 7.\texttt{c4 0-0} (Figuere Aguilera-Campona, Coria del Rio 2006) with an equal position, whilst after 7...\texttt{Qd4} Black can even play for a win;

B13) Interesting is 7.\texttt{d3} with the idea of 7...0-0 8.\texttt{Qh5}!? (this is why White delayed bringing his knight to f3!) 8...\texttt{g6} 9.\texttt{Qh6}. In all likelihood, there is nothing too terrible for Black here, but it is not so nice in blitz. Therefore Black does better not to rush with castling, and instead to play the useful move 7...\texttt{Nc6}, and only after 8.\texttt{Nf3} to play 8...0-0, with an equal position.

B2) 6.\texttt{Qxd2 Qxd2+} If one prefers not to exchange queens, then there is 6...\texttt{Qxe7}+ 7.\texttt{Qc2} (the correct move; after other continuations Black is already slightly better) 7...\texttt{Qc6} 8.\texttt{Qf3 Qg4} or 8...\texttt{Qc5}, also with roughly equal chances, but with queens still on the board. Another reasonable move is 6...\texttt{Qxe7}. 7.\texttt{Qxd2 Qxe7} (the position is absolutely equal) 8.\texttt{Qf4} (8.\texttt{Qc3 0-0 9.d3 Qd7 10.Qf3 Qf6 – 10...Qc5!? – 11.Qxf6 Qxf6 12.0-0 Qe8 13.Qfe1 Qxe1+ 14.Qxe1 Qf8 draw, Mukhametov-Baburin, Novosibirsk 1989) 8...\texttt{c6} (the temporary pawn sacrifice 8...\texttt{Qc6} does not seem to lead to anything good: 9.Qxe7 Qb4 10.0-0-0 Qf5 11.Qb5+ Qf8 12.c3 Qxa2+ 13.Qd2, and the knight on a2 does not adorn the black position) 9.Qf3 0-0 10.Qc4 Qd7 11.0-0-0 Qb6 12.Qb3 Qg4 with equality, Burakovsky-A.G.Panchenko, Kiev 2010.

5...cxd2+
6. \textit{Qxd2} \textit{Qxd2}+ 7. \textit{Bxd2} \textit{Bxg7} 8. 0-0-0

The move 8.c3 is very solid, of course, but completely unnecessary; in effect, it wastes a tempo, since after the natural 8.0-0-0 the b2-pawn is defended anyway. Black can choose between 8...\textit{f5} 9.0-0-0 \textit{d7} 10.\textit{f3} 0-0-0 with an equal game, Santos-Rogovsky, corr. 2007, and 8...\textit{c6} 9.\textit{f3} \textit{e6} (the most precise), not allowing the white bishop to the square c4 and taking aim at the a2-pawn. However, in this case too, the bounds of equality are not breached.

8...\textit{g4}

An interesting and rare move, which will almost certainly come as a surprise to the opponent.

White has slightly the better prospects after 8...0-0 9.\textit{f3}. Black is fine after 9.\textit{c4} \textit{c6} 10.\textit{e2} \textit{e5} 11.\textit{b3} c5 (11...a5!?):

A) 12.\textit{c3} c4 13.\textit{a4} a6 14.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 15.\textit{d7} \textit{d8} 16.\textit{xc8} \textit{xc8} 17.\textit{xd8}+ \textit{xd8} 18.\textit{f4} \textit{g7} 19.\textit{c3} f5 20.\textit{d1} \textit{xd1}+ 21.\textit{xd1} \textit{f7} with an equal position and a rapid draw, A. Zhelezny-Farnik, corr. 2003;

B) On 12.a4 a possibility is 12...c4 13.\textit{a2} a6 (or 13...\textit{d7}!??) 14.\textit{f4} b5, shutting the white bishop out of play and obtaining sufficient counterplay;

C) 12.\textit{g5} c4 13.c4 \textit{g4} 14.\textit{h4} a6 15.\textit{d7} \textit{e5} 16.\textit{xc8} \textit{xc8} with sufficient play for Black, Eglseider-Reinschmidt, corr. 1997.

9...\textit{g4} 10.\textit{e2} Otherwise he has to reckon with the exchange on f3, after which his kingside pawn structure is spoiled.

10...\textit{c6} 11.\textit{he1} – White has the initiative.

As well as the move in the game, 8...\textit{f5}!? and 8...\textit{c6} are also interesting. The first we only mention, but the second will be examined in the next two games.

9.\textit{e2}

One is unlikely to find many players who are willing voluntarily to spoil their pawn formation after 9.\textit{f3} \textit{xf3} 10.gxf3. The computer assesses this as some plus to White, but in practice, Black’s position is easier to play.
It seems that only 9.f3 can pose Black any problems. In reply, it is best to retreat the bishop to 9...\texttt{b}e6, attacking the pawn on a2.

\begin{center}
\textit{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

A) 10.\texttt{b}e2!? \texttt{c}6 11.b3 (11.\texttt{f}4?! \texttt{xa}2 12.b3 a5 13.\texttt{b}5 0-0 with a complicated game) 11...\texttt{xc}3 12.\texttt{xc}3 a6 with rough equality;

B) 10.\texttt{f}4?! \texttt{xa}2 11.\texttt{e}2 (the assessment of the position is not changed after 11.b3 a5 12.\texttt{xc}7 0-0 13.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{c}8 14.\texttt{d}8+ \texttt{xd}8 15.\texttt{xd}8 \texttt{c}6 16.\texttt{b}6 \texttt{e}8 17.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{b}4) 11...e5 12.\texttt{g}5 f6 13.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{e}6 – Black’s chances are superior;

C) 10.\texttt{b}1 \texttt{c}6 11.b5 0-0-0 12.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{h}g8 with equality, Zbikowski-Rührig, Germany Bundesliga 1983. Possibly even more accurate is 12...\texttt{d}6, not letting his pawns be spoilt: 13.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{e}5 or 13.\texttt{xd}1+ 14.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{b}4 with good counterplay for Black.

9...\texttt{xe}2 10.\texttt{xe}2 \texttt{c}6

Also good is 10...\texttt{d}7 11.\texttt{c}3 (11.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{g}8 with approximate equality, Bauland-Teumer, corr. 1999) 11...\texttt{g}8 12.\texttt{g}7 \texttt{g}7 – the game is equal, Stoma-Nalbandian, Warsaw 2005.

11.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{g}8 12.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{d}8

12...e6 13.\texttt{g}7 \texttt{g}7 14.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{xd}4 15.\texttt{xd}4, with a draw in the correspondence game Meiner-Rain, 2011.

13.\texttt{g}7 \texttt{g}7 14.\texttt{xd}8+ \texttt{xd}8 15.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{c}6

Also good is 15...\texttt{g}5 16.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{c}6 17.\texttt{c}3 e6 with equality.

16.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{g}5 17.\texttt{e}4 f6 18.a4 a5
The chances are roughly equal and the game ended in a draw.

Game 3
Lauris Laimins 2222
Vladimir Sveshnikov 2394
Riga 2014


The most popular continuation: one could hardly find a better square for the knight, whilst the light-squared bishop may later come out to d7, e6, f5 or g4.
White is promised little by 9.\textit{\texttt{b4}} \textit{\texttt{e5}} 10.\textit{\texttt{b3}} \textit{\texttt{a5}} (White is slightly better after 10...0-0 11.\textit{\texttt{f4}}, but 10...\textit{\texttt{d7}} is also possible, with equal chances) 11.\textit{\texttt{a4}} (also after 11.\textit{\texttt{a3}} \textit{\texttt{a4}} 12.\textit{\texttt{x2}} \textit{\texttt{c6}} 13.\textit{\texttt{f4}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} 14.\textit{\texttt{h3}} 0-0-0 15.\textit{\texttt{g5}} \textit{\texttt{df8}} 16.\textit{\texttt{e4}} \textit{\texttt{c6}} Black is not worse) 11...\textit{\texttt{d7}} 12.\textit{\texttt{e2}} \textit{\texttt{c6}} 13.\textit{\texttt{f3}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} with fully-fledged play for Black.

An interesting idea is 9.\textit{\texttt{b5}}!? \textit{\texttt{d7}}:
B1) Unconvincing is 15.\(\boxtimes\)xh6 \(\boxtimes\)xg2 – two white pawns are attacked, and Black has an active rook; now it is White who needs to play accurately to maintain equality;

B2) 15.\(\boxtimes\)xc6 \(\boxtimes\)xc6 16.\(\boxtimes\)e5 (worse is 16.\(\boxtimes\)xh6 because of 16...\(\boxtimes\)xg2, and it is already time for White to think about equality) 16...\(\boxtimes\)xe5 17.\(\boxtimes\)xe5 \(\boxtimes\)xg2 18.\(\boxtimes\)xh6 (18.\(\boxtimes\)e3 \(\boxtimes\)f7 with equality) 18...\(\boxtimes\)xf2 19.\(\boxtimes\)d2 \(\boxtimes\)f1+ 20.\(\boxtimes\)d1 \(\boxtimes\)f2 with a repetition of moves.

C) 15.\(\boxtimes\)c4 \(\boxtimes\)g7 16.\(\boxtimes\)xh6 (if 16.\(\boxtimes\)xh6 \(\boxtimes\)xg2 White’s position is somewhat easier to play, but the assessment does not exceed rough equality, e.g. 17.\(\boxtimes\)d5 \(\boxtimes\)xf2 18.\(\boxtimes\)g5 a5 – making luft – 19.a3 \(\boxtimes\)b8 etc.) 16...\(\boxtimes\)xf7 17.\(\boxtimes\)xf7 \(\boxtimes\)xf7 or 17.\(\boxtimes\)xf8 \(\boxtimes\)xf8 with mutual chances. It is very difficult to give a definite assessment of this position – maybe White is somewhat better, but over the board, it is also easier for him to go wrong. He needs to try to advance his kingside pawns, but this is not so simple: Black will attack the pawns, and these attacks will be hard to meet, since Black has four pieces versus three.

9...0-0

We should note in passing that 9...\(\boxtimes\)f5 also deserves consideration, whilst the plan with 9...\(\boxtimes\)d7!? with the idea of preparing long castling will be examined in more detail later.
analysis diagram

10.\textit{c3} White has also tried 10.\textit{f4} 0-0-0 (possibly stronger is 10...\textit{d4}!!?) 11.\textit{c4} \textit{e5} (11...\textit{h6}?? followed by the exchange of dark-squared bishops) 12.\textit{e2} \textit{c6} 13.\textit{he1} \textit{g6} 14.\textit{g3} \textit{b8} (White also retains slight pressure after 14...\textit{xf4} 15.\textit{xf4} \textit{e6} 16.\textit{g5} \textit{xd1+} 17.\textit{xd1} \textit{h6} 18.\textit{h4}!, keeping control of the square d8; after the exchange of rooks the position equalises out, although Black still needs to demonstrate accuracy, since his h6-pawn is weak) 15.\textit{h4} \textit{d4} 16.\textit{d3} \textit{e6} 17.\textit{c3} \textit{f6} 18.\textit{g5} \textit{g5+} 19.\textit{hxg5} with somewhat better chances for White, Ormsby-Gould, corr. 2012.

10...\textit{xc3} (10...\textit{g8}??) 11.\textit{xc3} 0-0-0 12.\textit{b5}

A) 12.f4 \textit{f5} 13.\textit{c4} \textit{e6} 14.\textit{he1} \textit{h5} 15.\textit{xd8+} \textit{xd8} 16.\textit{e2} \textit{h4} with rough equality, Sorokin-K. Grigorian, Togliatti 1985;

B) 12.\textit{e2} \textit{f5} 13.\textit{xd8+} \textit{xd8} 14.\textit{d1} \textit{xd1+} 15.\textit{xd1}, and here two Alekhine’s Defence specialists agreed a draw, Kengis-Bagirov, Jurmala 1985;

C) 12.g3 h5 13.\textit{h4} \textit{g4} 14.\textit{e2} \textit{xe2} 15.\textit{xe2} \textit{d6} with approximate equality, Dempster-Van Reybrouck, corr. 2009.

12...\textit{a6} 13.\textit{e2}

Or 13.\textit{a4} \textit{b8} (also good is 13...b5 14.\textit{b3} \textit{e6} with equality) 14.\textit{xd7+} \textit{xd7} 15.\textit{xd7} \textit{xd7}= Y. Brodsky-A.G. Panchenko, Kiev 2003.

13...\textit{f5} 14.\textit{xd8+} \textit{xd8} 15.\textit{d1} \textit{xd1+} 16.\textit{xd1}, draw, Kourkounakis-Bosch, Gausdal 2002.

10.\textit{f4}

It was better to move the knight, opening the way for the light-squared bishop – 10.\textit{f4}.

10...\textit{e6} 11.\textit{c3} \textit{ad8} 12.\textit{xd8} \textit{xd8} 13.\textit{g7} \textit{g7} 14.\textit{c3} \textit{f5}

There was also another possibility – trying to activate the king by means of 14...\textit{g6}.

15.g4
The correct move, else Black would play 15...d4 with definite pressure.

15...c8

Naturally, not 15...xg4 because of 16.g1 h5 17.h3, winning the bishop.

16.e2 e5

It was also possible to try 16.d4 17.d3 b6=.

17.f1 d4

Interesting was 17.d6 with the idea of transferring the rook to h6.

18.fxe5

On 18.f5 there could follow 18...h5 19.h3 hxg4 20.xg4 d7=.

18...xe5 19.h3

19...a6

Here I decided to protect b5 against the knight, and also to prepare the advance of the c- and b-pawns.

20.f2 c5

Correct was 20...h5!? 21.xh5 xh3 – the pawn on h5 is weak and White can face definite problems defending it.

21.f1

Correctly transferring the bishop to another diagonal, from where it defends the h3-pawn and eyes up the pawns on the queenside.
21...b5 22.g2 e6
A dubious move. Equality could be maintained by 22...h5 23.gxh5 h4.

23.b3
It was worth considering 23.b7!? with the better chances.

23...c4 24.b4 c8
Not letting White bring the bishop to b7. After 24...h5 25.gxh5 h4 the move 26.b7 is unpleasant.

25.Ed2!
The correct decision: the exchange of rooks favours White, because his king becomes very active.

25...Exd2 26.Kxd2
Now the king will try to break through to the queenside pawns via the weakened dark squares, and, in addition, he threatens e4 followed by c5 or d6.
Black’s position is already difficult.

26.g6 27.Kg6 f5
An attempt to exchange off more pawns. But he should have started with 27...h5 or 27...g5.

28.gxf5+
White can win easily with 28.f4 f7 29.gxf5+ or 28...fxg4 29.xe5 gxh3 30.h1.
This was a rapid game, so mutual mistakes in the time trouble phase are easily explained.

28...xf5
Better was 28...xf5.

29.e4?!
Again White had a clear path to the win: 29.b7 xc2 30.a6 or 29...xh3 30.a6 h5 31.xb5.

29...g5
Correct was 29...xe4 30.xe4 c6 31.a3 e7 with good chances of a draw.

30.d5
Here too, bringing the bishop to b7 would have decided the game in White’s favour after 30.h4+ g4 31.b7.

30...xh3
There was a draw with 30...xe4!? 31.xe4 c6 32.c3 h4.

31.xh7 c6 32.c3 a5
It was essential to play 32...\textit{e}6!? 33.\textit{c}7 \textit{c}8, after which Black should probably draw.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{33.a3}

The last moment in the game when White had a clear win: 33.bxa5! \textit{xa}5 34.\textit{c}7 \textit{d}7 35.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}6 36.\textit{d}4. 33...\textit{axb}4 34.\textit{cxb}4 \textit{f}5 35.\textit{g}6 \textit{g}6 36.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}7 37.\textit{d}5 \textit{xd}5+ 38.\textit{xd}5 \textit{d}7 39.\textit{d}4 \textit{f}5

Draw.
1.e4 Nf6 2.c3 d5 3.e5 d4 4.exf6 dxc3 5.fxg7 cxd2+ 6.Qxd2 Qxd2+ 7.Bxd2 Bxg7 8.0-0-0 Nc6
9.Qf3 g4

10.Be2

A) 10.b5 0-0-0 11.e3 White does not achieve much after 11.xc6 bxc6, since Black will soon take on f3 and spoil White’s kingside structure too. Then White can try to attack the black pawn on a7, by bringing his bishop to e3, and his rook to the queenside, whilst Black has the h2-pawn as an object of attack. The position is absolutely equal, but Black’s game is easier to play and he has chances to take over the initiative. 11...a6 12.e2 The assessment of ‘equal’ is not changed after 12.c4 e6. 12...f6 Chances are about equal. In the game Plat-Brazdil, Czech tt 2005/06, White played 13.d4?, and here the players unexpectedly agreed a draw – unexpectedly, because the simple 13...xd4! 14.xd4 xe2 15.xf6 exf6 leaves Black with two pieces for a rook and excellent winning chances.

B) After 10.e3 it is worth considering 10...a6, not allowing the bishop into b5.
B1) 11.h3 \( \text{xf3} \) 12.gxf3 \( e6 \) then \( \text{f6} \) and \( \text{e7-f5} \) with approximate equality;

B2) 11.e2 \( \text{e5} \) (11...\( \text{d8}?!?, \) exchanging a pair of rooks) 12.f4 (the game is also equal after 12.h3 \( \text{xf3} \) 13.gxf3 \( g6 \) 14.f4 \( \text{h6} \) 15.e4 \( \text{d8} \) 16.c6 \( e6 \) 17.f5 \( e7 \) 18.e5 \( f8 \) 19.e4 \( g8 \) 20.b4 \( d7 \) 21.c5 \( g8 \) 22.b3 \( e5 \) 23.f3 \( f5 \) 24.c6 \( e7 \) 25.xe7+ \( xe7 \) 26.f3 \( d8 \); White has won a pawn, but we have opposite-coloured bishops: now it is hard for White to defend his pawns on dark squares and Black has also managed to activate his rook) 12...\( \text{xf3} \) 13.gxf3 \( \text{e5} \) 14.d3 (14.c4 c6=) 14...\( \text{xd3} \) 15.e3 \( c5 \) 16.e4 \( d1 \) c4 17.e5 \( b5 \) 18.e7 \( h6+ \) 19.e1 \( f6 \) 20.e5 \( d8 \), and we reach a roughly equal position. White has active rooks, but his kingside pawn structure is spoilt;

B3) 11.c4 e6 12.c3 \( \text{xf3} \) (somewhat premature is 12...h5, but it is worth considering 12...\( \text{e7}?!? \) with the idea of ...\( \text{f5} \)-d6 or ...\( \text{f5} \) and ...\( \text{h6} \) 13.gxf3 \( \text{e7} \) (after breaking up the enemy pawn structure, Black puts his knight on e7 and pawn on c6, limiting White’s light-squared bishop) 14.e1 \( f6 \) 15.e2 \( d8 \) (15...\( c6 \)!) 16.e4 \( d8 \)+ \( xd8 \) 17.e3 \( d5 \), and it is quite unclear how White can strengthen his position further.

10...0-0-0 11.e1

11.e3 \( a6 \)=, Minte-Berghaus, corr. 2008.

11...f6

11...h6!? is worth considering, taking control of the g5-square.

12.h3 e6 13.g5

White wants to exchange the dark-squared bishops, so as to ensure some freedom of movement for his knight.

13...g7

Black, in his turn, prevents his opponent’s idea. But it was also possible to exchange: 13...\( \text{xg5} \)+ 14.e5 \( d5 \) 15.c4 \( \text{xg5} \) 16.e1 \( d1+ \) 17.e4 \( h6 \) 18.e7 \( f8 \) 19.e4+ \( b8 \) 20.e2 \( f7 \) 21.e3 \( a5 \) 22.e6 \( bxc6 \), and the rook ending is only slightly better for White.
14. $\text{Kxd8+ Kxd8}$

15.a3

After 15.b5 h6 16.h4 numerous exchanges are possible with 16...$\text{Qd4}$ 17.$\text{Qxd4 Qxd4}$ 18.$\text{Qxe7 Qg8}$ 19.g4 $\text{Qxf2}$ with a quick draw.

15...a6 16.$\text{Bd3}$ h6 17.$\text{Bd2}$

Nothing comes from 17.h4 because of 17...$\text{Qf8}$ with the idea of ...$\text{Qd5}$.

17...$\text{Qd5}$ 18.$\text{Qe4}$ e6 19.$\text{Bxd5}$ $\text{Qxd5}$ 20.$\text{Qe4}$ $\text{Qe7}$ 21.c4 $\text{Qf5}$ 22.$\text{Qc2}$ b5 23.b3 $\text{Qd7}$ 24.$\text{Qd3}$ $\text{Qg6}$ 25.$\text{Qe3}$

More precise is 25...$\text{Qxf3}$!? 26.gxf3 $\text{f5}$ 27.$\text{Qd4+ Qxd4}$ 28.$\text{Qxd4}$ e5+ 29.$\text{Qc5}$ bxc4 30.$\text{Qxc4}$ f4 31.$\text{Qd2}$ $\text{Qd6}$ with equality.

26.$\text{Qxc4}$ $\text{Qa5}$

Once again, 26...$\text{Qxf3}$ 27.gxf3 $\text{f5}$ deserves consideration; also very solid is 26...$\text{Qd5}$=.

27.$\text{Bc1}$

By shutting out the enemy rook with 27.$\text{Bc5}$, White could create certain problems for his opponent, although even this should not be anything serious.

27...$\text{Qd5}$ 28.$\text{Qe2}$ $\text{Qc6}$ 29.$\text{b4}$ $\text{Qd1}$ 30.$\text{Qe1}$ $\text{Qd5}$ 31.$\text{Qe3}$ h5 32.$\text{a4}$ $\text{Qf5}$ 33.$\text{Qd1}$ $\text{Qd5}$
This game is very useful for understanding positions of this type. White’s chances are slightly better, but no more than that; it is easier for Black to equalise than for White to set his opponent serious problems. I would recommend the reader practice playing such endings, and then even a stronger player will find it hard to beat you.

Game 5
Yuri Balashov 2540
Lev Alburt 2420
Leningrad 1974 (1)

1.e4 d6 2.c3 d5 3.e5 d4 4.exf6 dxc3 5.fxg7 cxd2+ 6.xd2?
A totally different approach: White keeps the queens on the board and hopes later to exploit the opponent’s weakened kingside.

6...\(\text{Bg}7\) 7.\(\text{Qf}3\)

Now there are two different popular continuations – I. 7.c3 and II. 7.\(\text{Qh}5\).

I. 7.c3 is solid but slow.

7...\(\text{Qc}6\) 8.\(\text{Qh}5\)
8. \( \mathcal{B}c4 \) can hardly be good because of 8... \( \mathcal{D}e5 \); also dubious is 8.\( \mathcal{B}b5 \) on account of 8...\( \mathcal{W}d5 \), with which Black simultaneously attacks the bishop and the pawn on g2.

The most natural move is 8.\( \mathcal{D}f3 \), preparing short castling. 8...\( \mathcal{W}d5 \) (Black in turn should put his own king on the queenside) 9.\( \mathcal{B}e2 \) \( \mathcal{D}e6 \) (the best square for the bishop) 10.0-0 0-0-0 with equality.

8...\( \mathcal{D}e5 \) 9.\( \mathcal{W}g5 \) 9.f4, as played in the game M"uhlhan-Karolak, Brandenburg 2007, is a poor move. After 9...\( \mathcal{D}d3+ \) 10.\( \mathcal{B}xd3 \) \( \mathcal{W}xd3 \) Black obtained clearly the better position. 9...\( \mathcal{F}f6 \) 10.\( \mathcal{W}g3 \) Now where should Black develop his lightsquared bishop? In the game Mumme-Schmeding, Wichern 1993, there followed 10...\( \mathcal{G}g4 \)¿. In general, the bishop is very well-placed on this diagonal, where it prevents the opponent castling long, but here the move fails for a concrete reason, namely the simple reply 11.f4, and White wins a piece. Admittedly, in the game, White did not find this obvious move, and after 11.h3 \( \mathcal{H}h5 \) Black obtained the advantage, because now his bishop securely controls the h5-d1 diagonal.

In the game Stukopin-Ruchkin, Vladimir 2008, Black brought the bishop out to f5. This is more accurate than 10...\( \mathcal{G}g4 \), and Black has a small advantage, thanks to his more active pieces.

But even better is the active queen move 10...\( \mathcal{W}d5 ! \). Black prepares long castling and will decide next move where to put his light-squared bishop.

II. 7.\( \mathcal{W}h5 \)

Obviously, the b2-pawn cannot be taken because of 7...\( \mathcal{A}xb2 \)? 8.\( \mathcal{W}b5 \).

\begin{center}
\textit{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

A) 7...\( \mathcal{D}e6 \)¿ is quite a rare move, but a perfectly good one. Now:

A1) 8.0-0-0¿! \( \mathcal{W}d4 \)! 9.c3 (Black is better after 9.\( \mathcal{C}c3 \) \( \mathcal{F}f4+ \) 10.\( \mathcal{B}b1 \) \( \mathcal{X}c3 \) 11.\( \mathcal{X}c3 \) \( \mathcal{X}f2 \)) 9...\( \mathcal{A}a4 \). In Sabranski-Kuckling, M"ohnsee 2011, there followed 10.\( \mathcal{B}b5 \) \( \mathcal{X}a2 \) 11.\( \mathcal{C}c4 \) \( \mathcal{A}a1+ \) 12.\( \mathcal{H}c2 \) \( \mathcal{A}a5 \), and Black remained with an extra pawn. White won a pawn in an even better fashion after 10.\( \mathcal{B}b5 \) \( \mathcal{X}a2 \), Mooslechner-Nuber, Salzburg 2004;

A2) 8.\( \mathcal{C}c4 \) \( \mathcal{D}e5 \):
A21) 9.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{g}4\) 10.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{d}4\)! 11.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{e}4\)+ 12.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{f}6\) 13.f3 (Black is also better after 13.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{xe}3\) 14.\(\text{fxe}3\) 0-0-0) 13...\(\text{xg}5\) 14.\(\text{fxe}4\) \(\text{f}6\) – here Black’s game is easier to play;

A22) Black played an interesting queen sacrifice in Gaiba-Popchev, Cesenatico 2007: 9.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}5\) 10.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{e}6\) 11.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{g}2\) 12.\(\text{x}e5\) \(\text{hx}1\) 13.0-0-0 \(\text{xe}5\) 14.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{g}8\) 15.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{xg}1\) 16.\(\text{xg}1\) \(\text{xg}1\)+ 17.\(\text{d}2\) 0-0-0+ 18.\(\text{c}3\) c6. The computer’s assessment is equal, but it is easier to play Black and he eventually won;

A23) 9.\(\text{c}3\). The computer considers this the strongest move, but it has not had any practical tests: 9...\(\text{g}4\) 10.\(\text{xf}7+\) \(\text{f}8\) 11.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{f}6\) 12.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{xf}7\) 13.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{g}8\) 14.\(\text{xf}6\) \(\text{xf}6\) 15.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{e}7\) 16.\(\text{b}3+\) \(\text{f}8\) 17.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{h}5\) 18.\(\text{g}4\) \(\text{e}8\) 19.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{xa}3\) 20.\(\text{bxa}3\) \(\text{f}7\) 21.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{g}5\) with equal chances.

A3) 8.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{d}6\) (taking the pawn with 8...\(\text{xb}2\) is dangerous, of course: 9.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{g}7\) 10.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}6\) 11.0-0, and White has a very powerful position) 9.0-0-0. Then in the game Krklec-Safyanovsky, Germany tt 2006, Black played 9...\(\text{f}6\) and won after a complicated struggle. But it is possible that 9...\(\text{e}6\) was even stronger, e.g. 10.\(\text{b}1\) 0-0-0 11.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}5\) 12.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) with an equal position;

B) 7...\(\text{d}4\)
analysis diagram

8.c3 (8...\textit{f3}!??) 8...\textit{e4}+:

B1) 9.\textit{e2} \textit{c6} Also interesting is 9...\textit{d7}!? with the idea after 10.\textit{f3} \textit{c2} of not allowing the enemy queen to \textit{b5}. 10.\textit{f3} \textit{c2} In Brestak-Abel, Bratislava 1992, Black offered to exchange queens with 10...\textit{e5}, but this move is not at all forced; it is more likely White who should seek a queen exchange than Black. 11.\textit{b5} \textit{d7} (11...0-0??) 12.\textit{b3} \textit{g6} It was also possible to exchange – 12...\textit{xb3} 13.axb3 0-0-0 (it was worth considering 13...h5 followed by ...h5-h4, taking the square \textit{g3} from the knight, and seizing space on the kingside) 14.b4, and here both 14...b6 and 14...a6 lead to a roughly equal position.

13.\textit{f4}

The black queen has a choice between the squares \textit{d6} and \textit{f6}: on one the queen will come under attack from the rook after 0-0-0, and on the other, after \textit{d5}, although neither represents real danger for Black. In the game Barry-Kaufmann, corr. 1977, Black retreated 13...\textit{d6}, and after the unfortunate reply 14.\textit{c4} could have obtained the advantage with the simple move 14...0-0-0. The move 13...\textit{f6} also leads to a position with mutual chances.

B2) 9.\textit{e3} \textit{g4}! This strong move was played in the game Cagasik-Kalousek, Olomouc 2012. Somewhat worse is 9...\textit{c6} 10.\textit{f3} (10.\textit{e2} \textit{g4} 11.\textit{g5} \textit{g6} or 11...\textit{f6} with good counterplay for Black) 10...\textit{f5} 11.\textit{d1} \textit{d8} 12.\textit{g5} \textit{xd1}+ 13.\textit{xd1} \textit{b1} 14.\textit{xb1} \textit{xb1} 15.a3 with approximate equality.
B21) 10.\textbf{Qc5}?! \textbf{Nd7} 11.\textbf{Qxc7} \textbf{Qc2}, and for the pawn on c7, we win the more valuable one on b2;

B22) 10.\textbf{Qb5+} \textbf{Nc6} 11.\textbf{h3} Bad is 11.\textbf{xb7?}, after which 11...\textbf{b8} 12.\textbf{a6} leads to a simple but attractive tactic: 12...\textbf{xc3}+! 13.bxc3 \textbf{xb1}+ 14.\textbf{d2} (or 14.\textbf{xb1} \textbf{xb1}+ 15.\textbf{d2} \textbf{d1#}) 14...\textbf{xa1} and White suffers large material losses. 11...\textbf{d7} 12.\textbf{d3} \textbf{xd3} 13.\textbf{e5} 14.\textbf{e2} 14.\textbf{c2} \textbf{d4} favours Black. 14...\textbf{c6} 15.\textbf{f4} The ending after 15.\textbf{f3} \textbf{xf3}+ 16.\textbf{xf3} \textbf{xf3} 17.gxf3 0-0-0 is probably drawn, but even so, White has doubled pawns, which means that he is slightly worse and it is easier to play Black. 15...\textbf{h6} This is the way; worse is 15...\textbf{g2} 16.\textbf{h2} \textbf{e4} 17.fxe5 \textbf{xe5} 18.\textbf{f2} \textbf{g3} 19.\textbf{f4} \textbf{xf2}+ 20.\textbf{xf2}. 16.\textbf{f3} After 16.\textbf{f2} \textbf{g6} White loses a pawn. Now, however, Black can either retreat the knight or take on f3 with knight or bishop. In all these variations, his position is slightly more pleasant.

B23) 10.\textbf{g5} \textbf{f6} 11.\textbf{f4} \textbf{xf4} 12.\textbf{xf4} \textbf{e5} One can suggest an interesting pawn sacrifice here – 12...\textbf{d7}. Of course, White is not obliged to accept it, but then we gain something compared with the variation in the game. We can say we have defended the pawn with ...\textbf{d7} and obtained the possibility of castling long one move earlier: 13.\textbf{xc7} \textbf{c8} 14.\textbf{a5} b6 15.\textbf{h3} \textbf{f5} 16.\textbf{a6} \textbf{c5} 17.\textbf{xc8} \textbf{xc8} 18.\textbf{b4} \textbf{d3}+ 19.\textbf{f1} \textbf{a6} 20.\textbf{e2} \textbf{xb2} with compensation for the sacrificed exchange. 13.\textbf{e3} \textbf{d7}. The chances are equal.

7...\textbf{xb2}
8.\textit{\textbf{\textit{d1}}}

The most popular move, but there are alternatives:

A) 8.\textit{\textbf{\textit{c4}}}

\textit{analysis diagram}

White does not hurry to move the rook away and makes an intermediate move, which forces Black to decide how to defend the f7-pawn.

8...\textit{\textbf{e6}} This is tempting: the $\textit{\textbf{c4}}$ is blocked and the queen has a path opened to f6. However, 8...0-0!? or 8...\textit{\textbf{f6}}!? are
also reasonable, with mutual chances. 9.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bd}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bb}}1 \textcolor{purple}{\textbf{Qf}}6 (this queen move is better than any bishop retreat) 10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bb}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bd}}4 11.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bf}}3 \textcolor{purple}{\textbf{Bg}}8 12.0-0 (12.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bxd}}4 \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bxd}}4 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Qf}}6 14.0-0 \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Qb}}3 15.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bd}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qb}}7 17.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qb}}5+ \textcolor{purple}{\textbf{Qf}}8 18.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Wh}}1+ 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}3+ 20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qd}}2 \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bxd}}1 21.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bb}}4+ (but not 21.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bxd}}1? \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Qd}}5+) 21...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}5 22.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}5+ \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bxc}}5 23.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bc}}5+ \textcolor{purple}{\textbf{Qg}}7 24.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bg}}5+ with perpetual check) 12...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nc}}6 (worse is 12...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bb}}6 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bd}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}7 14.g3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nc}}6 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Be}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bd}}7 16.a4 with the initiative to White) 13.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bb}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Rg}}8 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nf}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{N}}d7 12.c3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Rxg}}2 13.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bf}}2 b6 14.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Qxb}}2 Or 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Rg}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Rxg}}1+ 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nxg}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}7 with an unclear position. 14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bb}}7 15.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bb}}5 0-0-0 16.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{ag}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3+ 17.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}2 \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xf}}6 with a move repetition; B) 8.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Bb}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}6. Seemingly best. This is how the game Kolcak-Bednar, Slovakia 2003, developed: 9.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}3 \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{Wd}}6 10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nc}}4

\begin{center}
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10...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nc}}7 More promising is 10...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{ag}}4!? 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Wxg}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3+ 12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}6 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf}}7+ \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf}}7 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}4+ \textcolor{red}{\textbf{We}}6 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xa}}2, and Black’s chances are superior. 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3+ 12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Wf}}6 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}5 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}6 15.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}8 Stronger is 15...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}4 with advantage. 16.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}4 Better is 16.0-0. 16...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}4 17.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bd}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qd}}6 18.0-0 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}6 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}4 20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xa}}2 21.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bb}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qa}}5 22.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qa}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}4 23.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qfa}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qb}}5 24.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxa}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxa}}5 25.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxa}}5 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}4 26.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qa}}8+ \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}7 27.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qa}}7 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxa}}8 28.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxa}}8 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qd}}2 29.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qd}}4+? A serious blunder. The simple 29...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxf}}3+ 30.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxf}}3 and only now 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qd}}4+ gave Black every chance of winning. 30.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qh}}1 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}6 Now 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qxf}}3 fails to 31.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}5+. 31.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qh}}5+ \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qh}}6 32.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}8+, and White won.

8...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qd}}4

Another possibility is 8...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{We}}6.

9.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qe}}2 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}4

A complicated position arises after 9...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}7 10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bb}}3 (10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3+ 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}6 favours Black) 10...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}5 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}6. It is worth considering 9...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}6 10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bb}}3!? (both 10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}5 and 10.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qc}}6 are better for Black) 10...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b}}6 (10...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e}}5 is bad because of 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f}}4! \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d}}6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c}}3) 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qg}}3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{Qf}}5. The position remains complicated, and full compensation for the pawn is not obvious. The most White can hope for is to maintain the balance.

After the move in the game, White has a choice: to continue the game a pawn down with the queens on, trying to exploit
his advantage in development, or to exchange queens and regain the pawn.

10...\(\text{b3}\)

White prefers to retain the queens. After 10.\(\text{xg4}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 11.\(\text{xb1}\) \(\text{e5}\) 12.\(\text{xb7}\) he recovers the pawn, but in return, Black manages to activate his pieces; the position after 12...\(\text{d8}\) is roughly equal.

\[\text{analysis diagram}\]

10...\(\text{f6}\)

In his book, Bagirov gives the move 10...\(\text{e5?!}\) a ‘?’, but wrongly: Black is at least not worse after this. For example; 11...\(\text{c3}\) (still untried in practice is 11...\(\text{d3}\). In reply, I would suggest for Black the aggressive raid 11...\(\text{h5}\) followed by play on the kingside, or the quiet developing move 11...\(\text{c6}\), not yet settling the position of his king; then he can still castle on either side or leave his king in the centre) 11...\(\text{e6}\) White is better after 11...\(\text{xc3+?!}\) 12.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{g8}\) (clearly bad is 12...0-0? 13.\(\text{d3}\) 13.\(\text{xc7}\). A double-edged game results from 11...\(\text{g7}\) (this move has not been tried in practice) or 11...\(\text{c6}\). 12.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{xb3}\) 13.\(\text{axb3}\) \(\text{xc3}\+ 14.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{e6}\) 15.\(\text{g2}\) \(\text{f5}\) with a small advantage to Black, Le Bled-Baranowski, corr. 2003.

11.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{c6}\) 12.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{f5}\)

12...\(\text{g7?!}\) 13.\(\text{c3}\) (13...\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{e5}\) with mutual chances, Paronen-Mannermaa, corr. 1989) 13...0-0 14.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{f3}\) \(\text{d8}\) 16.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{g4}\) 17.\(\text{xg4}\) \(\text{xg4}\) 18.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{c8}\) 19.\(\text{xd8}\) \(\text{xd8}\) 20.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{c6}\) 21.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{e6}\) 22.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{d8}\) 23.\(\text{xe7}\) 24.\(\text{xe6}\) \(\text{fxe6}\) 25.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{f7}\) 26.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xe7}\) 27.\(\text{a5}\) a6 28.g4 \(\text{d5}\) 29.\(\text{xd5}\) exd5 and soon drawn, Kokorin-Taylor, corr. 2005.

13.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{e5}\) 14.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{g8}\) 15.\(\text{f4}\)
Significantly stronger is 15...d6 16.0-0 d7 (16...b8!??) 17.xb7 b8 18.a6 xc2 19.d2 (19.f3!?) 19...g6 20.b5 f8 21.d3 h6 22.c2 g4 with an unclear position, Bartsch-Rain, corr. 1997.

16.0-0 exd5 17.fxe5 e4 18.f2 b8?

It was essential to play 18...e3 19.f3 b6 20.xd5 e6 21.e4 d8 – White has the advantage, but Black is not losing by force.

19.b5 a8

Also bad is 19.d7 20.xd5 d8 21.d3 e3 22.d2 b6 23.b5 with an overwhelming advantage to White.

20.e1 g4 21.xd5 e6 22.xc6+ bxc6 23.xc6+ e7 24.e5+

More exact is 24.b1, including the rook in the attack.

24...d7 25.b5+ c8 26.a6+ d7 27.b5+ c8 28.b1?! e4
29.\textbf{b}4?!

White evidently missed his opponent’s strong \textit{zwischenzug}. He wins after 29.\texttt{a}6+ \texttt{d}7 30.\texttt{d}1+ \texttt{e}7 31.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{f}8 32.\texttt{b}4+ \texttt{g}7 33.\texttt{x}f7+! \texttt{h}8 (33...\texttt{x}f7 34.\texttt{f}6#) 34.\texttt{f}2.

29...\texttt{a}6 30.\texttt{a}4

More chances were offered by 30.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{xd}3 31.cxd3.

30...\texttt{d}5 31.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{f}3 32.\texttt{e}8+

Draw.

An interesting and important game. In the opening, White created serious problems for his opponent, with which the latter did not cope, and he fell into a lost position. Only stubborn defence and some help from the opponent enabled him to save himself. I would suggest on move ten that Black play 10...\texttt{e}5 instead of ...\texttt{f}6. However, even after the bishop retreat to f6, the position remains unclear, and, as we have seen, Black’s play can be improved.

\textbf{Game 6}
\textbf{Martin Villwock} 2260
\textbf{Sarunas Sulskis} 2573
Neustadt an der Weinstrasse 2009 (2)

1.e4 \texttt{f}6 2.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{d}5 3.e5 \texttt{d}4 4.\texttt{c}e2
4...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g4}}}!

The most energetic and strongest move.

4...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}d7} is not good because of 5.e6 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}xe6} 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}f3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}6} 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}5 with a small but stable white advantage because of the doubled pawns, Heberla-Gedminas, Warsaw 2009.

After 4...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}4}?! there is the unpleasant 5.c3:

A) Unpromising is 5...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}xc3} 6.bxc3 \textit{Translator’s Note:} The piece win 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{a}}}a4+? is known to be bad here after 6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d7 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xe4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c5 etc.] 6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}c6 7.d4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}cd7 (the assessment is not changed by 7...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e6 8.h4, Romero Holmes-Wall, Dublin 2012; and 7...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f4 e6 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{h}}}h5! 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d7 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{h}}}h3 h6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}b1 is completely bad for Black, Costa-Rawlings, corr. 2002) 8.e6 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}xe6 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}f6 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}d6 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}b3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f3 – White’s chances are clearly better, E. Sveshnikov-V.Sveshnikov, Malakov 2014;

B) 5...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c6 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xd4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xd4 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{a}}}a4+ c6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xd4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xe4 9.cxd4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}g5 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f5 11.d3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e6 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c7 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d8 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d2 e6 15.a3 a5 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}g3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}g6 17.h4 h5 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e4 with a small advantage to White, Wöstmann-Nispel, corr. 2007.

But as well as the text move, it is also worth considering 4...d3.

A) 5.cxd3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d5 6.a3 (covering b4; Black is better after 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c3?! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}b4) 6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c6 7.d4 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}b6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}g4 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}b3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d7 with good compensation for the pawn, Cmiel-Gassmann, Germany tt 2004; and if 9...e6 Black is, at a minimum, not worse.

B) 5.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f4?! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xc2 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}xc2 (on 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c3 very strong is 6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}g5! 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xf6 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}xf6 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xf4 (if 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d3, then 8...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c6 followed by \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e5 or \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d4) 8...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c6 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f3 exf6 with advantage to Black, Bakos-Paal, Fuzesabony 2001) 6...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d5 – Black is not in any way worse, and nobody has been found who is willing to play the white position.

C) 5.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}g4 (5...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xc2?! 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}xc2 favours White) 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xd3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xe5 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{b}}}b5+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{h}}}bc6 8.d4 a6 9.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}xc6+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}xc6 10.d5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e5 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}f3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}d6 (11...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{g}}}g4?!?) 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{f}}}xf3+ 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{c}}}c3 e5 with approximate equality, Stephan-Lindqvist, corr. 2007.

D) 5.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xf6 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xe2
The assessment of 4...d3 depends on the assessment of this position.

D1) 6.\(\text{N}xe2\) e\(xf6\) 7.d4 \(\text{d}6\) 8.e4 0-0 9.\(\text{c}3\) (or 9.c5 \(\text{e}7\) 10.\(\text{c}3\) f5 11.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{f}6\)) 9...\(\text{e}8\) 10.c5 \(\text{f}8\) 11.\(\text{c}3\) f5 with mutual chances;

D2) 6.\(\text{Q}xe2\) (the advantage of this move is that it forces Black to take on f6 with the g-pawn, but there is also a clear drawback, namely that the queen blocks the white bishop) 6...gxf6 7.\(\text{N}f3\) (more promising is 7.g3 \(\text{Q}d5\) 8.\(\text{b}5+\) \(\text{c}6\) with rough equality) 7...\(\text{c}6\) 8.\(\text{c}3\) (8.b3 e5 plays into Black's hands) 8...\(\text{e}6\) 9.d4 \(\text{d}7\) 10.\(\text{f}4\) 0-0-0 11.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{d}5\) 12.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{g}8\) 13.0-0 e5 – Black has seized the initiative;

D3) 6.\(\text{b}xe2\) e\(xf6\) (the statistics here are about equal, although it has not been the subject of many games; White is better after 6...gxf6?! 7.d4 e5 8.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{c}6\) 9.\(\text{f}3\)) 7.d4 \(\text{d}6\) 8.\(\text{f}3\) 0-0 9.0-0 \(\text{c}6\) 10.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{e}7\) with mutual chances, E. Sveshnikov-V. Sveshnikov, Paris 2014. This set-up is the best for Black and his next few moves are very simple: ...\(\text{e}6\), ...c7-c6, ...\(\text{d}7\), ...\(\text{f}e\)8, ...\(\text{ad}8\).

5.f4

The correct decision: this is the best way to defend the pawn on e5.

Black does not experience any problems at all after 5.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}6\).
analysis diagram

A) 6.c3 d3 7.\textit{\texttt{f}}f4 (the most exact; 7.\textit{\texttt{e}}d4 is dubious because of 7...\textit{\texttt{g}}xe5 8.\textit{\texttt{x}}xe5 \textit{\texttt{xe}}5 9.f4 \textit{\texttt{g}}6 10.\textit{\texttt{f}}3 e5 with a large advantage to Black, Milesi-Andrieu, Saint Affrique 2005) 7...\textit{\texttt{g}}xe5 8.\textit{\texttt{x}}xe5 \textit{\texttt{xe}}5 9.\textit{\texttt{a}}4+ c6 10.\textit{\texttt{e}}4 \textit{\texttt{d}}7 11.\textit{\texttt{x}}d3 \textit{g}6 with a somewhat better position for Black.

B) 6.h3 \textit{\texttt{g}}xe5 7.\textit{\texttt{x}}d4 \textit{\texttt{xd}}4 (even stronger is 7...\textit{\texttt{d}}5!) 8.\textit{\texttt{x}}e5 \textit{\texttt{d}}5 9.\textit{\texttt{c}}4 e5 with mutual chances, E. Sveshnikov-V. Sveshnikov, Riga 2014.

C) 6.d3 \textit{\texttt{g}}xe5 7.\textit{\texttt{x}}d4 (after 7.\textit{\texttt{x}}e5 \textit{\texttt{xe}}5 Black simply has an extra pawn) 7...\textit{\texttt{xf}}3+ (also possible is 7...\textit{\texttt{xd}}4 8.\textit{\texttt{x}}e5 \textit{\texttt{d}}5 9.\textit{\texttt{c}}4 e5 – it is also worth considering 9...\textit{\texttt{f}}5, removing the knight from a possible attack by the pawn from c3 and retaining a wide choice of plans: ...\textit{\texttt{g}}7-\textit{\texttt{g}}6, ...\textit{\texttt{e}}7-\textit{\texttt{e}}5 or ...\textit{\texttt{e}}7-\textit{\texttt{e}}6 – 10.c3 \textit{\texttt{c}}6 with a roughly equal position) 8.\textit{\texttt{xf}}3 e5 9.\textit{\texttt{e}}2 \textit{\texttt{d}}6 10.0-0-0-0 11.\textit{\texttt{e}}1 \textit{\texttt{e}}8 12.\textit{\texttt{d}}2 \textit{\texttt{f}}5 with a somewhat better position for Black on account of his extra space, Tran Quoc Dung-Nguyen Thai Binh, Vietnam 1999.
5...\textit{c6}

Another possibility is 5...c5:

A) 6.\textit{g3} \textit{c6} 7.\textit{g4}!? (the assessment is not changed by 7.\textit{f3} g6 8.\textit{c4} \textit{g7} 7...g6 8.\textit{e4} \textit{g7} (or 8...\textit{f5} 9.\textit{g3} \textit{c8}) 9.\textit{xc5} \textit{c7} 10.\textit{e2} h5 with an unclear position.

B) If 6.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} 7.h3 (if 7.\textit{g3} we transpose into the lines with 6.h3 and 6.\textit{g3}) A variation with independent significance is 6...e6 7.\textit{g3} (or 7.h3 \textit{h6} 8.\textit{g3} \textit{e7} 9.\textit{b5+} \textit{d7} 10.\textit{xd7+} \textit{xd7}=) 7...\textit{e7} with approximate equality, Katkowski-Malkowski, Mazowiec 2006.

C) 6.h3 \textit{h6} 7.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} (also interesting is 7...\textit{d5} 8.\textit{g3} \textit{f5} 9.\textit{xf5} \textit{xf5} 10.\textit{d3} with mutual chances, Sireta-Lageyre, corr. 1993) 8.g4 (if 8.\textit{g3} \textit{f5} 9.\textit{xf5} \textit{xf5} 10.\textit{b5} \textit{b6} only Black can stand better) 8...\textit{f6} (it would be interesting to see a practical test of 8...\textit{f5}?) 9.\textit{g2} (on 9.\textit{g3} a good reply is 9...\textit{fxe5} 10.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 11.\textit{fxe5} \textit{f7} or 11...\textit{e6}) 9...\textit{f7} 10.d3 \textit{fxe5} (or 10...\textit{g6}?) 11.\textit{xe5} \textit{fxe5} 12.\textit{fxe5} g6 13.0-0 \textit{g7} with sufficient counterplay for Black.

6.\textit{f3}

Let us look at some alternatives.

A) 6.h3 \textit{h6} 7.\textit{f3} d3 8.\textit{c3} (Black is favoured by 8.\textit{g3}?! \textit{f5} 9.\textit{xf5} \textit{xf5}; on 8.cxd3 both 8...\textit{e6} and 8...\textit{e6} are good) 8...\textit{b4} 9.cxd3 \textit{xd3}+ 10.\textit{xd3} \textit{xd3} 11.\textit{e2} \textit{xe2}+ 12.\textit{xe2} \textit{d7} 13.g4 \textit{e6} – the two bishops and half-open d-file promise Black the better game.

B) 6.\textit{g3} \textit{d5} (6...\textit{f6}!? with the possible variation 7.h3 \textit{h6} 8.\textit{f3} \textit{fxe5} 9.\textit{fxe5} \textit{f5} 10.\textit{xf5} \textit{xf5} 11.\textit{c4} d3 – with mutual chances) 7.\textit{f3} g5! 8.\textit{xg5} \textit{h6}
9.e6?! (better is 9.c4 dxc3 10.bxc3 $\mathcal{N}$xg5 11.fxg5 $\mathcal{W}$xe5+ 12.$\mathcal{W}$e2 $\mathcal{W}$xg5 with a dynamic balance) 9...$\mathcal{N}$xe6 10.$\mathcal{N}$xe6 $\mathcal{W}$xe6+ 11.$\mathcal{W}$e2 (Black has a powerful position after 11.$\mathcal{N}$e2 d3 12.cxd3 0-0-0 13.0-0 $\mathcal{H}$g8) 11...$\mathcal{B}$xf4 12.$\mathcal{W}$xe6 $\mathcal{B}$xg3+ 13.hxg3 fxe6 with advantage to Black, Saathoff-Hofer, Mittelfranken 2011.

6...f6 7.h3

Black is better after 7.exf6 exf6, when the pawn on f4 does nothing for White’s position and only prevents the normal development of his pieces.

7...$\mathcal{N}$h6 8.c3

It would be worth testing 8.b3, e.g. 8...fxe5 9.fxe5 $\mathcal{Q}$f5 10.g4 d3 11.gxf5 dxc2 (or 11...dxe2 12.$\mathcal{W}$xe2 $\mathcal{B}$xf5 with chances for both sides) 12.$\mathcal{W}$xe2 $\mathcal{Q}$b4 13.$\mathcal{W}$c3 $\mathcal{Q}$d3+ 14.$\mathcal{Q}$d1 $\mathcal{Q}$f2+ 15.$\mathcal{Q}$e1 (15.$\mathcal{Q}$c2? $\mathcal{Q}$xf5+ loses) 15...$\mathcal{Q}$d3+, and suddenly, it all ends in perpetual check.

8...fxe5 9.fxe5 e6

Worse is 9...d3 because of 10.$\mathcal{Q}$ed4 $\mathcal{W}$d5 11.$\mathcal{Q}$xd3 $\mathcal{Q}$xe5 12.$\mathcal{Q}$e2 with advantage to White, Tal-Böhm, Wijk aan Zee 1976; and even stronger is 12.$\mathcal{Q}$c2!.

10.$\mathcal{Q}$g3

White has also tried 10.$\mathcal{Q}$exd4 $\mathcal{Q}$xd4 11.$\mathcal{Q}$xd4?! (better is 11.cxd4 $\mathcal{Q}$f5 with unclear play) 11...$\mathcal{W}$h4+ 12.$\mathcal{Q}$e2 $\mathcal{W}$e4+ 13.$\mathcal{Q}$f2 $\mathcal{Q}$c5 – Black has the initiative, Martorelli-Braga, Chianciano ch-ITA 1988.

10...$\mathcal{Q}$e5 11.b4 $\mathcal{B}$b6 12.b5
12...\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{xe5}\)

A dubious piece sacrifice. Correct was 12...\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{e7}\) with a good game for Black.

13.\(\text{\texttt{\textdagger}}\text{xe5}\) 0-0 14.\(\text{\texttt{\textg}}\text{g4}\)

The wrong square! After 14.\(\text{\texttt{\textg}}\text{f3}\) dxc3 15.\(\text{\texttt{\textg}}\text{e4}!\)? (of course, not 15.dxc3 because of 15...\(\text{\texttt{\textf}}}\text{f2}+) 15...\(\text{\texttt{\textf}}}\text{d2}+ 16.\text{\texttt{\textd}}}\text{xd2} White’s pieces are active, his king is not threatened at all and Black’s two pawns are insufficient compensation for the piece.

14...\(\text{\texttt{\textf}}}\text{f5}\)

A complicated battle ensues after 14...\(\text{\texttt{\textf}}}\text{g4} 15.\text{\texttt{\textd}}}\text{g4} dxc3.

15.\(\text{\texttt{\textf}}}\text{xf5} \text{exf5} 16.\text{\texttt{\textc}}}\text{c4}+?!\)

After this inaccuracy, the advantage again swings to Black. Correct was 16.\(\text{\texttt{\textb}}}\text{b3}+ \text{\texttt{\texth}}}\text{h8} 17.\text{\texttt{\texth}}}\text{h2} \text{\texttt{\texte}}}\text{e8}+ 18.\text{\texttt{\textd}}}\text{d1} dxc3 with an unclear position.

16...\(\text{\texttt{\texth}}}\text{h8}\)
17.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}2}}

White defends against the possible check on h4, but it was necessary to close the e-file in advance: 17.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{e}5}} \text{dxc3} 18.dxc3 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}4+}} 19.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{d}2}} \text{\texttt{d}8+} 20.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{d}3}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}4+}} 21.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{c}2}} \text{\texttt{xe5}} 22.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{g}5}} \text{\texttt{f}8} 23.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}1}} with chances of equalizing.

17...\texttt{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}8+}}} 18.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{f}1}} \texttt{dxc3}

After these simple moves, White’s position collapses.

19.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}4}} \texttt{\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}d}4}} 20.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}5}}

Hoping for 20...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{q}xg5}}? 21.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xd}4}}.

20...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}6}} 21.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}3}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}6}}

Stronger was 21...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}5}}, attacking the knight.

22.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}4}}

Things are also bad for White even after the most tenacious line 22.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}1}} c2 23.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc}2}} \texttt{hxg5}.

22...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}6}}

But not 22...hxg5?? 23.hxg5+.

23.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}1}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}2}} 24.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xe}6}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xe}6}} 25.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xf}2}}
25...hxg5

Now that the light-squared bishops have been exchanged, it is possible to take the piece, without fearing the opening of the h-file.

26.hxg5+ Kg8 27.Qh3?

Other moves also lose, but not so quickly.

27...Qe2+ 0-1

**Conclusion:** after the interesting move 4.Nce2 Black has the strong response 4...g4!. But it is also possible to play more simply with 4...d3, and in both cases we reach tense positions with chances for both sides.
Chapter 2

1.e4  \( \textsf{\textit{N}} \textsf{f6} \) 2.\( \textsf{\textit{N}} \textsf{c3} \) d5 3.exd5

We continue our discussion of the Scandinavian system, begun in the first chapter. The exchange on d5 is often chosen by amateur players, when faced with Alekhine’s Defence. Naturally, Black regains the pawn with 3...\( \textsf{\textit{N}} \textsf{xd5} \). If White exchanges the knights as well, then the initiative passes to Black: the queen is usually very strong in the centre if it cannot be disturbed by the enemy’s minor pieces. There is also no danger for Black in the move 4.d4 – after the exchange on c3, he has easy play. The main position of the variation arises after 4.\( \textsf{\textit{c4}} \) \( \textsf{\textit{b6}} \) 5.\( \textsf{\textit{b3}} \) \( \textsf{\textit{c6}} \); we will study the correct set-up for Black, on the basis of the games of Lev Alburt.

Game 7

Vassily Smyslov 2550
Rafael Vaganian 2590
Moscow 1987

1.e4  \( \textsf{\textit{N}} \textsf{f6} \) 2.\( \textsf{\textit{c3}} \) d5 3.exd5

A completely harmless move, after which White has to show accuracy, so as not to end up standing worse.

4.d4 is also played, after which Black has very simple play: he exchanges on c3 and arranges his pieces according to the following scheme – ...\( g7-g6 \), ...\( g7 \), ...0-0, ...c7-c5, attacking the centre. Let us look at this line in more detail.

4...\( \textsf{\textit{xc3}} \) 5.\( \textsf{\textit{bxc3}} \) \( g6 \) 6.\( f3 \)

A) 6.\( \textsf{\textit{d3}} \) \( g7 \) 7.\( e2 \) 0-0 8.0-0 c5 (8...e5!? 9.e3 cxd4 10.cxd4 \( c6 \) 11.c3 e5 with rough equality, Schöne-Gurieli, Bad Wiessee 1999.

B) 6.\( \textsf{\textit{c4}} \) \( g7 \) 7.\( f3 \) 0-0 8.e2 c5 9.h4 cxd4 (stronger is 9...h5!, cutting off the possible white attack at the roots) 10.h5 \( f5 \) 11.hxg6 \( xg6 \) 12.d3 \( d7 \) 13.cxd4 \( c8 \) 14.\( h3 \) with a complicated position, Thorhallsson-Krasenkow, Copenhagen 2007.
6...\textit{Ng7}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{Analysis diagram}

A) 7.\textit{Be2} 0-0 8.0-0 \textit{c5} 9.\textit{Bd3} \textit{c7}

9...\textit{Nd7}?! 10.\textit{Bf6} 11.\textit{h6} \textit{Be4} 12.\textit{Be2} \textit{Nxc3} 13.\textit{Ng7} \textit{Be2}+ 14.\textit{Bxe2} \textit{Bxg7} 15.\textit{e5}+ f6 16.\textit{Bxc5} b6 17.\textit{Bb4} \textit{Bd6} with the better position for Black, Blagonadezhnaya-Erensko- Barlo, Naumburg 2002. 10.\textit{Bd2} \textit{c6} 11.\textit{h6} \textit{g4} 12.\textit{xg7} \textit{Be7} 13.\textit{d5} 13.h3 \textit{Bxf3} 14.\textit{Bf3} cxd4 15.cxd4 \textit{Bd8} 16.c3 \textit{Bd6} – the position is approximately equal, but it is easier to play for Black, and play is for two results (a draw or a win for Black), Hautajarvi-Krivoshey, Internet 2004.

13...\textit{Bd8} 14.\textit{Bc5}?! \textit{Bxf3} Even stronger is 14...\textit{Be5}. 15.\textit{Bxf3} \textit{Bxe5} with the better chances for Black, Schulze-Majer, Darmstadt 1995.

B) 7.\textit{Bf4} 0-0 8.\textit{Be5} 8.\textit{Bd2} \textit{c5} 9.\textit{e4}?! (better is 9.\textit{Be2}, but even then, after 9...c6 Black’s chances are rather better) 9...\textit{c6} 10.\textit{h6} cxd4 11.\textit{Bxg7} \textit{Bxg7} 12.\textit{Bxd4} \textit{Bc5} 13.\textit{Bd3} \textit{e5} 14.\textit{Bf3} \textit{Bf7} with advantage to Black, San Emeterio- Garza Marco, Burgos ch-ESP op 2003. 8...\textit{c5} Even stronger is 8...\textit{xe5} 9.\textit{xe5} \textit{d7} with the idea, after the knight retreats, of playing ...e7-e5 or ...c7-c5 with the better position for Black. 9.\textit{Bxg7} \textit{Bxg7} 10.\textit{Bd2} \textit{d6} 11.\textit{dxc5}?! \textit{Bxd2}+ 12.\textit{Bxd2} \textit{Be6} 13.\textit{Bb3} \textit{Bc8} 14.\textit{Bd4} \textit{Bd7} 15.\textit{Be1} \textit{e5} 16.\textit{Bb3} \textit{a5} – Black has the initiative, Kholmov-Alburt, Baku ch-URS 1972.

C) 7.\textit{e4} 0-0 8.0-0 \textit{c5} and now:
analysis diagram

C1) 9...b1 c7 10.e2 c6 11.a3 cxd4 12.cxd4 f5 13.d3 xd3 14.xd3 fd8 15.c3 ac8 with the better position for Black, Obando-Bendig, corr. 2006;

C2) 9.g5 c6 10.dxc5 c7 (10...a5!?, attacking the trebled pawns) 11.e1 (not wanting to give up the pawn on c3) 11...g4 12.e3 xf3 13.gxf3 ac8 or 13.xf3 e5 14.e4 xc5 15.d5 c6; in both cases, Black’s position is the more promising;

C3) 9.e3 c6 (9...c7 and 9...a5 also deserve consideration) 10.b1 (10.d2?! g4 11.e2 xf3 12.xf3 cxd4 13.cxd4 xd4 14.ad1 xe3 15.xe3 xc7 with an extra pawn for Black) 10.c7 11.d2 (on 11.d5 the reply 11...a5 followed by ...xc3 is unpleasant) 11...cxd4 12.cxd4 d4 13.xf7+ xf7 14.xd4 a6 – mainly thanks to his two bishops, Black’s position is somewhat better, Dempster-Arnold, corr. 1997;

C4) 9.a3 d7 and now:
analysis diagram

C41) 10.\textit{\texttt{Q}}e2 \textit{\texttt{W}}a5! (with tempo) 11.\textit{\texttt{B}}b2 \textit{\texttt{Q}}b6 12.\textit{\texttt{B}}b3 \textit{\texttt{Q}}g4 (also good is 12...\textit{\texttt{Q}}a4) 13.\textit{\texttt{d}}xc5 \textit{\texttt{W}}xc5 14.\textit{\texttt{h}}3 \textit{\texttt{Q}}xf3 15.\textit{\texttt{W}}xf3 \textit{\texttt{B}}c4 with the better chances for Black, Leite-Teixeira, Lisbon 2008;

C42) 10.\textit{\texttt{d}}xc5 \textit{\texttt{W}}c7 11.\textit{\texttt{W}}d5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}e5 12.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe5 \textit{\texttt{B}}xe5, Feist-Kunin, Germany tt 2005. Black is somewhat better: White’s extra pawn is not felt at all, whilst his doubled pawns and the poor position of his bishop at a3 are significant. In addition, Black is immediately attacking two pawns – h2 and c3, and he threatens \ldots \textit{\texttt{B}}e6;

C43) 10.\textit{\texttt{R}}e1 \textit{\texttt{Q}}a5 11.\textit{\texttt{B}}b2 \textit{\texttt{Q}}b6 12.\textit{\texttt{B}}f1 \textit{\texttt{Q}}a4 13.\textit{\texttt{W}}c1 (or 13.\textit{\texttt{B}}b1 \textit{\texttt{b}}6) 13...\textit{\texttt{Q}}e6 with advantage to Black, as was shown in the game Von Zabiensk-Rellstab, Duisburg 1948. It is also worth considering 13...\textit{\texttt{B}}g4, and only after 14.\textit{\texttt{Q}}e5 – 14...\textit{\texttt{Q}}e6 with advantage to Black.

4...\textit{\texttt{Q}}xd5

Black has obtained a very favourable version of the Scandinavian Defence, because White lacks the standard move \textit{\texttt{Q}}c3, driving the queen from the centre with tempo.

5.\textit{\texttt{W}}f3

Another toothless move, in the same spirit as the exchange on d5; now White seeks to exchange his opponent’s active queen. We will also examine two other plans: (1) White advances d2-d4; (2) White refrains from this advance.

A) 5.\textit{\texttt{d}}4 \textit{\texttt{Q}}c6
A1) Not very successful is 6.c3?! because of the immediate break 6...e5, and then: 
7.dxe5 Worse is 7.\( \text{N} \)f3 exd4 8.\( \text{N} \)xd4 \( \text{Q} \)xd4 9.\( \text{Q} \)xd4 \( \text{Q} \)xd4 10.cxd4 \( \text{e}6 \) 11.\( \text{b}5+ \) c6 12.\( \text{e}2 \) 0-0-0 with advantage to Black, Bodis-Laszlo, Hajduboszormeny 1998. 7...\( \text{Q} \)xd1+ 8.\( \text{K} \)xd1 \( \text{N} \)xe5 9.\( \text{B} \)f4 \( \text{B} \)d6 10.\( \text{Q} \)xe5 \( \text{Q} \)xe5 11.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 12.\( \text{b}5+ \) c6 13.\( \text{e}1+ \) \( \text{e}6 \) 14.\( \text{d}3 \) 0-0-0 15.\( \text{c}2 \) h6 – Black’s position is the more pleasant, Mezei-Kasa, Szechenyi 2003;

A2) 6.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 7.\( \text{e}3 \) 0-0-0 8.\( \text{c}4 \) White is worse after 8.\( \text{c}2 \) c5 9.dxe5 \( \text{e}6 \), Herden-Brendel, Rhein Main 1998. It is worth considering 8.a3, taking control of the square b4. 8...\( \text{a}5+ \) 9.\( \text{d}2 \) Worse is 9.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{b}6 \) 10.\( \text{b}3 \) (he loses after 10.\( \text{c}3 \) e5, Van de Beld-Meijer, Hengelo jr 1994) 10...\( \text{x}d4 \) 11.\( \text{x}d4 \) \( \text{x}d4 \) with an extra pawn for Black, Da Silva Fo-Suardi, Torre de Pedra 2012. 9.\( \text{x}d2 \) 10.\( \text{x}d2 \) \( \text{x}d4 \) 11.\( \text{x}d4 \) e5 12.\( \text{xe}5 \) \( \text{xd}4 \), and Black’s chances are somewhat better;

A3) 6.\( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{g}4 \)

Both 6...\( \text{f}5 \) and 6...e5 are also worth considering:
A31) 7.\textit{\text{e}3} 0-0-0 8.\textit{\text{e}2} The move 8.c3 in this position is a signal for Black, and there follows 8...e5!. Then a possible continuation is: 9.dxe5 \textit{\text{e}4} 10.\textit{\text{e}2}?! (White walks into a lovely knight jump, but even after the superior 10.\textit{\text{d}2} \textit{\text{e}3}+ 11.fxe3 \textit{\text{x}d}1 12.\textit{\text{x}d}1 \textit{\text{x}e}5 Black has the advantage) 10...\textit{\text{b}4}!, and Black soon won, Molina Heredia-Cortijo Manso, corr. 2007. 8...e5 9.0-0 9.c3 exd4 10.cxd4 \textit{\text{a}5}+ 11.\textit{\text{f}1} \textit{\text{c}5} 12.\textit{\text{d}2} \textit{\text{b}4} with advantage to Black, Kovacs-Mate, Budapest 1993; 9.dxe5 \textit{\text{x}f}3 10.gxf3 (nothing much changes after 10.\textit{\text{x}f}3 \textit{\text{a}5}+ 11.\textit{\text{d}2} \textit{\text{e}5}+) 10...\textit{\text{a}5}+ 11.\textit{\text{d}2} \textit{\text{e}5} with a clear advantage to Black, Ilyin Zhenevsky-Réti, Moscow 1925. 9...\textit{\text{x}d}4 10.\textit{\text{x}d}4 \textit{\text{x}e}2 11.\textit{\text{x}e}2 \textit{\text{c}4}! 12.\textit{\text{b}3} 12.\textit{\text{e}1}?! \textit{\text{x}c}2 with an extra pawn, Broersen-Tan, Hengelo jr 2000; 12.\textit{\text{d}2} \textit{\text{d}6} 13.\textit{\text{b}3} \textit{\text{h}4} 14.g3 \textit{\text{h}3} with the initiative, Yi Yuan-V. Smirnov, Sydney 2009. 12.\textit{\text{x}d}1 13.\textit{\text{b}c}4 \textit{\text{x}a}1 14.\textit{\text{x}a}1 \textit{\text{b}4} Even stronger is 14.\textit{\text{a}3} followed by \textit{\text{d}8}. 15.c3 \textit{\text{c}2} 16.d1 \textit{\text{e}7} 17.d4 f6 18.g3 c5 19.f5 \textit{\text{f}8} 20.c3 \textit{\text{a}3} 21.f4 \textit{\text{xc}4} with an extra pawn for Black, Mostertman-Wohl, Dieren 2009;

A32) 7.c4
Here we recommend the untried 7...\textit{f5}!?. The threat is to exchange on f3, damaging the white kingside pawn structure, so \textbf{8.e2} is practically forced. 8...0-0-0 The two moves with the e-pawn are also worth testing – 8...e6!? and 8...e5!?.

9.0-0 9.e3 \textit{xf3} 10.xf3 \textit{xd4} 11.g4 (11.xd4 \textit{e6}+! – but not 11...c5?? 12.g4 – 12.e2 c5, regaining the piece and retaining an extra pawn) 11...c2+ 12.xc2 \textit{g4} 13.0-0 e6, and White’s compensation for the pawn is clearly insufficient. And if he tries to regain the pawn with 14.xa7, then after 14...b6 15.a4 \textit{f5} 16.xf5 exf5 17.a5 \textit{b7} 18.axb6 cxb6 White starts to have problems with the position of the bishop on a7. 9...\textbf{e6} We have reached a position similar to the Scandinavian, but in a favourable version for Black. On the other hand, taking on d4 with 9...\textit{xd4} 10.xd4 \textit{xe2} 11.xe2 \textit{xd4} 12.e3 with an unclear position: Black has an extra pawn, but his kingside is clearly undeveloped;

A33) \textbf{7.e3 e5}
8...exd4 9.0-0 9...0-0-0 10.cxd4 10...Nxd4 11.Qxe2 Nxd4 12.cxd4 Bxd6 (but not 12...Qxd4 13.g5 followed by Qad1 with advantage to White) 13.e3 f5 (also good is 13...Rhe8, Jelica-Melamed, Nova Gorica EU tt (w) 1999). 10.d6 11.e3 Bb8 with somewhat better chances for Black, Alburt-Vasiukov, Kharkov ch-URS 1967;

A34) 7.e2
analysis diagram

7...0-0-0 8.0-0 Black is favoured by 8.c3 e5 9.h3 $\mathcal{h}5$ 10.0-0 exd4 11.cxd4 $\mathcal{d}6$; 8.c4 $\mathcal{w}e4$ 9.$\mathcal{xe}3$ (9.0-0 $\mathcal{xd}4$ 10.$\mathcal{xd}4$ $\mathcal{xe}2$ 11.$\mathcal{w}xe2$ $\mathcal{xd}4$ with an extra pawn for Black; White has some small compensation, but not enough, Papaioannou-Stefanopoulos, Patras 2000) 9...e5 10.d5 $\mathcal{xf}3$ 11.$\mathcal{xf}3$ (bad is 11.$\mathcal{xf}3$ $\mathcal{xc}4$) 11...$\mathcal{h}4$ 12.0-0 $\mathcal{d}4$ 13.$\mathcal{h}1$ $\mathcal{b}8$ 14.$\mathcal{g}1$ h6 – Black’s chances are superior. 8...$\mathcal{xd}4$ 9.$\mathcal{xd}4$ $\mathcal{xe}2$ 10.$\mathcal{xe}2$ $\mathcal{xd}4$ 11.$\mathcal{e}3$ $\mathcal{d}3$ 12.$\mathcal{xd}3$ Black is also better after 12.$\mathcal{h}5$ $\mathcal{d}5$ 13.$\mathcal{g}4+$ e6 14.$\mathcal{e}3$ $\mathcal{d}6$ 15.$\mathcal{g}3$ h5, Saad-Ferdinand, corr. 2010. 12...$\mathcal{xd}3$ with an extra pawn, Kampfhenkel-Dümmke, Hamburg 2005.

B) 5.$\mathcal{f}3$ $\mathcal{c}6$ 6.$\mathcal{e}2$ e5
analysis diagram

7.d3

On 7.0-0 an unpleasant reply is 7...e4 (Black is also somewhat better after 7...e7, Tokranov-V.Sveshnikov, Riga 2011) 8.c4 (on 8.e1, the strongest reply is 8...f5, preparing ...0-0-0, with an excellent position for Black) 8...f5 9.e1 (worse is 9.h4 f6 10.g3 h3 11.e1 c5 12.d4 xd4 13.f3 0-0-0 14.g4+ b8, and White resigned in Sassmannshausen-Hild, Wetzlar 2009) 9.d6 followed by ...0-0, and Black is better. 7.e7 Also good is 7.c5. 8.0-0 9.e1 9.e3 f5 is in Black’s favour, Neuhäuser-Leconte, France tt 2003. 9.f5 with a somewhat better position for Black.

5...e6

Also good is 5..c6 6.exd5 exd5 7.d4 transposing to an Exchange Variation of the Caro-Kann, without queens and a pair of knights. The game is equal.

6.exd5 exd5

7.f3

After 7.d4 we reach a symmetrical position, which is fine for Black – complete symmetry after seven moves cannot be a bad thing. Black intends ...d6, ...0-0, ...c6 etc.

7.f5

7.d6 is also good.

8.d3 c6

It was worth considering 8..c5!? and only then ...c6.

9.f4 d7
In the absence of queens, Black wants his king in the centre.

10.0-0-0

In principle, White could follow his opponent’s example – 10.\textit{d2}.

10...\textit{e8}

Black is first to take control of the open file. Now the e2-square is denied to the bishop, so White fianchettoes.

11.g3 \textit{d6} 12.\textit{xd6}

Maybe it was better to retreat – 12.\textit{e3}.

12...\textit{xd6}

Bringing the king further into the centre.

13.\textit{g2} \textit{e2}

Thus, after the exchange of one bishop and the other’s removal to g2, Black gets to penetrate via e2. Nothing terrible has happened to White, but Black has already made a certain amount of progress.

14.\textit{d2}

More accurate was 14.\textit{hfl}, and on 14...\textit{he8} – 15.\textit{de1}; if now Black does not want to concede the e-file, he has to exchange both rooks.

14...\textit{he8} 15.\textit{xe2} \textit{xe2} 16.\textit{f1} a5

Seizing space on the kingside.

17.\textit{d1}?

A mistake, which allows Black to land a tactical blow. It was essential to drive the rook off the second rank in a different way: 17.\textit{g1} \textit{e8} and 18.\textit{d2} followed by \textit{e1}. 
17...\texttt{xd}3!

Of course, Black exploits his opponent’s oversight.

**18.cxd3** \texttt{xb}2

Black already has two pawns and the a2-pawn is dropping.

**19.a3** \texttt{a}2 20.\texttt{c}1 \texttt{e}5

A mistake in return. Simply taking the pawn gave winning chances – 20...\texttt{xa}3, and on 21.d4 Black advances his pawns – 21...b5.

**21.\texttt{b}1** \texttt{xa}3 22.\texttt{xe}5 \texttt{xe}5 23.\texttt{e}1+ \texttt{d}6

Nothing is given by 23...\texttt{d}4 24.\texttt{e}7=.

24.\texttt{f}1

Bringing the bishop to the queenside. It was worth considering 24.\texttt{e}8!? Now not 24...b5 because of 25.\texttt{d}8+, taking the pawn on d5, whilst after 24...c6 both 25.d4 and 25.\texttt{f}8 are possible, with equality. If, however, 24...\texttt{xd}3 25.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{a}3 26.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{d}3 27.\texttt{c}2 the game ends with a repetition of moves.

24...b5

Black has very simple play.

25.\texttt{b}2 \texttt{b}4 26.d4

Simpler was 26.\texttt{e}3, and on 26...c5 – 27.d4 \texttt{xe}3 28.dxc5+ \texttt{xc}5 29.fxe3 d4 30.e4 a4 31.\texttt{d}3 with equality.

26...\texttt{f}3 27.\texttt{e}2 a4 28.\texttt{d}2 g5 29.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{b}3+
Black has few chances after 29...a3+ 30.\textit{\textbf{K}}a2.

30.\textit{\textbf{K}}c1

It was more solid to keep the king on the second rank – 30.\textit{\textbf{K}}c2.

30...a3 31.\textit{\textbf{K}}e2

Now he can’t play 31.\textit{\textbf{K}}c2 \textit{\textbf{R}}b2+ 32.\textit{\textbf{K}}c1 \textit{\textbf{R}}xd2 33.\textit{\textbf{K}}xd2 a2, and Black wins.

31...\textit{\textbf{R}}f3 32.\textit{\textbf{R}}c6+ \textit{\textbf{R}}e7 33.\textit{\textbf{R}}xe7+

It is a shame to lose the c-pawn, of course, but the a- and b-pawns are far advanced, so Black retains winning chances.

33...\textit{\textbf{R}}e6 34.\textit{\textbf{R}}e2 b3

Or 34...\textit{\textbf{R}}f6!? 35.\textit{\textbf{K}}b1 (bad is 35.\textit{\textbf{R}}c6+ \textit{\textbf{K}}f5) 35...b3.

35.\textit{\textbf{R}}e2+ \textit{\textbf{R}}d6 36.\textit{\textbf{R}}b1

An inaccuracy. Correct was 36.\textit{\textbf{R}}e3 a2 37.\textit{\textbf{R}}b2 \textit{\textbf{R}}xf2+ 38.\textit{\textbf{R}}e2 \textit{\textbf{R}}f3 39.\textit{\textbf{R}}e1! h5 40.\textit{\textbf{R}}f1. However, it is hard to criticise White for this error – his position is inferior and it is difficult to calculate all the variations accurately at the board.

36...\textit{\textbf{R}}c3!

This is the problem – the threat is 37...a2+ followed by ...\textit{\textbf{R}}c1(+). Therefore White’s next move is forced.

37.\textit{\textbf{R}}e1 \textit{\textbf{R}}c2 38.\textit{\textbf{R}}f1

The difference in activity of the rooks tells.

38...\textit{\textbf{R}}c3 39.\textit{\textbf{R}}e1 \textit{\textbf{R}}c2 40.\textit{\textbf{R}}f1 h5 41.\textit{\textbf{R}}d3
He also loses after 41.h4 g4 42.\( \text{Ka1} \) \( \text{Kc7} \), advancing the king.

41...\( \text{Rd2} \) 42.\( \text{Bf5} \) \( \text{Rxd4} \)

Taking a third pawn and opening the way for the king. The rest is simple. Black won on move 53.

**Conclusion:** Taking on d5 is completely harmless for Black. Of course, the position remains only equal, but already, White should display a certain accuracy. The move 3.d4 is again not dangerous for Black – after the exchange on c3 he has fully adequate, and, what is more important, simple play: he fianchettoes his king’s bishop, castles and then attacks the enemy centre with ...c7-c5.
1.e4 \( \text{d}f6 \) 2.e3 \( \text{d}5 \) 3.exd5 \( \text{\textit{x}} \text{d}5 \) 4.e4 \( \text{\textit{b}} \text{b}6 \) 5.\( \text{\textit{b}} \text{b}3 \) \( \text{\textit{c}} \text{c}6 \)

6.\( \text{\textit{f}} \text{f}3 \)

This is the most natural move and is met most. Let us also look at some alternatives:

A) 6.\( \text{\textit{g}} \text{e}2 \) \( \text{\textit{f}} \text{f}5 \) Also possible is 6...e5 7.0-0 \( \text{\textit{c}} \text{e}7 \) (one game between amateurs saw 7...\( \text{d}6 \) 8.d3 0-0 9.\( \text{\textit{c}} \text{c}3 \), and here it was necessary to exchange off the \( \text{\textit{b}}3 \) with 9...\( \text{a}5 \), equalising) 8.d3 0-0 or 8.f4 exf4 9.\( \text{\textit{xf}}4 \) 0-0 with mutual chances.

7.0-0 \( \text{e}6 \)
analysis diagram

Black has chosen a very solid and reliable set-up. 8.d4 8.d3 Be7 (also possible is 8...d6 9.g3 g6 10.ce4 e7=) 9.gg3 gg6 10.ce3 (on 10.f4 with the idea of f4-f5, a good reply is 10..dd4, preventing the advance, when Black’s position is slightly better) 10..dd4 11.ce2 xe2+ (it is worth considering 11.xb3 12.axb3 d5, and only White can stand worse) 12.xe2 with approximate equality, Junghanel-Schipper, corr. 1990. 8..e7 9.a4 White wants to free the path of the c-pawn, but it is hardly worth offering to exchange off the passive knight on b6. Simplifications would follow from 9.d5 exd5 10.xd5 xd5 11.xd5 with equality. 9..0-0 10.xb6 axb6 11.c3 d6 12.f4 xf4 13.xf4 g5, Derevianchenko-Bortnik, Ukraine 2009; Black has no problems at all;

B) 6.f3 White is attacking f7, so... 6..e6 7.ge2 7.g3 has also been played, not allowing Black to develop his king’s bishop and castle. Then Black replies 7..d4 followed by ..f5, driving away the queen. For example: 8.f3 (nor does Black have any problems after 8.ge2 f5 9.g4 d7 10.d4 h4 (it is worth considering 10..c6 followed by d7, retaining queens on the board for the time being) 11.xh4 xh4 12.0-0 c6 13.f3 e7 14.e3 0-0-0= Schuster-Schmelzer, Würzburg 1989) 8..f5 9.e5 d7 10.0-0 e7 11.d4 c6 with a good position for Black, Parmenzini-Soppe, Cordoba 2004.

7.e7 8.0-0 0-0
9.d3 White has also tried 9.d4 with a pawn sacrifice: 9...\(\text{Nxd4}\) 10.\(\text{Nxd4}\) \(\text{Qxd4}\) 11.\(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{d6}\) 12.\(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{Qd6}\) 13.\(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{e7}\) 14.a4 \(\text{a5}\). White’s compensation may be sufficient for equality, but in the game Castro Rojas-Shabalov, Manila 1992, he did not manage to draw. On 9.\(\text{d1}\), with the idea of \(d2-d4\), good is 9...\(\text{e5}\) (preventing \(d2-d4\)) 10.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{d4}\) 11.\(\text{exd4}\) \(\text{exd4}\) 12.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{e6}\) 13.\(\text{xe6}\) \(\text{fxe6}\) 14.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{d5}\) 15.\(\text{f5}\) \(\text{g3}\) \(\text{d5}\) with mutual chances. 9...\(\text{a5}\) Also worth considering is 9...\(\text{e5}\)! 10.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{g6}\). 10.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{d7}\) 11.\(\text{h5}\) Black is also fine after 11.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{c6}\) 12.\(\text{h5}\) \(\text{xb3}\) 13.axb3 \(\text{d5}\), Schoch-Sutter, Switzerland tt 1993. 11...\(\text{xb3}\) 12.axb3 \(\text{c6}\) 13.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{g6}\) 14.\(\text{h6}\) \(\text{d6}\) 15.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{f5}\), and Black keeps two pieces for the rook, Livshits-Sergeev, Olomouc 2001.

6...\(\text{f5}\) 7.0-0

Another possibility is 7.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{d7}\). 7...\(\text{g6}\) 8.d3 \(\text{e6}\) 9.\(\text{e6}\) \(\text{hxg6}\) 10.\(\text{e4}\) and a draw was agreed in Rozentalis-Kengis, Poland tt 1999, but even so, retreating the bishop to \(d7\), preserving the bishop from exchange, looks better. 8.\(\text{d4}\) 8.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{f5}\) with a repetition of moves, or 8...\(\text{e5}\)! to play on; 8.0-0 \(\text{a5}\) 9.\(\text{a4}\) (9.a3 \(\text{d4}\) 10.\(\text{a2}\) \(\text{e6}\), and Black is already slightly better) 9...\(\text{xa4}\) 10.\(\text{xa4}\) \(\text{e6}\) 11.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{d4}\) 12.\(\text{xd4}\) with a repetition of moves, or 8...\(\text{e5}\) 9.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{exd4}\) 10.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{b4}\) Also possible is 10...\(\text{f6}\) 11.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 12.0-0 \(\text{e7}\) 13.\(\text{g4}\) 0-0=. 11.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 12.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{e7}\) 13.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xe7}\) 14.0-0 \(\text{e8}\) 15.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{f8}\) with an equal endgame.

7...\(\text{e6}\)
8.d4

White has also played more quietly – 8.d3 Be7 9.e3. 9.f4 0-0 10.e1 a5 11.e2 xb3 12.axb3 a6=, Wright-Clifford, corr. 1994. 9...a5 Another interesting plan involves long castling: 9...d7 10.e4 0-0-0 with a complicated position with chances for both sides, Conde Ponderoso-Jimenez, corr. 1999; or 9...0-0 followed by ...a5, ...f6, ...d5 with a roughly equal game. 10.e1 10.h3 0-0 11...d2 h6 with equality, Bobadilla Roca-Lozon Urena, Barcelona 1997. 10...xb3 11.axb3 0-0 12.d4 g6 13.de2 a6 14.f4 f5 15.h3 c6 16.d4 g6 17.xg6 hxg6 18.f4 d5 19.d2 xc3 20.xc3 c7= Da Silva-Vilagos, corr. 2003.

9...Be7 9.e1


9...a5

Also possible is 9...0-0=.

10.d5

A dubious pawn sacrifice. Better was 10.e4 0-0 11.d2 xb3 12.axb3, maintaining the balance.

10...xb3 11.axb3 d5 12.xd5 xd5 13.xd5 exd5
The pin on the bishop is not enough by itself to compensate for a whole pawn.

14. \(\text{Nd4}\)

The best chance – now Black needs to find an accurate reply.

14... \(\text{Be4}\)

And he succeeds. Not, for example, 14... \(\text{Bg6}\) because of 15. \(\text{Nb5}\) \(\text{Kd7}\) 16. \(\text{Nxc7}\) \(\text{Bb4}\) 17. \(\text{c3}\) \(\text{Bxc3}\) 18. \(\text{bxc3}\) \(\text{Re7}\) + \(\text{Kc6}\) 20. \(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{Rhc8}\) 21. \(\text{e5}\), winning the g7-pawn. Now, however, White is simply a pawn down.

15. \(\text{c4}\) \(\text{Bb4}\)

The most accurate – the bishop escapes from the pin with tempo.

16. \(\text{e2}\) 0-0 17. \(\text{d2}\) \(\text{a5}\) 18. \(\text{xb4}\) \(\text{axb4}\) 19. \(\text{xa8}\) \(\text{xa8}\) 20. \(\text{f3}\) \(\text{d3}\)

And White loses another pawn.

21. \(\text{d2}\) \(\text{dxc4}\) 22. \(\text{bxc4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 23. \(\text{e2}\) \(\text{b5}\) 24. \(\text{b3}\) \(\text{d8}\) 25. \(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xd4}\) 26. \(\text{xb5}\) \(\text{b3}\) 27. \(\text{xc7}\)

Nor is he saved by 27. \(\text{b2}\) \(\text{b4}\) 28. \(\text{f2}\) \(\text{xb5}\).

27... \(\text{d1+}\) 28. \(\text{f2}\) \(\text{h6}\) 29. \(\text{b6}\) \(\text{b2}\)
The black pawn queens first.

30.\text{b7 b1=Q} 31.\text{Rc8+ K}\text{h7} 32.\text{b8=Q Rd2+} 33.\text{Kg3 Qg6+} 34.\text{Kf4 Qf6+}

White resigned, because he will inevitably be mated.

A very good and solid set-up was demonstrated here by Alekhine expert Lev Alburt. He brought his light-squared bishop out to f5, not fearing the jump $\text{Nh4}$, and then played $\ldots \text{e7-e6}$ and $\ldots \text{Be7}$ and castled short. This game also demonstrated the typical and favourable exchange of knight for bishop by $\ldots \text{a5xb3}$. 
Chapter 3
The Vienna system
1.e4 \(\mathcal{N}\)f6 2.e5 \(\mathcal{N}\)d5 3.\(\mathcal{N}\)c3

The name ‘Vienna System’ was suggested by the fifth World Champion, Max Euwe. White refrains from further chasing of the enemy knight with pawns or pieces, and wants instead to exchange it off and exploit his lead in development. But because the black position has no weaknesses (all of his pawns are unmoved!) and the white development lead is only small, Black should not have great problems obtaining a fully satisfactory game.

Game 9
Hugo Tirard 2451
Kevin Spraggett 2580
Metz 2010 (6)

1.e4 \(\mathcal{N}\)f6 2.e5 \(\mathcal{N}\)d5 3.\(\mathcal{N}\)c3 \(\mathcal{N}\)xc3

The most principled: Black immediately doubles the white pawns.

4.bxc3

The more popular move 4.dxc3 will be dealt with later.

The advantages of the text move are that White strengthens his centre and opens the b-file for his rook. On the other hand, 4.dxc3 gives White’s pieces greater freedom.

4...d6

The move 4...d5 also looks good, with French Defence motifs, and with the queen’s bishop not yet blocked in with e6, which is naturally to Black’s benefit.
5.f4

A) 5.d4 is not good because of 5...dxe5, and White has to give up a pawn – 6.\(f3\) (White can certainly not be happy with 6.dxe5 \(\text{\textit{f6}}\) 7.\(\text{\textit{xd1}}\), and Black has a ‘free’ advantage in the ending). After 6...exd4 7.cxd4 g6 Black gradually prepares casting and obtains excellent chances to realise his extra pawn. Instead of 7.g6 more forcing play is also possible: 7.e5!? 8.d3 (8.exf5? loses to 8...b4+ 9.d2 \(\text{\textit{xd4}}\)) 8...b4+ 9.d2 \(\text{\textit{xd2}}\) 10.\(\text{\textit{xd2}}\) exd4 11.0-0 0-0 with advantage to Black;

B) Against 5.c4 a good line is 5...dxe5 6.\(\text{\textit{h5 e6}}\) 7.\(\text{\textit{xd5}}\) \(\text{\textit{d7}}\) 8.\(\text{\textit{e2}}\) \(\text{\textit{d6}}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) 0-0, Delacroix-Bedue, France tt 2000. Then ...b7-b6 and ...\(\text{\textit{b7}}\) can follow, intending a central break with the c- or e-pawn;

C) Conceding the centre is also dubious: 5.exd6 cxd6 (this recapture is better than 5...exd6) 6.d4 \(\text{\textit{c7}}\) (6...g6 followed by ...\(\text{\textit{g7}}\), ...0-0, ...\(\text{\textit{c7}}\), ...e7-e5, with similar play to that after 6...\(\text{\textit{c7}}\), is also possible) 7.d2 On 7.d3 a good line is 7.e5 8.d2 \(\text{\textit{e7}}\) 9.d5+ (or 9.d3 0-0 10.d2 f5 11.d5+ \(\text{\textit{h8}}\) 12.0-0 e4 13.c4 \(\text{\textit{d7}}\) followed by ...a6 or ...\(\text{\textit{b6}}\) – Black’s chances are superior) 9.d7! 10.d2 0-0 11.d3 \(\text{\textit{d6}}\) 12.0-0 f5 with advantage to Black.

7...e5 8.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) g6 (it is worth considering 8...\(\text{\textit{g7}}\) followed by 0-0 and ...\(\text{\textit{f7}}\)-f5).

White’s play was dubious in Mustaps-V. Sveshnikov, Riga 2013 – 9.h4?!!. Admittedly, after 9.d3 \(\text{\textit{g7}}\) 10.0-0 0-0 the position is also in Black’s favour. 9...\(\text{\textit{g4}}\) Preventing h4-h5. Also perfectly possible was 9.g7 10.h5 0-0, and Black is better. White is hardly likely to be able to organise an attack on the enemy king, and, more likely, his own king will come under attack. Black has a small advantage in development, and he has already created tension in the centre.

10.e2 \(\text{\textit{g7}}\) 11.b1 White refrains from short castling, because then he would have once and for all to abandon any hope of an attack. Therefore, he tries to play some useful developing moves. 11.e6 12.d5 \(\text{\textit{e7}}\) 13.b5+ \(\text{\textit{f8}}\)! The king feels very comfortable here too. 14.h5 c4 – Black’s chances are clearly superior;

D) Nor is 5.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) g6 dangerous for Black:

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[step=1cm,black, very thin, line width=0.05cm] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\fill[black!40] (0.5,0.5) rectangle (7.5,7.5);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{\textbf{analysis diagram}}

D1) 6.e4 \(\text{\textit{g7}}\) 7.e2 0-0 8.h3 (by not allowing the enemy bishop to \(\text{\textit{g4}}\), White fights for the centre, but this move is also rather slow) 8...\(\text{\textit{c6}}\) (even more accurate was 8...c5 including the c-pawn in the battle for the centre) 9.d4 dxe5
10.\textit{dxe5 }\textit{\texttt{a5} 11.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{c}5 12.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{b}6 13.0-0 \texttt{b}7 14.\textit{b}2 \textit{c}7 15.\textit{fe}1 \textit{ad}8}, Laxman-Polaczek, Internet 2005. Black is better, since unlike his opponent, he has no positional weaknesses;

D2) \textit{6.d4 }\textit{g7 7.d3 }\textit{f4 }\textit{c6} (also good is the immediate 7...0-0, not letting White pin the knight) 8.b5 (8.e2?! 0-0 9.h3 \textit{e}6 10.\textit{b}5 \textit{b}8 (10...\textit{dxe5}!? 11.\textit{dxe5} \textit{d}5) 11.\textit{exd}6 \textit{cxd}6 12.\textit{d}3 \texttt{a}6 13.\textit{g}3 \texttt{f}6 14.\textit{g}3 \textit{d}5 15.c4 \textit{xf}3 16.\textit{xf}3 \texttt{e}5 17.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{f}5 with a decisive advantage for Black, Muslija-Janev, Bosnjaci 2004) 8...0-0 9.e2 \textit{dxe5} 10.dxe5 \textit{d}5 11.0-0 \textit{g}4 – Black has the initiative. 7...\textit{c6} 8.\textit{exd}6 \textit{exd}6 9.0-0 10.\textit{g}5 (Black is better after 10.\textit{b}2 \texttt{e}5) 10...\textit{a}5 with a good position for Black, Hamdouchi-Bouaziz, Tunis 2001.

5...\textit{g6}

Black also has such alternatives as 5...\texttt{c}5, 5...\textit{dxe5} and 5...\textit{f}5.

\textit{6.f3 }\textit{g7 7.d4 0-0}

\textbf{8.\textit{d}3}

8.\textit{c4} \texttt{c}5 9.0-0 \textit{c}7 (aiming at the \textit{c}4; it is hard to assess the position after 9...\textit{d}5 10.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{c}4; and 9...\textit{c}6!? is also interesting) 10.\textit{e}2 (if White moves the bishop away – 10.\textit{d}3, then after 10...\texttt{c}4 11.\texttt{e}2 \textit{d}7 Black transfers his knight to \textit{d}5) 10...\textit{c}6 11.\texttt{e}6 \texttt{f}5 (11...\textit{fxe}6 12.\textit{xe}6+ \texttt{h}8 also looks very promising) 12.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{b}6 with a complicated, non-standard position, in which Black’s chances are not worse, Canal-Colle, Merano 1926.

\textbf{8...\textit{c}5 9.0-0 \textit{dxe}5 10.\textit{dxe}5}

The alternative is 10.\textit{fxe}5!? \texttt{c}6 11.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{g}4 (the interesting 11...\texttt{e}6!? has not been seen in practice) 12.\texttt{e}4 \textit{a}5:
A) 13.\textit{d}d3 \textit{ad}8 14.\textit{c}c4 cxd4 15.cxd4 \textit{e}6 (15...\textit{c}8!? 16.\textit{e}2 \textit{a}4 17.\textit{d}3 \textit{b}4! with a complicated position with mutual chances (bad is 17...\textit{d}4? 18.\textit{x}d4 \textit{x}d4 19.\textit{b}5! \textit{b}4 20.c3, Castro Rojas-Solozhenkin, Manresa 1993); B) 13.\textit{e}1 \textit{ad}8 14.\textit{d}1 (Black is also better after 14.b1 \textit{xa}2 15.\textit{a}1 \textit{c}4 16.xc6 bxc6 17.xa7 cxd4 18.cxd4 \textit{d}7 19.xd7 \textit{xd}7 Petrovski-Ravic, Belgrade 2010) 14...\textit{xa}2 Zumsande-Essing, Canarias en Red blitz 2004 – White does not have full compensation for the pawn.

10...\textit{c}6 11.\textit{e}3 \textit{b}6 12.\textit{e}1 \textit{f}5 13.\textit{d}1

A double-edged game results from 13.\textit{xf}5!? gxf5 14.\textit{d}1 \textit{c}7 15.\textit{e}2 \textit{ad}8.

13...\textit{c}8 14.\textit{h}4
White has transferred his queen to the kingside, so Black decided to play

14...f6
taking control of the square g5 and creating pressure against White’s centre.
Also possible was 14...\textit{R}d8, not fearing 15.\textit{N}g5 because of the simple 15...h6, and the knight has to go back.

15.\textit{R}fe1

He should have preserved the bishop from exchange: 15.\textit{B}c4+!? \textit{K}h8 16.\textit{R}d2.

15...\textit{B}xd3! 16.cxd3

Worse is 16.\textit{R}xd3 because of 16...\textit{f}xe5 17.\textit{f}xe5 \textit{N}xe5 18.\textit{N}xe5 \textit{B}xe5 – Black regains the exchange and keeps an extra pawn.

16...\textit{Q}e6

It made sense simply to take the pawn: 16...\textit{f}xe5 17.\textit{f}xe5 \textit{N}xe5 18.\textit{B}xe5 \textit{Q}xe5.

17.d4 cxd4 18.cxd4 \textit{R}ad8 19.\textit{c}c1

On 19.a3!? (taking control of the square b4) there could follow 19...\textit{Q}d5 20.\textit{R}c1 \textit{Q}c8 with mutual chances.

19...\textit{Q}d5

Black could have exploited the opponent’s inaccuracy with 19...\textit{b}4, attacking the pawn on a2, threatening \textit{d}d3 winning the exchange and simply intending to transfer the knight to the central square d5, so as to establish a blockade on the light squares.

20.\textit{Q}h3
Taking aim at the weak square e6 and also c8, from where the black rook may wish to control the c-file.

20...f5

Of course, Black wants to shut the enemy queen out of play.

21.Bf2 e6 22.Ng5

A provocation, intended to weaken the enemy kingside. However, this uses precious time and Black turns out to have sufficient reserves to defend his king.

22...h6 23.Nf3 Rc8

Beginning the fight for the open file.

24.Nh4 Kf7

More accurate was 24...Ne7 with the better chances.

25.Rc3 Ne7 26.Rg3

White continues to try to get at the enemy king, despite the many defenders in the black camp.

26...Rg8

An excellent manoeuvre: Black prepares at any moment to drop the bishop back to f8, defending the pawn on g6.

27.a3 Ec7

Stronger was 27...b7, freeing the square d5 for the knight.

28.Nf3
Too passive. Because of the weaknesses on d4 and a2, White’s position is clearly inferior, so he needs to seek chances on the kingside after 28.g4!?

28...\textit{b}7 29.\textit{h}4 \textit{d}5

Black has transferred his knight to its ideal square, after which White’s position becomes very difficult.

30.\textit{g}3 \textit{f}8 31.\textit{b}3 \textit{c}2 32.\textit{f}6 \textit{c}6 33.\textit{h}4 \textit{xa}2 34.\textit{h}1 \textit{c}2 35.\textit{bb}1 \textit{a}5

White has no counterplay and Black simply advances his pawns.

36.\textit{h}2 \textit{a}4 37.\textit{h}5 \textit{a}3 38.\textit{hxg}6+ \textit{xg}6 39.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}4 40.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}3 0-1

In this game, Black demonstrated a good and simple method of fighting against 3.\textit{c}3 \textit{x}c3 4.bxc3 he fianchettoes his dark-squared bishop and then attacks the white centre with ...\textit{c}7-\textit{c}5.
1.e4 ⊙f6 2.e5 ⊙d5 3.⊙c3 ⊙xc3 4.dxc3

It is clear that this is the only way White can fight for an advantage. The advantages of this recapture are clear: White opens lines for his pieces, so as to complete his development as quickly as possible. But there are also minuses, because now his pawn structure is seriously compromised. After taking ‘away from the centre’, it will be hard for White to maintain the pawn bastion on e5, and after the likely rapid exchange of this pawn and other pieces, White risks falling into a strategically inferior position. Therefore White should play very energetically, as his long-term prospects are not so good.

4...d6

The most logical move: Black wants to exchange on e5 and obtain an extra pawn on the kingside, where he can later organise a passed pawn.

Another possibility is 4...d5.

5.⊙f3

White lures the enemy bishop to g4.

A) Interesting is 5.⊙f4 ⊙c6. Vladimir Bagirov gives the move 5...g6 a question mark in his book, quoting the variation 6.⊙e2 ⊙g7 7.0-0 0-0 8.h4!, Filipowicz-Jansa, Zinnowitz 1971. White’s plan is certainly very interesting: he castles long and starts an immediate kingside attack. However, the question mark is too severe a judgement, because it is far from easy to mate the black king. Black has a fairly solid position, all of his pieces come quickly into the centre, and the white king can also come under attack. Therefore the position remains double-edged. 6.⊙f3

On 6.b5 Black has a choice:
A) The computer recommends 6...a6, so as to clarify the bishop’s position at once. 7.bxc6+ (worse is 7.a4 b5 8.b3 e6 or 8...dxe5 9.xd8+ xd8 10.xe5 b7 11.f3 c5 12.c4 f6 13.g3 e5 with a good game for Black) 7...bxc6 8.f3 d5 or 8...b8 with mutual chances;

B) 6...d7 7.a6 (also possible is 7...dxe5 8.c5 xe5 9.e5 f6 10.e2 e5 with counterplay for Black) 8.c4 e6 9.d3 dxe5 and now:

B1) 10.e5 Nxe5 11.Bxe5 Bxe5 (if Black wants to play for a win, he should prefer 11...0-0 12.0-0 Qe7; although the position is still roughly equal, Black’s game is rather easier to play) 12.exf6 gxf6 and a draw was agreed, Hug-Schmidt, Pula 1975;

B2) 10.g3 e6 11.dxe5 12.d6 12.0-0 0-0 13.a1 Qe7 14.c3 g6 15.xd7 xd7, draw, Lechtynsky-Schmidt, Brno ch-CS 1975.

6...dxe5!!

A1) 7.xe5 xd1+ 8.xd1 xe5 9.c4 c6 10.d3 White has also tried 10.f4 f5 11.d2 e6 12.d4 f6 (12...b6!?, removing the attack from the pawn on a7) 13.e4 e7 14.f2 f7 with an equal position, Kurilov-V.Solovyov, St Petersburg 2007. 10.f5 Simplest; a more complicated game results from 10...f6 11.xg3 e5 Belkhodja-Lebel, Hyeres 1992. 11.d3 xd3 12.cxd3 f6 13.g3 e5 14.d4 exd4 15.exd4 c5 16.c4 b6 17.e4+ f7 18.d2 he8 19.he1 xe4 20.xe4 fe8 21.xe8 xe8 draw agreed, Tatai-Gheorghiu, Las Palmas 1972;

A2) 7.xe5 xd1+ 8.xd1 xe5 9.xc5 a6 Also possible is 9...e6, not fearing 10.b5+ e7 11.d7 f6 12.xc8 xc8 13.c4 b6 14.e2 e5. 10.d3 g6 11.xe4 g7 12.f4 After the striking 12.xc6, as in the game Jurkovic-Zelcic, Croatia tt 2006, strong is 12...f5 13.e3 f7 14.a5 c6. 12...0-0 with equality.

A3) 7.xd8+ xd8 8.xe5 Black has no problems after 8.xe5 f6 9.c4 (9.d3 e5 10.e3 g4) also good is 10...f7 followed by ...d6) 11.b4 b6 12.h3 h5 13.0-0 0-0 14.g4 f7 15.b5+ e7 16.d2 c5 17.xc5+ xc5 with the better position for Black, Schild-Zelcic, Geneva 1994) 9...e5 10.e3 e6 (10...b6!?, and Black is the first to get his bishop to the h1-a8 diagonal) 11.g3 c5 12.g2 xe3 13.e3 ex6 with approximate equality. 8...c6 9.0-
0-0 f6 9...g4!? 10...e2 f6 11...g3 e5 with counterplay for Black. 10...g3 White retreated his bishop in a different manner in the following game: 10...c7 g4 (10...e6?! 11...g3 c5) 11...c4 e5 12...h1 e7 with mutual chances, L.Hübner-Baburin, Berlin 1992. 10...e5 11...c4 c7 12...h1 f7 13...d2 h5 14.h3 On 14.f3 possible is 14...h4 15...f2 b6 with a complicated game. 14...h4 15...h2 f6 Not good is 15...a6?! (Malbran-Soppe, Villa Martelli 1999) because of 16.f4 – having secured his centre, White attacks the enemy king.

16...d3 g5 with mutual chances.

B) 5...c4 is a useful developing move and at the same time a small trap.

analysis diagram

5...c6 5...dxe5?? 6...xf7+ loses the queen. 6...f3 dxe5!? 7...xd8+ As Bagirov shows, 7...e2 is risky because of 7...f6 8...e3 e6 9...h4 g6 10.f4 d6 11.0-0 e7 (11...e4?!) 12.fxe5 dxe5 with an extra pawn for Black, Green-Williams, Coventry 1970. 7...xd8 8...xe5 f6 Black was worse after 8...e6 9.0-0 g6 10.b5+ c6 11...d3 g7 12...e1 c8 13...c4 c6 14.f4 0-0 15.f5 gxf5 (15...c5?! 16.fxg6 hgx6 17...e7 d8=) 16...xf5 c6 17...h6 g7 18...d3, K.Dolzhikova-Zhao Xue, Beijing 2008. 9...d3 The other knight retreat is worse – 9...f3, because after the natural 9...e5 there is no f2-f4 break, whilst the knight does nothing on f3. 9...e5
10.0-0 If 10.e3 with the idea of 0-0-0, then 10...e6 11.b3 (11.b5+ f7 12.c5 d5 13.0-0 xc5 14.xc5 e6 15.e3 d8 16.f3 a6 17.d3 g6 with an equal position, but Black’s game is easier to play, Schwarz-M.Kopylov, Nuremberg 2007) 11..d6 12.0-0-0 xb3 13.cxb3 e6 14.f3 0-0-0 with a good position for Black, Milosevic-Cosma, Kragujevac 1995. 10..e6 11.b3 11.xe6 xe6 favours Black. 11..d6 The untried 11...c5 with the idea of 12.c4 f7 (the more aggressive 12...b5!? is also worth considering) 13.e3 b6 looks even stronger – Black’s chances are superior. 12.e1 g5 Also good is 12...0-0 13.f4 xb3 14.axb3 f7 15.fxe5 xe5 16.xe5 xe5 17.e3 a6 with a somewhat better endgame, Perus-Zelcic, Slovenia tt 2006. 13.e3 f7, and Black’s chances are better, Nezhmetdinov-Spassky, Tbilisi ch-URS 1959;

C) 5.exd6

This voluntary cession of the centre can hardly pose Black any problems.

Now all three recaptures are perfectly possible.
5...cxd6

A move aiming at a complicated game, but the other two recaptures are perfectly possible. After 5...cxd6 6.Nf3 Be7 we transpose into a well-known position from the Petroff / Russian Game.

5...Qxd6 6.Qxd6 cxd6 (6...exd6=) 7.g3 c6 8.c3 g6 9.f3 g7 10.g2 0-0 11.d4 d7 12.0-0 f6 13.xc6 xc6 (taking with the pawn towards the centre was well worth considering – 13...bxc6) 14.ad1 xg2 15.xg2 b5 16.d4 a5 (16...b4!? with a somewhat better position for Black, Te Kolsté-Réti, Baden-Baden 1925.

6.Bd3 g6 7.f3 g7 8.h4 After the normal 8.0-0 0-0 the position is roughly equal, but Black’s chances are better for the long term, because he has two central pawns. 8.g4 9.f4 c6 with a good game for Black, Lastin-Zinchenko, Internet 2010 (also possible is 9.d7!? followed by transferring the knight to f6 to control the squares h5 and g4).

5...dxe5!?

The idea of the well-known theoretician Richard Réti: Black strives for simplification.

5...g4 looks very logical, but this is not the most successful move, because of 6.h3 h5 (White is better after 6...xf3 7.xf3) 7.e6!? fxex6 8.c4 with excellent compensation for the sacrificed pawn, Dzhumaev-Huan Hoang Canh, Vung Tau 2008. Or 8.e2!? (with the idea of g5) 8.xf3 9.xf3 c6 10.0-0 g6 11.h4!? d7 12.g4, also with compensation.

As well as the move in the game, also good is 5...c6 6.b5 g6 or 6...a6!? 7.xc6+ bxc6 8.0-0 e6 9.f4 e7 with mutual chances.

6.xd8+ xd8 7.xe5
If we now remove all the pieces from the board, leaving only the kings and pawns, then Black’s position would be winning. His task would be to exchange pawns on the kingside and organise a passed pawn, with which to deflect the white king, whilst the black king enters the queenside and wins the white pawns there. On the queenside, despite having the same numerical superiority of four pawns versus three, White cannot create a passed pawn. Black only needs to arrange his pawns in good time in the formation c6, b7 and a6, so as to prevent any possible breakthrough by the opponent.

7...\textit{\textbf{Ke8}}

Less good is 7...\textit{\textbf{Be6}}, although this move is not without some sense. Black defends the f7-pawn with the bishop and at the same time covers the square c4, where the \textit{\textbf{Bf1}} would like to go, and also frees the c8-square for the black king. He wants to play ...\textit{\textbf{d7}} with his bishop already developed. However, with this set-up, it is hard to get the rooks into the game – the bishop on e6 blocks the e7-pawn, and consequently the king’s rook on h8, whilst on c8, the king blocks in the other rook (of course, the king could instead come to e8, but then there is no point in putting the bishop on e6). In addition, Black loses the chance of a quick ...\textit{\textbf{f7-f6}} and ...\textit{\textbf{e7-e5}}, or ...\textit{\textbf{e7-e6}} and ...\textit{\textbf{d6}}, kicking away the white knight.

There could follow: 8.\textit{\textbf{Be3}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} 9.0-0-0 \textit{\textbf{c8}} 9...\textit{\textbf{e8}} 10.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{g4}} 11.\textit{\textbf{e2}} (not wanting to spoil his pawn formation any further after ...\textit{\textbf{xf3}}) 11...e5 12.h3 \textit{\textbf{f5}} 13.\textit{\textbf{he1}} f6 14.\textit{\textbf{c4}} with some advantage in development, Ashton-Baburin, England tt 2005. 10.\textit{\textbf{d3}} It was worth considering 10.\textit{\textbf{xd7}} \textit{\textbf{xd7}} 11.\textit{\textbf{xf7}} \textit{\textbf{g8}} 12.\textit{\textbf{g5}} e6 13.\textit{\textbf{e4}}. 10...\textit{\textbf{f5}} 11.\textit{\textbf{g3}} \textit{\textbf{e4}} 12.\textit{\textbf{g1}} \textit{\textbf{f3}} 13.\textit{\textbf{d2}} e6 with mutual chances, Radulov-Letzelter, Vratsa 1975.

8.\textit{\textbf{c4}}

The main continuation. 8.\textit{\textbf{e3}} has also been seen, preparing long castling: 8...\textit{\textbf{d7}} 9.\textit{\textbf{c4}} On 9.\textit{\textbf{f3}} good is 9...e5 10.0-0 f6 11.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{c5}} 12.\textit{\textbf{xc5}} \textit{\textbf{xc5}} 13.\textit{\textbf{e4}} \textit{\textbf{e6}} (but not 13...c6 14.f4!? b5 15.\textit{\textbf{e2}} exf4 16.\textit{\textbf{f3}} with attack, Listergarten-Bagirov, USSR 1974). 9...\textit{\textbf{b6}} 10.0-0-0 e6
11.\texttt{\textcopyright}xb6 In his book, Bagirov recommends 11.\texttt{\textcopyright}a5, tying the bishop to the pawn on b7, but after 11...\texttt{\textcopyright}d5 12.\texttt{\textcopyright}d2 (not 12.\texttt{\textcopyright}b5+ c6 13.\texttt{\textcopyright}xc6? a6! 14.\texttt{\textcopyright}a4 \texttt{\textcopyright}d7 with advantage to Black) 12...b6 Black drives the knight away with ...\texttt{\textcopyright}d6 and ...\texttt{\textcopyright}b7, achieving a good position. 11...axb6 12.\texttt{\textcopyright}b5+?! Better is 12.\texttt{\textcopyright}f4, as in the game Kucheryov-Gromov, corr. 2008: 12...c6 13.\texttt{\textcopyright}c7 \texttt{\textcopyright}e7 14.\texttt{\textcopyright}xb6 \texttt{\textcopyright}xa2 15.\texttt{\textcopyright}c4 \texttt{\textcopyright}a1+ 16.\texttt{\textcopyright}d2 \texttt{\textcopyright}xd1+ 17.\texttt{\textcopyright}xd1 \texttt{\textcopyright}d6 with a roughly equal position. 12...c6 13.\texttt{\textcopyright}xb6? After this move, White loses a piece. 13...\texttt{\textcopyright}xb5 14.\texttt{\textcopyright}d8+ \texttt{\textcopyright}e7 15.\texttt{\textcopyright}hd1 \texttt{\textcopyright}f6, and White resigned, Balashov-Zhidkov, Baku ch-URS 1972.

\textbf{8...e6}
to exchange into an endgame. In his turn, White must avoid exchanges as far as possible, but with queens already off the board, it is not so simple to achieve anything concrete.

9. \( f4 \)

A) \( 9.f4 d7 10.f3 \) The best move, according to Bagirov. After 10.\( \text{d}x\text{d}7 \text{b}x\text{d}7 11.e3 \text{d}6 12.0-0 c7 13.e1 \text{e}8 \) White’s development lead has been extinguished, whilst his queenside pawns remain spoiled; in this position, White needs to play accurately to maintain the balance, Sarapu-Hort, Sousse 1967. 10.\( \text{d}3 \) As in the game V.I. Ivanov-Gerchikov, St Petersburg 1997, in which after 10...\( \text{d}6 11.e3 \text{b}6 12.b3 d5 13.xd5 exd5 14.0-0 \text{g}4 15.xd1 d7 \) the players agreed a draw. 10...\( \text{d}6 \) Or 10...\( \text{b}6 11.d3 \text{d}7 12.c4 \text{c}4 13.b3 \text{d}6 14.d3 \text{c}6 15.f1 e7 16.e3 f6 \) with an equal position, Brodhuhn-Rufer, Germany tt 1989. 11.\( \text{d}2 \text{e}7 12.0-0-0 \text{e}8 13.xd1 \text{f}8 \) with a good position for Black, Stearns-Baburin, San Francisco 2001;

B) \( 9.0-0 \text{d}6 \) Black has also tried 9...\( \text{d}7 \) 10.\( \text{d}d7 \) (it seems White would do better to avoid the exchange with 10.\( \text{f}3 \), but this is hardly likely to change the assessment significantly) 10...\( \text{x}d7 \) 11.\( \text{e}1 \text{d}7 11.\text{a}6 \) Or 11...\( \text{b}6 12.\text{d}3 \text{f}6 \) followed by ...\( \text{f}7 \), Bannik-Bronstein, Moscow ch-URS 1961. 12.\( \text{e}3 \text{h}6 \) It was worth considering 12...\( \text{b}6 \) followed by ...\( \text{b}7 \), ...\( \text{e}7 \), and a good game for Black. 13.\( \text{d}4 \text{g}8 14.\text{a}1 \text{f}8 15.a3 \text{b}6 16.\text{d}2 \text{b}7 17.a2 \text{d}8 18.\text{c}4 \text{e}7 19.\text{e}5 \text{c}5 20.\text{d}8+ \text{d}8 \) 21.\( \text{xe}5 \text{c}8 \), and here Black’s chances are preferable because of his two bishops and better pawn structure, Y.Nikitin-Bagirov, Alma-Ata ch-URS 1968.

C) \( 9.\text{e}3 \)

\[ \text{analysis diagram} \]

9...\( \text{d}6 10.\text{d}3 \text{c}6 \) 10...\( \text{d}7 \) is also possible, Radulov-Jansa, Örebro 1966. 11.\( \text{b}5 \) Black also has no problems after 11.0-0-0 \( \text{a}5 \) (or 11...b6) 12.\( \text{b}3+ \text{d}7 13.\text{xd}7+ \text{xd}7 14.\text{d}4 \text{f}6 15.\text{c}5+ \text{c}5 16.\text{xc}5+ \text{c}6 17.\text{b}4 \text{c}4 \), Zvara-Konopka, Prague 1992. 11...\( \text{d}7 12.\text{e}5 \text{c}5 13.\text{xe}5= \) Neukirch-A. Sokolov, Bad Wörishofen 1992.

9...\( \text{d}6 10.\text{g}3 \)

Or 10.0-0-0 \( \text{d}7 11.\text{d}3 \text{xf}4+ \) (also good is 11...\( \text{b}6 12.\text{b}3 \text{xf}4+ 13.\text{x}f4 \text{d}7 \) 12.\( \text{xf}4 \text{f}6 13.\text{e}1 \text{d}7 \)
14. Nxd5 Nxd5 15. Bxd5 c6 16. Be4 e7 17. f4 Rad8 18. g3 c8 and a draw was agreed in Lechtynsky-Hlousek, Luhacovice 1971. This position is about equal, but with his superior pawn structure, Black could play for a win without any real risk.

10... N7d7 11. f3

Exchanges play into Black’s hands, thanks to his superior pawn formation: 11. Nxd7?! Bxd7 12. 0-0-0 Bxg3 13. hxg3.

11... b6

Also good is 11... b6?! 12. 0-0-0 e7 13. Nbd4 b7.

12. Be2 b6 13. e5

White returns the knight to e5, so as to exchange it for the bishop.

13... f6 14. Nxd7 Bxd7 15. 0-0-0 e7 16. Bf3 Bxg3 17. hxg3 c6

We can summarise the results of the opening duel. White has been unable to realise his advantage in development, whilst Black has accurately carried out his plan: exchange pieces, and aim for an endgame with an extra pawn on the kingside. White can draw, it appears, but he needs to be very accurate in the following exchanges.


Black clearly rushes with this exchange; after any other move, such as 21... f5, 21... e5 or 21... d7, White would have to work to make a draw. Now, however, we soon reach a drawn rook ending.

22. e1xd3 e5 23. Bb4 b6 24. Bxd5

The simplest.

24... cxd5 25. c4
Exchanging the doubled pawns quickly secures White the draw.

25...\textit{d}8 26.a4 d7 27.cxd5 exd5 28.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}6 29.c3

Draw.

Richard Réti’s idea is both simple and at the same time very convincing. Without fearing to leave his king in the centre, Black exchanges on e5, aiming for further simplifications in the ending, where he has the better pawn structure. This plan poses very serious questions for those players who want to fight for an advantage in the Vienna system 3.c3.
By attacking the enemy knight with pawns, White wants to gain as much time as possible. But the move 4.c5 also has its drawbacks, the most obvious of which is that White cedes his opponent control of the d5-square.

It should be noted that this Chase system is often used by players who also have the 2.c3 Sicilian in their repertoire; in particular, one of the authors of the present book, GM Evgeny Sveshnikov. However, Black is not obliged to transpose back into a 2.c3 Sicilian, where he has to fight for equality; he also has at his disposal more promising plans.

Game 11
Evgeny Sveshnikov 2515
Igor Khmelnitsky 2325
Sibenik 1990

1.e4 \( \text{d}6 \) 2.e5 \( \text{d}5 \) 3.c4 \( \text{b}6 \) 4.c5 \( \text{d}5 \)
5.\textit{c}4

On 5.d4 it is possible to answer 5...e6, after which, depending on White’s next move, we transpose either into the variation with 5.\textit{c}3, or into that with 5.\textit{c}4. In addition, after 5...d6 6.cxd6 cxd6, we reach a line of the 2.c3 Sicilian, which is also not bad for Black.

5...\textit{e}6

Another possibility is 5...c6 followed by ...d7-d6.

6.\textit{c}3

This move involves a pawn sacrifice, in return for which White counts on getting a kingside attack.

The positions arising after 6.d4 b6 will be examined later on the basis of the game Martin Hernandez-Granda Zuniga, La Laguna 2007. Once again, Black can also very reasonably play 6...d6 7.cxd6 cxd6, transposing into the 2.c3 Sicilian.

6...\textit{xc}5

The other possibility is 6...\textit{xc}3, after which White has a choice of which pawn to recapture with on c3:

A) 7.bxc3!? \textit{xc}5 (7...b6!??) 8.d4 d5 9.\textit{d}3 \textit{f}8 10.\textit{g}4 c5 11.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}6 12.0-0 h6 with mutual chances;

B) 7.dxc3 (White plays for a lead in development) 7...\textit{c}6 8.\textit{f}4 (or 8.\textit{h}5 \textit{xc}5 9.\textit{f}3 g6 10.\textit{g}4 f6 11.exf6 \textit{xf}6) 8...\textit{xc}5 9.\textit{g}4 g5!? 10.\textit{x}g5 \textit{g}8 11.h4 h6 (11...\textit{xe}5!?) 12.\textit{xd}8 \textit{xd}8 13.\textit{e}2 \textit{xe}2 14.\textit{xc}7 \textit{xf}2 – each side has his trumps.

Also interesting is 6...c6, which leads to complicated practical positions. Black’s statistics here are very good, but as the following game shows, he still faces definite problems: 7.\textit{e}4 b6 8.\textit{d}6+ \textit{xd}6 9.cxd6 0-0 10.\textit{f}3 f6 11.d4 \textit{a}6 12.b3, and White obtained a small advantage, E.Sveshnikov-Clery, Cappelle-la-Grande 2009.
7.d4

Only after this move can White count on achieving anything.

In the event of 7.Qg4 0-0 (but not 7...Nxc3 8.Qxg7 Qf8 9.bxc3 with a clear advantage to White, Vinocur-Benediktov, Sverdlovsk 1954) 8.d4 f5! 9.Qf3 Nxc3 10.bxc3 Qe7 he does not have full compensation for the pawn, Torres Tellez-Aloma Vidal, Linares ch-ESP jr 2007.

Of course, he can simply regain the pawn: 7.Bxd5 (a less good version is 7.Nxd5 exd5 8.Bxd5 d6; here Black’s chances are superior) 7...exd5 8.Qxd5 d6 9.d4 b6 10.Qb6 axb6 11.exd6 Qxd6. The position is about equal, but White has an isolated pawn with relatively few pieces on the board, so Black’s game is easier to play.

7...Bb4

The alternative is 7...Nxc3 8.bxc3 d5 9.d3 Qf8 10.Qg4 (10.f3 c5 11.0-0 c7 favours Black) 10...c5 (10...b6!? with the idea of quickly bringing the bishop out to a6) 11.f3 c6 12.0-0 h6. Black has retained an extra pawn, whilst White has compensation in the form of pressure on the kingside.

8.Qg4

A) In his book, Bagirov suggests 11...c6 12.0-0 (worse is 12.g5 d7 13.0-0 xc3 14.bxc3 g4 with the exchange of queens). This is how Vladimir Konstantinovich assesses the resulting position: ‘White has managed to deprive his opponent of castling rights and is the first to complete his development. He has good chances in the middlegame, thanks to his pressure on the e- and f-files. Black, despite his extra pawn, faces a difficult defence.’ But from a modern-day perspective (computers have taught us a lot about how to defend!), we can say that this is a complicated position with chances for both sides;

B) But more accurate is 11...dxe5 12.dxe5 f6!? (12...c6!? Zielinski-Bendig, corr. 2008) 13.f3 (on 13.d3 good is 13...c6) 13...g8 (this is stronger than 13...c6 14.0-0 e6 – 14...g8!? – 15.e1 with the initiative for Black, Jorgensen-Kristensen, corr. 1992). Then possible is 14.d3 e8+ 15.d2 (15.e3 xc3+ 16.bxc3 e4 with the exchange of queens) 15...d6 16.xd5+ f7 17.e1 xd5 18.xd5 f7, and Black’s chances are better.

8...xc3 9.bxc3?!

Preferable is 9.a3, and after for example 9...e4+ (or 9...f8 10.bxc3 d5 11.d3 c5) 10.axb4 e7 we reach a complicated, double-edged position.

9...xc3+ 10.f1 e7!

An unexpected and very strong resource.

11.b1

11.xg7 is not favourable for White, because of 11...f8, and Black exchanges queens.
11...f5

Another strong move, typical for such positions, when the e5-pawn cramps the black kingside.

12.\( \text{h5} \) + g6 13.\( \text{d1} \) c6

The more energetic central blow 13...c5!? also deserves attention.

14.\( \text{f3} \) xd4 15.\( \text{d4} \) e5 16.\( \text{b5} \) xc4+ 17.\( \text{e2} \) xe2+ 18.\( \text{xe2} \) f7 19.\( \text{xc7} \) b8

After all the complications, Black remains with two extra pawns. White has some compensation in the blockade on d6, but this is clearly insufficient.

20.\( \text{d1} \) a6 21.\( \text{b6} \) xe5

Better was 21...\( g8 \) followed by ...g6-g5.

22.\( \text{f4} \)!

White misses a good chance to play 22.\( \text{b2} \), pinning the enemy knight. Black would have to play 22...\( c4 \), and after 23.\( \text{h8} \) \( xb6 \) 24.\( \text{d4} \) d5 25.\( \text{a7} \) xc7 (only Black is risking anything after 25...\( c3+ \) 26.\( \text{d2} \) xd1 27.\( \text{xd1} \) b5 28.\( \text{xb8} \) 26.\( \text{xb8} \) d5 27.\( \text{c1} \) e7 28.\( \text{d6} \) c6 29.a4 b5 30.axb5 axb5 31.f4 White obtains good drawing chances.

22...\( c4 \) 23.\( \text{b4} \) b5 24.\( \text{xe6} \)

Or 24.\( \text{xb5} \) \(xb5 \) 25.\( \text{xc4} \) e5.

24...\( \text{b6} \) 25.\( \text{d4} \) e8+ 26.\( \text{f1} \) e4 27.g3 d6

More exact is 27...g5!? 28.\( \text{xg5} \) d6 29.\( \text{xe3} \) xe3+ 30.\( \text{fxe3} \) xe3 with an overwhelming advantage.

28.\( \text{f3} \)
Better was 28.a4 \text{d}7 29.axb5 axb5, exchanging a-pawns.

**28...\text{g}7 29.\text{d}2**

White hopes the opposite bishops will save him, but two pawns down, he has few chances...

**29...\text{xd}2+ 30.\text{xd}2 \text{e}6 31.a4 \text{c}4+ 32.\text{g}2 \text{a}5**

This is why White should have exchanged a-pawns!

**33.\text{b}2 \text{b}4 34.\text{f}4 \text{e}6 35.\text{bd}2 \text{b}3 36.\text{a}1 \text{c}6 37.\text{e}3 \text{xe}3 38.\text{fxe}3 \text{c}2 0-1**

After the forced 39.\text{a}2 \text{b}3 40.\text{b}2 Black simply brings his king to e5 and after ...\text{c}4 takes the a-pawn.

White did not pose his opponent any problems at all in the opening, and after the dubious 9.bxc3 himself obtained a difficult position. Even so, the sacrifice of the c5-pawn is quite interesting: White, without worrying over material losses, tries as quickly as possible to develop his pieces and create pressure on the kingside.

**Game 12**

Evgeny Sveshnikov 2585
Alexander Morozevich 2590
Alushta 1994 (3)

1.e4 \text{f}6 2.e5 \text{d}5 3.c4 \text{b}6 4.c5 \text{d}5 5.\text{c}3 e6 6.d4 \text{xc}3 7.bxc3 \text{b}6 8.cxb6 \text{axb6}
9. \textit{f3}

The alternative is 9.\textit{g4} c5 (also possible is 9...d5 10.\textit{h3} \textit{d7} 11.\textit{f4} g6 12.\textit{e2} \textit{a6} 13.0-0 \textit{c6} 14.\textit{xa6} \textit{xa6}, Cherniaev-Luther, Gibraltar 2003. Black is already better: it is very difficult for White to organise an attack on the king, whilst the weakness of the a- and c-pawns is very real) and now:

\textit{analysis diagram}

A) On 10.dxc5?! a very strong reply is 10...\textit{c7!} 11.\textit{f3} \textit{a6} (the simple 11...\textit{xc5} is also possible, with a clear advantage to Black) 12.\textit{xa6}?! \textit{xa6} 13.\textit{e3} \textit{xc5} 14.\textit{xc5} \textit{xc5}\textit{+}, Lein-Zelcic, Belgrade 1988;

B) 10.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} 11.\textit{d3}?! (better is 11.\textit{b5} cxd4 12.cxd4 \textit{a6} 13.\textit{xa6} \textit{xa6} 14.0-0 \textit{a4} with mutual chances) 11...\textit{xd4}
If 9.d3 b7 (also not bad for Black is 9...a6 10.f3 xd3 11.xd3 d5 12.exd6 xd6, Gal-Fekete, Bekescsaba 1996) 10.f3, transposing into the game.

9...b7

It is worth considering 9...a3!?, which has not been tried in practice. Black tries to exchange as many pieces as possible and after this to attack the a2- and c3-pawns. For example, 10.g5 (or 10.d2 c6 11.d3 a6 12.e2 xd3 13.xd3 h6 14.0-0 0-0) 10...e7 11.xe7 xe7 12.d3 a3 13.c1 a6 14.xa6 xa6 15.0-0 0-0 16.e2 a8 – in both cases, Black’s position looks more attractive.

10.d3 d6

Also possible is 10.e7 11.0-0, and in the game E. Sveshnikov-Solozhenkin, Elista 1996, the opponents agreed a draw. Interesting is 10...a3!?.

11.0-0 e7 12.e1 d7 13.c2

13.e2 dxe5 14.dxe5 a5 with somewhat better chances for Black, Rozentalis-Krasenkow, Poland tt 1998.

13...a5

It was more accurate first to exchange on e5: 13...dxe5 14.dxe5 a5 with the initiative.

14.d2

White misses the chance to equalise by 14.exd6.

14...dxe5 15.e4 a7

It was also worth considering the extravagant rook manoeuvre 15...d5!?.
16. \( \text{dxe5} \)

A game with chances for both sides follows after 16.dxe5!?.

16...\( \text{dxe5} \) 17.\( \text{Bxe5 f6} \) 18.\( \text{Be1 a8} \) 19.f3 0-0

Black has two pawn islands against the opponent’s three, so his position is the more promising.

20.\( \text{f4} \) g6 21.\( \text{b3} \) c5!?

Breaking up White’s pawns.

22.\( \text{dxc5} \) bxc5 23.\( \text{Be5} \)

Forced: the strong bishop on f6 has to be exchanged.

23...\( \text{g5} \)

Black does not want to simplify the position: after 23...\( \text{Bxe5} \) 24.\( \text{Rxe5} \) he has only a symbolic advantage.

24.\( \text{e2} \) a6 25.c4 d7 26.\( \text{ad1} \) fd8 27.\( \text{xd7} \) \( \text{xd7} \)

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28.\( \text{d1} \)

White strives for exchanges, but it was worth considering 28.\( \text{a1} \) f4! (all other moves are worse) 29.\( \text{b2} \) d4 30.f2! a7, taking the exchange after the preliminary 31.h1 b6 32.xd4 cxd4. Admittedly, it seems that here Black has sufficient compensation, thanks to his two bishops and passed d-pawn.

28...\( \text{d8} \) 29.\( \text{xd7} \) \( \text{xd7} \) 30.c3 f6 31.c2 f7 32.f2 d6 33.g3 f5 34.d3 c7

An equal position results from 34...\( \text{xd3} \) 35.xd3 f6.
35.a4
It was worth considering 35.a4!? and then b5 with the advance of the a-pawn.

35...f6 36.xf6 xf6 37.f4 e5 38.fxe5 39.a5 c7 40.c3+ e6
Interesting is 40...e5!?

41.a4 b7 42.e3+ f6 43.c3+ e6 44.e1+
White correctly avoids the repetition of moves, since he has a passed a-pawn, and Black needs to show a certain accuracy to make a draw.

44...d6
More solid was 44...f6.

45.d2+ c7
It was essential to bring the king back home: 45...e6, although after 46.d2+ f6 47.b5 Black already has problems.

46.f4+?
Missing the simple 46.d7+ b8 47.d6+ a7 48.xc5+, winning a pawn and with it, the game.

46...c8 47.d6 b2+ 48.f3 b7+ 49.f4
Now White goes wrong; he could maintain equality by 49.c6.

49...c1+ 50.e5 a1+?
Black also misses his chance: 50...c3+ 51.e6 xe4+ 52.e7 e4+ 53.e6+ e7 54.c2 d5 55.xe4 xe6 56.c2 a2 followed by ...c5-c4 and ...b3 gave him every chance of winning.
51. e6 xa4 52. f8+

Draw.

As we have seen, after 8.cxb6 Black has no problems at all.
1.e4 \( \text{\textit{N}} \)f6 2.e5 \( \text{\textit{N}} \)d5 3.c4 \( \text{\textit{N}} \)b6 4.c5 \( \text{\textit{N}} \)d5 5.e3 e6

With this move, Black defends the knight and attacks a pawn. The other possibility is 5...c6.

6.d4

In reply to 6.Qg4 Black quickly equalises with 6...d6 (a more complicated game follows after the other break 6...b6). For example: 7.cxd6 cxd6 8.Qf3 Qc6 (8...dxe5 is also possible, as in the game Cisler-Müller, Germany tt 1994) 9.Qb5 Qd7 10.exd6 Qf6 11.g3. This position arose in the correspondence game Green-Pepe, 2000. Now after 11...h5 12.Qh4 Qf6 13.Qg3 Qh5 14.Qg4 Qf6 moves were repeated; if Black is more aggressively inclined, then he should choose 11...a6 12.Qe2 b8 and then Qxd6 with mutual chances.

Black has no problems after 6.Qxd5 exd5 7.d4 d6. More complicated play results from 7...b6, and then: 8.e3 bxc5 9.dxc5 c6 10.b4 Qa6 (worse is 10...Qa6, as in the game Babic-Leventic, Osijek 2010; Black will anyway have to exchange bishops on a6, so this move amounts to a loss of several tempi) 11.e2 (11.Qxa6 Qxa6 12.a3 Qc7 with mutual chances, Hennings-Jansa, Polanica Zdroj 1969) 11...e7 12.g3 0-0 13.Qh3?! (better is 13.Qd4 Qxf1 14.Qxf1 or 13.a4 with the idea of meeting the break ...a7-a5 with b4-b5) 13...e4, and in the game Saulespurens-Lakdawala, California 1995, Black seized the initiative. 8.cxd6 cxd6 9.Qf3 Qc6
A) 10.\text{xe}2 \text{dxe}5 11.\text{dxe}5 On 11.\text{xe}5 good is 11...\text{d}6 12.\text{xc}6 \text{bxc}6 13.\text{c}2 \text{d}7 14.0-0 0-0 15.\text{d}2?! (an inaccuracy, but after 15.\text{e}3 \text{f}5 Black’s position is again preferable) 15...\text{h}4, and Black takes the initiative, Krajcovic-Konopka, Topolcianky ch-SVK 1993. 11...\text{b}4+ 12.\text{d}2 \text{a}5 13.\text{a}3 \text{xd}2+ 14.\text{xd}2 \text{xd}2+ 15.\text{xd}2 \text{g}4 with an equal position in Varga-Kovacs, Hungary tt 2007/08;

B) 10.\text{d}3 \text{dxe}5 (10...\text{g}4!??) 11.\text{xe}5

11.\text{dxe}5 \text{b}4+ 12.\text{d}2 \text{xd}2+ 13.\text{xd}2 0-0 (or 13...\text{g}4) 14.0-0 \text{g}4 15.\text{f}4 \text{xf}3 16.\text{xf}3 \text{xe}5 17.\text{h}7+ \text{h}7 18.\text{h}5+ \text{g}8 19.\text{xe}5 with equality. 11...\text{b}4+ 12.\text{d}2 \text{b}6 13.\text{xc}6 \text{bxc}6 14.0-0 \text{xd}2 There is also the quiet 14...0-0=. 15.\text{xd}2 \text{xd}4 16.\text{f}e1+ \text{f}8 17.\text{ac}1 \text{d}7, M.Zelic-Cs.Horvath, Croatia tt 1995, with a complicated game, in which Black proved stronger.

6...\text{xc}3 7.bxc3
If 7...d6, then after 8.cxd6 cxd6 we have transposed into a 2.c3 Sicilian, where White has not yet developed his knight to f3 and can take advantage of this: 9.f4!, strengthening the centre (a complicated position, slightly better for White, arises after 9.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)f3). If now 9...dxe5, then 10.fxe5, not fearing 10...\(\text{\textit{w}}\)h4+ 11.g3?! (also good is 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)e2, as in the game E.\textit{Sveshnikov-Filippov, Russia 1999}) 11...\(\text{\textit{e}}\)e4+ 12.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)f2 \(\text{\textit{x}}\)h1 (more tenacious is 12...\(\text{\textit{c}}\)c6, but here too, the position favours White) 13.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)d7 14.\(\text{\textit{b}}\)b3 \(\text{\textit{c}}\)c6 15.\(\text{\textit{g}}\)g2 \(\text{\textit{x}}\)f3 16.\(\text{\textit{x}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{x}}\)xh2 17.\(\text{\textit{x}}\)xh7 \(\text{\textit{e}}\)e7 18.\(\text{\textit{c}}\)c8+! (not being distracted by the rook on a8; he also wins by 18.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)f4) 18...\(\text{\textit{d}}\)d8 19.\(\text{\textit{a}}\)a3 \(\text{\textit{w}}\)h5+ 20.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)f2 \(\text{\textit{f}}\)f5+ 21.\(\text{\textit{g}}\)g1, and White wins.

8.\(\text{\textit{g}}\)\(\text{\textit{g}}\)4

The move 8.cxb6 is examined on the basis of the game E.\textit{Sveshnikov-A.Morozevich, Alushta 1994}.

8...\(\text{\textit{b}}\)xc5 9.\(\text{\textit{x}}\)g5 \(\text{\textit{e}}\)7 10.\(\text{\textit{xe}}\)7 \(\text{\textit{w}}\)xe7 11.\(\text{\textit{x}}\)g7 \(\text{\textit{f}}\)f8 12.\(\text{\textit{f}}\)f3 cxd4
13...\text{\textit{\textbf{e2}}}

If 13...\textit{\textbf{xd4}} Black can gain the advantage, but he must play very accurately:

A) White is better after 13...\textit{\textbf{f6}}? 14.\textit{\textbf{exf6}} 15.\textit{\textbf{g8}}+ 16.\textit{\textbf{g3}}, E. Sveshnikov-Grosar, Slovenia tt 2001;

B) 13...\textit{\textbf{Qc5}} 14.\textit{\textbf{Rc1}} \textit{\textbf{b7}} (14...\textit{\textbf{c6}} also looks logical, offering the exchange of knights – 15.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} \textit{\textbf{xc6}}; after 16.\textit{\textbf{d3}} \textit{\textbf{b7}} 17.0-0 0-0-0 we transpose into the variation 14...\textit{\textbf{b7}}) 15.\textit{\textbf{d3}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} \textit{\textbf{xc6}} 17.0-0 0-0-0 18.f3 (the threat was \textit{\textbf{g8}}) 18...\textit{\textbf{c5+}} 19.\textit{\textbf{h1}} \textit{\textbf{g8}} 20.\textit{\textbf{f6}} \textit{\textbf{e3}} 21.\textit{\textbf{cd1}} \textit{\textbf{g5}} 22.\textit{\textbf{f2}} \textit{\textbf{xf6}} and a draw was agreed in Ryska-Schirmer, corr. 2004;

C) It is worth considering 13...\textit{\textbf{a3}}?.

Unlike the variation with 13...\textit{\textbf{c5}}, here White does not have the defence 14.\textit{\textbf{c1}}.

14.\textit{\textbf{g3}} \textit{\textbf{b7}}
Now after 15...e2 (15.d1 c6 followed by 0-0-0, and Black’s chances are superior) there is the strong retort 15...xg2! 16.b5 b2 17.xg2 xa1+ 18.d2 b2+ 19.d1. Bad is 19.e3 c6 20.xc7+ d8 21.xa8 xc3+ 22.d3 f5, and Black wins. 19...ec6 The perpetual check after 19...a1+ no longer suits Black. 20.xc7+ d8 21.xa8 xc3 22.g7 The check 22.g5+ only drives the black king closer to the white knight: 22...c8 23.g1 b7. 22...e8 23.g1 d4 Or 23...a1+ 24.d2 b2+ 25.e1 xe5, taking a second pawn. 24.g4 c2+ (24...a1+!?) 25.e1 xe2 26.xe2 c3+ 27.f1 a1+ 28.e1 xe1+ 29.e1 e7 30.c7 c8 31.d5+ exd5 – Black has some winning chances in the rook ending.

13...a6

A complicated game results from 13...f5, E.Sveshnikov-Solozhenkin, St Petersburg ch-RUS 1998.

Also possible is 13...c6 14.0-0 (Black is better after 14.g5 c5 15.0-0 xe5 16.xe5 xe5 17.cxd4 c6 18.f3 h6 19.xc6 dxc6 20.f3 b7) 14...f5 15.exf6 xf6 16.xf6 xf6 17.xd4 xd4 18.exd4 b8 with mutual chances.

14.xa6

Rough equality is reached after 14.xd4 xe2 15.xe2 c6 16.0-0 xe5 17.xh7 b8 18.ab1 b6 19.d4 xe5 etc.

14...xa6 15.0-0

Black is also not worse in the variation 15.d4 f6 16.exf6 xf6 17.xf6 xf6.

15...dxc3 16.xh7?!
A bad decision; correct was 16...\texttt{c}1 \texttt{c}5.

16...0-0-0?

A mistake which could have had very unpleasant consequences. Before bringing the king to the weakened queen’s flank, Black should have activated his knight and strengthened the pawn on c3: after 16...\texttt{b}4 17.\texttt{ab}1 \texttt{d}5 he would have the advantage.

17.\texttt{ab}1

Even stronger is 17.\texttt{d}3?!?, attacking the knight and the pawn at once. Suddenly Black would face serious problems, for example: 17...\texttt{a}3 18.\texttt{ac}1 \texttt{b}4 19.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{xa}2 20.\texttt{b}5! \texttt{d}5 21.\texttt{cc}1, and White wins.

17...\texttt{a}3?!

More tenacious is the move 17...\texttt{c}5, although here too, White has a clear advantage.

18.\texttt{b}3

A decisive advantage was offered by 18.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{c}6 19.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{c}7 20.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{a}6 21.\texttt{fb}1 \texttt{d}6 22.\texttt{xc}3.

18...\texttt{xa}2 19.\texttt{xc}3 \texttt{d}5 20.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{c}5 21.\texttt{d}3

21.\texttt{b}5!? was an option that deserved consideration.

21...\texttt{c}4 22.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{a}5

More chances of holding were offered by 22...\texttt{c}7, although here too, after 23.\texttt{a}3 \texttt{b}2 24.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{b}6 25.\texttt{xa}7+ \texttt{b}7 26.\texttt{fa}1 White’s threats are very unpleasant.

23.\texttt{a}3

23.\texttt{b}1 wins more quickly.
23...b6 24.\textbf{a}1 b8
Nor does 24...c7 25.\textbf{xa}7 h8 26.f4 help.

25.\textbf{xa}7 d7 26.\textbf{a}8
More precise is 26.a7a5.

26...b7 27.h4
Black’s position is already bad, even lost, but now he creates a new weakness which accelerates the collapse.

27...f5? 28.exf6 xf6 29.h5
More accurate is 29.e5 h6 30.h5, after which Black quickly runs out of moves.

29...d6 30.g5 e5
Some saving chances were offered by 30...f4 31.xf4 (31.g8+!?, not exchanging queens) 31...d7 32.f3+-;
31...xf4 32.xe6 h4.

31.f3
Also good is 31.a6 e6 32.xa6 xa6 33.e5.

31.e6 32.g8+ c7 33.g5
Another way to win is 33.a7 b6 34.xb7+xb7 35.xb8+xb8 36.e6.

33...e7
34. h6 \textit{Nh6} 35. f7 \textit{Nxf7} 36. \textit{Nxf7+} e6 37. \textit{Qe8+} c7 38. \textit{Qxb8} \textit{Rxb8} 39. a7+ \textit{b6} 40. \textit{Qxb8+} c5 41. a1 \textit{f4} 42. a7+ b4 43. a5+ b3 44. a3+ b2 45. c3+

Black resigned. He played the opening well, but instead of 16... \textit{Nb4}! with advantage, he played the incautious 16...0-0-0?, came under attack and lost. Objectively, the move 8. \textit{Qg4} does not give Black any problems; after this, it is White who has to play accurately, in order to hold the balance.

Game 14
Jonas Martin Hernandez 1974
Julio Granda Zuniga 2612
La Laguna 2007 (1)

1.e4 \textit{f6} 2.e5 \textit{d5} 3.c4 \textit{b6} 4.c5 \textit{d5} 5.\textit{c4} e6 6.d4 \textit{b6}
7. $\text{Bxd5}$

Harmless is 7.cxb6 axb6 8.$\text{Nf3 Be7}$ 9.0-0 0-0 10.$\text{Nc3 b7}$ (maybe 10...$\text{Nxc3}$ 11.$\text{bxc3 a6}$ 12.$\text{d3 c8}$ is even better, with the superior chances for Black, Lucchese-Barlocco, Magenta 1999) 11.$\text{d3 d6}$ with a somewhat better position for Black, Torok-Baburin, Budapest 1992.

White has also tried 7.$\text{Nf3 Be7}$ (it is worth considering 7...$\text{bxc5}$, and on 8.$\text{dxc5}$, instead of 8...$\text{c6}$ Selby-Bacon, corr. 1989, I prefer the untried 8...$\text{b7}$!? with a double-edged position) 8.0-0 $\text{b7}$ 9.$\text{cxb6}$ The immediate 9.$\text{Nc3}$ is interesting, not opening the a-file for the opponent: 9...$\text{Nxc3}$ 10.$\text{bxc3}$ $\text{c6}$ with mutual chances. 9...$\text{axb6}$ 10.$\text{Nc3}$ $\text{Nxc3}$ 11.$\text{bxc3}$ 0-0 12.$\text{e1 d6}$ with a good position for Black, Rahls-Kir. Georgiev, Dresden 2007.

7...$\text{exd5}$ 8.$\text{cxb6}$

With the move 8.$\text{f3}$ White has scored a lot of points, but after 8...$\text{bxc5}$ 9.$\text{dxc5}$ $\text{c6}$, as was played in the game Potkin-Chigladze, Batumi 2002, only White can stand worse.

8...$\text{axb6}$
9. \textit{N}e2

On 9.\textit{f}3, unpleasant is 9...\textit{a}6, not letting White castle short.

9...\textit{d}6 10.\textit{f}4 dxe5 11.\textit{xe}5 \textit{d}7

After 11...\textit{c}6!? Black’s chances are preferable.

12.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}7

Here too, 12...\textit{b}4+!? 13.\textit{bc}3 0-0 14.0-0 \textit{c}6 looks strong, with the initiative for Black.

13.0-0

It was worth considering 13.\textit{c}2!, attacking the square \textit{c}7.

13...0-0

Before castling, it would have made sense to transfer the knight to \textit{e}6: 13...\textit{f}8 14.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}6.

14.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}8 15.\textit{bc}3

Better was 15.\textit{c}2, and the knight from \textit{b}1 heads to \textit{f}3.

15...\textit{c}6 16.a3 \textit{a}6

Again, the knight transfer to \textit{e}6 was worth considering, followed by \textit{c}5: 16...\textit{f}8.

17.\textit{g}3

White takes aim at the square \textit{f}5.
17...g6
Taking control of f5 and restricting the white knight.

18...d2 f8
It is now time to put the knight on e6, from where it will exert unpleasant pressure on the d4-pawn.

19...h6 e6 20.f4
White tries to sharpen up the game. However, his position is clearly inferior – the pawn on d4 is weak, Black’s pieces are more active and the latter also has the two bishops.
Therefore, instead of aggressive play, White should have employed prophylactic measures and strengthen his centre by means of 20...ge2.

20...f6 21.e5
On 21...ce2 unpleasant is 21...xe2 (or 21...c5) 22.xe2 a4.
White sacrifices an exchange in the hope of creating some sort of counterplay on the kingside, but he is clearly not ready for this.

21...xe5 22.dxe5 h4 23.f5
23...\textit{d} d 4 +

The most exact: after the exchange of queens, White has no hope at all.

24.\textit{xd} x d 4 25.\textit{g} g 5 \textit{xe} x e 5 26.\textit{f} f 6 \textit{c} c 2 0 - 1

White is an exchange and a pawn down and now the rooks will also be exchanged.

**Conclusion:** As we see, in the variation 5.\textit{c} c 4 e 6 d 4 b 6 White has no advantage.
Chapter 5
The Four Pawns Attack
1.e4 \( \text{\textit{f6}} \) 2.e5 \( \text{\textit{d5}} \) 3.c4 \( \text{\textit{b6}} \) 4.d4 \( \text{\textit{d6}} \) 5.f4

The Four Pawns Attack is considered one of the most dangerous lines for Black; maybe it even places the whole Alekhine’s Defence in doubt. On the other hand, the price of every move here is exceptionally high and White cannot permit himself to play ‘by general considerations’ – the tiniest inaccuracy can lead at least to the loss of the initiative, if not to much more serious consequences.

We will look in detail in this chapter at the forcing variation 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 c5 7.d5 g6, in which White risks quickly falling into a bad position, if he does not proceed very accurately. But we will also draw the reader’s attention to several alternatives, which, if you wish, you can study independently and thus obtain the chance to vary your lines.

**Game 15**
Michail Panarin 2486
Richard Polaczek 2365
Playchess 2005

1.e4 \( \text{\textit{f6}} \) 2.e5 \( \text{\textit{d5}} \) 3.c4 \( \text{\textit{b6}} \) 4.d4 \( \text{\textit{d6}} \) 5.f4 dxe5

It is worth considering 5...g6. The fact is that after 5...dxe5 6.fxe5 c5 7.d5 g6 White rarely puts his knight on f3, whereas now (5...g6) 6.\( \text{\textit{f3}} \) is a much more frequent guest, and then after 6...dxe5 7.fxe5 c5 8.d5 we get the possibility to bring the bishop out to g4. Thus, this move order offers a chance to trick a less experienced opponent. In addition, after 5...g6 there is also another interesting plan, involving bringing the bishop to e6; on this theme, you should study the games of GM Vladimir Sergeev.

Also possible is 5...\( \text{\textit{f5}} \), as GM Alexander Baburin has played many times.

6.fxe5
6...c5

Black immediately tries to break up his opponent’s pawn centre.

Let us look briefly at another, more popular plan: 6...c6 7.e3 (the inaccurate 7.f3 allows Black immediately to include his queen’s bishop in the attack on the centre: after 7.g4, as shown, for example, in the games Matinian-Bu Xiangzhi, Guimaraes 2012, and Malavazzi-Fier, Sao Paulo 2007, Black’s chances are already superior) 7.f5 8.c3 (on 8.f3 the reply 8.b4 is unpleasant, when White has to put his knight on the edge of the board – 9.a3) 8.e6 9.f3. Then Black has tried several schemes; in each one, we will point out the key games, which you may if you wish study independently.
A) 9...\textit{d}d7, after which Black castles queenside and then tries to break up the white centre with such moves as ...\textit{f}7-\textit{f}6 and ...\textit{g}g4 (Naegeli-Euwe, Bern 1932; Gipslis-Kengis, Jurmala 1983);

B) 9...\textit{e}e7 followed by short castling and the central break ...\textit{f}7-\textit{f}6 (Olape-Baburin, Bled 2002; D.Zilberstein-Baburin, San Francisco 2007; Grischuk-Svidler, Odessa 2009);

C) Interesting is 9...\textit{g}g4 which can be quite unpleasant for an unprepared opponent, although objectively, Black has problems here (V.Onischuk-Kovalenko, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013; Bologan-Rozentalis, Mulhouse 2010; Pavasovic-Nakamura, Austria Bundesliga 2008; Jones-V.Sveshnikov, Reykjavik 2011; Illescas-Baburin, Gothenburg 2005).

7...\textit{d}d5

Forced, since nothing good comes from 7.dxc5 \textit{\textit{d}d}1+ 8.\textit{\textit{x}x}d1 \textit{\textit{c}c}4! (somewhat weaker, although also possible, is 8...\textit{\textit{d}d}7 Khavin-Tolush, Moscow ch-URS 1944) 9.b3 \textit{\textit{x}x}c5 10.\textit{\textit{c}c}3 (or 10.\textit{\textit{e}e}3 \textit{b}6) 10...\textit{c}c6 with the better chances for Black, Pouw-Van Zandwijk, Vlissingen 2003.

7...\textit{g}6

Worse is 7...\textit{e}6 8.\textit{\textit{c}c}3 \textit{ex}d5 9.cxd5 \textit{\textit{d}d}4+ (9...\textit{c}c4 10.d6! is also better for White) 10.g3 \textit{\textit{d}d}4 11.\textit{\textit{b}b}5+ \textit{\textit{d}d}7 12.\textit{\textit{e}e}2 \textit{\textit{e}e}7 13.\textit{f}f3 \textit{\textit{g}g}4 14.0-0 – White has stabilised the game and has a clear positional advantage.

8.\textit{\textit{f}f}4 \textit{\textit{g}g}7 9.\textit{\textit{c}c}3 0-0 10.\textit{\textit{f}f}3 \textit{\textit{g}g}4 11.h3 \textit{\textit{h}h}3 12.\textit{\textit{x}x}f3 \textit{\textit{d}d}7

\begin{center}
\textit{Diagram}
\end{center}

13.\textit{\textit{e}e}3

On 13.\textit{\textit{x}x}g3, as in Karklins-V.Sveshnikov, Riga 2014, good is 13...\textit{b}8 14.\textit{e}6 \textit{\textit{e}e}5 15.\textit{\textit{x}x}f7+ \textit{\textit{e}e}7 16.\textit{\textit{x}x}e5 \textit{\textit{d}d}5 17.\textit{\textit{c}c}1 with the twin threats \textit{\textit{f}f}3 and \textit{\textit{d}d}5.

More accurate is the computer recommendation 13.\textit{d}4, but then too, Black gets adequate play after 13...\textit{b}8 14.\textit{e}6 \textit{\textit{e}e}5 15.\textit{\textit{x}x}f7+ \textit{\textit{e}e}7 16.\textit{h}2 (the threat was to take on f4, followed by 17...\textit{d}3+, winning the queen) 16...\textit{\textit{d}d}6 17.0-0-0 (or 17...\textit{\textit{g}g}6 18.\textit{\textit{e}e}2 \textit{\textit{f}f}5=) 17...\textit{\textit{f}f}8 18.\textit{\textit{e}e}2 \textit{\textit{f}f}4! 19.\textit{\textit{e}e}4 \textit{\textit{e}e}4 20.\textit{\textit{e}e}3 (not 20.\textit{\textit{d}d}4? \textit{\textit{d}d}3+) 20...\textit{\textit{b}b}c4 21.\textit{\textit{e}e}4
13...\textit{b}b8 14.e6 \textit{e}5

Weaker is 14...\textit{e}5 15.exf7+ \textit{xf7} 16.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 17.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 with approximate equality.

15.exf7+

Black is also better after 15.0-0-0 \textit{xc}4 16.\textit{e}4 (16.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4 17.\textit{e}4 \textit{d}6 with an extra pawn for Black, Mijic-Titova Boric, Pula 1990) 16...\textit{d}6, also with an extra pawn, Moraru-Grunberg, Romania tt 1994.

15...\textit{xf}7 16.\textit{h}2

In the game Lorincz-Mozes, Miskolc 1998, Black obtained a serious advantage after 16.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 17.\textit{e}2 (more tenacious is 17.\textit{d}3 e6 18.dxe6 \textit{f}6) 17...\textit{d}4 18.\textit{e}6 \textit{g}3+ 19.\textit{d}2 \textit{x}g2.

16...\textit{xc}4 17.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4 18.\textit{xc}5?

He keeps drawing chances after 18.\textit{e}4 \textit{d}6 19.\textit{e}6.

18...\textit{c}8

Black misses the winning combination 18...\textit{xb}2! 19.\textit{xb}8 \textit{d}3+ 20.\textit{d}2 \textit{xc}5 21.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}2+ etc.

19.\textit{xc}8+ \textit{xc}8 20.0-0-0 \textit{xb}2 21.\textit{xb}2 \textit{xc}3

Stronger is 21...\textit{f}2+ 22.\textit{b}1 \textit{xc}3 with an attack.

22.\textit{b}1 \textit{f}2 23.\textit{g}1 \textit{x}g2

Immediately winning is 23...\textit{f}4 with the threat to give mate with 24...\textit{b}4+.

24.d4 \textit{cc}2 25.\textit{he}1 \textit{xd}4 26.\textit{xd}4 \textit{b}2+ 27.\textit{c}1 \textit{xa}2 28.\textit{b}1 \textit{gb}2+ 29.\textit{c}1 \textit{a}1+
He also retains a decisive advantage after 29...\( \text{h}2 \), not exchanging the active rook.

30.\( \text{xb2} \) \( \text{xe1} \) 31.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{e5} \) 32.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{g7} \) 33.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{h6} \) 34.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{e6} \)?

A blunder; evidently, Black counted on 35.dxe6 \( \text{xe6} \), with three extra pawns.

35.\( \text{d6} \) \( \text{b5} \)?

Correct was 35...\( \text{e1} \) followed by ...\( \text{d1} \) or ...\( \text{c1-c8} \) with a drawn position.

36.\( \text{c3} \)?

Now White in turn misses his chance: after 36.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{e1} \) 37.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{e5} \) 38.\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{f5} \) 39.\( \text{d7} \) \( \text{f8} \) 40.\( \text{d8=} \) \( \text{xd8} \) 41.\( \text{xd8} \) he wins.

36...\( \text{e5} \)+ 37.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{e5} \)

37...\( \text{g5} \)?.

38.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{xf4} \) 39.\( \text{d7} \) \( \text{e4}+ \)

Simpler was 39...\( \text{f5} \) 40.\( \text{d8=} \) \( \text{f3} \) 41.\( \text{d2}+ \) \( \text{h5} \) 42.\( \text{d1} \) with equality.

40.\( \text{e5} \)

40.\( \text{d3} \)?.

40...\( \text{e5}+ \) 41.\( \text{e6} \)??

Another blunder – 41.\( \text{e4} \) holds the balance.
He wins after 41...f3! 42.d8=□f5; after this, the white king remains shut completely out of play, and the queen on its own cannot cope with such a large number of passed pawns.

42.□e5 □c5+ 43.□e4 □c4+ 44.□e5 □c5+ ½-½

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**Game 16**

Frederic Decoster 2305
Martijn Maddens 2047
Ghent 2012 (5)

1.e4 □f6 2.e5 □d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 □b6 5.f4 dxe5 6.fxe5 c5 7.d5 g6 8.□c3 □g7 9.□f4 0-0 10.□d2

The most popular and most principled move: White prepares long castling and is ready, if necessary, to defend the e5-pawn by means of □e3 and □e1.

10...e6

But Black has already evacuated his king and is ready for an immediate attack on the enemy pawn centre.

11.0-0-0 exd5

The alternative is 11...f6 12.□f3 (12.d6!?):

A) Now the rare 12...exd5, as in the game Buchicchio-Tonon, Arvier ch-ITA 2002, does not give equality: 13.cxd5 fxe5 14.□xe5 □xe5 15.□xe5 □8d7 16.□f3! White should avoid exchanges. Black is fine after 16.□xd7 □xd7 17.d6 □f6 (or 17...□h4) or 16.□g4 □f6 17.□xf6+ □xf6. 16...□f6 17.d6, and the strong passed pawn promises White the better chances;

B) 12...fxe5
13.\( \text{Bxe5} \) It looks very strong to play 13.\( \text{Bg5} \) \( \text{Qe8} \), as in the game Laine-Satosuo, corr. 2006. That continued as follows:

14.\( \text{d6} \) \( \text{Nc6} \) 15.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{Nd7} \) 16.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{d7} \) 17.\( \text{xd4?} \) \( \text{cxd4} \) 18.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{xc4} \) 19.\( \text{xc4} \) \( \text{e8} \), and Black soon won. However, after 17.\( \text{h5!} \) Black’s position hangs by a thread. 13...\( \text{exd5} \) (or 13...\( \text{Bxe5} \) 14.\( \text{Nxe5} \) \( \text{exd5} \) 15.\( \text{cxd5} \) \( \text{N8d7} \) 16.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 17.\( \text{d6} \) with advantage to White, McDonald-K.Sadler, corr. 2008) 14.\( \text{Bxg7} \) \( \text{Kxg7} \) 15.\( \text{cxd5} \) \( \text{g4} \) 16.\( \text{e2} \) (more accurate is 16.\( \text{g5!!} \) \( \text{h6} \) 17.\( \text{h3} \) with the better chances for White) 16...\( \text{Bxf3} \) 17.\( \text{xf3} \) \( \text{c4} \) 18.\( \text{Wc2} \) \( \text{d6} \). The computer assesses the final position as better for White, which is probably correct objectively, although things are not so simple in practice. As the game Das-Shabalov, Ravana 2009, showed, Black’s game is easier to handle – his knight blocks the passed e-pawn well, and the black pieces can become active on the dark squares, not allowing the opponent to exchange his light-squared bishop, whose activity is limited by his own passed pawn. Black can gradually prepare an attack on the queenside, thanks to his pawn majority there.

12.\( \text{cxd5} \) \( \text{g4} \)

The alternative is 12...\( \text{e8} \), after which White has three options:
analysis diagram

A) 13...Rd6 (also possible is 13...d5! or 13...c4! with counterplay) 14.f3 Bd4 (14...d5!?) 15.g5 f6 16.h4
White should choose 16.exf6, and after 16...fxe1+ 17.Qxe1 Qxf6 18.Qxf6 Qxf6 19.a3 his position would be preferable. 16...d5 17.b5 a6! 18.exf6 Qxe1+ It was necessary to sacrifice the queen for two bishops: 18...axb5 19.f7+ Kxf7 20.Qd8 Qxd8. Formally, Black’s material compensation is insufficient, but he has a lot of pieces pointing at the queenside, where the white king is placed. There is no defence against the threat of ...Qc4, ...Qxc3 followed by taking on a2, when the white position collapses. 19.Qxe1 Qxf6 20.e8+ Qxe8 21.Qxe8 Qc4 22.Qf7+ Qxf7 23.Qh6 Qd3+ 24.Qd1 Qg7 25.Qg5+ Qf8 26.Qh7+ Qg8 27.Qf6+ Qf7 28.Qg5 Qh8 29.Qe4 Qe8 30.d6 Qxd2+ 31.Qc2 A terrible mistake; after 31.Qc1 the position would remain complicated, but equal. 31...Qxd6, winning material and with it the game, Smith-Shabalov, Philadelphia 2007;

B) 13.Qf3 Qg4 14.b5 Qd7 15.e6
On 15.Qh1 the simplest is 15...Qxf3 16.gxf3 Qxe5, winning a pawn; White has some compensation, but hardly enough. In the game K.Lutz-Schnelzer, Germany tt 1994, there followed 15...a6 (instead of the exchange on f3) 16.Qxd7 Qxd7 (preferable is 16...Qxd7) 17.e6 fxe6 18.dxe6 Qf6 19.e7 (19.Qe2?) 19...Qxd2+ 20.Qxd2 Qf3 21.gxf3 Qf7 with rough equality. 15...fxe6 16.dxe6 Qxe6 17.Qg5 (17.Qhe1!) 17...Qd4 18.Qe1 Qc4 (18...Qf5!?) 19.Qe8+ Qe8, and here White began to go wrong: 20.Qe1 After 20.b3 Qxb5 21.Qxb5 White obtains sufficient counterplay for equality. 20...Qf8 21.Qe6 Qxe6 22.Qxe6 Qe8 23.Qxe8 Qxe8 – Black keeps an extra pawn, with good chances of success, Riedel-Schnelzer, Germany tt 1994.

C) 13.Qg5 is the strongest move in this position, which poses Black definite problems. 13...Qc7 This is more accurate than 13...f6 14.exf6 Qxf6 15.Qf3 with the better position for White, Cox-Saint Jean, corr. 2003. 14.b5 A position with chances for both sides arises after 14.d6 Qd7 15.a5 Qc6 16.Qf3 Qf5, Titzhoff-Andersen, corr. 2008. 14...Qd7 15.Qf3 a6 16.d6 Qc8 17.Qxd7 Qxd7 18.Qd5 Qxd5 19.Qxd5
analysis diagram

19...£e6 Dubious is 19...£xe5?! 20.£he1 £g7 21.£xe8+ £xe8 22.£e1 £f8 23.£xb7. 20.£f4 £c6 21.£xc6 £xc6 22.£he1 with a small advantage to White, Necula-Reichert, corr. 2012.

13.£e1 c4

An interesting and quite rare move. Also possible is 13...£a6 14.h3 £d7 15.£f3 £e8, Morgan-Gray, corr. 1998. The final position is in White’s favour, but dealing with all these complications at the board is not easy.

14.h3 £f5
Let us also look at another continuation: \textbf{15.\textit{f3} \textit{a6} 16.g4} Less good is 16.\textit{d4 \textit{d3} 17.d6 \textit{c5} 18.\textit{e2} \textit{e8}}, and the black pieces develop great activity, for example: 19.\textit{f3} \textit{bd7} 20.\textit{d5} \textit{xe5} 21.\textit{e7+} \textit{xe7} 22.\textit{dxe7} \textit{exe7} 23.\textit{e5} \textit{xe5} 24.\textit{xb7} \textit{c3} 25.\textit{xc3} \textit{xb7} 26.\textit{f5} 27.\textit{b4} a5 28.\textit{xe5} axb4 29.\textit{xc3} bxc3 30.\textit{xc3} \textit{b1+} 31.\textit{b2} \textit{xa2+}, and White resigned in Axelrod-Grunberg, Jerusalem 2005. \textbf{16...\textit{d3} 17.\textit{xd3}} White has also tried the immediate 17.\textit{d6} \textit{Rc8} (17...\textit{b4}!?) 18.\textit{g2} (White was obviously very frightened to open the c-file after 18.\textit{xd3} \textit{cxd3}) 18...\textit{c5} 19.\textit{d4} \textit{d7} with mutual chances – Cornette-Calvi, Balagne 2004, whilst after 19...\textit{bd7} Black even has the advantage: from d7, the knight exerts pressure on the e5-pawn and frees the path of the b-pawn and the queen. \textbf{17...\textit{cxd3} 18.\textit{d6} }

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \draw (-2,0) grid (2,2);
  \foreach \i in {-2,...,2} {\node at (\i,-2) {\textit{a}};}
  \foreach \i in {-2,...,2} {\node at (2*\i,2) {\textit{h}};}
  \foreach \i in {-2,0,2} {\node at (2*\i,-2) {\textit{g}};}
  \foreach \i in {-2,0,2} {\node at (2*\i,2) {\textit{d}};}
  \foreach \i in {-2,0} {\node at (--2*\i,2) {\textit{f}};}
  \foreach \i in {0,2} {\node at (2*\i,-2) {\textit{b}};}
  \node at (0,0) {1};
  \node at (0,2) {2};
  \node at (-2,0) {8};
  \node at (2,0) {7};
  \node at (-2,2) {6};
  \node at (2,2) {5};
  \node at (-2,-2) {3};
  \node at (2,-2) {4};
  \node at (-2,1) {4};
  \node at (0,1) {3};
  \node at (2,1) {2};
  \node at (-2,-1) {1};
  \node at (0,-1) {2};
  \node at (2,-1) {1};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

A) Bad is 18...\textit{b4} 19.\textit{e4}! a5 20.\textit{b1} \textit{e8} 21.a3 \textit{c4} 22.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 23.\textit{g5} (getting the bishop out from attack with tempo) 23...\textit{b6} 24.axb4 axb4 25.\textit{a2} with advantage to White;

B) 18...\textit{e8} 19.\textit{b1} \textit{c4} (he should not have given up the d3-pawn; correct is 19...\textit{b4} with counterplay) 20.\textit{xd3} \textit{b4} 21.\textit{d1} \textit{b6} 22.\textit{h2} \textit{xb2} 23.\textit{xb2} \textit{xc3} 24.\textit{d2} \textit{c6} 25.\textit{xc3} \textit{xc3} 26.\textit{b3} \textit{xe5} 27.\textit{xe5}, and Black resigned in Striebich-Schmidt, Germany tt 2008/09;

C) Very strong is the untried 18...\textit{c5}!. If now 19.b3, covering the square c4, then 19...a5, and the black position looks preferable – he already threatens ...a5-a4.

\textbf{15.\textit{d3} 16.\textit{xd3} \textit{cxd3} 17.\textit{xd3}}

Bad is 17.\textit{e4} \textit{a6} (the best square for the knight in this variation) 18.\textit{d4} \textit{e8} 19.\textit{xd3} \textit{f6} 20.\textit{f6} \textit{f5} 21.\textit{e2} \textit{axd4} 22.\textit{xd4} \textit{xd5} 23.\textit{e7} \textit{h1+}, and White resigned in Murey-Grunberg, Rohde 2002.

\textbf{17...\textit{a6}}

In the game Lazic-Cosma, Kragujevac 1995, Black chose 17...\textit{c6}, but it is not clear why he put the knight en prise – it is going to b4 anyway, and is excellently-placed on a6.

\textbf{18.\textit{d6} \textit{c8} 19.\textit{b1} \textit{b4} 20.\textit{d1}}
White has also tried 20.\(\text{b}5??\) \(\text{c}4\) 21.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{d}3\) 22.\(\text{xb}6\) (22.\(\text{f}3!!?)\) 22...\(\text{xb}6\) 23.\(\text{xb}6\) \(\text{axb}6\) 24.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{xe}1\) 25.\(\text{xe}1\) \(\text{f}4\) 26.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{d}8\) 27.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{xf}3\) 28.\(\text{xf}3\) \(\text{xe}5\) 29.\(\text{xb}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) with equality, Lazic-Cosma, Kragujevac 1995.

20...\(\text{c}4\) 21.\(\text{h}2\)

Very logical: White includes his rook in the defence along the second rank.

21...\(\text{a}5\) 22.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{a}3+\)

Clearly worse is 22...\(\text{c}5\) 23.\(\text{he}2\) with advantage to White, Movsesian-Francsics, Czech tt 2005; and even stronger is 23.\(\text{e}4!!\).

23.\(\text{a}1\)

Equality results from 23.bxa3, for example: 23...\(\text{xc}3\) 24.\(\text{xb}4\) \(\text{xb}4+\) 25.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{xf}4\) 26.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{c}5\) 27.\(\text{xb}7\) \(\text{xe}5\) 28.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 29.d7 \(\text{d}8\) 30.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\).

23...\(\text{b}5\)

24.\(\text{d}2\)

A mistake, although it is hardly likely that anyone could cope with this position over the board, without concrete knowledge. Which makes this variation all the more attractive for Black.

The only move is 24.\(\text{a}4\), and then: 24...\(\text{xd}6\) 25.\(\text{a}3\) 25.exd6 \(\text{c}2\) 26.a3 \(\text{xa}4\) 27.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{b}3\) 28.\(\text{xc}2\) \(\text{a}2+\) 29.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{xb}2+\) 30.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{c}3+\) (or 30...\(\text{xc}2\) 31.\(\text{xc}2\) \(\text{c}3+\) 32.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{xc}2+\) 33.\(\text{xc}2\) \(\text{xe}1\) 34.\(\text{xe}1\) \(\text{f}6\) with mutual chances) 31.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{c}8+\) 32.\(\text{xb}4\) \(\text{a}5+\) 33.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{c}4+\) 34.\(\text{xc}4\) \(\text{xc}4+\) 35.\(\text{xa}5\) \(\text{c}5+\) with perpetual check. 25...\(\text{d}5\) 26.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{b}5\) 27.exd6 \(\text{c}4\) 28.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{xc}3\) 29.\(\text{xc}3\) \(\text{xc}3\) 30.bxc3 \(\text{xc}3\) 31.\(\text{d}7\) (the assessment is not changed by 31.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{d}8\)) 31...\(\text{xa}3+\) 32.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{xa}2+\) (or 32...\(\text{d}3??\), keeping more pieces on the board) 33.\(\text{xa}2\) \(\text{a}5+\) 34.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{b}5+\) 35.\(\text{b}3\) (or 35.\(\text{a}2\) \(\text{a}5+,\) agreeing to perpetual check) 35...\(\text{xd}7\) – both sides have chances.
24...\text{n}xc3 25.bxc3 \text{n}xa2 26.\text{bxa2} \text{xc3}+ 27.\text{b2} \text{xf3}

White is a pawn down with an insecure king; Black’s position is winning.

28.\text{f2} \text{d5}

Also good is 28...\text{xh3}!?, taking all the kingside pawns.

29.\text{d2}

29...\text{c6}?

Black had a precise path to the win; 29...\text{a5}+ 30.\text{a2} (or 30.\text{b1} \text{c4}) 30...\text{b4} 31.d7 \text{xf4} 32.dxc8=\text{b} 33.\text{xe5}+ 34.\text{b2} \text{a5}+ 35.\text{a2} \text{xa2}+ 36.\text{xa2} \text{e8} 37.\text{xa7} \text{c3} 38.h4 \text{c4} etc.

30.\text{g5}?

A mistake in return; unclear play follows after 30.d7 \text{cd8} 31.\text{d4}.

30...\text{d7} 31.\text{e7} \text{e8} 32.\text{b4} \text{a5}

Both 32...\text{c6} and 32...\text{b6} win.

33.\text{b2}

More tenacious is 33.\text{d4}.

33...\text{c4} 34.\text{d3} \text{b4} 35.\text{b3} \text{xb3}?

Missing the win, which could be achieved by 35...\text{b5}.

36.\text{xb3} \text{e8} 37.\text{a2} \text{a4}?!
He could retain chances of success with 37...\textit{h}8, and now after 38.e6 fxe6 not 39.\textit{xe}6, which is no longer check, and in reply there follows 39...\textit{a}4+ 40.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}1#.

38.\textit{d}5 \textit{c}2+ 39.\textit{b}1

Or 39.\textit{a}3 \textit{c}3+ 40.\textit{a}2=.

39...\textit{c}3

39...\textit{h}2!?.

40.\textit{f}1 \textit{b}3+ 41.\textit{a}2 \textit{e}3 42.\textit{xf}7

Draw agreed – after 42...\textit{e}2+ perpetual check is unavoidable.

On the basis of this example, it is clear that at move 12, Black has two interesting possibilities – 12...\textit{e}8 and 12...\textit{g}4. It looks as though White should have the advantage, but the position is very complicated and playing it requires a very large baggage of knowledge and accurate calculation of variations. In addition, one must not forget that Black has many other variations, where the required knowledge is equally great.
1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Bb6 5.f4 g6 6.Nc3 dxe5 7.fxe5 c5 8.d5 g7 9.f4 0-0 10.Qd2 e6 11.d6

This move is met with two or three times less often than 11.0-0-0, but the percentage score is not in Black’s favour. In my view, it is quite an unpleasant move for Black.

11...c6

11...f6 fails because of 12.Nf3 fxe5 (more tenacious is 12...c6) 13.g5! d7 14.e4 c6 15.c2 d7 16.0-0-0 c8 17.h4! d6 18.h5 with a very strong attack, Vyskocil-Löffler, Austria Bundesliga 2007/08.

12.Nf3 d7

The correct manoeuvre: Black must develop and exert pressure on the enemy centre as quickly as possible.

13.\textit{we3}

White has also tried 13.0-0-0 cxe5 14.xe5 xxe5 15.xe5 c5 16.d3 (interesting is 16.h4!?, after which Black has a choice between 16...h5 or 16.b6 h5 g5 with a sharp game) 16...g4 (16...f6!? 17.xc5 17.g3!? 17.b6 18.d4 g5+ 19.d2 xd2+ 20.xd2 b7, Migot-Sergeev, Pardubice 2013).

13...f6

Only this move allows Black to count on equality. He does not equalise after 13...d4 14.0-0-0 f6 (even worse is 14...a5 15.h4 with an attack, Kraut-Sieglen, Stuttgart 1985) 15.h4!? fxe5 16.g5 a5 17.d3 b5 18.h5 with dangerous threats, Finkel-Grunberg, Jerusalem 2013.
14.h4!?

Other continuations have been tried:

A) 14.0-0-0 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)dx e5 (14...fxe5?! 15.g5 is in White’s favour) 15.\(\texttt{\textregistered}\)xe5 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)xe5 16.\(\texttt{\textregistered}\)xe5 fxe5 17.b1 In reply to 17.h4!?, both 17...b6 18.h5 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)b7 19.hxg6 h6 and 17...d7 18.h5 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)e6 19.hxg6 h6 are possible. In both variations Black’s position looks dangerous, but without practical tests it is hard to give a precise assessment; the chances are about equal.

17...d7 18.h4 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)f4 19.Qxc5 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)f2

B) 14.exf6 and now:

B1) Black does not gain equality from 14...\(\texttt{\textregistered}\)xf6 15.g5 Qf7 16.0-0-0 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)d4:

B11) The exchange sacrifice 17.Qxd4 is interesting: 17...cxd4 18.Qxd4 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)xd4 19.Qxd4 Qe7 It is worth considering 19...b6, so as to develop the queenside more quickly. Then there could follow 20.h4 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)b7 21.Qxf6 Qxf6 22.Qe2 Qe8 23.Qe2 Qe8 24.Qe2 Qe8 25.Qxe8 with a small advantage to White. 20.Qf6 21.Qe6 22.Qc5 with good compensation for the exchange, Hess-Mandt, Mittelrhein 2012;

B12) Practice has also seen the quiet 17.Qd3 \(\texttt{\textregistered}\)xf3 18.gxf3 Qd4 19.Qd2?! An inaccuracy, after 19.Qxe5! This is the point: now Black threatens to take on f3 with a tempo. 20.Qd1 Another inaccuracy; better was 20.f4 with mutual chances. 20...d7 (also better for Black is 20...Qxd3+!? 21.Qxd3 e5) 21.Qe4 (an oversight) 21.Qxe4 22.Qg2 Qd6, and in the game Dubois-Otwinowska, Challes ch-FRA w 1990, Black emerged with two extra pawns.

B2) It is also worth studying the untired 14...Qxf6 15.g5. Worse is 15.Qg3 Qg4 16.Qxe5 Qf5 17.Qae3 Qe3 18.Qd3, and after 18.Qf8 or 18.Qf7 the game turns out in Black’s favour. 15.Qe4 Also worth considering is 15.Qg4 16.Qg5 Qd7 17.Qa3 (17.0-0-0 b6 18.Qg1 Qa6, and Black takes over the initiative; 17.h3 Qf5 18.Qg1 Qg5 with counterplay for Black) 17...Qe5 (17...Qd4?!) 18.Qe2 Qc6 with mutual chances. 16.Qxe4 Qxf4 17.Qd3 Qb6 (there is also 17.Qxb2 18.Qb1 Qg7 with a complicated position) 18.Qxb6 (on 18.Qxf2 unpleasant is 18...Qb4) 18...axb6 with a position of dynamic equality.
14...\textit{Ndxe5} 15.\textit{Bxe5} fxe5 16.\textit{0-0-0}

An unclear game results from 16.h5 \textit{Qxd6} or 16...\textit{e4} 17.\textit{Ndxe4} \textit{Bxb2}.

16...\textit{Nd4} 17.h5

17...\textit{Nf5}

An interesting alternative is 17...\textit{Qxd6}!? 18.hxg6 h6.

18.\textit{Qxc5}

Stronger was 18.\textit{Qe1} gxh5 19.\textit{Qxh5}.

18...\textit{b6} 19.\textit{Qf2}

The computer’s recommended exchange sacrifice is also worth considering: 19.\textit{Qa3} 20.\textit{Qd3} 21.\textit{Nxd6} 22.\textit{Qxa2} \textit{Qe7} 23.\textit{Nge4} \textit{Bf6} (somewhat worse is 23...\textit{e4} 24.\textit{hxg7} \textit{Rfd8} 24.\textit{Qxg6} e4 – Black’s position is more promising.

19...\textit{Qb7} 20.\textit{Qd3}

On 20.hxg6 the reply 20...\textit{e4} is unpleasant.

20...\textit{Qc8}?!  

Correct was 20...\textit{Qxd6} 21.\textit{Qc2} \textit{Qf6} 22.h6 \textit{Qf4}+ 23.\textit{Qb1} \textit{Qf6} (somewhat worse is 23...\textit{e4} 24.\textit{hxg7} \textit{Rfd8} 24.\textit{Qxg6} e4 – Black’s position is more promising.

21.\textit{Qb1}

White misses the chances to obtain a clear advantage: 21.hxg6 h6 22.d7 \textit{Qc7} (also insufficient is 22...\textit{Qc5} because of 23.\textit{Qxf5} exf5 24.\textit{Qd6} \textit{Qe7} 25.\textit{Qd1} \textit{Qd8} 26.\textit{Qh4} \textit{Qxh4} 27.\textit{Qxh4} \textit{Qf8} 28.\textit{Qe6} \textit{Qc6} 29.\textit{Qd5} or 29.\textit{Qxf5} 23.\textit{Qxf5} exf5 24.\textit{Qd2} e4 25.\textit{Qg5!} \textit{Qxd7} 26.\textit{Qxd7} \textit{Qxg5}+ 27.\textit{Qb1} etc.
21...\textit{\texttt{N}}xd6 22.hxg6 h6 23.\textit{\texttt{N}}e2 \textit{\texttt{f}}f6 24.\textit{\texttt{Q}}e4

Preferable is 24.\textit{\texttt{N}}d2!? Now the initiative passes to Black.

24...\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe4 25.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{Q}}xe4+ 26.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{Q}}f4

Better was 26...\textit{\texttt{Q}}f5, with the idea after 27.\textit{\texttt{R}}he1 to exploit the pin – 27...\textit{\texttt{R}}xc4; even worse for White is 27.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xf5? exf5.

27.\textit{\texttt{R}}xf4

White wrongly allows his opponent to activate his rook with tempo. Preferable is 27.\textit{\texttt{R}}h4!? \textit{\texttt{Q}}xe4+ 28.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{Q}}f4 with mutual chances.

27...\textit{\texttt{R}}xf4 28.b3 \textit{\texttt{G}}g4 29.\textit{\texttt{D}}d2 e4

Finally the black bishop breaks out.

30.\textit{\texttt{H}}h4 \textit{\texttt{E}}xh4 31.\textit{\texttt{D}}xh4 \textit{\texttt{E}}f8 32.g3?!

Voluntarily creating an object of attack; more tenacious is 32.\textit{\texttt{H}}d6.

32...\textit{\texttt{e}}5 33.\textit{\texttt{F}}e2 \textit{\texttt{G}}xg3 34.\textit{\texttt{E}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{F}}f4 35.\textit{\texttt{E}}xf4 \textit{\texttt{D}}xf4

White resigned.

As we have seen, the plan of 11.d6 with the idea of h4-h5 poses Black definite problems. However, the position remains double-edged and a clear path to an advantage for White is not obvious.
1.e4 \( \text{e}6 \) 2.e5 \( \text{d}5 \) 3.d4 \( \text{d}6 \) 4.c4 \( \text{b}6 \) 5.f4 \( \text{dxe5} \) 6.fxe5 \( \text{c}5 \) 7.d5 \( \text{g}6 \) 8.c3 \( \text{g}7 \) 9.f4 0-0 10.e2

The idea of this move is very simple: White intends \( \text{f}3 \) followed by short castling, but he starts developing with the bishop move, so as not to allow an immediate ...\( \text{g}4 \) by Black.

10...e6 11.f3

Another line that has been seen is 11.d6 \( \text{c}6 \) 12.f3 \( \text{d}7 \) 13.d2 \( \text{dxe5} \) 14.xe5 \( \text{x}e5 \) (or 14...\( \text{x}e5 \) with mutual chances, D.Roos-Polaczek, Belgium tt 2013) 15.0-0 0 16.h4. Here in the game Saliba-Soares, Sao Paulo 1996, a draw was agreed, although Black’s chances are somewhat better.

11...exd5 12.cxd5

Despite the fact that White specially played \( \text{e}2 \) to stop the pin, Black now manages to bring his bishop out to \( \text{g}4 \) after all.

12...\( \text{g}4 \)

Combining development with pressure against the key pawn on \( \text{e}5 \).

13.0-0 \( \text{d}8d7 \)
Another black piece is included in the attack on the centre: already there is a threat of \( \textit{\ldots} \text{xf3} \) followed by the capture of the pawn on e5.

14.\( \textit{\textbf{Qe1}}?! \)

Black is also better after 14.d6 \( \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \) 15.\( \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) 16.\( \textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{b8}} \) 17.\( \textit{\textbf{d5}} \textit{\textbf{e4}} \) or 14.\( \textit{\textbf{e1}} \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \) (also possible is 14...\( \textit{\textbf{e8}}, \) Pein-V.Sveshnikov, Riga 2014) 15.\( \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \) (the e5-pawn cannot be defended on that square, so White has to advance it) 16.e6 \( \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) 17.\( \textit{\textbf{xe5}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) – Black’s chances are better.

Better is 14.\( \textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{xe2}} \) 15.\( \textit{\textbf{xe2}} \textit{\textbf{e8}} \) 16.\( \textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) (but not 16...\( \textit{\textbf{c4}} \) 17.\( \textit{\textbf{f2}}, \) Stanetskyy-Nogin, Kiev 2009, with advantage to White) 17.\( \textit{\textbf{xe5}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) (17...\( \textit{\textbf{d7}} \)?) 18.\( \textit{\textbf{xe5}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} \) 19.\( \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) with rough equality.

14...\( \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \) 15.\( \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) 16.\( \textit{\textbf{xe5}} \textit{\textbf{e8}} \) 17.\( \textit{\textbf{f2}} \textit{\textbf{dxe5}} \) 18.\( \textit{\textbf{dxc5}} \textit{\textbf{e8}} \)

Also good is 18...\( \textit{\textbf{h4}} \)!? 19.g3 \( \textit{\textbf{d4+}} \) 20.\( \textit{\textbf{g2}} \textit{\textbf{xg3+}} \) 21.hxg3 \( \textit{\textbf{xc5}} \) with an extra pawn for Black.

19.\( \textit{\textbf{f2}} \textit{\textbf{xc3}} \) 20.\( \textit{\textbf{bxc3}} \textit{\textbf{xc3}} \) 21.\( \textit{\textbf{ad1}} \textit{\textbf{d6}} \) 22.\( \textit{\textbf{d4}} \textit{\textbf{e7}} \) 23.\( \textit{\textbf{g4}} \textit{\textbf{c4}} \)!

23...h5 gives a decisive advantage.

24.\( \textit{\textbf{e6}} \textit{\textbf{d3}} \)

This is an inaccuracy, although, as it happens, it enabled Black to win in one move. Objectively stronger was 24...\( \textit{\textbf{e5}} \) 25.\( \textit{\textbf{e4}} \textit{\textbf{f3+}} \) 26.\( \textit{\textbf{xf3}} \textit{\textbf{fxe6}} \) 27.\( \textit{\textbf{xe6}} \textit{\textbf{xe6}} \) 28.\( \textit{\textbf{dxe6}} \textit{\textbf{xe6}} \) 29.\( \textit{\textbf{xa7}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} \) with a small advantage.
25. $\text{d}2$?

White resigned, not waiting for 25... $\text{xh}2+i!$ 26. $\text{xf}2$ $\text{xf}1+$ with decisive material gains.

But correct was 25. $\text{f}6!$ $\text{xf}1$ (the assessment is not changed by 25... $\text{f}5$ 26. $\text{xf}5$ $\text{c}1+$ 27. $\text{f}1$ $\text{xf}1+$ 28. $\text{xf}1$ (only not 28. $\text{xf}1$? $\text{xe}6$) 28...$\text{xe}6$ 29. $\text{xe}6$ $\text{a}6+$ 30. $\text{g}1$ $\text{b}6$ 31. $\text{xe}7$ $\text{xd}4+$ 32. $\text{f}1$ $\text{c}4+$ with equality) 26. $\text{xf}7+$ $\text{xf}7$ 27. $\text{xd}6$ $\text{c}1$ 28.h3 $\text{d}2+$ 29. $\text{h}2$ $\text{f}1+$ with perpetual check.

**Conclusion:** The move 10. $\text{e}2$ does not create any problems for Black. More likely, it is the opposite: now it is White who must show accuracy, to avoid falling into an inferior position.
Chapter 6
The Exchange Variation
1.e4 d6 2.e5 d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 Bb6 5.exd6 exd6

In the short theoretical survey above, we have already explained why we recommend taking on d6 with the e-pawn. White tries to obtain a solid position, with a small but stable advantage. But Black also has his trumps. He brings his bishops to f6 and f5, advances ...d6-d5 and tries to ‘lay siege to’ the d4-pawn. An important nuance is that Black should not hurry with the development of his knight to c6, because of a typical variation such as 6.Nc3 Nb6 7.Bb5 Ne7 8.Bc3 0-0 9.d5 Nf5 (one really doesn’t want to retreat to b8!) 10.Bxe5 dxe5. Positions of this type clearly favour White: Black is left with a bad knight on b6, and White sets up a scheme like Bb3, 0-0-0, f2-f3 and prepares an attack on the kingside.

Therefore, Black should for the moment leave the knight on b8 and complete the development of his kingside. After this, there are various possible variations: the knight can come out to a6 or c6, and we will look in more detail at these various possible plans in this chapter.

**Game 19**
D. Movileanu
Vladimir Sveshnikov
Amantea 2014


Here Black has an interesting idea, invented by the French GM, Christian Bauer.

8...Ba6!?
This move looks rather odd, as Black voluntarily puts his second knight on far from its obviously-best square. But this plan also has its pluses. Most importantly of all, the move will almost certainly come as a surprise to the opponent, because even in an extremely large database, I found only three games with it. So the move is completely unstudied, and it is also not nearly as bad as it may look at first sight.

By coming out to a6, the knight does not block the c-pawn, it controls the squares b4 and c5 and is not attacked if White plays d4-d5. Later, the knight can come to b4, or via c7 to e6, from where it puts pressure on the d4-pawn. In general, in this variation, Black often directs his knights towards e6 and f5.

9.0-0

Practice has also seen 9...e3 b4 (this position can also arise via 8...c6 instead of 8...a6) 10.0-0. Here the most accurate move looks to be 10...c6 (worse is 10...xd3, as in the game M.Stojanovic-Regan, Novi Sad 2009; there was no reason to rush with this exchange, since White cannot move the bishop away from d3 anyway, because the pawn on c4 would be hanging) 11.b3. Now Black can take the bishop: 11...xd3 12.xd3 d5 13.cxd5 (better is 13.c5 d7 14.b4 e8, Couttet-Wohl, France tt 2007, or 14...b6, Howell-Broomfield, Budapest 2003, in both cases with satisfactory play for Black) 13...xd5 Margarido-Spraggett, Figueira da Foz 2008. Black’s chances are already preferable, as he has two bishops and White has an isolated pawn.

At a Christmas blitz tournament in December 2014, an opponent of mine played 9.b3. This is how the game continued: 9...b4 10.b1 c6 11.0-0 d5 12.a3 a6 13.e3 dxc4 (13...c7 is also not bad) 14.bxc4 e6 (but not 14...xc4? because of 15.d3) 15.d3 (a position with mutual chances arises after 15.c5 d5 16.xd5 edx5 17.d3 c7) 15...g6 16.a2 xa3 17.d5 cxd5 (he should not hurry with the exchange on d5 – he can maintain the balance with 17...f5 18.d2 b4) 18.cxd5 f5 19.d2 b4 20.b1?! (a serious inaccuracy; after 20.g3 or 20.d4 White’s chances would be preferable) 20...c4 21.a2 xe3 22.fxe3 xb1 23.axb1 e7 – Black has the advantage, Bernotas-V. Sveshnikov, Riga 2014.

9...c6 10.b3 b4

Forcing the opponent to put the bishop on b1. After the immediate 10...d5 there is the unpleasant reply 11.c5 d7 12.xa6, and Black gets doubled pawns.

As well as the knight raid to b4, there is also another good plan, which we will examine on the basis of the following
11. \textit{b1} d5

White's next two moves are usually played without thinking, as are Black's.

\textbf{12. c5} \textit{d7} 13. a3 \textit{a6} 14. \textit{g3}

On 14.b4 there is the possible 14...\textit{c7} 15. \textit{d3} b6 with fighting play, or 15...\textit{e8} 16.b5 \textit{e6} 17.bxc6 bxc6 18.\textit{b1 f6} 19.\textit{e3} g6, also with mutual chances.
14...g6

The threat was 15.\( \text{f}5 \).

15.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{c}7 \)

The knight has nothing more to do on a6.

16.\( \text{a}2 \)

Transferring the other rook to the e-file looks very logical, but does not bring White any benefit at all.

16...\( \text{e}8 \)

Defending the bishop in advance.

17.\( \text{ae}2 \) \( \text{b}6 \)

Now there follows a standard breakthrough against the enemy pawn structure.

18.\( \text{b}4 \)

18.\( \text{xb}6 \) axb6 is in Black’s favour.

18...\( \text{a}5 \)

I wanted to open the a-file for the rook. Another good move is 18...\( \text{f}8 \) followed by the transfer of the knight to e6.

19.\( \text{h}3 \)

A useful move, of course: White makes luft against a back-rank mate and takes control of the square g4, where the black bishop might aim. But the move is very slow, and Black quickly seizes the initiative. Mind you, it is not so easy to
19...axb4

Opening lines for the rooks.

20.axb4 bxc5 21.bxc5

White has a weakness on d4 and Black now starts to attack it. The recapture 21.dxc5 also fails to equalise, because then White has a weak pawn on b4.

21...\texttt{N}e6 22.\texttt{Ra2}

An inaccuracy, as a result of which White loses a pawn.

22...\texttt{Ra2} 23.\texttt{xa2} \texttt{f6} 24.\texttt{b4} \texttt{b7} 25.\texttt{c2}

It may look as though White has defended the d4-pawn securely, but...

25...\texttt{N}xd4! 26.\texttt{Re8+} \texttt{xe8} 27.\texttt{e3}

After 27.\texttt{xd4} \texttt{xd4} 28.\texttt{e1}+ 29.\texttt{h2} \texttt{xe1} Black regains the piece and also wins the pawn on c5 as well.

27...\texttt{e6} 28.\texttt{g4} \texttt{g7} 29.\texttt{h6+} \texttt{h8} 30.\texttt{h5}

This seems White’s best chance: the piece sacrifice opens the enemy king and obtains some prospects of an attack.

30...gxh5

However, Black has a lot of pieces in the defence, so it is not so hard to find solid moves.

31.\texttt{h5} \texttt{f6} 32.\texttt{xf7+} \texttt{g8} 33.\texttt{h6+} \texttt{f8} 34.\texttt{h4} \texttt{h5}
If White avoids the queen exchange, he loses the knight, so White resigned.

Game 20  
Andrei Volokitin 2660  
Vassily Ivanchuk 2731  
Foros 2006 (8)

1.e4  Nf6 2.e5  d5 3.d4  d6 4.c4  Bb6 5.exd6  Bxd6 6.Nc3  Be7 7.h3

The idea of this move is very simple: White does not allow the enemy bishop out to g4, where it would pin the knight at f3. Although this move is useful, though, it also involves a loss of time and Black is hardly likely to have any real problems.

7...0-0 8.Nf3  Bf6

8...Re8 is also possible.

9.Be2

On 9.Be3 it is also worth considering 9...e6 10.b3 (a game with mutual chances results from 10.d5 Bxc3+ 11.bxc3 Bf5) 10...d5 11.c5 c8 (this is somewhat better than 11...Nd7) 12.d3 c6 13.0-0 Be7 and then ...f5 with counterplay. If White prods the bishop with the move g2-g4, then it heads to g6.

9...e6

Ivanchuk’s idea: Black attacks the c4-pawn and now White must do something to defend it.

As well as the move in the game, 9...c6 is also not bad.

10.d5

This logical move is tempting: White defends c4 with tempo.
White has also tried the more restrained 10.b3 d5 11.c5 d6 12.d4 (11...c8!?). Now:

A) 12...d3 is bad because of 12...xc5! 13.dxc5 f5 14.d2 d4 15.d1 d3 – Black regains the piece and continues his attack;
B) In the event of 12.0-0 Black does best not to take on c5, but to continue 12...e8 and then ...c6, ...f8 and ...g6 with a roughly equal game;
C) 12...b2 c6 (12...b6!? 13.e1 e8 14.0-0 f8 15.d3 d7 16.e2 f5 17.xf5 (17.b5!!?) 17...xf5 18.g3 g6 19.d2 e6 with the better chances for Black, Milu-Degraeve, Marseille 2012.

10...xc3+

The point of Ivanchuk’s idea: having provoked the move d4-d5, Black exchanges on c3, spoiling White’s pawn structure.

11.bxc3 d7

More accurate is 11...f5 12.0-0 (12.d4 g6 13.0-0 d7 14.e4 favours Black). Then possible is 12...h6 (or 12...a6=) 13.e1 e8 14.e3 d8d7 with equality.

12.0-0

Black had a small advantage after 12.e3 a6 13.0-0 c5 14.d4 e7 15.e1 e8 16.f1 d8 17.e2 xe1 18.xe1 xe8 19.xe8+ xe8 20.xf5 f6 21.f4 e7 in Klenburg-Sergeev, Oberwart 2009.

12...a6 13.g5

With this move, White provokes the move ...f7-f6, so as to weaken the square e6, where he would like later to direct his knight. However, this plan is difficult to realise, because Black puts his knight on c5 and takes control of the weak point. And if White exchanges the knight on c5, then after dxc5 the transit square d4 is unavailable for the white knight.
13...f6 14.e3 c5 15.e1 e8 16.f1 e7 17.d4 f8

Black prepares to double rooks on the e-file.

18.b5xb5

A perfectly sensible decision: the two knights are stronger than the two bishops in this position. The dark-squared bishop is hampered by the black pawns and the light-squared bishop by its own.

19.cxb5 eae8 20.a4 f5 21.a5 f4

22.d2

Unfavourable is 22.axb6?! fxe3 23.fxex3 axb6; all the remaining black pieces are better-placed than their opposite numbers, and the white position is full of weaknesses.

22...exf1 23.xf1 bxd7 24.f3 f6 25.c1 b6 26.axb6 axb6 27.f2 h6 28.d4 g5 29.c4 f6 30.a1 h5 31.a7 e7 32.c2

An inaccuracy; he could maintain the balance with 32.xc5 dxc5 (also good is 32.bxc5 33.d3 with mutual chances) 33.d6 xdx6 34.xdx6 cxd6 35.b7 g3 36.f2 a8 37.d3.

32.g3 33.a1

Preferable is 33.f2 – the rook should be placed on a7, so it can ‘fasten onto’ the c7-pawn. Admittedly, after 33...f6 with the idea of e7 (exploiting the fact that 34.xc7 does not work because of 34...xf1 35.xf1 a1+, mating) Black’s chances are still superior, but after the move in the game, White’s position becomes extremely difficult.

33.g5 34.h2 f7 35.g1 d7

Black transfers the knight to h4. It is a long way, but White finds it difficult to develop any activity.
36.\textit{h}2 \textit{e}5 37.\textit{f}2 \textit{g}6 38.\textit{d}3 \textit{h}4 39.\textit{a}7 \textit{e}7 40.\textit{a}8? \\

More tenacious is 40.\textit{a}1.

40...\textit{g}f5 41.\textit{f}1

41...\textit{e}3 42.\textit{xe}3 \textit{fxe}3 43.\textit{e}2 \textit{f}5 44.\textit{a}2 \textit{f}4+ 45.\textit{g}1 \textit{d}4 46.\textit{h}2 \textit{e}5+ 47.\textit{f}4 \textit{xf}4+ 48.\textit{g}1 \textit{g}3 49.\textit{d}3 \textit{e}4 50.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}4 51.\textit{b}1 \textit{d}2

White resigned.

\textbf{Conclusion:} Ivanchuk’s idea 9...\textit{e}6!? puts the move 7.h3 in doubt. White in this position has only a small space advantage, and he needs to develop as quickly as possible and try to exploit his small positional plus; White simply lacks the time for quiet moves like 7.h3.

\textbf{Game 21}  
Dragoljub Minic  
Vassily Smyslov  
Palma de Mallorca 1970 (18)  

1.e4 \textit{f}6 2.e5 \textit{d}5 3.d4 \textit{d}6 4.c4 \textit{b}6 5.exd6 \textit{exd}6 6.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}7 7.\textit{e}2 0-0 8.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}4

We will examine the plan with 8...\textit{f}5 later in the game Yagupov-Balashov, Moscow 1996.

The more subtle 8...\textit{f}6 is also worth considering, not yet determining the position of the light-squared bishop and not putting the knight on c6. However, after 9.0-0 Black nonetheless has to play one of these moves, so it will probably amount to no more than a transposition.

9.b3

The immediate 9.0-0 will be examined later.
9...c5

The seventh World Champion implements a very original plan. Other set-ups are also possible: 9...\textit{f}6, or 10...\textit{c}6, after which play transposes into variations considered after 9.0-0.

10.\textit{e}3

Strengthening the square d4. Black has no problems after either 10.dxc5 \textit{f}6 11.b2 dxc5, or 10.d5 \textit{xf}3 11.xf3 \textit{f}6 12.d3 \textit{e}8+ 13.e3 \textit{d}4 14.0-0 \textit{xe}3 15.fxe3 \textit{d}8d7.

10...\textit{c}6

10...cxd4 11.xd4 is obviously better for White – it is very hard for Black to rid himself of the weakness on d6.

11.\textit{c}1

Little is promised by either 11.d5 \textit{f}6 12.e1 \textit{xf}3 (12...\textit{e}7!? 13.xf3 \textit{d}4, or 11.dxc5 dxc5 12.0-0 \textit{xf}5 or 12...\textit{c}8 with equality.

Best, it would seem, is 11.0-0, after which Black replies 11...\textit{f}6.
A) 12.\(\texttt{Qe4!}\) \(\texttt{F e8}\) 13.\(\texttt{Qxf6+}\) \(\texttt{F xf6}\) 14.\(\texttt{h3}\) \(\texttt{Kh5}\) with mutual chances;

B) 12.\(\texttt{Rc1}\) \(\texttt{Bxf3}\) 13.\(\texttt{Bxf3}\) \(\texttt{cxd4}\) (also, 13...\(\texttt{Qxd4}\) 14.\(\texttt{Qxd4}\) \(\texttt{Qxd4}\) 15.\(\texttt{Bb7}\) \(\texttt{Bb8}\) 16.\(\texttt{e4}\) \(\texttt{e8}\)) 14.\(\texttt{Qxc6}\) \(\texttt{dxc6}\) 15.\(\texttt{Bb7}\) \(\texttt{Bb8}\) 16.\(\texttt{e4}\) \(\texttt{exf2+}\) 17.\(\texttt{Bxf2}\) \(\texttt{g6}\) – Black has satisfactory play;

C) 12.\(\texttt{dxc5}\) \(\texttt{Bxc3}\) (weaker is 12...\(\texttt{dxc5}\) 13.\(\texttt{Bc1}\), but it was worth considering 12...\(\texttt{Bxf3}\)! 13.\(\texttt{Bxf3}\) \(\texttt{cxd4}\) 13.\(\texttt{Bxc4}\) 14.\(\texttt{Bxd4}\) \(\texttt{Bg5}\) (13...\(\texttt{d5}\)?) 14.\(\texttt{Rc2}\) \(\texttt{Rfe8+}\) 15.\(\texttt{Rxe2}\) \(\texttt{Rxe2+}\) 16.\(\texttt{Bxe2}\) \(\texttt{d5}\) 17.\(\texttt{exd5}\) \(\texttt{Qxd5}\) 18.0-0 \(\texttt{Qdb4}\) 19.\(\texttt{a3}\) \(\texttt{Qxd4}\) 20.\(\texttt{Qxd4}\) \(\texttt{Qc6}\) with rough equality.

11...\(\texttt{f5}\)

This looks perfectly sensible – Black wants to play ...\(\texttt{f5-f4}\) and drive away the \(\texttt{Bc3}\), but this manoeuvre takes two moves and also weakens the square e6. Stronger was 11...\(\texttt{xf3}\)! 12.\(\texttt{Qxf3}\) \(\texttt{cxd4}\) 13.\(\texttt{Qxd4}\) \(\texttt{Qg5}\) (13...\(\texttt{d5}\)?) 14.\(\texttt{Bc2}\) \(\texttt{Bf8+}\) 15.\(\texttt{Bxe2}\) (15.\(\texttt{Bf1}\)?) 15...\(\texttt{Qxe2+}\) 16.\(\texttt{Bxe2}\) \(\texttt{d5}\) 17.\(\texttt{cxd5}\) \(\texttt{Qxd5}\) 18.0-0 \(\texttt{Qa6}\) 19.\(\texttt{a3}\) \(\texttt{Qxe2}\) 20.\(\texttt{Qxd4}\) \(\texttt{Qc6}\) with rough equality.

12.\(\texttt{dxc5}\)

It makes sense simply to castle, 12.0-0, and if 12...\(\texttt{f4}\), then 13.\(\texttt{Qd2}\) \(\texttt{xf3}\) 14.\(\texttt{Qxf3}\) \(\texttt{Qxd4}\) (worse is 14...\(\texttt{cxd4}\) 15.\(\texttt{Qc2}\), regaining one of the pawns) 15.\(\texttt{Qxb7}\) \(\texttt{Qb8}\) 16.\(\texttt{Qf3}\), after which Black has seriously weakened the light squares.

12...\(\texttt{dxc5}\) 13.\(\texttt{Qd5}\)

Again, it was worth considering 13.0-0.

13...\(\texttt{Qxd5}\) 14.\(\texttt{Qxd5}\) \(\texttt{b4}\) 15.\(\texttt{a3}\)
15...f4

More accurate is 15...\textit{xf}3?! 16.\textit{xf}3 f4 17.\textit{xf}4 \textit{xf}4 18.axb4 \textit{xd}4 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{xb}4 20.0-0 \textit{d}6 with approximate equality.

16.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 17.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xf}3 18.gxf3 \textit{a}6 19.\textit{e}3

Correct was 19.\textit{b}5; on this square, the rook is defended by the bishop, and it restricts the enemy knight and attacks the pawn on b7. In this case White would have a small edge.

19...\textit{f}6 20.\textit{d}2 \textit{fe}8 21.\textit{f}1 \textit{ad}8 22.\textit{d}3

It was worth considering 22.\textit{g}1!?. However, even after the game continuation, White retains the initiative, since Black has not played especially well.

22...\textit{d}6 23.\textit{g}1 \textit{h}8 24.\textit{g}4 \textit{xd}5 25.\textit{xf}4 \textit{c}5 26.\textit{c}2 \textit{e}5

In the event of 26...\textit{e}6 27.\textit{f}5 \textit{xf}5 28.\textit{x}f5 \textit{d}4 29.\textit{e}4 \textit{e}7 30.\textit{d}3 White’s advantage is also not in doubt.

27.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 28.b4 \textit{e}6
29.\textit{Re}e4?! 

By exploiting his opponent’s uncertain play over the past segment of the game, White could have achieved a decisive advantage: 29.f4 \textit{Re}ed5 (or 29...\textit{Rh}5 30.f5 \textit{Rf}f8 31.\textit{Rc}c7) 30.\textit{Rb}b3 \textit{R}5d6 31.\textit{Rxe}6 \textit{Re}x6 32.\textit{Rc}c7, and Black’s defences collapse.

29...\textit{Rxe}4 30.\textit{Rxe}4?! 

Another inaccuracy; better was 30.fxe4, straightening out his pawn structure.

30...\textit{b}6 31.\textit{Rd}3 \textit{Rxd}3 32.\textit{Rxd}3 \textit{Rf}f4 33.\textit{Re}4 \textit{g}6 34.\textit{Ke}1 \textit{Kg}7 35.\textit{Rd}2 

Here a draw was agreed, although White could perfectly well play on, since he does have an extra pawn, albeit doubled.

\textbf{Summary}: Smyslov played an interesting idea in 9...c5!; later, in the complications, White proved the stronger and had every chance of winning. However, this does not make the opening idea itself bad, and Black can perfectly well include it in his armoury.
1.e4 Nf6 2.e5 d5 3.c4 b6 4.d4 d6 5.exd5 exd5 6.Nc3 e7 7.f3 g4 8.e2 0-0 9.0-0

9...c6

The alternative is 9...c6!? 10.b3 Be8 11.h3 Bh5 12.e3. White has also tried 12.f4 a5 (the immediate 12...a6 deserves attention) 13.e1 a6 (the knight will follow the route well-known to us: b8-a6-c7-e6, so as to strengthen the pressure on the enemy centre) 14.f1 (better is 14.d2 with a complicated game) 14...c7 15.e1 e6 16.e3 d5 17.c5 d7 with a promising position for Black, Mortensen-Agdestein, Reykjavik 1995. 12.d5 13.c5 d7 14.b4 f6 15.b3 f8 16.fd1 e6 17.b5 d7 18.ac1 c7, Nezar-Degraeve, Marseille 2010. Black has placed his pieces successfully and can look to the future with confidence.

10.d5 xf3 11.xf3 e5 12.b3 g5!?

Practically forcing White’s dark-squared bishop to go to b2, because the exchange of bishops favours Black.

13.b2 xf3+ 14.xf3 f6 15.e1 d7 16.d1

So as to unpin the knight at c3, White himself has to offer the bishop exchange.

A roughly equal game also arises after 16.e3 a6 17.fe1 e5.

16.e8 17.xf6 xf6

The position is still within the bounds of equality, but, as we will see in this game, Black’s play is quite easy, whereas White should show definite accuracy.
18.\textit{xf6} \textit{xf6} 19.\textit{c3} \textit{a6}

Not allowing the knight to b5.

20.\textit{f3}

White opens a path to the centre for his king.

20...\textit{d7} 21.\textit{f2}

It is worth considering 21.\textit{f4}?, not allowing the enemy knight to e5.

21...\textit{e5} 22.\textit{e3}

22...\textit{f5}!

An excellent move: Black takes the square e4 away from the white knight and also prepares to bring his king to the centre. In addition, he stops White from playing g2-g4, seizing space on the kingside.

23.\textit{d1}

23.\textit{fe1}? loses to 23...\textit{f4}, but the knight transfer 23.\textit{e2} was worth considering; after this, there could follow 23...\textit{b5} 24.\textit{c1} bxc4 25.bxc4 \textit{ab8} with mutual chances.

23...\textit{e7}

A battle for the open file begins: for the moment, Black doubles his rooks.

24.\textit{h3}

White protects the g4-square, so as to play f3-f4 and drive the opponent’s knight out of the centre.
24...\textit{\texttt{e}e8} 25.\textit{\texttt{e}e2}

At the moment, 25.f4 does not work because of 25...\textit{\texttt{g}g4+}.

25...\textit{\texttt{g}g5!}

Again Black prevents f3-f4.

26.\textit{\texttt{g}g3} \textit{\texttt{f}f7}

It is time to bring the king closer to the epicentre of events.

27.\textit{\texttt{d}d4}

It was worth considering 27.f4!? \textit{\texttt{x}xf4} 28.\textit{\texttt{x}xf4} \textit{\texttt{g}g6} 29.\textit{\texttt{xe}e7+} \textit{\texttt{x}xe7} 30.\textit{\texttt{f}f3}, and it is not clear how Black can strengthen his position.

27...\textit{\texttt{f}f6} 28.\textit{\texttt{c}c2}?! 

Here too, 28.f4 leads to equality.

28...\textit{\texttt{h}h5} 29.\textit{\texttt{e}e2}

Another inaccuracy, after which White’s position becomes quite unpleasant.

29...\textit{\texttt{g}g4} 30.\textit{\texttt{fxg}4} \textit{\texttt{hxg}4} 31.\textit{\texttt{h}h4}

31.hxg4 is bad because of 31...\textit{\texttt{x}xg4+}.

31...\textit{\texttt{f}f3} 32.\textit{\texttt{d}d3}

Clearly worse is 32.\textit{\texttt{f}f4} \textit{\texttt{e}e3}.

32...\textit{\texttt{e}e4} 33.\textit{\texttt{b}b2}

White must stand and wait to see what his opponent undertakes.

33...\textit{\texttt{e}e7} 34.\textit{\texttt{a}a4} \textit{\texttt{a}a5}

Fixing the weakness on b3.

35.\textit{\texttt{c}c3}

More tenacious is 35.\textit{\texttt{c}c3}.

35...\textit{\texttt{e}e1}

The black rook breaks into the rear of the opponent’s camp.

36.\textit{\texttt{e}e2}

The correct decision – it is favourable for White to exchange one pair of rooks, so as to reduce the pressure on his position. However, all of Black’s pieces are more actively placed than their opposite numbers, so it is hard for White to
36...Ngxe2+ 37. Bxe2 f6 38. f4?!

More tenacious is 38. Ke3.

38...Ngb2+ 39. Ke3

There is no doubt about Black’s advantage in the variation 39. Kf1 Nd2+ 40. Ke1 Nxb3.

39...Ke1

Another strong move was 39...Nh5 with the transfer of the knight to c5.

40. c3 Ng2+ 41. Kxg2 Rg2 42. Kd4

42...f4!

The decisive breakthrough.

43. gxf4 gxf5 44. c5

Nor is he saved after 44. Ke3 Ed2+ 45. c3 Eh2 46. d3 (or 46. e7 g3) 46... Exh4 47. Ke2 Eh7 48. e8 Kxf4.

44...Kxf4 45. cxd6 cxd6 46. e7 d2+ 47. c3 Exd5 48.xb7 g3 49. g7 Kf3 50. b4 axb4+ 51. xb4 Ed4+ 52. b5 g2 0-1

Game 23
Leighton Williams 2355
Alexander Baburin 2527
Mallorca 2004 (7)
1.e4  \textit{N}f6 2.e5  \textit{N}d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4  \textit{b}6 5.exd6 exd6 6.\textit{c}3  \textit{c}6 7.\textit{e}2  \textit{e}7 8.\textit{f}3 0-0 9.0-0  \textit{g}4 10.b3  \textit{f}6 11.\textit{e}3 d5

The most accurate: Black provokes the advance of the c-pawn.

12.c5  \textit{c}8

13.h3

White has also tried 13.b4 a6 (also possible is 13...\textit{e}7 14.b5  \textit{a}5 15.h3  \textit{xf}3 16.\textit{xf}3 c6 17.\textit{d}3  \textit{c}4 18.\textit{f}4  \textit{g}6 19.\textit{h}2 with equality, Gipslis-Larsen, Sousse 1967; somewhat more accurate is 19.\textit{g}3, but the assessment of the position remains the same – rough equality, Klovans-Engel, Würzburg 1995) 14.\textit{b}1  \textit{e}7 15.a4  \textit{f}5 16.h3  \textit{xf}3 (16...\textit{h}5!?) 17.\textit{xf}3  \textit{xd}4 18.\textit{xd}5  \textit{xe}3 19.\textit{xe}3  \textit{xe}3 20.\textit{xe}3  \textit{g}5 21.\textit{b}3  \textit{ae}8 22.\textit{d}5  \textit{xe}3+ 23.\textit{xe}3  \textit{xe}3 24.b5  \textit{xb}5 25.\textit{xb}5  \textit{e}5 26.\textit{xc}6  \textit{bxc}6 27.\textit{b}7, draw, Vasiukov-Knezevic, Kislovodsk 1968.

13...\textit{e}6 14.b4

14.\textit{d}2  \textit{e}7 (in several GM games 14...b6 has been tried, but even so, it seems to me that Black is worse here) 15.g4 (White defends against ...\textit{f}5, but now the knight changes direction:) 15...\textit{g}6 (weaker is 15...g6, as in the game Mortensen-Kengis, Moscow 1994) 16.\textit{h}2 b6 with mutual chances, Shabaev-Hoynck van Papendrecht, corr. 2012.

14...\textit{a}6

Also possible is 14...\textit{e}7.

15.b5  \textit{xb}5 16.\textit{xb}5  \textit{a}7

16...\textit{e}7!? or 16...\textit{a}7 are also worth considering.

17.\textit{c}3
More promising is 17.\textit{a}4 $\text{b}5$ 18.\textit{axb}5 $\text{xa}1$ 19.\textit{xa}1 with a somewhat better position for White.

17...\textit{b}6 18.\textit{cxb}6 $\text{xb}6$ 19.\textit{e}5

19...\textit{c}5! 20.\textit{dxc}5

On 20.f4 there could follow 20...\textit{xe}5 21.\textit{xe}5 cxd4 22.\textit{xd}4 $\text{c}4$ with mutual chances.

20...\textit{xe}5 21.\textit{xb}6 d4 22.\textit{bxa}7?!

Dynamic balance could be maintained by 22.f4 or 22.b7.

22...\textit{dxe}3 23.\textit{xd}8 $\text{fxd}8$ 24.\textit{fd}1?

Better was 24.\textit{b}5 $\text{xa}1$ 25.\textit{xa}1 $\text{d}2$ 26.\textit{f}1 exf2$^+$.

24...exf2$^+$?

Black wins immediately with 24...\textit{xd}1+ 25.\textit{xd}1 $\text{xc}3$ 26.\textit{f}3 e2 27.\textit{xe}2 $\text{f}8$ or 27.\textit{b}1 e1=$\text{=Q}+ 28.\text{xe}1 \text{xa}7$.

25.\textit{xf}2 $\text{d}4+ 26.\textit{xd}4 \text{xd}4 27.\textit{b}1 \text{dd}8 28.\textit{b}7?!$

Again White goes wrong. After 28.\textit{b}5 $\text{xa}2$ 29.\textit{b}4 $\text{d}5$ 30.\textit{c}7 $\text{xa}7$ 31.\textit{xd}5 g6 the game is even, although it is Black who needs to show definite accuracy.
28...c8! 29.e7 d7

Thanks to this nice bishop manoeuvre, Black manages to eliminate the dangerous passed pawn on a7.

30.c4 exa7 31.xf7 h8 32.b3 aa8 33.g4 f8 34.g3?

More saving chances were offered by 34.xf8+ xf8+ 35.e3.

34...xf7 35.xf7 c6 36.g5 f8 37.h5 f5 38.h4 h6 39.g6?

Losing at once, although even after 39.d1 hxg5 40.hxg5 xg5+ White’s position is hopeless.

39...f3+ 0-1

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Game 24
Igor Yagupov 2435
Yuri Balashov 2530
Moscow 1996 (8)

1.e4 f6 2.e5 d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4 b6 5.exd6 exd6 6.f3 e7 7.e2 0-0 8.0-0 f5
In principle, the bishop is often not best posted on f5, because it can come under attack from a \( \text{d4} \) move after the preparatory d4-d5. But as we will see, here Black combines this move with a specific plan.

9. \( \text{c3} \) f6 10. e3

10. \( \text{d3} \) g4 (Black should also have no serious problems after 10...xd3 11. xd3 c6 12. b3 e8) 11. e4 (11. e3?! d5 with complicated play) 11...c6 with rough equality, Machado-Roberts, Pan-American Championship Jr 1998. Also worthy of consideration is the simple 11...c6 (instead of 11...c6), after which White must play accurately to maintain the balance.

10...c6 11. b3

A year earlier, Yuri Balashov played this same variation, but with white: 11. d5 b4 12. c1 x3! (an interesting exchange, giving White a wide choice: now he must either spoil his pawn formation or sacrifice a pawn) 13. xc3 (clearly more promising is 13. xc3 xa2 14. a3 b4 15. d4, and White has excellent compensation for a small material investment) 13...a6 14. e4 g6 15. f4 e4 16. f5 d7 17. xd2 ac5 18. g5 f6 19. f4 e8 20. f1 e5 21. e1 d3 22. b3 ce4 23. xd3 xg5 – Black’s chances are superior, Balashov-Kengis, Germany tt 1995.

11...d5!

The standard idea in positions of this type: Black establishes an outpost in the centre, forcing his opponent either to exchange on d5 and play with an isolated pawn, or push the pawn on to c5. In the second case, Black carries out a break on the queenside with ...b7-b6 and begins play against the weak pawn on d4.

12. c5

The lesser evil. 12.cxd5 xd5 is unfavourable for White.

12...c8 13. e1

Somewhat better is 13. d2 e7 (a typical knight transfer from b6 to f5) 14. h3 e6 (14...e4?!) 15. g4, and here instead of 15...g6, as in the game Mortensen-Kengis, Moscow 1994, stronger is 15...g6, fastening onto the squares...
weakened by the move 15.g4. Then Black breaks on the other flank with ...b7-b6 and achieves a good game. Also worthy of attention is 15...h6.

13...h6 14.g4 h7 15.g2 b6

Black plays correctly: the opponent has concentrated his forces on the kingside and so he needs to be distracted by an action on the other side of the board.

16.a4

White is worse after 16.cxb6 axb6 17.d2 b4 or 17.d6 18.ac1 e7. But possible is 16.c1! bxc5 (Black should not hurry with the exchange on c5 – it's better to move the knight: 16...e7) 17.xd5 xd5 18.xc5 d7 (18.d6 f4) 19.b5 e7 20.d5, regaining the piece, with chances for both sides.

16...b4

Creating the threat of 17.c2.

17.e1

Black is better after 17.d2 c2 18.ac1 xe3 19.xe3 e7.

17...bxc5

Again a somewhat premature capture. It is worth noting that after the break ...b7-b6 Black should not hurry with the exchange on c5, but does better first to strengthen to a maximum the position of his forces.

18.xc5 d6 19.d2 a5 20.a3

The correct decision – he needs to drive the enemy knight from b4.

20...c6 21.c1 e8 22.b7?!
Correct was 22.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 23.\( \text{xd3} \) or 22.\( \text{f3} \), returning the knight back to the game; in both cases, White’s game is very slightly inferior.

22...\( \text{xb7} \) 23.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{d6} \)

It was worth considering 23...\( \text{e7} \), attacking the pawn and transferring the bishop to d6.

24.\( \text{f3} \)?!

Also bad is 24.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 25.\( \text{xd3} \) with a double attack. White needed to bring the knight into play more quickly with 24.\( \text{g2} \), because the knight was also blocking in the rook on f1.

24...\( \text{b8} \)

Activating the rook and, at the same time, attacking White’s weaknesses.

25.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 26.\( \text{xd3} \)

The white knight still remains on e1, since 26.\( \text{xd3} \) fails to 26...\( \text{xb3} \).

26...\( \text{d7} \) 27.\( \text{c1} \)

Of course, it was better to keep the rook in an active position with 27.\( \text{c5} \), attacking two pawns at once, although here too, White’s position is close to being lost.

27...\( \text{b5} \)!

Exchanging the opponent’s only active piece.

28.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{xb5} \)

It is time for White to resign – all of his pieces are passively placed and Black can already start winning the weak
pawns.

29.\textbf{f2} \textit{\textbf{Nxd4}} 30.\textbf{xc7} \textit{\textbf{xb3}} 31.\textbf{e5} \textit{\textbf{xa3}} 32.\textbf{xd5} \textit{\textbf{e2+}} 33.\textbf{h1} \textit{\textbf{a1}}

Tying up White’s forces.

34.\textbf{d6} \textit{\textbf{c3}}

It was simplest just to advance the pawn with 34...a4; White can do nothing to oppose this.

35.\textbf{c6} \textit{\textbf{b4}} 36.\textbf{c4} g5 37.\textbf{e4} \textit{\textbf{xe4}} 38.\textbf{xe4} \textit{\textbf{f4}} 39.\textbf{g3}

And White resigned.

\textbf{Conclusion:} The plan with 8...\textit{\textbf{Bf5}} is quite unpleasant for White. It seems he has to reply with 11.d5 and after 11...\textit{\textbf{Nc6}} 12.\textbf{c1} \textit{\textbf{xc3}} 13.\textbf{xc3}? sacrifice the a2-pawn, else Black himself plays ...d7-d5 and seizes the initiative.

\textbf{Game 25}

\textbf{Alexey Shirov 2718}

\textbf{Ralf Appel 2525}

\textbf{Germany Bundesliga 2013 (9)}

1.e4 \textit{\textbf{f6}} 2.e5 \textit{\textbf{d5}} 3.d4 d6 4.c4 \textit{\textbf{b6}} 5.exd6 exd6 6.\textbf{d3}

The idea is the same as that used in the above game Movileanu-V.Sveshnikov, Amantea 2014 (6.\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textbf{e7}} 7.\textit{\textbf{d3}} 0-0 8.\textit{\textbf{ge2}} \textit{\textbf{a6}} etc.). White prepares to put his knight on e2, preventing the pin ...\textit{\textbf{g4}}, but for the moment, he holds back the move \textit{\textbf{c3}}, so as to be able to answer ...\textit{\textbf{c6}} by immediately defending the pawn with \textit{\textbf{e2}}. With the move-order 6.\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textbf{c6}}, in order to get the desired set-up with \textit{\textbf{d3}} and \textit{\textbf{e2}}, White would have to play \textit{\textbf{e2}}; here, he hopes to reach that set-up whilst saving a tempo or two.

6...\textit{\textbf{c6}}
Here it is not so dangerous for Black to put his knight on c6, as it is in the variation 6.\( \textit{Nc3} \textit{c6} 7.\textit{Ne3} \textit{e7} 8.\textit{f3} 0-0 9.d5! \). The point is that now, after 7.\( \textit{Nf3} \textit{g4} \), the pawn on d4 is already hanging. Then there could follow:

A) 8.h3 \( \textit{xf3} \) 9.\textit{xf3} \( \textit{xd4} \) 10.\textit{xb7} d5 (or 10...\textit{b8} 11.\textit{e4}+ \textit{e6} 12.\textit{c3} \textit{d7} 13.0-0 \textit{g6} 11.cxd5 \textit{xd5} 12.\textit{xd5} 13.0-0 \textit{b4} 14.\textit{e4} 0-0-0 with mutual chances;

B) 8.\textit{e3} \( \textit{b4} \) (here the presence of his knight on c3 would be very useful for White, as he could retreat his bishop to b1) 9.\textit{e2} (otherwise Black takes on d3) 9...\( \textit{f5} \) (by creating the threat of 10...\textit{c2}, Black forces his opponent to place his knight on the edge of the board) 10.\textit{a3} \textit{e7} 11.0-0 0-0 12.\textit{b3} c5, and here, instead of 13.\textit{fd1} with a somewhat better position for White (Zychowicz-Dabrowski, Mazowiec 2009), more accurate is 12...a5!. Then Black plays ...\textit{e8}, ...c7-c6, ...\textit{f6} etc., achieving a good position.

7.\textit{e2}

7.d5 can hardly suit White, in view of 7...\textit{e5} followed by ...g7-g6, ...\textit{g7}, and Black’s position is preferable.

The move 7.\textit{e3} barely has any independent significance, since after 7...\textit{g6} (there is also the immediate 7...\textit{b4}?) 8.\textit{c3} \textit{g7} White still has to commit his king’s knight, so we get a transposition.

7...\textit{g6}

This move was first played by Efim Bogoljubow way back in 1928. One should also note that after 6.\textit{c3} the reply 6...\textit{g6} is not so good because of 7.\textit{f3} \textit{g7} 8.\textit{g5} with the initiative for White, Ragozin-Sefc, Marianske Lazne/Prague 1956.

As well as the move in the game, other possible continuations for Black are 7...\textit{g4} and 7...\textit{e7}.

8.\textit{bc3}

8.0-0 \textit{g7} 9.e3 0-0 10.a3, and here instead of the overly aggressive 10...\textit{wh4}?! (Krämer-Bogoljubow, Dortmund 1928) Black gets a good position with 10...d5 11.cxd5 (11.c5 \textit{e4} 12.xe4 dxe4 13.\textit{bc3} \textit{f5} is not favourable for White) 11...\textit{xd5}.

8...\textit{g7} 9.e3 0-0 10.0-0
10...\texttt{b4}

An aggressive jump. But there is also a more solid plan for Black: 10...\texttt{e8}. Now:

A) Not very good is 11.d5 \texttt{e}e5 12.b3, as in the game Lopez Martinez-Nogueiras, Santa Clara 2004 – after 12...\texttt{g}g4 Black's chances are superior. And after 12.\texttt{d}d4 (instead of 12.b3), as in the game Jaeck-L.Adams, Wallertheim 1993, 12...\texttt{h}e7 (the immediate 12...\texttt{h}h4 is even stronger) 13.\texttt{x}xe5 \texttt{xe}5 14.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{h}h4 Black obtained the better position;

B) On 11.b3 good is 11...d5 12.c5 \texttt{d}d7 13.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{x}xc5 (also interesting is 13...\texttt{e}7 with the idea of \texttt{f}8, \texttt{e}6, \texttt{f}5, strengthening the pressure against the pawn on d4) 14.dxc5 d4 15.\texttt{d}d4 \texttt{d}d4 with equality;

C) 11.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{b}b4 12.b3 \texttt{d}d3 13.\texttt{d}d3 \texttt{f}5 (possibly somewhat more accurate was 13...c6 14.d5 cxd5 15.cxd5 \texttt{d}d7 with mutual chances) 14.\texttt{d}d2 d5 15.c5 \texttt{e}8 16.\texttt{f}4 c6 17.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{e}6 18.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{e}7 19.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{f}5 20.\texttt{x}f5 \texttt{x}f5 21.\texttt{x}g7 \texttt{x}xe8 22.\texttt{x}xe8 \texttt{x}e8 23.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{f}8 24.\texttt{e}5 f6 25.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{e}8 with equality, Kristjansson-Skulason, Reykjavik ch-ISL 1970.

11.b3 \texttt{c}6

11...\texttt{x}d3 is also possible. White has more space, whilst Black has two bishops and no weaknesses; White can hardly count on anything serious.

12.\texttt{b}1 d5 13.c5 \texttt{d}d7 14.a3 \texttt{a}6 15.b4

In my practice I have met 15.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{c}7 16.\texttt{c}2 \texttt{e}6 17.b4 b6 18.\texttt{fe}1 bxc5 (the immediate 18...\texttt{a}6, maintaining the pawn tension, is also worth considering) 19.bxc5. Here Black went wrong: 19...\texttt{x}xc5? (19...\texttt{a}6 or 19...\texttt{b}8 gave good play), and after 20.dxc5 d4 21.\texttt{x}d4 \texttt{xd}4 22.\texttt{e}d1 \texttt{e}6 23.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{a}5 24.\texttt{e}4 White obtained the advantage in Lavendelis-V.Sveshnikov, Riga 2014.

15...\texttt{c}7 16.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{e}6 17.\texttt{d}2 b6 18.\texttt{ad}1 \texttt{a}5

18...\texttt{b}8!? was worth attention.
19.b5!?

Otherwise after the exchange on b4, the rook on d8 becomes very active.

19...b7 20.Nxd5

20.bxc6 Bxc6 21.cxb6 axb6 also leads to an equal position.

20...bxc5

Also possible was 20...cxd5 21.c6 Bc8 22.cxd7 Bxd7 23.Rfe1 Bd6 24.Qf4 d7=.

21.bxc6 Bxc6 22.e4 a4


23.Bc1


A more tense position results from 28...Ba7!? 29.g5 f6 30.e3 (30.Bxf6 Bxf6 31.Bxa4 Bd3 plays into Black’s hands) 30...Bb3.

29.Bfd1
29...ab8

A draw by repetition arises after 29...e2 30.e1 xd2 31.xa8 d4 32.c7 g4 33.f1 e2 34.e1 g4.

30.xa5 b2 31.xd8+ xd8 32.b1 xa3 33.c4 d3 34.e5 d5 35.g4 b2 36.h3 d3 37.xb2 xa5

Draw.

So, in reply to 6.d3, unlike after 6.c3 c6 7.d3, Black has a good system with ...g7-g6. Then on move ten, we looked at different plans for Black: the solid and quiet 10.e8 and the sharper 10.b4; both plans give Black adequate play.
Chapter 7

The modern system

1.e4  d6 2.e5  d5 3.d4  d6 4.f3

This is the system White most often chooses in practice, counting on obtaining a solid position with a small advantage. We suggest against this the relatively new continuation 4...dxe5 5.xe5 c6!?

Black’s plan is to bring his bishop out to f5 and then play ...d7, challenging the enemy knight on e5. Ideally, Black will exchange a pair of minor pieces, so his position ceases to be cramped, and then he will carry out the break ...c6-c5 or ...e7-e5. The resulting positions remind one of a favourable (for Black) version of the Caro-Kann or Scandinavian defences: he has no pawn weaknesses and no bad pieces either. In rapid and blitz, Black’s position is even slightly easier to play, because it is clear what he is aiming to do.

Game 26
Hedinn Steingrimsson 2536
Vladimir Sveshnikov 2380
Bratto op 2014 (5)

1.e4  d6 2.e5  d5 3.d4  d6 4.f3 dxe5 5.xe5 c6

Black plays a useul strengthening move and at the same time avoids revealing too much about his plans.

After 5...d7 White has the chance to force a draw at least, by means of 6.xf7 xf7 7.h5+ e6 8.e2+ etc. In addition, he can continue his attack on the king, which is forced to e6, and in blitz, it is usually easier to attack than to defend.

We would also mention the quite solid alternative 5...g6; you can find out more about this in Bagirov’s book.
6. \textit{Be2}

The most popular and principled move. If he brings the bishop out to d3, then it can be hit by \textit{...Nb4}, whilst the move 6.\textit{c4} deprives White of the chance of e2-c4 at the appropriate moment.

6...\textit{Bf5}

I suggest first developing the queen’s bishop, and only then playing the knight to d7. The point is that after the immediate 6...\textit{Nd7} 7.\textit{Nf3} Black must move his knight again in order to get the bishop out. In principle, therefore, 6...\textit{f5} looks more logical.

We will mention also one other plan for Black: 6...g6.

7. \textit{0-0} \textit{Nd7} 8.\textit{f3}

The exchange on d7 is obviously not in White’s interests: after 8.\textit{xd7 Qxd7} Black has a good game.
In the position after 8.\( \square f3 \), we will study two interesting continuations: 8...e6 (as I played against Steingrimsson) and 8...h6. As some postal games have shown, Black has definite problems after both moves, but in independent play over the board, nobody has demonstrated very deep knowledge of the opening.

Let us begin with 8...h6, and then move onto 8...e6.

**analysis diagram**

Black has spent a tempo to ensure his light-squared bishop is not exchanged after \( \square f3-h4 \). Can White exploit his small advantage in development? He has two main plans for this: to drive the knight from the centre immediately with c2-c4 or to first take control of b4.
A) 9.a3

B) 9.c4

A) 9.a3 This variation is suggested in Khalifman’s book *Opening with White According to Anand*. White takes the square b4 from the black knight, but should he expend precious time on this? As we will see later, in reply to 9.c4! it is not good to play 9...\( \text{\underline{b}4} \) anyway, because of 10.\( \text{\underline{c}3!} \), and 10...\( \text{\underline{c}2} \) does not work because of 11.\( \text{\underline{b}1} \) \( \text{\underline{b}4} \) 12.\( \text{\underline{f}4} \) with a very promising exchange sacrifice. Thus, 9.a3 is, in principle, a loss of a tempo, and now Black has no problems. We will follow the variation from the above-mentioned book.

9...\( \text{\underline{e}6} \) 10.c4 \( \text{\underline{f}6} \) 11.\( \text{\underline{f}4} \) Taking d6 from the bishop. Here Khalifman only considers 11...\( \text{\underline{h}5} \) and 11...\( \text{\underline{e}7} \), but Black has the stronger continuation 11...\( \text{\underline{g}5!} \), driving the enemy bishop from f4. 12.\( \text{\underline{e}3} \) On 12.\( \text{\underline{g}3} \), good is 12...\( \text{\underline{e}4} \), exchanging knight for bishop.

B) 9.c4!
B1) 9...\(\text{B}4?!\) is dubious because of 10.\(\text{c}3\). White also has good compensation after 10.a3 \(\text{c}2\) 11.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{xd}4\)
12.\(\text{exe}4\) \(\text{exe}1\) 13.\(\text{exe}1\) \(\text{f}5\) 14.\(\text{e}1\) (14.\(\text{f}4!?)\) 14...e6 15.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{f}6\) 16.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{c}8\) 17.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{g}4\) 18.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{xd}3\) 19.\(\text{xd}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 20.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{f}6\) 21.\(\text{e}5\) 0-0 22.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{h}7\) 23.\(\text{d}1\), Ottesen-Hugentobler, corr. 2005. 10...\(\text{c}2\) 11.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{b}4\) 12.\(\text{a}1\) Also possible is the immediate 12.\(\text{e}3\), whilst 12.\(\text{f}4!?)\) also deserves attention, but we will only examine one game, which shows how great White’s compensation for the exchange is. 12...\(\text{c}2\) 13.\(\text{b}1\) \(\text{b}4\) 14.\(\text{e}3\) Declining the repetition of moves. 14...\(\text{xb}1\) 15.\(\text{xb}1\) \(\text{g}6\) Black prepares \(\text{g}7\) followed by ...0-0.

16.\(\text{h}4!\)
A strong retort: if it were not for this move, then Black would be fine. In principle, in blitz one can play this variation, if you are prepared to take a risk and are not bothered by the possibility of White taking a repetition by $\text{Rb1-a1}$ etc.  

16...$\text{Rg8}$ An unaesthetic move, but what should he do? On 16...$\text{Bg7}$ there follows the blow 17.$\text{Nxg6}$ and the knight cannot be taken by 17...fxg6 because of 18.$\text{Qxg6+ Kg8}$ 19.$\text{Bh5 Qe8}$ 20.$\text{Qf5+}$, winning the queen. 17.$\text{a3 Qa6}$ 18.$\text{Af3}$ Having done its job, the knight returns to a more active position. 18...$\text{Cc7}$ 19.$\text{Ed1}$ Bringing up the last reserves. 19...$\text{g7}$ 20.$\text{d5}$ Everything is ready for the breakthrough. 20...$\text{cxd5}$ 21.$\text{cxd5 Kg8}$ 22.$\text{d6}$ $\text{exd6}$ 23.$\text{Exd6}$, and in this position, the extra exchange clearly does not compensate for the activity of White’s pieces and his attack, Laine-Legemaat, corr. 2010.

B2) 9...$\text{Qf6}$

![Analysis Diagram]

A more solid continuation, but now the black minor pieces lack space to manoeuvre.

B21) In reply to 10.$\text{d5}$ it is worth considering 10...$\text{e5}$ 11.$\text{dxe6 fxe6}$ Worse is 11...$\text{fxe6}$ 12.$\text{Ed4}$ 12.$\text{Ed4 Ec5}$ 13.$\text{Fxf5}$ If 13.$\text{Ec3}$, then Black simply castles – 13...0-0. Nor does he have any problem after 13.$\text{g4 Exd4}$ (13...$\text{Qb6}$!?) 14.$\text{gx5}$ (worse is 14.$\text{Exd4 Exg4}$ 15.$\text{Exg4 Eh4}$ 16.$\text{h3 h5}$ with the initiative to Black) 14...$\text{e5}$ (or 14...$\text{e5}$ 15.$\text{h5+ Eh5}$ 16.$\text{Exh5+ Ff8}$ with mutual chances) 15.$\text{fxe6 Ed6}$, preparing ...0-0-0. 13...$\text{Fxf5}$ 14.$\text{Eh5+}$ Otherwise Black simply castles. 14...$\text{Ff8}$
15.\(B\)c3 15.\(f\)f4 only helps Black: 15...\(g\)5 16.\(d\)d2 (bad is 16.\(d\)d6+ \(g\)7) 16...\(x\)h5 17.\(x\)h5 \(g\)7 18.\(c\)c3+ \(f\)6 19.\(d\)d1 \(e\)8 20.\(f\)3 \(h\)6 with mutual chances. 15.\(g\)6 looks logical: White removes the bishop from exchange and prevents the black king travelling via g7 and h7. Black cannot tolerate the bishop on g6, and should take counter-measures:

15...\(e\)5 16.\(x\)f5 \(x\)d1 17.\(e\)xd1 \(g\)6 (interesting is 17...\(f\)7!?) 18.\(c\)c2 \(f\)g4 19.\(f\)f1 \(g\)7 20.\(d\)d2 \(x\)f2 21.\(b\)b3 \(h\)3+ 22.\(h\)h1 \(f\)2+ with a possible perpetual check.

15...\(x\)h5 16.\(x\)h5 \(f\)6 17.\(e\)3 White wants, after the exchange of bishops, to open the f-file and exploit the insecure position of the black king. 17...\(e\)3 18.\(f\)xe3 \(g\)6 19.\(h\)3 \(e\)5 20.\(f\)f1 On 20.e4 there follows 20...\(f\)4 and then ...\(g\)7-g5. 20...\(d\)8 Black has also played 20...\(g\)7 21.e4 \(h\)8 22.\(e\)xf5 \(x\)d1 23.\(e\)xd1 \(c\)4 24.\(f\)d3 \(e\)5 25.\(b\)3 \(b\)6, draw, Shchebenyuk-Kuteneva, corr. 2013. 21.\(e\)4 \(g\)7 22.\(e\)xf5 \(h\)8 23.\(e\)4

\textit{analysis diagram}
23...\texttt{xf5}! Beautiful! 24.\texttt{xf5} Naturally, not 24.\texttt{xf5} because of 24...\texttt{xd1+}, and with two rooks for the queen, Black has good winning chances. 24...\texttt{gxf5} 25.\texttt{d6 f4} This position is somewhat more pleasant for White, but if Black plays accurately, he should not have much trouble making a draw. 26.\texttt{fe1 f6} 27.\texttt{e4 f3} 28.\texttt{g3 h5} 29.\texttt{f1 b6} 30.\texttt{b4 a5} 31.\texttt{bxa5 bxa5} 32.\texttt{c5 b8} 33.\texttt{h3 a4} 34.\texttt{e3 a3} 35.\texttt{xa3 a8} 36.\texttt{e3 a2} 37.\texttt{de1 f2} 38.\texttt{c1 fa8} 39.\texttt{e4+ f5} 40.\texttt{xf2 a1} 41.\texttt{xa1 a1+} 42.\texttt{e1 a4} 43.\texttt{d1 c4} 44.\texttt{d8}, draw, Kazantsev-Reichert, corr. 2008;

B22) 10.\texttt{c3 e6}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{analysis_diagram.png}
\end{center}

\texttt{analysis diagram}

B221) In the only game with this position in the database, play continued 11.\texttt{f4 g5}?! (stronger is 11...\texttt{b6} 12.\texttt{d2 e7} – White’s chances are slightly superior, but not more than that, and play is for three results) 12.\texttt{g3 h5} 13.d5 with a small advantage for White, Kociscek-Neumann, Karvina 2010;

B222) Black faces more problems after 11.d5 \texttt{c5} 12.\texttt{d4 cxd5} (White is better after 12...\texttt{xd4} 13.\texttt{xd4 e5} 14.\texttt{e3 cxd5} 15.cxd5 0-0 Asquith-Donnelly, Milan 2008) 13.cxd5 0-0 14.dxe6 \texttt{xe6} 15.\texttt{xe6 fxe6} 16.\texttt{a4 e7} 17.\texttt{xc5 xc5} 18.\texttt{c4 fad8} 19.\texttt{e2}, and White retains the opening initiative, Cernovsky-Lloyd, corr. 2012. Both of these games went in White’s favour, but it is important to note that they were played by correspondence, and over the board, one is hardly likely to come across so well-prepared an opponent. We would also point out that both of these games ended in draws, which suggests that Black’s position is fully defensible;

B223) On the other hand, if White plays more modestly, as players below master standard tend to do, for example with 11.h3 intending \texttt{e3}, then Black simply completes his development: 11...\texttt{d6} 12.\texttt{e3 0-0} 13.\texttt{e1 c7} (or 13...\texttt{e4} exchanging a pair of knights) 14.\texttt{d3 xd3} 15.\texttt{xd3 ad8}.
We have an equal position. It is important to note that Black has no weaknesses, so he has very simple play: he can carry out ...e6-e5 or ...c6-c5, or just build pressure against the pawn on d4. Black has no bad pieces and so the majority of exchanges will be in his favour.

We should also note that such structures arise not only in Alekhine’s Defence, but also in the Caro-Kann, the Scandinavian Defence and the French with 3...dxe4.

Having studied the move 8...h6, let us return to the game Steingrimsson-V.Sveshnikov.

8...e6 9.c4

The move 9.a3 is simply a loss of time. Black continues development with 9...d6, and now after 10.c4 he can reply 10...f4 or 10...e7.

9...f5

9...b4 is dubious because of 10.a3 a6 (10...f2 fails to 11.e2 xd4 12.xd4 xb1 13.g5 – and unlike the variation 8...h6, here the bishop can move from c1 with tempo – 13...f6 14.xb1 fxg5 15.d1 with advantage to White) 11.c3 f5 12.d5 with advantage to White, Hracek-Appel, Germany Bundesliga 2012/13.

10.c3

Here White could already play 10.h4! In this case, it is clear, to my mind, that Black has problems, which will not be easy to solve. Admittedly, so far people have not realised what is going on, because Megabase has just one game in which this move was played. Everyone plays 10.c3, removing the knight from a possible exchange, and only then h4.

10...e4

If 10...d6, then after 11.h4, which has been played dozens of times, White stands better.
Here my opponent thought for 20-30 minutes, and it was clear that he was not familiar with the position. The idea of Black’s last move is simple: he exchanges one pair of knights and takes control of the square h4. Another great advantage of this move is that there are practically no games with it in the database, although this knight jump to the centre is the best resource.

The diagram position is one I had had at home, but the move

11.\(\text{Qb3}\)

chosen by my opponent after a good think, I had not prepared. From this moment, both sides had to start thinking for themselves.

Before studying the game further, let us look at some alternative continuations.

A) 11.\(\text{Nxe4}\) (the most tempting move) 11...\(\text{Bxe4}\) and now:
A1) 12.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}7 (White simply completes his development and Black does the same) and now:

A11) 13.\textit{Q}b3 \textit{Q}b6 14.\textit{Q}c3 0-0 15.a3 a5 16.\textit{B}d2 \textit{g}6 17.\textit{Q}d5 \textit{Q}d8 18.\textit{Q}c4 b5 19.\textit{B}d6 \textit{f}6 20.\textit{b}f3 \textit{w}d7 21.\textit{Q}e5 \textit{Q}d5 22.\textit{Q}xd5 exd5 23.h3 \textit{Q}d8 24.\textit{B}fe1 \textit{f}6 25.\textit{Q}f4 \textit{c}7 26.\textit{Q}f3 a4 27.\textit{Q}g4 \textit{e}ad8 28.\textit{Q}f3 a5 29.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{w}xg4 30.\textit{hxg}4 \textit{Q}d7 31.\textit{Q}e6 \textit{a}8 32.\textit{Q}g3 \textit{f}8 33.\textit{Q}e1 \textit{d}8 34.\textit{Q}d2 \textit{e}7 35.\textit{Q}xe7 \textit{xe}7 36.\textit{Q}e1 \textit{a}7 37.\textit{Q}f4 \textit{d}8 38.\textit{Q}c8 \textit{a}8 39.\textit{Q}b6 \textit{a}7 40.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{b}7 41.\textit{Q}c8 \textit{f}7 42.\textit{Q}d6+ \textit{g}8 43.\textit{Q}f4 h6 44.\textit{Q}h7 45.\textit{Q}f4 \textit{g}8 46.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{Q}d7 47.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{b}7 48.\textit{Q}f4 b4 49.\textit{Q}e2 b3 50.\textit{Q}f3 \textit{f}8 51.\textit{Q}e1 \textit{g}8 52.\textit{Q}d2 \textit{f}8 53.\textit{Q}f2, draw, Shields-Kratochvyl, corr. 2011;

A12) 13.\textit{Q}e1 0-0 14.h3 \textit{w}b6 (14...\textit{Q}b4!? 15.b3 c5 16.\textit{Q}e5 \textit{Q}xe5 17.\textit{d}xe5 \textit{Q}fd8 18.\textit{Q}c1 a5 19.\textit{Q}f1 \textit{d}3 20.\textit{Q}xd3 \textit{Q}xd3 21.\textit{Q}c2 \textit{Q}ad8 22.\textit{Q}ed1 \textit{Q}3d7 23.\textit{Q}xd7 \textit{Q}xd7 24.\textit{Q}d1 \textit{w}d8 25.\textit{Q}xd7 \textit{Q}xd7 26.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{h}6 27.\textit{Q}f1 \textit{b}6 28.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{w}c6 29.\textit{Q}f3 \textit{d}8 30.\textit{Q}d2 \textit{h}5 31.\textit{Q}d3 \textit{Q}e7 32.\textit{Q}d1 \textit{g}6 33.\textit{Q}c2 \textit{Q}f8 34.\textit{Q}e3 a4 35.\textit{b}xa4 \textit{Q}xa4+ 36.\textit{Q}b3 \textit{Q}c6 37.\textit{Q}d4 \textit{d}8 38.\textit{Q}b5 \textit{Q}c7 39.\textit{Q}c3 \textit{g}7 40.\textit{Q}e8 \textit{Q}g5 41.\textit{Q}a8 \textit{Q}d7 42.\textit{Q}a6 \textit{Q}e3 43.\textit{Q}b5 \textit{Q}d8 44.\textit{Q}b2 \textit{Q}d7, draw, Papp-Schroll, Austria tt 2011.

A2) He can immediately attack the enemy bishop: 12.\textit{Q}g5 \textit{g}6 (12...\textit{f}5 has yet to be tried) 13.d5 (at least consistent; White attacks the pawn on e6, at the same time hoping to open up the enemy king) 13...e5 (but Black can improve here with 13...exd5 14.cxd5 and simply 14...\textit{Q}e7 – preparing castling – 15.\textit{Q}xc6 \textit{b}xc6, and the one weakness on c6 is not enough to confer an advantage; in addition, White's knight is attacked and he must spend time moving or protecting it, when Black will complete his development with the move ...0-0) 14.\textit{Q}d3 (stronger is 14.\textit{Q}f3 with some pressure for White). Here in the game Zinchenko-Sergeev, Alushta 2005, a draw was agreed: after 14...\textit{Q}e7 the position is roughly equal, admittedly.

B) 11.\textit{Q}d3
Also a very logical move: White forces his opponent to exchange on $11...\text{Na}xc3$, when the reply $12.bxc3$ strengthens the white centre and opens the b-file for his rook. But there is also one drawback: White's pawns are doubled, and later, if Black manages to fix them with the move $...c6-c5$, White may start to have problems with the pawn on c4. Thus:

$12...\text{Nxd}3$ $13.\text{Nxd}3 \text{N}d6$ ($13...\text{Nc}7$ $14.\text{Be}1$ 0-0 $15.\text{B}b1$ $\text{Bc}7$ $16.\text{Be}3$ $\text{b}6$ $17.\text{Bd}1$ $\text{Bfd}8$ $18.\text{Bg}5$ $\text{Bxg}5$ $19.\text{Bxg}5$ $\text{Bf}6$ $20.\text{B}f3$ $\text{c}5$ $21.\text{h}3$ $\text{Bac}8$ $22.\text{Be}5$ $\text{cxd}4$ $23.\text{cxd}4$ $\text{Bd}7$ $24.\text{Bxd}7$ $\text{Bxd}7$, draw, Glanville-Tolhurst, corr. 2013) $14.\text{Bg}5$ $\text{Bf}6$ $15.\text{Be}1$ 0-0 $16.\text{Bh}3$ $\text{Bc}8$ $17.\text{c}5$ $\text{Bf}8$ $18.\text{Bf}4$ $\text{b}6$ $19.\text{cxb}6$ $\text{axb}6$ $20.\text{a}4$ $\text{h}6$ $21.\text{Bf}3$ $\text{b}5$ $22.\text{axb}5$ $\text{Bxa}1$ $23.\text{Bxa}1$ $\text{cxb}5$ $24.\text{Bb}1$ $\text{Bd}5$ $25.\text{Bd}2$ $\text{Bc}6$ $26.\text{Bf}3$ $\text{Bd}5$ $27.\text{Bc}1$ $\text{Bc}8$ $28.\text{c}4$ $\text{B}a3$ $29.\text{Bc}2$ $\text{Bb}4$ $30.\text{Bc}3$ $\text{Bxf}3$ $31.\text{Bxf}3$ $\text{Ba}8$ $32.\text{Bf}1$ $\text{bxc}4$ $33.\text{Bd}6$ $\text{Bc}2$ $34.\text{Bf}4$ $\text{Bb}4$ $35.\text{Bd}6$ $\text{Bc}2$, draw, Yu Ruiyuan-Shimanov, Katowice 2014.

$11...\text{Nxc}3$ $12.bxc3$
After the exchanges, Black needs to defend b7, and I chose:

12...Qc7

It was worth considering 12...b6, not tying the queen to the defence of b7. Then Black needs to castle and play ...c6-c5 or ...e6-e5 with a good game. For example, 13.f4.

The computer considers this best, creating a problem for the opponent: White wants to play Qa4, Ne5 and Bf3, attacking Black’s new weakness.

13.d5 also looks logical, trying to open the position. Naturally, taking on d5 is not favourable for Black, so he should play with tempo 13...c5 14.d1 e7, preparing short castling. Then play might continue: 15.d4 (White should play energetically, as he will end up worse after quiet, slow play) 15...cx d5 (forced) 16.xf5 exf5 17.cxd5 0-0. White has the advantage of the two bishops, but Black has no weaknesses (whereas White’s pawns are quite vulnerable), and his pieces occupy good blockading positions. In conclusion, the position is about equal, although in blitz, Black’s game is easier to play.

13.e7 14.a4 c8 (14...0-0!? 15.e5 xex5 16.xe5 0-0 17.f3 a6 18.xc6 (or 18.xc6 xc6 19.xc6 e8 20.d5 d3 21.fd1 e2 22.db1 xc4 23.b7 c5 24.d6 xe5 25.dxe7 e8 26.b4 c5 27.xb6 xe7 28.xa6 xa6 29.xa6 g6 with equality) 18...c2 19.xc2 xc6 20.xb1 xc4 21.d3 xc4 22.xc4 xe4 23.xb6 xc3 24.xa6 d8 25.a7 f6 26.f4 e2 – Black has sufficient counterplay for a draw.

13.h4 g6

Stronger is 13...e4, and if 14.e1 (more principled is 14.f3 g6 15.xg6 hxg6 16.g3), then 14...h6, freeing the square h7 for the bishop. For example, 15.c5 f6 16.g3 g5 17.f3 h7 with mutual chances.

14.g3 b6 15.xg6 hxg6 16.a4 d6

Interesting is 16...a5!? , avoiding the opening of the a-file.

17.a5 0-0 18.e3 c5 19.a2 ab8 20.axb6 axb6 21.a7
21...\textsf{Rfc8}

It was worth considering 21...\textsf{Rb7}. Then a possible continuation is 22.\textsf{Qa6} (more accurate is 22.\textsf{Qa4}) 22...\textsf{e5} 23.\textsf{f3} \textsf{Rbb8} 24.\textsf{Qa7} cxd4 (24...\textsf{Rfc8}) 25.\textsf{Qxc7} \textsf{Rxc7} 26.cxd4 exd4 27.\textsf{Qxe5} \textsf{Qe5} 28.\textsf{Qd4} \textsf{Qd4} 29.\textsf{Qc4} \textsf{Qxc4} 30.\textsf{Qd5} b5 with approximate equality. Of course, White’s play can be strengthened, but this variation captures the essence of the position: Black is slightly worse, but close to equality and White needs to play extremely accurately in order not to lose his advantage.

22.\textsf{Qxc7} \textsf{Rxc7} 23.\textsf{f4}

I had completely missed this move in my calculations: I had hoped to play ...\textsf{e6-e5} at move 23, with possible exchanges.

23...\textsf{Kf8} 24.\textsf{Rfa1} \textsf{Nf6}

Black’s position is inferior, of course, but it is quite solid, and I decided not to create any weaknesses and simply to sit tight and wait to see what my opponent would do.

26.\textsf{Qd7} 27.\textsf{Qf2} \textsf{Rcc8} 28.\textsf{Qc1} \textsf{Qc7} 29.\textsf{Qe2} \textsf{Qh8} 30.\textsf{Qg2} \textsf{Qb8} 31.\textsf{Qd3}

An inaccurate move, instead of which he should play, for example, 31.h3 and try to strengthen his position to the maximum.

31...\textsf{b5}!

This is the point: with the bishop on \textsf{e2}, this would simply be an oversight, whereas now after

32.\textsf{cxb5}

there follows

32...\textsf{c4} 33.\textsf{Qe2} \textsf{Qxb5}
regaining the pawn and obtaining some freedom for his pieces.

34.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{b6}\) 35.\(\text{a5}\) \(\text{b1}\)

Not exchanging the active rook.

36.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{f5}\)

This move slightly weakens the seventh rank and makes the advances ...\(g6\)-\(g5\) and ...\(e6\)-\(e5\) impossible, but it takes control of the important square \(e4\), from where the white bishop can hassle the \(\text{b1}\).

37.\(\text{f2}\) \(\text{d7}\) 38.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{c8}\) 39.\(\text{a7}\+)

39...\(\text{c7}\)?!

Having more time on the clock, I wanted to play for a win, after which I could have faced definite problems. It was necessary to wait with 39...\(\text{c7}\) with a probable draw, because it is not obvious how White can strengthen his position.

40.\(\text{b7}\)

White misses the promising continuation 40.\(\text{a5}\)! with the idea of transferring the rook to \(c5\), obtaining a clear advantage.

40...\(\text{b8}\) 41.\(\text{xb8}\) \(\text{xb8}\) 42.\(\text{a6}\) \(\text{d6}\) 43.\(\text{a7+}\) \(\text{c7}\) 44.\(\text{a6}\) \(\text{d6}\) 45.\(\text{a7+}\)

Here my opponent offered a draw. After some thought, I realised that playing on would give me more chances of losing than winning, so I accepted.

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Game 27
David Navara 2638
Nigel Short 2663
1.e4 \(\text{Nf6}\) 2.e5 \(\text{Nf3}\) d6 3.d4 dx e5 4.\(\text{Nxe5}\) c6 5.\(\text{Bb5}\) c5 6.\(\text{Be2}\)

We will also examine 6.c4. Here this move does not bring White special benefit, rather the opposite, but it is still played quite often: in terms of popularity, it is third behind 6.\(\text{Bb2}\) and 6.\(\text{Bc4}\). This is the move, threatening 7...\(\text{exd4}\). For example, 7.a3 is not good because of 7...\(\text{exd4}\) 8.axb4 (on 8.\(\text{b5}\) there follows 8...\(\text{c5}\) 9.\(\text{Bb2}\) \(\text{d6}\) with an extra pawn) 8...\(\text{c5}\) 9.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{d6}\) 10.dxe5 \(\text{dxe5}\) 11.\(\text{e6}\) \(\text{Nf8}\) 12.\(\text{e6}\) \(\text{g5}\) 13.\(\text{Bb1}\) \(\text{Nh7}\) 14.\(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{Be6}\) 15.\(\text{Bf3}\) \(\text{Bxe5}\) with advantage to Black, Antoms-V.Sveshnikov, Latvia 2012;

A2) 8.\(\text{Be2}\) \(\text{e5}\) (even stronger is the quiet 9...\(\text{e6}\) and then \(\text{e7}\) and 0-0 with a somewhat better position for Black) 10.0-0 \(\text{e4}\) 11.\(\text{Be1}\) \(\text{d6}\) 12.\(\text{Bb3}\) a5 with a complicated, roughly equal position, Andriasyan-V.Sveshnikov, Capelle-la-Grande 2012;

A3) 8.\(\text{Be3}\) \(\text{d7}\) 9.\(\text{Bd7}\) \(\text{c5}\) (also interesting is 10...\(\text{e5}\), Ginsburg-Giri, Germany Bundesliga 2010) 11.0-0 \(\text{e5}\) 12.\(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{g6}\) 13.\(\text{h5}\) 0-0 (13...\(\text{xh5}\) is worth considering, avoiding the doubled pawns) 14.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{h6}\) 15.\(\text{Bc2}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 16.\(\text{Bxc6}\) \(\text{f8}\) with equality, Kovanova-Zhao Xue, St Petersburg rapid 2012.

B) 7.\(\text{Be3}\) (the main move in this position) 7...\(\text{e5}\)
analysis diagram

B1) On 8...d3 there is the unpleasant 8...e5 9...b4 b4+ 10...c3 a5 (Black is also somewhat better after 10...0-0 or 10...exd4) 11.b3 (11.e1!?) 11...exd4 12...xd4 a6 (a strong move: Black prepares ...0-0-0; Black is also better after 12...0-0 13.0-0-0 – more tenacious is 13.e2 – 13...a6 14.d3 fd8 15.xf5 xf5 16.c2 ff4 17.d2 – a serious oversight, although even after the superior 17.e3 xxc4 Black has a healthy extra pawn – 17...exd4, and White resigned in Gillani-Baburin, Calvia 2004) 13.e2 0-0 14.c3 c5 15.xc5 xc5 16.d1 (things are even worse for White after 16.0-0 d2, Adhiban-Thejkumar, Velammal 2008) 16...xd1+ 17.xd1 d8 18.c1 b4 19.0-0 xc3 20.xc3 xa2 with an extra pawn, Ahmad-Thejkumar, Beirut 2009;

B2) 8...d3 d3+ 9...d3 g6 (or 9...e6 10..c3 d7 11.0-0 d6 with a complicated but roughly equal game) 10..c3 g7 11..c5, as in the game Teske-Wirth, Berlin 2012, and here instead of the passive 11...c8 stronger is 11...b6 or 11...0-0, after which only White can have problems.

Now let’s return to the position in the game after 6.e2.
6...\textit{\textbf{f}}5 7.g4

The same idea was seen in Locatelli-V. Sveshnikov, Bratto 2014, but with the inclusion of the moves 7.0-0 \textit{\textbf{d}}7. This game developed as follows: 8.g4 \textit{\textbf{c}}xe5 (both 8...\textit{\textbf{e}}6 9.f4 \textit{\textbf{c}}xe5 10.fxe5 g5!? and 10...g6 11.c4 \textit{\textbf{c}}c7 12.\textit{\textbf{c}}c3 \textit{\textbf{g}}7, with a complicated game, are also worth considering) 9.gxf5 \textit{\textbf{d}}d7 10.c4 \textit{\textbf{d}}5f6 11.\textit{\textbf{c}}c3 g6 with mutual chances.

7...\textit{\textbf{e}}6 8.f4

The more aggressive 8.c4 has also been tried:

\textit{analysis diagram}
A) 8...\(\text{Nc7}\) 9.\(\text{Bg1}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) 10.\(\text{f3}\)  \(\text{g6}\) 11.\(\text{c3}\)  \(\text{Bg7}\) 12.\(\text{e3}\) 0-0 13.\(\text{Wd2}\)  \(\text{b5}\) 14.\(\text{cxb5}\)  \(\text{Qxb5}\) 15.\(\text{Qxb5}\)  \(\text{Qxb5}\) 16.\(\text{Qxb5}\)  \(\text{d5}\) 17.\(\text{e2}\)  \(\text{Ec8}\) 18.\(\text{b3}\)  \(\text{Qf6}\) with strong compensation for the pawn, Anand-Carlsen, Moscow Wch Blitz 2007;

B) Even more accurate is 8...\(\text{Nb6}\) 9.\(\text{b3}\)  \(\text{f6}\) 10.\(\text{Nbd3}\)  \(\text{Qxd4}\) 11.\(\text{Bb2}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) (also possible is 11...\(\text{Qd8}\) 12.\(\text{Qd2}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) (12...\(\text{Bf7}\)?) 13.\(\text{Qd2}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) 14.0-0-0 15.\(\text{Qd2}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) with a complicated game, Kasparov-Short, Moscow 2002) 12.a4  \(\text{Qa6}\) (12...\(\text{Qc7}\)?) 13.\(\text{a5}\)  \(\text{c8}\) 14.\(\text{Qc3}\)  \(\text{Qf7}\) (Black is also better after 14...\(\text{Qd6}\) 15.\(\text{Qa4}\)  \(\text{Qf7}\) 16.0-0  \(\text{e5}\) 17.\(\text{Qdc5}\)  \(\text{Qxc5}\) 18.\(\text{Qxc5}\)  \(\text{Qc7}\), as in the correspondence game Huuskonen-Jensen, 2010) 15.\(\text{Qe4}\)?! (15.\(\text{Wd2}\)?) 15...\(\text{e5}\) 16.g5 – Yet another inaccuracy by White, and in G.Szabo-M.Grunberg, Cluj ch-ROM 2008, Black could have obtained the advantage by 16...\(\text{Qd6}\) or 16...\(\text{Qg6}\).

8...\(\text{f6}\)

Black does best to evict the enemy knight from the centre as quickly as possible, and free in advance the f7-square for his bishop.

9.\(\text{Qd3}\)  \(\text{Qf7}\)

The immediate 9...\(\text{Qa6}\)!? deserves consideration, so as to complete the development of the queenside as quickly as possible.

10.0-0

On 10.\(\text{Qf3}\) a good reply is 10...\(\text{e6}\) 11.\(\text{c3}\)  \(\text{Qxc3}\) (it is worth considering 11...\(\text{Qd7}\), not hurrying with the exchange on c3; then there follows ...\(\text{Qe7}\), ...0-0, ...\(\text{Qxc3}\) or ...\(\text{Qb4}\) with a good game for Black) 12.\(\text{bxc3}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) 13.0-0  \(\text{Qd6}\) 14.\(\text{f5}\)  \(\text{e5}\), Alekseev-Laqua, Berlin 2006. White, who was rated some 500 points higher than his opponent, was already worse after 14 moves.

10...\(\text{Qa6}\) 11.\(\text{Qc3}\)

11...\(\text{e6}\)

Black has also tried 11...\(\text{Qxc3}\) 12.\(\text{bxc3}\)  \(\text{g6}\) 13.\(\text{Qe1}\)  \(\text{Qg7}\) 14.\(\text{f5}\)  \(\text{Qd7}\) 15.\(\text{Qf2}\)  \(\text{gxf5}\) 16.\(\text{Qxf5}\)  \(\text{Qxf5}\) 17.\(\text{gxf5}\)  \(\text{Qg8}\) 18.\(\text{Qf2}\) 0-0-
0 19.\(\text{\textit{c}3} \text{\textit{f}8}\) (19...\(\text{\textit{c}7}\) is worth considering, as played in a correspondence game; the idea is that after \(\text{\textit{f}4}\) Black plays ...\(\text{\textit{h}6}\) instead of ...\(\text{\textit{f}8}\)) 20.\(\text{\textit{f}3}\) \(\text{\textit{c}7}\) 21.a4 \(\text{\textit{d}5}\). Here in the game J. Polgar-Short, Bled 2002, a draw was agreed. The position is equal, although already White needs to play accurately, in order not to end up worse.

**12.\(\text{\textit{d}xd}5\)**

It is worth considering 12.\(\text{\textit{e}4}!?,\) avoiding exchanges for the time being.

**12...\(\text{\textit{f}xd}5\) 13.\(\text{\textit{e}e3}\) \(\text{\textit{e}7}\) 14.\(\text{\textit{f}f3}\) \(\text{\textit{d}d}7\) 15.\(\text{\textit{c}3}\) \(\text{\textit{d}8}\)**

Possibly Black should have decided on 15...0-0-0 with opposite-side castling and chances for both players.

**16.\(\text{\textit{e}e2}\) 0-0 17.\(\text{\textit{h}h1}\) \(\text{\textit{c}7}\) 18.\(\text{\textit{ae}1}\) \(\text{\textit{g}6}\) 19.\(\text{\textit{f}f2}\) \(\text{\textit{fe}8}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{g}g1}\) \(\text{\textit{d}d}6\) 21.\(\text{\textit{g}g3}\) \(\text{\textit{d}d}5\) 22.\(\text{\textit{c}c5}\) \(\text{\textit{c}c8}\) 23.\(\text{\textit{g}g5}\) \(\text{\textit{b}6}\)**

![Chess diagram]

**24.\(\text{\textit{d}xe6}\)**

A blunder by White. He should have retreated 24.\(\text{\textit{d}d}3\), after which Black gets slightly the better position after 24...\(\text{\textit{xd}3}\) 25.\(\text{\textit{xd}3}\) \(\text{\textit{f}5}\).

**24...\(\text{\textit{f}5}\) 25.\(\text{\textit{g}g4}\) \(\text{\textit{xe}6}\) 26.\(\text{\textit{xe}6}\+) \(\text{\textit{xe}6}\) 27.\(\text{\textit{xe}6}\) \(\text{\textit{x}g4}\) 0-1**
1.e4  \( \textit{f6} \) 2.e5  \( \textit{\text{d}}\text{d5} \) 3.d4  \( \textit{d6} \) 4.\( \textit{f3} \) dxe5 5.\( \textit{xe5} \) c6 6.\( \textit{c4} \)

Like 6.\( \textit{e2} \), this second-most popular move poses Black some definite problems. The minus of the move is that the bishop occupies the c4-square, to which the white c-pawn may later wish to come, so as to expel the enemy knight from its central post. But there are also pluses to the move, most notably that White can play \( \textit{f3} \), attacking f7 and putting additional pressure on d5. In addition, the bishop can later drop back to b3, opening the path for the c-pawn.

6.\( \textit{d2} \) is sometimes seen. The idea of this move is very simple: White intends to meet 6...\( \textit{d7} \) with 7.\( \textit{df3} \) and after 7...\( \textit{xe5} \) to take on e5 with the knight. However, in this case, the exchange of a pair of knights favours Black and eases his position. There can follow: 6...\( \textit{f5} \) (6...g6!? 7.\( \textit{c4} \) e6 8.\( \textit{c3} \) 9.\( \textit{d7} \) 10.\( \textit{e2} \) 0-0 11.0-0 \( \textit{e8} \) 12.\( \textit{d2} \) \( \textit{xe5} \) 13.\( \textit{xe5} \) \( \textit{c7} \) 14.\( \textit{h3} \) c5 15.\( \textit{ac1} \) \( \textit{ad8} \) 16.\( \textit{b3} \) cxd4 17.\( \textit{cxd4} \) b6 18.\( \textit{xc3} \) \( \textit{xc3} \) 19.\( \textit{bxc3} \) \( \textit{c7} \), and Black seized the initiative in Soot-V.Sveshnikov, Tallinn 2014.

![Analysis Diagram](attachment:image.png)

**Analysis Diagram**

Here Black has two possibilities: 6...g6, so as to complete his development as quickly as possible, and 6...\( \textit{d7} \), immediately forcing White to decide the fate of his knight on e5.

**6...g6**

Black wants to prepare short castling as quickly as possible. The alternative is 6...\( \textit{d7} \), so as to solve immediately the question of the knight on e5. Then play could continue: 7.\( \textit{f3} \) \( \textit{f6} \) 8.\( \textit{h3} \) (restricting Black’s light-squared bishop; after 8.0-0 there would follow 8...\( \textit{g4} \) with mutual chances) 8...\( \textit{f5} \) 9.0-0 e6 with good counterplay for Black, Shirov-Carlsen, Moscow Wch Blitz 2007.

7.\( \textit{c3} \)
Another popular plan is 7.0-0 \textit{g7} 8.\textit{d2}, preparing to strengthen the knight at e5.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\t\node (a1) at (0,0) {\textit{a}}; \\
\t\node (b1) at (0,1) {\textit{b}}; \\
\t\node (c1) at (0,2) {\textit{c}}; \\
\t\node (d1) at (0,3) {\textit{d}}; \\
\t\node (e1) at (0,4) {\textit{e}}; \\
\t\node (f1) at (0,5) {\textit{f}}; \\
\t\node (g1) at (0,6) {\textit{g}}; \\
\t\node (h1) at (0,7) {\textit{h}}; \\
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

A) Inaccurate is 8...0-0?! 9.\textit{d}f3 \textit{d}d7 because of the strong retort 10.\textit{d}d3!. White has managed to defend the pawn on d4 and strengthen his control over the square e5, whilst exchanges are unfavourable to him, since he has more space. With this continuation, Black faces definite problems with the arrangement of his pieces (whereas after 10.h3 \textit{xe}5 11.\textit{xe}5 \textit{e}6, Movsesian-Svidler, Odessa 2009, Black is fine);

B) Stronger is the immediate 8...\textit{d}d7!, and now White cannot play 9.\textit{d}d3 because he loses the d4-pawn. He has to agree to the exchange of knights: 9.\textit{f}f3 \textit{xe}5 10.\textit{xe}5 0-0 (also good is 10...\textit{e}6 11.\textit{b}3 0-0 12.\textit{e}2 a5 13.a4 \textit{c}7 14.\textit{xe}6 \textit{xe}6 with approximate equality, V.Gurevich-V.Bagirov, Jyväskylä 1996) 11.\textit{e}1 \textit{e}6 12.\textit{b}3 a5 13.c3 \textit{c}7 14.\textit{d}3 \textit{f}5 15.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}8 16.\textit{d}2 a4 17.\textit{xd}5 \textit{cxd}5 18.\textit{b}4 \textit{ad}8, and Black’s position, with his two bishops, is in no way worse, Adams-Agdestein, Oslo 1994.

7...\textit{g}7 8.0-0

There is no danger for Black in the aggressive 8.\textit{f}f3 \textit{e}6 9.0-0 \textit{d}d7 10.\textit{e}1 \textit{xe}5 11.\textit{dxe}5 \textit{c}7 (11...0-0!? 12.\textit{d}d3 0-0 13.f4 \textit{d}5 14.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 15.\textit{g}3 \textit{ad}8, and Black took over the initiative in the game Stepovaia-Zhukova, Batumi 2000.

8...0-0 9.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5

Possible is 9...\textit{d}7 10.\textit{xd}7 (if 10.\textit{f}3, then 10...e5 with simplifications) 10...\textit{xd}7 11.c3 with a draw, Lanka-Kengis, Regensburg 1996.

10.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}6
11.\textbf{b3}

On the immediate 11.f4 the simple 11...\textbf{d}7, Almasi-Hodgson, Germany Bundesliga 1994, with a good game for Black, is unpleasant for White, as is 11...f6 12.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{xf}4 13.\textbf{x}e6+ \textbf{x}e6, and Black wins a pawn.

11...\textbf{d}7 12.f4 \textbf{f}5

12...\textbf{b}6 or 12...\textbf{xe}5 13.fxe5 \textbf{f}6, breaking up White’s central pawns, both deserve consideration.

13.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{h}8 14.\textbf{c}3 \textbf{g}8 15.\textbf{h}4 \textbf{h}5

In reply to the flank diversion, it is worth considering central action with 15...c5!?

16.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{e}6 17.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{f}7 \textbf{f}6 18.\textbf{h}1

White moves the knight from g3, where it does nothing.

18...\textbf{d}6 19.\textbf{g}3 \textbf{g}4

Black could obtain a somewhat better position after 19...c5.

20.\textbf{f}2 \textbf{xf}2 21.\textbf{xf}2 \textbf{b}5

Of course, I should prefer 21...\textbf{f}6, but my opponent’s next move came as a surprise to me.

22.\textbf{xd}5 \textbf{xd}5

With the idea of playing ...c6-c5 and still hoping for a win, although objectively, Black’s position is already worse.

23.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{a}5 24.\textbf{g}2 \textbf{xb}2+ 25.\textbf{x}g2 \textbf{fb}8 26.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{f}7 27.\textbf{e}5 \textbf{e}8 28.\textbf{fe}1 \textbf{g}8 29.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{d}8 30.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{f}8 31.\textbf{ae}1
White had little time left, and I decided to sharpen the position with a pawn sacrifice. In my opinion, my opponent played accurately.

31...c5 32.\(\text{N}c5\) \(\text{bxc6}\) 33.\(\text{Kf2}\) \(\text{xc5}\) 34.\(\text{dxc5}\) \(\text{d3}\) 35.\(\text{ed2}\) \(\text{ad8}\) 36.\(\text{ed1}\) \(\text{xd2+}\) 37.\(\text{xd2}\) \(\text{d5}\)

Now after 38.a4 White would have obtained excellent winning chances, but Marzaduri, in severe time-trouble, played 38.a3 and offered a draw. Being a pawn down without serious compensation, I accepted.
Although this move is quite rare, it has already occurred several times at the highest level. In general, the move is somewhat dubious. On the plus side, we can note that the bishop does not block the queen’s access to the d1-h5 diagonal, on which it may come to f3, and in addition, Black cannot bring his bishop out to f5.

However, the minuses are greater: Black can play ...\textit{N}b4 at an appropriate moment, attacking the bishop on d3, and if it moves away, Black can play ...\textit{B}f5. In addition, when the black knight moves from d5, the pawn on d4 will often be hanging, whilst a knight on f3 can be pinned by ...\textit{B}g4. One need also not speak about the bishop being active on d3, as after ...g7-g6 the bishop will bite on granite.

6...\textit{Nd7}

Another possibility is to play 6...g6, ...\textit{Bg7}, ...0-0 and only then ...\textit{N}d7, removing the knight from e5.

7.\textit{Nxd7}

This exchange is rather harmless for Black, not only after 6.\textit{Bd3}, but after other continuations as well.

We will also examine some other alternatives – 7.0-0 and 7.\textit{Nf3}.

A) 7.0-0 \textit{Nxe5}

The best move: Black exchanges the opponent’s powerful centralised knight and also opens a path for his light-squared bishop. Practice has also seen 7...g6, Korneev-Miroshnichenko, Khanty-Mansiysk 2005, but the exchange on e5 is stronger.

8.dxe5
8...g6

Black also has 8...e6, but he cannot really do without ...g7-g6 anyway, so it seems logical to start with this move.

Also possible is 8...b4 9.e4 wxd1 10.xd1 f5 (more accurate is 10...g6) 11.a3 a6 (11...fxe4 12.axb4 g6 13.e3 g7 14.e5 with somewhat better chances for White, Van der Mark-Young, corr. 2008) 12.f3 g6 13.d2 e6 14.e2 c7 15.f3 d5 16.d4 g7 17.c4 f7 18.f4 – White has a small advantage, Sutovsky-Carlsen, Rethymnon 2003.

In this variation, both sides’ play can be improved, but objectively, 8...g6 is a stronger continuation.

A1) 9.w2 e7 10.f4

10.a3 0-0 11.e1 e6 with mutual chances, Goncharenko-A. Ward, corr. 2008;
10.c4 b4 11.e4 d4! (11...0-0!?) 12.a3 (better is 12.d2 wxb2 13.c3 with compensation for the pawn) 12...a6 13.e1 c5 14.e2 g4 15.e3 xe2 16.xd4 e6 17.xa7 xc4 18.d2 d5 19.b6 a6 20.e3 xe5 with an extra pawn for Black, Pokorna-Rutter, Czech/Slovak tt w 2009.

10...0-0 11.d2 b6+ 11...f6!?. 12.h1 e3 13.c4 Preferable is 13.d1!?, not exchanging queens. 13...xe2 14.xe2 f5 with a somewhat better position for Black, Siwiec-Nguyen, Krakow 2008;

A2) 9.c3 g7 10.e1 0-0 11.a3 e6

Or 11...c7 12.e2 e6 (12...d8!?, Coche-Mulde, corr. 2008) 13.c2 c5 with chances for both sides, Crosa Coll-Soppe, Sao Paulo 2003. 12.c2 c5 13.e4 d7 14.e3 ad8 15.xd5 xd5 16.xd5 xd5 17.xd5 xd5 with equality, Sutovsky-Mamedyarov, Gothenburg 2005.

B) Most often in positions of this type, White answers ...d7 with the retreat 7.f3, avoiding exchanges and leaving the enemy knight on d7. Then White plans to play c2-c4, driving the knight away from d5; if it retreats to f6 (and this seems the best square for the knight), then the second knight has to occupy a less good square. White, meanwhile, places his queen’s knight on c3, after playing c2-c4.
But there are also definite drawbacks to the move 7.\(\text{N}f3\). White removes the knight from an excellent central position, and this is already the third move with this knight. Possible then is 7...\(\text{g6}\). White is somewhat better after 7...\(\text{Q}7\text{f6}\) 8.h3 (8.0-0 and 8.a3 are also worth considering) 8...\(\text{b}4\) (more accurate is 8...\(\text{g}6\), but here too, White has a small advantage) 9.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 10.\(\text{b}3\) a5 11.a3 \(\text{a}6\) (the assessment is not changed by 11...\(\text{b}5\) 12.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{b}6\) 13.\(\text{c}3\)) 12.\(\text{h}4\) \(\text{g}6\) 13.\(\text{x}g6\) \(\text{x}g6\) 14.0-0. 8.0-0 Or 8.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{c}7\) 9.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 10.0-0 0-0 11.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{b}6\) 12.\(\text{c}5\) \(\text{d}5\) with mutual chances, Kahn-Ramirez Alvarez, South Padre Island 2009. 8...\(\text{g}7\) 9.\(\text{e}1\) 0-0 10.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{e}5\)!? But not 10...\(\text{c}7\) 11.c4 \(\text{f}4\) 12.\(\text{xe}7\), and White wins a pawn, Movsesian-Orfalea, Panormo 2002. 11.\(\text{xe}5\) Or 11.\(\text{exe}5\) \(\text{c}7\) 12.\(\text{e}6\) \(\text{c}5\) 13.\(\text{xf}7+\) \(\text{xf}7\), and the activity of the black pieces fully compensates for the sacrificed pawn. 11...\(\text{xe}5\) 12.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{e}8\) 13.\(\text{f}1\) 13.\(\text{f}4\)?! is not good because of 13...\(\text{h}4\) 14.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{h}3\). 13...\(\text{b}5\) Not letting White put his pawn on c4. Then Black will take on e5 and reach an equal position. The computer also likes 13...\(\text{h}5\), taking control of the square g4. Black wants to place his bishop on f5 and obtain counterplay.

7.\(\text{xd}7\)

Also interesting is the rare continuation 7...\(\text{xd}7\) 8.0-0 \(\text{g}6\) 9.\(\text{c}3\).

The computer’s 9.\(\text{d}2\) also deserves consideration.

9.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{g}7\) 10.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) with chances for both sides, Foenander-Stallinga, corr. 2006.

Play is in Black’s favour after 9.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{h}6\) 10.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{g}7\) 11.c3 0-0 12.a4 c5 13.\(\text{b}5\) (better is 13.dxc5) 13...\(\text{d}6\) 14.dxc5 \(\text{xc}5\), Schirmbeck-Löffler, Vienna 2006.

9...\(\text{g}7\) 10.\(\text{e}1\) 0-0 11.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{c}7\)

It is worth considering the immediate 11...c5 or 11...\(\text{e}5\).

12.\(\text{f}3\) b6 13.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{b}7\) 14.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{e}8\) 15.\(\text{e}5\) c5 with adequate play for Black, Alfaro Rojas-Ramirez Alvarez, Ajuela 2008.
8. 0-0 g6

9. \( \text{d2} \)

A) 9. \(\text{e1} \text{ g7} 10. \text{c3} 0-0 11. \text{d2} \) (11. \( \text{g5!} \)?) 11... \( \text{c7} \) 12. \( \text{f3} \) Worse is 12. \( \text{f3} \) e5 13. dxe5 \( \text{xe5} \), and Black already has the advantage, Guzenko-Ulanov, Dagomys 2010; also interesting is 13... \( \text{ae8!} \), so as to take with the rook on e5.

12...c5 Or 12... \( \text{d8} \) 13. \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{fe8} \) 14. \( \text{h4} \) e5 with mutual chances, Lilov-Janov, Plovdiv 2008. 13. \( \text{g5} \) e6 14. \( \text{d2} \) \( \text{cxd4} \)

15. \( \text{cxd4} \) Better is 15. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{fe8} \) or 15...a6. 15... \( \text{b6} \) 16. \( \text{e4} \) \( \text{f6} \) (16...f6!??) 17. \( \text{e5} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 18. \( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{c6} \) 19. \( \text{h4} \) h5 20. \( \text{h6} \) \( \text{d8!} \) 21. \( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 22. \( \text{h3} \) \( \text{ec8} \) 23. \( \text{ec1} \) \( \text{d5} \) (23...\( \text{d5!?} \)) 24. \( \text{xe8} \) \( \text{xc8} \) 25. \( \text{h5} \) gxh5 26. \( \text{g5}+ \) \( \text{h7} \) 27. \( \text{h5}+ \) \( \text{g7} \) 28. \( \text{g5}+ \) \( \text{h7} \) 29. \( \text{h5}+ \) \( \text{g7} \) 30. \( \text{g5}+, \) draw, Michiels-Miroshnichenko, Antwerp 2008;

B) 9. \( \text{c4} \)
9...\text{\textit{B}}g7 (another possibility is 9...\textit{Q}f6) 10.\textit{B}c3 \textit{g}7 11.\textit{e}3 Worse is 11.\textit{e}4 0-0 12.d5 cxd5 13.exd5 \textit{b}5 14.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}6 15.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}4, and it is already White who has problems, Rohler-Birk, Austria tt 2013. 11...\textit{e}6 11...0-0!? 12.\textit{Q}d2 (12.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{e}6) 12...\textit{e}6 (12...b5!? 13.\textit{f}3 or 13...\textit{d}7 with mutual chances. 12.\textit{Q}e2 White has good compensation after 12.\textit{Q}f3?! \textit{xd}4 13.\textit{f}3 \textit{xc}3 14.bxc3 \textit{c}8 15.h3. 12...\textit{xd}4 13.\textit{f}3 c5?! Very risky. More solid is 13...\textit{xe}3!? 14.\textit{xe}3 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{d}4 – White has sufficient compensation for the pawn, but hardly any more than that. 14.\textit{e}4 0-0 15.\textit{d}a4 \textit{ec}8 16.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xe}3 Another inaccuracy. After 16...\textit{xc}5 17.\textit{xc}5 \textit{a}6 White is better, but Black is still holding. 17.\textit{xe}3 with an obvious advantage to White, A.Muzychuk-Howell, Antwerp 2009.

9...\textit{B}g7 10.\textit{f}3 0-0

In principle, another line which should also suffice for equality is 10...\textit{e}4 11.c3 0-0 12.h3 \textit{xf}3 13.\textit{xf}3, Golubka-Khaetsky, Illichevsk 2008.

11.\textit{e}1

A) 11.\textit{h}3 \textit{e}7 12.\textit{e}e1 \textit{fe}8 (12...c5!? 13.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}4 Worse is 13...\textit{b}6, as in the game Pinter-Szeko, Slovakia tt 2008. After 14.a4 the threat is a4-a5, and Black starts to have problems with his knight. And if Black himself plays 14...a5, then 15.\textit{b}3, and the weakness of the square b6 is felt (also possible is 15.\textit{e}3!?). 14.\textit{e}c2 \textit{ad}8 with sufficient counterplay for Black;

B) 11.\textit{d}2 a5 Interesting is 11...\textit{g}4!!, provoking White to play 12.\textit{e}5. Then 12...\textit{e}6, and Black is ready to play c5, since the knight on e5 is hanging. 12.a3 \textit{g}4 A complicated game results from 12...a4 13.\textit{g}5 \textit{c}8 14.\textit{d}1 b5 15.\textit{h}4 e6 16.\textit{g}5 f6 17.\textit{d}2 \textit{f}7 18.\textit{e}4 c5 Kulaots-Heim, Gausdal 2003. 13.\textit{e}5 \textit{e}8 14.\textit{e}1 \textit{ed}8 15.\textit{f}1 \textit{f}5 16.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}7 17.\textit{g}4 \textit{e}6 18.\textit{e}2 a4 19.\textit{c}3 \textit{d}6 20.\textit{h}1 \textit{ac}8 21.\textit{d}3 b6 22.\textit{g}2 \textit{d}7 23.\textit{d}2 c5 24.c4 \textit{c}7 25.d5 b5 26.\textit{f}4 \textit{b}6 27.\textit{xe}7 \textit{xc}4 28.\textit{e}5 \textit{xe}5 29.\textit{xe}5 \textit{e}8 30.\textit{g}5 f6 31.\textit{xc}7 \textit{xc}7 32.\textit{xe}8+ \textit{xe}8 33.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}7 34.\textit{e}1 \textit{f}7 35.\textit{d}6 \textit{d}7 36.\textit{d}1, draw, Vorozhtsov-Reichert, corr. 2008.

11...\textit{g}4! 12.c3
More solid is 12...e2 or 12...e4.

12...c5!

Exploiting his advantage in development, Carlsen immediately strikes a blow at the centre.

13.e4

White should have taken up the challenge with 13.dxc5. Black had prepared in reply a new blow – 13...xc3!, but the resulting complications lead to a roughly equal position. This is how play might continue: 14.bxc3 xc3 15.h6 xe1 (both 15...xa1? 16.xa1 and 15...e8? 16.e3 are bad) 16.xe1 xd3 17.e5 (17.e5? f6 18.xe7 ef7) 17...d4 18.c6 (Black is better after 18.xf8 xf8 19.xg4 xg4) 18...xc6 19.xc6 if6 (it is worth considering 19...d6, but here too, White should equalise without any great problems) 20.e7+ h8 21.d5 d4 22.c7 (weaker is 22.xf8 xf8 23.e3 e6) 22...ac8 23.xf8 xf8=.

13...cxd4 14.cxd4 e6

Now Black’s positional advantage is not in doubt: all of his pieces are excellently placed, and White has a weak isolated pawn.

15.b3?!

More drawing chances are offered by 15.h3 xf3 16.xf3 b6 (or 16...c8 17.e3) 17.xd5 exd5 18.e3. For example, 18...xb2 19.d3 b6 20.ab1 c7 21.b5 fd8 22.b3, and White regains the pawn.

15...xf3!

A very concrete decision: Black takes the central pawn.

16.xf3 xd4 17.xd5

17.xb7?! is bad because of 17...a5 followed by ...ab8, but it is worth considering 17.g3, retaining the two bishops.
17...\text{%Qxd5}

Now White is just a pawn down.

18.\text{%Qxd5 exd5} 19.\text{%d1 \text{%g7}}

\text{\textbf{20.\text{%fl}}}

If 20.\text{%xd5 \text{%fd8}} White starts to have back rank problems: 21.\text{%xd8+} (on 21.\text{%d2} unpleasant is 21...\text{%ae8}, creating a threat to take on c1) 21...\text{%xd8} 22.\text{%e3} (completely bad is 22.\text{%f1 \text{%d1+}} 23.\text{%e2 \text{%h1}}) 22...b6 23.\text{%b1 \text{%xb2}} and Black also obtains a healthy extra pawn.

20...\text{%fd8} 21.\text{%g5 \text{%d7}} 22.\text{%d2 h6} 23.\text{%e3 d4} 24.\text{%d3}

More tenacious is 24.\text{%ad1}. Of course, the extra pawn gives Black every chance of a win, but he would still have some work to do.

24...\text{%e8} 25.\text{%d2}

A dubious decision – he should not let the enemy rook into the second rank. More tenacious was 25.\text{%ad1} or 25.\text{%c1}.

25...\text{%e2}

Now Black not only has an extra pawn, but his pieces are also much more active. Carlsen confidently realises his advantage.

26.\text{%b1 \text{%e7}} 27.\text{%a4 f5} 28.\text{%b3 \text{%ec7}} 29.\text{%e1 \text{%f7}} 30.\text{%d2 \text{%e1}} 31.\text{%xc1 \text{%xc1}} 32.\text{%e2 \text{%b1!}}

Not letting White place his king on d3, and tying the rook to the defence of the b3-pawn.

33.\text{%d3}
Now he only has to bring his king into the centre, which Magnus duly does.

33...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}e6} 34.h4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d5} 35.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d2} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e4} 36.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}g3} f4}}}}

37.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g}g3}}

On 37.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}xg6} there follows the nice mate 37...d3#.

37...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e5} 38.f3+ \textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d5} 39.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e1} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d6} 40.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d2} g5 41.hxg5 hxg5 42.e1 g4}}}}

The decisive breakthrough: Black sacrifices a pawn and transfers his king to e4, where it supports the advance of the passed d-pawn.

43.fxg4

If White does not take on g4 and plays, say, 43.a5, then Black continues 43...g3, fixing the kingside pawns and cramping the opponent even further. Soon White will have to move his bishop from e1, and then Black will get at the g2-pawn.

43...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}e4} 44.g5}

White resigned, without waiting for 44...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{x}xe1+}. A confident victory for Carlsen and an important game for the theory, putting the variation with 6.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d}d3} in doubt.}}
After this recapture, Black has no problems. The pawn on e5 can soon become a weakness.

5...\textit{\textbf{B}}g4 6.\textit{\textbf{B}}e2

6.c4 is dubious because of 6...\textit{\textbf{N}}b4 (definitely here) 7.\textit{\textbf{W}}xd8+ \textit{\textbf{C}}xd8 8.\textit{\textbf{A}}a3 e6 9.\textit{\textbf{G}}g5 \textit{\textbf{C}}e8 10.\textit{\textbf{F}}e2 \textit{\textbf{F}}f5 11.0-0 \textit{\textbf{D}}c6 12.\textit{\textbf{F}}f3 a6 13.\textit{\textbf{D}}d2 \textit{\textbf{E}}d8 14.\textit{\textbf{C}}c3 \textit{\textbf{E}}c5 15.\textit{\textbf{D}}d1 \textit{\textbf{C}}e7 with advantage to Black, P. Chandler-Bagirov, Giessen 1994.

White can force his opponent to give bishop for knight: 6.h3 \textit{\textbf{B}}xf3 (on 6...\textit{\textbf{B}}h5 7.e6! is unpleasant) 7.\textit{\textbf{W}}xf3 e6 8.a3 (8.e4?! \textit{\textbf{D}}b4 9.\textit{\textbf{W}}xb7? loses after 9...\textit{\textbf{D}}c6 10.\textit{\textbf{B}}b5 \textit{\textbf{C}}e2+ 11.\textit{\textbf{G}}e2 \textit{\textbf{D}}d4+) 8...\textit{\textbf{D}}d7 9.c4 (on 9.\textit{\textbf{G}}g3 good is 9...f6 10.\textit{\textbf{W}}xf6 \textit{\textbf{W}}xf6 with mutual chances, Asztalso-Vukovic, Debrecen 1925) 9...\textit{\textbf{C}}c7 10.\textit{\textbf{F}}f4 (risky is 10.\textit{\textbf{W}}xb7 \textit{\textbf{B}}b8 11.\textit{\textbf{W}}xa7 \textit{\textbf{D}}c6 12.\textit{\textbf{A}}a4 \textit{\textbf{D}}d4 – 12...\textit{\textbf{D}}dxe5! – 13.\textit{\textbf{C}}c3 \textit{\textbf{B}}b3 with good compensation for the pawn, Alvarez Castillo-Llanos, Buenos Aires 2003) 10...\textit{\textbf{D}}c6 (even stronger was 10...\textit{\textbf{G}}g6!) 11.\textit{\textbf{W}}g3 \textit{\textbf{D}}d4 12.\textit{\textbf{W}}c3 \textit{\textbf{C}}c5 13.\textit{\textbf{D}}d2 \textit{\textbf{W}}c7 with a good game for Black, Petrosian-Mikenas, Tbilisi ch-GEO 1944.

6...e6

Since the bishop has already come to e2, it is possible also to play 6...\textit{\textbf{D}}c6. For example:

A) 7.0-0 (now 7.\textit{\textbf{B}}b5 would simply cost a tempo) 7...e6 8.h3 \textit{\textbf{F}}f5 9.a3 \textit{\textbf{B}}b6 10.\textit{\textbf{F}}f4?! \textit{\textbf{W}}xd1 11.\textit{\textbf{X}}xd1 h6 12.\textit{\textbf{D}}d2 0-0-0 with the better chances for Black, Biro-Grunberg, Romania tt 2002;

B) 7.h3 \textit{\textbf{F}}f5 8.0-0 \textit{\textbf{D}}d4 9.a3 \textit{\textbf{W}}xd1 10.\textit{\textbf{X}}xd1 0-0-0 11.\textit{\textbf{D}}c3 e6 12.\textit{\textbf{H}}h4 \textit{\textbf{D}}xe5 13.\textit{\textbf{G}}xf5 \textit{\textbf{F}}xf5 – White has no compensation for the pawn, D.Petrov-V.Sveshnikov, Tallinn 2015.

7.0-0 \textit{\textbf{D}}c6 8.\textit{\textbf{E}}e1 \textit{\textbf{E}}e7

8...\textit{\textbf{D}}c5!? also deserves attention. 8...\textit{\textbf{D}}db4 is also interesting, and if 9.a3?! (more accurate is 9.\textit{\textbf{D}}d2 \textit{\textbf{F}}f5), then after 9...\textit{\textbf{W}}xd1 10.\textit{\textbf{X}}xd1 \textit{\textbf{X}}xf3 11.gxf3 \textit{\textbf{D}}d5 12.c4 \textit{\textbf{D}}de7 the initiative passes to Black.

9.h3 \textit{\textbf{F}}f5

Also not bad is 9...h5.
10.a3

Apparently best: White takes control of the important square b4, to which the \( \text{N}d5 \) can jump.

10...0-0

While Black is ahead of his opponent in development, the immediate 10...\( \text{N}b6 \) is worth considering, not spending a move on castling.

11.\( \text{B}d3 \)

11.\( \text{B}b5?! \), with the idea of spoiling the black pawn structure, looks dubious. Precious time is spent on this manoeuvre, and it will not be easy to exploit the pawn weaknesses, not to mention the point that Black gains the advantage of the bishop pair. Therefore the move in the game is the correct decision.

11...\( \text{B}xd3 \)

Worth considering was 11...\( \text{Q}d7?! \), so as not to improve the white queen’s position by the exchange on d3.

12.\( \text{Q}xd3 \) \( \text{N}b6 \)

Black opens a road for his major pieces.

13.\( \text{Q}xd8 \)

Evidently, White could not find more useful work for his queen than to exchange her off. He can already not count on an advantage, and therefore tries to simplify the position. But Black, in his turn, is happy to bring another piece into play.

13...\( \text{fxd8} \) 14.b3

A logical move: White covers the squares c4 and a4, where the \( \text{N}b6 \) can come, and in addition, the \( \text{B}c1 \) can now come
to b2. But this continuation also has its minuses.

14...a5

Trying to create weaknesses in the white camp; in addition, the rook on a8 now becomes more active.

15.Bb2 a4 16.Bbd2 axb3 17.cxb3 Bd3 18.Rc1 f8

The king is the only piece which is not taking part in the game and Black intends to bring it to d7, where it will defend the pawn on c7, thanks to which the knight on c6 acquires freedom of movement.

But even stronger was 18...h5!? followed by ...g5-g4, driving away the knight from f3.

19.f1

White also brings his king into the centre.

19...e8 20.e2 d5 21.c4

White simplifies the position in timely fashion, and Black’s advantage disappears – the consequence of the logical, but not strongest move 18...f8.

21.xc4 22.xc4 d7

Black decides not to simplify the position further with 22...a5 23.xc7 xb3.

23.b4 b5

Weakening the squares c5 and c6, but fixing the white pawns.

24.c2 a6 25.ac1 f6

There is no other obvious source of play for Black.

26.exf6 xf6 27.xf6 gxf6 28.h5?

Black had noticed at move 25, when he exchanged dark-squared bishops, that this apparently active raid fails to a tactical point.

28.h3 holds the balance.

28.xc5 29.xc5 xa3
White was counting on swapping the a3-pawn for that on b5, but he realised that 30.\(\text{R}x\text{b5}\) runs into the simple tactic 30...\(\text{R}x\text{f3}\)! 31.\(\text{K}x\text{f3} \text{N}d4+\).

30.\(\text{R}h5 \text{Kd6} 31.\text{R}xh7 \text{Ra2+} 32.\text{Nd2} \text{Nxb4} 33.\text{Kd1} \text{Nd5}\)

A quicker win was available with 33...\(\text{Nd3}\), but the move in the game is good enough.

34.h4

White plays out his ‘trumps’.

34...c5

And Black does likewise.

35.h5 c4 36.\(\text{R}h8\)

White realises that his passed pawn is too slow, so he brings his rook back to defend.

36...c3 37.\(\text{Nd3} \text{xf2}\)

The play was proceeding at blitz pace, and so I decided not to think long and to take as much material as possible.

38.h6 \(\text{f1+} 39.\text{Ke2}\)

More tenacious is 39.\(\text{Kc2}\), but here too, after 39...\(\text{Rh1}\) 40.h7 \(\text{Ke5}\), White cannot save himself.

39...\(\text{Rh1} 40.\text{h7} \text{Ke5} 41.\text{Nd3} \text{b4} 42.\text{Nd5} \text{ph2}\) 43.\(\text{Nd3} \text{xf4+} 44.\text{Nd4} \text{c2} 45.\text{Rc8} \text{xh7} 46.\text{g3} \text{Nd2} 47.\text{xb4} \text{b7+}\)

White resigned, since after any move, Black will take the knight and promote his pawn.

Conclusion: This game shows that the move 5.dxe5 does not create any problems for Black. Of course, White doesn’t
have any either, but Black’s position is very easy to play, because all of his moves are natural, and he needs only at the right moment to move his knight from d5 to b4 or b6, opening a path for his major pieces.
Part II
The Queen’s Gambit Accepted

Chapter 8
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4

We suggest proceeding according to the same principles as after 1.e4: to dictate the character of the opening struggle.
ourselves as soon as possible, and try to draw the opponent into concrete variations, and not allow him to play by ‘general considerations’. We want to get ‘our position’ immediately, and let the opponent think and suffer to recall the variations!

In this chapter, we will look at the positions which arise after 3.e4 e5. The immediate clash in the centre results in the position assuming an open character, and the value of each move becomes extremely high. Both with queens on the board, and without them, the tension does not decline for long.

It is useful to note that the ending arising after 4.dxe5?! \(\text{Qxd1+} 5.\text{Kxd1 Nc6}\), tends in favour of Black, and he is also fine after 4.\(\text{Bxc4 Qxd4}\!\). Meanwhile, if White tries to avoid the exchange of queens with 4.d5 \(\text{Nf6} 5.\text{Nc3}\), then 5...b5! is very strong. The main position of the variation therefore arises after 4.\(\text{Nf3 exd4} 5.\text{Bxc4 Nc6}\); in this chapter, we will examine this in great detail.

### Game 31

Alisa Galliamova 2505  
Sergey Rublevsky 2665  
St Petersburg ch-RUS 1998 (2)

This is what Sergey Rublevsky wrote about this game: ‘A case where the dynamics proved more important than the strategic factors of the position. Black’s bad pawn structure is compensated for by the open lines for his rooks. One of these occupies the central outpost d5, which is more usually occupied by a knight or bishop, rather than a major piece. White does not take up this challenge – not feeling the danger, she does not seek equality, and could not cope with the growing enemy initiative, which builds like a snowball.’

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 e5 4.\(\text{Nf3}\)

A) Black is better in the ending arising after 4.dxe5?! \(\text{Qxd1+} 5.\text{Kxd1 Nc6}\):
A1) 6.f4 g4+ (6...f6!? ) 7.e2 0-0-0+ 8.d2 xe2+ 9.xe2 c5 10.c2 ge7, completing his development and obtaining a position with the better chances for Black, Schneider-Winter, Bad Wildbad 1993; also good is 10...h6;

A2) 6.xc4 xe5 7.e2 c5 8.f4 f6 (also promising is 8...g4!? 9.xg4 xg4+ 10.f3 0-0-0+ 11.c2 e6) 9.g3 e6 10.f3 0-0-0+ 11.e2 xf3 12.xf3 e7 13.a3?! c6 14.d2 d4+ 15.c1 d7 with clearly the better chances for Black, Shevelev-Rublevsky, Paris 1993.

B) He can also avoid the exchange of central pawns: 4.d5 f6 5.c3 b5!
B1) 6.\(\Box x b 5 \ \Box x e 4\) 7.\(\Box a 4\) Better is 7.\(\Box c 3\) 8.bxc3 \(\Box c 5\), and the pawn cannot be taken with 9.\(\Box x c 4\) because of 9...\(\Box x f 2+ 10.\Box x f 2 \ \Box h 4+\); Black regains the bishop and keeps an extra pawn, with the white king position being insecure. 7...c6 8.dxc6 \(\Box c 5!\) 9.\(\Box x c 4\) Completely bad is 9.\(\Box x c 4\) \(\Box a 5+\) 10.\(\Box e 2\) \(\Box e 6\) 11.\(\Box x c 4\) \(\Box x b 5+\) 12.\(\Box e 1\) \(\Box b 4+\) 13.\(\Box d 2\) \(\Box x d 2+\) 14.\(\Box x d 2\) \(\Box x b 2+\) 15.\(\Box c 2\) \(\Box x a 1\) with an extra rook, Iwaniuk-Hoang Thanh Trang, Szeged 1994. 9...b6 10.\(\Box h 3?\) \(\Box x h 3\) 11.gxh3 0-0 He also wins with 11...\(\Box b 4+\) 12.\(\Box x b 4\) \(\Box f 2+\) 13.\(\Box d 1\) \(\Box x c 6\). 12.c7 \(\Box c 6\) 13.\(\Box d 5\) \(\Box b 4+\) 14.\(\Box e 2\) \(\Box f 2+\) 15.\(\Box d 1\) \(\Box f 3+\), and Black won in Usatiuk-Jarmula, Polanica Zdroj 2011.

B2) 6.\(\Box g 5\) \(\Box c 5\) Also good is the simple 6...a6, defending the extra pawn. 7.\(\Box c 2\) c6! Breaking up the centre. 8.\(\Box f 3\) 0-0 9.0-0-0 After the break 9.b3 there is the unpleasant 9...\(\Box a 5\) 10.\(\Box x f 6\) (the threat was 10...\(\Box x e 4\) 10...\(\Box x f 6\). Then play can continue 11.bxc4 cxd5 12.exd5 b4 13.\(\Box a 4\) \(\Box x f 2+\) 14.\(\Box x f 2\) \(\Box b 6+\) 15.\(\Box e 1\) bxc3 with advantage to Black. 9...\(\Box g 4\) It is worth considering 9...\(\Box b 6\), getting the queen away from the line of the rook and attacking \(f 2\). 10.dxc6 \(\Box a 5\) 11.a4 \(\Box c 6\) 12.\(\Box x f 6\) gxf6 13.axb5 \(\Box d 4\) 14.\(\Box a 4\) \(\Box x a 4\) 15.\(\Box x a 4\) \(\Box a 8\) with a clear advantage to Black, Azmaiparashvili-Kanep, Liepaja 2006.

C) 4.\(\Box x c 4\) \(\Box x d 4\)

\[\text{analysis diagram}\]

This is the way to capture! Since the \(\Box c 4\) is hanging, Black can take on d4 with the queen, practically forcing transition into an ending.

5.\(\Box x d 4\) 5.\(\Box b 3\) is not good because of the loss of a second pawn: 5...\(\Box x e 4+\) 6.\(\Box e 3\) \(\Box g 6\) (but not 6...\(\Box x g 2\) 7.\(\Box x f 7+\) with advantage to White) 7.\(\Box c 3\) \(\Box d 6\) 8.\(\Box f 3\) \(\Box c 6\) 9.\(\Box g 5\) \(\Box h 6\) 10.h4 0-0 11.\(\Box f 5\) 12.\(\Box d 5\) \(\Box d 4\) 13.\(\Box x d 4\) exd4 14.\(\Box c 4\) \(\Box b 4+\) 15.\(\Box e 2\) \(\Box e 7\) 16.\(\Box f 3\) \(\Box e 6\) 17.\(\Box x e 6\) \(\Box x e 4+\) 18.\(\Box f 1\) \(\Box x e 6\), and White resigned in Itou-Hayakawa, corr. 2014.

5...\(\Box x d 4\) 6.\(\Box f 3\), and here both 6...\(\Box c 6\) and 6...\(\Box c 5\) give Black the better chances. White’s small advantage in development clearly does not compensate for the loss of the pawns.

4...\(\Box x d 4\)
5. \textbf{xc4}

Other moves have also been tried. 5. \textbf{xd4} is harmless because of 5...\textbf{c5} 6.\textbf{e3} \textbf{f6} (things are roughly equal after 6...\textbf{c6} 7.\textbf{xc6} \textbf{xd1}+ 8.\textbf{xd1} \textbf{xe3} 9.\textbf{xe3} \textbf{bxc6} 10.\textbf{xc4} \textbf{f6}, Kazhgaleyev-Khamrakulov, Tashkent 2011) 7.\textbf{c3} (dubious is 7.f3 \textbf{c6}, V.Kiselev-Borisek, playchess.com blitz 2006; and even worse is 7.e5 \textbf{g4}, winning e3 or e5), and here Black has a choice between the quiet 7...0-0= or the not unfavourable complications after 7...\textbf{g4}!? 8.\textbf{a4+} \textbf{d7} 9.\textbf{e6!} fxe6 10.\textbf{xc5} \textbf{g5} 11.\textbf{a3} \textbf{h4} with mutual chances.

The endgame, which Black cannot really avoid, is important for the assessment of the whole variation. This arises after 5.\textbf{xd4} \textbf{xd4} 6.\textbf{xd4} \textbf{f6}.

A) Interesting but risky is 7.\textbf{xc4}, because this move is linked with a pawn sacrifice, after all: 7...\textbf{c5} 8.\textbf{b3} \textbf{xe4}
with a sharp game, Navara-Jackova, Czech tt 2004/05. Also possible is the quieter 8...b6 with mutual chances, T. Mamedyarova-Danielian, Istanbul 2003;

B) 7.f3 \( \texttt{\textit{c5}} \) 8.b5 More solid is 8.e3, after which a possibility is 8...\( \texttt{\textit{c6}} \) 9.e4 \( \texttt{\textit{xe3}} \) (or 9...\( \texttt{\textit{b4}} \) 10xa3 (10.xb4 \( \texttt{\textit{xe3}} \) gives Black the advantage of the two bishops) 10...\( \texttt{\textit{xe3}} \) 11.xe3 \( \texttt{\textit{xe6}} \) 12.xc4 0-0=) 10.xe3 \( \texttt{\textit{xe6}} \) 11.xc4 \( \texttt{\textit{b4}} \) 13.xc4 0-0-0 with rough equality, Gallego-Moreno, Madrid 2011. 8...\( \texttt{\textit{a6}} \) 9.f4 On 9.xc4 \( \texttt{\textit{c6}} \) 10.c3 both 10...b5 and 10...\( \texttt{\textit{b4}} \) are unpleasant, with some initiative for Black.

8...\( \texttt{\textit{a6}} \) 9.f4

On 9.xc4 \( \texttt{\textit{c6}} \) 10.c3 both 10...b5 and 10...\( \texttt{\textit{b4}} \) are unpleasant, with some initiative for Black.

C) 7.c3 \( \texttt{\textit{c5}} \)

\( \texttt{\textit{analysis diagram}} \)

C1) On 8.e3 there follows 8...\( \texttt{\textit{g4}} \), immediately attacking the bishop. Then there could follow: 9.d5 Worse is 9.xc4 c6 – here Black’s chances are superior (somewhat weaker is 9...\( \texttt{\textit{xe3}} \) 10.xe3 \( \texttt{\textit{d7}} \), as in the games Cifuentes Parada-Bronado, Oviedo 1993, and Comp King-Yakovich, Oviedo 1993). For example, 10.0-0 \( \texttt{\textit{d7}} \) (also good is 10...0-0) 11.xd1 \( \texttt{\textit{xe3}} \) 12.xe3 \( \texttt{\textit{e5}} \) 13.xb3 \( \texttt{\textit{g4}} \) 14.xe2 \( \texttt{\textit{d8}} \) with advantage to Black. Cifuentes Parada-Magem Badals, Terrassa 1994. 9...\( \texttt{\textit{xe3}} \) 9...\( \texttt{\textit{a6}} \)!? 10.xc4 c6 11.xa6 exd5 12.b5+ \( \texttt{\textit{d7}} \) 13.xd7+ \( \texttt{\textit{xd7}} \) with somewhat better chances for Black. 10.fxe3 \( \texttt{\textit{a6}} \) 11.xc4 c6 12.xa6 cxd5 13.b5+ \( \texttt{\textit{e7}} \) The game is immediately equalised after 13...\( \texttt{\textit{d7}} \) 14.xd7+ \( \texttt{\textit{xd7}} \) 14.exd5

Somewhat worse is 14.xc1 \( \texttt{\textit{xd4}} \) 15.exd4 a6 (15...dxe4!? 16.xc7+ \( \texttt{\textit{d6}} \) 17.xf7 \( \texttt{\textit{e6}} \) 18.xb7 \( \texttt{\textit{bh8}} \) 19.a6 \( \texttt{\textit{xb7}} \) 20.xb7 \( \texttt{\textit{bh8}} \) 21.xe4 \( \texttt{\textit{xb2}} \) – if anyone can play for a win in this position, it is Black) 16.xe2 dxe4 17.xc7+ \( \texttt{\textit{d7}} \) 18.g4 \( \texttt{\textit{hd8}} \) with a small advantage to Black, Li Jin Jeslin Tay-Batchimeg, Shenzhen 2011. 14...\( \texttt{\textit{xd4}} \) 15.exd4, draw, Mikhalchishin-Gulko, Riga 1985;

C2) 8.db5 \( \texttt{\textit{a6}} \) 9.f4 9.xc4 fails to 9...c6 (driving the knight back) 10.a3 b5, and Black wins a piece. 9...c6 Another possibility is 9...e6, giving up the pawn on c7. 10.d6+ \( \texttt{\textit{xd6}} \) 11.xd6 \( \texttt{\textit{e6}} \) Worse is 11...b5 12.e5 d5 13.a4 with the initiative for White. 12.0-0-0 12.e5 d7 13.e2 (13.b3 \( \texttt{\textit{b6}} \) 14.e2 0-0-0 15.e4 \( \texttt{\textit{c7}} \) 16.g5 \( \texttt{\textit{d5}} \) 17.0-0 \( \texttt{\textit{h6}} \) 18.h3 \( \texttt{\textit{b5}} \) with advantage to Black, Arkell-Pilgaard, Can Picafort 2013) 13...f5 14.xd1 \( \texttt{\textit{ac5}} \) 15.0-0 \( \texttt{\textit{f7}} \)
16.f4 g6 17...d4 b5 18...f3 ac8 – the compensation for the pawn is insufficient, and Black’s chances are superior, Beliavsky-Ponomariov, Enghien-les-Bains 1999. 12...0-0 0 13...e2 Be8 14...d7 15...d4 b5 16...d1 dac5 17...g3 db7 18...f2 a6, and White does not have full compensation for the pawn, Aronian-Dominguez Perez, Moscow 2009.

5...c6

6.0-0

The queen move to the flank is also not dangerous for Black: 6...b3 b4+

Interesting is 6...d7, for example: 7...b5 (better is 7...d2 a6 with mutual chances) 7...e7 8.0-0 a6 9.e2 g6 10.d1 c5 11.e3 0-0 12.c4 a7 13...d4 d8 14.c3 xd4 15.xd4 xd4, and Black wins a piece, Guramishvili-Landa, Rosmalen 2014. 7...d2 Or 7.bd2 d6 8.0-0 ge7 9.e5 g6 10.h4 h5 11.df3 0-0 with mutual chances.

7...xd2+ There is also a variation with a possible exchange of queens: 7...e7 8...xb4 (8.0-0 deserves attention, retaining queens, after which Black replies 8...e6 with the idea of 0-0-0-0) 8...e4 9.d2 c5 10...c6 11...d4 with mutual chances. 8...d2 f6 Also possible is 8...h6 9.0-0 (on 9...d3 Black exchanges queens: 9...e7 10...xe7+ xe7 with roughly equal chances) 9...0-0 10.h3 e7 11.ac1 d8 12...d5 e5 13...xe5 xe5 14.f3 f4 with chances for both sides, Notkin-Volzhin, Elista 1996. 9.0-0 ge7 10.e5 g6 11.f1 0-0 12.ac1 Black need not fear the aggressive 12.e6 fxe6 13.e4 a5 14.xe6+ h8 15.a3 xe6 16.xa5 c6 17.xe7 d5 – Black has the initiative, J. Graf-Hübner, Germany Bundesliga 1988. 12...b8 13.d3 h6 14.a3 xe6 15.c2 g6 16.b4 bd8 17.b5 cc7 18.e4 f4 with the initiative, Bagirov-Romanishin, Tbilisi 1978.

6...e6
Another possibility is 6...\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}e6}\), but we will not examine it in this book. The move 6...\(\text{\textit{\text{B}}e6}\) is more concrete, and requires from White concrete knowledge of quite complicated variations.

7.\(\text{\textit{\text{B}}}x e 6\)

The move 7.\(\text{\textit{\text{B}}}b5\) will be examined in detail later in the following games.

7.\(\text{\textit{\text{B}}}b3\) does not work because of 7...\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}xc4\) (but not 7...\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}d7\) 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}xb7\) \(\text{\textit{\text{b}}b8}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a6\) with advantage to White, Azmaiparashvili-Dao Thien Hai, Singapore 2007) 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}xc4\) \(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}d7\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f4\) \(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}e7\) (also good is 9...0-0-0) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e5?!\) (better is 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g3\), but here too, after 10...\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}6\) the position favours Black) 10...\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}xe5\) 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}c6\) 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g3\) \(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}e7\) (also promising is 12...h5!? 13.h3 h4 14.\(\text{\textit{\text{h}}}h2\) 0-0-0) 13.\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d2\) 0-0; Black completes his development and keeps an extra pawn.

7.\(\text{\textit{\text{N}}}d2\) is worthy of consideration. Now after 7...\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}d6\) there is the unpleasant 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{Q}}}b3\), and 8...0-0-0 is bad because of 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g5\), attacking the bishop on e6 and the pawn on f7. Meanwhile, 7...\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f6\) fails to 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b5\) with the idea of spoiling the black pawn structure, exploiting the fact that he no longer has the reply ...\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}e7\).

A) A complicated game results from 7...\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f6\) 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b5\). 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d3\) 0-0-0 (also good is 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}e7\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a4\) \(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d7\) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b3\) 0-0-0 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{c}}}c4\) \(h6\) 12.e5 \(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e6\) 13.\(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e4\) with a complicated game, Wojtaszek-Stevic, Aix-les-Bains ch-EUR 2011) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a4\) \(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}5\) (somewhat impulsive; Black keeps a small advantage by 9...\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g6\) or 9...\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b8\) 10.e5, and here instead of 10...\(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e7\), as in the game Belous-Eliseev, Loo jr 2013, better was 10...\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g7\), not taking the pressure off the e5-pawn and not taking the square e7 from the knight. In this complicated position, both sides have their chances. 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e7\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b3\) \(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g4\) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d4\) \(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f3\) 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f6\) \(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}xf6\) 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f3\) 0-0-0 with a complicated position, which the computer assesses as equal;

B) The simplest seems to be: 7...\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d6\) 8.e5. On 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b3\) a good reply is 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d7\), and if 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b7\), then 9...\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b8\) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a6\) \(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}e7\) followed by ...0-0 and an equal game. 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e7\) It is worth considering the untried 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{c}}}c4\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{c}}}c4\) \(c5\) 10.e6 \(f6\). 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b3\) \(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d7\) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b7\) \(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b8\) 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a6\) \(\text{\textit{\text{h}}}h6\) followed by ...0-0; there are chances for both sides.

7...\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}xe6\) 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b3\)

Black is better after 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g5\) \(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d7\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{h}}}h5+?!\) (dynamic balance is maintained by 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b3\) 0-0-0 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a6\) \(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e8\) 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f8\) \(\text{\textit{\text{f}}}f8\) 9...\(\text{\textit{\text{g}}}g6\) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{h}}}h3\) 0-0-0 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b6\) h6 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d7+\) \(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e7\) 13.\(\text{\textit{\text{e}}}e6\) \(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d6\) Herndl-Ibragimov, Vienna 1996.

8...\(\text{\textit{\text{d}}}d7\) 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b7\) \(\text{\textit{\text{b}}}b8\) 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{a}}}a6\) \(f6\)
There are also other possibilities, e.g. 10...\textit{d6} or 10...\textit{g7}.

11.\textit{bd2}

Things are unfavourable for White after 11.\textit{e1}?! \textit{b4} 12.\textit{d2} 0-0 13.\textit{a3} \textit{e7}! (leaving the opponent’s knight on \textit{b1}) 14.\textit{g5} \textit{xb2} with an extra pawn and good winning chances for Black, Mikhailovski-Bosch, Hoogeveen 1998.

Neither can one recommend 11.\textit{e2}?! \textit{d3} (also good is 11...\textit{c5}, Beliavsky-Godena, Budva 2009) 12.\textit{e3} \textit{e7} 13.\textit{d1} \textit{b4} 14.\textit{a3} 0-0 15.\textit{h3}. In the game Jakovenko-Ilescas Cordoba, Budva 2009, the players agreed a draw here, but this was a poor decision by Black, as after 15...\textit{a4} his chances are clearly superior.

Interesting is 11.e5 \textit{g4} 12.\textit{bd2}. If 12.\textit{e1}, then 12...\textit{d5} 13.\textit{h3} \textit{gxe5}, taking a pawn. Then there could follow 14.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 15.\textit{xa7} \textit{d7} 16.\textit{xc7} \textit{b4} 17.\textit{d2} \textit{d6} 18.\textit{a5} \textit{b5}?! (18...\textit{xa5} 19.\textit{xa5} \textit{e7}=) 19.\textit{xe6+} \textit{f7} 20.\textit{xd6} \textit{xa5} 21.\textit{xd5} \textit{xd5} with a somewhat better position for Black. 12...\textit{gxe5}?! 12...\textit{b4} also favours Black, as shown by the game Xu Jun-Svidler, Bad Homburg 1997. 13.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 14.\textit{xa7} \textit{c6} 15.\textit{a4} \textit{d6} – Black’s chances are superior.

11...\textit{d6}

Also worth considering is 11...\textit{b4}.
12. \( \text{Qd3} \)

This is far from White’s only continuation in this position.

A) On 12. \( \text{Qc4} \) the simplest is to play 12...0-0 with somewhat better chances, since taking on d4 is not possible anyway: 13. \( \text{Qxd4?} \) \( \text{Qxd4} \) 14. \( \text{Qxd4} \) \( \text{exh2+} \) winning the queen. And after 13. \( \text{b3} \) there follows 13... \( \text{b4} \) followed by ...e6-e5 or ...

B) 12. \( \text{b3} \) 0-0 It is worth considering 12...e5!? , not giving up the pawn on d4. Now if White tries to prevent castling with the move 13. \( \text{c4} \), then 13... \( \text{b4} \) (driving away the white queen) 14. \( \text{d3} \) 0-0 with a good game for Black.

13. \( \text{bxa4} \) \( \text{bxa4} \) 14. \( \text{Qb1} \) \( \text{Qg4} \) 15. \( \text{Qc2} \) Better is 15.h3 \( \text{xf2} \) 16. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{xe4} \) 17. \( \text{xf8+} \) \( \text{xf8} \) 18. \( \text{c6} \) \( \text{xc6} \) 19. \( \text{xc6} \) a6, and White, still a pawn down, is fighting for a draw. 15... \( \text{exh2+} \) 16. \( \text{h1} \) \( \text{e5} \) 17. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{f7} \) 18. \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{h5+} \) 19. \( \text{h3} \), and here in the game Savchenko-Carstensen, Copenhagen 2008, instead of 19... \( \text{xf2+} \) as played, Black can win by 19... \( \text{h4} \), threatening ... \( \text{xf2} \) and ...

C) 12. \( \text{b3} \)? 0-0 13. \( \text{b2} \)

Serious attention should be given to 13. \( \text{a3} \) with an exchange of bishops. For example, 13... \( \text{b6} \) 14. \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{xa3} \) 15. \( \text{xa3} \) \( \text{h5} \) 16. \( \text{g3} \) e5 17. \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{h3} \) with a complicated position, in which White’s chances are nonetheless somewhat better, Hammer-Stevic, Tromsø 2014.

Maybe Black does better to take the bishop – 13... \( \text{xa3} \), not putting his rook on b6, where it will be hit by a later \( \text{c4} \).

Then possible is 14. \( \text{xa3} \) \( \text{d6} \) (offering the exchange of queens as well) 15. \( \text{a6} \) (15. \( \text{xd6} \) \( \text{xd6} \) gives White nothing) 15... \( \text{b6} \) 16. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{b4} \) 17. \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{g4} \) (17... \( \text{d7} \), Sabaev-Wojtyra, corr. 2013, is the same) 18. \( \text{ac1} \) \( \text{ce5} \) 19. \( \text{xe5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 20. \( \text{g3} \) with slightly the better chances for White, Dronov-Pinkovetsky, corr. 2011.

13... \( \text{e5} \) 14. \( \text{fc1} \)

The correct rook. If 14. \( \text{ac1} \), then 14... \( \text{b4} \), and the pawn on a2 is not guarded by the rook. Nor is anything promised by 14. \( \text{c4+} \) \( \text{h8} \) 15. \( \text{ac1} \) \( \text{b6} \) with mutual chances.
C1) 14... Nd4!? 15. Nxe5 Qf7 with mutual chances;
C2) 14... Nxd8 15. Nxd4 exd4 16. e5 Nxe6 17. exd6 cxd6, draw, Eljanov-Ganguly, Sabadell 2008;
D) 12. a3!? preparing b2-b4.
12...0-0

13.b4 \(\text{Bg4}\) The solid 13...e5!? is also possible, but he did not want to block in the bishop. 14.\(\text{Bb2}\) 14.h3 \(\text{ge5}\) 15.\(\text{Bxe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 16.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 17.\(\text{Wxc4}\) e5 18.\(\text{d1}\)?! (better was 18.\(\text{bxc5}\) \(\text{Ebc8}\) 19.\(\text{b2}\) \(\text{xe5}\), and Black’s chances are preferable) 18...\(\text{Wf7}\) 19.\(\text{Ra2}\) \(\text{xb4}\) 20.\(\text{Wxd4}\) \(\text{Wbd8}\) 21.\(\text{Wb2}\) (a blunder. The battle would continue after 21.\(\text{Wc4}\) 21...\(\text{e7}\), and White resigned in Chetverik-Brynell, Oslo ch-NOR op 2006. 14...\(\text{Wxe5}\) 15.\(\text{Bxe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 16.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{Wf6}\) 17.\(\text{Wxa7}\) 17.\(\text{Qa7}\) 18.\(\text{Wc4}\) \(\text{e5}\) 19.\(\text{Qa3}\) \(\text{e5}\) 20.\(\text{Wc1}\) \(\text{Wxc1}\) (black has also tried the aggressive 20...\(\text{g5}\) 21.\(\text{bxc5}\) \(\text{Wxc8}\) 22.\(\text{Wxc6}\) \(\text{Wxc6}\) 23.\(\text{Wg4}\) \(\text{Wg4}\) 24.\(\text{Wf3}\) \(\text{Wd8}\) with a double-edged game, Kolcek-D’Adamo, corr. 2011) 21.\(\text{Wxc1}\) \(\text{h5}\) (21...\(\text{Wg6}\)?) 22.\(\text{Wc3}\) \(\text{Wf7}\) 23.\(\text{Wd4}\) a6 24.\(\text{Wc3}\) \(\text{h4}\) 25.\(\text{Wb3}\), draw, Dobrica-Chukanov, corr. 2014. 17...\(\text{Wf2+}\) White is better after 17...\(\text{h2}\)?! 18.\(\text{Wc4}\) \(\text{xf1}\) 19.\(\text{Wxh6}\) \(\text{Wc6}\) 20.\(\text{Wd7}\) \(\text{Wxd7}\) 21.\(\text{Wxf4}\) \(\text{Wxf4}\) with unpleasant threats against the white king, Larsen-Liedl, corr. 2013) 22.\(\text{Wc3}\) \(\text{Wf7}\) 23.\(\text{Wd4}\) a6 24.\(\text{Wc3}\) \(\text{h4}\) 25.\(\text{b3}\), draw, Dobrica-Chukanov, corr. 2014. 17...\(\text{Wf2+}\) White is better after 17...\(\text{h2}\)?! 18.\(\text{Wc4}\) \(\text{xf1}\) 19.\(\text{Wxh6}\) \(\text{Wc6}\) 20.\(\text{Wd7}\) \(\text{Wxd7}\) 21.\(\text{Wxf4}\), Volkov-Credit, Internet 2005. 18.\(\text{Wb1}\) \(\text{Wxf2+}\) 19.\(\text{Wxb2}\) \(\text{Wd6}\) 20.\(\text{Wg1}\) \(\text{Wxh3+}\) 21.\(\text{gxh3}\) \(\text{Wg3+}\), draw, Andersen-Liedl, corr. 2014;

E) On 12.\(\text{We1}\) there follows 12...\(\text{Wg4}\) 13.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{We5}\) 14.\(\text{We5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 15.\(\text{c4}\). Or 15.\(\text{Wb3}\) 0-0 16.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{We6}\)!? 17.\(\text{Wc2}\) \(\text{xc6}\) with advantage to Black. 15...0-0 The simple 15...\(\text{Wxc4}\) 16.\(\text{Wxc4}\) 0-0 also looks fine. 16.\(\text{We5}\) There have been no tests of the logical 16.\(\text{Wxd6}\) \(\text{We6}\) 17.\(\text{Wc3}\) \(\text{xd6}\) 18.\(\text{Wd6}\) \(\text{xc6}\) or 18...\(\text{xc6}\); Black’s position here looks preferable. 16...\(\text{We5}\) 17.\(\text{Wd3}\) \(\text{Wb5}\) Black is also somewhat better after 17...\(\text{c5}\), Gyimesi-Horvath, Hungary 2002. 18.\(\text{Wd1}\) \(\text{Wxd3}\) 19.\(\text{Wxd3}\) \(\text{c5}\) 20.\(\text{b3}\) \(\text{Wf8}\) 21.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{We6}\) 22.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{We7}\) 23.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{b5}\) 24.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{a5}\) with the idea of ...\(\text{xa8}\) and ...\(\text{a5-a4}\), Pelletier-Rublevsky, Lucerne 1997. Black’s position is preferable.

12...0-0

13.a3

13.h3 e5 14.\(\text{c4}\) (14.a3 a5) 14...\(\text{b4}\) (or 14...\(\text{We6}\)?) 15.\(\text{b3}\) \(\text{bd5}\) 16.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 17.\(\text{fxe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 18.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{We6}\) 19.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{b4}\) 20.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{dc3}\) 21.\(\text{bxc3}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 22.\(\text{We3}\) \(\text{xc3}\) 23.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{c5}\) 24.\(\text{xe6+}\) \(\text{xe6}\)= Grammatica-Istomin, corr. 2012.

13.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{g4}\) (13...\(\text{b4}\)?) 14.\(\text{d1}\) – dangerous is 14.\(\text{b1}\)!, since the queen strays too far from the king; after 14...\(\text{g4}\) 15.e5 \(\text{We6}\) 16.\(\text{xd6}\) \(\text{xf3}\) Black has a dangerous initiative – 14...\(\text{xe4}\) 15.a3 \(\text{c6}\) 16.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{f6}\) with mutual chances)
14.h3  \text{Exf3}  15.\text{xf3} (worse is 15.gxf3  \text{Qxe5}  16.\text{Qxe5}  \text{Qxe5}  17.\text{Qe2}  \text{Qg6}  18.\text{Qd1}  \text{Exf8}  19.\text{b3}  \text{Qf4}  20.\text{a3}  \text{e5}!  21.\text{Qf1}  \text{Qh3??}  \text{xf8??}  \text{Qh3 with mate})  21...\text{Exf6}  22.\text{Qxf6}  \text{Qh6}  23.\text{Qg2}  \text{Qf4}  24.\text{Qg1}  \text{Qh4},  \text{Perez-Bandiera, corr. 2001})  15...\text{Qh2}  16.\text{Qe2} (Black is better after 16.\text{Qd3}  \text{b4}  17.\text{Qd1}  \text{Qxf1}  18.\text{Qxf1}  \text{Qc6})  16...\text{Qxf1}  17.\text{Qxf1}  \text{Qf8}  18.\text{Qd2}  \text{Qg3}  19.\text{e1}  \text{Qxe5}  20.\text{Qxe5}  \text{Qxe5=}  \text{Miton-Kortchnoi, Krynica 1998}.

13...\text{Qg4}

'A stable structure naturally favours White, who has no weaknesses: 13...e5? 14.\text{c4}  \text{Qe6}  15.\text{d2}. Therefore, while his opponent is not yet fully mobilised, it is essential to develop the initiative' (Rublevsky).

14.b3

White has also tried 14.h3  \text{Qxe5}  15.\text{Qxe5}  \text{Qxe5}  16.\text{Qd4}  \text{b5} (16...\text{d3}!? with a complicated position)  17.b4  \text{c6}  18.\text{c4}  \text{e5}  19.g3  \text{xal}  20.\text{xc6}  \text{d4}  21.\text{g2}  \text{f6},  \text{draw, Nikolic-Anand, Monaco blind 1999}.  \text{Instead of the last move, an interesting alternative is 21...a5}?  22.bxa5  \text{Qc5}  23.\text{Qa4}  \text{Qc3}  \text{with mutual chances}.

14...\text{Qxe5}  15.\text{Qxe5}

Some time earlier, there had been a game Dreev-Rublevsky, Elista 1998, in which White achieved a stable advantage after 15...\text{Qxe5}  16.g3  \text{f7}  17.\text{f4}  \text{e3}?!  18.\text{c4}  \text{xc4}  19.\text{xc4}  \text{d6}  20.e5  \text{e7}  21.b4. However, Black’s play can be strengthened: 17...\text{d6} (instead of 17...\text{e3})  18.e5  \text{h5}  19.h4, and here 19...\text{xe5}  \text{deserves attention}.  \text{Now White needs to find a series of accurate moves to hold the balance: 20.fxe5  \text{e3}  21.\text{e1}!  \text{xe5}  22.\text{e4}!  \text{f3}  23.\text{xe3}!  \text{Xg3+}  \text{24.Xg3}  \text{xe3}+  \text{with perpetual check}.

However, for the game with Galliamova, Rublevsky had prepared a new, quite unexpected idea.

16.\text{Qd4}  \text{Qg4}  17.e5

17.g3? loses to 17...\text{f7}  \text{with numerous threats.}
17...\textbf{Qxe5} 18.\textbf{b2}

18.h1?! h\textsubscript{5} (even stronger 18...c5!) 19.\textbf{c4} \textsubscript{d}d5 20.\textbf{h}h4 \textbf{b}b5 21.\textbf{h}h3 \textbf{xc}xc4 22.bxc4 \textbf{xc}xc4 23.\textbf{xe}xe6+ \textbf{h}h8 24.\textbf{e}e3 \textbf{d}d2! 25.\textbf{d}d1 (25.\textbf{d}d2? \textbf{h}h5+) 25...\textbf{d}d5 with an extra pawn, Dreev-Vorobiov, Moscow 2007.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

18...\textbf{b}b5!

‘An extremely important consolidating move, which was brought to my attention by Ruslan Scherbakov. The rook could not have a better square than d5! In the game with Dreev, I did not go in for this position, because here I had considered only 18...\textbf{d}d3?! 19.g3 \textbf{x}xb2 20.\textbf{xb}xb2 with a stable edge for White. Now, however, he has no advantage, and Black’s tactical possibilities are not easy to cope with under the pressure of the ticking clock’ (Rublevsky).

From the viewpoint of modern computers, the position after 18...\textbf{d}d3 19.g3 \textbf{x}xb2 20.\textbf{xb}xb2 \textbf{c}c5 is not at all worse for Black. But the text move is undoubtedly stronger.

19.\textbf{c}c4

The immediate queen retreat 19.\textbf{e}e4 was worth considering.

19...\textbf{d}d5 20.\textbf{e}e4

Black is better after 20.\textbf{c}c3?! \textbf{d}d3 21.\textbf{x}xd6 cxd6. Better is 20.\textbf{h}h4 \textbf{d}d3 21.\textbf{x}xd6 (but not 21.\textbf{c}c3 \textbf{f}f4 22.\textbf{h}h3 \textbf{x}f2 23.\textbf{x}f2 \textbf{c}c5 24.\textbf{e}e3 \textbf{x}f2 25.\textbf{xf}xf2 \textbf{d}d3, and White loses) 21...\textbf{x}xd6 with a small advantage to Black.

20...\textbf{d}d3

The knight on d3 causes White serious inconvenience.

21.\textbf{x}xd6

He has to exchange. If 21.\textbf{e}e2, then after 21...\textbf{c}c5 White starts to have problems with the f2-pawn.

21...\textbf{x}xd6
Now the queen is also included in the game. Black’s pieces are rather more active and White faces a difficult defence.

22.\textit{c}3 \textit{b}6 23.\textit{h}4

An inaccuracy, but the position is difficult to defend anyway, when the opponent’s pieces are so active. Thus, after 23.\textit{e}3 there follows the simple tactical blow 23...\textit{xf}2 24.\textit{xb}6 \textit{xf}1+ 25.\textit{xf}1 \textit{xb}6, winning a pawn.

The most tenacious was the passive, but solid 23.\textit{e}1. In reply, Black can simply strengthen the position of his pieces – 23...\textit{ff}5; White is worse, but this is how he should have played.

23...\textit{f}4 24.\textit{g}4?!  

It was necessary to put the king on h1, preventing a check on e2, although after 24...h6, with the idea of meeting \textit{g}3 with ...\textit{g}5, Black has the advantage.

24...\textit{f}7 25.\textit{ad}1?

More tenacious is 25.\textit{ae}1, although this is hardly likely to have saved the game.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
% Insert chessboard diagram here
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

25...h5!  

The queen has to move and has no good retreat square.

26.\textit{f}3  

26.\textit{h}4 g5 27.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}2+ also loses.

26...\textit{h}3+! 0-1  

‘It is a shame that the beautiful finish remained behind the scenes: 27.\textit{x}h3 \textit{xf}2+! 28.\textit{xf}2 \textit{xd}1+’ (Rublevsky).

8...Nc6

The most solid continuation, although 8...Qd6!? is also possible, with the idea of castling long more quickly. Possible then is 9.e5 (9.Nc4!? Nxc4 10.Qxc4 f6 followed by ...0-0-0; the immediate 10...0-0-0 is worse because of 11.b4! with initiative to White) 9...d5 10.Qg5!? 0-0-0 11.Nc4 Qd7 12.Qxe6 fxe6 13.b4 Qxb4 (13...Bb6 14.Qb3 Qe7 15.Qf3 Qxb4 16.Qxb4 Qxb4 17.Qg5 Qh6 18.Qxe6 Qd7 Rost-Mukherjee, corr. 1999, or 13...Qxb4!? 14.Qb3 Qb8 15.Qb1 b6, in both cases with a complicated game) 14.Qb3 Qd5 15.Qe4 Qb6 (the retreat 15...Qe7 is also possible, e.g. 16.Qb1 b6 17.a4 Qb8 18.a5 Qh6 with mutual chances)
16.a4! a5 17...d6+ b8 18...xd5 exd5 19...d2 cxd6 20...xb6 dxe5 21.f4 f6 22.fxe5 e4 23.axa5 d3 24.e6 d6 25...xd6+ d6 26.e7 f6 27.xf6 e6 28.d1 e8 29.b4, draw, Kasparov-Anand, Linares 1999.

9...g5

The alternative is 9...b3, attacking the other bishop.

A) Simplest of all is 9...xb3 10...xb3 0-0 or 10...b6 with satisfactory play;
B) Also possible is the more passive 9...\textit{b}6 10.\textit{b}xd4 \textit{d}7 11.\textit{c}xc6 \textit{xc}6 with a solid position;

C) The most ambitious is 9...\textit{Q}d6 10.g3 (here 10.\textit{g}5 is dubious: 10...0-0-0 11.\textit{c}xe6 fxe6 12.\textit{Q}g4 \textit{e}5 13.\textit{h}3 \textit{b}6 14.f4 \textit{d}7 15.\textit{d}2 \textit{b}8 with the better chances for Black, A.Brown-Slingerland, Haarlem 2011, but it was worth considering 10.\textit{c}xc5, with the possible variation 10...\textit{Q}xc5 11.\textit{c}xd4 0-0-0 12.\textit{c}e4 13.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{d}x\textit{c}4 14.\textit{c}xc5 \textit{Q}e4 15.\textit{Q}e5 \textit{Q}e5=) 10...\textit{b}xb3 11.\textit{Q}xb3 0-0 12.\textit{b}f4 \textit{Q}d8 (covering the pawn on c7 and at the same time avoiding the pin, which arises with the queen retreat to d7; but also possible is 12...\textit{Q}g6 13.\textit{Q}xe7 \textit{Q}xe4, e.g. 14.\textit{c}ac1 \textit{b}6 15.\textit{Q}f5 16.\textit{Q}f4 \textit{d}ad8 17.\textit{a}4 \textit{d}5 18.\textit{g}2 \textit{d}3 19.\textit{c}3 \textit{d}4, draw, Mathe-D’Adamo, corr. 2007) 13.\textit{d}2 \textit{g}6 14.\textit{c}xc6 bxc6 15.\textit{c}c4 \textit{b}6 16.\textit{xc}6 \textit{a}5 17.\textit{xc}1 \textit{e}8 with a good game for Black, Santos Etxepare-Seelig, corr. 2011.

9...\textit{Q}d7 10.\textit{d}f3

More solid was 10.\textit{c}xe6 with a roughly equal game: 10...\textit{Q}xe6 11.\textit{b}3 \textit{d}6 (11...\textit{b}6 12.\textit{d}x\textit{d}4 \textit{g}6= is also possible) 12.\textit{f}4 \textit{Q}x\textit{f}4 13.\textit{c}xc5 0-0 14.\textit{g}3 (or 14.\textit{c}1 \textit{a}6 15.\textit{g}3 \textit{h}6 16.\textit{e}2 \textit{f}d8= Giorgadze-Sakalauskas, Istanbul 2000, or 14.\textit{c}1 \textit{xc}1 15.\textit{a}xc1 \textit{f}b8 16.\textit{e}d1 \textit{a}6 17.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}d8= Cruzado Duecas-Akdag, corr. 2012) 14...\textit{h}6 15.\textit{c}1 \textit{f}d8 (15...\textit{a}6?!?) 16.\textit{b}7 \textit{d}b8 17.\textit{a}4 \textit{e}5 18.\textit{c}x\textit{c}7 \textit{g}6=, Dreev-Svidler, Elista 1997 (and if he wishes, Black can force a draw here with 18...\textit{f}3+?! 19.\textit{g}2 \textit{h}4+).

10...\textit{f}6

11.b4

11...\textit{Q}xe6!? \textit{xe}6 12.\textit{c}xd4 \textit{xd}4 13.\textit{wd}4 \textit{a}6 14.\textit{c}4 \textit{d}6 15.\textit{ad}4 0-0-0 16.\textit{c}e5 (16...\textit{d}4?!?) 17.\textit{b}3 \textit{b}5 18.\textit{a}5 \textit{b}7 19.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}5 20.\textit{a}e3 \textit{c}4 21.\textit{f}d1 \textit{c}7 22.\textit{xd}8 \textit{xd}8 23.\textit{d}1 \textit{c}7c6 24.\textit{e}2 \textit{a}5 25.\textit{xa}5 \textit{xa}5= Gelfand-Nisipeanu, Bazna 2010.

11...\textit{xb}4 12.\textit{b}1 \textit{d}6 13.\textit{c}xe6 \textit{xe}6 14.\textit{d}3

It is strange that White refrained from 14.\textit{xd}4 0-0-0 15.\textit{a}4 with some compensation for the pawn.

14...\textit{d}7
The computer recommends 14...0-0-0, but it is not a very human decision to put the king on this side.

15.\texttt{\texttt{d}2} a6 16.\texttt{c}4

More saving chances were offered by 16.\texttt{xc}6  \texttt{xc}6 17.\texttt{xb}7 0-0 18.\texttt{c}4+ \texttt{h}8 19.\texttt{d}5. White is worse, of course, but he has regained one pawn and his pieces have developed some activity.

16...b5 17.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{b}8

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess-board.png}
\end{figure}

18.\texttt{fe1}

Better was 18.\texttt{be}1, in order after 18...\texttt{e}5 19.\texttt{xe}5 fxe5 to play 20.f4 with the rook on f1. Admittedly, even here, after 20...c5 White is worse, and besides, Black is not obliged to play 18...\texttt{e}5.

18...\texttt{e}5

A simple and strong move. Black, having two extra pawns, exchanges knights, closing the centre, and after the forced exchange, Black defends the pawn on d4.

19.\texttt{xe}5 fxe5 20.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{c}8

Taking control of the square f7 and preparing the transfer of the knight to a more active position.

21.\texttt{g}3 c5 22.f4 c4

The black pawn storm decides.

23.fxe5 \texttt{c}7 24.\texttt{d}1 0-0 25.\texttt{b}4
25...\text{\textit{f6}}

Other rook retreats also win, but this is the most accurate.

26.\text{\textit{h5}}

Of course, the rook could not be taken: 26.exf6 \text{\textit{\textbf{xg3}.}}

26...\text{\textit{\textbf{h8}}} 27.\text{\textit{f1}} 28.exf6 \text{\textit{\textbf{xg3}}} 29.hxg3 gxf6 30.exf6 c3 31.\text{\textit{bf1}} c2 32.\text{\textit{d6}} 33.\text{\textit{f7}} 34.d8 0-1
The exchange of the knight for the light-squared bishop brings White no benefit.

8...\texttt{Qe7}

Black simply defends the bishop and is ready at some moment to castle long.

9.\texttt{Nxe6+}

After 9.\texttt{Nxe6 Qxe6}, Johansson-Westerberg, Linköping 2013, Black’s pawns do not get doubled.

9...\texttt{bxc6} 10.\texttt{Bxe6 Qxe6} 11.\texttt{d2}

11.b4 deserves attention.
A) After 11...\textit{\$\textsubscript{xb}4} White takes a central pawn in return – 12.\textit{\textsubscript{wx}d4} \textit{\$d6} (12...\textit{\textsubscript{e}7}!? 13.\textit{\textsubscript{b}2} (bad is 13.\textit{\textsubscript{wxg}7}? \textit{\textsubscript{e}5}) 13...\textit{\textsubscript{f}6} 14.\textit{\textsubscript{d}2} \textit{\textsubscript{e}7} 15.\textit{\textsubscript{c}4}, and because Black’s extra pawn is doubled, White has good chances of equalising;

B) If Black retreats 11...\textit{\textsubscript{b}6}, so as to keep his central pawn, then White obtains counterplay after 12.a4 a6 (in the event of 12...a5 13.bxa5 \textit{\textsubscript{xa}5} 14.\textit{\textsubscript{d}2} \textit{\textsubscript{f}6} 15.\textit{\textsubscript{b}3} White’s passed pawn compensates for his opponent’s extra pawn) 13.a5 \textit{\textsubscript{a}7} 14.\textit{\textsubscript{d}3}. Black’s passed pawn is blockaded and the a6-pawn is weak;

C) Maybe the best move is to give up the central pawn and complete the development of the queenside: 11...\textit{\textsubscript{e}7} 12.\textit{\textsubscript{b}2} \textit{\textsubscript{f}6} 13.\textit{\textsubscript{xd}4}. White has regained the pawn, and although after 13...0-0 14.\textit{\textsubscript{d}2} \textit{\textsubscript{fd}8} 15.\textit{\textsubscript{c}3} \textit{\textsubscript{ab}8} 16.a3 c5!? 17.bxc5 \textit{\textsubscript{f}8} or 17...\textit{\textsubscript{b}5} Black still has some initiative, this does not really promise anything serious.

11...\textit{\textsubscript{d}8}

Correct: it is better immediately to defend d4. Now White does not get back the central pawn.

12.\textit{\textsubscript{c}2} \textit{\textsubscript{b}6} 13.\textit{\textsubscript{d}3}

Blockading the dangerous passed pawn.

13...\textit{\textsubscript{f}6} 14.\textit{\textsubscript{c}4} \textit{\textsubscript{d}7}

On 14...0-0 unpleasant is 15.\textit{\textsubscript{g}5}, pinning the knight.

15.b4

Taking control of the square c5, where the black knight might head. On 15.\textit{\textsubscript{xb}6} it is best to take the knight at once – 15...cxb6, since after the preliminary 15...\textit{\textsubscript{c}5} with the idea of taking on b6 after the queen retreats, White has the beautiful tactical resource 16.\textit{\textsubscript{a}8} \textit{\textsubscript{xd}3} 17.\textit{\textsubscript{xc}7+}, regaining the queen and a pawn. Now, however, after 16.\textit{\textsubscript{wx}d4} \textit{\textsubscript{e}5} 17.\textit{\textsubscript{a}4} \textit{\textsubscript{d}7} Black has more active pieces, which promises him the better chances. After the text, white cannot avoid the exchange of Black’s doubled pawn:
15...c5 16.b5 c6 17.bxc6 Qxc6

One can draw conclusions: Black has a healthy extra pawn and every chance of winning.

18.h5 f6 19.h4 c7 20.f4 0-0 21.a1 e8

Also good was 21...a6, attacking a2 and the c4, or 21...b8, seizing the file.

22.d2

The pawn on e4 was hanging.

22...a5

Now Black transfers his bishop to the a5-e1 diagonal with tempo.

23.c4 c3

White certainly does not want to put up with such a bishop on c3, so his next move is tempting.

24.e1 xe4

Black exchanges queens and central pawns. Also possible was 24...xe1 25.fxe1 e6 with advantage to Black.

25.xe4 xe4 26.xc3 dxc3 27.xc3 b8 28.g3 b4
Black has active rooks and an extra pawn; for complete happiness, he only needs to activate his knight and king.

29. \texttt{N}e3 \texttt{N}b6 30. \texttt{R}f2

More tenacious was 30. \texttt{K}g2, bringing the king to f3.

30...c4 31. \texttt{R}fc2 \texttt{K}f7

Black centralises an important and powerful piece in the endgame – the king.

32. \texttt{K}f2

White has to do the same, naturally.

32...\texttt{R}d4 33. \texttt{R}a3 \texttt{R}d7 34. \texttt{R}ac3 \texttt{R}d4 35. \texttt{R}a3 \texttt{R}d7 36. \texttt{R}ac3

Having repeated the position twice to gain time, Black of course decides to continue, since he has an extra pawn.

36...\texttt{R}c7 37. \texttt{K}f3 g6 38. \texttt{K}e4 f5+

Driving the king out of the centre.

39. \texttt{K}f3

Not 39. \texttt{K}d4 because of 39...\texttt{R}b5 with the threat of 40...\texttt{R}d7, winning material.

39...\texttt{e}6 40. \texttt{R}d2 \texttt{R}d7 41. \texttt{R}dc2 \texttt{R}c7 42. \texttt{R}d2 \texttt{a}4 43. \texttt{h}3

After this move, White is ready when necessary to play g3-g4, but now the h- and g-pawns are weakened. On the other hand, if White sits still, then Black simply transfers his king to the queenside: 43. \texttt{R}dc2 \texttt{d}6 and ...\texttt{c}5.

43...\texttt{R}d7 44. \texttt{R}dc2
After the exchange of rooks 44.\(\text{R}xd7\) \(\text{K}xd7\) the king march to the queenside decides things.

44...\(\text{R}d4\) 45.a3 h5 46.\(\text{R}c1\)

46...\(\text{R}e4\)

Black could already play 46...\(\text{N}d5\) 47.\(\text{R}xc4\) (47.\(\text{N}xd5\) \(\text{K}xd5\)) 47...\(\text{R}xc4\) 48.\(\text{R}xc4\) (48.\(\text{R}xc4\) \(\text{R}d3\)) 48...\(\text{R}d3+\) 49.\(\text{K}f2\) h4 (this is where White’s 43rd move is felt) 50.gxh4 \(\text{N}xf4\), winning.

47.\(\text{R}d1\) \(\text{Ra}5\) 48.\(\text{R}d8\)

Correct: White should activate his rook and give checks with it, attacking the black pawns.

48...\(\text{R}e7\) 49.\(\text{R}d1?\)

More tenacious is 49.\(\text{R}g8\).

49...\(\text{R}b5\) 50.\(\text{g}4\) \(\text{e}6\) 51.gxf5+ \(\text{gxf5}\) 52.\(\text{R}d8\) \(\text{b}3\) 53.\(\text{x}b3\) \(\text{cxb3}\)

The passed b-pawn decides the game.

54.\(\text{R}d3\) \(\text{b}2\) 55.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{a}4\)
56. \( \text{Nc2} \)

Also bad is 56. \( \text{Rxb2} \) \( \text{Rxa3} \) 57. \( \text{Kf2} \) \( \text{Rxe3} \) 58. \( \text{Kxe3} \) \( \text{Nc4} \) or 57. \( \text{Re2} \) \( \text{Nc4} \) 58. \( \text{Kf2} \) \( \text{Nxe3} \) 59. \( \text{Rxe3} \) \( \text{d5} \) 60. \( \text{d5} \) a5.

56... \( \text{Nc4} \) 57. \( \text{Ke2} \) \( \text{Ra6} \) 58. \( \text{Nd4} \) \( \text{Kf6} \)

Black also wins with 58... \( \text{d5} \) 59. \( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{b6} \).

59. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{b6} \)

White resigned, since after 60.a4 there follows 60...a6 61. \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{axb5} \), and on 60. \( \text{d3} \) – 60... \( \text{xa3} \).

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**Game 34**

Loek van Wely 2645

Viswanathan Anand 2765

Monaco blind 1997 (9)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 e5 4.f3 exd4 5.xc4 c6 6.0-0 e6 7.b5 c5 8.e2 \( \text{b6} \)
9.a4

An equal position results from 9.\textit{Bxc6+ bxc6} 10.\textit{Bxc6+ d7} 11.\textit{Qc4 d6} (playing on with 11...c5!? is also worth considering) 12.\textit{Bc6+ d7}, draw, Kortchnoi-Ponomariov, Donetsk 2001.

White has also tried 11.\textit{Qc2} (instead of 11.\textit{Qc4}) 11...\textit{Ne7} 12.\textit{Nxa3} (it is hardly in White’s interests to open the a-file after 12.b4 a5 13.bxa5 \textit{Bxa5}, Sanatullin-Tonoian, Dagomys 2004) 12...\textit{0-0} 13.\textit{b4 c5} 14.\textit{f5} (14.\textit{f4 d6} 15.\textit{e5} \textit{g6} 16.\textit{g3} f5 17.\textit{exf5} \textit{xf5} 18.\textit{b3 d6} with mutual chances, Pototschnig-Kuchyna, corr. 2013) 14...\textit{d6} 15.\textit{b5} \textit{c7} 16.\textit{g5} \textit{c7} 17.\textit{xe7} \textit{xe7} 18.\textit{a1} \textit{ae8} 19.\textit{d3} fxe4 20.\textit{xe4} \textit{d8} 21.\textit{e1} \textit{d5} 22.\textit{e5} \textit{c7} 23.\textit{xe8} \textit{xe8}, and Black seized the initiative in Granda Zuniga-Nabaty, Benidorm 2009.

9...a5 10.\textit{Bxc6+ bxc6} 11.\textit{Bxc6+ d7}
12. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}c2 \)

12. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}c4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}e6 \) (if you are not happy with repeating moves, then it is possible to play 12... \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}f6 \) with mutual chances, Matveev-Maslov, Kostroma 2010) 13. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}c6+ \) \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}d7 \) 14. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}c4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}e6 \) 15. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}c6+ \) (in the game Tregubov-Yakovich, Novgorod 1995, White avoided the repetition and soon lost: 15. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}b5+ \) \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}d7 \) 16. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}d3 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}e7 \) 17. \( \textcolor{red}{
abla}e5 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{
abla}d6 \) 18. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{b}}4 \) 19. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}3 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}6 \) 20. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}3 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}7 \) 21. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}2 \) 0-0 22. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}c1 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{f}}5 \) 23. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}5 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{ad}}8 \) 24. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{g}}3 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}\text{xf}4 \) 25. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\text{xf}4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}3 \) 26. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{c}}3 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}4 \) 27. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\text{xd}3?! \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{xe}}5 \) 28. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\text{xd}8 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{xd}}8 \) 29. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}3? \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}6 \) – the threat is 30... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}1 \) mating, and the knight on \( f4 \) is hanging, so White resigned) 15... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}7 \) with a repetition of moves, Ward-Rublevsky, Thessaloniki 1996.

12... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}7 \) 13. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{a}}3 \)

13. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}5 \) 0-0 14. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}2 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}6 \) 15. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{dc}}4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}6 \) 16. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{xb}}6 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{xb}}6 \) 17. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\text{g}6 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{hxg}}6 \) 18. \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{a}}3 \), draw agreed, Sorin-Sorokin, Salta Clarin 1995, although this opposite-coloured bishops ending is nicer for Black.

13... 0-0 14. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}4 \)

14. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}5 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}6 \) 15. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{ac}}4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{xe}}5 \) 16. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{xe}}5 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}8 \) (16... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}8 \)? looks tempting, retaining the two bishops) 17. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}4 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{f}}6 \) (again, better is 17... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}8 \)) 18. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{xd}}7 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}\text{f}4 \) 19. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{xb}}6 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{xb}}6 \) 20. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{fe}}1 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{ac}}8 \) 21. \( \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}3 \) \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}6 \) 22. \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{ad}}1 \), draw, Ibragimov-Makarov, Elista 1996.

14... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}6 \)

Black has also tried 14... \( \textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}5 \) with a complicated battle, Perelshtein-Krush, Stillwater ch-USA 2007.
15. \textit{d1}?
Correct was 15. \textit{g5} \textit{e8} 16. \textit{x}xb6 \textit{cxb6} =, Flear-Estrada Nieto, Issy les Moulineaux 1997.

15... \textit{b4} 16. \textit{b}b3 \textit{c5}
Black solidly defends the d4-pawn; White has a difficult position.

17. \textit{d}d2 \textit{c}c7 18. \textit{x}xb4 \textit{b}b8
It was also possible to take the pawn – 18... \textit{axb4}, but the move in the game is also good.

White has exchanged one knight, but the second heads to c4 to blockade the light squares. But he has a weak pawn on b3, which soon becomes an object of attack for Black.

23... \textit{fb}8 24. \textit{ab}1 \textit{h}5
It is useful to seize space on the kingside.

25. \textit{c}4 \textit{c}7 26. \textit{d}3
26...g6

It would have been useful for Black himself to push his pawn to h4, because then in the event of h2-h3 the opponent’s light squares on the kingside would have been weakened. On the other hand, if White plays g2-g3, then Black has a choice between ...h4xg3 and ...h4-h3. In addition, he need not hurry to clarify the kingside pawn structure and can simply leave the pawn on h4, since it is unfavourable for White to capture g3xh4, weakening the pawn cover of his king.

27.h4

The correct defence.

27...Qc6 28.g3 Qb7

Black tries to strengthen the pressure against the pawn on b3.

29.Nd2 Bd6

The bishops heads to h6, so as to attack the knight, which defends the key pawn b3.

30.Ac1

The right idea: White needs to exchange his passive rook.

30...e7 31.Ac4 Kb6

Of course, it is unfavourable for Black to exchange.

32.Kf1?!

The start of a risky plan: with a full board of pieces, White decides to transfer his king to the other flank. Correct was 32.f4 and then e4-e5, with an equal game.
32...f8 33...e2?!  
It was still not too late to refrain from his mistaken plan and play, for example, 33.f4.

33...e8

34...d1?  
The decisive mistake. Once again, 34.f4 holds the balance.

34...be6  
Stronger was the immediate 34...f5!?, and if 35.exf5 f6! 36.fxg6?, then 36...xf2 winning.

35.c2  
After spending four moves, White has managed to transfer his king to c2. But here, unlike on the kingside, he is in danger.

35...f5  
A timely break in the centre.

36.exf5  
More tenacious was 36.f3, not opening the c-file, but even here, after 36...c7 37.g1 h6 White cannot hold the e4-pawn.

36...e2  
The black rook breaks through to the enemy camp, and it becomes obvious that the white king is very uncomfortable in
his new home.

37.fxg6 hxg6 38.Rd1 Qd5!

The centralised queen allows Black to strengthen his position to the maximum.

39.Rb1 Qxf2

40.Qc2

Losing at once. But even after the strongest move 40.Rc2 Re3 41.Qc4 Qxc4 (or 42.Rxc4 Rd3) 42...Rxb3+ Black wins.

40...d3 41.Qc3 Qxd2 42.Qxd2 Be1+ 43.Ra2 Qxd2 44.Qf6

44.Qxd2 Re2 also loses.

44...Re2 0-1

Game 35
Levon Aronian 2759
Alexey Shirov 2699
Elista Candidates’ match 2007 (3)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 e5 4.f3 exd4 5.cxd4 c6 6.0-0 e6 7.b5 a5 8.b4!?
8...b6

Of course, taking the pawn is bad: 8...xb4? 9.Qa4.

9.a4

White continues to harass the enemy bishop. As an alternative, we will examine a continuation in which White calmly continues his development and regains the pawn on d4: 9.b2 e7. Now:

A) Insufficient for equality is 10.Qxd4 0-0 11.Qxc6 Qxc6 12.Qxc6 bxc6 (Black is also better after 12...Qxd1 13.Qxd1 bxc6, Van Wely-Sermek, Buekfuordo 1995) 13.Qc3 (White has serious problems after 13.Qc2 a5 14.a3 Qg5 15.Qxc6 Qad8 16.Qc3 axb4 17.axb4 Qd4 – stronger is 17...Qd6 with a solid advantage to Black, but after the text, White immediately went wrong and obtained a hopeless position: 18.Qa8? Qh3 19.g3 Qxa8 20.Qxa8+ Qd8, winning material, Rakhmangulov-Svetushkin, Alushta 1999) 13...a5 14.bxa5 Qxa5 15.Qb3 Qh4 16.Qg3 Qxg3 17.hxg3 f5 18.a4 fxe4 19.Qa3 Qff5 20.g4 Qf4 21.Qb4 Qg5 22.a5 Qa7, and White resigned, De Ruiter-Rausis, Leiden 2014; 

B) 10.Qxd4 0-0
11. \( \text{c5} \) (White is also worse after 11. \( \text{xb6 axb6 12. c3 \text{xd1} cxb4} \), Carnic-Svetushkin, Nis 1998) 11... \( \text{xc5} \) 12. \( \text{xc5} \) a6 (a postal game saw 12... \( g4 \) with mutual chances, Grosso-Mrazik, corr. 2003) 13. \( \text{c6 dxc6} 14. \text{c3 e4} \) (equality results from 14... \( \text{e7} 15. \text{d5 xe5} 16. \text{xc7 Beliavsky-Sherbakov, Niksic 1996} ) 15. \text{e1 e7} 16. \text{c1 xe5} 17. \text{d5 b5} 18. \text{d2 e5} 19. \text{xc4 xc4} 20. \text{e2 ed6} 21. \text{e3}, and now in the game Kanep-Mikhalchishin, Calvia 2004, there unexpectedly came a draw agreement. Black has an extra pawn and could have played on without risk.

9... \( a6 \)

White is better after 9...a5?! 10. \( \text{bxa5 \text{xa5} 11. \text{bd2}} \) followed by \( \text{b3} \) or \( \text{c4} \).

10. \( \text{xe6+ xc6} 11. \text{a5} \)

11. \( \text{b2} \) has no independent significance, because after 11... \( \text{f6} \) White plays 12.a5 anyway, transposing to the game after 12... \( \text{a7} \).

11. \( \text{bd2 f6} 12. \text{c2 (12. e5 \text{d6} 13. \text{d3 d7} 14. \text{f3 0-0 15. f4 \text{e7} 16. a5 a7} 17. \text{c1 c5 18. \text{xc5 xc5} 19. \text{xc5} 20. \text{xd4 d7} 21. \text{f5} 22. \text{exf5 \text{e8} 23. \text{h3 ead8 24. \text{f3 d6} 25. \text{c6 xf4 26. \text{xf4 \text{a3}, draw, Zidu-Akdag, corr. 2012} ) 12...0-0 13. \text{xc6 e8} 14. \text{b2 d7} 15. \text{c2 e7} 16. \text{xd4 xb4 17. \text{c3 b5} 18. \text{a5 a7} 19. \text{f1 c8} 20. \text{fe1 h5 with mutual chances, Ponomariov-Sasikiran, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007).} \text{a7} 12. \text{b2 f6} \)

If 12... \( \text{d6} \)?! White can ignore the threat to the b4-pawn: 13. \( \text{a3! \text{d8} (on 13... \text{xb4 there follows 14. \text{c1 e7 15. \text{c2 xd4 with advantage to White}) 14. \text{c2 (also interesting is 14. \text{d3}!?, attacking the pawn on a6) 14. \text{e7 (14... \text{g4} 15. \text{h3 xf3 16. \text{xf3 e7} 17. \text{fd1 Shishkin-Nyzhnyk, Kiev 2010, is also in White’s favour) 15. \text{xd4 xd4} 16. \text{xd4 with the better chances for White, Hawkins-Mannion, Hastings 2013.}} \text{xd4 \text{xe4} 14. \text{a7} \))} \)\)

13. \( \text{xd4} \)

A) An important position for understanding the whole variation is the ending which arises after 13. \( \text{xd4 xe4} 14. \text{xa7} \)
\( \text{Qxd1} (14...\text{\textit{xa7}}?! \text{\textit{(Schandorff}}-\text{Rasmussen, Silkeborg 2008)}) 15.\text{\textit{c1}}? \text{\textit{with the better chances for White}) 15.\text{\textit{xd1 \textit{xa7}.}} \text{\textit{analysis diagram}\n
Black has an extra pawn, but his queenside structure is seriously spoilt and his rook on a7 misplaced. On the other hand, White's pawn on b4 is vulnerable and it is hard for him to complete his development, whilst avoiding exchanges. Overall, White has sufficient compensation for the pawn, but can hardly count on an advantage:

A1) Black is fine after 16.\text{\textit{e1 f6, Ilincic-Solodovnichenko, Banja Luka 2007, or 16...\textit{d6, Kortchnoi-Solodovnichenko, Banja Luka 2007}};}

A2) 16.\text{\textit{d4 c5}}?! (also possible is 16...\textit{d5} with approximate equality) 17.\text{\textit{c6}} (17.\textit{xe6 fxe6 18.\textit{e1 f6 19.bxc5 \textit{e7=}) 17...\textit{a8 18.f3 f6 (also possible is 18...\textit{d6 19.bxc5 b7 20.c3 c5 21.e1 0-0=) 19.bxc5 \textit{d7 20.e1 f6 (the simple 20...0-0 21.a4 \textit{d8 22.d4 g6, draw, Pavoni-Chukanov, corr. 2013, is also good) 21.d2 \textit{f7 22.c3 b8= Volkov-Kunin, Bad Wiessee 2011;}}}

A3) 16.\text{\textit{e5 d5}} (Black is somewhat worse after 16...\textit{b7 17.xc6 d6 18.c3, Yudin-Yang Wen, St Petersburg 2009, or 18.a3, Wang Yue-Zhang Pengxiang, Beijing 2008) 17.f3 \textit{d6 (another possibility is 17...\textit{f6 18.c3 0-0 19.xd5 exd5 20.c6 b7 21.e7+ h8 22.xd5 xd5 23.xd5 \textit{xb4 24.e1= Malakhatko-Solodovnichenko, Metz 2011) 18.e3 f6 19.xd5 fxe5 20.c3 b7 21.ab1 f8 (a little less precise is 21...e7 22.e1 f7 23.e4 h8, Pashikian-Babujian, Yerevan ch-ARM 2012, although this position too is close to equality) 22.e4 f4 23.xe5+ f8 24.e4 dxe4 25.fxe4 \textit{xb5 26.e6 c5= Soares-Moura, corr. 2013.}}}

B) This is how the battle might develop with queens on, if White does not hurry to regain the pawn: 13.bd2 0-0 14.c2.
analysis diagram

B1) Risky for Black is 14...g4?! 15.h3 f6 16.e5! with the initiative, Topalov-Nisipeanu, Vitoria Gasteiz 2007.

B2) Sufficient for equality is 14...e8!? 15.Qxc6 (worse is 15.Re1 b8, fastening onto the b4-pawn) 15...d7 16.xa6 b8 (threatening 17...b5, winning the queen) 17.d3 b5 18.c4 b7 19.xd4 xe4 20.fd1 d8 21.c3 d5 22.c2 xb4 23.c3 d5, draw, Gerhards-Steiger, corr. 2009;

B3) 14...h5 (the most ambitious move: Black wants to create an attack against the enemy king) 15.g3 (15.xc6 f4 16.xa6 is dangerous because of 16...f5!?, e.g. 17.g3 fxe4 18.gxf4 d5 19.xe4 xf4 20.fd2 g5+ 21.h1 xe4 22.xe4 xe4+ 23.f3 d5 24.e2 (Black is better after 24.d3 f8, Pecis-Alf, corr. 2009) 24...h5 25.g2 f8 26.a3 f4 27.g3 f5 28.a6 h5 29.h3 e4 30.g1 e7 31.g2 d3 32.xg7 h4 33.g4 xg4 34.hxg4 e3 35.c3 xf3, and White resigned in Hunger-Moll, corr. 2009) 15...d6 (not 15...f5? 16.xc6, taking a pawn with tempo, Volkov-Solodovnichenko, Voronezh 2009) 16.f1 xg3 (16...b8= is also possible) 17.xg3 d3 18.xc6 xg3+ 19.h1 h3+ 20.h2 (Black is better after 20.g1?! g4) 20...xf2 21.g1 – in this complicated, double-edged position, the players agreed a draw, Gerhards-Farias, corr. 2013.

13...xd4

13...d6 also deserves attention.

14...xd4

Black has no problems after 14.xd4 xd4 15.xd4 xe4 16.e1 d6 17.xg7 g8 18.c3 b5, Istomin-Chukanov, Moscow 2012.
14...\textbf{Nxe4}

14...\textbf{Nb8}?! 15.\textbf{Qd2} (15.f3 \textbf{Rxb4} with counterplay) 15...\textbf{Nxe4} 16.\textbf{Qb2} c5 (more accurate is 16...\textbf{Qe7} with a possible repetition of moves after 17.\textbf{Qc2} \textbf{Rxb4} 18.\textbf{Qxc6+} \textbf{Qd7} 19.\textbf{Qa8+} \textbf{Qd8} 20.\textbf{Qc6+} \textbf{Qd7} 21.\textbf{Qa8+} \textbf{Qd8}=) 17.\textbf{Qxc5} \textbf{Qf6} 18.\textbf{Qd4} \textbf{Qg6} 19.f3 c5?! 20.\textbf{Qe3} \textbf{Rxb4} 21.\textbf{Qc1} (stronger is 21.\textbf{Qa3} with advantage) 21...\textbf{Qc4} 22.\textbf{Qa3} (22.\textbf{Qb2}?) 22...\textbf{Qd6} 23.\textbf{Qxc5} \textbf{Qb5} 24.\textbf{Qe3}= Laznicka-Sasikiran, Kolkata 2008.

15.\textbf{Qxg7}

Black has no problems after 15.\textbf{Qe1} \textbf{Qf6} (but not 15...\textbf{Qd5}?! 16.\textbf{Qd3} c5 17.\textbf{Qxe4} \textbf{cxd4} 18.\textbf{Qc3} \textbf{Qb3} 19.\textbf{Qxd4} 0-0 20.\textbf{Qd2} with advantage to White, Onischuk-Nisipeanu, Foros 2007) 16.\textbf{Qc3} 0-0=.

15...\textbf{Qg8} 16.\textbf{Qe5}

16.\textbf{Qc2} \textbf{Qxg7} 17.\textbf{Qxe4} \textbf{Qf8}=.

16...\textbf{Qh3} 17.\textbf{Qg3} \textbf{Qxg3} 18.\textbf{hxg3} \textbf{Qxd1} 19.\textbf{Qxd1} \textbf{Qe6} 20.\textbf{Qc3} \textbf{Qg4}

The correct move – Black activates his rook with tempo. After other moves, he could face certain problems.

21.\textbf{Qab1}
21...b8

It is worth considering 21...c4, attacking the knight. Then there could follow 22.a4 b8 23.c5 xb4 24.xa6 
xb1 25.xb1 a4 26.xc7+ e7 27.xe6 xxe6=.

22.f4

Otherwise Black would take on b4.

22...f5

The immediate 22...xg3 23.e4 g6 24.c5 a8= is also possible.

23.b2 xg3 24.a4

White transfers the knight to h5, from where it attacks the pawn a6.

24...f8 25.c5 a8 26.f2 c3

The most accurate; the rook heads for c4, attacking the pawns on f4 and b4.

27.bd2 c4 28.d4 xd4 29.xd4 e7 30.d1 e6 31.e1 f6 32.e5

Black also has no problem in the rook ending arising after 32.h1 g6 33.xe6 fxe6 34.c1 b8 35.xc6 xb4.

32...h6 33.g3 e4 34.d7+ g7 35.e7

White has made definite progress: he has placed his pieces actively and Black needs to show accuracy.

35...d8

The computer recommends defending c7 immediately with the move 35...c8, and then by accurate play, Black can
equalise, for example: 36.f5 $b5 37.e3 c5 38.bxc5 $a4 39.$f4 $d8 40.e5 $d4+ 41.e3 $f6 42.xd4 $xe7=.

36.e3

36.e5, winning the pawn on c7 or c6, poses Black greater problems.

36...h5!

Correct: otherwise White plays g3-g4, cramping his opponent further.

37.f5

White prevents the enemy bishop coming to e6 and is ready to play $e3-f4-g5.

37...g8

Alexey prepares play against the g-pawn. It looks simpler to play 37...$h8 followed by ...h5-h4 and the exchange of pawns.

38.e4

This move misses the win. Better is 38.$f4:

A) 38...h6 39.f6 $b8 40.e8 $xb4 (he loses after 40...$xe8 41.xe8 $f1 42.xc7) 41.g8+ $g7 42.g5 $b3 43.g4 $f6+ (43...hxg4? 44.f6 mating) 44.xf6 hxg4 45.xg4, and Black needs to show very accurate play;

B) 38.d5 39.e5 $b8 40.g5 $b5 (bad is 40...xb4 41.f6+ $g8 42.h6 $b8 43.xc7) 41.xc7 or 41.d7 – in both cases, Black has to demonstrate considerable accuracy to save the game.

38...b5 39.h4

On 39.e7 there follows 39...c5 40.bxc5 $xd7 41.xd7 $f6=.

39...d8 40.c5 $h6 41.$f4 $e2 42.$h2 $b5 43.$e5 $g5
In a few moves, Black has activated his king and his rook.

44.\texttt{\textbf{Ne4+}}

Correct: he needs to drive the king from \texttt{g5}; after other moves, it is White who could face problems.

44...\texttt{\textbf{Kg4} 45.\texttt{Kf6} 46.\texttt{Rd3} 47.\texttt{Cc5} \texttt{\textbf{Xg3} 48.\texttt{Exh5} \texttt{\textbf{Fc4}}}}

There is an immediate draw with 48...\texttt{\textbf{Rd6+}} 49.\texttt{Kxf7} (49.\texttt{Ke5?? f6#}) 49...\texttt{\textbf{Kg4} 50.\texttt{Rh7} \texttt{\textbf{Kf5=}}). Now, however, he still has to work to overcome the resulting problems.

49.\texttt{\textbf{Rh1}!}

49...\texttt{\textbf{Rb8}?

He could draw with 49...\texttt{\textbf{g4} 50.\texttt{e7} \texttt{\textbf{Rd4}}}! (less accurate is 50...\texttt{\textbf{b8} 51.f6 \texttt{\textbf{Rx}}b4 52.\texttt{Re1} \texttt{\textbf{d5} 53.\texttt{Cxd3} \texttt{\textbf{Rb5} 54.\texttt{Cc5+} \texttt{\textbf{f5} 55.\texttt{Cxf7} \texttt{\textbf{Rxa5}}, and Black has to give up the bishop for a pawn, to make a draw}) 51.f6 \texttt{\textbf{g5} 52.\texttt{Cc1} \texttt{\textbf{g6=}.}}

50.\texttt{\textbf{Rd1}}

Now Black obtains a lost position. Also good was 50.\texttt{Re1} with the same ideas.

50...\texttt{\textbf{Rx}}b4

He also loses after 50...\texttt{\textbf{a8} 51.\texttt{Cxa4} \texttt{\textbf{d5} 52.\texttt{Cc7.}}

51.\texttt{\textbf{Rd4}!}

An extremely unpleasant pin.

51...\texttt{\textbf{f3} 52.\texttt{\textbf{Cxa6}}}
It was better not to hurry with this capture and to play 52.\texttt{Ke7}, improving the position of the king; the pawn on a6 is not going anywhere.

52...c5

On 52...\texttt{Ra4} the game is decided by 53.\texttt{Nc5} \texttt{Rb4} 54.a6.

53.\texttt{Nxe5} \texttt{e3} 54.\texttt{Nh4} \texttt{Nd2} 55.\texttt{Na6}

He also wins by 55.\texttt{He5} \texttt{Ec3} 56.\texttt{Hh3+} \texttt{Ec2} 57.a6 \texttt{Eb5} 58.a7 \texttt{Ec6} 59.\texttt{Hh6}.

55...\texttt{Ra4} 56.\texttt{Nxc7}

Or 56.\texttt{Nd5} \texttt{Eb4} 57.\texttt{He5} or 56...\texttt{Rxa5} 57.\texttt{Rxc4}, winning.

56...\texttt{Nd3} 57.a6 \texttt{Ra5} 58.\texttt{Rf4} \texttt{Ec3} 59.\texttt{He7} \texttt{Ec5} 60.\texttt{Nd6} \texttt{Ba5}

\textbf{61.f6?}

A terrible mistake, missing the win. He wins easily with 61.\texttt{Ec6} \texttt{Bxa6} 62.\texttt{Bb6}, winning the bishop.

61...\texttt{Bxa6} 62.\texttt{Bxa6} \texttt{Ba6+} 63.\texttt{He7}

Evidently White thought he was winning the rook ending because of his passed pawn, but Black manages to draw by some precise play – admittedly, he needs to find five only moves in a row!

63...\texttt{Ba7+!} 64.\texttt{Gf8} \texttt{Hd3!} 65.\texttt{Hh4} \texttt{He3!} 66.\texttt{Hh7} \texttt{Hf4!}

The king heads for g5.

67.\texttt{Hxf7} \texttt{Ba6!} 68.\texttt{Gg7}
Here a draw was agreed, since after 68...$g5 White cannot make progress. Black simply sits and waits until the pawn advances, whereupon there immediately follows ...$g6-h6+ with perpetual check.
A relatively new continuation: for a long time, players simply refused to take seriously such an ‘unaesthetic’ move. But it has a serious achievement – without further ado, Black simply defends his extra pawn. White needs to regain it, but how? Of course, Black is taking a certain amount of strategic risk, but from a practical viewpoint, this is a good variation. It is played quite often, for example, by the Latvian GM, Ilmars Starostits. We immediately restrict White’s choice to the maximum, and begin forcing play which we have studied at home. And for White, this move can easily come as an unpleasant surprise.

We should immediately point out a small, but extremely important tactical nuance: after 4.Nf3 c6 White cannot disturb the Be6 with 5.Ng5? because of 5...Qa5+.

Game 36
Andrejs Strebkovs 2420
Ilmars Starostits 2464
Panevezys 2009 (3)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e3 Be6 4.Nf3 c6 5.a4

5.Ng5? Qa5+.

5...f6 6.a3
First of all, White regains the gambit pawn. Admittedly, to do so, he has been forced to send his knight on an unusual route, and on c4 it will hardly be better-placed than on c3.

6...\textit{d}d5

6...c5 also deserves consideration:

A. 7.\textit{xc}4

B. 7.\textit{xc}4

A) 7.\textit{xc}4 \textit{xc}4 8.\textit{xc}4 \textit{c}6
A1) 9.0-0 cxd4 (or 9...e6 10.\(\text{\textit{b3}}\) \(\text{\textit{c7}}\) 11.dxc5 \(\text{\textit{dxc5}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{d2}}\) 0-0= Tibensky-Varga, Austria Bundesliga 1999) 10.exd4 \(\text{\textit{e6}}\) 11.\(\text{\textit{b3}}\), and now:

A11) 11...\(\text{\textit{b4}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{g5}}\) (12.a5 0-0= Lechtynsky-Hasagatin, Olomouc 2007) 12...\(\text{\textit{d5}}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{b7}}\) (13.\(\text{\textit{e5}}\)?) 13...\(\text{\textit{e7}}\) 14.\(\text{\textit{x}}\) \(\text{\textit{xc6}}\) \(\text{\textit{e6}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{xf6}}\) \(\text{\textit{xf6}}\) 16.d5 \(\text{\textit{xd5}}\) 17.\(\text{\textit{f1}}\) \(\text{\textit{d4}}\) 18.\(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) \(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) 19.\(\text{\textit{e1}}\) \(\text{\textit{f6}}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{b5}}\) + \(\text{\textit{f8}}\) 21.\(\text{\textit{xb7}}\)?! (correct was 21.\(\text{\textit{e5}}\)=) 21...\(\text{\textit{d8}}\) 22.\(\text{\textit{xd8}}\) + \(\text{\textit{d8}}\) 23.h3 \(\text{\textit{g6}}\) 24.\(\text{\textit{xa7}}\) + \(\text{\textit{f7}}\) with somewhat better chances for Black, Pantev-Drenchev, Plovdiv 2011;

A12) 11...\(\text{\textit{d5}}\) 12.\(\text{\textit{b7}}\) (12.\(\text{\textit{f4}}\) \(\text{\textit{b4}}\) 17.\(\text{\textit{xf4}}\) \(\text{\textit{xf4}}\)) 12...\(\text{\textit{d2}}\) 13.\(\text{\textit{f3}}\) \(\text{\textit{e4}}\) also deserves consideration, preserving the bishop from exchange) 12.\(\text{\textit{e5}}\) 0-0 13.\(\text{\textit{xd5}}\) \(\text{\textit{xd5}}\) 14.\(\text{\textit{xc6}}\) (Black is better after 14.\(\text{\textit{b3}}\) \(\text{\textit{f6}}\) 15.\(\text{\textit{e1}}\) \(\text{\textit{d6}}\) 16.\(\text{\textit{xc6}}\) \(\text{\textit{bxc6}}\) 17.a5 \(\text{\textit{ab8}}\) Allicock-Starostits, Coulsdon 2008) 14...\(\text{\textit{xd2}}\) 15.a6 \(\text{\textit{d8}}\) 17.\(\text{\textit{a6}}\) \(\text{\textit{b8}}\) (it is worth considering 17...\(\text{\textit{xd2}}\)?! 18.\(\text{\textit{xc3}}\) \(\text{\textit{d7}}\) followed by ...\(\text{\textit{c6-c5}}\) 18.\(\text{\textit{xc1}}\) \(\text{\textit{xc3}}\) 19.\(\text{\textit{xc3}}\) \(\text{\textit{xa5}}\) 20.\(\text{\textit{d3}}\) \(\text{\textit{f8}}\), and Black’s chances are preferable, Lapienis-Golod, St Vincent 2005; perhaps the immediate 20...\(\text{\textit{c5}}\) is even stronger;

B) 7.\(\text{\textit{xe4}}\) \(\text{\textit{c6}}\) (after 7...\(\text{\textit{xd4}}\) White has the interesting pawn sacrifice 8.\(\text{\textit{ce5}}\)!, e.g. 8...\(\text{\textit{c6}}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{b5}}\) \(\text{\textit{d5}}\) 10.0-0 \(\text{\textit{a6}}\) 11.\(\text{\textit{xe6+}}\) bxc6 12.\(\text{\textit{e1}}\) dxe3 13.\(\text{\textit{xe3}}\) with a complicated position)
even so, after 15...\texttt{\textbackslash b}8 or 15...\texttt{\textbackslash d}e4 Black should equalise by transferring the knight to d6) 11...\texttt{\textbackslash d}7 12.\texttt{\textbackslash b}5 a6 13.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d7+ \texttt{\textbackslash x}d7 14.\texttt{\textbackslash b}3 \texttt{\textbackslash e}6 15.\texttt{\textbackslash a}4+ \texttt{\textbackslash d}7 16.\texttt{\textbackslash b}3 \texttt{\textbackslash e}6 with a repetition of moves;

B3) 8.\texttt{\textbackslash c}e5 cxd4 9.\texttt{\textbackslash b}5 (worse is 9.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6 bxc6 10.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}5 11.\texttt{\textbackslash d}2 e5 12.\texttt{\textbackslash f}3 \texttt{\textbackslash d}6 13.\texttt{\textbackslash e}2 0-0 14.\texttt{\textbackslash c}3 \texttt{\textbackslash c}7 15.h3 \texttt{\textbackslash f}d8= Naumkin-Varga, Bad Wörishofen 2001) 9...d5 and now:

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\begin{itemize}
\item B31) On 10.\texttt{\textbackslash d}4 the best reply is 10...\texttt{\textbackslash x}g2 11.\texttt{\textbackslash b}3! (11.\texttt{\textbackslash g}1 a6 12.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6+ \texttt{\textbackslash x}c6 13.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d1+ 14.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d1 bxc6 15.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6 \texttt{\textbackslash e}8\textsuperscript{=} followed by ...g7-g6 and ...\texttt{\textbackslash g}7) 11...\texttt{\textbackslash d}5 12.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 13.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6 a6?! 14.\texttt{\textbackslash b}4+ axb5 15.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 16.\texttt{\textbackslash x}b5 f5=;
\item B32) 10.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d4 e6 11.\texttt{\textbackslash g}5?! (it was necessary to play 11.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6+ bxc6 and only now 12.\texttt{\textbackslash g}5 c5 13.\texttt{\textbackslash f}4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}6 14.\texttt{\textbackslash x}f7 \texttt{\textbackslash x}e5 15.\texttt{\textbackslash x}e5 g5 16.\texttt{\textbackslash x}g5 \texttt{\textbackslash a}5+ 17.\texttt{\textbackslash f}1 \texttt{\textbackslash a}6+ 18.\texttt{\textbackslash e}1 – 18.\texttt{\textbackslash g}1?? \texttt{\textbackslash g}8 loses – 18...\texttt{\textbackslash a}5 with a repetition of moves) 11...\texttt{\textbackslash a}5+! 12.\texttt{\textbackslash d}2 \texttt{\textbackslash x}b5! 13.axb5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d4 14.exd4 \texttt{\textbackslash e}7 15.\texttt{\textbackslash g}7 \texttt{\textbackslash f}5 0-0 16.\texttt{\textbackslash g}5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}g2 17.\texttt{\textbackslash g}1 \texttt{\textbackslash d}5\textsuperscript{=} Konopka-Petr, Czech tt 2013;
\item B33) 10.0-0 a6 11.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6+ bxc6 12.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d4 g6 13.\texttt{\textbackslash g}5?! (13.a5?! \texttt{\textbackslash g}7 14.\texttt{\textbackslash a}4 \texttt{\textbackslash c}7 15.\texttt{\textbackslash d}2 \texttt{\textbackslash e}4 16.\texttt{\textbackslash d}3 0-0\textsuperscript{=} Lagowski-Kharlov, Cappelle-la-Grande 2004) 13...\texttt{\textbackslash g}7 14.e4 h6 15.exd5 hxg5 16.\texttt{\textbackslash x}g5 (16.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c6 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 17.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 18.\texttt{\textbackslash x}g5 \texttt{\textbackslash h}5\textsuperscript{=} 16...\texttt{\textbackslash d}7! 17.f4 (17.f4 \texttt{\textbackslash x}e5 18.fxe5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d5\textsuperscript{=} 17...\texttt{\textbackslash h}5 18.\texttt{\textbackslash fe}1 cxd5 with mutual chances.
\end{itemize}

7.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c4

In reply to 7.\texttt{\textbackslash x}c4 Black strengthens his light-squared bishop with 7...e6. Then play might continue 8.\texttt{\textbackslash e}2 (8.0-0 \texttt{\textbackslash x}a3?! 9.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 exd5 10.\texttt{\textbackslash x}a3 \texttt{\textbackslash bd}7= Xiu Deshun-Zhang Pengxiang, Shandong 2007; completely toothless is 8.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d5?! exd5; Black has exchanged off the light-squared bishops and his central pawns are on light squares, and as a result, he has a favourable version of the Carlsbad structure, Papadopoulou-Danielian, Dresden 2004) 8.\texttt{\textbackslash b}4+ 9.\texttt{\textbackslash d}2, and here in the game Vasiljevs-Levin, Düsseldorf 2012, after 9...\texttt{\textbackslash x}f3 10.\texttt{\textbackslash g}xf3 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d2+ 11.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d2 0-0 with the idea of ...\texttt{\textbackslash bd}7 and ...e6-e5, Black obtained a good position on account of his superior pawn structure.

7...e6
8.\textit{Be2}

It is also possible to bring the bishop out to a more active position – 8.\textit{Bd3} c5 (8...\textit{Ba6}!? with the idea of playing ...\textit{Bb4}, attacking the bishop on d3, Ruiz Mata-Aranda Gonzalez, Barcelona 2009) 9.0-0 \textit{c6} and now:

A) 10.\textit{Cd2}!? (creating the threat of e3-e4) 10...\textit{Bb4} 11.\textit{Bb5}+ \textit{Bc6} 12.\textit{Bb3} \textit{Bxb5} 13.\textit{axb5} cxd4 14.\textit{fxd4} \textit{Bd6} (14...\textit{Be7}!? with the idea of meeting 15.\textit{Bf3} with 15...\textit{Bd5}) 15.\textit{Bf3} \textit{Bb8}= (worse is 15...\textit{Bc7} 16.\textit{Ad2}, and after \textit{Ec1} the queen is under the x-ray of the rook, Tan Zhongyi-Rudolf, Dresden 2008);

B) 10.\textit{Ce5} and now:

B1) 10...\textit{Bxe5}!? 11.\textit{Bxe5} \textit{Bd6} 12.\textit{Bb5}+ (12.\textit{Be2} cxd4 13.\textit{Bb5}+ \textit{Be7} 14.exd4 h6 15.\textit{Be1} \textit{Bc8}++; White has an isolated pawn, in return for which the black king is still in the centre, Lundvik-Peng Zhaooqin, Stockholm 2005) 12...\textit{Be7} 13.\textit{Bd2} \textit{Bc8} 14.\textit{Be2} \textit{Bd4} 15.\textit{Be1} cxd4 16.exd4 \textit{Bb6} 17.\textit{Bd3} \textit{Bf6} 18.\textit{Bc3} h6 with a complicated game, Cosma-Danielian, Kallithea 2008. Here White has quite a dangerous plan: f2-f4 followed by g4-g5, in order to try to exploit the insecure position of the black king. Therefore, a more reliable continuation is:

B2) 10...\textit{cxd4} 11.\textit{Bxc6} bxc6 12.\textit{Bxd4} e5 13.e4 (dubious is 13.\textit{Bxe5} e4 14.\textit{Bxe5} \textit{Bxe5} 15.\textit{Bc3} h5 with the initiative for Black, Wang Li-Zhang Pengxiang, Hefei rapid 2010; also good is the simple 15...0-0) 13...\textit{Bxe4} 14.\textit{Bf3}?! (correct was 14.\textit{Be2} exd4 15.\textit{Bxe4} \textit{Bxe7} 16.\textit{Bxd5} \textit{Bxd5} 17.\textit{Be1} \textit{Bf6} 18.\textit{Bd1} \textit{Bf6} 19.\textit{Be2} \textit{Bxe5}+ 14...\textit{Bd6} with the better chances for Black (but not 14...\textit{f6}! 15.\textit{Bxe5} fxe5 16.\textit{Bh5}+ \textit{Bd7} 17.\textit{Bxe4} \textit{Bxe4} 18.\textit{Bxe4} \textit{Bxe4} 19.\textit{Bxe4}+ \textit{Bc7} 19.\textit{Bxe4}, and White has a large advantage, Amanov-Young, Saint Louis 2011).

8...\textit{c5}

Black also has no problems after 8...\textit{Be7}, as was shown by the game Lechtynsky-Gajewski, Legnica 2005.

9.0-0 \textit{cxd4}

Black also has fully adequate play after 9...\textit{Bc6}.

10.\textit{Bxd4}
In this position, taking with the pawn is dubious – after 10.exd4 e7 Black has simple play, Edes-Z.Varga, Banska Stiavnica ch-SVK op 2012.

10...e7

The position is also equal after 10...c5, as in the game Motuz-Varga, Slovakia tt 2011.

11.b3 0-0 12.b2 a6

12...bd7 is also possible.

13.f3 c5

14.h1

White prepares to advance his central pawns. The immediate 14.e4? fails to 14...xc4 15.xc4 e5, and Black wins a piece.

14...h5

Opening a path for the queen to the kingside. It was also possible to start counterplay on the other wing: 14...b4 15.c1 e7 16.e4 xc4 17.xc4 ac8 with mutual chances.

15.e4

Better was 15.c1 with the idea of 16.d2 and 17.fd1. The raid 15...h4 is not dangerous for White on account of 16.e4 – the exchange of queens favours him.

15...xc4 16.xc4 b4 17.f4 h4

Also good is 17...f6!? 18.e5 fd5 with counterplay.
18.\textit{\textbf{Qf3}}

18.\textit{\textbf{Qf3}} 19.\textit{\textbf{g3}} \textit{\textbf{Qh3}} favours Black.

18...\textit{\textbf{Nf6}} 19.\textit{\textbf{Ra1}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}} 20.\textit{\textbf{Be2}}

White takes control of the squares $g4$ and $h5$, at which the black knight might aim.

20...\textit{\textbf{b6}} 21.\textit{\textbf{e5}}

He should not have hurried with this move, because now Black gets a square at $d5$. It was better to strengthen the position slowly, since White has in reserve more useful moves than his opponent. The simplest was to start, for example, with 21.h3; thanks to his two bishops and control of the central squares, White is better.

21...\textit{\textbf{Nd5}} 22.\textit{\textbf{f5}}

22...\textit{\textbf{Qe7}}?

He should have preferred 22...\textit{\textbf{g6}} with mutual chances.

23.\textit{\textbf{g3}} \textit{\textbf{h3}} 24.\textit{\textbf{f6}}

It looks very strong to play 24.\textit{\textbf{fxe6}} fxe6 25.\textit{\textbf{Wg4}} \textit{\textbf{Wg4}} 26.\textit{\textbf{Wxg4}}, and Black loses the pawn on $e6$.

24...\textit{\textbf{gx}}\textit{\textbf{f6}} 25.\textit{\textbf{Wxf6}}

It was better to take with the pawn – 25.\textit{\textbf{ef6}} \textit{\textbf{Qf5}} (on 25...\textit{\textbf{Qg6}} Black centralises the queen with 26.\textit{\textbf{We4}}, at the same time defending his knight and threatening ...\textit{\textbf{Qc6}}, ...\textit{\textbf{Qg4}} and a blow on $e6$; it is not easy for Black to find a move) 26.\textit{\textbf{Qxf5}} \textit{\textbf{Qxf5}} 27.\textit{\textbf{Qxf5}} \textit{\textbf{exf5}} – White has the two bishops and the pawn on $f5$ is unlikely to survive.

25...\textit{\textbf{bd5}}
Definitely this knight – Black brings pieces to the defence of his king.

26.\( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{h8} \) 27.\( \text{e4} \)

In many cases, the queen is very strong in the centre. The computer recommends 27.\( \text{b5} \), but I like the text move just as much.

27...\( \text{xd4} \)

It was worth considering the queen transfer 27...\( \text{h6} \) with the idea of ...\( \text{g6} \), offering to exchange the strongest pieces.

28.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{f5} \) 29.\( \text{d3} \)

The game could have ended in a repetition of moves after 29.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 30.\( \text{xf5} \) exf5 31.e6 \( \text{g8} \) 32.exf7+ \( \text{xf7} \) 33.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{fd7} \) 34.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{e7} \) 35.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{ed7} \).

29...\( \text{de7} \) 30.\( \text{a3}?! \)

A preferable continuation is 30.\( \text{fd1} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 31.\( \text{xd3} \) with the better chances for White.

30...\( \text{xd3} \) 31.\( \text{xd3} \) \( \text{g8} \)

He threatens a blow on g3.

32.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{d5} \)

All the black pieces have developed activity, and now White should be careful. His position is still not actually worse, but psychologically it is difficult to adjust, when one goes from being the active side to the defender.

33.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{b4} \)

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34.\( \text{c3}?! \)
A blunder. Correct was 34.\textit{d}2, after which there could follow 34...\textit{xg}3+ (or 34...\textit{c}6!? 35.\textit{g}1 \textit{xe}5 36.\textit{b}2 \textit{f}6 37.\textit{xe}5 \textit{fxe}5 38.\textit{c}4=) 35.\textit{d}8+ \textit{g}8 36.\textit{f}6+ \textit{g}7 38.\textit{d}8+ with perpetual check.

34...\textit{a}2

Now Black wins easily.

35.\textit{d}2 \textit{xc}1 36.\textit{xc}1 \textit{xg}3+ 37.\textit{d}8+ \textit{g}8 38.\textit{e}6 \textit{g}8 39.\textit{f}6+ \textit{f}1 40.\textit{f}7 \textit{g}6

White resigned.

**Game 37**
Vladimir Epishin 2626
Ilmars Starostits 2431
Geneva 2003

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\textit{f}3 dxc4 4.e3 \textit{e}6

5.\textit{e}2!? 

Quite a sensible and interesting decision: White does not rush to regain the e4-pawn, but first completes his development and depending on his opponent’s actions, then works out his further plan. Black, in his turn, should also prepare short castling.

5...\textit{f}6 6.0-0 \textit{g}6

On 6...b5 there is the unpleasant 7.a4.
A) Now 7...\texttt{d}d5 is bad because of 8.axb5 cxb5 9.\texttt{c}c3 a6 10.b3, and Black’s position is hanging by a thread, Hebden-Rausis, Hastings 1998;
B) Problems also remain after 7...a6 8.\texttt{c}c2 g6 9.\texttt{c}c3 \texttt{bd}7 10.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{g}7 11.\texttt{xe}6 \texttt{xe}6 12.\texttt{f}3 Stoffers-Jasinski, corr. 2001;
C) 7...\texttt{bd}7!? 8.axb5 (maybe it is better not to hurry with the exchange on b5 and to strengthen the position with 8.\texttt{c}2=) 8...\texttt{xb}5 9.\texttt{c}c3 b4 10.d5 \texttt{g}4 11.\texttt{b}5 \texttt{b}6 12.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{xe}2 13.\texttt{xe}2 a6 14.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{d}7 15.\texttt{bd}4 \texttt{xd}5 with equal chances. But not 15...\texttt{e}6? 16.\texttt{xe}6 \texttt{xe}6 17.\texttt{d}2 (17.\texttt{a}5??) 17...\texttt{d}6 18.\texttt{xb}4 e5 19.\texttt{f}3 0-0 20.\texttt{a}5 with advantage to White, Graf-Danielian, Kavala 2010.

7.a4

A) It is worth considering the untried 7.\texttt{c}2 b5 8.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{g}4 9.\texttt{x}g4 \texttt{xc}4 10.b3 \texttt{xb}3 11.\texttt{xb}3 \texttt{g}7 12.\texttt{d}2 with some compensation for the pawn;
B) A very interesting alternative is 7.\texttt{g}5!? \texttt{d}5 8.\texttt{d}2 b5 (it is probably better not to defend the c4-pawn, but instead to complete his development and prepare the break ...\texttt{c}6-c5, beginning with 8...\texttt{h}6. There is not a single game with this position in the database, so giving an exact assessment is not easy) 9.\texttt{c}2 10.e4 h6 11.\texttt{gf}3 \texttt{e}6 12.b3 c3 13.\texttt{b}1 b4 14.a3 c5 15.\texttt{xb}4! \texttt{dx}c3 with excellent compensation, Kolanek-Dumitrescu, corr. 2010;
C) 7.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{g}7 8.\texttt{x}c4 c5 9.\texttt{xc}5 \texttt{xd}1 (9...\texttt{fd}7 10.\texttt{c}3 0-0 11.e4 \texttt{xc}5= Caselas Cabanas-Perez Garcia, La Coruna 1999. Maybe even more accurate is 9...0-0, and only then Black takes on c5) 10.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{fd}7 11.\texttt{a}5 \texttt{xc}5= Kozul-Varga, Jahorina 2003.

7...\texttt{g}7 8.\texttt{c}2

The knight can again be sent on its now-familiar route: 8.\texttt{a}3 0-0 9.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{bd}7, and now:
analysis diagram

A) 10.b4 \( \text{b}6 \) (Black gets a roughly equal, though slightly passive position, after 10...\( \text{e}4 \) 11.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 12.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{xc}4 \) 13.\( \text{xc}4 \) \( \text{xc}4 \) 14.\( \text{xc}4 \) \( \text{c}8 \) 15.a5 a6 Fridman-Dautov, Essen 2000) 11.a5 (11.\( \text{ce}5!? \) \( \text{bd}5= \)) 11...\( \text{c}7 \) 12.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{e}4 \) with a complicated, roughly equal position, Srebrnic-Jovanic, Ljubljana 2005;

B) 10.b3 \( \text{e}4 \) (approximate equality results from 10...c5 11.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{c}8 \) 12.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 13.dxc5 \( \text{xc}5 \) Gokhale-Parikh, Chennai 2004) 11.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 12.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 13.\( \text{fd}1 \) e6 14.\( \text{fe}5 \) \( \text{xe}5 \) 15.dxe5 \( \text{h}4 \) (15...b5?! 16.axb5 cxb5 17.\( \text{d}6 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 18.exd6 \( \text{xb}2 \) 19.\( \text{xb}2 \) \( \text{xd}6 \) 20.\( \text{xb}5= \)) 16.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{f}4 \) (16...\( \text{h}6!? \) or 16...\( \text{h}6!?, in both cases with a complicated position) 17.f3 fxe3 18.\( \text{xe}3 \) \( \text{g}5 \) 19.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{f}7!? \) 20.g3 (Black’s inaccuracy at move 19 could have been exploited with 20.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{d}8 \) 21.\( \text{f}4 \)) 20...\( \text{b}4 \) 21.\( \text{xd}5 \) cxd5 22.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{b}6= \) Xu Yinglun-Zhou Weiqi, China tt 2014.

8...0-0 9.\( \text{d}1 \) b5

Black has good play after 9...\( \text{f}5!? \) 10.xc4 \( \text{bd}7= \) or 10...a5 followed by ...\( \text{a}6\)-b4.

10.e4

The best: White seizes the central squares.

10.d5 is not dangerous, after which Black has the reply 10...\( \text{d}7 \). The pawn on c4 is already defended and Black does not particularly need the bishop on e6, whilst the white knight on g5 does nothing, and will soon have to return to f3. Also possible is 10...\( \text{g}4!? \), exchanging bishops.
10...a5!?

Seizing space on the queenside.

11.axb5

On 11.g5 Black can exchange bishops 11...\textit{g}4 12.xg4 xg4 with chances for both sides.

11...cxb5 12.d5

Having clarified the situation on the queenside, White breaks through in the centre. It is also worth considering the simple development of the knight, attacking the pawn – 12.c3, after which there could follow 12.d7 13.e5 e8 14.f4 a6 15.e3 b4 16.c1 e6.\textit{variation}

12...\textit{g}4

Better is 12.d7, e.g. 13.c3 a6 14.e5 b4 15.b1 c7 16.xd7 xd7, and White has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

13.d4?!

A superficial move. Stronger is 13.c3 a6 (or 13...b6 14.h3 xf3 15.xf3 fd7) 14.xb5 b4 15.b1 (worse is 15.xc4 c8 16.b3 xe4+ 15.xf3 16.xf3 b8 17.d4 d7).\textit{variation}.
13...\textit{\texttt{Na6!}}

Without losing time, the knight immediately heads for b4.

14.\textit{\texttt{Nc3}}

The b5-pawn is invulnerable: 14.\texttt{\texttt{Nxb5? Nxb4}} 15.\texttt{\texttt{Qd2}} (15.\texttt{\texttt{Qxc4 Rc8}}, winning a pawn) 15...\texttt{\texttt{Qxe4}} 16.\texttt{\texttt{Qe3 Qf2!}} 17.\texttt{\texttt{Qxe2 xe2}} 18.\texttt{\texttt{Qe2 b6+}}, and Black regains the piece, keeping two extra pawns. And if 14.\texttt{\texttt{Bxg4 Nxg4}} White cannot take the pawn with 15.\texttt{\texttt{Nxb5}} because of the fork 15...\texttt{\texttt{Qb8}}.

14...\texttt{\texttt{Nb4}} 15.\texttt{\texttt{Qd2 Qb6}}

Now Black has an extra pawn and active pieces.

16.\texttt{h3 d7}

Missing a favourable tactical resource: 16...\texttt{\texttt{xe2}} 17.\texttt{\texttt{xe2 fxd5 18.exd5 Qxd5 19.Qxb5 Qxb5 20.Qd5 Qb4}}, and Black has an extra piece.

17.\texttt{e3 g4}

A small simplifying combination. It was also worth considering 17...\texttt{\texttt{a4}}.

18.\texttt{\texttt{xg4 xg4 19.hxg4 xd4 20.xd4 xd4 21.xd4 c2 22.xb5 xa1}}

The outcome is that Black has an extra exchange and winning chances.
Better was 23.\texttt{Bxc4}, but White probably did not like 23...\texttt{Rxc8} 24.\texttt{Rxc8+ Rxc8}. However, he has the saving move 24.\texttt{Rc6!}, after which Black has to reply 24...\texttt{c2} (bad is 24...\texttt{Rxc6} 25.\texttt{dxc6 Rxc8} 26.\texttt{a7 c7} 27.\texttt{e3 f8} 28.\texttt{b6}, and Black has to return the exchange, after which he is a pawn down) 25.\texttt{c7 b4} 26.\texttt{xa8 c6} 27.\texttt{b6 d8!} 28.\texttt{g5} (28.\texttt{dxc6? d1+ loses}) 28...\texttt{e5} 29.\texttt{xe7 b8} 30.\texttt{d6 xb6} 31.\texttt{xe5 f6} 32.\texttt{c7 xb2} 33.\texttt{xa5=}. 

23...\texttt{Rac8}

A surprise: why this rook? After the natural 23...\texttt{Rfc8} Black has good winning chances. For example: 24.\texttt{c7} (24.\texttt{c7 a7} 25.\texttt{xc4 b7}, taking the b2-pawn) 24...\texttt{c3} 25.\texttt{bxc3 b3} 26.\texttt{a4 c5} 27.\texttt{a3} (White
loses after 27.\textit{c}c4 \textit{d}a6; the most tenacious is 27.\textit{e}xa5, but here too, after 27...\textit{e}xa5 28.\textit{a}xa5 \textit{d}xe4 White is hardly likely to save the game) 27...\textit{d}xe4, and Black wins.

24.\textit{c}c7

Attacking the pawn on \textit{c}4.

24...\textit{b}b8

There is no reason to give up the exchange. Better is 24...c3 25.\textit{b}xc3 \textit{d}b3 26.\textit{a}a4 (26.\textit{c}c4 \textit{a}a8 27.\textit{a}a4 \textit{d}fc8\textsuperscript{2}) 26...\textit{d}c5 27.\textit{d}d4 (worse is 27.\textit{e}xa5 \textit{d}xe4 28.\textit{c}c4 \textit{a}a8\textsuperscript{+}) 27...a4 with advantage to Black.

25.\textit{xb}8 \textit{xb}8 26.\textit{c}c3 \textit{xb}2

It made sense to defend the pawn on \textit{c}4 with 26...\textit{c}c8 or 26...\textit{b}4.

27.\textit{xc}4 \textit{f}6?!  

Now it is Black who will have problems. He should have pinned the enemy knight with 27...\textit{d}c2 with good chances of a draw.

28.\textit{c}5

White manages to attack the pawn on \textit{a}5.

28...\textit{c}2

On 28...\textit{b}3 the pin 29.\textit{b}5 is unpleasant.

29.\textit{xa}5 \textit{xc}3 30.\textit{xa}1

The outcome is that White has an extra pawn, and Black must fight for a draw. We give the rest of the game without analysis, mentioning only that White conducted the rook ending at a high level.
Conclusion: One can assess the move 5.\textit{Be}2 as worthy of attention: White first completes the development of his kingside and only then initiates action on the queenside or in the centre. Black should do the same – prepare short castling and then either defend the c4-pawn or prepare a break against the white centre.
Game 38
Alexey Dreev 2690
Alexey Kornev 2561
Krasnoyarsk ch-RUS 2003 (4)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 dxc4 4.e3 Be6 5.Ne5

White intends to regain the sacrificed pawn immediately. But there is also a drawback: White plays many moves with the same piece in the opening, and Black gets a lot of time for development.

5...Nf6 6.Nxc4

6.Nxc4? is bad because of 6...Bxc4 7.Nxc4 Qd5, and Black wins a pawn.

A position with chances for both sides results from 6.Nc3 b5 7.e2 b6 (7...g6 is worth considering, completing his kingside development) 8.0-0 Bd7, Vassallo Barroche-Starostits, Lille 2011.

6...g6

Preparing to fianchetto the king’s bishop.

Also possible is 6...c5!?; immediately challenging the centre.

7.Nbd2

7.Nc3 looks more natural, after which Black can react with something such as 7...g7 8.e2 0-0 9.0-0 c5; having carried out this standard plan, he has obtained a good game.

7...g7
8. b4

With this move, White prevents the break \( \ldots c6-c5 \), but in return presents Black with another plan, involving \( \ldots a7-a5 \).

8... 0-0 9. \( b2 \) \( d5 \)

Tying the bishop on f1 to the defence of the g2-pawn. If White wants to castle short, then he will have to play e3-e4, driving Black’s light-squared bishop from its good square, but weakening the d4-pawn at the same time.

10. \( c2 \) \( bd7 \)

Also possible was 10...b5!? 11. \( a5 \) \( d6 \) 12. a3 \( e6 \), not allowing White to play e3-e4.

11. e4 \( xc4 \) 12. \( xc4 \)

This capture can hardly create any problems for Black.

Preferable is 12. \( xc4 \), after which Black has a solid, but passive position, where he cannot carry out any of the breaks – not \( \ldots e7-e5 \), \( \ldots c6-c5 \), nor \( \ldots a7-a5 \).

12... \( h5 \)

The immediate 12...a5 is also good.

13. \( f3 \) a5 14. a3

A position with mutual chances arises after 14.bxa5 \( xa5+ \) 15. \( c3 \) \( a3 \) (or 15... \( a4 \) 16. \( xa4 \) \( xa4 \) 17. \( b3 \) \( a7 \)) 16.0-0 b5 17. \( b3 \) c5.

14... \( axb4 \)

The immediate 14...e5 deserves attention, not rushing to open the a-file.
15.\text{axb}4 \text{\texttt{xa}1+} 16.\texttt{xa}1 \text{e}5

An equal position is reached after 17.0-0 \text{ex}d4 18.\text{\texttt{N}xd}4 \text{\texttt{b}6} 19.\texttt{f}3 \text{\texttt{x}c}4 20.\texttt{xc}4=.

17...\texttt{Qe}7 18.\texttt{Qc}3

Defending both pawns at once – on b4 and e5.

18...\texttt{e}8 19.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{d}xe}5 20.\texttt{\texttt{d}xe}5 \texttt{\texttt{d}xe}5 21.\texttt{\texttt{w}xe}5 \texttt{\texttt{w}xe}5 22.\texttt{\texttt{d}xe}5 \texttt{\texttt{d}xe}5 23.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{b}5 24.\texttt{\texttt{b}3} \texttt{c}5 25.\texttt{f}4

Or 25.\texttt{bxc}5 \texttt{xc}5 with an equal game. On 25.\texttt{d}5 a good reply is 25...\texttt{f}4 26.\texttt{bxc}5 \texttt{xd}5 27.\texttt{exd}5 \texttt{xd}5=.

25...\texttt{\texttt{x}e}4 26.\texttt{bxc}5 \texttt{e}7

A simpler way to equalise was 26...\texttt{xf}4 27.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{e}6=.

27.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{c}7 28.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{f}8
29.g3

Too cautious. White could count on a small advantage after the more aggressive 29.g4 \( \mathcal{N} \)f6 30.\( \mathcal{B} \)f3.

29...\( \mathcal{K} \)e7 30.\( \mathcal{R} \)b1 \( \mathcal{N} \)f6 31.\( \mathcal{B} \)g2

Or 31.\( \mathcal{R} \)xb5 \( \mathcal{N} \)xd5 32.\( \mathcal{R} \)xd5 \( \mathcal{R} \)xc6=.

31...\( \mathcal{D} \)d6 32.\( \mathcal{R} \)xb5 \( \mathcal{G} \)g8 33.\( \mathcal{D} \)d5

Not letting Black play ...\( \mathcal{N} \)e7 and take the c6-pawn.

33...\( \mathcal{D} \)f6

Black again attacks the bishop.

34.\( \mathcal{D} \)f3 \( \mathcal{G} \)g8

Again attempting to transfer the knight to e7.

35.\( \mathcal{D} \)d5 \( \mathcal{D} \)f6 36.\( \mathcal{D} \)f3 \( \mathcal{G} \)g8 37.\( \mathcal{D} \)d5+

White attempts to avoid the repetition of moves.

37...\( \mathcal{D} \)e6

Avoiding the trap: 37...\( \mathcal{R} \)xc6? loses to 38.\( \mathcal{R} \)d8+. 
38.\textit{e}5+

White could keep some chances of an advantage after 38.f5+!? gxf5 (38...\textit{e}7?! 39.fxg6 fxg6 40.\textit{d}2±) 39.\textit{a}5 \textit{e}7 40.\textit{f}2 \textit{xc}6 41.\textit{c}5 \textit{d}6 42.\textit{xf}5 (the pawn ending after 42.\textit{xc}6+ \textit{xc}6 43.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 is drawn, e.g. 44.\textit{f}3 \textit{d}6 45.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}6 46.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}5 47.\textit{h}4 \textit{e}4 48.\textit{f}3 49.\textit{xf}5 \textit{g}3 50.\textit{f}6 \textit{h}6 51.\textit{xf}7 \textit{f}4 52.\textit{g}6 \textit{e}5 53.\textit{hx}6 \textit{f}6=).

38...\textit{d}6 39.\textit{d}5+ \textit{e}6 40.\textit{e}5+ \textit{d}6 41.\textit{e}8 \textit{e}7 42.\textit{h}8 \textit{h}5 43.\textit{d}8+ \textit{e}6 44.\textit{b}8 \textit{xc}6 45.\textit{b}6 \textit{d}7

46.\textit{d}5
Or 46...\textit{ex}c6 47...\textit{xc}6+ \textit{xc}6=.

**46...\textit{d}8 47.\textit{b}2 \frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}**

One can conclude that the move 5.\textit{e}5 followed by \textit{xc}4 is not dangerous for Black, because this manoeuvre takes too much time: Black succeeds in completing his development and getting in the break ...c6-c5. And if White manages to prevent this with the move b2-b4, as in the game just examined, then Black carries out the advance ...a7-a5, whilst one must also reckon with the break ...e7-e5.

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**Game 39**

Merab Gagunashvili 2584  
Zhang Pengxiang 2644  
Khanty-Mansiysk 2007 (1)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\textit{f}3 dxc4 4.e3 \textit{e}6 5.\textit{c}2

As with 5.\textit{e}5, White intends to regain the c4-pawn immediately.

Very similar positions to the game arise after 5.\textit{bd}2.

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**analysis diagram**

**A. 5...\textit{b}5**

**B. 5...\textit{f}6**

A) Aggressive but risky is 5...\textit{b}5 6.\textit{a}4 \textit{a}5 7.\textit{e}2. On 7.\textit{a}3!, with the threat of 8.axb5, the best reply is 7...\textit{d}8 (worse is 7...\textit{b}4 8.\textit{a}1 c3 9.bxc3 bxc3 10.\textit{b}3 c2+ 11.\textit{xa}5 cxd1=\textit{a}+ 12.\textit{x}d1=, Farago-Horvath, Hungary tt 2006/07), and White probably has to return the rook to a1 – 8.\textit{a}1 \textit{a}5 with a repetition. 7...\textit{f}6 8.0-0 \textit{g}6 9.\textit{g}5 9.e4 \textit{g}7 10.\textit{g}5 \textit{d}7 (the untried 10...\textit{c}8 is worth consideration) 11.e5 \textit{d}5 12.\textit{g}4 h6 13.\textit{x}d7+ \textit{xd}7 14.\textit{xf}7 \textit{xf}7 15.e6+ \textit{xe}6 16.\textit{g}4+ \textit{f}7 17.\textit{x}d7 \textit{c}7 18.\textit{g}4 \textit{f}4 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{xd}4 20.axb5 (20.\textit{e}1?!?) 20...\textit{xb}5 21.\textit{a}6? \textit{e}5 22.\textit{e}4 \textit{b}4 23.\textit{a}3 \textit{d}3 24.\textit{d}2 \textit{h}f8 25.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}6 26.\textit{xg}7 \textit{xg}7+ Kanakaris-Danielian, Athens 2007. 9...\textit{d}7
9...\texttt{d5}?! 10.e4 h6 (10...h6 11.exd5 \texttt{xg5} 12.b3! with an overwhelming advantage; this is stronger than 12.dxc6 \texttt{xc6} 13.b3 \texttt{xb3} 14.xb5 0-0 15.xg5+, Rozum-Nabaty, Kemer 2009) 11.exd5 hgx5 12.dxc6±. 10.b3 10.de4?! \texttt{xe4} 11.xe4 \texttt{c7} 12.axb5 cxb5 13.b3 a5 14.d2 g7 15.bxc4 b4 16.xb4 \texttt{c6} 17.d5 axb4 18.xa8 \texttt{xa8} 19.a4+ \texttt{c6} 20.dxc6 \texttt{xc6} 21.c5 0-0 22.b5 \texttt{a7} 23.c4 \texttt{c6} 24.b5 \texttt{a7} with a repetition of moves, Boles-Cartaya Verdecia, corr. 2013. 10...c3 Both 10...b4!? and 10...\texttt{d5} are worth considering also; White’s chances are superior, but the position is very complicated. 11.b4 \texttt{xb4} 12.axb5! Black is better after 12.a3 \texttt{xa4} 13.a4 bxa4 14.e4 \texttt{d5} (but not 14...f5 15.xc3 h6 16.f3 \texttt{c2} 17.\texttt{c1} b3 18.e5 \texttt{d7} 19.d5 with the initiative, Gasanov-Khairullin, Dagomys 2008). 12...cxd2 13.b3 \texttt{xa8} He loses after 13.d6 b6. 14.c4 \texttt{b6} 14...e6 15.e3+-. 15.xf7 cxb5 16.b3 with a winning position.

B) 5...\texttt{f6}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.7\textwidth]{analysis_diagram.png}
\end{center}

\textbf{analysis diagram}

6.xc4 On 6.xc4 (so as to avoid the exchange of bishops) the following looks good: 6...\texttt{d5} 7.e2 (the more logical-looking 7.d3 has not been tried) 7.e6 8.0-0 c5!? (also possible is 8...\texttt{e7} followed by ...0-0 and ...c6-c5) 9.b3 \texttt{bd7} 10.b2 \texttt{e7} 11.dxc5 \texttt{xc5}, Makarov-Riazantsev, Sochi rapid 2004, and White has only a symbolic edge. 6.xc4 7.xc4 7.e6 The position after 7...\texttt{bd7} 8.0-0 g6 (J.Ivanov-Starostits, Sevilla 2010) is in White’s favour, because the bishop is passively placed on g7. White will later advance e3-e4, obtaining a space advantage. 8.0-0 Black faces more problems after 8.\texttt{b3}, forcing the opponent to reject ...\texttt{d5}. Then play could continue: 8...\texttt{c7} 9.0-0 \texttt{bd7} 10.e2 \texttt{e7} (better is 10...\texttt{e4} with the idea after 11.b4 to take the bishop in one move – 11...\texttt{xb4} 12.\texttt{xb4} \texttt{b6}, and White is hardly likely to be able to exploit his small lead in development) 11.b4 c5 12.dxc5 \texttt{xc5} 13.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5} 14.b5+ \texttt{fd7} 15.\texttt{fd1} a6 16.\texttt{a5} \texttt{xa5} 17.\texttt{xa5} b6 18.c4 \texttt{e7}, and Black must fight for equality.

Now, however, Black can exploit the fact that White does not control the square d5, to play 8...\texttt{d5}?! activating the queen: 9.b3 \texttt{bd7} 10.e2 \texttt{e7} 11.b2 0-0 12.\texttt{ad1} a5 with mutual chances, Janev-Vasilev, Kesarovski 2007.
Quite a solid continuation: Black returns the extra pawn so as to complete his development without hindrance.

There is also the more aggressive line 5...b5, but here Black can face certain problems:

6.a4

(6...g5 g4!? 7.gxh7 (7.h3?! only drives the bishop to a better square – 7.h5 followed by ...g6) 7.h5 (the threat is 8...g6, winning the knight; worse is 7.f6, Cramling-Danielian, Beijing 2011, because of 8.xf6+, spoiling the pawn structure; it is worth considering 7.a6!?, aiming at the b4-square) 8.xf8 xf8 9.b3 g6 10.b2 exb3
11.axb3 a5 12.d2 f6 13.h3 bd7 Dehaybe-Bossenbroek, corr. 2007.)

6...f6 7.axb5


7...cxb5 8.c3 b6 9.e4


6.bxc4 bxc4 7.Qxc4

White has regained his pawn without loss of time, but in the meantime, Black has solved his main problem by exchanging the light-squared bishops. Since the white pawns are on dark squares, and Black’s, by contrast, are on light squares, this exchange is in Black’s favour. On the other hand, White has activated his queen and he has more space, so his chances are still a little better, but no more than that – after all, Black has no bad pieces and no weaknesses.

7...a5+

7...bd7 is also possible, as in the game Gagunashvili-Zhang Pengxiang, Khanty-Mansiysk 2007, and Black is close to equality.
8. \( \text{Nbd2} \)

Quite a well-thought-out move: White not only blocks the check, but also anticipates the manoeuvre \...\( \text{wa6} \), followed by \...\( \text{xc4} \) – he will be ready to recapture with the knight. White also has another possibility, namely to meet \...\( \text{wa6} \) with b2-b3 and take back with the pawn on c4 – in this case, the knight on d2 will be very well-placed, as it will not obstruct the dark-squared bishop, when it comes to b2.

In reply to 8. \( \text{c3} \) Black does best to offer the exchange of queens at once: 8...\( \text{wa6} \) 9.\( \text{xa6} \) (9.\( \text{e5 \ e6} \) 10.\( \text{d2} = \text{Laketic-Rausis, Porto San Giorgio 2001} \) 9...\( \text{xa6} \) 10.e4 \( \text{e6} \) 11.a3 (11.0-0 \( \text{h6} \) 12.\( \text{f4 \ b4} \) 13.\( \text{fe1 \ 0-0} \) 14.h3 \( \text{fd8} \) 15.a3 \( \text{xc3} \) 16.\( \text{bxc3 \ c5} = \text{Brandhorst-Michelman, corr. 2000} \) 11...\( \text{e7} \) 12.\( \text{e2 \ 0-0} = \text{Dziuba-Beinoras, Warsaw 2013} \) 12.\( \text{e2 \ 0-0} = \text{Dziuba-Beinoras, Warsaw 2013} \)) 9...\( \text{xa6} \) 10.e4 \( \text{e6} \) 11.a3 (11.0-0 \( \text{h6} \) 12.\( \text{f4 \ b4} \) 13.\( \text{fe1 \ 0-0} \) 14.h3 \( \text{fd8} \) 15.a3 \( \text{xc3} \) 16.\( \text{bxc3 \ c5} = \text{Brandhorst-Michelman, corr. 2000} \) 11...\( \text{e7} \) 12.\( \text{e2 \ 0-0} = \text{Dziuba-Beinoras, Warsaw 2013} \).

White is promised little by 8.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{wa6} \) 9.\( \text{a3 \ e6} \) 10.\( \text{xa6} \) \( \text{xa6} \) 11.\( \text{c4 \ e8} \) (or 11...\( \text{e4} \) 12.\( \text{e2 \ e7} \) 13.\( \text{hc1 \ xd2} \) 14.\( \text{fxd2 \ c5} \) 15.\( \text{b3 \ cxd4} \) 16.\( \text{xd4 \ 0-0} \) 17.\( \text{a5 \ d8} \) 18.\( \text{xb7 \ b8} \) 19.\( \text{xd8 \ xb2} + \) 20.\( \text{c2 \ xc2} + \) 21.\( \text{xc2 \ xd8 = Izoria-Harikrishna, Pamplona 2005} \) 12.\( \text{e2 \ e4} \) 13.\( \text{hc1 \ e7} \) 14.\( \text{a5 \ e7} = \text{Hoi-L.B.Hansen, Denmark 1999} \).

8...\( \text{e6} \) 9.\( \text{0-0 \ e7} \)

Black simply completes his development.

The position is also equal after 9...\( \text{bd7} \), as shown by the game Lalic-Starostits, Coulsdon 2013.

10.\( \text{a3} \)

White prepares b2-b4. Black is fine after 10.b3 \( \text{0-0} \) 11.\( \text{b2 \ bd7} \) 12.\( \text{c2 \ fd8} \) 13.\( \text{c4 \ f5} \) 14.\( \text{xf5 \ xf5} = \text{Bonin-Izoria, New York 2004} \), or 10.\( \text{b1 \ bd7} \) 11.\( \text{b4 \ a4} \) 12.\( \text{e1 \ b6} \) 13.\( \text{b3 \ xb3} \) 14.\( \text{xb3 \ xd7} = \text{Gasanov-Gleizerov, Voronezh 2007} \).

10...\( \text{0-0} \) 11.\( \text{b4} \)

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

11...\( \text{xf5} \)

The best square for the queen: here it has more possibilities than after any other retreat.
12. \textit{\texttt{Nbd3}} \textit{\texttt{Nbd7}} 13. \textit{\texttt{Bb2}} \textit{\texttt{e4}}

Better was 13...\textit{\texttt{Nbd6}} 14. \textit{\texttt{Wb2}} \textit{\texttt{Wb5}} 15. \textit{\texttt{Wc2}} (15. \textit{\texttt{Wxb5}} \textit{\texttt{cxb5}} 16. \textit{\texttt{Wfc1}} \textit{\texttt{Cc4=}} or 16...\textit{\texttt{Ec8}} 17. \textit{\texttt{Wxc8}} \textit{\texttt{Wxc8}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Ec1}} \textit{\texttt{Bxc1=}} 19. \textit{\texttt{Bxc1=})} 15...\textit{\texttt{Da4}} or 15...\textit{\texttt{Cc4}} 16. \textit{\texttt{Fb1}} a5 with chances for both sides.

14. \textit{\texttt{Ec1}}

Stronger is 14. \textit{\texttt{Dc5}}, e.g. 14...\textit{\texttt{Fd8}} (14...\textit{\texttt{Dxe5?!}} 15. \textit{\texttt{Dxe5=}}, locking the queen out of the game) 15. \textit{\texttt{Wd2}}, threatening f2-f3 followed by e3-e4 or g2-g4. Now Black does best to retreat the knight: 15...\textit{\texttt{Ef6}} 16. \textit{\texttt{Da5}} \textit{\texttt{Dab8}} 17. \textit{\texttt{Bxc6}} (or 17. \textit{\texttt{Bac1=?)}} 17...\textit{\texttt{Bxc6}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Dxc6=}}.

14...\textit{\texttt{Dd6}} 15. \textit{\texttt{Wd2}} \textit{\texttt{Bb5}} 16. \textit{\texttt{Cc2}}

From White's viewpoint, it is worth considering the exchange of queens, because Black's queen is more active: 16. \textit{\texttt{Wxb5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxb5}} (16...\textit{\texttt{cxb5?!}} 17. \textit{\texttt{Ec7}} \textit{\texttt{Fd8}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Cc5}} with advantage to White) 17. \textit{\texttt{Cc5}} (an unclear position arises after 17. \textit{\texttt{Dd6}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Bb5}} \textit{\texttt{Dc7}} \textit{\texttt{Fd8}} 19. \textit{\texttt{Cc5}} \textit{\texttt{Ec8}} 20. \textit{\texttt{Cc5}} \textit{\texttt{Ec8}} 21. \textit{\texttt{Exd7}} \textit{\texttt{Exd7}} 22. \textit{\texttt{Cc7}} \textit{\texttt{Bxa4}} 23. \textit{\texttt{Ea1}} b5) 17...\textit{\texttt{Bxc5}} (or 17...\textit{\texttt{Bxc5}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Bxc5}}) 18. \textit{\texttt{Bxc5}} with somewhat the better chances for White.

16...\textit{\texttt{Df5}}

Black decides that the queen exchange favours him, but as we have seen, this is not quite so.

17. \textit{\texttt{Db1}}

And now White wrongly avoids the exchange. He had a pleasant choice: 17. \textit{\texttt{Cc5}} \textit{\texttt{Exc2}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Ec2}} or 17. \textit{\texttt{Dxf5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxf5}} (17...\textit{\texttt{Exf5}} 18. \textit{\texttt{Cc5}} \textit{\texttt{Dxc5}} 19. \textit{\texttt{Bxc5}}) 18. \textit{\texttt{Df5}} cxd5 19. \textit{\texttt{Ec7}}, in both cases with definite pressure.

17...\textit{\texttt{Ffd8}} 18. \textit{\texttt{De1}} \textit{\texttt{Eac8}} 19. \textit{\texttt{Wd2}} \textit{\texttt{Bb5}} 20. \textit{\texttt{Cc2}}

Here 20. \textit{\texttt{Wxb5}} is not so bad for Black, since he can recapture 20...\textit{\texttt{cxb5}}, and White no longer has the entry \textit{\texttt{Ec7}}.

20...\textit{\texttt{Bc6}}
Black prepares the break ...c6-c5. Dubious is 20...\textit{Q}f5 because of 21.e4.

21.\textit{Q}e5

White transfers his knight to d3, so as to hamper the move ...c6-c5. Even so, Black gradually manages to prepare this.

21...\textit{Q}a4 22.\textit{Q}d3 \textit{Q}b7 23.\textit{Q}d2 \textit{Q}xc2 24.\textit{Q}xc2 c5 25.\textit{Q}ec1 \textit{Q}b8 26.bxc5 bxc5 27.\textit{Q}b3 \textit{Q}f8

28.g3

Now the position completely equalises.
Preferable was 28.dxe5!?, e.g. 28...\(\text{dx}\text{c}5\) 29.\(\text{bxc}5\) \(\text{dx}\text{c}5\) 30.\(\text{xc}\text{c}5\) \(\text{xc}\text{c}5\) 31.\(\text{xc}\text{c}5\) \(\text{xb}2\) 32.\(\text{ed}2\) 33.\(\text{ff}1\) \(\text{ff}8\) 34.\(\text{xd}8\) \(\text{xd}8\) 35.\(\text{c}7\). The final position of this variation is drawn, of course, but even so, the active rook gives some chances of success.

28...\(\text{cxd}4\) 29.\(\text{dxc}5\) \(\text{a}\text{a}5\) 30.\(\text{bxc}4\) \(\text{b}7\) 31.\(\text{ec}8\) \(\text{xc}\text{c}8\) 32.\(\text{xc}\text{c}8\) \(\text{b}8\) 33.\(\text{ec}7\) \(\text{b}7\) 34.\(\text{ec}8\) \(\text{b}8\) 35.\(\text{c}7\) \(\text{b}7\)

Draw.

**Conclusion:** The plan with 5.\(\text{a}2\) followed by the exchange of light-squared bishops promises White little. One possible reaction for Black is the exchange of queens via the manoeuvre ...\(\text{a}5\)-\(\text{a}6\), or else the standard break ...\(\text{c}6\)-\(\text{c}5\).
Again playing to hold the pawn on c4: Black wants to play ...b7-b5. We should point out that 4.a4 is prospectless now because of the central blow 4...e5!. But the critical position of the variation arises after 4.e4 b5 5.a4 b4, and now both 6.a2 and 6.c2 deserve serious attention.

**Game 40**

Daniel Fridman 2590  
Ilmars Starostits 2469  
Riga open 2004 (9)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6

In the games examined here, we always see this move-order – ‘our’ order 2...dxc4 (avoiding the Slav Exchange) 3.c3 c6 etc. transposes.

3.c3 dxc4 4.e4

The prophylactic move 4.a4?! is too slow here because of the central blow 4...e5:
A) 5.d5? is bad because of 5...\( \text{\textsc{f6}} \) (or 5...\( \text{\textsc{b4+}} \)) 6.e4 \( \text{\textsc{b4}} \), and the pressure on the white centre becomes unbearable. There could follow: 7.\( \text{\textsc{x}} \text{\textsc{c4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{xe4}} \) 8.\( \text{\textsc{xb3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{b6}} \) (8...\( \text{\textsc{h4?!}} \)) 9.\( \text{\textsc{e3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{xc3+}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{bxc3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{cxd5}} \) 12.\( \text{\textsc{xd5}} \) \( \text{\textsc{f6}} \) 13.\( \text{\textsc{b3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{c6+}} \) Delgado Lozano-Cifuentes Parada, Granada 2006.

B) Dubious is 5.e3?! exd4 6.exd4 \( \text{\textsc{e6}} \) 7.\( \text{\textsc{f3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{f6}} \) (7...\( \text{\textsc{b4+}} \)) 8.\( \text{\textsc{e5}} \) (8.\( \text{\textsc{e2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{b4}} \) 9.0-0 \( \text{\textsc{bd7}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{c2}} \) a5+?), Obodchuk-I.Sokolov, Poikovsky 2002) 8...\( \text{\textsc{bd7}} \) 9.\( \text{\textsc{xc4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{xe5}} \) 10.dxe5 \( \text{\textsc{Qx61+}} \) 12.\( \text{\textsc{xd1}} \) \( \text{\textsc{d5}} \) or 12.\( \text{\textsc{xd1}} \) \( \text{\textsc{g4}} \), with somewhat better chances for Black.

C) 5.\( \text{\textsc{f3}} \) exd4 6.\( \text{\textsc{xd4}} \) 7.\( \text{\textsc{e6}} \) (or 7...\( \text{\textsc{e3}} \) !? Ibragimov-I.Popov, Moscow 2013 – better is 7.e3 \( \text{\textsc{f6}} \) 8.\( \text{\textsc{xc4}} \) 0-0 with mutual chances – 7...\( \text{\textsc{xd4}} \) 8.\( \text{\textsc{xd4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{f6}} \) 9.e4 \( \text{\textsc{e5}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{e2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{xe5}} \) 11.\( \text{\textsc{c5}} \) \( \text{\textsc{e7}} \) =, Micele-Hiarcs 8, 2002.

D) 5.dxe5 (the principled continuation) 5...\( \text{\textsc{xd1+}} \) and now:

D1) 6.\( \text{\textsc{xd1}} \) \( \text{\textsc{a6}} \) 7.\( \text{\textsc{e4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{e6}} \) 7...\( \text{\textsc{g4+?!}} \) 8.\( \text{\textsc{f3}} \) 0-0-0+ 9.\( \text{\textsc{c2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{b4+}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{b1}} \) \( \text{\textsc{e6}} \) 11.\( \text{\textsc{e3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{b8}} \) 12.\( \text{\textsc{h3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{d3+}} \) Schlüter-Starostits, Guben 2003) 8.\( \text{\textsc{e3}} \) (8.\( \text{\textsc{f4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{d8+}} \) 9.\( \text{\textsc{c2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{b4+}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{b1}} \) \( \text{\textsc{f5}} \), and Black seizes the initiative) 8...\( \text{\textsc{f6}} \) 8...0-0-0+!? 9.\( \text{\textsc{f4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{d8+}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{e2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{g4+}} \) 11.\( \text{\textsc{f2}} \) fxe5 12.\( \text{\textsc{xc4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{exf4}} \) 13.\( \text{\textsc{xf4}} \) \( \text{\textsc{c5}} \) 14.\( \text{\textsc{f3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{f6+}} \), Azmaiparashvili-Gulko, San Roque 1996;

D2) 6.\( \text{\textsc{xd1}} \) \( \text{\textsc{b4+}} \) 7.\( \text{\textsc{d2}} \) (his problems are not solved by 7.\( \text{\textsc{c3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{e6}} \) !? – defending the c4-pawn in advance – 8.e4 \( \text{\textsc{d7}} \) 9.\( \text{\textsc{f3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{e7}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{e2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{g6}} \) 11.0-0 \( \text{\textsc{gxe5}} \) with an extra pawn for Black, Bletz-Göke, Germany tt 1994) 7...\( \text{\textsc{xd2+}} \) 8.\( \text{\textsc{xd2}} \) \( \text{\textsc{c6}} \) 9.e4 \( \text{\textsc{d7}} \) 10.\( \text{\textsc{f3}} \) \( \text{\textsc{c5}} \), and Black’s chances are not worse, Micele-Hiarcs 8, 2002.
4...b5 5.a4 b4 6.Nce2

The idea is to meet \( Nf6 \) not by attacking the knight with e4-e5, giving up the square d5, but simply to defend e4 with \( Ng3 \).


6...Nf6

Also possible are 6...e6 and 6...Ba6, after which we usually transpose to positions examined in the game. The move 6.Nf6 is probably the most exact: Black forces the enemy knight to come to g3.
7. \( \text{g}3 \text{a}6 \)

Of course, Black should not give the pawn back at once.

8. \( \text{f}3 \text{e}6 \)

9. \( \text{g}5 \)

9. \( \text{e}2?! \) is not promising because of 9...\( \text{c}5 \) 10.\( \text{g}5 \text{c}6 \) 11.\( \text{d}5 \text{exd}5 \) 12.\( \text{xd}5 \text{xd}5 \) 13.\( \text{xd}5 \text{c}7 \) 14.\( \text{f}5 \text{e}6 \) Krasenkow-Blomqvist, Copenhagen 2011.

The alternative is 9.\( \text{c}2 \text{b}3 \) (if 9...\( \text{a}5 \) 10.\( \text{d}2 \text{c}3 \) we get an unpleasant position for Black, in which he will be defending for a long time: 11.\( \text{bxc}3 \text{xf}1 \) 12.\( \text{cb}x\text{b}4 \) (White is also better after 12.\( \text{xf}1 \text{bxc}3 \) 13.\( \text{xc}3 \text{a}6 \) 14.\( \text{e}3 \)) 12...\( \text{xb}4 \) 13.\( \text{xb}4 \) 14.\( \text{xf}1 \)³, Grandelius-Tikkanen, Lund ch-SWE 2010) 10.\( \text{c}3 \) and now:

A) 10...\( \text{b}6 \) (creating the threat of 11...\( \text{b}4 \), winning the queen) 11.\( \text{d}2 \text{d}6 \) 12.\( \text{e}3 \) (12.\( \text{xc}4 \text{g}3 \) 13.\( \text{hg}3 \text{e}4 \)³) 12...\( \text{bd}7 \) 13.\( \text{a}5 \text{b}7 \) 14.\( \text{c}1 \text{c}5 \)³, Zakharevich-Makarov, Elista ch-RUS 1996;

B) But even better is the untried 10...\( \text{h}5 \)!?, e.g. 11.\( \text{xc}4 \text{h}4 \) 12.\( \text{f}1 \) (12.\( \text{xa}6 \text{b}6 \)! 13.0-0 \( \text{xa}6 \) 14.\( \text{h}1 \text{e}4 \) 15.\( \text{xb}3 \text{d}7 \)³) 12...\( \text{h}3 \) 13.\( \text{g}3 \text{xe}4 \)³ (or 13...\( \text{b}6 \) 14.\( \text{d}2 \text{xe}4 \) 15.\( \text{d}3 \text{xd}2 \) 16.\( \text{xd}2 \text{xc}4 \) 17.\( \text{xe}4 \text{c}5 \) 18.\( \text{d}5 \text{h}5 \) 19.\( \text{xe}6 \text{xe}6 \) 20.\( \text{xe}6 \)³\( \text{f}x\text{e}6 = \) ) 14.\( \text{xb}3 \text{d}7 \) 15.\( \text{d}1 \text{d}2 \) 16.\( \text{xd}2 \text{b}8 \) 17.\( \text{d}3 \text{xc}4 \) 18.\( \text{xc}4 \text{xb}2 \) 19.\( \text{xc}6 \text{b}6 \) 20.\( \text{c}2 \text{b}4 \) 21.\( \text{xb}4 \text{xb}4 \) 22.0-0 0-0 with advantage to Black.

9...\( \text{a}5 \)
10.\textit{Be2}

10.\textit{Bc1 b3+} (good is 10...\textit{Bc1d7 11.\textit{Bxc4 cxc4} 12.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bb6} 13.\textit{Bc1} \textit{Bxa4} 14.\textit{b3} \textit{Bxb5}+, Gerbich-Koch, corr. 2009)
11.\textit{Bd2} \textit{Bxa4} 12.\textit{Bc1} (12.\textit{Bc3} \textit{Bb4} 13.\textit{Bd2} \textit{cxc3} 14.\textit{Bxc3} \textit{Bd7} 15.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bb8} 16.\textit{Bxb3} \textit{Bxb3} 17.\textit{Bxb3} \textit{Bxb3} 18.\textit{Bxb3} \textit{Bd7} 19.\textit{Bc4} \textit{cxc4} 20.\textit{Bxc4} c5 21.\textit{dxc5} \textit{Bxc5} with a roughly equal endgame, Mackintosh-Kuiper, corr. 2006) 12...\textit{Bb5} 13.\textit{Bd5} \textit{Bb6} 14.\textit{Bc3} \textit{Bb4}!? (worse is 14...\textit{Bd7} 15.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bxc4} 16.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bxc4} 17.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bxc4} 18.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bxc4} 19.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bxb5} 20.\textit{Bxb5} \textit{Bb6} 21.\textit{Bb6} 0-0 22.\textit{Qxc4} \textit{Bc7} 21.0-0 \textit{Bc6} with a roughly equal position.

10...\textit{Bd7}

10...\textit{Bd7}??, Brodda-Pirs, corr. 2011.

11.0-0 \textit{h6} 12.\textit{Bxf6}

12.\textit{Bxe7} 13.\textit{Bd2} \textit{Bb6=}, Gareev-Dreev, Moscow 2007; 12.\textit{Bf4} g5 13.\textit{Be3} c5 14.\textit{Bd2} cxd4 15.\textit{Bxd4} \textit{Bc8}+, Stephan-Rydholm, corr. 2007.

12...\textit{gxf6}

Taking with the knight is worse: 12...\textit{Bxf6} 13.\textit{Bc1}+. Black needs the knight on b6 to defend the c4-pawn.

13.\textit{Bd2} \textit{Bb6} 14.\textit{Bc1} 0-0-0 15.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bxc4} 16.\textit{Bxc4} \textit{Bc7} 17.\textit{Bd1}
17...h5

The attempt to activate the dark-squared bishop tactically with 17...\textit{\textcolor{red}b}c5? fails to 18.dxc5 \textit{\textcolor{blue}d}xd1+ 19.\textit{\textcolor{blue}q}xd1 \textit{\textcolor{red}b}xc4 20.\textit{\textcolor{red}w}d4±, attacking the bishop and the pawn at f6, Gelfand-Huzman, Israel tt 2000.

18.\textit{\textcolor{blue}w}c2

Bad is 18.h4 \textit{\textcolor{blue}k}b8 19.e5?! , as in the game Goudriaan-Markus, Groningen 2013 (better is 19.b3∿), because of 19...f5, and Black’s chances are superior, because the h4-pawn is weak.

18...h4 19.\textit{\textcolor{blue}n}f1 \textit{\textcolor{blue}k}b8

It is useful for Black to get his king off the c-file.

20.\textit{\textcolor{blue}r}d3?!

It is not clear why White pins his own knight. After 20.h3 the position would be roughly equal.

20...h3

Naturally, Black seizes the chance to weaken the enemy king position.

21.g3

Even worse is 21.gxh3, because in this case, not only are the light squares around the king weakened, but also the g-file is opened, and the white king will be very uncomfortable.

21...c5

Having the two bishops, Black tries to open the position and so lands this central blow.

22.d5
After 22.dxc5 too many lines are opened: 22...\textit{\textbf{R}}xd3 23.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd3 \textit{\textbf{B}}xc5 with a strong initiative for Black.

22...\textit{\textbf{f}}5!

Breaking up the white centre even further and unleashing the two bishops; White’s position is now very difficult.

23.\textit{\textbf{D}}fe3

He gets no relief from 23.\textit{\textbf{R}}ad1 \textit{\textbf{fxe4}} 24.\textit{\textbf{R}}3d2 \textit{\textbf{B}}g7\textit{\textbf{µ}}.

23...\textit{\textbf{fxe4}}

Stronger was 23...\textit{\textbf{f}}4 followed by ...\textit{\textbf{fxg3}}, breaking up the pawn cover around the king. However, the text move also gives White many problems.

24.\textit{\textbf{R}}d2 \textit{\textbf{B}}b7 25.\textit{\textbf{R}}ad1 \textit{\textbf{B}}g7 26.\textit{\textbf{dxe6}}

If 26.\textit{\textbf{d}}6 \textit{\textbf{Q}}c8 27.\textit{\textbf{a}}5 \textit{\textbf{d}}4 28.\textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{xb7}} White would have to give up the exchange on d4.

26...\textit{\textbf{R}}xd2 27.\textit{\textbf{B}}xd2

Nor is equality promised by 27.\textit{\textbf{R}}xd2 \textit{\textbf{fxe6}} 28.\textit{\textbf{d}}6 \textit{\textbf{d}}4 29.\textit{\textbf{xb7}} \textit{\textbf{xb7}}\textit{\textbf{µ}}.

27...\textit{\textbf{d}}4

After the simple 27...\textit{\textbf{fxe6}}\textit{\textbf{µ}} Black has an extra pawn and the two bishops.

28.\textit{\textbf{exf7?}}

White misses a fleeting chance to save the game: 28.\textit{\textbf{f}}5!? e3 29.\textit{\textbf{fxe3}} \textit{\textbf{c6}} 30.\textit{\textbf{exd4}} and now:

A) 30...\textit{\textbf{h}}1+ 31.\textit{\textbf{f}}2 \textit{\textbf{f}}3+ 32.\textit{\textbf{g}}1 \textit{\textbf{fxe6}} 33.\textit{\textbf{f}}4+ \textit{\textbf{xf4}} 34.\textit{\textbf{xf4}} \textit{\textbf{exf5}} 35.\textit{\textbf{f}}2=;
B) 30...cxd4 31.\(\text{\textit{d}f2} \text{\textit{g}2} + 32.\text{\textit{e}f1} \text{\textit{f}3} \) (32...\(\text{\textit{g}1} + 33.\text{\textit{e}2} \text{\textit{g}2} + =\)) 33.\(\text{\textit{f}e3!} \text{\textit{d}xe3} 34.\text{\textit{xe}3} \text{\textit{e}8} 35.\text{\textit{e}5} + \text{\textit{a}8} 36.\text{\textit{d}d7} \text{\textit{e}xe6} 37.\text{\textit{d}d8} + \text{\textit{b}7} 38.\text{\textit{a}5} + \text{\textit{b}6} 39.\text{\textit{c}4} + \text{\textit{b}7} 40.\text{\textit{a}5} + \) with a draw by perpetual check.

28...\(\text{\textit{e}f7} 29.\text{\textit{d}d6} \text{\textit{b}3} 30.\text{\textit{e}xb7} \text{\textit{e}b7} 31.\text{\textit{e}2} \text{\textit{a}4} 32.\text{\textit{f}5} \text{\textit{d}8}\)

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

33.b3

Or 33.\(\text{\textit{f}xe4} + \text{\textit{c}6}, \) and after the exchange of queens, the queenside pawns are unstoppable.

33...\(\text{\textit{c}6} 34.\text{\textit{e}1} \text{\textit{e}3!} 35.\text{\textit{f}xe3}\)

He also loses after 35.f3 \(\text{\textit{c}3} 36.\text{\textit{d}d1} \text{\textit{d}d2} 37.\text{\textit{xd}2} \text{\textit{exd}2} \) or 35.\(\text{\textit{d}xe3} \text{\textit{xe}3} 36.\text{\textit{f}xe3} \text{\textit{d}d3}.\)

35...\(\text{\textit{c}3} 36.\text{\textit{d}f1} \text{\textit{d}d2} 37.\text{\textit{d}d6} +\)

Or 37.\(\text{\textit{f}3} \text{\textit{g}2} + 38.\text{\textit{h}1} \text{\textit{xf}3} 39.\text{\textit{xf}3} \text{\textit{b}2} \) winning.

37...\(\text{\textit{xd}6} 0-1\)

After the opening, a complicated, roughly equal position was reached, with opposite-side castling. In the subsequent struggle, White committed several mistakes and lost.
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 b5

In reply to 3.e4 we recommend 3...e5. But in this game, we reach a position which arises in our repertoire after 3.Nc3 c6 4.e4 b5 5.a4 b4.

4.a4 c6 5.Nc3 b4 6.Na2

Practically forcing White to advance the pawn.

7.e5

White seizes space on the kingside, but gives Black an excellent square on d5 for his knight. With the pawn on e5, White tries to create an attack on the kingside, exploiting the absence of a knight from f6. In addition, if White manages to exchange dark-squared bishops, his knight will have an excellent post on d6. However, if White is too slow and does not realise his plans, then in the future, the pawn on e5 can become an object of attack.

At the same time, 7.f3 is dubious because of 7...e5:

A) 8.Nxc4?! Bd4 (8...exd4 is also good, as shown by the game Liang Chong-Zhang Pengxiang, China tt 2008) 9.e2 (even worse is 9.c2 c5 Lautier-I.Sokolov, Groningen 1995) 9...c5 10.g5 Bxd6 11.c1 h6 12.h4 g5+, Arduman-Guramishvili, Turkey tt 2012; 12...a5!;

B) 8.dxe5 Bxd1+ 9.exd1 c4 70.e6 (nothing good comes out of the attempt to keep the pawn with the move 10.f4 – 10...c3 11.bxc3 b3 12.b4 c5 13.b2 cxe4 14.e1 a5 15.d3 d7 10...f6e6 11.xc4 b6 12.b3 a6 (Black is also somewhat better after 12...a5, Hillarp Persson-Van Beek, Stockholm 2006) 13.c3 c5 14.c2 xb3 15.xb3 c5 with advantage to Black, Golovin-A. Zaitsev, Tula 2014; and even stronger is 15...e5! with the idea of giving check with the bishop from e6 more quickly.
Thus White has regained his pawn, after which he is ready to complete his development and begin play on the c-file. Black’s task is to carry out ...c6-c5, after which the position will be equalised.

8...e6

Another possibility is to start by bringing out the bishop with 8...\textit{B}f5.

9.\textit{N}f3

9.\textit{e}2 is harmless: 9...\textit{b}7 (or 9...a5=) 10.0-0 c5 11.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}7 12.a5 \textit{e}8 13.a6 \textit{a}8 14.\textit{c}1 \textit{e}7 15.dxc5, as in the game Jussupow-Vera Gonzalez, Linares 1997: after 15...\textit{x}e5 Black obtained the better chances.

An equal game results from 9.\textit{g}4 \textit{a}6 10.\textit{x}a6 \textit{x}a6 11.\textit{f}3 (White is also slightly better after 11.\textit{e}2 c5 12.dxc5 \textit{x}c5, Gasanov-Rustemov, Warsaw 2005) 11...c5 12.0-0 \textit{d}7=.

9...a5

10.\textit{g}5

It is favourable for White to exchange dark-squared bishops, so he can win a tempo for development, without having to fear the reply 10...\textit{e}7. Let us consider some other possibilities:

A) 10.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}7 11.\textit{c}1 \textit{b}7 12.\textit{b}3 \textit{d}7 13.0-0 0-0 14.\textit{c}1 \textit{xe}3 15.\textit{fxe}3 \textit{b}6 (15...c5!? 16.\textit{d}3 \textit{xa}4 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{g}6 18.\textit{a}1 \textit{xb}2 19.\textit{xb}2 a4 20.\textit{bd}2 c5 21.\textit{e}4 \textit{b}8 22.\textit{xb}7 \textit{xb}7 with mutual chances, Mamedyarov-Balogh, Ningbo 2011;

B) 10.0-0 \textit{e}7 Somewhat worse is 10...\textit{a}6 11.\textit{xa}6 \textit{xa}6 12.\textit{d}2 c5 13.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}6 14.\textit{c}1 \textit{c}8 (also insufficient for equality is 14...\textit{cx}d4 15.\textit{b}3 \textit{e}7 16.\textit{fx}d4 0-0 17.\textit{b}5 \textit{b}8 18.\textit{xb}6 \textit{xb}6 19.\textit{fc}1=) 15.\textit{b}5+ \textit{xb}5 16.\textit{xb}5=, Ponomariov-Eljanov, Kiev ch-UKR 2011. 11.\textit{d}2 \textit{a}6
analysis diagram

12.\textit{w}e2 12.\textit{w}xa6!? 13.\textit{w}c1 c5 14.\textit{w}e2 0-0 15.\textit{w}b3 cxd4 16.\textit{w}fc1 \textit{w}c3! (16...\textit{w}b8?!), Malakhatko-Simkin, Kiev 1999, 17.\textit{w}fxd4! followed by \textit{w}g4, and White has the advantage) 17.\textit{w}c4 (17.bxc3 bxc3 18.\textit{w}e1 d3 19.\textit{w}e4 d2 – regaining the piece – 20.\textit{w}fxd2 cxd2 21.\textit{w}c5 22.\textit{w}xc5 \textit{w}xc5 23.\textit{w}xc5 \textit{w}xd2=) 17...\textit{w}c5 18.\textit{w}fxd4 (18.\textit{w}xc5 \textit{w}c8 19.bxc3 dxc3 20.\textit{w}e3 \textit{w}xc5 21.\textit{w}xc5 \textit{w}c7 22.\textit{w}e4 \textit{w}xc5 23.\textit{w}g5 g6 24.\textit{w}h4 h5 25.\textit{w}f4 b3 26.\textit{w}e4 \textit{w}b4 27.\textit{w}f6+ \textit{w}g7 28.\textit{w}xh5+ gxh5 29.\textit{w}g5+ \textit{w}h7 30.\textit{w}xh5+ with perpetual check) 18...\textit{w}xb3 19.\textit{w}xb3 \textit{w}d5 20.\textit{w}b5 \textit{w}d5 21.\textit{w}e2 \textit{w}xd2 22.\textit{w}xd2 \textit{w}d7= Satici-Berlinger, corr. 2011. 12...\textit{w}xc4 If 12...0-0 13.\textit{w}xa6 \textit{w}xa6 14.\textit{w}c1 c5 15.\textit{w}b3 cxd4 16.\textit{w}fc1 \textit{w}c3 we reach a position examined after 12.\textit{w}xa6!?. 13.\textit{w}xc4 \textit{w}b6 14.\textit{w}c2 \textit{w}d5 15.\textit{w}c1 \textit{w}d8 16.\textit{w}d3 c5 17.\textit{w}xc5 17.\textit{w}f4 \textit{w}c6 18.\textit{w}xc5 0-0 19.\textit{w}fc1 \textit{w}xc5 20.\textit{w}e3 \textit{w}ac8 21.\textit{w}d3 \textit{w}bd7=, Al Sayed-Peralta, Barcelona 2005. 17...\textit{w}xc5 18.\textit{w}xc5 \textit{w}xc5 It is also equal after 18...\textit{w}xc5 19.\textit{w}fd1 \textit{w}c8 20.\textit{w}g5 b3 21.\textit{w}e2 \textit{w}c4 22.\textit{w}xc4 \textit{w}xc4 23.\textit{w}ac1 0-0 24.\textit{w}xc4 \textit{w}xf2+ 25.\textit{w}xf2 \textit{w}xc4 26.\textit{w}e7 \textit{w}fc8 27.\textit{w}d4 \textit{w}xa4, Farago-Meier, Austria Bundesliga 2011. 19.\textit{w}e4 0-0 20.\textit{w}e3 \textit{w}c4 21.\textit{w}d4 \textit{w}d5 21...\textit{w}d5 22.\textit{w}xd5 \textit{w}xd5=. 22.\textit{w}fc1 \textit{w}a6 23.\textit{w}c6 \textit{w}b7 24.\textit{w}ac1 \textit{w}fc8 25.\textit{w}d2 \textit{w}xc6 26.\textit{w}xc6 \textit{w}f8 27.\textit{w}c4 \textit{w}d7 28.\textit{w}b5 \textit{w}c7 29.\textit{w}e2 \textit{w}d5 30.\textit{w}b5 \textit{w}c7 31.\textit{w}e2 \textit{w}d5 32.\textit{w}b5, draw, Moranda-Peralta, Warsaw 2007.

C) 10.\textit{w}g5 \textit{w}e7
analysis diagram

11...g6 (11...exd4?) 12.h5 f5 13.hxg6 hxg6 14.hxg6 (14.h5=) 14...h5 15.0-0 a6 16.a6xa6 a6xa6+. Black is ready to break in the centre with ...c6-c5, whilst the white queen on h3 is misplaced, Yakovich-Chuprikov, Voronezh 2010. 11...0-0 Worse is 11...a6 12.a6xa6 a6xa6 13.g4 f8, and in the game Aleksandrov-Felgaer, Spain tt 2007, Black was unable to castle (not 13...0-0 14.h6++; the lesser evil is 13...c5, but this weakens the dark squares and after 14.h6 it is still not easy for Black to castle). 12.0-0 d7 13.b3 c5 14.b2 a6 15.c1 xc4 16.xc4 e8 17.e2 b5 18.c1 e4 19.bxe4 b3 20.ac3 xc4 Guevara-Rydholm, corr. 2009.

10...b6

With his previous move, White freed the square c1, and now he exploits it to bring his knight into the centre. Later the knight will come to b3 or d3, and will prevent the freeing move ...c6-c5.

11.c1 a6
12. \textit{\textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{Q}e2}}}}


12... \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{h6}}}} 13. \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{B}}e3}} \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{xc4}}}}

The immediate 13... \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{e7}}}} also deserves attention, not hurrying with the exchanges.

14. \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{W}}xc4}} \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{d7}}}} 15. \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{B}}b3}} \textbf{\textsf{\textit{\textbf{e7}}}}
16.\texttt{Rc1}

It was also possible to occupy c1 with the other rook – 16.0-0 0-0 17.\texttt{fc1}, although the assessment of the position as roughly equal does not change. For example: 17...\texttt{Rfc8} 18.\texttt{We2} (intending \texttt{Rc4} and \texttt{ac1}, doubling rooks on the c-file) 18...e5 19.\texttt{dxc5} \texttt{xc5} 20.\texttt{xc5} (or 20.\texttt{d4} \texttt{e7} 21.\texttt{fd2} \texttt{ac8} 22.\texttt{g3} \texttt{xb3} 23.\texttt{xc7} \texttt{xc7} 24.\texttt{xb3} \texttt{d8} 25.\texttt{b5} \texttt{b8} 26.\texttt{d3} \texttt{c8} 27.\texttt{a6} \texttt{c4} 28.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{xc4} =, Ahlander-Tikkanen, Sweden tt 2011) 20...\texttt{xc5} 21.\texttt{g3} \texttt{c7} = and draw agreed, Nechaev-Rau, corr. 2012.

16...0-0 17.0-0

On 17.\texttt{xc6} there follows 17...\texttt{xc6} 18.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{b6}; Black regains the a4-pawn, after which he is definitely not worse.

17.\texttt{Rfc8}

Black has completed his development and is fully ready for the standard central break.

18.\texttt{We2} c5 19.\texttt{fd2} \texttt{e6}

19...\texttt{a6}?! 20.\texttt{xa6} \texttt{xa6} 21.\texttt{c2} \texttt{b6} 22.\texttt{xc5} (on 22.\texttt{a1} there follows 22...c4 23.\texttt{ac1} \texttt{a8} 24.\texttt{xc4} \texttt{xc4} 25.\texttt{xc4} \texttt{xc4} 26.\texttt{xc4} \texttt{b6} 27.\texttt{c7} \texttt{d8} 28.\texttt{xc2} \texttt{xa4} with somewhat better chances for Black, because he can soon create a passed pawn) 22...\texttt{xa4} 23.\texttt{a1} \texttt{ab6} 24.\texttt{ba5} \texttt{a5} 25.\texttt{xa5} \texttt{xc5} 26.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5} 27.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5} =.

20.\texttt{h5} \texttt{xa4} 21.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{xc5}

21...\texttt{c6}?!?

22.\texttt{dxc5} \texttt{xe3}

Otherwise White threatens to take on h6.

23.\texttt{fxe3} \texttt{xc5}
23...\texttt{Qf8}!?

\begin{enumerate}
\item 24.\texttt{Qxf7+ Kxf8 25.e4 Qf7 26.Qe4 Qd7}
\end{enumerate}

The queen has no more to do on a4, so Kramnik returns her to her own camp; however, 26...\texttt{Qb5} was also strong. In both cases, White is fighting for a draw.

\begin{enumerate}
\item 27.b3 b6 28.fd1 Qf7 29.f1 a7
\end{enumerate}

\begin{enumerate}
\item 29...Qd7 leads to a repetition of moves. A draw would not be a bad result against the computer, but Black’s position is better and Kramnik decides to play for a win.
\item 30.exf8+ Qxf8 31.d4 a4
\end{enumerate}

Black wants to organise a passed pawn.

\begin{enumerate}
\item 32.xe6 xe3+ 33.h1 xc1
\end{enumerate}

Winning chances were still offered by 33...\texttt{Re8} 34.d1 (or 34.f1 a6 35.f3 xe6 36.xe3 a6) 34...a3 35.xg7 xg7 36.bxa3 ff8++.

\begin{enumerate}
\item 34.xf8
\end{enumerate}

\begin{enumerate}
\item 34...e3??
\end{enumerate}

A terrible blunder, to which nobody is immune, even a player of the calibre of Vladimir Kramnik. He demonstrated a very high class of play in the opening and middlegame: to get a superior position as Black against the computer is far from easy.

After 34...g8 35.g6 the position is absolutely equal.

\begin{enumerate}
\item 35.h7#
\end{enumerate}
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nc3 dxc4 4.e4 b5 5.a4 b4 6Nb1 a6

Black defends his extra pawn for the moment, also making it hard for White to develop.

7.Qc2

White has to continue in gambit style.

A) It is extremely slow to play 7.e3?! Qf6 8.f3 (no better is 8.e5 d5 9.e6 f5 10.c2 g6 11.xc4 d6 12.xa6 xa6, Standke-Pinho, corr. 2002) 8...e5 9.Qe2
9...\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}6} The most exact. Also good is 9...\textcolor{red}{\textit{bd}7} 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{a}5} 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c}1} b3 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{b}4}\pm, but the clarification in the centre with 9...\textcolor{red}{\textit{exd}4} is less effective, because of 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{exd}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{a}5}?! 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}2}\pm Anand-Lautier, Monaco 1996, or 10...c5?! 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b}5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xb}1} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}1} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xb}5} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{axb}5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{bd}7} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e}5} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}2}\pm, Shipov-Echavarria, Internet 2004; better is 10...c3 or 10...\textcolor{red}{\textit{fd}7} with an equal game. 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}2} 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{dxex}5}?! \textcolor{red}{\textit{exe}5} 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{exd}8}+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}8} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{bd}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{bd}7} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xe}5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xe}5} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c}7} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{hd}8} 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f}5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d}3}\pm 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}3} 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{ad}8} 19.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f}1} \textcolor{red}{\textit{b}3}, and White resigned in Koski-Mujunen, corr. 2014. 10...0-0 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e}8} 12.g3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{c}7} An interesting computer recommendation is 12...g5. 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e}1} \textcolor{red}{\textit{b}6} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xc}4} 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{exd}4} 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{bd}7} 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b}3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e}5} 18.a5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd}4}+ 19.\textcolor{red}{\textit{exd}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xa}5} 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g}2} c5 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}1} c4 22.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e}3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{ad}8} 23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}4} \textcolor{red}{\textit{wb}6} 24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{eg}4}, and White resigned in Kirsanov-Solov’yev, Sochi 2014;

B) If 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f}3}?! \textcolor{red}{\textit{f}6} 8.e5 \textcolor{red}{\textit{d}5} White also faces a battle to equalize.
analysis diagram

B1) 9...e6 10.0-0 c5=;

B2) 9...d2 e6 10...c1 c5 (even stronger is 10...c3 11.bxc3 xf1 12.xf1 c5=, Koski-Ryska, corr. 2000) 11.xc4 b6=, J.Horvath-Z.Varga, Hungary tt 1993/94;

B3) 9...g5?! a5 (9...h6 deserves attention, asking why the bishop came to g5.) 10...c1 (Stocek-Hasangatin, Pardubice 2005) 10...c3=

B4) 9...g5 e6 10...h5 d7! (not weakening the square f6; 10...g6 11...f3 leads to a position with chances for both sides) 11...e4 b3 followed by ...d4 – Black’s chances are superior.

7...f6

A) 7...e5!? 8...f3 b3 9...e3 f6 (9...b6 10.a5 b7 11...d2 exd4 12...xd4 c5 13...d5 c6 14...xc4 f6 15...d3 b4 16.xb4 xb4+ 17...d2 c4 18...xc4 xc4 19...xc4 xe4 20.0-0 Le Quang Liem-Felgaer, Gibraltar 2012) 10...xc4 (10...bd2 exd4 11...xd4 e5 12...f5 0-0 13...xe4 xc4 14...xc4 d7 15.0-0 e8 16...xb3 e5 17...g3 g6 18...c3 f8 19...d4 c8 20...f3 f6 21...xf3 xd4, draw, Andersen-Kregelin, corr. 2013) 10...exd4 11...xb3 xc4 12...xc4 c5 13.b4 c6 14...a3 e7 15.bxc5 xe4 16...bd2 xd2 17...xd2 0-0 18.0-0 d7=, Sargissian-Balogh, Ningbo 2011;

B) 7...xd4?! 8...f3

analysis diagram

B1) 8...d7 9...xc4 xc4 (on 9...e6 a possibility is 10...bd2!? with the idea after 10...xc4 to take with the knight – 11...xc4=) 10...xc4 e6 with approximate equality, Vasilyev-Davidov, Bulgaria 2010;

B2) 8...b6 9...e3 f7 (9...c7!? 10...bd2 e6 11...xc4 xc4 12...xc4 f6 13.0-0 e7 14.e5 d5 15...g5 0-0=, Pashikian-Grigoryan, Yerevan ch-ARM 2012; practice has also seen 9...c5 10...d2 c3 11.bxc3 xf1 12.xf1 bxc3 13...xc3 e6 14...c4 a6 15...b3 d7 16...b5 c8 17...e5 f6 18...f3 b8 19...xc6 e7 20...d1= Linna-Voll, corr. 2012) 10...bd2 c3 11.bxc3 xf1 12.xf1 e6 13.g3 f6 (13...a5!?+) 14...g2 a6 15...ab1 e7 16...hc1 0-0= Khismatullin-Khairullin, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013.
8. \( \text{d}2 \)

Worse is 8...c3 9.\( \text{x}a6 \) \( \text{x}a6 \) 10.bxc3 e6 11.\( \text{gf}3 \) bxc3 12.\( \text{xc}3 \) e8 13.0-0 \( \text{b}4 \) 14.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 15.\( \text{b}3 \), Onischuk-Caruana, Reggio Emilia 2011, or 8...\( \text{xd}4 \) 9.\( \text{gf}3 \) b3 10.\( \text{xd}4 \) bxc2 11.f3 e6 (11...e5 12.\( \text{xc}2 \), Khairullin-Tarlev, Moscow 2012) 12.\( \text{xc}2 \) \( \text{bd}7 \) 13.\( \text{xc}4 \), Lemos-Felgaer, Buenos Aires 2012.

9. \( \text{xc}4 \) \( \text{xc}4 \) 10.\( \text{xc}4 \) e5

Black has played ...c6-c5, and now the position is equalised.

11.\( \text{gf}3 \)

White has also tried 11.dxc5 \( \text{bd}7 \) 12.\( \text{b}3 \) e8 13.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) (13...\( \text{g}4 \)?) 14.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 15.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 16.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 17.\( \text{d}4 \) b3 18.\( \text{g}7 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 19.\( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{xc}5 \) 20.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{xc}4 \), Jakovenko-Naer, Yerevan 2014.

11...\( \text{bd}7 \) 12.0-0 \( \text{xd}4 \) 13.e5

Black also has no problems after 13.\( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 14.a5 0-0 15.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{c}5 \) 16.\( \text{xd}8 \) \( \text{fxd}8 \) 17.\( \text{xc}5 \) \( \text{xc}5 \).

13...\( \text{d}5 \) 14.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{e}7 \)

He can also offer the exchange of queens: 14...\( \text{c}7 \) 15.\( \text{xc}7 \) (or 15.\( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{c}2 \) 16.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{xd}1 \) 17.\( \text{xd}1 \)=) 15...\( \text{xc}7 \) 16.\( \text{bd}4 \) \( \text{d}5 \).

15.\( \text{xd}4 \) \( \text{c}7 \)

It was better simply to castle 15...0-0, not fearing 16.\( \text{g}4 \), on which there follows the prophylactic 16...\( \text{h}8 \) with an equal game.
16.\textit{Be3}!? \textit{Nxe3} (16...0-0 17.\textit{Rfc1} \textit{Qb8} 18.\textit{a5} \textit{b6} 19.\textit{c6}±) 17.\textit{exe3} (or 17.\textit{fxe3} \textit{b7} 18.\textit{fd1}±) 17...0-0 18.\textit{ac1} \textit{b6} 19.\textit{fd1} with somewhat better chances for White.

16...\textit{Rc8} 17.\textit{bd4}

White takes control of the square \textit{c2}, where the black queen might otherwise head.

17...0-0 18.\textit{d2} \textit{c4} 19.\textit{fd1}

19.b3!? \textit{ac6} 20.\textit{ac5} (20...\textit{exf5} 21.\textit{xd5} \textit{e6} 22.\textit{xe6} \textit{fxe6} 23.\textit{fd1}=) 21.\textit{g3} or 21.\textit{g5} \textit{exf5} 22.\textit{xd5} with mutual chances.

19...\textit{c5} 20.\textit{g4}

Black is better – all of his pieces are very actively placed.

20...\textit{fd8} 21.\textit{h6} \textit{f8} 22.\textit{g5} \textit{d7}

Even stronger was 22...\textit{ac7} 23.h3 \textit{b3} 24.\textit{xb3} \textit{xb3} 25.\textit{xd8} \textit{xd8}+

23.h3 b3 24.\textit{d2} \textit{b4} 25.\textit{dxb3}

Preferable is 25.\textit{ac1}, but, admittedly, after 25...\textit{b6} White cannot hold the a-pawn.

25...\textit{xd4} 26.hxg4 \textit{d3}

Attacking e5 and b2.

27.\textit{f3} \textit{xb2} 28.\textit{db1}
It was more stubborn to exchange a pair of rooks after 28.\(\text{ adc1}\).

28...\(\text{ d3}\)

29.\(\text{ bd2}\)

White has lost the thread of the game. He should retreat the bishop – 29.\(\text{ d2}\), although White’s position after, for example, 29...\(\text{ b6}\) followed by ...\(\text{ c4}\) is difficult all the same.

29...\(\text{ h6}\)

But now the bishop is shut out of the game.

30.\(\text{ h4}\) \(\text{ c3}\) 31.\(\text{ b3}\) \(\text{ xe5}\)

Black simply takes a pawn.

32.\(\text{ xe5}\) \(\text{ xd2}\) 33.\(\text{ b7}\) \(\text{ g5}\)

Again driving the bishop to a poor position, and freeing the square g7 for his own bishop.

34.\(\text{ g3}\) \(\text{ e2}\) + 35.\(\text{ fl}\) \(\text{ xg3}\) + 36.\(\text{ fxg3}\) \(\text{ cc2}\) 37.\(\text{ xf7}\) \(\text{ g7}\)

White resigned, since new material losses for him are inevitable.

A good game: Black played ...c6-c5 in good time and equalised; later White failed to cope with the demands of the position and was gradually outplayed.
Chapter 11

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Nf3 c6 4.a4/4.e4 b5

4.a4 is a very cunning move-order by White – he defends against both ...e7-e5 and ...b7-b5 and wants to regain the pawn on c4, as they say, ‘at his own convenience’. But in this variation, a surprise awaits him: we suggest the very rare move 4...Bg4!?

Also in this chapter, we will analyse the ‘lively’ variations arising after 4.e4 b5.

Game 43
Vladimir Belous 2554
Alexander Riazantsev 2700
Moscow 2013 (12)

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Nf3 dxc4 4.a4Bg4

Of course, the most solid and reliable way to play is to go into a Slav with 4...Ng6 5.Nc3 Bf5; there is also the riskier continuation 5...Be6 with the familiar idea of defending the pawn on c4.

But the move in the game also has its pluses: it is not seen very often and after it, White needs to know some concrete variations, in order to retain the opening initiative. In blitz, your opponent will not have the time to recall the lines, so the surprise effect can work.

5.e3

A) 5.Nc3 d7, and now:
analysis diagram

A1) 6.e3 e6 (6...e5!? 7.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}4c4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}7}\) 8.b3\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}5}\) or 8.d5 \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}f6}\) 9.dxc6 bxc6) 7.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}4c4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}f6}\) 8.0-0 \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}4c4}\); here the bishop on g4 is placed better than on f5;

A2) 6.e4 e5 7.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}4c4}\) exd4 8.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}xd4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}xf3}\) 9.gxf3 \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}f6}\) 10.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}g5}\)?! (better 10.f4) 10...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}5}\) 11.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}2}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}7}\) 12.0-0 (Black also has no problems after 12.0-0 0-0 0-0) 12...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}5}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}2}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}8}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}2}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}6}\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}}d1}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}6}\) 16.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}xd6}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}}xd6}\) 17.f4 h6 18.e5 hxg5 19.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}xd6}\) 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}xf4}\), and White resigned in the game Tremp-Domont, Leukerbad ch-SUI 2011.

B) More dangerous for Black is 5.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}5}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}}5}\) (on 5...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}6}\)?!, unpleasant is 6.e4 (White is also somewhat better after 6.e3 \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}6}\) 7.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}3}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}7}\) 8.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}xc4}\) g6 9.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}2}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}7}\) 10.0-0 0-0 11.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}4}\)\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}6}\), Sekulovska-V. Georgiev, Skopje 2011) 6...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}7}\) 7.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}xc4}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}6}\) 8.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}3}\) a5 9.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}3}\)\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}6}\).
Now a complicated position with chances for both sides arises after 6.f3!? Nbd7 (or 6...e6 7.e4 b5±) 7.Qxe5 Qxe5 8.Qxe5 Qxe5 9.dxe5 a5+ 10.Nc3 Qxe5.

On 6.g3 the most reliable line is 6...e6 with an equal position. But there is also the trappy continuation 6...f6!?, hoping White is tricked into avoiding the fork (7.Qxc4 Qd5) and retreats 7.Qf3, as in the game Porat-Videki, Balatonlelle 2006. Then there follows 7...e5, and Black is already better. In reality, White should not be afraid of 7.Qxc4 Qd5 because of 8.Qb3!, and Black cannot take the rook with 8...Qxh1 because of 9.Qxb7+-.

The most problems Black faces are in the variations 6.g4!? and 6.Qc3; we will examine these in more detail.

B1) The move 6.g4!? has for some reason never been seen in practice, although it poses Black concrete problems. 6...Qg6 6...f6!? 7.gxh5 fxe5 8.dxe5 Nbd7 (8...Qa5+ 9.Qd2 Qxe5 is worth considering, and here White needs to find the strong continuation 10.Qb4! Qc7 11.Qxc4 Qa6 12.Qc3±) 9.Qf4 (9.e6 Qc5 10.Qxd8+ Qxd8 11.Qa3 Qxe6 12.Qe3 (Black gets a large advantage after 12.Qxc4? Qd4 13.Qe3 e5) 12...c3 13.bxc3 Qxe4) 9...e6 10.Qc3 Qc5 11.e3 (11.Qxd8+ Qxd8±) 11...Qb6 12.Qc2 Qb4 (12...0-0-0 13.Qxc4 Qb4 14.b3±; 12...Qb3 13.0-0-0 Qe7 14.e4±) 13.0-0-0 Qd8 14.Qxd8+ Qxd8 15.Qd1+ Qc8 16.Qb1±. 7.Qg2 e6 8.Qc3 It is worth considering 8...Qa6!? 9.0-0 (9.Qxc4 Qb4!? 10.0-0 Qc2 11.Qd2 a5 with a complicated game) 9...Qb4 10.e4±. 8...Qd7 9.Qxe4 Qg6 10.e4 White seizes the centre. 10...Qb4 11.0-0 0-0 11...Qxc3 12.bxc3 Qxe4 fails to 13.Qxe4 Qxe4 14.Qd6+, and White wins a piece. 12.g5 Qxc3 13.Qxf6 Qb4 14.Qxg7 Qxg7 15.Qf4 with an obvious advantage to White, because the black king is very weak;

B2) 6.Qc3

Clearly bad is 6...Qa6?! because of 7.g4 Qg6 8.e4 Qb4 9.Qe3 Qf6 10.Qxc4 e6 11.Qb3 Qe7 12.f3! (strengthening the centre and shutting Black’s bishop and knight out of the game) 12...Qfd5 13.Qf2±.

B21) 6...e6!? 7.g4 Black has no problems after 7.g3 Qe7 8.Qxc4 Qf5 9.Qe3 Qxe3 10.Qxe3 Qb4 11.Qg2 0-0 12.0-0 Qe7 13.Qe2 Qd8 14.Qa2 Qa6 15.Qd3 e5± Riazantsev-Kruppa, St Petersburg 2000. 7...Qf6 On 7...Qg6 unpleasant is 8.h4, Sadzikowski-Komarov, Varna 2010. 8.Qxh5 Qxe5 9.dxe5 Qxd1+ (9...Qh4!?) 10.Qxd1 Qd7 11.Qh3 Qf7 12.Qe4 Qe7 13.f4 (13.Qg1!? Qxe5 14.Qd2 with the idea of bringing out the bishop to c3 and creating strong pressure.
on the square g7) 13...h6 14.g1 f5 15.xf5 exf5 16.g5+ xg5 17.xg5 g6 18.e3 f8 19.c2 c6 20.hxg6? (White should not have opened the h-file for Black’s rook) 20...hxg6 21.g2 h3 22.a3 a5 23.c3 b5 24.b3? b4, and White resigned, Inhoven-Ulibin, Biel 2007. 9...d7 10.xc4 e7 Shchekachev-Riazantsev, Geneva open 2005; it was worth considering the pawn sacrifice 10...gf6 11.xe6 followed by 0-0-0;

B22) 6.d7 7.xc4 b6 If 7...e6 a position with mutual chances arises after 8.a5 gf6 9.f4 d5 10.d6+ (more promising is 10.xd5 exd5 11.d6+ xd6 12.xd6?) 10...xd6 11.xd6 f7 12.g3 0-0 Filippov-Sakaev, Sochi tt 2004, or 8.g3 a5 9.g2 gf6 10.0-0 d5 (10...b4?? 11.a2 e7 12.a2 0-0-0) 11.f3 e6 12.e5 d7 Dzagnidze-Lahno, Khanty-Mansiysk 2010. However, White can count on a small, but stable advantage after 8.f3! or after the untried 8.f3!? a5 9.e4 b4 10.e2. 8.e5 f6 9.d3 g4?! fxg5 10.gxh5 exd4 11.a5 dxc3 12.axb6 cxb2 13.xd8+ xd8 14.xb2 a6 15.e3 f6 16.c4 xh5 with a complicated game. 9...f7 9...e5!? 10.xe5 fxe5 11.xe5 f6 12.xd8+ xd8 13.a5 bd5 14.xd5 xd5 15.d3 g6 16.a6 b6 17.d2 b5 18.e3 xd3 19.xd3 xb2. 10.a5 10.e4!? c4 with an unclear position, in which White’s chances are somewhat superior.

10...c4 11.a4 (11.a6 b5=) 11...xd4 12.e3 with an unclear position.

5.e6 6.xc4 f6 7.0-0 e7

Preparing castling.

8.c3 0-0 9.e2

In the event of 9.h3 h5 10.g4 g6 11.e5 bd7 12.xg6 hxg6 Black will then play ...e6-e5 or ...c6-c5 and obtain a position with chances for both sides.

9.e5

Black has completed his development and implemented the typical break. Another plan consists in the advance 9...a5 followed by ...a6-b4.

10.dxc5

There is no danger for Black in 10.d5 xd5 11.xd5 exd5 12.d1 d4 13.exd4 cxd4 14.h3 xf3 15.xf3 c6, and
White must think how to recover the pawn.

On 10.Rd1 possible continuations include both 10...cxd4 11.exd4 Ne6, and 12.d5 leads to further simplifications, e.g. 12...xf3 13.xf3 e5! 14.f4 xc4 15.xc4 xd5 16.xd5 exd5 17.xd5 c8 18.xc8 fxc8=, and also 10...c6 11.d5 (11.dxc5 a5=) 11...xf3 12.gxf3 (12.xf3 e5 13.f4 xc4 14.xc4 exd5 15.xd5 xxd5 16.xd5 b6=) 12...exd5 13.xd5 xd5 14.xd5 b6 with mutual chances.

10...xc5 11.Rd1 e7 12.h3 h5

Also good was 12...xf3 13.xf3 c6=.

13.e4 c6?!

Preferable is 13...xf3!? 14.xf3 c6, exploiting the opponent’s weakening of the square d4.

14.g4

White wrongly provokes complications, which he could have avoided with 14.e5 d7 (White is better after 14...d5 15.xd5 exd5 16.g4 d4 – he loses with 16...g6? 17.xd5 – 17.g5 f6 18.exf6 gxf6 19.xe7 xe7 20.h6=) 15.g4 g6 16.g5 e8 17.e4 with the initiative.

14...cxd4!

14...g6 fails to 15.e5=. But the piece sacrifice is very promising in this position.

15.hxg4 xg4 16.e5

He needs to take control of the square e5 urgently, because there was a threat of ...f6 and ...e5.

16...d4 17.xd4 xd4 18.f4

A mistake, but in such a complicated position, it is practically impossible to avoid mistakes, and even top players frequently stray from the right path.
The computer suggests 18.\textit{Q}e4 \textit{Q}xf3 19.\textit{Q}xd4 and assesses this position as equal. However, it is certainly easier for Black to play: with material equality (rook and two pawns against two pieces) White has a seriously weakened king.

18...\textit{R}ac8

18...\textit{B}xc3 19.bxc3 \textit{f}6 opening the f-file, wins more quickly.

19.\textit{Q}g2

More tenacious was 19.\textit{B}d3 \textit{B}xc3 20.bxc3 \textit{B}xc3 21.\textit{Q}e4, but here too, after 21...\textit{f}5 22.\textit{exf}6 \textit{Q}xf6 23.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{Q}f5 24.\textit{Q}xf5 \textit{Q}xf5 White is hardly likely to hold the game.

19...\textit{f}6?

It was correct first to take on c3 – 19...\textit{B}xc3 20.bxc3 and only then 20...\textit{f}6 with an easily winning position.

20.\textit{Q}d3

White has the saving blow 20.\textit{Q}xe6+!, and now 20...\textit{Q}xe6 21.\textit{Q}xd4 allows White to avoid the unpleasant pin and obtain a position with mutual chances, whilst 20...\textit{Q}xe6 transfers the initiative to White: 21.\textit{Q}xd4! \textit{Q}xe5 (or 21...\textit{Q}xe2 22.\textit{Q}xe6 \textit{Q}xe6 23.\textit{Q}xe2 \textit{Q}xe6 24.\textit{Q}d4\textsuperscript{1}) 22.\textit{Q}xe5 \textit{Q}xe2 23.\textit{Q}d6 \textit{Q}fd8 24.\textit{Q}f5 \textit{B}xc3 25.\textit{b}xc3 \textit{Q}d3 26.\textit{Q}e7+ \textit{Q}f7 27.\textit{b}4.\textsuperscript{2}

20...\textit{Q}xf3+ 21.\textit{Q}xf3 \textit{fxe}5 22.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{Q}cd8

The simplest way to win was 22...\textit{Q}e8 with the threats of either 23...\textit{Q}c6 or 23...\textit{Q}h5.

23.\textit{Q}h1 \textit{g}6 24.\textit{Q}e4 \textit{Qxb}2 25.\textit{g}4 \textit{Q}d4 26.\textit{Q}xd4 \textit{Q}xf4+ 27.\textit{Q}xf4 \textit{exf}4 28.\textit{Q}xe6 \textit{Q}h8 29.\textit{Q}d1 \textit{h}5+ 30.\textit{Q}f3
30...<f6?

Black had a precise path to the win: 30...<h4 31.<d8+ <h7 32.<b8 <g4+ 33.<e4 <g2+ 34.<d3 <f3+ 35.<c2 <c3+ etc.

31.<xf4?

There were saving chances with 31.<d8+ <xd8 (worse is 31...<h7 because of the simple, but no less attractive, 32.<d7! <xd7 33.<f8+, winning the queen) 32.<xd8 <xd8 33.<xf4. Yes, White is two pawns down, but this is an ending with opposite-coloured bishops. If he manages to exchange the f-pawn for the g-pawn, then he will only need to give up his bishop and a4-pawn for the black queenside pawns, in order to reach a theoretical draw, where Black has the ‘wrong rook’s pawn’.

31...<g7 32.<g1 <a3+ 33.<d3 <g5 34.<xh5+ <h6 35.<xf6 <xd3+ 36.<g2

Now, in order to win, Black only needs to avoid blundering his queen.

36...<f5 37.<h1+ <g6 38.<h5 <e4+ 39.<f3 <xa4 40.<g3 <c2+ 41.<h3 <c8+ 42.<g2 a5 43.<e1 a4 44.<e4 a3 45.<g3 a2 46.<d1 <c6 47.<g4 b5

White resigned.

Conclusions: In this game, White chose 4.a4, not allowing his opponent to defend the c4-pawn with ...b7-b5. In reply, we suggest the rather rare and interesting idea, involving the development of the bishop to g4. Here White can only create problems with the move <e5 followed by g2-g4, but nobody has played that way so far.
1.c4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.Nf3 dxc4 4.e4 b5

Defending the pawn. 4...e6 fails to 5.Ng5.

5.Ne2

It is worth considering the gambit continuation 5.b3! cxb3 (5...e5 is also interesting) 6.axb3 (on 6.axb3 a good line is 6...g4 7.e2 f6 8.e5 d5 9.0-0 e6 10.h3 h5 with somewhat better chances for Black) 6...Nf6.

Dubious is 7.e5 (giving up the square d5) 7...e6 8.c2 d5 with a good game for Black.
A) On 7.\texttt{d3} the untried central blow looks strong: 7...e5, and now:

A1) 8.a4!? \texttt{e6} 9.\texttt{b2} (or 9.\texttt{c2} b4 10.\texttt{dxe5} b3 11.\texttt{e2} \texttt{fd7} \pm) 9...\texttt{c5}! 10.axb5 (10.\texttt{dxe5}? \texttt{xd3} with advantage to Black) 10...0-0; 

A2) 8.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{xd4} 9.\texttt{xf7+} \texttt{d8} 10.\texttt{d2} \texttt{c5} (not 10...\texttt{xal} because of 11.\texttt{a5}+) 11.\texttt{a5+} \texttt{b6} 12.\texttt{xb6+} \texttt{axb6} 13.\texttt{g7+} \texttt{d8} with a repetition of moves; 

A3) 8.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{a6}!? (with the threat of 9...\texttt{c5}) 9.\texttt{c2} \texttt{c5} (also possible is 9...\texttt{e6} 10.\texttt{b2} \texttt{d7} \pm) 10.\texttt{e3} \texttt{g4} 11.\texttt{d2} (bad is 11.\texttt{e2} \texttt{e6} with the threat of 12...\texttt{c4}) 11...\texttt{c7} 12.\texttt{b2} \texttt{e6} with chances for both sides.

B) 7.\texttt{bd2} \texttt{e6} 8.a4 (8.\texttt{b2} \texttt{bd7} 9.\texttt{c1} \texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{d3} a6= Elhaj-Monteverde, corr. 2000; then Black castles and plays ...c6-c5) 8...\texttt{b4} 9.a5 (not allowing Black himself to play ...a7-a5 and defend his potential passed pawn on b4) 9...\texttt{e7} 10.\texttt{c4} 0-0 11.0-0 \texttt{c5}. Black has castled and played ...c6-c5, and White’s compensation is insufficient, Sondermann-Heinicke, Dortmund 2001.

5...\texttt{f6} 6.e5 

The alternative is 6.\texttt{c2}!?

\begin{center}
\textbf{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

B1) It is worth considering 6...\texttt{a6} 7.a3 (otherwise 7...\texttt{b4}) 7...\texttt{b7} (or 7...\texttt{c7} 8.\texttt{e3} g6 9.\texttt{e5} \texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{c3} \texttt{g7} 11.0-0 0-0 with mutual chances) 8.0-0 \texttt{e6} 9.\texttt{c3} \texttt{e7} 10.\texttt{d1} 0-0; 

B2) 6...\texttt{e6} 7.0-0 \texttt{bd7} 8.b3 \texttt{cxb3} 9.\texttt{AXB3} (White can regain the pawn – 9.\texttt{xc6}, but after, say, 9...\texttt{b8} 10.\texttt{AXB3} a6 11.\texttt{bd2} \texttt{b7} 12.\texttt{c2} \texttt{c8} \pm, Black’s pieces become active) 9...\texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{d1} a6 with mutual chances, Tleptsok-Pecka, corr. 2013; 

B3) Also interesting is 6...\texttt{g4} and only then ...\texttt{e7-e6}.

6...\texttt{d5} 7.0-0 \texttt{g4} 

It is worth considering the untried 7...\texttt{f5} 8.a4 \texttt{e6} 9.\texttt{AXB5} \texttt{cxb5} 10.b3 (worse is 10.\texttt{c3} \texttt{cd7}! – the compensation for the pawn is clearly insufficient) 10...\texttt{c6} (or 10...\texttt{xb1} 11.\texttt{xb1} \texttt{c3} 12.\texttt{c2} \texttt{xb1} 13.\texttt{xb1} with an unclear position)
11.bxc4 bxc4 12.Qxc4 $e7$

8.a4

White also had another plan, involving the transfer of the queen to the other flank: 8.Qg5 $xe2$ 9.Qxe2 h6 10.e4 $e6$ 11.Qg4.

8...b4?!

At the very least, a strange decision – simply giving up a pawn. After the natural 8...e6 Black has a normal position with chances for both sides, eg. 9.axb5 $xb5$ 10.Qc3 Qxc3 11.bxc3 $xe7$.

9.Qxc4

White, of course, accepts the present. Black’s position remains solid, but it was also that before, and with an extra pawn.

9...e6 10.Nbd2 $e7$

White’s chances are somewhat better, but it is not so easy to achieve anything real in such a closed position.

11.Qd3

It is worth considering 11.h3 $h5$ and then 12.b3 with pressure down the c-file. For example, 12...0-0 13.Qe2 Qd7 14.Qd2 a5 15.Qc1 with a small advantage to White.

11...Qd7 12.Qe2

There is no better square for the queen, because here it can come under attack after ...c6-c5 and ...Qc8.

12...c5

Perhaps he should have first played 12...Qc8 and only then ...c6-c5.

13.dxc5 Qxc5

It was better to take with the bishop – 13...Qxc5, not allowing a check from b5.

14.Qb5+ Qd7

In positions of this sort, with a white pawn on e5 and a black knight on d5, Black frequently answers a bishop check on b5 with simply 14...Qf8. The drawback is that the rook on h8 has trouble getting into play, but in return, he saves time on retreating the knight to d7, whilst on f8, the king is quite as safe as after castling.

15.Qd4

The white knight heads to c6.
15...0-0

If 15...a6!? the move 16.\textsf{N}c6 does not work, because of 16...\textsf{Q}c7 17.\textsf{c}4 axb5 18.\textsf{x}g4 \textsf{Q}xe5 (Black may also take the piece – 18...\textsf{x}c6 19.\textsf{ax}b5 \textsf{b}7 20.\textsf{xa}8+ \textsf{xa}8 21.\textsf{x}g7 \textsf{f}8) 19.\textsf{Q}xe5 \textsf{Q}xe5, and White remains a pawn down.

Therefore White does better to choose 16.\textsf{B}c6 \textsf{R}c8 17.\textsf{Q}e4 \textsf{B}h5 18.\textsf{Q}xh5+ \textsf{Q}xh5 (or 18...\textsf{ex}d5 19.\textsf{Q}d5 0-0) 19.\textsf{Q}e2 \textsf{ex}d5 20.\textsf{x}a6 \textsf{Q}xe5 21.\textsf{e}e1 \textsf{d}3 22.\textsf{b}5 (bad is 22.\textsf{b}7 \textsf{c}7 23.\textsf{b}6 0-0, and not 24.\textsf{xe}5 because of 24...\textsf{x}c1+ 25.\textsf{xc}1 \textsf{xb}6) 22...\textsf{f}6 with unclear play.

16.\textsf{N}c6 \textsf{Q}e8 17.\textsf{b}3

After 17.\textsf{xe}7+ \textsf{xe}7 Black is not worse.

17...\textsf{Q}c8

It is worth considering 17...a6 18.\textsf{d}3 \textsf{xc}8 19.\textsf{xa}6 (19.\textsf{x}h7+? \textsf{h}8; the white queen is overloaded, and in addition, the unpleasant 20.\textsf{xe}5 is threatened) 19...\textsf{f}5 20.\textsf{xe}7+ \textsf{xe}7 21.\textsf{d}1 (or 21.\textsf{xc}8 \textsf{xc}8 22.\textsf{xe}8 \textsf{xe}5 with counterplay) 21...\textsf{c}2 22.\textsf{f}3 \textsf{xe}5 23.\textsf{g}3 \textsf{a}8 24.\textsf{b}5 \textsf{g}6?

18.\textsf{d}3 \textsf{f}5?!

It was better to sacrifice the exchange: 18...\textsf{x}c6 19.\textsf{x}c6 \textsf{xe}5 20.\textsf{x}d5 (or 20.\textsf{xe}8 \textsf{xd}3 21.\textsf{b}5 \textsf{xc}1 22.\textsf{fx}c1 \textsf{f}6?) 20...\textsf{ex}d5 21.\textsf{xe}8 \textsf{xe}8 with a complicated position: Black has two bishops and a pawn for the exchange.

19.\textsf{g}3 \textsf{c}7
20. \( \text{d2} \)

A pleasant alternative is 20. \( \text{xe7}+!\) \( \text{xe7} \) 21. \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{f6} \) 22. \( \text{exf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 23. \( \text{d4} \pm \).

20...\( \text{a6} \)

Things are also bad for Black after 20...\( \text{f6} \) 21. \( \text{exf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 22. \( \text{xb4} \) \( \pm \).

21. \( \text{xe7+} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 22. \( \text{xa6} \)

White has the two bishops and an extra passed pawn.

22...\( \text{e2} \)

More tenacious is 22...\( \text{a8} \) 23. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{c5} \), although here too, White has a clear advantage.

23. \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{f6} \)

On 23...\( \text{e8} \) White has both 24. \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{xb2} \) 25. \( \text{c1} \) and 24. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{xb2} \) 25. \( \text{c5} \) with a decisive advantage.

24. \( \text{exf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 25. \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{e5} \) 26. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{f7} \) 27. \( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 28. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 29. \( \text{b3} \)

Creating the threat 30. \( \text{c4} \).

29. \( \text{e4} \) 30. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{h8} \) 31. \( \text{c4} \) \( \text{c4} \) 32. \( \text{add1} \) \( \text{c3} \) 33. \( \text{d7} \) \( \text{xd7} \) 34. \( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{d8} \) 35. \( \text{xb4} \) \( \text{d2} \) 36. \( \text{e7} \) \( \text{e4} \) 37. \( \text{f1} \) \( \text{h6} \) 38. \( \text{a5} \)

It is hard to understand why White gives up a pawn. 38.\( \text{b4} \) wins, when the passed pawns march unstoppably to queen.

38...\( \text{xa5} \) 39. \( \text{f7} \)

Stronger was 39.\( \text{h3} \)\( \pm \), making \textit{luf}t for the king and freeing the rook from the obligation to defend the first rank.
After the move in the game, Black has some saving chances, but he failed to take them and resigned on move 81.
1. d4 d5 2. c4 c6 3. Nf3 dxc4 4. e4 b5 5. a4

5...e6

If 5...g4?! 6. axb5 cxb5 7. Nc3 Black will hardly succeed in keeping his extra pawn.
5...f6?! 6. axb5 cxb5 7. Nc3, and again the pawn is hard to defend.
5...d7?! 6. b3 cxb3 7. axb5 cxb5 8. Qxb3 with strong compensation for the pawn, Huang Qian-Ushenina, Batumi 2012.

6. axb5

Let us look at a few other continuations:

A) 6. b3 b4+ 7. d2 xd2+ 8. xd2 cxb3 9.axb5 f6 10. c3 (Black also has no problems after 10. e5 d5) 10...0-0 11. d3 (11. e5?! b7 12. f3 e7 13. b1 d8 14. c3 fd7 15. bxc6 xc6 16. xc6 xc6 Beliavsky-Bacrot, Albert 1999) 11...cxb5 12. e5 d5 13. xd5 exd5 14.0-0 a5 15. fb1 b4 Radjabov-Volzhin, Valle d’Aosta 2001;

B) 6. e2 f6 7. e5 (7. g5 b7 8.0-0 h6 9. xf6 xf6 10. axb5 cxb5 11. b3 xe4 12. bxc4 bxc4 13. xe4 d4; 7. b7 8.0-0 a6 9. g5 h6 10. xf6 xf6 Beliavsky-Bacrot, Asti 1995) 7... d5 8.0-0 b6, Beliavsky-Bacrot, Vlissingen 2001, or 8...e7, preparing castling quickly, Malmström-Quaranta, corr. 2007;

C) 6. g5 f6 (dubious is 6... b4+ 7. c3 Lputian-Kupreichik, Yerevan 1984, but also possible is 6... c7 7. xe7 xe7 8. axb5 cxb5 9. b3 b7 10. bxc4 xe4 11. cxb5 xf3 (11...0-0?) 12. xf3 d7 Beliavsky-Bacrot, Asti 1995) 7. e5 h6 8. xf6 (Black is better after g5 9. xf6 gxh4) 8...gxf6 with mutual chances;

D) 6. c3 b4 (6... b4 is played more often, but we recommend the text)
D1) \(7.Nb1\) \(\&a6\) and now:

D11) 8.\(\&e5\)?! \(c5\) 9.\(\&e3\) \(\&f6\) 10.\(f3\) \(\&d7\) (after \(f2-f3\) the knight on \(f6\) has nothing more to do, so it goes to \(d7\) and the other knight to \(c6\)) 11.\(\&xc4\) \(\&xd4\) 12.\(\&xd4\) \(\&c7\) 13.\(\&bd2\) \(\&c6\) 14.\(\&e3\) \(\&c5\); 

D12) 8.\(\&c2\) \(b3\) (or 8...\(\&f6\) 9.\(\&bd2\) \(c5\) 10.\(\&xc4\) \(\&xc4\) 11.\(\&xc4\) \(\&bd7\)=) 9.\(\&c3\) (but not 9.\(\&d1\)?! \(\&f6\) 10.e5 \(\&e4\) 11.\(\&e2\) \(c5\)) 9...\(\&b6\); 

D13) 8.\(\&g5\) \(\&a5\) (an interesting computer recommendation is 8...\(\&f6\), which has still not been tested in practice) 9.\(\&c1\) \(h6\) 10.\(\&e3\) \(c3\) 11.\(\&xc3\) \(\&xf1\) 12.\(\&xf1\) \(\&f6\) 13.e5 \(\&d5\) 14.c4 \(\&a6\) 15.\(\&g1\) \(\&xe3\) 16.fxe3 \(c5\) with the better chances for Black, Kozul-Vitiugov, Budva 2009. 

D2) \(7.\&a2\) \(\&a6\) 8.\(\&d2\) (worse is 8.\(\&e5\) \(\&f6\) followed by \(c5\), and Black’s chances are superior) 8...\(\&f6\) (8...\(\&b6\) \(\&\) Hertel-Farkas, Slovakia tt 2007/08) 9.\(\&xb4\) \(\&xe4\) 10.\(\&xa6\) \(\&xd2\) 11.\(\&xd2\) \(\&xa6\) 12.\(\&xc4\) \(\&b4\) with approximate equality, Koutsin-Matlak, Czech tt 1995. 

D3) \(7.\&e2\) \(\&a6\) 8.\(\&g3\) \(c5\) (another possibility is 8...\(\&f6\)) and now:
D31) 9.d5 exd5 10.exd5 (it can hardly be good to exchange queens in a position a pawn down: 10.\textit{Q}xd5?! \textit{Q}xd5 11.exd5 \textit{Q}f6 (Savina-Giry, Gaziantep 2012) 12.\textit{Q}g5 \textit{Q}bd7++; even stronger is 11...\textit{Q}e7, so as to meet 12.\textit{Q}g5 with 12...f6) 10...\textit{Q}f6 11.\textit{Q}g5 \textit{Q}xd5 12.\textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}xd5 13.0-0-0 h6 14.\textit{Q}e1+ \textit{Q}e7 15.\textit{Q}xe7 \textit{Q}xe7 16.\textit{Q}f5 \textit{Q}c6 17.\textit{Q}d6+ \textit{Q}f8 (this is more accurate than 17...\textit{Q}d7, as in the game Riazantsev-Felgaer, Tromsø 2013) 18.\textit{Q}e5 \textit{Q}xe5 19.\textit{Q}xe5 \textit{Q}d8 20.\textit{Q}xc4 \textit{Q}d5 21.\textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}xd5 with an extra pawn for Black, Baldauf-Felgaer, Graz 2014; D32) 9.\textit{Q}e3 cxd4 10.\textit{Q}d4 \textit{Q}d7 11.\textit{Q}b5 \textit{Q}xb5 12.axb5 \textit{Q}c5 13.\textit{Q}xc5 \textit{Q}xc5 14.\textit{Q}c2?! (stronger is 14.\textit{Q}xd8+ \textit{Q}xd8 15.\textit{Q}xc4 \textit{Q}c7=, F.Hanssen-Groot, corr. 2011), and here in the game Dubov-Balogh, Aix-les-Bains 2011, Black obtained the better position after 14...c3 15.bxc3 (or 15.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{Q}d2+ 16.\textit{Q}xd2 cxd2+ 17.\textit{Q}d1 \textit{Q}f6++) 15...b3, and the b-pawn is very unpleasant.

6...cxb5 7.b3 \textit{Q}f6

Another, more popular possibility is 7...\textit{Q}b7.
8.bxc4


8...Nxe4 9.c5


9...fxe5! 10.Qxb5+

Black is better after 10.dxc5?! Qxd1+ 11.Qxd1 Qxf2+ 12.Qe1 Qxh1=.

10...d7 11.Qxd7+ Qxd7 12.c5

12.0-0 Qd6=.

12...Qxd1+ 13.Qxd1 Qxf2+ 14.Qe2 Qxh1 15.Qf4

On 15...0-0 one must reckon with the move 16...d6, depriving Black of short castling. For example, 16...f6 17...c3 d7 (better is 17...f7?) 18...h1, and the king is not very well placed on d7, Bacrot-Arencibia, Habana 1998.

16...c8 17...d6 d7 18...a4 f6

Also possible is 18...c6 19...h1 a6 20...c3 c8 21.b1 f6 22.b5 e5 (clearly worse is 22...f7 23.b7 e8 24.b5 with unpleasant pressure for White, Malakhatko-Asylguzhin, Batumi 2002, but it is worth considering 22...c6).

19...h1
White has two pieces for rook and two pawns, and his king is more active. One can assess the position as equal, with chances for both sides.

19...\textit{Ne}4 20.\textit{Rd}1 \textit{Rd}8

Also possible was 20...\textit{Rc}6 21.\textit{Rd}4 \textit{Qxd}6 22.\textit{Qe}5 \textit{Qb}5 23.\textit{Qxc}6 \textit{Qxd}4+ 24.\textit{Qxd}4 \textit{Qf}8=.

21.\textit{Qe}5 \textit{Ba}c8 22.\textit{Ac}4 \textit{Bc}6 23.\textit{Rd}4 \textit{Qxd}6 24.\textit{Qxd}6 \textit{Qb}8 25.\textit{Ac}4 \textit{Ac}7 26.\textit{Qd}6 \textit{Qf}8 27.\textit{Qd}3 \textit{Qb}1 28.\textit{Qc}3 \textit{Bf}1 29.\textit{Qe}3 \textit{Be}1 30.\textit{Cc}6 \textit{Qe}7 31.\textit{Qc}4 \textit{Bf}1 32.\textit{Qb}5 \textit{Qd}1+ 33.\textit{Qd}2 \textit{a}6 34.\textit{Xe}6+ \textit{Qxe}6 35.\textit{Qxc}7+ \textit{Qd}6 36.\textit{Qxa}6 \textit{Qxc}6

37.\textit{Qb}4+ \textit{Qd}6 38.\textit{Qc}2 \textit{g}6 39.\textit{Qe}3 \textit{Ba}1 40.\textit{Qe}4+ \textit{Qe}7 41.\textit{Qd}4 \textit{Qf}8 42.\textit{Qd}5 \textit{Ba}2 43.\textit{Qf}4 \textit{Qg}7 44.\textit{h}4 \textit{Ba}5
45.g4 f5 46.gxf5 exf5 47.e3 a5 48.e6+ f7 49.d5+ g8

Draw. If White takes on h7, the black king comes to h5 and takes on h4.

Game 46
Stepan Zilka 2472
Colomban Vitoux 2445
Olbia Mitropa cup 2008 (5)

1.c4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nf3 Nf6 4.c3 xc4 5.e4 b5 6.e5

On 6.a4 there is the unpleasant 6...b4. The white knight should retreat – 7.a2, and then Black takes the central pawn:

7...xe4 8.xc4 e6 9.0-0 e7 10.e1 (perhaps better is 10.e2 f6 11.e3 a5 12.c1 0-0 13.d3 bd7, but here too, full compensation is hard to see) 10...f6 11.b3 0-0 with an extra pawn for Black, Sabejinski-S.Savchenko, Dresden 2009.

6...d5

7.a4

7.g5?! is premature because of 7...h6:

A) 8.h5? g6 (Black is also winning after 8...hxg5 9.f8xh8 xb4) 9.h4 g7+ Muter-Coates, England tt 2008 or
9.b4 10.e6 c2+ 11.d1 hxg5 12.h8xh8 xa1 13.exf7+ xf7 14.xg5 f5+, Eckstein-Overbeck, Main Vogelsberg 2011;

B) 8.ge4 f5 9.g4 (9.f3 e6++; 9.e2 e6++) 9...xe4 10.cxe4 e6 11.g2 b4+ (11...a5+!? 12.d2 b6++; 12.d2 0-0, Fritz 4.01-Genius 4, Debrecen 1997.

7.h6
A very logical and accurate move – Black does not allow the enemy knight to jump to g5, where it can either start an attack together with the queen (after $Qh5$), or come to e4 and thence to d6 or c5.

A complicated and more well-studied position arises after 7...e6.

**8.axb5**

8.g3?! is bad because of 8...b4!? (also good is 8...e6) 9.$\text{\textgreek{d}}$e4 $\text{\textgreek{f}}$5 10.$\text{\textgreek{c}}$c5 (10.$\text{\textgreek{w}}$c2 c3 11.$\text{\textgreek{d}}$3 $\text{\textgreek{e}}$6; it is not clear whether the move g3 was really necessary) 10...e6 11.$\text{\textgreek{d}}$xc4 (usually g2-g3 is played so as to put the bishop on g2) 11...$\text{\textgreek{x}}$c5 (a roughly equal position arises after 11...$\text{\textgreek{d}}$d7 12.$\text{\textgreek{b}}$3 $\text{\textgreek{e}}$7 13.0-0 0-0 Alburt-Frias Pablaza, Cambridge Springs ch-USA 1988) 12.$\text{\textgreek{x}}$xc5 $\text{\textgreek{g}}$4 13.$\text{\textgreek{h}}$3 $\text{\textgreek{f}}$xf3 14.$\text{\textgreek{w}}$xf3 $\text{\textgreek{e}}$7 15.$\text{\textgreek{f}}$4 $\text{\textgreek{d}}$7++. White has his weaknesses, and in this position, the two bishops are weaker than the two knights.

A harmless line for Black is 8.$\text{\textgreek{d}}$xd5 $\text{\textgreek{w}}$xd5 (worse is 8...cxd5 9.axb5 $\text{\textgreek{e}}$6 10.$\text{\textgreek{d}}$2++, Eljanov-Ignatiev, St Petersburg 2001) 9.$\text{\textgreek{e}}$2 $\text{\textgreek{g}}$4 10.$\text{\textgreek{h}}$3 $\text{\textgreek{h}}$5 11.0-0 e6, and only White can have problems.

One other possibility is 8.$\text{\textgreek{e}}$2 e6 (interesting is 8...$\text{\textgreek{x}}$c3 9.$\text{\textgreek{b}}$xc3 $\text{\textgreek{e}}$6 with the transfer of the bishop to d5; White has compensation for the pawn, of course, but the statistics are not in his favour) 9.0-0 a6 – the most solid; this was the game Köhler-Warter, Germany tt 2004/05. Black later played ...$\text{\textgreek{b}}$7, ...$\text{\textgreek{d}}$7, ...$\text{\textgreek{e}}$7 and ...0-0. One should also examine the capture on c3, after which we reach positions with chances for both sides. At the same time, 9...b4 (weakening the c4-pawn) looks dubious after 10.$\text{\textgreek{e}}$4 $\text{\textgreek{a}}$6, and here in the game Salem-Andriasyan, Dubai 2014, White regained the pawn with the simple developing move 11.$\text{\textgreek{d}}$d2 followed by $\text{\textgreek{c}}$1, and obtained the better position.

**8...$\text{\textgreek{x}}$c3 9.$\text{\textgreek{b}}$xc3 $\text{\textgreek{b}}$xb5 10.$\text{\textgreek{a}}$3 $\text{\textgreek{e}}$6**

Also interesting is 10...$\text{\textgreek{e}}$6!? with the transfer of the bishop to d5 and only then ...e7-e6, transposing to much the same type of position as in the game.

**11.$\text{\textgreek{a}}$xf8 $\text{\textgreek{xf}}$8**
12.\text{Be}2

12.\text{b}1!? (not allowing the bishop to b7) 12...\text{d}7 (Black stood worse after 12...a6 13.\text{d}2! \text{d}7 14.\text{e}2 \text{b}7 15.\text{xc}4 \text{g}2 16.\text{g}1 \text{b}c4 17.\text{g}2, Ivanchuk-Nogueiras, Habana 2006) 13.\text{e}2 \text{c}6 (transferring the bishop to an active position) 14.0-0 \text{d}7 15.\text{a}6 \text{b}6?, Mamedyarova-Rzaev, Baku 2001.

12...\text{b}7 13.0-0 \text{d}5

13...\text{d}5 also deserves attention, not letting White play \text{d}2 and transfer his bishop to f3. And if White still wants to put his bishop on the h1-a8 diagonal at all costs, then he has to play 14.\text{e}1, from where, unlike from d2, the knight cannot get to e4. There could follow 14...\text{c}6 15.\text{f}3 \text{d}7, with mutual chances.

14.\text{d}2 \text{c}6 15.\text{f}3 \text{xf}3 16.\text{xf}3

Taking with the knight (16.\text{xf}3) is worse. On the kingside, the knight has nothing to do, and after 16...a5 it will sooner or later have to return to d2.

16...\text{d}5

Not 16...\text{d}7 because of 17.\text{fb}1 \text{b}8 18.\text{a}6+-.
17.\texttt{Ra6}

After 17.\texttt{Rx}d5 \texttt{exd}5 18.\texttt{Ra}6 \texttt{Rc}8 the ending is in Black’s favour. After the inevitable advance \ldots b5-b4 and the exchange of the c- and b-pawns, Black will have a passed pawn on the c-file and White a weakness on d4.

17...\texttt{Qxf3} 18.\texttt{gxf3}

White decides to accept doubled pawns, in order to keep his knight on d2, from where it can come to e4 more quickly.

18...\texttt{Nc}5

The knight heads towards the excellent outpost d5, from where it will control an enormous number of squares and ‘eye up’ the white pawn on c3.

19.\texttt{Ra}1 \texttt{Na}5 20.\texttt{Rx}a7 \texttt{Rx}a7 21.\texttt{Rxa}7 \texttt{g}5

Of course, not 21...\texttt{Nxc}3 because of 22.\texttt{Ra}8+, winning a rook.

22.\texttt{ade}4

In reply to 22.\texttt{Ra}3, with the idea of transferring the knight via f1-e3 and exchanging the opponent’s centralised knight, Black can quickly organise a passed pawn: 22...b4 23.cxb4 c3. The other possibility is 22...\texttt{g}7 23.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{b}8, and after 24.\texttt{c}3 Black of course does not exchange his knight, but plays 24...\texttt{f}4. Here the knight is also very well placed, and Black has the advantage, thanks to his actively-placed pieces.

22...\texttt{g}7 23.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{b}8
24. \( \text{d}6 \)

White creates counterplay against the pawn f7.

On 24. \( \text{e}2 \) there could follow 24...b4 25.cxb4 \( \text{xb}4 \):

A) 26.\( \text{a}2 \) \( \text{f}4+ \) 27.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{b}3 \) 28.\( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{g}2 \) 29.\( \text{c}2 \) \( \text{g}6-+ \);

B) 26.\( \text{d}6 \) c3 27.\( \text{d}3 \) (27.\( \text{xf}7+ \) \( \text{g}6 \) 28.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{xd}4+ \) 29.\( \text{xd}4 \) c2-+) 27...\( \text{b}2 \) 28.\( \text{e}4 \) c2 29.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 30.\( \text{c}7 \) \( \text{b}1-+ \);

C) 26.\( \text{a}3 \) \( \text{g}6 \) 27.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{b}3 \) 28.\( \text{xb}3 \) cxb3, and then the black king heads towards the weak pawns on the kingside.

24...\( \text{xc}3 \)

Black wins immediately with 24...b4 25.\( \text{xf}7+ \) \( \text{g}6 \) 26.cxb4 c3 27.\( \text{xe}2 \) (27.\( \text{a}7 \) c2 28.\( \text{a}1 \) \( \text{xb}4 \) 29.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{b}1-+ \)) 27...\( \text{xb}4 \) 28.\( \text{f}8 \) \( \text{b}2+ \) 29.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 30.\( \text{c}8 \) \( \text{d}2+ \) 31.\( \text{c}1 \) \( \text{xf}2 \) or 31.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{d}3+ \) 32.\( \text{f}1 \) c2, winning.

25.\( \text{xf}7+ \) \( \text{g}8 \) 26.\( \text{f}6 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 27.\( \text{g}6+ \) \( \text{h}7 \) 28.\( \text{xe}6 \) c3 29.\( \text{f}5 \) \( \text{c}8 \)

29...b4 also wins.

30.\( \text{exh}6+ \) \( \text{g}8 \) 31.\( \text{d}6 \) c2 32.\( \text{xd}5 \) c1=\( \text{=} \) 33.\( \text{g}2 \)
An incomprehensible decision to bring out his king, with so many pieces still on the board. Clearly stronger was 33...\textit{f}8, attacking the knight, or 33..b4, making another queen.

34.\textit{d}7+ \textit{g}8?!

Better was 34...\textit{g}6, and on 35.\textit{d}6+ there is 35...\textit{h}7 (but not 35...\textit{x}f5?? 36.\textit{f}6#) 36.\textit{d}7+ \textit{h}8, removing the king further from checks.

35.e6 \textit{e}8

Only 35...g4!! retains winning chances, but playing such a move is very, very difficult, since after 36.\textit{e}7+ (after 36.fxg4 the black queen gets the important square \textit{g}5 and checks on the diagonal h1-a8) Black also needs to give up a rook – 36...\textit{g}7! (nothing is given by 36...\textit{h}8 37.\textit{g}6+ \textit{g}8 38.\textit{e}7+) 37.\textit{x}c8+ \textit{f}6 etc.

36.d5

A draw was given by 36.\textit{h}6+ \textit{h}8 (36...\textit{f}8?? 37.\textit{f}7#) 37.\textit{f}7+ \textit{g}8 38.\textit{h}6+ \textit{h}8 39.\textit{f}7+ \textit{g}7 40.\textit{d}6+ \textit{f}6 41.\textit{x}e8+ \textit{xe}6 42.\textit{b}7. Then White takes the pawn on b5, after which he is definitely not losing.

36...g4 37.\textit{g}7+ \textit{f}8

Black is better after 37...\textit{h}8 38.\textit{x}g4 (38.fxg4? \textit{c}4-+) 38...\textit{c}5, and he should win (but not 38...\textit{g}8? 39.e7! \textit{x}g4+ 40.fxg4 \textit{c}8 41.\textit{d}6 \textit{x}g4+ 42.\textit{f}1, and Black has to give perpetual check, since he cannot now win).
38.fxg4?

White had to try to give perpetual check by 38.Rf7+ Kg8 39.Rg7+ Kh8 40.Rf7+. Admittedly, Black can avoid the repetition with 39...Kh8, after which the advantage is on his side.

38...Rxg6

This capture effectively offers a draw, since Black cannot win without his rook. Instead, after 38...Qd1 or 38...Qc4 White would again be in a bad way, because he is losing the pawn on d5.

39.dxe6 Qc6+ 40.Kg3 Rxg6 41.Rb7

The correct decision: Black’s last trump must be eliminated.

41...Qc5+ 42.Kh4 Rxh2+ 43.Kg5 Rxf2 44.Rg6 Qe8 45.Rb5

The immediate 45.g5 was somewhat more accurate, since the pawn on b5 is not going anywhere anyway.

45...a7 46.g5 f6 47.e5 c7 48.e7 c6+ 49.h7 h1+ 50.g6 c6+ 51.h7 f6 52.e8+ xe8

Draw.

On 53.gxf6 there follows 53...e7 and f6, winning the last pawn.
Chapter 12
1.\textit{f}3 and 1.c4
In this chapter, we deal with how Black should reply to 1.\(\text{Nf3}\) and 1.c4. As we have already noted in the Foreword, we have concentrated our efforts principally on the moves 1.e4 and 1.d4, which are met in 80% of games. Other schemes, after 1.c4 and 1.\(\text{Nf3}\), are dealt with briefly, but even so, after going through this chapter, we hope the reader will have a clear picture of how he should play and in which directions his further opening work should be aimed.

Game 47  
Arkady Naiditsch 2716  
Christian Bauer 2638  
France tt 2011 (2)

1.\(\text{Nf3}\) d5 2.c4 d4
In the Réti System, Black immediately reveals his plans and begins a battle for the centre. Now his main task is to support the square d4, whilst White tries to undermine this point. Therefore the most principled moves are 3.e3 and 3.b4.

3.e3

Trying to remove the d4-pawn immediately, since if Black defends it with ...\( \text{N} \)c6 and ...e7-e5, then he will have no problems at all. The alternative 3.b4 will be examined later.

3...\( \text{N} \)c6 4.exd4

White also has the gambit 4.b4. There is nothing too terrible here for Black, but he should be prepared: 4...dxe3 5.fxe3 \( \text{N} \)xb4 6.d4 (harmless is 6.\( \text{Q} \)a4+ \( \text{N} \)c6 7.d4 \( \text{Q} \)d7 8.\( \text{Q} \)b3 e6), and here there is the choice between 6...e5!? with the idea of 7.\( \text{Q} \)xe5?! \( \text{Q} \)h4+ and 6...e6. It is not easy for White to show that he has sufficient compensation for the pawn.

4...\( \text{N} \)xd4 5.\( \text{N} \)xd4 \( \text{N} \)xd4 6.\( \text{c} \)c3 e6

Important: Black restricts the knight on c3 and takes prophylactic steps against a rapid march of the white d-pawn.

7.d3 \( \text{h} \)6

Another link in the chain: the knight heads for f5, to strengthen the pressure against the point d4.
8.h3?!

White does not have the time for such unhurried manoeuvres and should immediately start the battle for the centre: 8...e3 d8 9.d4 f5 10.d2 g6 (consequential: the bishop comes out to g7, so as also to attack d4) 11.e2 g7 12.d1 0-0 13.0-0, as in the game Ramirez-Tomashevsky, Tromsø 2013. Now Black should play 13...a5, freeing the square d8 for the rooks, after which we reach a complicated position with chances for both sides.

8...f5 9.g4 e5+!

Thanks to this intermediate check, the knight manages to reach d4.

10.e4

In the endgame arising after 10.e2 xxe2+ 11.xe2 d4 12.d1 g6, the initiative would also be on Black’s side.

10...d4 11.f4 a5+ 12.d2 d8

Maybe somewhat stronger is 12...c7 13.e3 e5!.

13.g2 g6

A natural human decision. The computer is keen on 13...f5!? 14.gxf5 xfx5 with somewhat better chances for Black, but few human players would choose to go into such an unbalanced position, with mutual weaknesses.

14.c3 g7 15.0-0 h5

It is useful to fix the kingside pawn structure before castling, so as to deprive White of ideas such as f4-f5 etc.

16.g5 0-0 17.d2 f5 18.e1 c7 19.g3 d8

Black has fully completed his development and thanks to his control over the squares d4 and f5, he has the advantage.
Black has regrouped his forces, so as to attack the enemy’s weak pawns. Now he has created a threat to take on e4, followed by winning the pawn on g5.

22.\textit{h}1

Moving the king out of the opposition with the enemy queen.

22...\textit{d}7 23.\textit{x}g7 \textit{x}g7 24.\textit{d}1 \textit{fd}8 25.\textit{f}2

White can no longer defend all of his weaknesses.

25...\textit{xd}3 26.\textit{xd}3 \textit{xd}3 27.\textit{xf}4 \textit{d}4 28.\textit{g}3 \textit{xf}4 0-1

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Game 48
Hans Ree
Boris Spassky
Amsterdam 1973 (10)

1.\textit{f}3 d5 2.c4 d4 3.b4 c5
It is hard to do without this logical move, since otherwise the position of the knight on c6 will be unstable (because of the threat b4-b5).

4.e3

A) 4.bxc5?! \(\mathcal{N}\)c6 (the knight on c6 cannot now be dislodged; Black puts his pawn on e5 and recaptures on c5, after which he is at least equal) 5.g3 (more principled is 5.e3 e5 6.exd4 exd4 7.\(\mathcal{Q}\)e2+, Stefanova-Zhukova, Moscow 2010, and here 7...\(\mathcal{Q}\)e7! 8.d3 \(\mathcal{Q}\)f6 9.\(\mathcal{N}\)bd2 0-0 gives Black satisfactory play) 5...e5 6.d3 \(\mathcal{Q}\)xc5. Black’s position is more pleasant: he has good development and simple play, whilst it is not easy for White to choose a plan, Kramnik-Tkachiev, Moscow 2009;

B) 4.\(\mathcal{B}\)b2 f6 5.e3 (Black is better after 5.\(\mathcal{Q}\)a4+ \(\mathcal{B}\)d7 6.\(\mathcal{Q}\)c2 e5 7.e3 \(\mathcal{Q}\)c6 8.a3 \(\mathcal{Q}\)d6 9.\(\mathcal{Q}\)d3 \(\mathcal{Q}\)ge7 10.b5 \(\mathcal{Q}\)a5) 5...e5 6.bxc5 \(\mathcal{Q}\)c6, and Black has realised his idea;

C) 4.\(\mathcal{Q}\)a4+ \(\mathcal{Q}\)d7 5.b5 \(\mathcal{Q}\)f5!? followed by ...\(\mathcal{Q}\)d7.

In reality, the game Ree-Spassky had a different move-order: 3.e3 c5 4.b4, after which we reached the same position as in the game.

4...f6!?

Black defends the important square. It is very likely that Spassky’s team had prepared this interesting plan for his match with Fischer in 1972.
5.exd4

5.bxc5 e5 6.exd4 exd4 (but not 6...e4? 7.Qe2 f5 8.d3± or 7...Qe7 8.g1 Qc6 9.b2, Azmaiparashvili-Stefansson, Moscow 1994, in both cases with a large advantage to White)

A) 7.d3 Qc6 8.Qe2 (8.g3!?; 8.b2 Qxc5 9.Qbd2 or 8.Qe2+!? Qe7 9.Qxe7+ Qxe7 10.a3 with mutual chances) 8...Qxc5 9.0-0 Qge7 10.Qbd2 0-0 11.Qb3 b6 12.Qb1 a5 13.Qe1 Qd6 14.Qf1 Qg6 15.Qxc5 bxc5 16.Qd2 f5 with countercplay for Black, Pirc-Kostic, Novi Sad 1936;

B) 7.a3 Qc6 (the most natural set-up, although another possibility is 7...a6 8.b3 Qe7 9.d3 Qc6, e.g. 10.0-0 Qxc5
11.\text{e}1+ \text{f}7 12.\text{xc}5 \text{xc}5 13.\text{a}3 \text{g}6 with chances for both sides) 8.\text{d}3 \text{e}7+ 9.\text{e}2 (9.\text{f}1 \text{h}6) 9...\text{g}4 10.0-0 0-0 11.\text{e}4 \text{f}5 12.\text{xe}7 \text{xe}7 13.\text{h}3 \text{xf}3 14.\text{xf}5+ \text{b}8 15.\text{xf}3 \text{e}5 16.\text{g}2 \text{xc}4 17.\text{e}4 \text{b}6 18.\text{b}4 \text{f}6 19.\text{a}3 \text{xa}3 20.\text{xa}3 \text{d}7 – Black has successfully solved his opening problems.

5...\text{xd}4 6.d3 \text{e}5 7.a3 \text{a}5 8.b5 \text{d}7 9.\text{bd}2 \text{h}6

The position remains complicated, but Black's game is easier to play, as it is clear where he needs to put his pieces.

10.\text{e}2 \text{e}7

More energetic is 10...a4!?, e.g. 11.\text{e}4 \text{f}7 12.\text{h}4 \text{c}5 13.\text{xc}5 \text{xc}5 14.0-0 0-0 with the better game for Black.

11.0-0 0-0 12.\text{e}1 \text{f}7 13.\text{g}4 \text{d}6 14.\text{e}6+

A harmless check; and soon this bishop will be exchanged.

14...\text{h}8 15.a4 \text{c}5 16.\text{xc}8 \text{xc}8 17.\text{a}3 \text{e}6

Black now enjoys a slight initiative.

18.\text{b}3 \text{b}6 19.\text{f}3 \text{b}7 20.\text{xe}7 \text{xe}7 21.\text{e}1
21...\textit{d7}

It was possible to fight for an advantage with 21...\textit{f7}, transferring the queen to the kingside. But evidently, Spassky was not in a fighting mood that day.

\textbf{22.} \textit{Nfd2} \textit{Rfe8} 23.\textit{Qf3} \textit{bc5} 24.\textit{Qxc5} \textit{xc5} 25.\textit{e4} \textit{f5} 26.\textit{Qxc5} \textit{Exc5} 27.\textit{ad1}

Draw.

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Game 49}  \\
Andrey Kharlov 2555  \\
Evgeny Sveshnikov 2524  \\
Sochi tt 2006 (5)  \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

1.\textit{Qf3} \textit{d5} 2.\textit{b3} \textit{g4}

As in the previous games, here too, from the very first moves, Black starts a battle for the central squares d4 and e5.
3.e3

On 3...b2 very strong is 3...xf3! 4.gxf3 f6, after which it is not easy for White to activate his light-squared bishop.

**analysis diagram**

A) After the natural moves 5.c4 c6 6.e3 bd7 7.f4 e6 White gets nothing from 8.g1?! g6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.h3 g7, and Black’s chances are superior, Feoktistov-E.Sveshnikov, Moscow 2007;

B) It is more logical to bring the bishop to g2 and castle short: 5.e3 bd7 6.f4 e6 7.g2 g6 8.c4 c6 9.0-0 g7 10.c3 0-0 11.d4 e8 12.e1 b6 13.e3 c8 14.e5 (in the game Polugaevsky-E.Sveshnikov, Sochi 1976, the players agreed a draw after 14.b1, but objectively after 14...f8!? Black’s position is slightly preferable) 14...e7 15.b4 f5 16.b5
Nh4 with equality.

3...e5 4.b2

In the event of 4.h3!? bad is 4...h5? 5.g4 g6 6.Qxe5 – Black simply loses a pawn.

Here too, he should exchange bishop for knight: 4...xf3 5...f3:

A) Now White is better after 5...e4 6.g3 d6 7.b2 c6 8.b5;

B) It is worth considering the plan with a fianchetto: 5...g6!? 6.b2 g7 7.e2 c6 8.g3 ge7 9.g2 0-0 10.0-0 h7 11.d3 Ad8 12.d2 a5 13.f1 d4 14.e4 f5, and Black is close to equality, Mastrovasilis-Miladinovic, Chania 1999;

C) But objectively, the strongest continuation seems to be 5...f6 6.b2 d6:

![analysis diagram]

C1) 7.c4 c6 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.c3 (better is 9.g3!? with mutual chances) 9...e4 10.d1 (White loses after 10.f5? g6 11.b5+ c6 12.xe4 gxf5 13.xf6 e7+) 10...c6 11.b5 e5 12.xe5 cxe5 13.e2 0-0 14.b2 d7, and Black seizes the initiative, Sotnikov-E. Sveshnikov, Cheliabinsk 1993;

C2) 7.g3 h5!? is the simplest decision, since now after 8.f3 (8.g4 g6 followed by ...f7-f5 and counterplay for Black) 8...f6 9.c4 (what else can one suggest?) 9...c6 we reach a position examined under C1, which was fully satisfactory for Black. However, for a full picture, we will examine some other possibilities for Black after the move 7.g3:

- 7...0-0 8.xe5 xex5 9.xe5 c6 10.f4 e8 (White is better after 10...d4 11.c4 e7 12.0-0 Ad8 13.a4) 11.d3 d4 12.0-0 d5 13.g3 db4 14.a3 xd3 15.cxd3 dxe3 (White is clearly better after 15...e7 16.b5; he also has a promising position after 15...a6 16.e4?) 16.dxe3 xd3 17.xc7 e7 18.f4 d8 – Black needs to show definite accuracy, to neutralise his opponent’s pressure;

- 7.e7 8.xg7 g8 9.h6 c6 (bad is 9...bd7 10.h4 e4 11.c3 c6 12.0-0-0 0-0-0 13.f4±, Gulko-Timoshenko, Frunze 1981) 10.c3 0-0-0 with good compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

4...f6 5.h3 e6
Black has managed to secure his centre, so now he is fully able to keep his light-squared bishop.

6.c4 c6 7.\textit{c}3 d6 8.\textit{c}2

Black is fine after 8.cxd5 cxd5 9.\textit{b}5+ \textit{c}6 10.d4 e4. The resulting position reminds one of a French Defence with colours reversed, but with the white bishops less than ideally placed.

8...\textit{e}7 9.cxd5?!  

White spends several tempi to exchange his opponent’s light-squared bishop, but this is not so significant a positional achievement. In addition, after the exchange on d5, the black knight gets the convenient square c6.

9...cxd5 10.\textit{b}5 \textit{bc}6 11.\textit{xd}6+ \textit{xd}6

![Chessboard Diagram](image)

Black controls the centre and his pieces are harmoniously placed. The initiative is on his side.

12.\textit{e}2

If 12.d4 e4 13.\textit{d}2 (better is 13.\textit{g}1!?) White could end up facing serious problems: 13...\textit{b}4! 14.\textit{d}1 \textit{c}8 15.\textit{c}1 \textit{xc}1 16.\textit{xc}1 \textit{f}7 with advantage to Black.

12...\textit{e}8 13.\textit{d}1

Stronger is 13.0-0, not fearing 13...\textit{d}4 14.\textit{d}1 or 13...e4 14.\textit{e}1.

13...d4 14.exd4

The computer recommends 14.\textit{b}1, preventing the further advance of the central pawns, but after that move Black has a large choice of tempting continuations: 14...\textit{b}4, 14...\textit{f}5 or simply 14...dxe3.

14...e4 15.\textit{h}2 \textit{xd}4
Black’s advantage is obvious: he has seized an excellent outpost at d4, whilst White’s pieces are scattered around the board. White naturally cannot tolerate the knight on d4, so he must exchange it and try to get rid of the backward pawn on d2.

16.\textit{B}xd4 \textit{Q}xd4 17.0-0 0-0 18.d3 e3 19.\textit{N}f3 \textit{Q}b6

Stronger is 19...\textit{Q}f4!? 20.d4 \textit{Rc}3, immediately starting the fight for the open c-file. After 21.e1 \textit{Rfc}8 22.fxe3 \textit{Qxe}3+ 23.\textit{Q}f2 \textit{Qf}5 24.\textit{Rae}1 \textit{Qd}5 25.\textit{Rd}1 \textit{Qh}6 Black is close to winning. More tenacious is 21.\textit{c}4, but here too, after 21...\textit{xc}4 22.bxc4 \textit{Qf}5 Black’s advantage is not in doubt.

20.d4
20...\(d5\)

The IQP on d4 should not have been blockaded, but attacked and taken: 20...exf2+!? 21.\(\text{xf2}\) \(\text{fd8}\) 22.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{f5}\) 23.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{d5}\), and White has no satisfactory defence, e.g. 24.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{xf3}\) 25.\(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{xd1}\) 26.\(\text{xc8}\) \(\text{h5}\) 27.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{xd4}\) 28.\(\text{e6+}\) \(\text{f8}\)!+.

21.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{fe8}\) 22.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{f7}\)?

Involving an oversight. After 22...exf2+ 23.\(\text{xf2}\) \(\text{f4}\) (23...\(\text{f7}\)?) 24.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{d6}\) 25.\(\text{xe6+}\) \(\text{xe6}\) Black retains a small advantage. Now, however, White simply wins a pawn.

23.\(\text{fxe3}\) \(\text{c7}\)!

Panic. After 23...\(\text{xe3}\)!!? 24.\(\text{xe3}\) \(\text{xe3}\) 25.\(\text{xf7+}\) \(\text{xf7}\) Black was afraid of the move 26.\(\text{d3}\) with a double attack on the knight and the pawn on h7. True, after 26...\(\text{c2}\) 27.\(\text{f1}\) Black cannot defend the h7-pawn with the move 27...\(\text{g8}\) because of 28.\(\text{c1}\) with a decisive pin. However, he has the cold-blooded 27...\(\text{h6}\)!, and on 28.\(\text{c1}\) there follows 28...\(\text{b4}\) (now the \(\text{c8}\) is taken without check). The striking knight jump into the centre also turns out to be a shot with blanks – the black king simply retreats to g8.

24.\(\text{d2}\)

Stronger is 24.e4 \(\text{f4}\) 25.\(\text{c1}\)\(±\), immediately beginning an attack in the centre.

24...\(\text{g3}\) 25.\(\text{ac1}\) \(\text{a6}\) 26.\(\text{a4}\) \(\text{c7}\) 27.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{ec8}\)

It is not possible to create counterplay on the queenside anyway, so it would have been better to have played 27...\(\text{ce7}\) immediately.

28.a5!

Prophylaxis: by blockading the flank, White can quietly prepare an offensive in the centre.

28...\(\text{e8}\) 29.\(\text{e1}\) \(\text{ce7}\) 30.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{d8}\) 31.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{de8}\) 32.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{h8}\)?!

More tenacious is 32...\(\text{c7}\), although here too, after 33.e4 \(\text{f4}\) 34.\(\text{xf7+}\) \(\text{xf7}\) 35.\(\text{e3}\) White gradually increases the pressure.

33.e4 \(\text{f4}\) 34.\(\text{xf7}\) \(\text{xf7}\)
35.\texttt{Re3} \texttt{Qg6}

Because of the threat \texttt{Qf3-e5} the queen must retreat, and then White activates his knight with tempo.

36.\texttt{Nh4} \texttt{Qh5} 37.\texttt{Nf5} \texttt{Rd7} 38.\texttt{Qf2} \texttt{Qe6} 39.\texttt{e5} \texttt{fxe5} 40.\texttt{exe5} \texttt{Qf7} 41.\texttt{d5} \texttt{Qc7} 42.\texttt{Nd6}!

A simple but nice final blow. Black resigned.

\textbf{Game 50}

\begin{tabular}{ll}
\textbf{Sergey Movsesian} & 2699 \\
\textbf{Ruslan Ponomariov} & 2743 \\
\end{tabular}

Khanty-Mansiysk FIDE Blitz 2013 (21)

1.\texttt{c4} \texttt{c5}

In reply to the English Opening, we recommend for blitz a scheme where we try to clarify the situation in the centre.

2.\texttt{Qf3} \texttt{Qc6} 3.\texttt{Qc3}

We will examine the alternative 3.d4 below.

3...\texttt{e5}
The battle for the centre: Black seriously impedes his opponent from playing d2-d4, whilst the weakening of d5 does not worry him, as it is very hard for White to exploit this.

4.e3

A «direct» plan: White is determined to play d2-d4 at all costs. In the later examples, we will look at White’s other plan of play on the flank.

4...Nf6 5.d4 e4 6.Ne5

After 6.Ng5 the line 6...cxd4 7.exd4 b4 is unpleasant. Black will follow up with ...h7-h6, and the white knight will have to retreat to h3. In reply to 6.Nd2 the following reaction is possible – 6...cxd4 7.exd4 b4. For example, 8.d5 Ne5 9.e2 0-0 10.Nc2 d3+ 11.Nxd3 exd3 12.Nxd3 Nxc3 13.bxc3 Nxe8+ 14.Nf1 d6 with good compensation for the pawn, Nei-Bondarevsky, Leningrad 1963.

6...g6

A solid continuation, although in blitz, one may also try a more lively continuation, by way of variety: 6...h5!? 7.e2 c7 (a perfectly playable endgame with chances for both sides arises after 7...d6 8.xc6 dxc6 9.dxc5 Nc5 10.xd8+ xd8, Belous-Karjakin, Moscow 2014) 8.a3 a6 (in the variation 8...xe5?! 9.b5 b8 10.dxe5 xe5 11.d2 a6 12.e3 b8 13.xf6 gxf6 14.c3 f5 15.d5, maybe White does not have any particular advantage, but his position is clearly easier to play. Therefore Black should consider 8...e7 9.b4 xe5 10.b5 b8 11.dxe5 xe5 12.a2 0-0 13.b2 g5 14.0-0 e8 with a very complicated game, in which Black has attacking chances) 9.f4 cxd4 10.exd4 d6 11.xc6 bxc6 12.0-0 g6?.
This double-edged position, with both sides having weaknesses, would be a very interesting one to test in practice.

7.g4

On the principle that ‘fortune favours the brave’! Black solves his problems successfully after 7.e2 g7 8.xc6 dxc6 9.dxe5 a5!? (Black does not equalise fully with 9...0-0 10.xd8 xd8 11.d2 f8 12.a4 – it is not so easy to get the pawn back). For example, 10.d6 e6 11.b1 d8 12.b4 a6! 13.c7 0-0 14.a5 xa5 (also good is 14...xc4) 15.bxa5 d7 16.xe4 f5 17.f3 xe4 18.fxe4 c3+ (White is better after 18...xc5 19.a3 c3+ 20.f1 19.f1 b8!? 20.a3 xa5 21.f2 fe8 with equality.

7...h6 8.g2 g7

Indirectly defending the pawn on e4 – White also has his weaknesses.

9.h4

He should not hurry to castle: after 9.0-0 e7 10.f4 exf3 11.xf3 (11.xf3?!?) 11...0-0 12.xc6 dxc6 13.h3 h5! 14.gxh5 xh5 Black obtained a significant advantage in the game Fridman-Almasi, Bastia 2013.
9...cxd4?!

This game was played in the World Blitz Championship, which explains the lapses by both players. A roughly equal position results from 9...d5 10.g5 hxg5 11.hxg5 Rxe1+ 12.Bxe1 Nh7 13.cxd5 Qxe5 14.dxe5 Qxg5 15.Qxe4 Qxe5, whereas now White obtains the advantage.

10.exd4 d5 11.g5 hxg5 12.hxg5 Rxe1+ 13.Bxe1 Nh5?

It was necessary to play to evict the enemy knight from e5 at once: 13...Nf7 14.Qxc6 Bxc6 15.cxd5 cxd5 16.Nxd5 Bb7 17.Qc3±.

14.cxd5?

White could exploit the weakening of the enemy queenside: 14.Qa4! g6 15.Qxd7 Qxd7 16.Qe3, e.g., 16...Qxd4 (on 16...Qg4 17.Qd1+ wins) 17.Qxd4 Qxd4 18.Qxd7+ Qxd7 19.0-0-0 Qe6 20.Qxe4 d4 21.Qxb7 Qb8 22.Qf3±.

14...Qxe5 15.dxe5 Qxe5 16.Qa4+ Qf8 17.Qxe4 Qe7 18.Qe3 Qf5 19.Qa4 Qc8 20.Qc1 Qf4
Black has successfully regrouped his forces and, despite his pawn minus, has obtained a large advantage.

21.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}\textcolor{blue}{d} 2 22.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}\textcolor{blue}{c} 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\textcolor{blue}{c} 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}\textcolor{blue}{d} 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 26.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}\textcolor{blue}{d} 27.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 28.\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 29.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}\textcolor{blue}{c} 30.\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\textcolor{blue}{c} 31.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 32.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 33.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}\textcolor{blue}{f} 34.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 35.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}\textcolor{blue}{d} 36.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}\textcolor{blue}{d} 37.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}\textcolor{blue}{f} 38.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 39.\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\textcolor{blue}{x} 40.\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}\textcolor{blue}{x} 41.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 42.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}\textcolor{blue}{d} 43.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}\textcolor{blue}{a} 44.\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}\textcolor{blue}{b} 45.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}\textcolor{blue}{e} 46.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}\textcolor{blue}{a} 47.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}\textcolor{blue}{c}

White resigned.
1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.Nc3 e5 4.d3 d6 5.a3 a5

If Black is ready for a more dynamic game, then he can perfectly well not prevent the advance b2-b4. We will see this plan in the following game.

6.g3

In refraining from action in the centre, White puts his faith in his light-squared bishop: it will take part in the battle for the square d5 and also exert pressure on the queenside. In his turn, Black also quietly brings his pieces to their best squares and awaits White’s actions.

6...Nge7

This is a more subtle set-up than 6...Nf6 7.Bg2 Be7 (7...h6!? 8.0-0-0 9.Bg5; Black wants to fianchetto his king’s bishop.

7.Bg2 g6 8.g5 g7 9.Bxe7

Battling for the square d5. However, by itself, possessing one strong square is not so significant, if it is not backed up by some sort of active operations.

9...fxe7 10.0-0 0-0 11.d2 e6 12.h1 gfc8

Black understands that his opponent is getting ready to start operations on the queenside, and he prepares for it in advance.

13.d5 d8 14.b4!?
Just at the right moment: after the exchange on d5, Black cannot take on b4 with his knight, since the b7-pawn will be undefended. White has no other active plan.

14...axb4 15.axb4 Bxd5 16.Bxd5 cxb4

In any event, Black has obtained an extra pawn, and White’s positional achievements are not so obvious. Of course, he can at any moment re-establish material equality, but it seems clear that this is not why Carlsen played b2-b4.

17.Ne4 Rc7 18.Qd2 h8 19.a1 b8 20.f1 h6

Black waits, offering his opponent the chance to do something.

21.xc6 bxc6 22.xb4 d5 23.xb8 xb8 24.d6 e4

White has regained the pawn, but Black has activated his bishop; the dynamic equality has not yet been disturbed.

25.a6 exd3 26.exd3 h7 27.g2 dxc4 28.dxc4 ed7 29.c5

A beautiful draw by repetition arises after 29.exc6 f8 30.d5 ed6 31.xf7+ g7 (not 31...h8? 32.c7) 32.e4 d8 33.e4 d6 34.e4 d8 etc.

29.f8

Also possible was 29.e5 30.f3 xd6 31.xc6 b5 32.xd6 e7 (threatening an incursion on e2) 33.e3 xc5, also with equality.

30.b6

The pawn cannot be taken: 30.xc6? a8 31.d5 c7.

30...c7 31.b3 a7 32.c3?
An oversight; correct was 32.\textit{b}2  \textit{xc}5 33.\textit{e}8  \textit{d}1 34.\textit{f}3  \textit{c}4 35.\textit{f}6+  \textit{g}7 36.\textit{e}8+  \textit{h}7 37.\textit{f}6+  \textit{g}7 38.\textit{e}8+ with perpetual check.

32...\textit{xd}6 33.\textit{cxd}6  \textit{a}5!

By exploiting geometric motifs, Black wins a pawn. Later we reach a very interesting endgame, in which the World Champion fails to cope with a difficult defensive task.

34.\textit{h}4  \textit{xd}6 35.\textit{e}3  \textit{d}5+ 36.\textit{f}3  \textit{h}5 37.\textit{xd}5  \textit{cxd}5

The endgame is absolutely drawn, of course, but we will look at how events developed. At first, Carlsen plays correctly.

38.\textit{f}3  \textit{g}7 39.\textit{c}7  \textit{f}6 40.\textit{e}3  \textit{a}6 41.\textit{d}7  \textit{e}6 42.\textit{b}7  \textit{a}3+ 43.\textit{f}4  \textit{a}4+ 44.\textit{e}3  \textit{e}4+
45. \textit{\textsc{d}3!}

The king should stop the passed pawn. After 45. \textit{\textsc{f}3?!} White would face serious problems, for example: 45...f5 46. \textit{\textsc{b}6+} \textit{\textsc{e}5} and now:

A) He loses after 47. \textit{\textsc{x}g6?} d4 48. \textit{\textsc{g}8 d3}, and the passed pawn becomes too dangerous: 49. \textit{\textsc{d}8} \textit{\textsc{d}4} 50. \textit{\textsc{e}8+} \textit{\textsc{d}5} 51. \textit{\textsc{e}3} (or 51. \textit{\textsc{e}1 d2} 52. \textit{\textsc{d}1} \textit{\textsc{c}4}) 51...\textit{\textsc{e}4+} 52. \textit{\textsc{x}e4} \textit{\textsc{f}e4} 53. \textit{\textsc{f}3} (53. \textit{\textsc{g}4} \textit{\textsc{h}xg4} 54. \textit{\textsc{h}5} \textit{\textsc{e}5} is no help) 53...\textit{\textsc{c}4!} 54. \textit{\textsc{f}e4} \textit{\textsc{c}3} etc.;

B) Stronger is 47. \textit{\textsc{b}8}, but here too, White still has problems. For example: 47...\textit{\textsc{d}4} (also interesting is 47...d4 48. \textit{\textsc{d}8} \textit{\textsc{g}4}) 48. \textit{\textsc{b}6} \textit{\textsc{g}4} 49. \textit{\textsc{e}2 f4} 50. \textit{\textsc{g}xf4} \textit{\textsc{f}xf4} 51. \textit{\textsc{x}g6} \textit{\textsc{f}h4}.

45...\textit{\textsc{e}1} 46. \textit{\textsc{b}6+} \textit{\textsc{f}5} 47. \textit{\textsc{b}7 f6} 48. \textit{\textsc{d}7} \textit{\textsc{e}5}

Nothing comes from 48...\textit{\textsc{g}4} 49. \textit{\textsc{d}6} g5 50. \textit{\textsc{f}6} \textit{\textsc{g}xh4} 51. \textit{\textsc{f}4+}.

49. \textit{\textsc{f}3}

Also possible is 49. \textit{\textsc{d}8} \textit{\textsc{g}4} 50. \textit{\textsc{g}8} \textit{\textsc{f}3} 51. \textit{\textsc{x}g6} \textit{\textsc{x}f2} 52. \textit{\textsc{d}4} \textit{\textsc{f}5} 53. \textit{\textsc{g}8} \textit{\textsc{g}2} 54. \textit{\textsc{g}6} \textit{\textsc{h}3} 55. \textit{\textsc{c}5} \textit{\textsc{f}3} 56. \textit{\textsc{x}d}5 \textit{\textsc{x}g3} 57. \textit{\textsc{x}f}6 \textit{\textsc{x}h4} 58. \textit{\textsc{e}4=}.

49...\textit{\textsc{e}6} 50. \textit{\textsc{g}7} g5 51. \textit{\textsc{h}7}

A forced draw results, starting with 51. \textit{\textsc{f}4}, e.g. 51...\textit{\textsc{f}4} 52. \textit{\textsc{g}f4} \textit{\textsc{e}4} 53. \textit{\textsc{h}7} \textit{\textsc{f}xf4} 54. \textit{\textsc{x}h}5 d4 55. \textit{\textsc{h}7} \textit{\textsc{f}5} 56. \textit{\textsc{h}6} (bad is 56. \textit{\textsc{h}5}? \textit{\textsc{g}5}) 56...\textit{\textsc{g}4} 57. \textit{\textsc{h}8 f5} 58. \textit{\textsc{h}5} \textit{\textsc{g}5} 59. \textit{\textsc{h}6} \textit{\textsc{h}4} 60. \textit{\textsc{h}7} \textit{\textsc{g}6} 61. \textit{\textsc{c}4} \textit{\textsc{g}7} 62. \textit{\textsc{d}8} \textit{\textsc{x}h7} 63. \textit{\textsc{x}d}4 \textit{\textsc{h}6} 64. \textit{\textsc{f}4} \textit{\textsc{g}6} 65. \textit{\textsc{d}3} \textit{\textsc{g}5} 66. \textit{\textsc{e}3} or 66. \textit{\textsc{f}1} \textit{\textsc{e}6} 67. \textit{\textsc{g}1=}. Evidently, Carlsen failed to calculate this variation out fully.

51...g4

White is posed more problems by 51...\textit{\textsc{f}5}, but here too, he should hold: 52. \textit{\textsc{f}4} \textit{\textsc{g}xh4} 53. \textit{\textsc{g}4} \textit{\textsc{f}4} 54. \textit{\textsc{h}5} or 52. \textit{\textsc{e}3} d4+ 53. \textit{\textsc{x}d}4 \textit{\textsc{h}xh4} 54. \textit{\textsc{g}xh4} \textit{\textsc{f}4+} 55. \textit{\textsc{e}3} \textit{\textsc{h}xh4} 56. \textit{\textsc{h}8}.

52. \textit{\textsc{f}xg4}
A fairly easy draw is offered by 52.f4 \( \text{Rx}e1 \) 53.\( \text{Rx}h5 \) \( \text{Rg}1 \) 54.\( \text{Kd}4 \)! (again White is saved by his centralised king!) 54...\( \text{Rx}xg3 \) 55.f5+ \( \text{Kf}7 \) 56.\( \text{Rh}7 \)+ \( \text{Kf}8 \) 57.\( \text{Rh}6 \).

52...\( \text{hxg}4 \) 53.\( \text{g}7 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 54.\( \text{g}6 \)+ \( \text{Kf}7 \) 55.\( \text{Kd}2 \)?

The decisive mistake, again associated with underestimating the strength of the centralised king. He could save the game with 56.h5! \( \text{Rh}1 \) (both 56...f4 57.\( \text{g}x\text{f}4 \) \( g3 \) 58.\( \text{g}g6 \) \( \text{g}1 \) 59.\( \text{e}2 \) d4 60.f5 \( g2 \) 61.\( \text{f}2 \), and 56...\( \text{g}1 \) 57.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{g}x\text{g}3 \) 58.\( \text{e}5 \) \( \text{f}3 \) 59.\( \text{a}7 \)+ \( \text{g}8 \) 60.\( \text{h}6 \) g3 61.\( \text{f}6 \) \( g2 \) 62.\( \text{g}7 \)+ \( \text{h}8 \) 63.\( \text{g}x\text{g}2 \) \( \text{h}7 \)= are also insufficient for victory) 57.\( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{hx}g5 \) 58.\( \text{e}5 \)! White sacrifices a second pawn, but saves the game thanks to his active king.

I have no doubt that Smyslov or Karpov would easily have found this drawing line, but Carlsen has a huge gap in his endgame education.

56...\( \text{g}1 \) 57.\( \text{a}3 \) \( \text{g}2 \)+?

Now it is Black’s turn to err. He wins with 57...d4! 58.\( \text{e}2 \) (or 58.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 58...\( \text{e}6 \) 59.\( \text{h}5 \) \( \text{g}2 \)+ 60.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{h}2 \) etc.

58.\( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 59.\( \text{f}1 \) \( \text{c}2 \)

There is also a draw with 59...\( \text{h}2 \) 60.\( \text{a}6 \)+ \( \text{e}5 \) 61.\( \text{g}1 \) \( \text{h}3 \) (61...\( \text{e}2 \) 62.\( \text{h}5 \) 62.\( \text{g}2 \) d4 (or 62...f4 63.\( \text{g}x\text{f}4 \)+ \( \text{e}4 \) 64.\( \text{a}4 \)+ d4 65.f5 \( \text{f}3 \) 66.f6 \( \text{xf}6 \) 67.\( \text{g}3 \) 63.\( \text{a}5 \)+ \( \text{e}4 \) 64.\( \text{a}7 \) f4 65.\( \text{e}7 \)+ \( \text{d}5 \) 66.\( \text{g}f4 \).

60.\( \text{a}6 \)+ \( \text{e}5 \) 61.\( \text{h}5 \) \( \text{h}2 \) 62.\( \text{h}6 \) d4 63.\( \text{g}1 \) \( \text{h}3 \) 64.\( \text{g}2 \)?

Once again underrating the centralized king! He needed to play 64.\( \text{f}2 \)! , e.g. 64...\( \text{d}5 \) 65.\( \text{a}5 \)+ \( \text{e}4 \) 66.\( \text{a}6 \) \( \text{h}2 \)+ 67.\( \text{g}1 \) \( \text{h}5 \) 68.\( \text{f}2 \) d3 (68...f4 69.\( \text{x}f4 \) \( \text{x}f4 \) 70.\( \text{f}6 \)+ \( \text{e}5 \) 71.\( \text{g}6 \) or 70...\( \text{e}4 \) 71.\( \text{e}6 \)+ \( \text{d}3 \) 72.\( \text{g}3 \) with equality) 69.\( \text{a}4 \)+ \( \text{e}5 \) 70.\( \text{a}5 \)+ \( \text{d}4 \) 71.\( \text{a}4 \)+ \( \text{c}3 \) 72.\( \text{a}3 \)+ \( \text{c}2 \) 73.\( \text{a}2 \)+ \( \text{b}3 \) 74.\( \text{a}6 \) \( \text{h}2 \)+ (74...d2 75.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{h}2 \)+ 76.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{c}3 \) 77.\( \text{a}3 \)+ \( \text{d}4 \) 78.\( \text{x}h7 \) \( \text{h}7 \) 79.\( \text{x}d2 \) \( \text{h}2 \)+ 80.\( \text{e}1 \)=) 75.\( \text{g}1 \)! \( \text{h}3 \) 76.\( \text{f}2 \) d2 77.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{h}2 \)+ 78.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{c}3 \) 79.\( \text{a}3 \)+ \( \text{d}4 \) 80.\( \text{h}7 \) \( \text{e}4 \) 81.\( \text{h}8 \)= \( \text{h}8 \) 82.\( \text{x}d2 \) with a draw. Now, however, White’s position again becomes lost.
64...d3 65.ea5+ ²d4 66.ea4+ ²c3 67.ea6 d2 68.ee6+ ²d3 69.ee6+ ²c2 70.ee6+ ²d1 71.ee6 f4!

This breakthrough brings Black the win. The decisive factor is the unfortunately-placed white king, which is on g2 instead of f2.

72.gxf4 ²e2 73.ee6+ ²e3 74.ee3+ ²xe3 75.h7 d1=² 76.h8=² ²f3+ 77.²g1 ²f2+ 78.²h1 ²f1+ 79.²h2 g3+

White resigned, because after 80.²xg3 ²g1+ he loses the queen.

Game 52
Vladimir Kramnik 2800
Ian Nepomniachtchi 2730
Moscow 2011 (1)

1.²f3 c5 2.c4 ²c6 3.²c3 e5 4.g3 g6 5.²g2 ²g7 6.a3 d6 7.0-0 ²ge7 8.b4
A pawn sacrifice which cannot be accepted: 8...cxb4 9.axb4 \(\text{Nxb4}\) 10.\(\text{B}\)a3 gives White the advantage. However, Black intends something quite different.

8...e4

By exploiting the weakening of the long diagonal a1-h8, Black seizes space in the centre.

9.\(\text{Ne1}\) f5 10.\(\text{Bb2}\) 0-0 11.d3 \(\text{Be6}\)

12.dxe4

A number of games have tested 12.\(\text{Rb1}\), not yet clarifying the situation in the centre. In reply, we suggest the useful
waiting move 12...\textit{Q}d7!? – Black defends the b7-pawn and connects his rooks. The chances are equal.

\textbf{12...fxe4 13.\textit{B}xe4 \textit{B}xc4 14.\textit{N}c2}

In the source game Romanishin-Agzamov, Sochi 1984, after 14.\textit{B}g2 cxb4 15.axb4 \textit{N}xb4 16.\textit{Q}d2 (16.\textit{B}xb7!?) 16...\textit{N}ec6 17.\textit{B}b1 a5 White still needed to prove that he had sufficient compensation for the pawn.

A roughly equal game also results from both 14.bxc5 dxc5 15.\textit{N}d3 \textit{N}d4 and 14.\textit{N}d3 d5 15.\textit{B}g2 \textit{B}xd3 16.exd3 (16.\textit{Q}xb7 c4 17.\textit{B}d1 d4 with complicated play) 16...cxb4 17.axb4 \textit{N}xb4 18.\textit{Q}b3 a5, Stefansson-Goryachkina, Pardubice 2012.

\textbf{14...d5}

The opening has gone well for Black, who has seized the initiative.

\textbf{15.\textit{B}g2}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}[scale=0.5]
\draw (0,0) grid (8,8);
\foreach \x in {1,...,8} {
\foreach \y in {1,...,8} {
\draw (\x,\y) circle (0.5);\
\draw (\x,\y) node[inner sep=0.25cm] {\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\x\y}}}};\
\draw (\x,\y) node[inner sep=0.25cm] {\texttt{\textbf{\textit{\x\y}}}};\
}\n\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{15...d4}

This active move is tempting, but even so, it is probably not the best decision. It is worth considering the computer’s recommendation 15...b6!?, quietly defending the pawn on c5. Now 16.\textit{N}e3? does not work because of 16...d4 17.\textit{Q}xc4 dxc3, and Black obtains a decisive advantage.

\textbf{16.\textit{Q}e4}

Worse is 16.\textit{a}a4?! because of 16...b6, and the white knight turns out to be out of play (17.bxc5 b5 does not work, when White loses a piece).

\textbf{16...\textit{B}xe2}

A tempting exchanging combination, but White obtains a very promising position at the end.
17. \(Qxe2\) \(d3\) 18. \(Qg4\) \(\& xb2\) 19. \(\& d1\) \(\& c8\)

The queen sacrifice does not give equality: 19...\(dxc2\) 20. \(\& xd8\) \(\& axd8\) 21. \(\& xc5\) \(\& d4\) (or 21...\(c1=\&\) 22. \(\& xc1\) \(\& xc1\) 23. \(\& xb7??\)) 22. \(\& d3\) \(\& c3\) 23. \(\& xb7\), and White’s chances are superior.

20. \(\& xc8\) \(\& axc8\) 21. \(\& xd3\) \(cxb4\)

He cannot create a protected passed pawn: 21...\(c4\) 22. \(\& d7\) \(b5\) 23. \(\& b1\) \(\& g7\) 24. \(\& d6\), and after 24...\(\& b8\) (more tenacious is 24...\(\& cd8\) 25. \(\& e1\) White breaks down his opponent’s defences.

22. \(\& xb4\)

Stronger is 22. \(\& xb4\) \(\& xb4\) 23. \(\& xb4\) with a small advantage to White.

22. \(\& cd8\) 23. \(\& xd8\) \(\& xd8\) 24. \(\& b1\)

The bishop on \(b2\) was not to well placed, as becomes clear in the variation 24.\(b5\) \(\& d4\) (better is 24...\(\& a5\), although the knight has to go to the edge of the board) 25. \(\& b1\). After the text move, Black hides the bishop in his own camp and experiences no further difficulties.

24...\(\& g7\) 25. \(\& h4\) \(b5\) 26. \(\& f1\) \(a6\) 27. \(\& c5\)

This allows the black pieces to activate markedly. More cautious was 27. \(\& h3\).

27...\(\& d2\) 28. \(\& e3\) \(\& d4\)

29. \(\& e4\)

More principled, of course, is 29. \(\& xa6\). Analysis shows that White can douse his opponent’s initiative, but at the board is is obviously not so easy to enter such complications: 29...\(\& e5\) 30. \(\& xb5\) \(\& f5\) and now:

A) 31. \(\& d1\) \(\& g4\) 32. \(\& c5\) \(\& xf2\) 33. \(\& xf2\) \(\& xf2+\) 34. \(\& h1\) \(\& xg3\) (after 34...\(\& xg3+\) 35. \(\& g2\) \(\& xc5+\) 36. \(\& xg3\) \(\& d6+\) White,
of course, still has work to do, but objectively, the position is a draw) 35.\( \text{N} \text{e4} \text{h2}+ \text{36.}\text{g1} \text{c5} \) (or 36...\text{f4} 37.\text{h5})
37.\( \text{f6}+ \text{g7} \text{38.}\text{g4} \), and White is out of danger;

B) Even more solid is 31.\text{Nxf5} \text{gxf5} 32.\text{Kf1}! (the pawn cannot be held anyway – 32.\text{f1} \text{g4} 33.\text{c6} \text{xf2+} 34.\text{h1} \text{xe3} 35.\text{xf5} \text{h2+} 36.\text{g1} \text{f2+} 37.\text{xf2} \text{xf2} \) with a large advantage to Black, so it is better to give up the pawn at once and insure the king) 32...
33.\text{Rxf2+} 33.\text{Kxe1} \text{f3+} 34.\text{d1}, and the passed b-pawn gives White sufficient counterplay.

29...\text{b2} 30.\text{xb2} \text{xb2}

In this ending, the advantage lies with Black, because the pawn on b4 is rather more vulnerable that the one on a6.

31.\text{c2} \text{d5} 32.\text{c5} \text{dxb4} 33.\text{xb4} \text{xb4} 34.\text{d3}

The position after 34.\text{xa6} \text{xa6} 35.\text{xb5} \text{c5} should be winning for Black; in any event, he has great practical chances. White is counting on drawing a pawn down, thanks to the opposite-coloured bishops. This highly interesting endgame deserves separate analysis in an endgame book. Black won on move 53.

In commenting on this game, we have made use of variations given by GM Alejandro Ramirez.

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**Game 53**

**Sergey Karjakin 2767**

**Rustam Kasimdzhanov 2706**

Baku 2014 (5)

1.\text{c4} \text{f6} 2.\text{c3} \text{c5} 3.\text{f3} \text{c6} 4.\text{d4}

By preventing the move ...e7-e5, White immediately opens the centre. Now we reach a very important opening tabiya.

4...\text{cxd4} 5.\text{xd4} \text{e6}

A very interesting and dynamic position, in which each side has many possibilities.

6.\text{a3}
A) In reply to 6.\textit{f}4 (an attempt to exploit the weakness of the squares d6 and c7) there follows 6...d5 7.e3 \textit{b}4 8.\textit{e}2 (Black has satisfactory play after 8.\textit{x}c6 bxc6 9.\textit{a}4 \textit{b}6 10.\textit{e}2 \textit{e}4 11.\textit{c}1 0-0 12.cxd5 cxd5, Eljanov-Grischuk, Ningbo 2011) 8...dxc4 9.\textit{x}c6 \textit{x}d1+ 10.\textit{x}d1 bxc6 11.\textit{x}c4 \textit{d}5.

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\textit{analysis diagram}

The excellent knight on d5 compensates for the slight weakness in the black pawn structure, Carlsen-Kramnik, London 2013;

B) It is worth considering play in the style of the Sicilian Defence: 6.\textit{d}b5 d6 7.\textit{f}4 e5 8.\textit{g}5 a6 9.\textit{xf}6 gxf6 10.\textit{a}3 \textit{f}5

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11. \(d2\) (11.e3 \(g8\) 12.\(d5\) \(e6\) 13.\(d2\) \(c8\) with chances for both sides, Khusnutdinov-Akkozov, Astana 2012)
11...\(e6\) 12.\(d1\) \(g7\) with satisfactory play for Black, Shimanov-Grigoryan, Katowice 2014. The popular move 6.g3 will be examined in the next game.

6...\(d5\)

The most ‘direct’ line: Black accepts an IQP, but in return, his pieces reach active positions. This is by no means the worst possible scenario for blitz games, where activity is very important!

Other plans have also been tried:

A) 6...\(c5\) 7.\(b3\) \(e7\) 8.g3 \(b6\) 9.\(g2\) \(a6\) 10.\(d2\) \(c8\) 11.b4 \(b7\) 12.0-0 0-0 13.\(b2\) \(d6\) 14.\(c1\) \(d7\) 15.\(a4\) \(fd8\) 16.\(fd1\) a6 with a complicated position, Nakamura-Anand, Stavanger 2013;

B) 6...\(e7\) 7.g3 \(d5\) 8.\(g2\) 0-0 9.exd5 exd5 10.0-0 \(e8\) 11.h3 \(a5\) 12.b3 \(e6\) 13.\(b2\) \(c8\) 14.e3 \(d6\), Nakamura-Karjakin, Stavanger 2013.

7.exd5 exd5 8.g5 \(c5\) 9.e3

9...\(xd4\)

It was also possible to continue developing – 9...0-0, not fearing the hanging pawns: 10.\(xc6\) bxc6 11.d3 \(h6\) 12.h4 \(d4\) 13.\(a4\) \(d6\) and Black has the initiative, Krasenkow-Ghaem Maghami, Jakarta 2012.

10.exd4 \(h6\)

Also possible is 10...0-0 11.\(e2\) \(h6\) 12.\(h4\) \(e8\) (12...\(d6\) 13.\(g3\) \(e7\) 14.\(d3\) \(e8\) 15.0-0 \(f5\) 16.\(d2\) \(e4\) 17.\(xe4\) \(xe4=\) Ponomariov-Nisipeanu, Vitoria Gasteiz 2007) 13.0-0 \(g5\) 14.\(g3\) \(e4\) with a complicated game, Navara-Wojtaszek, Wroclaw 2011.

11.\(e3\)
In the event of 11.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 12.\( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{d6} \) 13.\( \text{c3} \) one should take the pawn with the knight – 13...\( \text{xd4} \)!, since in the ending after 13...\( \text{xd4} \) 14.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 15.0-0-0 \( \text{c6} \) 16.\( \text{c4} \) White has a small, but stable advantage. The tactical justification of the move 13...\( \text{xd4} \) is in a ‘little combination’: 14.\( \text{b5} \) brings White great unpleasantness after 14...\( \text{e5} + \); Black is also better after 14.\( \text{b5} + \) \( \text{xb5} \) 15.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{e6} + \) 16.\( \text{e2} \) 0-0 17.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{xe6} \) 18.\( \text{e7} \) \( \text{ac8} \) 19.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{fxe6} \) 20.0-0 \( \text{c2} \). Therefore White only has the modest 14.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{f5} \) 15.\( \text{xd6} \) \( \text{d6} \) 16.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{e6} \) 17.0-0-0 0-0-0 with equal chances.

11...0-0
Also good is 11...\( \text{f5} \).

12.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{e4} \)

White has also tried 12...\( \text{f5} \) 13.0-0 \( \text{e8} \) 14.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{c8} \) 15.\( \text{b4} \) a5 16.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{e7} \) 17.\( \text{a4} \) \( \text{d6} \) 18.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{g4} \) 19.\( \text{xg4} \) \( \text{xg4} \) 20.f3 \( \text{f5} \) 21.\( \text{xc8} \), draw, Fridman-Khenkin, Germany Bundesliga 2007.

13.\( \text{c1} \) \( \text{d6} \) 14.\( \text{xd5} \)

Black is fine after 14.0-0 \( \text{f5} \).

14...\( \text{f5} \) 15.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{e6} \) 16.\( \text{f4} \)

In the variation 16.\( \text{c5} \) \( \text{c8} \) 17.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 18.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{fxe6} \) 19.\( \text{xc8} \) \( \text{xc8} \) 20.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{d8} \) 21.0-0 \( \text{xd4} \) the active knight in the centre assures Black adequate play. Even so, this is what White should have gone in for.

16...\( \text{xd4} \) 17.\( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 18.0-0 \( \text{b3} \) 19.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{f6} \)

After 19...\( \text{e8} \) 20.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 21.g3 \( \text{ad8} \) Black seizes the initiative.

20.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{xf4} \) 21.\( \text{xb3} \) \( \text{ad8} \) 22.\( \text{a2} \)
22...\textit{d7}

Possibly, when Black went in for this position, he was counting on 22...\textit{fe8}, but in this case the move 23.\textit{ce1}! solves all of White’s problems. However, even after the continuation in the game, the position soon simplifies and equalises out.

23.\textit{ce1} \textit{f6} 24.\textit{e4}! \textit{g6} 25.\textit{c3} \textit{g7} 26.\textit{fe1} \textit{fd8} 27.\textit{f1} \textit{f5} 28.\textit{xf6+} \textit{xf6} 29.\textit{g3} \textit{h5} 30.\textit{h4} \textit{c7} ½-½

\begin{center}
\textbf{Game 54}
\textbf{Alexander Morozevich 2758}
\textbf{Alexander Grischuk 2764}
Loo tt 2013 (3)
\end{center}

1.c4 \textit{c5} 2.\textit{f3} \textit{c6} 3.d4 \textit{cxd4} 4.\textit{xd4} \textit{f6} 5.\textit{c3} \textit{e6} 6.\textit{g3}

A fairly unpleasant continuation for Black: by fianchettoing the bishop, White wants to create pressure on the enemy kingside. Black should immediate start activity in the centre.

6...\textit{b6} 7.\textit{b3} \textit{e5}!

Exploiting the vulnerability of the c4-pawn.

8.\textit{e4} \textit{b4} 9.\textit{e2} \textit{d6}

The classic game Taimanov-Geller, Moscow 1955, showed that after 9...\textit{a5} 10.\textit{e3} \textit{c7} 11.d2 White’s chances are superior.
10. \textit{\textbf{d2}}

After 10.f4 \textit{\textbf{c6}} 11.e3 Black replies 11...\textit{\textbf{xc3+}} 12.bxc3 \textit{\textbf{c7}} 13.g2 e5!, and the weakening of the square d5 turns out to be insignificant. For example: 14.c5!? (14.f5 is harmless) 14...b6 (the more direct 14...dxc5 15.xc5 b6 16.a6 xa6 17.xa6 g4 18.d2 d8 is also possible) 15.cxd6 xd6 16.0-0 0-0 with rough equality, Radjabov-Gelfand, London 2013.

10...0-0

It is worth considering 10...a5 11.f4 \textit{\textbf{c6}} 12.e3 \textit{\textbf{c7}} 13.g2 e5, and Black’s chances are not worse, Fridman-Anand, Baden-Baden 2013.

11.0-0-0 \textit{\textbf{a5}}

Also good is 11...d7, preparing to bring the bishop to the long diagonal.

12.f4 \textit{\textbf{a4}} 13.\textit{\textbf{a1}}

Greater complications, with unclear consequences, start after 13.fxe5 axb3 14.a3 dxe5 15.axb4 a1+ 16.b1 a6 17.d3 b5 18.c5 xe4 19.g2 f2.

13.\textit{\textbf{c6}} 14.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{a3}}

With his last few moves, Black has ‘coiled the spring’ as tightly as possible. Quieter is 14...c5 with chances for both sides.

15.b3
15...d5!?
Here too, it was possible to choose 15...c5 or 15...e5.

16.g2 dxc4 17.xc4 xc3?!  
Evidently connected with some sort of oversight or miscalculation. Stronger was 17...g4 with sufficient counterplay.

18.xc3 g4 19.f3!  
Thanks to this manoeuvre, White seizes the initiative.

19...e5 20.f5  
Also in White’s favour is 20.h3!? 20...c5 (or 20...f6 21.b1) 21.e1 f6 22.b1.

20...f6  
The attempt to solve the defensive problems by tactical means does not bring full equality: 20...d4 21.xd4 xd4 22.c3 e3+ 23.d2.

21.g5 c5?  
21...b4!? was worth considering.

22.b1 b6 23.xf6 gxf6 24.d5 e7 25.hd1 a5 26.e3  
This inaccuracy allows Black to turn the tables. White could secure a stable advantage with 26.f2, after which it is not easy for Black to activate his bishop.
26...\textit{d}d4! 27.xd4 exd4 28.xd4 xf5

Black suddenly exploits the resulting pin on the e-file.

29.d6 g6 30.g4 c8 31.h4

31...h5!

The bishop on g6 is out of danger, whereas the white king, by contrast, starts to feel some uncomfortable attentions directed at his person. White’s position is extremely unpleasant and in the rest of the game, he fails to cope adequately with a difficult defensive task.
32. gxh5 gxh5 33. h3 e8 34. g3 e5 35. g4 h2 36. g2 xg2 37. xg2 exh4 38. c1 c8+
39. d1 g7 40. d2 c3 41. xb6 h5+ 42. e1 f4 43. d5 e3+ 44. d2 g3 45. xh5 f2+ 46. e1
gxg2 47. d5 xa2 48. f1 af2+ 49. e1 b2 50. f1 a2 51. a6 h2 52. g1 hd2

White resigned.
Section 2 – A White Repertoire for Blitz

First of all, I should like to remind you of the words of the ninth World Champion, Boris Vasilievich Spassky, who often said that a knowledge of opening variations can make up for many chess weaknesses.

In building this repertoire for White, we will follow the same principles already used for our black repertoire: maximally limiting the possibilities of the opponent (even at the cost of clear concessions on our own part), but in compensation, studying the chosen variations as deeply as possible. Therefore, for example, we will not consider the Spanish Opening. Undoubtedly, this is the strongest, most correct opening of all, but after 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 White should be prepared for the Marshall, Berlin, Schliemann, numerous lines of the Chigorin system, the Zaitsev, the Breyer... and, even before reaching the Spanish, there are such lines as the Petroff and Philidor defences. Where can the average chess amateur find the time to study and remember all the numerous variations and deep positional and tactical contents involved in these openings?

Thus, we suggest opening the game with Ostap Bender’s favourite move 1.e4! [Translator’s Note: Ostap Bender was the conman hero of the classic Soviet satirical novel, The Twelve Chairs. One of his adventures involves him passing himself off as a visiting chess master, despite admitting to his sidekick that his entire knowledge of chess is limited to the move 1.e4.] And we will study in detail four replies by Black: 1...e5, 1...c5, 1...e6 and 1...c6. Why only these moves, when there are after all also the Alekhine, Scandinavian, and Pirc-Modern defences? Well, one cannot achieve the unachievable! FIDE World Champion Alexander Khalifman, in his series Opening with White According to Anand, spent some 10-15 volumes, whereas we are trying to cover white and black in just one! But this is not even the main reason: the moves of the black e- and c-pawns in reply to 1.e4 occur in about 80% of games, if not more, and if you can achieve a comfortable game against the four main responses, then it will not be so hard for you to add to your repertoire.

And now a few words about those four main openings.

After 1.e4 e5 we suggest 2.Nc3 – the Vienna System.

This prophylactic move (White defends the e4-pawn and takes control of d5) limits Black’s possibilities to the maximum. For example, in reply to the King’s Gambit (2.f4) he has a wide choice of possible replies, including 2...exf4 followed by the central blow ...d7-d5 or playing to hold the extra pawn with ...g7-g5, and also the immediate
counterblow 2...d5 (The Falkbeer) and the King’s Gambit Declined – 2...d6 or 2...c5. But after 2.c3 Black effectively has only one serious reply: 2...f6, so as to meet 3.f4 with 3...d5!

At the beginning of 2015, a substantial, 400+ page book appeared, by GM Roman Ovetchkin and IM Sergey Soloviov called The Modern Vienna Game, in which after 1.e4 e5 2.c3 f6 the authors suggested the move 3.c4. The book is nice and contains many original ideas, but it is well-known (I have known it since childhood) that after 3.c4 Black equalises with the move 3...exf4! Ovetchkin and Soloviov only devote a few pages to this system, buried in the middle of their book, but they admit frankly that the continuation 4.h5 d6 5.xe5+ ‘leads to solid positions with great drawing tendencies’. In fact, the great Akiba Rubinstein showed almost a 100 years ago, in a game against Fritz Sämisch (Hannover 1926), how Black draws this position; I believe Rubinstein played the opening in this game better than modern-day computers! And in the contemporary game Caruana-Giri (Wijk aan Zee 2014) Black drew in this line without any difficulty, although Ovetchkin and Soloviov assure their readers that ‘White obtained a small, but stable advantage’.

We give these two games in the present work, but our main focus is elsewhere – on the old line 3.f4 d5 4.fxe5 xe4 5.xf3!?

Objectively, this should also be a draw, but the position is complicated and not so well researched; there is still room here to play and to make mistakes. White has a very simple and understandable plan: to mate the enemy king. In blitz, it is usually easier to attack than to defend, and if you have more knowledge than the opponent (thanks to this book), then Black will face a tough task. I should like once again to emphasise that the Vienna is an absolutely correct and positionally-based opening; the most White risks here is the loss of his opening initiative.

In reply to the Caro-Kann, we suggest the favourite line of the young Fischer: 1.e4 c6 2.c3 d5 3.f3.
As is well-known, the future World Champion believed that this system refuted the Caro-Kann, but we will not go so far! The main continuation here is 3...\texttt{Bg4} 4.h3 \texttt{Bxf3} 5.\texttt{Qxf3}. Note that the queen comes out to f3, just as in our recommended line of the Vienna – we have tried to ensure that the lines we recommend to you complement each other, because it is much easier then to remember the main plans and ideas, as well as specific piece manoeuvres.

In this line of the opening, White gets the two bishops and more space, although one cannot say that Black’s position, which is free of weaknesses, is anything but very solid. White has a choice: he can sacrifice the d-pawn, relying on his lead in development, or he can initiate a long battle, with equal material, hoping that, sooner or later, the position will open up and then the bishop pair will show its strength. Both approaches are perfectly valid and the choice is a matter of taste.

Against the French Defence, our set-up is similar: 1.e4 e6 2.\texttt{Nf3} d5 3.\texttt{Nc3}.

From a theoretical point of view, I think the strongest plan is 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.\texttt{c3}!, whilst I myself, out of practical
considerations, play 3.e5, but in both cases, Black has a very wide choice of set-ups, and he ‘sets the tone’ of the subsequent play. But in blitz, the system with the early development of both knights is very good, because Black’s choice of possibilities is narrowed down sharply. For example, we avoid the huge amounts of theory which exist on the Winawer and MacCutcheon systems. And one other thing: in the line suggested, play develops in similar fashion to our line against the Caro-Kann, and several of the ideas are common to the two systems (for example, when White seizes space in the centre).

Finally, in reply to the Sicilian 1.e4 c5, we have decided to suggest not 2.c3 and not 2.f4, although I have already written entire books on these, but the relatively rare continuation 2.b3!?.

In the last few years, this plan has become more popular, and has been played by Carlsen, Kramnik and Morozevich. I also tried this move in match games against Alexey Shirov. Why did I choose it? Firstly, I wanted a change – something new is always interesting. And secondly, at the present moment, the move 2.b3 remains little-studied and can be an unpleasant surprise for the opponent.

There is one other serious reason. First and foremost, this move fights for the important squares d4 and e5. The move 3.b3 looks especially logical after 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6. The other, practical, argument is that 2.b3 is rare, and it is unlikely that the opponent will be very well prepared for such a development of events, especially in rapid and blitz. It is also important that the amount of information available on this line is not very great at all, and this is important for chess amateurs, who do not have so much time for preparation.

Of course, there is nothing new under the sun, and in one of my other books, Sveshnikov Versus the Anti-Sicilians, I looked at the move 2.b3, from Black’s viewpoint. And I am not ready to abandon my earlier conclusion: after 2...Nb6 3.b2 c5 4.c4 d6 5.c3 Qe4 Black should draw. But this leads to quite complicated variations, which one needs to know by heart, otherwise it is very dangerous for Black to play this way. Are your opponents in blitz games really going to be that well prepared for this variation? If not, then Black should not take on e4, but then the initiative remains with White.

In conclusion, I will repeat what I wrote in the introduction to the first section. The chess content of this book is mainly the analyses of my son and my task has principally been to identify and assess the critical positions. Admittedly, most of the coverage of the Sicilian Defence is down to me. We have presented the theoretical variations via concrete games, which are given from beginning to end. Amateurs need initially just read the Introduction and go straight onto the main games, after which they can test the lines in practice. But I am sure you will gradually want to deepen your knowledge
and then it makes sense to analyse the games suggested by the authors carefully and slowly, and also to look in the database. I hope the book will also be interesting for professionals, because it contains many new analyses and novelties.

Once again, I underline: this is a repertoire primarily for blitz (although also for rapid chess). In the opening, we are prepared to take risks, assuming that the opponent will not (and will not be sufficiently well-prepared to) play the best moves. For the best results, though, it is useful to have at least two lines in one’s repertoire, since then it will be harder for the opponent to prepare. For example, in the Sicilian, to play not only 2.b3, but also 2.c3 or 2.f4. Thanks to this, at the preparation stage, you will have a choice: with one opponent, a sharp variation, with another, a quiet endgame. You may also choose, based on your own physical condition, mood and plans for the concrete game, etc.

One of the main aims of this work is to acquaint the reader with my methods of forming an opening repertoire, so that later on, you can work independently to add to it and perfect it. But this is not the only task. The authors have done a great deal of professional work on these variations and have tried to find new ideas and concrete novelties. We have also tried to explain everything in clear and intelligible language, with explanations and variations which will be comprehensible to the amateur. It is for the reader to judge how well we have succeeded in this.

Evgeny Sveshnikov
Riga, October 2015
Part IV

The Sicilian Defence

1.e4 c5 2.b3!?  

This not very popular move has at least three clear merits:

1) The first is precisely that it is not very popular. Not only at the top level, but even at lower levels, it is not met with every day and so few of your opponents are likely to be prepared against it. This is especially true initially, when you first add it to your armoury.

2) Not popular does not mean not good. This set-up has a sound positional basis: the bishop on the long diagonal occupies a strong position, exerting pressure against the enemy centre and kingside.

3) The main merit of 2.b3 is that it rules out immediately all of the standard Sicilian lines and you do not need to study and remember numerous variations of the established systems, such as the Najdorf, Dragon, etc. The same thing is true of the line 2.c3, but in our day, it is also very well known. A more rational opening repertoire makes a lot of sense, especially in rapid and blitz.

In general, the move 2.b3 is not so exotic. It was seen in the games of the match between Kieseritsky and Anderssen, played in 1851. It has been played by World Champions Boris Spassky, Vladimir Kramnik and Magnus Carlsen plus grandmasters Nigel Short, Shakriyar Mamedyarov, Levon Aronian, Alexander Morozevich, Yuri Balashov and Evgeny Romanov. You will be in good company!

In bringing the bishop to b2, White fights for the central squares d4 and e5; later he can play with the same aim: $b5$, f2-f4 and $f3$. In the meantime, he invites his opponent to commit himself. If Black limits himself to putting his pawns on the 6th rank (...e7-e6, ...a7-a6, ...b7-b6, ...d7-d6), then White can ‘re-think’, and leave his pawn on f2, bring his knight to f3 and play d2-d4, reaching a favourable type of open Sicilian. Against the Scheveningen or Paulsen systems, the bishop is especially good on b2, and in many cases, White manages to get his pawn to c4, preventing the breaks ...b7-b5 and ...d7-d5. For example: 2...e6 3.$f3!? a6 4.c4.
The most principled plan for Black is to await the bishop’s arrival on b2 and then block the long diagonal with ...e7-e5, trying to tell his opponent that he has wasted two tempi developing the bishop on b2: 2...\textcolor{red}{N}c6 3.\textcolor{red}{B}b2 e5!? 

But this is not all so one-sided: Black weakens the square d5 and also limits his own dark-squared bishop.

A very interesting continuation is 2...\textcolor{red}{N}f6!? , immediately attacking the pawn on e4; if it advances, then the bishop’s diagonal is blocked, after White has gone to such lengths to develop it to b2.
Against the Alapin system 1.e4 c5 2.c3, the move 2...Nf6 is the best reply for Black, but after 2.b3 this is not quite so. But in any event, here we reach very dynamic, little-explored positions. There is no deep, established theory here, so we will cover fairly briefly the main plans for each side and how White can fight for an advantage in different set-ups.

Chapter 13
Sicilian with 2.b3: 2...g6, 2...b6, 2...d6, 2...Nf6

We begin with the rarest replies. This does not mean they are dubious – simply that there is little theory here and great room for creativity.
1.e4 c5 2.b3 g6!?

An ambitious plan: Black aims to neutralise the bishop, on which the opponent is placing his hopes. However, White has at his disposal an interesting manoeuvre, thought up by Nigel Short.

3.b2 \( \textit{f6} \)

Gawain Jones is not afraid of the exchange on \( f6 \), but his opponent has a quite different idea in mind...

4.\( \textit{f3} \)!?
An unstereotyped approach! First of all, he threatens e4-e5, and now the knight cannot come to d5. And, as soon becomes clear, the queen is very well placed on f3.

4...\textit{B}g7

Obviously, Black refrained from 4...d6 (preventing 5.e5) because of 5.b5! Here, after 5...d7 6.xf6! exf6 7.xd7+ xd7 8.c3 White’s advantage will be indisputable, after he occupies d5 with his knight. Black would do better to block the check with the knight – 5.bd7, but here too, after 6.xf6 exf6 7.c3 he still faces problems.

5.e5 d8 6.e6! f6 7.xf7+ xf7

8.g4!
Short plays very concretely. If Black manages to play \ldots f8 and \ldots g8, he will be perfectly OK, but now he must defend against the threat of g4-g5.

8...h6

Nothing more sensible is evident, but now the g6-pawn is weakened.

9.c3

Wonderful; White continues developing and at the same time creates an unpleasant threat of a check on c4. Nothing results from the immediate 9.h4?! because of 9...d5! 10.g5 g4 11.g2 hxg5 12.hxg5 xh1 13.xh1 h5, and Black is fine.

9...d5

At the Olympiad in Norway Black tried 9..c6 10.0-0-0 d4 11.g3 d5 12.h3 a6, Shaw-Safarli, Tromsø 2014, and here after 13.g2 White has a stable advantage.

10.h3 e6 11.0-0-0 c6 12.e1 d4

If 12..f8 13.h4 g8 14.g2 d7!? 15.h3 Black is also a long way from equality: his kingside is weak and he has no counterplay.

13.g2 d7 14.f3 xf3 15.xf3 c6 16.d3

A logical move: White ties the enemy king to the defence of the weak pawn on g6.

16..d6 17.h4 g5 18.e2 a6

Black wants to create counterplay on the queenside. White could have prevented this plan with the prophylactic move 19.a4!?, but Nigel Short finds an even stronger decision.
19.f4!

Breaking down the barriers around the enemy king.

19...gxf4

Obviously, the queen cannot take on f4 because of the deadly pin down the f-file. Nor is much changed by the continuation 19...d4 20.xe4 xe4 21.xe4 gxf4 22.hf1 with a dangerous initiative for White.

20.g5 e4

More careful is 20...d7, since the seemingly more active text could have led to painful consequences after 21.h5+! g8 22.xe4 dxe4 (or 22...xb2+ 23.xb2 dxe4 24.xh6) 23.g6 f8 24.xe4 – Black’s position is close to lost. However, Short played a weaker check:

21.g6+?!

Losing part of his advantage, but then Jones in turn went wrong.

21...e7?!

Black has reasonable chances of a draw after 21...g8 22.xe4 xb2+ 23.xb2 dxe4 24.xe4 d4+ 25.b1 xe4 26.xe4 xe4 27.xe4 f8 28.xe6 g7.

22.xd5+! xd5 23.xg7 g8 24.g4 xh1 25.e5 d8 26.g7 g8 27.xf4

Here and later, White misses a series of favourable possibilities.

For example, 27.h7 f2 28.xf4 was very strong.

27...d7 28.c4 e6 29.e4

Preferable is 29.f5 e7 30.c3.
29...Qe7 30.Bxc6+ Kxc6

31.Rg1

It was possible to open the central files and start an attack on the king: 31.d4 cxd4 32.Qe4+ b6 33.Qxd4+ c6 (or 33...Qc5 34.Qc7+ c6 35.Qxe6+) 34.Qf6 Qd7 35.Qe4+, and things are bad for Black.

31...Qd7 32.Qf3+ b6 33.Qh1 Qad8 34.Qh2 Qf7 35.Qe2 Qf5 36.h5 Qd7 37.Qg6 Qa7 38.Qh6 Qdxg7 39.Qxg7 Qxg7
40.\textit{\textbf{Q}}e3?

On the final move of the time control, White misses the win, which was still available with 40.Qxe6 Qg1+ 41.Bb2 Qb1+ 42.Qa3. [Translator’s Note: This was not actually the final move of the time control. The game was played in a weekend Swiss, using the rather fast time control of 90 minutes for the entire game, plus 15 seconds per move increment throughout. It should also be noted that the Bunratty tournament is famous as a very ‘friendly’ event, in which alcohol and general conviviality plays a major part, so the players’ inaccuracies should not be judged too harshly!]

40...Qg5 41.Qxe6 Qxh5 42.Bb2 Qh1 43.Qa3 Qh3 44.Qe5 Qxe5 45.Qxe5 Qh2 46.Qd5 Qb6 47.Qc4 cxb4+ 48.Qxb4 Qc6 49.a4 b6

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50.a5 b5 51.Qc5+ Qb7 52.Qc3 bxc4 53.Qxc4 Qh5 54.Qb4 Qd5 55.d4 Qb8 56.Qa4 Qb7 57.Qb4+ Qc7 58.Qc4+ Qd7 1/2-1/2

\textbf{Conclusions}: The critical position of this variation arises after 2...g6 3.Qb2 Qf6 4.Qf3 d6 5.Qb5+ Qd7 6.Qxf6 exf6 7.Qc3 Qg7 with unclear play. In the game, White had a lasting initiative, and not every player would enjoy losing castling rights and having to defend for such a long time. The most accurate approach for White is 12.Qge2, Qg2, Qg3 with a small advantage.

\textbf{Game 56}

\textbf{Alexander Morozevich} 2731

\textbf{Yu Yangyi} 2675

Dubai rapid 2014 (14)

1.e4 c5 2.b3 b6

A symmetrical reply: White has not yet revealed his plans in the centre and Black acts likewise. But in the Sicilian, a bishop on b7 is almost always badly placed.
3. \textit{b2}

This position was handled in original style by the Peruvian GM, Granda Zuniga: 3.c4 \textit{b7} 4.d3 \textit{c6} 5.f3 \textit{b4} 6.c2 (White is not bothered by the exchange of the light-squared bishop for the enemy knight, as he often initiates this exchange himself by \textit{f1-b5 and taking on c6) 6...\textit{xc2+ 7.Qxc2 e5 8.c3 d6 9.d3 g6 10.b4 (also reasonable is 10.a4 \textit{g7 11.a5 with the initiative) 10...cxb4 11.Qa4+ Qd7 12.Qxb4 Qe7 (Granda Zuniga-Cheparinov, Camarinas 2013), and after 13.0-0 \textit{c6 14.Qb3 White obtained a small initiative.}

3...\textit{b7} 4.c3

White handles the position in the spirit of the Closed Sicilian: he brings his knight to c3, then plays f2-f4, keeping his pawn on d2, and begins an offensive on the kingside. The question is what to do with the light-squared bishop. The simplest thing, of course, is to exchange it for the knight on c6, but if this is not possible, then the bishop can come to d3, after which both white bishops will be pointing at the enemy kingside.

4...d6

Alexander Morozevich has frequently played the 2.b3 Sicilian with success in rapid and blitz tournaments, so it is useful to see how the Moscow GM handles the line. Here we give a few of his games, with brief notes:

A) 4...\textit{c6} 5.f4 (after 5.b5 there follows 5...\textit{d4, so for now the light-squared bishop stays at home) 5...e6 6.f3 \textit{ge7 7.e2 a6 8.0-0 \textit{d4 9.f2 \textit{ec6 10.xd4 \textit{xd4 11.d3}}}}
11...\textit{c}7 12.\textit{d}e1 0-0-0 13.\textit{b}1 (stronger is 13.\textit{f}1 b5 14.a4 b4 15.e2 c6 16.g3; this game was played in the World Blitz Championship and inaccuracies are understandable – it is more important to understand which plans the two sides can carry out) 13...\textit{b}8 14.e2 (by removing the knight from d4, White will exert unpleasant pressure against the enemy kingside) 14...c6 15.f5 e5 16.f4 d6 17.hf1 a8 (Black can equalise with 17...exf5 18.exf5 xd3 19.xd3 f6) 18.h3 b5 19.e2 e8 (on 19...xe4 White had evidently prepared 20.fxe6 fxe6 21.e3 b7 22.d1, after which he takes the pawn on g7 and obtains a stable advantage) 20.d1 c4 21.d (a logical move: the black position depends to a large extent on the knight at e5, so it needs to be exchanged. However, the move involves an oversight) 21...cxd3 22.xd3? f6? (after 22...xd3 23.exd3 g3 White loses the exchange) 23.d2 hd8 24.g4 xd3 25.cxd3 b6 (here too, after 25.g3 26.e2 e5 Black would have the advantage, but in this game, the bishop determinedly avoids the square g3) 26.f3 e5 27.d4 exd4 28.xd4 c5 29.b2±
29...b4?! 30.e5! (White has placed his pieces ideally for a breakthrough in the centre; soon he will obtain an overwhelming advantage) 30...fxe5 31.Rxe5 d5 32.Rd1 Rd7 33.Re6± Rb5 34.Rc2 Ra5 35.Rc1 d4 36.Rd3 Rdc7 37.Rf3 Ra7 38.Rxb7 Rxb7 39.Rxd4 Rbc7 40.Re5 Rb6 41.Rxc5 Rxc5 42.Rxc5 Rxc5 43.Ra3, and Black resigned, Morozevich-Cheparinov, Dubai 2014;

B) 4...e6 5.f4 Qf6 6.e5 d5 7.Qf3! (by exploiting the undefended b7, White immediately brings his queen to the kingside and castles long) 7...e6 (on 7...c8!? there would follow the same reply) 8.g3 Qb4 9.0-0-0 d5?! 10.exd6 Qxd6 11.f3±.
White is somewhat ahead of his opponent in development and is fully prepared for the opening of the centre. 11...\texttt{d}7 12.d4 (a tempting move, but significantly stronger here was 12.\texttt{e}e1! with the idea of f4-f5, e.g. 12...\texttt{f}6 13.\texttt{b}5! \texttt{e}7 14.f5, and it is hard to see a satisfactory defence for Black. The game was played in the World Rapid Championship, so many decisions were taken by the players ‘by eye’) 12...\texttt{c}8 13.d5 \texttt{x}d5 14.\texttt{x}d5 exd5 15.\texttt{a}6 \texttt{e}7 16.\texttt{e}1+ \texttt{e}7 17.\texttt{e}7+ \texttt{x}e7 18.\texttt{g}5+ \texttt{f}6 19.\texttt{g}7 \texttt{f}4+ 20.\texttt{b}1 d4 21.\texttt{h}8 \texttt{e}4 22.\texttt{e}1 \texttt{g}4 23.\texttt{g}5 \texttt{e}3 24.\texttt{x}e4 \texttt{e}4 25.\texttt{d}3 \texttt{f}4 26.\texttt{c}1, and White won, Morozevich-Polgar, Dubai 2014.

5.f4 e6 6.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{d}7

Black places his pieces too passively – it is impossible to equalise like this.

7.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{g}6 8.0-0-0 \texttt{e}7 9.\texttt{g}4 d5 10.e5

![](image)

10...\texttt{x}g4?

A very risky move. More solid is 10...\texttt{e}4, although even here, after 11.\texttt{x}e4 \texttt{d}x4 12.\texttt{e}1 c4!? (by sacrificing the pawn, Black gets some open lines and squares for his pieces) 13.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{e}8 14.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{c}5 15.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{f}5 White’s chances are superior.

11.\texttt{g}1

This automatic move is what Black was counting on, but much stronger was 11.\texttt{g}2! Now if the knight retreats to h6 (immediately or after 11...h5 12.h3) White takes on g7 with the queen and wins a piece. Therefore Black has to play 11...f5 12.h3 \texttt{h}6 13.\texttt{x}g7 \texttt{f}7 14.\texttt{b}5 d4 15.\texttt{g}2 \texttt{f}8 16.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{b}8 17.\texttt{h}g1±; Black has managed to keep the piece, but his position is still difficult.

11...h5 12.f5 \texttt{f}8 13.\texttt{b}5 d4 14.\texttt{g}2 exf5?

Black misses a powerful blow. After 14...\texttt{c}8 15.\texttt{b}1± White has only a small advantage.

15.\texttt{fx}d4! \texttt{x}g2 16.\texttt{x}f5 \texttt{c}6 17.\texttt{x}g7+ \texttt{d}7 18.d4 c4 19.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{h}4 20.d5 \texttt{b}7 21.e6+. \texttt{c}8
22.d6?! 

A more precise path to the win begins with 22.\textbf{\texttt{Q}}c4+.

22...\textbf{\texttt{Q}}g5+?! 

Black could resist longer with 22...fxe6! 23.d7+ \textbf{\texttt{N}}xd7 24.\textbf{\texttt{N}}xe6 \textbf{\texttt{Q}}e7, although even here, after 25.\textbf{\texttt{N}}d5 \textbf{\texttt{B}}xd5 26.\textbf{\texttt{R}}xd5± White’s attack is very strong.

23.\textbf{\texttt{B}}b1+- \textbf{\texttt{B}}xe6 24.\textbf{\texttt{B}}xe6 fxe6 25.h3 \textbf{\texttt{B}}f2 26.\textbf{\texttt{R}}gf1 \textbf{\texttt{B}}e3 27.\textbf{\texttt{R}}xf2 \textbf{\texttt{N}}xd1 28.\textbf{\texttt{Q}}xc4+ \textbf{\texttt{Q}}c5 29.\textbf{\texttt{Q}}xe6+ \textbf{\texttt{B}}b8 30.\textbf{\texttt{N}}xd1 \textbf{\texttt{B}}d8 31.\textbf{\texttt{Q}}e7 \textbf{\texttt{B}}e8 32.\textbf{\texttt{B}}e5 a5 33.d7+ \textbf{\texttt{B}}a7
And White won.

**Conclusions:** The move 2...b6?! is not sufficient for equality. Black’s second serious positional mistake was 6...\texttt{N}bd7?!, thereby giving up the fight to control the important central square d4. The remaining inaccuracies were already not so important, as regards the opening battle.
Game 57  
Oleg Skvortsov  
Evgeny Sveshnikov  
Moscow 2014 (1)

1.e4 c5 2.b3 d6

In any event, Black immediately fixes the pawn on e4.

3.b2

3...c6

A logical alternative is 3...f6, immediately attacking the e4-pawn. White usually defends it with the move d2-d3, but first brings his bishop outside the pawn chain with 4.b5+:  
A) 4.c6 5.xc6+ bxc6 6.d3 g6 (Morozevich-Moiseenko, Dubai 2014), and here it was time to exploit the chance to break up the enemy pawn centre: 7.e5! dxe5 8.xe5 g7 9.c3 0-0 10.f3 d5 11.xg7 xg7 12.e4 f5 13.g3 d6 14.0-0 a5 15.a4±;

B) 4.d7 5.xd7+ xd7 6.d3 g6 7.f4 g7 8.f3 0-0.
Black has completed his development favourably and has no weaknesses. In his turn, White has a superiority in the centre and a simple plan – short castling and preparing an attack on the kingside.

B1) 9.\textit{Q}e2 (a slow move; Black has a lead in development and immediately stakes a claim in the centre) \textit{9...e5 10.f5 d5! 11.0-0 c4 12.\textit{B}bd2 cxd3 13.cxd3 \textit{B}c8 (13...gxf5!?)} 14.\textit{ac}1 (it is better to flick in the exchange on g6 – 14.fxg6 fxg6 15.\textit{ac}1±) 14...\textit{a}5 15.a4 (Morozevich-V.Milov, Dubai 2014), and here after 15...\textit{b}6+ 16.\textit{h}1 \textit{xe}1 17.\textit{xc}1 gxf5 18.exf5 \textit{e}8 or 18.\textit{h}4 f4!? Black’s chances are somewhat superior;

B2) 9.0-0 d5 10.\textit{e}1 (also good is 10.e5 \textit{h}5 11.\textit{d}2 \textit{h}6 12.g3 \textit{g}7 13.a4 \textit{c}7 14.a5 \textit{e}6 15.\textit{g}2 \textit{ad}8 16.\textit{c}3 with the initiative for White) \textit{10...d}4 11.\textit{h}4 e5 12.fxe5 \textit{h}5 13.\textit{xd}8 \textit{fxd}8 14.\textit{bd}2 \textit{xe}5 15.a4 \textit{f}4 16.\textit{d}4 \textit{xf}3+ 17.\textit{xf}3 \textit{e}6 18.\textit{c}1±, Short-Moiseenko, Jakarta 2013.

In the game Skvortsov-Sveshnikov, a different move-order occurred – \textit{2...c}6 3.\textit{b}2 d6. Now White has several promising plans.
4.\textbf{N}c3

A roughly equal position arises after 4.f4 \textbf{N}f6 (4...a6!? 5.\textbf{N}f3 e6 6.\textbf{W}e2 \textbf{N}f6 7.\textbf{D}c3 a7 8.0-0 0-0 9.\textbf{g}4 d5, and here 10.\textbf{D}e5 \textbf{D}d4 11.\textbf{W}e3 \textbf{b}5 leads to a game with chances for both sides, whilst after 10.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{D}h5 11.\textbf{W}f2 \textbf{D}xf4 Black obtained the advantage in Morozevich-Polgar, Dubai 2014) 5.\textbf{D}c3 g6. For example: 6.\textbf{D}d5 \textbf{B}g7 7.\textbf{D}xf6+ exf6!? 8.\textbf{B}b5 0-0 or 6.\textbf{D}f3 \textbf{g}7 (also possible is 6...\textbf{h}6 7.\textbf{g}3 0-0 8.\textbf{g}2 \textbf{g}7) 7.\textbf{W}e2 \textbf{g}4 etc.

The alternative 4.\textbf{b}5 will be examined via the game Skvortsov-Karjakin.

4...\textbf{f}6 5.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{a}6

It was worth considering 5...e5!? 6.\textbf{h}3 \textbf{e}7 with rough equality.

6.\textbf{a}4

White prevents ...\textbf{b}7-\textbf{b}5. In reply to 6.d4 a possible line is 6...\textbf{c}xd4 7.\textbf{D}xd4 \textbf{c}xd4 8.\textbf{W}xd4 \textbf{e}5 9.\textbf{W}e3 \textbf{e}6 10.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{e}7 11.0-0 \textbf{w}7=. Black is fine in the centre, the d5-square is not weak and White has not brought his bishop out to g5.

6...\textbf{g}6 7.\textbf{e}4

On 7.\textbf{d}5 there could follow 7...\textbf{g}7 8.\textbf{xf}6+ \textbf{xf}6 (he can also take with the pawn – 8...\textbf{exf}6, with a more complicated game) 9.\textbf{xf}6 \textbf{exf}6 10.\textbf{c}4 \textbf{f}5 11.\textbf{xf}5 (11.d3 \textbf{f}xe4 12.\textbf{dxe}4 \textbf{g}4 13.\textbf{h}3 \textbf{a}5+ 14.\textbf{d}2 \textbf{xf}3 15.\textbf{xf}3 \textbf{xd}2+ 16.\textbf{xd}2 \textbf{xf}8=) 11...\textbf{e}7+ 12.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{xe}2+ 13.\textbf{xe}2 \textbf{xf}5 14.0-0-0 0-0-0 with a roughly equal endgame. White needs to be accurate to avoid being slightly worse: 15.d4 \textbf{f}6 16.\textbf{dxc}5 \textbf{dxc}5 17.\textbf{e}8+ \textbf{e}8 18.\textbf{d}1 \textbf{e}4 19.\textbf{e}8+ \textbf{d}8 20.\textbf{g}3 etc.

7...\textbf{g}7

7...\textbf{e}6!? is worth considering.

A) Black is better after 8.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{d}5= 9.\textbf{e}xd5 \textbf{e}xd5 10.\textbf{e}2 (10.\textbf{xd}5?! \textbf{xd}5 11.\textbf{e}5 \textbf{f}7+ 12.\textbf{f}1 \textbf{f}6 13.\textbf{d}6 \textbf{e}6 14.\textbf{c}x\textbf{d}6 \textbf{g}7 15.\textbf{e}1+ \textbf{d}7 16.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{e}8 17.\textbf{xf}7 \textbf{e}4 18.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{xb}2+ or 17.\textbf{xf}7 \textbf{xe}1+ 18.\textbf{xe}1 \textbf{e}4 19.\textbf{xe}4 \textbf{xb}2 20.\textbf{c}3 \textbf{b}6 21.\textbf{d}2 \textbf{b}7 22.\textbf{d}1 \textbf{a}3 23.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{f}8 24.\textbf{d}5 \textbf{c}5+ 25.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{a}5=) 10...\textbf{c}xd4 11.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{g}7 12.\textbf{xc}6 \textbf{bxc}6 13.0-
0-0-0 14.\textit{f}3 \textit{e}8\textsuperscript{\texttt{+}};

B) Better is 8.0-0 \textit{g}7 9.d4 d5 with mutual chances, e.g. 10.exd5 exd5 11.\textit{e}1+ \textit{e}6 12.\textit{f}1 0-0 13.\textit{d}c5 \textit{d}7 14.\textit{b}1 \textit{xc}5 etc.

\textbf{8.\textit{d}5}

Necessary, else Black would take the initiative.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textbf{8...\textit{e}6}

Also possible is 8...\textit{e}5 9.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 10.h3 0-0 11.0-0 \textit{e}6 – Black has a solid position.

8...0-0!? is interesting, e.g. 9.\textit{xf}6+ (9.\textit{xf}6 exf6\textsuperscript{\texttt{+}}) 9...\textit{xf}6 (maybe 9...exf6 is even stronger, e.g. 10.0-0 \textit{f}5 11.\textit{xg}7 \textit{xg}7 12.d3 \textit{f}6 13.\textit{d}e4 \textit{d}xe4 14.\textit{g}5 15.\textit{d}e5 16.\textit{d}e6 17.\textit{d}e6 \textit{e}6 18.\textit{e}xe6 \textit{e}xe6 19.\textit{d}e1 \textit{e}8 20.\textit{d}f1 \textit{h}6 – White needs to play very accurately to defend this endgame.

The text move is also good.

\textbf{9.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 10.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 11.0-0 0-0}

It is worth considering 11...\textit{e}5!? 12.h3 \textit{g}5, immediately trying to seize the initiative on the kingside, although objectively, the position remains roughly equal.

\textbf{12.\textit{c}3 \textit{d}8}

Mutual chances result from 12...\textit{e}5 13.\textit{xe}5 \textit{dxe}5\textsuperscript{\texttt{+}} or 12...\textit{d}7 13.d4 \textit{cxd}4 14.\textit{cxd}4 \textit{f}4\textsuperscript{\texttt{+}}.

\textbf{13.d4}

If 13.\textit{e}2, then 13...\textit{f}4 (risky is 13...\textit{d}5 14.e5 \textit{e}7 15.d3 b6 16.h4 with the initiative) 14.g3 \textit{g}4 15.\textit{fd}1 \textit{e}5 16.\textit{e}1 \textit{xe}2 17.\textit{xe}2 \textit{c}6 18.\textit{c}2 with equality. White has not done anything bad in the opening, so he cannot stand worse.
13...cxd4 14.cxd4

If 14...cxd4 d5 15.exd5 exd5 16...e2 f5 Black is slightly better.

14...e5

E.Sveshnikov: ‘At first, I wanted to play 14...d5, with such possible variations as 15.e5! (bad is 15.exd5 exd5 16...e2 g4, and the d4-pawn is lost) 15...e7 16...e2 b4 17.h4 d7 18.d3 dc8 19.fc1 (or 19.h5 a5 20.fb1 c3 21.d2 c6 22.g3!) 19...a5 20.d1 h5 21.e3 e8 with a complicated game.

However, then I decided to choose a different plan, underestimating the fact that White will now have simple play to exploit the weakness of b6. Oleg Skvortsov plays the next part of the game very strongly.’

15.d5! e7

If 15...b4 16.a5 White’s chances are also superior, e.g. 16...g4 17.d2 xf3 18.xf3 xf3 19.e2 xe4 20.a4 c2 21.d1 b5 22xb4 xd2 23.xd2 ac8±.

16.d3

Also good is the move 16...e2±, so as then to transfer the knight via d2 and c4 to b6.

16...g5?

The chief cause of Black’s difficulties. It was necessary to complete his development more quickly – 16...g4 followed by ...ac8. For example, 17.d2 g5 18.f1 h3 19.xh3 (19.g3 f5!) 19...xd2 20.h4 d7 21.d1 f4 22.xf4 exf4±. In this case, the position remains close to equality.

17.e3! h6 18.d2
Black’s position has already become unpleasant, and after his next ‘active’ move, it is just bad.

18...\textit{g6}?

It was already necessary to seek the queen exchange – 18...\textit{f4}. Admittedly, after 19.\textit{ce2 d7} 20.\textit{xf4 exf4} (completely bad is 20...\textit{xf4} 21.\textit{c4 c8} 22.\textit{a5 b6} 23.\textit{b7 f8} 24.\textit{ac1}) 21.\textit{c4} the white knight hurries to a5 or b6. For example, 21...\textit{c8} 22.\textit{d3 b5} 23.\textit{a5} with unpleasant pressure for White. But even so, this is the least of the evils.

19.\textit{fc1}

After this simple move, the black position has already become very difficult, and maybe even hopeless.

19...\textit{d7}

Nor is 19...\textit{f4} 20.\textit{ce2 g7} 21.\textit{c7} any better.

20.\textit{b6! f4} 21.\textit{c2}!

Cutting out Black’s chances to create counterplay. All the while the pawn remains on h2, there is nothing for Black to fasten onto, to attack on the kingside.

E.Sveshnikov: ‘For a long time, I suffered under the illusion that Black had the advantage, but now I finally realised that my opponent had outplayed e and that I had to seek some practical chances to survive.’

21...\textit{ac8} 22.\textit{xb7 h4} 23.\textit{ac1}
23...\textit{\texttt{gxg2}}

Throwing caution to the winds, Black sacrifices a piece. He has no sensible plan.

\textit{\texttt{24.\texttt{hxg2 h3+ 25.xh3}}}

White also wins with 25.h1 \textit{\texttt{xf2 26.g1 a5 27.b5}} – Black cannot strengthen his attack in any way, whilst he is a piece down. But at this moment, White had only a minute left on the clock.

\textit{\texttt{25..xf2 26.f1 f3+ 27.g3 g4+ 28.h4 f4 29.f5}}

The simplest way to win was 29.e7, defending against the mate on g5. Also good is 29.e2.

\textit{\texttt{29..g5+ 30.g3 f4+}}
31. \texttt{h4}

White had just a few seconds left, so he forces a draw by repetition. Objectively, he can retain a winning position by
31. \texttt{g2} \texttt{xe4}+ 32. \texttt{g1} \texttt{xe4} 33. \texttt{f2} \texttt{d7} 34. \texttt{xd7} \texttt{xd7} 35. \texttt{c3} h5 36. \texttt{h3} a5 37. \texttt{hxg4} h\texttt{xg4} 38. \texttt{g3} etc.

31... \texttt{g5+}

Draw.

The plan with 2...d6 and 3...\texttt{c6} is very interesting. Black makes it clear to his opponent that Kramnik’s plan of 4. \texttt{c4} and d3 is no longer available, since after \texttt{c4}, Black is not obliged to play ...e7-e5. The move 4. \texttt{e3}, as this game shows, does not give any advantage. There only remains to test the plans with 4. \texttt{b5} (Skvortsov-Karjakin) and 4. \texttt{f4} (Morozevich-Polgar). The move in the game, 5...a6, is not obligatory, but White also did not react in the best way: instead of 6.a4, more principled is 6.d4.

\textbf{Game 58}

Oleg Skvortsov

Sergey Karjakin

Moscow 2012

1.e4 c5 2.b3 \texttt{c6} 3.\texttt{b2} d6 4.\texttt{b5}
4...d7

This is the way Black plays most often, so as to prevent his pawns being doubled, although he also has other interesting continuations. For example:

A) 4...Nf6!? 5.Qxf6 gxf6 6.Qc3 g8 with mutual chances;

B) 4...e5, and in order to fight for the initiative, White should continue 5.f4!? with sharp play. If instead 5.Qf3, then Black has the choice between the quiet 5...Nf6 and the more aggressive 5...f5 6.d3 Qf6 7.bd2 a6 8.Qc6+ bxc6 9.0-0 e7; in both cases, the chances of the two sides are roughly equal.

5.f4

There is no danger for Black in 5.Qf3 Qf6!? (also possible is 5...e5) 6.Qxf6!? (a dubious experiment; White should choose between 6.Qe2 a6 7.Qxc6 Qxc6 8.d3 g6! and 6.d3 a5+ 7.Qc3 e6 8.0-0) 6...exf6 (also good is 6...gxf6!?) 7.0-0 g6 8.d4 (better is 8.Qxc6 Qxc6 9.Qd5 Qg7 10.Qe2 0-0 11.Qd3 b5!? 12.Qg7 9.Qc3 0-0 10.dxc5, E.Sveshnikov-Stauskas, Jurmala 2015, and here Black can obtain a significant advantage by 10...f5! 11.Qd3 Qa5 12.e5 Qad8!±.

5...a6

Black has also played 5...Qf6:

A) 6.d3 a5+ (6...g6 7.Qf3 Qg7 8.0-0 0-0 9.Qe2 a6 10.Qxc6 Qxc6 11.Qbd2 b5 12.e5 Qh5!? 13.Qg5! h6 14.Qe4, and White’s advantage is obvious, Skvortsov-J.Polgar, Zürich 2014) 7.Qc3 d5!? 8.exd5 Qxd5 9.Qe2 Qxc3 10.Qxc6 Qxc6 11.Qxc3 Qc7 12.Qh3 – White’s chances are somewhat better, Skvortsov-Karjakin, Moscow 2012;


6.Qxc6 Qxc6 7.d3
7...d5!

Sharper is 7...d5!?, immediately beginning to clear the diagonal for his bishop. Then there could follow:

A) 8.exd5 cxd5 9.d3 e6+ 10.f2! with great complications, where White can count on an advantage, thanks to his lead in development;


8.d3

There is no particular theory here (which should please chess amateurs!), but there is one relevant game. White was the Georgian GM, Tamaz Gelashvili, who regularly employs the flank development of his queen’s bishop. He played here 8.e2!? (prophylaxis against 8...d5, after which there follows 9.e5 g4 10.e6! with a very promising position for White) 8...e6 9.d3 c7 (9...e7!? , transposing into a position from the game Morozevich-I.Popov, which we examined above) 10.b2 0-0 11.0-0 h6 12.a4 g8 13.d4 – White has emerged from the opening with the advantage, Gelashvili-Kalashian, Gyumri 2008.

8...e6

Karjakin tries to avoid complications. In reply to the logical break 8...d5 he probably did not like the blockading pawn sacrifice 9.e5 g4 10.e6!? . The computer then recommends 10.f5!? and assesses this crazy position as roughly equal! But if White wishes to avoid all this, he should follow Gelashvili’s example with 8.e2!?.

9.0-0 e7 10.bd2 c7 11.e2 0-0 12.e1 b5 13.e5
All of the forced and useful moves having been made, White goes onto the attack.

13...\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{d5}\)

A logical move; in the event of 13...\(\text{dxe5}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{xe5}\) \(\text{b7}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{f3}\) White has the initiative.

14.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{g5}\)?

Objectively stronger is 14.\(\text{exd6}\) \(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d6}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e5}\) \(\text{b7}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{g4}\) with the initiative.

\[
\text{Diagram}
\]

From the viewpoint of opening theory, the remaining moves are of no importance, but even so, I give them with brief notes, to show how energetic and enterprising play can shake any opponent out of his comfort zone. When playing against amateurs, masters and GMs generally try to win through ‘class’, without having to exert themselves especially in the calculation of specific variations. But you should make them work as hard as possible, not just remembering what they have studied at home, but thinking over the board!

14...\(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{f4}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{f4}\) \(\text{\texttt{xg5}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{h4}\)

White wants to sacrifice the exchange and break up the defences around the enemy king.

17...\(\text{\texttt{d5}}\)

Naturally, the repetition of moves with 17...\(\text{\texttt{g5}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{g4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{h6}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{h4}}\) did not suit the grandmaster.

18.\(\text{\texttt{xh6}}\) \(\text{\texttt{gxh6}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{f3}}\)?

Yet another provocative move, which fully justifies itself.

19...\(\text{\texttt{d4}}\)?

One’s hand wants to play this of its own accord: we shut out the enemy bishop, and with tempo as well. The drawbacks of the move are less obvious, but more important: White gets the valuable transit square e4.

Stronger is 19...\(\text{\texttt{e7}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{f1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{h8}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g8}}\), and Black has stabilised the position, retaining a material advantage.
20. \( \text{e}4 \text{f}5? \)

Not for nothing do they say that mistakes always come in pairs. Black has just made a serious inaccuracy, as a result of which the position has become much sharper: the knight is heading to \( \text{f}6 \), but Black does not want to exchange it, because then White brings his second rook into the attack. So Karjakin makes a move ‘by eye’ – he blocks the square \( \text{f}6 \) and hopes in the near future to organise the cooperation of his bishop on the long diagonal and rook on the g-file. But in the process, he greatly exposes his own king...

Correct was 20...\( \text{a}xe4 \) 21.\( \text{a}xe4 \text{d}8! \) – here, not \( \text{e}7 \), so that the \( \text{a}8 \) will later be defended. After 22.\( \text{a}c1 \text{f}5 \) 23.\( \text{exf}6 \text{a}xf6 \) 24.\( \text{g}4+ \text{g}6 \) Black has successfully regrouped his forces, retaining his material advantage.

21.\( \text{exf}6 \text{f}7 \) 22.\( \text{g}4+ \text{h}8 \) 23.\( \text{xc}5 \)

Leads to a draw by repetition. White could fight for the advantage by going into the ending: 23.\( \text{g}7+ \text{g}7 \) 24.\( \text{xf}7+ \text{xe}7 \) 25.\( \text{xc}5 \text{g}6 \) 26.\( \text{xd}4 \), although objectively his winning chances here are not great.

23...\( \text{g}8 \) 24.\( \text{xe}6 \text{g}2+ \) 25.\( \text{f}1 \)

Karjakin reached for his queen’s rook, so that after 25...\( \text{ag}8 \) 26.\( \text{xf}7 \) he could announce a nice mate with 26...\( \text{g}1+ \) 27.\( \text{e}2 \text{g}2+ \) 28.\( \text{d}1 \text{f}3+ \) 29.\( \text{c}1 \text{xe}1# \). But just in time, he noticed that after 26.\( \text{xd}4! \) Black’s counterattack is over and he has to resign. Luckily, he found an attractive way out.

25...\( \text{g}1+! \) 26.\( \text{f}2 \)

White also has no choice: he loses after both 26.\( \text{e}1 \text{g}6+ \) 27.\( \text{f}2 \text{g}2# \), and 26.\( \text{e}2 \text{h}5+ \) 27.\( \text{d}2 \text{g}5+ \) with mate in a few moves.

26...\( \text{g}2+ \) 27.\( \text{f}1 \text{g}1+ \)

Draw.

As you see, in a sharp battle, nobody is guaranteed against mistakes. In a rare variation, an amateur manages to create a sharp battle against a GM of extra class, and force him to work at the board. And if instead the game had seen the
Najdorf, say, which Sergey Karjakin reaches in 20-25% of his games? Things would probably have been very different...

**Conclusion:** After 2.b3 \( \text{\textit{c6}} \) 3.\textit{b2} \textit{d6} 4.\textit{b5} White needs to be prepared for 4...\textit{f6}, whilst after 4...e5, he clearly needs to prepare 5.f4!?. On the other hand, after 4...\textit{d7} 5.f4!? (there are hardly any other serious attempts to fight for the centre) a very important position arises after 5...\textit{f6} 6.d3 \textit{wa5}+ 7.\textit{c3} \textit{d5} 8.exd5 \textit{xd5} 9.\textit{wd2} \textit{xc3} 10.\textit{xc6} \textit{xc6} 11.\textit{xc3} \textit{wc7} 12.\textit{h3} – here White has a small advantage. In the game, the critical position arose after 5...a6 6.\textit{xc6} \textit{xc6} 7.d3 \textit{f6} 8.\textit{f3}. It seems to us very attractive for White, and his plan is clear: short castling, \textit{we2}, \textit{bd2}, \textit{ae1} and e4-e5, then \textit{ce4} with the threats of \textit{d6} and especially \textit{f6}.

**Game 59**  
Oleg Skvortsov  
Vladimir Barsky  
Moscow 2012

\( 1.e4 \textit{c5} 2.b3 \textit{f6}!? \)

Black wants to lure the pawn to e5, so as to close the long diagonal. The ideal scenario for him then is to exchange off the pawn by ...\textit{d7}-\textit{d6} and create a pawn wall in the centre with ...\textit{f7}-\textit{f6} and ...\textit{e7}-\textit{e5}.

\begin{center}
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\end{center}

\textbf{3.e5}

Practically forced. After 3.d3?! there would follow 3...\textit{d5}, and Black is fine.

\textbf{3...\textit{d5} 4.\textit{b2} \textit{c6} 5.\textit{f3}}

Interesting is 5.g3 \textit{d6} 6.exd6 \textit{wd6} 7.\textit{a3}!? – the ‘double fianchetto’ in this form appears not to have been seen in practice.

\textbf{5...\textit{d6}}
Hikaru Nakamura played an original plan – 5...g6!?:

**analysis diagram**

A) 6.g5 g7 and now:

A1) The interesting sacrifice 7.xf7!? fails to the cold-blooded response 7...f6 8.f3+ c6 9.c4+ e6! 10.exf6 (White gets nothing from 10.g4 h6) 10...xf6 11.xf6+ xf6 12.xf6 xf6 13.c3 d5 14.f1 d4?;

A2) The double attack 7.f3 is met by a double attack in reply: 7...0-0! 8.f3 d5 e6 9.c5 xg5 10.h4 (10.e3!?) 10...f5 11.d3 f4 12.e2 b6 13.e3 xe3 14.xe3 xe5 15.xe5 c5 16.d4 c6 17.c4 b7 with mutual chances.

B) 6.c4 b6 and now:


B2) It is best to play in the spirit of the Rossolimo System, by doubling the enemy pawns on the c-file: 7.b5 g7 8.xc6 bxc6 (8...xc6 9.h3, limiting the c8) 9.0-0 c4 (Morozevich-Nakamura, Dubai 2014) 10.e2 d5 11.d3 cxd3 12.cxd3 0-0 13.bd2?.

**6.b5**

So far everything is logical – a battle is raging around the key square e5. It is not favourable for either side to release the tension voluntarily.

**6...g4**

Too passive is 6...c7 7.xc6+ bxc6 8.0-0 d5 (8...f6 (Emunds-Maksimenko, Senden 2001) 9.exd6 exd6 10.h4! with the unpleasant threat of g5+) 9.c3, and White wants to go after the c5-pawn in classical fashion with a4, a3 etc.

**7.h3 h5 8.c3 f4!?**

Black needs to mess things up, else White will get a stable advantage.
9.g4!?

The principled response. In the event of the modest 9.g3 Ne6 10.exd6 Qxd6 Black has no problems, thanks to his control of d4.

9...g6 10.d4

10...a6!


11.Qxc6+ bxc6 12.Qxc5

Enemy No 1 for White is the Qf4, and it must be removed from its convenient post. Weaker is 12.Qd2 dxe5 13.Qxe5 Qxd4 14.0-0-0 Qxd2+ 15.Qxd2 f6 16.Qxc6 h5!? with the better chances for Black.

12...dxc5 13.Qe1 Qd5

Stronger is 13...Qe6 with the idea of 14.Qh4 (14.Qe2? is too slow because of 14...h5!) 14...d4 15.Qxg6 hxg6 16.Qf1 e6 17.g2 Qe7 with a double-edged game.

14.Qh4

Instead, the tempting blockading sacrifice 14.e6!? does not bring White any special dividends after 14...f6! 15.Qh4 Qd6 16.0-0 Qxe6 17.Qe1 Qd6 18.Qd2 Qf7!?

14...e6

A more precise path to equality was 14...Qxc3 15.Qxc3 Qe4 16.0-0 e6; despite his mangled pawn structure, Black should hold.
15. Nxg6 hxg6 16. Ne4 Qa5+?! 
Black’s only chance was the pawn sacrifice 16...c4! 17.bxc4 Qa5+ 18.Qd2 Qa4!. For example: 19.e2 b8 20.Qd4 Qe7 with counterplay.

17.Qd2 Qb4?
Black should settle for an inferior endgame with 17...Qxd2+ 18.Kxd2 0-0-0 19.Ng5 Rd7.

Now White has an unexpected retort, after which Black’s situation becomes critical:

18.Kf1 Qd8 19.d6+ Qxd6 20.exd6 f6 21.a3 
Even stronger was 21.c4!, taking control of the square d5, but even after the text move, Black’s position remains close to lost.

21...Qd5 22.c4 Qb6
In the event of 22...Qxd6 23.cxd6 cxd5 24.g2 Black’s compensation for the piece is insufficient to maintain the balance.

23.g5
White takes direct aim at the enemy king.
23...h4

It is hard to give Black any good advice. Maybe it made sense to sacrifice a pawn: 23...e5 24.gxf6 Qxf6 25.Bxe5 Qf3 (25...Qxe5? 26.Rxe1) 26.Qg1 0-0. Black does not lose at once, but whether he can save himself is a big question.

24.gxf6 gxf6 25.Rxe1

It looks very promising to play 25.Qd3 Kf7 26.Rg1 Qg8 27.Qf3 d7 28.Qxc6 Ra7. Black is a pawn down and his defences hang by a thread.

25...Qf7 26.Re3

This gives Black a breathing space. More energetic was 26.Qg1, and the h3-pawn is indefensible: 26...Qxh3 27.Qf4! with decisive threats.

26...Qd7 27.Rf3 e5 28.Qg1 Qh8 29.Qg5 Qh5
By some miracle, Black has succeeded in regrouping and repulsing the enemy threats.

30. \(\text{Q}e3\)

30. \(\text{Q}xe5\) fails to 30...\(\text{Q}xf3\) 31. \(\text{Q}xh4\) \(\text{Q}d3+\) 32. \(\text{Q}g2\) \(\text{Q}xe5\).

30...\(\text{Q}h6\)

The tempting move 30...\(\text{R}h8\) runs into a striking refutation: 31. \(\text{R}g5!\) \(\text{Q}h6\)

32. \(\text{R}xf6++!\) \(\text{R}xf6\) 33. \(\text{Q}xe5+\) \(\text{R}xe5\) (33...\(\text{Q}f7\) 34. \(\text{Q}xh8\) \(\text{Q}xh8\) 35. \(\text{Q}e7+\)) 34. \(\text{Q}xe5+\) \(\text{Q}f7\) 35. \(\text{Q}e7+\) \(\text{Q}g8\) 36. \(d7\) \(\text{Q}d4\)
37. \( \text{d8} = \text{Q} + \) \( \text{xd8} \) 38. \( \text{Qxd8} + \text{h7} \) 39. \( \text{Qd7} + \text{g7} \) 40. \( \text{Qxc6} \), and White should realise his two extra pawns.

31. \( \text{g2} \)

In sharp mutual time-trouble, the two players decided to take no chances and agreed a draw.

After 2...\( \text{Nf6} \) 3.e5 \( \text{Nd5} \) 4.\( \text{b2} \) \( \text{e6} \) 5.\( \text{f3} \) Black has three interesting possibilities – 5...\( \text{e6} \), 5...\( \text{g6} \) and, as seen in this game, 5...\( \text{d6} \). After this, White needs to solve the problem of his light-squared bishop. It is most active on b5, therefore 6.\( \text{b5} ! \); if 6.\( \text{c4} \), then the best reply is 6...\( \text{f4} ! \) 7.0-0 \( \text{d5} \) 8.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{d7} \) or 8...\( \text{e6} \), in both cases with a good game for Black.

After 6.\( \text{b5} \) \( \text{d7} \) 7.exd6 \( \text{e6} \) 8.0-0 the bishop on b2 is extremely active, whilst the pawn sacrifice 8...\( \text{d6} ! \)? 9.\( \text{xg7} \) \( \text{g8} \) 10.\( \text{b2} \) is scarcely sufficient for equality. After the move in the game, 6...\( \text{g4} \), the complications are again favourable for White.
Chapter 14
1.e4 c5 2.b3 e6 3.Nf3

In the system with the white queen’s bishop on b2, the black pawn is not terribly well placed on e6: it is more logical for Black to strive for a set-up with the pawn on e5, so as to close the long diagonal and control the square d4.

Game 60
Alexandr Petrushin
Evgeny Sveshnikov
Rostov 1981

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.b3 Nc6
The move 3...d5 will be considered later.

4.Bb2

In the event of 4.Bb5 (harmless is 4.c4 e5 5.Bb2 d6 6.c3 g6) Black’s simplest reply is to force the exchange on c6, without spoiling his pawn structure: 4...ge7 5.0-0 a6 6.xc6 (6.e2 gives nothing because of 6...d4 7.xd4 cxd4 8.c3 c6 9.b2 c5 10.b4 a7 11.a4 d5 12.b5 e7 – Black, having reinforced d4, achieves satisfactory play) 6...xc6 7.Bb2 b5. This position has been known to theory for a long time, because via a different move-order, it can arise from the Rossolimo System.
This is how events may develop:

A) 8.d4 cxd4 9.\( \text{cxd} \)4 \( \text{f6} \) 10.c3 e5 11.\( \text{xc} \)6 dxc6 12.a4 b4 with a good game for Black;

B) 8.c4 (an interesting idea: White begins play aimed at restricting the enemy bishops) 8...bxc4 9.bxc4 \( \text{b8} \) 10.c3 d6 11.a3 e5 12.c2 e7 13.e3 0-0 14.d3 \( \text{d7} \)? (in May 2002 at the Russian team championships in Yekaterinburg, the game Akopian-E.Sveshnikov ended in a draw after 14...e8; six months later, the exploration of this position was continued: 15.b1 bx\( \text{b} \) 1 16.b1 d8 with double-edged play, Akopian-Kasparov, New Century match, Moscow 2002) 15.b1 bx\( \text{b} \) 1 16.b1 d8 17.d5 f6 18.b2 f7 19.b1 a7 20.c2 b7 21.b3 a5 22.b1 bx\( \text{b} \)3 23.axb3 bx\( \text{b} \) – Black seized the initiative, Galstian-E.Sveshnikov, Stepanakert 2005;

C) 8.a4 b4 9.d4 cxd4 10.xd4 \( \text{f6} \) (Black brings his queen to the kingside, where it will be quite actively placed) 11.a2 xd4 12.xd4 g6 13.d2 b7 14.f3 d5 15.e5 d7 16.f4 0-0 17.f3 ac8 – Black’s chances are at least not inferior.

4...\( \text{f6} \)

The move 4...d5 will be examined below.

5.e5 d5
6.\texttt{b}5

Black is fine after 6.g3 \texttt{e}7 7.c4 \texttt{c}7 8.g2 f5 9.exf6 \texttt{xf}6 10.\texttt{xf}6 xf6 11.\texttt{c}3 d5 12.0-0\texttt{z}.

Grischuk’s move 6.\texttt{a}3!? is worth consideration.

\begin{center}
\textit{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

Now both sides have a mass of possibilities: 6...a6 (6...\texttt{e}7 7.c4 \texttt{c}7\texttt{z}) 7.g3 \texttt{e}7 8.g2 0-0 0-0 b5 10.c4 \texttt{c}7?! (better is 10...bxc4 11.\texttt{xc}4 a5 12.d4 a4\texttt{z}) 11.d4 exd4 12.\texttt{xd}4 b4 13.\texttt{xc}6 dxc6 14.\texttt{bl}+ \texttt{b}7 15.\texttt{d}2 a5 16.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{a}6 17.\texttt{h}5 \texttt{h}8 18.\texttt{ad}1 \texttt{e}8 19.\texttt{f}6 \texttt{xf}6 20.exf6 g6 21.\texttt{xa}5 \texttt{c}8 22.\texttt{b}6 \texttt{b}8 23.\texttt{xb}4 \texttt{xa}2 24.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{a}8 25.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{e}8 26.\texttt{e}7 \texttt{g}8 27.\texttt{xb}8 \texttt{xb}8 28.\texttt{d}7+- Grischuk-I.Popov, Moscow 2014.
There is also the move 6...c3, but we will not analyse this. However, we will look at 6.c4!? in some detail.

6...\(\text{Q}c7\)

The doubled pawns on c6 are not so terrible for Black, so he could simply continue developing with 6...\(\text{Q}e7\). However, even in this case, the initiative remains with White, for example: 7.0-0 8.\(\text{Q}xc6\) (both 8.\(\text{c}c3\) and 8.\(\text{a}a3\) are also interesting) 8...bxc6 (it is worth considering 8...dxc6 9.\(\text{c}c3\) b5 10.d3 a5 11.a4 \(\text{a}a6\), trying to create counterplay) and now:

A) a double-edged position results from 9.c4 \(\text{f}f4\) 10.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{d}d3\) 11.\(\text{e}e2\) \(\text{x}xb2\) 12.\(\text{x}xb2\);

B) 9.d3 f6 10.\(\text{c}c3\) (10.\(\text{c}d2!?) 10...fxe5 11.\(\text{e}e5\) \(\text{e}e8\) 12.\(\text{e}e4\) d6 13.\(\text{c}c4\) \(\text{d}d8\) 14.a3 e5 15.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{f}f4\) Spassky-Hernandez, Buenos Aires 1978;

C) 9.\(\text{d}d3!\? \(\text{e}e7\) 10.\(\text{e}e4\) f5 11.\(\text{e}e6\) \(\text{d}d6\) 12.\(\text{e}e6\) \(\text{d}d6\) 13.\(\text{d}d6\) \(\text{d}d6\) 14.\(\text{e}e2\) 15.\(\text{g}g5\) e5 16.\(\text{ae}1\) – White’s chances are superior.

It is worth considering 6...\(\text{b}b6!\?\), inviting White to exchange: 7.\(\text{xc}6\) \(\text{xc}6\). Then possible is 8.0-0 a6 9.c4 \(\text{f}f4\) 10.d4 cxd4 11.\(\text{c}c1\) (better is 11.\(\text{xd}d4\) b6 12.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{g}g6\) 13.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{b}b7\)?) 11...\(\text{g}g6\) 12.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{c}c5\) 13.\(\text{a}a3\) b6 14.\(\text{xd}d4\) \(\text{xc}7\) 15.\(\text{b}b2\) \(\text{b}b7\), Morozevich-Kretov, Moscow 2014.

7.0-0 a6

![Chess Diagram]

8.\(\text{c}c4\)

A somewhat unexpected decision, but far from bad. However, in the event of the natural exchange 8.\(\text{xc}6\), White’s chances are also superior. For example: 8...\(\text{xc}6\) 9.d3 b5 10.\(\text{d}d2\) (not so clear is 10.c4 \(\text{f}f4\) 11.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{b}b7\) 12.\(\text{e}e1\) (12.\(\text{e}e4\) \(\text{xd}3\)) 12...\(\text{bxc}4\) 13.\(\text{d}xc4\) \(\text{h}h3\) 14.\(\text{f}f1\) \(\text{g}g5\) 15.\(\text{h}h4\) \(\text{e}e7\) with counterplay for Black) 10...\(\text{b}b7\) 11.c4 \(\text{e}7\) 12.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{f}5\) 13.\(\text{e}e4\) \(\text{e}7\) 14.\(\text{fe}1\), and White’s position deserves preference: he can improve it further, whilst Black suffers from a shortage of useful moves.

8.\(\text{f}f4\) 9.\(\text{e}e1\) d5
An attempt to somewhat complicate the game. He does not get equality from either 9...e7 10.g3 g6 11.h4 h5 12.d3 or 9...b5 10.f1 b7 11.g3 g6 12.g2.

10.exd6 xd6 11.g3

![Chess Diagram]

11...h5

The knight has to retreat. After 11...h3+ 12.g2 e5 13.xe5 0-0 14.h5 xe5 15.xe5 d8 16.b2 Black clearly has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

12.h4 f6 13.f5 f8 14.f3 d7 15.xg7+ xg7 16.xf6 d4!

White has played the opening very inventively and won a pawn, but even so, Black has managed to obtain definite compensation for it.

17.xd4 exd4

White is better after 17...xd4 18.c3 g7 (bad is 18.e5 19.h5) 19.d5 b8, and here White has a pleasant choice between 20.h5 and 20.e3.

18.c3

White gradually starts to drift off the right course. He retains the advantage with 18.h5!? 0-0 19.a4 b5 20.d3 f5 21.axb5 axb5 22.xa8 xa8 23.e2!?. It is also worth considering 18.a4!?.

18...0-0 19.xd4
19...\textit{c6}!

Evidently, Petrushin had underestimated the strength of this manoeuvre. The d4-pawn is not going anywhere and Black wants to take it with the rook, so as to activate his pieces to the maximum. The two bishops on the long diagonals promise at least a satisfactory game.

20.\textit{Qh5}

Black is better after 20.\textit{Qe3 Rxd8}.

20...\textit{Rxd8} 21.\textit{Nc3}

He cannot jettison the d-pawn favourably: 21.d5 \textit{Bxd5} 22.dxd3 h6 23.\textit{Qc3 c6}, and as after the game continuation, Black has the initiative.

21.\textit{Qxd4} 22.\textit{Qd1 Rfd8} 23.\textit{a4 Qe7}
24.\textbf{e2}

It is not clear how Black can be prevented from quietly strengthening his position. Perhaps White should listen to Houdini’s by no means indisputable recommendation: 24.d3!? \textbf{xc4} 25.dxc4 \textbf{xc3} 26.g4+ f8 27.xd8+ xd8 28.d1 f6 29.d3; but here too, the battle is for two results.

24...f6 25.e3 g6

After 25...h6 26.f4 xf4! White falls into a critical position, but at the board, it is not easy to decide on such a sacrifice, because Black is doing excellently even without it.

26.e2 e4

A very strong attack on the light squares results from 26...xc4! 27.bxc4 d3 28.f4 h5.

27.b6 d7 28.d3?

More tenacious is 28.d4 g4 29.b4 h3.
28...\textit{h}4! 29.f3 \textit{x}f3 30.\textit{f}2 \textit{c}6?

A time-trouble error, which White does not exploit. Black gets a decisive advantage after 30...\textit{g}4 31.d4 \textit{h}6.

31.\textit{f}4?

This is what Black had counted on, whereas after 31.d4 b5 32.axb5 axb5 33.d5! exd5 34.\textit{d}3 \textit{g}5 35.\textit{c}1 White obtains excellent compensation for the pawn.

31...\textit{xf}4! 32.\textit{xf}4 \textit{d}4+ 33.\textit{f}1 \textit{h}5 34.\textit{d}2 e5 35.\textit{f}6 \textit{d}6! 0-1
Conclusion: Black does not equalise fully in the line 2...e6 3.Nf3 Nc6 4.b2 f6 5.e5 d5 6.b5, so he should study 4...d5 5.c5 b6 6.f6!.

Game 61
Dmitry Chuprov
Semen Dvoirys
Tomsk 2011 (7)

1.e4 c5 2.b3 d6 3.e5 d5 4.b2 e6 5.f3 e6 6.c4

White forces his opponent to disclose at once where his knight will retreat to.

6...Nde7

The most logical: the knight heads either to g6, from where it will attack the e5-pawn, or to f5, to take part in the battle for d4.

Sometimes 6...c7 is also played – of course, the knight is not ideally placed on this square, but in return, Black can complete his development more quickly.

7.d3 (7.a3!?; 7.e3!? d5 8.a3 e7 9.c2 b6 10.d3 b7, in both cases with mutual chances) and now:
analysis diagram

A) 7...e7 8.0-0 d5 9.exd6 wxd6 10.e4 0-0 (10...f6!? 11.e2 d7 12.d4 (12.e1!? 12...cxd4 13.a3 b4 14.d1 d8 15.xd4 b6 16.c3;)

B) 7...d6!? 8.exd6 wxd6 9.xg7 xg7 10.b2 xg2 11.e2 e5 12.xe5 (12.c4∞) 12...xe5 13.xe5 f6! 14.xd6+ (14.g3!? 14...xg6 15.e3 e6 16.g7 f4 17.e4 g4 18.h3 h5 19.f1 e8∞.

The move 6...f4?! will be examined later, in the game Engström-Miezis.

7.g3!? 8.e4 a6 9.c2 f5 10.e2 e7 11.h3 g6 12.0-0 b6 13.g2 b7 14.d4 cxd4 15.fxd4 fxe4 16.d4 (Gaprindashvili-Woodhams, Amsterdam 1976) 16...h5∞.

8.d5 9.exd6 xd6
10.0-0 0-0 11.\(\text{d}c3\) \(\text{e}7\) 12.\(\text{e}4\) b6

12...\(\text{c}7\)!.?

13.\(\text{e}5\)

After this move, Black seizes the initiative. Better is 13.g4!? \(\text{d}6\) 14.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{b}7\) 15.d4 \(\text{xd}4\) 16.\(\text{xd}4\)

16...\text{xd}4 (White has a small advantage after 16...\text{xe}2 17.\text{xe}6 \text{fxe}6) 17.\text{xd}4 \text{f}6 18.\text{d}2 \text{xd}2 19.\text{xd}2 \text{e}4 20.\text{xd}8 \text{fxd}8 21.\text{xf}6 \text{xf}6 22.h3 \text{d}2 – Black has sufficient play.
13...\text{dxe}5 14.xe5 b7

All of Black’s pieces have occupied good positions, whilst White has a backward pawn on d2 and no active plan.

15.g4 d7 16.fe1 ad8 17.ad1 f6 18.b2 d4 19.xd4 cxd4 20.h5 e5 21.d3 b4 22.e2 de8 23.a3 e7 24.b4 g6 25.h6 f5 26.g5 xg5 27.xg5 xg2 28.xg2 a4 29.c1 c6+ 30.g1 f3 31.de2 e6 32.ee1 ffe8 33.ee2 c6 34.a2 g7 35.b2 g5 36.b5 f3 37.e2 g4 38.a4 f6 39.de2 g6 40.a5

White’s position is still worse, but he has at least managed to create some counterplay on the queenside.

40...e4 41.dxe4 xxe4 42.axb6 axb6 43.f1 c3 44.a2 d3 45.c5
It was worth considering 45.\texttt{Qd}2!? and after 45...\texttt{Qxd}2 46.\texttt{Qxd}2 \texttt{Qd}8 47.\texttt{Rfd}1 White is close to equality.

\textbf{45...bxc5 46.b6 c4}

Now White’s passed pawn becomes very dangerous.
Simpler was 46...\texttt{Qb}4 47.\texttt{Rd}3 \texttt{c4} 48.\texttt{Qd}7 \texttt{Qxb}6, and the extra pawn gives Black good winning chances.

\textbf{47.b7 \texttt{Qe}5}

An inaccuracy, which throws away the win.
Correct was 47...\texttt{Qb}8 48.\texttt{Qb}1 \texttt{Kg}7.

\textbf{48.\texttt{Qb}1 \texttt{Qc}7 49.\texttt{Qa}6+ \texttt{Qg}7 50.\texttt{Qb}5 \texttt{Qxe}5 51.\texttt{Qc}4 c3 52.\texttt{Qb}3}

\textbf{52...\texttt{Qe}57?}

He can hold the balance with 52...d2 53.\texttt{Qxc}3 \texttt{Qd}7.

\textbf{53.\texttt{Qd}4+ \texttt{Qe}5?}

The decisive mistake. Essential was 53...\texttt{Qe}5 54.\texttt{Qb}5 \texttt{Qf}6 55.\texttt{Qf}4 \texttt{Qc}8 56.\texttt{Qh}6+ \texttt{Qf}7 57.\texttt{Qxh}7+ \texttt{Qf}6 58.\texttt{Qh}6+ \texttt{Qf}7.²

\textbf{54.\texttt{Qxd}3 \texttt{Qb}8 55.\texttt{Qb}5 \texttt{Qe}4 56.\texttt{Qxc}3+ \texttt{Qf}7 57.\texttt{Qf}1}

Black resigned.

\textbf{Conclusion:} In the opening Black outplayed his opponent, so White should turn his attention to 7.\texttt{Qc}3!? (as in the following game) instead of 7.g3.

\textbf{Game 62}
1.e4 c5 2.\f3 e6 3.b3 \f6 4.e5 \d5 5.b2 \c6 6.c4 \de7 7.c3!?

Let us consider some alternatives:

A) 7...\f5!? (a move with pretensions to seizing the initiative) 8.d3 \fd4 9.b5! (it is necessary to fight anew for d4)
9...\b4 10.e4 d5 (10...\xb5!? 11.cxb5 d5 12.b1 d4 13.0-0 \xe7 14.a3 \d5 15.b4 \d7 with mutual chances) 11.exd6
\xb5 12.cxb5 \xd6 13.a3 (Black is better after 13.xg7?! \g8 14.b2 f5 15.b1 \xg2) 13...\d5 14.0-0. White is
ahead of his opponent in development and his pieces are more harmoniously placed;

B) 7...\g6 8.b5!? (nothing is given by 8.e2 d5 9.exd6 \xd6 10.e4 0-0) 8...a6 9.d6+ \xd6 10.exd6 e5 (an
extremely confused position arises after 10...0-0!? 11.h4 f6 12.h5 \ge5 13.h6 g6) 11.h4
analysis diagram

B1) 11...\(\text{Nf6}\) 12.h5 \(\text{Qf4}\) 13.g3 \(\text{Qe6}\) 14.\(\text{Qe2}\) 0-0 15.\(\text{Qe4}\) \(\text{Qd4}\) (Movsesian-Agrest, Malmö 1999) 16.\(\text{Qxd4}\)! \(\text{exd4}\) 17.\(\text{Qd3}\) g6 18.0-0 b5 19.\(\text{hxg6}\) \(\text{hxg6}\) 20.\(\text{Qh6}\)! (20.\(\text{Qh4}\)) 20...\(\text{b4}\) 21.\(\text{Qd1}\) \(\text{b7}\) 22.\(\text{Qb7}\) \(\text{Qxd3}\) 23.\(\text{Qf1}\) \(\text{Qxf2}\) 24.\(\text{Rf8}\) \(\text{Qf8}\) 25.\(\text{Rf8}\) \(\text{Qxf8}\) 26.\(\text{Qe5}\)–;

B2) 11...0-0!? 12.h5 \(\text{Qf4}\) 13.g3 \(\text{Qe6}\) 14.h6 g6 15.\(\text{Qxe5}\) \(\text{Qe8}\) 16.f4 \(\text{Qd4}\) 17.\(\text{Qf2}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\) 18.\(\text{fxe5}\) \(\text{Qxe5}\) 19.\(\text{Qxd4}\) \(\text{cxd4}\) 20.\(\text{Qd3}\) (Akopian-Bologan, Bastia 1999), and here after 20...\(\text{Qg5}\)! 21.\(\text{Qe1}\) \(\text{Qe6}\) a position is reached with chances for both sides.

8.\(\text{exd6}\) \(\text{Qf5}\) 9.\(\text{Qd3}\)

Weaker is 9.\(\text{Qe4}\)?! \(\text{xd6}\) 10.g3 0-0 11.g2 e5 12.0-0 \(\text{Qe8}\) – Black wins the battle for the square d4 and can look to the future with optimism, Bartel-Gutman, Berkel 2003.

9...\(\text{e5}\)!

If 9...\(\text{xd6}\) 10.\(\text{a4}\)! b6 11.0-0 White also obtains the advantage.

Better is 9...\(\text{xd6}\) 10.\(\text{xf5}\) \(\text{exf5}\) 11.0-0 0-0 12.d4 \(\text{cxd4}\) 13.\(\text{Qd5}\).
10.d7+!

A subtle zwischenzug, spoiling the harmony among the enemy pieces.

10...\texttt{xd7}

White is also better after 10...\texttt{xd7} 11.\texttt{d5±}.
11.0-0 e7 12.d5 f6 13.h4!±

By combinational means, White weakens the enemy king’s defences.

13...hxh4 14.h5+ g6 15.xh4 f5 16.h6 f7 17.f4

17...f8

17...d4 does not save the game because of 18.xe7 xe7 19.fxe5 xe5 20.ae1 f6 21.g4 hg8 22.e4+-.

18.h3

The future 2015 World Seniors Champion plays the final attack energetically and accurately. Mikhail Antipov has an excellent feel for the initiative.

18...g7 19.fxe5 xe5 20.xf5 xf5 21.xf5+ gxf5 22.xf5+ g7 23.xe5+ xe5 24.xe5+ h6 25.e6+ g7 26.g4+ h6

And Black resigned.

In this game, White carried out an energetic plan – 6.c4 de7 7.c3!? (instead of 7.g3). An important position arises after 7.g6 8.b5! a6 9.b6+ x6 10.ex6 e5 11.h4 0-0?! (worse is 11.f6) 12.h5 f4 13.g3 e6 14.h6 g6 15.xe5 e8 16.f4 ed4 with a sharp game, Akopian-Bologan, Bastia 1999.

Yet another critical position occurs if, in the game after 7...d6 8.exd6 f5 9.d3, Black plays 9.xd6. After 10.xf5 exf5 11.0-0 0-0 12.d4 cxd4 13.d5 White has the advantage, but can he win?

In the game, after 9...e5 10.d7+! Black’s position is scarcely likely to be defensible.
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.b3 d6 4.b2 Qb6 5.e5 d5 6.c4 Qc4?!

Black provokes the move g2-g3, but this suits White perfectly well. The retreat of the knight to e7 is still the best, because in that case, the knight can come to either g6 or f5.

7.g3 g6 8.h4!

Too slow is 8.g2 d6! 9.exd6 e5! (Black manages to close the long diagonal and take on d6 with the bishop, after which he has no problems) 10.h4 xd6 11.h5 ge7 12.h6∞, E.Sveshnikov-Miezis, Latvia 2015.

8...d6 9.exd6 Qxd6

Now 9...e5 is not possible because of 10.h5.

10.Qc3?!±

The more forcing continuation also deserves consideration: 10.h5 ge5 11.Qxe5 Qxe5 12.h6, with the help of which White weakens the long diagonal.
A) 12...\(\text{d}3 \+\) 13.\(\text{B}x\text{d}3\) \(\text{Q}x\text{d}3\) 14.\(\text{W}e2\) (he can also stop the check on e4 with 14.\(\text{N}c3!?)\) 14...\(\text{Q}xe2\) + 15.\(\text{K}xe2\) \(\text{R}g8\) 16.\(\text{h}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 17.\(\text{R}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 18.\(\text{c}3\) ±;  

B) 12...\(\text{R}g8\) 13.\(\text{h}h5\) \(\text{d}3+\) 14.\(\text{B}x\text{d}3\) \(\text{Q}x\text{d}3\) 15.\(\text{h}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) 16.\(\text{B}x\text{g}7\) \(\text{R}x\text{g}7\) 17.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{b}6\) 18.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{W}x\text{e}2\) + 19.\(\text{c}x\text{e}2\) \(\text{c}b7\) 20.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{d}8\) 21.\(\text{c}3\) ±. In both cases, an ending arises which is somewhat better for White.

10...\(\text{N}g5\) 11.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{xf}3+\) 12.\(\text{xf}3\) \(\text{c}e7\)

White also keeps the initiative in the variation 12...\(\text{W}b8\) 13.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{a}6\) 14.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{d}4\) 15.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{e}5+\) 16.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{c}7\) 17.\(\text{h}5\).
13.\( \text{d3} \)

A possible plan, although it looks a bit artificial. Simpler is 13.\( \text{g2} \) a6 14.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{c7} \) 15.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{d4} \) 16.\( \text{d3} \) f5 17.\( \text{g5} \)±.

13...a6 14.\( \text{e4} \) \( \text{d8} \)!

He does not get full equality with 14...\( \text{b4} \) 15.\( \text{c3} \) f5 16.\( \text{b1} \), when White drives the knight from b4 and completes his development.

15.\( \text{c3} \) f5

16.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{c6} \)

He cannot get the bishop to the long diagonal: 16...\( \text{d7} \) 17.0-0 \( \text{c6} \)? 18.\( \text{d5} \)++. Better is 17...\( \text{f7} \), but here too, after 18.\( \text{fe1} \) \( \text{e7} \) 19.\( \text{e3} \) 0-0 20.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{c6} \) 21.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 22.\( \text{h5} \) White has the initiative.

17.\( \text{e2} \)

A roughly equal game results from 17.0-0 \( \text{d4} \) 18.\( \text{d3} \) \( \text{c7} \) 19.\( \text{fe1} \) \( \text{e7} \) 20.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xc2} \) 21.\( \text{xc2} \) 0-0.

17...\( \text{f7} \) 18.\( \text{h5} \)!

An incorrect assessment of the position leads White into difficulties. Evidently he thought he was still fighting for an advantage, whereas it was time to think about equality: 18.0-0 e5=.

18...\( \text{e5} \) 19.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{d6} \) 20.\( \text{h6} \) \( \text{g6} \) 21.\( \text{d4} \)

An attempt to cut the Gordian Knot.

21...\( \text{cxd4} \) 22.\( \text{xd4} \)

He has to exchange one of his bishops for the knight, as 22.\( \text{xd4} \)? fails to 22...\( \text{c5} \).
22...\textbf{\textit{N}}xd4 23.\textbf{\textit{N}}xd4 0-0 24.\textbf{\textit{N}}f3

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\chessboard[
    size=8,
    /tikz/inner sep=10pt,
    /tikz/outer sep=-2pt,
    /tikz/nodes={/tikz/inner sep=0pt},
    /tikz/path picture={
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,0) rectangle (1,1);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,0) rectangle (2,1);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,0) rectangle (3,1);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,0) rectangle (4,1);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,0) rectangle (5,1);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,0) rectangle (6,1);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,0) rectangle (7,1);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,0) rectangle (8,1);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,1) rectangle (1,2);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,1) rectangle (2,2);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,1) rectangle (3,2);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,1) rectangle (4,2);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,1) rectangle (5,2);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,1) rectangle (6,2);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,1) rectangle (7,2);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,1) rectangle (8,2);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,2) rectangle (1,3);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,2) rectangle (2,3);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,2) rectangle (3,3);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,2) rectangle (4,3);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,2) rectangle (5,3);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,2) rectangle (6,3);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,2) rectangle (7,3);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,2) rectangle (8,3);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,3) rectangle (1,4);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,3) rectangle (2,4);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,3) rectangle (3,4);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,3) rectangle (4,4);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,3) rectangle (5,4);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,3) rectangle (6,4);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,3) rectangle (7,4);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,3) rectangle (8,4);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,4) rectangle (1,5);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,4) rectangle (2,5);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,4) rectangle (3,5);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,4) rectangle (4,5);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,4) rectangle (5,5);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,4) rectangle (6,5);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,4) rectangle (7,5);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,4) rectangle (8,5);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,5) rectangle (1,6);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,5) rectangle (2,6);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,5) rectangle (3,6);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,5) rectangle (4,6);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,5) rectangle (5,6);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,5) rectangle (6,6);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,5) rectangle (7,6);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,5) rectangle (8,6);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,6) rectangle (1,7);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,6) rectangle (2,7);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,6) rectangle (3,7);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,6) rectangle (4,7);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,6) rectangle (5,7);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,6) rectangle (6,7);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,6) rectangle (7,7);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,6) rectangle (8,7);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (0,7) rectangle (1,8);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (1,7) rectangle (2,8);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (2,7) rectangle (3,8);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (3,7) rectangle (4,8);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (4,7) rectangle (5,8);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (5,7) rectangle (6,8);
        \draw[fill=white!30] (6,7) rectangle (7,8);
        \draw[fill=black!30] (7,7) rectangle (8,8);
    }
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

24...\textbf{\textit{e}}4

Exploiting his two bishops and superiority in the centre, Black begins the decisive offensive.

25.\textbf{\textit{g}}5 \textbf{\textit{f}}6 26.\textbf{\textit{d}}1 \textbf{\textit{c}}7 27.\textbf{\textit{h}}3 \textbf{\textit{g}}5 28.\textbf{\textit{g}}1 \textbf{\textit{e}}6 29.\textbf{\textit{e}}2 \textbf{\textit{d}}ad8 30.0-0 \textbf{\textit{f}}7 31.\textbf{\textit{g}}4 \textbf{\textit{f}}4 32.\textbf{\textit{c}}3 \textbf{\textit{g}}6 33.\textbf{\textit{a}}5 \textbf{\textit{e}}6 0-1

\textbf{Conclusion}: As this game shows, the move 6...\textbf{\textit{f}}4 is dubious, but White does better to develop his initiative with 13.\textbf{\textit{g}}2, rather than 13.\textbf{\textit{d}}3, as in the game. Later, Miezis effectively outplayed his opponent.

\textbf{Game 64}
\textbf{Jiri Nun 2379}
\textbf{Aleksander Volodin 2498}
Pardubice 2012 (5)

\textbf{1.e4 c5 2.\textbf{\textit{f}}3 e6 3.b3 \textbf{\textit{c}}6 4.\textbf{\textit{b}}2 d5}
5. **b5! dxe4**

5...a6?! is too slow because of 6. **xc6+ bxc6 7.e2 f6 8.d3 e7 9.0-0 0-0** (Stieg-Kirwald, corr. 1996) 10.e5±.

The moves 5... **e7** and 5... **f6** will be considered below.

6. **e5 c7**

Bad is 6... **g5? 7.0-0±**, e.g. 7... **d7 8.xd7 xd7 9.d3 exd3 10.xd3+ c7 (10... **d5 11.e2±**) 11.xc6+ xc6 12.d1 xd5 13.e2 f5 14.a3 a6
15.g4 Qh4 16.e5 Qb4 17.\textcolor{red}{c}c4 \textcolor{red}{f}6 18.c3 Qb5 19.a4, and Black resigned in A.Ivanov-Khmelnitsky, Parsippany 1996.

After 6...\textcolor{red}{d}7 7.\textcolor{red}{x}c6 \textcolor{red}{x}c6 8.\textcolor{red}{x}c6 bxc6 9.Qe2 \textcolor{red}{f}6 White will sooner or later regain the pawn, whereas Black will find it harder to rectify the weaknesses in his pawn structure.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}

\begin{scope}[scale=0.5]
\draw [gray, very thin] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw [thick] (0,0) -- (8,8); \draw [thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\draw [ultra thick] (0,0) -- (8,8);
\draw [ultra thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\draw [ultra thick] (0,0) -- (8,8);
\draw [ultra thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\node at (0,0) [below left] {\textcolor{red}1}; \node at (0,1) [below left] {\textcolor{red}2}; \node at (0,2) [below left] {\textcolor{red}3}; \node at (0,3) [below left] {\textcolor{red}4}; \node at (0,4) [below left] {\textcolor{red}5}; \node at (0,5) [below left] {\textcolor{red}6}; \node at (0,6) [below left] {\textcolor{red}7}; \node at (0,7) [below left] {\textcolor{red}8}; \node at (1,0) [below left] {a}; \node at (2,0) [below left] {b}; \node at (3,0) [below left] {c}; \node at (4,0) [below left] {d}; \node at (5,0) [below left] {e}; \node at (6,0) [below left] {f}; \node at (7,0) [below left] {g}; \node at (8,0) [below left] {h};
\end{scope}

\node at (0.5,0.5) {\textcolor{red}1}; \node at (1.5,1.5) {\textcolor{red}2}; \node at (2.5,2.5) {\textcolor{red}3}; \node at (3.5,3.5) {\textcolor{red}4}; \node at (4.5,4.5) {\textcolor{red}5}; \node at (5.5,5.5) {\textcolor{red}6}; \node at (6.5,6.5) {\textcolor{red}7}; \node at (7.5,7.5) {\textcolor{red}8}; \node at (0.5,1.5) {\textcolor{red}a}; \node at (1.5,2.5) {\textcolor{red}b}; \node at (2.5,3.5) {\textcolor{red}c}; \node at (3.5,4.5) {\textcolor{red}d}; \node at (4.5,5.5) {\textcolor{red}e}; \node at (5.5,6.5) {\textcolor{red}f}; \node at (6.5,7.5) {\textcolor{red}g}; \node at (7.5,8.5) {\textcolor{red}h};

\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

A) 10.\textcolor{red}{c}3 Qd4 11.0-0 c4 12.\textcolor{red}{h}e1 cxb3 13.axb3 a5 14.\textcolor{red}{b}1 (14.\textcolor{red}{x}e4 Qa3 15.c3 Qxb2+ 16.Qxb2 Qd7 17.\textcolor{red}{x}f6+ gxf6 18.Qe4±) 14...\textcolor{red}{b}4 15.\textcolor{red}{x}e4 Qxe4 16.Qxe4 0-0 17.Qxe4 Qf8 18.Qc4 Qb8 19.Qc3 Qa6 20.Qb2±;

B) 10.\textcolor{red}{a}3 Qe7 11.\textcolor{red}{c}4 Qd5 12.0-0 Qh5 13.Qxh5 Qxh5 14.Qae1 Qf6 15.h3 Qg8 16.Qxf6 Qxf6 17.Qxe4 Qd8 18.f4 g6 19.g4 Qd4 20.Qe2±, Da Silva-Dutra, Internet 2005.

7.Qe2

A) White could handle this position in gambit style: 7.\textcolor{red}{a}3!? Qf6 8.\textcolor{red}{x}c6+ bxc6 9.f3, but Black does better to decline the sacrifice – 9...Qa6 and now:
analysis diagram

A1) 10.fxe4 dxe4 11.g3 d6 (11...g5 12.e3 f6 13.e7f7 14.xf7 xf7 15.0-0) 12.d3 f5 13.xf7 xf7 14.c4 c6 15.gxf5 b4+ 16.c3 e5+ 17.d2 exf5 18.d4 xd4+ 19.e1 d3 20.xd3 cxd3 21.xd4 e8 22.d2 e2+ 23.c3;

A2) 10.e7f7 d6 11.0-0! (11.e2 exf3 12.xf3 d5 13.0-0 (13.0-0-0?) 13...xc4 14.xc4 e7 15.e1) 11...e3 12.d3 e7 13.f4 0-0 14.e3 d5 15.e3 d8 16.e1.

B) Also good is 7.xc6+ bxc6:

B1) 8.e2 (Zakurdjaeva-Dimitrijevic, Warsaw 2001) 8...f6 9.a3 e7 10.xc4 a6 (10...0-0 11.g4 a6 12.0-0-0 xxc4 13.xc4 f4 14.h1) 11.f3 exf3 12.xf3;

B2) 8.xc4 f6 9.a3 a6 10.xf4 0-0 d8 12.e1 d4

7...f6 8.xe6+ bxe6 9.a3 a5 10.xc4 a4

11.f3!

White is prepared to sacrifice a pawn, to open lines and exploit the dominating position of his forces. Black sensibly declines the ‘gift’. 
11...a3 12.c3 d5 13.exd5 cxd5 14.0-0 0-0 15.f4 e8?

Allowing a simple, but nice combination. Stronger is 15...f6! 16.d3 b4 17.axb4 cxb4 18.f3 (18.ac1!? ) 18...b8 19.h3 g6 20.e1, and White has only a small initiative.

16.xf7!± xf7 17.xh7 f8 18.e5 d8 19.d6+ e7 20.xe8 xe8 21.xg7+-

White has obtained an overwhelming position, but then he starts to commit inaccuracies, and then finally blunders.

21...xg7 22.xg7+ f7 23.g3 d7 24.e4 f6 25.e3 g8 26.ae1 g6 27.xc5+ f7 28.g3 d3 29.e3 e2 30.d4 g4 31.e2 c3 32.e4?
Now White allows his opponent to carry out a combination with a knight sacrifice. After the accurate 32.\textit{Kh1} \textit{Qxd4} 33.\textit{Kd1} \textit{a7} 34.\textit{h3} \textit{Qf6} 35.\textit{g4} White should gradually conduct the game to victory.

\begin{align*}
32... & \textit{N}xh2! 33.\textit{Qh7+ Rg7} 34.\textit{Qh5+ g8} 35.\textit{Qxh2 Xg3+} 36.\textit{Qxg3+ Qxg3+} 37.\textit{Kh1 f7} 38.\textit{Ke5 d3} 39.\textit{Kf2 xdx4} 40.\textit{g2} \textit{c5} 41.\textit{Kf2} \textit{Qc6+} 42.\textit{Kg3} \textit{Qg1+} 43.\textit{Kh3 f3}
\end{align*}

White resigned.

\textbf{Conclusions:} After 2.\textit{Nf3} e6 3.\textit{b3} \textit{c6} 4.\textit{b2} d5 the move 5.\textit{b5}! is the only way to fight for an advantage. Here Black has three ways to continue: 1) 5...dxe4, as in the game, 2) 5...\textit{Nge7} and 3) 5...\textit{Nf6}. In the game there followed 5...dxe4 6.\textit{Nc3!} \textit{Qc7} 7.\textit{Qe2}, whilst 7.\textit{Nf3} is also not bad – in both cases with a strong initiative for the sacrificed pawn. This game shows that it is hard to improve Black’s position after 5...dxe4, so it is better to play 5...\textit{Nf6}!

\textbf{Game 65}

\textbf{Evgeny Romanov 2500}

\textbf{Tomasz Warakomski 2446}

Yerevan Wch U20 2006 (11)

1.e4 c5 2.b3 e6 3.\textit{b2} \textit{c6} 4.\textit{f3} d5 5.\textit{b5} \textit{e7}

A solid but somewhat passive move, which also hinders the development of Black’s pieces.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
\end{center}

6.\textit{exd5 exd5}

After 6...\textit{exd5} White can play on his lead in development: 7.\textit{f3}?! \textit{c7} 8.\textit{e5} \textit{e7} 9.\textit{exd5 exd5} 10.\textit{f3} 0-0 11.\textit{xd5}. Of course, Black has definite compensation for the pawn, but it is hardly sufficient for equality. This is how events may develop: 11...\textit{a4} 12.\textit{e4} \textit{e6} (12...\textit{f6} 13.0-0\textit{e6} 13.0-0 \textit{d6} 14.a3 \textit{xc2} 15.\textit{ac1} \textit{b6} 16.\textit{f3}! \textit{d4} 17.\textit{xd4} and now:
A) 17...g6 18.a1 \texttt{Q}xb5 19.g5± h5 (19...\texttt{Q}e6 20.\texttt{Q}xh7+-) 20.\texttt{Q}h4 \texttt{e}7 21.\texttt{Q}g3 \texttt{Q}xg5 22.\texttt{Q}xg5 \texttt{Q}h7 23.f4 \texttt{d}7 24.f5 \texttt{Q}xf5 25.\texttt{Q}xc5 f6 26.\texttt{Q}xf6 \texttt{Q}e6 27.h3±.

B) 17...cxd4 18.g5 g6 19.\texttt{Q}h4 h5 20.\texttt{Q}xe6 fxe6 21.d3 \texttt{Q}g7 22.\texttt{Q}e4 \texttt{f}6 23.\texttt{Q}c4 e5 24.\texttt{Q}fc1 \texttt{e}8 25.b4±.

7.0-0

White can also count on a small advantage after 7.\texttt{Q}e2 \texttt{Q}e6 (Plaskett-Navara, Birmingham 2006) 8.g5 \texttt{d}7 9.xe6 \texttt{Q}xe6 10.c3 0-0-0 11.\texttt{Q}xe6+ fxe6 12.0-0-0.

7...a6 8.xc6+

Interesting complications begin after 8.d3!? \texttt{Q}g6 9.e1+ \texttt{Q}e6 10.f5 \texttt{Q}e7 11.xe6 fxe6 12.xg7! \texttt{Q}g8 13.h6±.
13...\(\text{d6}\) 14.c4 and now:

A) 14...\(\text{Nf4}\) 15.\(\text{xf4}\) \(\text{xf4}\) 16.\(\text{e2}\) 0-0-0 17.\(\text{exf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) (19...\(\text{dxc4}\) 20.\(\text{c3}\)±) 20.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{dxc4}\) (20...\(\text{xf3}\) 21.\(\text{xf3}\) \(\text{xf3}\) 22.cxd5 \(\text{h4}\) 23.dxc6 \(\text{xf2+}\) 24.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{xe1}\) 25.gxf3 \(\text{xd2}\) 26.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{e3}\) 27.cxb7 \(\text{xb7}\) 28.\(\text{d1}\)±);

B) 14...0-0-0 15.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{xf4}\) (15...\(\text{b8}\)?) (Maslakkostia-NightMan, playchess.com 2006) 16.g3 \(\text{h3+}\) 17.\(\text{g2}\) \(\text{e5}\) 18.cxd5 \(\text{h6}\) 19.dxc6 \(\text{f4+}\) 20.\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 21.\(\text{e4}\) \(\text{d3}\) 22.\(\text{e2}\)±.

\[8...\text{dxc6} 9.\text{e1+}\]

More energetic is 9.d4! \(\text{e6}\) (9...\(\text{e7}\) 10.dxc5 0-0 11.\(\text{c3}\)±) 10.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{e7}\) 11.dxc5 \(\text{xc5}\) 12.\(\text{d2}\)±.

9...\(\text{e6}\) 10.d4 \(\text{e7}\) 11.dxc5 0-0
12.b4

White could still count on a small advantage after 12...d2 c8 13.d1 (13.b4 b6!?) 13...g4 14.f4 xf3 15.xf3 d4 16.d2 (16.c3) 16...xc5 17.e4 b6 (17...b6 18.a3±) 18.c3 e8 19.h3 e6 20.ab1±.

12...f6 13.xf6 xf6 14.c3?!

After this incautious move, the initiative passes to Black. Rough equality could be maintained after 14.bd2 xb4 15.b3=.

14...xb4 15.d4 c6 16.xc6 bxc6 17.d4 fb8

Stronger is 17...g6 18.d2 h3 19.g3 ab8=.

18.e3 d4 19.cxd4 b4
20.d5!?

Black is better after 20.a3 \( \textit{R} \)xd4 21.\( \textit{N} \)d2 h6\( \text{†} \).

20...\( \textit{Q} \)xa1 21.\( \textit{N} \)c3 \( \textit{Q} \)xe1+

Black could retain the queen – 21...\( \textit{Q} \)b2 22.dxe6 \( \textit{R} \)b7 23.h3 \( \textit{R} \)e7 24.\( \textit{R} \)e2 \( \textit{R} \)b4\( \text{†} \). It is hard to say which poses the fewer technical problems in realising his advantage.

22.\( \textit{Q} \)xe1 cxd5 23.\( \textit{Q} \)xd5 \( \textit{R} \)d4 24.\( \textit{Q} \)e3 \( \textit{Q} \)c8 25.\( \textit{Q} \)a5 \( \textit{Q} \)c6 26.h3 h6 27.\( \textit{c} \)c2 \( \textit{Q} \)d5 28.\( \textit{Q} \)b4 \( \textit{Q} \)xc5 29.\( \textit{Q} \)xa6 \( \textit{Q} \)a5 30.\( \textit{Q} \)e2 \( \textit{Q} \)d8 31.\( \textit{Q} \)h2 \( \textit{Q} \)a4 32.\( \textit{Q} \)b5 \( \textit{Q} \)aa8 33.\( \textit{Q} \)c6 \( \textit{Q} \)d7 34.a4 \( \textit{Q} \)xc6 35.\( \textit{Q} \)xc6 \( \textit{Q} \)a5 36.f4 \( \textit{Q} \)da8 37.f5 \( \textit{Q} \)xa4 38.\( \textit{Q} \)f3 \( \textit{Q} \)d8\( \text{†} \)
39.f6!

By stubborn defence, White salvages half a point.

39...g5 40.Qe3 Rf8 41.Qe5 Ra4 43.Qh2 Qf4 45.Qe7 Rfc4 46.Qe5 Rc5 47.Qe7 c4 48.Qe5 Qf4 49.Qe7 Ra8 50.Qg1 Bb8 51.Qh2 Qf5 52.Qg1 Qg4 53.hxg4 Qg5 54.Qe4 Qg6 55.Qe5 Qf8 56.Qh2 Bxg4 57.Qh3 Qg5 58.Qe3 Qh8 59.Qg3 Qfg8 60.Qh2 Qc8 61.Qh3 Qg8 62.g4 Qg6 63.Qe5 Qa8 64.Qh4 Qg5 65.Qe3 Qc8 66.Qe7 Qgc5 67.Qe3 Qc1 68.Qe4 Qe1 ½-½

Conclusions: Instead of the game-move 6...exd5 it is worth considering 6...Qxd5!? , after which White should develop his initiative with 7.Qc3 Qe7 8.Qe5 Qc7 9.Qxd5 exd5 10.Qf3 0-0 11.Qxd5 Qb4 12.Qe4 Qe6 with a complicated game.

After 6...exd5 a reasonable line for White is 7.Qe2 Qe6 8.Qg5 with a small advantage, or 7.0-0 a6 8.Qxc6+ Qxc6 9.d4! (the most accurate) 9.Qe6 10.Qc3 Qe7 11.Qxc5 Qxc5 12.Qd2 0-0 13.Qad1 Qb4 14.a3 Qxc3 15.Qxc3, and Black faces a difficult defence. In the game, instead of 9.d4 White played 9.Qe1+ Qe6 10.d4 Qe7 11.Qxc5 0-0, and now he should have played 12.Qd2 with a small advantage.
1.e4 c5 2.d3 e6 3.b3 Bb4 4.b4 c6 5.a3 d5

6.exd5

It is also worth considering Spassky’s plan: 6.e5!? Nf6 7.Nf3 xc6 bxc6 8.d3 e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.Qe1 f6 (10...Qc7 11.Qd2 (11.Qbd2 Qb8) 11...h6) 11.exf6 Qxf6 (Spassky-Giardelli, Buenos Aires 1978) 12.Qxf6 Qxf6 13.Qbd2 e5 14.f1 a5 15.a4 Qb8 16.Qd2 Qb4 17.Qg3+.

6...exd5

This game actually had a different move-order: 1.e4 e6 2.b3 d5 3.Qb2 c5 4.Qf3 Qf6 5.exd5 exd5 6.Qb5+ Qc6.

7.Qe2+!?  


7...Qe7  

One of the critical positions of the variation arises after 7...Qe7 8.Qxf6 gxf6.
Objectively, the position is about equal, but it seems to us that White’s game is easier to play in blitz, because Black will have problems with his king.

On 7...\textit{Be6} there is the unpleasant 8.\textit{Ng5! Qe7} (White is also better after 8...\textit{Qd7} 9.0-0 \textit{d6} 10.\textit{xe6} \textit{xe6} 11.\textit{xf6 gxf6} 12.\textit{c3±}) 9.0-0 \textit{d7} (Da Silva-Da Maia, Internet 2004) 10.\textit{e1} \textit{xe2} 11.\textit{xe2+ e7} 12.\textit{f3 d8} 13.\textit{xc6 xc6} 14.\textit{e5 f8} 15.d3 \textit{d6} 16.\textit{xc6+ bxc6} 17.\textit{d2 e8} 18.\textit{xf6+ gxf6} 19.\textit{ae1 xe2} 20.\textit{xe2±}.

8.\textit{de5 d7}

9.0-0
It was better to reinforce the centralised knight, avoiding unnecessary simplifications: 9.f4!? a6 (9...0-0-0 10.0-0 \(\square\)xe5 11.fxe5 \(\square\)xb5 12.\(\square\)xb5 \(\square\)d7 13.d4 f6 14.\(\text{d}2\) fxe5 15.dxe5 \(\text{d}xe5\) 16.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{d}7\) 17.\(\text{d}7\) + \(\text{d}7\) 18.\(\text{f}7\) d4 19.c3) 10.\(\text{e}6\) \(\text{e}6\) bxc6 12.\(\text{xf}6\) gxf6 13.\(\text{e}3\).

9...\(\text{xe}5\) 10.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xb}5\)

Stronger is 10...0-0-0 11.d4 \(\square\)e4 (but not 11...a6 12.\(\text{xd}7\) + \(\text{xd}7\)! 13.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{xe}5\) 14.\(\text{dxe}5\) \(\text{b}8\) 15.\(\text{e}1\) g5 16.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{e}6\) 17.\(\text{e}4\) with the initiative for White) 12.\(\text{xd}7\) + \(\text{d}7\) 13.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{g}5\), and Black is close to equality.

11.\(\text{xb}5\) + \(\text{d}7\) 12.\(\text{c}3\)

It was also possible to keep queens on the board – after 12.\(\text{d}3\)!? \(\text{e}7\) 13.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{d}8\) 14.\(\text{fe}1\) 0-0 15.\(\text{e}2\) White’s position is also the more pleasant.

12...0-0-0?

A careless move; correct was 12...\(\text{xb}5\) 13.\(\text{xb}5\) \(\text{d}7\) 14.\(\text{d}4\).

13.\(\text{a}5\)!

White forces a weakening of the enemy king position and threatens to start a direct attack.

13...b6 14.\(\text{a}6\)+ \(\text{b}7\) 15.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{d}6\) 16.\(\text{f}4\)

It was better simply to take the pawn: 16.\(\text{xf}6\) gxf6 17.\(\text{f}5\)+ \(\text{b}8\) 18.\(\text{xf}6\).

16...\(\text{xe}5\) 17.\(\text{fxe}5\) \(\text{e}4\) 18.\(\text{xe}4\) dxe4 19.\(\text{c}4\)

Another inaccuracy – he could retain a small advantage with 19.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{xd}2\) 20.\(\text{g}7\) \(\text{e}8\) 21.\(\text{ae}1\) \(\text{d}5\) 22.\(\text{g}4\)+ \(\text{b}8\) 23.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{xe}4\) 24.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{xc}2\) 25.\(\text{xf}7\)+.

19...\(\text{hf}8\) 20.\(\text{f}2\) \(\text{d}4\) 21.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{d}7\) 22.\(\text{af}1\) \(\text{f}5\) 23.\(\text{exf}6\) gxf6
24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}}?

A serious mistake, after which it is Black who obtains a significant advantage.

24...\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}} 25.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf6}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xd2}} 26.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xh3}} 27.\textcolor{red}{\textit{gxh3}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{exc2}} 28.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h6}} e3 29.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f1}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xa2}} 30.\textcolor{red}{\textit{hxh2}} 31.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h4}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d8}} 32.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e8}} 33.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xa7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xh5}} 34.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{h6}} 35.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e2}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e6}} 36.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d8}} 37.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c8}} 38.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e5}} 39.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d8}} 40.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e6}} 41.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h7}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}} 42.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b6}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}} 43.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g6}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e4}} 44.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g7+}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{c6}} 45.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g6+}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{b5}} 46.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d6}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{a5}} 47.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{e6}} 0-1

\textbf{Conclusions:} In the position after 2.b3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{c6}} 3.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b2}} e6 4.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f3}} d5 5.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b5}}! \textcolor{red}{\textit{f6}}! 6.exd5 exd5 (the game transposed into this position) the most unpleasant move for Black is 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e2+}}?! Then after 7...\textcolor{red}{\textit{c7}} 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} 9.0-0 \textcolor{red}{\textit{xe5}} 10.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xe5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xb5}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xb5+}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{c3}} 0-0-0? (a serious mistake; correct is 12...\textcolor{red}{\textit{xb5}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xb5}} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d7}} 14.d4 – here Black has a small advantage in the endgame) White obtained a winning position with the move 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{a5}}!.

Black does better with 7...\textcolor{red}{\textit{e7}}.

\textbf{Game 67}
\begin{tabular}{l}
\textbf{Alexander Ivanov} 2425 \\
\textbf{Evgeny Sveshnikov} 2570 \\
Tashkent 1980
\end{tabular}

One of the authors of this book played the master Alexander Ivanov (now living in the USA) in the First League of the USSR Championship in 1980.

\textbf{1.e4 c5 2.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f3}} e6 3.b3 d5}

After this direct move, White should have the advantage. More subtle is the move 3...\textcolor{red}{\textit{c6}}, already examined, and also 3.b6 or 3.a6, which we will discuss later.

\textbf{4.exd5 exd5 5.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b5+}}!}
After 5.d4 Nc6 6.Nc3 Nf6 Black does not experience any particular problems (we have reached a position from a line of the French Defence, but it is not clear what the white pawn is doing on b3). Then a possible continuation is 7.b5 a6 8.0-0-0-0 9.dxc5 Bxc5 10.a4 (it was probably better to forget about the move b2-b3 and develop along standard 'French' lines: 10.g5 e6 11.f2 with roughly equal chances) 10...d6 11.b2 g4

![Analysis Diagram]

12.Bxc6 (12.h3 h5 13.e1 (Black does not manage to win the pawn: 13.Bxf6 Bxf6 14.Bxd5 Bxd5 15.Bxc3 Na5 16.Bg3 Bxa1!)) 13.e4 (Skvortsov-Bar'sky, Moscow 2012), and here it is White who should be thinking of maintaining equality) 12...bxc6 13.Bd3 Re8 14.Bad1 c7 15.c4 d6 16.g3, (Kovalevskaya-A.Muzychuk, Sochi 2007) 16...a5 with the better chances for Black.

5...d7

On 5...c6 unpleasant is 6.e2+ e7 (White is better after 6...e7 7.a3 e6 8.e3) 7.e5 d7 8.xc6! xc6 9.0-0 0-0-0 (9...g6 10.e1 is bad for Black) 10.c3 d4 11.xc6 bxc6 12.g4+ b7 13.a4 f6 14.g3, and the black pawn on c5 is quite vulnerable.

6...xd7+

Less accurate is 6.e2+ e7, e.g.

A) 7.e5 xb5 8.xb5+ d7! (8.c6?!) 9.xd7+ xd7 10.xd7 xg2 11.b2 e8+ 12.f1 e7, and Black’s chances in the ending are superior, Oral-Navara, Czech tt 2004;


6...xd7

Black also has problems after 6...xd7 7.0-0:
A) 7...gxf6 (Rozentalis-Degraeve, Gonfreville 2006) 8.e1+ e7 9.e2 f8 10.e5 c7 (10...a6 11.a3±) 11.b2 a6 12.g3± or 12.d3±;

B) 7...d6 8.b2 (also possible is 8.d4 e7 9.c3 0-0 10.dxc5 xc5 (Carlsen-Van Wely, Schagen 2006) 11.g3 e4 12.xe4 dxec 13.g5±, but 8.b2 is even stronger) and now:

B1) 8...f6 9.e1+ e7 10.e2±, and it is difficult for Black to complete his development, without losing something in the process;

B2) 8...d4 9.c3 e7 10.cxd4 cxd4 11.a3 0-0 12.b5 c5 13.c2 e6 14.bxd4 xd4 15.xd4±;

B3) 8...e7!? (an ingenious pawn sacrifice, trying to muddy the waters) 9.xg7! g8 10.b2 c7 11.c3 – Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn, Skvortsov-Barsky, Moscow 2012.

7.0-0

7.e5!? deserves consideration.

7...d6

Black does not escape his difficulties after 7...c6 8.e1+ e7 9.a3! 0-0-0 10.d4 cxd4 (Rendle-Donea, Budva 2003) 11.xe7 gxe7 12.xd4 h8e 13.c3 with the better chances.

The alternative is 7...e7 8.d4.
On 8...\(\text{Nf6}\) there is the unpleasant 9.dxc5 (a position with mutual chances arises after 9.\(\text{Ne5 Qc7}\) 10.\(\text{Bf4}\) \(\text{a5}\) 11.\(\text{Re1}\) 0-0 12.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{Nc6}\) 13.dxc5 \(\text{Nxc5}\) 14.c3 \(\text{Nxe7}\) 15.b4 \(\text{Qd8}\#) 9...0-0 10.\(\text{Bb2}\) \(\text{a6}\) 11.\(\text{Ne5}\) and now:

A) 11...\(\text{Qe6}\) 12.\(\text{Re1}\) \(\text{Bxc5}\) 13.\(\text{Nxc3}\) \(\text{c6}\) 14.d4 \(\text{Qd8}\) (15...\(\text{fe8}\) 16.\(\text{f1}\) \(\text{exe1}\) 17.\(\text{exe1}\)\(\text{±}\)) 16.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{fe8}\) 17.\(\text{d4}\) \(\text{exe1}\) + 18.\(\text{exe1}\) \(\text{b6}\) 19.\(\text{d1}\)±;

B) 11...\(\text{Qc8}\) 12.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{d8}\) 13.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{xc5}\) 14.\(\text{ad1}\) \(\text{b4}\) 15.a3 \(\text{c6}\) (the pawn cannot be taken: 15...\(\text{xc2}\) 16.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{d6}\) 17.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 18.\(\text{xf7}\+) \(\text{h8}\) 19.\(\text{xd5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 20.\(\text{g6}\) h\(\text{xg6}\) 21.\(\text{xf7}\#) 16.\(\text{fe1}\) \(\text{f8}\) 17.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{a5}\) 18.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{c7}\) 19.\(\text{b5}\) \(\text{d7}\) 20.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 21.\(\text{c5}\) \(\text{xc5}\) 22.\(\text{bxc5}\) \(\text{g7}\) 23.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{h8}\) 24.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{f5}\) 25.\(\text{d6}\) \(\text{d4}\) 26.\(\text{g5}\), and Black resigned in Akopian-Romanov, Dagomys 2008.

9.\(\text{Be1}\) \(\text{d6}\) 10.\(\text{e5}\) It is worth considering 10.\(\text{a3}\)? 0-0 11.\(\text{xc5}\) \(\text{xc5}\) 12.\(\text{dxc5}\) \(\text{ad8}\) 13.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{d4}\) 14.\(\text{a4}\)±. 10...\(\text{d8}\) He does not get full equality from 10...\(\text{xe5}\) 11.\(\text{dxe5}\) \(\text{e4}\) 12.c4 0-0-0 13.\(\text{c2}\) \(\text{f5}\) (13...\(\text{he8}\) 14.\(\text{a3}\)±) 14.f3 \(\text{dxc4}\) 15.\(\text{a3}\) \(\text{d2}\) 16.\(\text{xd2}\) \(\text{bxb3}\) (16...\(\text{xd2}\) 17.\(\text{xf5}\+) \(\text{d7}\) 18.\(\text{xd7}\+) \(\text{xd7}\) 19.e6+ \(\text{c7}\) 20.\(\text{xe4}\)±) 17.\(\text{axb3}\) \(\text{xd2}\) 18.\(\text{xf5}\+) \(\text{b8}\) 19.\(\text{c4}\)±. 11.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{bxc6}\)
12.\textit{\textbf{e}2} Also very strong is 12.\textit{\textbf{a}3} 0-0 13.\textit{\textbf{x}e}7! \textit{\textbf{x}e}7 14.\textit{\textbf{x}c}5 \textit{\textbf{c}7} 15.\textit{\textbf{f}f}8 \textit{\textbf{f}f}8 16.\textit{\textbf{c}3\pm}, Stone-Pena Gomes, London 2010. 12...\textit{\textbf{d}7} 13.\textit{\textbf{f}3} \textit{\textbf{f}8} 14.\textit{\textbf{a}3} \textit{\textbf{e}8} 15.\textit{\textbf{f}f}2 \textit{\textbf{c}xd}4 16.\textit{\textbf{d}x}d4 \textit{\textbf{h}5} 17.\textit{\textbf{x}c}7+ A double-edged game results from 17.\textit{\textbf{x}e}7 \textit{\textbf{x}e}7 18.\textit{\textbf{c}3} \textit{\textbf{g}8} 19.\textit{\textbf{x}e}7 \textit{\textbf{x}e}7= 17...\textit{\textbf{e}7} 18.\textit{\textbf{c}3} \textit{\textbf{d}6} 19.\textit{\textbf{a}4} \textit{\textbf{h}6} 20.\textit{\textbf{c}5\pm} with somewhat better chances for White.

\textbf{8.\textit{\textbf{b}2}}

Another good possibility is 8.d4 \textit{\textbf{c}7} 9.dxc5 \textit{\textbf{c}5} 10.d5 \textit{\textbf{e}5} 11.d3 with a stable plus.

8...\textit{\textbf{f}6}

9.d4 Ne7 10.Nc3


10...0-0 11.Ba3

Also good is 11.dxc5 bxc5 12.Na4 (12.Qe2!?) 12...d6 13.c4! – by exploiting his advantage in development, White develops a dangerous initiative.

11...Re8?!

Better is 11...cxd4, although even here, after 12.Nxd6 Nxd6 13.Nxd4 Qb6 14.Ne1 a6 15.Qe2 White’s chances are superior.


White is also better after 14.Nxd4 Qd7 15.Qd2.

14...Qd7 15.Nbxd4 Qc6

16.Qe2?!

Too slow. Here White could obtain a stable advantage with 16.Qb6 Be8 17.c4.

16.Qg6 17.Qd2 Be8 18.Qd1 Qge5
Black has managed to regroup successfully, activating his pieces and obtaining satisfactory play.

19.h3 \textit{Rad8} 20.\textit{Re3} \textit{Re7}

20...\textit{Nxf3+} 21.\textit{Nxf3} \textit{Rxe3} 22.\textit{Re3} \textit{d4} is also sufficient to maintain the balance.

21.\textit{Nxe2} \textit{Nxf3+} 22.\textit{Rxf3} \textit{Qe8} 23.\textit{Re3} \textit{d4} 24.\textit{Re7} \textit{Rxe7} 25.\textit{a4} \textit{g6} 26.\textit{f4} ½-½

We will summarise in brief the course of this game: 2.\textit{Nf3} \textit{e6} 3.\textit{b3} \textit{d5} 4.\textit{exd5} \textit{exd5} 5.\textit{b5+} \textit{d7} 6.\textit{xd7+} \textit{xd7} 7.0-0 (also good is 7.\textit{Nc5}) 7...\textit{d6} (another important position arises after 7...\textit{e7} 8.\textit{d4} \textit{c6} 9.\textit{e1} \textit{f6} 10.\textit{a3} – here White has a small advantage) 8.\textit{b2} \textit{f6} (he also fails to equalise after 8...\textit{d4} 9.\textit{c3} \textit{c6} 10.\textit{cxd4} \textit{cxd4} 11.\textit{Nc4} \textit{Be7} 12.\textit{a3} \textit{ge7} 13.\textit{b5} 0-0 13.\textit{bxd4} \textit{cxd4} 14.\textit{f4}) The critical moment in the game arises after 15 moves. Ivanov played too slowly with 16.\textit{Re2}, and Black managed to defend, whereas after 16.\textit{c6} White’s advantage is obvious.

\textbf{Game 68}  
\textbf{Evgeny Sveshnikov}  
\textbf{Evgeny Kolegin}  
\textit{Moscow open 2014 (9)}

1.e4 \textit{c5} 2.\textit{Nf3} \textit{e6} 3.\textit{b3} \textit{b6}

Quite a popular move: White wants to fianchetto his queen’s bishop and Black does the same.

4.\textit{b2} \textit{b7} 5.\textit{e2}!?

An interesting idea: White hinders the move ...\textit{d7-d5} and prepares long castling.

\textbf{5...d6?}

A serious positional mistake. Correct is 5...\textit{c6}, after which 6.\textit{d4} or 6.\textit{a3} \textit{f6} 7.e5 \textit{d5} 8.\textit{c4} \textit{e7} 9.0-0-0 0-0 lead to
sharp play with mutual chances. And after 6.c3 d5! 7.e5 \(\text{\textchi}_6\) Black seizes the initiative.

6.d4! exd4 7.\(\text{\textchi}\)xd4 \(\text{\textchi}\)f6 8.\(\text{\textchi}\)c3 \(\text{\textchi}\)e7 9.0-0-0 \(\text{\textchi}\)bd7 10.g4 \(\text{\textchi}\)e5 11.\(\text{\textchi}\)g2

In the Scheveningen or Najdorf variations, White could only dream of such a position! Note how well the two white bishops are placed on b2 and g2.

11...g6

No better is 11...0-0 12.f4.

12.f4 0-0 13.h4

White had a quite precise path to victory: 13.e5! \(\text{\textchi}\)d5 14.\(\text{\textchi}\)xd5 exd5 15.\(\text{\textchi}\)b5 a6 16.exd6 \(\text{\textchi}\)xd6 17.\(\text{\textchi}\)xd6 \(\text{\textchi}\)xd6 18.\(\text{\textchi}\)d2 \(\text{\textchi}\)e6 19.\(\text{\textchi}\)h1 etc. However, after the game continuation too, the attack develops of its own accord.

13...\(\text{\textchi}\)a6?!

More tenacious is 13...h5 14.g5 \(\text{\textchi}\)g4 15.h3 e5 16.fxe5 \(\text{\textchi}\)xe5 17.\(\text{\textchi}\)d5.

14.\(\text{\textchi}\)e1 \(\text{\textchi}\)xg4 15.h5 \(\text{\textchi}\)c8 16.\(\text{\textchi}\)g3 e5 17.\(\text{\textchi}\)xg4 exd4 18.\(\text{\textchi}\)xd4 \(\text{\textchi}\)c7 19.\(\text{\textchi}\)b1 \(\text{\textchi}\)b7 20.hxg6 fxg6
21.b4

White also wins after 21.d5 xd5 22.exd5 f6 23.e5 dxe5 24.fxe5 g7 25.d6.

21...d7 22.d1

The simplest win was 22.h3!.

22.e6 23.h3 xf4 24.d5 cf8 25.xf4 xf4 26.f1 xf1 27.xf1 c8 28.c4 f6

29.xd6?
An improbable oversight! After the simple 29.\text{\textipa{d3}} \text{\textipa{x}xb2} 30.\text{\textipa{xd}xb2} \text{\textipa{g}g7}+ 31.\text{c3} Black can only resign.

**29...\text{\textipa{x}xd6} 30.\text{\textipa{xc}c8}+?**

Better is 30.\text{\textipa{xf}xf6} \text{\textipa{d}d7} 31.e5 \text{\textipa{d}d1}+ 32.\text{\textipa{b}b2}, retaining a small advantage.

**30...\text{\textipa{d}d8} 31.\text{\textipa{e}e4}+**

Mistakes come not only in pairs, but also in trios! After 31.\text{\textipa{xf}xf6} \text{\textipa{xf}xf6} (he loses after 31...\text{\textipa{xb}xb4}+ 32.\text{\textipa{b}b2} \text{\textipa{c}c1} \text{\textipa{b}b4}+ 34.\text{\textipa{a}a1}) 32.e5 \text{\textipa{e}e7} 33.a3 h5 34.e6 \text{\textipa{g}g7} 35.\text{\textipa{c}c3}+ \text{\textipa{h}h7} 36.\text{\textipa{d}d4} White’s chances are still superior. But after the impulsive text move, the advantage passes to Black, and White only makes a draw with the greatest difficulty in what follows.

**31...\text{\textipa{f}f7} 32.a3 \text{\textipa{xb}xb2} 33.\text{\textipa{xb}xb2} \text{\textipa{g}g7} 34.\text{\textipa{c}c3}**

**34...\text{\textipa{e}e5}?**

It is Black’s turn to err. After 34...\text{\textipa{e}e5}+ 35.\text{\textipa{d}d4} h5 36.\text{\textipa{xe}xe5}+ \text{\textipa{xe}e5} 37.\text{\textipa{d}d4} \text{\textipa{f}f6} 38.c4 g5 39.c5 g4 he wins.

**35.\text{\textipa{d}d4} \text{\textipa{f}f6} 36.\text{\textipa{b}b3} h5 37.\text{\textipa{c}c4} \text{\textipa{e}e7} 38.\text{\textipa{c}c5} \text{\textipa{x}xc5} 39.\text{\textipa{b}xc5} \text{\textipa{f}f7}+ 40.\text{\textipa{d}d5} \text{\textipa{e}e7} 41.\text{\textipa{b}b4} h4 42.\text{\textipa{c}c8} g5 43.\text{\textipa{e}e6} \text{\textipa{f}f6} 44.\text{\textipa{f}f5} \text{\textipa{g}g7} 45.\text{\textipa{e}e6} \text{\textipa{f}f6} 46.\text{\textipa{c}c8} \text{\textipa{g}g7} 47.\text{\textipa{b}b5} g4 48.\text{\textipa{c}c6} \text{\textipa{e}e8}+ 49.\text{\textipa{a}a6} \text{\textipa{f}f6} 50.\text{\textipa{x}xc4} \text{\textipa{x}xc4} 51.\text{\textipa{f}f5}+ \text{\textipa{e}e7}**
52. \textit{Qh7+}

52. \textit{Qxg4 \textit{Wc6+ 53. \textit{Qxa7 \textit{Qxc6+ 54. \textit{Kxa7 \textit{Qxc5+ 55. \textit{Qa5 etc. also leads to a draw.}}}}}}}

52...\textit{Qe6}

If Black is carried away by the desire to win, then he can be mated in nice style after 52...\textit{Kd8 53. \textit{Qxh4+ \textit{Kc7 54. \textit{Qh7+ \textit{Kc6?? 55. \textit{Qb7+ \textit{Qxc5 56. \textit{Qd5#}}} But of course, after 54...\textit{Qd8 55. \textit{Qh4+} and here things end in perpetual check.}}}}}

53. \textit{Qf5+ \textit{Qe7 54. \textit{Qh7+ \textit{Qe6 55. \textit{Qf5+ 1/2-1/2}}}}}

\textbf{Conclusion:} The set-up e6, d6, b6, \textit{Nd7} is too passive and allows White successfully to play d2-d4, castle long and begin a pawn storm on the kingside.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Game 69}
Evgeny Sveshnikov 2527
Anna Sharevich 2323
Reykjavik open 2011 (7)
\end{center}

1.e4 c5 2. \textit{f3} e6 3.b3 a6 4. \textit{b2}

The immediate 4.c4!? is also interesting. We will examine this move in the game Skvortsov-Barsky.

4...\textit{Qe6 5.c4}

Little is promised by either 5.g3 d5 or 5.d4 cxd4 6.\textit{Qxd4 \textit{Wf6 7.c3 \textit{Qc5}. However, it is worth considering 5.\textit{Qd3} or 5.g3 d5 6.exd5 exd5 7.\textit{Wxe2+ \textit{Wxe7 8.\textit{Qc3 \textit{Qxe2+ 9.\textit{Qxe2 \textit{Wf6 10.0-0-0.}}}}}}}}
The move 5...Qf6 will be examined later in the game Sveshnikov-Milliet.

If 5...d6, then White obtains a stable advantage after 6.d4 exd4 7.Qxd4 Qd7 8.c3 Qf6 9.e2 Qe7 10.0-0 0-0 11.Qc2; quite a few games have been played in this line.

The most principled continuation is 5...d5 6.cxd5 exd5 and now:

**analysis diagram**

A) 7.Qc3?! d4! 8.Qd5 Qe7 9.Qc4 b5 10.Qxe7 Qxe7 11.Qd3 Qg6 (11...Qe6 12.Qg5±) 12.g3 Qe6 13.0-0 Qd6 14.e5 Qxe5 15.Qxe5 Qxe5 16.a4 (better is 16.Qe1 Qd6 17.Qh5 Qe7∞) 16...bxa4 17.Qxa4 0-0 18.Qe1 Qd6?, E.Sveshnikov-
6.g3 \( \text{g6} \) 7.d3 \( \text{e7} \) 8.g2 \( \text{0-0} \) 9.0-0

9...d6

More confused play results from 9...d5 10.e5 \( \text{g4} \) 11.e2 \( \text{h6} \). Sharevich makes very natural, solid moves. The position remains roughly equal, but very tense, and interesting to play over the board.

10.c3 d4

10...\( \text{b8} \)!

11.h3

It was worth considering 11.d2 \( \text{b8} \) 12.d4 cxd4 13.e5 \( \text{e6} \) 14.fc1 \( \text{g6} \).

11...\( \text{b8} \) 12.e2 e5

Rough equality also results from 12...d3+ 13.xf3 b5 14.g2 \( \text{b7} \).

13.d2 b5 14.f4 \( \text{b7} \) 15.d4 cxd4 16.a3

Or 16.c1 b4 with a complicated game.

16...a8

16...c6?!.
17.\textit{Kh2 }bxc4?!  
An inaccuracy; better is 17...\textit{Rf8} or 17...\textit{Nd7}.

18.\textit{Qxc4 }exf4

19.\textit{Bxf4}!

Now White manages to get through to the weak pawn d4. On the other hand, after 19.gxf4 d5 the initiative would switch to Black.

19...\textit{d5} 20.\textit{Bxe7 }\textit{Qxe7} 21.\textit{exd5 }\textit{Qxd5}?!  
Better is 21...\textit{Bxd5}, although here too, after 22.\textit{Rxd4 }\textit{Bd8} 23.\textit{Bxd5 }\textit{Qxd5} 24.\textit{Bf3} (also good is 24.\textit{Be4 }\textit{Bf6} 25.\textit{Be1}) 24...\textit{Bb4} 25.\textit{Be4 }\textit{Qg5} 26.\textit{Rd1 }\textit{Qxa2} 27.\textit{Be5} White’s chances are superior.

22.\textit{Qxd4}
22...\texttt{c3}?! 

The result of an oversight. In the variation 22...\texttt{c3} 23.\texttt{d2} \texttt{xg2} 24.\texttt{xc3} (little is promised by 24.\texttt{xg2} \texttt{b7}+ 25.\texttt{h2} \texttt{be8} 26.\texttt{e1}) 24...\texttt{c6} 25.\texttt{d2} \texttt{f6} 26.\texttt{f4} White has only a small advantage.

\textbf{23.\texttt{e2} \texttt{xg2} 24.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{xe3} 25.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{b7} 26.\texttt{e1}}

White has an extra pawn and excellent winning chances.

\textbf{26...g6}

The character of the battle and the assessment of the position are not changed by 26...\texttt{fd8} 27.\texttt{xd8}+ \texttt{xd8} 28.\texttt{c4} h5
29.\text{e}3 \pm.

27.\text{g}1 \text{f}d8 28.\text{x}d8+ \text{x}d8 29.\text{d}1 \text{f}3 30.\text{d}2 \text{e}4 31.\text{d}4 f5 32.\text{f}2

White also had another strong plan – to surrender the passed d-pawn, so as to obtain two connected passed pawns on the queenside: 32.d5!? \text{f}7 33.\text{f}2 \text{f}6 34.\text{d}4 \text{e}5 35.\text{a}4 \pm.

32...\text{f}7 33.\text{c}4 g5 34.\text{e}3 \text{e}6 35.\text{b}6 \text{d}6 36.\text{a}4 \text{f}6 37.\text{f}2 \text{c}6 38.\text{c}5 \text{d}5 39.\text{b}4 \text{g}6 40.\text{a}4 \text{b}6 41.\text{b}2 \text{g}7

42.\text{f}2

More energetic is 42.b5 \text{h}6 43.h4 gxh4 44.b6 hxg3 45.b7 f4+ 46.\text{x}f4 \text{xb}7 47.\text{xb}7+ winning.

42...\text{g}6 43.\text{d}3 \text{f}6 44.a5 \text{e}6+ 45.\text{e}5 h5 46.\text{c}2 h4 47.\text{e}7 \text{e}8 48.\text{x}h4 f4+ 49.\text{f}2 \text{gxh}4 50.\text{c}5

Waeker is 50.\text{d}7 \text{e}6 51.\text{a}7 \text{f}5 52.\text{xa}6 \text{e}4 53.\text{d}6 \text{c}8 54.\text{g}4 \text{c}2+ 55.\text{e}1 \text{c}4, and Black obtains sufficient counterplay to draw.

50...\text{d}8 51.\text{c}6 \text{d}6
52.b5!

The decisive breakthrough: the two passed pawns break down Black's defences.

52...axb5 53.b4 a8

Nor is he saved by 53...c4 54.e6 e6 55.xd6+ xd6 56.f3 f1 57.xf4 xh3 58.g5+-.

54.d5! e5 55.a6 d4 56.xb5 e4 57.b8 xd5 58.e8+ f5 59.f8+ e4 60.xd5 xa6 61.xf4 a3
62. $\text{f}6$

White also wins after 62. $\text{g}2$, for example: 62...$\text{a}2+ 63. $\text{g}1 \text{f}3 64. $\text{g}2+ $\text{g}3 65. $\text{g}8+$.

62...$\text{a}2+ 63. $\text{g}1 \text{e}3 64. $\text{f}1 \text{a}5$

Black is not saved by 64...$\text{a}4 65. $\text{g}7 \text{e}4 66. $\text{g}2 \text{a}5 67. $\text{e}6 \text{e}3 68. $\text{g}5+$.

65. $\text{f}4 \text{a}2 66. $\text{g}2+ $\text{e}4 67. $\text{f}4+ $\text{e}5 68. $\text{x}h4 \text{f}5 69. $\text{g}4$

Black resigned.

**Conclusion:** Black does not equalise with the passive 2...e6 3. $\text{f}3 \text{a}6 4. $\text{b}2 \text{c}6$. Now the main critical position arises after 5.c4 d5!? 6.cxd5 exd5 7.exd5 $\text{b}4 8. $\text{c}4! b5 9.a3!, and White’s advantage in development allows him to obtain the advantage.

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Game 70
Evgeny Sveshnikov 2527
Sophie Milliet 2369
Reykjavik open 2011 (9)

1.e4 c5 2. $\text{f}3 \text{e}6 3.\text{b}3 \text{a}6 4. $\text{b}2 \text{c}6 5. c4 $\text{f}6$!

Sharevich played 5...$\text{c}7$, and this move is apparently stronger.

6.e5 $\text{g}4 7.\text{h}3 $\text{h}6$

8.g4

Simply playing to limit the $\text{h}6$. White also has a more subtle plan – 8.$\text{d}3$! with the idea of 8...d6 9.exd6 $\text{xd}6$
10.\text{B}e4 \text{B}e7 11.\text{B}xc6+ bxc6 12.0-0 e5 13.\text{B}c3 0-0 14.\text{B}e1, obtaining a stable advantage, Shirazi-Bauer, Wasselonne 2014. More accurate is 8...\text{B}e7!?. We offer the following small analysis of this continuation: 9.\text{B}e4 \text{Q}c7 10.0-0 0-0 11.\text{B}c3 \text{B}xe5 12.\text{B}xe5 \text{B}xe5 13.\text{B}d5 \text{B}d6 (also interesting is 13...\text{B}xb2 14.\text{B}xe7+ \text{h}8 15.\text{B}xc8 \text{B}xc8 16.\text{B}xb7 \text{B}c7 17.\text{B}xa6 \text{g}5) 14.\text{B}xe7+ \text{B}xe7 15.d4 \text{f}5 16.\text{B}f3 \text{g}7 17.\text{d}xc5 (17.\text{B}e1?) 17...\text{B}xc5 18.\text{d}2 with compensation for the pawn.

8...\text{d}6

Play turns in White’s favour after 8...\text{B}e7 9.\text{B}g2 \text{f}5 (9...\text{f}6!?; 9...0-0!?)) 10.exf6 \text{B}xf6 11.\text{B}xf6 \text{Q}xf6 12.\text{B}c3, but it is worth considering 8...\text{d}5!? 9.\text{B}g2 (or 9.cxd5 \text{exd}5 10.\text{B}g2 \text{d}4) 9...\text{d}4 10.\text{d}3 \text{Q}c7 11.\text{B}e2 \text{B}e7 with mutual chances.

9.\text{B}g2

Black has decent counterplay after 9.exd6 \text{B}xd6 (9...\text{f}6!; 9...\text{f}5!?)) 10.\text{B}c3 \text{d}7 or 10...\text{f}6.

9...\text{d}xe5

Also interesting is 9...\text{B}b4 10.d4 \text{cxd}4 11.exd6 \text{d}3 12.0-0 \text{B}xd6 13.\text{B}c3.

10.\text{B}xe5 \text{B}d4

Battling for the key point in the centre. After 10...\text{B}xe5 11.\text{B}xe5 \text{f}6 12.\text{B}b2 the position also remains unclear, e.g. 12...\text{B}e7 13.\text{B}c3 0-0 14.\text{Q}e2 (possibly stronger is 14.f4!? \text{f}5 15.g5 \text{B}f7 16.h4) 14...\text{B}f7 15.0-0-0 etc.

11.0-0 \text{d}6 12.\text{f}4

If 12.\text{B}f3, then 12...\text{f}5!? and Black seizes the initiative.

Interesting complications arise after 12...\text{g}5!? 13.\text{B}c3 (13.\text{b}4; 13.\text{B}d3) 13...\text{gxf}4 14.\text{d}3 \text{f}5.
13. Nc3 Qc7

White is better after 13...f6 14. Nd3 f5 15. g5. Events become very interesting after 13...f5 14. Ne2 (little is promised by 14.gxf5 Nhxf5 15. Ne4 a7, whilst 14.g5 Nxe5 15. gxf6 Qf6 16. hxg7 Qf7 is in general unfavourable to White) 14...fxg4 15. hxg4 Qxg4 (15...Nxe5!? 16. Qxf4 Nxe5 17. Nb1 b8 with compensation for the small material investment).

14. Ne2

White is ready to sacrifice a pawn, so as to eliminate the strong enemy knight. Black is fine after 14. Nd3 Qd8 or 14...f5.

14...Nxe5 15. fxe5 Qxe5 16. Nxd4 cxd4 17. Qf3 Qc5

Stronger is 17...f6, although even here, after, for example, 18. Qd3 Qd8 19. e1 Qc7 20. e4 f5 21. gxf5 Qxf5 22. Qx5 exf5 23. d5+ Qxd5 (bad is 23... Rf8 24. Qd4) 24. cxd5 Qd7 25. Qd4 b5 26. Qc3 Qf7 27. Qf2 White has the advantage.

18. e1

18...f5

On the immediate 18...e5 the reply 19. Qd5! is very strong. On the other hand, if 18...f6, then 19. Qd3 Qd8 (he loses after 19...e5 20. g5 fxg5 21. Qxf8+ Qxf8 22. Nxe5 or 21...exf5 22. Qxh7) 20. e4 f5 21. gxf5 Qxf5 22. Qf4 Qc7 23. Qf3 with more than sufficient compensation for the pawn.

19. Qg3!

Playing for a blockade of the dark squares.

19... Qd8 20. e5

Consequential, although it was also possible to exploit a fleeting tactical chance: 20. Qh4! Qf8 21. g5 Qf7 22. Qxd4 with an overwhelming advantage.
20...d6

White is better after 20...b4 21.h4.

21.gxf5

On 21...xf5 there would follow 22.xf5! exf5 23.d5+ (but not 23.e8+? f7) 23...f8 24.xd4, and Black's position collapses.

22.e3

Also good is 22.f6 g6 23.g5 xg3 24.xg3 h6 25.e4 f7 26.f4 f5 27.xf5 exf5 (27...e5?) 28.xd4 h6 29.h4 with advantage.

22.xg3

Unsatisfactory is 22.e5 23.f6 g6 24.e2.

23.xg3 exf5

23...e5 24.a3 d7 25.d5 loses.

24.d5
White regains the pawn and creates decisive threats on the kingside.

24...g6 25.\textit{B}xd4 \textit{B}e6 26.\textit{B}xe6 \textit{R}xd4 27.\textit{R}f5 \textit{R}f8 28.\textit{R}f7

Forcing transition into an endgame.

28...\textit{R}xf7 29.\textit{R}f3 \textit{R}d7 30.d4 \textit{B}g7 31.\textit{R}xf7+ \textit{R}xf7 32.\textit{B}xf7 \textit{B}xf7 33.d5 \textit{B}f6 34.c5 \textit{B}e5 35.d6 \textit{B}e6 36.b4 \textit{R}d7 37.\textit{R}f2 g5 38.h4!

The last accurate move – now there is no need to count tempi or seek corresponding squares. Black resigned.

Conclusion: After 5.c4 \textit{N}f6 (Sharevich played 5...\textit{Q}c7) 6.e5 \textit{Q}g4 7.h3 \textit{Q}h6 White obtains an advantage most simply by 8.\textit{B}d3. In the game, there followed 8.g4 d6 9.\textit{B}g2, and now White’s chances are also superior, thanks to the badly-placed black knight on h6.

Game 71
Oleg Skvortsov
Vladimir Barsky
Moscow 2013

1.e4 c5 2.\textit{B}f3 e6 3.b3 a6 4.c4!? 

In the spirit of the Maroczy Bind, White seizes space in the centre, whilst it will not be hard for him to follow up with d2-d4.
4...d5

A principled move, but it does not yield equality. Stronger is 4...c6! 5.b2 (5.d4 exd4 6.cxd4 Qa5+ 7.d2 Qe5, and Black wins a pawn) 5...c7, taking play into a position from the game Sveshnikov-Sharevich.

5.exd5 exd5 6.cxd5 Nf6 7.Nc3 b5?!

Too ambitious – Black takes the square c4 from the enemy bishop in advance, but does so at the cost of development. Better is 7...dxe5 8.dxe5 Qxd5, e.g. 9.b2 c6 10.c4 e4+ 11.e2 xe2+ 12.xe2 (White has a small initiative, but with accurate moves Black should hold equality) 12...g4 13.h3 g5 14.g4 g6 15.h4 d8 etc.

8.d3

Energetic action could have placed a question mark against the opponent’s idea: 8.d4 c5 (more tenacious is 8...b7, accepting an inferior position) 9.dxe5 Qxe5 10.d3! cxd4 11.0-0 b4 12.e1+! xe1 13.e1+ e6 14.e4 a7 15.dxe4. Black’s problem is that he cannot keep his queen on the e-file; but he has one other sharp resource: 15...xe4!? 16.xe4+ (thanks to the back-rank weakness, Black regains the queen, but that is not the end of the matter) 17.xb5! xe4 (17...axb5 18.b4, taking control of the square e1) 18.d6+ d7 19.xe4. The complications have finally ended, and White has a healthy extra pawn in the ending.

8...e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.h3 b7 11.e1 cxd5
Black has successfully solved his opening problems.

12.a4!?

An ingenious resource, thanks to which the tension is preserved. An equal and rather colourless position is reached after 12...\texttt{Nxd5 Bxd5 13.Ba3 d7 14.e1 e8.}

12...\texttt{f6}

With this manoeuvre, Black hopes to secure the advantage. In the event of 12...\texttt{Nb4 Be4 Bd4 e4 14.dxe4 bxa4 15.Nxa4 Nc6} the two sides’ pawn weaknesses balance each other out.

13.axb5 cxb3 14.dxc3 cxc3

Bad is 14...\texttt{xf3? 15.Bxf3}, and the rook on a8 is attacked.

15.g5! f6! 16.c4+ h8 17.d8xd8 xd8 18.ad1 d7
19.\textit{e3}!

The most precise move. He could make a draw ‘from a position of weakness’ with 19.\textit{e7} \textit{xf3} 20.\textit{xd7} \textit{xd7}
21.\textit{xd7} axb5 22.\textit{xb5} fxg5 23.\textit{xf3}, but 19.\textit{d2}? is simply bad: 19...\textit{xf3} 20.\textit{xf3} axb5 21.\textit{xb5} \textit{bxd2} 22.\textit{xd2} axb5 23.\textit{xd8+} \textit{xd8} 24.\textit{g2} g5 25.\textit{c1} \textit{d5} 26.\textit{c4} \textit{d2}.

19...\textit{d4}?

A terrible mistake, resulting from overestimating his position. Equality results from the accurate 19...\textit{xf3} 20.\textit{xf3} axb5 21.\textit{xb5} \textit{d4} 22.\textit{f4} \textit{e5} 23.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5}.

20.\textit{xd4} \textit{cxd4}?

Consequential, but bad. There were chances to defend after 20...\textit{f8} 21.\textit{e7} axb5 22.\textit{xb5} \textit{fxg5} 23.\textit{xb7} \textit{cxd4}.

21.\textit{xd4} \textit{fxg5}
22.bxa6!

The most resolute continuation, although also possible is 22.ed3.

22...c6?

Some slim drawing chances were still offered by 22...xa6 23.xa6 xa6 24.xd7 aa8.

23.b4

More precise is the computer continuation 23.e6! ac8 24.b4, but the text is also good.

23...b6

Or 23...db8 24.fl b6 25.b5, and White’s passed pawns cannot be stopped.

24.xd8+ xd8 25.e6 xc4

The last chance; he loses immediately after 25...c8 26.a7.

26.xc6 d6
27.a7?

Haste in serious time-trouble. White can win with the aid of a clever rook manoeuvre: 27.Rb6 Nc4 28.Rb5 Nd6 29.Rd5!, and Black does not manage to include his king in the defence: 29...Kg8 30.b5 Kf7 31.exd6! exd6 32.a7.

27...Nb5!

The a7-pawn is attacked and White does not manage to play Rb6.

28.a6 a8 29.a5 b6 30.b5 c8 31.a3 xa7
32.b6!
An ingenious resource, but it only leads to a draw.

32...\textit{a3} 33.b7 \textit{e7} 34.b8=\textit{g8} 35.f8 \textit{a1}+ 36.h2 h6 37.g3

Draw. All the pawns are on one flank and Black easily holds.

\textbf{Conclusion}: After 1.e4 c5 2.b3 e6 3.f3 a6 4.c4 the central blow 4...d5?! does not give equality, because of White’s serious lead in development. This is underlined most of all by White’s 8th move d2-d4!
Chapter 15

1.e4 c5 2.b3 Nc6 3.Bb5 d5, 3...e5

The main content of this chapter is White’s fight against the pawn barrier c5-d6-e5. But we also need to pay some attention to Inarkiev’s plan of playing ...d7-d5 with the pawn on e7.

Game 72
Vladimir Kramnik
Ernesto Inarkiev
Nizhnij-Novgorod 2013 (6)

1.e4 c5 2.b3 Nc6 3.Bb2 d5

The black queen comes into the centre too early and here, unlike in the 2.c3 Sicilian, the white pawn is not on c3 and the white knight can come to this square with tempo.
4.exd5 \textit{Q}xd5 5.Nc3

It is worth considering 5.Nf3!? , first taking the square e5 from the enemy queen. Now the move b1-c3 becomes a doubly unpleasant threat, against which Black must ‘take measures’. After the plausible 5...g4 6.e2 f6 7.h3 h5 8.c3 d7 9.0-0 e6 10.e1 White is a little better.

5...e5+ 6.e2 xe2+ 7.gxe2 f5 8.0-0-0 0-0-0 9.g3 e5 10.f4!?

Evidently, Kramnik had been aiming at this position since some time back, where he has a small initiative, thanks to his lead in development.

10...exf4 11.xf4 f6 12.e4 d4 13.d3 d6 14.df1
After 14...xf7?! xf4+ 15.gxf4 a6 with the threat of ...f8 and ...b7-b5 Black has excellent compensation for the pawn.

14...d7 15.e2 xf4+ 16.xf4 c6 17.h1 d7

Also after 17...f3 18.g2 d4 19.d2 or 17...g4 18.xf7 xh2 19.f2 g4 20.xd4 cxd4 21.e2 White’s chances are superior.

18.xd4 cxd4 19.b4 b5 20.b3 g4

21.h5! xh2 22.f2 g4 23.f4 f5?!

Black sacrifices the exchange, hoping to activate his pieces. More tenacious is 23...e3, although after 24.xg7 g8 25.f5 xf5 26.xf5 White has a stable advantage.

24.e6 g6 25.g7 e5 26.e1 f3 27.e2 d8 28.xd7+ xd7 29.e6
The knight breaks out to freedom and Kramnik technically realises his advantage.

29...\[d6 30.\[f8 h5 31.\[e6 \[xe6 32.\[xe6 \[d7 33.\[f8 \[g1 34.\[d1 \[e8 35.\[xd4 \[f3 36.\[d6 g5 37.\[e6 \[d7 38.\[c5 \[e8 39.\[e6 \[d8 40.\[b7+ \[d7 41.\[e3 g4 42.\[c5+ \[d8 43.\[e6+ \[d7 44.\[f4 \[f7 45.\[d4 h4

46.\[xf3 gxf3 47.gxh4 \[xa2 48.\[e1 \[e7 49.\[d5 \[d6 50.\[h5 \[e5 51.\[h6 \[xf4 52.\[f2

Black resigned.

Conclusion: After 2.b3 \[c6 3.\[b2 the move 3...d5 is interesting but not sufficient for equality. By comparison with the
variation 1.e4 c5 2.c3 d5!?, here the counterplay is less effective for Black and White can at least obtain an advantage in the endgame and play for two results, as happened in this game. Also very unpleasant for Black is 4.exd5 \(\text{Bxd5}\) 5.\(\text{Nf3}\)!, and Black’s position is not to be envied – the very least White will obtain is a free advantage of the two bishops.

![Chessboard Diagram](image)

**Game 73**

**Vladimir Kramnik** 2784

**Mikhail Kobalia** 2651

Tromsø 2013 (2)

1.e4 c5 2.b3 \(\text{Nc6}\) 3.\(\text{Bb2}\) e5 4.\(\text{Bc4}\)

At the present moment, this is a *tabiya* for the 2.b3 system.

White strengthens his control over the square d5, after which he wants to bring his knight to e2, castle short and then play according to circumstances: prepare the break f2-f4 or transfer his knight via g3 to f5. Sharper attempts by White do not pose the opponent serious problems:

A) 4.f4 exf4 5.\(\text{Nf3}\) \(\text{Bf6}\) 6.e5 \(\text{Nf6}\), and Black, as in the King’s Gambit, holds his extra pawn;

B) 4.\(\text{b5}\) d6 5.f4 exf4 6.\(\text{Nf3}\) \(\text{d7}\) 7.0-0 \(\text{f6}\) 8.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 9.e5 \(\text{d5}\) 10.exd6 \(\text{xd6}\)! 11.\(\text{xc7}\) \(\text{g8}\) 12.\(\text{b2}\) (12.\(\text{e1}\)+) \(\text{e7}\) 12...\(\text{d7}\) – again Black is fine.

4...d6

The more energetic alternative 4...\(\text{f6}\) will be examined later.

5.d3

The following game is very instructive from the point of view of White’s play: 5.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{e7}\) 6.\(\text{ge2}\) \(\text{e6}\) 7.0-0 \(\text{d7}\) 8.f4 exf4 9.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 10.exd5 \(\text{e5}\) 11.\(\text{xf4}\) 0-0-0 12.\(\text{b8}\) 13.d4 cxd4 14.\(\text{xud4}\) \(\text{f6}\) 15.e4 \(\text{c8}\) 16.\(\text{c1}\) h5
17.b4! $h6 18.$b3 $d8 19.$a3 a6 20.b5 $c7 21.b6 $d7 22.c5 g5 23.$xa6 gxf4 24.$d3 $c6 25.dxc6 bxc6 26.b7, and Black resigned in Balashov-Iskusnykh, Moscow 1996.

$$...f6 6.e2 e7 7.bc3 d4$$

White is better after 7...a6 8.a4 0-0 9.f4 $d6 10.f5 $xc4 12.bxc4.

8.0-0 0-0 9.f4 a6 10.a4

Black has quite a large choice here, but it is not easy to find a precise path to equality. Thus, after 10...$g4 11.d5 $e6
12. \( \text{Nxd4 cxd4} \) 13.a5 or 10...

10...

10...b6 11.\( \text{Nd5 } \) \( \text{b8} \) 12.f5! \( \text{xc4} \) 13.bxc4 White retains definite pressure.

The most promising of all is 10...

10...

12.g4 11.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{e8} \) 12.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{e6} \) 13.\( \text{ce2} \) h6, and Black has his play.

10...b6 11.\( \text{Nd5 } \) \( \text{b8} \) 12.f5!

A little slow. Kramnik could obtain an advantage if he initiated play on the kingside at once: 13.\( \text{Nd4 exd4} \) (13...\( \text{exd4} \) is bad because of 14.\( \text{xe7+ xe7} \) 15.\( \text{a3} \)) 14.\( \text{xf6+ xf6} \) 15.\( \text{h5 g6} \) 16.\( \text{f3 e5} \) 17.\( \text{c1} \) (the bishop has fulfilled his mission on the long diagonal, and now it is time to include it in the attack via another route) 17...\( \text{h4} \) 18.\( \text{f3 e7} \) 19.\( \text{f6 g7} \) 20.\( \text{f4} \) with the better chances.

In what follows, Kobalia obtained a satisfactory game and could even have thought about more, but then he missed a cunning tactical blow.

13...\( \text{Nd5} \) 14.\( \text{Nd5} \) \( \text{h4} \)

The immediate 14...\( \text{g6} \)! is also not bad.

15.\( \text{h5 f6} \) 16.\( \text{c4 g6} \) 17.\( \text{d1 g7} \) 18.\( \text{a2 e7} \) 19.\( \text{c3 e6} \) 20.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{b5} \) 21.\( \text{axb5 axb5} \) 22.\( \text{h1 h5} \) 23.\( \text{xd4 exd4} \)

24.\( \text{f5} \)

Black had obviously missed this blow. Now he is forced significantly to weaken his own king.

24...\( \text{gx5} \) 25.\( \text{fx5 bxc4} \) 26.\( \text{f6} \) \( \text{d6} \) 27.\( \text{fxg7 xg7} \) 28.\( \text{bxc4 xd5} \) 29.\( \text{hxh5 f5} \) 30.\( \text{xd5 g6} \) 31.\( \text{h4 be8} \) 32.\( \text{f3 e3} \) 33.\( \text{xe3 dxe3} \) 34.\( \text{e7+ f7} \) 35.\( \text{xe3 f4} \) 36.\( \text{e5+ f6} \) 37.\( \text{xf6+ xf6} \) 38.\( \text{g3 f3} \) 39.\( \text{g1 f5} \) 40.\( \text{d6 f6} \) 41.\( \text{f2 e5} \) 42.\( \text{e1+ xd6} \) 43.\( \text{e3} \) 1-0

Conclusions: The critical position arose after 4.\( \text{c4} \) d6 5.d3 6.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{e7} \) 7.\( \text{bc3} \) \( \text{d4} \) 8.0-0 0-0 9.\( \text{f4} \) a6 10.\( \text{a4} \). Black needs to play accurately – 10...\( \text{g4} \)! 11.\( \text{d2 ec8} \) 12.\( \text{g3 e6} \) 13.\( \text{ce2} \) h6 with sharp play. However, in the game after
10...b6?! there followed 11.d5! b8 12.fxe5 dxe5, and Kramnik could have obtained the advantage by means of 13.dxe4 exd4 14.\textit{xf6+} xf6 15.\textit{h5} g6 16.\textit{f3} \textit{e5} 17.\textit{c}1 with the initiative on the kingside. However, after the move in the game, 13.g3, Black obtained sufficient play.

The game shows that with slow play by Black, White obtains a lasting initiative. More forcing variations arise after 4...\textit{f6}?! 5.c3 (if 5.d3, then 5...d5 with counterplay) 5...\textit{xe4} 6.\textit{xe4} d5 7.\textit{d}3 dxe4 8.\textit{xe4} \textit{d}6 with mutual chances; these positions will be examined on the basis of the following game.

\textbf{Game 74}
\textbf{Oleg Skvortsov}
\textbf{Evgeny Sveshnikov}
\textbf{Moscow 2014 (1)}

1.e4 c5 2.b3 \textit{c}6 3.\textit{b}2 e5 4.\textit{c}4 \textit{f6}

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_board}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

5.c3

If White defends the e4-pawn straightforwardly with 5.d3, then after 5...d5! 6.exd5 \textit{xd}5 7.\textit{f}3 f6 8.c3 b6 (8...\textit{e}6!?) 9.b5 \textit{d}7 or 9...\textit{d}6 gives Black a comfortable game.

The move in the game prevents the advance ...d7-d5, but Black can instead carry out another typical simplifying operation.

5...\textit{xe4}

Of course, Black does not by any means always show such a principled approach and go in for this combination. After the more modest 5...\textit{e}7 White can justifiably count on a small advantage, e.g. 6.d3 a6 7.a4 d6 8.ge2 e6 9.0-0 d5 10.exd5 \textit{xd}5 11.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 12.c3 \textit{xc}4 13.bxc4\textdagger, Romanov-Kupreichik, Tula 2006.

6.\textit{xe4}
After 6.\hfillxf7+?! 7.xf7 7.xe4 d5 8.g3 e7 9.f3 f6 Black has two bishops and a powerful pawn centre. He will soon castle by hand and fight for the advantage.

6...d5 7.f4!?  

The main continuation 7.d3 will be examined below.

E.Sveshnikov: ‘This novelty by Oleg Skvortsov had been prepared specially for our game. Undoubtedly, Oleg has rare qualities as an analyst and he has rewritten whole areas of opening theory! I have great respect for him. After the surprise of the text move, I spent about ten minutes, deciding which piece to take.’

7...dxc4  

E.Sveshnikov: ‘I decided to take the bishop, to rule out being mated. I realised that the most principled move is 7...exf4 8.h5 dxc4, but it is risky to enter such a sharp continuation without preparation.’

Thus, the critical position of the variation arises after 7...exf4 8.h5 (Black is fine after 8.e2 e6) 8...dxc4 9.f3
analysis diagram

A) 9...cxb3 and now:
   A1) 10.0-0 e6 11.fg5 g6 12.xe6 fxe6 13.g4 e5 (13...d4 14.axb3 e7 15.xf4± 14.xf4 bxc2 (14...exf4?!) 15.e6+ e7 16.xh8 f8 17.f1 c7 18.cxb3±) 14.f6+ (15.e2±) 15.e7 16.e4±;
   A2) 10.fg5!? and now:
      A21) Bad is 10...d5 11.c4 f5 (11...xc4? 12.xg7+-) 12.0-0 g6 (he loses after 12...d4? 13.e1) 13.xg6 (or 13.e1 xh5 14.f6+ d8 15.xh5±) 13...hgx6 14.e1 e6 (14...d7 15.xf7 h5 16.axb3±) 15.axb3 0-0-0 16.xf4±;
      A22) 10...c7 11.0-0 f5 (the only move) 12.e1 0-0-0 13.xf7
13...\texttt{xe}4 (13...\texttt{d}d4 14.cxb3 \texttt{xd}7 15.\texttt{e}e8+ \texttt{d}8 16.\texttt{f}7=) 14.\texttt{x}e4 \texttt{xd}2 15.\texttt{xb}3 with a complicated game.

B) 9...\texttt{e}6 10.\texttt{fg}5.

\textit{analysis diagram}

The game tends in White's favour after 10...\texttt{d}d4 11.0-0\texttt{e} or 10...g6?! 11.\texttt{xe}6 fxe6 12.\texttt{g}4 e5 13.\texttt{e}6+ \texttt{e}7 (13...\texttt{e}7 14.\texttt{d}6+ \texttt{d}8 15.\texttt{f}7+ \texttt{c}7 16.\texttt{xe}7+ \texttt{xe}7 17.\texttt{hx}8 \texttt{x}h8 18.bxc4=) 14.\texttt{f}6+ \texttt{f}8 15.\texttt{d}7+ \texttt{e}8 (15...\texttt{g}7? 16.0-0 followed by \texttt{xf}4 and \texttt{ae}1, and White wins) 16.\texttt{xe}5 \texttt{xe}5 17.\texttt{xe}5 (or 17.\texttt{xe}5 \texttt{f}8 18.0-0=) 17...\texttt{f}8 18.0-0\texttt{e} or 18.0-0-0\texttt{e}.

In the diagram position, the path to equality is 10...\texttt{d}7 11.\texttt{xe}6 \texttt{xe}6 12.0-0 0-0-0 13.\texttt{x}f4=.

C) An equal position arises after 9...c3
10.\textsf{Bxc3} \textsf{e6} 11.\textsf{Bxc5} \textsf{Bd5} 12.\textsf{Bxd5} \textsf{exd5} 13.\textsf{d3} (but not 13.\textsf{Bxb7}?! \textsf{a5}) 13...\textsf{d6}=; 

D) A fighting move, but a risky one for Black, is 9...g6, and now:

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{analysis_diagram1}
\end{figure}

D1) 10.\textsf{Qg5} \textsf{Qxg5} 11.\textsf{Qf6}+; White is also better after 11...\textsf{h6}?! 12.\textsf{Bxh8} \textsf{hxg5} 13.0-0-0 \textsf{cxb3} 14.\textsf{axb3} \textsf{Qxe6} 15.\textsf{Qg5} \textsf{Qf5} or 15.\textsf{Qf4}+;

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{analysis_diagram2}
\end{figure}

D2) 10.\textsf{Bf6}+?! \textsf{Qxf6} 11.\textsf{Qxf6} \textsf{gxf6} 12.\textsf{Bh8} \textsf{b4} 13.0-0-0 \textsf{f5} (13...\textsf{Qxa2}+ 14.\textsf{Qb2} \textsf{cxb3} 14...\textsf{Qb4} 15.\textsf{Qxc4} \textsf{Qe6}) 15.\textsf{c3} \textsf{e6} 16.\textsf{Qf1}+ \textsf{e6} (16...\textsf{Qe7} 17.\textsf{Qg5} \textsf{Qe6} 18.\textsf{Qxe6} \textsf{fxe6} 19.\textsf{d3} \textsf{d3} \textsf{Qe5} =) 17.\textsf{Qxe6} or 17.\textsf{Qg5} \textsf{Qxe6} 18.\textsf{Qxe6}+ \textsf{fxe6} 19.\textsf{d3} = 14.\textsf{Bc1}+ \textsf{Qd7} 15.\textsf{Bxc4} and now:
D21) 15...\textit{b} \textit{a}2+ 16.\textit{b} \textit{b}2 \textit{b} \textit{b}4 17.\textit{e} \textit{e}5+ \textit{c} \textit{c}7 18.\textit{d}3±;

D22) 15...\textit{d}6 16.\textit{e} \textit{e}5+ \textit{c} \textit{c}7 17.\textit{f} \textit{f}7 \textit{f} \textit{x} \textit{c}2 18.\textit{e} \textit{e}2 \textit{b}4 19.\textit{d} \textit{d} \textit{c} \textit{c}d4 20.\textit{x} \textit{x} \textit{d} \textit{d}6 21.\textit{x} \textit{x} \textit{d} \textit{d}4 \textit{d} \textit{d}3+ 22.\textit{f} \textit{f}2±;

D23) 15...\textit{x} \textit{c}2 16.\textit{e} \textit{e}5 \textit{g} \textit{g}6 17.\textit{d}5+ \textit{c} \textit{c}7 18.\textit{e} \textit{e}5 \textit{b} \textit{b}4 19.\textit{d}7+ \textit{c} \textit{c}8 (19...\textit{b}6 20.\textit{h} \textit{x} \textit{g} \textit{g} \textit{x} \textit{g} \textit{g} 21.\textit{a}3 \textit{c} \textit{c}6 22.\textit{f} \textit{f}1±) 20.\textit{f} \textit{f}6± or 20.\textit{f} \textit{f}1±.

\textbf{8.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}4}

‘White wishes to complete his development more rapidly and prepare long castling. Yes, I saw the variation at the end of which Black was slightly worse, but from practical considerations, I decided to play this solid move’ (E.Sveshnikov).

The critical position of the variation arises after 8...\textit{f}4 9.0-0.
Obviously, White has compensation for the pawn, thanks to his lead in development, although after, say, 9...\text{e}7!?

10.\text{xg7 g8} 11.\text{e}2 h3 12.\text{f}2 f5 13.\text{c}3 g4 14.\text{h}1 \text{xb3} 15.\text{xb3} \text{d7} \Rightarrow Black's position is preferable.

Instead of 8...g4, another very interesting move is that pointed out by Oleg Skvortsov: 8...f5!? However, such sharp variations need to be analysed at home, before being tried over the board.

A) 8...f5!? 9.\text{f}2 e4 10.\text{e}5 \text{xe}5 11.\text{xe}5.

\textit{analysis diagram}

A1) Dubious is the tempting 11...\text{xb3} 12.\text{h}5+ g6 13.\text{h}3 b2 (13...g8? 14.\text{xb3} \pm) 14.\text{xb2} g8 15.\text{b3} \text{b6}
16.\texttt{Q}xg8 \texttt{Q}xb2 17.0-0 \texttt{Q}g7 18.\texttt{Q}b3±;

A2) 11...\texttt{Q}d7 12.\texttt{Q}h5+ \texttt{Q}f7 13.\texttt{Q}xf7+ \texttt{Q}xf7 14.bxc4 \texttt{Q}e6 15.d3 exd3 16.cxd3 – the position is close to equality;

A3) 11...\texttt{Q}e6 12.\texttt{Q}h5+ \texttt{Q}d7 13.0-0 (13.0-0-0?) 13...\texttt{Q}d6 14.\texttt{Q}xg7 \texttt{Q}e8 15.\texttt{Q}h3 \texttt{Q}g8 16.\texttt{Q}c3±;

A4) 11...\texttt{Q}d5 12.0-0 \texttt{Q}d7! 13.\texttt{Q}e2 \texttt{Q}c6 14.bxc4 \texttt{Q}f7 15.d3 exd3 16.cxd3 0-0-0 17.\texttt{Q}e3 \texttt{Q}d6±;

A5) 11...h5!? (covering the square) 12.\texttt{Q}e2 \texttt{Q}e6 (12...cxb3 13.axb3) 13.0-0 \texttt{Q}d7 (13...\texttt{Q}d5?) 14.bxc4 \texttt{Q}d6 15.\texttt{Q}xd6 \texttt{Q}xd6 16.d3 0-0-0±.

B) Another interesting possibility for Black is 8...\texttt{f}5 9.\texttt{g}3

B1) 9...\texttt{Q}e6 10.\texttt{Q}xe5 \texttt{Q}xe5 11.fxe5 (11.\texttt{Q}xe5?) 11...cxb3 12.axb3 \texttt{Q}e7 13.0-0 with an approximately equal game;

B2) 9...\texttt{Q}d7 10.\texttt{Q}xf5 \texttt{Q}xf5 11.\texttt{Q}xe5 \texttt{Q}xe5 12.\texttt{Q}xe5 cxb3 13.axb3±;

B3) 9...\texttt{Q}g4 10.\texttt{Q}e2 (10.fxe5 cxb3 11.axb3?!) 10...cxb3 11.axb3 \texttt{Q}e7 (11...\texttt{Q}d5 12.fxe5?) 12.fxe5 0-0 13.0-0 with mutual chances.

9.fxe5 \texttt{Q}d4?!

Stronger was 9...cxb3 10.axb3 \texttt{Q}e7, e.g. 11.0-0 0-0 12.d3 \texttt{Q}d4 13.\texttt{Q}xd4 \texttt{Q}xf3 14.\texttt{Q}xf3 \texttt{Q}xd4+ 15.\texttt{Q}f2 \texttt{Q}xe5 (or 15...b6 16.\texttt{Q}ae1 \texttt{Q}ae8 17.\texttt{Q}e4 \texttt{Q}d8?) 16.\texttt{Q}xb7 \texttt{Q}ab8 17.\texttt{Q}f3 (17.\texttt{Q}xa7 \texttt{Q}d6 18.g3 \texttt{Q}d5 19.\texttt{Q}a5 \texttt{Q}a8 20.\texttt{Q}b6 \texttt{Q}xa5 21.\texttt{Q}xa5 \texttt{Q}e5?) 17...\texttt{Q}c7 18.\texttt{Q}g4 \texttt{Q}g5?.

10.\texttt{Q}xd4±
10...\textit{xf3}

White is better after 10...cxd4 11.bxc4 \textit{e}7 12.0-0 0-0 13.h3 \textit{h}5 14.d3±.

\textbf{11.\textit{xf3} \textit{xd4} 12.c3 \textit{xe5}}

Clearly bad is 12...\textit{d}3 because of 13.bxc4 \textit{xf3} 14.gxf3, and White has a healthy extra pawn.

\textbf{13.0-0 0-0-0 14.bxc4 \textit{d}6}

Stronger is 14...\textit{b}8, although even here, after, say, 15.\textit{ab1} \textit{d}7 16.\textit{b}2 \textit{d}6 17.\textit{xd6} \textit{xd6} 18.\textit{fb1} \textit{a}6 (18...\textit{b}6 19.a4 \textit{b}7 20.a5 \textit{e}8 21.axb6 axb6 22.\textit{a}1 \textit{f}6 23.\textit{ba2} \textit{c}7 24.\textit{h}3±) 19.\textit{g}3+ \textit{a}8 20.\textit{xg7} White retains the initiative.
15.\texttt{Nxd6}+?! \\

This natural move turns out to be an inaccuracy. Better is 15.\texttt{Qg4+! Kb8} 16.\texttt{Nxd6 Qxd6} (16...\texttt{Rxd6} 17.\texttt{Rae1±}) 17.\texttt{Rad1!}, and Black has two pawns under attack. He has to go onto the defensive: 17...\texttt{Rf8} 18.\texttt{Qxg7} f5 19.d4± or 17...\texttt{Qg6} 18.\texttt{Qf4+ c8} 19.\texttt{Qxf7} \texttt{Qxf7} 20.\texttt{Rxf7} \texttt{Ed7} 21.\texttt{Rxd7} \texttt{Qxd7} 22.\texttt{Rf1 e6} or 22...\texttt{Qc6}. Black has good drawing chances, but defending an ending a pawn down is not terribly pleasant.

15...\texttt{Qxd6} 16.\texttt{Qxf7}?! \\

Better is 16.\texttt{Qg4+}. \\

16...\texttt{Qxd2} 17.\texttt{Qab1}?! \\

Correct is 17.\texttt{Qf5+ b8} 18.\texttt{Qxc5 xc3} with mutual chances.

17...\texttt{Qe3+} \\

White had missed this intermediate check. The idea of the move is to take control of the square e6, from where the white queen could pin the black rook.

18.\texttt{Qh1} \texttt{Ed7} 19.\texttt{Qf5} g6 20.\texttt{Qg4 Ed8}!
21.\texttt{Be1}?! \\
A very interesting continuation: at the cost of a pawn, White manages to secure the e6-square for his queen after all. On 21.\texttt{Bd1}? very strong is 21...\texttt{h5}! 22.\texttt{Be1} \texttt{Qxe1} 23.\texttt{Qxd7+} \texttt{Rxd7} 24.\texttt{Rxe1} \texttt{Rd3} with good winning chances. Black is better after 21.\texttt{h3} \texttt{Qxc3}, but this was, nonetheless, objectively the best continuation.

21...\texttt{Qxc3} 22.\texttt{Bd1} \\

22...\texttt{Bc7}?!
With his flag hanging, Black does not find the manoeuvre 22...\texttt{g}7! 23.\texttt{d}5 \texttt{e}7!, securely defending the rook on d7 and stabilising the position. For example: 24.h3 \texttt{b}8 25.\texttt{f}4+ \texttt{a}8 26.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{d}6 27.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{d}4, retaining an extra pawn.

\textbf{23.\texttt{f}4+ \texttt{c}6 24.\texttt{e}4+ \texttt{c}7 25.\texttt{f}4+ \texttt{c}6 26.\texttt{e}4+ \texttt{c}7 27.\texttt{f}4+ \texttt{b}6}

An attempt to avoid perpetual check.

\textbf{28.\texttt{b}1+ \texttt{a}6 29.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{c}2 30.\texttt{f}3!}

White ties the enemy rook to the defence of the square b7 and prevents the enemy king fleeing after ...b7-b6 via b7 to b8 or c7.

\textbf{30...\texttt{d}1!?}

The last try! But White does not pay any attention to the queen.

\textbf{31.\texttt{a}3+ \texttt{b}6 32.\texttt{b}3+ \texttt{a}6}

There is no escape from perpetual check.

\textbf{33.\texttt{a}3+ \texttt{b}6 34.\texttt{b}3+}

Draw. A very interesting novelty, a full-blooded struggle and a striking finish!

\textbf{Conclusion:} The idea of 7.f4!? is very interesting, but after the correct 7...\texttt{e}4 8.\texttt{h}5 \texttt{d}4 8.\texttt{e}5 8.\texttt{f}3, and now it is worth considering 8...f5!? with sharp and not unfavourable complications for Black. In the game, though, after 8...\texttt{g}4?! 9.\texttt{xe}5 \texttt{d}4 10.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{f}3 11.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{xd}4 12.\texttt{e}3 \texttt{xe}5 13.0-0 0-0-0 14.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{d}6 White could retain the advantage with 15.\texttt{g}4+ \texttt{b}8 16.\texttt{e}6 \texttt{xd}6 17.\texttt{e}1.
The young Russian GM Zhenya Romanov is these days one of the main specialists in the 2.b3 system. He was himself taught this system by the well-known theoretician from an earlier generation, Yuri Balashov.


Black has sufficient counterplay in the variation 7...b5 dxe4 8.Qxe4 Bb5+ bxc6 9.Qe2 Qd5!? 10.c4 Qd3 11.Qxe5 a5 as well.

7...dxe4 8.Qxe4

8...Qd6

Black also has other possibilities:

A) 8...Qd4 and now:

A1) 9.f3 Qd6 (9...f5 10.Qxd4 cxd4 11.Qd3 c5 12.Qb5+ Qd7 13.Qe2) 10.Qxd4 cxd4 11.0-0 0-0 12.c3 f5 13.Qd5+ Qh8 14.Qe2 Qa5 15.Qc4 dxc3 16.Qxc3 Qc7 17.Qfe1 e4 18.g3 Qd7×;


B) 8...Qc7 9.Qh5 Qd4 10.Qf3 Qd6 11.Qxh4 exd4 12.c3 Qg6 13.Qf6 Qf8 14.Qg4 Qe7 15.Qg3 dxc3 16.Qxc3 (16.Qxc3 Qd6 17.Qc1 0-0 18.0-0 Qe7 19.Qfe1) 16...Qxc3 17.Qxc3 Qf6 18.0-0× Balashov-Schöllmann, Regensburg 1997.

The move 8...Qd7, preventing the doubling of his c-pawns, will be examined in the following game.
As a result of the exchanging operation, Black has seized space in the centre, and the pawns on c5 and e5 prevent White opening lines to exploit his small lead in development. White needs to play very energetically: if Black manages quietly to complete his development, then the initiative will be on his side.

9. \( \text{Q}h5 \)

Logical, but 9. \( \text{N}f3!? \) also deserves consideration, e.g. 9... \( \text{Q}c7 \) (9... \( \text{d}7!? \)) 10.0-0 0-0 11. \( \text{e}1 \text{e}8 \) 12. \( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{bxc}6 \) 13. \( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 14. \( \text{e}4 \). 

In this line too, the break 9. \( \text{f}4!? \), invented by Oleg Skvortsov, is interesting: 9... \( \text{exf}4! \) 10. \( \text{b}xg7 \) \( \text{R}g8 \) 11. \( \text{c}3 \) \( \text{h}4+ \) 12. \( \text{f}1 \) White is unable to castle, but in return, he has spoilt his opponent’s pawn structure. 12... \( \text{e}6 \) It is important to close the e-file; the incautious 12... \( \text{d}7 \)? fails to 13. \( \text{e}1 \)!, Skvortsov-Barsky, Moscow 2014. Now the threat of a discovered check forces Black to exchange queens, when the endgame will be very difficult for him, as the dynamics cease and his pawns are weak. 13. \( \text{f}3 \) On 13. \( \text{e}2 \) possible is 13...0-0-0 14. \( \text{f}3 \) \( \text{h}5 \) 15. \( \text{e}1 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 16. \( \text{xb}4 \) \( \text{xb}4 \) 17. \( \text{d}4 \) \( \text{xe}2+ \) 18. \( \text{xe}2 \) \( \text{g}4 \) with the better chances for Black. 13... \( \text{h}5 \) 14. \( \text{e}1 \) White should strive for the exchange of queens; the attempt to go after the enemy king on the queenside after 14. \( \text{e}2 \) 0-0-0 15. \( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{bxc}6 \) 16. \( \text{a}6+ \) does not bring any benefits: 16... \( \text{b}8 \) 17. \( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{d}5 \) 18. \( \text{b}5+ \) \( \text{c}8! \) 19. \( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{b}7 \), and Black wins.
A very interesting position to analyse. Black can prevent the enemy queen coming out to h4, or allow it:

A) 14...e7 15.e5 (15.e2!?) 15...xe5 16.xe5 0-0-0 (it is understandable that now or on the following move Black cannot take the bishop on e5 because of the discovered check) 17.e2 xe2+ (here he must exchange queens: the white bishops aim powerfully at the enemy king, which can easily come under attack) 18.xe2 xe4+ 19.f1 f3!? – here great complications arise;

B) 14...g4 15.xc6+ bxc6 16.e5 d7!? (the black king follows the example of his opposite number and also starts wandering around the board) 17.xd6 xd6, and if now 18.h3, then a beautiful draw results: 18...xg2! 19.xg2 d5 20.f1 g8+ 21.h2 g3 (White is better after 21...xf3!?) 22.g1 22.e5+ xe5 23.xe5 g2+ 24.h1 f2+ etc.;

C) 14...0-0-0 15.h4 xh4 16.xh4 e5 (in the ending, Black also has sufficient resources to maintain the balance, but he needs to play very accurately) 17.f3 xc3 18.dxc3. Now Black needs to bring the knight into play quickly, without worrying about the pawn:
18...\textit{Be7}! 19.\textit{Bxh7} \textit{Bg7} 20.\textit{Be4}?! (a subtle move: White lures the pawn to f5, at the same time undermining the support of the \textit{Be6}; Black’s task is simpler after 20.\textit{Bd3} \textit{Bd5} 21.\textit{Bf2} \textit{Edg8} 22.\textit{Ehg1} \textit{Bxc3} etc.) 20...f5 21.\textit{Bd3} \textit{Bd5} 22.\textit{Bf2} (Skvortsov-Barsky, Moscow 2014), and here instead of the mistaken capture on c3, Black should play 22...\textit{Be3}! 23.g3 \textit{Bg4}+ 24.\textit{Kg2} \textit{Be3}+, after which we again reach a draw by perpetual check.

Thus, with the help of the sharp idea 9.f4?! White can try to catch his opponent out, although objectively, Black has adequate play and chances to take the initiative.

\textbf{9...\textit{Be4}?!}

This appears to be the most accurate move.

Dubious is 9...h6?!; Sveshnikov-Shirov, Riga 2014, because of 10.f4! 0-0 11.\textit{Bxc6} bxc6 12.fxe5 with an extra pawn.

The alternative is 9...\textit{Be7}. Now:

A) 10.f4?! (Skvortsov) 10...exf4 11.\textit{Bf2}! (the point of White’s idea; after 11.\textit{Exg7}? \textit{Bxe4}+ 12.\textit{Kf2} \textit{Bxg8} 13.\textit{Be1} \textit{Bxe1}+ 14.\textit{Bxe1} \textit{Exg7} Black has too much material for the queen) 11...\textit{Be5}?! (closing the long diagonal and threatening \textit{Bg4}) 12.h3 (Skvortsov-Barsky, Moscow 2014) 12...g6 (it would also be interesting to try 12...\textit{Bd8}?) 13.\textit{Wf6} f6 14.\textit{Wxe5} \textit{Bxe5} 15.\textit{Wg6}+ \textit{Kd8} 16.\textit{Be1} \textit{Bc7} 17.\textit{Bf3} \textit{Bd7} – in this sharp position, both sides have chances.

B) 10.\textit{Bf3} g6 (here it is no longer sufficient to play 10...\textit{Bd4}?! 11.\textit{Exd4} exd4 12.0-0 \textit{Be6} 13.c3! g6 14.\textit{Wh6} \textit{Be5} (Romanov-Bogachkov, Minsk 2006) 15.f4! \textit{Bf6} 16.\textit{Be1} with a large advantage to White) 11.\textit{Wh6} \textit{Bd7} 12.0-0 0-0-0 13.\textit{Bf1} f6, Romanov-Petersen, Helsingor 2012.
Houdini is at first quite optimistic about White’s position, promising him an advantage if he opens the centre with 14.c3!? a8 15.d4 cxd4 16.cxd4. However, if we continue the variation, the assessment changes: 16...b4! 17.ed1 xd4 18.xd4 exd4 19.xd4 b5 20.f3 xd4 21.xd4 d8 22.e3... Maybe White is very slightly better, but the most likely outcome is a draw, of course.

10.f3

It appears that 10.0-0-0!? has not yet been seen in practice; we will give a brief analysis of the resulting position:
A) 10...g6 11.h6 f8 12.e3 g7 (it is hard to say where the bishop is more actively placed, on g7 or d6; but, at the
very least, this manoeuvre does not use up so much time) 13.h4 h5 14.f4 (14...f3!? 14...exf4 (14...h6!?) 15.xf4 0-0 with mutual chances;

B) 10...h6!? (White wants to drive the white queen away, whilst keeping his bishop on d6) 11.e1 g6 12.d1 (sacrificing a piece with 12.xg6 fxg6 13.xg6+ gives nothing – after 13...d7 14.c3 e6 15.d4 g5+ Black has the advantage) 12...0-0 (White has the initiative after 12...c7 13.f4 0-0 14.f3; but it is worth considering 12...f6) 13.h4 h5 14.f3 a5 or 14...e8 15.g5 e7, in both cases with a complicated, tense position.

10...f6?!

An inaccuracy, which could have cost Black dear. Correct was 10...g6! 11.h6 f8 12.e3 g7 13.c3, and now the ball is in Black’s court:

![Analysis Diagram]

**Analysis Diagram**

A) It is possible to sacrifice a pawn to fight for the initiative: 13...xf3+ 14.xf3 0-0! (White is better after 14...c7 15.a3) 15.xe5 e4 16.e2 e8 with compensation;

B) 13...e6:

B1) 14.c4 (it is unpleasant to leave the b2 shut in) 14...d4 15.d4 exd4 16.f3 0-0 17.0-0 c7 (17...a5!?) 18.d3 e5 19.g3 e8 with a roughly equal game;

B2) 14.0-0 f5 15.d3 e4 16.c4 d6 (16...e7!?) 17.fe1±.

11.d4 exd4

There is not full equality from 11...exd4 12.0-0, e.g. 12...g6 13.f3 xf3 14.xf3 0-0 15.fe1 d8 16.c3 dxc3 17.dxc3 (a position with mutual chances results from 17.xc3 a5 18.f6 f8 19.g3 a4) 17...c4!? 18.bxc4 e6 19.d5±.

12.0-0 h6?!

Better is 12...g6, although here too, Black has problems. For example, 12...g6 13.f3 xf3 14.xf3 0-0 15.c3 dxc3 16.xc3 a5 17.fe1 a4 18.bxa4 xa4 19.xe5 xe5 20.xe5 e6 21.xb7 b8 22.d5 a5 23.xe6 fxe6 24.xe6+...
13.c3

Black has not managed to complete his development and support his pawn centre, so any break is very unpleasant for him. After 13.f4!? 0-0 14.fxe5 Qxe5 15.Qxe5 Qxe5 16.ae1 f6 17.a3 White’s advantage is also not in doubt. The move in the game leads to a more complicated battle, with queens on.

13...0-0 14.cxd4 exd4 15.g3 d8 16.b5 b8 17.d3 f8 18.ac1 b6 19.fe1 e6 20.f5 xf5 21.xf5 e8 22.xe8 xe8 23.c4 d8 24.e5?!

White has subtly enhanced his advantage, but at this moment, he dithers and allows Black to start counterplay. After an accurate move such as 24.d3!? White’s pressure would grow.

24...g6!

The queen penetrates the white position, via the suddenly undefended light squares. Also good was 24...a6!, so as first to force the weakening move a2-a4.

25.c1 d3 26.c7 e8 27.e4 xd2 28.xd4

More accurate was 28.xd4 with equality.

28.e2 29.xd2 xd2 30.e5

White must go onto the defensive. Luckily for him, he can achieve the draw without too much trouble.

30.f6

On 30...xa2 there is the unpleasant pin 31.c8, with the threat of d6. After the practically forced 31...d2 32.b8 d7 33.b2 f6 34.a3 White regains the pawn.
31. \textbf{f4} \textbf{Exa2} 32. \textbf{Ec8} \textbf{f7} 33. \textbf{Ec7}+ \textbf{g6} 34. \textbf{Exb7} \textbf{c5} 35. \textbf{e3}

The rook endgame is easily held. The most Black can hope for is 3 v 2 on the same side, but even getting this far is extremely difficult.

35...\textbf{xe3} 36.fxe3

36...a5 37.h4 \textbf{e2} 38.\textbf{Ec7} \textbf{b2} 39.\textbf{a7} 1/2-1/2

**Conclusions:** The critical position of this sharp variation arises after Black’s eighth move \textbf{d6}. It is worth further studying the position after 8...\textbf{d7} (Romanov-Laznicka) and 8...\textbf{d4}, whilst after 8...\textbf{d6} Black should be prepared for both 9.\textbf{h5} and 9.f4.

\begin{center}
\textbf{Game 76}
Evgeny Romanov
Viktor Laznicka
Istanbul 2005 (8)
\end{center}

1.e4 c5 2.b3 \textbf{c6} 3.b2 e5 4.\textbf{c4} \textbf{f6} 5.\textbf{c3} \textbf{xe4} 6.\textbf{xe4} d5 7.\textbf{d3} dxe4 8.\textbf{xe4} \textbf{d7}!?
For some reason, Viktor Laznicka has not so far found any followers with this move, although, as we will see, it is not by any means bad. Black gets peace of mind from ensuring the safety of his pawn structure, and long castling is also one step closer.

9. \textit{\textbf{Nf3}} \textit{\textbf{Bd6}}

It is worth considering the immediate 9...\textit{f6} followed by \textit{\textbf{Qc7}} and \textit{\textbf{...0-0-0}}.

10. \textit{\textbf{Qe2}} \textit{\textbf{f6}}

Black needs to be careful. After 10...\textit{\textbf{Qe7}} 11.\textit{\textbf{Bxc6}} \textit{\textbf{Bxc6}} 12.\textit{\textbf{Nxe5}} or 10...\textit{\textbf{0-0!?}} 11.\textit{\textbf{Qd3}} \textit{\textbf{Qe7}} 12.\textit{\textbf{Bxh7+}} \textit{\textbf{Kxh8}} 13.\textit{\textbf{f5}} he is a pawn down.

11. \textit{\textbf{Nh4}}

The quieter 11.\textit{\textbf{0-0!?}} is also possible.

11...\textit{\textbf{g6}}
12.f4!

A typical idea.

12...\textit{\textbf{Q}}e7

Perhaps Black does better to play 12...\textit{\textbf{Q}}e7!? with the idea of 13.0-0-0 0-0-0 or 13.0-0 0-0-0 14.\textit{\textbf{R}}ae1 \textit{\textbf{R}}he8, but only practice can answer this question.

13.f5 g5?!

Now Black gets quite an unpleasant position – full of holes and passive. He should have given up a pawn: 13...0-0-0 14.fxg6 d4 (too slow is 14...hxg6 15.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xg6 \textit{\textbf{R}}hg8 16.h4! f5 17.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xe6 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xe6 18.h5 \textit{\textbf{R}}e8 19.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xe5 \textit{\textbf{Q}}c6 20.0-0-0 \textit{\textbf{R}}xg2 21.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f1 \textit{\textbf{Q}}xe5 22.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xf5++; White’s advantage is not in doubt) 15.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd4 exd4 16.0-0-0 hxg6 17.\textit{\textbf{Q}}xg6 \textit{\textbf{R}}he8 with good compensation. For example, after 18.\textit{\textbf{Q}}f3 c4 19.\textit{\textbf{Q}}de1 d3 Black’s threats suddenly become very real.

14.\textit{\textbf{Q}}h5+ \textit{\textbf{K}}e7 15.\textit{\textbf{f}}3

The black king is caught in the centre on a board full of pieces – this, at the very least, is dangerous. The whole time there will be a threat of \textit{\textbf{Q}}xg5, and also the breaks c2-c3 and d2-d4.
15...h6 16.0-0

16.0-0-0 is also interesting, with an even sharper game.

16...eag8?!

Better is 16...e8 17.h3 h5 18.g3 d4! with counterplay for Black.

17.e1 e8 18.e2 f7 19.h1 h5 20.c3 f8 21.c2 g7 22.e3 d8 23.d3 a6 24.f3 c8 25.e1 b5 26.d5 xd5 27.xd5 b4
Finally, White chooses the moment and lands this blow. After the quiet 28...d2 bxc3 29...xc3 he is still better, but it would not be easy to break through Black’s defences.

28...fxg5!?

The decisive mistake. After 29...f8 30.f5 the battle continues, although White’s advantage is indisputable.

30.h4! d7 31.hxg5+ xg5 32.e4 h4 33.e3+ g4 34.h3+

Black resigned.

I would like to emphasise once again that Laznicka’s 8...d7 is a perfectly good and sensible move: Black prepares long castling and does not allow the opponent to break up his pawn structure. Most likely, the move 8...d7 has not become popular just because of the result of the game, but Black’s mistakes came at a later stage.

Conclusions: In ending the opening survey, I would like to stress once again that the system with 1.e4 c5 2.b3!? is far from just a one-off trap, the main idea of which is just to catch the opponent out. It is a perfectly solid opening set-up, which at the present remains little-explored (that is, compared to the main lines of the Open Sicilian – there are no totally unexplored areas of opening theory any more). If you study the system seriously, one which is especially good for blitz and rapid chess, then you will soon be half a step, and then a full step ahead of your opponents. After all, Sicilian players have plenty of other systems to worry about, besides 2.b3. Yes, with accurate play, Black should neutralise his opponent’s pressure, but White is taking no risks and a precise system of defence has yet to be established.

This summary here is one of the first serious attempts at theoretical work, explaining this system from White’s side. Here there is still great room for creativity!
Part V

The Caro-Kann Defence

So as to restrict Black’s options as far as possible, we suggest Bobby Fischer’s favourite set-up: 1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3.

The main continuation here is 3...Bg4 4.h3 Bxf3 5.Qxf3. White obtains the two bishops and a small advantage in space, although Black’s position is without any pawn weaknesses and is very solid. White then has a choice: he can sacrifice the d-pawn and rely on his lead in development, or head for a long struggle with material equality, hoping that sooner or later the position will open up, and then his two bishops can have their say. Both approaches are valid enough and the choice, as they say, is a matter of taste. We will consider both plans below.

Chapter 16

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.Nf3 dxe4; 3...Nf6
So, against the Caro-Kann, we recommend that White brings his two knights out first, before playing d2-d4. First we will examine some of Black’s minor replies on move 3.

**Game 77**

Sergei Movsesian 2630  
Stjepan Draganic 2185  
Pula 1997 (1)

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3

We recommend that White start with this move. It is also possible to play 2.Nf3, and almost always this will transpose after 2...d5 3.Nc3. The difference is that if Black refrains from the move 2...d5 and plays, for example, 2...d6 or 2...g6, going into a Pirc/Modern set-up, then after 2.Nc3 White still has plans with f2-f4, whereas if he has played 2.Nf3, then he can instead play lines with c2-c4.

2...d5 3.Nf3
So, the Two Knights’ variation: not the most popular reply, but not so rare either. For example, this is the line the young Bobby Fischer loved to play against the Caro-Kann.

In the diagram position, the main continuation is 3...\textit{g}4, and after 4.h3 Black has a choice – to exchange or to retreat. 4...\textit{xf}3 is considered the most reliable, and after 5.\textit{xf}3 Black has a solid position: after exchanging his light-squared bishop, he places his central pawns on light squares and completes his development. However, this plan also has its minuses: White now has the bishop pair and a small advantage in development. Such a position is quite pleasant for White to play, since as a rule, the battle is for two results: a win for White or a draw. Retreating the bishop to h5 after 4.h3 looks risky, because White can immediately play 4...\textit{h}5 5.exd5 cxd5 6.g4 \textit{g}6 7.\textit{b}5+ \textit{c}6 8.\textit{e}5, attacking the pinned knight. Then he constantly threatens h4-h5, and Black has some problems.

It is worth considering 3...\textit{f}6, but this move also entails a definite risk. White can immediately play 4.e5, attacking the knight, and after 4...\textit{e}4 we reach a complicated position, in which White’s chances are superior.

But we will start by looking at the worst variation of all for Black.

\textbf{3...dxe4 4.\textit{xe}4}

In this position, by comparison with the main line 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.\textit{c}3 dxe4 4.\textit{xe}4 \textit{f}5, Black often plays without thinking

\textbf{4...\textit{f}5?!}

But in the Two Knights variation, this is much worse, because White has saved a tempo on the move d2-d4 and has already brought his knight out to f3. After 5.\textit{g}3 \textit{g}6 6.h4 h6, unlike in the main line with 2.d4, White has the chance to play 7.\textit{e}5: immediately attacking the bishop, White obtains the advantage. We will look at this line in detail in the present game, but first let us consider some other options for Black.

A) The move 4...\textit{f}6 has an obvious drawback:
After 5.\texttt{\textbf{xf6}}+ White spoils his opponent’s pawn structure.

A1) If Black takes with the e-pawn 5...\texttt{\textbf{exf6}}, then he gives White a pawn majority on the queenside. Now if we were to remove all the pieces from the board, leaving only the kings and pawns, then White’s position would simply be winning: he can organise a passed pawn on the queenside, whilst Black cannot do the same on the kingside because of his doubled pawns (White only needs to arrange his pawns wisely on f3, g2 and h3). Black needs to be careful about exchanges, because the ending is not in his favour. 6.\texttt{\textbf{d4}} and now:
A11) 6...g4 7.d3 White ignores the threat to the d4-pawn. Also perfectly possible is 7.e2 d6 8.h3 h5 9.h4 with a small advantage. 7.fx3 Accepting the challenge, although grabbing the pawn looks quite risky. After 7...d6 8.h3 e5 9.e2+ e7 10.xe7+ xxe7 11.h4 g6 12.xg6+ hxg6 White has the better pawn structure and the two bishops. 8.xf3 xd4 9.f4! e7 The second pawn can certainly not be taken – after 9...xb2 10.0-0 Black cannot complete his development. 10.0-0-0 White has enormous compensation for just one pawn: all of his pieces are in play and very active, whilst the black king is in the centre;

A12) 6...d6 7.d3 0-0 8.0-0 g4 White has an extra pawn in the centre and needs to set it in motion. In the following examples, the move-orders vary somewhat but White’s plan is one and the same: to complete his development and start operations in the centre:

A121) 9.e3 d7 10.h3 h5 11.c4 e8 It is worth considering 11...c5!? 12.f5 cxd4 13.xd4 e5 14.xe5 fxe5 (stronger is 14...xe5 15.xd8 xd8 16.e1 g6 17.xf6 xf6 18.xd1 f7; White retains the advantage, thanks to his pawn majority on the queenside, but by accurate play, Black should draw) 15.xd5 (Black has more problems after 15.d3 g6 16.e1 xf5 17.xf5+ 15...c7 16.c5 e7 17.e4 with the initiative, Granara Barreto-Bauza, Montevideo 2001. 12.c2 c7 13.d3 f5 14.g4 g6 15.xf5 h5 16.d2 d8 17.d1 xh1 18.xd1±, and in the game Sueess-Burri, corr. 2014, Black was unable to show that breaking up the white kingside pawns was worth a pawn;

A122) 9.h3 h5 10.e1 d7 11.c4 c5 12.e4 c7 13.e3 exd4 14.xd4

![analysis diagram](image)

14.xf3 The computer considers that after 14...ad8 both sides have chances, but this recommendation has not been tested in practice. 15.xf3 c5 16.d5 White also keeps a small advantage after 16.f4! xe4 17.xc7 or 16.f4 e5 17.d5. 16...xe3 17.xe3 with a somewhat better game for White, Marshall-Tartakower, Karlsbad 1929.

A2) If Black takes with the other pawn, 5...gxf6, then it will be dangerous for him to castle short: 6.d4
A21) 6...g5 7.g3 A logical and reliable plan. The fianchettoed bishop will exert pressure on the enemy queenside, and, in addition, White prophylactically takes measures against Black’s play down the open g-file. To be strictly fair, it should be said that White also has a small plus after 7.e4, but in that case, the game is sharper. 7...d5 Black needs to seek counterplay immediately, otherwise White will complete his development and sooner or later break in the centre, obtaining the advantage. Here is an excellent example on this theme: 7...e6 8.f4 g7 9.0-0 0-0 10.h4 g6 11.d4 d7 12.e3 a5 13.d5 Gelfand-Nikolic, Sarajevo Candidates’ (rapid) 1991. 8.c3 d7 9.g2 c4 10.b3 a6 After 10...b6 11.xc4 xc4 12.h4 g4 13.b3 d6 14.f4 White gradually sets his central pawns in motion. Black also fails to equalise fully after 10...xb3 11.axb3 e6 12.b4 Campora-Chandler, Vrsac 1981 (maybe 12.h4 is even more accurate, not allowing Black to place his bishop at e4). 11.f1 d3 12.xd3 xd3 13.c4 e4+ 14.e3 f5 15.0-0 with a stable advantage to White, Rozentalis-Kovalenko, Tromsø 2014;

A22) 6...g4 Now it is not so easy for White to fianchetto his king’s bishop. But he also has another promising plan: he can prepare the exchange of light-squared bishops. 7.e2 c7 He does not completely equalise after 7...e6 8.f4 d6 9.g3 (note this manoeuvre: White closes the g-file in good time) 9.c7 10.d2 f5 11.c4 xg3 12.hxg3 d7 13.d3 xd3 14.xd3 0-0-0 15.0-0-0+ Averbakh-Simagin, Moscow 1946. 8.0-0 d7 9.h4
The move 9...h5 is interesting, of course, but it does involve a pawn sacrifice: 10.\textit{\texttt{B}}xg4 hxg4 11.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xg4².

10.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xe2 e6 11.c4 0-0-0 12.g3 \textit{\texttt{B}}g8 Black has also tried 12...c5 13.d5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}e5 14.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f3, and here after 14...\textit{\texttt{Q}}d4, as in the game Arkhangel'sky-Ovetchkin, Moscow 1999, it was best to play 15.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f4, sacrificing the pawn on c4. Then there could follow 15...\textit{\texttt{Q}}xc4 16.\textit{\texttt{R}}fd1 e5 17.b3 \textit{\texttt{Q}}a6 18.\textit{\texttt{Q}}e3 with good compensation. 13.d5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}e5 14.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f3 exd5 15.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f4 \textit{\texttt{Q}}e4 16.cxd5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}xf3 17.\textit{\texttt{Q}}xf3 c5 Not 17...cxd5 because of 18.\textit{\texttt{R}}ac1+, winning a piece. 18.\textit{\texttt{R}}fd1 b6 White has a large advantage after 18...\textit{\texttt{Q}}b6 19.d6 \textit{\texttt{Q}}d7 20.\textit{\texttt{R}}ac1 \textit{\texttt{Q}}c8 21.\textit{\texttt{Q}}h4 \textit{\texttt{Q}}c6 22.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f5± Havlikova-Korenova, Germany Frauenbundesliga 2014. 19.d6 \textit{\texttt{Q}}g7 20.\textit{\texttt{Q}}d5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}e5 21.\textit{\texttt{Q}}g2 \textit{\texttt{Q}}d7 22.\textit{\texttt{R}}ad1 \textit{\texttt{Q}}e8 23.\textit{\texttt{Q}}h4 (the knight heads to f5) 23...\textit{\texttt{Q}}g6 24.\textit{\texttt{R}}h5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}xf4+ 25.gxf4 h6 26.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}f8 27.\textit{\texttt{Q}}f3± Michalik-Rombaldoni, Belfort Wch Jr 2005.

B) 4...\textit{\texttt{Q}}d7
The idea of this move is very simple: Black wants to bring a knight to f6, without allowing his kingside pawn structure to be spoilt. But the drawback of the move is that Black temporarily blocks his queen’s bishop. We suggest for White the following plan: 5.Bc4 and 6.Qe2 followed by Ne5, attacking the pawn at f7 and forcing Black to put his pawn on e6, without having been able first to develop the Bc8, which will then be seriously blocked in.

But before proceeding to that plan, we will briefly consider the move 5.Qe2!?.

If Black blinks and plays 5...Ng6??, as has happened many times even in serious games, then he is mated at once by
Of course, this trap is well-known and it is unlikely that your opponent will fall for it. But even the logical developing move 5...e6 does not solve all of Black’s problems, since in this case, Black voluntarily shuts in his bishop on c8. After 6.g3 ∆gf6 7.g2 ∆xe4 8.∆xe4 ∆d6 9.0-0 0-0 10.d4±, White is ahead in development and has a space advantage.

Even so, after 5.∆e2 Black does have a reliable path to equality – 5...∆d6!?, defending against the mate and preparing the exit of his light-squared bishop. Then there could follow: 6.d3 ∆xe4 7.dxe4 e5!? (worse is 7...g4 because of 8.h3 ∆xf3 9.∆xf3± or 8.∆d2 followed by 0-0, also with a small advantage) 8.∆d2 (or 8.h3 ∆f6 9.∆d2 ∆d6 10.0-0-0 ∆e7 with a roughly equal game) 8...d6 (worse is 8...∆f6 9.0-0-0 ∆e7 10.∆c3 ∆d6 11.∆d3, and Black must either give up the pawn on e5 or defend the bishop with his king, losing castling rights) 9.0-0-0 ∆e7 with a roughly equal game.

Now we return to the main white plan after 4...∆d7: 5.∆c4 ∆gf6 Naturally, here too, one cannot recommend the voluntary shutting-in of the queen’s bishop by 5...e6. After 6.d4 ∆gf6 both 7.∆xf6+ ∆xf6 8.0-0 ∆e7 9.∆e5 (9.c3!?; 9.∆e2?!; 9.∆e1!!?) and 7.∆e2 ∆xe4 8.∆xe4 ∆f6 9.∆e2 (9.∆h4?!?) 9...d6 10.∆g5±, Kramnik-Quist, Mainz 2001, are good. This continuation promises White a small, but lasting plus. 6.∆e2!? Also possible is 6.∆g5 e6 7.∆e2 ∆d5 8.d4 h6 9.∆e4 ∆e7 10.0-0-0 0-0 11.a3, taking control of the square b4, where the black knight might head. Then White wants to play ∆d3 and c2-c4, driving the knight out of the centre; he has the initiative. 6...∆xe4 7.∆xe4 ∆f6 8.∆e5

8...e6 8...∆d5!? has only been seen once. It has the advantage over 8...e6 that Black does not shut in his queen’s bishop. There could follow: 9.0-0 (9.∆f3 is worth considering, forcing 9...e6 10.d4 g6 11.0-0 ∆g7 12.∆e1 0-0 13.c3 with a somewhat better position for White) 9...g6 10.d4 ∆g7 11.∆h4 0-0 12.∆h6 (more accurate is 12.c3, after which White has a simple plan: ∆e1, ∆h6, ∆g4, with the better chances) 12...e6 (stronger is 12...∆f5 13.∆xg7 ∆xg7 14.∆b3=) 13.∆e1 ∆c7 14.∆xg7 ∆xg7 15.∆xe6 ∆xe6 16.∆ad1 ∆d6 17.∆d3 with the initiative, Ozsvath-Lengyel, Voros Lobogo 1955. 9.∆e2
9...\textit{Be7} In reply to 9...\textit{d6}!? White immediately strengthens his centralised knight with the move 10.d4. There could follow: 10...\textit{Cc7} 11.0-0 0-0 (11...\textit{c5}?! is premature because of 12.\textit{b5}+; now 12...\textit{d7} 13.\textit{f4} 0-0 14.\textit{xd7} \textit{xd7} 15.\textit{dxc5} \textit{xe5} 16.\textit{xe5} \textit{xe5} 17.\textit{xe5} leads to a position with an extra pawn for White, and playing without castling is also unpleasant: 12...\textit{e7} 13.\textit{f4} cxd4 14.\textit{ad1} \textit{d5} 15.\textit{g3} f6 16.\textit{f3} \textit{xg3} 17.\textit{hxg3} \textit{b6} 18.\textit{xd4}+, Gopal-Arun Prasad, Mumbai ch-IND 2009) 12.\textit{f4} (White also keeps a small advantage with 12.\textit{e1} b6 13.\textit{d3} or 12...\textit{c5} 13.\textit{dxc5} \textit{xc5} 14.\textit{f4}).

\textit{analysis diagram}

It is not so easy for Black to untangle, e.g. 12...\textit{c5} 13.\textit{ad1} \textit{d5} (worse is 13...\textit{d8} 14.\textit{fe1} cxd4 15.\textit{xd4}+) 14.\textit{g3}± or
12...b6 13.\( \text{ad1} \) \( \text{b7} \) 14.\( \text{ed2} \)±. 10.0-0 0-0 11.\( \text{e1} \)

**analysis diagram**

11...\( \text{d5} \) Black has also tried 11...c5 12.b3 \( \text{c7} \) 13.\( \text{b2} \) b6 and now:

A) 14.\( \text{ad1} \) \( \text{b7} \) 15.d4 (better was 15.\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{xf7} \) 16.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{d6} \) 17.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{gf6} \) 18.\( \text{xf6} \)±) 15...\( \text{ad8} \) 16.dxc5 \( \text{xc5} \) 17.\( \text{d8} \) \( \text{d8} \) 18.\( \text{d1} \), draw, Sydor-Kostro, Polanica Zdroj 1969;

B) 14.f4!? \( \text{b7} \) and now:

B1) 15.\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{xf7} \) 16.\( \text{xe6} \) \( \text{f8} \) 17.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{gf6} \) 18.a4±, preventing ...b6-b5;

B2) 15.f5 b5 (15...\( \text{xf5} \)? 16.\( \text{xf7} \) \( \text{xf7} \) 17.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{gf6} \) 18.\( \text{xe7} \) – or 17...\( \text{xf6} \) 18.\( \text{e8}+ \) \( \text{e8} \) 19.\( \text{xe8} \)±) 16.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 17.\( \text{f2} \), and now not 17...\( \text{g6} \) because of 18.\( \text{d7} \)!, winning.

12.a4 \( \text{f6} \) On 12...c5 unpleasant is 13.\( \text{a3} \) with the initiative for White. 13.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{d6} \) Black still has problems after 13...\( \text{d7} \) 14.d4, e.g. 14...\( \text{e8} \) 15.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{h5} \) 16.c4 \( \text{b4} \) 17.a5 \( \text{fe8} \) 18.d2 \( \text{h8} \) 19.\( \text{c3} \)± Ducci-Francescone, corr. 2010.

14.d4 \( \text{h8} \) 15.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{d7} \) 16.\( \text{b3} \) \( \text{e8} \) 17.c4 \( \text{f4} \) 18.e4 \( \text{g6} \) 19.c5 \( \text{c7} \) 20.h4 with the initiative for White, Van der Wiel-Stanec, Austria Bundesliga 2000.

5.\( \text{g3} \)
5...\textit{g6}

Black is reluctant to play 5...\textit{g4}, because after 6.h3 he has to exchange. The position after 6...\textit{xf3} 7.\textit{xf3} is clearly in White’s favour, as he is ahead in development and has the two bishops.

6.h4 \textit{h6} 7.\textit{e5} \textit{d6}

Defending the bishop. Completely bad is 7...\textit{h7} 8.\textit{h5} g6, and here White has a pleasant choice:

A) He gets a serious advantage after 9.\textit{c4} e6 (not 9...\textit{gxh5}?? 10.\textit{xf7#}) 10.\textit{e2} (threatening 11.\textit{xf7}) 10...\textit{e7} (best; bad is 10...\textit{g7} 11.\textit{xf7}!, as in a 1908 simultaneous game of Lasker, or 10...\textit{f6} 11.\textit{xf7} \textit{xf7} 12.\textit{xe6+}, winning, Alekhine-Bruce, Plymouth 1938) 11.d4\pm. One only has to glance at the position and it becomes clear that White has a clear advantage;

B) 9.\textit{f3} \textit{f6} (even worse is 9...\textit{d5} 10.\textit{xd5} \textit{cxd5} 11.\textit{b5+} \textit{d8} 12.\textit{xf7+} or 11...\textit{c6} 12.\textit{xc6} \textit{bxc6} 13.\textit{xc6+}, winning) 10.\textit{b3}, simultaneously attacking \textit{b7} and \textit{f7}. 
Then there could follow 10...\textit{d}5 11.\textit{x}b7 \textit{xe}5+ 12.\textit{e}2 e6 (but not 12...\textit{g}7?? 13.\textit{c}8#). Black's only hope is after 13.\textit{x}a8 to try to trap the queen. For example, 13...\textit{c}7, not allowing the queen to leave the square a8, and then to play ...	extit{0}-0 and ...\textit{bd}7.

Therefore, instead of taking the rook immediately, White should consider 13.a4!? with the idea after 13...\textit{g}7 of playing 14.\textit{a}3 0-0 15.\textit{x}a8 \textit{c}7 16.\textit{b}3, and the queen quietly emerges from the corner. And if in reply to 13.a4 Black plays 13...\textit{e}7, then after 14.a5 he cannot castle 14...0-0, because the bishop on e7 would be under attack. Finally, in the event of 13...\textit{d}5 14.\textit{x}a8 \textit{c}7 (with the threat of 15...\textit{b}6), there follows 15.a5 and then a5-a6. The queen comes out via b7 and White has an extra exchange.

\textbf{8.d4 \textit{d}7 9.\textit{x}g6 \textit{x}g6 10.\textit{f}4}

Also good is 10.\textit{d}3 \textit{d}6 11.c3 with advantage to White, Grandelius-Ljung, Norrköping 2009.

\textbf{10...\textit{gf}6 11.c4 e5}
12. \textit{\textbf{d3!}}

12.dxe5 is not good, because after 12...\textit{\textbf{b4+}} 13.\textit{\textbf{d2 xd2+}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xd2 xe5}} the position equalises.

12...\textit{\textbf{g4}}

He does not escape his problems with 12...\textit{\textbf{e4}} 13.\textit{\textbf{c2 b4+}} 14.\textit{\textbf{f1}}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item A) 14...h5 15.a3 \textit{\textbf{e7}} 16.\textit{\textbf{f3}}, and White wins the e4-pawn;
  \item B) After 14...0-0 (or 14...0-0-0) 15.h5 \textit{\textbf{h7}} 16.\textit{\textbf{e2±}} the black queen is poorly placed, whilst 15...\textit{\textbf{g4}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xg4 xg4}}
\end{itemize}
17. \(\text{Nx}e4\) leads to the loss of a pawn.

13. \(\text{Bxe}5\) \(\text{b}4+\) 14. \(\text{f}1\) \(\text{Nxe}5\) 15. \(\text{dxe}5\) \(\text{Qxd}1+\) 16. \(\text{Rxd}1\)

16... \(\text{N}d7\)

More tenacious is 16... \(\text{g}4\), not allowing White to defend the pawn with 17.\(f4\) because of 17... \(\text{e}3+\), winning the exchange. Therefore 17.\(a3\), and then:

A) On 17... \(\text{e}7\) White simply defends the e5-pawn with the move 18.\(\text{Re}1\) and keeps an extra pawn. It is also worth considering 18.\(e6!\) with the idea after 18...\(fxe6\) of giving the check 19. \(\text{g}6+\) and stopping Black’s castling;

B) After 17... \(\text{a}5\) White does best to return the extra pawn: 18.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{xe}5\) 19. \(\text{f}5\) 0-0 20.\(f4\) \(\text{g}6\) 21.\(g3\), restricting the enemy knight. In the final position, material is equal and the pawn formation symmetrical, but Black will still have to work to draw.

17.\(f4\)

Now, however, White has a healthy extra pawn.

17... 0-0-0 18.\(a3\) \(\text{f}8\) 19.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{a}5\) 20. \(\text{f}5\) \(\text{c}7\) 21. \(\text{xd}7\) \(\text{x}d7\) 22. \(\text{xd}7+\) \(\text{x}d7\) 23. \(\text{d}1+\) \(\text{c}7\) 24.\(h5\) \(g6\)

Otherwise the white knight would appear on \(f5\).

25. \(\text{hx}g6\) \(\text{fx}g6\) 26. \(\text{e}4\) \(\text{e}7\) 27. \(g4\)
White simply advances his pawns, organising passed e- and f-pawns.

27... Rd8 28. f5 Re8 29. e6 gxf5 30. gxf5

Black resigned.

Conclusions: In this move order, when the white knight is on f3, 3...dxe4 4. Nxe4 Bf5 is dubious for Black, because after 5. Ng3 g6 6. h4 h6 White plays 7. e5!, attacking the bishop. Black’s position becomes difficult: in reply to 7... Qd6, as played in the game, White not only takes on g6, gaining the advantage of the two bishops, but then also attacks the queen with Bd3 and brings his bishop out with tempo. But the move 7... Bh7 is even worse: after 8. Qh5 Black’s position is objectively already lost. Black does better at move four to play ...Nd7 or ...Nf6, but White’s chances are still superior in these cases too.

Game 78
Lev Aronin
Salomon Flohr
Moscow ch-URS 1949 (2)

1.e4 c6 2. Nc3 d5 3. Nf3 Nf6
This seemingly risky move has become quite popular in recent times. This line often leads to very sharp, tense positions, with which it is hard to come to terms, even with the aid of the computer.

4.e5

Other continuations are harmless for Black, so White seizes space with tempo.

4...\(\text{\textit{c}e4}\)

On 4...\(\text{\textit{f}d7}\) the blockading pawn sacrifice 5.e6!? is rather unpleasant for Black, e.g. 5...fxe6 6.d4 \(\text{\textit{f}f6}\) 7.d3 g6 8.0-0 \(\text{\textit{g}7}\) 9.\(\text{\textit{c}2}\). White has more than sufficient compensation for the small material investment: if he wishes, he can regain the pawn on e6 without great effort, whilst it is hard for Black to complete his development or start any sort of counterplay. One correspondence game saw the battle end prettily:
5. $\text{Ne}2!?$

White moves his knight away from the exchange, after which he has ideas of playing d2-d3 or f2-f3, driving the enemy knight out of the centre with tempo.

5...e6
The most principled move 5...\textit{b}6 will be examined below.

Of course, Black would like to solve at once the problem of his light-squared bishop, by bringing it to f5 or g4, but each of these moves has its minuses:

A) 5...f5 6.d3 c5 7.f4 e6 8.d4! (the signal for a hunt of the bishop) 8...bd7 9.g4 g6 10.h4 h5 (or 10...h6 11.xg6 fxg6 12.c3±) 11.xg6 fxg6 12.f4 e7 13.g5 with advantage to White, Alberny-Jacquier, corr. 2008.

B) 5...g4 6.fg1 Threatening 7.f3, winning a piece. Another possibility is 6.d3 c5 (6...xf3 7.gxf3 c5 8.d4 e6 9.c3±) 7.d4 (7.fd4!?±) 7...e6 (better is 7...cd7 8.f4 e6 9.e2±) 8.c3 f6 9.h3 fxh3 10.gxf3 xh3 12.f4 g6 13.h4 xh6 14.xh3 df8 15.h5± Ragozin-Levenfish, Leningrad 1930. 6.e5 Worse is 6...h5 7.f3 c5 8.d4 ca6 9.f4 g6 10.xg6 hxg6

\textit{analysis diagram}

11.e6! (this cramping sacrifice is a typical device in this variation) 11...d6 (11...fxe6 loses because of 12.d3 f7 13.h3 with the threat of g5+) 12.exf7+ xf7 13.f4±. 7.d4 e6 8.c3 c5 9.h3 xe2 10.xe2±

6.d3 c5
Another plan also deserving attention is 7.g3!? Black needs to play ...c6-c5, so the game may develop as follows:

7...\text{cd}7 8.\text{g}2 \text{c}5 9.0-0 \text{c}6 10.\text{f}4 \text{e}7 11.\text{h}4 0-0 12.\text{e}1 \text{f}6 (better is 12...\text{b}5 with mutual chances) 13.\text{xf}6 \text{xf}6 14.\text{c}3 \text{g}4?! 15.\text{g}5 \text{e}5 16.\text{x}d5+ \text{h}8 17.\text{e}3 \text{xe}3 18.\text{xe}3 \text{x}g5 19.\text{hx}g5 \text{hx}g5 20.\text{xc}6 \text{bx}c6 21.\text{e}1 \text{f}5 22.\text{e}2\pm Ragozin-Rovner, Leningrad 1938.

Perhaps, instead of the move in the game, more subtle is 7.c3, inviting Black to commit himself. His problem is that he cannot do without the advance ...c6-c5, but he lacks a useful waiting move. On the other hand, c2-c3 is useful for White, and he can play d3-d4 later.

7...\text{cd}7 8.\text{f}4 \text{c}5 9.\text{c}3 \text{x}d4 10.\text{x}d4 \text{b}4+ 11.\text{d}2 \text{a}5 12.\text{a}3 \text{xd}2+ 13.\text{xd}2 \text{xd}2+ 14.\text{xd}2 \text{b}6
Looking at the diagram, one might think that the game had started as a French Defence, rather than a Caro-Kann. Clearly, the ending which has resulted is in White’s favour: he has a space advantage and Black has not yet solved the problem of his light-squared bishop. Even so, the solidity of such positions is very great.

15. \( \text{N}d3 \)

White is also better after 15.b3 0-0 16.a4 (with his previous move, White restricted the \( \text{N}b6 \), and now he wants to disturb it) 16...\( \text{N}c6 \) 17.a5 \( \text{d}7 \) 18.b5 \( \text{db}8 \) 19.\( \text{xc}6 \) (playing for a ‘good knight’ against a ‘bad bishop’) 19...\( \text{xc}6 \) 20.\( \text{d}3 \) a6 21.\( \text{hc}1 \), Sokolsky-Flohr, Moscow 1949.

15...\( \text{c}4+ \) 16.\( \text{c}3 \) 0-0 17.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{a}5 \)

Here the knight has more prospects than on b6.

18.\( \text{b}1 \) b6 19.\( \text{b}2 \) \( \text{ac}6 \) 20.\( \text{b}4 \)

An unnecessary exchange, although White retains pressure.

It was worth considering 20.\( \text{c}2 \)!? followed by doubling rooks on the open file.

20...\( \text{d}7 \) 21.\( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{xc}6 \) 22.\( \text{a}6 \)
White has the advantage, because he has won the battle for the open c-file. Here Flohr found some counterplay, involving a pawn sacrifice.

22...\textit{Rab8} 23.\textit{Ec3} b5?! 24.\textit{Ec5} \textit{Eb6} 25.\textit{Exb5} \textit{Fb8}

No better is 25...\textit{Nxe5} 26.\textit{Exd7} \textit{Exd7} 27.\textit{Ec7} \textit{Ob8} (or 27...\textit{Fb8} 28.\textit{Exd7} \textit{Exb3+} 29.\textit{Fd2} \textit{Eb2+} 30.\textit{Fc1} \textit{Exf2} 31.\textit{Eb1±}) 28.\textit{Exa7}, and White’s two passed pawns decide.

26.\textit{Exc6}

More accurate was 26.a4 a6 27.\textit{Exc6} \textit{Exb3+} 28.\textit{Fc2} \textit{Fb2+} 29.\textit{Fd1} \textit{Eb1+} 30.\textit{Fc2} \textit{Exh1} 31.\textit{Exd7±}, and now after \textit{Fa1} the a-pawn is already defended.

26...\textit{Exb3+} 27.\textit{Fc2} \textit{Fb2+} 28.\textit{Fd1} \textit{Eb1+} 29.\textit{Fc2} \textit{Exh1} 30.\textit{Exd7} \textit{Fa1} 31.a4

31.\textit{Ec3} \textit{Fb2+} 32.\textit{Fd2} g6 also leads to a position with mutual chances.

31...\textit{Fb2+} 32.\textit{Ff3} h6

Draw.

\textbf{Conclusion:} In this game, Black played the interesting, but rather risky move 3...\textit{Df6} and after 4.e5 \textit{Df4} 5.\textit{Df2}? chose the solid but passive continuation 5...e6. In reply White kicked away the enemy knight with 6.d3 \textit{Dc5} 7.d4 \textit{Dd7} and then played 8.\textit{Df4}, transferring the second knight to the kingside. In the game after 8...c5 9.c3 White obtained a good version of the French Defence.
1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.f3

The young Bobby Fischer considered the Two Knights almost a refutation of the Caro-Kann and relied on it fanatically. Things did not always work out well for him, and several top players even played the Caro-Kann against him specially, even though they usually preferred other openings. However, the future World Champion also achieved some striking victories.

3...Nf6 4.e5 Ne4 5.Ne2 Qb6

Mate is threatened on f2. White has to advance his pawn to d4, and the threat of d2-d3 disappears from the agenda.

6.d4 c5

On the immediate break 6...f6?! there follows 7.Ng3 (worse is 7.Nf4, as in the game Felgaer-Azmaiparashvili, Dos Hermanas 2005, on account of 7...g5, and the position becomes extremely sharp) 7...Nxg3 8.hxg3 with the better chances for White.

The move 6...e6 will be examined below.

7.dxc5 Qxc5

On 7...Nx5 White takes a pawn – 8.Qxd5.

8.Qxd4 Qe6

White is better after 8...Qg4 9.c3.

9.Nb5

9.Ne2 and 9.c3 also deserve attention.

A) 9.Ne2
9...g4 10.0-0 dxe4 11.dxe4 dxe2 12.Bxe2 e6 13.e3 c4 (it is important to prevent the break c3-c4) 14.d3 with a somewhat better position for White.

We would point out that instead of 13...c4, worse is 13...c7 because of 14.c4! xc4 15.c1 b5 16.d4 (in the old game Sokolsky-Kholmov, Moscow 1949, White played 16.c7 c5 17.d4, and here with the move 17...a5 Black obtained adequate play) 16.d7 17.e2 c5 (or 17...e7 18.b5 0-0 19.f3 a6 20.a3 g5 21.h4, winning the knight) 18.b4 a6 19.a3 e7 20.g4 f8 21.e3 with the initiative to White;

B) 9.c3
B1) 9...g4?! 10.e3 a5 11.e6±;
B2) On 9...b6 both 10.b3± and 10.d3 g4 11.c2 c5 12.e2 xd4 13.cxd4 e4 14.b3 xb3 15.axb3 a6 16.g1 xe2 17.xe2 e6 18.f4± are good;
B3) 9...e6 10.e3 xd4 11.d4+ c7 12.b5+ d7 13.xd7+ xd7 14.0-0 c5 (or 14...e7 15.g4 g6 16.h6±) 15.e2 e7 16.g4 g6 17.h6±.

9...a6

9...g4? is bad because of 10.0-0 e6 11.h3 f5 (Black also stands badly after 11...h5 12.e3 b4 13.a3 a5 14.c4+-) 12.e3 b4 13.a4+- Chernov-Proskurnov, corr. 2003 (he threatens to take on c6 and f5).

Also insufficient for equality is 9...d7 10.0-0.

analysis diagram

A) Now 10...xe5 11.xe5 xb5 fails to 12.b4! xb4 13.a3 xa3 14.xb5 c5 15.c4 e6 16.a4 e7 (the only move) 17.ac1 d4 (17...xc4 18.d7+-) 18.d3 c6 19.b4+ d8 20.c5+-;
B) 10...e6 11.e3 b4 12.c4! (exploiting his lead in development, White immediately opens the game) 12...xb2 13.cxd5 and now:

B1) 13...exd5 14.e6 fx6 15.b1 a3 (15...xa2 16.xc6 bxc6 17.e5 f6 18.xd7 xd7 19.g4+- or 18.xd7 19.b7+ c8 20.f7+-) 16.e5 (or 16.xc6 xc6 17.e5+-) 16...xe5 17.h5+-;
B2) 13...c3 14.dxe6 xd1 15.exd7+ d8 16.axd1 (even stronger is 16.fxd1, so as to have the possibility of ab1) 16...xd4 17.xd4 c5 18.c4+- Svetushkin-Landa, Rijeka 2010.

10.xc6+ bxc6 11.0-0 b6

Better is 11...e6 12.e3 b4 13.xc6 b7 14.cd4 xb2 15.c4±.

Now, however, the standard cramping pawn sacrifice follows, to which we have already drawn attention.
12.e6! fxe6 13.f4

Also good is 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e5!? , e.g. 13...c5 14.c4! \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d6 (14...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xd4? 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xa4+ \(\text{\textit{K}}\)d8 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f7+, winning the exchange) 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f3 with the initiative.

13...g6 14.e5 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f6?

After the only correct move 14...\(\text{\textit{R}}\)g8 White has good compensation for the pawn, but in the battle for the initiative, he still needs to show some ingenuity.

15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g5

All the while the enemy knight stood on e4, this was not possible.

15...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)h6 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)dxe6

It was stronger to take with the other knight – 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe6, so the opponent cannot exchange his dark-squared bishop for one of the knights. In this case, Black’s affairs would be completely bad.

16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xg5 17.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xg5

It is worth considering 17.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)c7+ \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f7 18.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xa8 (taking the rook instead of the bishop) 18...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)a7 19.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)c7±.

17...0-0 18.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d2 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f5 19.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)ae1 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)ad8 20.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)c3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d7 21.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e6 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe6 22.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe6 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d4 23.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)b4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d5 24.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)a3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f7 25.g3
Black has many weaknesses and his pawn structure is shattered, but even so, thanks to his centralised knight and the d4-pawn, his defences are holding. Meanwhile, White’s bishop is out of play and his pieces rather scattered.

25...\textit{c}c7 26.\textit{e}e5 27.\textit{d}d5 27.\textit{d}d3 2f6?!  
Better was 27...a5 followed by ...\textit{b}b4, shutting off the bishop on a3.

28.\textit{c}c4 2b4 29.\textit{e}e6  
White should have carried out this plan somewhat differently – after 29.\textit{c}c5 he not only attacks the pawn on c6, but at the same time, does not let the enemy queen get to the square b5.

29...\textit{b}b5 30.\textit{b}xb5 axb5  
White is better after 30...cxb5 31.h3 \textit{f}f6 (31...a5 32.hxg4 b4 33.\textit{x}xb4 axb4 34.\textit{fe}1\textit{c}c7 33.\textit{d}d4 \textit{xc}2 34.\textit{xa}6\textit{b}b6).  
31.\textit{xc}6  
Stronger was 31.h3, not allowing the knight to e5. For example, 31...\textit{f}f6 32.\textit{xc}6 or 32.\textit{fe}1 with a clear advantage.

31...\textit{e}e5 32.\textit{e}c8+ \textit{g}g7 33.\textit{b}b4 \textit{f}f3+ 34.\textit{g}g2 e5 35.\textit{d}d1 g5
36.\textbf{B}f8+ Bxf8 37.Bxf8 Bxf8 38.Bxf3 Bf7

More tenacious was 38...Bf7+ 39.Be2 Bc7 40.Bd3 Be7±.

39.c3 Be6

Or 39...Ba7 40.cxd4 Bxa2 41.dxe5±.

40.cxd4 exd4 41.Bc4 Bf7 42.f3

And Black resigned, because he loses another pawn.

\textbf{Conclusions:} In this game, instead of 5...e6, as seen in the previous game Aronin-Flohr, Black chose the more aggressive 5...Qb6, attacking the square f2, and after 6.d4 he played the standard break 6...c5. In reply to this, White does best to capture 7.dxc5 and after 7...Bxc5 put his knight from e2 on the blocking square – 8.Nd4. Now after 8...c6 White gets the better chances with all of 9.b5, 9.e2 and 9.c3.

When you see this move for the first time, the knight retreat to g1 may look extravagant, but White creates the concrete threat of f2-f3, trapping the black knight in the centre of the board! Here, sharp forcing play begins, and if Black is not familiar with its subtleties, then he risks simply not getting out of the opening alive.

The alternative 7.Ng3 will be seen later in the game Adams-Motylev.

7...f6

If 7...h6? 8.h4 Black loses a piece.

8.f3 g5 9.exf6 gxf6 10.f4 e4

10...f7 is looked at below in the game Dominguez Perez-Vachier-Lagrave.

11.g3
Of course, the knight on e4 must be exchanged. In addition, White opens the queen’s path to h5.

On the other hand, Black has a lot of pawns in the centre and so his king will feel relatively safe, even if it remains uncastled. But right now, Black should make a choice: whether to strike an immediate blow in the centre or pay attention to the safety of his king.

11...c5

Throwing fat into the fire. The alternatives are 11...\textit{d}7, 11...\textit{c}7 and 11...\textit{d}7:

A) 11...\textit{d}7 12.\textit{h}5+ \textit{d}8 13.\textit{f}3 c5 14.c3
The battle rages over the whole board, but even so, White’s game is easier to play – his king is not getting under the feet of his other pieces. 14...\textit{c}\textit{c}7 It was worth considering 14...\textit{c}\textit{c}6!?, after which the clarification in the centre 15.\textit{d}\textit{e}4 \textit{dxe}4 16.\textit{h}4 \textit{d}7 17.\textit{dxc}5 \textit{xc}5 18.\textit{d}2 allows Black to stay afloat: 18...\textit{c}\textit{c}7! (White is better after 18...f5 19.\textit{h}3 or 18...\textit{e}3+ 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{f}5 20.\textit{g}3 \textit{xg}3+ 21.\textit{h}x\textit{g}3 \textit{d}7 22.\textit{b}3\pm) 19.\textit{b}3 \textit{f}5 20.\textit{e}3 or 19.\textit{xe}4 \textit{d}5 20.\textit{d}2 \textit{e}5, in both cases with a double-edged position. 15.f5 \textit{xg}3 16.\textit{hxg}3 \textit{xc}d4 16...\textit{d}6!? 17.\textit{f}7 with confused play. 17.\textit{xe}6 \textit{xe}6+ 18.\textit{f}2 \textit{dxc}3 19.\textit{d}4 \textit{e}5 20.\textit{f}4+ \textit{e}8 21.\textit{bc}3

![Analysis Diagram](image)

\textit{Analysis Diagram}

His lead in development and the opponent’s weak pawns ensure White more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn. In addition, Black will have to spend more time, ensuring the safety of his king.

21...\textit{c}\textit{c}6 Both 21...\textit{e}e8 22.\textit{d}d3, and 21...\textit{e}e8 22.\textit{h}6± are in White’s favour. 22.\textit{e}e1 \textit{g}8 On 22...\textit{f}5 an unpleasant reply is 23.\textit{d}1± followed by \textit{h}5 or \textit{d}3, whilst if 22...\textit{e}5, then 23.\textit{xe}5 \textit{fxe}5 24.\textit{xe}5 \textit{f}6+ 25.\textit{g}1±. 23.\textit{e}2 \textit{xd}4 24.\textit{cxd}4 \textit{xd}4+ 25.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}6 26.\textit{f}3 \textit{h}6 27.\textit{d}3 \textit{e}5 28.\textit{h}5 \textit{g}4 29.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xf}3+ 30.\textit{gx}f3 \textit{fxe}5 31.\textit{exe}5 \textit{c}6 32.\textit{e}7 \textit{d}8 33.\textit{f}7 \textit{c}8 34.\textit{g}4± Lukasova-Balta, corr. 2013;

B) 11...\textit{c}7
Now Black will meet the check on h5 by interposing his queen. Naturally, it is not in White’s interests to enter the endgame, because there his opponent will have the advantage, thanks to his extra central pawns. Therefore, White should simply continue developing, whilst where possible hindering his opponent from doing likewise.

12. \textit{Be3} It is worth considering bringing the knight out to h3, either at once, or after the moves 12. \textit{Bd3} f5 13. \textit{Nh3}. 12... \textit{Bg8} 12...f5?! is premature because of 13. \textit{Qh5+ Kg7} 14. \textit{Qh3} (with the pawn on f5, Black does not have the idea ...e6-e5, so the queen is comfortably placed on h3) 14... \textit{Nd7} 15. \textit{Nf3} with the better chances for White. He will put one of his knights on e5 and exchange the other on e4, then castle long. 13. \textit{Nh3} \textit{Nd6} It is worth considering 13... \textit{Na6} 14.a3 \textit{Nxc3} 15.\textit{hxg3 Nxd5} 16.\textit{e2} with compensation for the pawn. 14. \textit{d3} In the authors’ opinion, White’s chances are superior here, although the position needs further analysis. White played less well in one postal game: 14.a3 f5 15. \textit{g5} h6 16. \textit{hg5+ d8} 17. \textit{f3 d7} 18. \textit{e5 e8} 19. \textit{f3 h7} Van Tricht-De Homont, corr. 2013;

C) 11... \textit{d7}?! This rather committal move was first seen in the game Saric-Mchedlishvili, Fujairah 2012. We give a short analysis of this sharp position. 12. \textit{h5+ d8} 13.c3
13...c5 White is better after 13...f5 14.\textit{\texttt{x}}xe4 fxe4 15.\textit{\texttt{h}}3\texttt{f}. Interesting is 13...d6!? 14.f3 c7 15.a4 a5 16.d3 or 16.e2. Here White has the initiative, but Black’s chances should not be underestimated. 14.f3 f5 15.xe4 fxe4 Nor does he get full equality from 15...dxe4 16.g5 f6 17.f7 e7 18.dxc5 xc5 19.d2\texttt{f}. 16.g5 f6 He loses after 16...c7? 17.f5 exf5 18.f7 with numerous threats against the black king. 17.f7 e7 18.dxc5 c6 White is also better after 18...xc5 19.xe6+ xe6 20.xe6\texttt{f}. 19.a4 a6

\textbf{analysis diagram}

20.b5! xc5 The queen sacrifice does not work, as White gets too much material: 20...AXB5 21.axb5 xa1 22.bxc6 xc1+ 23.d2 xh1 24.c7+ xc7 25.xc7+ b8 26.xf6, winning. 21.e2 c6 22.e3\texttt{f}
Now we return to the continuation in the main game – 11...c5.

12.\textit{Wh}h5+ \textit{K}d8 13.\textit{N}xe4 dxe4 14.d5!

An important resource: it is essential to break up the opponent’s pawn chain, and to restrict in advance the scope of his pieces. After 14.\textit{Q}f7 \textit{B}e7 15.dxc5 \textit{Q}xc5 both sides have chances: the white queen is fighting on her own and it is not clear from where she can obtain reinforcements.

14...\textit{f}5

On 14...\textit{B}d7, an unpleasant line for Black is 15.dxe6 \textit{Q}xe6 16.b3$^\pm$ followed by \textit{c}c4.

Or 14...\textit{N}a6 15.dxe6 \textit{Q}xe6 (worse is 15...\textit{Q}xe6 because of 16.\textit{N}xa6 \textit{Q}xa6 17.f5 \textit{N}c4 18.\textit{Q}f4$^\pm$ or 17...\textit{B}d7 18.\textit{Q}f4$^\pm$) 16.\textit{N}xa6 bxa6 (16...\textit{Q}xa6 17.f5$^\pm$, freeing the f4-square for his minor pieces) 17.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{f}5 18.\textit{Q}d2$^\pm$.

15.\textit{N}c4

This is not a blunder of a piece: White exploits the fact that his opponent has weakened the long black diagonal.

15...\textit{ex}d5

On 15...\textit{Q}b4+ there follows 16.\textit{Q}d2 \textit{Q}xc4 17.\textit{Q}c3, and now not 17...\textit{g}g8 because of 18.\textit{Q}f7, after which Black suffers material losses.

White is also better after 15...\textit{Q}e7 16.\textit{Q}d2 \textit{Q}f6 17.\textit{Q}e2$^\pm$.

16.\textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}e6 17.\textit{Q}e3
Again tactics come to White’s aid: the bishop on d5 turns out to be indirectly defended.

17...\textit{Nd7}

On 17...\textit{Bxd5} there follows 18.0-0-0 \textit{Qe6} 19.c4 \textit{c7} 20.xd5 \textit{d7} 21.xf5± or 21.e2 \textit{b6} 22.xf5±. And if 17...\textit{c7}, then 18.xe6 \textit{xe6} 19.e2 \textit{c6} 20.g3±, going after the f5-pawn.

18.xe6 \textit{xe6} 19.g4

Only energetic action can expose the weaknesses of the black position. The main problem is the insecure position of his king.

19...fxg4 20.f5 \textit{f6}

On 20...\textit{Qc4} unpleasant is 21.e2 \textit{c7} 22.0-0-0±.

21.0-0-0+ \textit{c7} 22.h4 \textit{f7}

On 22...\textit{Qe5} there would also follow 23.e2±, but in the centre, the queen would be more exposed.

23.e2 \textit{c6}

Black gets his king off the dangerous diagonal in advance. On 23...\textit{e7} there would follow 24.g3+ \textit{c6} (24...\textit{c8} 25.c3+-) 25.e5±. And after 23...\textit{d5} the exchange sacrifice decides: 24.xd5 \textit{xd5} 25.f4+ \textit{d6} (completely bad is 25...\textit{b6} 26.f6+ \textit{c6} 27.xh8+-) 26.d1 xf4+ 27.xf4 \textit{e5} 28.e6+ \textit{b6} 29.c4!, and White achieves a decisive advantage. Black’s extra exchange is not felt at all, his rooks are out of play, and his king is weak, whilst White’s pieces are very active.

24.f4 \textit{e8} 25.e6
25...\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{ex}e6}}}

It is undoubtedly very difficult to put up with this knight.

26.fxe6 \text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{ex}e6}}}

But now White has an extra exchange, with active pieces and an insecure black king.

27.\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{rf}1}}} 28.\text{\textbf{\texttt{b}e7}} 29.\text{\textbf{\texttt{g}g5}} \text{\textbf{\texttt{r}f8}} 30.\text{\textbf{\texttt{b}g5}} \text{\textbf{\texttt{r}f7}} 31.a4

Seizing space on the queenside and also getting the a-pawn out of attack.

30...b5 31.axb5+ \text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{b}b}5}} 32.\text{\textbf{\texttt{b}b}1} \text{\textbf{\texttt{f}f8}} 33.\text{\textbf{\texttt{h}h4}} \text{\textbf{\texttt{g}7}} 34.\text{\textbf{\texttt{g}g3}} \text{\textbf{\texttt{e}e3}} 35.\text{\textbf{\texttt{d}d}5} 36.\text{\textbf{\texttt{x}x}f7} \text{\textbf{\texttt{x}f7}} 37.c4+

Black resigned, since after 37...\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{xc}4}}} there follows 38.\text{\textbf{\texttt{c}c}1}+.

\textbf{Conclusions:} In this game, after 5...\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{q}b}6}} 6.d4 Black chose the solid 6...e6, after which White reacted with the non-standard 7.\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{nf}g}1}!!}, creating the threat of f2-f3 winning a knight. Black should reply 7...f6 8.f3 \text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{g}g}5}} 9.exf6 gxf6. Now after 10.f4 Black returned the knight to the centre – 10...\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{e}e}4}}, when White played 11.\text{\textbf{\texttt{d}g}3}, preparing to exchange on e4 when appropriate. This position is quite complicated, but as the game and the analysis shows, White can count on a definite advantage.

\textbf{Game 81}
\textbf{Leinier Dominguez Perez 2757}
\textbf{Maxime Vachier-Lagrave 2719}
\textbf{Tromsø 2013 (3)}

1.e4 c6 2.\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{c}c}3}} d5 3.\text{\textbf{\texttt{f}f3}} \text{\textbf{\texttt{f}f6}} 4.e5 \text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{e}e}4}} 5.\text{\textbf{\texttt{e}e}2} \text{\textbf{\texttt{b}b}6} 6.d4 e6 7.\text{\textbf{\texttt{fg}1}} f6 8.f3 \text{\textbf{\texttt{g}g}5} 9.exf6 gxf6 10.f4 \text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{d}d}7}}

As we saw in the previous game, the move 10...\text{\textbf{\texttt{\textit{e}e}4}} is perfectly possible, leading to sharp and very interesting
complications, which are not easy to get to the bottom of even in home analysis. But even so, Black often retreats the knight to f7, closer to his king, which is more solid.

11. \( \text{f3} \)

11...\( \text{g7?!} \)

This move was met in the highest level game (based on the ratings of the players) and so we are treating it as the main line. However, objectively, it is not the strongest continuation. Let us consider the alternatives – 11...c5, 11...\( \text{d7} \), 11...\( \text{e7} \) and 11...e5:

A) On 11...c5 strong is 12.f5!, breaking up Black’s pawn centre.
analysis diagram

12...\textit{c6}

Bad is 12...e5 13.dxe5 \textit{xf5} 14.c3 fxe5 15.xd5 (White also wins with 15.b5+ c6 16.xe5 xe5 17.h5+ d8 18.xf5+-) 15...d6 16.g5! xg5 17.xg5 d7 18.b5 a6 19.f6+ f7 20.c4+ g7 21.h5 e6 22.h6+ xf6 23.g5+ g7 24.h6+, and Black resigned in Mons-Möh, Bad Wiessee 2013.

13.f4 \textit{xd4} 14.xd4 cxd4 15.fxe6 (or 15.d2\textpm) 15...xe6 16.d3\textpm;

B) 11...d7 is partly a developing move and partly a waiting one.
12.c3 Also not bad is 12.Qg3!? or 12.a4!!, in both cases with a small advantage to White. 12...e7 13.Qg3 c5 14.f5 exd4 15.Qxd4 e5 16.Qe6 Qxe6 17.Qxe6 Qxe6 18.Qe2 Qg8 19.0-0 Qc6 20.Qf5 – White has excellent compensation for the pawn, Papp-Gledura, Oslo 2014;

C) Better is 11.Qe7. Here the bishop is placed better than on g7, because it will not be faced with exchange when the white knight comes to h5. 12.c3 At GM level, White has tested the aggressive 12.c4 dxc4 13.Qc3 Qd6 14.Qh4?! (a bad square for the knight; stronger is 14.Qb1!? followed by b2-b3 or immediately 14.b3 with unclear play) 14...a6, and Black’s chances are superior, Bartel-Riazantsev, Rhodos 2013.

C1) 12...0-0 (Barrenechea-Bartel, Gibraltar 2015) 13.Qg3

C11) 13...c5 14.Qd3 Qc6 15.0-0 cxd4 (15...Qd6 16.Qxc5 Qxc5+ 17.Qh1± or 17.Qd4±) 16.Qxd4 Qxd4 17.Qe3 f5 (he loses after 17...Qc5? 18.Qxd4 Qxd4 19.Qxh7+ Qxh7 20.Qxd4 Qd8 21.Qh5+ Qh6 22.f5+-) 18.Qh1±;

C12) 13...e5 14.Qe2 Qe8 (14...e4 15.Qh4±) 15.Qxe5 Qxe5 16.Qxe5 Qg4 (weaker is 16...Qd8 in view of 17.Qf4 Qg4 18.0-0-0 Qd7 19.Qd2 Qxf3 (he is losing after 19...Qxe5 20.Qxe5 Qxe5 21.Qe1 Qe7 22.Qd4 Qf6 23.Qxe5 h5 24.Qxc7 Qxe1+ 25.Qd2 Qd1+ 26.Qc2 Qxd4 27.h3! Qe3 28.Qxg4 Qd2+ 29.Qb3 c5 30.c4 b5 31.cxd5 Qd4 32.Qf5+-) 20.Qxf3 Qdxe5 21.Qf5 Qg6 22.Qg3±) 17.Qh3 Qxf3 18.Qxf3 Qh4 19.Qd1 Qxg3 20.Qg2 Qf2 21.Qe1 Qxg2 22.Qxg2 Qxe5 23.Qxg3+ Qf7 24.Qe2±. As this analysis shows, on g8 the black king is quite vulnerable. Consequently another plan is preferable, in which the king remains in the centre and prepares for evacuation to the queenside.

C2) 12...Qd7 13.Qg3
13...\textit{\textit{N}}f8 He would like to cover the square h5, by putting the pawn there – 13...h5?! , but then he weakens the square g6, which is a more significant weakness: 14.\textit{\textit{N}}h4 \textit{\textit{N}}f8 15.f5 (Black is fine after 15.\textit{\textit{B}}d3?! f5, Dauletova-Zahedifar, Tabriz 2014) 15...e5 16.\textit{\textit{B}}g6 \textit{\textit{B}}xg6 17.fxg6. The white pawn, having broken into the black camp, will cause him a great deal of trouble. For example, 17...\textit{\textit{Q}}d6 18.g7 \textit{\textit{R}}g8 19.\textit{\textit{Q}}xh5+ \textit{\textit{Q}}d8 20.dxe5 fxe5 21.e2 \textit{\textit{B}}xg7 (he loses immediately after 21...e4?? 22.\textit{\textit{Q}}h7 \textit{\textit{B}}e6 23.\textit{\textit{Q}}g4+-) 22.\textit{\textit{Q}}xe5 \textit{\textit{Q}}e8 23.\textit{\textit{Q}}h5 \textit{\textit{Q}}g8 24.\textit{\textit{B}}e3 \textit{\textit{B}}xb2 25.0-0, and White has a decisive advantage.

14.\textit{\textit{B}}h5!? \textit{\textit{B}}g8 In the computer’s opinion, it is perfectly possible to dispense with castling after 14...\textit{\textit{d}}d7 15.\textit{\textit{Q}}g7+, but such play is far from being to everyone’s taste. 15.\textit{\textit{Q}}e2 \textit{\textit{d}}d7 16.\textit{\textit{B}}d3 with a complicated game, in which White’s chances are not worse.

D) It is also worth considering the quite aggressive try 11...e5 12.fxe5 fxe5.
13. $\texttt{Ng3}$ Black is fine after 13.dxe5 $\texttt{Bg7}$ 14.$\texttt{Qd4}$ $\texttt{Nx}e5$ 15.$\texttt{Nxe5}$ $\texttt{Qxd4}$ 16.$\texttt{Nxd4}$ $\texttt{Bxe5}$ 17.c3= Rade-Zovko, Croatia tt 2014. 13...$\texttt{Bg7}$

White is better after both 13...$\texttt{Be7}$ 14.dxe5 and 13...exd4?! 14.$\texttt{Bd3}$ – his compensation for the pawn is more than sufficient.

It is risky to stabilise the situation in the centre with 13...$\texttt{e4}$!, since after 14.$\texttt{Ng5}$ $\texttt{Nxg5}$ 15.$\texttt{Bxg5}$ White creates unpleasant pressure on the kingside. For example: 15...$\texttt{e6}$ 16.$\texttt{Wh5+}$ $\texttt{f7}$ 17.$\texttt{Wg4}$ $\texttt{d7}$ (naturally, not 17...$\texttt{Wxb2}$? because of 18.$\texttt{Wc8#}$) 18.0-0-0 $\texttt{Gg8}$ 19.$\texttt{Qxe4!}$ $\texttt{e7}$ (19...$\texttt{dxe4}$? 20.$\texttt{Wxe4}$++) 20.$\texttt{Axd6+}$ $\texttt{xd6}$ 21.$\texttt{Le1+}$ $\texttt{e5}$ 22.$\texttt{h4}$! with decisive threats.

It is worth considering 13...$\texttt{g4}$!? 14.$\texttt{Ag2}$ $\texttt{xf3}$ 15.$\texttt{xf3}$ $\texttt{Wxd4}$ 16.$\texttt{Wxd4}$ exd4 17.$\texttt{d2}$. Of course, White has good compensation for the pawn, but it is unclear if he can count on an advantage.

14.$\texttt{c3}$ exd4 It is unfavourable for Black to close the centre – after 14...$\texttt{e4}$ 15.$\texttt{Rh4}$ White’s chances are superior. 15.$\texttt{Wxd4}$ 0-0 16.$\texttt{Le2}$ with a double-edged game.

12.$\texttt{Ng3}$ 0-0 13.$\texttt{Rh5}$ e5

Also in White’s favour is 13...$\texttt{c5}$ 14.$\texttt{dxc5}$ $\texttt{Wxc5}$ 15.$\texttt{d4}$±.

14.$\texttt{Wxg7}$ $\texttt{xg7}$ 15.$\texttt{fxe5}$ $\texttt{fxe5}$

White has the advantage of the two bishops (a consequence of the move 11...$\texttt{g7}$), and the black king is exposed. Now White’s main task is to complete his development, maintaining the necessary care.
16. \texttt{Be2}

This move retains a small advantage, but even stronger is 16.dxe5 \texttt{Nx}xe5 (16...\texttt{Bg}4 is not dangerous for White because of 17.\texttt{Qd}2 \texttt{Qd}7 18.b3 \texttt{Bxf}3 19.gxf3 \texttt{Nfx}e5 20.\texttt{Qb}2; then the white king quietly castles long, whilst the black monarch is not to be envied) 17.\texttt{Qd}2±.

16...\texttt{exd}4 17.\texttt{Qxd}4+

Better is 17.\texttt{Qxd}4!?, not exchanging queens, because Black has a weakened king.

17...\texttt{Bxd}4 18.\texttt{Bxd}4 \texttt{c}5

It was worth considering 18...\texttt{Qd}6!? , covering the square b5 and intending ...\texttt{c}6-c5.

19.\texttt{Bb}5 \texttt{Ba}6 20.\texttt{Qd}2 0-0 \texttt{Qd}7
21.\text{f2}?! 

Clearly stronger was 21.a4±, defending the knight and preparing to bring the rook out via a3. Now, however, Black gets the chance to untangle and regroup.

21...\text{xb5} 22.\text{xb5} \text{d6} 23.\text{xf8} \text{xf8} 24.\text{f1} 

In the event of 24.\text{xa6} bxa6 25.g3 \text{e4} Black obtains a strong knight on e4.

24...\text{b4} 25.c3 \text{e2} 26.\text{b1} \text{d4} 

It was worth considering 26...\text{e4} 27.\text{d3} \text{e1} 28.\text{h6+} \text{h6} 29.\text{xe1} \text{d8} with good chances of a draw for Black.

27.g3 \text{e3} 28.\text{xe3} dxe3 29.\text{f2} 30.\text{e2} \text{c4} 31.\text{f2} exf2+ 32.\text{xf2} \text{b2} 33.\text{e3} \text{f6}
34.\textit{\textbf{e2}}

This move loses the advantage. Correct was 34.\textit{\textbf{d2}}, after which Black, in order to get his knight out, has to surrender a pawn. For example,: 34...c4 35.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{a4}} 36.\textit{\textbf{xc4}}; 34...\textit{\textbf{e5}} 35.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{a4}} 36.\textit{\textbf{g2}}, and Black loses the b-pawn (36...\textit{\textbf{b5}} 37.\textit{\textbf{c6}}); or 34...\textit{\textbf{a4}} 35.\textit{\textbf{g2}}.

34...\textit{\textbf{a4}} 35.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{b6}} 36.\textit{\textbf{d3}}

On 36.\textit{\textbf{f3}} Black now has 36...\textit{\textbf{c4+}} 37.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{b5}}.

36...\textit{\textbf{e5}} 37.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{c4+}} 38.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} 39.\textit{\textbf{xd5}} \textit{\textbf{xd5}} 40.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{b5}}
Conclusions: In this game, after 10.f4, we saw the retreat of the knight – 10...\( \text{f7} \), and after 11.\( \text{f3} \) Maxime Vachier-Lagrange played the outwardly logical, but dubious move 11...\( \text{g7} \) when after 12.\( \text{g3} \) 0-0 13.\( \text{h5} \) he faced definite problems. However, if instead of 11...\( \text{g7} \) Black played something else, White will follow the same plan: take the knight from e2 to the kingside and strengthen the d4-pawn with c2-c3; one should also remember the typical breaking-up advance f4-f5.

Game 82
Michael Adams 2758
Alexander Motylev 2682
Germany Bundesliga 2014/15 (12)

1.e4 c6 2.\( \text{c3} \) d5 3.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 4.e5 \( \text{e4} \) 5.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{b6} \) 6.d4 e6 7.\( \text{g3} \)!

If for some reason you do not wish to enter the fiery complications with 7.\( \text{fg1} \), then you have in reserve this quieter alternative. White’s play here is fully logical and easy to understand and he retains some slight pressure.

7...c5 8.c3

Let us consider a gambit continuation in the style of Nimzowitsch (the well-known theoretician loved to sacrifice the d4-pawn against the French Defence): 8.\( \text{d3} \)!
\( \text{xg3} \) 9.\( \text{hxg3} \)
The sacrifice should be accepted. Worse is 9...\texttt{c}6 10.\texttt{dxc}5 \texttt{xc}5 11.\texttt{e}2 \texttt{b}4 12.\texttt{b}5+ \texttt{c}6 (or 12...\texttt{d}7 13.\texttt{xd}7+ \texttt{xd}7 14.\texttt{c}3 \texttt{c}6 15.\texttt{b}4 \texttt{e}7 16.0-0\pm; later White should open the position by playing c3-c4) 13.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{d}7 14.a4 a6 15.\texttt{d}3\pm, and it is not easy for the black king to castle, as everywhere it can come under attack. 10.\texttt{g}5 White immediately creates threats on the kingside.

10...\texttt{c}6

All other moves are worse:
A) 10...e7 11.fx7 (White is also better after 11.\h5 xg5 12.xg5±) 11...xf7 12.xh5+ f8 13.g6 d7 14.f3±, and Black has to return the piece on f6;

B) 10...h6 11.h5 (11.f3!?) 11...g6 12.g4 h5 13.f4 c7 14.0-0 g7 15.e1 c6 16.b3 0-0 17.f3 b4 18.g4 hxg4 19.xg4 with a strong initiative for White;

C) 10...c7 11.f1 and now:

C1) 11...xe5? 12.f4 f6 13.xh7 e7 14.xb8 xb8 15.f6+ f7 followed by xh8;

C2) 11...e7 12.xh7 (or 12.h5 xg5 13.xg5±) 12...xh7 13.xh7, and after 13...xe5?? 14.f4 Black loses the queen;

C3) 11...c6 12.xh7 d8 (the threat was 13.f6+) 13.g5+ e7 14.g4±;

C4) 11...g6 12.f3 h5 (12...h6 13.f6 g8 14.h7±, later White moves his queen away and plays f6) 13.f6 g8 14.g4 with the initiative, and now not 14.hxg4? because of 15.h7+-.

11.xh7 d7 12.f6+ gxf6 13.xh8 0-0-0 If he does not castle now, he will not get the chance again (on 13...fxe5 or 13...xe5 there follows 14.h6).

analysis diagram

We have reached a very complicated position, where Black’s game looks easier to play – he won all three games in which this position arose.

14.f1 White has also tried 14.h5 fxe5 with an unclear position, Ponkratov-Shimanov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2012.


In our view, in blitz this variation is easier to play with black, but on the way to this position, he must find a number of accurate moves.

Now we return to the game move 8.c3.

8...c6

Interesting is 8...d7!? 9.d3 cxd4 and now:
10. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{x}xe4}} Also possible is 10. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{x}xd4 \textbar{x}xg3}} 11. h\textbar{x}g3 \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c6}} 12. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{f}f3}} with mutual chances. Worse is 10. c\textbar{x}d4?! because of 10... \textit{\textbf{\textbar{x}xg3}} (or 10... \textit{\textbf{\textbar{b}b4+?!}} 11. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{e}e2}} f5³) 11. h\textbar{x}g3 h6 12. g4 \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c6}} 13. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{f}f1}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{b}b4}} 14. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{b}b1}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c8}} 15. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{d}d2}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{a}a6+}} 16. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{g}g1}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{a}a4}} 17. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{e}e1}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c2}} 18. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{x}xc2}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{xc2}}} 19. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{h}h3}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{b}b6}} 20. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c3}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{e}e7}} 21. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{e}e2}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{g}g6+}} Kuzubov-Solak, Dubai 2015. 10... \textit{\textbf{\textbar{d}xe4}} 11. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{d}xe4}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{d}xc3}} 12. b\textbar{c}c3 \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c6}} 13. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{b}b1}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c7}} 13... \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c5?!}} is bad because of 14. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{c}c6+}} \textit{\textbf{\textbar{x}xc6}} 15. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{xb7}}}, but not so bad is 13... \textit{\textbf{\textbar{a}a6}} 14. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{g}g5}}³. 14. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{d}d3}} with mutual chances.

9. \textit{\textbf{\textbar{d}d3}}

9... \textit{\textbf{\textbar{x}xg3}}
9...cxd4!? 10.\textit{x}e4 (worse is 10.cxd4 \textit{b}4+ 11.\textit{f}1 f5\textsuperscript{+} Middleton-Haydon, High Wycombe 2011) 10...dxe4 11.\textit{x}e4 dxc3 12.bxc3 \textit{a}6 (12....\textit{c}7 13.0-0 \textit{x}e5 14.\textit{x}e5 \textit{xe}5 15.\textit{e}1 \textit{c}7 16.\textit{d}4\textsuperscript{=}; 12...\textit{a}5 13.0-0 \textit{x}e5 14.\textit{b}1\textsuperscript{=}) 13.\textit{d}3 (it was better to defend the e5-pawn in advance with 13.\textit{f}4 and only then play \textit{d}3 followed by castling; in that case, White’s chances are somewhat better) 13...\textit{a}5 14.0-0 \textit{x}e5 15.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5 16.\textit{c}7 17.\textit{b}5+ (17.\textit{g}4?!\textsuperscript{?}) 17...\textit{d}7 18.\textit{f}4 \textit{c}8 19.\textit{x}d7+ (19.c4?!?) 19...\textit{xd}7 20.\textit{g}4 h5 21.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}6 22.\textit{xc}6+ bxc6, and then in the game Dominguez Perez-Grischuk, Beijing 2013, Black realised his extra pawn.

10.hxg3 cxd4 11.cxd4 \textit{d}7

12.\textit{f}1

Worse is 12.b1 \textit{e}7 13.0-0 \textit{c}8\textsuperscript{=} Grischuk-Riazantsev, Moscow 2013, but another possibility is 12.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}4+ 13.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}7 14.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}5 15.\textit{g}4\textsuperscript{=} Almasi-Cheremnova, St Petersburg 2012. In this variation, Black should not include the moves 12...\textit{b}4+ 13.\textit{f}1; in reality, this is a tempo loss, because White does not mind having his king on \textit{f}1. Black should play the immediate 12...\textit{e}7 with mutual chances.

12...\textit{e}7 13.\textit{g}4 \textit{b}4 14.\textit{b}1 \textit{b}5+ 15.\textit{g}1 \textit{a}6

Better was 15...\textit{c}8\textsuperscript{=}.
16.\textbf{Bg5!}

Of course, in this pawn structure, the exchange of dark-squared bishops is in White’s favour.

16...\textbf{h6} 17.\textbf{Bxe7} \textbf{Kxe7} 18.\textbf{Qd2} \textbf{C6} 19.\textbf{g5}

It made sense first to move the bishop closer to the battle and only then play g4-g5.

For example, 19.\textbf{Bc2 Ra8} 20.\textbf{g5 a5} 21.\textbf{C3 b4} 22.\textbf{b3 hxg5} 23.\textbf{Exh8 Exh8} 24.a3 \textbf{a5} 25.\textbf{xc5} and White is slightly better.

19...\textbf{Be2}

Better was 19...\textbf{a5} 20.\textbf{e3 b4} 21.\textbf{g6} (21.b3 \textbf{a3=}) 21...\textbf{xb2} 22.\textbf{h2 f8=} (but not 22...\textbf{xa1?} 23.\textbf{a3+ e8} 24.gxf7+ \textbf{xf7} 25.\textbf{g6+ xg6} 26.\textbf{xa1=}).

20.\textbf{gxh6}

It was worth considering 20.\textbf{e1!?} \textbf{af8} (on 20...\textbf{ac8} both 21.\textbf{c2}, activating the bishop and preparing the rook’s exit to c1, and 21.\textbf{h4}, with the idea of meeting 21...\textbf{d7} with 22.\textbf{f4}, attacking the f7-pawn, are possible; in both cases, White has the initiative) 21.g6± or 21.gxh6 \textbf{Exh6} 22.\textbf{Exh6 gxh6} 23.\textbf{h7±}.

20...\textbf{gxh6} 21.\textbf{h3 xf3} 22.\textbf{xf3 a4} 23.\textbf{d3 a5} 24.\textbf{e3}
24...\text{ac}8

On 24...\text{hg}8 White will be only too happy to take the pawn, although not immediately, but after the preliminary 25.\text{b}3 \text{c}7, and now 26.\text{h}6\pm.

25.a3

A loss of time, since this does not actually defend against the threat of ...\text{b}4 (in reply to \text{c}2). Stronger was the immediate 25.\text{b}3 \text{c}7 26.\text{d}3\pm.

25...\text{d}7 26.\text{b}3 \text{c}7 27.\text{d}3 \text{hc}8?

It was better to get the king out of the centre more quickly – 27...\text{c}8. Admittedly, even so, after 28.\text{c}1 followed by \text{bc}3, doubling rooks, White has the advantage.

28.\text{b}5 a6 29.\text{xc}6+ \text{xc}6

Forced.

30.\text{h}6

It was even stronger to start by giving check with 30.\text{c}1+ and only after 30...\text{d}7 to take the pawn with 31.\text{x}h6. In this case, the black king cannot run away to the square b7.

30...b6

It was stronger to push the pawn one square further – 30...b5, since later Black plays this move anyway.

31.\text{c}1+ \text{b}7 32.\text{xc}7+ \text{xc}7 33.\text{b}4 b5 34.g3 \text{c}2
35. \texttt{g2}

Stronger was 35.\texttt{f8 c7 36.b3 d7 37.f3 c7}, and Black is tied to the defence of \textit{f7}, whilst White strengthens his position: \texttt{g2, g3-g4}, etc.

35...\texttt{c7 36.a4?}

A time-trouble error; correct was 36.\texttt{f6±}.

36...\texttt{a5?!}

Black misses his chance: 36...\texttt{b6! 37.f8 c8 38.xc8 (or 38.xf7 a5 39.b3 b4=) 38...xc8 39.b3 c2=}.

37.\texttt{f8}

Correct was 37.\texttt{b3! xa4 38.f3 c7 39.g7 xd4 40.xf7±}.

37...\texttt{c7}

He could save half a point with 37...\texttt{c8! 38.xf7+ c7 39.f8 c8 40.d6 c6=}. The white queen cannot leave the a3-f8 diagonal, because it must defend the rook.

38.axb5
38...Rx f2+?

Black is the last to go wrong. After 38...a5! 39.b6 Rx f2+ 40.Rx f2 c2+ 41.e3 axb4 42.xb4 d1 43.c5 White’s chances of winning are no greater than Black’s of drawing.

39.Rx f2 c2+ 40.e3 c1+ 41.d3 1-0

**Conclusion:** If you prefer to avoid the complications after 7.g5, and quiet positions of the French Defence-type are more to your taste, then you can model your play on this game and choose the move 7.g3, when after the break 7.c5 White has both the standard 8.c3, and also 8.d3.
Before we go over to the main move of this variation, the capture on f3, we will first examine the bishop retreat to h5. This is a sharp and quite risky continuation. Admittedly, to place this variation in doubt, White needs to demonstrate definite knowledge.

Game 83
Paul Keres
Igor Bondarevsky
Moscow ch-URS 1941 (1)

1.e4 c6 2.\(\text{\textit{\text{c3}}} \text{ d5} \text{ 3.\textit{\text{f3}}} \text{ \textit{\text{g4}}} \text{ 4.h3 \textit{\text{h5}}}

The more solid exchange 4...\textit{\textit{xf3}} will be examined later.

5.exd5 cxd5 6.b5+

White wants immediately to exploit the absence of the enemy light-squared bishop from the centre.

6...\textit{\textit{c6}} 7.g4 \textit{\textit{g6}} 8.e5 \textit{\textit{d6}}

The main move 8...\textit{\textit{c8}} is examined below in the game Istratescu-Svetushkin, Patras 2001.
By playing 8...<br wrap="true">d6, Black attacks the knight and, unlike with 8...<br wrap="true">c8, is prepared in the right circumstances to castle queenside. But the downside of this move is that, in some lines, the queen on d6 can come under an unpleasant x-ray from a white bishop at f4, and besides, taking the king to the queenside is quite dangerous: after the exchange on c6, its protection is sharply weakened, which with an undeveloped kingside can have sad consequences.

9.d4 f6

9...0-0-0? is clearly bad because of 10.<br wrap="true">xc6 bxc6 11.<br wrap="true">e6 12.<br wrap="true">a4, and Black has no defence against his opponent’s growing threats.

On 9...<br wrap="true">c8? there follows 10.<br wrap="true">f4 <br wrap="true">d6 10...<br wrap="true">d8 loses to 11.<br wrap="true">e2 followed by 0-0-0) 11.a3 <br wrap="true">xb2 12.<br wrap="true">d2! <br wrap="true">f6 13.f3 and then <br wrap="true">a2, winning the queen and the game.

White’s pressure is very unpleasant and Black should do something to escape it. The only real alternative to the text-move is 9...<br wrap="true">a6. The critical position arises after 10.<br wrap="true">xc6+ <br wrap="true">bxc6 11.<br wrap="true">f4. 
Now Black has the choice between A) 11...\texttt{Q}b4 and B) 11...\texttt{Q}e6:

11...\texttt{Q}f6 does not solve the problems because of 12.\texttt{Q}d2 \texttt{R}c8 13.\texttt{Q}a4 followed by 0-0-0 and \texttt{Q}b6 or \texttt{Q}c5. Slightly more tenacious is 12...h6 (instead of 12...\texttt{R}c8), but after the same reply 13.\texttt{Q}a4 White has a huge lead in development and piece activity, and Black also has weak pawns on c6 and a6.

A) 11...\texttt{Q}b4 12.\texttt{Q}d2 e6 Completely bad is 12...\texttt{Q}xb2 13.0-0 \texttt{Q}xc2 14.\texttt{Q}e3 (naturally, exchanging queens is not favourable for White) 14...\texttt{Q}f6 15.\texttt{Q}b1 \texttt{Q}e4 (forced; the threat was \texttt{Q}fc1, winning the queen) 16.\texttt{Q}xe4 \texttt{Q}xe4 17.\texttt{Q}g6 18.\texttt{Q}b7 e6 19.\texttt{Q}xg6 \texttt{Q}xc2 20.\texttt{Q}e5, and White wins. 13.0-0-0 \texttt{Q}f6 13...\texttt{Q}b8 fails to 14.\texttt{Q}d3 \texttt{Q}xd3 15.\texttt{Q}xb8±, winning the exchange. 14.h4

The bishop on g6 is in danger. If Black ensures its safety by advancing his h-pawn to either h6 or h5, then White takes on g6, after which Black has a weak pawn on e6.
Now after 14...d6 15.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{c}6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{b6}\) 16.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{x}d6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{c}6\) 17.\(\text{\text{a}}3\) Black loses a pawn, since 17...\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{x}g4\) fails to 18.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{g}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{f}6\) 19.\(\text{h}5+\). After 14...\(\text{Q}b8\) Black again loses the exchange: 15.\(\text{d}3 \text{\text{Q}}\text{xd}3\) 16.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{b8}\). Therefore his only chance is to muddy the waters on the queenside.

14...\(c5\) 15.\(\text{a}3 \text{\text{Q}}\text{b7}\) 1f 15...\(\text{Q}xd4\), then 16.\(\text{h}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{d}2+\) 17.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{xd}2 \text{\text{Q}}\text{e}4\) 18.\(f3\), winning a piece. 16.\(f3\) \(h6\) White is better after 16...\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{h}1\) (or 17.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{x}g6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{x}g6\) 18.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{h}1 \text{\text{Q}}\text{f}7\) 19.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{d}7 \text{\text{Q}}\text{g}3\)) 17...\(\text{h}7\) 18.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{xc}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{xc}5\) 19.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{d}7\) 20.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{d}7\) \(\text{\text{Q}}\text{xd}7\) 21.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{xd}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{ex}d5\) 22.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{e}3\) or 22.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{e}5\) with a decisive advantage. 17.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{h}1\) Or 17.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{x}g6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{x}g6\) 18.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{h}1 \text{\text{Q}}\text{f}7\) 19.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{e}5\). 17...\(\text{h}7\) 18.\(\text{g}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{h}5\) 19.\(\text{g}6 \text{\text{Q}}\text{g}6\) 20.\(\text{\text{Q}}\text{xc}5 \text{\text{Q}}\text{xc}5\) 21.\(\text{d}3+\), and Black loses the pawn on \(e6\);

B) 11.\(\text{\text{\text{Q}}e}6\) 12.\(\text{a}4\)
analysis diagram

B1) 12...h5 13.gxh5 hxg4 14.hxg4 h7 15.c5 c8 16.e2 e6 17.ed7 xc5 18.xc5+–;

B2) 12.f6 13.c5 c8 14.ed7 a7 15.xf8 xf8 16.e2 h5 17.0-0-0 f7 (17...h6 18.xh6 xh6 19.f4+) 18.b1 hxg4 19.hxg4 xh1 20.xh1 a5 21.d2 a4 22.f4 a3 23.b3 e6 24.b4, and Black resigned in Bukowski-Mitica, corr. 2014;

B3) 12...f6 13.c5 c8 (somewhat weaker, but also possible is 13.c5 c8 14.h6 h5 15.xg6 fxg6 16.f3, and White was clearly better in Leko-Berescu, Baile Herculane jr 1991) 13.e4 (on 13...h6 both 14.c5 c8 15.xg6 fxg6 16.0-0-0+ and 14.b6 a7 15.0-0-0 h6 16.0-0-0 are very strong) 14.0-0-0; White wants to continue with f2-f3 and c5, obtaining an overwhelming position.

10.xg6 hxg6 11.d3 0-0-0

Black can defend the g6-pawn with 11...f7, but then there follows a simple tactical blow: 12.xd5! e6 (of course, not 12...xd5 because of 13.c4, winning the queen) 13.f4 g5 (if 13...ge7, then 14.c4, and Black starts to have trouble with the pawn on e6) 14.g6 h6 15.xf8 xf8 16.c3, and White has an extra pawn.

12.xc6

A timely exchange: now both recaptures on c6 have their drawbacks.

12...xc6

In reply to 12...xc6 White can simply complete his development – 13.e3 b8 14.0-0-0±.

A more aggressive continuation is also worth considering: 13.a6+ b8 14.b4! a8 15.b5 cxb5 16.xb5 and now:

A) 16.e5 17.a3 c7 (17...xa3 18.c6+ b8 19.b1+ b4 20.c5 a5 21.b6+ c8 22.c6+ b8 23.f1, and there is no defence against the threats of b5 and b3) 18.xd5 b7 19.xb7+ xb7 20.xf8 and here after both 20...xd5 21.dxe5 xe5+ 22.f1+ and 20...xf8 21.dxe5 fxe5± White keeps an extra pawn;

B) 16.e6 17.f4 b4 (if now 17.xf4 Black is mated after c6 and b1) 18.c6+ b7 19.xb7+ xb7 20.b1+

13.Qxg6 e5 14.Qd3

Black does not have full compensation for the pawn.

14...Db4

A) 14...e4!? 15.Qb5 Dh6 (in the game Vavrousek-Skaroupka, Znojmo 2007, Black with the move 15...Qc7 avoided the exchange of queens, in reply to which White could simply have taken another pawn – 16.Qxd5+-) 16.Qxc6+ bxc6 17.Qxh6 Qxh6. Black has some drawing chances, but he is a pawn down and White can play for a win without any risk;

B) On 14...Dh6 White does better to exchange on h6: 15.Qxh6 Qxh6 16.dxe5 (or 16.0-0-0 e4 17.Qe3 Db4 18.Qe2±) 16...fxe5 17.0-0-0 d4 18.Qe4±;

C) 14...exd4 15.Qb5 Qc5.
In the game Vinje Gulbrandsen-Ostenstad, Oslo ch-NOR 1984, after 16.\texttt{d2} $\texttt{e8}\pm$ 17.$\texttt{f1}$ a complicated, double-edged position arose. However, White would have done better to take the pawn with 16.$\texttt{xd4}$. Of course, in reply Black can take on $c2$ after 16...\texttt{xd4} (16...$\texttt{e8}\pm$ gives nothing after 17.$\texttt{e3}\pm$) 17.$\texttt{xd4}$ $\texttt{xc2}$, but after 18.$\texttt{e3}\pm$ the a7-pawn is attacked and there is a threat of the extremely unpleasant $\texttt{e1}$.

15.$\texttt{d2}$ $\texttt{e4}$

This is how one postal game went: 15...\texttt{e7} 16.0-0-0 $\texttt{e4}$ 17.$\texttt{c3}$ $\texttt{c4}$ 18.$\texttt{b1}$ $\texttt{c6}$ 19.$\texttt{a3}$ $\texttt{a5}$ 20.$\texttt{b3}$ $\texttt{a6}$ 21.$\texttt{c1}$ $\texttt{e8}$ 22.$\texttt{f3}$ $\texttt{b6}$

16.b5 Qxc3 17.Qxe6+ bxc6 18.bxc3

In his famous book on the 1941 USSR Absolute Championship match-tournament, Botvinnik gave this move an exclamation mark and wrote: ‘Keres decides on a worsening of his queenside pawns for the sake of improving the position of his pieces (the b-file)’.

But of course the bishop recapture 18.Bxc3 also leaves White with a definite advantage.

18...g5 19.e2 e7 20.f3 exf3+ 21.Kxf3 Nc6 22.Be1 Rb7 23.Bg3 Qa4 24.Rab1

‘Now we see the effect of the move 18.bxc3. White can dispense with defending the h3-pawn, because he can always regain the pawn on a7, obtaining a passed pawn in the process. It would have been better for Black to refrain from this variation.’ (Botvinnik)

White won on move 53.

**Conclusion:** In reply to 4...h5 White immediately exploits the bishop’s absence from the queenside with 5.exd5 cxd5 6.b5+ c6 7.g4 g6 8.e5, attacking the c6. In this game, Black chose to defend it with 8...d6, but after 9.d4 he had to play 9.f6, since after other replies, White places his bishop on f4, eyeing the black queen. After 10.xg6 hxg6 11.d3 Black loses the pawn on g6 or on d5 (11...f7 12.xd5).
1.e4 c6 2.d3 d5 3.d3 g4 4.h3 h5 5.exd5 exd5 6.b5+ c6 7.g4 g6 8.e5 c8

9.d4 e6 10.e2

The idea of this move is to stop Black playing ...f7-f6.

We will look briefly at another, more direct plan: 10.h4 f6 11.xg6 hxg6 12.d3 f7 13.xc6 xc6 14.d2.
The computer’s assessment is equality, but White’s game is clearly easier to play, as he has a clear plan to castle long and attack the king. It is rather harder for Black to create counterplay: he needs to advance his queenside pawns, but this can make weaknesses of them. So White can bravely adopt this alternative plan.

10...\textit{b4}

The most popular move. The alternatives are 10...\textit{e7} and 10...\textit{d6}:

A) On 10...\textit{e7}
it is worth considering the rare 11.f4 b6 (after 11...h5 12.f5 exf5 13.Qxf1 hxg4 14.hxg4 or 13.Qxg6 fxg6 14.gxf5 gxf5 15.Qg5 White has a strong initiative) 12.f5. Even stronger was the preliminary 12.0-0!?, e.g. 12...a6 (12...Qxd4+ 13.Qf3 Qb4 14.f5 exf5 15.Rae1 – White has included all his pieces in the attack on the uncastled black king) 13.Qxc6+ bxc6 (after 13...Nxc6 14.Nxc6 Rxc6 15.f5 Black loses a bishop) 14.Qf2+. 12...Qxf5 After 12...exf5 13.Qg5 a6 14.Qxe7 Qxe7 15.Qxc6 bxc6 16.Qxd5 Qd8 17.Qxe7 Qxe7 18.Qxa6 White keeps an extra pawn. 13.Qxf5 Qxf5 14.Qe3

14...Qxd4 14...Qd6!? 15.Qf2 Qxd4 16.Qxd4 Qxd4 17.Qf3 Qf6 18.0-0-0±. 15.Qxd4 Qxd4 16.Qf3 Qc5 17.0-0-0 Qe7 18.Qe5± Bellin-Nisipeanu, Zalakaros 1997;

Now Black has: B1) 12...\(\text{f8}\), and B2) 12...\(\text{b8}\).

12...\(a6\) is unpromising because of 13.\(\text{xc6+}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 14.c4 \(\text{xe7}\) 15.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xe7}\) 16.\(\text{e3}\) \(b5\) 17.\(\text{b3}\) \(\text{f6}\) 18.\(\text{d1}\), and White has an extra pawn, Mulligan-Risdon, corr. 2011.

B1) 12...\(\text{f8}\) 13.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{xc6}\) 14.\(\text{c3}\) White has also tried 14.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{f6}\) 15.\(\text{c3}\), Venkatesh-Ding Liren, Ho Chi Minh City 2012. It seems to us that here it is harder for White to realise his extra pawn, because the knight on e3 somewhat hampers his normal development. 14...\(\text{b4}\) 14...\(\text{b6}\)! 15.\(\text{b5}\) \(\text{f6}\) 16.\(\text{xd6}\) \(\text{xd6}\) 17.\(\text{c3}\) – while White has not completed his development, Black has some compensation. But, as they say, a pawn is a pawn, and only White can play for a win here. 15.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{xd4}\) Of course, this move is risky, because White immediately seizes the open d-file, but Black does not wish to play a pawn down. 16.0-0-0 \(\text{c4}\) 17.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{f6}\) 17...\(\text{f6}\) 18.\(\text{d8+}\) \(\text{f7}\) 19.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 20.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{xe3}\) (20...\(\text{xc4}\) 21.\(\text{d7}\) \(\text{e7}\) 22.\(\text{b5}\) \(a6\) 23.a3 \(\text{axb5}\) 24.axb4) 21.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{e5}\) (21...\(a6\) loses to 22.\(\text{hd1}\)) 22.\(\text{xa7}\). 18.\(\text{d8+}\) \(\text{e8}\) 19.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 20.\(\text{hd1}\) \(f6\) 21.\(\text{e3}\);

B2) 12...\(\text{b8}\) and now:

B21) 13.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{xd4}\) 14.\(\text{c3}\)
B2111) 14...\text{Q}d6 15.\text{N}xc6 bxc6 16.\text{B}c4± or 15.\text{N}d2 \text{N}e7 16.0-0-0±;

B2112) If 14...\text{Q}f6, then here, instead of the capture on c6 with the knight, as played in two games, stronger is 15.\text{B}xc6+ bxc6 16.\text{B}e3± followed by \text{N}d3, \text{B}d4 and 0-0-0;

B2113) 14...\text{Q}d7 15.\text{B}e3 (it is worth considering 15.\text{B}d2±, preparing long castling) 15...\text{R}d8?! (more tenacious is 15...\text{N}ge7 16.\text{B}a4±) 16.\text{B}d4 \text{K}f8 17.\text{B}xc6 bxc6 18.0-0-0+- Varas Gonzalez-Izeta, Euskadi 2000.

B22) 13.\text{N}c3 \text{Qxd4} If he does not take the pawn at once, he will not get another chance. 14.\text{B}e3
14...\texttt{d}8 Black’s play was dubious in the game S.Vidovic-Zelcic, Croatia tt 2000: 14...\texttt{d}6 15.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{c}7 16.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{d}8 17.\texttt{d}4 e5 18.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{xd}1+ 19.\texttt{xe}1 \texttt{e}7 20.\texttt{f}6+ \texttt{f}8 21.\texttt{c}4, and White had created a strong attack. Also risky is 14...\texttt{b}4?! because of 15.0-0-0 \texttt{e}7, Menvielle-Gomez, Corte Ingles 1998 (on 15...\texttt{f}6, as in the game Gurgenidze-Liberzon, Leningrad 1960, there is the unpleasant 16.g5 \texttt{d}7 17.\texttt{b}1 a6 18.\texttt{xc}6 \texttt{xc}6 19.\texttt{d}4 \texttt{e}7 20.\texttt{hd}1 \texttt{b}6 21.h4. White’s pieces are clearly the more active, whilst the black king is uncastled; and if Black castled short, then White is ready to play h4-h5), and after 16.\texttt{b}1 0-0 17.a3 \texttt{a}5 18.h4 White begins a storm. 15.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{a}5 On 15...\texttt{e}7 unpleasant is 16.\texttt{e}4 with the threat of \texttt{c}5, and 16...\texttt{b}6 is not possible because of 17.\texttt{c}4+. 16.\texttt{c}5 White has fewer chances after 16.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{d}8 17.\texttt{xd}8+ \texttt{xd}8 18.\texttt{xd}8+ \texttt{xd}8 and Black is close to equalising, Leko-Izeta, Pamplona 1993. Now:

\texttt{analysis diagram}

B221) 16...\texttt{e}7?! is bad because of 17.b4 \texttt{a}3 18.\texttt{e}3; on 17...\texttt{c}7 White can win the queen: 18.\texttt{d}6 \texttt{xd}6 (completely bad is 18...\texttt{b}6 19.\texttt{xe}7 \texttt{xe}7 20.\texttt{d}5+) 19.\texttt{xd}6 with a large advantage;

B222) White is better after 16...\texttt{d}8 17.b4 \texttt{xd}1+ 18.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{d}8+ 19.\texttt{c}1;

B223) On 16...\texttt{f}6 the white king castles by hand – 17.\texttt{f}1, whilst the black king cannot escape from the centre so easily: on ...0-0 he must always reckon with h4-h5.

\texttt{11.h}4 \texttt{e}7

This move involves a piece sacrifice, but Black has nothing better.

A) \texttt{11...a}5
12.\texttt{d2} Also good is 12.0-0 \texttt{xc3} 13.\texttt{xc3} \texttt{xc3} 14.\texttt{xc6+} bxc6 15.\texttt{b1}, after which White has more than sufficient compensation for the pawn. We will show several variations, which demonstrate White’s advantage: 15...\texttt{f6} (15...\texttt{xc2} 16.\texttt{a6} \texttt{e7} 17.\texttt{a3+}-) 16.\texttt{b3} \texttt{xc2} (16...\texttt{xd4} 17.\texttt{h5} \texttt{xc2} 18.\texttt{b2} \texttt{e4} 19.\texttt{e3} \texttt{a4} 20.\texttt{a3} \texttt{e4} 21.\texttt{d2} \texttt{a4} 22.\texttt{f3} \texttt{c2} 23.\texttt{xc2} \texttt{xc2} 24.\texttt{c1+-}) 17.\texttt{e3} 0-0 (17...\texttt{h5} 18.\texttt{a3} \texttt{g4} 19.\texttt{xg4} \texttt{hxg4} 20.\texttt{e5}, and against the threats of \texttt{d6} and \texttt{xg7} there is no satisfactory defence) 18.\texttt{a3} \texttt{fe8} 19.\texttt{c1} \texttt{e4} 20.\texttt{d2+-}; the threat is \texttt{f2-f3} and \texttt{h4-h5}, so Black suffers material losses. 12...\texttt{e7} 13.\texttt{h5} \texttt{xc2} 14.\texttt{e1} 0-0 He is not saved by 14...\texttt{e4} 15.0-0 0-0 16.\texttt{xc6} bxc6 (or 16...\texttt{xc6} 17.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{e6} 18.\texttt{f3+-}) 17.f3 f6 18.\texttt{d7} – Black loses material. 15.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6} 16.\texttt{xc6} \texttt{xc6} 17.\texttt{xc2} with an extra piece for White, Brikov-Poletov, Tula 2004;

B) 11...\texttt{xc3+}
12.bxc3 a5 13.b1! A novelty recommended by the computer. 13...xc3+ Declining the pawn does not significantly ease Black’s life: 13...e7 14.h5 e4 (or 14...xc3+ 15.d2 xc2 16.c1 e4 17.f3 xe2+ 18. xe2, and Black loses the bishop) 15.f3 f6 (15...xc3+ 16.d2 (here 16.d2 no longer works, because after 16...xd4 the e5 is hanging) 16...xc2 17.b2 xd2+ 18.xd2 f6 19.e6 bxc6 20.e2, winning the bishop) 16.xe4 xe5 17.exd5 exd5 18.0-0+.

The position is quite open, White, unlike his opponent, has already castled, and Black will hardly succeed in escaping without significant losses. 14.d2 xd2+ Bad is 14...xc2 15.xc2 xe2 16.xc6+ bxc6 17.b7, and Black’s position collapses: 17...h6 (17...f6 18.a3+-; 17...e7 18.a3 g6 19.xf7-) 18.xh6 gxh6 19.d2 a4 20.xa7 b5 21.a4 c4 22.d7+-; and now both 22.xf7 and 22.xc6+ are winning. 15.xd2
B1) 15...f6 16...xc6 bxc6 17.h5 e4, and now 18.f3 wins the bishop;
B2) 15...f6 16...xc6 bxc6 17.a6 d8 (or 17...c7 18.b8+ d7 19.a3+-) 18.a3+-;
B3) 15...h5 16...xc6+ bxc6 17.g5 – despite the extra pawn, Black’s position is lost – White has much more active pieces, his rooks are already poised to break through on the b-file, the bishop is about to come to a3 and the black king finds it hard to castle.

12.h5 e4 13.f3

13...0-0

13...a6? is bad because of 14...xc6+ xc6 15...xc6 xc6 16.f1 (it is premature to take the bishop 16.fxe4 because of 16...xc3) 16...xc3 (16...f6 17.g2 xf3+ 18.xf3 xd4 19.d1 c4 20.d2+) 17.bxc3 xc3 18.fxe4 dxe4 19.xe4 c7 20.d2 xc2 21.e2 0-0 22.h6 g6 23.ac1 c4+ 24.e3 xc1 25.xc1 xa2 26.e5 f6 27.e7, and Black resigned in Bartak-Roj, Czech tt 1991.

14...xc6 xc6 15.e3
15...\(e6\)

On 15...\(a5\) one possibility is 16.0-0 \(xc3\) 17.\(xc3\) \(xc3\) (17...\(xc2\) 18.\(xc6\) \(xc6\) 19.\(xc2\) \(xc3\) 20.\(f2\)+) 18.\(xc6\) (but not 18.\(xe4\) \(xd4\) 19.\(xd4\) \(xd4\) 20.\(g2\) \(dxe4\) 21.\(ad1\) \(e5\) Baro\-Gonzalez, La Roda 2006) 18...\(xc6\) 19.\(xe4\) \(dxe4\) 20.\(ab1\)

In the variation 15...\(xc3\)+ 16.\(xc3\) \(xf3\) 17.\(xf3\) \(a5\) 18.\(xc6\) \(xc3\)+ 19.\(f2\) \(xc6\) (19...\(xc2\)+ 20.\(g3\) \(xc6\) 21.\(ac1\)+-) 20.\(g3\) the three black pawns in this position do not compensate fully for the piece minus.

Interesting is 15...\(e5\)?, but here too, play develops in White’s favour. For example: 16.\(xc6\) \(xc6\) 17.\(xe4\) \(xc3\) 18.0-0 (White is also better after 18.\(xc3\) \(xc3\)+ 19.\(f2\) \(exd4\) 20.\(f4\) \(xa1\) 21.\(xa1\)+) 18...\(a5\) 19.\(xc3\) \(xc3\) 20.\(d3\) \(a3\)+ 21.\(d1\) \(dxe4\) 22.\(xc3\) \(xc3\) 23.\(e1\) \(b2\) 24.\(g1\) \(c8\) 25.\(d2\) \(a1\)+ 26.\(e2\) \(xa2\) 27.\(c3\) \(a6\)+ 28.\(f2\) \(f6\)+ 29.\(e1\), and in the game Dabija-Leite, corr. 2012, White escaped the checks and soon realised his extra piece.

16.\(xe4\) \(xd4\) 17.\(xd4\) \(xd4\)
So Black has taken several pawns, and the white king on e1 cannot castle. But in return, White has a whole extra piece and one can say that he has good winning chances, although Black has some hopes of saving himself.

18.\textit{Ed1}

White has also played 18.\textit{f1} xc3 (Black does better to take on e4: 18...dxe4!? 19.Ed1 f6+ 20.g2 xc3 21.bxc3 e5v) 19.bxc3 xc3 20.e1 xc2 21.exd5 xe2+ 22.e2 c5 23.d3 xd5 24.e4 Ed7 25.g5± Stevenson-Kilpatrick, corr. 1988.

18...xc3+ 19.bxc3 xc3+ 20.f1 dxe4 21.xe4

21...xc2
Interesting complications begin after 21...f5: 22.\textit{Qxe6+ K\textit{h8} 23.\textit{g2 Qxc2+} (Black is not saved by 23...fxg4 24.\textit{d3 \textit{ce8} 25.\textit{Hf1 \textit{c5} 26.\textit{xf8+ xf8} 27.\textit{f1 g8} 28.\textit{f5 c6+ 29.\textit{e4 h6} 30.\textit{xg4 e8} 31.\textit{f5 g8} 32.\textit{c4}, and Black resigned in Lopez Ramos-Fernandez, Gijon 1994) 24.\textit{e2 and now:}}}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}[scale=0.5]
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[very thin, lightgray] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

A) 24...\textit{Qxe2+ 25.\textit{xe2 c2} 26.\textit{he1 fxg4 27.g3 xa2 28.f1 (28.d7?! a3+ 29.d3-+) 28.a3+ 29.xg4 a4+ 30.g3 g8 31.f3+- Sikora-Firt, Ostrava 1998;}

B) 24...fxg4 25.f1 (White also has good winning chances after 25.xc2 xc2+ 26.g3 De la Villa-Delgado, Ibercaja 1999) 25.c5 26.xf8+ xf8 27.d3 (or 27.h6 c3 28.xg4+- Van der Wiel-Van der Sterren, Eindhoven ch-NED 1991) 27.a6 28.b1 h5 29.h1 d5+ 30.e4 f7 31.xh7 f3+ 32.xf3 gxf3+ 33.g3, and Black resigned in Gibney-Prabhakar, corr. 2001.

\textbf{22.\textit{xc2}}

22.e2?! has not been tried in practice, e.g. 22.e5 23.g2± or 22.xe2+ 23.xe2 c2+ 24.d2 e8 25.d1±.

\textbf{22...\textit{xc2}}
23.a4

This is how one correspondence game went: 23...d7 a6 24.d3 xa2 25.xb7 c8 26.e2 h6 27.h3 c1+ 28.f2 c4 29.b8+h7 30.b7 xg4 31.xf7 g5 32.d7 e5 33.e3 xh5 34.xe6 h2+ 35.f3 h3+ 36.g2 c3 37.f1 c1+ 38.f2 c3, draw, Van Damme-Morley, corr. 2012.

23...a6

Also possible here is 23...f5 24.g5 e5 and now:
A) 25.g6 e7 26.h2 e4 27.hd2 hxg6 28.hxg6 a6 29.d7 f6 30.e6+ f8 31.d8+? (31.f7+-) 31...e7 32.f7 fc6 33.f1d5 f6 34.f8, draw, Dempster-Sunao, corr. 2002;

B) Even stronger is 25.h4!? e4 (or 25...f4 26.d3 e3 27.e4+-) 26.d7 h8 27.f4+-.

24.e2 a2 25.d7 xa4 26.xb7 h6 27.f2 f5

 Conclusion: In reply to the main continuation 8...c8 White has two plans after 9.d4 e6. The first is 10.f6 11.xg6 hxg6 12.d3 f7 13.xc6 xc6 14.d2. As we have already written, the computer assesses this as equal, but White’s game is much easier to play, as he has a clear plan to castle long and attack on the kingside, whilst it is much harder for Black to create counterplay on the other flank, where advancing his pawns may just make weaknesses out of them.

The second plan, used in the game, is 10.e2, not allowing Black to play ...f7-f6. In this variation, White can count on an opening advantage.
Chapter 18

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.f3 g4 4.h3 xf3 5.Qxf3

Now we have come to the main continuation for Black. White has the bishop pair and some more space here. Black’s main moves in this position are 5...f6!? attacking the pawn on e4 immediately, or first the quiet developing move 5...e6. In both cases, the struggle revolves around square e4, and, after the exchange there, the pawn on d4. White may either defend it, or sacrifice it for fast development.

Game 85
Robert Fischer
Paul Keres
Bled 1961 (16)

1.e4 c6 2.Nc3 d5 3.f3 g4 4.h3 xf3 5.Qxf3 f6!? 6.d4

The most popular continuation involves the move 6.d3, e.g. 6...e6 (White is better after 6...d4 7.b1; he can quietly complete his development and obtain some advantage, thanks to his bishop pair and mobile pawn chain in the centre) 7.d2 bd7 8.0-0-0 or 7.e5 fd7 8.g3, in both cases with chances for both sides. Black creates a powerful pawn trio in the centre with c6-d5-e6, and his bishop controls the dark squares, whereas after 6...d4 the harmony among the black forces is lost.

White can also be a little more cunning, playing first 6.e2!? and only after 6...e6 – 7.d4 dxe4 8.e3, but this small subtlety does not change the assessment of the position as being roughly equal. A game with mutual chances also results from 7.0-0 (instead of 7.d4) 7...e5 or 7...d4 8.b1 bd7.

6...dxe4 7.e3
A solid continuation: White defends the pawn on d4, but has to waste time on a second queen move. Black has no bad pieces and a very solid position, but even so, White’s position is slightly better, on account of his two bishops and small space advantage. Play is for two results, and Black needs to show definite accuracy, to equalise. This variation makes sense as White, if you want to play for a win from a slightly better position, without any particular risk.

The more principled move 7.Nxe4 is examined in the game Mamedov-Alavi, Abu Dhabi 2006.

7...Nbd7

The same position arises after 7...e6 8.Nxe4 Nxe4 9.Qxe4.

Black’s attempt to hold the pawn by 7...Qa5 8.d2 Qf5 does not succeed, because White has sufficient resources to exchange of drive away the defenders of e4: 9.g4 Qf3 10.g1 Qxe3+ 11.fxe3 Qd7 12.g5 Qd5 13.Qxe4=, Arribas Lopez-Granda Zuniga, La Roda 2015.

7...Nxe4 9.Qxe4 Nf6 10.Qd3

8...Nxe4 is worth considering, so as after 8...e6 9.0-0 Qd6 10.Qxe4 Qxe4 11.Qxe4 Qf6 to retreat the queen not to d3, but f3: 12.Qf3.

8...Qxe4 9.Qxe4 Qf6 10.Qd3
10...\textit{\textbf{d5}}

More solid and also simply better is 10...e6. Now after the logical 11.\textit{\textbf{e2}} Black has a choice of where to develop his bishop:

A) 11...\textit{\textbf{e7}} 12.0-0 0-0 13.c4 (White has also tried 13.c3 \textit{\textbf{b6}} 14.\textit{\textbf{c2}} \textit{\textbf{fd8}} 15.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{d5}} 16.a3 with somewhat better chances for White, although in Balashov-Lastin, Moscow 1996, a draw was agreed in this position) 13...\textit{\textbf{c7}} and now:

A1) 14.b3 e5?! 15.\textit{\textbf{g3}}, and Black falls into a pin: 15...\textit{\textbf{d7}} 16.\textit{\textbf{b2}} f6 17.\textit{\textbf{d3}}+, Westerinen-Gudmundsson, Reykjavik 1982. Instead of the hasty 14...e5?! it was better to play simply 14...\textit{\textbf{fd8}} 15.\textit{\textbf{b2}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} 16.\textit{\textbf{fd1}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}} 17.\textit{\textbf{c3}} with approximate equality;

A2) 14.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{fd8}} 15.\textit{\textbf{fd1}} \textit{\textbf{d7}} 16.\textit{\textbf{f3}} \textit{\textbf{ad8}} 17.\textit{\textbf{c3}} h6 18.g3 with the somewhat better position for White, on account of his two bishops, V.Kozlov-Mikh. Tseitlin, Cheliabinsk 1975.

B) 11...\textit{\textbf{d6}} (this move looks more promising) 12.0-0 and now:
B1) 12...\textit{c}c7 13.g5 (White has also tried 13.c4 \textit{d}d8 14.e3 0-0 15.b3 c5 16.dxc5 \textit{x}c5 17.f3 \textit{d}4 18.b1 e5 19.b4 e4 20.b3 b6 21.d1 e5 22.e3 with the somewhat better chances for White, Miles-Wade, Birmingham 1974) 13...h2+ 14.h1 f4 15.xf6 gxf6 16.b4, Ljubojevic-Saidy, Las Palmas 1973. This opposite-coloured bishops position favours White, since the black king does not feel totally safe after castling on either side;

B2) Better is 12...0-0 13.c3 (somewhat more precise is 13.e1, but after 13...\textit{c}7, connecting the rooks and preparing the breaks ...c6-c5 or ...e6-e5, Black is close to equality) 13.e8 14.g3 e5 15.dxe5 \textit{x}e5 16.g2 \textit{c}7 17.f3 \textit{ae}8 18.d2 \textit{e}4 19.xe4 \textit{xe}4 20.ae1 \textit{xe}1 21.xe1 \textit{xe}1 22.xe1 with an equal position and a quick draw, Teeriaho-Bondars, corr. 2014.

\textbf{11.c4 \textit{d}6}

It made sense for Black to keep the queens on, since in the ending arising 11...\textit{e}4+ 12.e3 (White is also better after the more direct 12.xe4 \textit{xe}4 13.d3 f6 14.e3 e6 15.0-0-0, Honfi-Eperjesi, Budapest 1973) 12...xd3 13.xd3 0-0 14.0-0-0 e6 15.g4 \textit{d}6 16.f4± (Stripunsky-Galkin, Rostov-on-Don 1993) White has a stable advantage: he has two bishops and has seized space in the centre and on the kingside.
12.\textit{Be2}

Black plans the advance ...e7-e5, practically equalising the chances. White could prepare for this more effectively with 12.\textit{Be3} e5 13.0-0-0 \textit{Be7} 14.\textit{Qf5} exd4 15.\textit{Qxd4} \textit{Qc7} 16.\textit{g4}± Ghinda-Dumitrache, Romania tt 1999, or 16.\textit{Be2} 0-0 17.\textit{Rhd1}±.

12...\textit{e5} 13.\textit{d5}

After the exchange on e5, White has nothing to ‘bite on’ and Black quietly completes his development. Therefore, White has to allow the enemy pawn to e4.

We give the rest of the game with only very brief notes. White retains a definite initiative and could several times have exploited inaccuracies by his opponent to obtain an advantage. But he did not take advantage of these moments and in the end, the experienced Paul Keres held the draw against his young opponent.

13...\textit{e4} 14.\textit{Qc2} \textit{Be7} 15.\textit{dxc6} \textit{Qxc6} 16.0-0 0-0 17.\textit{Be3} \textit{c5} 18.\textit{Qc3} \textit{b6} 19.\textit{Rfd1} \textit{Qfd8} 20.\textit{b4} \textit{Qxe3} 21.\textit{fxe3}

The following game, played at the very end of the last century, shows that taking with the queen gives White the better chances: 21.\textit{Qxe3} \textit{Qac8} 22.\textit{a3} \textit{Qc7} 23.\textit{c5} bxc5 24.\textit{a6} \textit{Qb8} 25.\textit{Qxc5} \textit{Qb6} 26.\textit{Qxd8+} \textit{Qxd8} 27.\textit{Qxb6} axb6 28.\textit{a4}±, Richardson-Tammemaegi, corr. 1999.

21...\textit{Qc7} 22.\textit{Qd4} a5 23.\textit{a3} axb4 24.axb4 h5 25.\textit{Qad1} \textit{Qd4} 26.\textit{Qxd4} \textit{Qg3} 27.\textit{Qxb6} \textit{Qa2}
28.\textit{f1}?! \\
Black has wrongly sacrificed a pawn, overrating the strength of his attack. The cold-blooded move 28.\textit{f1}! \pm would have permitted Fischer to fend off all of his opponent’s threats, keeping his extra material and a much superior position.

28...\textit{h4} \\
Black could have forced a draw by perpetual check: 28...\textit{g4} 29.\textit{hxg4} (nothing is changed by 29.\textit{d8}+ \textit{h7} 30.\textit{hxg4 hgx}4 31.\textit{d5 xe3}+ 32.\textit{h1 h6}+ etc.) 29...\textit{f2}+ 30.\textit{h1 h4}+ with a draw.

29.\textit{c5 f2}+ 30.\textit{h1 g6} 31.\textit{e5 g7} 32.\textit{c5 xe3} 33.\textit{c6 c2} 34.\textit{b5 c1} 35.\textit{xc1 xe1} 36.\textit{g1 e3} 37.\textit{c7 e2} 38.\textit{xe2 xc7} 39.\textit{f2 g5} 40.\textit{b6 e5} 41.\textit{b7 d7} 42.\textit{d2 b8} 43.\textit{e2 f6} 44.\textit{f3 e6}
45...g4+ f5 46.d1 f6 47.d8+ g6 48.g8+ h6 49.f8+ g6 50.g8+ h6 51.f8+ g6 52.b4 c6 53.d2 d8 54.f3 xb7 55.xb7 a1+ 56.h2 e5+ ½-½

**Conclusion:** After 5...f6 6.d4 dxe4 we offer two plans. In the game we have just seen, Fischer chose the first, more solid move 7.e3. White defends the d4-pawn at the cost of a tempo. As a result, a position is reached in which White has the two bishops and slightly more space, but Black has no bad pieces or weaknesses, with a very solid position. By accurate play, Black can gradually equalise but the play is for two results: White will either win or draw.

The second, more aggressive plan, will be examined below.

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**Game 86**

Rauf Mamedov 2561

Sayed Alavi 2314

Abu Dhabi open 2006 (1)

1.e4 c6 2.f3 d5 3.c3 g4 4.h3 xf3 5.xf3 f6 6.d4 dxe4 7.xe4

Of course, this is more ambitious than 7.e3, but it involves a pawn sacrifice.
7...\texttt{Qxd4}

If Black declines the offer, he will just be slightly worse in a stable position, without any particular counterchances. For example: 7...\texttt{Nxe4} 8.\texttt{Qxe4} \texttt{Nf6} 9.\texttt{Bd3} 10.\texttt{Bb4\texttt{+}}, Fischer-Benson, San Francisco sim 1964.

8.\texttt{Bd3}

White is promised less by 8.\texttt{Nxf6\texttt{+}} exf6:

A) 9.\texttt{d3} fails to 9...\texttt{Bb4\texttt{+}}, depriving White of castling (weaker is 9...\texttt{d6}, e.g. 10.0-0 0-0 11.c3 \texttt{h4} 12.g3 \texttt{a4} 13.f5 \texttt{d8} 14.\texttt{xh7\texttt{+}} f8 15.e1 \texttt{e5} 16.\texttt{h8\texttt{+}} e7 17.e5+, and White won in Sulskis-Vadasz, Budapest 1995), since White cannot block the check: 10.c3 \texttt{xc3\texttt{+}} 11.bxc3 \texttt{xc3\texttt{+}}, and Black takes the rook on a1;

B) 9.\texttt{e2} \texttt{d6} 10.0-0 \texttt{d7} 11.e3 (11.g3?) 11...\texttt{e5} 12.g3 0-0 13.a1 \texttt{e7} 14.fe1 \texttt{e8}, and in the game Miettinen-Eman, corr. 2013, White’s compensation sufficed only for a draw.
The game ended as follows: 15.\texttt{d2} \texttt{e6} 16.\texttt{b3} \texttt{ad8} 17.\texttt{g2} \texttt{e5} 18.\texttt{e4} f5 19.\texttt{f4} \texttt{d5+} 20.\texttt{f3} \texttt{xf3} 21.\texttt{xe8+} \texttt{exe8} 22.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{xf3+} 23.\texttt{xf3}, draw, Miettinen-Eman, corr. 2013.

\textbf{8...\texttt{bd7}}

The move 8...e6 leads to the same position as is reached after 5...e6 6.d4 \texttt{f6} 7.\texttt{d3} dxe4 8.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{xd4}.

Black also has the strong continuation 8...\texttt{xe4}!? 9.\texttt{xe4} e6. It is also worth considering 9...\texttt{d7}, e.g. 10.0-0 \texttt{f6} 11.\texttt{g3} \texttt{e5} 12.\texttt{f3} \texttt{f6}=. If White wishes to avoid the repetition and exchanges, then he can play 13.\texttt{e2} with an unclear position. He has two bishops and a small advantage in development, whilst the black king is still not castled; on the other hand, Black has an extra pawn and no weaknesses. 10.\texttt{e3} White can also complete his development, ignoring the queen on d4 for now. For example: 10.0-0!? \texttt{d7} (worse is 10...\texttt{e7} 11.\texttt{d1} \texttt{f6} 12.\texttt{b3} b6 13.\texttt{e3} 0-0 14.\texttt{c3}=, and it is not easy for Black to complete his development, because of the weak c6-pawn) 11.\texttt{f4} \texttt{d8} 12.\texttt{ad1} \texttt{f6} (the queen will be out of play on the queenside: 12...\texttt{b6} 13.\texttt{g3=}) 13.\texttt{fe1} e5 (13...\texttt{e7} 14.\texttt{e3=} 14.\texttt{f5} \texttt{xf5} 15.\texttt{xe5} \texttt{xe5} (clearly bad is 15...\texttt{xf3}?! 16.\texttt{f6+} \texttt{e7} 17.\texttt{xe7+} \texttt{f8} 18.\texttt{xf3} \texttt{gf6} 19.\texttt{xd7} \texttt{xd7} 20.\texttt{xd7} \texttt{g8+} 21.\texttt{f1=} with an active rook in the ending) 16.\texttt{g3=}.
A) It is extremely dangerous to take a second pawn, because White can exploit the opening of the b-file: 10...\textit{Q}xb2?! 11.0-0 \textit{Q}f6 12.\textit{Q}g3 e5 13.\textit{Q}ab1 b5 14.\textit{Q}e4 \textit{Q}c4 15.g5 h5 16.\textit{Q}e4 \textit{Q}d5 17.\textit{Q}xd5 cxd5 18.\textit{Q}xb5 \textit{Q}c6 19.\textit{Q}xd5 \textit{Q}d8 20.\textit{Q}d8+ \textit{Q}xd8 21.\textit{Q}xa7\pm;

B) A complicated position with chances for both sides is reached after both 10...\textit{Q}c4!? 11.0-0-0 (11.\textit{R}d1!?) 11...\textit{Q}xa2 12.c3, and 10...\textit{Q}d7 11.0-0 \textit{Q}e7 12.\textit{Q}ad1 \textit{Q}c7 13.\textit{Q}f4 e5 14.\textit{Q}g3\textit{Q}, Pacher-Roesemann, Marianske Lazne 2013;

C) The most principled move is 10...\textit{Q}e5 11.0-0-0, but here, any inaccuracy can prove fatal for Black:
11...\textbf{e}7? (correct was 11...\textbf{c}5 12.\textbf{f}4 \textbf{f}6 13.h4 \textbf{d}7 14.g4 with a double-edged game) 12.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{g}5+ 13.\textbf{b}1 \textbf{e}5 14.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{f}6 15.\textbf{g}4 0-0 16.h4 \textbf{h}5 17.\textbf{x}h5 \textbf{g}6 18.\textbf{g}4, and White’s attack became irresistible in Brignone-Rettore, Limone Piemonte, ch-ITA sf 2001.

\textbf{9.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{d}5}

The ‘tight-fisted’ 9...\textbf{b}4+!? 10.\textbf{d}2 \textbf{x}b2 is also possible. Now after 11.\textbf{c}3, admittedly, 11...\textbf{a}3?! is not good because of 12.0-0 \textbf{x}e4 13.\textbf{xe}4 \textbf{c}8 (13...\textbf{e}6? 14.\textbf{ab}1+-) 14.\textbf{fd}1 \textbf{c}5 15.\textbf{ab}1 \textbf{xe}4 16.\textbf{b}3 \textbf{a}4 (or 16...\textbf{a}6 17.\textbf{xe}4\textbf{\pm}) 17.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{a}6 18.\textbf{xe}4 with a clear advantage to White. However, after 11...\textbf{b}6 12.0-0 there is no obvious direct refutation of Black’s risky plan. Of course, White has a strong initiative for the sacrificed material, in blitz one could courageously head for this position.

\textbf{10.\textbf{d}1}

\textbf{10...\textbf{e}6}

It is worth considering 10...\textbf{g}6!? 11.c4 \textbf{a}5+ or 11...\textbf{h}5 12.\textbf{xf}6+ \textbf{xf}6. In the game, Black’s bishop will also soon appear on g7, but the weakening of the dark squares after ...\textbf{e}7-\textbf{e}6 tells.

\textbf{11.0-0 \textbf{e}7 12.\textbf{xf}6+ \textbf{xf}6}

After 12...\textbf{xf}6 13.\textbf{g}3 Black has problems defending the pawn on g7.

\textbf{13.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{b}5 14.b3 \textbf{e}5 15.\textbf{h}5 \textbf{g}6}

Understandably, Black wants to evacuate his king from the centre, but this is not so easy to achieve.

\textbf{16.\textbf{h}6 \textbf{b}4 17.\textbf{f}4 \textbf{g}7 18.\textbf{d}4 \textbf{a}5}
19.b4 \(c7\) 20.c5

Not allowing the black king to castle.

20...\(d8\) 21.c3 \(xd1\)?

The decisive mistake. Stronger was 21...b6, preparing castling. Black probably avoided this move because he spotted the tactical blow 22.\(xd8+\) \(xd8\) 23.\(xe5\)!, but after 23...\(xe5\) 24.\(xe6+\) \(d7\) 25.\(xd7+\) \(xd7\) a roughly equal ending arises.

22.\(xd1\) \(c8\) 23.a4

The rook on h8 remains out of play and White calmly develops an assault on the queenside and in the centre.

23...\(a6\) 24.\(c2\) \(f6\) 25.\(d6\) \(b5\) 26.\(b3\) \(f7\) 27.\(c5\) \(d8\) 28.\(b6\) \(b7\) 29.\(xe6!\)

Black resigned: on 29...\(xe6\) there follows 30.\(b8+\), winning back a knight.

**Conclusion:** In this game, after 5...\(f6\) 6.d4 dxe4 White played a second, more aggressive plan with 7.\(xe4\), involving a pawn sacrifice. In return, White gets an advantage in development. We hope that this game and the accompanying analysis will help you orient yourself in this position, better than your opponent!
6. d4

White also has other plans, such as 6. d3 Nf6 7. Bd2, preparing long castling, or 6. g3 followed by a fianchetto and short castling. But we recommend adopting the same set-up as against 5... Nf6, with a white pawn on d4.

6... Nf6

The move 6... Nd7 has no independent significance, since after 7. Bd3 dxe4 8. Nxe4 Qf6 the game transposes into positions seen after 6... f6.

White is better after 6... e7 7. Bd3 g6 8. 0-0 e5 9. e3 0-0 10. e2 d7 11. f4 dxe4 12. Qxe4.

The following black possibilities are examined in more detail:

A) On 6... b4 we recommend 7. Qg3, immediately attacking the g7-pawn (although 7. a3 dxe4 8. Nxe4 f6 9. N d3 a5 10. e2 is also reasonable for White):
A1) 7...g6 8.a3 \(\text{Bxc3+}\) 9.\(Qxc3\);

A2) On 7...dxe4, as in the game Keres-Agustsson, Amsterdam 1954, White also takes the pawn: 8.\(Qxg7\) \(Qf6\) 9.\(Qxf6\) \(\text{xf6}\) 10.\(\text{d2}\). White has two bishops and Black has a weak pawn on e4;

A3) 7...\(\text{xf8}\) 8.a3 \(\text{Bxc3+}\) 9.\(\text{bxc3 dxe4}\) 10.\(\text{b1 b6}\) 11.a4 \(\text{f6}\) 12.\(\text{c4 bd7}\) 13.0-0 \(\text{d5}\) 14.\(\text{a3+ g8}\) 15.\(\text{a6}\) 16.\(\text{c4 e7}\) 17.\(\text{b7}\) 18.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{b8}\) 19.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{c8}\) 20.d5 with advantage to White, Lu Shanglei-Borisenko, Moscow 2012;

B) 6...g6 7.\(\text{f4}\) and now:

A1) 7...g6 8.a3 \(\text{Bxc3+}\) 9.\(\text{xc3}\);

A2) On 7...dxe4, as in the game Keres-Agustsson, Amsterdam 1954, White also takes the pawn: 8.\(\text{xg7}\) \(\text{f6}\) 9.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 10.\(\text{d2}\). White has two bishops and Black has a weak pawn on e4;

A3) 7...\(\text{xf8}\) 8.a3 \(\text{Bxc3+}\) 9.\(\text{bxc3 dxe4}\) 10.\(\text{b1 b6}\) 11.a4 \(\text{f6}\) 12.\(\text{c4 bd7}\) 13.0-0 \(\text{d5}\) 14.\(\text{a3+ g8}\) 15.\(\text{a6}\) 16.\(\text{c4 e7}\) 17.\(\text{b7}\) 18.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{b8}\) 19.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{c8}\) 20.d5 with advantage to White, Lu Shanglei-Borisenko, Moscow 2012;
B1) 7...d7 8.0-0-0 gf6 (8...a6 9.g4 a5 10.b1 b5 11.exd5 exd5 12.xd5 exd5 13.xd5 d8? 14.e4! ? and Black resigned in Vogt-Böhnisch, Leipzig 1978) 9.exd5 xdx5 10.xd5 exd5 11.h4 – White develops his initiative on the kingside unhindered;

B2) 7...g7 8.exd5 exd5 9.0-0-0 e7 10.h5 h5 11.g3 (even stronger is 11.e1 followed by g5) 11...d7 12.h3 0-0 13.g4 with attack, Prié-Le Masle, Creon 1999.

C) 6...b6 7.d3 xd4 (7...f6 transposes to the main game) 8.exd5, and now each of the recaptures on d5 has its downsides:

![Chess Diagram]

**Analysis Diagram**

C1) 8...xd5 9.f4 d7 10.0-0-0 with very strong compensation for the pawn, Keres-Flohr, Budapest 1950, because the open e-file prevents Black quietly completing his development;

C2) 8...xd5 9.b5 (here White has the chance of a cavalry raid on the queenside) 9...e5+ 10.d1 a6 11.e1 f6 12.xd5 e7 13.f3 f6 14.e2+. White has regained the pawn and prepares artificial castling, whilst Black has problems finding a move.
7...d3

The rare continuation 7.e2 definitely deserves attention.

A) On 7...b4 8.e5 dxe5 9.0-0 xc3 10.bxc3 c5 11.b1 c7 there is the extremely unpleasant central blow 12.c4!, e.g.

B) More solid is 7.dxe4 8.e3, and then:

analysis diagram

B1) After 8...bd7 9.dxe4 xe4 10.xe4 f6 11.d3 we reach a position examined under a different move-order
(5...\(\text{f}6 6.d4 dxe4 7.\(\text{e}3 \text{bd}7 8.\text{xe}4 \text{xe}4 9.\text{xe}4 \text{f}6 10.\text{d}3 \text{e}6 11.\text{e}2);\n
B2) 8...\(\text{wa}5 9.0-0 \text{w}f5 (holding the pawn this way is not possible, because the queen gets attacked on the kingside) 10.g4 \text{g}6 11.f3 \text{bd}7 (he loses after 11...exf3? 12.\text{xf}3 \text{xc}2 13.\text{d}3 or 12...\text{bd}7 13.\text{d}3 \text{h}6 14.g5) 12.\text{xe}4 \text{xe}4 13.fxe4;\n
B3) 8...\text{b}4 9.0-0 \text{xc}3 10.bxc3 0-0 11.\text{g}3 \text{h}8 (after 11...\text{wa}5!? 12.\text{h}6 \text{e}8 White has a choice between 13.c4 and 13.a4 \text{d}7 14.\text{fb}1, in both cases with double-edged play) 12.\text{b}1 \text{b}6 13.c4 with good compensation for the pawn.

7...\text{wb}6 8.0-0 \text{xd}4

The most principled continuation – Black takes up the gauntlet.

White is better after 8...dxe4 9.\text{xe}4 \text{bd}7 10.c3 \text{xe}4 11.\text{e}4 \text{f}6 12.\text{c}2, Klovans-Linnanen, Eupen 1994.

An interesting alternative to the game move is 8...\text{e}7!?.

\[\text{analysis diagram}\]

In this case, White should not rush with the pawn push e4-e5, but should first play 9.\text{e}3:

A) Now taking the b2-pawn is very dangerous: 9...\text{wb}2 10.\text{d}2 \text{b}6 (after 10...dxe4 11.\text{xe}4 \text{xd}4 12.\text{c}3 \text{d}8 13.\text{ab}1 White’s initiative is very menacing) 11.\text{ab}1 \text{xd}4 (on 11...\text{c}7 there is the unpleasant 12.\text{f}4 \text{c}8 13.\text{xd}5 \text{exd}5 14.\text{b}5 0-0 15.\text{c}7, and White wins the exchange) 12.\text{exd}5 \text{xd}5 13.\text{xd}5 \text{xd}5 14.\text{g}3, and White takes one of the pawns on b7 or g7;\n
B) If Black quietly continued developing with 9...0-0, then after 10.e5 \text{fd}7 11.\text{g}4 White develops unpleasant pressure on the kingside.

9.\text{e}3 \text{b}4

White has also played 9...\text{e}5 10.\text{f}4 \text{h}5 11.g4 \text{h}4 12.\text{exd}5 \text{exd}5 13.\text{b}5 \text{a}6, and here instead of 14.\text{d}4 \text{c}5 with an unclear game, as in the game Mellado-Almagro, Spain 2003, White could have got the advantage with 14.\text{ae}1, e.g.: 14...\text{e}7 15.\text{d}6+ \text{xd}6 16.\text{xd}6 0-0 0-0 17.\text{g}3 \text{h}3 18.\text{xa}6 bxa6 19.\text{f}4+-.
10...exd5

Clearly unsatisfactory is 10...exd5? 11.\( \text{Re1} \) c7 12.\( \text{f4} \)+, and Black has problems finding a move, Balashov-Lechtynsky, Tarnavia 1988.

Things are bad for Black after 10...\( \text{Nxd5} \) 11.\( \text{Nxd5} \) cxd5 12.\( \text{c4} \) (it is worth considering 12.a3!? and only next move c2-c4) 12...\( \text{c6} \) 13.\( \text{cxd5} \) \( \text{e5} \) 14.\( \text{e2} \) \( \text{xd3} \) 15.\( \text{xd3} \) \( \text{d8} \) 16.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{d6} \) 17.dxe6 fxe6 18.\( \text{xa7} \) – White wins a pawn, Alikulov-Khamrakulov, Tashkent 2011.

11.\( \text{b5} \) c6 12.\( \text{c4} \)

Also good is the simple 12.\( \text{xa7} \) c7 13.d4 with advantage to White.

12...c7

His problems cannot be solved by 12...\( \text{c5} \) 13.a3 \( \text{b3} \)
14. $\text{h6}!$ (exposing the weakness of the dark squares on the enemy kingside) 14...gxh6 15. $\text{xf6}$ $\text{f8}$ 16. $\text{e2}$ $\text{e7}$ 17. $\text{g7}$ $\text{dxc4}$ 18. $\text{d4}$ $\text{b6}$ 19. $\text{ac1}$ 0-0 20. $\text{xc4+}$ $\text{b8}$ 21. $\text{b5}$ and White is clearly better.

13. $\text{a3}$ $\text{a5}$ 14. $\text{xa7}$ 0-0 15. $\text{b4}$ $\text{d8}$ 16. $\text{d4}$ $\text{b8}$ 17. $\text{ad1}$ $\text{c6}$ 18. $\text{b2}$

White has re-established material equality and thanks to his two bishops and queenside pawn majority, he has a clear positional advantage.

18... $\text{b8}$
More tenacious was 18...\textit{b}6, although after 19.\textit{x}f6 \textit{x}f6 20.cxd5 \textit{e}5 21.\textit{e}4 \textit{x}d3 22.\textit{x}d3 exd5 23.\textit{x}d5 Black still loses a pawn, but not in such a bad version as in the game.

19.\textit{x}f6 \textit{x}f6 20.cxd5 \textit{e}5 21.\textit{e}4 \textit{x}d3 22.\textit{x}d3 exd5 23.\textit{x}d5

White has won a pawn, whilst retaining all the advantages of his position. He won on move 41.

**Conclusion:** In reply to 5...e6 we also suggest the active 6.d4, and after 6...\textit{f}6 – 7.\textit{d}3. Then Black in this game chose the dubious continuation 7...\textit{b}6 (more principled is 7...dxe4 8.\textit{x}e4 \textit{x}d4, accepting the sacrifice). White confidently demonstrated how to get the advantage: while Black takes on d4, he castles short, completes his development and opens the game, obtaining more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed material.

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**Game 88**

Emil Sutovsky 2673
Viorel Iordachescu 2582
Legnica 2013 (10)

In this beautiful, but head-spinning game, the advantage passes from hand to hand, but Black is the last to make a mistake.

1.e4 c6 2.\textit{c}3 d5 3.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}4 4.h3 \textit{x}f3 5.\textit{x}f3 e6 6.d4 \textit{f}6 7.\textit{d}3 dxe4 8.\textit{xe}4

8...\textit{xe}4

8...\textit{bd}7 is not of independent significance, because on the following move, Black has nothing better than to exchange on e4 and play \textit{f}6, transposing into the variation with 8...\textit{xe}4.

The move 8...\textit{xd}4 is looked at in the examples Boleslavsky-Makagonov and Nepomniachtchi-Lintchevski.

9.\textit{xe}4 \textit{d}7 10.\textit{d}2!?
White avoids putting his pawn on c3, because that square is a good one for his bishop. As well as the text move, there is also 10.\!\!f3 \!\!f6 11.e3 with a somewhat better game for White, or 10.f4 \!\!f6 11.e5 \!\!d5 12.c7 \!\!d7 (weaker is 12...\!\!xd4 13.xb7 \!\!b4+ 14.c3\pm) 13.xd7+ \!\!xd7 14.c4 \!\!d6 15.e3 \!\!hd8 16.g4 \!\!e8 17.e2, Hou Yifan-Yu Yangyi, Xinghua 2014. Black is close to equalising, but the play is only for two results.

10...\!\!f6

11.h4

There have been no practical tests of 11.e3!??, although one has the impression that Black has some problems after this. For example: 11...\!\!d6 12.c4 (or 12.0-0-0, and on 12...0-0 there follows 13.g4 with the initiative) 12...0-0 13.0-0 \!\!e8 14.c3\pm, not allowing Black to play ...e6-e5.

11.e7

11...\!\!d5 has also been seen.
A) Interesting is 12.\textit{g}3 \textit{d}6 13.\textit{f}3 (the simple 13.\textit{xd}6 \textit{xd}6 14.\textit{g}3 with a somewhat better position for White, is more solid, but Black should equalise with accurate defence) 13...\textit{b}4 14.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5 15.\textit{xb}4 \textit{xb}4+ 16.\textit{c}3 \textit{xb}2 17.0-0 \textit{b}5? (he should have settled on 17...\textit{fxe}4 18.\textit{h}5+ \textit{d}8 19.\textit{ab}1 \textit{xc}3 20.\textit{xb}7 \textit{a}3 with a complicated position, although with accurate play, it seems only White can have problems) 18.\textit{d}3 \textit{d}5 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{f}7 20.\textit{fe}1 \textit{e}8 21.\textit{c}4 \textit{d}6 22.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}6 23.\textit{g}4 with the initiative, Sutovsky-Kadimova, Baku 2011;

B) 12.\textit{xd}8+ \textit{xd}8 13.\textit{c}3 \textit{d}6 14.0-0-0 \textit{c}5 15.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 16.\textit{hf}1 \textit{f}5 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{f}7 18.\textit{e}2 \textit{b}6 19.a3 with somewhat better chances for White; in the game Ryder-Casella, corr. 2010, Black held the draw.

12.0-0-0 \textit{a}5 13.\textit{he}1 \textit{a}4 14.\textit{a}3 \textit{b}5 15.\textit{g}3 0-0 16.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}7

The rook heads to the d-file.
17.\textit{\textbf{B}}e5

An aggressive lunge, but the straightforward 17.\textit{\textbf{B}}h6!? \textit{\textbf{N}}e8 18.\textit{\textbf{B}}e3± was preferable.

17...\textit{\textbf{B}}d7 18.\textit{\textbf{f}}4

It was better to defend the pawn quietly with 18.c3 and then advance the pawns on the kingside.

18...\textit{\textbf{N}}e8?!

It is not clear what Black did not like after the simple 18...\textit{\textbf{R}}xd4. Then a possible continuation is 19.\textit{\textbf{B}}c3 \textit{\textbf{R}}d7 20.\textit{\textbf{R}}g5 g6, and White’s attack ends, whilst Black still has an extra pawn and an excellent post on d5 for his knight.

19.\textit{\textbf{f}}5 \textit{\textbf{d}}6 20.\textit{\textbf{f}}xe6 \textit{\textbf{fxe6}}
21.\textbf{g}5  

With this move, White instigates tactical complications, but Black finds a strong retort.

An advantage was to be had with 21.\textbf{b}4! \textbf{xe}5 22.\textbf{xe}5 \textbf{f}6 23.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{g}6 24.\textbf{xc}6 – White has two bishops and a pawn for the exchange, whilst Black still has problems with his king.

21...\textbf{xe}5 22.\textbf{x}h7+ \textbf{h}8 23.\textbf{h}4  

White probably underestimated his opponent’s reply. Better was 23.\textbf{xe}5, after which Black should play 23...\textbf{c}7 24.\textbf{xc}7 \textbf{xc}7 25.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{c}5 with mutual chances.

23...\textbf{g}3! 24.\textbf{x}g3 \textbf{xd}4 25.\textbf{xd}8 \textbf{xd}1+ 26.\textbf{a}2 \textbf{ff}1 27.b3
27...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}xh7}

Black misses the beautiful idea 27...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}a1}+ 28.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}2} b4!! 29.axb4 (29.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}3}?? \texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}b1#}) 29...a3+, creating a far advanced passed pawn. After 30.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}}7} Black should win.

28.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}}4}+ \texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}8} 29.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}7} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}6} 30.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}}e6}+ \texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}}7} 31.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}}5}

The right square, covering b4, where the black pawn can advance.

31...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}}xb3}+

There was a draw with 31...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}}a1}+ 32.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}2} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}}b1}+ 33.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{a}}xb3} 34.cxb3 (or 34.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}}d6} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}x}c2 35.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}}c}2 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}c1}+ 36.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}1}+ 37.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}2} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}b2=} 34...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}c1}+ 35.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}d1}+ 36.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}2} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}l}+ etc. Another move sufficient for equality is 31...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}2}.

32.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb}}3} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{b}}1}+ 33.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}}3}
33...\textit{Ef6}

Simpler was 33...\textit{bd1}!? with equal chances.

\textbf{34.\textit{Qe2 c5 35.\textit{Nc3 d4 36.\textit{Qe4+ Kg8?}}}

Here there was still a draw, but it requires a series of only moves: 36...\textit{Rg6}! 37.\textit{Bc3 Rd1+ 38.\textit{Kg2 Rg1}}, and White must give perpetual check – 39.\textit{Qh4+ Kg8 40.Qd8+} etc.

\textbf{37.\textit{Bc3 Rd6+ 38.\textit{Qe2 Bd1}}}

The superior 38...\textit{Kf7} still does not help, because of 39.\textit{Qf5+ Kg8} (or 39...\textit{g5} 40.\textit{Qf5+ e6} 41.\textit{f2 g6} 42.\textit{Qd8+ f7} 43.\textit{Qd7+ e5} 44.\textit{Qd5+ e6} 45.\textit{Qxe5+}) 40.\textit{a4 b4} 41.\textit{Qxc5 bxc3} 42.\textit{Qxc4+-}.

\textbf{39.a4 Bd5 40.axb5}

After he has taken another pawn, the position becomes easily winning for White.
40...b6 41.e8+ h7 42.e4+ g8 43.g4 g6 44.h4 e6+ 45.f5+ g1 d5 47.d8+ f7 48.a5 e7 49.b6 d5 50.e7

Black resigned, because the b-pawn will cost him a knight or a rook.

**Conclusion:** In this game, after 6.d4 Nf6 7.Bd3 Black exchanged twice on e4 – 7...dxe4 8.xe4 xe4 9.xe4, and played 9...d7 with the idea of putting his second knight on f6, attacking the white queen with tempo. Here definite problems are posed by 10.Bd2 f6 11.xh4, as played by Emil Sutovsky, but it seems that 11.e3 is even stronger, followed by 0-0 and c2-c4 or 0-0-0 and g2-g4.
1.e4 c6 2.d3 d5 3.f3 g4 4.h3 xf3 5.xf3 e6 6.d4 f6 7.d3 dxe4 8.xe4 xd4

Black accepts the challenge and takes the pawn.

9.e3

The move 9.c3 is analysed further in the game Nepomniachtchi-Lintchevski, Moscow 2012.

9...b4+

We will also examine several interesting other continuations:

A) Dubious is 9...xb2?! 10.0-0 xe4 11.ab1
A1) 11...\(\text{Qd2}\) 12.\(\text{Qxd2}\) \(\text{Bf6}\) 13.\(\text{Qg3}\) b5 14.\(\text{Qxb5!}\) cxb5 15.\(\text{Qd7}\) 16.\(\text{Qxd7+}\) \(\text{Qxd7}\) 17.\(\text{Qd3+}\) \(\text{Qd6}\) 18.\(\text{Qb5+}\) \(\text{Ke7}\) 19.\(\text{Qg5}\); 

A2) 11...\(\text{Qxa2}\) 12.\(\text{Qxe4}\) \(\text{Qd6}\) 13.\(\text{Qd1}\) (13.\(\text{Qd1+}\) is also strong) 13...0-0 14.\(\text{Qxb7}\) \(\text{Qa6}\) 15.\(\text{Qxb8}\) \(\text{Qxb8}\) (15...\(\text{Qxb8}\) 16.\(\text{Qxc6}\)+-) 16.\(\text{Qxd6}\), and Black resigned in Van den Broeck-Taffijn, corr. 2004.

B) 9...\(\text{Qe5?!}\) 10.0-0 \(\text{Qd7}\) 11.\(\text{Qf4}\):

B1) 11...\(\text{Qh5}\) 12.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{Qa5}\) 13.\(\text{Qd1}\) or 13.\(\text{b4}\) \(\text{Qxb4}\) 14.\(\text{ab1}\), in both cases with good compensation for the material
sacrificed;

B2) 11...\texttt{a5} 12.b4 \texttt{xb4} 13.\texttt{ab1}.

C) 9...\texttt{d8} 10.0-0-0 (a complicated game also results from 10.\texttt{d1}!? \texttt{bd7} 11.0-0 \texttt{xe4} 12.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{f6}) 10...\texttt{bd7}

\begin{center}
\textbf{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

C1) 11.\texttt{c4} \texttt{a5} 12.\texttt{d2} (12.\texttt{d4}?! is unconvincing after 12...\texttt{e7}; but not 12...0-0-0? 13.\texttt{g5} \texttt{e5} 14.\texttt{xd8}+ \texttt{xd8} 15.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{xf3} 16.\texttt{xe6+ e7} 17.\texttt{xd8} \texttt{xd8} 18.gxf3 b6 19.\texttt{g1} g6 20.\texttt{xg5} \texttt{g7} 21.f4 \texttt{c7} 22.f5 \texttt{xf5} 23.\texttt{f4+}, and Black resigned in Fornari-Contini, corr. 1982) 12.\texttt{b6} 13.\texttt{e1} (a repetition of moves is possible after 13.\texttt{e3} \texttt{a5} 14.\texttt{d2=} 13...\texttt{xe4}?! (better is 13...\texttt{e7} 14.\texttt{g5} \texttt{f8} – unclear play results from 14...0-0!? 15.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{xf7} 16.\texttt{xe6} \texttt{f8} – 15.\texttt{e3} \texttt{b4} with mutual chances, Domnitz-Ruppin, Israel-ch 1961) 14.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{f6}

\begin{center}
\textbf{analysis diagram}
\end{center}
15.\textbf{Bxe6!} (exploiting his advantage in development, White breaks through to the enemy king) 15...\textbf{fxe6} 16.\textbf{Bxe6+ Be7} 17.\textbf{Bde1} \textbf{d5} 18.\textbf{g5} (even stronger is 18.\textbf{Wh5+ g6} 19.\textbf{Bxe7+ Bxe7} 20.\textbf{e5} 0-0-0 21.\textbf{e5} with a decisive advantage) 18...0-0-0 19.\textbf{Bxe7 Bxe7} 20.\textbf{Bxe7}, and White won in Boleslavsky-Flohr, Moscow ch-URS 1950;

\textbf{C2) 11.\textit{h1}}

\textbf{C21) 11...\textbf{Bxe4} 12.\textbf{Bxe4 Be7} (12...\textbf{Wh6} 13.\textbf{e2±}) 13.\textbf{g4} with a dangerous initiative;}

\textbf{C22) 11...\textbf{Bb6} 12.\textbf{Qxf6+ Bxf6} 13.\textbf{Be2} (13.\textbf{g4??}) 13...\textbf{d5} 14.\textbf{g3} \textbf{g6} 15.\textbf{d2} \textbf{d4} 16.\textbf{Bb4} 17.\textbf{e1} 0-0 18.\textbf{a3} \textbf{e7} 19.\textbf{h4} \textbf{h5} 20.\textbf{d3};}

\textbf{C23) 11...\textbf{Be7} 12.\textbf{g4}.}

\textit{Analysis diagram}

In this tense position, 12...\textbf{d5}?! looks rather optimistic in view of 13.\textbf{d4} \textbf{e5} (White has a strong initiative after 13...0-0 14.\textbf{c4} \textbf{b4} 15.\textbf{e2} \textbf{c7} 16.\textbf{h4}) 14.\textbf{e3} \textbf{c7} (dangerous is 14...0-0 15.\textbf{h4}, but more tenacious is 14...\textbf{xe3} 15.\textbf{fxe3} \textbf{c7} 16.\textbf{g5} \textbf{f6} 17.\textbf{e5}±) 15.\textbf{g5} 0-0-0 16.\textbf{xf7}+. Therefore Black should choose between 12...\textbf{a5} 13.\textbf{g5} and 12...\textbf{e5}?! 13.\textbf{xf6+ xf6} 14.\textbf{f4}, in both cases with a very complicated and sharp game.

\textbf{10.\textit{h2} \textit{d8}}

10...\textbf{e5} has not been tried in practice, although the move is perfectly possible.

\textbf{11.\textit{h1}}

The alternative is 11.\textbf{g3}:
analysis diagram

A) 11...Nx e4 12.\textit{x}xg7 (12.\textit{x}xe4\textit{\textasciitilde}) 12...f6 13.\textit{g}xg4 c5 14.\textit{xe}e4 \textit{xe}e3 15.\textit{xe}e3= Simagin-Petrosian, Moscow 1950;

B) 11...\textit{bd}7 12.\textit{x}xg7 g8 13.\textit{xf}x6+ \textit{xf}x6 14.\textit{h}xg6 \textit{x}xg2 15.\textit{hx}g1 (better is 15.\textit{ad}1!? \textit{f}f8 16.\textit{h}h4 \textit{d}d5 17.\textit{x}xh8+ \textit{x}xh8 18.\textit{x}xa7 with a roughly equal endgame) 15...\textit{f}f8 16.\textit{h}h4 \textit{x}xg1 17.\textit{x}xg1 \textit{d}d5 18.\textit{g}xg5 \textit{d}d6 19.\textit{x}xh7 \textit{f}f4+ (19...\textit{e}e5+!? 20.\textit{f}f1 \textit{x}xb2\textit{\textasciitilde}) 20.\textit{x}x f4 (20.\textit{xf}3 \textit{x}xd3 21.\textit{x}xd3 \textit{xd}d3+ 22.\textit{c}xd3=) 20...\textit{xf}x f4 21.\textit{g}xg3 \textit{e}e5+ 22.\textit{e}e3 \textit{xb}2\textit{\textasciitilde}, Nepomniachtchi-Pantsulaia, Moscow 2004.

11...\textit{xe}e4

Also possible is 11...\textit{bd}7?! 12.\textit{g}3:
A) 12...0-0?! 13.\( \text{N}\text{xf6+} \text{Qxf6} \) 14.\( \text{c3 e7} \) 15.\( \text{Qxh7+} \text{Nxh7} \) 16.\( \text{Bxd7} \pm \\

B) 12...\( \text{Nxe4} \) 13.\( \text{Bxe4} \) \( \text{g6} \) 14.\( \text{Rd4} \) \( \text{Qa5} \) (the only move) 15.\( \text{a3 e7} \) 16.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{Qe5} \) (correct was 16...\( \text{Qh5+} \) 17.\( \text{Bf3} \) \( \text{Qb5+} \) 18.\( \text{c4} \) \( \text{Qe5} \) 19.\( \text{Bxd7} \) \( \text{Bxa1} \) 20.\( \text{Qc7} \) 0-0 21.\( \text{Bxe7} \) \( \text{Bxa1} \) 22.\( \text{Qf1=} \) 17.\( \text{Bxd7} \) \( \text{Bxe4} \) 18.\( \text{Bad1} \pm \), Brzeski-Czakon, Koszalin 2005;

C) 12...\( \text{h5} \) 13.\( \text{Bf3} \) \( \text{Bh6} \) 14.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{h5} \) 15.\( \text{Bf3} \) \( \text{Bh6} \), draw, Hernaez Fernandez-Cacizares Cuadra, corr. 2008.

12.\( \text{Bxe4} \) \( \text{Qe7} \) 13.\( \text{Bf1} \) 0-0

14.\( \text{g3} \)

14.c3 is also possible, immediately clarifying the position of the black bishop. Then 14...\( \text{a5} \) is dubious because of 15.\( \text{Bxh7+} \text{Nxh7} \) 16.\( \text{h5+} \text{g8} \) 17.\( \text{xa5} \pm \); White regains his pawn, with a lead in development and the advantage of bishop against knight in an open position.

Therefore, after 14.c3 Black should reply 14...\( \text{Bd6} \), after which White increases the pressure with 15.\( \text{Bd4}! \) with the idea of doubling rooks on the d-file, and also, if the chance arises, of sacrificing the bishop on h7 and giving mate along the h-file. Instead of the rook move to d4, weaker is 15.\( \text{Bd2} \) \( \text{c7} \) 16.\( \text{Bd1} \) \( \text{g6} \) 17.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{Bd8} \) 18.\( \text{Bxd8+} \) \( \text{Bxd8} \pm \) or 15.\( \text{Bh5} \) \( \text{g6} \) 16.\( \text{Bg5=} \).

14...\( \text{Bd6} \) 15.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{d5} \)

A position with mutual chances results from 15...\( \text{d5}!? \) 16.\( \text{f4} \) \( \text{Bd8} \).

16.\( \text{Bd3} \)

Better is 16.\( \text{Bd4} \) \( \text{f5} \) (16...\( \text{f6}!! \) 17.\( \text{Bd3} \) \( \text{h6} \) 18.\( \text{Bxc6} \) \( \text{bxc6} \) 19.\( \text{Bxa6=} \) 17.\( \text{Bd3} \) \( \text{c7} \) 18.\( \text{c5=} \).

16...\( \text{c7} \) 17.\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{f6} \) 18.\( \text{Bh4} \) \( \text{g6} \) 19.\( \text{Bb6} \) 20.\( \text{h6} \) \( \text{Bfd8} \) 21.\( \text{g3} \)
21.\textit{c2!}\texttt{? xd1+ 22.\textit{xd1 ad8 23.e1\texttt{.}}}

\textbf{21...h8}

Black gets his king away from possible checks after \textit{xg6}.

21...\textit{e8} is worth considering – from this square, the knight defends the king solidly and later Black will double rooks.

White does not appear to have full compensation for the pawn.

\textbf{22.h4}

The logical continuation: White is a pawn down and places his hopes on a kingside attack.

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\textbf{22...d7}

Somewhat more accurate is 22...\textit{d5}, taking control of the square h5. And if White plays 23.c4, kicking the rook, then he weakens the square d4, which helps Black.

\textbf{23.c2}

White decides to exchange one rook, whilst the second is ready to come to e1, so as to pressurise the e6-pawn.

\textbf{23...ad8 24.xd7 xd7 25.e1 c5 26.f4 e7}

The queen must return, because he does not want to play 26...f5, weakening the dark squares.

\textbf{27.b3}

Better was 27.g4, so as after 27...e5 to play 28.h5 g5 29.f8 e8 (29...xf8? 30.xd7\texttt{+}) 30.h6\texttt{.}

\textbf{27.d8 28.e4 e5 29.f3 b5 30.g3 d6 31.c1 g7 32.g2 d7 33.g4}

White carries out his plan consequentially. He is still a pawn down, and strives to open the enemy king’s position and
exploit the advantage of the bishop pair.

33...\textit{e}e8 34.h5

A terrible mistake.

He also loses after 34...g5? 35.h6+. Correct was 34...\textit{f}f7 35.h6+ (or 35.\textit{f}f1 36.\textit{f}f6 37.\textit{xf}6 \textit{gf}6+ 38.\textit{xf}6 39.\textit{xf}6 ef3 40.\textit{h}h3 \textit{e}e5 41.\textit{f}f4 42.\textit{xe}e5 \textit{xe}e5 43.\textit{xf}3+ with equality) 35...\textit{xh}6 36.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 37.\textit{d}d1 \textit{c}c8 (not 37...\textit{e}e7? 38.\textit{g}g5+ \textit{xf}5 39.\textit{d}d3+ \textit{fg}7 40.\textit{d}d7+-) 38.\textit{d}d6 \textit{c}c5 (worse is 38...\textit{d}d8 39.\textit{d}d1+) 39.\textit{g}g5+ \textit{fxg}5. It looks as though White’s attack is running out of steam, but he has a way to throw further fuel on the flames:
35. **h6+!**

Effectively ending the game. The bishop cannot be taken: 35... **xh6 36. **xf6#.  

35... **g6 36. **xh5+

Black resigned, since he is inevitably mated.

Before drawing conclusions, we will examine one further game.

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**Game 90**

*Ian Nepomniachtchi 2707*

*Danil Lintchevski 2555*

Moscow 2012 (7)

1.e4 c6 2. **f3 d5 3. **c3 **g4 4. h3 **xf3 5. **xf3 e6 6. d4 **f6 7. **d3 dxe4 8. **xe4 **xd4 9. c3

9... **d8

9... **d5 has not been seen. Analysis shows that in this case, the game turns in favour of White: 10. **xf6+ **xf6 11. **e4 **c4 (he loses after 11... **e5 12. **f4 **b5 13. a4 **xb2? 14. **b1 **a3 15. **xb7+-) 12. **b3 **c5 (12... **b5 13. **xf6 **g8 14. **f3 with advantage for White) 13. **xf6 **g8 14.0-0 **h5 (or 14... **d7 15. **f3 **e5 16. **f4±) 15. **f3 **xf3 16. **xf3±.

10.0-0 **bd7

The main alternatives are 10... **e7 and 10... **xe4.

A) 10... **e7 11. **d1 **bd7 and now:
A1) 12.\(\text{N}xf6+\) \(\text{B}xf6\) (or 12...\(\text{N}xf6\) 13.\(\text{B}xh7\) \(\text{a}5\) 14.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{h}5\) 15.\(\text{B}xh5\) \(\text{d}xh5\) 16.\(c4\)) 13.\(\text{c}2\) \(\text{c}7\) is unclear;

A2) 12.\(\text{g}3!?\) \(\text{N}xe4\) 13.\(\text{B}xe4\) \(g6\) 14.\(\text{f}4\) (14.\(\text{h}6!?\)) 14...\(\text{b}6\) 15.\(\text{c}7\) (15.\(\text{e}3!?\) \(c5\) 16.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{e}5\) 17.\(\text{e}2\)) 15...\(\text{xb}2\) 16.\(\text{f}3\) (16.\(\text{ab}1!?\) \(\text{xa}2\) 17.\(\text{d}6\) \(\text{b}6\) 18.\(\text{xe}7\) \(\text{xe}7\) 19.\(\text{h}4+\) \(f6\) 20.\(\text{h}6\) \(\text{ag}8\) 21.\(\text{a}1\) \(\text{e}2\) 22.\(\text{e}1\) \(\text{b}5\) 23.\(\text{xa}7\) \(\text{c}8\) 24.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{g}5\) 25.\(\text{xb}7+\) \(\text{d}6\) 26.\(\text{xb}5\) 27.\(\text{e}4\)) 16...\(\text{c}8\) 17.\(\text{ab}1\) \(\text{xb}1\) 18.\(\text{xb}1\) \(\text{xc}7\) with a complicated position, Kortchnoi-Spassky, Tbilisi ch-URS 1959;

A3) 12.\(\text{f}4\) 0-0 (12...\(\text{d}5\) 13.\(\text{g}3\) 0-0 14.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{b}5\) 15.\(\text{d}6\) \(\text{xd}6\) 16.\(\text{xd}6\) \(\text{e}8\) 17.\(a4\) \(a5\) 18.\(\text{e}3\)) 13.\(\text{xf}6+\) \(\text{xf}6\) 14.\(\text{c}2\) \(g6\) (on 14...\(\text{e}8\) strong is 15.\(\text{d}6!\) \(\text{c}8\) 16.\(\text{h}7+\) \(\text{hxh}7\) 17.\(\text{d}3+\) \(\text{g}8\) 18.\(\text{xd}7\) \(\text{d}8\) 19.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{xd}7\) 20.\(\text{xd}7\), seizing the d-file) 15.\(\text{d}3\), preparing the doubling of rooks.

B) 10...\(\text{xe}4!?\) 11.\(\text{xe}4\) and now:
analysis diagram

B1) 11...\text{Qf6}?! 12.\text{Qg3} e5 13.\text{Qg5} (13.\text{Qg4}\pm Kochurov-Bachin, Samara ch-RUS U20 2004) 13...\text{Qe6} 14.\text{Rd1} \text{Qd7} 15.\text{Qf3} g6 16.\text{c2}±, threatening 17.\text{b3};

B2) After the moves 11...\text{Qd7} 12.\text{Rd1} we have transposed into the variation 10...\text{Qd7} 11.\text{Qd1} \text{Qxe4} 12.\text{Qxe4} (12.\text{Qg3}?!?)

B3) 11...\text{d6}?! 12.\text{Qd1} (12.\text{Qg4}?!; 12.a4?!?) 12...\text{Qe7} or 12...\text{Qc7} with complicated play.

\textbf{11.\text{Rd1} \text{Qe5}?!}

If Black does not want to play 11...\text{Qe7}?, going into a position arising after 10...\text{Qe7}, then he should play 11...\text{Qxe4} 12.\text{Qxe4} \text{Qf6}
analysis diagram

A) 13.\texttt{\texttt{We}e2}!? \texttt{\texttt{d}c5} (13...e5 14.\texttt{\texttt{d}c2}±) 14.b4 \texttt{\texttt{d}b6} 15.b5 \texttt{\texttt{e}c8} 16.bxc6 bxc6 17.a4 \texttt{\texttt{e}c5} 18.\texttt{\texttt{a}a2} \texttt{\texttt{d}e5} 19.\texttt{\texttt{e}e3} \texttt{\texttt{xe}e3} 20.\texttt{\texttt{We}xe3}++;  
B) 13.\texttt{\texttt{d}f4} \texttt{\texttt{d}d8} 14.\texttt{\texttt{g}g3} \texttt{\texttt{e}e7} 15.\texttt{\texttt{d}c2} e5 (after 15...0-0? 16.\texttt{\texttt{c}c7± Black loses the exchange) 16.\texttt{\texttt{e}e3} and now:  
B1) 16...a6 17.\texttt{\texttt{f}d3} \texttt{\texttt{f}f6} (17...0-0 18.\texttt{\texttt{f}ad1} \texttt{\texttt{d}b8} 19.\texttt{\texttt{g}g4} \texttt{\texttt{xd}d3} 20.\texttt{\texttt{xd}d3}±) 18.\texttt{\texttt{b}b6} \texttt{\texttt{xd}d3} 19.\texttt{\texttt{xd}d3} \texttt{\texttt{e}e5} 20.\texttt{\texttt{e}e3} \texttt{\texttt{e}e7} 21.\texttt{\texttt{d}d1};  
B2) 16...0-0 17.\texttt{\texttt{x}xa7} \texttt{\texttt{e}e6} 18.\texttt{\texttt{e}e3} (18.a4!? \texttt{\texttt{d}f6} 19.\texttt{\texttt{b}b6} (19.a5!?) 19...\texttt{\texttt{f}d7} 20.\texttt{\texttt{xd}d7} \texttt{\texttt{d}xd7} 21.\texttt{\texttt{e}e3}±) 18...\texttt{\texttt{f}fe8} 19.\texttt{\texttt{e}e1} \texttt{\texttt{g}g6} 20.\texttt{\texttt{e}e2} \texttt{\texttt{c}c5} 21.\texttt{\texttt{h}h6} e4 22.\texttt{\texttt{f}f4} \texttt{\texttt{d}d6} 23.\texttt{\texttt{g}g5} f5 24.\texttt{\texttt{f}f7} 25.\texttt{\texttt{b}b4} \texttt{\texttt{e}e6} 26.\texttt{\texttt{b}b3} \texttt{\texttt{e}e5} 27.\texttt{\texttt{d}d2} \texttt{\texttt{xd}d2} 28.\texttt{\texttt{xd}d2} \texttt{\texttt{e}e7} 29.\texttt{\texttt{d}d1} \texttt{\texttt{h}h8} 30.\texttt{\texttt{f}f7} \texttt{\texttt{f}f4} 31.\texttt{\texttt{f}f4} \texttt{\texttt{xf}f4} 32.\texttt{\texttt{d}d4}+ \texttt{\texttt{g}g7} 33.\texttt{\texttt{e}e3} \texttt{\texttt{c}c7}, draw, Borges-Toledo, corr. 2011. 

12.\texttt{\texttt{g}g3}  

Better is 12.\texttt{\texttt{e}e2}!?:
A) 12...\textit{N}xe4 13.\textit{N}xe4 and now:

A1) 13...\textit{d}6 14.\textit{f}4 (also good is 14.\textit{f}4 \textit{g}6 15.\textit{f}5 \textit{f}8 16.\textit{f}3\textit{f}3↑; White is also better after 15...\textit{exf}5 16.\textit{xc}6+ \textit{f}8 17.\textit{xb}7 \textit{b}8 18.\textit{d}5\textit{d}5↑) 14...\textit{f}6 (the only move) 15.\textit{g}3 (or 15.\textit{xd}6 \textit{xf}4 16.\textit{ad}1↑) 15...\textit{c}7 16.\textit{h}4 \textit{h}6 17.\textit{h}5 0-0 (17...\textit{d}8 18.\textit{d}4↑) 18.\textit{c}2 with more than sufficient compensation;

A2) 13...\textit{d}7 14.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}7 (14...\textit{b}6 15.a4 a5 16.b4↑) 15.b4 followed by b4-b5 or 15.\textit{e}5 \textit{f}6 16.\textit{g}3, and in the event of 16...0-0 17.\textit{d}3 \textit{c}5 18.\textit{xa}7+ \textit{h}8 19.\textit{f}3 White wins.

B) 12...\textit{xd}3 13.\textit{xd}3 \textit{c}7 14.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{gxf}6 15.\textit{e}3 \textit{d}6 (worse is 15...\textit{e}7 16.\textit{g}4↑) 16.\textit{ad}1 (or 16.\textit{d}4 \textit{e}7 17.\textit{ad}1 0-0-0 18.\textit{f}3, winning the pawn on f6; now it is completely bad to play 18...\textit{e}5? 19.\textit{xa}7 b6 20.\textit{f}5+ \textit{b}7 21.\textit{d}7+-, winning the queen) 16...0-0-0 17.\textit{xa}7\textit{f}3.

\textbf{12...\textit{N}xe4}

12...\textit{d}5 13.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{gxf}6 14.\textit{c}2 \textit{b}5 15.\textit{f}4 \textit{h}5 16.a4 \textit{e}2 17.\textit{dd}2 \textit{h}4 18.\textit{xe}2 \textit{hxg}3 19.\textit{g}3\textit{g}3\textit{g}3, Broyles-Markus, corr. 2008.

\textbf{13.\textit{xe}5 \textit{f}6}
14. \textbf{f4}

Better is 14. \textit{g3}! \textit{a5} 15. \textit{c2}.

14... \textit{d5}

He could equalise with 14... \textit{d5}!? 15. \textit{c7} \textit{d7} 16. \textit{e5} (16. \textit{a5}!?) 16... \textit{d5}=.

15. \textit{c4}

It is worth considering 15. \textit{c2} \textit{b6} 16. \textit{g5}.

15... \textit{c8}

15... \textit{f6}? loses to 16. \textit{xd5} \textit{cxd5} 17. \textit{b5}+ \textit{d8} 18. \textit{c7}#.

16. \textit{b3} \textit{b6}?! 

More tenacious is 16... \textit{e7}, although after 17. \textit{g3} White has a dangerous initiative. The black king is stuck in the centre and his kingside is undeveloped.

17. \textit{g3}

It would also be good simply to take the pawn: 17. \textit{xd5} \textit{cxd5} 18. \textit{xd5}±.

17... \textit{e5}
18.\textit{Re}1

Stronger is 18.\textit{Rd}4± followed by doubling rooks.

18...\textit{Nc}7

Other moves are not apparent, but this knight retreat allows Black to maintain his defences.

19.\textit{Qf}4

19.\textit{Qe}2!? \textit{Bd}6 (less good is 19...\textit{Be}7 20.\textit{R}ad1 0-0 21.\textit{R}d7± 20.\textit{Rx}e6 \textit{Rx}e6 21.\textit{b}4 \textit{Wb}5 22.\textit{Rx}d6 \textit{Wx}e2 23.\textit{Wx}e2 \textit{Rd}8 24.\textit{R}d1 with a somewhat better position for White.

19...\textit{Be}7 20.\textit{R}ad1 \textit{Nd}5

The d-file must be blocked.

21.\textit{Qg}4 0-0 22.\textit{Be}5 \textit{Af}6

Not 22...\textit{Af}6 because of 23.\textit{Rxd}5 exd5 24.\textit{Rx}f6+-.

23.\textit{Rx}f6 \textit{Rx}f6 24.\textit{Rd}7 \textit{b}5 25.\textit{Wd}1 \textit{Wd}8

Black has managed to complete his development, retaining his extra pawn. In the subsequent battle, his chances are superior.

26.\textit{Wf}4 \textit{Rx}d7 27.\textit{Wxd}7 \textit{a}5 28.\textit{a}4 \textit{b}4

Stronger is 28...\textit{Wb}6!±. After the move in the game, White has a trump – the passed a-pawn.

29.\textit{cxb}4 \textit{AXB}4
30. \textit{d}2 g6 31. g3 \textit{e}8 32. \textit{g}2 \textit{e}7 33. \textit{d}3 \textit{g}7 34. \textit{d}1

The bishop has nothing left to do on b3, and it is better to transfer it to f3. In addition, White wants to play b2-b3, getting the pawn out of the attack from the black bishop.

34... \textit{a}7 35. b3 \textit{c}3 36. \textit{e}3 \textit{xe}3

If Black wanted to play for a win, then he should have chosen 36... \textit{e}7, avoiding the queen exchange.

37. \textit{fxe}3 \textit{f}6 38. \textit{d}6 \textit{c}7 39. \textit{f}3 \textit{e}5 40. \textit{d}2

It seems White is playing for a win, exploiting his passed a-pawn, although he is a pawn down, and his position is not better. Equality results from 40. \textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 41. \textit{xc}6.

40... \textit{e}7 41. \textit{a}5 \textit{a}7 42. \textit{a}2 \textit{c}7 43. \textit{a}6 \textit{d}6 44. \textit{d}2+ \textit{e}5 45. \textit{a}2 \textit{d}6 46. \textit{e}2 \textit{b}6 47. \textit{d}2+ \textit{e}7 48. \textit{f}3 \textit{f}5
49.\textit{Re}c2 \textit{R}d6 50.\textit{Re}c4 e5 51.\textit{Be}7 52.gxf5 gxf5 53.e4 f4 54.g2 f6 55.g8 56.xg7 1/2-1/2

Conclusion: This is a principled variation: Black accepts the pawn sacrifice and White obtains the standard compensation, in the form of an advantage in development. White has two moves after the capture on d4: \textit{Be}3, as played by Boleslavsky, and c2-c3 (Nepomniachtchi). We believe the move c2-c3 is the more dangerous for Black, but we cannot give a precise assessment of whether White has an advantage in this variation. The only thing that is clear is that Black’s position is quite dangerous and if you remember the variations given, then your opponent will not find it easy, at blitz or indeed any other time control.

Game 91
Francisco Vallejo Pons 2705
Rasmus Svane 2458
Hockenheim 2014 (11)

1.e4 c6 2.\textit{De}c3 d5 3.\textit{D}f3 \textit{g}g4 4.d4

‘Our’ move order 4.h3 \textit{xf}3 5.\textit{xf}3 e6 6.d4 leads to the same position.

4...e6 5.h3 \textit{xf}3 6.\textit{xf}3 dxe4 7.\textit{xe}4
Of course, White can avoid giving away the central pawn by taking with the queen, but this costs two tempi. However, thanks to his small space advantage and two bishops, even here White can fight for the initiative.

7...\(\text{N}f6\)

Another black plan involves the transfer of his king’s knight via e7 to f5, but it is less promising. For example, 7...\(\text{N}d7\) 8.g3 g6 9.\(\text{B}g2\) \(\text{g}7\) 10.0-0 \(\text{e}7\) 11.\(\text{B}e2\) (covering d4 in advance; weaker is 11.\(\text{B}g5\) h6 12.\(\text{B}e3\) \(\text{f}5\#\)), A. Muzychuk-Kosteniuk, Geneva 2013, but it is worth considering 11.\(\text{Q}d3!?!\) 11...0-0 12.\(\text{R}d1\) \(\text{N}b6\) 13.c3 a5 14.\(\text{B}c2\) a4 15.\(\text{Q}f4\) \(\text{c}4\) 16.\(\text{N}d3\#\) Nakamura-Kosteniuk, Geneva 2013.

8.\(\text{Q}d3\)

The queen is most well placed in the centre.

Black has fewer problems after 8.\(\text{Q}h4\) \(\text{bd}7\) 9.\(\text{Q}d3\), and then there are three possible moves: A) 9...\(\text{d}5\), B) 9...g6, C) 9...\(\text{d}6\):
A) Somewhat direct, but reasonable, is 9...\textbf{d}5, offering the queen exchange. 10.\textbf{x}d8+ White has also played 10.g3 \textbf{b}4 11.0-0 \textbf{f}6 (it was better to take the bishop at once – 11...\textbf{xd}3 12.\textbf{xd}3 \textbf{f}6 with a roughly equal game) 12.\textbf{d}1 g6?! 13.\textbf{g}5 \textbf{g}7 14.\textbf{c}4 h6 15.\textbf{xf}6 \textbf{xf}6 16.e4 0-0 17.\textbf{b}3 \textbf{e}7 18.c3 \textbf{d}5 19.\textbf{xb}7\pm Souleidis-Stockmann, Bad Wiessee 2009. 10...\textbf{x}d8 11.\textbf{xd}5 \textbf{c}xd5

\textbf{12.a}4!? Seizing space on the queenside. 12.\textbf{d}6 12...\textbf{e}7 13.a5 (13.0-0!?), not hurrying for the moment with the advance of the a-pawn: 13...0-0 14.c3 \textbf{b}8 15.\textbf{d}2 \textbf{c}6 16.b4 with somewhat better chances for White, Song-Jacobsen, Györ 2014) 13...a6 14.c3 \textbf{b}8 15.b4 \textbf{c}6 16.b5 (White could also delay this advance with, for example, 16.\textbf{e}2, and
then bring out his dark-squared bishop and play \( \text{h}b1 \), strengthening the position of his pieces. But the assessment is hardly likely to change in this case: the position is equal, although Black needs to be accurate) 16...\( \text{a}xb5 \) 17.\( \text{c}xb5 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 18.\( \text{e}2 \) \( \text{a}8 \) 19.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 20.\( \text{a}6 \) \( \text{bx}a6 \) 21.\( \text{c}x\text{a6} \) \( \text{h}b8 \) 22.\( \text{d}3 \) \( \text{xa}1 \) 23.\( \text{xa}1 \) \( \text{g}6= \) Nepomniachtchi-Riazantsev, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013. 13.\( \text{a}5 \) \( \text{b}8 \) 14.\( \text{c}3 \) (14.\( \text{a}6 !? \)) 14...\( \text{a}6 \) 15.\( \text{b}4 \) \( \text{c}8 \) 16.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{e}5 \) 17.\( \text{d}xe5 \) \( \text{xe}5 \) 18.\( \text{c}1 \) 0-0 19.0-0= Nepomniachtchi-Mamedyarov, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013;

B) The move 9...\( \text{g}6 \) has twice been tried by Alexey Dreev.

\[ \text{analysis diagram} \]

10.0-0 \( \text{g}7 \) 11.\( \text{c}2 \) Better is 11.a4, seizing space on the queenside. And if now 11...\( \text{d}5 \), then 12.\( \text{xd}8+ \) \( \text{xd}8 \) (or 12...\( \text{xd}8 \) 13.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{cx}d5 \) 14.\( \text{c}3 \) 0-0 15.\( \text{a}5 \) \( \text{a}6 \) 16.\( \text{e}3 \), intending \( \text{b}4-\text{b}5 \) or \( \text{a}3-\text{b}3 \)) 13.\( \text{xd}5 \) \( \text{ex}d5 \) 14.\( \text{e}3 \) followed by \( \text{b}4-\text{b}5 \). 11...\( \text{d}5 ! \) Offering to exchange the active white queen. 12.\( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{b}4 \) 13.\( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 14.\( \text{ad}1 \) \( \text{xd}3 \) 15.\( \text{xd}3 \) In the game Khairullin-Dreev, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013, a draw was agreed here. But in the game Nepomniachtchi-Dreev, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013, played a few days later, the battle continued: 15...\( \text{d}5 \) 16.\( \text{f}4 \) 0-0 On 16...\( \text{xa}2 \) he must reckon with 17.\( \text{c}4 \). The threat is \( \text{a}1 \), winning the queen, whilst after 17...\( \text{a}5 \) there follows 18.\( \text{d}6 \), preventing Black's castling. 17.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{a}5 \) 18.\( \text{c}8 \) \( \text{fd}8 \) 19.\( \text{b}3 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 20.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{f}5 \) 21.\( \text{xf}5 \) \( \text{gxf}5 \) Black has equalised completely, although after going wrong later on, he eventually lost.

C) 9...\( \text{d}6 \)
10.\(\text{Ne}4\) Or 10.0-0 h6 11.\(\text{Ne}4\) (possibly White need not hurry with the exchange of knights and should just play some useful moves, e.g. 11.a3 0-0 12.\(\text{Re}1\) \(\text{Re}8\) 13.\(\text{Qd}2\); the position is close to equality, but even so, White has some advantage, thanks to his two bishops) 11...\(\text{Nxe}4\) 12.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Nf}6\) 13.\(\text{Qf}3\) 0-0, and White has only a symbolic advantage, Lisetskaya-Zhak, corr. 2010. 10...\(\text{Nxe}4\) It is worth considering 10...\(\text{Be}7\) 11.c3 (better was 11.0-0 \(\text{Nxe}4\) 12.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Nf}6\) 13.\(\text{Qe}3\) with the same general character to the struggle: White has a small advantage on account of his two bishops, but Black has no weaknesses or bad pieces, and is close to equality) 11...\(\text{e}5\) 12.0-0 \(\text{exd}4\) 13.\(\text{Qe}1\) \(\text{Qxe}4\) 14.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Qf}6\) 15.\(\text{Qe}2\) \(\text{Qxd}3\) 16.\(\text{Qxd}3\) 0-0 17.\(\text{Qe}4\) \(\text{Qf}6\) – Black has simple play against the isolated pawn, Arapovic-Berczes, Sarajevo 2010. 11.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Qf}6\) 12.\(\text{Qf}3\), and the two bishops are insufficient for an advantage, because Black has no weaknesses nor bad pieces, Lu Shanglei-Narayanan, Chennai 2013.

8...\(\text{Bd}7\)

The move 8...\(\text{a}6\) is seen in the game Georgiadis-Dreev.
9.g3

Another quite promising line for White is 9.d2 c7 10.0-0 d6 11.b1 f4 12.e1 b5 13.e2 d6 14.g4 0-0 15.g2±, Leroy-Pfretzschner, corr. 2012.

9...e7

Black has tried 9...g6 10.g2 g7 11.0-0 0-0 12.d1 e7 13.e2 (13.e2!? with the idea on 13...e5 to reply 14.f4±, exploiting the pin on the e-file) 13...fd8 14.c3 (preferable is 14.b3 ab8 15.f4 e5 16.dxe5 xe5 17.e1±) 14..a5 15.c2 a4 16.a3 e5±, Dominguez Perez-Wang Hao, Beijing 2014.

10.g2 0-0 11.0-0 c7 12.b3 ad8 13.b2
13...c5

More accurate is 13...\textit{f}e8 14.\textit{ad}1 \textit{f}8 15.\textit{e}2. Black has no bad pieces and no weaknesses, but White has the two bishops and more space, so his position is slightly better, Vallejo Pons-Nisipeanu, Plovdiv 2012.

14.\textit{e}2

14.d5!? exd5 15.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 16.\textit{x}d5 b6 17.\textit{ad}1 – thanks to his two bishops, White’s chances are preferable.

14...\textit{xd}4 15.\textit{b}5 d3 16.\textit{x}d3 \textit{b}6 17.\textit{e}2 a6 18.\textit{d}4 \textit{c}5 19.\textit{ad}1±
19...b8 20.f3 c6 21.e5 d4 22.c4 f5 23.xd8

It was worth considering 23.d3!?±, inviting Black to exchange rooks himself.

23...xd8 24.d3 e7

White also retains slightly the better chances in the event of 24...d6 25.g4 e7 26.d1± or 25...h4 26.g5 xg2 27.gxf6 e3 (the only move) 28.xe3+ 29.f2 g3 30.fxg7 xf2+ 31.xf2±.

25.e1

More energetic is 25.g4!? d6 (not 25...d4 26.xd4 exd4 27.c8+ d8 28.xb7, and White wins a pawn) 26.f4±.

25...h6 26.e5 d5 27.g4 d6

Black could obtain sufficient counterchances after 27...h4 28.e4 a5±.

28.c5 xc5

Black is also worse after 28...c8 29.xb6 cxb6±.

29.xc5 c8

If 29...b4, then 30.c3 xa2 31.a1 e8 32.exa2 d1+ 33.h2 xc5 34.xb7 d6 35.xd6 xd6 36.xa6 with an extra pawn.

30.xe6!

With the help of a nice tactical blow, White exploits the instability of the enemy minor pieces in the centre.

30...fxe6 31.xd6 xd6 32.xe6 f4 33.xd6 xc2 34.a4

As a result, White has won a pawn and obtained good winning chances.
34...a5 35.\textit{d}8+

It was better to attack b7 immediately with the rook – 35.\textit{b}6, not allowing check and not pushing the black king nearer to the centre.

35...\textit{f}7 36.\textit{d}7+ 37.\textit{xb}7 \textit{g}5 38.\textit{b}6+ 39.\textit{e}5 39.\textit{b}5+ 39.\textit{d}4

Now, thanks to the activity of his pieces, Black manages to draw. There was a win with 40.h4! g\textit{x}h4 (40...\textit{c}1+ 41.\textit{h}2 \textit{c}2? 42.hx\textit{g}5 \textit{xf}2 43.\textit{g}3+, and the white king breaks through) 41.\textit{f}5 \textit{e}1+ 42.\textit{h}2 \textit{d}3 43.\textit{h}3+-.

40.\textit{xa}5

40...\textit{c}1+ 41.\textit{h}2 \textit{c}2! 42.\textit{f}1 \textit{xf}2+ 43.\textit{g}1 \textit{b}2 44.\textit{b}5 \textit{e}3 45.\textit{e}5+ 39.\textit{f}3 46.\textit{e}1 \textit{xb}3 47.\textit{a}1 \textit{g}3 48.a5 \textit{d}x\textit{h}3+ 49.\textit{d}x\textit{h}3 \textit{d}x\textit{h}3 50.a6 \textit{b}8 51.a7 \textit{a}8 52.\textit{a}4 \textit{h}4 53.\textit{g}2 \textit{h}5 54.gx\textit{h}5+ \textit{d}x\textit{h}5 55.\textit{f}3 \textit{g}4+ 56.\textit{g}3 \textit{g}5 57.\textit{x}g4+ 39.\textit{f}5 58.\textit{e}7 \textit{e}5 59.\textit{h}7

Draw.

We will also examine the following game on the same theme and then draw conclusions.

\textbf{Game 92}

\textbf{Nico Georgiadis 2436}
\textbf{Alexey Dreev 2673}
\textbf{Caleta 2014 (2)}

1.e4 c6 2.d3 d5 3.f3 g4 4.d4 e6 5.h3 \textit{xf}3 6.\textit{xf}3 dxe4 7.\textit{xe}4 \textit{f}6 8.\textit{d}3 a6
An inventive move, but it too fails to yield equality. Caro specialist GM Alexey Dreev has had this position a number of times. Black’s idea is to play ...\( \text{N} b4 \), attacking the white queen, and then transfer the knight to d5.

9.a3

It makes sense to cover the b4-square against the enemy knight incursion.

9...\( \text{Q} a5 \)

With this move, Black renews the threat of 10...\( \text{N} b4 \), because of the pin against the \( \text{Ra1} \).

Black has also tried 9...\( \text{c7} \) 10.g3 \( \text{g} \)7 11.\( \text{f} \)2 0-0 12.0-0 \( \text{cd5} \) 13.\( \text{e} \)2 b5 14.b3\( \text{±} \), preparing c2-c4, driving the knight from d5, Wang Chen-Wang K, Las Vegas 2013.

10.\( \text{R} b1 \)

10.\( \text{e} \)2 has also been tried, at the highest level, in reply to which Black carries out his idea:
10...\textbf{\textit{\textit{\textit{\textit{\textbf{b4}}}}} (10...0-0-0, as in the game Lu Shanglei-Mamedyarov, Dubai 2014, can hardly be good; after 11.\textbf{b1} followed by b2-b4 the black knight can come under attack) 11.\textbf{d2} \textbf{bd5} 12.\textbf{xd5} \textbf{xd2}+ 13.\textbf{xe2} \textbf{exd5} 14.\textbf{b5}+ \textbf{d8} 15.\textbf{d3} \textbf{d6} 16.\textbf{e2} \textbf{e7}, and the two bishops in themselves are hardly enough to give White the advantage, Chadaev-Dreev, Loo tt 2013.

10...\textit{\textbf{c7}}

In the game Smirin-Dreev, Khanty-Mansiysk 2013, Black obtained equality after 10...\textbf{d8} 11.\textbf{d2} \textbf{b6} 12.\textbf{e3} \textbf{c7} 13.\textbf{e2} \textbf{cd5} 14.\textbf{xd5} \textbf{xd5} 15.\textbf{d2} \textbf{c7} 16.0-0 \textbf{f4} 17.\textbf{xf4} \textbf{xf4}. However, instead of the modest 11.\textbf{d2} it looks very strong to play 11.b4 \textbf{c7} (on 11...\textbf{f5} there is the unpleasant 12.b5 \textbf{xd5} 13.\textbf{xd5} \textbf{c7} 14.bxc6 bxc6 15.\textbf{b7} with advantage to White) 12.g3 \textbf{e7} (there is no danger for White in 12...\textbf{e5} 13.\textbf{e3} \textbf{xd4} 14.\textbf{g2} \textbf{e7} 15.0-0 0-0 16.\textbf{e1}, and Black is hardly going to be able to hold his extra pawn, and the knight on a6 does not adorn his position) 13.\textbf{g2} 0-0 14.0-0 \textbf{e5} 15.d5±.

11.\textbf{e2}

White gets nothing from 11.\textbf{d2} 0-0-0 12.\textbf{e2} \textbf{f5} 13.\textbf{xf5} \textbf{exf5} 14.\textbf{d3} \textbf{g6} 15.\textbf{e2} \textbf{e6} 16.c3 \textbf{c5±} Nepomniachtchi-Mamedyarov, Beijing 2013.

In reply to the aggressive 11.b4
Black should move the queen to f5: 11...\textit{xf5} (White was somewhat better after 11...\textit{b6} 12.\textit{a4} \textit{b5} 13.\textit{c5} \textit{xd3} 14.\textit{xd3} 0-0-0 15.\textit{b3}± Korneev-Dreev, Baku 2013), and after 12.g4 \textit{xd3} 13.\textit{xd3} he had a roughly equal position, Chigaev-Dreev, Rostov-on-Don 2014.

11...\textit{cd5} 12.\textit{0-0} \textit{e7} 13.\textit{f3} 0-0

White is better after 13...\textit{xc3} 14.bxc3 (or 14.\textit{d2} \textit{e2}+ 15.\textit{xe2} \textit{c7} 16.c4±) 14...\textit{c7} 15.c4±.

14.\textit{e2} \textit{b5}
15.b3

It was slightly better first to drive the queen away – 15...d2!? c7, and then play 16.b3 followed by c2-c4 (16...xa3? 17.b4, winning a piece).

15...ab8 16.c4 bxc4 17.bxc4± a6

He does not get full equality from 17...xb1 18.xb1 c3 19.xc3 (19.d3 xe2+ 20.xxe2 c8±) 19...xc3 20.b7 xa3 21.xa3 xa3 22.xc6±.

18.xb8


18...xb8 19.f4 xf4 20.xf4 d8

21.c7

In the ending arising after 21.d1 c5 22.d5 exd5 23.cxd5 xd3 24.xd3 d6 (24...e8?!) 25.e3 d7, Black should hold a slightly worse position.

21...c8

Weaker is 21...d7 22.e5±, and Black does not have the move ...d7.

22.e5 d7 23.b1?!

White loses his sense of danger. Correct was 23.f4 b6 24.e4 g6 (or 24...xc4 25.xh7+ f8 26.g3=) 25.c5 xd3 26 xd3 with equality.

23...xe5 24.dxe5 xa3 25.d7
In the event of 25.\textit{xa}3 \textit{xa}3 26.\textit{a}1 \textit{c}5 Black retains an extra pawn.

25...\textit{d}8 26.\textit{c}7 \textit{g}6 27.\textit{b}7 \textit{c}1+ 28.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}4+ 29.\textit{g}1 \textit{h}4

Somewhat more accurate is 29...\textit{g}5, so as after White plays g2-g3 the bishop is not attacked.

30.\textit{b}8 \textit{xb}8 31.\textit{xb}8+ \textit{g}7 32.\textit{xa}7

![Chessboard Diagram]

32...\textit{xe}5?

Some winning chances remain after 32...\textit{xc}4 33.\textit{g}3 \textit{d}8\text{½}.

33.\textit{g}3 \textit{xg}3

Or 33...\textit{f}6 34.\textit{xc}6=.

34.\textit{fxg}3 \textit{xe}3+ 35.\textit{g}2 \textit{f}4 36.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}5 37.\textit{c}5 \textit{d}4+ 38.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}4+ 39.\textit{g}1 \textit{d}4+ 40.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}4+ 41.\textit{g}1 \textit{e}5 42.\textit{g}2 \textit{d}4+ 43.\textit{f}1 \textit{d}3+ 44.\textit{f}2 \textit{d}2+ 45.\textit{f}1 \textit{e}4 46.\textit{e}7 \textit{d}3+ 47.\textit{f}2 \textit{d}4+ 48.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}3+ 49.\textit{f}2 \textit{d}4+ ½-½

Conclusions: In reply to the early capture of the pawn e4 (6...\textit{d}xe4) White already has no need to sacrifice the pawn on d4, since after the simple recapture with the queen 7.\textit{xe}4 his chances are superior. After 6...\textit{d}xe4 7.\textit{xe}4 \textit{f}6 8.\textit{d}3 \textit{bd}7, as in the game Vallejo-Svane, White has the better chances after both 9.\textit{g}3 followed by short castling, as played by Vallejo, and 9.\textit{d}2 and castling long.

On 6...\textit{d}xe4 7.\textit{xe}4 \textit{f}6 8.\textit{d}3 \textit{a}6, as Dreev has played a number of times, White should play 9.a3, covering the square b4 against the black knight’s incursion. After 9...\textit{a}5 (renewing the threat of 10...\textit{b}4) he plays 10.\textit{b}1; then White should complete his development and seize more space, and then open the position.
Part VI
The Vienna Game

After 1.e4 e5 we suggest 2.Nc3 – the Vienna Game.

White defends the pawn on e4 and adds further control of d5, thanks to which he limits his opponent’s possibilities to the maximum. Now Black effectively has only one serious plan: 2...Nf6, so as to meet 3.f4 with 3...d5!. After 4.fxe5 Ng4 we suggest the old and half-forgotten move 5.Qf3!.

Here we reach complicated and not very well-explored positions, in which there remains scope for creativity and mistakes. White has a simple and easily understandable plan: to mate the enemy king. Attacking in blitz is usually easier than defending, and if you also have an advantage in knowledge (thanks to this book!), then the opponent faces a difficult task.

Chapter 19
1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Qc5
We start our survey of the Vienna Game with Black’s reply 2...c5. On f2-f4, Black wants to protect his e5-pawn with ...d7-d6, but first he wants to develop his bishop to an active position.

Game 93
Matteo Zoldan
Giacomo Paolinelli
Bratto 2006 (8)

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 c5 3.f4 3...d6
Having brought his bishop out to c5, Black defends his e5-pawn.

A) Clearly worse is 3...exf4 4.\(\text{\text{N}}\)f3 (necessary to stop a check on h4):

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[black,very thick] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,help lines] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,step=0.5] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,step=1] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,step=2] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,step=4] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,step=8] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black,thick] (0,0) -- (8,8);
\draw[black,thick] (0,8) -- (8,0);
\node at (0,0) {a};
\node at (1,0) {b};
\node at (2,0) {c};
\node at (3,0) {d};
\node at (4,0) {e};
\node at (5,0) {f};
\node at (6,0) {g};
\node at (7,0) {h};
\node at (0,1) {1};
\node at (0,2) {2};
\node at (0,3) {3};
\node at (0,4) {4};
\node at (0,5) {5};
\node at (0,6) {6};
\node at (0,7) {7};
\node at (0,8) {8};
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

A1) After 4...d6 5.d4 \(\text{\text{b}}\)6 (even worse is 5...\(\text{\text{b}}\)4 6.\(\text{\text{xf}}\)4+) 6.\(\text{\text{xf}}\)4 White has material equality and a solid positional superiority, with control of the centre and free development;

A2) 4...\(\text{\text{g}}\)6?! 5.e5 \(\text{\text{h}}\)5 (5...\(\text{\text{g}}\)4 6.d4 \(\text{\text{b}}\)4 7.\(\text{\text{xf}}\)4+) 6.d4 \(\text{\text{c}}\)7 (it is important to cover the square g5; in the event of the ‘active’ 6...\(\text{\text{b}}\)4 a sharp kingside raid decides: 7.g4! fxg3 8.\(\text{\text{g}}\)5 g6 9.hxg3 \(\text{\text{g}}\)3 10.\(\text{f}\)3 \(\text{\text{f}}\)5 11.\(\text{d}\)5 followed by \(\text{\text{h}}\)7, and Black’s position collapses) 7.e2 g6 (defending the knight in advance; 7...d5 is unpleasantly met by 8.\(\text{\text{g}}\)!?, attacking the black knight, and after 8...\(\text{\text{h}}\)+ 9.\(\text{f}\)1 g6 10.\(\text{h}\)x5 gxh5 11.\(\text{h}\)xh5 White has the advantage) 8.d5 d6 9.\(\text{f}\)4 \(\text{\text{f}}\)4 10.\(\text{d}\)4±; White has regained the pawn, retaining all the advantages of his position;

A3) 4...g5 (Black is too far behind in development, so playing to hang onto the pawn is not promising here) 5.d4 (with tempo!) 5...\(\text{\text{b}}\)4 (on 5...\(\text{\text{b}}\)6 extremely unpleasant is 6.\(\text{\text{c}}\)4 followed by h2-h4, and Black’s position collapses) 6.d4 (also good is the immediate 6.h4 g4 7.e5+, taking one of the pawns) 6...d6 7.h4 f6 8.hxg5 fxg5 9.e5 (the quieter 9.d3+ is also possible) 9...dxe5 10.h5+ \(\text{\text{d}}\)7 11.dxe5 with a strong attack.

B) Dubious is 3...\(\text{\text{x}}\)g1?! 4.\(\text{\text{x}}\)g1 \(\text{\text{h}}\)+ (White is better after 4...d6 5.d4 exd4 6.\(\text{\text{xd}}\)4 \(\text{\text{f}}\)6 7.d2 \(\text{\text{c}}\)6 8.\(\text{f}\)2 0-0 9.0-0 0± followed by an attack on the kingside) 5.g3 \(\text{\text{h}}\)2 6.g2. Black has devoured a clearly ‘inedible’ pawn and the resulting stomach ache will be severe:
B1) 6...h6 7.d4 (the simple 7.fxe5 \textit{e}7 8.d4 \textit{g}6 9.f4+ is also strong) 7...exd4 8.f5 \textit{f}6 9.d5 \textit{d}8 10.xd4+-;

B2) 6...h3 7.d4 (also good is 7.fxe5 \textit{c}6 8.d4+- Zoldan-Lucchese, Corsica op 2003) 7...d6 8.dxe5 \textit{g}4 9.d4 \textit{c}6 10.g1+-;

B3) 6...h1 7.g4 8.e7 \textit{x}g7 \textit{g}8 9.xe5 d6 10.d4 h3 11.g1 h2 12.f2 \textit{xf}2+ 13.xf2 \textit{x}f1 14.xf1+-.

4.f3

4...f6
After 4...\(c6\) 5.\(c4\) \(f6\) 6.d3 we reach a position which we will examine in the game, via the move-order 4...\(c6\) 5.\(c4\) \(c6\) 6.d3.

In addition, in reply to 4...\(c6\) White can play 5.\(b5\), immediately pinning the black knight.

\[\text{analysis diagram}\]

We will not analyse this position in detail, because it is impossible to cover every variation in a single volume. But this plan is quite interesting for White and so we will simply quote a few key games, which will serve as a basis for independent study.

A) 5...\(f6\)

A1) 6.a4!\(xe4\)? 7.\(e2\) \(f2\) 8.\(f1\) \(g4\) 9.\(xc5\) 0-0, as in the game Polasek-Jirka, Czech tt 2012. White has an extra piece, but his king is still in the centre, so White should exchange as many pieces as possible: 10.\(xc6\) bxc6 11.h3 exf4 (or 11...\(c6\) 12.\(e4\) exf4 13.\(xf6+\) \(xf6\) 14.\(f2\) \(f2\) 12.hxg4 \(e8\) 13.\(e4\) \(xg4\) 14.d3 \(f5\) 15.\(xf4\) \(xe4\) 16.dxe4;\n
A2) 6.d3 0-0 (6...\(d7\) 7.a4 \(d4\) 8.\(xd4\) (he also gets a small advantage from 8.\(xc5\)!? \(xc5\) 9.\(c4\) 8...\(xd4\) 9.\(xd7+\) \(xd7\) 10.c3 \(b6\) 11.\(xb6\) axb6 12.0-0 0-0 13.\(e1\) exf4 14.\(xf4\) \(e6\) 15.a3 \(d7\) 16.\(g3\) \(ae8\) 17.\(ae1\) \(c5\) 18.\(e3\) \(g6\) 19.\(h4\) f5 20.\(g3\) \(e6\) 21.\(h6\) \(f7\) 22.exf5 \(e2\) 23.\(xg7\) \(xg7\) 24.f6 \(xg3\) 25.\(xg3+\) \(f7\) 26.\(g7+\) \(e6\) 27.f7, and Black resigned in Zukertort-Harmonist, Frankfurt 1887) 7.\(a4\) \(b4+\) 8.\(c3\) \(a5\) 9.\(xc6\) bxc6 10.\(xe5\) dxe5 11.\(xe5\) \(xe4\) 12.0-0 \(d5\) 13.\(f4\) \(d6\) 14.\(c4\) \(d4+\) 15.\(h1\) \(b7\) 16.c5 \(f5\) 17.\(c4\) \(b4\) 18.\(e5\) \(d5\) 19.\(xf5\) with an easily winning position, Shulman-Gokhale, Goodricke 1999.

B) 5...\(d7\)
6. N\textsubscript{a}4 (or 6.d3 N\textsubscript{f}6 7.N\textsubscript{a}4 N\textsubscript{d}4 8.xc5 dxc5 9.xd4 exd4 10.xd7+ x\textsubscript{d}7 11.0-0 e\textsubscript{e}7 12.d2 0-0 13.f3 f\textsubscript{b}8 14.fae1\#, Spassky-Haik, Paris 1983) 6...b6 7.xb6 axb6 8.d3 ge7 (8...e7 9.0-0 f6 10.h1 h6 11.e1 0-0 12.a4\±, Hebden-Lane, London 1987) 9.0-0 0-0 10.f5 f6 11.c4+ h\textsubscript{8} 12.a3 e\textsubscript{e}8 13.e6 h\textsubscript{5} 14.e1 e\textsubscript{e}8 15.h4 d\textsubscript{d}8 16.a2 f\textsubscript{f}7 17.c4 c\textsubscript{5} 18.g4 with a growing attack on the kingside, Capablanca-Molina/Ruiz, Buenos Aires 1914;

C) 5...e7 6.f5 (or 6.a4 b6 7.xb6 axb6 8.0-0 0-0 9.fxe5 – 9.d3!? – 9...dxe5 10.c3±) 6...a6 7.c4 b5 8.b3 a5 9.d3 xb3 10.axb3 c6 11.e2 f6 12.c3 b6 13.xc5 xc5 14.0-0 b4
15. d4! exd4 16. \( \text{N} \)xd4 \( \text{N} \)xe2 18. \( \text{N} \)xe2 d5 19. exd5 \( \text{N} \)xd5 22. \( \text{N} \)d4 \( \text{N} \)xd4 23. \( \text{N} \)xd4 a5 24. \( \text{N} \)e1+ \( \text{N} \)f7 25. \( \text{N} \)e7+ \( \text{N} \)g6 26. \( \text{N} \)a7± Shomoev-Balashov, Taganrog tt 2011;

D) 5...a6 6. \( \text{B} \)xc6+ bxc6 7. fxe5 dxe5 8. \( \text{N} \)xe5 (or 8. \( \text{Q} \)e2 \( \text{Q} \)d6 9. d3 \( \text{R} \)b8 10. \( \text{N} \)a4 \( \text{B} \)a7 11. b3 \( \text{N} \)e7 12. \( \text{N} \)xe3 \( \text{Q} \)xe3 13. \( \text{Q} \)xe3 0-0 14.0-0± with the better position for White, on account of his opponent’s damaged pawn structure, Zeller-Schunk, Saarbrücken ch-GER 2002) 8... \( \text{Q} \)g5 (8... \( \text{Q} \)d4 9. \( \text{N} \)d3²) 9. d4 \( \text{xg2} \) 10. \( \text{Q} \)f3 \( \text{Q} \)xf3 11. \( \text{N} \)xf3 \( \text{B} \)b4 12. \( \text{N} \)g1±;

E) 5... \( \text{g} \)g4 6. fxe5 dxe5 7. \( \text{B} \)xc6+ (breaking up Black’s pawn structure) 7...bxc6 8. h3 \( \text{Q} \)xf3 (after 8... \( \text{h} \)h5 strong replies include both the restarined 9. \( \text{Q} \)e2!?! \( \text{f6} \) 10.d3± and the more aggressive 9. \( \text{g} \)g4 \( \text{g} \)g6 10.d3 \( \text{f6} \) 11. \( \text{Q} \)e2± followed by \( \text{Q} \)e3, exchanging dark-squared bishops, Koller-Karpatchev, Bad Zwusten 2003) 9. \( \text{xg3} \) \( \text{e} \)e7 10. b3 (or 10.d3 \( \text{B} \)b8 11. \( \text{N} \)a4 \( \text{B} \)b6 12. \( \text{N} \)e3± Moravec-Postupka, Riancy 2014) 10...0-0 11. \( \text{b} \)b2 \( \text{W} \)d6 12. \( \text{h} \)h4 \( \text{R} \)ad8 13.0-0-0 \( \text{a} \)a3 14. \( \text{h} \)h5± Johansson-Tallaksen, Copenhagen 2009.

5. \( \text{N} \)c4 \( \text{e} \)e6 6. d3

analysis diagram

The main position of the 2...\( \text{e} \)c5 variation. It can also arise via the Bishop’s Opening 1.e4 e5 2. \( \text{c} \)c4 or the King’s Gambit 1.e4 e5 2.f4.

6...\( \text{a} \)a5

In reply to 6... \( \text{a} \)a6 White has the simple reply 7. \( \text{xc} \)xe6 (also possible is 7. \( \text{b} \)b5 with the idea of exchanging bishop for knight and then playing \( \text{e} \)e2, \( \text{e} \)e3, \( \text{f} \)f4-\( \text{f} \)5 or \( \text{f} \)xe5) 7...fxe6 8. \( \text{a} \)a4 \( \text{b} \)b6 9. \( \text{x} \)xb6 axb6 10.fxe5 dxe5 (10... \( \text{xe} \)xe5 11. \( \text{xe} \)xe5 dxe5 12. \( \text{e} \)e3 0-0 13.0-0±) 11.0-0. He can also start with 11. \( \text{d} \)d2 with the idea of \( \text{c} \)c3, or play 11.b3 and put the bishop on b2, in both cases exerting pressure against the e5-pawn. Black has a damaged pawn structure and White a strong dark-squared bishop; White’s chances are somewhat superior.

7. \( \text{b} \)b3 \( \text{x} \)xb3

The move 7...a6 leads after 8. \( \text{e} \)e2 \( \text{x} \)xb3 9.axb3 to the same position as 7... \( \text{x} \)xb3. But Black should probably not hurry with the exchange on b3, instead playing the useful move 7...0-0. Then 8.f5!? is possible, Pokorny-Tichy, Czech tt w
2009/10 (a game with mutual chances results from 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g5 or 9.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e2!?) 8...\(\text{\textit{N}}\)xb3 9.axb3 d5 10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g5 dxe4 11.dxe4 \(\text{\textit{W}}\)xd1+ 12.\(\text{\textit{K}}\)xd1! (the correct recapture: one rook remains on a1, and after \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e2 the other takes the square d1) 12...\(\text{\textit{d}}\)d7 13.\(\text{\textit{e}}\)e2+.

8.axb3 a6

Otherwise White plays \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)a4 and exchanges the active black bishop, which prevents the former quietly castling short.

9.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e2

With this move, White prepares to bring his bishop out to e3.

Of course, not 9.fxe5 dxe5 10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe5 because of 10...\(\text{\textit{d}}\)d4 with a double threat to take the knight and to give mate.

9...\(\text{\textit{B}}\)g4

Black has also played 9...\(\text{\textit{W}}\)e7 10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)xe3 (10...\(\text{\textit{e}}\)xf4?? 11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf4 0-0 12.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)xe3 13.\(\text{\textit{W}}\)xe3 with somewhat better chances for White) 11.\(\text{\textit{W}}\)xe3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)d7 12.fxe5 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g4 (12...dxe5? 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g5 0-0 14.\(\text{\textit{W}}\)xe5±) 13.\(\text{\textit{W}}\)d2 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe5 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d5 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xh2+ 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xh2 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)d8 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 0-0 17.0-0-0 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)d6 18.\(\text{\textit{d}}\)g1 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)f6 19.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f4 \(\text{\textit{W}}\)e7 20.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)h1 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)f7 21.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f5 22.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g3 23.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)h3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f6 24.c3 25.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e8 26.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g6+ hxg6 27.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe6 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g6 28.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g5 f5 29.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe6 30.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)h7+ \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f8 31.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf7 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf7 32.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)h8+ \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e7 33.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g7, and Black resigned in Mitkov-Rocha, Boavista 2000.

10.fxe5 dxe5 11.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)d6 12.0-0 0-0

In the event of 12...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d7 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d1 0-0 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xc5 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xc5 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf3 16.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e6 17.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g5+ 18.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f2 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d4 19.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)b6 20.c3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf5 21.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xb6 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xb6 22.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xf5 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f6 23.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f2 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f7 24.g4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g6 25.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e6 26.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e3 White in the game Bouverot-Lukyanenko, corr. 2004, obtained a favourable rook ending and gradually realised his advantage.

13.\(\text{\textit{W}}\)f2

Also good is 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xc5!? \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xc5+ 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f2 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d6 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)d1±.

13...\(\text{\textit{d}}\)xe3 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe3
The computer assesses this position as almost equal, but White’s game is rather easier to play, because he has a simple and clear plan – to attack on the kingside.

14...c6 15.\textit{Ra}5 \textit{Ra}e8 16.\textit{Kh}1

White gradually strengthens the positioning of his pieces.

16...\textit{Bxf}3 17.\textit{Qxf}3 \textit{Re}6 18.\textit{Nd}1

The knight should transfer to e3, from where it can be involved in the kingside attack from f5 or g4.

18...\textit{Ne}8 19.\textit{Ne}3 \textit{Qc}7 20.\textit{Raa}1

The rook should also go to the kingside. In general, there is a simple rule: if you want to give mate, then you should bring as many pieces into the attack as possible.

20...\textit{Nd}6 21.\textit{Qg}3 \textit{Re}7 22.\textit{Rf}3 f6

Maybe Black should not hurry with this move, and should instead play 22...\textit{Rg}6 23.\textit{Qf}2 \textit{Re}8 24.\textit{Rf}1 \textit{Nd}7 and mark time, although in this case, White would have a plan to strengthen his position: he can start advancing his pawns.

23.\textit{Rf}1 \textit{h}8 24.\textit{Rh}4 \textit{f}7 25.\textit{Rh}3 \textit{h}6
26.\textit{Rff3}

A sudden blow on the left flank with 26.c4! would be extremely unpleasant for Black, with the idea of playing c4-c5, driving the knight from d6, and then installing the white knight on f5. But the move in the game is also good: White has brought all his pieces over to the enemy king, and now Black needs to be very careful about possible sacrifices on h6.

26...\textit{Qg6} 27.\textit{Nf5} \textit{Nf7} 28.\textit{Rhg3}

The other rook move wins: 28.\textit{Rfg3} \textit{Ng5} 29.\textit{Qg4} \textit{Rg8} (or 29...\textit{Qg8} 30.\textit{Qxh6+ gxh6} 31.\textit{Qxe6+ Qxe6} 32.\textit{Rxg6+}) 30.\textit{Rh5 Rh7} 31.\textit{Rgh3! Qxh3} 32.\textit{Rhx3 Rxe8} 33.\textit{Rxe6 gxh6} 34.\textit{Rxh6} with a decisive material advantage.

28...\textit{Qg5} 29.\textit{Rf1} \textit{Qf7}?

Losing a piece. But after the more tenacious 29...h5 (not letting the white queen into g4) 30.\textit{Re3 Rh7} 31.\textit{Re2 g6} 32.\textit{Re3 Qg7} 33.\textit{Qxe2} Black stands badly anyway. Admittedly, unlike after the game continuation, he does not lose at once.

30.\textit{Qg4 Rh7} 31.\textit{h4}
His own major pieces deny the black knight all possible retreat squares.

31...h5 32.Qe2 Qg6 33.Qe3 Qh7 34.hxg5 fxg5 35.Qxg5 Qf6 36.Qf3 Qg8 37.Qe7+ Qf8 38.Qg6+ Qg8 39.Qxe5 Qxf3 40.Qxf3 1-0

This game shows very clearly and instructively what White should aim for in positions of this type. He places his pawns on light squares and therefore it is not so terrible for him to exchange his light-squared bishop for the knight. Then White exchanges on e5 and opens the f-file, plays Qe2, Qe3, exchanges dark-squared bishops, castles short and then begins an attack on the kingside.

Game 94
Nikola Mitkov 2534
Gerard Welling 2400
Aosta open 2003 (9)

1.e4 e5 2.Qc4 Qc5 3.Qc3 Qf6 4.d3 Qc6 5.f4 d6 6.Qf3 a6
A prophylactic move, preventing the pin ♗b5. He also frees the square a7 for the bishop to retreat to after ♕a4, and Black also prepares ...b7-b5, should the occasion arise, attacking the enemy bishop. But for all this, the move is a little slow and passive.

7. ♕d5

This frees c3 for the white pawn, whilst in the event of an exchange on d5, White will take with the bishop, with the idea of capturing on c6 and spoiling the enemy pawn structure.

7...h6

The main alternatives are A) 7...♗g4 and B) 7...♕xd5:
A) 7...♗g4 8.c3 (it is important to take control of d4).
A1) 8...a7 9.h3 \texttt{\textmacr{x}}f3 10.\texttt{\textmacr{w}}xf3±;

A2) 8...\texttt{\textmacr{h}}h5?! 9.f5! (removing the pawn from attack and preparing to bring the bishop out to e3) 9...h6 10.b4 (it is useful to take control of the square a5, from where the black knight can harass White's bishop) 10...a7 11.e3 (also good is 11.e3 \texttt{\textmacr{x}}f3 12.\texttt{\textmacr{w}}xf3 \texttt{\textmacr{f}}f6 13.\texttt{\textmacr{g}}g3±) 11...e7 (he is not promised full equality by either 11...\texttt{\textmacr{c}}xb4!? 12.cxb4 c6 13.\texttt{\textmacr{x}}xa7 cxd5 14.\texttt{\textmacr{x}}xd5 \texttt{\textmacr{e}}xa7 15.h3 \texttt{\textmacr{x}}xf3 16.\texttt{\textmacr{w}}xf3±, or 11...\texttt{\textmacr{c}}xe3 12.\texttt{\textmacr{x}}xe3 \texttt{\textmacr{x}}f3 13.\texttt{\textmacr{w}}xf3 \texttt{\textmacr{f}}f6 14.0-0 0-0 15.g4, and White holds the initiative) 12.axa7 \texttt{\textmacr{x}}xd5 13.\texttt{\textmacr{x}}xd5 \texttt{\textmacr{e}}xa7 14.0-0 \texttt{\textmacr{e}}f4 15.\texttt{\textmacr{b}}b3 h5 16.d4 \texttt{\textmacr{c}}e7 17.\texttt{\textmacr{d}}d2 h4 18.\texttt{\textmacr{a}}e1 \texttt{\textmacr{x}}f3 19.\texttt{\textmacr{x}}xf3 \texttt{\textmacr{g}}g5 20.\texttt{\textmacr{d}}d1 f6 21.\texttt{\textmacr{h}}h1± Fedorov-Fyllingen, Aars 1999;

A3) 8...0-0 9.b4 a7 10.f5 and now:
A31) 10...e8? 11.h3 xf3 12.xf3 h8 13.f6± Cornette-Fuchs, Pula 2003;

A32) 10...h6 11.h3 xf3 12.xf3 xd5 13.xd5 – White has the advantage of the two bishops and will soon start an attack on the kingside, Safaryan-Boni, corr. 2003;

A33) The best move for Black is 10...Nxd5 11.Bxd5 a5 (11...e7!? 12.b3 d5 13.h3 xf3 14.xf3 with mutual chances) 12.b5 e7 13.xb7 b8 14.a6 d5 15.h3 xf5! (15...xf3 16.xf3 dxe4 17.dxe4±) 16.exf5 xf5 17.xf1. The computer assesses this position as somewhat better for Black, but White has an extra piece for just a pawn, and there are no apparently unanswerable threats to his king. Without concrete knowledge, it is hard to settle for such a sacrifice, and the majority of your opponents will not have looked at it.

B) 7...xd5 8.xd5 and now:

B1) 8...d7 9.fxe5 dxe5 10.g5, and the f7-pawn cannot be defended, because after 10...0-0 there follows 11.h5, winning;

B2) 8...0-0 9.f5

B21) 9.e7 10.g5 (10.b3!? a5 11.a4 d5 12.e2±) 10...h6 11.h4 d7 12.b3 a5 13.a4 h8 14.d2 f6 15.g4 d5 16.f2 dxe4 17.dxe4 xd2+ 18.xd2 xf2+ 19.xf2 d7 20.e3 Ad8 21.ad1. Here in the game Eberl-Poljak, corr. 2009, a draw was agreed; even so, White’s position is somewhat better and he could perfectly well have played on;

B22) In the event of 9.d4 White has a pleasant choice between 10.c3 xf3+ 11.xf3 c6 12.b3 b5 13.h4 h8 14.g4 a7 15.g5 f6 16.d2 d5 17.0-0-0 a5 18.g5 a4 19.c2 d4 20.h5 dxc3 21.bxc3 a3+ 22.b1 b6 23.dg1 g8 24.gxh6 xf6 25.e8+ f8 26.xe5 b4 27.h6 f7 (he also loses after 27...bxc3+ 28.b3+) 28.xg7+, and Black resigned in Al.Sokolov-Karpachev, Nizhnij Novgorod 1998, and 10.xd4 xd4 11.h5 (White is also better after 11.c3 a7 12.h5±) 11...c6 12.b3 d5 13.c3 a7 14.f3 (or 14.exd5!? cxd5 15.f1± with the threat of f3-h3; he also keeps the initiative after 14.f1) 14.dxe4?! 15.dxe4 wb6 16.d2 c5 17.0-0-0 h8 18.e3 c7 19.d5 d7 20.f6 g6 21.h6, and Black resigned in Hresc-Wiechert, Kirchheim 1990.

B3) 8.e6.
analysis diagram

Here too, White has a pleasant choice:

B31) 9.\( \text{Bxe6 fxe6 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.Qe2} \) (in the game Mista-Plachetka, Warsaw 2007, White, by means of 11.\( \text{Ng5 Qd7} \) 12.\( \text{Nh5+ g6 13.Qh3} \), created pressure against the e6-pawn, but after 13...\( \text{Qd4} \) Black simultaneously defends e6 and attacks c2; therefore White must play 14.\( \text{Qd1} \), remaining uncastled) 11...\( \text{Qd6} \) 12.\( \text{c3 0-0} \) 13.\( \text{Bxe3} \) with somewhat better chances for White, thanks to his more compact pawn structure;

B32) 9.\( \text{Bxc6+ bxc6 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.Qe2} \). White intends \( \text{Bxe3} \) with the idea of exchanging dark-squared bishops, and then wants to play b3, not letting his opponent exchange his doubled pawns after ...c6-c5-c4; White’s position is easier to play.

B4) 8...\( \text{g4 9.c3} \) It is also worth considering 9.\( \text{Bxc6+ bxc6 10.c3} \), e.g. 10...0-0 11.f5 d5 12.h3 \( \text{Bxf3} \) 13.\( \text{Bxf3} \) \( \text{b8} \) 14.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{a7} \) 15.\( \text{Bd2} \) \( \text{d6} \) 16.a4 \( \text{Bfd8} \) 17.\( \text{d1} \) 18.e4 \( \text{Bxb4} \) 19.\( \text{a3} \) \( \text{Bb3} \) 20.\( \text{c7} \) 21.\( \text{g4} \) (Antonov-Opatin, corr. 1990) 21...\( \text{h8} \) (21...\( \text{xe7} \)? 22.f6+-) 22.f6 g6 23.\( \text{g5} \) \( \text{b2} \) 24.\( \text{f1} \) with the unpleasant threats \( \text{h6} \) and \( \text{xe5} \). 9...0-0
analysis diagram

10.f5 (10.h3!? e6 11.xc6 bxc6 12.f5 c8=, Jackson-Bisguier, Ventura ch-USA 1971) 10...e7 11.g5 (11.b3!?, and then possible is 11...d5 12.h3 xf3 13.xf3 with somewhat better chances for White) 11...h6 12.h4 c6 (he can play 12...e8, but after 13.b3 he needs to see 13...xf5! 14.exf5 e4, and now 15.dxe4 is not possible because of 15...xe4+ 16.f1 xf3, winning the bishop on h4) 13.b3 d5 14.h3 xf3 15.xf3 f6 16.0-0-0 a5 17.a3 b5 18.d4 d6 19.exd5 exd5 20.dxe5 xe5 21.xd5 xd5+ h7 22.xa8 xa8 24.xa8 xa8 25.d1 with an extra pawn for White, which he realised in the game Zulfugarli-Dovliatov, Baku ch-AZE 2000.

Now we return to the game Mitkov-Welling, in which Black chose 7...h6.

8.c3
This was the game Fraser-Jantunen, corr. 1990: 8.fxe5 dxe5 9.dxe3 dxe3 10.dxe3 0-0 11.0-0 g4 12.xg4 xg4 13.d2 d4 14.c3 xf3+ 15.xf3 b5 16.b3 c5 17.d5 a7 18.f5 g6 19.f3 g7 20.af1 h5 21.h3 h6 22.c3 e7 23.f6 a5 24.g5, and Black resigned, since on the next move, White takes on f7 with the bishop and Black has to give up his queen, since otherwise he cannot defend the g6-pawn.

8...a7 9.f5!

With this move, White shuts in the c8 and creates the conditions for a pawn storm on the kingside.

9...d7

It makes sense to exchange knights with 9...xd5!! 10.xd5 and then transfer the knight from c6 to the kingside: 10.e7 11.b3 g8 12.e2 f6 13.e3 xe3 14.ee3±. But even in this case, White’s position is preferable: he has a small advantage in development and the possibility of a pawn storm on the kingside; in addition, Black’s light-squared bishop lacks activity.

10.b4 g4?! 11.g5!

Black had obviously underestimated this move.

11.hxg5 12.xg4 f6 13.h4± e7 14.h3 e6

Even after the relatively best move 14...xd5 15.xd5 c6 16.hxg5 xh3 17.xc6+ bxc6 18.gxh3 White would have an extra pawn and the better position.
15.hxg5

Rather more decisive was 15.\(\text{N}xf6+!\) gxf6 16.e6, tying up all Black’s pieces. The threat is 17.hxg5, and Black cannot avoid large material losses.

15...\(\text{Rxh3}\) 16.gxh3

Here too, the knight sacrifice on f6 was very strong: 16.\(\text{N}xf6+\) gxf6 17.\(\text{Wh}3\) d5 18.gxf6 dxc4 19.\(\text{Bg5}\) (nor is he saved by 19...\(\text{Ng8}\) 20.\(\text{f7+}\) \(\text{Nxf7}\) 21.\(\text{Bxd8}\) 20.\(\text{fxe7}\) \(\text{Wh8}\) 21.0-0-0 \(\text{Wh3}\) 22.dxc4+ \(\text{Ke8}\) 23.\(\text{Rd8+}\) \(\text{Kf7}\) 24.\(\text{gxh3}\), winning.

16.\(\text{Kxd5}\)
17. \textit{Bxd5}

Preferable is 17.exd5!?±, not allowing Black to exchange off his ‘bad’ knight.

17...\textit{Bxd5} 18.\textit{exd5} \textit{Qe7} 19.\textit{gxf6 gxf6} 20.\textit{Qg8+ Qf8} 21.\textit{Qe6+ Qe7} 22.\textit{Qg8+ Qf8} 23.\textit{Qe6+ Qd8}

Black refuses the repetition of moves. This was the final round, and only a win would do, although objectively, in such a position, Black can only dream of a draw.

24.\textit{d2} \textit{c6} 25.\textit{dxc6 bxc6} 26.0-0-0 \textit{Qc7} 27.\textit{d4}

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

27...\textit{exd4}

Drawing chances were offered by 27...\textit{Re8} 28.\textit{Qc4 Qg8} (he is losing after 28...\textit{Kb7} 29.\textit{d5 Rc8} 30.\textit{dxc6+ Qxc6} 31.\textit{Qd5} with an extremely unpleasant pin) 29.\textit{Qxg8 Rg8} 30.\textit{dxe5 dxe5} 31.\textit{h4 Rh8} 32.\textit{Rh1±}.

28.\textit{Bf4 Re8}?

More tenacious is 28...\textit{Kd8}, but here too, after 29.\textit{cxd4}, Black is in a bad way.

29.\textit{Bxd6+ Rxd6} 30.\textit{Qxe8}

White has an extra exchange and gradually won (although not without mistakes).

\textbf{Summary:} In reply to 6...\textit{a6} White put his knight on \textit{d5}, after which he can play \textit{c2-c3} and \textit{b2-b4}, seizing space on the queenside. Then he advanced his pawn to \textit{f5}, cramping Black on the kingside as well, whereupon Black went wrong and fell into a bad position. In general, the plan with \textit{f4-f5} and an advance on the kingside is seen quite often and is very unpleasant for Black.
7. \texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{Na4}}}}

Exchanging knight for bishop gives White a good position with no particular risk. A more complicated game results from 7.f5, shutting in the opponent’s light-squared bishop and preparing an attack on the kingside.

A) 7... \texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{Na5}}}} and now:

A1) 8.a3!? (taking control of the square b4, where the enemy bishop might go) 8... \texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{xc4}}}} 9.dxc4 h6 10.e2 c6 (10...b5!? 11.e3 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}}}}xe3 12.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{xe3}}}} d5 13.exd5 cxd5 14.0-0-0 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e8}}}} (Black loses after 14...d4? 15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{xe5}}}}, and he drops the d4-pawn as well) 15.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{xd5}}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{xf5}}}} 16.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{\textsc{he1}}}}; 

A2) 8.g5 and now:
analysis diagram

A21) 8...\texttt{N}xc4 9.dxc4 c6 (or 9...\texttt{b}4!?), creating pressure on the c3-knight and the square e4) 10.\texttt{Q}d3 h6 11.\texttt{Q}xf6 \texttt{Q}xf6 12.0-0-0\texttt{±} followed by g2-g4;

A22) 8...c6 9.a3 \texttt{N}xc4 (9...b5 10.\texttt{Q}a2 \texttt{b}7 11.\texttt{g}4\texttt{±} Becker-Lejlic, Berlin 1997) 10.dxc4 h6 (10...a6 11.\texttt{Q}d2 b5 12.0-0-0\texttt{±} Borgovan-Barasiant, Eforie Nord 1998) 11.\texttt{h}4 (11.\texttt{Q}xf6!? \texttt{Q}xf6 12.\texttt{Q}d3\texttt{±}) 11...a5 (11...\texttt{g}5!? 12.\texttt{Q}xg5 hxc5 13.\texttt{Q}xg5 or 12.\texttt{f}xg6 fxg6 13.\texttt{Q}d3 \texttt{e}6 14.0-0-0, in both cases with an unclear position) 12.\texttt{Q}d2 a4 13.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{b}6 14.\texttt{Q}xf6 gxf6 15.\texttt{Q}xh6 \texttt{Q}xb2 (if 15...\texttt{Q}e3, then 16.\texttt{g}5 winning) 16.\texttt{Q}d2 \texttt{d}4 17.\texttt{Q}e2, and Black resigned in Nun-Lehner, Oberwart 1992.

B) 7...\texttt{Q}d4 and now:

B1) 8.\texttt{Q}xd4 exd4 (8...\texttt{Q}xd4 9.\texttt{Q}f3 c6 10.g4 d5 11.\texttt{b}3 followed by play on the kingside) 9.\texttt{Q}d5 \texttt{Q}xd5 10.\texttt{Q}xd5 c6 11.\texttt{b}3 \texttt{h}4+ 12.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{h}3 13.\texttt{Q}f2 d5 14.\texttt{f}1 \texttt{h}5 15.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{h}3 16.\texttt{f}1, draw, Morozov-Hendriks, corr. 2007;

B2) 8.\texttt{g}5!? c6 9.a3.
After this move, the computer prefers Black, but the position is very complicated and the black king can come under attack.

B21) 9...h6 10.h4 b5 (10...d5!? 11.a2 a5 12.g4 g5?! (12...b7!?) 13.fxg6 hxg6 14.xf7+ g7 15.xd4 xd4 16.xf6+ (but not 16.e2?? (Fischer-Puto, Cicero simul 1964) 16...xe4! 17.dxe4 xh4+ 18.d2 xf2 winning, or 17.xd8 d2+ 18.f1 h3#) 16...xh6 17.xg4 f2+ 18.d1 b4 19.e2 xb2 20.g3, and Black resigned in Albano-Heap, corr. 1990;

B22) 9...b5 10.a2 a5 11.e2 xf3+ 12.gxf3. In the database, there are three games from this position, and in all three, Black played 12...b6 (although it is worth paying serious attention to 12...h6 13.h4 d5, and Black’s chances are even preferable).
In this position, the central blow 13.d4! promises White the advantage, e.g. 13...\textit{xd}4 14.\textit{xe}4 \textit{xd}4 15.\textit{xd}4 exd4 16.0-0-0 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{he}1 \textit{h}8 18.e3 \textit{b}7 (it is unfavourable to open the d-file: 18...dxc3 19.bxc3 \pm, and the d6-pawn is under attack) 19.cxd4. Black is in even worse trouble after 13...exd4 14.\textit{xf}6 gxf6 15.\textit{g}1+ \textit{h}8 16.\textit{d}2 d3 17.\textit{h}6 \textit{f}2+ 18.\textit{f}1 dxe2+ 19.\textit{xe}2 \textit{e}3+ (19...\textit{x}g1 20.\textit{xf}8#) 20.\textit{xe}3 \textit{xe}3 21.\textit{xe}3 \pm.

7...\textit{b}6 8.\textit{xb}6 \textit{xb}6 9.0-0 \textit{a}5 10.\textit{d}5

After 10.\textit{b}3 \textit{xb}3 White has to take away from the centre – 11.cxb3, as in the game Alekhine-Köhnlein, Hamburg 1910;

A position with mutual chances arises after 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.e2 \textit{xc}4 12.dxc4 \textit{g}4, Chigorin-Vidmar, Nuremberg 1906.

10...c6 11.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{xf}7 12.fxe5 dxe5 13.b4
13...\textit{\texttt{\text{\texttt{xe4}}}\\}

An approximately equal position arose after 13...\textit{\texttt{g4}}} 14.bxa5 \textit{\texttt{xa5}}} 15.d2 \textit{\texttt{a8}} in the game Mitkov-Hernandez, Aguascalientes 2007. Instead of 15.d2 it is worth considering 15.b2?!?, eyeing the pawn on e5.

This small nuance cannot change the basic assessment, of course, but White is still the more active side. It is easier for him to play here, because Black must the whole time keep an eye on the e5-weakness.

14.bxa5

Little is promised by 14.e2 f6 (or 14...b3!? 15.cxb3 c3 16.xe5 xd3 17.b2 d5=) 15.xe5 g4 (weaker is 15.e7 16.g3 e2 17.g5=) 16.b2 with approximate equality.

14...\textit{\texttt{f6}}} 15.b2 g4

Equality results from 15.ea5 16.xe5 e7 17.e4 f5 18.xf5 f5=.

16.xe5

It is worth considering 16.h3 xf3 17.xf3 xa5 18.g3 d6 19.e1=.

16...xa5 17.d4 d7 18.g3
18...\(\textit{\text{Q}}\)f8

After 18...\(\textit{\text{a}}\)a3! Black has unpleasant pressure on the knight on f3 and White begins to have problems.

19.\(\textit{\text{Q}}\)d3 \(\textit{\text{Q}}\)xf3 20.\(\textit{\text{Q}}\)xf3 \(\textit{\text{Q}}\)xf3 21.gxf3 \(\textit{\text{R}}\)d5 22.c3 b5 23.\(\textit{\text{Q}}\)e1 \(\textit{\text{Q}}\)g6 24.\(\textit{\text{Q}}\)e4 \(\textit{\text{R}}\)d7 25.\(\textit{\text{Q}}\)e8+ ½-½

\textbf{Conclusion:} After 6...0-0, if you definitely need to win at all costs, then we recommend 7.f5!? with a complicated game. But if you wish to obtain a slightly quieter position, without any special risk, then you should go for the variation with 7.a4, as in the game just examined. However, it must be admitted that grandmaster Mikhalevski demonstrated a precise path to equality in this line.
1.e4 e5 2.f4 c5 3.d3 d6 4.c4 c6 5.f6 c3 6.d3 g4!?

A rare continuation.

7.g5!

A sharp conflict from the very first moves! Black tries to break through to the square f2, but White does not think about defence (besides, 7.f1? would be met by 7...xh2!), but himself goes on the counterattack.

7...0-0

A) 7...exf4? 8.xf7+ f8 9.xf4 f2:
analysis diagram

A1) 10.\textit{Qh}3 \textit{N}xh1 11.\textit{Ne}6 \textit{Q}f6 12.\textit{Nd}5 with decisive material gains.

A2) Also good is 10.\textit{Qh}5 \textit{N}xh1 (or 10...\textit{Q}f6 11.\textit{Nd}5 \textit{Q}xb2 12.\textit{N}xe6+ \textit{Q}xe6 13.\textit{N}xe6 \textit{Q}xa1+ 14.\textit{Q}e2 \textit{Q}d4+ 15.\textit{Q}d2 – the white king moves out of the checks and after 15...\textit{N}xe6 16.\textit{R}xa1 Black loses the queen) 11.\textit{Q}e6 (11.\textit{Nd}5 also wins) 11...\textit{Q}e7 12.\textit{Nd}5, winning.

B) 7...h6?! and now:

B1) 8.\textit{Q}xf7+ \textit{Kf}8.
Now, with correct play by both sides, the game ends in a draw by perpetual:

B11) White wins quickly after 9.f5 hxg5 10.\(\text{W}xg4\) 11.\(\text{W}xg5\) 12.\(\text{B}d5\) \(\text{B}b4\)? 13.\(\text{f}f6\)! (a beautiful and strong move, after which Black’s position collapses) 13...\(\text{h}h7\) 14.\(\text{g}g6+\) \(\text{g}g8\) 15.\(\text{e}e7+\) \(\text{f}f8\) 16.\(\text{x}xh7\) \(\text{x}c2+\) 17.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{g}x6\) 18.\(\text{g}g6+\) \(\text{e}e8\) 19.\(\text{g}g8\#\), Pulkkinen-Prieur, Finland tt 2002. However, after 11...\(\text{W}d7\) (instead of 11...\(\text{W}d7\)) the position favours Black, although White certainly has compensation for the piece – two pawns and the insecure position of the enemy king;

B12) 9.\(\text{e}e6+\) \(\text{x}e6\) 10.\(\text{xe6}\)

\[\text{analysis diagram}\]

10...\(\text{b}b2\) is tempting, but after this Black obtains a somewhat inferior position: 11.\(\text{f}f3\) \(\text{f}f6\) (he loses immediately after 11...\(\text{x}h1??\) 12.\(\text{f}xe5+, and only marginally better is 11...\(\text{e}e7?\) 12.\(\text{f}f5\) \(\text{h}x1\) 13.\(\text{d}d5+\) \(\text{f}f8\) 14.\(\text{f}e3\) \(\text{f}g5\) 15.\(\text{c}c3\); then White plays \(\text{e}e3\), takes the \(\text{h}1\) and will have piece and pawn for the rook, with a very vulnerable black king and extremely passive enemy pieces – White’s position is winning) 12.\(\text{d}d5\) \(\text{x}e6\) 13.\(\text{f}f1\). Then possible is: 13...\(\text{f}f7\) (or 13...\(\text{c}c8\) 14.\(\text{f}f5\) \(\text{f}f7\) 15.\(\text{e}e3\) \(\text{x}e3\) 16.\(\text{xe3}\) \(\text{xd}3+\) 17.\(\text{c}d3\) \(\text{d}d4\) 18.\(\text{h}h3\) with somewhat better chances for White) 14.\(\text{e}e3\) \(\text{xe3}\) 15.\(\text{xe3}\) \(\text{xd}3+\) 16.\(\text{c}d3\)\!

Therefore, instead of 10...\(\text{b}b2\), stronger is 10...\(\text{x}h4+\) 11.\(\text{g}g3\) \(\text{f}f2+\) 12.\(\text{d}d2\) \(\text{e}e3+\) 13.\(\text{e}e1\) \(\text{f}f2+\), and a draw by perpetual check, G.Farkas-Tepper, Slovakia tt 2005.

B2) More promising is 8.\(f5\), and now:
B21) 8...f2 is just bad because of 9...h5 0-0 10...xf7 f6 11...xh6+, and Black resigned in Henkes-Cook, corr. 1998;

B22) Also unsatisfactory is 8...f2+ 9...f1 hxg5 (he also loses after 9...e3 10...xf7+ ...f8 11...xg4 ...xc1 12...e6+ ...xe6 13...xe6 ...xb2 14...d5! ...xa1 15.f6 g5 16.h4, and all of White’s pieces are taking part in the attack on the enemy king) 10...xg4 ...h4 11...xg5 ...xg5 12...xg5 ...h5 13...xf2 ...xg5 14.h4 ...h5 15...d5 with an extra pawn and a better position for White, Donovan-Berkvens, Hengelo jr 1996;

B23) Relatively best for Black is 8...hxg5, but here too, after 9...xg4 f6 (9...d4?! 10...xg5 f6 11...d2 g5 12...b3 ...h4 13...d1 ...d7 14.g3 ...h8 15...g4±, Perez-Krol, corr. 2006) 10.h4, White has a dangerous initiative.

8.f5
White seizes space on the kingside and prepares to give mate to the enemy king.

8...\textit{f2}+

8...\textit{f6} fails to 9.d5 h6 10.xf6+ xf6 11.h4! and now:

A) 11...a5 12.h7! xh7 13.g5, and Black resigned in Magee-Aker, corr. 1981;

B) 11...g6 12.g4 hgx5 (if 12...g7, then 13.c3! a5 14.xf7+ xf7 15.xf7 xf7 16.b4 – White takes a piece and keeps an extra pawn as well as the attack) 13.hxg5 g7 (13...e7 14.f3 with attack) 14.f6, and the queen is trapped.

9.f1 e3+ 10.xe3 xe3 11.h4
11...\textit{\textbf{x}g5}

Dangerous is 11...g6 12.\textbf{\textit{x}}f7 \textit{\textbf{xf}7} 13.\textbf{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textbf{f}4}, and here in the game Grabarczyk-Jirka, Griesheim 2003, there is an advantage with the simple 14.f\textit{\textbf{x}g}6 \textit{\textbf{hx}g6} 15.\textbf{\textit{x}f}7+ \textbf{\textit{xf}7} 16.g3, taking the bishop and ending with an extra exchange.

12.h\textit{\textbf{x}g}5 \textit{\textbf{w}x}g5 13.\textbf{\textit{h}h}5 \textit{\textbf{w}f}4+

On 13...\textit{\textbf{w}g}3 possible is 14.\textbf{\textit{h}h}3 \textit{\textbf{w}g}5 15.\textbf{\textit{d}d}5±.

14.\textbf{\textit{g}1} \textit{\textbf{e}7}

After 14...\textit{\textbf{w}e}3+ 15.\textbf{\textit{h}h}1 \textit{\textbf{e}7} (better, but also in White’s favour, is 15...\textbf{\textit{d}d}4 16.\textbf{\textit{d}d}5 \textit{\textbf{w}e}2 17.c3 \textit{\textbf{w}xd}1+ 18.\textbf{\textit{xd}1} b5 19.c\textit{\textbf{x}d}4 bxc4 20.dxc4±) 16.\textit{\textbf{w}g}4 \textit{\textbf{w}f}4 17.\textit{\textbf{h}h}3 h6 18.g4 White’s attack is very strong.

15.\textit{\textbf{e}2}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{chess_diagram.png}
\end{center}

15...\textit{\textbf{w}g}3

A) 15...g6 16.\textbf{\textit{f}1} \textit{\textbf{w}g}3 17.\textbf{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textbf{w}g}4 18.\textbf{\textit{h}h}3 \textit{\textbf{h}8} 19.f6 \textit{\textbf{g}8} 20.\textit{\textbf{e}3} c6 21.\textbf{\textit{d}1} d5 22.\textbf{\textit{f}2} \textit{\textbf{e}6} 23.\textbf{\textit{b}3}±, Deszczynski-Kostyra, Warsaw ch-POL 1994. Even stronger is 23.exd5 cxd5 24.g4, threatening \textit{\textbf{h}h}7 and \textit{\textbf{h}3} mating; Black inevitably suffers huge material losses;

B) 15...c6 16.\textbf{\textit{f}1} \textit{\textbf{w}g}3 17.\textbf{\textit{d}1} (transferring the knight to the kingside) 17...d5 18.\textbf{\textit{e}3}! \textit{\textbf{g}6} (on 18...dxc4 the move 19.\textbf{\textit{f}3} decides) 19.\textbf{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textbf{f}4} 20.\textbf{\textit{d}1} \textit{\textbf{x}h}5 21.\textbf{\textit{g}3} \textit{\textbf{g}3} 22.\textbf{\textit{b}3}, and Black resigned in Alonso Gonzalez-Lloveras Rebell, corr. 2006.

16.\textit{\textbf{f}1} \textit{\textbf{d}7} 17.\textbf{\textit{f}3}

17.\textit{\textbf{w}d}2 also wins, e.g. after 17...c6 (taking control of d5) there follows 18.\textbf{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textbf{g}4} 19.\textbf{\textit{f}h}3, and there is a threat of \textit{\textbf{h}x}7 and \textit{\textbf{h}4}, winning the queen.

17...\textit{\textbf{w}g}4 18.\textbf{\textit{h}h}3 \textit{\textbf{g}5} 19.\textbf{\textit{f}g}3 \textit{\textbf{f}6} 20.\textit{\textbf{h}5}
Also winning is 20.\textit{d}d5  \textit{d}xd5 21.\textit{d}xd5  c6 22.\textit{w}h5  h6 23.\textit{g}g6, and Black has to give up the queen.

20...h6

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\begin{scope}
\clip (0,0) rectangle (8,8);
\fill [lightgray] (0,0) rectangle (8,8);
\end{scope}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

21.\textit{d}d1!

Transferring the knight to g4 leads to the wrecking of the black king’s defences.

21...d5  22.\textit{d}e3!  \textit{f}d8

After 22...dxc4 there again follows 23.\textit{g}g4  \textit{b}6+ 24.\textit{h}2 followed by 25.\textit{x}h6+ and a decisive attack.

23.\textit{g}g4

The simple capture of the pawn 23.\textit{x}d5+ is also good.

23...\textit{b}6+  24.\textit{h}2  \textit{f}8

The black king tries to flee the attack.

On 24...dxc4 the battle is ended by 25.\textit{x}h6+  \textit{f}8 26.\textit{xf}7#.

25.\textit{x}d5

More accurate was 25.\textit{x}e5, threatening mate, and only after 25...\textit{f}6 26.\textit{g}4  \textit{b}6 taking on d5 (27.\textit{x}d5). Although this does not change the assessment – White is winning.

25...\textit{x}d5  26.\textit{x}d5  \textit{e}7

The black king continues to flee, losing his supporters on the way.

27.\textit{h}4  \textit{f}8  28.\textit{x}e5  \textit{f}6  29.\textit{e}4  \textit{d}8
30. \( \text{Wh}4 \)

White follows the old rule of exchanging when material up.

30...\( \text{Wh}4+ \) 31. \( \text{Wh}x4 \) \( \text{xf}5 \) 32. \( \text{Xg}7 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 33. \( \text{Xh}6 \) \( \text{ad}8 \) 34. \( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 35. \( \text{c}6+ \)

A tactical blow, which allows White to simplify further.

35...\( \text{bxc}6 \) 36. \( \text{e}5+ \) \( \text{e}6 \) 37. \( \text{dxe}6 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 38. \( \text{e}7+ \) \( \text{xe}5 \) 39. \( \text{xf}8=\text{Wh} \) 40. \( \text{xc}6 \)

The outcome is a rook ending with two extra pawns. Black resigned on move 56.
Conclusions: On 6...\(g4!\) White has the strong retort 7.\(g5!\), not fearing either the check ...\(f2+\) or the fork ...\(f2.\) Later in the game, White sacrificed a pawn to open the h-file and created a powerful attack. One should also pay attention to the typical knight transfer from c3-d1-e3, which is highly unpleasant for Black.

Game 97
James Constance
Ronald Raimbert
Corr. 2005

1.e4 e5 2.f4 \(c5\) 3.\(f3\) d6 4.\(c3\) \(f6\) 5.\(c4\) \(c6\) 6.d3 \(g4\)

Black has placed his bishops very aggressively. White needs to eliminate one of them urgently.

7.\(a4\) \(b6\)

We will study other black possibilities via the next game.

8.\(xb6\) axb6 9.c3

Similar positions arise after 9.0-0, but then Black has the additional possibility 9...\(d4.\) With the move in the game, White immediately takes control of the square d4. This position is quite popular, and so we will examine it in detail.
9...\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textit{e}7}}}

A) 9...\textit{\textbf{\textit{a}5}} 10.\textit{\textbf{\textit{b}5+ \textit{\textit{d}7}}} (10...e6 11.\textit{\textbf{\textit{a}4}} b5 12.\textit{\textbf{\textit{c}2}} c5 13.\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}3}} \textit{xf3} 14.\textit{\textbf{\textit{x}f3}} \textit{\textbf{c}6} 15.0-0¥ Sott-Hrach, Klatovy 1994) 11.\textit{\textbf{f}xe5} \textit{dxe5} 12.\textit{\textbf{x}d7+ \textbf{\textit{x}d7}} 13.0-0 0-0 14.\textit{\textbf{g}5} f6 15.\textit{\textbf{e}3} with a somewhat better position for White;

B) 9...exf4 10.\textit{\textbf{\textit{f}4}} and now:

\begin{itemize}
  \item B1) 10...\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}5}} 11.\textit{\textbf{\textit{g}5}} (this is better than 11.\textit{\textbf{\textit{e}3}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{e}5}} 12.0-0 \textit{\textbf{\textit{x}c}4} 13.\textit{\textbf{\textit{d}c}4} \textit{\textbf{\textit{e}7}} 14.\textit{\textbf{\textit{d}3}} 0-0¥) 11...\textit{\textbf{\textit{d}7}} 12.0-0 (a miniature occurred after 12.\textit{\textbf{\textit{b}5}} h6 13.\textit{\textbf{\textit{c}3}} d5 14.e5 g6 15.0-0 0-0-0? 16.\textit{\textbf{\textit{a}4}}, and in the game Jonkman-Kroeze, Leiden 1995, Black resigned, since he cannot avoid large material losses) 12...h6 13.\textit{\textbf{\textit{e}3}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{f}6}} 14.\textit{\textbf{\textit{b}5}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{e}7}} 15.\textit{\textbf{\textit{h}3}} \textit{\textbf{\textit{d}7}}
\end{itemize}
16.\textit{B}f2 \textit{Be}5 17.\textit{B}xd7+ \textit{B}xd7 18.\textit{Be}4 0-0 19.\textit{W}c2 \textit{Ba}5 20.d4 \textit{B}g6 21.\textit{B}f5 \textit{W}d8 22.b4 \textit{Ba}8 23.c4±, Glew-Nagley, corr. 2000;

B2) 10...0-0 11.0-0.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{analysisDiagram.png}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

B21) The move 11...\textit{Be}5 forces White to exchange on e5 and give up bishop for knight – 12.\textit{B}xe5 dx\textit{e}5, but after 13.h3 Black has to give up his bishop for a knight also. There could follow: 13...\textit{B}xf3 14.\textit{W}xf3 \textit{We}7 15.\textit{B}f2 \textit{Be}8 16.\textit{B}d1 \textit{Cd}6 17.\textit{Be}5 \textit{Ch}8 18.\textit{W}h5 \textit{f}6 19.\textit{B}f3 \textit{c}6 20.\textit{B}b3 \textit{e}5 21.\textit{B}d5 b5 22.a3 \textit{X}ad8 23.\textit{B}g3 \textit{D}c8 24.\textit{B}f5 \textit{h}6 25.\textit{W}g6 \textit{D}d6 26.\textit{B}h5 \textit{X}b8 27.\textit{B}g4 \textit{X}bc8 28.\textit{B}e6. White has transferred all his pieces to the kingside whilst Black has no counterplay, and in the game Jensen-Miclot, corr. 1989, he admitted defeat;

B22) In reply to 11...d5!? White does best to take the pawn on c7 after 12.exd5 \textit{B}xd5 13.\textit{B}xd5 \textit{W}xd5 14.\textit{B}xc7 \textit{W}xa2 (Black re-establishes material equality) 15.\textit{W}xa2 \textit{W}xa2 16.h3.
White’s advantage is indisputable, for example: 16...\texttt{Bxf3} 17.\texttt{Qxf3} \texttt{Qxb2} 18.\texttt{Bd6+}, 16...\texttt{Bh5} 17.d4 \texttt{Qxb2} (17...\texttt{Ec8} 18.\texttt{e2\pm}, defending both the bishop and the b2-pawn) 18.d5 \texttt{a5} 19.d6\pm, or 16...\texttt{f5} 17.d4 \texttt{Ec8} (17...\texttt{xb2} 18.d5 \texttt{a5} 19.d4\pm) 18.d2?! \texttt{xc7} 19.\texttt{f4} (with a double attack) 19...\texttt{e7} 20.\texttt{xf5} g6 21.\texttt{f4} \texttt{d5} (21...\texttt{xb2}? 22.d5 \texttt{a5} 23.d6, and the passed d-pawn decides) 22.\texttt{f6}\pm;

B23) 11.\texttt{h5} 12.\texttt{e3}, and now:

B231) 12.\texttt{d7} 13.d4 (also in White’s favour is 13.\texttt{h3} \texttt{e6} 14.\texttt{d2} \texttt{g3} – after 14...\texttt{f6} Black must reckon with the
sacrifice $15.\text{exf6}$, destroying the position of the black king – $15.\text{xf3} \text{h5} 16.\text{ef2} \text{g6} 17.\text{bd5} \text{e7} 18.\text{g6} \text{g7} 19.d4 \pm$, seizing even more space and cramping the black pieces) $13...\text{xf6} 14.\text{e2} \text{fe8} 15.\text{d3} \pm$ Starke-Vennemann, corr. 1998; B232) If $12...\text{f6}$, then White can pin the knight: $13.\text{g5} \text{e5}$ $(13...\text{h6} 14.\text{xf6} \text{xf6} 15.d4 \pm) 14.\text{xf6} \text{xf6}$ (in the variation $14...\text{gxf6} 15.\text{b3} \text{xf6}+ 16.\text{gxf6} \text{h6} 17.\text{e1} \text{h8} 18.\text{h1} \text{g8} 19.\text{g1}$ the position is practically equal, but even so, Black’s pawn structure is inferior, so White has some chances to gain the advantage) $15.\text{xe5} \text{e1} 16.\text{xf6} \text{gxf6} 17.\text{d2} \text{a4}$ (or $17...\text{d8} 18.\text{xf6}+ \text{g7} 19.\text{d5} \text{a4} 20.\text{xc7} \text{ac8} 21.\text{d5} \pm$) $18.\text{xf8} \text{xf8} 19.a3 \pm$; B233) $12...\text{e5}$ is dubious.

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\textit{analysis diagram}

13.\text{xe5}! (a beautiful queen sacrifice) $13...\text{xd1} 14.\text{xf7}$ and now:

B2331) $14...\text{xf7} 15.\text{xf7}$ (less is promised by $15.\text{xf7}+ \text{h8} 16.\text{axd1} \text{f6} \pm$, Li Hanbin-Nguyen Anh Dung, Ho Chi Minh City 2011) $15...d5$ (he loses after $15...\text{h8} 16.\text{fd1}$; in the event of $15...\text{b5} 16.\text{d5} \text{f6} 17.\text{d7}+ \text{xd5} 18.\text{xd8}+ \text{xd8} 19.\text{g5} \text{f8} 20.\text{xd1} \pm$ White has a healthy extra pawn) $16.\text{xd5} \text{xd5} 17.\text{exd5} \text{xf7} 18.\text{xd1} \text{xa2} 19.\text{b1} \pm$ with an extra pawn;

B2332) Nor is Black’s cause helped by $14...\text{e7} 15.\text{xd6}+ \text{h8} 16.\text{f7}+ \text{g8}$
17. \textbf{\textit{N}}d8+! (after 17.\textit{Rx}d1 \textit{N}f6, as in the game Mitkov-Sharif, Lyon 1993, the computer assesses the position as equal)
17...\textit{Kh}8 18.\textit{Rxf}8+ \textit{Qxf}8 19.\textit{Nf}7+ \textit{Kh}8 20.\textit{Nxe}5+ \textit{Kh}8 21.\textit{Rxd}1. White has two bishops and two pawns for the queen, so formally, Black has a material advantage. However, his pieces are rather more passive than White’s, who has a dangerous passed e-pawn, and Black has problems with his king. So White keeps the advantage, e.g. 21...\textit{Qe}7 22.\textit{Nf}7+ \textit{Kh}8 23.e5±.

C) 9...d5.
White has sufficient development so as not to have to fear this central blow. There can follow: 10.exd5 Qxd5 11.h3
Bxf3 12.Bxf3 exf4 13.Qf4 exf4 14.0-0 0-0 15.Qxf4 d7 16.d4 Bae8 17.Qf3 (17.Qae1±) 17...e7 (17...Qd8 18.f1
Qh8 19.Qg3 f5 20.Be3 g6 21.Bf1 Be3 22.Bxe3 Qf7 23.Qh4 g5 24.Qe7 Qc6 25.Qb3 Qd6 26.Qe6 Qe8 27.Qxd8
Qxd8 28.Qe7+ Qf6 29.Qxc7 Qh5 30.Qd7 h4 31.Qd6+ Qg5 32.Qxb5 Qe8 33.Qd6 Qc6 34.Qf2 Qe7 35.Be6 Qxe6 36.Qxe6
Qf4 37.Qd5, and Black resigned in Todorovic-Blagojevic, Herceg Novi ch-YUG 2001; 18.Bf1 Qd8 19.Qg3 g6
Spielmann-Przepiorka, Nuremberg 1906;

D) 9...0-0 10.0-0 and now:

![Analysis Diagram]

D1) After 10...exf4 11.Qxf4 we reach a position examined under the move-order 9...exf4 10.Qxf4 0-0 11.0-0;
D2) The position after 10...d5 11.exd5 Qxd5 12.h3 Qxf3 13.Qxf3 Qxf4 14.Qxf4 exf4 15.Qxf4 is considered under the
move-order 9...d5 10.exd5 Qxd5 11.h3 Qxf3 12.Qxf3 Qxf4 13.Qxf4 exf4 14.0-0 0-0 15.Qxf4;
D3) 10...e7 11.h3 Qxf3 12.Qxf3 Qh8 13.a3 Qg8 14.Qc3 f5?! 15.exf5 Qxf5 16.g4 Qf8 17.f5 Qa5 18.Qe6 b5 19.Qae1
White, Alekhine-Darruda, France sim 1923;
D4) In the event of 10...Qa5 White should not give up the strong bishop, of course: 11.Qb5 c6 12.a4 b5 13.Qc2 e5
14.h3 Qxf3 15.Qxf3±;
D5) In reply to 10...Qd7 with the idea of going ..Qa5, exchanging knight for bishop, White should play 11.a4 or 11.a3,
freeing the square a2. White retains two bishops and his chances are somewhat superior.

10.0-0
10...0-0

In the game Pfeiffer-Ferch, Wolfstein jr 1991, Black tried 10...0-0-0. In reply, White should immediately chase the bishop: 11.h3 Be6 (more tenacious is 11...Bxf3 12.Qxf3) 12.b5 exf4 13.Bxc6 bxc6 14.Bxf4, and later White began an attack on the queenside with a4-a5, etc.

11.h3 Be6 12.Bxe6 Qxe6 13.f5 Qe7 14.Bg5 h6 15.h4

Black is in an unpleasant pin. He can only escape it by means of

15...g5
but now White has an object of attack, in the shape of the g5-pawn.

16.\textit{B}g3 \textit{R}fd8 17.\textit{c}4!

It is important to close the centre, so as to be able quietly to attack on the kingside.

17...\textit{N}h5 18.\textit{B}e1 \textit{N}f6 19.\textit{B}d2 \textit{E}a7

16.\textbf{g}3 \textbf{f}d8 17.\textbf{c}4!

It is important to close the centre, so as to be able quietly to attack on the kingside.

17...\textit{N}h5 18.\textit{B}e1 \textit{N}f6 19.\textit{B}d2 \textit{E}a7

Black doubles rooks, but they have nothing further to do then anyway.

20.\textit{N}h2

White begins an attack on the king.

20...\textit{Q}f8 21.h4 \textit{Q}g7 22.hxg5 hxg5 23.\textit{R}f3

After the exchange on g5, the rook heads to g3, attacking the pawn, or goes to the already opened h-file.

23...\textit{N}d4

Evacuating the king does not help either: 23...\textit{Q}f8 24.\textit{R}g3 \textit{h}h7 25.\textit{h}h5 \textit{f}6 26.\textit{g}g4 \textit{f}f7 27.\textit{h}h6+ \textit{g}g7 28.\textit{g}g6 \textit{e}e7 29.\textit{h}h5 \textit{f}f7 30.\textit{x}xf6! \textit{x}xf6 31.\textit{h}h8+ \textit{e}e8 32.\textit{x}g5, winning.

24.\textit{g}g3 \textit{h}h7 25.\textit{g}g4 \textit{f}f8 26.\textit{h}h3 \textit{E}a8 27.\textit{h}h6

The simple 27.a3 was also possible, not giving up the a2-pawn.

27...\textit{E}xa2 28.\textit{E}xa2 \textit{E}xa2 29.\textit{c}3 \textit{Q}g8

Or 29...\textit{f}6 30.\textit{a}xd4 exd4 31.\textit{f}f3 \textit{a}1+ 32.\textit{f}f2 \textit{a}2 33.\textit{h}h3 \textit{xb}2+ 34.\textit{g}g1 \textit{b}1+ 35.\textit{h}h2 \textit{g}8 36.\textit{x}h7 \textit{h}h7 37.\textit{x}f6+, winning.
30. $\text{Kf2}$

Freeing a path for his queen.

30... $\text{Kg7}$ 31. $\text{Qh1}$  $\text{Ra6}$ 32. $\text{Qh5}$  $\text{Ra2}$ 33. $\text{Nf6}$ 1-0

Since on 33... $\text{Nxf6}$ there follows 34. $\text{Qxg5+ Kg8}$ 35. $\text{Qxf6}$ and $\text{Rh8}$.

Conclusion: In reply to 6... $\text{Bg4}$ White should chase the enemy dark-squared bishop with his knight, so as then to be able quietly to castle short. Then in the game there followed a typical press with $\text{f4-f5}$ and $\text{c3-c4}$, with the help of which White was able to easily to organise an attack on the enemy king, without giving his opponent any counterplay.

Game 98
Jens Kristiansen
Peter-Heine Nielsen
Arhus ch-DEN 1992 (2)

1.e4 e5 2. $\text{Bc4}$  $\text{gf6}$ 3.d3  $\text{Cc6}$ 4. $\text{Cc3}$  $\text{Cc5}$ 5.f4  $\text{d6}$ 6. $\text{Cc3}$  $\text{Bg4}$ 7. $\text{Ca4}$

In the previous game, we saw the solid 7... $\text{b6}$, but now we will look at other black possibilities.
7...\textit{\textbf{h5}}

A) Dubious is 7...\textit{xf3}?! 8.\textit{xf3} \textit{d4} 9.\textit{d1} b5 (White has a stable advantage after 9...\textit{b6} 10.\textit{xb6} axb6 11.c3 \textit{c6} 12.0-0±)

\textit{\textbf{analysis diagram}}

10.\textit{xf7+ \textit{xf7}} 11.\textit{xc5}, and now:

A1) 11...\textit{exf4} 12.\textit{b3} \textit{e6} 13.0-0 g5 14.g3 \textit{fxg3} (14...\textit{g8} 15.\textit{d2} \textit{f8} 16.a4 bxa4 17.\textit{xa4} \textit{h6} 18.\textit{f3} \textit{h3} 19.\textit{g2} \textit{xg2}+ 20.\textit{g2} a6 21.\textit{d4} \textit{d4} 22.\textit{x}d4 \textit{c}d4 23.\textit{a}4 \textit{fxg3} 24.\textit{hxg3} \textit{g4} 25.\textit{a}5 c5 26.\textit{f5}±, Evans-Pavillar, corr. 2003) 15.\textit{g5} \textit{gxh2}+ 16.\textit{h1} \textit{g5} 17.\textit{h5}+ \textit{e7} 18.\textit{xg5} \textit{f8} 19.\textit{d4} \textit{e8} 20.e5 \textit{dxe5} 21.\textit{xe5}+ \textit{d7} 22.\textit{f5}±
\( \text{d}6 \) 23.\text{e}1, and Black resigned, Lane-Jackson, Plymouth 1989;

A2) 11...\text{d}xc5 12.\text{f}xe5 \( \text{d}7 \) (after 12...\text{xe}4 White wins with 13.0-0+ \text{f}6 14.\text{xf}6 \text{gxf}6 15.\text{g}5, and Black resigned, Röberg-Janotta, Main Vogelsberg 2009) 13.0-0+ and now:

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\text{analysis diagram}

A21) 13...\text{g}8 14.c3 \text{e}6 15.d4 \text{cxd}4 16.\text{cxd}4 \text{h}6 17.d5 \text{g}5 18.\text{f}4 \text{xe}4 19.d6± followed by \text{d}5;

A22) 13...\text{e}8 14.c3 \text{e}6 15.d4 \text{cxd}4 16.\text{cxd}4 \text{e}7 (after 16...\text{xe}5, counting on 17.\text{dxe}5 \text{xd}1 18.\text{xd}1 \text{e}7± with real chances of a draw, there is the very strong 17.\text{e}3! \text{g}6 18.d5 \text{ef}8 19.\text{c}1, and White obtains an overwhelming advantage) 17.\text{e}3 \text{f}8 18.d5 \text{xf}1+ 19.\text{xf}1 \text{d}8 20.e6 \text{f}6 21.\text{c}1 \text{xe}4 22.\text{xb}5+ c6 23.\text{xc}6 \text{f}8 24.\text{c}1 \text{g}8 25.\text{c}7 \text{d}6 (25...\text{xc}7 26.\text{e}8#) 26.\text{e}8+ \text{f}8 27.\text{xe}7!, and in the game Balashov-Matanovic, Skopje 1970, Black admitted defeat, since after 27...\text{xe}7 there follows 28.\text{h}6+, winning the queen, and with it the game.

B) 7...0-0 8.\text{xc}5 \text{dxc}5 9.0-0.
B1) It is worth considering $9...\texttt{h5}!?$ $10.\texttt{e3}$ ($10.f5!?$) and now:

B11) $10...\texttt{exf4}$ $11.\texttt{bxc5}$ $\texttt{Re8}$ $12.h3$ $\texttt{Bxf3}$ $13.\texttt{Qd5}$ $\texttt{Qe5}$ $15.\texttt{Qf2}$ $c6$ $16.\texttt{b6}$ $\texttt{b6}$ $17.\texttt{d4}$ $\texttt{g6}$ $18.\texttt{Qf2}$ $g5$ $19.\texttt{Qf2}$ $\texttt{Nf3}$ $20.\texttt{Qf2}$ $\texttt{Rxe1}$ $21.a4$ $\texttt{Bh5}$ $22.a5$ $c4$ $23.\texttt{Qxc4}$ $\texttt{Rxa5}$ $24.\texttt{b5}$ $\texttt{b5}$ $25.d5$ $\texttt{b5}$ $26.\texttt{Qb3}$ $\texttt{h6}$ $27.d5$ $\texttt{h6}$ $28.e5$ $\texttt{Qf5}$ $29.\texttt{Qf3}$ $\texttt{h4}$ $30.\texttt{Qf4}$ $a5$ $31.e6$ $\texttt{fxe6}$ $32.dxe6$ $\texttt{Qe8}$ $33.e7+$ $\texttt{g7}$ $34.\texttt{c3}$ $\texttt{Qf6}$ $35.\texttt{d8}$ $\texttt{xc3}$ $36.bxc3$, and Black resigned in So-Adhiban, Singapore 2007;

B12) $10...\texttt{Qf4}!?$ $11.\texttt{Qd4}$ $\texttt{Qe8}$ $12.h3$ $\texttt{h5}$ $13.a4+$ $12.\texttt{Qd4}$ $\texttt{xf3}$ $13.\texttt{Qxf3}$ $\texttt{Qxd4}$ $14.\texttt{Qh1}$ $\texttt{xb2}$ $15.\texttt{Qb1}$ $\texttt{xc2}$ $16.\texttt{Qb7}$ $\texttt{e6}$ $17.h3+$, Martin Sanchez-De Blois Figueredo, corr. 2011;

B2) $9...\texttt{d6}$ $10.\texttt{d2}$, defending the f4-pawn and getting the queen out of the pin.
10...\textit{xf3} (10...\textit{exf4} 11.\textit{gxf4} \textit{c5} 12.\textit{e5} \textit{d5} 13.\textit{b3} \textit{h5} 14.\textit{e3} \textit{f7} 15.\textit{g5} \textit{h6} 16.\textit{g3} \textit{c4} 17.\textit{dxc4} \textit{bxc4} 18.\textit{a4} \textit{g6} 19.\textit{ae1±}, Nightingale-Cerrato, corr. 2012) 12.\textit{h1} (12.f5!? \textit{h5} 13.\textit{g5} \textit{f4} 14.\textit{h1} \textit{g6} 15.\textit{h6} \textit{h8} 16.\textit{g1} with the initiative) 12...\textit{h5} 13.\textit{fxe5} (13.f5!? \textit{f4} 14.\textit{f2} with a complicated game, slightly better for White) 13...\textit{xe5} 14.\textit{g5} \textit{g6} (14...\textit{xc4} 15.\textit{hx5} \textit{e5} 16.\textit{f4} \textit{c6} 17.\textit{f5±}, Aagaard-Antonsen, Hillerod ch-DEN 2010) 15.\textit{b3} \textit{b8} (it is worth considering 15...\textit{c4} 16.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 17.\textit{dxc4} \textit{f5} with an unclear position) 16.\textit{f4} \textit{c6} 17.\textit{f5} – \textit{White has the initiative, Williams-Ernst, Amsterdam 2014;}

C) 7...\textit{d4}

\begin{center}
\textbf{analysis diagram}
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8.\textit{xe5} \textit{dxe5} (in the event of 8...\textit{xf3} 9.\textit{gxf3} \textit{dxe5} 10.c3 the game may transpose to the line with 8...\textit{dxe5} 9.c3, but \textit{White has the additional possibility 10.fxe5} 9.c3 and now:

C1) 9...\textit{xf3} 10.\textit{gxf3} \textit{c6} (10...\textit{e6} 11.\textit{b3}±) 11.\textit{b5} \textit{h5} 12.fxe5, and 12...\textit{h4}+ is not dangerous for \textit{White because of 13.\textit{d2} 0-0-0 14.\textit{xc6} \textit{bxc6} 15.\textit{e2} \textit{f4} 16.\textit{xf4} (16.\textit{g1}±, attacking c5 and at the same time intending \textit{g3}, exchanging queens) 16...\textit{xf4} 17.\textit{d2} \textit{xe5} 18.\textit{hg1}± Metz-Gschwendtner, Bad Wiessee 2009;

C2) 9...\textit{xf3}+ 10.\textit{gxf3} \textit{h5} 11.fxe5 (\textit{White is better after 11.\textit{e2} \textit{d7} 12.\textit{g1} \textit{g6} 13.\textit{f5}± or 11...\textit{d6} 12.f5 \textit{g6} 13.\textit{fxg6} \textit{hxg6} 14.\textit{e3} 0-0-0 15.0-0-0± Spielmann-Bohatirchuk, Moscow 1925; instead of 12.f5 even stronger is 12.fxe5 \textit{xe5} 13.\textit{g1}±) and now:
C21) On 11...\( \square \)xe4 strong is 12.0-0 (but not 12.dxe4? \( \square \)xd1+ 13.\( \diamond \)xd1 \( \diamond \)xf3+, and wins) 12...\( \diamond \)g5 13.\( \square \)b3 0-0 (or 13...\( \square \)b8 14.\( \square \)b5+ c6 15.\( \diamond \)xc5\( \pm \)) 14.\( \square \)xb7 \( \square \)b8 15.\( \diamond \)d5\( \pm \);

C22) 11...\( \diamond \)d7 12.\( \square \)f4 \( \square \)e7 (worse is 12...\( \diamond \)h4+ 13.\( \diamond \)g3 \( \diamond \)g5 14.f4 \( \square \)xg3+ 15.hxg3 \( \square \)xd1 16.\( \square \)xd1\( \pm \) De Ridder-Laurincova, Prague ch-EUR jr w 2012) 13.\( \square \)g1 0-0-0 (13...0-0 14.\( \square \)d2\( \pm \), preparing long castling and at the same time defending e5, because 14...\( \square \)xe5 is not possible because of 15.\( \square \)xe5 \( \square \)xe5 16.\( \square \)g5, and Black loses a bishop) 14.a3\( \pm \);

now after 14...\( \square \)b6 there is 15.\( \diamond \)a2\( \pm \).

D) 7...\( \square \)e7 8.\( \diamond \)xc5 dxc5 9.\( \diamond \)b5.

analysis diagram
A typical idea for this variation – to take on c6 and spoil the black pawn structure (in this case, tripling his pawns).

D1) 9...0-0 10.\textsubscript{xc}6 bxc6 11.0-0;  

D2) 9...0-0-0 10.\textsubscript{xc}6 bxc6 11.0-0 exf4 12.\textsubscript{xf}4 c4 13.\textsubscript{e}1 \textsubscript{xf}3 14.\textsubscript{xf}3 cxd3 15.cxd3 \textsubscript{c}5+ 16.\textsubscript{e}3 \textsubscript{b}5 17.a4 \textsubscript{a}6 18.\textsubscript{a}3 \textsubscript{xd}3 19.\textsubscript{e}2 \textsubscript{hd}8 20.\textsubscript{d}4! \textsubscript{8xd}4 21.\textsubscript{f}xd3 \textsubscript{xe}4? 22.\textsubscript{d}8+, and Black resigned in Ledger-Rayner, Scarborough 2013;  

D3) 9...c4 10.\textsubscript{xc}4 (10.\textsubscript{xc}6+!? bxc6 11.0-0 0-0 12.h3 \textsubscript{xf}3 13.\textsubscript{xf}3 cxd3 14.cxd3) 10...0-0-0 11.h3 \textsubscript{xe}4 (11...\textsubscript{xf}3 12.\textsubscript{xf}3 \textsubscript{d}4 13.\textsubscript{d}1=) 12.hxg4 \textsubscript{g}3 13.\textsubscript{f}2 \textsubscript{hx}1+ 14.\textsubscript{h}1 exf4 15.\textsubscript{xf}4, and White obtained a decisive advantage in Bozkurt-Milde, corr. 2003.

\[\text{8.\textsubscript{xc}5 dxc5 9.f5 \textsubscript{f}6}\]

The game develops with a small advantage to White in the event of 9...0-0 10.0-0 \textsubscript{d}4 11.c3 \textsubscript{xf}3+ (or 11...\textsubscript{xf}3 12.gxf3 \textsubscript{c}6 13.a3=, preparing b2-b4 to seize space on the queenside) 12.gxf3 \textsubscript{h}3 13.\textsubscript{f}2 \textsubscript{h}4 14.\textsubscript{e}3 \textsubscript{f}4 15.\textsubscript{h}1=.

10.\textsubscript{e}3 \textsubscript{d}6 11.\textsubscript{h}3

It was worth considering 11.\textsubscript{e}2, not fearing 11...\textsubscript{d}4 12.\textsubscript{f}2 \textsubscript{xf}3 13.gxf3, and the white doubled pawns are more of a strength than a weakness – White has the resource f3-f4, and he can exploit the open g-file.

11...\textsubscript{xf}3 12.\textsubscript{xf}3 \textsubscript{a}5 13.\textsubscript{b}5+ \textsubscript{c}6 14.\textsubscript{a}4 \textsubscript{b}5 15.\textsubscript{d}2

After 15.\textsubscript{b}3 c4 only White can have problems.

15...\textsubscript{b}7?!

He should have played 15...\textsubscript{d}4, e.g. 16.\textsubscript{xa}5 \textsubscript{xa}4 17.\textsubscript{c}3 \textsubscript{xc}2 18.0-0 0-0-0 (worse is 18...\textsubscript{d}7 19.\textsubscript{g}3, taking one of the pawns) 19.\textsubscript{fd}1 \textsubscript{he}8 20.\textsubscript{ae}1 \textsubscript{a}4 21.\textsubscript{e}1=.

16.\textsubscript{b}3 \textsubscript{a}5 17.\textsubscript{a}4 0-0
18.c4!
A strong move, cutting out Black’s possibilities of counterplay with ...c5-c4.

18...b4
At the very least, it is a dubious decision to close the queenside. Now, after castling long, White simply advances his kingside pawns and Black has no counterplay at all.

19.0-0-0
Black has to mark time and White will start his pawn advance.

19...Rad8 20.Be3 Kh8 21.g4 Kg8 22.Ed2 f6 23.h4 Ke7 24.g5+- Rd7

White calmly strengthens his position:

25.c2 Rd8 26.b3 Kf8 27.g1 Kc7 28.d1 Ed7 29.c2 Ke7 30.Ke3 Ed7 31.h5 Ke7 32.Kg4 Ed7
Now everything is ready and White starts the final attack.

33.\texttt{Bg6} \texttt{Nd8}

He also loses after 33...h6, e.g. 34.\texttt{Bh5} \texttt{Qd8} 35.\texttt{gxh6} \texttt{Nhxh6} 36.\texttt{Qg6} \texttt{Qf8} 37.\texttt{Rdg2} \texttt{Rd8} 38.\texttt{Qe2} \texttt{Rd7} 39.\texttt{Qh5} \texttt{Rd7} 40.\texttt{Qg6} followed by a blow on h6.

34.\texttt{Bxh7} \texttt{Kxh7} 35.\texttt{Qh5+} \texttt{Kh6} 36.\texttt{gxh6} \texttt{gxh6} 37.\texttt{Qxc5} \texttt{Qxc5} 38.\texttt{Qg6+} \texttt{Kh8} 39.\texttt{Qg8#}

Another good and simple example of the plan with f4-f5, cramping Black on the kingside, combined with c3-c4, cutting out possible counterplay in the centre. After this, White organises an attack on the kingside. We hope that these simple ideas will help you win confidently and easily over the board!
Chapter 20
1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.Nc4

After Black’s reply, it is known that the King’s Gambit move 3.f4 doesn’t work too well because after 3...exf4 the black queen’s knight controls the e5-square. So the logical response here is 3.Bc4, leading to a position that can also occur in the move-order of the Bishop’s Opening. Often this leads to ‘normal’ lines by transposition, but for a moment Black has postponed the development of his kingside. White can try to take profit from this, as we will show in the first game of this chapter.

Game 99
Viswanathan Anand 2405
Raja Ravisekhar 2390
New Delhi 1986

1.e4 e5 2.Bc4 c6 3.c3 c5

After this move White has the interesting possibility

4.Qg4

Exploiting the early development of Black’s king’s bishop, and the absence of a knight from f6, White attacks the g7-pawn.

White can also play 4.d3, and after 4...f6 5.f4 d6 6.f3 we reach a position examined in the previous chapter (via 2...c5).
4...\textsf{\textit{f8}}

Black defends the g7-pawn, but forgoes castling. Let us consider the other possibilities:

A) 4...\textsf{d6}?! 5.\textsf{d5! f2+} 6.\textsf{d1 \textit{f8}} 7.\textsf{h3}

\textit{analysis diagram}

7...\textsf{d4} (White is also better after 7...\textsf{h5} 8.\textsf{g5 d4} 9.\textsf{d3 e7} 10.\textsf{f5 d6} 11.\textsf{f1 g4+} 12.\textsf{e1 f6} 13.c3 c5 14.b4, and he has to give up the knight – 14.xb4 15.cxb4 with a decisive advantage to White, Gisy-Noe, Willingen ch-GER jr 2007) 8.d3 d6 9.h4 (White also wins with 9.g3 or 9.f3) 9...\textsf{h3} 10.\textsf{xf3 a5} 11.\textsf{f1 \textit{xh4}} 12.\textsf{d7 f6} 13.\textsf{xh6 f2} (13...\textsf{xf6} 14.\textsf{xf6+ xxf6} 15.\textsf{h6+ g8} 16.\textsf{g7#}) 14.\textsf{xf2 xf2} 15.\textsf{h5}, and Black resigned in Mieses-
Chigorin, Ostend 1906;

B) Black’s best move is 4...g6 – in this case, he weakens his dark squares, but, unlike after the move in the game, he can still castle. Now the threat of ...d7-d5 forces White to move his queen from g4 – 5.\textit{Qf3}.

\textit{analysis diagram}

B1) Obviously bad is 5...f5? 6.exf5 \textit{Nd4} 7.\textit{Qg3}±;

B2) Dubious too is 5...\textit{Qf6}?! 6.\textit{Nd5} \textit{Qxf3} 7.\textit{Qxf3} \textit{b6} (better is 7...\textit{d6} 8.0-0 \textit{f6}, as in the game Oberhofer-Dronavalli, Gibraltar 2011 – Black’s position is slightly worse but he is not losing at once. We would point out that instead of 8...\textit{f6} it is bad to play 8...\textit{ge7}? because of 9.d4 exd4 10.\textit{Qf6+} \textit{Nd8} 11.\textit{Qg5+}+) 8.d3 \textit{d6} 9.\textit{Nd5}!\textit{Qd8} (9...\textit{e6} fails to 10.\textit{Qxe6} fxe6 11.\textit{Qxb6} axb6 12.\textit{Qxe6}, and White wins a pawn) 10.f4 \textit{c6} 11.\textit{Qxb6} axb6 12.\textit{Qxe5} dxe5 13.0-0 \textit{Qh6} 14.\textit{Qf3} \textit{g8} 15.\textit{Qxe5} winning, Jowett-Van Venetie, corr. 2001;

B3) Black’s best continuation is 5...\textit{Qf6} 6.\textit{Qge2} and now:
B31) 6...\textsubscript{f}f8 (transferring the bishop via f8 to g7) 7.d3  

B311) 7...h6 8.e3 d6 9.a3 g7 10.h3 e7 11.0-0-0 a6 12.g3 e6 13.xe6 xe6 14.d4 (also good is 14.f4!? h5 15.f2 exf4 16.xf4±) 14...exd4 15.xd4 xd4 16.xd4 0-0 17.\he1± Kulhanek-Cempel, Czech tt 2000;  

B312) 7...g7 8.g5 h6 9.xf6 xf6 (Black loses after 9...xf6? 10.d5 e7 (completely bad is 10...g7 11.xc7+ xc7 12.xf7+ d8 13.xg7+) 11.b6 d5 12.exd5 (or 12.xd5±) 12...d4 13.xd4 axb6 14.d6 xd6 (14...h7 15.b5+ f8 16.dxe7+ xe7 17.0-0 exd4 18.ae1 e6 19.c4+) 15.b5 d7 16.xf7+ d8 17.xg6+-) 10.b5 xf3 11.gxf3 d8 12.xf7±;  

B32) 6...d6 7.d3 (another possibility is 7.h3, first covering the square g4, and only then d2-d3) 7...g4 8.g3 and now:
analysis diagram

B321) 8...\(\text{x}\)xe2 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{e}}}}\)xe2 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{d}}}}\)h5 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{f}}}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{f}}}}\)f6 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)xf6 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)xf6 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)g5 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{d}}}}\)7 13.a3 with the better chances for White, thanks to his two bishops;

B322) 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{d}}}}\)d7 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)h4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)h5 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)h6± Maeser-Karl, Switzerland tt 2006; although even stronger is 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)g3 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{x}}}}\)g3 11.hxg3±;

B323) 8...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{e}}}}\)6 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)g5 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)h5 10.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)h4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{d}}}}\)d7 (10...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{f}}}}\)6?! 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{x}}}}\)xf6 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)xf6 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)xf6 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)xf6 13.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xe}}}}\)6 with an extra pawn, Bangiev-Steinkohl, Dudweiler ch-GER 1996; White is also better after 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)6 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xc}}}}\)4 12.dxc4± Schlechter-Englisch, Vienna 1896) 11.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)3

11...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xc}}}}\)4 (worse is 11...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{f}}}}\)4 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)4 14.dxc4 with an extra pawn, Watson-Mursheed, London 1992; or 11...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xc}}}}\)4 12.exf4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xc}}}}\)4 13.dxc4±) 12.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xf}}}}\)xf5 gxf5 13.dxc4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{b}}}}\)4 14.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xh}}}}\)h4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xc}}}}\)3+ 15.bxc3 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{e}}}}\)6 16.0-0 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)6 17.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xc}}}}\)c6 fxg6. White has an extra pawn, but his structure is spoilt and because of this, Black has reasonable drawing chances.

Returning to the game Anand-Ravisekhar: after 4...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{f}}}}\)8 the white queen again needs to move from g4, because ...d7-d5 is a threat.

5.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)3 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{d}}}}\)6

Or 5...\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{f}}}}\)6 6.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{g}}}}\)g2 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{d}}}}\)6 7.d3 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{h}}}}\)6 8.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{a}}}}\)4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{b}}}}\)6 9.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{xb}}}}\)6 axb6 10.f4 \(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{e}}}}\)7 11.0-0±, Rogers-Olarasu, Valle d’Aosta 2001.

6.\(\text{\textit{\text{\textbf{ge}}}}\)2
6...\(\textit{\text{\$d4}}\)

A dubious decision, because Black stands worse: he is behind in development and has lost castling rights. Consequently, he needs to complete his development, rather than trying to develop unfounded activity.

It was better either simply to develop with 6...\(\textit{\text{\$f6}}\), or to try to exchange knight for bishop – 6...\(\textit{\text{\$a5}}\).

7.\(\textit{\text{\$xd4}}\) exd4

He should have preferred 7...\(\textit{\text{\$xd4}}\), not spoiling his pawn structure.

8.\(\textit{\text{\$a4}}\)

White is also better after 8.\(\textit{\text{\$e2}}\) followed by d3 or c3.

8...\(\textit{\text{\$e6}}\)

Black should try to muddy the waters: 8...d5 9.\(\textit{\text{\$xd5}}\) (weaker is 9.\(\textit{\text{\$xc5 dxc4}}\), and it is not obvious what the white knight is doing on c5) 9...\(\textit{\text{\$e7}}\) 10.b4! (preparing \(\textit{\text{\$b2}}\), whilst also ensuring the \(\textit{\text{\$a4}}\) a safe square on c5) 10...\(\textit{\text{\$f6}}\) 11.\(\textit{\text{\$b3}}\) \(\textit{\text{\$xe4}}\) 12.\(\textit{\text{\$f4}}\) \(\textit{\text{\$g5}}\) (or 12...\(\textit{\text{\$f6}}\) 13.\(\textit{\text{\$b2}}\) \(\textit{\text{\$xb4}}\) 14.\(\textit{\text{\$xd4}}\) with an extra pawn) 13.\(\textit{\text{\$b2}}\) \(\textit{\text{\$xb4}}\) 14.\(\textit{\text{\$xd4}}\) with an extra pawn.

9.\(\textit{\text{\$xe6}}\) fxe6 10.\(\textit{\text{\$xc5}}\) dxc5 11.\(\textit{\text{\$b3}}\)

Also good is the simple 11.0-0 \(\textit{\text{\$f6}}\) 12.d3\(\pm\).

11...\(\textit{\text{\$c8}}\)

Forced, otherwise he loses a pawn. But on c8 the queen is placed worse than on d8.
12. \texttt{Qf3+} \\
White transfers his queen to the kingside and tries, after a series of checks and attacks on g7, to arrange a check on g5, picking up the c5-pawn.

12... \texttt{Ke7} 13. \texttt{Qg3} \texttt{Kf7} 14. \texttt{Qf4+} \texttt{Kg6} \\
On the move 14... \texttt{Ke8} there would follow the fork 15. \texttt{Qg5}, after which Black loses a pawn.

15. \texttt{Qg4+} \texttt{Kf6} \\
After 15... \texttt{Kf7} 16. \texttt{Qh5+} \texttt{g6} 17. \texttt{Qc5±} Black loses a pawn.

16. \texttt{d3} \\
16.h4 looks strong, with the idea of bringing out the rook via h3.

16... \texttt{b6} 17. \texttt{h4} \\
Anand plays the same idea, one move later.

17... \texttt{Qf7} 18. \texttt{Qf3+} \\
More precise is 18.h5 \texttt{Qf6} 19. \texttt{Qf4} (threatening 20.e5) 19... \texttt{e7} 20. \texttt{g5} \texttt{f7} 21. \texttt{h3} with the threats of h5-h6, e4-e5 and \texttt{f3}; Black’s position is hardly likely to prove defensible.

18... \texttt{e8} 19. \texttt{h5+} \texttt{f8} \\
On 19... \texttt{g6}? the move 20. \texttt{e5} would decide.

20. \texttt{g5}
The following looks extremely unpleasant for Black: 20.\texttt{Rh3} \texttt{Nf6} 21.\texttt{Qe5} \texttt{d7} 22.\texttt{h6!} \texttt{Qf7} 23.\texttt{Bxg7} \texttt{Kxg7} 24.\texttt{Qg5+} \texttt{Kf7} 25.\texttt{g3±}.

20...\texttt{Qe8} 21.\texttt{Qf3+} \texttt{Qf7}

\begin{center}
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22.\texttt{Bg3}

White should not exchange queens, because the black king is very weak and would feel much safer in the endgame.

22...\texttt{Nf6} 23.0-0-0 \texttt{h6} 24.\texttt{Bd2} \texttt{g8} 25.\texttt{b1} \texttt{f8} 26.\texttt{Rh3}

It was worth considering 26.f3 followed by \texttt{Rdg1}, \texttt{Qe1} and \texttt{g2-g4}; White still has the initiative. Now Black should have played 26...\texttt{h5}².

26...\texttt{Rh7}?! 27.\texttt{h5}

Now the rook on h7 is far from an adornment to the black position.

27...\texttt{h8}

Another dubious decision. Black’s position is clearly worse, because the opponent will sooner or later advance his f- and g-pawns and get very close to the enemy king. Therefore, Black should seek dynamics and try 27...\texttt{c4} 28.\texttt{f4} (after 28.\texttt{dxc4}?! \texttt{Bxe4} Black is still worse, of course, but his pieces to some extent come alive) 28...\texttt{exd3} 29.\texttt{cxd3} \texttt{c5} 30.\texttt{g4±}. Although here too, White somewhat outstrips his opponent in creating threats, at least in this variation Black exchanges off his doubled pawns and is not just marking time.

28.\texttt{f4} \texttt{Bg8}

Now, however, White simply advances his pawns and opens up the position of the enemy king. Once again, Black should have decided on 28...\texttt{c4}.

29.\texttt{g4} \texttt{e5} 30.\texttt{g5} \texttt{hxg5} 31.\texttt{fxg5} \texttt{g6} 32.\texttt{Rdf1}
He also wins by 32.hxg6 hxg6 33.d7! (or 33.g3 e8 34.xh7+ g7 35.f1+-) 33...f7 34.e8 g7 35.xh7+ h7 36.xe5+

32...e8 33.xf8 xf8

34.h6

A good practical decision: with such a strong and far-advanced protected passed pawn, the ending will be winning for White. At the same time, Black now must constantly worry about the safety of his king, since White will always have ideas of mate on g7.

34...e8 35.b3 a5 36.e1 e7 37.d2 f7 38.f1 xf1+ 39.xf1 h7 40.b2 e8 41.a4 e7 42.f3 h8 43.g4 h7 44.e1

White transfers the bishop to g3, from where it will attack the e5-pawn.

44...c6 45.g3 b5

Black tries to create some sort of counterplay.

46.e1 bxa4 47.bxa4 c4 48.dxc4 c5 49.xa5 b7+ 50.c1 e7 51.e6 e6 52.d2 c7
53.\text{\textit{f6}}

Tying the black queen to the defence of g7, after which White simply promotes his a-pawn.

53...\text{\textit{d7}} 54.\text{\textit{a5}} \text{\textit{c7}} 55.\text{\textit{a6}} \text{\textit{b8}} 56.\text{\textit{a5}} \text{\textit{d7}} 57.\text{\textit{d8}} 1-0

In the variation 3...\text{\textit{c5}} White can exploit the undefended pawn on g7 and play 4.\text{\textit{g4}} with good chances of obtaining an opening advantage. The alternative is 4.\text{\textit{d3}}, f4 and \text{\textit{f3}}, transposing to positions examined after 2...\text{\textit{c5}}.

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\textbf{Game 100}
Ferdinand Zernovic 2337
Peter Daus 2400
Corr. 2007

1.e4 e5 2.\text{\textit{c4}} \text{\textit{f6}} 3.\text{\textit{d3}} \text{\textit{c6}} 4.\text{\textit{c3}} \text{\textit{b4}}
The most popular variation – Black brings out his bishop to an active position, preparing castling.

The alternative is 4...\textit{c}5 5.f4

\textit{analysis diagram}

5...d5 (White is better after 5...exf4 6.\textit{x}xf4 0-0 7.\textit{f}3; later he plays \textit{d}2 and 0-0-0, developing the initiative on the kingside; the continuation 5...d6 6.\textit{f}3 is looked at via the move-order 1.e4 e5 2.\textit{c}3 \textit{c}5 3.f4 d6 4.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}6 5.\textit{c}4 \textit{c}6 6.d3) 6.\textit{x}xd5 \textit{xe}5 (in 6...\textit{g}4?! it is worth considering the untried 7.f5 h5 8.\textit{h}3; if Black reacts aggressively with 8...\textit{h}4+ 9.\textit{e}e2 \textit{f}2 10.\textit{g}f1 \textit{xe}4, then the best move is 11.\textit{c}3\textasciitilde, defending against a check on d4 and then White either takes the knight on e4 or captures on c7) 7.\textit{x}xd5 0-0 8.\textit{f}3 exf4 (or 8...\textit{g}4 9.c3\textasciitilde with an extra pawn; also worthy of attention is 9.\textit{xc}6 bxc6 10.\textit{fx}e5, taking a second pawn) 9.\textit{xc}6 bxc6 10.\textit{xf}4\textasciitilde. Black’s two bishops do not compensate for his pawn minus and damaged pawn formation.
5. \( \text{Ne2} \)

The idea of this is understandable: to answer \( ...\text{Nxc3+} \) by taking with the knight. The move also avoids blocking the f-pawn, thus retaining the possibility of f2-f4. The variation suggested does not give White any advantage with best play by Black, but only if Black plays correctly, and White’s position is very simple to play.

It is also possible to play the knight to f3, \( 5.\text{Nf3} \), and then \( 5...d5 \) \( 6.\text{exd5 Nxd5} \) 7.0-0 \( \text{Nxc3?!} \) is dubious on account of \( 8.\text{bxc3 Nxc3} \) 9.\( \text{g5!±} \) \( \text{Bxa1} \)? 10.\( \text{Bxf7+ Ke7} \) (or 10...\( \text{Kf8} \) 11.\( \text{a3+ e7} \) 12.\( \text{h5} \) with decisive threats) 11.\( \text{a3+ f6} \) 12.\( \text{f3+ f5} \) 13.\( \text{e4+ xf7} \) 14.\( \text{xf5+ e8} \) 15.\( \text{e6+ e7} \) 16.\( \text{xa1} \), and White wins.

5...d5

The move \( 5...\text{a5} \) is examined in the game Ivanchuk-Giri.

Another possible continuation is \( 5...0-0 \) 6.0-0:

\[
\text{analysis diagram}
\]

A) \( 6...d6 \) 7.\( \text{g5 xc3} \) (7...h6?! 8.\( \text{xf6 xf6} \) 9.\( \text{d5 d8} \) 10.c3 \( \text{a5} \) 11.b4 \( \text{b6} \) 12.a4 \( \text{a6} \) 13.\( \text{xb6 cxb6} \) 14.f4±, Malivanek-Kulhanek, Czech tt 1998; 7...\( \text{e6?!} \) 8.f4 \( \text{xc4} \) 9.dxc4 h6 10.fxe5 \( \text{xe5} \) 11.\( \text{xf6 xf6} \) 12.\( \text{g3 xc3} \) 13.bxc3 \( \text{h7} \) 14.\( \text{h5 d7} \) 15.\( \text{g4 g8} \) 16.\( \text{xd7 xd7} \) 17.\( \text{xf6+ g6} \) 18.\( \text{xd7+}, \text{Laznicka-Buscar, Oropesa del Mar 1999} \)
8.\( \text{xc3} \) h6 (worse is \( 8...\text{e6} \) 9.f4 h6 10.fxe5 \( \text{hxg5} \) 11.\( \text{xf6 xf6} \) 12.\( \text{d5 xd5} \) 13.\( \text{xd5±} \))
A1) 9.\textit{xf6}!? \textit{xf6} 10.\textit{d5} \textit{d8} 11.\textit{f4} exf4 (or 11...\textit{a5} 12.\textit{f5} \textit{xc4} 13.dxc4 \textit{c6} 14.\textit{e3}±) 12.\textit{xf4} (worse is 12.\textit{xf4 \textit{e5}++; Tartakower-Yates, Hamburg 1910) and now:

A11) 12...\textit{e5} 13.\textit{b3} \textit{g4} 14.\textit{e1}±;
A12) 12...\textit{g5} 13.d4 \textit{a5} (13...\textit{d7} 14.\textit{d2} \textit{ae8} 15.\textit{ae1}±) 14.\textit{e2} \textit{c5} 15.\textit{d2} \textit{c6} 16.\textit{c3}±;
A13) 12...\textit{a5} 13.\textit{b3} \textit{xb3} 14.axb3 with somewhat better chances for White.

A2) Another possibility is 9.\textit{h4} \textit{e6} 10.f3!? \textit{d4} (10...\textit{e7} 11.\textit{d5} \textit{xd5} 12.\textit{xd5}±) 11.\textit{d5} \textit{xd5} 12.\textit{xd5} \textit{g5} 13.\textit{f2} \textit{xd5} 14.exd5 \textit{f5} (or 14...\textit{c5} 15.dxc6 \textit{xc6} 16.\textit{d4} also with somewhat better chances for White) 15.d4 exd4 16.\textit{xd4} with a small advantage for White, on account of the weakness of the black king’s position.

B) 6...\textit{a5} 7.a3 \textit{xc3} 8.\textit{xc3} \textit{xc4} 9.dxc4
9...d6 (9...h6?! 10.f4 exf4 11.e5 \(\text{h}7\) 12.\(\text{x}\)f4\(\pm\); White’s pieces are somewhat more active, whilst Black’s queen’s bishop is not yet developed) 10.\(\text{W}\)d3 (10.\(\text{g}\)g5?! h6 11.\(\text{h}\)h4 \(\text{e}\)e6 12.\(\text{W}\)d3 g5 – Black needs to escape from the pin, so he has to weaken his king – 13.\(\text{g}\)g3\(\mp\) ) 10...h6 11.h3 \(\text{b}\)6 12.f4 \(\text{d}\)7 13.f5 \(\text{b}\)e6 14.\(\text{e}\)e3 \(\text{e}\)e8 15.\(\text{ad}\)1. Material is equal and Black’s position is solid, but he lacks counterplay and it is not really clear what he can do. White, on the other hand, has already advanced his f-pawn and prepared an attack on the king, and his game is clearly easier to play. For example: 15...a6 16.\(\text{f}\)f3 \(\text{f}\)f6 17.\(\text{g}\)g4 \(\text{d}\)d5 18.\(\text{d}\)d5 \(\text{f}\)6 19.\(\text{h}\)h4 \(\text{c}\)c5 20.\(\text{x}\)xc5 dxc5 21.\(\text{f}\)f2 \(\text{xd}\)5 22.\(\text{xd}\)5+ \(\text{xd}\)5 23.\(\text{xd}\)5 \(\text{ad}\)8 24.\(\text{fd}\)2 \(\text{xd}\)5 25.\(\text{xd}\)5 \(\text{ad}\)8 26.\(\text{c}\)c4 \(\text{f}\)f7 27.\(\text{b}\)b4 \(\text{xb}\)4 28.\(\text{xb}\)4 \(\text{e}\)e8 29.\(\text{c}\)c5 \(\text{xc}\)5 30.\(\text{bxc}\)5 \(\text{b}\)b8 31.\(\text{a}\)a2 \(\text{b}\)b5 32.\(\text{xa}\)6 \(\text{xc}\)5 33.\(\text{f}\)f2 \(\text{c}\)c2+ 34.\(\text{e}\)e3 \(\text{c}\)c3+ 35.\(\text{d}\)d2 \(\text{g}\)g3 36.\(\text{e}\)e6 \(\text{x}\)g4 37.\(\text{xc}\)7+ \(\text{e}\)e8 38.\(\text{d}\)d3 \(\text{g}\)g1 39.\(\text{a}\)a7 \(\text{f}\)f8 40.\(\text{c}\)c4, and Black resigned in Chamorro-Vico, corr. 2001.

6.\(\text{exd}\)5 \(\text{xd}\)5 7.a3!? 

More popular is 7.0-0, but the move in the game leads to more forcing continuations.

7...\(\text{xc}\)3+ 8.\(\text{xc}\)3
8...\textit{B}e6

8...\textit{N}xc3 9.bxc3 and now:

A) 9...\textit{Q}d6!? seems logical, with the idea of castling long. Then there could follow: 10.0-0 \textit{B}e6 11.\textit{B}xe6 \textit{Q}xe6 12.f4 0-0-0 (12...0-0? 13.f5 \textit{Q}f6 14.\textit{B}h5 h6 15.\textit{B}b1 b6 16.g4 e4 17.d4 \textit{Q}f8e8 18.g5 hgx5 19.\textit{B}xg5 \textit{Q}d6 20.f6 g6 21.\textit{B}h6 \textit{Q}f8 22.\textit{Q}h4+ Zautzig-Maurer, corr. 2007) 13.fxe5 \textit{R}he8 14.\textit{B}f4 \textit{N}xe5 with mutual chances, Vasile-Zuccotti, corr. 2009;

B) 9...0-0 10.0-0 \textit{R}e8 (10...\textit{N}a5?! 11.\textit{B}a2 c5 12.\textit{B}h5 c4 13.\textit{Q}xe5\pm, T.Heinemann-A.Goldberg, Germany Bundesliga 1995; 10...\textit{Q}h4?! (Mieses-Schiffers, Hastings 1895) 11.\textit{R}e1\pm) 11.f4 \textit{B}e6 12.\textit{B}xe6 \textit{Q}xe6 13.f5 \textit{R}d6 14.\textit{Q}g4 – White has the initiative.

9.\textit{B}xd5

Also worth considering is 9.\textit{Q}e4 0-0 10.0-0 \textit{Q}f4 11.\textit{B}xf4 exf4 12.\textit{B}xe6 fxe6, as in the game Beerdsen-Ernst, Dieren 2014. After 13.\textit{Q}d2 (covering the square f3 against the advance of the black pawn) White has simple play: \textit{Q}f3 and doubling rooks on the e-file, with pressure against the e6-pawn.

9...\textit{Q}xd5 10.\textit{Q}g4
10...g6?!


11.Bg5 Qd6


12.0-0 f5 13.Bh4 0-0 14.f4 Qf8

The correct decision: this rook does nothing on f8.

15.Qh1 exf4 16.Qxf4 Qd7 17.Qe1±
17...\textit{\textbf{c8}}

Black overprotects the c7-pawn. He cannot exchange rooks, because after 17...\textit{\textbf{d1}} 18.\textit{\textbf{x}}e1 \textit{\textbf{e8}} 19.\textit{\textbf{xe8}}+ \textit{\textbf{xe8}} he loses the \textit{\textbf{d5}}.

18.\textit{\textbf{b4}}

A useful move: White wants to play b4-b5, prodding the knight. In addition, the bishop can come via c1 to b2 with pressure on the long diagonal.

18...\textit{\textbf{f7}}

In reply to 18...a6 White has a wide choice: to transfer the bishop to b2 after 19.\textit{\textbf{c1}}, and he can also exchange on d5 (19.\textit{\textbf{xd5}}) or simply make the useful prophylactic move 19.h3. In any event, White’s chances are superior.

19.\textit{\textbf{b5}} \textit{\textbf{d4}} 20.\textit{\textbf{f6}} \textit{\textbf{d8}} 21.\textit{\textbf{xe8}}+ \textit{\textbf{xe8}} 22.\textit{\textbf{e5}} \textit{\textbf{d6}} 23.\textit{\textbf{e3}}

Black has a bad king, so White naturally avoids exchanging queens.

23...\textit{\textbf{d7}} 24.\textit{\textbf{h6}}
24...c5

On 24...d6 a strong reply is 25.e4, and now not 25...fxe4 because of 26.xd4! xdx4 27.f#. Black is also worse after the more tenacious 25...e5 26.f4 xc2 (or 26...g7 27.c5+; the white pieces have developed even greater activity and he threatens e5 winning a piece) 27.c1 d4 28.xc2 fxe4 29.b3+ f7 30.xf7+ xf7 31.e5+ e6 32.xd4 exd3 33.f3 d5 34.xd3 c4 35.ed1 ed8 36.cc1+ xb5 (36...xd4? 37.ed1+, and a rook is lost) 37.f2.

25.e1 f7 26.e5 e6 27.e2 xc2 28.e1 b3

He loses after 28...xa3 29.xc5 e8 (or 29...xc5 30.xc with a double threat against the knight and of mate) 30.b2, and the knight is lost.

29.b2 f7 30.g1

He could also play immediately 30.xc2 xc2 31.xc2, getting two pieces for a rook.

30.e8 31.xe2 xc2 32.xc2
White’s two pieces in this situation are rather stronger than the rook and pawn. White realised his advantage without any problems.

**Conclusions:** In reply to 4...\(b4\) we recommend the simple play after 5.\(\text{ge}2\), so as to be able to recapture on c3 with the knight if Black exchanges there. On e2, the knight also leaves open the path of the f-pawn, allowing f2-f4. The variation proposed does not give White the advantage against best play by Black, but the latter does need to play correctly, and White’s game remains very simple to handle. If Black plays ...d7-d5, then White exchanges on d5 and plays a2-a3, so as to clarify his opponent’s further plans. Black has two ways to play, which allow him to count on equality:

1) exchanging on c3 – 7...\( xc3+ \) 8.\(\text{xc}3 \) \( xc3 \) and 9...\( \text{d}6!?, \) preparing long castling,
2) continuing as in the above game, but instead of 10...g6 playing 10...f6, sacrificing the pawn on g7.

In all the remaining variations, White can count on an advantage.

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**Game 101**

Vassily Ivanchuk 2775  
Anish Giri 2714  
Beijing 2011 (1)

1.\( e4 \) e5 2.\( \text{c}3 \) d6 3.\( \text{c}4 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 4.d3 \( b4 \) 5.e2 \( a5 \)
6.a3

Forcing an exchange of pieces.

6...\textbf{xc3}+ 7.\textbf{xc3} \textbf{xc4} 8.dxc4 h6

A) 8...0-0 9.\textbf{f3} (or 9.f3 d6 10.g4†, Pareschi-Peterson, corr. 2007) 9...\textbf{e8} (or 9...d6 10.\textbf{g5} \textbf{e6} 11.b3 h6 12.\textbf{xf6} \textbf{xf6} 13.\textbf{xf6} gxf6 14.0-0-0±) 10.\textbf{g3} d6 11.f4 \textbf{xf4} 12.\textbf{xf4}±;

B) 8...d6 9.\textbf{e2}, and now:

B1) 9...0-0 10.\textbf{g5} (or 10.f3 \textbf{e6} 11.\textbf{e3} \textbf{d7} 12.h4±) 10...h6 11.\textbf{h4}±, and it is not easy for Black to escape from the pin; White will continue with long castling and attack on the kingside;

B2) 9...h6 10.\textbf{e3} 0-0 11.0-0-0 b6 12.f3 \textbf{a6} 13.g4 with the initiative, Rhodes-Segalla, corr. 2007.

9.\textbf{e3} d6 10.\textbf{f3} \textbf{e6} 11.\textbf{e2} \textbf{e7}

Black has also tried 11...\textbf{d7} 12.0-0-0 \textbf{c6} 13.\textbf{d5} (13.b3??) 13...\textbf{xd5} 14.exd5 \textbf{d7} 15.\textbf{d3}±, Vila Gazquez-Michalczak, Soller 2007.

12.0-0-0 a6
13.b3

This move is not forced, because the c4-pawn was defended anyway, and it was possible to play a more useful move, such as, for example, 13.g4, seizing space on the kingside and preparing a pawn storm if the chance arises.

13...c6

Black takes control of d5, but weakens the square b6 and the pawn d6.

After 13...0-0 Black must reckon with 14.g4 (there is also the preliminary 14.a4).

In reply to 13...0-0-0, White should simply strengthen his position: b2, e1, h2-h4, g2-g4. There is also the idea f2 and e3, forcing Black to play ...b7-b6, so as to stop the queen coming into a7, and then try to open the position of the black king or to play on the kingside. White is better.

14.b6

Correct: White ‘by mechanical means’ prevents the move ...b7-b5 and does not allow Black to play ...d8, so as to defend the pawn d6.

14...0-0

Not 14...d7 because of 15.c7, whilst after 14...c8 there follows 15.d3, and the d6-pawn is lost.

15.b2 c5 16.d2 e8

An inconvenient move, of course, but there is no other way to defend the d6-pawn.

17.a4

17.f4 exf4 18.xf4 also looks good.

17...c8 18.a5 c6
Black finds a way to free his e8 from the defence of the d6-pawn.

19.g4

White creates the threat of 20.h4 with a pawn storm against the king. In addition, Black cannot now play 19...f5.

It is also worth considering the rook transfer 19.\textit{Re}1, \textit{Re}3 and \textit{Rd}3, further strengthening the pressure on the d-file.

19...\textit{h}4

Evidently, Black did not like the idea of White playing 20.h4, and so he himself occupies that square with his queen.

20.\textit{g}2 \textit{f}6 21.\textit{d}3 \textit{d}7 22.\textit{a}4 \textit{xb}6 23.\textit{xb}6

Black has exchanged the b6 and can now defend d6 with a rook on d8, but he also now lacks his knight, which could have further defended the pawn.

23...\textit{d}8 24.\textit{hd}1 \textit{f}8 25.\textit{h}3 \textit{h}5 26.\textit{g}1 \textit{e}7 27.\textit{d}2 g5 28.\textit{d}1 f6
Black has defended everything. Simple manoeuvring will not bring anything, and White needs something energetic. Ivanchuk finds a break!

29.b4!

Otherwise it is not obvious how to make progress.

29...cxb4 30.c5

White also has winning chances after 30.Qxb4 Qf2 31.gxh5 Qc5 32.b3.

30...Qxh3

If 30...Kf7, then 31.a4 Qxh3 32.Qb4±.

31.cxd6+ Qf7 32.gxh5

It was possible simply to advance the pawn – 32.d7?!, and on 32...hxg4 White has 33.f4! Qh8 34.fxg5±.

32...b3

If 32...Qh5, then 33.Qxb4±.

33.cxb3 Qxh5 34.d7 Qh8 35.Qc3 Qxc3 36.Qxc3 Qh2+ 37.Qd2 Qf4 38.Qd6 Qh2+ 39.a3 Qg1 40.b4
40...f1

It was worth considering 40...g4!? 41.fxg4 xg4, exchanging pawns. But it is rather frightening to open the g-file, further exposing his king.

41.a3 g1 42.d3 e7? 43.b4+

Missing the chance of 43.c7 a1+ 44.b4 e1+ 45.c3, and Black has to give the exchange on d7, because 46.c8+ is threatened.

43.f7 44.d2 a1+ 45.b4 g6? 46.c5!

Using the king.

46.h1 47.d6 f7 48.c7 h8 49.b4

49.xb7 also wins.

49.g8 50.d2 h8
51.\textit{h}2 \textit{h}xh2

After 51...\textit{g}8 52.\textit{d}6 Black has no moves.

52.\textit{xd}8

And White won.

\textbf{Conclusions:} Despite the fact that this was a blindfold game, the standard of play was very high. One can learn many instructive ideas for White’s play from this game: he placed his pawns on light squares, and castled long, after which it became dangerous for Black to castle on the short side, since then White would immediately begin a pawn storm with $g_2-g_4$, $h_2-h_4$ etc. Therefore Black had to follow his opponent’s lead and castle long. However, he placed his pawn on $c_6$, covering the square $d_5$, but at the same time, this move noticeably weakened the $d_6$-pawn, which White exploited by opening the $d$-file. Black also played the move ...$a_7-a_6$, weakening the square $b_6$, where the white dark-squared bishop headed.
1.e4 e5 2.\textit{c}4 \textit{f}6 3.d3 \textit{c}6 4.\textit{c}3 \textit{a}5

Also a popular variation: Black wants to exchange the enemy bishop immediately.

5.\textit{g}e2

Another possibility is 5.b3.

5...\textit{xc}4

In our view, Black does better not to hurry with this exchange, but should wait for his opponent to play a2-a3 or a2-a4 and only then capture. The moves a2-a3, and especially a2-a4, are of course useful for White, but not obligatory. Therefore, Black should not rush to exchange the bishop, which he can do at any moment.

This is how events may develop instead: 5...\textit{c}5!? 6.0-0 0-0, and now:
A) Black has no problems after 7.a3 Nxc4 8.dxc4 d6 9.Qd3 Be6 10.Qg3 c6 (or 10...d7 11.Nf5=) 11.h3 d5 – Black has achieved the freeing break ...d6-d5 and equalised;

B) 7.Ng3 Nxc4 (after 7...c6 8.a3 Nxc4 9.dxc4 White can try to exploit the fact that the black pawn has moved to c6, which means that the d6-pawn has been weakened, and White can organise play against it via the d-file. It is also possible to combine two plans: play against the d-pawn and an attack on the kingside. It is important to understand that one must not permit Black to play the freeing move ...d6-d5, since after the opening of lines, his bishops come to life, and Black is at least equal) 8.dxc4 d6 9.Qd3 e6 10.b3 Qd7 11.Nc3 f6 12.ad1 a6 13.a4 a5 14.Nd5 Nxe3 15.Nxe3 c5 16.f3 Nf7 17.d2 b6 18.h4 Qad8 19.Nce3 g6 20.f4 Nh8 21.Nf2 Ng7 22.f5 Nc8 23.Nf3 g5 24.h5 g4 25.Ne2 b7 26.d5 Ne5 27.Nxd5 h6 28.Ne3 Ng8 29.f2 f7 30.Qh1 Ng8 31.Ndd1 Ne7 32.Qe2 Ndf8 33.Nhe1 Ne8, draw, Molinero-Blitsko, corr. 2014.

So, as we have seen, White puts his pawns on light squares, so as to restrict the enemy light-squared bishop and also to avoid obstructing his own dark-squared bishop. Then White begins play on the kingside. It is also worth noting that, if Black plays ...c7-c6, so as to cover the square d5, then he weakens the d6-pawn and White can try to pressurise this down the d-file. We should also point out that in the game cited, Black defended well and made a draw, which confirms the essence of the position: with correct play, Black should hold. However, this game was played by correspondence, and obtaining a draw over the board would be much more difficult.

6.dxc4

White’s pawns have not been spoiled, rather the contrary: in this structure, it is hard for Black to play the freeing break ...d7-d5. It is also very easy for White to develop his pieces, and he has a dark-squared bishop, with his pawns, as already noted, on light squares. White also has no problem developing his major pieces. The position has not yet departed from the realms of equality, but it is rather easier to play as White, especially if you are playing a not very strong opponent. And a fast time control, especially rapid or blitz, is also in White’s favour, since Black will have relatively little time in which to come to grips with the subtleties of the position.

6...e5 7.0-0
Other possible continuations are 7.h3, 7...d3 and 7.f3.

7...d6 8...d3

8...g5!? is also worth consideration.

8...e6


9.b3 0-0

Possible is 9...d7!? , not allowing White to pin the knight with g5.

A) 10.e3!? xxe3 (it is better not to hurry with the exchange on e3 and to play 10...0-0) 11.xe3 0-0 12.f4 with the initiative;

B) 10.g3 0-0 11.e3 xxe3 12.xe3 a6 13.a4 h6 14.f5 (White could not hurry with this move, but gradually strengthen his position instead: 14.f3, a4-a5 or ad1 with somewhat better chances) 14...g6! 15.xh6+ g7 16.f4 h4 17.f5 xh6 18.xh6+ xh6 19.fxe6 fxe6 20.xf8 xf8, draw, Vogt- A.Petrosian, Riga 1981.

10.g5 h6 11.e3

If 11.h4?!, then there follows 11...g5 12.g3, and it is not clear where White should then place his pieces. The bishop on g3 is shut in by pawns and the bishop itself deprives the knight of the g3-square.
11...Nd7

After 11...Nxe3 both recaptures make sense:


12.Qg3 Wh4


13.Wf5 Wxf5 14.exf5
14...\textit{\texttt{R}}\texttt{ab8}

A strange move: from a strategic viewpoint, it is not clear why this is necessary, although in some variations, the pawn on b7 is defended. Black’s problem is that he has no counterplay and it is not obvious what plan he should adopt.

From a human point of view, one can consider the immediate capture of the bishop – 14...\textit{\texttt{B}}\texttt{xe3}, in order after 15.fxe3 to attack the queen – 15...\textit{\texttt{N}}\texttt{c5} 16.\textit{\texttt{Q}}\texttt{d5}. Then it is worth considering 16...\textit{\texttt{a5}}, forcing White to play 17.a4 and obtaining the square c5 for his knight, since now White cannot carry out b3-b4. And if White does not play a2-a4, then Black himself does so with the idea of exchanging on b3 and opening a line for the \textit{\texttt{R}}\texttt{a8}.

However, White’s position is still somewhat preferable, since he has a simple and clear plan – to advance his pawns against the enemy king.

15.\textit{\texttt{N}}\texttt{e4} 16.\textit{\texttt{R}}\texttt{e1} 17.\textit{\texttt{R}}\texttt{e2}

Dubious manoeuvres – although it is not clear what Black should do, it is clear that he should not simply squander tempi in this way.

18.a4 19.\textit{\texttt{K}}\texttt{h1}

White simply strengthens his position, before starting the pawn storm.

19...\textit{\texttt{B}}\texttt{xe3}

Black decides to exchange after all.

20.\textit{\texttt{fxe3}} 21.\textit{\texttt{xf6}} 22.\textit{\texttt{xf6}} 22.e4
One can sum up the results: all the minor pieces have been exchanged, White has a space advantage, and since Black cannot organise counterplay, White will be able to advance the pawns on the kingside. Black’s position is difficult.

22...**Rg8** 23.**Qe3** b6 24.**Rf3** **Ra8**

The computer does not see anything better than simply marking time. But we humans, able to think logically, can see that such a strategy, in a position where White can gradually strengthen his position bit by bit, is doomed to failure.

25.**Re2** **Kh7** 26.**g4** **Rgd8** 27.**Rh3** **Kg8**

Already 28.**g5** was threatened.

28.**Rh5** c6

With his last move, Black prepares the central break ...d6-d5, and White, naturally, does not allow Black any counterplay. White has no need at all of complications, since he is playing against a computer, and when it comes to calculation, as we know, there is no opponent as strong as the machine!

29.**d2** **Rab8** 30.**h4** **We7** 31.**g5** **Kh7**
Black intends after 32.gxh6 to play 32...g6, somewhat complicating the position.

32.f6 $\text{e6}$ 33.$\text{f3}$

There is a quicker win with 33.$\text{g2}$ $\text{g8}$ 34.$\text{fxg7} \text{xg7}$ 35.$\text{xh6}$, but the move in the game does not spoil anything.

33...$\text{h8}$ 34.$\text{g2}$ a6 35.$\text{g3}$ g6 36.$\text{xh6}$+ $\text{g8}$ 37.$\text{xh8}$+ $\text{xh8}$ 38.$\text{h5} \text{g8}$ 39.$\text{h4} \text{e8}$ 40.$\text{h2}$

And Black resigned, since after 41.$\text{hxg6}$ he cannot avoid mate.

**Conclusions:** the exchange on c4 is somewhat premature, and it is better first to wait until White moves his a-pawn and only then to exchange. Then in the game, grandmaster Kristiansen did everything correctly: he placed his pawns on light squares, exchanged dark-squared bishops, first playing $\text{g5}$ and forcing ...h7-h6, which is due course told – White obtained a target for the attack. There followed g2-g4, h2-h4, g4-g5, and then the GM easily, and without allowing any counterplay, beat his powerful opponent. This once again shows that it is rather easier to play White in such positions.

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**Game 103**

*Sergey Karjakin 2727*

*Mohamad Al Modiahki 2556*

*Sochi 2008 (7)*

1.e4 $\text{e5}$ 2.$\text{c4} \text{f6}$ 3.d3 $\text{c6}$ 4.$\text{c3} \text{a5}$ 5.$\text{ge2} \text{xc4}$ 6.$\text{xc4} \text{d6}$ 7.0-0 $\text{e7}$
8.a4!?

A) On 8...g3 Black can exploit the position of the rook on h8 and play 8...h5!?. Therefore, we do not advise playing g3 all the while Black has not castled;

B) 8.b3 0-0 9.g3 c6 10.b2 a5 11.e1 c7 12.a4 e6 13.d1 a6 14.e2 g4 15.f3 d7 16.h1 ab8 17.f5 xf5 18.exf5 fe8 19.ed2 bd8 20.fd1 h5 21.a3 f4 22.f2 a5 23.e4 d5 24.xe7 xe7 25.h4 ed7 26.g3 e2 27.f6 b4 28.g4, and Black resigned in Larsen-Portisch, Porec Candidates’ match, 1968;

C) 8.d3!? 0-0 9.g3.

analysis diagram
After 9...\(\text{Be}6\) (on 9...g6 White simply strengthens his position, arranging his pawns on light squares and then playing \(\text{Be}3\), \(\text{Rad}1\) and advancing f2-f4 when appropriate; his chances are superior) it is worth considering the untried 10.\(\text{Ne}5\) (another possibility is 10.\(\text{Be}3\)?, and if 10...c6, then 11.\(\text{Rad}1\)):  

C1) 10...\(\text{Re}8\) 11.\(\text{Re}1\) (also possible is 11.\(\text{Qxe}7+\) \(\text{Qxe}7\) 12.\(\text{g5}\) h6 13.\(\text{h4}\) g5 14.\(\text{g3}\)?) 11...\(\text{d}7\) 12.\(\text{Qxe}7+\) \(\text{Qxe}7\) 13.\(\text{Qd}5\) \(\text{Qxd}5\) 14.\(\text{cxd}5\) \(\text{c}5\) 15.\(\text{Qf}3\) with somewhat better chances for White in both cases;  

C2) 10...\(\text{xf}5\) 11.\(\text{exf}5\) c6 12.\(\text{Be}1\), taking aim at the e5-pawn and not letting Black play \(\text{...d}6\)-d5. Then White will develop his bishop and play \(\text{Rad}1\); he may also attack on the kingside with pieces or pawns as the chance arises. His chances are somewhat better.

8...0-0 9.a5

Seizing space on the queenside: given the chance, White may push the pawn to a6 or play \(\text{a}4\) with the idea of c4-c5.

9...\(\text{Be}6\) 10.b3 c6 11.f4 \(\text{exf}4\) 12.\(\text{Qxf}4\) \(\text{Nd}7\)

It is worth considering 12...\(\text{c}8\)?! 13.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{d}7\) 14.\(\text{Qd}4\) (or 14.h3 \(\text{e}5\) 15.\(\text{a}3\)?) 14...\(\text{e}5\) 15.\(\text{h}1\) \(\text{c}7\) 16.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{e}8\) 17.\(\text{c}3\).

13.\(\text{b}2\) \(\text{e}5\) 14.h3

14...g5

An extremely aggressive move, but he should prefer 14...\(\text{f}6\). Then play might continue: 15.\(\text{we}1\) (or 15.\(\text{Qa}4\) with the idea of c4-c5: 15...b5 16.axb6 axb6 17.\(\text{we}2\)?) 15...\(\text{d}7\) 16.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{xb}2\) 17.\(\text{Qxb}2\) \(\text{e}8\) 18.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{c}7\) 19.\(\text{h}5\) g6 20.\(\text{g}3\) or 20.\(\text{h}4\) with mutual chances.

15.\(\text{Qfe}2\)

15.\(\text{d}3\)? \(\text{f}6\) (White is also better after 15...g4 16.\(\text{h}2\) g\(\text{h}3\) 17.\(\text{gxh}3\) \(\text{h}8\) 18.a6 b6 19.\(\text{wh}5\) with the initiative) 16.a6 b6 17.\(\text{e}2\), and the knight heads to h5.
15...g4 16.hxg4

16...fxg4? gxh3 17.gxh3 f6 18...h8 19...h1 g8 20.c5±, and not 20...dx5 because of 21...xd8 exd8 22...xe6 fxe6 23...xf6, winning.

16...hxg4

16...fxg4 is no different.

17...d4

17...f6?!

A poor move: Black wastes a tempo and severely restricts his dark-squared bishop. A normal continuation was 17...f6 18.g3 g5 19.g3 (on 19.d4 there follows 19...f6 with a repetition) 19...h5 20.d4 h4 21.h3±.

18...f7 19.d1!

The knight heads to e3 and then on the weakened light square f5.

19...g7 20.e3 g6 21.xg4 xg4 22.f5 f8 23.e3 e8 24.f4 xf4

More tenacious is 24...g6 25.xg4 xg4 26.d3 e8 27.f1±.

25.xf4 h5
26. \textit{f1}

It looks very strong to play 26. \textit{g3+!? g6} (26... \textit{h8} 27. \textit{c5 dxc5? 28. \textit{xex5 fxe5 29. \textit{xe5+ g8 30. e7+}, winning the queen}) 27. \textit{xe5 fxe5} 28. \textit{f2± or} 27... \textit{dxe5 28. \textit{d1±}, seizing the open file.}

26... \textit{e8} 27. \textit{d4 a6 28. \textit{g3+ g6} 29. \textit{h3 f7} 30. \textit{f4 g5 31. d3 e6 32. g3 h6 33. g4 f8} 34. \textit{h4 e7} 35. \textit{c3 f7} 36. \textit{f2 e8} 37. \textit{f1 d7} 38. \textit{b4 e8} 39. \textit{b5 f7} 40. \textit{g1 g8} 41. \textit{h2 f7} 42. \textit{d2 f8} 43. \textit{c1 e8} 44. \textit{f5}

44.bxc6!? bxc6 45.c5 d5 (worse is 45... \textit{dxc5} 46. \textit{c4+ g7} 47. \textit{f5+ h8} 48. \textit{xa6 xex4} 49. \textit{xg5 xh4+} 50. \textit{xh4 xf5} 51. \textit{d3 e5+ 52. g3± with a dangerous passed a-pawn) 46. \textit{xd5 xd3} 47. \textit{cxd5 cxd5} 48. \textit{gxg5 fxg5} 49. \textit{exh7+ g6} 50. \textit{a4±.}

44... \textit{g8} 45. \textit{bxc6 bxc6} 46. \textit{c5?!}

It was necessary to retreat the knight to \textit{g3}, not allowing Black’s reply and only next move playing \textit{c4-c5}. 
46...\(\text{Ng}e4\!\)!

After this move, the position is equal.

47.\(\text{Nxe}4\) \(\text{Nxf}5\) 48.\(\text{Rxe}8\) \(\text{Qh}5+\) 49.\(\text{Kg}3\) \(\text{Qxe}8\) 50.\(\text{cxd}6\) \(\text{e1}+\) 51.\(\text{Kf}3\) \(\text{xc}1\) 52.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{g}7\) 53.\(\text{d}8=\text{Q}\) 54.\(\text{xd}8+\) \(\text{Kg}7\)

The position is equal, but in the subsequent battle, White utilised his opponent’s inaccuracies, and managed to win the c-pawn, without allowing perpetual check, and eventually won.

**Game 104**
Sergey Karjakin 2591
Viktor Bologan 2663
Mainz Open 2004 (5)

1.e4 e5 2.c4 \(\text{Nf}6\) 3.d3 \(\text{c6}\) 4.c3 \(\text{a}5\) 5.ge2 \(\text{c}6\)?

The same position arises after 5...\(\text{e}7\) followed by 6..c6.
6.0-0 \textit{\&e7}

The aggressive 6...d5 deserves attention, but nobody has tried it in practice. Play could continue: 7.exd5 cxd5 8.\textit{\&b5+}:

\begin{itemize}
  \item A) 8...\textit{\&d7}?! 9.\textit{\&xd7+} \textit{\&xd7} 10.d4, and now a possibility is: 10...e4 11.\textit{\&g5} \textit{\&e7} 12.\textit{\&xf6} \textit{\&xf6} 13.\textit{\&f4} \textit{\&c6} 14.\textit{\&fxd5} \textit{\&xd4} 15.\textit{\&e1} f5 16.\textit{\&xe4!} fxe4 17.\textit{\&xe4+} \textit{\&e5} 18.\textit{\&h5+} \textit{\&f8} 19.\textit{\&d1} \textit{\&f7} (even worse is 19...g6 20.\textit{\&e2} \textit{\&d6} 21.\textit{\&e3} \textit{\&c7} 22.\textit{\&g4} \textit{\&e8} 23.\textit{\&e1}, taking the bishop, or 22...g7 23.\textit{\&c4}, and White wins) 20.\textit{\&xe5} \textit{\&xe5} 21.\textit{\&xe5+}
  \item B) Correct is 8...\textit{\&c6} 9.d4 (9.\textit{\&g5} is possible, and after 9...\textit{\&e7} 10.d4 e4 we reach the same position) 9...e4 10.\textit{\&g5} \textit{\&e7} and now:
\end{itemize}
B1) Nothing comes from 11.\textit{xf6} 12.\textit{xf6} e6 (12...a6 13.a4 b5? 14.b3 \textit{xd4} 15.\textit{xd5}, and White takes on e4 as well, Salesses-Garcia, corr. 1980, but correct is 13...e6?) 13.\textit{xc6+} bxc6 14.\textit{h5} 0-0 15.\textit{xf6+} \textit{xf6} 16.\textit{d2?};

B2) 11.\textit{f4} and now:

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\textit{analysis diagram}

B21) 11...a6 12.a4 e6 13.\textit{xe6} fxe6 14.\textit{xc6+} bxc6 15.f3 0-0 (worse is 15..\textit{exf3} 16.\textit{xf3} 0-0 17.\textit{h3}, and Black loses e6) 16.fxe4 \textit{dxe4} 17.\textit{h1} (avoiding possible checks) 17...\textit{b6} 18.\textit{xf6} \textit{xf6} 19.\textit{xe4} \textit{xb2} 20.c3\pm; White limits the black bishop, and the opponent has many weaknesses;

B22) 11...\textit{g4} 12.\textit{e1!} 0-0 13.\textit{xf6} \textit{xf6} 14.\textit{fxd5} \textit{xd4} 15.\textit{xe4} (or 15.\textit{xf6+} \textit{xf6} 16.\textit{xe4} \textit{b6} 17.\textit{d3\pm}) 15...\textit{f5} 16.\textit{f4} \textit{xc2} 17.\textit{fe1\pm}.

\textbf{7.a4}

The other possibility is 7.\textit{g3}.

A) There have been no practical tests of 7...\textit{d5} 8.\textit{exd5} \textit{cxd5} 9.\textit{b5+} c6 (9...d7 is bad because of 10.\textit{f5} 0-0 11.\textit{xd7} \textit{xd7} 12.\textit{xd5!}, and now 12...\textit{xd5} loses to 13.\textit{g4} – Black loses the queen, because of the threat of mate on g7 and check on h6) 10.\textit{e1} d4 (the pawn sacrifice 10...0-0!? 11.\textit{xc6} \textit{bxc6} 12.\textit{xe5} \textit{d6} 13.\textit{e1} \textit{g4} or 13.\textit{e2} \textit{g4} is worth considering, in both cases with compensation for the small material investment) 11.\textit{ce4} 0-0 12.\textit{xf6+} \textit{xf6} 13.\textit{d2\pm};

B) 7...\textit{d6} and now:

B1) 8.a4
With this move, we force Black to take on c4, because otherwise the bishop retreats to a2. It is important to note that we have delayed the move a4 as long as possible, in the hope that Black would take on c4 earlier, and then we might be able to do without a4 and spend this tempo on something more useful. 8...\(\text{dx}c4\) 9.dxc4 0-0 10.\(\text{Q}d3\) 10.\(\text{g}5!\) h6 11.\(\text{x}x6\) \(\text{x}f6\) 12.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{e}6\) (12...\(\text{x}x5\) 13.\(\text{ex}f5\) 13.\(\text{d}3\) (13.b3?! \(\text{x}f5\) 14.\(\text{ex}f5\) e4 attacking the knight) 13...\(g6\) 14.\(\text{x}h6+\) \(\text{g}7\) 15.\(\text{f}5+\) \(\text{xf}5\) 16.\(\text{ex}f5\) \(\text{x}c8\) 17.\(\text{g}3+\) \(\text{h}8\) 18.\(\text{h}3+\) \(\text{g}7\) (dangerous is 18...\(\text{x}g8\) 19.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{g}7\) 20.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{f}6\) 21.\(\text{d}1\) d5 22.\(\text{g}3\) with an attack) 19.\(\text{g}3+\) \(\text{h}8\) 20.\(\text{h}3+\) \(\text{g}7\) 21.\(\text{g}3+\) with a repetition of moves. 10...\(\text{e}6\) 11.\(\text{d}1!\) Now allowing Black to play ...d6-d5. Thus, after 11.b3 d5 he equalises. 11...\(\text{c}7\) 11...\(\text{d}7?!\) 12.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{xf}5\) 13.\(\text{ex}f5\) \(\text{c}5\) 14.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{h}8\) 15.\(\text{a}5\). 12.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{xf}5\) Worse is 12...\(\text{x}d8?!\) 13.\(\text{xe}7+\) \(\text{xe}7\) 14.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{d}7\) 15.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{c}5\) 16.\(\text{a}5\). 13.\(\text{ex}f5\) \(\text{d}5\) 14.\(\text{g}5\) He cannot win a pawn by 14.cxd5 cxd5 15.\(\text{x}d5\) \(\text{x}d5\) 16.\(\text{x}d5\), because c2 is hanging – 16...\(\text{xc}2\).
B11) 14...e4!? 15.\(\text{Qg}3\) \(\text{Qxg}3\) 16.hxg3 dxc4 (16...\(\text{Qad}8\)?) 17.cxd5 \(\text{Qxd}5\) 18.\(\text{Qxd}5\) \(\text{Qg}5\) 19.\(\text{Qxd}8\) \(\text{Qxd}8\) 20.\(\text{Qxe}4\), winning a pawn; best is 16...\(\text{Qac}8\), preparing for the exchange on d5, after which the rook will eye the pawn on c2; then a possible continuation is 17.cxd5 cxd5 18.\(\text{Qac}1\) \(\text{Qc}4\) 19.\(\text{Qxf}6\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 20.\(\text{Qxd}5\) \(\text{Qxa}4\) 21.\(\text{Qa}1\) \(\text{Qxa}1\) 22.\(\text{Qxa}1\) a6 23.\(\text{Qxf}6+\) \(\text{gxf}6\) 24.\(\text{Qf}1\) with a slightly better rook ending) 17.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Qfd}8\) 18.\(\text{g}4\) \(\text{Qf}8\) 19.\(\text{Qxf}6\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 20.\(\text{Qxf}6\) \(\text{gxf}6\) 21.\(\text{f}3\) with the better pawn structure in the rook ending;  

B12) 14...d4 15.\(\text{Qxf}6\) dxc3 (worse is 15...\(\text{Qxf}6\) 16.\(\text{Qe}4\), and Black has a bad bishop) 16.\(\text{Qxe}7\) \(\text{cxb}2\) 17.\(\text{Qxf}8\) \(\text{bxa}1\)=\(\text{Q}\) 18.\(\text{Qxa}1\) \(\text{Qxf}8\) 19.\(\text{Qd}1\)=\(\text{Q}\), seizing the d-file; then White plays \(\text{Qd}7\) with the idea of exchanging queens and keeping the more active rooks;  

B13) 14...\(\text{Qad}8\) 15.\(\text{Qxf}6\) dxc4 16.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 17.\(\text{Qe}4\) \(\text{Qe}7\) 18.\(\text{h}3\) \(\text{Qxd}1+\) 19.\(\text{Qxd}1\) \(\text{Qd}8\) 20.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{h}6\) 21.\(\text{Qxd}8+\) \(\text{Qxd}8\) 22.\(\text{b}3\).

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**analysis diagram**

The position is about equal, although queen and knight are usually somewhat stronger than queen and bishop, so White has some chances here.  

B2) 8.a3. With the pawn on a3, it is harder for Black to play ...\(\text{Qa}5\), since White has the reply b2-b4, attacking the queen. But the minus of the move a2-a3 is that with his pawn on a4, White can play a4-a5 without loss of time, and seize more space on the queenside. 8...\(\text{Qxc}4\) 9.\(\text{dxc}4\) 0-0 10.\(\text{Qg}5!\) \(\text{h}6?!\). White is also somewhat better after 10...\(\text{Qe}6\) 11.\(\text{Qd}3\) \(\text{g}6\) (or 11...h6 12.\(\text{Qxf}6\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 13.\(\text{Qf}5\)=\(\text{Q}\) 12.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{Qg}7\) 13.\(\text{Qd}2\) \(\text{Qe}8\) 14.\(\text{Qh}3\)=\(\text{Q}\) 11.\(\text{Qxf}6\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 12.\(\text{Qf}5\) \(\text{Qxf}5\) 13.\(\text{exf}5\) \(\text{Qe}8\) 14.\(\text{Qe}4\) \(\text{d}5\) 15.\(\text{cxd}5\) \(\text{cxd}5\) 16.\(\text{Qxf}6+\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 16...\(\text{gxf}6?!\) 17.\(\text{Qh}5\) \(\text{Qg}7\) 18.\(\text{Qad}1\) with the initiative. 17.\(\text{Qxd}5\) \(\text{Qxf}5\) 18.\(\text{Qxb}7\) \(\text{Qab}8\) 19.\(\text{Qxa}7\) \(\text{Qxb}2\) 20.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{Qc}8\), and Black equalises.  

7...d5 8.\(\text{Qa}2\)
8...\(\text{	ext{c}6}\)?!

Better was 8...d4 9.\(\text{	ext{b}1}\) c5 10.f4± or 8...0-0 9.\(\text{	ext{b}1}\) d4 (9...\(\text{	ext{b}4}\)?! 10.exd5 exd5 11.\(\text{	ext{g}5}\) \(\text{	ext{c}6}\) 12.f4±) 10.b4 dxc3 11.\(\text{	ext{xc}3}\), and then, for example, 11...\(\text{	ext{c}7}\) 12.\(\text{	ext{e}1}\) b5 13.bxa5 b4 14.\(\text{	ext{d}1}\) \(\text{	ext{x}a}5\) 15.\(\text{	ext{b}2}\) followed by \(\text{	ext{b}3}\), \(\text{	ext{c}4}\), \(\text{	ext{b}2}\), f2-f4.

Of course, in either case, White’s chances are somewhat better, but after the move in the game, he can immediately seize a large advantage.

9.d4

Even stronger was 9.f4 dxe4 (9...exf4 10.\(\text{	ext{xf}4}\)±) 10.fxe5 exd5 11.\(\text{	ext{f}4}\) \(\text{	ext{d}5}\) (11...\(\text{	ext{d}4}\)± 12.\(\text{	ext{h}1}\) \(\text{	ext{xe}5}\) 13.\(\text{	ext{xe}6}\) \(\text{	ext{xe}6}\) 14.\(\text{	ext{f}4}\) dxc2 15.\(\text{	ext{xc}2}\) f5 16.\(\text{	ext{e}2}\)+) 12.\(\text{	ext{xe}6}\) fxe6 13.\(\text{	ext{g}4}\) (also good is 13.cxd3±) 13...dxc2 14.\(\text{	ext{xe}6}\)±.

9...\(\text{	ext{xe}4}\) 10.\(\text{	ext{xe}4}\) dxe4 11.\(\text{	ext{xe}6}\) \(\text{	ext{xe}6}\) 12.\(\text{	ext{xe}5}\)

If White wants to keep the queens on, then he can play 12.\(\text{	ext{e}1}\) \(\text{	ext{c}7}\) (or 12...exd4 13.\(\text{f}4\) 0-0 14.\(\text{xe}4\)±) 13.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) (or 13...0-0 14.\(\text{c}3\)±) 14.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{f}5\) 15.\(\text{c}7\) b6 16.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{g}6\) 17.\(\text{xe}4\)±.

12...\(\text{xd}1\) 13.\(\text{xd}1\) \(\text{c}4\) 14.\(\text{g}3\)
14...\textit{\texttt{a}}f7

It is worth considering 14...e3!? 15.\textit{\texttt{x}}xe3 \textit{\texttt{e}}xe3 16.fxe3, doubling the white pawns. Although even here, play is purely for two results, because although the white pawns are doubled, he does have an extra one.

15.b3 \textit{\texttt{x}}xe5 16.\textit{\texttt{b}}b2 \textit{\texttt{g}}g6 17.\textit{\texttt{d}}d7 \textit{\texttt{a}}ab8 18.\textit{\texttt{x}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{d}}hd8 19.\textit{\texttt{a}}ad1

Also interesting is 19.\textit{\texttt{c}}c7!? \textit{\texttt{g}}g8 20.\textit{\texttt{f}}f1 \textit{\texttt{d}}dc8 21.\textit{\texttt{d}}d7 \textit{\texttt{d}}d8, and only now 22.\textit{\texttt{a}}ad1.\

19...\textit{\texttt{x}}xd7 20.\textit{\texttt{x}}xd7 \textit{\texttt{e}}e8 21.\textit{\texttt{d}}d3 \textit{\texttt{f}}f7 22.g3 e5 23.h4 h5 24.\textit{\texttt{c}}c1 \textit{\texttt{f}}f8 25.\textit{\texttt{e}}e3 a6?!

It was necessary to cover the square c5, by playing 25...b6. Then play might continue 26.\textit{\texttt{g}}g5 \textit{\texttt{e}}e6 27.\textit{\texttt{x}}xe7 \textit{\texttt{x}}xe7 28.\textit{\texttt{c}}c3 c5 29.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 \textit{\texttt{d}}d7 30.\textit{\texttt{f}}f5 g6 31.\textit{\texttt{g}}g5 \textit{\texttt{g}}g8; Black’s position is worse, but he is holding for the moment and has reasonable chances of a draw.

26.\textit{\texttt{c}}c5
Now, however, Black’s position becomes critical.

26...\textit{Ne6}

Another mistake. He should have played 26...\textit{Ke6}, getting the king away from a check on f3.

27.\textit{Rf3+} 28.\textit{Rxe7} 29.\textit{Rf5}

Black loses a pawn.

29...\textit{Ed8}

29...\textit{Ed4}!? 30.\textit{Rxe5+} 31.\textit{Rxf7} 32.\textit{Rxc2}. Black cannot save the pawn anyway, but he has managed to exchange a pair of pawns and this is usually favourable for the defender, as the fewer pawns that remain on the board, the greater his drawing chances.

30.\textit{Rxc5} 31.\textit{g2} 32.\textit{Rxe5} 33.\textit{c5}

It was also possible to quietly move the pawn from under attack – 33.c3 with a decisive advantage.

33...\textit{Ed4} 34.c3 35.\textit{Rxb7} 36.\textit{Rxc5} 37.\textit{Rc4} 38.\textit{Rc2} 39.\textit{h5}

He also wins with 38.\textit{Rxb4} 39.\textit{Rxb4} 39.\textit{f3}.

38...\textit{a5} 39.\textit{g4} 40.\textit{Rxe4}
After the exchange of rooks it all becomes simple: the kingside pawns easily decide the outcome of the game.

40...\textit{c1}+ 41.\textit{g3} \textit{d3} 42.\textit{d6}+ \textit{e6} 43.\textit{c4} \textit{c5} 44.\textit{xa5} \textit{d7} 45.g5 \textit{xa4} 46.\textit{xc6}

Black will not manage to take this knight, because then the white h-pawn would queen.

46...\textit{c5} 47.h6 \textit{gxh6} 48.gxh6 \textit{c4+} 49.\textit{h4} \textit{f6} 50.g5 \textit{e6} 51.g6

Black resigned.

\textbf{Conclusions:} In this game, Black did not rush to exchange on c4, but played ...c7-c6, ...\textit{e7} and then ...d6-d5. White had a choice between \textit{g3} and \textit{a2}; Sergey Karjakin chose the second continuation, not letting Black exchange on c4 and leaving him with a bad knight. Consequently, of course, Black should have played ...d6-d5 after ...c7-c6, without the move \textit{c7}, in reply to which White will exchange on d5, give check on b5, play d3-d4, fixing the d-pawn, and forcing the advance of the e-pawn. Then he can pressurise the d5-pawn with \textit{g5} and \textit{f4}, retaining the better chances.
Chapter 21

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.f4

We argued in the Foreword that 3.Bc4 allows Black to make a draw after 2...d6, with 3...Nxe4!. So in this book, where we look at practical ways to play for a win in blitz and rapid, we go for the old line 3.f4, with the intention of meeting 3...d5 4.fxe5 Nxe4 with 5.Qf3!? Of course, Black has other replies on move 3, which, though less critical, will also be examined in this chapter.

Game 105
Miguel Najdorf
Gilberto Chaves
Sao Paulo simul 1947 (3)

1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.f4

As we have already pointed out in the Foreword, in their recent book, Ovetchkin and Soloviov recommend 3.Nc4. But almost 100 years ago, the great Akiba Rubinstein showed how Black draws this position: Sämisch-Rubinstein, Hanover 1926, went: 3...Nxe4! 4.Qh5 Nbd6 5.Qxe5+ (we will examine the alternative 5.Bb3 on the basis of the game Caruana-Giri) 5.Qe7 6.Qxe7+ Nxe7 7.Bb3 Qf5! 8.Qf3 c6! (Black’s plan is to put his pawns on c6 and d5, so as to shut out the white bishop) 9.0-0 d5 10.Qe1 0-0
analysis diagram

11.d3 Black is better after 11.g4?! Nh4 12.Nxe7 Nxf3+ 13.g2 Nxe4 14.Rb7 Ne8 15.Ng3 (15.Nxd5? Ne1!!+) 15...Nh5 16.Nxd5 cxd5 17.Nxd5 Bd4+ 11...Nd6 11...a6?! 12.Ne2 Na6 13.c3 Nd7 14.Nf4 Ee8 15.Nxd6 Qxd6 16.Qg3 Qe5 17.Qe2 Black is fine after 17.Re5 f6 18.Qxd7 Qxd7 19.c4 (19.d4 g6 is not promising for White) 19...dxc4 20.Qxe5 Qe8 21.Qxe8 Qxe8 22.Qd1 Qe6= 17...g6 18.Qxe8 Qxe8 19.Qf1 Qg7 20.Qe1 Qxe1+ 21.Qxe1 Qe6 22.Qe2 f6 23.Qf4 Qxh4 24.Qxh4 g5, and the game ended in a draw on move 40, with Black holding the initiative in the final stages. Simple and logical play by the genius Akiba! He played the opening better in this game than modern computers can do!

Caruana-Giri Wijk aan Zee 2014 went 5.Qb3 (instead of 5.Qxe5+) 5...Qe7!. White is better after 5...Qc6 6.Qb5! g6 7.Qf3 Qf 8.Qd5 Qf6 9.Qxc7+ Qd8 10.Qxa8 b6 followed by ...Qb7, taking the knight. The computer assesses this position as in White’s favour, although it remains very complicated and without exact knowledge on White’s side, play is very much for three results. 6.Qxe5 0-0 7.Qd4 Qc6 8.Qf3
analysis diagram

8...a5!? 9.d5 (on 9.f3 possible is 9...xb3 10.axb3 b5!? or 10...b6 with counterplay) 9.e8 (better 9...c6 10.f3 dc4!? or 10...b5!?, in both cases with chances for both sides) 10.f3 c6 10...f6!? 11.d5 d6 12.d2 b6 13.e2 f6 14.e3 e8 15.0-0 f8 16.c4 g6 17.b3 g7 18.b2 b7 19.a1 d6 20.c3 d7 21.exd5 exe1 22.exe1 e8 23.exf6+ xf6 24.e8+ exe8 25.d5 d8 26.g3 a5 27.h4 xd5 28.xd5 e6 29.h5 e7 30.f3 f5 31.d5 f8 32.g4 wh6 33.e1 g7 34.c3 f8 35.hxg6 hxg6 36.b4 e8 37.e1 g5 38.f4 f6 39.d3 wh8 40.g2 c3 41.a3 a5 42.d7 axb4 43.axb4 b2, draw. Black obtained satisfactory play in the opening without great problems (simplest of all is 9...c6), although Ovetchkin and Soloviov assure their readers that White has ‘a small but stable advantage’.

3.d6

This is usually played only by relatively weak players who do not know the theory. The move is logical and solid enough, but too passive.

Outright bad is 3.c6? 4.fxe5 xe5 5.d4 c6 (or 5...g6 6.e5 g8 7.f3±) 6.e5 g8 7.f3±.

Another dubious move is 3.exf4, since after 4.e5 the knight has to retreat with 4...g8 (4...e7 does not help, as after 5.e2 Black still has to retreat the knight anyway – 5...g8 6.d4±) 5.f3 and now:
analysis diagram

A) 5...d5 6.d4 g5 (otherwise White simply takes on f4) 7.h4 g4 8.Ng1 e7 (8...c6 9.xf4±) 9.xf4 ±xh4+ 10.g3 e7 11.g2 e6 (more accurate is 11...c6 12.d2 or 12.d3 with compensation) 12.d3± with the double threat of taking on h7 or giving check on b5, Sorensen-Kula, Aarhus 1990;

B) 5...d6 6.d4 dxe5 7.Qe2 e6 (7...c6 8.xf4, taking on f4 and then on e5) 8.d5 xh5 9.xe5+ e6 (or 9...e7 10.xf4 c6 11.e3++; White follows up with 0-0-0 or d1, b5) 10.b5+ d7 11.xf4±.

The main continuation 3...d5 will be examined in detail below.

4.f3 exf4

A) On 4...g4 the reply 5.d4 is strong:
A1) 5...xf3 6.gxf3 Nh5 7.e3 (7.fxe5 fails to 7...h4+, Larino Nieto- Garcia Castro, Sanxenxo 2013) 7...exf4
(7...h4+ is bad because of 8.f2, and the queen must return home with 8.d8, since he cannot play 8.xf4 because
of 9.d5 followed by xc7+; whilst after 8.d8 9.fxe5 dxe5 10.dxe5± White’s chances are clearly superior) 8.f2
Nh7 9.d2 0-0 10.0-0-0 Nh7 11.g1±;

A2) 5.exd4 6.xd4 xf3 (6...c6 7.b5 d7 8.d3±) 7.gxf3 c6 8.b5 c7 8.d7 9.xc6 bxc6 10.e3± 9.xc6
bxc6 10.a4 e5 11.d2±.

B) 4.bd7!!
5.d4 (the other possibility is 5.\textit{c}c4 followed by d2-d3) 5...exd4 and now:

B1) A complicated battle with mutual chances results from 6.\textit{d}xd4:

B11) On 6...\textit{c}c5 the rare 7.\textit{f}f3 is interesting:

B111) Now it is worth considering the move 7...\textit{f}xe4, which was played in one correspondence game: 8.\textit{b}b5+ \textit{d}d7 9.\textit{xe}e4 \textit{e}e7 10.\textit{d}xd7+ \textit{xd}d7 11.0-0 \textit{xe}e4 (11...\textit{xe}e4 12.\textit{h}h3+ \textit{e}6 (worse is 12...\textit{d}d8 13.\textit{e}e3) 13.\textit{e}e3; White continues with \textit{ae}1 and \textit{f}2 with compensation for the pawn) 12.\textit{b}b3 \textit{c}c8 (12...\textit{c}c5 13.\textit{h}h3+ \textit{d}d8 14.\textit{f}f5=) 13.\textit{e}e1 \textit{c}6 (13...\textit{g}6? 14.\textit{d}d5 \textit{f}5 15.\textit{xf}f5 \textit{gxf}5 16.\textit{xf}f5+ \textit{d}d7 17.\textit{xe}e4=) 14.\textit{f}f3 \textit{d}5 15.\textit{e}e3= followed by c2-c4;

B112) 7...c6 8.\textit{d}2.

\begin{center}
\textbf{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{B1121)} Now 8...\textit{f}xe4 is dubious because of 9.\textit{xe}e4 \textit{e}e7 10.0-0-0 \textit{xe}e4 11.\textit{b}b4 with strong compensation;

\textbf{B1122)} Black is also worse after 8...\textit{e}e7, when White should play aggressively: 9.e5 \textit{fd}7 (or 9...\textit{d}xe5 10.\textit{xc}6! \textit{e}4 11.\textit{xe}7 \textit{xf}3 12.\textit{xc}8 \textit{xc}8 13.\textit{xf}3=) 10.\textit{xc}6! bxc6 11.\textit{b}5! cxb5 (11...\textit{xe}5 12.\textit{xe}5 \textit{xe}5+ 13.\textit{e}e2 with advantage) 12.\textit{xa}8=;

\textbf{B1123)} 8...\textit{d}7 9.\textit{f}5 \textit{e}7 (on 9...\textit{e}7 there is the unpleasant 10.\textit{b}3 \textit{xb}3 11.axb3 followed by 0-0-0, g2-g4) 10.0-0-0 0-0 11.\textit{d}3=.

\textbf{B12)} 6...\textit{g}6!? 7.\textit{f}3!? \textit{e}7 8.\textit{d}3 (8.\textit{e}2 deserves attention, after which a strong line is 8...\textit{b}6 9.\textit{e}5 \textit{fd}5 10.\textit{e}4 \textit{dxe}5 11.\textit{xe}5 \textit{f}5 12.a3 \textit{xe}4 13.\textit{xe}4 0-0-0=) 8...\textit{g}7 9.0-0 0-0 10.\textit{h}1, and in the game Vokac-Jansa, Lazne Bohdanec 1995, a draw was agreed.

Overall, the variation 6.\textit{d}xd4 deserves attention, since to obtain satisfactory play, Black needs to show considerable accuracy.

B2) As the main variation, we will examine 6.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}6 7.\textit{d}2 (the plus side of this move is that here, the bishop does not come under attack after 7...\textit{g}4; the more popular continuation is 7.\textit{e}e3) and now:

\begin{center}
\textbf{B21)} 7...d5 8.0-0-0 \textit{c}5 9.\textit{d}3 0-0 (9...\textit{d}xe4 10.\textit{xe}4 0-0 11.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 12.\textit{a}3 \textit{b}6 13.\textit{b}4 \textit{c}7 14.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 15.\textit{e}5= with advantage) 10.\textit{exd}5
B211) 10...\textit{c}7 11.\textit{g}5 \textit{d}6 (11...\textit{h}6 12.\textit{ge}4 \textit{cxd}5 13.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 14.\textit{xd}5, winning a pawn) 12.dxc6 bxc6 13.\textit{f}3 \textit{b}8, and here in the game Zsiltzova-Lisenko Ptacnikova, Tromsø 2014, after 14.\textit{ge}4 \textit{e}7 15.\textit{d}3 White had an extra pawn, without a shred of compensation for Black;
B212) Nor is there any help from 10...\textit{b}4 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.\textit{e}4 \textit{xd}2+ 13.\textit{fxd}2 with an extra pawn;
B213) Black is also worse after 10...\textit{b}6 11.dxc6 bxc6 12.\textit{g}5 \textit{b}8 13.\textit{b}1 \textit{a}5 14.b3 \textit{e}7 15.\textit{ge}4 \textit{d}8 16.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}5 17.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 18.\textit{e}3 \textit{b}4 19.\textit{b}5 \textit{xd}2 20.\textit{xd}2 \textit{xb}3 21.axb3 \textit{cxb}5 22.\textit{xd}8+ \textit{xd}8 23.\textit{d}1 \textit{f}8 24.\textit{xa}7 with an extra pawn, Tanase-Peerdeman, corr. 2014;
B214) Or 10...\textit{cxd}5 11.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xd}5 12.\textit{xd}5 and now:
B2141) 12...\(c7\) 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}d3\) (also good is 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}c3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xf4+\) 14.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{b}}}1\), Sharapov-Nesteretz, Ukraine tt 2010) 13...\(f6\) 14.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}g5\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}6\) (on 14...\(h6\), as in Böhnisch-Rost van Tonningen, corr. 2002, there is the strong move 15.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}3\), and it is hard to see any compensation for Black’s pawn minus) 15.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{b}}}1\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{b}}}6\) 16.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{h}}}f1\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{f}}}ac8\) 17.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}3\) h6 18.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}7\) 19.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{d}}}4\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}5\) 20.b3 (even better is 20.\(a3\)) 20...\(h5\) 21.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}1\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}1\) 22.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}xe1\) with an extra pawn for White, Le Hetet-Le Borgne, France tt 2011/12;

B2142) 12...\(b6\) 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}c3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}3+\) (the same thing is reached after 13...\(f6\) 14.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xf6\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}3+\) 15.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{b}}}1\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}f6\) 16.\(g3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}4\) 17.\(g2\)) 14.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{b}}}1\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{f}}}6\) 15.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xf6\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{f}}}xf6\) 16.\(g3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}4\) 17.\(g2\), Iordachescu-Baete, Vlissingen 2003. Black’s bishop pair does not compensate fully for the pawn minus.

B22) 7...\(b6\) 8.0-0-0

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[help lines] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw (0.5,0.5) node {a} (1.5,0.5) node {b} (2.5,0.5) node {c} (3.5,0.5) node {d} (4.5,0.5) node {e} (5.5,0.5) node {f} (6.5,0.5) node {g} (7.5,0.5) node {h};
\draw (0,0.5) node {1} (0,1.5) node {2} (0,2.5) node {3} (0,3.5) node {4} (0,4.5) node {5} (0,5.5) node {6} (0,6.5) node {7} (0,7.5) node {8};
\draw (0,0) node {\textcolor{black}{\textbf{analysis diagram}}}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

B221) 8...\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xd4\) 9.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}xd4\) and now:

B2211) On 9...\(g6\) things went reasonably for White in the game Wohl-Seret, Naujac 2002: 10.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}2\) (it is also worth considering 10.e5 \(dxe5\) 11.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}1\) \(h6\) 12.fxe5 \(\text{\textipa{\textit{d}}}d5+\) 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}xd2\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}4\) 14.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}6\) \(b6\) 15.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}2\) \(e5\) 16.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}f7+\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xf7\) 17.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{d}}}3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{b}}}c4+\) 18.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}1\) 10...\(g7\) 11.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{f}}}3\) 0-0 12.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}1\) \(h6\) (better was 12...\(e8\)) 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}2\) \(e5\) 14.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xd6\) \(xf3\) 15.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}f3\) \(h5\) 16.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{d}}}2\), and White kept an extra pawn;

B2212) 9...\(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}5\) 10.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}1\) \(e6\) (on 10...\(f7\) the move 11.\(h4\) is not bad, seizing even more space) 11.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{f}}}3\) \(e7\) 12.e5 \(dxe5\) 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}xe5\), Bae-Byklum, Norway tt 2008/09;

B222) 8...\(e7\) 9.\(g3\) (freeing a square for the light-squared bishop) 9...0-0 (9...\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xd4\) 10.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}xd4\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}5\) 11.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}2\) (now we see the point of 9.g3) 11.\(d7\) 12.h3 (it is important to cover g4 and further restrict the black pieces) 12...0-0-0 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{h}}}1\) with advantage to White, Janisch-Potter, corr. 2013) 10.h3 (White has also tried 10.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{g}}}2\) \(e8\) 11.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{h}}}1\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}xd4\) 12.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{a}}}xd4\) \(f8\) 13.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}2\) \(c5\) 14.h3 a5 15.g4 \(h6\) 16.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{e}}}1\) \(e6\) 17.\(g3\) \(\text{\textipa{\textit{c}}}d4\) 18.\(\text{\textipa{\textit{w}}}d4\), Dubko-Burg, corr. 2014)
10...e8 (on 10...d5 a possibility is 11.e5 dxe5 12.dxe5 cxd5 13.g2 f6 14.g4) 11.g2 (worse is 11.e3 d5 12.xb6 axb6 13.exd5 b4 14.dxe6 xe3 15.xd7 xd7, Alonso Moyano-Hernandez, Mislata 2003, but 11.g4 is not bad) 11...xd4 12.cxd4 c5 13.he1 f8 14.g4 h6 (or 14...a5 15.e2 a4 16.a3 g6 17.e1 fd7 18.f2 h6 19.g3, Schilcher-Lavrentyev, corr. 2011) 15.f5 xf5 16.gxf5 a5 17.f3 eac8 18.a3 fd7 19.b1 cd8 20.e2 with advantage to White, Schulz-Burg, corr. 2014.

C) 4.e7!!?
5.d4 (not so clear is 5.fxe5 dxe5 6.\(\text{Q}x\text{e}5 \text{Q}x\text{e}4\), and on 7.\(\text{Q}x\text{e}4\) there follows 7...\(\text{Qd}4\), regaining the knight; another possibility is to bring out the bishop with 5.\(\text{B}c4\) followed by 0-0) 5...exd4 6.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}4\) and now:

C1) 6...\(\text{Nc}6\) 7.\(\text{Qc}4\) 0-0 8.\(\text{B}c4\) \(\text{B}e6\) 9.\(\text{B}xe4\) ², White follows up by castling long and attacking on the kingside with f4-f5, g2-g4; maybe he should start with e4-e5;

C2) 6...0-0 7.\(\text{Be}3\)

C21) 7...\(\text{Cc}6\) 8.\(\text{Qd}2\) \(\text{Nc}6\) 8.0-0-0 \(\text{Qa}5\) 10.\(\text{Qe}1\) \(\text{Re}8\) (or 10...\(\text{B}e6\) 11.a3 \(\text{a}6\) 12.f5 \(\text{d}7\) 13.g4! \(\text{Q}x\text{g}4\) 14.\(\text{Qf}4\) followed by \(\text{eg}1\) and an attack on the king) 11.\(\text{Qc}4\) ²;

C22) 7...\(\text{g}4\) 8.0-0-0 (8.\(\text{Qg}1\) ? \(\text{f}6\) 9.\(\text{Wd}2\) \(\text{xc}3\) 10.\(\text{Wxc}3\) \(\text{Be}8\) 11.0-0-0 \(\text{Qe}4\) 12.\(\text{Wd}4\) ²) 8...\(\text{f}6\) 9.\(\text{Wd}3\) \(\text{xc}3\) 10.\(\text{Wxe}3\) ²;

C23) 7...a6 8.0-0-0 b5 9.\(\text{Wd}2\) \(\text{b}4\) (9...\(\text{b}7\) 10.\(\text{Qd}3\) \(\text{Qd}7\) 11.\(\text{Qe}1\) ²) 10.\(\text{Qd}5\) \(\text{Qd}4\) 11.\(\text{Wd}3\) (or 11.\(\text{Qx}b4\) \(\text{Qf}6\) 12.\(\text{Qd}3\) \(\text{Qxd}5\) 13.\(\text{Qe}4\) \(\text{g}6\) 14.\(\text{Qxd}5\) \(\text{c}6\) 15.\(\text{Qc}4\) 16.\(\text{Qa}4\) \(\text{Qd}7\) 17.\(\text{Qf}3\) ²) 11...\(\text{Qd}6\) 12.\(\text{Qg}5\) \(\text{g}6\) (12...\(\text{Qb}7\) 13.\(\text{Qd}4\) \(\text{g}6\) 14.\(\text{Qh}3\) \(\text{h}5\) 15.\(\text{Qe}7\) \(\text{Qe}7\) 16.\(\text{Qg}3\) ²) 13.\(\text{Qxf}6\)+ \(\text{Qxf}6\) 14.\(\text{Wd}5\) \(\text{c}6\) 15.\(\text{Qxd}6\) ².

D) 4...\(\text{c}6\)!

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{analysis_diagram.png}
\caption{Analysis diagram}
\end{figure}

5.d4 (there are also other continuations, such as 5.\(\text{b}5\) and 5.\(\text{c}4\))

D1) 5...\(\text{g}4\) 6.d5 \(\text{Qd}4\) 7.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{xf}3\)+ 8.\(\text{gxf}3\) \(\text{exf}4\) (8...\(\text{d}7\) 9.\(\text{f}5\) \(\text{d}5\) 10.\(\text{g}1\), and then \(\text{d}2\) and 0-0-0 with the initiative) 9.\(\text{xf}4\) \(\text{d}7\) 10.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{e}7\) 11.0-0-0 ², Grafl-Collinson, England tt 2009;

D2) 5...\(\text{xd}4\) 6.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{e}7\) (6...\(\text{d}7\) 7.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{e}7\) 8.0-0 0-0 9.\(\text{f}3\) ²; 6...\(\text{xf}4\) 7.\(\text{xf}4\) \(\text{xf}4\) 8.\(\text{e}3\) 0-0 9.0-0-0 ²; 6...\(\text{g}4\) 7.\(\text{xc}6\) \(\text{xc}6\) 8.\(\text{d}4\) ²) 7.\(\text{e}3\) 0-0 (White faces no problems after 7...\(\text{g}4\) 8.\(\text{g}1\) \(\text{f}6\) 9.\(\text{d}2\) ² followed by 0-0-0) 8.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{xd}4\) (or 8...\(\text{e}8\) 9.0-0 \(\text{f}8\) 10.\(\text{f}3\) ², Tsekhkovsky-Karasev, Zvenigorod ch-RUS sr 2005) 9.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{d}7\) (dubious is 9...\(\text{b}5\), since after 10.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{xe}5\) 11.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{d}7\) 12.\(\text{xb}5\) ² White takes a pawn; it is worth considering 9...\(\text{d}5\), but this move involves a pawn sacrifice: 10.\(\text{xf}6\) \(\text{xf}6\) 11.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xc}3\)+ 12.\(\text{bxc}3\) \(\text{f}6\) 13.\(\text{d}2\); Black has certain compensation, but White is not risking anything) 10.0-0 \(\text{c}6\) 11.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{c}3\)+ Carr-Dawson, Brighton ch-ENG 1984; even stronger is 11.\(\text{d}3\), and if 11...\(\text{d}7\), then 12.\(\text{b}4\) with the threat of going \(\text{b}4\)-\(\text{b}5\) and winning the bishop. For example, 12...\(\text{a}6\) 13.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{b}6\) 14.\(\text{g}3\) or 14.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{b}7\) 15.\(\text{ad}1\) with a serious initiative.

Now we return to the main game.
5. d4

5...c4!? e7 (worse is 5...g4, as in the game Alekhine-De Klerck, Tjespoe 1933: 6.d4 d5?! 7...xd5 d6 8...xf6+ gxf6 9.0-0±; even weaker is 8...xf6 9.e5+-) 6.d3 0-0 7...xf4 with a somewhat better position for White.

5...g6

Black cannot defend the pawn with 5...h5 6.d5 g5? (6...e7 7...xf4 xf4 8...xf4±) because of 7...xg5! xg5 8.xh5! xh5 9.f6+ d8 10.xh5+-.

The move 5...d5 does not fit with 3...d6: 6.exd5 xd5 7...xd5 xd5 8...xf4 d6 9...xd6 xd6 10.e4±.

6...xf4
6...a6?!

Too passive; more logical is 6...g7 7.e5 h5 8.g5 f6 9.exf6 xf6 10.d2±; 6...c6 7.d2 g7 8.0-0-0 0-0 9.g5±.

7.e4 b5 8.b3 g7

8...b4 does not work because of 9.e5 bxc3 10.exf6 cxb2 11.b1 xf6 12.g5 f5 13.e2+ e6 14.d5+-.

9.0-0

Also good is 9.e5! dxe5 10.dxe5 xd1+ 11.xd1 g4 12.h3 h6 13.d5, winning.

9...0-0 10.e5 h5 11.g5 d7
12.\textit{Q}c1?!

A strange move. Better was 12.\textit{Re}1+ followed by exd6 or e5-e6, opening lines for the rooks. But we should not forget that Miguel Najdorf played this game in a blindfold simultaneous display.

12...\textit{Q}g4?

Black could complicate his opponent’s task by 12...\textit{N}c6, and White needs to play 13.\textit{N}d5 (not 13.\textit{Kh}6 dxe5 14.\textit{B}xg7 \textit{K}xg7 15.dxe5 \textit{Q}xe5 16.\textit{Q}xe5 \textit{Q}d4++; this is where the move 12.\textit{Q}c1 tells – the square d4 is unprotected, 17.\textit{Kh}1 \textit{Q}xe5\textit{+}) 13...\textit{a}5 14.\textit{Q}f6+ \textit{Q}xf6 15.exf6 \textit{Q}xb3 16.cxb3 \textit{B}h8 17.\textit{B}h4, and the bishop on h8 spoils the black position.

13.\textit{h}3 \textit{Q}d7 14.\textit{Q}e4

14.\textit{Re}1?!

14...\textit{B}b7 15.\textit{Q}f6+

The queen centralisation is also good: 15.\textit{Q}e3+-.

15...\textit{xf}6 16.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6?

It was essential to play 16...dxe5 17.dxe5 \textit{Q}xf3 18.\textit{xf}3 \textit{Q}d4+ 19.\textit{Kh}1 \textit{xf}6 20.exf6 \textit{Q}h4, not allowing White to play \textit{Q}h6 with deadly threats. But admittedly, after 21.\textit{Q}e3 the black position is difficult anyway: White’s pieces are more active and the pawn on f6 is very unpleasant.

17.exf6 \textit{Q}f5
18. Ne5

An even simpler win was 18. Ng5, and after 18...Qd7 19. Ne4 Black is inevitably mated.

18...Qh5 19. g4 h8 20. Wh6 Qxh6 21. Nhx6 d5 22. Ze1

Material is equal, but the white pieces are much more active; Black’s position is absolutely lost.


Conclusion: As we have seen in this game and the accompanying analysis, after the passive 3...d6 Black cannot count on equalising.

1.e4 e5 2. Nc3 Nf6 3. f4 d5

The most popular and principled reply.
4.fxe5

4.exd5 is also interesting, although in this case, Black has three roughly equal continuations – 4...e4, 4...\(\text{N}d5\) and 4...\(\text{exf4}\), whereas our task is to restrict his options to the maximum extent.

4...\(\text{N}xe4\) 5.\(\text{Q}f3\)

An old move. White brings his queen out to the half-open f-file, attacking the \(\text{N}e4\), and also eyeing up the f7-pawn. If the chance arises (after the black knight leaves e4) the queen may come to g3, taking aim at the g7-pawn and overprotecting the pawn on e5.

On 5.\(\text{N}f3\) there is the very strong 5...\(\text{c5}\)! 6.d4 \(\text{b4}\), as in the game Andreikin-Kramnik, Moscow 2010. For example: 7.\(\text{d2}\) (7.a3 \(\text{xc3}+\) 8.\(\text{xc3}\) \(\text{xc3}\) 9.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{e4}\)?) 7...\(\text{c5}\) 8.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{xd2}\) 9.\(\text{xd2}\) cxd4 (9...\(\text{c6}\)) 10.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{c6}\) 11.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{e7}\) 12.0-0-0 \(\text{xc3}\) 13.\(\text{xc3}\) 0-0-0.

5...\(\text{c6}\)

The moves 5...\(f5\) and 5...\(\text{xc3}\) will be examined later.

6.\(\text{b5}\)

6.\(\text{xe4}\) fails to 6...\(\text{d4}\) 7.\(\text{c5}\) dxe4 with a good game for Black.

6...\(\text{xc3}\)

6...f5?! 7.d3 \(\text{xc3}\) 8.\(\text{xc3}\) a6 (8...\(\text{e7}\) 9.\(\text{e2}\) 0-0 10.\(\text{d4}\) \(\text{a5}\) 11.\(\text{f4}\) c6 12.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{c4}\) 13.0-0 \(\text{e8}\)? 14.\(\text{xd5}\) wins, Swanson-Hebden, Pagnell rapid 2010) 9.\(\text{xc6}\)+ \(\text{xc6}\)
10. \( g3 \) (preventing the enemy dark-squared bishop developing) 10... \( e6 \) 11. \( f3 \) c5 12. \( e3 \) \( d7 \) 13.0-0 with the initiative, Möwig-Wiegand, Hamburg 1910. White has already completed his development, whilst it is not so simple for Black to bring out all his pieces: long castling is very dangerous, and short castling is not possible because of the white queen, which is attacking the g7-pawn and stopping the bishop developing.

7. \( dxc3 \)

Less good is 7.\( bxc3 \) \( h4+ \) 8.\( g3 \) \( e4+ \) 9.\( xe4 \) dxe4 – the opening of the b-file does not bring White any particular benefit, and his dark-squared bishop is blocked in. And if 10.d4, opening up the bishop, then 10...\( exd3 \) 11.\( cxd3 \) \( d7 \), and White loses the e5-pawn, because after 12.d4 there still follows 12...\( xe5 \) 13.\( xd7+ \) \( xd7 \).

7...\( h4+ \)

7...a6!? 8.\( xc6+ \) \( bxc6 \) 9.\( e2 \) \( h4+ \) (9...\( c5 \) 10.\( g3 \) \( g8 \) 11.\( d4 \) \( xd4 \) 12.\( cxd4 \), Paulsen-Blackburne, Breslau 1889) 10.\( g3 \) \( e7 \) 11.0-0 0-0 12.\( f5 \) \( xf5 \) 13.\( xf5 \) \( c5+ \) 14.\( h1 \) \( ae8 \) 15.\( f4= \), Moussard-Jolly, Aix-les-Bains ch-FRA 2007;

7...\( d7 \) was played in the game Bueno-Hammer, Internet 2009. Then a possibility is: 8.\( g3 \) \( e7 \) (8...\( c7 \) 9.\( xd7+ \) \( xd7 \) 10.\( f3 \) 0-0 0-0 11.\( d2 \) h6 12.0-0 with mutual chances; White is better after 11...\( c5 \)?! 12.0-0 \( c6 \) 13.\( ae1= \)) 9.\( xc6 \) \( xc6 \) 10.\( f3 \) 0-0 0-0 11.\( e3 \), and then 0-0 or 0-0-0, with chances for both sides.

8.\( g3 \) \( e4+ \) 9.\( xe4 \) dxe4
10. **Bxc6+**

White spoils the enemy pawn formation, before Black can play ...**d7**.

Another possibility is 10.**e3** **d7** 11.**xc6** **xc6** 12.0-0-0 or 10.**f4**, Nakamura-Yermolinsky, Stillwater ch-USA 2007, with a roughly equal game in both cases.

10...**bxc6** 11.**e3**

An important square for the bishop: it prevents the opponent bringing his own bishop out to c5, and at the same time eyes up the a7-pawn. In this position, Black has numerous possibilities:
11...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e7}}}

A) 11...\texttt{d7} 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}}} 0-0-0 (better was 12...h5, not weakening the square f7 and with the idea of playing ...h5-h4) 13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f1}}} (or 13.0-0\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e8}}}) 14.\texttt{xf7} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xe5}}} 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d1}}};

B) 11...\texttt{g4} 12.h3 \texttt{h5} 13.g4 \texttt{g6} 14.0-0-0\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f6}}}, not allowing Black to castle; White will follow up with \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}}}-f4 with the better chances (White played less well in the game Vavra-Suran, Mlada Boleslav 2007: 14.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}}} h5 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f4}}} hgx4 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xg6}}} fxg6 17.\texttt{tf2} gxh3);

C) 11...\texttt{e6} 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}}} and now:

C1) 12...c5 (taking control of the square d4 and not letting the black knight come there) 13.0-0-0 \texttt{e7} (13...\texttt{xa2}? 14.b3 c4 15.\texttt{b2}+-, and the bishop falls) 14.h3 (taking control of the square g4, where the black light-squared bishop may aim) 14...\texttt{d8} (14...0-0 15.\texttt{f4} \texttt{c8} 16.\texttt{d5} \texttt{d8} 17.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{e8} 18.\texttt{d4}+) 15.\texttt{f4} \texttt{xd1}+ 16.\texttt{xd1} \texttt{c8} 17.\texttt{d5} \texttt{d8} 18.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{hxh3} 19.\texttt{xa7}+

C2) 12...0-0-0 13.\texttt{d4} \texttt{d7}?! (better is 13...\texttt{d5} 14.0-0-0 \texttt{e8} (or 14...\texttt{c5} 15.\texttt{f5} \texttt{xe3}+ 16.\texttt{xe3}+) 15.c4 \texttt{xc4} 16.\texttt{xc6} a6 17.\texttt{he1}+) 14.0-0 \texttt{e8}, and here in the game Bueno-Santos, Sao Paulo 2008, a draw was agreed, although after the simple 15.\texttt{f7} \texttt{xe5} 16.\texttt{af1} (or 16.\texttt{f4} \texttt{e7} 17.\texttt{xe7} \texttt{xe7} 18.\texttt{e1}+ followed by \texttt{xe4}) 16.\texttt{e8} 17.\texttt{f4} White has the initiative.

D) It is also worth considering 11...\texttt{b8}?!?, which has not been tried in practice, although without concrete knowledge, such a decision is hard to make, since it leaves the a7-pawn undefended.

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{analysis_diagram.png}
\caption{Analysis Diagram}
\end{figure}

12.0-0-0, and now:

D1) 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g4}}} 13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e1}}} (13.\texttt{d2}?! \texttt{b5} 14.\texttt{h3} \texttt{c8} 15.\texttt{e2} \texttt{xe5} 16.\texttt{hd1}+) 13...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b5}}} 14.\texttt{h3} \texttt{f5} (14...\texttt{c8} 15.\texttt{f4=}) 15.\texttt{f4}\texttt{e2} or 15.\texttt{e2} \texttt{xe5} 16.\texttt{d4} \texttt{d7} 17.\texttt{f4} \texttt{e7} (White is better after 17...\texttt{d5} 18.\texttt{xe4}+ \texttt{he1} 19.\texttt{c4=} 18.\texttt{xc7}=)

D2) 12...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b5}}} 13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}}} \texttt{xe5} 14.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d4}}} \texttt{c5} (14...\texttt{d7} 15.\texttt{f4}?, taking on c7, or 15.\texttt{he1} followed by \texttt{f4} with the idea of taking on c7, or \texttt{b3} with the idea of taking on a7) 15.\texttt{b3} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d5}}} 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xa7}}} – Black has two bishops, White has a distant passed a-pawn. Both sides have chances.
12...c5 13.c4 f6?! (better was 13...g4 14.e3 f3 15.0-0-0) 14.exf6 xf6 15.0-0-0 b8 16.b3 0-0 17.xc5 e8 18.e3 with an extra pawn for White, as in the game P.Petrov-Zgurev, Sofia ch-BUL 1942.

13.d4 d7 14.0-0-0 a5

15.he1

Stronger was 15.hf1 followed by f5.

15...a4 16.c4 fd8 17.a3 a5 18.d2 xe5 19.f4 h5 20.xe4

White has exchanged central pawns and is now taking aim at the c7-pawn.

20...e6? 21.xe6 xd1+ 22.xd1 xe6 23.xe6
White has an extra pawn.

23...\texttt{f6} 24.\texttt{g4}

Also strong was 24.b4 \texttt{\textit{xh}2} 25.\texttt{\textit{xc}6}, and the b-pawn decides; also possible is 24.b3, winning.

24...\texttt{\textit{h}4} 25.\texttt{b3} \texttt{\textit{xg}4} 26.\texttt{\textit{xc}7} \texttt{\textit{c}3}

He also loses after 26...\texttt{c}5 27.\texttt{\textit{xc}6} \texttt{\textit{d}4+} 28.\texttt{\textit{e}2} \texttt{\textit{e}7} 29.\texttt{\textit{c}3} \texttt{\textit{e}4+} 30.\texttt{\textit{d}3} \texttt{\textit{e}1} 31.\texttt{\textit{xa}4} (or 31.\texttt{\textit{b}4+-}) 31...\texttt{\textit{a}1} 32.a5 \texttt{\textit{xa}3} 33.a6.

27.\texttt{\textit{e}2} 28.\texttt{\textit{d}6} \texttt{\textit{f}7} 29.\texttt{\textit{xd}4} \texttt{\textit{xd}4} 30.\texttt{\textit{d}3} \texttt{\textit{g}1} 31.\texttt{\textit{bxa}4} \texttt{\textit{e}6} 32.a5 \texttt{\textit{d}7} 33.\texttt{\textit{e}5} \texttt{\textit{c}8} 34.a6 \texttt{g6} 35.\texttt{\textit{d}6} \texttt{h5} 36.\texttt{\textit{e}4}

Black resigned.

\textbf{Conclusions:} So, in the main variation against the Vienna, 1.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{e}5 2.\texttt{\textit{c}3} \texttt{\textit{f}6} 3.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{d}5, we recommend the more forcing 4.\texttt{f}xe5 \texttt{\textit{xc}4} and here the old, and third most popular move 5.\texttt{\textit{f}3}. Then in this game there followed 5...\texttt{\textit{c}6} 6.\texttt{\textit{b}5} \texttt{\textit{xc}3}, and here the capture with the d-pawn – 7.\texttt{\textit{xc}3}, opening a path for the dark-squared bishop. There followed 7...\texttt{\textit{h}4+} exchanging queens after 8.\texttt{g3} \texttt{\textit{e}4+} 9.\texttt{\textit{xe}4} \texttt{dxe}4. Here we suggest taking immediately on \texttt{c6}, spoiling the black pawn structure: 10.\texttt{\textit{xc}6+} \texttt{\textit{xc}6} 11.\texttt{\textit{e}3} and not allowing the opponent to play \texttt{\textit{xc}5}. We hope that the ideas and analysis presented here will help you to obtain the advantage in your games in this endgame.
1.e4 e5 2.\(\text{c3}\) \(\text{f6}\) 3.f4 d5 4.\(\text{fxe5}\) \(\text{xe4}\) 5.\(\text{f3}\) f5!? 6.d3 \(\text{xc3}\) 7.bxc3

7...\(\text{e7}\)

7...\(\text{c6}\) is dubious because of 8.d4\(\text{c5}\), and Black clearly misses the break ...\text{c6-c5}.

A) 7...\text{c5} and now:

A1) 8.g3!? \(\text{c6}\) 9.\(\text{g2}\) d4 (worse is 9...\(\text{e6}\) 10.\(\text{h3}\) d7 11.0-0 0-0-0 12.\(\text{g5}\)\(\text{c5}\); 9...\(\text{xe5}\)?! 10.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{e7}\) 11.\(\text{xd5}\)\(\text{c5}\) 10.\(\text{f4}\) (10.\(\text{e2}\)?! \(\text{xe5}\) 11.\(\text{d5}\) \(\text{xd5}\) 12.\(\text{xd5}\) dxc3 13.\(\text{xc3}\)\(\text{c5}\)) 10...dxc3 11.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{e6}\) (11...\text{d4} 12.\text{xd4} cxd4 13.0-0 \(\text{c5}\) 14.e6 0-0 15.\(\text{e1}\) with the initiative) 12.\(\text{b1}\) (12.\(\text{xc3}\)\(\text{c5}\)) 12...\(\text{d7}\) 13.\text{a4} \(\text{c8}\) 14.\(\text{xc6}\) bxc6 (14...\(\text{xc6}\) 15.\(\text{xc6}\)\(\text{bxc6}\) 16.\(\text{b7}\)\(\text{c7}\)) 15.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{e7}\) 16.0-0 0-0 17.\(\text{e3}\) with counterplay; or 17.\(\text{xe6}\) \(\text{xe6}\) 18.\(\text{b3}\) c4 19.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xc4}\) 20.dxc4=;

A2) 8.d4!? cxd4 9.\(\text{e2}\) dxc3 10.\(\text{f4}\)\(\text{c5}\);

A3) 8.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{c6}\) 9.\(\text{c2}\), and now:

A31) 9...\(\text{e6}\) 10.\(\text{f3}\) d7 11.0-0 0-0-0 12.\(\text{b1}\)\(\text{c5}\);

A32) 9...d4 10.\(\text{f3}\) (10.\text{c4}?) 10...dxc3 11.\(\text{e2}\)\(\text{c5}\);

A33) 9...\(\text{g6}\) 10.\(\text{f3}\) \(\text{g7}\) 11.h4 or 11.0-0 with mutual chances;

B) The most exact move is 7...\text{d4}, after which we reach a complicated position.
White has two main continuations – A) 8.\textit{Q}f4 and B) 8.\textit{Q}g3.

B1) After 8.\textit{Q}f4!? we have:

B11) In the event of 8...c5, the best move is to defend c3 with the knight – 9.\textit{N}e2 (9.\textit{Q}f3, as played by Spielmann, is not so good because of 9...\textit{Q}a5, and Black takes on c3 – 10.\textit{Q}d2 dxc3; also insufficient is 9.\textit{B}d2 \textit{N}c6 10.\textit{Q}f3 because of 10...h6\textsuperscript{=} followed by ...g7-g5 (equality results from 10...\textit{B}e6 11.\textit{Q}c2 \textit{Q}e7 12.cxd4 \textit{Q}xd4 13.\textit{Q}xd4 cxd4, Flamberg-Romanovsky, Triberg 1915), and 11.h4? g5 12.hxg5 hxg5\textsuperscript{+} is no help; White has queen and rook under attack).

After the move 9.\textit{N}e2 there are no games in the database, so we will just look at a few possible variations.
analysis diagram

B111) 9...\(\text{\textsection}c6\) 10.g3

B1111) 10...\(\text{\textsection}e6\) 11.\(\text{\textsection}g2\) \(\text{\textsection}d5\) 12.0-0 \(\text{\textsection}xg2\) 13.\(\text{\textsection}xg2\) \(g6\) (13...\(\text{\textsection}d5+\) 14.\(\text{\textsection}f3\) \(\text{\textsection}xf3+\) 15.\(\text{\textsection}xf3\) \(g6\) 16.cxd4 cxd4\(\text{\textsection}e1\) 14.cxd4 cxd4 15.\(\text{\textsection}f3\) (or 15.c4 dxc3 16.\(\text{\textsection}c4\) \(\text{\textsection}xe5\) 17.\(\text{\textsection}b5+\) \(\text{\textsection}c6\) 18.\(\text{\textsection}xc3\)\(\text{\textsection}e1\) 15...\(\text{\textsection}g7\) 16.e6 with mutual chances;

B1112) 10...\(\text{\textsection}d5\) 11.\(\text{\textsection}g1\) \(\text{\textsection}xe5\) 12.\(\text{\textsection}xe5+\) \(\text{\textsection}xe5\) 13.\(\text{\textsection}g2\) dxc3 14.\(\text{\textsection}xc3\).

B112) 9...dxc3

B1121) 10.\(\text{\textsection}xc3\) \(\text{\textsection}c6\) 11.\(\text{\textsection}c2\) \(g6\) (11...\(\text{\textsection}e6\) 12.\(\text{\textsection}f3\)\(\text{\textsection}e1\)) 12.\(\text{\textsection}f3\) \(\text{\textsection}g7\) 13.0-0 \(\text{\textsection}d4+\) (13...0-0 14.\(\text{\textsection}c4+\) \(\text{\textsection}h8\) 15.\(\text{\textsection}xc6\) bxc6 16.\(\text{\textsection}xc5\) \(\text{\textsection}e8\) 17.\(\text{\textsection}e1\) \(\text{\textsection}b6\) 18.\(\text{\textsection}a4\) \(\text{\textsection}xc5+\) 19.\(\text{\textsection}xc5\) \(\text{\textsection}xe5\) 20.\(\text{\textsection}f4\) \(\text{\textsection}xe1+\) 21.\(\text{\textsection}xe1\)\(\text{\textsection}e1\)) 14.\(\text{\textsection}xd4\) \(\text{\textsection}xd4\) 15.\(\text{\textsection}b1\).

B1122) 10.g3!? 

10...\(\text{\textsection}c6\) (10...\(\text{\textsection}d5\)\? , forcing White to play 11.\(\text{\textsection}g1\), and then: 11...\(\text{\textsection}c6\) (11...\(\text{\textsection}e6\) 12.\(\text{\textsection}g2\) \(\text{\textsection}d7\) 13.\(\text{\textsection}b1\) \(\text{\textsection}c6\) 14.\(\text{\textsection}a4\) \(\text{\textsection}c8\) 15.\(\text{\textsection}f2\) – freeing the path for the rook to e1 or d1 – 15...b6 16.\(\text{\textsection}xc3\)). 12.\(\text{\textsection}xc3\) (12.\(\text{\textsection}g2\) \(\text{\textsection}f7\) 13.\(\text{\textsection}xc3\); but not 12...\(\text{\textsection}xe5\)?? 13.\(\text{\textsection}xc6+\) bxc6 14.\(\text{\textsection}xe5+\), winning) 12...\(\text{\textsection}xe5+\) 13.\(\text{\textsection}xe5+\) \(\text{\textsection}xe5\) 14.\(\text{\textsection}g2\)\).
11...e6 (worse are both 11...e7 12.b1 0-0 13.0-0=, and it is not easy for Black to bring out the c8, and 11...d4 12.xd4 exd4 (12...xd4 13.a4 e7 14.a5 b8 15.e3 xf4 16.gxf4=) 13.0-0 e7 (13...e5!? 14.e6 0-0 15.e1 gives White more than sufficient compensation) 14.b1 g5 (14...0-0 15.xb7 b8 16.d5+ xd5 17.xb8=) 15.f2 b8 16.c6+! f8 17.e2 e6 18.e4 g7 19.xf5 xf5 20.f5=) 12.b1 d7 13.a4 c8 14.xc6 xc6 15.xc6+ bxc6 16.xc3 c4 17.e2=.

B12) 8...dxc3 9.xc4 c6 10.f3 h6 11.d4 a6 12.b1 g5 13.h3 e7 14.xc3 d7 15.c4 b5 16.xd3 c6 17.a5 d5 18.0-0 e7 19.d2 e6 20.a4 b4 21.xb4 xb4 22.xb4xb4 23.xb4 f7 24.c4 ab8 25.b1 b6 26.g4 b4 27.gxf5 xe1 28.fxe6+, and Black resigned in L-Hansen-Korman, corr. 2009;

B13) 8..c6 9.f3
analysis diagram

B131) 9...c5 10.b2 dxc3 11.xc3 e6 12.d4 b6 (not good is 12...b4 13.xb4 xb4 14.d2 c5 15.e4 a5 16.d5 c2+ 17.d1 xd2+ 18.xd2 xa1 19.dxe6 0-0-0+ 20.d3, and White gets a second piece for the rook, (Frohberg-Ehrke, Bad Segeberg 1995), but it is possible to play 12...e7 13.b1 with a complicated game) 13.0-0-0 (or 13.b2 13...d7 14.c3±) 13...e7 (13...d5!? 14.g5 0-0-0 15.xe6 xe6±) 14.b2± or 14.g5 0-0 15.b4 d5 16.xd8 fx8 17.d2 with mutual chances;

B132) 9...xc3 10.c4
B1321) 10...h6 11.e2 (11.d4?! g5 12.h3†) 11...g5 12.h4  g4?! (correct was 12...g4 13.e6  d4 14.d1 (14.xf8  xf8 15.xd1†) 14...e6 15.xc3  d5 16.0-0 b5 17.a5 b6 18.a4  c5+ 19.h7  d7 20.b3  xb3 21.axb3  g8 22.f4†) 13.h5+  d8 14.g6  xc4 15.dxc4  g8 16.xf8  b4 17.g6  xc2+ 18.f2  c5 19.b1  b6 20.b3†, Kassis-Sepp, Dresden 2008;

B1322) 10...b4 11.qxc3  d5 12.b3  b4+ 13.f2  c5+ 14.e2  c6 15.d4  c7 16.f2  g5 (the assessment is not changed by 16...0-0 17.c4  c7 18.e2† or 16...b5 17.c4  bxc4 18.xc4) 17.c4  c7 18.d5  c5+ 19.e3  e3+ 20.xe3 with a double-edged game.

B2) 8.g3

analysis diagram

B21) 8...dxc3!? 9.e2 (with the threat of h5†; worse is 9.f3  c6 10.e2  d5 11.0-0 e6†)

B211) 9...c6 does not work because of 10.h5+ g6 11.xg6+ hxg6 12.xg6+ d7 13.xf5+ e8 14.g6+ d7 15.e6+ d6 16.e7+ xe7 17.g5†, winning;

B212) 9...g6 10.f3  g7 11.e2 0-0 12.a3  e8 13.d4  a6 14.d1 with more than enough compensation for the pawn, Robinson-Menhinnick, corr. 1912;

B213) 9...d7! 10.f3  c6 11.xc6  xc6 12.e2  a4 13.f4  d4 14.e2  b6 15.e3  b2 16.0-0 xc2 17.f4  a4 18.g6  g8 (18...hxg6? 19.xg6+ d8 20.g5+ c7 21.xc7+ xe7 22.xg7+, winning) 19.xf8  xf8 20.xg7  d7 21.xd7+ xd7 22.xc1  c6 23.xc3=, Ruimy-Hofmann, corr. 2003;

B22) 8...c6 9.e2, and now:
B221) 9...\(d\)5!? (attacking e5) 10.\(\textit{f}3\) (White has also played 10.\(\textit{f}4\), defending the pawn, and then: 10...\(\textit{e}6\) 11.\(\textit{c}4\) \(\textit{b}4+\) 12.\(\textit{f}2\) \(\textit{d}7\) 13.\(\textit{b}1\) 0-0-0 14.\(\textit{f}3\) \(\textit{c}5\) 15.\(\textit{b}5\) \(\textit{b}6\) 16.\(\textit{e}2\) \(\textit{a}6\) 17.\(\textit{xc}5\) \(\textit{xc}5\) 18.\(\textit{b}1\)\(\textit{c}\), Hromadka-Schreiber, München 1936) 10...\(\textit{c}5\) (more logical and stronger is 10...\(\textit{xe}5+\) 11.\(\textit{xe}5+\) \(\textit{xe}5\) 12.\(\textit{cxd}4\) \(\textit{xf}3+\) 13.\(\textit{xf}3\) with a roughly equal position) 11.\(\textit{e}2\) \(\textit{dxc}3\) (after the superior 11...\(\textit{g}6\) White can play 12.\(\textit{h}4\) with the idea of \(\textit{h}5\), breaking up the black pawns on the kingside) 12.\(\textit{c}3\) \(\textit{e}7\) 13.\(\textit{d}4\)\(\textit{d}\), Hromadka-Treybal, Prague 1912 (even stronger is 13.0-0 \(\textit{xe}5\) 14.\(\textit{ae}1\) with an attack);

B222) 9...\(\textit{e}6\) 10.\(\textit{c}4\) (another possibility is 10.\(\textit{f}3\) 10...\(\textit{b}4+\) 11.\(\textit{d}1\). A new idea. Perez Mitjans in his two games retreated to \(\textit{f}1\) and \(\textit{f}2\), but this did not bring him success, and we instead recommend retreating the king to \(\textit{d}1\). The position is about equal, but White has the simple moves \(\textit{b}1\), \(\textit{f}3\), \(\textit{e}2\)-\(\textit{f}4\) or \(\textit{h}3\)-\(\textit{g}5\), \(\textit{h}4\)-\(\textit{h}5\).

\[8.\textit{d}4\]
\[8.\textit{e}2!\]?±.

\[8...\textit{c}5\]

8...0-0 9.\(\textit{e}2\) \(\textit{c}6\) 10.\(\textit{g}3\) (10.\(\textit{f}4\)??, and if 10...\(\textit{g}5\), then 11.\(\textit{d}3\) followed by \(\textit{h}2\)-\(\textit{h}4\)) 10...\(\textit{a}6\) 11.\(\textit{h}4\) \(\textit{c}7\) 12.\(\textit{h}3\) \(\textit{h}8\) 13.\(\textit{h}5\) \(\textit{e}8\) 14.\(\textit{xe}8\) \(\textit{xe}8\) 15.\(\textit{b}1\) \(\textit{c}7\) 16.\(\textit{f}1\) \(\textit{b}6\) 17.\(\textit{f}2\) \(\textit{d}7\) 18.\(\textit{e}3\) \(\textit{f}7\) 19.\(\textit{d}2\) \(\textit{af}8\) 20.\(\textit{bf}1\)\(\textit{c}\), Lasker-Goncharov, Moscow 1899.

\[9.\textit{h}3\]

Also possible is 9.\(\textit{e}2\)± and \(\textit{f}4\).

\[9...\textit{cxd}4\]

9...0-0 10.\(\textit{f}4\) \(\textit{c}6\) 11.\(\textit{xd}5\)+±.

\[10.\textit{f}4\]
It was even stronger to take the pawn at once – 10.cxd4 ±.

10...0-0

Or 10...\(a5\) 11.\(\text{cxd5} \text{e6}\) (11...\(\text{c6}\) 12.\(\text{c4} \text{e6}\) 13.\(\text{xe7} \text{xe6}\) 14.\(\text{xe6} \text{xe6}\) 15.0-0±; 11...\(\text{dxc3}\) 12.\(\text{c4±}\) 12.\(\text{xe7} \text{xe7}\) 13.\(\text{b1±}\).

11.cxd4 ±

11...\(\text{h8}\) 12.\(\text{c3}\)

White should have played 12.h4, preventing the move 12...g5, and the advantage is on his side.

12...g5 13.\(\text{h5}\)

It was better to retreat 13.\(\text{d3±}\), since the knight has nothing to do on h5 anyway and is only an object of attack for Black.

13...\(\text{e8}\)

Threatening 14...g4, winning the knight.

14.\(\text{h3} \text{e6}\) 15.\(\text{d3} \text{c6}\) 16.\(\text{g3} \text{f4}\) 17.\(\text{e2} \text{c8}\) 18.0-0 \(\text{c7?!}\)

Better was 18...\(\text{a5}\), transferring the knight to another, more active post on c4, and also allowing the black rook to aim at the pawn on c3. Then there could follow: 19.\(\text{b1} \text{b6}\) 20.\(\text{h4} \text{g4}\) 21.\(\text{f2}\) 22.\(\text{f4} \text{d7}\) with a complicated position.

19.\(\text{d2}\)
19...c5?
It seems Black miscalculated somewhere – after this move, he loses a piece.

20.dxc5

20.dxc5 \(\text{dxe5} 21.f2 \text{xd3} 22.d4+\)

It is probably this check that Black missed, forking the knight, else it is hard to explain how he lost a piece.

22...g7 23.xd3 f5 24.f3 g4 25.f2

Even stronger was 25.xf4 gxh3 26.g3 or 25...xe2 26.e1 d3 27.e3 gxh3 28.d4, and White wins.

25...gxh3 26.xf4 e4 27.d4

Also good is 27.g3 h5 28.h2+.

27...g8 28.f2 hxg2

He is not saved by 28...xg2 29.h2+.

29.c4 g4 30.c3 xf4 31.xf4

Black resigned.

**Conclusion:** The move 5...f5!? is perfectly possible and deserves serious attention. After 6.d3 xc3 7.bxc3 Black does best to play 7...d4 or 7...c5 with a complicated game, with mutual chances. On the other hand, after 7...e7, as in the game, Black has definite problems.
1.e4 e5 2.\(\text{\textit{N}}\)c3 \(\text{\textit{N}}\)f6 3.f4 d5 4.fxe5 \(\text{\textit{N}}\)xe4 5.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{N}}\)xc3 6.bxc3

6...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e7

A) 6...\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)h4+ 7.g3 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e4+ 8.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe4 dxe4 9.\(\text{\textit{B}}\)g2

\textit{analysis diagram}

A1) 9...\(\text{\textit{c}}\)c6 10.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)xe5 11.\(\text{\textit{B}}\)b1 c6 12.d4 \(\text{\textit{Q}}\)g6 13.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f3 \(\text{\textit{d}}\)d6 14.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)f2 0-0 15.\(\text{\textit{Q}}\)e1± Barreras Garcia-Piccoli, corr. 2005;
A2) 9...f5, and now:

A21) In reply to 10.hb1!? a tempting move is 10...b6 (actually, the correct move is 10...c6, and after 11.hxb7?! 0-0-0 12.hb1 c5xe5 the position favours Black), but then 11.d4 d7 12.hc2 0-0-0 (even worse is 12...c7 13.0-0 g6 14.hf4 c5 15.cgb6 fxb6 16.cgxe4+; Antal-Palotai, Hungary tt 1999/00) 13.0-0 g6 14.hf3± followed by h4; the immediate 14.hf4± is also good;

A22) 10.d4 c5 (White is also better after 10...d7 11.hh3 f6 12.exf6 c6xe5 13.0-0 g6 14.g5 0-0-0 15.hf4 g6 16.hae1±, Erdei-Salinnikov, Budapest 1997) 11.hc2 d6 12.hb1 0-0-0 13.0-0 c6 (13...g6 14.g5 g6 15.xe7 d7 16.gxe4 cxd4 17.gxg6 fxb6 18.hf7 e8 19.xe4 c6 20.hxg7±) 14.g5 d7 15.xe4 cxd4 16.cxd4±.

B) 6...c5!? 

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analysis diagram

7.h3 (another possibility is 7.g3, strengthening the e5-pawn and at the same time taking aim at the pawn on g7)
7...c6

B1) 8.b5 b6 (better is 8...e7 9.f4 0-0 10.hx5±) and now:

B11) 9.a4 xh3 (worse is 9...a6 10.xc6+ xc6 11.0-0 e6 12.f4±) 10.xh3 a6 11.xc6+ xc6 12.g3 c4 13.0-0 c5± 14.h1 g6 15.hc6 hxg6=;

B12) 9.0-0! c6 (not 9...xb5 10.xf7+ d8 11.xd5+ e8 12.f7+ d8 13.d4 cxd4 14.g5+ e7 15.xe7+ dxe7 16.ad1 e8 17.c4+) 10.a4 c4+(10...0-0-0 11.xc6 xc6 12.f4±) 11.h1 0-0-0 12.d4 cxd4 13.e3 d4 14.cxd4 g4 15.xd4 xd4 16.xd4±.

B2) 8.f4
B21) 8...dx6 9...xe6 fxe6 10...d7 11.b5 0-0-0 12.0-0±;

B22) 8...xf5?! 9.b5 e4 (9...xc2? 10.d3 9.a5 11.xc6+ bxc6 12.0-0± xc3? 13.e6 fxe6 14.f7+ d8 15.b7 c8 16.g5+ e7 17.xe7#), and here both 10.g4 and 10.e2 or 10.h3 followed by 0-0 lead to a better position for White;

B23) 8...xe5 9.e3!? (equality results from 9.xd5 xd5 10.xd5 d6 11.d4 cxd4 12.cxd4 c6 13.c3) 9.d6 10.b5+ d7 11.xd7+ xd7 (11...xd7?? 12.0-0 c6=) 12.d4 cxd4 13.cxd4 0-0 14.dxe5 xe5 15.b1 a4! (worse is 15...xf4 16.xf4 fe8+ 17.d1=) 16.e2 with a complicated position;

B24) 8...e7 9.xd5 0-0 10.xd8 xd8 11.e6 fxe6 12.c4=. Then play could continue 12...e5 13.xe6+ xe6 14.xe6 d6 15.f4 c4 16.b1 f6 17.xb7 e8+ 18.xf2 xd2 19.e1 e4+ 20.f3 g5+ 21.f2 e4+ (worse is 21...xe1 22.xe1 xc3+ 23.e2=) 22.f3 g5+ 23.f2=.

7.d4
7...0-0

The alternative is 7...c5 8.d3 c6 9.e2. Here we will consider three possible plans: A) Black prepares long castling, B) Black first clarifies the central position with 9...cxd4 and C) Black castles short.

A) 9...e6 10.0-0 d7 (worse is 10...b6 because of 11.e3 cxd4 12.cxd4 b4?! (it is better to castle) 13.ab1 with a decisive advantage, P. Arnaudov-Mortensen, Plovdiv ch-EUR sen 2013) 11.g3 (a correspondence game went 11.g3 cxd4 12.cxd4 c6 13.f4 c6 14.h5 0-0-0 15.xg7 c7 16.f5 xf5 17.xf5 e5+ 18.h1 xe5 19.b2 f6 20.d4 xd4 21.xd4 e8, draw, Kubasky-Milde, corr. 2004) and now:

...
A1) 11...0-0? 12.\textit{h}6, and he has to give up the exchange, since after 12...g6, instead of \textit{xf}8 the move 13.\textit{f}4! is even stronger;

A2) 11...g6 12.dxc5 (White is also better after 12.\textit{b}5 a6 13.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 14.\textit{b}1 0-0-0 15.\textit{g}5 \textit{xf}5 16.\textit{g}5±) 12...\textit{xc}5+ 13.\textit{h}1 0-0 14.\textit{h}6 \textit{fe}8 15.\textit{ae}1±;

A3) 11...0-0-0 12.\textit{b}5 (12.\textit{g}7? \textit{dg}8 13.\textit{h}6 c4 14.\textit{h}7 \textit{f}8 15.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}7+) 12...a6 13.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xc}6 14.\textit{e}3 or 14.\textit{g}5, and White is not worse.

B) 9...cxd4 10.cxd4 \textit{b}4+ (worse is 10...\textit{b}4, as in the game Matejov-Vyparina, Slovakia tt 2009/10, because of 11.\textit{b}5+ \textit{d}7 12.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{xd}7 13.0-0 0-0 14.\textit{c}3, and the knight has to go back, whilst White can play \textit{g}3 and then \textit{f}5 or \textit{h}5 with unpleasant pressure against the king) 11.\textit{c}3 \textit{xd}4! 12.\textit{g}3 (of course, not 12.\textit{xd}4 because of 12...\textit{xc}3+) 12...\textit{xe}2 13.\textit{xe}2 (there is nothing beneficial to be had from 13.\textit{h}7 \textit{h}4+ 14.\textit{xe}2 \textit{g}4+ 15.\textit{g}4 \textit{xg}4 16.\textit{d}2 \textit{a}5=) 13...\textit{c}5 (13...\textit{f}8 14.\textit{b}1 with the initiative. It is hard for Black to find a move: his light-squared bishop is tied to the b7-pawn, and his other bishop to the pawn on g7; White is also a little better after 14.0-0) 14.\textit{g}7 \textit{f}8 15.\textit{xh}7±, winning a pawn;

C) 9...0-0 10.0-0
analysis diagram

10...e6 (10...cxd4 11.cxd4 b4 12.a3 dxc3 13.bxc3 a3 14.axa3 with a slightly better position for White) and now:
C1) 11.g3!? h4 (11...h8 12.dxc5 xxc5+ 13.h1±; 11...g6? 12.h6 e8 13.f4+-) 12.e3±;
C2) A miniature occurred after 11.b1 b8 12.e3 g5? 13.xh7+ xh7 14.h5+ h6 15.xh6 gxh6 16.f6 h8 17.xf7+, and Black resigned, since he is mated next move, Olson-Nilsson, Gothenburg 1919;
C3) 11.e3 and now:
C31) Bad is 11.e8 12.f4 g5 13.xe6 fxe6 14.xf8+, and Black resigned in Antal-Hart, Millfield 2004, since he is losing a piece;
C32) 11.a5 12.ab1 ab8 13.g3 h8 14.b5 xa2 15.xc5! g6 (not 15.xc5 16.b4, and Black will soon be mated) 16.b5 a6 17.b6+-, Almeida-Tamayo, corr. 2013;
C33) 11.d7 12.g3 (better is 12.f4 g5 13.g3 xxf4 14.xf4 or 12...c4 13.e2 b5 14.g3 h8 15.f2 e8 16.xf1 with the initiative) 12...g4?! (correct was 12...cxd4 13.h5 g6 14.h6, and now not 14...dxe3? 15.h5 gxh5 16.xh7#, but 14.f5! 15.cxd4 b4 16.xd4 f6 17.f5 xf5 15.xf5 fxe5 16.g4 e8 17.h6 g6 18.e6+ h8 19.xf8 xf8 20.xd5 d8 21.f7 e7 22.d5, and Black resigned in Kloster-Ruzzier, Arco 1998.

8.d3
8...f6

A) 8...g6?! 9.h6 e8 10.e2 f8 11.xf8 xf8 12.f4 c6 13.0-0 with advantage to White;
B) 8...f5?! 9.h3 c5 10.f4 cxd4 (10...c6 11.xd5+ xd5 12.xd5 with an extra pawn for White) 11.cxd4 b4+ 12.d2 xd2+ 13.xd2 c6 (he loses after 13...d7? 14.xd5+ h8 15.e6, Burille-Pollock, New York 1889) 14.xd5+ (or 14.c3 c7 15.h4 with the initiative) 14...xd5 15.xd5 xd4 16.c7 b8 17.c4+ h8 18.e6±;
C) 8...c5.

C1) Too hasty is 9.h5 g6 (but not 9...h6? 10.xh6 gxh6 11.xh6 f5 12.exf6 xf6 13.h7+ f8 14.f3 with a
powerful attack) 10...\(\texttt{h}6\) and now:

C11) 10...\(\texttt{e}8?!\) 11.\(\texttt{d}f3\) \(\texttt{f}8\) 12.\(\texttt{f}4\) \(\texttt{g}7\) (worse is 12...\(\texttt{f}6\) 13.0-0 \(\texttt{d}7\) 14.\(\texttt{g}5!\) \(\texttt{x}g5\) 15.\(\texttt{f}7+\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 16.\(\texttt{x}g5\) \(\texttt{x}g5\) 17.\(\texttt{w}xe8\)) 13.0-0 \(\texttt{c}4\) 14.\(\texttt{g}5\) \(\texttt{c}xd3\) 15.\(\texttt{w}x\texttt{f}7+\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 16.\(\texttt{e}6\) \(\texttt{c}6\) (16...\(\texttt{d}xe2\) 17.\(\texttt{f}3\) (threatening 18.\(\texttt{h}3\)) 17...\(\texttt{e}6\)

\(\texttt{x}e6\) \(\texttt{e}6\) \(\texttt{w}e7\) 18.\(\texttt{a}3\) \(\texttt{x}f7\) 19.\(\texttt{w}x\texttt{f}8\) 20.\(\texttt{w}e8\); 18.\(\texttt{d}x\texttt{e}6\) \(\texttt{e}6\) 19.\(\texttt{x}e6\)±

17.\(\texttt{c}xd3\) \(\texttt{w}e7\) 18.\(\texttt{u}a3\) \(\texttt{x}f7\) 19.\(\texttt{e}6\) \(\texttt{w}e8\) 20.\(\texttt{u}a1\);

C12) Correct is 10...\(\texttt{c}4\) 11.\(\texttt{d}e2\) \(\texttt{f}6\) 12.\(\texttt{f}3\) \(\texttt{c}6\)\(\uparrow\), Arnaudov-Pogonina, Golden Sands 2013.

C2) Better is 9.\(\texttt{d}e2\) \(\texttt{f}6\) (the move 9...\(\texttt{c}6\) is looked at under 7...\(\texttt{c}5\) 8.\(\texttt{d}d3\) \(\texttt{c}6\) 9.\(\texttt{e}2\) 0-0) 10.\(\texttt{f}4\) (10.\(\texttt{e}f6\)? \(\texttt{x}f6\)

11.\(\texttt{d}f4\)) 10...\(\texttt{f}5\) 11.\(\texttt{d}xe5\) \(\texttt{d}xe5\) 12.\(\texttt{h}4\) \(\texttt{d}8\) 14.\(\texttt{x}c6\) 11...\(\texttt{c}6\) (Black is also worse after 11...\(\texttt{c}4\) 12.\(\texttt{d}e2\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 13.\(\texttt{x}c6\) \(\texttt{b}6\) 14.\(\texttt{e}6\))

and here in the correspondence game Barreras Garcia-Garcia Rojas, corr. 2005, after 12.\(\texttt{h}5\) White obtained the advantage: 12...\(\texttt{g}6\) 13.\(\texttt{x}g6\) \(\texttt{w}e8\) (13...\(\texttt{x}h6\)? 14.\(\texttt{x}g6+\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 15.\(\texttt{h}7\)) 14.\(\texttt{h}6\) \(\texttt{f}7\) 15.0-0-0 \(\texttt{c}4\) 16.\(\texttt{x}e7\) \(\texttt{d}e7\) 17.\(\texttt{e}6\) \(\texttt{d}xe6\) 18.\(\texttt{x}h7\) \(\texttt{w}e7\) 19.\(\texttt{x}g6+\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 20.\(\texttt{x}f5\) \(\texttt{g}8\) 21.\(\texttt{f}6+\) \(\texttt{g}7\) 22.\(\texttt{h}e1\)+.

9.\(\texttt{h}5\)

9...\(\texttt{g}6\)

Somewhat worse is 9...\(\texttt{f}5\), although it is a more ambitious continuation, since Black avoids perpetual check. There could follow: 10.\(\texttt{e}2\) (White is also better after 10.\(\texttt{h}3\) \(\texttt{c}5\) 11.0-0 \(\texttt{d}6\) 12.\(\texttt{e}3\) or 12.\(\texttt{f}4\)) 10...\(\texttt{c}5\) 10.\(\texttt{x}e8\) \(\texttt{e}8\)

12.\(\texttt{f}4\) \(\texttt{c}6\) 13.\(\texttt{c}d4\) 11.\(\texttt{g}4\) (11.\(\texttt{f}4\) \(\texttt{c}4\) 12.\(\texttt{e}2\) \(\texttt{a}6!\) 13.0-0 \(\texttt{c}7\) 14.\(\texttt{f}3\) \(\texttt{w}e8\) 15.\(\texttt{w}x\texttt{e}8\) \(\texttt{w}e8\) 16.\(\texttt{a}4\)) 11...\(\texttt{g}6\) 12.\(\texttt{h}e6\) \(\texttt{c}4\)

(12...\(\texttt{c}6\) 13.\(\texttt{g}3\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 14.\(\texttt{g}x\texttt{f}5\) \(\texttt{x}f5\) 15.\(\texttt{x}f5\) \(\texttt{x}f5\) 16.0-0-; 12...\(\texttt{c}4\) 13.\(\texttt{c}4\) \(\texttt{c}6\) 14.\(\texttt{e}3\) with the initiative) 13.\(\texttt{x}f5\)

\(\texttt{x}f5\) (weaker is 13...\(\texttt{g}5\) 14.\(\texttt{g}x\texttt{f}5\) \(\texttt{h}8\) (completely bad is 14...\(\texttt{d}f5\) 15.\(\texttt{g}1+\) \(\texttt{g}6\) 16.\(\texttt{e}6+\) \(\texttt{h}6\) 17.\(\texttt{g}6+\) \(\texttt{h}8\)

18.\(\texttt{g}8\) 19.\(\texttt{h}6\) \(\texttt{f}7\) 20.\(\texttt{g}6+\) \(\texttt{h}8\) 21.\(\texttt{h}f7+\) 15.\(\texttt{g}1\).

10.\(\texttt{x}g6\) \(\texttt{h}x\texttt{g}6\) 11.\(\texttt{x}g6+\) \(\texttt{h}8\)
This position is equal, although out of four games, Black drew two and lost two. White can give perpetual check at once, (12.\textit{Q}h6+ \textit{K}g8 13.\textit{Q}g6+ etc.), but can also play on. Admittedly, here there are also risky continuations, after which Black can gain the advantage, but for this, he needs to find a number of only moves.

12.\textit{Q}f3!?

On the ‘risky path’ 12.\textit{Q}h5+ \textit{K}g8 13.\textit{Q}h6 \textit{Q}e8 14.\textit{Q}f3 \textit{R}f7 15.\textit{Q}h5

\textit{analysis diagram}

White won quickly in the game Taubenhaus-Locock, Manchester 1890, after 15...\textit{fxe}5? 16.\textit{Q}g6+ \textit{K}h8 17.\textit{B}g7+ \textit{K}g8 18.\textit{B}f6+, and Black resigned.
A draw by repetition results from 15...\( \text{Qf8} \) 16.\( \text{Qf3} \).

But the best continuation for Black is 15...\( \text{Bf8} \) 16.\( \text{Qg6+ Kh8} \) 17.\( \text{Ne3} \) \( \text{Nc6} \) (17...\( \text{Qf5}?! \) 18.\( \text{Qxf5} \) \( \text{Nh6} \) 19.\( \text{Qh5} \) \( \text{Qh7} \) 20.0-0 with the initiative) 18.0-0 \( \text{xf5} \) 19.\( \text{Nh5} \) 20.e6 \( \text{Bxe6} \) 21.\( \text{Bxe6} \) \( \text{Nh6} \) 22.\( \text{Bxh6} \) 23.\( \text{Bf5} \) 21.\( \text{Qxe8} \) \( \text{Bxe8} \) 22.\( \text{Bxf6} \) \( \text{Qc6} \) 23.\( \text{Bf2} \) \( \text{Nh5} \) 24.\( \text{Qg5} \).

12...\( \text{e8} \) 13.\( \text{h6+ g8} \) 14.0-0

In the event of 14.\( \text{Nh4}?! \) Black needs to make three only moves in succession and at the end of the variation, he will stand better: 14...\( \text{fxe5} \) 15.\( \text{g6} \) \( \text{h4+} \) 16.\( \text{Nh4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) 17.\( \text{d1} \) \( \text{g4} \) (weaker is 17...\( \text{e4} \) 18.\( \text{b2} \) with an unclear game) 18.\( \text{f3} \) \( \text{h5+} \) or 18...\( \text{e4} \).

14...\( \text{fxe5} \)

Worse is 14...\( \text{c6} \) 15.\( \text{h4} \) \( \text{fxe5} \) 16.\( \text{a3} \!:\)

A) 16...\( \text{xa3} \) 17.\( \text{g6} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 18.\( \text{g4} \) \( \text{exd4} \) (he loses after 18...\( \text{xf1+} \) 19.\( \text{xf1} \) 19.\( \text{f6} \) 20.\( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 21.\( \text{Nh8+ f7} \) 22.\( \text{e5+ e6} \) 23.\( \text{Nh6+ g6} \) 24.\( \text{xf6+} \), and White wins;

B) 16...\( \text{g4} \) 17.\( \text{g6} \) \( \text{xf5} \) 18.\( \text{h8+ f7} \) 19.\( \text{h7+ e6} \) 20.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 21.\( \text{xe7} \) \( \text{xe7} \) 22.\( \text{g6+ f6} \) 23.\( \text{xf4+} \).

15.\( \text{g5} \)

Or 15.\( \text{a3} \).

15...\( \text{c6} \)

15...\( \text{xa5} \) 16.\( \text{xa5} \) 17.\( \text{xf5+} \).
16.dxe5

After 16...\textit{Bxe7} Black needs to demonstrate accuracy to hold the balance: 16...\textit{Qxe7} 17.\textit{Nxe5} \textit{Qg7} 18.\textit{Rxg8+ Bf8} 19.\textit{f4+ g6} 20.\textit{Re1 e7!} (20...\textit{h3} 21.\textit{f3\pm}) 21.\textit{f3} (21...\textit{d3\pm}) 21...\textit{f5} (21...\textit{c6} 22.\textit{h4\pm}) 22.\textit{Rxg7+ Qe7} 23.\textit{xf5 e3+} 24.\textit{h1} (maybe White can count on a small advantage after 24...\textit{f1?!} \textit{c1+} 25.\textit{f2}) 24...\textit{f8} 25.\textit{xd5+ f7} 26.\textit{h4 c1+} 27.\textit{h2 f4+} 28.\textit{g1 c1+=.}

Equality results from 16...\textit{Nxe5 Rxf1+} 17.\textit{Rxf1 f8} 18.\textit{Rxg8+ Qf8} 19.\textit{g6+ Qg7} 20.\textit{e8+ h7} 21.\textit{h5+ g8} 22.\textit{e8+ f8} 23.\textit{g6+ g7=}.

16...\textit{Qf7}

16...\textit{f5\tau}.

17.\textit{d4}

It is worth considering 17.\textit{xe7} \textit{Rxe7} 18.\textit{g5 f5} 19.\textit{g6+ g7} 20.\textit{e8+ f8} (20...\textit{f8?!} 21.\textit{xf8+ xf8} 22.\textit{h5 f5} 23.\textit{f1 e8} 24.\textit{xe8+ e8} 25.\textit{xf5 xe5} 26.\textit{g6+ c4} 27.\textit{e6\pm}) 21.\textit{g6+ g7} 22.\textit{e8+=.}

17...\textit{Qg5}

Correct was 17...\textit{g7}, exchanging queens, and the position favours Black.

18.\textit{Qxg5+ Qg7} 19.\textit{Rxf8+ Bf8} 20.\textit{xf1+ g8} 21.\textit{h4 e7?}

21...\textit{xe5} or 21...\textit{g4} both maintain equality.

22.\textit{e6 c5} 23.\textit{f7+-
23...\textit{xf}7 24.e\textit{xf}+ 25.b5

White has a decisive material advantage; he won the game after 20 more moves. Quite an interesting and important game for the theory of the variation. On move 12, White can make a draw by perpetual check or, as in the previous game, continue to play for a win with the move 12.f3!?, when Black needs to play accurately in order not to lose. White also has 12.h5+ g8 13.h6.
Part VII
The French Defence

Against the French Defence, we suggest the same set-up as against the Caro-Kann: 1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 (if 2...c5, then 3.b3 – transposing into a line we examined in the Sicilian section) 3.Nc3.

For blitz, the set-up with the early development of both knights is very good, because Black’s choices are sharply reduced. For example, we rule out the head-spinning and massively theoretical lines such as the Winawer and MacCutcheon. It is also very important that to a considerable extent, play runs by analogy with our treatment of the Caro-Kann, several ideas from which are repeated here (such as White seizing space in the centre).

Chapter 22
1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3
Just like in our treatment of the Caro-Kann, White develops his two knights first and saves out on d2-d4 for the moment. Black has three main options to react: push the d-pawn, take on e4, or attack pawn e4 one more time with 3...\texttt{\textit{N}}f6. We will examine the first two of these options in this chapter, as well as a sideline of the third, where Black moves his knight to e4 after 4.e5.

\textbf{Game 109}
\textbf{Ian Rogers 2595}
\textbf{Nicholas Pert}
London 1993

\texttt{\textit{1.e4 e6 2.Nf3 d5 3.Nc3 d4}}

A sensible and reasonable continuation: Black seizes space, attacks the knight and forces it to retreat.

\texttt{\textit{4.e2 c5}}

Dubious is 4...\texttt{\textit{N}c6 5.c3}. 
A) White is already better after 5...dxc3 6.\(\text{Nxc3}\); White has more space, some advantage in development and two central pawns against one for Black;

B) 5...\(\text{Nf6}\) 6.e5, and Black loses a pawn: 6...\(\text{Ng4}\) 7.cxd4 \(\text{Nh6}\) 8.b3 \(\text{Nf5}\) 9.\(\text{Bb2}\) or 6...\(\text{Nd7}\) 7.cxd4 \(\text{Nb6}\) 8.g3 \(\text{Nf5}\) followed by a2-a3 and \(\text{Bg2}\), Orosz-Szilagyi, Hungary tt 2004;

C) 5...e5 6.cxd4 exd4 7.\(\text{Qa4}\) \(\text{Bc5}\) 8.b4! \(\text{Bxb4}\) (Black is also worse after 8...\(\text{Nb6}\) 9.b5 \(\text{Qe7}\) 10.\(\text{exd4}\) \(\text{Nf6}\) 11.d3 with an extra pawn for White, Mozes-Benno, Budapest 1990) 9.\(\text{exd4}\) \(\text{e7}\) 10.\(\text{b5}\) \(\text{Qd6}\) (10...\(\text{d6}\) 11.e5 \(\text{c5}\) 12.\(\text{xc6}\) bxc6 13.\(\text{exc6}\) 14.\(\text{d7}\) 15.\(\text{xd7}\) 16.d4 \(\text{b6}\) 17.a3 with an extra pawn, Yusubov-Velikanov, Moscow 2009) 11.e5 \(\text{d5}\) (or 11...\(\text{c5}\) 12.\(\text{b3}\), and Black resigned in the game Tseshkovsky-Shofman, Kiev ch-URS sf 1969, because White takes the bishop next move; and the superior 11...\(\text{d7}\) 12.0-0 0-0 13.\(\text{e1}\) with the threat of e6, does not really help) 12.\(\text{xb4}\) with an extra bishop, Feller-Jentsch, Davis ch-EUR sr 2006.

5.c3 \(\text{c6}\)

A) It is worth considering 5...dxc3
6.\(\text{N}xc3\) (this move will be a definite surprise to your opponent – it is more popular to take with the pawn towards the centre – 6.bxc3 \(\text{N}c6\) 7.\(\text{N}g3\) \(\text{f}6\) and then 8.\(\text{b}5\), 8.\(\text{e}2\) or 8.d4, in all cases with chances for both sides) 6...\(\text{N}c6\) 7.\(\text{b}5\) (pinning the knight and preparing castling) 7...\(\text{d}7\) 8.0-0 and now:

A1) 8...\(\text{g}e7\) 9.d4 cxd4 10.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{xd}4\) 11.\(\text{wx}d4\) \(\text{xb}5\) 12.\(\text{xb}5\) \(\text{c}6\) (White is also better after 12...\(\text{xd}4\) 13.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{d}8\) 14.\(\text{e}3\); the material is equal and the pawn structure symmetrical, but Black is behind in development and he also needs to reckon with the knight leap to b5 and \(\text{ac}1\) with the idea of \(\text{c}7\) – Black faces a difficult defence in the endgame).
A11) 13.\(\texttt{a4}\) \(\texttt{c5}\) 14.\(\texttt{b4}\) \(\texttt{e7}\) 15.\(\texttt{f4}\) \(\texttt{e5}\) 16.\(\texttt{e3}\) 0-0 17.\(\texttt{fd1}\) \(\texttt{b8}\) 18.\(\texttt{a3}\) \(\texttt{c8}\) 19.\(\texttt{b3}\)± Gavrikov-Ashley, Bad Wiessee 1997;

A12) It is worth considering 13.\(\texttt{c3}\) \(\texttt{a6}\) 14.\(\texttt{b4}\) \(\texttt{e7}\) 15.\(\texttt{f4}\) \(\texttt{e5}\) 16.\(\texttt{e3}\) 0-0 17.\(\texttt{fd1}\) \(\texttt{b8}\) 18.\(\texttt{a3}\) \(\texttt{c8}\) 19.\(\texttt{b3}\)\²

A2) 8...\(\texttt{Nf6}\) 9.\(\texttt{e5}\)

\textit{analysis diagram}

A21) 9...\(\texttt{Nxd4}\) 10.\(\texttt{cxd4}\) \(\texttt{cxd4}\) 11.\(\texttt{bxc3}\) \(\texttt{bxc3}\) 12.\(\texttt{e5}\) \(\texttt{b5}\) 13.\(\texttt{exf6}\) \(\texttt{xf6}\) 14.\(\texttt{g4}\) \(\texttt{g4}\) 15.\(\texttt{d6}\) \(\texttt{d6}\) 16.\(\texttt{c6}\) \(\texttt{c6}\) 17.\(\texttt{fxg4}\) \(\texttt{fxg4}\) 18.\(\texttt{d4}\) \(\texttt{d4}\) 19.\(\texttt{c3}\)±

A22) 9...\(\texttt{Nxd6}\) 10.\(\texttt{cxd6}\) \(\texttt{cxd6}\) 11.\(\texttt{cxd6}\) 12.\(\texttt{cxb6}\) \(\texttt{bxc5}\) 13.\(\texttt{gxh7}\) \(\texttt{gxh7}\) 14.\(\texttt{e5}\) \(\texttt{e5}\) 15.\(\texttt{d5}\) \(\texttt{d5}\) 16.\(\texttt{dxe6}\) \(\texttt{dxe6}\) 17.\(\texttt{e5}\) \(\texttt{e5}\) 18.\(\texttt{f4}\) \(\texttt{f4}\) 19.\(\texttt{e3}\) \(\texttt{e3}\) 20.\(\texttt{c6}\) \(\texttt{c6}\) 21.\(\texttt{b4}\) \(\texttt{b4}\) 22.\(\texttt{d3}\) \(\texttt{d3}\) 23.\(\texttt{e4}\) \(\texttt{e4}\) 24.\(\texttt{d5}\) \(\texttt{d5}\) 25.\(\texttt{e6}\) \(\texttt{e6}\) 26.\(\texttt{a5}\) \(\texttt{a5}\) 27.\(\texttt{b6}\) \(\texttt{b6}\) 28.\(\texttt{xa6}\)±

B) 5...\(\texttt{f6}\)!± 6.\(\texttt{cx}\texttt{d4}\), and now:
B1) 6...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xe4

B11) 7.dxc5 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xc5 (not 7...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xc5? 8.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e4++) 8.d4 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e4 9.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)c3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xc3 (9...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e6 10.d3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e6 11.0-0= with a good isolated queen’s pawn (IQP) structure) 10.bxc3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e7 11.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)d2;

B12) Stronger is 7.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)c2 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)f6 (on 7...f5, as in the game Lukes-Vykoukal, Czech tt 1995, a good reply is 8.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)c3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)f6 9.dxc5 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xc5 10.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)b5 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e4 11.d3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)a5+ (11...\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xf2+? 12.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)e2+- and Black loses a piece) 12.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)d2 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)xb5 13.dxe4 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)b6 14.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)b3 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)b4+ 15.\(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)d2+) 8.dxc5 \(\text{\textsuperscript{\textdagger}}\)a5

**analysis diagram**
9. \( \text{Nc3} \) (he gets no advantage from 9. \( \text{Ned4} \) \( \text{Wxg5} \) 10. \( \text{Wxg5} \) \( \text{Nc5} \) 11. \( \text{Qb5} \) \( \text{d6} \) (11... \text{d5}!?\text{=}?) 12. \text{a3} \text{d7} 13. \text{b4} \text{e7} 14. \text{e5} 0-0 15. \text{b2}=-, \text{Sazonova-Ryzhkov, Alushta 2009}) 9... \text{dxc5} 10. \text{d4} \text{c6} (it is best to retreat to this square at once; weaker is 10... \text{b4}, since exchanging on c3 is not especially favourable for Black, and later White will chase the bishop with a2-a3: 11. \text{Bd3} 0-0 12.0-0 \text{h6} 13. \text{a3} \text{e7} 14. \text{e3} \text{d8} 15. \text{ad1} \text{bd7} 16. \text{e5} \text{b6} 17. \text{d2} \text{e8} 18. \text{b1} \text{f8} 19. \text{wd3} \text{g6} 20. \text{wxg6} \text{fxg6} 21. \text{wxg6+} \text{d7} 22. \text{axh6} \text{e7} 23. \text{wd3} \text{f8} 24. \text{g3} \text{f7} 25. \text{e1}=-, \text{Zakharov-A.Popov, Moscow 1996})

B121) 11. \text{Bd3}!? \text{c6} 12. \text{a3} 0-0 (12... \text{b4}=? is bad because of 13. \text{axb4} \text{wxg5} 14.0-0 followed by \text{Be3}, and Black loses his queen) 13.0-0\text{=};

B122) 11. \text{Bc4} \text{c6} 12.0-0 0-0 13. \text{d1} \text{d8} 14. \text{d2} (better is 14. \text{a3} \text{d5} 15. \text{f4} \text{d8} 16. \text{e1} \text{d5} 17. \text{g5} \text{xd5} 18. \text{wd5} \text{f6} \text{=} with a roughly equal position, \text{Bertholee-Kortchnoi, Netherlands tt 2001}.

B2) The most accurate is probably 6... \text{cxd4}, after which Black can count on equality: 7. \text{e5} \text{fd7} 8. \text{exd4} \text{exd5} 9. \text{b5}+ \text{ec6} 10.0-0

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

B21) 10... \text{d7}, and now:

B211) It is worth considering 11. \text{b3} \text{b4} (Black has tried 11... \text{d6} 12. \text{d4} 0-0 13. \text{c5} \text{b6} 14. \text{a4} \text{c5} 15. \text{dxc5} \text{wxc5} 16. \text{f3} \text{e7} 17. \text{c2} \text{f6} 18. \text{ec1} \text{a6} 19. \text{d8} 20. \text{e1} \text{e8} 21. \text{we2} \text{=, De Smet-Roy Laguens, corr. 2012}) 12. \text{c4} \text{c6} 13. \text{d4} \text{d7} 14. \text{a3} \text{d5} 15. \text{g5} \text{e7} 16. \text{f3} \text{b5} (better was 16. \text{dxe7} \text{we7} 17. \text{a1} \text{xc4} 18. \text{wc4} \text{d5} 19. \text{wd3} 20. \text{a1} \text{g7} 21. \text{f5} =) 16... \text{xf3} 17. \text{c5} \text{xc5} 18. \text{xc5} \text{d1} 19. \text{exf3} \text{e5} 20. \text{xc4} \text{d6} \text{=} with somewhat better chances for Black, thanks to his play against the IQP, \text{Janturin-Lysyj, Pardubice 2005};

B212) 11. \text{c2} \text{e7} 12. \text{d4} 0-0 (Black was worse after 12... \text{b4} 13. \text{c4} \text{c6} 14. \text{c3} \text{d5} 15. \text{f1} 0-0 16. \text{d5} \text{xc3} 17. \text{bxc3} \text{=, Aljautdinova-Minogina, Moscow 1981}) 13. \text{f4} \text{f5} 14. \text{c3} \text{xf3}+ 15. \text{gxf3} \text{xb5} 16. \text{xb5} \text{xc6} 17. \text{d1} \text{wxd5} 18. \text{xd5} \text{exd5} 19. \text{ac1} \text{wd8} 20. \text{f1} =, \text{Go-Sowray, Dieren 2014};

B22) It looks stronger to play 10... \text{d6}!? 11. \text{c6} (or? 11. \text{b3} 0-0 12. \text{b2} \text{xd4} 13. \text{xd4} \text{e5} 14. \text{c2} =) 11... \text{xc6} 12. \text{d4} \text{=} \text{Go-Straat, Amsterdam 2012};

B23) 10... \text{e7} 11. \text{b3} (since White has an isolated pawn, he should avoid exchanges and simplification) 11... \text{a6} 12. \text{e2} and now:

B231) 12... \text{a5} 13. \text{d4} \text{a4} 14. \text{c5}, and 14... \text{xd4} fails to 15. \text{xd4} \text{xc5} 16. \text{b5}+ \text{e7} (on 16... \text{d7} there follows
17. \( \text{Nxe6! fxe6} \) 18. \( \text{Nh5+ Kf8} \) 19. \( \text{Nxd7} \) 20. \( \text{Bxd7} \) 21. \( \text{Qc5+} \) ²

B232) Better is 12...e5 13.d4 exd4 (somewhat worse is 13...e4 14. \( \text{Nfd2 Nxd4} \) (14...f5 15. \( \text{Nc4} \) b5 16. \( \text{Nxe3} \) \( \text{Bxe2+} \) f6 0-0 18. \( \text{Bc7} \) 19. \( \text{h5} \) with some initiative to White on the kingside, although nothing terrible has happened to Black) 14.fxd4 0-0 15. \( \text{Nc3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 16. \( \text{Nxe6} \) (it seems he should not hurry with this exchange, since, in effect, White exchanges off the undeveloped \( \text{Nc8} \); better is 16. \( \text{c1} \)) 16...d4 17. \( \text{Bd5} \) 18. \( \text{ad1} \) \( \text{Be5} \) 19. \( \text{d4} \), draw, Nunn-Webb, England tt 1974.

6...cxd4

A) 7...exd4 8. \( \text{Nc3} \) \( \text{Nxd4} \) (8... \( \text{Nc3} \) 9.bxc3 \( \text{Nxd4} \) 10.d4 \( \text{d6} \) 11. \( \text{d3} \) 0-0 12.0-0) 9.d4 \( \text{d7} \) 10. \( \text{d3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 11.0-0 with a good IQP position;

B) 7... \( \text{Bxc5} \) (after this move, White obtains a small advantage in development, but remains a pawn down) 8. \( \text{c3} \) e5 (or 8...0-0 9. \( \text{Ned4} \) \( \text{Bd7} \) 10.0-0 \( \text{e6} \) 11. \( \text{d3} \), and full compensation for the pawn is not apparent) 9. \( \text{e2} \) (9. \( \text{c4} \)?) 9...0-0 10.0-0 \( \text{a6} \) 11. \( \text{d3} \) b5 12. \( \text{a3} \) \( \text{e7} \) 13. \( \text{g5} \) \( \text{e6} \) 14. \( \text{Nf1} \) \( \text{ac8} \) 15. \( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{gxf6} \) 16. \( \text{d5} \) \( \text{xd5} \) 17. \( \text{xd5} \) \( \text{d4} \) 18. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{b6} \) 19. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 20. \( \text{g4} \) \( \text{xc1} \) 21. \( \text{xc1} \) \( \text{f5} \) 22. \( \text{xf5} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 23. \( \text{e4} \) +, Topalov-Cruz Lopez, Elgoibar 1992.

7. \( \text{a4} \) \( \text{c5} \)

Black still has problems after 7...d3 8. \( \text{ed4} \) \( \text{d7} \) 9. \( \text{xd3} \), e.g. 9... \( \text{c5} \) 10. \( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{b6} \) 11.0-0 (strong is 11. \( \text{b4} \)!, not fearing 11... \( \text{xf2} \) + 12. \( \text{e2} \) \( \text{c6} \) 13. \( \text{b5} \) \( \text{d7} \) 14. \( \text{f1} \) \( \text{c5} \) 15. \( \text{e5} \) f6 16. \( \text{xd7} \) \( \text{xd7} \) 17. \( \text{b2} \) ±) 11... \( \text{xc6} \) 12. \( \text{b3} \) (better was 12. \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{f6} \) 13. \( \text{b4} \) \( \text{xb4} \) – White returns the pawn, but opens lines for his rook and the \( \text{b2} \) – 14. \( \text{b1} \) \( \text{a5} \) 15. \( \text{b2} \) ±) 12... \( \text{f6} \)! (a mistake in return – correct was 12... \( \text{xb3} \) 13. \( \text{xb3} \) \( \text{f6} \) ±) 13. \( \text{xb6} \) \( \text{xb6} \) 14. \( \text{e1} \) \( \text{d8} \) 15. \( \text{c2} \) \( \text{g4} \) 16. \( \text{d4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 17. \( \text{xd4} \) \( \text{xd4} \) 18. \( \text{f3} \) \( \text{f6} \) 19. \( \text{e3} \) \( \text{b4} \) 20. \( \text{b3} \) ±, and White has a clear advantage on account of the two bishops, and in addition, the f3/e4-pawn duo does an excellent job of restricting the enemy pieces. Even so, in the game Feller-Luce, Torcy 1991, a draw was agreed at this moment.
This position often arises in the variation with 4...d4, but it is far from being so good for Black.

8.b4 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{xb4}}}

8...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{b6}}} 9.b5 (also good is 9.b2 \textit{\textbf{f6}} 10.\textit{\textbf{exd4}} 0-0 11.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} bxc6 12.e5\textbf{\textit{\textbf{\pm}}}, Pinchon-Masset, corr. 2013) 9...\textit{\textbf{ce7}} 10.\textit{\textbf{exd4\textit{\textbf{\pm}}}}, winning a pawn.

9.\textit{\textbf{exd4}} \textbf{\textit{\textbf{a5}}}

Black is also worse after 9...\textit{\textbf{e7}} 10.\textit{\textbf{b5}} \textit{\textbf{a5}} 11.\textit{\textbf{b1}} \textit{\textbf{xa4}} 12.\textit{\textbf{xa4}} \textit{\textbf{c5}} 13.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} bxc6 14.d4 \textit{\textbf{b6}} 15.a3\textbf{\textit{\textbf{\pm}}}.

Completely bad is 9...\textit{\textbf{b6}}? 10.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} bxc6 11.\textit{\textbf{b1}} a5 12.\textit{\textbf{xb4}} (or 12.a3\textbf{\textit{\textbf{+}}}) 12...axb4 13.\textit{\textbf{xa8\textit{\textbf{+-}}} or 12...\textit{\textbf{xb4}} 13.\textit{\textbf{xc6\textit{\textbf{+}}} \textit{\textbf{f8}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xa8\textit{\textbf{+-}}}}.}

10.\textit{\textbf{xa5}} \textit{\textbf{xa5}} 11.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} bxc6 12.\textit{\textbf{e5}}

Even stronger is 12.\textit{\textbf{a3}} \textit{\textbf{f6}} 13.\textit{\textbf{d3}} b7 14.\textit{\textbf{b1}} \textit{\textbf{d8}} (14...0-0 0-0 15.\textit{\textbf{b3\textbf{\pm}}}) 15.\textit{\textbf{e2}} \textit{\textbf{b6}} 16.\textit{\textbf{e5\textbf{\pm}}}, Rogers-Heitmann, Adelaide 2004. Black has still not brought his \textit{\textbf{h8}} into the game, and he also has a weak pawn on c6.

12...\textit{\textbf{e7}} 13.\textit{\textbf{a3}} \textit{\textbf{c7}} 14.\textit{\textbf{c4}} \textit{\textbf{a6}} 15.\textit{\textbf{d6\textit{\textbf{+}}} \textit{\textbf{xd6}} 16.\textit{\textbf{xd6 \textit{\textbf{xf1}} 17.\textit{\textbf{xf1}}}}}
One can sum up: in the ending, White has bishop against knight (with rooks on), and Black has a weakness on c6. White has decent winning chances, and Black faces a long and difficult defence.

17...\textit{d}d7 18.\textit{c}c5 \textit{h}b8 19.\textit{e}e2 \textit{b}b5 20.\textit{ac}1 \textit{c}c8

Transferring the knight to a superior post on d6.

21.\textit{c}c3

White prepares to double rooks.

21...\textit{d}d6 22.f3 \textit{b}b7 23.\textit{e}e3

The bishop is stronger than the knight, so White avoids the exchange.

23...\textit{c}c5 24.\textit{fc}1 \textit{c}c8 25.\textit{fc}2

It was more accurate to play 25.e5, taking the square d6 and not allowing Black himself to play ...e6-e5. Then White’s idea is to play \textit{ac}1c2, taking control of the second rank, after which he plays d2-d4 and wins a pawn.

25...e5

Correct: Black puts his pawns on the same colour squares as his opponent’s bishop and takes control of the square d4.

26.\textit{a}a3

A good move, provoking the advance of the pawn.

26...a5 27.\textit{ac}3 a4

Dubious, because now it is easier for White to attack this pawn. It was necessary to mark time, and strengthen the position, avoiding the creation of further weaknesses – 27...f6.
28.\textbf{c}4  $\textbf{b}$4

Nothing in particular is changed by 28...\textbf{a}5 29.d4 exd4 30.\textbf{x}xd4 f6 31.h4 $\textbf{e}$6 32.g4\textbf{±}.

29.a3?! 

Correct was 29.\textbf{d}3, e.g. 29...\textbf{c}6 (after 29...\textbf{x}c4 30.\textbf{x}c4 Black loses a pawn) 30.\textbf{x}b4 \textbf{c}xb4 31.\textbf{c}4 \textbf{x}c4 32.\textbf{x}c4 b3 33.axb3 $\textbf{a}$5+ 34.\textbf{b}4 axb3 35.\textbf{a}3 $\textbf{c}$6 36.d3 $\textbf{b}$5 37.\textbf{d}2 $\textbf{c}$6 38.\textbf{x}b3\textbf{±}. It was also possible to start with 29.h4, continuing to strengthen the position.

29...\textbf{x}c4 30.\textbf{x}c4 \textbf{a}8

A draw results from 30...\textbf{c}6!, and after 31.\textbf{x}a4 $\textbf{b}$5 32.\textbf{a}7 $\textbf{b}$6 33.\textbf{a}4 $\textbf{b}$5 we get a repetition of moves, since the pawn on a3 takes the rook’s retreat square.

31.\textbf{x}c5 \textbf{c}8 32.d4 $\textbf{x}$c5

On 32...exd4 there follows 33.\textbf{x}d4\textbf{+} (with check), and White untangles.

33.dxc5 \textbf{a}8 34.c6\textbf{+} $\textbf{c}$7 35.\textbf{d}3

White simply strengthens his position.

35...\textbf{a}6 36.\textbf{c}3 \textbf{f}6

Not 36...\textbf{x}c6 because of 37.\textbf{x}c6\textbf{+} $\textbf{x}$c6 38.\textbf{b}4 with a winning endgame.

37.g4 g5 38.h3 \textbf{h}6 39.\textbf{b}4 $\textbf{b}$6\textbf{+} 40.\textbf{x}a4 \textbf{b}2
41.\text{c}3 \text{h}2 42.\text{b}5 \text{x}h3 43.\text{d}3 \text{h}1 44.\text{d}7+ \text{c}8 45.\text{f}7 \text{b}1+ 46.\text{c}5 \text{b}3 47.\text{f}6 \text{xa}3

And White won on move 62.

\textbf{Summing up:} In reply to 3...d4 White retreats his knight to e2 and after 4.\text{e}2 c5 immediately challenges the centre with 5.c3. After this, it is likely that 5...\text{f}6 gives good equalising chances, whereas in all other cases, White can count on an advantage.

\textbf{Game 110}
\begin{tabular}{l}
Ian Nepomniachtchi 2632 \\
Andreas Peschel 2219 \\
Ohrid ECC 2009 (6)
\end{tabular}

1.e4 e6 2.\text{f}3 d5 3.\text{c}3 dxe4 4.\text{x}e4 \text{f}6 5.\text{xf}6+
5...\text{xf}6

This is hardly ever played at a high level. And for understandable reasons: 6.d4 Black has to waste a tempo on h6, and White gets an advantage in space with more active pieces.

Black is also worse after taking with the pawn – 5...gxf6 6.d4.

\textit{analysis diagram}

A) Black’s best here is 6...\text{c}6, after which quite complicated positions arise. It does not make sense to go into great detail about all the possible variations of this rather rare continuation, so we will simply acquaint ourselves with possible white continuations, on the basis of some games. If you yourself want to delve deeper into these lines, then the
examples quoted should serve as a good guide in orienting yourself.

A1) 7.g3 e5 (7...b6!? 8.g2 b7 9.0-0 d7 10.c3 0-0-0 11.e3 b8 12.a4±) 8.e3±. Weaker is 8.g2?! as played by Garry Kasparov in a simultaneous display, since after 8...d4 9.xd4 xd4 10.xd4 exd4 White is a pawn down and can hardly count on anything more than a draw. However, the 13th World Champion’s opponent reacted less well: 8...g4 9.h3 h5 10.g4 (10.0-0+) 10...g6 11.c3 d7 12.e3 h5 13.dxe5 xd1+ 14.hxg1 fxe5 15.h4 e2 16.d2 b1 17.b4 cxb4? 18.0-0 xa2 19.bx7 c3 20.a8xh4 21.xg4 e4 22.g5 d6 23.e1 a8 24.c3 e7 25.e7, and Black resigned in Kasparov-Gazet van Antwerpen, Deurne 2000;

A2) 7.c3, and now:

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A21) On 7...d6 White can play 8.c4 d7 9.0-0, obtaining the same position as after 7.c4 – this variation will be examined below;

A22) It is worth considering the computer’s suggestion 7...b6, which has not been tried in tournament practice. For example, 8.f4 b7 9.g3 d7 10.b5 0-0-0 11.a4± or 10...a6 11.c3 0-0-0 12.0-0 b8 13.e2±, attacking the pawn on a6;

A23) 7.d5, and now:

A231) 8.d3!? d7 9.b3 xxb3 10.axb3 e7 11.b4 g7 12.0-0 0-0 13.f4 c5 14.g3±, Cipka-Becka, corr. 2008;

A232) 8.e3 d7 9.a3 h5?! 10.c4 e4 11.d2 a5?! 12.0-0-0 a4 13.d3 g4 14.hg1 a5 15.b1 b3 16.c3 h4 17.d5±, Revesz-Horton Kitchlew, Gibraltar 2008;

A233) 8.g3 e7 9.g2 e4+ 10.e3 d5 11.e2 c3 12.fxe3 h6 13.g5! g6 14.e4 0-0 15.0-0 f5 16.c5± followed by e3-e4 or d3;

A234) 8.b3 e4+ (8...e7 9.e3 d7 10.c4 d6 11.0-0 0-0-0 12.e3±) 9.e3 b6 10.d2 f5 11.c4 d5 12.xd5 exd5 13.f4 d8 14.d3 e6 15.0-0-0 d7 16.d1 d6 17.xd6 xd6 18.e3 hg8 19.g3 f5 20.he1±, Antoniewski-Gerasimenyk, Warsaw rapid 2011.

A3) 7.e3!?, and now:
A31) 7...e7?! 8.d3 d7 9.c4 c6 10.0-0±, Delgado-Dolezal, Asuncion 2011;
A32) 7...b6 8.c4 (or 8.g3 b7 9.g2 d7 10.0-0±) 8...b7 9.d5±. Instead of 8...b7 more accurate is 8...g8 9.g1 (or 9.g3 b7 10.e2 with slightly better chances for White) 9...b7 10.e2 and White is slightly better.
A4) 7.c4.

With this move, White not only develops the bishop and prepares castling, but also takes control of the square d5, where the black queen might have wanted to go. In addition, if the chance arises, the breakthrough motif d4-d5 may be on the

A42) 7...e5 8.0-0!? (an interesting sacrifice, although White can also do without it: 8.Be3 Bg8 9.dxe5 Qxd1+ 10.Rxd1 fx e5 11.0-0+ with slightly better chances) 8...Nxd4 9.c3 Nc6 10.Qb3°;

A43) 7...Qd6 8.0-0, and here after 8...Bd7, as in the game Heimann-Rapport, Deizisau 2014, White does best to play 9.c3, preparing b2-b4 and a2-a4 with an attack on the queenside, since Black will in any case have to castle long. Black, in his turn, will attack on the kingside: ...g8, ...e7-f5 or ...g6, ...h7-h5. With opposite-side castling and mutual attacking chances, White’s prospects should be better.

B) It is completely unfavourable for Black to play aggressively, when he is behind in development and has a weakened pawn structure: 6...c5 7.Be3.

B1) Black often chooses 7...Bb6 here, after which White does best to finish the development of his kingside after 8.e2 a5 9.0-0 Ad7 10.c3 (White is also better after 10.d5 exd5 11.Bxd5±, Pedersen-Christensen, Aarhus 1989; Black is behind in development and his kingside pawn structure is damaged) 10...c7 11.d5 (White also has better chances after 11.a4 cxd4 12.Bxd4 Bxd4 13.Bd4 Bc7 14.Bb5± Mahjoob-Asadi, Tehran 2014) 11...exd5 12.b4 d4 13.bxc5 Qxc5 14.Rc1 Bc8 15.f3 Re8 16.Qc2 Bg4 17.exd4 Bxe2 18.Rxe2 Qxc5 19.Qf3 Qxe4 20.Qd5±, and Black resigned, Richter-V.Petros, München 1936;

B2) 7...cxd4 8.Bxd4 (8.Bxd4 Bxd4 9.Bxd4± is also better for White) and now:


C) 6...b6 7.\textasciitilde b5+!.

\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[thick,->] (0,0) -- (8,0);
\draw[thick,->] (0,0) -- (0,8);
\draw[thick,->] (1,0) -- (1,8);
\draw[thick,->] (2,0) -- (2,8);
\draw[thick,->] (3,0) -- (3,8);
\draw[thick,->] (4,0) -- (4,8);
\draw[thick,->] (5,0) -- (5,8);
\draw[thick,->] (6,0) -- (6,8);
\draw[thick,->] (7,0) -- (7,8);
\draw[thick,->] (8,0) -- (8,8);
\draw[thick,->] (0,1) -- (8,1);
\draw[thick,->] (0,2) -- (8,2);
\draw[thick,->] (0,3) -- (8,3);
\draw[thick,->] (0,4) -- (8,4);
\draw[thick,->] (0,5) -- (8,5);
\draw[thick,->] (0,6) -- (8,6);
\draw[thick,->] (0,7) -- (8,7);
\draw[thick,->] (0,8) -- (8,8);
\filldraw[black] (4,4) circle (0.1cm);
\filldraw[black] (5,5) circle (0.1cm);
\filldraw[black] (6,6) circle (0.1cm);
\filldraw[black] (7,7) circle (0.1cm);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

White forces his opponent to play 7...c6, closing the diagonal a8-h1 (on 7...\texttt{d}d7 it is worth considering 8.a4!?), and after 8...\texttt{d}xb5 9.axb5 the a-file is opened for the white rook. Then play could continue: 8...\texttt{c}c4 (8...\texttt{d}d3 is also good):

C1) 8...\texttt{b}b7 9...\texttt{e}e2 \texttt{c}c7, and now:

C11) 10.a4 \texttt{d}d7 11.a5 \texttt{b}5 12.a6 bxc4 13.axb7 \texttt{xb}7 14.\texttt{xc}c4\texttt{e}e4\textasciitilde, Kasparov-Palacios, Zaragoza 1986;

C12) The simple 10.0-0!? also deserves attention, and on 10...\texttt{d}d7 there is a blow on e6: 11...\texttt{e}e6 \texttt{f}xe6 12.\texttt{xe}e6\texttt{e}e7 (worse is 12...\texttt{d}d8 13.\texttt{g}g5 \texttt{f}xg5 14.\texttt{g}g5\texttt{e}e7 (14...\texttt{c}c8?? 15.\texttt{e}e8\textasciitilde) 15.\texttt{xe}e7\texttt{c}c8 16.\texttt{fe}f1, and this position is absolutely winning for White: he already has three pawns for the knight with active pieces and an insecure black king) 13...\texttt{e}e1 14...\texttt{xf}f6 \texttt{d}d6 (14...\texttt{g}g8 15.\texttt{g}g5\texttt{f}f4 0-0-0 (15...\texttt{xf}f4 16.\texttt{xe}e7\textasciitilde \texttt{xe}e7 (16...\texttt{d}d8 17.\texttt{xf}f4 \texttt{xf}f4 18.\texttt{xb}b7\textasciitilde) 17.\texttt{xf}f4\textasciitilde) 16.\texttt{eh}h8 \texttt{fx}f8 17.\texttt{xc}c7 \texttt{xc}c7 18.\texttt{e}e3\textasciitilde;

C2) Black has also tried 8...\texttt{a}a6 with the idea of exchanging light-squared bishops: 9...\texttt{xa}a6 (weaker is 9...\texttt{b}b3 \texttt{c}c7 10.c4 \texttt{d}d7 11.0-0-0-0-0-0, and in the game Boleslavsky-Ufimtsev, URS-ch sf 1944, Black obtained counterchances. But 9...\texttt{d}d3 deserves consideration, when play might continue: 9...\texttt{xd}d3 10.\texttt{xd}d3 \texttt{c}c7 11.0-0, and on 11...\texttt{d}d7, preparing long castling, White can play 12.a4\textasciitilde, after which 12...\texttt{f}f6 0-0-0 is already rather dangerous for Black. White is better on account of his superior pawn structure and extra space, whilst Black has problems with where to put his king) 9...\texttt{xa}a6 10.0-0 \texttt{d}d7 11.c4 (11.a4\textasciitilde) 11...\texttt{d}d8?! 12.\texttt{e}e2 \texttt{g}g7 13.\texttt{e}e3 0-0 14.\texttt{ad}d1 \texttt{c}c7 15.\texttt{fe}f1 \texttt{e}e7 16.\texttt{f}f4 \texttt{fe}f8 17.\texttt{h}h3 \texttt{d}d7 18.\texttt{e}e4 b5 19.b3 bxc4 20.bxc4 c5 21.dxc5. After the capture on c5 Black made a serious blunder with 21...\texttt{xc}c5? and resigned without waiting for the reply \texttt{xd}d7, V.Sveshnikov-Giretti, Bratto 2015. But the superior 21...\texttt{xd}d1 would not have saved the game anyway, since after 22.\texttt{xd}d1 \texttt{xc}c5 there follows 23.\texttt{d}d7, and if 23...\texttt{a}a6, then 24.\texttt{b}b7 with a decisive advantage to White, whose pieces are very active, whilst Black has two pawns en prise.

6.d4
6...h6

Defending against g5. If Black does not play 6...h6, but plays, for example, 6...d6, then White has a pleasant choice:

A) 7.d3, and now Black can hardly manage without 7...h6, transposing into the game (after 7...0-0? 8.g5 Black loses the queen);

B) Also good is 7.g5 f5 (or 7...g6 8.d3 h5 9.h3 f6 10.d2 0-0 11.0-0 c6 12.e1 with a clearly better position for White: he has a lead in development, more space and pressure down the e-file) 8.d3 a5+ 9.d2 b6 10.0-0. Now after 10...c6 White plays simply 11.c3 and then b2-b4, a2-a4 with a serious advantage, whilst 10...xb2 is very dangerous in view of 11.b1 (11.a4 also wins, whilst 11.e2 a3 12.fb1 is not bad either) 11.a2 (after 11...a3 12.b3 xa2 13.g5 White has a strong attack) 12.c4 a6 13.c3+ or 12...c6 13.a1 b2 14.a4 d7 15.fb1 xd4 16.xb2 xa4 17.xa4 xf3+ 18.xf3+- with an extra piece.

7.d3 c5

The alternative is 7.d6.
The most popular continuation here is 8.0-0 (White is also better after 8.\textit{e}2±), and then:

A) On 8...\textit{d}7 White has a wide choice: 9.\textit{e}2±, 9.\textit{c}4± or 9.\textit{e}1±;

B) 8...\textit{d}7 9.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}6 10.\textit{e}5 \textit{xe}5 (10...0-0 11.f4±) 11.dxe5, and now:

B1) 11...\textit{h}4 has been played many times by a player named Frank. Now a very good line is 12.f4 \textit{d}7 13.b4 a6 14.a4±. White has the advantage on both flanks, as well as the two bishops;

B2) Black has also retreated with 11...\textit{e}7, e.g. 12.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}7 (not 12...0-0 because of 13.\textit{g}4+- with the double threats of \textit{xh}6 and \textit{b}4, winning the exchange) 13.b4 (threatening b4-b5 and on ...\textit{d}5 – c2-c4, winning the bishop) 13...a6 (better is 13...b6, although here too, after 14.\textit{fe}1± White’s position is clearly preferable: he has two bishops and the black king will not be safe either in the centre, on the queenside, or on the kingside) 14.a4 b6 15.\textit{xa}6+-, Rizouk-Kemper, Werther Schloss 2001;

C) 8...0-0 9.\textit{e}2 (9.3±), and now:

C1) White is better after 9...\textit{e}7 10.\textit{e}5 \textit{d}7 (or 10...\textit{xe}5 11.dxe5±; White has two bishops, an advantage in development, and a possible attack on the black king) 11.\textit{f}4 c5 12.dxc5 \textit{xc}5 13.\textit{ad}1±; White has active pieces and an advantage in development, whilst Black’s light-squared bishop is still not developed;

C2) 9...\textit{c}6 10.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}5 (worse is 10...\textit{d}8 11.\textit{h}7+ \textit{f}8 12.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}7 13.\textit{c}3 \textit{b}4 14.\textit{e}5 \textit{xc}3 15.\textit{xd}7+ \textit{xd}7 16.\textit{h}8+ \textit{e}7 17.\textit{xa}8 \textit{xb}2 18.\textit{ab}1 \textit{xd}4 19.\textit{xb}7 \textit{e}5 20.\textit{bb}1 \textit{d}4 21.\textit{f}4 \textit{d}6 22.\textit{b}8 \textit{c}5 23.\textit{e}8+ \textit{d}6 24.\textit{h}1 \textit{b}6 25.\textit{e}4, and Black resigned in Predke-Pasiev, Saratov 2013) 11.\textit{h}4 \textit{e}7 (bad is 11...\textit{a}5 12.\textit{hx}6 \textit{gx}6 13.\textit{h}6 \textit{f}5 14.\textit{g}6+ \textit{h}8 15.\textit{g}5, and Black resigned, since he is mated, Kotov-Petrov, Kimry 2007. He also loses after 11...\textit{f}6 12.\textit{g}5!, and Black loses the queen) 12.\textit{g}3 \textit{d}6 (or 12...\textit{f}6 13.\textit{f}4 \textit{d}6 14.\textit{e}5 \textit{xe}5 15.\textit{dxe}5 \textit{e}7 16.a3±).
C21) 13.\textit{Qxd6 cxd6 14.\textit{Bxf5 exf5 15.d5 \textit{Qd4 16.c4 \textit{Qd3 17.Wxd1 \textit{Qxc1 18.Wxc1 We8 19.c5 dxc5 20.Wxc5\textsubscript{=}}, H. Hunt-Punnett, Kenneth 2009;}}}

C22) 13.\textit{Qxf5!? \textit{Qxg3 14.hxg3 (or 14.fxg3 exf5 15.c4\textsubscript{=}) 14...exf5 15.c4\textsubscript{=} ??? 15.d5 \textit{Qb4 16.c4 \textit{Qd3 17.Wd1 \textit{Qxc1 18.Wxc1 b6 19.c5\textsubscript{=}}, Kubik-Sedivy, Frydek Mistek 2014.}}}

7...\textit{Nc6 has also been seen, e.g. 8.0-0 \textit{Bd7 (naturally, not 8...\textit{Nxd4 9.Wxd4 \textit{Qxd4 10.b5\textsubscript{+}, and Black loses the queen)}} 9.c3 0-0-0 10.b4 \textit{Qe7 (or 10...\textit{Qd6 11.b5 \textit{Qe7 12.c4\textsubscript{=}) 11.b5 \textit{Qd5 12.c4 \textit{Qf4 13.Qe4 g5 14.Qe5 Qb8 15.g3 Qg6 16.Qc6+ Qxc6 17.bxc6 \textit{Wxd4 18.Qb2 \textit{Wxd1 19.Wxd1 Qd6 20.Qxg6 fxg6 21.Qxh8 \textit{Qxh8 22.Qe1 e5 23.c5, and Black resigned in Karg-Phillips, corr. 2004.}})\textsubscript{=}}})))}}

\textbf{8.Qe3}
8...\textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}}

On 8...\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} 9.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{d6}}}, the simplest is 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c4}}}+. Another possibility is 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}}? a6 (worse is 10...\textit{\textit{\textbf{cxd4}}} 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{g6}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c3}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c7}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e5}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{a5}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d4}}}+). 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd7+}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xd7}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}}, and Black’s two bishops hardly compensate for White’s extra pawn.

9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c3}}}

It was stronger simply to take the pawn – 9.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}}, after which Black should also take on b2 – 9...\textit{\textit{\textbf{xb2}}} (otherwise he is simply a pawn down). 10.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} (10...\textit{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c8}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b1}}}?) 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d4}}}! 0-0 (11...\textit{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b1}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xa2}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{bxc6}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{f3}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} 15.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b7}}}++; 11...\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}}? 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}+-). 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{bxc6}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{b8}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{g4}}} (14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e1}}!?)) 14...\textit{\textit{\textbf{e5}}} 15.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} \textit{f5} 16.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xb7}}} (16...\textit{\textit{\textbf{exd4}}} 17.\textit{\textit{\textbf{ab1}}+} followed by \textit{\textit{\textbf{xa8}}}) 17.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c4+}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{h7}}} 18.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{exd4}}} 19.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xb7}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xb7}}} 20.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xb7}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{ae8}}} 21.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}}+.

9...\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}?}

Correct was 9...\textit{\textit{\textbf{cxd4}}} 10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}}:

A) 10...\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} 11.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}}!? (11.0-0) 11...\textit{\textit{\textbf{e5}}} 12.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{a6}}} 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d6}}} (it was more solid to retreat the queen immediately – 13...\textit{\textit{\textbf{c7}}} with somewhat better chances for White after 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} or 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{h5}}}) 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{f3}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} 15.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c2}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c7}}} 16.\textit{\textit{\textbf{fd1}}};

B) The most accurate is 10...\textit{\textit{\textbf{c5}}} 11.0-0 \textit{\textit{\textbf{xd4}}} 12.\textit{\textit{\textbf{cxd4}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{d6}}}, and Black is close to equality: 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c1}}} (on 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}}+ Black plays 13...\textit{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} followed by \textit{\textit{\textbf{d8}} and ...\textit{\textit{\textbf{f8}}}; 13.\textit{\textit{\textbf{g4}}!?}) 13...\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} 14.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b3}}} \textit{b6} 15.\textit{\textit{\textbf{b5}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} 16.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xb5}}} 17.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xb5}}}+ \textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} 18.\textit{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 0-0 19.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xb6}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{c7}}} 20.\textit{\textit{\textbf{f8}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{fb8}}} 21.\textit{\textit{\textbf{xc7}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xb5}}} 22.\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}} \textit{\textit{\textbf{xd5}}}=.

Now, however, after

10.\textit{\textit{\textbf{dxc5}}}
Black can no longer take on b2 and so he remains a pawn down.

10...\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{blue}{e}}}_5 11.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{blue}{e}}}_4 0-0-0 12.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_e5 \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_e5 13.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{f}}}_3 \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{c}}}_7 14.0-0-0

Also winning is 14.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_f7 \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_c5 15.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_c5 \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_c5 16.0-0-0, and on 16...\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{h}}}_f8 there follows the blow 17.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_b7+ \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_b7 18.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_d7++- or 17...\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{c}}}_7 18.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_g7 \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_f2 19.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{f}}}_3+-.

14...f5 15.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_b7+!

The exclamation mark is for beauty! If White does not land this blow on b7, but simply retreats the bishop with 15.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{c}}}_2, then after 15...\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_c5 16.\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_c5 \textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_c5 his winning chances diminish sharply.

15...\textit{\fbox{\textcolor{red}{x}}}_b7
16. $\text{Nxd7}!$

This move had to have been seen when he sacrificed the bishop.

16... $\text{Qxf3}$

Or 16... $\text{Nxd7}$ 17.c6+, or 16... $\text{Nxd7}$ 17. $\text{a8+ Kc7}$ 18. $\text{f4}++$.

17. $\text{Nxd8+ Kxd8}$ 18. $\text{gxf3}$

White has two extra pawns, which he easily realised.
1.e4 e6 2.d4

We would remind you that we would play this variation in the move-order 2.\(Nf3\) d5 3.\(c3\) dxe4 4.\(xe4\) \(d7\) 5.d4 \(\text{gf}6\) 6.\(d3\) c5 7.\(xf6+\) \(xf6\) 8.\(e3\) etc.

2...d5 3.\(c3\) dxe4 4.\(xe4\) \(d7\) 5.\(f3\) \(\text{gf}6\) 6.\(xf6+\) \(xf6\) 7.\(d3\) c5 8.\(e3\)

\[8...\text{c7}\\]

A) If Black attacks the bishop immediately with 8...\(d5\), then 9.0-0 is strong.
A1) Taking the bishop is dangerous for Black, since after 9...\( \Boxxe3 \) 10.fxe3 the f-file is opened and White’s advantage in development becomes the decisive factor. There might follow: 10...\( \Boxxe7 \) (Black is not saved after 10...f6 11.\( \Boxxe5! \) fxe5 12.\( \Boxxh5+ \) \( \Boxxd7 \) 13.\( \Boxxe5+- \)), and now:

A11) 11.\( \Boxxb5+ \) \( \Boxxd7 \) 12.\( \Boxxd7+ \) \( \Boxxd7 \) 13.\( \Boxxe5+- \), taking on f7. Nor is there any help from 11...\( \Boxxf8 \) 12.\( \Boxxe5 \) \( \Boxxf6 \) (or 12...f5 13.\( \Boxxh5 \) g6 14.\( \Boxxg6++- \)) 13.\( \Boxxh5 \) \( \Boxxc7 \) (or 13...g6 14.\( \Boxhx6+ \) \( \Boxxg8 \) 15.\( \Boxxf6 \) \( \Boxxf6 \) 16.\( \Boxxe8+- \)) 14.\( \Boxxf6 \) \( \Boxxf6 \) 15.\( \Boxxh6+ \) \( \Boxxe7 \) 16.\( \Boxxf1+- \);

A12) Also winning is 11.\( \Boxxe5 \) 0-0
12. $\text{B}xh7+ \text{gx}h7 \ 13. \text{Wh}5+ \text{gh}8 \ 14. \text{Dxf7} \text{xf7} \ 15. \text{Qxf7}+ \text{Dh}7 \ 16. \text{f3}+\text{, Galkin-Ristic, playchess.com 2007;}$

A2) 9...$\text{Be}7 \ 10.\text{dxc5 Dxe3} \ 11.\text{fxe3 Da5}$ (after 11...0-0 12.b4± Black cannot regain the pawn) 12.$\text{De}5 \text{Dxc5}$ (12...0-0??
13.$\text{Bxh7+ Kh}8 \ 14.\text{Qh5 Dg}5 \ 15.\text{Dg6+}$, and Black resigned, since he is mated next move, Paterson-Kopylov, Calvia 2015) 13.$\text{Dxf7}$ 0-0 14.$\text{Df3}$± with an extra pawn for White;

B) 8...cx$\text{d4}$ is dubious, since after 9.$\text{Dxd4}$ White has improved the position of his bishops and obtained full control over the e5-square: 9...$\text{Da5}+$(9...$\text{Be}7$ 10.0-0 0-0 11.$\text{De2}$±) 10.c3 $\text{Be}7$ 11.0-0 (or 11.$\text{Qc}2 \text{Dd}7$ 12.0-0±, Ponomariov-Anastasian, Moscow 2005) 11...0-0 12.$\text{De}5 \text{Dd}7$ 13.$\text{Wh}5 \text{h}6$ 14.$\text{De}1 \text{Df}6$ 15.$\text{Kh}3\text{, Uberos Fernandez-Alexandre Bisquert, corr. 2014.}$

9.$\text{De}2$

9...$\text{Be}7$

Black often plays 9...a6, taking control of the square b5, after which it is worth considering 10.c4, not letting Black play ...b7-b5 and ...$\text{Dd}5$ (there is also the more popular 10.0-0, after which Black has to play 10...b6, but here too, he has definite problems).
A) On 10...\textit{d}6, instead of the passive 11.h3, Sobolevsky-Franke, Bad Zwesten 2006, it is worth considering 11.dxc5 \textcolor{black}{\textit{xc}5} 12.0-0 0-0 13.\textcolor{black}{\textit{xc}5} \textcolor{black}{\textit{xc}5} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{fd}1} with somewhat better chances for White;

B) 10...cxd4 11.\textcolor{blue}{\textit{xd}4} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{b}4+} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d}7} 13.0-0 \textcolor{black}{\textit{c}6} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textit{b}3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d}6} 15.g3 0-0 16.\textcolor{black}{\textit{e}5} \textcolor{black}{\textit{e}7} 17.\textcolor{black}{\textit{e}5} \textcolor{black}{\textit{d}8} 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{ad}1} \textcolor{red}{\textit{d}5} 19.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xf}6} \textcolor{red}{\textit{xf}6} 20.\textcolor{black}{\textit{e}4} \textcolor{black}{\textit{d}7} 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{ad}2} \textcolor{red}{\textit{ad}8} 22.\textcolor{black}{\textit{xd}5} exd5 23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{fd}1} \pm with pressure against the d-pawn, Olofsson-Dailido, corr. 2012.

\textbf{10.0-0-0}

It is also worth considering the immediate capture on c5 – 10.dxc5.
A) White’s idea is that now 10...\text{\textit{d}}5 is bad because of the check 11.\textit{b}5+, and after 11...\text{\textit{d}}7 12.\textit{xd}7+ \text{\textit{xd}}7 13.\text{\textit{e}}1 \text{\textit{c}}7 14.\textit{b}5+ \text{\textit{c}}6 15.\text{\textit{xc}}6+ \text{\textit{xc}}6 Black remains a pawn down;

B) After 10...0-0, as well as 11.0-0-0, there is the strong continuation 11.\text{\textit{d}}4 \text{\textit{xc}}5:

B1) White is better after 12.\textit{e}5 \text{\textit{e}}7 (12...\text{\textit{d}}6 13.\textit{xf}6 \text{\textit{xf}}6 14.0-0-0 \textit{f}5 15.\textit{hg}1\textup{\textdollar} followed by g2-g4 and an attack, Mignon-'t Jong, Internet 2008) 13.0-0-0 \textit{a}6 14.h4 \textit{h}5 15.\text{\textit{h}2} \text{\textit{b}}6 16.g4\textup{-\textup{-}}, Pessoa-Johnston, corr. 2012;

B2) White has also played 12.\textit{xf}6 \text{\textit{xf}}6 13.0-0-0 \textit{b}8 (13...\textit{f}5 14.\textit{b}1 \textit{e}7 15.g4 \textit{xf}4 16.\textit{dg}1 \textit{f}5 17.h3 \textit{h}5 18.hxg4 \textit{xg}4 19.\textit{e}5 \textit{f}6 20.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 21.\textit{h}6\textup{\textdollar} \textit{e}7 23.\textit{g}7\textup{\textdollar}, and Black resigned in Lalic-Ellison, Belfast 2001) 14.\textit{d}2 \textit{f}4 15.\textit{h}5 \textit{g}5 16.\textit{g}4 \textit{h}8 17.\textit{hg}1\textup{\textdollar}, Paehitz-Zatonskih, Germany Frauenbundesliga 2014;

C) Black’s best is to take back the pawn at once with 10...\text{\textit{xc}}5, although here too, after 11.\text{\textit{xc}}5 \text{\textit{xc}}5 12.\textit{e}5\textup{\textdollar} the position is in favour of White.

10...0-0

The alternative is 10...\text{\textit{d}}7 11.\textit{e}5

\begin{center}
\textit{analysis diagram}
\end{center}

A) 11...\text{\textit{c}}xd4 12.\textit{xd}4 0-0 13.h4 \textit{c}6 14.\textit{xc}6 \text{\textit{xc}}6 15.\textit{b}1 \textit{d}8 16.\textit{e}5 \textit{a}6 17.g4\textup{-\textup{-}}, Suarez Gomez-Balbuena Fuentes, Spain 2015;

B) 11...\textit{a}6 12.f4 \textit{b}5 13.dxc5 \textit{xc}5 14.\textit{xc}5 \text{\textit{xc}}5 15.\textit{he}1 \text{\textit{e}}7 16.f5\textup{\textdollar}, Voicu Jagodzinsky-Miron, Curtea de Arges ch-ROM w 2002; even stronger was 16.g4 followed by g4-g5;

C) 11...0-0 12.\textit{xd}7 (12.f4!? \textit{cxd}4 13.\textit{xd}4\textup{\textdollar}) 12...\text{\textit{xd}}7 13.\textit{c}3\textup{\textdollar}, Buhnke-Avchinikov, corr. 2014.

11.\textit{xc}5
11...\(\texttt{\textit{\textit{\textit{\textit{\textit{\textit{d5}}}}}}\)\)

A) Black is also not guaranteed an easy life after 11...\(\texttt{xc5}\) 12.\(\texttt{xc5}\) \(\texttt{xc5}\) 13.\(\texttt{e5}\)

A1) 13...\(\texttt{b6}\) 14.\(\texttt{g4}\), Kryvoruchko-Farago, Essen 2013;

A2) 13...\(\texttt{e7}\) 14.\(\texttt{f4}\) \(\texttt{b6}\) 15.\(\texttt{g4}\) \(\texttt{b7}\) 16.\(\texttt{h1}\) \(\texttt{ad8}\) 17.\(\texttt{g5}\) \(\texttt{d7}\) 18.\(\texttt{h7}\) + 19.\(\texttt{h5}\) + 20.\(\texttt{g6}\) \(\texttt{f5}\) 21.\(\texttt{xf6}\) \(\texttt{f8}\) 22.\(\texttt{xf5}\) \(\texttt{xf5}\), and Black loses the queen, since she cannot leave the f-file because of mate on h8, Spraggett-Pogorelov, Andorra 2006;

A3) 13...\(\texttt{c7}\) 14.\(\texttt{g4}\) \(\texttt{d5}\) 15.\(\texttt{g5}\) \(\texttt{f5}\) 16.\(\texttt{xf6}\) \(\texttt{xf6}\) 17.\(\texttt{hg1}\) \(\texttt{f4}\) 18.\(\texttt{e4}\) \(\texttt{f5}\) 19.\(\texttt{g4}\) \(\texttt{f8}\) 20.\(\texttt{e3}\) \(\texttt{xd3}\) + 21.\(\texttt{xd3}\) \(\texttt{h5}\) 22.\(\texttt{f3}\) +, and Black resigned, Brandner-Stranz, Austria Bundesliga 2000;

B) Black also has the pawn sacrifice 11...\(\texttt{b6}\) 12.\(\texttt{d4}\) and now:
analysis diagram

A) Grandmaster Nikita Vitiugov, in his book The French Defence: A Repertoire for Black, now gives the variation 16.d1 e5 17.dxe3 cxd1+ 18.cxd1 cxe6 19.c6 b6, and Black obtains counter-chances;

B) Instead of the bishop retreat, it is worth considering 16.d4, and two correspondence games show that Black has a lot of problems in this variation. For example, 16...dxe5 (there is nothing else, he has to take the pawn back) 17.b4. White has swapped the g2-pawn for the one on c5 and obtained a pawn majority on the queenside, where it is rather easier for him to create a passed pawn than for the opponent to do so on the other flank. Things might continue 17...dxe5 18.fxe3 b6 (in the other game, play continued 18...b8 19.e4 f5 20.f3 f8 21.cxd8+ cxd8 22.c7 d6 23.c6 d6 24.cxd6 cxd6 25.c4 g5 26.d2 g4 27.h1 f6 28.c5 f6 29.a4 e5 30.d5 a6 31.b5! axb5 32.a5 f4 33.a6 (creating a passed pawn more quickly) 33...bxa6 34.c6 d8 35.c7 e8 36.a1, and in the game Yaroshenko-Shevtsov, corr. 2013, Black resigned, since he loses the pawn on a6; White will play b6-b8 and b7, promoting the c-pawn) 19.e4 d1+ 20.d1 b8 21.c6 (White is well ahead of his opponent in creating a passed pawn) 21...a6 22.c7 c8
23.\texttt{Rd7} $\texttt{Bxb4}$ 24.\texttt{Rb2} $\texttt{c5}$ 25.\texttt{b3} – Black has an extra pawn, but no useful moves. White now just strengthens his position. 25...h6 26.a4 $\texttt{Kf8}$ 27.\texttt{Bc6} g6 28.e4 e5 29.\texttt{a3} $\texttt{xa3}$ (the threat was 30.\texttt{b5}) 30.\texttt{xa3} f5 31.\texttt{d5} fxe4 (31...f4 32.\texttt{Rf7}+ $\texttt{Ke8}$ 33.$\texttt{f6+}$) 32.\texttt{xe4} e8 33.\texttt{xg6} e7 34.\texttt{f5} e4 35.\texttt{xe7} $\texttt{Bxe7}$ 36.c8=$\texttt{Q}$ $\texttt{xc8}$ 37.\texttt{xc8} f6 38.\texttt{b4} $\texttt{e5}$ 39.\texttt{g4} $\texttt{d4}$ 40.h4, and Black resigned in Scheppel-Cottegnie, corr. 2012.

12...$\texttt{Bxc5}$ 13.\texttt{b1}  

\begin{center}

\begin{tikzpicture}
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (0,0) grid (8,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,1) -- (7,1);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,2) -- (7,2);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,3) -- (7,3);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,4) -- (7,4);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,5) -- (7,5);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,6) -- (7,6);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,7) -- (7,7);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,8) -- (7,8);

\draw[black, line width=1pt] (0,0) -- (0,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (1,0) -- (1,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (2,0) -- (2,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (3,0) -- (3,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (4,0) -- (4,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (5,0) -- (5,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (6,0) -- (6,8);
\draw[black, line width=1pt] (7,0) -- (7,8);
\end{tikzpicture}

\end{center}

13...a6  

In the event of 13...$\texttt{d4}$ 14.$\texttt{xf4}$ $\texttt{xf4}$ 15.$\texttt{e4}$ it is not easy for Black to complete his queenside development. Thus, after 15...f5 16.$\texttt{d3}$ the bishop transfers to c4 and the e6-pawn is weak. White is also worse after 15.g3 $\texttt{c7}$ 16.h4, preparing an attack on the black king; also good is 15.$\texttt{d2}$, preparing $\texttt{hd1}$.

14.h4 b5 15.$\texttt{g5}$ h6 16.g4!
16...b7

He loses after 16...hxg5 17.hxg5:

A) 17...b7?? 18.h7+ h8 19.d3+–;

B) 17...g6 18.f4 (threatening h2 and f4-f5) 18.d8. Black has prepared for h2, but now there follows 19.f5 exf5 (or 19.d4 20.fxg6 fxg6 21.xg6+-) 20.gxf5 xf5 21.xf5 gxf5 22.h5 d4 23.b4! xb4 24.xd4 e5 25.g6 f8 26.xb4+–;

C) 17.e8 18.g6 f4 19.xf4 xf4 20.g5 b7 21.gxf7+ xf7 22.h7+ f8 23.e4 xe4 24.xe4 f5 25.d7! g8

*analysis diagram*
White has sacrificed a knight, after which he must break through to the black king. There are many variations here, but they show the correctness of the sacrifice and the difficulties the black king must face.
17.\(\text{h}3\)

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17...\(\text{b}4\)

Black wants to exchange off his opponent’s dark-squared bishop, which is eyeing up his king.

18.\(\text{h}g1\) \(\text{xd}2\) 19.\(\text{xd}2\) \(\text{fe}8\) 20.\(g5\) \(h5\) 21.\(g6\) \(f5\)

Naturally, it is unfavourable to play 21...\(\text{fxg6}\) 22.\(\text{xg6}\), and the black king is not to be envied.

Now the rook has nothing to do on the g-file, and White transfers it to a better position.

22.\(\text{ge}1\) \(\text{ad}8\)

Black also centralised his second rook.

23.\(a3\) \(\text{f}6\) 24.\(\text{e}3\) \(\text{d}5\) 25.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{c}6\) 26.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{xd}5\) 27.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{c}7\) 28.\(\text{xc}7\) \(\text{xc}7\) 29.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{f}8\) 30.\(\text{xh}5\)
White has managed to exchange several pieces and win the pawn on h5. His further actions are quite simple: he tries to exchange as many pieces as possible and win the ending with his extra pawn.

30...Nd5 31.Bf3 Nf4 32.Bc6 Rxd1+ 33.Rxd1 b8 34.h5 Nxh5 35.Rd7

Black has regained the pawn, but White has significantly activated his pieces.

35...f4 36.f7+ g8 37.d7 f8 38.e7 xg6 39.xe6+ h7 40.a7

Now the a6-pawn falls.

40...f4 41.xa6 xe6

Black exchanges minor pieces in the hope of drawing the rook ending a pawn down.

42.xe6 g5

Black tries to organise a passed pawn on the kingside, but White manages to bring his king across in time.

43.c1 g4 44.d2 f4 45.e1
45...\textit{f7}

After 45...g3 Black loses a pawn: 46.fxg3 fxg3 47.e3, and now:

A) 47...g2 48.h3+ $g7$ 49.g3+;
B) 47...g8 48.f1 followed by $g2$ and $xg3$;
C) After 47...f2 48.xg3 xc2 49.b3 Black takes the c2-pawn, but loses b5: 49...c5 50.d2 g6 51.d3 (White is also winning after 51.c3 d5+ 52.c2 f6 53.b3 e6 54.b4 d6 55.a4 bxa4 56.a4+-; the black king is cut off and White simply pushes the b-pawn) 51...f6 52.d4 g5 53.c3 e6 54.c5+-.

46.d6 $f5$ 47.b4 $g7$ 48.f1 $f6$ 49.d5 $c6$ 50.xb5 xc2 51.g5+ $f6$ 52.xg4

And White won.

\textbf{Conclusion}: As we have seen, in this variation Black has serious problems in several lines, in addition to which White has simple play.
another way to do so — 4...e7, after which the simplest thing for White is to play 5.Nf3 f6 6.d3, and after 6...bd7 7.0-0 or 6...xe4 7.xe4 d7 8.0-0 c5 9.c3 we reach positions covered under 6...e7.

5.Nf3 gf6 6.d3 xe4

A) An important variation here is 6...e7, and now:

analysis diagram

7.0-0 xe4 (7...0-0 8.xf6+ xf6 9.e5 is the same; White is also better after 8...xf6 9.e1 c5 10.c3 cxd4 11.cxd4± with a good IQP position) 8.xe4

A1) 8...c5 9.c3 0-0 (9...f6 10.c2 cxd4 11.xd4 0-0 12.f4±; White is also better after 12.e2± or 12.e1±) 10.c2,
and now:

A11) 10...\( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 11.\( \text{\texttt{f4}} \)±;

A12) 10...b6 11.\( \text{\texttt{d3}} \) (or 11.\( \text{\texttt{e4}} \)?) 12.\( \text{\texttt{e1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{c8}} \) 13.\( \text{\texttt{a4}} \) \( \text{\texttt{b8}} \) 14.\( \text{\texttt{f4}} \)±) 11...g6 12.\( \text{\texttt{h6}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e8}} \) 13.\( \text{\texttt{ad1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{b7}} \) 14.dxc5 \( \text{\texttt{xc5}} \) 15.\( \text{\texttt{e3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \) 16.\( \text{\texttt{e5}} \)±;

A13) 10...\( \text{\texttt{c7}} \)

![Analysis Diagram](image)

analysis diagram

11.\( \text{\texttt{d3}} \) (or 11.\( \text{\texttt{g5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) (11...\( \text{\texttt{xg5}} \) 12.\( \text{\texttt{xg5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 13.\( \text{\texttt{d3}} \) c4 14.\( \text{\texttt{h3}} \) h6 15.\( \text{\texttt{f3}} \)±) 12.\( \text{\texttt{d3}} \) g6 13.\( \text{\texttt{fe1}} \) b6 14.\( \text{\texttt{e5}} \)±) 11...g6 12.\( \text{\texttt{g5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xg5}} \) 13.\( \text{\texttt{xg5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) 14.\( \text{\texttt{f3}} \) \( \text{\texttt{g7}} \) 15.dxc5 h6 16.\( \text{\texttt{e4}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xe4}} \) 17.\( \text{\texttt{xe4}} \) \( \text{\texttt{xc5}} \) 18.\( \text{\texttt{ad1}} \) \( \text{\texttt{c7}} \) 19.\( \text{\texttt{fe1}} \) a5 20.\( \text{\texttt{d4}} \)± \( \text{\texttt{g8}} \) 21.\( \text{\texttt{f6}} \) \( \text{\texttt{a6}} \) 22.h4 h5? 23.\( \text{\texttt{e5}} \) \( \text{\texttt{e8}} \) 24.\( \text{\texttt{d4}} \) b5 25.\( \text{\texttt{xg6}} \), and Black resigned in Radulov-Nicevski, Polanica Zdroj 1982. In all these positions, the white bishops on c2 and c1 point towards the black king, and the knight is ready to come into the attack via e5 or g5, and the rooks via the third rank. And of course, the queen, the strongest piece of all, is always ready to join in. In many variations, Black fails to get his \( \text{\texttt{c8}} \) into the game in time; then White can exchange pawns on c5 and play down the d-file. Sometimes White can obtain the well-known advantage of the queenside pawn majority, where it is easier for him to organise a passed pawn.

A2) Another possibility is 8...\( \text{\texttt{f6}} \), driving the bishop from e4: 9.\( \text{\texttt{d3}} \) 0-0 10.\( \text{\texttt{e5}} \) c5 11.dxc5
A21) 11...\textit{Q} c7 12.\textit{R} e1 (White also has 12.\textit{B} f4 \textit{Q}xc5 13.c4\textpm, Reinstadler-Hammerle, corr. 2012) 12...\textit{Q} xc5 13.\textit{B} g5, transposing to 11...\textit{Q}xc5; we will examine this variation below.

A22) 11...\textit{Q} d5 12.\textit{R} e1 \textit{Q}xc5 (12...\textit{B} xc5 13.\textit{B} g5 \textit{Q}d7 14.\textit{B} f4 \textit{Q}d4 15.\textit{B} e4 \textit{Q}c5 16.\textit{N} d3 \textit{Q}b6 17.c3 \textit{Q}f6 18.\textit{c} c2 \textit{g} 19.\textit{R} ad1\textpm, Dann-Billing, Germany tt jr 2008) 13.\textit{Q} f3 (White is also better after 13.\textit{B} d2 \textit{R} d8 14.\textit{Q} f3\textpm; Black’s queenside is not yet developed, Marjanovic-Ilievski, Bjelovar ch-YUG 1979; and after 13.b3 followed by \textit{b}2, bringing the bishop to the long diagonal) 13...\textit{Q} d7 (13...\textit{R} d8 14.b3\textpm followed by \textit{b}2; 13...\textit{R} d6 14.\textit{Q} c4 \textit{c} c7 15.b3 \textit{W} d5 16.\textit{W} h3\textpm, Serikbay-Liu, Maribor 2012) 14.\textit{Q} f4 \textit{B} xe5 15.\textit{E} xe5 \textit{W} c6 16.\textit{Q} xh7+ \textit{x} xh7 17.\textit{W} h5+ \textit{g} g8 18.\textit{W} h3\textpm, Gufeld-Srivastava, Goodricke 1993.

A23) 11...\textit{B} xc5 12.\textit{R} e1!?
A231) 12...b6?! 13.Qf3 Qd5 14.Qh3 g6 15.Qh6 Qd8 16.Qg5 Qe7 17.c4 Qb7 18.Qxf7! Qxf7 19.Qxe6! Qg7 20.Qh6+ Qh8 21.Qxf6, and Black resigned, Ciprys-Vlk, Czech tt 2004;
A232) Also dubious is 12...Nd5?!; since after 13.a3 Black lacks normal moves. For example, 13...f6 14.Qh5 f5 15.Qe2± or 13...Qf6 14.Qg4 Qd8 15.b4 Qd6 16.c4 Qf4 17.Qc2 Qg6 18.Qb2±;
A233) After the computer’s 12...Qc7 (no human player has yet played this) 13.Qg5 Qd5 (13...Qd7 14.Qf4 Qxe5 15.Qxe5 Qe7 16.Qg4 g6 17.Qad1± or 17.h4±) 14.c4 Qb4 (14...Qd6 15.Qh5 g6 16.Qh4 Qxe5 (16...f6 17.cxd5 fxg5 18.Qxg5±) 17.cxd5 f6 18.Qac1 fxg5 19.Qxe7 gxh4 20.Qxe5±)
15. $\textbf{B}xh7+!$ (we have seen this sacrifice more than once already) 15... $\textbf{K}xh7$ 16. $\textbf{Q}h5+$ $\textbf{K}g8$ 17. $\textbf{B}f6!$ $\textbf{xf}2+$ (the only move; he loses after 17...gx$\textbf{f}6$ 18. $\textbf{Q}g4+$ $\textbf{K}h8$ 19. $\textbf{Q}h4+$ $\textbf{g}7$ 20. $\textbf{g}3+$ $\textbf{h}8$ 21. $\textbf{e}4+$, mating) 18. $\textbf{xf}2$ $\textbf{c}5+$ 19. $\textbf{f}1$ $\textbf{d}3$ 20. $\textbf{h}4$ $\textbf{f}2+$ (again the only move; bad is 20...gx$\textbf{f}6$ 21. $\textbf{g}3+$ $\textbf{h}8$ 22. $\textbf{x}d3$ $\textbf{f}xe5$ 23. $\textbf{e}4+$, and the black king is in danger) 21. $\textbf{xf}2$ $\textbf{xf}2$ 22. $\textbf{e}7$ $\textbf{e}8$ 23. $\textbf{b}4$ $\textbf{f}6$ 24. $\textbf{xf}2$ $\textbf{f}xe5$ 25. $\textbf{e}5$ – White not only has an extra pawn, but the more active pieces;

A234) After 12...h6 White has bishop sacrifice motifs on h6: 13. $\textbf{f}3$ $\textbf{d}7$ 14. $\textbf{x}d7$ $\textbf{d}7$ (in reply to 14...$\textbf{x}d7$ White simply takes the b7-pawn) 15. $\textbf{x}h6$ (a simple tactic decides the outcome of the game) 15... $\textbf{f}5$ (or 15...gx$\textbf{h}6$ 16. $\textbf{g}3+$ $\textbf{h}8$ 17. $\textbf{e}5+$ $\textbf{f}6$ 18. $\textbf{x}c5+$–) 16. $\textbf{f}4+$ with an extra pawn and an easily winning position, Vishnu-Anilkumar, Dharamshala 2014.

B) After 6...b6 7. $\textbf{N}xf6+$ $\textbf{N}xf6$ White has a pleasant choice:

B1) 8.a4!? a6 9.0-0 $\textbf{b}7$ 10.$\textbf{e}2$ $\textbf{d}6$ 11.a5±, Domancich-Ochoa Ramirez, corr. 2012;

B2) 8.$\textbf{Q}e2$ $\textbf{b}7$ 9.0-0 (the immediate 9.$\textbf{b}g5$ is also possible, with the idea of 0-0-0) 9... $\textbf{e}7$ 10.$\textbf{g}5$ 0-0 11.$\textbf{ad}1$ with somewhat better chances for White;

B3) 8.$\textbf{e}5$

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**analysis diagram**

8... $\textbf{b}7$ (or 8...$\textbf{d}5$ 9.$\textbf{e}2$ $\textbf{b}7$ 10.c3 $\textbf{xg}2$ 11.$\textbf{a}4+$ $\textbf{d}8$ 12.$\textbf{f}1$ $\textbf{c}8$ 13.$\textbf{x}f7$ $\textbf{g}8$ 14.$\textbf{f}4+$) 9.c3 $\textbf{e}7$ (9...$\textbf{xg}2$ fails to 10.$\textbf{b}5+$ $\textbf{c}6$ 11.$\textbf{x}c6$ $\textbf{d}5$ 12.$\textbf{xa}7+$ $\textbf{d}7$ 13.$\textbf{c}6$, and after the queen retreats, White takes on g2 and keeps an extra pawn, with two bishops and an excellent position; Black has also tried 9...a6 10.0-0 $\textbf{d}6$ 11.$\textbf{e}1+$, Antoniewski-Mufic, Croatia tt 2011, or 9...$\textbf{d}5$ 10.$\textbf{a}4+$ $\textbf{c}6$ 11.0-0 $\textbf{e}7$ 12.$\textbf{e}2$ $\textbf{b}5$ 13.$\textbf{c}2$ 0-0 14.$\textbf{f}3$ $\textbf{d}6$ 15.$\textbf{f}4$ $\textbf{d}5$ 16.$\textbf{g}3+$, Groszpeter-Bertholee, Haarlem 1997) 10.$\textbf{a}4+$ $\textbf{c}6$ 11.$\textbf{f}4$ a6 (or 11...$\textbf{d}5$ 12.$\textbf{g}3$ a6 13.0-0 $\textbf{b}5$ 14.$\textbf{c}2$ $\textbf{h}6$ 15.$\textbf{ad}1$ 0-0 16.$\textbf{fe}1+$, Ventimiglia-Garibaldi, corr. 2002; 11...$\textbf{c}8$!? with a passive, but solid position) 12.0-0 $\textbf{b}5$ 13.$\textbf{c}2$ $\textbf{c}5$ 14.$\textbf{xc}5$ $\textbf{xc}5$ 15.$\textbf{ad}1$ $\textbf{b}6$ 16.a4 0-0 17.$\textbf{g}5$ $\textbf{fd}8$ 18.$\textbf{xf}6$ $\textbf{gxf}6$ 19.$\textbf{d}7$ $\textbf{xd}7$ 20.$\textbf{xh}7+$ $\textbf{h}8$ 21.$\textbf{xd}7$ $\textbf{f}5$ 22.$\textbf{xf}5$ $\textbf{xe}2$ 23.$\textbf{xe}2$ $\textbf{g}8$ 24.$\textbf{h}1$ $\textbf{c}6$+ 25.$\textbf{e}4$ $\textbf{xd}7$ 26.$\textbf{h}4+$ $\textbf{g}7$ 27.$\textbf{g}1+$ $\textbf{f}8$ 28.$\textbf{h}6+$ $\textbf{e}7$ 29.$\textbf{xg}8$ $\textbf{d}5+$ 30.$\textbf{g}1$ $\textbf{d}1+$ 31.$\textbf{g}2$ $\textbf{d}5+$ 32.$\textbf{f}3$, and Black resigned in Palac-Mufic, Croatia tt 1993.

7.$\textbf{xe}4$
7...\texttt{f6} 8.\texttt{g5} \texttt{d6}

The alternative is 8...e7 9.\texttt{xf6}:

A) 9...\texttt{xf6}!? (taking control of e5) 10.e2 c6 11.0-0 (to complete the picture, we should mention 11.0-0-0; this was seen in a game played 100 years ago: Tarrasch-Mieses, Berlin 1916) 11...\texttt{b6} (or 11...\texttt{a5} 12.c4 \texttt{h5} 13.e3 \texttt{g8} 14.g3 f5 15.c2 \texttt{f8} 16.e5 \texttt{d6} 17.\texttt{f1}±; Black has a bad light-squared bishop, which in the game Cillyniz Razzeto-Sindelar, corr. 2013, never did get into the game) 12.c4±; Black’s position is solid, but seriously passive, Anand-Vaganian, Riga 1995;

B) 9...\texttt{xf6} 10.d3!± (simultaneously preparing long castling and attacking the pawn on h7) 10...h6 11.0-0-0, and now:

B1) 11...0-0 12.h4 (White also has better chances after 12.\texttt{b1} \texttt{d6} 13.h4 c5 14.g4±, Jeen-Altkirch, corr. 2007) 12...c5 (12...\texttt{b8} 13.g4 g6 14.e3 \texttt{g7} 15.e5 \texttt{d6} 16.f4+-; White has clearly outstripped his opponent in generating threats against the king, Zieba-Desormes, corr. 2013) 13.g4 \texttt{xd4} 14.c3 f5 15.gxf5 \texttt{f6} 16.e4 \texttt{e7} 17.\texttt{he1}±; Black’s light-squared bishop, as usual, is stuck on c8, Wichert-Schott, corr. 2007;

B2) On 11...c6 White also develops an initiative on the kingside, by pushing his pawns: 12.h4 \texttt{c7} 13.g4 \texttt{f4}+ 14.e3 \texttt{xe3}+ 15.fxe3 g6 16.g5 \texttt{hxg5} 17.hxg5 \texttt{h1} 18.\texttt{h1} \texttt{g7} 19.e5 \texttt{d7} 20.g4 e5 21.f6+ \texttt{xf6} 22.gxf6 0-0-0 23.dxe5±, and White has an extra pawn, So-Dableo, Manila 2008.

9.d3

Quite a promising pawn sacrifice.

9...\texttt{b4}+ 10.\texttt{d2} \texttt{xb2} 11.0-0
For his pawn, White has a large advantage in development.

11...\texttt{Q}a3

Practice has seen 11...\texttt{Be}7 12.\texttt{Re}1 (or 12.a4!? \texttt{b}6 13.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{a}5 14.\texttt{De}5 0-0 15.\texttt{Cc}4 \texttt{d}5 16.\texttt{Ex}c7 \texttt{b}6 17.\texttt{Ye}3 \texttt{c}6 18.\texttt{Ye}5 \texttt{b}7 19.\texttt{e}4\texttt{+}, Rublevsky-Galkin, Rostov-on-Don 2014), and now:

A) 12...0-0 13.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{Q}a3 (13...\texttt{Q}a3!? 14.\texttt{Cc}3 \texttt{d}6 15.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{Q}d7; or 15.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{d}8 (15...\texttt{d}8 16.\texttt{g}6 \texttt{d}7 17.\texttt{xe}7+ \texttt{xe}7 18.\texttt{e}5\texttt{+} 16.\texttt{b}1 \texttt{c}5 17.\texttt{xc}5 \texttt{xc}5 18.\texttt{f}3\texttt{+}) 14.\texttt{c}3 (14.\texttt{c}5\texttt{+} \texttt{c}6 15.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{e}8 16.\texttt{b}1\texttt{+}) 14...\texttt{d}6 15.\texttt{e}5 \texttt{b}5? 16.\texttt{c}5 \texttt{d}5 17.\texttt{xb}5 \texttt{b}7 18.\texttt{f}3\texttt{+}, Karjakin-Wang Hao, Tashkent 2012;

B) 12...\texttt{b}6 13.\texttt{c}4
13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\texttt{f}d6}} (13...0-0 14.c5 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}c6}} 15.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}e}5} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}d5}} 16.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}c}1} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}d8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}b}1} \textit{\texttt{c}6} 18.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}b}3} \textit{\texttt{g}6} 19.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}h}6} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}d7}} 20.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}xf}8} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{xf}8}} 21.\textit{\texttt{g}4} \textit{\texttt{g}7} 22.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}d}2} \textit{\texttt{f}5} 23.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}e}3} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}f}8} 24.\textit{\texttt{d}d1±}, Nickel-Szczepanski, corr. 2012) 14.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}c}3} 0-0 15.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}e}5} \textit{\texttt{g}6} 16.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}d}2} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}d8}} 17.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}ad}1} \textit{\texttt{a}5} 18.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{b}b}2} \textit{\texttt{a}a6} 19.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}h}6} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}5}} 20.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e}e}3}} \textit{\texttt{a}4} 21.d5 \textit{\texttt{g}5} 22.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}e}4} \textit{\texttt{exd}5} 23.cxd5 \textit{\texttt{f}5} 24.\textit{\texttt{c}c4} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}d3}} 25.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}d3}} \textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}f}7} 26.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}e}5} \textit{\texttt{d}6} 27.\textit{\texttt{g}g}4±, Hoeven-Szczepanski, corr. 2012.)

\begin{center}
\textbf{12.\texttt{\texttt{f}e}5}
\end{center}

\begin{center}
\textbf{12...\texttt{\texttt{d}d6}}
\end{center}

On 12...\texttt{\texttt{a}a4}, an unpleasant line for Black is 13.\texttt{\texttt{f}f}3 \texttt{\texttt{d}d6} (13...\texttt{\texttt{xd}4}? 14.\texttt{\texttt{b}b}5+ \texttt{c}6 15.\texttt{\texttt{xc}6}+ \texttt{bxc}6 16.\texttt{\texttt{xc}6}++-) 14.c4 0-0 15.\texttt{\texttt{h}h}3 (a short game ensued after 15.\texttt{\texttt{g}g}5 \texttt{\texttt{xe}5}? (better was 15...\texttt{\texttt{d}d7} 16.\texttt{\texttt{fe}1\texttt{\texttt{f}f}7}) 16.dxe5 \texttt{\texttt{d}d7} 17.\texttt{\texttt{h}h}5 \texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}d}5} 18.\texttt{\texttt{g}g}7#, Voiculescu-Joderholm, corr. 2013) 15...\texttt{g}6 16.\texttt{\texttt{h}h}6 \texttt{\texttt{e}e}8 17.\texttt{\texttt{g}g}5 \texttt{\texttt{d}d7} 18.\texttt{\texttt{xf}7}++. Black’s position collapses.

\begin{center}
\textbf{13.\texttt{f}f4}
\end{center}

13.\texttt{\texttt{f}f}3!! deserves attention,
with the idea after 13...\textit{Be}7 to give the check 14.\textit{Bb}5+ and stop Black’s castling. For example, 14...\textit{Kf}8 (on 14...\textit{c}6? White simply takes the pawn – 15.\textit{Nxc}6+-) 15.\textit{Qf}4± or 15.\textit{c}3±.

Not so clear is 13.\textit{Be}3 \textit{Be}7 14.\textit{c}4 \textit{c}5, Kasparov-Anand, Internet 2000.

\textbf{13...\textit{Qd}8 14.\textit{Qf}3 \textit{Be}7}

Black is very passive after 14...\textit{c}6 15.\textit{Rd}1 \textit{Be}7 16.\textit{c}4 0-0 17.\textit{b}1†.

After 14...\textit{d}5 15.\textit{e}3 \textit{Be}7 16.\textit{fd}1 0-0 17.\textit{c}4 White drives away the queen with tempo and his advantage in development more than compensates for the pawn.

\textbf{15.\textit{Bb}5+ \textit{Kf}8 16.\textit{Rd}1}

It is worth considering 16.\textit{Rd}1±, so as to put the second rook on b1.

\textbf{16...\textit{d}5 17.\textit{e}2}

Naturally, it is not in White’s favour to exchange queens.

\textbf{17...\textit{e}4}

Or 17...\textit{xa}2 18.\textit{c}4 \textit{d}5 19.\textit{e}5 (White is also better after 19.\textit{a}1 \textit{xf}4 20.\textit{e}4 \textit{xa}1 21.\textit{xa}1±) 19...\textit{a}6 20.\textit{c}6! \textit{bxc}6 21.\textit{xa}1 \textit{xa}1 22.\textit{xa}1±.

\textbf{18.\textit{d}2 \textit{d}5 19.\textit{g}3 \textit{b}4 20.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}7 21.\textit{c}1 \textit{c}3 22.\textit{fe}1}
22...\textit{d5}

22...\textit{f5} 23.\textit{c4} \textit{xd1} 24.\textit{xd1} is also in White’s favour. He is an exchange and a pawn down, but in return, he has active pieces and the black king is uncastled. He needs simply to transfer his major pieces to the kingside.

23.\textit{c4} \textit{a5} 24.\textit{d3}

Very strong is 24.\textit{d2}, and it is not clear how Black can escape from the pin. Thus, on 24...\textit{b4} White wins with both 25.\textit{g5}, threatening mate on d8, and 25.a3 \textit{xa3} (or 25...\textit{xa3} 26.\textit{a1} \textit{b2} 27.\textit{f4} \textit{f6} 28.\textit{d7}+! \textit{xd7} 29.\textit{xc7} \textit{e8} 30.\textit{xb7} \textit{d8} 31.\textit{xa7}+-) 26.\textit{xf7} \textit{xf7} 27.\textit{f4}+ \textit{e8} 28.\textit{xe6} \textit{xe6} 29.\textit{xe6}+ \textit{d8} 30.\textit{de1}+-.

24...\textit{xa2}

Black also has a bad position after 24...\textit{d5} 25.\textit{f3} \textit{f6} 26.\textit{b3}. The extra pawn is not felt at all, whereas his undeveloped pieces and king caught in the centre are the decisive factors in the assessment of the position.

25.\textit{a1} \textit{b4}
26...\textit{xa2}

It was even stronger first to take on f7 – 26...\textit{xf7}, opening up the black king, and only after 26...\textit{xf7} 27.\textit{e5 \textit{b6} too
take on a2 – 28.\textit{xa2}, obtaining an absolutely winning position.
Black also loses after 26...\textit{xe1} (instead of 26...\textit{xf7}) 27.\textit{e5 \textit{b6} too
\textit{d7} 28.\textit{f3+ \textit{g8} 29.\textit{e5 \textit{h8} 30.\textit{f7 \textit{g8} 31.\textit{xd7+-.}

26...\textit{xe1} 27.\textit{c4 \textit{a4} 28.\textit{a3 \textit{xf2}+ 29.\textit{xf2 \textit{xc2}

Black keeps grabbing pawns, to somehow compensate for White’s colossal advantage in development and piece
activity.

30.\textit{c3 \textit{e2} 31.d5 \textit{d7}

Black has somehow managed to get developed at long last, but it is too late: all the white pieces are taking part in the
attack on his king.
32.\texttt{c5+} \texttt{g8} 33.\texttt{g3} \texttt{f6} 34.\texttt{e3} \texttt{e8} 35.\texttt{c4} \texttt{h5} 36.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{f7} 37.\texttt{d4} \texttt{exd5} 38.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{e6} 39.\texttt{g4} \texttt{xd5} 40.\texttt{h6#}

To finish, a beautiful mate!

\textbf{Conclusion:} On 6...\texttt{xe4} 7.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{f6} 8.\texttt{g5} \texttt{d6} we suggest the interesting and strong pawn sacrifice 9.\texttt{d3} \texttt{b4+} 10.\texttt{d2} \texttt{xb2}. For his small material investment, White gets more than sufficient compensation, thanks to his advantage in development.

\textbf{Game 113}
\textbf{Erik Peterson}
\textbf{J\o zef Hujo}
Piestany 2013

1.e4 e6 2.\texttt{f3} d5 3.\texttt{c3} \texttt{f6} 4.e5 \texttt{e4}
Not 5.\textit{\texttt{Nx}}e4\textit{\texttt{d}}xe4 6.\textit{\texttt{Ng}}1 (the only square) 6...\textit{\texttt{Nc}}6\texttt{+}, and White has trouble with his pawn on e5.

5...\textit{\texttt{c}}5

Not 5...\textit{\texttt{c}}5? 6.d3+-, and Black loses the knight. On 5...\textit{\texttt{e}}7 it is worth considering 6.h4!? , not allowing the knight to go to h4. For example: 6.b6 (or 6...0-0 7.d3 \textit{\texttt{c}}5 8.c3 f6 9.exf6 \textit{\texttt{xf}}6 10.\textit{\texttt{e}}3\texttt{+}) 7.d3 \textit{\texttt{Nc}}5, and here the immediate knight transfer to the kingside – 8.\textit{\texttt{f}}4\texttt{+}. White’s position is clearly preferable, since his pieces are ready to probe Black on the kingside whilst his opponent has no counterplay at all. Instead of 8.\textit{\texttt{f}}4, another possibility is 8.c3 followed by the transfer of the knight to the kingside, as in the game Gavrilescu-Yakimenko, Golden Sands 2014.

6.d4

Black has forced the pawn to d4, so as to secure his knight against the move d3, but in doing so, has presented White with a whole tempo.

6...\textit{\texttt{e}}7

The alternative is 6...\textit{\texttt{b}}6 (which is a somewhat unusual place for the bishop in the French Defence!) 7.\textit{\texttt{g}}3 and now:
A) 7...\(\text{Q}xg3\) 8.hxg3 c5 9.dxc5 \(\text{Q}xc5\) 10.\(\text{B}d3\) \(\text{Q}b6\) (the same position is reached after 10...h6 11.g4 \(\text{Q}b6\) (or 11...\(\text{Q}c6\) 12.\(\text{Q}e2\) \(\text{c7}\) 13.c3 \(\text{d7}\) 14.g5 0-0-0 15.gxh6\(\text{Q}\), Zimmermann-Akesson, Gothenburg 2007) 12.\(\text{Q}e2\) \(\text{c6}\) 13.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{d7}\) 14.c3 a5 15.gxh6 gxh6 16.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{e7}\) 17.\(\text{Exh6}\) 0-0-0 18.\(\text{Exh8}\) \(\text{Exh8}\) 19.0-0-0 with an extra pawn for White, Tishin-Fomin, Tula 2005) 11.\(\text{Q}e2\) h6 12.c3 a5 13.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{c6}\) 14.\(\text{g5}\) \(\text{d7}\) (on 14...h5 the reply 15.g6\(\pm\) is unpleasant, Lisac-Grguric, Sibenik ch-CRO jr 2007) 15.gxh6 gxh6 16.\(\text{Exh6}\)\(\text{Q}\), winning a pawn, Majeric-Ludvai, Ajka 2008. Even more exact is 16.\(\text{g5}\)\(\pm\), preparing 0-0-0 and not letting Black do the same, whilst the h6-pawn can be taken a little later;

B) 7...c5 8.\(\text{B}d3\), and now:
B1) 8...\(\square\)xg3 9.hxg3. Now 9...c4 is bad because of 10.\(\Box\)xh7 \(\Box\)xh7 11.\(\Box\)xh7, and Black cannot trap the bishop: 11...g6 12.\(\Box\)g5+ with the threat of \(\Box\)g8, whilst after 9...cxd4 strong is 10.\(\Box\)g5 \(\Box\)c6 11.\(\Box\)f4\# (he needs to defend e5), e.g. 11...h6?! 12.\(\Box\)h5 \(\Box\)f8 13.\(\Box\)h7 \(\Box\)g8 14.\(\Box\)h4 g5 15.\(\Box\)g4+- The unpleasant check \(\Box\)f6+ is threatened, whilst after 15...\(\Box\)h8 there follows 16.\(\Box\)xg5;

B2) If Black does not exchange on g3, but plays 8...cxd4, then White himself plays 9.\(\Box\)xe4. Then there could follow: 9...dxe4 10.\(\Box\)xe4 \(\Box\)d7 (on 10...\(\Box\)a6 instead of 11.\(\Box\)g5, as in the game Bakhmatov-Vogler, Wiesbaden 2000, it is better to play 11.0-0, and after 11...\(\Box\)c5 we reach the same position as after 10...\(\Box\)d7 11.0-0 \(\Box\)c5 12.e1 (White is also somewhat better after 12.\(\Box\)e2 \(\Box\)xe4 13.\(\Box\)xe4 \(\Box\)d5 14.\(\Box\)g4, Fishbein-Murey, New York 1989) 12...\(\Box\)xe4 13.\(\Box\)xe4 \(\Box\)d5 14.\(\Box\)g4 \(\Box\)d7 15.\(\Box\)xg7\#, Bertholee-Span, Hoogeveen 2001;

B3) 8...f5 9.exf6 \(\Box\)xf6 10.dxc5 \(\Box\)xc5 11.0-0 \(\Box\)c6 (11...0-0 12.c4\#) 12.\(\Box\)g5 (the immediate central break is also worth considering – 12.c4 0-0 13.\(\Box\)d2 with somewhat better chances for White) 12...0-0 13.\(\Box\)e2 e5 14.\(\Box\)xe5, and now:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
<th>14</th>
<th>15</th>
</tr>
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<td>(\Box)d3</td>
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<td>(\Box)g4</td>
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\(\Box\)g3 c5 8.\(\Box\)d3

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**analysis diagram**

B31) 14...\(\Box\)b6?! 15.\(\Box\)xc6 bxc6 16.\(\Box\)e3 \(\Box\)g4 17.\(\Box\)d2 \(\Box\)xe3 18.\(\Box\)xe3 \(\Box\)xe3 19.fxe3, and White keeps an extra pawn, Pcola-Sedlakova, Trencin ch-SVK 1995. Nor does Black regain the pawn after 18...\(\Box\)xb2 19.\(\Box\)b1 d4 (19...\(\Box\)a3? 20.\(\Box\)xh7++) 20.\(\Box\)g5 \(\Box\)c3 21.h3 h6 22.\(\Box\)f4 \(\Box\)d7 23.\(\Box\)e2 \(\Box\)c5 24.\(\Box\)xd4 \(\Box\)xd4 25.\(\Box\)xd4\#;

B32) Correct is 14...\(\Box\)xe5 15.\(\Box\)xe5 \(\Box\)g4 16.\(\Box\)xd8 \(\Box\)xe5 17.\(\Box\)c7 (or 17.\(\Box\)g5 \(\Box\)g4 18.\(\Box\)h1 – otherwise f2 cannot be defended – 18...\(\Box\)d6; Black attacks h2 with the simple enough threat of mate in one, so White must play 19.\(\Box\)g3, and then 19...\(\Box\)c5 repeats moves) 17...\(\Box\)xd3 18.cxd3 \(\Box\)d7 with compensation for the pawn, thanks to the two bishops and pressure against f2.

7.\(\Box\)g3 c5 8.\(\Box\)d3
8...\(\Diamond xg3\)

A) 8...\(\Diamond a5+\) 9.e3 cxd4 10.\(\Diamond xd4\) \(\Diamond d7\) (Black is worse also after 10...\(\Diamond xg3\) 11.hxg3 \(\Diamond c6\) 12.\(\Diamond b3\) \(\Diamond d8\) 13.f4 g6 14.\(\Diamond e3\) \(\Diamond d7\) 15.\(\Diamond e2\) followed by g3-g4; the pawn on h7 is weak) 11.f4 \(\Diamond dc5\) 12.\(\Diamond b5\) (this is stronger than 12.\(\Diamond c2\) \(\Diamond a6\) , Litz-Sell, corr. 1995) 12...\(\Diamond d7\) (12...\(\Diamond d7\)? 13.b4+) 13.\(\Diamond xe4\) dxe4 14.0-0 a6 (nor does he save the pawn by 14...0-0 15.\(\Diamond c2\), and again 15...\(\Diamond e5\) is not possible because of 16.b4+) 15.\(\Diamond a4\) b5 16.\(\Diamond e2\) \(\Diamond b7\) 17.\(\Diamond e2\), and Black loses the pawn on e4;

B) 8...f5 9.exf6 \(\Diamond xf6\)

*analysis diagram*
10.c3 (also possible is 10.0-0) 10...0-0 11.0-0, and now:

B1) 11...cxd4 12.cxd4 (in this position, White has very simple play against the weak black e-pawn: \( \text{R}e1, \text{B}d2, \text{B}c3 \) and the standard jump \( \text{N}e5 \)) 12...\( c6 \) 13.\( \text{d2} \) \( \text{wb6} \) 14.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{d7} \) 15.\( \text{wd2} \) \( \text{ae8} \) 16.\( a3 \) \( \text{d6} \) 17.\( \text{ae1} \) \( \text{wc7} \) 18.\( \text{e5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 19.\( \text{dxe5} \) \( \text{g4} \) 20.\( \text{wg5} \), and Black resigned, Danin-Pick, Prague 2015, since after 20...\( \text{h6} \) there follows \( \text{h5} \) with the double threat of mate on g7 and a fork on f6;

B2) 11...\( c6 \) 12.\( \text{g5} \) (more accurate is 12.a3 \( \text{d7} \) 13.\( \text{e1} \) cxd4 14.cx\( \text{d4} \) \( \text{wb6} \) 15.b4 \( \text{ac8} \) 16.b2 or 14...\( \text{c8} \) 15.b4 a6 16.\( \text{g5} \) (also good is 16.\( a2 \) followed by \( \text{e2} \)) 16...\( \text{xd4} \) 17.b2 h6 18.\( \text{xd4} \) (also good is 18.b4 e5 19.\( \text{xd4} \) exd4 20.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{f8} \) 21.\( \text{e6} \) \( \text{xe6} \) 22.\( \text{xe6} \)\( \text{xc7} \) 18...\( \text{h5} \) 19.\( \text{wd2} \) 12...\( \text{cxd4} \) 13.\( \text{cxd4} \) \( \text{wb6} \) 14.\( \text{e5} \)

\[ \text{analysis diagram} \]

B21) 14...\( \text{xd4} \)? 15.\( \text{e3} \) \( \text{c5} \) 16.\( \text{xc1} \) \( \text{b3} \) 17.\( \text{xc5} \) (stronger is 17.\( \text{c3} \) \( \text{xe3} \) 18.\( \text{xb3} \) \( \text{c7} \) 19.\( \text{exe7} \) \( \text{xh7} \) 20.\( \text{exe6} \) or 17.\( \text{xb3} \) \( \text{xe3} \) 18.\( \text{exh7} \) \( \text{xh7} \) 19.\( \text{exe6} \); in both cases Black has a bad light-squared bishop) 17...\( \text{xc5} \) 18.\( \text{c2} \) \( \text{d6} \) 19.\( \text{xc5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 20.\( \text{xf8} \) \( \text{xf8} \) 21.\( \text{xe7} \), and thanks to his slightly better pawn structure and better-defended king, White’s chances are preferable, De Mie-Schmitz, Germany Frauenbundesliga 2001;

B22) White has a small advantage after 14...\( \text{d6} \) 15.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{xc6} \) 16.\( \text{h5} \) \( \text{c7} \) (he does not solve all his problems after 16...\( \text{e4} \) 17.\( \text{xe4} \) \( \text{dxe4} \) 18.\( \text{g4} \), attacking the e4-pawn and at the same time creating threats against the enemy king, or 16...\( \text{f7} \) 17.\( \text{xf6} \) gxf6 18.\( \text{e3} \)), and here, instead of 17.h3, as in the game Bach-Krause, Germany tt 1992/93, better is 17.\( \text{xf6} \) gxf6 18.\( \text{h6} \) \( \text{f7} \) 19.\( \text{h5} \), bringing the queen closer to the black king and at the same time defending h2;

B23) The strongest move for Black is the untried 14...\( \text{g6} \) 15.\( \text{xc6} \) \( \text{xc6} \) 16.\( \text{e3} \) with mutual chances.

9.hxg3
9...h6

A) On 9...c4 White takes the pawn 10.\(\text{Rxh7}\), not fearing 10...\(\text{Rxh7}\) 11.\(\text{Rxh7}\) \(d\text{d7}\) 12.\(c3\) \(g6\) on account of 13.\(\text{Qd2}\), transferring the queen to h6 to defend the bishop. For example, 13...\(\text{Qh8}\) 14.\(\text{Qh6}\) \(\text{c6}\) 15.\(\text{g5}\) \(b5\) 16.\(\text{xe7}\) \(\text{xc7}\) 17.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{b7}\) 18.\(\text{h1}\), White has saved the \(\text{h7}\) and has an extra pawn;

B) 9...\(\text{cxd4}\) 10.\(\text{cxd4}\) \(\text{c6}\) (or 10...\(\text{d7}\) 11.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{c5}\) 12.\(\text{f4}\) \(\text{xd3+}\) 13.\(\text{xd3}\) \(\text{h6}\) 14.0-0-0 with the better chances for White; he has a simple plan to play \(\text{g3-g4}\) and then prepare the breakthrough \(\text{g4-g5}\)) 11.\(\text{xc6}\) \(\text{bxc6}\) 12.\(\text{g4}\) \(\text{g6}\) 13.\(\text{h6}\), and now:
B1) 13...f8 14.0-0-0±;

B2) 13...b6 14.0-0-0 (somewhat worse is 14...b1 a6±, and the rook on b1 is not in the game, Ledger-Brusey, England tt 1997) 14...b8 15.b3 c5 16...g7 h5 17.f4 g8 18...f6±;

B3) On the check 13...a5+ White does best to bring the king to the kingside – 14.f1 b8, and now:

B31) 15.b3!? a6 16...xa6 xa6+. Here White has a choice between 17.e2 xe2+ 18...xe2 with a somewhat better endgame, and 17.g1, keeping queens on the board. In both cases, White has a somewhat more pleasant position, but by accurate defence, Black should be able to make a draw;

B32) White also has the interesting pawn sacrifice 15.f3 xb2?! (correct was 15...g8, preventing the threat of g7 and xh7) 16...g7 xa2? (better is 16...g8 17.xh7±) 17.xa2 xa2 18...g1! g8 19.xh7 b1+ 20...h2 b7, and here in the game Walther-Hecht, Vienna SWI-GER 1972, instead of 21.h6 f8 22.a6 c7 23.xc8 xh6 24.xe6 g7 25.h3 xe5= White wins easily with 21.xg6 fxg6 22.f6+-.

10.c3

10...cxd4

On 10...c6 Black must reckon with 11.dxc5 (also good is 11.g4 cxd4 12.cxd4 g6 13.a3 d7 14.b4±, Buchenau-Heinsohn, Germany tt 2004) 11...c7 12.e2 xc5 13.b4 (better was 13.g4± followed by g5 and the exchange on h6, giving Black a weak pawn) 13...e7 14.d2 d7 15.f1 0-0 0-0 16.a4 g5 (it was worth considering 16...g5, also beginning a pawn storm) 17.b5 a5±, Rodriguez Herreros-Piay Augusto, Ronda ch-ESP jr 1997.

11.cxd4

Or 11...c6 12.xc6 bxc6 13.e3 c5 14.g4 f8 15.b3 c7 16.0-0 d7 17.f4 h5 18.f3 d8 19.f5+, Garcia-Santos, Goiania 2014.

11...b4+
12.\textbf{f1}!

White is not bothered about losing castling rights: the h-file is open, so his \textbf{h1} is already in play, whilst the king itself is not badly placed on f1. In the near future, White will play a2-a3 (with tempo) and b2-b4, seizing space on the queenside.

12...\textbf{c6} 13.\textbf{e3} \textbf{d7} 14.\textbf{g4} \textbf{wb6} 15.\textbf{g5}↑ 0-0-0 16.\textbf{gxh6} \textbf{gxh6} 17.\textbf{a3}

Premature is 17.\textbf{xh6}?! \textbf{xh6} 18.\textbf{xh6} \textbf{h8} with unclear play.

17...\textbf{e7} 18.\textbf{b4} \textbf{g5}?!  
Even after the accurate 18...\textbf{b8} 19.\textbf{c1} \textbf{c8} 20.\textbf{h5} White has the advantage, since the h-pawn is weak.

19.\textbf{xg5} \textbf{hxg5} 20.\textbf{xh8}

It is worth considering 20.\textbf{h5}!?, not conceding the file.

20...\textbf{xb8} 21.\textbf{g1} \textbf{d8} 22.\textbf{b5} \textbf{a5} 23.\textbf{c1}+ \textbf{b8} 24.\textbf{xg5} \textbf{b6}

The computer recommends 24...\textbf{c7}, but the human reaction is to keep queens on, when one is material down.

25.\textbf{b2}

Stronger was 25.\textbf{f4}, attacking the pawn, and then not 25...\textbf{e8} because of 26.\textbf{f6} \textbf{g8} 27.\textbf{h7}, after which Black loses the exchange, and with it, the game.

25...\textbf{c8}
26.\textit{b1}

It was better to defend b5 with the pawn, so the white rook would not be tied to its defence – 26.a4±.

26...\textit{c4} 27.\textit{xc4}  \textit{xc4} 28.\textit{e3}  \textit{a6}

On 28...\textit{a5} White simply strengthens the position with the help of 29.g4, 30.\textit{g2} etc.

29.\textit{bxa6}  \textit{xa6}

It was worth considering 29...\textit{xb2}!? 30.\textit{xb2} b5, and White cannot hold the a6-pawn after ...\textit{a7}.

Of course, he still retains some winning chances, because he still has two extra pawns.

30.\textit{d2}

It looks strong to transfer the bishop to c5 via g5-e7 – 30.\textit{g5}.

30...\textit{a4} 31.\textit{b4}  \textit{c2}

An inaccuracy. More drawing chances were offered by 31...\textit{c2}, driving the rook from its active position, and in the event of 32.\textit{c1}  \textit{g6} offering the exchange of rooks.

32.\textit{d6}+  \textit{a8} 33.\textit{b4}  \textit{c4} 34.\textit{d2}  \textit{c8}
34...b6 was worth considering, covering the square c5.

35.c5 c6 36.c3 a4 37.f3 e8 38.g3 c4 39.e3 b5 40.d2 h8 41.a5+ a6 42.b6 b8 43.a7+ c7 44.d6+ d8 45.b8+ e8 46.a7 d3?

The idea of this move is to transfer the bishop to e4 and give mate on h1, but Black does not manage to realise it. Therefore it was necessary to go back: – 46...c4, and after which White should exchange queens with 47.b8+ c8 48.xc8+ xc8 49.g2, keeping an extra pawn.

47.b6+ e8 48.xb7 xb7 49.xb7 h7 50.f3 e2 51.g2

Black resigned.
Conclusion: after 4...\texttt{e}e4 White should retreat his knight to e2 and then play on the kingside, which promises him the better chances.
Finally, we arrive at Black’s main move in this line. 4...d7 is quite in the spirit of the French Defence, attacking White’s centre. White now does react with 5.d4, but since after 5...c5 he does not have the pawn move c2-c3 to defend the d-pawn, we take on c5, and after 6.dxc5 c6 7.f4, Black faces a choice: take back with the knight or the bishop?

**Game 114**  
Gadir Guseinov  
Alireza Noori  
Tehran 2005 (4)

1.e4 e6 2.d3 d5 3.c3 f6 4.e5 f3 d7 5.d4 e5 6.dxc5 c6 7.f4

We have arrived at the basic position of the variation.
7...\textit{\text{\textbf{N}}}xc5

This continuation is less popular than the bishop recapture on \textit{c5}, but after the latter, White has a very simple plan and in principle, the play there is often for two results. After 7...\textit{\textbf{N}}xc5, on the other hand, we reach a more complicated position, and the percentage score Black makes is slightly higher.

\textbf{8.\textit{Q}}d2

After this, we reach very complicated positions, where play is for three results, but we hope that the variations given here will help you to handle the position better than your opponents.

The move 8.\textit{\textbf{Q}}d2 is played to prepare long castling and begin an attack on the kingside, where Black will usually put his king. Don’t be afraid, just enjoy playing actively and attacking the enemy king!

However, White does also have some other continuations. We will have a look at a few of them:

The immediate 8.h4 is interesting, as has been played by Grandmaster Ian Nepomniachtchi.
In our opinion, this move is insufficient for an advantage, rather the opposite: if Black plays accurately, then only White can have problems. But the position is quite complicated, and it is far from easy to play as Black. We will just give four of Ian’s games, all of which he won.

A) 8...e7 9.h5 f5 10...h3 0-0 11.b5 e4 12.c3 b6 13.e3 a5 14.bd4 f4 15.xd2 c7 16.xc6 bxc6 17.d3 c5 18.c2 xf2+ 19.d1 b8 20.b3 c5 21.xe4 dxe4 22.xe4 b7 23.e2 g3 24.c2 c4 25.d4 d5 26.b4 a5 27.b5 b7 28.g1 e4+ 29.b2 d5 30.a4 d3 31.f3 xe5 32.hh1 e4 33.g4 fd8 34.h6 g6 35.h5 f5
36. exf5 exf5 37. Qf3 Qe4 38. Qf1 Qe8 39. Qxf4 Qxf4 40. Qxg2+ 41. Qf2 Qd5 42. Qb7 43. Qxa5 Qc5 44. Qa6 Qa7 45. Qf6 Qf8 46. Qxh8 Qxh8 47. Qa3 Qa8 48. Qe6+ Qe7 49. Qc5 Qb8 50. Qb4 Qf6 51. a5 Qg5 52. b6 Qg4 53. Qxc4 Qe7 54. a2 g3 55. a6 f4 56. b7 f3 57. a7 f2 58. axb8=Q Qf1=Q+ 59. Qa6 Qb1+ 60. Qa3 Qc1+ 61. Qa4, and Black resigned, Nepomniachtchi-Ding Liren, St. Petersburg 2012;

B) 8...a6 9. a3, and now:

B1) 9...b5 10. h5 h6
B11) 11. Qh3 Qb7 12. b4 Qe4 13. Qxe4 dxe4 14. Qd2 Qd4 15. c3 Qd5 16. c4 bxc4 17. Qxc4 Qd8 18. Qb6 Qxd1+ 19. Qxd1 Qe7 20. Qg3 Qxd1+ 21. Qxd1 Qg5 22. Qxg5 hxg5 23. Qxg5 Qh7 24. c4 f6 25. exf6 gxf6 26. Qc5 Qd7 27. g4 e5 28. Qe3 Qd4 29. a5 Qd6 30. Qxa6 Qc6 31. Qc4 f5 32. Qxf5+ Qxf5 33. gxf5 Qxh5 34. f6 Qf5 35. Qa6 Qc7 36. Qe1 Qb7 37. Qe6 Qc8 38. Qe7+ Qd6 39. f7, and Black resigned, Nepomniachtchi-Ding Liren, Sochi 2009;


**analysis diagram**

28. Qb4 Qa6 29. Qd1 a5 30. Qc2 Qc5 31. Qb1 Qa5 32. Qa2 Qa6 33. Qb2 Qa5 34. f4 Qc8 35. Qg6 Qc5 36. Qxe6+, and Black resigned, Nepomniachtchi- Lintchevski, Dagomys 2009;

B2) 9... Qe7 10. Qh3 Qd7 11. b4 Qe4 12. Qxe4 dxe4 13. Qd2 Qc7 14. Qc4 0-0 15. Qg3 Qh8 16. Qg4 Qg8 17. Qd1 b5 18. Qd6 Qxd6 19. exd6 Qd8 20. Qh5 Qf6 21. Qg5 Qf5 22. Qg4 Qxg4 23. Qxg4 f5 24. Qg3 h6 25. Qe3 Qg8 26. Qb6 f4 27. Qc3 Qf7 28. Qc5 e5
analysis diagram

29.c4 e8 30.cxb5 axb5 31.cxb5 d4 32.xd7 xxd7 33.c7 e3 34.b5 f5 35.b6 xh4 36.b7 xg2+ 37.e2 e4 38.fxe3 xxe3 39.a5 xg4 40.a8 f3+ 41.d2 e3+ 42.c1, and Black resigned, Nepomniachtchi-Hug, Biel 2007.

We would also point some other possibilities for White: 8.a3 followed by b2-b4, driving the knight from c5, and also 8.b5 (on this theme, we recommend studying the game Rogers-Rodriguez, Jakarta 1993).

8...a6

The alternative is 8...e7!? 9.0-0-0 0-0 10.h4
10...f6 (10...d7!? 11.h5 or 11.b1 c8 12.h3 a6 13.g3 with unclear play) 11.exf6 xf6 (somewhat worse is 11...xf6 12.g5 xf8 13.b1; White will exchange dark-squared bishops and create pressure against the square e5 – b5, e3, e1 with the better chances) 12.e3, and now:
A) Black is somewhat worse after 12...a5 13.a3 b6 (13...a6? 14.xd5±; dubious is 13...a4?! 14.xa4 xa4 15.g5 h6? 16.d3 hxg5 17.hxg5 e5 18.g6+ - with the threat of h5, d3 and h7, mating) 14.d4 b7 15.xc6 xc6 16.d4 ±. White wants to exchange dark-squared bishops and put his pawn on f4, blockading the e6-pawn, and then pressurise it along the e-file. This is in general a quite common idea in this variation;
B) 12...b6 13.h5 h6 14.b1±.

9.0-0-0

9...b5

The alternative is 9...e7 10.h4 b5 11.e3:
A) 11...b7 12.b1 (it is worth considering 12.e2 e4 13.fd4, inviting Black to take a pawn, and in return opening the b-file, e.g. 13...xb4 14.xc6 xc6 15.g3 e7 16.d4 c8 17.f3 c5 18.g4±) 12...h6 13.h5 b6 14.d4 0-0-0 15.xc6 xc6 16.e2 b8 17.d4 c7 18.d3 c8 19.b3 c8 20.f3 f8 21.g3 xb3 22.axb3 e5±, Aleksic-Farago, Porto San Giorgio 2009;
B) 11...0-0 12.b1 b7 13.e2 c7 14.ed4 fc8 15.h5 b4, and now;
analysis diagram

B1) 16.\textit{a}1 a5 17.\textit{b}5 \textit{b}6 18.\textit{g}5 \textit{x}g5 (18...\textit{f}8?! 19.\textit{h}4 a4 20.\textit{g}4 b3 21.cxb3 axb3 22.a3, and Black’s attack has become bogged down; now he must meet White’s more dangerous threats) 19.\textit{x}g5 h6 and a draw was agreed in Cimicki-Gudzovaty, corr. 2012. There could have followed: 20.\textit{d}6 \textit{f}8 (20...\textit{h}xg5? 21.h6 \textit{g}6 22.\textit{x}g5+ with the threat of \textit{f}6-g7#) 21.\textit{xb}7 \textit{d}4 22.\textit{f}4 \textit{xb}7 23.\textit{e}4 \textit{fd}8 24.\textit{f}6+ \textit{f}8 25.\textit{h}7+ \textit{g}8 26.\textit{f}6+ with a repetition of moves;

B2) 16.g4 looks interesting, in response to which Black needs to play very accurately, since the threat of g5-g6 is extremely unpleasant:

B21) 16...a5?! 17.g5 a4 18.g6 b3 19.gxf7+ \textit{xf}7 20.\textit{g}1;

B22) 16...\textit{xd}4 17.\textit{xd}4 and now:

B221) 17...\textit{a}4 18.g5 \textit{c}5 19.\textit{b}3 \textit{xd}4 20.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}6 21.g6 \textit{b}5 (bad is 21...\textit{fx}g6 22.hxg6 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{h}3 \textit{d}7 24.\textit{c}4! dxc4 25.\textit{xh}6+\textit{xf}7 26.\textit{h}3 \textit{c}5 23.\textit{e}3 a5 24.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{xf}7 25.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}4 26.\textit{g}1 \textit{h}8 27.\textit{f}3 \textit{xd}4 28.\textit{xd}4 \textit{e}7 29.\textit{h}6 \textit{g}6 30.\textit{f}4 \textit{e}7 31.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{xf}6 32.\textit{xf}6=, taking on e6;

B222) 17...a5 18.g5 a4 19.g6 b3 20.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{xf}7 21.\textit{g}1 bxc2+ 22.\textit{xc}2 \textit{f}8 23.\textit{d}4 a3 24.b3 \textit{e}4 25.\textit{h}3 \textit{c}3+ 26.\textit{a}1 \textit{xd}1 27.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{e}8 28.\textit{xd}1 \textit{e}3+ 29.\textit{xc}3 \textit{xc}3 30.\textit{f}5 and White has an edge;

B23) 16...\textit{e}4 17.g5 \textit{c}5 (17...a5?! 18.g6=; 17...\textit{xd}4?! 18.\textit{xd}4 \textit{e}5 19.\textit{a}1 \textit{xd}4 20.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xc}2 21.\textit{d}3 \textit{xf}2 22.\textit{xe}4=) 18.g6 \textit{xd}4 19.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 20.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{xf}7 (20...\textit{xf}7 21.\textit{xd}4 \textit{f}8 22.\textit{h}4 a5 23.\textit{h}3=) 21.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xc}2+ 22.\textit{a}1 \textit{xf}2 23.\textit{xb}4= or 23.\textit{d}3 \textit{xe}3 24.\textit{xe}3=.

10.\textit{e}3

The move 10.\textit{b}1 is worthy of attention, and was tried in one correspondence game.
If now 10...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{b7}}, then White puts his queen not on e3, but e1 – 11.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e1}}. Here she is somewhat passively placed, but in return, does not get hit by ...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{c5}}. This is how the above-mentioned game continued: 11...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{e7}} 12.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e2}} b4 13.\textcolor{red}{\textit{ed4}} 0-0 14.h4 (the usual pawn storm on the kingside) 14...a5 15.\textcolor{red}{\textit{xc6}} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{xc6}} 16.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g5}} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{b8}} 17.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e3}} (the queen transfers to the kingside) 17...a4 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{d3}} (the bishop also joins in – on f1 it does nothing, but now if Black takes on d3 with the knight, then White recaptures with the rook and it may also join in the attack) 18...a3 19.b3 (slowing up Black’s attack) 19...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{c8}} (Black does not know what to do and runs on the spot) 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{f4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{b8}} 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{e8}} 22.\textcolor{red}{\textit{h6}} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{f8}} 23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{exh7+1}} (White has already brought sufficient pieces into the attack and may now permit himself this sacrifice, opening up the black king’s bastions) 23...\textcolor{red}{\textit{exh7}} 24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{e3}} \textcolor{blue}{\textit{g8}} 25.\textcolor{red}{\textit{g5}}, and Black resigned in Vandermeulen-Napalkov, corr. 2008. The threat is the deadly \textcolor{red}{\textit{h5}}-\textcolor{red}{\textit{h7}}, mating, and if Black plays 25...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{g6}}, then there follows 26.h5 followed by hxg6, further exposing the black king and including the \textcolor{blue}{\textit{h1}} in the attack.

10...\textcolor{blue}{\textit{b7}}
11.h4 a5 12.b1 h6

Mutual chances result from 12...c8!? 13.h3 or 13.h5 h6 14.h3.

13.h3 0-0-0

In this game, Black decides to put his king on the queenside. From a human viewpoint, this is a very understandable decision, since White has already played h2-h4 and h3, so after short castling, Black will always have to reckon on a sacrifice on h6. However, after long castling, there will no longer be mutual attacks, which, in principle, was the only sensible way of playing for Black. Now White has a free advantage: he has the blockade square d4, he has seized space on the kingside and is ready in the near future to play h4-h5, fixing the pawn on g7, and then pressurising it with g3.

On 13...c8 possible is 14.e2 e4 15.fd4 c5 16.f3 b4 17.a3 xa3 18.bxa3 xc2 (or 18...f2 19.axb4 xb4 20.d3 xh3 21.gxh3) 19.xc2 f2 20.d2 xh3 21.gxh3, obtaining two pieces for a rook and pawn.

14.e2 e4 15.fd4
15...a5?

Better was 15...a8 although after 16.\textbf{xc6+} a\textbf{xc6} 17.d4 c8 18.h5 the position is still in White’s favour. This is just the sort of position we have just described: White plays h4-h5, seizing more kingside space and fixing the g7-pawn.

Instead, Black forgot about his knight on e4, and after

16.f3

it has no retreat square.

16...\textbf{xd4} 17.\textbf{xd4} g5 18.hxg5 hxg5 19.h2 g4 20.h8 h8 21.f4 gxf3 22.gxf3 \textbf{xd4} 23.\textbf{xd4} h4 24.e3 c7
25.\textit{\texttt{b4}}

White also wins with 25.fxe4 \textit{\texttt{exe4}} 26.\textit{\texttt{d3}} \textit{\texttt{exe5}} 27.\textit{\texttt{d4}} with an extra piece for two pawns and the weakened black king.

25...\textit{\texttt{exe5}} 26.\textit{\texttt{f8+}} \textit{\texttt{d7}} 27.\textit{\texttt{xf7+}} \textit{\texttt{c6}} 28.\textit{\texttt{e8+}} \textit{\texttt{c7}} 29.\textit{\texttt{e7+}}

A fork: Black resigned, because he loses a rook.

**Conclusion:** We repeat once more: the move 7...\textit{\texttt{dxc5}} is less popular than the recapture with the bishop, but not weaker, and Black even scores slightly better in this line. In reply, we suggest 8.\textit{\texttt{d2}} followed by long castling and h2-h4-h5, and also g2-g4-g5-g6, advancing the kingside pawns, after which a complicated double-edged game ensues. But at move eight, Black also has another continuation.

**Game 115**

\texttt{Ian Nepomniachtchi 2520}

\texttt{Sergey Volkov 2628}

Tomsk ch-RUS 2006 (1)

1.e4 e6 2.\textit{\texttt{f3}} d5 3.\textit{\texttt{c3}} \textit{\texttt{f6}} 4.e5 \textit{\texttt{fd7}} 5.d4 c5 6.dxc5 \textit{\texttt{c6}} 7.\textit{\texttt{f4}} \textit{\texttt{xc5}}

The most popular continuation.

8.\textit{\texttt{d3}}

White not only develops his bishop, but also sets a trap.
8...f6

8...0-0? is not possible because of 9.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{xh7+ \texttt{xh7}}} (on 9...\texttt{h8} White can just retreat his bishop with an extra pawn – 10.\texttt{d3\texttt{+}}) 10.\texttt{g5+ \texttt{g6} 10...\texttt{g8} 11.\texttt{h5+-}, and in order to avoid mate, Black has to give up the queen on \texttt{g5}) 11.\texttt{d3+ f5 12.g3

\textit{\texttt{analysis diagram}}

12...\texttt{dxe5} (worse is 12...\texttt{e7} 13.\texttt{xe6+ \texttt{h7} 14.\texttt{g5+ \texttt{g8} 15.xd5 \texttt{e8} 16.b3 \texttt{f7} 17.c7+-}, and Black suffers large material losses) 13.\texttt{xe6+ \texttt{g4} 14.\texttt{xd8 \texttt{f2+} 15.xf2 \texttt{xf2} 16.xc6 \texttt{xh1} 17.e5+ \texttt{h7} 18.f1+-}, and after White takes on h1, he will have two pieces for a rook. In addition, White also has the strong blockading squares d4 and
e5, whilst Black’s light-squared bishop is not the most useful piece in this position.

9.exf6 \( \text{\textit{xf6}} \)

Here Black has two possible plans: one involving long castling, the other short.

10.\( \text{\textit{We2}} \)

The alternative is 10.0-0 0-0 11.\( \text{\textit{We5}} \).

For this interesting and quite decent variation, you should look at the games of the Australian GM, Ian Rogers. In a few words, White’s idea is as follows: to establish a secure blockade of the square e5, exchange pieces and start an attack on the pawn on e6. If Black manages to advance his pawn to e5, then White can attack the d-pawn; on this theme, you should look at the World Championship game Spassky-Petrosian, Moscow 1966, in which White eventually won.

As well as 11.\( \text{\textit{We5}} \), it is worth considering the moves 11.\( \text{\textit{Wd2}} \) and 11.\( \text{\textit{We2}} \).

10...0-0 11.0-0-0 \( \text{\textit{d7}} \)

A) An important alternative is 11...a6 (Black immediately starts advancing his queenside pawns) 12.\( \text{\textit{b1}} \) b5 13.\( \text{\textit{e5}} \):
A1) 13...\textit{Q}b6 14.g4! (into the attack!) 14...\textit{Q}e8 (White is also better after 14...\textit{Q}xe5 15.\textit{Q}xe5 \textit{Q}d7 16.\textit{Q}g3 \textit{Q}b7 17.g5\textpm, and after 14...\textit{Q}d4 15.\textit{W}f1\textpm followed by \textit{W}h3 and an attack on the enemy king) 15.\textit{Q}xc6 \textit{Qxc6} 16.\textit{B}e5! (not fearing to sacrifice a pawn) 16...\textit{R}xf2 17.\textit{W}e1 \textit{a}7 18.\textit{Q}e4! dxe4 19.\textit{Q}xe4 \textit{Q}b6 20.b4 \textit{Q}e3 21.\textit{R}d3 \textit{Q}f6 22.\textit{Q}xe3 \textit{Q}xe4 23.\textit{Q}xe4 (White has restablished material equality, obtaining opposite-coloured bishops, and his bishop is rather more useful than its opponent: on the long diagonal a1-h8, he will exert unpleasant pressure on the pawn at g7; White has the advantage) 23...\textit{R}d7 24.\textit{Q}c3 \textit{Q}d8 25.\textit{Q}e5 \textit{Q}df8 26.\textit{Q}g1 \textit{Q}d6 27.\textit{Q}h4 \textit{Q}f7 28.\textit{Q}d7 29.\textit{Q}h6 g6 30.\textit{Q}b2 \textit{Q}c8 31.\textit{W}c1 \textit{Q}f4 32.\textit{Q}c5 \textit{Q}b7 33.\textit{Q}d1 \textit{Q}d5 34.\textit{Q}e3 \textit{Q}c4 35.\textit{Q}d4 \textit{Qxc5} 36.bxc5, and Black resigned, since after he takes the pawn on c5, White plays \textit{Q}b4, and the threats against the black king along the dark squares cannot be resisted, Cacamas Soler-Frangi, corr. 2013.

A2) The computer also suggests 13...\textit{Q}e8.
From here, the queen defends the knight and moves closer to its own king, as well as escaping the opposition of the $\text{Rd}1$. In reply White does best to play 14.$\text{Rde}1$, building pressure on the e-file, and re-establishing the $\text{R}$ vs $\text{Q}$ opposition. The second white rook will support a kingside pawn storm. The computer’s assessment is rough equality, but this is not quite right: Black has the worse pawn structure (three islands against two) and in addition, it is easier for White to organise an attack on the opposing king. Therefore White’s chances are superior.

A3) $13...\text{Nxe5} 14.\text{Bxe5}$:
White is better after 14...\textit{d}d7 15.g4 \textit{e}e8 (15...b4 16.g5 bxc3 17.gxf6\pm, Danin-Pollmann, Werther Schloss 2014; 15...\textit{e}e8 16.f4 \textit{d}d6 17.f5 exf5 18.gxf5 \textit{x}f5 19.\textit{d}xd5\pm; opening the centre plays into White’s hands – the black king becomes more vulnerable) 16.g5 \textit{h}h5 17.f3 \textit{d}d7 (on 17...\textit{e}e8 there follows 18.\textit{g}g2, and after 18...g6, as in the game Endress-Bluebaum, ch-GER w jr 2010, White is promised an advantage by 19.\textit{e}e4 \textit{c}c7 20.\textit{g}g3 \textit{e}e8 21.\textit{h}h1 \textit{f}f7 22.\textit{d}d3\pm; White has obtained control over the square e5 and wants to transfer his knight via e2 to d4) and now:

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
& a & b & c & d & e & f & g \\
\hline
1 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
2 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
3 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
4 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
5 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
6 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
7 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
8 & & & & & & & \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

\textit{analysis diagram}

18.\textit{x}xg7! \textit{x}xg7 (it is hard not to take the bishop, but more tenacious was 18...\textit{e}e8 19.\textit{h}h6\pm 19.\textit{x}xe6 \textit{g}6 (he also loses after 19...\textit{f}6 20.\textit{xd}5 \textit{xf}3 21.\textit{xf}6+, and Black resigned in Danin-Kniest, Werther Schloss 2014) 20.\textit{xe}6 \textit{hx}f6 21.\textit{xf}5 \textit{xf}7 22.\textit{xd}1 \textit{e}7 23.\textit{xd}7 \textit{xd}7 24.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{xf}7 25.\textit{e}4 \textit{e}7 27.\textit{d}d7 \textit{f}8 28.\textit{f}6 \textit{xf}6 29.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{xf}7 30.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 31.\textit{c}1, and Black resigned in Guseinov-Hassan, Dubai 2008;)

A32) 14...\textit{a}7!? 15.\textit{he}1 \textit{d}6 (15...\textit{af}7!?\pm) 16.\textit{e}3 (16.\textit{f}4\pm) 16...\textit{e}7 17.\textit{g}3 \textit{xe}5 18.\textit{xe}5 \textit{e}8 19.\textit{de}1 \textit{b}4 20.\textit{e}2 \textit{d}7 21.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}6 22.\textit{e}3 \textit{e}5 23.\textit{xb}4\pm, Bove-Naumkin, Forni di Sopra 2012;

A33) 14...\textit{b}4?! 15.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6 (15...\textit{xf}6? 16.\textit{e}4\pm with a double attack on rook and bishop, whilst 16...\textit{xe}4 there follows 17.\textit{xe}4, at the same time attacking the pawn on h7 and the rook on a8) 16.\textit{e}4! \textit{e}7 (16...\textit{xe}4 17.\textit{xe}4\pm with a double attack on the pawn h7 and rook a8) 17.\textit{xc}5 \textit{xc}5 18.\textit{h}5 \textit{h}6 (18...\textit{g}6? 19.\textit{xe}6 \textit{hx}g6 20.\textit{xf}g6+ \textit{h}8 21.\textit{d}mating) 19.\textit{h}4\pm followed by g4-g5; Black also has to reckon the whole time with \textit{g}6-\textit{h}7;

A34) 14...\textit{b}7 15.\textit{f}4 (the game ended quickly after 15.\textit{g}4 \textit{d}7 16.\textit{g}3 \textit{e}8 17.\textit{f}4 \textit{b}4 18.\textit{a}4 with a draw agreed in Danin-Nosenko, Prague 2015) 15...\textit{e}8 16.\textit{f}3 \textit{b}4?! (this only helps White, since he wants to play \textit{c}2-d4 anyway) 17.\textit{e}2 \textit{a}5 18.\textit{h}3 \textit{h}6 19.\textit{d}4 with advantage to White on account of his more active pieces and the weakness at e6, Garbarino-Labollita, Internet 2002.

B) 11...\textit{a}5?! 12.\textit{b}1. It is practically always useful to tuck the king away on b1 after long castling, especially after ...\textit{a}5, when otherwise the \textit{c}3 is tied to the defence of the a2-pawn.
B1) 12...\textit{b}4 13.\textit{e}5 \textit{d}7 14.\textit{d}4 (also possible is 14.a3 \textit{xd}3 15.\textit{xd}3\pm followed by \textit{d}4, exchanging dark-squared bishops and establishing a blockade on the squares d4 and e5) and now:

B11) 14...\textit{xd}3 15.\textit{xd}3 b5 (or 15...\textit{a}6 16.h4\pm, starting a pawn offensive against the king. White is also better after 16.\textit{e}1 \textit{ac}8 17.a3 b5 18.g4 b4 19.g5 \textit{e}8 20.axb4 \textit{xb}4 21.f4\pm) 16.\textit{b}3 \textit{b}6 17.\textit{xc}5 (17.\textit{xf}6!? \textit{xf}6 18.\textit{e}4 – a familiar idea for us, except that in previous cases, after the capture on e4 there followed a double attack on h7 and a8; here it is the black bishop on d7 that is hanging – 18...\textit{d}xe4 19.\textit{xd}7 \textit{xf}2 20.\textit{xe}4\pm; Black has a weak pawn on e6) 17...\textit{xc}5 18.\textit{d}4 \textit{c}6 19.\textit{e}5\pm, Stukopin-Arslanov, Moscow 2011;

B12) 14...\textit{xd}4 15.\textit{xd}4 \textit{c}6 16.\textit{e}5 (16.\textit{e}3!? \textit{xd}4 17.\textit{xd}4 with a slightly better position for White, on account of his superior pawn structure and the possibility of a blockade on e5 and d4) 16...\textit{xe}5 17.\textit{xe}5 \textit{ac}8 18.\textit{f}3 \textit{c}7 19.\textit{he}1 \textit{xe}5 20.\textit{xe}5\pm, Kosteniuk-Giddins, Port Erin 1999; then White played \textit{c}2-d4, blockading the black pawns and establishing pressure against e6.

B2) 12...\textit{d}7 13.\textit{e}5, and now:
B21) Bad is 13...\(\text{hxg5}\) 14.\(\text{hxg5}\) b5 (on 14...\(\text{dxe5}\), as in the game Shimanov-Polivanov, Lviv 2007, strong is 15.\(\text{dxe6}\)#, exploiting the weakness of the pawn on e6: 15...\(\text{f7}\) 16.\(\text{dxe5}\) \(\text{dxe5}\) 17.xf7 16.xd6 16.xe6+ \(\text{f7}\) 17.xd6) 15.g4 (the familiar pawn offensive) 15...b4 16.g5 bxc3 17.gxf6 \(\text{e8}\) 18.b3 \(\text{xf6}\) (or 18.xg6 19.\(\text{h5}\), and Black resigned, since he is mated, Stukopin-Stella, Sibenik 2007) 19.xf6 gxf6 20.hg1+ \(\text{f8}\) 21.g4 \(\text{e8}\) 22.g8 23.g7 – there is no defence to the threat of \(\text{f7}\), and Black resigned in Alagulian-Sambuev, Moscow 1999;

B22) 13...\(\text{ae8}\) 14.\(\text{he1}\) with slightly better chances for White because of the blockade of e5 and d4; in this position, the pawn advance does not work: 14.g4?! \(\text{d4}\) 15.g5 \(\text{xe5}\) 16.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{e5}\) 17.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{g4}\), and after the retreat of the queen, Black takes on f2, forking both rooks, Massoni-Danin, Cappelle-la-Grande 2014;

B3) 12...\(\text{a6}\), and now:

B31) 13.\(\text{he1}\) b5 14.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{d4}\) (correct is 14...\(\text{xe5}\) 15.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{a7}\)) 15.d2 (White frees a square for the \(\text{c3}\)) 15...b4 16.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{b5}\), as in the game Aabling Thomsen-Gershenov, Copenhagen 2011, after which White obtained the better position after 17.f3 \(\text{b7}\) 18.g3 \(\text{b6}\) 19.xb5 axb5 (bad is 19...\(\text{xb5}\) 20.f4 \(\text{e8}\) 21.ed3, and Black loses one of the pawns – 21...\(\text{e6}\) 22.xe6+, or 21...\(\text{c8}\) 22.xc5 \(\text{xc5}\) 23.d3+, and he loses the pawn on b4) 20.c1 2. White is not afraid of mate, since his knight on c1 protects the king solidly, whilst Black’s pawn structure is seriously spoiled: the doubled b-pawns and the weakness of e6 promise White an advantage;

B32) It is worth considering 13.g4, after which Black has many replies:

B321) 13...b5 14.\(\text{e5}\), and now:

B3211) The exchange 14...\(\text{xe5}\) is unfavourable for White because of 15.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{d7}\) (15...b4? 16.g5 bxc3 17.gxf6 gxf6 18.\(\text{h5}\) with an attack) 16.d6! (once again the weakness of the e6-pawn tells) 16...\(\text{d6}\) 17.\(\text{e6}\)+ \(\text{h8}\) 18.\(\text{h6}\)+. Instead of 16...\(\text{d6}\), more tenacious is 16...\(\text{e8}\), after which White should sacrifice the bishop on h7: 17.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\)
18.\textit{Bxh7+!} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Bxh7}}} 19.\textit{g5} (threatening a check on h5, winning the rook) 19...\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{b7}}} (on 19...\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{g8}}} there follows 20.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{Nxd5+}}-}
with the threat of \textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{Nf6+}}, whilst the knight on d5 also threatens b4, attacking queen and knight) 20.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{h5+}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g8}}} 21.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g6}}}
\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{d7}}} (21...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b4}}} 22.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d4}}}, bringing new reserves into the attack: 22...\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{c7}}} 23.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{h7+}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f8}}} 24.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{h4}}}
\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d7}}} (forced, since there is a threat of a check on f4) 25.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{f4+}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f6}}} 26.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{h8+}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e7}}} 27.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{xg7+}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d6}}} 28.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{xf6}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{bxc3}}} 29.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e1+})} 22.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{h7+}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f8}}} 23.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d1}}}.
After taking on c3, White will have three pawns for the piece, and the h- and g-pawns will most likely queen, whilst the black king is still not out of danger;

B3212) 14...\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{d4}}} 15.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{e3}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b4}}} 16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}}} \textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{xe2}}} 17.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{xe2+}}} White controls the blockade square e5, and he is also ahead of Black in creating threats against the enemy king.

B322) 13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b4}}} 14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e5}}} \textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{xd3}}} 15.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{\textbf{xd3}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d7}}} 16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d4±}} with a blockade of the dark squares;

B323) If White decides to take the pawn after all – 13...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xg4}}?}, then a simple tactical operation ensues:
16. \textit{analysis diagram}

14. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textit{xh7+}}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xh7}}} 15. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{\textit{g5+}}}} \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{g8}}} 16. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xg4}}} e5 17. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{f5}}} (completely bad is 17...\texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xf4}}} 18. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xd5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{f5}}} 19. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{f7+}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h8}}} 20. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xf4}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xf4}}} 21. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xf5}}} with a quick mate) 18. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h1}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf2}}} (or 18...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf4}}} 19. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xd5+}}} with the threat of \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xf5}}} and \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h7+}}} 19. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{g3}}}! \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{xg3}}} (in 19...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf4}}} there follows 20. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h3}}} mating) 20. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{hxg3}}} (White has given up the exchange to open the h-file, which, with such a weak black king, decides the game) 20...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf6}}} 21. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{xd5+}}} or 21. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h1}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h6}}} 22. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{f7+}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h8}}} 23. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h6+}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{g6}}} 24. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{g4+}}};

B324) Black has also tried 13...\texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{b4}}}, attacking the knight. For example, 14. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{c4}}} d4 (14...\texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{c7}}} 15. \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{g5}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{e8}}} 16. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h4}}} ) 15. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{e4}}} \texttt{\textcolor{brown}{\texttt{h6}}}, Debray-Blanc, France tt 2010/11. Black has weak central pawns and also many white pieces are pointing at the enemy king.

12. \texttt{\textcolor{blue}{\texttt{b1}}}

12...\text{c}8!?

Here 12...a6 is also possible, e.g. 13.\text{d}e5 \text{d}xe5 14.\text{d}xe5 \text{f}e7 (the move 14...b5 is considered via 11...a6 12.\text{b}b1 b5 13.\text{d}e5 \text{d}xe5 14.\text{d}xe5 \text{d}d7) 15.g4 (White has placed all his pieces quite well, and so he can start a pawn storm) 15...\text{d}e8 (the bishop no longer defends the e6-pawn, and so White’s next move is very logical) 16.\text{h}e1 \text{f}7 17.f4 (strengthening his control over e5, whilst at the same time, the f4-pawn supports the advance g4-g5 and can itself go to f5, if the chance arises) 17...\text{d}7 with the idea of exchanging on e5, Janturin-Brynell, Pardubice 2002, 18.\text{c}7 – it is best for White immediately to preserve the bishop from exchange. There could follow: 18...\text{f}6 (or 18.\text{ac}8 19.f5 (now we see the move f2-f4 justify itself!) 19.\text{xc}7 20.fxe6 \text{xe}6 21.\text{xe}6+ \text{xe}6 22.\text{xe}6 – the d-pawn is weak, and White’s chances are superior; White is also somewhat better after 18...\text{fe}8 19.\text{g}2) 19.g5 \text{xc}7 20.gxf6, and now:
A) Bad is 20...\(g_4+\) \(h_8\) 22.\(xh7!\) \(xh7\) 23.\(f5\) exf5 24.\(h4+\) \(g_7\) 25.\(xd5\) \(c_6\) (or 25...\(xd5\) 26.\(g1+\) \(xg1\) 27.\(xg1+\) \(f7\) 28.\(xh7+\) \(e_6\) 29.\(xc7+\)) 26.\(g_3+\) \(h_6\) (or 26...\(h8\) 27.\(g1\) with a quick mate) 27.\(e3\) \(xe3\) 28.\(xe3+\) \(h7\) 29.\(h3+\) \(g7\) 30.\(g1+\) \(g6\) 31.\(xf5\) \(e8\) 32.\(d7+\) \(xd7\) 33.\(xd7++=\); 

B) 20...\(fxf4\) 21.\(fxg7\) \(xg7\) 22.\(g2+\) \(h8\) 23.\(h3\) \(h6\) (on 23...\(h5\) there follows 24.\(xe6\), and the black bishop cannot take on \(e6\), since it must guard the pawn on \(h5\)) 24.\(e5\), and not 24...\(xe5\) because of 25.\(xh6+\) \(g8\) 26.\(h7\) mate; 

C) If Black does not take on \(f5\) immediately, but plays 20...\(g6\), then he does not get another chance – 21.\(g4\).

13.\(e5\)

13.\(he1!\)? \(a6\) 14.\(a3\).

13...\(e8\)

It was worth considering 13...\(a6\)!. In reply to this move, White has a great choice of continuations, and the positions become very interesting and fighting, although objectively, White has no advantage:

A) The aggressive 14.\(g4\)!? is worth considering, with a complicated game and mutual chances; 

B) Or 14.\(xd7\) \(xd7\) 15.\(he1\) with mutual chances; 

C) 14.\(f3\) \(e8\) 15.\(e1\) \(h5\) 16.\(c1\) \(e7\), draw, Hinken-Dressel, corr. 2007; 

D) 14.\(xc6\) \(xc6\) 15.\(e5\) \(e8\) 16.\(f3\) \(d7\) 17.\(g3\) \(e7\) (Black is also somewhat better after 17...\(f6\) 18.\(f2\) \(xf2\) 19.\(xf2\) \(c5\), Zubarev-Chuprikov, Alushta 2001) 18.\(d2\) \(g5\) 19.\(e1\) \(f6\), and Black was slightly better in Lastin-Volkov, Tomsk 2001; 

E) 14.\(he1\) (a very good and logical move: why not bring another piece into the game?) 14...\(xe5\) 15.\(xe5\) \(e8\) 16.\(h3\) \(h5\) 17.\(g4\) \(f7\) 18.\(f4\)
14.\textit{xc6} \textit{xc6} 15.\textit{xa4} \textit{e7} 16.\textit{b5} \textit{e4} 17.\textit{f3} \textit{xf4} 18.\textit{fxe4} \textit{d6} 19.\textit{xe8} \textit{xe8}

20.\textit{c3}

An equal game results from 20.\textit{c5} \textit{c6} 21.\textit{g3} \textit{f8} 22.\textit{e5} \textit{dd8} 23.\textit{d3}= or 23.\textit{b3}=.
20...d4 21.g3 f8 22.e5 d8 23.e4 c6 24.he1 d5 25.f2 a5

26.d3

Equality results from 26.xd4 c5 27.f4 xf4 28.gxf4 a4 29.a3 xa3 30.e4 (naturally, not 30.bxa3 xa3, and White loses) 30...b4 31.c3 a1+ 32.c2 a4+ 33.b1 a1+ with perpetual check.

26...a4 27.c1

Black tries to attack the white king, but the knight on c1 defends all the entry squares.

27.f5 28.e4 d5

Black has not managed to give mate, and now he starts to have problems with the d-pawn.

29.b3 f2

29...fxe5 30.xe5 xe5 31.xe5±. Here the two rooks are stronger than the queen.

30.g4 d7 31.h4?!

More accurate is 31.xd4 h5 32.xe6+ xe6 33.xe6 xd1+ 34 xd1 xh2 35.a4±, retaining some winning chances, although Black has counterplay with ...g7-g5 and ...h5-h4, creating a passed pawn.

31.d3 32.c4 e6 33.e4
33...\textit{\textbf{d}7}

Black can obtain sufficient counterplay with 33...\textit{\textbf{b}5}! 34.\textit{\textbf{d}2} (not 34.\textit{\textbf{c}xd5} \textit{\textbf{Q}c2+} 35.\textit{\textbf{K}a1} \textit{\textbf{Q}xb2#}) 34...\textit{\textbf{R}xd2} 35.\textit{\textbf{N}xd2} \textit{\textbf{bxc4}} 36.\textit{\textbf{N}xc4} =.

34.\textit{\textbf{Q}xc6} \textit{\textbf{bxc6}} 35.\textit{\textbf{e}3} \textit{\textbf{g}5}

It was better to play immediately 35...\textit{\textbf{d}2} 36.\textit{\textbf{c}2} \textit{\textbf{g}5}, transposing into a position from the game.

36.\textit{\textbf{h}xg5}

Now White had the additional possibility 36.\textit{\textbf{exd3}} \textit{\textbf{xd3}} 37.\textit{\textbf{xd3}} \textit{\textbf{g}xh4} 38.\textit{\textbf{gxh4}} \textit{\textbf{x}h4} 39.\textit{\textbf{d}4\pm}, attacking the pawns on c6 and e6.

36...\textit{\textbf{d}2} 37.\textit{\textbf{c}2} \textit{\textbf{xg5}} 38.\textit{\textbf{e}4} \textit{\textbf{f}7} 39.\textit{\textbf{c}5} \textit{\textbf{d}8} 40.\textit{\textbf{g}4}
40...\textit{e7}

Stronger is 40...\textit{h6}: the bishop is needed on g5 to defend the pawn, and after 41.\textit{e4} \textit{f5} 42.\textit{xg5}+ \textit{xg5} 43.\textit{xd2} \textit{xd2}+ 44.\textit{xd2} \textit{xe5} Black wins the e5-pawn in exchange for the d-pawn, and obtains an equal position.

Now, however, after

\textbf{41.\textit{d3}}

Black simply loses the d2-pawn.

\textbf{41...\textit{f5} 42.\textit{xd2} \textit{h5} 43.\textit{f4} \textit{g8} 44.\textit{h2} \textit{xf4} 45.\textit{xf4} \textit{h4}}

The assessment is not changed by 45...\textit{xf3} 46.\textit{xd2}±.

\textbf{46.\textit{gxh4} \textit{g4} 47.\textit{f2} \textit{xf4} 48.\textit{f3} \textit{e7} 49.\textit{c3} \textit{e1}+ 50.\textit{b3} \textit{a5} 51.\textit{d3} \textit{h4} 52.\textit{g3} \textit{f7} 53.\textit{b4} \textit{c5} 54.\textit{d3}}

White has forced the advance ...c6-c5 and will now play b2-b4.

\textbf{54...\textit{b6}}
55.a3 e4 56.f3+ g7

It was better to play the king to e7, closer to his pawns.

57.c3 a5+ 58.b4 cxb4+ 59.axb4

White has a passed c-pawn, which decides the outcome of the game.

59...c7 60.c5 g4 61.f2 b8 62.c6 h4 63.b3 e4 64.a2 d4 65.c5 f7 66.c7

Black resigned.

Conclusions: In reply to the capture on c5 with the bishop, followed by the break 8...f6 9.exf6xf6, White has two plans. The first is short castling, followed by play on the e-file and a blockade of the black central pawns; this variation can be studied via the games of the Australian GM, Ian Rogers. We, however, have presented a different plan, involving castling long, the main ideas of which are nonetheless the same: play along the e-file, and a blockade of the central squares. But here the kings are castled on opposite flanks, and White frequently advances his kingside pawns, so as to start an attack on the enemy king.

Objectively, with correct play, Black should equalise, but White has different plans and there are quite a few variations, besides which the whole line with the capture on c5 is far from being the main line. This means that your opponent’s knowledge is likely to be less than your own, after you have read this book. We should also add that, without concrete knowledge by either side, such positions are in general easier to play as White.

The other recapture. The previous game considered the move 9...Qxf6.

10.Bg3 0-0 11.0-0

In this variation, we castle short.

11...Nc4


11...h6?! is dubious because of 12.a4 (White is also better after 12.Ne2+) 12...a6 13.c4! or 12...e7 13.c4! or 13.Ne2!? Nxb4 14.Nxe1 Nxd3 15.cxd3 Nxb8 16.axc1 Nc6 17.Nc5!, in all of these variations, the initiative is with White.

12.Nxd4 Nxd4
13.\textit{d}2

The other possibility is 13.\textit{e}2:

A) 13...a6 (defending against the jump \textit{b}5) 14.\textit{ae}1 \textit{c}5 15.\textit{d}6 (a roughly equal position arises after 15.\textit{ae}5 \textit{xe}5 16.\textit{xe}5=), and now:

A1) The logical 15...\textit{d}8 does not work,

\textit{analysis diagram}

owing to the tactical blow 16.\textit{xd}5! \textit{g}5 (Black is also worse after the more tenacious 16...\textit{ex}d5 17.\textit{e}7 \textit{e}8 18.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xe}2 19.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xe}1 20.\textit{xe}1 \textit{xd}3 21.\textit{cxd}3± with an extra pawn for White) 17.\textit{e}7+ \textit{h}8 18.h4, and in the game
Ibarra Jerez-Larino Nieto, Salou 2012, Black resigned, since after 18...\texttt{\textsc{Q}}xh4 there would follow 19.\texttt{\textsc{Q}}f5 \texttt{\textsc{Q}}f6 20.\texttt{\textsc{Q}}e7+ or 19...\texttt{\textsc{exf}}5 20.\texttt{\textsc{Q}}e8+ \texttt{\textsc{Qxe}}8 21.\texttt{\textsc{Qxe}}8#;

A2) 15...\texttt{\textsc{Q}}xd3, and now:

A21) 16.cxd3 \texttt{\textsc{Q}}f7 17.\texttt{\textsc{Be}}5 \texttt{\textsc{Be}}5 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qxe}}5 \texttt{\textsc{Qd}}7 (or 18...\texttt{\textsc{Qxe}}5 19.\texttt{\textsc{Qxe}}5 with a somewhat better endgame for White) 19.\texttt{\textsc{Qxf6}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxf6}} (or 19...\texttt{\textsc{gx}}f6 20.\texttt{\textsc{Qf4}} with the better ending) 20.\texttt{\textsc{Qf4}} and again White has slightly better chances in the ending. Bishops usually combine with a rook (in this case, two rooks) rather more effectively than does a knight, but here the bishop is restricted by its own pawns, and it cannot show its usual long range and activity. Given the chance, White can deploy his pieces effectively on the blockade squares d4 and e5, but with accurate play, Black should nevertheless hold the draw;

A22) Taking with the queen on d3 deserves attention – 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} \texttt{\textsc{Bxc3}} 17.bxc3 \texttt{\textsc{Rf}}7 18.\texttt{\textsc{Re}}3 with a somewhat better opposite-coloured bishops position for White, Petrik-Gasthofer, Pardubice 2005;

B) 13...\texttt{\textsc{Qc}}5, and now:

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{analysis-diagram.png}
\caption{Analysis Diagram}
\end{figure}

B1) 14.\texttt{\textsc{Qae1}} \texttt{\textsc{Qd}}7 15.\texttt{\textsc{Be}}5 \texttt{\textsc{Qxe5}} 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qxe5}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxe5}} (if instead 16...\texttt{\textsc{Qac8}}, then White himself exchanges queens: 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qxf6}} \texttt{\textsc{gxf6}} 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qf4}} \texttt{\textsc{Qc6}} 19.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}2 \texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} 20.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} \texttt{\textsc{Re}}8 21.\texttt{\textsc{Qd4}} with somewhat better chances, Kerr-Davidson, corr. 2008) 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qxe5}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} (17...\texttt{\textsc{Qac8}} 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}2\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}5, Binas-Garau, corr. 2013) 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} \texttt{\textsc{Qac8}} 19.\texttt{\textsc{Qf3}} \texttt{\textsc{b}}5 20.\texttt{\textsc{Qf2}} \texttt{\textsc{b}}4 21.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}2 \texttt{\textsc{Qb}}5 22.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}3, draw, Englert-Brynell, Copenhagen 2013. The position is equal: Black has a weakness on e6, but controls the c-file;

B2) A repetition can occur after 14.\texttt{\textsc{Qd6}} \texttt{\textsc{Qd}}8 (14...\texttt{\textsc{Qf7}?} 15.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd5}}! \texttt{\textsc{Qxd5}} 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qe8+}} \texttt{\textsc{Qf8}} 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qxf8}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxf8}} 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qxh7+}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxh7}} 19.\texttt{\textsc{Qxf8+}}) 15.\texttt{\textsc{Qc7}} (here the same combination no longer works: 15.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd5}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxd5}} 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qe7}} \texttt{\textsc{Qb}}6 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd8}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxd8}}, and Black gets two pieces for a rook) 15...\texttt{\textsc{Qf8}} 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qd6}}=;

B3) 14.\texttt{\textsc{Qb}}5 is an interesting pawn sac:

B31) Black does not equalise with 14...\texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} 15.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd3}} \texttt{\textsc{Qb}}6 (or 15...\texttt{\textsc{Qd}}7 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd4}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxd4}} 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qe5}} \texttt{\textsc{Qh}}4 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qf4}} \texttt{\textsc{Qac8}} 19.\texttt{\textsc{Qf3}} \texttt{\textsc{Qe}}7 20.\texttt{\textsc{Qd4}} \texttt{\textsc{Qa}}6 21.\texttt{\textsc{Qg}}3 \texttt{\textsc{Qf7}} 22.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}5 \texttt{\textsc{Qf8}} 23.\texttt{\textsc{Qf1}±}, Poetsch-Goloborodko, Rhein Main 2010) 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qc7}} (White is better after 16.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}5 \texttt{\textsc{Qg}}6 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qd4}±}) 16...\texttt{\textsc{Qc}}7 (16...\texttt{\textsc{Qb}}8? 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qxd5}} \texttt{\textsc{Qxd5}} 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qxb8}+}) 17.\texttt{\textsc{Qc7}} \texttt{\textsc{Qd}}7 18.\texttt{\textsc{Qe}}5, and White’s dark-squared bishop is clearly stronger than Black’s bishop, Lukin-Veinger, Leningrad 1967;

B32) Black should accept the offered sacrifice: 14...\texttt{\textsc{Qxb2}} 15.\texttt{\textsc{Qab1}}
B321) 15...a6? 16...xb2!, and now:

B3211) Dangerous is 16...xb2 17.e5 b4 18.xh7+ xh7 19.h5+ g8 20.g6 f7 21.d6 e7 22.e8 e4 23.xg7 e5 24.h6+ (24.xe5+ fails to 24...f8 25.d6 xd6 6xd6, and the black queen is included in the defence – 26.e4) 24...h8 25.a3! (the queen must be driven off the fourth rank) 25...c5 (on 25...c4 White wins by 26.f6 with the threat of mate on g8, whilst after 26.d7 there follows a different mate: 27.g7+ xg7 28.h5+) 26.g7+ g8 27.xe5+ f8 28.d6 xd6 (forced, since there was a threat of 29.g7+ xg7 30.e8+ with mate) 29.xd6 c3 30.g5 g7 31.xg7+ xg7 32.xe7+, keeping two extra pawns;

B3212) 16.axb5 17.e5 e7 18.xb5±.

B322) Best is 15...d7 16.c7 ac8 17.d6
17...\texttt{Rf7} (the exchange sacrifice looks promising for Black: 17...\texttt{Rd4}!? 18.\texttt{Bxf8 Rxf8} 19.\texttt{Qxb5 axb5} 20.\texttt{Bxb5 a6} 21.\texttt{Bb1 b5} with a somewhat better position for Black, Firla-Pecka, Czechia 2005) 18.\texttt{Bxc5 Rxc7} 19.\texttt{Bxa7} with a roughly equal game, Guseinov-Stellwagen, Baku 2002.

13...\texttt{Qc5}

On 13...\texttt{a6} good is 14.\texttt{Rd1}

18.\texttt{Bxh6}

analysis diagram
with the threats 15.\texttt{B}xh7+ and 16.\texttt{Q}xd4:

A) 14...\texttt{B}e5 15.\texttt{Q}xe5 (15.\texttt{W}e3!?±) 15...\texttt{Q}xe5 16.f4 \texttt{Q}c6 17.\texttt{h}h1± Herrmann-Heinz, Germany tt jr 2006, or 17.\texttt{W}f2±; Black has a weak pawn on e6 and his light-squared bishop is restricted by his own pawns;

B) 14...\texttt{B}h8, and now:

B1) 15.\texttt{Q}e2² is worth considering.

\textit{analysis diagram}

Taking aim at the e6-pawn, and also taking control of the square e5; in addition, the queen may later come to h5, attacking h7. We will look a little at what happens if Black decides to move his knight, opening up the \texttt{c}8 to defend the e6-pawn:

B11) 15...\texttt{N}b8? 16.\texttt{B}d6 \texttt{R}d8 (even worse is 16...\texttt{R}g8 17.\texttt{Q}xh7! \texttt{Q}h7 18.\texttt{W}xd4+--, and now 18...\texttt{W}xd4 is impossible because of 19.\texttt{W}h5#) 17.\texttt{Q}xd5! exd5 18.\texttt{N}e5 with an extra pawn for White;

B12) Also bad is 15...\texttt{N}c5 16.\texttt{B}d6 \texttt{R}d8 because of the same move: 17.\texttt{Q}xd5! exd5 18.\texttt{Q}e7 \texttt{Q}g4 19.\texttt{Q}xd8 \texttt{Q}xe2 20.\texttt{B}xf6 \texttt{B}xf1 21.\texttt{B}xd4 \texttt{Q}xd3 22.\texttt{c}xd3 \texttt{Q}c6 23.\texttt{Q}e5 with an extra pawn for White;

B13) 15...\texttt{N}e5 16.\texttt{B}xh7! \texttt{B}xc3 17.bxc3 \texttt{Q}xf3 18.\texttt{Q}xf3 \texttt{Q}xf3 21.\texttt{B}d3 \texttt{Q}xd3 22.\texttt{c}xd3 \texttt{Q}d7 23.f4±.

B2) In one game, in reply to 15.\texttt{B}f1, Black went wrong straightaway – 15...\texttt{N}c5?! (correct was 15...\texttt{B}b8², transferring the knight to c6) 16.\texttt{B}f1 \texttt{xc}3 17.\texttt{B}xc3 \texttt{B}xc3 18.\texttt{b}xc3 \texttt{Q}a4 19.\texttt{c}4 (19.\texttt{d}6!? \texttt{R}d8 20.\texttt{Q}e5²) 19...\texttt{B}c3 20.\texttt{Q}d3 \texttt{Q}e4 21.\texttt{c}xd5 \texttt{ex}d5 22.\texttt{B}xd5 \texttt{Q}e6 23.\texttt{Q}e5 \texttt{Q}xg3 24.\texttt{Q}xe6 \texttt{Q}xf1 25.\texttt{Q}xf1 with an extra pawn in the rook ending, which White went to to realise in the game Pogosian-Shliahtin, Smolensk 1992.

C) 14...\texttt{a}7 15.\texttt{Q}e2 \texttt{g}6 (now Black starts to have problems: it was better to prepare for the move \texttt{Q}d6 and move the rook away – 15...\texttt{f}7 16.\texttt{h}h1 \texttt{Q}e5 17.\texttt{Q}e5 \texttt{Q}e7 18.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{d}7, although even in this position, White’s game is easier to play) 16.\texttt{Q}e1 (this rook, since the bishop on a7 exerts pressure on f2 and the other white rook defends that square) 16...\texttt{f}7?! (more tenacious is 16...\texttt{Q}c5 17.\texttt{Q}d6 \texttt{B}d8 18.\texttt{Q}e5 \texttt{Q}f7 19.\texttt{h}h1 \texttt{Q}xd3 20.\texttt{c}xd3 \texttt{Q}d7 21.\texttt{f}4 \texttt{Q}ac8 22.\texttt{d}1±, transferring the knight to e3 or f2, creating the threat of \texttt{Q}g4 and \texttt{h}6+ 17.\texttt{Q}d6 \texttt{Q}d8 18.\texttt{c}7 \texttt{Q}g8 19.\texttt{Q}g4 h5?! (an unnecessary weakening of the square g6, which in the end leads Black to defeat) 20.\texttt{Q}h3 \texttt{Q}b8 21.\texttt{Q}b8 \texttt{Q}b8 22.\texttt{Q}g3 \texttt{Q}c6 23.\texttt{c}7+ \texttt{Q}f8 24.\texttt{Q}e3 \texttt{Q}g7 25.\texttt{f}3 \texttt{Q}xc7 26.\texttt{Q}xf6+ \texttt{Q}f7 27.\texttt{Q}xg6 (the weakening of g6 tells) 27...\texttt{Q}d7 28.\texttt{Q}h6 \texttt{Q}e7
29. \texttt{\textit{N}}xd5+! exd5 30.\texttt{\textit{Re}}1+. Black has to give up the bishop on e6, after which he is two pawns down, so he resigned in Ozolin-Nakhapetian, Izhevsk 2011.

\textbf{14.\texttt{R}}ad1

\textbf{14...\texttt{N}}xd3 15.\texttt{\textit{R}}xd3 \texttt{B}b6

A) 15...\texttt{Be}5 is no good,

\textit{analysis diagram}

because after 16.\texttt{\textit{N}}xd5 (White is also better after 16.\texttt{\textit{a}}4 \texttt{\textit{e}}7 17.c4+) 16...\texttt{exd}5 (completely bad is 16...\texttt{\textit{W}}xb2 17.\texttt{\textit{c}}7
\[ \text{analysis diagram} \]

B1) On 17...\textit{f}7, as in Kovacik-Gazik, Slovakia tt 2013, instead of 18.\textit{e}3 it is better to put the rook on e5 first, and only then play the queen to e3 or e2, with the better chances for White;

B2) 17...\textit{b}7 18.\textit{e}3 \textit{ac}8 19.\textit{e}2 \textit{c}6 20.\textit{h}3 \textit{f}7 21.\textit{f}6 22.\textit{d}4 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{e}5 \textit{c}1+ 24.\textit{h}2, and in the game Santos-Senders, corr. 2012, Black admitted defeat. White will gradually start an attack on the king with \textit{g}4, \textit{eg}5, \textit{e}5, and Black’s problem is that his light-squared bishop cannot compete with the enemy dark-squared bishop.

\textbf{16.\textit{e}2}

A) Things went badly for White in the game De Filomeno-Saric, Pula 2012, after 16.\textit{d}6 \textit{f}7
17...d7 18...e5 f5 19...d2 e8 20...e1 c4 with a clear advantage for Black;

B) White is better after 16...a4:

B1) 16...a5 and now:

B11) 17...e2 a6 18.c3 b5 19...c5 b6 20...e5 c7 21...d3 d7 22...d4 xxd4 23...d4;  
B12) White is also somewhat better after 17...e5 (or 17...b6 18.cxd5 exd5 19.a3 f5 20...xd5+ e6 21...e4; after 17...dxc4 18...xe4 the undeveloped black queenside is felt, and the pawn on e6 may become an object of attack)

B2) Black can try giving up the bishop after 16...d7 17...xb6 axb6:

B21) After 18...d6, as in the game Landenbergue-Pelletier, Switzerland 2003, numerous exchanges followed, leading to a drawn position: 18...f7 19...a3 xxa4 20.c3 f4 21.f3 c6 22.g3. Now all the heavy pieces were exchanged and Black kept an extra pawn, but this was insufficient to win. White easily held his stronger opponent: 22...xf3 23...xf3 xxf3 24...xf3 xf3 25...f1 xf1 26...f1 f7 27...f2 e5 28...d6 e6 29...c7 b5 30...e3 b4 31.h4 b5 32.a3 b3 33...b8 f5 34...c7 a6 35...b8 f1 36...c7 g2 37...b8 h3 38...f1 39...b8 c4 40...c7 e4 41...b6 g4 42...f2 and draw agreed;

B22) But White is better after 18...b3
18...\(\text{a}4\) (18...\(\text{b}5\) 19.\(\text{a}3\) \(\text{a}4\) 20.\(\text{e}1\); 18...\(\text{a}6\) 19.\(\text{d}2\), defending c2) 19.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{xc}2\) 20.\(\text{c}1\) \(\text{g}6\) 21.\(\text{fe}1\) \(\text{fc}8\) 22.\(\text{a}3\)\(\text{±}\) with a better opposite-coloured bishops position for White.

**16...\(\text{d}7\)**

17.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{e}7\) 18.\(\text{d}4\)

White wants to exchange dark-squared bishops, and leave himself with a knight against the bad light-squared bishop. Then he will put his knight on d4, his pawns on c3 and f4, fixing Black’s hanging pawns, and pressurise the pawn on
e6.
A game with mutual chances arises after 18...\(\text{h1}\) \(\text{ac8}\) 19.f4\(\equiv\).

18...\(\text{xd4}\)

It was worth considering 18...\(\text{b4}\)!?, and Black gets at least an equal position, without any trouble: 19.\(\text{xb6}\) \(\text{xb6}\) 20.b3 \(\text{ac8}\) 21.\(\text{b1}\) \(\text{e8}\) (or 21...\(\text{b5}\) 22.c4 \(\text{a6}\) 23.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{f4}\) 24.\(\text{c1}\)=) 22.\(\text{c1}\) \(\text{g6}\) 23.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{e8}\) (after 23...\(\text{xc2}\) 24.\(\text{xc2}\) \(\text{xc2}\) 25.\(\text{f3}\) White has compensation for the pawn in the form of the blockading squares for the queen and d4 for the knight) 24.c4\(\equiv\).

19.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{f6}\) 20.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{g6}\) 21.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{a6}\)

Freeing the rook from the necessity of guarding this pawn.

22.f4

White continues his plan – a blockade on the dark squares, for which he needs to fix the black pawns.

22...\(\text{ac8}\) 23.\(\text{ff2}\) \(\text{e4}\) 24.\(\text{d4}\) \(\text{xd4}\) 25.\(\text{xd4}\) \(\text{f6}\)

![Chessboard Diagram]

26.\(\text{b6}\)

It was possible to exchange queens with 26.\(\text{xf6}\) \(\text{xf6}\) and transfer the knight to d4 – 27.\(\text{e2}\), also with the better chances. But White evidently thought this would not suffice for a win, and he decided not to simplify the position.

26...\(\text{c6}\) 27.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{h6}\)

‘Making \textit{luft}’.

28.\(\text{h3}\)

It is also useful for White to secure his king a flight on h2.
28...\textit{h}7

It was better first to activate the queen: 28...\textit{f}5 29.\textit{c}3 \textit{e}4 30.\textit{h}2 \textit{h}7\texttt{f} or 29...\textit{b}1+ 30.\textit{h}2 \textit{e}1\texttt{f}, getting the queen into the rear of the enemy position.

29.\textit{c}3

It was even stronger to hit the bishop at once with 29.\textit{d}4\texttt{f}.

29...\textit{f}5 30.\textit{d}4 \textit{e}4 31.\textit{c}7

White has done everything he needed to do: played \textit{d}4, put his pawn on c3 to defend the knight, and the pawn on f4, fixing the black pawn on e6. As a result, Black has a bad bishop and a weakness on e6.

White cannot be satisfied with 31.\textit{xc}6\texttt{b}c6 32.\textit{xc}6 \textit{xf}4 33.\textit{xf}4 \textit{e}1\texttt{f} 34.\textit{xa}6 \textit{c}1+ 35.\textit{h}2 \textit{f}4+ with perpetual check.

31...\textit{f}6

On 31...\textit{b}5 there could follow 32.\textit{e}5 (White could also not rush with the transition to a minor-piece ending – 32.\textit{h}2) 32...\textit{xe}5 33.\textit{fxe}5 \textit{xf}2 34.\textit{xf}2 with winning chances for White, since his knight is clearly stronger than the bishop.

32.\textit{e}5

32.\textit{e}2!? \textit{xf}4 33.\textit{xf}4 \textit{xf}4 34.\textit{xe}6\texttt{f}.

32...\textit{g}6

Black decides against exchanging queens with 32...\textit{xe}5, and this is understandable: there are few players who will enjoy defending an ending with a bad bishop against the strong enemy knight.

33.\textit{a}3 \textit{b}5
On 33...d7 White can play 34.g4± or just start to strengthen the position with 34.h2±.

34.f5 exf5 35.xf5 d6

Black does not want to exchange pieces, thereby moving closer to a pure good knight vs bad bishop ending. But as well as the knight, all of White’s other pieces are also better than their opposite numbers, so Black should have exchanged and gone into a minor piece ending, where his drawing chances would have been greater than with major pieces on the board.

36.f3 b1+ 37.h2 g6?

38.e6
Black acknowledged defeat, since there is a threat of $39.\, \square f8+$, and he has to give up rook for knight.

**Conclusion:** The capture with the queen on f6 does not promise Black an easy life; White castles short, and then places his heavy pieces in the centre, exchanges pieces and exerts pressure on the e6-pawn. Black can also be left with a bad light-squared bishop against a strong white knight, as in the game above.
Index of Games

Part I Alekhine’s Defence

Game 1 Alexey Fedorov – Igor Kovalenko Samara 2012

Game 2 Alexey Fedorov – Vladimir Sveshnikov Riga 2014

Game 3 Lauris Laimins – Vladimir Sveshnikov Riga 2014

Game 4 Yuri Shabanov – Eduardas Rozentalis Ashdod 2003

Game 5 Yuri Balashov – Lev Albur Leningrad 1974

Game 6 Martin Villwock – Sarunas Sulskis Neustadt an der Weinstrasse 2009

Game 7 Vassily Smyslov – Rafael Vaganian Moscow 1987

Game 8 Alexander Ivanov – Lev Albur Ashkhabad 1978

Game 9 Hugo Tirard – Kevin Spraggett Metz 2010

Game 10 Siegbert Tarrasch – Richard Réti Baden-Baden 1925

Game 11 Evgeny Sveshnikov – Igor Khmelnitsky Sibenik 1990

Game 12 Evgeny Sveshnikov – Alexander Morozevich Alushta 1994

Game 13 Evgeny Sveshnikov – Filip Barlowski Warsaw 2005

Game 14 Jonas Martin Hernandez – Julio Granda Zuniga La Laguna 2007

Game 15 Michail Panarin – Richard Polaczek Playchess 2005

Game 16 Frederic Decoster – Martijn Maddens Ghent 2012

Game 17 Jean Olivier – Matthieu Cornette Aix-les-Bains 2003

Game 18 Marius Moraru – Mihai Grunberg Bucharest 1999

Game 19 D. Movileanu – Vladimir Sveshnikov Amantea 2014

Game 20 Andrei Volokitin – Vassily Ivanchuk Foros 2006

Game 21 Dragoljub Minic – Vassily Smyslov Palma de Mallorca 1970

Game 22 Slim Belkhodja – Rafael Vaganian Moscow 2001

Game 23 Leighton Williams – Alexander Baburin Mallorca 2004

Game 24 Igor Yagupov – Yuri Balashov Moscow 1996
Game 25 Alexey Shirov – Ralf Appel Germany Bundesliga 2013

Game 26 Hedinn Steingrimsson – Vladimir Sveshnikov Bratto op 2014

Game 27 David Navara – Nigel Short Wijk aan Zee B 2009

Game 28 R. Marzaduri – Vladimir Sveshnikov Amantea 2014

Game 29 Veselin Topalov – Magnus Carlsen Morelia/Linares 2008

Game 30 Stephen Short – Vladimir Sveshnikov Galway 2014

Part II The Queen’s Gambit Accepted

Game 31 Alisa Galliamova – Sergey Rublevsky St Petersburg ch-RUS 1998


Game 33 Alexey Vyzhmanavin – Sergey Rublevsky Novosibirsk 1995

Game 34 Loek van Wely – Viswanathan Anand Monaco blind 1997

Game 35 Levon Aronian – Alexey Shirov Elista Candidates’ match 2007

Game 36 Andrejs Strebkovs – Ilmars Starostits Panevezys 2009

Game 37 Vladimir Epishin – Ilmars Starostits Geneva 2003

Game 38 Alexey Dreev – Alexey Kornev Krasnoyarsk ch-RUS 2003


Game 40 Daniel Fridman – Ilmars Starostits Riga open 2004

Game 41 COMP Deep Fritz – Vladimir Kramnik Bonn 2006

Game 42 Denis Khismatullin – Nikita Vitiugov Aix-les-Bains ch-EUR 2011

Game 43 Vladimir Belous – Alexander Riazantsev Moscow 2013

Game 44 Srdjan Panzalovic – Igors Rausis Germany tt 1997

Game 45 Mark Nieuweboer – I. Chitescu Corr. 2010

Game 46 Stepan Zilka – Colomban Vitoux Olbia Mitropa cup 2008

Part III The Réti and English Openings

Game 47 Arkady Naiditsch – Christian Bauer France tt 2011

Game 48 Hans Ree – Boris Spassky Amsterdam IBM 1973

Game 49 Andrey Kharlov – Evgeny Sveshnikov Sochi tt 2006
Game 50 Sergey Movsesian – Ruslan Ponomariov Khanty-Mansiysk FIDE Blitz 2013

Game 51 Magnus Carlsen – Wang Hao Stavanger 2013

Game 52 Vladimir Kramnik – Ian Nepomniachtchi Moscow Tal-mem 2011

Game 53 Sergey Karjakin – Rustam Kasimdzhanov Baku 2014

Game 54 Alexander Morozevich – Alexander Grischuk Loztt 2013

Part IV The Sicilian Defence

Game 55 Nigel Short – Gawain Jones Bunratty Open 2012

Game 56 Alexander Morozevich – Yu Yangyi Dubai rapid 2014

Game 57 Oleg Skvortsov – Evgeny Sveshnikov Moscow 2014

Game 58 Oleg Skvortsov – Sergey Karjakin Moscow 2012

Game 59 Oleg Skvortsov – Vladimir Barsky Moscow 2012

Game 60 Alexandr Petrushin – Evgeny Sveshnikov Rostov 1981

Game 61 Dmitry Chuprov – Semen Dvoirys Tomsk 2011

Game 62 Mikhail Antipov – Alejandro Franco Alonso Budapest 2012

Game 63 Kay Engström – Normunds Miezis Tromsø 2010

Game 64 Jiri Nun – Aleksander Volodin Pardubice 2012

Game 65 Evgeny Romanov – Tomasz Warakomski Erevan Wch U20 2006

Game 66 Rasmund Holving – Jan Vatn Lund 2010

Game 67 Alexander Ivanov – Evgeny Sveshnikov Tashkent 1980

Game 68 Evgeny Sveshnikov – Evgeny Kolegin Moscow open 2014

Game 69 Evgeny Sveshnikov – Anna Sharevich Reykjavik open 2011

Game 70 Evgeny Sveshnikov – Sophie Milliet Reykjavik open 2011

Game 71 Oleg Skvortsov – Vladimir Barsky Moscow 2013

Game 72 Vladimir Kramnik – Ernesto Inarkiev Nizhnij-Novgorod 2013

Game 73 Vladimir Kramnik – Mikhail Kobalia Tromsø 2013

Game 74 Oleg Skvortsov – Evgeny Sveshnikov Moscow 2014

Game 75 Evgeny Romanov – Artyom Frolov Kazan 2003
Game 76 Evgeny Romanov – Viktor Laznicka Istanbul 2005

Part V The Caro-Kann Defence

Game 77 Sergei Movsesian – Stjepan Draganic Pula 1997

Game 78 Lev Aronin – Salomon Flohr Moscow ch-URS 1949

Game 79 Robert Fischer – Fridrik Olafsson Bled/Zagreb/Belgrade ct 1959

Game 80 Frantisek Smalcl – Kurt Blattner Internet 2013

Game 81 Leinier Dominguez Perez – Maxime Vachier-Lagrave Tromsø 2013

Game 82 Michael Adams – Alexander Motylev Germany Bundesliga 2014/15

Game 83 Paul Keres – Igor Bondarevsky Moscow ch-URS 1941

Game 84 Andrey Istratescu – Dmitry Svetushkin Patras 2001

Game 85 Robert Fischer – Paul Keres Bled 1961

Game 86 Rauf Mamedov – Sayed Alavi Abu Dhabi open 2006

Game 87 Hou Yifan – Bela Khotenashvili Geneva 2013

Game 88 Emil Sutovsky – Viorel Iordachescu Legnica 2013

Game 89 Isaak Boleslavsky – Vladimir Makogonov Moscow ch-URS 1940

Game 90 Ian Nepomniachtchi – Daniil Lintchevski Moscow 2012

Game 91 Francisco Vallejo Pons – Rasmus Svane Hockenheim 2014

Game 92 Nico Georgiadis – Alexey Dreev Caleta Masters 2014

Part VI The Vienna Game

Game 93 Matteo Zoldan – Giacomo Paolinelli Bratto 2006

Game 94 Nikola Mitkov – Gerard Welling Aosta open 2003

Game 95 Nikola Mitkov – Victor Mikhailievski Las Vegas 2006


Game 97 James Constance – Ronald Raimbert Corr. 2005

Game 98 Jens Kristiansen – Peter-Heine Nielsen Arhus ch-DEN 1992

Game 99 Viswanathan Anand – Raja Ravisekhar New Delhi 1986

Game 100 Ferdinand Zernovic – Peter Daus Corr. 2007
Game 101 Vassily Ivanchuk – Anish Giri Beijing 2011

Game 102 Jens Kristiansen – COMP Deep Blue Copenhagen 1993

Game 103 Sergey Karjakin Mohamad – Al Modiahki Sochi 2008

Game 104 Sergey Karjakin – Viktor Bologan Mainz Ordix-open 2004

Game 105 Miguel Najdorf – Gilberto Chaves Sao Paulo simul 1947

Game 106 Maxime Lagarde – Alexandre Bouget Avoine Open 2012

Game 107 Rudolf Spielmann – Frank Marshall Breslau 1912

Game 108 Chris Depasquale – Gareth Charles Suncoast 1999

Part VII The French Defence

Game 109 Ian Rogers – Nicholas Pert London 1993

Game 110 Ian Nepomniachtchi – Andreas Peschel Ohrid ECC 2009

Game 111 Stéphane Standaert – Leonids Borisovs Corr. 2011

Game 112 Ivan Saric – Anna Zatonskih Bastia op 2013

Game 113 Erik Peterson – Jozef Hujo Piestany 2013

Game 114 Gadir Guseinov – Alireza Noori Tehran 2005

Game 115 Ian Nepomniachtchi – Sergey Volkov Tomsk ch-RUS 2006

Game 116 Alexandre Danin – Ilya Tokarev Kazan 2015
Index of Variations

Section 1 – Black repertoire

Alekhine’s Defence
1.e4  \( \mathcal{D} \)f6

2.d3

2.\( \mathcal{D} \)c3 d5 3.e5 d4

4.exf6 dxc3 5.bxc3
5. fxe7
5. fxg7 cxd2+
  6. wxd2 w xd2+ 7. w x d2 x g7 8. 0-0-0 g4
  8... c6
  9. b5
  9. e2
  9. f3
  6. x d2 x g7 7. c3
  7. h5
  7. f3
4. ce2 fd7
4... d3
4... g4 5. f3
5. f4

3. exd5 xd5

4. d4
4. xd5 w xd5 5. d4
  5. f3
  5. f3
  4. c4 b6 5. b3 c6 6. ge2
  6. f3
6. $\text{d}f3$

2.e5 $\text{d}d5$

3. $\text{d}c3$ $\text{xc}3$ 4.bxc3

4.dxc3 d6 5. $\text{f}f4$

5. $\text{c}c4$

5.exd6

5. $\text{f}f3$

3.c4 $\text{b}b6$ 4.c5 $\text{d}d5$ 5.$\text{c}c4$

5.$\text{c}c3$ e6 6.d4 $\text{xc}3$ 7.bxc3 $\text{b}6$ 8.exb6

8. $\text{g}g4$

4.d4 $\text{d}6$ 5.f4 dx$e5$ 6.fxe5
6...c6
6...e5 7.d5 g6 8.f4 g7 9.c3 0-0 10.f3
10.d2 e6 11.0-0-0
11.d6
10.e2
5.exd6 exd6

6.c3 e7 7.d3 0-0 8.ge2
7.h3
7. \textit{Be}2 0-0 8. \textit{f}f3 \textit{g}4 9.b3
9.0-0 \textit{c}6 10.d5
10.b3
6.d3

3.d4 d6 4.\textit{f}3 dxe5

5.\textit{x}xe5 c6 6.c4
6.e2 \textit{f}5 7.0-0 \textit{d}7 8.f3 h6
8...e6
7.g4 \textit{e}6 8.c4
8.f4
6.c4 g6 7.0-0
7.e3
6.d3
5.dxe5

\textbf{Queen’s Gambit Accepted}
1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4
3.e4 e5 4.dxe5
4.d5
4...xc4
4...f3 exd4 5...xd4
5...xc4 6...c6 6.b3
6...e6
7...d2
7...e6
7...b5 8...c5 8...bd2
8...g5
8...c2
8.b4
3.e3...e6
4. \( \text{d}f3 \) c6 5. a4
5. e2
5. e5
5. \( \text{e}4 \) bd2
5. \( \text{c}3 \) c2
3. \( \text{e}3 \) c6
4. a4
4. e4 b5 5. a4 b4 6. \( \text{e}4 \) ce2
6. $\text{Na2}$
6. $\text{Nb1} \text{a6}$ 7. $\text{e3}$
7. $\text{f3}$
7. $\text{wc2}$

3. $\text{f3} \text{c6}$

Réti Opening
1. $\text{f3} \text{d5}$
2.c4 d4 3.e3 \(\text{c6}\) 4.b4
4.exd4
3.b4
2.b3 g4 3.b2
3.e3

**English Opening**
1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 c6

3.d3 e5 4.e3
4.d3
Section 2 – White Repertoire

Sicilian Defence
1.e4 c5 2.b3

2...g6
2...b6
2...d6 3.b2 f6
3...c6 4.c3
4.b5
2...f6 3.e5 d5 4.b2 c6 5.f3 5.e6
5...g6
5...d6
2...e6 3.f3
3...\( \text{c6} \) 4.\( \text{b}5 \)

4.\( \text{b}2 \) 5.\( \text{f}6 \) 5.e5 6.\( \text{d}5 \) 6.\( \text{a}3 \)

6.\( \text{b}5 \)

6.c4 6.\( \text{c}7 \)
6...\( \text{d}e7 \) 7.g3
7.\( \text{e}3 \)
6...\( \text{f}4 \)
5.\( \text{b}5 \) dxe4
5...\( \text{e}7 \)
5...\( \text{f}6 \)

3...d5 4.exd5 exd5 5.\( \text{b}5 \)+ 6.\( \text{d}7 \) 6.\( \text{xd}7 \)+ 6.\( \text{xd}7 \)
6...\( \text{xd}7 \)
3...b6
3...a6 4.\( \text{b}2 \) 6.\( \text{c}6 \) 5.c4 6.\( \text{c}7 \)
5...\( \text{f}6 \)
4.c4
4.c4

2...\( \text{c6} \) 3.\( \text{b}2 \)
3...d5
3...e5 4.d4 d6

4...Nf6 5.f3 Nxe4 6.dxe4 d5 7.e5
7...Nf5 8.fxe5 dxe4
8...Nf3

Caro-Kann Defence
1.e4 c6 2.d3 d5 3.Nc3
4...\( \text{N} \)e4 5.\( \text{N} \)e2 e6
5...\( \text{N} \)b6 6.d4
6...c5
6...e6 7.\( \text{N} \)f3 g6 8.f3 \( \text{N} \)g5 9.exf6 gxf6 10.f4 \( \text{N} \)e4
10...\( \text{N} \)f7
7.\( \text{N} \)g3
3...\( \text{N} \)g4 4.h3 \( \text{N} \)h5 5.exd5 cxd5 6.\( \text{Q} \)b5+ \( \text{N} \)c6 7.g4 \( \text{N} \)g6 8.\( \text{Q} \)e5 \( \text{Q} \)d6
8...\( \text{Q} \)e8
3...\( \text{N} \)g4 4.h3 \( \text{Q} \)xf3 5.\( \text{Q} \)xf3

5...\( \text{Q} \)f6 6.d4 dxe4 7.\( \text{B} \)e3
7.\( \text{Q} \)xe4
5...e6 6.d4 \( \text{Q} \)f6 7.\( \text{Q} \)d3 \( \text{Q} \)b6
7...dxe4 8.\( \text{Q} \)xe4 \( \text{Q} \)xe4
8...\( \text{Q} \)xd4 9.\( \text{Q} \)e3
9.c3
6...dxe4 7.\( \text{Q} \)xe4 \( \text{Q} \)f6 8.\( \text{Q} \)d3 \( \text{Q} \)bd7
8...\( \text{Q} \)a6

Vienna Game
1.e4 e5 2.\( \text{Q} \)c3
2...\textit{c}5 3.f4 exf4
3...\textit{xg}1
3...d6 4.c4 \textit{f}6 5.d3 \textit{c}6 6.f3 a6
6...0-0
6...g4
6...g4 7.a4 b6
7...h5
2...\textit{e}6 3.c4
3...c5
3...f6 4.d3
  4...b4 5.e2 d5
    5...a5
  4...a5 5.ge2 c5
    5...xc4 6.dxc4 c5
    6...d6
  5...c6
2...f6 3.c4
3.f4 d6

3...d5 4.fx{5  x{e4 5.f3

5...c6
5...f5
5...xc3

French Defence
1.e4 e6 2.f3 d5 3.c3
3...d4
3...dxe4 4.\(\Box\)xe4 \(\Box\)f6 5.\(\Box\)xf6+ gxf6
  5...\(\mathbb{Q}\)xf6
  4...\(\mathbb{Q}\)d7 5.d4 \(\mathbb{Q}\)gf6 6.\(\mathbb{Q}\)d3 c5
  6...e7
  6...b6
  6...\(\Box\)xe4
3...\(\mathbb{Q}\)f6 4.e5 \(\mathbb{Q}\)e4 5.\(\mathbb{Q}\)e2 \(\mathbb{Q}\)c5 6.d4 \(\mathbb{Q}\)b6
  6...e7
  4...\(\mathbb{Q}\)fd7 5.d4 c5 6.dxc5 \(\mathbb{Q}\)c6 7.\(\mathbb{Q}\)f4 \(\mathbb{Q}\)xc5 8.h4
    8.\(\mathbb{Q}\)d2
    7...\(\mathbb{Q}\)xe5 8.\(\mathbb{Q}\)d3 f6 9.exf6 \(\mathbb{Q}\)xf6
    9...\(\mathbb{Q}\)xf6