My One Hundred Best Games

Alexey Dreev
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From First Steps to Success

I have chosen and commented on 100 games for this book and I have played them in a period of more than 20 years. These games are so different from each other that there will be some to everybody's liking – there are sacrifices, there are quiet moves, there are sharp tactical games as well as tough positional fights. You can also find instructive examples of how to play in the various stages of the game. In general, I have devoted a great attention to the openings and my comments about them are from the point of view of the contemporary theory.

A chess professional's life is not only the games played over the board. You go to different countries, you visit various continents; you see picturesque places and ancient towns and you come into contact with chess-fans all over the world. In my notes to some of the games, I have shared with my readers (as much as the size of the book allows) my impressions of these journeys and encounters.

While working on the story of my first steps in chess, it was as if I re-lived again everything I came through during all these times. Naturally, my memory is not perfect. I have had to omit many things also because this book is not an autobiography, it is not memoirs, and it is supposed to be a collection of games. Still I tried to tell in earnest about my development as a player, about my problems and hardships (some of them due to the surroundings and some of them just personal). I have shared with my readers my joy about my victories in my first tournaments and I have told about people who have helped me and to whom I owe my deepest gratitude.

I would like to begin my story with my early childhood. I was born 30.01.1969 in the city of Stavropol, but my family (my mother – Nina Michailovna, my father Sergey Sergeevich and my elder sister Tatyana) lived in Zheleznovodsk – a resort town, which seemed to me to be huge then (at present there are about 60,000 inhabitants there). My father (who is an engineering graduate) used to work in the town of Mineral Waters as the director of PTU (professional technical school in which people acquired high school special education). Later, he was given lodgment in the town of Zheleznovodsk and he had to quit his job as the director of the school, because it was too far from Mineral Waters town.

My father (who was a strong first-grade player and he would have been at least a candidate-master if he had played competitive chess) loved chess very much.
teaching her chess. I was only five and a half then and my father had no intentions to start teaching me yet. My sister proved to be a very good chess student, though.

My father recalls how one day when he was studying chess with my sister, I was standing around (I had just become six years old). At some moment I suggested a move, which proved to be not so bad after all. My father was pleasantly surprised, because in fact I had not been taught the rules by anybody. My sister had some doubtless successes by then, but she was not really interested in chess. Therefore my father reconsidered the situation and he decided to try with me. We began working together and he was convinced immediately that I was improving rapidly, so we started playing chess games regularly. There were just a few chess coaches in Zheleznovodsk then. Meanwhile, there were plenty of excellent books about chess (published in a huge print runs) in those Soviet times. Therefore my father was teaching me not only moves, but also the chess notation so that I could read and study books on my own. I remember vividly how he was teaching me the chess notation. We had a chess board, but without files and ranks marked by letters and numbers – just light and dark squares. My father had prepared 64 pieces of paper with the indexes of the squares (a1, b1, c1 etc.) and he placed them on each square. Strangely enough I grasped the notation immediately. In fact later, when I started going to school in my first grade and I had to learn a poem or a story, I was not studying them word by word or line by line, but I was remembering the words and the lines in their entirety, repeating the poem and the story altogether. My parents used to be amazed and all that seems to be hardly believable even to me now, since my chess memory is too far from being perfect. Still, I am telling you this not to boast about my memory, but just to explain to you how that system with the 64 pieces of paper did the job – I remembered visually where every square was situated. Somehow gradually, I understood the notation and if we present that schematically then I was reasoning like this: the bishop goes from f1 to c4 and that was
not because these squares were on the same diagonal. I learned the notation and I was already able to play games over from the books. I was very impressed then with the games of Alexander Alekhine and I recommend even now to the aspiring young players to study the chess inheritance of that outstanding Russian player.

Later, my father decided to introduce me to some chess specialists who lived in Zheleznovodsk. We went at first to the home of Vasily Tikhonovich Vlasov who was an eminent chess functionary and who was the director then of the Chess Club of Sochi. That was not just a chess club – it was the Club which organized the famous Sochi International Tournaments (There were just a few International Tournaments in the USSR at those times). Vasily Tikhonovich played a great role in the organization of these events and he was well-known in the chess world. He happened to be in Zheleznovodsk then and according to the whim of fate he became the director of the Chess Club there, naturally it was much more humble than that in Sochi. So, we visited him at his home. He lived up the slopes of a mountain while we lived in the valley. I remembered how we were climbing roaming around. There was a huge Sanatorium in front of us (with more than 1000 beds) and my father pointed his hand in the direction of the Sanatorium and he said “Vasily Tikhonovich lives there...”. I was thinking then - the director of the club is supposed to inhabit a large house and that was certainly a big house. I was walking up there with delight and awe. It turned out however that Vasily Tikhonovich lived much more modestly. So we met him and he tested me and gave me problems for homework. The he came to the conclusion that I was worth teaching. Accordingly, my father got me acquainted with all chess specialists residing at those times in Zheleznovodsk. After that he worked with me intensely.

Later, my father took me to the Chess Club. I remember how we went there, because I was reluctant to go and I resisted, but he took me there anyway.

They were playing chess in that Club – practice, tournaments (at first without clocks, later with clocks). I was recording my games even when I was still six years old and I could not write regular sentences yet. I became a first grade player almost immediately and I was improving rapidly. I was noticed then and I made my debut in the Championship of the Stavropol region for adults, then I became the junior
champion of the region three times in a row and later I shared 1-3 places in the adult Championship of the region.

Whenever I had nobody to play against, I went out to the park of Zheleznovodsk. I used to sit on a bench in the park, I arranged the pieces on the board and I was waiting for some passer-by from among the tourists. In case somebody came around – my father asked him to play with me. Some people agreed, and I was accumulating practical experience. Later, they built a pavilion in the park and we could play with a clock there. My father considered that experience useful and he kept finding sparring-partners for me – strong players among the people convalescing in the Sanatorium.

There soon happened something important for my chess-development. My father got acquainted with a high-class chess player – master Vladimir Sergeevich Saigin – Byelorussian champion numerous times, since he lived there for years. He was also famous because of the fact that as a master he tested the then young Mikhail Tal and played a match with him. Those were the times when you could not become a master without beating another master in a match. Tal won that match after a tough fight, so Saigin could have asserted that he gave the green light to world-class chess to M. Tal himself. He did something like that for me too and I am tremendously grateful to him about that as well. I know that Vladimir Sergeevich and Mikhail Tal preserved an excellent attitude towards each other throughout the years. According to the whims of fate, Vladimir Sergeevich ended up at the Caucasian Mineral Waters, in the town of Essentuki. My father asked him to work with me. They agreed on some financial conditions too. His work was paid indeed, but it soon became clear that he was teaching me not just for the money. In fact he told my father that money was money, but he would have never taken the job unless he had seen that it was worth it. It is a bit embarrassing for me to praise myself, but he had obviously detected something like talent in me and that had impressed him a lot. That seemed to motivate his enthusiasm while working with me; otherwise there was no other rational explanation.

I remember how I asked Vladimir Sergeevich a question when he came to us for the first time. I was really interested in the problem why in the position after 1.e4 e5 2.♗f3  ♗c6 3.d4 exd4 4.♗xd4, Black was not playing 4...♖xd4 5.♕xd4, followed by 5...c5 - ? It seemed to me that Black was winning a tempo like that. Now of course, I am a bit ashamed of a question like that, but back then I was really interested in that, since I was taught that it was essential to win tempi in the opening. Vladimir Sergeevich explained to me that not every win of a tempo was good and meanwhile in that position Black was not even winning a tempo, because he did not develop a piece, but he was just advancing a pawn. He gave me a lesson about weak squares and he told me that you should avoid compromising squares unnecessarily. I was really impressed and I understood that you were not supposed to push pawns just like that.

I still remember well my sessions with Vladimir Sergeevich – they were tiring not only for me – an eight year old boy, but also for him being an elderly man. They were lasting sometimes for eight hours a day – at first in the morning, then we
were having lunch and then we were working again in the afternoon. There was a ri
od (of about half a year) in which we were working quite often, like 5-6 times
week. He usually came to our place. Still, I remember once we went to his place
dly in the morning and it was some holiday, or somebody's birthday. So, instead
celebrating, Vladimir Sergeevich spent the whole day working with me, while ev-
body around was having fun, drinking and eating. We were studying chess then
ring the entire day and we went back home only late at night.

I solved a colossal number of most interesting positions. V. Saigin helped me a
. I felt that as a result of our work the quality of my chess improved considerably
I became a candidate master. We had competitions with a norm for a can-
date master and I took part in a tournament like that when I was only 8 years old. I
ied there with quite serious adult opponents (first grade players and candidate
sters) and I fulfilled my first norm for a candidate master. I acquired the title
er in the Championship of the region for men. I was playing often, numerous
mes and I was also playing for the team of the Stavropol region in some zonal
naments – there was an entire system of tournaments then and if one wanted
prove – there was never a shortage of tournaments.
Our sessions with V. Saigin stopped at some moment. I do not remember why,
t evidently something had changed in his life or mine back then.

The city of Zheleznovodsk was too far away from the actual chess centres and it
came difficult to know how I was going to develop further. My father was won-
dering how to introduce me to the real “chess world”. Fortunately for us, the All-Union Chess
School of Smyslov had some sessions in Kis-
lovodsk. That city was close to Zheleznovodsk
and I went there with my father to join. The
session was almost coming to an end, but still I
was accepted and I was given some problems.
I was asked to solve them and to send the solu-
tions by post. I solved the problems, of course
some of them with mistakes, but in general it
seemed that I had made a good impression on
people and I became a member of the Smyslov
School and I began to participate in every ses-

I would like to say a few words about that
school. It was organized with the all-union stu-
dents sporting club “Burevestnik”. The Direc-
tor of the club was the eminent chess-function-
ary Boris Naumovich Postovsky, who was the
leader of the Russian National Team for a while
and later also of Team USA. His experience has been appreciated everywhere. Vasily Vasilievich Smyslov was of course present at the sessions, but the main coaching chess work was performed by other coaches and there were simply brilliant specialists selected to work there. At first there was Yuri Sergeevich Razuvaev (I remember how he came and he had some lectures with us at one of the sessions, a bit later in the city of Podolsk, immediately after the end of one of Karpov’s matches and he was an aide to Karpov then). Yuri Balashov was also often present at some of our sessions. Berezin had some lectures with us. I also remember the names of S. Kishnev, B. Zlotnik, G. Nessis, V. Faibisovich - all of them strong masters. We had many a teacher to learn something from. It was far from easy to join that school and later many of the “graduates” of that school became famous grandmasters: A. Khalifman, E. Bareev, V. Salov, V. Akopian, K. Aseev, I. Glek, M. Krasenkow, E. Pigusov, Y. Piskov, G. Serper...We were solving problems and we were also playing against each other. All that no doubt proved to be quite purposeful.

Then, something very important happened in my life. When I was 10 years old, Mark Izrailevich Dworetzky (he was also a very good player then, surprisingly for all but obviously not for him, decided to start working as a coach, and he became a brilliant coach, famous all over the world) came to Kislovodsk as a second to Nana Alexandria in her candidates match against Levitina. I was introduced to him, we had a look at some positions together, he asked me some chess questions and he gave me some problems to solve. Later he gave me some homework, too, and he went back to Moscow. I solved my problems and I did my homework and I sent the solutions to him by post.

With Mark Dworetzky, Zheleznovodsk 1983
That is how Mark Izrailevich Dvoretzky came into my life. My sessions with Vladimir Sergeevich Saigin continued to be tremendously important for me as before, but my work together with M. Dvoretzky became essential for me as well. I have to acknowledge that these two people taught me to play top-class chess.

My father and I went to Moscow to work with M. Dvoretzky and we lived there with relatives or in hotels. We worked for a fortnight – this was something like a session. Mark Dvoretzky was working then simultaneously with me and Sasha Budnikov from Vladivostok. He had noticed his talent somewhere too. Sasha was a bit older than me and he was a member of the Smyslov School as well. I even had the feeling that Dvoretzky was somehow choosing between me and him, because it was obviously too strenuous for him to work simultaneously with both of us then.

We lived 1600 kilometers away from Dvoretzky and we met only from time to time, besides our sessions were too expensive for us. After he decided that our work together was quite fruitful, we began to meet more often and we had some training camps together too. We used different possibilities for me to join in the sessions. I remember how I went to the First League Championship of the USSR and while Dvoretzky was helping Sergey Dolmatov there he worked with me during his free time. I was getting tuned to the world of top-level chess. In fact, Dvoretzky had his own methods and he worked according to them. He told me immediately: "I began working with you in order to make a World Champion out of you!" I thought that to be absolutely unbelievable then, but his confidence proved to be contagious. It was already evident that he was not fantasizing – by that time Dvoretzky's pupils Valery Chekhov, Arthur Jussupov and Sergey Dolmatov had already become World Champions. Gradually, we began to meet and work with Mark Izrailevich more and more often.

I fulfilled the master norm at a tournament in the city of Grozny. The problem was not so much to make the norm but that there were so few tournaments with a master norm then that the real problem was to participate in a tournament like that! My father went together with V. T. Vlasov to Moscow and he asked for an audience with Vera Nikolaevna Tikhomirova, who was then the official head-coach of the Russian Federation. Vera Tikhomirova was quite famous for her rather peculiar character, she was always principled in her work and she was reluctant to favour anybody about anything, including herself. (In fact, I do not know anybody in the chess-world who would talk about her except with great respect and even reverence!). My father and Vlasov explained to her the situation – that there was a talented young player who had nowhere to show his skills. There were some arguments
against, but Vera Tikhomirova decided to take a risk and she presented me with “a wild card” and I was included in the tournament of the Russian Young Masters. I played quite successfully in that strong tournament and I fulfilled the master norm when I was only 13 years old. I got the title not immediately, but a bit later when I was 14. The process of awarding the title took some time but still the fact of somebody making the norm at the age of 13 was somewhat shocking. Nowadays no one will be even surprised, because there are 13 years old grandmasters, but those times were quite different. There were not so many possibilities to show your strength, there were not so many tournaments (particularly international), it was too problematic to even go abroad and of course there were no computers available for preparation. If we have to make a comparison, for example with Garry Kasparov – he made the master norm when he was almost 15 years old.

I had my chances to go to the World Championship a bit later – the qualification tournament for the World Championship for cadets (juniors under 16) was held in Sochi and I was the youngest participant (I was not even 14 yet). The tournament was quite strong and included V. Ivanchuk, B. Gelfand, E. Bareev, Art. Minasian, A. Shabalov, S. Savchenko. I tied for 1-2 places with Zhenya Bareev and I won several very good games, with good quality at a high level.

I do not remember what exactly the additional criteria were but it was decided that we had to play a match. I can understand the desire of the governing body of the Chess Federation to send to the Championship a more experienced player, the elder...and that was the last chance for Zhenya to become Under-16 World Champion. In the end, no matter what, our match with Bareev was played at “his territory” – in Moscow. I do not want to say that there were some intrigues and evil intentions, but the organization of the match was just terrible. I was not even given a hotel room and I lived with Mark Izrailevich at his home in Strogino. I slept in one of the rooms and Mark Izrailevich and his family slept in the other room. He had by then a little baby, who was pretty calm (I can understand that now, being the father of two daughters myself), but it could have woken up and cried in the middle of the night. I was supposed to eat at the Hotel Sport, which was situated on the other side of the enormous city of Moscow and naturally there was no reason to waste half a day in order to have lunch or dinner there. In the end, we managed to get some money for the coupons that we received for food. We played in the Central Chess Club. Zhenya studied and he lived in the Sports School and his road to the Central Chess Club was much shorter than mine from Strogino. It took me more than an hour to get to the Club, while Zhenya was there in about half an hour. I was not paying attention then to such trifles (I learned about that only later), but naturally, all that did not help me obtain a good result. After all this, I lost that match with a result of “–2” and Zhenya Bareev went to the World Championship. He played quite well there and he won it.

I was already too strong by the following year and I was chosen to represent my country at the World Championship even without preliminary qualifying. That was
first travel abroad and it was to the faraway country Colombia – to a town with the exotic name of Bucaramanga.

It was a competition at that Championship between me and the quite talented American player Patrick Wolff. (Patrick became a grandmaster soon after and we met again at the Interzonal Tournament in Biel, where I beat him. Still, later we met in New York and he beat me, but I see his name only rarely now. He has probably quit chess altogether...) During those times it was a great rivalry between the two countries, the USSR and the USA in everything, and particularly in sports. Therefore our chess competition had a special meaning.

I beat Patrick in our game in the first half of the tournament and later I built a comfortable cushion of a lead so he could not catch up with me. Still, when it looked as if there were no more rivals anymore and nobody could catch me, when there was nothing to be afraid of – there suddenly appeared a player from Indonesia (L.Wahl), who started the tournament from the fourth round and then he began eating everybody (He was playing like a machine!). There were not so many players anyway, so he came closer to the top and he started playing the participants that had just played against. So I was thinking “If he goes on like that, how will all that end?” He won, I thought, six games in a row, when he came to play against me. If I’d lost that game, the difference would have become very small and it could have ended either way. Instead, our game ended in a draw after a balanced fight, and he failed to catch up with me. It would be interesting what might have happened if I had started the tournament right from the very beginning. I do not know what is
happening with that player these days either, but back then he was just absolutely fantastic. The journey was also quite interesting and beautiful. It was my first travel abroad and it was in such a picturesque country. I was filled with impressions and it was all in such a wonderful atmosphere. It was very important for me to take first place, because any other place back in the USSR was considered to be a disaster. At the end, I made 10 out of 11 and I was 2 1/2 points ahead of the runner-up. That was how I became World Champion. Mark Izrailevich made good his promise.

I had serious problems with my studies in high school, because I was going to tournaments every month. The governing body of the school was furious, since at those times it was absolutely unbelievable that somebody might just not go to school. Higher education was something sacred during Soviet times. Parents could be deprived of custody if their kids did not attend school. There were no other forms of teaching except regular school attendance and I had to convince some of the teachers that I would study on my own and later I would pass individual examinations. For example, when I went to the tournament in the city of Grozny, and even after I came back having fulfilled the master norm, my father was reproached that he was impeding my education. There were similar accusations from the school, from the city council and the city Party committee, and even, what was really amazing, from the sports committee. The moment I went to the World Championship my father was totally cornered. They were quite adept at maltreating people during those times – he was called and reproached in the city Party committee as well as in other governing bodies. He had numerous difficult conversations and I did not
know about all that then, because my father had kept me protected from all this. Still, when I came back as World Champion, the situation changed overnight and the same people who almost wanted to take me away from my parents now had an entirely different attitude. I was accepted in the regional committee of the Party and I was officially congratulated. My name was noted in the Official Book of the Pioneers. (every Soviet schoolboy was a pioneer then...)

During the next year 1984, when I became 15, I had the personal right to participate in the next World Championship as the acting World Champion, and I did not need to pass through qualifying. The tournament was organized in France, in the town of Champigny, near Paris. The competition was considerably stronger than the previous year, and there were more participants, too – 40 players. The distance was a bit shorter – it was an 11 round Swiss system tournament. At the start, the American player S. Rachels (once again the representative of the USA!) showed a 100% result, but then he lost to me and later he lost to Vasily Ivanchuk as well. (Grandmaster Alexey Stepanovich Suetin was our coach at that tournament.) The fight for the first place between me, Vasily as well as V. Anand and J. Piket was quite tough and only the last two rounds clarified the situation. I was the only one among the leaders to win my game in the last round. Thus I made 8½ points and took the first place. (V. Anand, V. Ivanchuk and J. Piket all remained half a point behind me.) That was how I became Under-16 World Champion for a second time in a row.

After my second World title among cadets, in August of the same year I took part in the Under-20 World Championship in Finland. It was the first time in the history of these championships that a 15 year-old chess player was challenging much more experienced and famous players who were almost all 3-4 years his elder. Still, I managed to show a good result (10 points out of 13) and I was a whole point in front of the World Champion for the previous year Kiril Georgiev (meanwhile my rating was 200 points (!) inferior to his) and K. Torsteins. Unfortunately, I only won the silver medal, because the 19 year old Curt Hansen had half a point more than me. V. Anand was also a participant in that tournament. We played in the penultimate round in which I failed to materialize my positional advantage and the game ended in a draw.

In the year 1985, at the age of 16, I made my debut in the Championship of the USSR for Young Masters (there were not such young participants in similar tournaments up to then), which was by that time a real test for the young and promising players in the USSR. Many of the participants there became grandmasters later. Among the players in the year 1985 there were A. Khalifman, J. Ehlvest, G. Kaidanov, I. Glek, I. Novikov, K. Aseev, V. Neverov, Z. Sturua...I began the competition with two victories and during the first half of the tournament I was among the leaders and I shared 5-7th places with a final result of “+1” with Alexey Vyzhmanavin and Andrey Kharitonov, just a point behind the winner – Eduardas Rozentalis.
Here, I would like to deal with another subject for a while. Naturally, I cannot talk about earlier times, but during my years the state was helping chess considerably. "The Soviet Chess School" was an entire system for the support and development of chess. That did not apply necessarily to everybody, but in my case the support was quite significant. I was a member of the sports club "Burevestnik" and it was assisting eminent sportsmen and helping them in their travels, in competitions, in their work with coaches. (I was often traveling with my father, he was paid for that and I received coupons for food.) Our city was famous for its Sanatorium and the people, who were resting there, needed entertainment. There was a whole system for that and one of the things was a simultaneous display by a strong chess player. I began to give simulcs when I was 8 years old. If I had the free time, I could have given up to 10 simulcs per day. We were paid very well indeed. This was honest money for real work and the state had no qualms about that. In fact, I could make as much money in a month as the first secretary of the city committee of the Party. We received our money at one and a same place and he was really amazed – how was that possible? He received 250 rubles, while a 9-10 year old boy received 300 rubles? I did not know all the details, but there were rumours, and even legends going around. I did go sometimes with my father to the accounting office, and I signed the invoices. (I did not even have a passport then) That had always been interesting for me, because the accountants and the tellers were looking at me so strangely. Later, they started recognizing me, of course so, in the USSR – in a country, which was considered to be a socialist one, and where there was no capitalism, it was official that a 10 year old could receive money for individual work (a bit creative, though). So, on one hand, there was a total absence of freedom in the country, but on the other hand, the state was providing colossal support for chess and chess players and the possibility for them to work without any obstacles. There were simultaneous displays in Sanatoriums and in villages as well. The title was also very important: a grandmaster could receive up to 100 rubles per simul.

*Simultaneous display, Budenousk 1979*
(the average salary of an engineer was about 150 rubles per month) Naturally, no one could have simuls every day and there was a special office in Moscow where the available simuls were to be distributed about equally among the grandmasters. We had candidate masters who also had simuls. There were numerous sanatoriums and the simuls were distributed by the Chess Club. There was no animosity between the players about that. I did not have so many simuls then, because I had many tournaments, and I also had to attend my lessons at school. After I became Master of Sports of the USSR, World Champion and FIDE master (for my win at the World Championship) I was invited to work for the Sports School for children and juniors. I was working there with children; I was even given some elder, so that my work could have been more interesting and more effective, too. I think I worked there for a period of about half a year, and I received some salary from there as well.

In general, I lived quite well during those times. My sessions with Dvoretsky continued. Mark Izrailevich had an excellent system of preparation, but it had (and it still has) a certain drawback, which he admitted, too. He did not work with openings. Naturally, he could show you some not so fashionable schemes, and of course, he dealt with opening principles; nevertheless he either could not make a concrete opening repertoire for you, even in the sense of understanding in the so-called pre-computer era, moreover in the contemporary sense of the word, or he simply did not want to.

Dvoretsky was not an expert in the opening stage indeed, but he was always trying to attract specialists in that field to our training camps. There was a coach among them – Alexander Vasilievich Filipenko – whom I met at the all-union junior games in Tashkent. I was playing for the team of the Russian Federation there, and he was one of the coaches of the team. Alexander Panchenko was the chief-coach. That tournament was an important competition. I remember, they gave us special costumes (whenever they did that, that meant that the event was something special), and even sneakers. We did not have so many contacts with Filipenko, but there arose a chess problem at some moment – I needed to play for a win with Black in the exchange variation

With daughter Diana and A. Filipenko
of the Slav Defence and I was advised to ask him for help. He recommended to me something, I did not agree with him and we started analyzing and he proved to me quite convincingly that I had been wrong. (It is an amazing thing, but I have won so many points in that variation and mostly thanks to the concepts and ideas of A. V. Filipenko.) I very much liked the way he was showing and explaining things and I was really impressed. Later, when Dvoretsky asked me with whom I would like to study openings and maybe even go along to tournaments with (he had so many pupils and other work too that he could not always travel with me to tournaments), I named A. V. Filipenko. That was how our collaboration started and it has continued up to now. He came with me for the first time to a tournament at the Young Masters Championship in Tallinn back in the year 1986.

After I turned 17 my good life was suddenly troubled and it was soon over. That was the end of my junior chess years and there began a new period of my life. I was still not an adult, but I was not a kid or a junior either. My main coach at that moment – Dvoretsky told me that we had achieved a lot together, but it would be difficult for us to develop any further, because we saw each other so rarely that it would be better to live closer together. He was a member of the military club (AAD – Anti-Aircraft-Defence for the region of Moscow) and he worked there and he tried to make me a member there too. That was how I ended up in Moscow. Later, it turned out that some people had made some promises to M. I. Dvoretsky, but they failed to do what was necessary. So it happened that I was in Moscow, but I was like an illegal person there. There was a system acting in the USSR then and it was called "propiska" and according to it every person had to be registered and to live at a certain address. (That system has remained almost similar even today, but it is now called "registration"). I took my leave from Zheleznovodsk with the idea to be registered in Moscow. I failed however to register in Moscow (that was something quite difficult in those times and not everybody could manage a registration in Moscow by himself). I could see Dvoretsky only on Saturdays and Sundays. I was already having problems not so much chess wise, but I had purely everyday problems in life. Dvoretsky had tried to arrange a place for me to live in Moscow, but that failed as well. I had no relatives there except an aunt, but she lived in a shared lodging and I joined to stay with her for a while. My parents were far away; meanwhile they got divorced by that time and my father was absolutely incapable of devoting to me so much time and care as before. I was faced with having to solve problems that I had never encountered before. Dvoretsky was also unable to solve all my problems as well and we had to interrupt our collaboration. We kept our good relations and we have preserved them until now too.

It was about during those times that I was being stopped from going abroad. Every time I received an explanation like: "We have failed to prepare your documents", but in fact that usually meant that I was becoming something like a player for "domestic consumption". As a rule, somebody else was going to a tournament instead of me. The really warning bell for me rang when I was not even allowed to
participate in a tournament in one of the socialist countries (naturally, somebody else went there too...). It looked like some loss to me then, but later I went with Alexander Filipenko (and V. Ivanchuk too) to a training camp in Estonia to prepare for the World Championship, which was going to be held in Australia. Then it was once again the same story with "We have failed to prepare your documents..." This time however, the situation was completely different, since my place was from the reserve of FIDE and no one could have replaced me. In fact I learned later that our Federation did not even understand that at the moment and they were trying to prepare the documents of another player. So, after I was not allowed to go to Australia, it became clear that the almighty authority KGB had something against me as they were responsible for all travels abroad. I had numerous theories and speculation why it was like that. It was possible that it was somebody’s libel to blame (every anonymous slander was paid attention to in those times and that was totally destructive for society), or some anonymous letter by some malevolent person. In fact, I did not have any serious political dissension with the government when I was 15-16 years old and I was simply playing chess. It might have been connected with something else — for example I could have praised Fischer or Korchnoi in a conversation and that could have become like a "death sentence" for me. There was a period when some strange people, working for the state, were talking to us during our training camps and they kept asking questions. I used to answer them with what I thought at the moment, as I was young then. After so many years have passed, I received some information by chance and I remember a situation in which I was really tested for reliability — they asked me a direct question about: what my attitude towards Victor Korchnoi was (in fact his family name was not mentioned in the USSR, not even in the news about his match against A. Karpov). I answered definitely that my attitude towards his chess legacy is quite positive (naturally, I could not even imagine that I would play in tournaments with him many years later!) It was possible that answer might have contributed to the fact that I was not allowed to go abroad at that time. That should not have been the main reason, though. I still have no idea what the real reason was, even up to this day.

So, I was not permitted to play tournaments abroad and those were difficult times for me, financially too. There were many reasons that I could not go back to Zheleznovodsk either. I was in a semi-legal situation and I was not registered anywhere. I had a friend — Alik Ehevich, he was a student then (he lives in Israel now) and he did not understand many things, but he helped me a lot anyway. We spent plenty of time together and I visited him at his home in Odessa. I had to make some money for bread and butter by playing blitz for pretty serious stakes sometimes. I remember Alexey Vyzhmanavin too, we were often playing blitz at the same time, we were giving huge odds, at first he did, then I etc. — with great handicaps. We lost sometimes but still we were winning most of the time. We had to do that; you have to make your living somehow.

Naturally, I continued to play in tournaments and I was often in the process of qualifying for something, though I could not go abroad anyway. It is quite sufficient
to remember the qualification tournament in Borzomi where I took first place, so I had qualified once again for the Under-20 World Championship. Just like before, I did not go anywhere (Volodya Akopian was sent there instead of me and he took second place).

At my age, in that country, nobody could have given me a hint about what was going on or helped me at that moment. I was left entirely on my own.

When I became 18 years old I understood that I had better join the Army. I was advised to try to enter a special sports regiment, where sports people were not only soldiers, but they took part in competitions too. It was essential for the Army sport bosses to collect capable sportsmen – in the USSR every establishment had its own sporting club and teams and there were special competitions between the different establishments and there were special points awarded for all that. Still, the entire system of sports in the Army (just like the Army system itself) was so huge and clumsy that I failed to enter a sports regiment outright. At first I went to the Taman Artillery Regiment and I passed through the “young soldiers’ preparation course” in a period of one and a half months and then I gave my solemn Army oath. Later, I was transferred to a sports regiment indeed and right on the next day, in an Army uniform, I went to the city of Pavlodar to participate in the semi-final of the USSR Championship. Later I lived in the sports regiment and that life was semi-martial, semi-civilian. I was in Lefortovo then.

It was as if I was periodically discharged from the Army – you go out at 9 o’clock in the morning (and you become a civilian) and then you have to be back by 9 o’clock in the evening and you are again a soldier. Naturally, it was not like that every day. There were periods that I had to stay for a week or two with the Army and I had some fatigue duties too – the usual Army life. I was in fact lucky to be together with Maxim Sorokin, since he was responsible for a while for the library in the sports regiment and he was holding all the necessary keys. That was quite comfortable, because at 6 o’clock in the morning the usual Army activity started (sometimes it started at 5 o’clock as well) and there were all kinds of marching formations, some running around and sessions of studying something (I believe even today that all of them were utterly senseless; of course nobody cared about any real combat preparation). Instead we managed somehow to sneak into the library and we slept for an extra hour on the sofa. Denis Bilunov was also in our sports regiment (he is one of the founders of the Internet site - kasparovchess, he is quite close to G. Kasparov and he has been collaborating with him for a long time).

I played in numerous tournaments while I was in the Army and I had to be inside the barracks in between them. It was not easy at all to go out though. The system was so gigantic and difficult to fight against: the organization which was holding the tournament had to send a letter to the Army chiefs (the so-called invitation) and then the soldier had to be issued permission to go out. You could not even talk about any real preparation for a tournament during that time, because you did not know at all what would happen to you on the next day. There were times when
you could only sleep for 4-5 hours and you had to be up at 4 o’clock in the morning for some marching formation (for example, because the chiefs were not in a good mood, or because somebody did something wrong and we all had to pay for that). Sometimes we had to take care of the snow and clean it during a massive snowfall (that was not a very sensible thing to do either!), so there was no time or strength to prepare for chess. I worked on chess a bit together with Maks Sorokin though, whenever the circumstances allowed us to do that.

There were not so many tournaments around and we wanted to go away all the time, so we used to invent some non-existing tournaments to take part in, for example - “Championship of the Central Chess Club”. It is well-known that the Central Chess Club is situated in Moscow, but these “Championships” were held either in Kuibishev (now – Samara), or in Gorky (nowadays Nizhny Novgorod) – all of them big cities close to Moscow. In fact Alik Ehevich had managed somehow to acquire some blank forms with stamps on them from the Central Chess Club in Moscow. He used to send me to different cities and places with them. Naturally, that was all very dangerous, because I could have been caught and that would have meant serious punishment and even imprisonment for me. It all ended well though, and often when there were no real tournaments I had managed to stay away from the Army barracks thanks to those non-existing tournaments.

After about half a year I was sent away from the sports regiment – there were some mishaps and all the sportmen were sent to regular regiments. I was again among common soldiers and I was not accepted so cordially. That was not “the young soldiers’ preparation course”, where we were all of the same age; that was the real Army where there were some very special relations between the different annual intakes of conscripts. There were numerous conflicts with the “old guys” and some other rather unpleasant moments. Still, I managed to avoid somehow the horrors that had been described in the media and they even seem to continue now in the Russian Army. It all passed almost normally for me then, or maybe I was just lucky and I had been sent to a regular normal Army regiment. I did not harm my health there and I acquired some useful life experience. Still, I wished at that moment much more to play chess than to be in marching formations and to collect snow during a snowfall. The Soviet Army was not professional then and plenty of time was lost on all kinds of activities, which in principle had nothing to do with Army service.

Later, things improved considerably and I was transferred to the sporting regiment of the “Dzerzhinsky – Academy” and there the attitude towards me (and some other sportmen too) was more personal. I had some difficulties there too, but the second year of my service in the Army passed for me relatively comfortably. I had no problems going to tournaments; I had the possibility to participate in training camps too and to work on chess as well. My duties in the Army in the year 1989 were much easier and thus my service was soon over and done with.
Competing at Top Level

In the year 1989 I had my debut in the final of the USSR Championship. It was a round-robin event with 16 participants. I had a 50% result and I managed to beat Sergey Dolmatov in particular who happened to share 2-5th places.

I had lost some momentum in chess even not so much because of my Army service, but because I was not allowed to play abroad, since these travels were quite essential. It was practically impossible then, if you played only in the USSR, where there were so few international tournaments, to fulfill any norms for international titles.

Meanwhile, every journey abroad in those times (and not only for chess players) was important also for your well-being. You could not make a lot of money outright (suppose 300 or 500 dollars per travel, often thanks to savings from your food and pocket money), but you could live on that money comfortably in the USSR for half a year.

I somehow came out of the list of the players "for domestic consumption" only after the intervention of the member of the Academy – Leonid Ivanovich Abalkin, who was the Director of the Institute of Economy and a world renowned scientist. He was also a famous politician and social functionary, and besides all that, he was the president of the Russian Chess Federation for a long period of time. During that time, Karen Sergeevich Agadjanyan was the chief coach and he was a good, kind and considerate man, who had done so much for chess. I decided to address him about the subject. He understood the situation and intervened. He asked member of the Academy Abalkin to clarify what the situation was. Leonid Ivanovich had the opportunity to contact some really powerful people then and once at a reception in the Kremlin he approached the Chairman of the KGB Krjuchkov and he asked him "What was all that about and was all that so serious...?" Krjuchkov made a promise to have a look into it and it turned out that it was not so serious as "to stop the oxygen" for me. So finally, after the intervention of Leonid Ivanovich Abalkin, I went to play in the European Championship. I had earned that right once again in a qualification tournament. I was just 19 years old then (I was still in the Army) and I began traveling abroad again – possibly that was already an indication of the forthcoming liberty. Times were already changing and the Soviet Union was in a period of dissolution. I went to Arnhem, in Holland, and I became immediately the Champion of Europe. So, at the age of 20, because of all of my results, I was awarded the title of International Grandmaster.
Later, I played my candidates match against V. Anand, but I lost it despite the fact that I was the favourite. My results went down for a while after that. Gradually, I had my ups again and I managed to win several tournaments and I improved my position in the ranking table. My subsequent biography can be followed according to my participation in tournaments and in the notes to the games, which I have chosen to include in this book.

I believe that it would not be so original if I say that I would like to hope that I have not played my best game yet. Still, the 100 games which have been presented in this book, will probably give the readers an idea about what kind of a chess player I am.

Alexey Dreev
Moscow
April 2007
This game was played in the World Championship under 20 in Finland and I had written about it in the preface of the book. USSR was represented there by two participants – the highly talented Estonian player Lembit Oll (who unfortunately passed away too young...) and I. We had to face each other in the middle of the championship according to the whim of tournament pairing and that loss precluded Lembit from fighting for the top-places in the event.

1.\textit{\texttt{f3}} 2.g3 d5 3.\textit{\texttt{g2}} c6 4.0-0 \textit{\texttt{g4}} 5.d3 \textit{\texttt{bd7}} 6.h3

White plays much more often here 6.\textit{\texttt{bd2}}.

6...\textit{\texttt{xf3}}!?  
White cannot capture now with a knight and that move seems to be quite sensible. After 7.\textit{\texttt{xf3}} e5, followed by \textit{\texttt{c5}}, Black completes his development rather quickly and his position is active. The price that Black must pay for all that is the two-bishop advantage...

7.\textit{\texttt{xf3}}  
This move is possible and quite logical too. It has some drawbacks though, since Black will manage to push e5 sooner or later and he will obtain certain space for piece maneuvering. Meanwhile, White’s light squared bishop does not have too bright prospects, since it is restricted by Black’s pawns...

7...e6  
It is a bit early for Black to play 7...e5, because of: 8.f4 \textit{\texttt{d6}} 9.fxe5 \textit{\texttt{xe5}} 10.d4, followed by 11.\textit{\texttt{xe1}}.

8.f4 \textit{\texttt{d6}} 9.\textit{\texttt{d2}} 0-0 10.\textit{\texttt{f3}}  
White has problems to prevent e6-e5. Black can counter 10.d4 with 10...c5.

10...e5 11.fxe5 \textit{\texttt{xe5}} 12.\textit{\texttt{d4}} \textit{\texttt{e8}}  
That is a useful move and it prepares the retreat of the bishop to the f8-square, in case of \textit{\texttt{d4}}-f5.

13.a4 a5 14.\textit{\texttt{e3}} \textit{\texttt{g6}}  
Black is threatening 15...\textit{\texttt{g3}}.

15.\textit{\texttt{wd2}} h6

16.\textit{\texttt{ae1}}  
That was a very careless move. White had to consider the possibility c6-c5, followed by d5-d4. Therefore, the logical reaction for him seemed to be – 16.c3.

16...c5 17.\textit{\texttt{f5}} \textit{\texttt{f8}}  
The move 17...d4 looked to me
rather dangerous in view of: 18.\*xh6 gxh6 19.\*xh6+ \*f8 20.\*f5 \*g8 and here White had at least a draw, but he could also try to play for a win, capturing Black’s b7-pawn.

18.g4

White had better continue here with: 18.\*wd1 \*wd7 19.\*wf3 \*xa6, with a complicated position.

18...\*wd7

Suddenly, my opponent was faced with serious problems.

19.b3?

Lembit is oblivious to the danger and he simply defends his pawn. The situation would have remained quite unclear after: 19.f4!? \*xa4 20.g5 \*wd7 21.\*xh6+ (or 21.\*xg7 \*xg7 22.\*xf6 \*xf6 23.\*xc5 \*h4) 21...gxh6 22.\*xf6 \*wd5

19...d4 20.\*f4 \*xe1 21.\*xe1

21...c4!

That is the point! Now, White is already beyond salvation...

22.\*c1 cxd3 23.\*d2

Or 23.cxd3 \*c8.

23...\*c8 24.\*f1 dxc2 25.\*c4 d3

26.\*xa5 \*c5 27.\*d2 \*e5

Now, Black’s knight joins the action with a decisive effect and White is helpless, so he resigned. 0–1

A43

Dreev – Kaidanov
Moscow 1985

My encounter against Grigory Kaidanov was in a round-robin tournament of category 8, which was organized by the Moscow Region Chess Club. (There was also a main tournament of category 13 and it was won by O. Romanishin.). We lived and played in the Hotel “Kosmos” (The Moscow Chess Olympiad was played later there.). J. Dorfman won this tournament. I was not so successful in the event and I shared 7-11 places (among 14 participants), but still I played several interesting games.

1.d4 \*f6 2.\*f3 c5 3.d5 e6 4.\*c3

Black should manage to equalize in that line after a correct play. White’s usual move here is – 4.c4.

4...exd5 5.\*xd5 \*xd5 6.\*xd5 \*c6

7.\*g5

It deserves attention for White to try now the line: 7.e4!? d6 8.\*c4 \*e6 9.\*d3 \*e7 10.c3, with a slightly more pleasant position for him.

7...\*e7 8.0–0–0 \*b4
The game Shereshevsky – Gusev, USSR 1977, followed with: 8...0–0 9.a3 b5? 10.c3 b8 11.d3 c4 12.axh7+, but instead it was possible for Black to continue with 9...h6 and after 10.e3 White has an only minimal edge.

9.exe7 wxe7 10.b3 d6 11.e4 0–0

I had intended to counter 11...e6 with the check – 12.b5+.

12.a3 c6 13.d5 d8 14.wh5 g6

It seemed good for Black to try 14...e6, without being afraid of the exchange of the bishop after: 15.g5 h6 16.xe6 (or 16.h4 e5) 16...xe6 (or 16...fxe6 17.f4) 17.d5 w6. The endgame is only slightly better for White after: 14...xe4 15.xf7+ xf7 16.g5+ c7 17.xe4 e6 18.e2.

15.wh6 e5 16.xe5

Following 16.g5? f6, White achieves nothing much.

16...xe5

It would have been a mistake for Black to play 16...dxe5?, because of: 17.xd8+ w8d8 18.c4 and he would not be able to answer with 18...wd4?, due to 19.d1+–

17.d3

It was quite interesting for Black to try the active move 17...b5. Here after: 18.f4 c7 (18...f6 19.e5!) 19.xb5 b8 20.d3 d5 21.wg5 (21.exd5? w6f6 22.c3 wb6 23.d2 xd5) 21...f6 22. wg3 dx e4 23.c4+ e6 24.wxd8+ xd8 25.b3 xc4 26.xc4 w7, Black would have an excellent game thanks to his passed pawn. After 17...b5, the only way for me to maintain the tension would have been the move – 18.wh4.

18.f4 w7 19.wxg7+

In case of 19.w4, I did not like Black's possibility: 19...c4 20.e2 c3.

19...xg7 20.f5 gxf5

There would have arisen a complicated, but still approximately equal endgame with four rooks present on the board after: 20...d7 21.e4 (or 21.hf1 gxf5 22.exf5 d6 23.e4 c6 24.xc6 bxc6 25.f3) 21...gxf5 22.exd6 e6.

21.exf5 d5 22.b5 e4

In case of: 22...c6 23.xc6 bxc6 24.e1 d6 25.g4 h6 26.e3 d5 27. c3 c4 28.b3 w5, the position remains balanced. It deserved attention for Black to follow with 22...a6!?

23.e1 xf5

Black should have possibly avoided letting White's rook to the seventh rank. It was simpler for him to have defended with: 23...d5 24.d3 xd3 25.xd3 w6. After 26.e3 the position is unclear, but White should also consider the possibility – 26.c3?!

24.e7 w8?!?

This is already a serious mistake. The correct defence for Black was:

24...d5 25.xb7 e6.

25.xb7 e4 26.c7 xg2 27. d2 e4
Or 27...\texttt{xf3} 28.\texttt{c4} d5 29.\texttt{xf2} h5 30.\texttt{xf5}.

\textbf{28.\texttt{xd3}}

The exchange of the bishops is essential for White. Now, Black has nothing to protect his pawn-weaknesses with. White has a great advantage now, despite his opponent’s extra pawn. Black’s defence is extremely difficult and he loses the game rather quickly...

\textbf{28...\texttt{f3}}

Or 28...\texttt{xd3} 29.\texttt{xd3+}

\textbf{29.\texttt{c4} d5 30.\texttt{f2} \texttt{ac8}?!}

Or 30...\texttt{h5} 31.\texttt{f5+}

\textbf{31.xa7 h5 32.f5 g6 33.\texttt{xd5} e8 34.b3 e1+ 35.b2 e3}

In case of 35...\texttt{h1}, White plays 36.\texttt{d2}, threatening \texttt{d2-f2}.

\textbf{36.a4 f3 37.d2 f4 38.a5 b8}

\textbf{39.d5 c4 40.a8 xxa8 41.xa8 cxb3 42.cxb3 1-0}

\begin{center}
\textbf{3 C11}
\end{center}

\textbf{Dreev – Bareev}

USSR Ch Under 20, Tallinn 1986

\textbf{1.e4}?!

Well, I play that move very seldom, despite the opinion of the famous theoretician of the past – V.Rauzer – that it is the best(!), and I usually prefer the more modest first move 1.d4. Still, in this game I was almost 100% sure that my opponent was going to choose the French Defence. Evgenij Bareev was playing almost entirely that particular opening at that time and I had a very good idea about it, because I was playing it myself regularly. Naturally, it was not a problem for me to play the position which arose in that game, since I knew it rather well. At the end, the following game turned out to be quite interesting from the point of view of strategy as well as theory.

\textbf{1.e6 2.d4 d5 3.c3 f6 4.e5}

\textbf{5.f4 c5 6.f3 c6 7.e3 cxd4 8.xd4 c5 9.wd2 xd4 10.xd4 xd4 11.xd4 wb6}

\begin{center}
\textbf{C11}
\end{center}

The variation that we are playing is well-familiar. Contemporary theory considers White’s prospects slightly preferable; however as practice indicates in the main lines: 12.wxb6 \texttt{xb6}; 12.b5 \texttt{xd4} 13.\texttt{xd4}, or 12.0-0-0 \texttt{xd4} 13.\texttt{xd4}, White is practically forced to enter an endgame in which it is quite problematic for him to prove that he has any real advantage if at all. In case White decides to avoid the endgame with 12.wd2 (G.Kasparov’s
idea...) he should consider the possibility 12...\(\text{\textit{\textsc{wxb2}}}!\), after which the position becomes rather unclear and in the game Shirov – Bareev, Wijk aan Zee 2003, after 13.\(\text{\textit{\textsc{b1}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{a3}}} 14.\text{\textit{\textsc{b5}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{wa2}}} 15.\text{\textit{\textsc{d6}}+ \text{\textit{\textsc{f8}}}!} 16.\text{\textit{\textsc{d1}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{b2}}} 17.\text{\textit{\textsc{e2}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{b6}}} 18.\text{\textit{\textsc{c4}}}! \text{\textit{\textsc{d4}}} 19.\text{\textit{\textsc{f3}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{a5}}} 20.0-0 \text{\textit{\textsc{d3+}}} 21.\text{\textit{\textsc{h1}}}, White had a powerful initiative. Still, in a later game against the same opponent – Shirov (Monaco 2003) Bareev chose 15...\text{\textit{\textsc{e7}}}!? and Alexey failed to find anything better than: 16.\text{\textit{\textsc{b4}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{a5}}} 17.\text{\textit{\textsc{xc8+}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{d8}}} 18.\text{\textit{\textsc{e7}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{xc8}}} 19.\text{\textit{\textsc{xb7}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{xb7}}} 20.\text{\textit{\textsc{xd7+}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{b8}}}, so that he forced a draw at the end.

12.0-0-0!?

This move seems to be quite logical, because castling long is an integral part of White’s plan anyway.

12...\text{\textit{\textsc{xd4}}} 13.\text{\textit{\textsc{xd4}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{e7}}}!?

Presently, this move is regarded by theory as the most reliable for Black; nevertheless it was introduced into the tournament practice by Evgenij Bareev in this very game. Accordingly, I was faced with a novelty over the board, so I decided after some thought to follow with:

14.\text{\textit{\textsc{h4}}}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{image}
\end{center}

14...\text{\textit{\textsc{h5}}}!?

This blocking move restricts White’s possibilities at the same time and it is evidently the best.

In case of 14...\text{\textit{\textsc{b8}}}, I was planning to continue with 15.\text{\textit{\textsc{h5}}}!? myself, occupying additional space and seizing the initiative on the kingside. For example after: 15.\text{\textit{\textsc{c6}}} 16.\text{\textit{\textsc{d3}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{f6}}} 17.\text{\textit{\textsc{g3}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{fxe5}}} 18.\text{\textit{\textsc{xg7+}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{ff6}}} 19.\text{\textit{\textsc{h6}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{exf4}}} 20.\text{\textit{\textsc{h4}}}!? Black has a lot of problems to worry about. Now, after: 20...\text{\textit{\textsc{e7}}} 21.\text{\textit{\textsc{xf4+}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{d5}}} 22.\text{\textit{\textsc{d3}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{e5}}}, it deserves attention for White to sacrifice the exchange: 23.\text{\textit{\textsc{xf5}}}!? \text{\textit{\textsc{xf4}}} 24.\text{\textit{\textsc{xb7}}} and his compensation for it is more than sufficient.

It is hardly worth for Black to try: 14...\text{\textit{\textsc{f6}}}, because after 15.\text{\textit{\textsc{exf6+}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{xf6}}} (or 15...\text{\textit{\textsc{gxf6}}} 16.\text{\textit{\textsc{f5}}}) 16.\text{\textit{\textsc{e2}}}, his position remains quite passive without any good prospects.

15.\text{\textit{\textsc{e2}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{b8}}} 16.\text{\textit{\textsc{d2}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{d7}}}

It was also worth considering the move 16...\text{\textit{\textsc{c6}}}!? with the idea to counter 17.\text{\textit{\textsc{b5}}} with: 17...\text{\textit{\textsc{d7}}} 18.\text{\textit{\textsc{xc6}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{xc6}}} 19.\text{\textit{\textsc{e2}}} (Black’s position is quite acceptable in case of: 19.\text{\textit{\textsc{e1}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{h6}}}?) and thanks to the move 19...\text{\textit{\textsc{f6}}}, Black’s counterplay is good enough to equalize. Well, I think that instead of 17.\text{\textit{\textsc{b5}}}, I would have played 17.\text{\textit{\textsc{xd1}}}!?, maintaining somewhat better chances.

17.\text{\textit{\textsc{xd1}}} \text{\textit{\textsc{g6}}}!?
This is a serious imprecision. Evgenij did not have to be in a hurry with that move, since he practically deprives himself of any counterplay connected with the undermining pawn-break f7-f6: now, in case that happens — Black will not be able to capture on f6 with the pawn. It would have been much better for him to have tried 17...a6, or 17...c6, obtaining much more dynamic positions than the one he had in the game.

Here, as a result of my opponent’s mistake, I had a clear-cut plan for a solid positional bind on the queenside:

18.b3! a6

Black is now forced to resort to only passive defence. It is too bad for him to follow with 18...c6?! 19.ee4 and White has an overwhelming advantage.

19.a4 c6

It is too dubious for Black to play 19...c6?! because of 20.ee4.

On the other hand, Black could have tried another defensive plan: 19...d8!? 20.b2 c6, which seemed to offer him much brighter prospects, because it would be very difficult for White to accomplish the blocking idea a4-a5 with a black knight on the c6-square, while his attempt to follow 20.f3 c6, with the tactical variation: 21.xd5 exd5 22.xd5+ f8 23.b6 g4 24.xa8 x8 25.e1, would have made the game so sharp that Black would have obtained easily an active counterplay.

20.b2

It was much more precise for me to play 20.a5 immediately, transposing after 20...d7 21.b2 to the position, which was played later in the game.

20...d7

Evgenij fails to exploit the possibility to try to free himself from the positional bind with the move 20...a5?! Although after 21.b5 d7 22.d4 c5, I would have preserved a slight but stable positional edge, it would have been much easier for him to defend a position like that.

21.a5!

This blocking move fortifies White’s positional advantage and Black is bound to remain very passive now.

21...h8 22.d4 c5

It is not any better for Black to defend with: 22...b6 23.a1 b5 24.a2, because White’s positional advantage is obvious.

23.b4 b5 24.bd4

This move frees the b4-square for the knight. It is understandable that after: 24.axb6?! following: 24...a5 25.bd4 xb6, Black is not worse at all.

24...a7 25.a2 c7 26.b4 b7 27.c3 d7 28.id3
I have managed to improve my position considerably and my advantage is indisputable. Black’s position is passive indeed, but it is still solid enough and as long as there are rooks present on the board he has the potential to defend successfully. Therefore my plan is clear – I need to trade a couple of rooks and after that the catastrophic weakness of the dark squares in my opponent’s camp will make his situation critical. Accordingly, Evgenij should do his best to try to prevent the realization of that plan.

28...\texttt{B}c8
Black parries the threat \texttt{d}d3-c3.
29.\texttt{E}e3 \texttt{b}b8 30.\texttt{g}3 \texttt{c}c6?! This move facilitates considerably my task to press the positional advantage home. It was better for him to play 30...\texttt{d}d7, because in that case it is not immediately evident how I can proceed with the idea to exchange rooks.

31.\texttt{x}c6+ \texttt{x}c6 32.\texttt{d}d1!
It is essential to keep the c3-square free for my rook. After 32.c3? \texttt{b}6c7=, all my advantage would have evaporated into thin air.

32...\texttt{c}c5 33.\texttt{a}a3! \texttt{c}c7 34.\texttt{b}b4

\texttt{a}a8 35.\texttt{d}d3
This move creates the straightforward threat – \texttt{d}d3-c3.

35...\texttt{d}d7! 36.\texttt{d}d4

I was in a time-trouble, so I decided to repeat the moves. Of course, it would have been a blunder to follow with: 36.\texttt{c}c3?, due to 36...d4.

36...\texttt{d}ec7 37.\texttt{f}f3! \texttt{b}7 38.\texttt{d}d3 d4?
Evgenij was also in a time-pressure and he made a decisive mistake. He had to continue with: 38...\texttt{d}d7 and although after 39.\texttt{c}c3, I would have maintained my positional bind – he could have resisted. Now, Black’s defence crumbles.

39.\texttt{f}2 \texttt{d}8 40.\texttt{d}fd2 \texttt{e}d7

41.c3! \texttt{d}xc3 and here Black decided not to wait for the evident line: 42.\texttt{d}xd7+ \texttt{d}xd7 43.\texttt{d}xd7+ \texttt{d}xd7 44.\texttt{x}c3 and the king and bishop ending is hopeless for him (for example: 44...\texttt{d}5 45.\texttt{d}d4 \texttt{c}c6 46.b4 and Black is in a zugzwang – after the retreats of the bishop 46...\texttt{c}4; 46...\texttt{g}2, or 46...\texttt{a}2, White wins promptly with 47.g4, while in case of any king-move – White wins with 47.f5!), so Black resigned.
Dreev – Gelfand
USSR Ch Under 20, Tallinn 1986

1.d4 .gf6 2.g3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.d3 b7 5.a3 d5 6.cxd5 gxd5 7.e2 c5

The move 7...gxc3 has always been considered as more reliable for Black, both now and even back then, when our game was played...

8.cxd5 cxd5 9.g5 e4 10.e1 h6 11.exd5?

In the game Kasparov – van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1988, White preferred 11.h4, which seemed to be more solid and trustworthy than the move in the game.

11...hxg5 12.d4 g4 13.e5 h5!? 14.e2

That is a new move. In the game M.Petursson – K.Hansen, Borgarines 1985, there followed: 14.a4+?! c6 15.bxc5 e5 16.e3 e5 and Black had the advantage.

15. e5 b4+ 16.d1 c6

After: 16...d7 17.axb4 (but not 17.e4? d6) 17...c6, I would have to choose between the calm line: 18.h5 cxd5+ 19.xd5 exd5 20.b5 c5 21.e3 (21.h3 g3) with a slightly better position and the much riskier variation: 18.g7 cxd5+ 19.e1 c8 20.e3.

17.c6?

It seemed interesting for me to play 17.g7!?, but after: 17...xa3 (or 17...d7 18.axb4 cxd5+ 19.e1) 18.c3 exd5 19.exa3 f5 20.e1 b1+ 21.d2 a5, I did not see anything better for White than a draw by repetition of moves.

17...c6?

Now, Boris makes a wrong decision in this rather complicated position. It would have been too dubious for him to try: 17...c6?! 18.xb4 a4+ 19.e2 c5 20.d3 c4+ 21.d3 0-0–0 22.f3, but following the surprising line: 17...d7! 18.c7 (or 18.e4? c6 19.axb4 c8 20.b5 b7 21.h3 g3! 22.c7 d8 23.cxd7 d7 24.fxg3 exd5) 18...c4+ 19.c2 c8 (19...d5 20.e4 c8? 21.b5!; 20...d8 21.exd5 ed5+ 22.xd5 exd5 23.axb4=) 20.e4 c7 21.c4 b5, Black would have obtained an excellent game.

14...e5!

My opponent changes the situation in the game radically with this sacrifice. In case of: 14...xd5 15.bxc5 bxc5 16.xg4, White’s advantage is so to speak – for free...
18.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{D}}x\textbf{b}4} 0–0–0+
Or 18...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{W}}a}4+ 19.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{R}}}d2 \textit{\textbf{W}}xa3 20.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{R}}}d3±
\textbf{19.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{R}}}}d3 \textit{\textbf{f}}6 20.\textit{\textbf{W}}b2?!)
It was stronger for me to play: 20.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{W}}}f4 and if 20...e5 21.\textit{\textbf{W}}xg4+ \textit{\textbf{b}}8, then 22.f3.
\textbf{20...e5} 21.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{R}}}e1
The move 21.f3 looked weaker.

\textbf{21...e4}
That pawn-advance facilitated the realization of my material advantage considerably. My opponent could have offered much tougher resistance after the move 21...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{b}}}b8!, thus preventing White's threat to trade queens. Following that White would have had serious problems to prove his advantage, mostly because of his lag in development. For example: 22.f3 (or 22.h3 \textit{\textbf{g}}3 23.e3 \textit{\textbf{W}}d5; 23.f3 e4 24.fxe4 \textit{\textbf{W}}xe4 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}b4 \textit{\textbf{\textit{d}}}d4 26.\textit{\textbf{W}}f8+ \textit{\textbf{c}}8) 22...e4 (22...\textit{\textbf{W}}xf3 23.\textit{\textbf{W}}xf3 \textit{\textbf{\textbf{W}}}x\textit{\textbf{d}}3? 24.exd3 \textit{\textbf{W}}xf3 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}g2?++; or 23...e4 24.fxe4 \textit{\textbf{W}}xe4 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}f2 \textit{\textbf{W}}e3 26.\textit{\textbf{W}}g1 \textit{\textbf{c}}8 27.\textit{\textbf{W}}g3!++) 23.fxe4 \textit{\textbf{W}}xe4 24.\textit{\textbf{W}}b4 \textit{\textbf{\textit{d}}}d4 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}f8+ \textit{\textbf{c}}8 and although my chances would have been preferable, there would be still a real fight to follow...
\textbf{22.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{Q}}}}b4 \textit{\textbf{W}}d6 23.\textit{\textbf{W}}c1+! \textit{\textbf{\textbf{R}}}b8 24.\textit{\textbf{e}}3

Finally, I am solving the problem with the development of my kingside.
\textbf{24...\textit{\textbf{W}}e5}
The variation: 24...\textit{\textbf{W}}c8 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}d2 \textit{\textbf{W}}e5 26.\textit{\textbf{W}}a6, leads to the same position as in the game, but it deserves a serious attention for White to consider too: 26.\textit{\textbf{W}}e2?! \textit{\textbf{W}}a1+ 27.\textit{\textbf{R}}d1 \textit{\textbf{W}}xa3 28.\textit{\textbf{W}}c2?!
If 24...a5, then 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}a6+ \textit{\textbf{R}}a7 26.\textit{\textbf{W}}c7++, and White is threatening \textit{\textbf{W}}c7-b5-d4.
\textbf{25.\textit{\textbf{\textbf{Q}}}}a6
That move is not bad at all, but possibly it would have been stronger for me to have continued with: 25.\textit{\textbf{W}}e2! \textit{\textbf{W}}c8 26.\textit{\textbf{W}}d2 \textit{\textbf{W}}a1+ 27.\textit{\textbf{R}}d1 \textit{\textbf{W}}xa3 28.\textit{\textbf{R}}c2, or 28.\textit{\textbf{W}}xg4?!
\textbf{25...\textit{\textbf{W}}c8}
That is an only move for Black.
\textbf{26.\textit{\textbf{W}}d2 \textit{\textbf{W}}xa6}
After 26...\textit{\textbf{W}}a1+?, I had the beautiful winning line: 27.\textit{\textbf{R}}e2 \textit{\textbf{W}}xh1 28.\textit{\textbf{W}}d6+ \textit{\textbf{W}}c7 29.\textit{\textbf{W}}c6! \textit{\textbf{\textbf{Q}}}a8 30.\textit{\textbf{W}}xc7 \textit{\textbf{W}}xa6+ 31.\textit{\textbf{R}}d2+-
\textbf{27.\textit{\textbf{W}}xa6+ \textit{\textbf{Q}}a8}
Or 27...\textit{\textbf{\textbf{W}}}b7 28.\textit{\textbf{W}}d7+

\textbf{28.\textit{\textbf{R}}b4?!}
This move is too hasty. Naturally, it would have been a mistake for me to play 28.a4?, because of 28...\textit{\textbf{W}}a5 – and White's knight gets trapped. The cor-
rect move for him would have been 28...f1±

28...a5?

That is a decisive mistake for Black. Boris failed to find in his time-trouble the correct defence 28...b7!, which would have created great problems for me to materialize my advantage. Now, in case of: 29.e5 a5 30.d5+ (30. a2) 30...xd5 31.xd5 c5! 32.f4 c1+ 33.e2 e2+ 34.d1 e2 35.e2 xa3, Black has an excellent compensation for the piece. I had another possibility: 29.e1 a5 30.c2 b2 b1+ 31.e1 b3 32.e2 e8! 34.f3 gxf3 35.exf3 e1f3 36.e2 c8.

29.e5+ a1+

Or 29...b7 30.e2+-

30.e2 xh1 31.xb6+ b7
32.xc8 xxc8 33.e2+

The arising king and queen endgame is extremely difficult for Black.

33...d8 34.xe4 xh2 35. xg4 c7 36.e6
36.d4+!
36...c3?!

It was a bit better for Black to have defended with: 36...c2+ 37.f3 c7.

37.g8+ c7 38.xg7+ b6

After the obvious mistake – 39.e8??, Black makes a draw with the line: 39...c2+ 40.f3 f5+ 41.g3 g5+ 42.h2 h5+

39...a4 40.e7 b5 41.d7+

Here, the time-trouble was over and Black resigned.

5

Dreev – Kamsky

55th USSR Ch (½-final), Pavlodar 1987

This was the tournament (the USSR Championship semi-final), in which as I explained in the Foreword, I came to participate in the uniform of a Soviet Army private. I played well in the tournament though, and I qualified for the Final.

1.e4 e5 2.d4 c6 3.c3

The Ponziani Opening is a quite rare guest in the contemporary tournaments...

3...d6

This move is possible, but it is not principled. There arise some very complex positions after: 3...d5 4.b5. I think that Black's best reaction is – 3...f6 4.d4 xxe4 5.d5 e7 6.xe5 g6, with an approximate equality.

4.d4 e7
5.\*d3
It deserved serious attention for White to enter positions typical for the King's Indian Defence with d4-d5 (5.d5!? \*b8 6.c4), or by first exchanging the light squared bishops (5.\*b5!? \*d7 6.d5); but I preferred to preserve the tension in the centre.
5...g6 6.0-0 \*g7 7.\*bd2 \*f6
8.\*c4 0-0 9.dxe5
In case of the immediate 9.\*g5, it is good for Black to follow with: 9...h6 10.\*h4 exd4 11.exd4 g5.
9...dxe5
9...\*xe5?! 10.\*g5 h6 11.\*h4 \*d8 12.\*c2 g5
Black is forced to play that move, which compromises his position considerably; otherwise the pin along the h4-d8 diagonal is too unpleasant for him. In case of 12...\*g4, White can simply answer 13.\*e2, followed by \*c3 with tempo.
13.\*g3 \*h5 14.\*e3 \*f4 15.\*fd1
It was also possible for White to continue with 15.\*b5.
15.\*e6
Black could have tried here the exchange: 15...\*xd3 16.\*xd3 \*xd3 17.\*xd3, but White’s position would be clearly preferable, for example: 17...\*e6 18.\*b5 \*b8 19.\*d5 \*d6 20.\*d1 \*h8 21.\*e3 a6 22.\*e2 \*c5 23.\*d5 (23.h4 g4 24.\*h2 h5 25.\*d5) 23...\*e8 24.h4 g4 25.\*h2 h5 (25...f5 26.b4) 26.\*f1.
16.\*c4 a6 17.a4 \*bab8
Or 17...\*xc4 18.\*xc4 \*e6 19.\*e3 \*e7 20.a5±
18.b4
White is occupying space on the queenside.
18...\*e8
Black should worry about the possibility – \*e3-d5.

19.h4
I could have continued the game without that move somehow, instead I could have played something calmer, but it seemed to me that I could not maintain my advantage only by exploiting the weakness of the light squares in Black’s camp.
19...g4 20.\*h2 h5 21.\*d5?!
I decided to change radically the course of the game, but that was probably in vain...It would have been much more logical for me to have continued with the simple move 21.\*h4.
21...\*xd5 22.exd5 \*e7 23.\*e4 \*c8
After: 23...c6! 24.dxc6 \*xc6 25.\*xc6 \*xc6 26.f3 \*bc8! 27.fxg4 \*d4, Black’s position is excellent.
24.\*a2 \*d6 25.\*c2 b5
Gata prevents the move c3-c4, but he loses too much time while doing that. It seemed again quite acceptable for him to have played – 25...c6
26.\*f1 \*g6
Black had better follow with 26...bxa4 and if 27.\*b1 – 27...\*b5!
27.\*e3 \*d7 28.\*b1 \*a8
The move 28...e4!, would have led to a very unclear position.

29.\textit{wa2} \textit{we8}?!  
Black defends against the threat ab5, but he relinquishes the initiative completely with his last move. Once again, his best move would have been 29...e4!

30.\textit{axg6} \textit{fxg6} 31.c4 \textit{wf7}  
Or 31...\textit{bxc4} 32.\textit{dx}c4 \textit{c}e4? 33.d6! \textit{dh}7 34.\textit{dxc7} \textit{xd}1+ 35.\textit{c}x\textit{d}1 \textit{c}c3 36.\textit{dd}2 \textit{d}xd1 37.\textit{db}6+-  
32.a\textit{xb}5 \textit{de}4  
Black’s counterplay is evidently too slow.

33.b\textit{xa6}  
That is the simplest decision for White. His passed pawns are much more important than Black’s extra exchange.

33...\textit{dc}3 34.\textit{wa}3 \textit{xd}1 35.\textit{exd}1  
\textit{wf}6 36.b5 g5 37.hxg5  
37.d6?  
37...\textit{wxg}5 38.d6 h4  
(diagram)

39.\textit{axh}4  
It was much simpler for me to have followed with: 39.\textit{dx}c7 \textit{xd}1+ 40.\textit{c}x\textit{d}1 hgx3 41.\textit{w}xg3 and White’s pawns would be unstoppable.

39...\textit{wxh}4 40.\textit{dc}c7 \textit{ff}8 41.g3 \textit{w}f6 42.\textit{ed}2 \textit{dh}8  
Or 42...\textit{hh}6 43.\textit{dxg}4 \textit{g}6 44.\textit{hxh}6+ \textit{wxh}6 45.\textit{dd}6.  
43.\textit{dd}6  
Naturally, the exchange of queens is in favour of White.

43...\textit{ff}3 44.\textit{dd}5 \textit{ff}6 45.f3  
It was also possible to try 45.c5.  
45...e4 46.\textit{hh}2+ \textit{hh}6 47.f4 \textit{wa}1+ 48.\textit{wd}1 \textit{wc}3 49.\textit{dd}2 \textit{wx}d2 50.\textit{edx}2 \textit{gg}7 51.b6  
The rest is quite clear without any comments.

51...\textit{dc}3 52.\textit{dd}7 \textit{db}4 53.b7 \textit{ae}8 54.a7

54...\textit{cc}5 55.b8\textit{wx}e3+ 56.\textit{ff}1  
1–0
1.d4 ½f6 2.c4 e6 3.½f3 d5 4.½c3 ½e7 5.½f4 0–0 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5 ½xc5

8.½e2

White has here a calmer line at his disposal – 8.cxd5 ½xd5 9.½xd5 exd5 10.a3 ½c6 11.½d3 ½b6 12.0–0.

8...½c6 9.½d1

The other principled variation for White is: 9.a3 ½a5 10.0–0–0–0.

9...½a5 10.a3 ½e7 11.½d2 e5 12.½g5 d4 13.½b3 ½d8 (13...½b6) 14.exd4

I decided to try that seldom played move. White plays much more often here: 14.½e2 a5 15.½a4 h6 16.½xf6 ½xf6 17.c5 ½e6, with a complicated position.

14...exd4

It is also interesting for Black to defend with: 14...½xd4 15.½xd4 exd4 16.½b5. Now after: 16...½d7 17.½xd4 ½a5+ 18.½d2 ½b6 19.½e3, the opponents agreed to a draw in the game Ivanchuk – Vaganjan, USSR 1988. Meanwhile, Ivanchuk pointed out later that after: 19...½a4 20.b3 ½xb3 21.½b1 ½e4 22.½xb3 ½xd2 23.½xb6 ½xf1 24.½xb7 ½xe3 25.½xe3, White could have maintained the advantage. Therefore, it deserved attention for Black to follow with: 16...½g4!? 17.½xd4 ½e8! 18.½e3 (this is the only move) 18...½b6 19.½d3 ½c5 20.0–0 ½xd4 21.½xd4 ½d8 22.½xf6 gxf6 (or 22...½xf6 23.½c7) 23.h3 ½h5 24.½xh7+ ½g7 25.½e4 a6 26.½c3 ½g6 and the position was approximately equal in the game Piket – van der Sreterre, Lyon 1990.

15.½e2 ½g4 16.½xe7 ½xe7 17.½d5

In a game, which was played a year later – (Dreev – Kruppa, Frunze 1988) I decided to capture the pawn – 17.½xd4, but following: 17...½h4 18.g3 ½h3 19.½e4 ½d7, Black had an excellent compensation for it.
We played subsequently in the same year another game in this line with Boris and there he continued with 17...\textit{\texttt{We}}5! and after 18.f4 \textit{\texttt{Af}}5!, he had the advantage and he won that game. The only correct solution for White would have been: 18.\textit{\texttt{Wd}}2 \textit{\texttt{Se}}8 19.\textit{\texttt{Af}}4, with mutual chances.

\textbf{18.g3 \textit{\texttt{Wh}}3 19.\textit{\texttt{Af}}4 \textit{\texttt{Wh}}6 20.\textit{\texttt{Ad}}4}

Now, Black can hardly rely on obtaining any compensation for the pawn.

\textbf{20...\textit{\texttt{Ad}}4 21.\textit{\texttt{Ax}}d4 \textit{\texttt{Se}}8 22.\textit{\texttt{Hh}}4}

Here, I failed to find the best move – 22.\textit{\texttt{Ad}}5!, after which my advantage would have been considerable.

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

That is totally wrong! Black had better continue with: 22...\textit{\texttt{Af}}6 23.\textit{\texttt{Ed}}2 \textit{\texttt{Af}}5 24.\textit{\texttt{Wb}}3 \textit{\texttt{Se}}4 25.0--0 \textit{\texttt{Wf}}5.

\textbf{23.c5! \textit{\texttt{Wa}}5+ 24.\textit{\texttt{Ed}}2}

\textbf{24...\textit{\texttt{Af}}5?}

This is an incorrect combination in an already difficult position. Following: 24...b6 25.0--0 bxc5 (or 25...\textit{\texttt{Wxc}}5 26.\textit{\texttt{Wxc}}5 bxc5 27.\textit{\texttt{Ed}}1) 26.\textit{\texttt{Ed}}5, I would have the task to press the advantage of an extra pawn home. Now, White wins easily.

\textbf{25.\textit{\texttt{Wxf}}5 \textit{\texttt{Af}}2 26.b4}

Possibly, Black had simply overlooked that move...

\textbf{26...\textit{\texttt{Wxa}}3 27.\textit{\texttt{Hxf}}2 \textit{\texttt{We}}3+ 28.\textit{\texttt{He}}1 \textit{\texttt{Wxg}}3+ 29.\textit{\texttt{Hf}}1 \textit{\texttt{Gg}}6 30.\textit{\texttt{Hh}}3 1--0}

\textbf{7}

\textbf{Dreev – Chekhov}

\textit{Protvino 1988}

\textit{I fulfilled a grandmaster norm in that category 8 – tournament in the town of Protvino, near Moscow, with 8 points out of 11 rounds and I tied for first place with grandmaster Valerij Chekhov...}

\textbf{1.d4 d5 2.\textit{\texttt{Af}}3 \textit{\texttt{Af}}6 3.c4 dxc4 4.e3 e6 5.\textit{\texttt{Xc}}4 a6 6.0--0 c5 7.\textit{\texttt{Ed}}3 \textit{\texttt{Exd}}4 8.\textit{\texttt{Ed}}4 \textit{\texttt{Ec}}6}

Black plays much more often here 8...\textit{\texttt{He}}7, not determining the placement of the knight for the time being. Now, after 9.\textit{\texttt{Ec}}3, Black can play 9...b5, but in that case he must consider White’s active possibility 10.\textit{\texttt{He}}5.

\textbf{9.\textit{\texttt{Ec}}3 \textit{\texttt{He}}7 10.\textit{\texttt{Gg}}5 0--0 11.\textit{\texttt{Ec}}1}

\textbf{11.b6}

My opponent took a long time to make up his mind here and that novelty was obviously not the result of any home-preparation.
In a game, which was played much later (Dreev – Karjakin, Dos Hermanas 2003) Black equalized without too much of an effort with: 11...\( \text{Qd5} \) 12.h4

(\text{It is much more principled for White to follow here with:} 12.\( \text{Qxd5} \) \( \text{Qxg5} \) 13.\( \text{Qxg5} \) \( \text{Wxg5} \) 14.\( \text{Qb6} \) \( \text{Bb8} \) 15.\( \text{Wc2} \).)

12...h6 13.\( \text{Qxe7} \) \( \text{Qxe7} = \)

12.\( \text{Qxf6} \)

It also deserved attention for me to try to avoid exchanges – 12.\( \text{Wd2} \) and \( \text{Bfd1} \). I went for a forced tactical operation:

12...\( \text{Qxf6} \) 13.\( \text{Qe4} \)

At first it seemed to me that the move 13.\( \text{Qe4} \) would guarantee my advantage: 13...\( \text{Bb7} \) 14.\( \text{d5} \) \( \text{exd5} \) 15.\( \text{Qxd5} \) \( \text{Qxb2} \) 16.\( \text{Bb1} \). However, Black is not obliged to capture on \text{b2}, but he can play instead 15...\( \text{Qc8} \) and he can still hold that position: 16.\( \text{Qxf6+} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \) 17.\( \text{Qd7} \) \( \text{Qa8} \); White's position is evidently more active, just like before, but what he can do to turn that into something real remains unclear.

13...\( \text{Bb7} \)

Naturally, Black cannot capture on \text{d4} – 13...\( \text{Qxd4} \) 14.\( \text{Qxf6+} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \) 15.\( \text{Qxd4} \) \( \text{Qxd4} \) 16.\( \text{Qh7+} \); and if 13...\( \text{Qd7} \), then 14.\( \text{Qxf6+} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \) 15.\( \text{Qe4} \) \( \text{Qac8} \) 16.\( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qb4} \) 17.\( \text{Qb3} \) and after the unavoidable move \text{a2-a3}, Black's b-pawn becomes an easy prey. Therefore 13...\( \text{Bb7} \) – is a practically forced move.

14.\( \text{Qxf6+} \) \( \text{Qxf6} \)

It was worth for Black to capture with the queen – 14...\( \text{Qxf6} \) 15.\( \text{Qe4} \) \( \text{Qac8} \) 16.\( \text{Qe5} \) \( \text{Qxe5} \) 17.\( \text{Qxb7} \) \( \text{Qxc1} \) 18.\( \text{Qxc1} \), because after the best defence for him 18...\( \text{Qg6} \), White remains with only a slight advantage.

15.\( \text{Qe4} \) \( \text{Qc8} \) 16.\( \text{Bc3} \) \text{f5} 17.\( \text{Qg5} \) \( \text{Qxg5} \)

It is too bad for Black to play 17...h6, due to 18.\( \text{Qxc6} \) \( \text{Qxc6} \) (In case Black captures with his bishop – there follows the same reaction anyway.) 19.\( \text{Qh5} \) and here either: 19...\( \text{hxg5} \) 20.\( \text{Qh3} \), or 19...\( \text{Qxh3} \) 20.\( \text{Qxh6} \) and White checkmates.

18.\( \text{Qxc6} \) \( \text{Qe7} \) 19.\( \text{Qd5} \) \( \text{Qxc6} \)

If 19...\( \text{Qfd8} \), then 20.\( \text{Qh5} \).

20.\( \text{Qxc6} \)

White's powerful passed pawn provides him with an overwhelming advantage.

20...\( \text{Qfd8} \) 21.\( \text{Qe2} \)

This move is hardly the best. The correct decision would have been – the recommendation of Mark Dvoretzki – 21.\( \text{Qc1} \) with the idea to trade a couple of rooks after \( \text{Qd1} \). Now, Black prevents that quite reasonably. He would like to exchange queens, though...

21...\( \text{Qd6} \) 22.\( \text{Qe3} \)

In view of what I have already mentioned – it would have been better to follow with 22.\( \text{Qf3} \).

22...\( \text{Qd4} \) 23.\( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qd5} \)

Valerij has made a good use of my indifferent play and he has improved his position considerably.

24.\( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{Qe7} \)

Black must still try to exchange
queens – 24...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{g4}}}}\), in order to fight for the draw. His king is so vulnerable that he has no chances to attack White’s c-pawn effectively.

25.h3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{f8}}}}\)

26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{h5!}}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{e7}}}}\) 27.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{g5+}}}}\)!

Black can counter 27.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xh7}}}}\), with 27...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c5}}}}\) equalizing.

27...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{f6}}}}\)

After 27...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{f8}}}}\) 28.a3, there arises a peculiar zugzwang situation – Black has no useful moves left. Now, he loses a pawn by force and that practically spells disaster for him.

28.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{f4}}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{d8}}}}\) 29.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{b4}}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{e7}}}}\) 30.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{x6 a5}}}}\) 31.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c5 d6}}}}\) 32.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xa5 d1+}}}}\) 33.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xd1+}}}}\) 34.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{h2 d6+}}}}\) 35.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{g1}}}}\)

White wins some additional seconds in the time-pressure.

35...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{d1+}}}}\) 36.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{h2 d6+}}}}\) 37.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{g3 f4}}}}\) 38.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c3 fxg3+}}}}\) 39.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{fxg3 e7}}}}\) 40.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{b4 a7}}}}\)

(diagram)

The time-trouble is over. How should I continue? After 41.a3?, Black plays 41...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xa3!}}}}\) with a draw. I was tempted to follow with the spectacular line: 41.c7? \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xa2+}}}}\) 42.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c2}}}}\), but after 42...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xc5!}}}}\) Black again saves the day. I wrote the move 41.c7 on my scoresheet...

... but still fortunately, writing the move did not mean that I played it...!

41.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c2!}}}}\)

This move just shuns all possible temptations!

41...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{d8}}}}\)

or 41...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{a3}}}}\) 42.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c3}}}}\)

42.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{a4 xa4}}}}\) 43.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c7+}}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{c8}}}}\) 44.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{g5}}}}\)

This is the ultimate necessary precision. Black resigned.

Dreev – R. Sherbakov

Qualifier for World Junior (Under 20)

Borzhomi 1988

I have already mentioned this tournament too in the Foreword to this book. It was a qualification event for the World Under-20 Championship), and I took first place, but I did not go anywhere...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 e5 4.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{f3}}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{b4+}}}}\)

It is much more fashionable here for Black to follow with the capturing 4...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{exd4}}}}\). Now, the transfer to an endgame after: 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xd4 xd4}}}}\) 6.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xd4}}}}\), leads to an equal position. In case of: 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{xd4 c5!}}}}\) 6.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{\textsf{e3 f6}}}}\), Black has a good game, because he can counter
7.\textit{c}c3 with 7...\textit{g}g4!?; while against 7.f3 he has the powerful argument 7...\textit{c}c6!. Following 7.\textit{a}a4+ \textit{b}bd7 8.\textit{c}c3 0-0, Black's prospects, having in mind the threats \textit{d}d7-b6 and \textit{f}f6-g4 are evidently superior. Therefore, White's only way to fight for the opening advantage is the variation: 5.\textit{xc}c4 \textit{b}b4+!? 6.\textit{b}bd2 \textit{c}c6, which is connected with a pawn-sacrifice. Well, as contemporary practice shows, even then White's compensation for the pawn is sufficient, but the arising positions are rather complex and double-edged.

After 6.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 7.\textit{xd}4 \textit{f}f6, Black has nothing to worry about in the arising endgame.

6...\textit{e}e7!? 

This is the principled reaction by Black. Ruslan practically forces me to sacrifice a pawn for the initiative. The more modest move 6...\textit{e}e7 is not good enough to save Black from his problems as the tournament practice shows in the last several years. For example, the abovementioned game Topalov – Kharlov, continued with: 7.\textit{xc}c4 \textit{bc}6 8.\textit{e}e3 \textit{xd}4 9.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 10.\textit{xd}4 0–0 11.\textit{a}3 \textit{xc}c4+ 12.\textit{xc}c4 \textit{e}e6 13.\textit{e}e2 \textit{b}b3 14.h4!? and White maintained a stable positional advantage, because in that purely technical endgame – the material ratio of a couple of white bishops against a bishop and a knight for Black is a very powerful argument in favour of White.

5.\textit{xc}c4 \textit{xe}e4+ 8.\textit{e}e3?! 

No doubt, that novelty must have been a surprise for my opponent, since he failed to find the best defensive plan over the board. Naturally, I cannot tell what improvement Ruslan Sherbakov must have found against the main theoretical line: 8.\textit{f}f1 \textit{xc}c3 9.bxc3, which used to be fashionable at that moment.
8...\textbf{\textit{Qxc3+?!}}

This exchange is hardly necessary and it seems to me to be anti-positional. He should have played instead the principled reaction 8...\textit{\textit{Qxg2?!}} and I had planned to counter that with 9.\textit{\textit{Qd2!}}. There arises a rather unclear position, in which White has a powerful initiative for two sacrificed pawns. It is quite understandable – why Ruslan avoided that possibility. It is extremely difficult psychologically, particularly without any home-preparation to enter complications like that, while White’s game would have been quite easy. His threats like \textit{\textit{Qa4, Qb3, Qg1}} and \textit{\textit{Qh5}} are more than obvious; meanwhile the best defensive plan for Black is mildly speaking – rather unclear. Still, I believe that from the point of view of theory, after 9...\textit{\textit{Qc6?!}}, or 9...\textit{\textit{Qf8?!}}, Black’s prospects should not be inferior. Similar intuitive pawn-sacrifices for initiative were often met in the games of the great Russian player – the World Champion number four – Alexander Alekhine and his chess-legacy is something I had studied quite thoroughly in my junior years...

9.bxc3

In this very moment, the move 9...\textit{\textit{Qxg2}} is hardly any better that the line in the game, because in this case, besides 9.\textit{\textit{Qd4}} (and White’s initiative compensates the two sacrificed pawns...) I would have had the even stronger argument – 10.\textit{\textit{Qh5?!}}, after which Black is practically forced to enter the line: 10...\textit{\textit{Qg6}} (or 10...\textit{\textit{Qxh1+?!}} 11.\textit{\textit{Qd2+-}}) 11.\textit{\textit{Qe5+ Qe7}}, but after 12.0–0–0, White’s initiative is very powerful. For example, in case of 12...\textit{\textit{c6?!}}, it is good for White to follow with: 13.\textit{\textit{Qg5!}} f6 14.\textit{\textit{Qd6!}} and Black has no satisfactory defence: if 14...\textit{\textit{Qxg5+}}, then 15.f4 \textit{\textit{Qa5}} 16.\textit{\textit{Qhe1+-}}, while in case of 14...fxg5, there follows a spectacular checkmate in five – 15.\textit{\textit{Qd8+!! Qxd8}} 16.\textit{\textit{Qe6+ Qe8}} 17.\textit{\textit{Qc7+ Qf8}} 18.\textit{\textit{Qd8+ Qe8}} 19.\textit{\textit{Qxe8#}}. It is also too bad for Black to play: 12...\textit{\textit{Qg4?!}} 13.\textit{\textit{Qd1}} \textit{\textit{Qd7}} 14.\textit{\textit{Qf4+-}}. Therefore, he has probably nothing better than: 12...\textit{\textit{Qf6}} and after 13.\textit{\textit{Qxc7}}, White regains his pawn and maintains his initiative. It is also possible for White to try here: 13.\textit{\textit{Qxf6?! gxf6}} 14.\textit{\textit{Qf4}} and his initiative is quite dangerous notwithstanding the absence of the queens on the board.

10.0–0 0–0 11.\textit{\textit{Qe1 Qg6?!}}

My opponent is immediately in a very difficult position after that mistake. Even following: 11...\textit{\textit{Qh4}} 12.\textit{\textit{Qd2}}, he would have had plenty of problems to worry about, but he could have offered some tenacious defence. Now, the developments are just forced:

12.\textit{\textit{Cc1! Qg4}} 13.\textit{\textit{Qa3 Qd8?!}}

This move enables me to start a quite spectacular attack. Black could have tried to hold the position only
by entering a very difficult endgame
after: 13...\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}xd1 14.\texttt{\textsubscript{e}}xd1 \texttt{\textsubscript{d}}8 15.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}}b5.

\textbf{14.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xf7+! \texttt{\textsubscript{e}}xf7}
In case of: 14...\texttt{\textsubscript{h}}8 15.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xg4 \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xg4
16.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}ab1, or 16.f3, I would have maintained
an overwhelming positional advantage
with material equality present
on the board.

\textbf{15.\texttt{\textsubscript{b}}b3+ \texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f6 16.h3 \texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d7 17.e3!}
Black is beyond salvation after that strong move.

\textbf{17...\texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d5}
He can save the day neither with:
17...\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f4 18.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}}ae1 \texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d5 19.e7+ \texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g6 20.
\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g3+ \texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h6 21.g5+-; nor with: 17...
\texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e5 18.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}}ae1 \texttt{\textsubscript{b}}c6 19.f4+-

\textbf{18.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f3+ \texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5 19.c1+ \texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h4}

Now, the most logical final touch of
my attack would have been the move
– 20.\texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d1! and Black should better re-
sign outright, because of the unavoidable
threat of the “quiet’ move – \texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g1--
h2!!, with the idea to follow with \texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g2-\texttt{g}3.
Black is totally helpless against that
threat. For example, in case of: 20...
\texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d6 21.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f5!, or 20...\texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e5 21.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f5 \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xf5
22.g3+ White wins on the spot. I think
I played quite well until that moment,
but here I made a serious imprecision
and although I did not let the win slip
away altogether, my opponent had a
chance to resist quite resiliently for
much longer...

\textbf{20.\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g3?! \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xb3 21.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f3+ \texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h5 22.}
\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5+ \texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h6 23.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f5+ \texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f4 24.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xf4+
\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5 25.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xg5+ \texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g7 26.axb3 \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xf5
27.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xd8 c5 28.\texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c7 \texttt{\textsubscript{b}}6

Or 28...\texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c6 29.\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5 \texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e8. This end-
game without a pawn is still hopeless
for Black despite the opposite coloured
bishops present on the board. White
can easily advance his connected
passed pawns on the kingside, just like
it happened in the game, though...

There still followed:
\textbf{29.\texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d1 \texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c6 30.\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5 \texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e8 31.\texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d6}
\texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c5 32.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f6+ \texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g8 33.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e6 34.
\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5 \texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c8 35.f4 \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xb3 36.\texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e5 \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}a5
37.\texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e4 \texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f8 38.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f6+ \texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f7 39.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xb7
\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g8 40.\texttt{\textsubscript{g}}g5+ \texttt{\textsubscript{e}}e7 41.\texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h6 \texttt{\textsubscript{d}}d7 42.
\texttt{f}5 \texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c4 43. \texttt{f}6+ \texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f8 44.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f4 \texttt{\textsubscript{c}}c5
45.\texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h7+ \texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f7 46.\texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xe5 \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xg4 47.
\texttt{hxg4} \texttt{\textsubscript{a}}xg4+ 48.\texttt{\textsubscript{f}}f2 a5 and Black
resigned without waiting for the quite
evident follow-up – 49.\texttt{\textsubscript{h}}h5.

\textbf{9}

\textbf{D13}

\textbf{Baburin – Dreev}

56\textsuperscript{th} USSR Ch (1/2-final), Gorky 1989

There were Championships in ev-
ery republic constituting a part of the USSR. In the Russian Federation (which later turned into Russia after the dissolution of the Soviet Union) there were Championships as well, but they hardly ever attracted the strongest players. There were not enough international tournaments however and grandmasters participated often in the Championships of the different republics, which among everything else were qualification tournaments for the Championship of the USSR. In November 1989, in the city of Gorky (now that city is named Nizhny Novgorod) there was organized the Championship of the Russian Federation as a round-robin with 14 participants. I took the bronze medal with a result 8 ½ points “+4”, half a point behind Semen Dvoiris. Alexey Vizhmanavin played just brilliantly and he became the Champion with 10 points.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.cxd5 cxd5
4.d3 c3 f6 5.f3

In case of 5.f4, White must consider 5... wb6.

5... c6 6.f4 e6 7.e3

We have played one of the lines of the exchange variation of the Slav Defence. It looks like White does not risk anything in that position and after the attractive moves 7.d3, or 7.h3, his prospects seem to be superior. Things are far from simple, though...

7... h5

(diagram)

This interesting move leads to a complicated situation and it was played and quite successfully at that by the sixth World Champion Mikhail Botvinnik at those times... He was a player with an active positional style and he was just brilliant in his capabilities to complicate some quite simple positions with Black, right after the opening, in order to play them for a win. I am going to quote a magnificent classic example of his treatment of that variation in a training game – T.Petrosian – Botvinnik, USSR 1952, which followed with: 8.g5 wb6 9.a3 h6 10.h4 g5 11.g3 g3 12.g3 g7 13.d3 d8! 14.h2?! h5 15.e1 d7 16.b5 d8! 17.f1 g4 18.d2 e5 and Black seized the initiative.

8.g5

White’s other possibility here is – 8.e5.

8... wb6 9.b5

This move is no doubt the best for White and he is trying to create maximal problems for his opponent with it. V.Kron is his game with White against me in the same tournament tried here 9.b1, but after 9...h6 10.h4 g5 11.d2 g7 12.g3 f5, he did not achieve anything much and later, following the dubious line: 13.e5?! xe5 14.dxe5 g7 15.e4 e7 16.exd5 exd5 17.b5+ f8 18.0–0 f5, I even managed to obtain the advantage with Black.
In case of 9.\textit{d}d2, Black can counter with the standard reaction: 9...h6 10.\textit{h}h4 g5 11.\textit{g}g3 \textit{x}xg3 12.hxg3 \textit{g}g7 and his position is quite promising.

9...h6 10.\textit{h}h4 \textit{d}d7

It would have been a serious imprecision for Black to follow with 10...g5, due to 11.\textit{e}e5! and White maintains a dangerous initiative – 11...\textit{f}f6 12.\textit{g}g3.

11.0–0 \textit{d}d6!?  
After 11...g5 12.\textit{x}c6 \textit{x}c6 13.\textit{e}e5, White is clearly better.

12.e4

That is White's most energetic possibility. His alternative is: 12.\textit{e}e5 \textit{x}e5 13.dxe5 g6, but it leads to an approximately equal position, because in case of 14.g4, Black has the powerful argument – 14...g5!

12...0–0

I had in mind a positional pawn-sacrifice, while I played that move. Of course, it was possible to follow with the less risky line 12...\textit{f}f4, but not 12...de4, because of 13.d5!

13.exd5 exd5 14.\textit{e}e5 \textit{xe}5

It is too bad for Black to continue with: 14...\textit{x}e5 15.dxe5 \textit{x}b5, due to: 16.\textit{x}d5! \textit{a}a6 (or 16...\textit{c}c5 17.exd6 \textit{xf}1 18.\textit{x}h5) 17.\textit{e}e1++

15.dxe5 \textit{f}4 16.\textit{g}g3 \textit{e}e6 17.\textit{xd}5 \textit{fd}8

I had some compensation for the pawn and even if it had not been quite sufficient objectively from the practical point of view, White's game is much more difficult here.

18.\textit{e}e4

18.a4!?

18...\textit{ed}4 19.a4 \textit{f}f5 20.\textit{h}h4?!

It would have been more reliable for White to try: 20.\textit{e}e3 a6 21.\textit{x}c6 bxc6, with some compensation.

20...a6 21.\textit{c}c4

After: 21.\textit{x}c6 bxc6, my position would have been even slightly better.

21...\textit{xb}2 22.\textit{d}d5

My opponent gave back his extra pawn and he evidently intended to seize the initiative with that active maneuver.

22...\textit{e}6

This is a very solid move. It was also interesting for Black to follow with: 22...\textit{b}5 23.\textit{a}a2 \textit{e}e2+! 24.\textit{h}h1 \textit{x}g3+ 25.\textit{x}g3 \textit{x}e5 (25...\textit{d}d4 26.\textit{xf}6+ \textit{h}h8 27.\textit{h}h5 g6 or 26.\textit{e}e3 bxc4 27.\textit{xf}5 \textit{x}e5 28.\textit{xf}h6+ \textit{f}f8 29.\textit{f}f3 \textit{w}d5) 26.axb5 axb5 27.\textit{x}e5 \textit{x}e5 28.\textit{xa}8 \textit{x}a8 29.\textit{xb}5.

23.\textit{ab}1 \textit{a}a3 24.\textit{e}e3 \textit{ab}8 25.\textit{f}4
My opponent was in a terrible time-pressure here and he made a grave blunder. The correct defence for him would have been: 25.\( \text{Ka1} \) \( \text{Cc5} \), but Black would still preserve the edge.  
\[ 25...\text{xc4} \ 26.\text{xc4} \text{xa4} \]

Now, White is helpless against the threat \( \text{Ke2} \) and he resigned.

This game proved once again the tremendous importance of the psychological factor in the fight over the board. White had an extra pawn indeed, but he had great difficulties defending, instead of being able to attack or develop some initiative.

and that was a real holiday for chess then. Chess fans could watch the play of the grandmasters there (there was no Internet transmission yet!) and they could also participate in simultaneous displays and they could attend chess lectures. I remember that the exhibition of the chess-computer “Mephisto” attracted enormous interest. Naturally, nobody suspected then what tremendous level of playing quality the computers would achieve later! As far as I remember from the publications in the media, the tournament was visited by at least 30 thousand spectators. All that seems almost unbelievable now. After 9 rounds Sergey Dolmatov took first place alone with 7 points. I had 1½ points out of the first 2 rounds and in the third round I played against Zurab Azmaiparashvili. After my win in that encounter, the rest of my games ended in draws and I finished with “+2”, sharing 11th to 40th places.

\[ 1.d4 \text{g6} \ 2.e4 \text{d6} \ 3.\text{c3} \text{g7} \ 4.\text{g5}? \]

The idea of this move was popularized in the past by the outstanding Estonian grandmaster Paul Keres.

The qualification tournament of the GMA for the World Cup 1991-1992 was acknowledged at that time to be the strongest open tournament in history. There were 128 participants and 85 grandmasters among them. It was played in the cinema-concert hall “Izmailovo”. The conditions for the spectators were just wonderful.

\[ 4...\text{f6} \]
Black transposes to the Pirc-Ufimzev Defence with this move. He has tried in the tournament practice some other a bit awkward moves like: 4...c6, 4...a6 and 4...h6. It is not good for Black to play here 4...c5, since White can counter that with the excellent recommendation of Paul Petrovich – 5.dxc5 _ads5 6.\_e2 _ads5 7.\_b5!, and Black loses after 7...e6? 8.\_b4 \_c6 9.\_b5+–

Actually, the position that we are discussing arises usually after the following order of moves: 1.e4 d6 2.d4 \_f6 3.\_c3 g6 4.\_g5. GM Azmaiparashvili used to be the world-renowned expert of that opening at the time when this game was played. Only a few might not remember his famous victory with Black against Anatolij Karpov in the 50eth jubilee Championship of the USSR in the year 1983. Meanwhile, in our home-preparation with my coach IM Alexander Filipenko, we noted that despite the fact that Zurab played that opening often and quite successfully at that, this particular system, including the active move of White’s bishop, had been tested extremely rarely, both after: 1.d4 g6 2.e4 d6 3.\_c3 \_g7, as well as after the other move-order: 1.e4 d6 2.d4 \_f6 3.\_c3 g6. On the other hand my coach was and continues to be a real connoisseur of that super-aggressive system... Accordingly; our preparation lasted for not more than 40 minutes, despite the fact that I was going to play it for the first time in my life...

5.\_f4!

This is White’s most active move. In general, he plays more often here 5.\_d2, but the positions arising after: 5...h6 6.\_h4 (or 6.\_f4 g5 7.\_g3 \_h5) 6...g5 7.\_g3 \_h5, or 6.\_e3 \_g4 7.\_f4 e5 are favourable for Black.

5...c6

It is too dubious for Black to try the seemingly active move 5...c5, because after 6.e5! White’s initiative is very dangerous.

Forexample in the game A. Filipenko – M. Gurevich, Moscow 1983, there followed 6...\_h5 (It is worse for Black to play: 6...\_d4?, because of 7.\_exf6 \_xf6 8.\_xd4 \_e7+ 9.\_c2 \_c6 10.\_c3 and his compensation for the piece is insufficient; after 6...de 7.de, White maintains a clear positional advantage; in case of 6...\_bd7, Black has no suitable way to avoid the forced line: 7.ed \_f6 8.\_h4 ed 9.\_e2 \_f8 10.\_f3 \_c6 11.0–0–0 and White’s position is evidently superior.) 7.dxc5 dxe5 8.\_xd8+ \_xd8 9.0–0+ \_d7 10.\_xe5 h6 11.\_e3 (11.\_h4!?) 11...\_xe5 12.\_d5 \_c6 13.\_f3 \_g7 14.\_b5 \_d6?! (This is a mistake by Black, but his position is difficult anyway.) 15.\_f6 \_xf6 16.\_d2 \_e8 17.\_hd1 \_f5 18.\_d4! \_c8 19.\_xf6 \_xf6 20.\_d4 and White’s positional edge was overwhelming.

Black cannot solve his problems in the opening with the inclusion of the moves: 5...h6 6.\_h4 – and only then 6...c5: 7.e5 \_h5 8.dxc5 \_xf4! (It is too dubious for Black to continue with: 8...\_dxe5 9.\_xd8+ \_xd8 10.0–0+ \_d7 11.\_xe5 \_xe5 12.\_d5, because White is once again clearly better, due to the vulnerability of Black’s king.) 9.\_xd6 g5 10.\_f2. Contemporary theory evaluates the arising position as approximately equal, but I think that
is not quite correct, since Black’s compensation is not sufficient.

Finally, in case of 5...0–0, Black should consider the possibility – 6.e5!? – but still I believe that the most precise move for White is – 6.\texttt{\textdollar}d2!.

But not 6.\texttt{\textdollar}f3 c5! – and Black obtains an excellent counterplay, because he can counter 7.dxc5 with 7...\texttt{\texta}a5, and 7.e5 – with 7...\texttt{\textc}xd4 8.exf6 (8.\texttt{\textd}xd4 \texttt{\textc}c6) 8...exf6. Following 6.\texttt{\textd}d2, Black’s relatively best line is – 6...c6 (6...c5 7.dxc5) 7.\texttt{\textf}f3 b5 8.\texttt{\textd}d3 and there arises a well-familiar theoretical position. The same situation arose by a transposition of moves in our game too, though...

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image1.png}
\end{figure}

\textbf{6.\texttt{\textd}d2}

In case of 6.\texttt{\textd}f3, White should worry about 6...\texttt{\textb}b6 and here he must practically sacrifice a pawn in order to fight for the opening advantage – 7.\texttt{\textd}d2 \texttt{\textb}xb2 8.\texttt{\textb}b1 \texttt{\texta}a3, obtaining after 9.\texttt{\textd}d3 a quite sufficient compensation for it, indeed.

\textbf{6...b5 7.\texttt{\textd}d3 0–0 8.\texttt{\textf}f3 \texttt{\textg}4}

Following some mutual tricks – there arose a well known theoretical position on the board (it was a true tabia in that opening then...) and the main line for White here used to be considered the move 9.0–0. However, after 9...\texttt{\textb}b6, tournament practice has shown that Black has no problems whatsoever.

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image2.png}
\end{figure}

\textbf{9.e5!}

This move is not a novelty yet, but still it was quite seldom played at the times...

\textbf{9...b4 10.\texttt{\texte}e2 \texttt{\textx}xf3}

It is worse for Black to follow with 10...\texttt{\textd}d5 11.0–0 and White dominates in the centre.

\textbf{11.\texttt{\textx}xf3 \texttt{\textd}d5 12.\texttt{\textc}c4}

This is already a novelty. White had played before only 12.ed, or 12.\texttt{\texth}h4, after which he never achieved anything substantial. Black should not fear the move 12.0–0 either, at least because of 12...\texttt{\texta}a5!? . The bishop-move in fact opens a new page in the theory and that position is presently one of the most critical in this system of the Pirc–Ufimtsev Defence.

\textbf{12...a5 13.0–0–0}

(diagram)

\textbf{13...\texttt{\textd}7}

GM Azmaiparashvili was faced with a new idea in the opening and he failed to find the best continuation. A whole seven years (!) after our game, the talented IM Igor Zakharevich,
at the Russian Team Championship (Azov 1996), found against me the best plan for Black i.e. 13...f6! 14.exf6 exf6 15.\(\text{\text{h}}\)h4 \(\text{\text{h}}\)h6! 16.\(\text{\text{f}}\)f2 (White’s attempt at an improvement of the variation after the move 16.\(\text{\text{g}}\)g3, was in fact fruitless, because following: 16...\(\text{\text{d}}\)d7 17.h4 \(\text{\text{b}}\)b6 18.\(\text{\text{d}}\)d3 a4, in the game Kobalia – Zakharevich, Ekaterinburg 1999, Black had a very good game.) 16...\(\text{\text{d}}\)d7 17.h4 \(\text{\text{b}}\)b6 18.\(\text{\text{d}}\)d3 \(\text{\text{a}}\)a4. (After 18...\(\text{\text{e}}\)e8 19.\(\text{\text{b}}\)b1! White still has the initiative; later in the game Ulibin – Zakharevich Elista 1995, there followed: 19...\(\text{\text{h}}\)h8 20.\(\text{\text{d}}\)dg1 a4 21.h5 g5 22.fxg5 \(\text{\text{a}}\)xg5 23.f4 \(\text{\text{h}}\)h6 24.\(\text{\text{a}}\)a1 \(\text{\text{w}}\)d7?!) 25.c4! bx\(\text{\text{c}}\)3 26.bxc3 a3 27.c4 \(\text{\text{e}}\)e7 28.d5 \(\text{\text{a}}\)a4 29.\(\text{\text{c}}\)c3 cxd5 30.\(\text{\text{d}}\)d4! and White’s threats were very dangerous. In case of 18...a4 – when White’s bishop is on the f2-square, that move is not so effective, while now it is possible – there follows: 19.h5 g5 20.\(\text{\text{g}}\)g3!.) In answer to 18...\(\text{\text{a}}\)a4, I played the attractive move 19.h5?!, which suddenly proved to be a serious imprecision. After: 19...\(\text{\text{a}}\)ac3! 20.hxg6 \(\text{\text{a}}\)xe2+, I already had to think about equalizing: 21.\(\text{\text{w}}\)xe2 \(\text{\text{a}}\)xf4 22.gxh7+ \(\text{\text{h}}\)h8; 22.\(\text{\text{c}}\)c4+ d5; 21.\(\text{\text{b}}\)b1 \(\text{\text{c}}\)c3+ 22.bxc3 \(\text{\text{a}}\)xf4 – and I was clearly worse. I managed somehow to save that game, though, but I am not so excited to think about it, mildly speaking...

Still, I do not think that Zakharevich’s improvement has buried the whole system... I believe that instead of 19.h5?! White can try 19.\(\text{\text{b}}\)b1!? with the threat h4-h5, while in case of 19...\(\text{\text{b}}\)b8, White can proceed with his positional plan with the prophylactic move 20.\(\text{\text{a}}\)a1, removing his king to a safer place. White thus has once again the threat h4-h5 on his agenda and so he maintains somewhat better chances. By the way, I still think that the really important theoretical disputes in this system belong to the future.

Now, let us go back to my game with Azmaiparashvili...

**14.f5!**

This is an original plan – White ignores the material losses and he begins attacking Black’s king-shelter with his doubled f-pawns, which finally leads to success!

**14..\(\text{\text{w}}\)xf5**

Black does not have much to hope for after 14...\(\text{\text{d}}\)xe5 – following 15.fxg6 hxg6 16.h4 e6 17.h5 \(\text{\text{b}}\)b6 18.\(\text{\text{d}}\)d3 \(\text{\text{w}}\)d5 19.\(\text{\text{b}}\)b1, White’s attack is extremely powerful, as in the game Yakovich – Beim, Leeuwarden 1994.

**15.\(\text{\text{g}}\)g3?!**

White maintains his initiative with this strong move. Naturally, I saw the variation: 15.\(\text{\text{x}}\)xd5 cxd5 16.\(\text{\text{a}}\)xe7 \(\text{\text{c}}\)c8 17.\(\text{\text{x}}\)xd6, but I did not like to surrender the initiative to my opponent...

**15...\(\text{\text{e}}\)e6 16.f4!**

I had sacrificed a pawn already...

Now comes another one...

**16...\(\text{\text{d}}\)xe5**

In case of 16...h6 17.f5?! gxf5 18.\(\text{\text{f}}\)f4,
White’s compensation for the two sacrificed pawns is more than sufficient.

17.f5! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}\textcolor{red}{d6}}

After 17...gx5?! 18.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}h5}, White’s attack is probably irresistible.

18.fxg6 hxg6

\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{W}}}g8++}. His relatively best defence would have been the move – 19...f5, but even then after 20.h4, White’s attack would have still been extremely dangerous...

20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}f5!}

19.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}dg1!}

That is a precise positional move, which helps White preserve all the advantages of his position.

The straightforward attempt – 19.h4, would have been much weaker, because of: 19...exd4 (or 19...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}b6)!

20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}d3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xd4 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}e3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{C}}c4) 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}dg1} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}e3} etc...

19...exd4?! 

This is evidently a miscalculation. My attack now is running unopposed, but it was hard from easy for Black to find the right move. He would not have saved the day, for example with: 19...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}b6 20.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}d3} f5 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xf5!} gx5 22.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}h6} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}f7 23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xg7?} (23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xf5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xd4) 23...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xg7 24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xf5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{C}}d8} (Or 24...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}f6 25.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xe5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xf5 26.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}d8+–; 24...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xd4 25.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xg7+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xg7 26.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}g5+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}f8 27.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}e6} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}f4+ 28.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xf4+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xf4} 29.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}e1} and White checkmates unavoidably.) 25.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xg7+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xg7 26.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}g5+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}f8 27.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}g1} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}e8} 28.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xe5} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}d5 29.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xd7+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xd7} (29...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xd7 30.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}d1}) 30.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}d6+ \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}d8 31.

20...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e5 21.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xe3} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xe3}?!

It is quite possible that by playing 19...exd4, Azmaiparashvili had based all his hopes on that particular move. He could have prolonged his agony though, with the line: 21...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}g7 22.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}h6. Now, his position crumbles like a paper fortress...

22.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{A}}xe3} dxe3 23.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}d3! \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xg7}

24.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}xf7!} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}h5 25.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xg6+}. Black resigned.

The move 25...\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}xf7} will be countered by White with: 26.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}f1+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}e8 27.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}xf7+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}xf7 28.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}d8+} \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}f7 29.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{W}}}g8#}

11

Pliester – Dreev

New York (open) 1989

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{C}}}c3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}}f6 4.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{F}}}f3 e6 5.e3 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}}bd7 6.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{D}}}d3 dxc4 7.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{C}}}xc4 b5 8.\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{E}}}e2 \textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{B}}}b7 9.e4 b4 10.e5 bxc3 11.exf6
We are playing a well known vari-
ation of the Meran system.

11...cxb2
I was in a fighting spirit that day and
making that move I decided to enter
a very complicated and double edged
variation: 12.fxg7 bxa1\% 13.gxh8\%,
although that was connected with a
great degree of risk. It was more solid
and reliable for Black to play: 11...\%xf6
12.bxc3 \%d6, since he would have no
problems concerning equality. Still, in
that case, (the position is rather sim-
ple) Black would have no chances to
seize the initiative outright...

12.fxg7 bxa1\%!
The calmer line: 12...\%xg7 13.\%xb2,
is not so good for Black at all, as con-
temporary tournament practices show,
because his inferior pawn-structure
guarantees White a slight positional
advantage.

13.gxh8\%
have a crushing attack and White would probably be defenseless.

20...\(e_8\) 21.\(\text{d}1\) \(\text{e}4\) 22.\(\text{x}e4\)

The exchange of queens is forced.

22...\(\text{x}e4\)

Now, the game enters the technical stage of a realization of an extra pawn. My opponent had only negligent practical chances to make a draw.

23.\(\text{g}5\) \(\text{d}5\) 24.\(f3\) \(f5\) 25.\(\text{x}h7?\)

White loses quickly after that move. He had better defend with 25.\(\text{f}7\), but even after that his chances to save the game were quite minimal indeed.

25...\(\text{e}7\) 26.\(\text{a}6+\) \(\text{c}7\) 27.\(\text{f}4+\) \(\text{d}8\) 28.\(h4?!\) \(\text{x}h4\) 29.\(g3?\) \(\text{x}g3\) 30.\(\text{g}5+\) \(\text{c}7\) 31.\(\text{g}2\) \(\text{f}4\) and White resigned.

12

Ruban – Dreev

USSR Ch Under 26, Tbilisi 1989

1.d4 \(d5\) 2.c4 \(c6\) 3.\(\text{f}3\) \(\text{f}6\) 4.\(\text{c}3\) \(e6\) 5.\(\text{cxd}5\) \(\text{exd}5\) 6.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{e}7\) 7.\(\text{g}5\)

7...\(g6!\)

This is no doubt Black's best move, which provides him with excellent chances to equalize without too much of an effort, because of the threat \(\text{c}8-\text{f}5\). Entering after: 7...0-0 8.\(e3\) \(\text{bd}7\) 9.\(\text{d}3\) \(\text{e}8\) 10.0-0 \(\text{f}8\), the Carlsbad variation would be less purposeful, because despite the fact that Black's position is solid enough, the long-term world-experience indicates that he would be still too far from equality.

8.\(e4?!\)

That is White's most active resource in his fight for the opening advantage. Black has no problems whatsoever after: 8.\(e3\) \(\text{xf}5\) 9.\(\text{d}3\) (In case of 9.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{b}6\), I believe that Black's position is already a bit superior.) 9...\(\text{xd}3\) 10.\(\text{xd}3\) \(\text{bd}7!\) (Black does not permit even the slightest hint of White's initiative in the line: 10...0-0 11.\(\text{xf}6!?\) \(\text{xf}6\) 12.\(b4\).) and Black equalizes easily after 11.0-0 0-0, as well as after: 11.\(\text{h}6\) \(\text{g}4!?\) 12.\(\text{g}7\) \(\text{g}8\) 13.\(\text{e}5\) \(\text{gxe}5\) 14.\(\text{xe}5\) (or 14.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{c}7\) and Black is even better) 14...\(\text{xe}5\) 15.\(\text{xe}5\) \(\text{c}7\).

8...\(\text{d}xe4\)

It is much worse here for Black to follow with 8...\(\text{d}xe4?!\), due to 9.\(\text{xe}7\) \(\text{xe}7\) (but not 9...\(\text{xe}7\) 10.\(\text{xd}5\)+) 10.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{dxe}4\) 11.\(\text{xe}4+\) \(\text{f}8\) 12.\(\text{c}4\) and White maintains a slight, but stable advantage.

9.\(\text{xf}6\) \(\text{xf}6\) 10.\(\text{xe}4+\) \(\text{e}7\)

This is the most reliable answer. The move 10...\(f8\) is more fashionable nowadays and it leads to complicated, double-edges positions. Black has more chances to seize the initiative after that, in comparison to 10...\(\text{e}7\), but the risk for him to end up in a worse position is considerably greater too.

11.\(\text{c}4\) 0-0!?
Black's other possibility here is 11...\textit{xf}5 12.\textit{wxe}7+ \textit{exe}7 13.0-0-0 \textit{d}d8 14.\textit{he}1+ \textit{gf}8, with an approximately equal position.

12.0-0

It is more precise for White to play here: 12.\textit{wxe}7 \textit{exe}7 13.0-0-0 \textit{d}d7, entering a complex and roughly equal endgame.

12...\textit{wb}4!

Now, my chances are not worse to say the least.

13.\textit{ab}3 \textit{xf}5 14.\textit{gf}4 \textit{d}d7 15.\textit{fe}1 a5!

This is a good positional move, which improves my set-up. The threat a5-a4 is rather unpleasant for White.

16.g4

My adversary opted for this sharp and somewhat risky advance, which compromises his pawn-structure on the kingside.

In case of 16.\textit{de}4?! a4, Black obtains a very good counterplay. Now, after: 17.\textit{xf}6+, then 17...\textit{xf}6 18.\textit{c}2 \textit{d}d5; if 17.d5, then 17...\textit{g}7, while following: 17.\textit{de}5, Black's simplest defence is 17...\textit{xe}5 (The position is slightly better for Black too after: 17...\textit{g}7 18.\textit{xf}7+ \textit{h}8 19.\textit{xd}7 \textit{xd}7.) 18.\textit{xe}5 \textit{w}e7 and White will have to try to save the game in a variation with a pawn down – 19.\textit{f}6+ (It is too bad for him to play 19.\textit{c}4, because of 19...\textit{w}xe5 20.\textit{w}xe5 \textit{exe}5 21.\textit{f}6+ \textit{g}7 22.\textit{h}5+ \textit{xh}5 23.\textit{exe}5 \textit{gf}6.) 19...\textit{xf}6 20.\textit{exf}6 \textit{xf}6 21.\textit{c}2, or 21.\textit{xa}4 \textit{xb}2.

White could have tried here the seemingly passive line: 16.\textit{ac}1 a4 17.\textit{c}2 \textit{e}6 18.\textit{b}1, which was leading to an approximately equal position and it would have been his most reliable continuation, indeed.

16...\textit{e}6

17.\textit{xe}6

White should not expect anything promising out of the variation; 17.\textit{xe}6 \textit{fxe}6 18.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{h}8 19.\textit{xd}7, because of: 19...\textit{xb}2!? 20.\textit{c}1 (or 20.\textit{c}1?! \textit{g}7 21.\textit{d}2 \textit{xd}2 22.\textit{xd}2 \textit{d}8 23.\textit{e}6 \textit{fe}8) 20...\textit{xc}1+ 21.\textit{xc}1 \textit{d}8 22.\textit{e}6 \textit{xd}4 23.\textit{xd}4 \textit{xd}4 and despite White's minute material advantage (he has a knight and a bishop against a rook and a pawn) this endgame is preferable for Black, because of his superior piece-coordination and his pawn-majority on the queenside. In fact, what was most important – the initiative would have been definitely on my side in that case. Black's compensation for the pawn would have
been sufficient too in the line: 19... 
\[ \text{We7 20.\text{De5 Gg8 21.Wd2 Fad8 22.\text{Ed1 Fxd7 23.\text{Exd7 Wxd7.}} \]

17...\text{fxe6 18.\text{We3 Lae8 19.\text{De4 Gg7 20.Fad1 Db6 21.De5 Dd5}}}

Black's position is already slightly better, because of the weakness of the f4-square in White's camp.

22.\text{Wa3}

My opponent wishes to trade queens, compromising his pawn-structure on the queenside and that is easily understandable. With queens present on the board, after 22.\text{We2 Qf4}, threatening \text{Ed8}, White's position has no good prospects and its defense becomes extremely difficult.

22...\text{Wf4 23.h3 Wxa3 24.bxa3 Fxe4!??}

It seemed attractive for Black to play: 24...\text{Fxe5 25.dxe5 Ff3}, but after: 26.Bb1 We7 27.Bb3, he does not achieve anything substantial, while variations of the type: 26...\text{Fxb3 27.Bxb3 Eaxb3 28.Qf6+ Qxf6 29. exf6, or 26...\text{Fxb6 27.Fxb6 Eaxb6 28.Ff6+ Qxf6 29.exf6 Ff8 30.Fxe6 are quite unsafe for me, mildly speaking...}}

25.\text{Fxe4 Dc3 26.De1 Dxe4 27. Fxe4 a4!}

Black fixes White's a3-pawn on a dark square and it might turn later into a juicy target after a move like \text{Gg7-f8.}

28.\text{Dd3 Hf7 29.\text{Cc5 b5 30.\text{Df1?}}}

This is a serious mistake and my opponent's position becomes extremely difficult after that. He should have played 30.f4, preventing e6-e5 and although after 30...\text{Dg8}, my prospects would have remained clearly superior, he could have offered some more tough resistance to the end of the game.

30...\text{e5!}

This move literally destroys White's position. It is not quite all over yet, but he is practically beyond salvation...

31.\text{Dc7}

After 31.dxe5 \text{Dxe5 32.Dxe5 Dxe5}, the endgame with a bishop against a knight is easily winning for Black, because of the chronic weakness of White's a3-pawn.

31...\text{De6 32.dxe5}

Or 32.Dh1! Dd7 33.Df5+ Dd5--+

32...Dd7?!?

I was in a serious time-pressure here and I made a great imprecision, which provided my opponent with good chances of survival. Instead, I had to follow with: 32...\text{Db8! 33.Da5}
Ea8 34..Db7 Dd5 35.Ef4 Dxe5 36.Ef7 c5 and the victory would have been quite close in sight.

33.Dd8+!

This is an excellent defensive resource!

33...Dd5 34.Ee1 Dxe5 35.Ed1+?

Here, my opponent overlooked in his time-trouble the excellent opportunity to continue with 35.f4! and that would have provided him with a lifeline in the variation: 35...Df6 (or 35...Dd6 36.Ed1+ Dc5 37.Ec1+ Dd5 38.Ed1+Dd4 39.Ee1+)

37.Dxc6 Ec7 38.Eb4 Ec3 39.Ee1+

Presently, White's position is already lost, because he cannot bring into action his "roaming" knight.

35...Dc5 36.Ec1+

36.Ee1 Dd6 37.f4 Df6 38.Ec1 c5++,

or 38.Exe7 Dxe7 39.Df7+ Dd5++

36...Dd6 37.Exc6+

Now, White is practically forced to give up a piece, since the line: 37.Ed1+ Dc7 38.h4 c5 39.Ed5 Dd4 is completely unacceptable for him.

37...Dd7 38.Ec5 Dxd8 39.Exb5 Dd6 40.Ed5 Dc7 41.Ed4 Dc5 42.Exa4 Ef7 43.f4 De3 44.f5

In case of 44.De2, Black has the resource – 44...Exf4!++

44...gxf5 45.gxf5 Exf5+

Naturally, this position is winning for Black, since he has an extra piece for two pawns. I had to overcome some technical difficulties, indeed, mostly because I had to avoid the exchange of the rooks. In case I had allowed that – the position would have become immediately drawish, despite my extra bishop. This is what my opponent had based his practical chances on. Still, generally speaking, what followed to the end of the game was in fact just a matter of endgame technique...

46.Eg2 h5 47.h4 Dc6 48.Ee4 Dc5 49.a4 Dd6 50.Ee6 Da5 51.Eh6 Dd7 52.Eh3 De7 53.Eg3 De8 54.Ee6 Exa4 55.Ee5 Eg4+ 56.Ef3 Exh4 57.Eg3 Ef8 58.a4 Ef6 59.Ef5 Dg7 60.a5 Eg4+ 61.Eh3 Dg6 62.Ec5 Ea4 63.Eg3 Ea3+ 64.Eg2 h4 65.Dh2 Dg5 66.Ed5 Df4+ 67.Eh1 Ea2!

But not 67...h3? 68.Ed1=.

68.Eb5 Dc7 69.Ec5 Exa5 70.Eb5 Dc3 71.Ec5 Ef6 72.Eb5 Dg5 73.Ec5 Eh5 74.Ec4 Ef6 75.Eb4 Ed2 76.Ea4 Dg5 77.Eb4 De5 78.Ec4 Ef4 79.Eb4 Ed1+ 80.De2 Dg4 0–1

13

Dreev – E.Geller
Moscow 1989

This was a game with the legendary grandmaster Efim Petrovich Geller in the Moscow International round-robin Tournament. I took first place with 7½ points out of 11. Alexey Vizhmanavin remained half a point behind me. Efim Petrovich shared 3–4 places with V. Kotronias with 6½ points out of 11.
1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗f3 0–0 6.♗e2 e5 7.0–0 ♜c6 8.d5 ♜e7 9.♗d2

The line 9.b4 is more fashionable, but 9.♗d2 is also critical.

9...a5 10.♖b1

White has played more often here the move 10.a3, but I prefer 10.♖b1, since he enjoys greater variety of plans after that (naturally, it all depends on Black’s choice of move), while after 10.a3, White is more or less bound to proceed only with the plan with b4.

10...♗d7

That is a relatively seldom played line. It is much more popular for Black to continue here with 10...♘d7, but evidently Efim Petrovich, who is a world-renowned expert on the King’s Indian Defence, had a different opinion on the subject...

11.b3!?

The variation: 11.a3 a4 12.b4 axb3 13.axb3 b6 has been tested quite frequently in the tournament practice, but I was reluctant to play it. It did not suit my style, since it was too risky.

The move 11.b3!? seemed to me to be more flexible and solid.

11...♖c8

That move was quite fashionable at that moment. Its idea is to counter the standard 12.a3 with 12...♗b6 and after the thematic 13.b4 to continue with: 13...axb4 14.axb4 ♘a4, as it was played in the game Langeweg – E.Geller, Amsterdam 1974, in which after 15.♘c2 ♘xc3 16.♗xc3 ♗h6!? Black equalized easily. All that emphasizes the fact that my opponent was well-familiar with the scheme with 11...♘c8. In fact, he was one of the main exponents of the entire plan connected with that line. I have managed, however to find the drawbacks of the move 11...♘c8 – it discoordinates Black’s pieces a bit (the knight on e8 is awkwardly placed indeed...) and most of all – Black does not control sufficiently the e5-square in the diagrammed position! He cannot support it with ♘f6–d7, because the d7-square has been occupied by the bishop.

Therefore I continued with:

12.♗b2!?

This powerful positional move is a novelty! White refrains from the schematic idea a3 and b4 and he is threatening to develop a powerful initiative on the kingside by playing f4.

12...♗h6

Naturally, Black is trying to prevent radically the pawn-advance f2–f4.

13.♘c2 ♘h5!?

This activity is not justified, since it weakens Black’s kingside. He had better opt for the more modest line 13...♗e8, but even then I would have retained after 14.♗e1 a slight but stable positional advantage thanks to my superior piece-coordination.

We have witnessed a similar idea
with the move $\text{h}5$ in the famous game Spassky – Fischer, Reykjavik 1972, in which after 1.d4 $\text{Qf}6$ 2.c4 e6 3.$\text{Qf}3$ c5 4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.$\text{Qc}3$ g6 7.$\text{Qd}2$ $\text{Qbd}7$ 8.e4 $\text{Qg}7$ 9.$\text{Qe}2$ 0–0 10.0–0 $\text{Be}8$ 11.$\text{Qc}2$, Fischer suddenly played 11... $\text{h}5$!? but his attempt had been much more justified in that position.

14.$\text{Qxh}5$ gxh5 15.f4!?

That is the most active line for White; nevertheless it is connected with a positional exchange-sacrifice.

15...$\text{Qxf}4$ 16.$\text{Qxf}4$ exf4 17.$\text{Qe}2$

My compensation for the exchange is no doubt quite sufficient, due to the vulnerability of the dark squares on Black's kingside. My bishop on b2 is extremely powerful, since it dominates the a1–h8 diagonal. White has seized the initiative completely and Black's defence, particularly in a tournament game, is tremendously difficult.

17...$\text{Qg}5$ 18.$\text{Qf}3$ $\text{Qh}6$ 19.$\text{Qc}1$ $\text{Qg}4$

20.$\text{Qxf}4$ $\text{Qf}6$ 21.$\text{Qd}2$?!

White protects his knight on f4 and is threatening to deploy his bishop from c1 to b2, in order to organize a dangerous attack along the a1–h8 diagonal.

21...$\text{Qe}7$ 22.$\text{Qb}2$ $\text{Qh}6$ 23.$\text{Qc}3$ f6

It looks like Black has defended successfully, having neutralized the direct threats along the a1–h8 diagonal, but now he has new problems connected with the weakness of the e6-square. His position is clearly worse in a strategical aspect, despite the extra exchange.

24.$\text{Qc}1$ $\text{Qg}7$ 25.$\text{Qd}4$

25...$\text{Qg}6$?!

This is a serious mistake and it makes Black's situation quite difficult. It might look like blundering the exchange, but I believed Efim Petrovic had decided to give it back with the idea to simplify the position in the hope of equalizing after the transfer of his knight to the e5-square. Obviously, he had failed to notice that he would have serious problems connected with the vulnerability of his h5-pawn. He was understandably reluctant to defend passively the position without any bright prospects after: 25...$\text{Qf}7$

26.$\text{Qb}2$? $\text{Qh}6$ (It is too bad for Black to opt for 26...$\text{Qg}6$?, due to: 27.$\text{Qfe}6$

$\text{Qxe}6$ 28.$\text{Qxe}6$ $\text{Qh}6$ 29.$\text{Qc}1$ and White's position is easily winning.) 27.$\text{Qf}1$, but that would have been the least of evils, since his position would have remained still defensible.

26.$\text{Qfe}6$ $\text{Qxe}6$ 27.$\text{Qxe}6$ $\text{Qf}7$ 28.
\textit{\textbf{Game 14}}

\textbf{D47}

Aseev – Dreev

Zonal Tournament, Lviv 1990

The simplest road to victory is: 39.\textit{\textbf{We}}6+ \textit{\textbf{Wg}}3 (39...\textit{\textbf{Wxh}}4 40.\textit{\textbf{Wf}}6+ \textit{\textbf{Wg}}4 41.\textit{\textbf{Wf}}3+-) 40.\textit{\textbf{Wh}}3+ \textit{\textbf{Wf}}4 41.\textit{\textbf{Wf}}3+.

38.h4+! and Black resigned. After 38...\textit{\textbf{Wxh}}4 (38...\textit{\textbf{Wxh}}4 39.\textit{\textbf{We}}7+-) White wins with: 39.\textit{\textbf{Wf}}6+ \textit{\textbf{Wg}}4 40.\textit{\textbf{Wf}}3+, while after 38...\textit{\textbf{Wg}}4, his sim-
fashionable variations of the Meran system.

13.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}xd4} \)

My opponent chooses a sharp gambit line, which was introduced into practice by GM Jurij Razuvaev in 1987, three years before that game. The other possibility for White is the move – 13.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xel \), after which he protects his e-pawn, and it is played much more often, leading to complicated positions with mutual chances.

13...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}xe5!} \)

This is the most principled answer for Black. He must accept the pawn-sacrifice in this variation in order to obtain some active counterplay. Otherwise White will have a powerful initiative in a position with material equality.

It is just terrible for Black to play: 13...\(a6 \), because of: 14.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xe6! \) fxe6 15.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}h5+ \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{K}}e7 \) 16.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}g5+ \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xf6 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xf6+ \) and White's attack was overwhelming in the game Smagin – Sveshnikov, Sochi 1987. In the game Chernin – Kaidanov, Lviv 1987, there followed 13...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}c7 \), which seems to be rather passive and no doubt it contradicts the spirit of the active Meran system and after: 14.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e2 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{K}}e7 \) 15.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}d1 \) 0–0 16.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Af4}}} \)

\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Nd5}}} \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}g3 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xb6 \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xb6 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xb6 \) 19.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}b5?! \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}a6 \) 20.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e4! \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{G}}}6 \) 21.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}d6 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xd3 \) 22.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xd3 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Q}}}xd6 \) 23.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Exd6}}} \), White remained with a stable positional advantage.

In case of: 13...\(g6 \) 14.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}g4?! \), White maintains his initiative and the game Razuvaev – Bagirov, Jurmala 1987 continued with 14...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}g7 \) and after 15.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}g5! \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xe5?! \) 16.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xe6!! \) Black came under a crushing attack. The move 13...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}e7 \) seems to be much more reliable than 13...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}c7 \) and 13...\( g6 \), but still I believe that even then after 14.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}h5?! \) White's prospects are superior, because of his more active position.

14.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}b5+ \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}d7 \) 15.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}e1 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Ac8}}} \)

Contemporary theory considers this move to be indisputably the best for Black. Instead, it is bad for him to follow with 15...\( a6 \), because of 16.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}c6 \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}c7 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}xe6! \) fxe6 18.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}h5+–. \) The move 15...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}e7?! \) seems to be rather dubious because of the recommendation of GM A.Mihalchishin – 16.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{N}}}c6 \) and White's positional advantage is more than obvious.

16.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}h5 \) \( g6 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e5 \)

The other popular line for White is – 17.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e2 \), but the move in the game is no less fashionable.

17...\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}f6 \) 18.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Af3}}}?! \)

This is the only continuation for White to fight for the initiative. It is questionable for him to try: 18.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}e4?! \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Ac7}}} \); as well as 18.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{W}}}xf6?! \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Af5}}} \) 19.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Af5}}} \) \( \text{\textit{\textbf{Ag7}}} \), since his compensation for the pawn is practically non-existent in both cases.

Black should not worry too much about the rarely played move – 18.\( \text{\textit{\textbf{Af4}}} \). For example in the game Obuk-
hov – A.Filipenko, Perm 1988, there followed: 18...\(\texttt{\&}e7\) 19.\(\texttt{\&}a1\) 0–0?! 20.\(\texttt{\&}xd7\) \(\texttt{\&}xc1\) 21.\(\texttt{\&}xc1\) \(\texttt{\&}xe5\) 22.\(\texttt{\&}xe5\) \(\texttt{\&}f6\) and the position was approximately equal.

18...\(\texttt{\&}g7\)!

Presently, this move enjoys the reputation of Black's most solid and reliable line. Back then, when we played our game – that move was a novelty! Until this game, Black usually played here; 18...\(\texttt{\&}e7\) 19.\(\texttt{\&}h6\)!?, or 18...h6 19.\(\texttt{\&}f4\)!?; and White had a good compensation for the pawn in both cases.

19.\(\texttt{\&}g3\)!

This is a very serious mistake. My opponent was faced with a new idea in a complicated theoretical position and he failed to find the best solution. His best line would have been: 19.\(\texttt{\&}xd7\) + \(\texttt{\&}xd7\) 20.\(\texttt{\&}e2\), after which there would have arisen a complex double-edged fight. The contemporary practice shows however – Black's prospects are not worse at all.

19...\(\texttt{\&}d8\) 20.\(\texttt{\&}e5\) \(\texttt{\&}xe5\) 21.\(\texttt{\&}xe5\) 0–0

As a result of White's mistake on move 19, his compensation for the pawn is already insufficient; nevertheless the vulnerability of the dark squares on Black's kingside still provides White with some hopes for a successful defence.

22.\(\texttt{\&}d4\)!

White should not rely too much on a favourable outcome for him in the endgame after: 22.\(\texttt{\&}xd7\) \(\texttt{\&}xd7\) 23.\(\texttt{\&}h6\) \(\texttt{\&}f6\) 24.\(\texttt{\&}xe6+\) \(\texttt{\&}xe6\) 25.\(\texttt{\&}xe6\), because of 25...\(\texttt{\&}fd8\)! and Black's advantage is evident, because he can counter the attractive move for White – 26.\(\texttt{\&}ae1\), with the powerful argument 26...\(\texttt{\&}c2\)!?, threatening \(\texttt{\&}b7\)-\(\texttt{\&}c6\). I believe White's best move here was 22.\(\texttt{\&}e2\), maintaining the tension.

22...\(\texttt{\&}f6\)! 23.\(\texttt{\&}xa7\)?

White was greedy to gobble Black's a-pawn, but that proved to be his decisive mistake. After: 23.\(\texttt{\&}d3\) \(\texttt{\&}c6\) Black holds on to his solid extra pawn, but still it would have been a long road to its realization. Now, the placement of White's queen on the a7-square is so bad that his position quickly becomes totally hopeless.

23...\(\texttt{\&}c7\) 24.\(\texttt{\&}e3\)

This move is practically forced, since Black was threatening \(\texttt{\&}f8\)-a8, trapping White's queen.
24...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{c6}}}

Generally speaking, I do not let the win slip away from my hands with this move yet, but my task becomes much harder after that. It was evidently stronger for me to follow with: 24...e5! and White is almost forced to enter the variation: 25.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{ac1}} g8}
26.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xc7 a7}}}
27.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd7 xe3}}}
28.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xe3}}}
(or 28.fxe3 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{wh4}}}
29.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{ae2 a6!}}}
30.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xa7}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xb5}}}
31.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f2}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{we4+-}}}
28...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g5}}}
29.g3
(29.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f1 xg2!}}}-+)
29...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xf5}}}
and the position is easily winning for Black.

25.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xc7 xc7}}}
26.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xc6 e5}}}
27.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xe4}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{d5}}}
28.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd5 exd5}}}
29.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{ad1}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e8}}}
30.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{b6}}}

White has nothing better. It is too bad for him to try 30.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{ad4?}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f3}}}-+. In case of 30.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd5}}}, Black wins with: 30...
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g4}}}
31.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{edd1}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{we5}}}
32.g3 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{wh5}}}
33.h4 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xe3}}}

30...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g4}}}
31.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd5}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xb2}}}
32.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{ac5}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e2}}}
33.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f1}}}

It would not work for White to defend with: 33.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e7+}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g7}}}
34.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{d4+, because}}}
34...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd4!+-}}}

33...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{d2}}}
34.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd2}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xd2}}}
35.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e3}}}
Black cannot save the game after:
35.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xb4}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f4}}}
36.g3 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{c4}}}
37.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e7}}, due to}
37...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xb2}}}

35...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xf2!}}}
36.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f5}}}

Black's other possibilities lose as well: 36.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xf2}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{c1+}}}
37.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{f1}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{xc5+-}}};
36.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{c4}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{c3}}}.

36...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g4}}}
37.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e7+}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{g7}}}
38.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{c6}}}
\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{e3}}}. White resigned.

By winning this game I shared 1st - 4th places with 6 points out of 9 with A.Shirov, S.Lputian and L.Yudasin and I qualified for the Interzonal Tournament (A.Khalifman, A.Vizhmanavin and Y.Balashov had 5 ½ points each and they played a match-tournament for the 5th place. Alexander Khalifman won it.).

15

I. Novikov - Dreev

Zonal Tournament, Lviv 1990

There was a tremendous rivalry among the chess players in the former Soviet Union (starting in the 1940s - 1950s). There were so many strong and talented players, that it had become unbelievably difficult to break through into the international arena. Now, instead of just one country, there appeared many different independent countries and chess players can travel freely and they can choose where to live and they can even obtain the citizenship of other countries. The players of the former USSR dominate in individual and in team championships as well. The situation was entirely different then. The Soviet Union was a separate zone for the World Championship. The qualification Zonal Tournament in 1990 in Lviv was played in 9 rounds according to the Swiss system and it
had assembled a very powerful and balanced selection of participants. There were 28 players at the start and they were fighting for 5 places for the Interzonal Tournament. I started well; I had 1 1/2 points out of 2 and I was playing with Black against Igor Novikov in the third round...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.dıf3 dıf6 4.dıc3 e6 5.dıg5 h6 6.dıxf6 dıxf6 7.dıb3

This variation was played back then by World Champions – Vasiļij Smyslov and Tigran Petrosian. The alternative is in fact the main line – 7.e3.

7...a5!?

This idea belongs to GM Semyon Furman. Black plays more often here 7...dıd7 and 7...dxс4. The relatively low popularity of the move 7...a5!? is probably due to the fact that the arising positions are usually quite complex and rather unclear.

8.e4!?

My opponent chooses a double-edged line. After 8.e3 dıd7, there arise much calmer positions in which the chances of both sides are approximately equal.

8...dxe4 9.dıxe4 dıb4+ 10.dıd1

The game becomes much sharper after that move. It was still not too late for White to have simplified the position with 10.dıxb4 (In case of 10.dıc3 c5, or 10.dıed2 c5, Black has no problems at all.) 10...axb4 11.dıxf6+ gxf6 and the endgame is about equal. Evidently, my opponent had much more aggressive intentions and it was quite understandable. He did not play 8.e4!?, in order to enter a drawish endgame out of the opening, did he?

10...dıf4 11.dıd3

White adheres to the idea of sharpening the position. It seemed more reliable for him to have continued with: 11.dıe3!? dıxe3 12.fxe3 and the game would have been complicated, but still roughly equal.

11...f5!

Until this game, Black had played in the tournament practice only the line: 11.dıe7 12.dıe5 h5 13.g3 dıh6, which led to a slight advantage for White.

12.dıg3 c5!

Now, White's king is not completely safe on the d1-square and after this move, which undermines White's centre, I have an excellent counterplay.

It was too passive for me to follow with: 12...dıe7 13.c5, because White would have maintained a slight, but
stable edge, due to the weakness of the e6-pawn.

13.a3

It is too risky for White to play 13.d5?!, because after: 13...a4 14.\(\text{\texttt{c2}}\) a3!? Black’s prospects are considerably brighter.

13...a4 14.\(\text{\texttt{c2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{a5}}\)

15.\(\text{\texttt{xa4+}}\)

This is not good for White. The strongest move for him here is – 15.\(\text{\texttt{d7}}\)!, but still after 15...\(\text{\texttt{d6}}\)! (It is worse for Black to play 15...\(\text{\texttt{g4?!}}\), because of 16.\(\text{\texttt{e5}}\) and White’s initiative is quite dangerous, as it was proved later in the game Novikov – Shirov, Alicante 1992. It continued with: 16.\(\text{\texttt{g2}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{xf2}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{xa4+}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d7}}\) 19. b4 \(\text{\texttt{cxd4}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{xf7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xe1+}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{c2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xa1}}\) 22.\(\text{\texttt{d7}}\) b5 23.\(\text{\texttt{xb5}}\) and Black resigned...This was a quite instructive crush, indeed!) the position remains rather unclear. Black’s chances are definitely not worse and that was confirmed later in the game V.Popov – Lastin. Elista 2000: 16.\(\text{\texttt{xa4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d7}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{c2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{c6}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{xc5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xc5}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{c1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{c7}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{b3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{e7}}\), because Black’s compensation for the pawn was sufficient.

Now, my position seems to be slightly better, because of my bishop pair and the relatively unsafe placement of White’s king in the centre of the board.

15...\(\text{\texttt{d7}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{c2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xd4}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{d2?!}}\)

This is already a more serious mistake after which Black seizes the initiative. It was better for White to have continued with: 17.\(\text{\texttt{c1}}\), although even then, following: 17...\(\text{\texttt{xc1+}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{xc1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{c6}}\), Black would have been better, thanks to his excellent couple of bishops and his mobile pawn-centre.

17...\(\text{\texttt{g4}}\)

I was considering the retreat 17...\(\text{\texttt{c7}}\) as well, but it was not so precise, because after 18.\(\text{\texttt{exd4}}\), White’s chances are not worse anymore.

18.\(\text{\texttt{exd4?!}}\)

That is not the best move for White, but its idea is quite understandable. Should he suffer – he must have at least a pawn to hold on to... It was better for him to defend strictly passively with – 18.\(\text{\texttt{g1}}\), but it was not easy for him to play like that from the point of view of psychology, because after 18...\(\text{\texttt{c6}}\), Black would have been clearly better in a position with material equality. Still, in that case White would have more chances to hold the position. After the move in the game,
his position becomes extremely difficult and I only had to be on the alert not to make a blunder in order to press my advantage home.

18...\textit{c6}

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

19.\textit{b5}

It is not any better for White to play here 19.h3?!, because of 19...\textit{xg2 and it is bad for him to follow with 20.\textit{xg1, due to the forced line: 20...\textit{xg1+! 21.\textit{xg1 \textit{d4 22.\textit{b1 a4+ 23.b3 \textit{xb3 -- and Black's victory is just a matter of time. It is also bad for White to try: 20.\textit{h2 \textit{h2 21.\textit{h2 \textit{d4 22.\textit{b1 a4+ 23.b3 \textit{xb3+ 24.\textit{c1 \textit{c3 --; while in case of: 20.\textit{e2 \textit{d4 21.\textit{d4 \textit{g5, Black's great advantage is doubtless.}}}

19...\textit{xg2 20.\textit{c2 \textit{g4}}

Black creates the deadly threat -- \textit{c6-e5.}

21.\textit{bg1 \textit{h5 22.\textit{g3}}

White loses by force after: 22.\textit{xg7, because of: 22...\textit{e5 23.\textit{bd4 \textit{xf3 24.\textit{xf3 \textit{c6 25.\textit{g3 \textit{c7 and he has no satisfactory defence at all.}}}

22...\textit{e5 23.\textit{bd4 \textit{xf3 24.\textit{xf3}}

In case of 24.\textit{xf3, Black's simplest winning line is -- 24...\textit{g4 25.\textit{e3 \textit{d8!}}}

24...\textit{c6 25.b4}

This is a desperate attempt by White to complicate the game, but he is beyond salvation anyway. After 25.\textit{ag1, White wins with the simple 25...\textit{c7 --}

25...\textit{xb4 26.axb4 \textit{xa1 27.\textit{b2}}

My opponent obviously had some hopes connected with that move, since he intended to capture my g7-pawn, but...

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard2.png}
\end{center}

27...\textit{g1! 28.\textit{e5}}

It is understandable that 28.\textit{g1 loses because of 28...\textit{xf3+; while 28.\textit{g7 would not work, due to the spectacular strike -- 28...\textit{xf3+!}}

28...\textit{g3 29.\textit{xe6+ \textit{d8 30.\textit{d6+ \textit{c8 and White resigned.}}}

16

\textbf{Dreev -- D.Bronstein}

Reykjavik (open) 1990

\begin{center}
\textbf{E61}
\end{center}

\textit{There are not so many players of my generation who can brag about having played with the outstanding, legendary grandmaster David Ionovich Bronstein. This game was played}
in the quite strong open tournament, which was organized immediately after the team match-tournament, in which the team of USSR (I took part in it, though...) took the first place, in front of the team of USA after some fierce fight.

1.d4 .gf6 2.c4  g6 3..gc3  gg7 4.gf3 0-0 5.e3

I was playing that scheme quite often at that time. In case Black enters the Gruenfeld Defence with the move 5...d5, then White plays 6.gd2 and Black has great problems to accomplish the thematic move c7-c5.

5..d6 6.ge2  gb8d7
Black could have considered here also the plan with 6..c5.

7.b4  e5 8. gb2  we7
It is also interesting for Black to play 8..exd4. In the game Dreev – Shirov, Lviv 1990, there followed: 9.gcxd4  c5 10.bxc5  dxc5 11. gbd5  gb6 12.wb3  gg4 13.h3  ge5 14.0-0  ge6 15. aad1  wh4 16. gc7  dexc4 17. gxe6  gcxb2 18. gxf8 and here after I had calculated that I had no chances to win the game in case of: 18...gcxd1 19.gxg6 hgx6 20.exd1  c4 21.wc2  ed8, I offered a draw and it was accepted.

9.0-0  we8!? This move seems to be too risky, but it is logical to assume that Black is provoking White quite deliberately. It looked more natural for my opponent to have continued with 9...c6 10.a4 and White’s position would have been only slightly better.

10. gb5!? e4
That move leads to positions with a non-standard material ratio, but it is too late for Black to retreat. In case of: 10..wd8 11.dxe5  gg4 (or 11..ge4 12.gd3  dxe5 13.gxe4  gxf3+ 14.wxf3 gcxb2 15.gab1  ge5 16.axb7; 11...dxe5 12.gxe5  ge4 13.gd3), there follows: 12.exd6  gcxb2 13.gb1  gg7 14.gc7 and White’s advantage is decisive.
11.gc7  exf3 12.gxf3  gc6 13.gxe8 It is a mistake for White to play 13.gxa8, because of 13...gc4.
13..wxe8 14.wb3  ge4 15.gfd1
15...d5!
Black manages to block White's pawns at the price of a pawn. I would have countered 15...f5 with the move 16.aac1.

16.cxd5 f5
Black wishes to solidify the placement of his knight on the e4-outpost with this logical move. In case of the attractive move 16...d7, White can play 17.b5, occupying additional space on the queenside, since Black cannot play 17...xb5? 18.xe4 a4, because of 19.wd3. On the other hand, Black's last move has certain drawbacks, since now White has enough time to improve his position.

17.aac1 w7 18.c5!
This important resource enables White to fight for the advantage, since it is bad for Black to capture the rook on c5; meanwhile White is threatening the plan with a2-a4-a5.

18...d7 19.c7
It looks like White goes astray from the right path, being tempted to occupy the seventh rank, instead of the seemingly correct line: 19.b5 f8 20.a4, but then after 20...a5!, the position remains quite unclear, for example: 21.b8 22.e4 fxe4 23.d6 exf3 24.f1 d6 25.xf3 w8! (or 25...w7 26.a3).

19...b8 20.e2?!
Here, I overlooked a possibility, which was a bit risky and not so easy to notice: 20.xe4 fxe4 21.f3! (opening the position!) 21...exf3 22.d6 and White's advantage is quite obvious.

20...f6!
White's chances to obtain an advantage are not so great at all.

21.b5

Now, thanks to Black's mistake, I had the possibility to begin implementing the plan with the advance of the a-pawn. Black has great problems.

21...e8 22.c5 f8 23.a4 c8
Black regroups his forces without waiting for the move a4-a5.

24.f3
This is a quite purposeful move indeed, but White could have tried too the calmer line: 24.a3 cd6 25.d1, followed by advancing the queenside pawns.

24...b6
Black should have avoided weakening the c6-square. It was better for him to play: 24...f6.

25.c2 cd6 26.a3 d8 27.d1
White is threatening e3-e4.

27...w7 28.e1
Black's position is very difficult now and he can hardly prevent the pawn-advance e3-e4.

28...h4 29.g3 h6 30.f1 g5
31.b2?
I have to admit that it is really dif-
ficult for me to believe that I have played a move like that... Why not simply 31.e4! with an overwhelming advantage?!

31...\textit{g6}!\footnote{Dreev - Wedberg}

David Ionovich makes another mistake and that was probably because we were both in a time-trouble. After 31...\textit{f6}, the real fight would be just starting.

32.e4!

Finally White has pushed his central pawn forward and Black cannot avoid capturing it, while taking it loses as well.

32...\textit{fxe4} 33.\textit{fxe4} \textit{xe4} 34.\textit{d6}+ \textit{e6}?

My task would have been much more difficult after: 34...\textit{b8} 35.\textit{d3} \textit{b8xd6} 36.\textit{d5}+ \textit{g8} (or 36...\textit{g7}) 37.\textit{e4} 37.\textit{e4} (or 37.\textit{e5} \textit{f7} 38. \textit{xf4} \textit{e4} 39.\textit{xf4} \textit{xf5} 40.\textit{c7} \textit{xd5}) 37...\textit{xf6} 38.\textit{xe4} \textit{xe4} 39.\textit{xe4} \textit{a1}+ 40.\textit{xc1} \textit{f5} 41.\textit{xc4}+

35.\textit{xc4} \textit{xc4} 36.\textit{xc4}+ \textit{g7}?

Or 36...\textit{b8} 37.\textit{d5}+ \textit{f6} 38.\textit{xf2} \textit{g7} 39.\textit{e6}+-

37.\textit{xe4} \textit{xd6}

37...\textit{exe4} 38.\textit{d5}+

38.\textit{c7}+ \textit{g8} 39.\textit{xd8} \textit{xe4} 40.\textit{xe5}+ 1-0

\textbf{9...\textit{xe8}}

This line leads to a tough positional fight in which White's prospects are slightly better, because of his space advantage. In case of: 9...\textit{a6} 10.\textit{a4}! \textit{xe8} 11.0-0, or 10...\textit{bd7} 11.0-0, Black has greater problems to equalize in comparison to the move in the game, due to White's doubtless space edge. Black has great problems to find an acceptable game plan in similar positions. He has also difficulties to develop comfortably his light-squared bishop. His most active line (quite fashionable nowadays, though...) is 9...\textit{b5}!, but the game is quite forced in that case. Tournament practice has shown in the last 15 years that Black must play very precisely in the
long forced variations in order to have chances to equalize. The theory of that line has developed tremendously in the last several years and Black often finds forced or semi-forced lines in which he manages to draw. Here is a typical example in which he has demonstrated an excellent home-preparation – the game Beliavsky – Jobava, Khanty-Mansiisk 2005, which continued with: 10.\textekb5 \textexk4 11.\textekxe4 \textak5+ 12.\textfc2 \textwxb5 13.\textfd6 \textwa6 14.\textfc4 \textf8 15.\textfe4 \textd7 16.0–0 \textkb6 17.\textkb6 \textwxb6 18.\textfd8 \textxb6 19.\textf1 \textw7 20.\textd6 \textfe8 21.\textfd3 \textxd6 22.\textfd6 \textfc6 23.\textfd1 \textwd7 24.\textwa3 \textxd6 25.\textxe6 \textwxd6 26.\textxa7 \textfe8 27.a3 \textwd4 28.b3 \textfe2 and despite White’s extra pawn the position is quite drawish. There still followed: 29.\textwa8+ \textgf7 30.\textfd3 \textfa2 31.\texta4 c4 32.bxc4 \textxa4 33.\textwe3 and the opponents agreed to a draw.

10.0–0 c4 11.\textec2!?

The other possible line here for White is – 11.\textxc4 – but it is rarely played in the tournament practice, although after: 11...\textexe4 12.\textxe4 \textxe4 13.\textd3 \textfe8 14.\textg5, or 13.\textg5, White has good chances to obtain a minimal opening advantage without risking anything.

Still, I believe White must connect his ambitions to obtain something real only with the variation 11.\textec2!?
(diagram)

11...\textb5!?

That is the most logical and evidently best move for Black in this position. It is too passive for him to play 11...a6, since after the obvious 12.a4 White has a stable positional advantage, because the thematic pawn-advance for Black – b7-b5 would be too difficult to accomplish. He would have problems to equalize after 11...\textka6 too, because of 12.\textfe3 (It is also good for White to try: 12.\textfd4 \textc5 13.\textfe1 with a slight, but stable positional advantage for him.) 12...\textd7 (It is not any better for Black to defend with 12...\texteb4?!, due to 13.\textd2?! with a powerful initiative for White; in the game V. Bagirov – Vasiu- kov, Moscow 1991, there followed: 13.\textxc2 14.\textwc2 \textd7 15.\textxc4 \textwe7 16.\textfd4 \textxe4 17.\textfe1 \textxc3 18.\textxc3 \textgf5 19.\textxd6 and White was clearly better.) 13.a4?! with a considerable positional edge for White.

12.\textxb5!?

This is the most principled line for White in his fight for the opening initiative. The lines 12.a3 a6 13.\textfd4 and 12.\textfe1 a6 13.\textfd4 lead to complicated positions with mutual chances.

12...\textexe4 13.\textfe1

It was also possible for me to continue with 13.\textxe4 \textxe4 14.\textg5?! with a slightly better game, but I wanted to preserve my light-squared bishop.

13.\textfa6

Contemporary theory considers that to be Black’s most reliable move.

It is dubious for him to play 13...\textfd6?!, because after: 14.\textxe8+ \textxd8
15.\textsuperscript{e}2, White has a clear advantage.

Black should not rely too much on 13...f5?! In this case, following: 14.\textsuperscript{e}xe4 fxe4 15.\textsuperscript{d}g5 \textsuperscript{f}5 16.\textsuperscript{a}a4!? he has great problems to worry about, in view of White's threat \textsuperscript{d}b5xd6.

At first sight it seems quite attractive for Black to try 13...\textsuperscript{d}xf2, but then after the practically forced line: 14.\textsuperscript{e}xe8+ \textsuperscript{d}xe8 15.\textsuperscript{d}c7! \textsuperscript{e}e7 16.\textsuperscript{c}e2! \textsuperscript{c}xc7 17.\textsuperscript{e}e8+ \textsuperscript{f}8 18.\textsuperscript{h}6, his position remains tremendously difficult. For example, in the game A.Rychagov – Batsanin, Sochi 1998 after: 18...\textsuperscript{d}d7?! 19.\textsuperscript{g}g5 \textsuperscript{d}xh3+ 20.\textsuperscript{g}xh3 \textsuperscript{c}c5+ 21.\textsuperscript{f}f1 \textsuperscript{d}xd5 22.\textsuperscript{e}e4 Black was almost hopeless. He had better defend with 18...\textsuperscript{d}xh3+, but even then after: 19.\textsuperscript{g}xh3 \textsuperscript{c}c5+ (or 19...\textsuperscript{d}d7?! 20.\textsuperscript{g}g5 \textsuperscript{c}c5+ 21.\textsuperscript{f}f1 \textsuperscript{d}xd5 22.\textsuperscript{e}e4 \textsuperscript{a}6 23.\textsuperscript{d}xf8+?! \textsuperscript{d}xf8 24.\textsuperscript{e}e5+) 20.\textsuperscript{g}g2 \textsuperscript{d}d7 21.\textsuperscript{e}e4! \textsuperscript{b}b7 Black is practically forced to give up a piece, due to the threat \textsuperscript{d}e1-e7! with a decisive attack: 22.\textsuperscript{d}xd7 \textsuperscript{x}xd5. White’s chances, with an extra piece for three pawns, seem to be clearly preferable and he risks practically nothing in a position like that.

14.a4!

This is a strong positional move. It is difficult for Black to put up with his opponent’s knight on b5, but in case of 14...\textsuperscript{a}xb5 15.axb5, White remains with a couple of powerful bishops and pressure along the a-file.

14...\textsuperscript{a}xb5

What else?... In case of: 14...\textsuperscript{d}f6 15.\textsuperscript{d}xe8+ \textsuperscript{d}xe8 16.\textsuperscript{c}e2 White has a considerable positional advantage.

15.\textsuperscript{a}xb5 \textsuperscript{c}c5 16.\textsuperscript{d}d2!?

White maintains the initiative with that move. I would not have achieved much with: 16.\textsuperscript{d}xe8+ \textsuperscript{d}xe8. In the game Stohl – Wedberg, Gausdal 1991 Black played: 17.b6 a6 18.\textsuperscript{f}f4 \textsuperscript{b}b5 and he equalized easily.

16...\textsuperscript{e}e1+ 17.\textsuperscript{d}xe1 c3 18.bxc3 \textsuperscript{x}xc3 19.\textsuperscript{a}a3

19...\textsuperscript{a}b4!

That is the only move, which enables Black to hold the position, although his situation remains clearly worse. Following: 19...\textsuperscript{g}g7?! 20.\textsuperscript{c}c4, I would have preserved a clear advantage.

20.\textsuperscript{e}e3 \textsuperscript{d}bd7 21.\textsuperscript{e}e2 \textsuperscript{b}b6 22.\textsuperscript{e}e4 \textsuperscript{x}xe4?!

That is a grave mistake and my initiative becomes quite dangerous after that. Black had better continue with: 22...\textsuperscript{a}xd5!? 23.\textsuperscript{b}b2 \textsuperscript{c}c8! (It is too bad for him to try: 23...\textsuperscript{d}xe3?}
24.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}e3, since he has no satisfactory defence in sight, for example: 
24...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe4 25.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c8 26.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d4 f6
27.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d5+ \textit{\texttt{g}}g7 28.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xb4++, or 25...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c5
26.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c3 f6 27.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d5+ \textit{\texttt{g}}g7 28.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xa8 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xa8
29.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xf6++. Indeed, even after that, White can play 24.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{b}}}b3! (He achieves nothing much with: 24.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xd6 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xd6!
25.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}e8+ \textit{\texttt{e}}xe8 26.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{w}}}xe8+ \textit{\texttt{f}}f8 27.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}e5
\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c3 28.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xc3 \textit{\texttt{d}}xc3 29.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{w}}}xc3 \textit{\texttt{d}}d6=) 
24...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe3 (Or 24...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe4? 25.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}e4++; 
24...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xb3? 25.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xb3 and Black is helpless against the threat \textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}e2-d1.)
25.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}f6+ and his compensation for the exchange is more than sufficient in variations like: 25...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}f8 26.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe3
\textit{\texttt{x}}xb3 27.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xh7+ \textit{\texttt{g}}g8 28.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}f6+ \textit{\texttt{f}}f8
29.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}}}h6+ \textit{\texttt{e}}e7 30.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d5+ \textit{\texttt{d}}d7 31.\textit{\texttt{f}}f4
f5 32.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xb4 \textit{\texttt{c}}c5, or 25...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{g}}}g7 26.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe3
\textit{\texttt{x}}xb3 27.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{g}}}g4+ \textit{\texttt{f}}f8 28.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}}}h6+ \textit{\texttt{e}}e8 29.
\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}f6+ \textit{\texttt{e}}e7 30.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}e3+ \textit{\texttt{f}}f8 31.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xh7+
\textit{\texttt{g}}g8 32.\textit{\texttt{f}}f6+ \textit{\texttt{f}}f8 33.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{h}}}h6+ \textit{\texttt{e}}e7 34.
\textit{\texttt{d}}d5+ \textit{\texttt{d}}d7 35.\textit{\texttt{f}}f4 f5 36.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xb4 \textit{\texttt{c}}c5.

Still, White's advantage is far from being decisive in all these lines and there would have been a lot of fight left.

23.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xe4 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}c3

24.\textit{\texttt{h}}h4!

Now, my kingside initiative is tremendously dangerous.

24...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d7 25.\textit{\texttt{h}}h5 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c5 26.\textit{\texttt{e}}c4

White loses a considerable part of his advantage with that imprecision. It was much better to follow with 26.\textit{\texttt{g}}g4?.

26...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{f}}}f6 27.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}e3 \textit{\texttt{c}}c8?!

That attractive move is a clear mistake and my opponent's position becomes evidently worse after it. It deserved attention for him to try here 27...a6!? and I had not seen anything better than the line: 28.bxa6 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xa6
29.g3, with only a slight advantage.

28.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{g}}}g4! \textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c7

Black was losing after 28...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}d7? due to: 29.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xc8 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xc8 30.\textit{\texttt{f}}f5 and he would be left with a piece down.

29.g3 \textit{\texttt{\texttt{b}}}b8?

My opponent's position is hopeless after that move. He could have tried 29...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{g}}}g7, although his position would have remained clearly worse.

30.\textit{\texttt{h}}h6

That is not the best move for me, but I still maintain a solid positional advantage. The optimal line for White here is: 30.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xg6 hxg6 (30...fxg6 31.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xg6! \textit{\texttt{g}}g7 32.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}xc5 dxc5 33.\textit{\texttt{e}}e6++)
31.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xg6! fxg6 32.\textit{\texttt{w}}xg6+ \textit{\texttt{g}}g7 33.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xd6 winning. I failed to see that variation in the time-trouble, though...

30...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}xb5?
T. Wedberg was also under time-pressure here and he made a mistake too. After 30...\texttt{w}d8, he could have offered some more resistance.

31.\texttt{axc5}

Now, Black loses by force.

31...\texttt{we7}

He would have saved the game neither with: 31...\texttt{exc5} 32.\texttt{wc8}+--; nor with: 31...\texttt{dx5} 32.\texttt{d6} \texttt{ed7} 33.\texttt{exc5} \texttt{exe5} 34.\texttt{xd7}+-. Black gets checkmated unavoidably in both cases.

32.\texttt{axg6}! \texttt{xf6} 33.\texttt{exe5} 34.\texttt{wb4} \texttt{exc5} 35.\texttt{xb5} \texttt{xb5} 36.\texttt{wc8}+ \texttt{f7} 37.\texttt{wh8} and Black resigned.

11...\texttt{we7}

This move seems to be too slow. It looks more reliable for Black to play: 11...\texttt{g7} 12.e4 (In case of 12.\texttt{a6c3}, or 12.a3, Black can answer with 12...\texttt{g6} and the position would be approximately equal.) 12...\texttt{b4} 13.\texttt{wc3} and the situation is quite complex and still not well investigated. We played that position with A. Minasian in a tournament in the Spanish town of Ubeda (1999) and after 13...\texttt{fxe4} (The position is much more complex after 13...\texttt{a5}?) 14.\texttt{axe4} \texttt{exe4} 15.\texttt{xb4} \texttt{a5} 16.\texttt{wa3} \texttt{f5} 17.d5 \texttt{f7} 18.\texttt{e3} \texttt{cxd5} 19.\texttt{cxd5} b5 20.\texttt{c6} \texttt{we7} 21.\texttt{c1} \texttt{ac8} 22.\texttt{w1}, my opponent failed to equalize with Black and I obtained a slight but stable positional advantage.

11...\texttt{wc6}!

That is a powerful prophylactic positional move, preventing \texttt{a6-b4}. Black fails to prevent the thematic pawn-break for White – e2-e4. The

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Dreev – Malaniuk

58th USSR Ch, Moscow 1991

This game was played in the last championship of the USSR (which was organized according to the Swiss system) and I remember the game, because it received the prize as the best in the tournament.
immediate move 12.e4, does not bring White anything, because of: 12...fxe4
13.\text{\underline{x}}e4 \text{x}e4 14.\text{\underline{w}}xe4 \text{\underline{f}}5 15.\text{x}e7 (15.\text{\underline{w}}e3?! \text{\underline{b}}4) 15...\text{\underline{d}}3 16.\text{x}d6 \text{x}f1
17.\text{\underline{g}}f1 \text{\underline{a}}d8 18.\text{\underline{w}}e6 \text{\underline{b}}4 and Black's chances are not worse at all.

\textbf{12...g5}

In case of 12...\text{\underline{c}}7, it is possible for White to play 13.\text{\underline{h}}4! with a dangerous initiative, since the threat e2-e4 is very unpleasant for Black.

\textbf{13.e4 fxe4 14.\text{\underline{x}}e4 \text{\underline{d}}7}

This is an imprecision. Black had better play 14...\text{\underline{f}}5. Indeed, after:
15.\text{\underline{x}}f6+ \text{\underline{x}}f6 16.\text{\underline{w}}d2 \text{\underline{a}}e8 17.\text{\underline{e}}3, White's position is clearly better, because of Black's backward e7-pawn.

\textbf{15.\text{\underline{x}}f6+ exf6?!}

Now, that is already a serious mistake for Black. It is quite understandable from the psychological point of view that Vladimir was reluctant to play passive positions with a backward e7-pawn after: 15...\text{\underline{w}}xf6, or 15...\text{\underline{g}}f6, but still that would have been the least of evils for him.

\begin{center}

\textbf{16.d5!}

White's initiative is very powerful now.

\textbf{16...c5!}

That is Black's only move. He loses immediately after 16...\text{\underline{c}}d5?, because of 17.\text{\underline{x}}g5!. It is equally bad for him to continue with 16...\text{\underline{a}}e8?!.

\textbf{17.\text{\underline{e}}6!}

After: 17.\text{\underline{e}}3 f5 18.\text{\underline{g}}e1 \text{\underline{a}}e8 White is only slightly better.

\begin{center}

17...\text{\underline{c}}7

Accepting the exchange-sacrifice would not be good for Black at all, for example: 17...\text{\underline{a}}xe6?! 18.\text{\underline{x}}e6 \text{\underline{c}}7 (or 18...\text{\underline{w}}xe6? 19.\text{\underline{x}}g5!+--) 19.\text{\underline{w}}f5 and White's initiative is very dangerous. In case of: 19...\text{\underline{a}}e8 20.\text{\underline{d}}2 \text{\underline{h}}8 21.\text{\underline{e}}4 \text{\underline{c}}7 (or 21...\text{\underline{b}}8 22.h4 \text{\underline{c}}6 23.\text{\underline{g}}2 \text{\underline{g}}7 24.hxg5 hgx5 25.\text{\underline{h}}1 \text{\underline{e}}7 26.\text{\underline{f}}3+--) 22.h4 \text{\underline{g}}7 23.hxg5 hxg5 24.\text{\underline{g}}2, Black's position is too difficult -- now if: 24...\text{\underline{a}}e7 25.\text{\underline{h}}1 \text{\underline{f}}e8, then 26.\text{\underline{d}}5! -- and Black's position becomes completely hopeless. He is almost stalemated and he has no defence against White's deadly threat \text{\underline{d}}2-e4.

\textbf{18.\text{\underline{x}}d6 \text{\underline{e}}7!}

My opponent creates maximal difficulties for my task to realize my advantage. It would have been much worse for Black to have defended with:
18...\text{\underline{a}}e8, because of 19.\text{\underline{e}}6! (The po-
osition after: 19...£xd7 £xd7 20...£e1 £d6
21...£e6 £ae8 22...£h3 is quite unclear.)
– and here Black is already forced to
accept the sacrifice; otherwise he
remains a pawn down in a very bad
position. Still after: 19...£xe6 20.dxe6 £e7
(or 20...£xe6? 21...£xg5!++) 21...£f5,
White has a pawn for the exchange
and a very dangerous initiative. For
example: 21...£c8 22...£d1 £d6 23...£xd6!
£xd6 24...£d2.

24...£g6!!
This excellent move consolidates
my advantage. My opponent had
great defensive problems and Vladi-
mir made the decisive mistake on his
next move:
24...£h8?
It is also bad for Black to play here:
24...£wa4?! 25...£d2! £xd6 26...£xg5!£xg5
27...£x6 £xd6 28...£d5+ £f7 29...£x7+ £g6
30...£x6 £d1+ 31...£g2++; or 24...£xd6?!
25...£xg5 £f5 (25...£xg5
26...£d5+ £f7 27...£xf6++;) 26...£d5+ £h8
27...£f7+ £xf7 28...£x7 £f3 29...£d3++; or
24...£f7?! 25...£d2 £xd6 26...£e4!
£e6 27...£x6 £xd6 28...£xd6 £xd6 29.
£d5 £e7 30...£b2! £f8 31...£a3 £e1+
32...£g2 £c7 33...£x65!!–

Black has two exchanges extra;
nevertheless his defence is extremely
difficult. For example the move 24...
£fe8? loses immediately after 25...e7!,
while following 24...£e7, White has
the resource 25...£d5, after which Black
is again practically stalemated, since
he has no defence against the posi-
tional bind g3-g4, followed by £d2-
e4, threatening £e4-g3.

19...£xd7 £xd7 20...£d1! £ad8
It is too dubious for Black to play
20...£d6?!. After 21...£f5 (threatening
£g2-f1 and £f3-d2) Black's position
is probably already defenseless.
21.b4! £b6
White would have a clear advan-
tage after: 21...£xb4?! 22...£xb4 £fe8
23...£d4.
22.bxc5 bxc5 23...£d6! £e8

24...£g6!!
This excellent move consolidates
my advantage. My opponent had
great defensive problems and Vladi-
mir made the decisive mistake on his
next move:
24...£h8?
It is also bad for Black to play here:
24...£wa4?! 25...£d2! £xd6 26...£xg5!£xg5
27...£x6 £xd6 28...£d5+ £f7 29...£x7+ £g6
30...£x6 £d1+ 31...£g2++; or 24...£xd6?!
25...£xg5 £f5 (25...£xg5
26...£d5+ £f7 27...£xf6++;) 26...£d5+ £h8
27...£f7+ £xf7 28...£x7 £f3 29...£d3++; or
24...£f7?! 25...£d2 £xd6 26...£e4!
£e6 27...£x6 £xd6 28...£xd6 £xd6 29.
£d5 £e7 30...£b2! £f8 31...£a3 £e1+
32...£g2 £c7 33...£x65!!–

His only chance to hold the posi-
tion would have been the move 24...
£f7! and although after: 25...£e5! £xg6
26...£xg6 £f7 27...£d5, White maintains
a clear positional advantage; Black
preserves some chances for a draw.
25...£xg5!
My opponent's position crumbles
after that move and he has no satisfac-
tory defence at all.
25...£xg5
Black loses too after: 25...£xg5, be-
cause of: 26...£h5+ £g8 27...£d5+ £f7
28...£a5!
26.\textit{\textsc{W}}xh6+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}g8 27.\textit{\textsc{A}}d5+ \textit{\textsc{E}}f7 28.\textit{\textsc{W}}xg5 \textit{\textsc{Q}}f8 29.\textit{\textsc{A}}xf7 \textit{\textsc{Q}}xf7 30.\textit{\textsc{A}}xg7

White wins in case of: 30.\textit{\textsc{B}}e1 \textit{\textsc{B}}xd6 31.\textit{\textsc{W}}h5+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}f8 32.\textit{\textsc{B}}xe8+ \textit{\textsc{B}}xe8 33.\textit{\textsc{A}}xg7+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}e7 34.h4, as well.

30...\textit{\textsc{Q}}xg7 31.\textit{\textsc{B}}xc5+- \textit{\textsc{Q}}e8 32.\textit{\textsc{W}}h5+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}f8 33.\textit{\textsc{W}}h8+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}f7 34.\textit{\textsc{W}}h5+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}f8 35.c5 \textit{\textsc{Q}}e6 36.\textit{\textsc{B}}d4 \textit{\textsc{B}}d7 37.\textit{\textsc{W}}h8+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}f7 38.\textit{\textsc{W}}h7+ \textit{\textsc{Q}}f8 39.\textit{\textsc{B}}f4+
Black resigned.

This is an encounter from our candidates match. I was so very close to victory in that game, but unfortunately I failed to materialize my chances. There were numerous reasons for my demise in that match. One of them is closely connected with the specifics of the contemporary chess. Anand played very quickly as usual and he forced me into a time-pressure all the time. Naturally, I made plenty of annoying mistakes then... In fact, I failed to solve the problem with the time-trouble throughout the whole match...

1.e4 e6

The French Defence was my main opening weapon against 1.e4, at those times...

2.d4 d5 3.\textit{\textsc{D}}c3 \textit{\textsc{Q}}f6 4.\textit{\textsc{G}}g5 dxe4 5.\textit{\textsc{D}}xe4 \textit{\textsc{Q}}e7 6.\textit{\textsc{D}}xf6
(diagram)

6...\textit{\textsc{G}}xf6

The move 6...\textit{\textsc{G}}f6 is considered to be the more solid, but the line in the

My opponent failed to obtain anything real out of the opening stage. Now, he had to take some measures against Black's possibility f6-f5, without doing anything active on the kingside.

15.b4 f5! 16.\textit{\textsc{G}}g3
Or 16.\textit{\textsc{D}}e5 \textit{\textsc{D}}f4.
16...h5↑ 17.\textit{\textsc{B}}xa5

It was maybe worth for White to have avoided that exchange and to play instead 17.\textit{\textsc{D}}e2 immediately.

17...\textit{\textsc{B}}xa5 18.c4 \textit{\textsc{Q}}f8

This is a purposeful prophylactic move, since I was reluctant to be in a
hurry to push c6-c5 (18...h4 19...e2 c5 20.d5 ...f6 21...ab1).

19...f1 ...f6 20...e3 ...g7 21...b1 h4 22...e2 h3

That was a very important move, which included some risk too.

23.g3?
It was correct for White to capture that pawn – 23.gxh3! and that was leading to a rather unclear position.

23...c5 24.d5 exd5 25.cxd5 c4

Now, Black has the advantage thanks to the vulnerability of the h1–a8 diagonal.

26...c3 ...c5 27...a2

27...e7!
Presently, Black’s king is safe enough and he can exploit his knight in order to attack White’s d5-pawn.

28...ab2?
White’s relatively best decision would have been – 28...h4.

28...xd5! 29...b5 ...xc3
It was much simpler for Black here to follow with: 29...xb5! 30...xb5 ...a3 31...xd5! (or 31...xd5 ...xf3–+) 31...
xc3 32...xc3 ...xc3 33...xf5 ...d8! → 34...hx3 ...f6.

30...xc5 ...xb1 31...d7 ...xc5
Or 31...xf3?! 32...a5 bxa5 33...c4 ...h5.

32...d4?!
This move loses of course, but I have to admit – that was White’s best practical chance in my time-trouble. After the seemingly natural try: 32...xb7 ...c3! 33...xb6 ...d5–+ 34...e3 ...d1 35...h4 ...b8 36...xf5+ ...g8, White would be helpless against the threat 37...f1.

32...g6?
This was a serious mistake. Black was winning instead with the calm and simple line: 32...d5 33...xf5+ ...g6–+; or with the more complicated variation: 32...e8 33...xe8 ...xd4 34...d7 ...d5 35...xf5 ...e6 36...xb1 ...f5 37...c2 c3 38...d3 ...xf2 39...xf2 ...xf2+ 40...xf2 ...b3.

33...xb7 ...xd4?!
That was another mistake... It was correct for me to finish him off with:

33...c3 34...b6 ...a4 35...a7 ...xd4 36...xa4 ...b8–+

34...xb6+ ...f6
But not 34...g7 35...d6!!

35...b1 c3 36...d3
(diagram)

36...c2?
This move was connected with a miscalculation. Still, the win for me was already problematic, anyway. After: 36...hc8 37...c2, the position
would remain absolutely unclear (37. \textsuperscript{w}c2?! \textsuperscript{w}e8 (or 37...\textsuperscript{w}b8 38.\textsuperscript{w}xf5+ \textsuperscript{w}g5 39.\textsuperscript{w}xh3 \textsuperscript{f}5++) 38.\textsuperscript{w}f1 (38.\textsuperscript{w}b1 c2) 38...\textsuperscript{w}ce5 39.\textsuperscript{w}xf5+ \textsuperscript{w}g7++ 40.\textsuperscript{w}d1! 37.\textsuperscript{w}xc2 \textsuperscript{w}he8 38.\textsuperscript{w}xf5+! \textsuperscript{w}xf5 39.g4 \textsuperscript{w}c1+ 40.\textsuperscript{w}xc1 \textsuperscript{w}xf2 41.\textsuperscript{w}h1 \textsuperscript{w}e5 42.\textsuperscript{w}g1 \textsuperscript{w}g2

43.a5!

This is a beautiful and smart decision. Anand plans to make a draw based on the motive of a stalemate. He had to overcome certain difficulties had he played in some other fashion. Objectively speaking, his position was not worse even then, for example: 43.\textsuperscript{w}b1+ \textsuperscript{w}g7 44.a5 \textsuperscript{w}xh2+ 45.\textsuperscript{w}g1 \textsuperscript{g}2+ 46.\textsuperscript{w}h1 \textsuperscript{w}xg4 47.\textsuperscript{w}b7+ (but not 47.a6? \textsuperscript{h}2 48.a7\textsuperscript{w}g1+ 49.\textsuperscript{w}xg1+ \textsuperscript{h}xg1\textsuperscript{w} 50.\textsuperscript{w}xg1 \textsuperscript{d}d4++) 47...\textsuperscript{w}g6 48.\textsuperscript{w}c8= ; 43.\textsuperscript{w}xg2 \textsuperscript{h}xg2+ 44.\textsuperscript{w}xg2 \textsuperscript{w}g5 45.\textsuperscript{h}3 \textsuperscript{w}f4 46.a5 \textsuperscript{w}b8 47.a6 \textsuperscript{a}a7 48.\textsuperscript{w}f1 \textsuperscript{g}3 49.\textsuperscript{w}e2 \textsuperscript{w}xh3 50.\textsuperscript{f}f3 \textsuperscript{a}b8! 51.a7 \textsuperscript{a}xa7 52.\textsuperscript{f}f4 \textsuperscript{e}3!!++

43...\textsuperscript{w}xg1+ 44.\textsuperscript{w}xg1 \textsuperscript{w}g7 45.a6 \textsuperscript{w}b8 46.\textsuperscript{h}h1 \textsuperscript{g}8 47.\textsuperscript{g}1

Here, I had nothing left to do — a draw was a draw... 47.g5 \textsuperscript{f}5 48.g6 \textsuperscript{f}4 49.g7 \textsuperscript{f}3 50.a7=

47...\textsuperscript{w}f8 48.\textsuperscript{w}h1 \textsuperscript{e}8 49.g5 \textsuperscript{f}5 50.g6 \textsuperscript{f}4 51.g7 \textsuperscript{f}7 52.g8\textsuperscript{w}+ \textsuperscript{w}xg8 53.a7 \textsuperscript{a}xa7 Draw.

Nadera – Dreev
30th Olympiad, Manila 1992

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\textsuperscript{c}c3 \textsuperscript{f}f6 4.\textsuperscript{c}c3 e6 5.e3 \textsuperscript{b}d7 6.\textsuperscript{d}d3 dxc4 7.\textsuperscript{a}xc4 b5 8.\textsuperscript{d}d3 \textsuperscript{b}b7 9.e4 \textsuperscript{b}4 10.\textsuperscript{a}a4 c5 11.e5 \textsuperscript{d}d5 12.0–0 \textsuperscript{c}xd4 13.\textsuperscript{a}xd4 \textsuperscript{a}xe5 14.\textsuperscript{b}b5+ \textsuperscript{d}d7 15.\textsuperscript{e}e1 \textsuperscript{c}c8 16.\textsuperscript{w}h5 \textsuperscript{g}6 17.\textsuperscript{w}e2

We are playing one of the sharp variations of the Meran system. This position is well-familiar in the contemporary theory. White has the initiative for the sacrificed pawn, but Black's position is solid enough and his chances are not worse at all.

17...\textsuperscript{w}e7
That is in fact the old line. Pres-
ently, the move 17...a6! is much more popular and fashionable and it provides Black with a good counterplay. Still, the more modest approach – 17...\textit{We7} is quite reliable and White has not found yet any convincing way to prove his opening advantage.

18.\textit{Ag5}!?

That is the most energetic line for White. He would not achieve much with 18.\textit{Wg4}. Alexey Vyzmanavin played like that with White against me (Moscow 1989) and there followed: 18...\textit{Af5f6} 19.\textit{Wh3} \textit{Ae5} 20.\textit{Aa6} \textit{Ea8} 21.\textit{Ag5} \textit{Ag7} 22.\textit{Ead1} 0–0. I managed to obtain a solid and reliable position and White had a long way to go to prove that his compensation for the pawn was sufficient.

18...\textit{Wxg5} 19.\textit{Axe6}

The position has been simplified as a result of the forced developments and we have reached a rather complex endgame. Black has a pawn for the exchange. His couple of powerful bishops is quite dangerous for White in that open position and I believe Black’s chances are not worse at all despite White’s extra exchange.

25...\textit{Aa6}+!? 26.\textit{Af3}?!

That is a grave imprecision and Black seizes the initiative completely after that. White played better in the abovementioned game Sokolov – Shirov, which continued with 26.\textit{Ee3}, but still after: 26...\textit{Ab5} 27.b3 \textit{Ah6}+ Black had an excellent compensation for the exchange.

26...\textit{Ab7}+ 27.\textit{Ag3} \textit{Ad5} 28.b3

It is too bad for White to try 28.a3? here, because after: 28...\textit{Ac6} 29.b3 bxa3, he can hardly save the game.
28...\textd6 + 29.\texth3

As a result of White’s inferior move 26, I managed to activate maximally my bishops gaining tempi. My opponent’s knight on a4 is presently out of action and his king is not well placed on h3 either.

29...\textf8!

That is an excellent positional move, which consolidates my considerable advantage. I am threatening to play \textg7, bringing my rook into the action along the f-file. The immediate move 29...\textg7?! would have been clearly premature due to: 30.\textxd5! \textxd5 31.\textd1 and White would have good chances to equalize.

30.\textb2

What else can White do? He is understandably reluctant to leave his knight on a4 throughout the entire game?!

30...\textg7 31.\textxd5?!

This exchange-sacrifice is by far not the best line for White, since now he remains without a pawn and a sufficient compensation for it.

He could have offered serious resistance only in case of 31.\textc4!. Indeed, after 31...\textc5!? (Black does not achieve much with: 31...\textf3 + 32.\textg2 \textc5 33.\texte3! \textxe3+ 34.\textxd5 \textxe1 35.\textxc5, because the endgame is drawish.) 32.\texte3 \textxe3 33.\textxe3 \textf3+ 34.\textg2 (or 34.\texth4?! \texth5 35.\textd2 \texth6 36.\textg2 \texte4+) 34...\textxe3+ 35.\textg1, or 32...\textc6!? 33.\textg1 (33.\textc1? \textf3+ 34.\textg2 \textxe3+) 33...\textxf2 and Black maintains better chances, but the fight is not over at all. Now, the game enters a stage in which I had to overcome only some technical problems to materialize my extra pawn.

31...\textxd5 32.\textg2 \textf6

33.\textd3?!

That move just simplifies my task. White could have defended more tenaciously with 33.\textc1, not letting Black’s rook to the c-file.

33...\texte8 34.\texte2 \textc3 35.\textd2 \textg5 36.\texth3 \texth6 37.\textb2 \texte6 38.\textd3 \texta5 39.\texte2+ \textf5 40.\textd2 \texte4

Black improves methodically his position. White has no active counterplay in sight and his position is hopeless. Black’s victory is already not a matter of technique, but a matter of time only...

41.\texte1 \textd4 42.\texte2+ \textd5 43.\textd2 \textf4 44.\textd3 \texte4 45.\textf3+ \textd5 46.\textf2

White loses too after: 46.\textxc3 bxc3
47.\(f2\), due to: 47...d3 48.\(\text{exd3 c2}\), winning for Black.

46...\(\text{Bc1}\) 47.\(\text{Be2}\) \(\text{Bg3}\) 48.\(\text{Bg2}\) \(\text{Be5}\) 49.\(\text{Ed2}\) \(\text{Bf4}\) 50.\(\text{Bb2}\) \(\text{Ec3}\)

I have improved my position maximally and now the issue is settled quickly.

51.\(\text{Be1}\)

The other moves are even worse for White: 51.\(\text{Bxf4}\) \(\text{Bxf4}\); or 51.\(\text{d1}\) \(\text{Bxf3}\).

51...\(\text{Bc3}\) + 52.\(\text{Bf2}\) \(\text{Bg3}\) + 53.\(\text{Bxg3}\) \(\text{Bxel}\)

The rook and pawn endgame is easily winning for Black. The game still followed with:

54.\(\text{Bd2}\) \(\text{Bc3}\) 55.\(\text{Bf2}\) \(\text{Bc3}\) 56.\(\text{Be2}\) + \(\text{Bd5}\) 57.\(\text{Be8}\) \(\text{Bc2}\) + 58.\(\text{Bg3}\) \(\text{Bxa2}\)

59. \(\text{Bd8+}\) \(\text{Bc5}\) 60.\(\text{Bc8+}\) \(\text{Bb5}\) 61. \(\text{Bb8+}\) \(\text{Bc6}\) 62.\(\text{Bc8+}\) \(\text{Bb6}\) 63.\(\text{Bd8}\)

\(\text{Bb2}\) 64.\(\text{Bxd4}\) \(\text{Bxb3}\) 65.\(\text{Bd6+}\) \(\text{Bb5}\) 66.\(\text{Bh6}\) a4 67. \(\text{Bh5}\) a3 68.\(\text{Bxg5+}\) \(\text{Ba4}\) 69.\(\text{Bg8}\) \(\text{Bb1}\) and White resigned.

The following game was played in a Swiss system open tournament in memory of Alexander Alekhine, which was held in Moscow. It had attracted plenty of strong players and that was not surprising, because the prize fund was quite considerable even according to the contemporary standards. The first prize was not less than 20,000 $, if I remember correctly and that was almost unbelievable for those times in Russia...

International master Evgenij Babchuk had a huge contribution to the organization of the tournament. He was a famous chess-functionary and it was a pity that he passed away recently...

This game turned out to be quite short at the end. My opponent loses so quickly only very seldom and he is considered to have a high level of positional understanding and an excellently prepared opening repertoire. Unfortunately, he still needs a lot of work to realize his chess talent to its full extent...

1.\(\text{d4}\) \(\text{e6}\) 2.\(\text{c4}\) \(\text{f5}\)

The Dutch Defence is Zhenja's trademark opening weapon.

3.\(\text{Bf3}\) \(\text{f6}\) 4.\(\text{Bc3}\)

Now, in case of 4...\(\text{d5}\), White reaches a very favourable position from the Stonewall system, by playing 5.\(\text{Bf4}\), therefore Black often transposes to various set-ups, which can arise in some other openings like the Queen's Indian Defence as well as the Nimzowitsch Defence.

4...\(\text{Bb4}\) 5.\(\text{Bb3}\) \(\text{Be7}\)

It is also possible for Black here to continue with 5...\(\text{a5}\).

6.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{b6}\) 7.\(\text{Bg2}\) \(\text{Bb7}\) 8.\(\text{0-0}\) \(\text{Bxc3}\)
9. bxc3

This move is quite energetic, but it is a bit arguable. It is more solid for White, but somewhat dull, to follow with 9. \( \text{Bxc3} \)...

9... \( \text{dxe4} \)

This move was not forced for Black, but he thus prevented White’s eventual pawn-break c4-c5. Meanwhile, White has numerous other possibilities too. It can be recommended to Black to try instead: 9...0-0 10. \( \text{a3} \) d6 11. \( \text{c5} \) \( \text{dxe4} \) and the game would have remained quite unclear...

10. \( \text{g5!} \) 0-0 11. \( \text{xex4} \) \( \text{exe4} \)

Or 11...fexe4? 12. \( \text{a3} \) d6 13. \( \text{c2} \).

12. \( \text{xex4} \) fxe4 13. \( \text{a3} \) c5

Or 13...d6 14. \( \text{c2} \).

14. \( \text{c2} \) d5

Black should not have held to that pawn. He had better continue with: 14...e3 15. fxe3 c6 16. \( \text{f3} \), but White would still have some edge. Meanwhile, he is not forced to capture on e3, but he could have continued instead with f2-f4, followed by \( \text{e4} \).

15. cxd5 exd5 16. dxc5 bxc5 17. \( \text{d1} \) \( \text{d8} \) 18. \( \text{b3} \)

Now, it becomes clear that Black has failed to consolidate his position without giving up the pawn. His best chance would have been: 18... \( \text{e6} \)

19. \( \text{c5} \) \( \text{c6} \), preserving some practical chances.

18... \( \text{d6?} \)

This is just a terrible blunder...

19. \( \text{xd5!} \) \( \text{xd5} \) 20. \( \text{d1} \) 1-0

22

Dreev – Sakaev
Alekhine Memorial, Moscow 1992

1. \( \text{d4} \) d5 2. c4 e6 3. \( \text{f3} \) c6 4. \( \text{c3} \)

5. e3 \( \text{bd7} \) 6. \( \text{d3} \) dxc4 7. \( \text{xc4} \)

8. \( \text{d3} \) a6 9. e4 c5 10. e5 cxd4

11. \( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{xe5} \) 12. \( \text{xe5} \) axb5

13. 0-0!?

This interesting line of the Meran system is named the Relshetl attack and it is even presently not as well
analyzed as the more popular variation 13...b5+. At the moment that we played our game it was almost terra incognita... Contrary to the long forced lines arising after 13...b5, it leads to a complicated positional fight and the variations are much less forced.

13...d5 14.e2 b8

That move is not so often played as 14...a6, which is considered to be critical by the contemporary theory, but I am not convinced that it is worse at all. It is much less analyzed though, that is for sure...

15.g5!

This is the only way for White to fight for the opening initiative. In case of: 15.a4 d6, or 15.f4 e7, Black has no problems whatsoever.

15...e7

That is of course quite possible, but I think that the fashionable move 15...d6!? seems to be more reliable. After 16.f4 there arises a complicated position with mutual chances. In the game Lautier – Bacrot, France 2000 there followed later: 16...d7!? 17.eae1 0–0 18.f3 f5, with a rather complex situation in which Black’s prospects were at least equal. I think that instead of 17.eae1, it deserved attention for White to play 17.e4!!, having in mind the variation: 17...c5 18.d3 b6 19.f5, in which White would have a sufficient compensation for the pawn and some initiative.

16.a1!

That is the best move for White and it enables him to fight at least for a slight opening advantage. In case of: 16.f4 0–0 17.e3, the position would have remained rather unclear.

16...0–0 17.e6 b7?

That is a very serious mistake after which Black’s position is hardly defendable anymore. He had to continue instead with 17...xg5!? obtaining a quite acceptable position. Now, after 18.f4 h6! 19.e7+ (or 19...xb8! d6 20.e6 xf4+!) 19...h8, he can counter 20.e3 with the powerful argument 20...e5! and Black’s chances are not worse (But not 20...xb7? due to 21.h3 xf4 22.h1 g5 23.xf6 h6 24.f2! xf6 25.g3 and White has a crushing attack. It is not good for Black either to try: 20...h5?! in view of 21.h1! and after 21...b7 22.h3 g4 23.e2 his position is tremendously difficult.). Indeed following 20.c6 and 20...a8 21.a3, White’s position is preferable but not more...

18.f4!

After that very powerful move my opponent comes into something like a zugzwang, despite the fact that the board is full of pieces, since he has no useful moves at all.

18...c7?

That move loses quickly by force. He could have still defended with 18...h8!? and after 19.xe7 xe7 20.e5! b7 21.e2 g8 22.xe7 xe7 23.e7
Black would have remained with an exchange down without a sufficient compensation in an endgame. Nevertheless he was not losing directly yet and he could have relied on some practical chances for a draw in the hope that I might go wrong in the realization of my advantage. Now, everything is over with in only four moves. There still followed:

19.\(\text{\texttt{\textsc{$\Box$}xe7+ $\text{\texttt{\textsc{e}}}$xe7} 20.\text{\texttt{\textsc{f}}xf6 $\text{\texttt{g}}$xf6} 21.\text{\texttt{g}}g4+ $\text{\texttt{h}}$h8 22.\text{\texttt{h}}h4\}) and Black resigned.

23 C07

Tiviakov – Dreev
Podolsk 1992

We played this game in the town of Podolsk, near Moscow, in a round-robin, category 11, tournament – “Podolsk Company Cup”. It was organized by the local chess-club with the sponsorship of the Podolsk Company – one of the famous producers of sewing machines in Russia. The opening ceremony was attended by some quite distinguished guests – the mayor of the town and the World Champion Garry Kasparov. There were players of different generations participating in the tournament – some eminent chess-veterans, like the famous grandmasters Vladimir Bagirov, Aivars Gipslis, Eduard Gufeld and Igor Zaitzev. Sergey Tiviakov, Alexey Vizhmanavin and the author – we were the rating favourites. After the drawing of lots, it turned out that I had to play against Tiviakov in the last round and before it I had 6½ points together with S.Tiviakov and International master Georgij Georgadze. We were leading the tournament with a whole point in front of the rest of our rivals. We were discussing some opening variations with Sergey Kiselev (He had to play in the last round against Igor Arkadievich Zaitzev). I have to acknowledge that some of the ideas of Sergey Kiselev (He was a very talented chess-player, who unfortunately passed away too young...) proved to be very helpful for me in my last round game, the following day against Sergey Tiviakov.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.\(\text{\texttt{\textsc{d}}}$d2 c5 4.exd5 $\text{\texttt{\textsc{x}}}$xd5 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textsc{g}}}$f3$\text{\texttt{c}}$xd4 6.\(\text{\texttt{c}}$c4 $\text{\texttt{d}}$d6 7.0–0 $\text{\texttt{f}}$6 8.\(\text{\texttt{b}}$b3 $\text{\texttt{c}}$c6 9.\(\text{\texttt{b}}$xd4 $\text{\texttt{\textsc{x}}}$xd4 10.\(\text{\texttt{\textsc{x}}}$xd4 a6

This position is in fact a very popular tabia in this particular variation of the French Defence.

11.b3

My opponent has chosen a relatively calm positional line, which is not necessarily fighting for a serious opening advantage. White’s other possibilities here are: – 11.c3; 11.a4; 11.\(\text{\texttt{\textsc{b}}}$b3 – and they all lead to a complex positional battle. There is a forced line that is rather popular nowadays: 11.\(\text{\texttt{e}}$e1 $\text{\texttt{c}}$c7
12.\text{\textit{b3 a6} 13.\textit{f5 xh2+ 14.h1 0-0}}
15.xg7?? and it leads to a very sharp double-edged position.

11...\text{c7!?} 12.\text{b2 d6} 13.h3 0-0 14.a4

Thus seemingly standard move prevents Black's maneuver b7-b5, but it is imprecise and Black obtains a very good game after it. In case of 14.\textit{xf3?!}, Black has the powerful argument – 14...\textit{b5!}, with an obvious advantage following: 15.\textit{d3 b7}, as well as after: 15.\textit{xa8 b7} 16.\textit{xf8+ xf8} 17.\textit{d3 e5}.

White's best move would have been 14.\textit{d3}, with approximately equal prospects. Now, in case of 14...b5, White can enter a rather complicated position with 15.\textit{c4}, or he can force a draw if he so wishes with: 15.\textit{xb5 axb5} 16.\textit{xf6 gxf6} 17.\textit{g4+ h8} 18.\textit{h4 f5} 19.\textit{f6+ g8} 20.\textit{g5+ h8} 21.\textit{f6+}.

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14...\text{e5!} 15.\textit{f3 e4} 16.\textit{d4}

I was planning to answer 16.\textit{g5} with 16...\textit{e5} and if 17.\textit{a3}, then 17...\textit{b5!}—+

16...\textit{d7 17.e2 be8 18.c1}

My opponent was practically forced to make that ugly unaesthetic move, since the positional threat – e4-e3!

would have been rather unpleasant for him. For example: 18.\textit{ad1 e3!} and if 19.fxe3, then 19...\textit{h2+} 20.\textit{h1 e4}—+

18...\textit{a5!}

But naturally not 18...\textit{c5?}, in view of: 19.\textit{a3! xd4} 20.\textit{xd1}.

19.\textit{d1! e5} 20.g3?!

This is already a very serious mistake. Sergey had better continue with 20.f4!! and although after 20...\textit{a5}, (It was also interesting for Black to try: 20...\textit{exf3!} 21.\textit{xe5 xe5} 22.\textit{a3 fxg2} 23.\textit{xf8 xf8} 24.\textit{xg2 h5} and he would have a good compensation for the exchange.) my prospects would have been somewhat better, White could have preserved a quite defensible position. My advantage became considerable after the move in the game and I seized the initiative altogether.

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20...\textit{h5}

Black cannot capture the h3-pawn due to: 20...\textit{h3?} 21.\textit{f4 c5} 22.\textit{xd6 xd6} 23.\textit{e6!}

21.\textit{f1 c5!} 22.c3

The move 22.\textit{e3?}, can be countered by Black with 22...\textit{xg3}—+

22...\textit{h8!}

Now, capturing – 22...\textit{h8?!} is
far from clear: 23.fxg3 hxg3+ 24.g2
ox3 25.b2 xh3. I was considering the move 22...b5!?, but then I decided to play with my king with the quite straightforward idea to try to break through White’s position by advancing my f-pawn.

23.g2 f5 24.e2?!

That is another grave mistake and White’s position might be already beyond salvation after it. In case of 24.b4!?, or 24.a5!?, White’s position is evidently worse, but he can still hold on, because there is no decisive winning line in sight for Black yet.

24...c6 25.f4

The other defensive possibilities for White are hardly any better: 25.d4 e3 26.xc6 exf2+ 27.h2 bxc6; or 25.e3 xxe3 26.fxe3 b5 – and Black has a great advantage in both cases.

25.xf4 26.gxf4 c7 27.d5
e6 28.h1 g6

28...b6!?

29.f1 d6 30.xc6

30...xc6

In case of 30...bxc6, White can defend with: 31.d4 xf4 32.xa6 c5 33.wb5.

31.c4 wb6

Now, White’s position is practically hopeless, because of his vulnerable king and his weak kingside pawns. The rest is so to speak a matter of technique.

The game still followed with:

32.d5 xb3 33.d4 c3 34.
c1 d3 35.xd3 exd3 36.d1
d2 37.f3 xf4 38.xf5 f6 39.
d5 h6! 40.xd2 e4 41.g1 g5

42.f3 e3+ 43.h1 (if 43.f1, then 43...f2+ 44.e1 g6+) 43...g6

44.d3 (after 44.e4, Black wins with 44...g2) 44.f4 45.f1
e2. White resigned in view of the unavoidable checkmate.

This victory enabled me to win the first place in the tournament without a tie (G.Georgadze drew his game and he was quite happy about that, because that was a grandmaster norm for him...).

Later, I was awarded the prize for “Best Game in the Tournament” for my win against Tiviakov.

B13

Rogers – Dreev
Interzonal, Biel 1993

I played quite well at the Interzonal Tournament in Biel. I only had to make two draws in the last two rounds in order to qualify. However, I lost in the penultimate round to Valery Salov and I thus failed to become a Candidate for the World Title...

1.c4 c6 2.e4 d5 3.exd5 exd5

4.d4 df6 5.c3 dc6 6.g5 ae6
I tried here a very seldom played move. Black usually continues with 6...e6 or 6...dxc4 and these moves are popular and solid. Naturally 6...\&e6 seems to be rather strange, since the bishop is placed in front of the e7-pawn, therefore many players are quite skeptical towards that approach.

For example, Mikhail Botvinnik considered that after 7.\&xf6 gxf6 8.c5, or 7...exf6 8.c5, White was better, but tournament practice did not confirm that evaluation. In fact, strangely enough, nobody has proved yet how White can obtain any serious advantage in that line. I chose 6...\&e6 as a purely chess-weapon (that position is very complicated and it is not well analyzed yet) and also because of some psychological reasons. I had never played before the variation with 6...\&e6 and I hoped that my opponent would not be well prepared for it.

In general, that is what happened. I had no problems in the opening and my adversary lost so much time on his opening moves that he was later in a time-trouble.

7.\&e2
That is a relatively calm line. There arise more complicated positions with approximately equal chances after: 7.\&xf6 gxf6 8.c5, or 7...exf6 8.c5. White would not achieve anything much with 7.\&f3, since after 7...\&e4!?, Black’s counterplay is quite sufficient as contemporary tournament practice shows. It deserves attention for White to try 7.a3!? and that it a move preferred by V.Topalov and M.Adams. In his game against me at the tournament “Kremlin Stars” Moscow (rapid) 1996, Garry Kasparov played like that against me. There, I did not check the well familiar theoretical line 7...\&d7, (which is presently considered to be quite reliable) against the world-champion, but I tried instead a novelty – 7...\&g4 and after: 8.f3 \&e6!? 9.c5 g6 10.\&b5 \&g7 11.\&ge2 0–0, I obtained a quite reliable and satisfactory position.

7...\&a5!
That is the best move for Black. Its idea is in case of the standard reaction for White in similar positions – 8.c5, to answer 8...\&e4!? with a counterplay, which would be quite sufficient to equalize completely.

8.\&f3
It is not dangerous for Black if White plays 8.\&xf6 and I believe
Black’s simplest method to counter that is 8...exf6!? , with an excellent counterplay. Here, in case of: 9.cxd5 
\[ \text{x} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5} \] 10.\[ \text{f} \text{f} \text{3} \] \[ \text{b} \text{b} \text{4} \] 11.\[ \text{x} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5} \] (or 11.\[ \text{e} \text{e} \text{2} + \] \[ \text{f} \text{f} \text{8} \]! and Black’s position is even slightly better) 11...\[ \text{w} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5} \] , or 10.\[ \text{f} \text{f} \text{3} \] 0–0–0!? and Black’s prospects are not worse at all.

**8...dxc4**

I did not like the move 8...\[ \text{e} \text{e} \text{4} \] , because of: 9.0–0!? \[ \text{x} \text{x} \text{c} \text{3} \] 10.bxc3 dxc4 (In case of: 10...\[ \text{w} \text{x} \text{c} \text{3} \] 11.\[ \text{e} \text{b} \text{1} \] , Black lags in development considerably and White has a very dangerous initiative for the pawn.) 11.\[ \text{f} \text{f} \text{4} \] and although objectively Black should not be worse, I did not wish to play a position like that. White would have the initiative, despite being a pawn down.

**9.0–0**

**9...\[ \text{d} \text{d} \text{8} \] !**

It was too risky for Black to try 9...0–0–0–0, due to 10.\[ \text{w} \text{c} \text{1} \] ! and White’s compensation for the pawn would be more than sufficient. Here, in case of: 10...\[ \text{d} \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] 11.\[ \text{d} \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] \[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] , it is quite strong for White to follow with 12.b4! with a powerful initiative. That variation illustrates the danger of Black’s lag in development. After 10...\[ \text{b} \text{b} \text{8} \] , it seems very good for White to continue with 11.b3!? and White’s initiative is again threatening.

**10.\[ \text{c} \text{c} \text{1} \]**

It deserved attention for White to try 10.\[ \text{e} \text{e} \text{1} \] ! with a complicated double edged position. Now, it is bad for Black to play 10...\[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] , because of: 11.\[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] \[ \text{w} \text{x} \text{g} \text{5} \] 12.\[ \text{x} \text{x} \text{e} \text{6} \] fxe6 13.\[ \text{a} \text{a} \text{4} + \] and his position would be hardly defensible. Still, after 10...h6!, the situation would have remained rather unclear.

**10...h6 11.\[ \text{d} \text{d} \text{2} \]**

In case of: 11.\[ \text{e} \text{e} \text{3} \] g5! Black has a good game.

**11...\[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] !**

That is the most precise move. Following 11...g5, White can enter the variation (It is practically forced for Black.): 12.d5! \[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5} \] 13.\[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5} \] \[ \text{w} \text{x} \text{d} \text{5} \] 14.\[ \text{c} \text{c} \text{3} \] f6 15.\[ \text{e} \text{e} \text{3} \] ! and his initiative is quite sufficient to compensate his two-pawn deficit.

**12.\[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] \[ \text{d} \text{x} \text{d} \text{4} \] 13.b4! \[ \text{w} \text{d} \text{8} \] 14.\[ \text{e} \text{e} \text{3} \] \[ \text{d} \text{d} \text{7} \] 15.\[ \text{d} \text{d} \text{1} \]**

That is a mistake after which White must still prove that his compensation is worth a couple of pawns. He had better play 15.\[ \text{x} \text{a} \text{7} \] ! and that would
have led to a very complicated position in which I thought that after 15...g5, or 15...g6, Black's prospects would not have been worse.

15...a6

16.b5?!

This is another imprecision and this time it is quite serious, because White already does not have enough compensation for the sacrificed material for sure. It was stronger for him to continue with 16.\( \text{\textipa{\texta}a4} \) and he would have preserved good chances to maintain the balance.

16...axb5 17.\( \text{\textipa{\textb}1} \) g5 18.\( \text{\textipa{\textb}5} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textg}7} \) 19.\( \text{\textipa{\texta}4} \)!

My opponent creates maximal problems for me to materialize my advantage by playing that move.

19...\( \text{\textipa{\texte}4} \) 20.\( \text{\textipa{\textb}6} \)? \( \text{\textipa{\textb}8} \) 21.\( \text{\textipa{\texte}1} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textd}6} \)?

Here, it was my turn to make a mistake and my position becomes suddenly dangerous... I had to continue instead with: 21...\( \text{\textipa{\textf}4} \)! 22.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}3} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textf}6} \), preserving a considerable advantage.

22.\( \text{\textipa{\textb}4} \)! \( \text{\textipa{\textc}7} \)?!

It is not better for Black to play here 22...\( \text{\textipa{\textc}8} \)?!, because of: 23.\( \text{\textipa{\texte}6} \)! \( \text{\textipa{\texte}6} \) 24.\( \text{\textipa{\texth}5} \)+ \( \text{\textipa{\textf}8} \) 25.\( \text{\textipa{\textb}4} \) and his position remains nearly hopeless... The best chance was 22...\( \text{\textipa{\textf}5} \)?, obtaining after: 23.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}5} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textc}7} \) 24.\( \text{\textipa{\texta}4} \)+ \( \text{\textipa{\textf}8} \) a slightly worse, but still quite defensible position.

23.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}5} \)?!

White returns the favour... After: 23.\( \text{\textipa{\texte}6} \)! \( \text{\textipa{\texte}6} \) 24.\( \text{\textipa{\texth}5} \)+ \( \text{\textipa{\textf}8} \) 25.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}5} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textc}5} \) 26.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}5} \), my position would have been tremendously difficult...

23...\( \text{\textipa{\textx}c}5 \) 24.\( \text{\textipa{\textx}c}5 \)

Now, the move 24.\( \text{\textipa{\textx}e}6 \) is not so dangerous, because Black is not obliged to enter the variation: 24...\( \text{\textipa{\textx}e}6 \)? 25.\( \text{\textipa{\texth}5} \)+, in which his position is clearly worse, but he can play instead: 24...\( \text{\textipa{\texte}5} \)! with an approximately equal game. The variation: 25.\( \text{\textipa{\texta}4} \)+ \( \text{\textipa{\textf}8} \) 26.\( \text{\textipa{\textx}d}6 \) \( \text{\textipa{\textx}d}6 \) 27.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}4} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textf}6} \) 28.\( \text{\textipa{\textc}7} \) is not dangerous, because of 28...\( \text{\textipa{\texta}3} \)! and White has nothing better than: 29.\( \text{\textipa{\textx}e}5 \) \( \text{\textipa{\textc}1} \)+ 30.\( \text{\textipa{\textx}c}1 \) \( \text{\textipa{\textx}e}5 \) 31.\( \text{\textipa{\textb}1} \) \( \text{\textipa{\textg}7} \) 32.\( \text{\textipa{\textx}b}7 \), transferring into an equal endgame.

24...0–0 25.\( \text{\textipa{\textf}3} \)

Now, Black has two pawns for the exchange and they are a quite sufficient compensation. The prospects are about equal.

25...\( \text{\textipa{\texte}8} \)
26.\texttt{\textbf{A}}xd6?!

Here, my opponent overestimated his position and he decided to play for a win relying on his extra exchange. He had obviously ignored the power of Black’s c-pawn... Instead, he had better give back the exchange with the move 26.\texttt{\textbf{A}}xe6, entering after: 26...fxe6 27.e\texttt{\textbf{x}}d6! \texttt{\textbf{W}}xd6 (or 27...exd6? 28.\texttt{\textbf{x}}xb7+-) 28.\texttt{\textbf{E}}xc4 \texttt{\textbf{E}}xc4 29.\texttt{\textbf{W}}xc4 a drawish endgame.

26...\texttt{\textbf{W}}xd6 27.\texttt{\textbf{E}}xb7 c3

Now, my reliably protected and far-advanced c3-pawn provides me with a stable positional advantage. White’s extra exchange is practically immaterial in that position. In fact, his defence is already very difficult and additionally he did not have enough time...

28.\texttt{\textbf{W}}c2 \texttt{\textbf{A}}d4 29.g3 \texttt{\textbf{E}}c5 30.\texttt{\textbf{A}}e4 \texttt{\textbf{G}}g7 31.\texttt{\textbf{A}}d3 \texttt{\textbf{A}}f6

I am improving my position methodically. My adversary had to adhere to a waiting strategy, since he had no active counterplay.

32.\texttt{\textbf{A}}e4

It is not any better for White to try: 32.a4?!; due to: 32...\texttt{\textbf{A}}d5 33.\texttt{\textbf{A}}e3 \texttt{\textbf{A}}d4 and he has no good lines in sight. Now, after: 34.\texttt{\textbf{E}}e2 \texttt{\textbf{A}}xf2+! 35.\texttt{\textbf{X}}xf2 \texttt{\textbf{E}}xd3, as well as following: 34.\texttt{\textbf{E}}e1 \texttt{\textbf{A}}xf2+ 35.\texttt{\textbf{W}}xf2 \texttt{\textbf{E}}xd3, Black’s considerable positional advantage is doubtless.

32...\texttt{\textbf{A}}a5 33.a4 \texttt{\textbf{W}}d4

34.\texttt{\textbf{A}}c6?

GM Rogers was in a desperate time-trouble here and he made a decisive mistake. He had to defend with 34.\texttt{\textbf{E}}a1, but after 34...\texttt{\textbf{A}}d7, I would have preserved a great advantage; nevertheless he could have still resisted. Now, the game is quickly over.

34...\texttt{\textbf{A}}f5 35.\texttt{\textbf{W}}c1

Or 35.\texttt{\textbf{A}}e4 \texttt{\textbf{E}}e5--

35...\texttt{\textbf{E}}c5 36.\texttt{\textbf{A}}b5

It is not better for White to continue with: 36.\texttt{\textbf{D}}d1 \texttt{\textbf{W}}c4 37.\texttt{\textbf{A}}b5 (or 37.\texttt{\textbf{A}}d7 c2++; 37.\texttt{\textbf{A}}g2 \texttt{\textbf{W}}xa4++) 37...\texttt{\textbf{W}}e4 38.\texttt{\textbf{A}}b8 \texttt{\textbf{A}}xb5! 39.\texttt{\textbf{E}}xb5 \texttt{\textbf{A}}h3 and Black checkmates unavoidably.

36...\texttt{\textbf{E}}xc6 37.\texttt{\textbf{A}}xf5 \texttt{\textbf{W}}xa4 38.\texttt{\textbf{A}}d5 c2 39.\texttt{\textbf{D}}d2 \texttt{\textbf{W}}b3 40.\texttt{\textbf{A}}e3 \texttt{\textbf{W}}b2 41.\texttt{\textbf{A}}e1 \texttt{\textbf{E}}c5
and White resigned, since he had no useful moves at all. In case of 42.\texttt{g2}, Black wins with 42...\texttt{b7}, followed by 43...\texttt{b2}, while after 42.\texttt{de2} or 42.\texttt{f1}, Black's simplest win is 42...\texttt{b3}. That was a quite interesting game, although with numerous mistakes...

\textbf{25} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{B10}

\textbf{Lerner – Dreev}
Rostov-on-Don (open) 1993

1.c4 c6 2.e4 d5 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.exd5 \texttt{f6} 5.\texttt{b5+}

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\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{chess_board.png}
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5...\texttt{bd7}!

This is the best counter argument against the opening line, chosen by White (5.\texttt{b5}), based on the idea to hold on to the d5-pawn. The other possibility – 5...\texttt{d7} presents him after 6.\texttt{c4} with more chances to preserve his extra d5-pawn and as a result of that, with better prospects to maintain an opening advantage.

6.\texttt{c3} a6!

This simple and logical answer provides Black with a good counterplay, contrary to the line 6...g6, which leads to more complicated positions.

The idea of the move 6...\texttt{a6} is simple enough: in case of the retreat 7.\texttt{c2}, Black follows with 7...\texttt{b6} (or 7...\texttt{b5} with the idea \texttt{c8-b7}) and later he regains easily the d5-pawn, obtaining even a slightly better position, because White is left with an isolated pawn. He cannot change much in that case by continuing with 7.\texttt{e4} b5 8.\texttt{b3} \texttt{b6} (or 8...\texttt{b7}).

The straightforward move 7.\texttt{xd7+} seems to me to be anti-positional. White exchanges his important light squared bishop for Black's knight and after 7...\texttt{xd7??}, in order to try to protect his d5-pawn, he is practically forced to play 8.\texttt{f3} (It is too dubious for White to try 8.\texttt{f3}!! here, since after 8...\texttt{b5} 9.\texttt{c2} \texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{f4} \texttt{f5}, Black is clearly better.), but then after 8...\texttt{g4}! 9.\texttt{c1} (It is worse for White to continue with 9.g3, because that move compromises the light squares and it presents Black after 9...\texttt{b5} with a very dangerous initiative.) 9...\texttt{g6}, or 9...\texttt{b5}??, Black's compensation for the pawn is more than sufficient and what is even more important – he has the initiative, while White is deprived of castling rights and his pieces cannot be coordinated easily. It is less energetic for Black to try the line: 8...\texttt{b5} 9.\texttt{f3} \texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{e5} \texttt{d6} 11.\texttt{c4} \texttt{c5} 12.\texttt{e3}, although it is obviously good enough for equality. For example, in the game Formanek – Khenkin, Antwerp 1995, there followed: 12...\texttt{d8} 13.\texttt{d4} \texttt{xd4} 14.0-0 \texttt{c5} 15.\texttt{d1} \texttt{g6} 16.\texttt{d2} \texttt{g7} 17. \texttt{ac1} 0-0 18.\texttt{e4} \texttt{wb6} 19.\texttt{xf6+} \texttt{xf6} 20.\texttt{c3} \texttt{d7} and Black had balanced the chances.
Therefore, there is no sensible alternative to the variation, chosen by my opponent in the game.

7.\textit{wa}4 \textit{wb}8 8.\textit{xe}d7+

That exchange is practically forced, since it is quite obvious that 8.\textit{e}2 b5 cannot be good for White at all.

8...\textit{wd}7!

\textbf{9.\textit{wd}7+}

Strangely enough, entering the endgame here for White is his relatively best decision. His prospects are very poor in a middle game with queens present on the board. For example, in case of: 9.\textit{wb}3 \textit{wg}4!? Black’s initiative is more than sufficient to compensate the pawn. Following 9.\textit{wf}4 \textit{xa}8! White fails to hold on to the d5-pawn, because now, after the relatively best move 10.\textit{ef}3 (It is worse for White to play 10.\textit{wf}3?!), because of: 10...b5 11.\textit{ge}2 \textit{b}7 12.\textit{ef}4 \textit{wf}5, with an overwhelming advantage for Black.) in the game Kengis – A.Filipenko, USSR 1985 there followed: 10...\textit{xd}5 11.\textit{xd}5 \textit{wd}5 12.0–0 e6 and Black had a slight but stable advantage.

\textbf{9...\textit{xd}7 10.\textit{d}3?!}

Having in mind that I play this line for Black, my opponent had prepared a novelty here. Until that game, White played most often the move 10.\textit{d}4 (After 10.\textit{ge}2 \textit{ed}8 11.\textit{d}4 \textit{af}5, Black is better.), but following: 10...\textit{ed}8 11.\textit{ag}5 \textit{af}5 12.\textit{xf}6 \textit{xf}6, he never achieved any opening advantage.

\textbf{10...\textit{af}5 11.\textit{ag}5}

\textbf{11...\textit{ed}8!}

This is Black’s most precise defence. In case of 11...\textit{xd}3 12.0–0–0, White’s chances would have been superior, thanks to his lead in development.

\textbf{12.\textit{xf}6}

This is forced; otherwise White cannot hold on to his extra d5-pawn. Now however, Black remains with two bishops against a couple of knights and that is a good compensation for the pawn by itself.

\textbf{12...\textit{exf}6 13.0–0–0}

That is an imprecision, although only slight. It is better for White to play 13.\textit{d}2!?, planning the maneuver \textit{g}1-e2-g3, with a complicated and approximately equal position.

\textbf{13...\textit{c}5 14.\textit{d}4?!}

This is another mistake and that time it is much more essential. White weakens the important diagonal – b1–h7. It was definitely better for him to have followed with 14.\textit{ed}2, or 14.\textit{d}2
and his position would have remained quite defendable.

14...\texttt{d6} 15.\texttt{ge2 e8} 16.\texttt{d2 d7} 17.\texttt{c1 e4}!

I have the edge after that move. It is worth mentioning that it becomes very difficult to defend a position like that with White. Meanwhile, it is rather easy for me to improve my position, for example with moves like - b7-b5, \texttt{hc8}, or h7-h5, White's best moves are far from obvious or easy to find and his every imprecision might have grave consequences for him. Konstantin Lerner again chooses not the best defensive line:

18.h3?!

He could have still held the position with: 18.b3 \texttt{c7} 19.\texttt{a4 b4+} 20.\texttt{dec3}, but it was quite understandable that it was far from easy for him to make up his mind to play like that. White's position seems rather precarious, due to the pin of the knight on c3, despite the fact that I could hardly profit anything substantial out of it. Now, Black seizes the initiative altogether:

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

18...\texttt{e8}!

The threat is - \texttt{f4+}

19.g3 h5 20.h4

It is dubious for White to follow with 20.f4?! , because of 20...h4 and it would not work for him to play 21.g4 \texttt{xf4!} 22.\texttt{xf4 xd4+} 23.\texttt{d3 xd3+} 24.\texttt{c2 g6} 25.\texttt{b3 e3+}

20...\texttt{g4} 21.a3 \texttt{b5} 22.\texttt{d3 g5}!

Black’s pieces are totally dominating the whole board. White has no acceptable defensive plan in sight. My opponent became a helpless spectator of my decisive actions to the end of the game.

23.\texttt{e1}

White loses after 23.\texttt{he1?}, because of: 23...\texttt{xh4} 24.\texttt{xh4 f5+} 25.\texttt{d2 f4+}! 26.\texttt{xf4 xd4+} 27.\texttt{d3 xd3} 28.\texttt{c2 e5+} 29.\texttt{b3 e1} 30.\texttt{e1 d2} 31.\texttt{e2 d4} and the loss of a second pawn is unavoidable.

23...\texttt{f5+} 24.\texttt{d2 b4} 25.axb4 \texttt{xb4} 26.\texttt{c1 eb8} 27.\texttt{d1 g6}!

Black emphasizes his overwhelming positional advantage.

28.hxg5 fxg5

White is beyond salvation now and he has no satisfactory defence at his disposal.

29.\texttt{e3}

My opponent was trying to coordinate his forces somehow, but that could not save the game.
29...Exd4 30.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e}3\) a5 31.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{c}2\)

White was losing too after: 31.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}1\) \(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{db}4\) 32.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}2\) a4 and there was no acceptable defence against the threat a4-a3.

31...\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{c}4\) 32.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e}3\) a4 33.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}1\) \(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{c}5\) 34.\(\text{\texttt{f}}\text{f}3\) g4 35.\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e}3\) \(\text{\texttt{b}}\text{b}3!\) and White resigned, because of the numerous threats against which he was totally helpless.

This was a good positional game in which I managed to exploit the almost unnoticeable minute imprecision of my adversary.

9.\(\text{\texttt{c}}\text{c}1!\)

That is an interesting and new idea. White makes a useful waiting move and he prevents the thematic pawn-break b7-b5 in the process. He plays more often here either 9.d5 \(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e}5\), or 9...\(\text{\texttt{a}}\text{a}5\), and that leads to complicated positions with mutual chances, or 9.h4 with a very sharp and rather unclear game.

9...\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}7\)

In case of: 9...e5 10.d5, Black is slightly worse after: 10...\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e}7\) 11.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{g}3\), as well as following: 10...\(\text{\texttt{a}}\text{a}5\) 11.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{g}3\) – these positions are too passive for Black, since he has no active counterplay in sight.

10.d5

This move is too straightforward. Some time later (see the game against Mikhail Golubev, played at the tournament in Alushta in 1994) I played the more flexible move – 10.b3!?

10...\(\text{\texttt{e}}\text{e}5\)

Black’s knight is rather unstable here. It would have been more reliable for Black to follow with 10...\(\text{\texttt{a}}\text{a}5\) and in the game Mamedyarov – Cheparinov, Antalya 2004, there followed: 11.\(\text{\texttt{g}}\text{g}3\) c5 12.\(\text{\texttt{d}}\text{d}3\) b5 13.b3 bxc4 14.bxc4 \(\text{\texttt{b}}\text{b}4\) with a complicated, but quite acceptable position for Black.
11.\(b3\) \(\text{Qh5}\)

That seemingly active move is an imprecision enabling me to seize the initiative. Black should have defended passively, having in mind the line: 11...\(\text{Ac8}\) 12.\(f4\) \(\text{Qed7}\). The other active looking move – 11...\(b5\) is not any better, because after: 12.\(\text{cxb5}\) \(\text{axb5}\) 13.\(\text{Qd4}\), White’s initiative is quite dangerous. For example, in case of: 13...\(b4?!\) 14.\(\text{Qcb5}\), he has an obvious advantage.

\[
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\]

12.\(\text{Qg3!}\)

White achieves nothing much with 12.\(f4\), due to: 12...\(h6\) 13.\(\text{Qh4}\) \(\text{Qxf4}\) 14.\(\text{Qxf4}\) \(g5\) and Black’s chances are not worse.

12...\(f5\)

The desire of my opponent to play somewhat actively is easily understandable, but his last move seems to be anti-positional. He compromises his set-up considerably. Strangely enough, it would have been better for him to defend with 12...\(\text{Qxg3}\), without being afraid of the attack along the h-file after 13.\(\text{hxg3}\). Well, after 13...\(\text{g6}\) 14.\(\text{Qh6}\) \(\text{h8}\), or 14.\(\text{Qe2}\), White maintains the initiative indeed, but still Black’s position would have remained quite defensible.

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\]

13.\(\text{Qxh5}\) \(\text{gxh5}\) 14.\(\text{Qe2}\) \(\text{Qg6}\) 15.\(\text{exf5}\) \(\text{Qxf5}\) 16.\(0-0\) \(\text{Qd7}\) 17.\(\text{Qe4}\) \(\text{h4}\) 18.\(\text{Qd3}\) \(e5\)

19.\(g4!\)

This move consolidates White’s great positional advantage.

19...\(\text{Qxe4}\)

In case of: 19...\(\text{hxg3}\) 20.\(\text{hxg3}\), my opponent would be faced with serious problems. White would plan to regroup his forces according to the scheme – \(\text{wh2}\), \(\text{Qg2}\), \(\text{wh1}\) with an attack along the h-file.

20.\(\text{Qxe4}\) \(\text{Qf4}\)

It is evident that Black’s position is difficult from the strategical point of view, so my opponent is trying to complicate things somehow. He hopes to have more practical chances to save the game by sharpening it.

21.\(\text{Qxh4}\) \(\text{h5}\) 22.\(\text{Qf5}\) \(\text{Qxf5}\)

Now, the exchange-sacrifice is in fact forced for Black; otherwise after: 22...\(\text{we8}\) 23.\(\text{Qg5}\) \(\text{Qh3+}\) 24.\(\text{Qg2}\) \(\text{Qxg5}\) 25.\(\text{Qxg5}\), he would remain a pawn down without any chances for active counterplay.

23.\(\text{Qxf5}\) \(\text{Qxf5}\) 24.\(\text{Qh1}\) \(\text{Qf8}\) 25.\(\text{Qc2}\) \(\text{Qd3}\) 26.\(\text{Qd1}\) \(e4!\)

That is his best resource from the practical point of view. In case of 26...
\( \text{If} \ f4, \text{he would have to enter an endgame being an exchange down for nothing...} \)

27.\( \text{g3!} \)

White is threatening now the simple move – \( \text{fxe4}, \) reducing the tension in the position considerably. Accordingly, Black's next move is practically forced:

27...\( \text{h4} \) 28.\( \text{xh4} \) \( \text{Wh3} \) 29.\( \text{g3} \) \( \text{exf3} \) 30.\( \text{g1} \) \text{f2} 

That is Black's only possibility to regain the exchange. The position however, is simplified after that and that suits me just fine.

31.\( \text{xd3} \)

White is not falling into the trap: if 31.\( \text{e1??} \), then 31...\( \text{d1!} \) and Black wins, since White gets checkmated in the variations: 32.\( \text{xh2} \) \( \text{xf1!} \) 33.\( \text{xh1} \) \( \text{xf1#} \), or 32.\( \text{exe1} \) \( \text{fxe1}\text{f1}\) 33.\( \text{exe1} \) \( \text{f1+} \) 34.\( \text{xe1} \) \( \text{xh1#} \)

31...\( \text{fxg1+} \) 32.\( \text{gxg1} \) \text{h8} 

The position has been simplified considerably and Black is a pawn down and his king's shelter is much less reliable that that of its counterpart. It becomes quite difficult for Black to defend such a position, moreover in a time-trouble!

33.\( \text{e4} \)

That is an unprecision for White, but it changes nothing in the evaluation of the situation. It was better for me to play 33.a4!, preventing Black's counterplay on the queenside, connected with b7-b5. Naturally, Black exploits the available opportunity to show some activity:

33...\( \text{b5!} \) 34.a4 \( \text{bxa4} \) 35.bxa4 \( \text{wh5} \) 36.\( \text{e1} \) 37.\( \text{c3} \) 38.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{h5?} \)

Here, Black blundered in his time-trouble, leaving his bishop en prise, since he overlooked White's spectacular move 40. He could have played instead 38...\( \text{f5!?} \), with chances to offer some resistance. The move 39.\( \text{xc3??} \) would not work then for White, due to: 39...\( \text{b1+} \) 40.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{e4+} \) 41.\( \text{g2} \) \( \text{f1#} \)

Now, Black loses by force:

39.\( \text{xc3!} \) \( \text{d1+} \) 40.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{f1} \) 41.\( \text{e5+!} \)

Black resigned. He fails to capture White's queen, because in case of 41...\( \text{exe5}, \) or 41...\( \text{h7} \), he gets checkmated after 42.\( \text{h3}. \) That was an interesting fighting game with an exquisite finish.
27

Galdunts – Dreev
St Petersburg (open) 1993

1.e4 c5 2.dı3 dı6 3.dıb5 g6 4.0–0 dıg7 5.c3 dıf6 6.dıe1 0–0
7.h3

Here, it is much more popular for White to play: 7.d4 cxd4 8.cxd4 d5
9.e5 dıe4? and that is presently quite fashionable; nevertheless the move
in the game was also a frequent guest in the tournament practice and it was
modern too.

7...dıe5?

That is the most logical and the most principled answer for Black. The
other most often played lines (7...dıd6
8.d4 cxd4 9.cxd4; 7...dıb6; 7...dıd5; and
7...a6) are, I believe, not so reasonable
for Black and they all present White
with more chances to fight for the
opening advantage, than after 7...dıe5?!

8.dıxc6?!

I have always been quite skeptical
about such possible exchanges of the
bishop for the knight in similar posi-
tions, since they all seem to me to be
somewhat anti-positional for White.
I even think that after 7...dıe5, White
has not achieved anything promising
out of the opening. In case of: 8.d3 d6
9.dıbd2 dıc7!? 10.dıf1 a6 11.dıa4 b5,
Black will have no problems in the
near future and his plans are already
preferable. In fact, the position resem-1
bles a lot, in its pawn-structure, one of
the Chigorin variations of the Ruy Lo-
pez, except that it is now under much
more favourable circumstances for
Black. White’s most active line here
is – 8.d4. After the practically semi-
forced variation: 8...cxd4 9.cxd4 exd4
10.e5 (or 10.dıxd4?! dıb6! 11.dıxc6
dxc6=) 10...dıd5 11.dıg5?! dıc7!, there
arises a familiar theoretical position,
in which Black has no problems what-
soever, as contemporary tournament
practice shows convincingly.

8...dıxc6 9.dıxe5

Otherwise the move 8.dıxc6 be-
comes senseless. After 9.d3, I could
counter with 9...dıc7, defending my
e5-pawn and my position would have
been clearly preferable due to my
bishop pair.

9.dıe8 10.f4

It is worse for White to play 10.d4
in view of: 10...cxd4 11.cxd4 (or
11.dıxd4?! dıd7 12.f4 dıc7+) 11...dıxe4
and Black is better. Now, in case of:
12.dıxe4 dıxe5, Black maintains a huge
positional advantage as well.

10...dıh5!

I also considered the possibility
10...dıxe4; after: 11.dıxe4 f6, there
would have arisen a rather complex
position, in which my chances seemed
to be at least not worse. Still, the move
10...dıh5 was stronger.

11.d4 dıh4 12.dıf1
12...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}h}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{3}}!}\) 13.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{gxh}}\texttt{\textit{\textbf{3}}}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}\texttt{\textit{3}}+}\) 14.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h}}\texttt{\textit{1}}}\)
\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}\texttt{h3}+}\) 15.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}}\texttt{g1 \textit{\textbf{g}}\texttt{3}}}\)
I have more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed piece in this position. The most important point here is — I have the initiative. It is far from easy for White to defend that position, because of the unsafe situation of his king.

16.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}\texttt{d2}}\)

Following: 16.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}\texttt{e1?!}}\), I could have played: 16...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}\texttt{h1+}}\) 17.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}}\texttt{2}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}e}}\texttt{e4+}\) 18.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}\texttt{e3 \textit{\textbf{w}}\texttt{h4}}}\) and Black’s initiative would have been tremendously dangerous. For example: 19.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xe}}\texttt{e4}\) (or 19.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}h1?!}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}}\texttt{f2+}}\) 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}\texttt{xe4 c4!}}\) and White has no satisfactory defense against the threat \(\texttt{f7-f5}\) with a checkmate; 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}\texttt{d3}}\) 20...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}xd4}}\) and Black’s attack is so powerful that White is practically defenseless.) 19...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xe5}}\) 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}}\texttt{d3}}\) (or 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xe5?}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xe5+}}\) \(21.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xe5 \textit{\textbf{w}e7#}}}) 20...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xf4}}\) and Black has already three pawns for the piece and his attack is still quite menacing.

16...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}h1+}}\) 17.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}f2}}\)
(diagram)

17...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}h2+}}\)

That was not the best. I had better play: 17...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}xf1}}\)! 18.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}xf1}}\) (or 18.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}xf1?!}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}xe4}}\) 19.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}g3}}\) \(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}d5+}}) 18...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}xf1+}}\) 19.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{x}xf1}}\)
\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}xd4}}\) 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}xd4 f6}}\) 21.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}f3 \textit{\textbf{w}xe4}}\) 22.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}f5 \textit{\textbf{d}d8}}\) and Black would have a much better endgame.

18.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}f3 \textit{\textbf{w}h3}}\) 19.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}f2 \textit{\textbf{x}}f1}}\) 20.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{v}xf1 cxd4}}\) 21.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c}xd4 f6}}\) 22.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{v}f3 \textit{\textbf{x}}xe4}}\) 23.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}g3 \textit{\textbf{e}}e7}}\) 24.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f}f5}}\)

This is a very strong move after which the game becomes quite unclear and most probably White is not worse anymore to say the least.

24...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}g5}}\) 25.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{v}b3+ \textit{\textbf{v}h8}}\) 26.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}d2}}\)

\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}ae8}}\)

27.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{w}d3?}}\)

My opponent had a quite difficult defensive task during most of that game and as a result he was in a desperate time-trouble. That can easily explain his blunder, after which his position becomes immediately hopeless. It was correct for him to follow with 27.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{v}h1!}}\), after which in case of: 27...\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e}}e2+\) 28.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d}xe2 \textit{\textbf{w}xh1}}\) 29.\(\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g}g3}}, as
well as after: 27...g4!? we would have reached complex positions with mutual chances.

Now, the game is practically over rather quickly.

27...g4 28.h1 e2+! 29.xe2
30.e1 h5 31.f4 h4 32.e6
33.e2 g2 34.e3

34...h6!
That is the fastest road for Black to victory.

35.d1 xe3 36.xe3 g1# and White resigned.

It might be interesting to mention that after our game the variation: 1.e4
c5 2.f3 c6 3.b5 g6 4.0-0
g7 5.c3 f6 6.e1 0-0 7.h3 e5!? 8.xc6
xc6 9.xe5 xe8 10.f4, became practically extinct in the top-level tournament practice.

13...d4!?
My opponent chose a very seldom played line at those times (it is not so popular nowadays either...), avoiding the famous opening tabia, arising after: 13.dxe6 fxe6.

Back at the times in which we played our game, Black's main argument against the line 13.d4, was considered to be 13...c5, but the move 14.b4!? was already beginning to become fashionable. It was leading to an extremely complicated and double-edged position after the practically forced line: 14...cxb3 15.axb3
b4 16.a4. After my opponent made up his mind to follow with 13.d4, I understood that in case I answer with the usual move 13...c5, I risked facing some home-preparation novelty in this line and even if my position turned out to be acceptable, I would
have to solve difficult problems over the board in a very complex situation. Meanwhile, my opponent would have been armed with home-prepared analysis, so at the end, after a relatively short hesitation, I decided to choose a very rare line:

13...e5!?

avoiding complications and steering the game into a semi-closed positional maneuvering scheme.

It is interesting to mention that 12 years after our game, the same seldom played variation with the move 13...d4, happened in the game Anand - van Wely, Monaco (rapid) and small wonder, Loek decided not to take his chances with the move 13...c5, evidently afraid of the line 14.b4!?, but he chose instead, just like I did, the move 13...e5. Later, after: 14...f5 g6 15...e3 c5, he reached a reliable and approximately equal position.

14...f5 g6 15...h6

15...h5!?

This is a new idea. Black had tested before that only the move 15...g8 and in the game Szmeteran – Morovic Fernandez, Buenos Aires 1992, after: 16...xg8 xg8 17...f3 d6 18.b3, White had just a slight advantage, but what was more important he had the initiative...

16...f3 f4 17...xf7!?

This is White's most principled argument in his fight for the opening advantage.

Following: 17...xf4 exf4 18...h3 (18...g4? h5++) 18...g7, Black is better; after 17...g4 g7 there arises a complicated position, but I believe that Black is not worse at all, to say the least...

17...xf7 18.g3 g5 19.gxf4 gxf4 20...h5+ e7! 21...h4+

It is inferior for White to play here 21...g5+? f6, because he will remain to be the only one with problems to worry about...

21...f7

It is too bad for Black to play 21...f6?, due to 22...xf4! g8+ (22...exf4? 23.e5++) 23...g3 and White has a great advantage, but still it is quite possible for Black to follow with: 21...e8 22...h5+ d8 and the position is complicated enough with mutual chances.

22...d1?!

This move involves a great risk for White. I believe that my opponent had better comply with the fact that he had failed to obtain any advantage out of
the opening and after: 22.\textit{Wh}5+ \textit{De}7 23.\textit{Wh}4+, he could have presented me with a choice — to either agree to a draw by a repetition of moves after: 23...\textit{Df}7 24.\textit{Wh}5+ \textit{De}7, or to continue the fight in the quite unclear position after: 23...\textit{De}8 24.\textit{Wh}5+ \textit{Dd}8...

Evidently, GM B. Gelfand had overestimated his position a little bit...

22...\textit{Eg}8+ 23.\textit{Dh}1 \textit{Df}6 24.\textit{Ah}5+

Here, at first I of course calculated the line: 24...\textit{Dxh}5 25.\textit{Wh}xh5+ \textit{Dg}7 26.\textit{Dg}1+ \textit{Dh}8 27.\textit{Dxg}8+ \textit{Dxg}8 28.\textit{Dd}2 \textit{Dh}8, evaluating the position as roughly equal. Later, after some serious thought, I decided to sacrifice the exchange in order to reach a very sharp position in which I hoped to confuse my opponent and to manage to seize the initiative:

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

nevertheless my light squared bishop was going to become a real monster!

30.\textit{exd}5

Once again, White had to accept that sacrifice as well, because after: 30.\textit{Dd}2 \textit{Df}6, my position would have been clearly better. I would have a pawn for the exchange and the permanent threat – \textit{Dxe}4.

30...\textit{Ax}d5 31.\textit{Ef}1 \textit{Df}6

Black is threatening \textit{Eh}8.

32.\textit{Wh}7+ \textit{Eg}7 33.\textit{Wh}3 \textit{Ee}6! 34.\textit{Eg}2?!

This is an imprecision, after which my initiative becomes extremely dangerous.

White had better play 34.\textit{Wh}8!, and later either: 34...\textit{Eg}8 35.\textit{Wh}7+ \textit{Eg}7 36.\textit{Wh}8 \textit{Eg}8 with a draw, or: 35... \textit{Eg}7 36.\textit{Wh}4 \textit{Eh}8 37.\textit{Ef}2 \textit{Ef}8?!, with a rather unclear position.

34...\textit{g}5
35.a3!?
This is White's only chance to activate somehow his position. In case of 35.Qg1, Black's strong initiative is running unopposed; after 35...g4 36.fxg4 hxg4, White has no good defense in sight, while in case of: 37.e4 d7 38.d3, it is possible for Black to follow with: 38...d3!? 39.xd3 cxd3 with an overwhelming advantage for him, because Black's three connected passed pawns are a much more powerful argument in that position than White's extra rook.
35...g4 36.axb4 d5 37.e3 gxf3!

40.d5 xd5 41.d2 c6 42.xd7+
The exchange of queens does not save White at all.
42...xd7 43.Ea6 h3 44.Ef2
Or 44.Ea7+ e6 45.Eg7 xf1++

44...h4! and White resigned. After 45.Ea7+, Black wins easily with: 45...f6 46.Eg7 xf2 47.Eg8 d4.

29
Dreev – Golubev
Alushta 1994

This game was played in a round-robin tournament, which was held in the town of Alushta in the Crimean peninsula.

1.d4 Qf6 2.c4 g6 3.Qc3 Qg7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0–0 6.Qg5 Qc6 7.Qge2 a6 8.Qd2 E8b8 9.Ec1! Qd7

38.Ef2?
Here, my opponent made the decisive mistake in the time-trouble after which he lost quickly. It was relatively the best for him to try that practically forced line: 38.Exg7+?! xg7 39.Qxd5 d6 40.Ea5!(40.Ed1? Eg6 41.Eg1 f2++)
40...Eg6?! 41.Ef3 Ee4 42.Qg2 Ec2+ 43.Ef2 Ecl 44.Ea6 Ed1 and despite the fact that White would have been clearly worse in that case too, there was no quick victory for Black in sight.

38...Eb7 39.Ea5 Ed7??
This is the best line for Black with the deadly threat – h4.
That variation was played a year earlier in my game against M. Muhutdinov, which was also a part of this book (see game 26). I played there the straightforward move – 10.d5.

10...b3!?

At the moment – that move as a novelty. 10.b3!? is a much more flexible move than 10.d5. Its idea is to respond 11.d5, in answer to the seemingly attractive 10...b5, after which Black is practically forced to enter the rather complicated and even risky for him position after 11...\( \diamond \)e5, since his knight is unstable there. The other retreats of that knight promise no good prospects for Black; for example: 11...\( \diamond \)a7 12.\( \diamond \)g3 c6 13.\( \diamond \)x\( \text{-} \)c6 \( \diamond \)xc6 14.\( \diamond \)d5 and White has a slight but stable positional advantage. The pawn-structure resembles the Maroczy system in the Sicilian Defence, except that the situation is much worse for Black, since his knight is misplaced on a7. It is even worse for him to play 11...\( \diamond \)a5?!, because in that case after: 12.cxb5 axb5 13.\( \diamond \)d4 \( \text{\&} \)e8 (There is nothing better for Black in sight; if 13...b4, then 14.\( \diamond \)cb5!) White can enter the following semi-forced variation: 14.\( \diamond \)xb5!? \( \text{\&} \)xb5 15.\( \diamond \)xb5 \( \text{\&} \)xb5 16.b4 \( \text{\&} \)b7 (16...\( \text{\&} \)b7?! 17.a4 \( \text{\&} \)b6 18.a5 \( \text{\&} \)b5 19.\( \text{\&} \)xc7+-) 17.bxa5 with a great advantage for him.

10...b5 11.d5 \( \diamond \)e5

After: 11...b4 12.dxc6 bxc3 13.\( \diamond \)xc3 \( \text{\&} \)xc6 14.\( \text{\&} \)e2, Black ends up in a passive position, without any good prospects and he has no available plan to obtain an active counterplay.

12.f4

This move seems to be the most logical in White's fight to obtain an advantage in the opening. I would not have achieved much with: 12.cxb5 axb5 13.\( \diamond \)d4, because of: 13...\( \text{\&} \)e8 with a rather unclear position. Now, after 14.f4, Black can continue with 14...\( \text{\&} \)g4 and he should not be afraid of 15.h3, because of 15...b4 with a good counterplay for him.

12...\( \text{\&} \)g4 13.\( \text{\&} \)g3 h6 14.\( \text{\&} \)h4 \( \text{\&} \)h7 15.h3

That obvious move is imprecise. Black's knight on g4 is not so well placed, so it is hardly worth for White to repel it. He should have simply continued his development with 15.\( \text{\&} \)e2, preserving a slight positional advantage thanks to his superior piece-coordination. Now, the position becomes much sharper and quite unclear at that.

15...\( \text{\&} \)g6 16.\( \text{\&} \)d3 e5!

My opponent obtains here an excellent counterplay after that strong move.

17.fxe5

The position is complicated and double-edged after: 17.dxe6 fxe6 18.e5 (White achieves nothing with 18.0–0,
because of: 18...\(\text{Qxe}4\) 19.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Qxh}4\) with a better game for Black.) 18...dxe5 19.fxe5 g5 20.exf6 \(\text{Qxf6}\) 21.\(\text{Qxg}5\) hxg5 22.\(\text{Qxg}5\) \(\text{Qc}6\) and Black's compensation for the pawn is quite sufficient.

17...dxe5 18.\(\text{Qge}2\) c6

It is too dubious for Black to play 18...\(\text{Qxe}4?!\), due to: 19.\(\text{Qxd}8\) \(\text{Qxd}2\) 20.\(\text{Qx}c7\) \(\text{Qbc}8\) 21.\(\text{Qd}6\) bxc4 22.\(\text{Qxf}8\) cxd3 (or 22...\(\text{Qxf}8\) 23.\(\text{Qc}2\) cxb3 24.axb3+-) 23.\(\text{Qxg}7\) \(\text{Qxg}7\) 24.\(\text{Qxd}2\) dxe2 25.\(\text{Qxe}2\) and he does not have a good compensation for the exchange.

19.\(\text{Qf}2\)

It is worse for White to play 19.0-0?! in view of: 19...b4 20.\(\text{Qa}4\) (or 20.\(\text{Qd}1?!\) \(\text{Qxe}4\)) 20...\(\text{Qxe}4\) 21.\(\text{Qxe}4\) \(\text{Qxh}4\) 22.\(\text{Qc}5\) \(\text{Qfd}8\) and Black is evidently better.

19...\(\text{Qh}5\)

20.\(\text{Qc}5\)!

This move forces Black to remove his rook away from the f-file. His plan is more than obvious: that is to push f7-f5 and eventually also - f4, with the idea to follow with f3, so he needs his rook on the f-file. White’s move - 20.\(\text{Qc}5\)! impedes that plan. In case of: 20:0-0 \(\text{f5}\)? 21.\(\text{Qc}5\) \(\text{Qf}7\), Black has an excellent counterplay.

20...\(\text{Qe}8\) 21.0-0 \(\text{Qg}5\)!!

He is threatening now to sacrifice a piece on h3, under favourable circumstances.

22.\(\text{Qe}3\) \(\text{Qf}8\) 23.dxc6 \(\text{Qc}6\) 24.\(\text{Qd}5\) bxc4 25.bxc4 \(\text{Qe}6\)

We were both in time-pressure at that moment.

26.g3

That is a good positional move. In principle, it might have been stronger for me to have captured the pawn: 26.\(\text{Qxh}6\), but I did not have enough time to evaluate correctly the position after: 26...\(\text{Qxd}5?!\) 27.exd5 (In case of 27.\(\text{Qxg}7\), Black can follow with: 27...\(\text{Qxe}4\) 28.\(\text{Qxf}8\) \(\text{Qxd}3\) and the position is approximately equal, while after: 27.cxd5 \(\text{Qxh}6\) 28.\(\text{Qxh}6\) \(\text{Qef}4\), the situation is unclear.) 27...\(\text{Qc}5\), in which case Black has some compensation for the pawn. Having in mind the time-trouble, it would be then much easier for Black to play that position, even if his compensation is insufficient, because his knight on c5 has occupied the perfect blocking outpost. Additionally, he is threatening to advance his pawn-mass on the kingside with f7-f5.

26...\(\text{Qd}4\) 27.\(\text{Qh}2\) \(\text{Qh}7\) 28.\(\text{Qf}2\)

a5?!
This is an imprecision, since Black had better play 28...\textit{b}b7 with a complicated position with mutual chances.

$29.\textit{c}c1 \textit{b}b7 \ 30.\textit{c}c3$

$37.\textit{g}xg6+$!
That is the fastest way to victory.

$37...\textit{h}h8$
Or $37...\textit{x}xg6 \ 38.\textit{d}d3+ e4 \ 39.\textit{xe}4+ \ \textit{g}g5 \ 40.\textit{h}h4#$

$38.\textit{f}f3 \textit{x}xg3 \ 39.\textit{x}xg3 \textit{e}xa3 \ 40.\textit{d}d3$, and Black resigned. He has no defence against White’s numerous threats – 41.\textit{e}e4, 41.\textit{f}f5, or 41.\textit{g}g7.

$30$

Adams – Dreev
Dortmund 1994

$1.e4 \textit{e}6 \ 2.d4 \textit{d}5 \ 3.\textit{d}d2 \textit{c}5 \ 4.\textit{exd}5 \ \textit{w}xd5 \ 5.\textit{gf}3 \textit{cxd}4 \ 6.\textit{c}c4 \ \textit{w}d8 \ 7.0-0$

This is a well-known position in a popular variation of the French Defence.

$7...\textit{e}e7N$
Now, that is already a novelty. I do not believe this move to be superior to the standard lines for Black ($7...a6; 7...\textit{c}c6; 7...\textit{f}f6$), but possibly it is not worse either. I chose that variation, (which was not yet analyzed at the moment the game was played), mostly because of some psychological
reasons. I wished to introduce the element of surprise and to force my opponent to play an unknown position, avoiding his opening preparation in the well-familiar theoretical tabias. The development of the game proved that my experiment with the new idea - 7...e7 was quite successful. Michael Adams lost his confidence in that unknown situation and his position became quickly somewhat worse already in the opening stage.

8.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{b3}}} \text{c7} \quad 9.\text{\texttt{we2 g6}} \quad 10.\text{\texttt{fxd4}}\)

It was more precise for White to play 10.\(\text{\texttt{bxd4}}, \) in order to counter 10...a6 with: 11.\(\text{\texttt{b3 e7}} \quad 12.\text{\texttt{e1 0-0}} \quad 13.\text{\texttt{g5}}\) and to try to convert his lead in development into a slight opening advantage. My position would have remained solid enough in that case too, but I would still have some opening problems to worry about.

10...\(\text{\texttt{a6}} \quad 11.\text{\texttt{f4 e7}} \quad 12.\text{\texttt{f5 exf5}} \quad 13.\text{\texttt{xf5 xf5}} \quad 14.\text{\texttt{xf5 0-0}}\)

My opponent has not obtained anything out of the opening. White’s bishop pair is immaterial in this position. The harmonious development of forces is much more important and some of White’s pieces like the bishop on c4, the queen on c2 and the rook on f5 are all placed rather unstably.

15.\(\text{\texttt{d4}}\)

That is an imprecision. White had better continue with: 15.\(\text{\texttt{d2 d7?!}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{af1 d6}}\) with an approximately equal position.

15...\(\text{\texttt{d7}}\)!

This is a very good move, since this knight will be redeployed to f6 and it will be multi-functional there. It will cover the vulnerable spot - f7 and it will control the important e4 and g4-squares.

16.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\)

That is another questionable move. It would have been more reliable for White to transfer the bishop to a more stable placement with 16.\(\text{\texttt{b3}}\).

16...\(\text{\texttt{f6}} \quad 17.\text{\texttt{h1}}\)

This natural move is not the best either. It was stronger for White, just like on the previous move, to play 17.\(\text{\texttt{b3}}\). Now, I succeed in seizing the initiative.

17...\(\text{\texttt{ae8}} \quad 18.\text{\texttt{ff1}}\)

18...\(\text{\texttt{g4}}\)

Here, I played imprecisely too. It was much better to continue with 18...\(\text{\texttt{a3?!}}\) and White was practically forced after that to enter the line
19.\texttt{Exf6} (White has great problems after 19.\texttt{dcl}!, in view of: 19...\texttt{e4} 20.c3 \texttt{f6} and Black has a clear advantage.)
19...\texttt{gxf6} 20.\texttt{f5} \texttt{xb2} 21.\texttt{b1} \texttt{e5} 22.\texttt{h6} \texttt{hxh2}, in which Black’s position would have been evidently superior.

\textbf{19.\texttt{g1} \texttt{f6} 20.c3 \texttt{e3} 21.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{exe3} 22.\texttt{b3} \texttt{f8} 23.\texttt{f3} \texttt{e4}}

\textbf{24.\texttt{f5}?}
This seemingly active move is the decisive mistake for White. Michael had to play 24.\texttt{d5}!, with the idea to counter 24...\texttt{e4}, with 25.\texttt{f5}! and he would have good chances to equalize. Now, my opponent ends up in a very difficult position by force.

\textbf{24...\texttt{e5}! 25.\texttt{g3}}
It is not any better for White to play:
25.\texttt{h6}+ \texttt{xh6} 26.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{g4} 27.\texttt{xf7}+ \texttt{g7}, because Black’s position is easily winning; or: 25.\texttt{f4} \texttt{g4} 26.g3 \texttt{xf4} 27.\texttt{xf4} (27.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{c6}+ 28.\texttt{g2} \texttt{e2}+) 27...\texttt{xf4} 28.gxf4 \texttt{e2} and Black has an overwhelming advantage.

\textbf{25...\texttt{g4}}
Now, Black is threatening \texttt{f4}, therefore White must give up the exchange.

\textbf{26.\texttt{Exg4} \texttt{Exg4} 27.\texttt{h6}+ \texttt{xh6} 28.\texttt{xf6}}

\textbf{28...\texttt{e4}!}
This move emphasizes the vulnerability of White’s first rank.

\textbf{29.\texttt{g1}}
It would not work for White to defend with 29.\texttt{f1}, because of 29...\texttt{f4}! and he would be completely defenseless.

\textbf{29...\texttt{e1} 30.\texttt{f2} \texttt{xg1}+ 31.\texttt{g1} \texttt{e7}}
Naturally, that endgame is hopeless for White with an exchange down without any compensation. Still, there are queens present on the board and he preserves practical chances to create some havoc on the board. Therefore, my urgent task was to trade queens.

\textbf{32.\texttt{d5}?!}
White could have offered a more tenacious resistance by playing 32.\texttt{f1}, avoiding the exchange of queens.

\textbf{32...\texttt{e1}+ 33.\texttt{e1} \texttt{e1}+ 34.\texttt{f2} \texttt{e7}}
Now, after the position has been simplified, Black’s win should not be so complicated anymore. The game followed with:
35.c4 \texttt{g7} 36.b4 \texttt{f6} 37.\texttt{f3} b6 38.a4 a5 39.bxa5 bxa5 40.c5 \texttt{e5} 41.c6 \texttt{e7} 42.h4 \texttt{d6} 43.h5 \texttt{e5} 44.\texttt{e3} \texttt{c4} and White resigned.
This game was played at the super-tournament in Dortmund and then Peter Leko was still young and quite promising...

1.d4 \(\triangle f6\) 2.c4 \(g6\) 3.\(\triangle c3\) d5 4.\(\triangle f4\) \(g7\) 5.e3 c5 6.dxc5 \(\triangle a5\) 7.\(\triangle a4+\)

Contemporary theory does not consider that line to be so dangerous for Black. Still, he must play precisely, because he has to defend an endgame with an extra pawn for White. The critical line for White is 7.\(\triangle c1?!\), but I was reluctant to compete with Peter Leko (He was at that time already a great specialist of the Grunfeld Defence...) in long and complicated variations of the type: 7...\(\triangle e4\) 8.cxd5 \(\triangle x c3\) 9.\(\triangle d2\) \(\triangle x a2\) 10.bxc3, or 7...dxc4 8.\(\triangle x c4\) 0–0 9.\(\triangle g e 2\) \(\triangle x c5\) 10.\(\triangle b 3\) \(\triangle c 6\) 11.\(\triangle b 5\) \(\triangle h 5\), therefore I chose a simple line transferring immediately into an endgame right after the opening. I wanted to avoid playing complicated unclear positions and I intended to fight in a technical, positional manner. This strategy proved to be successful in that game.

7...\(\triangle x a 4\) 8.\(\triangle x a 4\) \(\triangle e 6?!\)

That is an interesting, but rarely played move. In general, Black plays here: 8...0–0, 8...\(\triangle e 4\) and 8...\(\triangle d 7\).

(diagram)

9.\(\triangle x b 8?!\)

That was a novelty at the moment we played our game. Until then, White had usually tried: 9.\(\triangle c 1\) 0–0 10.\(\triangle f 3\) \(\triangle c 8\), as well as: 9.cxd5 \(\triangle x d 5\) 10.\(\triangle b 5+\) \(\triangle d 7\), but he had not achieved anything special after all that.
12.\textit{Ec1!}

This move consolidates White's considerable positional advantage. Now, Black's compensation for the pawn is clearly insufficient.

12...\textit{a6?!}

Black again makes a mistake. Peter weakens the b6-square without any necessity and he simply sends my bishop to a more comfortable square. After: 12...\textit{Db4}!? 13.a3 \textit{Ed5}!? (Black should not expect anything promising out of the variation: 13...\textit{Da2}?! 14.\textit{Eb1} \textit{Db3} 15.\textit{Df3}; White is threatening 16.\textit{Dd2} and the move 15...\textit{a6} can be countered by White with 16.\textit{Db6}! with a decisive advantage.) 14.\textit{Df3} \textit{Cc6} 15.\textit{axb4} \textit{Dxb5} 16.\textit{Dc3} \textit{Cc6}, my opponent could have still offered tenacious resistance, despite being a pawn down. Now, his position deteriorates quickly.

13.\textit{Ec4} \textit{Db4}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image1.png}
\end{center}

14.\textit{Dxe6}!

Black had obviously overlooked that move.

14...\textit{fxe6}

Black would not have saved the day with: 14...\textit{Dd3}+ 15.\textit{Dd2} \textit{Dxc1} (or 15...\textit{Dxf2} 16.\textit{Ec4} \textit{Dxh1} 17.\textit{Dh3}+; 15.\textit{Ed8} 16.\textit{Db3} \textit{Dxf2}+ 17.\textit{Dxe2} \textit{Dxh1} 18.\textit{Df3}+–) 16.\textit{Ec4} \textit{Ec8} 17.\textit{Df3} and White would

have a winning position, because after 17...\textit{b5}, he would win with: 18.\textit{cxb6} \textit{Dxc4} 19.\textit{Dxc1} \textit{Dxc1} 20.\textit{b7}, while Black would be defenseless against the threat – \textit{b8}\textsuperscript{=}.

15.\textit{Dxe2} \textit{Dxa2} 16.\textit{Ec4} \textit{a5} 17.\textit{Df3} \textit{Db4}

Or 17...\textit{h6} 18.\textit{Ba1} \textit{Db4} 19.\textit{Db6}+–

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image2.png}
\end{center}

Peter succeeded in restoring the material balance, but his e6-square was so weak and his pieces were badly coordinated that Black's position was strategically hopeless. Now, the game enters a purely technical stage.

18.\textit{Dg5} \textit{e5} 19.\textit{Db6} \textit{De8} 20.\textit{Bxa1} \textit{Dc6} 21.\textit{Bxa4} \textit{Df6} 22.\textit{Dxe4} \textit{Dxf7} 23.\textit{Dc4}

Black is bound to lose his a5-pawn.

23...\textit{Dc8} 24.\textit{Dxa5} \textit{b6}

In case of: 24...\textit{Dxa5} 25.\textit{Dxa5} \textit{b6} 26.\textit{Dxa7}! Black's position is again doomed.

25.\textit{Dxc6} \textit{Dxc6}

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{image3.png}
\end{center}
26.\(\text{a6}\)!
Now, White is threatening b2-b4 and the win is already close.
26...\(\text{c7}\) 27.\(\text{xb6}\) \(\text{xb6}\) 28.\(\text{cxb6}\) \(\text{c6}\) 29.\(\text{a6}\) \(\text{c2}\) 30.\(\text{d3}\) \(\text{xb2}\) 31.b7!
That is the fastest road to victory, since Black has no useful moves.
31...\(\text{h6}\)
After 31...\(\text{xb7}\), White wins with: 32.\(\text{xf6}\) ef6 33.\(\text{d6}\) ef6 34.\(\text{xb7}\).
32.\(\text{c5}\) e4+ 33.\(\text{xe4}\) and Black resigned.

32 D45
Dreev – Cifuentes Parada
Hoogovens (k. o.), Wijk aan Zee 1995

1.d4 \(\text{f6}\) 2.c4 e6 3.\(\text{f3}\) d5 4.\(\text{c3}\) c6 5.\(\text{e3}\) \(\text{bd7}\) 6.\(\text{wc2}\) \(\text{d6}\)
This is the most popular position of the so-called Anti-Meran system and it has been played a zillion times in the tournament practice...
7.\(\text{e2}\)
That move is probably neither better, nor worse than 7.b3, 7.\(\text{d3}\) or 7.\(\text{d2}\), which all lead (just like the move in the game) to a complicated positional fight. The choice of moves here is much rather a matter of style. After 7.g4, there arise sharp positions with mutual chances.
7...\(\text{0–0}\) 8.\(\text{0–0}\)
(diagram)

8.\(\text{e8}\)
This move is possible, indeed. Recently, the more fashionable line is: 8...\(\text{xc4}\) 9.\(\text{xc4}\) a6!? and it seems that Black has greater chances (in comparison to 8...\(\text{e8}\)) to equalize and even to seize the initiative. G.Kasparov,

V.Ivanchuk, V.Anand, V.Akopian and plenty of other super grandmasters play like that with Black. I have also tried that line numerous times...

9.\(\text{d1}\) b6?!
Instead of the move in the game – 8...\(\text{e8}\), contemporary theory recommends the solid and completely reliable system with 8...b6, in which after 9.\(\text{d1}\) Black follows with the quite natural move 9...\(\text{b7}\) with an approximately equal position. Nobody has tried here the seemingly unnecessary move 9...\(\text{e8}\), since the combination of the two systems (8...\(\text{e8}\) and 8...b6) looks a bit strange and completely awkward. In our game that position arose after a slightly different move order. Instead of 9...b6?! it is better for Black to play 9...\(\text{e7}\) with a quite satisfactory position as tournament practice shows.
10. e4!
That is the most energetic move for White. He emphasizes the fact that after the practically forced line: 10... dxe4 11. dx e4 Qxe4 12. Qxe4, or 10... dx e4 11. dx e4 dxe4 12. Qxe4, the move Rf8-e8 is evidently unnecessary and it is simply a waste of time. It is less energetic for White to continue with 10. b3, because in that case after: 10... b7 11. b2 c7 the chances of both sides would have been approximately equal.
10... dxe4 11. Qxe4 Qxe4 12. Qxe4 c7
After 12... b7 13. f4!? White maintains a slight but stable positional advantage. The move in the game is aimed at preventing the maneuver c1-f4.
13. e3! b7 14. c5
That is the idea behind 13. e3!. White thus prevents Black's thematic pawn advance c6-c5 and he obtains a considerable positional advantage.
14... bxc5 15. dxc5 Qxc5?
That is a decisive mistake; since the c5-pawn is "poisoned"... Black could have still defended with 15... Qf8!? and although my position would have still been clearly better due to his "bad" bishop on b7, but there would be a lot to fight for.
16. R f2!
This is the best move for White and it leads to a practically forced variation after which his position is easily winning.
16... Qa6
Black loses immediately after 16... Qd7?, because of 17. Qd2 and he relinquishes a piece.
17. Qg5 g6
Black saves the game neither with: 17... f5 18. Qc4, nor with: 17... Qxh2+ 18. Qh1 g6 19. Qa4 Qb8 20. Qh4 f5 21. Qxe6 and White is completely winning in both cases.
18. Qa4 Qb4
I was planning to counter 18... Qc5 with: 19. Wh4 h5 20. Qxh5! gxh5 (or 20... f6 21. Qxg6 fxg5 22. Qxg5+-) 21. Qxh5 with a crushing attack.
19. Qxd6! Qxd6 20. Qe4 Qe5
21. Qxb4
The forced play is over and although my material advantage is only minimal (a couple of pieces for a rook and a pawn), but my positional edge is overwhelming.
21... Qed8 22. f4 a5
The exchange of queens would not save Black.
23. fxe5 axb4 24. Qc5 Qab8 25. Qc4 Qc8 26. g4 Qa8 27. Qf1
(diagram)
My pieces are completely dominant all over the board and my adversary has no counterplay whatsoever, so his position is completely hopeless.
The game still followed with:
27... Qg7 28. Qg2 Qa5 29. Qg3 Qa8 30. h4 Qa5 31. h5 Qa8 32. hxg6
hxg6 33...g5 1–0

*That was a well played game without any imprecision or mistakes on my part.*

33

Dreev – Seirawan

Hoogovens (k. o.), Wijk aan Zee 1995

1.d4 f6 2.g3 e6 3.c4 b6 4.a3

4...c6

Y.Seirawan tries a very seldom played line on move four. I believe that the usual variations 4...b7 and 4...a6 are clearly better. Still, strangely enough, the move 4...c6 should not be defined as dubious, or bad. It is only slightly worse than 4...b7 or 4...a6. The idea behind 4...c6 is to counter the natural move 5.c3 with 5.d5 and to obtain a well known position from the Slav Defence – 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.c3 d6 4.d3 e6, but with the inclusion of the moves a3 and b6. He then plans to build his game on the nuances arising in connection of the inclusion of these moves. Most probably, Y.Seirawan wanted to surprise me with the move 4...c6, avoiding in the process the well-trodden theoretical paths.

5.c3 d5 6.cxd5!?  

I wished to clarify the situation in the centre with my last move. It also deserved attention for White to try 6.g5?! with a more complicated game. Here, after: 6...dxc4 7.e4! the transfer to a position resembling the Botvinnik variation with: 7...e5 8.e5 h6 9.d4 g5 10.xg5 h5 11.xg5 d7, should be favourable for White, since he has an extra tempo – his pawn is on a3 and not on a2. That provides him with a good chance to maintain his opening advantage, since the placement of the pawn on a3 is no doubt in favour of White in the critical lines of the Botvinnik variation. In case of: 6...e7 7.e3, there arise positions from the Queen’s Gambit in which White is better.

6...cxd5!?  

That is the most logical move; otherwise 4...c6 is senseless, because after: 6.cxd5 7.g5, or 6.cxd5 7.e4, White has the initiative and a slight advantage.

7.g4 a6  

(diagram)

8.c1!  

That is the best for White and now Black has problems developing his dark-squared bishop. If here 8.e7?! (but not 8.d6? 9.xd6
\[ \text{In case of 10.} \Box d3, \text{my position would have been still better, but the move in the game is stronger. Now, the game becomes sharp and semi-forced. Black should play very precisely to hold the position.} \]

\[ 10...\Box c8 \]

\[ \text{It is too bad for Black to play: 10...axb5? 11.}\Box xb5 \Box c8 12.\Box e5, \text{since his situation is hopeless.} \]

\[ 11.\Box a4 \Box d7! \]

\[ \text{Presently, my adversary still finds the best defence. It is worse for him to try 11.}\Box h5, \text{since White has 12.}\Box a7! \text{and Black has plenty of problems to worry about. For example: 12...\Box xf4 (or 12...b5 13.}\Box xb5? \text{axb5 14.}\Box xb5\text{±) 13.exf4 b5 14.}\Box xe5? \text{axb5 15.}\Box xb5 \Box d6 (or 15...\Box c7? 16.}\Box xc6 \Box d7 17.\Box fe5++) 16.}\Box xc8 \Box xc8 17.\Box e5 \Box xe5 18.fxe5 0–0 19.\Box b6 and White has a considerable edge, because the material ratio of a rook and two connected pawns against two light pieces is clearly in his favour.} \]

\[ 12.\Box c7+ \]

\[ \text{It was also possible for White to continue with: 12.}\Box d6+ \Box xd6 13.\Box xd6 \Box xd4! 14.\Box xc8 \Box xf3+ 15.\Box xf3 \Box xc8 16.\Box d2! and his initiative compensates fully Black’s extra pawn.} \]

\[ 12...\Box xc7 \]

\[ 10.\Box b5! \]
13. \textit{\&xa6!}

That is the only way for White to fight for the opening advantage. It is worse for him to follow with: 13.\textit{\&xc7 \&xc7} 14.\textit{\&xa6}, due to: 14...\textit{\&db8} 15.\textit{\&xb7} (or 15.\textit{\&b5 \&d6}) 15...\textit{\&xb7} 16.0-0 \textit{\&d6}.

13...\textit{\&xa6!}

In case of: 13...\textit{\&db8} 14.\textit{\&xc7 \&xc7} 15.\textit{\&b5 \&d6} 16.0-0 0-0 17.\textit{\&e3 \&e8} 18.\textit{\&fc1}, Black's position is quite passive and he has great problems connected with the pin along the c-file. There is nothing decisive for White in sight indeed, but Black's defense is tremendously difficult, while White does not risk anything at all.

14.\textit{\&xc7 \&xc7} 15.\textit{\&xc6 \&b7} 16.\textit{\&e5 \&e7} 17.\textit{\&b4!}

That is the only way for White to maintain his initiative.

17...\textit{\&f6!}

Y. Seirawan is again beyond reproach — that is his only move to defend successfully. It was too bad for him to try 17...\textit{\&c4?!}, because after 18.\textit{\&xb6!} White would have a winning position. Here, in case of: 18...\textit{\&xb6} 19.\textit{\&xd7+ \&f8} 20.\textit{\&c6}, Black has no satisfactory defense in sight, for example: 20...\textit{\&xb4}+ 21.\textit{axb4} g6, to 22.\textit{\&e7+ \&g7} 23.\textit{\&e5+—}

18.\textit{\&b5!}

Following: 18.\textit{\&xb6 \&xb6} 19.\textit{\&xd7+ \&f8} 20.\textit{\&c6 \&b7} 21.\textit{\&xe6}, there arises a very unclear position, but I believe that Black's prospects (with an extra piece for three pawns) are not worse at all.

18...\textit{\&xb5} 19.\textit{\&xb5 fxe5} 20.0-0!

Black's defense is much easier after: 20.\textit{\&xe6 \&d4} 21.0-0 \textit{\&f7} 22.\textit{\&c6} \textit{\&f6}, since the coordination of his pieces improves considerably.

20...\textit{\&xd4?!}

In case of 20...\textit{\&f7}, White follows with 21.\textit{\&fc1} and the threat \textit{\&f6-c7} is quite unpleasant for Black and he cannot parry it with 21...\textit{\&d8}, because of 22.\textit{\&c7!} and White wins; or 20...0-0 21.\textit{\&xe6}.

21.\textit{\&fc1}

21...\textit{\&d8?!}

My opponent had defended excellently until his last move, but here he made a serious mistake and his position became quite difficult. It might be already beyond salvation. His only possibility to continue the fight would have been the move 21...\textit{\&d8}. Indeed, in that case after: 22.\textit{\&xe6+ \&f7} 23.\textit{\&c6 \&f6} (or 23...\textit{\&c5?!} 24.\textit{\&e5}) 24.\textit{\&e4! \&d7} (Black's situation is quite dangerous too in case of: 24...\textit{\&xe4}?! 25.\textit{\&c4 \&f8} (or 25...\textit{\&g6?} 26.\textit{\&xd4 \&f7} 27.\textit{\&c4 \&g6} 28.\textit{\&xe4+ \&f7} 29.\textit{\&xf6!+) 25.\textit{\&xd5}, because White preserves his initiative with a better game, but Black can still fight tenaciously.

Now, he has nothing to counter White's dangerous onslaught with and his situation deteriorates rapidly.
22. exd4! ef8 23. a4! g5 24. c2 ef4 25. a5 xd4 26. g3 d1+ 27. g2 a1 28. axb6 db8
Black loses too after: 28... a6 29. xa6 xa6 30. b7 xc6 31. xc6 f6 32. d6 and he is completely helpless. 29. d6+ and Black resigned.

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Dreev – Khalifman
Linares 1995

I have selected several interesting games for this book which I have played against Alexander Khalifman. We have played together in numerous tournaments. This game was played at the super-tournament in Linares.

1. d4 f6 2. c4 e6 3. f3 d5 4. c3 e7 5. f4 0–0 6. e3 c5 7. dx5 xc5 8. a3 c6 9. e2

9...xe4?!
I played this variation often at that time. With his last move Sasha decided to avoid the fashionable lines. He had obviously prepared that line beforehand.

See some other possibilities: 9... e8 10. g5 e7 11. c2 h6 12. h4 dx4 13. xc4 d5 14. xe7 cxe7 15.0–0

13...e5
This is a novelty. It is weaker for Black to play 13...a5. He stops the thematic pawn-advance b2-b4 with that move, but White can follow with: 14. xe4 xb2 15. e5+, but not 14. 0–0? e5 15. g3, due to 15... e8! 16. xe4 (16. b3 16... f5 17. b2 e7 18. b1 f6, Muse – van der Sterren, Altensteig 1991.) f5 17. f3? (17. h4 e6) 17...e4 18. xe5 g5 19. e7 e7–+
14.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{g3}}} \textit{\textbf{f5}}} 15.\textit{\textbf{0}}-0± \textit{\textbf{we7}}
Or 15...\textit{\textbf{a5}} 16.\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textbf{fe8}} 17.\textit{\textbf{b4}}+
\textit{\textbf{b4}}
\textit{\textbf{b6}} 17.\textit{\textbf{c5}} \textit{\textbf{c7}} 18.\textit{\textbf{f6d1}} \textit{\textbf{g6}}

My opponent is reluctant to wait passively here and he tries to advance his f-pawn. That plan gets refuted, though... In case of 18...\textit{\textbf{f6d8}}, White can continue with: 19.\textit{\textbf{a4}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 20.\textit{\textbf{b5}} f5 (or 20...\textit{\textbf{cxb5}} 21.\textit{\textbf{axb5}} f5 22.\textit{\textbf{b6}} axb6 23.\textit{\textbf{f6a8}} \textit{\textbf{xa8}} 24.\textit{\textbf{cxb6}} \textit{\textbf{d6}} 25.\textit{\textbf{xc6}}
\textit{\textbf{d8}} 26.\textit{\textbf{h4}+--} 21.\textit{\textbf{b6}} axb6 22.\textit{\textbf{cxb6}}
\textit{\textbf{d6}} 23.\textit{\textbf{a5}}! f4 24.\textit{\textbf{a6}} \textit{\textbf{fxg3}} 25.\textit{\textbf{hxg3}±}
\textit{\textbf{a4}}! \textit{\textbf{e8}}
Or 19...\textit{\textbf{ad8}} 20.\textit{\textbf{xc6}} f5 21.\textit{\textbf{h4}+--}
\textit{\textbf{b5}} f5
Or 20...\textit{\textbf{cxb5}} 21.\textit{\textbf{axb5}} \textit{\textbf{e7}} 22.\textit{\textbf{c6}}.
\textit{\textbf{bxc6}} f4 22.\textit{\textbf{h4}} \textit{\textbf{f5}}

23.\textit{\textbf{Ed7}!}
That is White’s strongest move. Black’s kingside initiative has been practically parried.
23...\textit{\textbf{xd7}} 24.\textit{\textbf{cxd7}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 25.\textit{\textbf{e7}} \textit{\textbf{h8}}
Or 25...\textit{\textbf{f6b8}} 26.\textit{\textbf{c4}+} \textit{\textbf{h8}} 27.\textit{\textbf{d5}}.
26.\textit{\textbf{xf8}} \textit{\textbf{Exf8}} 27.\textit{\textbf{wb3}+--}
It is also good for White to continue here with 27.\textit{\textbf{Wxa7}}.
27...\textit{\textbf{d8}}
Or 27...\textit{\textbf{f3}} 28.\textit{\textbf{f1}} f\textit{\textbf{g}2} 29.\textit{\textbf{xe2}} \textit{\textbf{f5}} 30.\textit{\textbf{h1}+--}; 27...\textit{\textbf{c6}} 28.\textit{\textbf{b5}}.

28.\textit{\textbf{Ed1}} h6 29.\textit{\textbf{Ed6}} \textit{\textbf{g5}} 30.\textit{\textbf{e6}}
\textit{\textbf{f6}} 31.\textit{\textbf{f1}} \textit{\textbf{fxg2}} 32.\textit{\textbf{xg2}} \textit{\textbf{g5}} 33.\textit{\textbf{a2}}
\textit{\textbf{g4}} 34.\textit{\textbf{Ed6}} \textit{\textbf{f5}} 35.\textit{\textbf{Ed6}} \textit{\textbf{h7}} 36.\textit{\textbf{h3}}
\textit{\textbf{g5}} 37.\textit{\textbf{h1}}! \textit{\textbf{f8}} 38.\textit{\textbf{xe4}+} \textit{\textbf{h8}}
39.\textit{\textbf{We8}} \textit{\textbf{e7}}
Or 39...\textit{\textbf{e7}} 40.\textit{\textbf{g6}}.
40.\textit{\textbf{xf8}+!} 1–0

35
Dreev – Shirov
Biel 1995

This game was played in the traditionally strong round-robin in Biel – Switzerland, which I managed to win. In general, the year 1995 was quite successful for me, since I also managed to win in January the tournament in Wijk aan Zee, which was played according to the knock-out system.

1.\textit{\textbf{d4}} \textit{\textbf{f6}} 2.\textit{\textbf{c4}} \textit{\textbf{g6}} 3.\textit{\textbf{c3}} \textit{\textbf{g7}} 4.\textit{\textbf{e4}}
\textit{\textbf{d6}} 5.f\textit{\textbf{f3}} 0–0 6.\textit{\textbf{g5}} \textit{\textbf{c5}} 7.d\textit{\textbf{d5}} \textit{\textbf{w}}\textit{\textbf{a5}}
8.\textit{\textbf{d2}} e\textit{\textbf{e}} 9.\textit{\textbf{ge2}} \textit{\textbf{exd5}} 10.\textit{\textbf{xd5}}
\textit{\textbf{xd8}} 11.\textit{\textbf{g5}}

11...\textit{\textbf{a5}+?}

Black was just having a black-out...
The usual line for him here was: 11...\textit{\textbf{e6}} 12.\textit{\textbf{e3}} \textit{\textbf{c6}} 13.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{d4}}; it was
also interesting for Black to try: 11...h6!? 12.\(\text{Q}x\text{f}6+ \text{K}x\text{f}6\) 13.\(\text{Q}x\text{h}6 \text{Q}x\text{b}2\) 14.\(h4 \text{Q}c6\), with a rather unclear position.

12.\(b4! \text{Q}d8\) 13.\(\text{B}x\text{c}5 \text{Q}a5+\)

There is nothing better for Black here. If 13...\(dxc5\), then 14.e5+–

14.\(\text{Q}d2 \text{Q}d8\)

Or 14...\(\text{B}x\text{c}5?\) 15.\(\text{Q}b4 \text{B}x\text{c}4\) 16.\(\text{B}d4+–\)

It was understandable that Black was in dire straights, but I had to play precisely to make a good use of that. I thought that I had to sacrifice the exchange in order to achieve something real after Black's serious mistake on move eleven.

15.\(\text{c}x\text{d}6! \text{Q}x\text{d}5\) 16.\(\text{c}x\text{d}5 \text{Q}xa1\)

Or 16...f5 17.\(\text{Q}c3!\) and Black's initiative is easily parried.

17.\(\text{Q}x\text{a}1 \text{Q}e8\)

Or 17...\(\text{B}x\text{d}6\) 18.\(\text{Q}h6 \text{Q}b4+\) 19.\(\text{Q}f2\) (19.\(\text{Q}d1 \text{Q}a4+\)) 19...\(\text{Q}c5+\) 20.\(\text{Q}g3 \text{Q}d6+\) 21.e5 (21.\(\text{Q}f4\) f6) 21...\(\text{Q}xd5\) 22.\(\text{Q}f4+–\)

18.\(\text{Q}d4!\)

I could have tried to keep the extra pawn with the move 18.\(\text{Q}f4\), but it was much more important to develop my pieces and not to relinquish the initiative. My last move was the beginning of a correct regrouping of forces.

18...\(f6\) 19.\(\text{Q}c3\)

That move protects indirectly the d6-pawn.

19...\(a6\)

Or 19...\(\text{B}x\text{d}6\) 20.\(\text{Q}b5+–\)

20.\(\text{B}b4 \text{b}5\) 21.\(\text{Q}e3!\)

21.\(\text{Q}e2 \text{B}b6\)!

21...\(\text{Q}d7\) 22.\(\text{Q}e2 \text{Q}e5\) 23.\(0-0 \text{Q}d7\) 24.\(\text{f}4 \text{Q}f7\) 25.\(\text{Q}c5!\)

Once again, White regroups his forces in the correct fashion.

25...\(\text{Q}c8\)

Or 25...a5 26.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}4\) b4 27.\(\text{Q}b5\).

26.\(\text{Q}d4+–\)

Now, Black's pieces are a sorry sight. Alexey understood that only White could improve his position and he tried his last chance.

26...\(\text{B}x\text{c}5\) 27.\(\text{B}x\text{c}5 \text{Q}c8\) 28.a4!

That is White's simplest and most precise road to victory.

28...\(\text{B}x\text{d}6\) 29.\(\text{B}x\text{d}6 \text{Q}xd6\) 30.\(\text{ax}b5 \text{Q}xe4\)

Or 30...\(\text{ax}b5\) 31.\(\text{ax}b5 \text{ax}b5\) 32.\(\text{Q}x\text{b}5\) \(\text{Q}x\text{e}4\) (32...\(\text{a}6\) 33.\(\text{Q}c7\) 33.\(\text{Q}d6\).

31.\(\text{Q}x\text{e}4\) 32.\(\text{Q}x\text{e}4\) 32.\(\text{Q}c1 \text{Q}f5\)

Or 32...\(\text{Q}d7\) 33.bxa6 \(\text{Q}x\text{d}5\) 34.\(\text{Q}f3\).

33.\(\text{Q}d3\) 34.\(\text{Q}x\text{f}5\) \(\text{gxf}5\) 35.\(\text{b}6\)

White's pawns are absolutely unstoppable. Black resigned.

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Dreev – de Firmian
Biel 1995

1.d4 \(\text{Q}f6\) 2.c4 e6 3.\(\text{Q}f3\) c5 4.d5 \(\text{exd}5\) 5.\(\text{c}x\text{d}5\) d6 6.\(\text{Q}c3\) g6 7.e4 \(\text{Ag}7\)

8.h3 0–0 9.\(\text{Q}d3\)
9...b5
This is the most principled line for Black.
His other possibilities are - 9...\textit{Ex}e8 10.0-0 c4, or 9...a6, and White can counter that with a2-a4; meanwhile he can even allow his opponent to push b7-b5: 10.0-0 b5 11.\textit{Af}4 and the position remains complicated.
10.\textit{Axb}5
Recently, contemporary theory prefers capturing with the bishop: 10.\textit{Axb}5 \textit{Axe}4 11.\textit{Axe}4 \textit{Wa}5+ 12.\textit{Afd}2 \textit{Wxb}5 13.\textit{Axd}6 \textit{Wa}6 14.\textit{A2c}4 and White maintains somewhat better chances.
10...\textit{Ex}e8 11.0-0 \textit{Axe}4 12.\textit{Eel} a6
That is an important intermediate move.
13.\textit{Aa}3 \textit{Af}6 14.\textit{Exe}8+ \textit{Exe}8 15.\textit{Ag}5 \textit{Af}6
This is an imprecision for Black. After the correct reaction 15...\textit{Wc}7, tournament practice has shown that White can hardly obtain any advantage.
(diagram)
16.\textit{Wd}2
The idea of the subsequent maneuvers belongs to GM Vladimir Epishin. His game against Vesselin Topalov (Las Palmas 1994) followed with: 16...\textit{Ab}7 17.\textit{Ee}1 \textit{Ed}7 18.\textit{Ee}4! (This is a very important move for White!) 18...\textit{Ab}6 18.b3 \textit{Ag}5 19.\textit{Ag}5 \textit{Af}6 20.\textit{Ee}4 and White has managed to solve his main problem – the defence of his d5-pawn and thanks to his extra space and the vulnerability of Black’s dark squares he has the advantage.
16...\textit{Ed}7 17.\textit{Ee}4 \textit{Ab}7 18.\textit{Ee}4 \textit{Exg}5 19.\textit{Exg}5 \textit{Df}6 20.\textit{Ee}1
I did not intend to waste tempi for the retreat of my bishop and I brought my rook into the action. I had to consider my opponent’s next move, though...
20...\textit{h}6?
This is the principled reaction for Black, but... it is a mistake. He has problems to find an acceptable alternative, for example in case of: 20...\textit{Ee}7, White has the powerful resource: 21.\textit{Wf}4! \textit{Exd}5 22.\textit{Wg}3 and he has a dangerous initiative, for example: 22...\textit{Eh}5 23.\textit{Wb}3 \textit{Ac}6 24.\textit{Exf}7 \textit{Exf}7 25.\textit{Aa}5.
21. \( \Box xf7! \)
This sacrifice is strong and quite correct too.

21...\( \Box xf7 \) 22. \( \Box xh6 \) \( \Box g7 \)
Black loses the thread of the game...

In case of 22...\( \Box xe4 \), it is very good for White to continue with 23.\( \Box h7+! \) (but not 23.\( \Box xe4? \) \( \Box xd5 \) 24.\( \Box h7+; \)
23...\( \Box f6 \) 24.\( \Box f4 \) \( \Box xd5 \) 25.\( \Box e3! \) \( \Box e6? \)
26.\( \Box xg6++; \) 25...\( \Box e6? \) 26.\( \Box h7+ \) \( \Box f8 \)
27.\( \Box xg6++; \) 25...\( \Box e4! \) 26.\( \Box g4? \) \( \Box h8 \)
27.\( \Box g5 \) \( \Box d8++; \) 27.\( \Box xh8 \) \( \Box xh8 \) 28.\( \Box g5 \)
\( \Box xh3 \) 29.\( \Box xf6+ \) \( \Box e7 \) 30.\( \Box f1 \) \( \Box h5++; \)
23...\( \Box g7 \) (23...\( \Box f8 \) 24.\( \Box xe4 \) \( \Box f6 \) 25.\( \Box f4 \) \( \Box g5 \) 26.\( \Box f5 \) \( \Box xd5 \) 27.\( \Box g6++; \)
23...\( \Box f6 \) 24.\( \Box xe4 \) \( \Box g7 \) 25.\( \Box g4 \) \( \Box g5 \) 26.\( \Box h6+ \)
\( \Box f7 \) 27.\( \Box xg5++; \) 24.\( \Box xe4 \) \( \Box c8 \) (24...
\( \Box g5 \) 25.\( \Box e6; \) 24...\( \Box xd5 \) 25.\( \Box f4++; \)
25.\( \Box f4+ \) \( \Box f5 \) 26.\( \Box g4 \) \( \Box g5 \) 27.\( \Box xd6+ \) \( \Box e7 \)
28.\( \Box xf5++; \)

Black’s only possibility to continue the fight would have been 22...\( \Box g8!? \). Here, after 23.\( \Box xg6 \), Black has 23...
\( \Box xd5! \) 24.\( \Box xe8 \) (or 24.\( \Box xe8+ \) \( \Box xe8 \) 24...\( \Box xg4= \). I could have tried instead:
23.\( \Box xg6+ \) 23...\( \Box g7 \) 24.\( \Box f5! \) \( \Box xd5 \) 25.\( \Box e6+ \) \( \Box xe6 \) 26.\( \Box xe6 \) \( \Box fe8 \) (26...\( \Box d5 \)
27.\( \Box b6++; \) 26...\( \Box fh5!? \) 27.\( \Box g3 \) \( \Box d5 \) 28.\( \Box e3 \) 27.\( \Box xd6 \) \( \Box xd6 \) 28.\( \Box xd6+ \)

23.\( \Box xg6+ \) \( \Box g8 \)
23...\( \Box f8 \) 24.\( \Box e6! \) \( \Box xd5 \) 25.\( \Box xd6+--; \)

24.\( \Box e6!++ \) \( \Box xd5 \)
After: 24...\( \Box xe6 \) 25.\( \Box xe6 \), White has the deadly threat \( \Box g6-f7 \), while in case of
24...\( \Box f8 \), White wins with he line:
25.\( \Box xf6 \) \( \Box xf6 \) 26.\( \Box h7+ \) \( \Box f7 \) 27.\( \Box xd6+ \)
\( \Box e7 \) 28.\( \Box xf6+ \) \( \Box xf6 \) 29.\( \Box xb7++; \)

25.\( \Box xd6 \) \( \Box xc4 \)
Following 25...\( \Box e7 \), White has the powerful argument 26.\( \Box xd5!--; \) and if
26...\( \Box e1+ \) 27.\( \Box h2 \) \( \Box xd5 \), then he con-
tinues with: 28.\( \Box h7+ \) \( \Box f8 \) 29.\( \Box h8+ \)
\( \Box e7 \) 30.\( \Box xg7+ \) with an unavoidable checkmate.

26.\( \Box xd8+ \) \( \Box xd8 \) 27.\( \Box h4 \) 1–0

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Dreev – Milov
Biel 1995

1.d4 \( \Box f6 \) 2.c4 \( e6 \) 3.\( \Box c3 \) \( c5 \) 4.d5
\( exd5 \) 5.cxd5 \( d6 \) 6.\( \Box f3 \) \( g6 \) 7.e4

We have entered one of the lines of
the Modern Benoni.

7...\( a6?! \)

Presently, this move is very fash-
ionable, but back in the year 1995,
when we played our game, it was just
becoming modern.

It is quite dubious for Black to play
7...\( \Box g4 \), because of: 8.\( \Box a4+! \) \( \Box d7 \) (or
8...\( \Box bd7?! \) 9.\( \Box d2\pm \) 9.\( \Box b3 \) and White
obtains a clear advantage.

The more popular move here – 7...\texttt{\texttt{g}g7} is in a crisis nowadays, because after 8.h3!? (White prevents the resource \texttt{\texttt{g}g4}, which is almost always favourable for Black in similar positions.) 8...a6 9.a4 0-0 10.\texttt{\texttt{d}d3}, White's position is evidently superior. Black has great problems to accomplish the thematic pawn-advance in similar pawn-structures – b7-b5. In case of: 8...0-0 9.\texttt{\texttt{d}d3} b5, White can enter the forced line: 10.\texttt{\texttt{x}xb5} \texttt{\texttt{x}xe4} 11.\texttt{\texttt{x}xe4} \texttt{\texttt{a}a5+} 12.\texttt{\texttt{d}fd2} \texttt{\texttt{x}xb5} 13.\texttt{\texttt{x}xd6} \texttt{\texttt{a}a6} 14.\texttt{\texttt{c}ec4} and it is quite popular indeed, but as tournament practice shows lately, White does not risk much in this position, while Black must play quite precisely in order to fight for equality.

The idea behind the move 7...a6 is rather obvious: Black wishes to push b7-b5. It looks like White can and should prevent that maneuver with the natural move 8.a4. But in that case after 8...\texttt{\texttt{g}g4}!, contemporary tournament practice shows that Black obtains a good counterplay.

8.h3 b5

Black has managed to push the thematic move b7-b5, but he still has plenty of opening problems to solve. White enjoys a space advantage and Black cannot develop his pieces harmoniously.

9.\texttt{\texttt{d}d3} \texttt{\texttt{g}g7} 10.0-0 0-0 11.\texttt{\texttt{f}f4} \texttt{\texttt{e}e8} 12.\texttt{\texttt{e}e1}

(diagram)

This position arises practically by force after 7...a6!? and it is critical in that variation of the Modern Benoni.

12...b4?!
15. ** hx d6!**

That is White's best move, after which Black's position becomes quite difficult to defend.

15... **c4**

This is not his best defence. He could have offered a more tenacious resistance with: 15... **hx a4!?** 16. **wxa4**

**xd6** 17. **e5** **xd5** 18. **e4** **d7** 19. **xd7**

**bxd7** 20. **xa8** **xa8** 21. **xf6** **xf6**, trying to save an endgame, in which Black would have a pawn for the exchange. It would have been far from easy then for White to press his advantage home. Now, he seizes the initiative completely.

16. **xc4** **xe4** 17. **f4** **a6**

Black's position is tremendously difficult to defend after: 17... **xa4**

18. **xa4** **xb2** 19. **ad1** **xa3** 20. **b5**.

18. **d6**? **f6**

It would not work for Black to try:

18... **xa4** 19. **xa4** **xb2**, because of:

20. **xf7+!** **xf7** 21. **b3+** **f8** 22. **xb2**

and White's position would be easily winning.

24. **e8+!** **xe8** 25. **xe8+** **f8**

26. **e7** **h6** 27. **xf8+** **h7** 28. **c5**!

This is the most precise line for White. The bishop is transferred to the a1–h8 diagonal and Black comes immediately under a crushing attack.

28... **g5**

In case of 28... **bxa3**, White wins by force with the line: 29. **d4** **f6** 30. **e7+** **g8** 31. **d8+** **f7** 32. **c7+** **g8** 33. **b8+** **f7** 34. **b7+** **g8** 35. **xa6**.

29. **d4** **f6** 30. **f7+** **h8**
31.\(\text{Qe}5!\) This is a spectacular final strike. Black resigned.

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Dautov – Dreev
32nd Olympiad, Yerevan 1996

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\(\text{Qf}3\) \(\text{Qf}6\) 4.\(\text{Qc}3\)
\(\text{e}6\) 5.\(\text{Qg}5\) \(\text{h}6\) 6.\(\text{Qxf}6\) \(\text{Qxf}6\) 7.e3 \(\text{Qd}7\)
8.\(\text{Qd}3\) \(\text{dxc}4\) 9.\(\text{Qxc}4\) \(\text{g}6\) 10.0-0
\(\text{Qg}7\)

This position is in fact the most popular tabia of the Moscow variation of the Slav Defence.

11.\(\text{Qe}4\)

White chooses here a rarely played line, which does not have the reputation of being too dangerous.

The critical lines for White here are: 11.e4!? 0-0 12.e5 \(\text{Qe}7\) 13.\(\text{Qe}1\), as well as: 11.\(\text{Qc}1\) \(\text{Qe}7\)? 12.e4 0-0 13.\(\text{Qe}1\) and he tries to fight for a slight opening advantage in both of them.

11...\(\text{Qe}7\) 12.\(\text{Qc}2\) 0-0

It is insufficient for equality for Black to try 12...\(b6\), because of: 13.\(\text{Qb}5!\) \(\text{Qb}7\) (It is just bad for Black to play 13...\(\text{cx}b5\)?, since after 14.\(\text{Qc}6\), he has no satisfactory defence, in case of 14...\(\text{Qb}8\), White wins with: 15.\(\text{Qd}6+\) \(\text{Qf}8\) 16.\(\text{Qxc}8\); 15...\(\text{Qd}8\) 16.\(\text{Qfc}1+\)-) 14.\(\text{Qxc}6\) \(\text{Qc}8\) 15.\(\text{Qxd}7+\) \(\text{Qxd}7\) 16.\(\text{Qc}3!\) (Following: 16.\(\text{Qd}3\) \(e5!\), Black's compensation for the pawn is more than sufficient.) 16...\(\text{Qf}3\) 17.\(\text{gxf}3\) and Black does not have enough for the sacrificed pawn.

13.\(\text{Qb}3\)

In case of 13.\(\text{Qad}1\), it is good for Black to continue with 13...\(b6!\), followed by \(\text{Qb}7\) and an excellent game for him.

13...\(e5!\)?

That move was a novelty at the moment the game was played. Black has no opening problems after it at all. He used to play before: 13...\(\text{Qd}8\) 14.\(\text{Qad}1\), or 13...\(\text{Qd}8\) 14.\(\text{Qfd}1\); both these lines were no doubt completely acceptable for Black, but they were a bit passive.

14.\(\text{Qfe}1\)
The other lines for White are not so dangerous for Black. In case of 14.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{c}3 \), or 14.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{g}3 \), Black can follow with 14...\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{h}8!!? \) and he has no problems at all. After 14.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{ad1} \), it is good for Black to continue with: 14...\text{exd}4 15.\text{exd}4 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}6!!? \), and his prospects are not worse to say the least. If 14.d5, Black can follow with: 14...\text{exd}4 15.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xd}5 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{b}6 \) 16.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{b}3 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}5 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{c}5 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{e}8?! \) and his chances are again at least equal.

14...\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{h}8! \)

It is less precise for Black to play here 14...\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{h}7 \), because White can counter that with 15.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{c}3!?? \), in order to answer the attractive move for Black – 15...\( \text{e}5 \), with 16.e4?! and White’s prospects are superior. In case of: 16...\text{exd}4 17.\text{exf}5, he is again slightly better.

15.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{ed}2 \)

Following: 15.d5 \text{cxd}5 16.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xd}5 \text{f}5 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{c}3 \text{e}4 \) 18.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{d}4 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{e}5 \), Black has a good game.

15...\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{e}8! \)

That is the best move for Black. He is threatening \text{e}5-\text{e}4 and his prospects are already slightly better. White must defend very precisely.

16.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{c}4 \text{e}4 \) 17.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{fe}5 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xe}5 \)

That move is a serious imprecision and my opponent has quite difficult defensive problems to solve after it. White could have preserved something close to equality with the following semi-forced line: 18.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xe}5 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xe}5 \) 19.\text{dxe}5 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}5 \) 20.e6!? \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xe}6 \) (After 20...\text{fxe}6 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}3?! \), the game becomes much sharper and Black might have some serious problems too, for example in case of 21...\text{exf}3, White has the line: 22.e4 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{g}4 \) 23.h3?! and Black is practically forced to enter the variation: 23...\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{h}5 \) 24.g4 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}8 \) 25.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{f}1 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{g}5 \) 26.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{c}3 + \text{e}5 \) 27.\text{exf}3 \( \text{\textit{A}} \text{g}4 \) 28.\text{hxg}4 \( \text{\textit{A}} \text{g}4 + \) 29.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{g}3 \), in which his three extra pawns are still not a sufficient compensation for White’s extra bishop.) 21.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xe}4 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xb}3 \) 22.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xe}7 \text{\textit{A}} \text{xe}7 \) 23.\text{axb}3 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{d}7 \) 24.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{ed}1 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{ad}8 \) 25.\text{exd}7 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xd}7 \) 26.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}1 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{d}3 \) 27.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xa}7 \text{\textit{A}} \text{xb}3 \) 28.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{a}2 \) – this endgame looks quite drawish.

18...\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}5 \) 19.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{ad}1 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{f}8 \) 20.\( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{d}6?! \)

Now, this is a grave mistake and Rustam’s position becomes really difficult after it. It would have been much better for him after: 20.h3 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xe}5 \) 21.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xe}5 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xe}5 \), to give up a pawn with the idea following 22.\text{ed}4, to obtain some compensation for it. At least, by playing like that, White could have still offered some tenacious resistance.

20...\text{exxe}5 21.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{xf}5 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xf}5 \) 22.\text{ed}2 \( \text{\textit{Q}} \text{ad}8 \) 23.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{ed}1 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{g}7 \) 24.\( \text{\textit{A}} \text{c}4 \text{\textit{Q}} \text{xd}2 \) 25.\text{exd}2

(diagram)

That is a quite difficult position to defend for White, despite the fact that there remain opposite-coloured bishops present on the board. Black’s plan is very easy – it is connected with advancing the queenside pawns.
25...Ec8!
Now, Black has the straightforward threat – b7-b5.
26.a4 Ec7 27.g3 a6 28.d1
It is not any better for White to defend with: 28.a5 Ed7 29.Exd7 Exd7 and his position is just hopeless, because of the vulnerability of his pawns on b2 and a5.
28...b5 29.b3 We6 30.c2 c5 31.axb5 axb5 32.b3 c4 33.bxc4 bxc4 34.a2 f6 35.a8 Ec8 36.a5 c3 37.a2 h5!? 38.h4 Ed6 39.a6 Eb8 40.Exd6+ Exd6

It is too complicated for White to save that endgame.
41.c2 Ec5 42.f1 d5 43.e1 c4 44.Ed7 f6 45.Ed8! 46.Ed1
46...d4 47.Ed1 Ed8 48.Ed1 a3 49.Ee2 a6 50.Ee1 a3 51.Ee2 a7 52.Ee1 Ac5! 53.Ee2 d2 54.Ed1 Ac4
I and my opponent, we were both in a time-trouble at that moment.
55.Ee1?
That was another serious mistake for White. He had better play 55.Ed1! and my task to materialize my advantage would have been far from easy then. Indeed, I could have continued with: 55...f4!? 56.gxf4 f5 and White's defence would have been extremely difficult in that case too.
55...a3+?
Here, it was my turn to make a mistake. After 55...a5!?, White had only some purely practical chances left to save the game.
56.Ed1 Eb4 57.Ee1?
Now, White had to play again 57.Ed1!, creating maximal difficulties for me to press my advantage home.
57...Ed5!?
White is probably beyond salvation after that move.
58.Ed3 + Ed3 59.Ed2 + Ed4
I was reluctant to venture playing the move 59...Ed2! in my time-trouble.
60.Ed3 + Ed3 61.Ed2+
Here the time pressure was over and there followed:

61...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e2}}}} 62.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{Exb4}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf2}}}} 63.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d1}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe3}}}}! 64.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}}}

In case of 64.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{hx5}}}}, Black wins with:
64...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d3}}}}! 65.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b1}}}} f4.

64...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f2}}} 65.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{hx5}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{gx3}}}} 66.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d1}}}} e3 67.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xc3}}}} f4 68.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b6}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d5}}}}! 69.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e2}}}}

Or 69.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}} f5 70.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h5}}} f3--}}

69...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f3}}} 70.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf3}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf3}}}} 71.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf6+}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{g2}}}} 72.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xe6}}}}

Or 72.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h5}}}} e2 73.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f5}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f2}}} 74.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf6+}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e1}}} 75.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{h6}}} d1--}}

72...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f2}}} 73.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{xf6+}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e1}}} 74.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}}}}

and White resigned.

He was understandably reluctant to play to the end of the variation:
74.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}} e2 75.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c8}}} c5+} 76.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b2}}} d2 77.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d8+}}} e3 78.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e8+}}} d3 79.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d8+}}} e4 80.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e8+}}} e5}}, in which the appearance of the new black queen was unavoidable.

\section{39 D31}

\textit{Dreev – Galkin}

Russia Ch, Elista 1996

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.e3 \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f6}}} 4.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c3}}}} e6 5.b3

Grandmaster Artur Jussupow is the greatest specialist in that variation and it is still not analyzed so extensively. Its idea is to develop White's pieces according to the scheme \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b2}}}, \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f3}}}}, \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{d3}}}} and to avoid the usual move \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}}}, which is hardly necessary for White in the plan with \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b2}}}-\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b3}}}} and \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c1}}}-\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{b2}}}}. After the habitual line – 5.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{f3}}}} \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bd7}}} – White can only seldom manage to continue without the move 6.\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}}, in the "Anti-

\section{5...\textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{bd7}}}}

This move is a bit passive and White manages to realize his idea in the opening after it and to avoid playing the move – \textit{\textbf{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{c2}}}.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{c}
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\end{center}
It is more active for Black to try: 5...\(\text{\#b4!}\) 6.\(\text{\#b2}\) \(\text{\#e4}\) 7.\(\text{\#c2}\) (In case of: 7.\(\text{\#g2}\) c5 8.f3 \(\text{\#xc3}\) 9.\(\text{\#xc3}\); or 7...\(\text{\#h4}\) 8.g3 \(\text{\#f6}\), the position remains approximately equal.) 7...e5!? and the situation is quite complex with mutual chances, Jussupow – Ivanchuk, Istanbul 2000.

6.\(\text{\#b2}\) b6 7.\(\text{\#d3}\) \(\text{\#b7}\) 8.\(\text{\#f3}\) \(\text{\#e7}\) 9.0–0 0–0

![Chess Board Diagram]

10.\(\text{\#e2!}\)?

It is understandable that White's queen is much better placed on the e2-square in that scheme than on c2. His position seems to be slightly better thanks to his more harmoniously deployed pieces.

10...c5 11.\(\text{\#ad1}\)

That is an imprecision. It is stronger for White to play 11.\(\text{\#fd1!}\), with the idea to counter 11...\(\text{\#c7}\) with 12.\(\text{\#ac1}\) and he maintains a positional pressure.

11...\(\text{\#c7}\) 12.\(\text{\#c1}\)

Here, I had to admit my mistake on move eleven, placing the 'wrong' rook on the d1-square.

12...\(\text{\#ad8}\)

Black would have probably equalized easier with the line: 12...dxc4 13.\(\text{\#xc4}\) (or 13.bxc4 \(\text{\#ad8}\)) 13...a6 and the game would have been approximately balanced. The move in the game is quite reliable too.

13.\(\text{\#xd5}\) exd5

In case of: 13...\(\text{\#xd5}\) 14.\(\text{\#xd5}\), White has a long-lasting positional advantage after: 14...exd5 15.\(\text{\#xc5}\) bxc5 16.\(\text{\#fd1}\), as well as following: 14...\(\text{\#xd5}\) 15.\(\text{\#xc5}\) \(\text{\#xc5}\) 16.b4 \(\text{\#xf3}\) 17.gxf3 \(\text{\#xd3}\) (or 17...\(\text{\#d6}\) 18.\(\text{\#b5}\) \(\text{\#b7}\) 19.a3) 18.\(\text{\#xd3}\) \(\text{\#xh2}\) + 19.\(\text{\#xh2}\) \(\text{\#xd3}\) 20.\(\text{\#c2}\) \(\text{\#xb4}\) 21.\(\text{\#d2}\).

14.\(\text{\#fd1}\) \(\text{\#b8}\) 15.\(\text{\#c2}\) \(\text{\#e8}\) 16.\(\text{\#b1}\) a6 17.\(\text{\#e2}\) \(\text{\#e4!}\)?

This is Black's most active possibility. It is worse for him to continue with 17...\(\text{\#f8}\), because after: 18.\(\text{\#g3}\) \(\text{\#e4}\) 19.\(\text{\#xc5}\) bxc5 20.\(\text{\#xe4}\)! dxe4 21.\(\text{\#g5}\), White maintains a clear advantage, since Black can hardly protect his e4-pawn; the move 21...\(\text{\#a8}\), would not work in view of 22.\(\text{\#f3}\) and he cannot play 22...exf3, because of the checkmate on h7.

18.\(\text{\#g3}\) \(\text{\#df6}\)

![Chess Board Diagram]

There arose a very complicated position with somewhat better chances for White.

19.a4!?

That is an interesting plan and it leads to a very complex situation. I am
threatening to push a4-a5 and to disrupt the homogeneous pawn-structure on Black’s queenside. I would not have achieved anything with the standard line in this type of positions: 19.dxc5 bxc5 20.\(\text{Q}f\text{f}5\) \(\text{Q}f\text{f}8\) 21.\(\text{W}a\text{a}1\), due to: 21...d4! and Black would have an excellent counterplay. He can counter the attractive move for White 22.exd4, with the powerful resource 22...\(\text{W}f\text{f}4\)! and Black’s initiative is very dangerous; now after: 23.\(\text{Q}g\text{g}3\) \(\text{Q}x\text{f}2\)! 24.\(\text{Q}x\text{f}2\) \(\text{Q}g\text{g}4+\), or 23.\(\text{Q}x\text{h}4\) \(\text{Q}x\text{f}2\)! 24.\(\text{Q}x\text{f}2\) \(\text{Q}g\text{g}4\) Black’s attack is quite powerful. Even after the relatively best line for White: 23.\(\text{Q}x\text{e}4\) \(\text{Q}x\text{e}4\) 24.\(\text{Q}g\text{g}3\) (24.\(\text{Q}x\text{h}4?!\) g5 25.dxc5 \(\text{Q}x\text{d}1+\) 26.\(\text{Q}x\text{d}1\) \(\text{g}x\text{h}4\) 27.\(\text{Q}x\text{f}6\) \(\text{Q}x\text{f}3\) 28.\(\text{g}x\text{f}3\) \(h\text{h}3\)! 29.\(\text{W}c\text{c}3\) \(\text{g}g\text{7}+\)) 24... \(\text{Q}x\text{f}3\) 25.\(\text{g}x\text{f}3\) \(\text{W}x\text{f}3\), Black maintains a clear positional advantage.

\[\text{xf}2+ 23.\text{f}1 \text{xe}3++) 20...\text{d}6?! 21.\text{a}5 \text{gx}3?! 22.\text{hxg}3 \text{c}4?! 23.\text{bxc}4 \text{dx}4 24.\text{x}c4 (or 24.\text{xc}4 \text{b}5 25.\text{g}c2 \text{d}6) 24...\text{b}5 25.\text{d}3 \text{d}6 and in both cases Black’s compensation for the pawn would have been quite sufficient in view of the threat \(\text{w}h6\).

20.\(\text{a}5\) \(\text{g}4?!\)

It is too late now for that move. In case of 20...\text{bxa}5 21.dxc5, I would have preserved a clear positional advantage, but still that would have been his relatively best decision.

21.\(\text{f}1\) \(\text{d}6\)

Black’s defence would not be any easier after: 21...\text{bxa}5 22.dxc5 \(\text{xc}5\), because of: 23.\(\text{xc}5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 24.\(\text{xc}7+\) \(\text{h}8\) 25.\(\text{f}5\) and White’s attack would be so powerful that Black would hardly be able to cope with it.

22.\(\text{a}x\text{b}6\)

\[\text{x}f8?!\]

This is a serious imprecision, after which White seizes the initiative completely. It deserved attention for Black to follow with 19...\(\text{Q}g\text{g}4?!\) and the position would have remained rather unclear with mutual chances for both sides. For example: 20.\(\text{f}1\) (or 20.\(\text{xe}4?!\) \(\text{dxe}4\) 21.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{h}4!\) 22.\(\text{g}3\) \(\text{g}3\) 23.\(\text{hxg}3\) \(\text{e}4\) 24.\(\text{a}1\) \(\text{xe}3\); 20.\(\text{xe}4?\) \(\text{dxe}4\) 21.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{h}4!\) 22.\(\text{xb}7\)

22...\(\text{w}h6\)

The other possible defence for Black – 22...\(\text{xb}6\) is not any better, because of: 23.\(\text{h}3?!\) \(\text{xe}3\) (It is too dubious for him to try: 23...\(\text{x}g\text{3}\) 24.\(\text{xc}7+\) \(\text{h}8\) 25.\(\text{fxg}3\) \(\text{xe}3\) 26.\(\text{g}5\), since Black’s position is almost hopeless.) 24.\(\text{xe}3\) \(\text{g}3\) 25.\(\text{xc}7+\) \(\text{h}8\) 26.\(\text{g}5\) and White maintains a very dangerous attack after: 26...\(\text{d}7\) 27.\(\text{xf}7\), as well as
following: 26...f5 27.\textit{\v{x}}xf5!
\textbf{23.\textit{\v{x}}f5 \textit{\v{w}}h5 24.h3 \textit{\v{w}}xf5}
Black's position is very difficult too in case of: 24...\textit{\v{g}}xf2 25.\textit{\v{x}}xf2 \textit{\v{w}}xf5
26.dxc5 \textit{\v{w}}h5 27.\textit{\v{f}}c2.

\textbf{25.dxc5!!}
That is the fastest and the most spectacular road for White to victory. The simple line: 25.hxg4 \textit{\v{w}}xg4
26.dxc5 \textit{\v{x}}c5 27.\textit{\v{e}}e5 \textit{\v{x}}e5 28.\textit{\v{c}}xe5
\textit{\v{x}}xb6 29.\textit{\v{c}}c7, was also good enough for me to maintain a decisive advantage.

\textbf{25...\textit{\v{g}}f6 26.c6 \textit{\v{e}}6}
After 26...\textit{\v{x}}c6 27.\textit{\v{x}}c6, Black's position is hopeless. He is a pawn down and he has no active counterplay whatsoever.

\textbf{27.\textit{\v{d}}d4 \textit{\v{d}}6 28.\textit{\v{a}}a1! \textit{\v{c}}8 29.b7 \textit{\v{x}}h3!}
My opponent is trying to exploit his last chance in a totally lost position and that is to complicate matters with a piece-sacrifice in order to force a mistake on my part. That did not happen, though...

\textbf{30.\textit{\v{g}}xh3 \textit{\v{e}}5}
(diagram)

\textbf{31.\textit{\v{f}}f3}
This is the simplest line for me. I believed, the move 31.c7 was also win-
ning, but in that case there might remain a chance for me to fall into some trap in the time-trouble, like for example: 31...\textit{\v{g}}g5+ 32.\textit{\v{h}}h1 \textit{\v{h}}5! 33.c8\textit{\v{w}}
\textit{\v{g}}d7!? 34.\textit{\v{f}}f3? \textit{\v{x}}xh3+ 35.\textit{\v{g}}g2 \textit{\v{g}}g6+
36.\textit{\v{c}}xh3 \textit{\v{f}}5+ 37.\textit{\v{c}}g2 \textit{\v{g}}g4+ 38.\textit{\v{c}}h2
\textit{\v{h}}5+ 39.\textit{\v{g}}g2 \textit{\v{g}}g4+ and Black would have saved the day with a perpetual check.

\textbf{31...\textit{\v{f}}5 32.c7 \textit{\v{e}}8}
In case of: 32...\textit{\v{x}}xf3, White wins with 33.\textit{\v{d}}e5! (But not 33.cxd8\textit{\v{w}}, because of: 33...\textit{\v{g}}g3+! 34.fxg3 (34.\textit{\v{h}}h2?
\textit{\v{g}}g4--) 34...\textit{\v{x}}xg3+ 35.\textit{\v{h}}h1 \textit{\v{x}}xh3+
36.\textit{\v{c}}g1 \textit{\v{g}}g3+ and Black makes a draw by a perpetual.

\textbf{33.c8\textit{\v{w}} \textit{\v{x}}xf3 34.b8\textit{\v{w}}}

\textbf{Black resigned.}

\textit{His counter attack is over now and White's colossal material advantage is indisputable! He has several extra}
queens after all! The final position deserves a separate diagram, because it is a quite rare occasion in the tournament practice in which White has three queens in a middle game! This was an interesting tactical encounter.

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Dreev – Vaganian
European Club Cup (final)
Budapest 1996

1.d4 ∆f6 2.c4 e6 3.∆f3 d5 4.∆c3 ∆e7 5.∆c2

The idea of this order of moves is that after: 5...0–0 6.cxd5 exd5 7.∆g5, White can transpose to the Carlsbad variation.

5...c5

This is the most energetic and the most principled move for Black. There was no definite evaluation of that variation at the time that we played our game.

6.dxc5 d4 7.∆b5

7...e5!?N

This is an excellent novelty and it provokes a new look at the entire variation with 5...c5. Or 7...∆c6 8.∆f4 0–0 9. 0–0–0 ±

Black had tested before only: 7...∆xc5 8.∆f4 e5 (Or 8...0–0 9.0–0–0 ∆a5 10.a3 ∆c6 11.b4 ∆xb4 12.axb4 ∆xb4 13.∆d2+– Eingorn – Vaganian, USSR 1988; 8...∆a5+ 9.∆d2 ∆b6 10.b4 ∆e7 11.a3 e5 12. ∆xe5 g6 13.c5± Eingorn – Belavin, USSR 1987; 8...∆a6 9.a3 ∆g4 10.∆d2 0–0 11.b4±) 9.∆xe5 ∆b4+ 10.∆d2 ∆c6 11.∆xd4 12.∆xd4 0–0 13.e3 ∆xd2+ 14.∆xd2 ∆e4 15.∆b4 ∆f6 16.∆f3 ∆g4 17.∆e2 ∆ad8 18.c5 ∆e8 19.∆d1± Galliamova-Ivanchuk–E.Geller, Vienna 1993.

8.∆xe5 a6 9.∆a3 ∆xc5

Black did not have to capture that pawn. Later, in the game Khalifman–Topalov, Dubai (rapid) 2002, Black found the correct reaction: 9...0–0 10.g3 ∆a5+ 11.∆d2 ∆xc5 12.∆d3 ∆c6 13.∆g1 ∆f5 14.∆g2 ∆c8 and he had a good compensation for the pawn.

10.∆d3 ∆xa3

Or 10...∆f5 11.∆a4+.

11.bxa3 0–0 12.g3! ∆e8 13.∆g2 ∆g4

14.0–0!

This move was quite unexpected for my opponent. White gives back his extra pawn, but he maintains a stable positional advantage thanks to the couple of active bishops and the pres-
sure along the b-file. After: 14.f3?! $f5 15.0–0 $c6, Black would have a quite sufficient compensation for the pawn.

14...$xex2
Or 14...$xex2 15.$b3±
15.$e1 $xd3 16.$xe8+ $xe8 17. $xd3 $e1+?! It would have been better for Black to have played 17...$c6 and after 18.$b1, or 18.$f4, my position would have been only slightly better.

18.$f1 $c3 19.$b1 $c6

20.$b3?
Here, I overlooked an excellent possibility to increase my advantage, which however required exact calculations: 20.$xb7! $a5 (That is Black's only defence. He was losing after: 20...$e5?, due to 21.$b3+--) 21.$b2 $d2 22.$b4 $e8 23.c5! $e1 (or 23...d3 24.$xf6 gxf6 25.$e4 $d8 26.$a1 $g5 27.$f3 $f5 28.$a4+--) 24.$xd4 $e2 (24...$xf1+ 25.$xf1+--) 25.$d8+ $e8 26.$c3 $xf1+ 27.$xf1 $e6 28. $xa5 $h6 29.$g2 $h7 30.c6+--

20...$a5 21.$xb7 $d8 22.$b1
In case of the not so good line for White: 22.$xf7 22...$xf7 (22... $b8 23.$e7 $b1 24.$e1++) 23.$xa8, Black's passed pawn becomes very powerful: 23...$c3 24.$d5 d3.

22...$c8 23.$b2 $e6 24.$h3 $d8 25.$e1
It deserved attention for White to try: 25.$d1!? $b6 26.$a1±
25...$b6 26.c5 $c6
Or 26...$xc5 27.$xe6 $xe6 28. $xe6+ $h8 29.$c1 $d6 30.$xd6 $xd6 31.f3±
27.$xe6 $xe6
It is a mistake for Black to continue with: 27...$xe6, because of 28.$xe6 $xe6 29.c6 e5? 30.c7 $c8 31.$xd4+- 28.$d1

28...$e4!
Black's knight is headed for the g5-square and White must play extremely accurately. If: 28...d3, then: 29.$e3 $d5 30.c6 $xc6 31.$xd3 $xd3 32.$xd3±

29.$xd4 $xd4 30.$xd4 $g5 31. $e3 $f3+ 32.$f1 $d5 33.$c3
33...e5?

Black had good chances for a draw in case of: 33...hxh2+, but even then after the correct line for White: 34.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)e2! (Or 34.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)e1 e5=; 34.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)g1 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f3+ 35.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)g2 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d4+ 36.f3 \(\text{\underline{a}}\)xa2+ 37.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)h3 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c6 38.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)e4 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d5=) 34...\(\text{\underline{a}}\)xa2+ 35.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d2 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c4+ 36.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d3, Black would have some serious problems, for example: 36...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xc5 (or 36...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)g4+ 37.f3 \(\text{\underline{w}}\)xg3 38.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d8+ \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f7 39.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d7+ \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f8 40.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d6+ \(\text{\underline{w}}\)xd6 41.cxd6++ and \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c3-e5; 36...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)a2+ 37.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)e1) 37.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d8+ \(\text{\underline{w}}\)f8 38.\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xf8+ \(\text{\underline{w}}\)xf8 39.f3 g5 (that is the only move for Black) 40.g4 h5 41.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)e5 (Or 41.gxh5 g4 42.f4 g3 43.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)e1 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)g4 44.\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xg3 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f6 45.h6 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)g4 46.h7 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)g7=) 41...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xg4 42.fxg4 hxg4 43.\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d3.

34.\(\text{\underline{g}}\)g2!

This paradoxical decision creates maximum problems for my opponent.

34...\(\text{\underline{d}}\)d4+?

Black lacks two pawns at the moment, but he should better wait with: 34.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)e1+ 35.\(\text{\underline{h}}\)h3 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f3 and it is not clear how White can win, for example: 36.g4 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)g5+! 37.\(\text{\underline{h}}\)h4 (37.\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xg5 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f3+) 37...h6!

35.f3 \(\text{\underline{w}}\)xa2+

If 35...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xc5, then: 36.\(\text{\underline{x}}\)xd4 exd4 37.\(\text{\underline{w}}\)e8+ \(\text{\underline{w}}\)f8 38.\(\text{\underline{w}}\)xf8+ \(\text{\underline{w}}\)xf8 39.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)f2 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e7 40.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)e2 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d6 41.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)d3 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d5 (or 41...\(\text{\underline{e}}\)e5 42.\(\text{\underline{h}}\)h4 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)d5 43.h5+--) 42.f4 h5 43.h3 a5 44.a4 g6 45.g4 hxg4 46.hxg4 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e5 47.g5 \(\text{\underline{d}}\)d5 48.a3+-

36.\(\text{\underline{w}}\)d2 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xd2+?

Black had more practical chances to save the game after a transfer to a king and queen endgame: 36...\(\text{\underline{w}}\)d5 37.\(\text{\underline{x}}\)xd4 exd4 38.c6 \(\text{\underline{x}}\)xc6 39.\(\text{\underline{x}}\)xd4 \(\text{\underline{c}}\)c2+ 40.\(\text{\underline{h}}\)h3 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f5+ 41.\(\text{\underline{g}}\)g4+

There still followed: 41...h5+ (Or 41...exf4 42.gxf4 gxf4 43.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)xf4 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f7 44.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)f5 \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e7 45.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)f6+ \(\text{\underline{e}}\)e7 46.\(\text{\underline{g}}\)g5+-) 42.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)f3 exf4 43.gxf4 \(\text{\underline{f}}\)f4+ 44.\(\text{\underline{e}}\)e4 h4 45.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)f5+ \(\text{\underline{g}}\)g5 46.f6 \(\text{\underline{g}}\)g6 47.\(\text{\underline{f}}\)f4 and Black resigned.

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Dreev – Graf

FIDE World Chess Ch (k. o.)
Groningen 1997

This is the second game of my match against Alexander Graf. He used to have a family name – Ne- nashev then...) and it was played in the first knockout World Championship. That was my first match, since I started fighting in the second round. The first game of the match ended in a draw and I tried there a novelty in the Meran variation (see my comments to the game against M.Sadler, which was played in the next round of the Championship).
This win in the second game enabled me to win the match and to qualify for the next stage.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.d3 c5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.f3 c6 6.g3 f6 7.g2 e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.dxc5 dxc5 10.g5 d4 11.xf6 xf6 12.d5 xbd8 13.d2

16...e7?! N

This novelty is not so good although the idea of that move looks logical. Black does not wish to let White’s knight to the c5-square. Evidently, Alexander was reluctant to try the usual line 16...b8, since after 17.xc5!? (I really intended to play like that...) White has a minimal, but very stable positional advantage thanks to his superior piece-coordination and Black’s vulnerable d4-pawn. In case of 16...a5 17.xb3 ab8 18.d6 wx e5 19.xa3, White has again a slight long-term positional edge.

17.d5 e5?

That is already a serious mistake after which Black is clearly worse. He had to admit his mistake on the previous move and to go back with his queen – 17...d8, although after 18.xc5, White would have the initiative and he would be clearly better. That would have been the least of evils for Black, though...

14.e1 a7 15.f4! d7 16.e4

18.f4!

This is an excellent move! That is the right way for White to maintain his advantage. The discovered check is not dangerous for him, as we are going to see later.
18...d3+ 19.\textit{\textbullet}h1 \textit{\textbullet}xb2!
That pawn-gobbling is not dubious at all. It is in fact a forced only move, enabling Black to continue the fight, despite being in a clearly worse position. He was losing after: 19...dxe2 20.\textit{\textbullet}xe2 \textit{\textbullet}b8 (20...
\textit{\textbullet}d4 21.\textit{\textbullet}fd1++; 20...d4 21.\textit{\textbullet}d2++; 20...
\textit{\textbullet}e6 21.\textit{\textbullet}c7++;) 21.\textit{\textbullet}ef6+ gxf6
22.\textit{\textbullet}xf6+ \textit{\textbullet}g7 23.\textit{\textbullet}xd7++. It is also bad for him to defend with 19...\textit{\textbullet}d4?, in view of: 20.e3 \textit{\textbullet}xb2 21.\textit{\textbullet}xd3 and Black's position is hopeless, because of White's threats \textit{\textbullet}e4-g5 and \textit{\textbullet}c1-b1.
20.\textit{\textbullet}xd3 \textit{\textbullet}g4!
We have to admit that Alexander finds the best moves to create maximal difficulties for me to materialize my great advantage.

21.\textit{\textbullet}b1! \textit{\textbullet}d4
This is once again the only move for Black. He was lost after: 21...\textit{\textbullet}xe2?
22.\textit{\textbullet}ef6+ gxf6 23.\textit{\textbullet}xf6+ \textit{\textbullet}g7 24.
\textit{\textbullet}xh7+ \textit{\textbullet}xf6 25.\textit{\textbullet}h6+ \textit{\textbullet}e7 26.\textit{\textbullet}xb7+ \textit{\textbullet}d7 27.\textit{\textbullet}xc6 and White's attack was crushing. In case of 27...\textit{\textbullet}e6 (or 27...\textit{\textbullet}fd8) White wins with 28.\textit{\textbullet}xd7++.! It is also hopeless for Black to play 21...
\textit{\textbullet}xe2?, due to: 22.\textit{\textbullet}ef6+ gxf6 23.\textit{\textbullet}f5! and he has no satisfactory defence against the threat \textit{\textbullet}g2-e4.

22.\textit{\textbullet}xd4
Naturally, that move does not lose the advantage altogether, but it enables Black to consolidate his defence. It was much stronger for me to continue with 22.\textit{\textbullet}c2!, threatening to follow with 23.\textit{\textbullet}fd1 and 23.e3, trapping Black's queen in the middle of the board. He has nothing better than 22...\textit{\textbullet}ad8?!?, relying on the variation: 23.\textit{\textbullet}fd1 \textit{\textbullet}xd5 24.\textit{\textbullet}xd4 \textit{\textbullet}xd4 and although Black is definitely worse he can still fight. Still, instead of 23.\textit{\textbullet}fd1, White has a much stronger move – 23.\textit{\textbullet}g5 and Black practically cannot avoid entering the variation: 23...g6 (23...f5 24.\textit{\textbullet}e6++) 24.e3 \textit{\textbullet}g7 (24...
\textit{\textbullet}h8 25.\textit{\textbullet}xb7++) 25.\textit{\textbullet}xb7 and White's advantage is overwhelming.

22...\textit{\textbullet}xd4 23.e3 \textit{\textbullet}a7 24.\textit{\textbullet}ef6+
gxf6 25.\textit{\textbullet}xf6+ \textit{\textbullet}g7 26.\textit{\textbullet}xg4 h5!? 27.\textit{\textbullet}xc6 bxc6
It is not better for Black to play: 27...hxg4?! 28.\textit{\textbullet}xb7 \textit{\textbullet}xe3, because of:
29.\textit{\textbullet}b3! \textit{\textbullet}ac8 30.\textit{\textbullet}d7, since following 30...\textit{\textbullet}c7 (or 30...\textit{\textbullet}cd8 31.\textit{\textbullet}xg4) 31.\textit{\textbullet}xg4, Black remains two pawn down.

28.\textit{\textbullet}e5 \textit{\textbullet}xe3

It is a quite difficult task to make a draw in a position like that in a practi-
cal game. Of course, Black has some practical chances and White needs to play precisely to reduce these chances to a minimum.

29.\textbf{f}e1!

Black’s c6-pawn is not running away, so it is essential for White to improve the placement of his rooks and to send Black’s bishop to an inferior square in the process.

29...\textbf{d}2 30.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{c}3 31.\textbf{e}1!

\textbf{d}4

The transfer after: 31...\textbf{x}e5 32.\textbf{x}e5 \textbf{h}4 (32...\textbf{f}e8 33.\textbf{g}5+! \textbf{f}8 34.\textbf{x}h5+--) into a rook and pawn endgame is a disaster for Black in view of: 33.\textbf{g}5+! \textbf{h}7 (33...\textbf{f}6 34.\textbf{x}c6++) 34.\textbf{h}5+ \textbf{g}7 35.\textbf{x}h4 \textbf{f}e8 36.\textbf{e}c2 and White’s victory is just a matter of technique.

32.\textbf{x}c6 \textbf{f}6 33.\textbf{g}2 \textbf{f}e8 34.\textbf{x}e8 \textbf{x}e8 35.\textbf{f}3

White has some other advantages in that endgame, besides the extra pawn. His king is more active and the knight is a more maneuverable piece than Black’s bishop. Meanwhile, Black’s h5-pawn is very weak. All these factors make me evaluate Black’s position as nearly hopeless.

35.\textbf{e}6

Black would not achieve anything by pinning along the c-file after 35...\textbf{c}8, since White can counter that with 36.\textbf{c}2 and it is rather unclear what Black can do next. White is threatening to improve his position maximally with the maneuver \textbf{f}3-e4-f5 and then he will get rid of the pin easily with the moves \textbf{c}6-b4 or \textbf{c}6-d4 and Black’s situation would become even worse.

36.\textbf{c}5 \textbf{d}6 37.\textbf{b}4 \textbf{h}4 38.\textbf{g}4

40.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{d}3 41.\textbf{d}5! \textbf{x}d5 42.\textbf{x}d5

This endgame is an easy win for White after the trade of the rooks and he can try different methods too. Therefore, the rest of the game does not require any further comments.

42...\textbf{g}6 43.\textbf{h}3 \textbf{a}5 44.\textbf{e}2 \textbf{g}7 45.a3 \textbf{d}8 46.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{g}6 47.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{f}6 48.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{f}5 49.\textbf{e}3 \textbf{x}g4+ 50.\textbf{x}g4 \textbf{a}5 51.a4 \textbf{f}7 52.\textbf{f}3 \textbf{b}6 53.\textbf{c}4 \textbf{c}7 54.\textbf{e}5+ \textbf{e}7 55.\textbf{g}6+ \textbf{d}6 56.\textbf{x}h4 \textbf{c}5 57.\textbf{g}6 \textbf{b}4 58.\textbf{h}4 \textbf{xa}4 59.\textbf{h}5 \textbf{b}3 60.\textbf{h}6 a4 61.\textbf{h}7 \textbf{a}3 62.\textbf{h}8\textbf{a}2 63.\textbf{e}4 \textbf{d}6 64.\textbf{d}3 \textbf{a}3 65.\textbf{c}3+ and Black resigned.

\textbf{Sadler} – \textbf{Dreev}

FIDE World Chess Ch (k. o.)
Groningen 1997

The result of this game was tremendously important for me, because the first encounter of that match had ended in a draw, so the second game had become decisive. The win here enabled me to qualify for the quarter-final, but then in the tie-break I lost to Boris Gelfand.
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\textit{d}f3 \textit{d}f6 4.\textit{c}c3 e6 5.e3 \textit{d}bd7 6.\textit{d}d3 dxc4 7.\textit{c}xc4 b5 8.\textit{d}d3 \textit{b}b7 9.0-0 a6 10.e4 c5 11.d5 \textit{wc}7

Black’s usual line here is – 11...c4.

The queen move seems to be quite attractive. This line became fashionable at the very beginning of the 90ies of the 20th century. White’s standard reaction 12.\textit{wc}2, after: 12...c4 13.\textit{c}c2 \textit{d}d6, leads to a different line (also well-familiar...) in which Black has no problems. In case of the immediate 12.\textit{c}c2?!., Black has a good counter argument and that is the move 12...0-0-0!, after which White faces difficulties. For example, it is dubious for him to play 13.\textit{g}g5, due to 13...\textit{b}b6. After 13.\textit{d}xe6, Black follows with: 13...\textit{e}e5! 14.\textit{w}e2 \textit{x}f3+ 15.\textit{w}xf3 \textit{fxe}6 16.\textit{wh}3 \textit{db}8 and his position becomes even slightly better; if 17.\textit{wx}e6?, then 17...\textit{c}c8.

Accordingly, in case White intends to fight for the opening advantage, he should reduce the tension in the centre with:

\textbf{12.dxe6 fxe6},

and that already seems to be a certain compromise on his part.

\textbf{13.\textit{c}c2!?}

There arose one of the most critical positions of the so-called Reynolds Variation.

Black used to play before this game the move 13...c4, after which White could transfer into an endgame with: 14.\textit{g}g5 \textit{c}c5 15.e5 \textit{xc}e5 16.\textit{e}e1 \textit{d}d6 17.\textit{xd}x6 \textit{xd}x6 18.\textit{e}e3 0-0 19.\textit{ad}1 \textit{xe}7 20.\textit{x}xc5 \textit{xc}5 21.\textit{exe}6 \textit{f}fc8 22.h3; but still the main line for White was – 14.\textit{d}d4!?

Following 13...\textit{xe}7 14.\textit{g}g5 \textit{c}c6 (It deserves attention for White to try 15.f4!? 15.\textit{f}f3 h6 16.\textit{h}h3 \textit{hxg}5 17.\textit{w}xh8+ \textit{f}f7 18.\textit{w}h3, White’s chances are preferable.

In my game against GM Evgenij Bareev (Elista 1996) I used a novelty – 13...0-0-0!? and after 14.\textit{g}g5 \textit{c}c5 15.\textit{we}1 \textit{wb}6 16.\textit{f}f4 \textit{dd}3 17.\textit{gg}3 c4+ 18.\textit{e}e3 \textit{c}c5 19.\textit{xc}c5 \textit{xc}c5! 20.\textit{h}h1 b4 21.\textit{da}4 \textit{xa}4 22.\textit{xa}4 h6 23.\textit{f}f7 \textit{xe}4, I had an excellent position. I was in a time-trouble at that moment, so I offered a draw. I remember I was afraid then of the move 24.\textit{w}g6, but in that case Black can force a transfer into a clearly better endgame after: 24...\textit{f}f2+ 25.\textit{xf}2 \textit{xf}2 26.\textit{xf}h8 \textit{f}f8 27.\textit{xe}6+ \textit{b}b8 28.\textit{c}c6 \textit{b}b6 29.\textit{w}e5+ \textit{c}c7 30.\textit{xc}c7+ \textit{xc}c7 31.\textit{xb}7 \textit{xb}7.

Earlier, I had tested that same posi-
tion in my game against GM M. Sadler at the World Team Championship in Lucern (which was played several months prior to the World FIDE Championship in Groningen). My opponent played a much better move than E. Bareev – 15. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{e}7}}}! and after 15... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{e}8}}} 16.f4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{c}6}}} 17. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{f}3}}}! I had plenty of problems to solve. Here, the line: 17... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{d}4}}} 18. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{x}d}4 \textbf{cxd}4}} 19. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{d}1}}} is not good enough for Black to equalize. I played 17...g5!?, but subsequently I lost after: 18.e5! g4 19.exf6 gxf3 20. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}xf}3 \textbf{d}4}} 21. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{h}5}}} the position was complicated indeed, but still White's chances were clearly better.

I had understood already that M. Sadler must have been perfectly up in arms against the variation with 13...0-0-0, therefore I chose –

13... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{d}6}}},

trying a new idea, which was prepared by me especially for that tournament.

Here, I should mention – this move could have hardly been a surprise for my opponent, because I had already tested that novelty three days earlier, in the previous round of the tournament, against GM Alexander Graf.

Naturally, M. Sadler should have expected that I was going to play 13... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{d}6}}} once again. I thought that he was not going to have enough time for preparation and he would hardly be able to manage to analyze thoroughly such extremely complicated position. Still, I must admit that M. Sadler had prepared a good line, but later he failed to find the best continuation and that led to his demise.

So, the game continued with:

\[14. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{g}5}}}
\]

The move 14... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{e}7}}}? is unplayable, because of 15.f4+-

14... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{f}8}}}

This is Black's only move.

15.f4 0-0-0

A. Nenashev played here 16. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}e}2}}, but after: 16...h6 17. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{f}3}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{x}f}4}} 18.e5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{x}f}4}!!} 19. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}xf}3 \textbf{xe}5}} 20. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}a}8+ \textbf{d}7}} 21. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}xa}6 \textbf{xh}2+}} 22. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{h}1 \textbf{e}7}}}, I had a wonderful position.

16. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{e}1}!!}}

That is Matthew's novelty! I had expected something of the sort, though...

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

16...e5?!

This was probably a nasty surprise for my opponent, at least because he went into deep thinking after that.

Most probably he expected that I was going to play analogously to the game Nenashev – Dreev: 16...h6?! Here, it is dubious for White to continue with: 17.e5?! hxg5 18.exd6 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}xd}6}} and Black's position is at least equal, but after: 17. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{f}3}}} \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{x}f}4}} 18.e5! \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{x}c}1}} (18... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{x}f}3}?! 19. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{w}xf}4+-}}) 19. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{xc}1}}} 19... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{d}5}}} 20. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\textit{\textbf{e}4}}}, White's initiative for the pawn is very dangerous.

M. Sadler decided to advance his a-pawn:
17.a4!?
This standard move turns out to be a serious imprecision in this situation.

White could have entered the rather unclear position after: 17.fxe5 â xe5
18.d3 e6 19.xe5 â xe5 20.e5, or the more reliable line: 17.f5, which would have led to an approximately equal position in case of: 17...h6
18.f3 â d7=

17...b4 18.e2
White has no compensation for the pawn after: 18.d5 â xd5 19.exd5 exf4, as well as after: 18.fxe5 â xe5 19.d5
â xd5 20.exd5 â xd5!?

18.h6 19.fxe5 â xe5 20.e5
Sadler felt that things were going wrong and he offered a draw here. I had played rather quickly by that moment and I had spent very little time on my clock, while my opponent had been thinking a lot. Still, when I had a look at the chess-clock I noticed that I had about twice less time left than my adversary. It was amazing, but the electronic clock had gone out of order... Nobody knew at that moment what was going to happen in the game, but Mathew proved to be a real gentleman and he pointed out to the arbiter the correct time for each player...

20...â e6!
Black has seized the initiative, his pieces are very active and White has a serious problem with the defence of his e-pawn.

21.dxe5 â xe5 22.e5 â d6!
The centralization of Black's forces looks just threatening.

23.e4
It would have been preferable for White to defend with: 23.e5 â c6
24.f1, but even then Black's prospects are superior after 24...â e4.

23...â xf4 24.e4

This is the critical position of the game.

GM Rainer Knaak pointed out in his comments that here the best for Black was: 24...b3 25.d1 â b6 26.
â b1 c4+ 27.h1 â xe4. Indeed, 24...b3 looks interesting. I think White must play 25.xb3 and after: 25...â d4+ 26.f2 â f2 27.e2 â e4 28.g1, the position remains approximately equal.

There is another attractive possibility for Black – 24...â xe4, after which White has numerous moves to choose from:

It is dubious for him to try 25.â xf6?!, because of 25...â d4+ (but

White can also play – 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exd1!? \texttt{\textbf{Exc6 Exxf6 gxf6 27.\texttt{\textbf{Exd8+ Exd8 28.\texttt{\textbf{Exe4Exa4 28...Ee8 29.\texttt{\textbf{Exf5+}}}}}}}}}} 29.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exd3 and the position remains unclear;}}}

It is also not easy to evaluate the position in case of 25.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exe4?!}, and 25...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Ed4+ \texttt{\textbf{Eh1 Exhe8}}}}}} (or 26...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exe4?! \textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exe6 \texttt{\textbf{Exb2 28.Ef1}}}}}}}} 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exc5+ Exc5 28.Ec1 Exe4 29.Exc5+ \texttt{\textbf{Exc5 30.Ec1 \texttt{\textbf{Dh7 31.h3; as well as after 25...\texttt{\textbf{Exhe8? \texttt{\textbf{Exxf6;}}}}}}}}}}}

As you can see – the position is extremely complicated. Presently, it seems to me that my most attractive possibility is the line: 24...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exd4+ 25.\texttt{\textbf{Exh1 Exhe8 26.\texttt{\textbf{Ed1 (26.\texttt{\textbf{Exe2 \texttt{\textbf{Exe3 27.\texttt{\textbf{Exg3 \texttt{\textbf{Exe1 Ed7 and the endgame is better for Black) 26...Exxb2 (26...\texttt{\textbf{Exe4 27.Exf1+}}}}}}}}}}}}}} 27.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exc5+ \texttt{\textbf{Exb8 28.Exb1 (28.Exd8+ Exd8 29.\texttt{\textbf{Exd3 Ed4 30.Exxb4) 28...\texttt{\textbf{Exd4 29.Exxb4 Exb4 30.Exb4.}}}}}}}}}}}

However, I continued with:

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{24.\texttt{\textbf{Exhe8,}}}}}

having calculated a long variation, which happened in the game, though...

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{25.Ed1 \texttt{\textbf{Exe4??}}}}}

After 25...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exb6!?}, there would have arisen another complex position.}}

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{(diagram)}}}

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{26.Exd6??}}}

Something quite mystical happened in that game (which determined the result of the entire match) against GM M.Sadler – a remarkable player and a true gentleman. No one can ever explain, without the involvement of the mystical..., how neither of us had noticed that after the move 26.\textit{\texttt{\textbf{Exe2!+/-}}, Black did not have the lifeline – \texttt{\textbf{Exd4 and as a result White wins the exchange, although I might still have had some chances to save the draw...}}}

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{26...\texttt{\textbf{Exe1+ 27.Ef2 Exd6 28.\texttt{\textbf{Exc5+ Ed8 29.Exe1 g5!}}}}}}}

That is the point! The forced line continues...

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{30.Ed3 b3 31.Ed5!?}}}

White plays quite enterprisingly. In case of: 31...\textit{\texttt{\textbf{bxc2?! 32.Ef7+ Ed7 33.Exd6 Ed6 34.Exc2, Black’s winning chances are just minimal.}}}

\textit{\texttt{\textbf{31...Ed7!+-}}
This precise move guarantees Black's decisive advantage.

32.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{Df7+}}} 33.e\texttt{\textit{\textbf{6}}}

It is too bad for White to follow here with: 33.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc7? xfx7 34.f5}}} (34.xb3+ \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d5+}}}) 34...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c6--}}} and Black wins.

33...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}} 34.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f5+}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} 35.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b1}}}

The endgame is a technical win for Black now. White's g2 and a4-pawns are under attack and Black's pieces are extremely active. He must be careful, though, because White maintains some drawing chances, due to the considerably reduced material.

35...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h5}}!} 36.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g3}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xa4}}} 37.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d2}}}

This is the most precise move for Black. Now, White loses his b2-pawn and that leads to a winning endgame for Black. There still followed:

38.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e3}}} 39.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e6}}} 39.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d3}}}

It is evident that the passive move 39.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c1}}} is unsatisfactory for White, because after 39...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e5}}} (with the idea to follow with \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d4}}}) Black wins easily.

39...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb2}}} 40.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xa6}}} 41.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b5}}}

\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} 42.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{h4}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{g4}}} 43.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{g2}}} 44.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c4+}}} 44.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc4}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc4}}} 45.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f4}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{f7}}}

and White resigned.

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\texttt{\textit{\textbf{1.d4 \texttt{\textit{\textbf{Df6}}}}} 2.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c4}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{g6}}} 3.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c3}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{g7}}} 4.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{d6}}} 5.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f3}}} 0-0 6.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{ag5}}}

There arose the Zaemish variation of the King's Indian Defence.

6...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{a6}}}

Black's main line here is -- 6...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c5}}} 7.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{e6}}}. G.Kasparov chooses a trickier move order, which is well-familiar too.

7.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d2}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{bd7}}}

8.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d5?!}}}

The other possibility for White is -- 8.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{ge2}}} c5. After 9.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} b5 10.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xb5}}}, Black has the resource 10...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{wa5}}} -- that is the idea behind that move order.

8...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{e5}}}!

In case of 8...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c5?!}}}, you can see the idea of the move 8.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d5}}}: after 9.a4, Black has difficulties playing e7-e6, as well as b7-b5. Following 8...c6, White can respond simply with 9.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{ge2}}}.

9.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{d1}}}

This move is a bit strange. The point is that after the natural line: 9.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f4}}}

\texttt{\textit{\textbf{ed7}}} 10.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{f3}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} (10...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c5?!}}}) I fail to stabilize the situation in the centre.

9...\texttt{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} 10.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}} \texttt{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}} 11.\texttt{\textit{\textbf{b3}}}
That pawn-structure is quite untypical for the King’s Indian Defence. Neither side has any opening advantage here and the position is quite complex.

11...\texttt{wa5} 12.\texttt{Da4}
But naturally not 12.\texttt{Dge2? Dd3+} 13.\texttt{Wxd3 Wxg5}.

12...\texttt{wc7}
Black could have entered the complicated endgame after 12...\texttt{Wxd2+?!}

13.\texttt{De2 Dh5} 14.\texttt{Dc3}
It was maybe better for White to play 14.\texttt{Dg3}.

14...\texttt{f5}

15.\texttt{exf5?!}
I was afraid of the move f5-f4, but in case of 15.\texttt{De2} f4, White could continue with 16.c5!.

15...\texttt{gxf5} 16.\texttt{f4}
16.\texttt{De2} f4.

16...\texttt{Dg4} 17.\texttt{Dxe2} h6 18.\texttt{Dh4} d5!
G.Kasparov seized the initiative here.

19.\texttt{Dxg4}
It is also bad for White to follow with: 19.0–0 d4, or 19.cxd5 \texttt{Dxf4} 20.\texttt{Dxg4 We5+}!

19...\texttt{fxg4} 20.0–0
If 20.cxd5, then 20...\texttt{Exf4} and White cannot castle.

20...\texttt{d4} 21.\texttt{De2} \texttt{c5}

The situation has been clarified. As a result of a series of imprecise moves in the opening, my position has become slightly worse. Black has a bishop pair and a powerful passed pawn in the centre. Additionally, G.Kasparov enjoyed a tremendous advantage on the chess-clock, while I was already entering a time-pressure... I still had some defensive resources, though...

22.\texttt{Db2} a5 23.\texttt{Dxe1 Dxf5} 24.\texttt{Dd3}
\texttt{a4} 25.\texttt{De5! axb3} 26.\texttt{axb3 Df6}

I case of 26...\texttt{Dfb8}, I had the excellent possibility: 27.b4! \texttt{Dxb4} 28.\texttt{Dxd4 Dd8} 29.\texttt{Wxb4 cxb4} 30.\texttt{Dxf5} with some compensation. The same line was applicable to the move 26...\texttt{Dab8}.

After 26...\texttt{Da3} 27.b4 \texttt{Df6} 28.\texttt{Df2}, it is not good for Black to play: 28...\texttt{Dxf4?} 29.\texttt{Dxf4 Dxe5}, in view of 30.\texttt{Dd5}.

Therefore Kasparov preferred:

27.\texttt{Dxf6} \texttt{Dxf6} 28.\texttt{Dd3 Da3}

This move forces White to play \texttt{De2-c1}. On the other hand the knight on c1 is not so badly placed, since I could have regrouped my knights, moreover that Black’s rook is misplaced on a3 as well. Accordingly, it was maybe worth for Black to try immediately 28...\texttt{Dg7}!? followed by h5-h4.
29. \( \text{Qe1} \) \( \text{Qg7} \) 30. \( \text{Ee2} \) \( \text{h5} \) 31. \( \text{Efe1} \) \( \text{Ef7} \) 32. \( \text{Wb2} \)
32. \( \text{Qf2} \).
32... \( \text{Wa7} \)

I thought during the game that the move 32...\( \text{Ea8} \) was stronger for Black, but after 33.b4, I would have an acceptable game, for example: 33...\( \text{cxb4} \) 34.\( \text{c5} \) \( \text{Ed7} \) 35.\( \text{Wxb4} \) \( \text{h4} \) 36.\( \text{Cc4+} \) \( \text{Wh7} \) 37.\( \text{Qb3} \).

33. \( \text{Qf2} \) \( \text{h4} \) 34. \( \text{Qe4} \) \( \text{Ea6} \)

It deserved attention for Black to try here: 34...\( \text{Qxe4} \) 35.\( \text{Exe4} \) \( \text{g3} \) with a rather unclear position.

35. \( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Qxe4} \) 36. \( \text{Exe4} \) \( \text{Ea2} \) 37. \( \text{Wb1} \) \( \text{h3} \)

Or 37...\( \text{Qd2} \) 38.\( \text{f5} \).

38.\( \text{gxh3} \) \( \text{gxh3} \) 39. \( \text{Qf2} \) \( \text{Wa5} \)

Or 39...\( \text{f5} \) 40.\( \text{Ee4} \) \( \text{Exe2} \) 41.\( \text{Exe2} \) \( \text{Wa8} \) 42.\( \text{Qxh3} \) \( \text{Ea7} \) 43.\( \text{Wf1} \) \( \text{Qh5} \) 44.\( \text{Ee6} \) \( \text{Ea1} \) 45.\( \text{Ee1} \) =

40. \( \text{Wd3} \) !

I should have played here 40.\( \text{Ee4} \) \( \text{Ee2} \). I have to mention that I played the second half of the game a terrible time-trouble (I had about a minute left for fifteen moves.). It is still difficult for me to imagine how I succeeded to make so many moves against such a strong player under the circumstances (There was no time added per move then...), moreover that I had even managed to improve my position around move 40.

40...\( \text{Ea1} \) ?!

After 40...\( \text{f5} \) 41.\( \text{Ee5} \) \( \text{Ea1} \), the position is equal. The best for Black was: 40...\( \text{Wc3} \) ! 41.\( \text{Exc3} \) \( \text{dx3} \) 42.\( \text{Ee3} \) \( \text{Qf5} \) 43.\( \text{Exh3} \) (or 43.\( \text{Exc3} \) \( \text{Eg7}+ \) 44.\( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{Eg2} \) 45.\( \text{Qxh3} \) \( \text{Exh2}-- \)) 43...\( \text{c2} \) 44.\( \text{Qd3} \) \( \text{Eh7} \), with some advantage for him.

41.\( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{f5} \) 42.\( \text{Exa1} \) \( \text{Wxa1}+ \) 43.\( \text{Ee1} \) \( \text{Wa8} \)

43...\( \text{Wb2} \) =

G.Kasparov played his last several moves in a time-pressure too. We were not recording the moves at that moment, so we had no idea whether the 40 moves of the time control had been completed. As a result, we played blitz a bit longer than necessary.

44.\( \text{Wxh3} \)

44...\( \text{Ea7} \) !

My flag fell at that moment and later it turned out that the time-control was over, so I had plenty of time to reconsider the situation... I understood that I would have great problems to realize my extra pawn, due to my vulnerable king. Therefore, I decided to force a transition into an endgame in which G.Kasparov managed to draw
easily despite his one pawn deficit.

45.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{g2}}}\)

If 45.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{d3}}}\), then 45...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{a3}}}\) 46.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{g3}}}\)

\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xb3}}}\) 47.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{e7}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{a1+}}}\) 48.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{g2}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{a8=}}}\)

In case of 45.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{g1}}}\), Black plays 45...

\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{a1}}}\) 46.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{f1}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{a6}}}\).

45...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xg2+}}}\) 46.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xg2}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{a3}}}\) 47.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{e5}}}\)

\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xb3}}}\) 48.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xc5}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{c3}}}\) 49.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{d5}}}\). We agreed to a draw here.

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Dreev – Krasenkow

European Club Cup (final)

Kazan 1997

This game was played in the final of the European Club Cup and I belonged to the host team of the competition, since I was playing for Kazan.

1.\(\text{\texttt{d4}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{f6}}}\) 2.\(\text{\texttt{c4}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g6}}}\) 3.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{c3}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d5}}}\) 4.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{f3}}}\)

\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{g7}}}\) 5.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{f4}}}\) 0–0 6.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{c1}}}\)

This variation of the Grunfeld Defence is very well known and it is also quite popular too until now.

6...\(\text{\texttt{dxc4}}}\)!

Michal chooses the most fashionable move, which leads to complicated double-edged positions.

Among the other serious alternatives for Black I have to mention 6...\(\text{\texttt{c5}}}\); indeed in that case after 7.\(\text{\texttt{dxc5}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{e6}}}\)!

(Contemporary theory considers that move to be the most reliable.) 8.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{d4}}}\)

\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{c6}}}\) 9.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xe6}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{fxe6}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\), there arises a well familiar theoretical position in which I think White has more chances to fight for the opening advantage than in the lines after 6...\(\text{\texttt{dxc4}}}\)?

It is also possible for Black to defend with 6...\(\text{\texttt{c6}}}\), but that move is not so often played, because after 7.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}}\), Black's position is solid indeed, but it is rather passive.

7.\(\text{\texttt{e4}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{g4}}}\) 8.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xc4}}}\) \(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xf3}}}\) 9.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{gxf3}}}\)

White cannot obtain anything much after 9.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xf3}}}\), due to 9...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{h5}}}\).

9...\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{h5}}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{e3}}}\)

10...\(\text{\texttt{e6}}}\)

Here, my opponent decided to opt for a very old line, which had been tried often in the 70ies and the 80ies of the last century. It is of course quite acceptable for Black, but I believe that it is stronger for him to continue with the move 10...\(\text{\texttt{e5}}}\)!, which has become quite modern in the last 5-7 years and it provides Black with an active counterplay. The position is complicated and double-edged and his prospects are not worse at all after: 11.\(\text{\texttt{dxe5}}}\)

\(\text{\texttt{\textbf{xe5}}}\).
See the most interesting examples:
12.\( \text{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{Q}}}} \)xd8 \( \text{\texttt{\texttt{Q}}}} \)xd8 13.b4?! (or 13.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}e2 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6 and the game is quite unclear)
13...\texttt{\texttt{Q}}f4! 14.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d5 (or 14.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6!) 14...\texttt{\texttt{Q}}g2+ 15.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}f1 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xe3+ 16.fxe3 c6 17.f4 cxd5 18.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xd5 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6 19.fxe5 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xb4 and Black was even slightly better in the game Lputian – Ivanchuk, Elista 1998;
12.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}b3 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6 13.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xb7 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}f6 14.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}e2 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}d4 15.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d5 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}h4 16.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}b4 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xe2 17.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xe2 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}ab8 and Black's initiative was at least good enough to compensate White's extra pawn, Dreev – Alterman, Elista 1998;
12.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}h6 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6!? 13.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xf8 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xf8 14.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}e2 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}f4 15.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xf4 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xf4 16.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}c3 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}e5 and Black had a sufficient compensation for the exchange in the game Rogers – Timofeev, Amsterdam 2005.
11.f4 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}h4 12.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}f3 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6 13.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}e2 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}ad8 14.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d1

The arising position is also well known in the contemporary tournament practice.

14...\texttt{\texttt{Q}}a5

My opponent tries a novelty here, but it still does not solve all his opening problems.
Black usually played before 14...a6, but I was planning to counter that with an even more meaningful novelty: 15.0-0!? (instead of the moves 15.a3, or 15.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}g1), with the idea after: 15...\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d7 16.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d2 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}fd8 17.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}fd1 to obtain a slight but stable positional advantage. It is also interesting to mention that a year later, at the Olympiad in Elista, that novelty (15.0-0!?) was tested in the game Lputian – Sutovsky, in which after: 17...\texttt{\texttt{Q}}a5!! 18.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d3 c5 19.dxc5 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xb2 20.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}xa6! White obtained a great advantage. It might be quite possible that Michal Krasenkov had a very good idea about the strong move 15.0-0!, therefore he had decided to avoid the theoretical move 14...a6.
15.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d3 c5 16.dxc5 \texttt{\texttt{Q}}xb2 17.0-0?!

I would not have achieved much with 17.e5, due to 17...f6! and Black is not worse at all.
17...e5 18.f5

That is the critical moment in the game. The position is quite complex, but I believe White's prospects are superior here.
18...\texttt{\texttt{Q}}c6

This is an imprecise move, since Black had better play 18...g5!? 19.\texttt{\texttt{Q}}d2!? with only somewhat better position for White.
19.\textit{\&c4 \&f6?!}
That was also not the best. It was too dubious for Black to continue with: 19...\textit{\&d4?!} 20.\textit{\&xd4 \&xd4 21.\&d5\&c6} but it deserved attention for him to try 19...\textit{\&d4} and his position would have remained quite defensible, although after: 20.f\textit{xg6 h\textit{xg6 21.\&g2?!} White would be still better.

20.\textit{\&xd8!}
It is not advisable for White to continue with: 20.\textit{\&b1?! \&d4 21.\&xb7, because of: 21...\textit{\&a5 22.\&b4 \&g4} with a good game for Black.

20...\textit{\&xd8 21.fxg6 h\textit{xg6 22.\&b1 \&d4?}
That is already a very serious mistake and Black can hardly hold the position after it. He had to play instead 22...\textit{\&a5!} and although after 23.\textit{\&xf7+ \&xf7 24.\&xb2 \&xe4 25.\&xe4 \&xe4 26.\&b5 \&c4 27.\&xb7+ he would remain a pawn down, but he would have still preserved some chances for a draw.

23.\textit{\&xb7 \&xe3}
(diagram)

24.\textit{\&xf7!}
That is the best move for White and Black's situation becomes hopeless after it.

24...\textit{\&xf2+}
It is not any better for Black to defend with: 24...\textit{\&xf2+ 25.\&xf2 \&xf2 + 26.\&xf2 \&xe4+ 27.\&e3 \&d2 28.\&e6 \&h8 29.\&d7 \&f1+ (29...\&c4+ 30.\&e4 \&d2+ 31.\&d5+-) 30.\&e4 \&xh2 31.\&xd8+ \&xd8 32.\&d7 \&g7 33.\&c6 \&xc6 34.\&xc6+-

25.\textit{\&g2 \&xc5}
Or 25...\textit{\&g5+ 26.\&xf2 \&g4+ 27.\&xg4 \&xg4 28.\&f4+-; 25...\textit{\&g4+ 26.\&xf2 \&xe4+ 27.\&e3+-

26.\textit{\&xf6+ \&h8}
Or 26...\textit{\&g7 27.\&xc6 \&f8 28.\&c7+ \&e7 29.\&e3+-

27.\textit{\&xc6 \&f8 28.\&f7 \&g5+ 29.\&g3} and Black resigned.

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\textbf{D20}

\textbf{Dreev – Svidler}

Russia Ch (k. o.), Elista 1997

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 \&f6 4.e5 \&d5 5.\textit{\&xc4 \&b6 6.\&d3 \&c6 7.\&e3 \&b4 8.\&e4 f5 9.exf6}
Or 9.\textit{\&f3?! f4 10.\&xf4 \&f5. 9...\textit{\&xf6}
We are playing one of the fashionable variations of the Queen's Gambit Accepted.
10. a3

In my later games, I preferred the move 10. c3 and I believed that White had greater chances to fight for the opening advantage after that move.

10... f5 11. axb4 axb4+

This check used to be considered as the main line at the time that we played our game. In fact, it is stronger for Black to play: 11... fxe4 and that move became more fashionable later. For example, in the game Ehliovet – Volzhin (Kochalin 1998) after: 12. c3 e6!? 13. h3 d6 14. g5 c4, Black equalized without any problems. Instead of 12. c3, I tried with White against D. Adla (Internet 2002) the move 12. h5+, but after: 12... g6 13. e5+ f7 14. c3 axb4 15. g5 e8 16. xe7+ d7 17. xg3 g4, I did not obtain anything promising out of the opening.

12. c3 fxe4 13. h5+ f8 14. ge2

(diagram)

14... e6!?

This is an interesting novelty. Black usually played before 14... e8, but after 15. h4, he still had some opening problems to solve.

15. 0–0 g8

In case of: 15... e8 16. h4 c4,

White can enter the complicated variation after: 17. f3 xc3!? 18. xe4 g8 19. xfc3 xf1 20. xf1, sacrificing the exchange. Indeed, that approach includes a certain degree of risk. Meanwhile, White can answer with a simpler move and I like it much more – 17. fc1!?. I believe that White’s compensation for the pawn is more than sufficient, because of his harmoniously placed pieces.

16. x e4

16... e8?!

That is a serious mistake. It was more reliable for Black to play: 16... d5 17. h4 (or 17. g5 f7=) 17... f5, with a complicated position, in which he has good chances to equalize. Now, I seize the initiative and Black’s situation worsens very rapidly.

17. xe8+ xe8 18. fc1
That move no doubt helps me preserve a considerable positional advantage. It also deserved attention for White to try: 18...\textit{xa7}!?, not being afraid of the variation: 18...\textit{c4} 19.\textit{d4g3 a6}, because after 20.\textit{xe1}!?, it was far from clear how Black could profit from the placement of his opponent's rook on a7.

\textbf{18...a5 19.\textit{d2g3 d5}}

It is not advisable for Black to defend with 19...a5!?, because after: 20.\textit{c5 d5} 21.\textit{d3}! White maintains a great advantage in case of: 21...\textit{c4} 22.\textit{xb4 axb4} 23.b3 \textit{xe3} 24.\textit{exe3 c6} 25.e4, as well as following: 21...c6 22.\textit{xb4 axb4} 23.\textit{a7}.

\textbf{20.\textit{d2}! \textit{xd2}!}

It was better for Black to play 20...a5, but even then after: 21.\textit{xb4 axb4} 22.\textit{c5}, White would maintain a considerable edge. Still, in that case my opponent would have offered a much more tenacious resistance than in the game. Now, Peter remains without a pawn by force in a very difficult position and he only has some practical chances for a draw, relying mostly on my eventual mistakes.

\textbf{21.\textit{xd2 c6} 22.\textit{xa7 f7} 23.\textit{f3}! \textit{d7}}

\textbf{24.d5!}

That is the best move for White, since he does not need to enter the following forced variation: 24.\textit{xc6 bxc6} 25.\textit{xe7 e6} 26.\textit{xc6+ d5} 27.\textit{c7 d6} and despite the fact that he has three pawns for the exchange, winning that position might turn out to be problematic.

\textbf{24...\textit{xd5} 25.\textit{xc7 e6}?}

This mistake in the time-trouble speeds up Black's demise. He could have resisted more stubbornly with the move 25...\textit{d8}, but after: 26.\textit{d4 he8} 27.\textit{f1}, threatening \textit{g3-f5} and \textit{a7-a5}, Black would have hardly survived for long.

\textbf{26.\textit{d4+ d6} 27.\textit{b5+ e6} 28.\textit{d4+}}

I decided to repeat the position a couple of times in the time-trouble in order to gain some time on the clock.

\textbf{28...\textit{d6} 29.\textit{b5+}}

\textbf{29...e7}

Peter avoids the repetition – 29...\textit{e6} and quite deservedly so. I had planned to counter that move with 30.\textit{h5}!, even before the repetition and Black had no defence against the numerous threats in that case. The
move in the game does not provide my opponent with any chances to save the game either. There still followed:

30.\text{\textdialect{f}}5+ \text{\textdialect{f}}6 31.\text{\textdialect{e}}3 \text{\textdialect{b}}6 32.\text{\textdialect{h}}4 \text{\textdialect{c}}6 33.\text{\textdialect{d}}4 \text{\textdialect{d}}5 34.\text{\textdialect{g}}4+ \text{\textdialect{g}}6 35.\text{\textdialect{h}}5+! and Black resigned. Peter decided not to prolong the purposeless resistance in an endgame with two pawns down after the practically forced line: 35...\text{\textdialect{x}}h5 36.\text{\textdialect{x}}g7 \text{\textdialect{e}}g8 37.\text{\textdialect{x}}g8 \text{\textdialect{e}}g8 38.\text{\textdialect{x}}c6 \text{\textdialect{x}}g4 (or 38...\text{\textdialect{b}}xc6 39.\text{\textdialect{e}}e5+; 38...\text{\textdialect{x}}g4 39.\text{\textdialect{x}}b7+-) 39.\text{\textdialect{x}}b7+-

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Dreev – Khalifman  
President’s Cup, Elista 1998

This game was played in the semi-final of the President’s Cup. The first game ended in a draw. The winner of the second game would qualify for the Final.

1.d4 \text{\textdialect{f}}6 2.c4 g6 3.\text{\textdialect{c}}3 d5 4.\text{\textdialect{f}}3 \text{\textdialect{g}}7 5.\text{\textdialect{f}}4 0–0 6.\text{\textdialect{e}}1 \text{\textcia}{xc}4 7.e4 c5 8.\text{\textcia}{xc}5 \text{\textdialect{a}}5 9.e5 \text{\textdialect{d}}8

This is the official theory. In fact, it is stronger for Black to play as V.Zvjaginsev did against me some time later (Dreev – Zvjaginsev, Essen 2000): 9...\text{\textdialect{h}}5. After: 10.\text{\textdialect{e}}3 \text{\textdialect{d}}8 11.\text{\textdialect{d}}d2 \text{\textdialect{e}}x\text{\textcia}{c}5 12.\text{\textbia}{xc}4 \text{\textdialect{c}}6 13.\text{\textdialect{b}}3 e6 14.\text{\textdialect{f}}3 \text{\textdialect{f}}4 15.0–0 \text{\textdialect{e}}x\text{\textcia}{c}3 16.f\text{\textcia}{x}3 \text{\textdialect{e}}c5 17.\text{\textdialect{e}}e4 \text{\textdialect{e}}7 18.g4, we agreed to a draw.

10.\text{\textdialect{d}}2 \text{\textdialect{g}}4 11.\text{\textdialect{xc}}4 \text{\textdialect{c}}6 12.\text{\textdialect{b}}5 \text{\textcia}{xd}2 13.\text{\textdialect{w}}xd2 \text{\textdialect{w}}xd2+

(diagram)

14.\text{\textdialect{xd}}2!N

In the game van Wely – Khalifman, Ter Apel 1993, following: 14.\text{\textdialect{xd}}2 \text{\textdialect{g}}5 15.0–0 \text{\textdialect{f}}5 16.\text{\textdialect{cd}}1 \text{\textdialect{c}}2 17.\text{\textdialect{c}}1 \text{\textdialect{f}}5 18.\text{\textdialect{cd}}1 \text{\textdialect{c}}2, the opponents shared the point. The idea behind White’s move 14 is that now it does not work for Black to play: 14...\text{\textdialect{xf}}2 15.\text{\textdialect{hf}}1 \text{\textdialect{g}}4, because of: 16.\text{\textdialect{c}}7 \text{\textdialect{b}}8 17.e6 with an edge for White and the routine line: 14...\text{\textdialect{h}}6+ 15.\text{\textdialect{e}}2 \text{\textdialect{xc}}1 16.\text{\textdialect{xc}}1 \text{\textdialect{g}}xe5 17.\text{\textdialect{xe}}5 \text{\textdialect{xe}}5 18.\text{\textdialect{d}}5 is obviously in favour of White. The move that Black played in the game (14...\text{\textdialect{ge}}5) has a quite essential drawback. It enables White to trade the knights and that is clearly in his favour, because of his extra exchange.

14...\text{\textdialect{g}}xe5 15.\text{\textdialect{xe}}5 \text{\textdialect{xe}}5!

Back in the past, when I found the move 14.\text{\textdialect{xd}}2 – that was about a year before this game – I and my coach A.Filipenko analyzed mostly 15...\text{\textdialect{xe}}5. Before this game however, we decided to refresh our analysis and we paid due attention to the move 15...\text{\textdialect{xe}}5 as well.

(diagram)

16.\text{\textdialect{e}}3!

That is the only move for White; otherwise he would not achieve much!

16...\text{\textdialect{f}}5

Black complies with his fate. In
is which White is better indeed, but the material is still equal. That game however, confirmed the old rule that “All rook and pawn endgames are a draw...” (Z.Tarrasch)!! Meanwhile, after the cold-blooded move 31...e4! Black (as A.Khalifman said after the game too...) would have hardly managed to survive...

31...hxh6 32.hxh6 gxh3 33.
Exh3 gxg6 34.exh4 fxg5 35.f4 xc8
36.f4 d8+ 37.0-0 c8 38.0-0
gd8+ 39.c3 xe8

Or 39...d1 40.h4+ e6 41.e4+ 
ed6 42.e4++; 41...h6 42.e2!

40.b4 e5 41.e5+ d6 42.e5
f6 43.ea5

43...xa8

That is the best move for Black.

44.0-0 e5+ 45.e4 e6 46.
xa6 f5+ 47.e3 d6 48.a3 Eh8!
49.xa7

Or 49.b5!? ec8!

49...h1 50.a8 b1 51.d8+
xe6 52.d3 e1+ 53.d2 a1 54.
e2 d2+ 55.e3 a1 56.b3 d6
57.f4 a2 58.c2+ d6 59.f3
a1 60.e3+ f6 61.c3 e5 62.
ec5+ d6 63.c3

I had already dissipated the lion's share of my advantage, but still I in-
tended to play some more... Still, my opponent A. Khalifman was on the alert and he pointed out that after the move 63...\(c_8\)e5, the position had been repeated for the third time... Draw. In the additional games, with a rapid time-control, Alexander made a draw with Black (and that again in a slightly worse rook and pawn endgame, by a triple repetition) and then he beat me with White to reach the final. There he encountered Vassily Ivanchuk who won that match and won the tournament as well...

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D20

Dreev – Rublevsky

President’s Cup, Elista 1998

This game was played in the President’s Cup too. Meanwhile, in Elista preparations for the World Chess Olympiad were running at full swing. City-Chess (consisting of cottages for the teams and the players and playing – halls) was being built. The Casino had already been opened and everything was done so that the chess-players could enjoy losing their money, because on the casino tokens, besides the sum in US dollars, you could also see a chess-piece.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 e5 4.\(\text{\textit{f}}_3\)

exd4 5.\(\text{\textit{x}}_c4\) \(\text{\textit{c}}_6\)

Sergey prefers recently the variation with 5...\(\text{\textit{b}}_4+\) for Black.

6.0–0 \(\text{\textit{e}}_6\) 7.\(\text{\textit{x}}_e6\) \(\text{\textit{f}}_6\) 8.\(\text{\textit{w}}_b3\)

\(\text{\textit{d}}_7\) 9.\(\text{\textit{w}}_b7\) \(\text{\textit{b}}_8\) 10.\(\text{\textit{w}}_a6\) \(\text{\textit{d}}_6\) 11.\(\text{\textit{d}}_d2\) \(\text{\textit{f}}_6\) 12.\(\text{\textit{d}}_3\) 0–0 13.\(\text{\textit{a}}_3\)

My coach A. Filipenko and I were preparing for a long time an improvement for White in this line and we thought that we had found the right path...

13...\(\text{\textit{a}}_5\)

In the first game of our match Sergey replied here with: 13...\(\text{\textit{g}}_4\) and after 14.b3 \(\text{\textit{c}}_e5\) 15.\(\text{\textit{x}}_e5\), he continued with 15...\(\text{\textit{x}}_e5\); following 16.g3 \(\text{\textit{f}}_7\)

17.f4 \(\text{\textit{e}}_3\) 18.\(\text{\textit{c}}_4+\) \(\text{\textit{c}}_4\) 19.\(\text{\textit{w}}_c4\) (or 19.bxc4?! \(\text{\textit{d}}_6\) 20.\(\text{\textit{w}}_d4\) \(\text{\textit{b}}_d8\) 21.e5 \(\text{\textit{a}}_a3\) 22.\(\text{\textit{w}}_a7\) 19...\(\text{\textit{d}}_6\) 20.e5 \(\text{\textit{e}}_7\)

21.b4± I obtained some advantage (Dreev – Rublevsky, Elista 1998). It is therefore understandable why he avoids the move 13...\(\text{\textit{g}}_4\) in this game and he goes for 13...\(\text{\textit{a}}_5\).

After some time, Sergey found an excellent counter measure against White’s prophylactic plan, whose main idea is to restrict maximally Black’s active possibilities connected with some knight-maneuvers and then to exploit the advantages of White’s position – 15...\(\text{\textit{g}}_5\)! (This is a very important novelty!) 16.\(\text{\textit{w}}_d4\) \(\text{\textit{g}}_4\) 17.e5 (or 17.g3 \(\text{\textit{a}}_xh2\) 18.e5 \(\text{\textit{a}}_xh1\) 19.\(\text{\textit{g}}_xh1\) \(\text{\textit{x}}_c3\) 20.\(\text{\textit{x}}_d6\) \(\text{\textit{x}}_d6\) 21.\(\text{\textit{x}}_f4\) 18...\(\text{\textit{b}}_5\) 19.\(\text{\textit{x}}_xh2\)

\(\text{\textit{c}}_5\)--+; 19.\(\text{\textit{x}}_d6\) \(\text{\textit{w}}_f1+\) 20.\(\text{\textit{f}}_3+\) \(\text{\textit{g}}_2\) \(\text{\textit{x}}_d4\) 22.\(\text{\textit{d}}_c7\) \(\text{\textit{x}}_b3\) 23.\(\text{\textit{f}}_4;\)

22...\(\text{\textit{b}}_7\) 23.\(\text{\textit{f}}_4\); 17...\(\text{\textit{e}}_7! 18.\(\text{\textit{d}}_3\) \(\text{\textit{f}}_2\)
and Black has the advantage) 17... $\text{\&}xe5 18.\text{\&}b2 \text{\&}b5! 19.\text{\&}c4 (19.\text{\&}c3 \text{\&}d5 20.\text{\&}xa7 \text{\&}c6 21.\text{\&}e4 \text{\&}d3 22.\text{\&}xe5 \text{\&}a8 23.\text{\&}xd6 \text{\&}xa7 24.\text{\&}c8 \text{\&}c5; 19.\text{\&}ad1 \text{\&}d5 20.\text{\&}xa7 \text{\&}g4--+) 19...\text{\&}d5 20.\text{\&}e4 (20.\text{\&}h4 \text{\&}d3 21.\text{\&}c3 \text{\&}f4 22.\text{\&}h3 \text{\&}c5; 20.\text{\&}c3 \text{\&}d3 21.\text{\&}xd6 cxd6) 20...\text{\&}d3 21.\text{\&}xd6 (21.\text{\&}e2? \text{\&}c5 22.\text{\&}e3 \text{\&}xf2!; 23.\text{\&}xd5 \text{\&}xd5; 23.\text{\&}xf2 \text{\&}xe3 24.\text{\&}xe3 \text{\&}d1--) 21...\text{\&}xd6 (21...cxd6!? 22.\text{\&}c3 \text{\&}c8) 22.\text{\&}c3 \text{\&}b6 23.\text{\&}h4 \text{\&}f4! 24.g4 (24.\text{\&}ae1 \text{\&}xb3 25.\text{\&}g3 \text{\&}f7) 24...\text{\&}f7 25.\text{\&}ad1? (25.\text{\&}ae1 \text{\&}b5! (or 25...\text{\&}xb3 26.\text{\&}b1 \text{\&}xc3 27.\text{\&}b8+ \text{\&}f8 28.\text{\&}xf8+ \text{\&}xf8 29.\text{\&}f4+) 26.a4 \text{\&}c5) 25...h5!+ 26.\text{\&}f3 \text{\&}h3+! Galliamova – Rublevsky, St Petersburg 1998.

14.b3 \text{\&}h8

Here already, the move 14...\text{\&}g4 is evidently weaker than on the previous move. The inclusion of the moves b2-b3 and a7-a5 is clearly in favour of White.

15.h3

Or 15.\text{\&}c4?! \text{\&}g4 16.h3 \text{\&}xf3 17.gxf3 \text{\&}ge5 18.\text{\&}xe5 \text{\&}xe5 19.\text{\&}d1 \text{\&}g6. 15...\text{\&}h5 16.\text{\&}c4 \text{\&}f4

Or 16...\text{\&}f4 17.\text{\&}xf4 \text{\&}xf4 18.e5.

17.g3 \text{\&}xc1 18.\text{\&}axc1

Black's offensive has reached its dead end and he has no active possibilities for an effective counterplay. I managed to exploit the advantages of my position rather quickly.

18...e5

Or 18...\text{\&}b5 19.e5 \text{\&}fb8 20.\text{\&}e4 \text{\&}d5 21.\text{\&}g4 g6 22.\text{\&}fd1.

19.\text{\&}g2

It was also possible for me to follow with: 19.\text{\&}xe5 \text{\&}xe5 20.\text{\&}xe5 \text{\&}xh3 21.\text{\&}xc7 \text{\&}e6 22.\text{\&}xd4, but I did not wish to enter forced lines, because White's position was extremely good, no matter what!

19...\text{\&}e6 20.\text{\&}cd2!

This is an important part of my plan: the knight retreats temporarily consolidating the position in the process and the rooks are exerting pressure on the c-file.

20...\text{\&}b6 21.\text{\&}c5 \text{\&}fb8 22.\text{\&}fc1 \text{\&}g6 23.\text{\&}h2 \text{\&}f8 24.\text{\&}1c2

This is a simple prophylactic – I am protecting the f2-square and Black is helpless against the triumphant march of White's knight to the c4-square.

24...h6

Or 24...\text{\&}d6 25.\text{\&}c4.

25.\text{\&}c4 \text{\&}bb8 26.\text{\&}fxe5 \text{\&}xe5 27.\text{\&}xe5 \text{\&}d6 28.\text{\&}d5 \text{\&}e6 29.\text{\&}d7 \text{\&}f6 30.\text{\&}xf8 \text{\&}xf8 31.\text{\&}xd4 \text{\&}e5 32.\text{\&}g2 1–0
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Dreev – Sveshnikov
51st Russia Ch (swiss)
St Petersburg 1998

This is a game from the fourth round of the Championship of Russia and in that year it was also a Zonal qualification tournament for the World Championship. I made 7 points out of 11 and I tied for 5th-11th places, half a point behind the winners – P. Svidler, K.Sakaev, S.Shipov and A.Morozевич. The final standing was decided only after the finish of all the games and the calculation of the Bucholz coefficient when the gold medal and the title Champion of Russia was awarded to Alexander Morozevich.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.d3 c6
Naturally, this is not the first time that I play against Evgenij Sveshnikov and he used to try every time with his black pieces to profit from the fact that I had been reluctant to enter the Slav Gambit. Here, in this game, I had prepared the most principled line.

4.e4 dxe4 5.xe4 b5 6.xd2

\[\text{Diagram:}\]

8...c5!?

Strangely enough, E.Sveshnikov has preferred this strange looking move numerous times. Black’s main defensive line here is – 8...\(a6.\)

9.xc5 \(d7\) 10.xd6!

In the game M.Sorokin – Sveshnikov, Elista 1996, there followed: 10.xd4 \(c5\) 11.xc5 b6 12.xa3 \(b7\) 13.xf3 \(e7\) 14.xd1 \(c6\) 15.xd2 \(e5\) 16.xf3 \(e4\) 17.xd2 \(f4\) 18.xf3 Draw.

10...\(w2\) 11.xf3 \(g5\) 12.h4

I had “borrowed” that idea during my home preparation from the Dutch grandmaster J.Piket. In the game Piket – van Der Werf, Netherlands 1998, there followed: 12...\(w5\) 13.xb4 \(w5\) 14.xb3 \(g6\) 15.0-0-0 \(e5\) 16.xc3 \(f3\) 17.xf3 \(d7\) 18.xd4 \(f2\) 19.xh2 \(e4\) 20.xd3 \(f2\) 21.h2 \(f2\) 22.xg3 \(d1\) 23.xg7 1-0.

E.Sveshnikov chose another way:

12...\(w6\) 13.xb3 \(e7\) 14.xe2

Or 14.xb7? \(b7\) 15.xb7 \(d8\).

14...0-0 15.xg3 \(e5\) 16.xe4 \(c6\)?

This move loses by force. It would have been correct for Black to have defended with: 16...\(e8\) and I had planned to counter that with 17.0-0-0 and here it would have been bad for Black to play 17...\(f5\), because of: 18.xf5! ef
19.\textit{\texttt{He1}} f4 20.\textit{\texttt{De4}} \textit{\texttt{Wf5}} 21.\textit{\texttt{Le5}}? and White wins.

\textbf{17.\textit{\texttt{Lxc6! bxc6}}}  
Black's relatively best chance is 17...\textit{\texttt{Lxc6}}.

\textit{\texttt{18.Lh5 Wf5}} 19.\textit{\texttt{Le7 Lc8}}  
Or 19...\textit{\texttt{We4}} 20.\textit{\texttt{Dd2}}.

20.\textit{\texttt{Df6! gxf6}} 21.\textit{\texttt{Eg1 Bh8}} 22.\textit{\texttt{O-O-O La6}}

E. Sveshnikov admitted after the game that he had been considering that position as quite acceptable for Black. He had overlooked the following powerful resource for White, though...:

\textit{\texttt{23.Le3! Be7}}

Black cannot save the day after: 23...\textit{\texttt{Eg8}} 24.\textit{\texttt{Wh6 Eg6}} 25.\textit{\texttt{Lxg6 fxg6}} 26.\textit{\texttt{Ed7}}.

\textit{\texttt{24.Lh6 Wg6}} 25.\textit{\texttt{Lxg6 fxg6}} 26.\textit{\texttt{h5 e5}}

Or 26...\textit{\texttt{Lc4}} 27.\textit{\texttt{Lf4!}}

\textbf{27.b3}

The rest requires no comments at all.

27...\textit{\texttt{Eg7}} 28.\textit{\texttt{Ed6 Laag8}} 29.\textit{\texttt{Ec6}} 30.\textit{\texttt{Ec8}} gh 31.\textit{\texttt{Wh5 Eg5}} 32.\textit{\texttt{Wf7}} 33.\textit{\texttt{Lg5 Eg5}} 34.\textit{\texttt{Wh6 Hg7}} 35.\textit{\texttt{c5 Lc8}} 36.\textit{\texttt{Wh5 Ld7}} 37.\textit{\texttt{Blb2}} 1–0

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\textbf{Balashov - Dreev}

Russian Cup (final), Samara 1998

\textit{This game was played in the round-robin tournament of the final for the Russian Cup. It coincided with the famous scandal of the year 1998 zoda. The tournament made history with the fact that its prize fund diminished somehow in a magic way more than fourfold...}

1.\textit{\texttt{Cc4}} 2.\textit{\texttt{C4}} 3.\textit{\texttt{Exd5 Lf6}} 4.\textit{\texttt{Cc3 cxd5}} 5.\textit{\texttt{Cc5}} 6.\textit{\texttt{Lc3 Lh6}}

8.\textit{\texttt{D4}}

White has also tried here the move 8.\textit{\texttt{h4}}, with which he attempts to punish Black immediately for his last move. This does not bring White anything promising, as the game A. Sokolov
Karpov showed and it was played as early as in the year 1987 in Linares. It followed with 8...g7 (That is Black’s most principled answer, although he can try also 8...h6.) 9.h5 c6 10.b1 c7 11.a3 f5 12.b5 a6 13.c5 d7 14.b3 0–0 15.hg hg 16.c4 f6 17.d4 b5 18.d5 a5 19.d1 b7 and Black was better at the end.

8...g7 9.d3 c6 10.0–0 0–0 11.e4

This is a new idea, with the intention to prevent Black’s plan with b7–b6. White plays more often here 11..e1 and Black can counter that with 11...b6, or with 11...g4.

11...d7

Now, Black changes his plan. I considered also the move 11..c7, but I did not like the fact that I would not be able to play 12...b6 on my next move, because of 13.d5 a5 14.d6.

12.e1 c8 13.g5 e8

14.c1

White’s most logical reaction here seemed to be: 14.d5 a5 15.d6 and I had intended to counter that with: 15...f6 16.xf6 (or 16.de a7 and Black is better) 16...ef. I believed that position to be better for Black as well.

14...a5 15.d3

That is an imprecision. It deserved attention for White to play 15..e2.

15..c4 16..b3?!

Or 16..e2 d6.

Possibly, White had to consider the line: 16..c4 c4 17..e5 xe5 18.de (but not 18..e5? f6 19..b3 b5) and the game could have ended in a draw after all. Well, I had in mind the move 17..c7 too, with somewhat better chances for Black...

16..b5 17..c4 c4 18..d2

It is quite dubious for White to follow with: 18..a3?! a4 19..c5 f6.

It is extremely risky for him to play: 18..e5 e5 19.de (or 19..e5 f6) 19...g4!

18..a4!

That move is much stronger than 18..c7.

19..e4 c6 20..cd1?

This is a mistake for White in a difficult position for him. After 20..c5, Black plays 20...c4, with the idea to follow with d8 – d5.

20...d5! 21..b1

Now, it becomes clear that White cannot continue with 21..b5, due to 21..a5, followed by d5xe4 – and he loses his bishop on g5.

21..a2 22..c5 a6
Black's position is winning, but it still requires some precision. I was in a time-pressure, so I was trying to play the most reliable moves possible.

23.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{d3}}} \textit{\texttt{a4}} 24.\textit{\texttt{b4}} \textit{\texttt{b7}} 25.\textit{\texttt{f3}} \textit{\texttt{wc7}} 26.\textit{\texttt{wb3}} e6 27.\textit{\texttt{a1}} \textit{\texttt{ec8}} 28.\textit{\texttt{d2}} \textit{\texttt{da1}} 29.\textit{\texttt{a1 wd6}}

It was even stronger for Black to have played 29...\textit{\texttt{wb6}}.

30.\textit{\texttt{e3e531.\texttt{ed1ed32.\texttt{ed4}}}} \textit{\texttt{ed4}} 33.\textit{\texttt{ed4}} \textit{\texttt{wc5}} 34.\textit{\texttt{ed2}} \textit{\texttt{xa2}} 35.\textit{\texttt{ed1a5}} 36.\textit{\texttt{wd2}} \textit{\texttt{gb7}} 37.\textit{\texttt{ac1}} \textit{\texttt{ad5!}} 38.\textit{\texttt{dd3 wd6}} 39.\textit{\texttt{h4 h5}} 40.\textit{\texttt{eh2}} \textit{\texttt{ac4}}

I had managed somehow not to spoil anything in the time-trouble and here, my position was already totally winning, thanks to the a-pawn. There still followed:

41.\textit{\texttt{df4}} a4 42.\textit{\texttt{wf2}}. White sets up his last trap, as he is threatening \textit{\texttt{df4xh5}}. 42...\textit{\texttt{wf6}} 0–1

13...\textit{\texttt{wc6!}}\texttt{?N}

I used to play before the moves 13...0–0–0 and 13...\textit{\texttt{ed6}} in this position.

The idea behind 13...\textit{\texttt{wc6}} is that Black is preparing \textit{\texttt{ec7}}; meanwhile he prevents the move \textit{\texttt{e4-5}}, because in case of 14.e5, he captures the pawn 14...\textit{\texttt{dxe5}} and 15.\textit{\texttt{dxe5}} is impossible due to 15...\textit{\texttt{wgx2}} – checkmate!

J.Timman responded with:

14.\textit{\texttt{f4!}}?

I have to mention that even after
this game, my novelty – 13...\texttt{wc6} was
played only very seldom in tourna-
ment practice. For example M.
Sadler
a bit later in the same year at the tour-
ament in Hastings played otherwise
– 14.\texttt{we2} and after: 14...\texttt{ad6} 15.\texttt{dg5}
\texttt{ae5} 16.\texttt{f4} \texttt{dd4+} 17.\texttt{dh1} e5 18.a4 \texttt{xc3}
19.axb5 axb5 20.\texttt{xa8}+ \texttt{xaa8} 21.bxc3
0–0 22.\texttt{c4} b4 23.\texttt{eb2} he obtained a
slightly better position. Black had to
continue however with 14...\texttt{xe7} with
an unclear game, because he should
not be afraid of 15.e5 in view of 15...
\texttt{d5} 16.\texttt{e4} \texttt{xc3}...

K.Shashikiran in his game against
C.Sandipan (Chalapathi 2000) tried
the move 14.\texttt{e1}. Black answered with:
14...\texttt{d8} 15.\texttt{we2} \texttt{d6} 16.\texttt{g5} \texttt{b8}. He
could have also played 14...\texttt{d6} with
the idea to counter 15.\texttt{g5} with 15...
\texttt{c7}!? 16.\texttt{f4} 0–0.

14...\texttt{d8}!

It is rather dubious for Black to follow
with 14...\texttt{e7}?! 15.e5! \texttt{d5}
16.\texttt{e4}.

15.\texttt{we2} \texttt{e7}

16.\texttt{ad1}

The specialists of that variation of
the Meran system for White tried
hard to find an improvement. Joel
Lautier managed to do that five years
later after that game. Playing against
L.Fressinet (Enghien les Bains 2003),
Lautier continued with 16.e5!. After:
16...\texttt{d5}?! 17.\texttt{xd5} \texttt{xd5} 18.\texttt{ff1} \texttt{xc6}
19.\texttt{g5}! \texttt{b6} (or 19...\texttt{xg5} 20.\texttt{ed6}!
\texttt{wc8} 21.\texttt{xg5} with an advantage for
White) 20.\texttt{xd8}+ \texttt{xd8} 21.\texttt{xd8} \texttt{xd8}
22.\texttt{ed1+} \texttt{d5} 23.\texttt{g5} \texttt{c7} 24.\texttt{ag4} \texttt{b6}
25.\texttt{xh7} and White was clearly bet-
ter. But as grandmaster Lutz rec-
commended later, Black had better play:
16...\texttt{h5}?! and if 17.\texttt{d2}?! (or 17.\texttt{e3}
0–0 18.\texttt{e4} \texttt{wb6}), then 17...0–0 18.
\texttt{e4} \texttt{b6} (or 18...\texttt{c7} 19.\texttt{g5} \texttt{xe4}
20.\texttt{cxe4} \texttt{xg5} 21.\texttt{xg5} \texttt{d4} 22.\texttt{wb3}
with an advantage for White) 19.\texttt{g5}
\texttt{xe4} 20.\texttt{xe4} \texttt{g6} and White is prob-
ably only slightly better.

16...0–0 17.\texttt{e1}
Or 17.e5 \texttt{h5}.

17...\texttt{h5} 18.\texttt{c1}

18...\texttt{wb6}!

It is bad for Black to play 18...\texttt{f4}?
19.\texttt{xf4} \texttt{xf4} 20.\texttt{d5}!; as well as 18...
\texttt{c7}.

19.\texttt{xd7}
If 19.g3, then 19...\texttt{hf6} and Black is
already slightly better.

19...\texttt{xd7} 20.\texttt{e5} \texttt{f6} 21.\texttt{xd7}
\texttt{xc7} 22.\texttt{e5} \texttt{c4} 23.\texttt{e3} \texttt{c6} 24.\texttt{e4}
\texttt{c8}
In case of 24...c7?, White counters with 25.g4!

25.b2 c6 26.e4 c8 27. xc2

Here, after c7, the position would have been repeated for the third time with a draw.

27...xc5

This move leads to a slight edge for Black.

![Chessboard Diagram]

After 32.xf4, I was planning to capture on f2 – 32...xd2!++

White would not have solved his problems with: 32.h4 32...xd4 33.xd4 xf3! 34.gxf3 (or 34.xd3 cxd3 35.gxf3 c2) 34...xf4.

32...xd3?

Naturally, I was also considering capturing with the pawn – 32...cxd3. After 33.xc1, I managed to see only: 33...xd4 34.xc8 xc8 35.g4!, but I failed to notice the move 33...d2, which would have consolidated my advantage after: 34.xd2 xd7 35.xc5 xd4 36.e3xb2.

Accordingly, being in a time-trouble and having overlooked 32...cxd3!, I dissipated my advantage. Timman defended tenaciously:

33.g4 e8 34.h4

But not 34.e6?? xf8.

34...b7

Planning to follow with 35..e4.

35.b3! f8 36.h5 f7 37.d2 a5

![Chessboard Diagram]

Here, I had only several seconds left on the clock and I decided to offer a draw, which was accepted by Timman. You should not forget that game was played in an Olympiad and after an eventual mistake in the last few
moves of the time-control, not to even speak about the possible loss on time; that would have ended in a disaster for the Russian team. After for example: 38.bxc4 dxc4 39...c6 d5 40.axa5 c7 41.b3 xex5, Black is naturally slightly better, but there is of course a lot of fight left.

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Sasikiran – Dreev
Linares (open) 1999

The following game was not played in the famous super-tournament, but in an ordinary Swiss open (although quite strong, though...). I was feeling rather comfortably and I took the first place with +7...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3...c3 d6 4.e3 e6 5.d3 d7 6.d3 dxc4 7.xc4 b5 8...d3 b7 9.e4 b4 10.a4 c5 11.e5 d5 12.xc5

The other possibility for White is - 12.0-0 cxd4.

12...xc5 13.xc5 xc5 14.0-0 h6 15...d2

I had played that position before. The first time it was against R.Dautov (Tbilisi 1989) and I had fallen into a trap after: 15...c3 16...c2 d5 17.f3 d8 18.e1 d4 (that was the only move) and fortunately Black had saved his piece, but after 19.d2, I had serious problems to worry about. Later, in the same year 1989 in Odessa, in my game against V.Tukmakov, I played: 15...0-0 16.e4 d4 17.d6 c6 18.h7+ xh7 19.xd4 f6 and my position was quite acceptable. In the year 1994, while I was preparing for my game against V.Epishin, I found out that Black had an excellent move here:

15...c7!

This resource seems to be good enough to equalize.

16.e1 d8 17.e4 e7 18.gg3

18...g6!

That is a standard plan for Black in this variation. He cannot castle, so he solves the problem with his king, by transferring it to the g7-square.

19...d2

In case White had played at first 19.e2 f8 and only then 20.d2, he would not have allowed the line ...d5-c3, which would have led to a very unclear position.

19...f8

I was also considering the move
19...\texttt{c3}!?. Here, it is bad for White to play 20.\texttt{wc2}?, because of 20...\texttt{d7} 21.\texttt{e3}. Now, Black has the pleasant choice between: 21.\texttt{c5}! 22.\texttt{xc3} \texttt{xc3}! 23.\texttt{xc3} \texttt{xe3} 24.\texttt{xe3} \texttt{xd3}, with the idea: 25.\texttt{b4} \texttt{d5} 26.\texttt{f3} \texttt{xe5} and the move 21...\texttt{c6}!?, since White loses immediately after: 22.\texttt{xf1} \texttt{e2}+, or 22.\texttt{f3} \texttt{e2}!+, while after the only possible answer – 22.\texttt{f3}, Black has plenty of attractive possibilities. Still, it is quite sufficient to look at the move 22...\texttt{d5} to understand that Black is clearly better. In fact, the right continuation for White is – 20.\texttt{xc3}! \texttt{xc3} 21.\texttt{wc2} and the position remains unclear and double-edged. Therefore, I chose the move 19...\texttt{f8}.

20.\texttt{e2} \texttt{g7} 21.\texttt{ac1} \texttt{b6} 22.\texttt{ed1}

Sashikiran is playing a new move here. The abovementioned game against V.Epishin, followed with: 22.\texttt{c4} \texttt{d4} 23.\texttt{b3} \texttt{h5} 24.\texttt{ed1} \texttt{b6} Draw.

The position in the game is quite amazing with the fact that on the board we are having something like a mutual zugzwang. Each side has problems finding moves, which would not compromise his position... Black cannot play, for example: 22...\texttt{d4}?, because of 23.\texttt{c4}, while in case of 22...\texttt{d7}, he must consider 23.\texttt{b5}. Fortunately for me, my a-pawn had no idea about all that, so I had a useful move, that did not spoil anything...:

22...\texttt{a5}! 23.\texttt{h3}

White’s h-pawn tried to imitate its counterpart...

Pay attention to the fact that neither here, nor on the previous move, White could have played: 23.\texttt{e4}?, due to 23...\texttt{d4}; or 23.\texttt{c4}?, because of 23...\texttt{a6}.

23...\texttt{a4} 24.\texttt{b5}?

White was so happy with the possibility to play something active, but this aggression led to his demise. It is of course quite difficult to recommend moves like 24.\texttt{h1}, but Black will have problems to create anything sensible, for example after: 24...\texttt{h5}, White plays +25.\texttt{e4}, while in case of 24...\texttt{d7} – 25.\texttt{b5}. White’s best bet was to continue waiting with the move – 24.\texttt{c4}...

24...\texttt{g5}!

White can hardly save the game after that move by Black.

25.\texttt{xa4}

White loses following: 25.\texttt{xg5}
hgx5 26.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xa4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{f4}} 27.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e3}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{a6}} 28.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xd8}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xd8}} 29.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b3}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{eg2}} 30.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{a8}}--

25...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{df4}}! 26.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf4}}

If 26.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{g4}}, then 26...\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{d3}}.

26...\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xf4}}

27.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Ec4}}

I had relied here only on the move 27.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{g4}}, after which Black could have played simply 27...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e5}} with a tremendous advantage, although it was also possible to continue with: 27...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc1}}!, without being afraid of the line: 28.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Nh5}}+ \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{f8}} 29.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb4}}+ \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb4}} 30.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xd8}}+ \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e7}} 31.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d7}}+ \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e8}}! and Black was winning.

27...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc3}} 28.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Ag4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{a5}} 29.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xd8}}

\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xd8}} 30.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b5}}

Here, I could have won quite simply with the move 30...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d5}}--+, but what I played in the game proved to be quite sufficient too:

30...\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb5}}--+ 31.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb5}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d1}}+ 32.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f1}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{h2}}+ 33.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{hxh2}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{xf1}} 34.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb4}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{d5}} 0--1

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\textbf{D20}

\textbf{Dreev - Svetushkin}

Linares (open) 1999

1.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{d5}} 2.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c4}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{dxg4}} 3.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{e5}} 4.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f3}}

\textbf{exd4 5.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{c6}} 6.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{0-0}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{e6}} 7.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b5}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{c5}} 8.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{bd2}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{ge7}} 9.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g5}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{d7}} 10.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xe6}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xe6}} 11.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b3}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{d6}}}

We are playing one of the new and rather fashionable variations of the Queens Gambit Accepted. In my game with S.Rublevsky (Elista 1998) I tried here to improve White's play with the move 12.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{g4}}. The game continued with: 12...0--0 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f4}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{e5}} 14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xe5}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xe5}} 15.f4 and after: 15...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d3}}! 16.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h1}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb2}}, there arose a complex position in which Black's chances were not worse at all.

12.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f4}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xf4}} 13.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{xc5}} 0--0

Now, it is not so precise for White to play 14.g3, as it happened in the game Stoeck - Ashley, Budapest 1997, as well as in the rapid-chess game: Dreev - Svidler, Elista, 1997. Black retreated in both games -- 14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{wh6}}, overlooking the wonderful possibility to equalize outright with 14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{d6}}, following with the idea -- 15.\textcolor{blue}{\textbf{xb7}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b4}}.

14.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{c1}}

That position was played for the first time in the game Granda Zuniga - Ibragimov, New York 1997, in which Black tried: 14...\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e5}} 15.g3 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{wh6}} 16.f4 \textcolor{red}{\textbf{a6}} 17.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{e2}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{b6}} 18.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{b3}} \textcolor{blue}{\textbf{d3}} 19.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h5}} \textcolor{red}{\textbf{c6}} 20.\textcolor{red}{\textbf{f3}} and White had a great advan-
tage. In the later game on the same subject however, G.Giorgadze – Svetushkin, Ubeda 1999, White preferred 17.\&d3 and after: 17...\&xd3 18.\&xd3 \&ac8 19.\&f3 b6 20.b4 \&e6 21.\&f2, he had some compensation and he later even won the game, however I would not venture to recommend that line to you.

It deserves attention for Black to play: 14...\&fb8, as he did in the game W.Browne – Kaidanov, Denver 1998, which continued with: 15.g3 \&h6 16.f4 a6 17.\&d3 a5 and the position was quite unclear.

Black tried a novelty here in our game and I considered it as quite dubious:

14...b6?!

I answered with:

15.\&d3!

Now, things look quite grim for Black in case of: 15...\&d6 16.\&c2 \&e5 17.\&xc7 \&xc7 18.\&xc7 \&xd3 19.\&xd3 \&g6 20.f4 \&fc8 21.\&d7 \&d8 22.\&xd8 \&xd8 23.g3 \&c8 24.\&d1 and the endgame is lost for him. After 15...\&f6, White can follow with 16.f4.

15...\&xe4 16.\&e1
If 16.\&g6, then 17.\&f3.

16...\&d5 17.\&a4 \&f5?

That is what my opponent had relied on, but after:

18.\&xc6! \&xc6 19.\&xc6

it turned out that Black had to comply (and for a long time at that!) with an inferior position. Now, he cannot play: 19...\&xd3 20.\&xa8 \&d2 21.\&d1, because White remains with an extra piece. Black played instead:

19...\&ad8

but once again he was faced with great problems. Well, I needed to play very precisely in order to materialize my advantage too.

Here, for example, it would have been rather inaccurate for me to continue with 20.\&c4 (planning to advance my b-pawn). in view of 20...\&d6, followed by \&d6xc6.

20.\&b5! \&f6

After the exchange of queens: 20...\&xb5 21.\&xb5 \&d6 22.\&e7 c6 23.\&c4, I think I should win this position.

21.b4 \&d6 22.\&c1 \&e6 23.\&c4 a5!

Otherwise, after the trade of queens, (Black’s position might be even more difficult with queens present on the board.) Black can remain with a weak pawn on a7 and that spells rather quick demise for him.
24. b5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}fd8 25. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}xe6

I was in some time-pressure here, so I decided to exchange queens, after all. Meanwhile, I had foreseen the possibility to go with my king to the d2-square.

25...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}xe6 26. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f1 g6 27. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}f3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e7
28. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}e2! \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7 29. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{Q}}}e1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}d5 30. a4
\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}d6 31. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}d2

31...h6

Suppose I am not going to criticize Black's move g7-g6, but Black's last move is obviously unnecessary, because his pawn-structure on the kingside becomes much more vulnerable after it. He had better not push any more pawns (They only go forward, you know that, don't you...?) and maneuver with his rook along the d-file. My task to press my advantage home would have been much harder in that case.

32. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}f3 g5

Black is persistent with his faulty strategy.

33. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}h5 f5 34. g3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}f6

If 34...g4, then White plays 35.h3 gxh3 36. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f3! and his advantage is decisive.

35. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7

I only need to complete my plan in order to win the game and it consists of two parts. The first one - White needs to deploy his pieces on their ideal squares (The bishop must be placed on d3 and the knight on the e5-square.). The second part of the plan requires from White to create an additional weakness in Black's camp (there is one - the pawn on c7...). After that explanation I hope you will understand much easier what is going on in the next few moves.

36. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{R}}}d1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e7 37. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}c4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7 38. f4
\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e7 39. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7 40. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}c1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e7 41. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}d1
\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}h7 42. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7

43. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e1!

This is one of the most difficult moves in our game. White's king had just been centralized a short while ago. Now however, the situation has changed. The knight, as I told you already, must go to the e5-square. If my opponent after that decides to capture g5xf4, then I will have to take with the pawn. Accordingly, my king must control some squares along the g-file. That is exactly the reason I am sending it back to the kingside.

43...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e7 44. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7 45. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}c4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f7
46. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}f6 47. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}d3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}g7 48. \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}c1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{B}}}e7
49. h4!
Now, White's pieces are perfectly placed. The first part of the plan has been fulfilled. In fact Black "helped" in the accomplishment of the second part, because he created another weakness on f5 himself. White's last move is an attempt to clarify finally the situation on the kingside.

49...g4

I was maneuvering with my rook in order to wait for the opportune moment to play $\mathcal{e}e5-g6$.

57...$\mathcal{e}d6$ 58.$\mathcal{c}g6$

After: 58...$\mathcal{e}e3$ 59.$\mathcal{a}xc7$ $\mathcal{a}xg3$ 60.$\mathcal{a}c4$, White wins, because of the checkmating threat.

58...$\mathcal{a}d7$ 59.$\mathcal{a}h4!$ $\mathcal{e}d5$ 60.$\mathcal{d}xf5$

This is the simplest...

60...$\mathcal{a}xf5$ 61.$\mathcal{a}c6$ $\mathcal{a}d6$ 62.$\mathcal{a}xd6$ $\mathcal{c}xd6$ 63.$\mathcal{a}xf5$ $\mathcal{a}xf5$ 64.$\mathcal{a}d3$

Black resigned. The king and pawn endgame is just lost for him.

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Dreev – Grischuk
Ubeda (open) 1999

Black will have to play that move sooner, or later. Here, I was considering the immediate move 50.h5, but I was afraid of the possibility – 50...$\mathcal{a}de6$, followed by an exchange sacrifice on the e5-square. White's bishop on d3 would not be protected then and Black would be able to win an additional tempo with the move $\mathcal{e}e3$.

I preferred instead

50.$\mathcal{d}e2$

– since my king could go to the centre once again.

50...$\mathcal{a}d5$ 51.$\mathcal{a}c6$ $\mathcal{a}d6$ 52.$\mathcal{a}c4$ $\mathcal{a}dd7$

It was more resilient for Black to defend with 52...h5, but even then after 53.$\mathcal{a}cl$, followed by $\mathcal{a}c4$, $\mathcal{d}d3$ and $\mathcal{b}b3$ etc. White had to win the game easily.

53.$\mathcal{d}d2$ $\mathcal{a}d6$ 54.$h5!$ $\mathcal{d}d5$ 55.$\mathcal{a}c6$ $\mathcal{a}d6$ 56.$\mathcal{a}c1$ $\mathcal{a}d5$ 57.$\mathcal{a}c4$

The following game was played in a very strong open tournament in the Spanish town of Ubeda. That tournament was played immediately after the Open in Linares and the great majority of the players had participated before that in Linares too. Some of them continued to live in the same hotel in Linares and they used to arrive to the round in Ubeda by bus. Among the strongest players who participated in Linares, V.Bologan and A.Sokolov did not take part in Ubeda. Meanwhile, V.Akopian had appeared and he became number one in rating at the tournament and he finished with 7½ points out of 10. I made 8½ points and I shared 1st-2nd place with grandmaster Konstantin Landa, who was the leader throughout the tournament. I managed to catch up with him only at the end and before the
last round my tie-break coefficient (Bucholz) was better than his. There was a mishap though, almost all of my opponents lost in the last round. Meanwhile, K. Landa was almost losing his last round game against G.Giorgadze – he had less time on the clock, a difficult position and he was against a strong opponent at that. Konstantin survived however and he won that Swiss Open event, thanks to his superior Bucholz.

This was my first encounter with Alexander Grischuk, who was only 15 years old then and his talent was just striking (I had already written about that in the media). His play at that time was very impressive indeed.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.\f3 c6 4.\e2 \d6

This is a seldom played move and as we are going to see soon it has quite serious drawbacks. My next move will emphasize them:

6.\h4
Naturaly, not 6.d2, because of 6...f5.

6...\e7 7.\g3!
After: 7.e3 \f5 8.\g3 \xg3 9.hxg3 f5, it is possible that White is still slightly better, but I wanted to obtain much more out of that position. Black's king shelter has been weakened, while the bishops will be soon exchanged.

7...c5!
In case of some calmer developments, Black's compromised pawn-structure enables White to rely on obtaining a considerable opening advantage, for example: 7...0–0 8.e3.

8.dxc5
This is the best for White. I would not have achieved anything with 8.cxd5, because of 8...cxd4. White has no advantage either after: 8.e3 cxd4 9.exd4 \bc6.

8...\xc5 9.cxd5 \xa5
Or 9...b4 10.\bd2 (10.\c3!?) 10...ed 11.e3 and White is better.

5.\g5!
In case of 5.g3, Black can enter a position from the Stonewall Dutch system with 5...f5.

5...f6
It is less precise for Black to play: 5...\e7 6.e3 f6, due to 7.\f4+.

10.\bd2
It is amazing, but that same position happened in my game with Artashes Minasian, several days earlier in another open tournament in the neighbouring Spanish town of
Linares. My opponent offered me a draw then. We had spent about an hour and fifteen minutes on the clock on seemingly simple moves. I took another 15 minutes, but I failed to find any clear way of obtaining any advantage, so I agreed to a draw, moreover that draw enabled me to preserve my leading spot in the tournament. After the game we spent a long time analyzing the following position: 10.\(\varnothing\)bd2 ed 11.\(\varnothing\)c1 \(\varnothing\)a6 12.e4! and Black has problems. Still, after the natural reaction 11...\(\varnothing\)b6 12.e4 (It is not advisable for White to try: 12.\(\varnothing\)c8 \(\varnothing\)c8 13.\(\varnothing\)c8 \(\varnothing\)d8.) 12...\(\varnothing\)bc6, Black is perfectly OK. Of course, it never entered my mind that I was going to have that same position on the board again so soon and I had not made up any decision about how White was supposed exactly to fight for the opening advantage. Still, the ideas, which we had found in our analysis with Minasian, helped me solve that problem over the board. I understood that the move 11.\(\varnothing\)c1 was unnecessary, moreover it was even harmful. Instead, it is much better for White to follow with 11.e4, as it happened in the game, emphasizing the drawbacks of Black's position.

I suspected that my young opponent, who had also played in that tournament, must have studied thoroughly the final position of our game with Minasian.

10...exd5 11.e4 \(\varnothing\)bc6
In case of: 11...dxe4 12.\(\varnothing\)xe4 \(\varnothing\)bc6 13.\(\varnothing\)c4, Black has nowhere to castle.

12.exd5 \(\varnothing\)b4 13.\(\varnothing\)c4 \(\varnothing\)d7!
After: 13...\(\varnothing\)f5 14.\(\varnothing\)b3 \(\varnothing\)d3 15.\(\varnothing\)e2 \(\varnothing\)b6, White has the powerful argu-

ment – 16.\(\varnothing\)h4.

14.\(\varnothing\)e2
If White manages to castle, Black position will become critical.

14...\(\varnothing\)c8
Here, Black seemingly considered that he had prevented White from castling.

Nevertheless I played:

15.0-0! \(\varnothing\)xf2?!

Now, Alexander had to comply unwillingly with entering the endgame after: 15...\(\varnothing\)bd5 16.\(\varnothing\)b3 \(\varnothing\)b6 17.\(\varnothing\)xc5 \(\varnothing\)xc5, but even then following 18.\(\varnothing\)b3! with the idea 18...\(\varnothing\)xb3 19.axb3 a6 20.\(\varnothing\)c4, he would have to solve plenty of problems.

16.\(\varnothing\)xf2 \(\varnothing\)xc4 17.\(\varnothing\)xc4 \(\varnothing\)d8
In case of 17...\(\varnothing\)xd5, White plays 18.\(\varnothing\)d1 and Black's queen has no good squares to retreat to.

18.\(\varnothing\)d6 \(\varnothing\)f8 19.\(\varnothing\)e5 \(\varnothing\)g8
After 19...\(\varnothing\)e8, it is possible for White to continue with: 20.\(\varnothing\)xe8 \(\varnothing\)xe8 21.d6 \(\varnothing\)ec6 22.d7 \(\varnothing\)e7 23.\(\varnothing\)d1.

20.\(\varnothing\)xb7 \(\varnothing\)c8 21.\(\varnothing\)c5 \(\varnothing\)f5 22.\(\varnothing\)c1 \(\varnothing\)bd5
(diagram)

Here, I had a choice and I took a long time to make up my mind. At first, of course I was considering to give back
This move loses immediately, but even after: 25...\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{W}$}}c8 26.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}ed7! (but not 26.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xd5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}xe5 27.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}e6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e7 28.\textit{\textcolor{purple}{$\mathcal{F}$}}c8 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\mathcal{F}}xc8 29.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xe5? \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}e3) 26...\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e7 27.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xd5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xg3 28.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}d6 (or 28...\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}d8 29.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xg8) 29.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}b7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e8 (29...\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}d8 30.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}c7 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}c6# – this is a very beautiful checkmate, indeed!) 30.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}xe8 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{F}$}}xe8 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\mathcal{F}}hxg3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}e2 32.b3 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xa2 33.g4! White should gradually win.

26.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xa8 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}e2 27.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}f2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xc1 28.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}xd5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}xe5 29.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}d7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e7 30.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xg8 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}d7 31.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}e3 1–0

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Tiviakov – Dreev
Ubeda (open) 1999

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}d2 dxe4 4.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xe4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}f5 5.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}g3 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}g6 6.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}c4 e6 7.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}1e2 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}f6 8.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}f4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}d6

I had played that position before and I had encountered: 9.c3 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}bd7 10.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}f3 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}b6 11.b3 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}bd5 12.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xg6 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}xg6 13.\textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}g5 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}e7 14.0–0–0 b5 with a rather unclear game, (Rublevsky – Dreev, Elista 1998), as well as: 14.0–0 \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}d7 15.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{Q}$}}xe7 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\mathcal{F}}xe7 16.\textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}fe1 \textit{\textcolor{red}{$\mathcal{F}$}}f5 17.a4? \textit{\textcolor{blue}{$\mathcal{F}$}}d6, with a better position for Black, Pedzich – Dreev, Linares 1999.
Naturally, Sergey Tiviakov knew about these games, so he tried to continue in another fashion:

9.h4 \( \text{\&c7} \) 10.\( \text{\&xg6} \) h\( \text{xg6} \) 11.\( \text{\&f3} \) \( \text{\&bd7} \) 12.\( \text{\&g5?} \)

This position has also been tested into practice numerous times and Black has always allowed White to castle long. For example, back in the year 1953, at the tournament in Bucharest, in his game against Isaak Boleslavsky, the player with Black – B. Sliwa chose: 12...\( \text{\&a5} \) + 13.c3 0–0–0 14.0–0–0. Black has also tried here: 12...0–0–0 13.0–0–0.

I found over the board a simple counterstrike after which White’s position became immediately critical:

12...c5!

This concrete approach was quite surprising for my opponent and he took a whole 40 minutes on the clock. Possibly, he considered opening of the game as contrary to the spirit of the position – he had the bishop pair after all. Still, the tactical complications are in favour of Black and he should already think about how to save the game; moreover it looks like it might be even too late for that. For example, it would not work for him to play 13.0–0–0, because of: 13...cxd4 14.\( \text{\&xd4} \) \( \text{\&e5} \).

13.\( \text{\&xc5} \) \( \text{\&xc5} \) 14.\( \text{\&xf6} \)

That is an admission that his previous actions were wrong and it is in fact another mistake. White’s position becomes even worse after that. He is possibly beyond salvation already. He cannot play: 14.\( \text{\&xb7} \) \( \text{\&b8} \) 15.\( \text{\&a6} \) \( \text{\&b6} \) 16.\( \text{\&a4} \) \( \text{\&b4} \). It is also too bad for White to follow with: 14.\( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&xg3} \) 15.\( \text{\&xg3} \) \( \text{\&xg5} \) 16.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( \text{\&xh1} \). He could have tried: 14.\( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&xc2} \) 15.0–0 \( \text{\&xb2} \), or 14.\( \text{\&b3} \) \( \text{\&e5} \) 15.\( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&xg5} \) 16.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( \text{\&xh1} \) 17.\( \text{\&d2} \) \( \text{\&xa1} \) (18.c3 0–0–0) 18.\( \text{\&xb7} \) 18...\( \text{\&d8} \), but White’s compensation is insufficient after that too.

His only correct defence could be: 14.\( \text{\&b3?!} \), preserving some defensible position. For example: 14...\( \text{\&c8} \) 15.\( \text{\&d3} \)! \( \text{\&e5} \) 16.\( \text{\&e2} \).

14...\( \text{\&xf6} \) 15.\( \text{\&b3} \) 0–0–0

I was also considering here: 15...\( \text{\&e5} \) 16.\( \text{\&e2} \) \( \text{\&xb2} \) (if 17.\( \text{\&d1} \), then 17.0–0–0 and Black is better) 17.\( \text{\&xb7} \) \( \text{\&a1} \) 18.\( \text{\&d2} \) \( \text{\&b4} \)! and Black wins. The move in the game however is at least that strong too.

16.c3?!

Here, Sergey should have thought about playing: 16.0–0–0 \( \text{\&xh4!} \) 17.\( \text{\&xh4} \) \( \text{\&g5} \) (if 18.\( \text{\&e3} \), then 18...\( \text{\&xh4} \) 19.\( \text{\&xa7} \)? \( \text{\&f4} \) 18.\( \text{\&b1} \) \( \text{\&xh4} \) and I would have to work hard to materialize my advantage.

(digram)

16...\( \text{\&xg3} \)! 17.\( \text{\&xg3} \)

In case White had captured with the pawn 17.\( \text{\&xg3} \), I would have followed with: 17...\( \text{\&e5} \) 18.\( \text{\&f1} \) \( \text{\&e4} \).

17...\( \text{\&h5} \)

Black’s position is totally winning.
The material is equal, but White has no useful moves whatsoever. The rest of the game does not require any comments at all:

18.0–0 \( \text{ad}h8 \) 19.\( \text{ef}3 \) \( \text{ex}h4 \) 20.\( g3 \) \( \text{gh}2 \) 21.\( \text{ac}2 \) g5 22.\( \text{ae}4 \) g4 23.\( \text{ef}4 \) \( \text{wh}5 \). White resigned.

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Semeniuk – Dreev
Russian Club Cup, St Petersburg 1999

We played this game in the Russian Club Cup, where the team of "Khimik" (from the city of Bjaroechensk), for which I was playing, became the Champion of Russia and I managed to achieve the best result on board one. The battle between the leaders of the teams was very tough indeed. The level of opposition corresponded to category 13 and there were players like A. Khalifman (you will see my victory against him later), V. Zvajaginsev and S. Rublevsky.

1.e4 \( \text{c}6 \) 2.d4 \( \text{d}5 \) 3.exd5 \( \text{c}x\text{d}5 \) 4.\( \text{q}d3 \) \( \text{ac}6 \) 5.c3

(diagram)

5...\( \text{wc}7 \)?

This move prevents the development of White's bishop to f4 and I believe that is Black's most active and logical alternative against the exchange variation of the Caro-Kann Defence chosen by White.

In fact, Black plays much more often in the tournament practice the variation: 5...\( \text{qf}4 \) 6.\( \text{qf}4 \) \( \text{qg}4 \) 7.\( \text{db}3 \) \( \text{dd}7 \) 8.\( \text{dd}2 \) e6 9.\( \text{gf}3 \) \( \text{xf}3 \)? 10.\( \text{xf}3 \) \( \text{id}6 \), in which he does not have any serious problems, but I think that instead of the standard move 7.\( \text{db}3 \), White should start his fight for the opening advantage with the rarely played move 7.\( \text{df}3 \)?.. Now, in case of 7...e6 8.\( \text{wb}3 \) \( \text{c}8 \) (or 8...\( \text{xf}3 \)? 9.\( \text{xb}7 \) \( \text{gx}2 \) 10.\( \text{xc}6+ \) \( \text{d}7 \) 11.\( \text{e}1 \); 8...\( \text{wd}7 \)? 9.\( \text{e}5 \) 9.\( \text{bd}2 \) \( \text{e}7 \) 10.0–0, or7...a6 8.\( \text{bd}2 \) e6 9.0–0 \( \text{id}6 \) 10.\( \text{xd}6 \) \( \text{wx}d6 \) 11.\( \text{wc}2 \), his position is somewhat better.

6.\( \text{d}e2 \)

The idea of that move is easily understandable – he wishes to develop his bishop with tempo to the f4-square. It has a certain drawback though; the knight is much more passive on e2 than on the f3-square.

It seems at first sight that the move 6.\( \text{g}5 \) is more active and logical, but in that case after: 6...\( \text{xf}6 \)? 7.\( \text{d}2 \) \( \text{g}4 \) 8.\( \text{gf}3 \) e6 9.\( \text{h}4 \) \( \text{d}6 \) 10.\( \text{g}3 \) \( \text{h}5 \), Black has no problems at all, Illescas
Cordoba – Anand, Linares 1994. Black should not be afraid either of the line: 8.\textit{\texttt{wb1}} (instead of 8.\textit{\texttt{dgf3}}), because he can counter that with 8...e5, reaching a complicated and approximately equal position, as well as with 8...e6; here, after 9.\textit{\texttt{de2 \texttt{dd6}}?} Black’s chances are at least equal, while following 10.\textit{\texttt{dg3}}, it is good for him to continue with 10...
\textit{\texttt{dh5}}? and after: 10.\textit{\texttt{xf6 gxf6 11.gg3}}, he can play: 11...0−0−0! with a slightly better game.

6.\textit{\texttt{bg4 7.f3 \texttt{dd7}}?}

It is also possible for Black to try 7...\textit{\texttt{h5}} with a complicated position, but the move in the game is stronger. Its idea is to counter White’s thematic move 8.\textit{\texttt{ff4}} with the active 8...e5?!, just like it happened in the game.

8.\textit{\texttt{ff4 e5}}?!

This was a powerful move, since I was not reluctant to opt for a position with an isolated d5-pawn.

9.\textit{\texttt{dxe5 \texttt{exe5 10.0−0 \texttt{dd6}}}}

My opponent has not achieved anything much out of the opening. The position resembles a lot one of the variations of the French Defence – the Tarrasch system (1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.\textit{\texttt{dd2 c5}} 4. exd5 exd5), but White’s situation is clearly worse, since his f3-pawn does not beautify his position at all, mildly speaking...Black is already slightly better, but not more than that.

11.\textit{\texttt{hh1 e7 12.a3 a6 13.cc2 0−0 14.d4 ac8 15.ec3}}?

That is a serious mistake after which White loses a pawn by force and his position becomes very difficult. After 15.\textit{\texttt{dd2}} Black’s situation would have remained slightly better thanks to his superior piece-coordination.

15.\textit{\texttt{xd3 16.xd6 xb2 17.db3}}

In case of: 17.\textit{\texttt{xc7}}? 17.\textit{\texttt{xd1 xc7 18.ad1 dxc7 19.dd3 ffc8}}, Black’s victory is just a matter of time.

17.\textit{\texttt{xd6 18.xb2}}

White is already a pawn down, meanwhile his c3-pawn is very weak and he can hardly save the game. The encounter enters the technical stage of the realization of Black’s advantage.

18...b5 19.\textit{\texttt{fe1 fe8 20.ad1 h6 21.e2 c5 22.ed3 gg6 23.bb3 we7 24.g3}}?

After that mistake, White’s position becomes completely hopeless. He had better defend with 24.\textit{\texttt{dd4}}, but that would have hardly changed the outcome of the game...
24...\texttt{D}e5

It was even stronger for Black to play: 24...\texttt{g}g4! 25.\texttt{f}f2 (or 25.\texttt{d}d4 \texttt{xf}3+ 26.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{e}e4--; 25.\texttt{g}g2 \texttt{xf}3+ 26.\texttt{xf}3 \texttt{e}e4--) 25...\texttt{e}e5 26.\texttt{x}d5 (or 26.\texttt{d}d4 \texttt{xf}3+ 27.\texttt{g}g1 \texttt{g}g5--) 26...\texttt{e}e6 and White would have no satisfactory defence in sight.

25.\texttt{x}d5 \texttt{d}d6 26.\texttt{a}d4 \texttt{c}c6

Black was also winning with the following forced variation: 26...\texttt{xf}3 27.\texttt{e}e7+ \texttt{xe}7 28.\texttt{exe}7 \texttt{exe}7 29.\texttt{d}d1 \texttt{e}e8 and White would be defenseless against the threats \texttt{c}c6 and \texttt{e}e2.

27.\texttt{f}f4 \texttt{xf}3+ 28.\texttt{g}g1 \texttt{b}b6 29.\texttt{f}f2 \texttt{b}b7 30.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{c}c6

I had here two extra pawns and a crushing attack, There still followed:

31.\texttt{d}d5 \texttt{g}g4 32.\texttt{f}f3 \texttt{e}e1+ 33.\texttt{f}f1 \texttt{e}e8 34.\texttt{d}d2 \texttt{c}c5 35.\texttt{f}f5 \texttt{e}e5 36.\texttt{e}e5 \texttt{xe}5 37.\texttt{g}g2 \texttt{c}c6 and White resigned.

\textbf{14...\texttt{d}d6}

The Encyclopedia of Chess Openings recommends the move 14...\texttt{a}a5. For example, that was played against me by Michal Krasenkov in our game in (Shenyang 1999). One other game, played on that theme, witnessed the move 14...a5 (G.Giorgadze – Avrukh, Bugojno 1999). Alexander tried here a novelty.

15.0–0 \texttt{e}e6

It deserved attention for him to play 15...\texttt{ad}8!? 16.\texttt{c}c2, which happened in the game Bareev – Huzman, Bugojno 1999.

After the move in the text, I took a long time on the clock, because I had a choice between 16.\texttt{c}c2 and 16.\texttt{h}h4.

I would have been definitely better after: 16.\texttt{c}c2 \texttt{ac}8 17.\texttt{fd}1, with the idea to counter 17...\texttt{xd}4 with 18.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{xd}4 19.\texttt{xe}6! Now, the line: 19...\texttt{xe}6 20.\texttt{g}xg6+ \texttt{h}h8 21.\texttt{h}h5+ \texttt{g}g8 22.\texttt{h}h4 loses for Black. But even in case of: 19...\texttt{xe}6 20.\texttt{xd}4, should Black defend in the best possible way 20...\texttt{fe}8! I still have superior chances after 21.\texttt{h}h4, while capturing on a2 is extremely dangerous for Black, for example: 21...\texttt{xa}2 22.\texttt{h}h5 and if 22...\texttt{e}e6, then 23.hxg6. Following 23...\texttt{fxg}6, then I can continue with 24.\texttt{h}h4
and my attack would be very powerful, while in case of 23...\textit{W}xg6, then 24.\textit{W}d2, with the idea – \textit{E}g4.

Still, I had decided to play the move

16.h4...

16.h4 $\textit{D}x\textit{d}4$ 17.$\textit{D}x\textit{d}4$

The second possibility for White is – 18.$\textit{E}xc7?!$. As Khalifman told me after the game, he was afraid of that move most of all. Here, after: 18...\textit{W}xc7 19.$\textit{E}xd4$, it seems reasonable for Black to play: 19...\textit{E}ad8 20.$\textit{D}x\textit{d}8$ $\textit{E}xd8$ 21.$\textit{E}e3$! with the idea to follow with: 21...\textit{E}e7 22.g3 $\textit{W}f6$ 23.$\textit{D}c1$ $\textit{W}xb2$ 24.$h5$. On the other hand, Black has at his disposal the line: 18...\textit{W}xf2+ 19.$\textit{E}xf2$ $\textit{W}xc7$ 20.$h5$ $\textit{D}c5$! 21.$\textit{W}g4$ $\textit{D}d7$! and if 22.$h$xg6, then 22...\textit{D}e5 23.$\textit{W}h5$? $\textit{W}xf2$+! and Black wins.

Naturally, all these lines do not exhaust the numerous possibilities for both sides after the move 17...\textit{D}x\textit{d}4.

For example, White can try 18.\textit{W}g4!? – and he most probably remains with a good compensation for the pawn. Is White better is something that remains unclear?

Nevertheless, the move 17...\textit{D}x\textit{d}4 is clearly better for Black than what Alexander Khalifman played in the game...

17...\textit{W}xd4?

He had evidently evaluated wrongly the consequences of the transfer into an endgame, thinking that it might have been approximately equal.

18.$\textit{E}xc7$ $\textit{W}xd1$ 19.$\textit{E}xd1$ $\textit{E}ab8$ 20.\textit{D}f4! $\textit{D}f6$


(diaagram)

21.$\textit{E}d3$!

Just before I played my move in the game, I decided at the last moment to have a look at the line: 21. $a4$. It turned out, however that after: 21...\textit{E}fc8 22.a5 $\textit{D}d5$ 23.$\textit{E}xd5$ $\textit{E}xc7$ 24.$\textit{E}xc7$
\[ \text{E}c8 \ 25.\text{\`g}3 \text{exd}5 \ 26.\text{\`c}x\text{d}5 \text{\`c}1+ \ 27.\text{\`h}2 \text{\`b}1 \text{Black equalizes easily.} \]

This is by far not an obvious move and it came as a surprise to many people, including my opponent. I had planned it already when I had played 20.\text{\`f}4.

21...\text{\`f}c8

Black loses after: 21...\text{\`x}h4? 22.\text{\`e}5! \text{\`f}c8 23.\text{\`h}3 \text{\`g}5 \text{24.g3, as well as after:} 21...\text{\`f}d8 22.\text{\`x}d8+ \text{\`x}d8 23.\text{\`xf}7 \text{\`xf}7 24.\text{\`xb}8 \text{\`x}h4 25.\text{\`xa}7.

22.\text{\`h}5 \text{\`xc}7

In case of: 22...\text{\`g}5 23.\text{\`xc}8+ \text{\`xc}8 24.\text{\`x}g5 \text{\`x}g5 25.\text{\`e}g3, White has a clear advantage.

23.\text{\`xc}7 \text{\`c}8 24.\text{\`xb}6 \text{axb}6 25.\text{\`hx}g6 \text{\`c}1+ 26.\text{\`h}2 \text{\`xb}2 27.\text{\`d}7

It was possible to leave the e6-pawn to Black for a while after: 27.\text{\`gx}f7+ \text{\`fx}f7 28.\text{\`d}7+, but I did not like the idea to let Black’s king away from the eighth rank.

27...\text{\`fx}g6 28.\text{\`xe}6+ \text{\`h}8

(diagram)

29.\text{\`h}3

I decided here not to force the issue. Generally speaking, it was not easy at all to choose the right move. For example, I did not like 29.\text{\`g}3, because of 29...\text{\`c}7 and Black repels my rook.

After the move 29.f4 (fixing Black’s g-pawn) Black’s position would have remained quite difficult, but I would not be quite convinced to assert that it would have been completely lost. Naturally, I had a look at that line too, but it seemed to me slightly unprepared.

29...\text{\`c}6!

Khalifman was in a severe time-pressure here, but he found the best practical chance. I would not like to say that I had foreseen all the consequences of that brilliant maneuver by Black, but I had felt intuitively that I did not let the advantage slip out of my hands altogether.

30.\text{\`d}5 \text{\`f}6 31.\text{\`f}3 \text{\`c}1 32.\text{\`g}3 \text{\`g}5

That move had become possible only because of the placement of Black’s rook along the sixth rank; otherwise White’s king goes to the g6-
square and the checkmate becomes unavoidable.

Now, it might seem to you that White cannot improve his position in a decisive fashion, but that is an illusion!

33.\(\text{g}4\) \(\text{e}3\) 34.\(\text{x}b7\) \(\text{d}6?!\)

In case Black continues to keep his bishop along the e3-c1 diagonal with the move 34...\(\text{c}1\), then for example after: 35.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{e}3\) 36.\(\text{a}4\) \(\text{c}1\), I have the possibility to play: 37.\(\text{f}4!\) \(\text{gxf4}\) 38.\(\text{g}5\). If 38...\(\text{f}8\), then 39.\(\text{g}6\), therefore Black’s only move is – 38...\(\text{b}2\). Accordingly, White plays – 39.\(\text{gxf4}\), followed by \(\text{f}5\), \(\text{e}6\), \(\text{d}6\) and he must win the game.

After the move in the game, I had no problems to press my advantage home.

35.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{d}4\)
If 35...\(\text{c}1\), then 36.\(\text{e}6!\).

36.\(\text{b}3\) \(\text{f}6\) 37.\(\text{f}7\) \(\text{e}5\)
Or 37...\(\text{c}6\) and 38.\(\text{f}5\).

38.\(\text{b}7\) \(\text{d}4+?!\)
Following 38...\(\text{f}6\), White continues with: 39.\(\text{e}7\) \(\text{d}6\) 40.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{e}5\) 41.\(\text{d}5\). Therefore, Black’s more resilient defence would have been – 38...\(\text{c}6\).

39.\(\text{x}g5\) \(\text{x}g3\) 40.\(\text{x}b6\)
Alexander Khalifman lost on time in this winning position for White.

1–0

Nam, who was residing in Malaysia, but who was of a Chinese origin, was organizing early regular round-robin tournaments with high-level participants in different cities of China.

The main purpose of organizing these tournaments was formulated by Dato Tan Chin Nam so as to enable the strongest Chinese players to encounter the best chess players of the West and to let them accumulate experience and to improve their ratings. From what we see now – how impressive the results of the Chinese players are, both men and women, it looks like that purpose has been achieved!

This was my first participation in the tournaments for the “Tan Chin Nam – Cup” and I shared 1st-2nd place with Ye Jiangchuan, but his tie-break coefficient proved to be better than mine.

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{f}6\) 4.\(\text{g}5\) dxe4 5.\(\text{x}e4\) \(\text{e}7\) 6.\(\text{x}f6\) \(\text{gxf6}\)

I had tried that capturing with the pawn before, as early as in my candidates match in 1991 against V.Anand. The “regular” move 6...\(\text{f}6\) had been tested in my tournament practice numerous times.

7.\(\text{f}3\)

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Wang Zili – Dreev
Tan Chin Nam Cup, Shenyang 1999

The Chess Federation of China, thanks to the sponsor Mr. Tan Chin
7...a6
This variation became popular thanks to the efforts of Alexander Morozevich. It is amazing, but when I first saw that move, it seemed to me quite interesting, but still dubious. The reason that I decided to play it, despite the fact that I had considered it quite questionable, was that I was relying on the effect of surprise. Meanwhile, I had evidently become the victim of the effect of advertising, which often makes us buy things that we do not really need, indeed... Black’s usual defence here is – 7...b6.

8.c4
That move (preventing the advance b7-b5) made me happy, because I considered the move 8.g3 as the most dangerous, as it was played in (Frankfurt (active) 1999) against A.Morozevich at first by Peter Leko and then by Christofer Lutz and White had been victorious in both games.

8...f5 9.g3 c5?! It was much better for Black to play here 9...f6, with the idea to follow with c7-c5. I could have obtained a quite acceptable game in that case, for example: 10.d2 c5 11.d5 e5.

10.d5 f6 11.c2 e5 12.0-0 0-0

13.d2!
This is the correct maneuver for White after which Black’s position, which is presently quite suspicious anyway, becomes even more critical. White is preparing f2-f3, followed by d3. Black’s main problem is that he cannot complete his development, due to his weakness on f5. His only plus is that his dark squared bishop has been deployed to the important diagonal a1-h8. It is not so easy to exploit that advantage though, but as we are going to see later, that was what helped me come out of my difficult situation later.

13...g7
The move 13...b5 would have been rather premature in that situation.

14.f3 w6 15.d3
White is now threatening g2-g4.

15...b5!
Black cannot wait anymore, so he has no other chance.

16.h3
This move is a bit slow; nevertheless it is correct from the point of view of strategy. White is not trying to force the issue with the move 16.g4, or with 16.cxb5 and I was planning to counter these with 16...c4! (Pawns are not so important in similar positions, it is essential to open the c-file.) 17.xc4 (or 17.xc4 axb5 18.xb5 xa2) and here either 17...d7, or 17...axb5 18.xb5 a6 and Black has an excellent counterplay for the sacrificed pawns.

It is evident now (after 16.h3) that Black cannot wait anymore. If it had been White to move in that situation, he would have played g2-g4 and his position would have become practi-
cally winning. I managed to find the only plan to distract White from the pawn-advance g2-g4.

16...b4

![Diagram](image)

17.\(\text{a}4\)

That is the most attractive variation for White. The position would have been quite unclear in case of: 17.\(\text{a}e2!\) a5 18.\(\text{g}3\) (Or 18.g4 e4! 19.fxe4 a4, with the idea to follow with b4-b3. Black has sacrificed some material indeed, but his counterattack seems quite dangerous.) 18...a4.

17...a5! 18.\(\text{b}1\)

After 18.g4, I had considered: 18...e4 19.fxe4 \(\text{d}7\) 20.\(\text{c}5\) \(\text{c}8\) (20...a4!?) 21.\(\text{d}7\) \(\text{d}7\) with an unclear position. The move 18.\(\text{c}5\) can be countered with 18...a4.

18...\(\text{a}6\) 19.\(\text{b}3\)

In case of 19.g4, Black can organize a powerful counterattack with: 19...\(\text{d}7\) (but not 19...e4 20.fxe4 \(\text{d}7\) 21.e5! \(\text{xe}5\) 22.\(\text{b}6\) 20.\(\text{xf}5\) \(\text{xa}4\) 21.\(\text{xa}4\) e4 22.\(\text{c}2\) b3 23.axb3 a4!? (or 23...\(\text{b}4\) 24.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{b}6\) 25.\(\text{f}2\) 24.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{b}6\) 25.\(\text{ba}4\) \(\text{fb}8\) 26.\(\text{d}2\) \(\text{xb}2\).

19...\(\text{e}8\)

That is the only move for Black. White cannot play here comfortably 20.g4 once again, because Black has the resource – 20...e4 21.fxe4 fxe4 22.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{xe}4\) 23.\(\text{xe}4\) \(\text{d}7\) 24.\(\text{hf}1\) (or 24.d6 \(\text{e}8\) 25.\(\text{xe}8\) \(\text{xe}8\) 26.d7 \(\text{xd}7\) 27.\(\text{xd}7\) \(\text{c}6\)) 24...\(\text{d}6\).

20.\(\text{hf}1\) \(\text{f}8\)

This is again Black’s practically only move. He has protected his c5-pawn and he is threatening \(\text{d}7\).

21.\(\text{d}6!\)

The careless move 21.g4, would have lost material for White after: 21...\(\text{d}7\) 22.\(\text{xa}5\) b3!

21...\(\text{d}6\) 22.g4

Or 22.\(\text{b}6\) a4 23.\(\text{xa}8\) axb3 24.\(\text{xb}3\) (24.axb3!? 24...\(\text{f}8\) with an unclear position.

22...e4

This is the only move.

23.fxe4 f4 24.e5 \(\text{xe}5\) 25.\(\text{hx}7\) \(\text{h}8\)

I did not like here 25...\(\text{g}7\), because of the possibility – 26.g5.

26.\(\text{f}5\)

White has decided to enter an endgame, because he was obviously not happy with the lines: 26.\(\text{bx}c5\) \(\text{xc}5\) 27.\(\text{xc}5\) a4 and Black has a good compensation; or 26.\(\text{e}4\) \(\text{a}7\) 27.\(\text{bx}c5\) (27.\(\text{xa}5\)? \(\text{b}8\)) 27...\(\text{c}5\) 28.\(\text{c}5\) and the game is quite unclear.

26...\(\text{xf}5\) 27.\(\text{xf}5\) \(\text{xf}5\) 28.gxf5
White has an extra pawn indeed, but he cannot play for a win anymore. He should not have problems to make a draw either... Still, my opponent, who was playing quite well in the previous part of the game, started to play rather unconvincingly. I began to accumulate gradually small advantages and I managed to win that game at the end.

43.\textit{\textit{d}3}
It was better for White to play 43.a3 immediately.

43...\textit{\textit{d}6} 44.\textit{\textit{e}2}
This is forced, because in case of 44.\textit{\textit{c}4}, Black will follow with: 44...
\textit{\textit{d}2} 45.\textit{\textit{b}3} a4.

44...\textit{\textit{e}5} 45.\textit{a}3 \textit{\textit{c}6} 46.\textit{\textit{d}2}
That is a serious imprecision. White would have maintained the balance with the move 46.\textit{\textit{d}3}.

46...\textit{\textit{e}4} 47.\textit{\textit{b}3} \textit{\textit{b}xa3} 48.\textit{\textit{a}xa3}
\textit{\textit{xf}5} 49.\textit{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textit{e}6} 50.\textit{b}3 \textit{\textit{d}8} 51.
\textit{\textit{e}3}
Or 51.\textit{\textit{c}4}? a4 52.\textit{\textit{c}3} a3.

51...\textit{\textit{f}5} 52.\textit{\textit{f}3} \textit{\textit{g}6} 53.\textit{\textit{c}4} \textit{\textit{c}7}
54.\textit{\textit{d}3} \textit{\textit{c}5} 55.\textit{\textit{d}4} \textit{\textit{b}5} 56.\textit{\textit{e}3} \textit{\textit{f}5}
57.\textit{\textit{h}4}
White does not wish to defend passively...

57...\textit{\textit{h}5} 58.\textit{\textit{e}7} \textit{\textit{d}8} 59.\textit{\textit{f}7}
\textit{\textit{xf}4} 60.\textit{\textit{d}6} \textit{\textit{b}6} 61.\textit{\textit{c}3} \textit{\textit{c}5}
62.\textit{\texttt{b2?}}
That is the decisive mistake. White could have still made a draw possibly with the move 62.\textit{\texttt{c4}}, with the idea to follow with b3-b4.
62...\textit{\texttt{g4}} 63.\textit{\texttt{c4}}  \textit{\texttt{b5}}  64.\textit{\texttt{c2}}
\textit{\texttt{f2}!}
Now, Black’s position is technically winning.
65.\textit{\texttt{g7}}  \textit{\texttt{f3}}  66.\textit{\texttt{f7}}  \textit{\texttt{ed5}}  67.\textit{\texttt{e7}}
\textit{\texttt{f4}} 68.\textit{\texttt{e8}}  \textit{\texttt{e3}}  69.\textit{\texttt{a8}}  \textit{\texttt{e2}}  70.\textit{\texttt{e8}}
\textit{\texttt{ed3}}  71.\textit{\texttt{g8}}  \textit{\texttt{ed4}}  72.\textit{\texttt{xa5}}
Or 72.\textit{\texttt{e8}}  \textit{\texttt{c4}}  73.\textit{\texttt{bc3}}  f3  74.\textit{\texttt{b3}}  f2
75.\textit{\texttt{e8}}  f1\textit{\texttt{W}}  76.\textit{\texttt{f1}}  \textit{\texttt{f1}}  77.\textit{\texttt{a4}}  \textit{\texttt{b6}}
78.\textit{\texttt{c5}}  \textit{\texttt{d8}}+--
72...\textit{\texttt{f3}}  73.\textit{\texttt{c6}}  \textit{\texttt{e4}}  0–1

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D20
Dreev – Rublevsky
FIDE World Chess Ch (k. o.)
Las Vegas 1999

This game was played in the FIDE knock-out World Championship. I was in the “waiting list” at that moment and I flew to Las Vegas without even knowing whether I would play or not. Literally at the last possible moment, it turned out that plenty of the participants in the main scheme dropped from the competition and I joined in the action...I reached the 1/8 final though, but then I lost my match against Michael Adams.

1.\textit{\texttt{d4}}  \textit{\texttt{d5}}  2.\textit{\texttt{c4}}  dxc4  3.\textit{\texttt{e4}}  e5  4.\textit{\texttt{f3}}
\textit{\texttt{exd4}}  5.\textit{\texttt{xc4}}  \textit{\texttt{b4}+}
(diagram)
This is well-known theoretical position.
6.\textit{\texttt{d2}}
It is more popular for White to play
here the move 6.\textit{\texttt{bd2}!}, which leads to complex situations. It is no doubt the critical one in White’s fight for the opening advantage.
Still, the move 6.\textit{\texttt{d2}} has its pluses not so much in theoretical aspect, but for mainly practical reasons. The positions, arising after 6.\textit{\texttt{d2}} are much simpler than those after 6.\textit{\texttt{bd2}} and White can fight for a slight opening edge, avoiding complicated developments. Black does not have in that case any practical chance of seizing the initiative and he is forced to play basically for a draw.
6...\textit{\texttt{xd2}+}  7.\textit{\texttt{bxd2}}  \textit{\texttt{f6}}
That is a seldom played line, but still it is quite possible. Black plays much more often in the tournament practice the move – 7...\textit{\texttt{c6}}.
8.\textit{\texttt{0–0}}  \textit{\texttt{e7}}  9.\textit{\texttt{e5}}  \textit{\texttt{g6}}  10.\textit{\texttt{xd4}}
\textit{\texttt{bc6}}  11.\textit{\texttt{2f3}}  0–0  12.\textit{\texttt{e6}!}
That is a very fashionable position in this variation of the Queen’s Gambit Accepted.

12...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textsf{x}}}}}xe6}

That is a novelty. Black’s usual defence here is 12...fxe6. It is interesting to mention that in his subsequent games, Sergey stopped playing 12...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xe6} and he preferred 12...fxe6. For example in the game Volkov – Rublevsky, Ekaterinburg 2002, after: 13.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}}}e1} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xd4} 14.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}}}e5} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}3}}}+ 15.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xf3} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}}}xd5} 16.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}}}xd5} exd5 17.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}}}xd5}+ \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}7}}} 18.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}d4} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}5}}} 19.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{b}ac}}}1 c6 20.a3 \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}f6}, Black equalized.

13.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xe6} fxe6 14.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}}}e1 \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{h}h}}}8

I case of 14...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}}}ad8}, I would have maintained better chances – in the middle game after 15.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}e2}, as well as in the endgame after: 15.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xe6} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xd1}+ 16.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}xd1} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}c2} 17.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{b}b}3}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xd1}+ 18.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}d1}, since White’s light-squared bishop has much better prospects in these positions than its opponent – the black knight.

15.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xe6} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}4}} 16.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{w}}}e2} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}6}}

Black cannot solve all his opening problems with the move – 16...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xf3}. After the practically forced line: 17.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}}}e4} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}4}} 18.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}xg}4}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xe2}+ 19.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xe2}, there arises an endgame with better chances for White, because his bishop is stronger in that position than Black’s knight.

17.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{h}}}h3} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}5}} 18.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}3}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}4}} 19.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xf5} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}e2}+} 20.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}}}xe2} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}5}} 21.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}1}}

(diagram)

White has a leeway for his king now and his pieces are more active. All that guarantees him a slight, but stable positional advantage.

21...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}8}} 22.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}7}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}7}} 23.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xf7} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{x}}}xf7} 24.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}5+}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}8}}

That move seems to be somewhat passive, but even the more active lines for Black – 24...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}6}} and 24...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}6}}, do not solve all his problems. For example: 24...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}6}} 25.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}6}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{c}c8}} (In case of: 25...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}8}} 26.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}4+}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}7}} 27.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}xe}8}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{xe}e}8}} 28.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}6}}, Black is faced with a long and difficult fight for a draw.) 26.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}3}}! and White has a powerful initiative; or 24...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}6}} 25.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}4+}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{f}f}7}} 26.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{c}c}5}} and he is again the active side.

25.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}3}!}

That is an excellent move, which improves considerably my tactical chances. White is threatening \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}6}} and later, depending on circumstances: \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{g}g}3}} or \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{b}b}3}}. Black must defend extremely precisely.

25...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}8}} 26.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}6}} \textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{d}d}1}+}

This is a mistake. Black had better play here 26...\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{e}e}7}}?!

27.\textit{\underline{\textit{\textsf{h}h}2}}
27...\textit{\texttt{E}}d7

He is still defending stubbornly. It was much worse for him to play the seemingly active line: 27...\textit{\texttt{E}}d2, because of: 28.\textit{\texttt{E}}b3 \textit{\texttt{Q}}a5 29.\textit{\texttt{E}}f3 h6 30.\textit{\texttt{E}}f8+ \textit{\texttt{E}}h7 31.b4 \textit{\texttt{D}}c6 32.b5 \textit{\texttt{Q}}a5 33.a4; or 28...\textit{\texttt{E}}e2 29.\textit{\texttt{E}}xc7 b6 30.\textit{\texttt{E}}c3?! \textit{\texttt{D}}d4 31.\textit{\texttt{E}}d3 \textit{\texttt{D}}f5 32.\textit{\texttt{E}}d8+ \textit{\texttt{E}}f7 33.\textit{\texttt{E}}d7+ \textit{\texttt{E}}f6 34.\textit{\texttt{E}}g4 \textit{\texttt{D}}e7 35.\textit{\texttt{E}}g3 and White would remain with a clear advantage in both cases.

28.\textit{\texttt{E}}f3 \textit{\texttt{F}}f7 29.\textit{\texttt{E}}g3!

That powerful move creates great problems for Black now. I would not have achieved much with the line: 29.\textit{\texttt{E}}xf7 \textit{\texttt{E}}xf7 30.\textit{\texttt{E}}xc7 \textit{\texttt{Q}}b4 31.\textit{\texttt{E}}b5 \textit{\texttt{D}}xa2 32.\textit{\texttt{E}}xa7 \textit{\texttt{E}}e6 and despite the fact that Black would be a pawn down, he would preserve good chances for a draw, because of the active position of his king.

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.3\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\end{center}

29...\textit{\texttt{E}}e5?!

This is a very serious mistake and Black's position becomes quite difficult after it. His only chance to fight for a draw was: 29...\textit{\texttt{E}}xf3+ 30.\textit{\texttt{E}}xf3 \textit{\texttt{Q}}b4; but indeed after: 31.\textit{\texttt{E}}xc7 \textit{\texttt{D}}xa2 32.\textit{\texttt{E}}b5 (or 32.\textit{\texttt{E}}e4?) 32...a6 33.\textit{\texttt{E}}d6 b5 34.\textit{\texttt{E}}e4, I would have still maintained a considerable positional advantage.

30.\textit{\texttt{E}}xf7 \textit{\texttt{E}}xf7 31.\textit{\texttt{E}}xc7 \textit{\texttt{D}}d3 32.\textit{\texttt{E}}b5! \textit{\texttt{E}}xb2 33.\textit{\texttt{E}}xa7 \textit{\texttt{E}}e6 34.\textit{\texttt{E}}b5 \textit{\texttt{D}}d5?

That move only speeds up Black's demise. It was more tenacious for him to defend with 34...\textit{\texttt{E}}d3. Now, the game ends up rather quickly.

35.\textit{\texttt{E}}c7+ \textit{\texttt{E}}c4

It is hardly any better for Black to play: 35...\textit{\texttt{E}}e5 36.\textit{\texttt{E}}f4+ \textit{\texttt{E}}e4 37.\textit{\texttt{E}}e8, because White's position is easily winning.

36.\textit{\texttt{E}}e8 b5 37.\textit{\texttt{E}}xg7 \textit{\texttt{Q}}a4 38.\textit{\texttt{E}}f4 \textit{\texttt{E}}c3 39.\textit{\texttt{E}}f5 \textit{\texttt{D}}d5 40.\textit{\texttt{E}}f4! \textit{\texttt{E}}xa2 41.\textit{\texttt{E}}d6 42.\textit{\texttt{E}}f5 \textit{\texttt{D}}c3

In case of 42...\textit{\texttt{E}}d7, White wins without any problems after: 43.\textit{\texttt{E}}e6 \textit{\texttt{E}}e8 44.\textit{\texttt{E}}c7+, since he remains with a couple of extra pawns.

43.\textit{\texttt{E}}e6 \textit{\texttt{D}}d5 44.\textit{\texttt{E}}f7 \textit{\texttt{E}}e7+ 45.\textit{\texttt{E}}e4 and Black resigned.

I managed to outplay a very strong opponent in this game in an only slightly better endgame for me. I exploited rather well his almost insignificant imprecision at some key moments of the fight.

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Dreev - Chandler

Hastings 2000

\textit{I took part in the traditional round-robin tournament in Hastings (which has a long and glorious history and impressive traditions) at the beginning of January in the year 2000. It was a part of the 75th International Chess Congress in Hastings. The Premier tournament in which I participated was of category 13. There were
10 players in the tournament and the two youngest participants – 16-year old American Irina Krush and the English player McShane (who became 16 just during the tournament) did not have high ratings at all and they diminished the category of the tournament considerably, but they proved to be very tough nuts to crack. Emil Sutovsky came first and he played quite convincingly throughout the tournament. I shared 2\textsuperscript{nd}-3\textsuperscript{rd} place with Jonathan Speelman. I did not start so well in that tournament and after round 5 I had only 50 %. I managed to finish successfully though and I collected 3 1/2 points out of the last four rounds. I consider that tournament to be quite satisfactory for me from the creative point of view and I played several good games. I have selected two games played in Hastings for this book – the game against M.Chandler (which turned out to be almost exquisite – technically) as well as my game from the last round against B. Lalic.

1.d4  \textbf{\textit{d}f6} 2.c4  \textbf{\textit{e}6} 3.\textbf{\textit{d}f3}  \textbf{\textit{d}5} 4.\textbf{\textit{c}3}  \textbf{\textit{e}7} 5.\textbf{\textit{f}4} 0-0 6.e3  \textbf{\textit{c}5} 7.\textbf{\textit{d}xc5}  \textbf{\textit{xc}5} 8.a3  \textbf{\textit{c}6} 9.\textbf{\textit{cxd5}}  \textbf{\textit{xd5}} 10.\textbf{\textit{xd5}}  \textbf{\textit{exd5}} 11.\textbf{\textit{d}d3} \textbf{\textit{b}6} 12.0-0  \textbf{\textit{g}4} 13.\textbf{\textit{h}3} \textbf{\textit{h}5} 14.\textbf{\textit{b}4} \textbf{\textit{a}6}

Black plays much more often here 14...\textbf{\textit{e}e}8. Of course, the move 14...\textbf{\textit{ff6}}, does not work, due to 15.g4 and after the trade of the bishops Black loses his d5-pawn.

(diagram)

15.\textbf{\textit{e}e2}!

This is an important improvement. Until now, there have been games with: 15.\textbf{\textit{fc1}} d4 16.g4  \textbf{\textit{g}6} 17.e4, Beliavsky


15...d4

Now, it is already weaker for Black to play: 15...\textbf{\textit{e}e}8 16.\textbf{\textit{a}a2}! and he cannot follow with: 16...d4 17.\textbf{\textit{xd}4}.

16.\textbf{\textit{exd}4}

Or 16.\textbf{\textit{xd}4} \textbf{\textit{x}d}4.

16...\textbf{\textit{xf}3}

It also deserved attention for Black to try the move 16...\textbf{\textit{d}d}5.

17.\textbf{\textit{xf}3}  \textbf{\textit{xd}4} 18.\textbf{\textit{e}e}3!

But, of course not: 18.\textbf{\textit{xd}4}?  \textbf{\textit{xd}4} 19.\textbf{\textit{xb}7}  \textbf{\textit{e}e}2+.

18...\textbf{\textit{xd}1} 19.\textbf{\textit{fxd}1} \textbf{\textit{xe}3} 20.\textbf{\textit{fxe}3}

20...\textbf{\textit{xe}8}?

That is White’s first serious imprecision and it is going to have grave consequences for him. He had bet-
ter continue with: 20...\textit{E}fd8 21.\textit{E}xc6 (Or 21.\textit{E}f2 \textit{E}xd1 22.\textit{E}xd1 \textit{E}d8 with a possible draw.) 21...\textit{B}xc6 22.\textit{E}xd8+ \textit{E}xd8 23.\textit{E}c1 \textit{E}c8 (Or 23...\textit{E}d6 24.\textit{E}c5, threatening \textit{E}a5.) — and White has a slight edge.

21.\textit{E}f2 \textit{E}c7

Just like before, Black had to deploy his rook on the d-file — 21...\textit{B}ad8, irrelevant of the loss of a tempo.

22.\textit{E}xc6 \textit{B}xc6 23.\textit{E}d6
Or 23.\textit{E}ac1? \textit{E}e6.

Black again overlooks his best chance to save the game — 29...\textit{E}d7!

30.\textit{E}e4 \textit{g}6

31.\textit{E}dc3!

Now, the game has been practically decided, because Black's king has been cut off from his vulnerable pawns.

31...\textit{E}e6 32.\textit{E}xe5+ \textit{E}f6 33.\textit{E}f3+ \textit{E}g7 34.\textit{E}d4 \textit{E}d7+ 35.\textit{E}c4 \textit{E}b8 36.\textit{E}c5 \textit{E}b6 37.\textit{E}b3 \textit{E}d6 38.\textit{E}a4 \textit{h}5 39.\textit{h}4 \textit{E}d7 40.\textit{E}a5 \textit{E}b8 41.\textit{E}xc6, and White soon won the game.

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\textbf{Dreev — B.Lalic}

Hastings 2000

1.d4 \textit{E}f6 2.c4 \textit{g}6 3.\textit{E}c3 \textit{E}g7

I was a bit surprised with that move, because the King's Indian Defence is not a part of GM Lalic's opening repertoire. I had expected 3...d5. He must have been quite well prepared, because my exclusive interest towards a certain line of the Zemisch system — (6.\textit{E}ge2) was very well known...

4.e4 \textit{d}6 5.f3 0–0 6.\textit{E}ge2 \textit{a}6!?

That is a smart move. Now, in case of: 7.\textit{E}g5 \textit{c}5 8.d5, Black sacrifices a pawn favourably with — 8...\textit{b}5 9.\textit{cxb}5
\[a5. \text{Therefore...} \]

7.\[e3 \ c6 \]
The move 7...\[c6 leads to the "Yugoslavian" variation.

8.\[c5?! \ \text{bd7} \]
Black plays much more often here

8...\[b5 \]
9.\[c1 \]
This is possibly a novelty. White usually played before 9.\[c1.

9...\[b6 \]
My opponent probably decided against the natural move 9...\[b5, because of 10.\[b4?!?

10.\[xd6 \ \text{exd6} 11.\text{df4 c5?!} \]
Here, Black had to play 11...\[b5.

12.\[a4! \]
White prevents the possibility \[b6-b5 in a radical fashion and he maintains an opening advantage.

12...\[xd4 \]
Black had better continue here with 12...\[b7, complying with a slightly inferior position after, for example 13.\[d5!?

13.\[xd4 \ \text{h6?} \]
I believe - that one and the next move is what Black had in mind, while he played the anti-positional move 12...\[xd4. Just like before, he had to follow with 13...\[b7.

14.\[e3 \ \text{h5} \]

15.\[e6! \]
But not: 15.\[xd6 \ \text{c5! (or 15... \[h4+? 16.g3 \[xg3 17.hxg3 \[xh1 18.\[f2) 16.\[xd8 \[xd8 17.g3 \[xf4 18.\[xf4 \[xf4 19.gxf4 \[d7 and Black's position is quite acceptable.} \]

15...\[xe6 16.\[xh6 \[h4+ 17.\[g3 \[xg3 18.\[hxg3 \[xh1 19.\[xf8 \[xf8 \]

At this moment my opponent surprisingly offered me a draw. Evidently Lalić had relied only on the line: 20.\[f2 \[a7! 21.\[xd6 \[f7 (It is worse for Black to play: 21...\[d7 22.\[xb6 \[h2+ 23.\[g2 \[d2+ 24.\[e2 \[xe2+ 25.\[xe2 \[xg2+ 26.\[f2.) with some chances for Black to equalize. My next move deprived him of his illusions.

20.\[d5! \[xd5 \]
Black was already beyond salvag-
tion: 20...\textit{g}1 21.\textit{xc}8 (21.\textit{e}7+!?)
21...\textit{xc}8 22.\textit{e}7+ \textit{f}7 23.\textit{xc}8 \textit{e}3+
24.\textit{e}2 \textit{g}1+ 25.\textit{d}2, or 20...\textit{b}7 21.
\textit{e}7+ \textit{f}7 22.\textit{c}7.

21.\textit{xd}5+ \textit{e}6 22.\textit{xa}8 \textit{xf}3
23.\textit{c}3 \textit{h}1 24.\textit{f}2! \textit{h}2+ 25.\textit{g}2
\textit{h}3 26.e5 dxe5 27.\textit{c}7!

But not: 27.\textit{d}5+? \textit{e}6.
27...h5

Black could have prolonged a bit his capitulation with: 27...\textit{xg}2 28.
\textit{xg}2 \textit{h}5 29.\textit{d}5+ \textit{h}8 30.\textit{f}3 \textit{h}2+
31.\textit{e}3 \textit{h}6+ 32.\textit{d}3.

28.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}5 29.\textit{d}5+ \textit{e}6 30.
\textit{a}8+ \textit{f}8 31.\textit{e}8. Black resigned.

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Dreev – Huebner
Julian Borowski, Essen 2000

This game with GM Robert Huebner was played in the second round of the all-play-all tournament, which was called “Julian Borowski Grandmaster Tournament” (after the name of the chess-sponsor and the owner of the company “Borowski GmbH – Antennen und Elektro-Technik”) and it was held there for the second time. The field was extremely strong, without any obvious outsiders and my result of +2 proved to be good enough for sharing 1st-3rd place with Vadim Zujaginzev and Klaus Bischoff. According to the tie-break rules Vadim Zujaginzev was declared the winner of the tournament and I took the second place. It was quite amazing, but there was a carting – competition, which happened during the free day (after round five) in the carting – arena, which belonged to the organizer of

the tournament Julian Borowski and strangely enough – Zujaginzev was the best again. He practically never fell out of the car and he showed the best result on the track. I drove over the series of ten laps, as I thought quite fast, but... I ended up only second at the end...

I had encountered Dr. Huebner several times over the chess-board until then, but I had never beaten this outstanding experienced grandmaster.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\textit{f}3 \textit{f}6 4.e3
\textit{f}5 5.\textit{c}3 e6 6.\textit{h}4 \textit{g}4

The other possible moves for Black here are – 6...\textit{g}6 (see my game with S.Volkov, in which I was playing with White) and 6...\textit{e}4.

7.\textit{b}3 \textit{b}6

Black can also play now – 7...\textit{c}7.
8.h3 \textit{h}5 9.g4 \textit{g}6

10.\textit{c}5!?

I was reluctant to play in the “standard” fashion – 10.\textit{xg}6 hxg6 11.\textit{g}2, because I had understood, having in mind my previous experience against Dr. Huebner, that in order to win against him I had to play definitely in a non-standard way, not anti-positionally, though...
10...c7 11.g5 Kg8

In the game Calderin – Rausis, Elista 1998, there followed: 11...Qf7 12.Qxg6 hxg6 13.f4 b6 14.exb6 axb6 15.Qd2 c5 16.Qg2 Qc6 17.Qb5 Qb7 18.e4 and White had the initiative. It seems to me however, that the move 15...c5 is too risky and it is also inconceivable why White must play 13.f4 in the first place. In case my opponent had played 11...Qf7, then I had in mind the line: 12.Qxg6 hxg6 13.e4!? b6 14.exb6 axb6 15.Qg2 and White would have slightly better prospects. Still, the best move for Black here is 11...Qh5, without being afraid for the future of his knight, because White cannot capture it in any way. For example after: 12.Qxg6 (or 12.Qe2 Qe7 13.Wd1 Qxg5) 12...hxg6 13.e4, there arises a complicated position with mutual chances.

12.Qxg6 hxg6 13.e4 Qh4?!

Evidently, that was the line that Dr. Huebner had relied on, having played 11...Qg8 before, but it turned out to be a mistake. It is equally bad for him to try: 13.Qe7 14.Qf4! Qxf4 15.Qxb7 dxe4 16.Qe2! – and White wins. Instead, he had better continue with: 13...b6 (or 13...Qd7) and White would have remained in a somewhat better position.

14.exd5 exd5
(diagram)

15.Qe2!

Following that natural and strong move, the position should be doubtlessly evaluated as very unpleasant for Black. For example after: 15...Qe7 16.Wg3 Qxg3 17.fxg3 Qe4! 18.Qg2 Qe6 19.g4!? White is clearly better.
23...\(\text{Ke7}\)

In case of 23...0-0-0, White can follow with 24.g6!, for example: 24...\(\text{\text{Bd7}}\) 25.gxf7 \(\text{\text{Bxf7}}\) (or 25...\(\text{\text{Wd8}}\) 26.\(\text{\text{Kg5}}\) \(\text{\text{Ke7}}\) 27.\(\text{\text{Kf4}}\) \(\text{\text{Kxg5}}\) 28.\(\text{\text{Ke6}}\); 26...\(\text{\text{Vc7}}\) 27.\(\text{\text{Ve3}}\) \(\text{\text{Ke7}}\) 28.\(\text{\text{Vg3}}\) \(\text{\text{Kxg5}}\) 29.hxg5 \(\text{\text{Bxh1+}}\) 30.\(\text{\text{Kxh1+}}\)) 26.\(\text{\text{Vg6}}\) and it is too bad for Black to continue with 26...\(\text{\text{Vf6}}\), because of: 27.\(\text{\text{Ve8}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vd8}}\) 28.\(\text{\text{Wxd8}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vxd8}}\) 29.\(\text{\text{Vg5}}\).

24.g6

This move is even better than 24.h5.

24...\(\text{\text{Vd8}}\) 25.\(\text{\text{h5}}\) \(\text{\text{Vd7}}\) 26.gxf7+ \(\text{\text{Kxf7}}\) 27.\(\text{\text{Vg6}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vg8}}\) 28.\(\text{\text{Vh6}}\) \(\text{\text{Ke7}}\) 29.\(\text{\text{Vg5}}\) \(\text{\text{Vf8}}\)

White would have countered 29...\(\text{\text{Vf8}}?\), with 30.\(\text{\text{Vxh7}}\)+.

30.\(\text{\text{Vxf7}}\) \(\text{\text{Vf7}}\)

I saw here that Black was losing immediately after: 30...\(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) 31.\(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) \(\text{\text{gxh6}}\) из-за 32.\(\text{\text{Wg4}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vg5}}\) 33.f4.

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

35.\(\text{\text{Vh3?!}}\)

Now, I made a serious mistake, having lost a lot of time on calculating the possible queen-sacrifice on move 31. Instead of the move in the game, I had better play 35.\(\text{\text{Ke4}}\). For example: 35...\(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) (Or 35...\(\text{\text{Ve7}}\) 36.\(\text{\text{Vh5}}\)+! \(\text{\text{Vf7}}\) 37.\(\text{\text{Vh3}}\) \(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) 38.\(\text{\text{Vf3}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vg6}}\) 39.\(\text{\text{Vg3+}}\); 36...\(\text{\text{Vg6}}\) 37.\(\text{\text{Vf3}}\) and White's attack is victorious.) 36.\(\text{\text{Vxe6}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vg5}}\) 37.\(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) \(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) 38.\(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) \(\text{\text{Vxh6}}\) 39.\(\text{\text{Vxe6}}\) b6 (Or 39...\(\text{\text{Vg6}}\) 40.\(\text{\text{Vd8}}\) \(\text{\text{Ve5}}\) 41.\(\text{\text{Vf3}}\) \(\text{\text{Vb4}}\) 42.\(\text{\text{Vf3}}\) \(\text{\text{Vxe2}}\) - 42.\(\text{\text{Vxb7?}}\) \(\text{\text{Vc2!}}\) - 42...\(\text{\text{Vxe2}}\) 43.\(\text{\text{Vxb7 and White must be winning.}}\) 40.\(\text{\text{Vd8}}\) \(\text{\text{Vb8}}\) (or 40...\(\text{\text{Bxc5}}\) 41.\(\text{\text{Vxc6}}\) cxd4 42.\(\text{\text{Ve2}}\) 41.\(\text{\text{Bc4}}\) \(\text{\text{Bxc5}}\) (or 41...\(\text{\text{Vg5}}\) 42.b5 \(\text{\text{Vxb5}}\) 43.c6 \(\text{\text{Va6}}\) 44.\(\text{\text{Vxe6+}}\); 41...\(\text{\text{Vb5}}\) 42.\(\text{\text{Vf7}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vg6}}\) 43.\(\text{\text{Vxe5}}\)+ \(\text{\text{Vf5}}\) 44.f3+-) 42.\(\text{\text{Vxc5}}\) \(\text{\text{Vg5}}\) 43.b5 \(\text{\text{Vxb5}}\) 44.\(\text{\text{Vc6}}\) \(\text{\text{Va6}}\) 45.\(\text{\text{Vxe6+}}\)

Frankly speaking, I had considered the move played by my opponent as impossible, because of the queen-sacrifice – 31.\(\text{\text{Vxh7+}}\) \(\text{\text{Vxh7}}\) 32.\(\text{\text{Vxg7+}}\) \(\text{\text{Vg6}}\) 33.\(\text{\text{Vf4+}}\) \(\text{\text{Vg5?}}\) 34.\(\text{\text{Vxe2}}\). Later, after I had lost plenty of time calculating variations, I understood that it would not work, because instead of 33...\(\text{\text{Vg5?}}\), Black could play 33...\(\text{\text{Vxf5}}\) and after: 34.\(\text{\text{Vh5+}}\) \(\text{\text{Vg5}}\) (But naturally...
35...\textit{Exh6} 36.\textit{Ef3+} \textit{Gg5} 37.\textit{Gg3} \textit{Hf6} 38.\textit{Ge5+} \textit{Gg6} 39.\textit{Gb3} \textit{Hh2} 40. \textit{Ge2} \textit{Hf7}

It seems interesting, but it is hardly advisable for Black to try: 40...\textit{Qc7} 41.\textit{Exb7} \textit{Qe6} 42.\textit{Ad2?! Hh4} 43.\textit{Axa7 Qxd4} 44.\textit{ Ea4}.

Here, the time-trouble was over and I understood that I would have serious problems to materialize my extra pawn...

41.\textit{Qg1 Hh4} 42.\textit{Be6+ Sh7} 43. \textit{Ge2 Gg7+} 44.\textit{Gg3 Hf7} 45.\textit{Eee3}

52...\textit{Gg6+?!}

It is better for Black to play: 52...\textit{Qxa2} 53.\textit{Dxc5} (or 53.\textit{Exb6?! Exb6} 54.\textit{Qxb6} \textit{cd4} 55.\textit{Qxd5 Qg5} 56.\textit{Qf4+ Kg4!}) 53...\textit{bc5} 54.\textit{Qxc5}, but White preserves good winning chances in that case too.

53.\textit{Qf3 Qxa2} 54.\textit{Dxc5 bxc5} 55. \textit{Qxc5} \textit{Qc6} 56.\textit{Qd3?!}

The move 56.\textit{Qb5} was much simpler.

56...\textit{Qc1} 57.\textit{Qxc1 Qxc1} 58.\textit{Qe3}

58...\textit{Qc4}?

The right defence for Black here is 58...\textit{Qc2!}, preventing the move \textit{Qe3-d4}. Now, White has the choice between 59.\textit{Qb8}, with the idea to advance the b-pawn – 59.\textit{Qb5 Qg6} 60.b3 and the move 59.\textit{Qd4}; nevertheless Black had some practical chances to save the game in all these lines.

59.\textit{Qb5 Qe4+} 60.\textit{Qd3 Qf4} 61. \textit{Qxd5 Qxf2} 62.b4 \textit{Qg6} 63.\textit{Qe5 Qf6} 64.\textit{Qe1} 1-0

I have remembered that tournament not only because I managed to share 1-3 place in it, having played rather well indeed and to take second place in the carting-competition, but also with something that happened on my way home...
The point was that the closing ceremony of the Essen tournament was quite unusual. There was a concert, as a part of the program, of a bass-vocalist and that was grandmaster Emil Sutovsky. I had listened to his performances before (for example at the Hastings tournament that same year, but the audience there were quite minimal...). Here, having a wonderful piano-player to accompany his singing, Emil demonstrated his brilliant musical talent and the public were just delirious with pleasure. I was so thrilled with his wonderful interpretation of a Don Quihote aria that on the morning of the next day, when we were supposed to fly to Moscow with Vadim Zvjaginsev, I still had in my mind the motif:

"That is why, senorita, that is why
The heart of Don Quihote is closed for others,
La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la..."

So, I made a "long multi-move combination, sacrificing plenty of material..." and that was – having only two hours left until the flight, I forgot in the taxi, which of course went immediately from the Dusseldorf airport back to Essen..., my bag with my computer as well as my passport and airplane ticket too... It all ended well, though...

\[ \text{\textbf{E12}} \]

\textit{Dreev – Sax}

European Club Cup, Neum 2000

1.\textit{d}4 \textit{\text{f}6} 2.\textit{c}4 \textit{e}6 3.\textit{\text{f}3} \textit{b}6 4.a3 5.\textit{b}7 5.\textit{c}3 d5 6.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}7 7.\textit{a}4+ c6 8.\textit{x}f6 \textit{x}f6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.g3

I played like this for the first time in my practice.

10...0–0 11.\textit{g}2 \textit{c}5?!

I believe that move to be imprecise. Black clarifies his intentions too early. It was better for him to try 11...\textit{d}7, or 11...\textit{e}7, followed by f7-f5 (V. Korchnoi played like that...).

12.\textit{\text{d}1}!

This is the correct reaction! In case of: 12.0–0 \textit{\text{c}6} 13.\textit{d}1, Black's position is acceptable.

12...\textit{\text{c}6}?! 12...\textit{\text{e}7}.

13.\textit{x}c5 \textit{x}c5 + 14.\textit{b}xc3 bxc5 15.0–0 \textit{\text{a}5}?

Sax should have been relying on that particular move. On the other hand, I think Black cannot save the game after the move in the text. Instead, he should have tried 15...\textit{\text{e}8} and I would have faced a choice between: 16.c4 \textit{d}4 17.e3, or the immediate move 16.e3. I would have maintained a clear advantage in both cases. Possibly, I would have preferred 16.e3, though...

16.\textit{\text{c}2}!

That is a very powerful move. Now, Black has no satisfactory defence
against the threat 17.\texttt{Qg5}; moreover that his d5-pawn is under attack.

\textbf{16...h6}

In case Black defends his d5-pawn with 16...\texttt{Qe7}, then after 17.\texttt{Qg5} g6, White has 18.\texttt{c4! Bxd8} (following 18...h6 19.\texttt{Qh3}, White's knight goes to the f4-square) 19.cxd5 (It is also very strong for White to play 19.\texttt{wa2! \pm}) \texttt{Bxd5} 20.\texttt{Qxd5} \texttt{Bxd5} (or 20...\texttt{Bxd5?} 21.\texttt{Qe4=} 21.\texttt{Qe4!}, threatening \texttt{Bxd5} and attacking the c5-pawn.

Sax could have attempted to give up a pawn and to try to survive in an endgame, but he obviously did not like that possibility and he preferred to fight in the middle game.

\textbf{17.\texttt{Qxd5} \texttt{Bxa3} 18.\texttt{Bh5}!}

I admit, I did not see that move immediately and instead I calculated the variations after: 18.\texttt{c1 Bxc1} 19.\texttt{Bxc1 Qa5} and 18.\texttt{Qd2 Qa5} 19.\texttt{Bb1 Bb3}, but I came to the conclusion that Black can hold the position in both cases.

\textbf{18...\texttt{Bfe8}}

Following: 18...\texttt{d8} 19.\texttt{Qg5 f5} 20.\texttt{Qxb7 Bxb7} 21.\texttt{Qe6 Bf6} 22.\texttt{Qc7}, White has the advantage.

\textbullet\texttt{e7 22.\texttt{xg7 Qg8}}, with an unclear position, but then I noticed the important intermediary move:

\textbf{19.\texttt{Bb1}!}

Now, the point is that after:

\textbf{19...\texttt{Ab8}}

(that is Black’s only move)

\textbf{20.\texttt{Qg5 hXg5} 21.\texttt{h7+ Bf8} 22.\texttt{h8+ Bxe7} 23.\texttt{Qxg7}}

and in case of 23...\texttt{g8}, White follows with: 24.\texttt{Bxb7+! Bxb7} 25.\texttt{Qg8 Bb1}+ 26.\texttt{Bf1}, winning the game after: 26...\texttt{d1} 27.\texttt{Bxg5+ Bxg5} 28.\texttt{Bxg5 Bd6} 29.e4, as well as after: 26...\texttt{Qa1} 27.\texttt{Bxg5+ Qd7} 28.\texttt{Bd5+ Qc7} 29.\texttt{Qxf7+ Qb6} 30.\texttt{Qg2 Bxf1} 31.\texttt{Bb3+}.

My opponent chose to defend in another fashion:

\textbf{23...\texttt{Qa8}}

and after

\textbf{24.\texttt{Qxg5+ Qd7} 25.\texttt{Be5+ Qc7} (if 25...\texttt{Qe7}, then 26.\texttt{Be4=}) he resigned in view of the line 26.\texttt{Bf7+ Qe7} 27.\texttt{Bf4+ Qe5} 28.\texttt{Bxb8}.}

\textbf{63}

\textbf{Dreev — Peng Xiaomin}

Tan Chin Nam Cup, Beijing 2000

\textit{The Cup of Tan Chin Nam, a famous chess-sponsor, was played in the year 2000 for the sixth time (and for the second time with my participation). The tournament was already a category 16 event and it was even very close to be category 17 (only 7 points short). There was tremendous attention in the Chinese media. Honorary President of FIDE F. Campomanes visited the tournament after}
an official invitation by the organizers.

The previous year the tournament was played in Shenjan (I have included my game against Wang Zili from that tournament in the book) and there were seven Chinese players then. This time it was balanced — there were five hosts and five guests. Nigel Short was quite confident at the opening ceremony that the Chinese players would dominate in the chess world after not more than 20 years, but he also expressed his hope that it would not happen in the next 10 years. One of the organizers said in his turn that he hoped that after the tournament the rating of the best Chinese players would improve and the tournament might be of an even higher category in the next year’s Cup.

The development of the fight in the tournament showed that N. Short’s hopes were a bit more justified, since the European players (V.Bologan, A.Dreev, N.Short and Al.Onishchuk shared 1st-4th place. It was amazing, but just like in the previous year in Shenjan, I came second according to the tie-break coefficient. Frankly speaking, the climate there is quite difficult for Europeans: it is hot and humid and in addition you have to endure one of the greatest problems in Beijing — the smog. It was in fact much easier in Shenjan the previous year. The wonderful attitude, however, of the organizers towards the participants and their kind consideration compensated for all that amply.

1.d4 _JOIN_6 2.c4 g6 3._JOIN_3 g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0–0 6._JOIN_2e2 c5 7.d5

9..._JOIN_5

This is a new and quite rare variation of the King’s Indian Defence and I had played it twice in my practice before that game. Black compromises his kingside pawn-structure considerably in order to obtain some counterplay connected with the pawn-advance f7-f5.

10._JOIN_5x5 gxh5 11._JOIN_d3 f5 12.0–0

Black has tried in that position the move 12..._JOIN_a6 too.

12..._JOIN_d7

This is a relatively new attempt, but it is not a novelty. GM Viorel Bologan had played that quite natural move against me in the second round of the same tournament and I had answered with 13._JOIN_e2. Following 13...c4! 14._JOIN_c2, we agreed to a draw, because I did not have any opening advantage at all. After that game I understood that the maneuver _JOIN_e2 was correct, but it still needed some preparation. Accordingly, I was quite happy when that same position had arisen once again on the board, because I had the possibility to check the correctness of that idea again in practice.
13.\texttt{c2} $\texttt{e5}$

Now, (just like on the previous move) it is not good for Black to follow with 13...\texttt{f4}, due to: 14.\texttt{e2} $\texttt{e5}$ 15.\texttt{g3+} and White maintains a great advantage.

14.\texttt{e2}!

Here, my opponent took a long time contemplating his decision. Black's pawn-weaknesses are slowly becoming a factor, particularly if he tries the typical idea for similar positions - 14...\texttt{fxe4} 15.\texttt{xe4} $\texttt{f5}$ 16.\texttt{xf5} $\texttt{xf5}$ 17.\texttt{g3}.

The move played by Black is quite interesting and it deserves an exclamation mark.

14...\texttt{wh4}!

This is not only an attacking maneuver by Black's queen, but he also protects his weak pawn in the process. Now, Black is planning \texttt{f5xe4}, followed by $\texttt{c8-f5}$. Meanwhile, I am going to mention that had he played: 14...\texttt{fxe4} 15.\texttt{xe4} and now 15...\texttt{wh4}, then White would have had the powerful argument - 16.\texttt{c2}.

15.\texttt{f4}!

Here, White has another possibility to fight for the advantage.

15...\texttt{c4}

In case of 15...\texttt{g6}, White can play 16.\texttt{exf5} and after: 16...\texttt{xf5} (or 16...\texttt{e7} 17.\texttt{g3}) 17.\texttt{xf5} $\texttt{xf5}$ 18.\texttt{g3} $\texttt{d4+}$ 19.\texttt{h1}, Black cannot follow with 19...\texttt{xd5}, due to: 20.\texttt{b3} $\texttt{e7}$ 21.\texttt{f5}.

16.\texttt{g3} $\texttt{xb2}$

It is obviously in favour of White if Black continues with: 16...\texttt{f4} 17.\texttt{xe4}.

17.\texttt{we2} $\texttt{g4}$

This is a quite attractive move for Black.

His other interesting possibility was 17...\texttt{d3} and here 18.\texttt{e5!} \texttt{dxe5} 19.\texttt{xh5} would have preserved the initiative for White.

18.\texttt{f3}

Now, in case Black follows with 18...\texttt{d3}, then after 19.\texttt{xd3} \texttt{xa1}, the line: 20.\texttt{xf5} $\texttt{xf5}$ 21.\texttt{g3} $\texttt{ae8}$ 22.\texttt{exf5} $\texttt{xe1+}$ 23.\texttt{f2} $\texttt{xc1}$ 24.\texttt{exg4+} \texttt{hxg4} 25.\texttt{f6} $\texttt{ff7}$ 26.\texttt{dd2}!, leads to a clear advantage for White. Black however, has a smart intermediate check - 19...\texttt{d4+} and after: 20.\texttt{h1} $\texttt{xa1}$ 21.\texttt{xf5} $\texttt{xf5}$ 22.\texttt{g3} $\texttt{ae8}$ 23.\texttt{exg4+} \texttt{hxg4}, he even seizes the initiative, because now White cannot capture \texttt{ef5}, because of the vulnerability of his first rank. It is equally bad for White to
try: 20.\texttt{ae}3 \texttt{axa}1 21.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{xf}5 22.\texttt{eg}3 \texttt{wxg}3 23.hxg3 \texttt{ae}8 and Black can counter 24.fx5 with 24...\texttt{xe}3. On the other hand, White has the cold-blooded resource 20.\texttt{df}1, which neutralizes Black’s tricky check and he maintains his advantage after: 20...\texttt{xa}1 21.\texttt{xf}5 \texttt{xf}5 22.\texttt{eg}3.

If Black checks immediately – 18...\texttt{ed}4+, then 19.\texttt{ae}3 (but not: 19.\texttt{eh}1 \texttt{dd}3 20.\texttt{wx}d3 and Black’s abovementioned idea triumphs once again – 20...\texttt{xa}1 etc.) 19...\texttt{fxe}4 (or 19...\texttt{xe}3+ 20.\texttt{wx}e3 \texttt{dc}4 21.\texttt{wc}3 and if 21...\texttt{wg}7 – 22.\texttt{e}5) 20.\texttt{xd}4 \texttt{fxe}3 21.\texttt{gx}f3 \texttt{wx}f4 22.\texttt{xb}2 and White has the edge.

\textbf{19.e5 dxe5 20.h3!}

But naturally not 20.\texttt{xb}2?, because of 20...\texttt{e}4; or 20.\texttt{fxe}5?, due to 20...\texttt{wd}4+.

\textbf{20...\texttt{gg}6 21.fxe5}

21.\texttt{xb}2 \texttt{e}4.

I had expected here White’s position to have been completely winning. I had seen Black’s next move beforehand, but I could not even believe that it was possible...

\textbf{21...\texttt{dc}4! 22.\texttt{xc}4 \texttt{xe}5}

Here, I understood that the position had remained quite unclear just like before. I was seriously considering: 23.\texttt{wxh}4 \texttt{xa}1 24.\texttt{dh}5, but it did not appease me at all. Finally, after I saw that Black had at his disposal the intermediate move 23...\texttt{df}6, I gave up that possibility altogether.

\textbf{23.\texttt{eb}1 \texttt{xxg}3!}

In case of 23...hxg3, I would have answered quite comfortably with 24.\texttt{xf}4.

\textbf{24.\texttt{xf}4}

It seemed attractive for White to play 24.\texttt{xb}2, but after: 24...\texttt{dd}7 25.\texttt{wc}3 \texttt{ae}8, he had no advantage whatsoever, while following: 26.\texttt{xxg}3 hxg3 27.\texttt{dd}1 (with the idea \texttt{h}5) Black had the wonderful resource – 27...\texttt{f}4.

\textbf{24...\texttt{b}6?}

Until now my opponent had played extremely well, but here he made a serious blunder. After: 24...\texttt{xf}4 25.\texttt{xf}4 \texttt{dd}6?!, I would have had some compensation, but the outcome of the game could have gone either way...

\textbf{25.\texttt{xxg}3!}

Naturally, I did not hesitate too much...

\textbf{25...hxg3 26.\texttt{xb}3 \texttt{ff}6 27.\texttt{xxg}3+ \texttt{ff}7 28.\texttt{ee}2! \texttt{hh}4?}

Now, Black loses immediately. But even after the only possible defence – 28...\texttt{dd}4+ 29.\texttt{ee}3 \texttt{hh}4 30.\texttt{ff}3?,
he would have great problems and his attempt to trade the rooks – 30...\texttt{g8}, after: 31.\texttt{xf5} \texttt{gxg3} 32.\texttt{e6+ g8} 33.\texttt{f7+ d8} 34.\texttt{f4 g6} 35.\texttt{dxe6 e7} 36.\texttt{c7!}, leads to a victory for White.

29.\texttt{e5}. Black resigned.

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textbf{64}] A81
\begin{quote}
Dreev – Zhang Zhong
Tan Chin Nam Cup, Beijing 2000
\end{quote}

1.\texttt{d4 f5} 2.\texttt{g3 f6} 3.\texttt{g2 g6} 4.\texttt{f3 g7} 5.0–0 0–0 6.\texttt{b3 d6} 7.\texttt{b2 g4}!?

The idea behind that move is rather simple – Black wishes to prepare the pawn-advance e7-e5, preventing in the process White’s possibility d4-d5. Zhang Zhong had played like that before and I did not mind entering a position of that type at all.

8.\texttt{c4 d7}

My opponent played rather quickly until that moment. I had to spend a lot of time in order to find the correct continuation.

9.\texttt{g5}!

This was the only way for me to prevent Black’s thematic pawn-advance, but it proved to be quite effective. Here, my adversary was faced with a dilemma – where to go with his knight on d7? In case of 9...\texttt{b6}, I would have played: 10.\texttt{h3 h6} 11.\texttt{c1 e5} 12.c5 and Black’s position would have been rather uncomfortable.

9...\texttt{d6} 10.\texttt{h3}

Naturally, it is not good for White to follow with: 10.d5? \texttt{e5}! 11.\texttt{dxe6 xh2}.

10...\texttt{d7} 11.d5 \texttt{f7} 12.\texttt{xf7 xf7}

Now, we can conclude: Black has failed to push e7-e5; accordingly the opening stage has ended in favour of White.

13.\texttt{d2 d7} 14.\texttt{f3}

Black would have liked to advance c7-c6, but he could not do that immediately, because of: 15.\texttt{dxc6 bxc6} (It is not good for Black to play 15...\texttt{xc6, due to 16.xg5!}) 16.c5! d5 17.b4 and White’s advantage is obvious. Therefore, Zhang Zhong preferred the passive defence:

14...\texttt{f8}

although he should have considered the possibility 14...a5, in order to impede White’s pawn-advance b2-b4.

15.\texttt{b4 c6}!?

That was an imprecision. We agreed after the game with my partner that Black’s best chance had been: 15...\texttt{a5} 16.a3 \texttt{c6}, but even then White would have been slightly better.

16.\texttt{dxc6 bxc6}

This is possibly not the best choice either. After: 16...\texttt{xc6} 17.\texttt{b3 e8} 18.a4, Black is of course worse, but that was definitely the least of evils.

17.\texttt{c5 b8}

Black has no more good moves; in
case of 17...d5 18.\(\text{\#}e5\), followed by a2-a4 and b4-b5, his position remains a sorry sight. It is only slightly better for him to defend with: 17...dxc5 18.bxc5 and after \(\text{\#}b8\), White can always counter with \(\text{\#}e5\).

18.\(\text{\#}xd6\) \(\text{\#}xd6\)

Or 18...\(\text{\#}xb4\) 19.dxe7 \(\text{\#}xe7\) 20.\(\text{\#}e5\) and Black has great problems.

19.\(\text{\#}b1\)!

This is a strong move. It seemed attractive for me to try 19.\(\text{\#}b3\)+, but the queen had to keep under control Black’s d6-pawn. Additionally, the move in the game is not a loss of time, because Black now must defend against the threat b4-b5.

19...a6 20.\(\text{\#}d3\) \(\text{\#}e8\)??

Black had better try 20...\(\text{\#}e4\).

21.\(\text{\#}fc1\)!

White is threatening now 22.\(\text{\#}d4\).

21...\(\text{\#}b6\)

Once again, Black had to consider: 21...\(\text{\#}e4\) 22.\(\text{\#}xg7\) \(\text{\#}xg7\) 23.\(\text{\#}d4+\) \(\text{\#}g8\), with some chances for a successful defence.

Black’s move in the game conceals a trap: if now 22.\(\text{\#}xd6\), then not: 22...\(\text{\#}xf2+??\) 23.\(\text{\#}xf2\) \(\text{\#}e4+\) 24.\(\text{\#}g1\) \(\text{\#}xd6\) 25.\(\text{\#}xg7\) \(\text{\#}xg7\) 26.\(\text{\#}d1\) and White wins, but: 22...\(\text{\#}e4!\) 23.\(\text{\#}d4\) \(\text{\#}d8\) 24.\(\text{\#}f4\)

g5 and White’s queen has no good square to retreat to. The following line would not work for White either: 22.\(\text{\#}xf6\) \(\text{\#}xf6\) 23.\(\text{\#}xd6\) \(\text{\#}xe2\) 24.\(\text{\#}fl\) \(\text{\#}g7\) 25.\(\text{\#}xd7??\) \(\text{\#}d8\) and his queen gets trapped.

22.e3

This solid stabilizing move annihilates Black’s hopes of organizing some counterplay.

22...d5?

That is Black’s decisive mistake. His last practical chance was to try 22...\(\text{\#}e4\), but the evaluation of the position after: 23.\(\text{\#}xg7\) \(\text{\#}xg7\) 24.a4 is crystal clear in favour of White.

23.\(\text{\#}e5\)

White is threatening 24.\(\text{\#}xd7\) and 25.\(\text{\#}xc6\).

23...\(\text{\#}e6\)

Black loses too after: 23...\(\text{\#}e7\) 24.\(\text{\#}xc6\) \(\text{\#}xc6\) 25.\(\text{\#}xf6\) \(\text{\#}xf6\) 26.\(\text{\#}xc6\). He could have only prolonged his resistance with the move 23...\(\text{\#}ad8\).

24.\(\text{\#}xd7\) \(\text{\#}xd7\)

25.\(\text{\#}xc6!\) \(\text{\#}xc6\) 26.\(\text{\#}xd5\) \(\text{\#}d6\) 27.\(\text{\#}xg7\) \(\text{\#}b6\)

Or 27...\(\text{\#}xg7\) 28.\(\text{\#}c3+\).

28.\(\text{\#}xe6+\) \(\text{\#}xe6\) 29.\(\text{\#}a1\) \(\text{\#}xa2\)

30.\(\text{\#}d1\) \(\text{\#}c4\) 31.\(\text{\#}d6\). Black resigned.
van Wely – Dreev
FIDE World Chess Ch (k. o.)
New Delhi 2000

This is the first game of the third round of the knock-out stage of the World Championship.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♗f3 ♗bd7 6.♘c2 ♗d6 7.♗d3 0-0 8.0-0 dxc4 9.♘xc4 a6

This is the key-move for the entire variation and its purpose is to prepare b7-b5 and to follow that with c6-c5. The immediate move 9...b5 is also possible. There is some difference between these two lines, though; sometimes after 9...a6, Black plays c6-c5 without the preliminary move b7-b5. That is exactly what happened in our game.

10.a4
White prevents the move b7-b5. His other possibility is: 10.♗d1 b5 11.♗e2 etc.

10...c5 11.♗d1

That is an interesting moment. My opponent had already tested that position before against Garry Kasparov in a game played on the Internet. Garry continued in that game with 11...

♗c7. This move was considered to be quite reliable, but after: 12.♗e4 ♘xe4 13.♗xe4 ♘f6 14.♗h4 cxd4 15.♗d3!, White sacrificed a pawn and he obtained a powerful initiative. I had all this in mind, while I was preparing for that game, but then I thought “Why not simply capture cxd4?”

11...cxd4 12.exd4
The move 12.exd4 seems to be rather unnatural for White.

12...♗c7 13.♗d3 ♘b6 14.♗e3! ♘b7 15.♗e2

White has found an interesting possibility not to lose tempi for the defence of his h2-pawn. Now, if Black is too greedy: 15...♗xf3 16.♗xf3 ♘xh2+ 17.♗h1 ♘d6, then after 18.g3 (with the idea to follow with ♘g2, ♘h1 etc.), it becomes evident that the dominance over the h-file, the two bishop advantage and the passive placement of Black’s pieces more than compensate White’s sacrificed pawn. Black’s position is cramped, so he cannot remove his rook away from the a8-square, because his a6-pawn would be hanging. Therefore, I think my next move is quite logical.

15...♗d5?! 16.♗e4?!
White surrenders the initiative to
Black with his last move. The correct decision for him would have been 16...£ac1! and Black can choose between: 16...£xc3, 16...£xe3, or 16...£b8.

16...£f4! 17.£xf4 £xf4 18.g3 £h6

White possibly thought that he can somehow exploit the unusual placement of the bishop on the h6-square. One of his bishops is already absent however, moreover his rook cannot go to c1 and his d4-pawn is isolated. All these factors might lead to serious problems for White in the nearest future.

19.h4?!

White does not even feel the danger. He should not have wasted time on scaring crows. He had instead to anticipate the move that Black played in the game, so it deserved attention for him to try 19.£a3.

19...£c6!

This move emphasizes the vulnerability of the a8-h1 diagonal, which arose as a result of the move g2-g3. Black is now threatening f7-f5.

20.£a3

White prevents the immediate advance 20...f5, because he can counter that with: 21.d5! exd5 (The line: 21...£xd5 22.£c2 fxe4 23.£xd5 exd5

24.£d4 is in favour of White.) 22.£d4 £g6 23.h5!, followed by 24.£d6. It would be bad for White to try: 20.£e5 £xe5 21.dxe5, due to 21...£ad8, with the idea to follow with £d3.

20...£d5!

After that move, it becomes clear that White should be on the defence from now on.

21.£b1 £ac8 22.£e1 £fd8 23. £eg5 £xg5 24.hxg5 £f8 25.£e3?!

It is understandable that White wishes to get rid of Black's pressure along the long a8-h1 diagonal and to preserve the queens on the board at the same time. He has no time for that, however. Instead, he had to continue with: 25.£e4 £xe4 26.£xe4 £xe4 27.£xe4, complying with a slightly worse endgame.

25...£c4!

This move seems to be more reliable than: 25...£a5!? 26.£e4 £xe4 27.£xe4 £xa4 28.d5; moreover that I had in mind that there were plenty of moves left to the first time-control.

26.£xc4

Otherwise White loses one of his pawns.

26...£xc4 27.b3 £b4 28.£d3!

I have to admit that Loek was play-
ing quite enterprisingly! He found an interesting possibility to continue the fight.

28...a5

But not 28...AXB3?? 29.AXB7+.

29.Ac4 AXf3 30.Axf3 Exd4

Now, Black has an extra pawn, but his rook is stalemated. Frankly speaking, I entered that position quite deliberately, since I considered that I would easily manage to free my rook from its exile.

31.Af4!

That is the only way to enable White to occupy the d-file.

31...Ed6 32.Ee4 Ed1+!

This is an important fine point! After: 32...Ag6 33.Ed4 Exd4 34.Exd4, White’s king is better placed on g1 than on the h2-square. That is why the intermediate check is so essential, just like every minute detail in chess!

33.Eh2

It is too bad for White to play 33.Ag2? Ag6 and he cannot continue with 34.Ed4.

33...Ag6 34.Ed4 Exd4 35.Exd4 Ef8 36.Ed8+ We7 37.Eb8

It is weaker for White to try here 37.Eg8, because of: 37...h6! 38.gh gh 39.f4 Ef6, followed by e6-e5, or Ag6-e7.

37...We5

38.Ab7+?!

The idea to capture the pawn with a check was basically incorrect. He had better continue with 38.Ab5 and after: 38...Af3+ 39.Ag2 Axb5 40.Ab6 Abx3 41.Aa6, it would be still far from clear, because White’s a-pawn would have remained to be very powerful.

38...Ad6 39.Ab5 Abx3 40.f4

Now, the line: 40.Ab6+ Ac5 41.Aa6, loses for White, due to: 41...Ab5 42.axb5 Abx5 43.Ac7 a4 44.f4 Ac6.

40...Af3+

After: 40...Ab5 41.axb5 Ac4 42.Axf7 a4 43.Axg7 a3 44.Ag8! (or 44.Axh7 a2) the position would have been unclear.

41.Ag2 Ad4 42.Ed7+ Ac5 43.Ac7+ Ad5 44.Ac4+ Ad6 45.Axf7 Bc3 46.Ab6

46...Af5?!

The immediate move 46...Ac7 was stronger for Black. Then White would have been forced to play 47.Ef8 with some chances for a draw.

47.Ag2

I had overlooked that move, when I played 46...Af5; accordingly I had just lost two tempi...

47...Ac7 48.Ac7
The only advantage of the move 46...\( \text{Qf5} \) is that now White cannot avoid the trade of rooks, because after 48.\( \text{Qf8} \) \( \text{Qc2+} \) he loses outright.

48...\( \text{Qxc7} \)

Now, the position is almost equal...

49.\( \text{Qd3} \) \( g6 \) 50.\( g4 \) \( \text{Qd6} \) 51.\( \text{Qe3} \) \( b5 \) 52.\( \text{axb5} \) \( a4 \) 53.\( \text{Qd2} \)

This is the precise defence. White avoids the line: 53.\( \text{Qd4} \) \( a3 \) 54.\( \text{Qc3} \) \( b6 \) 55.\( \text{Qb3} \) \( \text{Qxb5} \), since he cannot continue with: 56.\( \text{f5} \) \( \text{gxf5} \) 57.\( \text{gxf5} \) \( \text{exf5} \) 58.\( \text{Qxf5} \), because of 58...\( \text{Qd4+} \).

53...\( \text{Qb6} \) 54.\( \text{Qc1} \) \( \text{Qc5} \)

Or 54...\( \text{Qxb5} \) 55.\( \text{f5} \) =

55.\( \text{Qb2} \) \( e5 \)

That was my only chance to play for a win. After: 55...\( \text{Qd4} \) 56.\( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{Qe3} \) 57.\( \text{b6} \) \( \text{Qxh4} \) 58.\( \text{Qa3} \) \( \text{Qxg4} \) 59.\( \text{Qxa4} \) \( \text{Qxg5} \) 60.\( \text{b4} \) \( \text{Qf5} \) 61.\( \text{Qc5} \) \( \text{e5} \) 62.\( \text{Qd3} \), White holds the position.

56.\( \text{Qa3??} \)

That is a blunder... White could have made a draw in a problem-like fashion with: 56.\( \text{fxe5} \) \( \text{Qxb5} \) 57.\( \text{e6} \) \( \text{Qc7} \) 58.\( \text{e7} \) \( \text{Qd6} \) 59.\( \text{e8=Q} \) (or 59.\( \text{Qb5} \) \( a3=+ \)) 59...\( \text{Qxe8} \) 60.\( \text{Qc4} \) !

56...\( \text{e4} \) 57.\( \text{Qf1} \) \( \text{Qxb5}+ \) 58.\( \text{Qxa4} \) \( \text{Qd4} \) 0–1

After this victory, I was White in the second game, made a draw and I qualified for the 1/8-final. Veselin Topalov was my opponent there. I won the first game with White, but then I lost the second and my adversary was luckier in the tie-break. I would like to remind you that V. Anand won that World Championship.

66      I.Sokolov – Dreev
Dos Hermanas 2001

This game was played in a round-robin tournament in the Spanish city of Dos Hermanas. That was my first participation in this traditional tournament. That was its eleventh edition and the event had plenty of strong players taking part, with approximately equal strength. Meanwhile, the tournament was objectively much stronger than its "official" category 16, because the ratings of the young grandmasters were considerably lower than their actual strength (The World junior champion under 18 – Francisco Vallejo was playing, as well as, this tournament was the grandmaster debut of the 14 year-old Teimur Radjabov.) Miguel Illeskas had a very low rating at that moment too, but everybody knew how strong he really was. At the end, I shared first place with 5 ½ out of 9 with grandmaster I.Smirin, but I was awarded the trophy for the winner, because of my better "Berger" coefficient.

1.d4 \( d5 \) 2.c4 \( c6 \) 3.\( \text{Qf3} \) \( \text{Qf6} \) 4.\( \text{c3} \) \( e6 \) 5.\( \text{g5} \) \( h6 \) 6.\( \text{h4} \) dxc4 7.e4 \( g5 \) 8.\( \text{Qg3} \) b5
We have played the so-called “Anti-Moscow variation”.

9.\(\text{\texttt{e2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{b7}}\) 10.\(\text{\texttt{h4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{b4}}\)

Black’s usual reply here is – 10... \(\text{\texttt{g4}}\). At the time our game was played, the move – 10...\(\text{\texttt{b4}}\), which leads to an entirely different type of position, was relatively new and not well analyzed. It had the reputation of a variation in which even the tiniest imprecision might end up in a disaster for White as well as for Black.

Capturing that pawn leads to an advantage for Black here, for example:

17.\(\text{\texttt{axb3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{a5}}\)+ 18.\(\text{\texttt{d2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{exc5}}\) 19.\(\text{\texttt{xc5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xb5}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{e4!}}\) \(\text{\texttt{e7}}\).

17...\(\text{\texttt{gxf3}}\) 18.\(\text{\texttt{c6}}\) \(\text{\texttt{b4}}\)+ 19.\(\text{\texttt{c3}}\)

In case White interposes with his knight – 19.\(\text{\texttt{xc3}}\), then after: 19...\(\text{\texttt{xc6}}\) 20.\(\text{\texttt{xc6}}\) \(\text{\texttt{fxg2}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{g1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xf2?!}}\) 22.\(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) 23.\(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xd7}}\) 24.\(\text{\texttt{xf2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{c5}}\), his position is lost too.

19...\(\text{\texttt{xc3}}\)+ 20.\(\text{\texttt{bxc3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{fxg2}}\) 21.\(\text{\texttt{g1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{b2}}\) ! 22.\(\text{\texttt{d1}}\)

Or 22.\(\text{\texttt{xb2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{ec5!}}\)?

11.\(\text{\texttt{d4}}\)

This is of course possible, but the move – 11.\(\text{\texttt{hxg5}}\) is evidently stronger and it was played against me about a month later by grandmaster Suat Atalik.

11...\(\text{\texttt{exe4}}\) 12.\(\text{\texttt{xe5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g8}}\) 13.\(\text{\texttt{wc2}}\)

This is a novelty. That move is active indeed, but it is riskier than the one played in the game Xu Jun – P.Nielsen, Istanbul 2000, 13.\(\text{\texttt{hxg5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{hxg5}}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{xc4}}\).

13...\(\text{\texttt{c5}}\) 14.\(\text{\texttt{xc4}}\)

It seems here much more natural for White to exchange pawns first with: 14.\(\text{\texttt{hxg5}}\) \(\text{\texttt{hxg5}}\).

14...\(\text{\texttt{g4}}\) 15.\(\text{\texttt{b5+}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d7}}\) 16.\(\text{\texttt{dc5}}\)

(diagram)

16...\(\text{\texttt{b3!}}\) 17.\(\text{\texttt{wd3}}\)

22...\(\text{\texttt{wh4!}}\) 23.\(\text{\texttt{xd7+}}\) \(\text{\texttt{df8}}\) 24.\(\text{\texttt{wd4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{bl?!}}\)

The play is forced now and every tempo counts!

25.\(\text{\texttt{eb1}}\) \(\text{\texttt{ed8}}\) 26.\(\text{\texttt{cxb7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{xd4}}\) 27.\(\text{\texttt{wb8+}}\) \(\text{\texttt{ed8}}\) 28.\(\text{\texttt{xa7}}\) \(\text{\texttt{wh2}}\) 29.\(\text{\texttt{e2}}\) \(\text{\texttt{d2+}}\) 30.\(\text{\texttt{e3}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g3+!}}\) 31.\(\text{\texttt{xe4}}\) \(\text{\texttt{g4+}}\)

White resigned.
Dreev – Smirin
Dos Hermanas 2001

1.d4 癜f6 2.c4 伊斯 g6 3.騞c3 騞g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0–0 6.騞e2 a6 7.騞e3 騞bd7 8.騞d2 伊斯 c5 9.dxc5

That is a rarely played move; nevertheless it is quite interesting.

9...dxc5 10.騞d1 ǜa5

It seems more restrained for Black to try 10...騞c7, for example: 11.騞f4 e6 12.騞d3 申e8 13.騞f2 f5 14.exf5 gxf5 15.f4 申f6 16.騞e2 b6 17.騞f3 申a7 18.0–0 申b7 19.騞e2 申xf3 20.騞xf3 申d6 21.騞c1 申f7 22.騞e1 申e8 23.騞e2 申d8 ½ Khenkin – Banikas, Bolzano 2000.

11.騞c1 申c7 12.騞d3 b6 13.騞f4

13...e5?!N

This is a very important decision for Black. Instead, it was possible for him to try 13...申b7, as it was played in the game Luce – Morovic Fernandez, Copenhagen 1982.

14.騞g5 申e8

Black wishes to deploy his knight to the d4-square via f8–e6.

15.騞e2 申f8 16.騞d5 申xd5 17.cxd5

Now, it becomes evident that Black’s knight will never come to d4 in this game. Meanwhile, he cannot occupy additional space with the standard move 17...c4?!, because White will counter that with: 18.騞c1 b5 19.b3 and his position is already clearly preferable.

17...騞d7 18.騞c1 申d6

Or 18...a5!? 19.a4±

19.b4! cxb4 20.騞xb4 申b8 21.0–0 申f8 22.騞b2 申b7 23.a4 a5

24.騞f2!

With this powerful move White wishes to redeploy his pieces, placing them on the ideal squares – the bishop to b5 and the knight (depending on circumstances) – to g4 or to the d3-square and his positional advantage will become decisive.

Black’s only possible counterplay here is: 24...騞c5

but White has the resource:

25.騞b5 申d6 26.騞xd7 申xd7
27.\(\text{bxc}5!\) \(\text{bxc}5\) \(28.\text{\textcolor{red}{g}4}\) \(\text{a}6\)
That is Black’s only possibility.

29.\(\text{h}6+\)

This move is the best for White, but it is not so pragmatic; therefore I spent about ten minutes on it, which left me another ten minutes to the end of the time-control. The most natural line for White would have been:
29.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}e}5\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}a}4\) 30.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}b}7\) \(\text{d}4+\) 31.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{h}1}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}e}5\) 32.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}a}6\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}g}5\) 33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}a}5\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}3}\) and his position would have been objectively winning, despite some possible difficulties in the realization of the advantage.

29...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{f}8}\)

That is again an only move for Black. After 29...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{g}7}\), White wins with 30.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{f}6\) 31.\(\text{f}xe5+-\)

30.\(\text{f}4\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}d}5\) 31.\(\text{exd}5\)

I was here in a time-pressure, so I was reluctant to play the move 31.\(\text{f}xe5\), although I was calculating thoroughly the variation: 31...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}6}\) and here not: 32.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}f}7\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{g}8}\) (32...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}f}7\) 33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}6}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}4+}\) 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}d}4\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{c}xd}4\) 35.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{f}7+-}\); 32...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{g}7}\) 33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}6}\), with the idea to counter 33...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{a}a}8\) with 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{f}7+}\), but 32.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{f}2}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{b}3}\) – defending against \(\text{\textcolor{red}{f}6}\) (32...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}4}\) 33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}3}\), 33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}6}\) 33...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}e}6\) 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{b}2}\); 33...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}e}6\) 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}f}7+\); 33...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}e}6\) 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{c}5}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}6}\) 35.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}5}\) 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{c}5}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}6}\) (or 34...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}7}\) 35.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{c}3}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{a}7+}\) 36.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{h}1}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}8}\) 37.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}1}\) 35.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{c}3+-}\)

31...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{f}5}\)

(diagram)

32.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}1?!}\)

This is a typical time-pressure mistake. White was winning easily after 32.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{b}3}\)! and if 32...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}6}\) – then 33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{g}4}\).

32...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}a}4\)

Now, the fight becomes fierce again.

33.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{c}1}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}6}\) 34.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{h}4}\)! \(\text{\textcolor{red}{b}3}\) 35.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{a}1}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}d}5\) 36.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{b}1}\)

White has lost almost all his pawns, but his pieces are deployed in the closest vicinity to Black’s king, so he has a great advantage.

36...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}3+}\)

Or 36...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}3}\) 37.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{h}2}!?.\)

37.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{h}1}\!\)

If 37.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{h}2}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}2}\) 38.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{b}6}\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}g}2+\)! 39.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}g}2\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}2=}\)

37...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}4}\)

37...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}3}\)!

38.\(\text{\textcolor{red}{x}a}5\) \(\text{\textcolor{red}{e}f}4?\)

This is Black’s decisive mistake. GM Smirin admitted after the game that he had overlooked in the time-trouble the fact that White’s queen controlled the e1-square. Meanwhile, he had an only move – 38...\(\text{\textcolor{red}{d}7}\), enabling him to prolong his resistance.
39.\texttt{b7!} \texttt{a6} 40.\texttt{xh7} \texttt{e4} 41.\texttt{xc5} \texttt{e7}
Or 41...\texttt{g7} 42.\texttt{c3+}.
42.\texttt{g8} 1–0

This endgame is an easy win for White, because the h8-square is dark, for example: 42...\texttt{xg8} 43.\texttt{xe7} \texttt{xe7} 44.\texttt{xe7} h6 45.\texttt{f1} \texttt{f7} 46.\texttt{d8} \texttt{e8} 47.\texttt{c7} g5 48.h5 \texttt{f7} 49.\texttt{e5}.

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Atalik – Dreev
Sarajevo 2001

This game was played in the seventh round of the traditional round-robin tournament (It has been organized ever since the year 1957! ...) in Sarajevo. I had been already in Bosnia and Herzegovina in the autumn of the year 2000 and I took part in a tournament in the town of Neum, situated at the Adriatic coast. Still, that was my first visit to the capital of Bosnia – Sarajevo. It is just amazing how popular chess is there. I was walking in the city and I often saw people playing with huge chess pieces directly in the streets. There were electronic billboards in the pedestrian zones of the city, informing people about the participants in the tournament. There were advertisements all over the city. There were numerous spectators in the playing area in the Concert Hall of the Army Building. There was an official reception for the participants in the tournament by the state government during the day-off. It was emphasized at that meet-

ing that in Bosnia and Herzegovina chess is regarded as one of the solid connecting threads with the world society and by organizing this traditional tournament the country wishes to show its desire to maintain stability and to be integrated into the European system.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\texttt{f3} \texttt{f6} 4.\texttt{c3} e6 5.\texttt{g5} h6 6.\texttt{h4} dxc4 7.e4 g5 8.\texttt{g3} b5 9.\texttt{e2} \texttt{b7} 10.\texttt{h4} b4

I mentioned already in my comments to the game I.Sokolov – Dreev, Dos Hermanas 2001, that the usual reply for Black in that line of the “Anti-Moscow” system is the move – 10...g4.

11.\texttt{hxg5}

This is stronger for White than the move 11.\texttt{a4}, against which Black has serious arguments at his disposal as my game against I.Sokolov showed. By playing the move 11.hxg5, White is aiming at a direct refutation of the variation with 10...b4.

11...\texttt{bxc3} 12.\texttt{gxf6}

The subsequent development of that variation showed that here it is much stronger for White to follow with: 12.bxc3 \texttt{dxe4} 13.\texttt{e5} \texttt{h7} (Black cannot solve his problems with the
move 13...\(\text{\=Q}xc3\), which was played in the game Beliavsky – Sveshnikov, Metalska Trgovina 2002, 14.\(\text{\=Q}c2\) \(\text{\=Q}xe2\) 15.\(\text{\=Q}xe2\) \(\text{\=Q}d7\) 16.\(\text{\=Q}xh8\) \text{hxg5} 17.\(\text{\=Q}h7\) g4 18.\(\text{\=Q}e5\) \(\text{\=Q}xe5\) 19.\(\text{\=Q}xe5\) \(\text{\=Q}d5\). Alexander Henrkhovich played a wrong move with White here – 20.\(\text{\=B}b1\) and after 20...\(c5\), Black equalized. Beliavsky recommended later, as the best for White, the line: 20.\(\text{\=E}ah1!\) \(c5\) 21.\(\text{\=B}xf7\) \(\text{\=E}e4+\) 22.\(\text{\=Q}xe4\) \(\text{\=Q}xe4\) 23.\(\text{\=B}f4\); or 20...\(\text{\=Q}xg2\) 21.\(\text{\=B}xf7!\) \(\text{\=Q}xh1\) 22.\(\text{\=Q}g6+-\) 14.\(\text{\=B}b1\) \(\text{\=Q}a5\) 15.\(\text{\=Q}d2\!) and after this move, which was played by grandmaster D.Rogozenko against A.Filipenko (Internet, 2001), it can be said that the entire variation with 10...\(b4\) was doomed to oblivion. The game continued with: 15...\(f5\) (Or 15...\(\text{\=Q}xc3\) 16.0–0; 15...\(\text{\=Q}xd2\) 16.\(\text{\=Q}xb7\) \(\text{\=Q}xc3\) 17.\(\text{\=Q}c8+\) \(\text{\=Q}e7\) 18.\(\text{\=Q}f6+\) \(\text{\=Q}d6\) 19.\(\text{\=Q}d8+\) \(\text{\=Q}d7\) 20.\(\text{\=Q}e5+\) \(\text{\=Q}d5\) 21.\(\text{\=Q}xd7+\) \(\text{\=Q}e4\) 22.\(\text{\=Q}c6+\) \(\text{\=Q}f5\) 23.\(\text{\=Q}d1.\) 16.\(\text{\=Q}xf6\) c5 17.\(\text{\=Q}xe4\) \(\text{\=Q}xe4\) 18.\(\text{\=Q}h5+\) \(\text{\=Q}d8\) 19.\(\text{\=Q}xe4\) \(\text{\=Q}xc3\)+ 20.\(\text{\=Q}e2+-\)

\[12...\text{\=Q}xb2\] 13.\(\text{\=B}b1\) \(\text{\=Q}a5+\) 14.\(\text{\=Q}d2\)

Or 14.\(\text{\=Q}f1\) \(c3\) 15.\(\text{\=Q}e5\) \(\text{\=Q}a6!\)

\[14...\text{\=Q}c3\] 15.0–0 \(\text{\=Q}a6\) 16.\(\text{\=Q}b3\)

In the game Yuferov – Sveshnikov, St Petersburg 2000, there followed: 16.\(\text{\=Q}c4\) \(\text{\=Q}xa2\) 17.\(\text{\=Q}e3\) – and the game was rather unclear.

\[16...\text{\=Q}xa2\] 17.\(\text{\=Q}c5\) \(\text{\=Q}b5\) 18.\(\text{\=Q}c2\) \(\text{\=Q}a3\)

That is the best reply for Black. It would not work for him to play the natural line: 18...\(\text{\=Q}xc5\) 19.\(\text{\=Q}xc5\) \(\text{\=Q}a4\), because of: 20.\(\text{\=Q}xc3\) \(\text{\=Q}xe2\) 21.\(\text{\=Q}d2!\) and White would capture Black's super-important \(c3\)-pawn and later he would also regain his bishop thanks to the threat \(\text{\=Q}d6.\)

\[19.\text{\=Q}fd1\] \(\text{\=Q}g8!\)

This is an important resource for Black. Now, White must consider the possible exchange sacrifice – \(\text{\=Q}xg3.\) It was not so easy for me to decide to play that move from the point of view of psychology, since I was losing my castling rights. Still, the rook was my only piece that I could have brought into action at that moment. I was far from sure that my king would be comfortable in the centre, but I knew that it would not be so easy for my opponent to exploit that effectively. For example, White would not be able to push d4–d5 anytime soon, because of the placement of the knight on the \(c5\)-square.

In case of 20.\(\text{\=Q}e5\), Black can follow with 20...\(\text{\=Q}g5.\) It seemed to me during the game that White’s best possibility was – 20.\(\text{\=Q}f4\), but I was planning to counter that with 20...\(\text{\=Q}g6\), provoking my opponent to play 21.e5, after which he would have problems to advance d4–d5 ever.

Still, White captures:

\[20.\text{\=Q}xb5\]

and he forces the issue. This move looks anti-positional, because Black now has in addition a passed pawn and his knight obtains access to the \(c6\)-square. Suat intended to rely en-
tirely on dynamic factors, but he ignored some specific nuances of the position.

20...cxb5 21...e2 b4
That move is much stronger than 21...a6, since now I have the additional threat – c4.

22...e6
There is nothing else to recommend to White.

22...c4!
This is the most precise reaction for Black. It was quite possible that the line: 22...xex6 23...h5+ d8 24.d5 e5, was also very good, but similar complications were more to the taste of the computer and much less to my liking...

23...c7+ d8 24...h5
Naturally, 24...c2 was much better here for White, but I had plenty of attractive possibilities in that case too. For example: 24...c6 25...xb5 (or 25...xa8 b4) 25...xg3!? 26.fxg3 xb5 27.xc3 b8; or 24...xg3 (This move looks even more powerful.) 25...xa8 g6 and Black’s knight goes to the b4-square.

24...g5 25.h3 xg3 26.xg3 xc7 27.g8 d7 28.xf7 c4
Once again, this move with the queen to the c4-square is the most accurate for Black.

29.d5 e4. White resigned. In case of 30.e1, Black plays 30...c2, while after 30...e6, he wins with: 30...xb1 31.xb1 c2 32.e1 e8.

We shared a place in the final standings in the tournament once again with I.Smirin, just like we did a month ago in Dos Hermanas. This time we had 5 ½ points too, which proved to be sufficient to tie for first place in Spain...Here, in Sarajevo however, we only tied for 3rd – 4th place...Kiril Georgiev was the winner with 6 ½ points, while Veselin Topalov was second, half a point behind him.

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Dreev – Tkachiev
Tan Chin Nam Cup, Shanghai 2001

1.d4 d6 2.c4 g6 3...c3 g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0–0 6...ge2 c5 7.d5 e6
8.h3 exd5 9...xd5 h5 10.e2 h4
11...f1 h7 12...e3 f5 13.xf5

We had almost the same position, except with the inclusion of the moves a2-a4 and a7-a6, in our second additional game with Topalov (New Delhi, 2000). There followed: (Accordingly, the numbers of the moves are increased by one...) 14...xf5 15...f4 d7
16...xd6 e8 17...d2 and after some unbelievable developments I even managed to win that game... GM Tkachiev however, has an exquisite feeling for the nuances of the Qing’s Indian Defence and he finds a new idea,
based on the fact that both a-pawns have not been touched yet.
13...\textit{\textbf{a}}\textit{xf5} 14.\textit{\textbf{f}}2 \textit{b5}!

Now, you can see the difference. This move would have been impossible with pawns on a4 and a6 and White would have then an indisputable advantage after the transfer of the knight to the e3-square. Black is threatening now b5-b4. In case of: 15.\textit{\textbf{e}}3??! b4 16.\textit{\textbf{a}}4??! (It is better for White to try to play here 16.\textit{\textbf{xf5}.}) 16...d7 17.\textit{\textbf{c}}4, it is good for Black to follow with 17...\textit{\textbf{e}}7!? (It is quite dubious for him to try: 17...\textit{\textbf{e}}8?! 18.\textit{\textbf{xd}}6 \textit{a}xa4 19.\textit{\textbf{xe}}8 \textit{\textbf{d}}x\textit{d}1 20.\textit{\textbf{g}}x\textit{g}7 \textit{\textbf{e}}\textit{e}2 21.\textit{\textbf{e}}6, but he can consider instead 17...\textit{\textbf{e}}8?!.) and after 18.\textit{\textbf{f}}1, White would be in a critical situation after: 18...\textit{h}3 19.g3 \textit{\textbf{g}}5.

The position following: 15.\textit{\textbf{xb}}5 \textit{\textbf{wa}}5 16.\textit{\textbf{e}}2 \textit{\textbf{xc}}3+ (or 16...\textit{\textbf{e}}8 17.\textit{\textbf{d}}2) 17.\textit{\textbf{bxc}}3 \textit{\textbf{xc}}3+ 18.\textit{\textbf{d}}d2 \textit{\textbf{c}}2 19.\textit{\textbf{c}}c1 \textit{\textbf{xd}}1 20.\textit{\textbf{xc}}3 \textit{\textbf{xe}}2 21.\textit{\textbf{xe}}2 \textit{\textbf{a}}6, should be evaluated as rather unclear, because of the vulnerability of the d5-pawn, therefore I chose:
15.\textit{\textbf{a}}3
although that might look like a compromise on White's part.
15...\textit{\textbf{a}}6
It is not advisable for Black to continue with: 15...b4 16.a\textit{xb}4 \textit{\textbf{c}}\textit{b}4 17.\textit{\textbf{a}}a4.
16.\textit{\textbf{e}}3 \textit{\textbf{d}}7

Now, White can already push:
17.\textit{\textbf{g}}4!
and Black is forced to capture en passant:
17...\textit{\textbf{hxg}}3 18.\textit{\textbf{hxg}}3 \textit{c}4 19.\textit{\textbf{xf}}5
Of course not 19.g4, due to 19...\textit{\textbf{d}}d3.
19...\textit{\textbf{gxf}}5
In case of: 19...\textit{\textbf{xf}}5 20.f4, the vulnerability of the light squares in Black’s camp becomes worrisome.
20.\textit{\textbf{f}}f1 \textit{\textbf{f}}f6?!
This natural move leads to considerable difficulties for Black, since now he has no access to the f6-square with his knights. He had better play 20...\textit{\textbf{we}}7?!, or 20...\textit{\textbf{wa}}5?!
21.f4!
That useful move fixes Black’s f5-pawn and it creates a threat, which is far from obvious and small wonder Vlad overlooked it...
21...\textit{\textbf{eac}}8?!
Black has already great problems. He prepares \textit{\textbf{c}}c5 with his last move, because after the immediate 21...\textit{\textbf{c}}c5, Tkachiev naturally would have never liked the line: 22.\textit{\textbf{xc}}5 \textit{dxc}5 23.d6. In
case of 21...\(\text{\textsc{fe}8}\) (defending against \(\text{\textsc{xc}4}\)) it is good for White to continue with 22.\(\text{\textsc{wc}2}\), threatening \(\text{\textsc{h}5}\). It seems more logical for Black to follow with: 21...\(\text{\textsc{ab}8}\), with the idea to play next \(\text{a6-a5}\) and \(\text{b5-b4}\) and to create some action on the queenside. White however, can counter that plan successfully too, for example: 22.\(\text{\textsc{g}2}\) \(\text{a5}\) 23.\(\text{\textsc{ec}2}\) \(\text{b4}\) 24.\(\text{\textsc{axb}4}\) \(\text{\textsc{ab}4}\) 25.\(\text{\textsc{da}4}\) \(\text{c3}\) 26.\(\text{\textsc{bc}3}\) \(\text{\textsc{bc}3}\) 27.\(\text{\textsc{ac}1}\) \(\text{\textsc{fc}8}\) (or 27...\(\text{\textsc{bc}8}\) 28.\(\text{\textsc{db}5}\); 27...\(\text{\textsc{df}7}\) 28.\(\text{\textsc{xc}3!}\) \(\text{\textsc{fc}8}\) 29.\(\text{\textsc{h}5}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}6}\) 30.\(\text{\textsc{e}2}\)) 28.\(\text{\textsc{h}5}\) and he maintains his advantage.

22.\(\text{\textsc{xc}4!}\) \(\text{\textsc{b}xc}4\)

This move enables Black to organize some counterplay along the b-file; otherwise he would not have that possibility after his other lines.

23.\(\text{\textsc{h}5}\) \(\text{\textsc{b}8}\).

Vlad admitted after the game that he had still hoped that his mistake would not have such catastrophic consequences. I managed to find a clear-cut plan to obtain an overwhelming advantage.

24.\(\text{\textsc{xe}1}\)

I could have won a second pawn with: 24.\(\text{\textsc{xh}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{df}7}\) 25.\(\text{\textsc{h}5}\) \(\text{\textsc{h}8}\) 26.\(\text{\textsc{xf}5}\) \(\text{\textsc{xf}5}\) 27.\(\text{\textsc{xf}5+}\) \(\text{\textsc{g}6}\) 28.\(\text{\textsc{g}5+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}7}\), but Black would have some counter-

play. My opponent thought quite justifiably that after 24.\(\text{\textsc{e}2!}\) his position would have been rather difficult, but the move that I played in the game was at least that strong too...

24...\(\text{\textsc{xb}2}\) 25.\(\text{\textsc{xh}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}f7}\)

Unfortunately, there was no checkmate in sight – 26.\(\text{\textsc{xe}6}\) \(\text{\textsc{xc}3}\).

26.\(\text{\textsc{h}5+}\)

Or 26.\(\text{\textsc{e}6}\) \(\text{\textsc{xc}3}\).

26...\(\text{\textsc{g}8}\)

Of course not: 26...\(\text{\textsc{g}6}\)? 27.\(\text{\textsc{e}7+}\--\)

27.\(\text{\textsc{d}1!}\)

This is a very important move for White, because now the knight joins the action via the e3-square.

It is too bad for Black to play 27...\(\text{\textsc{b}1}\), because of 28.\(\text{\textsc{xe}6}\) (White can also try here the simple move 28.\(\text{\textsc{g}2}\); while in case of: 28.\(\text{\textsc{d}4}\) \(\text{\textsc{xd}4}\) 29.\(\text{\textsc{h}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}7}\) 30.\(\text{\textsc{xf}5+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}6}\) 31.\(\text{\textsc{xb}1}\) \(\text{\textsc{xd}5}\), he would have lost all his advantage.) 28...\(\text{\textsc{a}1}\) 29.\(\text{\textsc{h}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}7}\) 30.\(\text{\textsc{xf}5+}\) \(\text{\textsc{g}8}\) 31.\(\text{\textsc{h}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}7}\) 32.\(\text{\textsc{g}2+}\)-- and Black cannot capture White’s knight: 32...\(\text{\textsc{xd}1}\) 33.\(\text{\textsc{h}5+}\), while in case of 32...\(\text{\textsc{f}6}\), White wins with: 33.\(\text{\textsc{xf}6+}\) \(\text{\textsc{xf}6}\) 34.\(\text{\textsc{e}4}\), as well as with: 33.\(\text{\textsc{e}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{xe}7}\) 34.\(\text{\textsc{g}7+}\) \(\text{\textsc{f}7}\) 35.\(\text{\textsc{e}1+}\).

27...\(\text{\textsc{d}2}\) 28.\(\text{\textsc{e}3}\)

It is also possible for White to play
28...\textit{e}6 and after: 28...\textit{a}1 29.\textit{h}7+ \textit{f}7 30.\textit{x}f5+ \textit{g}8 31.\textit{h}7+ \textit{f}7 32.\textit{g}2 the position is winning for him. Black must also consider the possibility 28...\textit{c}3!, but after: 29.\textit{e}1 \textit{c}2 (He can also try the queen-sacrifice: 29...\textit{x}d5!? 30.\textit{x}f6 \textit{x}f6 31.\textit{e}e2 \textit{e}e8.) 30.\textit{x}d2 cxd1\textit{w}+ 31.\textit{w}xd1 \textit{w}d4 32.\textit{x}d6 \textit{f}6, his position would have been hardly better than the one he had in the game.

\textbf{28...\textit{f}7??!}

Black played that natural move, overlooking the possibility – 28...\textit{c}3!, after which strangely enough White does not achieve anything with the straightforward approach: 29.\textit{w}h7+ \textit{f}7 30.\textit{x}f5 \textit{h}8 31.\textit{e}e7+ (31.\textit{h}6+ \textit{f}8 32.\textit{e}e4 \textit{e}e5 33.\textit{h}5 \textit{x}h6 34.\textit{f}5 \textit{h}1+) 31...\textit{f}8 32.\textit{e}e8+ \textit{xe}8 33.\textit{x}g7+ \textit{x}g7 34.\textit{w}h8+ \textit{w}h8 35.\textit{w}h8+ \textit{e}7. He has however, the move 29.g4 and after: 29...\textit{fxg}4 30.\textit{w}h7+ \textit{f}7 31.\textit{x}g4 \textit{xf}2+ 32.\textit{w}xf2 \textit{h}8 33.\textit{w}e4 \textit{c}5 34.\textit{w}e3, White is still better, but of course it would be too early to talk about victory.

\textbf{29.\textit{d}xc4 \textit{x}d5 30.\textit{w}f3!}

Now, Black's rook is so misplaced that White wins tempi for an important regrouping of his forces.

\textbf{30...\textit{b}5 31.\textit{d}1}

It was even stronger for White to play immediately 31.a4, followed by \textit{d}5.

\textbf{31...\textit{d}5}

Or 31...\textit{f}8?! 32.\textit{d}d4.

\textbf{32.\textit{a}4}

Naturally, it would not work for White to continue with 32.\textit{x}d5?, because of 32...\textit{w}c6.

\textbf{32...\textit{d}xc4}

Black is now forced to give up the exchange; otherwise the game would be over after he loses his d-pawn.

\textbf{33.axb5 axb5 34.\textit{w}b7! \textit{e}6}

\textbf{35.\textit{e}1!}

That is more precise than the immediate move 35.\textit{w}b5.

\textbf{35...\textit{d}6 36.\textit{w}xb5 \textit{c}3 37.\textit{w}c4 \textit{d}f6}

Black is trying to obtain some counterplay at the price of a pawn.

\textbf{38.\textit{w}c8+ \textit{f}8 39.\textit{w}xf5 \textit{w}a6+ 40.\textit{g}1 \textit{c}8 41.\textit{c}2 \textit{w}c6.}

This move allows White to inflict a deadly blow. Black would have more practical chances if he had defended with 41...\textit{c}4, but White would have countered that with 42.\textit{h}4!, followed by f4-f5.

\textbf{42.\textit{d}d4 \textit{d}5 43.\textit{x}f6 \textit{x}f6 44.}
46. \( \text{e}8+ \text{e}8 \text{g}6+ \text{h}7 45. \text{e}7 \text{d}4+ 49. \text{f}8 \text{e}8+ \text{h}6+ \text{g}7 48. \text{e}8+ \text{f}8 47. \text{g}6+ \text{h}5! \\
Now, Black is already helpless.
49...\text{d}4+ 50. \text{g}2. Black resigned.

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Dreev – Zhang Zhong
Tan Chin Nam Cup, Shanghai 2001

This game is from the 7th Cup – Tan Chin Nam.

1.d4 \( \text{f}6 \) 2.\( \text{f}3 \) e6 3.g5
I wanted that day to go away from the most fashionable opening lines... The Torre Attack is an infrequent guest of the contemporary tournaments. Naturally, it possesses its own theory and fine points. It is interesting to quote here the notes that Richard Reti made more than 70 years ago about the move 3.g5, which had been played by Carlos Torre – "...this is not an attempt by White to take the advantage in the centre, but it is just a solid piece development...That setup by White does not guarantee him any real advantages...his excellent development provides him with the possibility to inflict a mortal strike, in case the opponent makes even a slight mistake..." (R.Reti “Ein Lehrbuch des Schachspiels”)

3...c5 4.e3 \( \text{c}6 \) 5.bd2 b6
My opponent is playing in the opening a bit carelessly. As a result, I had the possibility to change radically the contours of the game, which was quite rare for that type of positions.

6.e4!?
As usual, the game develops in the following fashion here: 6.d3 \( \text{e}7 \) 7.0-0 \( \text{b}7 \) 8.c3, or 6.c3 \( \text{b}7 \) 7.d3 cxd4 8.exd4.

6...\( \text{e}7 \)
Black had tried, in one of the quite rarely played games in this variation, the move – 6...cxd4 (Xu Yang – Enghat, Sofia 1994), but White could have answered with the logical capture – 7.exd4!?

7.xf6 gxf6
Taking with the bishop on f6 is in favour of White after: 7...\( \text{xf6} \) 8.d5 \( \text{b}4 \) (In case of 8...exd5, White has the pleasant choice between: 9.\( \text{xd}5 \) 0-0 10.0-0-0 and another line, which might be even better: 9.d6+ \( \text{e}7 \) 10.\( \text{xd}5 \).) 9.dxe6 fxe6 10.c3 \( \text{c}6 \) 11.d6+. The other possible capture – 9...dxe6 10.c3 \( \text{d}5 \) (or 10...\( \text{xd}1+ \) 11.\( \text{xd}1 \) \( \text{c}6 \) 12.\( \text{b}5 \) \( \text{d}7 \) 13.\( \text{d}6+ \) \( \text{e}7 \) 14.\( \text{xf}7 \) 11.\( \text{b}5+ \) \( \text{d}7 \) 12.\( \text{a}4 \), leads to a superior position for White as well.

8.d5 \( \text{b}4 \)
I spent a lot of time on the clock here. The move 9.d6 seemed to me to be too optimistic! I considered also 9.c3, but I understood that White would fail to establish a complete control over the d5-square, for example:
9...b7 10.c4 (or 10.e4 f5) 10...b5. Therefore:
9.c4 f5

Here, I had two probably equal in value possibilities to retreat with my knight - to c3, or to g3. In fact, it was far from obvious, which one was better...After the retreat to the c3-square; the knight would have solidified my position, while coming to g3 would enable me to bring my knight into the attack later. The move 10.g3 is a bit risky from the positional point of view, because the knight there has practically no free squares to go to; meanwhile Black has the bishop pair! On the other hand, I had already succeeded in compromising Black's pawn-structure on the kingside; while his knight on b4 is quite misplaced too...After some deliberations I played:

10.g3 d6 11.a3 d6 12.d3 c7 13.e4!?

I had a difficult choice once again. It would have been a wrong decision to play primitively, by simply castling: 13.0-0 h5!? 14.dxe6 fx6 15.e4 f4 16.e2 e5; but I could have tried instead to capture on e6 at first: 13.dxe6?! fx6 14.e4 f4 15.h5 e5 16.g7+.

13...fxe4 14.xe4 f5 15.d3 0-0 16.c2 d7
Or 16...exd5!? 17.xf5 (17.cxd5 d7) 17.dxc4 18.xc4+ h8.
17.dxe6 xe6+ 18.f1 f7 19.e1 d8
This move is practically forced.

20.h4
That is an important resource for White! Now Black has to defend against the threat g5.
20...h6 21.h5
I already have the possibility to consider the maneuver f3-h4.
21.d7
It seemed to me that the line:
22.h4 xh4 23.xh4 e8 24.xe8 xe8, was too primitive, so I continued with:

22.d2!
This move is rather unpleasant for my opponent now, because in case he tries to protect his h6-pawn, then my queen comes to the f4-square with tempo, attacking Black's d6-pawn.
He is presently forced to continue with:

22.f4 23.e4 e7
After 23.e8, I had a simple move - 24.h4, but also I had the interesting tactical possibility: 24.xc5!? bxc5
25.\textit{\textbf{c4} \textbf{c7} (or 25...\textit{\textbf{wxc4+} 26.\textit{\textbf{g1}}}) 26.\textit{\textbf{wdx6}}.}

\textbf{24.\textit{\textbf{h4} \textbf{xh4} 25.\textit{\textbf{Exh4}}} }

White’s rook joins in the action now.

\textbf{25...\textit{\textbf{ad8}}} 

That is a logical try. Zhang Zhong is preparing the move \textit{d6-d5}, which would not have worked immediately, because of: 25...d5 26.\textit{\textbf{cxd5} \textit{\textbf{wxd5}}} (or 26...\textit{\textbf{cxd5} 27.\textit{\textbf{d6} \textit{\textbf{xf6}}} 28.\textit{\textbf{c4} \textit{\textbf{Exh4}}} 29.\textit{\textbf{cxd5}+ \textit{\textbf{gh8} 30.\textit{\textbf{xa8} \textit{\textbf{xa8}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{f7+ \textit{\textbf{g7}}} 32.\textit{\textbf{xd7} \textit{\textbf{h1+}}} 33.\textit{\textbf{e2} \textit{\textbf{hx5+}}} 34.\textit{\textbf{d2} \textit{\textbf{xf7}}} 35.\textit{\textbf{e7+}) 27.\textit{\textbf{d6} \textit{\textbf{g5}} 28.\textit{\textbf{c4+}.}}}}

\textbf{26.g3!} 

But not 26.\textit{\textbf{cxd6} \textit{\textbf{xf6}}.}

\textbf{26...\textit{\textbf{d5}}} 

Now, White’s rook has the possibility to act in its full force in the fight for the \textit{f4}-square. After the capture 26...\textit{\textbf{fxg3}}, I would have to choose between 27.\textit{\textbf{wh6}} and 27.\textit{\textbf{e3} \textit{\textbf{xf2+} 28.\textit{\textbf{dxf2} \textit{\textbf{xf2+}} 29.\textit{\textbf{xf2} \textit{\textbf{gxf2}} 30.\textit{\textbf{g3+}.}}}}

\textbf{27.\textit{\textbf{Exf4}}} 

(diagram)

\textbf{27...\textit{\textbf{Exf4}}} 

My opponent decided here to give up his queen with the idea obviously to have some practical chances connected with exploiting the X-ray \textit{d8-}

d2 and the possibility to build up a fortress in the future. In fact, his move turned out to be a capitulation.

After 27...\textit{\textbf{wh5}}, it would not have worked for him to play: 28.\textit{\textbf{f6}+ \textit{\textbf{xf6}}} 29.\textit{\textbf{Exf6} \textit{\textbf{wh1+}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{e2} \textit{\textbf{e8+}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{d1} \textit{\textbf{a4+}) (but not: 31...\textit{\textbf{g4+} 32.\textit{\textbf{c2} \textit{\textbf{xe1}}} 33.\textit{\textbf{g6+!}}). Capturing 28.\textit{\textbf{cxd5}}, would have provided Black with at least a draw after: 28...\textit{\textbf{wh1+} 29.\textit{\textbf{e2} \textit{\textbf{wh5+}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{f1} (White’s attempt at avoiding sharing the point might have ended up in a disaster after: 30.f3 \textit{\textbf{wh2+} 31.\textit{\textbf{d1} \textit{\textbf{a4+!} 32.\textit{\textbf{c1} \textit{\textbf{cxd2+} 33.\textit{\textbf{cxd2} \textit{\textbf{xf4}}} 34.\textit{\textbf{xf4} \textit{\textbf{cxd5}}}).}}}

I would have however, the resource 28.\textit{\textbf{wh4!}} and following: 28...\textit{\textbf{wh3+} 29.\textit{\textbf{g1} \textit{\textbf{f3}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{Exh3} \textit{\textbf{dxe4}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{Exh6}}, thanks to the threat \textit{\textbf{g5}}, my position would have been winning. Instead, my opponent could have played 27...\textit{\textbf{wh5}}, having more tactical possibilities at his disposal and my task to find the best moves would have been much more difficult.

\textbf{28.\textit{\textbf{gxf4} \textit{\textbf{dxe4}}} 29.\textit{\textbf{Exe4} \textit{\textbf{xf5}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{e3} \textit{\textbf{e6}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{g3+} \textit{\textbf{f7}}} 32.\textit{\textbf{c3} \textit{\textbf{cxd3+} 33.\textit{\textbf{cxd3}}} 34.\textit{\textbf{Exd8} \textit{\textbf{Exd8}}} 35.\textit{\textbf{f3} \textit{\textbf{d4}}} 36.\textit{\textbf{g1} \textit{\textbf{f6}}} 37.\textit{\textbf{b7} \textit{\textbf{Exh5}}} }

Black’s attempt to obtain some counterplay with 37...\textit{\textbf{Ed1+}} fails after:
38.\(\text{Nh}2\) \(\text{Nd}2\) 39.\(\text{Ng}3\) \(\text{Nx}h5+\) (or 39...
\(\text{Ne}2+\) 40.\(\text{Ng}4\)) 40.\(\text{Ng}4\) \(\text{Ng}7\) 41.\(\text{Nh}3+\)
and he loses his rook.

38.\(\text{Nxa}7\) \(\text{Ed}6\) 39.\(\text{Nc}7\) \(\text{Ee}6\) 40.\(\text{b}4\)
\(\text{cxb}4\) 41.\(\text{axb}4\) \(\text{Ng}7\) 42.\(\text{b}5\) \(\text{Ec}8\) 43.
\(\text{Ec}8+\) \(\text{Ec}5\) 44.\(\text{Ed}5+\) \(\text{Ec}6\) 45.\(\text{c}5\)
\(\text{bxc}5\) 46.\(\text{b}6\) \(\text{Ed}6\) 47.\(\text{Ec}5\) 1–0

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Dreev – Banikas
European Club Cup, Panormo 2001

I was playing for the club of Bosna
(from Bosnia and Herzegovina) in
that European Team Cup.

1.\(\text{d}4\) \(\text{Lf}6\) 2.\(\text{c}4\) \(\text{c}5\) 3.\(\text{d}5\) \(\text{b}5\) 4.\(\text{cxb}5\)
a6 5.\(\text{b}6\)

I play that line regularly against the
Volga gambit – White does not accept
the pawn sacrifice and that leads to
quite different positions in compari-
sion to the line 5.\(\text{bxa}6\). Some two years
before this game, I had written a spe-
cial article on that subject, which was
published in the German magazine
Schach. I had shared with my readers
my understanding of that variation in
details in this article. Naturally, chess
theory develops permanently; fashion
changes and evaluations of positions
sometimes even contradict each oth-
er. Still, it seems to me that most of
the contents of my article remain up-
to-date even now. Frankly speaking, I
had no idea whether my opponent had
studied my theoretical work before
our game or not...

One of the basic plans for Black
against the 5.\(\text{b}6\) system is – d7-d6,
g7-g6, \(\text{f}8-g7\) and depending on cir-
cumstances – capturing on b6 with
the queen, or with the knight. It is in-
teresting, but still somewhat slow for
Black to play: 5...a5 6.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{a}6\) – with
the idea to develop quickly the light
squared bishop and to trade it for its
white counterpart, preventing White’s
castling in the process. Still, tourna-
ment practice has confirmed that after
White’s energetic reply 7.f4!, followed
by \(\text{f}3\) and e2-e4 – the position is in
his favour.

My opponent chose the sharpest
line, in which Black opens up the cen-
tre immediately:

5...\(\text{e}6\) 6.\(\text{c}3\) \(\text{xd}5\) 7.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{exd}5\)
8.\(\text{xd}5\) \(\text{c}6\)

GM H.Banikas had not played the
Volga Gambit in any game before our
tournament; nevertheless I had ex-
pected that variation as an eventual
possibility. The point was that in the previous round, in the game Portisch – Banikas, that position had already appeared on the board. The eminent Hungarian veteran chose an unfavourable line for White – 9.\( \text{g}5 \text{xb}6 10.\text{e}4+ \text{e}7 11.\text{xe}7 \text{xe}7 12.\text{c}2 \) (In case of 12.\text{xa}8, Black can at least force a draw with: 12...\text{xb}2 13.\text{d}1 \text{c}3+ 14.\text{d}2 \text{c}1+) 12...\text{b}8 (It also seemed good for Black to continue with the simple move 12...d5!? , with an advantage for him.) 13.b3 – and after: 13...c4 14.\text{f}3 \text{xb}3 15.axb3 \text{xb}3 16.\text{xb}3 \text{xb}3, Black remained with an extra pawn.

I decided to follow my own recommendation from the article, so I played:

9.\text{f}3

This is the best for White and now Black is practically forced to reply with:

9...\text{b}8

\[ 
\]

10.e4

White's other possibility to fight for the opening advantage is the move 10.\text{d}2 and one of its ideas is to place the bishop quickly on the c3-square, from where it protects the b2-pawn and it is aimed at Black's kingside. I have tested the move 10.\text{d}2 in several games and quite successfully at that. Therefore, I recommended it in my article and I made a conclusion there that although the move 10.e4 (Naturally, I analyzed thoroughly that move too in my article...) was also possible, Black, as a rule after it, could manage to solve his opening problems. During the game, it came to my mind that my opponent should have been familiar with this publication and he might have been specially prepared for our game, so I decided to play 10.e4, moreover that during the period after the appearance of the article I had succeeded in finding some additional possibilities for White in this variation. I still consider the move 10.\text{d}2 up to the point in this line, though...

10...\text{e}7 11.\text{c}4 0-0 12.0-0 \text{a}5

Black avoids the main variation (12...\text{xb}6 13.\text{h}5 d6 etc., White has also tried here 13.b3) and he continues with a seldom played line. The idea behind 12...\text{a}5 is quite obvious – he wishes to repel White’s bishop away from the a2-g8 diagonal. The drawback of that move is evident too – Black’s knight is decentralized.

13.\text{d}3 \text{xb}6 14.\text{h}5 \text{b}7

In the game Lautier – Koch, France 1999, Black played an interesting move – 14...d5 and after: 15.exd5 g6 16.\text{h}6 \text{xd}5 17.\text{e}1 \text{e}6 18.\text{xe}6 \text{xe}6 19.\text{g}5 \text{g}5 20.\text{xd}5 \text{d}4 21.\text{d}2 \text{xd}3 22.\text{xa}5 \text{a}2 23.\text{e}1 \text{d}6 24.h4 \text{c}6 25.\text{c}3 \text{f}7 26.\text{e}4, the opponents agreed to a draw.

15.\text{d}2 \text{d}6

Black has tested in practice 15...
\( \text{e6. Following 16.efe1, White's position is preferable.} \)

\[ \text{16.ead1N} \]

This is a novelty. In the game Arakelian – Sumaneev, Briansk 1995, White went back with his bishop 16.ac2. I did not like to lose a tempo for the retreat of the bishop and I played a useful move protecting it indirectly.

\[ \text{16...dc6 17.cf4} \]

The most natural try here is 17.cc3, but I did not like Black's possible reply 17...dd4.

\[ \text{17...gg6!} \]

\[ \text{18.cc4} \]

That is an imprecision and it became the reason that my opponent could have equalized the position, as we are going to see later.

Naturally, the pawn-advance 18.e5 would have been too optimistic. Black has two good possibilities after that: 18...dd4 19.ee1 h6 20.ac3 db6, or 18...xg2+ 19.xg2 g6, followed by cc6-d4.

Meanwhile, I should have played the move 18.efe1, protecting my pawn and preserving the threat e4-e5. During the game I thought that the consequences of 18...dd4 might be quite unclear, but later in my home analyses, I understood that after: 19.xd4 cxd4 20.a3, White's position should be better.

\[ \text{18...d6} \]

Now, it seems that White's pieces are perfectly placed and his advantage should be overwhelming. In fact, things are far from simple. For example, White cannot play 19.e5?, due to 19...dd4. I was considering the move 19.efe1, but Black could counter that with 19...cc8!. After White's only move 20.h3, Black redeploy his bishop – 20...ee6 and his position is quite acceptable.

Here, I thought for a long time before playing:

\[ \text{19.h3} \]

This move is motivated not so much by the need to ensure a leeway for the
king, but to prevent Black's maneuver $\&b7$-c8-e6. Now, 19...$\&c8$ is of course bad, for example, because of 20.e5.

It looks like the position will soon be clearly in favour of White, particularly if Black does not play actively enough. My positional advantage seemed to be guaranteed and it was supposed to increase, since Black's bishop could hardly be redeployed. My opponent found here a wonderful possibility to avoid the positional bind:

19...$\&a8$!

White now obviously needs his rook on e1, but unfortunately I had to lose a tempo for the move h2-h3. Here, after 20.$\&fe1$, Black organizes some counterplay after the knight-maneuver - 20...$\&b4$.

I did not have too much time left on the clock at that moment. My opening advantage seemed to be dissipating and I understood that I would fail to consolidate my position. Therefore I decided to act in a completely different fashion:

20.$\&g5$ $\&d8$

The game is rather unclear after: 20...$\&xg5$ 21.$\&xg5$ $\&h6$ 22.$\&xf7+$ $\&h8$ 23.$\&e2$ $\&d4$.

21.$\&e3$ $\&a8$ 22.$\&g5$ $\&d8$ 23.$\&d2$ $\&f6$

Here the move 23...$\&a8$ would have been senseless, because of 24.$\&d5$. In order for Black's battery to begin functioning, he should remove his knight somewhere, but White has taken the b4-square under control.

24.$\&d5$ $\&a8$ 25.$\&c3$ $\&e7$ 26.$\&xf6$ $\&xf6$

Black could have played here more calmly - 26...$\&xd5$ 27.exd5 $\&h6$! (This is better for Black than: 27...$\&xf6$ 28.$\&fe1$) 28.$\&g5$ $\&g6$ and that might lead to a possible repetition of moves.

Now, the fight becomes fierce again and its development is favourable for me...

27.$\&g5$ h6 28.$\&xf7+$ $\&b8$ 29.$\&xf7$ $\&xf7$ 30.$\&xd6$ $\&xe4$ 31.$\&fd1$ $\&f8$

I had too little time left to be able to apprehend all the fine points of that tricky position, but I had the feeling that White's prospects should be preferable.

32.$\&d7$!?

I considered the other possibility too - 32.$\&e2$!, but I made up my mind to follow with the penetration of the rook.

32...$\&f5$ 33.$\&g6$

Black has certain problems now. For example in case of 33...$\&h8$, White can continue with 34.$\&b6$!?. Possibly, Black had to try 33...$\&e8$!?. The exchange of queens becomes quite probable in many variations and that would lead to an endgame. Instead, H.Banikas tried to exchange queens outright and thus he in fact was making me a present. I was in a severe time-trouble at that moment, so...un-
fortunately I did not accept it...: 33...\textit{\$e6}?

\textbf{34.\textit{\$xc6}?}

Naturally, I saw the move – 34.\textit{\$1d6}, but I never connected it with the pawn-advance g2-g4 (attacking Black's knight...) in the line: 34...\textit{\$a4} 35.\textit{\$g4}+– \textit{\$b4} (or 35...\textit{\$c2} 36.\textit{\$xf5} \textit{\$c1}+ 37.\textit{\$d1} 36.\textit{\$d2}!). In case of 34...\textit{\$b5}, White can follow with the simple: 35.\textit{\$e6}+ \textit{\$h8} 36.\textit{\$d8}+–

So, as you have already seen – the move 34.\textit{\$1d6} was winning quite easily.

\textbf{34...\textit{\$xc6} 35.\textit{\$c7} \textit{\$f6} 36.\textit{\$f3}}

I was reluctant to continue with 36. \textit{\$c1}, because of: 36...\textit{\$d4} 37.\textit{\$xc5} \textit{\$g6}, although it might have been quite reasonable to play like that and to follow later with 38.\textit{\$g4}.

\textbf{36...\textit{\$h7}}

That is an unnecessary loss of time. Black could have equalized with 36...\textit{\$d4}! and if 37.\textit{\$b4} (It is better for White to play 37.\textit{\$f2}.) then Black would have the resource 37...\textit{\$d6}! and it would be White who would have to worry about how to make a draw...

\textbf{37.\textit{\$c1} \textit{\$d4}?!}

That is already a serious imprecision and the reason was that Black was also short of time. It would have been much better for him to follow with 37...\textit{\$d5} and after: 38.\textit{\$b3} \textit{\$d4} 39.\textit{\$h2}, the position would have been equal. Now, White can collect three pawns for his knight after: 39.\textit{\$1xc5} \textit{\$e6} 40.\textit{\$xg7}+ \textit{\$xg7} 41.\textit{\$xd5} \textit{\$f4} 42.\textit{\$d7}+ \textit{\$f8}, but that would not change the correct evaluation of the position...

\textbf{38.\textit{\$xc5} \textit{\$b5} 39.\textit{\$e7} \textit{\$g6}}

Black had better play here 39...\textit{\$d6}.

\textbf{40.\textit{\$f2} \textit{\$d6}}

White's rooks now are a bit misplaced, they are badly coordinated and they come under attack by Black's pieces. Therefore, my plan was to consolidate my position by exchanging a couple of rooks.

\textbf{41.\textit{\$e4}!}

Now, Black cannot play: 41...\textit{\$e6} 42.\textit{\$c2} \textit{\$d3}, because of 43.\textit{\$d2}.

\textbf{41...\textit{\$d7} 42.\textit{\$h4} \textit{\$e6} 43.\textit{\$c2} \textit{\$g6} 44.\textit{\$e3} \textit{\$f6} 45.\textit{\$d2}}

So, I managed finally to accomplish what I wanted – the rooks would soon be exchanged. Black's position without rooks would be extremely unpleasant and maybe even lost.

\textbf{45...\textit{\$xd2} 46.\textit{\$xd2} a5}

My next plan included the follow-
ing: I wanted to improve maximally the placement of my kingside pawns and then to create a passed pawn on the queenside. It is tremendously difficult for Black to resist that plan successfully on both sides of the board.

47.\textit{b3} $\textit{c6}$ 48.\textit{e4} $\textit{d7}$ 49.\textit{e3} $\textit{e5}$ 50.\textit{h5} $\textit{d5}$ 51.\textit{g4} $\textit{a4}$

Now, my task becomes much easier. Black’s pawn-advance $a6-a5$ was more or less reasonable, but his last move just speeds up his demise. The rest is quite simple.

52.\textit{e3} $\textit{xb3}$ 53.\textit{ed3}+ $\textit{e6}$ 54.\textit{xb3} $\textit{d6}$ 55.\textit{b4} $\textit{c6}$ 56.\textit{a3} $\textit{g5}$ 57.\textit{f4} $\textit{e6}$ 58.\textit{f5} $\textit{e8}$ 59.\textit{a5} $\textit{c6}$ 60.\textit{a7} $\textit{c7}$ 61.\textit{f4} $\textit{d5}$+ 62.\textit{g3} $\textit{c7}$ 63.\textit{f4} $\textit{d7}$ 64.\textit{b7} $\textit{d5}$ 65.\textit{a4} $\textit{d6}$

Or 65...$\textit{c3}$ 66.\textit{a5} $\textit{e2}$+ 67.\textit{f2} $\textit{xf4}$ 68.\textit{a6} $\textit{c8}$ 69.\textit{b8}+–

66.\textit{a5} $\textit{e6}$

Or 66...$\textit{xe4}$ 67.\textit{b6}+, followed by 68.\textit{xf6}+–

67.\textit{a6} $\textit{e4}$+ 68.\textit{h4} $\textit{c5}$ 69.\textit{b8} $\textit{xa6}$ 70.\textit{g8} $\textit{c5}$ 71.\textit{xe7} $\textit{d6}$ 72.\textit{f7} $\textit{d6}$ 73.\textit{g3} $\textit{e8}$ 74.\textit{h7} $\textit{b5}$ 75.\textit{exh6} $\textit{e7}$ 76.\textit{f5} $\textit{g5}$ 77.\textit{g6} $\textit{e4}$+ 78.\textit{xf4} $\textit{f6}$ 79.\textit{h6} 1–0

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T.Nedev – Dreev

World Ream Ch, Yerevan 2001

This game was played in the World Team Championship and I remembered it, mostly because that was the first time I studied thoroughly one of the most important variations of the Caro-Kann Defence, which I had never played before.

1.\textit{e4} $\textit{c6}$ 2.\textit{d4} $\textit{d5}$ 3.\textit{d2} $\textit{dxe4}$ 4.\textit{xe4} $\textit{f5}$ 5.\textit{g3} $\textit{g6}$ 6.\textit{h4} $\textit{h6}$

7.\textit{f3} $\textit{d7}$ 8.\textit{h5} $\textit{h7}$ 9.\textit{d3} $\textit{xd3}$ 10.\textit{xd3} $\textit{e6}$

11.\textit{d2}

The other possibility for White is – 11.\textit{xf4}.

11...\textit{gf6} 12.0–0 0–0 13.\textit{e4}

White obtains no advantage with that move. He had better try 13.\textit{b1}.

13...\textit{xe4} 14.\textit{xe4} $\textit{xf6}$ 15.\textit{e2} $\textit{d5}$! 16.\textit{c4}

Now, in case of 16.\textit{b1}, Black can continue with 16...\textit{e4}, as well as with 16...\textit{exh5}, with the idea – 17.\textit{g4} $\textit{xf6}$ 18.\textit{g5} $\textit{xe4}$ 19.\textit{xe3} $\textit{g4}$.

16...\textit{xe4} 17.\textit{xe3}

Here, after some deliberations T.Nedev decided to preserve the queens. Meanwhile, he should have considered more seriously the exchange: 17.\textit{exe4} $\textit{exe4}$ 18.\textit{xe3}.

(diagram)

17...\textit{b5}!

This move has already been tested in a game between not so famous players and White reacted there with 18.\textit{xe5}?! Capturing – 18.\textit{cxb5}?! is rather dubious, because of 18...\textit{c8}.

18.\textit{h4} $\textit{h7}$

Black’s queen has occupied the va-
23...\textit{f}d\textit{d} 24.\textit{c}c\textit{c} 25.\textit{b}b\textit{b}

Now, White’s task to save the game becomes too difficult.

25.\textit{a}b\textit{b}

In case of 25.\textit{d}d\textit{d}, Black can answer with 25...\textit{b}b\textit{b} 26.\textit{c}c\textit{c} \textit{a}a\textit{c}5, followed by \textit{a}a\textit{a}4.

25...\textit{e}e\textit{e} 26.\textit{g}g\textit{g} 27.\textit{d}d\textit{d}+ 28.\textit{c}c\textit{c} \textit{e}e\textit{e} 29.\textit{c}c\textit{c}

Or 29.\textit{d}d\textit{d} 29.\textit{d}d\textit{d}++ 29...\textit{a}a\textit{b}+ 30.\textit{w}w\textit{b}+ 31.\textit{w}w\textit{b}+ 32.\textit{d}d\textit{d}

20...\textit{d}d\textit{d}!

Black prevents White’s possible counterplay after 20...bxc 21.g5.

21.\textit{h}h\textit{h} bxc 22.\textit{w}wxc 0–0 23.\textit{d}d\textit{d}?

White is trying to impede the move c6-c5, but he loses too much time while doing that. His best chance would have been the line: 23.\textit{w}w\textit{c}c 24.\textit{w}wxc2 c5, but Black’s prospects would have been superior anyway.

30...\textit{e}e\textit{e}+ 31.\textit{w}w\textit{c}c

After 31.\textit{b}b\textit{b}, Black has the pleasant choice between 31...\textit{w}w\textit{d}d+ and 31...\textit{c}c\textit{c}+ 32.\textit{w}w\textit{c}c \textit{w}w\textit{d}d+ 33.\textit{a}a4 \textit{a}a\textit{a}2+. 31...\textit{a}a\textit{b}+ 32.\textit{d}d\textit{d}
Or 32.\textit{\=b}3 \textit{\=c}2+ 33.\textit{\=x}b4 \textit{\=b}8+ and Black checkmates.
32...\textit{\=d}3 33.\textit{\=g}5 \textit{\=x}a2 0–1

Dreev – Pigusov
FIDE World Chess Ch (k.o.)
Moscow 2001

This game was played in the third round of the knockout FIDE World Championship in Moscow. Before the event, I had “studied” the tournament scheme and I had expected my opponent at that moment (naturally, in case I had reached that stage...) to be the ex-world champion Anatolij Evgenievich Karpov. Surprisingly, he was sensationelly upset by the young Chinese chess-prodigy Zhang Pengxiang, who later succumbed to Evgenij Pugusov. Evgenij can be noted for his solid, even bulletproof style of playing. In fact he loses only very seldom...

In this game I managed to introduce a novelty, which was specially prepared for the occasion...

1.d4 \textit{\=f}6 2.c4 e6 3.\textit{\=f}3 d5 4.\textit{\=c}3 \textit{\=e}7 5.\textit{\=f}4 c5 6.dxc5 \textit{\=x}c5 7.e3 0–0 8.\textit{\=c}xd5 \textit{\=x}d5 9.\textit{\=c}xd5 exd5 10.a3 \textit{\=c}6 11.\textit{\=d}3 \textit{\=b}6 12.0–0 d4

We have played one of the popular lines of the Queen’s gambit. The position on the diagram is one of the most fashionable in this variation.

13.\textit{\=f}2!?

This move was a novelty at the moment in which that game was played. White had usually tried before – 13.\textit{\=e}4 \textit{\=g}4 14.h3 – and he was not achieving much, according to the state of theory in the year 2001. White is hardly obtaining much in that position even nowadays, because after: 14...\textit{\=h}5 15.g4 \textit{\=g}6 16.\textit{\=c}1 \textit{\=c}8 17.\textit{\=f}1 f6!? 18.\textit{\=c}4+ \textit{\=f}7 19.\textit{\=x}f7+ \textit{\=x}f7, Black equalized comfortably in the game Navara – Kasimdzhanov, Calvia 2004.

13...\textit{\=h}6

It seems dubious for Black to try here 13...\textit{d}xe3?!, because White can answer that simply with: 14.\textit{\=f}xe3 \textit{h}6 15.\textit{\=a}d1, obtaining an overwhelming positional advantage, or even enter the sharper line: 14.\textit{\=x}h7+!? \textit{\=h}8 15.\textit{f}xe3 \textit{g}6 16.\textit{\=c}5 \textit{\=f}5 17.\textit{\=f}2 \textit{\=g}7 18.\textit{\=w}h4 \textit{\=w}e7 (18...\textit{\=h}8? 19.g4 \textit{\=d}7 20.\textit{\=e}6!+-) 19.\textit{\=f}3!? and his attack becomes extremely dangerous.

14.\textit{\=e}4 \textit{\=g}4 15.\textit{\=d}2

Presently, after the theory of the variation 13.\textit{\=c}2?! \textit{h}6 14.\textit{\=e}4 \textit{\=g}4, has developed considerably, the move 15.\textit{\=e}5 is at the focus of attention.

15...\textit{\=c}8 16.\textit{\=a}4

(diagram)

16...\textit{\=e}6

It is stronger for Black to play here 16...\textit{\=f}6! and that was tried for the first time in a later game – Dreev – Short, Hyderabad 2002, in which after: 17.\textit{\=g}3 \textit{\=e}5 18.\textit{\=x}e5 \textit{\=x}e5, I failed
Black would not have changed much with the line: 28...a6 29.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Wd2}}} \textit{\textbf{\texttt{xf3}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{xf3}}} \textit{\textbf{\texttt{ac1+}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{xf1}}} \textit{\textbf{\texttt{xf1+}}} 32.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{xf1}}}, because my two powerful bishops and my superior pawn-structure would have provided me with a long-lasting positional advantage.

\textbf{\textit{\texttt{29.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Wxf3}}} \textit{\textbf{\texttt{Ec1}}} 30.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Ed1}}} \textit{\textbf{\texttt{Ec6}}} 31.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Wh1}}} \textit{\textbf{\texttt{Exd1}}} 32.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Exd1}}}}}}

The game enters here a purely technical stage after the trade of the rooks. It is extremely difficult for Black to defend a position like that. I have two great positional pluses - a bishop pair and a mobile pawn-tandem e4 and f4. Black has nothing to brag about at all, but still his position is solid enough and my task is to try to shatter it.

\textbf{\textit{\texttt{32...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Cc7}}} 33.\textit{\textbf{\texttt{Wd2} g5?}}}}}

This activity was absolutely unnecessary. Black had better adhere to a strategy of waiting with 33...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{We6}}}. Still, a move like 33...\textit{\textbf{\texttt{g5}}} is easy to understand from a psychological point of view. My opponent wanted to clarify somehow the situation, because he was evidently reluctant to just sit down and wait how I was going to gradually improve my position in the long run...

\textbf{\textit{\texttt{34.fxg5 \textit{\textbf{\texttt{Xg3}}} 35.hxg3}}}
Evgenij defends quite tenaciously, creating plenty of technical difficulties for me.

47.\(\text{e}2\) \(\text{wc}5\) 48.\(\text{wg}5+\) \(\text{df}8\) 49.\(\text{wd}8+\) \(\text{dg}7\) 50.\(\text{wd}5\) \(\text{we}7\) 51.\(\text{b}4\) \(\text{df}6\) 52.\(\text{df}2\) \(\text{we}7\) 53.\(\text{wd}2\) \(\text{dg}6\) 54.\(\text{wd}4\) \(\text{df}6\)

55.\(\text{wb}2?!\)  
At that moment, both of us were in a desperate time-trouble. It was much better for me to continue with 55.\(\text{wd}2\), or 55.\(\text{we}3\).

55...\(\text{wd}6\) 56.\(\text{de}3\) \(\text{de}7\) 57.\(\text{wd}4?\)
This was a terrible blunder in the time-pressure.

57...\(\text{wc}7\)
My opponent returned the favour... After: 57...\(\text{wh}6+!\) 58.\(\text{df}2\) \(\text{wh}2+\) 59.\(\text{df}1\) \(\text{wxg}3\), Black’s position would have been at least equal. Now, my chances have become once again preferable, but the realization of my advantage is connected with considerable technical difficulties.

58.\(\text{dd}2\) \(\text{dc}6\) 59.\(\text{wd}5\) \(\text{de}5\) 60.\(\text{wd}4\) \(\text{dc}6\) 61.\(\text{wc}3\) \(\text{wd}6++\) 62.\(\text{dc}1?!\)
That is another mistake in the time-trouble and my opponent thus obtained quite good chances for a draw as a result.

62...\(\text{dd}4\) 63.\(\text{dc}4\) \(\text{we}5\)
One more imprecision in the time-pressure, because in case of: 63...\texttt{Wh6+ 64.Wd2 Wh1+ 65.b2 Wxe4, Black would have equalized easily.}  
\texttt{64.Wd3 c6 65.b1}

\texttt{65...Wd4?}

That was already the decisive blunder. Black could have offered a serious resistance only by preserving the queens on the board, for example in the variation: 65...\texttt{c7 66.d5 e5.} Now, I exchange queens and the game is transferred into a technically winning endgame “a bishop against a knight, with an extra pawn”. I did not have too many problems to press my advantage home. The game still followed with:  
\texttt{66.Wxd4 dxd4}

\texttt{67.b2 f3 68.c3 f6 69.e2}

\texttt{\black{e5 70.d4 d6 71.e3 g6 72.\texttt{h5 e5 73.f4 c4 74.f5 e-}}}

\texttt{75.e2 d6+}

\texttt{Or 75...\texttt{xaxa3 d3 a5 77.b5+}}

\texttt{76.f4 f7 77.g4 a5 78.b5 e5 79.f5 f7 80.e5! xxe5 81.g5 d7 82.g6 f8 83.e6 c5+ 84.xxf6}

\texttt{e4+ 85.e5 c3 86.d3 e7 87.}

\texttt{c4 f8 88.d6 b1 89.a4} and Black resigned.

\texttt{I believe that game was quite interesting concerning the opening stage, as well as the great competitive tension involved...}

\texttt{Later in the tournament I had to face V.Anand...In a match to enter the last 8, I succumbed 0.5-1.5. That match was marked by a sad occasion too...Just before it had started, my coach and invaluable assistant Alexander Filipenko received the sad news that has mother had passed away and he had to leave...}

\texttt{74}  
\texttt{Dreev – Jobava}  
\texttt{Aeroflot-open, Moscow 2002}

\texttt{Alexander Grigorievich Bakh (the director of the tournament) had announced several months before that in February 2002 there would be a Chess Festival in Moscow with the huge prize-fund of US $150,000 (very high top-prizes too) and many people were quite interested. Still, some journalists were doubtful that so many players might come to Moscow in the winter (since it is really cold in Moscow then) and that the tournament would be attractive for}
strong grandmasters. There were no special conditions for anybody – both grandmasters and amateurs were supposed to pay “a package-deal”, which included an airplane ticket with “Aeroflot”, the hotel lodging and the tournament entry-fee. Still, many strong grandmasters were attracted by the big prizes, since Open tournaments with similar high prizes were quite rare for Eastern Europe (and even for the entire “old world” too). I was absolutely convinced that the tournament would be organized on a top-level when after an absence from Russia of almost a month (I played in a round-robin in Wijk aan Zee and then in the Team Championship of France) I came back to Moscow by plane from Paris. I saw then at the “Sheremetyevo” airport an enormous bill-board with the sign – “Welcome to the Participants in the International Chess Tournament “Aeroflot – Open”!”...

The tournament rules were tremendously difficult – a time-control of 1 1/2 hours for the whole game with 30 seconds added per move. There were three days with 2 rounds per day and three days with just one round per day. There were also four days in which the games were to begin quite early – that was at 10 o’clock in the morning. I hesitated a lot whether to participate or not because of these severe rules, but in the end I understood that the role of a spectator at a tournament like that, organized in Moscow, would not be attractive for me. The temptation of the fight was too great to withstand. In the end I made 6 points out of 9 and I shared 6th to 20th place, just half a point behind the five winners – G.Kaidanov, A.Grischuk, A.Shabalov, V.Milov and A.Alexandrov (according to the tie-break coefficient the first place and the highest prize was awarded to Grigory Kaidanov).

1.d4 6f6 2.c4 g6 3.6c3 6g7 4.e4 d6 5.f3 a6 6.Be3 c6 7.c5

I like this variation particularly because White manages to reach a principally different pawn-structure, which is quite untypical for the King’s Indian Defence.

7...0–0 8.6ge2 b5 9.cxd6 exd6 10.6f4 6bd7 11.6e2 6e7

There is no essential difference between this move and 11...c5, as Loek van Wely played against me at New Delhi in the year 2001. I had the advantage there after: 12.0–0 6b7 13.6d2 6e7 14.6ad1 6e8 15.dxc5 dxc5 16.6fd5 6xd5 17.6xd5 6d6 18.6c3 6xd2 19.6xd2 6c6 20.6fd1 6a7 21.6d6 6c8 22.6xd5 6xd5 23.6xd5, but a draw in that game was quite sufficient for me to win the match...

(diagram)

12.6d2N

The game Sakaev – Zemehman,
Duisburg, 1992 followed with: 12.0-0 b4?! 13.\a4 \d5 14.\cl \xf4 15.\xf4 d5 16.e5 \b7 17.d2 c5 18.xc5 \xe5 19.xb4 \c6 20.c3 \c8 21.wd2 \xd4+ 22.xd4 \xd4 23.wd4 \xe2 24.wd5 and White had an edge.

12...\b7 13.0-0 \fe8 14.\ad1

While playing that move, I had to consider also the line: 14...b4 (14...\d5 15.\f2! and White's advantage was only minimal.) 15.a4 xe4? 16.\f3 xe4, but after 17.ef3, Black does not have a full compensation for the piece.

14...\b6 15.\f2

This is a logical multi-purpose move for White. Its only drawback is that Black might play \h6 at some moment quite favourably. Meanwhile, that move is presently impossible due to \xg6.


15...\fd7

It deserved a serious attention for Black to try 15...b4 – and after: 16.\a4!? \xa4 17.wxb4 \xe4 (or 17...d5 18.xa4 dx4 19.h4 and the game is rather unclear) 18.fxe4 \xe4, there arises an unclear situation. White has a positional alternative, though: 16.\b1 c5 17.dxc5 dxc5 18.wx2, with the idea to follow with \bl-d2.

16.\fel

16.wc2!? 16...\ad8

Here, once again it deserved a serious attention for Black to play: 16...b4!? 17.bl c5 18.a3!? a5 19.h5, with some initiative for White.

17.wx2 c5?!

That natural move looks like a mistake to me. Black had better wait: 17...\c8!?

18.dxc5

In case Black captures with the pawn – 18...dxc5, White follows with: 19.xd5 \xd5 20.xd5 \xd5 21.xd5 c4 and here his task is to destroy Black's pawn-chain on the queenside. The simplest way to do that is 22.a4, but it also deserves attention for White.
to try the immediate move: 22.b3!? c3 23...d1 f5 24.a4 fxe4 (or 24...bxa4 25...c4...h8 26.exf5) 25.axb5 and he maintains better prospects.

19...fxd5...xd5 20...xd5...xd5 21...xd5...a4 22...b1!

The attractive move 22...c6?!, after 22...b2 23...a6...c3, does not bring anything good to White.

22...ec8 23...d2...c6 24...d1

White avoids the temptation again! After the spectacular variation: 24...xb5 axb5 25...xb5...c3 26.bxc3...b8 27...d4...d4+ 28.cxd4 d5!, there arises a completely unclear position.

24...ec8

25.g3!

That is an important prophylactic move, since now White can capture on b6.

25...c7 26...g2...b6 27...xb6

In case of 27...d3?, White preserves his two bishop advantage, but after 27...c4 28...e2...e7, his pieces are forced to defend the b2-pawn losing their mobility.

27...xb6 28...b3

Now, White is clearly better.

28...a5

Black loses a pawn after that move. The passive defence of the d6-pawn (after White attacks it with...d1) with...f8, enables White to improve patiently his position, for example by advancing his h-pawn. It is equally bad for Black to try: 28...d8 29...d1...f6 30...d6...xd6 31...xd6...b2+ 32...h3.

29...d3!...b8 30...a4 bxa4 31...xa4...c3! 32...d1...b4 33...xd6...e4 34...b3...d4 35...xd4...xd4 36...c2

That is the correct reaction for White! He must control the c and d-files in order to prevent the activation of Black’s rook.

36...a7 37...d1...b6

38...d7!

Naturally, that move was quite attractive, but I had already made up my mind to enter the variation with the march of the king. I had an extra pawn indeed, but it might not be enough to win the game at the end, so I had no more time to lose!

38...g1+

Or 38...f8 39.f4...g1+ 40...h3...f1+ 41...g2...a6 42...f3±

39...h3...f1+ 40...g2...a6

Or 40...c1 41...d2...f1+ 42...g4.

41...d2...f1+

Had Black known how all that might have ended, he would have preferred
the move 41...h5, but...then White has the resource: 42.f4 ♙f1+ 43.♗g2 ♙a6 44.♗f3.

42.♗g4! h5+

43.♗g5!

White must go forward! Black could have countered the tentative and humble move 43.f4, with the immediate 43...♗g1, with the decisive threat ♙a7-e3+.

43...♗b6

In case of 43...♗c5, White wins with: 44.♗f7! ♙f7 45.♗f4. It would not work for Black to play: 43...♗f3 44.♗a7 ♙g4+ 45.♗h6 h4, because White’s queen comes to the rescue: 46.♗g5!

44.♕xf7!

That is the most precise line for White!

44...♗xf7

Following 44...♗d8, Black loses after the exquisite line: 45.♗h6 (45.♗xg6?? ♙b6) 45...♗f7 46.♗d5+ ♙f8 47.♗d6.

45.♗d7+ ♙f8 46.♗xg6!

White’s pieces are in perfect harmony: 46...♗xf3 47.♗g7#. It is amazing, but even the bishop on a4 participates in the final attack. It was only a passive witness awhile ago; now it played a key decisive role in the attack, because it controlled the e8-square. Black resigned, since he had no defence against the checkmate.

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Dreev – Pelletier
Biel 2002

1.d4 ♙f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 ♙b4+

4.♖d2 a5

5.♖c2!?

This is an interesting line and contrary to the more popular moves 5.g3 and 5.♗c3, it is not so often played in tournament practice. I believe that it is not worse at all and it seems to be quite logical. In fact, White takes the e4-square under control and he is threat-
ening to occupy the centre with e2-e4 just in case, meanwhile the choice of his plans is quite flexible, concerning the possibility of fianchettoing of his light-squared bishop. For example, in case of 5...d5, it looks good for White to follow with 6.g3!? with an excellent position in a strategical aspect. It resembles one of the variations of the Catalan Opening, except that the situation is much more favourable for him, because Black's move a7-a5 is not particularly useful in similar pawn-structures... Following 5...0-0, White can play 6.e4!? , occupying the centre with clearly better chances.

5...exd2+ 6.exd2 d5

That is a novelty, but it is hardly better than the usual move 6...d6, which is a frequent guest in the tournaments.

7.g3!?

I like this plan including the fianchettoing of the light-squared bishop and castling short subsequently.

7...0-0 8.Ag2 b6 9.0-0 Ab7

\[ 
\]

White has a slight positional advantage in that pawn-structure. It is a bit similar to some lines of the Queen's Indian Defence, but as I have mentioned before, the move a7-a5 is not very purposeful for Black either.

10.Ac5 Aa6 11.Afd1

I would not have achieved much with 11.c5, because of: 11...bxc5 12.dxc5 Aa7! and Black's chances are worse neither after: 13.c6 Axe5 14.cx7 Ab8, not in case of: 13.Af3 Axe5 14.Axe5 Ab4.

11...c5 12.cxd5

Following: 12.dxc5 Axc5 13.cxd5 Axd5, the prospects of both sides are about equal.

12...exd5!?

Capturing the pawn leads to a complicated fight with a slightly better position for White. He would have maintained superior chances too in case of: 12...Axd5 13.e4 Ab7 14.dxc5 Axc5 15.Ac1.

13.b3!?

I was preparing the b2-square for my queen, in order to control the key d4-square.

13...Ag7 14.Ab2 Afd8 15.Ac1 Ac7 16.Aec4

The calm move 16.e3, would have preserved a slight advantage for me. I decided to play that spectacular move, since I wanted to sharpen the game, although it was leading to a bit unclear position.
16...\textit{\&}a6?!
That awkward move enables me to improve my situation considerably. It deserved attention for Black to follow with: 16...dxc4!? 17.\textit{\&}xb7 \textit{\&}ab8, with a complicated game with mutual chances.

17.\textit{\&}e3 g6
This is an imprecision, because my opponent compromises his dark squares on the kingside without any necessity. It was more reliable for him to defend with: 17...\textit{\&}e6 18.\textit{\&}f5 \textit{\&}d7, obtaining a slightly worse, but still quite acceptable position.

18.\textit{\&}f3 \textit{\&}e6
It is not better for Black to play: 18...a4, in view of: 19.bxa4 c4 20.\textit{\&}e5 with a considerable positional advantage for White.

This move emphasizes the vulnerability of the dark squares on the kingside and it increases my pressure along the a1-h8 diagonal.

22...\textit{\&}xg4
In case of 22...axb3, I was planning to continue with 23.dxc5!, after which my opponent would have very serious problems. For example, in case of: 23...\textit{\&}xg4 24.\textit{\&}xg4 h5 (White was threatening a checkmate in two – 25.\textit{\&}h6 \textit{\&}f8 26.\textit{\&}h8#) 25.\textit{\&}f6+! \textit{\&}f7 (25...\textit{\&}f8 26.c6+-) 26.exb6! my initiative would have been quite dangerous. Here, it is rather dubious for Black to play: 26...bxa2?!, due to: 27.\textit{\&}c7 a1\textit{\&} 28.\textit{\&}xe7+ \textit{\&}xe7 29.\textit{\&}xa1 \textit{\&}xa1+ 30.\textit{\&}g2 d4+ 31.\textit{\&}h3 and his position would be very difficult. White’s knight is untouchable, after 31...\textit{\&}xf6, White wins with 32.\textit{\&}xd4+ and Black loses unavoidably his bishop. It is not any better for Black to defend with: 31...e5, since after 32.\textit{\&}h7! his position is hopeless.

23.\textit{\&}xg4 \textit{\&}g7?!
This is a grave mistake. It was better for Black to try: 23...h5 24.\textit{\&}e5 axb3 25.axb3 \textit{\&}a2 26.\textit{\&}c3. Indeed, in that case I would have preserved a slight positional advantage too, but Black would have at least activated his rooks.

19.\textit{\&}h3!? a4 20.\textit{\&}xe6 fxe6 21.\textit{\&}e5 \textit{\&}da8
Simplifying the game with – 21...axb3 22.axb3 \textit{\&}da8 23.\textit{\&}a1 \textit{\&}xa1 24.\textit{\&}xa1 \textit{\&}xa1+ 25.\textit{\&}xa1 – would have preserved for me a slight, but stable positional advantage thanks to the powerful knight on the e5-outpost. My opponent would be doomed to a passive defence then.

22.\textit{\&}5g4!?
24.b4!
That excellent positional move cuts off practically Black's queenside pieces away from the actions and White has a free hand to organize later a crushing kingside attack.

24...a3 25.d2 c4 26.e3

My adversary's position is already close to hopeless from the point of view of strategy. His dark e5 and f6-squares are very weak and in addition his bishop on b7 is a sorry sight.

26...b5
We were both in time-trouble here. Still, it is quite understandable that it is much easier to play that position with White under time-pressure, because I do not risk anything in that pawn-structure, while every mistake by my opponent would lead him to an immediate disaster.

27.b1
That is a typical move for the time-trouble and it is not the best, but it does not change much in that position.

27...c6?!
This only speeds up Black's demise. It was better for him to try 27...f5.

28.e5 e8

My kingside attack is developing smoothly, while my adversary has no counterplay at all.

29...e7?!
That is another bad move for Black, played under a severe time-pressure. His position is strategically hopeless anyway, so White's victory is just a matter of time...
The game still followed with:
30.f3 c8 31.g4 g7 32.e1 h5 33.f6+ h8 34.e3 e8 35.f4 c6 36.e5 e8 37.f4 c8 38.h2 eca8 39.g4 hgx4 40.xg4 e6a7 41.h5 and Black resigned.

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Dreev – Vallejo Pons
Biel 2002

1.d4 f6 2.c4 e6 3.f3 b6 4.a3

Pako plays the Meran variation quite often with Black, but obviously he had decided otherwise for this game... Meanwhile, he probably knew that I was playing one and the same line permanently against the Queen's Indian Defence. He must have thought that I had failed to repair that line af-
ter my game with V.Emelin (Aeroflot-open 2002), in which I had not achieved any advantage with White whatsoever. Contemporary chess is becoming sometimes an exact science: to find a weak spot in the opening armour of the opponent, to analyze some opening line with “Fritz” and you can reach the desired result...Still, it is far from easy to understand the essence of the opening strategy with such an approach, so that tactics might often turn out to be counterproductive... This is exactly what happened in our game...

5.\texttt{\$e2 c5 6.d5 exd5 7.cxd5 g6}

Here, Black can win a pawn with: 7...\texttt{\$b7 8.e4 \$e7 9.\$d3 \$xd5 10.0-0 \$c7}, but that line is not popular for him at all.

8.\texttt{\$f4}

This is a rarely played move. The main line for White is - 8.\texttt{\$c3 \$g7 9.g3}.

8...\texttt{d6}
Or 8...\texttt{\$g7 9.\$d6}.

9.\texttt{\$c3 \$g7}

10.\texttt{\$a4+}

The previous as well as the subsequent moves are practically forced. GM Lobron played against me in a rapid chess game during the last year the line: 10...\texttt{b5 11.\$xb5 0-0 12.\$c3}, but his compensation for the pawn was insufficient.

10...\texttt{\$d7 11.\$xd6 \$xa4 12.\$xa4 \$xd5 13.0-0 0-0 14.e4 \$xf1 15.\$hxf1 \$bc6 16.\$c3 \$xc3}

It is too bad for Black to castle, because of \texttt{\$d5}. Until now, we were following the game Kasparov – Gligoric, Bugojno 1982 and there it was played: 16...\texttt{\$d8? 17.\$b5 \$d7 18.\$f4 \$xd1+ 19.\$xd1 0-0 20.\$d7} and White had a great advantage. So, the exchange of Black's bishop is practically forced.

17.\texttt{bc \$d8}

This position was played for the first time in the game Browne – Timman, Las-Palmas 1982. Black’s move in the game is considered to be his main defence. His alternatives are - 17...0-0-0 and 17...f6.

18.\texttt{\$e5N}

In my game against V.Emelin (Moscow, 2002), I played 18.\texttt{\$c7} and he countered that in the best possible way: 18...\texttt{\$xd1+ 19.\$xd1 f6 20.e5 fe 21.\$xe5 \$f8 22.\$f3 \$f6}, so the game was completely equal. Timman played: 18...\texttt{\$d7 19.\$f4 f6}. The move that I have chosen in this game changes not only the character of the fight,
but possibly the evaluation of the entire variation.

18...\texttt{xd}1+ 19.\texttt{xd}1 \texttt{xe}5 20. \texttt{xe}5 \texttt{f}6

\begin{center}
\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{image}
\end{center}

21.\texttt{d}7!

This is the road to White's advantage. He cannot achieve anything much with: 21.\texttt{c}4 \texttt{c}8, as well as with: 21.\texttt{g}4 \texttt{f}8 22.\texttt{d}6 \texttt{g}8.

21...\texttt{f}7

In case of 21...\texttt{f}5, White has the strong argument – 22.e5, or 22.\texttt{f}6+, followed by e4-e5.

22.\texttt{d}6 \texttt{c}8

Black had obviously relied on that very much. (But not 22...\texttt{d}8, because White follows with 23.\texttt{e}5+, winning a pawn.)

23.\texttt{c}6 \texttt{d}8

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\includegraphics[width=0.4\textwidth]{image}
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24.e5! \texttt{f}5

After: 24...\texttt{e}5 25.\texttt{xe}5+ \texttt{e}7, White has 26.f4!, preparing – \texttt{c}7.

25.\texttt{f}6 \texttt{e}7

Black facilitates my task considerably. He had to defend with 25...\texttt{h}6, with chances to offer some resistance, although even then after the move 26.f4, White is clearly better.

26.\texttt{c}7 \texttt{e}6 27.f4 \texttt{h}6 28.\texttt{a}7 \texttt{g}5

That is Black's last attempt...

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29.\texttt{h}5!

This is the best for White, while the move 29.g3 is less precise. Now, it is impossible for Black to play 29...\texttt{g}x\texttt{f}4, due to 30.\texttt{g}7+. I had calculated that line to the very end, though...: 30...\texttt{e}5 31.\texttt{xe}7+ \texttt{f}6 32.\texttt{b}7 \texttt{g}8 33. \texttt{h}5+ \texttt{g}5 34.\texttt{g}7+.

29...\texttt{g}6 30.\texttt{g}7+ \texttt{d}5 31.\texttt{e}6 \texttt{d}6 32.\texttt{g}4!

This move is not only the most beautiful, but it is the most accurate too! White obtains two connected passed pawns and they are unstoppable.

32...\texttt{g}xf4 33.\texttt{g}x\texttt{f}4 \texttt{f}3 34.\texttt{x}g6 \texttt{f}2 35.\texttt{f}7 \texttt{g}8 36.\texttt{e}7. Black resigned.
Dreev – Kishnev
European Club Cup, Chalkidiki 2002

This game was played in the European Club Cup where I made my debut for the Russian club “The Nickel from Norilsk”. We took second place, though.

1.d4 ½f6 2.c4 e6 3.½f3 d5 4.½c3 dxc4 5.e4 ½b4 6.½g5 c5 7.½xc4 cxd4 8.½xd4 ½xc3+ 9.bxc3 ½a5 10.½b5+ ½bd7 11.½xf6 ½xc3+ 12.½f1 gxf6 13.h4 ½a5 14.½h3

16.½d3!!

After that brilliant move, Black’s position, despite his extra piece, becomes absolutely critical. In case of the seemingly attractive line – 16.½g1, Black could have defended with 16...½c5 and White would then have nothing better than: 17.½d6+ ½e7 18.½f5+ ½e8 19.½d6+ forcing a draw by a perpetual check.

16...½b6

The other lines for Black are hardly any better. He has no satisfactory defence, for example: 16...½a5 (or 16...½d8 17.½d6 ½a6 18.½g1++; 16...½f8 17.½d6 ½a6 18.½b3++) 17.½b3 ½c5 18.½d6+ ½d8 19.½d5 and White’s attack should be victorious; or: 16...½a6 17.½g1 and the threat ½c1 is impossible to parry.

17.½b1 ½a6 18.½g1!

Black is in a zugzwang and he has no useful moves. Now, the game is quickly over.

18...½xa2

Or 18...½g8 19.½c1! ½xa2 20.½c7 ½e6 21.½c1+-

19.½c1! b5

Or 19...½f8 20.½dc3+-
20...c7 21.c1 a6 22.d6 xd6 23.xd6+ e7 24.xc8 and Black resigned.

That was a good game with a certain theoretical importance. Understandably enough, after that game the move 14...e5 in that line of the Vienna variation, disappeared from the tournament practice.

7...dxc4

The other possibility here for Black is – 7...e4.

8.xc4 0–0 9.ge2

The development of White's knight to f3 (9.gf3) leads to the classical positions.

9...xc5 10.b3 c6 11.b5 h5 12.g3

J.Piket played 12.c7 against Loek van Wely. After 12...a5, Black had a very bad position. He had better try 12...b8.

12...h4 13.c7 g5

This is one of the three possibilities that Black had at his disposal. The others – 13...b8 and 13...e5 – lead to complex positions as well.

14.xg5

I had prepared that novelty for my game against Peter. The game Gertarsson – Schandorff, Gentofte 1999, followed with: 14.f5 xf5 15.g3 d4!

14...xg5 15.xa8 d7 16.xb7 b8 17.c7 xa8

This looked like the most natural move for Black, but it deserved attention for him to try 17...c8!? and if
18.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}4}} – not 18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}4} 19.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}d}7} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}8}} 20.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}6} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}5}+} 21.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}1}} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}2}} 22.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}2}}, but 18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}5}!!}, or 18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}5}+}!!

\textit{\textbf{18.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}6}!}}}

This is a very strong move. Still, it would be fair to admit – that position was mentioned by GM Krasenkow in his comments and he had evaluated it as unclear. It seems to me that Black’s situation as almost critical, for example it is too bad for him to play: 18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}4}??} 19.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}7+}}. After: 18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}8}} 19.0-0 \textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}6}} 20.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}7}}, Black is clearly worse.

\textit{\textbf{18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}8}}}}

Peter continues with the forced play. He could have tried instead 18...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}5}??}

\textit{\textbf{19.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}d}7 \textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}5+}}}}}

\begin{center}
\textit{\textbf{20.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}4}!}}}

My opponent had underestimated this important nuance.

\textit{\textbf{20...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}b}4} 21.0-0 \textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}6}}}}

After 21...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}6}} 22.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}7}, White maintains a clear advantage.

\textit{\textbf{22.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}5} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}a}2}}}}

As Peter told me after the game, he had evaluated that position as quite acceptable for Black. In fact, White has a great advantage. In case of 22...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}6}}, White practically wins with: 23.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}g}7 (or 23...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}g}7} 24.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}4}+}) 24.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{c}7}} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}8}} 25.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{c}a}7}.}

\textit{\textbf{23.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{c}6} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}5}}}}}

I saw that following 23...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}5}}, the next spectacular line would not work for White: 24.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{h}6+} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}8}} 25.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}6}??}, because of 25...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}f}1+}, but it is quite sufficient for him to play the simple: 24.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}g}7} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}4}} 25.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}5} (or 25.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}8 \textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}6}} 26.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}7} 25...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}6} 26.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}7+} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{g}7}} 27.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}6}.}

\textit{\textbf{24.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}7+}}}

After 24.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}g}7 \textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}g}7}} , I failed to find anything decisive, while I was calculating variations; for example after: 25.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}7 \textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}8}} 26.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}6}}, Black had the resource 26...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}2}.}}

\textit{\textbf{24...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}8} 25.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{c}8}}}}}

Here, my opponent made the decisive blunder:

\textit{\textbf{25...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{b}4}??}}}

This move defends simultaneously against the threat \textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}7-b7}}, as well as against \textit{\textbf{\textsc{d}7-e7}.}

\begin{center}
\textit{\textbf{26.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{c}4}!}}}

Peter resigned in view of: 26...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}c}4 (or 26...\textit{\textbf{\textsc{a}3 27.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}4}}) 27.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}7+}\textit{\textbf{\textsc{g}8}} 28.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}e}8+} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}8}} 29.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{e}7+} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{g}7}} 30.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{f}5+} \textit{\textbf{\textsc{g}6}} 31.\textit{\textbf{\textsc{x}a}8+-}}}}}

Black had an only chance that could enable him to try to hold the game
somehow – 25...♗e5 and if: 26.♗b7 ♖b8 27.♗xa7 – 27...♗b2 (but not 27...♗b4, because of 28.♖c5). Well, even then after: 28.♕b6 ♖e7 (this is once again an only move for Black) 29.♖d7+ ♕g8 30.♕c8 (threatening ♖a7-a8) 30...f5, White’s advantage is considerable, but he has no forced win in sight...

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Dreev – Zagrebelny
Aeroflot-open, Moscow 2003

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♗f3 ♕f6 4.e3 a6 5.b3 ♕g4 6.♗bd2 e6 7.♖d3 ♕bd7 8.0–0 ♖d6 9.♗b2

I had played that position the previous time in the game (Dreev – Timman, Wijk aan Zee 2002). My opponent chose the move 9...♗b8 and it looked a bit awkward, but it prevented the move ♕f3-e5, meanwhile Black had at his disposal the c7-square in case White pushed c4-c5.

9...♗c7?!

Now you know – that move is not precise, because of the abovementioned reasons.

10.♗c2

10...0–0

Vesselin Topalov at the FIDE World Championship in New Delhi played here in another fashion against me: 10...♗h5, but after: 11.h3 0–0?! 12.c5 ♕e7 13.♕e5 ♕h8 14.f4 ♕xe5 15.fx5 ♕d7 16.♕h7 g6 17.g4, Black was faced with great problems and he lost the game (Dreev – Topalov, New Delhi 2000).

11.c5 ♕e7 12.♕e5

Naturally, White’s attempt to win a pawn seems rather dubious: 12.♕g5 h6 13.♕h7 ♕xh7 14.♕xh7+ ♕h8 15.f3 ♕h5 16. g4 f5 17.♕xf5 exf5 18.♕xh5 ♕f6.

12...♕h5 13.f4

That is the most natural move for White.

13...♕g6 14.♕xg6 hxg6

Now, White should consider the possibility ♕f6-g4 (followed by f7-f5). In case of: 15.h3 ♕h7 16.g4 f5, White cannot control the important f6-square with the move 17.g5, because of his weakness on the g3-square. Therefore I played:

15.♕e2

15...♕h7

Possibly, Black had to consider the possibility of including the moves:
15...b6 16.b4 a5 17.a3 – and only then – 17...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash t}}\)h7 (with the idea to follow with f7-f5). In that case, White would not be forced to play the move g2-g4 (analogously to the moves in the game...).

**16.g4 g5**

Here, the moves: 16...b6 17.b4 a5 18.a3 g5, could have been included as well.

**17.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)3 g6**

The line: 17...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)f6 18.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)d1, leads to an advantage for White.

Black intends to continue now with f7-f5 and White's next move is the most principled...

**18.f5 gxf5 19.gxf5 e5**

**20.f6!**

This sacrifice leads to the opening of important "arteries", so that I do not allow Black to close the position.

**20...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)xf6 21.dxe5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)g4?!**

It was better for Black to play 21...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)xe5, but then after: 22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)g4 23.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f1!, I would have a serious initiative for the pawn, while in the variation: 23...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)xd3 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xd3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)6 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)d4 f6 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\)xg5+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)7 27.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\)2 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\)8 28.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\)3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\)4 29.e4, White would maintain his advantage.

**22.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)7+!**

This check was obviously a great surprise for my opponent and he thought for over ten minutes on his only move...

**22...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)8**

It is quite understandable that 22...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash g}}\)7 is very bad for Black due to: 23.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xf7+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xf7 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)g6+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)8 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xf7 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)df6 (or 25...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)xe5 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f5) 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f1 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)8 27.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xf6.

**23.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)5?**

That natural move turns out to be a mistake as well. The correct move for White would have been – 23.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)d1! and Black can hardly save the game. For example: 23...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)6 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)xe5 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)h5 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)g7 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f3+-, or 23...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\)h7 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xg4 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)xe5 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash h}}\)h5+ \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)7 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)f3 f6 27.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)d4+-

**23...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)xe3 24.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash d}}\)d3 \(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash x}}\)c5**

After: 24...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xf5 25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xf5, Black is practically helpless.

**25.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)xd7**

**25...\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)c4+??**

Black cannot save the game anymore after that mistake. He had however a wonderful defensive resource, which I found only after the game – 25...f6!!

Now, it is of course a mistake for White to play 26.\(\text{\texttt{\textbackslash f}}\)c1?, due to: 26...
It is also terrible for him to continue with: 26.e6??, because of 26...g4+. White has no advantage in the variation: 26.\texttt{xf6} \texttt{xf6} (or 26...g4+? 27.\texttt{h1} \texttt{xf6} 28.\texttt{h3+ g7} 29.e4) 27.exf6 g4+ 28.xd4 \texttt{xh2+} 29.xf1 ef5 30.f7 ef8 31.xg6 \texttt{xd4} 32.xf6+ \texttt{h7} 33.xf5+ g6 34.xg6+ h6 35.xd4 xg6.

Following: 26.efe1 26...xd7 (or 26...c4+?! 27.xh1 xb2 28.xh3+ g7 29.xf5 h8 30.xc3) 27.xe3 xe3+ 28.xe3 ae8 (it is worse for Black to play here: 28...g4+ 29.xh1 ae8 30.xg1+) 29.xh1! (or 29.g3 fxe5 30.xe5+ h7 31.e1 xf5), White might be still slightly better, but the position would have remained complicated enough. For example: 29.xg8? (or 29...d4 30.xd4 xd5+ 31.g1 fxe5 32.xh3+ g7 33.xe3) 30.xg1 xf5 31.xg2 with the idea to follow with e3-g1.

26.xh1+ xb2 27.xh3+ g7 28.xf6 xe5 29.xh6+ g8 30.f5 1-0

Dreev – Tiviakov
Dos Hermanas 2003

This was my second participation in the traditional round-robin tournament. Just like in the year 2001, it was a category 16 event. I was only number three with my rating of 2690 at the start of the tournament. Alexey Shirov and Alexander Khalifman were in front of me because they both had a rating of over 2700. The participation of the 12 year old Sergey Karjakin was anticipated with great interest. I shared 1st-2nd place with 6 points out of 9 with Alexander Rустёнов, but according to the Berger coefficient he was declared the winner of the tournament.

1.d4 e6 2.e4 c5 3.d5 3...b6 4.a3 cxd5 5.c4 e5 6.c6 d5 e5 7.b3

This flexible move was introduced into the top-level tournament practice by GM Smbat Lputian.

7...d7 8.xd5 xd5 9.xc2 c5 10.e4 b7

I had reached that position three times in the several months preceding this game. In the first one, against Peter Leko, in the match “Russia against The Rest of the World” after: 11.xd1 cxd4 12.xd4 a6 13.e3 e7 14.e2 c8 15.b1 c5 16.f3 0-0 17.0-0 b8 18.b4 a4 19.c2 b5 20.c1 d6 21.g3, we agreed to a draw (Dreev – Leko, Moscow 2002).

In the second game, at the World FIDE Cup, Vishy Anand played a different move – 13...b5, but the game also ended in a draw after: 14.f3 e7 15.e2 c8 16.d2 e5 17.0-0 0-0 18.b4 c4 19.xc4 bxc4 20.e2 xd2 21.exd2 c6 22.d3 ½ (Dreev – Anand, Hyderabad 2002).
In the previous game, against Anatolij Karpov, (Dreev – Karpov, Cap d’Agde 2002), I had decided to try a much sharper move – 11.d5. After: 11...exd5 12.exd5 d6 13.0–0 0–0 14.f5 f6 15.b1 e5 16.f3 d4, I had no opening advantage and the position had remained quite unclear. Later, I had studied that position quite thoroughly and I found an interesting possibility, so when my opponent played 10...b7, I advanced my d4-pawn once again...

11.d5 exd5 12.exd5 d6 13.0–0 0–0

14.b5!? This is the possibility that I had mentioned...

14.h6

This move seems to be too slow, but it is quite logical, since Black takes the g5-square under control. White can counter the immediate move 14...f6 with the powerful – 15.g5.

After 14...h6, in case of the straightforward reaction 15.h4 (in order to play after 15...f6 – 16.g5) Black must follow with 16.e5 and White does not achieve anything. If White tries 16.c3, then Black can simply capture on d5 – 16...xd5.

Therefore, I started with the move – 15.c3

15...f6 16.c6 b8

In case of: 16...xc6 17.dxc6 e8 18.a4, Black has certain problems to worry about.

17.h4

My opponent had evidently underestimated that move.

17..g4

That was Black’s only move, since White was threatening f3-g5.

18.b1

This useful move helps White prepare f3-g5.

18...c8?

Sergey told me in our discussion after the game that he did not wish to allow the move f3-g5 and he relied a lot on his subsequent move g7-g6. In fact, the move 18...c8 turned out to be his decisive mistake.

Meanwhile, after 18...c7, it would have been quite premature to talk about any real advantage for White. For example, here the move 19.g5, leads possibly only to a draw by a perpetual after: 19...hxg5 20.hxg5 f5 21.gxf6 xf6 22.xf6 xf6 23.h7+ f8 24.h8+ etc. Therefore, I would have to look for some other possibili-
ties in case he had tried – 18...\( \text{c7} \)...

19.\( \text{d}6\text{e1}! \)

This is an important preparatory move. I though that after: 19.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{hxg5} \) 20.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( f5 \), White's attack was insufficient.

19...\( \text{g6} \)

Black can hardly save the game after his other possibilities either, for example if: 19...b5, then 20.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{hxg5} \) 21.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( f5 \) 22.\( \text{gx}f6 \) \( \text{xf6} \) 23.\( \text{g6} \) (23.\( \text{h}6? \)) and if 23...\( \text{b}4 \), then 24.\( \text{axb}4 \) \( \text{cxb4} \) 25.\( \text{d}4 \) and Black is completely helpless against the doubling of White's rooks along the h-file after \( \text{e}4 \), or \( \text{h}4 \).

In case of 19...\( \text{d}7 \), White can again answer with – 20.\( \text{d}5 \) \( \text{hxg5} \) 21.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( f5 \) 22.\( \text{gxf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 22...\( \text{xf6} \) 23.\( \text{h}7+ \) \( \text{f}7 \) 24.\( \text{xd}7 \) \( \text{xd}7 \) 25.\( \text{e}6 \) and 23.\( \text{g}6 \). After: 23...\( \text{xc}6 \) 24.\( \text{xc}6 \) \( \text{e}8 \) (24...\( \text{f}7 \) 25.\( \text{h}3 \); 24...\( \text{c}7 \) 25.\( \text{e}6 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 26.\( \text{h}7+ \) \( \text{f}7 \) 27.\( \text{he}1+ \) – 25...\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{e}6 \) 26.\( \text{h}7 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 27.\( \text{h}1 \), White's position is winning. Black's other possible defence is – 23...\( \text{c}8 \) (threatening \( \text{d}7-f5 \)) – but after: 24.\( \text{xd}7 \) \( \text{xd}7 \) 25.\( \text{e}6 \) (25.\( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{xf}6 \) 26.\( \text{h}7+ \) \( \text{f}7 \) 27.\( \text{h}5+ \) – 25...\( \text{e}7 \) 26.\( \text{e}3 \) \( \text{e}8 \) 27.\( \text{f}5 \) \( \text{c}8 \) 28.\( \text{xc}8 \) \( \text{xc}8 \) 29.\( \text{xe}7 \) \( \text{f}7 \) 30.\( \text{h}8+ \), the endgame should be an easy win for White.

After 19...\( \text{c}7 \), White wins again with the help of: 20.\( \text{g}5 \) – 20...\( \text{hxg5} \) 21.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( f5 \) 22.\( \text{xf6} \) \( \text{xf6} \) 23.\( \text{xf}6 \) \( \text{gxf6} \) 24.\( \text{h}6 \).

Following 19...\( \text{f}6 \), White should at first bring his queen into the attack – 20.\( \text{g}6 \) \( b5 \) 21.\( \text{g}5 \) \( \text{hxg5} \) 22.\( \text{hxg5} \) \( \text{e}5 \) 23.\( \text{h}7+ \) \( \text{f}7 \) 24.\( \text{h}6 \) and his advantage becomes decisive.

20.\( \text{e}6! \) \( \text{xe}6 \)

This is the only move for Black.

21.\( \text{dx}e6 \) \( f5 \)

Once again an only move...

22.\( \text{h}5 \)

That is the necessary introduction to White’s main idea. Now, it becomes clear that Black’s hopes to consolidate his position with the help of the move \( \text{e}7 \) are going to be in vain.

The point is that in case of 22...\( \text{g}5 \), I had in mind the powerful argument – 23.e7!!!, opening the important a2-g8 diagonal. After: 23...\( \text{xe}7 \) 24.\( \text{d}1 \) \( \text{c}7 \) 25.\( \text{b}3+ \) \( \text{f}7 \) 26.\( \text{e}6 \) \( \text{f}6 \) 27.\( \text{d}7 \), Black loses. If Black captures the pawn with his queen – 23...\( \text{xe}7 \), I had the answer 24.\( \text{d}5+ \) and following 24...\( \text{h}7 \) – 25.\( \text{e}1 \), so that after every retreat of Black’s queen, White plays 26.\( \text{e}6 \) and Black cannot defend his \( f5 \)-square and his position crumbles.
Therefore, Sergey played –
**22...gxh5**

But after:
**23.\text{Exh5}** – my attack was impossible to be parried:
**23...\text{We7} 24.\text{fh4 Wxe6 25.\text{xf5 \text{e5}}}**

Or 25...\text{Exf5 26.\text{xf5 \text{e5}}} 27.\text{We4. 26.\text{d5 1–0}}**

14...\text{c7}

This is an interesting novelty. Black is preparing \(\text{d7-f6}\). In a game, which was played several days earlier in another tournament (Dreev – Tiviakov, Dos Hermanas 2003), Black followed with 14...h6 (I have chosen that game too as a part of this book...).

Information spreads in a flash in contemporary society and naturally my opponent must have known about that game. He made his next several moves rather quickly...

**15.\text{c3 \text{Efd8 16.\text{b1 \text{f8}}}**

After 16...\text{e5 17.\text{g5 \text{g6 18.h4, White has the initiative.}}}

17.\text{We4}

Or 17.\text{f5!? a6 18.\text{d3 b5 19.g5 (19.wg5 \text{g6}) 19...b4 20.axb4.}}

17...\text{a6 18.\text{d3}}

18.\text{c6!?}

18...\text{b5 19.wg4 \text{g6 20.g5}}
Here, my opponent made a blunder:

**20...b4?**

The right move for him would have been 20...f4, after which he should be afraid neither of 21.xg6, nor of 21.xh7:

**a)** 21.xg6 hxg6 22.a5 xa5 23.xf4 f6 24.e3 (or 24.e6 xd5 25.xd5 xc5 26.xd5 (26.d6 d2) 26...e8 and Black is even slightly better) 24.fxg5 25.e6+ f8 (25...h8? 26.h4 g4 27.h5 g5 28.h6+-) 26.h4 (26.e3 g4) 26...g4 27.h5 c8 28.xg6 (28.e5 e8) 28...e7 29.h6 f7 30. hxg7+ xg7 31.c2 g8! (or 31...c4 32.h5 e6 33.h7 g8 34.ed4 xd5 35.xd5 xd5 36.fxg5 f7 37. c5+ e8 38.e5+ d7 39.e5=) and if 32.h5, then Black plays 32...e6;

**b)** 21.xh7 b4 (Or 21...xh7 22.h4 a8 23.f3 and White has some compensation for the material deficit and a powerful initiative.) 22.axb4 (or 22.f6+ xg6 23.xf6 d6; 22.f6 xd5) 22...cxb4 23.a4 (or 23.xb4 xdx5 24.xg6 fxg6 25.xg6 c6 26.xc6 dxc6 27.xd8+ xd8 28.f3 xg2) 23...b3! (In case of 23...xh7, White can continue with 24.h4 and he again has compensation and the initiative.) After the capturing 24.xg6 — Black can counter that with 24...fxg6 25.xg6 (or 25.e1 f7 26.f6+ gxf6 27.xf4 xdx5) 25...c2 and he remains in a slightly better position. Following 24.c3, it is good for Black to play: 24...d7! 25.xd7 xdx7 26.h4 xdx5 and his position is again superior.

Therefore, White obviously should better continue with 21.e4, protecting his d5-pawn. After 21...b4 (or 21.xg5 22.xg5 f4 23.xf4 xf4 24.a5 d7 (24...xd5 25.f3 xf3 (25...d7? 26.xd5) 26.xd8+ xdx8 27.xg8 xg8 28.e1) 25.xhe1) 22.axb4 cxb4 23.d2, the situation remains completely unclear.

21.xg6 hxg6 22.h4 bxc3 23. xhe1 xe5 24.h7+ f8 25.xh8+ xe7 26.xg7

My opponent had obviously overlooked that move. Now, his bishop on e5 is pinned.

26...d7 27.xg7+ c8 28.e6+ d7 29.e8+ d8 30.xxe5

The rest is quite clear without any comments —

30...xex5 31.xex5 cxb2 32. xxb2 d7 33.e4 e8 34.xc3 xac8 35.f1 a8 36.xb6 1–0

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**Dreev – Cu.Hansen**

18th North Sea Cup, Esbjerg 2003

*This game was played in the category 15 round-robin tournament,*
“North Sea Cup” in Esberg Denmark. That year the Cup had its 18th edition, but it was still an anniversary, since the local chess union had its 100 year jubilee. I was in Denmark for the first time in my life, but I will remember for a long time these ten days, which I spent on the North Sea coast. We were accommodated away from the noise of the city, next to a big park, maybe with the idea to be better acquainted with the local flora and fauna. That was a wonderful and picturesque place! There were deer grazing over the fence without being afraid of people and there were ducks swimming in the creek. There were some other animals too among beautiful shady alleys with attractive bridges and nice benches. It was difficult to imagine a better place to have a rest anywhere. Meanwhile, the atmosphere at the tournament and around it was quite warm and friendly and the conditions were just magnificent for the players as well as for the spectators. I would like to say again some kind words for the Director of the tournament, Brian Isaksen.

There were three winners with the very good result of “+4” for such a short distance – the young players Luke McShane, Krishnan Sarkinian and I. My rivals were collecting their points mostly against the players at the bottom of the tournament table, while I had to win against the favourites, since there was a point at which I had nowhere to retreat. So, my wins came at the end of the tournament. I will remember that event also with the fact that just after it my rating had passed over the 2700 mark for the first time in my chess career.

I encounter Kurt very seldom on the chess board. I would like to remind you that the strong Danish player was once the World Champion under 20, while I was only second...

1.d4 6f6 2.c4 e6 3.d3 b6 4.a3 6a6 5.hc2 6b7 6.c3 c5 7.e4 cxd4 8.xd4 6c5 9.hb3 6c6 10.6g5 h6 11.h4 6d4 12.xd4 6xd4 13.6d3 6e5 14.g3 6b8 15.0–0–0 0–0 16.hb1 d6 17.f3 6d8 18.xe5 dxe5 19.e2

In my game against grandmaster Milos, at the World Championship in Moscow (2001), I had to face a similar pawn-structure. The doubled pawn is a serious defect of Black’s position. It is not so easy to exploit that though... but still:

19...6c6 20.xd8+ 6xd8 21.6d1 6e7 22.6d2 6c8 23.b4 6f8 24.6b2 6e8

Black is preparing to maneuver his knight along the route – f6-d7-b8-c6-d4.

It is far from easy for White to improve his position without exchanging queens, so:

25.6d6 6xd6 26.xd6 6e7
27.\textit{Ed2}

That is the most natural move, but it was possibly more precise for me to play – 27.\textit{Ed1}.

27...\textit{g5}

In case of 27...\textit{d7}, White has the powerful resource 28.\textit{b5}; therefore Black starts advancing his pawns, believing that would improve his position... You should always be very careful about pushing pawns, though...

28.\textit{b3}

I did not like the idea to push my own pawn – g2-g4...

28...\textit{h5}

This is the critical moment in this game. I did not see how I could improve my position playing in a normal fashion. The most logical plan for me would have been to advance my a-pawn, but in case of 29.a4, I did not like Black’s response – 29...\textit{a5}!

29.\textit{c5}?!?

That is White’s only possibility to play for a win.

29...\textit{bxc5} 30.\textit{b5} \textit{b8}

In case I manage to push my pawn to the a5-square, my advantage would become overwhelming. Therefore Black must prevent that in different ways. Now, he would counter a2-a4 with a7-a5.

31.\textit{c4} \textit{d7} 32.\textit{Ed1}

It seemed that 32.a4!? might be a good move, but I was afraid that my advantage would disappear after it. Therefore I decided not to force the issue.

32...\textit{h4}!?

The move 32...\textit{b6}, does not solve Black’s problems either: 33.a4 a5 (or 33...\textit{d6} 34.\textit{xd6} \textit{xd6} 35.\textit{a5}) 34.\textit{bx} 35.\textit{a6} \textit{a6} 35.\textit{b3} \textit{a8} 36.\textit{b5} \textit{b6} 37.\textit{x} 38.\textit{xe8} \textit{xe8} (37...\textit{xe8} 38.\textit{a5}) 38.\textit{ed6} \textit{b8} 39.\textit{b5}, and White maintains the advantage.

33.\textit{f1}

The move a2-a4!? deserves attention too.

33...\textit{f6}?! 34.\textit{e2} \textit{b7} 35.\textit{g3} \textit{hxg3} 36.\textit{hxg3} \textit{b8} 37.\textit{g4} \textit{b7} 38.\textit{h1} \textit{d6} 39.\textit{h8} \textit{b8} 40.\textit{h7} \textit{c7}

The time-trouble was over here and I finally decided to advance thematically my pawn:

41.a4,

against which Black was completely helpless. His position was very difficult anyway and Kurt understood that his fate was doomed after passive defence, so he decided to follow with

41...\textit{b6}
42.\texttt{He}7!
This move emphasizes the drawbacks of the move 33...f6.
42...\texttt{a}a5 43.\texttt{b}b3 a6 44.\texttt{c}c4!
That is the most precise move for White!
44...\texttt{b}6
Here, I was reluctant to follow with the beautiful line: 45.bxa6 (or 45...\texttt{d}d5+ 46.\texttt{b}b7) and I played the much more reliable move –
45.\texttt{a}a7 \texttt{a}a8
That is Black’s only defence.
46.\texttt{x}xa8 \texttt{xa}a8 47.bxa6 \texttt{d}d7
In case of 47...\texttt{b}6, or 47...\texttt{c}c7, White wins with 48.\texttt{b}5.

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\textbf{Dreev – Sasikiran}
\textit{18th North Sea Cup, Esbjerg 2003}

\textit{This game was played in the penultimate round of a round-robin tournament. My opponent and L. McShane were leaders at that moment, while I was half a point behind...}

1.d4 \texttt{f}f6 2.c4 e6 3.\texttt{f}f3 b6 4.a3 \texttt{a}a6 5.\texttt{c}c2 \texttt{b}b7 6.\texttt{c}c3 c5 7.e4 cxd4 8.\texttt{x}xd4 d6 9.\texttt{e}e2 \texttt{bd}7 10.\texttt{e}e3 a6 11.0-0 \texttt{e}e7 12.\texttt{fd}1 0-0 13.\texttt{f}f3 \texttt{e}e8 14.\texttt{h}h1

48.\texttt{a}7
Fortunately for me, I avoided the trap. It looked like I was winning easily with 48.\texttt{b}b5 and if 48...\texttt{c}8, then 49.\texttt{c}c6, attacking Black’s knight. But following: 48...\texttt{xa}a5 49.axb5 \texttt{b}b6 50.\texttt{a}a7 c4+! 51.\texttt{a}a3 \texttt{a}a8, Black makes a draw.

48...\texttt{b}6
Or 48...\texttt{b}b6 49.\texttt{b}b5 \texttt{c}c8 50.\texttt{c}c4 \texttt{c}c7 51.a5+ and Black’s kingside is defenseless.

49.\texttt{b}b5 \texttt{xb}b5 50.\texttt{xb}b5 \texttt{a}a6 51.\texttt{a}a5! Black resigned.

This is a useful move, since White must watch about the possibility d6-d5 all the time. Now, after 14...d5, he has the line: 15.exd5 exd5 16.\texttt{f}f5! and if 16...\texttt{x}xc4 – 17.\texttt{xb}6!

14...\texttt{c}c7 15.\texttt{ac}1 \texttt{b}b8 16.\texttt{f}f1
I had to prefer possibly the move 16.b4, but it seemed to me that the maneuver \( \text{g2} - \text{f2} \) might turn out to be more important.

16...\( \text{d8} \) 17.b4 \( \text{c7} \) 18.\( \text{g1} \) \( \text{h8} \)

This is with the idea to follow with \( \text{g8} \) and \( \text{g5} \).

19.\( \text{b3} \)

White should better prepare some active actions on the queenside.

20.\( \text{exd5} \) exd5 21.c5! \( \text{f4} \) 22.\( \text{e1} \)

Now, White controls firmly the d4-square and he has the possibility to create a passed pawn in the future, while Black cannot organize any serious threats on the kingside. Later in the game, I was trying to follow lines in which Black's possible counterplay was reduced to a minimum. My opponent had obviously understood that his position was terrible, so he started to play very quickly with the idea to exploit my time-pressure.

22...\( \text{e8} \) 23.\( \text{e2} \)

It was also possible for me to play 23.cxb6. The move in the game was the beginning of basically prophylactic measures.

23...\( \text{h6} \) 24.\( \text{ed4} \) g6

25.\( \text{wa2} \)

White wishes to capture on b6 with the idea to occupy later the c5-square. Of course, it would not work for him to play 25.c6 – after 25...\( \text{e5} \) 26.b5 axb5 27.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{a8} \), he would have problems with the c6-pawn.

25...\( \text{g8} \) 26.cxb6 \( \text{e3} \)

That is practically a forced measure...

27.\( \text{xe3} \) \( \text{xe3} \) 28.\( \text{f2} \) \( \text{ec3} \) 29.\( \text{b5} \)

Naturally, I could have postponed that move a bit, but I decided to force the issue, because I did not have so much time left on the clock...

29...axb5 30.\( \text{xb5} \) \( \text{c2} \) 31.\( \text{g3} \)

That is the most reliable line. I could have also played 31.\( \text{h4} \).

31...\( \text{xb6} \) 32.\( \text{d4} \)

Here, I overlooked the possibility to win the exchange immediately with: 32.\( \text{d3!} \) \( \text{g3} \) 33.hxg3 \( \text{a2} \) 34.\( \text{c1} \), due to the time-trouble.

32...\( \text{e5} \) 33.\( \text{c6} \) \( \text{h5} \) 34.\( \text{e5} \)

\( \text{a8} \)
In case of 34...\textit{c4}!?, White wins with: 35.\textit{xc}4 dxc4 36.\textit{e}e7 \textit{e}5c7 (or 36...\textit{b}8c7 37.\textit{xb}7!) 37.\textit{d}c6!! and his material advantage is overwhelming.

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35.\textit{g}4

I could have won a pawn here with 35.\textit{xf}7, but after: 35...\textit{e}xe5 36.\textit{xe}5 \textit{c}4, Black would have good chances to save the game. Therefore, I decided to repel at first Black's knight on h5. Still, it would have been the best for me to have played the simple move 35.\textit{e}1 and after: 35...\textit{f}8 36.\textit{xf}7 \textit{e}xe5 37.\textit{xe}5, Black would not have the possibility 37...\textit{c}4.

35...\textit{g}7 36.\textit{f}6 \textit{f}8 37.\textit{xf}7 \textit{xf}7 38.\textit{xb}6 \textit{f}8 39.\textit{b}8 \textit{c}8 40.\textit{b}4 \textit{d}8 41.\textit{a}6.

This move forces the exchange of queens. The time-trouble was over and my position was easily winning. I had an extra pawn and a powerful knight on the d4-outpost. My opponent continued to play very quickly, while the time-control was "1 hour to the end of the game", after move 40. So, I did not have enough time; nevertheless I played quite well in the technical stage...

41...\textit{b}cc7 42.\textit{b}8 \textit{f}8 43.\textit{xd}8 \textit{xd}8 44.\textit{b}6 \textit{f}7 45.\textit{e}1 \textit{a}7 46.\textit{a}4 \textit{e}8 47.\textit{b}5 \textit{c}7

It is too bad for Black to play 47...\textit{d}6, because of 48.\textit{e}6!

48.\textit{g}2

It was high time I did that!

48...\textit{xb}5 49.\textit{axb}5 \textit{e}8 50.\textit{d}6 \textit{e}7 51.\textit{d}d1 \textit{e}4 52.\textit{g}3 \textit{b}7 53.\textit{h}4 \textit{e}8 54.\textit{f}4 \textit{f}7 55.\textit{h}5 \textit{g}xh5 56.\textit{g}xh5 \textit{e}8 57.\textit{g}5 \textit{e}7 58.\textit{b}6 \textit{d}7 59.\textit{xd}7 \textit{xd}7 60.\textit{e}1+ \textit{f}7 61.\textit{e}6 \textit{d}8 62.\textit{f}6+ \textit{g}8 63.\textit{h}6 \textit{a}8 64.\textit{f}5

The further resistance of my opponent could only be explained by the specific time-control.

64...\textit{b}7 65.\textit{e}5 \textit{c}8 66.\textit{f}4 \textit{b}7 67.\textit{d}6 \textit{e}8+ 68.\textit{e}6 \textit{b}8 69.\textit{d}6 \textit{f}8 70.\textit{f}5 \textit{a}6 71.\textit{e}7 \textit{h}8 72.\textit{g}7+ \textit{h}8 73.\textit{c}5 \textit{e}8+ 74.\textit{c}7 \textit{b}8 75.\textit{a}7 \textit{b}7 76.\textit{c}6 \textit{f}8 77.\textit{xb}7 \textit{d}4 78.\textit{b}8! 1–0

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\begin{center}
\textbf{Dreev – Gallagher}
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\begin{center}
\textit{Gibraltar (open) 2004}
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\begin{center}
\textit{My game against Joe Gallagher was played in an Open tournament with 90 participants. Nigel Short won sole first place with 8 points out of 10}
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games. He had shared 1st-2nd place the previous year with V. Kotronias, but he had been second on the tie-break. Second place this time was taken by the Indian grandmaster Surya Ganguly (who had lost to Short in round 6). I finished the tournament without a loss with 7 out of 10 (that corresponded to my expected level of performance) and I shared 3rd-5th place. I remember that journey with my lasting impressions at the sight of the Rock of Gibraltar and my acquaintance with its famous inhabitants – the tailless monkeys Barbary Macaques/Macaca Sylvanus, which were even depicted on the emblem of the tournament playing chess.

1.d4 df6 2.c4 g6 3.d3 d5 4.e4 d6 5.f3 0-0 6.gge2 c5 7.d5 e6 8.g3 exd5 9.exd5 h5 10.e2 dh7 11.e3 a6 12.a4 h4 13.gf1

Grandmaster Joe Gallagher played a much more flexible move:

13...d7 14.g2

This move frees the e3-square for the knight and it prepares the move f7-f5 at the same time. After the less flexible line 14.d2, White must worry about Black’s possibility 14...d4 all the time.

14...f5 15.exf5 gxf5 16.f4 e8 17.e3 d4

Black was obviously afraid not to be squeezed into a positional bind. Therefore, he was trying to change radically the type of the fight.

18.xf5

This is the most principled move for White. He would not have achieved anything with 18.d4, because of: 18...xf2 + 19.xf2 b6.

18...xf2 + 19.xf2 ef8

Here, in case of 20.g4, it would be very strong for Black to follow with 20...e5; while the move 20.dxd6 would have led to a quite unclear position after: 20...xf4+ 21.xf3 c4?!, or 21...e5!?

20.g4! hxg3 + 21.hxg3

It is understandable that I did not play g4, in order to capture on g3 with the knight...

I had already played that position before – against Vesselin Topalov (the moves a7-a6 and a2-a4 had been included there) and against Teimur Radjabov (without the inclusion of the moves with the a-pawns) – I had won both games. My opponents played f7-f5 and after exf5, both of them captured with the pawn: gxf5.
21...\textit{Exf5} 22.\textit{Exh7}

I was also considering the following order of moves: 22.\textit{Qd3} \textit{Qf6} 23. \textit{Exh7 Qxh7} (The line: 23...\textit{Qxh7} 24.g4 was just transposing to the game...) 24.\textit{Wg4+ Wg5} 25.\textit{Wxg5+ Qxg5} 26.\textit{Qxf5 Qxf5} 27.fxg5, but I was afraid that it might all end in a draw. Objectively speaking, that might have been White’s best move order – you will understand why a bit later...

22...\textit{Qxh7} 23.\textit{Qd3}

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\textbf{23...Qf6}

Now, Black had a fantastic possibility at his disposal: 23...\textit{Wg5}?! White can regain his material indeed, but only with the line: 24.\textit{Qf3 Qg7} 25.fxg5 \textit{Qxf3+} 26.\textit{Qxf3} and there arises an endgame, which is already familiar to us, but in a slightly better situation for Black.

\textbf{24.g4 c4!}

The move 24...\textit{Wb6}, would have been refuted by White with the line: 25.gxf5 c4+ (or 25...\textit{Wxb2+} 26.\textit{Qe2}) 26.\textit{Qf3 cxd3} 27.\textit{Wh1+ Qg7} 28.\textit{Wg2+ Qf8} 29.\textit{Qg1}.

\textbf{25.Qxf5+ Qxf5} 26.gxf5 \textit{Wb6+} 27.\textit{Qf3 Qxb2} 28.\textit{Qe1}

In case White after: 28.\textit{Qe4 Qg8} 29.\textit{Qh1+ Qg7} 30.\textit{Qg1+ Qf7} 31.\textit{Qxd6+}

\textit{Qe7}, captures 32.\textit{Exg8}, then Black can make a draw with the move 32...\textit{Wc3+}.

\textbf{28...Qg8?}

This is a mistake. Black could have saved the day only with the move – 28...\textit{Wh2}!. After 29.\textit{We7+ Qg8} 30.\textit{Wxf6}, Black forces a draw by a perpetual 30...\textit{Wh3+}; in case of: 29.\textit{Wh1 Wxh1+} 30.\textit{Qxh1+ Qg7} 31.\textit{Qb1 b5} 32.\textit{axb5 axb5} 33.\textit{Qxb5 Qa6}, the draw is again the most likely outcome.

\textbf{29.We7+ Qg7} 30.\textit{Wh1+ Qg8} 31. \textit{Wd8+ Qf7} 32.\textit{Wc7+ Qf8} 33.\textit{Wc8+}

\textbf{1-0}

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E.Alekseev – Dreev
Aeroflot-open, Moscow 2004

\textit{It was again winter and I was again in Moscow at the "Aeroflot – Open". That was the third tournament in a row and it was becoming increasingly popular and it was breaking more and more records. There were 370 players in the first tournament (in all the groups), while in the second tournament there were already 476 participants (including}
154 grandmasters). In 2004, there were 650 players from 53 countries and some representatives of “The Guinness Book of Records” were invited in order to note the official record – the participation of more than 160 grandmasters in a tournament. There were some grandmasters taking part at the drawing of lots concerning the colour of the pieces in the first round in both the first and the second years. This time that task was assigned to the youngest grandmaster, the 13 year old Magnus Carlsen. There were three ex-World Champions present at the opening ceremony – Vasily Vasilievich Smyslov, Boris Vasilievich Spassky and Anatoly Eugenievich Karpov as well as the multiple challenger for the World title – Victor Kortchnoi and the widow of Mikhail Tal – Sally Landay with their son.

With 7 points out of 9, 1st to 3rd place was shared by Sergey Rublevsky (who won the tournament according to the tie-break coefficient), Rafael Vaganian and Valery Filipov. I had 6 1/2 points and I tied for 4th-16th place and I took 5th place on the tie-break.

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 âf5 4.c3 e6 5.âe3 âb6 6.âb3

This seldom played variation of the Caro-Kann Defence has been introduced into the tournament practice relatively recently – at the very end of the 20th century. There are not so many games played in that line and the theory is still investigating the possibilities...

6...âd7 7.âd2 f6

This is the main line and the most principled too.

8.f4 g5!?

White’s pawn-structure undergoes some changes after that move and Black thus succeeds in getting rid of White’s e5-pawn, which cramps Black’s pieces.

9.âgf3

It is bad for White to play 9.g3 here, because of: 9...gxh4 10.gxf4 âh6!? (or 10...âh6!?) – and Black obtains a very good game. Following: 9.exf6, ‘Black has the powerful argument: 9...g4! – he takes the f3-square under control and he solves all his opening problems.

9...gxh4 10.âxf4 âh6 11.âxh6 âxh6 12.exf6 âxf6 13.âe2

The move 13.âe5 is harmless for Black, thanks to 13...âg8!?. In the game Smirin – Dreev, Moscow 2002, there followed later: 14.âdf3 âhg4 15.âxg4 âxg4 16.h3 âf6 17.âxb6 axb6 18.âe5 h5 19.a3 âe7 and Black’s position was superior.

(diagram)

13...âe4

Peter Leko in his game against Alexander Grischuk (Linares, 2001) continued with: 13...âg8 14.âxb6 14.axb6 15.0–0 âe4 and he obtained a good position. White did not need how-
ever to exchange on b6. For example, in the game Yudasin – Furdzik, New York 2003, he followed with: 14.0–0
\( \text{\texttt{D}} \text{e}4 15.\text{\texttt{D}}x\text{e}4 \text{\texttt{D}}x\text{e}4 \) – and there arose by transposition a situation from our

game. After 16.g3, Black made a mistake – 16...\( \text{\texttt{D}} \text{f}5 \) and following 17.\text{\texttt{D}}e5, 
White had the advantage.

14.\text{\texttt{D}}x\text{e}4 \text{\texttt{D}}x\text{e}4 15.0–0

In case of 15.\text{\texttt{D}}g5, I intended to continue with: 15...\text{\texttt{W}}xb3 16.axb3 \text{\texttt{D}}f5, 
with the idea to follow with \text{\texttt{W}}g8 and the position would have remained approximately equal.

15...\text{\texttt{W}}g8 16.g3 \text{\texttt{D}}f7!?

That was a new idea, although the move seemed to be quite attractive. Black must take the e5-square under
control, in order not to become clearly worse.

17.\text{\texttt{D}}d2 \text{\texttt{D}}f5 18.\text{\texttt{W}}xb6

It looked quite enticing for White to play 18.\text{\texttt{D}}h5, but then after 18...\text{\texttt{W}}c7! 
(threatening \text{\texttt{W}}xg3) White would fail to occupy the e5-square, for example:
19.\text{\texttt{D}}xf7+ \text{\texttt{D}}xf7 and here it was bad for him to continue with 20.\text{\texttt{D}}f3, because of: 20...\text{\texttt{W}}xg3+! 21.hxg3 \text{\texttt{W}}xg3+ 22.\text{\texttt{D}}h1 
\text{\texttt{W}}g8–+

18...\text{\texttt{W}}xb6 19.\text{\texttt{D}}h5 \text{\texttt{D}}g6 20.\text{\texttt{D}}g4

White is playing too optimistically. After 20.\text{\texttt{W}}xg6 the position would have

been about equal.

20...\text{\texttt{W}}e7 21.\text{\texttt{D}}xe1

In case of 21.\text{\texttt{D}}ae1, Black has the powerful resource 21...e5 – 22.a3 (or 22.dxe5 \text{\texttt{W}}xa2) 22...e4.

21...e5!?

My opponent had obviously underestimated this positional pawn-sacrifice.

22.dxe5 \text{\texttt{W}}h5 23.\text{\texttt{D}}h3 \text{\texttt{W}}h4 24.\text{\texttt{W}}e3

hxg3 25.hxg3

All these moves were quite correct for both sides.

25...\text{\texttt{W}}h6!

Now, all Black’s pieces will be deployed very comfortably. Naturally, the rather naïve move – 25...\text{\texttt{D}}g5 
would have been a mistake.

26.a3

White can hardly continue the
game without that prophylactic move. 26...\textit{f5} 27.\textit{g2} \textit{g4}!

Black has repelled White’s bishop away from the h3-c8 diagonal and now he deploys his knight on the f5-square creating some pressure and squeezing White’s pieces maximally.

28.\textit{ae1}

Here it is essential that White cannot play 28.\textit{af1}, due to 28...\textit{df5} 29.\textit{ed3} \textit{ae2}.

28...\textit{df5} 29.\textit{ed3} \textit{ah5} 30.\textit{gf1}

White had more possibilities for a successful defence after 30.\textit{fh2}.

Now, I was thinking of playing 30...b5, but White could have countered that with – 31.\textit{gf2} \textit{af8} 32.\textit{f3}.

Therefore I made up my mind on following:

30...\textit{af8} 31.\textit{fh2} \textit{fh8} 32.\textit{g1} \textit{hg8} 33.\textit{fh2}

Suddenly, White’s position becomes hopeless. The attempt 38.\textit{ef1}, would not work, because of the spectacular refutation: 38...\textit{g4+}! 39.\textit{gxg4} \textit{hxh3}! 40.\textit{hxh3} \textit{g8+} 41.\textit{h6} \textit{g8h6#}. In case of: 38.g4 \textit{gxg4}+ 39.\textit{gxg4} \textit{gxg4}, White is again lost.

Therefore White decided to give up the exchange:

38.\textit{xf3} \textit{xf3} 39.\textit{g2} \textit{f8} 40. \textit{c2} \textit{f7} 41.e6 \textit{e5} 42.\textit{d4} \textit{d3} 43.\textit{e3} \textit{f2} 44.g4 \textit{hxh3} 45.\textit{xh3} \textit{axh3} 46.\textit{axh3}

(diagram)

Here, I had the choice between 46...c5 and 46...\textit{ff2}. In case of 46...\textit{ff2}, I was winning after: 46...\textit{ff2} 47.b4 \textit{a2} 48.g5 \textit{axa3} 49.\textit{g4} \textit{xc3} 50.\textit{ff5} (or 50.g6 \textit{ff6}) 50...\textit{gg3}! (or 50...\textit{d3} 51.g6!) 51.g6 \textit{gg2} 52.\textit{ee5} (White is in
a zugzwang here...) 52...\textit{hxg6} 53.\textit{h5}+ \textit{d8} 54.\textit{d6} \textit{g4}.

I had calculated all that, but I preferred the move in the game, because I was winning much simpler after that.

46...\textit{c5} 47.\textit{xh5} \textit{xe6} 48.\textit{b4} \textit{b6} 49.\textit{g3} \textit{e5} 50.\textit{bxc5} \textit{bxc5} 51.\textit{g5} \textit{d4} 52.\textit{cxd4+} \textit{cxd4} and White resigned. Following 53.\textit{g4}, Black wins for example with: 53...\textit{d3} 54.\textit{g6} \textit{d2} 55.\textit{c3} \textit{f1} 56.\textit{g7} \textit{d1+} 57.\textit{xd1} \textit{xd1} 58.\textit{g5} \textit{g1+} 59.\textit{h6} \textit{f6}.

\textbf{86} \textbf{D45}

\textbf{Dreev – J.Geller}

Russian Club Cup, Sochi 2004

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.\textit{f3} \textit{f6} 4.\textit{c3} c6 5.e3 \textit{bd7} 6.\textit{wc2} \textit{d6} 7.g4

This active move is becoming more and more popular lately.

7...\textit{hxg4}

My opponent accepts the pawn sacrifice. The other possibilities for Black are – 7...\textit{h6}, 7...\textit{b4} and finally the line, which is attracting more adherents in the latest tournaments – 7...\textit{dxc4}!? 8.\textit{xc4} e5 9.\textit{g5} \textit{d5}.

8.\textit{g1} \textit{h2}

GM P.H.Nielsen in his mini-match against Garry Kasparov (Reykjavik 2004) preferred: 8...\textit{f5} 9.\textit{h3} \textit{f6} 10.\textit{g7} \textit{e4}. He equalized in the rapid chess game, but in the blitz-game he blundered in the opening and he lost.

9.\textit{hxh2} \textit{hxh2} 10.\textit{xc4} \textit{f6} 11.\textit{g2}

It is more natural for White to play here 11.\textit{h7}, but the character of the game changes radically then – White regains his pawn, but he loses his advantage in development. For example, it is possible for Black to follow with: 11...\textit{a6}, as it was played in the game Shirov – J.Piket, Monaco 1995, where after 12.\textit{h8} \textit{h8}, White played 13.\textit{e4}, but he underestimated Black’s resource 13...\textit{e5}! and he lost quickly.

11...\textit{d6}

\textbf{12.\textit{d2}}

I had considered the move 12.\textit{e4} to be rather premature, because Black
had the excellent resource 12...\textit{f}4! neutralizing White's initiative completely.

12...\textit{b}6
This move (which had not been played before) should be qualified as rather dubious; Black had better play 12...\textit{f}8.

13.e4!
Now, it is the right time for White!

13...\textit{f}4
That is Black's best here. It will not work for him to try: 13...e5, due to 14.exd5 exd4 15.\textit{e}4.

14.cxd5 exd5
Having played 14...cxd5, my opponent had to seriously consider White's maneuver \textit{b}5, after the preliminary 15 \textit{e}5. The piece-sacrifice is clearly insufficient for Black, for example: 14...exd5 15.e5 \textit{xe}5 16.dxe5 \textit{xe}5+ 17.\textit{e}2.

15.exd5 \textit{x}d2 + 16.\textit{xd}2 \textit{b}7

17.0-0-0!
I understood that after 17.dxc6 \textit{xc}6, my position was slightly better, but not more. Therefore, I decided to sacrifice a pawn for the initiative.

17...\textit{c}xd5
Black is practically forced to accept the gift, since after: 17...0-0-0, it is very strong for White to follow

with: 18.\textit{e}4 \textit{f}3! (or 18...\textit{e}7 19.\textit{f}4) 19.\textit{g}3!? \textit{xe}4 20.\textit{g}2 \textit{f}5 21.dxc6 \textit{xc}6 22.\textit{xc}6 \textit{b}8 23.\textit{f}3.

18.\textit{e}1+ \textit{d}8 19.\textit{g}5!
White is coordinating his pieces.

19...\textit{c}8
It deserved attention for Black to try here: 19...h6 20.\textit{h}5 \textit{g}6, but even then after the correct response for White: 21.\textit{h}3! (or 21.\textit{h}4 h5 22.\textit{d}3 \textit{h}6 23.\textit{f}4 \textit{f}6) 21...h5 22.\textit{he}3 (occupying the e-file, with the idea to follow with \textit{f}f1-h3) his position remains very powerful.

20.\textit{h}3

20...\textit{c}7
This might be the best defence for Black, but it is still too passive. He could have tried for example the much riskier line: 20...\textit{c}4 21.\textit{e}3 (The exchange of queens after 21.\textit{f}5, should be favourable for White, but I was far from sure during the game that it would be sufficient: 21...\textit{x}d4 22.\textit{x}d4 \textit{x}d4 23.\textit{xf}7 \textit{c}5 24.\textit{ee}7.) 21...\textit{xd}4. Now, it looks like that move is impossible for Black due to 22.\textit{f}5, but he has the surprising resource 22...\textit{e}6! and after: 23.\textit{d}4 \textit{e}1 24.\textit{c}2 \textit{f}8, White has the powerful move 25.\textit{a}4 indeed, but Black has great chances for a suc-
cessful defence. It is quite possible that the calm move – 22.\texttt{b}1, might turn out to be the most unpleasant answer for Black, since he has a problem to find a good move...

\textbf{21...\texttt{e}3}

I could have played at first 21.\texttt{f}5 and if 21...\texttt{h}4, then 22.\texttt{e}3.

\textbf{21...\texttt{c}6 22.\texttt{f}5 \texttt{h}4 23.\texttt{x}f7 \texttt{x}c8 24.\texttt{g}1!}

This is the decisive penetration for White. Maybe, Black could have coped with one white rook having penetrated on the seventh rank somehow, but he has no defence against White’s doubled rooks...

\textbf{24...\texttt{h}6 25.\texttt{g}6 \texttt{h}5}

\textbf{26.\texttt{g}7}

I was short of time here and I never suspected that Black had made a terrible mistake on his last move, losing control over the g3-square. Naturally, the correct decision for White would have been 26.\texttt{g}3! and because of the threats \texttt{c}6 and \texttt{f}5, Black could have already resigned. In case of 26...\texttt{a}4, White has the “cold-blooded” answer” 27.f3.

\textbf{26...\texttt{d}8 27.\texttt{g}3}

Here, I had already noticed that move...!

\textbf{27...\texttt{b}5}

That is the correct decision for Black, because it is his only chance to avoid the positional bind.

Here, to tell you frankly, I had almost lost my mind. I understood that I was winning, but I was seeing nothing and my last minutes were ticking on the clock. When I had only seconds left (well, the time-control was with thirty second added after every move..., so I could afford that...), I found a move, which was hardly the best, but it seemed to be quite practical:...

\textbf{28.\texttt{f}5 \texttt{e}8 29.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{b}7}

After: 29...b4 30.\texttt{x}d5 \texttt{x}d5, I had seen the important intermediate move 31.\texttt{e}5!, which was leading to a clear win for White. I must also add that after the game, in my home analysis, I found out that the line: 31.\texttt{x}d5 \texttt{e}4 32.\texttt{b}3! would have brought me an easy victory as well.

\textbf{30.\texttt{d}6! \texttt{c}8 31.\texttt{f}7 b4 32.\texttt{x}b4+}

It also seemed quite effective for White to play: 32.\texttt{x}d7.

\textbf{32...\texttt{a}8 33.\texttt{e}7}

This was the simplest and probably the best move in the time-pressure.

\textbf{33...\texttt{h}8 34.\texttt{d}6 \texttt{b}6}
Now, White can finish the game off in a spectacular fashion –

\[ 35.\text{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}}! \, 1-0 \]

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A.Kuzmin – Dreev  
57\textsuperscript{th} Russia Ch (1/2-final)  
St Petersburg 2004

This game against Alexey Kusmin was played in the semi-final of the Russian Championship. There were two semi-finals held that year (the second was in the city of Tomsk) according to the Swiss system and the first three players in both of them were to qualify for the Super-Final. There were also some players with ratings over 2700 invited personally to the Super-Final (including V. Kramnik and G. Kasparov) as well as Anatoly Karpov. There were the so-called “white nights” during the tournament in Saint Petersburg. I did not know then if they had helped me somehow, but I started the tournament with 4 out of 4 and then I made 5 draws in a row. There was a really tough one against A.Khalifman. So, in the end I took a sole first place, half a point in front of V. Tzeshkovsky and V. Epishin. I have chosen two out of my four wins there for this book.

\[ 1.\text{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} \, 2.\text{\textit{\textbf{c4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} \, 3.\text{\textit{\textbf{Cc3}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{f6}}} \, 4.\text{\textit{\textbf{e3}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{e6}}} \, 5.\text{\textit{\textbf{Af3}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{bd7}}} \, 6.\text{\textit{\textbf{Ad3}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{dx}}c4} \, 7.\text{\textit{\textbf{Ac4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{b5}}} \, 8.\text{\textit{\textbf{Ad5}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{b7}}} \, 9.\text{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{b4}}} \, 10.\text{\textit{\textbf{Aa4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{c5}}} \, 11.\text{\textit{\textbf{e5}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{d5}}} \, 12.\text{\textit{\textbf{Ac5}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}} \, 13.\text{\textit{\textbf{dx}}c5} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{xc5}}} \, 14.\text{\textit{\textbf{0}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{0}}} \]  

(diagram)

I have played that position numerous times before in my practice.

\[ 14.\text{\textit{\textbf{h6}}} \, 15.\text{\textit{\textbf{d2}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{c7}}} \]

That move was not so favourably regarded by theory for a long time. Instead, Black had played: 15...0–0 16.\text{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{d4}}} \, 17.\text{\textit{\textbf{d6}}}, with slightly better chances for White.

\[ 16.\text{\textit{\textbf{e1}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{e7}}} \]

This move is a novelty. I used to play before – 16.\text{\textit{\textbf{ad8}}}.

\[ 17.\text{\textit{\textbf{g4}}} \]

Here, my opponent took a long time on the clock and he avoided the main line – 17.\text{\textit{\textbf{e4}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{xe5}}} \, 18.\text{\textit{\textbf{a4+}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{c6}}} (The move 18...\text{\textit{\textbf{f8}}} seems to be too risky.) 19.\text{\textit{\textbf{b5}}}. Now, Black has two possibilities and it looks like they both lead to equality:

1) 19...\text{\textit{\textbf{c8}}}!? (It does not work for Black to continue with: 19...\text{\textit{\textbf{xf}}2+?} 20.\text{\textit{\textbf{xf}}2} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{xb5}}} \, 21.\text{\textit{\textbf{xb5+}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{xb5}}} \, 22.\text{\textit{\textbf{d6+}}}) 20.\text{\textit{\textbf{d2}}} \, 0–0 \, 21.\text{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}} \, \text{\textit{\textbf{xc6}}}
22.\text{f}ac1 \text{d}d6! 23.\text{f}xc6 \text{w}xh2+ 24.\text{w}f1 \text{w}h1+ 25.\text{e}e2 \text{w}xg2 26.\text{f}f6+ gxf6 27.\text{e}xd6 \text{w}e4+ 28.\text{f}f1 \text{w}h1+ 29.\text{e}e2 \text{w}h5+ 30.\text{f}f1;

2) 19...0–0!? 20.\text{e}xc6 \text{d}xc6 21.\text{w}xc6 \text{e}ac8 22.\text{w}a6 f5 23.\text{f}f4 \text{w}xf4 24.\text{w}xe6+ \text{h}h7 25.\text{e}xc5 \text{e}xc5=

Therefore, it looks like after: 17.\text{e}e4 \text{w}xe5, the game should practically end in a draw in case both sides play correctly throughout. Still, Black has an additional possibility, which deserves attention – the positional solution – to counter 17.\text{e}e4, with: 17...\text{e}e4 18.\text{e}e4 \text{d}d8 19.\text{a}a4 \text{f}f8.

17...\text{d}d8!

This move just parries White's active actions.

18.\text{e}e4

That is a very reasonable decision, but it would have been hardly better for White to have followed with: 18.\text{b}b5+ \text{f}f8 19.\text{b}b3 \text{xf}2+ 20.\text{xf}2 \text{b}6+ 21.\text{e}e3 \text{xb}5 and here in case of 22.\text{c}5, Black would have had the powerful argument 22...\text{d}d2+!

18...\text{b}b6 19.\text{f}f3

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard.png}
\caption{Position after 19.\text{f}f3}
\end{figure}

28...f5! 29.exf6!

White accepts the challenge! This probably looked to him to be necessary, mostly because after: 29.\text{wh}5 \text{h}7, he could have had serious problems. Indeed, Black would have been better, for example: 30.\text{d}d2 \text{c}7, with the idea to follow with \text{c}6 and White's

19...\text{d}d5

Now, the most natural line for Black would have been: 19...\text{xe}4 20.\text{xe}4 \text{f}5, but White could make a draw in that case with the line: 21.\text{xc}5 \text{xc}5 22.\text{e}e3 \text{xe}3 23.\text{xe}3 \text{xe}3 24.\text{xe}3 \text{d}2 25.a3; therefore I preferred the move in the game.

20.\text{xd}5 \text{xd}5 21.\text{c}c4 \text{a}6 22.\text{b}3 0–0

I had some pressure here, but White's defence remained too solid.

23.\text{e}e3 \text{xe}3 24.\text{xe}3 \text{f}5 25.\text{w}e2 \text{f}d8 26.\text{h}3

Here, I had no real possibilities to improve my position. I could have tried only the transfer of my queen to g5, or of the knight to the c3-square.

26...\text{b}7 27.\text{ed}1

My opponent had decided here that the following set-up of his rooks would enable him to play a2-a3 at some moment, but he had overlooked some other factors...It would have been more prudent for him to have defended with: 27.\text{ad}1 \text{d}4 28.\text{g}4.

27...\text{d}4 28.\text{g}4
e5-pawn would be very weak.

29...\eb5 30.\edxd4
This is White's only move.

30...\edxd4 31.\exxe6+ \eh7 32.g3
Or 32.\de3? \ee4.

32...\f3!
Or 32...\eg6 33.\ff5 \gxf6 34.\ee1.

33.\fxg7
Meanwhile the time-pressure was looming for both of us and I had almost complied with an eventual draw, by playing 33...\eg3. Then, suddenly I saw the move – 33...\ee4!

34.\wd6?
Alexey makes a serious mistake in the time-trouble! After the correct reply for him 34.\de5!, I would have to be very careful and to force the draw immediately, otherwise I might have fallen into a big trouble. For example: 34...\eh5? 35.\ec8 \exg7 36.\eg4 \eg6 37.\ed1++. The only correct line for Black here is: 34...\exg3!! 35.\fxg3 \exg3+ 36.\eh1 \ee1+ (or 36...\exe5 37.\g8+++) 37.\exel \exe1+ 38.\eg2 \ee2+ 39.\eg3 \ee2+ 40.\eg4 \ee4+ 41.\eh5 \ee2+.

Still, the move 34.\de5, was not my only possibility to make a draw. After:

34.\ec8 \exg7 35.\dd2 \exg3+ 36.\fxg3 \exg3+ 37.\eh1 \ee1+ 38.\exe1 \exe1+

39.\eg2 \exxd2+ 40.\eh3, the outcome would be the same all over again.

34...\ee2 35.\ff1 \exg7

36.\da5
That was something unbelievable... It was evidently due to the time-trouble...! After the correct defence for White 36.h4, my position would have been slightly better indeed, but as our analysis with GM A.Kuzmin showed after the game – there was still a lot of fight left in that position...

36...\exa2 37.\dc6 \ea6 38.\ec1 \xa2

I was repeating moves here with the idea to reach safely the end of the time-control.

39.\ef1 \ea6 40.\ec1 \ef7 41.\wc5 \ec7 42.\ec2+ \eg7 43.\wb2+ \ff6
White resigned. After 44.\db4, Black's simplest winning line is: 44...\ec1 45.\wc1 \ea1.

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Volkov – Dreev
57th Ch Russia (½-final)
St Petersburg 2004

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\df3 \df6 4.e3 \df5 5.\dc3 e6 6.\dh4
This is the eternal question for Black – where to place his bishop, to g4, e4, or g6...? The move in game is the most popular for Black lately.

6...\textit{\textit{\textbf{g6}}} 7.\textit{\textbf{b3}} 8.\textit{\textbf{c7}} 8.\textit{\textbf{xg6}}
\textit{\textbf{hxg6}}

9.\textit{\textbf{g3}}
Sergey Volkov had played only the move 9.h3 in his previous games.

9...\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}}}} 10.\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textbf{g2}}}}
That was a surprise for me in a way. I had expected either 10..\textit{\textbf{d2}}, or the immediate move 10.cxd5.

10...\textit{\textbf{b6}}
The idea of that try is to clarify the pawn-structure and the plans of both sides.

11.\textit{\textbf{cxd5}}
But naturally not 11.c5 – because Black will counter that with 11..\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textit{\textbf{d7}}}}}, followed by b7-b6.

11...\textit{\textbf{\textit{\textit{\textbf{cxd5}}}}}
I had a choice between that move and 11...\textit{\textbf{exd5}}. I liked the move 11...\textit{\textbf{cxd5}} much more, because first of all it simplified the position (sort of...) and I thought at that moment that was in my favour, because of several reasons. Meanwhile, after cxd5, White's bishop on g2 is not as effective as after exd5.

12.\textbf{a4}!!
That is the only way for White to create some problems for Black. My opponent would not have achieved anything with a calm development, since I could have always countered \textit{\textbf{d2}} with the move \textit{\textbf{c4}}.

12...\textit{\textbf{w4}}?
I was also considering the simpler measure 12...a6?! , which would have led to an equal position after: 13.e4 \textit{\textbf{dxe4}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xexe4}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xexe4}} 15.\textit{\textbf{dxe4}} \textit{\textbf{dxe4}}
Still, after some deliberations I chose 12...\textit{\textbf{w4}}.

13.\textit{\textbf{w2}}
White does not achieve anything good after: 13.\textit{\textbf{xc4}} 14.\textit{\textbf{xc4}} 15.\textit{\textbf{e2}}, due to 14...\textit{\textbf{a5}}.

13...\textit{\textbf{a6}}
Or 13...\textit{\textbf{b4}}?! 14.a5 \textit{\textbf{b6}} 15.\textit{\textbf{a4}}.

14.\textit{\textbf{a5}} \textit{\textbf{bd7}}
Frankly speaking, I liked the move 14...\textit{\textbf{c8}} much more during the game, since the knight had better prospects from that square. Finally, I chose \textit{\textbf{bd7}} as the more reliable move, without losing any tempi. The knight has some good prospects on the d7-square as well (although not so bright as on the c8-square...) and it can be redeployed to the c6-square.

15.\textit{\textbf{d2}} \textit{\textbf{e7}}
Black’s bishop has nothing to do on d6; moreover in some cases (in similar positions) the bishop is placed worse on d6 than on the e7-square, particularly if White manages to advance e3-e4 in the centre.

16.b3

Finally, my opponent has decided to castle.

16...wc7 17.0–0 0–0 18.wb2

This plan has some drawbacks too. It seemed more natural for White to try: 19.fc1 wd8 20.da4, with the idea to follow with b3-b4 and da4-c5; still after: 20...xc1+ 21.xc1 xc8, Black manages to hold the position thanks to the numerous exchanges, for example: 22.b4 xc1+ 23.wxc1 xe8 24.cc5 cd6. This plan would have been much better for White, though...

21.xe4 dxe4 22.xe4 a7

Naturally not: 22...ab8 23.h4 ed6 24.ac1.

23.ac1 wd8 24.wb3

That is a witty possibility for White. The move 24.d5?, would have been very bad due to df6.

24...f6

I could have also tried: 24...ac7 25.xc7 xc7 26.xg6 f6 (or 26...fxg6 27.xe6+ fh7 28.h3+ gh8 29.f6+ f8!= 30.xa6; 29...h7 30.xh3=), transposing to the position that we played in the game.

25.xg6

In answer to 25.xc8 xc8 26.cc1, I had planned: 26...ec7 27.xc7 xc7 28.xg6 fxg6 29.xxe6+ gh7 30.xa6 (or 30.wxh3+ gh5 31.g4 wd7) 30...wc2.

25...ac7

That is the correct decision. I had to admit that I wanted to play that move immediately. Then I decided to try to refute White’s idea in a more radical fashion and I calculated for about 15 minutes the variations arising after: 25.xc1 26.xc1 fxg6 27.xe6+ gh7 28.xh3+ gh5 29.g4 wd7 and here after 30.cc3, Black had the possibility – 30...b4. Later, I understood that I
29...w4!?
30.wf3 xb4 31.ad3
If 31.xb4 xb4 32.w5 wb2 33.\texttt{h}7+ (or 33.e4 xc1 34.xd5 g6! 35.wf3 xd1+ 36.xd1 exd5 37.xd5 wa1+ 38.g2 xa5) 33...\texttt{f}8 34.e4 g6 35.\texttt{h}6+ 36.\texttt{g}7 36.d2 ec5.
31.wc5 32.xb4 xb4 33.wh5 \texttt{f}6 34.wf3 \texttt{d}5 35.wh5 \texttt{f}6 36.wf3 \texttt{f}8 37.h4
Or 37.g4 \texttt{d}5.
37...wc8 38.wh2 \texttt{d}7 39.\texttt{c}1 wd8 40.b1

40...\texttt{d}5
40...g6!?
That was my last move before the time-control and it was played in a mutual time-trouble. It would have been a real disgrace for me to have fallen into the trap: 40...xa5?? 41.wa8+ \texttt{d}8 42.ec8.
41.h5
This move was played after long deliberations. My opponent wanted to make my task of materializing my extra pawn really hard.
41.ec7 42.ed1 \texttt{f}6
I practically forced the exchange of queens with that move. Well, my pawns became doubled, but I had to trade queens, otherwise White's activ-
ity would have compensated his one pawn deficit.

43.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{x}}}}}f6 gxf6 44.h6

It seemed at first sight that Black should not have any problems to turn his extra pawn into a full point. That might be possible indeed, but I had to play quite precisely, since White had some serious counterplay with his passed pawn.

44...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}}}c5 45.g4 b4 46.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{d}}}}d4

White protects his pawn indirectly, since after 46...\textit{\texttt{\texttt{\texttt{a}}}}a5, he can play 47.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{c}}}c4.

46...b3 47.\textit{\texttt{\texttt{e}}}

I understood here that after the seemingly "natural" move 48...\textit{\texttt{b}}b5 49.\textit{\texttt{b}}b1, I would have great problems to improve my position, so I played:

48...f5! 49.\textit{\texttt{g}}xf5

Or 49.\textit{\texttt{b}}b1 fxg4 50.\textit{\texttt{xb}}b2 f5!

49...\textit{\texttt{c}}c3 50.fxe6 \textit{\texttt{h}}h5+

But of course not: 50...fxe6?? 51.h7+.

51.\textit{\texttt{g}}g2 fxe6

I thought that after: 51...\textit{\texttt{xe}}e4 52.exf7+ \textit{\texttt{xf}}f7 53.\textit{\texttt{xb}}b2 \textit{\texttt{h}}h6, my position would have been winning, but my opponent would have had more practical chances (particularly if you have in mind the time-control – 10 minutes to the end of the game with 30 seconds added after every move...) in that case, than after 51...fxe6.

52.h7+ \textit{\texttt{g}}g7 53.\textit{\texttt{d}}d7+ \textit{\texttt{f}}f6 54.\textit{\texttt{d}}d3 \textit{\texttt{b}}b1 55.\textit{\texttt{xb}}b1 \textit{\texttt{xb}}b1

Now, my position is an easy win thanks to the d5-outpost. My knight is headed to that square and it will be placed there just like a volleyball umpire...

56.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 \textit{\texttt{c}}c3 57.\textit{\texttt{e}}e3 \textit{\texttt{h}}h4 58.\textit{\texttt{a}}a7 \textit{\texttt{d}}d5+ 59.\textit{\texttt{e}}e2 \textit{\texttt{e}}e5 60.\textit{\texttt{xa}}a6 \textit{\texttt{h}}h7 61.\textit{\texttt{a}}a8 \textit{\texttt{f}}f4+ 62.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 (Or 62.\textit{\texttt{d}}d2 \textit{\texttt{h}}h2) 62...\textit{\texttt{f}}f7 63.\textit{\texttt{a}}a6 \textit{\texttt{d}}d3+ 64.\textit{\texttt{e}}e3 \textit{\texttt{xf}}f2 65.\textit{\texttt{a}}a7 \textit{\texttt{d}}d1+ 66.\textit{\texttt{f}}f3 \textit{\texttt{c}}c7 67.\textit{\texttt{d}}d2 \textit{\texttt{f}}f7+ 68.\textit{\texttt{f}}f2 \textit{\texttt{f}}f3+ 69.\textit{\texttt{b}}b3 \textit{\texttt{d}}d5 70.\textit{\texttt{b}}b2 \textit{\texttt{b}}b6 (Or 70...\textit{\texttt{e}}e7, followed by \textit{\texttt{c}}c6.) 71.\textit{\texttt{b}}b8 \textit{\texttt{a}}a4+ 72.\textit{\texttt{b}}b3 \textit{\texttt{xa}}a7 73.\textit{\texttt{b}}b5+ \textit{\texttt{d}}d4 0–1

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Dreev – Huzman
36th Olympiad
Calvia de Mallorca 2004

1.d4 \textit{\texttt{f}}f6 2.c4 g6 3.\textit{\texttt{c}}c3 d5 4.\textit{\texttt{g}}g5 \textit{\texttt{e}}e4 5.\textit{\texttt{h}}h4 \textit{\texttt{xc}}c3 6.\textit{\texttt{b}}xc3 \textit{\texttt{d}}xc3

Now, the more fashionable and the more popular move is – 6...\textit{\texttt{g}}g7.

7.e3 \textit{\texttt{e}}e6
This position is very well known in chess theory. I believe that White's prospects in it are slightly better. I had found only one game of Huzman in the database in it, while I had been preparing for the game. That was a bit strange, because the Gruenfeld Defence was supposed to be my opponent's main weapon against 1.d4.

8.\f3

This is a solid positional move. There arise some much sharper positions (naturally, less clear too...) after 8.\b1. For example, the game S. Atalik - Predojevic, Sarajevo 2004, followed with: 8...\d5!? 9.\f3 \a5 10.\b2 \d7 11.\e2 \b6 12.0-0 \a4 13.\xb7 and the position was quite unclear.

8...\g7 9.\b1 \b6 10.\d2 0-0

11.\e2

The move 11.\xc4 here would have been slightly premature. Following 11...c5, Black's chances are not worse at all. For example, in case of 12.\f3, he can play 12...\d7 and it is too dubious for White to continue with 13.d5!?, because of: 13...\xc3+ 14.\e2 b5! 15.\xb7 \b6 and he is clearly worse.

11...\d7

I intended to counter 11...\d7, with 12.\f3, threatening d4-d5, seizing the initiative. It is not advisable for Black to try: 11...c5?! 12.\f3 \d7 (It is even worse for him to play 12...\d5, in view of 13.\xe7! and White obtains an overwhelming advantage.) 13.d5!? (After: 13.\xa8 \xa8 14.0-0 \d5, Black has some compensation for the exchange.) 13...\f5 14.e4 g5 15.\xb7 and White is clearly better.

12.0-0 c5 13.\xc4 \xc4 14.\xc4 \xd4 15.cxd4 \xc8 16.\f3 \c6 17.\xc1

The opening stage was over and I had a slight positional advantage.

17...\e6

18.\g3

I chose that move, although it deserved attention for me to try 18.a4!?, with the idea after 18...\e7, to follow with: 19.\e5 \xe5 20.\xe5 and White's position would have been superior, thanks to the vulnerability of the dark squares in Black's camp. In case of 18...\f5 19.\g3, White would have maintained some edge too.

18...\f8 19.\d2 \f5 20.\h4 \b4 21.\xc4 \xa2

That capturing of a pawn seems to be a really risky business... It is much more reliable for Black to continue with: 21...\xc4 22.\xc4 \d5, with an approximately equal position.
22.\textit{\textbf{b}b2} \textit{\textbf{c}c1} 23.\textit{\textbf{b}b2} \textit{\textbf{d}d3} 24.\textit{\textbf{c}c7} \textit{\textbf{e}e8} 25.\textit{\textbf{c}c3}! \textit{\textbf{b}b4} 26.\textit{\textbf{e}e4} 

Now, White's compensation for the pawn is more than sufficient.

26...\textit{\textbf{c}c7} 27.\textit{\textbf{c}c7} \textit{\textbf{c}c8} 

\begin{center}
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\end{center}

28.\textit{\textbf{b}b7}!

It is too bad for White to try 28.\textit{\textbf{c}xa7}?! due to 28...\textit{\textbf{c}c6} and Black is clearly better.

28...\textit{\textbf{c}c6}

I thought that my opponent had to consider here the possibility 28...\textit{\textbf{d}h6}?! and it would have led to a complicated position with quite unclear consequences.

29.\textit{\textbf{e}xf5} \textit{\textbf{e}xf5} 30.\textit{\textbf{c}xa7} \textit{\textbf{d}d5}?! 

This is Black’s first serious imprecision. White has excellent attacking prospects while the queens are still present on the board if you have in mind the not so reliable placement of Black’s king. Instead, Black had better exchange queens with: 30...\textit{\textbf{w}xf3} 31.\textit{\textbf{c}xf3}. I would have preserved somewhat better prospects in that endgame too, but Black’s position would seem to be quite defensible.

31.\textit{\textbf{e}e5} 

(diagram)

31...\textit{\textbf{d}d8}?! 

Now, after that second mistake, my opponent’s situation becomes extremely difficult. He had to defend with 31...\textit{\textbf{e}e6} and despite the fact that my position would have remained clearly preferable, Black could have still resisted further.

32.\textit{\textbf{e}e4}!

White’s knight joins in the attack with a decisive effect and Black can already hardly save the day.

32...\textit{\textbf{e}e8}

It was not any better for him to try 32...\textit{\textbf{d}d7}. After: 33.\textit{\textbf{b}b3} \textit{\textbf{f}xe4} 34.\textit{\textbf{x}e7}, Black’s position is very bad.

33.\textit{\textbf{f}f6}+ \textit{\textbf{x}f6} 34.\textit{\textbf{x}f6} \textit{\textbf{d}d7} 35.\textit{\textbf{x}d7} \textit{\textbf{x}d7} 36.\textit{\textbf{b}b3}+ \textit{\textbf{f}f7} 37.\textit{\textbf{x}xb6} 

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

I have managed to win a pawn and the endgame is just totally hopeless for Black. The game has entered a purely technical stage, in which I was not confronted with too many problems.
The rest of the game does not require any additional comments. There still followed:

37...\(\text{d}d5\) 38.\(\text{e}e5\) \(\text{e}e7\) 39.\(\text{b}b8+\) \(\text{f}f8\) 40.\(\text{e}e8\) \(\text{f}f7\) 41.\(\text{c}c6\) \(\text{e}e7\) 42.\(\text{c}c4+\) \(\text{f}f7\) 43.\(d\text{d}5\) \(\text{e}e7\) 44.\(g\text{g}3\) \(\text{f}f8\) 45.\(\text{c}c8+\) \(\text{e}e8\) 46.\(\text{b}b7\) \(\text{d}d8\) 47.\(\text{g}g2\) \(\text{e}e8\) 48.\(\text{c}c6+\) \(\text{d}d7\) 49.\(\text{f}f3\) \(\text{xc6}\) 50.\(\text{d}xc6\) \(\text{c}c5\) 51.\(\text{e}e2\) \(\text{e}e7\) 52.\(f\text{f}3\) \(\text{e}e6\) 53.\(\text{d}d3\) \(\text{e}e7\) 54.\(\text{c}c4\) \(h5\) 55.\(f\text{f}4\)
and Black resigned.

6...\(\text{d}d7\)

I am also choosing a variation, which is played in tournaments much more rarely than the standard line for Black – 6...e6. The variation 6...\(\text{d}d7\) is still not extensively studied (Valerij Salov liked to play it, for example, among the strong contemporary players.) and that is why it seemed quite attractive (at least to me...). I believe that the move 7...\(\text{d}d7\) is neither better, nor worse than the standard answer – 6...e6. I would also like to mention that the 6...\(\text{d}d7\) system had been used successfully during the 60ies of the last century by Leonid Stein, who was one of the strongest players in the USSR at those times...

7.\(\text{e}e2\)

Contemporary theory prefers the move 7.\(\text{d}d2\) as the best for White in his fight for the opening advantage. After: 7...\(\text{c}c8\) 8.0–0–0 \(\text{xd}4\) 9.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{a}a5\), there arises a rather fashionable position which is sharp and double edged.

7...\(\text{a}a5\)!

I force the exchange of White’s dark squared bishop for my knight on \(f6\) with that move. All that leads to complicated double edged positions. I could have played the calmer and

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Morozovich – Dreev
57th Russia Ch, Moscow 2004

This game was played in the second round of the Super-Final of the Russian Championship with the participation of Garry Kasparov and all the best chess players in Russia (with the exception of Vladimir Kramnik and Anatoly Karpov). Garry Kasparov won that Super-Final quite convincingly, while the silver medal was awarded to Alexander Grischuk. I took the bronze medal.

1.\(e\text{e}4\) \(c5\)

I had played the Sicilian Defence only very rarely until that tournament.

2.\(\text{f}f3\) \(d6\) 3.\(d\text{d}4\) \(\text{f}f6\) 4.\(\text{c}c3\) \(\text{cxd}4\) 5.\(\text{xd}4\) \(\text{c}c6\) 6.\(\text{g}g5\)

Suddenly, Alexander decided to try the Rauzer system, which had never been a part of his opening repertoire before. He had usually preferred 6.\(f\text{f}3\), or 6.\(\text{c}c4\), or quite rarely 6.\(\text{e}e2\).
more reliable move 7...e6 as well. For example, after the attractive line for White – 8.\textit{\$d}b5, Black obtains a quite satisfactory position following: 8...\textit{\$}b8 9.a4 a6 10.\textit{\$}a3 \textit{\$}c7. After 8.\textit{\$}b3 a6, or 8.0–0 a6, there arise positions, which are rather similar to the Scheveningen variation, but with an important difference – White’s bishop is on g5 and not on the e3-square (like in the Scheveningen...). This circumstance should rather be in favour of Black, because the placement of White’s bishop on g5 is less stable than on the e3-square.

\textbf{8.\textit{\$}xf6 gxf6 9.\textit{\$}b3}

My opponent chooses a relatively rare line. White plays much more often here 9.0–0.

\textbf{9...\textit{\$}g5}

This obvious move is Black’s only chance for some active counterplay.

\textbf{10.g3}

I was not so much afraid of the move 10.\textit{\$}d5, since after the simplest possible reply – 10...0–0–0, Black’s prospects are not worse at all. In the game Short – Salov, Amsterdam 1991, there followed: 11.0–0 \textit{\$}g8 12.g3 f5 13.f4 \textit{\$}g7 14.exf5 \textit{\$}xf5 15.\textit{\$}f3 \textit{\$}g4 16.c4 h5 17.\textit{\$}xg4+ \textit{\$}xg4 18.\textit{\$}e3 \textit{\$}xd1 19.\textit{\$}axd1 \textit{\$}g7 and Black was slightly better.

\textbf{10...f5 11.f4}

Now, in case of 11...\textit{\$}g6, White has the powerful resource: 12.\textit{\$}h5! \textit{\$}e6 13.\textit{\$}d4 \textit{\$}xd4 14.\textit{\$}xd4 \textit{\$}g8 15.\textit{\$}d5! and Black’s situation is clearly worse (Kupreichik – Mallahi, Ireland 2003). Therefore:

\textbf{11...\textit{\$}h6!?? 12.\textit{\$}d2}

This is the usual move is positions. There arises a quite complex situation after: 12.\textit{\$}d5 0–0–0 (It is also possible for Black to follow with: 12...\textit{\$}c8.) 13.exf5 \textit{\$}xf5, or 12.exf5 \textit{\$}xf5, but all that has never been tested into practice.

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

\textbf{12...\textit{\$}g7!?}

That is a novelty. The move that I am playing is quite useful by itself and it maintains the tension in the centre. In the game Romanishin – L.Stein, Odessa 1972, Black reduced the tension with 12...fxe4, but after 13.\textit{\$}xe4 \textit{\$}g7 14.c3!, White’s position remained slightly better.

\textbf{13.0–0–0}

Naturally, it had been very attractive for White to castle. After that move, during the game, I was rather unhappy with my position...but that lasted as long as I understood how powerful my move fourteen would turn out to be... So, I have to tell you now that White’s move 13.0–0–0!? – is a serious imprecision. He had better play: 13.exf5 \textit{\$}xf5 14.0–0–0 and the position would have remained extremely sharp and complex.

\textbf{13...fxe4}

It was also possible for Black to
play 13...0–0–0, but the move in the game was stronger.

14.\(\text{Qxe4}\)

14...\(\text{a5!}\)

It becomes clear now that not White, but Black is trying to obtain the advantage!

I lost plenty of time, while I was calculating that move, since I was examining variations connected with 15.g4 – that move and the lines after it were typically – trademark Morozevich... I was convinced that after: 15...a4 16.\(\text{Qbc5}\) a3! 17.b3 \(\text{Qc8}\) 18.\(\text{Qd3!}\)? (It is too bad for White to play: 18.g5? \(\text{Wg6}\) 19.\(\text{Qd3}\), because of: 19...\(\text{dxc5!}\) 20.\(\text{Qf6+}\) \(\text{xf6}\) 21.\(\text{Qxg6}\) \(\text{b2+}\) 22.\(\text{Qb1}\) \(\text{hxg6}\) and his position is just hopeless.) 18...\(\text{Qd4}\), my prospects would have been superior.

In fact, White has already problems to equalize. It is rather dubious for him to play: 15.\(\text{Qg5?!}\), due to: 15...a4 16.\(\text{Qc5}\) \(\text{c8}\) 17.\(\text{Qce4}\) a3 18.b3 \(\text{f5}\) 19.\(\text{Qf2}\) \(\text{Wf6}\) and Black’s advantage is overwhelming. In case of 15.\(\text{Qbc5?!}\), it is good for Black to follow with: 15...\(\text{h3!}\) 16.\(\text{Qxb7}\) 0–0 and his initiative for the pawn is quite dangerous. The move 15.a4 for White is anti-positional, because after 15...0–0, Black has a great advantage, thanks to the threats \(\text{Qc6-b4}\) and \(\text{Wf8-c8}\). It seems that the move 15.g4, would have been Alexander’s best chance, because then he would have maintained greater chances to organize some active counterplay, than after the relatively calm move that he played in the game:

15.\(\text{We3}\)

Here, I had the temptation to play the seemingly attractive move 15...\(\text{We6}\) (in order to deprive White of the possibility to sacrifice his knight), but it would have lost immediately to 16.\(\text{Qc4!}\).

15...0–0

Now, my bishop on g7 becomes so powerful that my positional advantage is doubtless.

16.\(\text{a3}\)

White should not let Black’s pawn to be pushed all the way up to the a3-square.

After 16.g4?! a4 17.\(\text{Qbd2}\) a3 18.b3 \(\text{d5}\) 19.\(\text{Qc4}\) \(\text{b4!}\), or 17.\(\text{Qbc5}\) \(\text{dxc5}\) 18.\(\text{Exd7}\) \(\text{We6}\) 19.\(\text{Exb7}\) \(\text{Wfb8}\), Black’s attack is probably unstoppable.

16...\(\text{We6!}\)

That is a very powerful resource for Black – his queen enters the actions with tempo, threatening d6-d5.
17.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}d3 h6

I did not play here 17...a4, because I understood that White was not obliged to play the immediate: 18.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}g5 \textit{\textdaggerdbl}g6 19.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}xg6 hxg6 20.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}d2 \textit{\textdaggerdbl}d4, with a much better endgame for Black, but he can follow instead with: 18.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}bc5! 18...dxc5 and only then – 19.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}g5, so that the position becomes completely unclear and White has serious counter chances. Therefore, I chose the move 17...h6 – I had everything protected and my opponent had all his problems to worry about.

18.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}b1

It is too dubious for White to play 18.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}f3?! , because after 18...a4, Black's initiative is quite dangerous, for example: 19.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}bd2 \textit{\textdaggerdbl}a2 20.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}c3 \textit{\textdaggerdbl}a1+ 21.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}db1 b5, with a strong attack. Or: 19.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}bc5 dxc5 20.\textit{\textdaggerdbl}xd7 \textit{\textdaggerdbl}a2 21.c3 \textit{\textdaggerdbl}b4! 22.axb4 a3 23.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}d2 (It is bad for White to follow with 23.bxa3, in view of: 23...\textit{\textdaggerdouble}xa3+ 24.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}c2 \textit{\textdaggerdouble}a2+ 25.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}c1 \textit{\textdaggerdouble}b3=+) 23...cxb4 and Black's attack is just crushing. Even in case of the relatively best for White – 24.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}d3, Black's advantage becomes decisive after: 24...axb2+ 25.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}xb2 \textit{\textdaggerdouble}a3 26.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}c2 \textit{\textdaggerdouble}fc8.

18...a4

21.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}e2?

This is an inconspicuous move, but it is very strong, just like 17...h6. It is important to understand that Black will manage to break White's defence with his bishops sooner or later. White will never succeed in building a blockade in any of the variations.

22.\textit{\textdaggerdouble}xe2 \textit{\textdaggerdouble}f6!
It is quite evident that after: 22...\texttt{\textdagger}xe2 23.\texttt{\textdagger}xe2, the endgame is clearly in favour of Black. Still, White’s defence is even more difficult with queens present on the board.

23.\texttt{\textdagger}e3?

Alexander was in a time-trouble here and he made a serious mistake. Instead, he could have resisted much more tenaciously with the move 23.\texttt{\textdagger}d2. I would have the possibility 23...\texttt{\textdagger}e6 then and White’s position would have been rather difficult. I would have doubled then my rooks along the c-file, maintaining a very powerful positional pressure.

23...\texttt{\textdagger}e6 24.\texttt{\textdagger}b4 \texttt{\textdagger}c4

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

25.\texttt{\textdagger}bd5

It is not any better for White to play 25.\texttt{\textdagger}d3, because after: 25...\texttt{\textdagger}xb4! 26.axb4 a3, Black’s attack is overwhelming. For example: 27.\texttt{\textdagger}f3 (or 27.\texttt{\textdagger}b6 axb2 28.\texttt{\textdagger}xb7 \texttt{\textdagger}a1+ 29.\texttt{\textdagger}xb2 \texttt{\textdagger}xc3+ 30.\texttt{\textdagger}xc3 \texttt{\textdagger}a2+ 31.\texttt{\textdagger}c1 \texttt{\textdagger}xc3++) 27...axb2 28.\texttt{\textdagger}hd1 (or 28.\texttt{\textdagger}xb2 \texttt{\textdagger}f5 29.\texttt{\textdagger}e3 \texttt{\textdagger}d4++) 28...\texttt{\textdagger}f5 29.\texttt{\textdagger}e3 \texttt{\textdagger}e4!! – and Black wins. After 30.\texttt{\textdagger}xe4, he plays 30...\texttt{\textdagger}xc3 and if 30...\texttt{\textdagger}g4 – 30...d5 and Black’s advantage is decisive.

25...\texttt{\textdagger}xd5 26.\texttt{\textdagger}xd5 \texttt{\textdagger}ac8

Now, Black’s pieces are totally dominant.

27.\texttt{\textdagger}d3

White has defended against the threat \texttt{\textdagger}xc3, but now Black’s b-pawn enters the action with a decisive effect:

27...b5 28.\texttt{\textdagger}c1 e6

The pawn-break b5-b4 had been prepared, but I decided to play a couple of prophylactic moves.

29.\texttt{\textdagger}e1 d5

White’s position is hopeless, because he is completely defenseless against b5-b4.

30.\texttt{\textdagger}e2 b4 31.\texttt{\textdagger}xa4 bxa3 32.\texttt{\textdagger}xa3 \texttt{\textdagger}a8 33.\texttt{\textdagger}b6

White cannot save the day with 33.b3, because of 33...\texttt{\textdagger}xa4.

33...\texttt{\textdagger}xa3 34.\texttt{\textdagger}xc4 dxc4 35.\texttt{\textdagger}e4 \texttt{\textdagger}a4 36.\texttt{\textdagger}c3 \texttt{\textdagger}f5 and White resigned.

This game was acknowledged to be the best in the tournament and at the closing ceremony I received a special beauty-prize delivered to me by the ex-World Champion Boris Vassilievich Spassky.

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Dreev – Kulaots

Aeroflot-open, Moscow 2005

1.d4 \texttt{\textdagger}f6 2.c4 e6 3.\texttt{\textdagger}c3 \texttt{\textdagger}b4 4.\texttt{\textdagger}e2 0–0 5.a3 \texttt{\textdagger}xc3+ 6.\texttt{\textdagger}xc3 b6

7.\texttt{\textdagger}g5 \texttt{\textdagger}b7 8.e3 d6

(diagram)

9.\texttt{\textdagger}e2?!

This variation has become fashionable quite recently, at the beginning of the 21st century. The once more popular line 9.f3 leads to complicated positions, in which as practice has shown,
Black obtains more than sufficient counterplay.

9...\=bd7 10.\=d3 \=a6 11.\=c3

I had chosen that calm and solid move, understanding that the best that I could hope for was just a slight opening advantage. On the other hand, thus I was almost eliminating the element of risk, because the position was simplified considerably. It would have been more active for me to have played the move 11.b4, but then the game would have become much sharper. In the game Kasparov – Grischuk, Greece 2003, there followed: 11...c5 12.b5 \=b7 13.\=c3 a6 14.f3 and the position was rather complicated.

11...d5 12.\=c2 \=xc4 13.\=xc4 dxc4 14.\=e2 c5 15.\=xc4 h6 16.\=h4 cxd4 17.\=xd4 \=c5

This move was quite possible, but I thought that it would have been more flexible for Black to have tried 17...\=c7!? For example, he equalized the chances after: 18.0-0 \=f6 19.\=fd1 \=d4 20.e4 \=xd4 21.\=xd4 \=e5 22.f3 \=h5 23.\=e1 \=f4, Beliavsky – Grischuk, Tripoli 2004.

18.\=xf6 \=xf6 19.\=xf6 gxf6

This position was tested in the game Ivanchuk – Kasparov, Greece 2003 and there after: 20.0-0-0 \=f6 21.\=b1 \=f5 22.\=d4 \=d3 23.\=d3 \=c5 24.\=d4 \=b3 25.\=h4 \=g7 26.\=a2 \=c5 27.\=d1, Vasily had somewhat better chances, but he failed to materialize his small advantage into anything real and the game ended in a draw after 42 moves.

20.\=e2!?

This is a new idea. White’s position seems preferable, because of his superior pawn-structure on the kingside and his more active king. Still, I think that after some precise defence, Black has good chances to equalize.

20...\=fd8 21.\=ad1 \=f8?!

That is Black’s first imprecision. It was better for him to have defended with 21...\=f5 and I would have great problems to achieve even a slight advantage.

22.g4!

White fixes with that move Black’s somewhat compromised pawn-structure on the kingside.

22...\=e7 23.\=h4 \=xd1 24.\=xd1 \=c8 25.\=f4 a6 26.\=h5

I have improved my position considerably and my opponent had to play very precisely. Instead, he made in fact a decisive mistake on his next move:
26...b5?
This activity was absolutely unnec-
essary. It was better for him to have
played 26...d7 and he would have
preserved some chances for a draw,
despite the fact that my position would
have been clearly superior.

27.ec1!
Now, Black cannot avoid the ex-
change of rooks and the arising king
and knight endgame turns out to be
just hopeless for him.

27...d7 28.d1 e4 29.xc8
dxc8 30.f2 d6 31.d3 d7
32.e4 c4

Black cannot save the game in the
king and pawn endgame either, for
example: 32...xe4 33.xe4 e7 34.
d4 d6 35.g5 and I was winning
easily.

33.b3!

This is a simple and reliable move
on the road to victory.

33...xa3 34.c5+ e7 35.
xa6
Black has no counterplay whatso-
ever.

35.e5 36.b4 f5 37.d5+
Black resigned. In case of 37...e6,
White wins easily with 38.g5, while af-
fter 37...f8, his most direct road to the
win is the line: 38.gxf5 exf4 39.exf4.

This was my third participation
in the tournament in Dos Hermanas
(the previous times I was there were
in 2001 and 2003). The organiza-
tion was just perfect as always. There
were some other tournaments be-
sides the main event. In fact, this was
not just a tournament – it was a real
Chess Festival with an excellent orga-
nization. Mr. Joaquin Espejo was the
Director of the tournament, just like
every time I have been in Dos Herma-
inas.

This year it was again a category
16 event although the players were
new, almost half of them, in compar-
sion to 2003. There were four play-
ers from the previous year – Alexan-
der Rustemov and I, the “host” of the
field – the super-experienced player
Miguel Illescas as well as one of the
youngest grandmasters in the world –
Sergey Karjakin. Teimur Radjabov
was among the other participants. In
fact he had already played there too in 2001. He beat S. Karjakin in the 5th round and then managed to preserve his lead until the very end, so T. Radjabov won the tournament outright with the score of “+2”.

This game against Sergey Karjakin was played in the last round and my victory enabled me to share 2nd – 5th place in that quite strong tournament.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.Qf3 Qf6

The Queen’s Gambit Accepted is Sergey Karjakin’s main opening weapon against the move 1.d4.

4.e3 e6 5.Qxc4 a6 6.0–0 c5

7.Qb3

This is one of the main lines for White. At the previous tournament in Dos Hermanas (2003), in the game against the same opponent, I had chosen the not so popular move 7.Qd3, but I did not achieve anything out of the opening and the game ended in a draw.

[Diagram]

7...b5

One of the basic positions of the 7.Qb3 variation arises after: 7...Qc6 8.Qc3 cxd4 9.exd4 Qe7 10.Qe1 0–0 and here – 11.Qf4, 11.Qg5, or 11.a3. In case of 7...b5, the game becomes a bit different. Black takes greater risks here in that line, but his chances to seize the initiative are considerable too. Meanwhile, that variation has not been analyzed extensively yet.

8.a4 b4 9.Qbd2

White can also play the immediate move 9.e4.

9...Qb7

The other possible line for Black here is the move: 9...Qe7, which is often played by GM Sergey Rublevsky – who is a renowned specialist of the Queen’s Gambit Accepted. He played that variation twice at the tournament in Poikovsky (which was played a bit earlier during the same year 2005), but he lost both games – after: 10.e4 cxd4 11.e5 Qfd7 12.Qc4 Qc6 13.Qxd4 Qxe5 14.Qf4 Qxc4 15.Qc6 Qb6 16. Qxe7 Qxe7 17.Qxc4 Qb7, Alexander Grischuk played the move 18.Qb3 (White used to play before 18.Qd2.) and Black had suddenly serious problems to worry about.

10.e4 Qe7 11.e5 Qfd7 12.Qc4 0–0 13.Qc2

I had reached that position in my game against Ruslan Ponomariov, who tried here 13...Qc6. I continued with: 14.Qxc5 Qxc5 15.Qd6, but after
15...b3!, Black had an excellent game (Dreev – Ponomariov, Erevan 2001). It is well-known that Sergey Karjakin worked together with Ruslan Ponomariov, including also in his match against V.Ivanchuk.

At the previous tournament at Dos Hermanas, Sergey played the move 13...a6 in his game against M.Ileskas and after: 14.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d3} g6 15.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}h6} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e8} 16.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xc5} (It also deserved attention for White to try 16.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d6}!?.) 16...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xc5} 17.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd8} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd8} 18. b3, the position was about equal (Ilescas – Karjakin, Dos Hermanas 2003).

Therefore, my opponent’s response proved to be a surprise for me in a way:

13...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd4} 14.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd4}
14.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd4}.
14...b3

This move is quite typical for this variation. It is bad for Black to capture immediately: 14...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xf3} 15.gxf3, because he fails to complete his development in a normal fashion, due to the threat \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e4}. It is too dubious for him to play 14...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c6}?! because of 15.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}g4}.

15.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xb3} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xf3} 16.gxf3 \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c6} 17.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e3} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c7} 18.f4

Sergey tries a novelty here. This move is more logical than what Black played earlier in the game: Banikas – Moutousis, Athens 2004: 18...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c5} 19.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e4} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d4} 20.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d1} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}ab8} 21.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d2} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}a7} 22.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c3} f5 23.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d3} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}fd8} 24.b4 \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xb4} 25.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xb4} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xb4} 26.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b1} a5 27.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d6} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd6} 28.exd6 \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}f6} 29.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}f3} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}xd6} 30.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b7} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c5} 31.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e3} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d5} 32.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b8+} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}f7} 33.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b7+} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}g8} 34.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b8+} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}f7} 35.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b7+} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}g8} 36.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}h5} g6 37.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e5} 1–0.

19.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d1}
19.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c2}!?
19...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}ad8}

We have to admit that move was the cause of Black’s further problems in this game. He had to play instead: 19...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}fd8}, so that he could counter 20.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}a3} with 20...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b4} 21.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d2} \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}ab8} and he would have had a quite sufficient compensation for the pawn.

20.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}a3}! \texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d4}?

Possibly, Black should have played here 20...f6, which was not exactly in the spirit of the position, but thus he would have somehow justified the move 19...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}ad8}. It would be weaker for him to play 20...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}b4} (in comparison to the line 19...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}fd8}), because after: 21.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}d2} a5 22.\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}e2}! White maintains the advantage.

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

18...\texttt{\textipa{\texttimes}c5N}
21.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\text{\textbf{d}6}}}!

Sergey had obviously overlooked that move.

21...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}5}}}

That was again not the best decision for Black. My young opponent continued to play too quickly even after he had made a serious mistake. So, he made another one as a result. It would have been more resilient for him to have defended with: 21...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{\text{x}d}6}}} 22.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{\text{x}d}4}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{e}7}}} 23.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}4}}} a5.

22.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}f}5}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}f}5}} 23.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}3}}} a5

After 23...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}5}}}, White wins with 24.b4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}b}4}} 25.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}3}}}. It would have been the best for Black to have tried: 23...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}6}}} 24.b4 \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}6}}+ 25.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{g}3}}}.

\textbf{24.b3!}

The pin of Black's knight becomes deadly. My opponent had failed to anticipate the fact that he cannot unpin anymore. Therefore, now he is forced to only sit down and wait...

24...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}6}}} 25.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}3}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}8}}} 26.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}3}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}7}}} 27.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}c}1}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}c}8}} 28.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{d}5}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{g}6}}+ 29.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{h}1}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{a}6}}

That is also possible, indeed...

\textbf{30.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{h}3}}}

Now, the threat \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}5}} is again on the agenda. I did not wish to play more solidly (for example 30.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{g}2}}}, in order to improve my position later...), so that Black had the possibility to play 30...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{e}6}}}, but then after: 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}e}7}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}3}} 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}3}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}3}} 33.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}3}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}1}}+} 34.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{h}2}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}f}2}}+ 35.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{g}2}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}f}4}}+ 36.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{h}1}}} h5 37.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}3}}}, I would have won even quicker, than if Black had just remained passive.

\textbf{30...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}6}}} 31.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{h}2}}}}

The attractive move 31.e6 would have been a mistake. Naturally in case of: 31...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}6}}} 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}5}}, followed by a discovered check, White is winning easily, but after: 31...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}e}6}} 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}5}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}c}5}} 33.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}e}6}}+ \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{h}8}}} 34.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}f}5}} (threatening \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{e}4}}}) Black has the defensive resource 34...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}8}}}.

31...\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{f}8}}} 32.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}4}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}7}}} 33.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}4}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}6}}} 34.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}b}4}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}6}}}

Black should not allow the move \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}4-a5}}}, since he would not have the move \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}5}}}.

35.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}1c2}}} g6 36.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{d}4}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{e}8}}} 37.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}5}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{b}5}}}

Now, White has a winning combination:

\textbf{38.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{a}6}}} \textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{x}a}6}}} 39.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{d}6}}}

I did not have enough time, so I played just like a “human player’. It would be much better and quicker for me to have won the game with: 39.e6! f6 40.\textit{\textcolor{red}{\textbf{\text{c}6}}+}. 
39...\$c5

In case of 39...\$c5, besides the simple line: 40.\$xc5 \$xc5 41.\$b2, White also wins with: 40.\$xf7+ \$xf7 41.e6+ \$g8 (or 41...\$xe6 42.\$e2+) 42.\$xc5.

40.\$xc7 \$xc7 41.\$b4 \$a6 42.\$b8+. Black resigned, because after 42...\$c8, White has the resource - 43.\$b7.

game Ravinsky – Shamkovich, Leningrad 1957, White was afraid to sacrifice his b2-pawn and he chose the rather humble move – 7.b3. I feel like including this interesting game in its entirety here: 7...\$g4 8.\$d2 d5 9.\$xf6 exf6 10.exd5 0-0 11.\$e2 \$d8 12.h3 \$xf3 13.\$xf3 f5 14.\$d1 \$xd5 15.\$e6+ 16.\$f2 \$c6 17.\$c7 \$xd4+ 18.\$g3 \$e7 19.\$xa8 \$e5 20.\$d5 \$b8 21.\$h2 g5 22.g3 \$xf4 23.\$xf4 \$xf4+ 24.\$xf4 \$e2+ 25.\$g3 \$h8 26.\$xc6 \$g8+ 27.\$h4 \$e7+ 28.\$h5 \$f6 29.\$hg1 \$g6 30.\$d6 1-0.

Besides 7.b3, White has tried 7.\$b1 in this position as well. The move 6...\$b6 is thus justified in both cases, since 7.\$b1 deprives White of the possibility to castle long, while 7.b3 compromises White’s queenside.

We had discussed the idea behind the move 7.\$d2, some 15 years ago with my life-long coach Alexander Filipenko, who had advised me not to be afraid to sacrifice that pawn (and not only it...!)...Still, I had never managed to play that variation in practice, so this was my first game in that line. The reason possibly being that not many players answer my 1.d4 with 1...d6, transposing to the Pirc-Ufimzev Defence. Meanwhile, the line

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1.d4 d6 2.e4 \$f6 3.\$c3 \$g6 4.\$g5 \$g7 5.f4 c6 6.\$f3

This poison has been reached in my practice several times and I have always treated Black’s possibility – \$d8-b6 quite seriously. I used to play before 6.\$d2, in order to be able to parry that maneuver by castling long. In that case however, Black switched to the plan with the move b7-b5 and that led to very complicated positions in which I had managed to win several games. The move 6.\$f3, no doubt presents White with many more possibilities in case Black follows with b7-b5, since White should not be in a hurry to play \$d2 at all.

6...\$b6?!

Black has numerous troubles to worry about in the line: 6...0-0 7.\$d2 b5 8.\$d3, as you can see in my encounter against Zurab Azmaiparashvili (Moscow 1989) see game 10.

(diagram)

7.\$d2!

Some half a century ago, in the
6...\texttt{b6} is quite seldom played as well.

During the game I thought that the move 7.\texttt{d2} was a novelty, but it turned out that it had been played before in some games of not so famous chess-players.

7...\texttt{x b2}

In case Black refrains from accepting the pawn-sacrifice, then White can castle long on his next move and the maneuver 6...\texttt{b6} will turn out to be quite senseless. For example, in one of the abovementioned games (Valko – Thuroczy, Nyiregyhaza 2003), there followed: 7...\texttt{g4} 8.\texttt{c4} \texttt{xf3} 9.gxf3 \texttt{h5} 10.0–0 \texttt{d7} 11.f5 \texttt{h6} 12.h4 \texttt{g5} 13.\texttt{f2} \texttt{a5} 14.h4 and White had an overwhelming advantage.

8.\texttt{b1} \texttt{a3}

It became familiar to me, while I was commenting this game for the book that the same position had already been tested in the game Duckstein – Grabler, Austria 1972, where White followed with the immediate 9.e5. I did not consider that move to be the best for White during the game and I preferred to continue patiently with my development, without going for immediate active actions:

9.\texttt{d3}

White's powerful pawn-centre and his huge lead in development is evidently a more than sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn. It is extremely difficult for Black to defend a position like that in a practical game. His main problem is that he can hardly castle – White then follows with e4-e5 and the e7-square is immediately in ruins. Black's queen does not seem to help in the solution of that problems at all, because of the line: 9...0–0 10.e5 \texttt{x e5} 11.fxe5 \texttt{d5} 12.\texttt{b3} \texttt{a5} 13.\texttt{d5} and White regains his pawn quite comfortably.

9...\texttt{a5}

Black wishes to bring his queen back to c7, in order to protect his e7-pawn. This idea seems to be quite reasonable, but still it consumes too much time...

10.0–0 \texttt{c7}

Black has won his opponent's b2-pawn at the cost of several tempi in order to return with the queen to its own camp. I had managed meanwhile to mobilize all my forces in the process...

11.e5!

This is the beginning of the all-out offensive. White should absolutely not slow down even for a bit, because he has practically nothing more to develop...

11...\texttt{d5} 12.\texttt{e4}

Here, I had a serious alternative at my disposal – capturing 12.\texttt{x d5} and after 12...\texttt{cxd5} – 13.f5. I understood that seemed quite attractive, but still I decided not to continue like that. The main reason was I thought that Black's defence would be easier in that case,
since his choice would have been considerably reduced and additionally he would have obtained the c6-square for his knight.

12...f5

This is the critical moment in the game: Black allows White to sacrifice a piece and it leads to an extremely powerful initiative for him. It is not so easy to give a good advice to Black, though...His other possibilities are hardly any better.

For example, in case of 12...0-0, it is good for White to follow with 13.c4. Now, it is terrible for Black to play 13...b6?!, because of 14.exd6 exd6 and after the strong move 15.Qf6+, Black's position becomes hopeless: 15...xf6 (or 15...h8 16.f5!) 16.Qxf6 Qd7 17.e7 Be8 18.Bbe1 and White is threatening Qe7xd6 as well as f4-f5. After: 13...f6 14.cx5 fxg5 15.Qexg5, White's initiative is tremendously dangerous – if 15...cx5 (Black has nothing better in sight...) then White can follow with: 16.Qxh7!? Qxh7 17. Qg5+ Qg8 18.Qxg6, with a crushing attack.

I believe that the position after the move 12...f6, deserves a separate diagram:

13.Qxf6!! (This tactical strike is much more effective than the positional line: 13.Qh4 0–0 – the move 13...f5, leads after White’s response to a position from our game – 14.c4 Qb6 15.c5 dxc5 16.Qxc5 Qd5 17.f5 Qxf5 18.Qg3.) 13...exf6 (Or 13...Qxf6 14.exf6 Qxf6 15.Qxf6+ exf6 16.Qbe1+-; 13...Qxf6 14.exf6 Qxf6 15.Qb4! 0–0 16.Qxd6 – the placement of White’s rook on b1 has turned out to be quite handy! – 16...b5 17.f5 and Black has great difficulties.) 14.Qxd6+ Qf8 15.c4 (15.f5?) 15...Qe7 16.Qg5! (This is more spectacular, but White can also continue with 16.f5.) 16...fxg5 17.fxg5+ Qg8 18. Wf4 Qf5 19.Qxc8 Wxc8 20.g4!+-

Black can hardly expect anything good to happen to him after: 12...dxe5 13.fxe5. Now, in case of 13...0-0, it is excellent for White to continue with: 14.c4 Qb6 15.Qf4?! Qd8! (It is too bad for Black to try 15...Qe6?!, due to 16.Qf6+! Qh8 17.Qg5 and White’s attack is overwhelming.) 16.Qh6 f6 17.Qxg7 Qxg7 18.exf6+ Qxf6 19.Qf4 and White remains with a clear positional advantage. Following 13...f5, White can play: 14.exf6 Qxf6 15.Qh6 0–0 16.Qc4 and his initiative is quite dangerous after: 16...Qb6 17.Qf4 Qd8 18.Qd6, as well as in case of: 16...Qxh6
17.\texttt{\textsc{w}}xh6 \texttt{\textsc{d}}b6 (or 17...\texttt{\textsc{w}}f4? 18.\texttt{\textsc{d}}f5+ -; 17...\texttt{\textsc{d}}f4? 18.\texttt{\textsc{h}}h4+ -) 18.\texttt{\textsc{e}}f1.

It is also a disaster for Black to try: 12...\texttt{\textsc{f}}f5? 13.\texttt{\textsc{exd}}6 exd6 14.\texttt{\textsc{xb}}7.

\textbf{13.\texttt{\textsc{x}}xe7!}

Now, White's bishop is again the sacrificial lamb! I can organize a powerful attack thanks to the precarious placement of Black's king. I had some other possibilities too; for example after 13.\texttt{\textsc{d}}f2, my compensation for the pawn would have been more than sufficient, but Black's situation would have remained much safer then and I did not even wish to write about that...

Sometimes, if you do not play a move like that in a game of yours, you might regret that during all your subsequent (I hope - long...) creative chess-career. Meanwhile, I do not share the conviction that only young players can play chess well, with good and stable results, during the present 21st century...Therefore, I am always glad when I hear about the outstanding successes of such tireless fighters like Victor Korchnoi and Alexander Beliavsky, who have never betrayed their creative credo...

13...\texttt{\textsc{d}}xe7

Black's defence is extremely difficult after his other possibilities too. For example: 13...\texttt{\textsc{fxe}}4 14.\texttt{\textsc{xd}}6 \texttt{\textsc{e}}3 15.\texttt{\textsc{w}}e1 \texttt{\textsc{wd}}8 16.\texttt{\textsc{g}}5, or 13...\texttt{\textsc{dx}}e5 14.\texttt{\textsc{d}}d6 \texttt{\textsc{wd}}8 15.\texttt{\textsc{fxe}}5 \texttt{\textsc{fxe}}4 16.\texttt{\textsc{d}}xe4 - and White's initiative is decisive in both cases.

\textbf{14.\texttt{\textsc{d}}xd}6+ \texttt{\textsc{f}}f8 \textbf{15.\texttt{\textsc{g}}g}5

This is to bring some more wind into the fire...

\textbf{15...\texttt{\textsc{b}}6}

White was threatening 16.\texttt{\textsc{xb}}7.

\textbf{16.\texttt{\textsc{w}}b4!}

That is an important resource for White, because now his queen joins into the attack. He is threatening 17.\texttt{\textsc{wb}}3.

\textbf{16...\texttt{\textsc{h}}6}

The other moves for Black were losing even quicker.

17.\texttt{\textsc{wb}}3 \texttt{\textsc{d}}d5 \textbf{18.\texttt{\textsc{g}}g}7 \texttt{\textsc{e}}6

White's attack is quite powerful after: 18...\texttt{\textsc{h}}7 19.\texttt{\textsc{xc}}8 \texttt{\textsc{xc}}8 20.\texttt{\textsc{d}}d6 \texttt{\textsc{wd}}7 (or 20...\texttt{\textsc{we}}6 21.g4!+-) 21.\texttt{\textsc{c}}c4 \texttt{\textsc{we}}6 22.\texttt{\textsc{xd}}5! \texttt{\textsc{xd}}5 (or 22...\texttt{\textsc{xd}}5 23.c4!) 23.\texttt{\textsc{wg}}3 \texttt{\textsc{we}}6 24.c4, with the threat d4-d5 to follow.

Black's best defence was 18...\texttt{\textsc{eg}}8, but then after: 19.\texttt{\textsc{xc}}8 \texttt{\textsc{xc}}8 (or 19...\texttt{\textsc{wx}}f7 20.\texttt{\textsc{wa}}3+ \texttt{\textsc{de}}7 21.\texttt{\textsc{c}}c4) 20.\texttt{\textsc{d}}d6 (This is the return of the "ghost" - be-
cause now White's other knight comes to the d6-square!; in case of 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c4 \textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}xf7 20...\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}e6 21.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d8 21.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}xd5+ cxd5 22.\textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}xd5+ \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}xa8 \textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c6 24.\textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}xc8 \textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}xc8 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}fd1 \textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a5, the position would have remained unclear.) 20...\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}e6 (After: 20...\textcolor{blue}{\text{d}}d7 21.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c4 \textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}e6 22.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3, White's attack is again very powerful.) 21.g4! and White has a dangerous initiative (It is weaker for him to play the naturally looking line: 21.c4 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7 (or 21...\textcolor{blue}{\text{c}}c7 22.g4! \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e8 23.gxf5 gxf5 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}x5 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}xe5+ (24...\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}c8) 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{h}}h1 \textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}xd6 26.fxe5 \textcolor{blue}{\text{x}}xd4 27.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e6+) 22.d5 (or 22.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3!? \textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d7 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{w}}a6) 22...\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d7 and White has some compensation for the piece indeed, but the position is quite unclear, for example: 23.dxc6 (or 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3 \textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c7) 23...\textcolor{blue}{\text{e}}e6 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3 \textcolor{red}{\text{b}}xc6 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c5.

\textbf{19.\textcolor{red}{\text{x}}xh8 \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}xh8 20.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c4 \textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7}

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

\textbf{21.g4!}

This is a powerful pawn-break, after which Black's defence crumbles irrevocably.

\textbf{21...\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d7 22.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}a3!}

This quiet but extremely effective move renders Black helpless, so he opts for trying his last practical chance.

\textbf{22...c5}

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

Or 22...\textcolor{blue}{\text{g}}g8 23.\textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}5! \textcolor{red}{\text{xf}}5 24.gxf5 gxf5 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}e7.

\textbf{23.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}5 \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}d5}

In case of 23...\textcolor{red}{\text{e}}xe5, White's most direct road to victory is the intermediate move – 24.\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}b5.

\textbf{24.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}xd5 \textcolor{red}{\text{x}}d5 25.\textcolor{red}{\text{a}}bd1} and Black resigned.

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\textbf{Dreev – M.Gurevich

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\textbf{1.d4 \textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f6 2.c4 e6 3.\textcolor{red}{\text{f}}f3 d5 4.\textcolor{red}{\text{c}}c3 c6 5.e3 \textcolor{red}{\text{bd}}7 6.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}d3 dxc4 7.\textcolor{red}{\text{xc}}4 b5 8.\textcolor{red}{\text{d}}3 b4}

This variation of the Meran system is named after the Swedish player Erik Lundin and it is becoming recently more and more popular in competitions at the highest possible level. The lines 8...a6 and 8...\textcolor{red}{\text{b}}7 are no doubt sharper and more fashionable, since Black often enters rather unclear positions and he tries to seize the initiative early in the game. Still, the move 8...b4 is quite reliable too and Black usually obtains solid and relatively simple positions, in which it is sometimes quite difficult for White to fight even for a slight opening edge.
9.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\text{\texttt{d}}}}\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{e}}}4!? \\
Contemporary theory considers that move to be White's best chance to obtain some opening advantage. In case of 9.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}a4 c5! Black's task to equalize is much easier. Following: 10.dxc5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xc5 11.e5 dxc5 12.0-0 (or 12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b5+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d7=) 12...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b7 13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b5+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e7, or 13. \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e2 0-0, he has no opening problems at all. In case White plays 10.e4, instead of 10.dxc5, then after 10...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xd4 11.e5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d5 12.0-0, Black is not forced to continue with 12...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b7 (entering a very complicated and double edged variation, which arises much more often after another move order: 1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}c3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}f6 4.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}f3 e6 5.e3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}bd7 6.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d3 dxc4 7.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xc4 b5 8.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d3 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b7 9.e4 b4 10.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}a4 c5 11.e5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d5 12.0-0), but he can opt instead for 12...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}c5, or 12... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}a5?!?, reaching relatively simple and reliable positions.

9...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xe4 10.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xe4 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d6!? \\
That line is quite fashionable lately and tournament practice has shown in the last several years that White has great problems to obtain even a slight edge in the opening. Great players like Grischuk, Bareev, Akopian and Lautier play like that with Black...

12.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}c2 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}c8

13.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d3!? \\
This is a novelty, which has never been tested before. Against Grischuk (rapid tournament, Mainz 2003) I continued with 13.a3, but after 13...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}f5! 14.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d3 c5, I did not obtain anything promising out of the opening and Black's position turned out to be even slightly better.

13...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}f6 14.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d1 \\
It deserved attention for White here to play 14.e4!??. Now, after 14... \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e7?!, there arises a complicated position in which I think White's prospects should be slightly better.

14...c5 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}a4+

I would not have achieved much with: 15.dxc5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xc5 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e2 0-0?!, or 15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e2 cxd4 16.exd4 (or 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b5+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e7=) 16...h6. Black is not worse at all in both cases.

15.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}c6 16.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}b5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xb5 17.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xb5+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d7 18.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xd7+ \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xd7 19.a3 b3! \\
That is the best for Black. Opening of the position after: 19...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xa3?! 20.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xa3, or 19...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xd4?! 20.axb4, is obviously in favour of White.

20.dxc5 \texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}xc5 21.\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}d2

21...\texttt{\textcolor{red}{\texttt{\textbf{\textit{d}}}}}e4?! \\
This is a very serious mistake and White seizes the initiative completely.
after it. It seemed logical for Black to play here 21...a5!?, not allowing White's bishop to come to the b4-square and Black's position would have been quite acceptable after that.

22...\text{b}4 \text{d}5

In case of 22...\text{c}2, White has 23.\text{d}4! with an overwhelming advantage. It is too dubious for him to win a piece with the line: 23.\text{xd}6 \text{xd}6 24.\text{e}5+?! \text{e}7 25.\text{xd}6 \text{xd}6 26.\text{xf}7+ \text{e}7 27.\text{xh}8, since after: 27...\text{xb}2, he must already think about survival...

23.\text{d}4 \text{e}5 24.\text{xb}3 \text{xb}2 25.\text{xd}5+ \text{exd}5 26.\text{d}1 \text{f}6 27.\text{c}5+ \text{c}6 28.\text{d}3 \text{a}5 29.\text{xb}2 \text{axb}4 30.\text{xb}4

As a result of his mistake on move 21, my opponent has remained without a pawn almost by force, but his king is much more active than its white counterpart and therefore the realization of my advantage is far from being effortless.

30...\text{b}8

It was more tenacious for Black to defend with 30...\text{b}5!?, hampering maximally White to press his advantage home.

31.\text{d}3 \text{d}4 32.\text{e}5+ \text{d}5 33.\text{f}3 \text{xb}4 34.\text{xd}4

We were both under time-pressure here. It was understandable that Black had some chances for a draw, despite being a pawn down. Still, his defence (particularly in the time-trouble) was tremendously difficult. Therefore it was not surprising that he lost rather quickly.

34...\text{e}4 35.\text{h}3 \text{b}7 36.\text{g}4 \text{h}5 37.\text{f}5 \text{f}3?!

This move only speeds up Black's demise. He could have still resisted with the move 37...\text{b}4, but I thought that the variation: 38.\text{d}6+ \text{f}3 39.\text{g}5, would not have left him too many chances to save the game.

38.\text{g}5 \text{h}7 39.\text{f}1 \text{g}6 40.\text{h}4+ \text{e}4 41.\text{d}4+ \text{e}5 42.\text{f}4+ \text{e}6 43.\text{f}2 \text{f}8 44.\text{f}3 \text{e}7 45.\text{e}5 \text{c}7 46.\text{f}3 \text{e}6 47.\text{b}4 \text{d}6 48.\text{b}6+ \text{d}5 49.\text{xf}7 and Black resigned.

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\text{Dreev – Sakaev}

Word Cup, Khanty-Mansyisk 2005

This game was played in the World Cup in the Siberian town of Khanty-Mansyisk and I managed to win there several matches in a row and to enter the scheme of the last 16. At that particular moment of the tournament however, we were both very tired as a result of our previous marathon fights and that explains the numerous mutual mistakes in our encounter.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.\text{c}3 e6 4.\text{e}4 dxe4 5.\text{xe}4 \text{b}4+ 6.\text{d}2 \text{xd}4 7.\text{xb}4 \text{xe}4+ 8.\text{e}2 \text{a}6 9.\text{a}5!?

This move is presently quite fashionable. It has become even more
popular and modern than the well-familiar lines like 9.\texttt{\textbox{\texttt{d6}}} and 9.\texttt{\textbox{\texttt{c3}}}.

9...\texttt{\texttt{f6}}!?

I believe – that is Black’s most reliable defensive line in this variation of the Slav Gambit. Not so long ago, it was considered that Black’s most solid defence here was the following practically semi-forced variation: 9...\texttt{\texttt{d7}} 10.\texttt{\texttt{f3}} \texttt{\textbox{\texttt{f6}}} 11.\texttt{\texttt{d6}} \texttt{\texttt{f5}} 12.\texttt{\texttt{e5}} \texttt{\texttt{xf2+}} 13.\texttt{\texttt{xf2}} \texttt{\texttt{e4+}} 14.\texttt{\texttt{f3}} \texttt{\texttt{xd6}} 15.\texttt{\texttt{hd1}} \texttt{\texttt{e7}} 16.\texttt{\texttt{c5}} \texttt{\texttt{xc5}} 17.\texttt{\texttt{b4}} \texttt{\texttt{b6}} 18.\texttt{\texttt{ac1}} \texttt{\texttt{ce4}} 19.\texttt{\texttt{d3}} \texttt{\texttt{f5}} 20.\texttt{\texttt{xe4}} \texttt{\texttt{fxe4+}} 21.\texttt{\texttt{e3}} \texttt{\texttt{c5}} 22.\texttt{\texttt{xc5}} \texttt{\texttt{bxc5}} 23.\texttt{\texttt{xc5}} \texttt{\texttt{e8}} 24.\texttt{\texttt{xd6+}} \texttt{\texttt{d8}} and Black’s position should not be worse. For example, the game Yakovich – Galkin, Dubai 2001, continued with: 25.b4 \texttt{\texttt{a5}} and the opponents agreed to a draw. Recently, the entire line was dealt a heavy theoretical blow in the game Grischuk – Shulman, Khanty-Mansyisk 2005, where instead of 16.\texttt{\texttt{c5}}, White played: 16.\texttt{\texttt{d2}}! \texttt{\texttt{e8}} 17.\texttt{\texttt{ad1}} \texttt{\texttt{f6}}?! (Black’s relatively best defence here would have been the move 17...\texttt{\texttt{df5}}, but I still think that after 18.\texttt{\texttt{d8}} – or even 18.\texttt{\texttt{g4}}! – 18...\texttt{\texttt{xd8}} 19.\texttt{\texttt{xd8+}} \texttt{\texttt{xf8}} 20.\texttt{\texttt{g4}}, White has more than sufficient compensation for Black’s two extra pawns and his initiative is tremendously danger-

ous.) 18.\texttt{\texttt{xd6}} \texttt{\texttt{fxe5}} 19.\texttt{\texttt{e3}} \texttt{\texttt{h5}} 20.\texttt{\texttt{d8+}} \texttt{\texttt{g7}} 21.\texttt{\texttt{f1+}} \texttt{\texttt{g8}} 22.\texttt{\texttt{e7}} \texttt{\texttt{c7}} 23.\texttt{\texttt{d2}}! \texttt{\texttt{c8}} 24.\texttt{\texttt{d3}} \texttt{\texttt{g6}} 25.\texttt{\texttt{df2}} \texttt{\texttt{h7}} 26.\texttt{\texttt{d6}} \texttt{\texttt{a6}} 27.\texttt{\texttt{xe5}} and Black came under a crushing attack.

10.\texttt{\texttt{f3}}!

This simple move is much stronger than the seemingly more active line: 10.\texttt{\texttt{d8+}} \texttt{\texttt{f7}}, since in that case after: 11.0-0 \texttt{\texttt{b6}} 12.\texttt{\texttt{c3}} \texttt{\texttt{e5}}, Black’s prospects are at least equal, while after 11.\texttt{\texttt{f3}}, it is good for Black to play: 11...\texttt{\texttt{b6}} 12.\texttt{\texttt{c3}} \texttt{\texttt{c5}}! 13.\texttt{\texttt{d2}} \texttt{\texttt{g6}} and he ends up with a better game. For example, if 14.\texttt{\texttt{b4}}?!, then the line: 14...\texttt{\texttt{e7}}? 15.\texttt{\texttt{exh8}} \texttt{\texttt{d3+}} 16.\texttt{\texttt{f1}} (or 16.\texttt{\texttt{xd3}} \texttt{\texttt{xd3}} 17.\texttt{\texttt{b2}} \texttt{\texttt{b7}} 18.\texttt{\texttt{xa8}} \texttt{\texttt{xa8}}\texttt{=} 16...\texttt{\texttt{f4}} 17.g3 \texttt{\texttt{xe2}} 18.\texttt{\texttt{xe2}} \texttt{\texttt{b7}} 19.\texttt{\texttt{xa8}} \texttt{\texttt{xa8}} is evidently in favour of Black.

10...\texttt{\texttt{b6}} 11.\texttt{\texttt{c3}} \texttt{\texttt{e7}} 12.0-0 0-0

13.\texttt{\texttt{e1}} \texttt{\texttt{e5}}

14.\texttt{\texttt{b4}}?!

White’s compensation for the sacrificed pawn is quite sufficient in that position, because Black’s queen is rather unstable on the e4-square and his pieces are not well coordinated at all. The most important point is that it is much easier to play that position with White mostly because he has the
indisputable initiative.

14...\textbf{\textdagger}$\textdagger$\texta5 15.\textw4 \textc7 16.\texta3d1 \textf6 17.\textb3d6!? \textf5d8 18.\textd2 \textw4 19. \textcxd8+ \textxd8 20.\textf3 \textf6 21.\textw6

My opponent had defended pretty well until that moment. I have preserved some initiative for the pawn indeed, but I still think that the chances for both sides are approximately equal here.

21...\textg5

This is an imprecision and Black begins to have some problems after it. It was more reliable for him to play 21...\textd4, or 21...\textf4 with a very complicated game and mutual chances.

22.\textw7 \texte8 23.\textd2 \texte6 24.g3 \textw6 25.\textwxa7

I have managed to regain my pawn and now White is already better.

25...\textd4?!

That is already a grave mistake and Black loses a pawn after it without sufficient compensation. It would have been better for him to protect simply his pawn with the move 25...\textc8, preserving a quite defensible position. Then, in case of: 26.\textw7d7 \textd8 27.\textxc6 \textd4 28.\textf7 (or 28.\textxd4? \textwxd2+−) 28...\textxe2+ 29.\textxe2 \textd3 30.\textf1 \texth3, Black's compensation would have been acceptable in view of the vulnerable light squares on White's kingside.

26.\textwxb6 \textxe2 27.\textxe2 \textw3 28.\textf3?!?

That was a serious imprecision on my part and I lost a great deal of my advantage with it. The correct move was 28.a4!, after which my opponent would have nothing really to counter the march forward of my a-pawn with.

28...\texth5 29.a4 \texth4 30.\textw2

That was another mistake for White. It would have been better to continue with 30.\textg2, preserving the edge. Now, Black has good chances for a draw.

30...\textxg3 31.hxg3 \textd3 32.\texte1 \texte6 33.b5 \textxc5 34.\textxb5 \texte8 35. \textb4 \textd5 36.\texta5 \textf2

Black's pieces are so active in this position that he has a full compensation for White's extra pawn. The final part of this game was played in a desperate mutual time-trouble...

37.\textb6?! \textb2 38.\textw4?!

After that surprising move, my opponent had only a few seconds left on the clock and he simply lost his cold-bloodedness and following:
38...\texttt{Wh}3?? 39.\texttt{Wxd5+} he resigned.

Still, in the diagrammed position Konstantin had the spectacular problem-like move – 38...\texttt{Wb6}!!, which would have equalized, since in that case White would have been forced to enter the line: 39.\texttt{Wxb6} \texttt{Qxb6} with an equal endgame.

\textbf{96} \hspace{1cm} \textbf{D24}

\textbf{Dreev – van Wely}

Word Cup, Khanty-Mansyisk 2005

\textit{A game from the World Cup, in a match for the 13th – 14th place in the final.}

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1.d4 \texttt{Qf6} 2.c4 e6 3.\texttt{d3} d5 4.\texttt{Cc3} dxc4

5.\texttt{Wa4}+!?

White's most energetic and no doubt critical line here is: 5.e4!? \texttt{Qb4} 6.\texttt{Qg5}, but after 6...c5 there arises a quite complicated, double-edged position, which has been tested by my opponent numerous times in practice. I understood in my preparation that he had played it quite well with Black. Therefore, I decided to choose a not so sharp line, which was far from being harmless...

5...\texttt{Qb7}

That is Loek's favourite move in answer to 5.\texttt{Qa4}. It seems to be active and quite logical too, but I think that the more modest line – 5...c6 is more reliable.

6.e4 a6 7.\texttt{Qxc4} \texttt{Qb8} 8.\texttt{Qc2} b5 9.\texttt{Qd3} \texttt{Qb7}

It is also interesting for Black to try the variation: 9...c5!? 10.\texttt{Qf4} \texttt{Qb6}, which is very rarely played in tournament practice. I believe that White's prospects should be somewhat better, due to the not so natural placement of Black's rook on b6, but still the position seems to be rather complex and quite acceptable for Black.

10.\texttt{Qf4} \texttt{Qc8} 11.d5?! \texttt{Qc5} 12.0-0-0 \texttt{Qxd5} 13.\texttt{Qxd5} \texttt{Qxd5} 14.\texttt{exd5} \texttt{Qxd3}+

All that has been played in the game Tregubov – van Wely, Warsaw 2005, in which after: 15.\texttt{Qxd3} \texttt{Qe7} 16.h4 0-0 17.\texttt{Qg5} g6 18.\texttt{Wd2} \texttt{Qd6} 19.\texttt{Qe1} \texttt{Qxf4} 20.\texttt{Wxf4} \texttt{Qxd5}, Black maintained equality.

15.\texttt{Qxd3}!?

This novelty had been especially prepared by me for that game and it created certain problems for Black.

15...\texttt{Qe7} 16.h4
My opponent took here about forty minutes on the clock, but he failed to make the right choice.

16...\textit{\texttt{Nd7}}?!  
That is a serious mistake, after which Black's position becomes very difficult. Why did he not play the seemingly obvious move — 16...\textit{\texttt{0-0}}? I had prepared against that the line: 17.\textit{\texttt{Qg5 g6}} (It is too bad for Black to try 17...\textit{\texttt{Axg5? 18.hxg5 g6}} (or 18...\textit{\texttt{h6 19.gxh6 g6}} 20.h7+ \textit{\texttt{Qh8 21.Qh6 Exe8 22.Wd4+ f6 23.Qg4+-}}), because of 19.Eh7! and White would have a crushing attack.) 18.Eh7?! \textit{\texttt{Exh7}} 19.h5, with a dangerous initiative for the sacrificed piece.

Evidently, van Wely had seen that variation and he did not find anything better than the move 16...\textit{\texttt{Nd7}}?!, which did not seem to be so natural. Still, my opponent had a good chance to defend successfully if he had found the move 16...\textit{\texttt{f6}}! in the diagrammed position. My prospects would be still better then, but not more. Black plans to castle and I cannot prevent that, since after 17.Wb3, he can follow with: 17...\textit{\texttt{d6 18.Ehe1+ f7 19.Ee3}} and White is only slightly better.

17.Ee5 Wd6 18.Wf5! 0-0 19.\textit{\texttt{Nd7}} g6  
That is probably the best for Black. Loek is trying to complicate the position somehow. In case of: 19...\textit{\texttt{Wb4}} 20.Qxf8 \textit{\texttt{Exf8 21.Qg5}}, Black remains an exchange down in a relatively simple position and his practical chances to save the game would not be so great at all.

20.Qxd6 cxd6+ 21.Wc2 \textit{\texttt{Exc2+}} 22.Qxc2 Ee8+ 23.Qb1

Now, it is clear that Black's compensation for the exchange is insufficient, but his bishop pair should not be underestimated. I had to play precisely in order to materialize my advantage.

23...\textit{\texttt{Ec7}} 24.Qb8! \textit{\texttt{Ec5}}  
In case of 24...\textit{\texttt{Ec8}}, White's simplest line is: 25.Qc6 \textit{\texttt{Exc6}} 26.dxc6 \textit{\texttt{Exc6}} 27.\textit{\texttt{Ec1}} and winning that endgame is just a matter of technique. Naturally, Black wishes to avoid simplification.

25.Ede1!  
That is the best move and my opponent cannot avoid the trade of the rooks anymore, so my task to realize my advantage is facilitated considerably.

25...Qf8  
Or 25...\textit{\texttt{Ec7}} 26.Qc6+-

26.Ed7 Ec8 27.\textit{\texttt{Ec1}}! \textit{\texttt{Exc1+}}  
Black has to exchange rooks now. After 27...\textit{\texttt{Ed8}}, White wins easily with 28.Qb6 and there is no satisfactory defence against the threat — \textit{\texttt{Ec7}}.

28.Ec1 Ee7 29.Ee1 Exh4 30.g3  
\textit{\texttt{Ag5 31.f4 Eh6}}  
(diagram)

32.Ee7  
That is the final touch. White is threatening \textit{\texttt{Db6}} and Black cannot save his bishop on a7. My opponent
1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.d3 d6 4.e3 e6 5.f3 b6 7.dxc4 b5 8.d3

8...a6

That was a real surprise! Jenya had played in our last game a somewhat passive, but reliable move – 8...b4 and he managed to draw with Black without too much of an effort. In fact, I never understood why he chose this time a variation, which led to much more complicated positions. There were two possible reasons – he was either afraid of my opening preparation, or he wanted not only to equalize, but to play for a win at any rate. I was inclined much more to think that the second possibility was the right one, because his tournament situation was such as in case of his win against me, he would have had great chances to fight for winning the Championship.

9.e4 c5 10.e5 cxd4 11.xb5 axb5

The other more “classical” line of the Sozin variation is the move – 11...e5.

12.exf6 gxf6 13.0–0 wb6 14. We2

It was still not too late for me to chicken out and to regain my pawn

could have resigned here, but he continued with:

32...g5 33.f5 g7 34.b6 g4 35.
c2 f6 36.xb7 f4 37.xf4 g3
38.d7+ xf5 39.f8 and finally
Black resigned.

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Dreev – Bareev
58th Russia Ch, Moscow 2005

It can be said that our chess games with Jenya Bareev have always had something quite special about them... We are great rivals ever since we were kids. I had played a match with Bareev back in 1983 for the right to represent the USSR at the Under-16 World Championship. (I have written about that in the Foreword to this book). Then, the elder and the more experienced Bareev won...Presently, I do not feel anything extraordinary before our games with Bareev, but still there are some shadows of the past hanging over our encounters on the board...

This game was played at the Super-Final of the Russian Championship which was held for the second time in 2005.
with the line: 14.\texttt{\textbackslash e}4 \texttt{\textbackslash b}7 15.\texttt{\textbackslash x}b7 \texttt{\textbackslash w}xb7 16.\texttt{\textbackslash d}xd4 \texttt{\textbackslash g}8 17.\texttt{\textbackslash w}f3, with equality. Naturally, all that was too far away from my plans...

14...\texttt{\textbackslash a}6 15.a4
That is a seldom played move. White’s main line here is – 15.\texttt{\textbackslash d}1. It is amazing, but that position has been played by Bareev numerous times with White and Black as well...

15...\texttt{\textbackslash g}7
That is a new move. Black’s main line here is: 15...\texttt{\textbackslash c}5 16.\texttt{\textbackslash a}xb5 \texttt{\textbackslash b}7 17.\texttt{\textbackslash x}xa8+ \texttt{\textbackslash x}xa8. In the older game of the two – Bareev – Shirov, Novgorod 1994, there followed: 18.\texttt{\textbackslash f}4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}6 and Black had a wonderful position, but later in the game Bareev – Karjakin, Beer-Sheva 2005, White reacted correctly and that was: 18.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d4. That move was considered to be impossible before, due to 18...\texttt{\textbackslash w}d6, but after the brilliant computer discovery – 19.b6!, Black managed to draw the game somehow, but White’s position was clearly preferable.

16.\texttt{\textbackslash a}5
This seems to be the most principled move.

16...\texttt{\textbackslash w}d6 17.\texttt{\textbackslash e}4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}8 18.\texttt{\textbackslash g}4
White takes advantage of the fact that Black cannot castle, because of \texttt{\textbackslash h}6, so he maneuvers with his queen discoordinating Black’s pieces, moreover White’s bishop comes to the f4-square with tempo.

18...\texttt{\textbackslash f}8 19.\texttt{\textbackslash f}4 \texttt{\textbackslash e}5 20.\texttt{\textbackslash w}h5
Until now, my opponent had played almost instantly and he had an advantage on the clock of about 50 minutes. Here he thought for about an hour and a quarter! Evidently, Jenya had realized that things were far from simple and White’s initiative was really serious.

20...\texttt{\textbackslash e}c8
That move was a great surprise for me; meanwhile White’s initiative was developing quite freely after Black’s other possibilities as well, for example:

20...\texttt{\textbackslash x}f3+ 21.\texttt{\textbackslash w}xf3 \texttt{\textbackslash w}d5 (or 21...\texttt{\textbackslash e}5 22.\texttt{\textbackslash d}2) 22.\texttt{\textbackslash e}4 (Or 22.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 \texttt{\textbackslash x}d5 23.\texttt{\textbackslash f}c1 \texttt{\textbackslash e}7 24.\texttt{\textbackslash c}6 \texttt{\textbackslash a}8 25.\texttt{\textbackslash e}4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}7 26.\texttt{\textbackslash b}6 \texttt{\textbackslash a}a7 27.\texttt{\textbackslash b}8 \texttt{\textbackslash b}7 28.\texttt{\textbackslash x}b7 \texttt{\textbackslash x}xb7 29.\texttt{\textbackslash d}6+ \texttt{\textbackslash d}8 30.\texttt{\textbackslash x}b7 \texttt{\textbackslash x}b7 31.a6 \texttt{\textbackslash a}a7 32.\texttt{\textbackslash c}5 \texttt{\textbackslash a}8 33.\texttt{\textbackslash x}d4.) 22...\texttt{\textbackslash w}d7 23.\texttt{\textbackslash c}6 \texttt{\textbackslash e}7 24.\texttt{\textbackslash w}d3! ?; 20...b4 21.\texttt{\textbackslash x}e5 fxe5 22.\texttt{\textbackslash g}5 \texttt{\textbackslash d}7 23.\texttt{\textbackslash a}c1!;
20...\texttt{\textbackslash w}d5 21.\texttt{\textbackslash x}e5 fxe5 22.\texttt{\textbackslash g}5 \texttt{\textbackslash d}7 23.\texttt{\textbackslash e}4 \texttt{\textbackslash d}6 24.\texttt{\textbackslash f}c1.
21.\$ae1
It also seemed good for White to
follow with the more positional ap-
proach 21.\$ac1, but I had decided to
play for a direct attack.
21...\$ec5 22.\$b4
It seemed to me that the inclusion
of that move was in my favour in case
I had intended to continue as I did in
the game.
22...\$ec3 23.\$exe5 fxe5 24.\$dg5
\$e7
Or 24...\$ec7 25.f4.

25.f4! e4
White’s attack remains very pow-
erful, and Black can hardly parry it
even after 25...f5, for example: 26.
\$xf5 exf5 27.fxe5 \$g8 28.\$xf5 h6 29.
\$e4 \$c8 30.\$f6+ \$xf6 31.\$xf6 \$h7
32.\$g6+ \$g7 (32...\$h8 33.e6) 33.
\$xh6 \$h7 34.\$xh7 \$xh7 35.\$e8+ \$g7
36.\$f1+. Meanwhile, White can also
continue with the simple move 26.\$b1
too.
26.\$xe4
I was very much tempted here to
play beautifully with the line: 26.f5
exd3 27.fxe6 f6 28.\$e4, with the idea
to follow with \$d4-d8, but Black can
parry all that with the simple move −
28...\$c4. It is interesting for White to
try 28.\$e5, but the move in the game
is stronger and simpler as well.
26...\$h6
Black must play that move sooner
or later anyway.
27.\$f3
Now, White’s knight is headed for
the e5-square.
27...\$xb4 28.\$e5 \$e7
The line: 28...\$ec7 29.\$g6!, loses for
Black for the same reasons...

29.\$g6! b4
Black’s light squared bishop finally
enters the actions, but unfortunately
it is already too late...
30.\$xf7 \$xf1
30...\$xe5 31.fxe5 \$xf1 32.\$xf1+-.
31.\$g6+ \$xf7 32.\$xe7+ \$xe7
33.\$g4!
Black’s position is indefensible, so
Jenya resigned.

98 Dreev – Bareev
Poikovsky 2006

This game is just one of our numer-
ous encounters on the chess board
with Jenya Bareev. He lost against
me in the super-final of the Russian
Championship (I have commented that game in the book too). Therefore, despite the fact that he was Black, he was evidently in a very aggressive mood and he wanted to take his revenge. The opening variation that he chose confirmed that expectation.

1.d4 əf6 2.c4 e6 3.əf3 b6 4.a3 c5 5.d5 əa6

6.əb3

I preferred that move, because I wished to enter a certain line. In case of the usual move 6.əc2, White must consider the variation: 6...exd5 7.cxd5 əb7 8.e4 əe7 9.əd3 əxd5 and after 10.0–0 əc7, his compensation for the pawn is sufficient, but that would have led to an entirely different type of position...

6...exd5 7.cxd5 g6 8.əf4 d6 9.əc3 əg7 10.əa4+

10...b5!?

This is an interesting pawn-sacrifice. After the main line: 10...əd7 11.əxd6 əxa4 12.əxa4 əxd5 13.0–0–0, Black must play very precisely in order to equalize.

11.əxb5 0–0 12.əc3 əb6 13.əb1

There are only a few games played in that line, but I have to mention that White has tried here mostly 13.əd2. I do not like that move, though...

13...əbd7

14.e4

That is the correct decision for White. I lose my castling rights indeed, but I solve other problems in the process. The position resembles a bit the Volga Gambit, but with an essential difference – the a-file is closed. If White manages to bring his king to safety, Black will have no compensation for the pawn; therefore he must act energetically...

14...əxf1 15.əxf1 c4

This is an arguable decision. Evgenij frees in that fashion the c5-square for his knight, trying to seize the initiative. It seemed to me quite interesting for him to try: 15...əh5, after which he could have obtained a very accept-
able game, for example: 16.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{e5}\) 17.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{xe5}\) 18.\(\text{e2!}\) (After 18.\(\text{g3}\) \(f5\) 19.\(\text{exf5}\) \(\text{gxf5}\) 20.\(\text{g2}\) \(\text{b7}\), the game is quite unclear.) 18...\(f5\) 19.\(\text{exf5}\) \(\text{gxf5}\) 20.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{g7}\).

16.\(\text{wb4}\)

Or 16.\(\text{c6}\) \(\text{d8}\) 17.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{e8}\), with a good compensation for Black.

16...\(\text{d8}\)

It was evidently stronger for Black to continue with: 16...\(\text{xb4}\) 17.\(\text{axb4}\) \(\text{e8}\) 18.\(\text{d2}\) and here either immediately 18...\(f5\), or 18...\(\text{b6}\), followed by \(f7-f5\).

17.\(\text{g3}\)

The principled decision for White here would have been the move 17.\(\text{xd6}\). After 17...\(\text{e8}\), I was calculating only the line: 18.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{g4}\) 19.\(\text{e6}\) \(\text{fxe6}\) 20.\(\text{dxe6}\) (20.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{b6}\)) 20...\(\text{de5}\) and Black would have some compensation. I had completely overlooked the move 18.\(\text{xe1}\)!, since in that case after: 18...\(\text{g4}\) (or 18...\(\text{xc8}\) 19.\(\text{h3}\) \(\text{ge5}\) 20.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{exe5}\) 21.\(\text{xe5}\) \(\text{exe5}\) 22.\(\text{xc4}\), White would be clearly better.

17...\(\text{c5}\) 18.\(\text{g2}\)

Or 18.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{e8}\) 19.\(\text{we2}\) \(\text{e8}\) 20.\(\text{d2}\) \(\text{h5}\), with some compensation for Black (or 20...\(\text{fxe4}\) 21.\(\text{cxe4}\) \(f5\) 22.\(f3\)).

18...\(\text{d3}\)!

Or 18...\(\text{xc8}\) 19.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{cxe4}\) 20.\(\text{d3}\), with an edge for White.

19.\(\text{xd6}\)

After 19.\(\text{xc4}\) \(\text{xf4+}\) 20.\(\text{gxf4}\) \(\text{h5}\) 21.\(\text{e2}\) \(\text{e8}\), Black's counterplay is sufficient.

19...\(\text{h5}\)!

The queens are exchanged now and Black regains one of the pawns. The position is transferred into a complicated multi-piece endgame.

20.\(\text{xd8}\) \(\text{dxf4+}\) 21.\(\text{gxf4}\) \(\text{xf4+}\) 22.\(\text{g3}\) \(\text{h5+}\) 23.\(\text{g4}\)

White controls the \(f4\)-square. If 23.\(\text{g2}\), then after 23...\(\text{f4+}\) the game might end in a draw. That could have been the most logical outcome of that encounter, but I decided to play more aggressively...

23...\(\text{axd8}\) 24.\(\text{e5}\) \(\text{f5}\+)

It seemed very strong for Black to play 24...\(\text{f6}\), but after 25.\(\text{d4}\) White is better. It deserved attention for Black instead to try 24...\(\text{f6+}\)!

25.\(\text{h4}\) \(\text{f8}\)

It is obviously better for Black to play immediately 25...\(\text{f4}\). Jenya probably had overlooked that after: 26.\(\text{hxd1}\) \(\text{d3}\) 27.\(\text{xd3}\) (The correct line for White here is: 27.\(\text{b3}\) \(\text{xe5}\)
28.\( \text{d}4 \), with an unclear position.) 27...\text{cxd3} 28.\text{\textit{d}d1} \text{\textit{e}e8}, I would have lost one of my central pawns.

\textbf{26.\textit{e}h\textit{d}1 \textit{f}4}

The variation: 26...\text{\textit{g}xe5} 27.\text{\textit{g}xe5} \text{\textit{g}xe5} 28.\text{\textit{d}d4} – is in favour of White.

\textbf{27.\textit{b}3 \textit{g}xe5! 28.\textit{b}xc4 \textit{g}e8 29.\textit{d}d4}

Or 29.\text{\textit{e}b3} \text{\textit{c}c8}.

\textbf{29...\textit{c}c8 30.\textit{e}b4}

\begin{figure}
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\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard}
\end{figure}

\textbf{30...\textit{g}e5!}

My king was in a cage here and Black could have forced a draw at any moment...

\textbf{31.\textit{g}c5 \textit{g}g2+ 32.\textit{h}3 \textit{f}4+ 33.\textit{h}4 \textit{a}6}

My opponent was in a serious time-trouble here. Still, we both had thirty seconds added after every move and also the fact that Black could have repeated the position at any moment with \textit{g}g2 did not make me think that his time-pressure was so important.

\textbf{34.\textit{d}a7 \textit{g}g2+ 35.\textit{h}3 \textit{f}4+ 36.\textit{h}4 \textit{c}c7}

That was another intermediate repetition...

\textbf{37.\textit{d}c6 \textit{g}g2+}

Once again...

\textbf{38.\textit{h}3 \textit{f}4+ 39.\textit{h}4}

Here, my adversary lost his sense of danger, so he avoided the repetition of moves and he played:

\textbf{39...\textit{d}6 40.\textit{c}5}

\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{chessboard}
\end{figure}

Now, there happened a very strange thing... Evgenij no doubt knew that he had to make one more move to the end of the time-control and he had approximately three minutes left to do that. Still, he could not make up his mind whether to play 40...\textit{g}5+, or 40...\textit{x}c5. After 40...\textit{g}5+, White's king manages, like in a fairy tale, to squeeze through Black's pieces. He can win a piece indeed, but the evaluation of the position remains quite unclear, because of White's powerful passed \textit{d}6-pawn and his active pieces, for example: 41.\textit{\textit{f}xf5} \textit{g}g7+ 42.\textit{\textit{f}xf5} \textit{g}f8+ 43.\textit{d}e4 \textit{xc}5 44.d6 \textit{h}3 45.\textit{d}d5 \textit{xa}7 46.\textit{e}7+ \textit{h}8 47.\textit{c}c6 \textit{xf}2 48.\textit{\textit{d}d}5. In case of: 40...\textit{x}c5 41.\textit{\textit{f}xf4} \textit{xa}7, it is only White who can be better – 42.\textit{g}g3!? \textit{c}5 43.\textit{a}4 \textit{a}8, but Black has nothing to complain about either...

At the end, Jenya played neither 40...\textit{g}5+, nor 40...\textit{x}c5 and he chose instead another possibility – he simply failed to play the last move of the time-control and as a result... \textit{1–0}. 
Bologan – Dreev
Poikovsky 2006

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 5.f5 4.f3 e6 5.e2 d7 6.0–0 g6 7.c3 h6
7...a6.
8.xh6 gxh6 9.bd2

9...e7!?

This is an interesting novelty. I decided to refrain from the standard plan here, including the undermining move f7-f6. Black usually opted for the immediate 9...f6, as Z.Isoria played with Black against V.Bologan. The game continued with: 10.b3 g7 11.exf6 wxf6 12.e1 e5 13.g4 f5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.xf5 xf5 16.d4 wf7 17.f4 0–0 18.d3 c4 19.e3 e8 20.c2 e4 and he obtained a quite acceptable position (Bologan – Isoria, St Vincent 2005). Meanwhile, Black had also tried the move f7-f6, after the preparatory f8-g7 and castling. In the game Smikovski – Galkin, Internet 2004, there followed: 9...g7 10.e1 0–0 11.f1 f6 12.exf6 wxf6 13.g3 e5 14.dxe5 dxe5 15.wd2 eae8 16.f1 a6 17.dxe5 wxe5 18.eae1 wff4 19.wxf4 efx4 20.f3 hff8 21.ee3 e3 22.fxe3 e8 and Black had a very good game. Still, while I was preparing for the game, it seemed to me that things were not so promising for Black after the undermining move f7-f6. He had to play extremely precisely in most of the lines in order to avoid ending up in an inferior position. The fact that Viorel was obviously quite ready to repeat the way he played against Z.Isoria confirmed that evaluation. The move I chose, was leading to a much more complex position.

10.e1

This is a quite interesting maneuver. White had also to consider the possibilities: 10.c4, 10.b3 and 10.b4.

10...c5!

Of course, that move is an integral part of Black’s plan anyway, but after the maneuver of White’s knight it is doubtlessly even stronger.

11.b3?! 

Black can counter 11.f4 with the powerful argument – 11...wb6. In case of 11.d3, Black can also play 11...wb6, but then White would have the strike – 12.c4! with great complications. Therefore, it deserved attention for White to come back with his knight to the centre.
11...\texttt{b}6 12.dxc5

Now, it is bad for White to play: 12.\texttt{d}2 \texttt{c}4 13.\texttt{c}c1, because of: 13...\texttt{d}xe5! 14.dxe5 \texttt{g}g5 15.\texttt{d}1 \texttt{xb}2.

12...\texttt{xc}5

Capturing with the knight on c5 is evidently worse, since Black's pressure against his opponent's e5-pawn is thus reduced.

13.\texttt{f}3

White has no advantage after the opening. In case of: 13.\texttt{c}c5 \texttt{c}5, he has problems with the protection of his b2-pawn.

13...\texttt{f}8!?

Now, Black's bishop is redeployed to g7, via its initial square, in order to exploit the vulnerability of White's e5-pawn.

14.a4

I was not impressed by that "active" move. You will see later that it only weakens the b4-square. White had better play the immediate – 14.c4.

14...\texttt{a}6 15.c4

Viorel is trying to provoke a lively piece-play as quickly as possible. I only needed to complete my development and my position would be clearly better.

15...\texttt{e}4!

That is the right way for Black to hold on to the d5-outpost. In case of 15...dxc4, it is very good for White to continue with 16.\texttt{bd}2!

16.a5 \texttt{b}4 17.\texttt{bd}2 \texttt{d}8

This is a strong move. The tension in the centre has reached its peak. After the "normal" line for Black: 17...\texttt{g}7 18.\texttt{xe}4 \texttt{xe}4 18.\texttt{d}2, the position remains approximately equal. You should not forget though, Black's pawns are doubled...

18.cxd5?!

Now, the position has been stabilized and Black can calmly complete his development! It deserved attention for White to follow with: 18.\texttt{e}1!? \texttt{xb}2 (or 18...\texttt{g}7? 19.\texttt{e}4 \texttt{xe}1 20.\texttt{d}6+) 19.\texttt{xe}4 (White would not
achieve anything much with: 19.cxd5
\( \text{\textit{\&d5} 20.\text{\textit{\&c4} 2c6!}} \) 19...\text{\textit{\&xe4} 20.\text{\textit{\&b1}}
\text{\textit{\&a3} 21.\text{\textit{\&d4} d5?!}} (It is clearly worse for Black to play: 21...\text{\textit{\&g7} 22.\text{\textit{\&xe6?!}}
\text{\textit{\&xe6} 23.\textit{\&h5+ \&e7} 24.\text{\textit{\&xe4} \&xe5} 25.\textit{\&fe1}) 22.\text{\textit{\&d2}} \text{\textit{\&a4} and Black is better. It is also interesting for White to try 18.\text{\textit{\&a3}}! and here after: 18...\text{\textit{\&xb2}}
19.\text{\textit{\&b3} \&a2} 20.\text{\textit{\&xb7} \&g7} (It is too dangerous for Black to play: 20...\text{\textit{\&xa5?}}
21.\text{\textit{\&d4 \&xe5} 22.\textit{\&h5!}) 21.\text{\textit{\&xe4 \&xe4} 22.\text{\textit{\&d4 \&xe5} 23.\textit{\&b3 \&xb3} 24.\textit{\&xb3},
White maintains good prospects on the queenside in that sharp endgame. Instead, Black could have followed with the more restrained line: 18...\text{\textit{\&c5}}
(preventing the move \text{\textit{\&a3-b3}}) 19.cxd5
\text{\textit{\&xd5} 20.\textit{\&c2 \&g7} 21.\textit{\&c1 \&d7}.
18...\text{\textit{\&xd5} 19.\textit{\&c2 \&g7} 20.\textit{\&c4}}
Black can counter 20.\text{\textit{\&a4}} with the powerful argument 20...\text{\textit{\&c5}}!
20...0–0
I managed already to evacuate my king, while White’s initiative ebbed away and his pawns were quite vulnerable...
21.\text{\textit{\&fd1 \&c8} 22.b3}
It is more resilient for White to play here: 22.\text{\textit{\&a4?! \&c5} 23.\textit{\&c3 \&fd8}.
22...\text{\textit{\&xe5} 23.\textit{\&fxe5 \&xe5} 24.\textit{\&a4 \&e7}
That was an imprecision. I decided to play more “solidly”, while I was choosing between that move and 24...\text{\textit{\&c3}}. The latter looks to me now much stronger.
25.\text{\textit{\&d2 \&g7}}
(diagram)
White’s position seems to be quite difficult, but he could have resisted more tenaciously with: 26.\text{\textit{\&b6 \&b3} 27.\text{\textit{\&c8 \&c8} 28.\textit{\&g4}! \&d1} and here he would have the surprising intermediate move – 29.\text{\textit{\&h6 f6}} (That is the only move for Black, since 29...\text{\textit{\&f8}} does not work, because of 30.\text{\textit{\&d3!}}) 30.\text{\textit{\&d1 \&c5}} – and Black would have an obvious advantage. It would be however, rather difficult for him to turn it into a full point, because of the opposite-coloured bishops present on the board and the vulnerability of the e6-pawn.
26.\text{\textit{\&f3}}?
This terrible move was played in a time-pressure and it became quite easy for me to press my advantage home.
26...\text{\textit{\&xf3} 27.\textit{\&xf3 \&fd8} 28.\textit{\&e2 \&g5+} 29.\textit{\&f1 \&xd1+} 30.\textit{\&xd1 \&d8} 31.\textit{\&c2 \&h5} 32.\textit{\&g2 \&g6+!}
This is the simplest for Black.
33.\text{\textit{\&xg6 hxg6} 34.\textit{\&b4 \&d7} 35.\textit{\&b6 \&c7} 36.\textit{\&a8 \&c3} 0–1
10 0
Yevseev – Dreev
Moscow 2006

This game was played in the traditional match Moscow – Saint Petersburg. It was preceded by a blitz-tournament for the participants of the main event and I won it. Unfortunately, I could not play in the first round of the competition and accord-
ing to the rules, in the second day I could not play on boards one or two. I was faced with the choice – to play with Black on board three, or to be with White on some of the lower boards. I decided to choose board three, because I wanted to try to take my revenge against Denis, who had beaten me a short while before that with White, in the first round of the Russian team championship...

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.$f3 $f6 4.$c2 dxc4 5.$xc4 $f5
I had played 5...$g4 in the game I mentioned.

6.g3 $e6 7.$g2 $bd7 8.0-0 $e7
9.$c3 0-0

That is a well-known tabia in that variation. White can continue here with 10.a4, or 10.$g5. It is also popular for him to play the move 10.$e1, for example: 10.$e1 $e4 11.$b3 $b6 12.$h4 $xh4 13.$xh4 $xh4. White only should not forget the famous trap: 10.$d1 $c2 and in case his rook retreats (11.$d2), Black wins his opponent’s queen with the move 11...$b6.

10.e3
This is the main line here. The e2-square is freed for White’s queen. I used to play like that with White some time ago...

10...b5!
This move is relatively new. That was the reason I stopped playing 10.e3 altogether. The idea behind the advance of the b-pawn is to impede the occupation of the centre by White with e3-e4.

11.$e2
It is too dangerous for White to accept the pawn-sacrifice: 11.$xc6 b4, since Black has a very good compensation.

11...b4 12.$b1
This move is a bit surprising, but it is quite sensible. (I used to play here 12.$a4.). White lags in development now, but in case Black postpones the pawn-advance c6-c5, his position might become inferior rather quickly.

12...$e8
It was also possible for Black to try the immediate move 12...c5 and if 13.$e5, then 13...$xe5 14.dxe5 $d3.

13.a3 a5
It deserved attention for Black to play here 13...$a5.

14.axb4 axb4
I felt that the move 14...$xb4 would have been good enough to equalize, but I wanted to enter a more complicated position.
15.\textit{\texttt{Qbd2}}
That move was not so accurate, since White had better start with 15.b3, although even then after 15...c5, Black would have an excellent game.

15...c5
Now, it becomes clear that White has problems to complete his development.

16.b3
It is quite understandable that White wishes to mobilize his forces as quickly as possible, but he weakens the c3-square with his last move. Black's knight heads for that outpost immediately. The tension in the centre would have been quite advantageous for Black after: 16.e4 $\textit{Qg6}$, while the move 16.$\textit{Qd1}$ would have been senseless in view of 16...$\textit{Qc2}$.

16...$\textit{Qd5}$ 17.$\textit{Qb2}$ $\textit{Qc3}$ 18.$\textit{Qxc3}$
That decision was practically forced.

18...$\textit{Bxc3}$ 19.$\textit{Qc4}$

Now, it seems at first sight that White has no problems at all. He only needs to play – $\textit{Qc1}$...

20.$\textit{Qfe5}$?
That natural move is a mistake too. It was still not too late for White to play 20.$\textit{Qfc1}$, with the following eventual developments: 20...$\textit{Qxb3}$ 21.$\textit{Qa5}$ $\textit{Qb2}$ 22.$\textit{Qe1}$ c2 23.$\textit{Qc6}$ $\textit{Qe8}$ 24.e4 (or 24.$\textit{Qc3}$ $\textit{Qb1}$) 24...$\textit{Qg4}$ 25.$\textit{Qc3}$ $\textit{Qb6}$ 26. $\textit{Qxe7+}$ $\textit{Qxe7}$ 27.$\textit{Qxe2}$=

20...$\textit{Qxe5}$ 21.$\textit{Qxe5}$ $\textit{cxd4}$! 22.$\textit{Qxd4}$
Or 22.$\textit{Qc6}$ d3.

22...$\textit{Qc8}$
Black's rook goes back to the c8-square just in time. The routine line: 22...$\textit{Qxb3}$, after: 23.$\textit{Qc6}$ $\textit{Qd6}$ 24.$\textit{Qc4}$, led to complete equality.

23.$\textit{Qc6}$ $\textit{Qd6}$ 24.$\textit{Qa6}$ $\textit{Qf6}$ 25.$\textit{Qe4}$
It is too bad for White to play:

25.$\textit{Qa7}$ $\textit{Qxd4}$ 26.$\textit{Qxc8}$ $\textit{Qd3}$!

25...$\textit{Qxe4}$ 26.$\textit{Qxe4}$

Now, it seems at first sight that White has no problems at all. He only needs to play – $\textit{Qc1}$...

26.$\textit{Qd7}$!
This move disrupts the harmony of White's pieces. Black's queen is headed for the b7-square.

27.$\textit{Qfa1}$ $\textit{Qb7}$ 28.$\textit{Qb4}$ $\textit{Qfd8}$!
It is quite sensible for Black to bring some reserves, while White's pieces are pinned.

29.$\textit{b5}$
Or 29.f3 $\textit{Qd6}$.

29...$\textit{Qxd4}$ 30.$\textit{Qe3}$ $\textit{Qd5}$
It was even stronger for Black to play here the immediate move – 30...c2. I was calculating during the game the variation: 31.\textit{\textbackslash}xd4 \textit{\textbackslash}xd4 32.\textit{\textbackslash}c1, but I saw that in case of: 32...\textit{\textbackslash}xa1 33.\textit{\textbackslash}xa1 \textit{\textbackslash}xb5, White had the resource – 34.\textit{\textbackslash}xc2, therefore I played 30...\textit{\textbackslash}d5. Still, after the simple move – 32...h6!, the combination of the threats \textit{\textbackslash}f3 and \textit{\textbackslash}xa1, would have rendered White's situation completely hopeless.

\textbf{31.\textit{\textbackslash}b6}

After that move, I played quite imprecisely. I was planning to continue with the correct reply at first – 31...\textit{\textbackslash}d7, but then the move in the game seemed to me to be preferable.

\textbf{31...\textit{\textbackslash}c7 32.\textit{\textbackslash}b4}

Or 32.\textit{\textbackslash}a7 \textit{\textbackslash}xb6.

\textbf{32...\textit{\textbackslash}d4}

That move leads to an endgame by force. Black had better opt for: 32...\textit{\textbackslash}dd8 33.\textit{\textbackslash}c6 \textit{\textbackslash}b7.

\textbf{33.\textit{\textbackslash}xd5 \textit{\textbackslash}xe3}

\textbf{34.\textit{\textbackslash}c6! \textit{\textbackslash}xc6 35.\textit{\textbackslash}e7+ \textit{\textbackslash}f8 36.\textit{\textbackslash}xc6 \textit{\textbackslash}d2 37.\textit{\textbackslash}a2}

Now, it is quite evident that Black has complicated his task considerably, although victory is still within reach.

\textbf{37...\textit{\textbackslash}e8 38.\textit{\textbackslash}f1}

Both kings are eager to join in the fight.

\textbf{38...\textit{\textbackslash}d7 39.\textit{\textbackslash}e2 \textit{\textbackslash}d6 40.\textit{\textbackslash}d3}

If 40.\textit{\textbackslash}a7, then Black has the resource 40...\textit{\textbackslash}c7.

\textbf{40...\textit{\textbackslash}c5 41.\textit{\textbackslash}a7}

White has problems now to protect his b5-pawn and his counterplay is obviously too slow.

\textbf{41...\textit{\textbackslash}xb5 42.\textit{\textbackslash}d4+ \textit{\textbackslash}b6 43.\textit{\textbackslash}d7}

43.\textit{\textbackslash}xf7 \textit{\textbackslash}d8

\textbf{43...\textit{\textbackslash}c7 44.\textit{\textbackslash}d6+ \textit{\textbackslash}c5 45.\textit{\textbackslash}d8}

45...\textit{\textbackslash}g5! 46.\textit{\textbackslash}b8 \textit{\textbackslash}f6 47.\textit{\textbackslash}b5+ \textit{\textbackslash}d6 48.\textit{\textbackslash}b3 \textit{\textbackslash}c6 49.\textit{\textbackslash}b8 \textit{\textbackslash}a7

The rest is already easy.

50.f4 \textit{\textbackslash}a2 51.g4 h6 52.\textit{\textbackslash}f8 \textit{\textbackslash}b2

53.g5 hxg5 54.fxg5 \textit{\textbackslash}xg5 55.d4+ \textit{\textbackslash}d5 56.\textit{\textbackslash}xc3 \textit{\textbackslash}xh2 57.\textit{\textbackslash}xf7 \textit{\textbackslash}f6

58.d7+ \textit{\textbackslash}c5 59.\textit{\textbackslash}c7+ \textit{\textbackslash}d6. White resigned.
Some of Dreev's Result of Tournaments and Matches

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Alexey Dreev is one of the most popular contemporary Russian grandmasters. He is famous for his deep understanding of chess and fine endgame technique. Many of his games are milestones in the theory of the Slav Defence, the King's Indian Defence and others.