

Chess Room Newsletter



Our GM in Residence takes on 24 boards at UN Plaza with a full scholastic tournament in the background.

Issue #1064 | October 11th, 2025 | Gens Una Sumus!

Contents

[Recent Tournaments at Mechanics' Institute by Alex Robins](#)

[In remembrance of Tibor Weinberger \(1932-2025\) by IM John Donaldson](#)

[Sam in Samarkand: King's Indian Games from the FIDE Grand Swiss by GM Sam Shankland](#)

[Educational Chess; How to Grow the Game in the US By Abel Talamantez, IA, LSI, FIDE 100 Best Educator](#)

[Remembering Lombardy by Renate Otterbach](#)

[Announcing our Tournament Advisory Group By IA/NTD Dr. Judit Sztaray](#)

[Annotated Games from the TNM by IM Elliott Winslow](#)

[A UK" Chess-cation" by John Mark Krejci Ph.D.](#)

[Interview with GM Priyadharshan Kannappan: Part 2 by Alex Robins](#)

[Tony's Teaser](#)

[Solutions - Contact Us](#)

Recent Tournaments at the Mechanics' Institute

By Alex Robins

September began with our **22nd St. Amant Memorial**. Pierre Charles Fournier de Saint-Amant was one of the first world-class players to visit Mechanics' and we're proud to keep that history alive here. The top section was won in a tie between **GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez** (2615) and **Aadit Bhatia** (2413) with 3.5 points each. In third place we also had a 2-way tie between **Zhuoyuan Wu** (2026) and **Niko Pompe** (2274). In the 1600-1999 section **Rakshita Dhanasekar** (1718), and **Theodore Miller** (1585) also split first place with 3.5 points each. **Eli Seidel** (1714) and **Hovik Manvelyan** (1910) were right on their heels tied for third with 3 points each. In the u1600 section **Arjun Sunil Shenoy** (1232) won the section outright with a perfect score. Behind him we had a three way tie for 2nd between **Vihaan Kumar** (1208), **Sumanth Pavuluri** (1306), and **Jessica Zhang** (1228).

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Judit Sztaray and IA Abel Talamantez.

Our **September Monthly Scholastic Swiss** was the biggest we have had on record at the club with 47 players and a ton of fun! It was so big we split the tournament into three sections instead of the usual two. In the over 800 section, first through fifth went to: **Wesley Wongchenko** (1075), **Rishaan Nair** (1052), **Blouin Morin** (1089), **Arfan Pasha** (980), and **Allen Zhang** (1065). In the 500-799 section, **Thomas Moore** (793) took first with 4 out of 4 points - he and his family have been big supporters of ours so a big congratulations on the strong performance. Thomas was followed by **Preston Lung** (678), **Julian Liang** (659), **Nora Liang** (403), and **Andre Wang** (693). In the under500 section, **Ethan Lueng** (unr.) took first place and was followed in order by **Niko Kladianos** (398), **Lucas Chin** (209), **Jordan Thach** (454), and **Chloe Li** (444). A big thank you to all of our scholastic players and their families for their continued support!

Full results can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Judit Sztaaray and Senior TD Arthur Liou.

After our Monthly Scholastic Swiss we had two scholastic tournaments with our Chess in the Community partners out at nearby public parks. Huge thank you to our partners at UN Plaza and Union Square for making these possible. At our UN Plaza Chess Tournament we had almost 60 players participating and had a great time! Even our GM in Residence Sam Shankland stopped by and gave a simul - winning all 24 games in record time. In the rated section of the tournament first place went to **Austin Bo Chen** (1641) with a perfect score. Following him in order were **Brett Fisher** (1385), **Ethan Lueng** (unr.), **Derek Diaz Ko** (unr.), and **Aiden Smuckler** (unr.). In the non-rated section, **Raymond Shao**, **Iain Huynh**, **Edward Lim**, **Alan Chen**, **Aaron Kwan**. It was a great time overall and we hope to hold an even bigger tournament next year.

Only two weeks later we had a tournament and simul with NM Daniel Cremisi over with our partners at Union Square. Shoutout to our winner of the rated section and Mechanics' regular **Matthew Tang** (812), second place went to **Derek Diaz Ko** (534), and third through fifth in order went to **Harrison Lin** (987), **Byron Li** (761), **Ean Park** (516). In the non-rated section, **Ansh Shenvi Priolkar** took first with a perfect score and second through fifth place in order went to **Xander Elbogen**, **Iain Huynh**, **Bangjie Luo**, **Brandon Lee**.

Full results for the UN Plaza Tournament can be found [here](#) and the Union Square Tournament can be found [here](#).

These tournaments were directed by IA Judit Sztaaray and ANTD Scott Mason.

Our next tournament day was a new type of event we're trying where we do a double-header with a rapid tournament in the morning and a blitz in the afternoon. It turned out to be a really fun day and we hope you'll join us for the next one on October 26th. In the top section of our **September Mechanics' Weekend Rapid**, GM **Mark Heimann** (2603) came out to play and tied for first place with **Ivan Zhou** (2199) and **Zlata Mokeeva** (2013) with 4 points each. In the under section, **Hinduja Reddy** (unr.) took a clear first

with **Toma Yuen** (1713) taking second. In third we had a 7(!!!) way split with everyone taking home a whopping \$3.14. Don't spend it all in one place! Later that afternoon, in the **September Weekend Blitz** we had **GM Fidel Corrales Jimenez** (2615) sweep the field and take home first place with a perfect score. **Vladyslav Shevkunov** (2214) was behind with six points. In third we had a three way-tie between **Aryan Balyan** (2258), **CM Pranav Sairam** (2227), and **Ivan Zhou** (2199). In the under section, **Toma Yuen** (1713) finished a strong day after placing in the rapid tournament to take first place home in the blitz! Shoutout in the bottom sections to **Bharadwaj Janadhan** (1328) and **Shaikat Hossain** (1196) who both split second place with five points each.

Full results for the rapid can be found [here](#) and for the blitz [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Abel Talamantez.

We wrapped up the final tournament of the month with the 3rd Gray Memorial Tournament. The top section was won outright by **NM Sebbby Suarez** (2284) with second place split between **Ivan Zhou** (2199) and **Christopher Atkeson** (2062). In the 1600-1999 section first place was split by **Thomas Gu** (1738) and **Preron Chakrabarty** (1608) with 3.5 points each. Third place was split four ways between **Hovik Manvelyan** (1910), **Elena Pang** (1640), **Youting Long** (1607), and **Pranav Balasubramanian** (1484). In the under section **Samuel Allen Saliva** (1006) won outright with a perfect score. **Wilson Han** (1137) was right behind him with 3.5 points. In third place we had **Sanvi Pawar** (1216) and **Sicheng Ao** (1190) with 3 points each. Thanks to all of our players for a great tournament.

Full results for the rapid can be found [here](#) and for the blitz [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Abel Talamantez.

And one last tournament before the newsletter was published was put out on the 23rd McClain Memorial Tournament. The top section was won by **Reyansh Paragiri** (2165) with **Kevin Kane** (2006) and **Eli Seidel** (1826) taking second place. In the middle section we had a clear winner with **Max Meacham** (1711) sweeping the field. Second place had a three way tie between **Rayna Yan** (1600), **Elena Pang** (1583), and **Necip Sayiner** (1563). In the under section we again had a sweep with **Calvin Django Dees** (1317) going 4 for 4. **Michael Cafiero** (unr.) was right on his heels with 3.5 points.

Third place was split three ways between **Vihaan Kumar** (1356), **Milan Patel** (1279), **Shivam Patel** (1510).

Full results for the tournament can be found [here](#).

This tournament was directed by IA Abel Talamantez and ANTD Scott Mason.

In Remembrance of Tibor Weinberger (1932-2025)

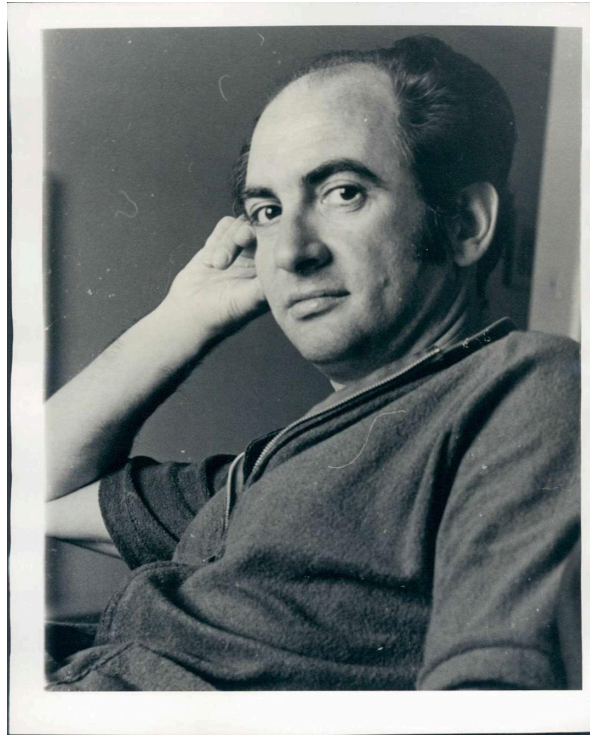
By IM John Donaldson

The Mechanics' Institute Chess Club lost a loyal friend with the passing of Tibor Weinberger on August 25th at the age of 92 in Santa Monica, California. A FIDE Master and USCF Senior Master, who in 1968 was rated 14th in the United States, Weinberger was born in Hungary. Like many of his countrymen he escaped his homeland after the Soviet invasion in 1956 and moved to the United States.

Tibor did not immediately settle in Southern California, spending his first two years in the country in Milwaukee and Brooklyn, but in late 1958 he found a home in Los Angeles and never left. His arrival was soon felt as he won the California Open and Closed Championships plus several smaller events in 1959. The next few years he was the dominant player in California before being supplanted by International Masters William Addison and Anthony Saidy, both participants on U.S. Olympiad teams in the 1960s.

The greatest success of Weinberger's career occurred at the 1968 National Open, held in Stateline on the Nevada-California border next to Lake Tahoe. There he shared second place with William Lombardy, behind Pal Benko with a 7-1 score. His result included wins over Grandmaster Larry Evans (his second defeat of the many-time U.S. Champion) and 1967 World Junior Champion Julio Kaplan, and a draw with Benko.

Here are his two big wins from the 1968 National Open. In the first he outplays Evans in a complicated Stonewall Dutch and in the second Kaplan loses a miniature.



Tibor reflecting in the 1970s.



Tibor hard at work!

Dutch A92

Larry Evans – Tibor Weinberger

National Open (6) 1968

1.c4 e6 2.g3 f5 3.Bg2 Nf6 4.Nf3 Be7 5.0–0 0–0 6.Qc2 d5 7.d4 c6 8.Nbd2 Qe8
9.Ne5 Qh5 10.f3 Nbd7 11.Nd3 Bd6 12.e3 g5 13.Nf2 f4 14.g4 Qf7 15.e4 e5
16.exd5 cxd5 17.dxe5 Nxe5 18.cxd5 Nxd5 19.Nde4 Be7 20.Re1 Ng6 21.Bd2 Bd7
22.Rad1 Nh4 23.a3 Rac8 24.Qd3 Ba4 25.Rc1 Rcd8 26.Qc4 Bc6 27.Bh1 Ng6
28.h3 h6 29.b4 a6 30.Qb3 Rfe8 31.Bg2 Ne5 32.Bc3 Ne3 33.Qxf7+ Nxf7 34.Bh1
Nd6 35.Nc5 Ndc4 36.Ne6 Rd7 37.Nd4 Kf7 38.Nxc6 bxc6 39.a4 Red8 40.Ne4
Rd3 41.Nf2



41...Rxc3! 42.Rxc3 Bxb4 43.Rxc4 Bxe1 44.Rxc6 Bxf2+ 45.Kxf2 Rd2+ 46.Kg1
Rd1+ 47.Kh2 Rd2+ 48.Kg1 Rd1+ 49.Kh2 Nf1+ 50.Kg2 Ng3 51.Rxa6 Rxh1 0–1

English A33

Tibor Weinberger – Julio Kaplan

National Open (7) 1968

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nf3 c5 4.g3 cxd4 5.Nxd4 Nc6 6.Bg2 Bb4+ 7.Nc3 Qa5

7...0-0 8.0-0 Qe7 was much safer. Now Black will have trouble getting his pieces out.

8.0-0 Nxd4 9.Qxd4 0-0 10.Bf4 Rd8



10...d5 was much safer although after 11.Be5 White is clearly on top.

11.Nb5! d6 12.a3 e5

12...Bc5 13.Qd3 Bb6 14.b4 Qa4 15.Nxd6 is winning for White.

13.axb4 Qxb5 14.cxb5 exd4 15.b6! a6 16.Rfd1 d5 17.b5 a5 18.Rxd4 Bd7 19.e4! Be6

20.exd5 1-0

Tibor may have only played once at the Mechanics' Institute (the 1960 State Championship), but his impact on the club was felt. He sponsored four major tournaments (2002, 2007, 2012 and 2017) to honor the memory of his late friend International Master Imre Konig and the participants included many top American players including Grandmasters Alex Yermolinsky, Sam Shankland, Daniel Naroditsky, Yury Shulman, John Fedorowicz and Vinay Bhat as well as young International Masters Hikaru Nakamura and Varuzhan Akobian. These events rank among the strongest the M.I. has held in its over 170 year existence and for this we owe Tibor a debt.

**Sam in Samarkand: King's Indian Games from the
FIDE Grand Swiss**
By GM Sam Shankland

Our GM in Residence will be analyzing his games from the FIDE Grand Swiss and teaching us about one of the newer weapons in his repertoire, the King's Indian Defense!

Sargissian, Gabriel **E90**

Shankland, Samuel L **2626**
FIDE Grand Swiss (4) **2670**
[samsh] 07.09.2025

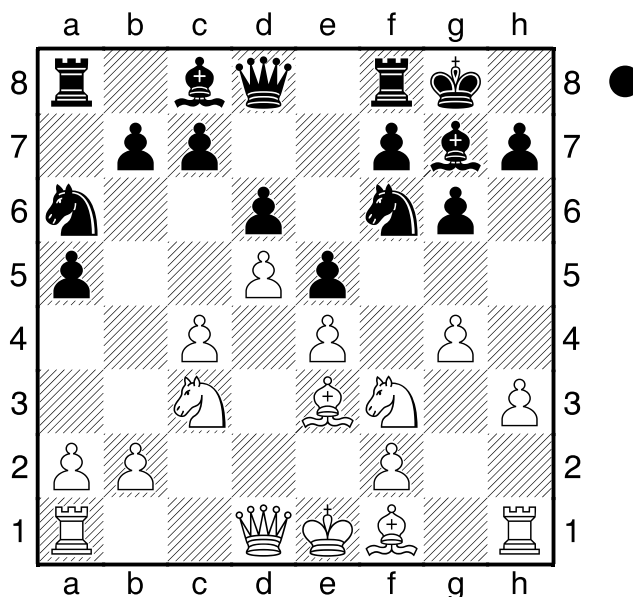
1.d4 Ever since adding the King's Indian to my repertoire, I have really enjoyed playing it. I find that I always get interesting positions, and a much higher proportion of decisive results than I get with any other line. And, my results have been fantastic! A big part of this is preparing well and knowing when to ignore the computer. For the most part, I have done a very good job of that. But, as this tournament shows, I was not perfect by any stretch. I'll be covering my 3 King's Indian games in 3 separate articles, as they all had very unique characteristics. **1...Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 d6 5.Nf3 0-0 6.h3**

This was the first surprise. Sargissian had only ever played Be2 in the past, going for the mainlines. Normally, it can be a bit offputting if your opponent plays something totally new for them that they clearly prepared specifically with you in mind, but I was actually very happy to see this move. In general, I think my repertoire is fairly impervious to computer prep, and this game proved to be no exception. The extra understanding I had of the resulting position helped me score a nice win. **6...e5 7.d5 a5 8.Be3 Na6 9.g4**

(Diagram)

Nd7! This is an important move. Black's ideal setup is to play with Ndc5 instead of Nac5. It will make it much easier to throw f5, and it also makes it easier to throw plans with c6 and Bd7. **10.Rg1**

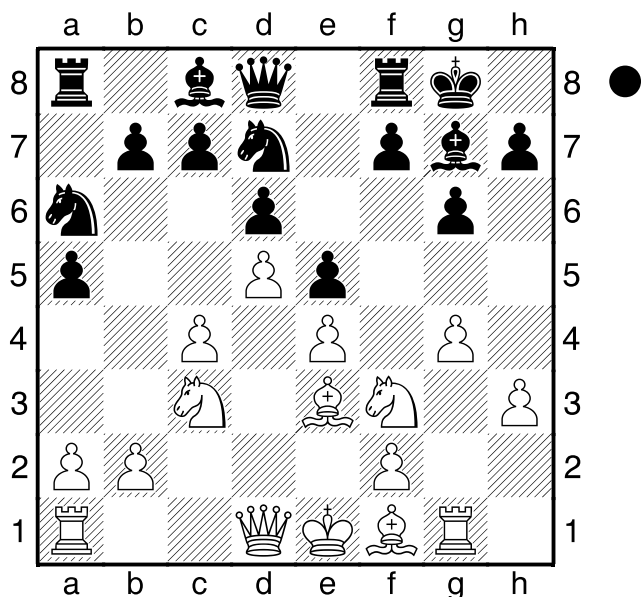
[10.a3 In my opinion, this is White's best move. He is now ready to meet



Ndc5 with b4 directly, and he prevents Black from reaching his ideal coordination. Nac5 11.Rg1 a4! The threat of Nb3 and Ndc5 forces White's knight back. 12.Nd2 Bf6! If Black is able to play Bg5, he should be almost better. This compels White to advance g4-g5 himself. 13.g5 Be7 14.h4 f6 White is a bit better here, but the game goes on. He certainly does not have a direct way to a huge position, and I thought Black should not be in such bad shape in human terms. He has plenty of counterplay and his own long term strategic trumps.]

(Diagram)

My opponent played this move very quickly, indicating he was still in his preparation. It is my computer's top choice, but in terms of human understanding, I think it may have been ill advised. **10...Ndc5!** Black is able to get his ideal setup with Ndc5. **11.h4 c6!** With White opening the kingside and leaving his king in the center, it makes a lot of sense to try to blast open the c-file



and fight on the queenside.

[11...Kh8 I considered this as well, hoping to break with f5 next, but I did not love Black's position. 12.h5 gxh5 13.g5! With Nh4 coming next, I was a bit worried here.]

12.g5

[12.h5 This was the main move I had in my analysis. Bd7 13.Nd2 Rb8 And here Rb8 was my main idea, hoping to play cxd5 next and be ready to throw b5 in case of cxd5 back.]

12...Bd7 13.Nd2 a4

[13...f5 My computer suggested playing a kingside plan here. It's not ridiculous by any stretch, but somehow I was not thrilled with the position after h5. 14.h5 Rf7! Black can't allow h6 to bury the bishop on f8. 15.a3 a4 16.hxg6 hxg6 17.Qe2 Black is very much fine here.

I'm not sure why I disliked this option.]

14.a3 Understandably, White chose to prevent a4-a3.

[14.h5 a3 This would allow me to gain control of the dark squares on the queenside. 15.bxa3 (15.b3 Nb4~~7~~) 15...Qa5 16.Qc1 Rfb8 The machine claims White is better here, but Black's position looks fully

playable to me.]

14...Rb8?! This was not best. I wanted to play cxd5 next and to be able to respond to cxd5 back with b5 directly, but it was a bit too subtle. I could have taken d5 directly.

[14...cxd5! 15.Nxd5 White should take this way, but then I get a fantastic version of the game.

(15.cxd5 This is a mistake, but it was the only move that concerned me.

Qa5! Black stops any hope of Bb5, and is ready for b5 to come next.

16.Nc4 I saw this far and stopped calculating. What I failed to appreciate is that after **Qc7!** White's knight is misplaced on c4. He cannot get the bishop to b5, and I am ready for b5 next.) 15...Ne6]

15.Qc2 cxd5 16.Nxd5

[16.cxd5 b5~~7~~ This would give me exactly what I want. Qa5, Rfc8, and b4 are on the way. White should get crushed on the queenside.]

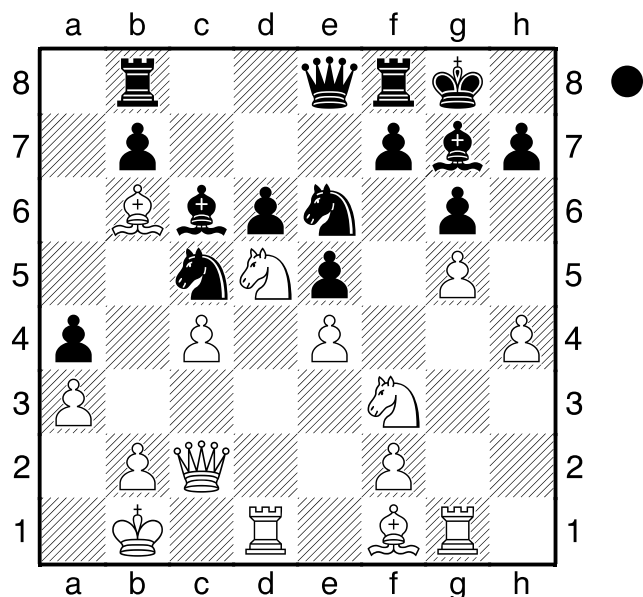
16...Ne6?

[16...Nc7 The computer gave this as better. I saw the move, but I wasn't convinced by Black's position. 17.Bxc5 dxc5 18.0-0-0 (18.Nxc7! This should be preferred, but after **Qxc7** 19.0-0-0 **Bc6=** Black is obviously fine.)

18...Nxd5 19.exd5 This looked a bit skeptical to me. f5 20.gxf6 Qxf6 21.Ne4 Qxh4 22.Bd3 I got a bit spooked by Rh1 and Rdg1 coming, but the machine has nerves of steel and claims Black is better.]

17.Bb6 Of course I had seen this move, but I hadn't really appreciated that the bishop on b6 would be such a great piece. Even with the machine running, it does not make a whole lot of sense to me. **17...Qe8 18.Nf3 Nac5 19.0-0-0 Bc6 20.Kb1**

(Diagram)

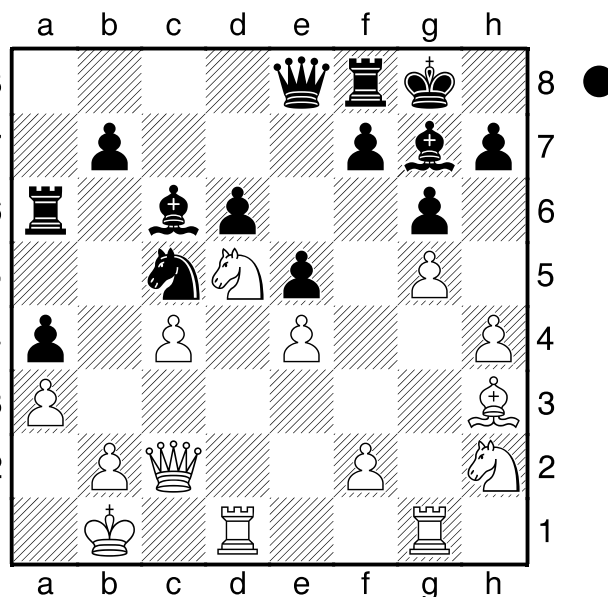


Ra8! This is definitely best, but it also highlights why it was a mistake to play Rb8 all those moves ago. Black lost some time. **21.Bh3?** This missed a chance.

[21.h5! Ra6 22.Bxc5 Nxc5 23.h6! Bh8 This position did not look so bad for Black to me. I thought I can slam f7-f6 against any legal move and break out of the bind, but the machine finds some nice ideas for White, all based around having gotten the pawn to h6. Forcing the bishop to h8, and controlling the g7-square, means that f7-f6 will open the a2-g8 diagonal in a bad way. 24.Ne1! Now that Nd3 is a possibility down the road, Nc7 is a real threat. Bxe4 will not win the queen. Qd8 25.f3 f6 26.Nd3! It turns out all White has to do is get rid of my c5-knight. Then throw c4-c5, and Bc4 will be mate. Nxd3 27.Bxd3 fxe4 28.c5!]

21...Ra6 22.Bxc5 Nxc5 23.Nh2?

[23.h5 Again, the computer wants this one. Rb6 24.h6 Bh8 25.Nd2 Qd8 26.Nxb6 Qxb6 This did not look so bad for me with f7-f6 coming next, but an exchange is an exchange.]



Bringing the knight to f6 is not the right idea. Black rarely gets mated in the King's Indian, White's best chance is to win strategically and prophylactically. In fact, White could have done so by advancing h4-h5-h6 before, not trying to open the kingside, but burying the bishop on h8 and making f7-f6 a non starter. I was very happy to see this move.

23...Rb6! 24.Ng4 Qd8 25.Rge1?

Continuing along the wrong line. Nf6+ is not the right idea.

[25.Nge3=]

[25.Ngf6+? Bxf6 26.Nxf6+

Always examine all checks and

captures. Qxf6! 27.gxf6 Bxe4--

Black wins back the queen, and the game shortly after.]

25...Rb3 26.Ngf6+ Bxf6 Finally I trade off my bad bishop. **27.Nxf6+ Kg7**

28.Bg2

[28.Re3 This was the last chance, but it's not fun for White. Rxe3 29.fxe3 h6]

[28.Bf1 Rf3! Rf4, or even just sacrificing on f6, should finish the game off pretty easily.]

28...Qe7 29.Qd2 It is not a good sign for White that the computer approves this decision. The alternative was sitting and

doing nothing while Black can prepare any number of winning plans. Rb8 and b5 comes to mind, as does Rh8 and h6.

29...Nd3 30.Qxd3 Rxd3 31.Rxd3

White's position is solid for the moment, but it will not hold forever. The second my queen enters the game, his entire kingside will collapse. It took a little effort, but I got her there. **31...b5!**

32.cxb5 Bxb5 33.Rd2 Rb8 34.Rc1

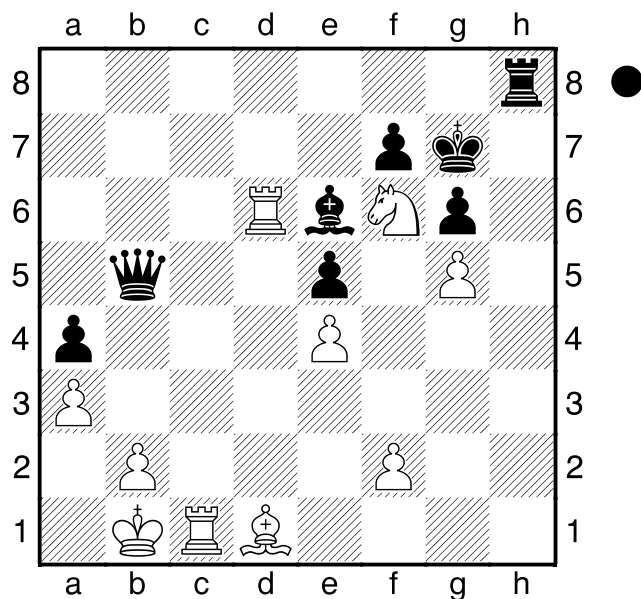
Qb7 35.Rc3 h6 36.Rdc2 Qa6! 37.Kc1

Bd3 38.Rd2 Bc4 39.Bf3 hgx5

40.hxg5 Rh8 It's still not that easy to finish White off, but it can be done.

41.Kb1 Bb3 42.Rc1 Be6 43.Be2 Qb6

44.Bd1 Qb5 45.Rxd6



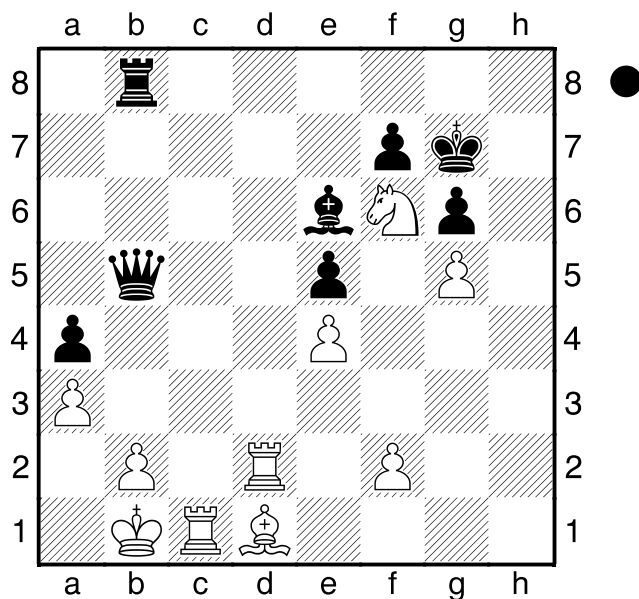
I had done enough preparatory moves, and now it's time to calculate a direct way to get the queen in. There are some pitfalls to avoid, but I managed.

45...Rb8! The first step is to force the rook back to d2.

[45...Qf1? 46.Rxe6! Oops! White immediately makes a draw with a perpetual check. fxe6 47.Rc7+ Kf8 48.Rd7! I can't do a thing about Rd8-d7 coming next.]

46.Rd2

(Diagram)



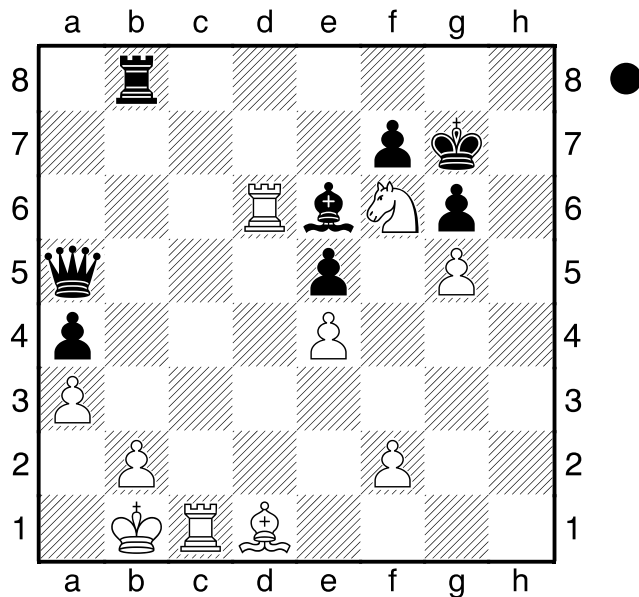
Qa5! Another important move. Black kicks the rook and it does not have a great place to go.

[46...Qf1? 47.Bb3! This would also allow White to escape.]

47.Rd6

[47.Rdc2 Qd8! Bb3 is coming next, or simply Qd3. White can no longer keep the pieces out.]

[47.Re2 Rd8 The machine claims Qd8 is even stronger, but my intended move is quite sufficient. White will not enjoy dealing with Rd2 next.]



47...Qe1! Now that White's rook has left the second rank, this move works like a charm. Bb3 is not a thing. **48.Bxa4**

[48.Bb3 Qxf2 White cannot take on e6 on pain of mate. It's time to resign.]

[48.Rxe6 Qd2! This is an important detail I had to see in advance.

(48...fxe6? 49.Rc7+! Kf8 50.Rd7!

We have seen this before. Nh7-f6 next should make a draw.) 49.Bc2 Qd4!

White is mated.]

48...Qxf2 I earlier wrote that as soon as Black's queen gets in, White will collapse. The queen is in, and the game ended in short order. **49.Bc2 Qe3 50.Rd3 Ba2+ 51.Kxa2 Qxc1 52.Bb3 Qxg5**

I made a couple of poor decision in the middlegame. Rb8 was not great, and Ne6 allowing Bb6 definitely gave him more chances than I had anticipated. At some point, h4-h5-h6 would have been more or less winning, but this was not easy to see or evaluate. King's Indian middlegames often see a lot of mistakes even between very strong players, and this one was no exception. But, I was glad to take the full point in the end. Next up, we will see my next King's Indian game, which did not go as well as this one...

0-1

Educational Chess; How to Grow the Game in the US By Abel Talamantez, IA, LSI, FIDE 100 Best Educator

For the past 4 years, I have worked as the Chess Program Director at Hamilton K-8 School in Novato, CA. It is a Title I public school, with a full-time chess program sponsored by RISE Scholars, Inc., an educational non-profit working in partnership with the school. Our mission is to use chess as an educational tool to provide 21st century skills to students to prepare them to excel and grow academically, logically, and socially. Success for us is seeing kids better prepared to meet the challenges they face every day and especially when they leave Hamilton and go off to high school. In this article, I'd like to share some of the methods and strategies we use to engage kids, and offer some suggestions for chess coaches, educators, and parents on a different way of thinking about chess in schools. This approach to chess, which focuses more on skill building through games rather than competitive play, is the key to growing the game in schools and reaching more kids, particularly those in lower income areas.



Inside the Hamilton K-8 School chess room in Novato, CA

Chess as a Tool to make you Think

I'd like to share some of the ways we use chess at Hamilton. We teach a growth mindset and emphasize the value of grit, but we also need to make learning fun.

1. Homecoming Chess

This is a fun game that can be used for all levels of students. The pieces in the back row are mixed up, and you don't use any pawns. The setup looks like this:



With white moving first, the goal is to get all the pieces back to the original starting position. The winner is the player that can do this first.

Rules:

- There are no captures
- Pieces cannot move past the middle of the board. For example, white pieces cannot move past the 4th rank, black pieces cannot move past the 5th rank.

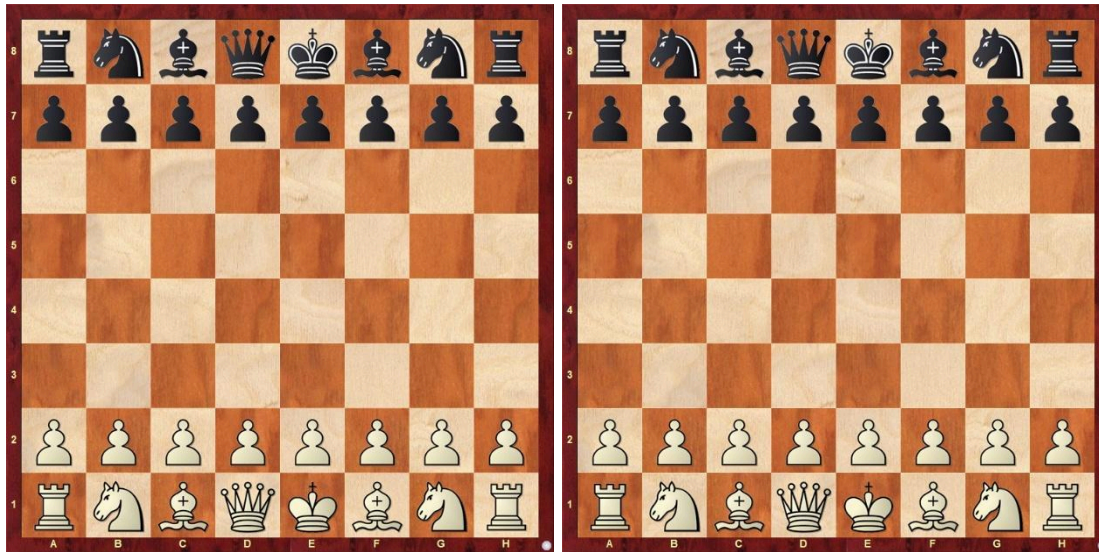


Homecoming chess is a great way for players to play a quick game that involves much more strategy than meets the eye.

This is a great mini-game kids can play once they know the piece movements. We usually use this as a short warm up during our lunch sessions for new students, but this is also a great game to play among skilled players as there are a lot of strategies involved in arranging the pieces in the optimal way to finish faster than the opponent. Try it out in your class!

2. Super Chess

This is a team chess variant created by kids at Hamilton. The setup looks like this:



This is a 2-player team variant with teammates sitting next to each other playing the same color.

Rules:

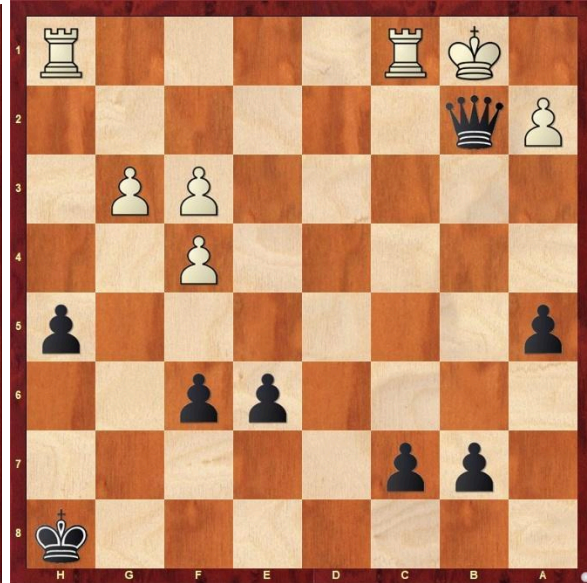
- The boards are connected to make one big 128 square board. Pieces can move freely across the two boards, but if a piece goes to a teammates board, they control the piece.
- Only one king needs to be checkmated.
- Teammates can communicate with each other on strategy

This is a great strategic game and a lot of fun. It has all the team elements of bughouse and it teaches the students to really think abstractly across two boards.

For example, a match could arrive at the following position:



Board 1



Board 2

The black team has won this game because the black queen has checkmated the white king on board 2 at b2, protected by the black rook on board 1 at d2. This game provides another team variant that can be played that makes it fun and fosters communication and visualization skills.

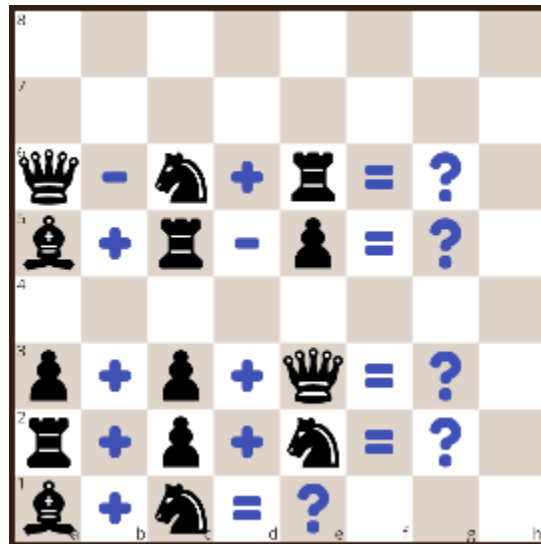


The kids at Hamilton love the team aspect of Super Chess, which also inspires communication and spatial strategy.

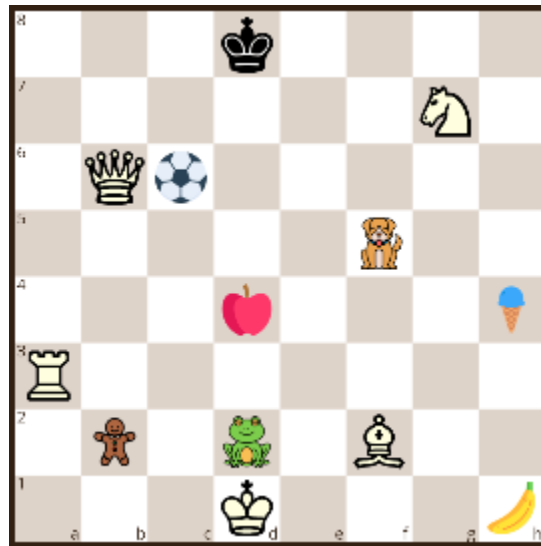
The beauty of this is that the creation came from the students themselves. Building on the 21st century skills we aim to teach, the students applied well-known concepts to create something new.

3. Spatial and math learning with LogiqBoard

We introduce 2nd and 3rd graders to the game in our open lunch class, but these sessions run about 35 minutes. We need an activity that can be done in a short time but also gives a chance for students to apply their chess learning to other academic areas. Here are a couple of examples using a great online tool called LogiqBoard:



Building on knowledge of the piece values, we can create exercise like this to build math skills. LogiqBoard is a must have tool for coaches, because you can create many age and skill appropriate exercises that make the board fun for learning. Here is a perfect example:



The tool allows coaches to place many different images to make the board look fun. In this exercise, I'd ask students to tell me what items each piece can capture. Which piece cannot capture anything? Which fruit cannot be captured? These exercises are great for new and younger students. Check it out here: [LogiqBoard](#)

I serve on the FIDE Chess in Education Commission, which over the last few years has made a demonstrable effort to spread the message around the world about the value of educational chess. The ideas and tools are many, but what is most important is changing the mindset that all chess in schools must have a competitive component and kids must learn tactics and mates or they are not learning. I argue that the educational chess approach builds culture and community within a school and makes chess fun and engaging for the great many students that enjoy playing recreationally but may not be interested in competitive chess. In my almost four years at Hamilton (where I estimate 85% of kids out of 700 students at least know how to play chess), some of the best moments have been seeing kids that are not part of our competitive team come in during lunch to socialize with friends and play a game of chess, and continue to do this over several years. If coaches incorporated these types of tools and games in their school programs, they could add more depth to their teaching approach and make chess fun for the kids that love to play and learn.



Keeping it fun for the kids is the key to keeping them engaged long term.

Click on these resources to learn more about the FIDE EDU Commission and other helpful resources for chess educators:

[FIDE EDU](#)

[LogiqBoard](#)

[ECU Education Commission - EDU Commission](#)

Remembering Lombardy

By Renate Otterbach

Sometimes a person has a profound effect on us. For me, Lombardy was such a person. Although I knew him only for a short time, I often reflect on what he told me. These reflections have shaped my perspective on the game of chess.

One of the conversations I often replayed in my mind took place during an Imre Koenig tournament. It was a two-day grandmaster round robin event, and lunch was provided. The players and most of the spectators had returned to the playing hall. I was cleaning up while Lombardy finished his dessert.

This was the ideal opportunity to seek expert advice on how to study chess effectively. I had tried different approaches and was struggling to find a systematic way of studying chess; most of the advice I received did not work for me. A different approach was needed, but what was it?

I approached Lombardy and asked him. He motioned me to sit down and then studied me. It was clear that he was trying to determine the best approach for me.

Finally, he said, "I think the best way for you would be to spend 10 minutes each day and go through as many games as you can."

I laughed. "It takes me hours to go through one game," I replied. "I need to analyze it or I do not understand it."

"Don't analyze, just go through the games," he reiterated.

"I can't do that," I replied. "I won't understand."

Lombardy leaned back on his chair and studied me thoughtfully.

"When you listen to music, do you analyze it?" He finally asked.

"Well... no," I replied, confused, trying to remember when I listened to music. I mostly listen to songs, and "yes," I analyze the words, but the music?

Lombardy smiled – "don't think, just absorb". (I am not sure if these are the actual words or if they were spoken, but it was clear to me that this is what he meant.)

I tried, but it didn't seem to work for me, so I forgot about it. However, about a year ago, I decided that I really needed to learn notation. I became aware that trying to notate games was more difficult for me than reading the position on the board. It was seriously interfering with my ability to play chess. So, I decided to revisit Lombardy's advice. To play through games without analysis, with the sole goal of reading the moves, executing them, and then notating them.

I was shocked. I realized that I read one move, played a different move, and wrote down a different move—something like reading c4, playing e4, and notating d4. The problem was much more serious than I had thought. So, I

decided to break the task into two parts: the first part was to go through games, play them on the board. The goal was simple: to complete a whole game without error. Once I had mastered this, my next goal was to notate the games.

I soon discovered that this was an extremely difficult task for me. I realized that I soon lost my place in the game and would make mistakes. There were many reasons for this, but one main culprit was my tendency to shift into analysis. I realized that Lombardy was right; analysis did interfere. So, I decided to focus on this aspect of chess.

I also remembered from Lombardy's writing that he attributed his chess progress to having gone through 2,000 games. He pointed out that it took him a long time, as he had to play them on the board. I decided to follow his example and started with Lombardy's games. I have finished about 200 of them. Interestingly, I seem to understand them. Sometimes my hand freezes and refuses to continue. When I study the position, I often realize that there is something that does not make sense. In cases like this, I check the position on the computer and try to find out the tactic I missed. But first, I mark the position on the game sheet, so I know where I left off.

I realized that I was running my analysis in the background, even though I was concentrating on following the game. Over time, I started to remember move sequences, especially action sequences and forced moves. When I played my next OTB game, I realized I was notating the moves nearly automatically, and I began to notice if my notation didn't make sense.

So, who was right? We both were, I think. I need to analyze to understand the positions. I discovered that most people are able to "see" images in their minds. I am unable to see any images. My understanding of chess is based more on propositional logic, or, as Paul Whitehead once said, it is grounded in mathematics. Yet, over time and with a lot of practice, I have developed a feel for the pieces.

Yet, I needed Lombardy's insight to help me overcome analysis paralysis and to focus on one move at a time. So, see what is actually on the board, here and now.

Thank you, Lombardy, I miss you.

Announcing our Tournament Advisory Group

By IA/NTD Dr. Judit Sztaray

We're excited to invite players to join our new **Tournament Advisory Group**.

This group will focus on discussing tournament formats, start times, and playing conditions — all with the goal of making our events better and more enjoyable for everyone. The group will be led by Judit Sztaray, with other staff members joining occasionally as needed.

We are looking for 2–3 players from each of the following rating sections: U1200, 1200–1599, 1600–1999, and 2000+, as well as parents of scholastic players to represent the needs of younger participants.

Meetings will be held via Zoom, approximately once per quarter, on Thursday evenings, lasting 1 to 1.5 hours, with an agenda shared in advance. Occasional email discussions may also take place between meetings.

If you're passionate about tournaments and want to help shape the player experience, we'd love to have you involved! Please fill out the [Google Form by Oct 25](#) for initial consideration. We hope to get started in early November.

Annotated Games from the TNM

By IM Elliott Winslow

A selection of annotated games from the Silman TNM annotated by IM Elliott Winslow. All the games from the current TNM can be found here, and games from previous TNMs are in the [Tournament Archive](#).

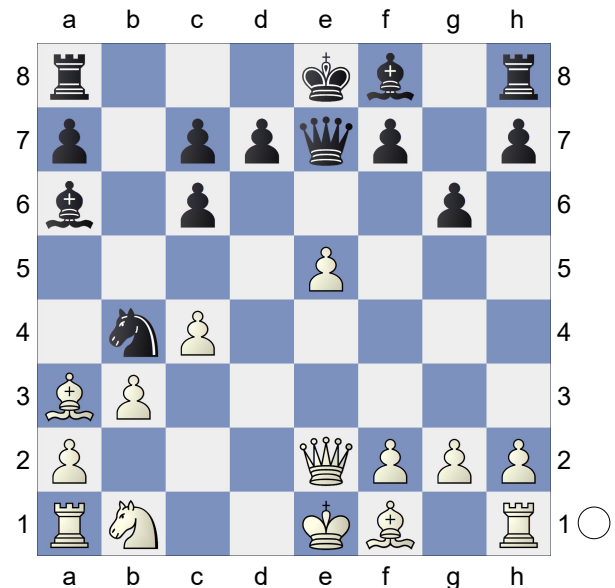
Viadiu, Hector **C45**
1926
 Coyne, Theodore James **2239**
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (1.1) 02.09.2025
[Winslow, Elliott]

There is one round left in the 2025 Fall Tuesday Night Marathon, with more or less drama depending on the section! In the 2000+ section, Theo Coyne has already wrapped up first with a perfect 6-0; what drama there is depends on ... *me* in clear 2nd with 4.5. And there is quite a collection tied for 3rd-7th: Senthilkumar, Bambou, Zavgorodniy, Melville and Parsons. They're all hoping I screw up while they win, thus tying for 2nd-3rd or so. **1.e4 2:08:36 e5 7 2.Nf3 7 Nc6 4 3.d4 14 exd4 6 4.Nxd4 8 Nf6 7 5.Nxc6 58 bxc6 6 6.e5 55 Qe7 8 7.Qe2 2:42 Nd5 7 8.c4 3:42** So: let's look at some Theo games. :-) He knows quite a bit of theory: wait til you see his latest game! But here, he readily heads into the jungle of the Scotch Game with both players playing Q-K2 (old-school notation); while I've been typing, Stockfish 17.1 makes both moves for Black "0.00" already (d35). But "it's complicated." **8...Ba6 10**

[8...Nb6 9.Nc3 lets White develop a bit more smoothly than he deserves, but SF thinks Black is fine.]
9.b3 2:03 g6 44 Silicon and Carbon alike have settled on this as "correct" (but there are plenty of alternatives).
10.Ba3 3:41

[10.Bb2 Bg7 11.g3 (of course: double fianchetto!) and the two main moves are castles and castles. 0-0-0 (gotta choose one of them to continue) 12.Bg2 Rde8 13.0-0 Bxe5 14.Bxe5 Qxe5 15.Qxe5 Rxe5 16.cxd5 Bxf1 17.Kxf1 cxd5 18.f4 Re3 19.Bxd5= and the "0.00"s are

starting to show up.]
10...Nb4 38
 [Black invites 10...Qxa3!? but if anyone is favored it's White: 11.Nxa3 Bb4+ 12.Qd2! Bxd2+ 13.Kxd2 Nb4 14.Kc3 c5 15.Nb5 when 15...Kd8 looks a bit better than taking, and in a "typical" atypical position in this line of the Scotch Game, White has a bit of an advantage, development or not.]



11.f4?! 15:58 And here we lose the top-echeloners, and there were a few (2700s even).

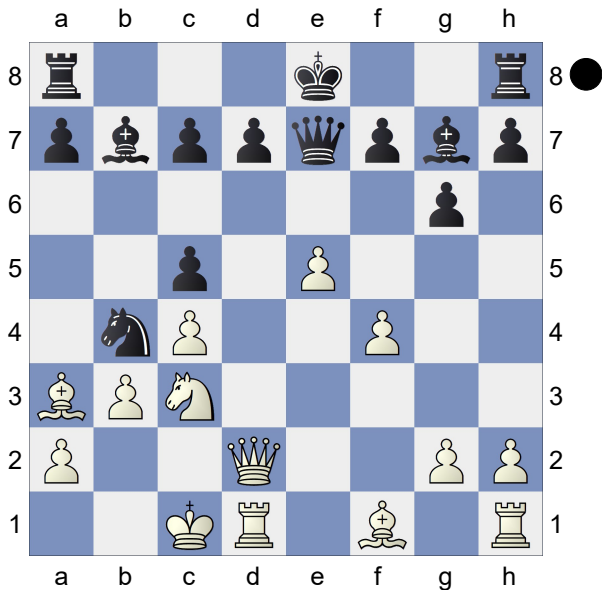
[11.Bb2 is by far the main move, especially used by Xiong Bg7 12.a3 Nd5 13.Nd2 0-0 14.0-0-0= and eventually Black settles for ... Nb6 which he could have done half a game ago.]
11...Bg7 9:50
 [♖11...d5!♟ is a sort of missed shot, when 12.Nc3!? 0-0-0 13.0-0-0 Nd3+! 14.Rxd3 Qxa3+ 15.Qb2 Qa5 and I'd be baffled during a game, but Stockfish has Black doing pretty well. -0.73/d30. 16.Nb1! (had to include *that*)]

12.Qd2 1:11 c5 1:35 13.Nc3 5:07

Finally! **13...Bb7** **20:14**

[13...0-0 14.0-0-0 Bb7 15.Qxd7 Qh4
16.g3 Qh6 (-0.36/d28) Black stays
ever so slightly on top, through
various tactics 17.Bxb4 cxb4 18.Nd5
Bxe5 19.Bg2 Bxd5 20.Rxd5 Bd6
21.Rxd6 cxd6 22.Bxa8 Rxa8
23.Qxd6 Qg7 24.Kb1 a5 25.Rd1
Qc3 26.Qd4 Qxd4 27.Rxd4 Kg7
28.Rd5 Kf6 29.Re5 h6 30.a3 g5
31.axb4 axb4 32.Rb5 gxf4 33.gxf4
Re8 34.Rxb4 Kf5 35.c5 h5 36.c6
Rc8 37.Rc4 Ke6 38.Kc2 Kd6
39.Kc3 Kc7 40.Kd4 Re8 41.h4 Re1
42.f5 f6 43.b4 Re5 44.Rc5 Re1
45.b5 Rd1+ 1-0 (45) Daroczi,D
(1699)-Kovacs,R (2064) Hungary
2017]

14.0-0-0 **5:49**



Rd8N **12:43** (that game went 14...0-0)

15.Bxb4 **29:43**

[sf 17.1 has a nice line: 15.Bb2! 0-0!
16.a3 d5!! 17.axb4 dxc4 18.Qc2
cxb3 19.Qxb3 cxb4= 0.00/d23]

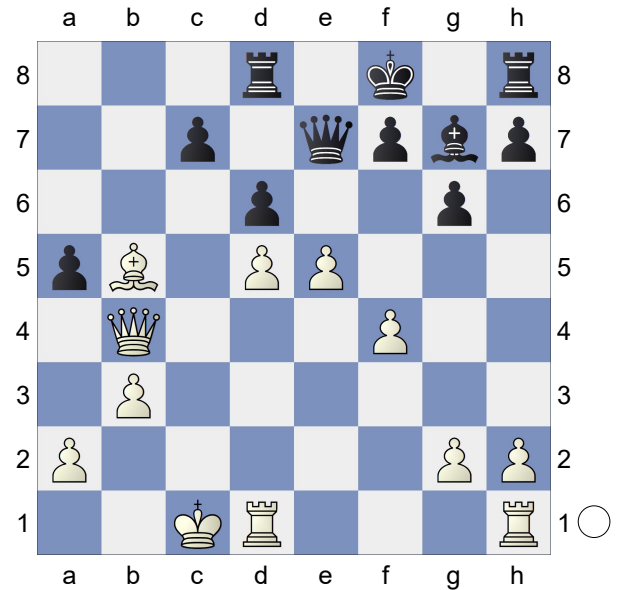
15...cxb4 **11** **16.Nd5** **36** **Bxd5** **58**

17.cxd5 **41** **d6** **11:07** **18.Bb5+** **40** **Kf8** **9**

-0.15/d30 **19.Qxb4** **12:02** **a5!?** **1:37**

[19...dxe5 20.Qxe7+ Kxe7 21.fxe5
Bxe5 might be, objectively, the better
line. If you and your opponent are

computers...]

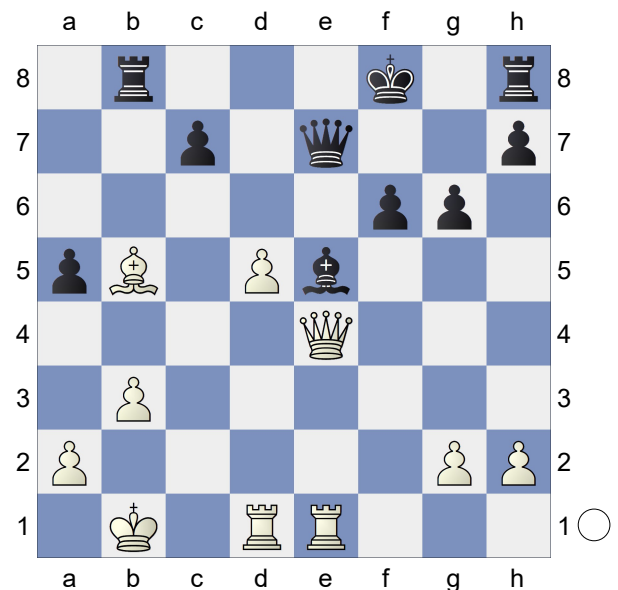


20.Qe4?! **4:21**

[20.Qxa5 dxe5 21.Rhe1! e4 22.Bc6
Qf6 23.Qa3+ Kg8 24.Rxe4=
forces Black to take the perp.]

20...dxe5 **35** **21.fxe5** **17** **Bxe5** **1:05**

22.Kb1 **30** **Rb8** **2:01** **23.Rhe1** **2:30** **f6**
29

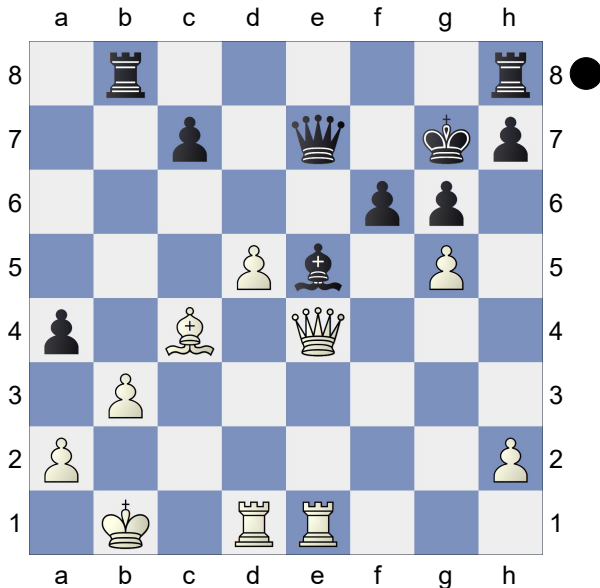


24.Bc4?? **1:19** Here Viadiu loses the
way. The combination of long diagonal
and a-file *will* be fatal. Hector was
down to 7 minutes now and the danger
didn't register.

[24.Qc4 h5 25.h4 Rh7 26.a4

keeps the lid closed.]

24...a4-+ 1:01 25.g4 3:23 Kg7 10:31
Even after this long think, Theo still had
26 minutes. **26.g5 50**



Qa3?! 20 Significantly inaccurate -- but
for White scary, which could matter
more.

[26...Rhe8-+]

27.gxf6+?! 1:22

[27.Qc2 7]

27...Bxf6 6 28.Qc2 19 Rb6?! 4:59

[28...axb3 29.Bxb3 Rhf8!-+ 30.Re6
(30.Qxc7+? Kh8 31.Qc2 Rfc8
and ...Rxb3+) 30...Kh8 31.Re3]
[or immediately 28...Rhf8-+]

29.Re6 8 Rhb8 58

[29...Rf8!]

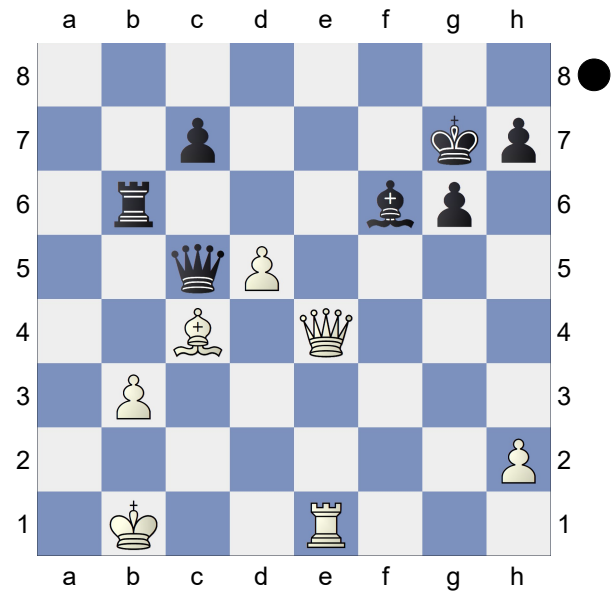
**30.Rxb6 28 Rxb6 14 31.Re1 53 Qc5
1:29** (...Qd4 is the next move, I'm
surprised White can't play the queen to
d3.) **32.Qe4 1:12**

[32.Qd3 Qf2 Oh. 33.Re2 (33.Qe2
Qd4) 33...Qg1+ 34.Kc2 Qa1
Ouch. Note Black didn't trade pawns
on b3.]

32...axb3 32 33.axb3 32

(Diagram)

Qa3 1:24 "Second best!" notes



Stockfish:

[33...Rxb3+! 34.Bxb3 Qc3
was its flash finish. I think it's
because it spots mate -- in 34, and
after 35.Qe7+ -- and so the forcing
line gets the nod. It's not seeing a
mate with the move Theo played,
even after a minute.]

34.Kc2 6 (It's "only" -3.98/d21 and
holding. **34...Qb2+ 41**

[34...Rb8 heading -- again! -- for f8
(or d8 or a8).]

35.Kd3 6

[Δ35.Kd1]

35...Qxh2 1:56

[35...Rb8! Wants in via a8.]

36.Rh1 1:06 Viadiu is down to two and a
half minutes, so defense is going to be
inaccurate.

[36.Re2]

[36.Qe2]

36...Qg3+ 1:18 37.Qe3 4 Qxe3+ 57

38.Kxe3 Two connected passed pawns
will brush away any bishops of opposite
color issues. **38...h5 25 39.Ke4 24 Rb8
30 40.Rh2 52 Kh6 33 41.Re2 48 Rf8
1:03**

[41...Re8+ wins too]

["best" is 41...Be7! stomping into d6.
Attack and Defense.]

42.b4 21 g5 38 43.b5 1:37 g4 28

44.Kf4 1:17

[44.d6!?!-+ with their own passed pawn is a good principle, but insufficient here.]

44...Bd4+ 1:10 45.Kg3 9 Kg5 46

46.Re7 33 h4+ 35 mate in sight (#10)

47.Kg2 28 h3+ 56 48.Kh2 40 Rf2+ 19

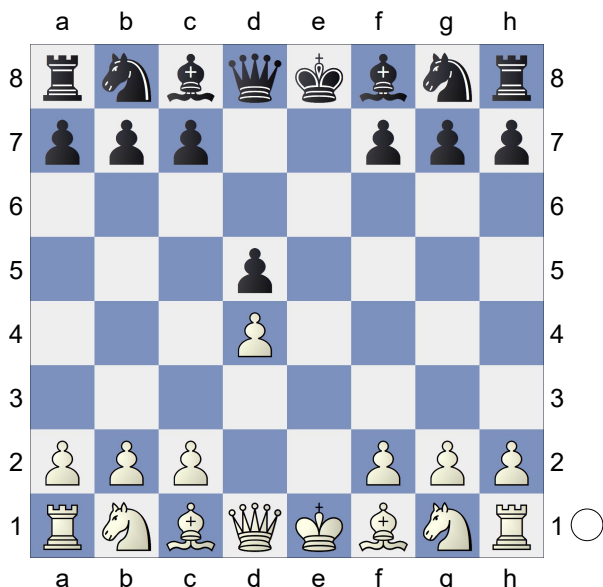
49.Kh1 2 g3 13 50.Re4 42 Rh2# 6

This Round 1 game showed Coyne's hallmarks of close to flawless opening play, and combative middlegame handling.

0-1

Coyne, Theodore James **C01**
2239
 Walder, Michael **1979**
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (2.1) 09.09.2025
[TA/Winslow, Elliott]

1.d4 3 e6 34 Proto-Nimzo with 2.c4
 Bb4+!? 2.e4 45 No! A French! 2...d5 7
 3.exd5 8 exd5 16

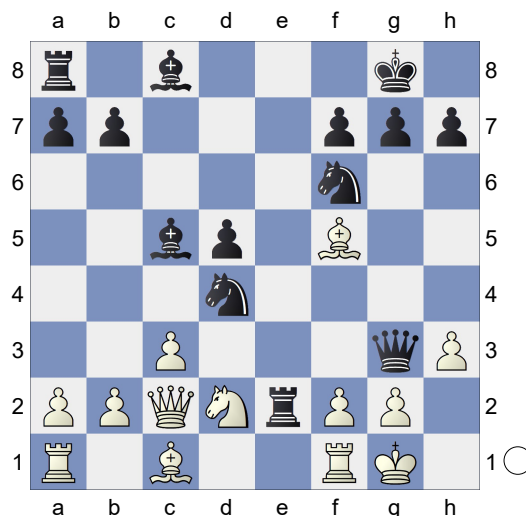


This is one reason to not play the French! But it's not as bad as all that. Black does have to stay alert, as it's not going to be "business as usual." And either player can push their queen

bishop pawn two squares. I did this against Hayk Manvelyan in a TNM years ago and won, despite my usual less than stellar result from the opening.

4.Nf3 5

[I can't help but give the (few) moves to Tatai-Korchnoi, Beersheba 1978, whenever I can: 4.Bd3 c5 5.Nf3 Nc6 6.Qe2+ Be7 7.dxc5 Nf6 8.h3 0-0 9.0-0 Bxc5 10.c3 Re8 11.Qc2 Qd6 12.Nbd2 Qg3 13.Bf5 Re2 14.Nd4 Nxd4



0-1, Tatai, S (2455)-Kortschnoj, V (2665) Beersheba 1978]

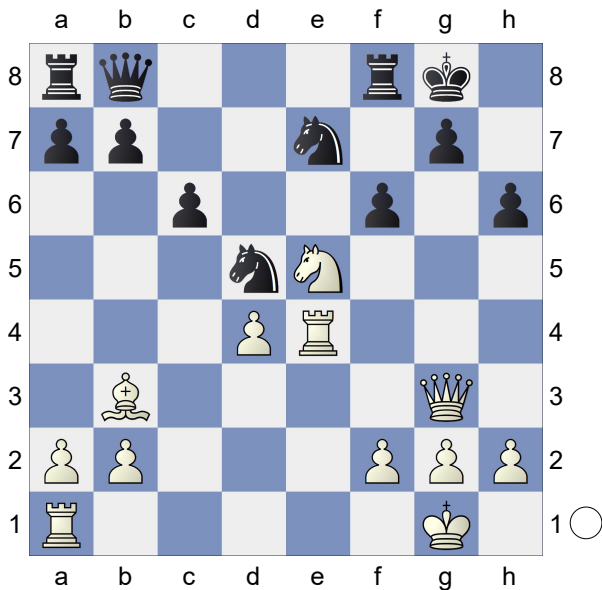
4...Bd6 1:57 5.c4 10 As in the above gamelet, the c-pawn push; the bishop on d6/d3 is a sort of bonus, since it might want to be on e7 (or b4!) now. 5...c6 31
 The waiting game, to win a tempo. 6.Nc3 30 Ne7 1:23 7.Bd3 43 dxc4 2:07
 8.Bxc4 5 0-0 1:22 9.0-0 1:15 Bf5 9:26
 10.Re1 8:51 Nd7 3:36 11.Ne4?!N 0.15/29 5:14

[11.Bg5 Nb6 12.Bb3 Kh8 13.Bxe7 Bxe7 14.Ne5 Bg6 15.Qg4 Bf6 16.Rad1 Qc8 17.Qf4 1-0 (46) Pap, G (2432)-Bora, S (2476) Budapest 2023]
 [11.Nh4!± 0.57/31 Bg6 12.Nxg6 sees White with more of a plus than after, say, 1.e4. (12.Bg5)]

11...Bb4 1:47

[11...Nb6! 12.Bb3 Nbd5=]

12.Bd2± 1:58 Bxd2 7:56 13.Qxd2 29 Nb6 16 14.Bb3 43 Nbd5 1:32 15.Qg5 13:16 This shouldn't work. 15...h6 8:51 16.Qg3 2:23 Bxe4 6:14 this is fine, as were others 17.Rxe4 53 Qb8 4:16 This is less fine; [17...a5 18.Rae1 Nf5 and 19...Nd6 is close to completely equal.] 18.Ne5± 17:10 f6? 2.74/26 9:49 Losing right away. [Black should try 18...Nf6± 0.54/31]



19.Nxc6!+- 8:34 Not only does White win a pawn, it comes with a built-in queen trade (if White wants it). 19...bxc6 8:05

[19...Nxc6 20.Bxd5+]

20.Rxe7 35

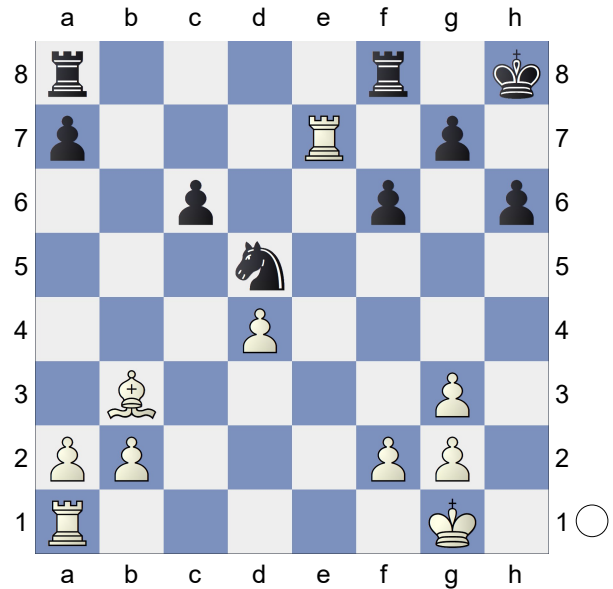
[Actually not a queen exchange:

20.Qxb8?? Raxb8 21.Rxe7 Rxb3-+]

20...Qxg3 1:14 In fact it's Black thinking it's the best try to hold. 21.hxg3 15 Kh8 1:13

(Diagram)

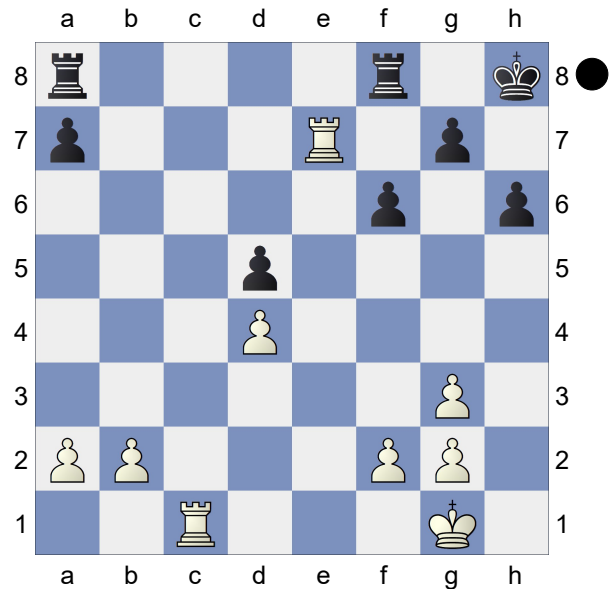
22.Bxd5?! 1:25 In fact dropping quite a bit of the advantage but it's still in the "win zone." The trade in itself makes sense, dealing with the threat to the



rook and removing that great knight, but now there is exposure on the b-file -- and it could have been done anyway.

[22.Re6! is best, almost +4 acc. to Stockfish.]

22...cxd5 7 23.Rc1 4:26

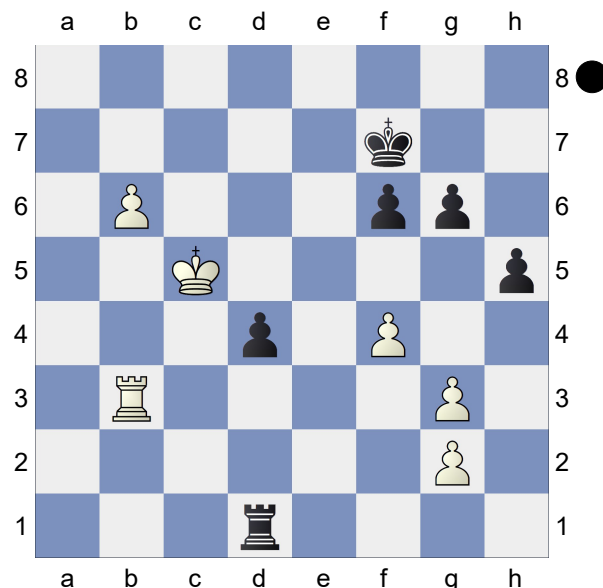


White does have a couple other plusses (not to mention that extra pawn!): 7th rank threats, three pawns to threaten. If Coyne knew for sure this was a routine win, then the four rook ending would be a fine way to go. I'm iffy on it. Stockfish sides with Theo. +2.37/d20, +3.34/d25 23...Rfe8 39 24.Rxe8+ 2:43 Fine, but not "technique."

[24.Rcc7 Rxe7 25.Rxe7 a5 26.b3
is a whole move up, in effect.]
[24.Rd7! Re2 25.Rcc7 Rg8 26.Rxa7
Rxb2 27.a4 will be *two* pawns (and
the 7th rank).]
24...Rxe8 5 KR-KR. White is a pawn up.
25.Kf1 1:03 Prevents Re2. 25...Rb8 1:33
26.b3 2:02 Rb4 24 27.Rd1 2:21
[27.Rc7]
27...a5 23 28.Ke2 1:20 a4 6:04 29.Rd3
6
[29.Kd3! axb3 30.Kc3]
29...axb3 54 30.axb3 5 Kg8 32 31.Kd2
14 Kf7 48 32.Kc3 21 Rb8 59 33.Re3
2:19 Rc8+ 1:12 34.Kb4 10
[34.Kb2]
34...Rc2 21 35.f4?! 0.94/23 6
[Less strong is 35.Rf3 Ke6=]
[35.Ka3! and push.]
35...h5? 4.87/20 1:12
[35...g5!± 0.94/23 is more resistant.]
36.Kb5 2.78/24 55
[36.Ka5! 4.87/20 Ra2+ 37.Kb6]
36...g6? 5.30/22 54
[36...Kg6 2.78/24 37.b4 Kf5
38.Ka5+- still winning though]
37.Kb6 1:36
[37.Ka5!]
37...Rc1 1:28 38.b4 47 Rc4 20 39.b5
21 Rxd4 19 40.Kc5 1:06 Rd1 2:58
41.b6 4:51 d4 15 42.Rb3 41

(Diagram)

d3 9 43.Kd4 55 d2 1:10 44.Kd3 16
Rc1 17 45.Kxd2 6 Rc8 4 46.Kd3 2:11
Ke6 3:22 47.b7 1:16 Rb8 17 48.Ke4
1:53 f5+ 9:30 49.Kd4 7 Threatening
mate with Rb6+. 49...Kd6 16 50.Rb6+
21 Kc7 4 51.Kc5 2:19 Rxb7 2:23
52.Rxb7+ 5 Kxb7 13 53.Kd6 3
Weighted Error Value: White=0.29/
Black=0.75. Hardly flawless but well
within range to cash in after Black's fatal



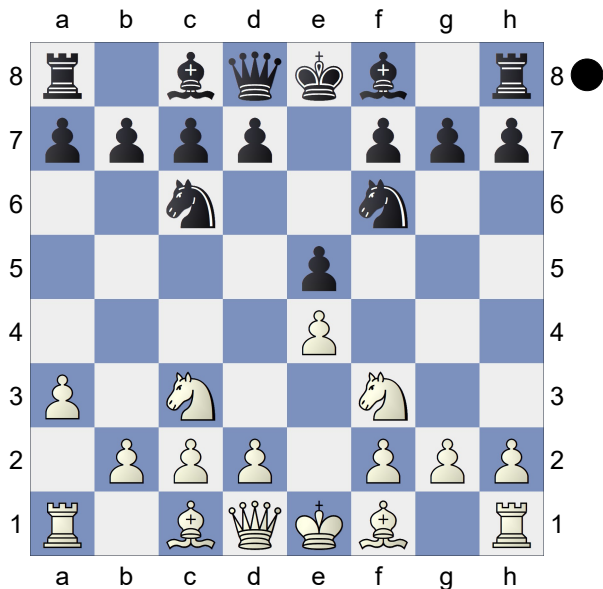
slip on move 18.
1-0

C47
□ **Bambou, Christophe** **2116**
■ **Coyne, Theodore James** **2239**
2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (3.1) 16.09.2025
[TA/Winslow, Elliott]

Bambou essays a recently revived
strategy, "Playing Black as White."
Coyne handles classically, leans toward a
somewhat favorable ending, and ends
up outplaying Bambou in Bishop vs.
Knight. Once again, worthwhile strategy,
worth studying. **1.e4 11 e5 6 2.Nf3 8**
[2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Qh5 Nd6
5.Bb3 Nc6 6.Nb5]
2...Nc6 5 3.Nc3 12 Nf6 7 4.a3 38
[4.d4 exd4 5.Nxd4 Bb4]

(Diagram)

When I first saw this move a few years
ago, after the initial laughter had died
down, I realized how many double king-
pawn openings have Bb5 (or Nb5) in
them as an important move. Now, with



colors reversed, that b4 square isn't available. The line that especially amused me (more laughter) was 1.e4 e5 2.Nc3 Nf6 3.Bc4 Nxe4 4.Qh5 Nd6 5.Bb3 Nc6 6.Nb5!, the Weaver Adams line. Of course there are other moves available...

4...d5 1:05 5.Bb5 11 Nxe4 6

[5...d4 6.Ne2 Bd6 7.c3 dxc3 8.d4 Nxe4 9.d5 a6 10.Ba4 Bc5 11.0-0 b5 12.Bc2 Nxf2 13.Rxf2 Bxf2+ 14.Kxf2 cxb2 15.Bxb2 Ne7 16.Nxe5 0-0 17.Nd4 Qxd5 18.Ndc6 Qe6 19.Nxe7+ Qxe7 20.Qd3 g6 21.Re1 Qh4+ 22.Kf1 Bf5 23.Qc3 Bxc2 24.Qxc2 Rae8 25.g3 Qh3+ 26.Kg1 f6 27.Nf3 Rxe1+ 28.Nxe1 Qe6 29.Nf3 Rf7 30.Kf2 Rd7 31.Bd4 Kf7 32.h4 Qc4 33.Qxc4+ bxc4 34.Ke3 c5 35.Bxc5 Rd3+ 36.Ke2 Ke6 37.Bb4 Kd5 38.g4 Rb3 39.g5 f5 40.Nd2 Rh3 41.Nf3 f4 42.Ba5 Ke4 43.Nd2+ Kf5 44.Nxc4 Rxh4 45.Nd6+ Kg4 46.Ne8 Rh2+ 47.Kd3 Rh3+ 48.Kd4 Rxa3 49.Bd8 f3 50.Nf6+ Kf5 51.Nd5 f2 52.Be7 Ra4+ 53.Kc3 Re4 54.Bc5 f1Q 55.Ne3+ Rxe3+ 56.Bxe3 Qf3 57.Kd4 Qe4+ 58.Kc3 Qxe3+ 59.Kc4 Qxg5 60.Kd5 h5 61.Kc6 h4 62.Kb6 h3 63.Ka5 Qf6 64.Ka4 Qc6+ 65.Ka3 Qb5 66.Ka2

h2 67.Ka1 h1Q+ 68.Ka2 Qhb1+ 69.Ka3 Qa5# 0-1 (69) Guseinov,G (2665)-Sarana,A (2649) Chess.com INT 2021]

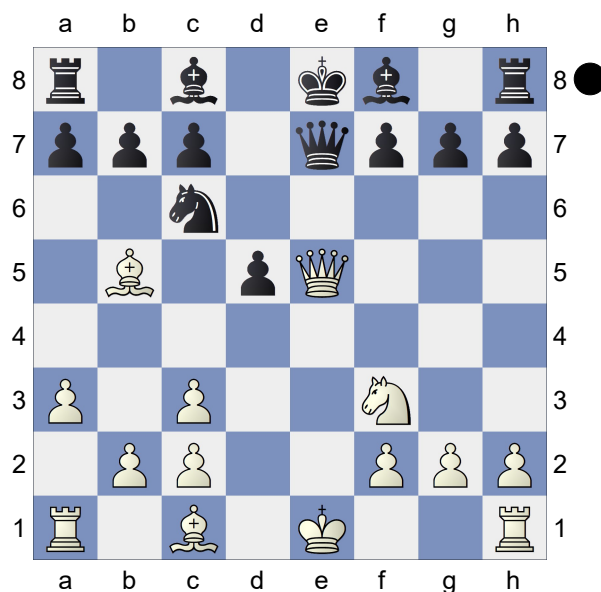
6.Qe2 17 Nxc3 11

[6...Qd6 7.Nxe4 dxe4 8.Qxe4 Bd7]

7.Qxe5+ 13 Qe7! 8 scores better than

7...Be7. 8.dxc3 15

[8.Qxe7+ simplifies Bxe7 9.dxc3 Bd7 10.Be3]



Threatening Be3, keeping queens on -- but seriously, not much to go on. In any case, this clump of queenside pawns, while recently popular in the Petroff Defense (well, not so recent! It's been going on like crazy since the 1980s), has its flaws. Not so much that the pawns are doubled, but that they aren't really resilient. **8...Bd7 1:06 9.Qxe7+ 12**

Bxe7 1:08 10.Bf4 19 0-0-0 35 11.0-0-0 15 a6 5:00 12.Bxc6 56

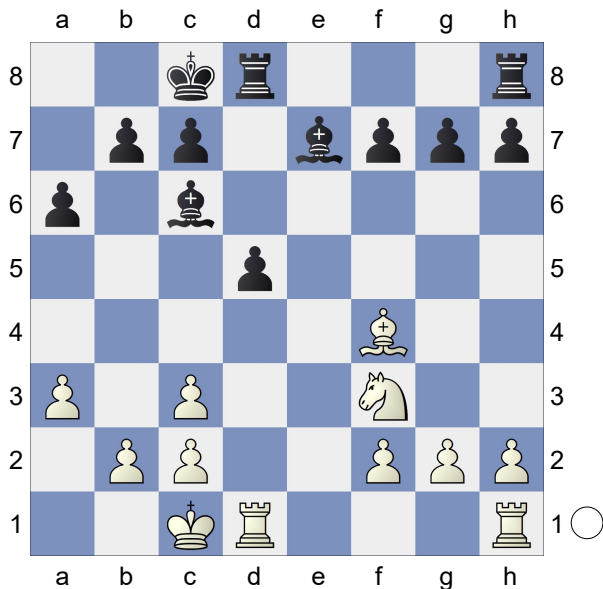
[12.Be2]

12...Bxc6 8

(Diagram)

13.Ne5N 14

[Predecessor: 13.Rhe1 Bd6 14.Bxd6 Rxd6 15.Ne5 Rf6 16.f3 Rd8 17.h4



Be8 18.h5 h6 19.Rd4 ½-½ (34) Tari,
A (2672)-Deac,B (2692) Chess.com
INT 2022]

13...Be8 18:05

[13...Bb5]

14.Rhe1 40 Bf8 1:15 15.h3 19:13 f6

4:16 16.Nd3 4:20 Bf7 2:19

Now we might see Steinitz's "Knight
Restriction" method. In fact in the game
that happened White had a great chance
to blow up Steinitz's kingside, good for a
draw, but avoided or missed it and went
on to lose. **17.Re2 8:08 Re8 5:43**

"TA" gives "Black is weak on the dark
squares" -- well, he might be after ...c6.

18.Rxe8+ 3:56 Bxe8 5 19.Nb4 6:46 c6

1:29 20.Re1 2:42 Bf7 10:54 21.Nd3

1:07 Kd7 2:28 22.Be3 42 Bd6 18

23.Bc5 7:27 Re8 1:21 24.Rxe8 13

Bxe8 5 Okay, so this is nothing for Black
(in fact, White is if not just equal, better).

25.Bxd6?! 17 Kxd6 6 You'd think

trading off one of Black's two bishops
would be a good thing, but the pressure
remains: it's a little uncomfortable. **26.b4**

5:45 b6 24 27.Kd2 23 c5 -0.08/56 53

The TA evals are often quite a bit off
compared to in depth looks, but for
some reason they're tied to the move
times if I'd want to delete them...

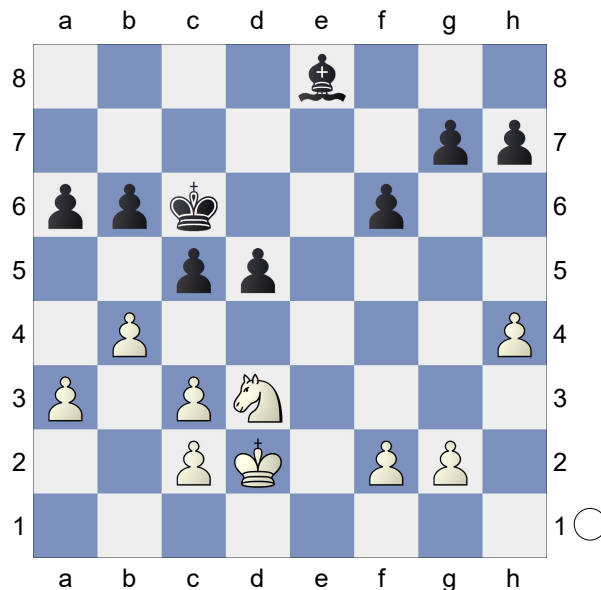
[27...g5 -0.46/30 might be stronger.]

28.h4 2:27

[28.c4 dxc4 29.bxc5+ bxc5 30.Nb2
Kd5]

28...Kc6 6:30

[28...g5 29.hxg5 fxg5]



29.g4?! -0.78/33 5:17

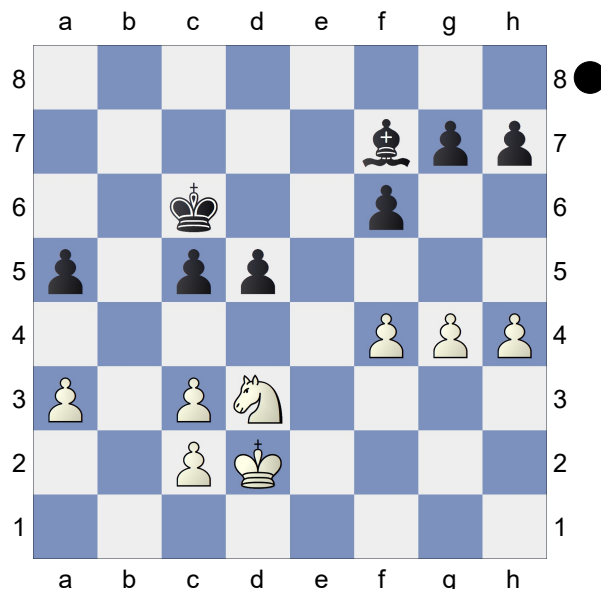
[29.bxc5= -0.14/38 bxc5 30.c4=]

29...Bg6 12:24 30.Nf4 2:35 Bf7 10

31.Nd3! 1:49 a5 4:25 32.bxa5 5:34

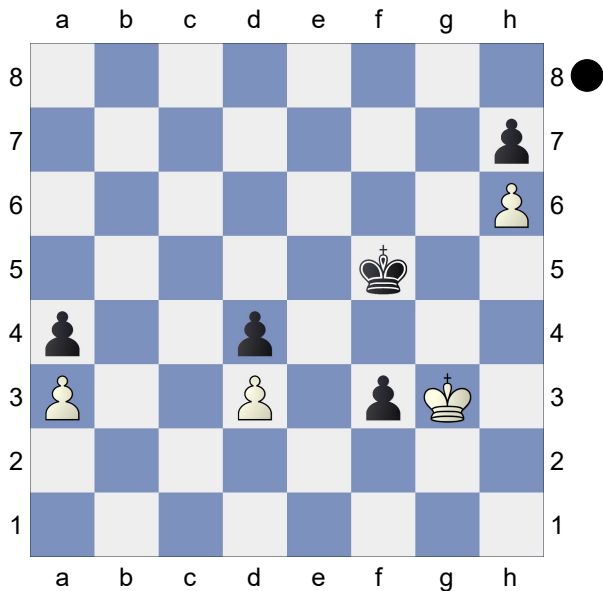
bx5 6 33.f4?! -3.52/29 2:22

[White should play 33.f3! -0.49/37]



How bad is it? The deeper we look, the

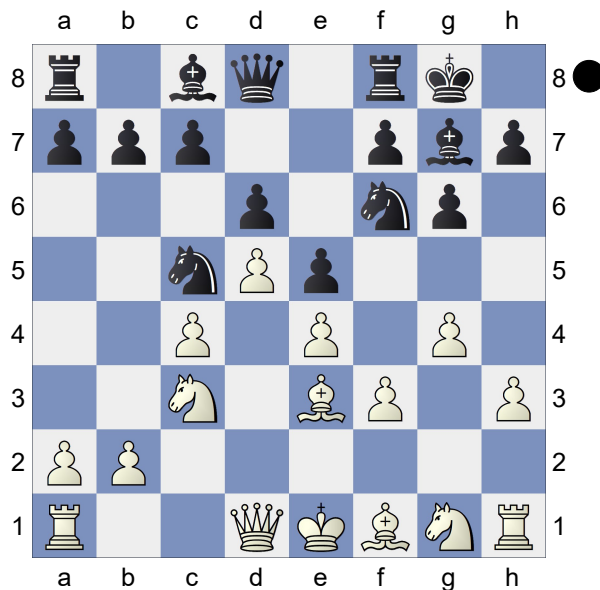
worse it gets: 33...d4!-+ 5:10 34.cxd4
 2:08 cxd4 6 35.Ne1 -5.31/20 7:46
 [Δ35.Nf2 -3.25/24 Kd5 36.Kd1]
 35...Kd5 58 36.g5 2:14 Ke4 1:06
 37.gxf6 38 gxf6 7 38.Nd3 4:22 Bc4
 1:53 (-> ...Bxd3) 39.Nc5+ 1:13 Kxf4 22
 40.Nb7 1:06 a4 1:24 41.Nc5 13 Bb5
 2:28 42.h5 1:32 Ke5 2:13 43.h6 57 f5
 2:22 44.Ke1 44 Bc6 -7.07/25 3:20
 [Δ44...Kd5 -#46/49 45.Nb7 Be8
 46.Ke2 Bh5+ 47.Kd2 f4 48.Nd8 Bg6
 Poor knight!]
 45.Kf2 1:35 Kd6 38 46.Nd3 58 Be4 11
 47.Nb4 1:56 Ke5 15 48.Kg3 3 f4+ 4:35
 49.Kg4 11 f3 1:00 50.Kg3 8 Kf5 34
 51.Nd3 1:38 Bxd3 54 Black mates.
 52.cxd3 1



f2! 34 A classic inroad. 53.Kxf2 3 Kf4 8
 54.Kg2 1:05 Ke3 14 55.Kg3 23 Kxd3 6
 56.Kf4 10 Kc2 13 57.Ke5 8 d3 4
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.62/
 Black=0.17
 0-1

□ Coyne, Theodore James E71 2239
 ■ Winslow, Elliott 2200
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (4.1) 23.09.2025
 [TA/Winslow, Elliott]

I'll remove my "clock time" explanation
 for the Newsletter and just note: another
 example of Coyne's excellent opening
 preparation and execution. For me it was
 yet another line I've been meaning to get
 to, and instead it got to me! 1.d4
 [01:30:58] 1...Nf6 [01:30:50] 2.c4
 [01:31:24] 2...g6 [01:31:08] 3.Nc3
 [01:31:49] 3...Bg7 [01:31:14] 4.e4
 [01:32:13] 4...d6 [01:31:29] 5.h3
 [01:32:09] 5...0-0 [01:30:50] 6.Be3
 [01:32:31] 6...e5 [01:31:09] 7.d5
 [01:32:55] 7...Na6 [01:31:32] 8.g4 Nc5
 [01:31:02] 9.f3



[01:33:28] 9...h5 [01:31:23] Okay, since
 I scribbled notes together for this a
 couple weeks ago I'll admit now: this ...
 h5 stuff is asking for trouble. To Theo's
 credit, he showed me lots of it, with his
 trademark restraint and precision.
 [9...a5!? -- see Board 3! Heiserman
 vs. Walder. And many others,
 including another Caruana-Jones
 encounter.]

10.Qd2 [01:32:46]. White is better.

[10.g5 Nh7 11.h4 f6]

[10.Nge2 Nh7]

[10.Bg5!? worried me, I was going to play Qe8 when 11.Bxf6?]

(my concern) (11.b4) 11...Bxf6

12.gxh5 Bh4+ 13.Kd2 f5!⚡]

10...Nh7 [01:29:52] **11.b4!?** [01:26:11]

[11.gxh5!? Qh4+ 12.Qf2 Qxf2+]

13.Bxf2 gxh5 14.b4]

[11.0-0-0 h4 12.Bd3 Nxd3+]

13.Qxd3 f5 14.Rh2 Kh8 15.Rg2

Bd7 16.exf5 gxf5 17.g5 f4 18.Bf2

Qe8 19.Ne4 Bf5 20.Bxh4 Qh5

½-½ (69) Caruana,F (2811)-Jones,G (2640) Wijk aan Zee 2018]

11...Na6 [01:28:54]

[11...Nd7 12.a3= (12.gxh5! gxh5

13.h4±) 12...a5 (12...h4) 13.Rb1

axb4 14.axb4 Bf6?! (14...f5!⚡)

15.Bd3 Bh4+ 16.Kf1 Kh8 17.Kg2 f5

18.exf5 gxf5 19.Bxf5 Rxf5 20.gxf5

Qg8+ 21.Kf1 Nb6 22.Qd3 Qf7

23.Rh2 Ra3 24.Rc1 Bxf5 25.Qe2

Na4 26.Qd2 Bg3 27.Rg2 h4 28.Re2

Nxc3 29.Rxc3 Bxh3+ 30.Nxh3

Qxf3+ 31.Rf2 Bxf2 32.Rxa3 Bxe3+

33.Nf2 Bxd2 34.Rxf3 Bxb4 35.Ne4

Kg7 36.Rb3 Ba5 37.Rxb7 Kg6

38.Rb5 Kf5 39.Nxd6+ cxd6 40.Rxa5

Nf6 41.Kg2 Ng4 42.Kh3 Ne3 43.c5

dxc5 44.Rxc5 e4 45.d6+ Ke6

46.Re5+ Kxd6 47.Rxe4 Nf5 48.Kg4

Ne7 49.Kxh4 Nc6 50.Kg5 Kd5

51.Re1 Nd4 52.Kf6 Nf3 53.Re3 Nd4

54.Re5+ Kc4 55.Rh5 Nf3

½-½ (55) Yanayt,E (2115)-Pancevski,

F (2432) Las Vegas 1000 GM IM-B,

Las Vegas, June 2, 2024]

12.a3 [01:26:04] **12...h4!?** [01:27:53]

[12...c5 13.dxc6 bxc6 14.0-0-0 Bb7

15.gxh5 gxh5 16.Nge2 f5 17.Bh6 f4

18.Rg1 Rf7 19.Qxd6 Qxd6 20.Rxd6

1-0 (48) Perez Ponsa,F (2553)-

Perdomo,L (2447) Montevideo 2022]

13.g5 [01:22:18]. Inhibits Bf6. White is more active.

[13.c5! Nb8 14.Rc1±]

13...f6 [01:20:51] **14.gxf6** [01:22:39]

14...Bxf6 [01:21:11] **15.Nge2** [01:19:21]

15...Bg5? 2.85/34 [01:17:20]. A mistake

that costs the game. And after four

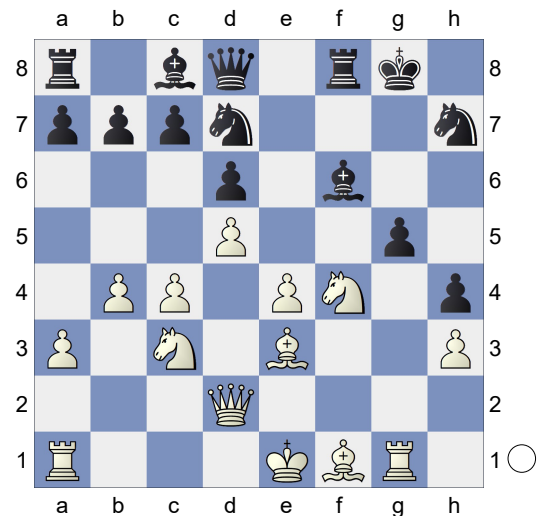
minutes...

[15...Nb8± 0.94/33 and Stockfish 17.1,

given time, reduces that to 0.74/24 --

oh wait, still not clear: 16.Rg1! g5

17.f4! exf4 18.Nxf4 Nd7!]



19.Ne6 Ne5 20.Nxd8 Nf3+ 21.Kd1

Nxd2 22.Kxd2 Rxd8 23.c5

(You had to wonder when White's queenside initiative might rear its head) Bd7 24.a4 a5±]

(Diagram)

16.f4!+- [01:03:14] **16...exf4** [01:11:13]

17.Nxf4! [01:02:03]

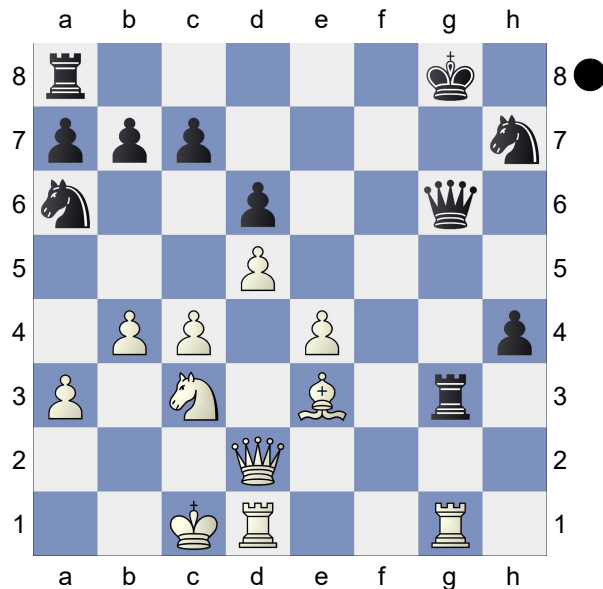
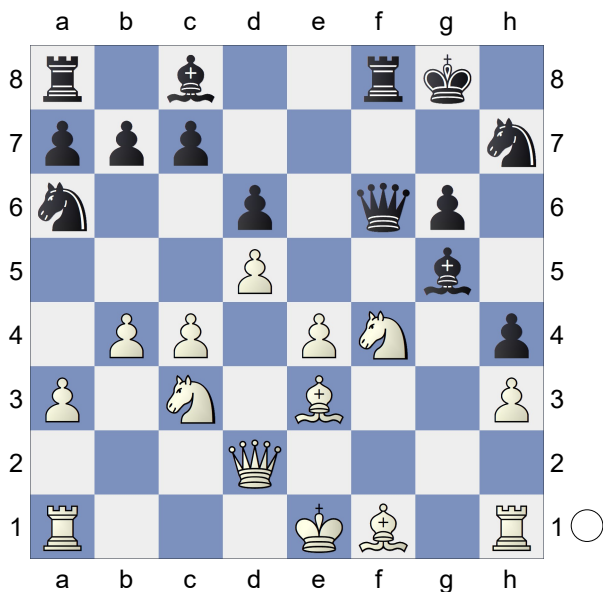
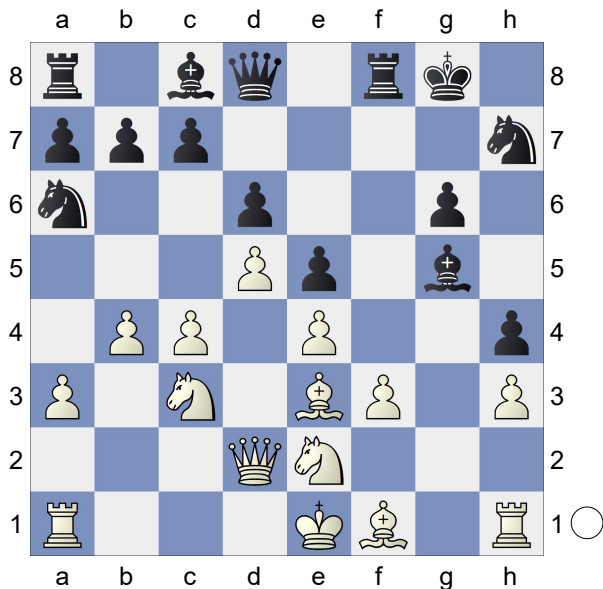
[17.Bxf4?? Rxf4! 18.Nxf4 Qf6-+]

17...Qf6? 4.30/30

[17...Bxf4 2.68/29 18.Bxf4 Nb8]

(Diagram)

[01:09:14] I missed White's obvious next move! (Actually I noticed it in the minute



[00:48:20] 24...Rff3 [00:49:52] 25.Nxg3
 [00:47:22] 25...hxc3 [00:49:49]
 26.Rdf1! [00:42:34] 26...Rxf1+
 [00:48:42] 27.Rxf1 [00:42:56] 27...Nf6
 [00:44:36] 28.Bd4 [00:41:19] 28...Nxe4
 [00:35:18] 29.Qf4 [00:41:12] 29...Qg5
 [00:33:45] 30.Qxg5+ [00:41:31]
 30...Nxg5 [00:34:13] 31.Rg1 [00:41:22]
 31...Ne4 [00:33:25] 32.Kc2 [00:41:36]
 32...Kf7 [00:33:10] 33.Kd3 [00:41:29]
 Weighted Error Value: White=0.09/
 Black=0.49
 1-0

or so Theo took to play it) 18.Nxg6!
 [01:00:10] 18...Qxg6 [01:04:28] 19.Rg1
 [00:59:35] 19...Rf3 [01:00:20] 20.Bxg5
 [00:57:05] 20...Bxh3 [00:57:51] (I
 thought this was going pretty well for
 me! Theo deftly dispels me of *that*
 thought!) 21.Bxh3 [00:53:25] 21...Rhx3
 [00:57:50] 22.0-0-0 [00:50:09] 22...Rg3
 [00:55:26] 23.Be3

(Diagram)

[00:49:18] This is the problem with ...h5
 lines. Where did Black's pawn cover go?
 It gets ugly... 23...Rf8 [00:53:50] 24.Ne2

A20
 1992
 2239
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (5.1) 30.09.2025
 [Winslow,Elliott]

Both players seemed unsure of the
 handling of this tricky line -- but it was
 White who really crossed the line,
 getting his bishop tied up on the b-file.
 1.c4 13 e5 9 2.g3 19 c6 21
 A principled response to 2.g3, although
 in some lines it gets very sharp. 3.Nf3 33
 e4 7 4.Nd4 11 d5 7 5.cxd5 25 Qxd5 8
 6.Nc2 22 Nf6 21 7.Nc3 28 Qe5 7

8.Bg2 27 Na6 23 9.Rb1 47

[9.0-0 Be7 10.d4 exd3=]

9...Nb4 1:06

[9...Be7]

[9...h5!?]

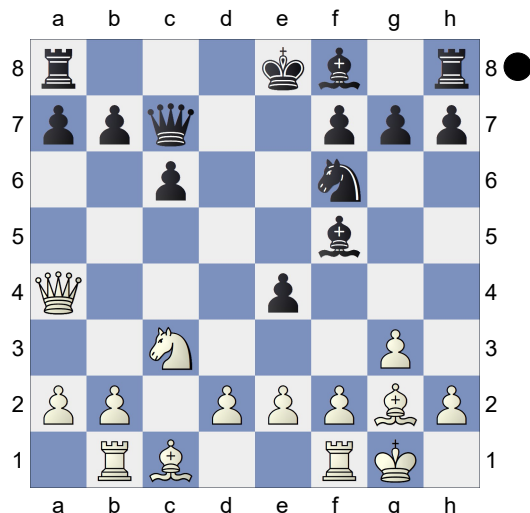
10.0-0 29 Nxc2 36 11.Qxc2 9 Bf5 16

12.b4!?N 1:01 Hoping for b5.

[12.Qb3 Qc7 (12...Qe7!?;

12...0-0-0!=) 13.Qa4 (13.Qc2!? Qe5

14.b4)



A) 13...e3! 14.d3 (14.Ra1)

14...exf2+ 15.Rxf2 Qb6=

(15...Be6=; 15...Bc5?? 16.d4+-);

B) 13...Qe5?? 14.d3+- Bc5

15.dxe4 (15.Bf4) 15...Bg6?!

(15...Be6) 16.Bf4 Qd4 17.Rbd1

(17.b4!) 17...Qxa4 18.Nxa4+-

½-½ (67) Shankland,S (2691)-

Sevian,S (2660) Lichess 2020]

12...Be7 25 13.b5 1:30 bxc6 is in the air

13...0-0 1:38 14.bxc6 1:45 bxc6 12

15.e3± 58 Qe6 9:57

[15...Rfd8]

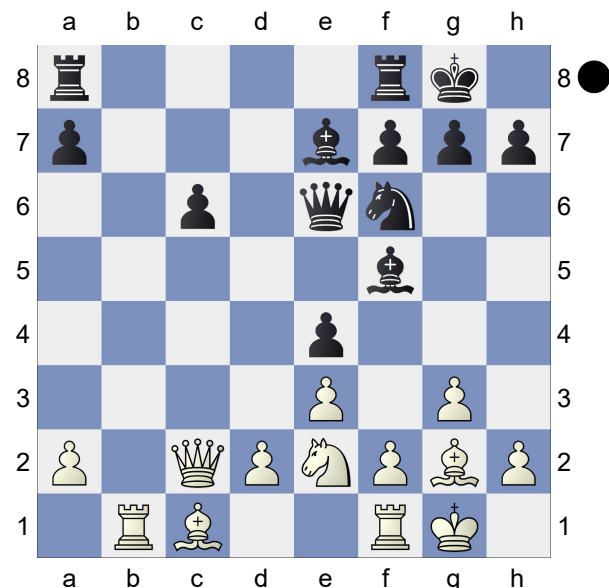
[15...c5]

16.Ne2 7:33

(Diagram)

c5 1:17 Against Nd4 **17.Bb2 9:35**

On the one hand, a bit of a trap to take the pawn; on the other, it ends up the bishop that gets trapped, sort of.



[17.Nf4!± (+0.34/d44) is something.]

17...Qxa2?! 14:47

[17...Nd5! 18.Nc3 Nb4=]

18.Nf4?! -0.77/32 13:30 Now it gets serious.

[18.Ra1! 0.10/35 Qe6 19.Nf4±]

18...Rab8 5:10

[Even a bit better is 18...Rfb8!?

backing up the passed pawn! 19.Qc1

a5 20.Bxf6 Rxb1 21.Qxb1 Qxb1

22.Rxb1 Bxf6 23.g4! Bxg4 24.Bxe4

Rd8 25.Rb5 a4 26.Ra5 Bd1 (!)]

19.d3?? -4.37/20 11:05 And that snaps

it. And these moves were costing White

over ten minutes each (with an hour left).

[19.Qc1 0.72/31]

(Diagram)

19...exd3+- 4:56 20.Qc3 1:24 Rfd8

13:23 Wards off Nd5 while preparing to

launch the new passed pawn (does

Black really have three?). **21.Qe5 11:04**

d2! 15:07 That big think left Black with

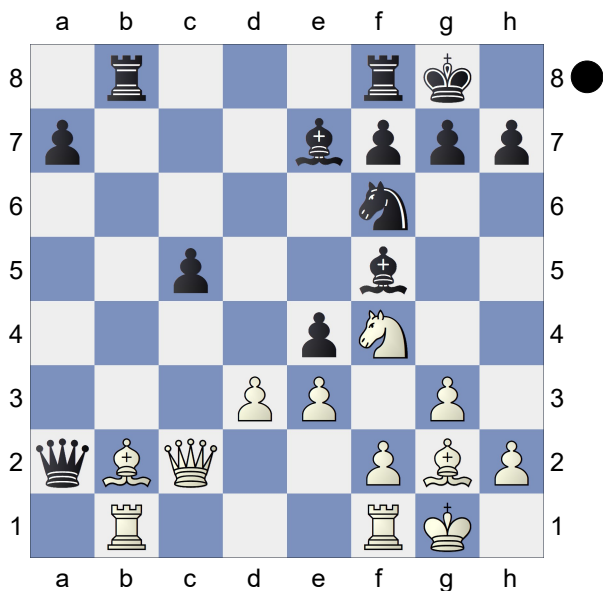
half an hour -- and a completely won

game. **22.e4 14:13 Be6 6:24 23.Nd5**

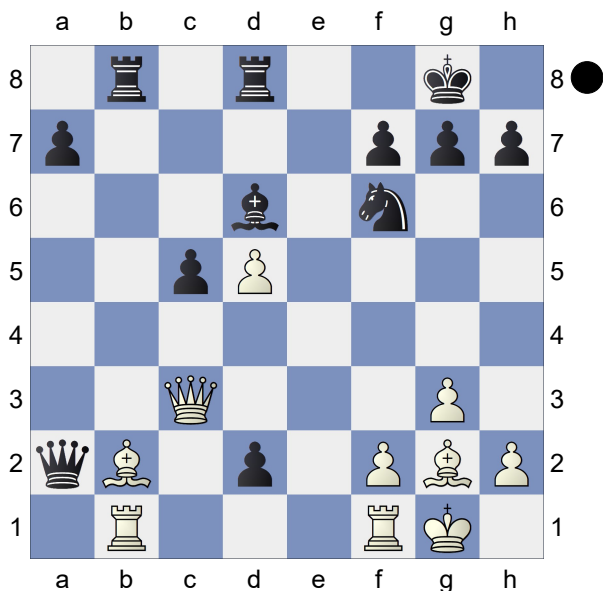
1:33

[23.Nxe6 Qxe6 24.Qxe6 fxe6

25.Bf3 c4]



23...Bxd5 1:09 24.exd5 43 Bd6 1:06
25.Qc3 1:17



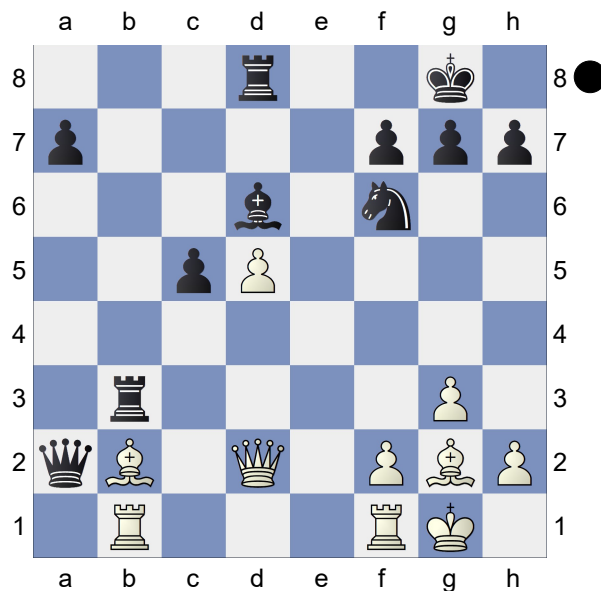
Rb3?! 37 Gives White a "chance" when any other rook move (!) was a lot better (it's all winning for Black in any case).

26.Qxd2? -5.31/24 2:42

[26.Qxb3 -3.31/26 Qxb3 27.Bxf6 Qd3! ready to add the c-pawn to the march. (27...Qc2!?) 28.Bxd8 c4-+ It's -3.19/d22 or so.]

(Diagram)

26...Rdb8 14 Weighted Error Value:



White=0.54/Black=0.19. The mathematical precision he's showing in these games -- oh wait, he *is* a mathematician! (graduate student, UC Berkeley)

0-1

D97
 ☐ **Coyne, Theodore James** **2239**
 ■ **Heiserman, Jimmy** **2291**
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (6.1) 07.10.2025
[Winslow, Elliott]

This was interesting for me. I played the Russian Variation 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3. Nc3 d5 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Qb3) of the Gruenfeld Defense ages ago; I had no idea how developed it all is now. But of course it is, with guys like Giri and MVL around (and their computers). Coyne mentioned to me that he hoped Heiserman didn't look at the Berkeley Friday Night Marathon games, where he'd see Theo playing a Russian Variation just a few days before. So...

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 d5
Heiserman: Gruenfeld addict. :-) **4.Nf3**
Bg7 5.Qb3 dxc4 6.Qxc4 0-0
 [6...a6 7.Bf4 c6 8.e4 Be6 9.Qd3

b5 10.Qc2 0-0 11.Be2
 1-0 54, Coyne,T-Wang,Chase, 2025
 Shorman FNM (6), Berkeley Chess
 School Oct 3, 2025.]

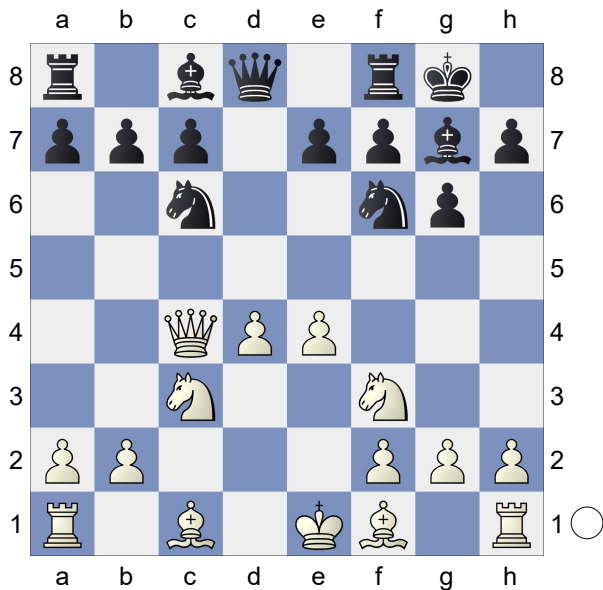
7.e4 Nc6

[All of these alternatives have been
 iconic in their time: 7...Bg4]

[7...c6]

[7...Na6]

[7...a6 (Stockfish's pick here a fourth
 of the way through the 21st century)]

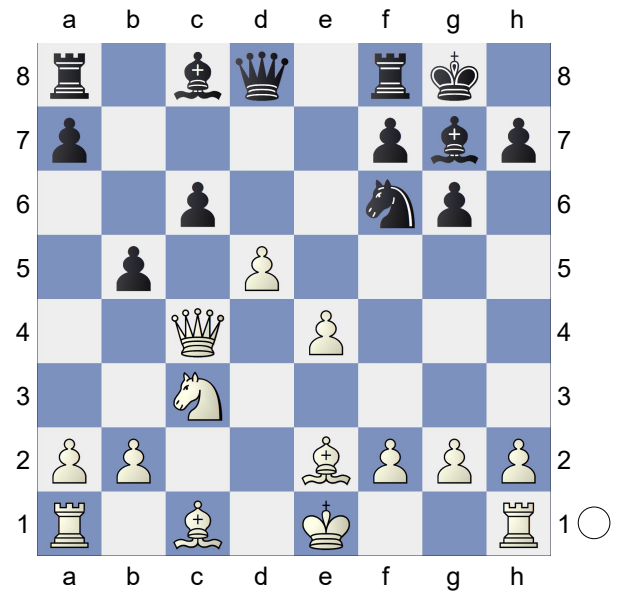


I don't know if Theo somehow knew that
 this is what Jimmy would play; they
 plowed at blitz speed through quite a
 few moves now! I only found out later
 that this is a major theoretical battlefield.
 Remember I'm sitting next to this game,
 my own game deep in my usual
 Exchange Queen's Gambit shenanigans,
 so I was looking at Board 1 and
 wondering what was going on. **8.Be2 e5**
9.d5 Nd4 10.Nxd4 exd4 11.Qxd4 c6
12.Qc4 b5

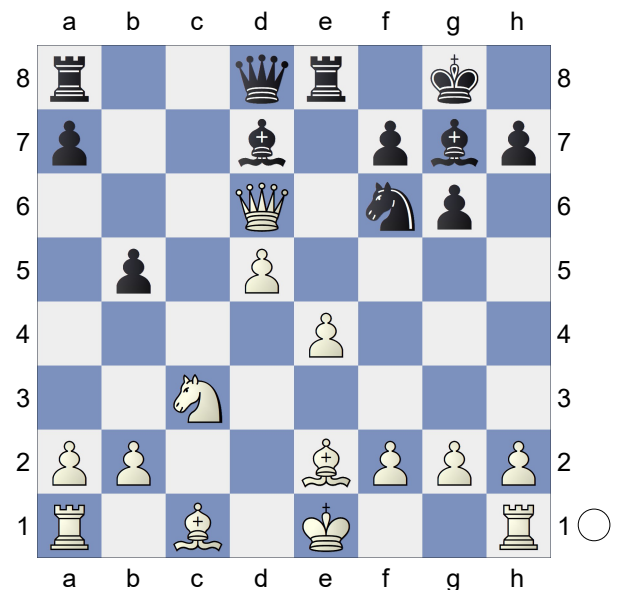
(Diagram)

13.Qxc6 Bd7 14.Qd6 Re8

[14...Rb8 15.a3 Re8 16.Bg5 a5
 17.f3 (17.0-0 below) 17...b4 18.axb4



axb4 19.Bxf6 Bxf6 20.Nd1 Bd4
 21.Ra6 Qc8 22.Qf4 f5 23.Qg5 fxe4
 24.f4 Qc1 25.d6 Re5 26.Qg3 Rd5
 27.Qb3 Be6 28.Qa4 Bc5 29.Ra8
 Qd2+ 30.Kf1 Qxf4+ 31.Ke1 Qd2+
 32.Kf1 Rf5+ 33.Bf3 Bc4#
 0-1 (33) Roos,A (2211)-Leenhouts,K
 (2385) Vlissingen 2014]



15.e5

[The no-less-wild alternative was
 played in one of the highest-rated
 contests ... ever? 15.Bg5 Rb8 16.a3
 a5 17.0-0 (17.f3 above) 17...b4
 18.axb4 axb4 19.Nd1 Nxe4 20.Bxd8

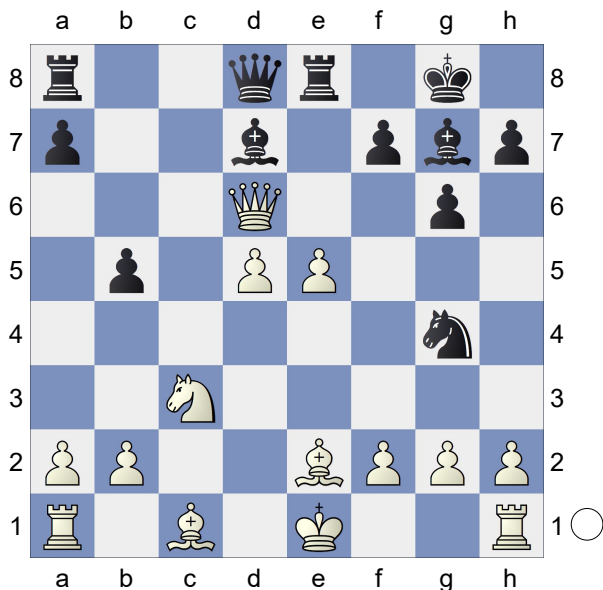
Nxd6 21.Bc7 Rb7 22.Bxd6 Rxe2
 23.Ra8+ Re8 24.Rxe8+ Bxe8
 25.Re1 Bd7 26.Re4 Ba4 27.b3 f5
 28.Rxb4 Rxb4 29.Bxb4 Bxb3 30.Nc3
 Bxc3 31.Bxc3 Bxd5 ½-½ (31) Giri,A
 (2783)-Mamedyarov,S (2817) Wijk
 aan Zee 2019 CBM 188 [Fernandez,
 Daniel Howard]]

15...Ng4!? With so many of these lines
 White will have some sort of advantage,
 but with accurate play it fades.

[15...b4!? looks like a solid drawing
 alternative: 16.Qxb4 (16.exf6??
 bxc3 17.fxg7?? Rxe2+-+) 16...Rxe5
 17.0-0

A) 17...Nxd5 18.Nxd5 Rxe2
 (18...Rxd5!? 19.Bf3±) 19.Be3±;

B) 17...a5= slightly better than]



16.e6!? fxe6 17.h3!?

Here (1) Coyne had 1:36:09 on his clock after this move (starting with 1:30:00); (2) Heiserman had 1:31:01, but has the first think of the game, 12 minutes (3) I have no idea what's going on!

[17.Bxg4?! exd5+! 18.Be2!
 (18.Ne2?? Bxg4 19.Qxd8 Raxd8
 20.f3 d4!-+ (everything else was good
 too)) 18...Bxc3+ 19.bxc3 Rxe2+
 20.Kf1! Re8! 21.Qxd5+ Be6 22.Qxd8

Raxd8= Black is no worse.]

[17.dxe6!? Bxe6 18.Qxd8 Raxd8
 19.0-0 b4 20.Nb5 Bd7 21.Bc4+ Be6
 22.Bxe6+ (22.Be2= repeats)
 22...Rxe6 23.h3 Ne5 24.Bg5
 (24.Nxa7)]

17...Be5?!

[17...Nf6± 18.0-0

A) 18...exd5 19.Rd1 Re6
 (19...Bxh3!? 20.Qxd8 Raxd8
 21.gxh3 d4 22.Bxb5 dxc3±)
 20.Qf4±;

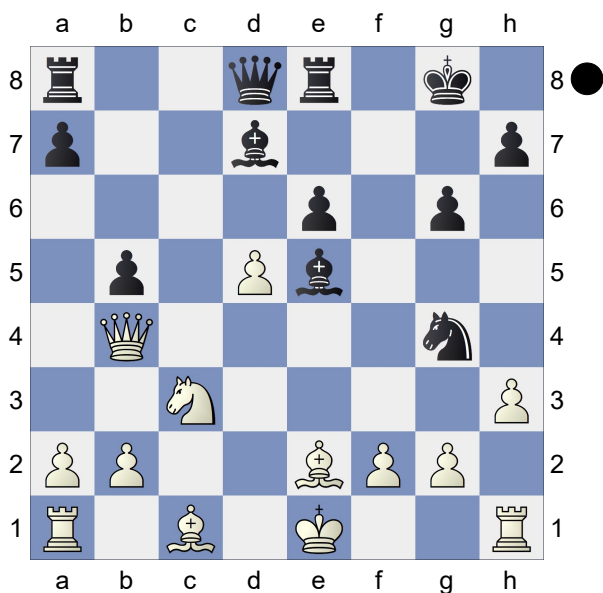
B) 18...Bf8? 19.Qf4 exd5 20.Bf3
 Bc6 21.Be3 Bd6 22.Qd4 Be5
 23.Qf4 Bd6 24.Qd4 Be5 25.Qc5
 Rc8 26.Rad1 a6 27.Bg5 Ba8
 28.Qa3 d4 29.Bxa8 Rxa8
 30.Qb3+ Kg7 31.f4 Bd6 32.Nd5
 Be7 33.Nxe7 Rxe7 34.f5 Rf7
 35.fxg6 Kxg6 36.Rf3 Qd6 37.Bf4
 Qd5 38.Rg3+ Kh5 39.Rg5+
 1-0 (39) Mishra,A (2517)-Stearman,
 J (2413) Charlotte 2021]

[17...Ne5! MVL drew a couple games
 against some really strong opposition:

18.dxe6 (18.0-0 Nf7 19.Qa3 exd5
 20.Bf3 d4 21.Ne4 Bc6 22.Ng5 Bxf3
 23.Nxf3 Qd5 24.Rd1 Nd6 25.Qd3
 Rac8 26.a4 b4 27.Be3 Nc4
 28.Rab1 Nxe3 29.fxe3 b3 30.exd4
 Rc2 31.Rd2 Qc4 32.Qxc4+ Rxc4
 33.Rd3 Rxa4 34.Rxb3 Bxd4+
 35.Nxd4 Rxd4 36.Rb7 Rd2 37.Rc1
 Rf8 38.b3 Rf7 39.Rc8+ Kg7
 40.Rxf7+ Kxf7 41.Rc7+ Kf6 42.Rxa7
 Rb2 43.Rb7 h5 44.h4 Rc2 45.Rb4
 Kf5 46.Kh2 Rc3 47.Rb5+ Kg4
 48.Rb4+ Kf5 49.g3 Rc2+ 50.Kh3
 Kf6 51.Rf4+ Kg7 52.b4 Rb2 53.Rc4
 Kh6 54.g4 Rb3+ 55.Kg2 hxg4
 56.Rxg4 Kh5 57.Rc4 g5 58.hxg5
 Kxg5 59.Kf2 Kf5 60.Ke2 Ke5
 61.Kd2 Kd5 62.Rc5+ Kd4 63.Rh5
 Rxb4 64.Rh4+ Kc5 65.Rxb4 Kxb4
 ½-½ (65) Duda,J (2743)-Vachier

Lagrange,M (2784) Opera Euro Rapid Prelim, chess24.com INT 2021)
 18...Bxe6 19.Qxd8 Raxd8 20.Bxb5 Bc4 21.Bxe8 Nd3+ 22.Kf1 Bxc3 23.bxc3 Nxc1+ 24.Kg1 Ne2+ 25.Kh2 Rxe8 26.Rhe1 Bf7 27.c4 Bxc4 28.Rac1 Bb5 29.Rc7 a6 30.Ra7 Re4 31.Rd1 Rd4 32.Rxd4 Nxd4 33.a4 Bxa4 34.Rxa6 Bb3 35.Ra7 Bf7 36.Kg3 ½-½ (36) Yu,Y (2763)-Vachier Lagrange,M (2774) Khanty-Mansiysk 2019]

18.Qb4



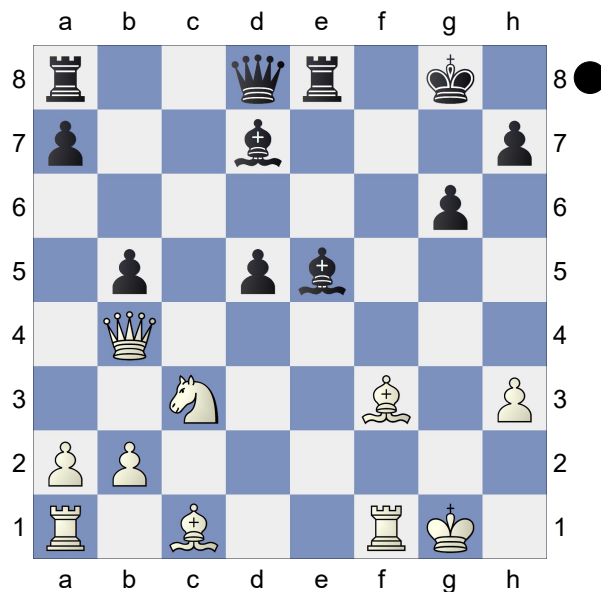
Nxf2!?! (after 20 seconds!) Was this even more preparation!? It looks like it shouldn't lose, and it certainly puts White to the test -- but objectively it's questionable. Shades of Spassky-Fischer, Game 1!

[18...Nf6 19.d6 Bc6 (19...Rc8) 20.Bg5 (20.Qc5! Qxd6 21.Qxd6 Bxd6 22.Bxb5 Bxg2 23.Rg1 Bxh3 24.Bxe8 Rxe8 25.Be3±) 20...Qd7? (20...Bxg2 21.Rg1 Bd5! 22.0-0-0 a5 23.Qh4!±) 21.Rd1± (21.0-0!) 21...Nd5 22.Nxd5 exd5 23.Be7 Rad8 24.Bxd8 Bxd6 25.Qd2 Rxd8 26.0-0 d4 27.f4 Bc5 28.Bf3 Bxf3 29.Rxf3 Re8 30.Kh1 Qf7 31.f5 gxf5 32.Qg5+ Qg6 33.Rxf5 Bb6

34.Qxg6+ hxd6 35.Rxb5 Rd8 36.Rd3 Kf7 37.g4 Ke6 38.Kg2 Rc8 39.a4 Rc2+ 40.Kf3 Rh2 41.Kf4 Kf6 42.Ke4 Re2+ 43.Kd5 Re5+ 44.Kc4 Re6 45.a5 Bc7 46.Rxd4 1-0 (46) Kandaz,B (1519)-Caputcuoglu,Z (2095) Adapazari 2022. Wait, what? A 1500 player beating a 2100? Yow.]

19.0-0! In less than a couple minutes.
 [19.Kxf2 exd5!= 20.Rf1 Qb6+ 21.Ke1 Bc6±]

19...Nxf3+! 20.gxf3 exd5! 21.Bf3
 White's first think of the game, seven whole minutes, *finally* putting him under his original time.



21...Bxh3?! 25 minutes on this suspect move.

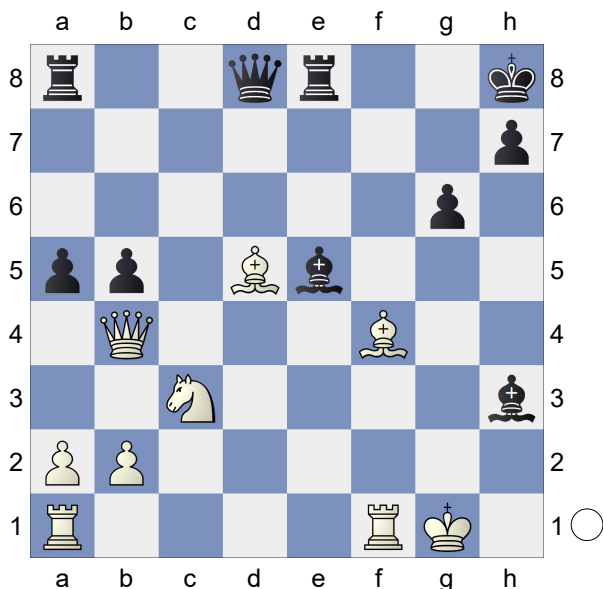
[21...a5 22.Bxd5+ Kh8 23.Qe4 Bf5±]

22.Bxd5+ Kh8? This king is not safe at all here!

[22...Be6 23.Bxe6+ Rxe6 24.Be3±]

23.Bf4!+- a5?

[23...Bg7 24.Bxa8 Bxf1 was registered last February in "Let's Check" by the mysterious Pat Clare; I'd really like to know what he has set up, he's everywhere. 25.Rxf1 Qxa8 26.Qxb5+-]



Now Theo finishes **very** nicely, with an "only move no less: **24.Qf8+!!**
Quite eloquent!

[24.Qf8+ Rxf8 25.Bxe5+ Rf6
26.Rxf6! (26.Bxf6+ Qxf6 27.Rxf6+-)]
1-0

□ **Lewis, Edward** **E68**
 ■ **Winslow, Elliott** **2200**
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (2.2) 09.09.2025
 [Winslow, Elliott]

My path to second place with one round to go (and having played Coyne already) was a lot less convincing. Still it's been fun. A few examples? Here's a typically dodgy play against the Fianchetto System in the King's Indian, against Ed Lewis. With Ed you never know what you're going to get. On this occasion I was fortunate that he seemed unfocused and erratic. I'll stick pretty much to my notes from the round file: **1.d4 Nf6**
2.Nf3 g6 3.g3 Bg7 4.Bg2 0-0 5.0-0
d6 6.c4 Nbd7

[6...Nc6

A) 7.Nc3 a6 (7...e5!?) 8.d5 Na5

9.Nd2 c5;

B) 7.d5]

[6...c5 7.dxc5 dxc5 I don't like symmetrical positions. I know Fischer played this. Maybe it's a "Roshambo" position! Where A beats B, B beats C, C beats A! Zugzwang!!]

7.Nc3 e5 8.e4 h6

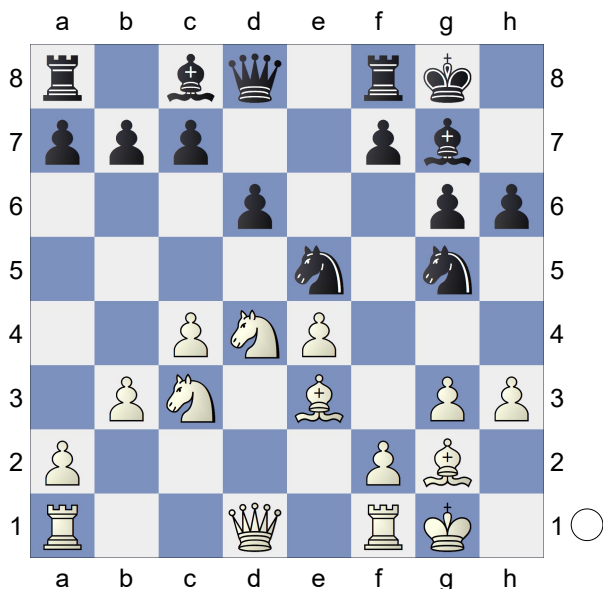
[8...c6 9.h3 Interesting that this traditional main line, 9...Qb6 , which I've dutifully played over the years but grew suspicious of, is now (Stockfish 17.1 ranking) 12th best! In other words, not best at all -- after 10.c5! Well-known but improvements make it a clear advantage for White. Ed noted he was going to play it. dxc5 11.dxe5! Ne8 12.e6! fxe6 13.Ng5! Ne5 14.f4 Nf7 15.Nxf7 Bd4+!? is slightly better, getting out while it can (15...Rxf7 16.e5) 16.Kh2 Rxf7 17.e5 But now Ne4 (combined with a4 and Ra3) heads towards the kingside, while Black's supermajority on the queenside just never kicks in. Nc7 18.Ne4 Nd5 19.a4 a5 20.Ra3 Qc7 21.Nd6 Rf8 22.h4 b6 23.h5 Qg7 24.hxg6 hxg6 25.Be4 ½-½ (47) Shirov,A (2670)-Kasparov,G (2805) Linares 1993]
 [8...exd4 9.Nxd4 Re8 10.h3 Nc5 11.Re1 Bd7 (and/or 11...h6) 12.Rb1 h6 and such has been a big thing, maybe mostly in blitz, at the top level, but the results are spotty.]

9.h3 Nh7 10.Be3 exd4 11.Nxd4N

Stockfish gives this a definite preference (but what do computers know about the King's Indian? -- too much these days)

[11.Bxd4 Ed wondered about this after the game. Ne5 12.Nxe5 Bxe5 13.f4 Bxd4+ 14.Qxd4 Bd7 15.Rad1 Bc6 16.c5 dxc5 17.Qxc5 Qe8 1-0 (49) Tarasov,D (2221)-Tsarukian, E (2192) Kirov 2015]

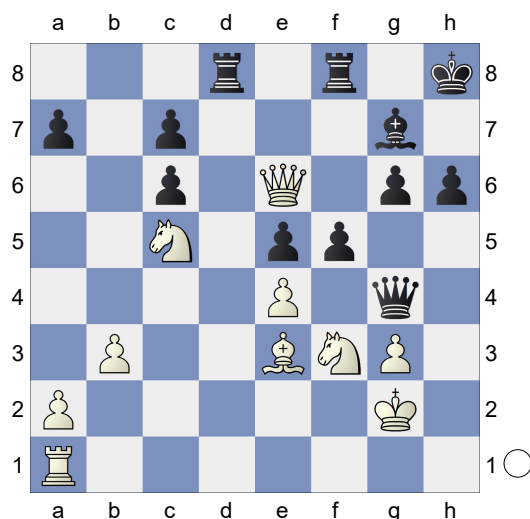
11...Ne5 12.b3 White is better. 12...Ng5



13.g4?? I was stunned. Maybe he hadn't seen what I planned "in general"?

[I was quite unclear about 13.f4

Nxh3+ 14.Bxh3 Bxh3 15.fxe5 Bxf1 16.Kxf1 dxe5 and now Stockfish 17.1 "going out on a limb": 17.Nf3 Qe7 18.Nd5 Qd6 19.c5 Qd8 20.c6 bxc6 21.Nb4 Qb8 22.Na6 Qc8 23.Nc5 Qg4 24.Kg2 f5 25.Qd7 Rad8 26.Qe6+ Kh8



27.Bxh6 Bxh6 28.Rh1 Rd2+ 29.Nxd2 Qe2+ 30.Kh3 Bxd2 31.Qxg6 Qf3 32.Re1 0.00/23] [13.h4!? Ne6 (I contemplated 13...Nh3+ when I saw 14.Kh1±) 14.Rc1!±]

[Stockfish ruins all the fun and points out 13.Kh2!± c5 14.Ndb5 a6 15.Nxd6 Nef3+ 16.Bxf3 Bxc3 17.Rc1 Bd4 18.Bxd4 Qxd6 19.Be3±]

13...c5!± 14.Ndb5?!

[Better is 14.Nde2!± Ngf3+ 15.Bxf3 Nxf3+ 16.Kg2

A) 16...Qf6 17.Bf4

A1) 17...Nd4? 18.Nd5 Qd8

19.Rc1± (19.Nxd4 cxd4 20.Rc1±);

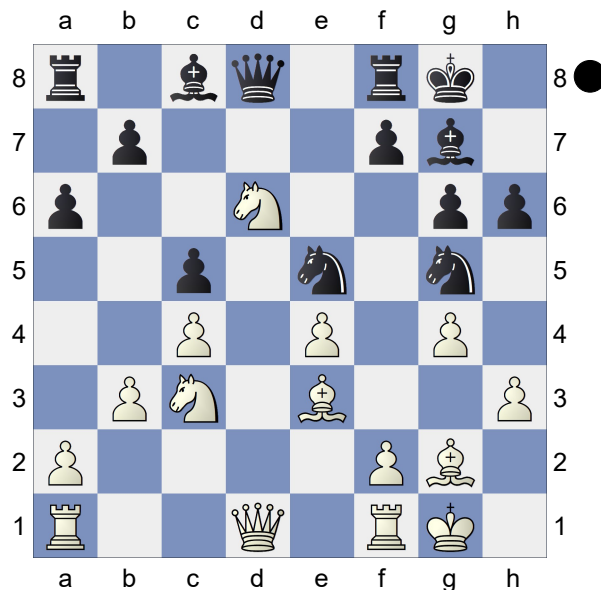
A2) 17...Nh4+;

B) 16...Nh4+ 17.Kg3 and here SF17.1 gives as the only way to an advantage b5! 18.cxb5 Bb7± !=]

14...a6

[14...Nxh3+ 15.Bxh3 a6]

15.Nxd6



Nxh3+!± 16.Bxh3□

[16.Kh1? Qh4]

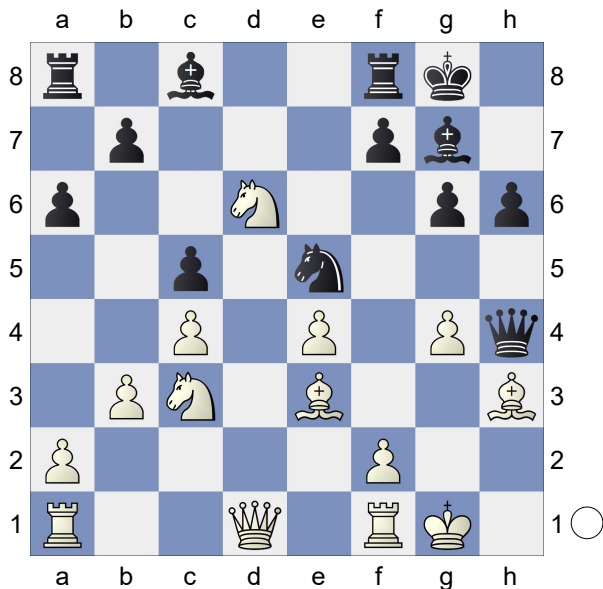
[16.Kh2? Nxg4+]

16...Qh4!

(Diagram)

17.Nxc8?

[17.Kg2± is a better chance. Bxg4! 18.Bxg4 Nxg4 19.Qd2! (For some reason I was concerned about 19.Bf4



I thought "Up two pawns, must be winning." I should have been thinking "Exposed White king, must be TOTALLY winning."]

29.Kg2 Qb2+ 30.Kg3 Rad8 31.e5 Rfe8?! Stockfish calls it a pretty big drop in value (still quite won though)

[31...f5! busts down the door, along the lines of that comment to Black's 28th.]

32.Qd5 Rd7

[32...Qxa1?? 33.Qxf7+=]

33.Rf1 Re6

[33...Qxa2? 34.Rxf7+ (34.Qxc5? Qxb3+ 35.Kg2 Qc2+ 36.Kg3 Qe2+) 34...Kh8 35.Rxd7+-]

34.Qxc5 Qc3+

[34...Qxa2 35.Qc8 Qe2 (35...Qxb3+ 36.Rf3?) 36.Qxd7+-]

35.Rf3 Qe1+ 36.Kg2 Kg7 37.Qd4

Kg8 38.c5 Qh4 Strongly threatening ... h5. 39.b4

[39.Qa4 was necessary. Qd8 40.Rf2]

39...h5 40.Rg3 Qg5 41.gxh5 Qxh5

42.a4 Qe2+ 43.Kh3?

[43.Qf2 Qe4+ (43...Rxe5! -5.56/25) 44.Rf3]

Bxc3 20.Qf3 Bxa1! 21.Rxa1 h5-+; 19.Rc1 Qh2+ 20.Kf3 Nxe3

Removes Bf4 to defend d6) 19...Qh2+

20.Kf3 Nxe3 21.Rh1! Qg2+ 22.Kxe3

Bd4+ 23.Ke2 (23.Kd3?! Rfd8-+)

23...Rad8 24.Qf4 Rxd6! 25.Rag1!

(25.Qxd6 Qxf2+ 26.Kd1 Qf3+)

25...Rf6! 26.Qxf6! Qxg1! ChessBase

won't let you use the "box" ("Only

Move") and "!" at the same time...

27.Rxg1 Bxf6 28.Nd5 Bd4

17...Qxh3-+ 18.Ne7+ Kh7 19.f3 Qg3+

[19...Nxg4]

20.Kh1 Nxg4 21.Bf4 Qh3+ 22.Kg1

Bxc3 23.fxg4 Bd4+ 24.Rf2 Bxf2+

[24...Qh4! -5.56/37 Let me confess: I

thought what I played was "cut and

dried." Rook and a pawn for a bishop.

I had this thought that 25.Qxd4!?

cxg4 26.Nd5 would give him annoying

chances. Only if I blunder into a

knight fork! And even then! Look at all

those pawns to go with my queen.

And specifically, Qxg4+ 27.Rg2 Qe6

28.Rf2 g5 29.Bd2 f6 30.Nc7 Qe5

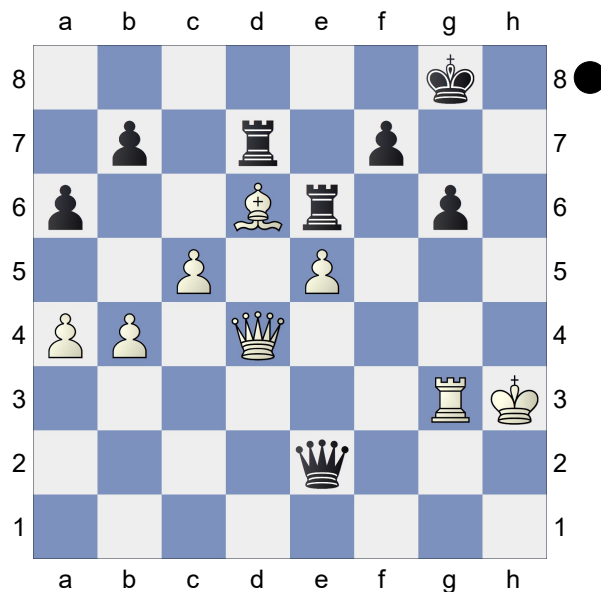
31.Nxa8 Rxa8 is just silly.]

25.Kxf2 Qh4+ 26.Kf3 Qxe7 27.Bd6

Qf6+ 28.Kg3 Qc3+?!

[I saw earlier and didn't play 28...Rfe8!

29.e5 Rxe5! 30.Bxe5 Qxe5+



43...Rdxd6! Finally coming to my

senses.

[43...f5!]

44.exd6 Re5 45.Rg4 Re3+?! #27 But this is embarrassing:

[♞45...Qf3+ 46.Rg3 Rh5+ 47.Qh4

Rxh4+ 48.Kxh4 Qh5#]

46.Rg3 Qf1+ Black mates. 47.Kh4

Qh1+ 48.Kg4 Re4+ White got

outplayed after the opening.

Weighted Error Value: White=0.67/

Black=0.04 (flawless)

[♞48...f5+ 49.Kf4 Re4+ 50.Qxe4

Qxe4+ 51.Kg5 Kg7]

0-1

□ Winslow,Elliott

■ Zavgorodniy,Andrew

2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (3.2) 16.09.2025

[TA/Winslow,Elliott]

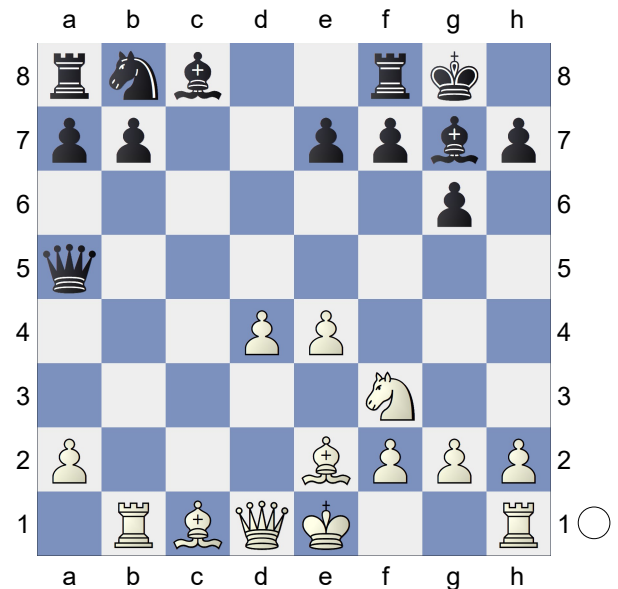
This one got away from me. After it got away from him! Playing these lines in the Gruenfeld that were once the height of theory but now have been worked out often ends up as a test of endgame play. On this occasion I was handed a test, when the right answer(s) would lead to a win, and I flunked. **1.d4 3:33 Nf6 38 2.c4 9 g6 20 3.Nc3 23 d5 30 4.cxd5 1:28 Nxd5 7 5.e4 9 Nxc3 6 6.bxc3 5 Bg7 23 7.Nf3 3:59 c5 36 8.Rb1 2:05 0-0 46 9.Be2 4 cxd4 49 10.cxd4 7 Qa5+ 23**

(Diagram)

I've wondered when someone would get around to playing this against me. And it turns out I really wasn't sure what was going on. Back to Gelfand's books!

11.Bd2 1:37

[There's always the "copout" with 11.Qd2]



11...Qxa2 34 12.0-0 1:43 This is Boris Gelfand's torrid love affair starting in the mid-1980s and for another dozen years or more. Plenty of other superstars showed a longstanding interest as well. I never got to the bottom of it (understandable!) and remember next to nothing. Still, I acquit myself well, as does Zavgorodniy. I'll remove the mention of the myriad alternatives.

12...Bg4 47 13.Bg5 39 h6 1:31

[13...Qe6!? 14.h3 Bxf3 15.Bxf3]

14.Be3 5:50 Nc6 1:36 15.d5 4:25

Ne5!? 1:19

[15...Na5 (expected)]

[15...Bxf3!? 16.gxf3!? (16.Bxf3 Ne5 17.Bc5!?) 16...Nd4!]

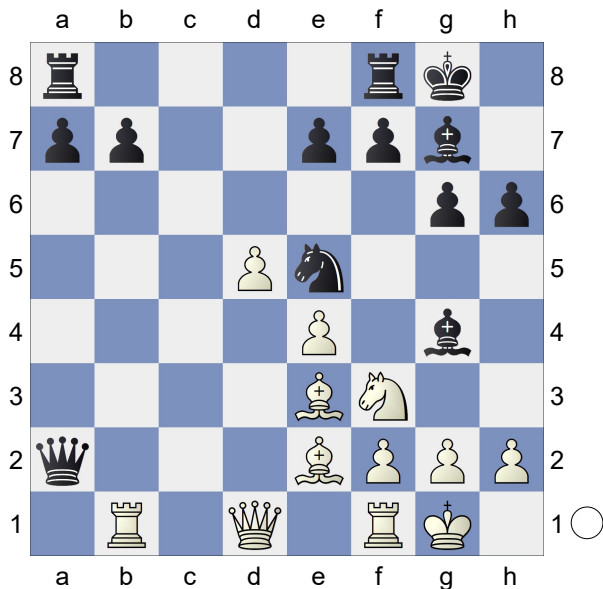
A) 17.Bxd4 Bxd4 18.Qxd4 Qxe2 19.Kg2 b6 (19...Qa6);

B) 17.Bd3 a5 Wards off Rb4 (17...Qa3 18.f4) 18.f4 is another story.]

(Diagram)

16.Re1!? 2:18

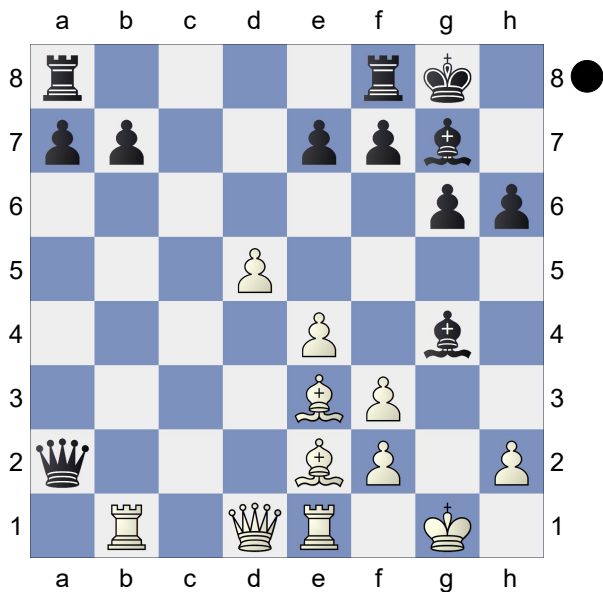
[16.Rxb7 a5 17.Bd4 Nxf3+ 18.Bxf3 Bxf3 19.gxf3 Bxd4 20.Qxd4 Strongly threatening Kg2!. Qa3



½-½ (47) Nepo-MVL, online (blitz)
2022]

[16.Rxb7 a5 (16...e6)]

16...Nxf3+ 5:26 17.gxf3 35



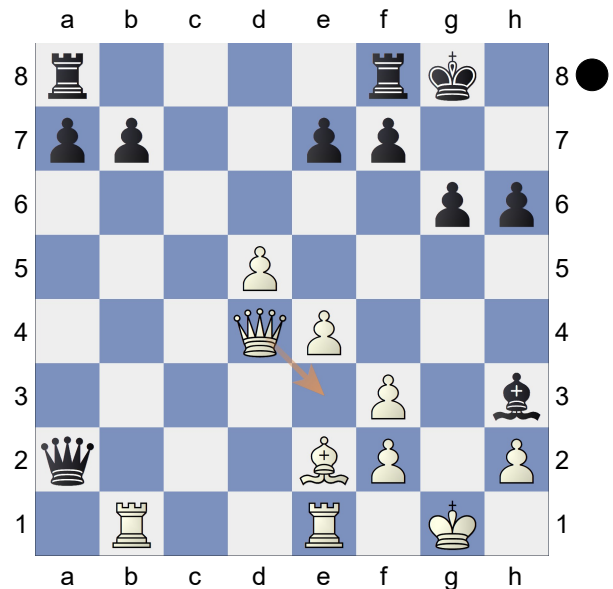
A sharp opening, and a pawn structure
I'm quite familiar with. Even if I
committed one of my most horrible
blunders in it! Perhaps I'll show it in my
next pre-TNM lecture... 17...Bh3 53

18.Bd4 5:38 Bxd4 5:13 19.Qxd4 2:04

(Diagram)

Qa5N 1:27

[19...Qa3 ½-½ (46) Mielke,K (2487)-



Dos Santos,M (2457) ICCF email
2015]

[Predecessor: 19...Qa3 20.Qe3 Qxe3

21.fxe3 Rfb8 22.Kf2 a5 23.Bb5 Rd8

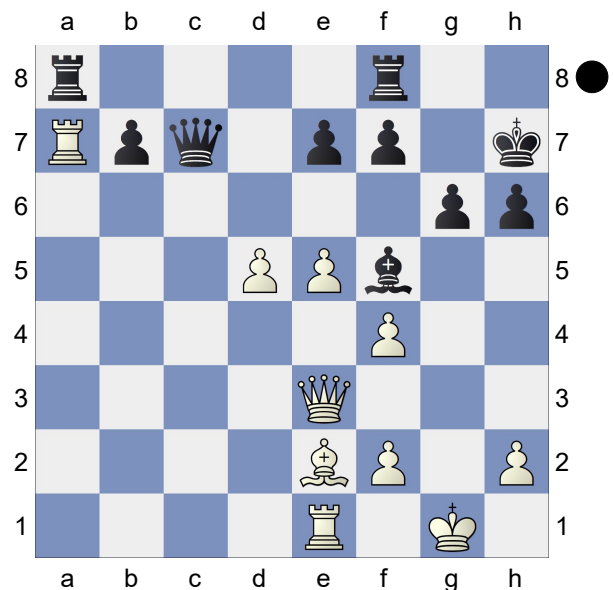
24.Re2 Kg7 25.Ra2 Bc8 ½-½ (46)

Mielke,K (2487)-Dos Santos,M (2457)
ICCF email 2015]

20.Qe3 15:52 Kh7= 5:11 21.f4 4:43

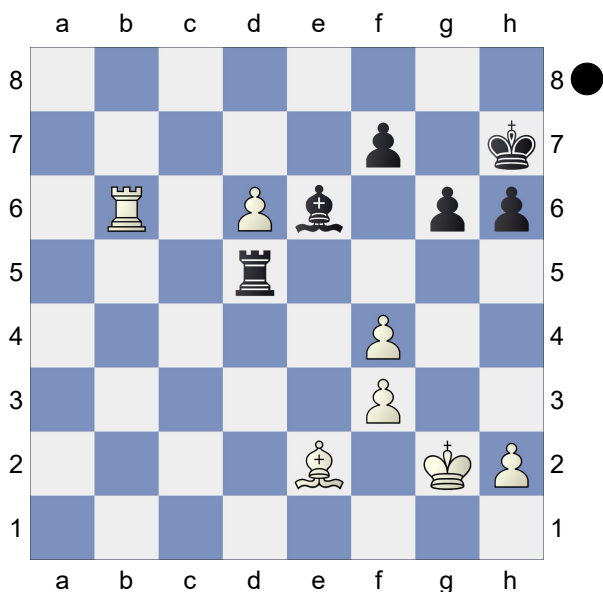
Bd7 1:48 22.Ra1 6:26 Qc7 5:01 23.e5

4:08 Bf5 4:53 24.Rxa7 8:19



It's been fun, but I better get rid of that
pawn before it starts moving down the
board. Stockfish had Black on top by a
bit, which all but disappeared in the time
it took me to type half this comment.

24...Rxa7 3:22 25.Qxa7 3 Qc3 38
26.Rd1 56 It's "0.00s" time. I'll let the TA
 (which I've been running with double
 think time per move) fumble through it
 for a while: **26...Qb4 7:31 27.Qd4 1:50**
Qxd4 11:25 28.Rxd4 1:44 Endgame
KRB-KRB 28...Rc8 44 29.Kg2 7:55
Rc3 4:12 30.f3 15 Bd7 1:47 31.Rb4 55
Rc5 3:08 32.d6 3:14 exd6 2:50
33.Rxb7 11 Be6 52 34.exd6 18 Rd5
1:04 35.Rb6 22



Rd4 8:02

[35...Rd2!? 36.Kf1□ Kg7=]

36.Kf2 1:55 Rxf4 1:07 37.Ke3 8 Rf5 46
38.f4 1:06 Ra5 5:00 39.Bb5 31 Ra7
2:57 40.Kd4 2:21 Kg7 1:37

(Diagram)

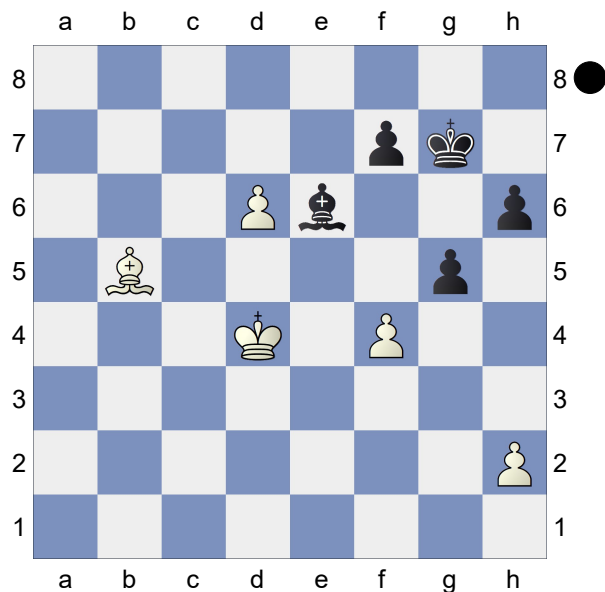
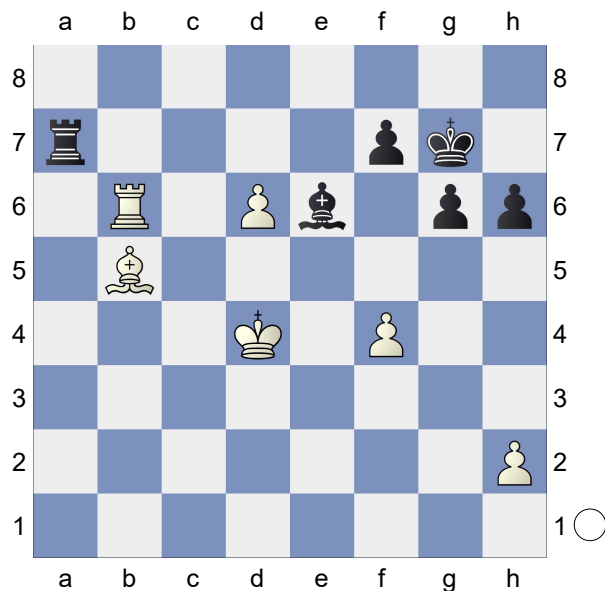
41.Ra6!? 3:15 Rxa6 0.62/28 4:45

On the one hand, I'd seen that he didn't have to trade rooks; on the other, with rooks off one might expect he has better drawing chances. Note for example what eventually happened in the game...

[41...Rb7!= 0.03/37 42.Kc5 Rb8]

42.Bxa6 2 KB-KB 42...g5 1:27 43.Bb5
3:44

(Diagram)



Kf6? 9.69/26 1:30 Did I really miss a win here ?? Let's see...

[43...gxf4 0.93/36 44.d7 Bxd7

45.Bxd7 and here it's already dead drawn (although Stockfish still hasn't "learned" about mismatched bishop and rook pawn!)]

44.fxg5+ 30 hxg5 11

[SF looks at 44...Kxg5 45.Bc4 Kf6 46.Bd5!+-]

[and even 44...Kg7!? 45.Bc4 Bd7 46.gxh6+ Kxh6 47.Bxf7 This is a (tablebase) win and I didn't see why.]

45.Bc6?! 0.93/34 1:47

[45.Kc5!? #39/27 Ke5 46.Bc4!

(46.d7 Bxd7 47.Bxd7 f5=) 46...Bf5
 47.Bxf7 Well: This is a Tablebase Win.
 How embarrassing! Bd7 48.Bc4 g4
 49.Bd5 Bf5 50.Kc6 (50.Bc6 Ke6+-)]

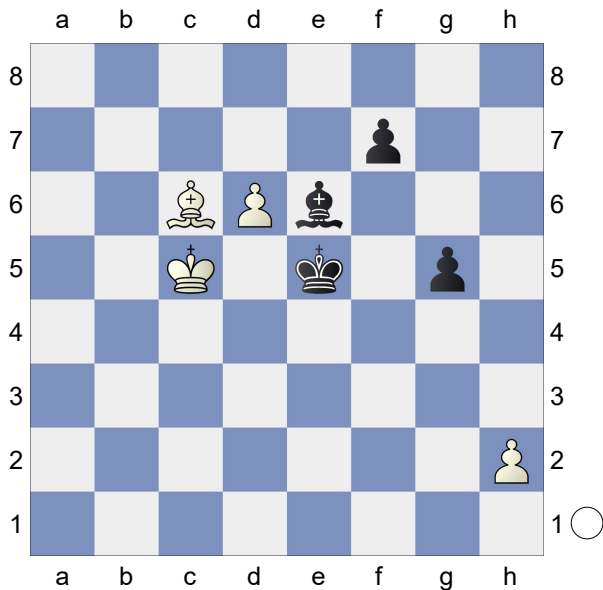
45...Bh3? #39/23 2:12

[45...Bc8± 0.93/34]

46.Kd5 1:38 I thought keeping him off e5 was important, but it's not.

[46.Kc5!]

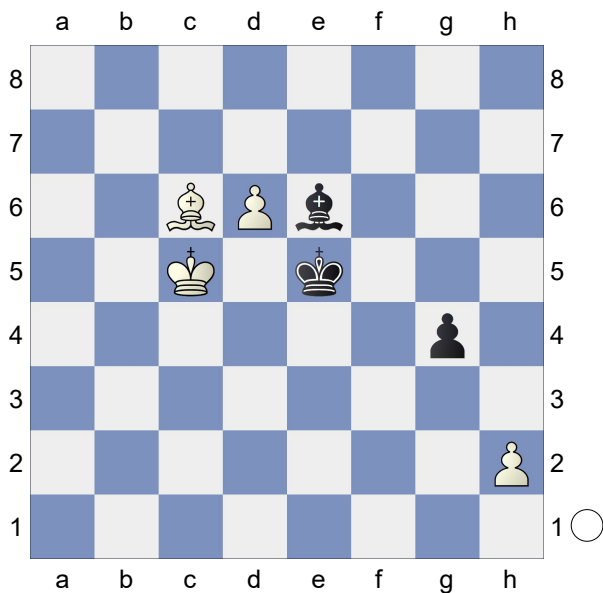
46...Be6+ 1:05 47.Kc5 8 Ke5 59



48.Bd5! 18 At least I found this nice (and only) move here. **48...Bd7 1:10**

[48...Bc8 49.Bxf7]

49.Bxf7 17 Ba4 28 50.Bh5 1:32 Bd7 41 51.Bf3 g4 1:31 52.Bc6 33 Be6 9



53.d7?? 0.00/35 38 With 2:08 minutes left I lose my head and throw away the win. Bad practical play: I could have made a few fast bishop moves to get more time!? Did I have to worry about him trading off the h- and g-pawns? No, then his king is too far away! I couldn't remember if he could hold then but of course it's lost. Bad bad bad. If the h- and g-pawns were already gone and his king is on e5 then it's a draw.

[53.Be8 #25/32 is the fastest win ("DTZ 11") -- using "syzygy-tables.info" Bf5 54.Kc6 Bc8 55.Kc7 Ke6 56.Bc6 (or 56.Bb5; or 56.Ba4) 56...Ke5 ...Kd5 on the other bishop moves made no difference 57.Bd7 Ba6 58.Bxg4 Bb5 59.Bf3 (White could push the h-pawn but why bother) with Bc6 and -- NOW!! -- d7 and queens.]

53...Bxd7!= 8 54.Bxd7 1 Kf4 17

55.Bc6 14 Kg5 0.83/37 18

[55...Ke3= 0.00/35 eliminates the h-pawn directly.]

56.Bg2= 12 "± White is better" says the TA... you gotta love it. 56...Kh6 14

57.Kd6 13 Kh7 17 58.Ke5 12 Kh8 2:15

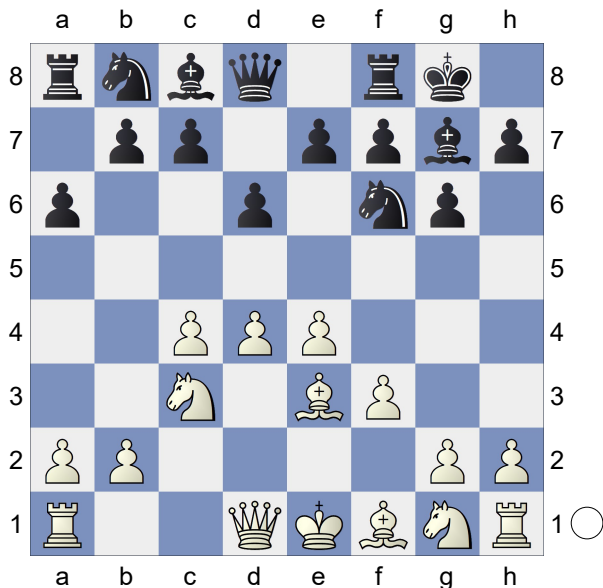
Now for the insult to injury: in the Rapid tournament held the next weekend, I had this huge attacking position against Daniel Cremisi -- he defended fiercely, I went into what must have been a winning BvN ending, but let him slip into this very same mismatched bishop and rook pawn finale. I need to be hit over the head a few times before I learn... Weighted Error Value: White=0.31/ Black=0.47

1/2-1/2

Seshadri, Sudarshan **E81**

Winslow, Elliott **2022**
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (5.4) 30.09.2025
[Winslow, Elliott]

And now this lesson which I may ever learn:
1.d4 4 Nf6 52 2.c4 12 g6 1:06
3.Nc3 7 Bg7 4 4.e4 8 d6 14 5.f3 12
0-0 37 6.Be3 11 a6 1:09



Somewhere I saw a recent article by GM Vasilios Kotronias, a sort of update on his epic Grandmaster Preparation Kings Indian series, where he foregoes his previous 6...c5 for some gambit play. But, (1) I couldn't remember what he gave against 7.Bd3 (2) I can't find the article now! Oh well... **7.Bd3 2:02**

[I'd actually been in this position four months ago -- at the 50th Anniversary tournament of the U.S. Open in Lincoln, Nebraska, against Midwest/Japanese/Washington State polymath Loren Schmidt. 7.Qd2 c6

A) As White a ****LONG**** time ago I played **8.Nge2** b5 9.Nc1 (in the 21st Century and on the Black side again I saw 9.cxb5 axb5 10.Ng3 h5 11.h4 e5 12.dxe5 dxe5 13.Qc2 Na6 14.Rd1 Qc7

15.a3 Be6 16.Be2 Nd7 17.b4 Qb7 18.Kf2 Nb6 0-1 (40), Paetz, M (1752)-Winslow, E (2221) Berkeley 2023) 9...Nbd7 10.g4N e5 11.d5 b4 12.N3e2 c5 13.Bh6 Ne8 14.Bxg7 Qh4+ 15.Ng3 Nxg7 0-1 (46) Winslow, E-Cook, D Maplewood 1966;

B) **8.h4** h5 9.Nh3 b5 10.Bh6 e5 11.Bxg7 Kxg7 12.dxe5 1/2-1/2 (12) Schmidt, L-Winslow, E (2230) Lincoln June 1 2025. He here executed a timely draw offer! I had drawn with Chinese superstar Zhou Jianchao (2661) in the previous round, and wasn't fired up to continue. Loren and I then had a wonderful conversation during lunch which made it worth it -- but then in the last round I blundered a piece on move 18 against a young Indian boy (when I would have tied for 1st-13th(!) with a win as it turned out!), so maybe it wasn't worth it after all.]

7...Nc6 2:32

[Found it! In Informant 156. Here Kotronias gives as the main line 7...c6 I have this sense he doesn't even realize he's in a sort of Byrne Variation -- I didn't think he was that young! ("Sort of" because Robert played it with 5...c6 6.Be3 a6 keeping castling for later if at all)]
 [He also runs amok with a side of 7...Nfd7!? looking for ...c5 and playing a la Benko after White's d5.]

8.Nge2 17 e5 1.00/27 3:22

[TA: Black should play 8...Nb4± 0.34/30 (hard to believe)]

9.d5± 57 Ne7 6:32 I must acquiesce to a bad Mar Del Plata formation (White is far better set to both defend and proceed, on either front).

[9...Nb4 10.Bb1 a5±]

10.0-0?! 0.59/30 5:08 His kingside advances more worried me. (It is, after all, the Saemisch Variation!)

[10.Qd2± 1.15/29]

10...Nd7 1:13 11.b4 1:44 White is better. (TA) **11...f5 59 12.c5 1:03** So he does get that in very quickly, but his knight on e2 and bishop on d3 aren't so well set up for further action in that direction.

12...f4 1:07 13.Bf2 25 g5 14 14.Qb3 -0.09/29 8:58

[14.Kh1± 0.65/29]

14...Kh8 0.38/35 2:02

[Stockfish says "boo!" with 14...g4!?= -0.09/29]

15.b5?N -0.76/32 8:07

[15.Kh1!± 0.38/35]

[15.Rac1 Rf6 16.c6 bxc6 17.dxc6 Nf8 18.a4 g4 19.b5 gxf3 20.gxf3 axb5 21.axb5 0-1 (33) Zheleznyaykov, P (1955)-Kobzar, A (2197) St Petersburg 2011]

15...Nxc5 1:04 16.Bxc5 8 dxc5 5

17.bxa6 26 b6 1:01

[17...bxa6!? is computer-preferred but hard to stomach]

18.a4 57 Bxa6 -0.01/35 1:24

[Again: 18...g4 ̄ -0.44/32]

19.Bxa6= 8 Rxa6 6 20.a5 10:28 Qa8 0.00/46 2:49

[20...Qd6 ̄ -0.36/31

is more appropriate.]

21.Nb5= 21 Qb8 3:25 22.Qc4 3:07

Rxa5 41 23.Rxa5 7 bxa5 3 24.Qxc5 2:09 Qb6? 0.59/36 1:46

[24...Rc8!= 0.00/46 but it was too complicated for my weak mind.]

25.Rc1± 9 Rb8!? 2:24 26.Nxc7± 1:16

Nc8 3:40 27.Qxb6! 5:05 Nxb6 16

28.Ne6 0.00/45 2:30

[28.Rb1!± 0.84/31 Na6 would now be deadly. Nd7 (28...a4? 29.Na6+-) 29.Rxb8+ Nxb8 30.Nc3 and TA Stockfish and "New Computer" Stockfish agree for a

change: White is doing pretty well (although it's shrinking as I type).]

28...Bf6 27 29.d6?! 2:01

[29.Rc7 also seems to lose its luster as it goes. a4±]

29...Kg8 1:10

[29...a4 30.Nc3±]

[Stockfish wants to start pushing rook pawns; I wanted my king in the game. It sure helped in a few moves! 29...h5 30.h3 a4]

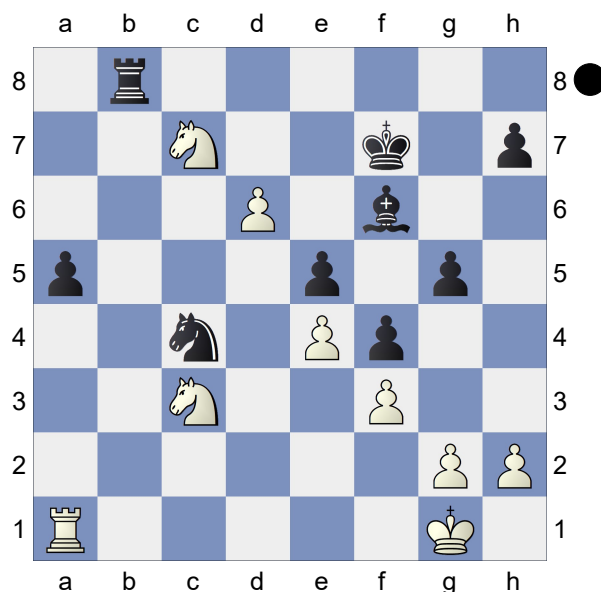
30.Ra1 -0.28/35 4:09

[̄30.Rc7 0.10/42]

30...Kf7 ̄ 2:01 31.Nc7?! -1.09/34 25

[31.Nc5 ̄ -0.50/38]

31...Nc4! ̄ 1:55 -0.88/27 32.Nc3 4:53



Bd8 -0.61/29 4:53

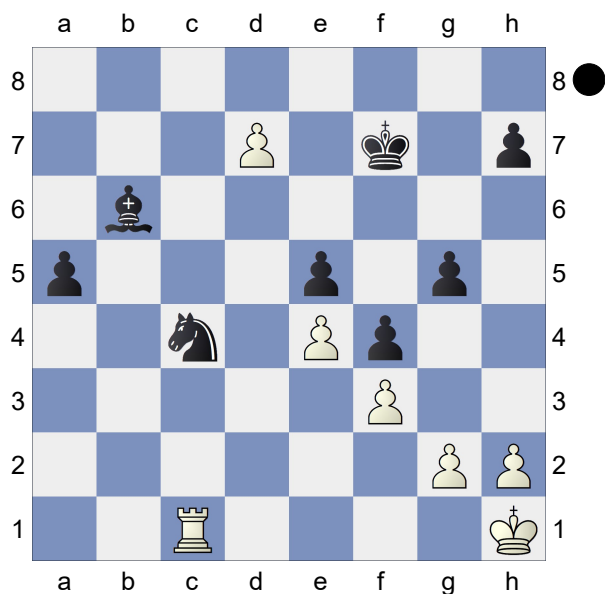
[32...Rb2! ̄ -1.10/27 (TA): Strongly threatening ...Bd8!. I wanted to play it, but something distracted me. Maybe "Rooks belong behind passed pawns." Then again, "Rooks belong on the 7th rank." Not enough rooks. 33.Rc1 Nxd6]

33.N3d5? -2.51/24 1:10 (TA) This costs White the game. And surprised me!

[I thought I'd be okay after 33.N3b5 ̄ -0.61/29 but probably not winning: Rb6 34.Kf2 and my king can't get in.]

33...Rb7+- 4:39 34.d7? -4.64/28 3:40

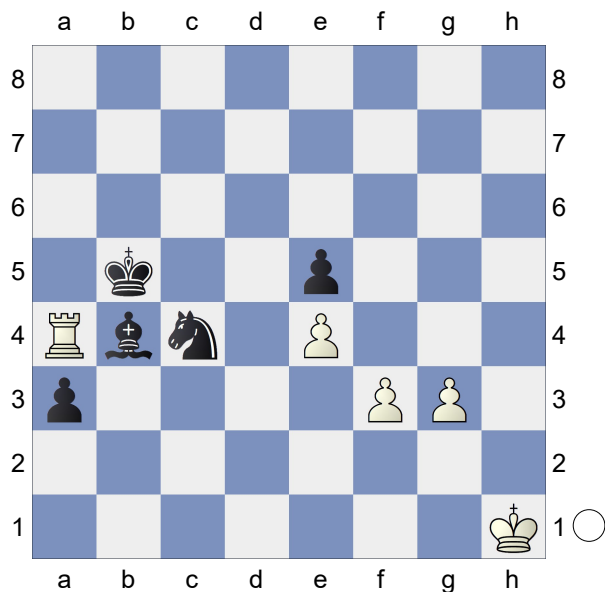
[34.Na6 -2.15/28]
 34...Rxc7 46 35.Nxc7 15 Bxc7 1
 36.Rc1 1:14 Bb6+ 9 37.Kh1 1:20



Ne3 18 38.Rc6 26 Bd8 29 39.Rh6 23
 Ke7 4:15 40.Rxh7+ 6 Kd6 9 41.g3 21
 fxg3 1:48 42.hxg3 6 Be7 18

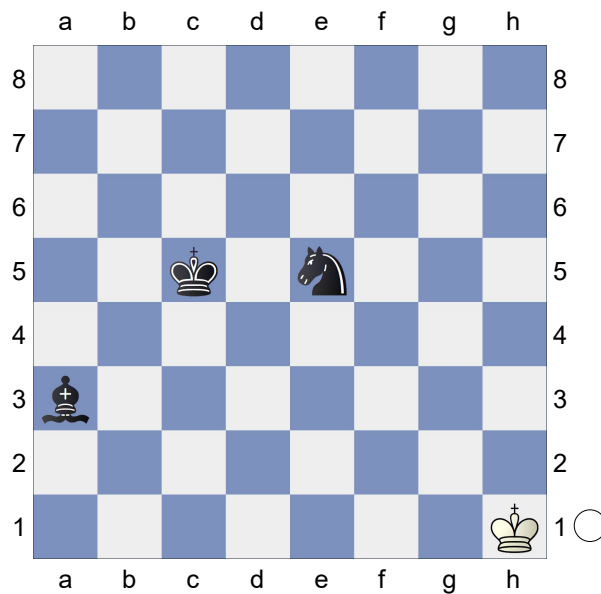
After this and that, the d-pawn is finally removed. 43.Rh6+ 6:47 Kxd7 15
 44.Ra6 5 Bb4 1:55 45.Rg6?! -7.35/23
 1:52

[45.Kg1 -3.97/23 Nc4 46.Kf1]
 45...a4 2:10 46.Rxg5 44 a3 9 47.Rg7+
 4 Kc6 4 48.Ra7 9 Nc4 16 49.Ra4 9:02
 Kb5 7



50.Rxa3 4 Bxa3 11 51.f4 3 Kc5 27

52.fxe5 5 Nxe5 10 53.g4 6 Nxg4 14
 54.e5 5 Nxe5 19



This is the second time a pretty strong player decided the best chance was to test out my Mate with Bishop and Knight vs. Lone King competence. Except I know a trick or two in that. I'm 3-0. Meanwhile, tablebase Nalimov: #25. By the way, this isn't the lesson I was talking about; more the interesting handling of the Saemisch KID!

Especially that 7...Nfd7!? stuff... 55.Kg2
 9 Kd5 23

[55...Kd4 -1 (meaning, 55...Kd4 was one move faster) 56.Kf2 Nd3+]
 56.Kf2 1:10 Ke4 38 57.Kg3 16
 [57.Kg2 +1 (and this would have taken a perfect me one move longer)]
 57...Bc5 1:23

[57...Nd3 -1]
 58.Kg2 11 Kf4 30 59.Kh1 25 Kf3 1:41
 60.Kh2 11 Ng4+ 1:26 61.Kh1 18 Nf2+
 8

[61...Bd6 -1 62.Kg1 Nf2 63.Kf1 Bh2
 64.Ke1 Ne4 65.Kd1 (65.Kf1 Nd2+
 66.Ke1 Ke3) 65...Ke3 (65...Be5
 66.Kc2 Nc5) 66.Kc2 Nd2 67.Kb2
 Bd6]

62.Kh2 9 Bd6+ 58 63.Kg1 7 Be5 11
 64.Kf1 21 Bh2 3 65.Ke1 7 Ne4 21

66.Kd1 4:21 Ke3 12 67.Kc2 26 Nd2!
 1:11 68.Kc3 2:00
 [68.Kb2 +1]
 68...Bd6! 8 69.Kc2 10 Be5 17 70.Kd1
 35 Kd3! 15 71.Ke1 20 Bg3+ 4 72.Kd1
 6 Bf2 14
 [72...Nc4 -1]
 73.Kc1 10 Nc4 28 74.Kd1 38 Nb2+ 15
 [74...Ne3+ 75.Kc1 Kc3 76.Kb1
 Kb3]
 75.Kc1 6 Kc3 3 76.Kb1 7 Kb3 23
 77.Kc1 9 Be3+ 7 78.Kb1 8 Nc4 10
 79.Ka1 9 Bf4 4 80.Kb1 13 Na3+ 6
 81.Ka1 4 Be5# Weighted Error Value:
 White=0.53/Black=0.09 Not too bad, I
 only wasted a couple moves.
 0-1

□ Winslow,Elliott

■ Chan,Kyle

2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (6.2) 07.10.2025

[Winslow,Elliott]

Another wobbly performance that teetered on lost before I accept his crazed wandering king with open arms (and checkmate). 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 e6 3.Nc3 d5 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Bg5 c6 6.e3 Be7 7.Bd3 0-0 8.Qc2 h6 9.Bh4 Re8 10.Nge2 Nh5 11.Bxe7 Qxe7 12.h3± Nf6

[12...a5]

13.g4?!= This is my own addiction: I learned about the Minority Attack half a century ago, I think originally from "New Ideas in Chess" by Larry Evans, an exceptionally instructive little book. But my sense now is playing that way (Rb1, b4-b5 etc.) gives White some plus but not much. So I've sworn myself to opposite sides castling, or at least not castling on kingside. I think I'm cutting myself short this way, although I've

certainly won some wonderful games once my opponents lose their way!

[13.0-0]

13...b5 In general this doesn't scare me, which might be some genetic failure to sense danger.

[13...a5]

[13...c5!? 14.dxc5 Nbd7=]

14.Ng3

[14.Nf4!?]

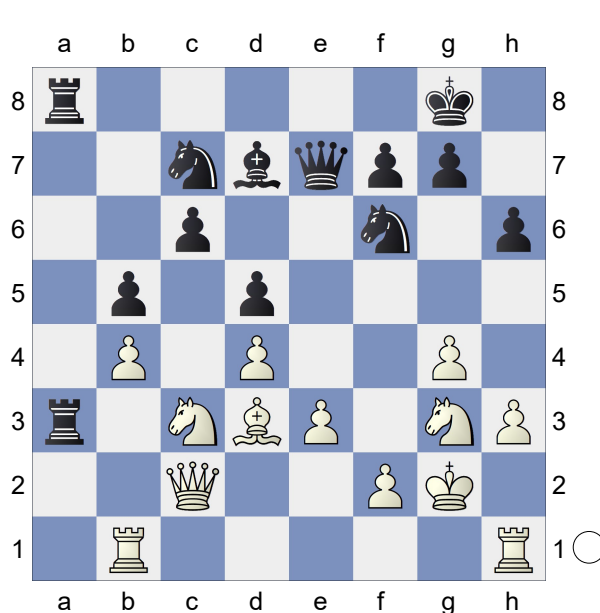
14...Na6 15.a3

[15.Qd2!?]

15...Bd7 16.b4?!

[16.0-0]

16...Nc7± 17.Kf1?! The e-file was looking a bit uncomfortable, but who knows, maybe Re1 and e3-e4!? 17...a5± /± 18.Rb1 axb4 19.axb4 Ra3 20.Kg2 Rea8



During the game I was thinking "do I have to concern myself?" only to notice it was "Yes!" after his next move.

21.Rhe1 Qd6?

[21...Na6 22.Na2 h5! Stockfish 17.1 backs up its claim that Black is better by throwing this h-pawn at my king. 23.f3 h4 24.Nf1 Ne8 25.Rb3 Ra4± Precarious.]

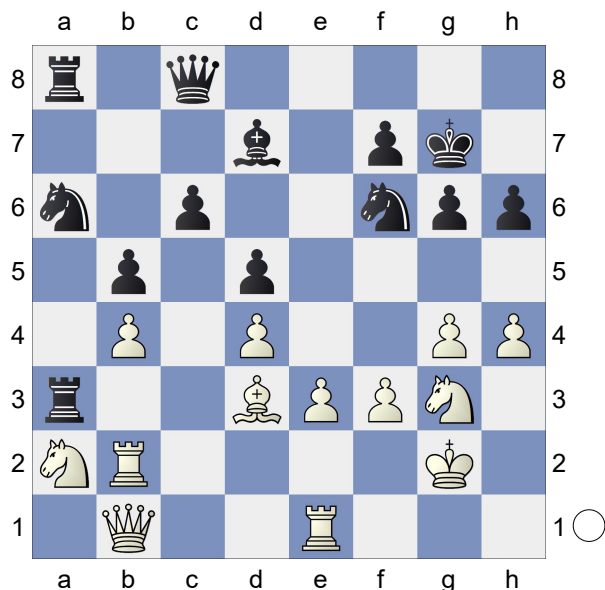
22.f3?! Na6 23.Na2 Qf8

[23...Qe7]

24.h4

[24.Re2]

24...g6 25.Rb2 Kg7 26.Qb1 Qc8



27.h5? Rather a bluff:

[27.Rb3 takes some of the pressure off by diluting the play on the a-file.

Rxb3 28.Qxb3 Nc7 29.Qc2]

27...Be8?

[27...gxh5! 28.gxh5 Nc7

White really can't make anything of the g-file.]

28.hxg6?!

[28.Nc1!±]

28...fxg6 (After this every move for Black was taking a few minutes, running down his clock. **29.Nc1± Qd8?!**

[29...Bf7]

30.Nce2 Nc7

[30...Ng8!? 31.Nf4 Qd6±]

31.Nf4 {Now the pressure is just too much} **31...Ra1?!**

[31...g5! 32.Nh3!+- but just.]

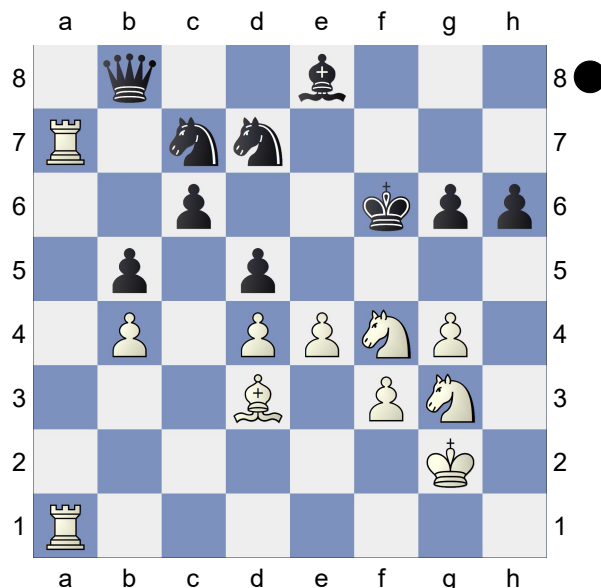
32.Qxa1 Rxa1 33.Rxa1 Now it's "White wins as he pleases" but still... **33...Qb8**

34.Rba2 Nd7 35.Ra7 Kf6?!

[35...Nf8 36.Bc2 or anything else]

36.e4

(Diagram)



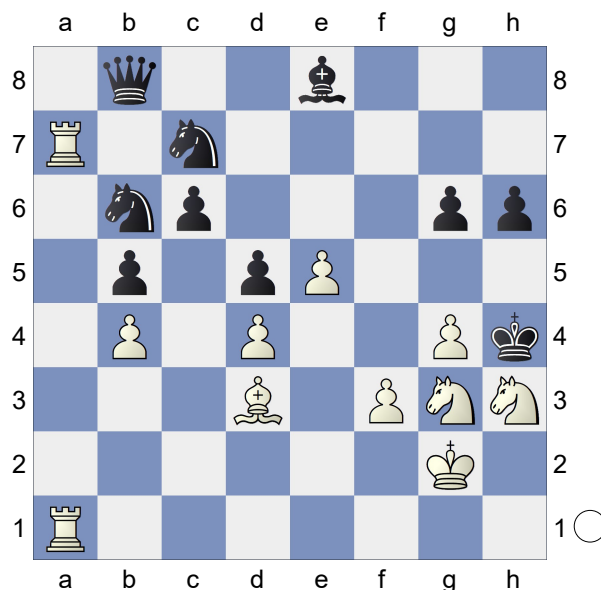
Nb6?!

[36...Kg5 37.e5!]

37.e5+ Kg5?!

[37...Ke7 continues; the text doesn't.]

38.Nh3+ Kh4



39.Rxc7 I thought I was so clever but even here this is a lot slower.

[39.Rh1! Qxa7 40.Ng1+! Kg5

41.Rh5+! Kf4 (41...gxh5 42.Nh3+ Kh4 43.Nf5#) 42.Kf2! and mate in two.]

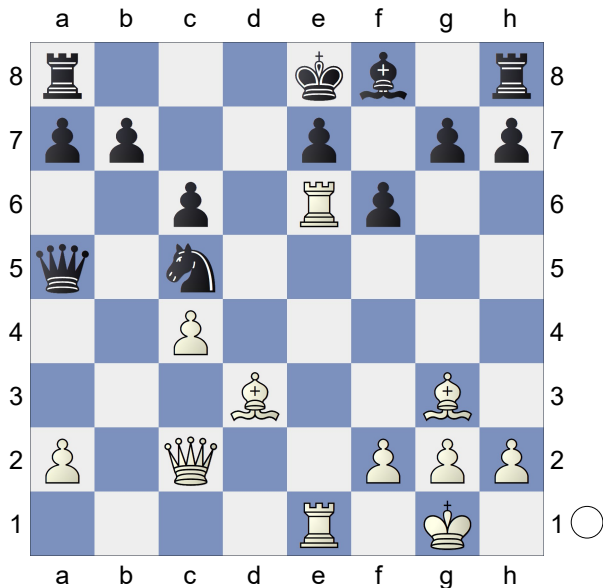
39...Qxc7

[39...Nc4 causes some trouble, although 40.f4! Qa8!! 41.Rh1! stumbles into mate in 6.]

40.Rh1 Bf7 41.f4
1-0

□ Parsons,Stephen A16 1861
 ■ Rajaram,Raghu 1947
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (2.12) 09.09.2025
 [Winslow,Elliott]

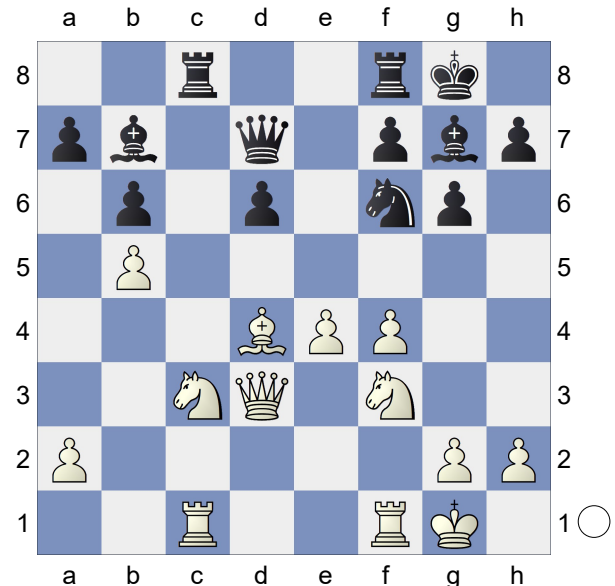
Of the players with 4, Parsons is the lowest rated. But he's been playing with more and more energy, witness the finish to this game: 1.c4 Nf6 2.Nc3 c6 3.e4 d5 4.e5 Ne4 5.Nxe4 dxe4 6.d4 exd3 7.Bxd3 Qa5+ 8.Bd2 Qxe5+ 9.Ne2 Qxb2 10.0-0 Qb6 11.Re1 Bg4 12.Qc2 Bxe2 13.Rxe2 Qc7 14.Rae1 Nd7 15.Bg5 f6 16.Bh4 Qf4 17.Re4 Qc7 18.Re6 Nc5 19.Bg3 Qa5



20.Bg6+ hxc6 21.Qxc6+ Kd7 22.Rd6+ Kc7 23.Rxf6+ Kb6 24.Rxc6+
1-0

□ Heiserman,Jimmy A50 2291
 ■ Parsons,Stephen 1861
 2025 Fall TNM: 2000+ (3.7) 16.09.2025
 [Winslow,Elliott]

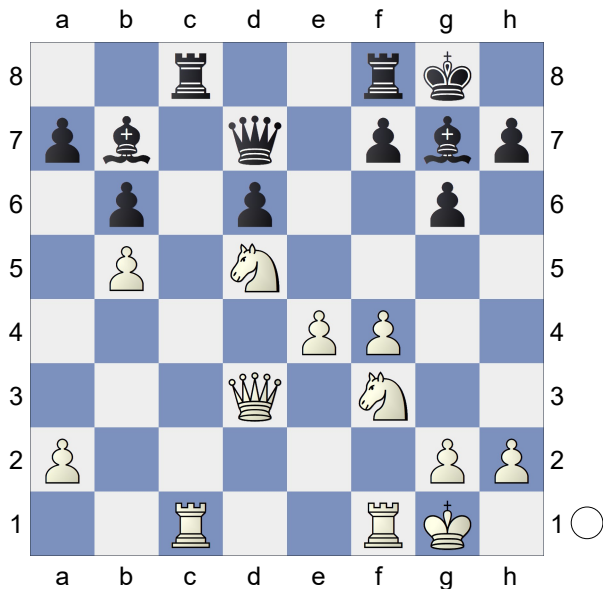
Meanwhile I had this game marked for Newsletter inclusion a while ago. Heiserman outclasses Parsons in the ending after Black misses a draw. 1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 b6 3.Nc3 Bb7 4.d5 g6 5.e4 d6 6.f4 Nbd7 7.Nf3 Bg7 8.Bd3 0-0 9.0-0 e6 10.Be3 exd5 11.cxd5 Nc5 12.Bd4 Qd7 13.b4 Nxd3 14.Qxd3 c6 15.dxc6 Bxc6 16.b5 Bb7 17.Rac1 Rac8



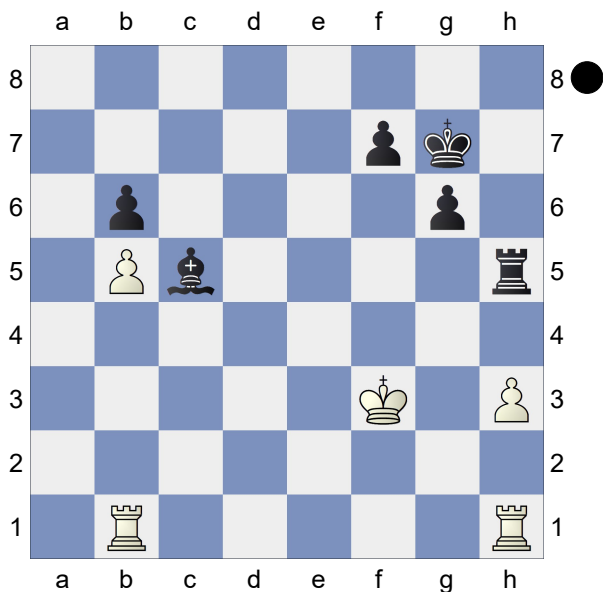
18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Nd5 Bg7

(Diagram)

20.Ne5 Qe6 21.Nc6 Rfe8 22.f5 Qxe4 23.Qxe4 Rxe4 24.Nde7+ Kf8 25.Nxc8 Bxc8 26.fxg6 hxc6 27.Rcd1 Be6 28.Rxd6 Bh6 29.a4 Be3+ 30.Kh1 Bc5 31.Rd8+ Kg7 32.Ra1 Bb3 33.Rd7 Bxa4 34.Nxa7 Bb3 35.h3 Re2 36.Nc6 Be6 37.Rdd1 Bc4 38.Nd4 Rf2 39.Rac1 Bd5 40.Nf3 Bxf3 41.gxf3 Rxf3 42.Kg2 Rf2+ 43.Kg3 Rf5 44.Rb1 Bf2+ 45.Kg2 Bc5 46.Rf1



Rg5+ 47.Kf3 Rh5 48.Rh1=



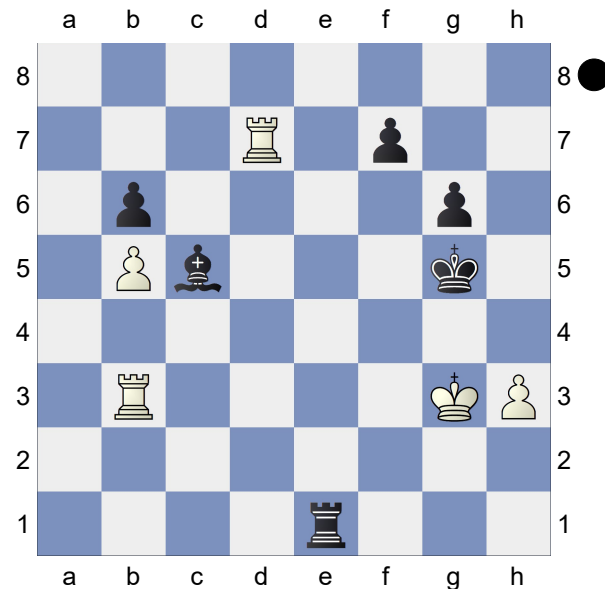
**Re5 49.Rb3 Kf6 50.Rd1 Kg5 51.Rd7
Re1 52.Kg3**

(Diagram)

Rg1+??

[52...f5=]

**53.Kh2 f5 54.Rg3+ Rxc3 55.Kxc3
Kf6 56.Kf3 Kg5 57.Rd5 Bg1 58.Rd6
Bc5 59.Rc6 Bg1 60.Kg2 Be3 61.Kf3
Bg1 62.Rc8 Bd4 63.Rd8 Bc5 64.Rh8
Kf6 65.h4 Kg7 66.Rc8 Bg1 67.Kf4
Kh6 68.Rh8+ Kg7 69.Rc8 Kh6
70.Kf3 Bd4 71.Rd8 Bg1 72.Rd7 Bc5**



**73.Kf4 Bg1 74.Ke5 Bf2 75.Rb7 Kh5
76.Rh7+ Kg4 77.Rh6 g5 78.h5**

Really, this is fine.

[78.hxc5 Kxc5 79.Rh8 might be
more "direct"]

78...f4

[78...Kf3!? 79.Rg6!]

**79.Ke4 Bc5 80.Rh7 f3 81.h6 Bf8
82.Rf7 Bxh6 83.Rxf3 Bg7 84.Rf1 Bc3
85.Rg1+ Kh4 86.Kf5 Bd2 87.Rg2
Be3 88.Rg4+ Kh5**

[88...Kh3 89.Rxc5]

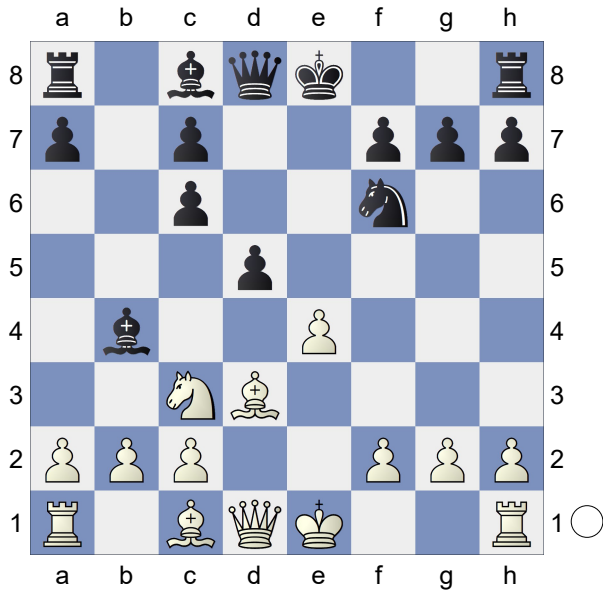
89.Rg3

1-0

C47
 □ Schaezlein,Charlie **1609**
 ■ Lamouroux,Lucas **1943**
 2025 Fall TNM: 1600-1999 (1.11) 2.9.25
 [Winslow,Elliott]

Meanwhile: in the middle section it's going to be a showdown between Lucas Lamouroux and Carl Pickering at 5 points going into the last round, with William Gray a half point out and three others a point out. But back in Round 1 it could have been quite a different story had Charlie Schaezlein brought home

what would have been a nice upset from
a fractured Scotch Game... **1.e4 e5**
2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 exd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6
5.Nxc6 bxc6 6.Nc3 Bb4 7.Bd3 d5



8.0-0 Be6? 9.Bg5?

[9.e5!±]

9...h6?

[9...Bxc3! 10.bxc3 dxe4]

10.Bh4?

[10.exd5! cxd5 11.Bxf6 Qxf6

12.Bb5+! Kf8! 13.Nxd5 Bxd5

14.Qxd5 Rb8±]

10...Be7?

[10...Bxc3 11.exd5 Bg4!∞]

11.Bg3

[11.e5!]

11...0-0 12.e5 Nd7 13.f4 Nc5?

[13...f5!]

14.f5+- Nxd3 15.Qxd3 Bc8 16.f6

Bc5+ 17.Bf2 Bxf2+ 18.Rxf2 g6

19.Qe3 Kh7 20.Rd1 Bf5

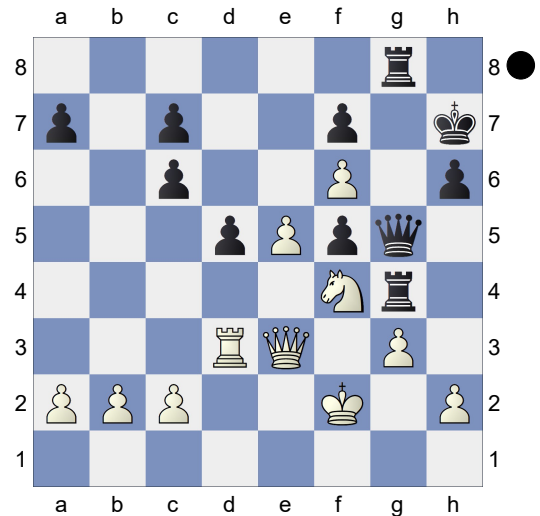
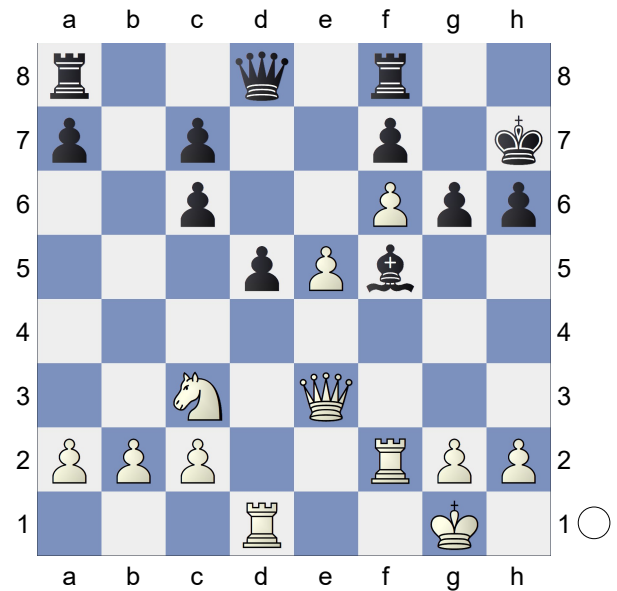
(Diagram)

21.Rxf5?! gxf5 22.Rd4± Rg8 23.Rh4?

[23.Ne2! Rg4 24.Nf4 Qg8 25.Kf2

Qg5 26.g3 Rg8 27.Rd3

(Diagram)



Rxf4+!? 28.Qxf4 Qh5 29.Qh4! Qxh4
30.gxh4 Rg4 31.h5 f4 32.Ra3 Rg5
33.Rxa7 Rxe5 34.Rxc7 Rxh5
35.Kg2 f3+ 36.Kxf3 Rxh2 37.Rxc6
d4!=]

23...Rg6= 24.Ne2 Qb8! 25.b3 Qb6

26.Nd4! Re8

(Diagram)

27.Kh1?

[27.Qf4 Qb4 28.Qe3!=]

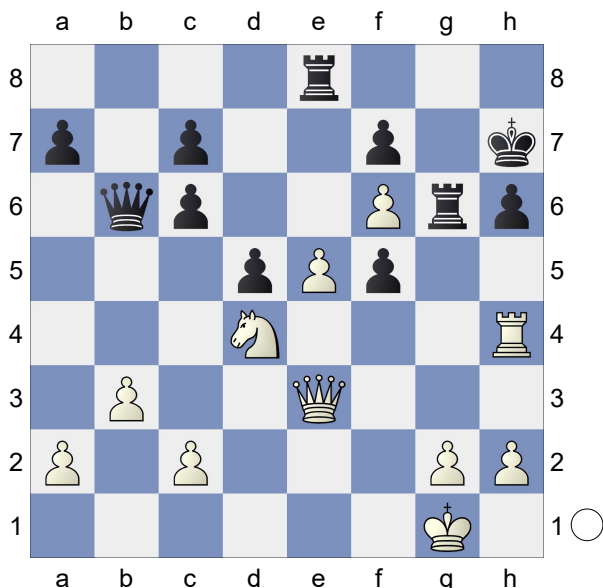
27...Rxf6-+

[27...Qa6! 28.Kg1 Qxa2 29.Nxf5??

Qb1+ 30.Kf2 Qxc2+]

28.Qf4 Qb4! 29.Qf2 Rxe5 30.Nf3 Re4

31.Ng5+ Kg7 32.Nxe4 fxe4 33.Qg3+



Kf8 34.Kg1 Qd4+ 35.Kh1 Rf1#
0-1

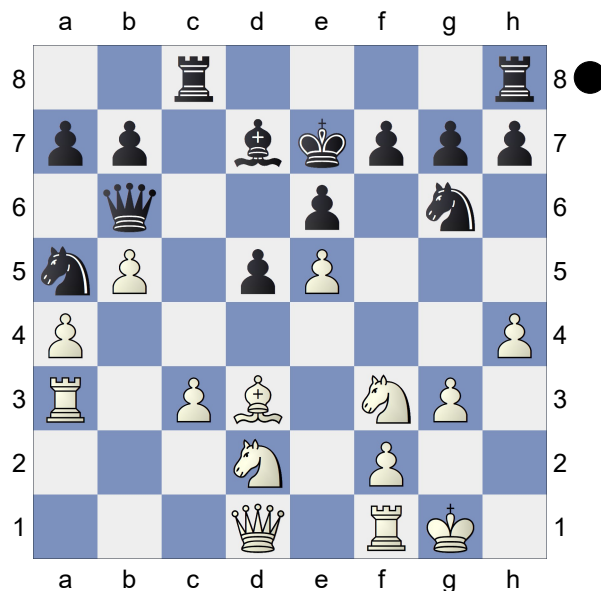
□ Lamouroux, Lucas **D00** 1943
 ■ Krishnan, Sreyshtaa **1783**
 2025 Fall TNM: 1600-1999 (6.5) 07.10.25
[Winslow, Elliott]

1.d4 d5 2.Bf4 Nf6 3.e3 e6 4.Nd2
 Bd6 5.Bg3 b6 6.Ngf3 Bb7 7.Bd3 c5
 8.c3 Qc7 9.Ne5 Nbd7 10.f4
 Is this one of the London System's
 dream positions? All it needs is Black
 castling kingside... 10...c4 11.Bc2 b5
 12.a3

[12.Qf3±]
 12...a5 13.Ndf3 Ne4 14.Bxe4 dxe4
 15.Ng5 Bxe5 16.fxe5 h6 17.Qh5 Nf8
 18.0-0 g6 19.Qh4 hxg5 20.Qxh8
 0-0-0 No safety there. 21.Qg7 b4
 22.Rxf7 Nd7 23.axb4 axb4 24.Qxg6
 bxc3 25.bxc3 Qb6 26.Rff1 Qb2
 27.Qxe6 Qxc3 28.Rfc1 Qxe3+ 29.Bf2
 Qd2 30.Qxc4+ Nc5 31.Qxc5+ Bc6
 32.Qxc6+ Kb8 33.Qc7#
 1-0

□ Tam, Hoa Long **C02** 1698
 ■ Pickering, Carl Anthony **1652**
 2025 Fall TNM: 1600-1999 (5.15) 30.9.25
[Winslow, Elliott]

Here's a long win by Pickering. I'm not
 going to go into it in depth, but I do like
 how Black seemed to be dead, only no.
 29.Rxe6+ is supposed to be a finisher!
 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 c5 4.c3 Nc6
 5.Nf3 Bd7 This is The Thing against the
 Advance French these days, with articles
 in the Informant and such. 6.dxc5 Bxc5
 7.b4 Be7 8.b5 Na5 9.Bd3 Qb6 10.a4
 Bc5 11.0-0 Ne7 12.Nbd2 Ng6 13.g3
 Rc8 14.Ba3 Bxa3 15.Rxa3 Ke7 16.h4

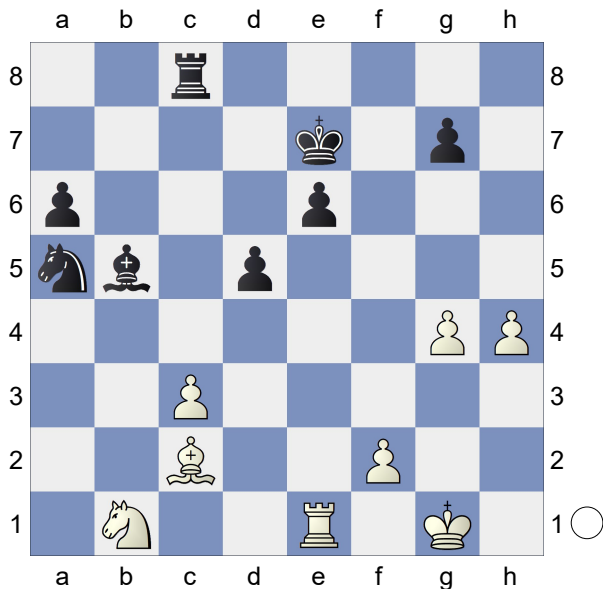


Nxe5 17.Nxe5 Qd6 18.Nxf7 Qxa3
 19.Nxh8 Rxh8 20.Qc2 Rc8 21.Nb1
 Qb3 22.Qxb3 Nxb3 23.Bxh7 a6
 24.Bc2 Nc5 25.bxa6 bxa6 26.a5 Bb5
 27.Re1 Nb7 28.g4 Nxa5

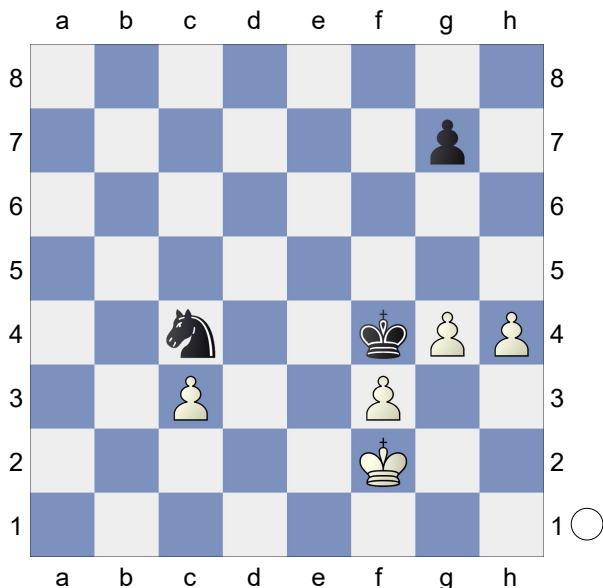
(Diagram)

29.Rxe6+ Actually this doesn't set up
 anything good for White other than
 winning a pawn.

[29.h5 comes much closer to
 equality.]



29...Kxe6 30.Bf5+ Ke5 31.Bxc8 Kf4
 32.Kg2 Nc4 33.f3?!
 [33.Bb7 Nb6 34.f3 Bd3 35.Na3 Nc4
 36.Nxc4 Bxc4]
 33...a5! 34.Bb7 a4 35.Kf2 a3 36.Nxa3
 Nxa3 37.Bxd5 Bc4 38.Bxc4 Nxc4



39.h5 Ne5 40.h6 gxh6 41.Kg2 Nxf3
 42.c4 Kxg4 43.c5 Ne5 44.Kh2 Kf5
 45.Kh3 Ke6 46.Kh4 Kd5 47.Kh5 Nf7
 48.c6 Kxc6 49.Kg6 Kd6 50.Kh5 Ke5
 51.Kh4 Kf5 52.Kh5 Kf6 53.Kh4 Kg6
 54.Kg4 h5+ 55.Kh4 Nd6 56.Kh3 Kg5
 57.Kg3 Ne4+ 58.Kh3 Kf4 59.Kh4 Nf6
 60.Kh3 Kf3 61.Kh2 Kg4 62.Kg2 Kh4
 63.Kh2 Nd5 64.Kg2 Nf4+ 65.Kh2

Kg4 66.Kg1 Kh3 67.Kh1 h4 68.Kg1
 Nh5 69.Kh1 Nf6 70.Kg1 Nh5 71.Kh1
 Ng7 72.Kg1 Ne6 73.Kh1 Nc5 74.Kg1
 Ne4 75.Kh1 Kg3 76.Kg1 h3 77.Kh1
 Nf2+
 0-1

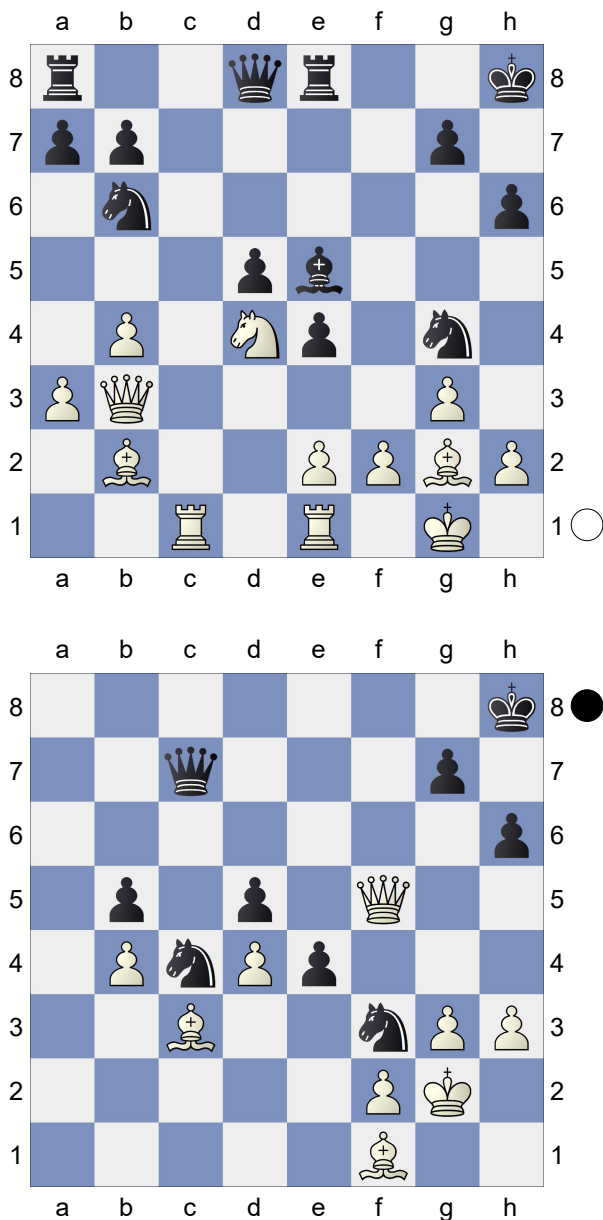
□ Starr, Albert Martin A00 1500
 ■ Liu, Eric 1288
 2025 Fall TNM: u1600 (1.22) 02.09.2025
 [Winslow, Elliott]

And in the Under 1600 section, Eric Liu is in the clear with an impressive 5 wins and a draw, no losses to round the corner a clear point ahead of the field. He's played one of the 4.5s, Zachary Wickliffe, so it's probably going to be Andrew Braithwaite in the last round. He shows a fondness for the Stonewall and even here against Albert Starr's Orangutan in Round 1 he set up the standard formation. Less standard is his getting in ...e5! 1.b4 d5 2.Bb2 Bg4 3.g3 e6 4.Bg2 f5 5.Nf3 Nf6 6.a3 Bd6 7.0-0 Nbd7 8.d3 c6 9.Nbd2 0-0 10.c4 Re8± 11.Re1 e5 12.Qb3 Kh8 13.Rac1 h6 14.cxd5 cxd5 15.Nf1 e4 16.dxe4 fxe4 17.Nd4 Be5 18.Ne3 Nb6 19.Nxg4 Nxg4

(Diagram)

20.e3?
 [20.f4!±]
 20...Nc4 21.Bc3 Rf8 22.Rf1 Bxd4
 23.exd4 b5 24.h3 Nf6 25.Rfd1 Nh7
 26.a4 a6 27.axb5 axb5 28.Ra1 Ng5
 29.Rxa8 Qxa8 30.Ra1 Qd8 31.Qd1
 Qc8 32.Qg4 Qe8 33.Ra7 Rf7 34.Rxf7
 Qxf7 35.Bf1 Qc7 36.Qf5 Nf3+ 37.Kg2

(Diagram)



Ne3+ Black has a number of other moves that draw, but this is the most interesting.

[These all get "0.00" on SF: 37...Qc6]

[37...Nb6]

[37...Nd6]

[37...Qb7]

38.fxe3 Qxc3 39.Qf8+

[39.Be2 doesn't change anything.]

39...Kh7 40.Qf5+ Kh8 41.Qf8+

One side or another was going to set up repetition.

1/2-1/2

B23
1288
1449
 2025 Fall TNM: u1600 (4.6) 23.09.2025
 [Winslow,Elliott]

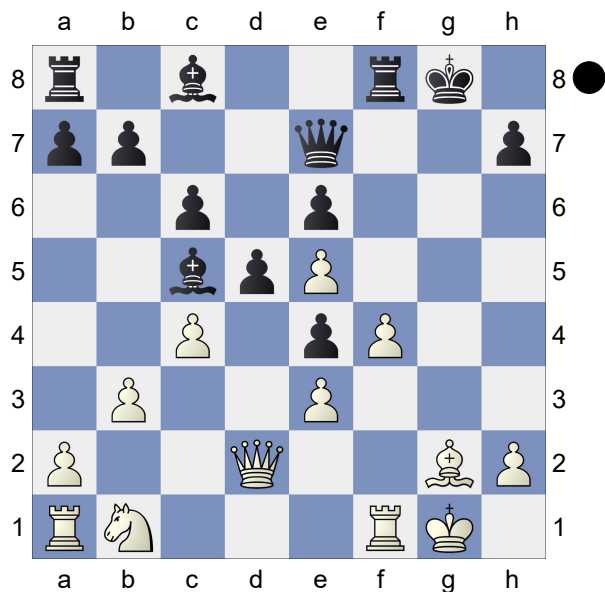
White play a Grand Prix positionally -- although I'm not sure what's "positional" about planting one's knight on a1! How *did* it get out of that? Anyway, Black ran low on time might be the main thing that happened. 1.e4 c5 2.Nc3 Nc6 3.f4 g6 4.Nf3 Bg7 5.Bc4 e6 6.d3 Nge7 7.0-0 d5 8.Bb5 0-0 9.Bxc6 Nxc6 10.Qe1 Nd4 11.Nxd4 cxd4 12.Na4 b5 13.Nc5 Qb6 14.Nb3 dxe4 15.Qxe4 Bb7 16.Qe2 Rac8 17.Rb1 a5 18.Qd1 a4 19.Na1 b4 20.Bd2 Bd5 21.a3 b3 22.Bb4 bxc2 23.Nxc2 Bb3 24.Bxf8 Bxc2 25.Qd2 Bxb1 26.Bxg7 Rc2 27.Qb4 Qxb4 28.axb4 Rxb2 29.Bxd4 Rxb4 30.Bc5 Rb3 31.d4 Bd3 32.Ra1 Bb5 33.Ra2 Kg7 34.Be7 Rd3 35.Rb2 Bc4 36.Rb4 Bb3 37.Rb8 Rxd4 38.g3 Rd1+ 39.Kg2 Rd2+ 40.Kh3 Bc4 41.g4 Bf1+ 42.Kg3 Rg2+ 43.Kf3 f5 44.g5 Rxh2 45.Bf8+ Kf7 46.Bd6 e5 47.fxe5 Bc4 48.e6+ Kxe6 49.Bxh2 a3 50.Re8+ Kd5 51.Be5 a2 52.Kf4 Kc5 53.Rh8 Kb4 54.Rxh7
1-0

A90
1343
1288
 2025 Fall TNM: u1600 (5.6) 30.09.2025
 [Winslow,Elliott]

This stonewall worked out, rather nicely.

1.d4 6 e6 4 2.c4 5 f5 5 3.g3 10 Nf6 7
 4.Bg2 17 d5 5 5.Qc2 39 c6 34 6.Nf3 17
 Bd6 11 7.b3 30 Qe7 11 8.0-0 27 0-0 5
 9.Ne5 3:58 Nbd7 2:11 10.Bf4 3:46 Ne4
 2:00 11.f3 3:59 Nxe5 10:21 12.dxe5 29

Bc5+ 24 13.e3 2:10 g5 6:47 14.fxe4
11:47 fxe4 8:02 15.Qd2 6:51 gxf4 2:17
16.gxf4 58



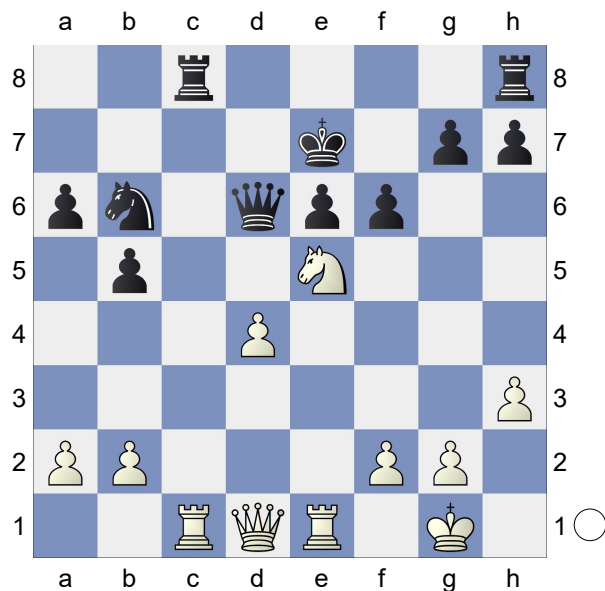
Bd7 9:44 17.a3 1:57 a5 1:59 18.Kh1
7:56 Kh8 6:54 19.Qc1 10:47 Rg8 3:19
20.Nc3 59 Rg6 1:23 21.Rf2 11:34 Rag8
24 22.Raa2 2:25 b5 21:17 23.cxb5 3:36
cxb5 14 24.a4 3:32 b4 5:50 25.Nb5 21
Bb6 24 26.Rac2 16 Qh4 28 27.Rfe2
5:06 Rh6 2:36 28.Qg1 1:22 Rg3 1:16
29.h3 3:24 Rhg6 4:36 30.Qf2 5:56
Rhx3+ 1:59 31.Bxh3 15 Qxh3+ 4
32.Qh2 9 Qf1+
0-1

□ Braithwaite, Andrew

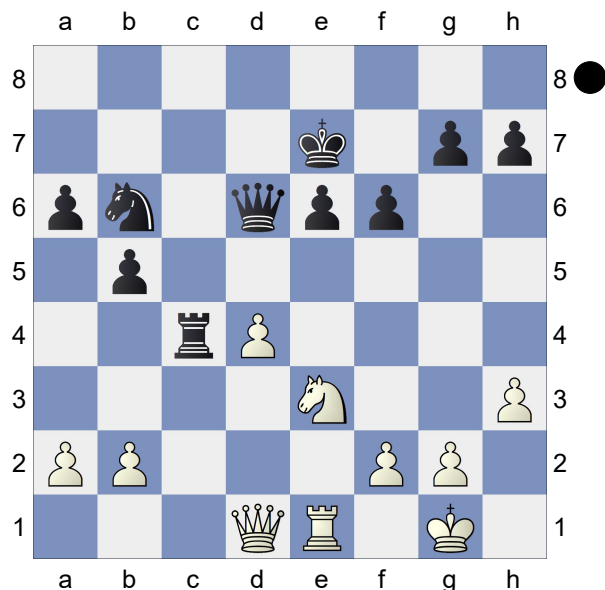
■ Langrog, Alex

2025 Fall TNM: u1600 (6.24) 07.10.2025
[Winslow, Elliott]

I like how Andrew brought his knight
around! 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5
4.c4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bg5 dxc4 7.Bxc4
e6 8.Nf3 Be7 9.0-0 b5 10.Bb3 Bb7
11.Re1 Nd5 12.Bxd5 Bxd5 13.Bxe7
Kxe7 14.Nxd5+ Qxd5 15.Re5 Qd6
16.Rc1 Nd7 17.Re1 Rac8 18.h3 Nb6
19.Ne5 f6



20.Rxc8 Rxc8 21.Ng4 Rc4 22.Ne3



B13 g6 23.Nxc4 Nxc4 24.b3 Nb6 25.Qd2
1311 g5 26.Qc3 Nd5 27.Qc5 Qxc5 28.dxc5
1475 Nb4 29.Re2 Nd3 30.c6 Nf4 31.Rc2
1-0

A UK “Chess-cation”

By John Mark Krecjci Ph.D.

Chess is a universal yet cross cultural game. This was very apparent in the recent exhibition tournament, “Checkmate: USA vs. India,” held in front of a live crowd in Arlington, TX, where Hikaru Nakamura dramatically tossed Gukesh's king into the cheering crowd after a come-from-behind victory. Although players were given some theatrical free rein, one can hardly imagine classy and composed Gukesh employing similarly outrageous antics, had the outcome been reversed. From my experience playing chess in the UK, the emotional aspect of the game in Great Britain lies somewhere between the American and Indian ends of the spectrum.

In my continued chess travelogue, this year I had the good fortune to experience the casual blitz cultures in England and Scotland. In my time, I got a glimpse of the London chess scene, the Edinburgh chess club, and two small clubs on the South coast of England.

My first stop was Worthing, UK, a laid-back pebble-beached town complete with a pier and a “Giant” ferris wheel in the summer. In the Bognor Regis club (see photo), you could hear a pin drop, while the Worthing club had a talkative chess bar scene similar to the Bay Area, except there were almost no women in the entire bar! There was, however, at least one 2200+ FIDE rated player, who now does chess coaching for free.

As I traveled North, the chess became more heated with the London chess club, which hosts casual chess outdoors in front of the London City Runners (club) on Sundays from 11-4. From this experience, an enduring friendship was forged in the fire of competition. Meet Eric, a London local (also husband and father of two young chess players) whose parents immigrated from Nigeria to the UK when he was a child, and who loves chess as much as his favorite clothing style, American cowboy fashion. Having assiduously studied Sun Tzu's, The Art of War, and applying it to chess, he bested me in every blitz game except one; in this, I had to play my most inspired and creative Grob (g4) game of my life, ending with a pawn takes pawn capture/discovered checkmate.

Finally was Scotland, where I experienced the chess culture of the Edinburgh chess club; despite the small size of the room, it proudly boasts the distinction of being the second oldest chess club in the world (!) Here I met another interesting character, Simon, a university student who, for some reason, has studied my favorite opening (The Grob-G4) extensively, and is even writing a book on it. Despite his unassuming and bespeckled appearance, he embodied the subtly brutal Scottish trash talk that I had read about, denigrating my profession and saying several times how the game was “over” before it was. Having even more Grob experience than I, I felt lucky to secure one draw against him, playing his most studied opening against him.

Reflecting on the culture of chess in and outside the Bay Area, I always come to the conclusion that the casual chess atmosphere at Mechanics is as good as it gets—friendly, rarely overly emotional or overtly competitive, and generally good-natured, highlighting our mutual love of the game. Hikaru can throw his opponent's king. I prefer to smile and shake my opponent's hand, and even congratulate him when he wins. As Eric and I did.



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Interview with GM Priyadharshan Kannappan: Part 2

By Alex Robins

This is part one of a two part interview with GM Kannappan who recently lectured at the club and was generous enough with his time to sit down with me and share some of his wisdom. In the first part of the interview we talked about his advice to both scholastic and older club players, and then about some of his favorite chess books (which you can find in the library - along with [his book](#)!) If you want to learn more about GM Kannappan and his chess coaching business, check out [ChessGaja](#) or his monthly newsletter [here](#).

Alex:

While we're talking about books, I want to mention your book, *The Modernized Berlin Wall Defense*. Can you tell us a little bit about what inspired you to write this book? I'm curious as you showed a Four Knights game in your lecture here and you were talking about positions that people think of as drawish or people think of as not that exciting. And maybe there's some dynamism in the Berlin Defense too that's fun. I know actually my colleague Christian, who you didn't get to meet, loves playing the Berlin defense.

Priyadharshan:

Yes, so I wrote this book in 2019. I finished writing it in 2018 and I wrote it for Thinker's Publishing and I talked about how to play the Berlin with the Black pieces. And the reason I wrote this is because I've been playing the Berlin since I was 10 years old. I got inspired to play the Berlin because obviously it was the world championship match between Kasparov and Kramnik, where Kramnik used it so extensively and got amazing positions. And then I just got a fascination to it and then I learned that opening and I played it for basically 15 years, Berlin was my predominant weapon against e4. Someone plays e4. I was playing Berlin. I played other lines as well, but if I'm going for a crucial game, some game that I want to go into very confidently, I would play the Berlin in that.

And so Berlin also has this kind of unique tag, you know, generally like boring, and it is to an extent true if you are in the top level. If you're 2700, they are just going to be playing at a very high level in theory and they're going to get to a very equalish position. But if you look at, let's say even that 2500 GM level or IM level the Berlin is an opening where there's a lot of minor nuances, small technical stuff that if you are more experienced, you can grasp it right away. So if you are playing an opening, let's say for 67 years, you can grasp it right away, but your opponent is not going to be facing he or she is not going to be facing it every game. They are just going to be playing the Berlin once out of every 25 games. They will have the opening knowledge, obviously they would like watch some coerce or read some book, they'll come with a first 15, 16 moves and it would say equality, the theory would end there, right? But this is where the understanding of the opening would make a huge difference. And also the problem would be that if as white player, they approach the Berlin, they'll think my opponent is trying to play for a draw. And often they think they can play anything as the position is going to stay equal for a long period of time. But this is where if you understand this as black you can take advantage and see there's a small mistake here by my opponent and there's a small extra pawn push that creates a weakness etc. You just keep accumulating these minor advantages here and there, and there and suddenly they start to look big. This is something I really like about the Berlin and I have a very good, score with it.

So this is what I think is with many openings these days. They might look boring or have that reputation. So many openings of that similar category are now coming into life, for example, the Exchange French with white. People are figuring out, oh we can push for something in this. Or maybe the Four Knights I showed the other day. You know, if you play it right, you can still create your chances.

Alex:

The one thing I wanted to ask you, because it was something I found interesting when we were talking, just the two of us was just in general, I'd love to hear just your thoughts on chess in India because as an outsider in the U.S., I feel like a lot of people at the club will watch these tournaments

going on and we've seen this incredibly strong crop of young Indian players taking over the chess world by storm. And I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about chess education in India, is there a lot of institutional support for chess? And what do you attribute the current domination by India happening in the chess world?

Priyadharshan:

So most of the domination now started at least 20 years ago, when Anand rose and Anand has been the number one player for a very long time in India. Historically and around the time, you know, early 90s to 2000s is when a lot of the effort for what Indian chess is now started growing. A lot of Russian coaches would come and do camps in India. They would teach the Russian chess method, how to train and so on. Because back then India had very limited top quality coaches. I myself have attended camps by coaches like Yevgeni Vladimirov, who we used to work with Kasparov. So then what happened is that these young indian players we all got some international exposure. We were playing in tournaments in Europe and so on, and we started to become Grandmasters ourselves.

And then, some of us started moving from playing to coaching around the start of 2010s. So Grandmasters who are now in their age of 32, 35 or 40. When we started coaching the Russian methodology combined with the technology of chess engines. We Indians are also generally good in tech and when you combine that tech-based training with traditional Soviet training methods it creates a very strong coaching ecosystem.

And then parents were looking at chess as a way to get a government job. Because if you get good at chess, the government would give you a job where they give you a monthly salary, but you don't have to go work. Basically, they are saying you forget about the finance part of your life, now you go and play chess. This is only for if you are an IM or a GM, you know? So in a way, for younger players today, it is more about scholarships, but if you're older, you managed to get a government job as part of a sports quota. This existed until like, I would say five, six years ago, it still exists, but not at the same scale as it used to be before but we have about 90 Grandmasters now.

And then people realized that chess is a great hobby to have, especially in the state where I'm from, Tamil Nadu. Here, chess is not considered something nerdy, but it's considered cool and smart. So because of this aspect, chess being considered cool and with government support, then once the government started supporting and every time, let's say you win the Asian youth category medal at some sort of international tournament, the government was also giving cash awards. This is partially because India needs sports heroes to inspire the next generation.

Following this, private sponsors started to slowly come in. It's still not very huge for a country as big as India, India needs a lot more private sponsors, but at least the top five to 10 players have an individual private sponsor. And now that we've managed to achieve domination at the top. So a lot more private institutions are saying we can run a lot of camps, we'll put in money to subsidize the training for the players who are coming in.

So there are certain schools in India, which would be like, okay, so it's proud for the school if we have a, you know, youth champion or an international champion. So we will support you by giving, you know, extra learning support, even if you missed classes. Or, you know, we'll depute some teachers to teach outside the school time when you whenever you are able to manage your schedule accordingly. So this has created a full ecosystem, which can keep pouring and building more champions for the next, I would say, 10, 15 years, at least very consistently. And obviously, we are at 90 grandmas just now. I think in another three, three years is my timeline, three to four years where I think India will reach 200 grand masters. might just double the number of grandmasters. Three to four years time from now based on how I think things are going. Yeah.

Alex:

It's interesting to hear your insights into Indian chess and I think the rise of India is fantastic for chess. I'm a fan and I love watching Chessnbase India as well and we often in the club are watching the ChessBase India stream over the other ones.

Priyadharshan:

Sure, ChessBase India is very crucial in terms of taking the game to the masses. They're able to take these unknown players, players without any media visibility, put a spotlight on them so they get some financial support when they are early on in their career and it really helps. Even a small support for a young player could push them and even accelerate their growth. So the media's role is a crucial cog in this whole ecosystem.

Alex:

You've been very generous with your time both today and last week. So my last question for you is, are you currently taking students and can you tell us a little bit about ChessGaja for our members who might be interested or looking for an instructor?

Priyadharshan:

Of course, so I run ChessGaja, which is a private limited company. We are registered out of India. I started it in 2019 and we are now six years into this coaching industry and we have about 200 students from 22 countries. I think in our six years we have taught 5,000 plus students. A lot of our students come from the US, specifically, Texas and California. I have a team of about 30 coaches and the focus is primarily on one-on-one classes and group classes. And we have coaches who are rated all the way from 1500 1550 FIDE, all the way up to Grandmaster level. Some classes I teach and we also have other grandmasters based on availability. So we are building a very professional chess academy, so it's not like, okay, we just assign a coach to you and kind of we forget you. Which is what a lot of tutoring organizations do. We routinely check our students' USCF cards and we have tools that track their performance. So we see that they play a tournament, did their rating go up, down, what happened? They tried to see some trends there over a longer period of time. That is one part.

And one crucial piece is that even if the student does not take classes with me directly in the academy, they do get a personalized timetable from me, which I put together based on the student's preferences. Do they want to read chess books or do they watch more videos? So I give them a timetable on what they should do. And we are also now building a kind of an e-book library within the academy where, I have like I put a list of maybe 120

common questions with my answers. So we are building a kind of library with each question being addressed in a five to seven page small mini e-book. We have just now started creating that. There's a project.

So, if you come in as an absolute beginner, as you progress, it'll move you through the rating levels of the coaches. And another thing is I think, as I mentioned earlier, also, we work with adults as well as kids. I personally work with some corporate CEOs, but our other coaches in our academy have also worked with our adult learners, even if they have a full-time job, they just want to learn and improve. So that is one part of our business. And many times it's about giving the right guidance. There's no lack of information now. If you want to get good at chess, technically, there are enough free resources out there. So that's not really the problem. The problem is, which resource to study, how to study, how much time to study. This kind of mentorship is a big role for a coach and is most of the time to ensure the student sticks to whatever the plan is.

And so far, the highest rated players from the Academy we have produced are a player who is about 2300 called Priyan. He lives in the New York area, and is, I think, in the under 12 or 13 age category. We have had some other high rated under nine or 10 students as well. In general, students from our academy are consistently ranked in the top hundred in the US category rankings. So 10 of our students of, let's say, you know, of our U.S. students, very consistently ranked in that. We are yet to produce any IMs or GMs, but I think that would be the next national progression because we've come all the way up to 2300 USCF now so next as they progress, we'll have our own IMs and GMs.

Alex:

That's fantastic and that's all I have for you, but thank you so much for taking the time and doing this interview. I also hope our members will check out your book from the library and that some will choose to check out ChessGaja and consider taking lessons at your academy!

Tony's Teasers

White to play and mate in 2.



Solutions

For Tony's Teaser:

1. Qh8!! If 1... Kf4 then 2.Qd4# if 1...Kh3 or Kh4 2.Bd5!

Contact Us

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