

# Yearbook

NEW  IN CHESS 130

## Contributing Authors

Adhiban • Andriasyan • Bosch • Caruana • Cummings • Fedoseev • Flear • Fogarasi • Giri  
Gonda • Gupta • Hazai • Ikonnikov • Ilczuk • Karolyi • l'Ami • Lukacs • McShane • Ninov  
Olthof • Panczyk • Prasanna • Quintiliano • Ramirez • Ris • Rodi • Saric • Schoppen  
Stohl • K.Szabo • Timman • Van der Tak • Van der Wiel • Videnova • Vilela • Zakhartsov

***CHESS OPENING NEWS***

**Edited by Jan Timman**

## From the editor



### Enormous contributions

**Dear reader,**

It is with sadness that I learned about Vladimir Kramnik's retirement. His contribution to opening theory has been enormous. What struck me was that his ideas were very profound in most cases. In the Forum we focus our attention on a small part of his theoretical legacy, whereas Tibor Karolyi has written a Survey on Kramnik's latest contributions to the Exchange QGD.

The great theoretical experts of the moment are the two best players in the world: Magnus Carlsen and Fabiano Caruana. For this Yearbook, Ivan Saric wrote an impressive Survey on the Rossolimo, the variation that featured in the first half of the World Championship match. In the second half, Caruana opted for a sideline of the Sveshnikov. John van der Wiel and Igor Stohl have written two separate Surveys on this.

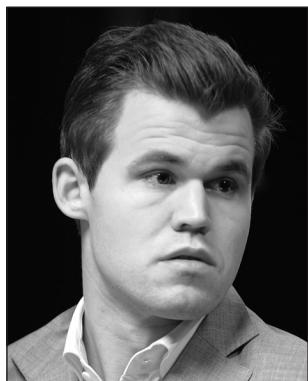
Last year Caruana won the Grenke Tournament by beating Nikita Vitiugov with black in the last round, using an astonishing novelty. It was awarded the Novelty of the Year by Yearbook readers – see the Editorial report in the Forum section.

Apart from Kramnik, one more top player was in bad form in Wijk aan Zee: Shakhriyar Mamedyarov. Still, he came up with a most interesting novelty in the Grünfeld with black against Anish Giri and drew easily. I have taken a closer look at this line in my Survey. Some questions still have to be answered.

Glenn Flear reviews two books on the Najdorf and two on the Queen's Indian. It is a rare circumstance – twice, two books on the same opening, right after each other.

**Jan Timman**

# Opening Highlights

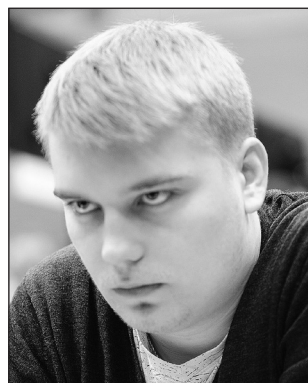


## Magnus Carlsen

Before winning Tata Steel for the seventh time, Magnus successfully defended his world title. His handling of uncommon Sicilians in the match was very impressive. After some initial problems against Fabiano Caruana's sneaky 7.♘d5 Sveshnikov (see facing page!) he took over in the rapid playoff. **Against the gambit 6.b4!? in the 3...g6 Rossolimo he never got into trouble.** The line was investigated by Ivan Saric, who found a fabulous novelty while writing this Survey! See page 47.

## Maxime Vachier-Lagrave

It seems that these days in the Grünfeld, the more pawns Black throws into the fire the better. This principle perfectly suits the sharp style of French top player MVL, who introduced **a highly interesting double pawn sac against the Russian System** which was repeated in the top encounter Giri-Mamedyarov at this year's Tata Steel event. Grünfeld guru Jan Timman takes a closer look at this ultra-modern line in his Survey on page 201.



## Vladislav Kovalev

**To avoid the main-line Berlin, white players often turn to the move 6.♗xe5** nowadays. At least this keeps the queens on the board for a while. The pawn push 13.d5 has come into fashion, promising White some unpleasant pressure. Vladislav Kovalev, the clear winner of the Tata Steel Challengers this year, gave a good demonstration of Black's troubles against Lucas van Foreest in Wijk aan Zee. Glenn Flear examines the line in his Survey on page 104.

## Lucas van Foreest

The younger Van Foreest did quite well though (as did his big brother Jorden, who took three big scalps in the Masters!). He crushed Evgeny Bareev in a brilliant attacking game starting from **a deceptively tranquil Exchange Caro-Kann** (Survey by Jeroen Bosch, page 84). That Lucas can also hold his own in cutting-edge lines can be seen in Nikolay Ninov's Survey on the Vienna on page 188, which features a sac-packed draw with Ivan Sokolov in their Groningen match.





### Fabiano Caruana

It didn't bring him any full points in the World Championship match, but Fabi did come out with some highly creative ideas in the Sicilian. His **7.♘d5, avoiding Magnus's main-line Sveshnikov, turned out to contain quite some vitriol.** It has already found followers on a high level, like Jorden van Foreest at Tata Steel. This new trend is covered in Surveys by John van der Wiel (about 7...♗xd5 8.exd5 ♖b8, page 65) and Igor Stohl (on 8...♗e7, with analyses by Anish Giri, page 55).

### Vladimir Kramnik

We'll miss him. Oh yes, we will very sorely miss the former World Champion in the chess arena. Tibor Karolyi explains on page 138 how Kramnik adopted **the powerful 12.♗e2 in the Exchange QGD** after taking a beating against it at the hands of Magnus Carlsen. On page 24 in the FORUM, René Olthof presents **Kramnik's final (?) surprise: 10...♗c4!?** against Vladimir Fedoseev, in the reviled Berlin he himself had re-introduced to baffle Garry Kasparov back in 2000.

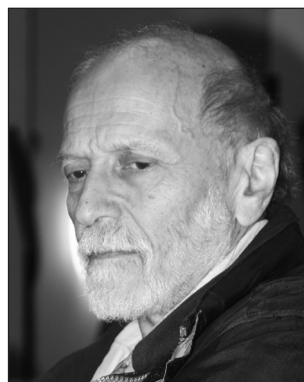


### Daniil Dubov

Are you looking for **a quick initiative with white against the Chebanenko Slav?** Then the dynamic **5.♖c2!?** may be just the ticket for you. There are a lot of hidden subtleties behind this move, as the extremely talented young Russian GM Daniil Dubov, the new holder of the World Rapid title, has demonstrated more than anyone else in several games. Take a look at Dubov's gambit ideas, like **7.b3!?**, in the second part of Renato Quintiliano's Survey on page 154.

### Michael Basman

The legendary English IM, known for his crazy opening experiments, visited Haarlem late last year to play one of his rare tournaments abroad. Our editor René Olthof, always on the lookout for opening curiosities, visited the Dutch city and watched **how the veteran fared with 1.g4/2.h3 and 1...g5/2...h6.** Actually his Dutch opponents were well-armed against these freaky lines, but if you're not averse to some arcane opening ideas, then you will surely enjoy René's Survey on page 120.



# Your Variations

## Trends & Opinions

### Forum

	Petroff Defence . . . . . Steinitz Variation 3.d4 . . . . . Editorial staff. . . . .	12
	Caro Kann Defence. . . . . Advance Variation 4.♘c3 . . . . . Olthof . . . . .	13
	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Four Knights Variation 6.♘xc6 . . . . . Videnova. . . . .	15
<b>HOT!</b>	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Najdorf Variation 6.♙g5. . . . . Schoppen . . . . .	16
	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Dragon Variation 9.♙c4. . . . . Van der Tak . . . . .	18
	English Opening . . . . . Double Fianchetto 3.b3 . . . . . Olthof . . . . .	20
<b>GAMBIT</b>	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Wing Gambit 2.b4 . . . . . Boel . . . . .	22
	Ruy Lopez. . . . . Berlin Defence 4.0-0. . . . . Olthof . . . . .	24
	Benoni Defence . . . . . Fianchetto Variation 3.g3. . . . . Zakhartsov . . . . .	26
<b>SOS</b>	Various. . . . . A universal set-up . . . . . Moody Jr. . . . .	27
	<b>From Our Own Correspondent by Erwin l'Ami . . . . .</b>	<b>29</b>

## Surveys

### 1.e4 openings

	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Najdorf Variation 6.♙e3. . . . . Andriasyan . . . . .	42
<b>GAMBIT</b>	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Rossolimo Variation 3...g6 . . . . . Saric. . . . .	47
<b>HOT!</b>	Sicilian Defence . . . . . Sveshnikov Variation 7.♘d5 . . . . . Stohl . . . . .	55
<b>HOT!</b>	Sicilian Defence. . . . . Sveshnikov Variation 7.♘d5 . . . . . Van der Wiel . . . . .	65
	French Defence . . . . . Steinitz Variation 7.♘e2. . . . . Rodi. . . . .	75
<b>SOS</b>	Caro-Kann Defence . . . . . Exchange Variation 4.♙d3. . . . . Bosch. . . . .	84
	Caro-Kann Defence . . . . . Tartakower 4...♘f6 5.♘xf6 exf6 . . . . . Szabo . . . . .	92
	Ruy Lopez. . . . . Smyslov Variation 3...g6 . . . . . McShane. . . . .	97
	Ruy Lopez. . . . . Berlin Defence 4.0-0. . . . . Flear. . . . .	104
	Italian Game. . . . . Giuoco Piano 5.d4 . . . . . Panczyk/Ilczuk . . . . .	113
<b>SOS</b>	Various Openings . . . . . Grob 1.g4 . . . . . Olthof . . . . .	120

## 1.d4 openings

	Queen's Gambit Declined. . Exchange Variation 5. ♖g5 . . . . .	Rodi . . . . .	128
	Queen's Gambit Declined. . Exchange Variation 5. ♖g5 . . . . .	Karolyi. . . . .	138
	Slav Defence . . . . . 4. ♖c2 . . . . .	Lukacs/Hazai. . . . .	146
	Slav Defence . . . . . Chebanenko Variation 5. ♖c2 . . . . .	Quintiliano. . . . .	154
	Slav Defence . . . . . Accepted 4...dxc4 . . . . .	Gupta . . . . .	161
	Catalan Opening . . . . . Accepted 4...dxc4 . . . . .	Vilela . . . . .	168
	Catalan Opening . . . . . Accepted 4...dxc4 . . . . .	Ris . . . . .	176
	Nimzo-Indian Defence . . Rubinstein Variation 4.e3 . . . . .	Prasanna . . . . .	183
	Nimzo-Indian Defence . . Vienna Variation 5. ♖g5 . . . . .	Ninov. . . . .	188
	Grünfeld Indian Defence. . Stockholm Variation 5. ♖g5 . . . . .	Olthof . . . . .	193
	Grünfeld Indian Defence. . Russian System 7...♗c6 . . . . .	Timman. . . . .	201
<b>GAMBIT</b>	Benoni Defence . . . . . Benko Gambit 5...g6 . . . . .	Fogarasi. . . . .	208
	Old Indian Defence. . . . . 5.g3 Line . . . . .	Ikonnikov. . . . .	214
<b>SOS</b>	Queen's Pawn Openings. . The Anti-Chigorin Line 3...♖g4 . . . . .	Gonda . . . . .	220

## Others

<b>HOT!</b>	Réti Opening . . . . . 1...d5 2.c4 e6 . . . . .	Cummings . . . . .	227
-------------	---	--------------------	-----

## Views

### Reviews by Glenn Flear

Keep It Simple by Christof Sielecki. . . . .	238
The Queen's Indian Defence by Michael Roiz . . . . .	240
Play the Queen's Indian Defence by Evgeniy Solozhenkin. . . . .	242
The Modernized Najdorf by Milos Pavlovic. . . . .	243
opening repertoire: the Sicilian Najdorf by John & Joshua Doknjas. . . . .	245
<b>Solutions to exercises. . . . .</b>	<b>247</b>

**HOT!** = a trendy line or an important discovery

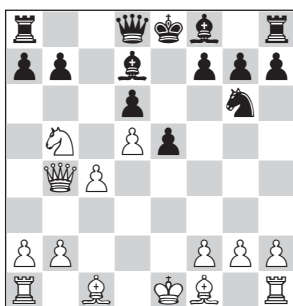
**SOS** = an early deviation

**GAMBIT** = a pawn sacrifice in the opening

# To the kingside!?

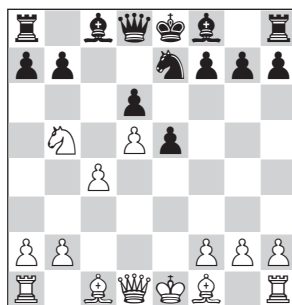
by Igor Stohl (special contributions by Anish Giri)

- |     |             |              |
|-----|-------------|--------------|
| 1.  | <b>e4</b>   | <b>c5</b>    |
| 2.  | <b>♘f3</b>  | <b>♗c6</b>   |
| 3.  | <b>d4</b>   | <b>cx d4</b> |
| 4.  | <b>♗xd4</b> | <b>♗f6</b>   |
| 5.  | <b>♗c3</b>  | <b>e5</b>    |
| 6.  | <b>♗db5</b> | <b>d6</b>    |
| 7.  | <b>♗d5</b>  | <b>♗xd5</b>  |
| 8.  | <b>exd5</b> | <b>♗e7</b>   |
| 9.  | <b>c4</b>   | <b>♗g6</b>   |
| 10. | <b>♖a4</b>  | <b>♙d7</b>   |
| 11. | <b>♖b4</b>  |              |



In the 2018 World Championship match, Game 8 signified a shift by the challenger, Fabiano Caruana, from the Rossolimo to the Open Sicilian. As could have been expected, Magnus Carlsen countered with the Sveshnikov, which has been a part (albeit not an integral one) of his repertoire already for more than a decade. Caruana, who had only meagre Sveshnikov experience prior to London, did surprise his opponent with the sideline 7.♗d5. Games 8 and 10 featured the established reaction 7...♗xd5 8.exd5 ♗b8. Not only had Carlsen played this earlier, it is also recommended in recent books about the Sveshnikov (2014, Kotronias, and 2016, Timoschenko).

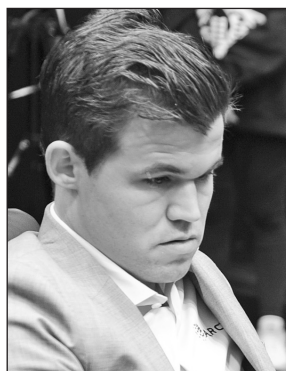
However, in both games after 9.a4 ♙e7 10.♙e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♗d7 Black faced problems, initially after 12.♙d2 and then after the novelty 12.b4. All this is the topic of the separate Survey by John van der Wiel that follows after this one. Here, we will concentrate on Carlsen's subsequent decision to deviate earlier – in Game 12 he went 8...♗e7. It's pretty clear that Black will have to move his knight again to develop his kingside, but he must tread with care. After 9.c3 the alternative 9...♗g6 is clearly weaker due to 10.♖a4 ♙d7 11.♖b4 with the idea 11...♙f5 12.♖c4, or even 10.h4, which was featured in an article in Yearbook 106 by De Dovitiis. The best reaction is the circumspect 9...♗f5, overprotecting d6. However, Caruana still quite quickly answered with the more usual 9.c4.



Here it's the other way around. Although there is quite a number of games with 9...♗f5, Black would prefer not to restrict his f-pawn unnecessarily. I will limit myself to Timoschenko's analysis, as his Sveshnikov book from 2016 is the most comprehensive one: 10.♙d3 ♙e7 11.0-0 0-0 12.f4! a6 13.♗c3 exf4 14.♙xf4 ♗h4



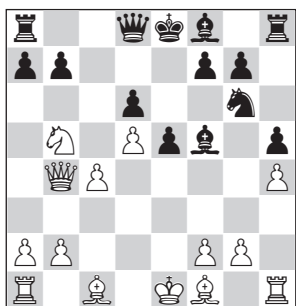
15. ♖c2 ♘g6 16. ♔h1! with a significant advantage for White. Although Gennady mentions as possible improvements 10... g6 and 12...g6, he nevertheless considers this line inferior for Black. Carlsen played the stronger 9... ♘g6, Caruana opted for the most principled 10. ♖a4 (other tries for White seem harmless) 10... ♙d7 11. ♖b4, which brings us to the starting point of our Survey.



Magnus Carlsen

### The new main line(?)

Now, 11... ♙xb5?! is a definite positional concession. Carlsen played 11... ♙f5, which was also not so common until now. 12.h4 is still the main try, recommended by Timoschenko and also recently tested at the Olympiad by Kramnik. Here the key game deviated from previously trodden paths with 12...h5!?

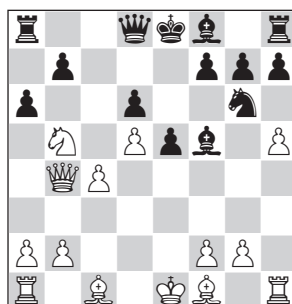


After repeating moves with 13. ♖a4 ♙d7 14. ♖b4 ♙f5, Caruana went for 15. ♙e3?!, which is not ideal. Giri in his notes to Caruana-Carlsen points out the strong reaction 15... ♙e7!, ignoring White's queenside ideas and sacrificing a pawn to fight for the initiative. Carlsen's slower and more circumspect 15...a6?! led to a roughly balanced position; the tide started turning in Black's favour only when Fabiano burned a lot of time on his clock, finally misplacing his king with the extremely risky 21. ♔h2?. The stronger 13. ♙g5 was featured in the

engine encounter Houdini-Stockfish, also quoted by Giri. Black was able to hold (a rather uneasy) equality after overcoming some problems. The notes also indicate how Black should meet the earlier alternative 12. ♙e3.

### Kramnik and Giri's tweet

During Game 8, and bearing in mind the aforementioned game Kramnik-Roganovic, Giri tweeted that if only out of respect for Kramnik, Carlsen should have studied 7. ♘d5 in great detail. It seems that Magnus took this advice to heart, but in a different fashion – subsequently he had a closer look at the Serbian GM's treatment of the line! Instead of 12...h5!?, Roganovic opted for 12...a6. Kramnik considers this a serious alternative, maybe even the best move. His reaction was 13.h5, when Black is at a crossroads.



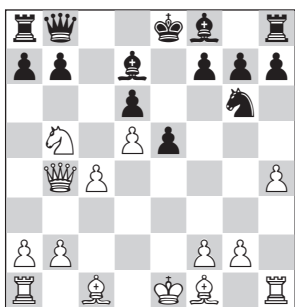


Roganovic played 13...♘f4 and went on to lose a complex game; 17...g6 or 18...e4 are possible improvements. Instead, after 13...axb5 14.hxg6 both 14...fxg6 and 14...bxc4!? were tested in email practice with better results. However, even though Black has counterchances, in this line he is hanging on by a thin thread.

Also 13.♘c3!? deserves attention. In a game Rybka-Raptor, White subsequently won after fascinating complications, but the notes indicate that Black could have not only transposed into Kramnik-Roganovic, but even improved later on.

### More usual, but hardly better

In the tiebreak, Carlsen had second thoughts about 11...♙f5 and fell back on the more usual 11...♖b8. Here White's most common continuation is 12.♙e3, but in Wharrier-Sudnitsyn Black achieved a roughly balanced position with 12...a6!? 13.♘c3 ♙e7. However, Caruana played by analogy 12.h4, which is White's most ambitious option. Now Black has basically two possible reactions.



Magnus went for the tested structure with 12...h5, as the notes point out that 12...a6 13.h5! is no bed of roses either. After 13.♙e3 a6 14.♘c3 a5 Black didn't fully equalize in Caruana-Carlsen. Later on, White's downhill ride started with the impetuous 21.c5?!. Giri writes that

21.0-0 0-0 is not fully clear, but expresses his concern about Black's position.

Indeed, 22.♘b5 seems pleasant for White. In his most recent outing with 8...♘e7, the World Champion came up with 14...f5!?. Although the game J.van Foreest-Carlsen was seemingly a one-sided affair, it posed more questions than it answered. First of all, Black's idea is not new, and in earlier games White did fine not yet committing his king with 15.g3 ♙e7 16.♙e2. Moreover, later on the principled 18.♙xh5 has Black struggling to prove his compensation.

### Conclusion

The aforementioned games mostly indicate that there is more to 8...♘e7 than meets the eye, and it can't be simply discarded as just a weaker alternative. In case White ignores the knight on g6, it will be well placed for developing Black's kingside play. However, it can become more of a liability after a timely h2-h4. The best move order is 10.♖a4 ♙d7 11.♖b4 ♙f5 12.h4, where in the position after 12...h5!? we lack more relevant games to come up with an ultimate verdict. Also the jury is still out whether this is better than 12...a6.

So, does Magnus's choice suggest he believes more in this set-up than in 8...♘b8, or was it just a practical try to surprise the challenger and survive the last classical game of the match with black? I would say a bit of both. During the match Carlsen obviously didn't have much time to delve into finer details. This, in turn, connected also with the natural tendency to avoid Caruana's preparation, led him to vary his approach in the second tiebreak game with the somewhat inferior 11...♖b8. I still consider this continuation

somewhat inferior and would also ascribe a predominantly psychological background to his repetition of the line against Van Foreest in Wijk aan Zee 2019. In a short post-game interview Magnus indicated he wasn't adverse to risk in order to end his series of 21 classical

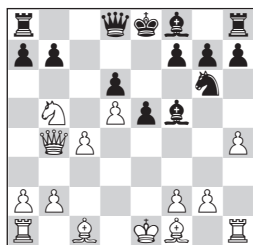
draws in a row. I surmise that in the future Black will pay at least the same amount of attention to 8...♟b8 – after all, even in Game 12 Carlsen transferred his knight from g6 to d7 at the first suitable moment.

### The new main line 11...♟f5 12.h4 h5

#### Fabiano Caruana Magnus Carlsen

London Wch m 2018 (12)

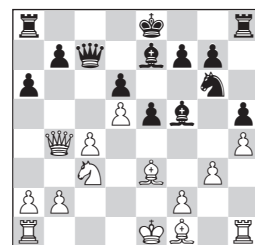
**1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5 d6 7.♟d5** Caruana sticks to the same line against the Sveshnikov that he played in his two previous White games. Indeed, he had his reasons to be satisfied with the opening outcome of those games as well as with the double-edged character of the arising positions. **7...♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟e7!?** Not wanting to see what other move Team Fabi had in store for them, Team Carlsen deviates first. **9.c4 ♟g6** Here, 9...♟f5 is possible too, but not 9...a6?, when after 10.♟a4! Black is suddenly losing as there is no sensible defence against 11.♟xd6+. **10.♟a4 ♟d7 11.♟b4** So far, all well-known, following Kramnik-Roganovic from the Batumi Olympiad. **11...♟f5 11...♟b8** is also possible and in fact can lead to similar positions after 12.h4 h5. **12.h4!** Following Big Vlad.



**12...h5!?** This is the first real surprise, and a rather serious one, it seems, as Fabi clearly started to improve from here onwards, spending a lot of time as well.

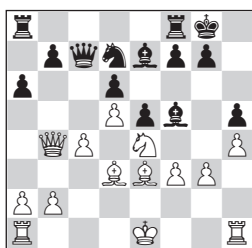
**13.♟a4** Repeating the position once never hurts, but as Fabiano spent half an hour here and clearly seemed unfamiliar with this particular deviation, it began to look increasingly likely that he would actually just get it over with at this point. There were some clear arguments for this: firstly, it's not pleasant to be surprised. Secondly, you do not want to start a game against a well-prepared opponent being half an hour down on the clock, especially when losing is not an option you can afford. However, there is also your pride on the line and one could argue that it could be important with what psychological background you want to go into the tiebreak. **13...♟d7 14.♟b4 ♟f5 15.♟e3!?** The logic is clear: Fabi doesn't want to repeat moves, and neither does he want to enter Magnus' prep after 15.♟g5. But playing a suboptimal move just to avoid preparation, something we all have occasionally done, is often a bad idea. Fortunately for Fabiano he remained unpunished for this one. **15.♟g5 ♟b8** (this is the move played in the only game that reached this point, which was a computer game. In fact, very likely play will transpose to the game, after let's say 15...♟e7? 16.♟xe7 ♟xe7 could work if not for 17.c5!, which is trouble; 15...f6 is ugly, while 15...♟d7 will be met with the sophisticated 16.♟a5 b6 17.♟a4 when Black finally has to play the ugly ...f7-f6 and ...♟f7) 16.g3 a6 17.♟c3 ♟c7 18.♟e3 ♟e7, which also seems to explain Magnus' decision to play 15...a6 and 16...♟c7 in the game without too much hesitation. **15...a6!?** Transposing into a

familiar position, but missing a superb resource. After 15...♟e7! Black has huge dynamic potential on the kingside and there was no need to be shy: 16.g3 (16.♟xa7 0-0 17.♟e2 (17.♟b6 ♟d7 18.♟b5 forces a queen swap, but Black is fine after more than one move: 18...♟xh4; 18...e4!?, or even 18...♟d8 19.♟xd7 ♟xd7 20.♟xd8 ♟fxd8 21.♟b5 ♟xb5 22.cxb5 ♟a4 are all fully playable) 17...♟f4! 18.♟xf4 exf4 19.♟b5 ♟e8 and with so many juicy files and diagonals for his pieces and domination of the dark squares, Black is on top here) 16...♟e4 17.♟g1 ♟f3 18.♟xa7 0-0 – White's king is somewhat stuck in the middle of the board and Black has all any Sicilian player would give a pawn for. **16.♟c3 ♟c7 17.g3** Interesting is 17.♟a4+!?. **17...♟e7**



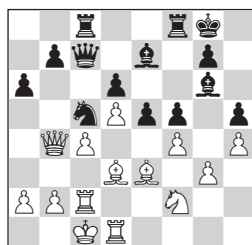
**18.f3** This seems a little odd, but Fabi must have been concerned about ...e5-e4, ...♟e5 ideas. Probably it was best to allow 18...e4 and just get on with his development with 18.♟e2, when Black has to choose between 18...e4, which should be met with the clever 19.♟a4+!, or 18...♟f8 followed by ...♟d7, as in the game, but then White will be able to take control, castling kingside and trading the d7-knight with ♟a4-b6. The ...♟g6, ...f7-f5 idea will be met with f2-f4!, closing

the kingside. 18. ♖a4+ also deserves attention; now 18... ♗d7 (18... ♖d7 19. ♕e2±) 19. ♖d1 ♕g4 20. ♕e2 resembles the second tiebreak game. However, the difference is in Black's favour, as the b5-square is not weakened: 20... ♗xe2 21. ♖xe2 f5∞. **18... ♗f8!?** I was rooting for something more dynamic, as I was incited by the slow and shaky looking f2-f3, but Magnus, familiar with the position, goes for this very sound regrouping. The knight on g6 was Black's main issue in the position and with ...e5-e4 stopped, this is its only alternative route. After 18...0-0 19. ♕e2, the problem is that White can still castle both ways, depending on Black's response. **19. ♗e4** Original, securing the d3-square for the bishop. **19... ♗d7 20. ♗d3 0-0**



**21. ♖h2?** The idea of preparing queenside castling is deep, but this move is clearly too original to be good. Black finds an excellent way to meet 0-0-0 without going for ...b7-b5, against which the ♖h2-c2 lift would indeed be brilliant. 21.0-0 ♕g6 22. ♖d2 was more down to earth and should have been played. The position after 22...f5 23. ♗g5 ♕xg5 24. ♕xg5 is at the very least acceptable for White. Black will get some typical Najdorf play with ...e5-e4, ...♗e5, but his g6-bishop looks a little unhappy with all that. 21.0-0-0 is met with 21...b5! when it would surely be nice to have the h1-rook on c2. **21... ♖ac8** 21...b5 is now counterproductive due to 22. ♖c2!. **22.0-0-0** Fabi left himself no choice but to go 'long'. **22... ♕g6!** Black's only active idea left, now that ...b7-b5 is off the cards, but

an extremely good one. Now it turns out that ...f7-f5 followed by ...e5-e4 is unstoppable and White is in trouble. **23. ♖c2** 23. ♖b1 f5 24. ♗g5 ♕xg5 25. hxg5 e4 26. fxe4 ♗e5 is great for Black as well, e.g. 27. ♕e2 ♗g4!?. **23...f5 24. ♗f2** This couldn't have been the plan, but after the natural 24. ♗g5, Black's initiative would develop by itself and that was something Fabi wasn't keen on allowing. After 24. ♗g5 ♕xg5 25. hxg5 e4, 26. ♕f1! is clever, intending ♕f4, shutting down the g6-bishop, but it doesn't change the fact that Black is on top (26. fxe4 fxe4 27. ♕e2 and Black will send the knight to d3 and the rook to f3. White is in a lot of trouble, e.g. 27... ♗c5 28. ♖b1 ♖f3) 26...f4! 27. ♕xf4 ♗c5 and with the g6-bishop suddenly becoming a beast, White has good reason to worry. **24... ♗c5 25.f4** This invites some very unpleasant shots, but White had no easy solution here. 25. ♕xc5 would stop some immediate breakthroughs, but here Magnus could win even without wanting to. Black's dark-square dominance is going to account for something.



**25...a5?!** Black remains in charge, but there were already some ways to go for the finishing line. At this point, 25...b5! would have given Black a pretty much winning initiative:

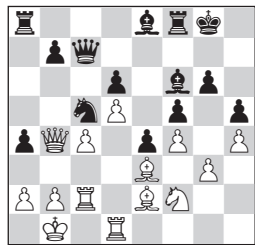
A) 26. ♕xc5 dxc5 27. ♖d2 e4 28. ♕f1 ♖d7, followed by ...♕f6 is slowly winning for Black because of his dark-square domination;  
B) 26. ♖a3 was Carlsen's suggestion at the press conference, but besides the simple 26... exf4!, there is also a prettier win:

26... ♖b6!, threatening 27...b4, but also the more hidden 27... ♗b3+!

C) 26. ♕e2 was likely Fabiano's intention, but he may have missed a strong resource: 26...a5! 27. ♖d2 (after 27. ♖xb5 ♕e8! suddenly traps the queen) 27...b4 28. ♕xc5 (28. fxe5 b3!) 28... ♖xc5 29. ♗d3. This doesn't help, as after 29... ♖d4!, in the absence of the essential dark-squared bishop, White is just losing: 30. c5 e4!.

25...exf4 is an even lazier way to start a crushing attack: 26. ♕xf4 (26. gxf4 ♕xh4!) 26...b5! and now the same attack. In fact, I don't even have to give variations, because there aren't any. ...♕f6 is coming and then Black can choose whether to win by opening the b-file with ...bxc4 or by a slower queenside assault with ...b5-b4, ...a6-a5 and ...a5-a4. **26. ♖d2** 26. ♖a3! is quite deep, but could in fact be the right square for the queen: 26... ♗a6 27. ♖b1 e4 28. ♕e2 b5. This looks like bad news, though White fights on with 29. ♖b3!, with the idea to meet 29...b4 with 30. c5! and after 29... ♗c5 30. cxb5 ♗xb3 31. ♖xc7 ♖xc7 32. b6 ♖b7 33. ♕a6!, White has good chances to escape. **26...e4 27. ♕e2 ♕e8 28. ♖b1 ♕f6 29. ♖e1?!** Allows one more ...b7-b5 shot. 29. ♖dcl was stronger. White's main hope is something like 29... g6 (29... ♕a4 30. ♕xh5!) 30. ♗d1 ♕a4 31. b3 ♗d7 32. ♗c3, followed by ♗b5, pretending it's a fortress. Although I am not sure at all if that's the case. **29...a4?!** Missing another attractive opportunity. Fabi pointed out 29... ♕a4! at the press conference. Often the defender sees more resources for the attacker: 30. ♖cc1 b5 31. cxb5 ♖b6 and with the b-file open, the d3-square exposed and the d5-pawn weak, Black would get dangerously close to a victory: 32. ♗d4 ♕xd4 33. ♖xd4 ♕xb5 and here is where Sesse gave -2 and Carlsen pretended not to care. **30. ♖b4 g6** Magnus was clearly not in a rush and his position could undeniably afford that. **31. ♖d1**

As he had been expecting 31.♟d1, this move left Magnus completely confused. In turn, he decided to confuse everybody else as well and offered a draw. **31...♞a8 ½-½**



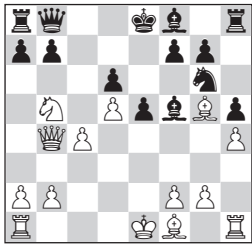
A) 32.♞h3, sending the knight to g5, is not great, because ♟e6 can always be met with ...♞xe6 and ...♞fe8xe6. Also, once the knight is out of place, Carlsen's idea of ...♞a5 gains in strength, as the knight is not in time to return to c3 to block the ...b7-b5 break;

B) 32.♟d4 ♟xd4?! (32...♟d3 33.♞b6 ♞xb6 34.♟xb6 ♟b4 35.♞cc1 a3 36.b3 ♟b2 wins an exchange, when I doubt this is a fortress) 33.♞xd4 and now: 33...♞a5? (but after 33...♟d7 34.♟d1 ♞a5 35.♟e3 (35.♟c3 a3 36.b3 ♟a6 traps the queen) 35...♞b8, if we would teleport the white king to g2, it would likely be completely fine, but the problem is once White embarks on this journey he is going to get hit badly with ...b7-b5) 34.♞xa5 ♞xa5 35.♟d1 b5 36.cxb5 ♟xb5 37.♟xb5 ♞xb5 38.♟c3 ♞a5 leads to equality. First of all, there is the findable 32...♟d3! resource, but also after the trade of the bishops the position is very dangerous for White with a weak king on b1 and ...b7-b5 on the menu, so it's not clear why the rush with the queen trade.

M/18-8-40 Giri

**Houdini 6.03**  
**Stockfish 260318**  
TCEC 11 Superfinal 2018 (36)  
**1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4**  
**4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5**  
**d6 7.♟d5 ♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟e7 9.c4**  
**♟g6 10.♞a4 ♟d7 11.♞b4 ♟f5**

11...♟xb5 12.♞xb5+ ♞d7 13.♞xd7+ (13.a4!? e4 14.♞xd7+ ♟xd7 15.b4 ♟e5 16.♟f4 g6 17.c5 ♟d3+ 18.♟xd3 exd3 19.♞b1 ♟e8+ 20.♟d2 ♞e2+ 21.♟xd3 ♞xf2 22.♞hf1 ♞xg2 23.♟xd6± Ventimiglia-Alvebring, cr 2004) 13...♟xd7 14.h4!? (14.g3 ♟e7 15.♟d3 ♟c8 16.♟e3 a6 17.f4 e4 18.♟xe4 ♞xc4 19.♟d3 ♞a4 20.♟c2 ♞a5 21.♟b3 ♟xd5 22.♟d4 h5 23.h4 ♟e7 24.0-0-0 ♞f8 25.♟b1 ♟f6 26.♟f2 ♟e7 27.♞d3 ♟c6 28.♞hd1±/±, Sacerdotali-Kroes, cr 2011) 14...h5 15.g3 f5 16.♟h3 ♟e7 17.f4 e4 18.b3 g6 19.♟b2 ♞g8 20.♟e2 ♟g7 21.♟xg7 ♞xg7 22.♟e3 ♞gg8 23.♟d4 a5 24.a3 ♞a7 25.♟f1 b6 26.♟e2 ♞ga8 27.♞a2 ♟g8 28.♞ha1 ♟f6 29.♟d1 ♟c7 30.♟c2 (½-½ (34) Van der Sterren-Ammann, Winterthur 1976) 30...b5!?. **12.h4** 12.♟e3 a6 13.♟c3 ♟e7!N (Timoschenko. 13...♞c7 (Lopez Gomez-Bergmann, cr 1990) 14.h4 h5 15.g3±) 14.g3 (14.♞xb7 0-0 15.♞b3 (15.g3 e4! Δ ...♟e5, ...♟f6) 15...♞b8 16.♞a3 ♟h4!) 14...0-0±. **12...h5 13.♟g5 ♞b8**



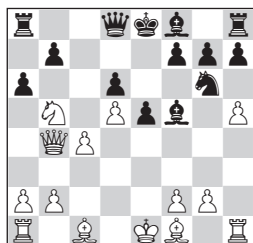
**14.♟e2** More forcing is the energetic 14.♞a5 b6 15.♞a4 ♟d7 16.♟d3 a6 (safer is 16...♟e7, but even here White can fight for an edge with 17.♟f5! ♟e7 (17...axb5?? 18.♟xd7+ ♟xd7 19.♞xb5+ ♟c8 20.♞c6++-) 18.♟xd7+ ♟xd7 19.c5!? dxc5 (19...axb5 20.♞xb5+ ♟c8 21.cxb6→) 20.♟c3+ b5 21.♞e4 c4 22.d6±) 17.♟xg6 (17.♞c2!?) 17...fxg6 18.♟xe7 ♟xe7 19.♞c2 ♟f5 20.♞e2 ♟f7±/±; 14.g3 a6 15.♟c3 ♞c7 16.♟e3 (16.♟e2 ♟e7 is similar) 16...♟e7 transposes to Caruana-Carlsen. **14...a6 15.♟c3** ♟f4 15...♞c7 seems safer. **16.♟f1** 16.♟xf4!? exf4 17.♞a4+ ♟d7 18.♞c2 ♟e7 19.♞e4 b5 20.0-0

b4 21.♟d1 ♟f8 22.♞xf4 ♟f6±/±. **16...♟e7 17.♟xe7 ♟xe7 18.g3** ♟g6 18...♟d3+ 19.♟xd3 ♟xd3 20.0-0-0 ♟g6 21.f4!; 21.♞he1f. **19.♞b6** 19.♟e2 ♟f8 20.♟d1!±. **19...f6 20.♞c1 ♟f8 21.♞e3** ♞a7! **22.♞d2 g6 23.♟g2 ♟d7** **24.0-0 ♞c5 25.♞fe1** Black will already consolidate after 25.b3 ♞b4 26.♞e2 ♟c5±. **25...♞xc4!?** **26.♟e4 ♞d4 27.♞xd4 exd4** **28.♟d2+ ♟f8 29.♟e4 ♞e8!** 29...♟xe4 30.♟xe4±; 29...♟c5 30.♟xf5 gxf5 31.♞ed1 d3 (31...b5 32.♟f3±) 32.♟c4±. **30.♟g2** 30.♟xf5 ♞xe1+ 31.♞e1 gxf5 32.♞e6 d3 33.♟f1 (33.♟xd6 ♞h7±; 33.♞e3 ♟f7 34.♞xd3 ♞c8=) 33...♞h7 (33...♟c5 34.♞xf6+ ♟g7 35.♞xf5 ♞e8 36.♞f3 a5±) 34.♞e3 ♟b6 35.♞xd3 ♞c7±. **30...b5 31.♟xf5** ♞xe1 **32.♞xe1 gxf5 33.♟f3 d3** **34.♟d4 34.♞d1 ♟e5 35.♟d4 f4** 36.gxf4 ♞g8+ 37.♟f1 ♟c4 38.b3 ♟b6 39.♟f5!±. **34...f4 35.♟e6+** 35.gxf4 ♟b6. **35...♟f7 36.♟xf4** ♟e5 **37.♞c1 ♞e8 38.f3** 38.♟f1 d2 (38...a5±) 39.♞d1 ♟f3 40.♟e6 f5 41.♟e2 ♟d4+=. **38...♟c4** 39.♟xd3± ♞e2+ 40.♟f1 **♞d2** **41.♞c3 ♟xb2 42.♟xb2 ♞xb2=** **43.♞a3 ♞b1+ 44.♟e2 ♞g1** **45.♞xa6 ♞xg3 46.♞xd6 ♞h3** **47.a3 ♞xh4 48.♞b6 ♟e8 49.♞xb5** ♟e7 **50.♞b7+ ♟d6 51.♞b6+ ♟c5** 51...♟xd5 52.♞xf6 ♞h2+= is also a TB draw. **52.♞xf6 ♟xd5 53.♟g6** ♞h1 **54.♟d3 h4 55.♞g5+ ♟e6** **56.♟e4 h3 57.♞h5 h2 58.♟f4 ♞a1** **59.♞xh2 ♞xa3 ½-½**

**Kramnik and Giri's tweet**  
**11...♟f5 12.h4 a6**

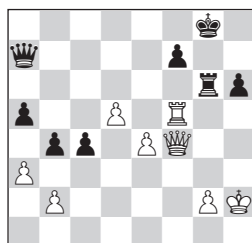
**Vladimir Kramnik**  
**Milos Roganovic**  
Batumi ol 2018 (7)  
**1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4**  
**4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5**  
**d6 7.♟d5 ♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟e7 9.c4**  
**♟g6 10.♞a4 ♟d7 11.♞b4 ♟f5**  
**12.h4 a6 12...♟e7 13.h5 (13.♟g5!?** a6 14.♟xe7 ♟xe7 15.♟c3 ♞c7 (Voronin-Pelekh, cr 2011) 16.h5 ♟f4 17.0-0-0± is also advantageous

for White – Timoschenko) 13...♟f4 14.♟e3 ♞d3+ (14...a6!? 15.♞c3 ♞d3+ 16.♟xd3 ♟xd3 transposes to our game) 15.♟xd3 ♟xd3 16.h6 g5 17.♞c3 ♟g6 18.c5 0-0 19.0-0 dxc5 20.d6 ♟f6 21.♞c7 ♞xd6 22.♞xa8 ♞xa8 23.♞fd1+/- Silkin-Postnikov, cr 2012. **13.h5**



**13...♟f4** 13...axb5 14.hxg6 bxc4!? (14...fxg6 15.♞xb5+ ♞d7 16.a4!? (16.♞xd7+ ♟xd7 17.♟d3 ♟f5 18.♟e2 (18.♟e2!±) 18...e4 19.♟c2 ♟e7 20.a4 ♟f6 21.♞a2 ♟g4+ 22.♟f1 0-0 23.♟e3 ♞fe8±/± Brookes-Pauwels, cr 2008) 16...♞xb5 17.cxb5 ♟e4 18.a5 ♟xd5 19.a6 ♟e7 20.♟e3 ♟e6 21.♟d3 ♞d7 22.a7 ♟f5 (Wharrier-Goncharov, cr 2014) 23.♞d1±) 15.♞xh7 ♞xh7 16.gxh7 ♟xh7 17.♞xb7 ♟e7 18.a4 (18.♟xc4 ♟e4 19.♟f1 ♞b8 20.♞a6 f6 21.f3 ♟f5 22.♟d3 ♟d7 23.b3 f5 24.♟e3 ♟f7!?±; 24...♞a8 25.♞b6 ♞xb6 26.♟xb6 ♞a3 27.♟e3 ♟f6 28.♟c1 ♞a5 29.♟c4 e4 30.b4 ♟b5! 31.♟xb5+ ♞xb5 32.♞b1 ♞d7 33.a4 ♞xd5 34.♟e2± Timoschenko) 18...♟f8 19.♟xc4 ♞b8 20.♞a7 ♟e4 21.♟f1 ♞c8 22.♟a6 ♞d8 23.♟b5 ♟xd5 24.♟d2 g6 25.♞e3 ♞c7 26.♟g1 ♞b7 27.b4 ♟xg2 28.♟e2 ♟d5 29.a5 ♞d7 30.a6 ♞f5±/=, Broniek-Costa Trillo, cr 2014. **14.♞c3 ♟e7 15.♟e3 ♞d3+** Natural, as after 15...0-0 16.0-0-0 △ g2-g3 Black has problems with his ♟f4. **16.♟xd3 ♟xd3 17.h6! 0-0** A possible improvement is 17...g6 18.♞d1 (18.0-0-0 e4∞; 18.f3 ♞c8 (18...b5 19.cxb5 axb5 20.♞d1±) 19.♞xb7 (19.b3 b5±) 19...0-0±) 18...e4 19.♞e2!? (19.c5 dxc5 20.♟xc5 ♟xc5 21.♞xc5 ♞c8 22.♞d4 ♞d7!∞) 19...♟xc2 (19...0-0 20.♞f4; 19...♞c8 20.♞f4 ♞xc4 (20...♟xc4 21.b3±) 21.♞xb7

♞a5+ 22.♟d2 ♞b5 23.♞xb5+ axb5 24.♞xd3 exd3 25.♟c3±) 20.♟xe2 ♞d7 21.♞c3 ♞f8±/∞. **18.♞d1 a5** ≥ 18...e4!? 19.hxg7 ♞e8 prevents the following sacrifice. **19.♞b5 e4 20.hxg7 ♞e8 21.♞xd3! exd3 22.c5! ♟g5** ♞ Forced, as otherwise the attack on h-file decides immediately. **23.♞xd3 h6 24.♞e4 dxc5 25.♟f1!** 25.♞xg5 ♞xg5±. **25...♞xe4** 25...♟xe3 26.♞xe3 ♞a6 27.♞xh6 ♞xe4 28.♞h8+ ♟xg7 29.♞xd8 ♞xe3 30.fxe3 a4 31.d6± **26.♞xe4 ♟xe3 27.fxe3±** The material is equal again, but White has a better pawn structure and retains the pull. **27...♞a6** 27...♞f6+ 28.♟g1 (28.♞f4 ♞xf4+ 29.exf4 ♟xg7 30.♟e2±) 28...♟xg7 29.♞h3!; 27...♞g5!±. **28.♞h5 ♟g6** 28...♞f6+ 29.♞f5 ♟xg7 30.a4!±; 30.♞e5 ♞d6±; 28...♟xg7±. **29.♟g1 ♟xg7 30.♞f5 b5** ≥ 30...♞d6 31.a4±. **31.♞e5+ ♟g8** 31...♞f6 32.b3 ♞d6 33.♞b2 △ 33...♟g6 34.♞xf6+ ♞xf6 35.♞c2+. **32.e4 c4 33.♞f4?! 33.♞f2!±. 33...♞d7?! 33...♞b6+** 34.♟h2 ♞d6±. **34.a3 ♞a7+ 35.♟h2 b4**



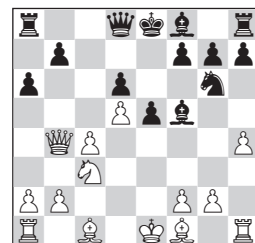
**36.e5** ≥ 36.axb4! axb4 37.e5 ♞d7 38.d6± △ 38...c3 39.♞f6 cxb2 (39...♞g4 40.e6+→) 40.♞xg6+ fxg6 41.♞xb4+→. **36...♞d7 37.e6** 37.d6 c3 38.♞f6 cxb2± 39.e6 ♞xg2+! 40.♟xg2 ♞c6+ 41.♟h2 ♞c2+ 42.♟g3 ♞c3+ 43.♟g4 h5+ 44.♟h4 ♞e1+ 45.♟xh5 ♞d1+=. **37...fxe6 38.♞f8+ ♟g7 39.♞a8 ♟h7** 39...♞f7? 40.♞xf7+ ♟xf7 41.d6+→; 39...♞g5!±. **40.♞d4 ♞d6+ 41.♟h1 e5** 41...♞g5!±; 42.♞a7+ ♟g6 43.♞g7+ ♟h5 44.♞d1+ ♟h4 45.♞d4+ ♟h5=. **42.♞xc4 bxa3 43.bxa3 ♞xa3?** The final mistake. 43...♞b6 44.♞c8 ♞f6 holds. **44.♞c7+ ♟g7 45.♞c2+ ♟g6** 46.♞a7+→. **1-0**

## Rybka 4.1

### Raptor 2.3

TCEC Season 9 – Stage 2 2016 (15)

**1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 ♞c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5 d6 7.♞d5 ♞xd5 8.exd5 ♞e7 9.c4 ♞g6 10.♞a4 ♟d7 11.♞b4 ♟f5 12.h4 a6 13.♞c3!?**



**13...♟e7** 13...♞xh4 14.c5 ♟e7 15.♞xb7 (15.cxd6 ♟f6 16.♟e3±) 15...0-0 16.c6 ♟g6 (Piazza-Dutra Neto, cr 2007) 17.♞b4 f5 (17...♞f5 18.♟d3±) 18.♞c4!; 13...♞d7 14.♞a4 ♞b8 15.♞b6 ♞c7 16.♞a4+ ♟d8 17.♟e3 ♞f4 18.0-0-0 ♟e7 19.g3 ♞h5 20.♟d3 ♟g4 21.♞de1 ♟f3 22.♞hf1 ♞f6 23.♟c2 ♞e4 24.♟xe4 ♟xe4 25.♟d2 ♟d3 26.♟a5+→ Julean-Mircea, cr 2009. **14.h5 ♟h4** 14...♞f4 15.♟e3 (15.h6!? g5∞) 15...♞d3+ 16.♟xd3 ♟xd3 is the game Kramnik-Roganovic. **15.h6 g6** 15...g5!± 16.♞xb7 0-0∞. **16.♟e3** 16.♞xb7 0-0 17.♞b3 ♞b8 18.♞a3 (18.♞d1 e4!±) 18...♞e8. **16...0-0 17.f3** 17.a4!±. **17...b5!?** **18.cxb5 axb5 19.♟f2** 19.♞xb5 ♟d7 20.♟f2 ♟f5±. **19...g5 20.♞h2! △ 21.♞xb5 20...♞g6** 20...♟g6 21.♞xb5 f5∞. **21.g3 e4!?** **22.fxe4 ♞e5?** 22...♟g4 23.♟d4 ♞e5! (23...f5 24.exf5 ♟xf5 25.0-0-0±) 24.♟xe5 (24.♟e2 ♟xe2 25.♟xe2 ♞d7, ♟e2>) 24...dxe5 25.♞xb5 ♞b8 26.♞d3 ♞b6±; 26...♟c5±. **23.exf5! ♞f3+ 24.♞d7 ♞xh2 25.♞xb5! ♟f6 26.a4 ♟e7** 26...♟e5 27.♞e4 ♞f6 28.♟c2!±. **27.♞e4!** More forcing than 27.♟c2!±. **27...♞xe4 28.♞xe4 ♟xb2 29.♞a2 ♟e5 30.♟e3 ♞f3** 30...♞g4 31.♟xg5±. **31.♟c6 ♞a5** 31...♞ab8 32.a5±. **32.♟b6 ♞a6 33.a5 ♞b8 34.♞a4 f6 35.♟b5 ♞axb6** 35...♞aa8 36.♟d7 ♟f8 37.♞c4+→. **36.axb6 ♞xb6 37.♞a8+ ♟f7 38.♟e8+ ♟e7 39.♟h5! h7>** 39...♞b1+ 40.♟c2

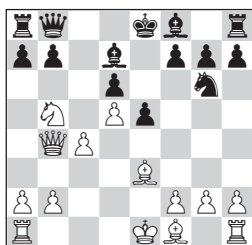


**12...a6!**? 12...f5 13.h4 a6 14.♖c3 (14.h5 axb5 15.hxg6 h6 16.cxb5 ♗e7±/∞, Gubas-Binas, cr 2014) 14...h5 transposes to J.van Foreest-Carlsen; 12...b6 13.h4 a5 14.♖a3 ♗xb5 15.cxb5 ♗e7 16.♖c1!! Timoschenko. **13.♖c3 ♗e7** **14.♖a4** 14.g3 0-0 15.h4 e4 16.♖xe4 ♗e8 17.♗e2 b5 18.cxb5 ♗xb5 19.♗xb5 axb5 20.♖c3 ♖c8 21.♗xb5 ♗f6 22.♖f1 ♖f5∞ Kruk-Schüppel, cr 2011. **14...♖c7** 15.♗b6 15.♗b6 (Razmyslov-Romero Romero, Coria del Rio 2006) 15...♖c8!

**More usual but hardly better**  
**11...♖b8**

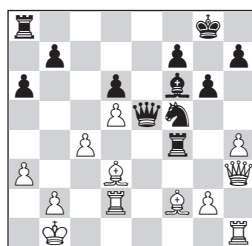
**Jo Wharrier**  
**Andrey Sudnitsyn**  
cr 2015

**1.e4 c5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.d4 cxd4**  
**4.♖xd4 ♖f6 5.♖c3 e5 6.♗db5**  
**d6 7.♖d5 ♖xd5 8.exd5 ♖e7 9.c4**  
**♖g6 10.♖a4 ♖d7 11.♖b4 ♖b8**  
**12.♗e3**



**12...a6!**? 12...f5 13.h4 a6 14.♖c3 (14.h5 axb5 15.hxg6 h6 16.cxb5 ♗e7±/∞, Gubas-Binas, cr 2014) 14...h5 transposes to J.van Foreest-Carlsen; 12...b6 13.h4 a5 14.♖a3 ♗xb5 15.cxb5 ♗e7 16.♖c1!! Timoschenko. **13.♖c3 ♗e7** **14.♖a4** 14.g3 0-0 15.h4 e4 16.♖xe4 ♗e8 17.♗e2 b5 18.cxb5 ♗xb5 19.♗xb5 axb5 20.♖c3 ♖c8 21.♗xb5 ♗f6 22.♖f1 ♖f5∞ Kruk-Schüppel, cr 2011. **14...♖c7** 15.♗b6 15.♗b6 (Razmyslov-Romero Romero, Coria del Rio 2006) 15...♖c8!

16.♗a5 ♖b8 17.♖b6 ♖c7 and White hardly has anything better than repetition with 18.♖a8 ♖c8=. **15...♖b8** 15...♖d8 16.♗d3 f5 17.f3 0-0 18.♖xd7 ♖xd7 19.0-0 ♖c8 20.♖d2 f4 (20...b5!; 20...♖f4 21.♗xf4 exf4 22.♖xf4 ♗f6∞) 21.♗b6 ♗d8 22.♗f2 ♗h4 23.♖ac1 ♗xf2+ 24.♖xf2 ♖e7 (½-½, Cipka-Zambor, cr 2007) 25.♖fd1±. **16.0-0-0 0-0 17.f3 ♖h4 18.♖xd7 ♖xd7 19.♖b1 ♖fe8 20.a3 g6** 20...♖f5 21.♗f2 ♗g5±. **21.♗b6 ♗d8 22.♗a7 ♖a8 23.♗f2 ♗f6** **24.♖b3 ♖f5 25.h4 e4!**? 25...♖d4 26.♗xd4 exd4 27.h5 ♖e3 28.♗d3 ♖c8∞. **26.fxe4 ♖xe4 27.♖f3 ♖e7 28.♗d3 ♖e5** 29.♖d2 ♖f4 30.♖h3

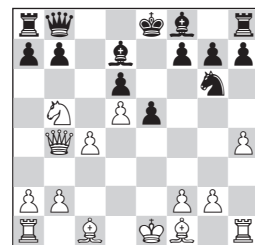


**30...b5!** 30...♖e7 31.h5→, so the queen sacrifice is more or less forced. **31.♗e1 ♖xf2 32.♖xe5 ♖xd2 33.♗e2 ♖xe2 34.♗xe2 ♗e8** 35.♖f3 35.♖d3 ♖e3 36.♖d1 bxc4 37.♗xc4 ♖g3±. **35...♗e3 36.♖f1 ♖g7 37.cxb5 axb5 38.♗d3 38.♗xb5?** ♖b3. **38...♖h4 39.♖a2 ♖g3 40.♗xb5 ♖xg2 41.♗e2 ♖h2 42.a4 ♖f5** **43.a5 h5 44.a6 ♖g3 45.♖g1 ♖xe2 46.a7 46.♖xg3 ♖xb2+** 47.♖a3 ♖b6 48.♖d3 ♖b8 49.♖a4 h4 50.♖a5 ♖h8 51.♖h3 ♗d4=. **46...♖xb2+** 47.♖a3 ♖e2 48.♖f1 **♖b5!** 49.♖xf6+ 49.a8 ♖?? ♗b2+. **49...♖xf6 50.a8 ♖g7 51.♖c6 ♖b8 52.♖c3+!** ♖xc3 ½-½ 53.♖e3 ♖a8+ 54.♖b3 ♖b8+ (54...♖a5 55.♖xe2 ♖xd5=) 55.♖a3=.

**Fabiano Caruana**  
**Magnus Carlsen**

London Wch m rapid 2018 (2)  
**1.e4 c5 2.♖f3 ♖c6 3.d4 cxd4**  
**4.♖xd4 ♖f6 5.♖c3 e5 6.♗db5**  
**d6 7.♖d5** Once again, back to

the tabiya of this match that had appeared in Games 8, 10 and 12. **7...♖xd5 8.exd5 ♖e7 9.c4 ♖g6** **10.♖a4 ♖d7 11.♖b4 ♖b8!**? Deviating from Game 12, where he went 11...♗f5. **12.h4**



**12...h5** Black has also tried 12...a6 and now:

A) **13.♖c3 ♗e7 14.g3** (14.h5 ♖h4 15.♖a4 b6 (15...b5! 16.cxb5 ♖f5± 17.b6 ♖d4 18.♗d3 ♗b5) 16.♖xb6 (16.h6 g5!) 16...♗d8 17.♖xh4 (17.♗e3? ♖f5) 17...♖xh4 (17...♗xb6!?±) 18.♖b3 ♖a7 19.♖xd7 ♖xb3 20.axb3 ♖xd7 21.b4 ♖b8 22.b5 (22.♗d2!?± ♖c4-c5, b4-b5) 22...♖aa8 (22...♗d8! 23.bxa6 h6∞ ♖g5) 23.bxa6 e4 24.♖a4 ♖b3 25.c5! dxc5 26.♖xe4! Joutsu-Alexandrov, cr 2006) 14...0-0!? (14...h5 15.♗e2 f5 16.♗e3! leads to a position which could arise in Van Foreest-Carlsen after 15.g3) 15.h5 ♖h8 16.h6 g6 ♖...f7-f5∞;

B) **13.h5! axb5** (13...♖f4 14.♖c3± ♖g2-g3, ♗f4) 14.hxg6 ♖a4!? (14...fxg6 15.cxb5 ♗e7 16.a4! 0-0 17.a5 ♖e8 18.♗e2 ♗f6 19.b6 ♖b8 20.♗e3 ♖e7 21.♖c1+ Dobrica-Marquardt, cr 2011) 15.♖b3!? (15.gxf7+ ♖xf7 16.♖b3 bxc4 17.♗xc4 ♗e7 18.♗e3 b5 19.♗e2± Timoschenko) 15...fxg6 (15...bxc4 16.♗xc4 fxg6 17.♗b5 ♖e4+ 18.♖f1+ ♖f2-f3, ♗e3) 16.cxb5 ♖e4+ 17.♗e3±. **13.e3** 13.g3 ♗e7 14.♗e2 ♖g4 is Lanc-Przewoznik, cr 1983, quoted already in Yearbook 24. Now 15.♗xg4 hxg4 16.c5 dxc5 17.♖a4! ♖f8 18.♖xg4± is promising for White. ≥ 14...a6. **13...a6** 13...♗e7 14.c5!±. **14.♖c3 a5** 14...♗e7 can be met with 15.♖a4, which explains the logic behind the ...a5-a4 idea: 15...a5 16.♖b3 ♗d8 17.g3 0-0 18.♗e2 e4 19.c5 (19.♗xh5

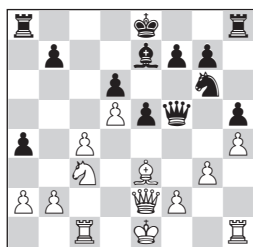
b5 20.cxb5±; 19.♔d4!?) 19...♙e5 20.♙f4 ♘f3+ 21.♙xf3 exf3 22.0-0-0 ♙c7= Mende-Pravec, cr 2014.

**15.♖b3 a4 16.♗d1 ♙e7 17.g3 ♗c8** So far both players played at the speed of light, or so it seemed from the transmission that I was following. Possibly there was some bluffing involved, as Black's position seemed highly suspect at this point. **18.♙e2 ♙g4** 18...0-0 is not good, as after 19.♖c1 it is hard for Black to find a move, when 19...♙g4 20.♙xg4 hxg4 21.h5 forces 21...♙h8, as there is no longer a pin on the h-file once Black castles. **19.♖c1** Not the roughest of the options. It doesn't spoil much, but it certainly lets Black quite a bit off the hook. 19.♙xg4 felt principled: 19...hxg4 20.c5, with what feels like a powerful initiative after 20...dxc5 21.h5. Black has some issues with his knight and White wants to follow up with ♗e2 and 0-0-0 with a strong initiative.

19.f3 was also quite appropriate here, when it felt like Caruana would have a better version of Game 12.

19.♘b5 is also promising and might transpose into a position from the following note.

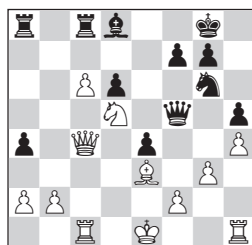
**19...♙xe2 20.♗xe2 ♗f5**



**21.c5!?** This operation doesn't work well for White here, now that there are no h4-h5 ideas after ...0-0, compared to the 19.♙xg4 lines. 21.0-0 0-0 would lead to an unclear position, but I am not convinced about Black's queenside pawn structure. White can stick the knight to b5 and prepare the c4-c5 push eventually. Black in turn will have to show

some creativity to get play on the kingside. Kryakvin after 22.♘b5 ♙g5 claims White is better, and the engines tend to agree.

**21...0-0 22.c6!?** Very ambitious. But chess is a concrete game and in hindsight it is easy to explain why this isn't good. White is yet to castle and he is a tempo short in many lines that arise, and the weak king on e1 comes back to haunt him. **22...bxc6 23.dxc6 ♖fc8 24.♗c4 ♙d8** 24...♗e6!?, fighting for the d5-square, also looks good for Black: 25.♘d5 ♖a5 26.♘b6 d5 27.♗c3 ♖b5 28.♗c2 ♙b4+ 29.♙e2 ♙c3!? with complications favouring Black. **25.♘d5 e4**



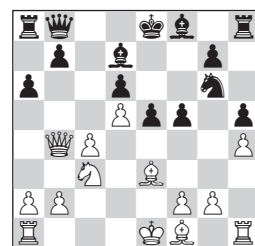
**26.c7?** White's position was extremely dangerous and on the verge of collapse, but this is losing by force. After 26.♙d4, despite having a few attractive options, Black doesn't have anything killing: 26...♖a5 (26...♗f3 27.0-0 ♘xh4 leads to a perpetual – 28.gxh4 ♗g4+ 29.♙h2 ♗xh4+; 26...♙a5+! 27.♙c3 ♙xc3+ 28.♖xc3 ♖a5 29.♙e3 and White is completely in the game) 27.♙e3 ♗f3 28.0-0 and despite the fact that Black has options to sac both pieces on h4, White is holding and objectively he is surviving here. **26...♙xc7 27.♙xc7 ♙e5 28.♘d5** 28.♗d5 loses to the very strong 28...♖ab8!, threatening 29...♖xc7 followed by 30...♙f3+, picking up the d5-queen, on top of some other threats such as ...♙d3+ etc. **28...♙h7** Stepping out of the ♙e7+ fork. White is completely lost, as he is losing the full house to the potential ...♙d3 fork, and so he resigned.

M/18-8-19 Giri

## Jorden van Foreest Magnus Carlsen

Wijk aan Zee 2019 (5)

**1.e4 c5 2.♙f3 ♙c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♙f6 5.♙c3 e5 6.♙db5 d6 7.♙d5 ♙xd5 8.exd5 ♙e7 9.c4 ♙g6 10.♗a4 ♙d7 11.♗b4 ♗b8** After 21 classical draws in a row, Magnus is unwilling to 'risk' repetition after 11...♙f5 12.♗a4 ♙d7 13.♗b4. **12.h4 h5 13.♙e3** After 13.♙g5 probably the best reaction is 13...♙e7! (13...f6 14.♙e3 a6 15.♙c3 f5 16.g3 was the move-order in Bhat-Wang, mentioned below) 14.♙d3 a6 15.♙xe7 ♙xe7 16.♙c3 f5= 17.0-0? ♘xh4 18.♙e2 ♙g6 19.♗d2 ♗f8 20.♖ac1 h4 21.c5 h3 22.cxd6+ ♙f7 23.g4 ♙h4→ Foote-Chambers, Internet 2004. **13...a6 14.♙c3 f5!?** Jorden was undoubtedly prepared for 14...a5 from the second tiebreak game Caruana-Carlsen, but Black is the first to deviate.



**15.0-0-0N** A novelty, but White doesn't have to define the position of his king yet.

A) 15.g3 ♙e7 16.♙e2 is more flexible and worked well for White in previous games:

A1) 16...f4 17.gxf4 (≥ 17.♙b6±) 17...exf4? (17...♙xf4!?) 18.♙d4 0-0 19.♙xh5 ♘xh4 20.0-0-0 ♙f5 21.♙g6 ♘xd4 22.♙h7+ ♙f7 23.♖xd4+ Bhat-Wang, Dallas 2002;

A2) 16...♙d8 17.c5 dxc5 (17...f4 18.♗e4! (18.♙d3 0-0 19.♙xg6 fxe3 20.fxe3 (Herrera-Reinderman, Antwerp 1992) 20...dxc5 21.♗xc5 ♖f6! 22.♙xh5 ♙b6=) 18...0-0 19.♗xg6 ♙e8 (19...fxe3 20.♙d3!→) 20.♗e4 fxe3 21.♗xe3±) 18.♙xc5 ♗c7 19.d6 ♗c6 20.0-0 ♖c8 21.♙a7 ♖h6 22.♙h2 ♖a8 23.♙e3 f4 24.♙d2± Kroes-Pavliceck, LSS



email 2012; 24. ♖ac1! fxe3 25.fxe3  
 ♟f8 26. ♟e4±.

Black should look for untested alternatives, but e.g.

A3) 16...e4 17. ♟a4±;

A4) 16...b5 17.cxb5 axb5 18. ♟d2!± prepares ♟b5 and looks attractive for White. If 18. ♟xb5?! 0-0 19. ♟d2 f4±.

B) 15. ♟e2 is similar to 15.g3 and likely to transpose after 15... ♟e7 16.g3;

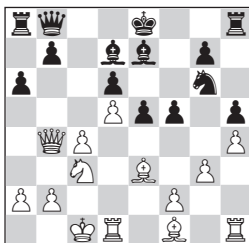
C) 15. ♟a4 is a direct try, which also deserves attention. Now 15... f4 16. ♟d3 ♟xh4!? was allegedly suggested by Carlsen in the post-mortem: 17. ♖xh4 fxe3 and now:

C1) 18. ♟g6+ ♟d8 19.fxe3 ♖h6!∞;

C2) 18. ♟b6 a5 19. ♖b3 exf2+ 20. ♟xf2 a4 21. ♟g6+ (21. ♖b4 ♟e7 22. ♟g6+ ♟d8 23. ♖xh5 ♖xh5 24. ♟xh5 ♖a6=) 21... ♟d8 22. ♖g3 ♖a6 23. ♟xd7 ♟xd7 24. ♟xh5 ♟xh5 25. ♟xh5 ♖a7+ 26. ♟e2 ♖d4±;

C3) More testing is 18.fxe3 b5 (18... ♟e7 19. ♖xh5 ♖xh5 20. ♟g6+ ♟d8 21. ♟xh5 transposes to the main line after 21...b5) 19.cxb5 (19. ♟g6+ ♟d8 20. ♖a5+ ♖c7 21. ♖xc7+ ♟xc7 22.cxb5 axb5 23. ♟c3 ♟e7 24. ♖b4 is also pleasant for White, but after 24... ♟b6 followed by ... ♟a5 Black retains material equality) 19...axb5 20. ♟c3 ♟e7 (20... ♖b6 21. ♟d2 ♟e7 22. ♖f1!±

△ 22... ♟xh4? 23. ♖xh4 ♖h6 24. ♖g5+–) 21. ♖xh5 ♖xh5 22. ♟g6+ ♟d8 23. ♟xh5± and Black must yet prove his compensation.  
**15... ♟e7 16.g3**



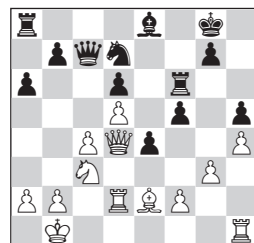
**16...0-0** A pawn-sacrifice.

However, this also goes for the alternatives:

A) 16...e4 17. ♟a4 (17. ♟e2 ♟e5 △ ... ♟f7, ...g7-g6) 17...b5 18. ♟b6 bxc4 19. ♖xc4 ♖a7 20. ♟xd7 ♖xd7 21. ♖a4 ♟e5 22. ♟xa6 0-0∞/±;

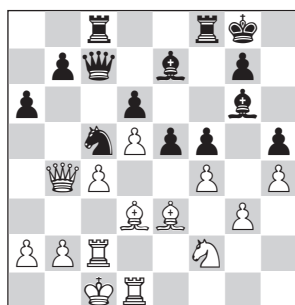
B) 16...b5! 17.cxb5 axb5 18.a3 (18... ♟g5 e4±) 18...0-0∞.  
**17. ♟e2 e4 18. ♟d4?! 18.f4 exf3 19. ♟xf3 ♟e5 20. ♟e2 (20. ♟xh5 ♖c8 21. ♟e2 a5 22. ♖b3 a4 23. ♖b4 ♟d8±) 20...b5 21.cxb5 axb5±; ≥ 18. ♟xh5 ♟e5 19. ♟e2 b5 20.cxb5 axb5 prepares ...cxc8, or ... ♟d8-a5, but White has the strong 21. ♟g5!±. 18... ♟f6 19. ♟xf6 ♖xf6 20. ♖b6?! 20. ♟xh5 ♟e5 21. ♟e2 b5 22.cxb5 ♟xb5! 23. ♟xb5 axb5 24.a3 ♖f7± and even though White can take**

a second pawn, the dominant ♟e5 gives Black compensation. However, this was better than the timid game continuation. **20... ♟e5 21. ♟b1 ♟e8 22. ♟d2 ♟d7 23. ♖d4 ♖c7**



The material has remained equal and Black is gradually taking over. He has active ideas (pawn breaks b5 and f4), while it's difficult to suggest a constructive plan for White. **24. ♟d1 ≥ 24. ♖c1±** at least keep in check the aforementioned breaks. **24... ♟e5 25. ♟e3?! 25. ♖c2±. 25...f4! 26.gxf4 ♖xf4 27. ♖g1** Now White's position collapses quickly. 27. ♟g2 ♖f8±. **27... ♟g6 28. ♟a1 28. ♖xg6 ♟xg6 29. ♟g2 ♖f5 30. ♖xe4 ♖f7 31. ♟d3 ♖f6 32. ♖e2 ♟f8+ △ 33... ♖e8. 28... ♖af8 29.c5 29. ♟d1 b5+; 29... ♟f3! 30. ♟xf3 exf3 31. ♖e3 ♖e4 32. ♖g5 ♖xc4+.** **29... ♖xf2 29... dxc5 30. ♖c3 ♖d6+.** **30. ♖c3 ♖xc5 31. ♖xc5 dxc5 32.d6 ♟h7 33.d7 ♟f3 0-1**

## Exercise 1

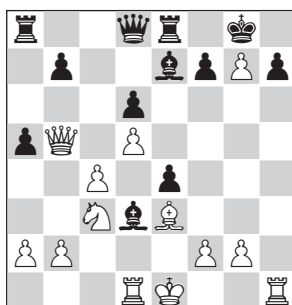


position after 25.f3-f4

How does Black develop his initiative?

(solutions on page 247)

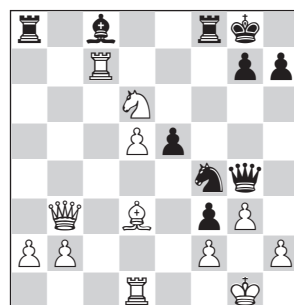
## Exercise 2



position after 20... ♖f8-e8

Black's kingside is shattered, but his active forces promise him counterplay. How should White proceed?

## Exercise 3



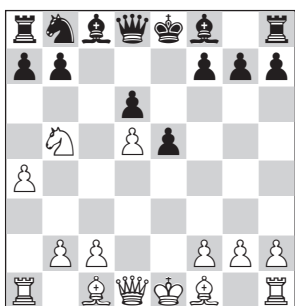
position after 23. ♟b5xd6

How can Black continue his kingside attack?

# Renaissance in the anti-Sveshnikov

by John van der Wiel (special contribution by Anish Giri)

- |    |             |              |
|----|-------------|--------------|
| 1. | <b>e4</b>   | <b>c5</b>    |
| 2. | <b>♘f3</b>  | <b>♘c6</b>   |
| 3. | <b>d4</b>   | <b>cx d4</b> |
| 4. | <b>♘xd4</b> | <b>♘f6</b>   |
| 5. | <b>♘c3</b>  | <b>e5</b>    |
| 6. | <b>♘db5</b> | <b>d6</b>    |
| 7. | <b>♘d5</b>  | <b>♘xd5</b>  |
| 8. | <b>exd5</b> | <b>♘b8</b>   |
| 9. | <b>a4</b>   |              |



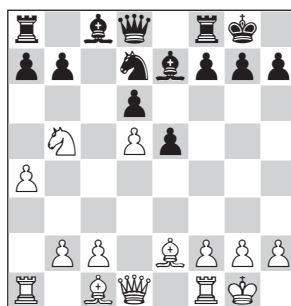
7.♘d5 has always been a serious option to avoid the classical Sveshnikov/Chelyabinsk Variation. Until 2017, however, not many new ideas were surfacing. It was more or less known what Black was supposed to do. But now, mainly thanks to the Caruana-Carlsen clashes (easily the most interesting part of their match), 9.a4, always the smaller brother of 9. c4, is suddenly a fierce weapon!

## The new insights

It used to be mainstream theory to meet Black's kingside advance with f2-f4, often preceded by ♖g1-h1. Then usually Black gets a minor piece on e5, with equal chances. The Renaissance Movement, however, says: get the pawn to a5, at some point Black will have to

go ...a7-a6 and then with ♘b5-a3-c4 White will start to exploit his queenside chances. On the downside, Black isn't hampered in playing ...f7-f5 and ...f5-f4 or ...e5-e4. Can White easily allow that? This needs to be studied in great depth. Giri, in his Caruana-Carlsen analyses, already gives some good pointers.

In the main line with 9...♙e7 10.♙e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♘d7 the idea a4-a5 can be realized in three ways:



A) 12.a5, which has only one drawback: after 12...a6 the knight has to go to the lesser square c3. With some preparation White will at least have ♘c3-a4, but it looks less perfect this way;

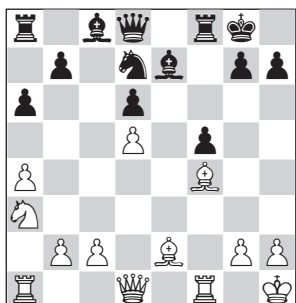
B) 12.♙d2, as in match game 8. Already popularized somewhat in 2018 and optically best, only the bishop is temporarily unavailable for other jobs (than supporting a5);

C) 12.b4. This looks ugly, but the logical 12...a6 13.♘a3 a5 didn't solve all Black's problems in match game 10. 12.a5 and 12.♙d2 were already invented in the 1970's, albeit not in very instructive or convincing ways, but 12.b4 was completely new! And possibly this is

what caused Carlsen to give up 8...♖b8 for the rest of the match.

### Dance in the old-fashioned way

In the older lines with ‘somewhere’ f2-f4, Black has experienced some difficulties. Mainly due to lack of appreciation for the value of a knight or bishop on e5. After 12.♖h1 f5 13.f4 a6 (not to let the knight go to d4) 14.♘a3 exf4 15.♙xf4,



what would you play?

In my opinion it should be 15...g5, weakening or not, but refusing to give White the option to destroy ♖e5 at an inconvenient moment.

There are still things to be found in these positions. For instance, is 14...g5!? playable? Or, is 12.f4, less popular than ♖h1, a better try? Black then has the tricky 12...a6 13.♘a3 b5!? but in fact it might be better to select 13...♙g5 and then improve on Kaidanov-Kotronias. See the notes to Rowson-Adams.

### Early subtleties

Before we hit the main lines, it is good to know some things in the very beginning of the variation(s).

Firstly: in general Black wants to postpone ...a7-a6. Play it too early and White goes ♘a3, ♘c4 and a4-a5 without needing an extra move to realise a4-a5. As a rule, play ...a7-a6 when

A) you want to go ...e5xf4 or ...e5-e4;

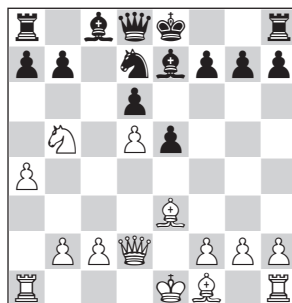


Fabiano Caruana

B) a7 is in danger;

C) you want to follow up with ...a6-a5 or ...b7-b5.

Secondly: 10.♙e3 is pretty interesting. If Black ignores it with 10...0-0?, then 11.a5! already wins a pawn. So, play 10...♘d7 (rather than 10...a6) and here 11.♙d2 is most consistent. If White goes slow with 11.♙e2, there is a good plan with (11... or 12...) a7-a6 and ...♙e7-g5.



Now when Black wants to tackle this set-up in the sharpest manner, he should choose 11...f5 over 11...0-0. See Borisek-Parligras in the Game Section. Not obvious at all, these small grains of knowledge!

### Infamous last words

It is easy to predict that this anti-Sveshnikov with 9.a4 will have a surge in popularity for months or years to come. No more ‘who knows it best’, no

more forced draws. And even the World Champion had his hands full. But it is early days, Black may yet find antidotes. For now, well, he had better, or else...

Also, I am really curious what Carlsen was going to do about the treatment that Caruana did NOT choose against 8...♟e7. But that is another Survey!

### A serious test 12. ♟d2

**Fabiano Caruana**  
**Magnus Carlsen**

London Wch 2018 (8)

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4

4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5

d6 7.♟d5 ♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟b8 9.a4

♟e7 10.♟e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♟d7 So far

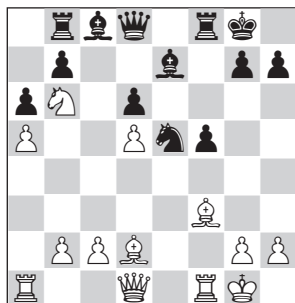
the natural moves, leading up to this tabiya. Now White has a wide choice of options and approaches.

**12. ♟d2** The point of this modest move is to strengthen the a4-a5 advance. Now that the a5-pawn will be protected, White will be able to retreat with the knight to a3 after Black plays ...a7-a6. So far we are still on relatively well-known ground, as this move was played twice by Grigory Oparin against Boris Gelfand – see Game 4. **12...**

**f5 13.a5 a6 14.♟a3 e4 15.♟c4**

♟e5 Black abandons his queenside somewhat, but in return gets a beautiful knight on e5 and some potential for a kingside initiative. 15...f4 felt somewhat premature.

**16. ♟b6 ♟b8 17.f4** Sooner or later White has to pay some attention to what Black is doing on the kingside and this break is eventually necessary. **17...exf3 18. ♟xf3**



Another critical position. Despite looking completely fresh and uncharted, it had

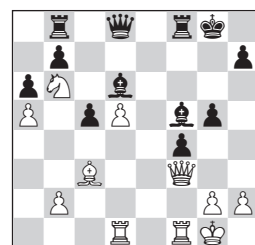
actually occurred in a couple of correspondence and computer games. Black's queenside is cramped, but his main issue is the c8-bishop, which lacks attractive squares. **18...g5?** Structurally speaking, this is not such a bad move, as Black wants to push on the side where he's got a pawn majority, but there seems to be no need to start with it. Both 18...♟f6 or 18...f4 would be more advisable, and only then should Black decide whether to push ...g7-g5 or perhaps abandon this idea altogether.

A) 18...♟g5 feels tempting, to gain even more control of the dark squares, but it seems rather slow: 19.c4 ♟xd2 20.♟xd2 f4 21.c5 and White just crushes through on the queenside or in the centre before Black is in time with any sort of counterplay;

B) 18...♟f6 is a decent preparatory move, when 19.c3 looks natural, and now already 19...g5 seems more appropriate, although after 20.g3! it is not easy to find a clear follow-up. Perhaps some sophisticated manoeuvring like ...♟c7-♟g7 or ...♟d7-♟e8 is called for, with an unclear position, at least in practical terms;

C) 18...f4! is my favourite, and not only because it was recommended by my wife on air during her commentary with Peter Svidler: 19.c4! (after 19.♟a4 in fact the game push 19...g5 seems a lot more attractive. I even speculated on Twitter that this may have been written down in Magnus' file, but most likely I am probably just imagining things as usual). Now 19...g5 would transpose to the game, but Black has a better option: 19...♟f6 20.♟h1 ♟xf3 21.♟xf3 ♟xb2 22.♟ae1 and White has tremendous compensation for

the pawn, as the f4-pawn will likely fall and Black has to continuously watch out for the c4-c5 break. Still, with perfect play Black may hold this one. **19.c4 f4 20. ♟c3!** This is important. Just as Black gets the desired ...♟f5, he gets hit with the thematic c4-c5 break. **20...♟f5 21.c5!** ♟xf3+ **22. ♟xf3 dxc5** Black is a pawn up, but that is really all he can be happy about. In fact, after delving into this position it becomes apparent that White's advantage is simply enormous. The d5 passer is huge and in the long run, with the kingside pawns overextended and the mighty c3-bishop unopposed, Black's king will find no safety. In fact, Black's only chance to survive this is to either scare White with some ...g5-g4/f4-f3/g4-g3 push or coordinate his pieces by regrouping his queen to g6. **23. ♟ad1** A fine move, but there were some very powerful alternatives as well. 23.g4! is the roughest solution, but 23.♟ae1 is just a very strong move too: 23...♟f6 24.h4! h6 25.hxg5 hxg5 26.g4!. Once again, this is the puncher. Depending on where the bishop will go, ♟e6 or d6 will decide. **23...♟d6** One of the key positions of the match. Here Fabiano must have forgotten that apart from ...g5-g4 there is also the positional threat of ...♟d8-e8-g6, connecting the rooks and securing the king, all at the same time.



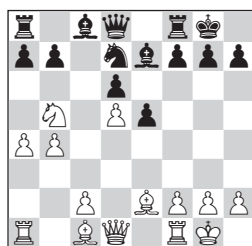
**24.h3?** Quite incredible, but this actually gives it all away in just one move.

A) 24.♟c4 g4 25.♟f2 is indeed a little murky, but in fact White is winning objectively;

B) 24.♟h5! was a pretty clean solution, and one that is very much doable. That said, of course when ‘the world is watching’ and the pressure is so high, things can go wrong: 24...♟e8 is objectively the toughest defence (24...♟g6 25.♟h3! ♟f5 and this can now be met with the by now thematic 26.g4!) 25.♟xg5+ ♟g6 26.♟xg6+ hxg6 27.♟c4 ♟bd8 28.♟xd6 ♟xd6 29.♟e5 ♟d7 30.♟xf4. Compared to the game Black is a couple of pawns down and is thus pretty much lost. **24...♟e8!** Now it turns out that once the queen reaches g6, Black suddenly solves all of his problems. The b8-rook will find its ideal spot on e8 and so right now White is forced to initiate a simplifying sequence. **25.♟c4 ♟g6 26.♟xd6 ♟xd6** White is not in time to set up a deadly battery along the a1-h8 diagonal, as b2-b3, ♟b2, ♟c3 is not going to happen due to ...♟e8-♟e3. Fabiano found nothing better but to simplify further, and indeed it seems there isn’t anything to play for any longer. **27.h4 gxh4 28.♟xf4 ♟xf4 29.♟xf4 h5! 30.♟e1 ♟g4 31.♟f6 ♟xf6 32.♟xf6 ♟f7 33.♟xh4 ♟e8 34.♟f1+ ♟g8 35.♟f6 ♟e2 36.♟g6+ ♟f8 37.d6 ♟d2 38.♟g5 ½-½**

M/18-8-30 Giri (abbreviated)

approach of repeating the same opening variation, as I felt that in modern times it shouldn’t take too long to solve pretty much any opening issue, once you have access to a team of great seconds with powerful computers. What I didn’t see coming, and neither did Magnus, was that Fabi would come up with a new move as early as move 12. **12.b4!** A rare case, in fact, when a new idea is also literally new. As far as I could see, it hasn’t been played in any(!) over-the-board game and also hasn’t featured in correspondence practice. Quite surprising, as this move looks just as logical as 12.♟d2 which Fabi played in the previous game. The idea is once again to be able to retreat with the knight to a3, once White goes a4-a5 and Black meets it with ...a7-a6.



**12...a6** The most logical. In fact, 12...a6 followed by 13...a5 was the first idea that came to my mind as well.

A) 12...f5 13.a5 a6 14.♟a3 felt like a worse version of the previous game, as you would expect b2-b4 to be more universal than ♟c1-d2. In fact, it is not that straightforward. A sample line could be: 14...e4 15.♟c4 f4!? 16.♟d2 (after 16.♟a3 ♟e5, here for example the b4-pawn is going to be hanging after 17.♟xe5 dxe5, and after the natural 18.♟b3, Black can initiate some play on the kingside, starting with, for example, 18...♟h4, hinting at some ...f4-f3, gxf3 ♟h3 ideas and keeping the ...♟f6 lift as an option as well) 16...♟f6 17.♟a3! (this rook lift, which Fabiano has probably

encountered in his preparation, eventually got into his DNA, as we will see later) 17...♟e7 18.♟g4 ♟e5 19.♟xc8 ♟axc8 20.♟xe4 f3 21.♟e1 fxe2 and Black has some play here, but being half a pawn up, White remains in control;

B) 12...a5 feels less good without including ...a7-a6, but made some sense as well;

C) 12...b6 is one other idea, toying with the move order. The arising positions are highly complex, as are pretty much all positions in this variation: 13.a5 a6 14.axb6 ♟xb6 and the more natural 15.♟a3 can be met with the original 15...a5!?, trying to take the sting out of White’s queenside play. **13.♟a3 a5!?** Probably this is already somewhat inaccurate. Now Black suddenly finds himself walking down a narrow road and I am not sure that he will be too happy with what he will see at the end of it. 13...b6!? was an alternative to 13...a5 and it would retain more tension in the position: 14.♟c4 f5 (14...a5 doesn’t give Black an easy life either, as after 15.bxa5 bxa5 16.♟d2, he will have to take care of his weak a5-pawn) 15.f4. This is a way to keep both sides of the board in check, but here Black, too, has quite some options. He can choose to challenge the queenside structure with ...a6-a5 or do something more cautious. For example, ...♟b7, ...♟c8 comes to mind, trying to finish the development – for what it’s worth. Here too, by the way, one of White’s main ideas is the ♟a3 rook lift. 15.a5 b5 is rather desperate for Black, but not so clear. White will dominate the queenside after tearing apart Black’s pawn structure with c2-c4, but Black will in turn organize some quick initiative with ...e5-e4 and ...f5-f4. **14.bxa5! ♟xa5** 14...♟xa5 would have transposed to the game. The extra option of ...♟c7 is surprisingly unfortunate: 15.♟c4 ♟c7 (15...♟d8!) 16.a5 f5 (16...b5 can now be met with a nice tactic:

## A Carlsen slayer 12.b4

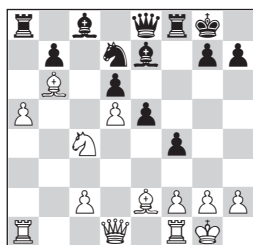
### Fabiano Caruana Magnus Carlsen

London Wch 2018 (10)

**1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5 d6 7.♟d5 ♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟b8 9.a4 ♟e7 10.♟e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♟d7** So far the game followed the same course as Game 8. Commentating this live, I was sceptical about Fabiano’s

2

17.♟b6! 17.♙e3 f4 18.♙b6 and this would be a worse version of the game for Black, as he would not have the option of ...♙e8. **15.♟c4 ♚a8** Other squares are obviously not attractive. **16.♙e3! f5** I was sceptical about allowing a4-a5 and ♙b6, when following the game without a computer, but that was before I realized that 16...b6 can be met with 17.♚b1!. After 17...♙xa4 18.♟xb6, Black has no structural problems, but he has a very serious issue of having no safe square for his rook. **17.a5 f4 18.♙b6 ♙e8!** 18...♟xb6 19.♟xb6 ♚b8 20.♙g4 is a positional disaster. White's knight is far superior to the bad e7-bishop.



**19.♚a3?** As the attentive reader may have noticed, this is often a good idea in this variation. Here, however, it seems to be somewhat premature. The priority should have been to stop Black's play beginning with ...e5-e4. In fact, it was very much achievable, but in order to find the right idea, one must realize how vital the ...e5-e4 push is.

A) 19.♙c7 is the most tempting move to begin with. Black has two natural ways of protecting the d6-pawn, both of which are possible: 19...♙g6 and 19...♙f6;

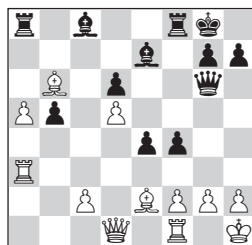
B) 19.♙h5 is a flashy idea that came to mind, but, as pointed out by Peter Svidler, provoking ...g7-g6 can also have downsides: 19...g6 20.♙e2 ♟xb6 21.♟xb6 ♚a7 22.♙g4 ♙f5! and suddenly White can't claim light-square dominance as ♙xf5 can now be met with ...gxf5!, controlling the key light squares e4 and g4;

C) In fact, the strongest and the most flexible seems to be the

immediate 19.♚e1! taking ...e5-e4 out of the position and preparing to blockade the e4-square.

**19...♙g6 20.♙c7** 20.♚e1 could now be met with 20...♟f6!?, not to mention that 20...e4 would be possible too, now that the queen is already on g6, when 21.♙h5 can be met with 21...♙f5. **20...e4** The immediate 20...b5! had some point as well, without the natural inclusion of ...e5-e4 and ♟h1: 21.♟b6 ♟xb6 22.♙xb6 b4 23.♚b3. Now Black has the rather attractive option of 23...♙f5, hitting the c2-pawn. And ...e5-e4 is still on the cards here. **21.♟h1 b5!?** Flashy, but in fact not as killing as it may seem at first. The deep 21...♙h6! was the strongest: 22.♙g1!? (this is the best move, but a rather desperate one at that too) 22...b5 23.♟b6 ♟xb6 24.♙xb6. This is now a somewhat better version for Black. He has the initiative, but White will keep on kicking.

**22.♟b6!** 22.axb6 is greedy and in fact quite suicidal. After 22...♙xa3 23.♟xa3 f3! 24.gxf3 ♙e5! Black's attack develops by itself: 25.♙g1 ♙h6! **22...♟xb6 23.♙xb6**



**23...♙g5?** There were really many good options, but despite being extremely interesting and original, this was not one of them. One idea of counterplay is to get ...♙f6-e5 and follow it up with ...f4-f3. Black can either do that immediately, or start with ...♙d7 or ...b5-b4. After 23...b4, Black has many options on every move, but I will give one sample line to demonstrate how a game between two geniuses could play out here: 24.♚b3 ♙f6 25.♚xb4 ♙c3 26.♚a4 ♙d7 27.♚a3 ♙b2 28.♚b3 ♙e5 29.f3 e3 30.a6 ♙h6!

(preparing ...♙f5, an important finesse) 31.♙d3 ♙h5! 32.a7 ♚f6 33.♙e2! ♚h6 34.g4! (34.g3!) 34...fxg3 35.♙xe3 ♙xh2+ 36.♙xh2 ♚xh2+ 37.♙g1 ♙h3 38.♚b8+ ♙f7 39.♚xa8 ♚g2+ 40.♙h1 ♚h2+ with the usual final result. **24.g3?** Returning the favour. Fabiano wanted to clarify the kingside situation after all and even after the game he regretted this move, but suggested 24.f3 instead.

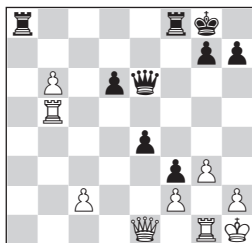
A) It seems he trusted his opponent and didn't believe he could get away with simply 24.♙xb5 ♚f6 25.♚e1! g6 26.♙f1 ♙f5 27.♚a4! ♙g4 28.f3 exf3 29.gxf3 ♙d7! 30.♚a3 ♙d8! 31.♙d4 ♙xb6 32.♙xb6 ♙b5!? (a beautiful double deflection) 33.♙f2! ♙xf1 34.♙xf1 ♙xd5 35.a6 ♚e6 and with the white passed pawn being so far advanced and so well protected, Black is not feeling comfortable here;

B) 24.f3 e3 25.g3 was an attempt to clarify the situation on the kingside, but Black keeps the initiative even after the f4-pawn goes: 25...fxg3 26.♙g1 ♙h6 27.♙xg3 ♙g5!, followed by ...♙f4;

C) 24.♙g1! ♚f6 25.♙d4! The e4-pawn is important, but after 25...♙f5 there suddenly is 26.g4!! ♙g6 27.♙xb5 and it's actually not easy to attack White's king now that the g6-bishop is in the way of the ...♙f6-h6 lift. **24...b4 25.♚b3 ♙h3** Initiating a forced sequence, which leads to a rather drawish position, but one in which Black is in control. 25...f3!?. **26.♙g1** Forcing 26...f3. 26.♚e1 is bad on account of 26...♙f6!. **26...f3 27.♙f1 ♙xf1 28.♙xf1!** Better to give up the beautiful d5-pawn than to get mated. **28...♙xd5 29.♚xb4 ♙e6** Black has now clearly taken the risk out of the position. White's only trump is the a5-pawn, but Black can always trade down into a drawish major-piece endgame with ...♙d8. In fact, after Fabi found a decent move, that was exactly what Magnus decided to do. **30.♚b5 ♙d8** 30...♙fc8 31.♙b1! followed by ♙b3



gives White just enough play of his own to secure equality. **31. ♖e1 ♟xb6** 31...d5 32. ♖d2 is not a winning attempt by Black. **32. axb6**



The position is now pretty equal. The b6-pawn is annoying, but so is the f3-pawn and eventually both sides should find a way to simplify this into a draw.

**32... ♖ab8 33. ♖e3 ♖c4 34. ♖b2 ♖b7 35. ♖d1 ♖e2!? 36. ♖e1 ♖xe3 37. ♖xe3 d5 38. h4! ♖c8 39. ♖a3 ♟f7 40. ♟h2 40. ♖a7** was a more straightforward draw: **40... ♖cb8 41. c4! dxc4 42. ♖b4. 40... ♟e6 41. g4 ♖c6 42. ♖a6!? ♟e5 43. ♟g3 h6 44. h5 ♟d4?! 44...g5** is just one of many ways to make a draw without being on the bad side of things: **45. ♖b5! ♖d6! 46. ♖a4+ ♟e5 47. ♖ab4 ♟e6 48. c4 dxc4 49. ♖xc4 ♖dxb6 50. ♖xe4+ ♟f7 51. ♖f5+ ♖f6 52. ♖xf6+ ♟xf6 53. ♟xf3 ♟f7 54. ♟g3 ½-½**

M/18-8-34 Giri (abbreviated)

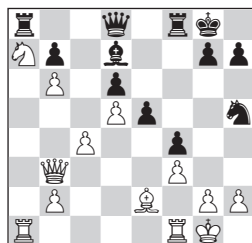
## Popularized 12. ♖d2

**Niclas Huschenbeth 3**  
**Zbynek Hracek**

Le Castella tt 2018 (4)

**1. e4 c5 2. ♟f3 ♟c6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♟xd4 ♟f6 5. ♟c3 e5 6. ♟db5 d6 7. ♟d5 ♟xd5 8. exd5 ♟b8 9. a4 ♟e7 10. ♟e2 0-0 11. 0-0 ♟d7 12. ♟d2 f5 13. a5 ♟f6** A different approach from Carlsen's. It is a pawn sac, if White so desires. **14. ♟e3 14. c4 f4 15. f3 ♟f5 16. ♟e1 a6 17. ♟c3 ♖c8 18. ♟d3 (18. ♟f2!?) 18... ♟xd3 19. ♖xd3 ♖c7 20. b3 b6 21. axb6 (21. ♟h1!?) 21... ♖xb6+ 22. ♟f2 ♖xb3 23. c5!** Ivic-Nenezic, Skopje Ech blitz 2018, was only a blitz game,

but illustrative of the difficulties that Black may face. **14... ♟d7 15. ♟xa7 f4 16. ♟b6 ♖e8 17. f3** Where is the compensation? 17...g5 looks slow and 17... ♖g6 18. ♟b5 doesn't impress. But Hracek has an idea. **17... ♟d8 18. c4 ♟xb6+ 19. axb6 ♖d8 20. ♖b3 ♟h5**



Black's play may look primitive, but with 21... ♖f6 coming up, things could become serious. Therefore White decides to start his own 'attack': **21. c5!? dxc5 21... ♟g3(?)** would be overdoing it: **22. hxg3 fxg3 23. ♖fc1 ♖h4 24. ♖e3** and White parries the attack. **22. ♟c6 ♖f6 23. ♖a7!? ♟g3** Desperate measures, as White's pawns are too good after **23... ♖xa7 24. bxa7 bxc6 25. dxc6+ ♟e6 26. ♟c4. 24. ♖e1(?)** If 24. hxg3 fxg3 25. ♖fa1 there is 25... ♖h6!, but White can do better with 25. ♖e3!. Probably Black then wants to continue **25... bxc6 26. ♖xd7 ♖h4 27. ♖d1 e4. A missed opportunity? 24... ♟xe2+ 25. ♟xe2 bxc6 26. ♖xa8 ♖xa8 ½-½** Some perpetual check line seems to be the most likely outcome after **27. b7 ♖a1+ 28. ♖e1! ♖xe1+ 29. ♟f2 ♖h4+ 30. g3.**

**Grigory Oparin 4**  
**Boris Gelfand**

Moscow 2017 (3)

**1. e4 c5 2. ♟f3 ♟c6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♟xd4 ♟f6 5. ♟c3 e5 6. ♟db5 d6 7. ♟d5 ♟xd5 8. exd5 ♟b8 9. a4 ♟e7 10. ♟e2 0-0 11. 0-0 ♟d7 12. ♟d2 ♟f6** Two days later, in the Rapid section of the same event, Gelfand preferred **12... a6 13. ♟a3 a5.** Things were unclear for quite some time, but after **14. ♟c4 b6 15. f4 ♟a6 16. ♟e3 ♟b7 17. ♟c3 g6 18. ♟b5 ♟a6 19. ♟xd7!? (19. ♟xa6 ♖xa6 20. ♖e2) 19... ♖xd7 20. ♖f3**

**♖ae8 21. fxe5 dxe5 22. ♟xe5 ♟c5 23. ♟d4 ♟e2! 24. ♖xe2 ♟xd4 25. c3 ♟c5 26. ♟f1 ♖e5?** (better **26... ♖e4**) **27. ♟g4!** White definitively gained the upper hand. **13. ♟e3 a6 14. ♟a3 ♖b8** Black hasn't launched a kingside initiative but now intends **15. ♟c4 b5 16. axb5 ♖xb5! 15. b4** White sees it and gets ready to go **16. ♟c4 b5 17. ♟a5** or else **16. a5. 15... a5 16. c3?!)** There are other options. I like **16. bxa5 ♖xa5 17. ♟b5!** and **18. ♟c4** or **17... ♟g4!** **18. ♟d2. 16... ♟f5 17. ♖b3 ♟g4** The game has now become obscure. Black has probably obtained acceptable play. **18. f3 ♟h5 19. ♖ad1 e4 20. ♟c4 b6 21. ♟d2 exf3 22. ♟xf3 ♟xf3 23. ♟xf3 ♟d7 24. ♟f4 ♟e5 25. ♟xe5 dxe5 26. d6 ♟xd6 27. ♖d5 ♟e7** A wise choice, as **27... ♟c7 28. ♖c6 ♖c8 29. ♟d5** looks very dangerous; if **29. ♖d7 ♟d8. 28. ♖xe5 ♟f6 29. ♟xd8 ♟xe5 30. ♖xb8 ♖xb8 31. ♟d5 ♟xc3 32. ♖xf7 ♟h8 33. bxa5 bxa5 34. ♖b7** Oparin acknowledges that there are no realistic hopes for a win (**34. h4 g6**). **34... ♖xb7 35. ♟xb7 g6 36. g3 ♟g7 37. ♟g2 ♟f6 38. ♟f3 ♟b4 39. ♟c6 h6 40. ♟b5 ½-½**

## Jobava & co 12. a5

**Dragan Sorgic 5**

**Zoran Markovic**

Serbia tt 2015 (1)

**1. e4 c5 2. ♟f3 ♟c6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♟xd4 ♟f6 5. ♟c3 e5 6. ♟db5 d6 7. ♟d5 ♟xd5 8. exd5 ♟b8 9. a4 ♟e7 10. ♟e2 0-0 11. 0-0 ♟d7 12. a5** 'Perhaps the most logical move, but the problem is that after **12... a6** White's knight cannot reach the desired c4-square and has to go back' – Giri. **13. ♟c3 f5 14. ♟d2 ♟g5** A good idea to swap these bishops, but it is a little time-consuming. The alternative would be **14... e4!?. 15. ♟a4 e4** White doesn't have the versatile knight on c4 in this line, but from a4 it still does a good job in supporting c2-c4, b2-b4, c4-c5. Therefore Black

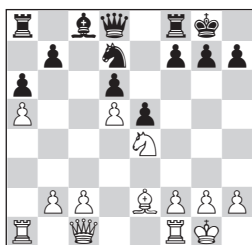


embarks on an active course, now more or less threatening 16...♗xd2 17.♖xd2 f4. The other option is first 15...♗xd2 16.♖xd2 f4, when White chooses between 17.f3 and 17.♗g4. **16.f4 exf3 17.♗xf3 ♖e5 18.♗b6 ♖b8** By transposition we have reached a position that could have occurred in Caruana-Carlsen, had Black chosen 18...♗g5 over 18...g5! **19.♗e2?! White** should play 19.c4 here, as Giri indicated. I am not sure that after 19...♗xd2 20.♖xd2 f4 the advance 21.c5 is already the killer action that Anish claims it to be, but anyway 19.c4 is potentially dangerous for Black. **19...♗xd2 20.♖xd2 g5 21.♗c4** White, the lower rated player, is not playing with a high amount of ambition, but it suffices for equality. **21...♗xc4 22.♗xc4 ♖f6 23.♖ad1 ♗d7 24.♖d4 ♖xd4+ 25.♖xd4 ½-½**

### Baadur Jobava 6 Ivan Salgado Lopez

Tbilisi playoff rapid 2017 (1)

**1.e4 c5 2.♗e2 ♗c6 3.♗bc3 ♖f6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♗xd4 e5 6.♗db5 d6 7.♗d5 ♗xd5 8.exd5 ♖b8 9.a4 ♗e7 10.♗e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♗d7 12.a5 a6 13.♗c3 ♗g5 13...f5 14.♖a3?! e4 15.♗f4 ♗e5?! (15...g5!) 16.♗a4 ♗g6?! (16...♖xa5? runs into 17.♗xe5! dxe5 18.d6 but 16...♗f6 is fine) 17.♗d2 ♗g5 18.♗b6 ♖b8 19.f4 exf3 20.♖axf3 with advantage to White was another Jobava-Salgado Lopez (1-0, 38) on the same day (third rapid game), in which Black could have treated the opening a lot better. **14.♗e4 ♗xc1 15.♖xc1****



**15...♗c5** Perhaps it is possible to hold the position this way, but it is not a happy decision, as Black

will have to block the d-pawn with his queen. 15...♗f6 is playable, but I would prefer 15...♖e7, intending to follow up with ...f7-f5. **16.♗xc5 dxc5 17.♖d1 ♖d6 18.♖a3 ♖b8 19.♖e3?! 19.♖b3!** certainly looks like ±. **19...♗f5 20.c4 b6 21.♖d2** Probably 21.axb6 is still normal, even though there will be a lot of pressure on White's b-pawn. **21...b5! 22.h4 b4 23.♖a1 ♖bd8** In the remainder Jobava didn't manage to find a convincing plan, which probably doesn't exist anyway... ½-½ (37)

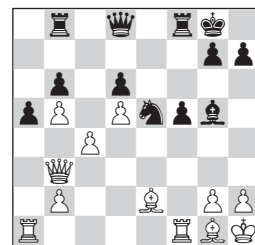
### The old-fashioned way 12.♗h1

### Hikaru Nakamura 7 Boris Gelfand

London 2012 (1)

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 e5 6.♗db5 d6 7.♗d5 ♗xd5 8.exd5 ♖b8 9.a4 ♗e7 10.♗e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♗d7 12.♗h1 f5 13.f4 a6 14.♗a3 exf4 15.♗xf4 ♗e5 16.♖d2 16.♗c4 ♗xc4 (16...♗f6?! – by transposition – 17.♗xe5(!) 17...dxe5 18.a5 e4 19.♗b6 ♗e5?! (or 19...♖b8 20.d6 ♗e6 21.♗c4, which is still not easy for Black) 20.d6! ♗e6 21.♗c4 led to a quick win for White in Ragger-Dek, Porto Carras 2018) 17.♗xc4 ♗f6 is absolutely fine for Black and was in Gallagher-Parligras, Gothenburg 2005, even somewhat better after 18.c3 g5 19.♗e3 ♗e5 20.♗d4 ♖f6 21.♗xe5 dxe5 22.d6+ ♗e6 23.♖b3 ♗xc4 24.♖xc4+ ♖f7 25.♖ad1 ♖d8 26.♖d5 e4 27.♖fe1 ♗g7 28.c4 ♖xb2 29.♖xe4! ♖xd6! 30.♖xd6 fxe4. **16...♗d7 16...♗f6 17.a5 ♗g6?! (better 17...♗d7 or even 17...♖b8. Don't remove the Beauty from e5!) 18.♗c4! ♗xf4 19.♗xf4 ♗d7(!) 20.♗d3 g6 21.♗xd6 ♖c7?! 22.♗e8! gave White winning play in Kanovsky-Klima, Czechia tt 2017/18. **17.♖b4?! This** doesn't seem to put Black to the test. Worthy of attention is 17.♗xe5 dxe5 18.d6, but then 18...♗c6! is adequate; Therefore the most****

universal move should be 17.a5 with 18.♗xe5 dxe5 19.♗c4 as a possible follow-up. **17...♖b8 18.c4** Another move that Gelfand wouldn't mind and Giri called a serious positional mistake. But if 18.a5 Black has 18...b5 or 18...b6 and on 18.♗e3, then 18...a5 looks fine. **18...a5! 19.♖b3 ♗g6 20.♗e3 b6 21.♗b5 ♗xb5 22.axb5 ♗g5 23.♗g1 ♗e5**



Black stands well, having blocked the queenside. But there is hope for White to get at least something moving there. For that he should play either 24.♖c2 g6 25.b4 (or 25.♖fb1) or 24.♖c3! and continue with 25.b4 or maybe... 25.c5!?. But instead: **24.♖a3? ♗d2!** Presumably just missed by Nakamura. Now White's hope of activity vanishes altogether. **25.♖ad1 ♗b4 26.♖h3 ♖g5 27.♗e3 ♖f6 28.♗d4 ♗c5 29.♗c3 ♖g5 30.♗xe5 dxe5 31.g4** It looks as though White doesn't have to lose. But in the ensuing endgame Gelfand converted his advantage very impressively... **0-1 (58)**

### Deep Sengupta 8 Dimitri Reinderman

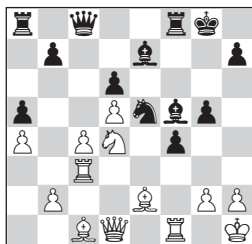
Parramatta 2009 (5)

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♗c3 ♖f6 4.d4 cxd4 5.♗xd4 e5 6.♗db5 d6 7.♗d5 ♗xd5 8.exd5 ♖b8 9.a4 ♗e7 10.♗e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♗d7 12.♗h1 f5 12...a6 13.♗a3 b6 (by transposition) 14.♗c4 ♗b7 15.a5 b5 16.♗e3 f5 17.f4 g6 18.c4 exf4 19.♖xf4 ♗g5! saw Black doing rather well in Kaidanov-Krush, Gausdal 2008. However, White has a much better queenside treatment: 14.a5! (instead of 14.♗c4) with 14...bxa5 15.♗c4 or 14...b5 15.c4/15.b4. **13.f4****

**a6 14. ♖a3 exf4** Better than 14...b6 15.a5! b5 16.c4 with two examples:

A) 16...♖xa5 17. ♖d2 ♖b6 18. ♖xb5 (threatens 19. ♖a5) 18...♖b8 19. ♖c3 exf4 20. ♖xf4 ♖xb2 21. ♖b5 ♖b4 22. ♖c7 ♖b8 23. ♖e6 with excellent compensation for White, Gallagher-Cherniaev, Saas Almagell 2005;

B) 16...♖b7 17.cxb5 axb5 (17...♖xa5 18. ♖c2) 18. ♖xb5 ♖xa5 19. ♖c6! ♖xc6 20.dxc6 ♖f6 21.b4 ♖d5 22. ♖b3 ♖h8 23. ♖b2 and White was much better in Wang Pin-Sharbf, Tehran 2007. Completely unusual but maybe not crazy is 14...g5!?. In Sebastian-Abel, Germany Bundesliga 2009/10, Black managed to hold his own via 15.fxg5 ♖xg5 16. ♖c4 ♖xc1 17. ♖xc1 ♖b6! 18. ♖xb6 ♖xb6 19. ♖g5+ ♖h8 20. ♖d3 (20. ♖a3 f4) 20...♖c7 (½-½, 57). White may try 16. ♖xg5 (instead of 16. ♖c4) 16...♖xg5 17. ♖c4 ♖f6 18. ♖a3 ♖h6, which isn't so clear either. **15. ♖xf4 g5** Weakening? Well, the kingside is Black's best sphere of influence. He has a majority there, and why indeed not chase away ♖f4 before installing the knight on e5? In many games ♖f4xe5 eventually proved to be a good (often tactical) blow. So I would say that after 15...g5 Black has nothing to complain about. Or, as they put it at the local tournament venue: 'no worries!' **16. ♖c1 ♖e5 17.c4 f4 18. ♖c2 ♖f5 19. ♖d4 ♖c8 20. ♖a3 a5 21. ♖c3**



**21...♖f6** The natural move, but certainly 21...b6 is a candidate as well, depending on the strength of White's following action.

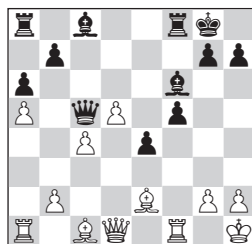
**22.c5!?** Even 22.g3 is a move. After 22...♖e4+ 23. ♖g1 f3 White may have a strong exchange sac, but

23...♖h3 and 23...♖c5! (instead of 23...f3) are to be considered as well. The text is much more initiative-orientated. **22...dxc5 23. ♖xf5 ♖xf5 24.d6 b6 25. ♖b3 ♖ab8 26. ♖d5+ ♖g7 27. ♖d3 ♖g4 28. ♖b5** Now and until the very end it is a delightfully wild and obscure game. Possibly Black was better at some point, but nobody knew for sure what on earth was going on... ½-½ (58)

### Igor Smirnov Umut Atakisi

Kharkov 2006 (11)

**1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♖f6 5. ♖c3 e5 6. ♖db5 d6 7. ♖d5 ♖xd5 8.exd5 ♖b8 9.a4 ♖e7 10. ♖e2 0-0 11.0-0 a6** 11...♖d7 12. ♖h1 a6 13. ♖a3 ♖c5 was a very unusual approach in Das-Edouard, Gibraltar 2011: 14. ♖c4 a5 and here 15.f4 looks best, but there followed 15. ♖e3 b6 16.f4 exf4 17. ♖xf4 ♖e8 18.c3 ♖a6 19. ♖a3! ♖xe2 20. ♖xe2 ♖xa4 21. ♖b5 ♖c5 22. ♖c4 ♖b8 23. ♖ae1 ♖f8 (23...♖d3 24. ♖xd6!) 24. ♖xe8 ♖xe8 25. ♖xe8? (after 25. ♖xd6 White would still be very much 'in the game') 25...♖xe8 26. ♖xd6 ♖e2 and Black soon won. **12. ♖a3 f5 13.f4 ♖d7 14. ♖h1 ♖f6** Probably not as good as 14...exf4. **15. ♖c4 ♖b6 16.fxe5 dxe5 17. ♖xb6** 17. ♖e3 ♖g5 (17...f4 18.a5!?) 18.c4 f4 19.a5 ♖d7 20. ♖c2 e4 21. ♖d4 ♖e8 22. ♖g4 ♖g6! (22...♖e5) 23. ♖c3?! (23. ♖e6+ ♖h8 24. ♖e1!?) 23...♖c5! 24. ♖e2 e3 fared less well for White in an older game Zelcic-Sutovsky, Struga 1995. **17...♖xb6 18.a5 ♖c5 19.c4 e4**



**20. ♖b3!** After 20. ♖a3 ♖e5 21. ♖e3 ♖e7 22.c5 f4 23. ♖c4 ♖h8 24.d6 ♖g5 25. ♖d5 ♖e6! 26. ♖xe6

fxe3 27. ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 28.g3 e2 the complications favoured Black in Nataf-Antic, Vrnjacka Banja tt 2005. The text is an improvement: the queen not only prepares ♖c1-e3 but also introduces a threat against b7 and on the a2-g8 diagonal. **20...♖e5 21. ♖e3 ♖e7 22.c5 ♖h4 23. ♖g1 ♖h8 24. ♖a3 f4** Probably too risky. Perhaps White is better in each case, but 24...♖b8, intending 25...♖d7, may offer Black more hope. **25.g3 ♖h6 26.gxf4 ♖xf4 27. ♖b6 ♖g5 28. ♖g3 ♖xd5 29. ♖e3 ♖g4 29...g5 30. ♖xf4 (or 30. ♖h6) 30...gxf4 31. ♖h6** does look terrifying. **30. ♖d1!** Winning material, e.g. 30...♖c6 31. ♖xg4. **30...♖xd1+ 31. ♖xd1 ♖xd1 32. ♖xf4 ♖xf4 33. ♖c7 ♖g4 34. ♖xb7 ♖f8 35. ♖e7 ♖g8 36. ♖xg4 ♖xg4 37. ♖xe4 h5 38.c6 ♖f8 39. ♖g2 1-0**

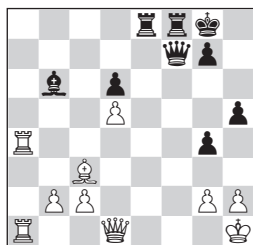
### Trickier 12.f4

### Jonathan Rowson Michael Adams

London m 1998 (1)

**1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3.d4 cxd4 4. ♖xd4 ♖f6 5. ♖c3 e5 6. ♖db5 d6 7. ♖d5 ♖xd5 8.exd5 ♖b8 9.a4 ♖e7 10. ♖e2 0-0 11.0-0 ♖d7 12.f4 a6 13. ♖a3 b5!?** 13...exf4 14. ♖xf4 ♖g5 15. ♖xg5 ♖xg5 16. ♖c4 ♖b6! 17. ♖d4 ♖h3?! (17...♖xd5! is unclear/equalish, with 18.h4 ♖e7 or 18. ♖xd6 ♖e3) 18. ♖f2 ♖xc4 19. ♖xc4 ♖ae8 (19...b5 20.axb5 axb5 21. ♖xa8 ♖xa8 22. ♖xb5 ♖a1+ 23. ♖f1 doesn't quite work) 20. ♖b6! ♖e4 21. ♖f1 f5 22. ♖xb7 and Black didn't manage to get serious compensation in Kaidanov-Kotronias, Gausdal 2008 (1-0, 37). **14. ♖h1** I think White did better in a game between two much less famous players, Spiekermann-Band, Dortmund 2001. There Black had played 11...f5 instead of 11...♖d7 (which is seriously worse, see Exercise 1). Now it went 14.axb5 axb5 15. ♖e3 (discarding 15. ♖xb5 ♖b6+ 16. ♖h1 ♖xa3 or 15. ♖h1

b4) 15...exf4 16.♟xf4 ♖b6+?! (better 16...b4 or 16...♟d7) 17.♟h1 ♟d7 18.♟c4! ♜xa1 19.♟xb6 ♜xd1 20.♜xd1 g5 (or 20...♟e8 21.♟c8) 21.♟d2 ♟e8 22.♜a1!?. White had a vastly superior ending and went on to win in 33 moves. In spite of the difference, Spiekermann's idea remains valid. On 14.axb5 axb5 15.♟e3 Black may want to try 15...exf4 16.♟xf4 ♟a6. **14...bxa4** RR: 14...b4 15.♟c4 a5 'with equal play' – Timoschenko. **15.♟c4 exf4 16.♟d2!** 16.♟xf4 ♟c5. **16...♟e5 17.♟a5** After 17.♜xa4 g5 White still has something to prove. **17...♖e8 18.♟b6 f3 19.♟xf3 ♜b8 20.♟e2 ♟d8** 20...♟d7(!) might be an improvement. **21.♟xc8 ♜xc8 22.♟b4!** 22.♟xd8 ♜xd8 23.♟xa6 ♜b8 is unpleasant for White. **22...♟c7 23.♟xa6 ♜a8 24.♖e2 ♜b8 25.♟c3 f5 26.♜f4 ♖f7 27.♖d2 ♟b6 28.♟e2 ♖be8 29.♜fxa4 ♟g4 30.♟xg4 fxg4 31.♖d1 h5**



Rowson has fought well, but there are still some dangers in the position. These could have been reduced by 32.♟d4!, after which White is at least equal.

**32.♜a6?** ♖f2 The threat 33...♜e2 already costs material. **33.♜xb6 ♖xb6 34.♖d3 ♖f2 35.♜g1 ♖f5 36.♖d4 ♜f7 37.♟b4 ♜e4 38.♖d2 h4 39.♟xd6 ♜d7 40.♟a3 ♜xd5 0-1**

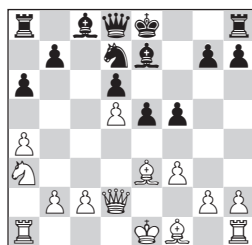
**Pretty interesting**  
**10.♟e3**

**Jure Borisek**  
**Mircea Emilian Parligras**

Nova Gorica 2004 (6)

**1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5**

**d6 7.♟d5 ♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟b8 9.a4 ♟e7 10.♟e3 ♟d7** There is actually a trap involved in 10.♟e3. 10...0-0? 11.a5! wins material for White. This happened in Borisek-Atakisi, Bled 2002: 11...♟d7 12.♟xa7 f5 13.♖d2 f4 14.♟b6 ♖e8 15.♖b4 ♟f5 16.♟b5 ♟a6 17.♖d2 ♖g6 18.c3 ♟g5 19.h4 ♟h6 20.h5 ♖f6 21.f3 and Black didn't have enough compensation. With the text Black can postpone ...a7-a6, accurately. 10...a6 11.♟a3 ♟d7 12.♟c4 0-0 13.a5(!) f5 14.f3 ♖e8 15.♖d2 (15.♟e2! is more flexible) 15...♟f6 16.♟b6 ♜b8 17.♟d3 e4! 18.fxe4 fxe4 19.♟e2 ♟g4 20.♟xc8 ♖xc8 21.♟xg4 ♖xg4 22.♖e2 ♖d7 23.0-0-0 ♖a4 24.♟b1 ♟f6 (24...♖xa5 25.♖g4) 25.♟b6 and a draw was agreed upon in Dvoirys-Beshukov, Novgorod 1999. **11.♖d2 a6 12.♟a3 f5** 12...0-0 13.♟c4 f5 14.f3 ♖e8 15.a5 transposed to Dvoirys-Beshukov above (again I would prefer 15.♟e2) in Borisek-Al Sayed, Bled 2002. After 15...♜b8 16.0-0-0 ♟f6 17.♖b4 f4 18.♟a7 ♜a8 19.♟f2 ♟f5! 20.♟b6 ♜d8 21.c4 e4 the game was quite unclear, possibly good for White (½-½, 51). **13.f3**



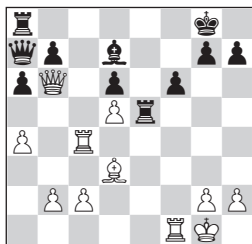
**13...♟h4+(!)** This may be the way to frustrate White's plans. In Borisek-Wang Yue, Calvia 2004, Black chose 13...0-0 14.♟c4 b6. After 15.a5 b5 16.♟b6 ♟xb6 17.axb6?! (17.♟xb6 is about equal) 17...♜b8 18.c4 bxc4 19.♟xc4 ♜xb6! this met with success (0-1, 46) but White overdid it. Simply 15.♟e2 and castling kingside should give White a pleasant game, as Black has already limited his active options by playing ...b7-b6. **14.g3 f4 15.♟f2**

**♟g5 16.♟c4** Even though this works out perfectly on this occasion, 16.h4!? certainly deserves attention. After 16...fxg3 (16...♟f6!?) 17.hxg5 gxf2+ 18.♟xf2 we have a very double-edged position, difficult to assess. **16...fxg3?!** I can't really understand why Black didn't play 16...0-0!. Then 17.g4 e4, 17.♟xd6 fxg3, and 17.h4 fxg3 18.hxg5 (18.♖xg5 gxf2+ 19.♟xf2 ♟f6) 18...gxf2+ 19.♟xf2 ♟c5 are all quite promising for him. **17.♟xd6+ ♟f8 18.♟e3 ♟xe3 19.♖xe3 ♖a5+?!** Possibly Black had planned 19...♖h4 here (20.0-0-0 ♖xa4 with counterplay) and then saw 20.♖e4!. Still, he should have played it, since after 20...♖h6! things are far from clear, for example 21.♟f5 ♖b6 etc. **20.♖d2 ♖xd2+ 21.♟xd2 gxh2 22.♜xh2 ♟f6 23.c4 ♟e7 24.♟xc8+ ♜axc8 25.a5 ♟d6 26.b4** Now thanks to his queenside pawns White is much better... **1-0 (57)**

**Willem Muhren**  
**Sergey Kalinitschew**  
Dieren 2004 (3)

**1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 ♟c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♟xd4 ♟f6 5.♟c3 e5 6.♟db5 d6 7.♟d5 ♟xd5 8.exd5 ♟b8 9.a4 ♟e7 10.♟e3 ♟d7 11.♟e2 0-0 12.0-0 a6 13.♟a3 ♟g5!** Thus White doesn't get much joy out of putting his bishop on e3. **14.f4** More chances are offered by 14.♟xg5 ♖xg5 15.♟c4. In Aagaard-Hossain, Dresden 2008, White was much better after 15...♖e7 16.a5 ♜b8! 17.b4 ♟f6? 18.♟b6 ♟d7 19.c4 ♟xb6 20.axb6 ♟d7 21.♖d2 f5 22.♜ac1 ♜fc8 23.c5 (1-0, 31). But Black played aimlessly and forgot about his own counterplay. He should have opted for 16... or 17...f5 (not 17...b5 18.axb6 ♟xb6 19.♟a5!) with roughly equal chances. **14...exf4 15.♟xf4 ♜e8 16.♟c4 ♟xf4 17.♜xf4 ♟e5 18.♖d4 ♟xc4 18...♜b8** would perhaps be more difficult to meet for White. The

game is equal(-ish), but from here on Black played some strange moves, maybe hoping to surprise his lower rated opponent. **19. ♖xc4 ♗d7 20. ♖af1 f6 21. ♗d3 ♖e5 21... b5** looks better, but after **22. ♖h4: 22...f5** or **22...h6** ? **22. ♖b4! ♖c7?! 22... ♖b8. 23. ♖c4 ♖b8 24. ♖b6 ♖a7**



**25. ♖b4?!** Surely Black wouldn't like to see **25. ♖xa7 ♖xa7 26. ♖c7! ♗xa4 27. ♗f5 ? 25... ♗f8 26. ♗xh7 a5 27. ♖xa7 ♖xa7 28. ♖b6 ♗xd5 29. ♗e4 ♗d4 30. ♖xb7 ♖xb7 31. ♗xb7 ♖xa4** So Kalinitschew got away with it. **32. b3 ♖b4 33. ♗a6 a4 34. bxa4 ♗xa4 35. ♗d3 ♖b2 36. ♖f2 ♗e7 37. ♖e2+ ♗d8 38. ♗f2 ♗b5 39. ♗xb5 ♖xb5 40. h4 ♖c5 41. ♗f3 ♖c4 42. g4 ♗d7 43. h5 d5 44. ♖g2 ♗e6 45. ♖e2+ ♗d6 46. ♖g2 ♗e6 47. ♖e2+ ♗f7 48. ♖d2 ♗e6 49. ♖e2+ ½-½**

## Premature 9...a6

**Luis Sanz Arilla 13**

**Oscar Saez Gabikagogeaskoa**

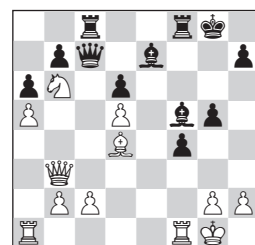
Zaragoza 2003 (2.9)

**1.e4 c5 2. ♖f3 ♗c6 3. d4 cxd4 4. ♗xd4 ♗f6 5. ♗c3 e5 6. ♗db5 d6 7. ♗d5 ♗xd5 8. exd5 ♗b8 9. a4 a6 10. ♗a3 ♗e7 11. ♗c4** The most logical move. White always wants to increase his queenside control and to make use of the early ...a7-a6. Some examples with **11. ♗e2** (which isn't bad either): **11...0-0 12.0-0 f5 13. ♗c4 ♗d7** and now:

A) **14. f4 ♗f6?!** (I think **14...exf4 15. ♗xf4 g5!** is Black's best shot, by far) **15. a5! ♖c7 16. ♗h1 exf4 17. ♗xf4 ♗e5 18. ♗xe5 ♗xe5 19. ♗xe5 dxe5 20. c4 ♖f6 21. b4 ♖h6 22. c5 ♖e7 23. d6** and White was already winning (**23... ♖h4 24. ♖d5+**) in S.A.Ivanov-Niemi, Finland tt 2007/08;

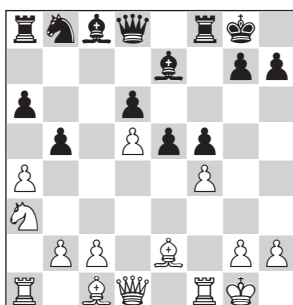
B) **14. a5! f4 (14...b5? 15. axb6 ♗xb6 16. ♗a5! with a big advantage, Winants-Vanhee, Geraardsbergen 1992) 15. ♖e1 ♖e8 16. ♗h5! g6 17. ♗f3 ♗f6 18. ♗b6 ♖b8 19. ♗xc8 ♖xc8 20. b3 g5 21. ♖a4 h5 22. ♗e4! (intending 23. ♗f5) 22... ♖d7 23. ♖f3 ♗xe4 24. ♖axe4 ♗g7 25. c4** and White was much better,

**Voitsekhovsky-Dusenov, Saratov 2006. 11...0-0 11...a5** blocks White's expansion, but here, too, Black has a difficult life: **12. ♗e2 0-0 13.0-0 ♗d7 14. f4 exf4 15. ♗xf4 ♗c5 16. ♗e3 b6 17. ♗d4 f5 18. c3 ♗f6 19. ♗xf6! ♖xf6 20. b4 ♗d7 21. ♖d4 ♗a6 22. b5!? ♗c8 23. ♗h5! g6 24. ♗d1 ♖b8 25. ♗c2 ♗c5 26. ♖ae1** and White went on to win (1-0, 33) in Mrva-Volodin, Piestany 2004. **12. ♗e3** Probably not the best move (12. a5; 12. ♗e2) but good for a lively game. **12... ♗d7 13. a5 f5 14. f4 exf4 15. ♗xf4 ♗c5 16. ♗d3 g5 17. ♗e3 ♗xd3+ 18. ♖xd3 f4 19. ♗d4 ♗f5 20. ♖b3 ♖c8 21.0-0 ♖c7 22. ♗b6**



**22... ♖xc2?!** Here **22... ♖c8** is called for, or maybe **22... ♗xc2** as an exchange sac, but Black 'falls for it'. **23. ♗xc8! ♖xb3 24. ♗xe7+ ♗f7 25. ♗xf5 ♖xd5 26. g4 h5 27. h3** With the h8-square unavailable, Black is worse... **1-0 (65)**

## Exercise 1

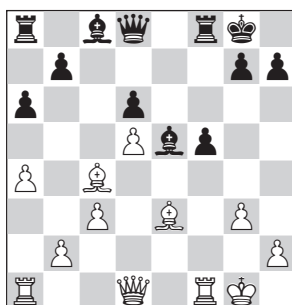


position after 13...b7-b5

Black is trying to use some tactical momentum. How should White respond?

(solutions on page 248)

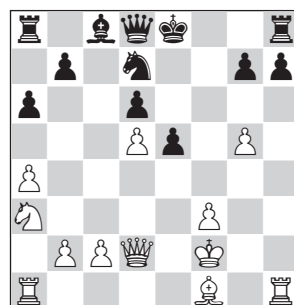
## Exercise 2



position after 19.g2-g3

White stops his opponent's kingside advance. What should Black pursue now?

## Exercise 3



position after 18. ♗e1xf2

This could have happened in the game and then it would have been of great theoretical significance. What would you play as Black?