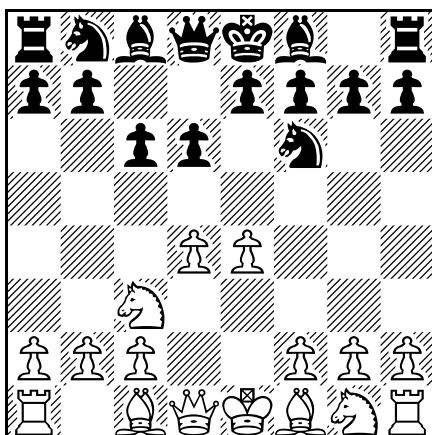


Introduction

When I told friends I was working on a 1...d6 book they usually asked if I meant Pirc. Next, they would incorrectly guess Modern. I actually had trouble explaining just what the no-name opening was. In Canada, where I grew up, we called 1...d6 “the Rat”, but this was invariably a euphemism for the old Pirc/Modern complex. This book covers a patchwork of opening repertoires created by many players over the decades, but mostly through the work of Czech IM Josef Pribyl and English IM Robert Wade, who transformed it into a real system.

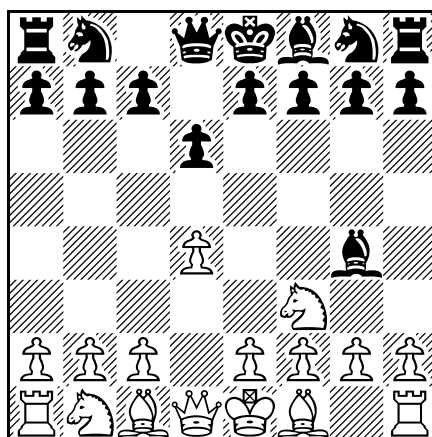
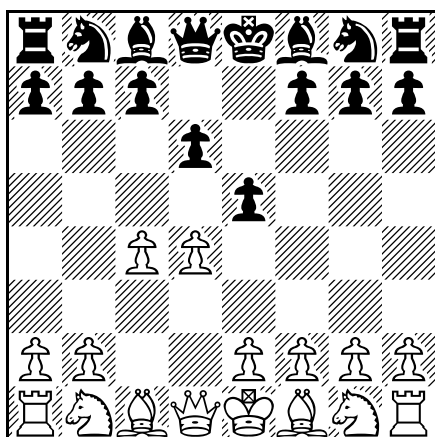
The Pribyl/Wade/Rat/No-name System defies the corporatization of pedigreed opening systems. In the way a cave engulfed in darkness for a half billion years may be illuminated by a single flashlight, the hope is to turn this little known fringe idea into the mainstream of theory by trying to explain what was formally theoretically incomprehensible. Having tested out the lines in blitz versus IMs and GMs over the internet, I was staggered to discover that even FIDE 2600+ players knew little about the opening, yet usually entered the sharpest lines. Many were just making moves up as they went along! If GMs and IMs barely know it, what need for explanation about your club opponent’s knowledge of it? Mastery of the Pribyl/Wade/Rat ensures you of a clear experience/theory advantage from the get go.

1...d6 is intended to be a universal system which can be employed against virtually any first move. In essence the book divides into two sections, with Chapters One through Five dealing with 1 e4 and Chapters Six through Eight dealing with queen’s pawn and English setups from White. Now, on to business:



Here we arrive at the main starting position of the e-pawn sections of the book. The pawn structure is so fluid and unorthodox that it essentially constitutes a blank slate. White can respond with critical lines like 4 f4, the Austrian Attack (Chapters Two and Three). Or he can try quieter lines like 4 Nf3 (Chapter One). On virtually all other responses we weave in and out of Philidor structures with ... Bd7 and ...e5, mixed with strange Pribyl ideas. Black's position is maddeningly slippery from White's perspective, and it is deceptively hard to catch and checkmate us. Quite often our counterattacks come through first. We see a pattern of Black successfully exiting through back windows when our opponents, in trembling fits, try to kick in our front door.

The next two diagrams represent our main challenges in the queen's pawn sections.



Here, unlike many of the 1 e4 segments, White doesn't try to refute our line by playing directly for mate. Instead, we engage in heavyweight strategic battles which are no less tricky. As mentioned before, your biggest weapon will be your familiarity of this virtually unknown, oddball line. Soon, you will add experience as a second weapon. Let's get our opponents thinking on move two rather than move 22.

The Format

The *Move by Move* format is designed to be interactive and simulate a chess lesson as closely as possible. Walt Whitman wrote: "The process of reading is not a half sleep, but in the highest sense an exercise, a gymnastic struggle, that the reader is to do something for himself." The *Move by Move* books are not intended to be a passive process and the reader is expected to get involved and sweat a bit! We start with a question-and-answer format in the early part of the game, which mainly deals with theory (what little there is!). Many of the questions are ones asked by my own students, ratings ranging from 1000-2400, so some questions are basic; others sophisticated. Then as we move into the middlegame and endgame we begin drilling with exercises to test your skills and understanding with planning, critical decisions, combination alerts, multiple choice quizzes and homework assignments. My goal as a teacher is to help you develop your entire game, not just the open-

ing, and the aim is to drive you toward your highest potential.

Let's begin the book with a game where the godfather of our opening system shows how to befuddle a higher-rated opponent:

Game 1
E.Vasiukov-J.Pribyl
 Stary Smokovec 1988

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 c6

Game on! Pribyl faces down a GM, armed with his understanding of an unknown and quirky system and distilled by his experience in the line. Pribyl was the underdog in this game but one should never underestimate the value of experience (it's a reasonable assumption that Vasiukov's sum total of experience in the Pribyl/Rat was zero!). To understand, one must first do!

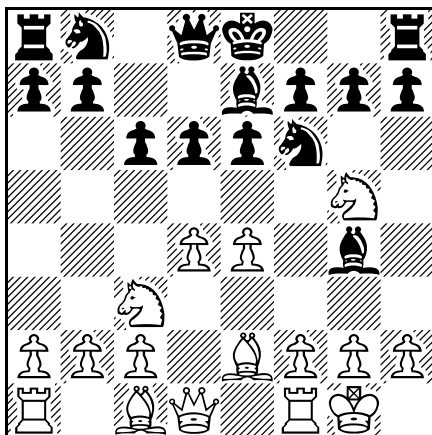
4 ♘f3 ♙g4

Reaching the starting position of Chapter One. This move must have come as a surprise to Vasiukov, who probably expected 4...g6 and a transposition to the Pirc.

5 ♙e2

5 h3 ♙h5 6 ♚e2 intending g4 and ♘h4 is the scariest line for us. We cover this one in detail in Chapter One.

5...e6 6 0-0 ♙e7 7 ♘g5!?



A novelty at that time and one which isn't particularly dangerous to us.

Question: Why not?

Answer: By swapping White breaks the principle: Avoid exchanges when the opponent is cramped.

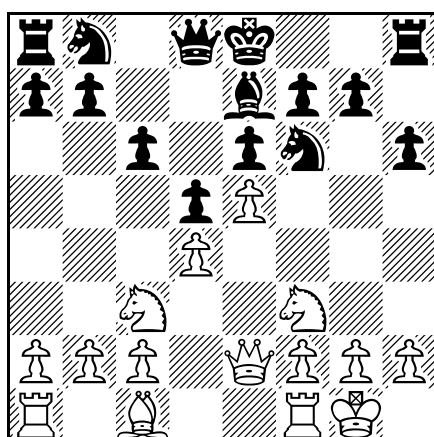
Question: But Black can swap anyway on f3 even if White avoids his last move, correct?

Answer: Correct, and we see this plan arise in Game 2, Langeweg-Petrosian. In this case White gets the bishop pair, although it's debatable whether the bishop pair actually constitutes an edge in such a blocked position.

7...♙xe2 8 ♚xe2 h6 9 ♘f3 d5

The main idea. Black gets a French sans bad bishop.

10 e5



Question: Hasn't White gained a typical advantage against the French or Caro-Kann now?

Answer: No. White's last move, although gaining space, actually violates a few principles:

1. Don't place too many pawns on the same colour as your remaining bishop.
2. Don't close the position when your opponent owns the knights.
3. Don't close the position when leading in development.

Question: So was White's move an error?

Answer: Paradoxically, no. White gets nothing as well if he retains the central tension: 10 ♙f4 0-0 11 ♖ad1 dxe4 12 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♚xe4 ♚d5! with equality, S.Neamtu-I.Cosma, Herculanu 1996. The lesson: Following principles doesn't work 100% of the time. There are always exceptions.

10...♘fd7

Question: Doesn't White have the edge with his extra space?

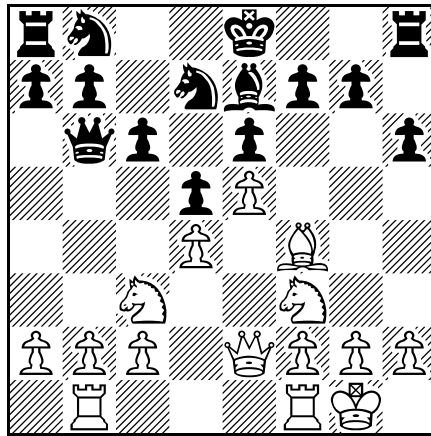
Answer: Black has equality at a minimum. Here is why:

1. The position resembles a French except that White's good and Black's bad bishop are missing.
2. White's natural attacking chances go way down without his powerful light-squared bishop.
3. Black has ...c5, at the moment the only real break in the position for either side.

11 ♖f4

If this bishop is waiting for Black to help out with ...f6? he will be waiting a long time!

11... ♜b6 12 ♜ab1



12... ♜a6!

A queen swap would take away White's only plus in this position: attacking chances due to his extra space. Compare 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 ♙f5 4 ♙d3 ♙xd3 5 ♜xd3 e6 6 ♘e2 ♜b6 7 0-0, where Capablanca used the same idea and reached a favourable ending after 7... ♜a6! 8 ♜d1 c5 9 c3 ♘c6 10 ♘d2 cxd4 11 cxd4 ♜d3 12 ♘b3 ♜xd1 13 ♜xd1, H. Atkins-J. Capablanca, London 1922.

13 ♜d1

Question: Why was 12... ♜a6 given an exclamation?

It looks ineffective since White simply dodged the queen trade.

Answer: Black attained the following with his manoeuvre:

1. White lost time backing up his queen, since moving to d2 walks into pins on c3, and moving to e3 allows ...c5, ...cxd4 and ...♙c5 with more time lost.
2. Black increased his control over the light squares, the colour on which White is weaker.
3. Black's queen takes aim at a2 and may induce queenside pawn weaknesses from White.

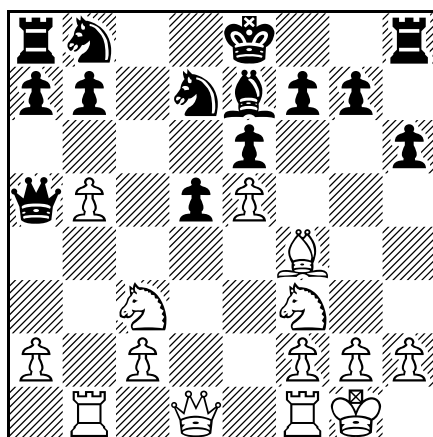
13...c5

With this pawn break Black swaps off a wing pawn for a central pawn, but on the downside White gains d4 for his pieces and opens the game when ahead in development.

14 dxc5 ♟xc5!?

I would play 14...♘c6 to avoid what follows.

15 b4! ♟e7 16 b5 ♚a5!?



Exercise (critical decision): Should White remain calm and play positionally? Or should he, upon the mildest provocation, fly into a paroxysm of rage, accept the challenge and sac on d5?

Answer: 17 ♘xd5!

Rage it is! The “give and let live” philosophy is correct here. White burned his bridges positionally; hence the position calls for drastic measures. Sometimes one must take on sensible debt in the face of a strategic emergency.

16...♚b6 would have prevented the sac on d5.

17...exd5 18 e6?

There is boldness and then there is leaping off a cliff. This is the wrong way.

White gets full compensation for the piece with 18 ♚xd5!. For example, 18...♚c7 (or 18...♚b6 19 e6! fxe6 20 ♚h5+ ♟f8 21 ♚fe1) 19 ♚fe1 ♘b6 20 ♚xf7+! ♟xf7 21 e6+ ♟g6 22 ♟xc7 and White’s huge development lead compensates him in this unbalanced ending.

18...fxe6 19 ♘d4 0-0 20 ♘xe6 ♘f6

Giving White the choice of either rook.

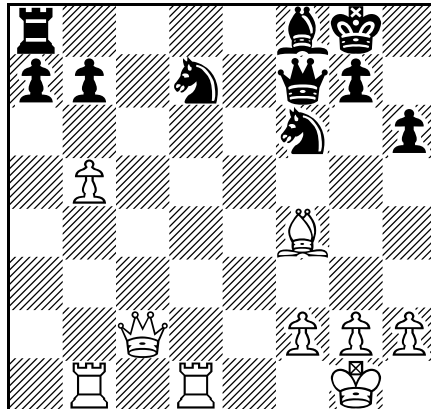
21 ♘xf8

White didn’t get enough for his sac. If 21 ♚e2 then 21...♚e8 (preventing ♘xg7) 22 ♘c7 ♘bd7 23 ♘xa8 ♟c5! wins the a8-knight with advantage.

21...♟xf8 22 c4

Hoping to milk his development lead.

22...♚xa2 23 cxd5 ♚xd5 24 ♚c2 ♘bd7 25 ♚fd1 ♚f7



Black consolidates. His knight pair is worth more than a rook.

26 ♖d6 ♜b6 27 ♖xf8 ♜xf8 28 ♜b3!?

Vasiukov is concerned about the safety of his own king and allows queens off the board. The plan of keeping queens on and going after a7 isn't all that tempting either. For example, 28 ♜a1 ♜fd5 29 ♜xa7 ♜c3! 30 ♜e1 ♜xb5.

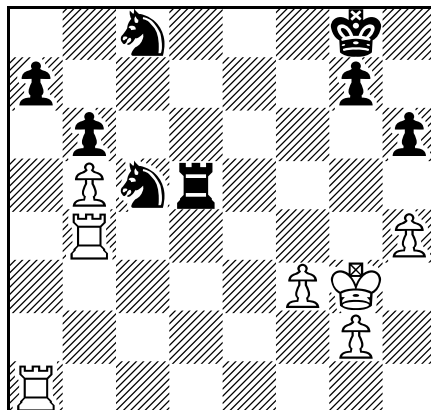
28...♜e4 29 f3 ♜xb3 30 ♜xb3 ♜c5 31 ♜b4

31 ♜a3 is met with 31...♜c8 32 ♜d5 b6.

31...♜f5 32 ♜a1 ♜c8

Divided we stand. In the next few moves Black harmonizes his clunky knights.

33 h4 ♜d5 34 ♜h2 b6 35 ♜g3



Exercise (planning): Black guarded his queenside property with meticulous frugality. Still, he finds himself a bit tied down to his weakness on a7. Is there a way he can do the same to White by targeting the b5-pawn?

Answer: There is, by heading to d6.

35...♘b7! 36 ♖c1 ♜c5 37 ♜e1

Or 37 ♜xc5 bxc5 38 ♜a4 ♘bd6 39 ♜a5 ♚f7 and Black should win.

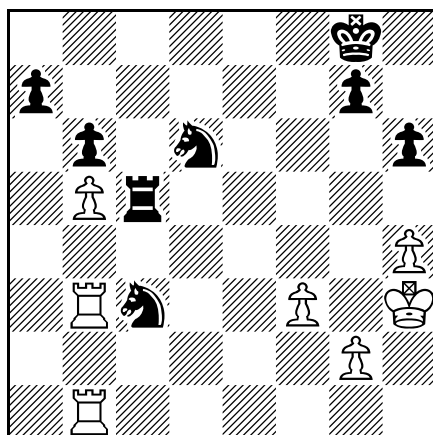
37...♘bd6

Forcing White's rooks into indenture, guarding b5.

38 ♜eb1

38 ♚f4 ♘xb5 39 ♜e8+ ♚f7 40 ♜xc8 ♜xc8 41 ♜xb5 ♜c4+ is totally lost for White, who has no chance against the connected queenside passers.

38...♘e7 39 ♚h3 ♘d5 40 ♜4b3 ♘c3!



There goes b5, after which a knight conveniently covers a7. White could resign here.

41 ♜e1 ♚f7 42 g4 ♘dxb5 43 ♜b4 ♘d5 44 ♜be4 ♘d6 45 ♜d4 ♘c8 46 h5 ♘ce7 47 ♚g3 b5 48 ♜e5 a5 49 ♜f4+ ♚e8 50 g5 ♜c1 51 gxh6 gxh6 52 ♜d4 ♜c5 53 ♜de4 ♚d7 54 ♜g4 b4 55 ♜g6 b3 56 ♜b6 ♘xb6 57 ♜xc5 a4 0-1

Summary: Our opening is weirdly deceptive. Read on and the next 400 or so pages explain why!

I wish the reader good luck with the Pribyl/Wade/Rat/No-name System. May your booked up opponents give you perplexed looks when you employ it!

Acknowledgements

Thanks to editor John Emms, for his untiring help and encouragement throughout the book. To Nancy for proofreading and also for kindly agreeing to urgent pleas that she stop talking about the royal wedding; and to Tim for nursing my elderly computer, keeping it rosy cheeked, skipping about and clapping its hands in delight at every variation in the book.

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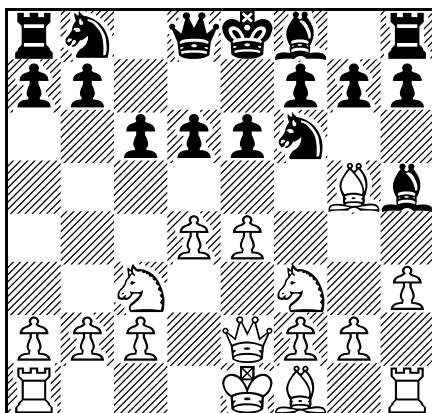
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Game 8
G.Newerovski–R.Ovetchkin
 Tula 2003

1 ♘f3 d6 2 d4 ♙g4 3 e4 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 c6 5 h3 ♙h5 6 ♚e2 e6 7 ♙g5?!



Question: Is he trying for e5, in conjunction with the pin?

Answer: This isn't White's main idea behind 7 ♙g5. Remember, Black normally plays for ...d5 and White responds with e5, so White's idea behind the pin is a plan to unload his potentially bad dark-squared bishop in exchange for Black's knight.

Question: That doesn't seem like such a bad idea. Why don't you like it?

Answer: There are three problems:

1. It violates the principle: Avoid swaps when you have a space advantage.
2. White forks over the bishop pair in a fluid position which may later open.
3. If White avoids the swap on f6 he may later be vulnerable to tactics involving ...♘xe4.

7...♙e7 8 ♙xf6

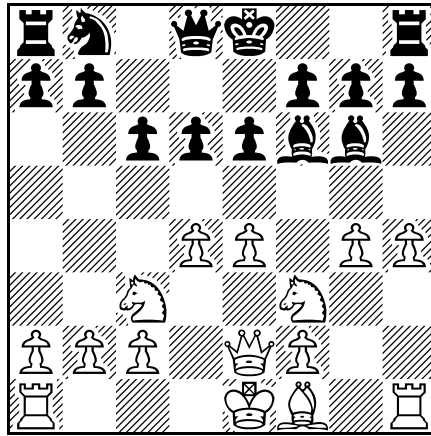
Consistent but probably faulty. White gives up his bishop pair, and some dark squares in the process, but doesn't even make Black pay the price of a tempo with ...h6. The alternative is to delay the capture on f6 with 8 0-0-0:

a) 8...♘bd7 9 ♚b1 d5 10 g4 ♙g6, but now he must submit to the unforced capture on f6 anyway: 11 ♙xf6 ♘xf6 was played in G.Todorovic-K.Mokry, Tuzla 1990. I would try the more adventurous 11...gxf6!? denying e5 to White's pieces and increasing the hold over the dark squares.

b) I would avoid the trick 8...♘xe4?! which wins the exchange but also hands White many strategic plusses: 9 ♘xe4 ♙xf3 10 ♙xe7 (10 ♚xf3? ♙xg5+ drops a pawn) 10...♙xe2

11 ♖xd8 ♖xd1 12 ♖h4 ♖h5 and a draw was agreed in P.Dezan-P.Toulzac, Toulouse 2000. White has excellent compensation for the exchange after 13 ♘xd6+ ♔d7 14 ♘xb7.

8...♗xf6 9 g4 ♖g6 10 h4



Once again White goes forward in his decision to napalm the kingside.

Question: And this doesn't make you nervous?

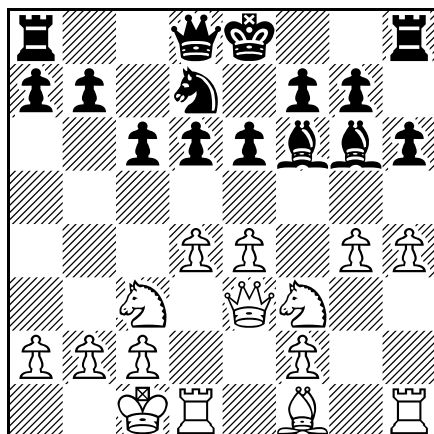
Answer: No. Somehow these rushing pawns don't make me nervous because Black hasn't committed his king to that side of the board. The position, for now all fun and games for White, may sour for him later since he risks serious danger of overextension.

10...h6

It makes more sense to keep the position fluid now that it is Black who has the bishop pair. Still, 10...h5 looks fully playable: 11 g5 ♗e7 12 0-0-0 ♘d7 13 ♖h3 d5 14 ♘e5 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 ♔a5 16 exd5 cxd5 17 f4 0-0 18 f5 exf5 19 ♗xd5 ♔b4 20 ♖g2 ♗fe8 21 ♔b1 ♖f8 22 ♗f2 a6 23 ♗hd1 ♗ac8 with mutual chances, V.Epishin-K.Mokry, Vienna 1991. Black's king looks slightly more secure to compensate for White's more centralized pieces.

11 0-0-0 ♘d7 12 ♗e3!

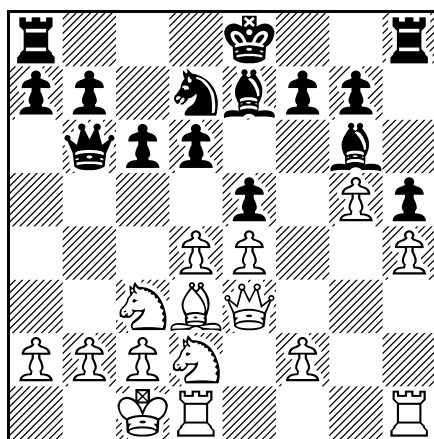
Multipurpose: he adds heat to the g5-square in order to push his g-pawn, his queen eyes a7, in case Black castles queenside, and he covers his c3-knight in order to play d5 at some point.



12...e7 13 d3 h5!?

I would have left the kingside fluid and played 13...b6 intending to castle queenside.

14 g5 b6 15 d2 e5!



Question: Why an exclamation when Black violates a principle by opening the position when behind in development? Also, shouldn't Black be playing for ...d5, and not ...e5, which we have seen in previous games?

Answer: Black isn't all that far behind in development. He violates the principle you mentioned, but follows one of opening the game when owning the bishop pair. At some point you must take your stand and fight back in the centre. Also, remember you don't always play for ...d5. Sometimes ...e5 may be superior. We must remain flexible. White threatens to overwhelm Black with f4 and f5, so Black logically plants his flag on e5.

16 e2 f6!

Bit by bit, Black chips away at White's imposing pawn centre. After 16...exd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗e5 18 f4 ♘g4 19 ♔g1 0-0-0 20 f5 ♕h7 White stands better due to his space and the buried black bishop on h7.

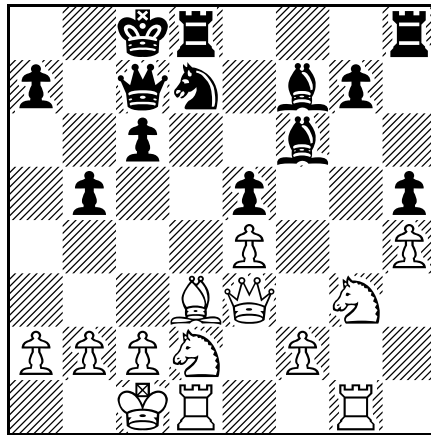
17 ♖c4 ♔c7 18 gxf6

The early release of tension probably helps Black. However I also like Black's position if White keeps the tension with 18 f4 ♕f7 19 ♔b1 0-0-0 20 dxe5 dxe5 21 ♔xa7 exf4.

18...♕xf6 19 dxe5?!

Ditto. Too early. Once again White releases central tension and falls victim to the law of diminishing returns. If you push all your pawns forward and then later lose momentum, a position tends to go south quickly. Remember the old saying: Early is late if you believe tomorrow is yesterday! Better was 19 f4 ♕f7.

19...dxe5 20 ♖hg1 ♕f7 21 ♘g3 b5! 22 ♖d2 0-0-0



An assessment:

1. Black owns the bishop pair in a semi-open position.
2. Black controls the dark squares.
3. White is saddled with a potentially bad bishop.
4. h4 is weak.

Conclusion: The advantage swings to Black.

23 c4?!

Question: I noticed you gave White's aggressive move a dubious mark. Why force your pacifist philosophy on your readers? Some of us actually prefer to fight for the initiative, take risks and eat red meat!

Answer: There is a thin line between controlled aggression, which is good, and just flailing about, which is not! Fischer once said that to get squares one must sometimes give up squares. It's perfectly understandable that White doesn't want to sit around and wait while Black improves his position. However, his move compromises control over the key d4-

square. I have difficulty pinpointing just what he “gets” for the weakening besides the purely optical aggression and initiative you speak of.

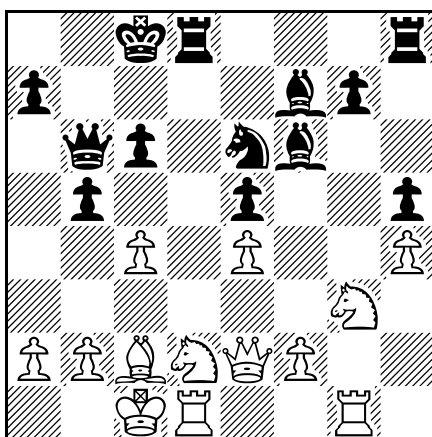
23...♔b6!

The dark-square weaknesses spread like an infection in White’s camp. Another good plan at Black’s disposal is to force the superior ending after 23...g6! 24 cxb5 cxb5+ 25 ♔b1 ♚a5 26 ♘b3 ♚b6 27 ♚xb6 ♘xb6 28 ♙xb5 ♙xb3 29 axb3 ♚xd1+ 30 ♚xd1 ♙xh4. The doubled, isolated b-pawns virtually leave White a pawn down. Black’s menacing, passed h-pawn will make White sweat to try to hold the ending.

24 ♚e2?!

24 cxb5! cxb5 25 ♚xb6 ♘xb6 26 ♙xb5 ♙xh4 27 ♘f5 ♙f6 28 ♘xg7 h4 gives Black terrific compensation for his missing pawn. Still, this was White’s best shot.

24...♘c5 25 ♙c2 ♘e6



A spreadsheet of White’s strategic woes:

1. White must deal with punctures on f4, d4 and c5.
2. Black holds a grip on the dark squares.
3. Black’s bishops grow more powerful as the game continues to open.
4. The h4-pawn is weak.

Conclusion: White stands on the border of busted.

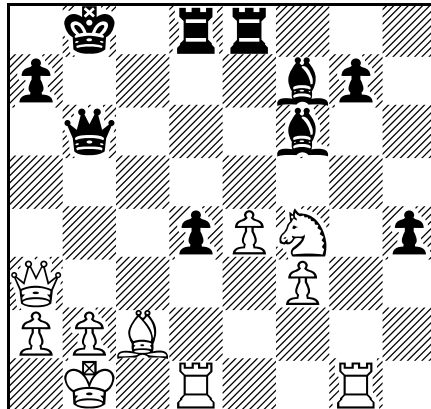
26 cxb5 ♘d4 27 ♚e3 ♙xh4

27...♙xa2! is even stronger since White can’t respond with 28 b3?? in view of 28...♚c5! winning.

28 ♘f3 ♙f6 29 bxc6 ♚xc6 30 ♘xd4 exd4 31 ♚a3 ♔b8 32 ♔b1 h4 33 ♘e2

Or 33 ♘f5 h3 34 f4 h2 35 ♚h1 d3! 36 ♚xd3 ♚b6! with a nasty threat to check on g1.

33...♚he8 34 f3 ♚b6 35 ♘f4



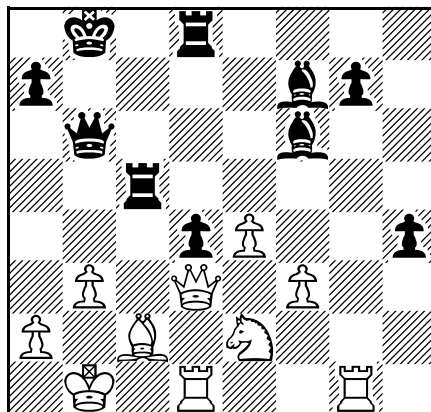
Exercise (planning): Should Black go for a touchdown with his h-pawn or directly after White's king?

Answer: Black should go after the king, with all his guns aimed in that direction.

35...♖e5! 36 ♔d3 ♜b5 37 b3

Fatally weakening the dark squares around his king.

37...♜c5 38 ♞e2



Exercise (combination alert): Find the move which bludgeons all hope.

Answer: 38...♞c4! 0-1

39 ♜d2 d3 wins.

Summary: No need to concern ourselves about the strategically suspect 7 ♞g5?! after which I believe White fights for equality.