

The Sicilian

Accelerated Dragon

20th Anniversary Edition

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Bonus Game 2
Gulko – P.H.Nielsen
 Esbjerg 2000

(1.c4 c5 2.Nf3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Bg7 5.e4 Nc6 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0–0 8.Be2 d6 9.0–0 Bd7)

Now with the benefit of hindsight, I would probably use the 9...Nxd4 move-order, but at the time I stayed loyal to the book!

10.Nc2!?

This is quite a luxurious version of the Nc2 system. White's bishop goes directly to e3, while Black has committed his bishop to d7.

10...a6 11.f3 Rc8 12.Qd2 Re8 13.Rac1 Qa5



I am sure I felt comfortable at the time, putting my pieces where intended and not really seeing any relevant way for White to make relevant progress.

14.Na3!

Back then, this move was a puzzling move, looking rather passive and without any apparent plan. This is just about as wrong as one can be in judging the opponent's motive as possible, but at least it does bring back the good memories of youthful optimism!

14...Be6

In hindsight, 14...Ne5 might have looked logical, preventing White's next

move, as the c4-pawn would then be hanging. But... then 15.b3!! is possible, as 15...Qxa3 traps the black queen, which means that White can proceed in a similar fashion to the game anyway!

15.Nab1!!



15...Ne5 16.b3 Rb8 17.a3

White has been shuffling his knight backward as well as now weakening his pawn-structure. Yet, my position has turned from what I thought as completely fine to a state of now having absolutely nothing positive to say about it. After the text move, Black cannot play ...b7–b5 which loses a pawn due to 18.cxb5 axb5 19.b4. However, if he cannot play that, he cannot do much other than just sit and wait. The extra set of knights compared to the standard position might at first seem a bit clumsy for White, but as he controls more space, the white extra knights will have more room to manoeuvre, while Black's knights, on the other hand, will start tripping over each other.

17...Rec8 18.b4?!

Too soon! Here, 18.f4!? or 18.h3 first, preparing a later f3–f4 by covering the g4-square, would mean Black having to worry about both flanks, leaving him with a very unpleasant position.

18...Qd8 19.Nd5 b6?

Here 19...b5!? would have created some much need counterplay, as 20 cxb5 axb5 21 Rxc8 Rxc8 22 Bxb5 Nxd5 23 exd5 Bd7 creates almost Benko-like counterplay for the pawn. After the text move, however, he is back to just being passive.

**20.Rfd1 a5 21.h3 axb4
22.axb4 Bd7 23.Na3!? Bc6 24.Bf1
Ned7**



25.Nc2?

As Gulko explained to me after the game: not only did he provide me with half a point, but he also gave a lesson on the pawn structure: "I spend the whole game showing the virtues of keeping four minor pieces on the board, but just like this, I allowed you to swap down to three!" Many other moves would have preserved a white edge, basically anything not allowing Black those liberating exchanges!

**25...Ba4 26.Re1 Nxd5
27.exd5 Bxc2 28.Rxc2 Ra8 29.Bg5
½-½**

Game 29

P.Cramling - Petursson

Reykjavik 1984

**(1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4
g6 5.c4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0
8.Be2 d6 9.0-0 Bd7)**

10.Rc1 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Bc6



12.Qd3!?

White tries to get the same kind of position as in Game 19, but here she has wasted time on 10.Rc1. However, when Black plays the 9...Bd7 move order, there is nothing White can do about this. Black is ready to play ...a7-a5 with the standard dark-square strategy. Instead, White can also play 12.f3, with the exchange of the dark-squared bishops in mind. Here it is important for Black to respond with 12...a5 since 12...Nd7? was severely punished in Razuvaev-Honfi, Cienfuegos 1976. After the thematic 13.b4! Bxd4+ 14.Qxd4 Qb6 15.Qxb6! Nxb6 16.e5! dxe5 17.b5 Be8 18.c5 Nd7 19.Nd5 e6 20.Ne7+ Kg7 21.c6 Black was unable to stop the c-pawn. But if Black does play 12...a5 it seems that Rc1 is not a particularly useful move. For example, 13.b3 Nd7 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 15.Qd4+ Kg8 16.Rfd1 as in Andersson-Christiansen, Hastings 1978/79, and now Black could have obtained an equal ending with 16...Qb6, but who wants to play an ending against Andersson?

In Dokhoian-Glek, Bonn 1994, Black instead played 15...f6!? in order to control the dark squares. After 16.Rfd1 Nc5 17.Rb1 Qb8 18.Bf1 Rd8 19.Qe3 e5 20.Rd2 Ne6 21.Rbd1 b6 22.g3 Ra7 23.Bh3 Ng5 24.Bg2 Ne6, a draw was

agreed. Black has equalised with the standard dark-squared strategy.

12...a5!

The correct move order. 12...Nd7?! was punished by 13.Bxg7 Kxg7 14.b4! in Smyslov-Golz, Polanica Zdroj 1968, when White has achieved a typical advantage.

13.f4

The logical plan. It is now far more difficult for White to seize space on the queenside.

13...a4!?

This is a very interesting idea. Normally, this move would be met by b2-b4, ...a4xb3, a2xb3, with an opening of the queenside favourable to White. But here the rook has left a1, which means that Black gets counterplay along the a-file. The 'standard' 13...Nd7 is also playable, which after 14.Bxg7 Kxg7 leads to structures very similar to the main lines where White takes on g7. Normally White must play his pawn to f4 in two moves, but here White has played Qd3, where it is not well placed in this kind of structure. Timman-Wedberg, Amsterdam 1984, continued 15.Kh1 f6 16.Rcd1 Qe8 17.Qd4 Qf7 with equality.



14.Kh1 Qa5

Black again delays ...Nd7, keeping White guessing, while making useful moves.

15.Qe3

15.Nd5 might be a better idea when Black has a choice of captures:

a) White was successful in Dolmatov-Petursson, Reykjavik 1988, when after 15...Nxd5 16.exd5 Bxd4, Dolmatov played 17.dxc6!? 17...Bxb2 18.Rc2 Qb4 19.cxb7 and Black blundered with 19...Ra5?? 20.Rxb2 Qxb2 21.Rb1 with a lost position. It was probably better to play 18...a3 which seems okay for Black. It is noteworthy that White did not like the attractive 17.Qxd4 Bd7 18.Bd3 followed by f4-f5.

b) Black had more success with 15...Bxd5 16.exd5 Nd7 in the game Petrakov-Mololkin, Moscow 1994, when after 17.Bxg7 Kxg7 18.Rfe1 Rfe8 19.Bf1 Nf6 20.Qd4 b6 21.h3 Qc5 22.Qd2 Ra7, Black had a solid position. White now mistakenly played the 'active' 23.b4 axb3 24.axb3, and Black took the a-file with 24...Rea8 and later won the game.

15...Nd7

Now, finally, Black plays the standard plan.

16.Bxg7 Kxg7 17.Bg4 Qc5

Since this kind of ending is at least equal for Black due to White's bad bishop, Black wins time by threatening the exchange of queens.

18.Qe2 Nf6 19.Bh3 e5!



A very strong move which probably gives Black the advantage. He now

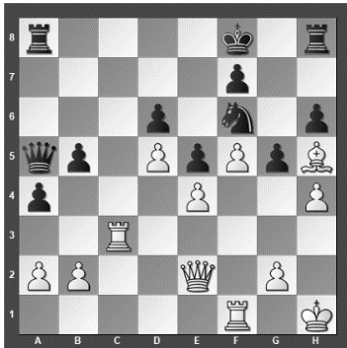
threatens ...e5xf4 followed by ...Rae8, attacking the e4–pawn, which will be difficult to protect with the bishop offside on h3.

20.f5 g5!

Since the knight on f6 is a mighty defender, Black does not fear the possibility of a white kingside attack.

21.Bg4 h6 22.h4 Rh8 23.Bh5 Kf8 24.Nd5 Bxd5 25.cxd5 Qa5 26.Rc4 b5 27.Rc3

This is a very interesting position. Place the white h-pawn on h2 and the bishop on d3, and White would be winning. Yet here the pawn on h4 secures Black counterplay on the kingside since White will never be able to close it comfortably. It is difficult to say who is better, but Black seems to have more than sufficient counterplay.



27...Ke7 28.Rfc1 Ra7

Black defends c7, but White will break through eventually. The only question is: will Black be able to break through on the kingside?

29.Bf3 Rd7 30.a3 Rb8 31.Rc6 Qd8 32.Qe1 Qg8

Black's last moves might seem passive, but now he is ready 33...gxh4 and 34...Qg5. White cannot find a way to meet this.

33.Qb4 Rbd8!

Not 33...gxh4 34.Rxd6!

34.Be2 gxh4 35.R6c3 Qg5 36.Bxb5 Rg8

Finally, it is Black who is making the threats.

37.Bf1 Qf4 38.Rc7 Rgd8!?

38...h3 was winning, but in time trouble Black plays it safe. He will win in the end because his knight is so much stronger than the white bishop.

39.Qe1 Nxe4 40.R7c4 Ng3+ 41.Kg1 Qxf5 42.Rxa4 Qg5 43.Rc2 f5 44.Bb5 Rb7 45.Ba6 Rb3 46.Qa5 Rxb2 47.Rc7+ Kf8 48.Rb4 Rd2 49.Rb1 h3

0–1

A hard-fought battle, where Black defended well. His knight on f6 kept things under control and then he went onto the offensive. White's ideas with Qd3 are not particularly dangerous but do lead to complicated struggles with mutual chances.

Game 50

Geller - Larsen

Monte Carlo 1967

(1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.c4 Bg7 6.Be3 d6)

The immediate 6...Nh6 has, of course, also been tried, but generally, it just transposes. A few exceptions are mentioned in the next game.

7.Be2 Nh6

First recommended by Simagin. Of course, Tarrasch's maxims teach that it is bad to place the knight on the edge of the board, but here it does have some use. The only other square for the knight is f6, where it temporarily hinders Black by blocking the g7–bishop and the f-pawn.



8.0-0 0-0 9.Qd2

At the time of the game, this move was considered good for White, but now it is not very highly regarded. The game transposes to the Classical System with 9...Re8 without Black having played ...Re8! In that variation, Black plays 9...Re8, waiting to counter 10.Qd2 with 10...Ng4 but here Black get a better version since the rook is not urgently needed on e8 with this structure. The standard 9.Nc3 is considered (by transposition) in the next game.

9...Ng4 10.Bxg4 Bxg4

11.Nc3 Qa5

Nowadays, this is regarded as the main line. The alternatives are:

- a) 11...Rc8 has been played on occasion. A horrible example is Bhend-Keres, Zurich 1959, when Black had a terrible position after 12.b3 a6 13.Rac1 Qa5 14.h3 Bd7 15.Nxc6 bxc6? 16.c5 Be6 17.Nd5!?! although Keres later managed to draw. Better was 15...Bxc6 16.Nd5 Qd8, followed by ...b7-b5 with reasonable play.
- b) Langeweg-Velimirovic, Amsterdam 1974, saw 11...Bd7 12.f4 Rc8 13.b3 Qa5 14.Rac1 f5 15.exf5 gxf5 16.Nde2 Be6 17.Ng3 Rfd8 18.Rfd1 Bf7 19.Nb5! Qxd2 20.Rxd2 a6 21.Nc3 e6 22.Bb6 Rd7 23.Na4 and Black has too many weaknesses. Normally Black is not afraid of

endgames in the Maroczy, but if he has played ...f7-f5, they are generally dangerous for Black.

12.Rac1

Interestingly, Geller has no confidence in 12.f4!?, which had brought Petrosian a quick victory against Heinicke 12 years earlier. In that game, Black had played 12...Nxd4 13.Bxd4 e5 14.fxex5 dxe5 15.Be3 Rad8 16.Qf2 f5? 17.Bc5 Rf7 18.h3 and White picked up a piece. 12...Bd7 followed by ...Rc8 seems more logical, after which Black has reasonable play. A sign that 12.f4!? cannot be so bad for Black is the fact that Larsen was ready for it - and Geller did not dare play it!

12...Rfc8 13.b3 a6 14.Rc2?!

Played to prevent ...b7-b5, but this move misses its objective. Better is 14.Nxc6!, which was introduced by a young Kasparov against Ivanov, Daugavpils 1978, which continued 14...Rxc6 15.Bh6! Rac8 (trading Black's best piece, since 15...Bh8 16.Nd5 Qd8 17.Qg5! is winning) 16.Bxg7 Kxg7 17.f4 f6 18.Kh1 b5 19.f5 g5 with complex play. Kasparov writes that 17.Qb2 is preferable, giving White an edge after 17...f6 18.Nd5, though surely it is not a lot. This idea was tried out in Popovic-Abramovic, Novi Sad 1985, and after 15.Bd4 Be6 16.Bxg7 Kxg7 17.Qb2 f6 18.Nd5 Qd8 19.a4 Rac8 20.Rcd1 Rc5, Black's set-up was solid and he can try for ...b7-b5.



14...b5!

Very strong. After 15.cxb5, Black has the pleasant choice between 15...axb5 16.Ndxb5 Nb4 17.Rb2 Bd7 with fine compensation, 15...Nxd4 16.Bxd4 Bxd4 17.Qxd4 axb5, and the spectacular 15...Bxd4!? 16.Bxd4 axb5, since 17.Be3 Nb4 is annoying for White. It may seem odd to give up the dark-squared bishop, but White must defend his queenside and will not get a mating attack.

15.Nd5 Qxd2 16.Rxd2 Bxd4

17.Bxd4 Rab8!

Black keeps things under control. If now 18.c5 Be6! 19.cxd6 Bxd5 20.exd5 Nxd4 21.Rxd4 exd6, he gains a huge advantage due to his control of the c-file.

18.Rc1 Kf8 19.Bb2 bxc4

20.Rxc4 Ke8 21.Rdc2 Kd7

Black enjoys a slight edge. He has more central pawns and a centralised king and can later play ...a5-a4. This may not be enough to win the game, but it is quite unpleasant for White.



22.f3 Be6 23.Rd2 a5 24.h4

Rb5 25.Ra4 f6

Seemingly a very innocent move, but it contains a little trap which Geller walks right into.

26.Kh2? Bxd5! 27.Rxd5

Rxd5 28.exd5 Nb4 29.Rxa5 Rc2

Now we see the idea behind 25...f6. Without it, White would have had a perpetual with Ra7+, but now the king hides on f7.

30.a3

Entering a difficult rook ending, but the alternatives were grim and in particular 30.Bd4 Rxa2 31.Rb5? Nxd5!! 32.Rxd5 Kc6 is beautiful.

30...Rxb2 31.axb4 Rxb3

32.Ra7+ Ke8 33.Ra8+ Kf7 34.Rb8 Rd3 35.Rb5 Rd4 36.Kg3 g5 37.hxg5 fxg5 38.Kf2 Rd2+ 39.Kg3 h5 40.Kh3 Rd3 41.Kg3 Kf6 42.Kf2 Rd2+ 43.Kg3 Rd4 44.Kh3 g4+ 45.fxg4 Rxb3 46.Rb8 Rd4 47.Rb5 Re4 48.Rb8 Re5 49.Rb5 e6 50.Rb8 Rxd5 51.b5 Rd4 52.Rh8 Rb4 53.Rh6+ Kf7 54.Rxb5 Kg6 55.g4 d5 56.Re5 Kf7 57.Kh4 Rxb5 58.Re1 d4 59.Ra1 Kf6 60.Ra8 Rd5 61.Kg3 d3 62.Ra1 Ke5 63.Kf2 Kd4 64.Ra7 e5 65.g5 e4 66.Ra4+ Ke5 0-1

Nice play by Black, who managed to carry out the Sicilian dream: proving that 3.d4 leaves Black a central pawn up!

From the Larsen Chapter

(30)

Andersson - Larsen B38

Naestved 1985

1.Nf3 g6 2.d4 Nf6 3.c4 c5 4.Nc3 cxd4
5.Nxd4 Bg7 6.e4 0-0 7.Be2 d6 8.0-0
Nc6 9.Be3 Re8 10.f3 Nd7 11.Qd2 Nc5
12.Rfd1 (A novelty at the time of the
game; like 12.Rad1, White now
threatens 13.Nxc6 followed by Bxc5)
12...Qa5 13.Rab1 Nxd4 14.Bxd4
Bxd4+ 15.Qxd4 Ne6 16.Qf2 Bd7
17.f4 Qc5 (equal chances - notes to
Game 21)



18.g3 Bc6 19.b4 Qxf2+ 20.Kxf2 b6
21.Rd2 Rac8 22.Rb3 Kf8 23.Nd5
Red8 24.h4 h6 (White has a space
advantage but Black's position is
solid) 25.Re3 Ng7 26.Ra3 Rd7
27.Ne3? (This a strange mistake; now
Larsen could have played 27...Bxe4
followed by ...f7-f5 with a fairly clear
advantage) 27...Rdc7? 28.Nd5 Bxd5
29.exd5 Ne8 30.g4 Nf6 31.Rd4 Nd7
32.g5 Kg7 33.Re3 hxg5 34.hxg5
(Once more, White is trying to squeeze
Black) 34...Nf8 35.Kg3 (35.Rde4!?
looks like a better try, but Black should
be able to hold) 35...a5 36.a3 axb4
37.axb4 Ra7 38.Rde4 Rcc7 (Here
Black's pieces are well coordinated
and he should be able to hold the

position without too much effort)
39.Bg4 Nh7 40.Be2 Kf8 41.Rb3 Ra4
42.Kf2 f6 43.Rh3 Kg7 44.Rhe3 Kf7
45.Rh3 Nf8 (Now Larsen is pressing
for more!) 46.gxf6 exf6 47.Rb3 Ra2
48.c5! bxc5 49.bxc5 dxc5 50.d6 Rd7
51.Ke3 Rxe2+! 52.Kxe2 Rxd6
53.Rb7+ Rd7 54.Rb6 g5 55.fxg5 ½-
½

(31)

Hjartarson - Larsen B77

Gausdal zt 1985

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4
g6 5.Nc3 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Bc4 0-0
8.Bb3 d6 9.f3 Nd7 (We have entered a
regular Dragon) 10.Qd2 Nc5
(10...Nde5 can also be considered)
11.0-0-0 Nxb3+ 12.cxb3 Qa5!?
13.Kb1 f5!? (Aggressively played,
Larsen wants to claim the initiative)
14.exf5 Bxf5+ (Normal, but the
surprising 14...Bxd4!? 15.Bxd4
Bxf5+ 16.Ka1 Rac8 gives Black the
initiative) 15.Nxf5 Qxf5+ 16.Ne4
Rad8 (Black has a pleasant position)



17.Qd5+ Qxd5 18.Rxd5 Rf5 19.Rhd1
Rxd5 20.Rxd5 Rf8 21.a3 Rf5 22.Nc3
Rxd5 23.Nxd5 (With Black essentially
being a pawn up, he has the better
chances but converting it to a full point

is anything but easy) 23...Kf7 24.b4 Ke6 25.Nf4+ Kd7 26.b5 Nd4 27.a4 b6 28.Nd5 Nf5 29.Bf2 Bd4 30.Be1 e6 31.Nb4 Bc5 32.Nc6 a5 33.g4 Ne3 34.Bf2 Nc4 35.Be1 Kc7 36.Kc2 Ne3+ 37.Kd3 Nd5 38.Bd2 Kd7 39.Ke4 Bg1 40.h3 Bc5 41.Kd3 e5 42.Kc4 Nc7 43.b4 axb4 44.Nxb4 (White's pawn majority on the queenside is now a real factor for Black to consider) 44...Ke6 45.Na6 d5+ 46.Kd3 Bd6 47.Be3 (47.Be1!?) 47...d4 48.Nxc7+ Bxc7 49.Bd2 Kd5 50.Bc1 Bd6 51.Bb2 Bb4 ½-½

(32)

Kavalek - Larsen B38

Nordic-USA (Reykjavik) 1986

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.c4 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0 8.Be2 d6 9.0-0 Bd7 10.Qd2 Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Bc6 12.f3 a5 13.b3 Nh5?! (A rather bizarre novelty by Larsen; naturally, 13...Nd7 was normal and perfectly good for Black) 14.Be3 f5?! (This was Larsen's idea behind the previous move, but the idea is not a good one!) 15.exf5 gxf5?! 16.f4 Nf6 17.Rad1 Rf7 18.Bf3 Qf8 19.Nd5 Bxd5 20.Bxd5 Nxd5 21.Qxd5 Qc8 22.a4 Qc6 (White has a dominating position and therefore Larsen is trying to control White by encouraging him to exchange the queens; however, even without the queens on the board, White has a rather clear advantage)

23.Qe6 (23.Rf3!?) 23...Qc8 (23...Qe4!? was possibly a better try) 24.Qxc8+ Rxc8 25.Rd3 (The immediate 25.Rd5 seems like a better choice) 25...Bb2 26.Bb6 Ra8 27.Rd5 Bc3 28.Rf3 Bb4 29.c5 dxc5 30.Bxc5 Bxc5+ 31.Rxc5 b6?! (31...e6!? looks better, connecting the rook on f7 to the b7-pawn; the double rook endgame is very unpleasant for Black as White's rooks are far more active than Black's) 32.Rb5 Rf6 33.Rg3+ Kh8 34.Re3 Ra7 35.Rbe5 Rf7 36.Re6 Rb7 37.R3e5 Kg7 38.Kf2 Rf6 39.Rxe7+ Rxe7 40.Rxe7+ Kg6 41.Ke3 (With a better took, king and a pawn extra, White should win this endgame but some precision is still necessary) 41...Rd6 42.g3 h6 43.Re5 Kf6 44.Rb5 Kg6 45.b4 axb4 46.Rxb4 Kh5 47.h3 Kg6 48.Rd4 Rc6 49.Kd3 Rc1 50.Rd6+ Kg7? 51.Rxb6 Rg1 52.Kc4 Rxc3 53.Rb3 Rg1 54.a5 1-0

