

DOUBLE-FIANCHETTO

THE MODERN CHESS LIFESTYLE

by
Daniel Hausrath



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Typesetting
i-Press <www.i-press.pl>

First edition 2020 by Thinkers Publishing

Double-Fianchetto — the Modern Chess Lifestyle
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ISBN 978-94-9251-075-4
D/2020/13730/3

All sales or enquiries should be directed to Thinkers Publishing, 9850 Landegem, Belgium.

e-mail: info@thinkerspublishing.com
website: www.thinkerspublishing.com

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KEY TO SYMBOLS

| | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------|
| ! | a good move |
| ? | a weak move |
| !! | an excellent move |
| ?? | a blunder |
| !? | an interesting move |
| ?! | a dubious move |
| □ | only move |
| = | equality |
| ∞ | unclear position |
| ∞ | with compensation for the sacrificed material |
| ± | White stands slightly better |
| ∓ | Black stands slightly better |
| ± | White has a serious advantage |
| ∓ | Black has a serious advantage |
| +- | White has a decisive advantage |
| -+ | Black has a decisive advantage |
| → | with an attack |
| ↑ | with initiative |
| ↔ | with counterplay |
| Δ | with the idea of |
| ▷ | better is |
| ≤ | worse is |
| N | novelty |
| + | check |
| # | mate |

PREFACE

First of all, I would like to tell the readers something about myself and the aim of this book. I started playing chess at the age of 4 and went to my first chess club aged 6. In my youth I was very talented and won the German youth championships quite often. I had the opportunity to play several World and European youth championships. My greatest achievement was equal second place at the European under 18 Championships in Greece. Also, I have good memories of the World under 12 Championships in Timisoara 1988, where I attained sixth place and won nice games against the now-strong GMs Almasi and Nisipeanu.

At this time also, adjourned games still existed. Before round 10 I had the opportunity to analyze an adjourned game together with the Polgar family, because they would have been happy if I could reach a draw in this game.



Daniel Hausrath. (Photo by Ralf Lange)

After analyzing for a long time, we found the way to draw, but the next morning I lost that game, despite this analysis. At noon I had to play against Judith herself and lost a terrible game which is one of my first games in the database now. But I will definitely never forget this story.

In the mid-nineties, a Botvinnik chess school was built in Bonn and the strongest and most talented youth players from Germany had the chance to learn a lot from the patriarch himself. The first two sessions were headed by Botvinnik and the strong GM Valery Salov, who was one of the leading players at that time.

I became an IM in 1997 and a GM in 2013. Many of my students have asked me when I will start writing a book, because they know that I like writing and explaining things. I come from a teaching family; my father was a teacher at a German academic high school and I always loved and still love reading and writing.

Nowadays it is no longer easy to find enough silence for reading, because I have three small children between the ages of 3 and 6. This book is definitely not a book full of theoretical lines. Of course, I will give some advice if possible and necessary. But the main purpose is to explain the structures that can result from double fianchettoed positions. The reader will find five chapters with structures from the white side and six chapters with structures from the black side. The last chapter is a mixed one, with games from both sides.

The main — and longest — part will be the first chapter, with games and analyses of my own main weapon starting with ♘f3 , g3 and b3 against the King's Indian and Grünfeld. I will show the reader a few games of my own and also games from Kramnik and Andersson, two of my favourite players. I have learned a lot from their games myself. I have played those structures for nearly 25 years and one of my sons also now starts with $1.\text{♘f3}$. During my years of playing chess I tried many possible openings with White and Black, but I was only successful with fianchettoing one, or even better both, bishops. Maybe this was a sign and those structures are really a lifestyle for me?

I hope you will enjoy reading this book and maybe these structures will also become part of your lifestyle.

Daniel Hausrath

PART 1.

**DOUBLE FIANCHETTO
WITH WHITE**

CHAPTER 1.

DOUBLE FIANCHETTO AGAINST THE KING'S INDIAN AND GRÜNfeld

The first game I would like to analyze is a brilliancy from Kramnik. It is always nice when such a genius plays your own openings. I am always dreaming that he is analyzing my games and thinks that my openings are so good that he himself has to play this. Unfortunately this won't be the case, but the other way round also works and I really like to get some input from very strong players.

A few years ago there existed almost no theory on the Double Fianchetto structures, but this definitely changed when Avrukh published his monumental works covering 1.d4 in 2010. In chapter 20 he analyzed the resulting structures against the Grünfeld in deep detail. After this, those positions were played very often and with good results for White. Later on, Avrukh published a new and updated version of his masterpieces.

Nowadays we have a lot of books and videos which show the many lines for both sides. One of them is the

work of Adrian Demuth — his book “The Modernized Reti” — which I can recommend to readers who want to really investigate the resulting positions in detail.

Let us now start with Kramnik's brilliancy! The game against Vocaturo was played at the Baku Olympiad in 2016.

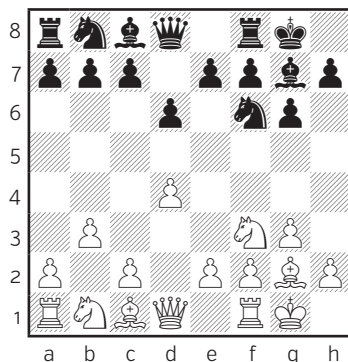
1

▷ Vladimir Kramnik [2808]

▶ Daniele Vocaturo [2583]

Baku 2016

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 g6 3.g3 ♙g7 4.♙g2
o-o 5.o-o d6 6.b3



Kramnik himself annotated this game for ChessBase and here he wrote that he was avoiding the mass of theory after 6.c4. It is interesting to read this, because I thought that I was the only one who had become older and thus wants to avoid main-line theory.

6...e5

6...c5 is another principled move, which will be analysed in the next game between Kramnik and Caruana.

7.dxe5 dxe5 8. ♖a3

Now a typical endgame in this opening emerges — one that usually favours White. You should not fear trading the queens, because this still yields substantial winning chances.

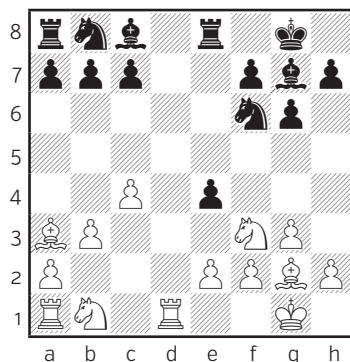
8... ♙xd1 9. ♚xd1 ♜e8 10.c4

Also 10. ♘c3 is an interesting alternative which was played by Kramnik in a blitz game against Vovk in Berlin 2015.

10...e4

The critical test.

Otherwise White is better developed and will use the d5-square for his knight.



10... ♘c6 This is very logical. 11. ♘c3 e4 12. ♘e1 ♙f5 13. ♜ac1 e3 14. f3 with a complicated game, but better chances for White.

11. ♘d4 c6?!

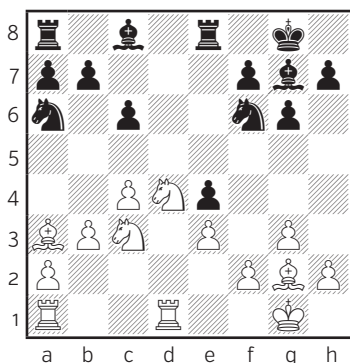
In such a position it is very important for Black to search for active counterplay. Now White gets enough time to finish his development. It was necessary to start with 11... ♗g4 ♖11... ♗g4 ♘12. ♘c3 e3 13. f4 c6 14. ♘e4∞

12. ♘c3 ♗a6

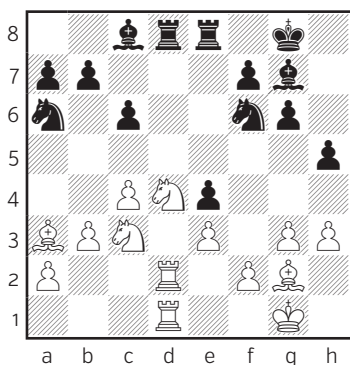
The major problem for Black is that he has no obvious squares for his pieces. The knight, as awkward as it might look, is at least aiming for c5.

13.e3

Now White has everything under control and e4 is also something of a target.



13... ♗g4 14. ♖d2 ♖ad8 15. h3 ♗c8
16. ♖ad1 h5



17. ♗e7!

A nice tactical trick.

Kramnik wrote that he couldn't resist playing this one. Of course, b4 was also possible and very strong.

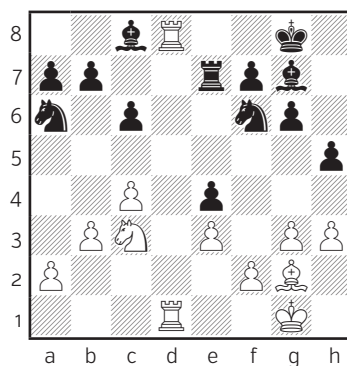
17. b4 ♖c7 18. b5 cxb5 19. ♖cxb5 ♖xb5
20. ♖xb5 ♖xd2 21. ♖xd2+ with control of the d-file and access to the important d6-square.

17... ♖xd4□

a) 17... ♖xe7 is just losing because of 18. ♖xc6 ♖xd2 19. ♖xe7+ ♔f8 20. ♖xc8+-;

b) 17... ♖d7± leaves Black without the e4-pawn after ♗xf6 and ♖xe4.

18. ♖xd4 ♖xe7 19. ♖d8+



19... ♖e8□

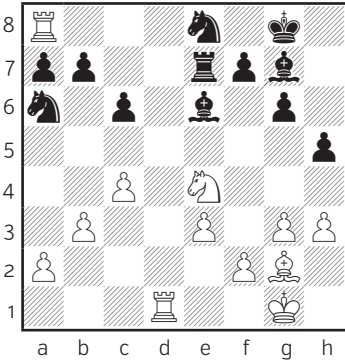
19... ♖e8 20. ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 21. ♖d8 ♔f8
22. ♖xe4 ♗e6 23. ♖d6 ♔e7 24. ♖xb7± taking on c6 next.

20. ♖xe4 ♗e6

Kramnik admitted that in his calculations his main concern was that Black would take on h3, but then he saw, and gave, the following variation:

20... ♗xh3 21. ♖d6 ♗d7 (21... ♗xg2
22. ♖xe8 ♗f3 23. ♖f6#) 22. ♖xb7 ♗g4
23. f3 ♗f5 24. e4 ♗e6 25. ♖a5 ♔h7
26. ♖xc6 ♖c7 27. ♖d4± with a technically winning position.

21. ♖a8



The point of this combination: Black has problems defending his queen-side pawns.

21... ♗e5 22. ♖dd8 ♔f8 23. ♖xa7

Kramnik is well known for his deep calculations and before his sacrifice on move 17 he thought that he would have a big advantage in this position. The computer shows that this is not quite so simple and with correct play Black would reach equality. But the good thing is that we are all human, and make mistakes!

23... ♗c7?

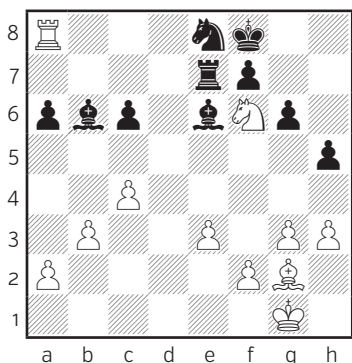
23... ♗f5! Threatening to exchange on e4, followed by ... ♗c7. 24. ♘g5 ♗c7! 25. ♖da8 ♗b6 26. ♖xa6! bxa6 27. ♖xa6 ♗d8 28. ♗xc6 ♖c7 29. h4 ♗c8 30. ♖b6= and also here White



Vladimir Kramnik, 13th January 2018. [Photo by Frans Peeters]

would retain good winning chances, although the engine gives equality.

24. ♖da8! ♙b6□ 25. ♖xa6 bxa6
26. ♗f6!



Here is the difference, and the reason why Black should have played ... ♙f5 earlier. The knight doesn't need to go to g5 and the resulting pin is now very annoying for Black.

26... ♙d7

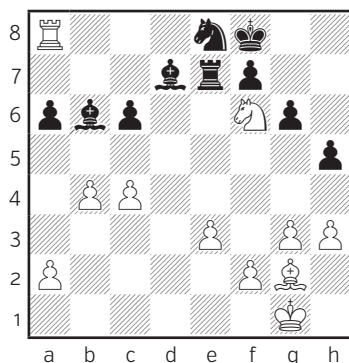
Not nice, but the only move. Otherwise White gets the piece back directly:

26...c5 27. ♙c6+-

27.b4!

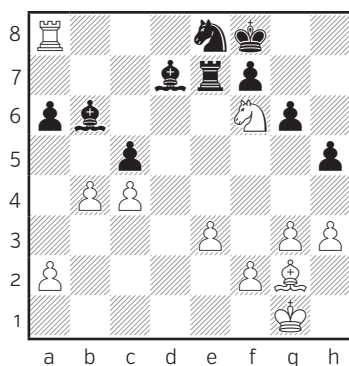
Very strong!

Black is pinned by hand and feet, so White has the time and the composure to make progress.



27. ♗xd7+ ♖xd7 28. ♙xc6 ♖d8
29. ♖xa6± is also very good.

27...c5

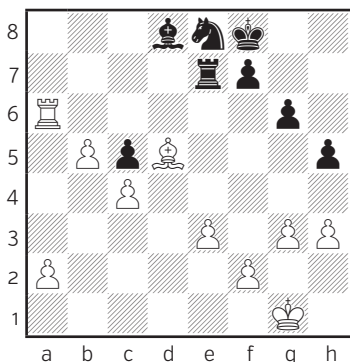


27... ♙c7 28.c5! ♙e5 29. ♗xd7+ ♖xd7
30. ♙xc6 ♖e7 31.a4+- and nothing can prevent White from queening his pawns.

28. ♗d5! ♙c6

28... ♖e6 loses because of 29. ♖b8 ♙a7 30. ♖b7+-

29. ♖xa6 ♙xd5 30. ♙xd5 ♙d8 31.b5

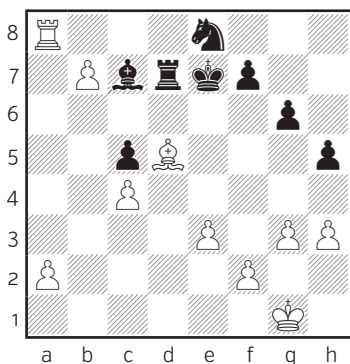


Now White is winning as Black cannot stop him from pushing his pawns. All of Black's pieces are badly placed.

31...Rd7

31...Nc7 32.Rd6 R8e8 33.Qc6 Qe7
34.Rd7 N6e6 35.a4+-

32.b6 Qe7 33.b7 Qc7 34.Ra8

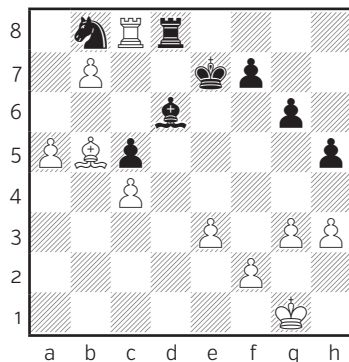


34...Nf6

34...Rd8 35.a4 N6d6 36.a5 Nxb7
37.Ra7 Qxa5 38.Rxb7+ R7d7

39.Rxd7+ Qxd7 40.Qxf7 h4 41.gxh4
Qd8 42.Qxg6+-

**35.Rc8 Qd6 36.Qc6 R8d8 37.a4 N6d7
38.a5 N6b8 39.Qb5**



A very nice game!

Showing some of the tactical opportunities that are made possible by better development and more activity!

1-0

This next effort was one of my first double-fianchetto games. It was played in Budapest at one of the legendary First Saturday tournaments, a closed round-robin event.

After finishing school I played a lot of tournaments and in Budapest I made my first IM norm with 11 out of 13. Perhaps this game was the start of my love for the double-fianchetto structures.

2

▷ Daniel Hausrath [2390]

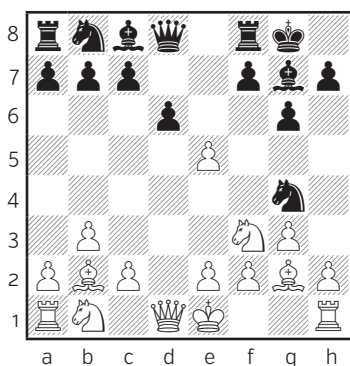
▶ Sandor Farago [2365]

Budapest 1996

1. Nf3 Nf6 2. g3 g6 3. b3 Bg7 4. Bb2
d6

Black adopts a King's Indian setup.

5. d4 O-O 6. Bg2 e5 7. dxe5 Ng4



A common tactical trick to push through ...e5. Usually Black takes back on e5 with the knight to exchange a few pieces in an attempt to equalize.

8. $\text{Qd2}!?$

Nowadays I prefer h3. It was often played by none other than Smyslov in the good old days.

8. h3 Nxe5 9. Nxe5 dxe5 10. Qxd8
 Kxd8 11. Nd2 c6 12. O-O-O White has a very nice positional advan-

tage. The d6-square is weak and also the pawn on e5 becomes a target. Sometimes the white knight will be well-placed on a5 and attack the queenside. I have played this position three times in open tournaments and won all three games quite easily.

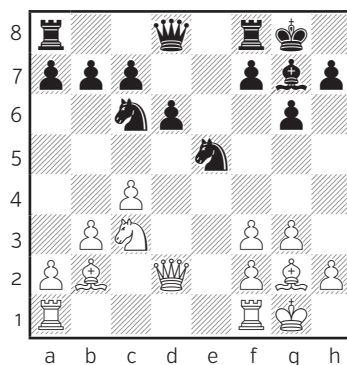
8... Nc6 9. O-O Ngxe5 10. c4

This was the idea behind the queen move to d2. Now the bishop on b2 is protected.

10... Bg4 11. Nc3 $\text{Qxf3}?$

Black sacrifices his bishop pair in an open position for doubtful play.

12. exf3



12... Nd4

My opponent was well-known as a good tactician, but here it is not so easy to put fire on the board. Normally King's Indian players want to

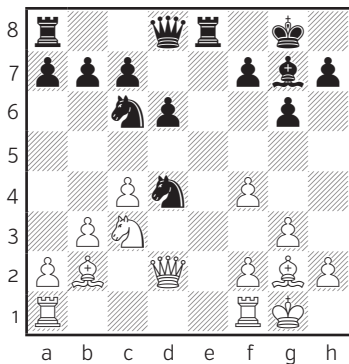
create some unstable positions, but against the Double Fianchetto this is usually impossible.

13. ♖d1 ♜e8?!

Black should first of all stabilize the knight on d4 with ...c5.

13...c5 14.f4 ♞ec6 15. ♖d2± It is not easy to exploit the weakness on d6 in this position, but the weakened white squares are a different story.

14.f4 ♞ec6 15. ♖d2



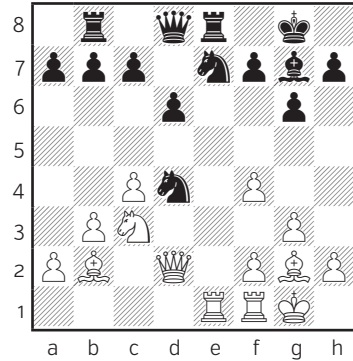
15... ♜b8

The main problem in such positions is to find useful moves as Black.

He wants to defend the b7-pawn, but of course this is not the most active way of playing. Maybe it was better to play ...♖d7 and connect the rooks.

15... ♖d7 16. ♜ae1 ♜xe1 17. ♜xe1 ♜e8±

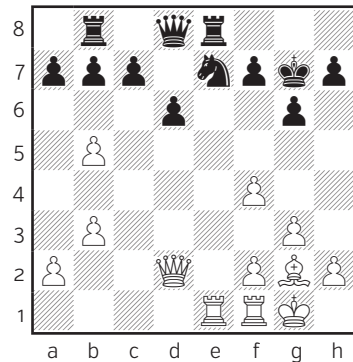
16. ♜ae1 ♞e7



17. ♞b5!

Exchanging some pieces and putting pressure on the queenside. It also gets rid of the outpost on d4.

17... ♞xb5 18. ♞xg7 ♜xg7 19. cxb5



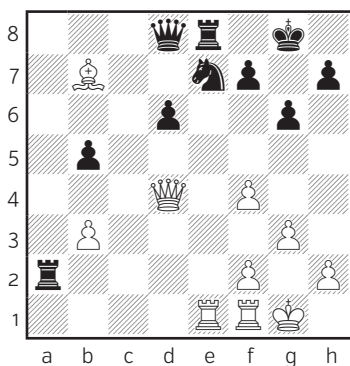
Although White has two doubled pawns, his advantage is not in question. He will control the e-file, and the bishop is much stronger than the knight in such an open position. Also, all the black pawns on the queenside are targets and not so easy to defend.

19...♔g8

Black wants to play ...♘f5 and exchange a pair of rooks.

19...♘f5? 20.♖xe8 ♕xe8 21.♗c3+ winning the c7-pawn.

20.♗a5 c6 21.♗xa7 cxb5 22.♗d4 ♖a8 23.♙xb7 ♖xa2



24.♗e4?!

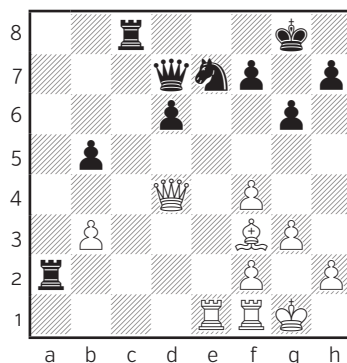
The pin looks nice, but now Black could have taken the chance to develop a bit.

Better was 24.♙e4± controlling the f5-square.

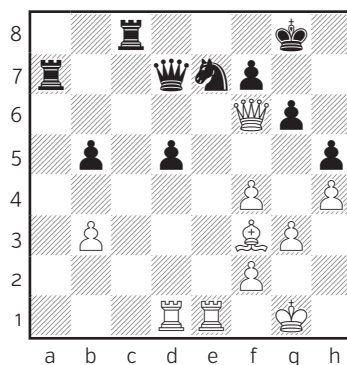
24...♔f8?!

24...♗b6 25.♙c6 ♖c8 26.♙d7 ♖cc2 27.♖e3±

25.♗d3 ♗d7 26.♙f3 ♖c8 27.♗d4 ♔g8



28.♗f6 ♖a7 29.h4 h5 30.♖d1 d5 31.♖fe1



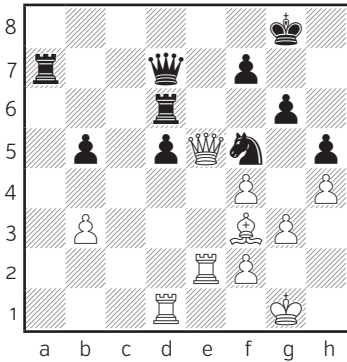
Now White has everything under control. All his pieces are working together.

31...♖c6 32.♗d4 ♖d6 33.♖e2?!

It was much easier to go directly to the a-file. In time trouble both sides made mistakes. In those days we didn't play with an increment, and as I remember correctly my opponent had only one minute left. This often leads to the problem that you only watch the clock and don't try

to find the best moves when the opponent is in deep time trouble. The worst thing would be to blitz out your moves as well. It is much more annoying for him if he has to wait for your moves for a while.

33...♘f5 34.♚e5?

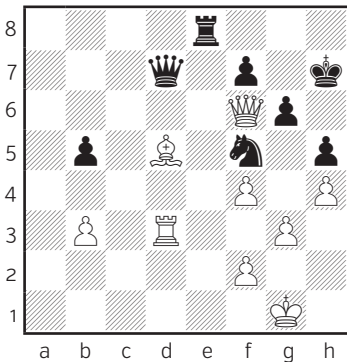


34.♚d3 d4 35.♞e5±

34...♞a8??

34...d4 35.♞c2 d3 36.♞c5 d2 Here the d-pawn saves Black.

35.♞xd5 ♞xd5 36.♙xd5 ♞d8 37.♞d2 ♙h7 38.♞d3 ♞e8 39.♚f6



39...♚e7?

The final blunder in a difficult position!

39...♘h6 40.♙e4 ♚a7 41.♚d4±

40.♚xf7+ ♚xf7 41.♙xf7 ♞e7
42.♙d5 ♞e2 43.♙c6 b4 44.♙d7 ♞b2
45.♙e6 ♙g7 46.♞d7+ ♙f6 47.♙c4

Definitely not a perfect game, but a nice and important one for getting a norm.

1-0

3

▷ Vladimir Kramnik [2783]

▶ Fabiano Caruana [2811]

Zürich 2015

This was a rapidplay game.

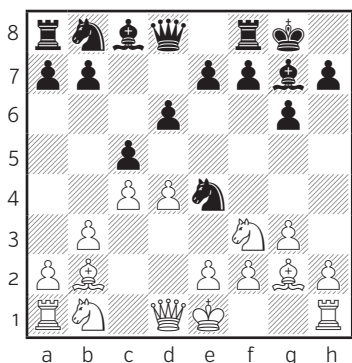
1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 g6 3.b3

Here Vladimir played the classical move order.

3...♙g7 4.♙b2 c5 5.♙g2 o-o 6.c4 d6 7.d4 ♘e4!?

A very interesting try.

Black looks to profit directly from the pin on the d4-pawn.



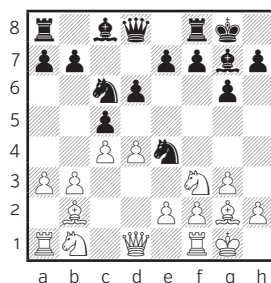
8...o-c6 9.h3!?

Kramnik wants to prevent ...♙g4 ideas.

The old main line started with 9. ♖bd2. I analysed the “ugly” looking move 9.a3 here which also leads to nice play for White. The idea behind this move is to protect the b2-bishop with ♖a2 or ♗c2, without giving Black the chance to attack those pieces with ...♘b4. My first experience with this line was also a very funny one. I played against GM Glek in a blitz game at the German team competition on board one with 5 minutes each. After a3 he thought for nearly 3 minutes and played ...♙g4, but with 5 versus 2 minutes there was no chance to hold the game.

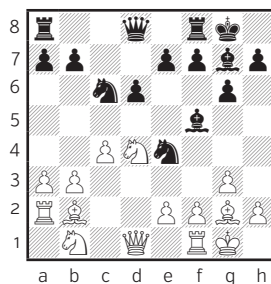
a) 9. ♘bd2 ♘xd2 10. ♗xd2 e5!?∞ this leads to complicated play;

b) 9.a3!?



9...♙g4

b1) 9...♙f5!? 10. ♖a2 cxd4 11. ♘xd4



11...♘xf2?! A spectacular sacrifice which I got in an online blitz game against Cheparinov. First of all I thought that this sacrifice gives Black an edge, but then I found the following line:

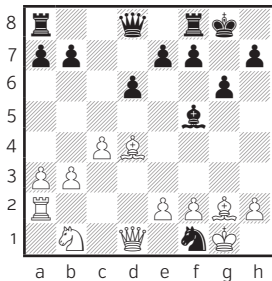
[11...♙xd4!? A much better version for Black, but not yet seen in practice. 12. ♙xd4 ♘xg3 13. ♙xc6

b11) 13.fxg3 ♙xb1 14. ♙xc6 ♙xa2 15. ♙d5 e6 Now Black has the main resource ...♗b6 with check after ♙f6, because the white rook is not on f2. 16. ♙f6?? (16. ♗d2! Here also White should

have the better prospects. One possible line is: 16...e5 17. ♖e3 ♖xb3 18. ♗b2 ♖a4 19. ♗xb7 ♗d7 20. ♗xf7 ♗xf7 21. ♗xa8+ ♖g7 22. ♖xf7 ♖xf7 23. ♖xa7±) 16... ♗b6+;

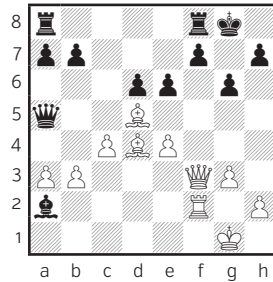
b12) 13.hxg3 ♖xb1 14. ♖xc6 ♖xa2 15. ♖d5 ♗a5 16. ♗c2! ♗xa3 17. ♖a1 ♗xb3 18. ♗xa2 ♗xa2 19. ♖xa2 ♖ac8! I would prefer this position as White, but objectively-speaking it should be equal;

13... ♖xf1 14. ♖g2



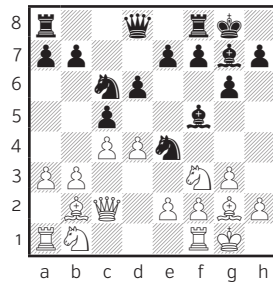
Firstly, I thought that this would be the easiest solution for White—just winning an exchange—but then ...e5 was found! 14...e5 (14... ♖xh2? 15. ♖xh2 e5 16. ♖e3 The main difference; with a knight on f1 this wouldn't be possible. 16... ♗h4+ 17. ♖g1 ♖h3 18. ♗f1 ♗g4 19. ♖c3± with ♖d2 and ♖d5 coming. Also the g5-square would be protected.) 15. ♖c3 ♖xh2 16. ♖xh2 ♗h4+ 17. ♖g1 ♖h3 18. ♗f1 ♗g4=]

12. ♗xf2 ♖xd4 13. ♖xd4 ♖xb1 14. ♖xc6! ♖xa2 15. ♖d5 This position seems to be nearly winning for White. It is not easy, perhaps impossible, for Black to prevent ♗d2/c1–h6. The bishop on a2 will be also lost soon. 15... ♗a5 (15...e6?? 16. ♖f6 ♗b6 17. ♗d2) 16.e4! e6 17. ♗f3!+–



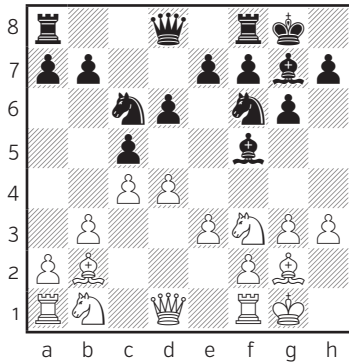
b2) 9...d5! Maybe the best choice for Black. 10.cxd5 ♗xd5 11. ♖fd2 f5 12. ♖c3 ♗xd4 13. ♖dx4 ♗xd1 14. ♖fxd1 fxe4 15. ♖xe4 ♖e6= with equal chances;

10. ♗c2 ♖f5??



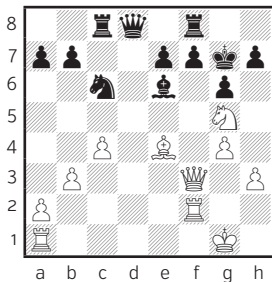
11.g4 ♖g3 12.gxf5 ♖xf1 13.d5! I got this once in an open tournament in a slightly different way and won easily.

9... ♖f5 10.e3 ♘f6?!



I don't like to criticize the World Championship challenger, but ...♘f6 looks way too passive. Now White can develop in the most active way. I guess Caruana was afraid of ♖h4 getting the pair of bishops, but this wouldn't be too fearsome.

10... ♜c8 11. ♖h4?! (11.g4 ♙e6 12. ♘bd2 d5 This move is very often important for Black, attacking the center. 13. ♘xe4 dxe4 14. ♖g5 cxd4 15. ♙xe4 dxe3 16. ♙xg7 exf2+ 17. ♜xf2 ♖xg7 18. ♚f3∞



...with a complicated position.) 11... cxd4 12. ♘xf5 gxf5 13. exd4 d5= With

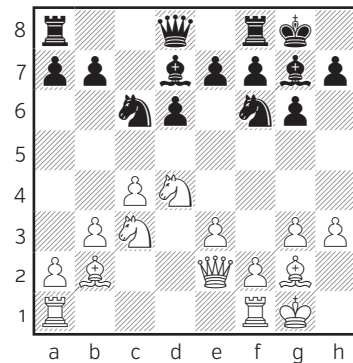
the weakness of d4, Black needn't be afraid of these exchanges.

11. ♘c3

I often found myself in similar positions and preferred d5 here, gaining more space.

11.d5 ♘b4 12.a3 ♘a6 13. ♚e2± with ♘bd2 and e4 coming

11...cxd4 12. ♘xd4 ♙d7 13. ♚e2



Now we have a normal position and Black has lost a lot of time with ...♘e4-f6 and ...♙f5-d7

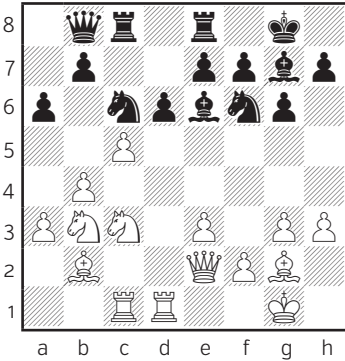
13...a6 14. ♜fd1 ♜c8 15. ♜ac1 ♚a5 16.a3

White only makes normal moves but his advantage increases.

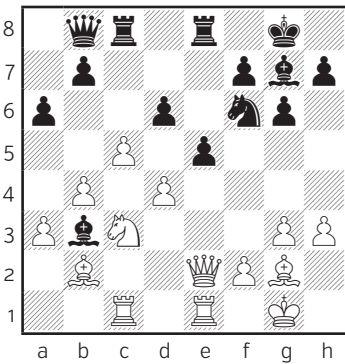
16... ♜fe8 17.b4 ♚c7 18. ♘b3

Now ideas with ♘d5 are in the air.

18... ♖b8 19.c5 ♙e6



20. ♘d4 ♘xd4 21.exd4 ♙b3 22. ♖e1 e5?



Now matters becomes worse, but Black was always under pressure. A very unpleasant situation, especially in a rapid game.

22...d5± It was necessary instead to close the center.

23.dxe5 ♖xe5?

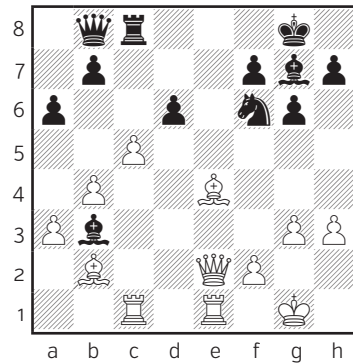
Normally one mistake never comes alone!

23...dxc5 24.f4± This was better, but of course also not nice for Black. After the game move, however, it is lost.

24. ♘e4

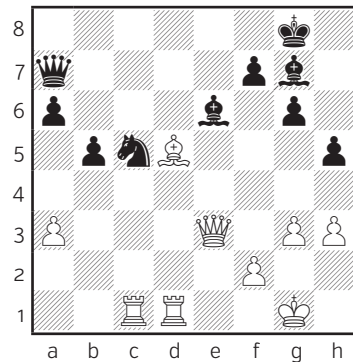
Winning the exchange.

24... ♖xe4 25. ♙xe4



The rest is easy.

25... ♙e6 26. ♙g2 dxc5 27. ♙e5 ♖a7 28.bxc5 ♖xc5 29. ♙d4 ♘d7 30. ♙xc5 ♘xc5 31. ♖ed1 h5 32. ♙d5 b5 33. ♖e3



This looked like an easy game for Kramnik!

1-0

The next game was played by me in the Dutch Team Championships.

The teams play over 10 boards, and up to 15 minutes before the match it is not clear which opponent will be yours. Normally it makes no sense to prepare against all 10 possible opponents. This rule makes it easier for players like me to play their normal repertoire and have some fun.

4

▷ Daniel Hausrath (2507)

▷ Lars Ootes (2340)

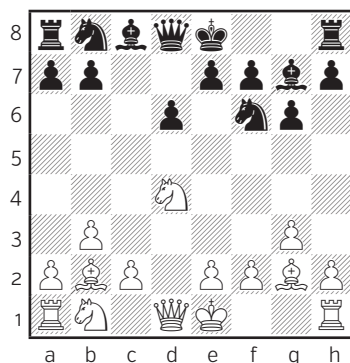
Netherlands 2012

1. ♖f3 ♗f6 2. g3 g6 3. b3 ♕g7 4. ♖b2 d6 5. d4

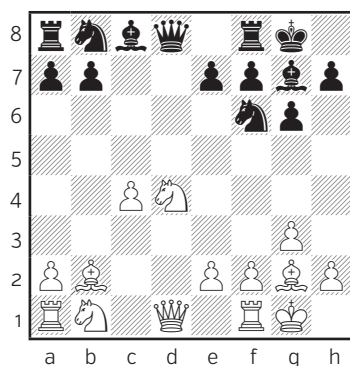
These double-fianchetto structures can also be called anti-Grünfeld, or as in this game anti-King's Indian.

Both types of players want to get a dynamic battle with attacking chances, but this is nearly impossible.

5...c5 6. ♖g2 cxd4 7. ♗xd4



7...d5 8.0-0 0-0 9.c4 dxc4 10.bxc4



This 'tabiya' — or main starting position — was discussed in detail in the first volume of Avrukh's masterpiece covering 1.d4. Of course, his move order was a bit different and he came to this position via the Grünfeld. The book was published nearly one year before this game was played and I had certainly taken a deep look at the resulting positions. But as often in a chess career, it was also necessary to remember the details at the board. Sometimes you analyze variations but get them only once in 10 years.