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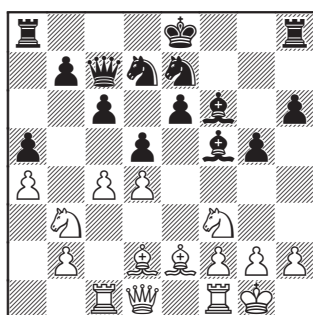
# B 12

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♘f5 4.♗f3 e6 5.♙e2 ♗d7 6.♗bd2 h6 7.0–0 ♗e7  
8.♗b3 ♖c7 9.♙d2 a5 10.a4 g5 11.♖c1 ♙g7 12.c4

	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	
1	...	ef6	♙e5 <sup>3</sup>	de5	♙c4	♖e1	♖c4	♖e2	♗d4	
	f6 <sup>1</sup>	♙f6 <sup>2</sup>	♙e5 <sup>4</sup>	dc4	♗e5	♗c4	0–0–0	♖b6	♗d5 <sup>5</sup>	±
2	...	cd5 <sup>6</sup>	h4	♗e1	♙g4	♙f5	de5	♗f3	♗c5 <sup>9</sup>	
	0–0	♗d5	g4	f6 <sup>7</sup>	fe5	ef5 <sup>8</sup>	♗e5	♖f7	♗f3 <sup>10</sup>	=
3	...	♖e1	ef6 <sup>11</sup>	♗e5 <sup>12</sup>	♗g6	f3	♙c3 <sup>13</sup>	♙d3	♖d3	
	...	f6	♗f6	♗g6	♙g6	♖fe8	b6 <sup>14</sup>	♙d3	dc4 <sup>15</sup>	=
4	...	♖e1	♖c3 <sup>17</sup>	♙c4	♙d3	♖d3	dc5	♗c5	♖e4	
	...	♖b6 <sup>16</sup>	dc4	♖a7	♙d3	c5	♗c5	♖c5	♖c6	=

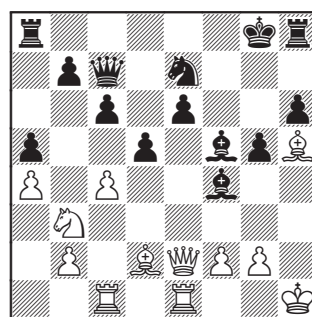
1 12...dc4 13.♙c4 ♗d5 14.♗e1 0–0  
15.♙d3 (15.♗c2 f6 16.♗e3 fe5 17.♗f5  
♖f5 18.♖e1 ♗h8 19.♙d3 ♖f7 20.h4 ♗f4  
21.♙f4 gf4∞ Jan Klimkowski 2342 - Rafał  
Antoniewski 2493, Polska 2021) 15...♗e7  
16.f4 gf4 17.♙f4±

2

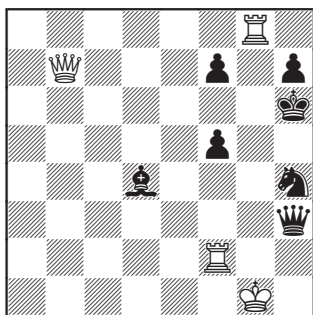


3 14.h3 0–0 15.♖e1 ♙g7 16.♙e3  
♙e4 (16...♗g6∞) 17.♗bd2 ♙g6 18.♖b3  
♖b6 19.♖b6 ♗b6 20.♗e5 (20.b3 ♖ad8  
21.♙d1 ♗f5∞) 20...♗a4 21.♗g6 ♗g6 22.  
b3 ♗b6 23.♙g4 ♖fe8∞ Alexei Fedorov  
2472 - Zhamsaran Tsypdypov 2529, Chely-  
abinsk 2022

4 14...♗e5 15.de5 ♙e5 [15...♖e5?  
16.♙c3+-] 16.♙h5 ♗f8 [16...♗d8 17.♖e1  
♖f8 18.♙c3 ♙h2 19.♗h1 ♙f4 20.g4 ♙c1  
21.gf5 ♖f4 22.♗d4+-] 17.♖e1 ♗g8 [17...  
♙h2 18.♗h1 ♙f4 19.♗d4 ♙d2 20.♖d2  
♖f4 21.♖c3 ♗g8 22.♗g1 ♖f8 23.g3 ♖d6  
24.c5 ♖d7 25.♖e5±] 18.♖e2 ♙h2 19.  
♗h1 ♙f4



20.g4! ♙e4 [20...♙d2 21.gf5+-] 21.f3 ♙d2  
22.♗d2 ♗g6 23.cd5 [23.fe4 ♗f4 24.♖h2  
d4 25.e5±] 23...♙d5 24.♙g6 ♖f8 25.♗g2  
♖f4 26.♗e4 ♖e5 27.♖c3+- David Navara  
2657 - Paulius Pultinevičius 2561, Polska  
2025 — 165/46



44. ♖b6!! ♕b6 45. ♖g6 ♖h5 46. ♖g5=]

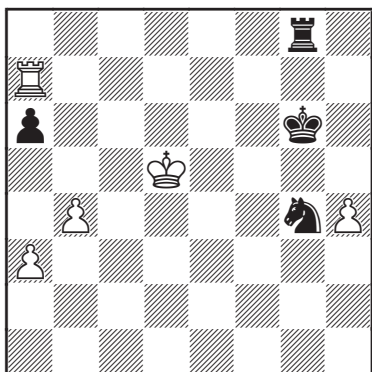
44. ♖c8 ♖g7 45. ♖f8! ♖g6 46. ♖h6!!

1/2 : 1/2

## David Antón GUIJARRO 2631 - Constantin LUPULESCU 2577

Batumi 2025

An interesting endgame where Black's knight faces three pawns. Black's main problem is the distant king, which ideally should be fighting against two connected white passed pawns. Additionally, what makes defence even harder is the white edge pawn, always the toughest challenge for a knight. Both players demonstrated great precision and calculation in navigating this truly difficult endgame, especially demanding for Black.



55. ♖a6 ♖f5 56. b5 ♖d8 57. ♖c5 ♖e5 58. b6 ♖c8 59. ♖b5 ♖c1 60. ♖a4 ♖e6 61. b7 ♖d7 62. ♖d4 ♖c5? Black's first defensive mistake. In the game, Black's move restricted the activity of their own rook. The correct idea



photo by ECU

David Antón Guijarro

was to remove the knight from the ♖d7 threat and keep the rook on an active square.

[62... ♖b8! 63. a4 ♖e7 64. a5 ♖b1 65. ♖b4 ♖f1 66. ♖b6 (66. a6 ♖f5=) 66... ♖f6 67. ♖a7 ♖c6 68. ♖a8 ♖f8 69. b8 ♖ ♖b4=]

**63. ♖a6?** White aims to support the advanced b-pawn with the king. The problem with ♖a6 move is that White's king has tucked into the corner and moved closer to the knight, giving Black plenty of defensive resources.

[Correct is 63. ♖a4! The king steps away from potential checks and the geometry of Black's knight. The threat is ♖d7. 63... ♖b8 64. ♖d8 ♖c6 65. b8 ♖ ♖b8+- On ♖c4, White has prepared ♖b4 and defended the h4 pawn. A position with two edge pawns still requires some technique to convert the win.]

**63... ♖c3?** Black misses the chance to improve the knight's position with tempo.

[63... ♖b8! 64. ♖a7 ♖c6 65. ♖b6 ♖c3! It is important to constantly attack White's pieces. 66. ♖b4! White blocks the b-file and prepares

♖g6 33.♘g3 h4 34.♞f1 ♞f5! 35.♞e3  
hg3 36.fg3 ♞h6! 31...h4! 32.g4 ♞e1  
33.♞h3 ♞d1 34.a6 ♞a1 35.a7 ♞e7! 36.  
♞e3!? (36.♞h4 ♞c6 37.♞h5 ♞d4 38.cd4  
♞a7 39.♞d5±) 36...♞c6 37.♞e1 ♞a2  
38.♞e2 ♞a1 39.♞c5!? ♞c5 40.♞e8 ♞h7  
41.a8♞ ♞a8 42.♞a8 ♞e5! 43.♞a5 ♞d3  
44.♞e3 d4 45.cd4 ♞d4 46.♞d5 ♞e3 47.  
fe3 ♞b4!±]

**30...♞e1**

[30...♞h4 31.g4 ♞e1 32.♞b5 ♞g4=]

**31.♞b5** ♞c5! A surprising idea.

[31...♞h4!? 32.g4 ♞g4=]

**32.♞d3**

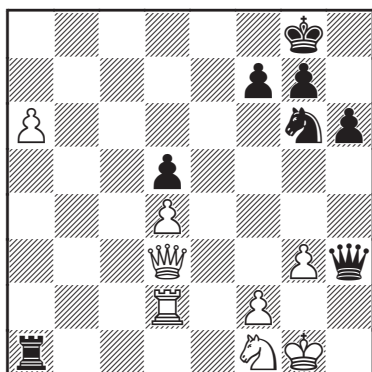
[32.♞a2? ♞a7! 33.♞b2 ♞h8○ 34.♞d2  
(34.♞b1 ♞e5! 35.♞e5 ♞e5 36.♞d3 ♞h5  
37.♞f3 ♞f5++) 34...f6 35.f3 ♞e5 36.♞f2  
♞c1 37.♞e2 ♞f3! 38.♞a7 ♞d2 39.♞d2  
♞h2 40.♞f3 ♞h1! 41.♞g2 ♞c3 42.♞f2  
♞g2 43.♞g2 ♞a3+;

32.♞c5?? ♞e5 33.f4 ♞g3 34.♞h1 ♞f3  
35.♞e8 ♞h7 36.♞e1 ♞e1+]

**32...♞d4**

[32...f5 33.f4 ♞d4 34.cd4 ♞a1 35.♞f2=]

**33.cd4 ♞a1**



**34.♞d1??** A serious blunder!

[34.♞e2 ♞e6 35.♞a2! ♞e2 36.♞e2 ♞a6  
37.♞e8 ♞h7 38.♞d8 ♞e7 39.♞e3=;

34.♞b2 ♞e6 35.♞b8 ♞h7 36.♞b7 ♞a6  
(36...f5!?) 37.♞f7=]

**30**



Gukesh, Carlsen, Caruana, Nakamura

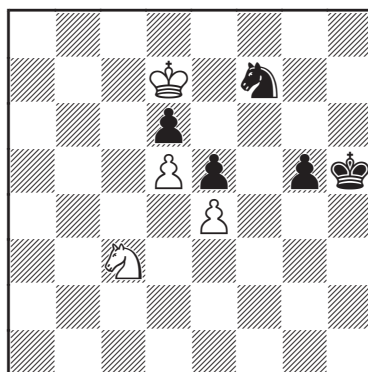
**34...♞f4?** - and White resigned...

[But let's see the only defence: 35.♞e3!!  
Paradoxical! But that is actually the only  
good move in the position. 35...♞d3 36.♞a1  
♞c8 37.♞d5 ♞c2 38.a7 ♞f2 39.♞h1 ♞f3  
40.♞h2 ♞e2= Black has nothing better  
than forcing a draw by repetition.;

Instead: 34...♞h4! 35.g4 ♞g4++ with siml-  
ple win.] **0 : 1**

**Magnus CARLSEN 2839 - Fabiano  
CARUANA 2789**

*Saint Louis (rapid) 2025*



**55...g4?** Too hasty.

[Black missed the moment to centralize the  
king: 55...♞g4! 56.♞b5 (56.♞e7? ♞f3!  
57.♞f7 g4++ and White can't stop the passed  
pawn.) 56...♞f4 57.♞d6 ♞d6 58.♞d6 g4  
59.♞c6 g3 60.d6 g2 61.d7 g1♞ 62.d8♞



Hovhannisyan - Giri

photo by Michal Walusza / FIDE

36...♔f6+ 37.♙d3 ♙c1 38.♔b1 ♚c4 39. bc4 ♙e3 40.c5 ♙c5

0 : 1

B 90

**Marc'Andria MAURIZZI 2610 -  
Anish GIRI 2746**

Samarkand 2025

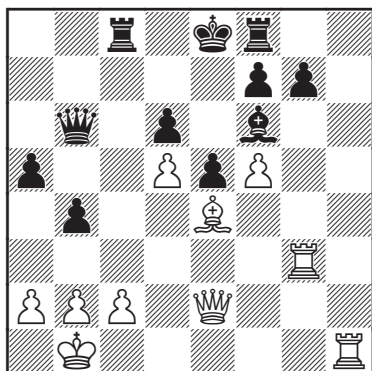
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cd4 4.♘d4 ♘f6  
5.♘c3 a6 6.♘b3!? e6 7.♙e3 ♘c6 8.g4  
b5 9.g5 b4! 10.♘a4 ♘d7 11.♚e2 ♙e7  
12.0-0-0 ♙b7 13.f4 Another sharp Najdorf  
encounter!

18...♞h2!? Bravely taking the pawn.

[18...♚b7!?]

19.♘f3 ♞h8 20.♘g5 ♘b6 21.♙b6 ♚b6+  
22.♙f3 b4 23.♘d5 ♙d5 24.ed5 a5 Black  
is advancing on the queenside, while no real  
White counterplay is in sight.

25.♞h1 ♞f8 26.♘e4 ♘e4 27.♙e4 ♙g5  
28.♞cg1 ♙f6 29.♞g3



29...♞c3!?

[29...a4!]

30.♞c3 bc3 31.b3 ♙e7 32.♚c4 ♞h8 33.  
a4 ♞h1 34.♙h1 ♙g5+ The endgame is  
completely winning for Black, as the white  
king is out of play.

35.♙a2 ♚b4 36.♙e4

[36.♚b4?? ab4 37.♙g2 ♙f6 38.♙e4  
♙e3+]

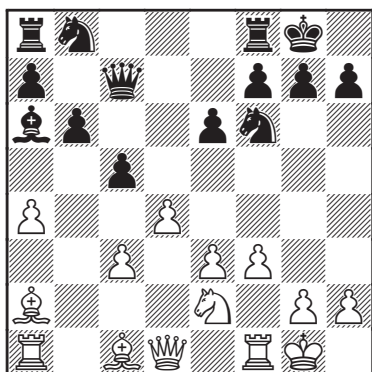
photo by Michal Walusza / FIDE



Marc'andria Maurizzi

13...♘a7?! Giri is trying to harass the white  
knight on the edge of the board.

[Objectively 13...♘a5 was a better choice.  
14.♙d2 (14.♞d4 ♘c6 15.♞d1=) 14...♘b3  
15.ab3 a5∞]



**13...♖c6** This is what one might call a "Nimzo-Indian dream" for Black.

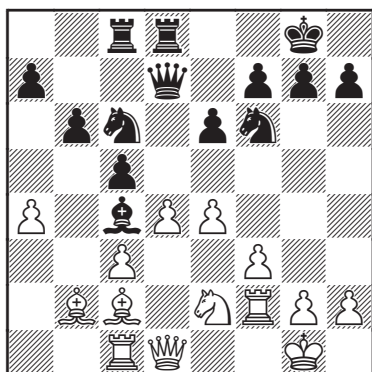
**14.♖f2 ♖fd8 15.♗b2 ♘a5 16.e4 ♗c4**

[16...♖d7]

**17.♗b1**

[17.♗c1 is probably better.]

**17...♖ac8 18.♗c2 ♘c6 19.♖c1 ♗d7**



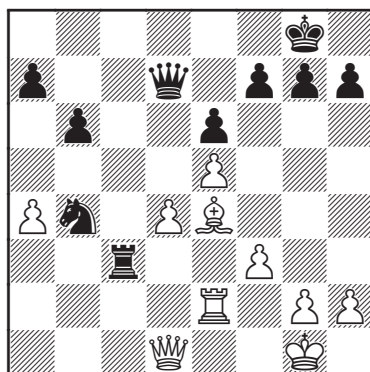
**20.e5?** A very radical decision strategically, but I believe White was afraid of losing the d4 pawn.

[20.♗e1 gives better defensive chances: 20...cd4 (20...♗e2 21.♖e2 cd4 22.♖d1) 21.♘d4 ♗e5 with some pressure for Black.]

**20...♘d5 21.♗d2 cd4 22.cd4 ♘cb4 23.♗b1 ♗e2 24.♖e2 ♖c1 25.♗c1 ♖c8**

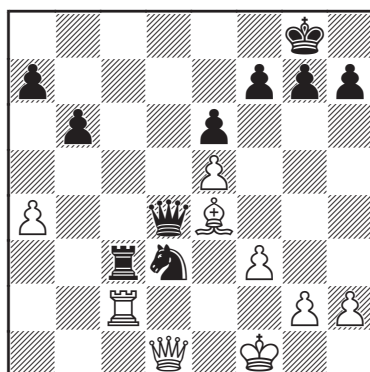
[25...♗a4 wins easily.]

**26.♗d1 ♘c3 27.♗c3 ♖c3 28.♗e4** This loses immediatley, but it was difficult to suggest anything.



**28...♘d3!** A deadly blow.

**29.♖c2 ♗d4 30.♗f1**



**30...g6??** After playing a virtually perfect game, Supi makes a mistake when trying to capitalize on his advantage. Good advice for readers who struggle to convert winning positions is to always choose the simplest continuation that leads to victory whenever possible.



Luis Paulo Supi

photo by: FIDE/Eteri Kublashvili



### World Cup 2025

The Chess World Cup 2025 unfolded in Goa, India, from 31 October to 27 November - a month of relentless tension, dazzling creativity, and heartbreaking collapses. With 206 players vying for glory, the tournament once again proved why it is one of the most unforgiving battlegrounds in modern chess.

At the end of this grueling knockout marathon, it was Javokhir Sindarov who stood alone. At just 19 years old, the Uzbek prodigy not only lifted the trophy but also rewrote history by becoming the youngest winner the event has ever seen. His triumph, achieved through resilience and nerve, was one of the defining stories of the chess year. Alongside him, Wei Yi and Andrey Esipenko completed the trio of qualifiers for the 2026 Candidates Tournament, securing their place among the world's elite.

### Format

The format of the World Cup remains as dramatic as ever - an eight-round knockout gauntlet where one slip can end a dream. The top 50 seeds received a bye into round two, but no player was truly safe. Even the semi-final losers had to regroup immediately for a tense third-place match, with a coveted Candidates spot hanging in the balance.

Matches were fought over two classical games, but when tensions rose - and they often did - the players returned for a decisive third day of tie-breaks. As the time controls accelerated, so did the pressure:

Classical: 90 minutes for 40 moves, then 30 minutes for the rest, with a 30-second increment from move one.

If tied 1 : 1: Two rapid games (15+10).

If tied 2 : 2: Two more rapids (10+10).

If tied 3 : 3: Two blitz games (5+3).

If tied 4 : 4: Two faster blitz games (3+2).

If tied 5 : 5: The final trial - an Armageddon duel.

White receives 4 minutes + 2 seconds.

Black bids for time; the lowest bid wins the Black pieces.

A draw gives Black the match.

In these Armageddon deciders, entire careers seemed to hang on single moments, single decisions, sometimes even single seconds.

### Goran Arsović

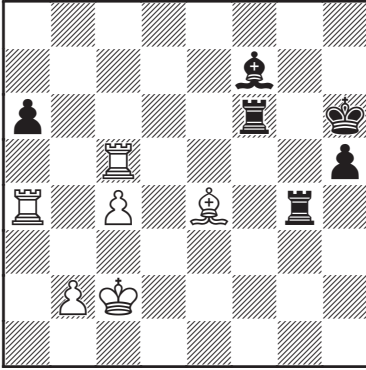
- **Country:** Serbia
- **Born:** 1967
- **Rating:** 2316
- **Peak rating:** 2540
- **Title:** International Master since 1997



**Samuel SHANKLAND 2654 -  
Fabiano CARUANA 2789**

USA (ch) 2025

Black was certainly trying to improve the position step by step, but it is here that White erred.



**39. ♖b7??**

[39. ♖d5 keeps White's position safe. 39... ♗g6 40. ♖c3 ♜g3 41. ♖d4 ♜d3 42. ♖e5 ♜f5 43. ♖d6=]

**39... ♗g6! 40. ♖d2**

[40. ♖c3 ♜g3! 41. ♖b4 (41. ♖d4 ♜d3 42. ♖e5 ♜f5+) 41... ♜b6+;

40. ♖c1 ♜f2+]

**40... ♜d4!** Now Black is able to restrict White's king to the edge of the board without giving him the option to use any pieces as shield.

**41. ♖e1 ♜e6 42. ♖f2 ♜d2 43. ♖g3 ♜d3 44. ♖f2 ♜b6!** Now Black threatens mate and



Carissa Yip

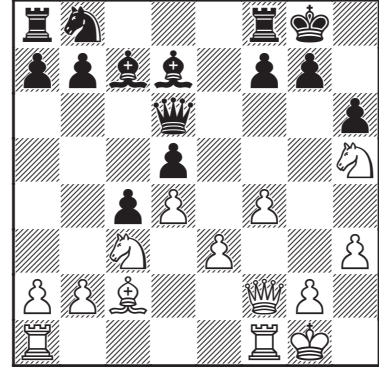
photo by: Saint Louis Chess Club

winning the bishop and there is nothing else White can do to survive.

**45. b4 ♜b7 46. ♜c6 ♜f7 47. ♖e2 ♜g3 48. ♜aa6 h4 0 : 1**

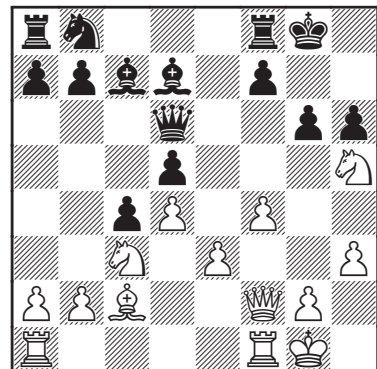
**Irina KRUSH 2388 - Alice LEE 2409**

USA (ch) 2025



Coming out of a QGD, Black feels the pressure on the king side, thought there is nothing concrete that White can do and blunders with

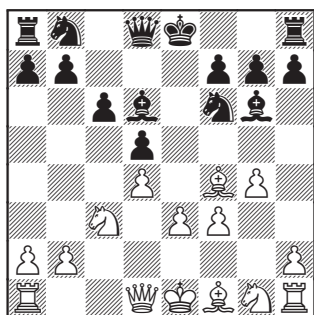
**18... ♗g6??** The idea is to push the knight away and follow through with f5 to keep the king side locked in. Unfortunately, for Black, in this position there is a powerful move that totally neglects the attacked knight and Irina finds it!



**19. e4!!+-**

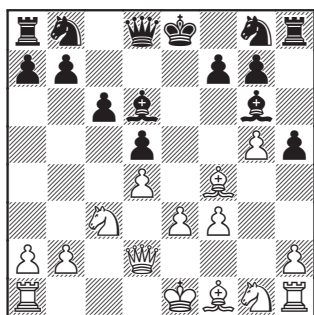
[Of course not 19. ♖g3 f5 20. ♖ge2 ♜a6 and Black is OK.]





9. ♖d2!? Remember. 9...h5 (9...0-0 10.h4 h5 11. ♘d6 ♖d6 12.g5±) 10.g5

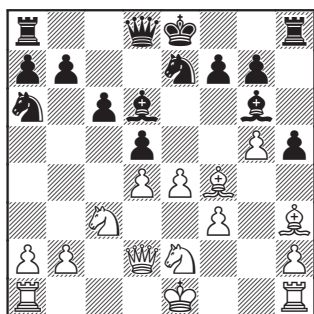
a) 10... ♖g8



11. ♘ge2! ♖e7 12.e4

a1) 12...0-0 13. ♘h3 c5 (13... ♖a6 14. ♘d6 ♖d6 15.e5 ♖b4 16.f4 ♘f5 17. ♘f5 ♖f5 18.0-0-0±) 14.dc5 ♘c5 15.0-0-0 ♖bc6 16. ♘d5 ♖d5 17. ♖d5±;

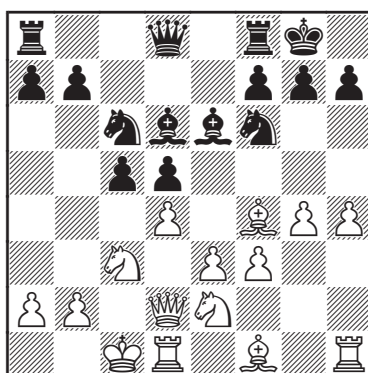
a2) 12... ♖a6 13. ♘h3±



b) 10... ♘f4 11.ef4 ♖g8 12.h4 ♖e7 13. ♘ge2±]

9. ♘ge2 0-0 (Igor Lysyj 2597 - Alexey Dreev 2606, Russia (blitz) 2022)

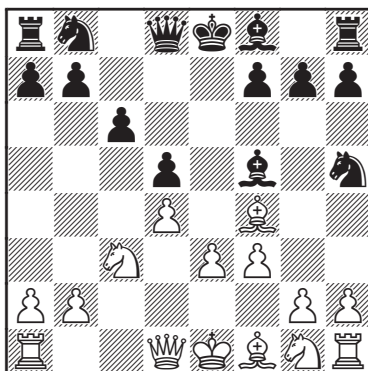
10. ♖d2 c5 11.0-0-0 ♖c6 12.h4±



White has good prospects for developing the initiative both on the kingside and in the centre. Black must constantly keep an eye on White's possibility of capturing on c5.

**D 35 7.f3!? ♖h5!**

1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3. ♖c3 ♖f6 4.cd5 ed5 5. ♘f4 c6 6.e3 ♘f5 7.f3!? ♖h5! This is probably the strongest response for Black, but it requires considerable knowledge and good preparation in the resulting non-standard position.



8. ♘b8

[8. ♘g3!? Also possible but not so strong. 8... ♖g3 9.hg3

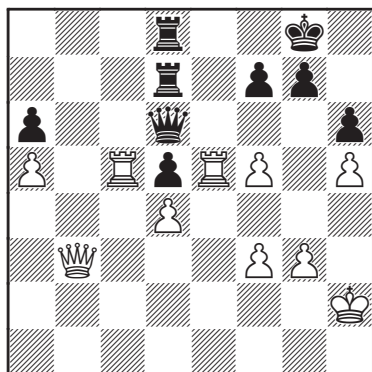


**Boris GELFAND 2680 -  
Vladimir KRAMNIK 2725**

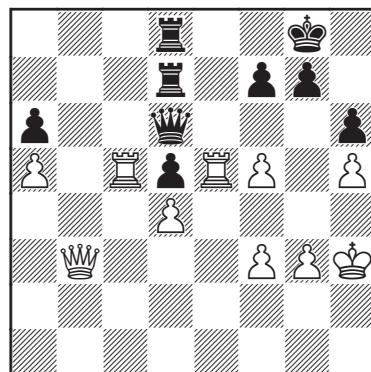
*Sanghi Nagar (m/6) 1994 – 61/72*

Gelfand's win over Kramnik was decided by the final game, after the two players had exchanged spectacular wins in games three and four and drawn all other games.

Gelfand was very close to winning game six, but ran into some wonderful adjournment analysis by Kramnik and his seconds.



**61.♔h3** Having moved his king back and forth for the past 15 moves, waiting for the chance to adjourn the game, this was the move which Gelfand placed into the sealed move envelope. As both players analysed with their seconds they began to realise just how hopeless Black's position was as White can target both the a pawn and the d pawn. Gelfand's team were not 100% sure of a win, but by the time Kramnik retired for the night at 3.00am he had decided that he would probably resign the game without play. However Kramnik's seconds, Joel Lautier and 20-year-old Oganess Danelian, kept analysing through the night. When they woke him at 11.00am - the seconds told Kramnik to continue play. They had found one trick, just one, which Gelfand might fall for...



**61...♞f6!**

[61...♔h7 fails to 62.♞b6 ♞b6 63.ab6 ♜b7 64.♜c7! ♜c7 65.bc7 ♜c8 66.♜e7 when White can eventually exchange the c7 pawn for the d5 and a6 pawns, winning easily.]

**62.♜cd5**

[Gelfand rejected 62.f4 on the grounds that 62...♜d6 63.♜cd5 ♜d5 64.♜d5 ♜d5 65.♞d5 would be very hard to convert,; but 62.♜ed5 was wrongly dismissed because of 62...♞g5 63.g4 ♞f4 However with the pre-

a) If 63...♜d5 64.♜d5 ♜d5 (64...♜f8 offers

## 2. GAMBITS - PAST AND PRESENT

C 58

**Jan-Krzysztof DUDA 2739 - Levon ARONIAN 2747**

*București 2025 – 164/129*

The word gambit comes from the Italian “gambetto” which means tripping someone with the leg to make him fall.

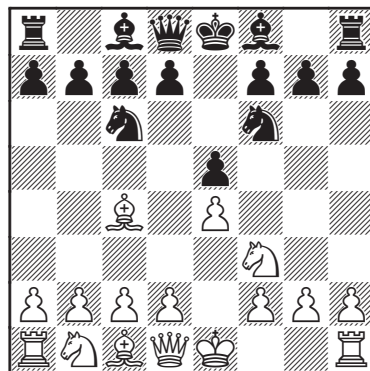
Might be seen in football as well, but in chess the meaning is that a side sacrifices some material (usually a pawn) in order to get some compensation or long-term initiative. The term has also become popular in economics or politics too. The idea of sacrificing material for the sake of some future gain was the engine that involved tactical play. By that time, it was premature to speak about the strategy in chess, rapid development followed by the mate attack was considered to be the path to follow.

Gambits were mostly played with the intention of:

- Gaining space or development advantage
- Getting the control of the centre of the board
- Destroying the enemy king’s shelter
- Attracting an opponent’s piece in order to capture or neutralize its action
- Opening lines or diagonals for our pieces

Nowadays gambits are widely played with both colours, by all kind players, bringing to the game passion, surprise, tension, and many other elements that chess has to offer. When it comes to rapid or blitz games the gambit can be a real weapon.

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♖f6**



**4.♘g5?!** A psychological moment at the very beginning of the game. White forces Black to enter in a gambit line of the Italian game. Was it a wise decision or not?

**4...d5 5.ed5 ♘a5 6.♙b5 c6 7.dc6 bc6 8.♗f3 ♙e7 9.♙d3 0–0**

**[9...h6 10.♘e4 ♘d5 11.♘g3 0–0**

**a) 12.♘c3 ♘b4 13.♘f5 ♙g5 (13...♘d3 14.♗d3 ♙c5 15.♗d8 ♖d8 16.g4±) 14.h4 ♘d3 15.cd3 ♙f5 16.♗f5 ♙h4 17.b3∞;**

**b) 12.♙f5 ♙g5 13.0–0 ♙b7 14.♘e4 g6 15.♘g5 hg5 16.♙e4 f5± Jonathan Tayar 2342 - Ni Hua 270, Edmonton 2009]**

**10.♘c3 h6 11.♘ge4 ♘d5 12.♘g3 ♘b4 13.♘f5 ♘d3 14.♗d3**

