

The Original Arkhangelsk

Take Control of the Ruy Lopez as Black

Tibor Karolyi

The Original Arkhangelsk – Take Control of the Ruy Lopez as Black

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ISBN 978-1-916839-36-6 (paperback); 978-1-916839-35-9 (hardback)

Table of Contents

Index of Games and Lines	4
Introduction to the Original Arkhangelsk	10
Typical themes.....	10
Key lines	15
 Chapter 1: Quick Opening Disasters for White	21
Chapter 2: Rare moves, 7.a4, 7.♔e2, 7.♘g5 and 7.d4.....	34
Chapter 3: 7.♘c3.....	66
Chapter 4: 7.c3	116
Chapter 5: 7.♖e1	163
Chapter 6: 7.d3	281
Epilogue.....	322

Index of Games and Lines

Chapter 1: Quick Opening Disasters for White

Game	Players	Year
1	Avgousti – Uzman	1970
2	Wolter – Arias Bouzada	1986
3	Baramidze – Kniest	2000
4	Young – Schulien	1989
5	Dutreeuw – Malaniuk	1991
6	Klein – Swinkels	2004
7	Balaz – Potapov	2011
8	Karjakin – Prakken	2001
9	Maltsevskaya – Boruchovsky	2020
10	Shovunov – Macieja	1996
11	Garcia Correa – Francisco	2025
12	Sieberg – Geller	1991
13	Nguyen – Huynh	2017
14	Vehi Bach – Braga	1991
15	Roberts – Kotsur	1992
16	Oberhofer – Schreiner	2018
17	Thevonez – Polaczek	1988
18	Carcamo – Pierrot	2014
19	Capallera – Mallol	2015
20	Blanchon – Pirrot	1997
21	Lupu – Adda	1990
22	Matkovic – Maier	2018
23	Korneev – Fedorchuk	2008
24	Brookes – Ris	2013
25	Cano Egea – Serra Canals	2012

Chapter 2: Rare moves, 7.a4, 7.♔e2, 7.♘g5 and 7.d4

Game	Players	Year	Line
26	Vitolins – Shirov	1987	7.♘d5, 7.a3, 7.a4
27	Kozlov – Kolesnik	2000	7.♔e2 ♘a5
28	Hunt – Emms	1996	7.♔e2 ♘c5
29	Adarsh – Fodor	2022	8.c3 d6 9.a4

30	Estrada Nieto – Petek	1994	8.c3 0-0 9.♖d1
31	Fournier – Pierquin	2005	7.♘g5 d5 8.exd5 ♘d4
32	Jones – Zenelaj	2023	9.♖e1 ♙d6
33	Lurie – Stefanova	2001	10.♘f3 0-0
34	Zhalmakhanov – Artemiev	2024	7.d4 ♘xd4
35	Rombaldoni – Lenic	2009	8.♘xd4 exd4
36	Rothebarth – Kaidanov	2014	9.e5 ♘e4 10.♚f3
37	Danielyan – Dagkli	2018	10.c3 ♘c5
38	Pavlidis – Jaracz	2009	10.c3 dxc3
39	Makarichev – Mikhalkhishin	1979	11.♚f3

Chapter 3: 7.♘c3

Game	Players	Year	Line
40	Galiana – Iruzubieta	2017	7.♘c3 ♙d6
41	Neubronner – Paciencia	2010	8.d3 ♘a5
42	Czarnota – Prosviriakov	2006	8.d3 h6
43	Panchanathan – Kavutskiy	2012	9.a4 b4 10.♘e2
44	Narva – Zhukova	2025	7.♘c3 ♙e7
45	Zanette – Concio	2021	8.♖e1 0-0 9.a4 ♘d4
46	Baklan – Ovsejevitsch	2009	8.d3 d6
47	Bailet – Jolly	2009	9.♘d5
48	Munguntuul – Zhukova	2024	9.a3 0-0 10.♙e3
49	Fedorchuk – Hamitevici	2015	10.♙a2
50	Abdusattorov – Adhiban	2018	10.♙g5
51	Nepomniachtchi – Carlsen	2021	10.♘e2
52	Sanchez – Gholami Orimi	2024	10.♙d2 ♚d7
53	Kelires – Mahitosh	2024	9.a3 ♚d7 10.♖e1 0-0 11.♙d2 ♖ae8
54	Hansen – Grischuk	2019	11.♙d2 ♘d8
55	Bellia – Lodici	2016	11.h3 ♖fe8
56	Ma Qun – Xiu Deshun	2024	11.h3 ♘d8
57	Anwesh – Pavasovic	2017	11.h3 ♖ae8
58	Pichot – Ali Marandi	2015	11.♘e2 d5
59	Yeletsky – Shaposhnikov	2019	11.♘e2 ♖fe8
60	Caruana – Carlsen	2015	11.♘e2 ♘d8
61	Edouard – Fedorchuk	2009	9.a4 ♘a5 10.axb5
62	Maciejka – Erdos	2018	10.♙a2 b4 11.♘d5

63	Estrada – Benitez	2021	11.♟e2 ♖b8
64	Kovalev – Chovan	2017	12.♞g3 0-0 13.♙d2 c5 14.c3
65	Topalov – Beliavsky	1999	14.♞f5
66	Gao Rui – Wen Yang	2009	12.♖e1 0-0 13.♙d2 c5 14.♞g3 ♙c8
67	Gaponenko – Kirchner	2018	12.♞g3 0-0 13.♖e1 c5 14.♞f5
68	Tal – Kuzmin	1985	14.♞d2
69	Tondivar – Kuzmin	1991	14.c3

Chapter 4: 7.c3

Game	Players	Year	Line
70	Drei – Thorfinnsson	2020	7.c3 ♞xe4
71	Kotenko – Nesterov	2022	8.d4 exd4 9.♖e1 d5
72	Sai – Robson	2019	10.♞g5 ♜d7
73	Smeets – Assaubayeva	2024	8.♖e1 d5 9.d3 ♞c5
74	Kamsky – Khoroshev	2024	8.♖e1 ♞c5
75	Dubov – Artemiev	2020	9.♙d5
76	Yang Zilong – Rasulov	2024	9.♞xe5 ♞xe5 10.♖xe5+ ♙e7
77	Jorgensen – Mikhalechishin	1991	10.♖xe5+ ♞e6
78	Kadav – Praggnanandhaa	2016	10.♖xe5+ ♞e6
79	Yu – Wen	2009	8.d4 ♞a5 9.♞xe5 ♞xb3 10.♜xb3 ♞d6
80	Ostrowska – Malaniuk	2008	11.♖e1 ♙e7
81	Mohanty – Sachdev	2006	11.c4 f6
82	Mortensen – Shirov	1991	9.♙c2 exd4 10.♜e2
83	Nemcova – Zvara	2011	10.♙xe4 ♙xe4 11.♖e1 d5 12.b4
84	Nagy – Ovsejevitch	2010	12.♞xd4
85	Acs – Beliavsky	1999	10.♖e1 d5
86	Timofeev – Onischuk	2006	11.♞xd4 ♙d6
87	Hovhannisyan – Kravtsov	2008	11.♞xd4 c5
88	Zinchenko – Sharma	2009	10.♞xd4 d5
89	Erdogdu – Kravtsov	2008	10.♞xd4 c5 11.♞f5 ♜f6
90	Mamedov – Belozerov	2005	11.♞f5 d5
91	Bernadskiy – Pavlov	2018	12.♞d2

Chapter 5: 7.♖e1

Game	Players	Year	Line
92	Niemann – Bartel	2022	7.♖e1 ♗c5
93	Manish Anto – Urazayev	2024	8.d3 0-0
94	Svidler – Carlsen	2006	Illustrative game
95	Garcia Martinez – Vinolas	2021	8.c3 0-0 9.d3
96	Agrest – Sachdev	2021	8.d3 h6 9.c3 0-0
97	Rogic – Kryvoruchko	2009	8.c3 d6 9.a4 0-0 10.h3 h6 11.d3 ♖e8
98	Berg – Lenic	2008	8.d3 d6 9.c3 h6 10.a4 ♗b6 11.♗bd2 ♗g4
99	Carlsen – Tkachiev	2008	10.♗bd2 0-0 11.♗f1 ♗e7 12.♗g3 ♗g6 13.h3 ♖e8 14.a4 ♗b6
100	Sjugirov – Carlsen	2020	15.♗f5
101	Ruiz – Bartel	2021	8.c3 d6 9.h3 ♗b6 10.d3 ♗e7
102	Firouzja – Rasulov	2024	9.d3 h6 10.♗bd2 0-0 11.♗f1 ♗b6 12.♗g3 ♗e7 13.h3 ♗g6 14.♗d2
103	Antipov – Mihajlov	2018	14.♗f5
104	Leventic – Atalik	2004	8.c3 0-0
105	Granda Zuniga – Stefanova	2004	9.d4 ♗b6
106	Kamsky – Stefanova	2013	10.♗e3 exd4 11.cxd4 ♗a5 12.d5
107	Anand – Ivanchuk	1997	12.♗g5
108	Saric – Quesada Perez	2020	10.♗g5 ♖e8
109	Gurel – Quesada Perez	2020	10.♗g5 h6 11.♗h4 ♖e8 12.d5
110	Svidler – Naumann	2025	12.h3 d6 13.♖d3
111	Yemelin – Morozevich	2004	13.d5
112	Medina – Mikhalchishin	1984	8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♗b6
113	Del Rio de Angelis – Beliavsky	2003	10.a3
114	Grigorian – Hoang	1994	10.d5
115	Klimkowski – Boruchovsky	2020	10.♗c2
116	Fritz – Agrest	2007	10.h3
117	Smeets – Svidler	2009	10.h3 0-0
118	Martin del Campo – Khanin	2023	10.h3 h6 11.♗e3 0-0
119	Huschenbeth – Lenic	2019	10.♗e3 h6
120	LCZero – Stockfish	2025	9.a4 h6 10.d4 ♗b6
121	Ostergaard – Moberg	1998	8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♗b6 10.♗e3 0-0
122	Rodriguez – Beliavsky	2003	10.♗e3 0-0 11.♗bd2 ♖b8
123	Fedoseev – Bartel	2015	11.♗bd2 exd4 12.cxd4 ♗b4
124	Erigaisi – Rasulov	2024	13.♖b1

125	Stefansson – Khalifman	2004	11.♘bd2 h6 12.h3 ♖e8 13.♗b1
126	Svidler – Caruana	2011	13.♙c2
127	Kamsky – Dvirnyy	2014	13.d5 ♘a5
128	Vachier-Lagrave – Bachmann	2015	13.d5 ♘e7 14.♙xb6 cxb6
129	Kamsky – Hrbek	2024	15.♘f1
130	Alekseenko – Grischuk	2018	15.a4
131	Leko – Wen	2015	15.♙c2
132	Wang Jue – Abdumalik	2017	8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♙b6 10.♙g5 0-0
133	Tari – Grischuk	2019	10.♙g5 h6 11.♙xf6 ♗xf6 12.♙d5 ♖b8 13.♙b5
134	Lam – Saeed	2017	13.♘bd2
135	Ernst – Furhoff	2006	11.♙h4 g5 12.♙g3 0-0
136	Dolmatov – Beliavsky	1990	13.♗d3
137	Garcia – Beliavsky	1990	13.dxe5
138	Dervishi – Sakelsek	2008	13.h3
139	Shabalov – Pasalic	2007	10.a4 0-0
140	Arenas Vanegas – Bachmann	2014	11.axb5
141	Mrdja – Beliavsky	1998	11.♘a3
142	Fedoseev – Vachier-Lagrave	2021	11.h3 ♖e8
143	Guliyev – Le,Quang Liem	2024	11.h3 h6
144	Gupta – Petrosyan	2021	11.♙g5 h6 12.axb5
145	Della Morte – Paveto	2020	12.♙h4 g5
146	Ponkratov – Predke	2021	13.♘xg5
147	Davidson – Kaidanov	2014	13.♙g3 exd4
148	Lastin – Tomashevsky	2008	13.♙g3 ♖e8

Chapter 6: 7.d3

Game	Players	Year	Line
149	Nijboer – Tukmakov	1991	7.d3 ♙d6
150	Soltanici – Bartel	2015	8.a3 h6
151	Rombaldoni – Jovanic	2012	8.a3 0-0
152	Klima – Pavlov	2016	8.a4 h6
153	Radjabov – Johannessen	2012	8.a4 h6 9.c3
154	Brodsky – Zvara	1993	8.c3 h6
155	Peussner – Mikhachishin	1990	8.c3 0-0
156	Brodsky – Potapov	2003	9.♘bd2 h6 10.a3 ♖e8
157	Bezgodov – Potapov	1993	10.d4 ♖e8

158	Pavlovic – Mozetic	1994	9.♖e1 h6 10.♘bd2 ♖e8
159	Zherebukh – Bartel	2009	11.♘f1 ♙f8
160	Djukic – Blagojevic	2021	12.d4
161	Necromant – Everest	2006	12.♘e3
162	Zivkovic – Potapov	2020	12.♘g3 d5
163	Kramnik – Anand	2003	12.♘g3 d6
164	Kobalia – Hansen	2010	13.a4
165	Agrest – Lenic	2018	12.♘g3 ♘a5 13.♙c2 d5
166	Zichanowicz – Bartel	2011	13.♙c2 c5

Introduction

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♙b3 ♙b7

When you choose an opening as Black, the first question to ask is: what are you really aiming for?

Some players simply want equality — to neutralise White's initiative and reach a level position. That's a perfectly sound goal, but openings that are designed purely to equalise rarely offer much room to play for a win. On the other hand, if you crave dynamic chances and an unbalanced fight, you'll usually have to accept a certain degree of risk. The key, as always in chess, lies in finding the right balance.

That's where the Original Arkhangelsk Variation comes in. It offers a rare blend of safety and ambition. The resulting positions are lively, often sharp, and full of creative possibilities — yet they rest on solid positional foundations. What's more, if White wants to press for an edge, he can't avoid theory; sidestepping into quiet sidelines will only make your life easier as Black.

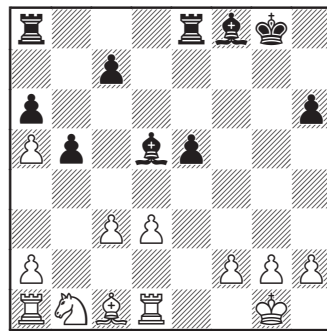
In this book, we explore a full opening repertoire for Black starting from the position after 6...♙b7. Whenever possible, I present both an adventurous option and a more reliable one, so you can choose your approach depending on your style and your opponent. My goal isn't just to give you moves — it's to help you understand why they work, to deepen your strategic insight into each line, and to equip you to make your own informed decisions over the board.

The beauty of this variation lies in its flexibility. At times, Black can unleash direct attacks against the White king; at others, play becomes quietly strategic, reminiscent of the Breyer Variation. The positions are often rich in piece activity and fluid manoeuvring, with a unique pawn structure that encourages both creativity and precision.

Typical themes

(a1)

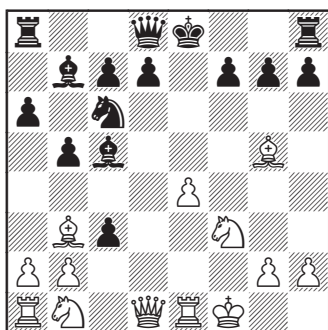
Here is a unique position in respect of pawns and piece-play, taken from analysis in game 30:



After 19...♙ad8! Black faces no direct threat in a position with no queens on the board; and although he could end up three pawns down in the resulting position he has sufficient play for the pawns. How? The reasons are that the white central pawns are vulnerable, White has doubled a-pawns, and he is poorly developed, while Black has the bishop pair.

(a2)

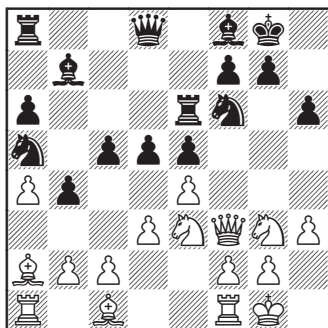
In the following position, taken from game 2, Black threatens to promote to a new queen. Moreover, the pawn can promote in just two moves. How rare is it to promote to a queen as Black in the opening? And it is even rarer doing so as early as move 14!



12...cxb2!

(a3)

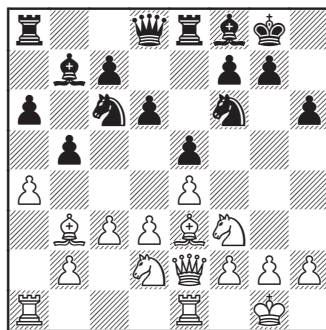
Black can sacrifice a pawn on b3 under various conditions. Doing so can render the bishop on b7 powerful, or, sometimes, the a2-bishop passive.



17...b3! and a large advantage for Black. See the analysis in game 43.

(a4)

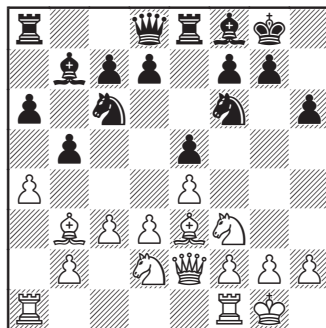
Black can use the c6-knight in many ways. This makes the variation so interesting. Let me show you a position where it moves to e7 aiming to get to g6.



13...♞e7 (analysis in game 28). The knight will stand superbly on g6, where it defends e5 while vacating the long diagonal for the b7-bishop. This way, Black may carry out the d5 break. It also enables a black knight to show up on f4, either after ♞h5 or without it.

(a5)

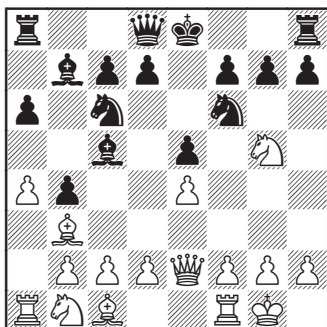
The c6-knight regularly moves to a5 as well. Here is an example when Black can place the knight on a5 to prepare advancing the c and/or d-pawns two squares (one move earlier in game 28 analysis).



One can also play this move if the b3 bishop is unable to escape from being exchanged.

(a6)

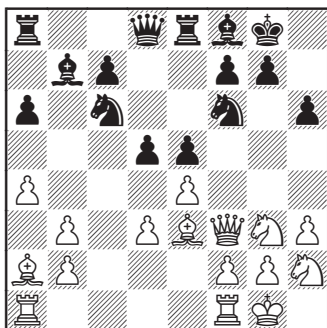
The c6-knight may move to d4, too (another line in the same game 28):



9...Nxd4 and game over! This knight move sometimes also solves Black's problems by exchanging the f3-knight, though in this diagram it is exchanged for the b3-bishop

(a7)

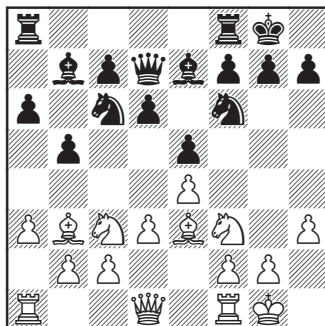
The c6-knight can jump to b4 as well. Here is an example from analysis in game 43.



17...Nb4. The knight somewhat paralyses White's queenside.

(a8)

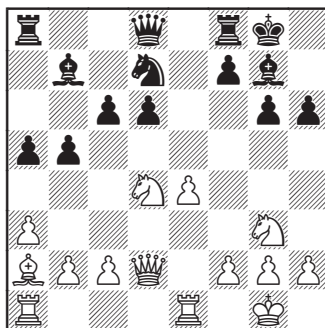
The c6-knight also has a surprising square to move to (game 48):



11...Nd8! The knight heads for the e6-square, after which Black's pieces will have a strong grip on the centre.

(a9)

Sometimes the knight gets a nice outpost on e5.



20...Ne5 Black has a slight edge because of the strong e5-knight and bishop pair (analysis in game 151).

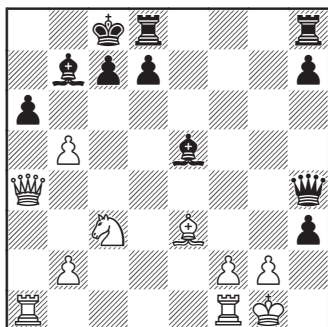
But these are only the possibilities of the c6 knight. The f6 knight can also move to many different squares in the opening. It may take a white piece on d5, move Nd7, Nh7, Ng4 or Ne8, and often takes the e4 pawn.

This natural developing move surprisingly loses.

14... ♖h4!

Black attacks the white king; White has no defence.

15.dxe5 ♙xe5 16.h3 0-0-0 17.♙e3 g5 18.a4 g4 19.axb5 gxh3 20.♚a4



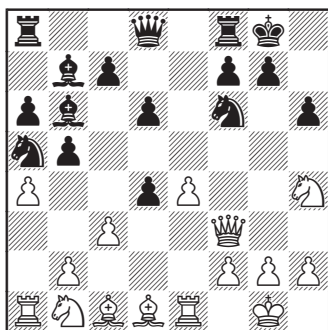
20... ♖hg8! 0-1 What a beautiful queen sacrifice!

(4)

Young, Ronald – Schulien, Charles

World Open, Philadelphia (10), 1989

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♙b3 ♙b7 7.♖e1 ♙c5 8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♙b6 10.a4 h6 11.♘h4 0-0 12.♚f3 ♘a5 13.♙d1 exd4



14.♘f5??

White wants to attack despite having five pieces on the back rank. Moving the knight here is fatal.

14... ♘e4!

This move not only takes a key pawn from White but improves the black bishops drastically.

15.♚g4

15.♖xe4 ♙xe4 16.♚xe4 ♖e8 would win for Black.

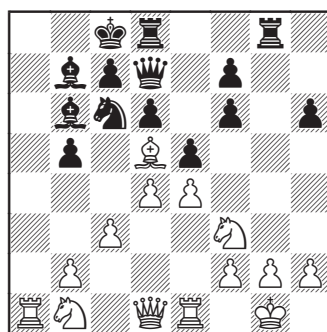
15... ♚f6! 16.♘xh6+ ♙h8 17.♘f5 ♖ae8 18.♙c2 d3 19.♙xd3 ♙xf2+ 20.♙h1 ♙xe1 21.♚h5+ ♙g8 0-1

(5)

Dutreeuw, Marc – Malaniuk, Vladimir

Forli (6), 1991

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♙b3 ♙b7 7.♖e1 ♙c5 8.c3 d6 9.d4 ♙b6 10.♙g5 h6 11.♙h4 ♚d7 12.a4 0-0-0 13.axb5 axb5 14.♙xf6 gxf6 15.♙d5 ♖hg8



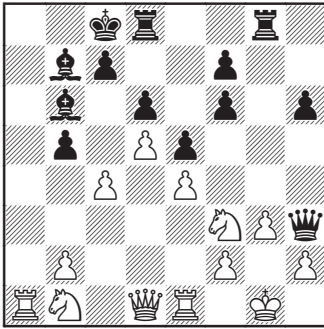
16.♙xc6?

Giving up the bishop is a big mistake. Interestingly, this does not free the b7-bishop, but does free the b6-bishop.

16... ♙xc6 17.d5 ♙b7 18.c4

18.♙h1 ♚g4 19.g3 f5 would win for Black.

18... ♚h3 19.g3

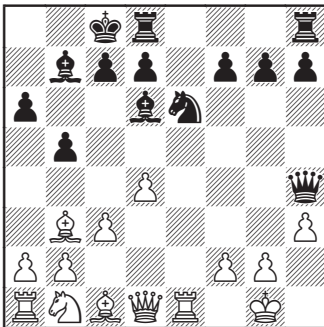


19...Rxc3+! 20.hxc3 Rg8! 0–1

(6)

Klein, Felix – Swinkels, Robin
Boeblingen (6), 2004

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6
4.Ba4 Qf6 5.O-O b5 6.Bb3 Bb7 7.c3
Nxe4 8.Re1 Nc5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5
10.Qxe5+ Ne6 11.d4 Bd6 12.Qe1
Qh4 13.h3 0-0-0



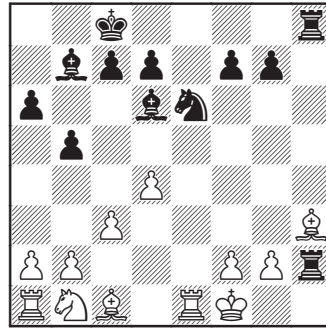
14.Qg4??

Exchanging queens loses, as Black will be able to use the h-file to attack.

14...Qxg4 15.hxg4 h5! 16.Bd1

On 16.g5 h4 would be the answer for Black.

16...hxg4 17.Bxg4 Rh2 18.Bh3
18.f3 Bg3 would win for Black.
18...Rh8 19.Qf1



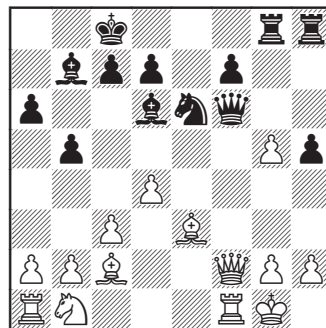
19...R8xh3! 20.gxh3 Bf3 0–1

(7)

Balaz, Rene – Potapov, Alexander
Czech Team Championship, rapid,
Pardubice (1), 2011

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bb5 a6 4.Bc4
Qf6 5.O-O b5 6.Bb3 Bb7 7.c3 Nxe4
8.Qe2 Nc5 9.Nxe5 Nxe5 10.Qxe5+
Ne6 11.d4 Bd6 12.Qh5 Qf6 13.f4 g6
14.Qh6 Qf5 15.Bd1 0-0-0 16.Qh4 h5
17.Qf2 Rdg8 18.Bc2 Qf6 19.Be3??
g5! 20.fxg5

20.f5 Nf4 would win the g2–pawn for Black.



20...Nc5!! 0–1

Another brilliant queen sacrifice from Black!

Out of the blue, Black is winning.

23. ♖xf4

This is virtually resignation. On 23. ♖e3 ♖xd2 24. ♖xd2 ♔g7 the g5-rook would be in trouble. Or 23. ♖ad1 ♖ae8 24. ♖e3 ♖h3+ wins.

23... ♖xf4 24.d6+ ♖f7 25. ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 26. ♖xe1 ♖xg5 27. ♖f3 ♖xf3 0-1

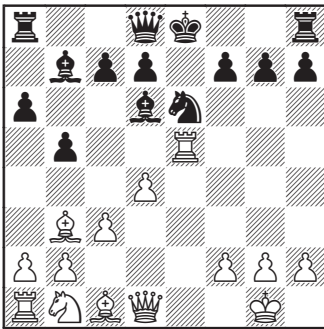
(78)

Kadav, Omkar –

Praggnanandhaa, Rameshbabu

Mumbai Open (2), 2016

1.e4 e5 2. ♖f3 ♖c6 3. ♖b5 a6 4. ♖a4 ♖f6 5. 0-0 b5 6. ♖b3 ♖b7 7.c3 ♖xe4 8. ♖e1 ♖c5 9. ♖xe5 ♖xe5 10. ♖xe5+ ♖e6 11.d4 ♖d6



12. ♖e1

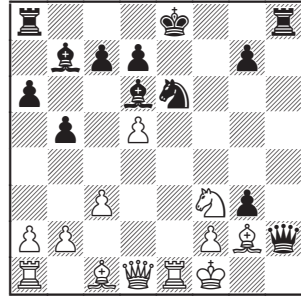
White returns his rook to the first rank. This line is harmless for Black.

12... 0-0

12... ♖h4. Bringing the black queen to challenge the white king is testing.

a) On 13.g3? ♖h3 14.d5 h5 15. ♖c2 (15. ♖f3 h4 (15... 0-0-0 16. ♖c2 g6 17. ♖e4 ♖c5 18. ♖g2 ♖xg2+ 19. ♖xg2 after which Black had a clear advantage in Tejaswini, S-Tomilova, E,

Caleta, 2020.) 16. ♖d2 hxc3 17. hxc3 f5 18. ♖g2 0-0-0 19. ♖f3 occurred in Kosteniuk, A-Riazantsev, A, Moscow, 2005, in which after 19... ♖h5 20. ♖e5 g5 Black should have won.) 15... h4 16. ♖e4 hxc3 17. hxc3 f5 18. ♖g2 ♖h2+ 19. ♖f1 f4 20. ♖d2 fxg3 21. ♖f3



21... ♖h5 and Black's attack was winning in Kodric, M-Pavasovic, D, Rogla, 2002.

b) 13.h3! White must defend the h2-pawn this way.

b1) 13... 0-0 14. ♖g4. White settles for a somewhat worse position. 14... ♖xg4 15. hxc4 ♖ae8 16. ♖xe6 (On 16. ♖f1 ♖f4 17. ♖xe8 ♖xe8 18. ♖xf4 ♖xf4 19. ♖a3 White was able to live with the small disadvantage in Ivanov, A-Orlov, V, St. Petersburg, 2006.) 16... ♖xe6 17. ♖xe6 fxe6 18. ♖e3 e5 19. ♖d2 exd4 20. ♖xd4, after which Black had an edge in Ruiz Jimenez, F-Iruzubieta Villaluenga, J, Burgos, 2003.

b2) On 13... 0-0-0 14.d5 ♖f4 (If 14... ♖g5 15. ♖xg5 ♖xg5 16. ♖d2 ♖f4 17. ♖f3 ♖de8 Black's position was preferable in the game Spitzl, V-Barski, R, Neustadt an der Weinstrasse, 2018.) 15.g3 ♖xh3+ 16. ♖g2 ♖f6 17. ♖e3 ♖g5 18. ♖d2 ♖f5 Black is better.

13.♘d2

The move 13.♚d3? surprisingly loses. Following 13...♚h4 14.g3 ♚h3 15.♚f1 as occurred in Kroneder,H-Junker,R, Buechenbach, 2001, Black wins with 15...♚f5.

13...♚h4 14.♘f1 ♚ae8

Black brings his last piece into play.

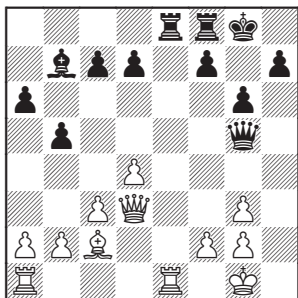
15.♘g3?!

The knight move accelerates Black's attack.

a) 15.♚d3?? ♘c5! 16.♙xf7+ (16.dxc5 ♙xh2+ 17.♘xh2 ♚xe1+ 18.♘f1 ♚fe8 and Black wins.) 16...♙h8 17.♚d2 ♚xe1 18.♚xe1 ♘e4 19.g3 ♚f6 20.♙b3 ♘xf2 21.d5 ♚f3 0–1 occurred in Gazic,J-Nogly,C, Hamburg, 1992.

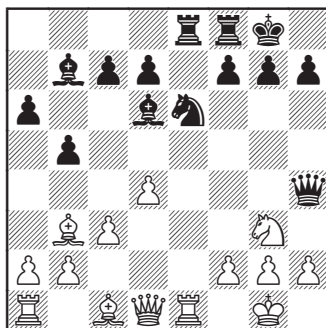
b) 15.♙e3 ♘f4 16.♙xf4 (The move 16.d5 keeps the balance.) 16...♚xf4 17.♚d2 ♚g4 18.♘g3 g6 19.♚xe8 ♚xe8 20.♚e1 and Black has an edge in Plaskan,J-Lenic,L, Ljubljana, 2006.

c) 15.♙c2 ♘g5 16.♙xg5 (16.♚e3 g6 17.♙d2 f5) 16...♚xg5 17.♘g3 g6 18.♚d3 ♙xg3 19.hxg3? (If 19.fxg3 ♚xe1+ 20.♚xe1 ♚d5 21.♚d2 ♚xa2 22.♙b1 ♚c4 White's advantage is small.)



19...♚d5! 20.f3 ♚xe1+ 21.♚xe1 ♚xa2 and Black won a pawn in the game Yapici,A-Lenic,L, Konya, 2011.

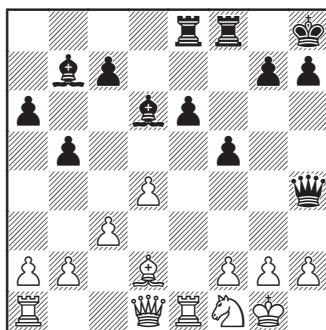
d) 15.a4 b4 16.♙e3 (16.a5 f5 17.♙d2 f4 18.f3 is also playable.) 16...f5 (If 16...♘f4 17.♙xf4 ♚xf4 18.♚d3 White could hold, as demonstrated in the game Padmini,R-Sachdev,T, Al Ain, 2015) 17.f3 ♙h8 occurred in Nomin Erdene,D-Nyamtuuya, Ulaanbaatar, 2010, in which after 18.d5 White has a small advantage.

**15...f5! 16.♙d2 ♙h8**

After 16...f4 17.♚h5 ♚xh5 18.♘h5 a5 Black has some advantage.

17.♙xe6?

After 17.d5 ♘c5 18.♚xe8 ♚xe8 19.♙c2 Black's advantage is small.

17...dxe6 18.♘f1**18...e5**

After 18...f4! 19.f3 e5! 20.dxe5 ♙c5+ 21.♙h1 ♚f2! Black is winning.

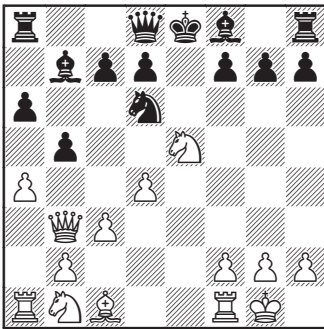
19.dxe5 ♖xe5 20.f3 ♗d6 21.♖xe8
 ♖xe8 22.♗e1 ♗c5+ 23.♔h1 ♖c4
 24.♗g3 ♗b6 25.♔d7 ♖e6 26.♖xe6
 ♖xe6 27.♖e1 ♖xe1 28.♗xe1 ♔g8
 29.♗d2 ♗d5 30.a3 ♗c5 31.♗f4 c6
 32.♗e3 ♗e6 33.♗c2 a5 34.b4 axb4
 35.axb4 ♗e7 36.♗e3 g6 37.♗c5 ♗g5
 38.♗e3 ♗f6 39.♗d4 ♗d8 40.f4 ♗d5
 41.♔g1 ♔f7 42.♔f2 h6 43.♗e3 ♗e4
 44.♗e5 ♗b6 45.g3 g5 46.fxg5 hxg5
 47.♔e2 ♔e6 48.♗b8 ♗d8 49.♗f1 ♗f6
 50.♔d2 ♗g7 51.h4 gxh4 52.gxh4 ♗h6+
 53.♔e2 f4 54.♗d2 ♗d5 55.♗f3 ♔f5
 56.♗d4+ ♔g4 57.♔f2 ♗g7 58.♗e2 f3
 59.♗d4 ♗f6 60.♗g3 ♗e4 61.h5 ♗g5
 62.♗e6 ♗d2 63.♗e5 ♔f5 0–1

(79)

Yu, Yangyi – Wen Yang

Zonal Tournament, Beijing (5), 2009

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6
 4.♗a4 ♗f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♗b3 ♗b7
 7.c3 ♗xe4 8.d4 ♗a5 9.♗xe5 ♗xb3
 10.♖xb3 ♗d6 11.a4

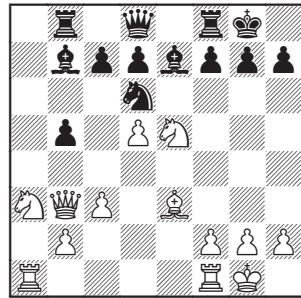


White looks to create a weakness on b5.

11...♗e7 12.♗a3 0-0 13.♖e1

White improves the f1–rook, whereas developing the c1–bishop is not dangerous for Black.

a) 13.♗e3 ♖b8 (If 13...♗f5!? 14.axb5 axb5 15.♗xb5 d6 16.♗d3 ♗e4 17.♗f4 ♖xa1 18.♖xa1 c6 19.♗a3 d5 Black has nice play for the pawn.) 14.axb5 axb5 (14...♗xb5 15.♗xb5 d6 16.♗d3 ½-½ occurred in Talla,V-Ovsejevitch,S, Legnica, 2006, in which after 16...♗e4 the position would be equal.) 15.d5



15...♗c4 16.♗axc4 ♗xd5 17.♖d1 ♗xc4 18.♗xd7 ♗xf1 19.♔xf1 ♖a8 ½-½ occurred in Hait,A-Belozerov,A, Moscow, 1996.

b) 13.♗f4 ♖b8 (If 13...♗g5 14.♗g3 h5 15.h3 ♗f5 16.axb5 axb5 Black has a slight advantage.)

b1) 14.axb5 axb5 15.♗c2 ♗f5 16.f3 d6 17.♗g4 occurred in Galkin,A-Belozerov,A, Tomsk, 1997, in which after 17...♗h4 18.♗ge3 ♗g6 19.♗g3 h5 Black would have an edge.

b2) 14.♖fe1 ♗g5 15.♗g3 ♗f5 16.axb5 d6 17.♗d3 axb5 18.d5 h5 19.f4 ♗h4 20.♗xh4 ♗xh4 led to a balanced position in Nijboer,F-Van de Oudeweetering,A, Netherlands, 2000.

13...♖b8

Black has a pleasant middlegame after 13...♗g5 14.g3 ♗xc1 15.♖axc1 ♖b8 as well.

14.axb5 axb5 15.♗c2

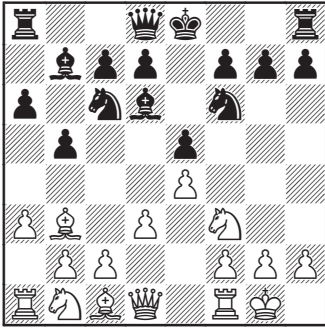
(150)

Soltanici,Ruslan – Bartel,Mateusz

European Championship,

Jerusalem (2), 2015

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6
 4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♙b3 ♙b7 7.d3
 ♙d6 8.a3



White makes room for the bishop; this makes it hard for Black to play ♘a5 and c5 under reasonable circumstances.

8...h6

Black stops the c1–bishop from moving to g5.

9.♘c3 0-0 10.♘e2

White transfers the knight to the kingside. However, he has several alternative moves.

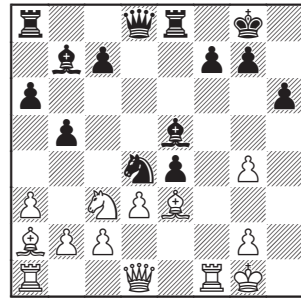
a) On 10.♘d5 ♘a5 the players agreed to a draw in the game Bakhmatsky,V-Pavlov,S, Mukachevo, 2018, while Wegener,O-Mikhailchishin,A, Dortmund, 2000, agreed to a draw after 10...♘xd5.

b) 10.♙e1 ♘d4 equalises. (The move 10...♙e8 can be played as well.) Play could continue 11.♙a2 c5 12.♘d2 ♙c7 13.♘d5 ♘xd5 14.♙xd5 ♙xd5 15.exd5 d6.

c) 10.h3 ♙e8 (After 10...♘e7

Black could transfer the knight to g6. Following 11.♘xe5 ♙xe5 12.d4 ♘xe4 13.♘xe4 ♙h2+ 14.♙xh2 ♙xe4 15.c3 ♙d5 16.♙c2 f5 White's bishop pair doesn't work well, so Black can be happy.) 11.♙e3 ♙f8

c1) 12.♘h2 ♘d4 13.♙a2 d5 14.f4 occurred in Bologan,V-Potapov,A, Moscow, 1998, which Black could have sharpened up with 14...♙d6 15.♘g4 ♘xg4 16.hxg4 dxe4 17.fxe5 ♙xe5



18.♙xf7+. It's a nice idea to allow this move. After 18...♙h7 19.♘xe4 ♙h4 20.♙f4 ♙xe4 21.dxe4 ♘c6 Black would have enough play for the pawn.

c2) 12.♙d2 d6 (If 12...♘b8 13.a4 as occurred in Jasny,S-Potapov,A, Pardubice, 2008, Black could have played 13...d5 14.♘xd5 ♘xd5 15.♙xd5 ♙xd5 16.exd5 ♙xd5 and equality.) 13.♘d5 ♘h5 (Or 13...♘xd5 14.♙xd5 ♙d7 15.a4 ♙ab8 and White's advantage is symbolic and will evaporate easily.) 14.♘h2 occurred in Zeberski,J-Bartel,M, Wroclaw, 2022. Black equalised with 14...♘d4, but after 14.g4 ♘f6 White has some advantage.

c3) 12.♙a2!? This somewhat mysterious move prepares ♘h2 to stop ♘d4 coming with a tempo.

c3.1) 12...b4 13.axb4 (If 13.♘d5! White has some advantage.) 13...♗xb4 14.♕b3 d5 15.exd5 ♘bxd5 16.♗xd5 ♗xd5 17.♗d2= occurred in Milliet,S-Flear,G, Saint Affrique, 2012. Black could have maintained equality with 17...a5 18.♗e4 ♕c6 19.♕c4 ♗b6.

c3.2) 12...d6

c3.2.1) 13.♗h2 occurred in Ismagambetov,A-Moradiabadi,E, Tabriz, 2014. Black could have equalised with 13...♕c8 14.f4 exf4 15.♕xf4 ♕e6 16.♕xe6 ♖xe6

c3.2.2) On 13.♗h2 ♗e7 14.g4 d5 15.♗xe5 c5 16.f4 ♖c7 17.♖e2 White has an edge.

d) 10.♕a2

d1) 10...♖e8 11.h3 ♗d4 12.♗xd4 exd4 13.♗e2

d1.1) On 13...c5 14.f4 ♕f8 15.b4 (If 15.♗g3 ♖b6 16.♕d2 ♖ac8 17.♗h2 c4 Black's position is acceptable.) 15...d6 16.♗g3 a5 and the position is equal.

d1.2) On 13...♕c5 14.c3 (If 14.♕f4 d5 15.e5 ♗d7 16.c3 dxc3 17.bxc3 ♕b6 18.d4 f6 Black's position is a bit worse.) 14...dxc3 15.bxc3 ♕b6 16.♕f4 c5 17.♗g3 ♕c7 18.♕xc7 ♖xc7 19.f4 c4 20.♗f5?! (If 20.e5 ♗d5 21.♗f5 ♖b6+ and Black does fine.) 20...d6 and Black obtained an advantage in Lanka,Z-Navrotescu,C, Calimanesti, 1992.

d2) 10...♕c5 11.♕e3 d6 12.♗h4 (If 12.♕xc5 dxc5 13.a4 b4 14.♗d5 Black has a small advantage after either 14...♕c8 or 14...♗xd5 15.♕xd5 ♖f6.) 12...♗d4 13.♕xd4?! (13.♗g6 ♖e8 14.f4 ♕b6) 13...exd4 14.♗e2 d5 15.exd5 ♗xd5 and Black had a small advantage in Luther,T-Kasimdzhanov,R, Mainz, 2003.

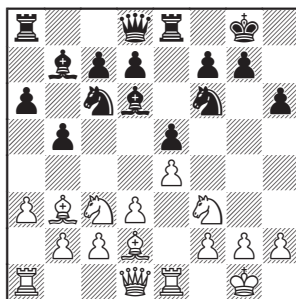
e) 10.♕d2 ♖e8

e1) On 11.♗e2 ♕f8 12.c4 White stopped d5 in the game Becerra,J-

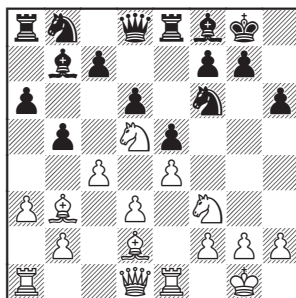
Cuartas,J, Antioquia, 2016. Now Black could equalise with the move 12...d6.

e2) On 11.♗d5 ♗xd5 (White has a small plus after 11...♖b8 12.g3 ♕f8 13.♖e1 d6 14.c4 or 11...♕f8 12.h3) 12.♕xd5 ♖b8 13.h3 (If 13.g3 ♕f8 14.♕a2 d6 15.♗h4 ♕c8 16.♗g2 ♕e6 17.♕xe6 ♖xe6 18.♗e3 White has a small advantage.) 13...♖f6 14.♗h2 ♗d4 15.♕xb7 and they agreed to a draw here in the game Riff,J-Flear,G, Saint Affrique, 2012. (If 15.♕a2 ♖g6 Black's position is acceptable.)

e3) 11.♖e1



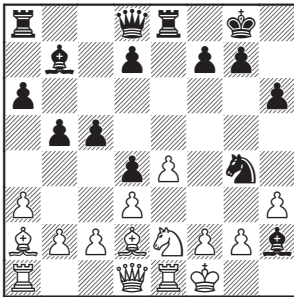
e3.1) 11...♕f8 12.♗d5 d6 13.c4 ♗b8?! (If 13...♗d7 14.a4 bxc4 15.♕xc4 ♗e7 16.♗xe7+ ♖xe7 17.♕c3 ♖ab8 White has a small advantage.)



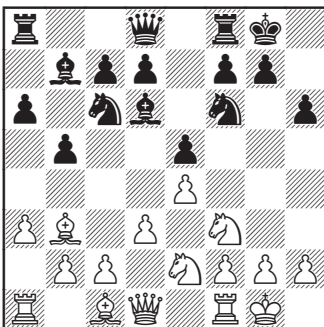
14.♕a5! A nice positional move. Following 14...♗xd5 15.cxd5 ♖d7

16.♙a2 ♘e7? 17.d4 White was winning in Naiditsch,A-Stefanova,A, Wijk aan Zee, 2004, but after 16...c5 17.b4 or 16...c6 17.♚c1 White has only some advantage.

e3.2) The move 11...♘d4! eases Black's position, by looking for control over the d5-square. After 12.♙a2 c5 13.♘xd4 exd4 (If 13...cxd4 14.♘e2 ♚c8 the position would be fine as well.) 14.♘e2 ♘g4 15.h3? (If 15.♘g3 ♚h4 16.h3 ♘xf2 17.♙xf7+ ♚xf7 18.♚f3+ ♚f6! the position is equal, but if 18...♘g8? 19.♘f5 White would have an advantage.) 15...♙h2+ 16.♚f1



16...♘xf2! 17.♚xf2 ♚f6+ 18.♙f4 ♙xf4 19.♘xf4 ♚xf4+ and the opening ended with Black gaining an extra pawn for nothing in the game Villanueva,M-Francisco,R, Chess.com, 2017.



10...♚e8

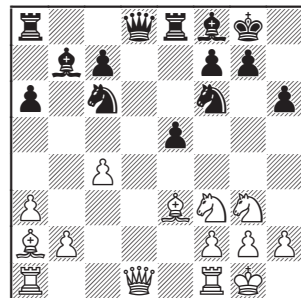
Black plays for d5.

11.♘g3 ♙f8 12.♚e1

a) 12.c3 ♘a5 13.♙c2 ½-½ occurred in Milov,L-Pap,M, Bayerisch Eisenstein, 2017. Black could play either 13...c5 or 13...d5, leading to a nice middlegame.

b) 12.♙d2 d5 13.exd5 ♘xd5 14.♚e1 ♘d4 (14...♚d7 is simple and strong enough to equalise; 14...♘f6 is equally possible) 15.♘xd4 exd4 16.♚xe8 (16.♚f3!? ♚d7 17.♘h5 could put more pressure on Black.) 16...♚xe8 17.♚f3 occurred in Bojkovic,N-Yildiz Kadioglu,B, Warsaw, 2013, and Black could have equalised with 17...♚d7.

c) 12.♙a2 d5 13.exd5 ♘xd5 14.c4?! and Black had some advantage following 14...bxc4 (14...♘f4 was also good) 15.dxc4?! ♘f6 16.♙e3



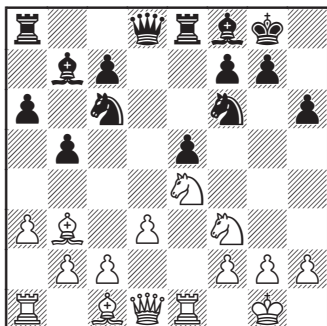
as occurred in Kovalenko,I-Krustkalns,K, Riga 2013. Now, Black would have been better after 16...e4!

12...d5 13.exd5

13.♙d2 is a harmless move. 13...dxe4 14.dxe4 ♘d4 (The move 14...♚d6 is also nice for Black.) 15.♘xd4 exd4 (The move 15...♚xd4 is also fine.) 16.e5 ♘d5 17.♚g4 c5 18.♘h5 occurred in Tan,J-Ramesh,R, Canberra, 2015, and following 18...♚e6 the position is equal.

13...♖xd5 14.♗e4 ♗f6?!

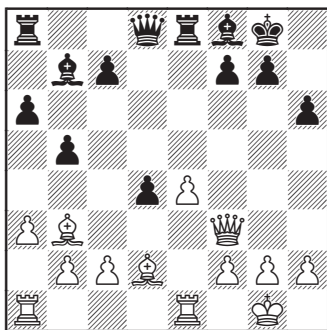
After 14...♗d4! 15.♖a2 c5 16.c3 ♗f5 Black's position would be preferable.



15.♖d2?!

Soltanici missed a fantastic move. On 15.♖g5!! ♖e7 16.♖xf6 ♖xf6 17.♖e2 ♖e7 18.♖ad1 ♖d7 19.c3 Black's position requires precise play.

15...♗xe4 16.dxe4 ♗d4 17.♗xd4 exd4 18.♖f3



18...♖d7

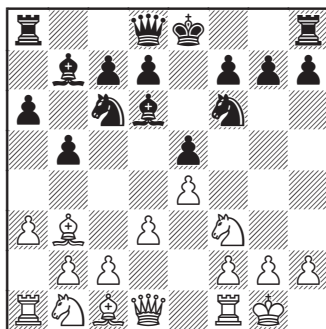
Black's position is somewhat preferable.

19.♖ad1 c5 20.♖d5 ♖e5 21.♖f4 ♖xd5 22.exd5 ♖xd5 23.♖g3 a5 24.c3 ♖a6 25.♖d3 ♖g6 26.♖g3 ♖c6 27.cxd4 c4 28.♖e2 ♖e6 29.♖g4 ♖xg2 30.♖xe6 fxe6 31.♖e1 ♖d5 32.♖f4 c3 33.b4 axb4 34.axb4 ♖xb4 35.♖xh6 ♖f8 36.♖a1 c2 37.♖c1 ♖c3 0-1

(151)

Rombaldoni, Axel – Jovanic, Ognjen
Trieste Open (5), 2012

1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♖b5 a6 4.♖a4 ♗f6 5.0-0 b5 6.♖b3 ♖b7 7.d3 ♖d6 8.a3



8...0-0

In this line Black can go without advancing the h-pawn.

9.♖g5

Pining the knight makes it harder to carry out d5.

9.c4

a) On 9...bxc4 10.♖xc4 ♗e7 11.♗g5 (If 11.♗c3 ♗g6 12.♖e3 White has no advantage.) 11...♖b8 12.♗c3 ♗g6 13.b4 ♖e7 (If 13...h6 14.♗f3 c6 15.♖c2 ♖c7 Black's position is pleasant.) 14.♗e2 h6 15.♗h3

