The Modernized Colle-Zukertort Attack

Second Revisited and Extended Edition

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ISBN: 9789083429090
D/2024/31732/22

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

E-mail: info@thinkerspublishing.com
Website: www.thinkerspublishing.com

First edition 2019 by Thinkers Publishing.
Second edition 2024 by Thinkers Publishing.
This book is printed on environmentally friendly paper.

The Modernized Colle-Zukertort Attack

Second Revisited and Extended Edition

Milos Pavlovic

Thinkers Publishing 2024

Key to Symbols

!	a good move
?	a weak move
!!	an excellent move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
□	only move
N	novelty
⟳	lead in development
⊙	zugzwang
=	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
+	check
#	mate

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Introduction

I have returned to my book from a few years ago, to an opening that at the time was a rare guest among books as a topic – and not only among books, but also in tournament practice. In the intervening years it has become very popular to use this old and somewhat forgotten method of playing and I have found lots of interesting new games.

This time though I have focused mainly on Colle-Zukertort type positions, plus some transpositions to Queen's Indian-type play, so this is not a repertoire book like the previous one, but rather you can look at it as an opening book. Of course, Slav reactions with …c6 are covered as well, and also early and quick …c5 and …g6 reactions.

Due to increased popularity, I have dived into specifics which we can consider now as a renaissance of this old line.

Another important thing, and it is indeed an especially important detail, is the organization of material into logical sections, because this system is often transpositional. Therefore, it is important to do this because reading this book should be an easy and joyful experience.

There are positions in this book that have stood the test of time, but I have also focused on the most recent ideas as I didn't want to simply repeat the same ideas as before – I wanted to include as much as possible new plans. I also tested these ideas numerous times in my own practice.

So, what you have here is a completely redesigned and modernized system compared to only a few years ago, when this system was virtually forgotten.

One very important thing to have in mind is that chapters 1 to 4 start with the following move order so that readers can more easily assimilate follow-up material:

1. d4 d5 2. ♘f3 ♘f6 3. e3 e6 4. ♗d3 From here you will find a further branch in the following chapters.

Milos Pavlovic, September 2024

Part I

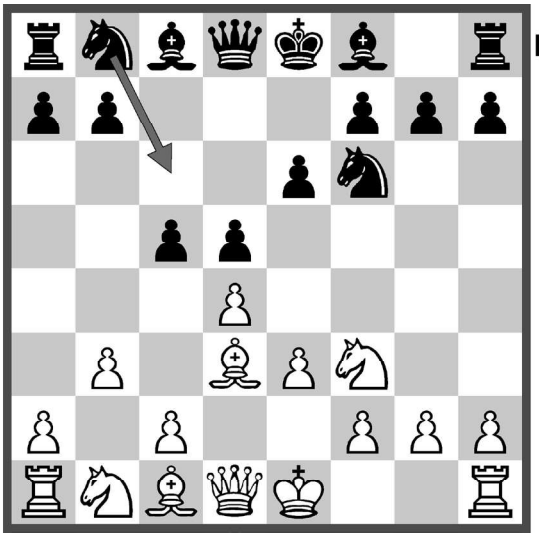
The Zukertort Attack - White plays b3

1

5.b3 ♘c6

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.e3 e6

4.♗d3 c5 5.b3



Chapter Guide

Chapter 1 – 5.b3 ♘c6

1.d4 d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.e3 e6 4.♗d3 c5 5.b3

a) 5...-- 11

b) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗e7 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 a6 13

c) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗e7 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 b6 15

d) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗e7 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 ♘b4 9.♗e2 b6 10.a3 ♘c6 11.♗d3 ♗b7 12.♕e2 ♖c8 13.♖ad1 19

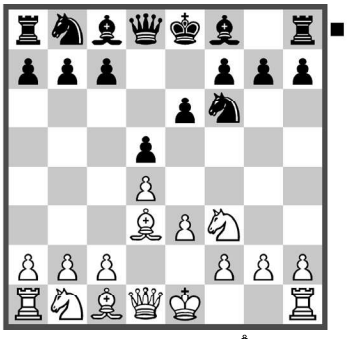
e) 5...♗d6 6.0-0 0-0 7.♗b2 ♘c6 8.♘bd2 ♘b4 9.♗e2 b6 10.a3 ♘c6 11.♗d3 ♗b7 12.♕e2 ♖c8 13.♘e5 23

f) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗d6 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 -- 25

g) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗d6 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 ♕e7 28

a) 5...--

1. d4 d5 2. ♘f3 ♘f6 3. e3 e6 4. ♗d3



Position after: 4. ♗d3

It is important to realize that this is a starting position in the first four chapters so that readers can easily identify positions. Due to many transpositions, it is important somehow to deliver a book that is readable and easy to understand.

4... c5

Chapters 1 and 2 are about exactly this position where Black play a quick ...c5 and then decides where to place the b8-knight. Chapter 1 is about having it on c6 while chapter 2 is about lines where the knight is on d7.

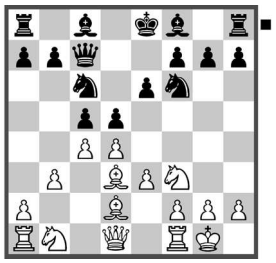
5. b3

In Chapter 4, I analyse 5. 0-0 which allows Black to advance further with 5...c4, pushing the bishop away from the active d3-square. Of course, we will focus on the original move order here because we also have to cover some other aspects that I will present in this file. 5.c3 is the Colle system and will be discussed in Chapter 4.

5... cxd4

Before coming to the real subject of this subchapter, we will have a short look at an early alternative.

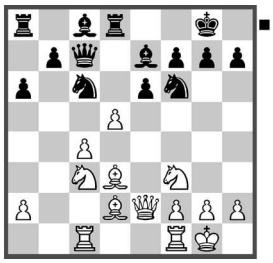
5... ♕a5+ 6. ♗d2 ♕c7 7. 0-0 ♘c6 8. c4!



Position after: 8. c4!

I can't be completely sure that this is a novelty with millions of games played today, but it is surely a strong idea. The point is, as we will see later in other files where Black tries early queen moves, the main reaction is always c4! hitting the centre.

A) 8... dxc4 9. bxc4 ♗e7 10. ♘c3 cxd4 [10... 0-0 11. d5⇑] 11. exd4 0-0 12. ♕e2 ♖d8 13. ♖ac1 a6 14. d5!

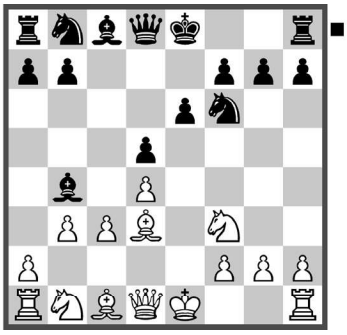


Position after: 14. d5!

14... exd5 15. ♘xd5 ♘xd5 16. cxd5 ♖xd5 17. ♕e4 ♖xd3 18. ♕xd3 ♗e6 19. ♕e4 White is better. We can see from these examples that Black has problems organising his play exactly due to their early queen play.

B) 8... cxd4 9. exd4 ♗e7 10. ♘c3 0-0 11. c5 b6 12. b4! White has the initiative.

6. exd4 ♗b4+ 7. c3

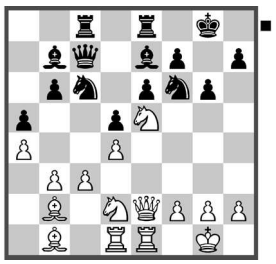


Position after: 7. c3

7... ♗d6

The idea was to provoke c3: Black hopes that that this will give him a clear target and also the bishop on b2 will be far less capable in this case. Black can also retreat to e7 as well:

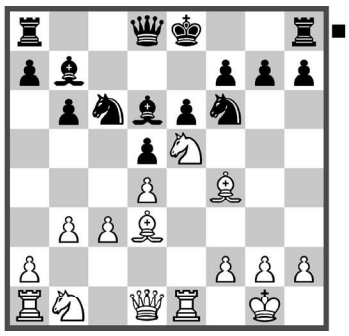
7... ♗e7 8. 0-0 0-0 9. ♘bd2 b6 10. ♕e2 a5 11. a4 ♗a6 12. ♗b5 ♗b7 13. ♗b2 ♘c6 14. ♖fe1 ♖c8 15. ♖ad1 ♕c7 16. ♗d3 ♖fe8 17. ♗b1 g6 18. ♘e5



Position after: 18. ♘e5

18... ♗f8 19. f4 ♗g7 20. ♕f2 ♘e7 21. g4 ♘c6 22. ♕h4 Typical attacking play in such positions. Still, it is far from clear and the game itself is a good model for both sides. ½-½ (37) Lobron, E (2585) – Adams, M (2685) Dortmund 1996.

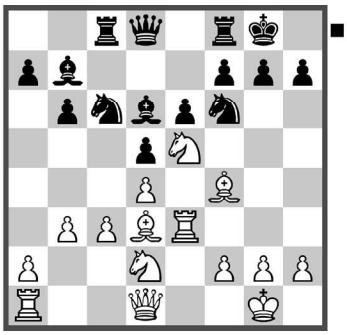
8. 0-0 ♘c6 9. ♖e1 b6 10. ♘e5 ♗b7 11. ♗f4!?



Position after: 11. ♗f4!?

An interesting concept – suddenly we are in a London system!

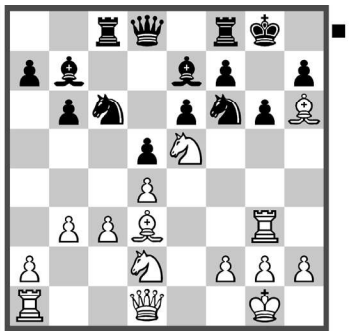
11... 0-0 12. ♘d2 ♖c8 13. ♖e3!



Position after: 13. ♖e3!

It is very important to recognise this manoeuvre. We have seen it in a few other examples here.

13... ♗e7 14. ♖g3 g6 15. ♗h6



Position after: 15. ♗h6

15... ♘xe5

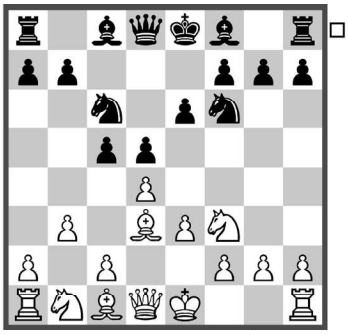
15... ♖e8 16. ♗b5 ♘d7 17. ♘df3 White has an initiative.

16. dxe5 ♘e4 17. ♗xe4 dxe4 18. ♗xf8 ♗xf8 19. ♘c4

White achieved better play. 1-0 (42) Lemos, D (2474) – Akobian, V (2643) Caleta ENG 2019.

b) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗e7 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 a6

1. d4 d5 2. ♘f3 ♘f6 3. e3 e6 4. ♗d3 c5 5. b3 ♘c6



Position after: 5... ♘c6

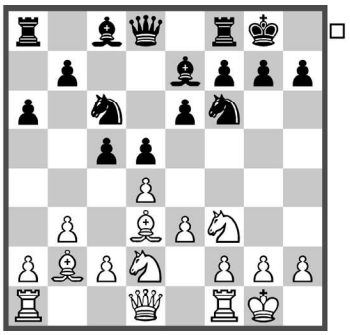
This chapter is about having a knight on c6 as I already mentioned but it is OK to repeat it because the positions are really very fluid and transpositional.

6. 0-0 ♗e7

We will now examine positions with a bishop on e7 but there are also bishop on d6 ideas and we will see them in future sub-chapters. Of course, needless to say there are differences between them: while the bishop on e7 is solid

and allows Black to take a knight on e5 at once, with a bishop on d6 play proceeds rather differently.

7. ♗b2 0-0 8. ♘bd2 a6



Position after: 8... a6

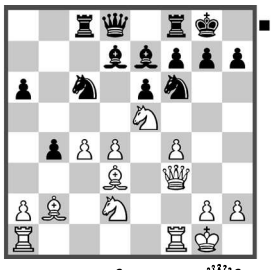
The idea is to generate a quick ...b5. For 8...♘b4 see the next sub-chapter.

9. ♘e5

A typical reaction here.

9... ♕c7

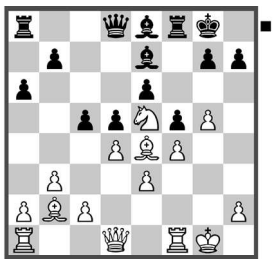
A) 9... ♗d7 10. f4 b5 11. c3 b4 12. c4 cxd4 13. exd4 dxc4 14. bxc4 ♖c8 15. ♕f3



Position after: 15. ♕f3

15... g6 16. ♖ad1 ♖e8 17. ♕h3 White has a clear advantage and clear play on the kingside. 1-0 (21) Sokolovsky, Y (2442) – Zimmermann, U (2280) chess.com INT 2023.

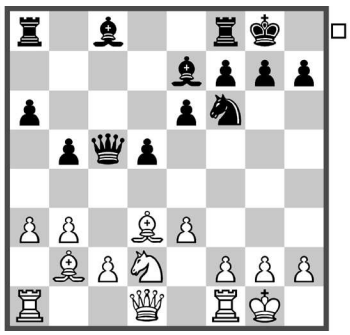
B) 9... ♘d7 10. f4 f5 11. g4 ♘f6 12. g5 ♘e4 13. ♘df3 ♗d7 14. ♘xc6 ♗xc6 15. ♘e5 ♗e8 16. ♗xe4



Position after: 16. ♗xe4

16... fxe4 17. dxc5 ♗xc5 18. ♗d4 ♗d6 19. ♕g4 with some edge for White but the position is far from simple as Black has the bishop pair. ½-½ (42) Rotstein, A (2515) – Cioara, A (2430) Porto San Giorgio 2007.

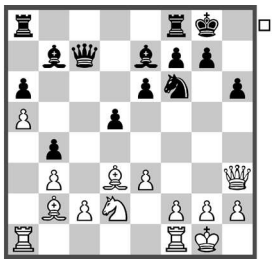
10. a3 b5 11. ♘xc6 ♕xc6 12. dxc5 ♕xc5



Position after: 12... ♕xc5

13. ♕e2!

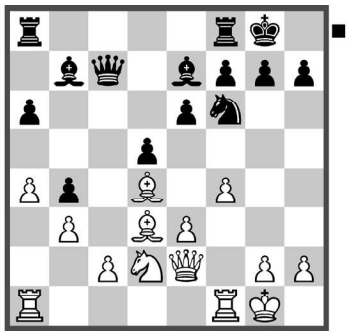
13. ♕f3 ♗b7 14. ♕h3 h6 15. a4 b4 16. a5 ♕c7



Position after: 16... ♕c7

17. ♘f3 [17. f4! ♘e4 18. ♘xe4 dxe4 19. ♗c4 ♗d5 20. ♗xd5 exd5 21. ♕g4 g6 22. f5 White has easier play.] 17... ♘d7 18. ♕g4 ♘f6 Black is fine here. 0-1 (33) Andreikin, D (2729) – Tari, A (2660) chess. com INT 2022.

13... ♗b7 14. a4 b4 15. ♗d4 ♕c7 16. f4!



Position after: 16. f4!

16... a5

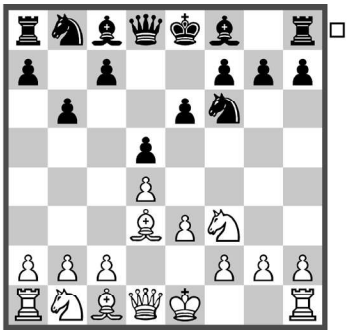
16... ♘e4 17. ♕h5 h6 [17... ♖ad8 18. ♖f3!↑] 18. ♘xe4 dxe4 19. ♕g4 g6 20. ♗c4 Again White has attacking play. These are good examples of how White should continue his plan, keeping his bishops active.

17. ♖f3 ♘e4 18. ♖h3

White has achieved a very strong attack.

c) 5...♘c6 6.0-0 ♗e7 7.♗b2 0-0 8.♘bd2 b6

1. d4 d5 2. ♘f3 ♘f6 3. e3 e6 4. ♗d3 b6

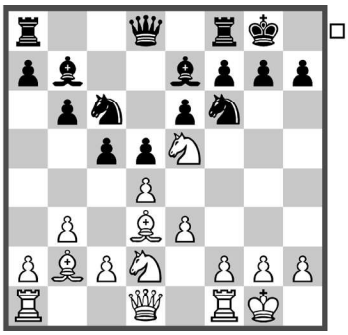


Position after: 4... b6

5. 0-0 ♗b7 6. b3 ♗e7 7. ♗b2 0-0 8. ♘bd2 c5 9. ♘e5 ♘c6

This is a critical position in this line: White is trying to organize his attacking play with f4 next, opening the possibility of a rook transfer to h3 via f3. Black on the other hand is counting on counter-play along the c-file and, of course, using the e4-outpost.

9... ♘bd7 transposes to Chapter 2.

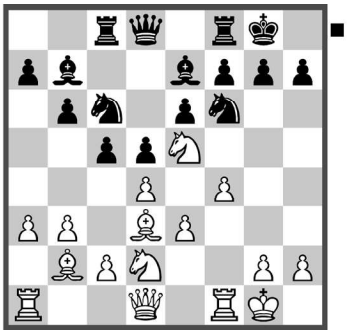


Position after: 9... ♘c6

10. f4 ♘b4

10... ♖c8 11. a3 leads to the same position.

11. ♗e2 ♖c8 12. a3 ♘c6 13. ♗d3



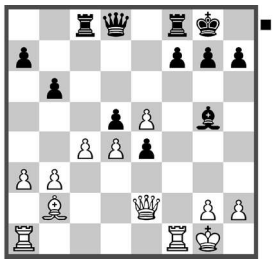
Position after: 13. ♗d3

This is an important line because Black's play so far is optimal, so we have to see how to conduct a game from here.

13... a6

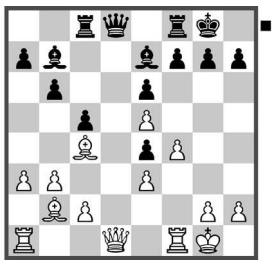
Black's main idea.

A) 13... ♘xe5 14. dxe5 This time, because Black didn't first take on d4, it is better to take back with the d4-pawn... [14. fxe5 ♘e4 15. ♘xe4 dxe4 16. ♗c4 ♗g5 17. ♕e2 cxd4 18. exd4 ♗d5 19. ♗xd5 exd5 20. c4



Position after: 20. c4

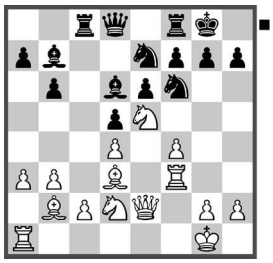
20...f5! Gives Black more than adequate play. 1-0 (45) Li, R (2541) – Sadovsky, A (2276) chess.com INT 2023] 14... ♘e4 15. ♘xe4 dxe4 16. ♗c4



Position after: 16. ♗c4

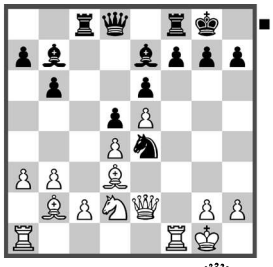
A typical reaction: the bishop is very strong on c4, and Black will go for trade-offs to minimize White's pressure. 16... ♕xd1 17. ♖axd1 ♖fd8 18. a4 h5 19. g3 g6 20. ♔f2 a6 21. ♔e2 ♔f8 22. h4 ♔e8 23. ♖xd8+ ♔xd8 24. ♖d1+ This is equal. ½-½ (34) Schleime, F (1749) – Buckels, V (2210) Goch 2014.

B) 13... cxd4 14. exd4 ♘xe5 The modern reaction. [14... ♗d6 15. ♕e2 ♘e7 16. ♖f3



Position after: 16. ♖f3

16... ♕c7 17. ♖h3 ♘g6 18. ♖f1 ♗xe5 19. fxe5 ♘e4 20. ♕h5 h6 21. ♗c1 White has clear attacking play. 1-0 (57) Yang Kaiqi (2481) – Bian, E (1485) chess.com INT 2021] 15. fxe5!? ♘e4 16. ♕e2

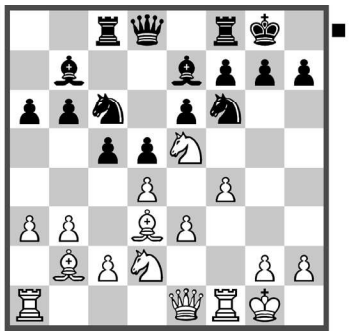


Position after: 16. ♕e2

B1) 16... ♘c3 An engine suggestion but it is far from a solution... 17. ♕f3 ♕c7 18. ♖ae1 g6 [or 18... ♗g5 19. ♕h5 h6 20. ♗xc3! ♕xc3 21. ♘f3 ♗e7 22. g4! with attack.] 19. ♕g4! The idea is to transfer a knight to f3, and the bishop will go to c1.

B2) 16... ♘xd2 17. ♕xd2 ♗g5 18. ♕e2 g6 19. ♖f3 This is a big advantage for White. 1-0 (21) Sarkar, J (2380) – Hartikainen, J (2149) chess.com INT 2020.

14. ♕e1!?N



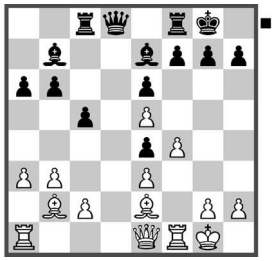
Position after: 14. ♕e1!?N

This seems to be a new idea: it is important to place the queen on the right diagonal and in my opinion, this is the correct square.

14... b5

The main continuation here; Black follows his plan, but there is an important alternative:

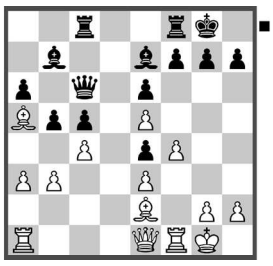
14... ♘xe5 15. dxe5 ♘e4 16. ♘xe4 dxe4 17. ♗e2



Position after: 17. ♗e2

This is a very interesting position; who has the better bishops? Black deprived White of having a bishop on c4 but as

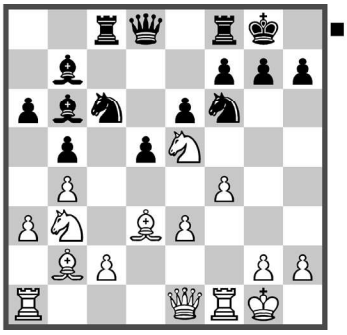
we will see this is not the only idea for White here. 17... b5 [17... c4!? 18. b4 a5 19. ♗d4 ♗d5 20. c3 b5 21. ♗d1 ♖a8 22. ♗c2 ♕d7 23. g4⩲] 18. ♗c3!! Without a queen on e1 such a move would be more or less pointless, but here it is a very good idea to keep in mind. 18... ♕c7 19. ♗a5 ♕c6 20. c4



Position after: 20. c4

20... ♗d8 [20... bxc4 21. ♗xc4⩲; 20... f6 21. exf6 ♗xf6 22. ♖d1⩲] 21. ♖d1 ♗xa5 22. ♕xa5 bxc4 23. ♗xc4 ♕c7 24. ♕xc7 ♖xc7 25. f5 White is better.

15. dxc5 ♗xc5 16. b4 ♗b6 17. ♘b3!

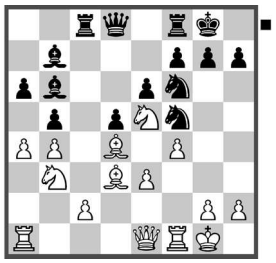


Position after: 17. ♘b3!

This is clearly a good idea; the queen is very good on e1.

17... ♘xe5

17... ♘e7 18. ♗d4 ♘f5 19. a4!



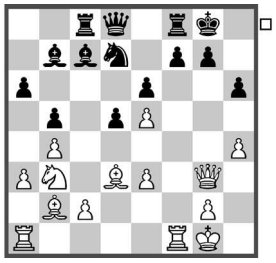
Position after: 19. a4!

White plays on the queenside now. 19... ♗c6 [19... ♗xd4 20. exd4 ♘e4 21. ♘c5 ♕e7 22. c3⩲] 20. c3!⩲

18. ♗xe5

Taking with the bishop is a good choice.

Recapturing with the pawn is also possible: 18. fxe5 ♘d7 Aiming at the e5-pawn is in my opinion the best idea here. 19. ♕g3 h6 20. h4 ♗c7!



Position after: 20... ♗c7!

21. ♗d4 f5 22. a4 ♗c6 The position is not that clear, but it is White who has somewhat easier play.