

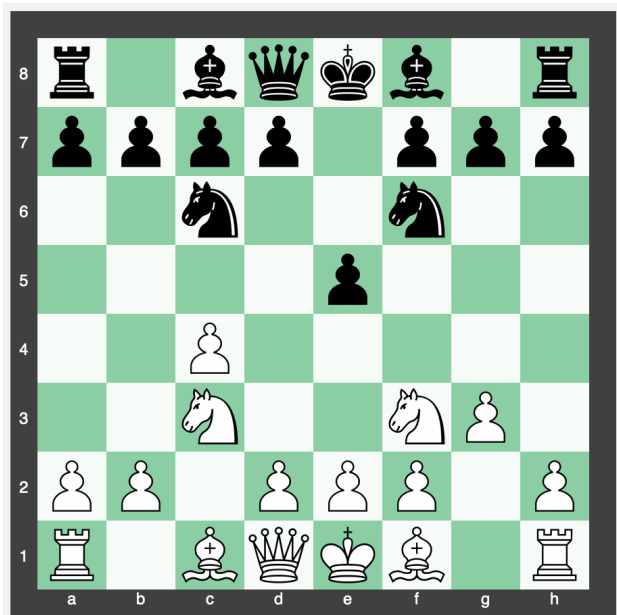
Day 2 of the 58th Ballarat Begonia Open Chess Tournament demanded three games of the competitors.

Round 3

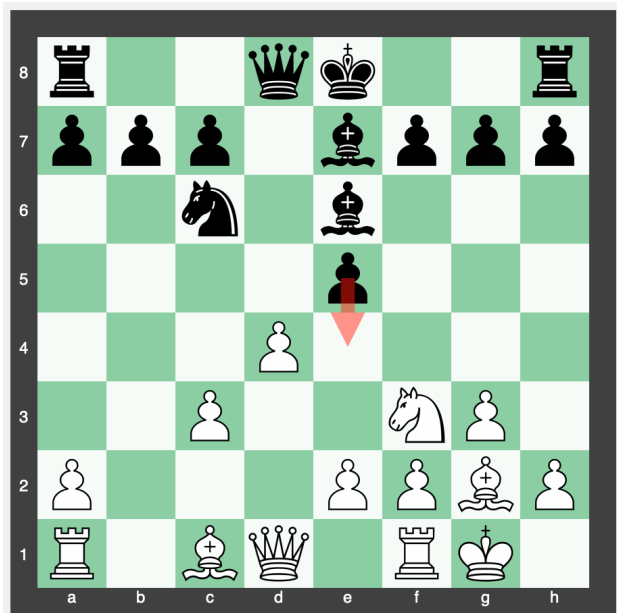
Board 1

Top seed Gawain Jones (White) was untroubled against Nicholas Ilic, outplaying the latter in the Opening, tying up Black's pieces and inducing resignation by move 23.

Jones played an English Opening Four Knights Fianchetto,



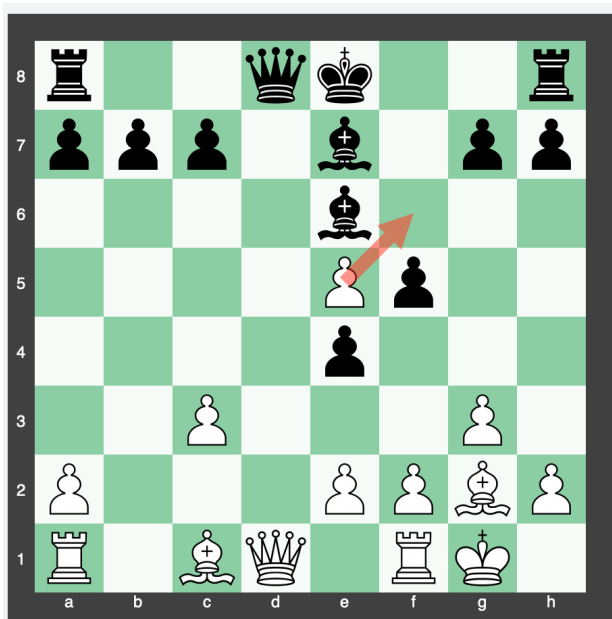
arriving, after 9... e4, at the same position as Kasparov-Korchnoi, Immopar Rapid, Paris, 1990



where Kasparov continued 9. Nd2; Jones played 9. Ne5

After 10... Nxe5 11. dxe5 both White's Pawn on e5 and Black's on e4 are liabilities.

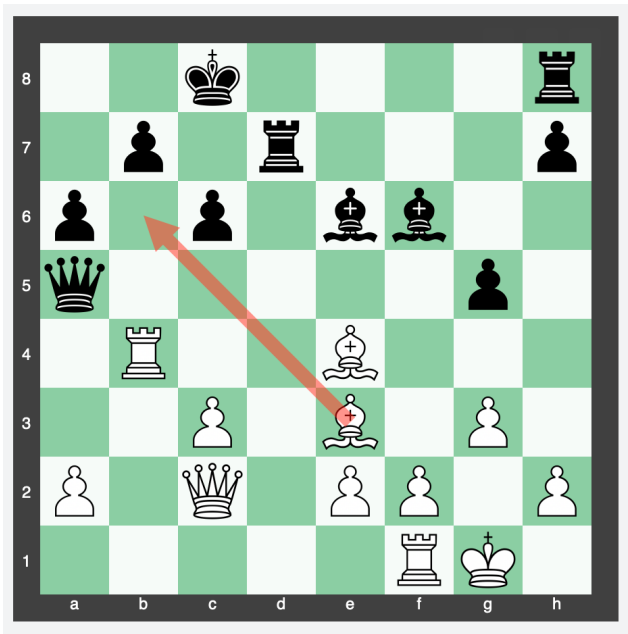
Here Ilic played 11... f5



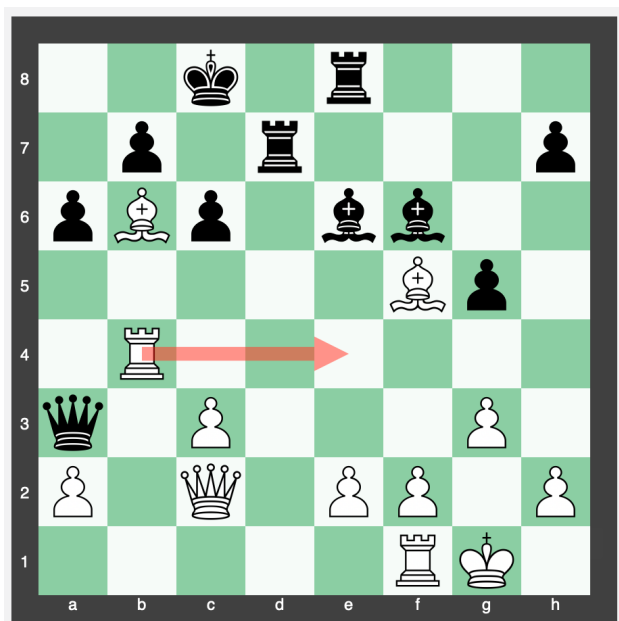
allowing Jones to liquidate White's e-pawn 12. exf6 and leaving Black's e-pawn exposed to attack.

Better for Black was 11... Qxd1 12. Rxd1 Bf5

Black's e-pawn fell, Black castled long and by move 18, White was ahead in development and could advance with tempo 19. Bb6

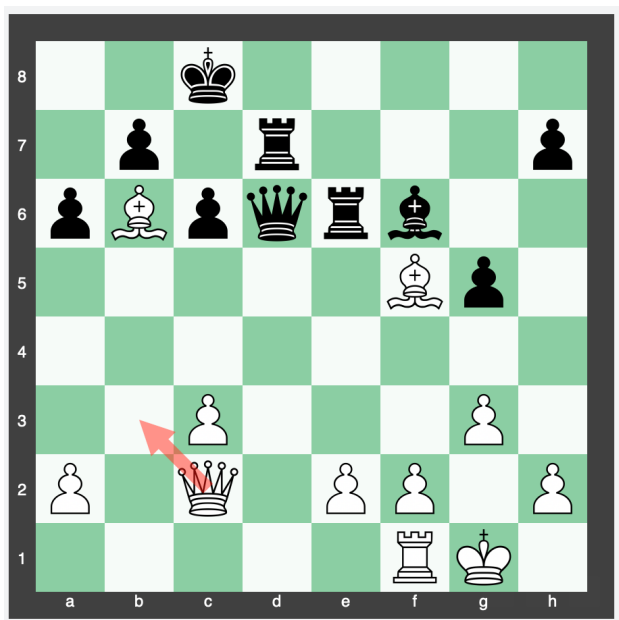


There followed 19... Qa3 20. Bf5 Re8 21. Re4



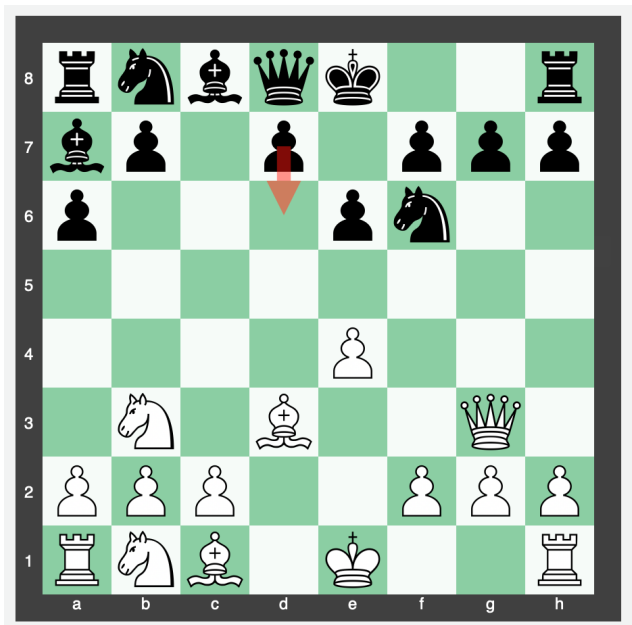
and Black's pieces are all tied up.

Then 21... Qd6 22. Rxe6 Rxe6 23. Qb3



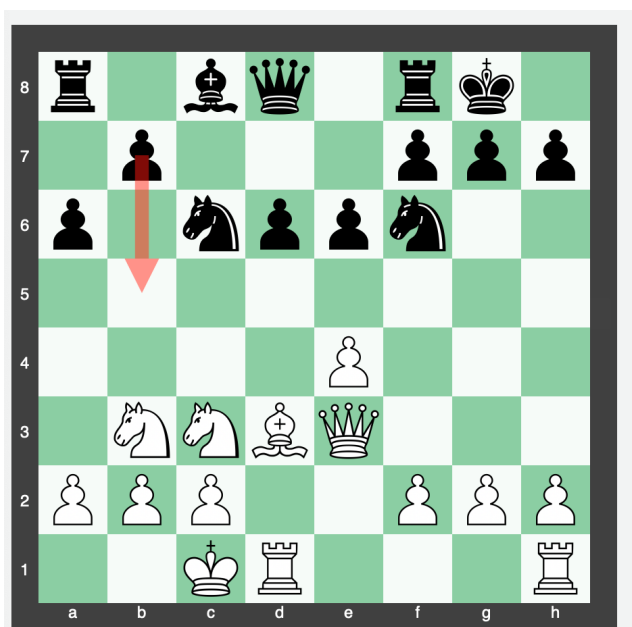
Black resigned, as there is no way to avoid significant material loss.

Board 2, Dragicevic (White) put up stiffer resistance against second seed Zhao, playing a Sicilian Defence, arriving at the same position after 8... d6 as So-Anrdeikin, SPICE Cup Lubbock, Texas, 2009



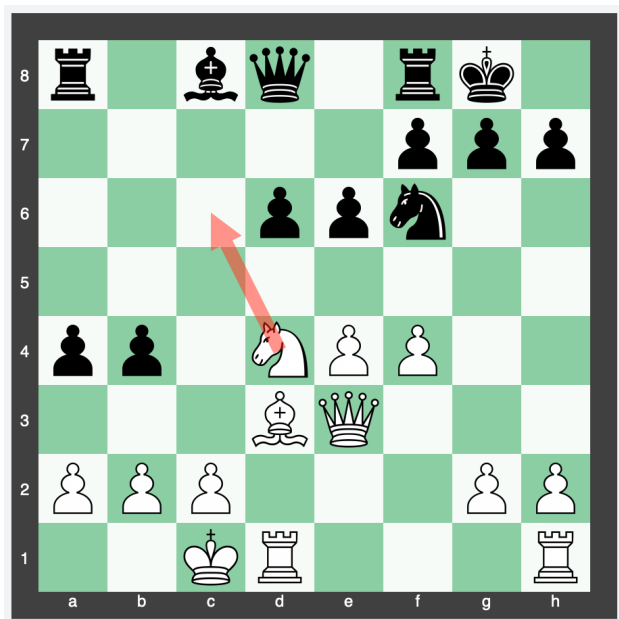
where So continued 9. Nc3; Dragicevic 9. Be3

Zhao continued with the thematic advance 12... b5



and White 13. f4

A critical position occurred after 16... a4

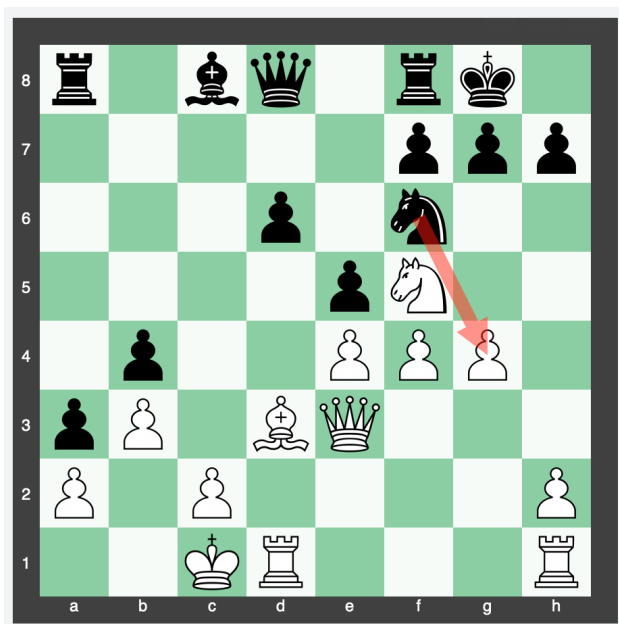


where White can play 17. Nc6 hitting Queen and b-pawn, blunting Black's Queen side initiative, after 17... Qc7 18. Nxb4

But, instead, played 17. g4

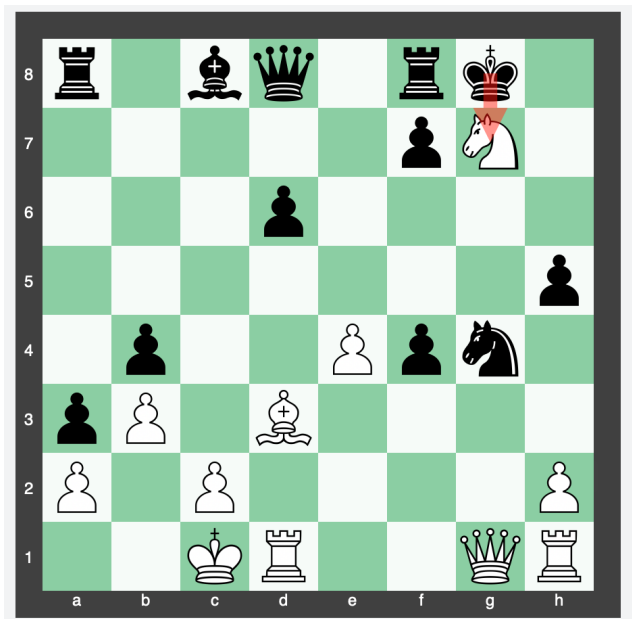
There followed 17... a3 18. b3 with an unsafe White King position and vulnerability down the dark diagonal a1-f6

after 19... Nxg4

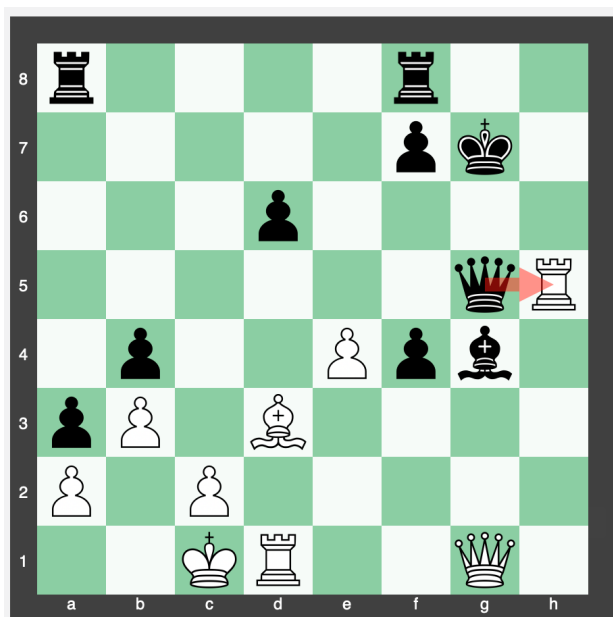


it was desperation time for White.

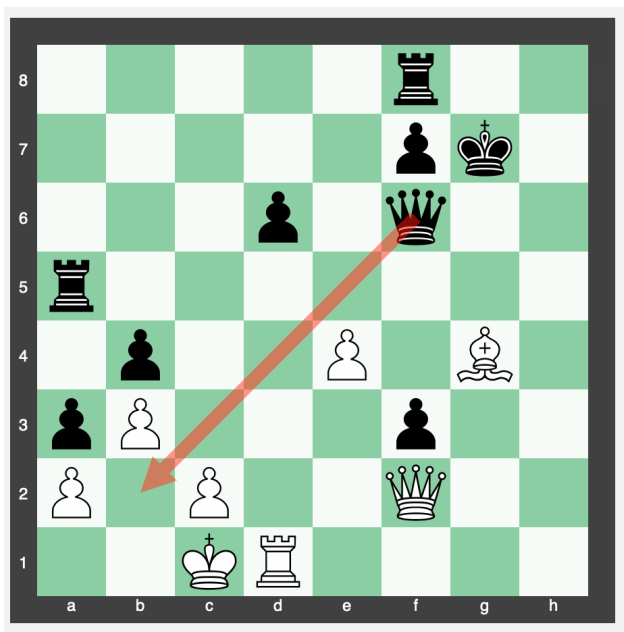
And so it was with Dragicevic's Nxg7 with h3 threat



and Exchange sacrifice 25. Rxh5 with 26. Be2 threat

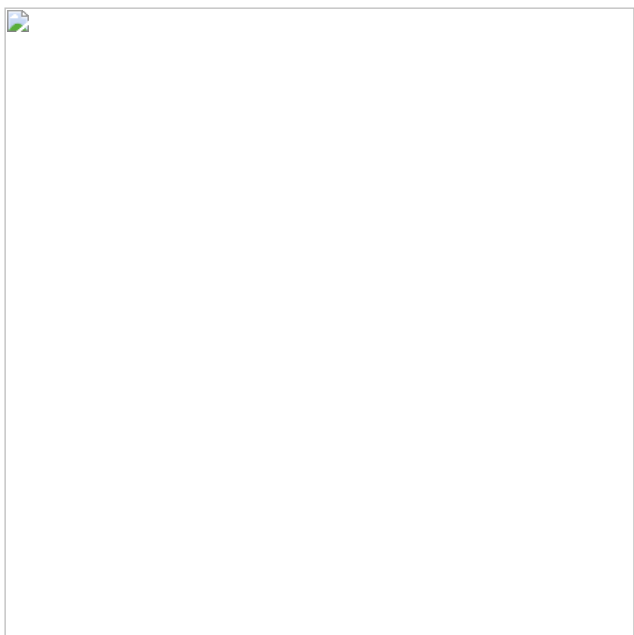


But, when the dust settled, Black's threats materialised and by 32... Qb2+



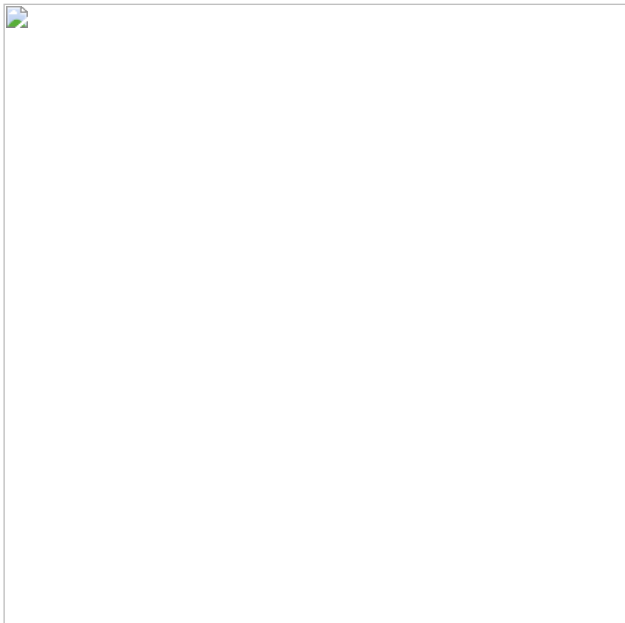
it was game over.

White resigned at 35... Rg5



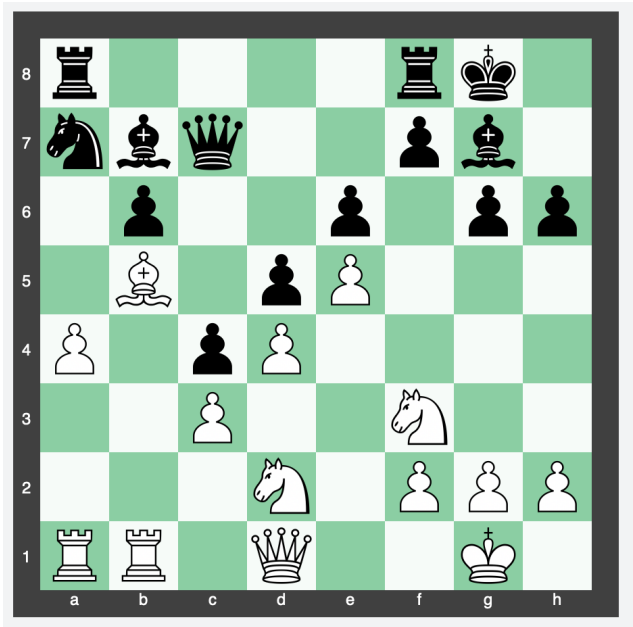
Meanwhile, on **Board 3**, Radovanovic despatched Bassig in 20 moves.

On **Board 4**, defending champion James Morris, playing Reinier Millan, demonstrated his versatility and aversion to being a static target by playing a Pseudo Queen's Indian Defence (1... Nf6 2... b6), arriving at the same position as Korobov-Pons, World Blitz Championship Dubai, 2014 after 9... Qe7



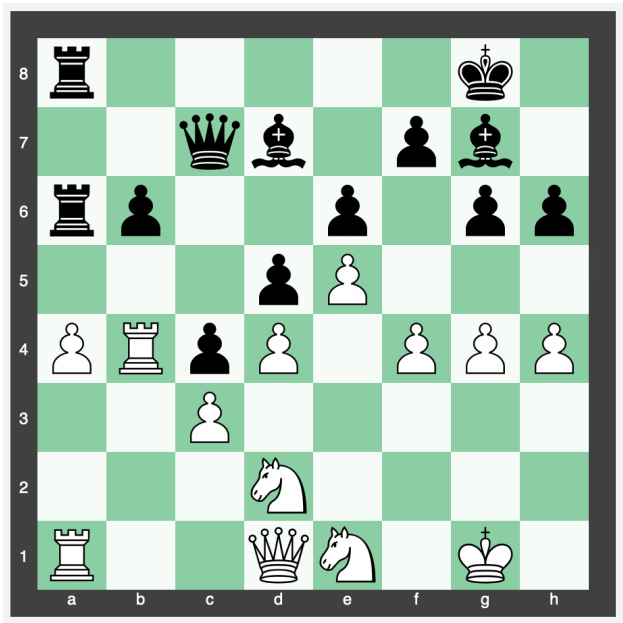
where Pons continued 10. O-O-O, Milan 10. O-O

A strategically important position was reached after 19... Qc7



"When you don't know what to do, wait for your opponent to get an idea; it is sure to be bad." - Siebert Tarrasch

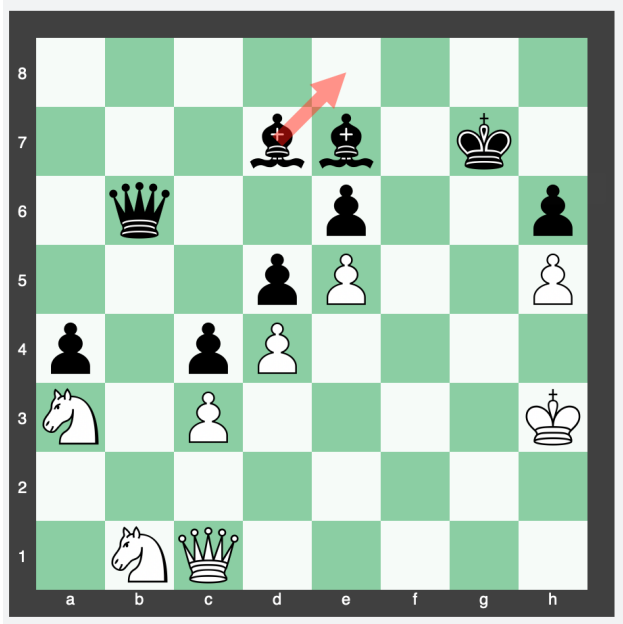
Here, Millan played the retrograde 20. Ne1 followed by 21. f4, 24. g4, 25. h4



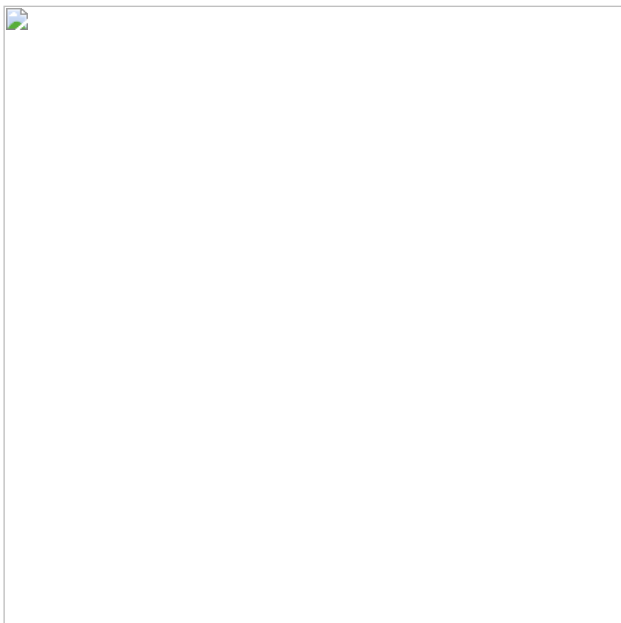
Whose King is safer? White's self-immolation may lead to downfall.

Black began the Queen side attack with 25... b5, winning the a-pawn.

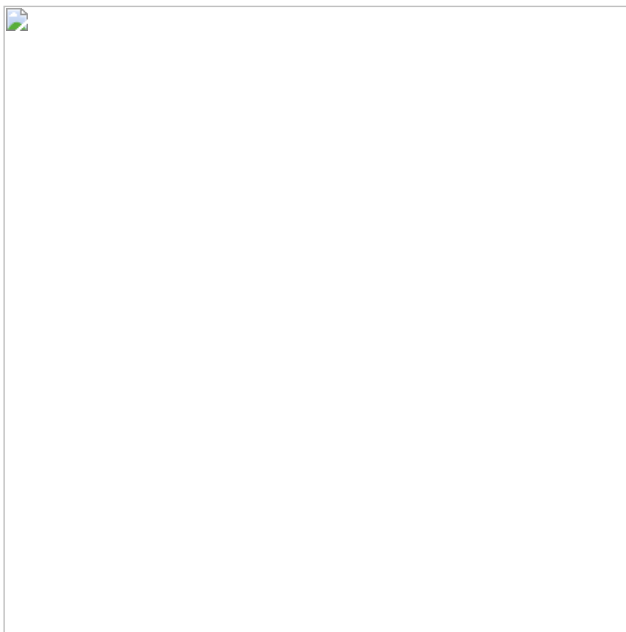
After exchanges, Black targeted White's King side pawn(s)



Black's Queen advanced down the open b-file



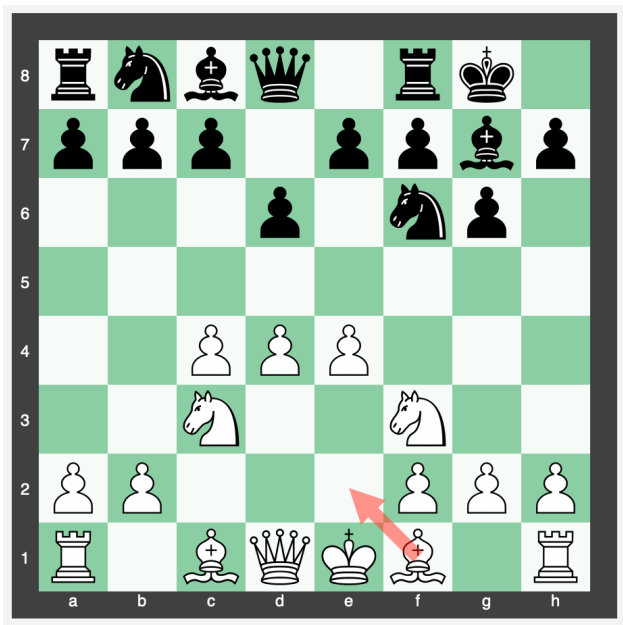
and by 44. Qf2, it was time for White to resign



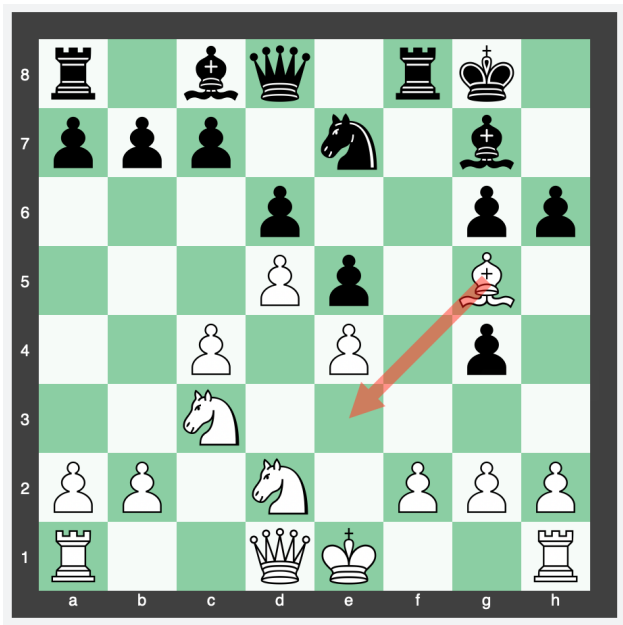
White's King cannot escape the maurouding Black Queen and two Bishops.

In the battle of youth, Testolin (White) faced Annapureddy on **Board 6**.

The game was a King's Indian Defence: Orthodox Variation

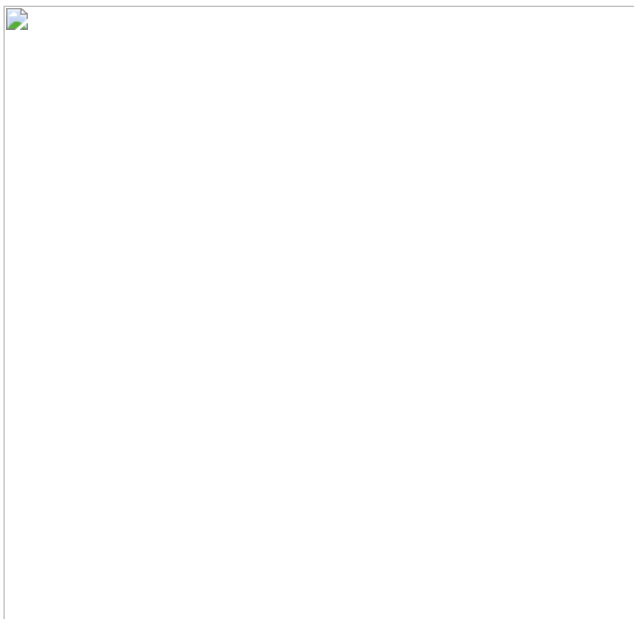


reaching the same position after 14. Be3 as Caruana-Radjabov, Gashimov Memorial, Shamkir, Azerbaijan, 2014

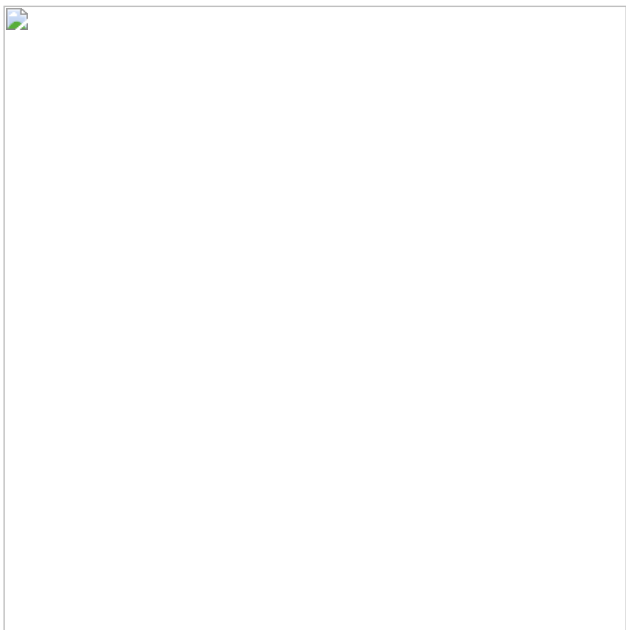


where Radjabov continued 14... c5; Annapureddy chose 14... g5

Black was under pressure as White won the a7-pawn

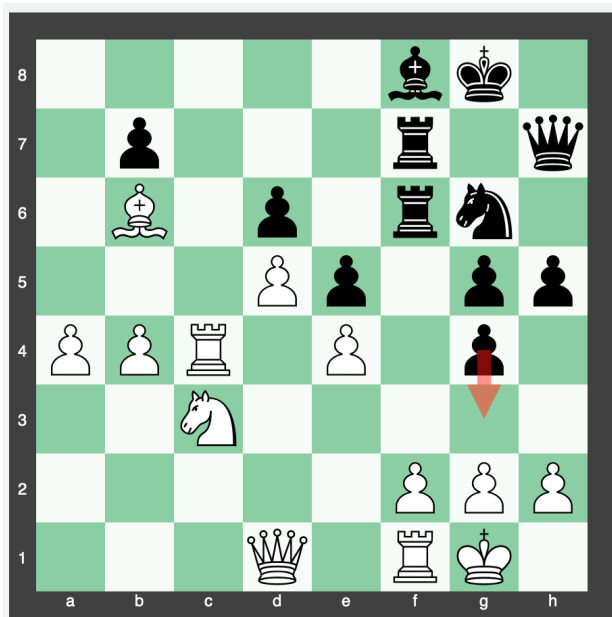


and by 29. Nc3, White's Queen side pawn majority was menacing.

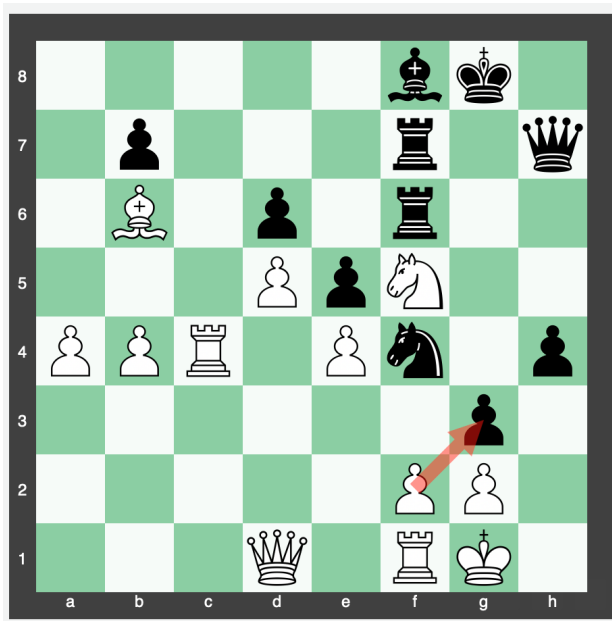


Here, Annapureddy showed mature judgement. It was time for counter-attack by Black.

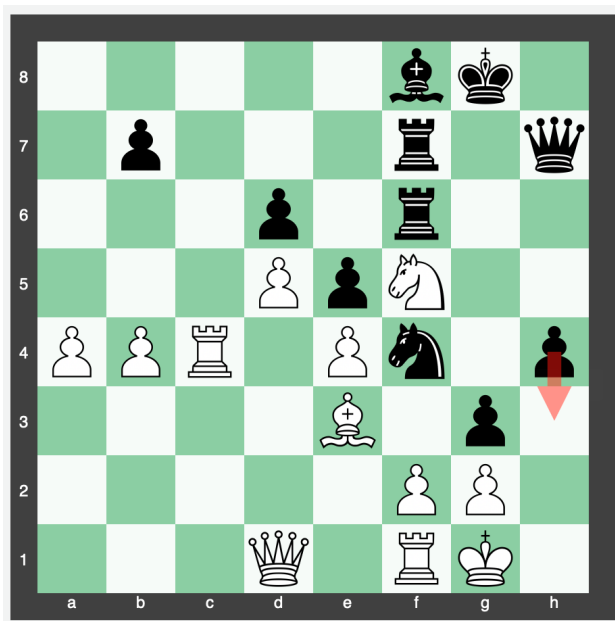
Annapureddy played 29... g3



White should reply 30. hxg3 h4 31. g4 h3 32. g3 h2+ 33. Kg2 and White preserves the advantage, but, instead played 30. Ne2 There followed 30... gxh2+ (better is 30... h4) 31. Kxh2 (better is 31. Kh1) A critical position was reached at 34... Nf4

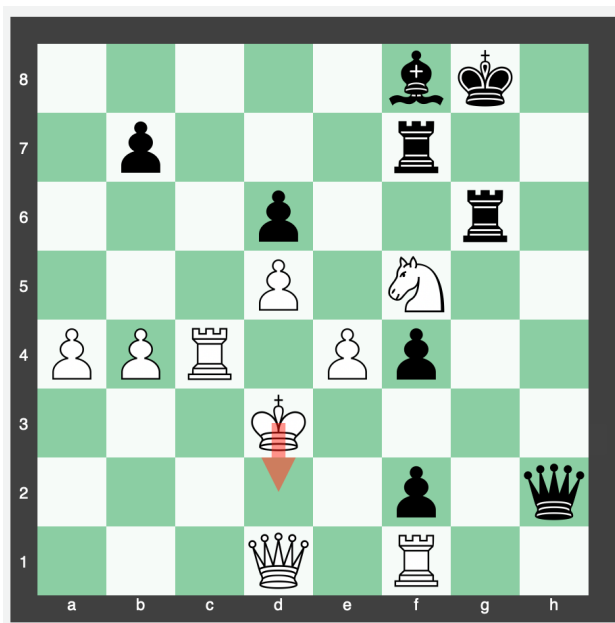


where White is on the defensive, but 35. fxg3 hxg3 36. Nxg3 and 35. Rc3 h3 36. Rxg3+ both look to hold. But, instead, White played 35. Be3 and Black's attack develops with 35... h3



There followed 36. Bxf4 hxg2 37. Kxg2 Qh2+ 38. Kf3 exf4 39. Ke2 Rg6 (better was f3) and White should hold.

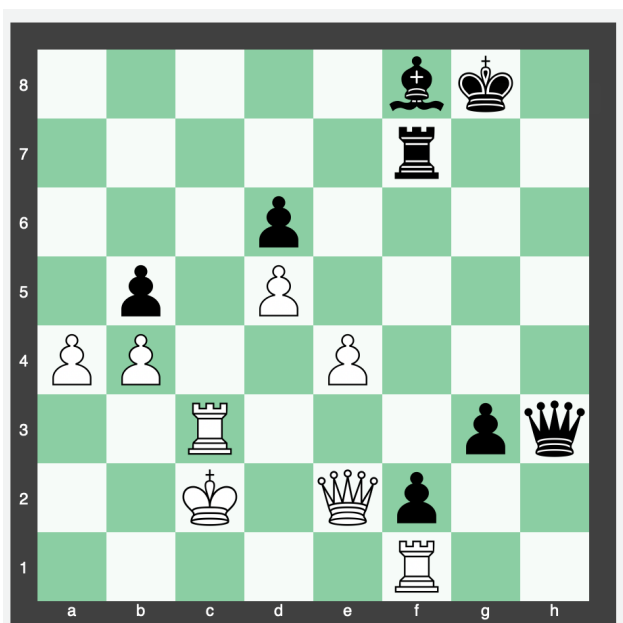
But, the White King imbued with fear, took to flight, abandoning the defence of the f-pawn and 40. Kd3 gxf2 followed



Even now, 41. Kd2 should hold as on 41... Rg1 42. Rc1

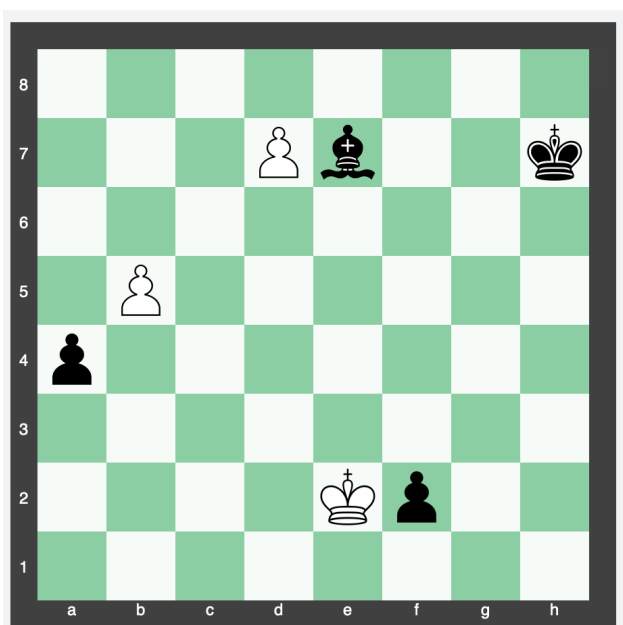
But, instead, White played 41. Qe2

There followed 41... Qh3+ 42. Kc2 b5 43. Rc3 Rg3 44. Nxf3 fxf3



and White is busted.

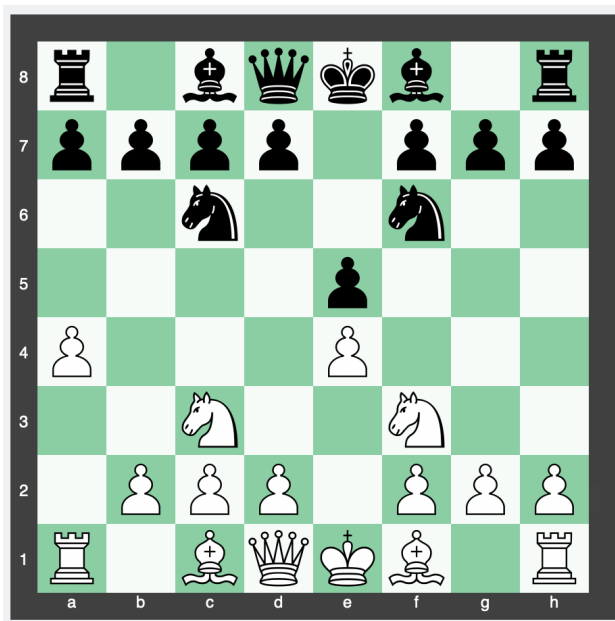
Annapureddy mopped up



Round 4 saw the much awaited clash between top seed Gawain Jones and defending champion James Morris.

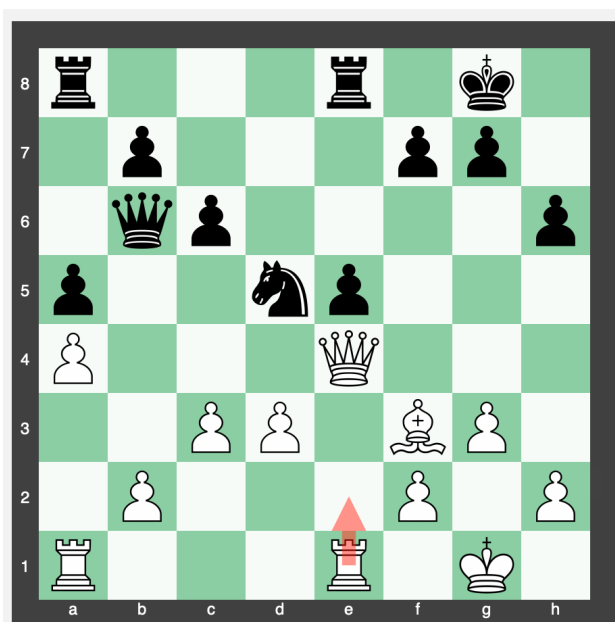
Morris (White) began with a King's Pawn Opening which became a Four Knights Game. Onlookers may have been wondering what quirky deviation Morris had in mind.

We didn't have to wait long, as 4. a4 appeared on the board



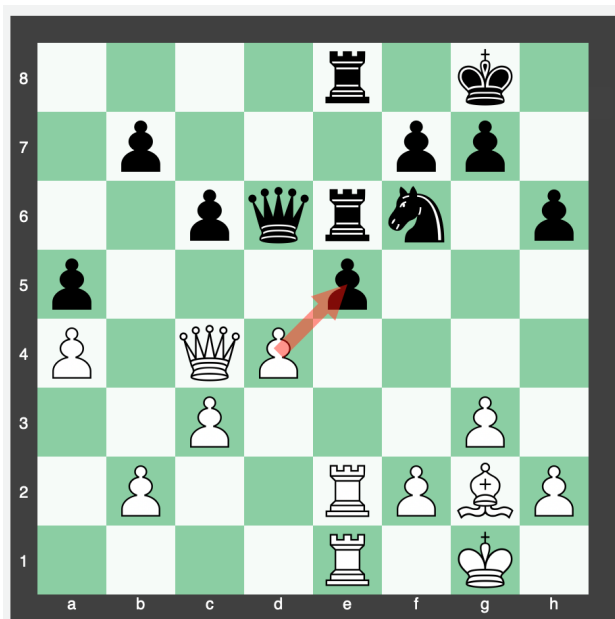
followed by 5. g3

After 20 moves the position was equal.

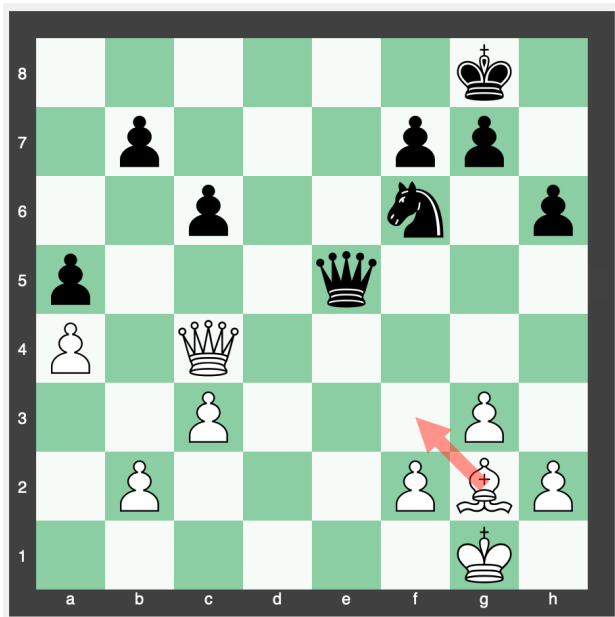


White's plan is to double Rooks on the semi-open e-file (while protecting b2), Black's to over protect the strong point e5 and White's to exchange d-pawn for Black's e-pawn

And so 26. dxe5

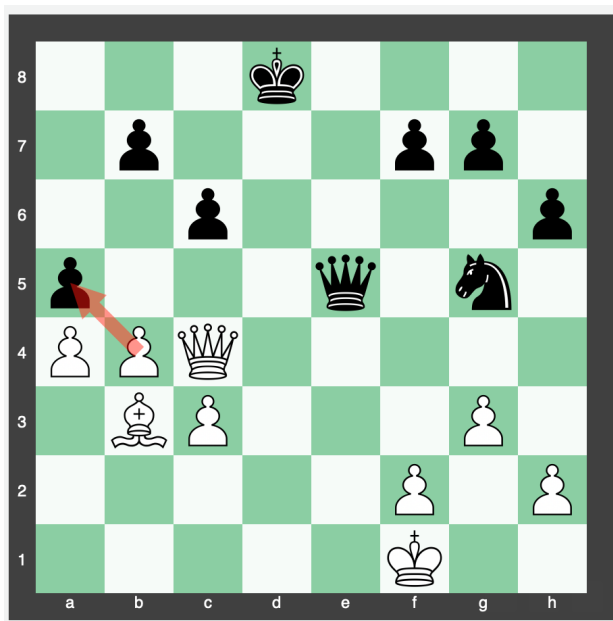


After exchanges reaching an equal position.



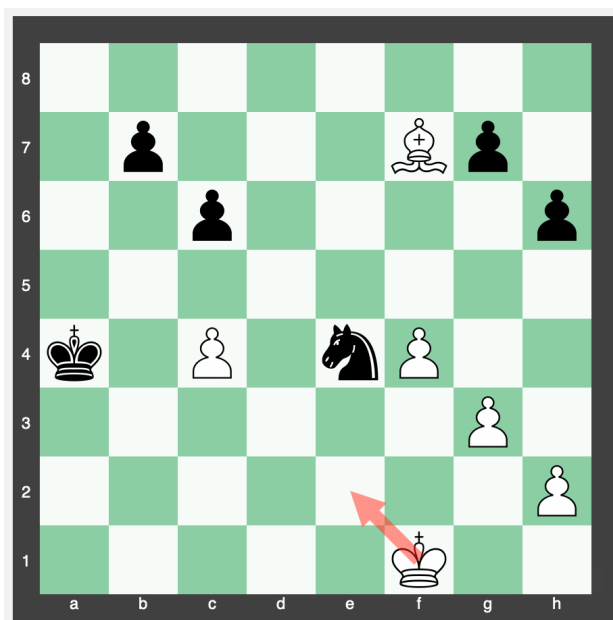
The question was, "How long does each side want to prolong the battle in the hope the opponent may err?"

White had an opportunity on move 38

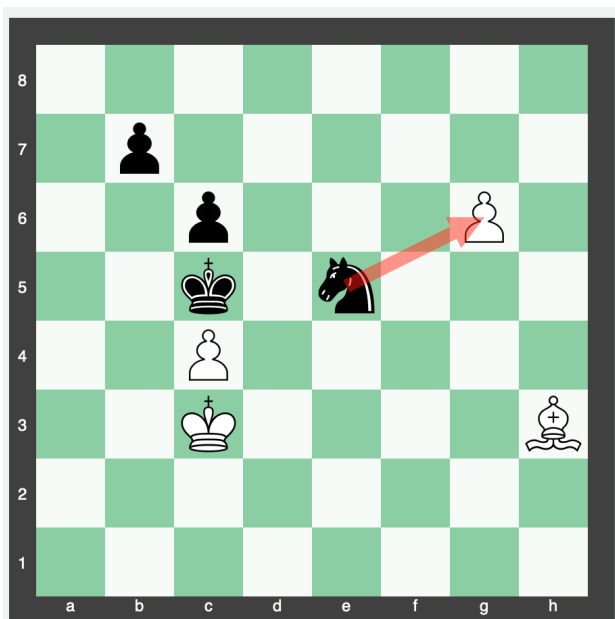


with 38. bxa5 as on 38... Qxa5 39. Qd4+ Kc7 40. Qxg7

The position was equal on 44. Ke2

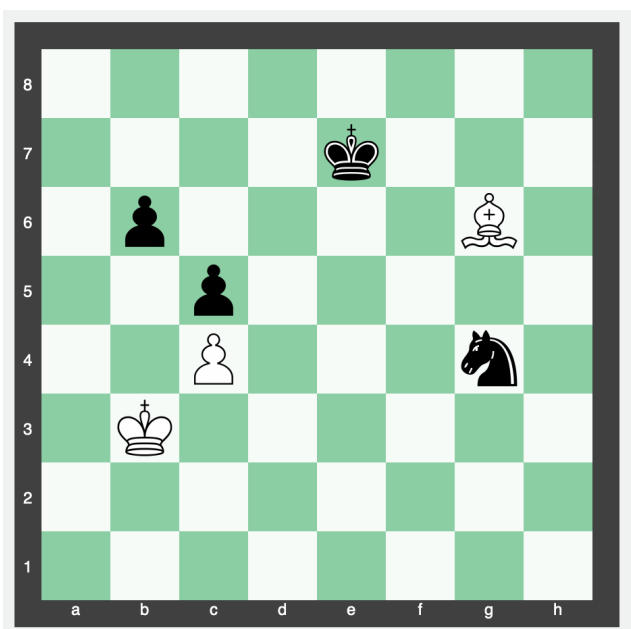


after 53... Nxg6



a tablebase draw

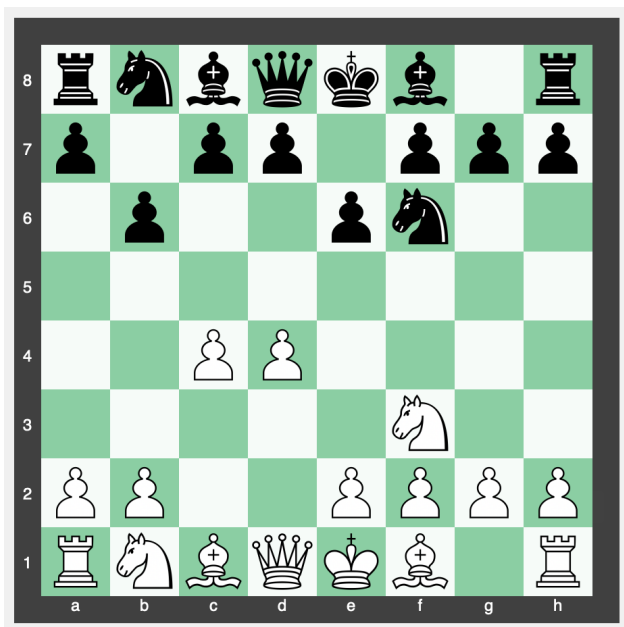
and after 89... Ng4



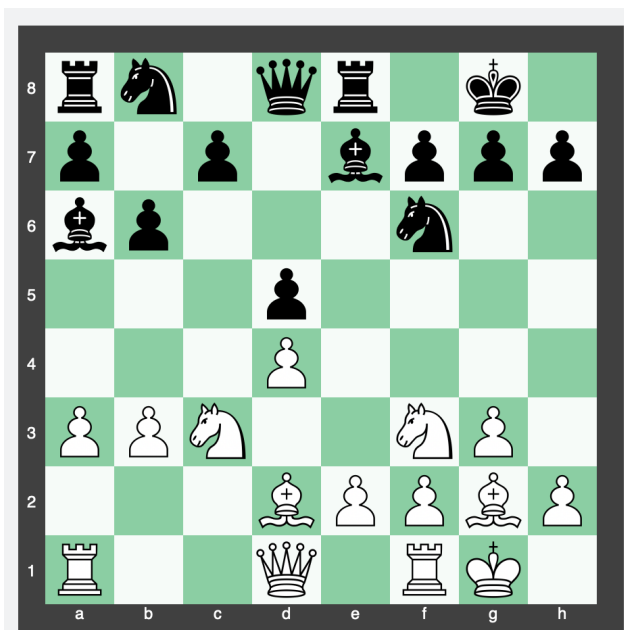
Draw

Meanwhile on **Board 2**, the game was far from equal.

Soo (Black) played a Queen's Indian Defence against Zhao

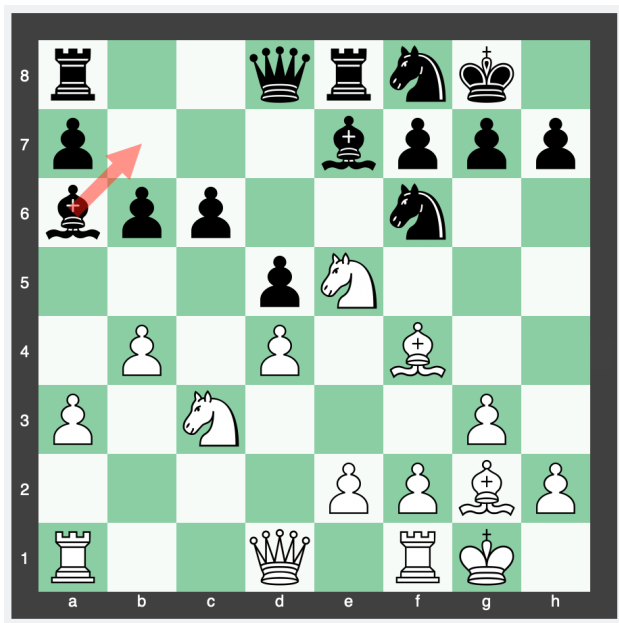


reaching the same position as Fabiano Caruana vs Sergey Karjakin, World Championship Candidates, Moscow, 2016, after 11. a3

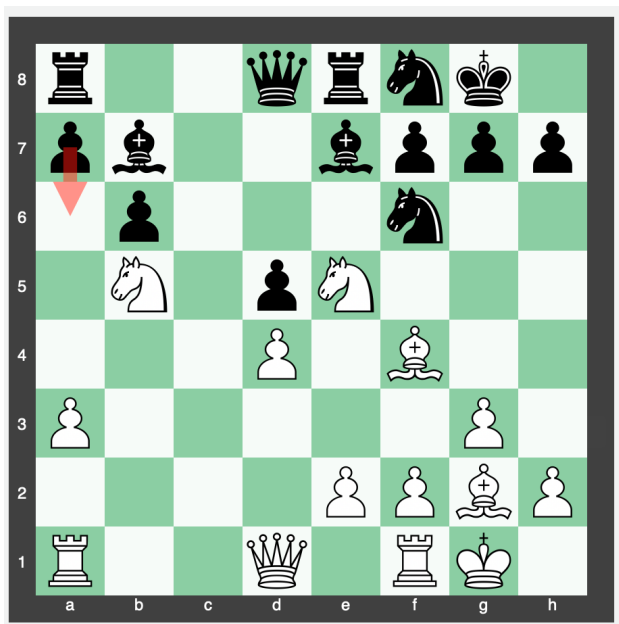


Here, Karjakin continued 11... c5; Soos chose 11... c6

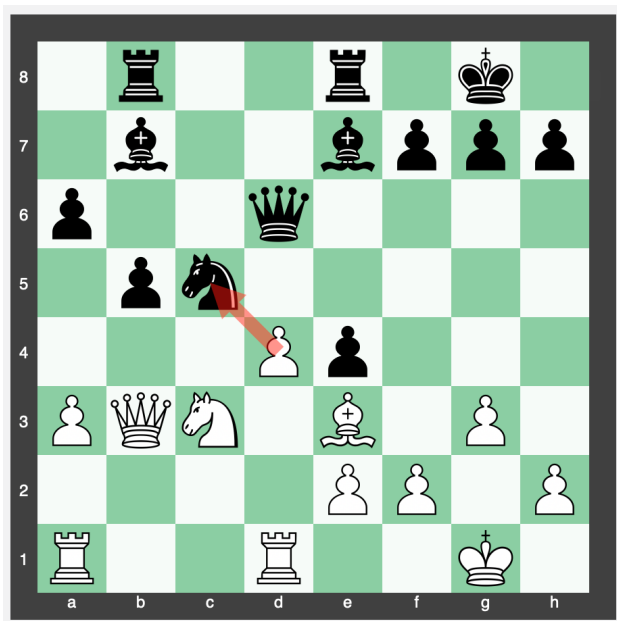
A critical position occurred after 14... Bb7



Here, Zhao played 15. b5, which, after 15... cxb5 16. Nxb5, allowed Black to resolve the Queen side pawn majority and advance with tempo 16... a6

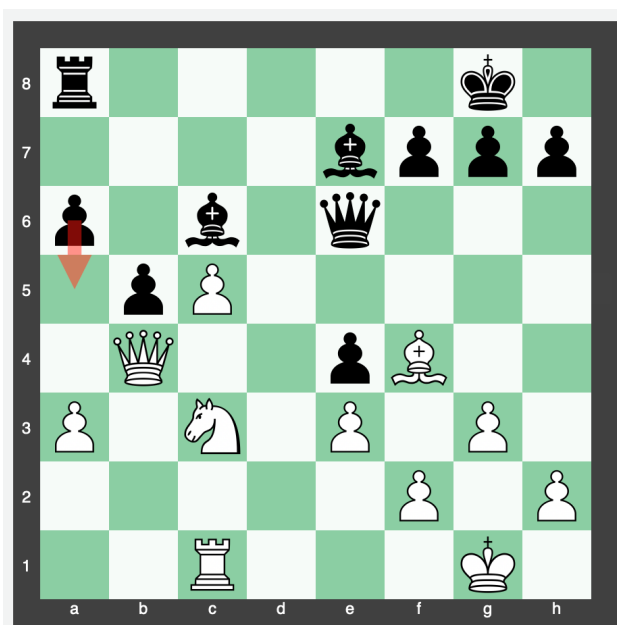


White counter-punched, establishing a passed c-pawn by 24. dxc5



Which would prevail?

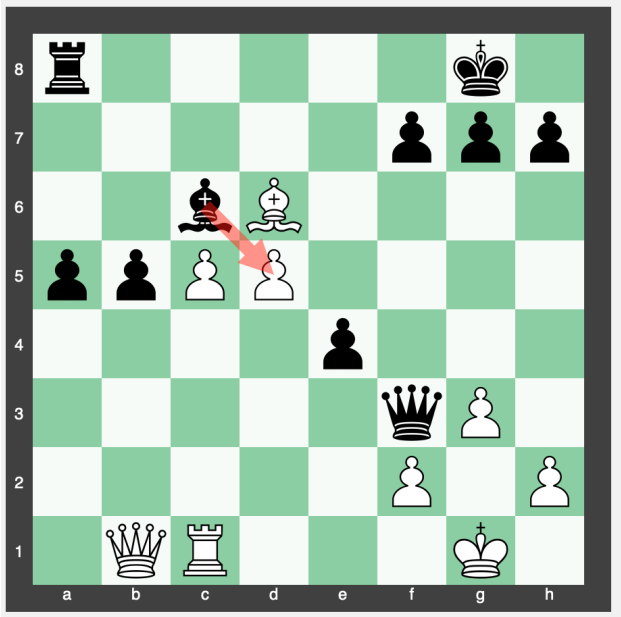
The answer came by 31... a5



where White's Queen, burdened with the defence of the c-pawn, was forced to retreat, allowing the incursion of Black's Queen, which captured White's a-pawn



and White was busted and resigned at 39... Bxd5

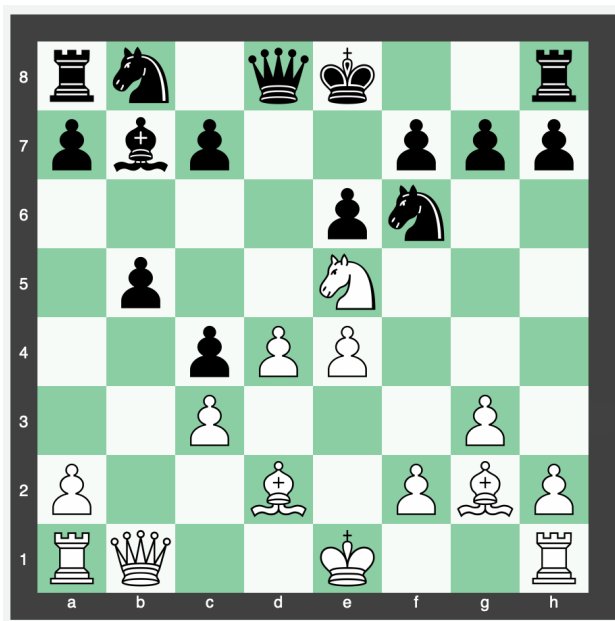


In other results, third seed Radovanovic defeated Annapureddy, Ryjanova maintained an unbeaten run drawing with Li, McClymont drew with Leaver and Solomon defeated Dai.

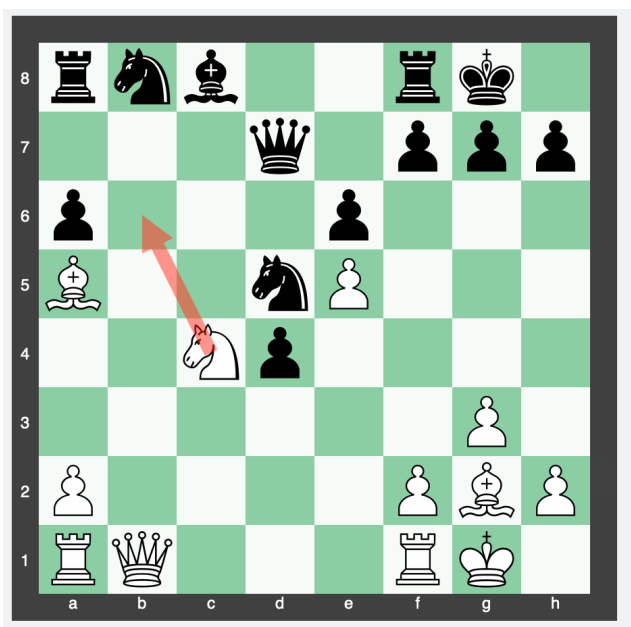
Round 5 saw the clash between the only two players on 4/4.

Radovanovic (White) played an English Opening against Soo.

After 11. Qb1

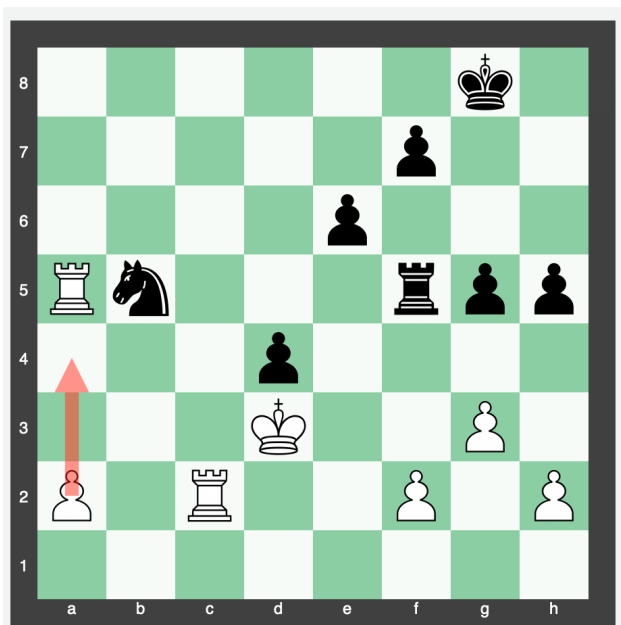


Soo dropped the c-pawn by 11... a6 (correct is O-O or Nbd7) 12. Nxc4
and blundered the Exchange of Rook for Knight by 18... Qd7, allowing 19. Nb6



19... Nxb6 20. Qxb6 Qa7 21. Rfc1 Qxb6 22. Bxb6 Nd7 23. Bxa8

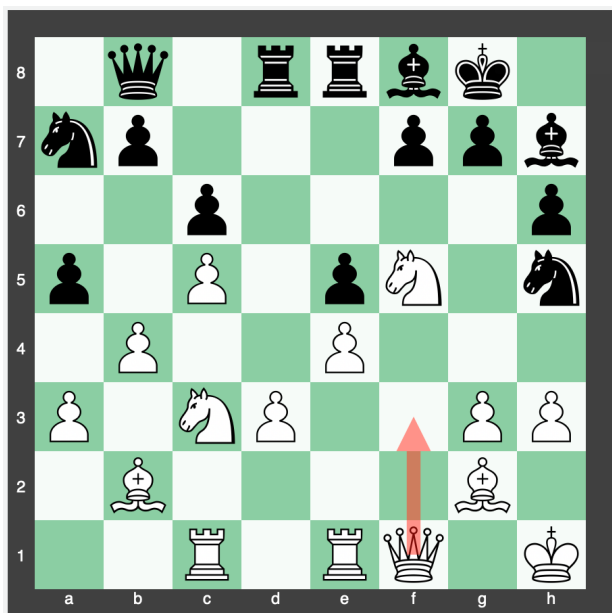
The last straw was 36. a4



Black resigned, as, for example, 36... Nd6 37. Rxf5 Nxf5 38. a5

On **Board 2**, Gawain Jones (White) also played the English Opening, against Giang Nguyen

A critical position was reached after 27. Qf3

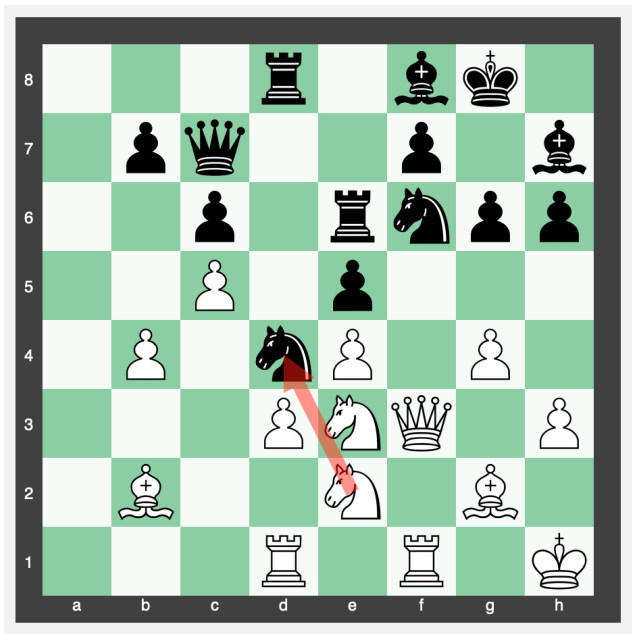


where Black can defend the Knight by Bg6

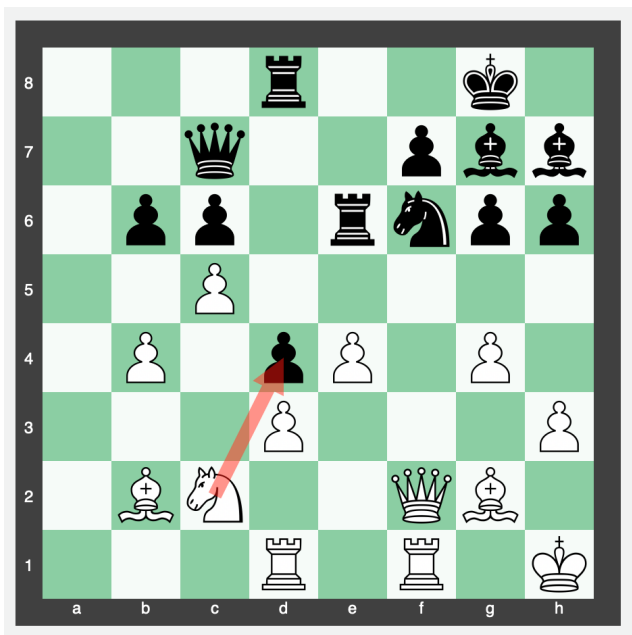
but, instead, played 27... g6, where the White Knight is not obliged to move, as the Black Knight would be hanging on gxf5

White took advantage of the tempo, building pressure with 28. Rf1 and 31. g4

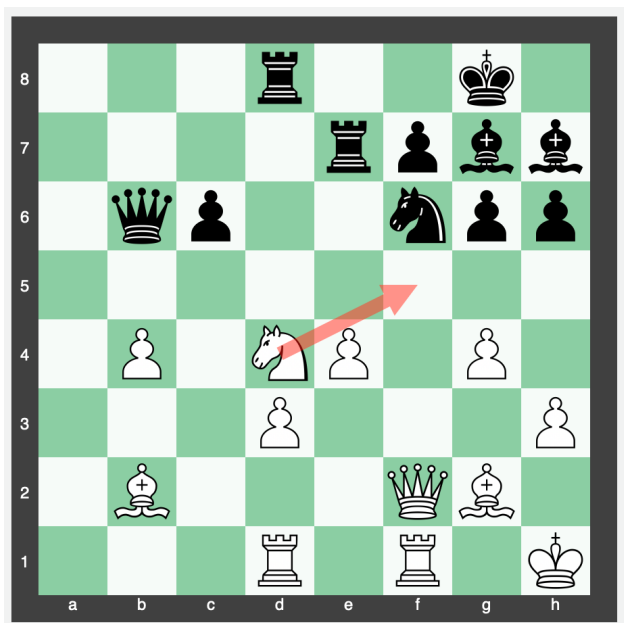
On 33... Nd4



34. Nxd4 exd4 left Black's d-pawn isolated, which soon fell



after 38... Qxb6, White had a tactical shot 39. Nf5 which won the Exchange of Rook for Knight



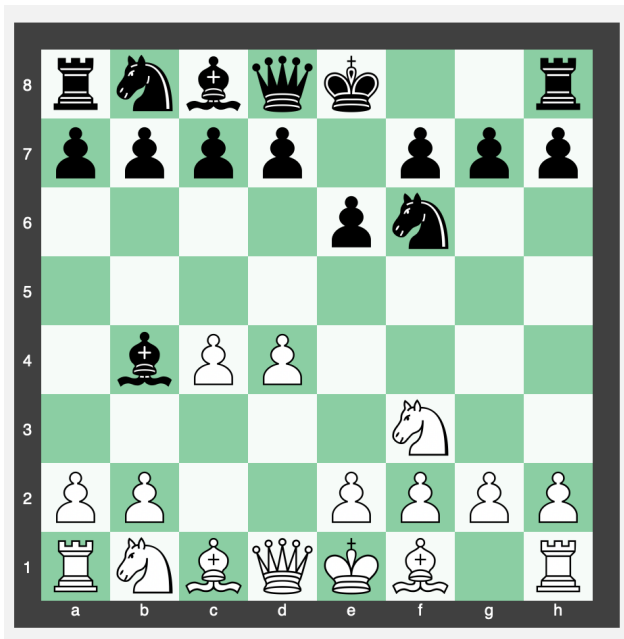
(or a free Knight on 39... Rb7 40. Nxh6+ Kf8 41. Qxb6 Rxb6 42. Bxf6)

There followed 39... Qxf2 40. Nxe7+ Kf8 41. Rxf2 Kxe7

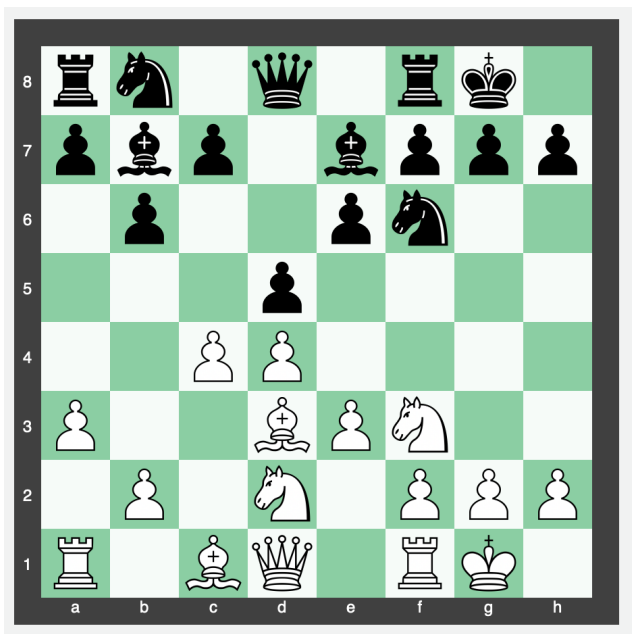
and it was game over.

On **Board 3**, Skiotis took on defending champion Morris.

Morris (Black) played a Bogo-Indian Defence

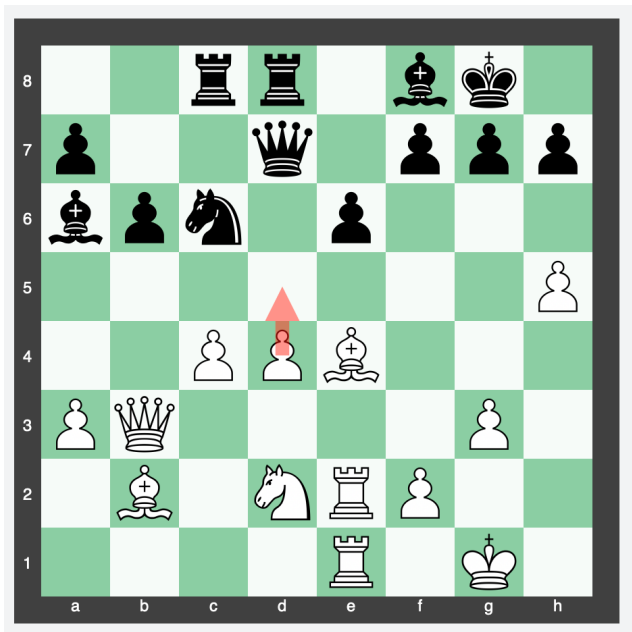


arriving at the same position as Karpov-Grischuk Tal Memorial, Moscow, 2008 after 8... Bb7



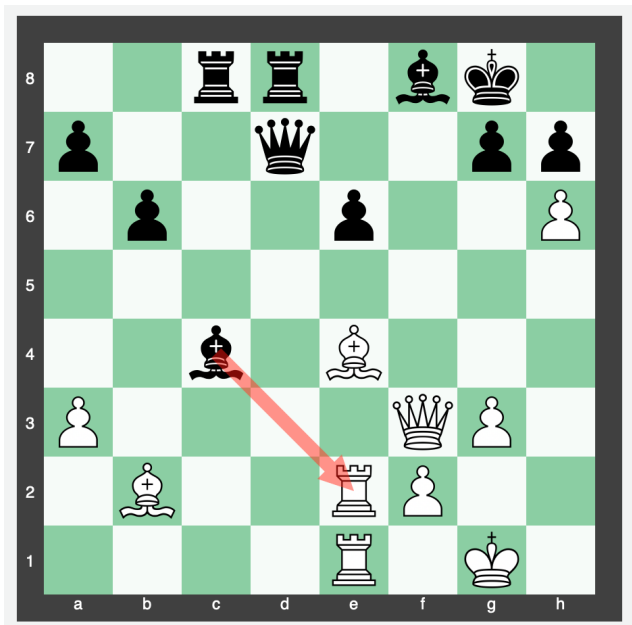
Karpov continued 9. b4; Skiotis chose 9. Qe2

Manoeuvring continued in an equal position, until White had the opportunity to break in the Centre with 29. d5

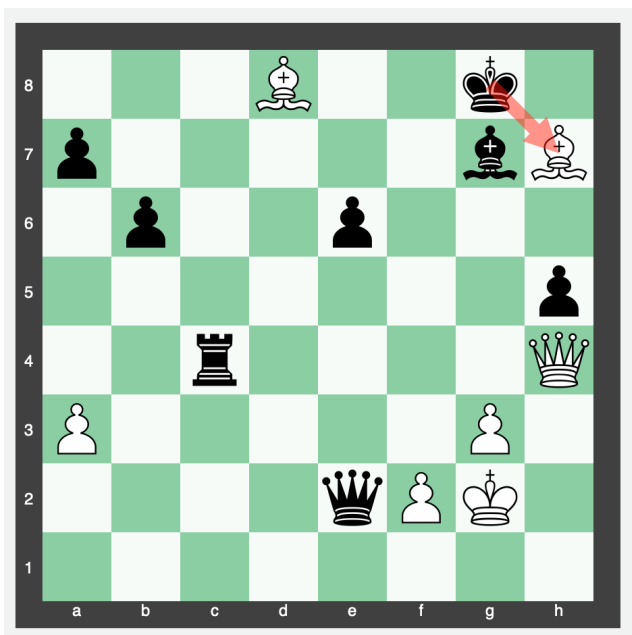


After exchanges, 29... Na5 30. Qf3 Nxc4 31. dxe6 fxe6 32. Nxc4 Bxc4, Black was a Pawn up, but White had better piece placement.

Then White sacrificed the Exchange of Rook for Knight 33. h6 Bxe2



White then tried to squeeze something out of the position with 35. Qg4+ Bg7 36. Bf6 h5 37. Qg5 Rc5 38. Qh4 Qd1+ 39. Kg2 Qxe2 40. Bxd8 Rc4 and finally 41. Bxh7+



but there was nothing there. 0-1

The top 10 board pairings for Round 6/7, 9:30am Monday are

Bo.	Fed	White Player		Pts	Result	Pts	Black Player		Fed
1		4	IM Morris, James	4.5	...	5	3	IM Radovanovic, Mihajlo	
2		10	FM Fernandez, Michael	4.5	...	4.5	1	GM Jones, Gawain	
3		2	GM Zhao, Zong-Yuan	4	...	4	28	CM Wang, Ruicheng	
4		15	FM Chan, Kris	4	...	4	5	IM McClymont, Brodie	
5		16	FM Soo, Kai Jie	4	...	4	7	IM Solomon, Stephen J	
6		20	FM Ilic, Nicholas	4	...	4	9	FM Wallis, Christopher	
7		30	— Li, Jackie	4	...	4	12	IM Cannon, David	
8		44	— Milojevic, Miodrag	4	...	4	14	— Testolin, Ryder	
9		38	— Naraharasetty, Saisiddharth	3.5	...	3.5	6	GM Johansen, Darryl K	
10		39	— Chakrabarty, Reyaansh	3.5	...	3.5	8	WGM Ryjanova, Julia	

Time control is 90 minutes per player plus 30 seconds per move from move 1.

The tournament runs until 5pm Monday 11 March at The Ballarat Tech School, Federation University, 136 Albert St, Ballarat.

<https://www.ballaratchess.com/begonia/2024/index.html>

by Paul Power, Australian Chess Federation, publicity@auschess.org.au