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**Challenging
the Nimzo-Indian**

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Vigorito on Chess

IM David Vigorito

It's better to be lucky than good...

The Massachusetts Open was held over Memorial Day weekend, as always. I had decided not to play in it, because I had a book deadline coming up and did not think I could spare the three days. At the last minute, I decided to play. I got lucky in this tournament because Ivanov was clearly burned out from the US Championship and everyone was playing my favorite openings. In the first round I was paired with the rapidly improving Chris Williams.

C. Williams - D. Vigorito
Massachusetts Open (1) 2007
Sicilian Defense [B88]

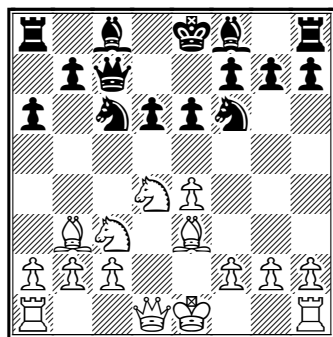
1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4

I am always happy to see the Sozin variation. I have a very good score with Black in this line, including a win against GM Kudrin.

6...e6 7.Bb3 Nc6

This is more commonly played via a Classical Sicilian move order (5...Nc6) and I find some White players surprised by this move via the Najdorf. For those of you preparing to play Fischer's favorite line against me, please take note that I played 7...b5 against Kelleher in round 5. I may have to prepare 7...Nbd7 now too. All three moves score well for Black.

8.Be3 Qc7



8...Be7 is the main alternative, and I have played it several times as well.

9.0-0 Na5 10.Qe2 b5 11.Kh1?! Be7 12.Bg5 Nxb3

White's last couple of moves makes a funny impression. Here I forced things too much. The simple 12...0-0 is more than comfortable for Black.

13.cxb3 b4 14.Na4 Qb7 15.Rac1 Bd7

I became a little hasty in my queenside pursuits, so Chris plays to exploit his slight lead in development.

16.e5 dxe5 17.Qxe5

Here I was pretty annoyed with myself. I had confidently chased his knight to the a4-square, and now it is ready to jump back into the game with strong effect via e5. I cannot castle because of Rc1-c7, and challenging the c-file is difficult. After some thought, I realized that Rc7 was not necessarily fatal, so I thought it would be useful to force White to make a decision with his bishop.

17...h6!?

The point of this move is to get White's bishop off of the c1-square, after which I can consider playing ...Rc8. There is another point as well, but I was not yet aware of it. The immediate 17...Rc8 gives White the initiative after 18.Rxc8+ Qxc8 19.Rc1 Qd8 20.Nc5. I could offer a queen trade by 17...Qd5, but the ending after 18.Bxf6 Bxf6 19.Qxd5 exd5 20.Rfe1+ Kd8 21.Nc6+ Bxc6 22.Rxc6 only offers prospects to White.

18.Bh4

18.Rc7 Qb8 19.Bxf6 gxf6 20.Qg3 Bd8 21.Qg7 Bxc7 22.Qxh8+ Ke7 23.Qxh6 Qh8 gives Black some counterplay. After 18.Bf4 or 18.Be3, I can at least consider castling, because upon 18...0-0 19.Rc7 Qb8, there is no more Bxf6, so the d7-bishop won't hang.

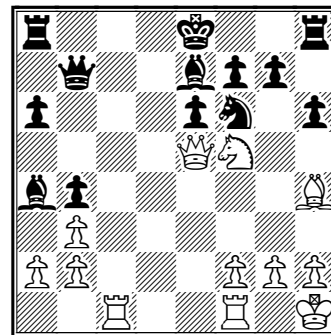
18...Bxa4

I thought I should eliminate this knight before it could hop into c5. Now White gets carried away.

19.Nf5?

When I came back to the board and saw this, it naturally scared the crap out of me. A bear move like this, sound or not, is very disturbing to see when you have not even considered it. After 19.Rc7 Qd5, White has too many pieces hang-

ing. Instead, 19.bxa4 Rc8 is equal, because White cannot take over the c-file. This was still probably White's best.



19...exf5 20.bxa4

After 20.Rc7, I have a pleasant choice:

a) 20...Qxc7 21.Qxc7 Bd7! Much worse is 21...Bb5 22.Re1 0-0 23.Qxe7 (23.Rxe7 Rac8 24.Qf4 Nd5++) 23...Rae8 24.Qxb4 Rxe1+ 25.Qxe1 g5 26.a4 (I saw this move during the game and did not like the looks of my position) 26...Bd7 27.Bxg5 hxg5 28.Qd2 and White has the initiative. After 21...Bd7! 22.Re1 g5 23.Qd6, Black has 23...Ng8!+. This looks ugly, but Black is up quite a bit of material.

b) 20...Qe4 This move shows a hidden point of 17...h6. The h4-bishop is loose. 21.Rxe7+ Kf8 22.Bxf6 (22.Qxf6 gxf6 23.Rxe4 fxe4 24.Bxf6 Bb5++) 22...Qxe5+.

During the game I had not decided which way to play, but 20...Qe4 is certainly simpler, even if it looks scary at first.

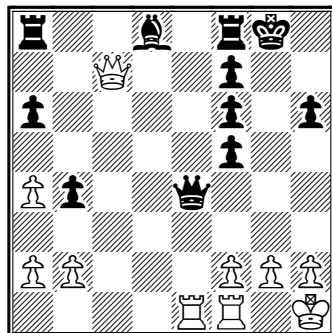
20...Qe4 21.Bxf6 gxf6 22.Qc7

Here I realized that after my intended 22...Bd8, White has 23.Qd6 (or 23.Qc5), when Black must repeat with 23...Be7. Chris and I both saw this possibility, while some of the spectators thought I might be losing. In fact, there is a win for Black.

22...0-0!

This took me almost half an hour to find, even though it is basically a two-mover. This happens a lot – you spend thirty minutes calculating various things and then suddenly something occurs to the mind and you hardly need any time to check it. This happened here, and once I saw the point I only spent a minute or two calculating things and looking ahead for potential problems.

23.Rce1 Bd8!



The point. Black saves the piece.

24.Qd6 Qg4

I do have to be a little careful. If White brings a rook to the g-file, even if I save my queen, the f8-rook will be hanging if my king moves. This is complicated by the fact that the d8-bishop has no squares.

25.f4

If 25.Re3, then 25...f4.

25...Rc8!

Now the bishop comes to c7 and all is well. We were both in some time pressure now and the rest of the game happened very quickly.

26.Re3 Bc7 27.Qxa6 Bxf4 28.h3 Qg5 29.Ref3 Rc2 30.Rg1 Rd8 31.Qf1 Be5 32.Qe1 Rdd2 33.Qf1 Rxb2 34.a3 bxa3 35.Rxa3 Qf4 36.Qxf4 Bxf4 37.a5 Be5 38.Ra4 Ra2 0-1

The second round was unusual because I was paired even lower, although the game was also very difficult.

D. Vigorito - D. Meredith

Massachusetts Open (2) 2007

Sicilian Defense [B38]

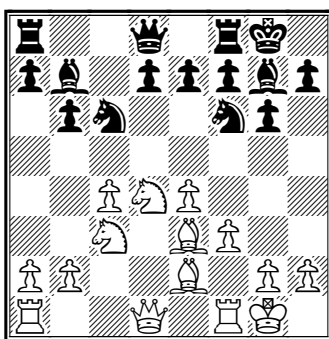
1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 0-0 5.Nf3 c5 6.Be2 cxd4 7.Nxd4 Nc6

A King's Indian has turned into a Maroczy Bind. This is another one of my most successful openings. I like space.

8.Be3 b6

A tricky line that I have also played.

9.0-0 Bb7 10.f3



White has to be a little careful. 10.Rc1? Nxd4 11.Bxd4 Bh6! and 10.Qd2?! Nxd4 11.Bxd4 e5! are well known tricks.

10...Qb8!?

A modern interpretation. Black wants to play ...Rd8, ...d6, ...Rd7, ...Qf8, ...Rad8, and ...e6 with a dynamic hedgehog.

11.Ndb5

An odd move, but not without logic. The knight is not easy to chase away because ...a6 will leave the b6-pawn very difficult to defend. My opponent was moving very quickly and I wanted to make him start thinking. I also had a specific idea in mind.

11...Rd8 12.Nd5!

This looks like a good novelty. The threat of 13.Ndc7 does not give Black time to set up his desired formation.

12...Nxd5 13.cxd5 Bxb2

I did not notice this move at all. Black could not move his knight, because both 13...Ne5 14.f4 and 13...Na5 14.b4 lose material. It just did not occur to me that I was not yet really threatening the c6-knight, because after 14.dxc6 dxc6 my queen is attacked and my own knight is hanging. Now I get a bit too creative.

14.Qb1?!

It was better to simply play 14.Rb1 Bg7 15.Qd2 with more than enough compensation for the pawn. The position looks a lot like a Grünfeld.

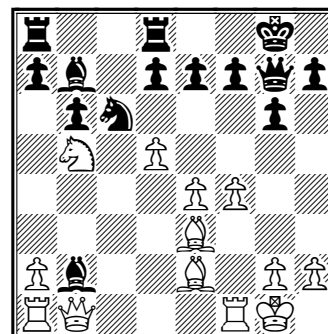
14...Qe5!

After 14...Bxa1 15.Qxa1 Na5 16.d6, Black will have a lot of trouble defending his king. I saw the text move, but kind of "forgot" about it. The problem for White is that it is difficult to avoid an exchange of queens after the inevitable "sacrifices" of more material.

15.f4

It may have been better to play 15.Bf4 Qxf4 16.Qxb2 Na5 (16...Ba6!?), but White has nothing to be proud of here.

15...Qg7



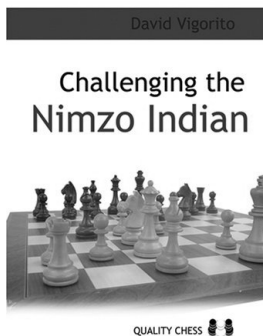
16.dxc6

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I spent thirty-three minutes on this move. My original plan was to play 16.e5 Bxa1 17.Qxa1 Na5 18.d6, with what I thought was good practical compensation. I quickly realized that the truth here did not matter, because after 17...Nb4!, the d5-pawn is attacked and the simplifying ...Nc2 is threatened. Unfortunately, I did not have much of a Plan B; however, I did notice a strange tactical possibility.

16...dxc6 17.Nxa7!?

It took me another eleven minutes to play this. It does not really work, but then again, nothing does, and at least this is complicated. The ending that arises after 17.Nc7 Rac8 18.Na6 Bxa1 19.Qxa1 Qxa1 20.Rxa1 c5 21.e5 Be4 did not appeal to me. Black has a rook and two pawns for two minors and the a6-knight is cut off. Black also has the strong 18...Qc3!, which I did not notice during the game. The text move at least gives Black choices, and my opponent started burning the clock for the first time in the game.

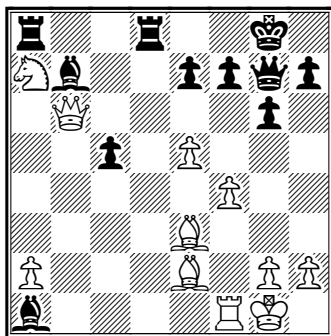
17...c5?

I had seen that 17...Rxa7 18.Bxb6 Bxa1 19.Qxa1 Qxa1 20.Rxa1 Rda8 21.Bxa7 Rxa7 22.a4 was just an equal ending. What I had missed was that upon 17...Bd4 18.Bxd4 Qxd4+ 19.Kh1, Black has 19...Qe3! (not 19...Rxa7?? 20.Rd1) 20.Nxc6 Bxc6=. Sometimes it's better to be lucky than good.

18.e5!

The dream comes true. White is allowed to keep queens on the board.

18...Bxa1 19.Qxb6



19...Rdb8?

One mistake follows another. I had seen this idea well ahead of time and knew it was bad. A much better try was the desperado 19...Bxe5!. Black has counterplay after 20.fxe5 Qxe5 21.Qxc5

Rd5 and 20.Qxb7 Bd4 also gives Black chances. One possibility is 21.Bf2 Rdb8 22.Qxe7 Re8 23.Qb7 Rxa7 24.Qxa7 Rxe2 25.Qa8+ Qf8 26.Qxf8+ Kxf8 27.Bxd4 cxd4 28.Rd1 Rxa2 29.Rxd4 with a draw.

20.Rxa1 Bf3 21.Qxc5

My original intention was 21.Qxb8+! Rxb8 22.Bxf3 with three minor pieces for the queen. During the game I thought playing in such a manner would give me good chances to win the "most interesting game" prize donated by Walt Champion. This is indeed pretty crushing, but as I was down to about fifteen minutes, I thought it would be easier to play the text move in time pressure.

21...Bxe2 22.Nc6 Qf8!?

White has a pawn and a powerful initiative for the exchange. Black makes a practical decision, offering back the exchange. I did not want to take a lot of time here, so I "pretended" Black had moved his rook and played for an attack.

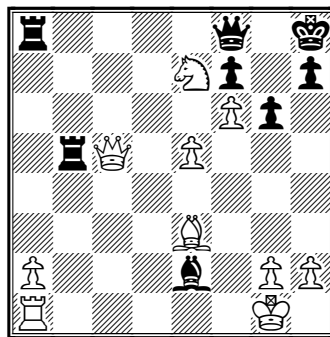
23.Nxe7+

23.Nxb8 is good enough as well.

23...Kg7?!

My opponent missed my next move, but the position is beyond saving anyway. If 23...Kh8, 24.f5 is still strong.

24.f5 Rb5 25.f6+ Kh8



26.Qc1!

White's bishop will come to h6. There is no defense.

26...Qd8 27.Bh6 Qd4+ 28.Kh1 Rg8 29.Bg7+ Rxc7 30.Qc8+ 1-0

While this was happening, Pismenny defeated Ivanov. More luck for me. In the

In microcosm the opening represents modern chess itself: never mind how it looks; does it work?
John Cox, *Starting Out: Sicilian Sveshnikov*

third round I played a short but theoretically interesting draw against Riordan. We grabbed some lunch and I was able to rest up a bit for the evening round.

D. Vigorito - A. Pismenny

Massachusetts Open (4) 2007
King's Indian Defense [E94]

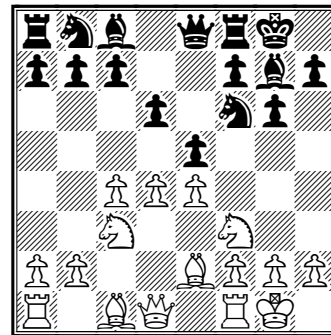
1.d4 g6 2.c4 Bg7 3.e4 d6 4.Nc3

Here I deviated from our previous encounter that went 4.Nf3 Bg4 5.Be3 Nc6 6.Be2 e5 7.d5 Bxf3 8.Bxf3 Nd4 9.Bxd4 exd4 10.Nd2, which is perhaps marginally better for White.

4...Nf6

Black just transposes to a King's Indian. Objectively this is probably the best decision, but this is yet another good opening for me.

5.Nf3 0-0 6.Be2 e5 7.0-0 Qe8



A strange move, but not one I was unfamiliar with. At Foxwoods in 2006, Pismenny played 7...Nc6 against me and I won a long game.

8.dxe5 dxe5 9.b4

Earlier this year, I played 9.Be3, when Foygel tried 7...Qe8. After a back and forth struggle, the game was eventually drawn. It is important to play very purposefully against such sidelines in order to get an advantage.

9...Qe7 10.Qb3

Khalifman recommends the immediate 10.b5 in his "According to Kramnik" series. I think my move may be more accurate, although this was more by accident than design. The idea of both moves is to play a quick Bc1-a3, and the two moves can transpose.

10...c6

The only way to test my idea is by playing 10...Nc6, but this commits Black to an exchange sacrifice after 11.b5 Nd4 12.Nxd4 exd4 13.Ba3.

11.b5 Nbd7

This leads to trouble. Black has to play 11...Rd8 12.Ba3 Qe8, but I still like White after 13.Rfd1.

12.bxc6!

This is more accurate than 12.Ba3 c5, when White is still better, but the position is so closed that it is not easy to exploit White's initiative.

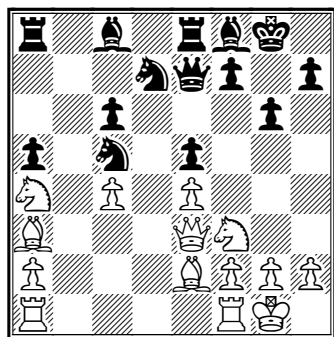
12...bxc6 13.Ba3 Nc5?

This self pin will lose material. 13...c5 was forced, but compared to the previous note, White has open lines to work with.

14.Qb4 Nfd7 15.Na4 a5 16.Qd2 Re8

16...Nxe4 does not work, because after 17.Bxe7, White's queen is protected, so White will emerge up a piece.

17.Qe3 Bf8



18.Nd2?

This is a big mistake. My original intention was to play 18.Rfd1. White threatens 19.Rxd7, winning two very good minors for a rook. Black could try the desperate 18...Nxa4 19.Bxe7 Bxe7. I intended to sacrifice a pawn with 20.c5 to open lines for my pieces.

18...Rb8?

We both missed 18...Qd8!. The tactical point is that after 19.Nxc5 Nxc5 20.Bxc5 Bxc5 21.Qxc5, Black has 21...Qxd2. Computer analysis tends to dispel any illusions we have about our "flawless" games.

19.Rab1

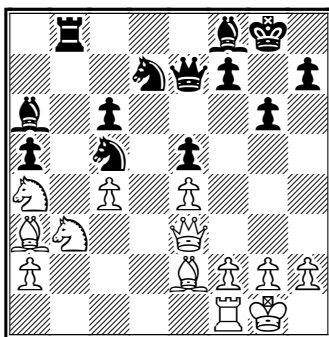
I wanted to trade a set of rooks. Instead, 19.Nb3 Rb4 20.bxb4 axb4 21.Naxc5 Nxc5 22.Nxc5 Qxc5 23.Qxc6 Bxc5 does not look easy. Black having a rook makes a big difference because it increases his chances for counterplay, and White's rooks do not have much scope.

19...Ba6

19...Rb4 20.Rxb4 axb4 21.Bxb4 was my idea, but Black has 21...Qd8, so it

would be better to just take the exchange. Instead, 19...Rxb1 20.Rxb1 Qd8! still works. I must admit, I doubt I would have awoken to this fact. Objectively, 20.Nxb1! would win after 20...Ba6 21.Rd1 and again I can win two minors for a rook.

20.Rxb8 Rxb8 21.Nb3



Now winning the exchange is decisive, as Black does not have a rook and I can take my time probing the position.

21...Rb4 22.Bxb4 axb4 23.Naxc5 Nxc5 24.Nxc5 Qxc5 25.Qxc5 Bxc5 26.Rb1 Kg7 27.Kf1 Kf6 28.Ke1 h5 29.Kd2 Kg5 30.g3 h4 31.Rf1 Bc8 32.f4+ exf4 33.gxh4+! 1-0

Black will lose a pawn.

In the fourth round, Ivanov had overpressed against MacIntyre and lost, so he was out. The fifth round saw Kelleher, MacIntyre, and myself at 3½/4. Curdo was the only one at 3/4, so the pairing were Kelleher - Vigorito and Curdo - MacIntyre. Both games ended in draws, but no one caught up with the four of us, so the stage was set for Vigorito - MacIntyre and Kelleher - Curdo. Kelleher offered Curdo a quick draw, so I thought I had to take my shot at the title, especially because I had White.

Vigorito - P. MacIntyre

Massachusetts Open (6) 2007
King's Indian Defense [E92]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.e4 0-0 5.Nf3 d6 6.Be2 e5

As expected Paul sticks with his King's Indian. While the KID is undoubtedly playable, it is not exactly the most solid opening. Paul was rather unlucky heading into the last round, because the forced pairing meant he would get a fourth Black in six games. This boded

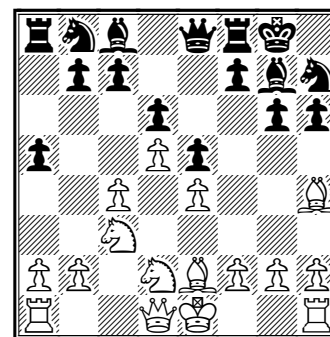
well for me, because the inevitable King's Indian is an opening I score well against. Since this game I have played Paul twice with white. He played the Old Indian in a G/60 and the Czech Benoni at the New England Masters. In both games I had to beg for a draw like a scared little bunny. 7.d5!

I often play 7.0-0 here, but after 7...Nc6 8.d5 Ne7 9.Ne1 Nd7 10.Be3 f5 11.f3 f4 12.Bf2 g5, any mistake by White can be punished by checkmate. The tournament situation demanded a more strategic, if less critical, course of action.

7...a5 8.Bg5 h6 9.Bh4 Qe8

This is slightly inaccurate. Normal would be 9...Na6, followed by something like 10.Nd2 Bd7 11.0-0 Qe8 12.b3 Nh7 13.a3 h5 14.f3 Bh6 with a complicated game.

10.Nd2 Nh7?



But this is a real mistake. Black really had to play 10...Na6.

11.a3! a4

This is the only way to stop White from playing b2-b4 in one go, as 11...Na6 can still be met by 12.b4, because of the pin on the a-file. This could have been avoided if Black had played ...Na6 and ...Bd7 more quickly.

12.Nb5!

Black has no good way to cover his queenside.

12...Qd7

This is ugly, no doubt, but after 12...Na6, I can just snap up the pawn with 13.Qxa4. It is not only the pawn itself that is important – once the pawn goes I can quickly play b2-b4 sidelining the a6-knight.

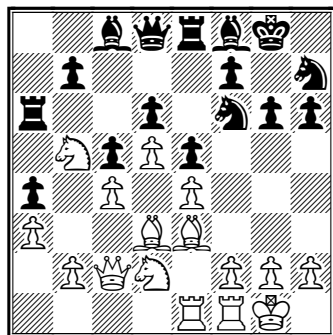
13.0-0 h5 14.f3 Bh6

If we compare this to the position I mention in the note to Black's ninth move, we can see that Black's position lacks coordination because of the oddly

placed black queen. How can he develop his queenside? Black's last move does have a slight threat. If I am not careful, Black may play ...Na6, because White's queen cannot take the a4-pawn, as White's queen must protect the d2-knight.

15.Nb1!

Paul told me he expected this prophylactic move. He knows me well enough to realize that my genius has no bounds. Not only is ...Na6 prevented, but 15.N1c3 is threatened, after which the a4-pawn will fall. This reminded me of another recent game I had:



17.Nb1! Ng4 18.Bd2 Ng5 19.f3 Nf6 20.N1c3 Nh5 21.Qc1 Be7 22.Bc2! f5? 23.exf5 gxf5 24.f4! exf4 25.Bxf4 Rf8 26.h4 Nf7 27.Bxh6 Bxh4 28.Bxf8 Bxe1 (28...Bg3 29.Be7) 29.Qxe1 Kxf8 30.Bxf5 Bxf5 31.Rxf5 Ng7 32.Rf1 Qe7 33.Ne4 Qe5 34.Qf2 1-0, Vigorito - Chase, Somerville 2007.

15...Be3+ 16.Kh1 Bc5

Black's last two moves were necessary to save the a4-pawn. Now 17.N1c3? can be met by 17...c6, trapping the b5-knight. However, Black's dark-squared bishop has wandered away from the kingside, and this did not escape my attention.

17.Qd2!

Eyeing the h6-square and contemplating f3-f4.

17...f6

This was played after long thought. Upon 17...Kg7 18.f4, White holds the initiative all over the board. After 17...f6, however, 18.f4 can be met by 18...exf4 and White cannot recapture the pawn so easily because of ...g5.

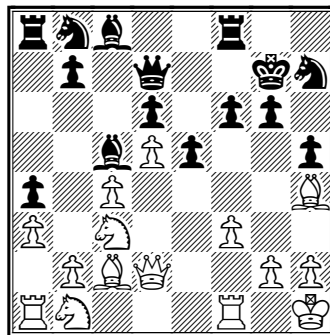
18.Bd1!

Taking aim at the a4-pawn again, as in the game against Chase. 18.Qh6 g5 is not so clear.

18...Kg7 19.Bc2

Now I may even threaten to win the pawn with 20.Qd1, so Black feels compelled to do something.

19...c6 20.N5c3 cxd5 21.exd5!



This is an unusual move, but it is very strong. White maintains control over the b5-square and can even look to the kingside now. 21.Nxd5 Nc6 allows Black to at least activate his pieces. The natural 21.cxd5 is not as good. If 21...b5 22.Bd3 Ba6 23.Na2!, gives White a nice bind on the queenside, but 21...Qe8, intending ...Bd7, ...b5 gives Black some hope.

21...Bd4?

This move is easy to criticize, but it is difficult to suggest moves for Black.

22.Nb5! Bxb2 23.Ra2

This rook is destined for better things.

23...Bd4 24.Nxd4 exd4 25.Qxd4

White has the bishop-pair to add to his assets.

25...Na6

Finally! But it is very late. White now sends another knight to the b5-square.

26.Nc3 Nc5 27.Nb5

The threat of Bh4-g3, pressuring the d6-pawn, is always hanging over Black. Perhaps the immediate 27...Ra5, intending to sacrifice the exchange, would have lasted longer.

27...Ra6 28.Re1 b6 29.Bb1!

Here comes the a2-rook.

29...Rf7 30.Rae2 Ra5

I thought Black would have to do this eventually. 30...Nf8 would lose immediately to 31.Re7!, threatening 32.Qxf6+.

31.Re6 Rxb5 32.cxb5 Qd8

Paul was down to less than two minutes here. I had over twenty, but I started burning a lot of time here looking for a knockout.

33.Re8 Qd7 34.Bg3 Bb7 35.R8e6 Qxb5 36.Rxd6 Qb3 37.h3

I was low on time now as well and decided I did not have to force matters.

Sometimes doing nothing can push the opponent into the abyss.

37...Ng5 38.Bh4 Nh7 39.Kh2

Another "safe" move. Instead, 39.Bxf6+ Nxf6 40.Rxf6 Rxf6 41.Re7+ Kg8 42.Qxf6 Qxb1+ 43.Kh2 would mate. The text is fine though, and very practical. Black loses patience.

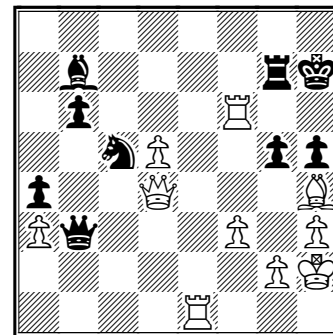
39...g5? 40.Bxh7 Kxh7

Instead, 40...gxh4 41.Re7! wins quickly.

41.Rxf6

Here too 41.Re7 won, but I saw a clean win.

41...Rg7



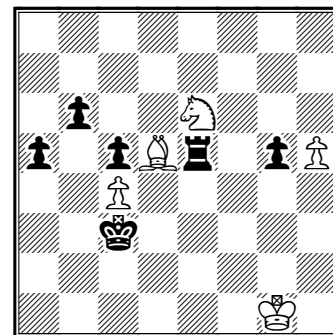
42.Bxg5! 1-0

Black is mated after either 42...Rxg5 43.Re7+ Rg7 44.Rh6+! or 43...Kg8 44.Rf8+! Kxf8 45.Qf6+, so after almost not playing, I managed to win my first Massachusetts State Championship.

In closing, I would like to show an interesting endgame.

H. Terrie - K. Ma

Massachusetts Open, 2007



I strolled by the board when this position arose between wily veteran NM Hal Terrie and the up-and-coming Kevin Ma. White had about seven minutes to Black's three. It quickly becomes clear that it will be virtually impossible for White to stop

Black's a-pawn from queening, so White must queen his own h-pawn. If Black is allowed to sacrifice his rook for the pawn, White will probably not save the game. The first couple of moves are compulsory.

1.h6 g4

Black needs to have ...Rh5 available.

2.Ng7

2...h7 fails to 2...Rh5 2.Ng5 Re8 (2...Rxc7 3.Bf7!) 3.h7 Rh8 and Black will queen.

2...a4

At first I thought that 2...Re3 3.Bf7 would win for White, but after 3...Rg3+! White will lose either his bishop or his h-pawn. 3.Bg2 is trickier, but after 3...Rd3 4.Ne8 (4.Ne6 Rd7 5.Be4 a4 6.h7 Rxh7 7.Bxh7 a3++) 4...Rd7 5.Nf6 Rd8 6.Bc6 Rh8 7.Nxg4 Kb3, Black wins.

3.h7 a3 4.h8Q a2

White has a queen, bishop and knight against a rook, but the a-pawn cannot be stopped.

5.Ne6?

A better try was 5.Qa8 Re1+ 6.Kg2 a1Q 7.Qxa1+ Rxa1. Black is better, but White has good drawing chances because there are so few pawns remaining. Thus 2...Re3 was the most accurate move. With so little time though it is not easy to realize this at the board!

5...a1Q+ 6.Kg2

At the time I thought 6.Kh2 was a better try, so that White may play Bd5-g2, but now I think it does not really matter. White is lost.

6...Kb4 7.Qh6? Re2+ 8.Kg3 Qg1+ 9.Kf4 Qe3+ 0-1

One more thing...

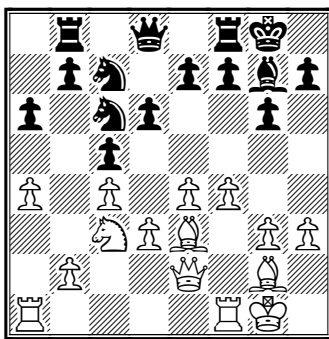
Die by the Sword

I play in too many of these G/60 events. Sometimes I go 4-0, but some of these experts are dangerous.

The 15th World Computer Chess Championship took place in Amsterdam, Netherlands, June 11-18, 2007. Rybka won with 10/11.

Also, Rybka, playing black in every game, won a six game handicap match against Jaan Ehlevest (2629) 4½-1½.

C. Thiel - D. Vigorito BCC, Somerville (2), 2007



After some sort of English Opening, Black has comfortably equalized and looks forward to seizing the initiative on the queenside.

14.Nd5 b5

Rather sloppy. 14...Nxd5 15.cxd5 Nd4 with ...b5 coming, is nice for Black.

15.Nxc7 Qxc7 16.axb5 axb5 17.cxb5 Rxb5 18.e5!

Now White has some counterplay because he has opened up the position for his bishops and destabilized the pawn structure.

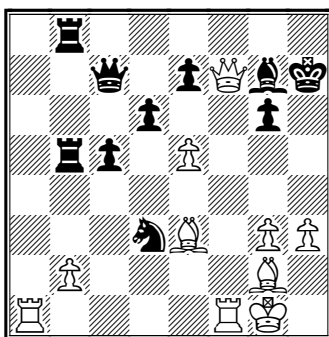
18...Rfb8 19.Qf3 Nb4 20.f5

I saw this coming and was rather annoyed. I intended to play 20...Nc2, but at the last moment I changed my mind.

20...Nxd3? 21.fxg6 hxg6?

After 21...fxg6, I had missed 22.Qd5+. White is better, but Black can fight on after 22...Kh8 23.Qxd3 Bxe5.

22.Qxf7+ Kh7



Black is just lost but I had hoped to wiggle out. Suddenly I saw something and I had a sick feeling. Chris Chase was sitting next to me and I could tell he saw it too. I held my breath.

23.Qc4+-

This is strong and White went on to win easily, but there is better. Can you find it?

After 23.Qxg6+!! Kxg6 24.Be4+ Kh5 25.Rf5+ Kg6 26.Rf6+ Kh5 27.Bg6#, the spectators would have showered the board with gold coins.

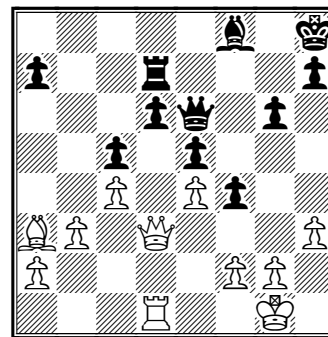
Here are the games that won the "most interesting game" prize at the MA Open. The game Vigorito-Meredith can be found on page 21.

White: Keller, Joshua (1375)

Black: Cook, Richard (1083)

76th Massachusetts Open/U1500 Marlboro, MA (1), 26.05.2007 [B72]

1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 g6 5.Be2 Bg7 6.Be3 Nf6 7.Nc3 0-0 8.0-0 d6 9.Bc4 Bd7 10.h3 Rc8 11.Bb3 Nxd4 12.Bxd4 b6 13.Re1 e5 14.Be3 Bc6 15.Qd3 Rc7 16.Rad1 Rd7 17.Nd5 Nxd5 18.Bxd5 Ba8 19.Qb5 Qe7 20.Rd3 Kh8 21.Red1 Bxd5 22.Rxd5 f5 23.Qd3 f4 24.Bc1 Rc8 25.c4 Rc5 26.Rxc5 bxc5 27.b3 Bf8 28.Ba3 Qe6



29.Bxc5 f3 30.Qxf3 Kg8 31.Qd3 g5 32.f3 h5 33.Qd5 Qxd5 34.Rxd5 Kf7 35.Be3 Be7 36.Ra5 Rd8 37.Rxa7 Ke6 38.Rxe7+ Kf6 39.Rc7 Ra8 40.Ra7 Rc8 41.Ra6 g4 42.hxg4 hxg4 43.Rxd6+ Ke7 44.Ra6 g3 45.a4 Kf7 46.a5 Rd8 47.Kf1 Rd3 48.Ke2 Rxb3 49.Rb6 Ra3 50.a6 Ke7 51.a7 Rxa7 52.Re6+ Kxe6 53.Bxa7 Kd6 54.Kd3 Kc6 55.Be3 Kd6 56.c5+ Kc6 57.Kc4 Kb7 58.Kb5 Kc7 59.c6 Kb8 60.Kb6 Ka8 61.Kc5 Kb8 62.Kd6 Kc8 63.c7 1-0

White: Perez, Hector (1627)

Black: Lunetta, Richard (1499)

76th Massachusetts Open/U1750 Marlboro, MA (4), 27.05.2007 [A20]

1.Nf3 Nf6 2.g3 Nc6 3.Bg2 e5 4.c4 d5 5.cxd5 Nxd5 6.d3 Bc5 7.0-0 f6 8.Nc3

Continued on page 35

further protection for my weak a-pawn. Sometimes, I have been known to castle queenside if I feel kingside castling is unsafe.

11.Rac1 c5 12.Rfd1 0-0 13.Bb1 Re8

With this move, I plan on preparing and playing the move, e5. Even though White's position looks good, it's roughly even.

14.Ne1 Qc7 15.Nd3 e5

Grabbing my share of the center.

16.d5

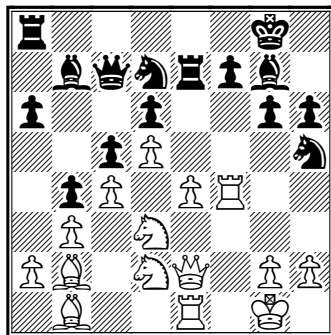
This move changes the entire landscape of the position. Now, both sides will reposition their pieces to reflect the closed center.

A big battle emerges much like some past games in the Old Benoni, as in the following sample game. Harry Golombek - Petar Trifunovic, Amsterdam 17, 1950: 1.d4 c5 2.d5 e5 3.e4 d6 4.Nc3 a6 5.a4 g6 6.f4 exf4 7.Bxf4 Bg7 8.Nf3 Nf6 9.Be2 Bg4 10.0-0-0 11.h3 Bxf3 12.Bxf3 Ne8 13.Qd2 Nd7 14.Kh1 Ne5 15.Be2 b6 16.Nd1 Nf6 17.Qe3 Nfd7 18.Bh6 Re8 19.Bxg7 Kxg7 20.Qf4 h6 21.h4 Nf6 22.Ne3 Qe7 23.Rae1 Ra7 24.Kg1 b5 25.axb5 axb5 26.Bxb5 Rb8 27.Bd3 Nh5 28.Qh2 Rxb2 29.Rf5 Nf6 30.Ref1 Nfg4 31.Rxe5 Nxe5 32.Qg3 Kh7 33.h5 Qg5 34.Qxg5 hxg5 35.hxg6+ Kxg6 36.Kh2 Ra3 37.Nf5 c4 38.Ne7+ Kg7 39.Nf5+ Kf8 40.Be2 Rxc2 41.Rb1 Ra8 42.Bh5 0-1.

16...Bf8

I fully expected White to play f4 and battle for the e5-square. My move is the first step toward repositioning my dark-squared bishop to g7 to help me control the e5-square.

17.e4 g6 18.Rf1 Bg7 19.Rce1 Re7 20.f4 exf4 21.Rxf4 Nh5



This move seems necessary to me in order for me to win the battle for the e5-

square. I am able to temporarily remove two of White's pieces from the attack of the e5-square and continue to get more assistance from my other pieces.

22.Rh4 Bxb2 23.Nxb2 Kg7

Protecting against the moves g4 and Rh6.

24.Qf3 Ne5 25.Qh3 Rh8

Once again protecting against White's intended g4 and Rh6. In addition, now I am able to relocate my light-squared bishop that has been primarily a spectator up until this point.

26.Nd3 Bc8 27.Qe3 Nf6

Black's position is under control, but I am still concerned about White deciding to refocus his attention to the e5-square. So, it's time to relocate my knight on h5 and head it to the fight for the e5-square. Ultimately, winning control of the e5-square means White's light-squared bishop will be very useless.

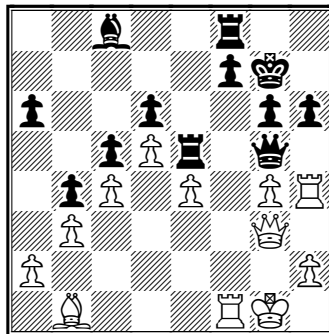
28.Nxe5 Rxe5 29.Nf3 Ree8 30.Qd2 Nd7 31.Qf4 Ne5 32.g4?

This error was caused by White's lack of time. Better was 32.Rf1.

32...Qe7

A very solid move that keeps the pressure on White, without having any of the complications and risks of a move like g5.

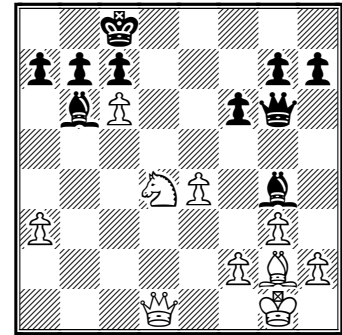
33.Nxe5 Qxe5 34.Qf3 Qg5 35.Rf1 Rhf8 36.Qg3 Re5 0-1



White was very low on time and faced with a very bad position, so he just let his time run out. Black has a solid advantage on the board, as both White's bishop and White's rook on h4 are very poorly placed. My plan in this position was to maintain my stranglehold on the e5-square and the kingside, while starting to work White over on the queenside with moves like Bd7, Ra8, a5, a4, bxa4, Ra3, etc.

MA Open continued from page 25

8...Nxc3 9.bxc3 Be6 10.Qc2 Qd7 11.Rd1 Bh3 12.Bh1 Qf5 13.e4 Qg6 14.d4 exd4 15.cxd4 Bb6 16.Be3 0-0-0 17.Rac1 Rd7 18.a3 Rhd8 19.d5 Bxe3 20.dxc6 Rxd1+ 21.Rxd1 Rxd1+ 22.Qxd1 Bb6 23.Bg2 Be6 24.Nd4 Bg4

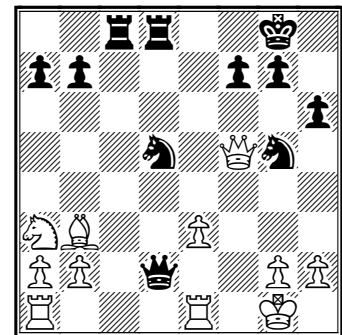


25.cxb7+ Kb8 26.Nc6+ Kxb7 27.Qd5 Qg5 28.Na5+ Kc8 29.Qg8+ Kd7 30.Qf7+ Kd6 31.Nb7+ Ke5 32.Qd5# 1-0

White: Brudno, Stephen (1945)

Black: Krishnamurthy, Vishwa (1885)
76th Massachusetts Open/U2000
Marlboro, MA (3), 27.05.2007 [A31]

1.d4 Nf6 2.c4 c5 3.Nf3 cxd4 4.Nxd4 e5 5.Nb5 d5 6.cxd5 Qa5+ 7.N5c3 Bf5 8.e3 Bb4 9.Bd2 0-0 10.Bc4 Na6 11.0-0 Rac8 12.Bb3 Bd3 13.Re1 e4 14.f3 Rfd8 15.fxe4 Bxe4 16.Nxe4 Nxe4 17.Bxb4 Nxb4 18.Na3 Nxd5 19.Qh5 Qd2 20.Qf3 Ng5 21.Qf5 h6



22.Rad1 Nxe3 23.Rxd2 Nxf5 24.Rxd8+ Rxd8 25.Re5 Nh4 26.Re7 Rd2 27.g3 Nhf3+ 28.Kf1 Nh3 29.Re2 Nxb2+ 30.Ke1 Nf3+ 31.Kf1 Nh2+ 32.Ke1 Nf3+ 33.Kf1 Rxe2 34.Kxe2 Nd4+ 35.Kd3 Nxb3 36.axb3 f5 37.Nb5 g5 38.Nxa7 Nf2+ 39.Ke3 Ne4 40.Kf3 Nd2+ 41.Ke3 Nxb3 42.Nb5 Kf7 43.Kd3 Ke6 44.Kc3 Nc5 45.Kc4 Ne4 46.Nd4+ Ke5 47.Ne2 h5 48.b4 g4 49.Kb5 Nxg3 50.Nxg3 h4 51.Nf1 g3 52.Kb6 g2 0-1