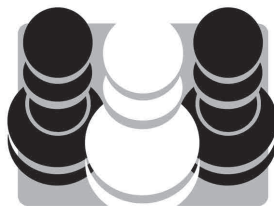


*The Italian Renaissance II*

# The Main Lines

By

**Martyn Kravtsiv**



Quality Chess  
[www.qualitychess.co.uk](http://www.qualitychess.co.uk)

# Contents

|                                      |     |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| Key to Symbols used & Bibliography   | 4   |
| Preface                              | 5   |
| Introduction                         | 7   |
| <b>Part I: The ...d7-d5 Break</b>    | 15  |
| 1 Introduction to 6...d5             | 17  |
| 2 8...a6                             | 33  |
| 3 9.♘bd2 ♖h8                         | 47  |
| 4 8...a5                             | 61  |
| <b>Part II: Lines with ...a7-a6</b>  | 71  |
| 5 Introduction to 6...a6 7.a4 ♘a7    | 73  |
| 6 9...h6 10.♘bd2 ♗e8                 | 91  |
| 7 9...♘e7                            | 105 |
| 8 9...♖h8                            | 129 |
| 9 9...♙e6 and 9...b5                 | 147 |
| 10 Black delays ...♙a7               | 165 |
| <b>Part III: Lines with ...a7-a5</b> | 181 |
| 11 5...0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.♗e1            | 183 |
| <b>Part IV: Early Deviations</b>     | 211 |
| 12 3...g6 and Lines with ...♙e7      | 213 |
| 13 3...♘f6 4.d3 h6                   | 239 |
| Variation Index                      | 256 |

# Preface

---

When I was taken to a chess school as a child, the instructors taught me to play 1.e4 with White and to reply with 1...e5. It was just a few years ago that I embraced some other moves, but at the same time I have never abandoned the moves of the king's pawns.

Over the past few years I have spent a fair amount of time studying the Italian Game while playing it for both colours. As a result I have accumulated a large quantity of analysis which forms the basis of this book. Practically all the variations have been examined afresh, and some have been corrected thanks to the increased power of present-day computers.

Notwithstanding its great popularity, the Italian Game still contains plenty of life and scope for new ideas. This has to do with the fact that in quiet positions there is rarely a single strongest move – usually there will be a few moves of approximately equal worth. Moreover, mastering all the nuances and different move-orders is a highly complex affair. In consequence I have succeeded in finding one or two new ideas or improvements in virtually every line.

I made the decision to write in Russian, as the Italian Game is often about understanding ideas as well as knowing the precise moves. I felt I could communicate these ideas more clearly in Russian, then the excellent translator John Sugden expressed them in English, for which I thank him.

This book is the second volume of my work about 1.e4 e5. The first volume covered 2.♘c4 and also 2.♗f3 ♘f6 – the Petroff Defence. In this volume the starting point is 1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♗c6 3.♘c4 – the Italian Game. I will give more details about the content of this book in the Introduction that follows. Together the two volumes combine to give White confidence in meeting 1.e4 e5 and having flexibility in which move order to use, even from move 2.

This book will be of use to chessplayers of any level; nobody, after all, will say no to obtaining a good position out of the opening. Possibly the book will be no less useful to those who play the Italian Game with the black pieces, seeing that practically all defences to the Italian are examined, and I will offer improvements and novelties even for Black.

I have tried to assess the positions objectively, and not to conceal any strong moves for the sake of showing White's ideas in a favourable light; in such cases I consider it better to acknowledge candidly that if the opponent finds one or two accurate moves he will manage to reach a normal position. For all that, White often does succeed in securing a plus, even if only a small one; the suggested ideas for the white side appear highly promising.

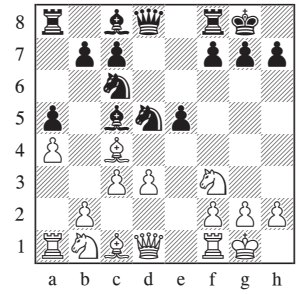
I think this book serves as further confirmation that chess is still a long way away from the “draw death”, and that, despite all the accumulated knowledge and technical progress, the game still offers ample scope for new ideas and continued study.

Martyn Kravtsiv  
June 2020

---

# Chapter 4

---



## 8...a5

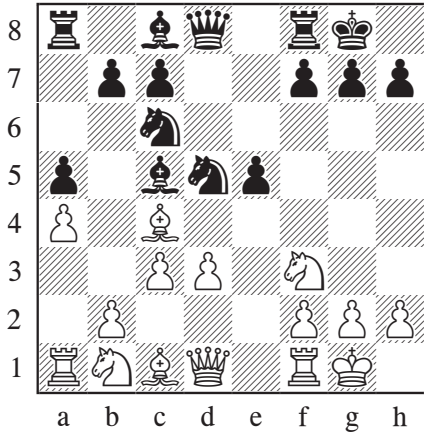
### Variation Index

---

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 ♘xd5 8.a4 a5

|   |    |
|---|----|
| A) 9.♞e1                                      | 62 |
| B) 9.♘bd2! ♘b6 10.♙b5 ♙d6 11.♞e1              | 63 |
| B1) 11...♘a7                                  | 63 |
| B2) 11...♙g4                                  | 64 |
| B21) 12.h3                                    | 64 |
| B22) 12.♘e4! ♘a7 13.h3 ♙h5 14.d4 ♘xb5 15.axb5 | 65 |
| B221) 15...f6                                 | 65 |
| B222) 15...exd4                               | 66 |

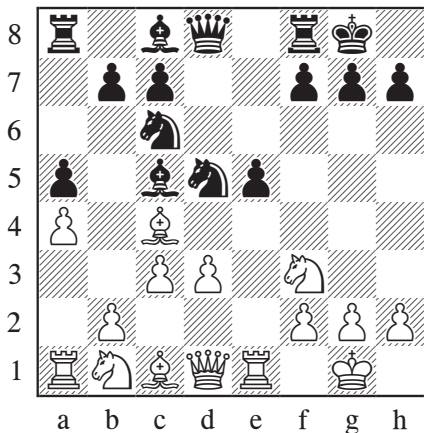
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6  
5.d3 0–0 6.0–0 d5 7.exd5 ♘xd5 8.a4 a5



The pawn move to a5 has been adopted a few times by Aronian and others, but most of these games were played with fast time controls. Black stops White from playing b2-b4 but weakens the b5-square in the process. On studying this variation I realized that White needs to be accurate in his choice of move order, and that even some slight imprecision can allow Black to equalize fully.

We examine A) 9.♙e1 and B) 9.♘bd2!

#### A) 9.♙e1



This usually leads to the same position as 9.♘bd2, but Black has an interesting extra possibility.

#### 9...♘b6!?

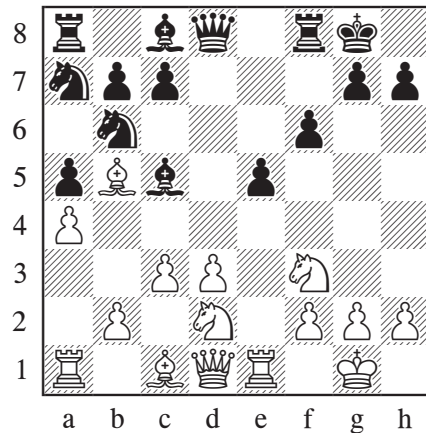
With 9...♙g4 10.♘bd2 ♘b6 11.♙b5 ♙d6, variation B2 is reached.

#### 10.♙b5

Or 10.♙g5 ♗d6 11.♙b5 f6 12.♙h4 ♙f5±.

#### 10...f6 11.♘bd2 ♘a7

Vidit – Piorun, Batumi 2018, saw 11...♙g4 12.h3 ♙h5 13.♘e4 ♙d6 14.♘g3 with a slight edge for White. He should meet 14...♙f7 with 15.♘h4.



#### 12.♘b3!±N

Harikrishna – Shirov, St Petersburg 2018, went: 12.d4 exd4 13.♘e4 ♘xb5 14.♘xc5 (14.axb5 ♙d6=) 14...♗d5!∞ With the aid of this intermediate move, Black prevents White from seizing the initiative.

#### 12...♙e7

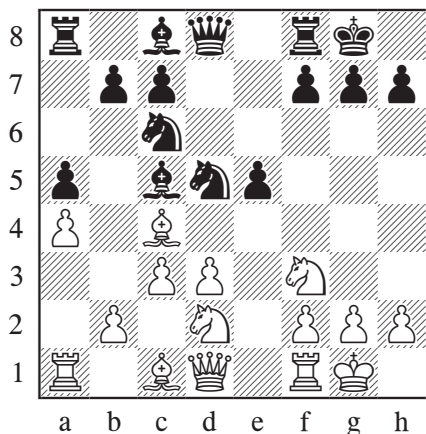
After 12...♘xb5 13.axb5± Black still loses his a5-pawn.

#### 13.♘xa5 c5!±

With a complex, obscure position. Of course most players are unlikely to know about this

possibility, but it's nonetheless simpler to play 9.♖bd2 rather than 9.♙e1.

### B) 9.♖bd2!



9...♖b6 10.♙b5 ♙d6

Alternatively:

a) 10...♙g4 11.♙e1 ♙d6 12.♖e4 transposes to variation B2.

b) 10...♙f5 11.♖e4 ♙d6 (after 11...♙xe4 12.dxe4± White has a stable plus due to his good light-squared bishop) 12.♙g5± Thanks to his well-placed knight on e4 and his more active minor pieces, White has seized the initiative. On 12...f6 he can withdraw his bishop to e3. Against 12...♗d7, a good move is 13.♙e1.

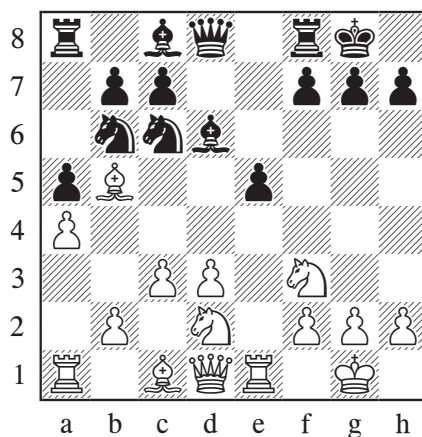
c) 10...f6 11.d4 (11.♙e1 transposes to variation A) 11...exd4 12.♖b3 ♙d6 13.♖fxd4± As a consequence of Black's ...f7-f6, White has a small but stable advantage.

### 11.♙e1

White has to play accurately, paying attention to the order of moves.

Instead 11.♖e4 gives Black the possibility of: 11...♖a7!? 12.d4 (after 12...♙e3!? ♖xb5

13.axb5 ♖d5 the position is approximately equal) 12...♖xb5!? Taking the bishop on b5 at once is probably best (12...exd4 13.♖xd6 ♗xd6, as in Duda – So, Internet 2018, gives White the extra option of ♖xd4 with the idea of ♖xb5). 13.axb5 (or 13.dxe5 ♖xc3 14.bxc3 ♙e7∞) 13...exd4 14.♖xd6 ♗xd6 15.♗xd4 ♗xd4 16.♖xd4 ♙d7= And Black has no noticeable problems.



Now Black has **B1) 11...♖a7** and **B2) 11...♙g4**.

Also possible is: 11...♙f5 12.♖b3 ♙e8 (or 12...♖a7 13.♖xe5± and when the exchanges are over, White will pick up the a5-pawn) 13.♙e3 ♖d5 14.♖fd2± White usually arranges his knights on f3 and g3, but in this case he frees the f3-square for his queen.

### B1) 11...♖a7 12.♙c4!

This is why we left our knight on d2! It doesn't pay Black to take the bishop on c4, since with his knight on a7 his pawns would be left vulnerable.

### 12...♙f5

In the case of 12...♖xc4 13.♖xc4 f6± White has the advantage after either 14.d4!? or the simple 14.♖xa5.

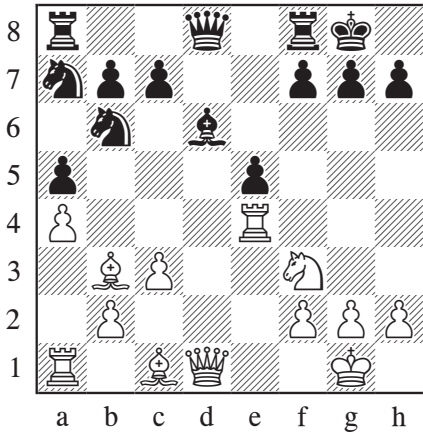
**13. ♖b3?!**

A very cunning idea in place of the simple 13. ♘e5, although that move too leaves White with a small plus after 13... ♙e5 14. ♞xe5 ♙xd3 15. ♙xd3 ♞xd3 16. ♞f1!. For example: 16... ♞xf1† 17. ♚xf1 ♘c6 18. ♞b5± The white bishop will soon come out to e3 or f4, giving Black trouble.

**13... ♙xd3?!**

A better option is 13... ♘c6 14. ♘e4± with only a slight advantage to White.

**14. ♘e4! ♙xe4 15. ♞xe4→**



Black might seem to have an extra pawn in a quiet position, but the rook is heading for g4 to start a dangerous attack! For example:

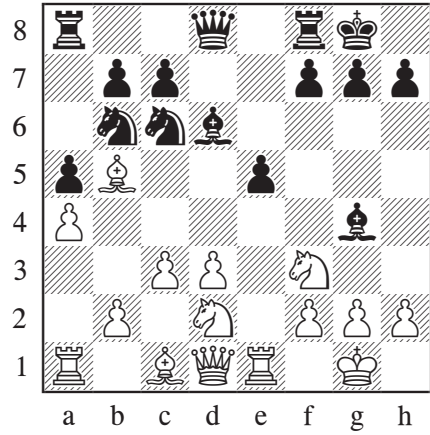
**15... ♘c6**

Or 15... ♘d7 which is no improvement; after 16. ♘g5 h6 17. ♞h5 ♞f6 18. ♞h4 the attack is dangerous.

**16. ♞g4 ♙e7 17. ♞e2**

And Black has no better move than 17... ♚h8, surrendering the e5-pawn; 17... ♞d6 18. ♙e3 is worse, and 17... ♙f6! 18. ♘g5! is also bad for Black.

**B2) 11... ♙g4**



Now White can choose between B21) 12.h3 and B22) 12. ♘e4!

**B21) 12.h3 ♙h5**

White's next move is obvious:

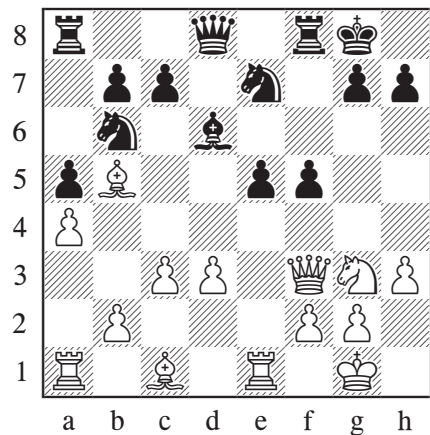
**13. ♘e4**

But Black can take advantage of the fact that his bishop is already on h5:

**13... ♙f5! 14. ♘g3**

Or 14. ♙g5 ♞e8 15. ♞b3† ♚h8 16. ♘d6 cxd6± with about equal chances.

**14... ♙xf3 15. ♞xf3 ♘e7!**





The availability of this move justifies Black's decision to play ...f7-f5 on move 13.

### 16. ♖xb7

A practically forced capture.

The game Vachier-Lagrave – Aronian, London 2016, saw instead: 16. ♕g5?! c6 17. ♕c4† ♖xc4 18. dxc4 e4 After 19. ♖xe4 fxe4 20. ♗xe4 Black could have continued strongly with 20... ♗d7! 21. c5 ♕xc5 22. ♕xe7 ♕xf2†, emerging with an extra pawn after 23. ♖h2 ♕xe1 24. ♕xf8 ♕xc3!.

### 16... ♖b8

If 16...c6?! then: 17. ♕c4† ♖xc4 18. ♗b3± The queen has escaped, and White remains a pawn up.

### 17. ♗f3 c6 18. ♕xc6 e4 19. dxe4 ♖xc6

Although White has several pawns for the piece, the position remains wholly unclear. A good reply to 20. ♖xf5 is 20... ♗f6.

### B22) 12. ♖e4!

Once again some accuracy on White's part is required.

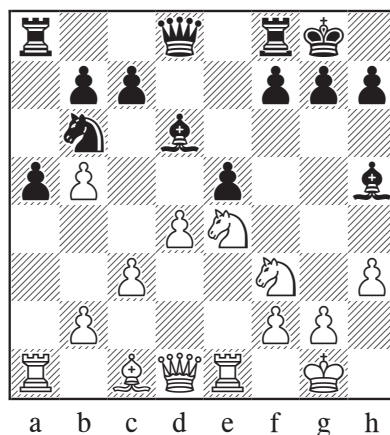
### 12... ♖a7

In this case Black cannot play: 12...f5? 13. ♗b3† ♖h8 14. ♖xd6 cxd6 15. ♖g5+- If his bishop were on h5, he would have had the resource ...♕f7 in reply to the queen check.

### 13. h3 ♕h5 14. d4 ♖xb5

Nothing is altered by 14...exd4 15. ♖xd6 ♗xd6 16. ♗xd4 (16... ♖xb5 17. axb5 transposes to variation B222).

### 15. axb5

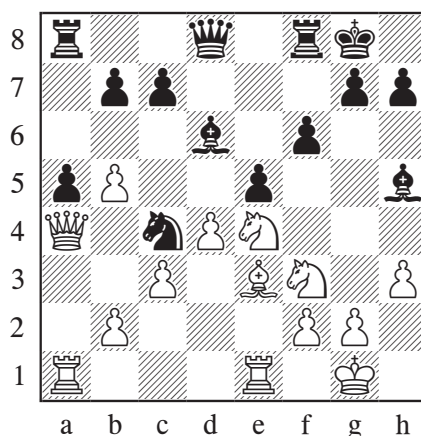


Here we examine B221) 15...f6 and B222) 15...exd4.

### B221) 15...f6 16. ♕e3

An inadequate try is: 16. dxe5 ♕xe5 17. ♗xd8 ♗fxd8 18. ♖xe5 fxe5= The presence of opposite bishops compensates for the weakness of the e5-pawn.

### 16... ♖c4 17. ♗a4±

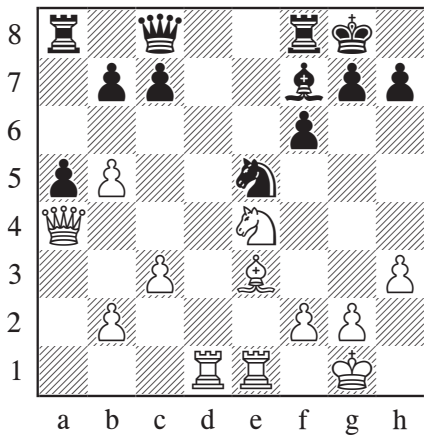


This position occurred twice within a short space of time in games between Ragger and V. Mikhalevski. In the first, Black obtained a good position; but in the second, Ragger improved his play and won.

**17...♙f7**

Or 17...♗xe3 18.♞xe3±, and now Black does badly with 18...♙xf3?! 19.♞xf3 exd4 20.♞xd4±; White has a large plus after 20...♙e5 21.♞c4† and ♗c5.

In the event of 17...♗b6!? 18.♞b3† ♙f7 19.♞c2± White has a slight edge due to his good pawn on b5.

**18.dxe5 ♙xe5 19.♗xe5 ♗xe5 20.♞ad1 ♞c8****21.♙d4±**

In the first of the games I mentioned, the continuation was 21.b3 ♞d8∞ with a comfortable position for Black in Ragger – Mikhalevski, Chalkidiki 2018.

Two months later, Ragger improved his play against the same opponent.

**21...♗c4 22.♙xf6 ♞f5**

Otherwise Black stands very badly.

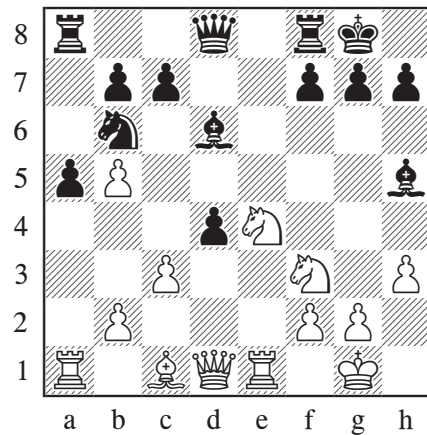
On 22...gxf6? 23.♗xf6† ♗h8, there can follow:

a) 24.♞d7? This being a rapid game, White goes somewhat astray. 24...♙g8 25.♞xc4 ♞xd7‡ was Ragger – Mikhalevski, St Petersburg (rapid) 2018.

b) 24.b3! ♞f5 25.♗g4+– with a winning advantage. The knight can't move away in view of ♞d4†, while ...h7-h5 loses to ♗h6.

**23.♙d4±**

White is a pawn to the good. Black can't play 23...♗xb2 on account of 24.♞c2 followed by ♗f6†.

**B222) 15...exd4****16.♗xd6**

The game Vachier-Lagrave – So, Paris 2018, saw the unsuccessful 16.g4 ♙g6 17.♗xd6 ♞xd6 18.♞xd4=. As a result of White's loss of tempo with g2-g4, Black has no problems.

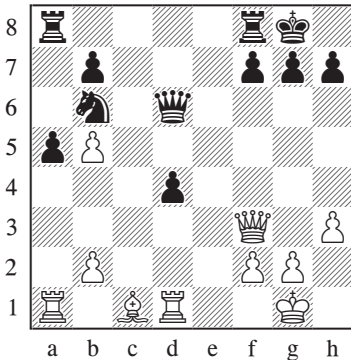
**16...♞xd6**

Or 16...♙xf3 17.♞xf3 ♞xd6 18.♞d1! (better than 18.♙f4 ♞d7∞), and now:

a) 18...♞fe8 19.♙f4 ♞c5 20.♞xb7 dxc3 21.bxc3± occurred in Giri – Aronian, Leuven 2016. Black has to defend his pawn on c7. On 21...♞ac8 White can simply capture with 22.♞xa5. In the case of 21...♞ec8 22.c4! ♞xc4 23.♞xa5!± White has a large plus in spite of the equal material. We answer 23...♞ab8 with 24.♞f3, and Black still has problems with the c7-pawn. For instance after 24...♞b4 25.♞a7! Black can't capture on b5 on account of the back-rank mate.

b) 18...♖e5 19.♖xd4 ♗xb5 20.♗xb7± and again Black has problems due to his weak queenside pawns.

c) 18...c5 19.cxd4 cxd4

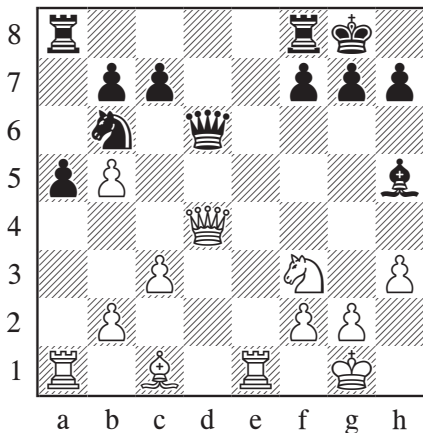


20.♗e3! With these possibilities:

c1) 20...d3 21.♖a3 ♘c4 22.♖axd3± ♗b4 (or 22...♗e6 23.♗xb7± and Black can't take on b2 in view of 24.♗xa8!) 23.♗d4 ♗xb5 24.♗c3!± With this quiet move, White unblocks the d-file and acquires a huge plus. Now 24...♘b2?! 25.♗g4 is hopeless for Black. The only line to leave him with saving chances is 24...f6! 25.♖d7 ♘e5.

c2) 20...♗d5 21.♗g3!, and now 21...♗xb5 is unplayable owing to 22.♗h6!. White has a substantial plus, since with play on opposite wings the bishop is much better than the knight.

17.♗xd4



17...♗xf3!±N

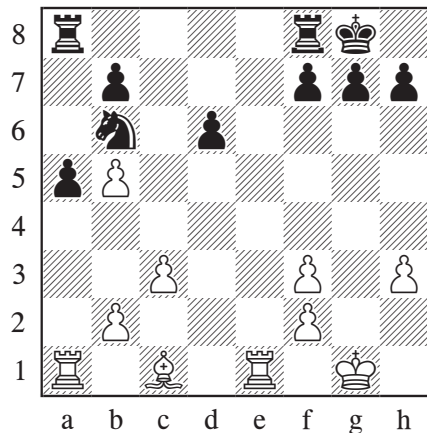
This has yet to be played, but the move is perfectly logical and demands to be studied. Moreover it is the computer's main line.

After 17...♗xd4 18.♘xd4, practice has seen:

a) 18...♖fc8?! 19.♘f5 With a large plus for White in Navara – So, Saint Louis 2019. White will meet 19...♖e8 with 20.♗f4 ♘d5 21.♗h2.

b) 18...♗g6 19.♗f4 ♖fc8 And now 20.♗g3!± is better than 20.b3 c5 21.bxc6 bxc6= as in Harikrishna – Vidit, Prague 2019. After withdrawing his bishop, White is threatening ♖e7. If 20...c5, then 21.♘f3! is good for White.

18.♗xd6 cxd6 19.gxf3



The unfortunate position of the black pawn on a5 gives White a small plus in spite of the doubled f-pawns. Let's see how the game might continue:

19...a4

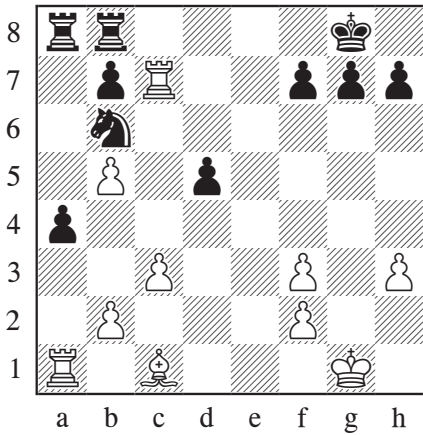
Fixing the b2-pawn, not allowing b2-b3. At first sight Black is all right, but White has a good rook manoeuvre available.

On 19...♖fe8 White plays: 20.♙xe8† ♜xe8 21.♔f1 ♜a8 22.♕e2± Once his king goes to d3, White can develop his bishop without worrying about ...♘c4.

**20.♙e7 ♜fb8 21.♙c7!**

An important move, depriving the knight of the c4-square. Now after ...d6-d5 Black will constantly have to reckon with ♕f4.

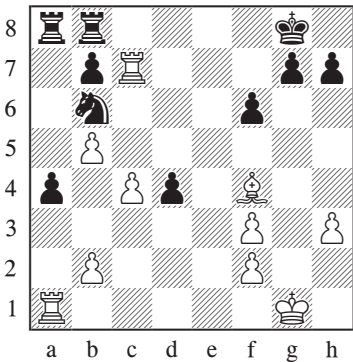
**21...d5**



**22.♕f1**

It's best to bring the king to the centre, leaving the bishop on c1 just for now.

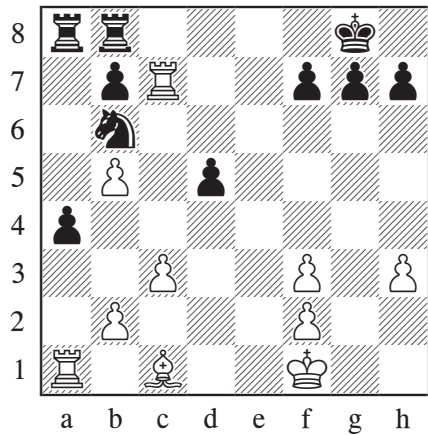
On 22.♕f4, Black has 22...d4 23.c4 f6! (not 23...♜c8?! 24.♙xb7 ♘xc4 25.♙c7±; White threatens ♙xa4, and in addition his b-pawn has become too dangerous).



A phase of forced play now begins. I have come to the conclusion that Black can hold the position with the aid of some precise moves. For example:

a) 24.♙d1 ♙d8 25.♙xb7 ♘xc4 26.♙c1 ♘d6! Not forced, but probably the best move in the position. 27.♕xd6 (27.♙b6 ♘f7∞ isn't so clear) 27...♙xd6 28.♙cc7 h6! 29.♙xg7† ♔h8± And Black holds on, thanks to his strong d-pawn. He will most likely succeed in exchanging his pawns on a4 and d4 for the two white b-pawns.

b) 24.♙e1 ♙e8! (not 24...g5? 25.♙e7! gxf4 26.♙g7† ♔h8 27.♙xh7† ♔g8 28.h4+- and there is no defence against h4-h5-h6, winning) 25.♙xe8† (or 25.♕f1 ♙e1† 26.♕xe1 a3! 27.bxa3 ♙xa3= and the pawns on b5 and d4 are of about equal strength) 25...♙xe8 26.♙xb7 ♘xc4 27.♙d7 g5 28.♙xd4 a3 29.bxa3 ♘xa3= As a result of his small tactical ploy, Black manages to exchange the queenside pawns.



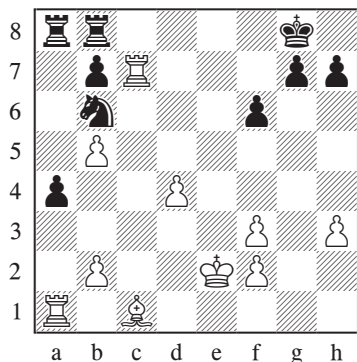
**22...f6**

Or:

a) 22...♙a5 23.b4! ♙xb5 24.♕f4± and Black has problems due to his misplaced rook on b5.

b) 22...d4! By freeing the d5-square, Black aims to eliminate the potential threats of ♕e3

and ♔f4; all the same, with a pawn less, he is definitely worse. 23.cxd4 (with the white bishop on c1, the continuation 23.c4 ♖c8 24.♙xb7 ♜xc4∞ isn't so good) 23...f6 24.♗e2

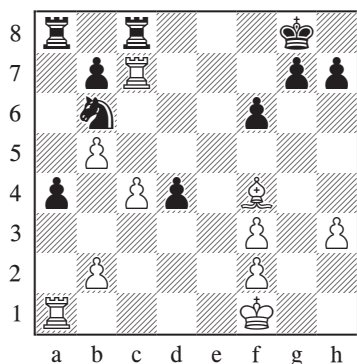


24...♙a5 (or 24...♜d5 25.♖c4 ♜b6 26.♖c5±) 25.♖c5 ♜d7 26.b4! An important intermediate move, based on a tactical ruse. 26...♙a7 (in answer to 26...♜xc5?! 27.bxa5 ♜b3 White has 28.♙xa4! ♜xc1† 29.♗d2±; then after 29...♜b3† 30.♗c2, or 29...♖c8 30.♙a3, he traps the knight) 27.♗d3± With an appreciable plus. Now 27...♜xc5†? 28.bxc5 is bad for Black, as he has no means of stopping the white pawns.

### 23.♗e2

It would be worth considering 23.♗e3!? ♜c4 24.♖d1, with a small plus for White.

With 23.♗f4 White sets his opponent some specific problems, but with accurate play Black can draw: 23...d4! 24.c4 ♖c8



And now:

a) 25.♖c1 a3 26.bxa3 ♖xa3 27.♙xb7 ♜xc4 and White keeps the initiative – but if Black makes a few precise moves, a drawn position comes about. In the event of 28.b6 ♖c3 29.♖e1, Black saves himself with 29...g5! 30.♗g3 d3 31.♖1e7 d2. White then only has perpetual check.

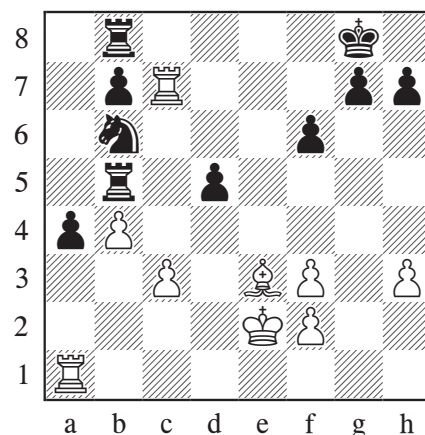
b) 25.c5 ♖xc7 26.♗xc7 ♜d5 27.♗d6 ♗f7 And thanks to the ...a4-a3 thrust, Black holds the position. For example 28.♖d1 a3 29.bxa3 ♜c3! 30.♖xd4 ♜xb5, and after 31.♖b4 ♜xd6 a drawn rook endgame is reached.

### 23...♙a5

For 23...d4 24.cxd4, see the note to Black's 22nd move, variation b.

The computer likes 23...♜c4; but from the human viewpoint, surrendering the d-pawn in this way is rather odd: 24.♖d7 ♙a5 (24...♜b6?! 25.♖d6±) 25.♖xd5 ♖c8 26.♗d3± Now in answer to 26...g6, both 27.♗d4 and 27.♖d4 are good moves. And in the event of 26...♜b6 27.♖f5 White is ready to play b2-b4, so Black will not succeed in winning the b5-pawn.

### 24.b4 ♖xb5 25.♗e3±



As his rook on b5 is boxed in, Black will have to give up a pawn on a4 or d5, after which White will have the advantage. A good reply to 25...♖e8 is 26.♔f1!.

## Conclusion

In this chapter we considered 1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.♙c4 ♘c5 4.c3 ♗f6 5.d3 0–0 6.0–0 d5 7.exd5 ♗xd5 8.a4 a5. The interpolation of a2-a4 and ...a7-a5 is plainly in White's favour, as Black thereby weakens the b5-square. But White needs to choose his move-order accurately, so that Black can't capture the bishop on b5 with ...♗a7, or play ...f7-f5! – as he can after 9.♗bd2! ♗b6 10.♙b5 ♙d6 11.♖e1 ♙g4 if White plays 12.h3 instead of 12.♗e4!. After the correct move, the outcome should be an ending where White has a small but stable plus. Essentially there will only be two results to play for.

# Abridged Variation Index

The Variation Index in the book is 7 pages long. Below is an abridged version giving just the main variations, not the sub-variations.

## Part I: The ...d5 Break

### Chapter 1

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♗f6  
5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 ♗xd5 8.a4

- A) 8...♙f5 19
- B) 8...♗b6 25

### Chapter 2

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♗f6  
5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 ♗xd5 8.a4 a6

- A) 9.♞e1!? 34
- B) 9.♗bd2 37

### Chapter 3

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♗f6  
5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 ♗xd5 8.a4 a6  
9.♗bd2 ♖h8

- A) 10.♞e1 48
- B) 10.♗e4!? 54

### Chapter 4

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♗f6  
5.d3 0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.exd5 ♗xd5 8.a4 a5

- A) 9.♞e1 62
- B) 9.♗bd2! 63

## Part II: Introduction to 6...a6 7.a4 ♙a7

### Chapter 5

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♗f6  
5.d3 d6 6.0-0 a6 7.a4 ♙a7 8.♞e1 0-0  
9.h3 h6 10.♗bd2

- A) 10...♗h5 74
- B) 10...♙e6 81

### Chapter 6

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3  
♗f6 5.d3 d6 6.0-0 a6 7.a4 ♙a7 8.♞e1  
0-0 9.h3 h6 10.♗bd2 ♞e8 11.b4 ♙e6  
12.♙xe6 ♞xe6 13.♞c2

- A) 13...♗h5 92
- B) 13...d5 93
- C) 13...♗e7 94
- D) 13...♞d7 95

### Chapter 7

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♗f6  
5.d3 d6 6.0-0 a6 7.a4 ♙a7 8.♞e1 0-0  
9.h3 ♗e7

- A) 10.d4 106
- B) 10.♗bd2 108

## Chapter 8

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6  
5.d3 d6 6.0–0 a6 7.a4 ♙a7 8.♖e1 0–0  
9.h3 ♗h8 10.d4

A) 10...h6!? 131

B) 10...♘g8 135

## Chapter 9

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6  
5.d3 d6 6.0–0 a6 7.a4 ♙a7 8.♖e1 0–0  
9.h3

A) 9...♙e6 148

B) 9...b5 152

## Chapter 10

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6  
5.d3 d6 6.0–0 a6 7.a4 h6 8.♖e1 0–0 9.h3  
a5!? 10.♘bd2 ♙e6 11.b3

A) 11...♙a7 167

B) 11...d5 174

## Part III: Lines with ...a5

### Chapter 11

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♙c5 4.c3 ♘f6  
5.d3 0–0 6.0–0 d6 7.♖e1

A) 7...h6 8.♘bd2!? 184

B) 7...a5!? 192

## Part IV: Early Deviations

### Chapter 12

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4

A) 3...g6 214

B) 3...♙e7 215

C) 3...♘f6 4.d3 ♙e7 216

### Chapter 13

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙c4 ♘f6 4.d3 h6  
5.0–0 d6 6.c3

A) 6...g6 240

B) 6...g5 245