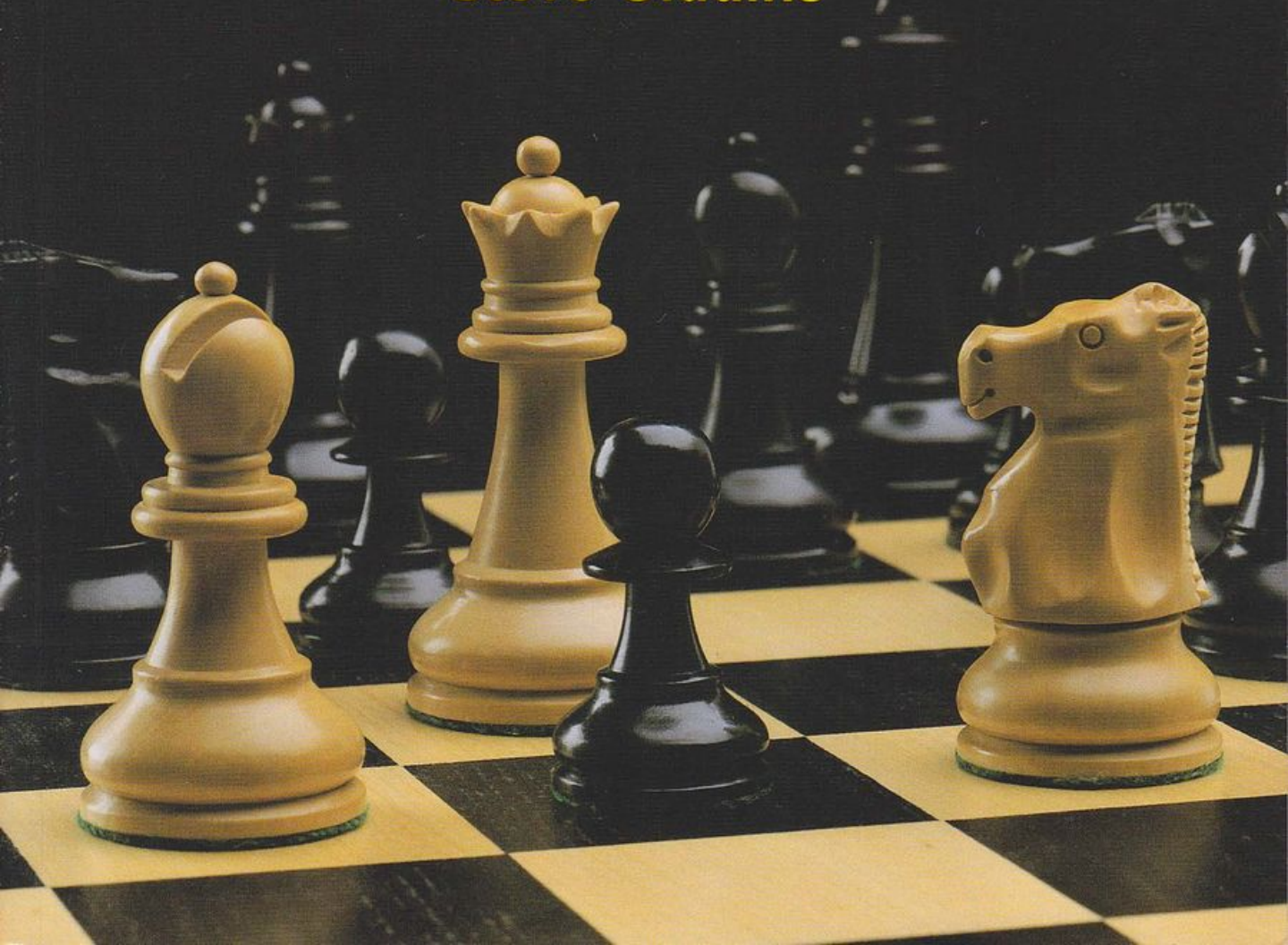


GAMBIT

101 Chess Opening Traps

A collection of deadly traps new and old
to catch opponents of all standards

Steve Giddins





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GAMBIT

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To my parents

Gambit Publications Ltd

Managing Director: GM Murray Chandler

Chess Director: GM John Nunn

Editorial Director: FM Graham Burgess

German Editor: WFM Petra Nunn

Webmaster: Dr Helen Milligan WFM

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Introduction

There are probably not many authors who can introduce their book by saying that it arose from a case of blackmail, but I can make such a claim with complete honesty! In August 1997, I attended a party hosted by John and Petra Nunn, during the course of which Murray Chandler sidled up to me with an evil look in his eye. “I’m writing a book on opening traps”, he said casually. “Have you any ideas I could use? I’m thinking of the sort of thing that you had in your game against Stefanova at Antwerp”. The thinly-veiled threat to publish a game where I’d been lost after 5 moves had the desired effect, and I hastily rattled off about half a dozen examples he could use. Over the next few weeks, I supplied another 20-30 as well, by which point I began accompanying my faxes with such comments as “Are you going to list yourself as co-author of this book?”. Eventually, Murray’s project developed beyond the confines of opening traps, and grew into what is now entitled *How to Beat Your Dad at Chess*. At the same time, I was asked to take over the opening traps project, and the result is the volume you are now holding in your hands.

Whilst this book is in the same format as Graham Burgess’s *101 Chess Opening Surprises*, there are important differences in the aims and contents of the two books. Graham’s is a book of lines you may want to try in your games – this, by contrast, is a book of lines you very definitely want to avoid! In addition, Graham’s book concentrates on new, or little-known lines, whereas the present volume contains at least some traps which have been known for years (but not that well-known, as their practical appearance demonstrates). What I have set out to do is put together a fairly wide-ranging collection of traps and pitfalls of the sort which crop up in practical play. Almost every one of the 101 traps is illustrated by an actual game, and in many cases the same trap has been seen in a large number of games. On occasions, the same tactical idea is seen in more than one opening context, something which supports Mark Dvoretsky’s point that a broad opening erudition assists one in playing any opening. Wherever possible, I have included details of the background to particular lines and games, which I hope will add to the entertainment value of the book.

One important issue on which a few words are necessary is that of how one defines an opening ‘trap’. I think most would agree that 1 f4 e6 2 g4 ♖h4# is not really what we generally mean by a trap; rather, it is simply bad play. Likewise, after 1 e4 e6 2 d4, one would not call the move 2...♗c5 a ‘trap’ – it is just a crass blunder. The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* defines a trap as “an arrangement to catch an unsuspecting person”, which seems to me to capture very well the essence of what we mean when we talk about an opening trap, the fundamental requirement being that the fatal move should be reasonably plausible. This is the

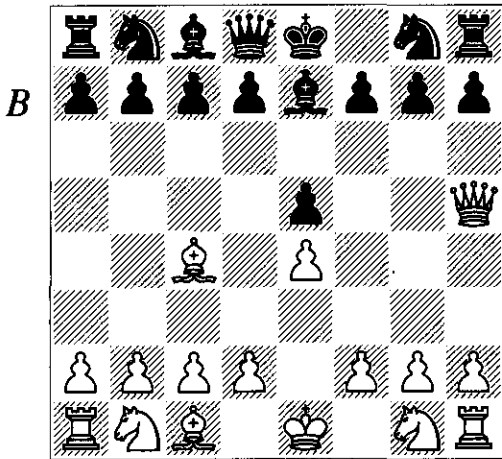
basis on which I have compiled the examples in this book. I have extended the definition to cover not just lines which lose by force immediately, but also some cases where the trap is of a more positional nature, where the victim merely ends up standing worse, rather than losing out of hand. I have also included some examples where a line which has for a long time been regarded as a trap may in fact be satisfactory after all.

Acknowledgements are due to the following people: John Nunn for his advice and support in matters silicon; Graham Burgess for invaluable editorial assistance and for pointing out some additional game references; Matthew Sadler for assistance with analysis and for providing the scores of certain games I was unable to trace; Jonathan Mestel and Ian Rogers for providing some background details on certain of their games; and Robert Bellin, Murray Chandler, Chris Rice and Dave Barnes for drawing my attention to some traps I was not aware of. In the immortal words of Richard Eales in his book *Cambridge Chess*, "By a universal convention, all remaining shortcomings must be attributed, however unfairly, to me"!

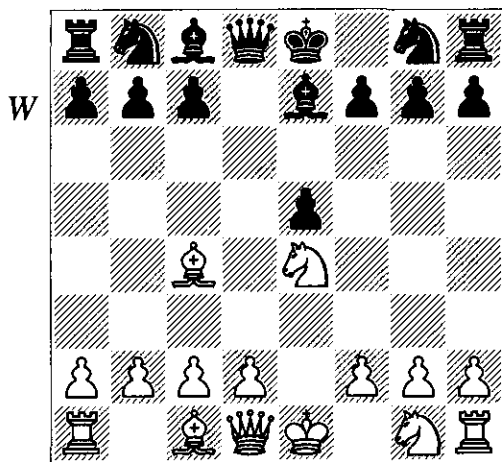
Steve Giddins
Chatham
April 1998

Symbols

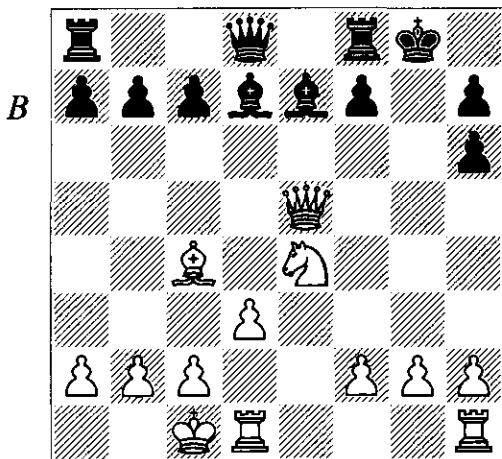
+	check	IZ	interzonal event
++	double check	Z	zonal event
#	checkmate	OL	olympiad
!!	brilliant move	jr	junior event
!	good move	wom	women's event
!?	interesting move	mem	memorial event
?!	dubious move	rpd	rapidplay game
?	bad move	corr.	correspondence game
??	blunder	1-0	the game ends in a win for White
Ch	championship	1/2-1/2	the game ends in a draw
Cht	team championship	0-1	the game ends in a win for Black
Wch	world championship	(n)	nth match game
Ct	candidates event	(11a)	see diagram 11a (etc.)



1a: after 3 ♖h5



1b: after 4... ♗e7



1c: after 11 0-0-0

Trap 1 – What is the Weakest Square on the Board?

Ask any chess-player which is the weakest square on the board in the initial position, and he will tell you it is f2 or f7. We all imbibe this particular piece of information along with our mother's milk. Yet do we heed the advice? Unfortunately, not always. This is why one sees such gems as the following game, played between two players rated well over 2000 on a high board of a recent Kent-Buckinghamshire county match: 1 e4 e5 2 ♖c4 ♗e7?? 3 ♖h5! (1a).

The only thing to be said in Black's defence is that he usually plays the Elephant Gambit (2 ♘f3 d5), so I suppose 2 ♗e7 threw him a bit!

The following example is very similar, with the move ... ♗e7 again featuring as the culprit.

Vorotnikov – Peschel
Giessen 1993

1 ♘c3 d5 2 e4 dxe4 3 ♘xe4 e5 4 ♖c4 ♗e7?? (1b) 5 ♖h5!

Black is already lost. Indeed, more than one game has been resigned in this very position. Peschel struggled on with 5... ♘h6 6 d3 0-0 7 ♗xh6 gxh6 8 ♘f3 ♘c6 9 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 10 ♖xe5 ♗d7 11 0-0-0 (1c) but was just a pawn down for less than no compensation, and duly went under after 11... ♗c6 12 f4 b5 13 ♗xb5 ♗xb5 14 ♖xb5 ♖b8 15 ♖c4 ♖b6 16 f5 ♗g5+ 17 ♖b1 ♖e7 18 ♘xg5 hxg5 19 ♖c3 ♖fb8 20 b3 ♖d6 21 ♖de1 ♖c6 22 ♖e5 ♖a3 23 f6 h6 24 ♖hf1 ♖a6 25 ♖b2 ♖d6 26 h4 ♖bb6 27 hxg5 ♖g3 28 ♖e8+ ♖h7 29 ♖f8 ♖xg2 30 ♖xf7+ 1-0.

Trap 2 – Lullaby Baby

As the rest of this book will show, it is more often than not the quieter openings which produce the most traps. If you are playing a razor-sharp Najdorf Sicilian, your 'cheapometer' is bound to be on full alert, but if the opponent has played some sort of Réti or Queen's Pawn Game, there is a dangerous tendency to switch off in the early stages. This is perhaps even more likely to happen if your opponent has a reputation as a peaceable player from whom an early draw offer can be expected. How else to explain the following disaster?

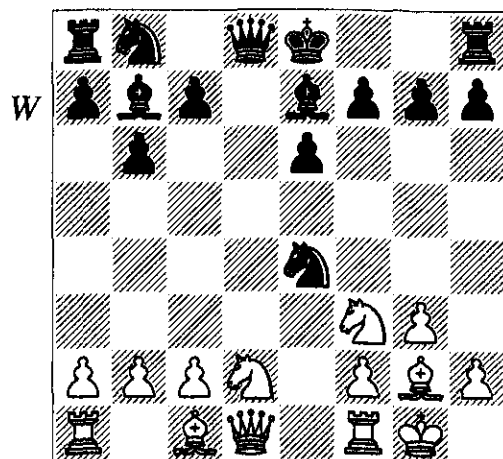
Kochiev – Ivanov USSR 1976

1 Nf3 Nf6 2 g3 b6 3 Kg2 Kb7 4 O-O e6 5 d3 d5 6 Nbd2 Ke7 7 e4 dxe4 8 dxe4 Nxe4?? (2a) 9 Ne5 1-0

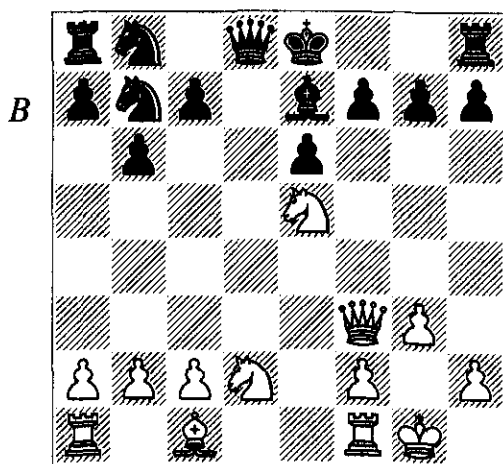
After 9... Nd6 10 Kxb7 Nxb7 11 Qf3 (2b) Black loses a piece.

Alexander Kochiev is probably best known in England for having been the Soviet representative in the 1974 World Junior Championship, when he was spectacularly defeated by England's Tony Miles. Nowadays he seems to play most of his chess in his native St Petersburg.

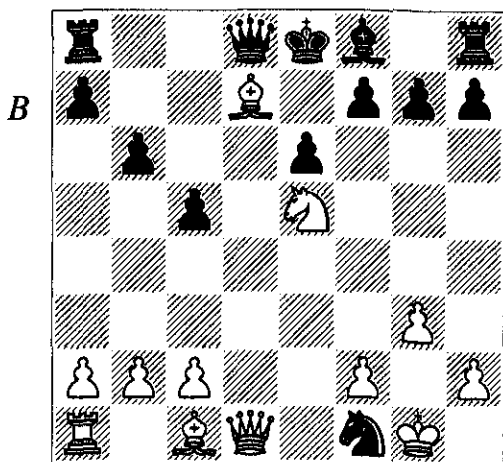
I should add that the identical trap occurred in a 1991 game Beckemeyer-Delano, with the single difference that Black had played 6... c5 instead of 6... Ke7 . In that game, Black played on a few more moves but resigned after 9... Nxd2 10 Kxb7 Nd7 11 Kc6 Nxf1 12 Kxd7+ (2c).



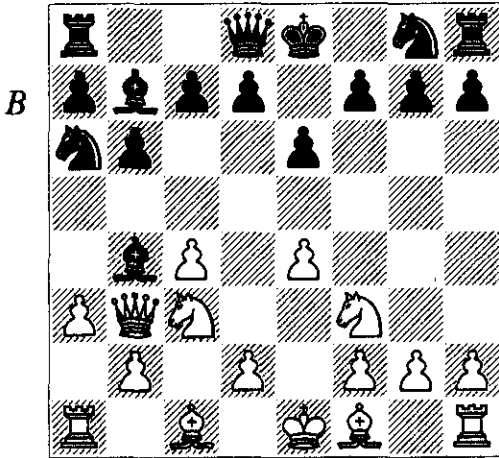
2a: after 8... Nxe4



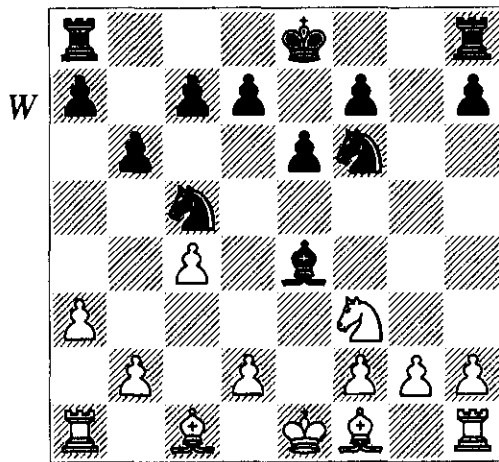
2b: after 11 Qf3



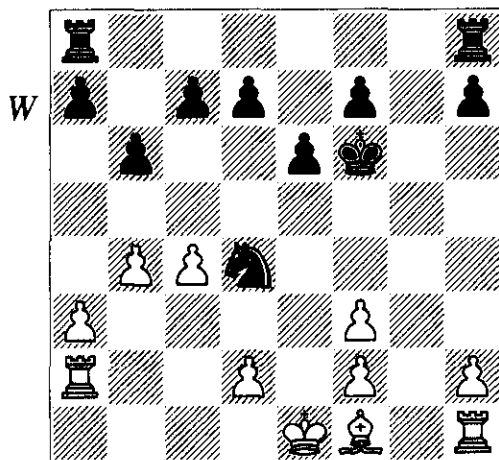
2c: after 12 Kxd7+



3a: after 6 a3



3b: after 10...dxf6



3c: after 15...d4

Trap 3 – Pawns Don't Move Backwards

The opening trap seen in the following game is one which has occurred many times – besides the game given below, I have witnessed at least three other occasions when people have fallen for it. The resulting position is an excellent illustration of the maxim that “pawns don't move backwards” – one bad pawn move can create a weakness which can never be repaired.

Stone – Giddins
Club Match 1988

1 c4 b6 2 d3 c3 d7 3 e4 e6 4 f3 b4 5
Bb3 a6 6 a3? (3a)

Natural, but falling into the trap. 6 d3 is correct.

6...c5! 7 c2

Sad necessity, as 7 bxb4 a5 traps White's queen.

7...xc3 8 cxc3 xe4 9 cxc7 f6 10
xf6 xf6 (3b)

White has preserved material equality, but has terrible problems with his b3-square. Put his pawn back on a2 and he would stand fine, but as it is, there is no good way to solve the problems.

11 b4 b3 12 b2 e7 13 xf6+ xf6
14 a2 xf3 15 gxf3 d4 (3c)

White's thrashing about has liberated his queen's rook, but his position is shattered and the black knight on d4 is a monster. Only a few more moves were necessary.

16 d3 e5 17 0-0 ag8+ 18 h1
xf3 19 e2 d4 20 d3 f4 21 h5 g5
22 e2 hg8 0-1

Trap 4 – An Adult Fairy Tale

This next example is a case of ‘the trapper trapped’. Black’s 7th move leaves a pawn *en prise*, but the obvious way of capturing it loses material. Unfortunately for Black, however, an inversion of moves enables White to take the pawn in complete safety.

Smejkal – Grimm

Porz 1992

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 cxd5 ♘xd5 4 g3 g6 5 ♙g2 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♙g7 7 ♖b1 (4a)

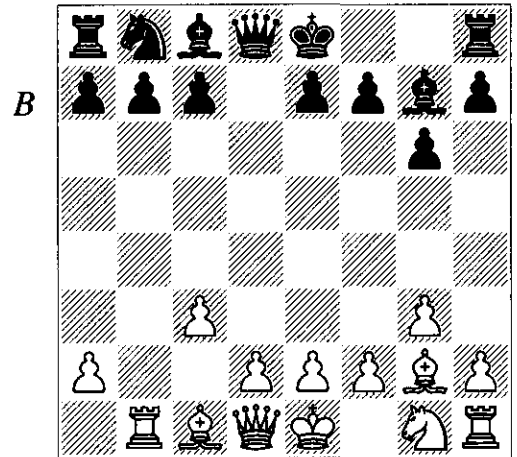
This is White’s most common choice. On the face of it, the move threatens to take on b7, and, indeed, Black’s best move is probably 7...c6. However, in the game, Black lived up to his surname by playing 7...0-0?, no doubt hoping for the variation 8 ♙xb7 ♙xb7 9 ♖xb7 ♗d5 (4b) spearing a rook.

Unfortunately, real life rarely measures up to even the Grimmiest fairy tale – the Czech grandmaster instead played 8 ♖xb7! ♙xb7 (4c) when White really does win a pawn.

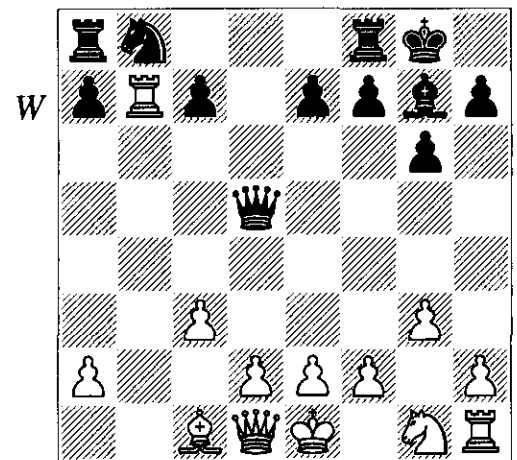
9...♗d7 10 ♙xa8 ♗xa8 11 ♘f3

Smejkal notes that 11 f3 would also leave White with a clear advantage. It is fair to say that the remainder of the game is the proverbial ‘matter of technique’, which the Czech grandmaster negotiated efficiently enough and won in 45 moves. In two of the other games I found where this position arose, however, the task proved too much for White and a draw resulted.

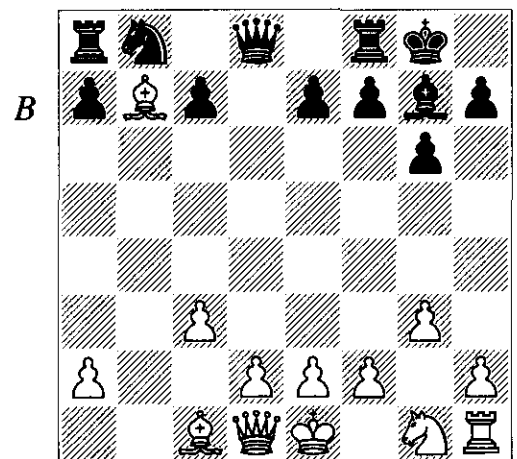
The frequency with which this trap arises is evidenced by the fact that I found seven examples on my database, in two of which White missed 8 ♖xb7 and instead played the tame 8 ♘f3.



4a: after 7 ♖b1



4b: after 9... ♗d5



4c: after 9 ♙xb7

Trap 5 – Winning the Queen, but What About the Game?

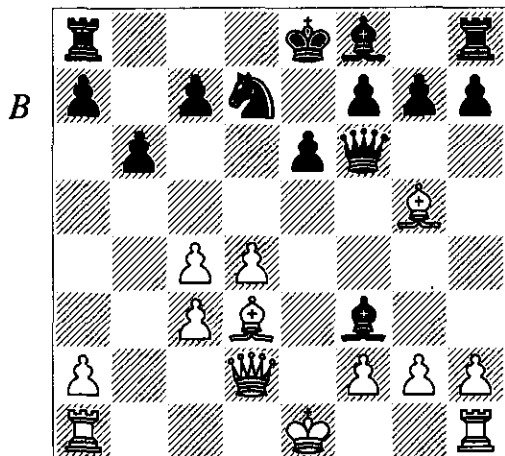
The following sequence has long been quoted in opening books as a trap for Black:

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 e6 3 e4 d5 4 e5 d4 5 exf6 dxc3 6 bxc3 ♚xf6 7 d4 b6 8 ♘f3 ♙b7 9 ♙d3 ♘d7? 10 ♙g5 ♙xf3 11 ♚d2! (5a)

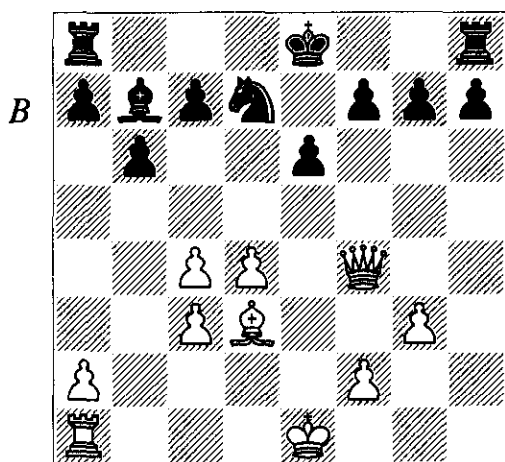
This neat trick wins the queen, and most books stop here. But in the game Rowson-Richardson, Walsall 1997, the rising star of Scottish chess decided that the position after 11...♙xg2 12 ♙xf6 ♙xh1 was by no means clear, a verdict which is supported by that generally most materialistic of chess judges, Fritz. Instead, Rowson declined the offer by playing 10 ♚e2 and won quickly. In the only practical example I have found of the position after 12...♙xh1, White continued 13 ♙h4 ♙d6 14 ♙g3 ♙xg3 15 hxg3 ♙b7 16 ♚f4 (5b) and had only a small advantage, although he eventually won (Banas-Blatny, Trnava 1989).

The same tactical idea arises in a quite different setting, the so-called Fort Knox variation in the French Defence. This line gained its name from IM Andrew Martin, who (jokingly, I believe) so christened it on account of its extreme solidity. After the moves 1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♙d7 5 ♘f3 ♙c6 6 ♙d3 ♘d7 7 ♚e2 ♘gf6 8 ♘xf6+ ♚xf6?! 9 ♙g5 ♙xf3 10 ♚e3 (5c).

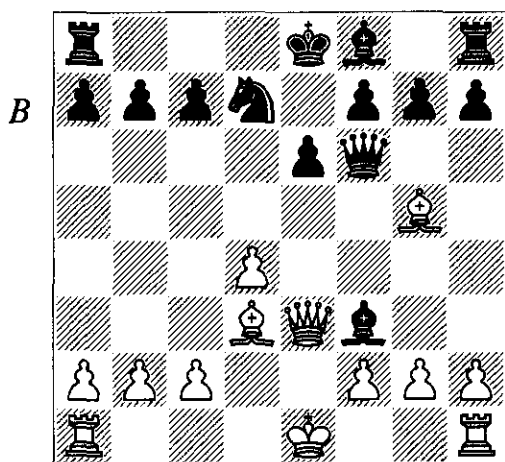
White again wins the queen, but as in the previous example, it is far from clear how much advantage White has after 10...♙xg2 11 ♙xf6 (of course, Black's last move freed the f3-square for his queen, so White has no time for 11 ♙g1) 11...♙xh1, etc.



5a: after 11 ♚d2



5b: after 16 ♚f4



5c: after 10 ♚e3

Trap 6 – Sharpening up the English

Although the English Opening has a reputation as a quiet opening, certain lines can be quite tactical. The Flohr-Mikenas Attack is one such, and we have just seen one trap (or not, as the case may be) in this line. Here is another:

Christiansen – Magar Philadelphia 1989

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♖c3 e6 3 e4 c5 4 e5 ♘g8 5 ♘f3
♜c6 6 d4 cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♘xe5 8 ♘db5 d6?
(6a)

A key mistake, though White's next is easy to overlook. Indeed, Scottish GM Paul Motwani recently missed it when annotating a game in *BCM*, giving only the less effective 9 ♙f4. Correct for Black is 8...a6, when 9 ♘d6+ gives White good compensation for the pawn.

9 c5! a6

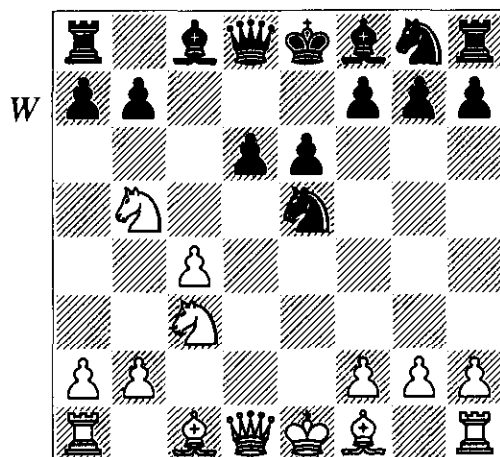
Forced, since both 9...dxc5 and 9...d5 lose immediately to 10 ♙f4.

10 ♘xd6+ ♙xd6 11 cxd6 ♘f6 12 ♙e2
0-0

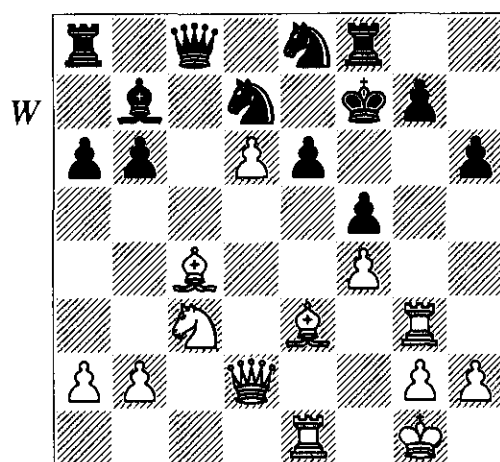
I once had the pleasure of playing this position as White myself, the game continuing 12...h6 13 0-0 0-0 14 ♙e3 ♘e8 15 f4 ♘d7 16 ♚d2 b6 17 ♚f3 ♙b7 18 ♚g3 f5 19 ♙c4 ♙f7 20 ♚e1 ♚c8 (6b) 21 ♙xe6+ ♙xe6 22 ♙d4+ ♙e4 23 ♘xe4 fxe4 24 ♚xe4+ ♙d5 25 ♙xg7+ ♙xe4 26 ♚d3+ ♙xf4 27 ♚f3# Giddins-Goodfellow, Chatham 1992.

13 ♙f4 ♘ed7 14 0-0 b5 15 b4 ♙b7 16 a4
(6c)

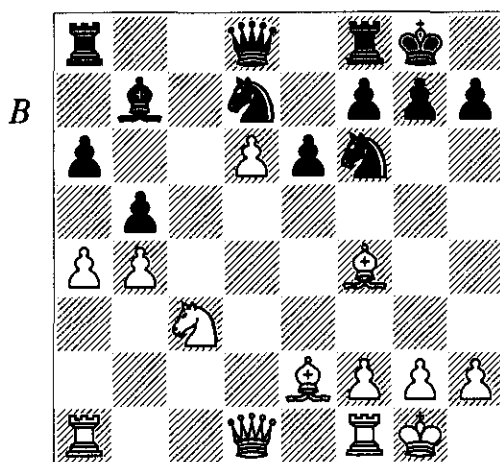
White has a substantial advantage and went on to win.



6a: after 8...d6



6b: after 20...♚c8



6c: after 16 a4

Trap 7 – Beware the Tiger's Jaws

Former world champion Tigran Petrosian always enjoyed a reputation as a supremely solid player, almost impossible to beat, a lover of slow manoeuvring games and someone who rarely seemed averse to a draw. As such, one would not expect to find him winning too many miniatures. Beneath the quiet exterior, however, lurked a tactician of genius and the pride of performance characteristic of any great champion. If an opponent stuck his head in the Tiger's mouth, he could expect to have it bitten off, as the unfortunate Hans Ree discovered in the following game.

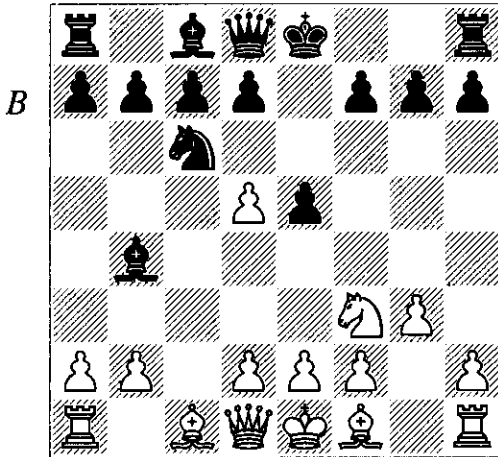
Petrosian – Ree *Wijk aan Zee 1971*

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 ♘f3 ♘c6 4 g3 ♗b4 5
♘d5 ♘xd5 6 cxd5 (7a) 6...e4??

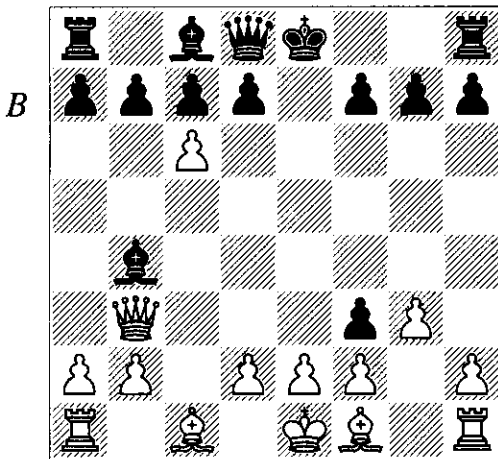
Not the happiest of choices!

7 dxc6 exf3 8 ♖b3 (7b) 1-0

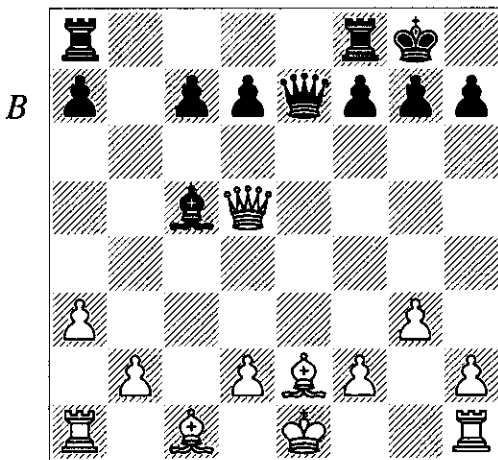
Black is losing a piece. Interestingly, Hans Ree is the strongest of four players I know to have fallen for this trap and is also the only one to have had the decency to resign without further ado, thereby creating what presumably is the shortest decisive game ever in the 60-year history of the Hoogovens tournament. In Sr.Cvetković-Brestian, Balatonbereny 1985 Black struggled on with 8...♗e7 9 a3 fxe2 10 ♗xe2 ♗c5 11 cxb7 ♗xb7 12 ♖xb7 0-0 13 ♖d5 (7c) and only resigned at move 22. In two other games, Black played on even longer, but in both cases to no avail.



7a: after 6 cxd5



7b: after 8 ♖b3



7c: after 13 ♖d5

Trap 8 – Spiking the Hedgehog's Guns

The next game features a tactical idea which should be familiar to any player of the Hedgehog, Queen's Indian, etc, since it is a standard trick in positions where a bishop on g2 opposes an undefended bishop on b7.

Åkesson – Goritsas
Corfu 1991

1 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}f6$ 2 $\text{c}4$ $\text{e}6$ 3 $\text{g}3$ $\text{b}6$ 4 $\text{g}2$ $\text{b}7$ 5 $0-0$
 $\text{c}5$ 6 $\text{c}3$ $\text{e}7$ 7 $\text{e}1$ $\text{d}6$ 8 $\text{e}4$ $\text{bd}7$?!

Not the most accurate. Black could preempt the forthcoming problems by 8...a6 intending 9 d4 cxd4 10 $\text{d}xd4$ $\text{c}7$.

9 $\text{d}4$ $\text{cxd}4$ 10 $\text{d}xd4$ (8a) 10...a6??

A thematic Hedgehog move, but here it loses material. It was essential to defend the b7-bishop with 10... $\text{b}8$.

11 $\text{e}5$!

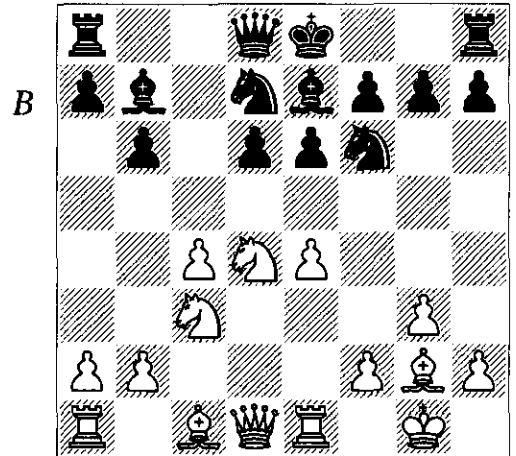
Winning material. Black prefers to take the line of least resistance and donate a whole piece, but even after the alternative 11... $\text{dxe}5$ 12 $\text{xb}7$ $\text{exd}4$ 13 $\text{xa}8$ he has inadequate compensation for the exchange.

11... $\text{g}2$ 12 $\text{exf}6$ $\text{xf}6$ 13 $\text{c}2$ 1-0

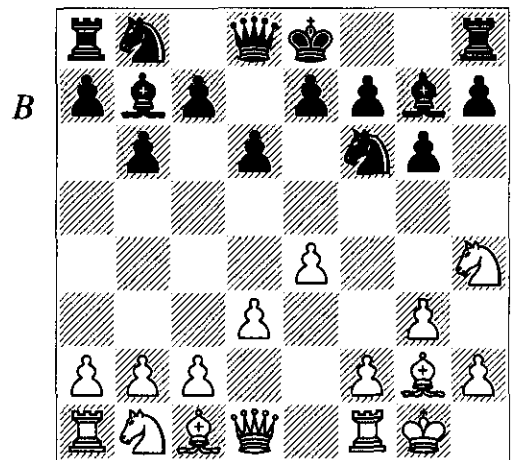
More commonly this tactic occurs with a white rook on f1, in which case White's material gains are likely to be limited to two pieces for a rook. A typical example is the following sequence, which I once saw Hungarian GM Portisch bring off in a tournament game:

1 $\text{d}f3$ $\text{d}f6$ 2 $\text{g}3$ $\text{b}6$ 3 $\text{g}2$ $\text{b}7$ 4 $0-0$ $\text{g}6$ 5
 $\text{d}3$ $\text{g}7$ 6 $\text{e}4$ $\text{d}6$ 7 $\text{h}4$ (8b) 7... $0-0$? 8 $\text{e}5$
 $\text{g}2$ 9 $\text{exf}6$ $\text{xf}1$ 10 $\text{fxg}7$ (8c) 10... $\text{c}2$
11 $\text{xf}1$

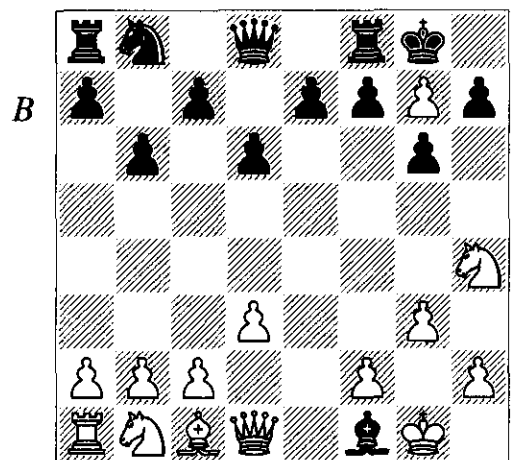
...and so on.



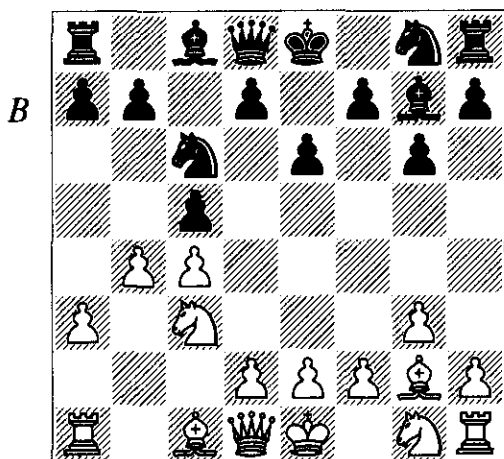
8a: after 10 $\text{d}xd4$



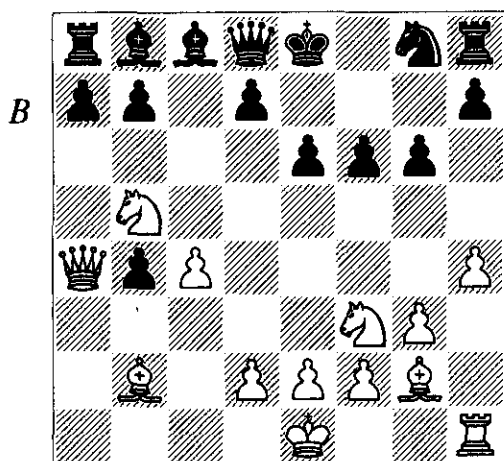
8b: after 7 $\text{d}h4$



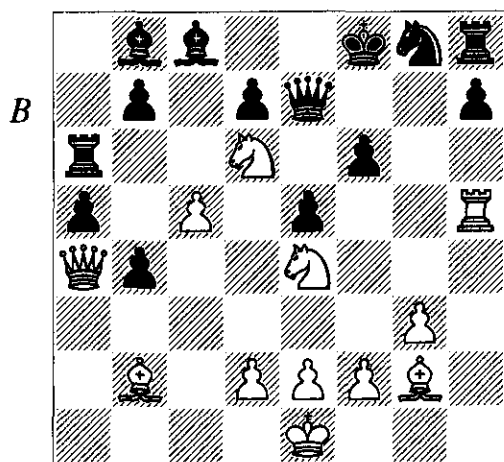
8c: after 10 $\text{fxg}7$



9a: after 6 b4



9b: after 12 h4



9c: after 18 b4

Trap 9 – You Mean he can Capture *That* Way?

The following brilliant effort could easily be mistaken for a deep sacrificial game by White. In fact, of course, he'd just missed Black's trap (as Julian admitted afterwards).

Hodgson – Gulko
Groningen 1995

1 c4 c5 2 g3 g6 3 ♖g2 ♗g7 4 ♘c3 ♘c6 5 a3 e6 6 b4? (9a)

This sacrifice gives good, Benko-style compensation after 6...cxb4 7 axb4 ♘xb4 8 ♖a3, etc. However...

6...♘xb4!

Amongst the many other players who have fallen for this are Smyslov, M.Gurevich, Krasenkov and Lobron. Murray Chandler wrote in the March 1995 *BCM* of the sadistic way in which Lobron's opponent, Lubosh Kavalek, executed the move: "Kavalek captured by first picking up the white pawn on b4 and slowly putting it by the side of the board. Lobron, expecting a routine pawn capture, wrote down 6...cxb4 on his scoresheet. When Kavalek subsequently placed his knight on b4, Lobron had the double humiliation of losing material and having to cross out a move!"

7 axb4 cxb4 8 ♘b5 ♖xa1 9 ♗a4 ♖e5 10 ♘f3 ♖b8 11 ♖b2 f6 12 h4 (9b) 12...a5?

12...h5 is recommended by *ECO* as good for Black.

13 h5 gxh5 14 ♖xh5 ♗e7 15 ♘g5! ♖a6 16 ♘e4 e5 17 c5 ♖f8 18 ♘bd6 (9c) 18...♖xd6 19 ♘xd6 ♖xd6 20 cxd6 ♗xd6 21 d4! exd4 22 ♖d5 ♗c7 23 ♖xa5 ♘e7 24 ♗xb4 d6 25 ♖b5! ♖g7 26 ♗xd4 ♖f8 27 g4! ♗d7 28 ♖h5 ♖g8 29 g5 ♗g4 30 gxf6! 1-0

Trap 10 – Black is OK!

Hungarian GM Andras Adorjan is famous for his enthusiastic advocacy of the black pieces, but I doubt that he greatly enjoyed the following demonstration of his motto:

Adorjan – Spassky
Toluca IZ 1982

1 d4 e6 2 c4 b6 3 ♘c3 ♙b7 4 e4 ♙b4 5 ♙d3 f5 6 ♚h5+ g6 7 ♚e2 ♘f6 8 f3 ♘c6! (10a)

This very logical move, hitting White's vulnerable d4-pawn, underlines the rather clumsy development which White's defence of his centre has entailed. It is also much better than the greedy 8...fxe4 9 fxe4 ♙xc3+ 10 bxc3 ♘xe4? of F.Becker-Pajekski, NRW-Oberliga II 1995, when 11 ♘f3! (10b) gave White a fierce attack.

The text-move also has the merit of setting a vicious trap, into which the Hungarian GM plunges headlong.

9 e5?

White should prefer 9 ♙e3, though Black seems to be doing well after 9...fxe4 10 fxe4 e5 11 d5 ♘d4, etc.

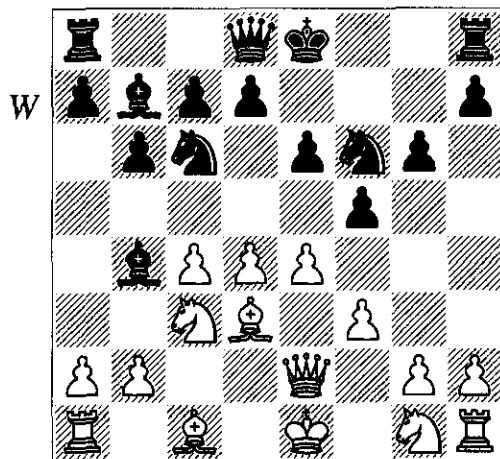
9...♘xd4! 10 ♚f2 ♘h5! (10c)

Ouch! The knight on d4 is immune and White has lost a pawn. Adorjan chose the path of least resistance.

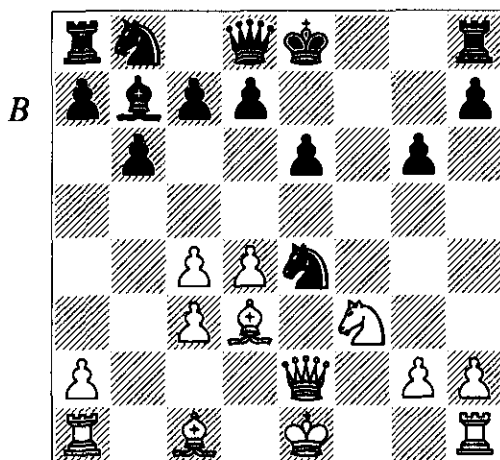
11 ♚xd4?? ♙c5

To coin a phrase, Black is OK! Even this was not enough to persuade Adorjan to throw in the towel, however, and he played on to move 23 before doing the decent thing and letting Spassky escape to the tennis court.

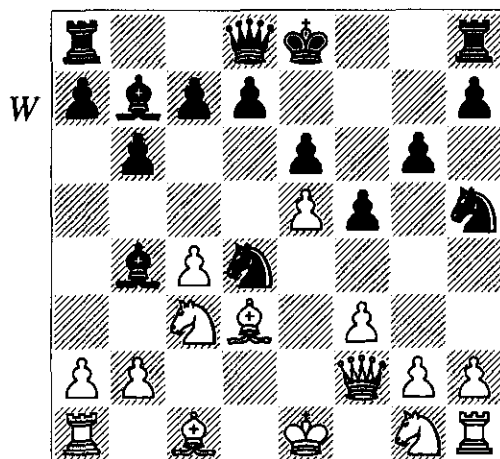
12 ♚xc5 bxc5 13 ♙e3 ♚h4+ 14 g3 ♘xg3 15 ♙f2 f4 16 ♙e4 0-0-0 17 0-0-0 ♘e2+ 18 ♘gx2 ♚xf2 19 ♚hf1 ♚e3+ 20 ♚d2 d5 21 ♘d1 ♚xd2+ 22 ♙xd2 dxe4+ 23 ♙c2 g5 0-1



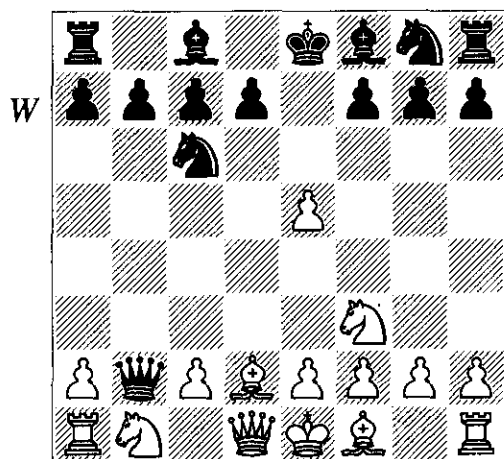
10a: after 8...♘c6



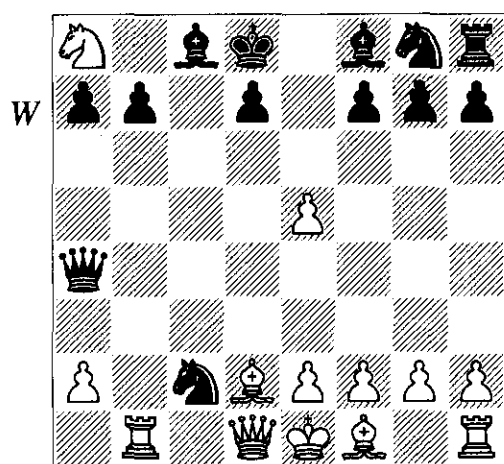
10b: after 11 ♘f3



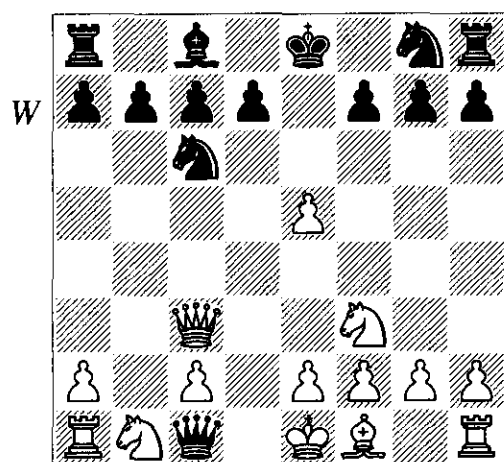
10c: after 10...♘h5



11a: after 5... ♖xb2



11b: after 12... ♖xc2+



11c: after 8... ♖c1#

Trap 11 – An Accident Waiting to Happen

The following disaster is one I first saw many years ago, and is made all the more remarkable by the fact that it occurred in a postal game! Unfortunately – or maybe fortunately, depending on one's point of view – the mists of time have obscured the identities of the players involved, but it still deserves its place in any collection of opening disasters.

1 d4 e5 2 dxe5 ♘c6 3 ♘f3 ♖e7 4 ♙f4

This move is not bad in itself, and with the right follow-up is a reasonable try for advantage.

4... ♖b4+ 5 ♙d2 ♖xb2 (11a) 6 ♙c3??

In all of the seven other games I found with this position, White preferred the correct 6 ♘c3, when the position is fairly unclear – a main line is 6... ♙b4 7 ♖b1 ♖a3 8 ♖b3 ♖a5 9 a3 ♙xc3 10 ♙xc3 ♖c5. 6... ♘b4 is trappier, e.g. after 7 ♘d4 c6, 8 ♖b1?! ♖a3 9 ♘db5? cxb5 10 ♘xb5 ♖a4 11 ♘c7+ ♔d8 12 ♘xa8?? ♘xc2+ (11b) 0-1 was a game from the 1990 Paris Championship. No wonder so many British professionals have moved to France in an attempt to bolster their earnings! However, 8 a3 ♘d5 9 ♘xd5 cxd5 10 e3 ♖b6 11 ♙e2 (Bücker) gives White some advantage.

6... ♙b4 7 ♖d2 ♙xc3 8 ♖xc3 ♖c1# (11c)

It is hard to believe that such a sequence could occur in a postal game, but it does at least prove that the player with White wasn't consulting his Fritz!

Trap 12 – That Old f7-Square Again!

As noted in Trap 1 above, this book has more than its fair share of disasters around the f2- and f7-squares. But none of them involve a player as strong as the black player in the following example.

Ibragimov – Zhelnin
Russia Cup (Moscow) 1998

1 d4 d6 2 ♘f3 ♘d7 3 e4 g6 4 ♙c4 ♙g7??
(12a) 5 ♙xf7+ 1-0

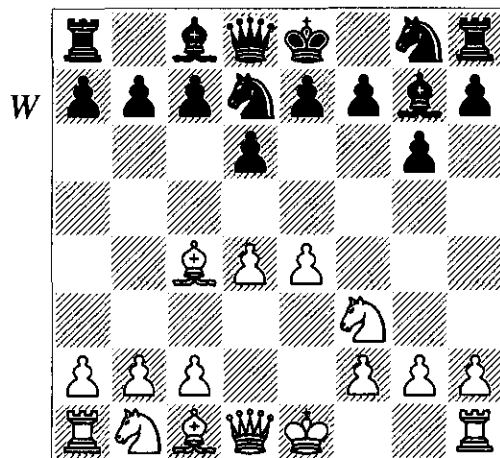
After 5...♙xf7 6 ♘g5+ ♙f6 (both 6...♙e8 and 6...♙f8 lose to 7 ♘e6), 7 ♙f3# is mate. A terrible humiliation for a player rated 2490! When I first saw this game, which occurred in the last round of the tournament, I could not help wondering whether this was a case of 'the wallet being mightier than the sword', but I understand that there was nothing untoward going on. Zhelnin is in fact an extremely strong and talented player, but has virtually no theoretical knowledge and accidents such as this have occasionally happened to him before.

The same tactic is well-known in several settings. Another was seen in the 1950 British Championship and remains to this today, I understand, the shortest decisive game ever in British Championship history.

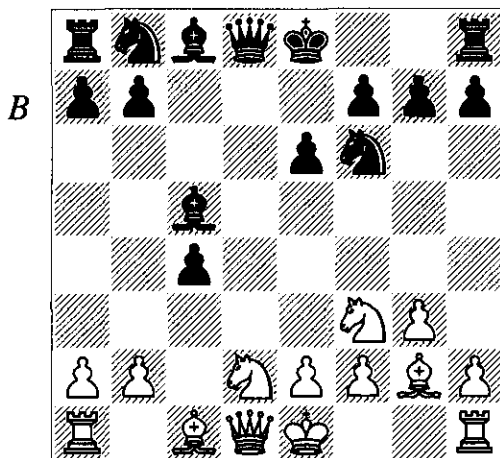
Veitch – Penrose
British Ch (Buxton) 1950

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 g3 dxc4 5 ♘bd2 c5 6 dxc5 ♙xc5 7 ♙g2?? (12b)
7...♙xf2+ 0-1

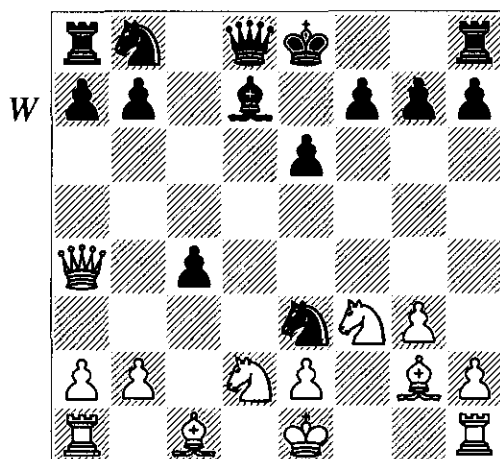
There is no escape for the white queen: 8 ♙xf2 ♘g4+ 9 ♙e1 (9 ♙g1 ♙b6+) 9...♘e3 10 ♙a4+ ♙d7 (12c), etc.



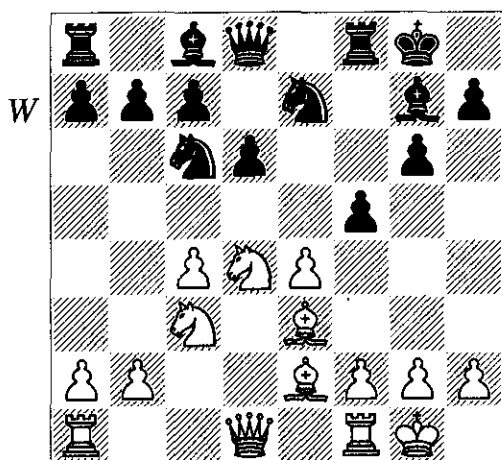
12a: after 4...♙g7



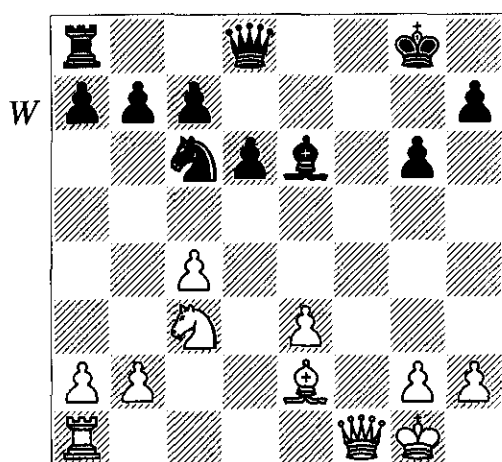
12b: after 7 ♙g2



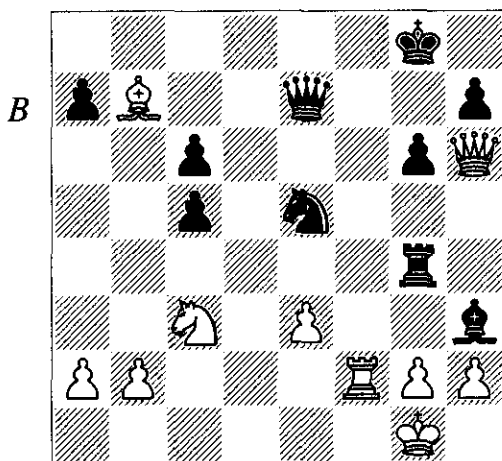
12c: after 10...♙d7



13a: after 9...f5



13b: after 14...e6



13c: after 24...h6

Trap 13 – Expecting the Unexpected

The next game is a very good example of a purely positional trap, where the victim does not actually lose material or even reach an objectively lost position, but just ends up standing worse. It is also a nice example of a non-standard *zwischenzug*, which is very hard to see. One has to have some sympathy for White, whose play is very natural, but in this tournament Mestel was simply unstoppable – he rattled off 9 consecutive wins on his way to the first of his three British Championships.

Neat – Mestel

British Ch (Portsmouth) 1976

1 d4 g6 2 c4 ♗g7 3 e4 d6 4 ♘c3 e5 5 ♘f3
exd4 6 ♘xd4 ♘e7 7 ♗e2 0-0 8 0-0 ♘bc6 9
♗e3 f5 (13a)

Now White should play 10 ♘xc6, but instead he overlooks Black's reply.

10 exf5? ♗xd4! 11 ♗xd4 ♘xf5

Suddenly White is in a lot of trouble, having no choice but to play the ugly...

12 ♗e3 ♘xe3 13 fxe3 ♗xf1+ 14 ♗xf1
♗e6 (13b)

White clearly has a very unpleasant position, and although it should objectively be defensible, it is not surprising that he goes downhill.

15 ♗d1 ♗e7 16 ♗f3 ♘e5 17 c5?! dxc5
18 ♗xb7 ♗f8 19 ♗e1? c6 20 ♗g3 ♗f5 21
♗f1 ♗g5 22 ♗f4 ♗h3 23 ♗f2 ♗g4 24 ♗h6
(13c)

Now a neat tactic traps the white queen.

24...♗xg2! 25 ♗xg2 ♗h4 26 ♘d5 ♗d8
0-1

Trap 14 – A Half-Baked Half-Benoni

Although not terribly good, the following sequence arises surprisingly often:

Gruener – Laqua
Germany 1991

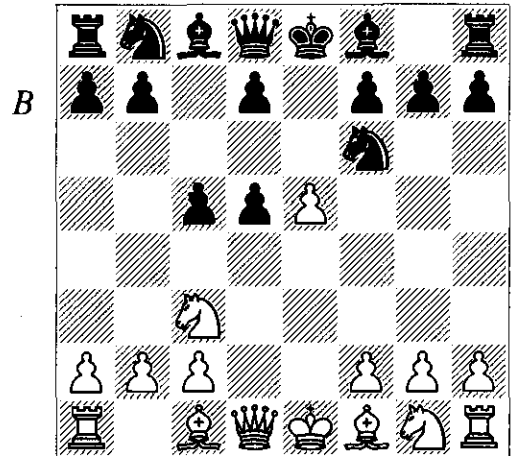
1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 c5 3 d5 e6 4 e4 exd5 5 e5!
(14a)

This vigorous move is clearly best and underlines the error of Black's ways. Surprisingly, however, it was played in only 2 of the 6 games with this position which I found on my database. The majority of players settled for 5 exd5, whilst Stefanova-Vidiniak, Dresden wom 1995 saw 5 ♘xd5, with White winning handily. After the text-move, Black's only chance is the retrograde 5...♘g8, since the alternative 5...♖e7 6 ♖e2 ♘g8 7 ♘xd5 does not help much. Instead, he gives it all away:

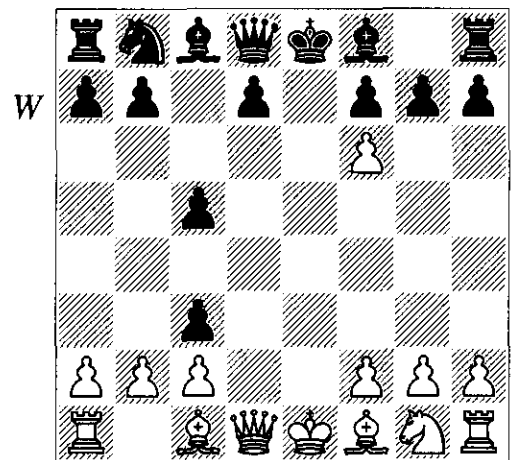
5...d4?? 6 exf6 dxc3 (14b) 7 ♖e2+ ♙e7 8 fxe7 ♖a5 9 b3

White won in 69(!) moves.

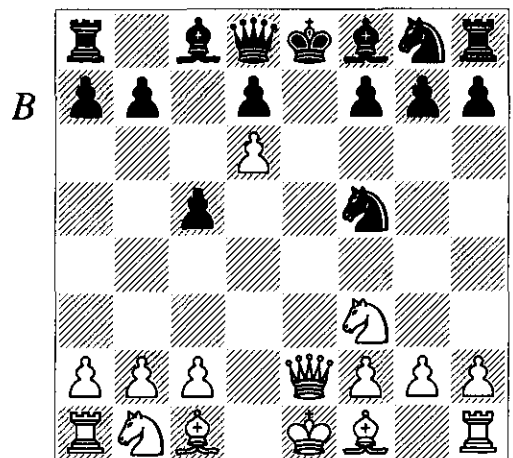
Besides once seeing the above trap played out in a weekend tournament, I also saw my friend Roger Parry pull off the same trick in the first round of the Ashford Open in 1975: 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 ♘c6? 4 d5 exd5 5 exd5 ♘ce7?? 6 d6 ♘f5 7 ♖e2+ (14c) 1-0. Luckily, his opponent resigned immediately – well, it *was* Friday evening and the pubs were open! I hesitate to speculate about how many pints were needed to drown Black's sorrows after such a game!



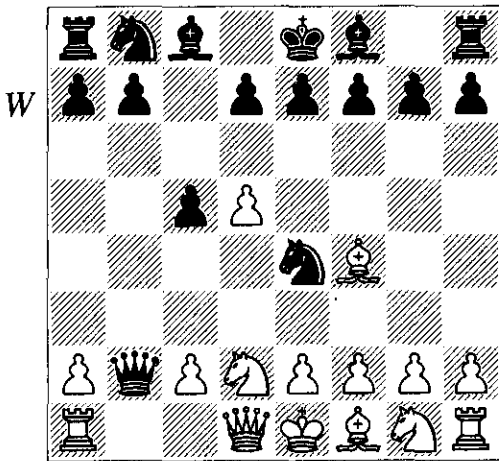
14a: after 5 e5



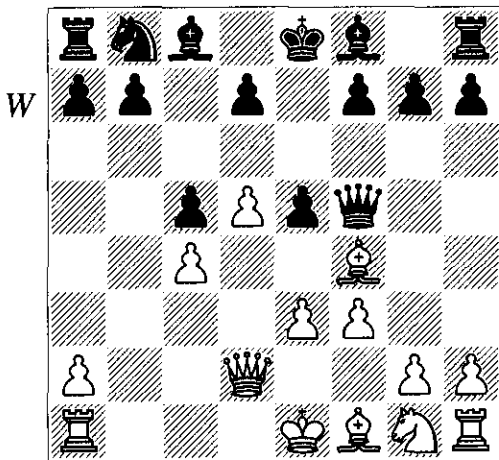
14b: after 6...dxc3



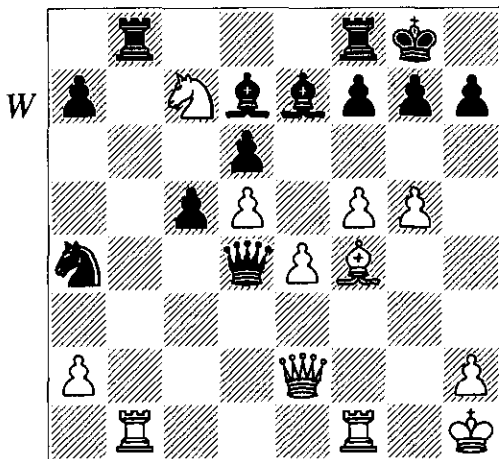
14c: after 7 ♖e2+



15a: after 5... ♖xb2



15b: after 10... ♖f5



15c: after 28... ♘a4

Trap 15 – (Almost) Always Develop with Tempo!

Although some of its recent outings give the impression that GM Julian Hodgson's beloved 'Tromp' may be in danger of passing its sell-by date, I certainly wouldn't mind having £1 for every game he has won with it. He has suffered a few embarrassments along the way, however, and when one of them was against a Director of Gambit Publications, you can hardly expect me to leave it out, can you?

Hodgson – Chandler Hastings 1991/2

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♙g5 c5 3 d5 ♘e4 4 ♙f4 ♖b6 5 ♘d2 ♖xb2!? (15a) 6 ♘xe4 ♖b4+ 7 ♖d2 ♖xe4 8 e3 e6 9 c4 e5 10 f3 ♖f5 (15b) 11 ♙d3?

Fred Reinfeld said you should always develop with tempo...

11... ♖f6 12 ♙g3 e4

But not this time! Julian struggled on, but although Jules is Jules, a piece is a piece!

13 ♖b1 exd3 14 ♖xd3 d6 15 ♘e2 ♘d7 16 ♘c3 ♙e7 17 0-0 ♘e5 18 ♖c2 0-0 19 f4 ♖g6 20 e4 ♘xc4 21 ♖e2 b5 22 ♘xb5 ♘b6 23 f5 ♖h6 24 ♙f4 ♖f6 25 ♘c7 ♖b8 26 g4 ♖d4+ 27 ♙h1 ♙d7 28 g5 ♘a4 (15c) 29 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 30 f6 ♘c3 31 ♖f3 ♙f8 32 fxg7 ♙xg7 33 ♙d2 ♖f8 34 ♙xc3 ♖xc3 35 ♖e2 ♖a5 36 ♘e6 0-1

Trap 16 – I was There!

The Lost Boys tournament in Antwerp has long been a favourite of mine and I have only missed one out of the five held. The 1997 edition was not one I look back on with as much fondness as usual (see Trap 101 and you'll understand why!), but it was memorable for producing the biggest GM howler I have ever witnessed.

Ye Rongguang – Van Wely
Antwerp 1997

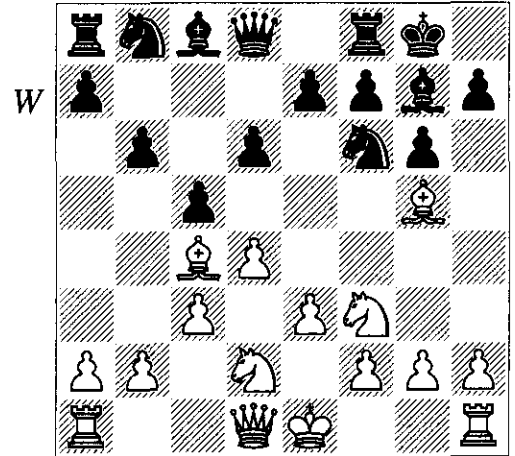
1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 ♙g5 ♙g7 4 ♘bd2 0-0
5 e3 d6 6 ♙c4 c5 7 c3 b6?? (16a) 8 ♙xf6
♙xf6 9 ♙d5 (16b)

It was at this point that I left my board for the first time in the game and cast a glance at the stage where the GM section was playing. The first thing which struck me was Van Wely's body language – he was sitting slumped at the board, head buried in his hands, looking terrible. If I hadn't known he is teetotal, I'd have thought he was feeling the effects of a heavy night, but it still didn't immediately dawn on me that after only 5 minutes play, it could be his position which was making him feel so bad. Then I looked at the demo monitor!

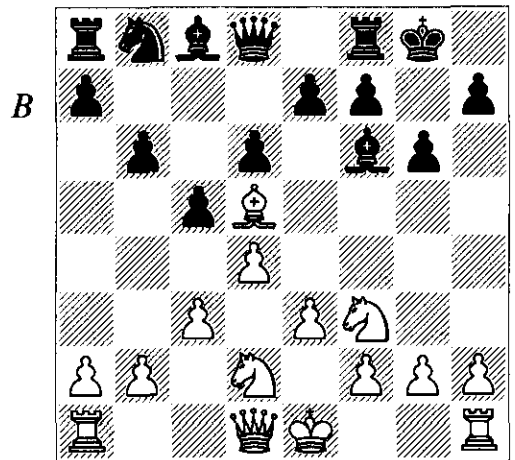
'King Loek' played on a few more moves before finally throwing in the towel:

9... ♙a6 10 ♙xa8 d5 11 c4 dxc4 12 0-0
cxd4 13 exd4 ♙xd4 14 ♘xc4 (16c) 1-0

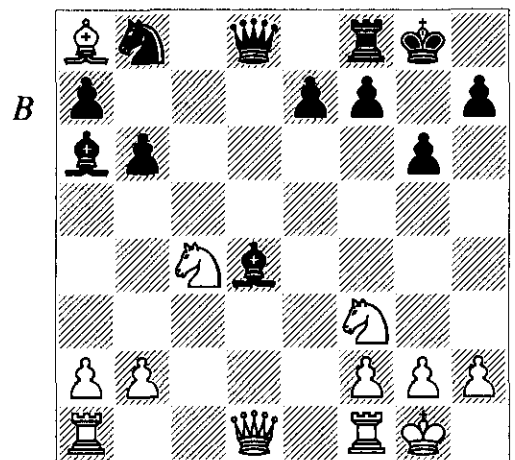
Incidentally, it was later revealed that Karpov had won the identical game in a simultaneous display in Belgium only weeks earlier – you can't even blunder originally nowadays!



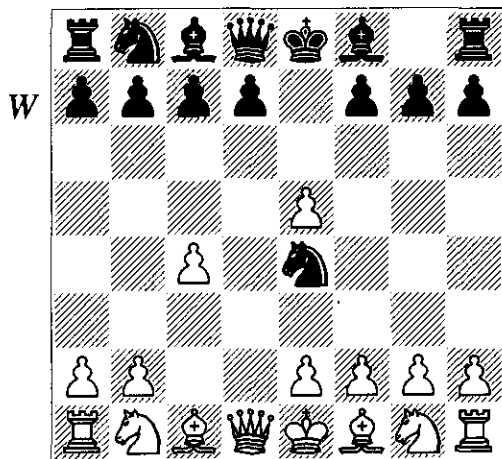
16a: after 7...b6



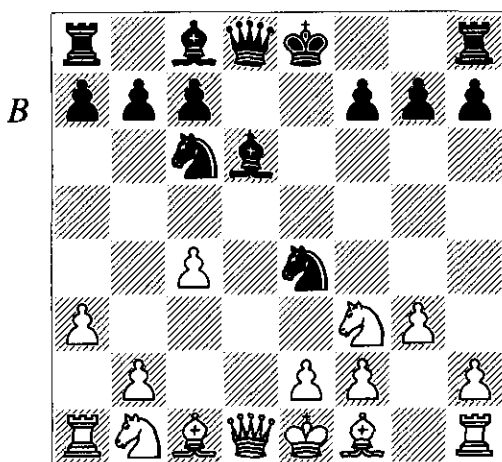
16b: after 9 ♙d5



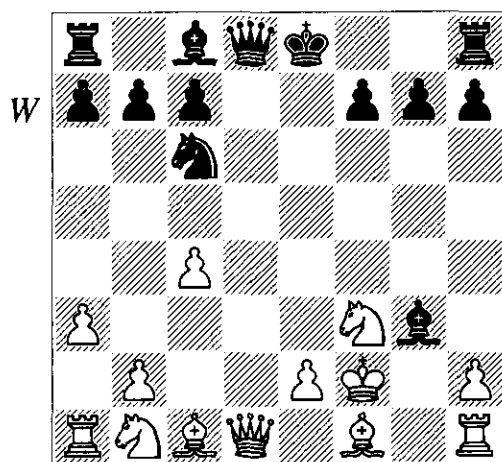
16c: after 14 ♘xc4



17a: after 3...♞e4



17b: after 7 g3



17c: after 8...♞xg3+

Trap 17 – Unfamiliarity Breeds Contempt

There are some opening traps which are so old, so hoary, so well-known, that you just can't believe that anyone would really fall for them nowadays, especially not in an opening that has little to recommend it other than the existence of a couple of such traps. The Fajarowicz Variation of the Budapest Defence is a typical example. Like a number of similar lines, it is periodically advocated in low-budget pamphlets, usually by authors who manage to bring to their subject a messianic fervour that rivals the early Christians. Despite their efforts, however, the vast majority of us carry on playing our boring Nimzo-Indians and Slav Defences and have no truck with such unsound romanticism. Perhaps for this reason, when some brave soul does spring a line like the Fajarowicz on his opponent, he can sometimes be rewarded spectacularly.

Marinelli – Osmanbegović
Cannes 1995

1 d4 ♞f6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 ♞e4 (17a)

The characteristic move of the Fajarowicz Variation.

4 ♞f3 ♞c6 5 a3 d6 6 exd6 ♞xd6 7 g3?? (17b)

Falling for the biggest trap in the entire opening.

7...♞xf2 8 ♚xf2 ♞xg3+ (17c) 0-1

White is losing his queen. Lest anyone think that only weak players ever fall for such traps, I should point out that Marinelli is rated over 2400, and that the experienced IM Andrew Whiteley once fell for a similar trap in this same opening.

Trap 18 – When is a Trap not a Trap?

It is always interesting when a line which theory has condemned for years suddenly turns out to be playable after all. The following is a typical example:

K.Berg – Ri.Bates
Richmond 1994

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗g5 c5 7 d5 e6 8 ♖d2 exd5 9 cxd5 h6 (18a) 10 ♗xh6!

For years it had been assumed that the pawn on h6 was immune because of the tactic 10...♘xe4. However, one day in the early 1990s somebody – actually the Russian GM Dreev, I believe – had a closer look.

10...♘xe4 11 ♘xe4 ♖h4+ 12 g3 ♖xh6 13 ♖xh6 ♗xh6 14 ♘xd6 ♘d7 15 f4 ♘b6

Black's best chance is 15...♘f6, e.g. 16 0-0-0 ♖d8 17 ♘xc8 ♖axc8 18 ♗g2 ♘g4 19 ♗h3 ♘f2! 20 ♗xc8 ♘xd1 21 ♖xd1 ♖xc8 (18b) with equality, as analysed by Stohl.

16 0-0-0 ♖d8 17 ♘xc8 ♖axc8 18 ♗h3 f5 19 ♘f3! (18c)

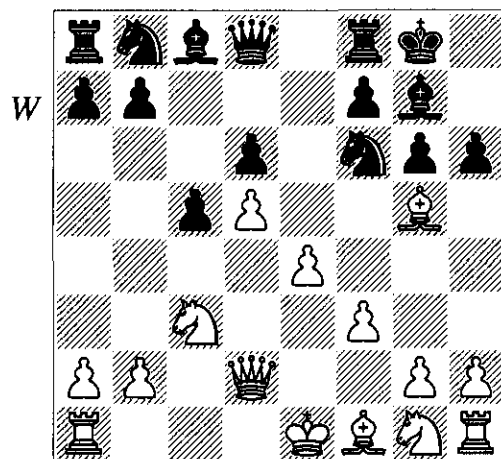
This move, a Dreev recommendation, underlines White's advantage. After the game, Berg revealed that he had already won two previous games from the position.

19...♘xd5 20 ♖he1! ♘b4

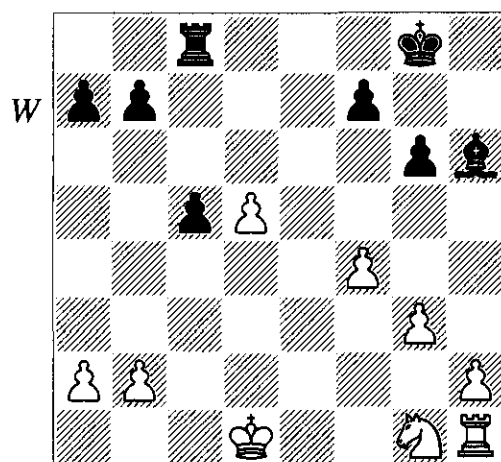
One of Berg's other wins in this line went 20...♗g7 21 ♗f1 ♘b6 22 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 23 ♖e6 c4 24 ♖xg6 ♖d5?? 1-0 Berg-Onoprienko, Groningen Open 1994.

21 ♘e5 ♖h7 22 a3 ♘c6 23 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 24 ♘xc6 bxc6 25 ♖e7+ ♗g7 26 ♗f1 a5 27 a4 ♖d4 28 b3 ♖e4 29 ♖xe4 fxe4

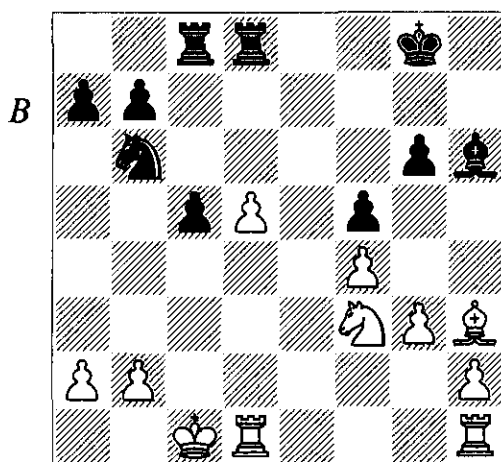
Berg was well on the way to the hat-trick, which he duly completed.



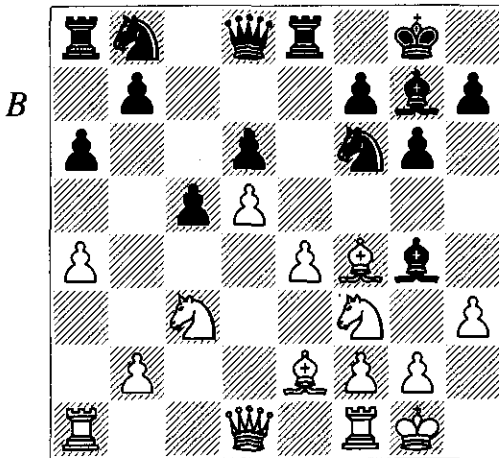
18a: after 9...h6



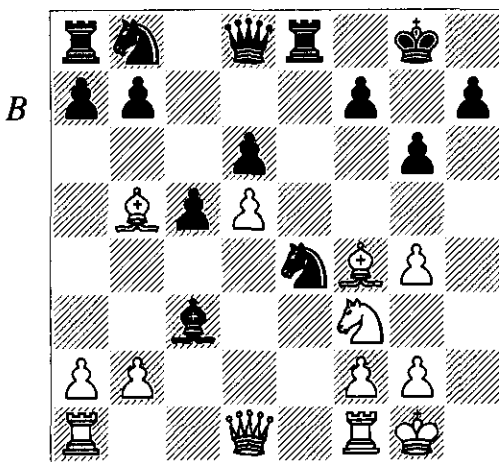
18b: after 21...♖xc8



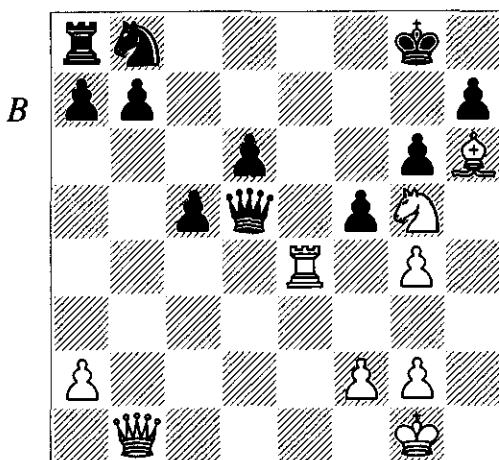
18c: after 19 ♘f3



19a: after 12 h3



19b: after 13 g5



19c: after 20 fxe4

Trap 19 – Viktor Bites Yer Legs!

The following trap is one every Modern Benoni player knows and loves:

Uhlmann – Fischer
Palma IZ 1970

1 d4 e6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 dxc3 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 6 e4 g6 7 f4 a6 8 a4 g7 9 f3 0-0 10 e2 g4 11 0-0 e8

In this position, the very strong East German GM, who was to join Fischer amongst the Candidates qualifiers from this tournament, produced the unfortunate **12 h3??** (19a). This allowed the ever-alert Fischer to grab a pawn: **12...dxe4!** **13 dxe4** (13 hxg4 exxc3) **13...fxe4** **14 g5 e8** and Fischer duly won.

There is, however, an interesting post-script to this story. It turns out that in the Soviet Championship some 11 years earlier, the game Korchnoi-Lutikov had reached the same position as diagram 19a, but without the inclusion of the moves ...a6 and a4. Lutikov sprung the same 'trap' as Fischer with **11...dxe4**. Unfortunately for Lutikov, however, you have to be up very early in the morning to catch 'Viktor the Terrible' with a tactic and the great man quickly demonstrated who was trapping whom by continuing **12 hxg4 exxc3** **13 b5!** (19b). Now the significance of the missing moves ...a6 and ...a4 becomes clear, as White is able to get his bishop 'off prise' with tempo. A brief flurry of violence later, it was all over: **13...xb2** **14 ex8 ex8** **15 e1 xa1** **16 xa1 f5** **17 h6 e7** **18 g5 e5** **19 b1 xd5** **20 fxe4** (19c) 1-0.

Trap 20 – A Controversial Position

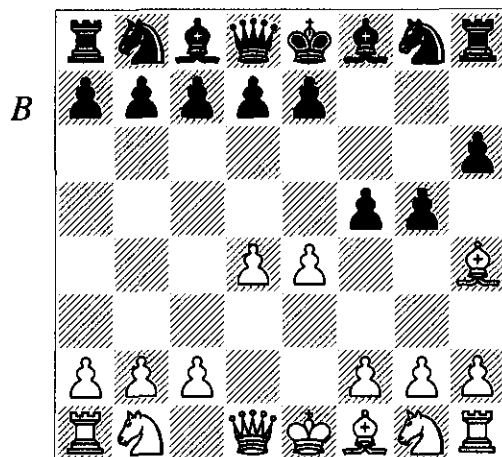
The move 2 ♙g5 has long been regarded as possibly White's most dangerous try against the Dutch. One critical line goes **1 d4 f5 2 ♙g5 h6 3 ♙h4 g5** and now **4 e4** (20a).

In his book *Winning With the Dutch*, Robert Bellin dismisses this on the basis of **4... ♙g7** quoting an old 1950s game which went **5 ♜h5+ ♚f8 6 ♙c4 d5 7 exd5 ♞f6 8 ♜f3 gxh4, winning for Black. However, things are far from so clear after the simple **5 ♙g3** . The game Mah-Siebrecht, London 1997 demonstrated a conclusive refutation of the attempt to win a piece with **5...f4** (20b), viz. **6 ♙xf4 gxf4 7 ♜h5+ ♚f8 8 ♜f5+ ♚e8 9 ♙e2** (20c).**

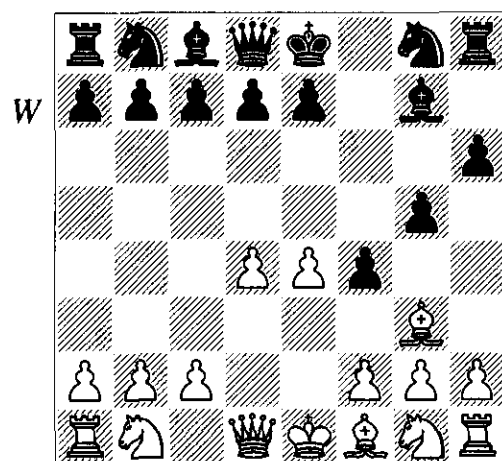
White's threat of **10 ♙h5#** is deadly. Amusingly, in a 1994 game Molander-Lindstedt, White took a draw by repetition here with **9 ♜h5+** , etc!

After **9... ♞f6 10 e5 d6 11 ♜xf4 dxe5 12 dxe5 ♞d5 13 ♙h5+ ♚d7 14 ♜g4+ ♚c6 15 ♜xg7** White soon won. In fact, the position after **9 ♙e2** had already been reached by another English player, Angus Dunnington – he won equally crushingly.

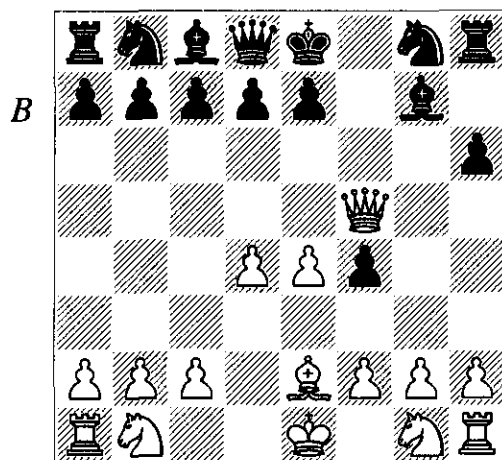
Black's only chance in this line appears to be **5...fxe4** but after **6 ♞c3** (also interesting is **6 ♙e2** , Cummings-S.Brown, British Ch (Norwich) 1994) **6... ♞f6 7 h4** White has excellent compensation. A recent survey on this line in *New in Chess* showed White scoring heavily from this position, leaving a question mark over the viability of **2...h6** and **3...g5**.

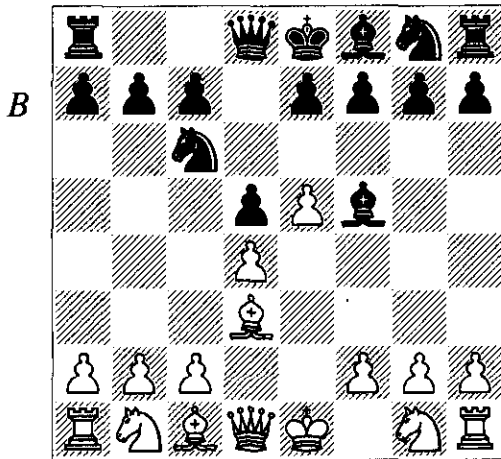


20a: after 4 e4

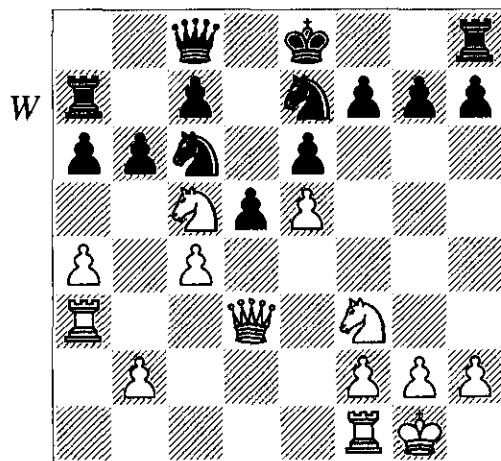


20b: after 5...f4

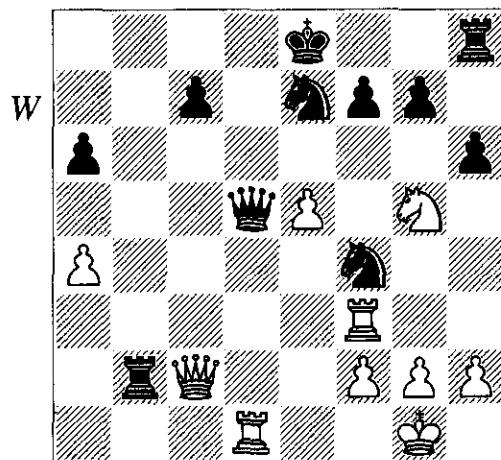
20c: after 9 ♙e2



21a: after 4...d3



21b: after 16...b6



21c: after 25...xb2

Trap 21 – You Mean This Isn't the Caro-Kann??

I remember once reading the story of the player from one of the weaker teams in an Olympiad who, as Black, played 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e5 against a grandmaster. Having been flattened fairly comprehensively, he was rather shocked to be told after the game that his choice of opening was dubious – “But according to my book”, he replied, “this is the best defence to the King’s Gambit”! Such confusion of openings might explain why I found no fewer than eight examples of the following howler:

Kontopoulos – G.Mohr
Athens 1993

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 f5 4 d3?? (21a)

In the equivalent position in the Caro-Kann, this move is perfectly playable (although none too scary for Black), but not here!

4...xd4

Thank you! Remarkably, of the 8 games I found, Black went on to lose 2 and draw another! In the present encounter, however, the Slovenian IM did the business efficiently enough.

5 xf5 xf5 6 d3 d7 7 f3 e6 8 0-0 c5 9 bd2 fe7 10 a4 a6 11 b3 a7 12 e3 c6 13 a3 ge7 14 xa7 xa7 15 c5 c8 16 c4 b6 (21b) 17 cxd5??

As good a way as any of resigning, except for the fact that White forgets the correct follow-up!

17...b4 18 c4 bxc5 19 xc5 b7 20 dx6 xe6 21 g5 d5 22 c1 d3 23 c2 f4 24 f3 h6 25 d1 xb2 (21c) 0-1

Trap 22 – Death of a Variation

The two closely-related variations considered below occupied the analytical attention of various English players during the 1970s and 1980s, but the general verdict nowadays seems to be that the lines are dead for Black. Still, it was fun while it lasted!

Owen's Defence

1 e4 b6 2 d4 ♖b7 3 ♙d3 (22a)

Probably the most critical, reserving the option of c3 to bolster the centre and denying Black the chance to pin the c3-knight. Black's next move is the critical attempt at refutation, but it appears to come up short in the spectacular Russian analysis which follows.

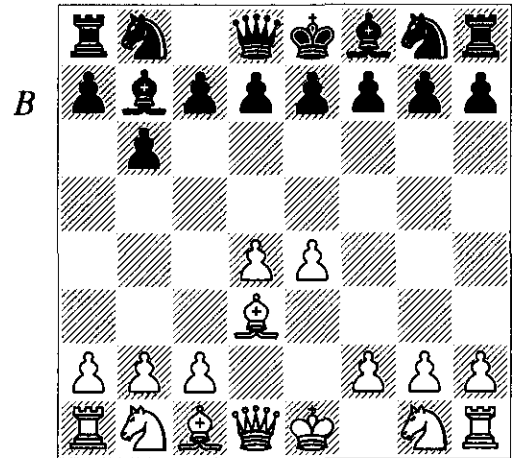
3...f5 4 exf5! ♙xg2 5 ♚h5+ g6 6 fxg6 ♙g7 7 gxh7+ ♚f8 8 ♘f3!!

This is the key move of the refutation. Previous attention had concentrated on the obvious 8 hxg8♚+, but as so often, the threat proves stronger than its execution.

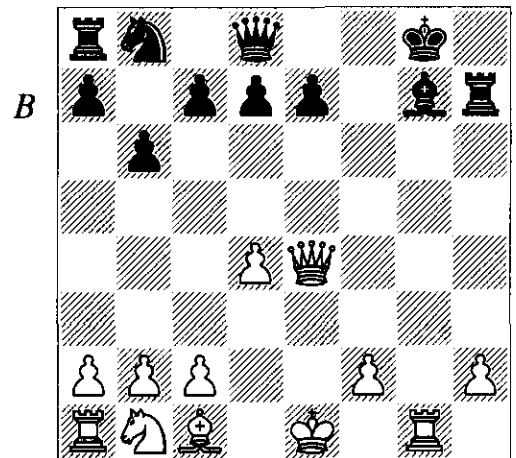
8...♘f6 9 ♚g6! ♙xf3 10 ♜g1 ♜xh7 11 ♚g3! ♙e4 12 ♙xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♚f3+ ♚g8 14 ♚xe4 (22b)

White has a clear advantage.

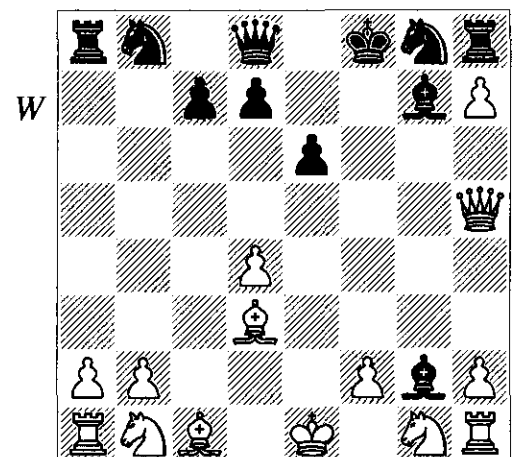
Once this analysis appeared in the mid-1970s, it seemed clear that 3 ♙d3 f5 in the Owen's Defence was dead and buried, but what about similar positions in related defences? One such is Mike Basman's infamous St George Defence, a line he developed and played with considerable success before graduating to the Grob and the Global Opening. In the St George, a similar line to that above can arise after the moves **1 e4 e6 2 d4 a6 3 c4 b5 4 cxb5 axb5 5 ♙xb5 ♙b7 6 ♙d3 f5 7 exf5 ♙xg2 8 ♚h5+ g6 9 fxg6 ♙g7 10 gxh7+ ♚f8 (22c).**



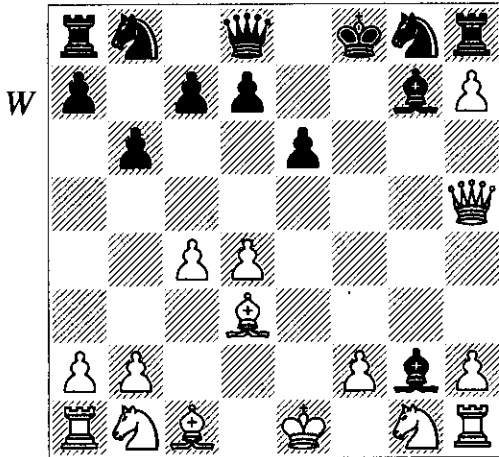
22a: after 3 ♙d3



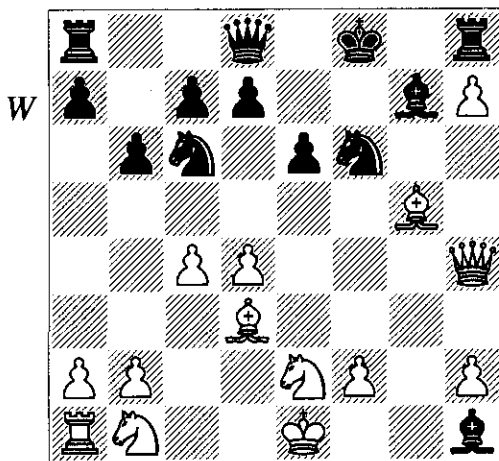
22b: after 14 ♚xe4



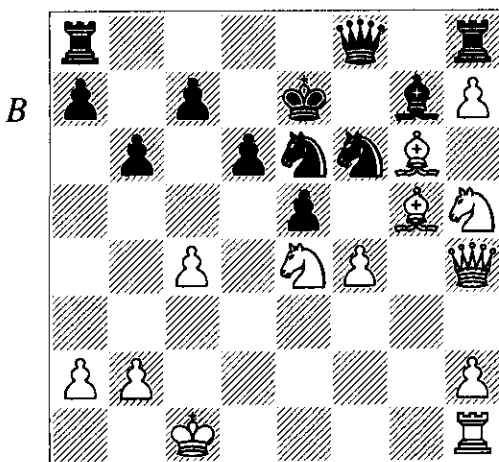
22c: after 10... ♚f8



22d: after 8...Kf8



22e: after 11...Nc6



22f: after 19 Nxe4

As Basman has pointed out, by comparison with Owen's Defence the continuation 11 Nf3 Nf6 12 Kg6 is less threatening here, because the open lines on the queenside give Black additional defensive resources such as ...Ra5xg5 to break any Kg5 pin, or perhaps ...Nc6-b4-d5, defending the f6-knight.

The second comparison is with the English Defence. Here too we have the extra moves c4 and ...e6, which should definitely help Black by comparison with Owen's Defence. So we all thought, until the game Browne-Miles, Tilburg 1978:

1 d4 e6 2 c4 b6 3 e4 Kb7 4 Kd3 f5 5 exf5 Kxg2 6 Kh5+ g6 7 fxg6 Kg7 8 gxh7+ Kf8 (22d) 9 Ne2!

The same idea as in the above analysis, aiming to prove that the h7-pawn is worth more than the g8-knight.

9...Nf6 10 Kh4 Kxh1 11 Kg5 Nc6 (22e) 12 Nf4 Kf7 13 Kg6+ Ke7 14 Nh5 Kf8 15 Nd2 e5 16 0-0-0 Nxd4 17 Kxh1 Ne6 18 f4 d6 19 Ne4 (22f)

Black is in an almost comical state of paralysis and soon lost.

Various attempts have been made to revive this line for Black. Firstly, Miles's 12...Kf7 was identified as a clear mistake and both 12...e5 and 12...Nxd4 were suggested as improvements. Then 12 Nd2 was tried as an improvement over Browne's 12 Nf4, only for Black to hit back with the crazy-looking 12...b5. Finally, that indefatigable analyst of all things tactical Otto Hardy suggested an even earlier deviation for Black, with 11...Kf3.

At GM level, however, nobody seems to trust 4...f5 any more, with English Defence specialists such as Speelman and Zviagintsev preferring 4...Nc6.

Trap 23 – Countering the Centre Counter

The Centre Counter, or Scandinavian Defence, has achieved a degree of respectability in recent years, thanks in part to Anand's use of it against Kasparov in their world championship match. Although more recent games have begun to make the pendulum swing the other way, it remains a useful surprise weapon, especially at club and county level. As a line with relatively little theory and which can be played on move one, it has obvious advantages for the amateur player who has neither the time nor the inclination to learn the latest Sicilian lines down to move 30 and beyond.

If you are going to play the Centre Counter, however, one piece of advice – don't forget to sling in a timely ...c7-c6. The result if you do not can be terribly embarrassing!

Diringer – Link

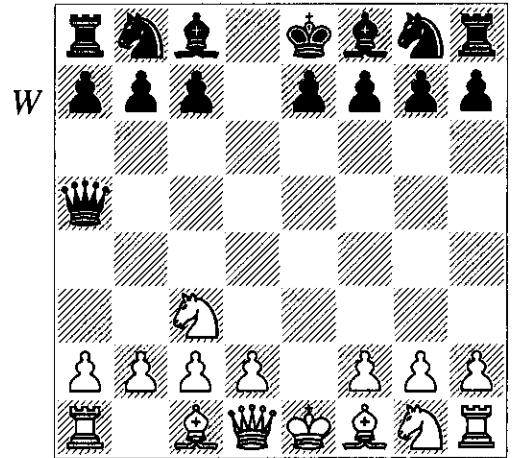
Oberliga Württemberg 1990/1

1 e4 d5 2 exd5 ♖xd5 3 ♘c3 ♗a5 (23a) 4 d4 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♙g4 6 h3 ♙h5 7 ♙d2 e6 8 g4 ♙g6 9 ♘e5 (23b)

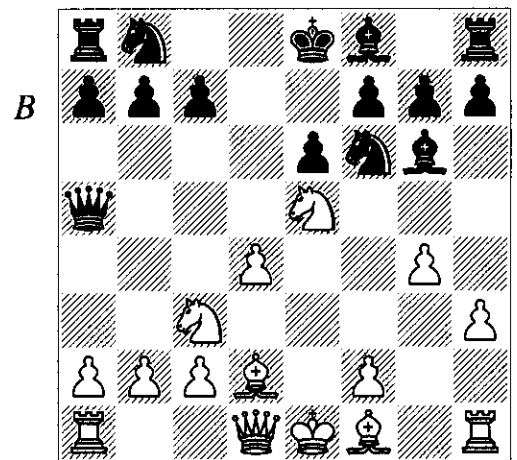
Now after the thematic 9...c6, Black would have no particular problems, but instead he overlooks the primary danger.

9...♘c6?? 10 ♘b5 ♗b6 11 ♘c4 ♗xb5 12 ♘d6+ 1-0

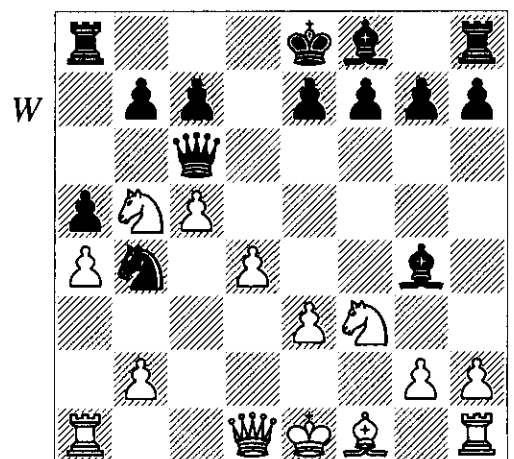
Similar accidents have occurred many times. Rõtšagov-P.Olsen, Copenhagen 1993 went 1 e4 d5 2 exd5 ♖xd5 3 ♘c3 ♗a5 4 d4 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 ♙d2 ♙g4 7 ♘b5 ♗b6 8 a4 a5? (8...♙xf3) 9 ♙e3 ♘d5 10 c4 ♘xe3 11 fxe3 ♘b4 12 c5 ♗c6 (23c) 13 ♘d6+ exd6 14 ♙b5 winning the queen.



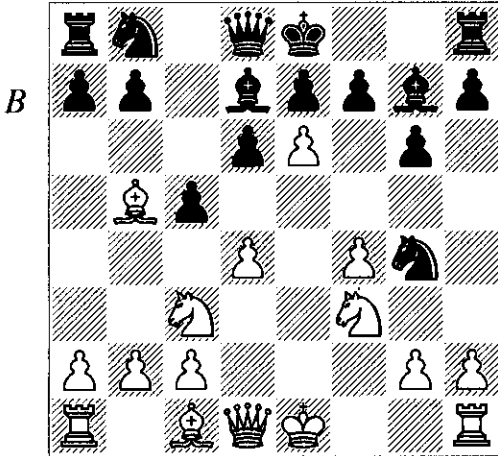
23a: after 3... ♗a5



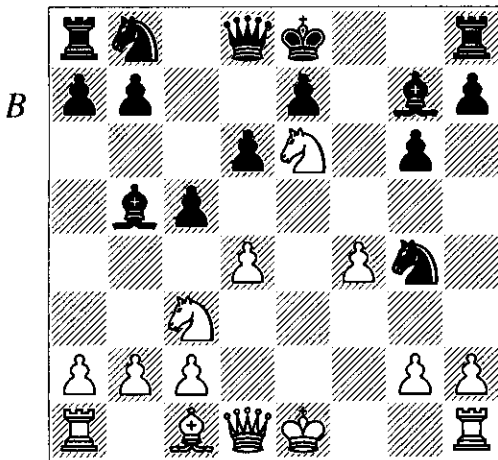
23b: after 9 ♘e5



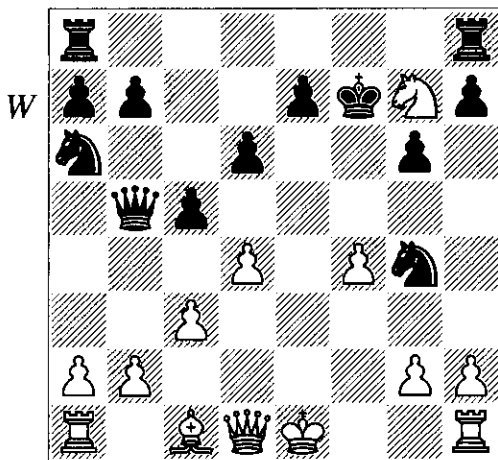
23c: after 12... ♗c6



24a: after 8 e6



24b: after 10 Qxe6



24c: after 13... Kf7

Trap 24 – A Trap that Draws!

We saw in Trap 18 that lines which have been thought for years to be bad can sometimes be revived or reassessed. The following game is maybe the most spectacular example of this in recent years:

Sax – Seirawan
Brussels World Cup 1989

1 e4 d6 2 d4 Qf6 3 Qc3 g6 4 f4 Qg7 5 Qf3 c5 6 Qb5+ Qd7 7 e5 Qg4 8 e6 (24a)

For years theory had considered Black's next move impossible, and numerous games had gone 8... Qxb5 9 exf7+ Qd7 10 Qxb5 Qa5+ 11 Qc3 cxd4 12 Qxd4 Qc6, etc. On this occasion, however, Seirawan had prepared a real shocker.

8... fxe6 9 Qg5 Qxb5 10 Qxe6 (24b)

Sax must have been wondering what the American GM was doing, but all was now revealed. Later practice has established as the main line 10 Qxb5 Qa5+ 11 c3 Qxb5 12 Qxe6 Qa6 13 Qxg7+ Qf7 (24c), when the position is unclear and Black's results have been satisfactory.

10... Qxd4!! 11 Qxd8 Qf2+ 12 Qd2 Qe3+ 13 Qe1 Qf2+ 1/2-1/2

This has since become one of the most favoured lines for tired-out competitors seeking to play out a pre-arranged draw, as witnessed by the 28 occurrences I located on my database. And, no, nobody managed to lose this position for either colour!

Trap 25 – Ever the Optimist

If the great Bobby Fischer did have a weakness as a player, it was the occasional tendency towards over-optimism. The Curaçao Candidates tournament of 1962 was a typical example. Having dominated the Interzonal earlier the same year, the 19-year-old Fischer went to Curaçao expecting to mop up the Soviet opposition as though it was a simultaneous display, but soon ran into problems. His eventual 4th place left him claiming bitterly that the Soviets had conspired against him and fixed the result, and he withdrew from all international chess for almost two years. A look at the games, however, suggests he was simply out of form and carried away with an excess of optimism. The following is typical.

Fischer – Korchnoi *Curaçao Ct 1962*

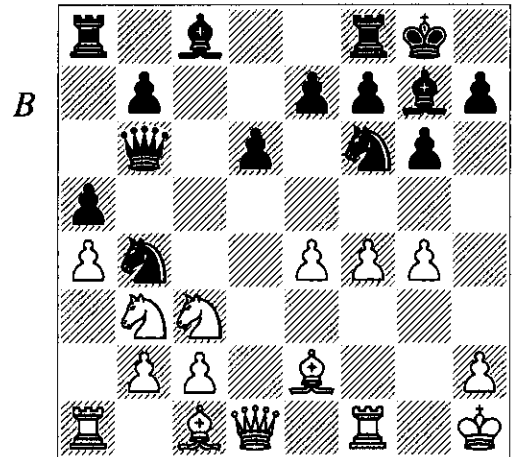
1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 g6 4 f4 ♙g7 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♙e2 c5 7 dxc5 ♚a5 8 0-0 ♚xc5+ 9 ♙h1 ♘c6 10 ♘d2 a5 11 ♘b3 ♚b6 12 a4 ♘b4 13 g4? (25a)

Typical of the player who thinks he can get away with anything. Instead, the move allows a combination which wrecks White's position.

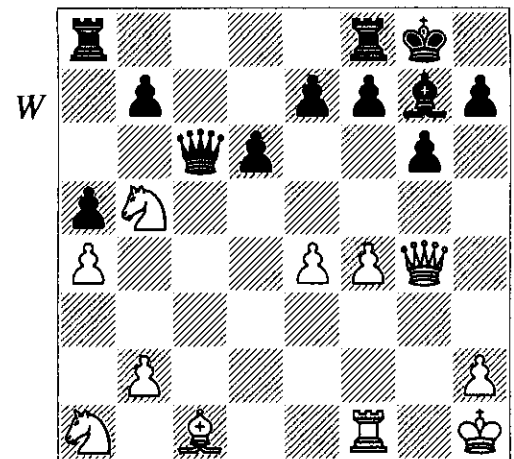
13...♙xg4! 14 ♙xg4 ♘xg4 15 ♚xg4 ♘xc2 16 ♘b5 ♘xa1 17 ♘xa1 ♚c6 (25b)

The transaction has left White with hopelessly uncoordinated pieces and a draughty king. Fischer hacks away desperately, but to no avail.

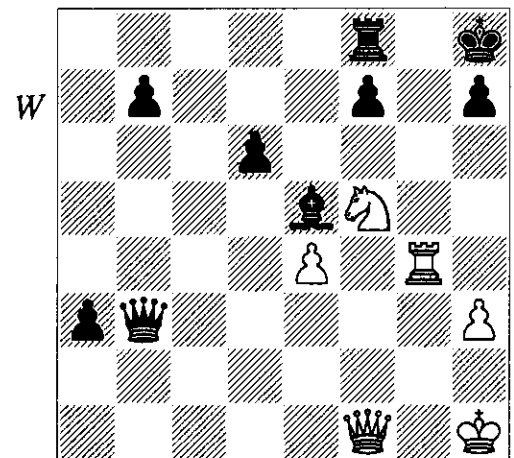
18 f5 ♚c4 19 ♚f3 ♚xa4 20 ♘c7 ♚xa1 21 ♘d5 ♙ae8 22 ♙g5 ♚xb2 23 ♙xe7 ♙e5 24 ♙f2 ♚c1+ 25 ♙f1 ♚h6 26 h3 gxf5 27 ♙xf8 ♙xf8 28 ♘e7+ ♙h8 29 ♘xf5 ♚e6 30 ♙g1 a4 31 ♙g4 ♚b3 32 ♚f1 a3 (25c) 0-1



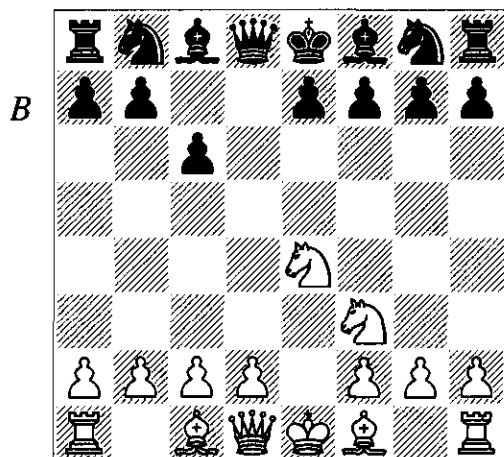
25a: after 13 g4



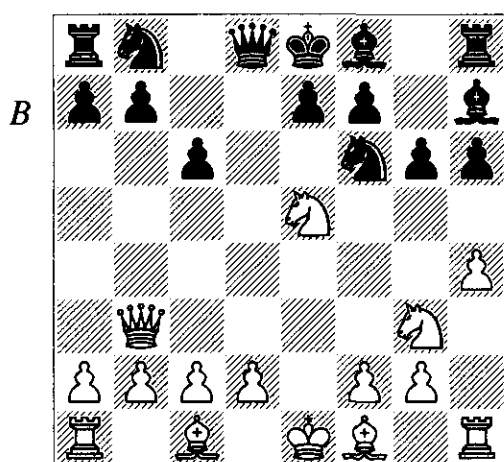
25b: after 17... ♙c6



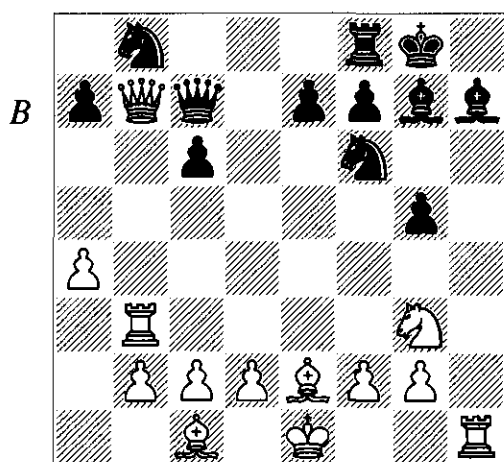
25c: after 32... a3



26a: after 4 Nxe4



26b: after 10 Qb3



26c: after 18 Qb7

Trap 26 – Good Tunes and Old Fiddles

There are many examples of longevity in chess. In our own day, the great Vasily Smyslov continues to play strong chess, despite very poor eyesight, whilst the indefatigable Viktor Korchnoi remains capable of beating anyone in the world on his day. But nobody has yet emulated the remarkable performances of Emanuel Lasker in the 1930s. Returning to tournament play at Zurich 1934 after an absence of 9 years, he downed Max Euwe in the first round with a positional queen sacrifice, and later in the same event he demonstrated a nasty pitfall in the Caro-Kann.

Em.Lasker – H.Müller
Zurich 1934

1 e4 c6 2 Nc3 d5 3 Nf3 dxe4 4 Nxe4 (26a)
4... Qf5?!

Standard when White has played 2 d4 instead of 2 Nf3, but not good here.

5 Ng3 Qg6?

5... Qg4 was the last chance saloon. Now it is disaster.

6 h4 h6 7 Ne5 Qh7 8 Qh5 g6 9 Qf3

Fischer recommends 9 Qc4 as even better, but Lasker's move looks convincing enough, since 9... Qd5?? loses to 10 Qxd5 cxd5 11 Qb5+.

9... Nf6?

The losing move. The alternative 9... f6 looks hideous, but there is no clear refutation.

10 Qb3 (26b) 10... Qd5 11 Qxb7 Qxe5+
12 Qe2 Qd6 13 Qxa8 Qc7 14 a4 Qg7 15
Qa3 0-0 16 Qb3 g5 17 hxg5 hxg5 18 Qb7
(26c)

White won on move 32.

Trap 27 – Silence is Golden

“Speech may be silver, but silence is gold”, as my former Latin teacher was fond of reminding recalcitrant schoolboys. It seems to me that silence is a very much underrated quality, especially in our noise-dominated world. Even today, however, there are times when words fail one and silence is really all that remains. The following game is one such:

Keres – Arlamowski
Szczawno Zdroj 1950

1 e4 c6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 ♘f3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♘f6 5 ♚e2 (27a)

A move of no great objective merit, but it does set a small trap.

5... ♘bd7??

“Whereof one cannot speak, thereof must one remain silent” (Wittgenstein).

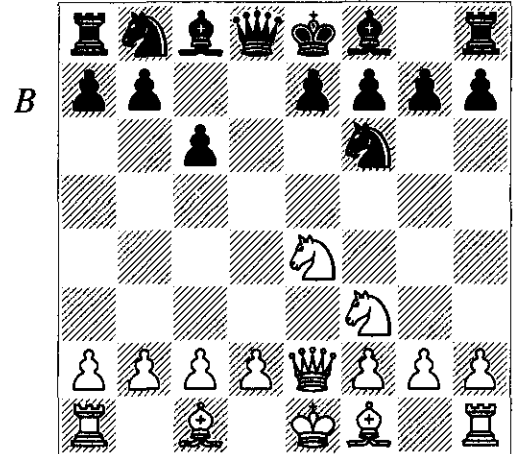
6 ♘d6# (27b) 1-0

Another of the more amazing statistics which I uncovered when writing this book was the discovery of 8 examples of this same sequence being repeated in tournament play!

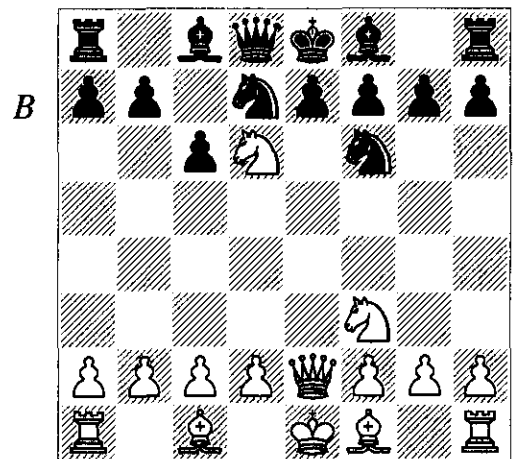
The trap has an echo in the main line of the Budapest Defence, where there are various ways for White to blunder into a mate after a sequence such as the following:

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 ♘g4 4 ♚f4 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♚b4+ 6 ♘bd2 ♚e7 7 a3 ♘gxe5 8 axb4?? ♘d3# (27c)

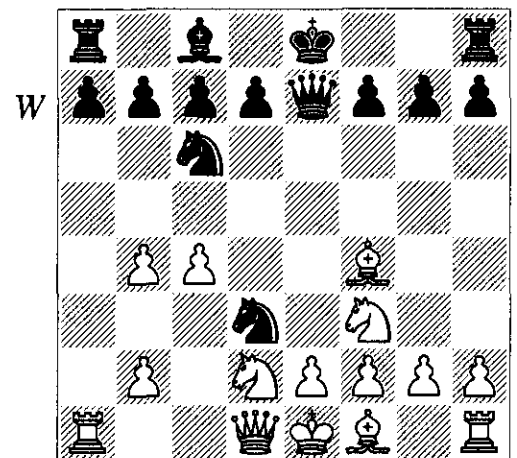
As well as 8 examples of the Caro-Kann line above, I also located 5 examples of this trap!



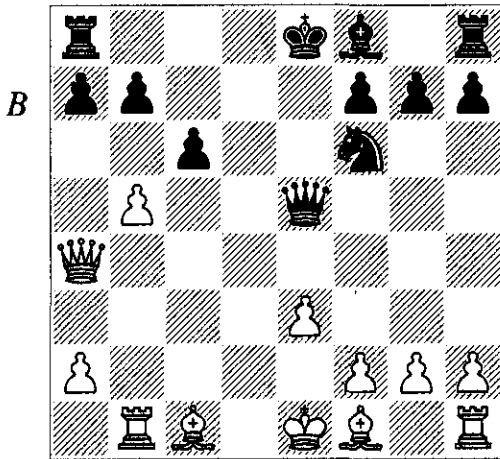
27a: after 5 ♚e2



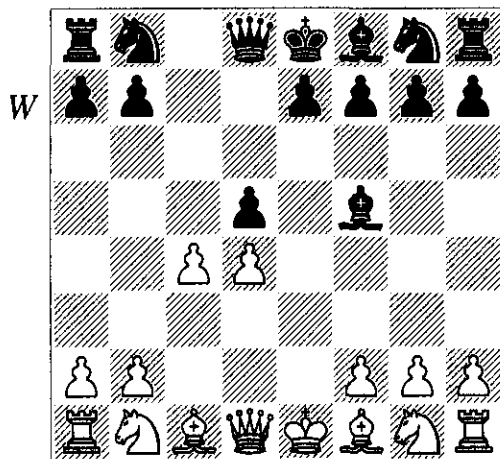
27b: after 6 ♘d6#



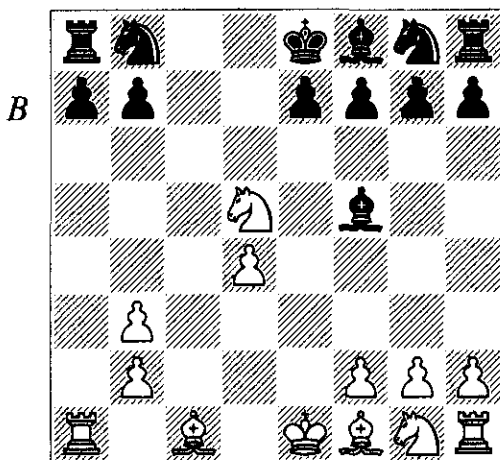
27c: after 8... ♘d3#



28a: after 11 b5



28b: after 4...f5



28c: after 9 axb3

Trap 28 – If Only it Were that Simple

The next game is perhaps an example of naivety, as much as anything else. In many queenside openings, Black struggles to develop his queen's bishop, and the temptation to bring it out early is always a strong one. A good example is the so-called Baltic Defence 1 d4 d5 2 c4 f5. Unfortunately, if things were really that simple, the Queen's Gambit would have gone out of fashion years ago, and practice suggests that Black's position is rather dodgy after 3 cxd5 fxb1 4 Wa4+, e.g. 4...c6 5 fxb1 fxd5 6 f3 f6 7 e3 bd7 8 b4 e5 9 dxe5 xe5 10 xe5 xe5 11 b5 (28a) when Black is almost lost, Sadler-Condie, British Ch (Swansea) 1995.

The following game illustrates the same principle, albeit in a slightly different setting. A premature ...f5 leaves Black in trouble at once, and a further mistake brings a sudden end.

Engels – May
Dusseldorf 1937

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4 f5?
(28b) 5 cxd5 fxd5 6 f3 c3 7 Wa5 8 Wb3
9 Wb6?

Losing immediately, but Black's game is already seriously compromised. Indeed, his best move may be 7...f8c8 which is condemnation enough of his play.

8 f3 d5 9 fxb3 10 axb3 (28c) 1-0

Suddenly there is nothing to be done against the twin threats of f7c7+ and f6b6. A drastic punishment indeed!

Trap 29 – I was There (Part 2)

The following trap is one I saw played out at the now-defunct Folkestone Easter Congress in the early 1980s. The winner, Simon Le-Blancq, was a popular figure in British and Channel Islands chess circles, who died at a tragically early age. Interestingly, the trap is not mentioned at all in *ECO*.

Le Blancq – Eales
Folkestone 1984

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3
♘c6 6 ♙g5 ♚a5 7 ♙d2 dxc4 8 ♙xc4 (29a)

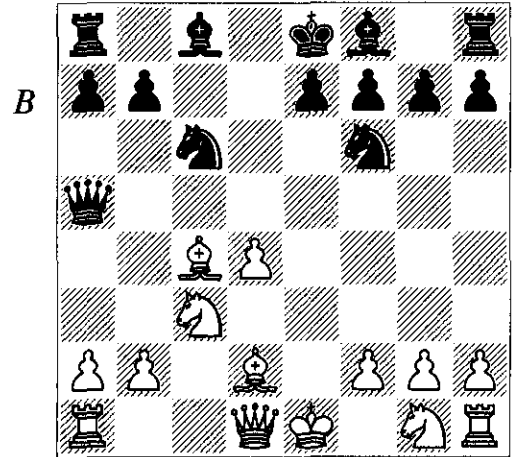
Bagirov in *ECO* gives only 8...e6 here. I remember walking up to the present game and wondering why Black couldn't take on d4 here. Before I could work out the reason, the 2360-strength Richard Eales played the move, and answer soon became clear.

8...♙xd4 9 ♘b5 ♚b6 10 ♘xd4 ♚xd4

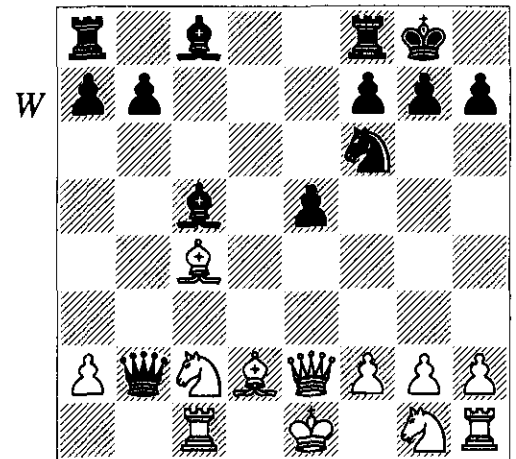
The only other game I have found with this trap was a 1992 encounter (presumably a blitz game) between American GM John Fedorowicz and a Mephisto computer. It is surprising that this trap should be beyond the computer's horizon, but despite this the silicon monster continued 10...e5 11 ♘c2 ♙c5 12 ♚e2 ♚xb2 13 ♚c1 0-0 (29b) and eventually won!

11 ♚a4+ (29c) 1-0

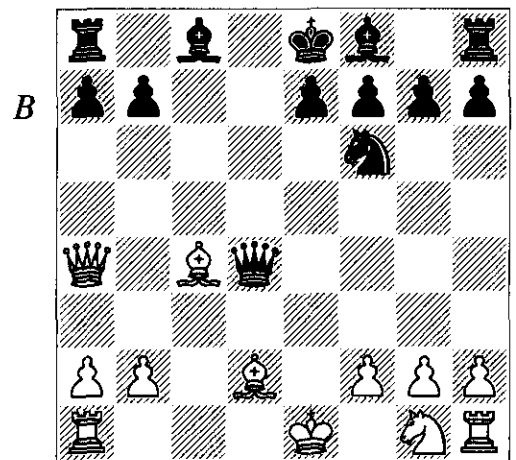
Black loses his queen after 11...♙d7 12 ♙xf7+, 11...♚d7 12 ♙b5 or 11...♙d8 12 ♙a5+ b6 13 ♚d1.



29a: after 8 ♙xc4



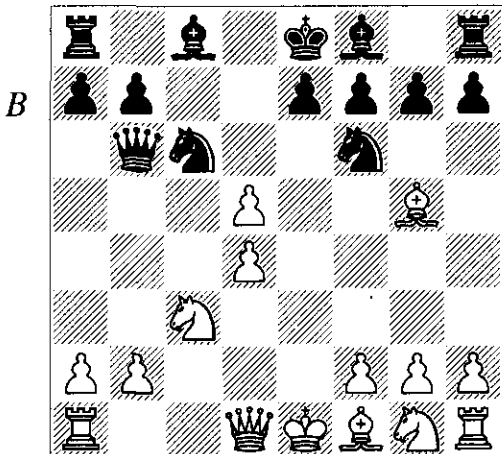
29b: after 13...0-0



29c: after 11 ♚a4+

Trap 30 – Forewarned is Forearmed

Mikhail Botvinnik is widely credited with being the founder of the modern scientific approach to the study of openings, and the following game is frequently quoted as a typical example of the benefits of his methods. The final position had been on his board “...in the quiet of my study” (to use the Patriarch’s own favourite phrase!) some months earlier.



30a: after 7 cxd5

Botvinnik – Spielmann Moscow 1935

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4

The defining move of the Panov-Botvinnik Attack, still to this day regarded as one of White’s the most dangerous weapons against the Caro-Kann.

4...♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♘c6 6 ♙g5 ♚b6 7 cxd5 (30a) 7...♚xb2??

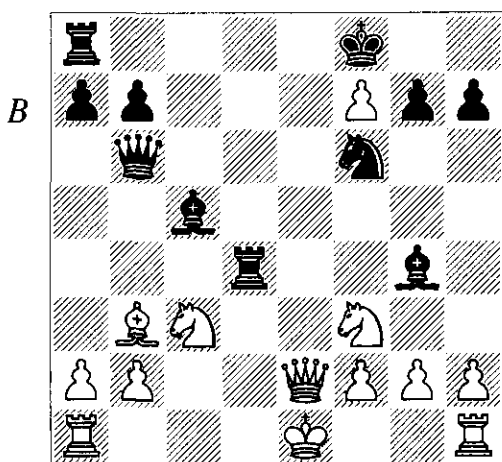
Losing by force. Relatively best is *ECO*’s 7...♘xd4 8 ♙e3 e5 9 dxe6 ♙c5 10 exf7+ ♚e7 11 ♙c4 ♖d8 12 ♘f3 ♙g4 13 ♙xd4 ♖xd4 14 ♚e2+ ♚f8 15 ♙b3 (30b), although Black’s position hardly inspires a great deal of confidence.

8 ♖c1 ♘b4

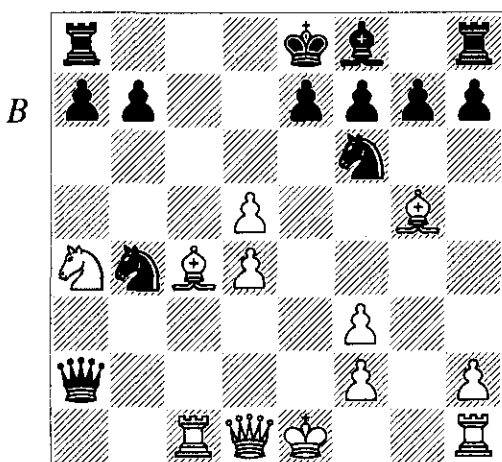
The text loses a piece, but other moves are no better, for example 8...♘a5 9 ♚a4+, or 8...♘d8 9 ♙xf6 followed by 10 ♙b5+.

9 ♘a4 ♚xa2 10 ♙c4 ♙g4 11 ♘f3 ♙xf3 12 gxf3 (30c) 1-0

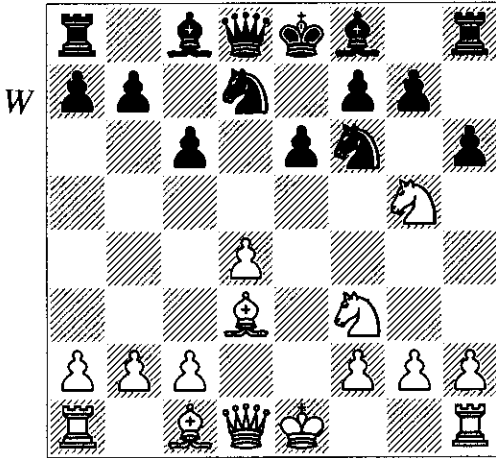
Spielmann resigned since after 12...♚a3 13 ♖c3 (but not 13 ♖a1?? ♚xa1) he is forced to jettison a piece by 13...♘c2+ in order to extricate the queen.



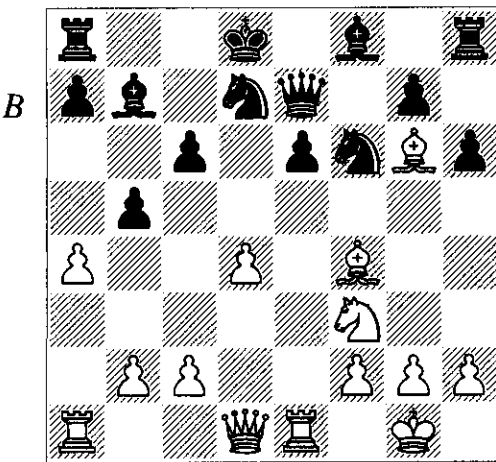
30b: after 15 ♙b3



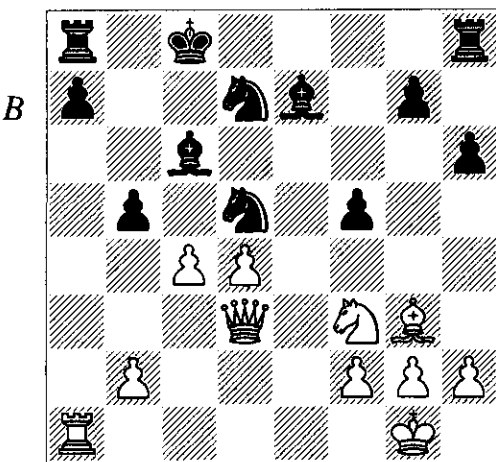
30c: after 12 gxf3



32a: after 7...h6



32b: after 13 ♖e1



32c: after 19 c4

Trap 32 – Mankind's Biggest Ever Loss?

The following game was hailed by many people as the most significant ever played, since it marked the first time the world champion had been defeated in a match by a computer. In reality, however, its true significance in my mind is simply that it is the most humiliating disaster of Kasparov's career.

Deep Blue – Kasparov New York (6) 1997

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 dxe4 4 ♗xe4 ♘d7 5 ♗g5 ♗gf6 6 ♙d3 e6 7 ♗1f3 h6? (32a)

Naturally, the moment the game finished, the chess world wanted to know how Kasparov could have fallen into a known trap in an opening which he must have analysed for many hours in preparation for Karpov. Never one to disappoint his public, Gazza offered two completely different explanations within hours of the game finishing! One press conference was told it was a finger-slip and he had intended 7...♙d6, whilst a Russian journalist was told that he had chosen 7...h6 deliberately, because he believed Deep Blue's opening preparation was all based on a German computer chess openings program, which advocated 8 ♗e4 rather than the sacrifice on e6. Readers can choose for themselves which (if either) of these explanations they believe. Suffice it to say that Black is probably lost after White's reply.

8 ♗xe6! ♙e7 9 0-0 fxe6 10 ♙g6+ ♙d8 11 ♙f4 b5 12 a4 ♙b7 13 ♖e1 (32b) 13...♗d5 14 ♙g3 ♙c8 15 axb5 cxb5 16 ♙d3 ♙c6 17 ♙f5 exf5 18 ♖xe7 ♙xe7 19 c4 (32c) 1-0

Trap 33 – An Accident at the Seaside

One of the striking things readers may have already noticed about this book is that the Caro-Kann features more times than any other opening, proof enough that even the most solid of openings can spring a leak if a player's tactical alertness is switched off. With due apologies to Caro devotees everywhere, here is yet another example.

Keres – Pflieger
Hastings 1964/5

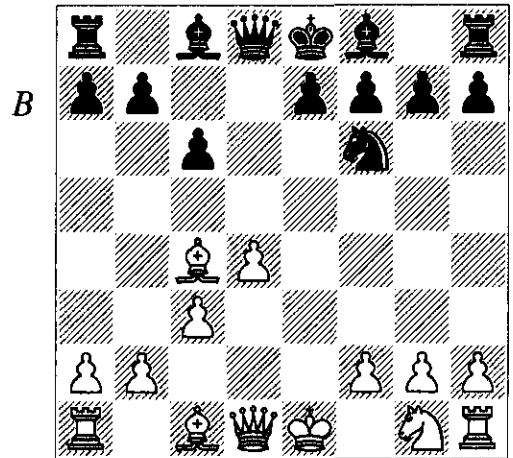
1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♘d7 5 ♙c4 ♘gf6 6 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7 c3 (33a)

White's move-order promises him nothing at all after the accurate 7...♚c7, but instead the German GM played the routine Caro-Kann move 7...♙f5?? and after 8 ♚b3! found himself forced to say 'Auf Wiedersehen' to a pawn. After the further moves 8...♘d5 9 ♚xb7 ♘b6 10 ♘f3 (10 ♚xc6+?? ♙d7 11 ♚c5 ♚c8) 10...f6 11 ♙b3 compensation was thin on the ground and White duly won in 46 moves.

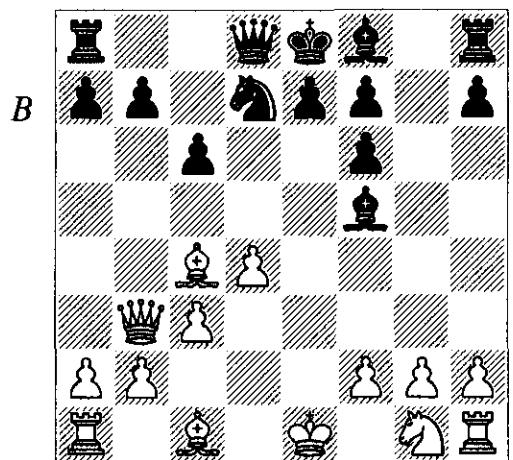
The same idea crops up in other lines of the Caro, for instance 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♘f6 5 ♘xf6+ gxf6 6 ♙c4 ♙f5 7 c3 ♘d7?? 8 ♚b3 (33b) cost Black a pawn in Tresch-A.Grün, Worms U-20 1992.

Another line where the double attack is relevant is 1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘c3 dxe4 4 ♘xe4 ♘d7 5 ♘f3 ♘gf6 6 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 7 ♘e5 ♙f5?! 8 c3! (33c).

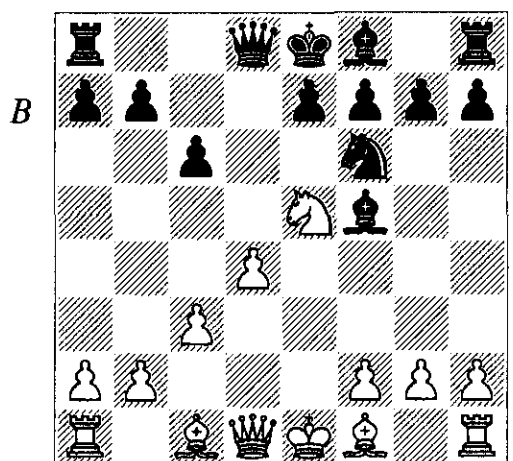
This move has various points, one of which is to threaten 9 ♚b3, and the most natural way to stop this, 8...e6, runs into 9 g4! ♙g6 10 h4, when Black has major problems.



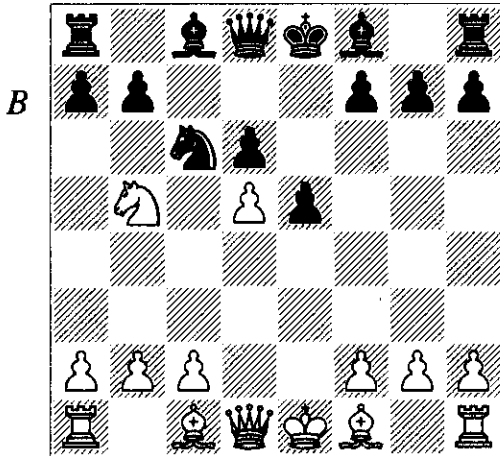
33a: after 7 c3



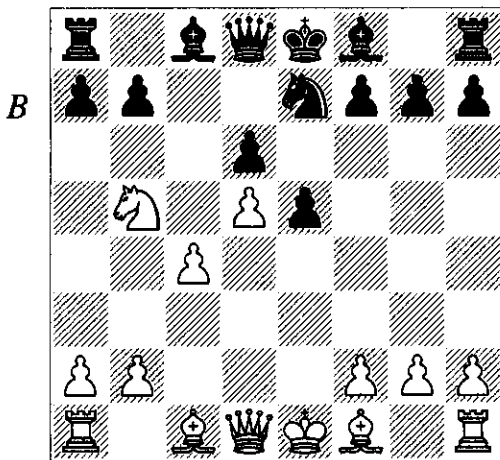
33b: after 8 ♚b3



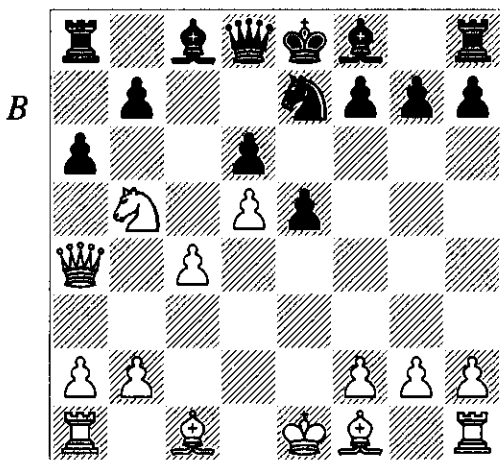
33c: after 8 c3



34a: after 8 exd5



34b: after 9 c4



34c: after 10 ♖a4

Trap 34 – Pelikan Crossing

Many of the opening lines we see in this book are lines which have no special merit, other than setting a little trap. One would expect such lines to have relatively little success, since if the trap is the main point of the move, the opponent ought to be more likely to spot it (although as this book shows, practice often confounds this theory!). White's opening line in the following game, on the other hand, is one which has considerable objective merit in itself, quite apart from setting a vicious trap for the unwary. Indeed, many Pelikan players prefer to avoid 7 ♘d5 by employing the Four Knights move-order (5...e6 6 ♘db5 d6 7 ♙f4 e5 8 ♙g5).

Oll – Herczeg
Budapest 1989

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 e5 6 ♘db5 d6 7 ♘d5 ♘xd5 8 exd5 (34a) 8...♘e7

The alternative retreat 8...♘b8 is also possible and avoids any traps of the sort which arises in the game. In this case, White should pursue the long-term strategic plan of exploiting his queenside pawn majority, a plan with which Michael Adams has been successful on several occasions in the past.

9 c4 (34b) 9...a6??

Obvious, but fatal. He must remove the knight from e7 first.

10 ♖a4! (34c)

Immediately winning material, because both interpositions on d7 lose out of hand. Herczeg gave up the exchange by 10...axb5 11 ♖xa8 but never looked like getting back into the game.

Trap 35 – The King is Dead, Long Live the King

It is always a significant turning point when a long-established champion is finally toppled by a young pretender. Samuel Reshevsky dominated American chess for over two decades, but by the time he met Fischer in the 1958/9 US championship, the youngster was already knocking firmly on the door. He had won the previous year's championship ahead of Reshevsky, and this year he repeated the feat and humiliated the veteran in the process, by catching him a known opening trap.

Fischer – Reshevsky
USA Ch (New York) 1958/9

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 g6 5
♘c3 ♗g7 6 ♖e3 ♘f6 7 ♖c4 0-0 8 ♖b3
♘a5? (35a)

Opening theory was always Reshevsky's Achilles' Heel, and here he falls into a trap which had been pointed out in the Russian magazine *Shakhmatny Bulletin* some time before. Unfortunately for Reshevsky, the young Fischer was an avid student of Russian chess literature.

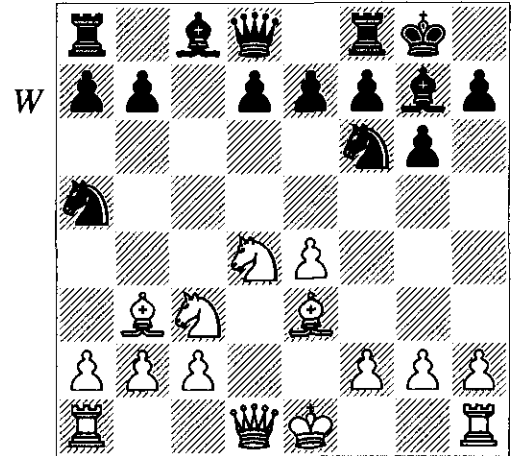
9 e5! ♘e8 10 ♖xf7+ ♔xf7

The alternative 10...♗xf7 loses to the same reply.

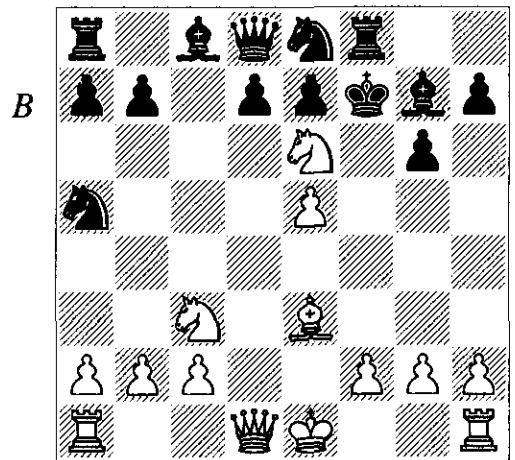
11 ♘e6!! (35b)

This is the real point. 11...♔xe6 leads to rapid mate after 12 ♕d5+ (35c).

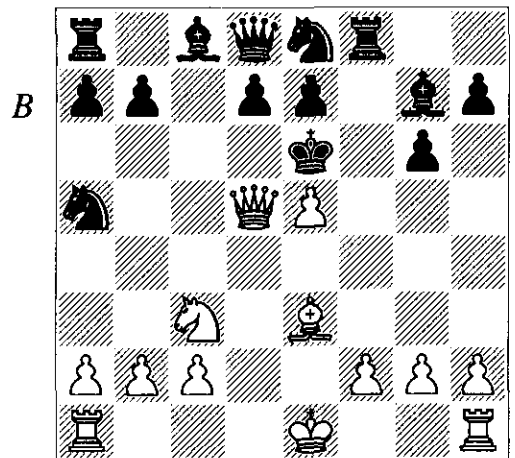
Reshevsky, no doubt mortified at suffering such a humiliation at the hands of his young rival, gave up queen for two pieces and played on for 40-odd moves before finally admitting defeat.



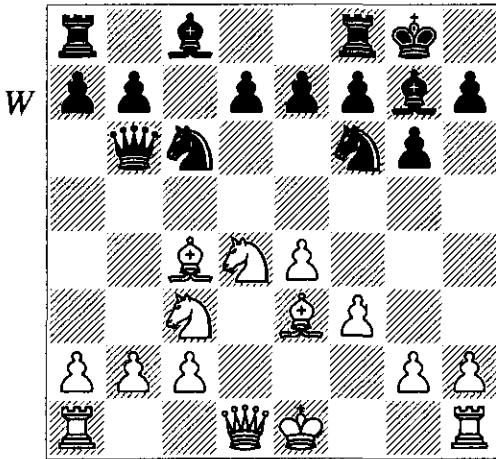
35a: after 8...♘a5



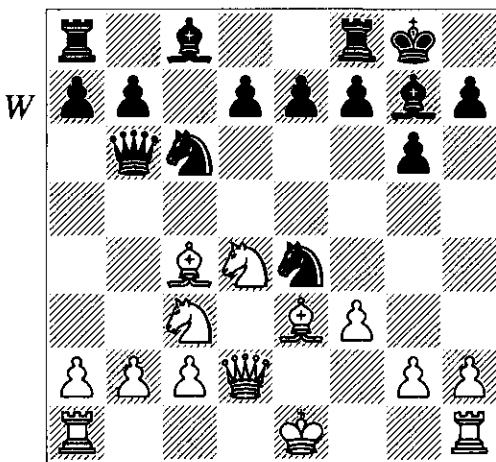
35b: after 11 ♘e6



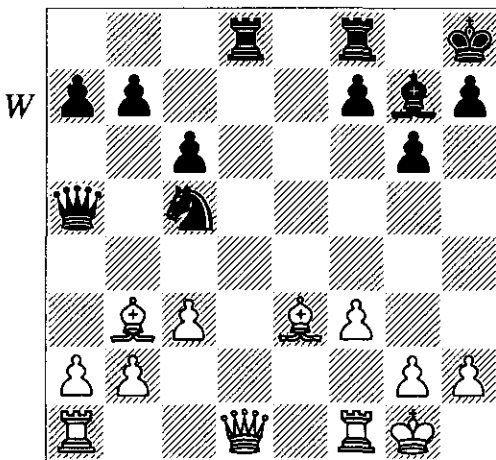
35c: after 12 ♕d5+



36a: after 8...♙b6



36b: after 9...♞e4



36c: after 15...♞cd8

Trap 36 – When Similar is not the Same

The following game is an excellent example of the benefits of move-ordering. White is trying to get into a main-line Dragon, but against Black's accelerated move-order, this proves impossible and he gets himself into a terrible tangle very quickly.

Kahn – Malakhov
Budapest 1996

1 e4 c5 2 ♞f3 g6 3 d4 ♙g7 4 ♞c3 cxd4 5 ♞xd4 ♞c6 6 ♙e3 ♞f6 7 ♙c4 0-0 8 f3?

Continuing to hope for a Dragon after 8...d6, but after Black's next move, White is already in trouble. Correct is 8 ♙b3, as seen in Trap 35.

8...♙b6! (36a)

This is already somewhat embarrassing for White, because the threats extend beyond 9...♙xb2 to include 9...♞xe4. It is not so easy for White to hold his position together, and with his next moves he just succeeds in impaling himself convincingly.

9 ♞cb5?

This panic reaction destroys his own position. Another common way for White to self-destruct is 9 ♙d2? ♞xe4! (36b).

The young Fischer showed the correct path: 9 ♙b3 ♞xe4 10 ♞d5 ♙a5+ 11 c3 ♞c5 12 ♞xc6 dxc6 13 ♞xe7+ ♖h8 14 ♞xc8 ♙axc8 (14...♞e8!? is more ambitious) 15 0-0 ♞cd8 (36c) with equality, Fischer-Panno, Portorož IZ 1958.

9...a6 10 ♞f5 ♙d8!

Very simple, but very effective – the position of the white knights is almost comical.

11 ♞bd4 gxf5 12 ♞xf5 d5 0-1

An awful humiliation for a player rated 2380!

Trap 37 – Threefold Repetition Equals ... Three Points!

The following example shows that threefold repetition in chess doesn't always mean a draw. Australian GM Ian Rogers pulled off the same opening trap three times in the space of just over a year, winning all three games. And what is more, the trap wasn't even new – it had previously occurred in a game of Mikhail Tal's. One might have thought that any game where the Riga Magician went down in 21 moves with White against an unknown Cuban would have attracted a certain amount of attention, but apparently not!

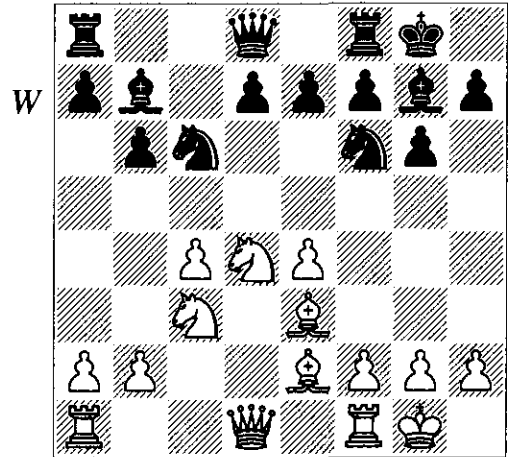
Eingorn – Rogers

London Lloyds Bank 1989

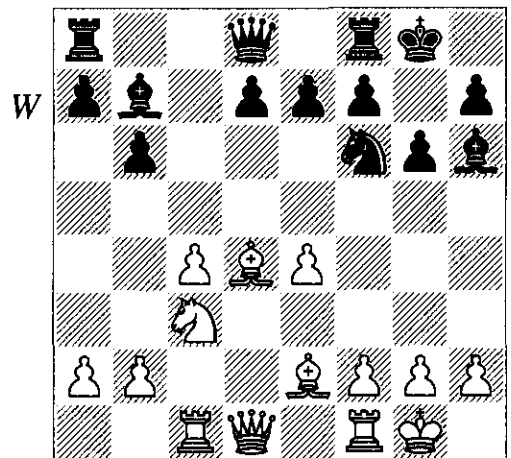
1 f3 c5 2 c4 g6 3 e4 g7 4 d4 cxd4 5 fxd4 c6 6 e3 f6 7 c3 0-0 8 e2 b6 9 0-0 b7 (37a)

Black's double fianchetto system is a little unusual and White should now play 10 f3 with an edge. His next move in the game is extremely natural, but a surprising tactical trick proves it to be an error. This position is also noteworthy for containing another trap, since the equally natural 10 c1? loses material after 10... fxd4 11 exd4 h6! (37b) when Black threatens both the c1-rook and the c4-pawn.

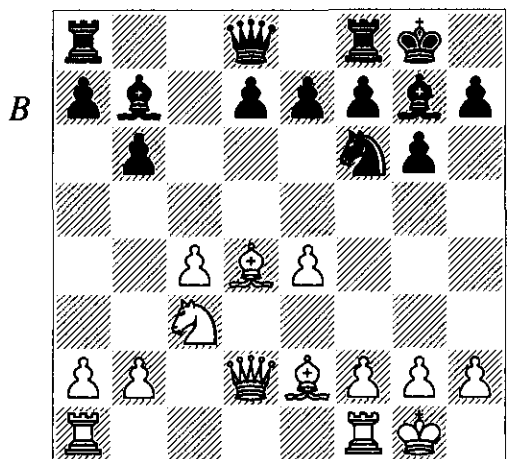
This trap too has claimed a large number of victims. I found eight examples, plus the usual crop of cases where Black had the chance to spring the trap but missed it. Most notable amongst the latter category was a game Mi. Tseitlin-Apicella, Budapest 1993, where the Russian GM played 10 c1? and his strong French opponent settled for 10... d6? rather than winning material with 10... fxd4 .



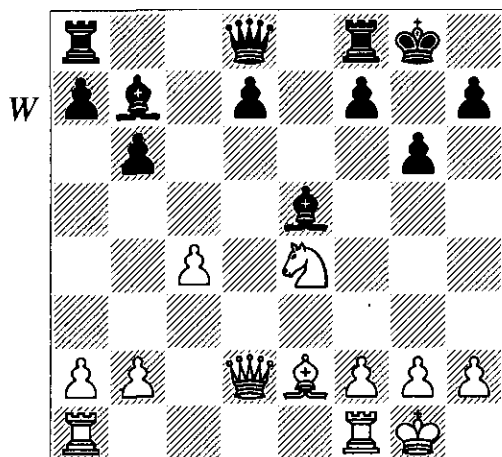
37a: after 9... b7



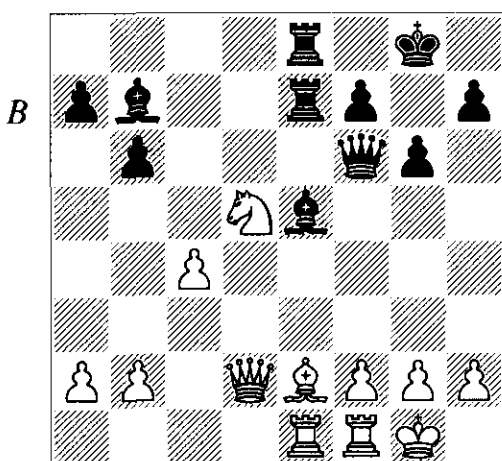
37b: after 11... h6



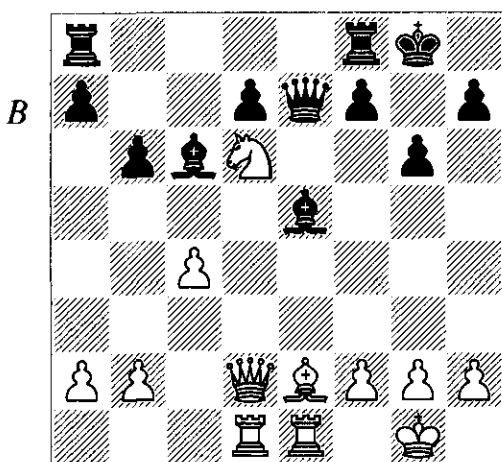
37c: after 11 exd4



37d: after 13...♙xe5



37e: after 18 ♘d5



37f: after 16 ♖fe1

10 ♙d2? ♘xd4 11 ♙xd4 (37c) 11...e5!

Of course, the e4-pawn could not be taken immediately because of 11...♘xe4 12 ♘xe4 ♙xe4 13 ♙xg7 ♚xg7 14 ♙d4+, but the text cleverly forces a favourable liquidation which nets Black the bishop-pair. Black is probably not objectively that much better in the resulting position, but the shock value usually causes White to defend poorly.

12 ♙xe5 ♘xe4 13 ♘xe4 ♙xe5 (37d) 14 ♘d6

In Robović-Rogers, Biel 1992, White preferred 14 ♘g3 but after 14...♙c6 15 f4 ♙g7 16 ♖ad1 a5 Black was better and went on to win. Tal chose the third alternative 14 ♘c3 against R.Hernandez at Las Palmas 1977, but a series of uncharacteristically weak moves sent him crashing to defeat: 14...♖e8 15 ♖ae1? ♙f6 16 ♙xd7 ♖e7 17 ♙d2 ♖ae8 18 ♘d5? (37e) 18...♙xd5 19 cxd5 ♙f4! 20 ♙xf4 ♙xf4 (suddenly the e-file pin is costing White a piece) 21 d6 ♖xe2 0-1.

14...♙c6 15 ♖ad1 ♙e7 16 ♖fe1? (37f)

No doubt unsettled by the turn of events, Eingorn blunders. Ericsson-Rogers, Malmö 1993 saw the superior 16 ♙g4 ♙xd6 17 ♙xd6 ♙e4 18 ♙h3 ♙xc4 but Rogers went on to complete his hat-trick.

16...♙f6!

Winning material by force. Eingorn gave up the exchange by 17 b3 ♙c3 but was ground down in 56 moves.

Given the existence of two highly plausible ways for White to go wrong on move 10, this line may have a certain appeal for Black. One word of caution, however – as Ian Rogers points out, if White avoids the traps (for example, by 10 f3) Black just has a rather passive Maroczy position, which can be fairly depressing for him unless he plays extremely accurately.

Trap 38 – Fair Exchange, No Robbery?

To misquote George Bernard Shaw, “Simplification is the last refuge of a scoundrel”. As anyone who has played chess for very long can testify, there are few things more calculated to frustrate a player than a lower-rated opponent who seeks to make a draw by doing his best impression of a vacuum cleaner, sweeping the board clean of all available wood at every opportunity. And when he starts using tactical means to do it, this just adds insult to injury. The following game is therefore dedicated to all those frustrated professionals whose lives are made a misery by vacuum-happy 2200-rated players in Open tournaments.

Pein – E.Hernandez
Mexico City 1991

1 ♖f3 ♗f6 2 c4 g6 3 d4 ♙g7 4 ♗c3 0-0 5 e4
c5 6 ♙e2 cxd4 7 ♗xd4 ♗c6 8 ♙e3 d6 9 0-0
(38a) 9...♗g4??

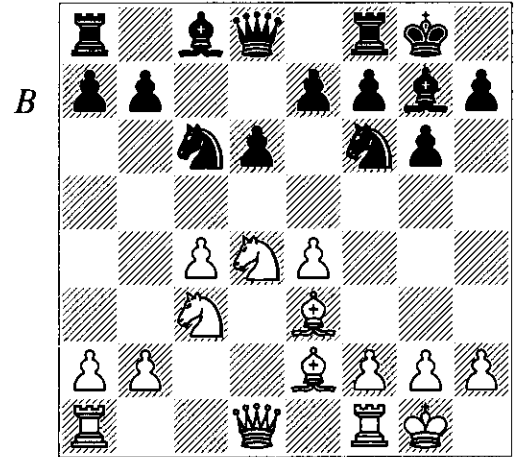
This tactic is perfectly playable in the sequence 1 ♖f3 ♗f6 2 c4 c5 3 ♗c3 ♗c6 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♗xd4 g6 6 e4 ♙g7 7 ♙e3 ♗g4 (38b) but here it loses material.

10 ♙xg4 ♙xg4 11 ♗xc6

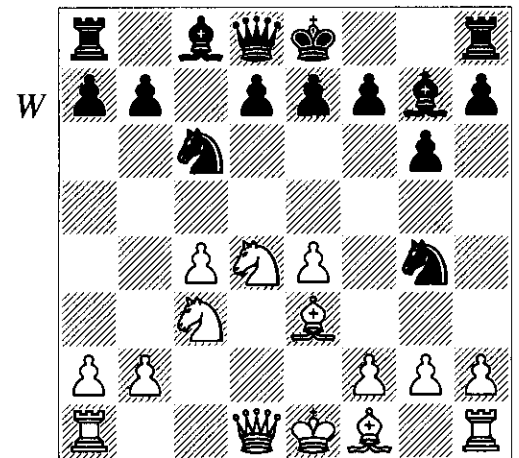
There is no saving the piece, for instance 11...♙d7 12 ♗xe7+ ♔h8 13 f3 1-0 L.Spasov-T.Kristiansen, Oslo 1976.

11...♙xd1 12 ♗xd8 (38c) 1-0

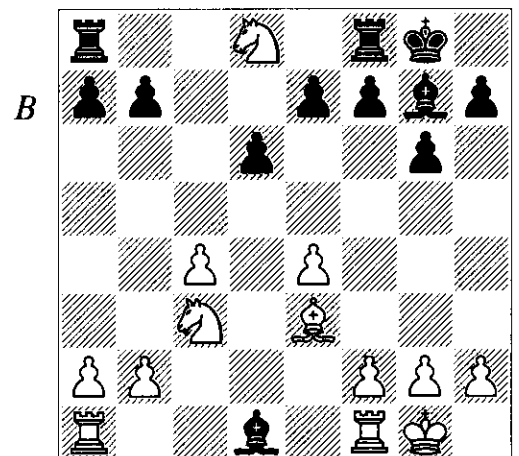
This is one of those opening traps which occurs with the greatest frequency. I located 15 examples, and I have no doubt there are many others. The most recent case was the game Åkesson-Heidenfeld from the European Team Championship at Pula 1997, where the Irish international fell for the same line and resigned on move 14.



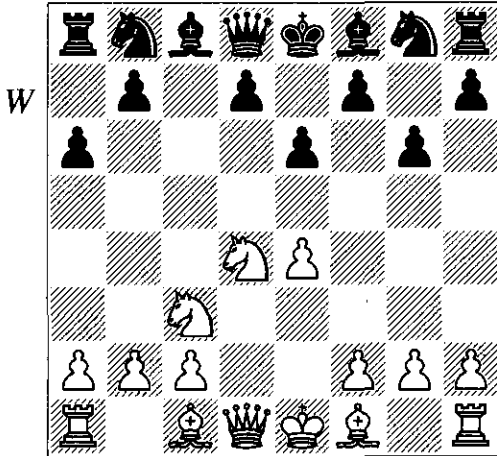
38a: after 9 0-0



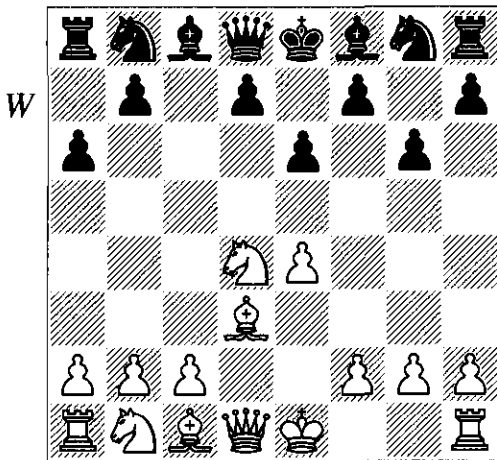
38b: after 7... ♗g4



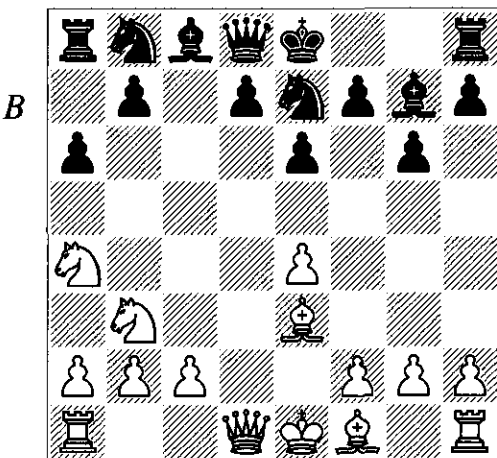
38c: after 12 ♗xd8



39a: after 5...g6



39b: after 5...g6



39c: after 8...a4

Trap 39 – Hacking With Hector

Swedish GM Jonny Hector is a player who always gives value for money. Possessed of a sharp attacking style, backed up by a large bag of opening tricks of assorted levels of (un)soundness, he can usually be relied upon to win at least one miniature per tournament. He is particularly noted for his nefarious opening lines as Black after 1 e4 e5, with which he has bagged many victims. In the following game, his opponent unwisely resorts to a rather dubious idea in the Sicilian, only to be viciously clubbed in the very opening.

Hector – Vidarsson

Reykjavik 1996

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 a6 5 ♘c3 g6?! (39a)

Against 5 ♘d3, the move 5...g6 (39b) has some pedigree, although even there it is not really an opening to recommend to one's mother.

Against 5 ♘c3, however, it looks even less convincing.

6 ♙e3 ♙g7 7 ♘b3 ♘e7?

He must play 7...b5 to prevent White's next, although the black position does not inspire confidence in any case.

8 ♘a4! (39c)

Suddenly Black has no defence against the invasions on the b6-square and, indeed, his position is already completely resignable! In the game, he saves his rook from ♘b6, but allows something even worse.

8...♘bc6? 9 ♙b6 1-0

Trap 40 – Slaying the Dragon

For reasons which have never been entirely clear to me, many Dragon players earlier this century preferred to enter their beloved variation via the Classical move-order. It was only during the 1950s and 1960s that the replies 6 ♘g5 and 6 ♘c4 became popular, against which the Dragon cannot be reached. Despite this, some people still try.

Riemersma – Wilsbeck
Gausdal Arnold Cup 1993

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♘c4 (40a) 6...g6? 7 ♘xc6 bxc6 8 e5 ♘g4

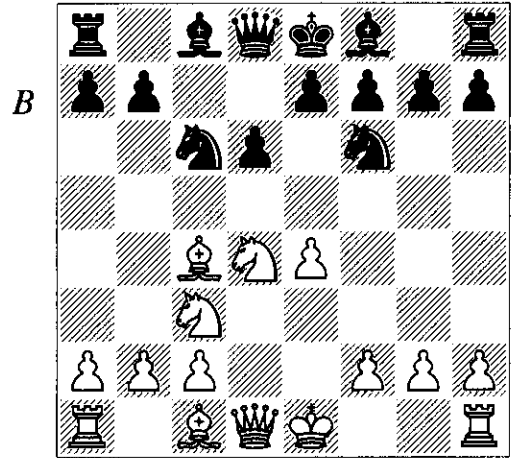
Fischer quotes an offhand game of his own which saw $8... \text{♘h5?}$ 9 ♖f3 e6 ($9... \text{d5}$ 10 ♘xd5!) 10 g4 ♘g7 11 ♘e4 ♖a5+ 12 ♘d2 ♖xe5 13 ♘c3 1-0 , while $8... \text{dxe5??}$ 9 ♘xf7+ (40b) has occurred a few times.

9 e6 f5 10 0-0 ♘g7 11 ♘f4

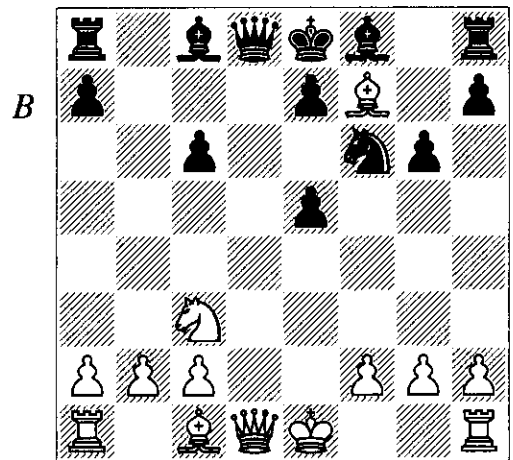
Probably the most famous game with this variation was Schlechter-Lasker, Berlin Wch (7) 1910, which went $11... \text{♖b6!}$ 12 ♘b3 ♘a6 13 ♘a4 ♖d4 (40c).

Now Schlechter mistakenly exchanged queens by 14 ♖xd4? , whereas 14 ♖f3 would have yielded a strong initiative. The game itself, which was drawn after many thrills, ranks as one of the great drawn games in chess history.

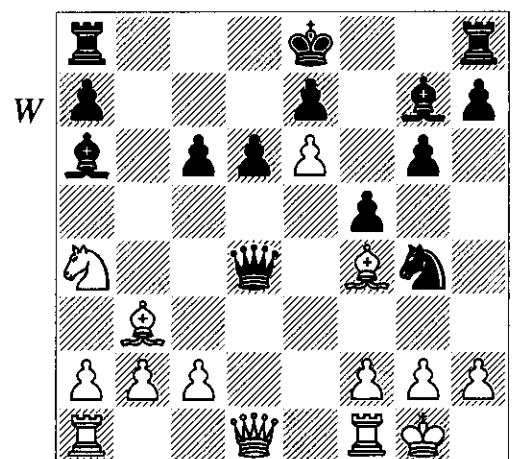
11... ♘e5 12 ♘b3 0-0 13 ♖d2 ♘a6 14 ♖fe1 ♘h8 15 ♘h6 ♘xh6 16 ♖xh6 ♖f6 17 ♖ad1 ♖g8 18 ♖g5 ♖g7 19 ♖d4 h6 20 ♖d2 g5 21 ♘a4 ♘g6 22 ♖a5 ♖ff8 23 ♖ed1 ♘e2 24 ♖1d2 c5 25 ♖d5 ♘f4 26 ♘c3 ♘h5 27 h3 ♘xe6 28 ♖5d3 ♘f4 29 ♖e3 g4 30 hxg4 ♘xg4 31 f3 ♘h3 32 ♘d5 ♘xg2 33 ♖xe7 ♖g3 34 ♖c3+ 1-0



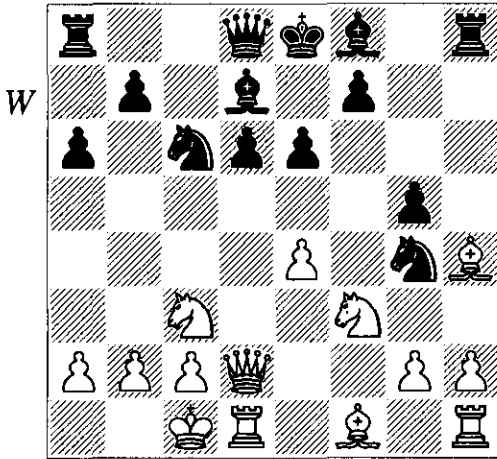
40a: after 6 ♘c4



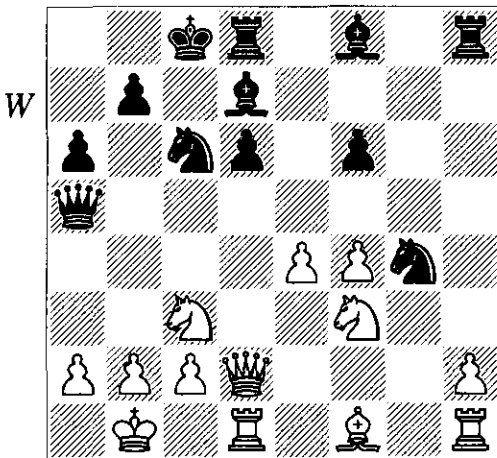
40b: after 9 ♘xf7+



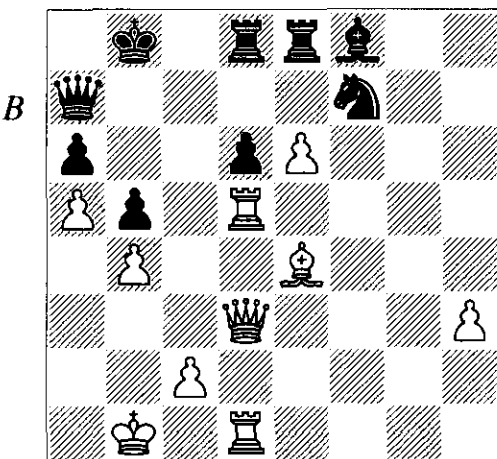
40c: after $13... \text{♖d4}$



41a: after 12...hxg5



41b: after 17...0-0-0



41c: after 34 fxe6

Trap 41 – What's a Piece between Friends?

This book features a number of examples where a player falls into a trap, loses material, but then plays on staunchly as if nothing had happened and duly wins. The next game is one such, with Stuart Conquest showing an admirable poker face after an involuntary piece sacrifice in the opening.

Conquest – Lewis
British Ch (Plymouth) 1989

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♘c6 6 ♙g5 e6 7 ♚d2 a6 8 0-0-0 ♙d7 9 f4 h6 10 ♙h4 g5 11 fxc5 ♘g4 12 ♘f3 hxg5 (41a) 13 ♙xg5?? f6 14 ♙f4 e5

Oh dear! Of course, 15 ♙g3 ♙h6 wins the queen, so the bishop must go.

15 g3 exf4 16 gxf4 ♚a5 17 ♚b1 0-0-0 (41b)

Two pawns are not sufficient compensation for the piece in this position, but there is still plenty of play left, and the stronger player begins gradually to assert himself.

18 ♙g2 ♚c5 19 ♜de1 ♙e6 20 h3 ♘h6 21 ♘d5 ♚b8 22 ♜e3 f5 23 ♘g5 ♙c8 24 b4 ♚a7 25 ♜d1 ♙g7 26 ♜d3 fxe4 27 ♙xe4 ♜he8 28 a4 ♘e7 29 a5 ♘xd5 30 ♜xd5 ♙f8 31 ♚d3 b5 32 f5 ♘f7 33 ♘e6 ♙xe6 34 fxe6 (41c) 34...♘e5??

The pressure (and the time-trouble?) finally takes its toll!

35 ♜xe5 dxe5 36 ♚xd8+ ♜xd8 37 ♜xd8+ ♚c7 38 ♜d7+ ♚b8 39 ♜xa7 ♚xa7 40 h4 ♚b8 41 h5 ♚c7 42 c4 bxc4 43 b5 1-0

I should add that Stuart is not the only player to have fallen for this, but he is the only one to have salvaged something from the wreckage – the others all lost.

Trap 42 – Seeing is Believing

When I first starting researching material for this book, I did not anticipate including many of the very well-known opening traps, on the basis that nobody would ever fall for them nowadays. A few hours of perusing the database soon punctured that illusion but even now I find it hard to believe that a player rated over 1900 could lose the following game.

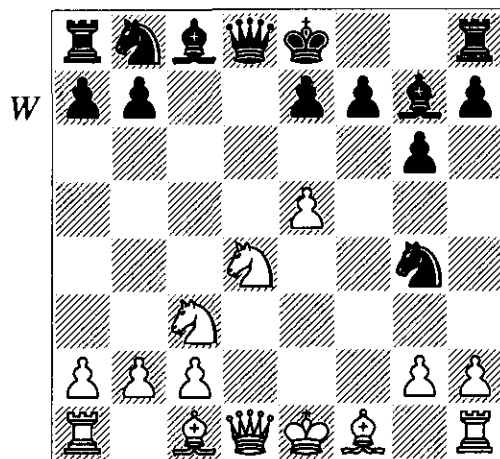
Kolar – Riznar
Bled 1996

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 g6 6 f4 ♙g7 7 e5 dxe5 8 fxe5 ♘g4? (42a) 9 ♙b5+ ♚f8

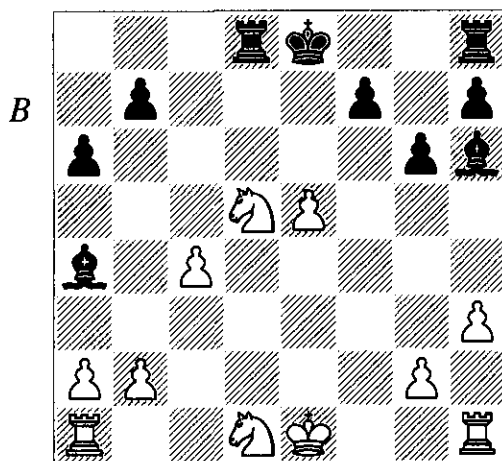
Of course, the alternatives 9...♘d7 and 9...♙d7 lose a piece after 10 ♚xg4, but a much tougher defence is 9...♘c6. White seems to have nothing better than 10 ♘xc6 ♚xd1+ 11 ♘xd1 a6 12 ♙a4 ♙d7 13 h3 ♘h6 14 ♙xh6 ♙xh6 15 ♘xe7 ♙xa4 16 ♘d5 ♚d8 17 c4 (42b), when he is a pawn up in the ending, but the e5-pawn is weak and Black has two bishops.

10 ♘e6+ 1-0

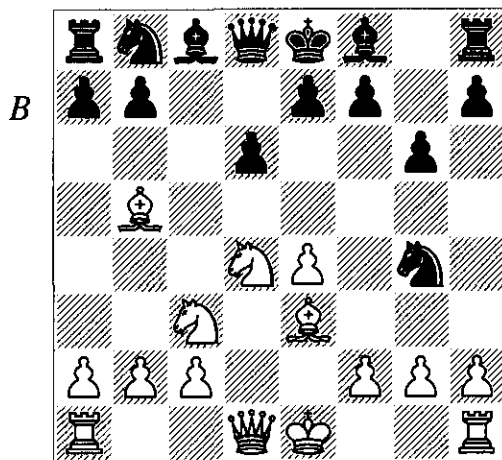
In fairness, Mr Riznar is only one of ten players to lose in this fashion on my database alone, the most notable of all being the top American master Kashdan in a 1948 game against Pilnik. I also found five examples of 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 g6 6 ♙e3 ♘g4??, in two of which White preferred 7 ♙g5?? rather than winning out of hand by 7 ♙b5+ (42c).



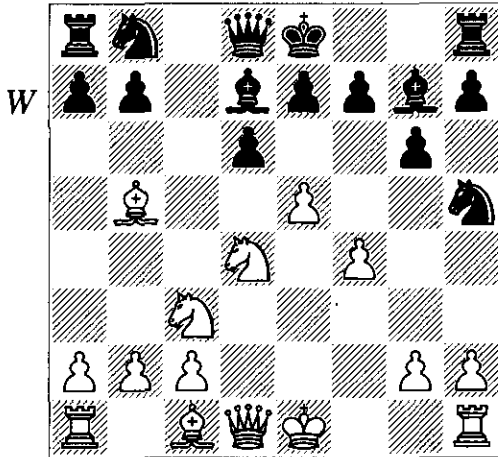
42a: after 8...♘g4



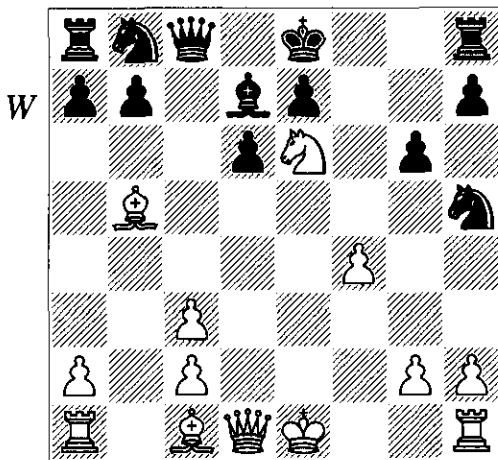
42b: after 17 c4



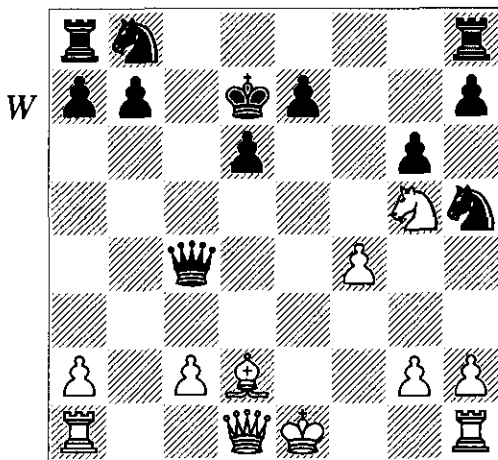
42c: after 7 ♙b5+



43a: after 8...♙d7



43b: after 11...♚c8



43c: after 14...♚c4

Trap 43 – When is a Trap is not a Trap? (Part 2)

Largely on the basis of games such as the previous one, it was believed that the move 6...♙g7 in reply to the Levenfish Attack in the Dragon (6 f4), was an error due to 7 e5. However, Dragon specialist Jonathan Mestel (prompted by Bob Wade, I understand) took a closer look at the position and soon realized that things were far from clear. He played the line first against Vladimirov in the World U-16 Championship, but the critical variation was not tested. He later got a chance to prove his point in the 1979 British Championship, with mixed success.

McAllan – Mestel
British Ch (Chester) 1979

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 g6 6 f4 ♙g7 7 e5 ♘h5 8 ♙b5+ ♙d7 (43a) 9 ♙xd7+

This leads to nothing, as does Vladimirov's 9 ♚f3. The critical 9 e6 was seen in J.Littlewood-Mestel from a later round of the same championship. Although Mestel went down drastically after 9...fxe6 10 ♘xe6 ♙xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♚c8! (43b) (this is the key improvement on the previously-played 11...♚a5) 12 ♙xd7+ ♚xd7 (12...♘xd7 appears eminently reasonable) 13 ♘g5 ♚c4 (13...♚xc3+ 14 ♙d2 ♚c4 (43c) was unclear in Conquest-W.Watson, London 1989, eventually drawn) 14 ♖b1 ♚c7 15 ♖b4 ♚xa2 16 ♚e2 ♘c6 17 ♘e6+ 1-0, the whole line appears very unclear – even the final position if Black continues 17...♚c8 18 ♖xb7 ♚a4.

9...♚xd7 10 exd6 ♚xd6 11 ♘db5 ♚c6 12 ♘d5 ♘a6

Now, in a tribute to the value of surprise in chess, White lost on time in this position!

Trap 44 – The Power of the Switchback

In the psychology of blunders, it is well-known that moves of a certain type can be particularly hard to see. Retreating moves, particularly diagonal retreats, seem to be one example of this. Another is the ‘switchback’, where a piece returns to the square it left only the move before. Probably the most vicious example of this that I have ever witnessed is the following embarrassment for Matthew Sadler.

Sammalvuo – Sadler Gausdal 1994

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 ♙g5 e6 7 f4 ♘c6 (44a)

An unusual line which has been played much less than the heavily-analysed alternatives such as 7...♙e7, 7...♚b6 and 7...b5. Although it has never achieved great popularity, it has been played by both Ivanchuk and Anand, as well as being used regularly by Najdorf specialist Walter Browne.

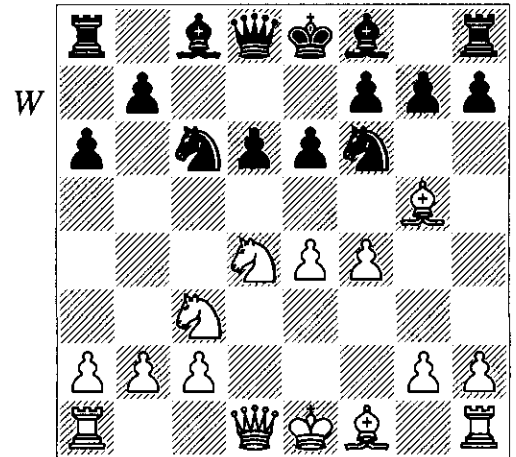
8 ♘xc6 bxc6 9 e5 h6 10 ♙h4 g5 11 ♙g3 (44b)

White’s last is not the most critical, with most games going 11 fxg5 ♘d5 12 ♘e4 (44c) with unclear play.

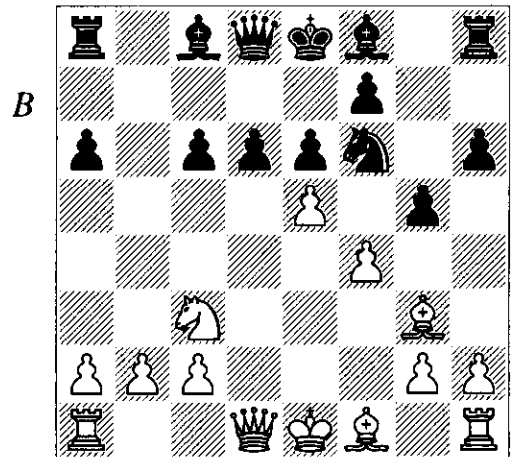
The text-move does have the merit of setting a nasty trap, however, which Sadler promptly fell into, despite thinking for some 25 minutes!

11...gxf4?? 12 ♙h4!

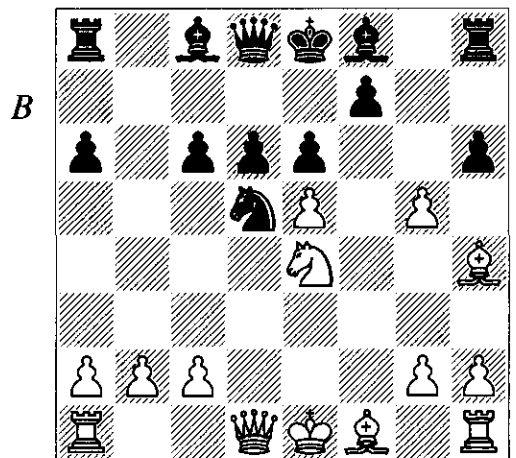
Horror! Black is losing a piece and the game with it.



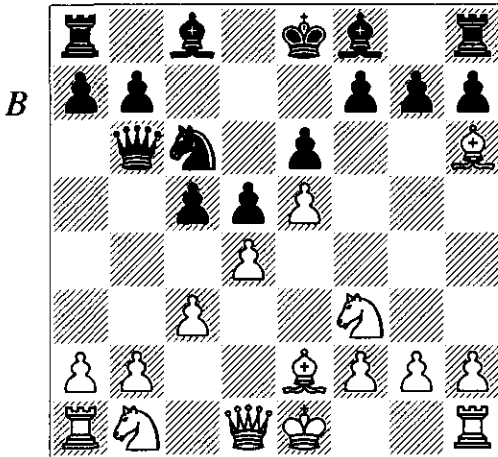
44a: after 7...♘c6



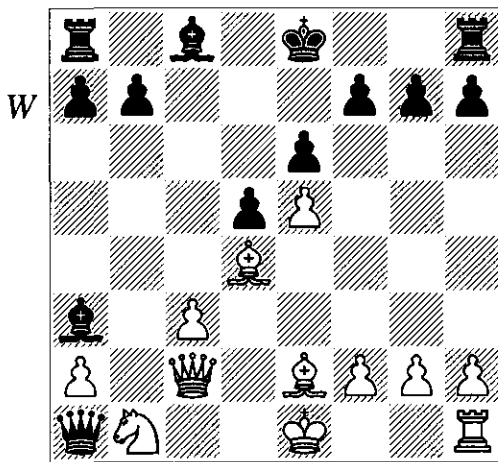
44b: after 11 ♙g3



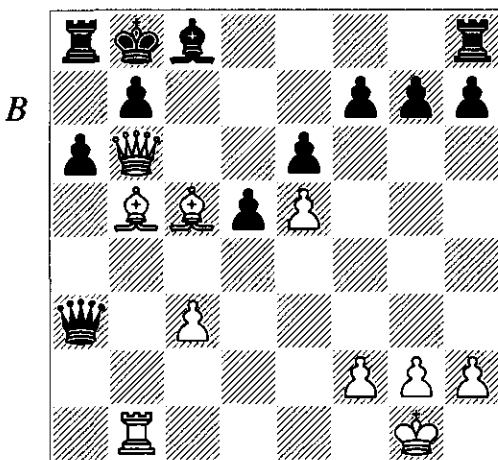
44c: after 12 ♘e4



45a: after 7 Bxh6



45b: after 11... Qa3



45c: after 19 Bc5

Trap 45 – The Fine Art of Move-Ordering

‘Move-ordering’ is an art which has always reaped dividends in chess. By employing a subtle move-order in the opening, an opponent can frequently be tricked into a line he did not intend to play, or even cheated out of his intended opening altogether. The following game is a case in point. Black, a Sicilian Defence specialist, finds herself inveigled into an Advance French, and promptly falls into a trap which is well-known to French Defence players, but less so to others.

C.Cobb – J.Bellin

British League (4NCL) 1994

1 e4 c5 2 c3 e6 3 d4 d5 4 e5 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 ♚b6
6 ♙e2 ♘h6 7 ♙xh6 (45a) 7... ♚xb2??

With the preliminary exchange 6...cxd4 inserted, this capture is perfectly playable (indeed, good for Black), but here it loses. Correct is simply 7...gxh6, when Black has a perfectly good game, e.g. 8 ♚d2 ♙g7 9 0-0 0-0 10 ♘a3 cxd4 11 cxd4 f6 12 exf6 ♖xf6 with equality.

8 ♙e3 ♚xa1 9 ♚c2 cxd4 10 ♘xd4 ♘xd4
11 ♙xd4 ♙a3 (45b)

Black has managed to dig out her queen, but the white attack proves too strong.

12 ♙b5+ ♚d8 13 0-0 ♚b2 14 ♚a4 a6 15 ♘xa3 ♚c7 16 ♖b1 ♚xa2 17 ♚a5+ ♚b8 18 ♚b6 ♚xa3 19 ♙c5 (45c) 1-0

Trap 46 – The French ‘Wing Gambit’

Every experienced French Defence player knows that the move ...g7-g5 is a key idea for Black in many positions. Indeed, the great Soviet trainer Mark Dvoretsky even included a whole chapter on this theme in his book *Opening Preparation*. The following example was not included – well, Mark Israelevich tends to prefer the rapier to the sword, but some of us are more easily pleased!

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 ♖g4

Nimzowitsch’s ‘last word’ in his attempts to revive the Advance Variation. Unfortunately, it has not proved amongst his more durable contributions to opening theory, this game being one of the reasons why.

4...cxd4

Another good move here is the surprising 4...♔a5+ (46a). In his book *COOL Chess* Scottish GM Paul Motwani quotes the amusing miniature Nei-Gleizerov, Österkars 1995, which Black won crushingly in 16 moves. Motwani praises Gleizerov highly for his ‘innovation’ 4...♔a5+, but in fact the move was invented by Botvinnik back in the 1930s!

5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 ♙d3 ♚c7 7 ♙f4 ♘b4 (46b)

Also good is 7...♘ge7, but the text-move follows analysis by the highly gifted 1930s Soviet master Belavenets.

8 ♘xd4? ♘xd3+ 9 cxd3 ♚b6!

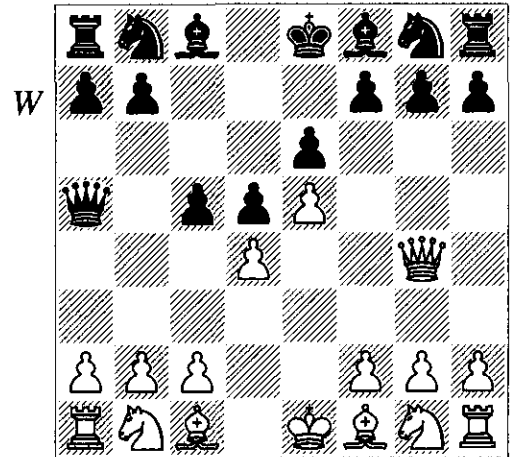
Already embarrassing, but worse follows if White tries the only apparent defence.

10 ♘b3?? ♚b4+ 11 ♘1d2 (46c) 11...g5!

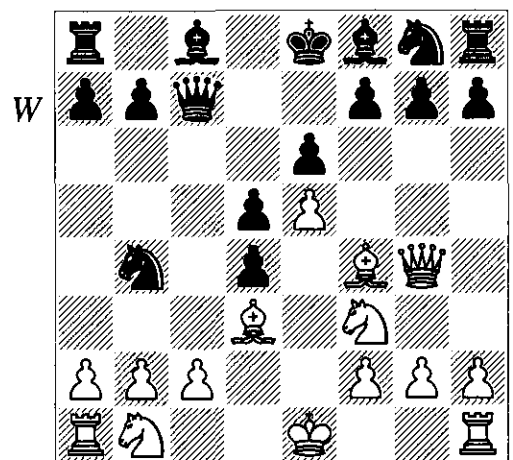
The left-handed ‘Wing Gambit’ strikes again!

12 ♚xg5 ♙h6

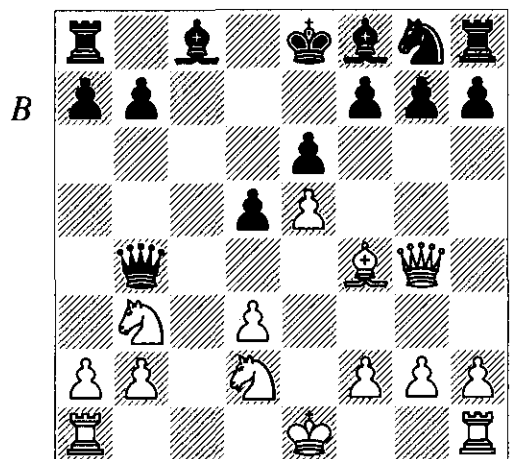
Black is winning.



46a: after 4...♔a5+

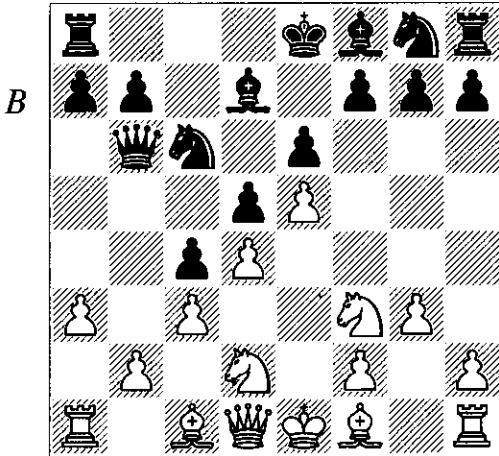


46b: after 7...♘b4



46c: after 11 ♘1d2

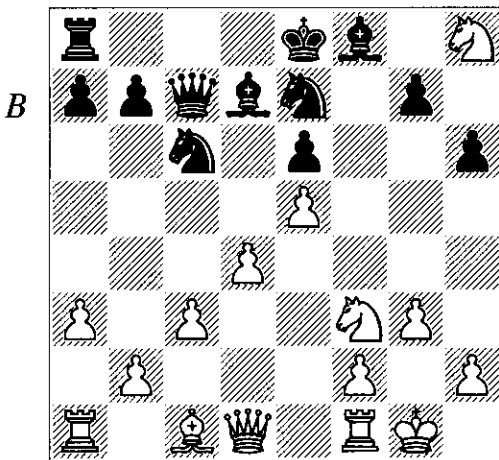
Trap 47 – Even Homers Nod



47a: after 8 g3

Illescas – Yusupov
Linares 1992

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 e5 c5 4 c3 ♖b6 5 ♘f3
 ♙d7 6 a3 c4 7 ♘bd2 ♘c6 8 g3 (47a)
 8...♘ge7?? 9 ♙xc4!



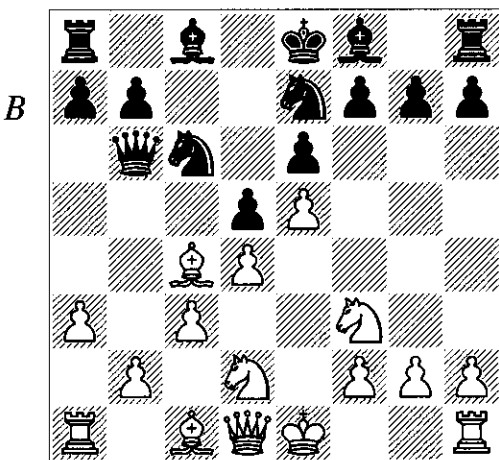
47b: after 14 0-0

The bishop is immune: 9...dxc4 10 ♘xc4
 ♖c7 11 ♘d6+ ♙d8 12 ♘xf7+ ♙e8 13
 ♘xh8 h6 14 0-0 (47b) and White wins.

Yusupov instead settled for being a pawn
 down after 9...♘a5 10 ♙e2 but duly lost.

This trap is more usually seen in the
 position after 5...♘c6 6 a3 c4 7 ♘bd2
 ♘ge7?? 8 ♙xc4 (47c), etc.

In this move-order, the examples I found
 were more striking for the missed opportuni-
 ties than for anything else – out of 6 games I
 found where Black played 7...♘ge7, White
 only took on c4 in two of them!



47c: after 8 ♙xc4

Those who like to analyse the psychology
 of blunders may wish to consider whether
 Yusupov's alertness was blunted by the fact
 that White had just played 8 g3, somehow
 'promising' to put his bishop on g2 or h3.

Trap 48 – A Trap Refuted?

The following game sees an apparent refutation of an anti-French Defence line which has long been regarded as good for White.

Almeida – Romero Holmes
Andorra Z 1987

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♘d2 ♘f6 4 e5 ♘fd7 5 ♙d3 c5 6 c3 ♘c6 7 ♘gf3 f6 (48a) 8 ♘g5

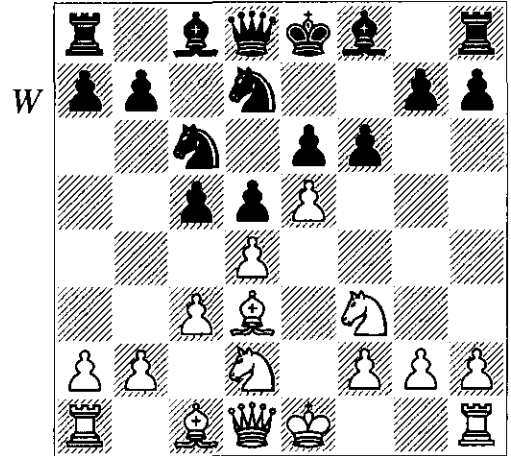
Usually awarded an exclamation mark, with 8...♘dx5 considered the only defence. The present game seems to refute this, however, in which case White should perhaps prefer the pawn sacrifice 8 0-0. The game Plachetka-Mellado, Casablanca 1994 continued 8...fxe5 9 ♘xe5 ♘dx5 10 dxe5 ♘xe5 11 ♚h5+ ♘f7 12 ♚e1 (48b) with good compensation for White, who went on to win.

8...fxg5 9 ♚h5+ g6 10 ♙xg6+ hxg6 11 ♚xg6+ ♚e7 12 ♘e4 (48c) 12...♘dx5!

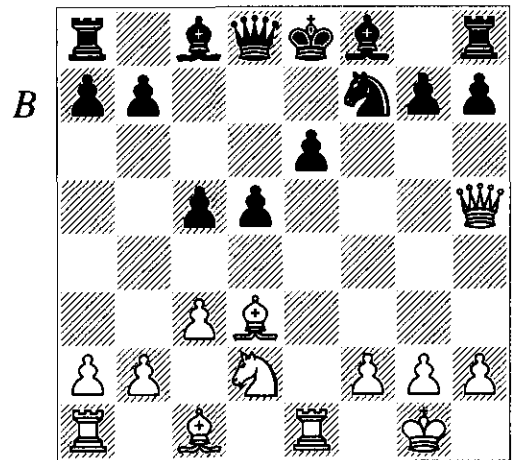
The key improvement. Instead, 12...♙h6?? loses to 13 ♙xg5+ ♙xg5 14 ♚g7+ ♚e8 15 ♘d6#, a variation which my friend Chris Rice once brought off in a tournament game.

13 dxe5 ♚d7! 14 ♙xg5 ♘xe5 15 ♘xc5+ ♙xc5 16 ♚g7+ ♙e7 17 ♙xe7 ♚xe7 18 ♚xe5 ♚g8

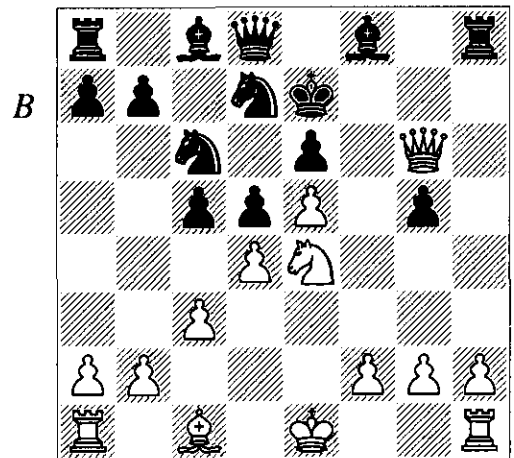
Black has a decisive material advantage and went on to win.



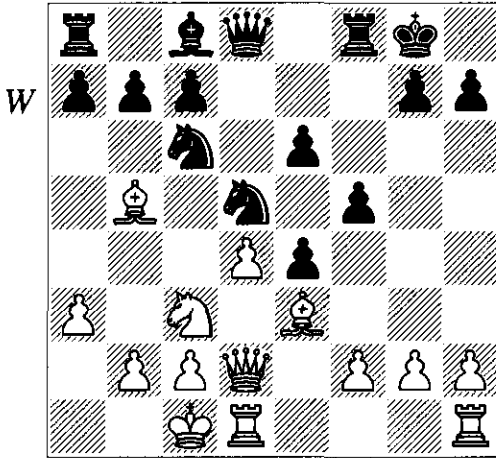
48a: after 7...f6



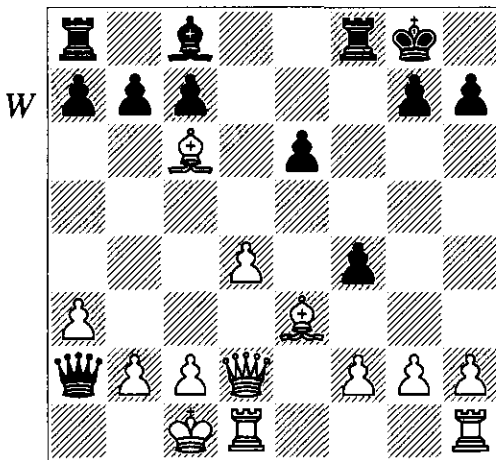
48b: after 12 ♚e1



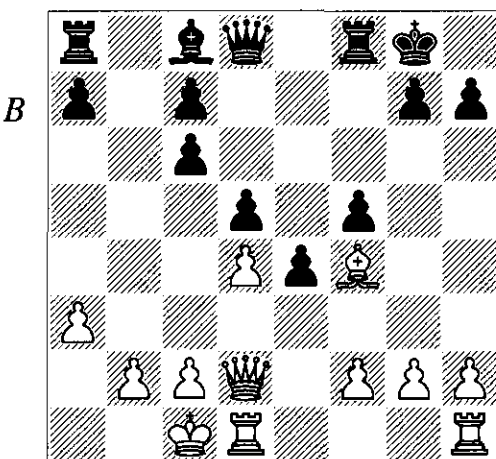
48c: after 12 ♘e4



49a: after 11...Nxd5



49b: after 15...Qa2



49c: after 14 Qxf4

Trap 49 – A One-Opening Man

One eternal question in chess is whether a player is better advised to play a wide variety of openings, or to stick to one line. The advantages of both approaches are obvious – the player with a wide variety of systems is harder to prepare for and less likely to play routinely, whereas the player who sticks to his systems can build up a depth of understanding of his chosen line which a part-time practitioner can never do. In recent years, probably as a result of the increasing use of computer databases, the pendulum has definitely swung in favour of the first approach, but for many years most players tended to stick to a narrow repertoire. Perhaps the best example of this is the German GM Uhlmann, whose 40-plus years of exclusive devotion to the French Defence has brought him great success. The following was one of his easier victories in his beloved opening.

Pavlov – Uhlmann
Halle 1981

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 Nc3 Bb4 4 Nge2 dxe4 5 a3 Bxc3+ 6 Nxc3 Nc6 7 Bb5 Nge7 8 Bg5 f6 9 Qe3 f5 10 Qd2 0-0 11 0-0-0 Nxd5 (49a)

Black sets a vicious trap, into which the unfortunate Mr Pavlov walks headlong.

12 Bg5?? e3! 13 Qxe3 f4 14 Nxd5 Qxd5 15 Bxc6 Qa2! (49b)

The final subtlety, winning a piece and with it the game. Before you French players get carried away with your enthusiasm for 11...Nxd5, however, note that the prosaic 12 Nxd5! exd5 (or 12...Qxd5 13 c4 with compensation) 13 Bxc6 bxc6 14 Bf4 (49c) gives White good compensation and leaves Black a fairly dull future.

Trap 50 – As Old as the Hills

This next trap is another from the ‘golden oldies’ collection, with one of the main games being played between Chigorin and Mieses, at Ostend 1906. Nonetheless, I found a dozen examples from recent years, and no doubt there are plenty of others. Indeed, in the game below, White even manages to improve on Chigorin’s play!

L.Kiss – Jurecka
Finkenstein 1995

1 e4 e5 2 ♖c4 ♜c6 3 ♘c3 ♙c5 4 ♚g4 (50a)
4...♚f6?

Natural, but walking into a big counter. Better is 4...g6 after which a game Larsen-Portisch, Santa Monica 1966 continued 5 ♚f3 ♘f6 6 ♘ge2 d6 7 d3 ♙g4 8 ♚g3 h6 9 f4 ♚e7 10 ♘d5 ♘xd5 11 ♚xg4 ♘f6 12 ♚h3 (50b) with an edge for White.

5 ♘d5! ♚xf2+ 6 ♙d1

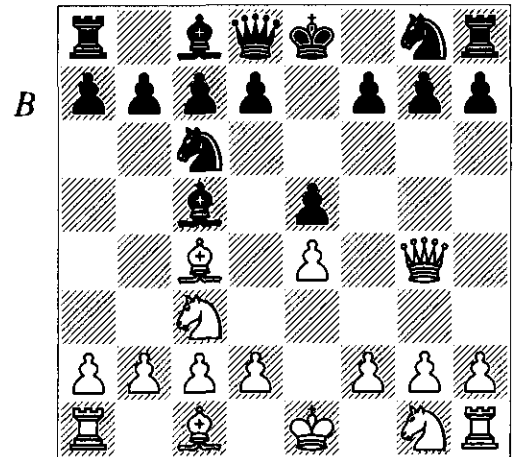
Suddenly Black has many problems, since g7 hangs and his queen will lose a lot of time after White’s ♘h3.

6...♙f8 7 ♘h3 ♚d4 8 d3 d6 9 ♚f3

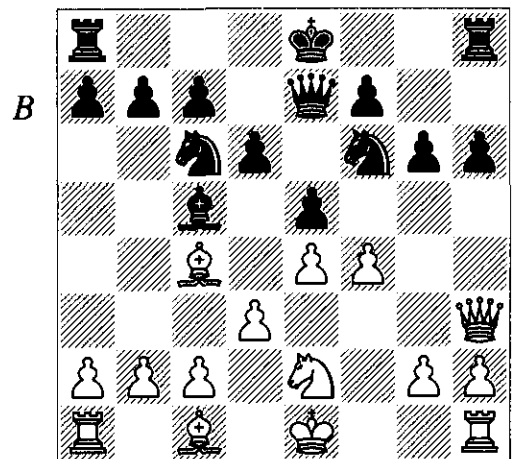
An ‘improvement’ over the aforementioned Chigorin-Mieses game, which went 9 ♚h4. The text-move also contains a drop of poison, which Black duly swallows.

9...♙xh3? 10 ♚f1! (50c)

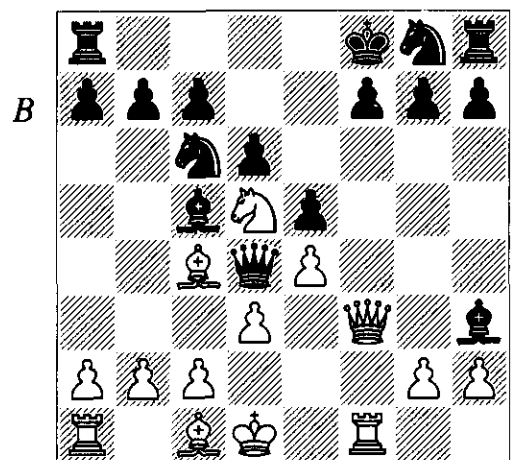
Black resigns, since as well as mate on f7, White’s last move also takes away the f2-square from Black’s queen and so threatens 11 c3.



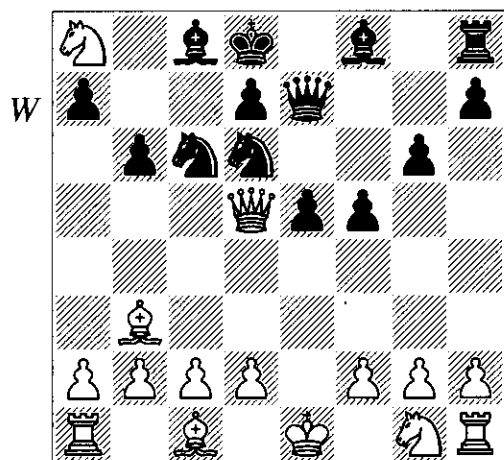
50a: after 4 ♚g4



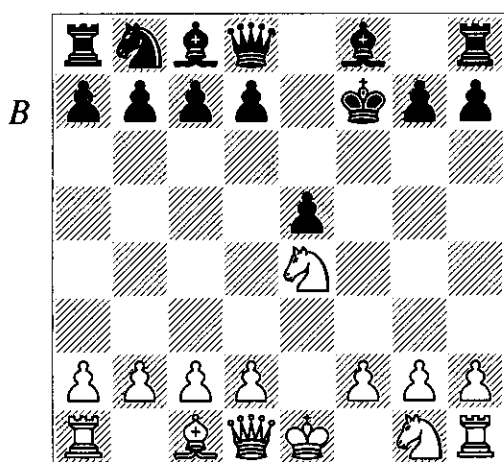
50b: after 12 ♚h3



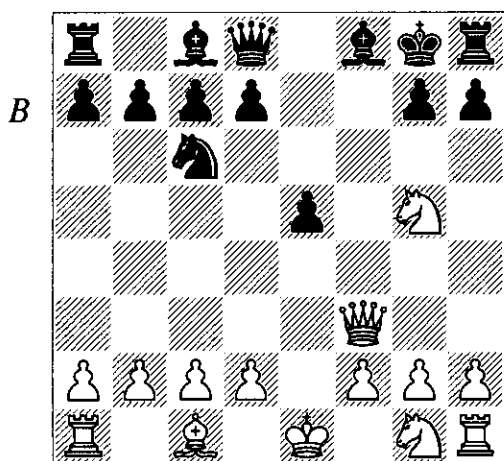
50c: after 10 ♚f1



51a: after 10...b6



51b: after 5...dxe4



51c: after 7...d5

Trap 51 – A County Match Special

With the growth of weekend tournaments in Britain, the popularity of county chess has declined quite markedly, but I for one have always enjoyed it immensely. I have perhaps been fortunate to live most of my life in Kent, a county which has had a remarkably stable pool of strong players for the past 20 years, not to mention a succession of dedicated and efficient captains. The following effort is amongst the more amusing games I have witnessed. The loser was a Kent player graded around 2000 at the time, and as you can imagine, his team-mates' sympathies scarcely hid their amusement! Out of respect for the loser's feelings (there but for the grace of God, etc.), I have withheld the identities of the players involved.

1 e4 e5 2 ♖c4 ♜f6 3 ♞c3 ♜xe4 4 ♙xf7+?

Much better is 4 ♙h5, which can lead to the long and highly unclear variation 4...♞d6 5 ♙b3 ♞c6 6 ♞b5 g6 7 ♙f3 f5 8 ♙d5 ♙e7 9 ♞xc7+ ♙d8 10 ♞xa8 b6 (51a).

4...♙xf7 5 ♞xe4 (51b)

Now the natural 5...d5 would give Black a fine game. Instead, he decides to defer this move in favour of piece development.

5...♞c6? 6 ♙f3+ ♙g8??

Instead of this, 6...♙e8 was essential, although the centre is not where Black wants to have to retreat his king.

7 ♞g5! (51c)

I will never forget the acute shade of crimson which the black player's face assumed when this move appeared on the board. He took fully five minutes to convince himself that there really was no defence, before resigning and departing rather rapidly from the room!

Trap 52 – A Trap, A Blunder or just ‘Plus Equals’?

The following line of Philidor’s Defence had always been controversial.

Kenworthy – Eales

English Counties Ch Final 1997

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 ♘bd7 5 ♙c4 ♙e7 (52a)

Now White has two ways to try to destroy Black by a sacrifice on the f7-square. It is well-established that the immediate sacrifice traps White, rather than Black: 6 ♙xf7+ ♖xf7 7 ♘g5+ ♖g8 8 ♘e6 ♗e8 9 ♘xc7 ♗g6 10 ♘xa8 ♗xg2 11 ♚f1 (52b) 11...exd4 12 ♗xd4 (12 ♗e2 dxc3 13 ♗c4+ d5 14 ♗xc8+ ♖f7, I.Rabinovich – Ilyin-Zhenevsky, USSR 1922) 12...♘e5 13 f4 ♘fg4! is winning for Black, Heidenfeld-Wolpert, Johannesburg 1955.

Theory therefore considers that White should first interpolate the exchange of pawns on e5.

6 dxe5 dxe5

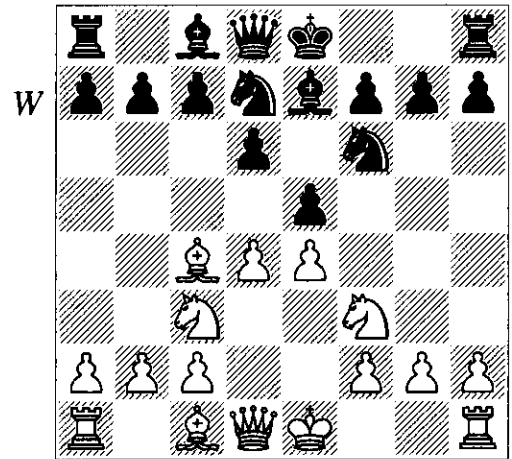
When my team-mate Richard Eales played this, I thought he had blundered, since I had always believed the following sacrifice was supposed to win for White. Instead, theory considers 6...♘e5 as better. Things are not so clear, however.

7 ♙xf7+

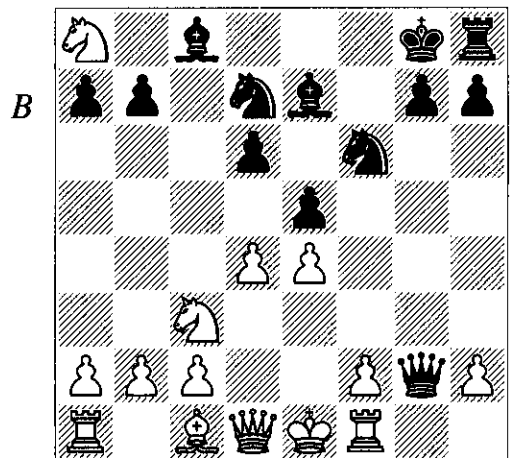
The alternative 7 ♘g5 0-0 8 ♙xf7+ ♚xf7 9 ♘e6 ♗e8 10 ♘xc7 ♗d8 11 ♘xa8 b5! 12 ♘d5 ♙d6! 13 0-0 ♙b7 14 ♘ac7 ♙xc7 15 ♘xc7 ♗xc7 was OK for Black in Arulaid-Heuer, Estonian Ch 1970.

7...♖xf7 8 ♘g5+ ♖g8

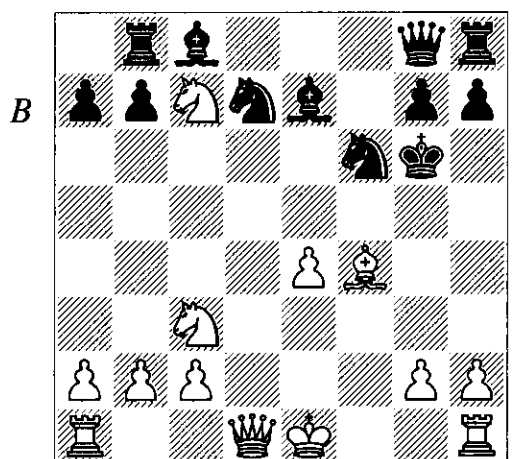
This is the most common move, but 8...♖g6 is critical. Keres then gives 9 f4! (9 h4 h5 10 f4 exf4 11 ♘e2 ♙d6 12 e5 ♘xe5!)



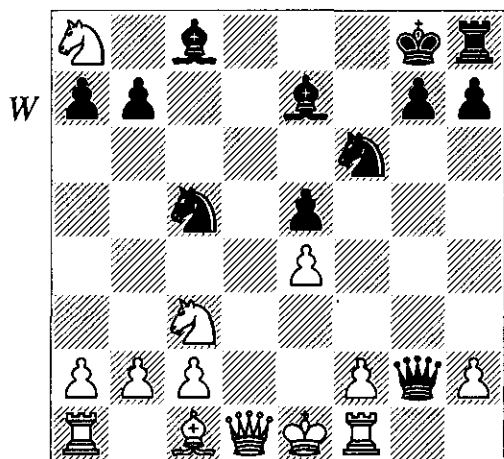
52a: after 5...♙e7



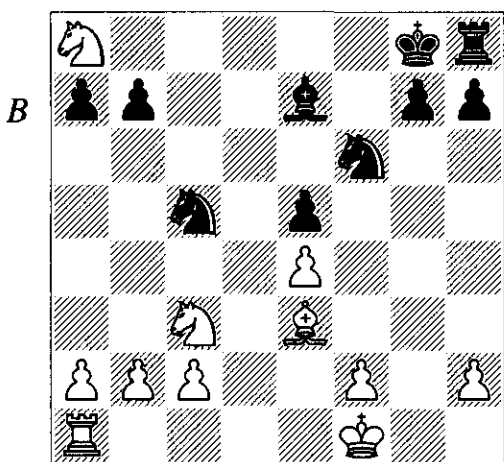
52b: after 11 ♚f1



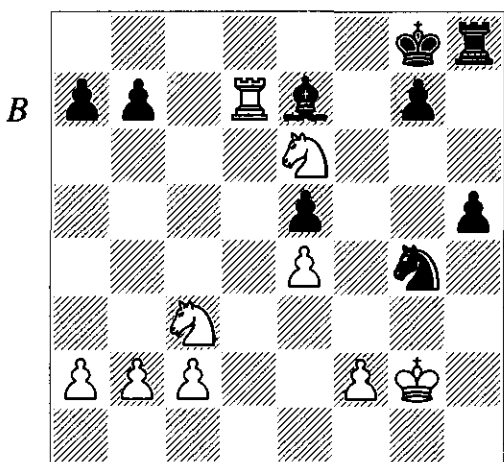
52c: after 12 ♙xf4



52d: after 12...♘c5



52e: after 16 ♖xf1



52f: after 22 ♖d7

9...exf4 10 ♖e6 ♗g8 11 ♖xc7 ♜b8 12 ♙xf4 (52c) as best play for both sides.

He suggests White has compensation, although that soulless silicon materialist Fritz, characteristically, prefers Black. Certainly Black has problems coordinating his pieces, but in view of the outcome of our featured game, this line may be his best try.

9 ♖e6 ♗e8 10 ♖xc7 ♗g6 11 ♖xa8 ♗xg2 12 ♜f1 ♖c5 (52d)

Once this position was reached, it became clear that Richard had not blundered at all, but was aiming for this very position, as he later confirmed. He had played it before and considered that White was only slightly better. This verdict may have to be reviewed after the present game, however, because White maintains the initiative throughout and Black's defences eventually collapse.

13 ♗e2 ♙h3 14 ♙e3 ♗xf1+ 15 ♗xf1 ♙xf1 16 ♙xf1 (52e) 16...♖g4?!

This gains a pawn, but loses valuable time, allowing White to get his rook into Black's vitals. However, both 16...♖e6 and 16...♙f7 have been tried without equalizing, so Black seems to have problems here.

17 ♖c7 ♖xh2+ 18 ♙g2 ♖g4 19 ♙xc5 ♙xc5 20 ♜d1 h5 21 ♖e6 ♙e7 22 ♜d7 (52f)

With the penetration of the rook to the seventh rank, White's advantage assumes decisive proportions and the remainder consists merely of mopping up operations.

22...♙f6 23 ♖d5 ♜h6 24 f3 ♙h4 25 fxg4 ♜xe6 26 gxh5 ♜a6 27 ♙h3 ♙g5 28 ♜xb7 ♜xa2 29 c4 ♙h7 30 c5 ♜a6 31 ♙g4 ♙h6 32 ♜d7 g6 33 hxg6 ♙xg6 34 ♜d6+ ♜xd6 35 cxd6 ♙d8 36 b4 a5 37 bxa5 ♙xa5 38 ♖e7+ ♙f7 39 ♖c6 ♙b6 40 d7 1-0

Trap 53 – Never Trust What You Read

It isn't often that any game ends decisively in 6 moves and when the loser is a player of Anand's class, there has to be a story somewhere! Well, there is indeed – read on.

Zapata – Anand
Biel 1988

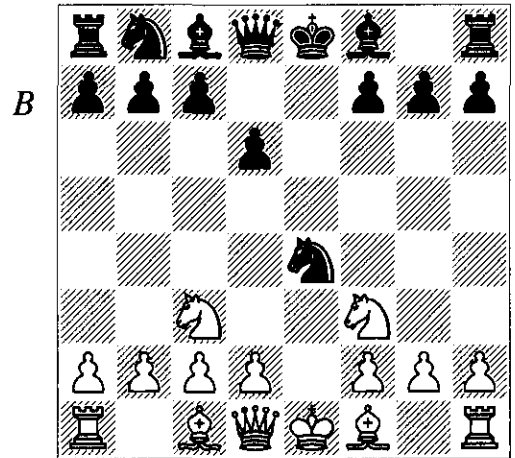
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘xe5 d6 4 ♘f3 ♘xe4 5 ♘c3 (53a) 5...♙f5??

The usual move here is 5...♘xc3, with a position so dull it even gives the Petroff a bad name.

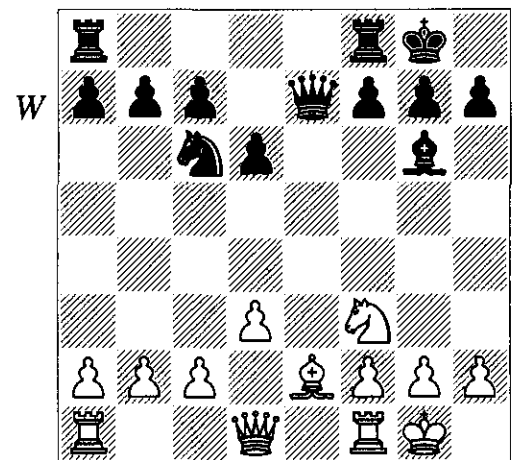
The text-move move had previously been played in a game Miles-Christiansen, USA Ch (San Francisco) 1987, which had been drawn shortly after 6 ♘xe4 ♙xe4 7 d3 ♙g6 8 ♙g5 ♙e7 9 ♙xe7 ♚xe7+ 10 ♙e2 ♘c6 11 0-0 0-0 (53b), etc. Anand recalled seeing this game published in the highly respectable journal *Informator* and, impressed with the ease with which Larry Christiansen had drawn, Vishy decided to try it for himself.

6 ♚e2 (53c)

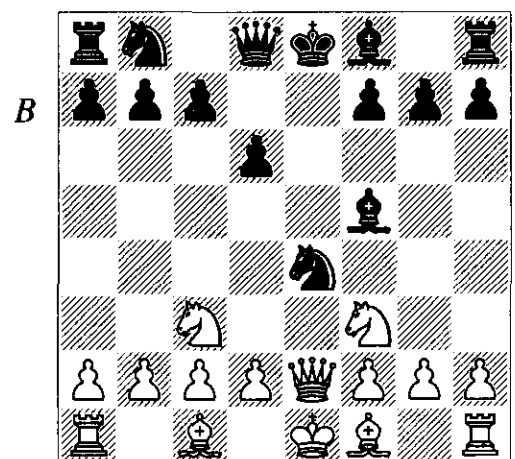
After this 'improvement', however, poor Vishy had to resign, as Black is losing a piece. The \$64,000 question was how could Miles and Christiansen have both missed such an obvious move? Later enquiries revealed that they hadn't. What Vishy's source did not reveal was that Miles-Christiansen had been agreed drawn in advance! At the board, Tony saw that 6 ♚e2 was winning, but remained the gentleman and avoided playing it. Mind you, I understand that he did spend some seconds 'polishing' the e2-square with his forefinger, until he was satisfied that Larry Christiansen's face had assumed a suitable shade of red, whereupon Tony took on e4!



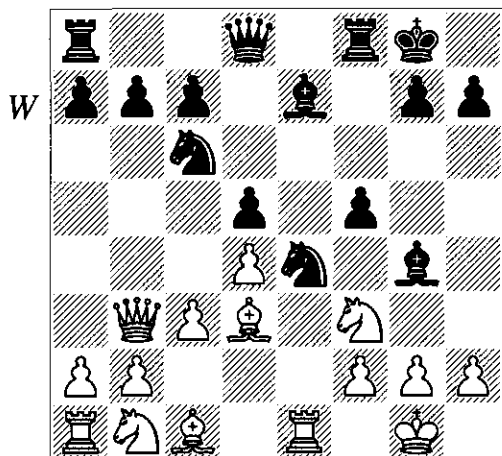
53a: after 5 ♘c3



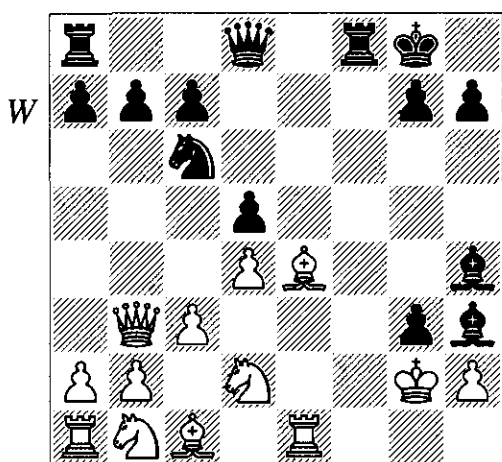
53b: after 11...0-0



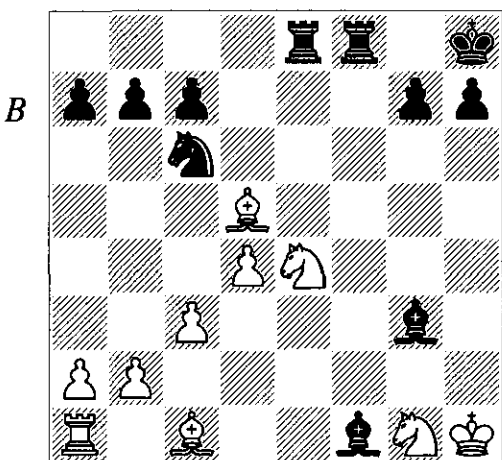
53c: after 6 ♚e2



54a: after 10...0-0



54b: after 15...♔h3+



54c: after 24 ♖e4

Trap 54 – The Antiques Roadshow

In the modern chess world, it is not often that value is to be had from studying 100-year-old analyses, but every now and then, one comes across a case where knowledge of some very old analysis proves highly valuable. In the following game, the colourful Yugoslav GM Ljubojević falls victim to a devastating attack, and his mood after the game can't have been improved by discovering that it was all old analysis by Carl Schlechter from the turn of the century!

Ljubojević – Makarychev
Amsterdam IBM 1975

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘xe5 d6 4 ♘f3 ♘xe4 5 d4 d5 6 ♙d3 ♙e7 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 ♖e1 ♙g4 9 c3 f5 10 ♚b3 0-0 (54a) 11 ♘fd2?

This move loses by force thanks to the following sacrifice, something Schlechter had demonstrated some 70 years before this game was published. Needless to say, Makarychev, a leading Petroff specialist, knew all about this. His task was therefore not too difficult, although he executed it most effectively.

11...♘xf2! 12 ♚xf2 ♙h4+ 13 g3 f4 14 ♙g2 fxg3 15 ♙e4 ♙h3+! (54b)

A neat touch. 16 ♚xh3 ♚d7+ leads to rapid mate. Ljubo fights on, but with his king so totally exposed, he cannot hope to salvage the game.

16 ♚g1 gxh2+ 17 ♚xh2 ♚d6+ 18 ♚h1 ♙xe1 19 ♚xd5+ ♚xd5 20 ♙xd5+ ♚h8 21 ♘f3 ♙g3 22 ♘g1 ♙f1 23 ♘d2 ♖ae8 24 ♘e4 (54c) 24...♖xe4! 25 ♙xe4 ♖f2 26 ♘f3 ♙g2+ 27 ♚g1 ♙xf3 28 ♙xf3 ♖xf3 0-1

Trap 55 – You Don't Win by Resigning

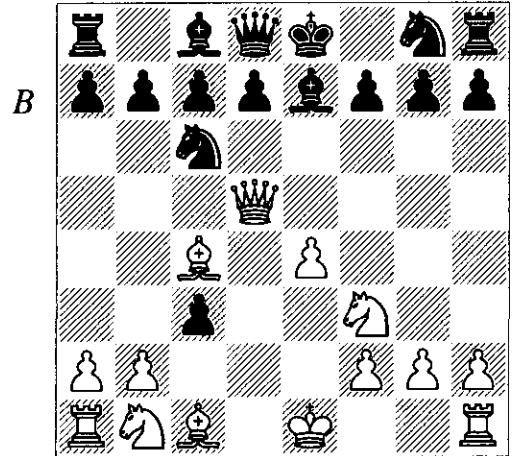
Another gem from the Great f7 Disaster Collection. Indeed, they don't come much more drastic than this!

Sanchez Jimenez – Tofe Mata
Zaragoza 1995

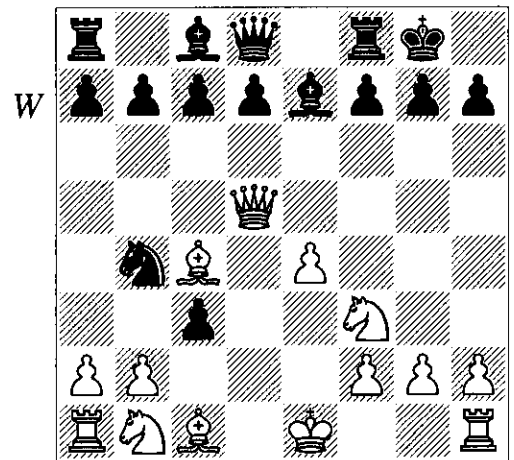
1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♙c4 ♙e7 5 c3 dxc3? 6 ♚d5! (55a) 6...♘h6 7 ♙xh6 1-0??

This is the real blunder. Contrary to appearances, Black is not losing a piece, because after 7...0-0 White cannot keep his extra piece because of 8 ♙c1? ♘b4 (55b), etc.

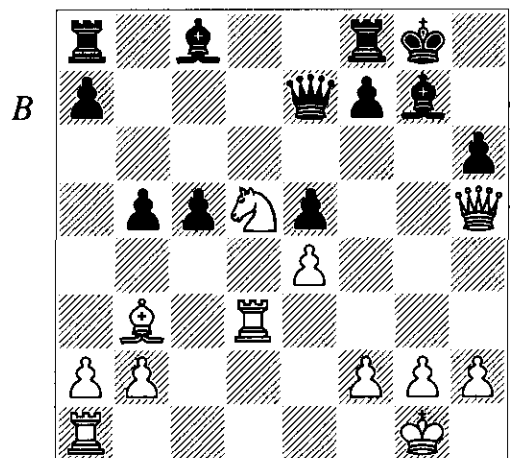
My database contains no fewer than 19 games which arrive at the position after 5...dxc3. Two players missed 6 ♚d5, but won anyway after 6 ♚b3. Of the rest, all played 6 ♚d5 but three went on to lose after 7...0-0 8 ♘xc3 gxh6 and another only drew. One of the successful white performances was Zarnicki-M.Rubin, Buenos Aires 1990, which went 9 ♚h5 ♙f6 10 ♚xh6 d6 11 ♘d5 ♙g7 12 ♚h5 ♘e5 13 ♘xe5 dxe5 14 0-0 c6 15 ♘e3 h6 16 ♖fd1 ♚e7 17 ♖d3 b5 18 ♙b3 c5 19 ♘d5 (55c) 19...♚g5 20 ♚xg5 hxg5 21 ♘e7+ ♚h7 22 ♙d5 ♖b8 23 ♖c1 c4 24 ♖a3 a6 25 ♘xc8 ♖bxc8 26 ♖xa6 ♖c5 27 ♖c3 f6 28 ♖a7 ♚g6 29 ♙e6 g4 30 ♙xg4 ♙h6 31 ♙f5+ ♚h5 32 ♖h7 ♖d8 33 ♖h3+ ♚g5 34 ♖g3+ 1-0.



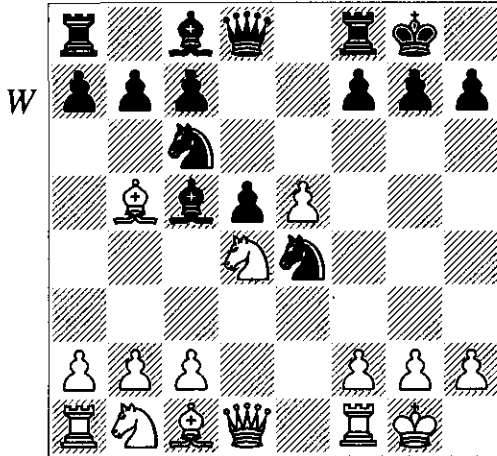
55a: after 6 ♚d5



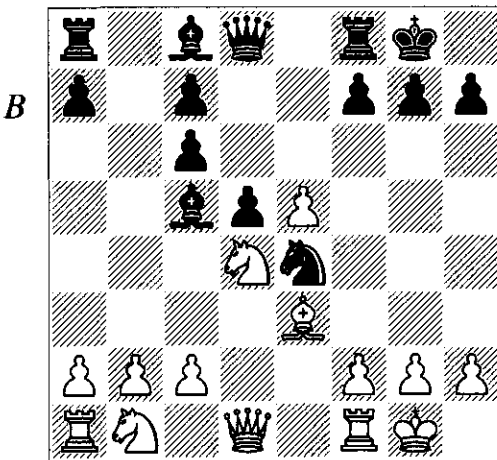
55b: after 8...♘b4



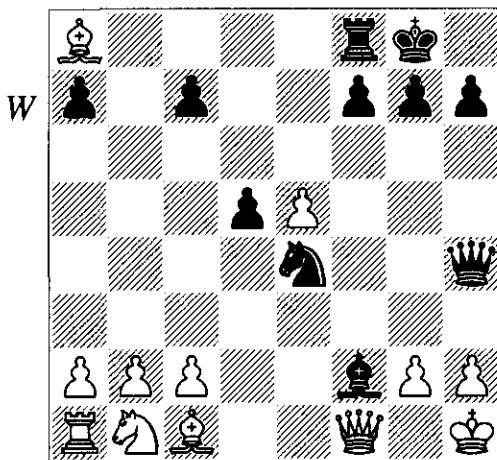
55c: after 19 ♘d5



56a: after 8...0-0



56b: after 10 ♖e3



56c: after 13...♙h4

Trap 56 – Knowing the Classics

The next game is an excellent example of the value of knowing your classics. If White had been familiar with the 1936 correspondence game Hermann-Keres, he would never have suffered the embarrassing rout which actually occurred in the game.

Romijn – Arp

Amsterdam Donner mem 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 exd4 4 ♙c4 ♘f6 5 e5 d5 6 ♙b5 ♘e4 7 ♘xd4 ♙c5 8 0-0 0-0 (56a)

To anyone unfamiliar with this position, the obvious question is why White cannot play 9 ♘xc6 here. This game supplies a very convincing answer.

9 ♘xc6?

Correct is 9 ♙xc6 bxc6 10 ♙e3 (56b) with equal chances (but not 10 ♘xc6? ♙d7 11 ♘d4 ♙a6 with initiative for Black).

9...bxc6 10 ♙xc6 ♙a6!

Exposing White's lack of development.

11 ♙xa8 ♙xf1 12 ♙xf1?

Choosing the line of least resistance.

The aforementioned Hermann-Keres game continued 12 ♙e3 ♙xe3 13 fxe3 ♙xg2 14 ♙g4 ♙h3! 15 ♙xh3 ♙g5+ 16 ♙f1 ♙xa8 with a winning positional advantage for Black.

12...♙xf2+ 13 ♙h1 ♙h4 (56c)

There is no defence to ...♘g3+. It is rather extraordinary that anyone would play on this position over the board, but Romijn stumbles on for a couple of moves.

14 ♙f4 ♙xf4 15 g3 ♙f3+ 0-1

Trap 57 – The Silence of the Lambs

One of the first opening traps any player learns is the notorious ‘Fried Liver Attack’. It is all the more surprising then that it should still occur in practical play. In the following game, White employs a delayed and even stronger version of the line, and dismembers his opponent with a ferocity which would have pleased even that well-known connoisseur of fried livers, Dr Hannibal Lector himself.

Clarisse – Van Dijke
 Vlissingen 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙c4 ♘f6 4 ♘g5 d5 5 exd5 (57a) 5...♘xd5?

Walking into it. Necessary here is 5...♘a5, 5...♘d4 or 5...b5.

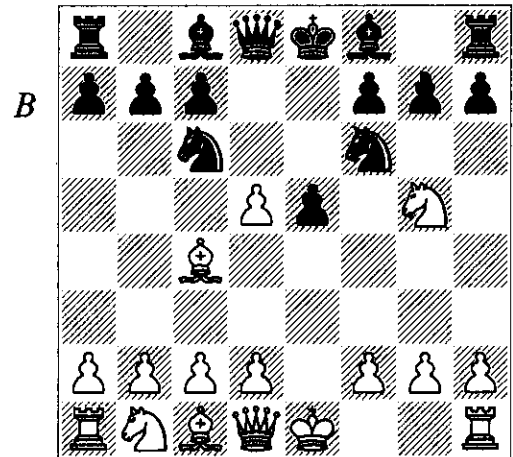
6 d4!

Even stronger than the immediate sacrifice on f7, after which the variation 6 ♘xf7 ♙xf7 7 ♚xf3+ ♙e6 8 ♘c3 ♘e7 allows Black to play on, though White has an overwhelming score in practice.

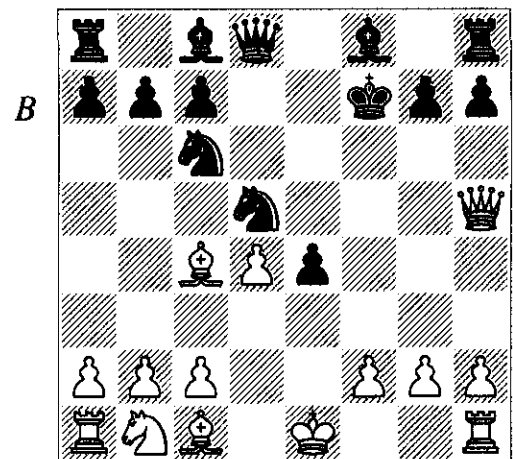
6...e4 7 ♘xf7 ♙xf7 8 ♚h5+ (57b) 8...g6

The alternative variation 8...♙e6 9 ♘c3 ♘ce7 10 ♚e5+ (57c) illustrates rather drastically the benefit of having the moves 6 d4 e4 included.

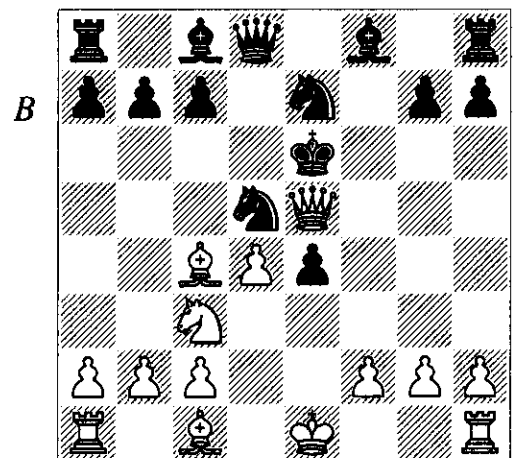
9 ♙xd5+ ♙g7 10 ♙h6+ 1-0



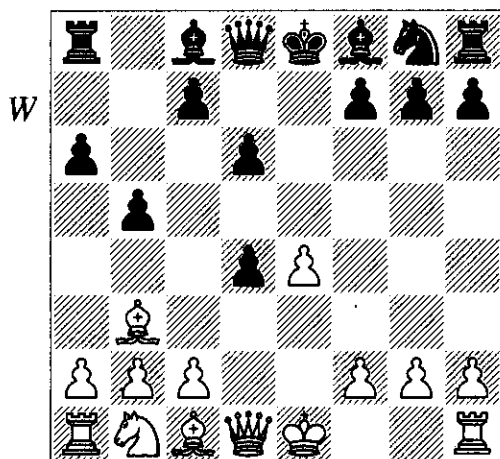
57a: after 5 exd5



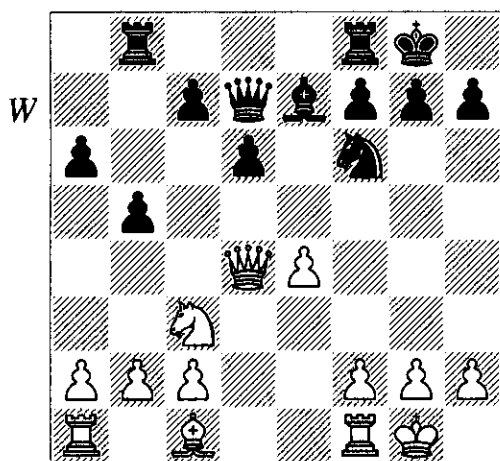
57b: after 8 ♚h5+



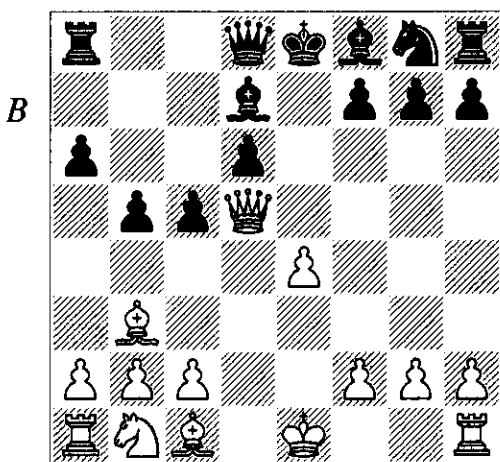
57c: after 10 ♚e5+



58a: after 7...exd4



58b: after 13...0-0



58c: after 11 ♖d5

Trap 58 – How to Draw with Alekhine

The so-called Noah's Ark Trap is extremely well-known, yet amazingly it still crops up in tournament play. Its most famous occurrence is probably not a game, however – annotating his game with Yates at New York 1924, Alekhine gives the whole variation as leading to a draw!

Aschenberg – Doll
Endingen 1987

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 d6 5 d4 b5 6 ♙b3 ♘xd4 7 ♘xd4 exd4 (58a) 8 ♙xd4??

Almost any move would be better here, the two most common tries being 8 c3 and 8 ♙d5. Neither promises White any advantage, however, which serves to underline the harmlessness of the whole 5 d4 variation. The great Paul Keres, for example, won several games as Black from the position reached after 8 ♙d5 ♗b8 9 ♙c6+ ♙d7 10 ♙xd7+ ♗xd7 11 ♗xd4 ♘f6 12 0-0 ♙e7 13 ♘c3 0-0 (58b), including a famous brilliancy against Hort at Oberhausen 1961.

8...c5 9 ♗d5 ♙e6 10 ♗c6+ ♙d7 11 ♗d5 (58c)

Here Alekhine gave only 11...♙e6 drawing, though I somehow suspect that he would not have played this move had the position arisen!

11...c4 0-1

I should add that, of the six games with this trap that I found, White managed to win one, whilst in another, Black preferred 8...♘f6 instead of 8...c5 (perhaps trying to improve on the game where White won!) and went on to win anyway!

Trap 59 – One for the Birds

In the following clash of the generations, the veteran English master Joseph Henry Blackburne springs a rather nasty trap on a youthful Alekhine and nets a whole piece, but the youngster gives a hint of things to come by bamboozling his opponent in the complications and making a draw.

Alekhine – Blackburne *St Petersburg 1914*

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♖b5 ♘d4 (59a)

Bird's Defence had a brief burst of popularity in the early 1980s, before drifting back into thoroughly well-deserved obscurity. It does offer a few tricks for the unwary, however, and could be worth the occasional try in club chess.

4 ♘xd4 exd4 5 0-0 g6 6 d3 ♗g7 7 f4 c6 8 ♗c4 d5 9 exd5 cxd5 10 ♖b5+ ♔f8 (59b)

This rustic approach is a common theme in this opening. Black intends such subtleties as ...h5, ...♘g4, etc.

11 ♘d2??

Not a move one would expect from a future world champion!

11...♔a5!

Suddenly a piece is going, but the young champion-to-be fights on and gradually outplays the veteran.

12 a4 a6 13 ♘b3 ♔d8 14 ♗d2 axb5 15 axb5 ♖xa1 16 ♗b4+! ♘e7 17 ♔xa1 ♗f6 18 ♔a7 b6 19 ♖e1 ♗e6 20 ♔h1 h5?! 21 ♗xe7+ ♔xe7 22 ♔xb6 (59c)

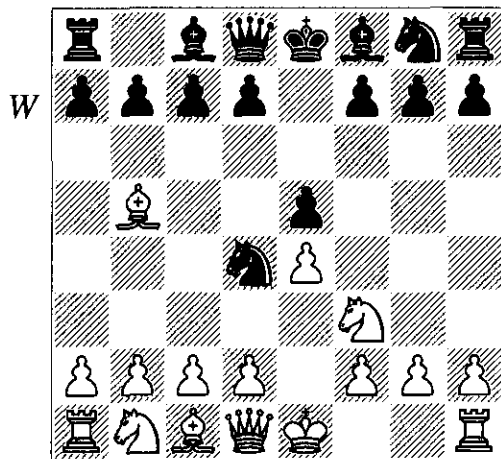
The odds are levelling up all the time.

22...♔b4 23 ♔c5+ ♔xc5 24 ♘xc5 ♗d8?

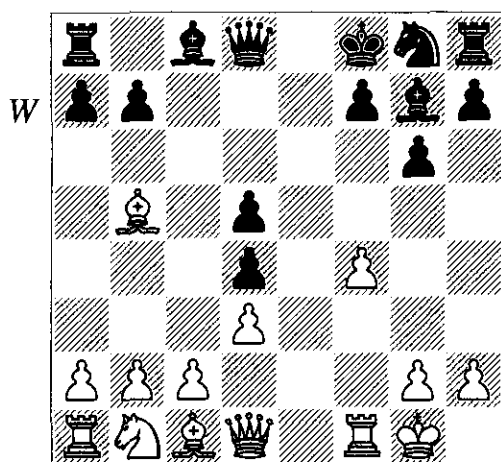
24...♔e7 should still win.

25 ♘xe6+ fxe6 26 ♖xe6

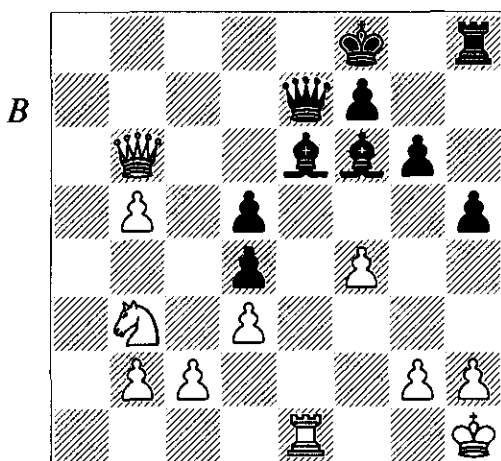
The ending was drawn.



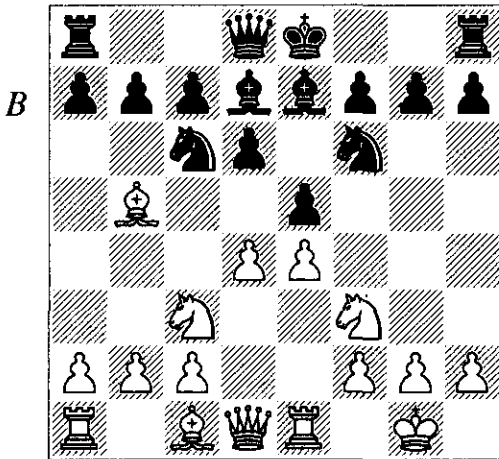
59a: after 3...♘d4



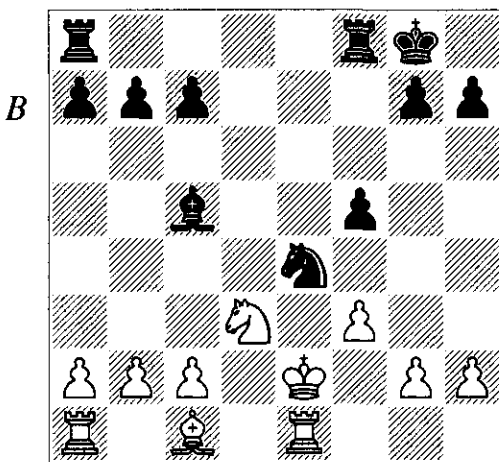
59b: after 10...♔f8



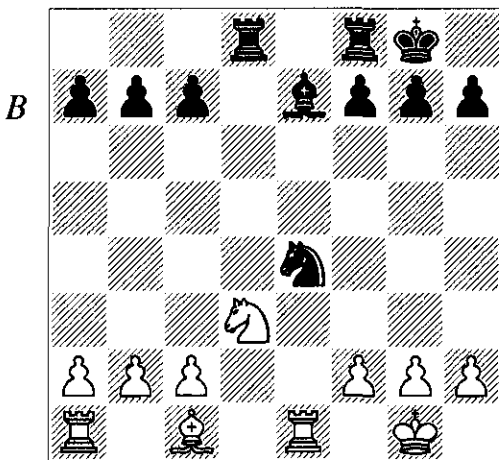
59c: after 22 ♔xb6



60a: after 7 ♖e1



60b: after 16 ♕e2



60c: after 13 ♞d3

Trap 60 – A Golden Oldie

The following is one of the most famous of all opening traps. Although it is of relatively little practical relevance today, since the Steinitz Defence has long ceased to be popular in master chess, it has particular historical importance in the development of opening theory. It was this trap which demonstrated that Black could not maintain his e5-pawn in the Steinitz Defence, and this in turn led Black to pay closer attention to the move 3...a6, allowing the pin to be broken with a later ...b5. The eventual result was the development of the main lines of the Closed Lopez, which remain popular to this day.

Tarrasch – Marco
Dresden 1892

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 d6 4 d4 ♙d7 5 ♘c3 ♙e7 6 0-0 ♘f6 7 ♖e1 (60a) 7...0-0?

This move is fatal. Black must 'surrender the centre' (as Tarrasch put it) by 7...exd4.

8 ♙xc6 ♙xc6 9 dxe5 dxe5 10 ♚xd8 ♚axd8

Or 10...♚fxd8 11 ♘xe5 ♙xe4 12 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♘d3 f5 14 f3 ♙c5+ 15 ♕f1! ♚f8 16 ♕e2 (60b), winning for White.

11 ♘xe5 ♙xe4 12 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 13 ♘d3 (60c)

The tangle of pieces on the e-file will cost Black material.

13...f5 14 f3 ♙c5+ 15 ♘xc5!

Better than 15 ♕f1 ♙b6 16 fxe4 fxe4+ 17 ♘f4 g5, which is still unclear.

15...♘xc5 16 ♙g5 ♚d5 17 ♙e7 1-0

The other interesting point about this game is that Tarrasch had published the entire line of analysis some 18 months earlier in *Deutsche Schachzeitung!*

Trap 61 – Outpsyching the Juniors

The perennial problem of how to play against juniors is one which comes to us all, as the years creep remorselessly up on us. The next game shows one effective tactic, which is to choose openings which went out of fashion 100 or so years before one's opponent was born. You can bet your life that in this computer-driven age, he will know all the finer points of anything played by Kasparov or Anand, but games by Steinitz and Zukertort are less likely to figure in *The Week In Chess*!

McShane – Campora
Benasque 1996

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 ♘f6 4 0-0 d6 5 ♖e1 ♙d7 6 c3 ♙e7 7 d4 0-0 (61a) 8 ♘bd2?

Allowing a cheapo which frees Black's position and nets him the bishop-pair.

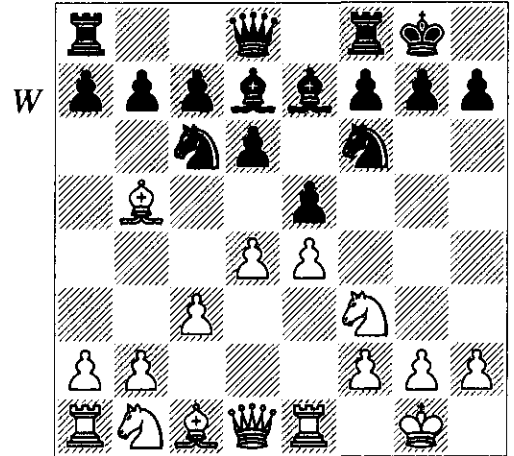
8... ♘xd4! 9 cxd4

I recall once seeing a game of David Bronstein's in which his opponent preferred to sacrifice a pawn and keep the bishop-pair himself after 9 ♘xd4 exd4 10 ♙xd7 dxc3 11 ♙a4 cxd2 12 ♙xd2. White has some compensation, but it proved insufficient.

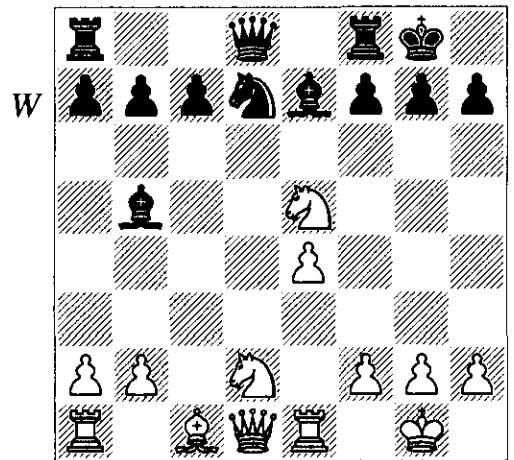
9... ♙xb5 10 dxe5 dxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘d7 (61b)

The pair of bishops and weakness of d3 give Black a clear edge, and on this occasion the youngster's powers of resistance fail him.

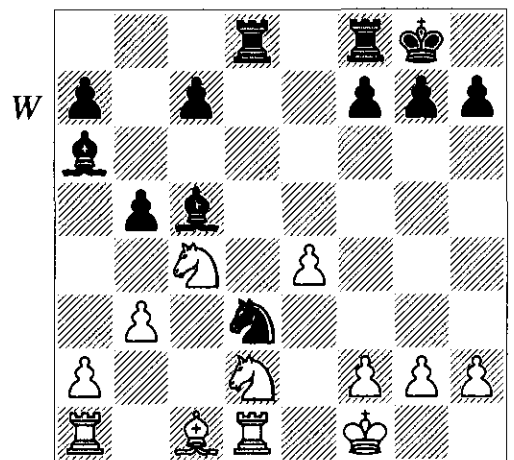
12 ♙b3 ♙a6 13 ♘ec4 ♘c5 14 ♙c2 ♙d3 15 ♙xd3 ♘xd3 16 ♖d1 ♖ad8 17 b3 ♙c5 18 ♙f1 b5 (61c) 0-1



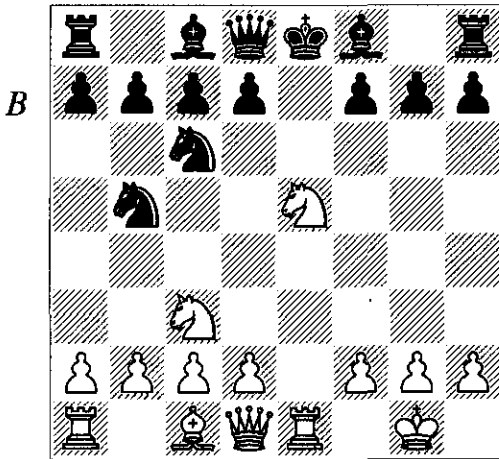
61a: after 7...0-0



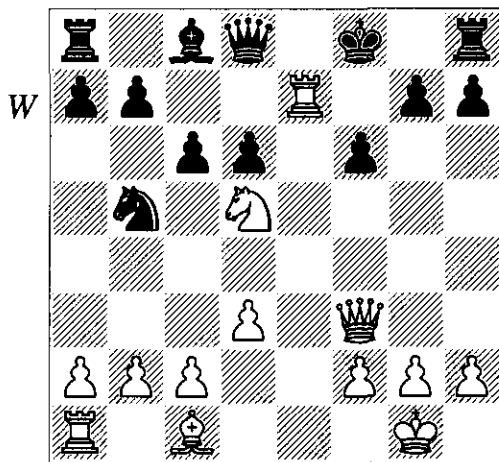
61b: after 11...♘d7



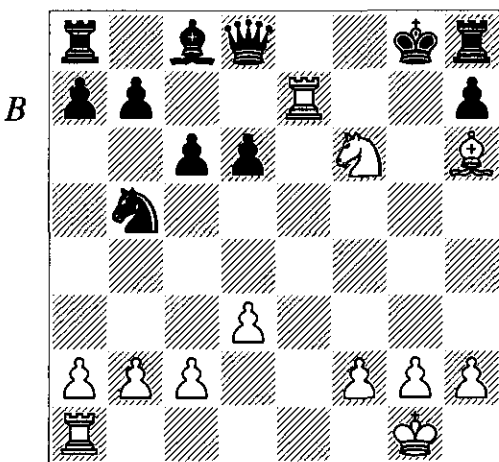
61c: after 18...b5



62a: after 7 dxe5



62b: after 12...c6



62c: after 15 dxf6#

Trap 62 – Breaking Down the Berlin Wall

Over the past year or so, Tony Miles has revived the Berlin Defence with considerable success, aiming for the ending which arises after 1 e4 e5 2 d3 c6 3 b5 f6 4 0-0 dxe4 5 d4 d6 6 xc6 dxc6 7 dxe5 f5 8 xd8+ xd8, etc. White players who wish to avoid this rather technical position may care to investigate the old line 5 e1, which although it promises little against accurate defence, does at least keep more pieces on the board and sets one or two nasty traps for the unwary. The whole line was the subject of a comprehensive survey by Jimmy Adams in the *BCM* as long ago as 1979, and it is from this that I sourced the following game.

Bachmann – Fiechtl Regensburg 1887

1 e4 e5 2 d3 c6 3 b5 f6 4 0-0 dxe4 5 e1 d6 6 c3 xb5 7 dxe5 (62a)

Now Black must play the solid 7...e7, avoiding the danger on the open e-file. Instead, capturing either knight loses.

7...dxe5?

Or 7...xc3? 8 xc6+ e7 9 dxe7 xd1 10 g6+ e7 11 dxe7, winning for White.

8 xe5+ e7 9 d5! d6

The alternative 9...0-0 10 dxe7+ h8 also loses drastically after 11 h5 g6 12 h6 d6 13 h5 gxh5 14 f6#.

10 xe7+ f8 11 f3 f6 12 d3 c6 (62b)

Allowing a neat finish.

13 xf6+! gxf6 14 h6+ g8 15 dxf6# (62c)

Trap 63 – Testing the ‘Archangel’

The ‘Archangel’ Variation of the Ruy Lopez has recently been revived in a slightly amended form, involving the move-order 6...♙c5, and this ‘New Archangel’ has enjoyed great popularity in the hands of players such as Shirov and our own Mickey Adams. The original ‘Archangel’, however, has fallen on lean times and is rarely seen these days. Maybe the most critical challenge to its viability is the line seen in the following game. Although Black need not fall into this particular trap, his position hangs by a thread and few players seem willing to defend it nowadays.

Mecking – Harandi Manila IZ 1976

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 b5 6 ♙b3 ♙b7

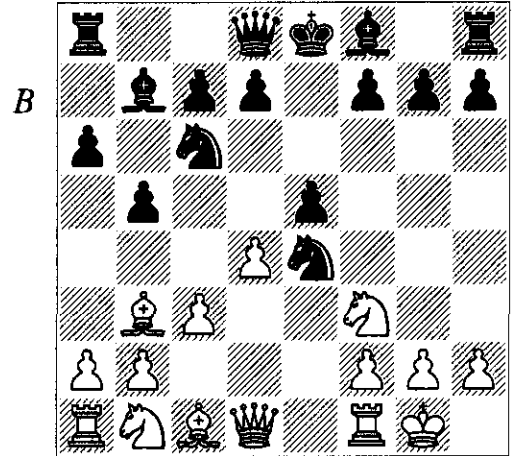
This move characterizes the ‘Archangel’ proper, a line that enjoyed great popularity for much of the 1970s. One of its most loyal practitioners was English GM Glenn Flear, although he too eventually abandoned it after several rocky experiences against the line featured in the present game.

7 c3 ♘xe4 8 d4 (63a) 8...exd4?

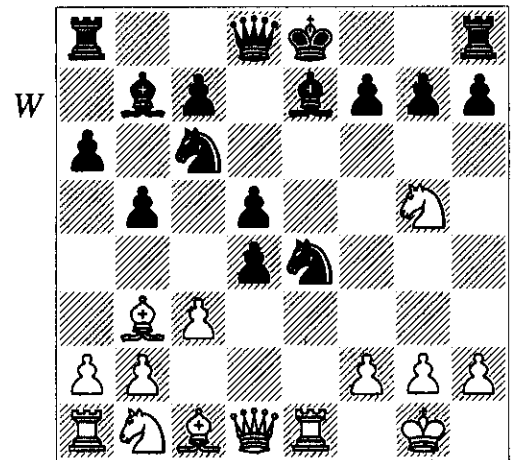
Naïve, to say the least. The only way to play the position is 8...♘a5, but even here Black’s position is extremely shaky.

9 ♖e1 d5 10 ♘g5 ♙e7 (63b) 11 ♖xe4! dxe4 12 ♘xf7 ♚d7 13 ♘xh8 0-0-0 14 ♘f7 ♜f8 15 cxd4 ♘xd4 16 ♘e5 ♚d6 17 ♘g4 h5 18 ♘e3 (63c)

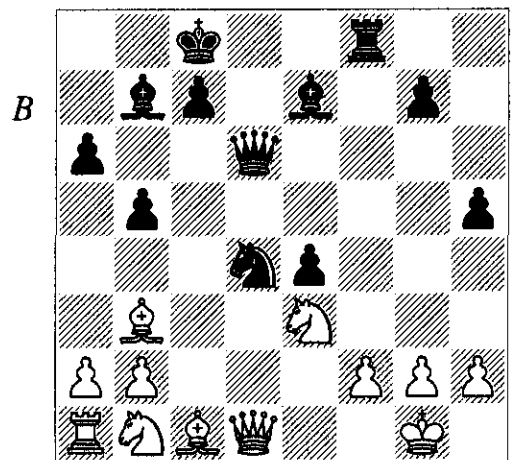
White has consolidated his extra piece and went on to win without difficulty.



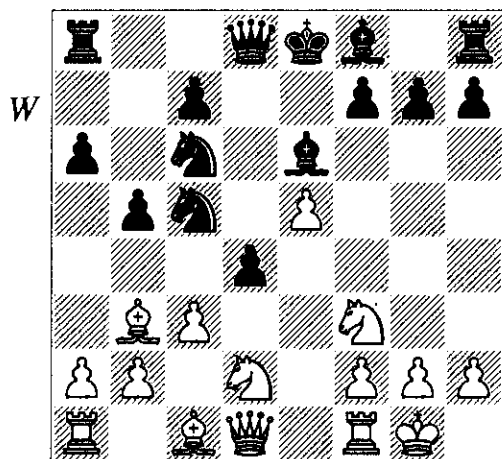
63a: after 8 d4



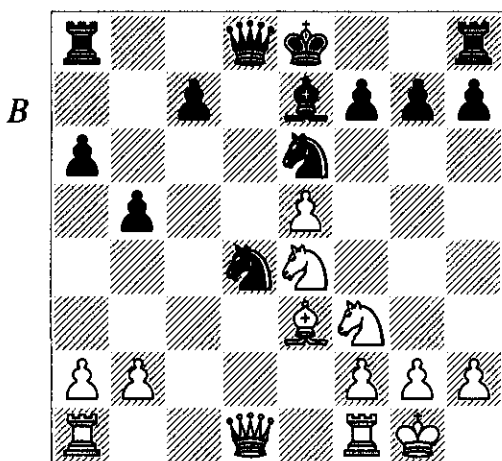
63b: after 10... ♙e7



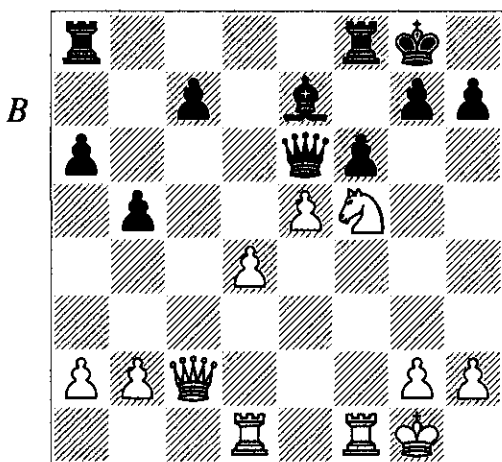
63c: after 18 ♘e3



64a: after 10...d4



64b: after 14...e3



64c: after 21...f5

Trap 64 – A Man For All Traps?

Russian GM Artur Yusupov has been one of the strongest players in the world for most of the past 15 years, but he does seem unusually prone to falling into one-move tactical traps. The game below is one of three such cases in this book and also illustrates a particularly insidious pitfall for Black in the Open Defence to the Ruy Lopez.

Tseshkovsky – Yusupov
Erevan Z 1982

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♙e6 9 ♘bd2 ♘c5 10 c3 d4 (64a)

In the Kasparov-Anand world championship match of 1995, the World Champion brilliantly revived Karpov's controversial piece sacrifice 11 ♘g5 in this position. Prior to that game, however, White's next had become established as the main line and had been the battleground for numerous games.

11 ♙xe6 ♘xe6 12 cxd4 ♘cxd4 13 ♘e4 ♙e7 14 ♙e3 (64b)

White has a small but clear advantage.

14...♘f5 15 ♚c2 0-0 16 ♚ad1 ♘xe3 17 fxe3 ♚c8 18 ♘d4 ♘xd4 19 exd4 ♚e6 20 ♘g3 f6 21 ♘f5 (64c) 21...fxe5??

Highly plausible, but immediately fatal.

22 ♚b3! 1-0

Incidentally, there is a vicious rumour that this identical sequence of moves was repeated in a 1985 game between two current directors of Gambit Publications. I plead the Fifth Amendment in lieu of further comment! [Nothing to do with me – *editor's note*]

Trap 65 – Tarrasch's Other Trap

This traps business can get very confusing. We have already seen Tarrasch's Trap (see Trap 61 above). But that was only Tarrasch's Trap in the Steinitz Defence. There is also another Tarrasch Trap, this time in the Tarrasch Defence. That is, the Tarrasch Defence to the Ruy Lopez, not to be confused with the Tarrasch Defence to the Queen's Gambit, which so far as I know, does not contain any traps named after Tarrasch.

Confused? So were his opponents.

Tarrasch – Gunsberg Manchester 1890

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♘xe4 6 d4 b5 7 ♙b3 d5 8 dxe5 ♙e6 (65a) 9 c3

For many years the main line in this position, but subsequently superseded first by Keres's 9 ♚e2 and then by the currently popular 9 ♘bd2.

9... ♙e7 10 ♚e1 0-0 11 ♘d4 (65b) 11... ♚d7??

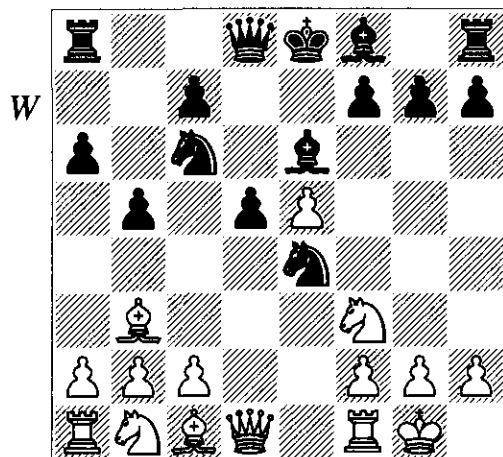
Correct is 11... ♘xd4 12 cxd4 h6, with an edge for White, Hübner-Piket, Dortmund 1992.

12 ♘xe6 fxe6

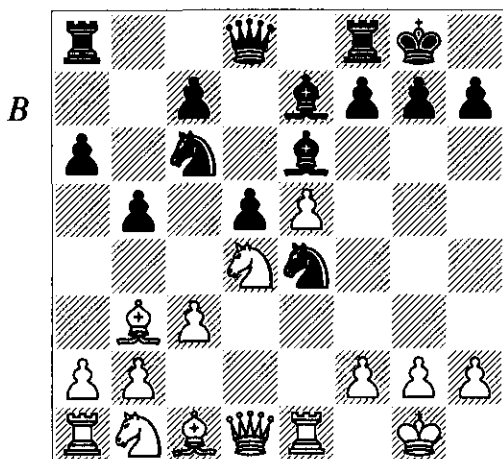
Recapturing with the queen is answered in the same fashion with 13 ♚xe4.

13 ♚xe4 (65c) 1-0

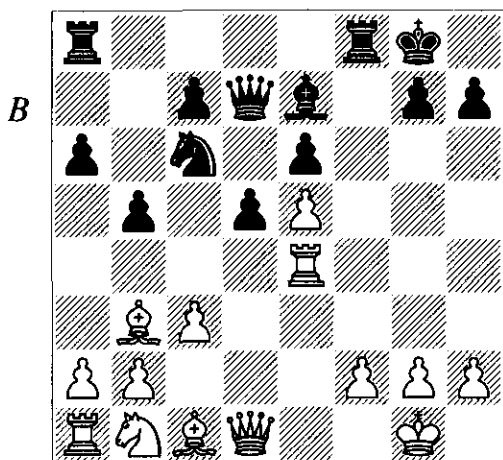
Remarkably, Tarrasch defeated another world championship contender of the time, Zukertort, in identical fashion at Frankfurt 1887, except that Zukertort did not resign immediately.



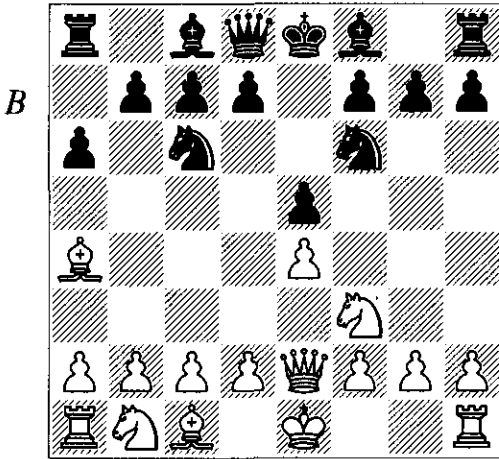
65a: after 8... ♙e6



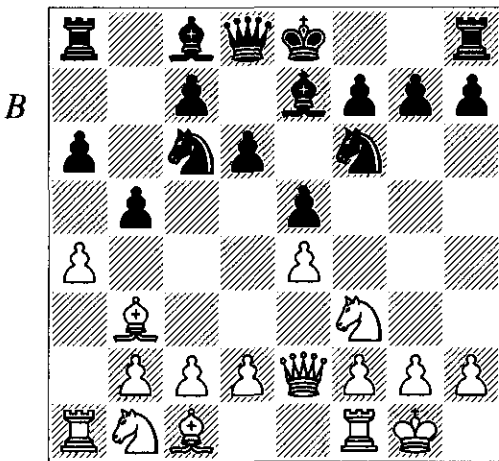
65b: after 11 ♘d4



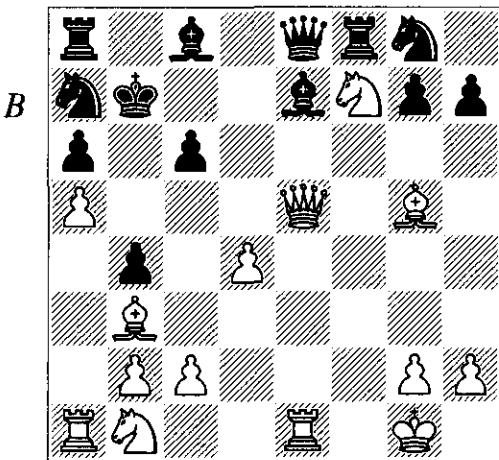
65c: after 13 ♚xe4



66a: after 5 ♕e2



66b: after 8 a4



66c: after 20 ♗g5

Trap 66 – When Similar is not the Same

So often in this book, we see the danger of routine moves. This is particularly the case where the position on the board closely resembles a standard type which is well-known to a player, but with one or two small and seemingly insignificant differences. The Ruy Lopez with ♕e2 instead of the more common ♕e1 is an excellent example of this. As the following game shows, the superficial similarity of the positions conceals some nasty tactical differences.

Varavin – Levin

Novosibirsk 1989

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 ♕e2 (66a)

This move has been played with great success by the young Russian GM Sergei Tiviakov, and was also employed very successfully by Nigel Short in his 1992 Candidates match win over Karpov.

5...♗e7 6 0-0 b5 7 ♙b3 d6 8 a4 (66b)
8...b4??

A very standard reply in such positions, but with the white queen on e2, it walks into a real sucker punch.

9 ♕c4! ♔d7

The only other try is 9...♕d7, which also inspires little confidence in Black's position. The rest is a massacre, which I append for the delight of the sadists amongst my readers.

10 a5 ♘a7 11 ♘g5 ♗f8 12 ♘xf7 ♕e8 13 f4 c6 14 fxe5 dxe5 15 d4 ♘xe4 16 ♕d3 ♘f6 17 ♕f5+ ♙c7 18 ♕xe5+ ♙b7 19 ♗e1 ♘g8 20 ♙g5 (66c) 20...♗xf7 21 ♙xf7 ♕xf7 22 ♙xe7 ♙f5 23 ♙xb4 ♗d8 24 ♘c3 ♙xc2 25 ♗ac1 ♙d3 26 ♘a4 ♙b5 27 ♘c5+ ♙a8 28 ♘e6 1-0

Trap 67 – An Anti-Marshall Pitfall

The Marshall Attack is one of the most feared responses to the Ruy Lopez and, indeed, many white players prefer to avoid it altogether. Even Kasparov himself has never, to my knowledge, taken on the Marshall, instead giving his patronage to the main Anti-Marshall line with 8 a4.

The game below features another system to avoid the Marshall, beginning with 8 d4. Black's best reply is to transpose back into a relatively harmless line of the Closed Lopez by 8...d6 9 c3 ♗g4, etc. One of the reasons he cannot avoid this is demonstrated below.

Penrose – A.R.B.Thomas
British Ch (Aberystwyth) 1961

1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♙b5 a6 4 ♙a4 ♘f6 5 0-0 ♙e7 6 ♖e1 b5 7 ♙b3 0-0 8 d4 (67a) 8...♘xd4?

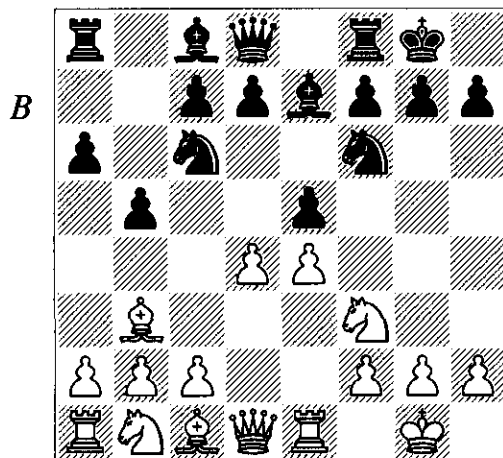
The other alternative 8...exd4 9 e5 is also unpleasant, but the text loses a pawn to a move which is not so easy to see if you are unfamiliar with the idea, something shown by the fact that I found no fewer than 14 examples of this trap.

9 ♙xf7+! ♖xf7 10 ♘xe5 ♘e6?

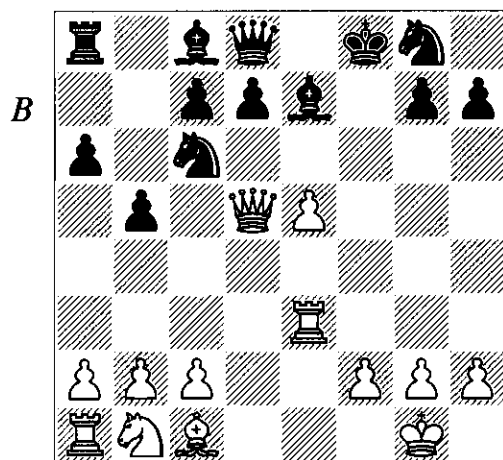
The alternative 10...♘c6 also loses after 11 ♘xf7 ♙xf7 12 e5 ♘g8 13 ♙d5+ ♙f8 14 ♖e3 (67b), etc. The only chance is to play on a pawn down by 10...♖f8, as the other thirteen players did in the games I found – five of them were rewarded with a draw, whilst one of them (the veteran Sarapu) even won!

11 ♘xf7 ♙xf7 12 e5 (67c)

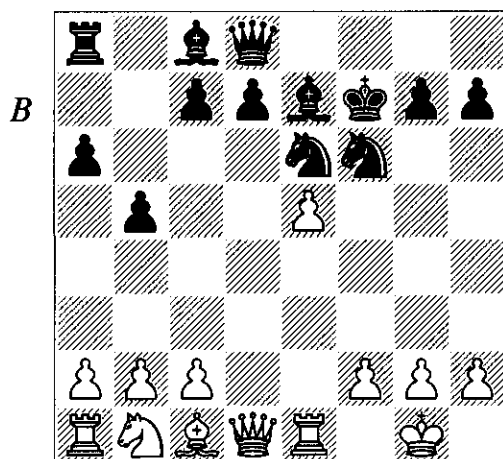
Only now did Black realize that he cannot move the knight away because of 13 ♙f3+. Instead he gave up the knight, but remained an exchange down and shortly lost.



67a: after 8 d4



67b: after 14 ♖e3



67c: after 12 e5

Trap 68 – The One Even I Saw!

It is a nice feeling to be able to present a trap which I succeeded in avoiding over the board!

Tangborn – Ebenfeld
Porz 1989

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♙g5 c5 4 e3 d5 5 c3 ♙e7 6 ♘bd2 b6 7 ♙d3 ♘bd7 8 ♚a4

This improves on the famous game Spassky-Petrosian, Moscow Wch (7) 1966, which is a model for Black when defending this variation. Spassky played 8 0-0 ♙b7 9 ♘e5 ♘xe5 10 dxe5 ♘d7 11 ♙f4 ♚c7 12 ♘f3 h6 13 b4 g5 14 ♙g3 h5 15 h4 gxh4 16 ♙f4 0-0-0 17 a4 (68a).

Now the strategically brilliant 17...c4!! 18 ♙e2 a6! left White unable to open lines on the queenside and facing a lost cause on the other wing.

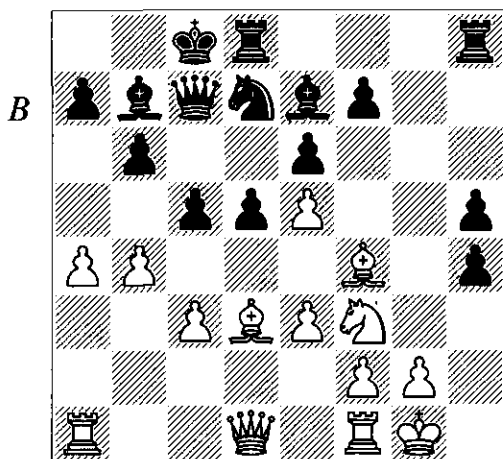
8...0-0 9 ♘e5 ♙b7 10 0-0 (68b) 10...♘xe5?!

Probably dubious, but not yet fatal. Against Ye Rongguang in Antwerp 1996, I preferred 10...h6 and achieved good counterplay after 11 ♙xf6 ♘xf6 12 f4 ♚c7 13 ♚ae1 a6, etc.

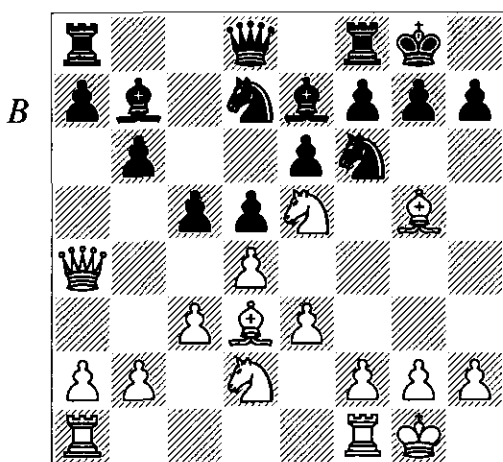
11 dxe5 ♘d7??

This is the real howler. 11...♘e4 is obligatory, although after 12 ♙xe7 ♚xe7 13 ♘xe4 dxe4 14 ♙xe4 the fact that the extra pawn is doubled does not offer Black anything like sufficient compensation.

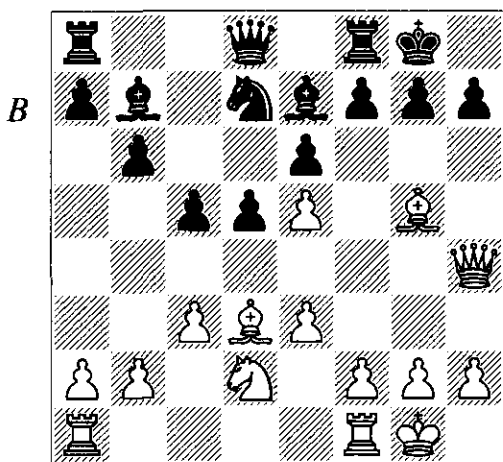
12 ♚h4 (68c) 1-0



68a: after 17 a4



68b: after 10 0-0



68c: after 12 ♚h4

Trap 69 – When the Pin Doesn't Bite

There are lots of examples of pins with ...♙g4 failing to a tactic beginning ♖xe5. One of the original examples was the so-called Legall's Mate, arising after a sequence such as 1 e4 e5 2 ♗f3 d6 3 ♙c4 h6 4 ♖c3 ♙g4? 5 ♖xe5 ♙xd1 6 ♙xf7+ ♚e7 7 ♖d5# (69a).

The following game shows that such tactics can arise even in this day and age – the loser in this case was rated 2250!

Wilder – Barouty
New York 1985

1 d4 d5 2 c4 ♖c6 3 ♗f3 ♙g4 4 ♖c3 ♗f6 5 cxd5 ♖xd5 6 e4

Black is already in trouble and has scored dreadfully from this position. Following 6...♙xf3 7 gxf3, a characteristic example was Keres-Terpugov, Moscow 1951, which saw Black crushed in hideous fashion after 7...♗b6 8 d5 ♖b8 9 ♙f4 c6 10 ♚b3 ♖8d7 11 ♖d1 ♚c8 12 ♙h3 g6 13 ♖a4 (69b), etc.

Probably the best try is 7...♖xc3 8 bxc3 e5. Ribli now recommends 9 ♖b1, but after 9...♙d6 Black has reasonable practical chances.

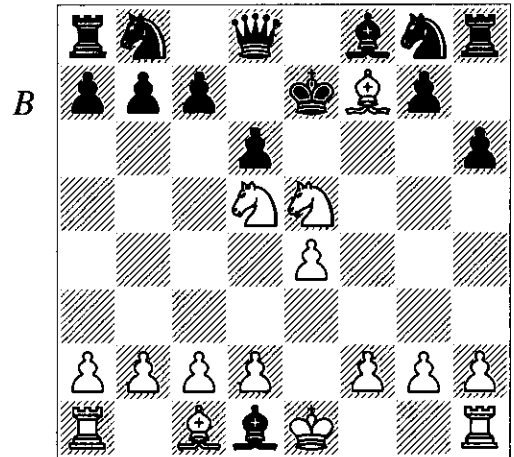
6...♗b6 7 d5 (69c)

Black must now grovel with 7...♗b8, instead of which he produces a real howler.

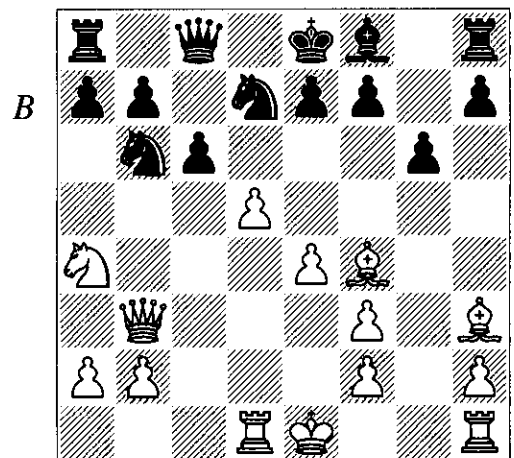
7...♖e5?? 8 ♖xe5! ♙xd1 9 ♙b5+ c6 10 dxc6 ♙a4

A spectacular piece of desperation, but it changes nothing.

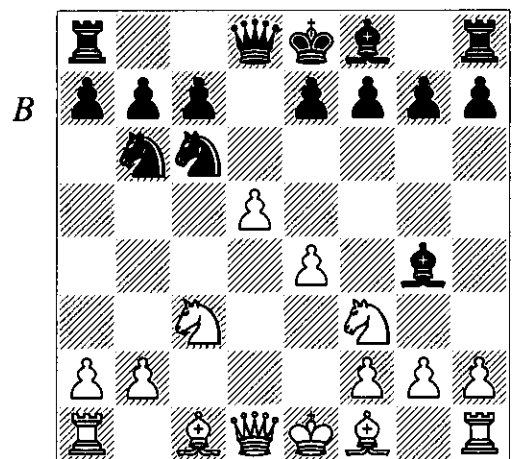
11 ♖xa4 ♚c7 12 cxb7+ ♚d8 13 ♖xf7#



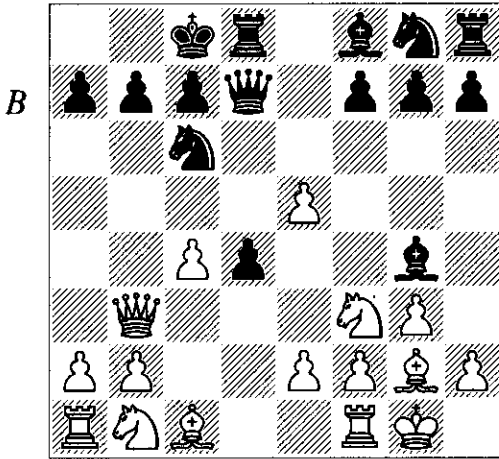
69a: after 7 ♖d5#



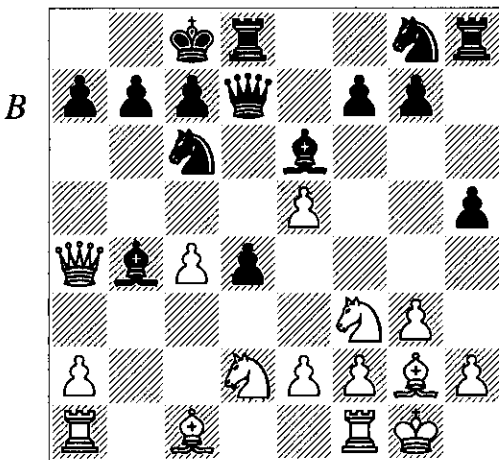
69b: after 13 ♖a4



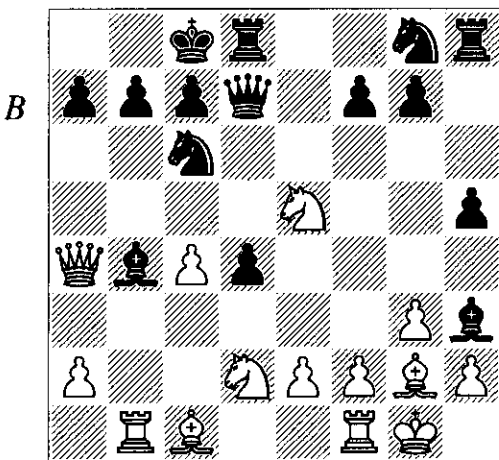
69c: after 7 d5



70a: after 8 ♕b3



70b: after 10 ♖a4



70c: after 13 ♞e5

Trap 70 – Living by the Sword

One thing which most surprised me in preparing this book is the number of cases where a player who chooses an obscure and unusual variation himself falls for a known trap. This next game is such a case. I would expect that anyone who plays the Albin Counter-gambit would know about the dangers of a premature ...♙h3, allowing the thrust e5-e6, yet it occurs over and over again in practice.

Østenstad – Hartung Nielsen
Copenhagen 1986

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 d4 4 ♘f3 ♘c6 5 g3
♙g4 6 ♙g2 ♕d7 7 0-0 0-0-0 8 ♕b3 (70a)

Every English schoolboy knows that Black can't play 8...♙h3 here.

8...♙h3??

But clearly not every Danish schoolboy...

9 e6! ♙xe6 10 ♘e5 ♕d6 11 ♘xc6 bxc6
12 ♖a4 1-0

Another, very recent example of this same idea is the following, played in the March 1998 4NCL weekend:

Poulton – Spice
British League (4NCL) 1997/8

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e5 3 dxe5 d4 4 ♘f3 ♘c6 5 g3
♙e6 6 ♘bd2 ♕d7 7 ♙g2 0-0-0 8 0-0 h5 9
b4 ♙xb4 10 ♖a4 (70b) 10...♙h3 11 e6!
♙xe6 12 ♖b1 ♙h3?

This really is asking for it. He had to try 12...♕e7 or 12...♕d6, when the position is still unclear.

13 ♘e5! (70c) 13...♘xe5 14 ♙xb7+ ♕xb7
15 ♕xb4+ ♕c6 16 ♙a3 1-0

Trap 71 – The Trap That Didn't Happen

I suspect many readers will have seen the trap which occurs at move 7 of the following game, as it is one which has been quoted in many books as a beautiful miniature won by Schlechter. Sadly, however, it did not actually happen! The unfortunate Mr Perlis did in fact avoid the immediate catastrophe, but despite this, history has attributed him a nine-move loss.

Schlechter – Perlis Karlsbad 1911

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♙f5 3 c4 c6 4 ♚b3 ♚b6 5 cxd5 ♚xb3 6 axb3 ♙xb1 (71a) 7 dxc6! ♘xc6

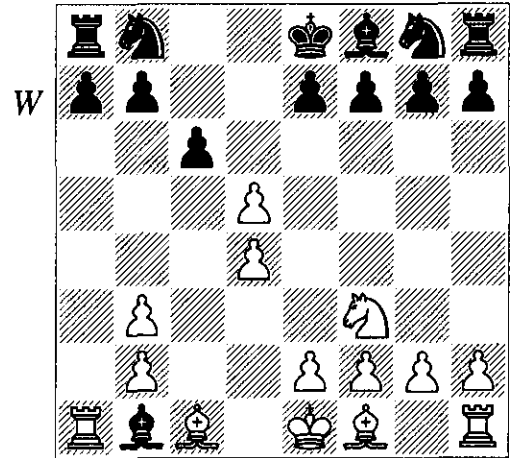
According to some books, the game continued 7... ♙e4 8 ♖xa7!! ♖xa7 9 c7 (71b) 1-0. In reality, however, Perlis preferred to bale out a pawn down and went on to lose.

The British GM Joe Gallagher, resident for a number of years in Switzerland and now a member of the Swiss national team, found a slightly more cooperative opponent in the following game and was able to demonstrate the trap in its entirety:

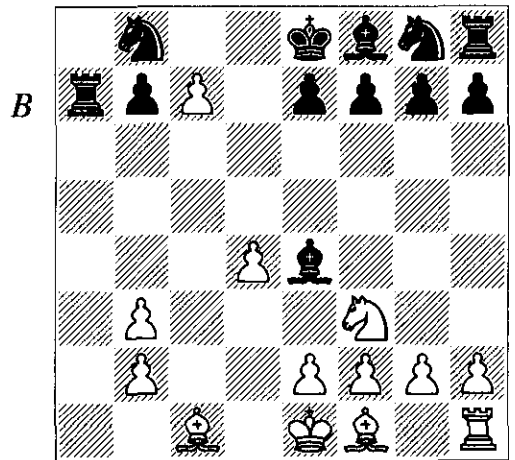
Terentiev – Gallagher Liechtenstein 1990

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♙g5 ♘e4 3 ♙f4 c5 4 c3 ♚b6 5 ♚b3 cxd4! 6 ♚xb6 axb6 7 ♙xb8? dxc3! 8 ♙e5?? ♖xa2! (71c)

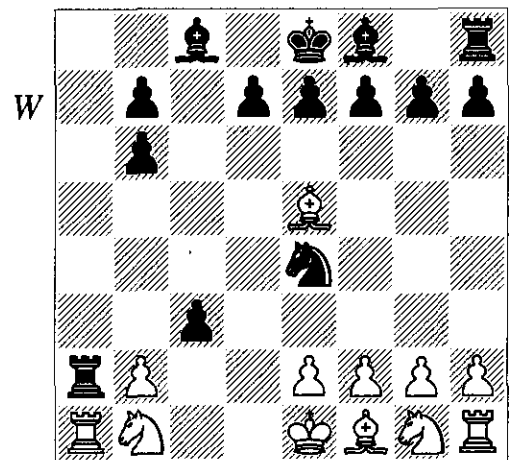
However, for some reason Terentiev did not see fit to resign this position, and played several more pointless moves.



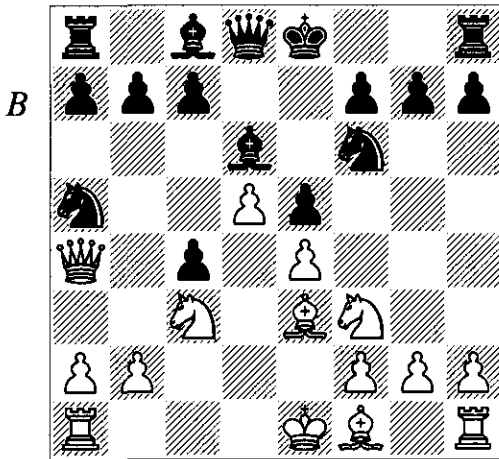
71a: after 6... ♙xb1



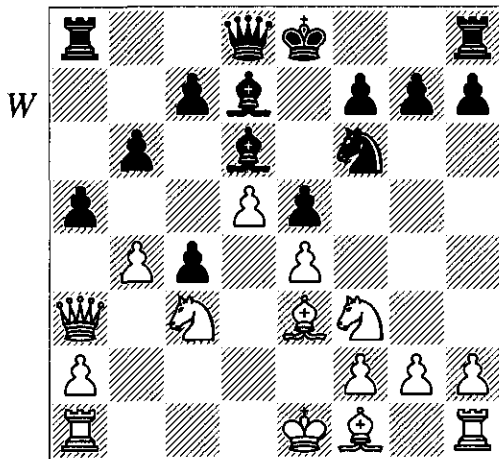
71b: after 9 c7



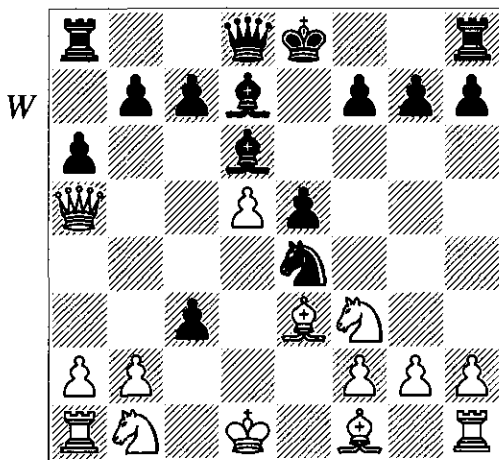
71c: after 8... ♖xa2



72a: after 8 ♖a4+



72b: after 11...a5



72c: after 11...c3

Trap 72 – The Power of Preparation

Having been a friend of Matthew Sadler since he was a child, I have to say that I gained a vast amount of vicarious pleasure when the following game hit the newspapers. It also represents Matthew's most important theoretical contribution, reviving a key line of the QGA which had been under a serious cloud. Indeed, his innovation is so strong that the move 5 ♘c3 has been put right out of commission, with many players (including Karpov) preferring 5 f3 nowadays.

Illescas – Sadler
Linares Z 1995

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 e4 ♘c6 4 ♙e3 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 e5 6 d5 ♘a5!

Originally Matthew's innovation, first played by him against Vyzhmanavin in the 1994 Intel QP in Paris.

7 ♘f3 ♙d6!

This was the first new move of the game, with 7...♘g4 and 7...a6 both having previously been tried and found wanting.

8 ♖a4+ (72a) 8...♙d7!

This must have come as a terrible shock.

9 ♖xa5 a6!

The point – the white queen is in trouble.

10 ♘b1??

No doubt stunned by the turn of events, Illescas collapses completely. Karpov, when he stumbled into this position in a rapidplay game versus Lautier, chose 10 ♙xc4 b6 11 ♖xa6 and eventually drew, although he is clearly worse here, whilst 10 b4 b6 11 ♖a3 a5 (72b) gives Black superb compensation. Best is 10 ♘a4, when Ftačnik gave 10...♘xe4 11 ♙xc4 b5 12 ♙b3 bxa4 13 ♙xa4 0-0 as equal.

10...♘xe4 11 ♙d1 c3! (72c) 0-1

Trap 73 – Sir Stuart's Lucky Escape

It is a particular pleasure to be able to include the following game, for several reasons. Firstly, it is a very plausible opening trap which occurs regularly. Secondly, Sir Stuart Milner-Barry was a player I had the pleasure of playing with on many occasions in county matches for Kent, and was truly one of the great gentlemen of this life. Thirdly, the background to the game gave the late Harry Golombek the chance to appear at his most caustic.

D. Lees – Milner-Barry
British Ch (Sunderland) 1966

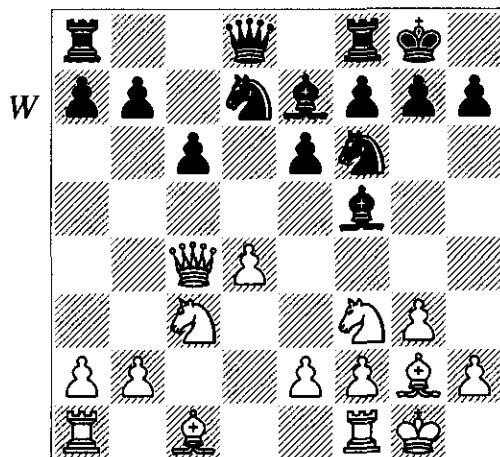
1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 c4 dxc4 4 ♙a4+ c6 5 ♙xc4 ♙f5 6 g3 e6 7 ♙g2 ♘bd7 8 0-0 ♙e7 9 ♘c3 0-0 (73a) 10 ♚d1??

As Golombek gleefully pointed out in the *BCM*, this blunder represents a lucky escape for Milner-Barry, whose opponent had announced to all and sundry before the game his intention to wear down the veteran "...over three sessions, like water dripping on a stone". Unfortunately, it is White's trousers that get wet first.

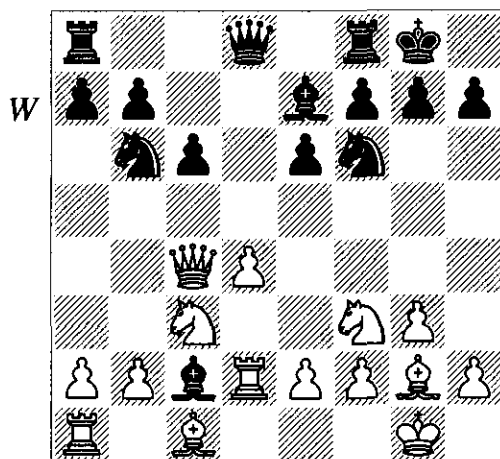
10...♙c2! 11 e3

Sadly, he must donate the exchange, since there is a threat of 11...♘b6 winning the queen after, for example, 11 ♚d2 ♘b6 (73b).

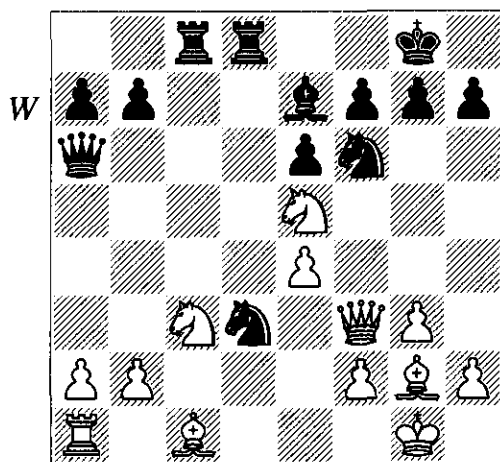
11...♙xd1 12 ♘xd1 c5 13 ♘c3 ♚c8 14 ♙e2 ♙b6 15 dxc5 ♘xc5 16 e4 ♚fd8 17 ♘e5 ♙a6 18 ♙f3 ♘d3 (73c) 0-1



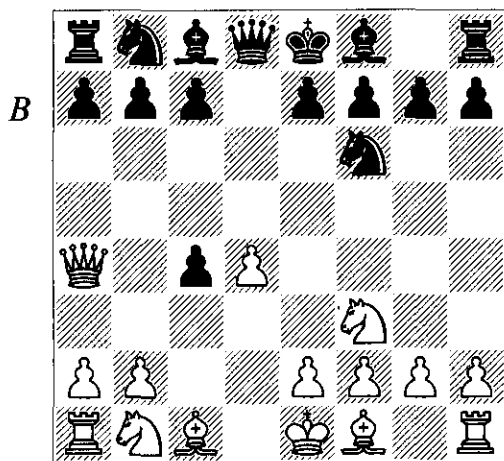
73a: after 9...0-0



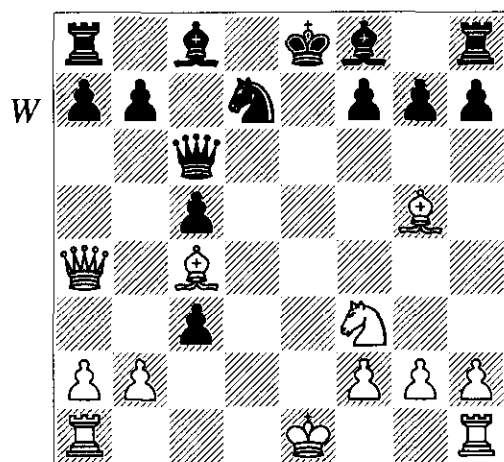
73b: after 11...♘b6



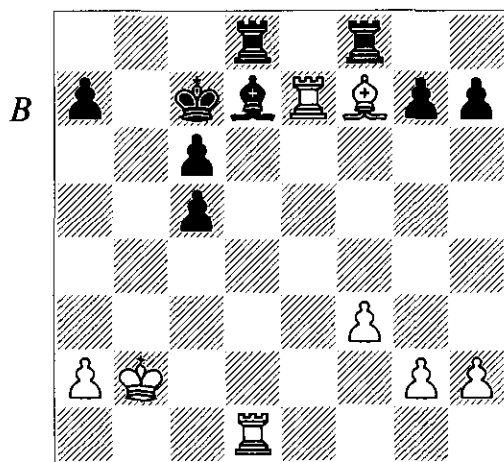
73c: after 18...♘d3



74a: after 4 ♔a4+



74b: after 11... ♖c6



74c: after 21 f3

Trap 74 – Embarrassment at Oakham

In Trap 54 above, we saw an example of a young Soviet player catching a Western opponent with some old analysis the latter was unaware of. This next example, however, sees the reverse happening. The starting point is a game in the USSR Championship of 1960.

Taimanov – Polugaevsky
USSR Ch (Leningrad) 1960

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♔a4+ (74a)
4... ♞bd7?! 5 ♘c3 e6 6 e4 c5 7 d5 exd5 8 e5
d4 9 ♙xc4 dxc3 10 exf6 ♖xf6 11 ♙g5 ♖c6
(74b) 12 0-0-0!!

The splendid point of White's play. Now taking the queen loses: 12... ♔xa4 13 ♖he1+ ♙e7 14 ♖xe7+ ♙f8 15 ♖xf7+ ♙g8 (15... ♙e8 16 ♖e1+ ♘e5 17 ♖xe5+ ♙e6 18 ♙xe6) 16 ♖fxd7+ ♖xc4 17 ♖d8+ ♙f7 18 ♘e5+. Polu tries another tack, but cannot defend all the threats.

12... ♙xb2+ 13 ♙xb2 ♙e7 14 ♖he1 f6 15 ♙b5 ♖b6 16 ♙c1 fxg5 17 ♙xd7+ ♙f8 18 ♖xe7 ♙xe7 19 ♖e4+ ♙d8 20 ♙f5+ ♙c7 21 ♖e5+ ♙c6 22 ♖d6+ ♙b5 23 ♖b2+ 1-0

One of the classic games from Soviet Championship history. Imagine, then, the embarrassment the young Boris Gelfand must have felt when he stumbled into the black side of the same line against Garcia Palermo at the Oakham Junior International in 1988! Gelfand chose a different defence at move 12, but to no avail:

12... ♙e7 13 ♖xc6 bxc6 14 ♙xe7 cxb2+ 15 ♙xb2 ♙xe7 16 ♖he1+ ♙d8 17 ♘e5 ♙c7 18 ♘xd7 ♙xd7 19 ♖e7 ♖ad8 20 ♙xf7 ♖hf8 21 f3 (74c) 1-0

Trap 75 – A Trap with Many Faces

This next trap is an excellent example of a theme which crops up in more than one opening. It is probably also the most embarrassing defeat ever suffered by IM and ex-British Champion Paul Littlewood – sorry Paul!

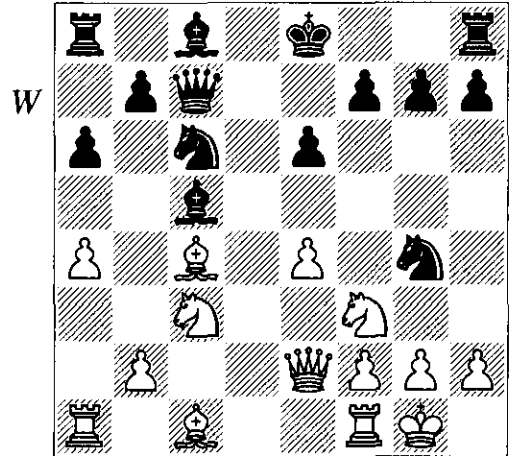
P.Littlewood – Penrose
British Ch (Chester) 1979

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♙xc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 a4 ♘c6 8 ♚e2 ♚c7 9 ♘c3 ♙d6 10 dxc5 ♙xc5 11 e4 ♘g4 (75a) 12 h3?? ♘d4 0-1

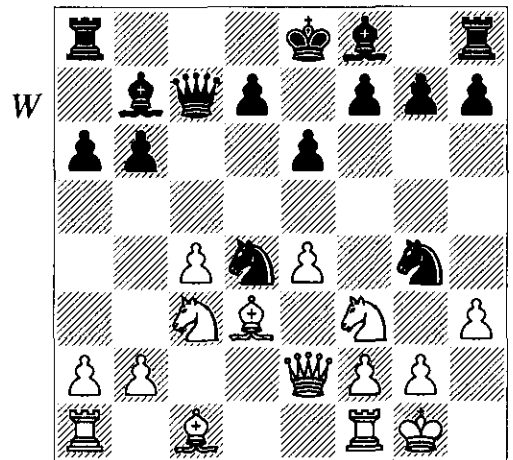
If it is any comfort to Paul (which I doubt!), I found four other examples of White falling for this same tactic in the QGA. Instead of this disaster, White should play 12 g3, when the position is approximately equal after 12...0-0 13 ♙f4 e5, etc.

As well as occurring in other lines of the QGA, there are other, completely different settings of this tactic, for example the Sicilian Paulsen: 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 a6 5 ♙d3 ♚c7 6 c4 ♘f6 7 ♘c3 ♘c6 8 ♘f3 b6 9 ♚e2 ♙b7 10 0-0 ♘g4 11 h3?? ♘d4 (75b), etc.

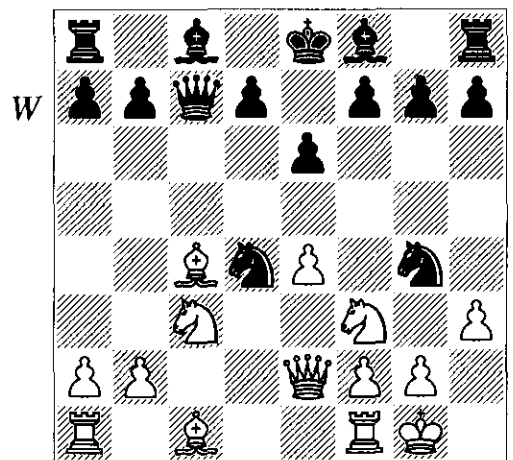
Also an anti-Morra Gambit line which was developed by a number of Siberian players, and has therefore become known as the ‘Siberian Trap’. 1 e4 c5 2 d4 cxd4 3 c3 dxc3 4 ♘xc3 ♘c6 5 ♘f3 e6 6 ♙c4 ♚c7 7 ♚e2 ♘f6 8 0-0?! ♘g4! and now, e.g. 9 h3?? ♘d4 (75c), etc.



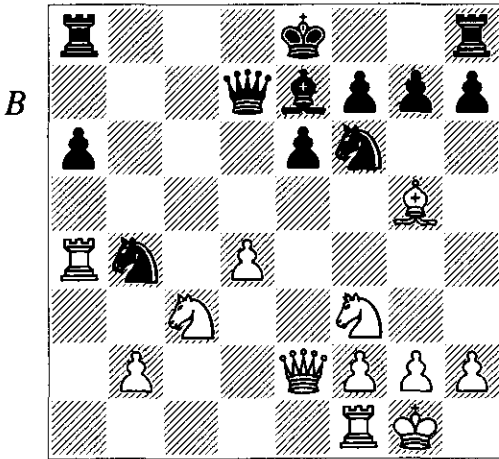
75a: after 11...♘g4



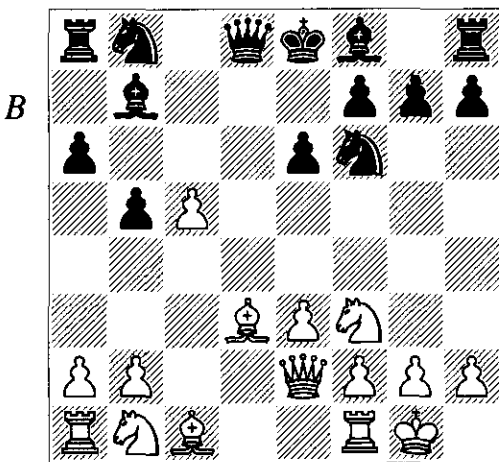
75b: after 11...♘d4



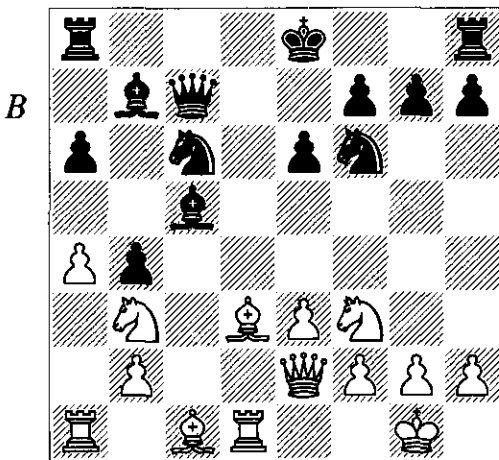
75c: after 9...♘d4



76a: after 15 g5



76b: after 9 dxc5



76c: after 13 b3

Trap 76 – The One Three GMs Missed!

The trap seen in the next game is both extremely well-known and not particularly difficult to see. All the more amazing, therefore, that in a 1992 game (albeit a rapid game) between Portisch and Anand, the Indian superstar allowed the trick and that his opponent overlooked it. On top of that, American GM Nick de Firmian also passed up the chance to play 10 gxb5+ in a game played at Biel 1986.

Lapienis – Bucinskas

Lithuanian Ch (Vilnius) 1996

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 f3 f6 4 e3 e6 5 gxc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 e2 b5 8 d3 b7

The critical line is 8...cxd4 9 exd4 c6 10 a4 bxa4 11 xa4 b4 12 b5+ d7 13 xd7+ xd7 14 c3 e7 15 g5 (76a) (Kožul-Psakhis, Zagreb 1993) and now 15...b7! with equal chances.

9 dxc5 (76b) 9...gxc5??

It is essential now to play 9...c6, although the line 10 d1 c7 11 a4 b4 12 bd2 xc5 13 b3 (76c) has been the scene of at least two smooth positional wins by Russian GM Mark Taimanov.

10 gxb5+!

Netting a pawn, because after 10...axb5 11 xb5+, Black cannot save both bishops. In the Portisch-Anand game referred to above, the Hungarian GM played 10 e4, as did de Firmian against Costa at Biel 1986, in both cases with a draw as the eventual result.

In the present game, Black struggled on with 10...bd7 but after 11 d3 0-0 12 c3 was just a pawn down for no compensation and went on to lose in 49 moves.

Trap 77 – A Case of Metal Fatigue?

Who would you say was the most difficult player to beat in chess history? Whatever your answer, I would be astonished if Tigran Petrosian wasn't high up your shortlist. Yet on his debut in the final of the Soviet Championship, the future 'Iron' Tigran bore rather more resemblance to a made-in-Taiwan plastic version of the real thing. He started with five straight losses, against respectively Kotov, Smyslov, Geller, Keres and Flohr. He only managed to break his duck in the following round when he gained an advantage against the veteran Levenfish. He desperately wanted to offer a draw to break the losing sequence, but decided that with 0/5, it would be an insult to his opponent to do so, as a result of which he played on and ended up winning!

Here is the terrible embarrassment that started the rot.

Kotov – Petrosian

USSR Ch (Moscow) 1949

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♙g5 ♙e7 6 e3 c6 7 ♚c2 (77a) 7...♘e4??

Tradition limits me to two question marks, but feel free to add any additional number you feel is justified.

8 ♙xe7 ♚xe7

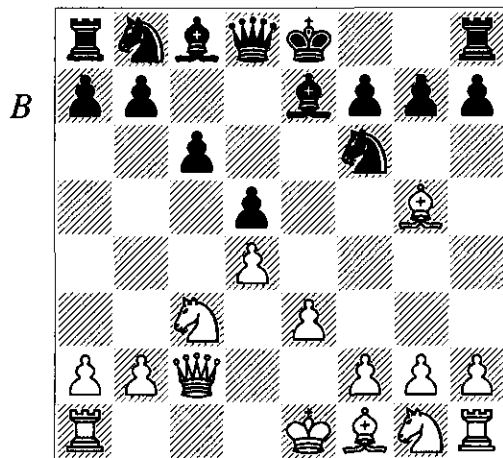
The pedant in me feels compelled to point out that 8...♚xe7 limits the losses to a pawn, plus of course a very red face!

9 ♘xd5!

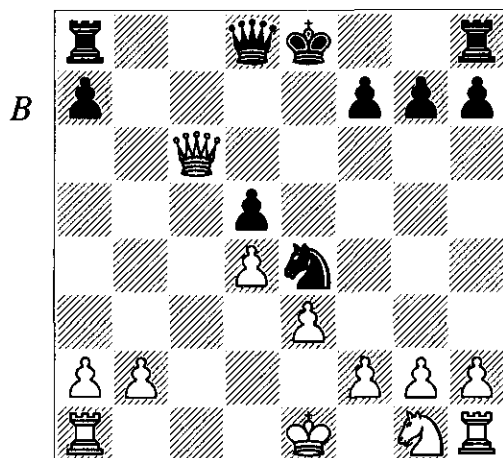
Instantly winning.

9...cxd5 10 ♚xc8+ ♚d8 11 ♙b5+ ♘c6 12 ♙xc6+ bxc6 13 ♚xc6+ (77b) 1-0

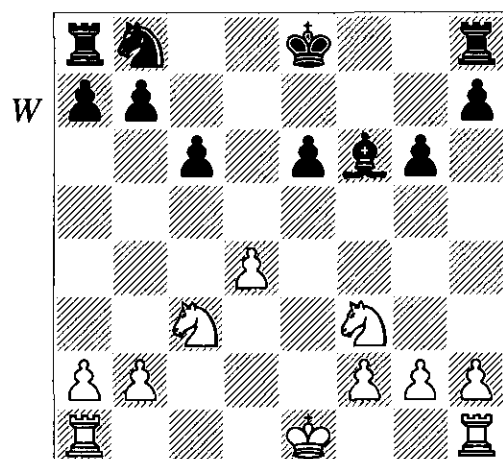
Interestingly, this trap found an echo some 40 years later. During the mid-1980s,



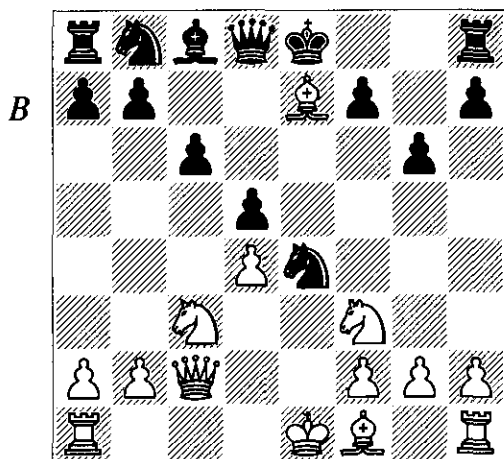
77a: after 7 ♚c2



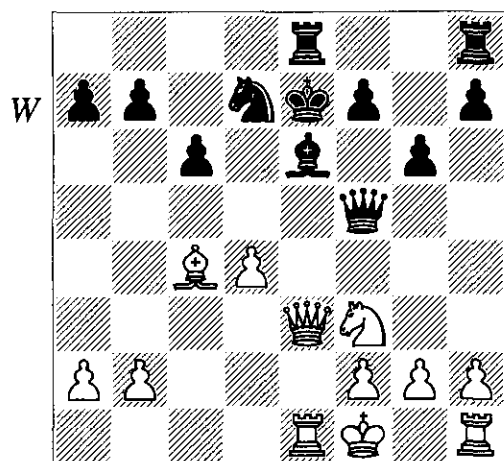
77b: after 13 ♚xc6+



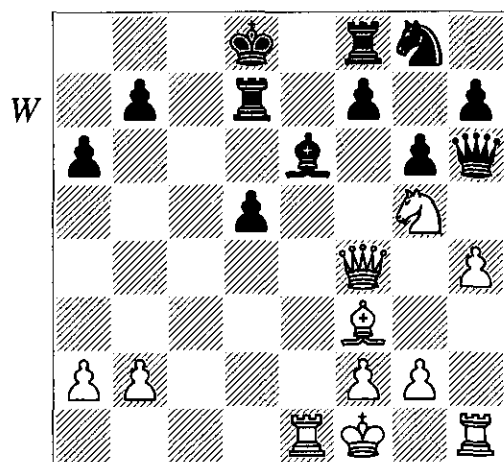
77c: after 13...fxe6



77d: after 9 Qxe7



77e: after 15... Rae8



77f: after 29... Ng8

the line 1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 Nf3 d5 4 Nc3 Qe7 5 cxd5 exd5 6 Qg5 c6 7 Qc2 g6 8 e4 had something of a vogue. White's last was an attempt to avoid the rather sterile equality reached after 8 e3 Qf5 9 Qd3 Qxd3 10 Qxd3 Nbd7, etc.

In several games, White achieved an edge after 8...dxe4 9 Qxf6 Qxf6 10 Qxe4+ Qe6 11 Qc4 Qe7 12 Qxe6 Qxe6 13 Qxe6+ fxe6 (77c).

Playing Karpov in the 1988 Soviet Championship, no less a player than Yusupov sought to avoid these problems by 8...Nxe4?!, which was met by 9 Qxe7 (77d). Now 9...Qxe7?? 10 Nxd5 is devastation à la Kotov-Petrosian, so Black had to play 9...Qxe7 10 Nxe4 dxe4 11 Qxe4+ Qe6 12 Qc4 but despite inventive defence, he could not prevent his king perishing to a subsequent d4-d5 break. The whole attack was elegantly conducted by Karpov, and well worth seeing in its entirety: 12...Qa5+ 13 Qf1 Qf5 14 Qe3 Nd7 15 Re1 Rae8 (77e) 16 d5! cxd5 17 Qb5 a6 18 Qa3+ Qd8 19 Qa5+ Qe7 20 Qb4+ Qf6 21 Qd4+ Qe7 22 Qd3 Qh5 23 h4 Qd8 24 Ng5 Rhf8 25 Qe2 Qh6 26 Qf3 Re7 27 Qb4 Nf6 28 Qd6+ Rd7 29 Qf4 Ng8 (77f) 30 Qg4 Qc8 31 Qxe6 fxe6 32 Rc1+ Qd8 33 Nxe6+ Qe7 34 Qxf8+ Qxf8 35 Nxf8 Qxf8 36 Rh3 Ne7 37 h5 Qg7 38 h6+ Qf6 39 Rf3+ Qe6 40 Re1+ Qd6 41 Rf6+ Qc7 42 g4 Nc6 43 Re8 d4 1-0.

Trap 78 – The Art of Timing

Yet another example on the theme of similar positions not being the same. The move ...♘bd7 in the Queen's Gambit Declined is as natural for Black as drawing breath, but timing is everything in chess...

Toloza – R.David

Parnaiba U-26 Wcht 1995

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 c4 e6 4 ♘c3 ♙e7 5 ♙f4 (78a) 5...♘bd7??

An astonishing mistake for a strong player to make.

6 ♘b5!

Oops! Now the attempt to bale out with 6...♙b4+ 7 ♘d2 ♘e4 (or 7...♙a5 8 b4, etc.) fails to 8 ♘xc7+ (78b), when Black will emerge a pawn down after 8...♙xc7.

Black chooses the only other move to avoid catastrophe on c7, but it is already too late for salvation.

6...e5 7 dxe5 c6

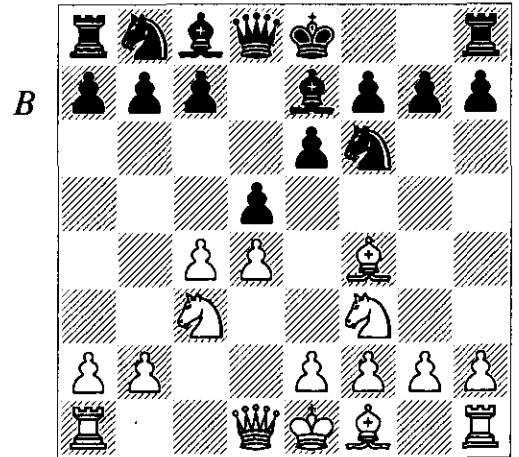
If Black really wishes to prolong the game, he must try 7...♘h5, although after 8 ♙d2 ♘b6 9 cxd5 there are absolutely no grounds for optimism on his part. The remainder is really rather obscene, considering the strength of the players concerned.

8 exf6 ♙b4+ 9 ♘c3 ♙xf6

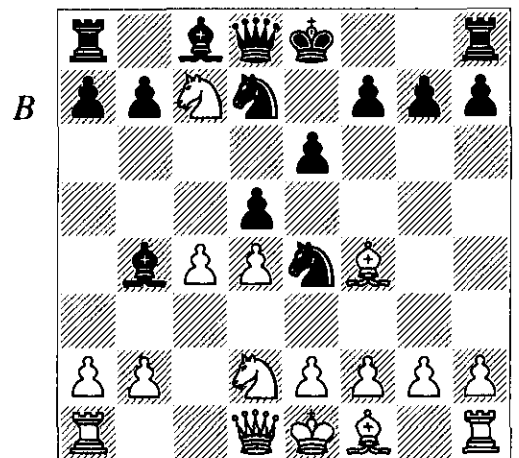
As so often, a combination of shock, anger, disbelief and a burning desire to avoid losing a game in under ten moves prompts Black to play on a large amount of material down.

10 ♙d4 ♙xd4 11 ♘xd4 ♘b6 12 cxd5 ♘xd5 13 ♙d2 (78c) 1-0

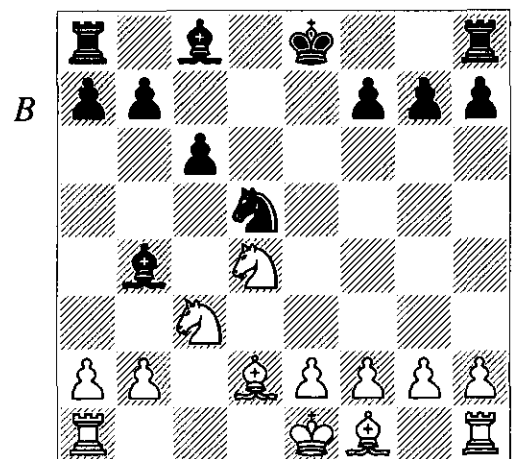
Not a moment too soon!



78a: after 5 ♙f4



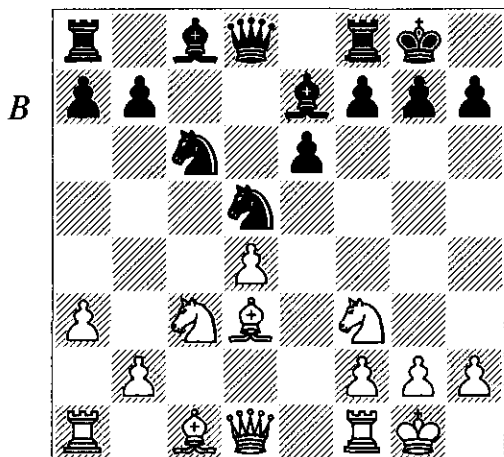
78b: after 8 ♘xc7+



78c: after 13 ♙d2

Trap 79 – Vicious Vishy

Ever since he first appeared on the chess scene as a junior, Vishy Anand has created an exceptional impression, most notably with the sheer blinding speed with which he calculates variations. In the following encounter between a youthful Anand and an even younger Mickey Adams, the former springs a vicious tactic when barely out of the opening.



79a: after 10 a3

Anand – Adams
London Lloyds Bank 1987

1 e4 c6 2 d4 d5 3 exd5 cxd5 4 c4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 e6 6 ♘f3 ♙e7 7 cxd5 ♘xd5 8 ♙d3 ♘c6 9 0-0 0-0 10 a3 (79a)

As pointed out in Trap 95 below, this position can arise from many different openings and is very much a 'tabiya' in modern chess. Besides his next move in the game, Black can also play 10...♙f6 11 ♙e4 ♘ce7 in an attempt to shore up the critical d5-square.

10...♘f6 11 ♙c2 b6 12 ♖e1 ♙a6

Aiming to disrupt White's intended ♗d3 build-up, but the awkward position of the black minor pieces on the queenside brings its own problems.

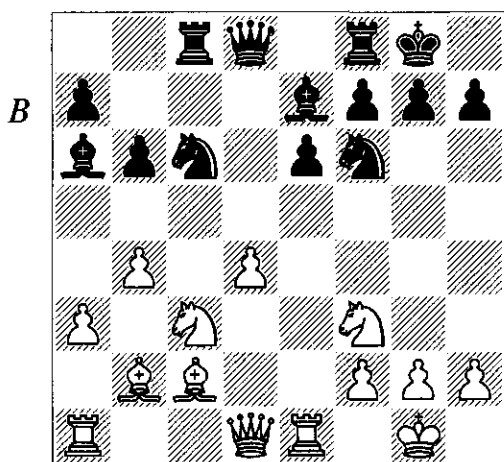
13 b4 ♜c8 14 ♙b2 (79b) 14...♘d5??

Overlooking White's 16th.

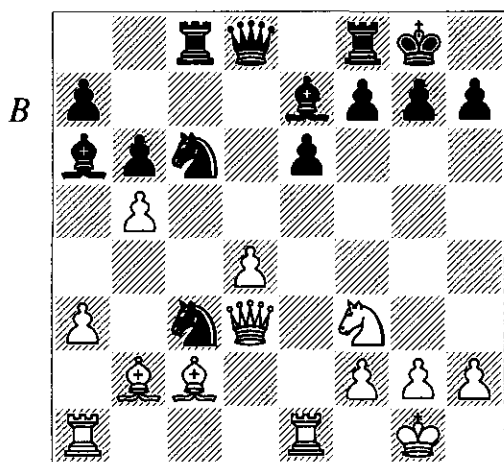
15 b5 ♘xc3 16 ♗d3! (79c)

The point – the mate threat allows White to defend his b5-pawn with tempo.

16...g6 17 ♙xc3 ♗c7 18 bxa6 ♘a5 19 ♙xa5 1-0



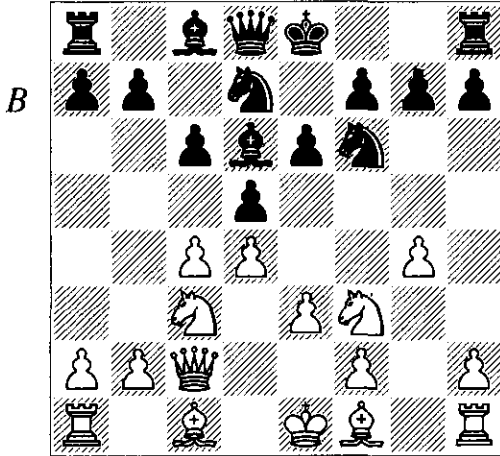
79b: after 14 ♙b2



79c: after 16 ♗d3

Trap 81 – Bayonetting Oneself

The next game features a popular Anti-Meran line usually known as the Bayonet Attack. On this occasion, however, White shows himself to be less than familiar with the finer points of usage of this venerable weapon, and only succeeds in committing hara-kiri with it.



81a: after 7 g4

Groffen – De Waal
Vlissingen 1996

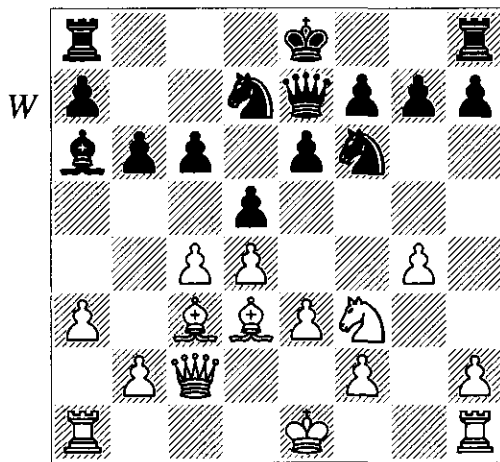
1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 ♜f6 4 ♜f3 e6 5 e3
♞bd7 6 ♚c2 ♙d6 7 g4 (81a)

This outrageous-looking move was invented by the Latvian-born, US-resident GM Alexander Shabalov. It was subsequently played by his compatriot Shirov, and soon achieved a high level of popularity as a violent and enterprising way to combat the ever-popular Semi-Slav. At present, however, it is under a substantial theoretical cloud, in the shape of the line 7...♙b4! 8 ♙d2 ♚e7 9 a3 ♙xc3 10 ♙xc3 b6! 11 ♙d3 ♙a6 (81b) when the coming exchange of light-squared bishops will deprive White of his main trump, the bishop-pair, and therefore eliminate most of his attacking chances (Gelfand-Kramnik, Berlin 1996).

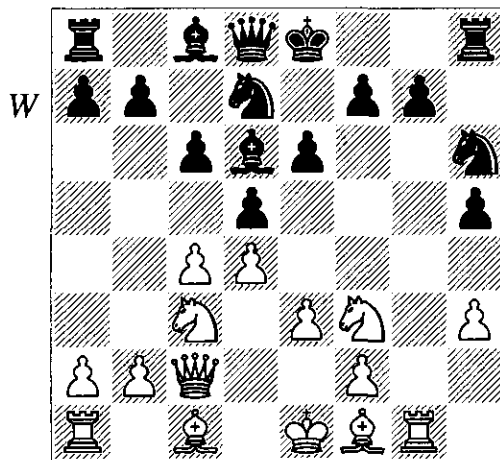
7...♞xg4 8 ♜g1 h5 9 h3 ♞h6 (81c) 10 ♜xg7??

Shirov preferred 10 e4 against Akopian at Oakham 1992, whilst Peter Wells has suggested 10 ♙d2 intending 0-0-0. It is safe to say that almost anything is better than the text-move.

10...♚f6 11 ♜h7 ♜xh7 12 ♚xh7 ♞f8 0-1



81b: after 11...♙a6



81c: after 9...♞h6

Trap 82 – A Dish Best Eaten Cold

Revenge, we are told, is a dish best eaten cold. I certainly enjoyed the culinary experience involved in the following game, against an opponent who had crushed me spectacularly the previous time we had met, in the Donner Memorial 1995.

Giddins – Bodicker

Antwerp 1997

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 e6 5 e3
♘bd7 6 ♙d3 dxc4 7 ♙xc4 b5 8 ♙e2

A relatively rare method of combating the Meran, which has the advantage of avoiding the most heavily-analysed lines, whilst still posing Black a few problems.

8...♙b7 9 0-0 a6 10 e4 b4 11 e5 bxc3 12
exf6 ♘xf6!

This simple recapture was originally introduced by Kramnik and is almost certainly the best line for Black. By contrast, the ‘four queens’ variation 12...cxb2 13 fxg7 bxa1 ♙ 14 gxh8 ♙ (82a) is much better for White, whose king is far safer.

My only practical experience of this position ended rapidly: 15...♙e7? 16 ♙b3 ♘c5 17 ♙a3 ♘a4 18 ♙xe7+ ♙xe7 19 ♙g5+ 1-0 Giddins-Telfer, Croydon 1995.

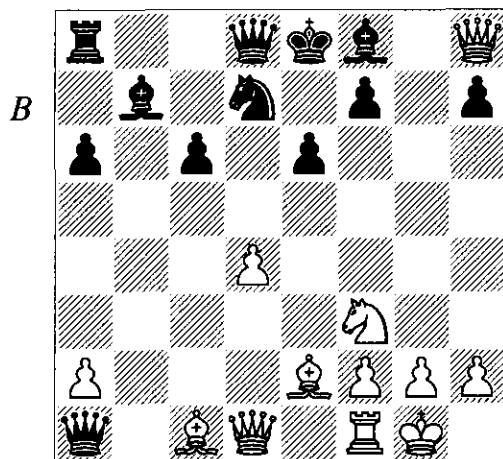
13 bxc3 (82b) 13...c5?! 14 ♘e5! ♙d6 15
♙a4+ ♘d7 16 ♙d1

White is clearly better.

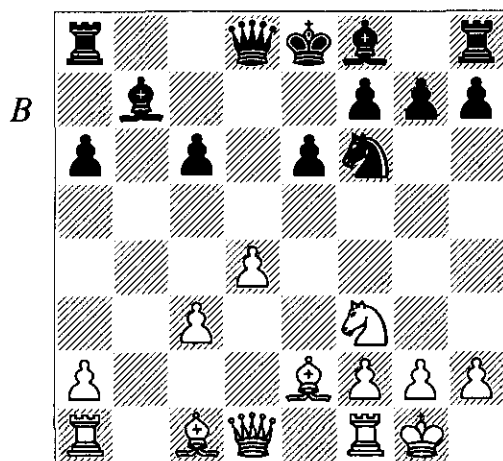
16...♙c7? (82c)

The text loses instantly, but the threat of 17 ♘xd7 could only be met by the ghastly 16...♙xe5 17 dxe5 ♙c7 18 ♙d6 with a huge advantage. Black’s idea is 17 ♘xd7 ♙c6, etc. However...

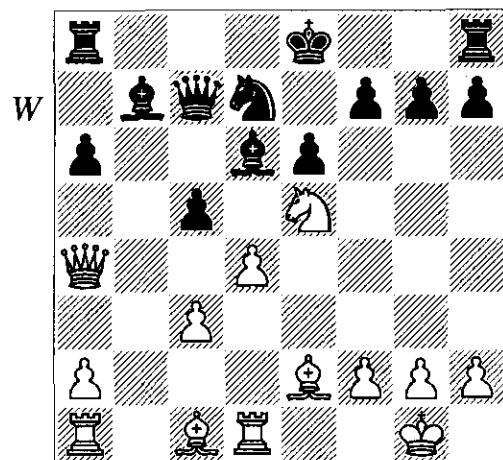
17 ♙xd7+! 1-0



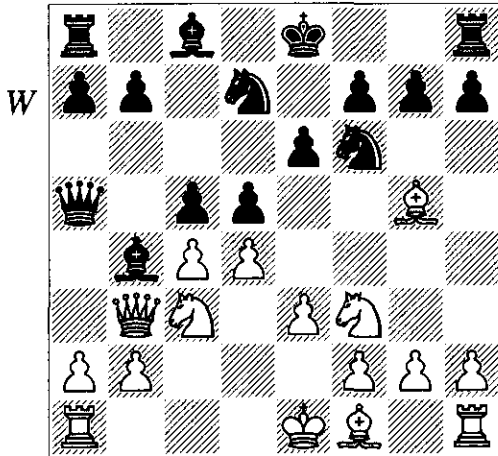
82a: after 14 gxh8 ♙



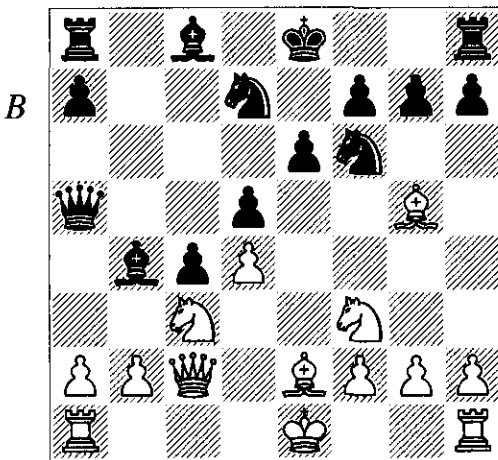
82b: after 13 bxc3



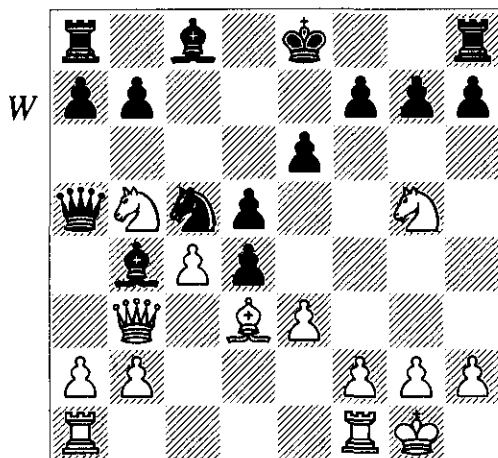
82c: after 16... ♙c7



83a: after 7... ♖a5



83b: after 11 exd4



83c: after 11... ♖c5

Trap 83 – Trapping a Ten-Year-Old

Of all the great chess prodigies, the childhood feats of Sammy Reshevsky are perhaps the most remarkable of all. Even the likes of Morphy and Capablanca did not tour Europe giving simultaneous displays at the age of 6 years! But even a genius of this level had to serve a relatively hard apprenticeship on the road to becoming a world-class master, as the following accident shows. The game was played in the youngster's first taste of an international tournament, at the tender age of 10!

Reshevsky – Ed.Lasker
New York 1922

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 d5 4 ♘c3 ♘bd7 5 ♙g5 ♙b4 6 ♚b3 c5 7 e3 ♚a5 (83a) 8 ♙d3?? b5!

After this terrible blow, White must lose a pawn. He played on with 9 ♚c2 bxc4 10 ♙e2 cxd4 11 exd4 (83b). However, he had no compensation and, indeed, should have lost a further pawn after 11... ♘e4. Edward Lasker chose instead 11...0-0 and eventually won.

Remarkably, it appears that Lasker knew of this trap from a game where he had previously played the white position against Capablanca, at the New York Masters tournament in 1915. The great Cuban had missed 8...b5, settling instead for the weaker 8... ♘e4 9 0-0 ♘xg5 10 ♘xg5 cxd4 11 ♘b5 ♘c5 (83c) although he did eventually win.

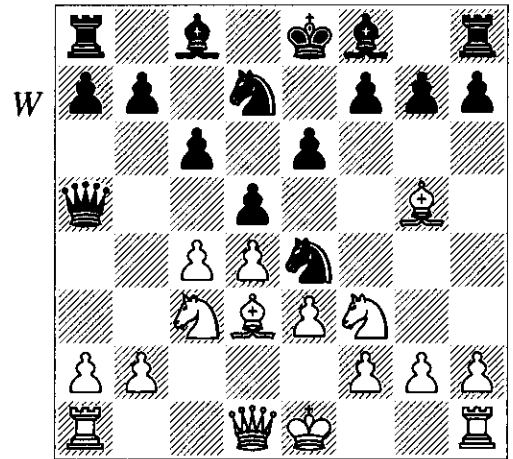
Trap 84 – Springing the Cambridge Springs Trap

One might have thought that the first reaction of any player, when faced with the Cambridge Springs variation in the QGD, would be to make sure he didn't drop his g5-bishop. It seems, however, that such crude materialism is the last thought to enter some players' heads, as my finding three occurrences of the following sequence would appear to demonstrate.

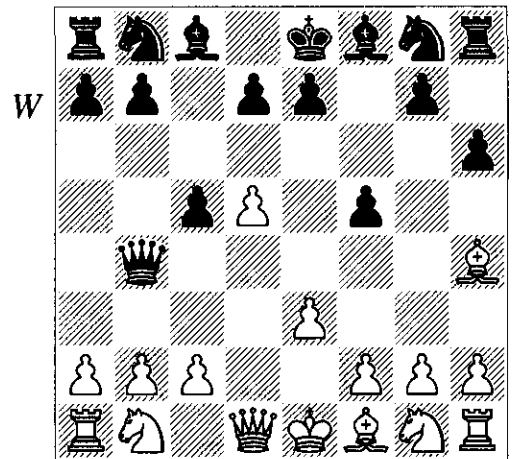
Herr – Fruehe
Eppingen 1988

1 d4 e6 2 c4 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♘f3 ♘bd7 5 ♙g5 c6 6 e3 ♚a5 7 ♙d3 ♘e4 (84a) 8 ♚c2?? ♘xg5 9 ♘xg5 dxc4 0-1

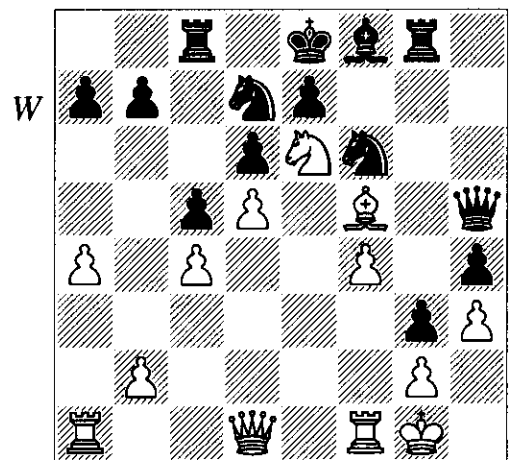
Similar disasters can occur in other openings where the queen's bishop comes to g5 early on. I recently won a club championship game which went 1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 ♙g5 c5 4 e3 ♘c6 5 ♙d3 cxd4 6 ♘xd4 ♚a5+, whilst IM Paul Littlewood once lost a piece in just five moves after 1 d4 f5 2 ♙g5 h6 3 ♙h4 c5 4 e3 ♚b6 5 d5?? ♚b4+ (84b), P.Littlewood-Zeidler, British League (4NCL) 1995. The players then exchanged several blunders in an entertaining game: 6 ♘c3 ♚xh4 7 ♘f3 ♚f6 8 e4 d6 9 ♙d3 g5 10 0-0 g4 11 ♘d2 h5 12 exf5 ♙xf5 13 ♘de4 ♙xe4 14 ♘xe4 ♚h6 15 f4 ♘d7 16 ♘g5 ♘gf6 17 ♙f5 ♙g8 18 ♘e6 ♙c8 19 c4 g3 20 h3 h4 21 a4 ♚h5?? (84c) 22 ♚xh5+ ♘xh5 23 ♘xf8 ♙xf8 24 ♙g6+ ♙d8 25 ♙xh5 ♘f6 26 ♙g6 ♙g8 27 ♙f5 ♙b8 28 ♙c2 a5 29 ♙ae1 ♙g7 30 ♙e6 b6 31 ♙fe1 ♙b7 32 ♙1e3 ♙c7 33 ♙f1 ♙b7 34 ♙e2 ♙c7 35 ♙f3 ♙b7 36 ♙f5 ♙b8 37 ♙xf6 exf6 38 ♙e6 ♙c7 39 ♙xf6 ♙h8 40 ♙e6 ♙d8 41 ♙g4 ♙c7 42 ♙e4?? ♙xg4 0-1.



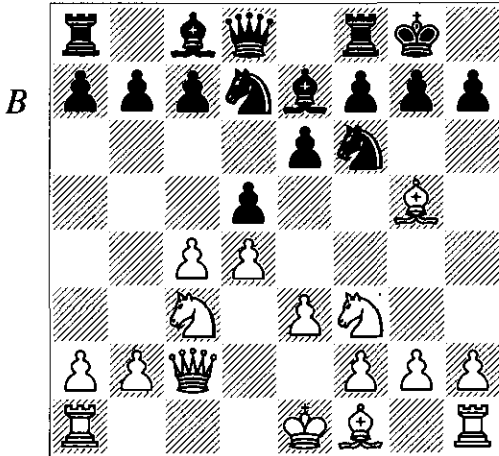
84a: after 7...♘e4



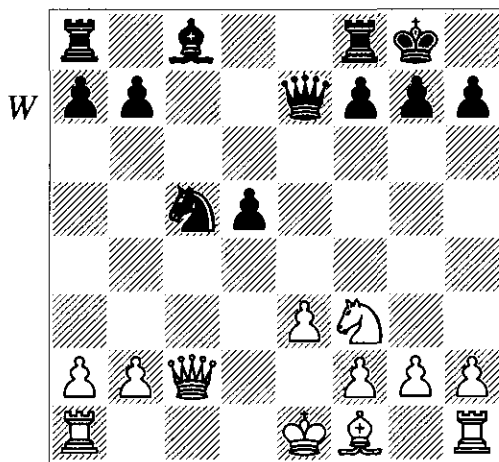
84b: after 5...♚b4+



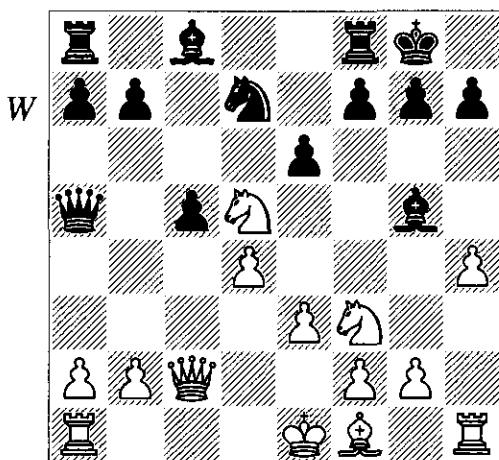
84c: after 21...♚h5



85a: after 7 ♖c2



85b: after 11... ♘xc5



85c: after 10... ♔a5+

Trap 85 – Sharpening up the QGD

The following game is one which I first saw quoted, unattributed, in an article by the late Gerald Abrahams. He used the game as an example of imagination in chess, but it occurs to me that the game is not totally devoid of theoretical interest. Certainly, it shows that Black cannot so easily avoid the rather dull IQP-type position which can otherwise arise in this variation, whilst the combination beginning with White's 11th move is sufficiently well-hidden to catch many unsuspecting Queen's Gambit defenders.

Casas – Piazzini
South America 1952

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♘f3 ♙e7 5 ♙g5 0-0 6 e3 ♘bd7 7 ♖c2 (85a)

This old variation was for a long time considered less effective than the orthodox 7 ♖c1, but after a number of energetic performances by Garry Kasparov, it is now seen as at least as strong and rather more threatening.

7...c5 8 cxd5 ♘xd5 9 ♘xd5 ♙xg5?!

Although the IQP position after 9...exd5 10 ♙xe7 ♖xe7 11 dxc5 ♘xc5 (85b) holds few real terrors for Black, it is not everyone's cup of tea.

10 h4! ♔a5+? (85c)

Fatal. Correct is 10...♙e7, when Black stands only slightly worse, although once again his position is hardly one to set the blood racing.

11 b4! cxb4 12 ♖xh7+! ♙xh7 13 hxg5+ ♙g6 14 ♘e7# (1-0)

A most elegant finale.

Trap 86 – Akiba's Double Blunder

The great Akiba Rubinstein rates as one of the true immortals of chess history, but for a player of his class, he was exceptionally blunder-prone. This is one of his 'classics'.

Euwe – Rubinstein
Bad Kissingen 1928

1 Nf3 d5 2 c4 e6 3 d4 Nf6 4 Ng5 Nbd7 5 e3 Ne7 6 Nc3 0-0 7 Rc1 c6 8 Nd3 a6 9 cxd5 exd5 10 0-0 Re8 (86a)

White has obtained a rather inferior version of the Exchange Variation, with his rook on c1 appearing a little misplaced.

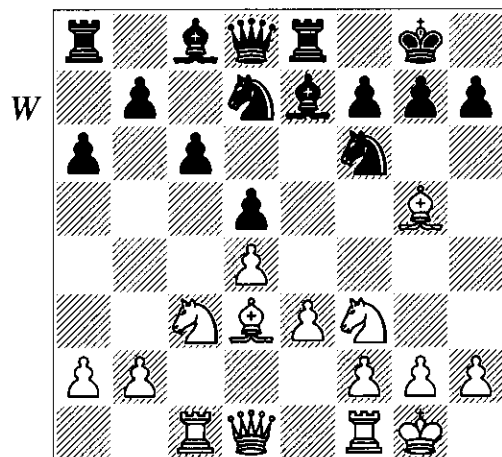
11 Qb3 h6 12 Qf4 (86b) 12... Nh5?? 13 Nxd5!

In view of 13... cxd5 14 Qc7 , Black was forced to acquiesce to the loss of a pawn.

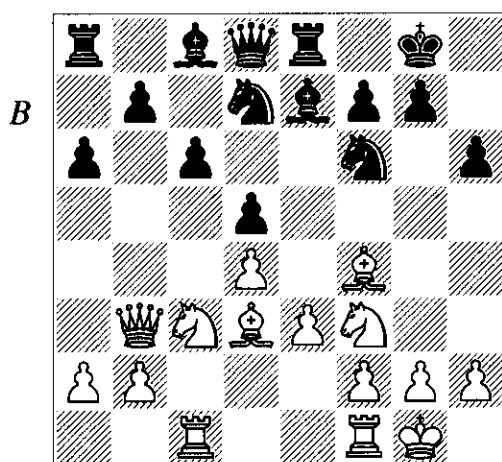
Absent-mindedness was a characteristic of Rubinstein, and there are many off-the-board anecdotes about him in this regard. But his absent-mindedness was not confined to off-the-board incidents only. Two years after the above accident, he fell for the same tactic against Alekhine at San Remo 1930:

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 Nc3 Nf6 4 Nf3 Nbd7 5 Ng5 Ne7 6 e3 0-0 7 Rc1 Re8 8 Qc2 a6 9 cxd5 exd5 10 Nd3 c6 11 0-0 Ne4 12 Qf4 f5?? (86c) 13 Nxd5!

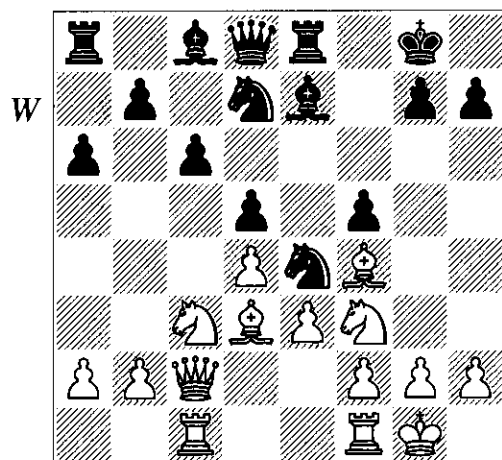
As above, the knight is immune because of 14 Qc7 , so White wins a pawn.



86a: after 10... Re8

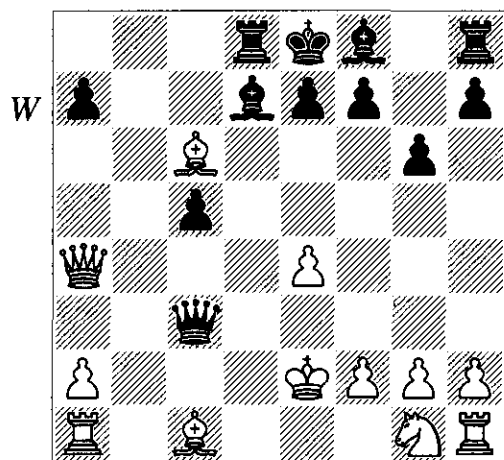


86b: after 12 Qf4

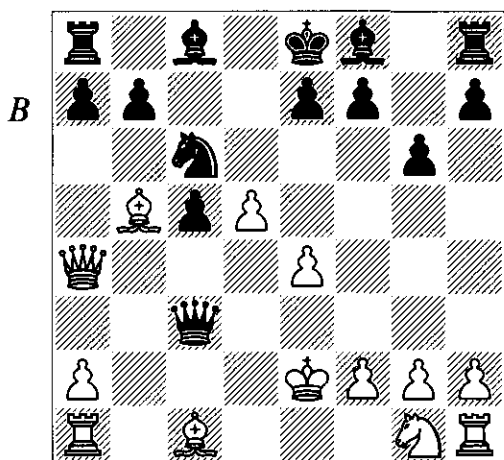


86c: after 12... f5

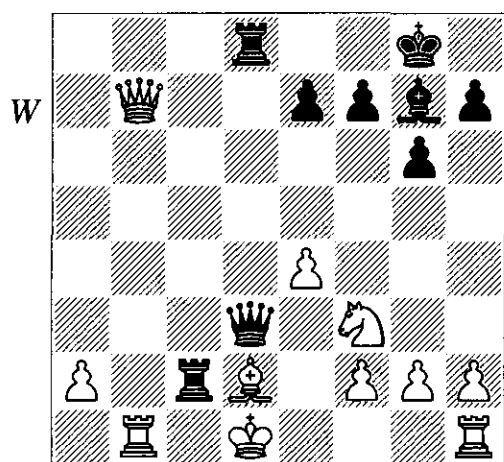
Trap 87 – Caught by a Tartar



87a: after 12...♖d8



87b: after 10 ♖e2



87c: after 20...♖c2

Quite apart from its theoretical significance, the following game is one of the most brilliant I have ever seen from a simultaneous display.

Nezhmetdinov – NN
USSR simul 1951

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 c5 7 ♖b5+ ♘c6 8 d5 ♖a5 9 ♖a4 ♖xc3+ 10 ♖e2 ♖d7 11 dxc6 bxc6 12 ♖xc6 ♖d8 (87a) 13 ♖b3!! ♖xa1 14 ♖b2 ♖b1 15 ♘f3 ♖xh1 16 ♘e5 e6 17 ♖xd7+ ♖xd7 18 ♖b8+ ♖d8 19 ♖b5+ ♖e7 20 ♖b7+ ♖f6 21 ♖xf7+ ♖g5 22 ♘f3+ ♖h5 23 g4+ ♖xg4 24 ♖xe6+ ♖f4 25 ♖e5+ ♖xe4 26 ♘g5# (1-0)

Truly a king-hunt!

There are two interesting sequels to this. The first is that the whole game, down to move 22 was repeated in Yusupov-Morenz, Graz 1981. Yusupov, of course, knew of the Nezhmetdinov precedent, and had prepared the whole line with his trainer Mark Dvoretzky. However, in 1994 the Russian GM and Grünfeld specialist Semion Dvoirys found what appears to be a significant improvement for Black, leaving the status of 7...♘c6 uncertain. In the position after 10 ♖e2 (87b) he played:

10...♖g7! 11 dxc6 0-0 12 cxb7?!

Dvoirys recommends 12 ♖b1 with a small advantage to White.

12...♖xb7 13 ♖b1 c4! 14 ♖xc4 ♖ac8 15 ♖b5 a6 16 ♖d2 axb5 17 ♖xb5 ♖c2 18 ♖xb7 ♖fd8 19 ♘f3 ♖d3+ 20 ♖d1 ♖c2 (87c) 0-1 Kiseliiov-Dvoirys, Russian Ch (El-ista) 1994.

Trap 88 – Ftačnik's Folly

It is surprising enough when a strong grandmaster falls for a well-known opening trap, but when the GM in question is a theoretical specialist in the opening concerned, it is all the more remarkable. Slovak GM Lubomir Ftačnik is one of the world's leading experts on the Grünfeld Defence, yet in the following game he falls into a trap well known to Grünfeld players since the 1960s.

Ftačnik – Gulko Biel 1988

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♙g7 7 ♙c4 0-0 8 ♘e2 ♘c6 (88a)

A change from the more usual 8...c5. Black chooses instead to develop his queen-side pieces first, reserving for later the plan ...♘a5 and ...c5.

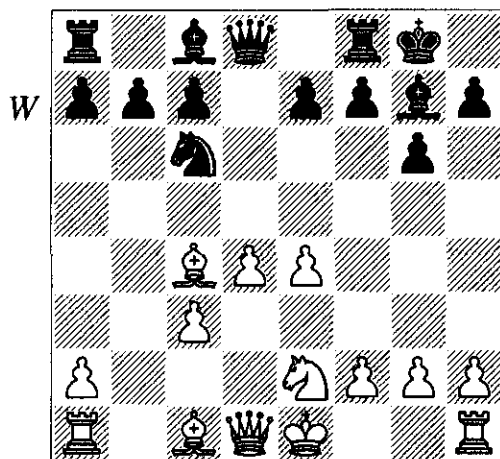
9 0-0 b6 10 ♙g5 ♙b7 11 ♚d2 ♚d6 (88b)

A standard position in this variation.

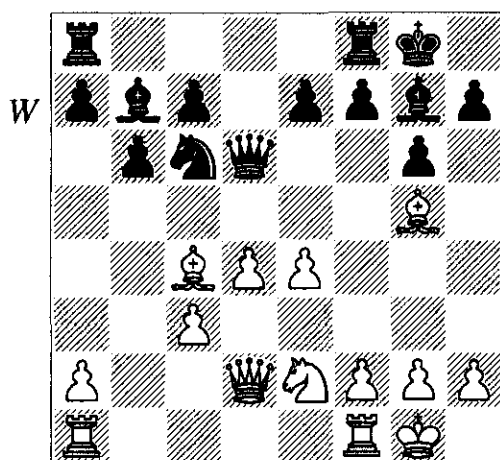
12 e5?? ♘xe5!

Winning a pawn in view of 13 dxe5 ♚c6, etc. Ftačnik struggled on but eventually lost. I first saw this trap in a game Gligorić-Hartston in the 1960s; Gligorić was a great specialist on the white side of the Exchange Grünfeld, so it is equally surprising to see him fall for such a trap.

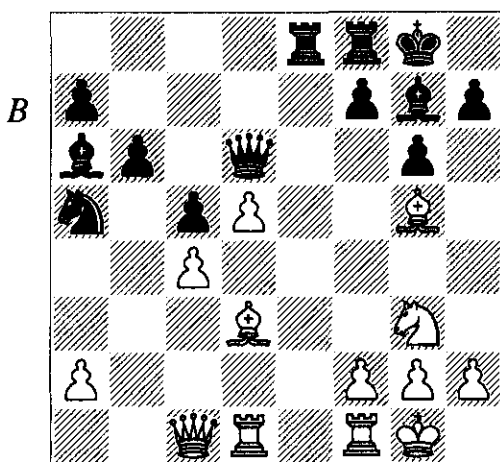
The correct line of play for White was subsequently demonstrated by Beliavsky, also against Gulko, at Linares 1990, the game continuing 12 ♖ad1 ♘a5 13 ♙d3 c5 14 d5 e6 15 c4 ♙a6 16 ♚c1 exd5 17 exd5 ♖ae8 18 ♘g3! (88c) with some advantage to White.



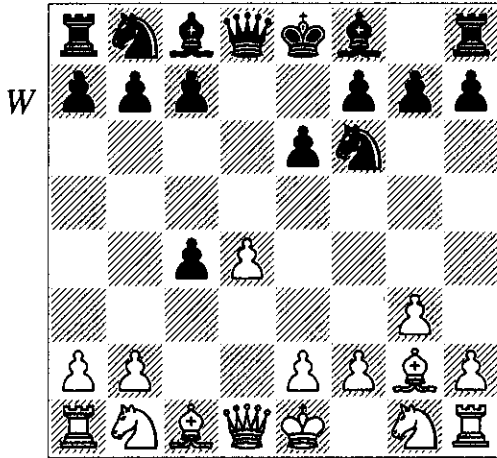
88a: after 8...♘c6



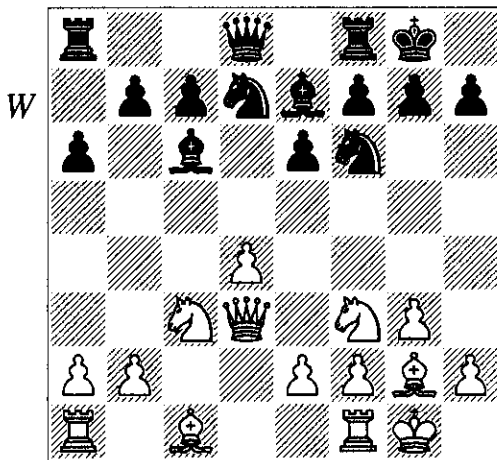
88b: after 11...♚d6



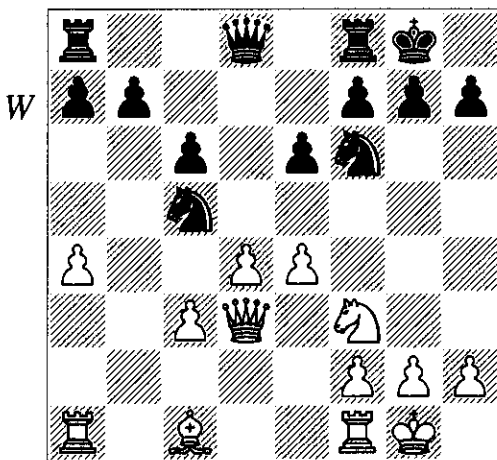
88c: after 18 ♘g3



89a: after 4...dxc4



89b: after 10...a6



89c: after 12...Nc5

Trap 89 – Pride and Sorrow

The death of young talent Ian Wells in the early 1980s was a great blow to English chess, but not the first such incident. Few people nowadays have ever heard of Gordon Crown, yet in the immediate post-war years, he showed every sign of being the coming man of British chess. At the age of just 17, he crushed Grandmaster Kotov in the USSR-Great Britain match, one of very few games won by the English team in the event. Yet within weeks of this triumph he was dead, after a routine operation went tragically wrong. It is sad not to be able to represent him in this volume with a win, but instead I feature one of his less celebrated efforts.

Crown – Golombek

British Ch (Harrogate) 1947

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 Qg2 dxc4 (89a)

Golombek follows his own advice! Himself a great connoisseur of the Catalan as White, he always insisted that Black should defend by taking on c4 early, rather than the more passive but solid lines with ...c6 and/or ...Bb4/e7.

5 Wa4+ Qd7 6 Wxc4 Qc6 7 Nf3 Nbd7 8 Nc3 Qe7 9 0-0 0-0 10 Wd3 a6 (89b) 11 e4?? Nc5

Black is winning.

This is a tactic well worth knowing. Another setting is the following line of the Slav: 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 Nf3 Nf6 4 Nc3 dxc4 5 a4 Qf5 6 e3 e6 7 Qxc4 Qb4 8 0-0 Nbd7 9 Qd3 Qxd3 10 Wxd3 0-0 11 e4? Qxc3 12 bxc3 Nc5 (89c), etc.

Trap 90 – Brazil's Prodigal Son

The double Interzonal winner of the 1970s, Brazilian GM Henrique Mecking, dropped out of chess in 1980, suffering from a debilitating and seemingly incurable muscular disorder. Some 14 years later, he returned to chess, having found religion in a big way and claiming to have been miraculously cured. Certainly, his first few results suggested that he needed only to shake off the ring-rust to become a very strong GM once again, but after only a few appearances he seems to have returned to hibernation. In the following game, he shows his rustiness by falling into a known trap, but still makes a draw.

Mecking – Milos
São Paulo 1995

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♙b4+ 4 ♙d2 ♚e7 5 g3 ♘c6 6 ♙g2 ♙xd2+ (90a) 7 ♚xd2?

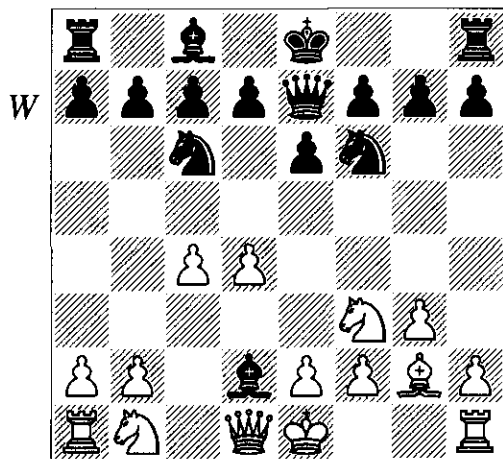
The whole point of Black's 5th move is to prevent this recapture and force the less active 7 ♘bxd2.

7... ♘e4 8 ♚c2 ♚b4+ 9 ♘c3 ♘xc3 10 ♚xc3 ♚xc3+ 11 bxc3 (90b)

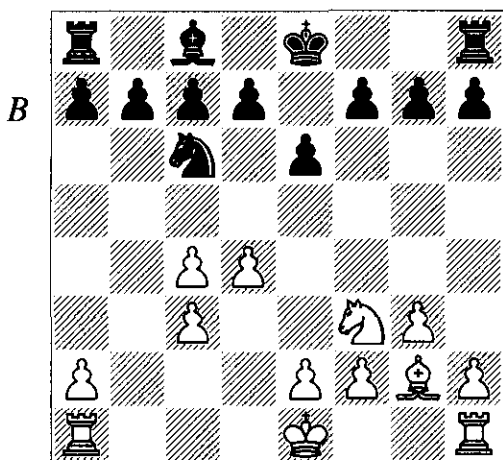
With broken pawns and no queens, White faces an unpleasant defensive task, but Black's next is a peculiar decision which allows White to inflict similar structural damage on Black's position. Against Icelandic GM Helgi Gretarsson in Gausdal 1995, I preferred the more logical 11... ♘a5 12 ♘d2 ♙b8 13 0-0 but then spoilt it all by chickening out and accepting my opponent's draw offer!

11... ♙b6?! 12 ♘e5 ♙b7 13 ♘xc6 ♙xc6 14 ♙xc6 dxc6 (90c)

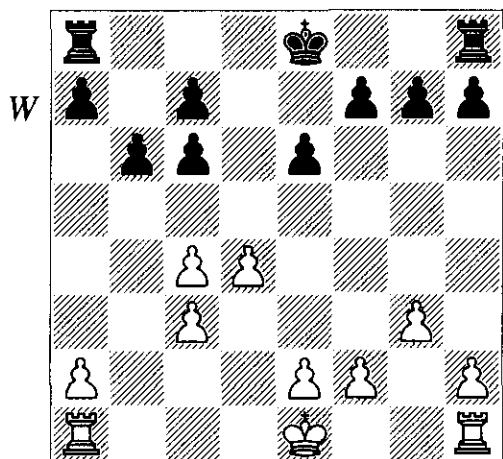
White has been allowed to solve his problems and the game duly ended in a draw after 42 moves.



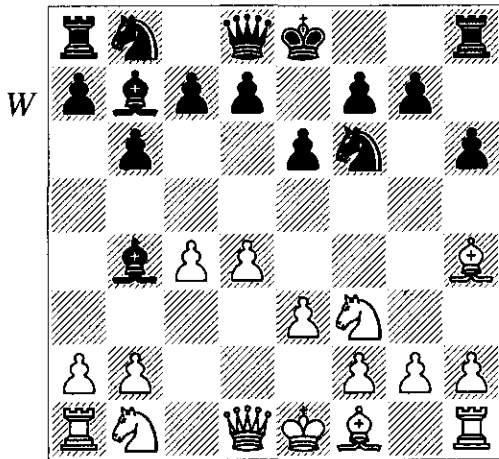
90a: after 6... ♙xd2+



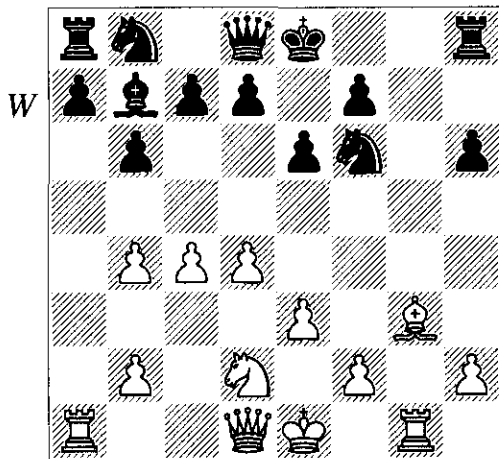
90b: after 11 bxc3



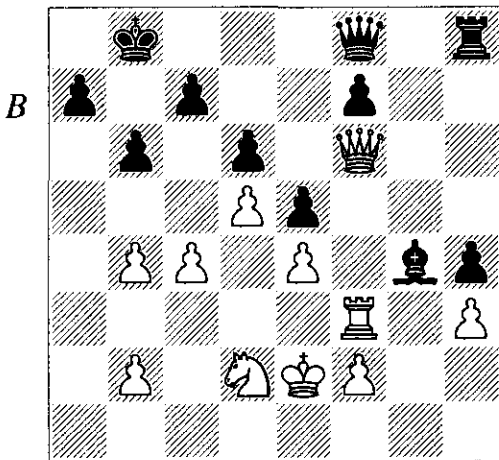
90c: after 14... dxc6



91a: after 6...♙b4+



91b: after 12...♙b7



91c: after 27 h3

Trap 91 – A Trap that Loses!

The trap seen in the following game has, to my knowledge, featured in three games. Each time White has lost a piece on move 7, but so far, East German GM Wolfgang Uhlmann is the only player to have dropped half a point as *White*!

Tarrasch – Bogoljubow Gothenburg 1920

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 b6 4 ♙g5 ♙b7 5 e3 h6 6 ♙h4 ♙b4+ (91a) 7 ♘bd2?? g5 8 ♙g3 g4

Embarrassing indeed for White. Now 9 ♘e5 ♘e4 wins a piece, so Tarrasch tries another way.

9 a3 gxf3 10 axb4 fxe2 11 ♙xe2 ♙xe2 12 ♖g1 ♙b7 (91b)

Yes, White is a whole piece down, with compensation conspicuous by its absence. But the *Praeceptor Germaniae* plays on as if nothing had happened and is duly rewarded.

13 ♙h4 d6 14 e4 ♘bd7 15 ♖f3 ♖e7 16 ♖g4 e5 17 d5 0-0-0 18 ♙e2 ♖dg8 19 ♖ag1 ♖xg4 20 ♖xg4 h5 21 ♖g3 ♙b8 22 ♖f5 ♙c8 23 ♙g5 h4 24 ♖f3 ♖f8 25 ♙xf6 ♘xf6 26 ♖xf6 ♙g4 27 h3 (91c) 27...♖h6??

Truly one of the worst GM blunders of all time!

28 hxg4 1-0

As noted above, in the early 1970s, Grandmaster Uhlmann fell into the same trap and drew, whilst in the game Mills-Wachtel, USA 1989, White played 9 ♘e5 ♘e4 10 a3 ♙xd2+ 11 ♙e2 and went on to win!!

Trap 92 – The One Hundred Percenter

The following variation is relatively deep to be regarded as an opening trap, but in view of the conclusiveness of the refutation which it involves, plus the fact that the position had been reached several times before, I felt it was worthy of inclusion. John Nunn recalls in *John Nunn's Best Games* that the devastating innovation was found independently by himself and Tony Miles during a 1986 thematic opening tournament in Utrecht. Given his opening repertoire, the line was unlikely to prove of practical use to John, but Tony had the chance to use it within months. It later received the best innovation prize in *Informator 42*, obtaining a maximum 90/90 points!

Miles – Beliavsky
Tilburg 1986

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 ♘c3 ♙b4 5 ♙g5 ♙b7 6 e3 h6 7 ♙h4 g5 8 ♙g3 ♘e4 9 ♙c2 d6 10 ♙d3 ♙xc3+ 11 bxc3 f5 12 d5 ♘c5 13 h4 g4 14 ♘d4 ♙f6 15 0-0 ♘xd3 16 ♙xd3 e5 17 ♘xf5! ♙c8 (92a) 18 f4!!

The key move. Previously the alternative piece sacrifice 18 ♘d4 had been played, but the text is much more decisive.

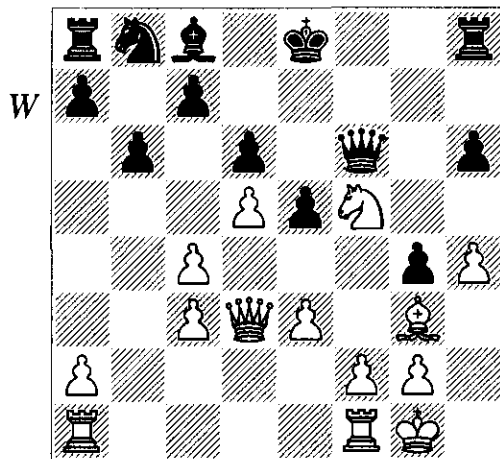
18... ♙xf5

18... gxf3 19 ♙xf3! and 18... ♙xf5 19 e4 and 20 fxe5 are both superb for White.

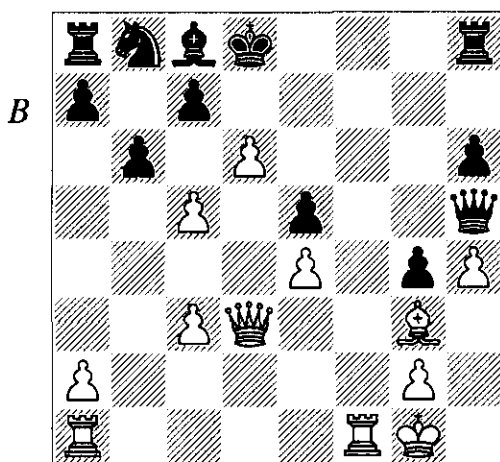
19 e4 ♙h5 20 fxe5 dxe5 21 c5 ♙d8 22 d6! (92b)

The way the white forces home in on the black king makes this one of the most crushing defeats I have ever seen inflicted on a grandmaster of Beliavsky's class.

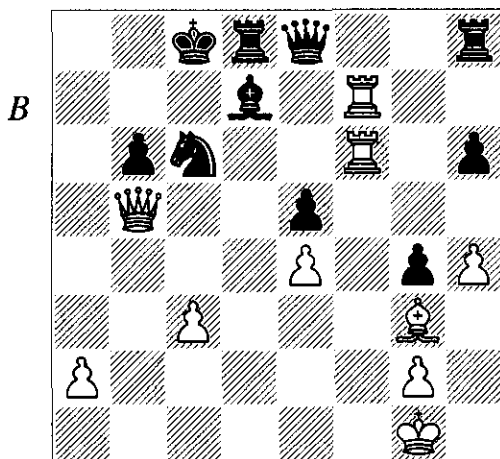
22... ♙e8 23 dxc7++ ♙xc7 24 ♙d5 ♘c6 25 ♙f7+ ♙d7 26 ♙af1! ♙d8 27 ♙1f6 ♙c8 28 cxb6 axb6 29 ♙b5 (92c) 1-0



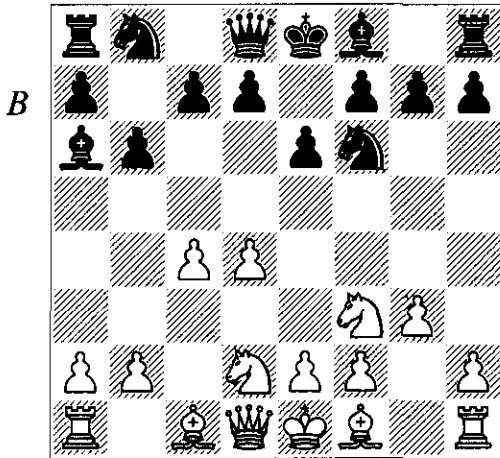
92a: after 17... ♙c8



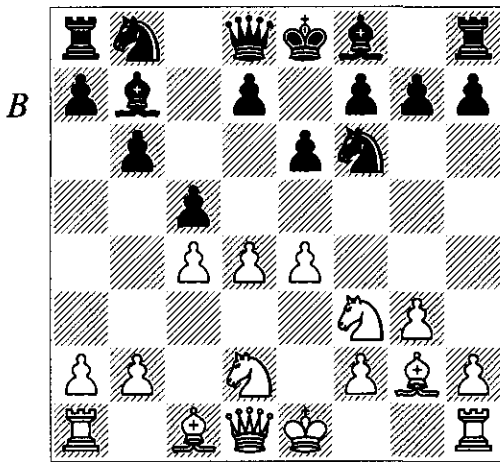
92b: after 22 d6



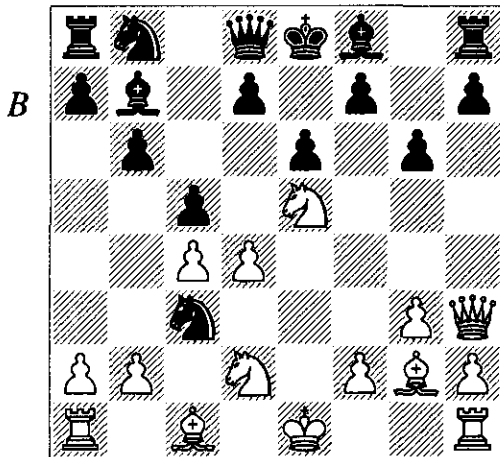
92c: after 29 ♙b5



93a: after 5 ♖bd2



93b: after 7 e4



93c: after 10 ♖h3

Trap 93 – Colemanballs

American IM Maurice Ashley is famous for his frenetic commentaries on the Intel QP tournaments. One wonders what the great British sports commentators would make of the following masterpiece?

Browne – Ashley
Philadelphia 1991

1 d4 ♜f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♞f3 b6 4 g3 ♚a6 5 ♜bd2 (93a)

An interesting departure from the heavily-analysed 5 b3, where innovations tend to come somewhere after move 20 nowadays!

5...♚b7 6 ♚g2 c5 7 e4 (93b) 7...♞xe4?!

“Looks like a wee bit of argy-bargy in the centre there” (Bill McLaren).

8 ♞e5 ♞c3??

“Oh I say, that’s a dream of a tactical resource” (Dan Maskell).

9 ♚h5 g6 10 ♚h3 (93c) 1-0

“And that was a piece the 30-year-old American didn’t intend to lose” (Ted Lowe).

Back in the cold reality, Black usually prefers 7...cxd4 rather than taking on e4. After the further 8 e5, Black has tried 8...♞g8, 8...♞g4 and 8...♞e4, with practical results suggesting the last is the most reliable.

Having said that, however, after 7...♞xe4 8 ♞e5, I can see no total refutation of 8...d5, provided Black then meets 9 cxd5 with 9...exd5, since 9...♞xd2? loses to 10 ♞xf7!, so it looks as if the real bloomer is the ‘flashy’ 8...♞c3??.

Trap 94 – A Trap that Draws (Sometimes)

The great Capablanca was not a player who made a habit of falling into opening traps. He was also not a player who liked admitting his few mistakes when he did make them. So, when he fell into a known opening trap in game 8 of his match with Euwe in 1931, it was something of a sensation. Fine defence enabled him to save the ending, but even this was not enough for Capa. Just to confound those critics who thought he had blundered into the trap, he repeated the line in game 10, and drew again. Now that's what I call class!

Euwe – Capablanca
Amsterdam (8) 1931

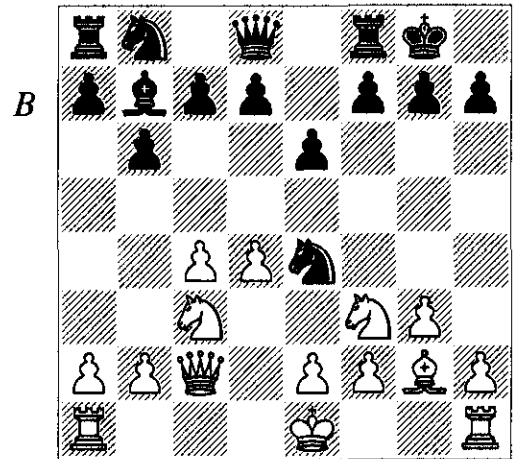
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♙b7 5 ♙g2 ♙b4+ 6 ♙d2 ♙xd2+ 7 ♚xd2 0-0 8 ♘c3 ♘e4 9 ♚c2 (94a) 9... ♘xc3? 10 ♘g5 ♘e4 11 ♙xe4 ♙xe4 12 ♚xe4 ♚xg5 13 ♚xa8 ♘c6 14 ♚b7 ♘xd4 15 ♚d1 (94b) 15... ♚e5

In game 10 Capa preferred 15...c5 and a draw was agreed after 16 e3 ♘c2+ 17 ♙d2 ♚f5 18 ♚g2 ♘b4 19 e4 ♚f6 20 ♙c1 ♘xa2+ 21 ♙b1 ♘b4 22 ♚xd7 ♘c6 23 f4 e5 24 ♚hd1 ♘d4 25 ♚xa7 exf4 26 gxf4 ♚xf4 27 ♚e1 ♘f3 28 ♚e2 ♘d4 29 ♚e1 (94c).

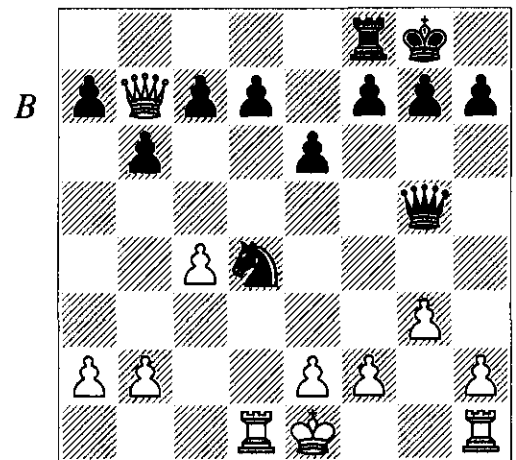
16 e3 ♘c2+ 17 ♙e2 d5 18 ♚d2 ♚xb2 19 cxd5 ♚b5+ 20 ♙f3 ♘b4 21 ♚c1 ♚a5 22 d6 cxd6 23 ♚c8 g6 24 ♚xf8+ ♙xf8 25 ♚c8+ ♙e7 26 ♚c7+ ♙f6 27 ♚d8+ ♙g7 28 ♚xd6 ♘xa2 29 ♚d4+ e5 30 ♚d5 ♚xd5+ 31 ♚xd5

White has preserved his extra exchange into the ending, but was unable to break down the great Cuban's defence and had to agree a draw on move 54.

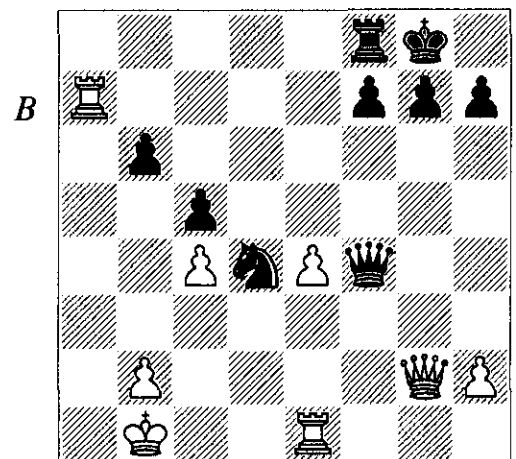
The postscript to this is another game I witnessed at the Lost Boys tournament in



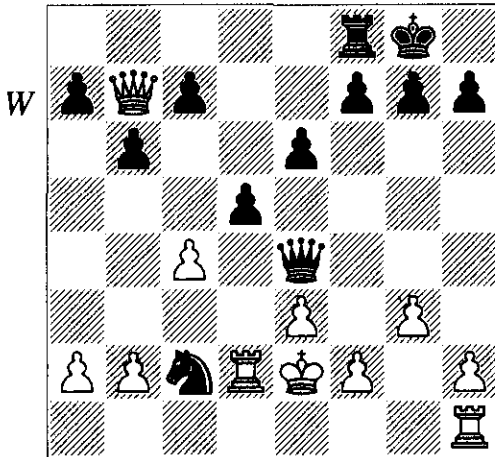
94a: after 9 ♚c2



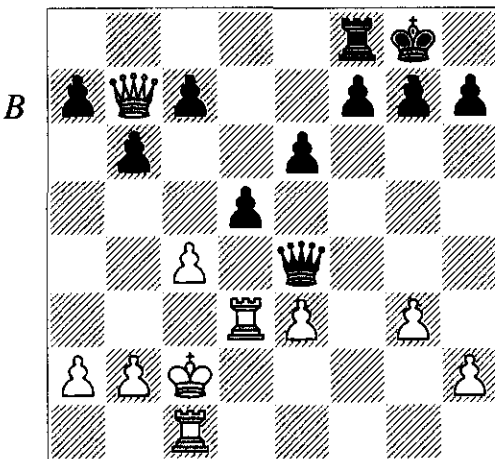
94b: after 15 ♚d1



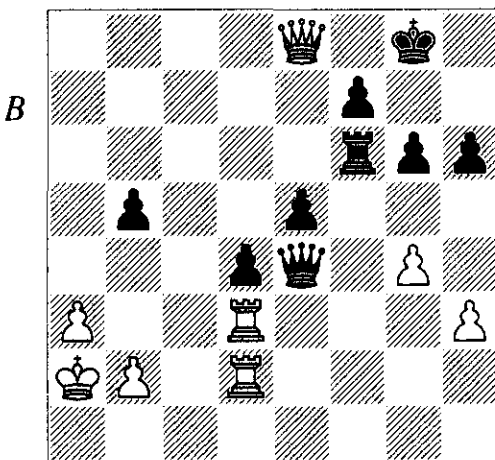
94c: after 29 ♚e1



94d: after 18... ♖e4



94e: after 23 ♖d3



94f: after 44 ♖e8+

Antwerp (readers may be forgiven for getting the impression this is the only chess tournament I ever play in!). In 1995, American GM Larry Christiansen essayed the black side of the same line against Ukrainian GM Igor Novikov. Christiansen rattled out the opening moves with great confidence, followed Euwe-Capablanca, Game 6, for 17 moves, and then produced a new move: 18... ♖e4 (94d).

This proved to be Black's high point in the game, however. After the further moves 19 ♖c1 ♘xe3 20 fxe3 ♖g2+ 21 ♔d1 ♖h1+ 22 ♔c2 ♖e4+ 23 ♖d3 (94e) it was already clear that Black was coming up short. Although the game went on for some time, only due care was required of White and Novikov, always an excellent technician, duly inched his way to victory.

23... ♖xc4+ 24 ♖c3 ♖e4+ 25 ♔b3 c5 26 a3 h6 27 ♔a2 ♖a4 28 ♖f1 ♖b5 29 ♖f2 a5 30 g4 a4 31 ♖c7 d4 32 exd4 cxd4 33 ♖c4 ♖e5 34 ♖d3 ♖d8 35 ♖xa4 ♖e4 36 ♖fd2 e5 37 h3 ♖d5+ 38 ♖b3 g6 39 ♔b1 b5 40 ♖b4 ♖c8 41 ♖e7 ♖e4 42 ♖d7 ♖c6 43 ♔a2 ♖f6 44 ♖e8+ (94f) 1-0

The next move is 45 ♖xd4.

All of which leaves one wondering precisely what Christiansen had in mind when entering the variation. The only conclusion which can be drawn is presumably this: either Novikov is better than Euwe, or Capablanca was better than Christiansen.

Trap 95 – A Trap that isn't Played

It is surprising enough when a player plays a move, the only point of which is to threaten a crude trap, and the opponent still allows it. But what can one make of a case where the first player then doesn't even play the trap move? Such is the case with the following game.

N.Pert – De Vreugt
Herculane U-14 Ech 1994

1 ♖f3 ♜f6 2 g3 b6 3 ♙g2 ♙b7 4 0-0 e6 5 c4
♙e7 6 ♜c3 0-0 7 d4 ♜e4 8 ♚c2 ♜xc3 9
bxc3 (95a)

This rather dubious-looking move really has only one point going for it, namely that it threatens 10 ♜g5 winning the exchange. There is also a positional threat to take control of the centre by 10 e4, but the natural 9...f5 disposes of both threats and leaves White looking rather silly. The further course of the game is therefore all the more mysterious.

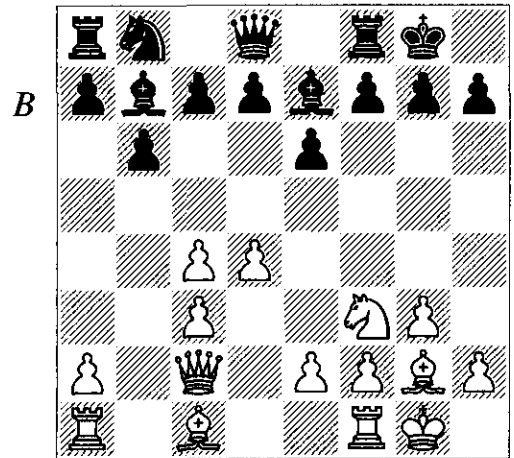
9...d6?? 10 e4??

As noted above, 10 ♜g5 (95b) wins the exchange.

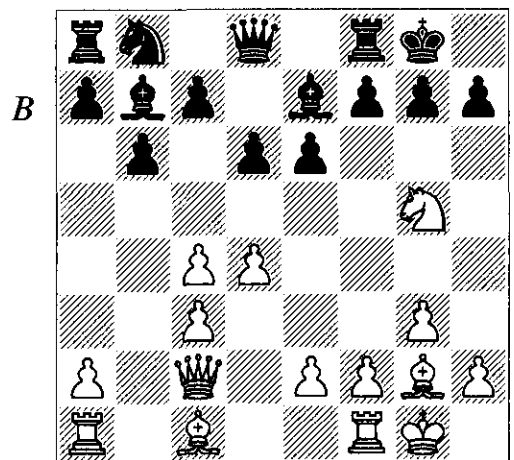
10...♜d7 11 ♙e3 ♙f6 12 ♜d2 e5 13 f4
♚e7 14 ♚ae1 (95c)

After the various vicissitudes, we have a fairly typical Queen's Indian-type position, which in this case was eventually drawn. In the other game I located where the same double blunder occurred, White went on to lose.

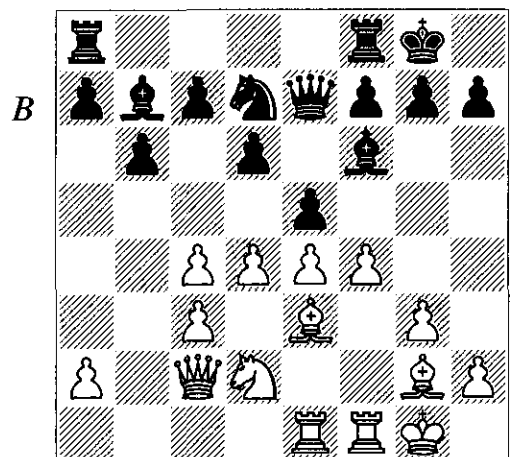
I remain mystified as to why anyone would play 9 bxc3 as White, and then not follow up with 10 ♜g5 when given the chance. But then as they say in the North of England, "There's nowt so queer as folk"!



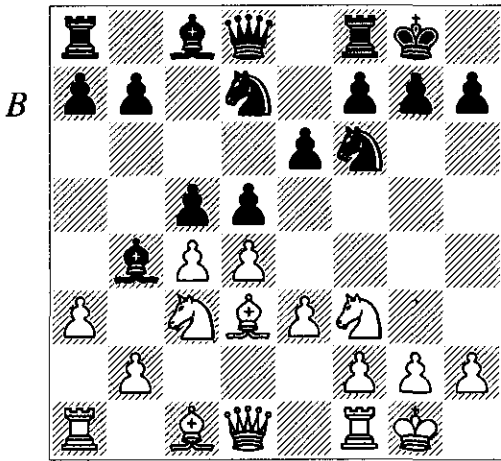
95a: after 9 bxc3



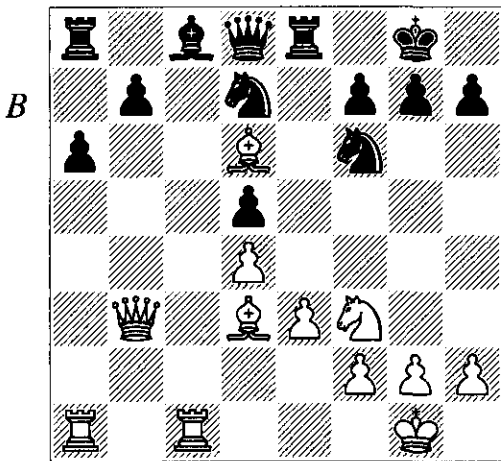
95b: after 10 ♜g5



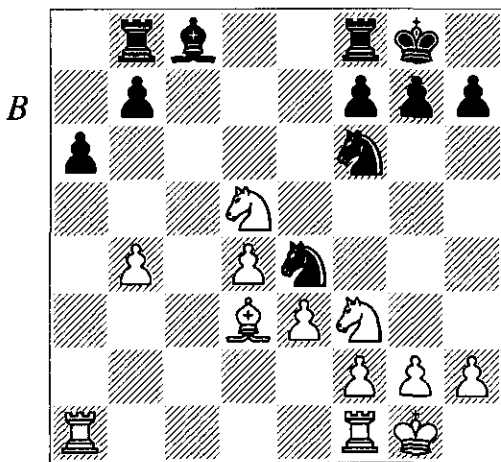
95c: after 14 ♚ae1



96a: after 8 a3



96b: after 16 fcl



96c: after 18 dxd5

Trap 96 – The Truth is Out There Somewhere

The motto of the *X-Files* is very appropriate to the chess-player engaged in the constant search for improvements in the opening. There are many examples where a player has developed a variation over several years, before eventually finding the key idea which places a particular line under a long-term theoretical cloud. The variation below is a perfect illustration. Gligorić had many battles as White against the line beginning 7...d7, including several games in his 1968 Candidates match with Tal. When he finally found the solution, it brought him two points and left 7...d7 under a theoretical cloud from which it is yet to emerge fully to this day.

Gligorić – Yanofsky
Lugano OL 1968

1 d4 f6 2 c4 e6 3 c3 b4 4 e3 c5 5 d3 0-0 6 f3 d5 7 0-0 d7 8 a3 (96a) 8...a5?

If this line is to be played, Black should probably prefer 8...cxd4 here.

9 cxd5 exd5 10 b4!

The key idea.

10...cxb4 11 b5 a6 12 b3 e7

In a game against Damjanović a few months earlier, Gligorić had achieved excellent compensation after 12...bxa3 13 d6 c7 14 xa3 xd6 15 xd6 e8 16 fcl (96b) and went on to win.

13 d2 e4 14 xb4 xb4 15 b4 xb4?! 16 axb4 df6?! 17 c7 b8 18 xd5! (96c)

Winning a pawn, after which Gligorić's technique did the rest.

Trap 97 – The Four-Opening Trap

I have made the point several times in this book that the same trap can often occur in different openings, but in most of those cases it is the basic tactical idea which is repeated, not the exact-same position. The next trap is one which can arise from, amongst others, the Nimzo-Indian, the Caro-Kann, the 2 c3 Sicilian and the QGD Tarrasch.

T.Petrosian – Balashov USSR 1974

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 e6 3 d4 ♙b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♙d3 d5 6 ♘f3 0-0 7 0-0 dxc4 8 ♙xc4 ♘c6 9 ♙d3 cxd4 10 exd4 ♙e7 11 ♖e1 b6 12 a3 ♙b7 13 ♙c2 ♖c8 14 ♚d3 (97a)

The key position, where Black must now play 14...g6.

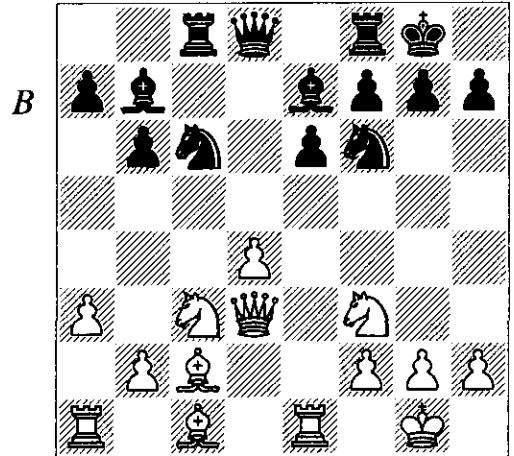
14...♖e8? 15 d5! exd5 16 ♙g5 ♘e4

Forced since 16...g6 17 ♖xe7! wins the house.

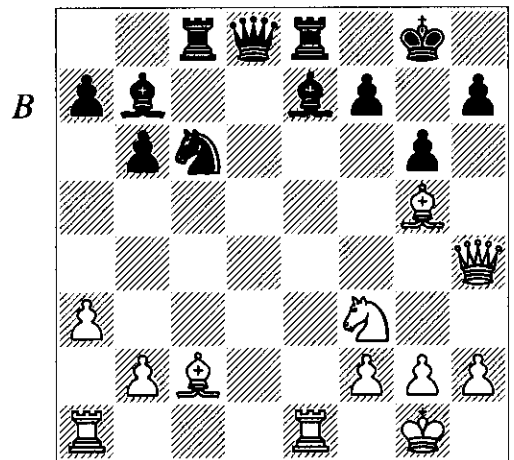
17 ♘xe4 dxe4 18 ♚xe4 g6 19 ♚h4 (97b)

This position arises by force from 15 d5!. Black has several tries, but none of them is adequate. In my only experience in this position, my opponent played 19...♙xg5 20 ♘xg5 ♖xe1+ 21 ♖xe1 h5 but 22 ♙xg6 killed him (Giddins-Kahn, Amsterdam 1997). When he stumbled into this position, Karpov preferred 19...h5 and scrambled a draw after 20 ♖ad1?! (20 ♙b3!) 20...♚c7, etc. (Portisch-Karpov, Milan 1975). Balashov chooses a third alternative, but to no avail.

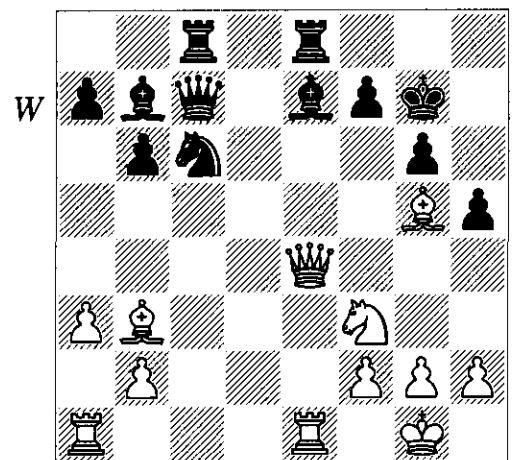
19...♚c7 20 ♙b3 h5 21 ♚e4 ♙g7 (97c)
22 ♙xf7! ♙xf7 23 ♙h6 ♚d6 24 ♚c4+ ♙f6
25 ♖ad1 ♘d4 26 ♚xd4+ ♚xd4 27 ♖xd4
♖c5 28 h4 1-0



97a: after 14 ♚d3



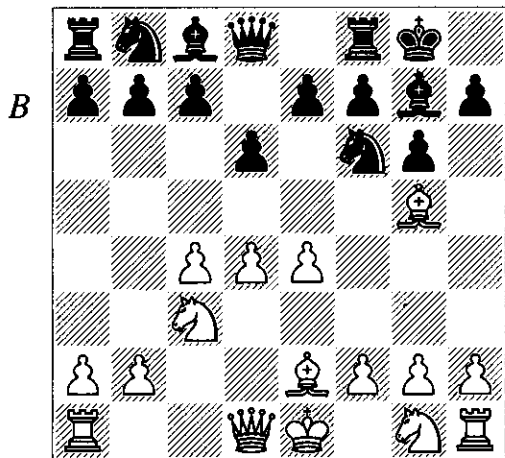
97b: after 19 ♚h4



97c: after 21... ♙g7

Trap 98 – Like Lambs to the Slaughter

The following game is fairly hard to believe in itself, but a review of the statistics on my database is even more stunning. Mind you, this book has continued to prove that not only are the mistakes all there waiting to be made, the players are also there, waiting to make them!



98a: after 6...g5

Amura – Milligan
Manila wom OL 1992

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♙e2 0-0 6 ♙g5 (98a)

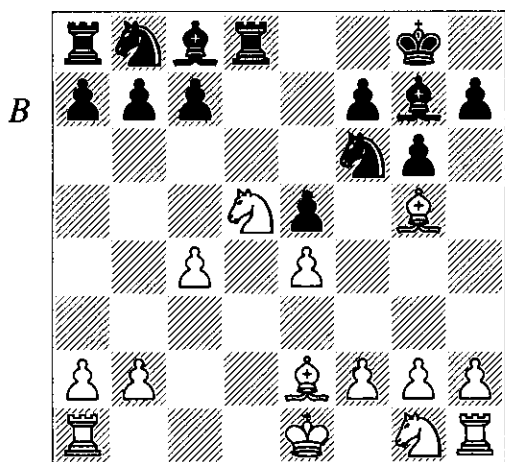
The Averbakh Variation, one of the main points of which is that Black cannot play 6...e5. But this doesn't seem to stop people.

6...e5?? 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♙xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♘d5 (98b) 1-0

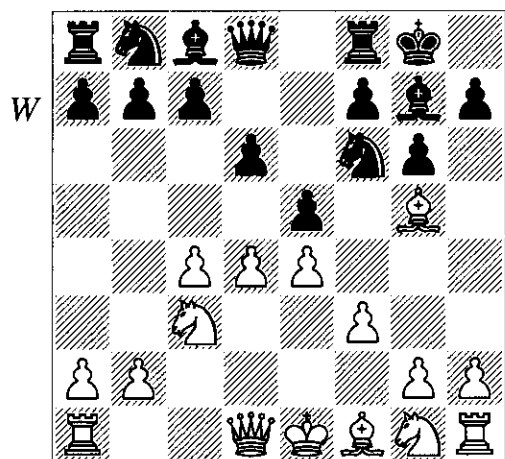
Sad, to say the least, but lest any male chauvinists out there start on about how this sort of thing only happens in Women's Olympiads, I should point out that I located a remarkable 20 games where Black played 6...e5. In two of them White refrained from 7 dxe5, whilst in two more, he played it and still lost!!

I also located seven examples of the equivalent position in the Sämisch King's Indian, 5 f3 0-0 6 ♙g5 e5?? (98c), with White again scoring rather less than 100%!

My experience shows that exchanging on e5 in the King's Indian can be effective even where it doesn't win material immediately. For a number of years in my youth, I played the line 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♙e2 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♙xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♙g5. Amongst my wins with this line were mating attacks in 16, 23 and 24 moves, all against players over 2000 rating!



98b: after 9...d5



98c: after 6...e5

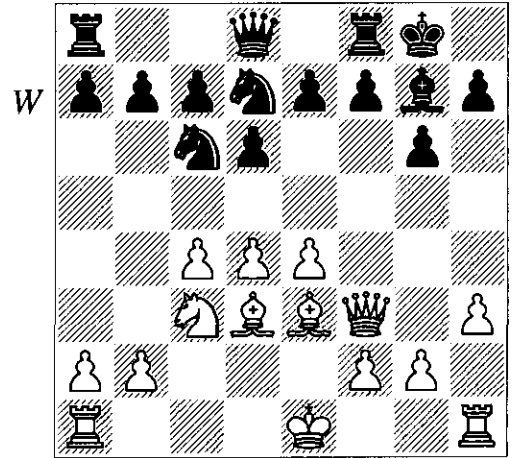
Trap 99 – The Trap With No Game

The next trap is one of the few in this book which are not represented by a real-life example, for the very simple reason that I couldn't find one! It is, however, another analytical embarrassment for Alekhine. His book of the New York 1924 tournament is deservedly regarded as a classic, but it seems that he took a little while to warm up, for the annotations to round one contain two huge howlers. We have already seen the example where he overlooks the Noah's Ark Trap (see Trap 58 above), and the following case arises from the first-round game between Marshall and Réti.

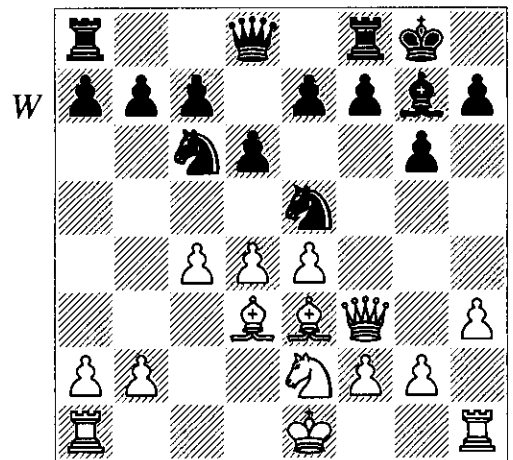
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♙g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♙d3 ♙g4 7 h3 ♙xf3 8 ♚xf3 ♘fd7 9 ♙e3 ♘c6 (99a)

The King's Indian was very much in its infancy in those days, and so it is not surprising that White's system looks distinctly unimpressive to modern eyes. In the game, Réti had continued 9...c5 and secured a good position, but Alekhine gives as an alternative the line 9...♘c6 and now 10 ♘e2? e5 11 d5 ♘d4 with good play. Much stronger than this, however, is the neat tactic 10...♘de5! (99b) which wins a couple of pawns.

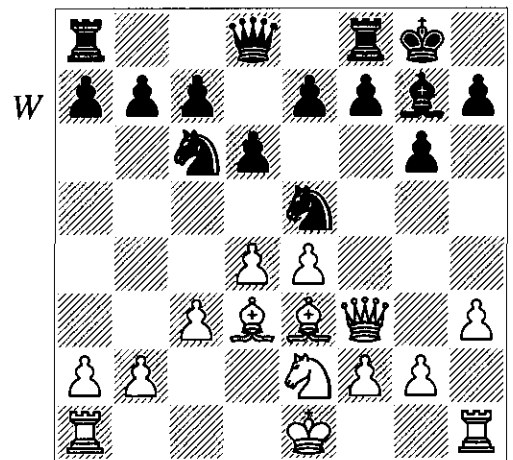
Although I have not been able to locate any master games with this trap, I recall once seeing a game that went 1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♙g7 3 ♘f3 d6 4 ♙d3 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 ♙g4 6 h3 ♙xf3 7 ♚xf3 ♘c6 8 ♙e3 ♘d7 9 ♘e2 0-0. White now tried to secure his centre with 10 c3?, only to be rocked by 10...♘de5! (99c).



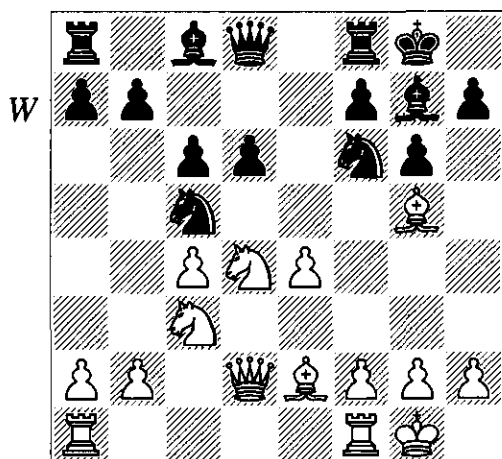
99a: after 9...♘c6



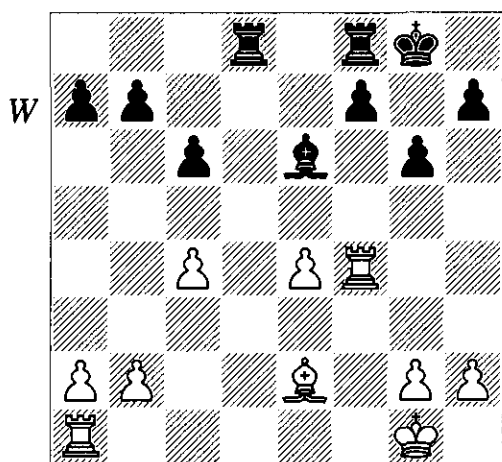
99b: after 10...♘de5



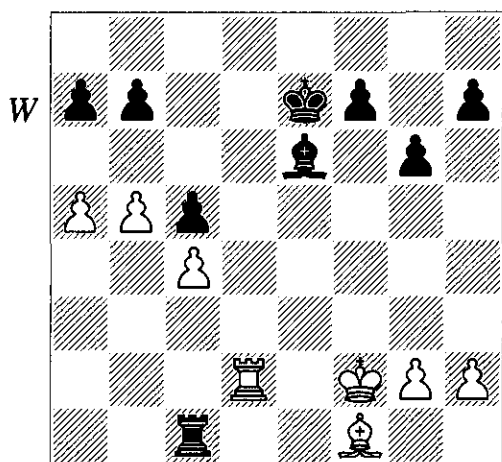
99c: after 10...♘de5



100a: after 10...Nc5



100b: after 18...Rd8



100c: after 28...Ke7

Trap 100 – Lightning Never Strikes ... Three Times!

Winning more than one game with the same opening trap is something which many people have done – indeed, Trap 37 features a case where Ian Rogers won no fewer than three games with the same trick. It is another matter, however, to win two games with the same opening trap, in the same event! I have little doubt that the moment this book is published Edward Winter will produce a host of other examples, but to my knowledge the following is unique.

J.Adamski – Geller

Lugano OL 1968

1 d4 Nf6 2 c4 g6 3 Nc3 Qg7 4 e4 d6 5 Qe2 0-0 6 Qg5 Nbd7 7 Wd2 e5 8 Nf3 c6 9 0-0 exd4 10 Nxd4 Nc5 (100a) 11 f3?? Nfxe4!

Initiating a combination which gives Black a large positional advantage.

12 Nxe4 Nxe4 13 fxe4 Qxd4+ 14 Wxd4 Wxg5 15 Wxd6 We3+ 16 Rf2 Qe6 17 Wf4 Wxf4 18 Rxf4 Rad8 (100b)

White has managed to avoid losing material, but his dark squares are an open wound, his e4-pawn is dropping off and Black will seize control of the d-file. In short, White is positionally lost.

19 Qf1 Rd4 20 Rc1 Rfd8 21 Rf2 Rxe4 22 b4 Red4 23 a4 Rd1 24 Rfc2 R8d2 25 a5 Qf8 26 b5 c5 27 Rxd2 Rxc1 28 Qf2 Ke7 (100c) 0-1

This game was played in round 9 of the Olympiad. Two rounds later, against the Danish player Holm, Geller reached exactly the same position after 11...Nfxe4, at which point an embarrassed Holm resigned!

Trap 101 – The Game that Started it all

I felt it only appropriate that Trap 101 should be the game which led to this book being written in the first place. Personally, I would like to see the game confined to Room 101, but at least this way I know I can't be black-mailed into writing any more books for Murray Chandler!

Stefanova – Giddins
Antwerp Lost Boys 1997

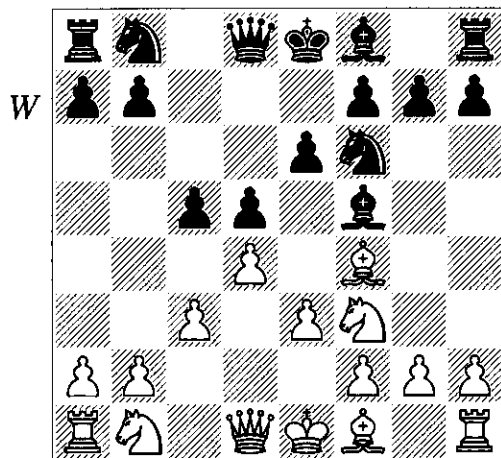
1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♙f4 c5 4 e3 ♙f5 5 c3 e6? (101a) 6 ♙xb8!

This game was played in the final round, which in common with that most detested of tournament traditions, took place in the morning. After playing my 5th move, I went in search of caffeine and was somewhat shocked when I returned to the board and saw a white bishop on b8. It took me a moment or two to work out how it had got there, and then a further few moments to realize the true horror. The lesser evil was undoubtedly 6...♙xb8 7 ♙b5+ ♔d8, although it is hardly appealing. Instead, I chose an even worse alternative.

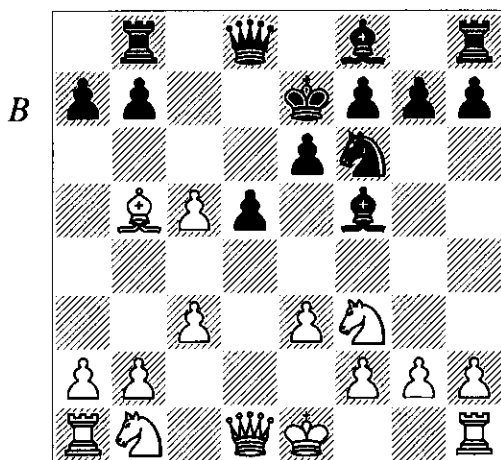
6...♙xb8 7 ♙b5+ ♔e7

Regrettably forced, as 7...♘d7 8 ♘e5 wins a piece. After **8 dxc5 (101b)** I struggled on with the best poker face I could manage, eventually succumbing to a mating attack somewhere around move 30.

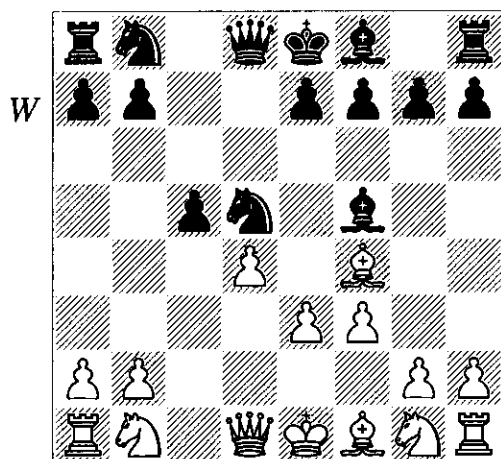
On the theme of opening disasters involving the move ♙xb8, there are a couple of other examples I would like to present. The first sees Dutch super-GM Loek van Wely dropping a piece against Mickey Adams at Tilburg 1996 after the moves **1 d4**



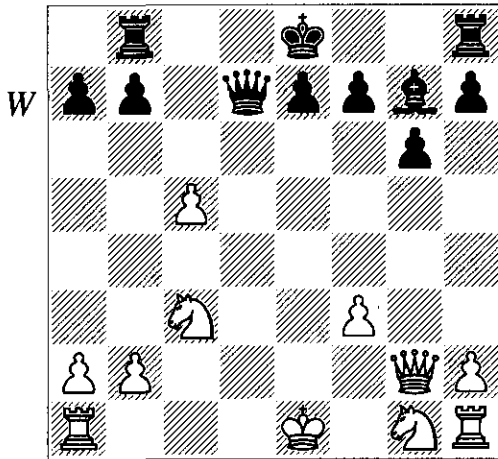
101a: after 5...e6



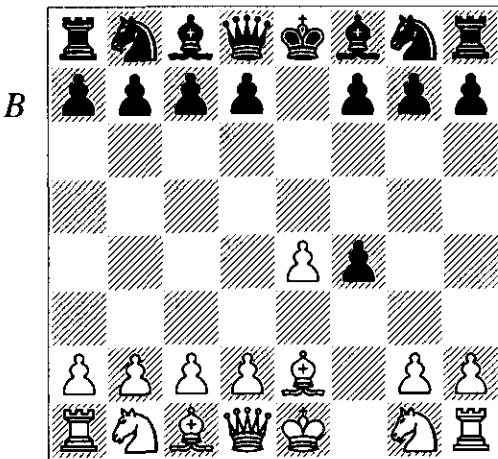
101b: after 8 dxc5



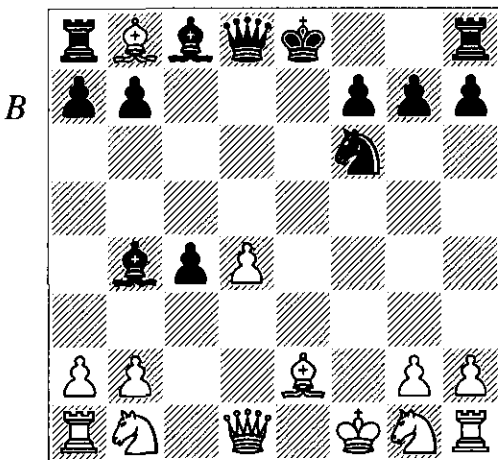
101c: after 7...♘xd5



101d: after 14...g7



101e: after 3...e2



101f: after 9...xb8

1. f6 2. g5 e4 3. f4 d5 4. e3 f5 5. f3
 6. f6 6. c4 c5 7. cxd5 xd5 (101c) 8. xb8!

Suddenly, Black is losing a piece because of the threat e3-e4. However, this time the proverbial ‘luck of the strong’ came to the Dutchman’s aid and after 8...xe3 9. b5+ d7 10. xd7+ xd7 11. e2 xg2+ 12. xg2 xb8 13. dxc5 g6 14. c3 g7 (101d) he had some compensation for his material, eventually drawing.

The second example is a case of ‘the biter bit’. In the New York tournament of 1924, the game Tartakower-Capablanca opened 1. e4 e5 2. f4 exf4 3. e2 (101e) 3...d5 4. exd5 f6 5. c4 c6 6. d4 b4+ 7. f1 cxd5 8. xf4 dxc4.

At this point Tartakower, clearly believing his great opponent had blundered, played our favourite move 9. xb8? (101f).

Instead of winning a piece after 9...xb8 10. a4+, however, he was rocked back on his heels by the ‘mother of all zwischenzugs’, 9...d5! and after the further moves 10. f2 (10. f4 f6 does not help) 10...xb8 11. xc4 0-0 his position was a wreck and he went down rapidly.

Going back to the Stefanova game, the thing I found most difficult to accept was that Black’s extremely natural first five moves could invite such retribution, since they were all perfectly normal developing moves. The problem is, as I was eventually forced to realize, Black could make the same complaint after the sequence 1. e4 e5 2. c4 c6 3. h5 f6 4. xf7#. If this book has proved anything, I hope it has demonstrated that the road to chessic hell is paved with natural moves!



This collection of superb opening traps is essential reading for any chess player.

The only thing more humiliating than losing a game quickly is to lose a game quickly to a known opening trap. On the other hand, the easy point scored by the trapper is a great confidence booster, and allows the winner a good rest before the next game in a competition.

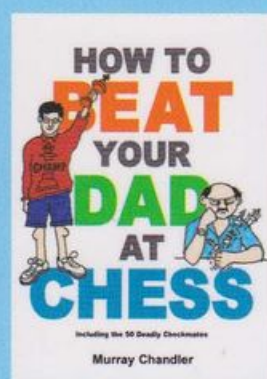
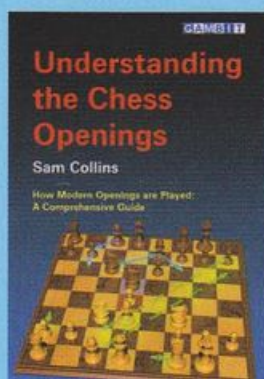
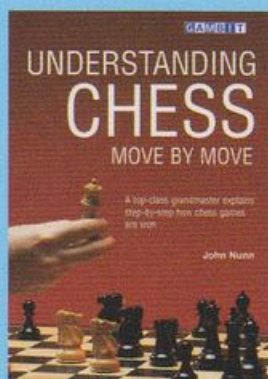
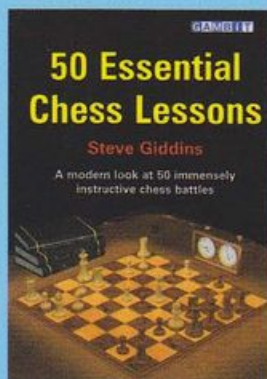
As the traps in this book show, no one should feel safe from an opponent armed to the teeth with cunning traps – in these pages we regularly see masters losing in a handful of moves.

Steve Giddins has collected these traps from a wide variety of sources, and has focused his attention on risk-free traps – those that can be laid ‘incidentally’ by moves that are good and useful even if the opponent avoids the trap.

- All major openings covered
- Focuses on traps that club players are most likely to fall for
- Provides excellent training in tactics
- Shows opening principles in – frequently brutal – action

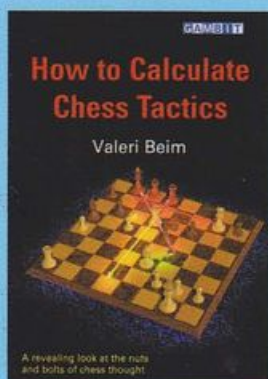
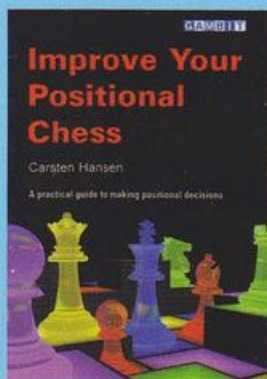
Steve Giddins is a FIDE Master from England who plays regularly in international events. As a fluent Russian speaker who has recently been based in Moscow, he has had access to sources not normally available in the West. He contributes frequently to the *British Chess Magazine*.

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