

YOUR JUNGLE GUIDE TO 1.d4!

AGGRESSIVE ENTERPRISE

Volume 1A
Queen's Gambit Accepted & Minors

by

Vassilios Kotronias
and Mikhail Ivanov



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Typesetting
i-Press <www.i-press.pl>

First edition 2022 by Thinkers Publishing

Your Jungle Guide to 1.d4! Aggressive Enterprise. Vol 1A: Queen's Gambit Accepted & Minors
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ISBN 978-94-6420-13-9
D/2021/13731/40

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

e-mail: info@thinkerspublishing.com
website: www.thinkerspublishing.com

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KEY TO SYMBOLS

!	a good move
?	a weak move
!!	an excellent move
??	a blunder
!?	an interesting move
?!	a dubious move
□	only move
=	equality
∞	unclear position
≈	with compensation for the sacrificed material
±	White stands slightly better
∓	Black stands slightly better
±	White has a serious advantage
∓	Black has a serious advantage
+ -	White has a decisive advantage
- +	Black has a decisive advantage
→	with an attack
↑	with initiative
↩	with counterplay
Δ	with the idea of
⊃	better is
≤	worse is
N	novelty
+	check
#	mate

INTRODUCTION

Dear Readers!

Creating a repertoire with 1.d4 in the year 2021 is an immensely difficult task. There is a huge amount of information spreading around at lightning speed, and White's chances for an advantage become slimmer and slimmer due to the opening analysis offered by rapidly improving engines. Nowadays, everything depends on small details which are hard for the authors to discover and subsequently explain to the chess public, and this is the reason you will often see at chess stores many books offering a repertoire for Black but very few doing the same for White. It is simply much more difficult to find a new path for White than in the past, as the machine will provide almost always a way to equality, whereas with Black you only need to reach a draw without necessarily being creative, as that is the nature of things. Additionally, praxis and theory have shown that in most openings there is more than one way for Black to equalize, a fact that considerably helps an author who creates a repertoire for Black and conversely renders extremely arduous the respective task of building a White repertoire.

Still, the authors of the present series decided to pick up the gauntlet. GM Vassilios Kotronias was not a 1.d4 practitioner but had the appetite to dive into the deep waters of something new for him, while GM Mikhail Ivanov's vast experience and knowledge of 1.d4 ensured that the correct paths would be, more or less, followed.

As is customary for such a work, we decided to start by examining the most solid, symmetrical defense for the opponent, which in the present case is 1...d5. Given the extreme amount of theory it would have been practically impossible for us to cover everything in one volume, so here we are, starting with the one numbered 1A, which examines some "lesser" defenses after 1.d4 d5 2.c4 and a couple of important variations of the Queen's Gambit Accepted. The fact that the rest of the Queen's Gambit Accepted is examined in a separate volume classified as 1B, speaks about the practical difficulties we encountered from the size and the complexity of this popular opening, but hopefully, we did well.

In our view, a classical defensive scheme like the one the QGA embodies can hardly be refuted, and our analysis verified that. But at the same time, whatever chances existed for White in the related structures were used by us, in order to make Black's life less easy. Our philosophy was to look for and find the critical path, recommending strong attacking methods whenever that was possible, and clear cut strategic ideas when it was not. You will actually be surprised to see that even openings like the Chigorin Defence, the Albin Counter-Gambit, and the Mirror Variation (1.d4 d5 2.c4 c5) have not been refuted, but at least there our task there was not as hard as in the lines of the QGA this volume includes, in particular the 3.e4 b5 Variation.

This book, or this series, if you so prefer, will require meticulous study if you want to reach a really high level of opening knowledge. On the other hand, we hope that even amateurs can profit from the many included ideas and the many diagrams in critical (or non-critical) positions. It is impossible to remember everything from these dense pages, but what is possible is to get a feeling of the struggle. If you manage to achieve that, then our work's aim will be fulfilled.

GM Vassilios Kotronias & GM Mikhail Ivanov
November 2021

CHAPTER 1

CHIGORIN

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.f3 g4 4.cxd5 xf3 5.gxf3 xd5
6.e3 e5 7.c3 b4 8.d2 xc3 9.bxc3 d6

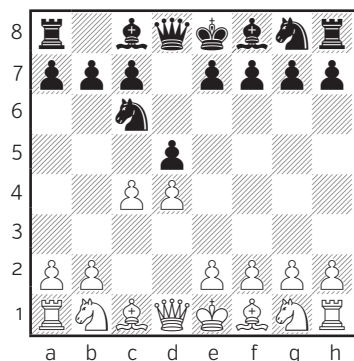
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THE CHIGORIN DEFENSE

Many players tend to underestimate it, but as we shall see a refutation is not easy. The fact that world class players like Short, Rapport and Morozevich have used it on a more or less regular basis means that there is still some life in it, and even I did not get bad positions in my chess career when I was sporadically employing it.

1. 6...e6

1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♘c6!?

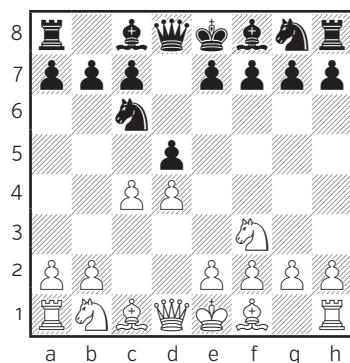


In the main line we are recommending White will get the two bishops and this should be enough for a slight advantage, but the knights are treacherous creatures who often create dangerous possibilities of counterplay so we should play with care.

It is universally accepted that the most critical position of the Chigorin occurs after

3. ♘f3!

defending the all-important d4-point. After this move it is our belief that it is Black and not White who has to prove something. The c6-knight is blocking the c-file, so Black cannot hope to strike at the center with a push of his c-pawn which means he must find alternative means of counterplay. The only such means at his disposal is to increase the pressure against d4 by the following.



3... ♙g4! 4. cxd5!

This is quite a popular continuation and in our view the best. The idea is to win time by luring the enemy queen to d5 and then attack her with ♗b1-c3.

4... ♙xf3!

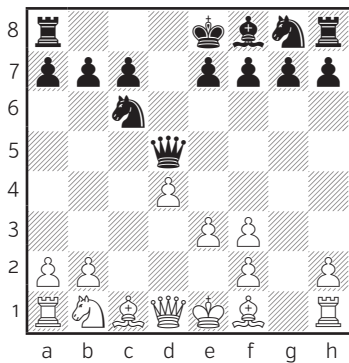
Without this move the whole Chigorin defense would not have any meaning. From this point on we will witness a fight between White's bishop pair and his own static weaknesses. It is those weaknesses where Black's

counterplay lies but in our view the bishops should offer White the better chances.

5.gxf3! ♖xd5

Thanks to the capture on f3, instead of losing time Black has actually managed to win some as now the d4-pawn is threatened. On the minus side for him the queenside looks a bit bare due to the surrender of the important light-squared bishop. In most cases Black will castle long covering the weak b7 point with his king and hoping that White will not get a lethal attack down the b-file.

6.e3



This is the tabiya for our repertoire against the Chigorin Defense.

Black now must decide how many squares to push his e-pawn. Before proceeding with our main line (6...e5) let us examine the alternative.

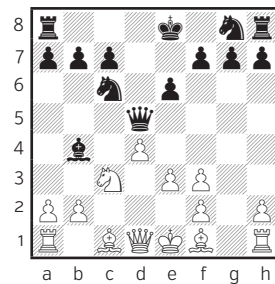
6...e6?!

This alternative has been played on several occasions, but in our view it is much less principled and will lead to very difficult positions for Black. The main move 6...e5! (examined in the next subchapter) follows the principle that the one who has a strategically worse position should seek dynamic play in order to compensate for this.

7.♞c3 ♖h5!?

This is the only move that has any strategic point as the queen places the white kingside under pressure.

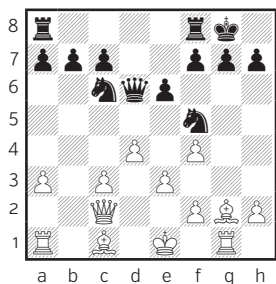
7...♞b4 allows White to fortify his center and obtain both bishops with a few accurate moves.



After 8.♞g1!

[8.a3!? ♞xc3+ 9.bxc3 is less clear because it allows the black queen to reach h5, e.g., 9...♞ge7! (9...♞f6 10.♞b1! 0-0 11.♞b5!±) 10.c4 (10.♞b1 b6 11.♞b5 ♖d6∞; 10.♞g1 ♖h5!) 10...♖h5! 11.f4 ♖xd1+ 12.♞xd1 b6 13.♞d2 ♞c8 14.♞g1 g6 15.♞d3 f6± and the ending should be defendable for Black.]

8...♖ge7 9.f4! ♘f5 10.♔g2 ♔d6 11.a3
♙xc3+ 12.bxc3 o-o 13.♖c2±

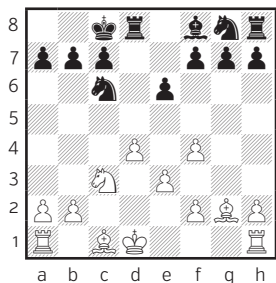


White has a massive center and the two bishops while Black lacks breaks to get at the white king, making the game very one-sided.

8. ♔e2!

We favor this logical move, defending f3 and freeing the queen for action.

a) We don't like the ending arising after 8.f4 ♖xd1+ 9.♔xd1 o-o-o 10.♔g2



because the black knights will manage to control White's central pawn mass. For example, 10...♘ce7!? 11.♔e2

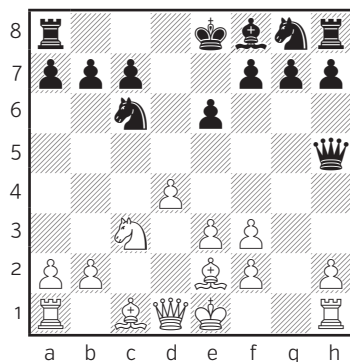
[Another possibility is 11.♘e4 h6 12.h4 (12.♘c5 ♘d5 13.♘d3 g5!± shows a typical way for Black to

seek counterplay in these endgames.) 12...♘f5 13.♔d2 ♔e7 14.h5 ♘f6 15.♘xf6 gxf6!? 16.♔e2 ♘d6 17.♖ac1 f5! and Black does not seem to face any particular problems.]

11...♘f6 12.♔d2 ♘f5 13.♖hc1 ♔b8= and Black has stabilized his position. A typical plan is ...g7-g5 gaining space on the kingside. We do not think it is worthwhile to invest time searching for something here from White's point of view. In our opinion the chances are balanced.

b) On the other hand, 8.h4!? seems like a good idea. After 8...o-o-o 9.♔e2 ♖g6 we have transposed back to our main line 8. ♔e2!.

So let us check 8. ♔e2!

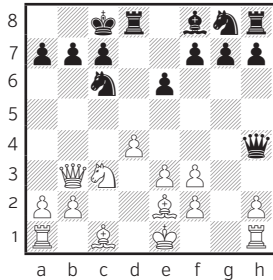


8...o-o-o

It is possible to play 8...♖h4!? but after 9.♔d2!± White gets an advantage in spite of the fact that the black queen cramps White's kingside. The

reasoning behind White's advantage is that Black has problems with the c5 and b7-squares.

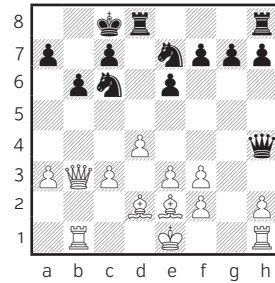
After 8...♖h4, if white wants to force matters there is also the following idea: 9.♖b3!? o-o-o



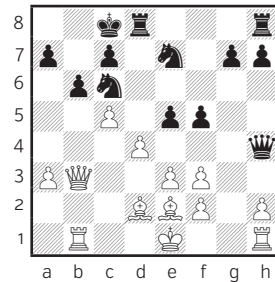
10.♙d2!

[Instead, 10.a3 ♙d6! (10...♗ge7 11.♙d2 ♗f5 12.♗e4±) 11.♙d2 ♗ge7 12.♗e4 (12.o-o-o ♖xf2 13.h4 ♗f5 14.♗df1 ♖g2 15.♗fg1 ♖f2=) 12...♙b8 13.♗c1 f5! 14.♙a6 (14.♗xd6 ♗xd6 15.f4 ♗d5± is actually preferable for Black as on this occasion the knights are dominating the white bishops) 14...b6 15.♖xe6 ♖h5! (15...fxe4 16.♖xe4 ♖xe4 17.fxe4 is preferable for White!) 16.♗c3 ♖xf3 17.♗g1 g6± is a position with very double-edged play.]

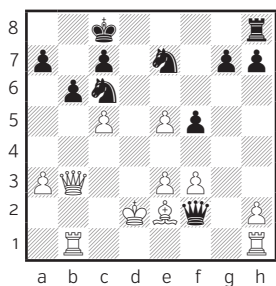
10...♙b4!? 11.a3! (11.♗e4!? ♙xd2+ 12.♗xd2 ♗ge7 also looks a bit better for White, however after 13.f4 ♗xd4! 14.exd4 ♖xf4± Black has a lot of practical chances.) 11...♙xc3 12.bxc3 ♗ge7 13.♗b1 b6 and now the right pawn should be pushed to break up Black's defensive skeleton.



14.c4! Preparing to open lines and attack the black king with the combined force of queen, rook and both bishops. (Attention! Do not play 14.e4?! here because it gives Black a lever to open lines on the kingside and create strong counterplay. 14...g5! 15.a4 ♗hg8 16.♙e3 ♙b8↑ now the situation has changed. The position already looks more pleasant for Black who plans ...♗g8–g6 followed by ...f7–f5.) After 14.c4! the only way for Black is to counterattack quickly with 14...f5! 15.c5 e5!?



We do not believe White should fear the complications. 16.dxe5! ♗xd2 (The computers also give 16...f4 17.cxb6 axb6 18.exf4 ♗xd2 19.♙xd2 ♗f8 20.♙e1 ♗xf4 21.♖e6+ ♙b7 22.♗c1 ♖g5 23.♙f1 ♖xe5 24.♖xe5 ♗xe5 25.♗d1 h6 26.♗d8 with some advantage for White.) 17.♙xd2 ♖xf2

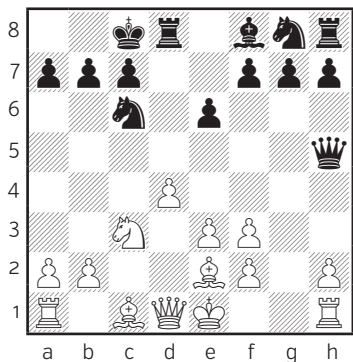


18. ♖b2! This is the key move, preparing an evacuation of the king to the queenside by defending the ♕e2. After 18... ♖a5 19. ♖c3

[19. ♖e6+ ♖b7 20. cxb6 axb6 21. ♖c1 (21. ♖xe7?? ♖c4+) 21... ♖xe3+ 22. ♖b1 ♖ac6 23. ♖c1 ♖xe5 24. ♖xe5 ♖xe5 25. f4± is less advantageous]

19... ♖d5 20. ♖d4 ♖d8 (20... f4 21. ♖f1±) 21. ♖c1± Black does not have full compensation for the exchange.

Let us return to 8...o-o-o.

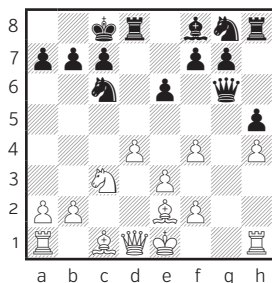


9. ♕d2!

This is the best continuation, White wants to play pragmatically, with o-o-o or ♖a1-c1.

a) Instead, 9. f4 ♖h4! 10. ♕f3 ♖b4 11. a3 ♖d5= is ok for Black as the position of the d5-knight is unshakable.

b) We also looked at 9. h4, with the aim of restricting the black queen. However, after 9... ♖g6!? 10. f4 h5!? (10... ♖b4 11. h5 ♖c2 12. ♕d2 ♖f6 13. a3 ♖xd1+ 14. ♖xd1 ♖bd5 15. ♕f3 c6±)

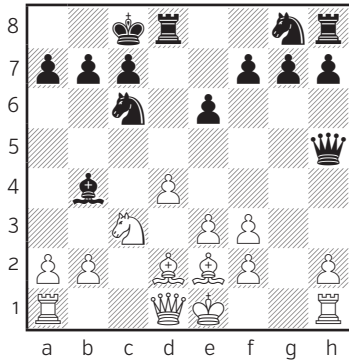


11. ♖f1!? (11. ♕f3 e5!; 11. ♕d3 ♖g4!; 11. ♕d2 ♖f6 12. ♖b3 ♖b4! 13. ♖f1 ♖b8 14. ♖c1 ♖bd5=) 11... ♖b8!? 12. ♕d2 (12. ♕d3 f5 13. a3 ♖f6 14. ♖b3 ♖e8∞) 12... ♖f6 13. ♖g1 ♖f5 14. ♕f3 ♖d3+! 15. ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 16. ♖xe2 ♖e7 17. ♖e4 ♖xe4 18. ♕xe4 g6 19. ♖ac1 c6= the ending is excellent for Black.

So let us return to 9. ♕d2!.

9... ♕b4!?

Luckily for us, 9... ♖h4 does not succeed due to 10. ♖c1 ♕d6 (10... ♕b4 11. ♖e4±) 11. ♖a4! ♖ge7 12. ♖e4 ♖b8 (12... f5 13. d5!+-) 13. b4 ♖xd4!? (13... ♖a8 14. b5 ♖b8 15. ♖xd6 cxd6 16. b6±; 13... ♖c8 14. ♖xc6±) 14. exd4 ♕f4 15. ♕xf4 ♖xf4 16. ♖c4 ♖f5 17. b5± and Black does not have enough compensation for the piece.



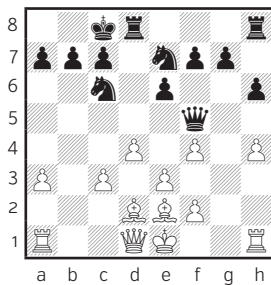
10.h4!!

Black has no real counterplay as this brilliant idea deprives the queen of the h4-square.

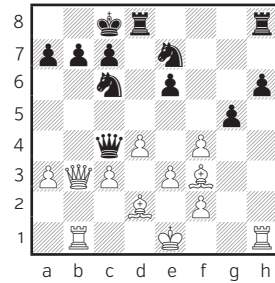
Not so clear would be 10.a3 ♖xc3 11.bxc3 ♖h4 12.♖b1 ♘ge7 13.♖a4 b6 14.♖b5 ♖d6±, or 10.♖b3 ♘f6 11.0-0-0 ♖h4∞.

10...♘f6!?

This is how the main line goes. Unfortunately for Black, 10...♘ge7 fails when the queen is not situated on h4. 11.f4 ♖f5 12.a3 ♖xc3 (12...♖a5 13.b4 ♖b6 14.♖g4 ♖f6 15.♖c1 ♘f5 16.♘e4 ♖e7 17.♖xc6 bxc6 18.♖a4±) 13.bxc3 h6



14.h5! (14.♖b1 ♖d5 15.♖g1 g5! 16.fxg5 ♖d6 17.gxh6 ♖h2 18.♖f1 ♖xh4 19.e4 f5 20.e5 f4 21.♖e4 ♖xh6 22.0-0-0 ♘d5 23.♖h1 ♖g7 24.♖xh8 ♖xh8 25.♖h1 ♖d8±) 14...g5 15.hxg6 fxg6 (15...♖xg6 16.♖h5±) 16.♖g4 ♖d5 (16...♖f6 17.♖b3 ♖d6 18.♖b1±) 17.♖f3 ♖c4 18.♖b1 g5 19.♖b3±

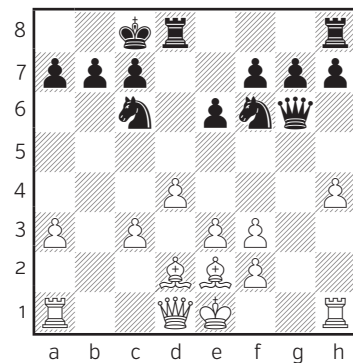


and White is going to get a very favorable ending as Black's pawn structure is not ideal.

11.a3 ♖xc3

11...♖a5 12.b4 ♖b6 13.f4 ♖f5 14.♖b1± leaves the b6-bishop without any prospects.

12.bxc3 ♖g6



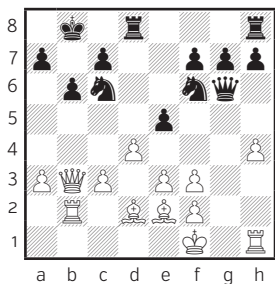
This is an important position where White is better no matter what Black does. The two bishops are very powerful pieces and there are realistic chances of attack via the b-file. Sample lines follow.

13. ♖f1!

We like this prophylactic move, guarding g2 before doing anything else, and also creating the tactical idea h4–h5 in some positions, as we will see later.

Instead, 13.f4 ♘e4 is not at all simple for White.

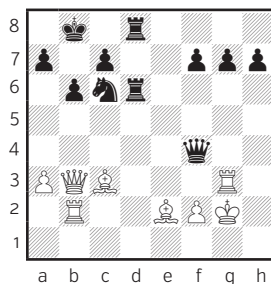
An important possible alternative is 13. ♖b3!? e5 14. ♖b1! b6 (14... ♘a5 15. ♖a2 ♖g2 16. ♖f1 ♖he8 17. ♖xf7±) 15. ♖f1 ♖b8 16. ♖b2! when, by relieving his queen from the burden of defending the rook, White prepares to increase the pressure on the queen-side.



16...exd4 We found nothing better for Black.

a) A brilliant illustration of how White intends to proceed unfolds

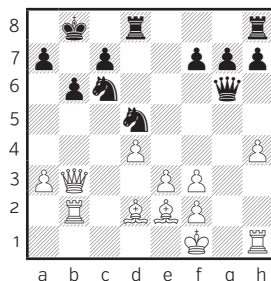
after 16... ♖d6 : 17.h5!! ♘xh5 18.f4! ♘xf4 19.exf4 exd4 20. ♖h3 ♖hd8 21. ♖g3! (21. ♖c4 dxc3 22. ♖xc3 ♘d4±) 21... ♖h6 22. ♖g2 dxc3 23. ♖xc3 ♖xf4



and at this point White has a pleasant choice between 24. ♖xg7± or 24. ♖f3 ♘e5 25. ♖xe5 ♖xe5 26. ♖e2 ♖f6 27.a4± and White's attacking chances are more important than the slight material deficit.

b) 16... ♘e8 paves the way of the black queen towards to the queen-side, yet after 17. ♖b5! ♖e6 18.a4 ♖f8 19. ♖c4± it is clear that White has very uncomfortable pressure.

Let us return to 16...exd4 17.cxd4 ♘d5. The position has opened up for the bishops, while Black has gained some breathing room.



18. ♖c2 f5 19. ♗b5! In such positions it is important to keep compressing the opponent which is what this move achieves as Black cannot put his rook on d6.

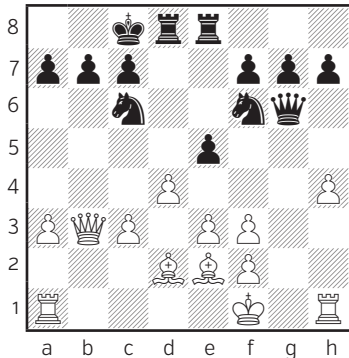
[Weaker is 19. f4 ♗e6 20. a4 (20. ♔f3 ♖ce7 21. a4 ♖xf4) 20... ♖ce7 21. ♖b2 (21. ♖h3 ♖g8 22. a5 ♖gf6±) 21... ♖g8! 22. a5 ♖gf6± and the position is fully playable for Black who has gotten a good blockade in the center.]

19... ♖ce7 20. a4 c6 21. ♗c4 ♗d6± White has the advantage, but Black might be able to defend.

Back to 13. ♔f1!

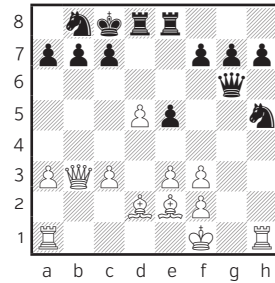
13... e5 14. ♗b3 ♖he8

14... ♖d7 15. a4 ♖a5 16. ♗d5±



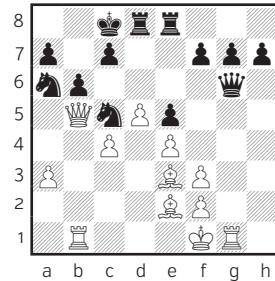
15. ♖b1!

We like this preparatory move best. After 15. h5!? ♖xh5 16. d5 (16. f4 ♖f6! 17. fxex5 ♖e4 18. ♔e1 ♗f5 19. f4 f6↗) 16... ♖b8



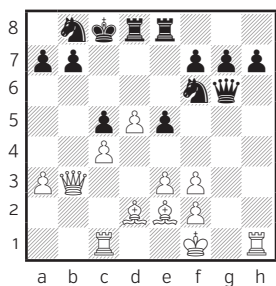
White has compensation for the pawn but probably no more than that, e.g., 17. c4

[17. ♖b1 b6 18. c4 ♖f6 19. e4 (19. ♔b4 e4 20. f4 ♗f5 21. ♗a4 ♖b7 22. ♔c3 g5↗) 19... ♖fd7 20. ♔e3 ♖a6 21. ♗b5 ♖dc5 22. ♖g1! A highly interesting position e.g.

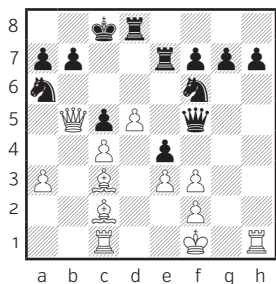


22... ♗h5 (22... ♗d6 23. a4! — 23. ♖xg7 ♖g8! — 23... g6 24. a5→) 23. ♗c6 f5! 24. ♗a8+ (24. ♖xg7 ♖g8!) 24... ♔d7 25. ♖xg7+ ♔e7 26. ♗c6+ ♔c8 27. ♖g5! ♗h1+ 28. ♖g1 ♗h3+ 29. ♔e1 ♗h2 30. ♖f1 f4 31. ♔xc5 ♖xc5 32. ♔d1 ♗h5 33. ♗a8+ ♔d7 34. ♗xa7 ♔e8∞.]

17... ♖f6 18. ♖c1 (18. e4 ♖fd7 19. ♔e3 ♖a6∞) 18... c5! with a very complicated game.

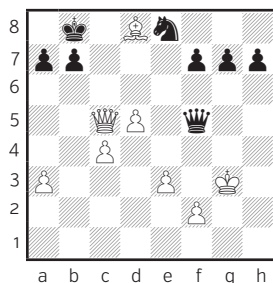


Looking at the diagram position it is easy to understand why tactical masters like Rapport and Morozevich like the Chigorin as it is a domain where the imbalances can easily tip the scales in favor of one side of the other. For example, White has clear compensation due to his pressure against b7 and the awkward position of the black queen, but at the same time it is obvious that if Black manages to restore his coordination and defend against the threats he could easily capitalize on the extra pawn. Let us see a line featuring the eternal fight of these elements: 19. ♖d1 (19. ♜b1 ♜e7 20.e4 ♞h5∞) 19... ♜e7 20. ♖c2 e4 21. ♜b5 (21. ♖c3 ♜f5 22.f4 g5↖) 21... ♞a6 22. ♖c3 ♜f5!



23. ♖xf6 (23.f4 ♞e8 and ...♞d6 next.) 23... ♜xf3! 24. ♖xe7 ♜xh1+ 25. ♖e2 ♜xc1 26. ♖xe4 ♞c7 27. ♖f5+ (27. ♜xc5

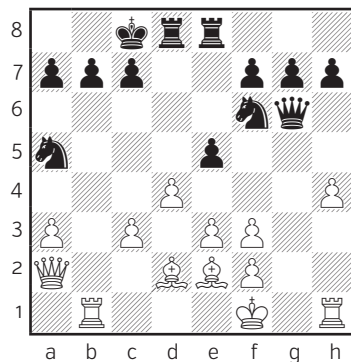
♜b2+ 28. ♖f3 ♜e5 29. ♖xd8 ♖xd8 30. ♜f8+ ♞e8= Δ31. ♜xf7?? ♜xe4+-+) 27... ♖b8 28. ♜xc5 ♜b2+ 29. ♖f3 ♜e5 30. ♖xd8 ♜xf5+ 31. ♖g3 ♞e8∞



With the idea of ...h5.

We will now check the best move 15. ♜b1!.

15... ♞a5 16. ♜a2!



From this This is a wonderful square the queen defends the rook, guards c2 and keeps f7 under pressure. White is now ready to push his opponent back.

16...b6 17.e4!

The best move according to the engines.

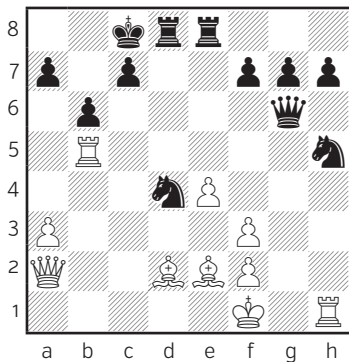
White prepares to deploy his bishop to e3.

At the same time, the black position now seems cut in two.

17...exd4 18.cxd4 ♘c6 19.h5!

Again, this deflection.

19...♞xh5 20.♞b5 ♞xd4

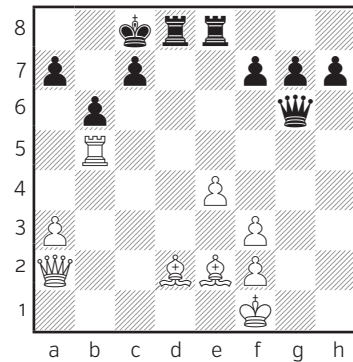


21.♞hxh5!!

Probably the only move to secure a considerable advantage.

Instead, 21.♞bxh5 ♞xe2 22.♔xe2 f5 23.♞g5 ♞d6 24.♞xf5 ♞d3+ 25.♔d1 g6 26.♞f7 ♞e7! 27.♞xe7 ♞xf3+ 28.♔c1 ♞xh1+ 29.♔c2 ♞f1 30.♞e6+ ♔b8 31.♞d7 ♞xd7 32.♞xd7 ♞c4+ 33.♔d1 ♞xe4 34.♞xh7 ♞g4+ 35.♔e1 ♞g1+ 36.♔e2 ♞g4+ 37.♔f1 ♞d1+ 38.♔e1 ♞d3+ 39.♔g1 ♞xa3 40.♞xg6 ♞f3 produces an ending that Black should logically hold.

21...♞xb5 22.♞xb5



While you may argue that this still looks very complicated we have faith in White's position.

Materially speaking he is very much ok, and his king is safer thus making Black's prospects look inferior. We believe that in a correspondence game the result should be 1-0 no matter how Black proceeds.

22...c5!?

22...♞e6 23.♔c4 ♞h3+ 24.♔e2±

23.♞b1!±

And White's advantage is indisputable.

2. 6...e5, 10.--.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 ♞c6!? 3.♞f3! ♔g4! 4.cxd5! ♔xf3! 5.gxf3! ♞xd5 6.e3

It is now time to examine the best option for Black.