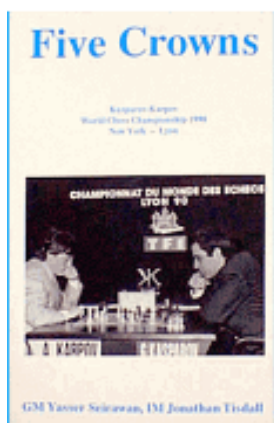


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Browne-Seirawan
Pirc Classical B 08
American Open 1987
Round 4

My best game of the tournament was my fourth round match-up against Walter Browne.

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

The night before the tournament, I had met Walter in the finals of a knockout five-minute tournament. In one of the match games I played 6...Bg4. The game ended in a draw in which Walter had kept an enduring plus. Wanting to avoid the symmetrical endings that occur after 6...Bg4 I decided to mix it up with an old weapon.

6...c6!? 7.h3! d5

A strange way to work with a Kingside fianchetto. I don't recommend that anybody repeat this idea!

8.e5 Ne8 9.Be3 b6

Lacking space, Black readies himself for an exchange on a6.

10.Qd2 Na6!?

Perhaps I was too concerned by White's possibility of playing e5-e6 after 10...Ba6. Still, with the position so

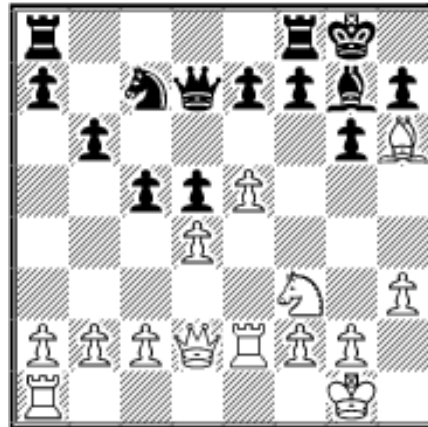


blockaded a tempo or two are not so important.

11.Bxa6!?

An interesting way to handle the position. White seeks a pure advantage from his spatial edge.

**11...Bxa6 12.Rfe1 Nc7 13.Bh6 Qd7 14.Ne2 Bxe2
15.Rxe2 c5**



A risky and double-edged move. Ahh, do I see doubting Thomases shaking their heads? The position appears tranquil enough but a cauldron is brewing. The normal continuation was 15...Ne6 16.Bxg7 Kxg7 17.Ng5 Nxc5 18.Qxg5 f5 19.exf6+ e.p. exf6 20.Qd2

Rae8-all very standard and all rather boring. After further wholesale exchanges on the e-file the game peters out. If Black wants to try anything then instead of 17...Nxc5, 17...c5 is a possibility, hoping for 18.c2-c3. Instead White can play much more actively by 18.Nxe6+ Qxe6 19.Rd1. None of these variations held much promise for any advantage, when my eyes fell upon c6-c5. The purpose of the move is to throw down a challenge and to invite Walter to attack my King. In order to do this however, Walter has to make a concession, give up the center. He accepts the challenge!

16.dxc5!? bxc5 17.Re4

The point. White menaces the Kingside with this Rook lift. It was necessary to calculate the game continuation very precisely.

17...Rfd8

The only move.

18.Rh4 Bh8!



This was the position I aimed for with 15...c5. I've provoked Walter into shifting his army to the Kingside. My logic was that if I'm not mated, all of White's pieces are offside. In addition my trump-the center-will then be played to effect.

19.Re1

Not the sharpest. Before starting any sacrifices Walter insures that all his pieces play a role in the attack. An ideal to be sure. Still, when playing 15...c5 it was necessary to calculate 19.Ng5 Ne6 20.Nxh7 Bxe5 (Not 20...Kxh7 21.Bg7+!! and it's mate soon.) 21.Re1 Qd6!

A bizarre position. White's Kingside attack is fast, furious and fruitless. My pieces on e5, e6 and d6 perform defensive miracles. Despite staying up until 3am Walter and I were unable to find a valid continuation of White's attack.

19...Ne6 20.c3?!

To put it dogmatically, I have a candidate passed pawn in the center. White's last move speeds the pawn's development. White's best move 20.Ng5 wouldn't significantly change the position.

20...d4! 21.cxd4 cxd4

Already White must rethink whether he has over-pressed on the Kingside.

22.Ng5 Nxg5 23.Bxg5 f6! 24.exf6 exf6 25.Bf4

White's attack has proven to be a complete failure. Before starting the attack, White had a huge spatial plus and a hammer lock on the center. Look again.

25...Qf7

After leaving my King to fend for himself for so long, I suddenly decide to start protecting him. Well, not really. The main point is to put my Queen on a more active square. My d-pawn is about to venture to d3 and I wanted to be able to double on the d-file. I must also say that a lot of time was spent on 25...g5!? What do you think? Is 26.Bxg5 fxg5 27.Qxg5 Qg7 dangerous for Black? It should be mentioned that 25...g5 provokes White into making this sacrifice because 26.Rg4 h5! 27.Rg3 Bg7 is more in Black's favor. The reason I finally settled on 25...Qf7 was determined by Walter's clock. With Walter nearing time pressure I didn't want to make his life easier by ceding the initiative.

26.Bg3 d3 27.Rc1!

A very fine move and one that took me by complete surprise. I had been willing to leave the e-file uncontested in White's hands. White would not find this file useful at all. Furthermore, keep in mind that White's a-pawn is hanging. With the text, however, White can infiltrate on the 7th or 8th ranks. The Rook on c4 will also block my attack against a2.

27...Rd7 28.Rhc4

Walter brings the Rook back into the game and offered a draw.

28...Rad8 29.b3 Bg7 30.Rc8 h6?!

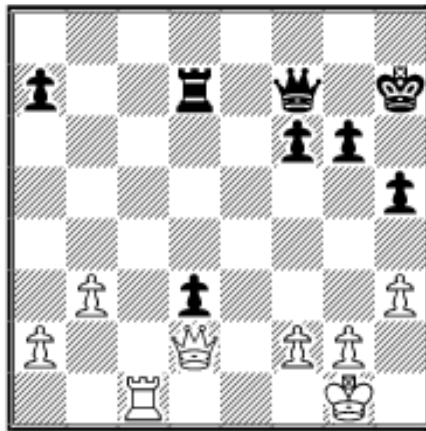
Imprecise: correct was 30...h5!, in order to break White's

blockade by Kh7, Bh6 etc..

31.Bf4 Rxc8 32.Rxc8+ Kh7 33.Qb4!

Fundamentals tell you the Queen is a horrible blockader. Certainly she was created for greater duties than blockading pawns!

33...h5! 34.Bd2 Bh6 35.Bxh6 Kxh6 36.Qd2+ Kh7 37.Rc1



In order to exchange roles with the Queen. Walter hopes to use his Rook as a blockader. This major piece ending was rather forced. Black's victory hinges on the question of whether or not I can slide my Rook over to the c- or e-files forcing the White Queen away while protecting

the d pawn. Answer: yes, probably.

37...Qd5 38.Re1 Kg7 39.h4?!

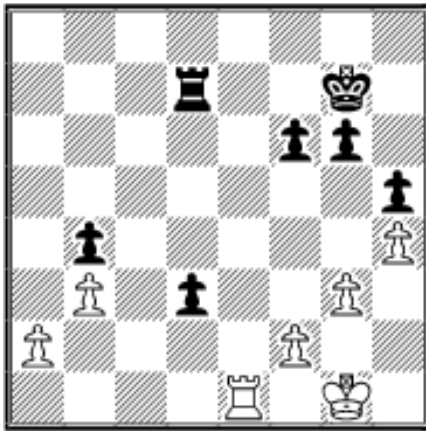
Walter tries to avoid the motif ...Re2 with the Queen on d6. Then the pawn at d3 could not be captured because of Re1+. However, h4 drags the g-pawn with it, and a juicy weakness wells up around White's King. In such cases my Queen on d5 will be as powerful as on d6. My d-pawn will still be untouchable. Perhaps Walter should try to distract me with 39.b3-b4?

39...a5! 40.Re3?

The last move of time control and a lemon. Best was 40.g3 Rc7 41.Rd1 Re7 42.Re1! and it's still a long way to go before victory.

40...Qd4 41.g3 Qb4!

The upcoming Rook ending is a forced win. White must exchange Queens on b4. The newly created b4-pawn then holds both of White's Queenside pawns. Which means that I'm a passed pawn ahead with my Rook perfectly placed behind it. On the other hand if White's Rook were still on e1, he could defend his Queen with Rd1. That Rook ending with Black's pawn still on a5 is a likely draw as White's Queenside pawns are mobile.

42.Qxb4 axb4 43.Re1**43...g5!**

Forcing either an imbalance or more weaknesses on the Kingside. Once this is done my King can march up the board.

**44.f3 gxh4! 45.gxh4 Kg6
46.Kf2 Kf5 47.Rd1 Kf4****48.Rd2 f5!**

I'm anticipating a King and Pawn ending in which I exchange my d3-pawn for the f3-pawn. Then White will have to race a Queenside pawn against my f-pawn. My last move insures that the race will be unfair.

49.Rd1 d2 50.Ke2 Kg3 51.Rg1+!

The best try. Walter offers his h4-pawn as bait in order to construct a blockade, eg. 51...Kxh4? 52.Kd1! When suddenly White's Rook is free to journey around the board.

51...Kh2! 52.Rd1 f4!

The most precise. 52...Kg2 allows 53.f4!, with similar

variations to the last note. Now I simply threaten Kg2.

**53.Rxd2 Rxd2+ 54.Kxd2 Kg3 55.a4 bxa3 56.Kc3 Kxf3
57.b4 Ke4 58.b5 a2 0-1**

In spite of one or two very small inaccuracies, this was one of my best games from 1987.

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