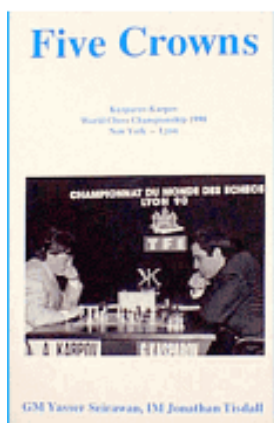


Inside Chess

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Yasser Annotates:

Yermolinsky - de Firmian, Parsippany 1996

This month, we are pleased to have “guest annotator” Larry Christiansen.

Alex Yermolinsky-Nick de Firmian

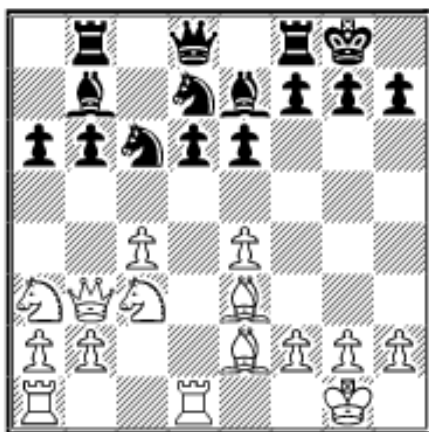
U.S. Championship, Parsippany (1) 1996

Sicilian Paulsen B44

1.c4

A statistical survey of Yermolinsky’s games since 1992 reveals that 1.c4 is his least frequent choice among 1.c4, 1.d4 or 1.Nf3.

1...c5 2.Nf3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nc6 5.Nb5 d6 6.e4 Nf6 7.N1c3 a6 8.Na3 Be7 9.Be2 O-O 10.O-O b6 11.Be3 Bb7 12.Qb3 Nd7 13.Rfd1 Rb8!?



13...Nc5 14.Qc2 Bf6 has been the sequence favored by theory. Nunn-Lautier, Monte Carlo 1995, proceeded 15.Rac1 Be5 16.Nab1 Qh4 17.g3 Qf6 18.f4 Bd4 19.Qd2 e5 20.Nd5 with roughly equal chances, while in Sammalvuo-P. Cramling, Reykjavik 1995, Black solved her opening problems by 15.Rac1 Bxc3 16.Qxc3 Nxe4 17.Qb3 Gb8 18.Bxb6 Qe7 19.Qe3 Ba8. GM de Firmian has a sharper plan in mind involving

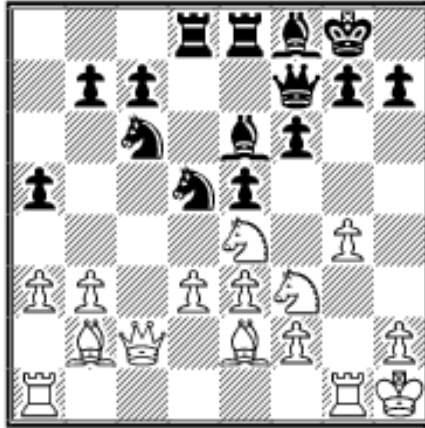
kingside expansion.

14.f3

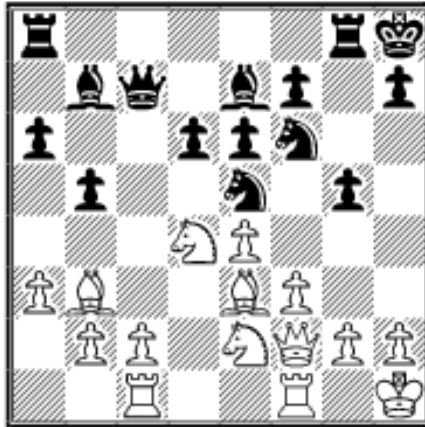
14.Rd2 at once is worth considering.

14...Kh8 15.Rd2 g5!?

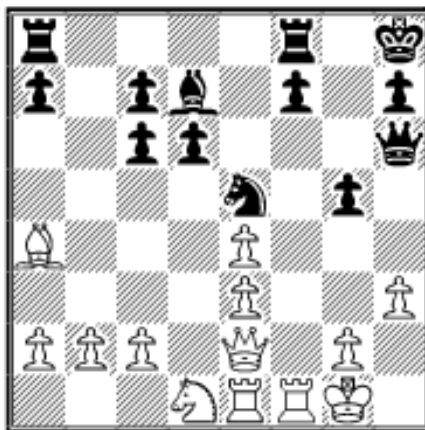
This very ambitious bid to create kingside counterplay is strikingly similar to a sequence from the famous game Fischer-Andersson, Siegen (TV exhibition) 1970: 1.b3 e5 2.Bb2 Nc6 3.c4 Nf6 4.e3 Be7 5.a3 O-O 6.Qc2 Re8 7.d3 Bf8 8.Nf3 a5 9.Be2 d5 10.cxd5 Nxd5 11.Nbd2 f6 12.O-O Be6 13.Kh1! Qd7 14.Rg1 Rad8 15.Ne4 Qf7 16.g4! (See next diagram)



A more obscure Fischer game (as Black) from the 1966 Havana Olympiad against Garcia Soruco went 1.e4 c5 2.Nf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Nxd4 Nf6 5.Nc3 a6 6.Bc4 e6 7.Bb3 b5 8.a3 Be7 9.Be3 O-O 10.O-O Bb7 11.f3?! Nbd7 12.Qd2 Ne5 13.Qf2 Qc7 14.Rac1 Kh8 15.Nce2 Rg8 16.Kh1 g5. (See next diagram)



Although the origin of this theme is popularly credited to Fischer, it is quite possible that he came across this idea in the game Paulsen-Morphy, New York 1857: 1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Nc3 Bc5 4.Bb5 d6 5.d4 exd4 6.Nxd4 Bd7 7.Nxc6 bxc6 8.Ba4 Qf6 9.O-O Ne7 10.Be3 Bxe3 11.fxe3 Qh6 12.Qd3 Ng6 13.Rae1 Ne5 14.Qe2 O-O 15.h3 Kh8 16.Nd1 g5 (See next diagram)



17.Nf2 Rg8 18.Nd3 g4 19.Nxe5 dxe5 20.hxg4 Bxg4 21.Qf2 Rg6 22.Qxf7 Be6 23.Qxc7 Rxg2+! 0-1 in 25. According to IM John Donaldson, *both* players played blindfolded, with Paulsen taking on three other opponents blindfolded at the same time, the only recorded instance of Morphy *receiving* odds. That concludes our history lesson for today. Back to the game.

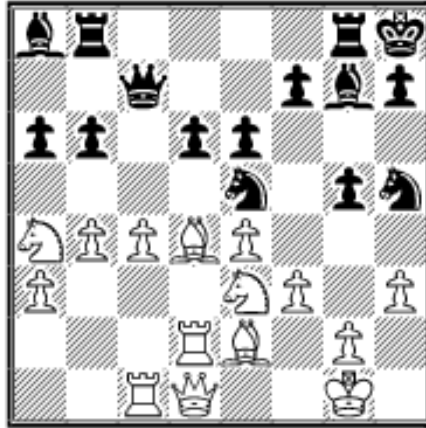
16.Qd1 Rg8 17.Nc2 Nce5

17...Qf8!?, preventing an exchange sacrifice on d6, is safer.

18.Bd4

18.Rxd6! Bxd6 19.Qxd6 looks like a very promising positional exchange sacrifice. On 19...Qf8 20.Rd1 Qxd6 21.Rxd6 Black will be hard put to defend against Bd4 (21...Kg7 22.Bxg5). And after 19...Rc8 20.Bd4! Rc6 21.Bxe5+ f6 22.Bxf6+ Nxf6 23.Qe5 White has plenty of compensation for the exchange.

18...Qc7 19.Ne3 Nf6 20.Rc1 Bf8 21.b4 Bg7 22.h3 Nh5 23.Na4 Ba8 24.a3



It sure looks like White is primed to do something here. The “drunken sailor” method, 24.c5 dxc5 25.bxc5 b5 26.Nb6 Bc6 27.Nbd5?! exd5 28.exd5 Bd7 29.c6 Bc8, falls just short. Maybe 24.Rcc2, opening the possibility of Qa1, was worth considering.

24...Nf4 25.Bf1 Rgf8

Hoping to achieve the desirable ...f7-f5.

26.Ng4

Logical; White decides to eliminate the powerful e5-knight.

26...Nxg4 27.hxg4 Bxd4+ 28.Rxd4 Rfd8 29.g3 Ng6 30.Kg2 Rbc8??

After this Black’s position collapses. Correct was 30...f6! with the idea of 31.Qd2 Ne5 32.Rcd1 Nf7 and a solid position for Black.

31.Qd2

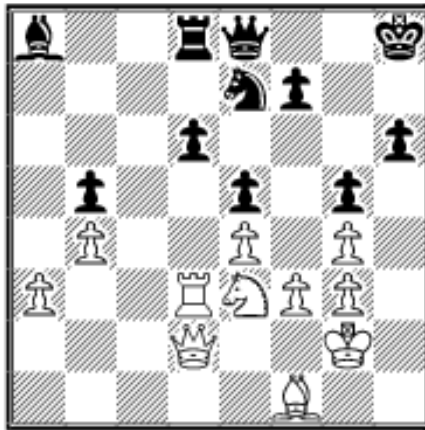
Black cannot defend d6 and g5 without making a terrible concession.

31...e5



The desperate 31...f5 is best handled by 32.gxf5 gxf5 33.Qxg5 fxe4 34.Qf6+ Kg8 35.c5 exf3+ 36.Kf2 bxc5 37.Nxc5 Qf7 38.Bc4 d5 39.Qxf7+ Kxf7 40.Bxa6 etc.

32.Rd3 b5 33.Nb2 h6 34.Rdc3 Ie7 35.Nd1 Qe8 36.Ne3 Ne7 37.cxb5 Rxc3 38.Rxc3 axb5 39.Rd3 (See next diagram)



39.Rc7 d5! 40.Bxb5 dxe4!

39...Qc6??

Considerable resistance was offered by 39...Qd7 with the idea of creating a fortress with ...Bc6. White's best plan in that case looks like Bf1-e2-d1-b3 for probing action against f7 to provoke ...f7-f6.

40.Nd5!

This forces the win of a pawn.

40...Nxd5 41.Rxd5 Qa6 42.Rxe5 Qxa3 43.Rxb5 Qa1 44.Ra5 Qg7 45.Qa2 Bb7 46.Ra7 f6 47.Ba6 Rd7 48.Qe6 Bc6 49.Rxd7

49.Qe8+ would have ended the agony sooner, e.g., 49...Kh7 50.Bd3 f5 51.e5 etc.

49...Bxd7 50.Qxd6 Qf7 51.Qd5 Be6 52.Qd4?

Falling for one of the few tricks in the position; now White has to go back to work.

52...Bxg4! 53.Be2 Bd7 54.b5 Qe6 55.Kf2 Kg7 56.g4 Qe7 57.Bc4 Be6 58.Bd5 Qd6 59.Kg2 h5 60.gxh5 Bd7 61.b6 Qf4 62.b7 g4 63.Qf2 Kh6 64.e5!

Without this the win would be in doubt. The point is 64...Qxe5 65.b8=Q! Qxb8 66.Qe3+ with forced mate in four, or 65...gxf3+ 66.Bxf3 Qxb8 67.Qe3+ with mate in six.

64...g3 65.Qxg3 Qd2+ 66.Kh1 1-0



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