



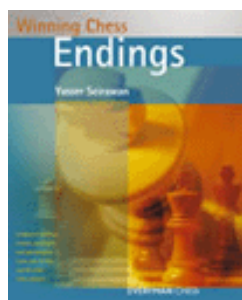
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C O L U M N I S T S

Inside Chess

Yasser Seirawan

*Winning Chess Endings*

by Yasser Seirawan

Yasser Annotates:

Short - Speelman, London qf (m4) 1988

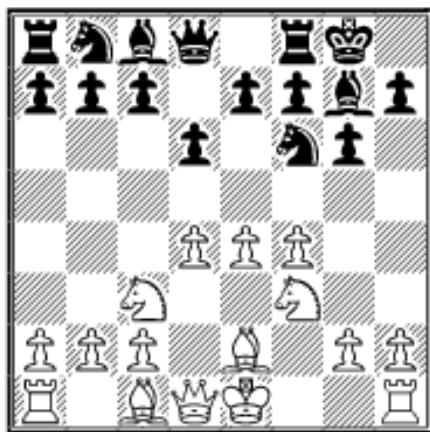
Nigel Short - Jonathan Speelman

London 1988, Candidates' Quarterfinal (m4)

Pirc [B09]

1.e4 d6 2.d4 g6 3.Nc3 Bg7 4.f4

Initiating the Austrian Attack against the Pirc. Nigel has a surprise in mind. Despite its aggressive reputation this treatment usually flows into sedate strategic waters. White has an array of sharper continuations at his disposal.

4...Nf6 5.Nf3 O-O 6.Be2!?

Nigel tries an old weapon from the sixties. Today, it's recognized that the bishop is better placed at d3. In such cases, Black has tried 6...Na6 with the idea of ...c7-c5 and possible harassment with ...Na6-b4. Or 6...Nc6 with the idea of ...e7-e5 and again ...Nc6-b4. The theoretical jury is still out on whether Black has equality or not. I prefer White and therefore play 5...c5.

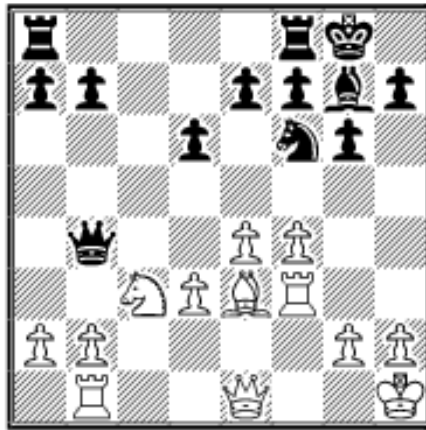
6...c5 7.dxc5 Qa5 8.O-O Qxc5+ 9.Kh1 Nc6 10.Bd3

Seemingly wasting a tempo. As opposed to the main 5...c5 lines White leaves his bishop on c1, thereby slowing down Black's queenside counterplay. If Black isn't careful White will marshal his pieces for a kingside attack by Qd1-e1-h4 and f4-f5. Black naturally seeks to exchange some pieces. An extremely provocative idea by Black is: 10...e5!? 11.f5 gxf5 12.Bg5! f4 (12...Nxe4 13.Bxe4) 13.Nh4 Ng4!? 14.Nf5 with crazy complications.

10...Bg4 11.Qe1 Bxf3 12.Rxf3 Nb4 13.Be3

White could also consider burning his positional bridges by 13.f5 ceding e5 but opening up the c1-h6 diagonal.

13...Nxd3 14.cxd3 Qb4 15.Rb1



A typical middlegame has been reached. White's last move was an unfortunate necessity that gives Black a number of tactical possibilities based upon the pinned b2-pawn. White's plan is straightforward. He wants to step on Black's king. First, with a center roll by d3-d4 and e4-e5 booting away the knight and then a mating attack against h7 in combination with the moves Qe1-h4 and Rf3-h3 or with Nc3-d5-e7+ and a sacrifice against h7.

Clearly, Black can't sit idly by. His counterplay consists of action along the c-file and a queenside pawn storm. The linchpin of his plans revolves around the instability of White's knight. Also, if White overpresses his cards in the center, Black can hope for counter-chances there. To sum up, the game will be decided by who comes up with the best long, well thought out, attacking plan.

15...a5 16.f5?

The first real blow of the game and an incorrect one. White has a very crafty move up his sleeve with 16.Bg1!! This would prepare for a discovered attack against Black's queen as well as prevent an exchange of queens from taking place with check: e.g., 16.Bg1 Nd7?? 17.Nd5 and Nxe7+ or 16.Bg1 a4 17.a3 Qb3? 18.d4 opening up the lateral possibilities for White's rook. What I really like about 16.Bg1 is White buckles up his seatbelt for the turbulence ahead. My final point is that White can't expect his attack to work with the knight on f6. He must involve his center with d3-d4 and e4-e5. By 16.Bg1 White stops the potential attack ...Nf6-g4.

16...Rac8 17.Bg1

Preventing Black's threat of 17...Ng4 and ...Bxc3 if possible.

17...a4?

Shortsighted. Black has a marvelous opportunity to undo Whites's attack with 17...e6!. White's queen is fastened to the defense of the rook on b1. White can't allow Black to play ...exf5 and ...Rfe8 when Black has everything. While 18.fxe6 fxe6 19.a3 Qb3 20.d4 Nh5 is better for Black.

18.a3 Qb3 19.Bd4?!

Nigel spurns a likely repetition by 19.d4 Qc2 20.Rf2 Qb3 21.Rf3. This last move seems like one that had been prepared beforehand. On the surface it appears to be a nice concept. White reinforces his problem area, b2 and c3 and aims at Black's king. The bishop on d4 is invulnerable to attack and Black's a-pawn attack has been anticipated at home. The problem is that in combination with f4-f5 this attack doesn't work. Instead, White should shift gears and use his trumps; his more mobile center and Black's weakened queenside. My choice is 19.Qd1! Qxd1 20.Rxd1 Ra8 21.d4 with a clear edge to White

19...e6!

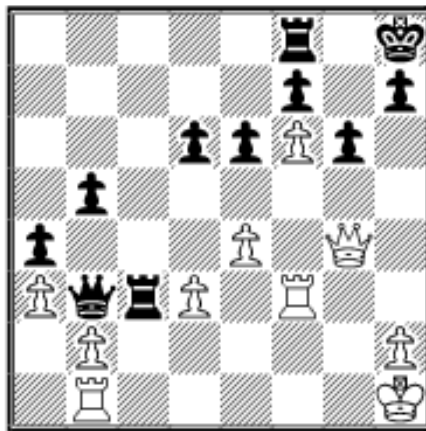
Controlling d5.

20.Qg1

Nigel is preparing himself for a long-winded tactical skirmish.

20...b5 21.g4 Nxc4! 22.f6?

Unquestionably, Nigel had thought it was checkmate with 22.Bxg7 Kxg7 23.Qxg4 Rxc3 24.f6+ Kh8 (24...Kg8 25.Qg5)



Analysis

Around here, Nigel probably analyzed lines like 25.Qg5 Rxd3! or 25.Qg3 (threatening Rbf1 and Qg5, mating) 25...Rfc8 26.Qxd6 with both players holding dangerous threats. It seems White should try 25.Qh3 hoping for Rfc8? 26.Qh6 Rg8 and 27.Qxh7+ instead 25.Qh3 h5 26.Qg3 and a new threat appears: 26...Rfc8? 27.Qg5 Kh7 28.Rh3! and Black can't prevent mate!

If Black tries 26...Rcc5 27.d4 Qc2 28.Re1 gives White the necessary tempos for a winning attack! Great! Then Nigel saw the correct defense: 25.Qh3 Rc5!! 26.Qh6 Rg8 27.Rh3 Rh5 28.Rxh5 gxh5 29.Rg1 Rxg1+ 30.Kxg1 Qd1+ 31.Kf2 Qc2+ and the game is drawn by perpetual. After further investigations, Nigel probably returned to the position at hand, discouraged and a point down he decided to gamble with an extra piece. This was the moment that cost him the match. The game continuation favored Black.

22.f6? Nxf6 23.Bxf6 Bxf6 24.Rxf6 b4!

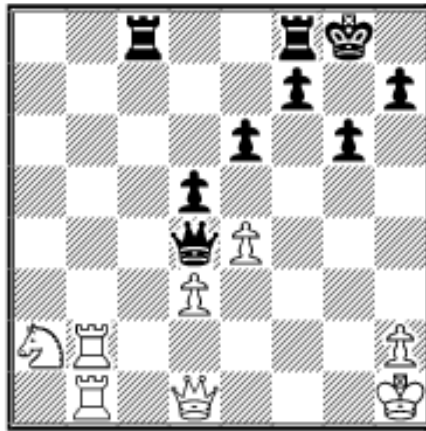
White's attack on the kingside has run out of gas, while Black's counter-

attack is beginning to rev up.

25.axb4 a3 26.Qd1 Qxb4 27.Rff2 axb2 28.Na2

White's problem is returning with his knight to clothe his naked king. Black has a raging initiative, plus White is in time trouble.

28...Qd4 29.Rfxb2 d5!



This move removes any losing chances from the position for Black.

30.Rb4?

This makes things easy. White is still kicking after 30.Qf3.

30...Qa7! 31.Nc1 dxe4 32.dxe4 Qe3 33.Qg1 Qf3+ 34.Qg2 Qd1+ 35.Qg1 Rfd8 36.Nb3 Qf3+ 37.Qg2 Rd1+

38.Rxd1 Qxd1+ 39.Qg1 Qe2 40.h3 Rc2 0-1

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