



COLUMNISTS

Inside Chess

Yasser Seirawan

*Winning Chess
Combinations*

by Yasser Seirawan

Yasser Annotates:

Ivanchuk - Seirawan, Novi Sad 1990

Vassily Ivanchuk, URS (2680) - Yasser Seirawan, USA (2635)

Novi Sad ol (7) 1990

Caro-Kann [B19]

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.Nc3 dxe4 4.Nxe4 Bf5 5.Ng3 Bg6 6.h4 h6 7.Nf3 Nd7 8.h5 Bh7 9.
Bd3 Bxd3 10.Qxd3 Ngf6



More common is 10...Qc7 in order to prevent Bc1-f4. I wanted to forego ...Qd8-c7, intending to use the extra tempo for a ...c6-c5 break.

11.Bf4

Taking advantage of my omission. Standard now is 11...Qa5+ 12.Bd2 Qc7 transposing to main lines.

11...e6 -12.0-0-0 Be7 13.c4!?

A little surprising. It's clear that Black intends to castle short; both sides will scramble to mate the other's king. The text voluntarily weakens White's pawn shield. After 13.Kb1 0-0 14.Ne4 Nxe4 15.Qxe4 or 14.Ne5, White has a space advantage.

13...b5!?

A difficult strategic decision. By forcing White to lock the queenside with c4-c5, Black has almost no queenside play. In return he earns the d5-square and will play for a center-break, most likely ...e6-e5.

14.c5!

Taking the pawn by 14.cxb5? cxb5 15.Qxb5 -O-O is suicidal for White, as he just exposes his king.

--14...0-0 15.Kb1! a5!



Black's "attack" on the queenside is going nowhere. Nonetheless, experience has shown that, for the ending and late middlegame, Black should create a queenside wedge. In a somewhat cramped position Black's strategy



will be to trade pairs of pieces.

16.Bc1!

Excellent play. White avoids all exchanges while vacating the f4-square for Ng1-e2-f4, when possible sacrifices will abound. The “normal” 16.Ne4 Nxe4 17.Qxe4 Rc8 18.Ne5

Nf6 19.Qe2 Nd5 20.Bc1 a4 or 20...Bg5 just helps Black.

16...a4 17.Ne2 Qb8!

A multi-purpose move. Black prepares his ...e6-e5 break, while he plans ...Rf8-d8, threatening ...Nd7xc5. White’s queen is a bit embarrassed for squares, if she retreats by Qd3-c2, then ...b5-b4-b3 becomes a possibility. On another note, Black had to avoid the trap 17...Ng4? 18.Rhf1 Ndf6 19.Ne1!. Now the h5-pawn is poison because of f2-f3 and g2-g4. So the f6-square needs to be cleared: 19...Nd5 20.f3 Ngf6 21.g4 with a good game for White.

18.g4?!

Ivanchuk loses patience. More natural is 18.Nf4! Rd8 19.Qc2 b4 20.Qc4 Nd5 21.Nxd5 exd5 22.Qd3 with an edge for White. Having spent some time on the previous move thinking about ...Nf6-g4, I was happy to go there and gain a pawn to boot.

18...Nxc4

The challenge must be accepted by Black since g4-g5 is a killer.

19.Rdg1



With all of White’s pieces pointing at my king and my teammate “the Fed” going down in flames, things did not look good for our side. However, on closer inspection, Black has gotten precisely the kind of position he wants. I couldn’t break through on the queenside, the center-break was still being prepared, but now the kingside exploded. Black is a pawn up, but, more importantly, White’s position is riddled with weaknesses. If Black can handle all of White’s threats, he can pocket the point!

19...f5!

A crucial defensive reaction. Black keeps the blockade along the g-file, while the rook on f8 performs some defensive duties. Grabbing things with 19...Nxf2? does not work because of 20.Qc2!! (20.Qe3 Nxf1 21.Rxg7+ (21.Qxh6 Ng3) 21...Kxg7 22.Qxh6+ Kg8 is not clearly mate. 23.Ng5 Bxg5 24.Qxg5+ is only perpetual). The purpose of 20.Qc2!! is to keep the bishop on c1 alive. Now 20...Nxf1 21.Bxh6 Bf6 22.Nf4! Rd8 23.Bxg7 Bxg7 24.Nxe6 fxe6? 25.Rxg7+ has all the earmarks of a tremendous crush. Having confidence in Ivanchuk’s tactical ability, I shoved my f-pawn.

20.Nf4!

The only move. White has no time for timidity, as 20.Rg2 a3!? 21.b3 e5! shakes White's position to its roots.

20...Rf7!

Once again, the diagnosis after 20...Nxf2 21.Qc2! Nxf1 22.Nxe6 Rf7 23.Bxh6 Bf6 24.Bf4 Qc8 25.h6 looks terminal for me. These variations were doing a good job of tempering my usual greedy instincts.

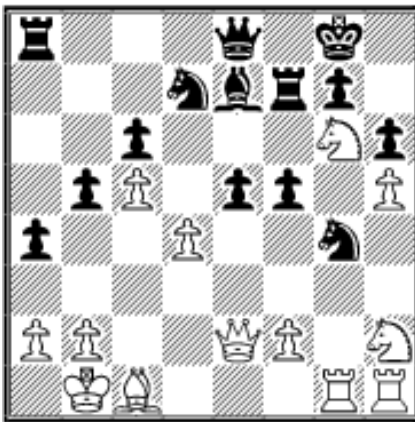
21.Qe2 e5??

Played without a second thought. I'd been building up to this break for so long that the idea had become rooted in my consciousness. I thought the game was going to end with the black pawns marching up the board and routing the white forces. After the normal 21...Nf8! 22.Nxe6 Bf6, intending ...Qb8-e8, the weaknesses in White's position would become alarmingly clear: 23.Nxf8 Qxf8 24.Qe6?! Qc8 with a big edge to Black. My *idée fixe* has a terrible hole.

22.Ng6!

Pow! Now my intended 22...e4 is executed by 23.Nxe7+ Rxe7 24.Nh4 (This is what I missed.) 24...Qf8 (24...Rf7 25.Nxf5) 25.Ng6 Qf7 26.Nxe7+ Qxe7 27.f3! wins on the spot. After sponging off my red face, I bent to the task of saving the game.

22...Qe8! 23.Nh2?



White misses his chance! With the simple 23. Nfxe5 Ndx5!? 24.dxe5 Bxc5 25.Rg2! Black is in real trouble. White's threat of f2-f3 will clear the g-file when a lot of bad things could happen.

23...Nxb2 24.Rxb2 Kh7

Black's position is still no bargain. With time trouble just around the corner, I began looking for exchanges.

25.f3!

The most unpleasant. If 25.dxe5, then Nxc5 intending ...Nc5-e6, e.g. 26.e6 Rf6 27.Nf4 Bd6 28.Rhg2 Ra7! and Black holds. Also, 25.Nxe5? Bxc5! helps Black.

25...Bf8

Black must remain passive: 25...Bf6? 26.dxe5 27.Re1 is a nasty pin on the e-file.

26.Re1

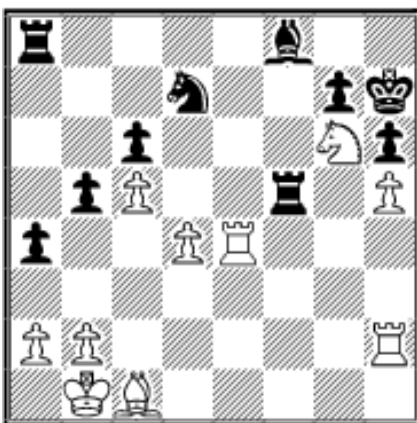
Again, any clarification on e5 just helps Black.

26...e4!

A sensible time pressure decision. Trade queens! Black now threatens ...Nd7-f6 keeping

his extra pawn.

27.fxe4 Qxe4+ 28.Qxe4 fxe4 29.Rxe4 Rf5!?



Black is beginning to slip away. The only question now was how important time-trouble would be.

30.Re6?

Misplacing the rook. I feared the simple 30. Rf4, keeping a grip on the position.

30...Rc8 31.Kc2 Kg8 32.Bd2?! Kf7 33.Ree2 Nf6 34.Ref2 ½-½

With both players having a minute or less to reach time-control, neither player wanted to risk the righteous anger of his teammates by suffering a last-second loss. After 34...Rd5 35.Rh4 Be7, intending ...Be7-d8-c7, Black has a pull.

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