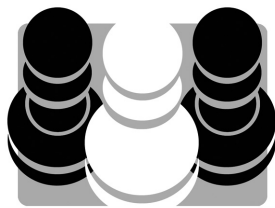


*Grandmaster Repertoire*

# The Dragon 2

By

Gawain Jones



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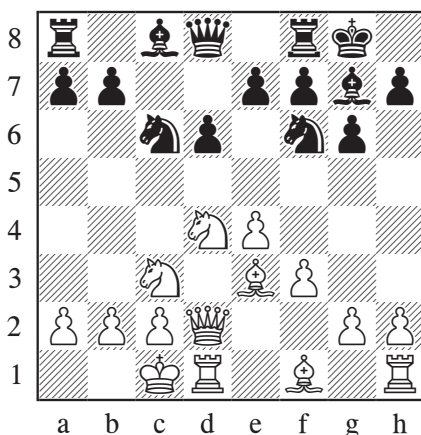
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# Introduction to 9.0–0–0

Welcome to Volume 2! This book continues where the first left off, by providing a complete repertoire against all of White's alternatives to the Yugoslav Attack with 9.♘c4 and 9.g4. Volume 1 contains both a preface and a detailed thematic introduction to the Dragon and, since the two books are complementary halves of a single work, I will not take up space duplicating them here.

I would, however, like to say a few things about the most important topic of the present volume, namely the position after the opening moves: 1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4 ♞f6 5.♞c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7 7.f3 0–0 8.♚d2 ♞c6 9.0–0–0



Coverage of this critical variation spans the first seven chapters. In my own praxis I have faced 9.0–0–0 more often than any other system. I think this is due to practical considerations: the 9.♘c4 lines are razor-sharp and White needs to remember a lot of theory, whereas here the play tends to be more positional.

## 9...d5

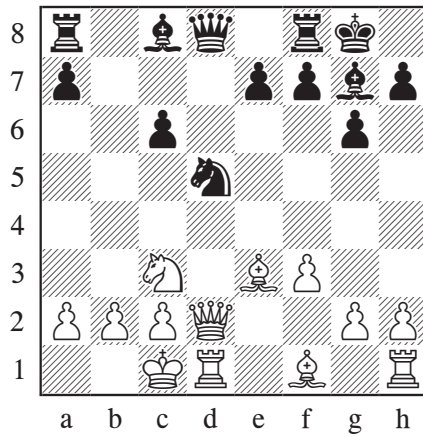
Typically in the Dragon, when we get the chance to execute the ...d5 break we should take it.

## 10.exd5

10.♞b1 received a flurry of interest some years ago, but in Chapter 5 I will show a good way to neutralize it.

10.♚e1 used to be popular but then fell out of fashion. However, it has recently attracted the attention of some strong players. The positions after 10...e5 11.♞xc6 bxc6 12.exd5 ♞xd5 have definite similarities to the old main line; see Chapter 6 for further details.

## 10...♞xd5 11.♞xc6 bxc6



### 12. ♖d4

12. ♖d5 cxd5 13. ♗xd5 ♖c7 is covered in Chapters 3 and 4. Taking the material, whether just the pawn or grabbing the black rooks for the white queen as well, is dangerous for White. The open lines on the queenside give Black easy counterplay against White's king.

The text move is White's main try and, in my view, the current main line of the entire Dragon.

### 12... ♗xd4

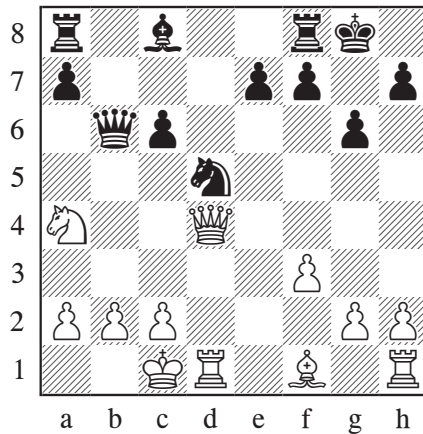
12... e5 13. ♗c5 ♗e6 used to be the main line but Black was suffering rather.

### 13. ♗xd4 ♖b6

White will try to exploit his better structure and the outpost on c5, but Black has his own trumps.

### 14. ♘a4

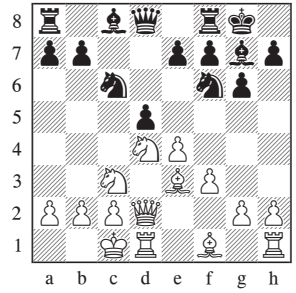
White's other tries are covered in Chapter 1.



From this important position I have covered two options in detail. The slightly offbeat 14... ♗a5 15. b3 ♗e6!? is presented in Chapter 1 and the more popular 14... ♗c7 can be found in Chapter 2.

# Chapter 7

## 9.0-0-0



## Offbeat Alternatives

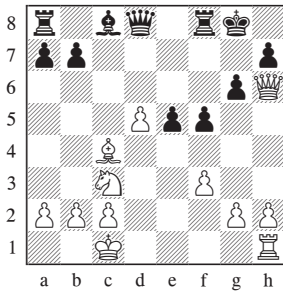
### Variation Index

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7  
7.f3 0-0 8.♚d2 ♘c6 9.0-0-0

9...d5

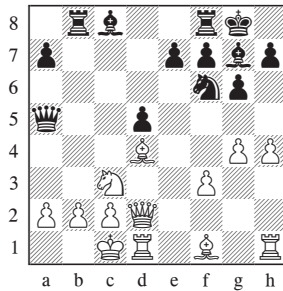
|                 |     |
|-----------------|-----|
| A) 10.♙e2       | 129 |
| B) 10.♙h6       | 130 |
| C) 10.h4        | 130 |
| D) 10.♘xc6 bxc6 | 133 |
| D1) 11.h4       | 134 |
| D2) 11.♙h6      | 135 |

B) after 15.♙c4



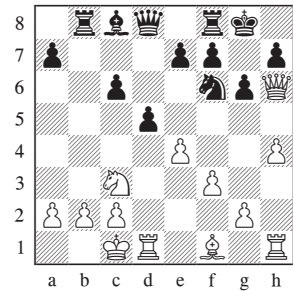
15...♚f6N

D1) after 14.g4



14...♘e4!N

D2) note to 13.e5



13...♚a5!N

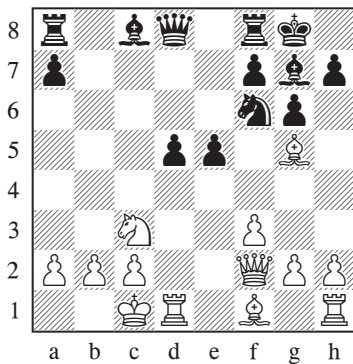
1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6  
5.♗c3 g6 6.♙e3 ♙g7 7.f3 0–0 8.♚d2 ♗c6  
9.0–0–0 d5

In this final chapter on 9.0–0–0 d5, we will deal with the rare options: **A) 10.♙e2**, **B) 10.♙h6**, **C) 10.h4** and **D) 10.♗xc6**.

10.♗xd5 ♗xd5 11.♗xc6 bxc6 12.exd5 cxd5 would transpose to variation B of Chapter 3.

10.♗b3?! puts absolutely no pressure on Black. After 10...dxe4 11.♚xd8 ♗xd8 12.♗xd8† ♗xd8 13.♗xe4 (13.fxe4 b6) 13...♗xe4 14.fxe4 b6 the endgame favours Black, as he will be able to put pressure on the e4-pawn.

10.♚f2? e5 11.♗xc6 bxc6 gives White a much worse version of the 10.♚e1 line, as 12.exd5 can now be met by 12...cxd5† when 13.♙g5 no longer comes with a discovered attack on the e5-pawn. The following game is a good illustration of how bad White's position has already become:

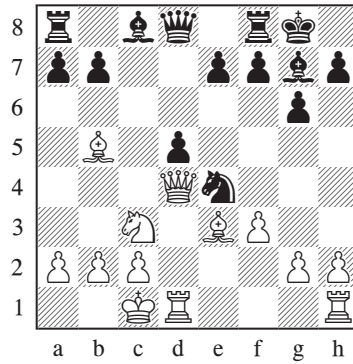


13...d4 14.♚h4 ♚b6 15.♗e4 ♗xe4 16.fxe4 ♙e6 17.♗b1 ♗f8 18.♙d3 ♗ab8 19.♙c1 ♗c3! 20.♗d2 ♙xa2† 21.♗xa2 ♗a3† 22.♗b1 ♚a5 0–1 Sanchez Piquero – Gonzalez Valdes, Asturias 1987.

10.♙b5?!

This move encourages Black to trade knights but the ensuing structure favours Black.

10...♗xd4 11.♙xd4  
11.♚xd4 ♗xe4!N

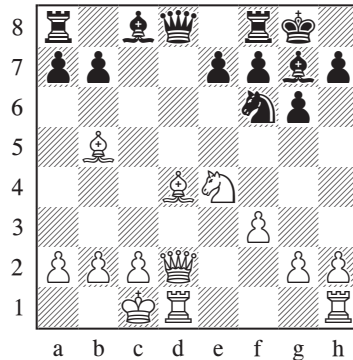


12.♚xd5 ♗d6† Black will gain time against White's queen and has good attacking prospects.

11...dxe4 12.♗xe4

12.♙xf6? ♚xd2† 13.♗xd2 exf6† White loses material due to the threat of ...♙h6.

12.fxe4 ♙e6† also favours Black due to White's loose e4-pawn and the potentially strong outpost on e5.



12...♗xe4 13.fxe4 ♙xd4 14.♚xd4 ♚a5  
15.♚a4 ♚c7†

Paolini – Casafus, Buenos Aires 1994.

10.g4 dxe4! 11.♗xc6

This is White's only way to maintain the balance.

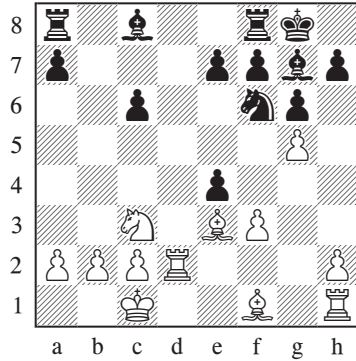
11.g5 seems consistent with White's last, but 11...♗d5† is just good for Black.

11. ♖f2 ♜xd4 12. ♙xd4 ♚a5≠ left White a pawn down in Soltes – Baranek, Slovakia 1998.

11... ♖xd2† 12. ♞xd2?!

12. ♙xd2N would have stopped the knight from going to d5 with tempo. 12... bxc6 13. g5 ♜d5 14. ♜xe4 a5=

12... bxc6 13. g5



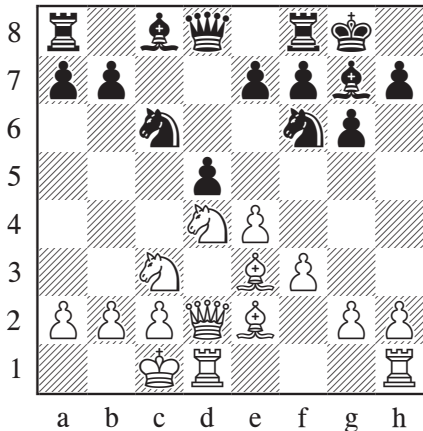
13... ♜d5! 14. ♜xd5 cxd5 15. ♞xd5

In Strater – Toel, Duisburg 2005, there was no reason not to take the pawn:

15... exf3N

With a clear advantage to Black.

A) 10. ♙e2



White connects his rooks but this inoffensive move does not challenge Black at all.

10... ♜xd4 11. ♙xd4 dxe4 12. fxe4

12. ♖g5 was played in Munksgaard – Carlstedt, Odense 2012. White's last didn't actually threaten anything, so I would simply develop with 12... ♙e6!N.

12. ♜xe4 ♜xe4 13. fxe4 ♙xd4 14. ♖xd4 ♚a5 was already more pleasant for Black in Bertusi – Havas, Novi Vinodolski 2009.

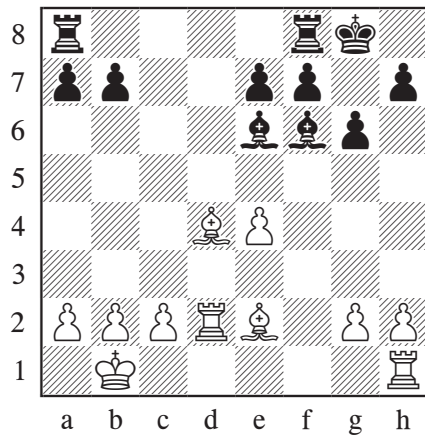
12... ♚a5 13. ♜b1 ♙e6 14. ♜d5

14. ♙xf6 is probably White's best, but it's clear that he is already angling for a draw. 14... ♙xf6 (14... exf6!? is also interesting) 15. ♜d5 ♚a4 (15... ♖xd2N 16. ♜xf6† exf6 17. ♞xd2 ♞fd8=) 16. ♖e3 ♞fd8= jin38 – cordo, Internet 2013.

14... ♖xd2 15. ♜xf6†

After 15. ♜xe7†?! ♜h8 16. ♞xd2 ♜xe4 17. ♙xg7† ♜xg7 18. ♞d4 ♜f6 White's knight is extremely offside.

15... ♙xf6 16. ♞xd2



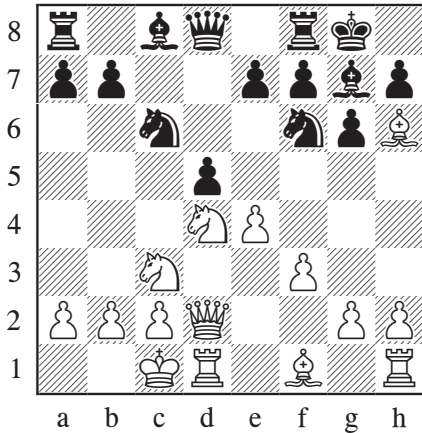
16... ♞ad8!

This accurate move gave Black the better chances in Prestage – Vaassen, email 2003. The reason for preferring the queen's rook is revealed after:

17. c3N ♙xd4 18. cxd4 f5!≠

Black has the more pleasant ending.

### B) 10.♔h6



White immediately decides to trade bishops but he loses control of the centre.

### 10...♙xh6

10...dxe4 is a straightforward alternative which comfortably equalizes: 11.♙xg7 ♗xg7 12.♘xc6 (12.fxe4 ♖xd4 13.♖xd4 ♘xd4 14.♙xd4 e5 15.♙c4 ♙d7= Holmsten – Gambäck, Stockholm 1999) 12...♖xd2† 13.♙xd2 (13.♙xd2 bxc6 14.fxe4 ♙e6=) 13...bxc6 14.♘xe4 ♘xe4† 15.fxe4 ♙d8† 16.♙d3 ♙g4= Sulskis – Gomez, Calvia 2006.

### 11.♖xh6 ♘xd4 12.♙xd4

12.e5?? is a typical intermezzo in these structures, but here it just loses to 12...♘f5! as in Simovic – Pletanek, Decin 1997.

### 12...e5

White's best chance is to sacrifice the exchange.

### 13.♙xd5!

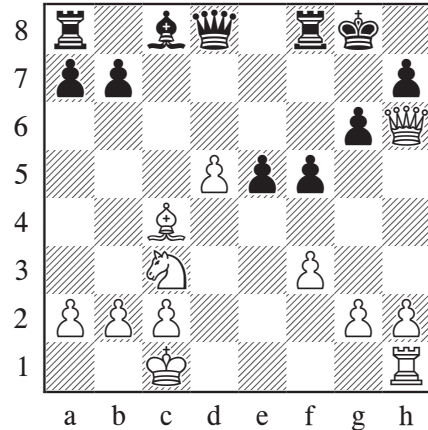
Instead 13.♙d1 is much more common but 13...d4♣ is comfortable for Black.

### 13...♘xd5 14.exd5

White has compensation for the exchange but no more.

### 14...f5 15.♙c4

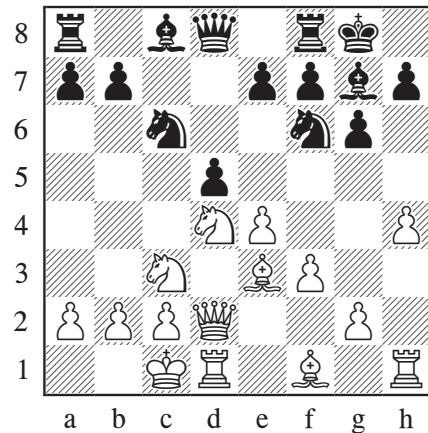
In Schulz Streeck – Soujon, Germany 1997, Black should have played:



### 15...♖f6N

Controlling several important squares. Black has a solid position with good chances to build on his material advantage.

### C) 10.h4



White immediately goes for the kingside attack, but it is not at all dangerous as Black's central play is already underway.

### 10...dxe4 11.h5

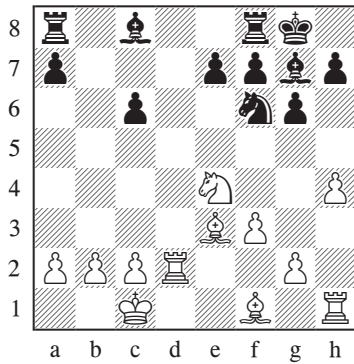
After 11.fxe4?! ♘g4 White's kingside has too many holes.



11. ♖xe4? has been played a few times but 11... ♖xe4 12. fxe4 ♙xd4!N 13. ♙xd4 ♙g4!→ wins material.

11. ♖xc6 ♗xd2† 12. ♗xd2  
12. ♙xd2?! bxc6 13. fxe4 ♖g4 14. ♗e1 ♙e6  
favoured Black in Roux – Goulenok,  
Montigny le Bretonneux 1999.

12...bxc6 13. ♖xe4



13... ♖xe4N

13... ♖d5!? is the move if you wish to keep more material on the board. White should reply: 14. ♙c5N (In Murray Ortiz – Ericsson, Guarapuava 1995, White immediately erred with 14. ♙d4? ♙h6†) 14... ♗b8 White has the slightly better structure but Black's piece activity is enough to maintain the balance. (14... ♙h6?! is less accurate in view of 15. c4 ♖f6 16. ♖xf6† exf6 17. ♙xf8 ♖xf8 18. ♙d3±.)

14. fxe4 ♙e6

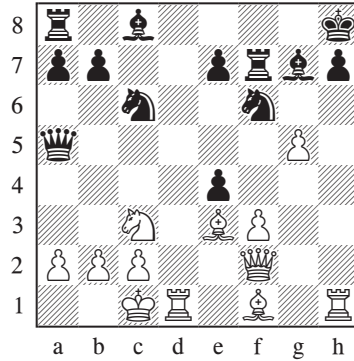
The endgame is balanced, for instance:

15. ♙a6 ♗ab8 16. b3 h5 17. ♖b1 ♙e5 18. ♙c5 ♗fe8=

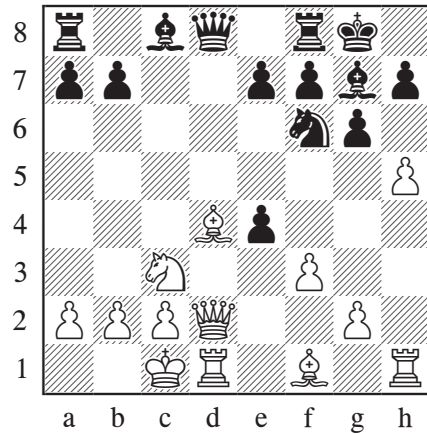
11... ♖xd4 12. ♙xd4

12. h6 ♙h8 (12... ♖e6!N could also be considered) 13. ♙xd4 exf3 14. gxf3 occurred in Escofet Fernandez – Izquierdo, Uruguay 1982. I think 14... ♗c7!N is best, taking control over the c4-square, with an edge to Black.

12. hxg6? is an enterprising piece sacrifice but White's attack is not strong enough. 12... ♖c6 13. gxf7† ♖h8 14. ♗f2 ♗a5 15. g4 ♗xf7 16. g5



16... ♖g4! 17. ♗h4 ♙xc3!→ Rasidovic – Riemersma, Caorle 1989.



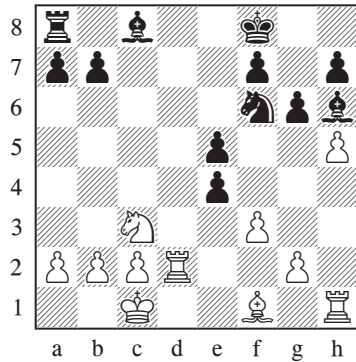
12...e5!

This is the simplest way to defuse White's initiative.

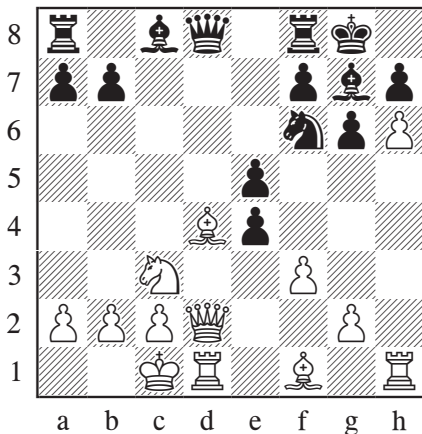
13. h6

13. ♙xe5 ♗xd2† 14. ♗xd2 favours Black after: 14... e3! 15. ♗d3 (15. ♗d6?! ♖xh5 16. ♙xg7 ♖xg7 17. g4 ♖g3† Britton – W. Watson, London 1982) 15... ♖xh5 16. ♙xg7 ♖xg7 17. ♗xe3 ♖g3 18. ♗g1 This was Donchev – Semkov, Varna 1982, and now Belov's suggestion of 18... ♙e6N gives Black slightly better chances in the ending.

13.♔c5 has only been tested in correspondence play but it seems to be White's best. The position liquidates into an equal ending:  
13...♖xd2† 14.♗xd2 ♕h6! 15.♕xf8 ♖xf8



16.hxg6 ♕xd2† 17.♖xd2 hxg6 (17...fxg6!? 18.♗xe4 ♗xe4† 19.fxe4 h5 was also level in Bujan Mosteiro – Diani, email 2009) 18.♗xe4 ♖e7 19.♗xf6 ♖xf6 20.♗h8 b6 21.♕c4 ♕b7= Jenull – Thannheiser, email 2007.

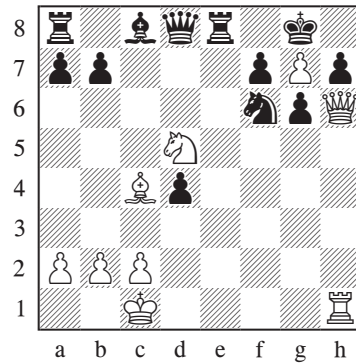


13...exd4! 14.hxg7 ♖e8!

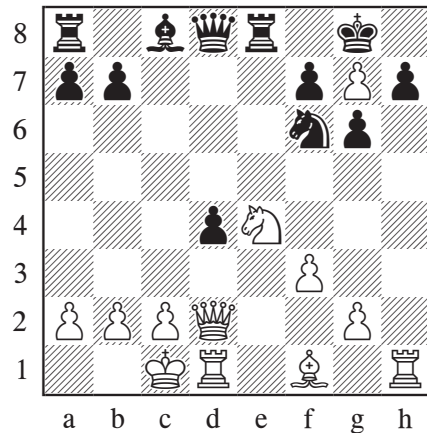
The position might look scary with a pawn on g7 but White cannot exploit it.

15.♗xe4

In another game White went all in for mate:  
15.♖h6 exf3 16.♕c4? (16.gxf3 ♕f5) 16...fxg2 17.♗d5 gxh1=♖ 18.♗xh1



White has sacrificed everything for a speculative attack. However 18...♖e1†!–+ must have come as a cold shower in Llaneza Vega – Moranda, Herceg Novi 2005. (In fact 18...♗h5!N is also winning: 19.♗xh5 ♖e1† 20.♖d2 ♖d1†! 21.♖xd1 ♕g4† 22.♕e2 ♕xh5–+)



15...♗xe4 16.fxe4 ♖f6!

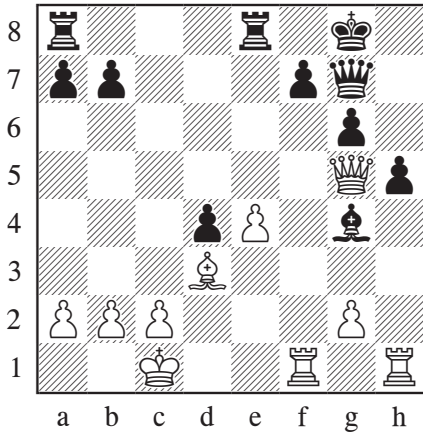
With the queen coming to the aid of the king, Black has nothing to fear.

17.♕d3

17.♖xd4 ♖f4† 18.♖b1 ♕g4 19.♖e1 ♖ad8 20.♖xa7 ♖xe4! ♖ Hernaez Fernandez – Montella, corr. 2003.

17...♕g4 18.♖df1 ♖xg7 19.♖g5 h5

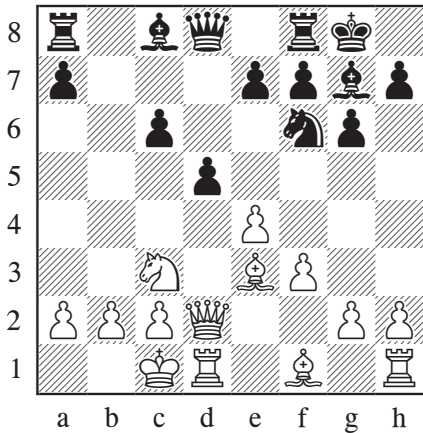
Black is safe on the kingside and is still a pawn up, but White has just enough activity to hold on to equality.



20. Bxf6 Re6 21. Bhf1 Bxf6 22. Bxf6 Re8  
23. e5 Re6=

Zupec – Ravnik, email 2006.

D) 10. Qxc6 bxc6



The knight exchange strengthens Black's centre and opens the b-file. In return, White hopes to gain time for his kingside attack. He may proceed with D1) 11. h4 and D2) 11. Qh6.

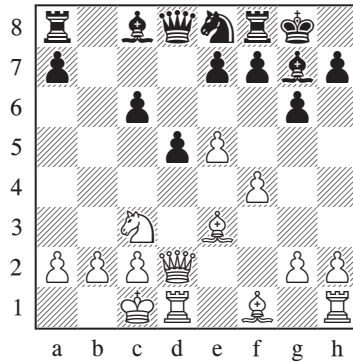
11. g4 Qc7!N 12. g5 Qh5 13. exd5 Bd8+ is promising for Black.

11. exd5 may transpose to the main lines if Black recaptures with the knight, but 11... cxd5 seems like a logical way to limit White's

options; there is nothing better than 12. Qxd5 Qxd5 13. Qxd5, transposing to variation B of Chapter 3.

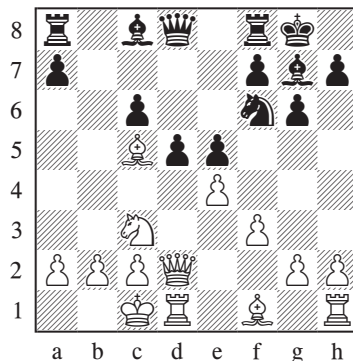
11. Qc4 White exploits the pin to bring his bishop to b3. 11... e6 12. Qb3 Qb7= On the one hand the bishop blocks Black's play down the b-file, but it also finds itself shut out of play by Black's central pawns.

11. e5 Qe8 would be good for White if he could keep the bishop hemmed in, but Black can fight back immediately. 12. f4 (12. Qf4 was tried in Niewold – Decallonne, corr. 1989, but 12... Qc7!N followed by ... Qe6 looks strong)



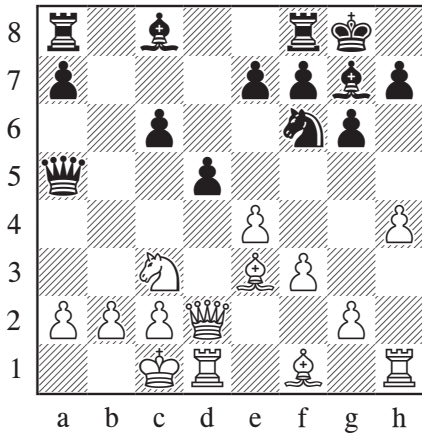
12... f6 13. exf6 In Shurunov – Sarana, Dagomys 2009, 13... Qxf6N would have been the right recapture. Black intends ... Qa5, ... Bb8 and ... Qd6, with a good position.

A final option is: 11. Qd4 e5! 12. Qc5



12...♙e6!?N (I find 12...d4 a bit too committal, even though it worked extremely well in its only practical encounter: 13.♙xf8?! ♖xf8 14.♘b1?? ♙h6 0-1 Pereira – Teixeira, Vila Real 2005) 13.♙xf8 ♖xf8 Black has great play for the exchange; just look at his central dominance and easy play down the b-file.

### D1) 11.h4 ♖a5!



Black's quick play along the b-file means his attack is faster.

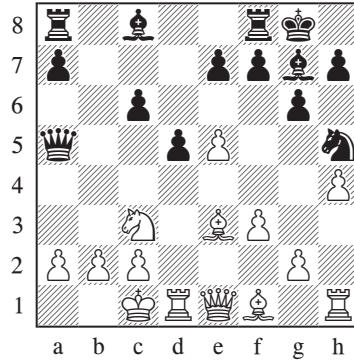
### 12.exd5

12.♙b1 has been tried, but after 12...♖b8 the pressure against b2 forced White to play 13.b3 in Stratil – Dobias, Bratislava 1992. Here I like 13...♖b4!?N, putting pressure on the e4-pawn. 14.e5 (14.exd5 ♖d8) 14...♘h5 White has to sacrifice the pawn as 15.f4? ♘g3 16.♖g1 f6! would be terrible for him.

12.h5 was played in M. Filippov – Ponomarev, St Petersburg 2009, when Black should have taken the offering: 12...♘h5!N 13.♙h6 (13.g4 ♘g3+) 13...♙xc3! 14.♖xc3 ♖xc3 15.bxc3 ♖d8

12.e5 ♘h5 13.♖e1!N (13.♙h6 d4! 14.♘b1 ♖xd2† 15.♙xd2 occurred in Al Haysamy – Chaudry, Singapore 1987. After the correct

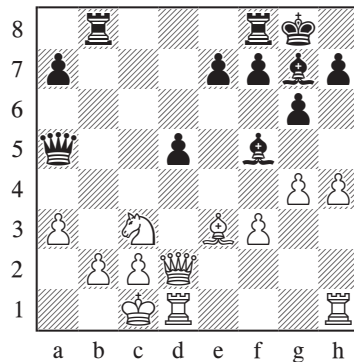
15...♘g3N 16.♖g1 ♙xe5+ White is in trouble.) The text move is White's only way to defend, but Black can maintain the pressure with:



13...♖b8! 14.♘xd5 (14.g4 ♙xe5 15.gxh5 ♖xb2+) 14...♖xa2 15.♘xe7† ♙h8 16.♖c3 ♙e6+ White is still struggling.

### 12...♖b8 13.♙d4

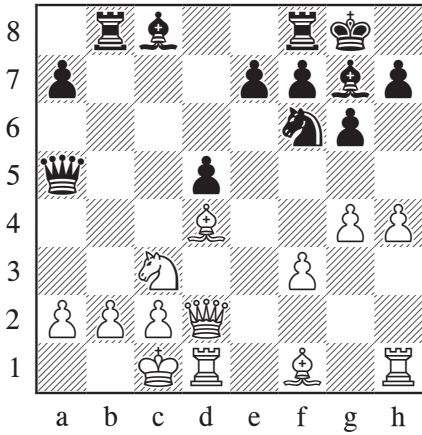
After 13.♙c4 ♘xd5! 14.♙xd5?! cxd5 White was in deep trouble and did not last much longer: 15.a3 ♙f5 16.g4



16...♖xb2! 17.♙xb2 ♖b8† 18.♙a2 ♙xc3 19.♖c1 d4 0-1 Zelic – Nikolin, Pula 1984.

### 13...cxd5 14.g4

Here I found a powerful improvement over Parfenov – Kornev, Kurgan 2001.



14...dxe4!N

A surprising but effective piece sacrifice.

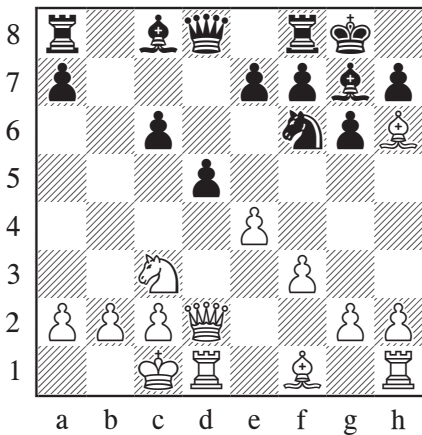
15.fxe4

15. dxe4 ♖xa2

15...e5! 16. f2 d4

White cannot afford to lose the a2-pawn, so Black will regain the piece with an excellent position.

D2) 11. h6



Compared to the earlier variation B, the bishop exchange makes more sense when Black cannot simply capture on e4. On the other hand, the open b-file gives Black attacking chances of his own.

11...hxh6 12. ♖xh6 ♖b8

This position is double-edged, with both sides playing for mate.

13.e5

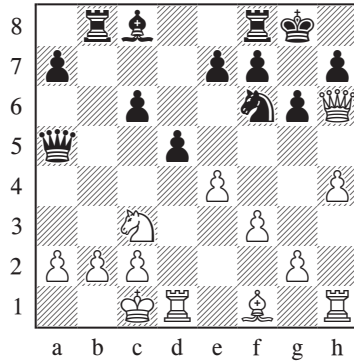
This is White's main try.

13.h4

This is obviously a critical plan, but Black has a strong novelty.

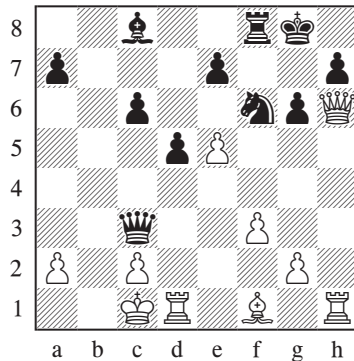
13...a5!N

Instead 13...e6 14.e5 h5 15.g4 g3 16.f3 h1 17.fxh1 was dangerous for Black in Doci – Misovic, Slovakia 2002.



14.h5 ♖xb2! 15. hxb2 ♖b4† 16. h1 ♖xc3 17.hxg6 fxg6 18.e5!

18.exd5 f5 19.f3 (19.f3 ♖a3† 20.f2 d3 21.cxd3 ♖xa2† 22.f1 ♖xg2 23.fh3 ♖xh3 24.fhx3 dxd5) 19...fxd3 20.fxd3 f7 21.dxc6 ♖c8† Black's king is safe on f7 and his attack remains extremely strong.



My engine thinks White is holding a draw here but Black has many different tries. One possibility is:

18...♙f5 19.♙d3 ♙xd3 20.♞xd3 ♜xe5

Perhaps White can hold, but the position feels much easier for Black to play.

13...♘d7 14.h4

14.♙d4!?N is another interesting try. 14...♞e8 15.e6! (15.♞h4 ♘f8 doesn't get White anywhere) 15...♘f6 16.exf7† ♘xf7∞ The position is complicated but I like the potential of Black's central pawns.

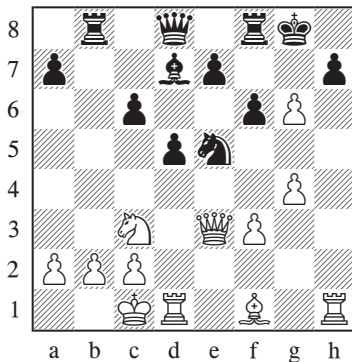
14...♘xe5 15.h5 ♙f5 16.g4 f6!

This is the crucial idea that holds Black's position together. The bishop is inedible.

17.♜f4?

After 17.gxf5? g5! White's queen is trapped and he will have to give at least a rook to extricate it.

17.♜e3!N looks like the best square for White's queen. 17...♙d7 18.hxg6

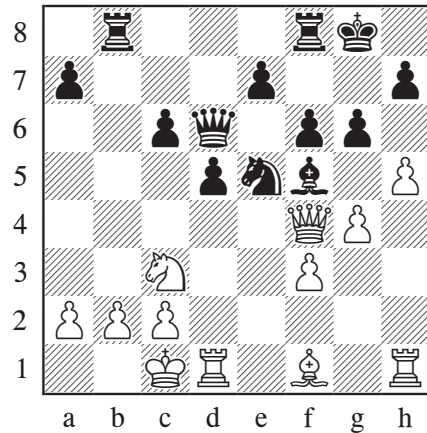


18...♜b6! Forcing the exchange of queens. (18...hxg6 19.f4! is dangerous) 19.gxh7† (19.♜h6? loses to 19...♜xb2† 20.♙d2 ♘xf3† 21.♙d3 ♘g5!-+) 19...♙h8 20.♜xb6 axb6 White is temporarily a pawn up but the h7-pawn is dropping. I like Black's compact structure, but White should be able to retain equality.

17.♜d2N is less accurate than the above line, as f3-f4 is no longer such a big threat. 17...♙e6 18.hxg6 hxg6 19.♙d3 ♙f7 Black's king can find sanctuary in the centre.

17...♜d6!

The threat of a discovered check forces White to lose time with his queen, giving Black vital extra time for his counterattack.



18.♜e3 ♜b4! 19.gxf5?! ♜xb2† 20.♙d2 d4! 21.♜e4 ♜xc3† 22.♙e2 gxf5

0-1 Gonell Aparici – Marin, Manresa 1995. Twenty years later, this energetic display from the Romanian GM remains a model demonstration of Black's chances.

## Conclusion

Most of White's alternatives on move ten are not dangerous as Black can simply take the pawn on e4. 10.♘xc6 bxc6 is more interesting as the pin on the d-file prevents ...dxe4, but Black obtains strong counterplay along the b-file, making this a risky way for White to play. Pay particular attention to 11.♙h6, as it is the sharpest line considered in this chapter.