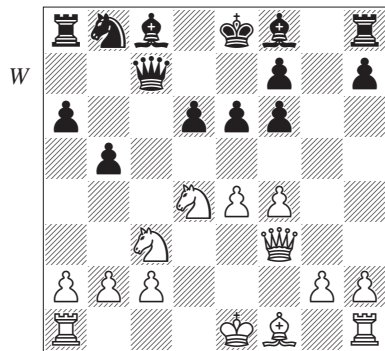


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Game 36
Solak – Istratescu
Halle jr Wch 1995

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4
♜f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 ♖g5 e6 7 f4 ♗c7 8
♗f3 b5 9 ♖xf6 gxf6 (D)



10 e5?!

This is another critical line. White obtains some initiative on account of his better development and the aggressive position of his pieces. As usual, Black will try to repel the attack and then make use of his bishops and central pawns to obtain an advantage. White has three more peaceful options that are probably better than the text-move:

a) 10 0-0-0 b4! 11 ♜ce2!? (11 ♜d5 takes us to Game 38) has barely been played, but maybe it should be tried more often, for Black needs to play very actively to achieve adequate counterplay.

a1) 11...♖b7? 12 ♗h5! ♗c5? (after 12...♖xe4, White replies 13 ♜g3) 13 e5 ♖d5 14 f5! ±.

a2) 11...♜d7?! 12 ♗h5! ♜c5 13 ♜g3 ♖b7 14 f5 0-0-0 15 fxe6 fxe6 16 ♗h3 ±.

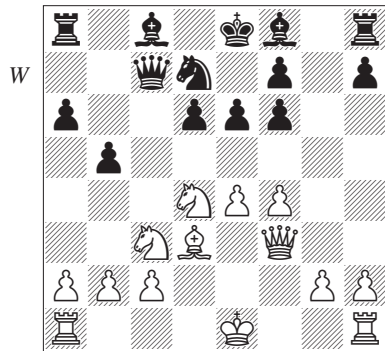
a3) As we can see, the queen must not be allowed into h5. Therefore, 11...h5! is absolutely necessary. After 12 ♜g3! (12 e5? dxe5 13 ♗xa8?? loses to 13...♖b7 14 ♗a7 ♖c5, while 12 h4?! ♖b7 13 ♜g3 ♜d7 14 ♜xh5 ♗a5 is not very good either) 12...h4 13 ♜h5 ♜d7! (another good recommendation from Emms; Black sacrifices his h-pawn in return for a couple of tempi and activity) 14 ♗g4 ♖b7 15 ♗xh4 (15 f5 e5 16 ♜b3 ♖h6+ 17 ♖b1 ♖g5 is OK for Black) 15...0-0-0 16 f5 e5!? (Emms gives 16...♜c5, with compensation) 17 ♜b3 d5 18 exd5 ♜b6 19 ♖e2 ♜xd5 20 ♖f3 (20 ♖b1 a5!) 20...a5! Black has a very promising attack.

b) 10 ♖d3 is a very tricky move that does not commit the king's position yet. For instance, after 10...♜c6 11 ♜xc6 ♗xc6, White might try 12 0-0, or 12 a3 followed by 13 0-0, in both cases with some initiative. So Black should play 10...♜d7!? (D), and then:

b1) 11 0-0 is possible here, but Black seems to achieve enough counterplay by putting pressure on White's centre; e.g., 11...♖b7 12 ♗h5? ♗c5!.

b2) After the thematic 11 f5!?, Black must be very careful. 11...♜c5! (11...♜e5?! 12 ♗h5 ♗c5 13 0-0-0 ±) 12 0-0-0 b4! 13 ♜ce2 (13 fxe6 bxc3 14 ♗xf6 ♖g8! ♞) 13...e5 is good for Black.

b3) 11 0-0-0 ♖b7 12 ♗he1 (12 f5!? e5! 13 ♜b3 ♜b6 should be alright for



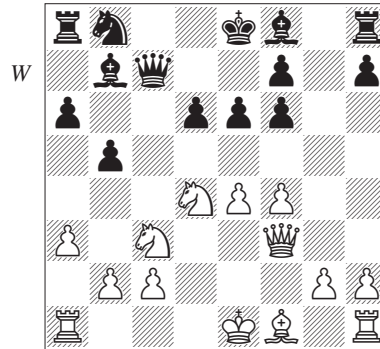
Black; in general, when the knight reaches b6 Black is doing well because he has d5 under control) 12...0-0-0 13 f5 and here:

b31) 13...♞c5?! was played in the game Suetin-Balashov, Sochi 1973. White obtained an advantage after 14 fxe6 fxe6 15 ♖h3! (15 ♖xf6 ♙g7 only helps Black) 15...♞d7 16 ♙e2 h5 17 b4 e5, but now missed the chance to increase it by 18 ♞f5! ±.

b32) 13...e5!? is untried, but we believe it gives Black adequate counterplay. For example, 14 ♞b3 ♞b6, and whenever White hops into d5, Black simply takes with the knight and keeps the bishop to put pressure on d5. Now Black has ideas like ...h5, ...h4, ...♙h6, or ...♞b8 and ...♞c8, and sometimes even ...d5.

c) 10 a3!? is a little move that also keeps Black guessing where the white king will go. Therefore, we again prefer to avoid 10...♞c6 11 ♞xc6 ♞xc6 12 ♙d3, followed by 13 0-0, which in our opinion gives White the better chances. 10...♙b7! (D) (10...♞d7? does not work now because of 11 f5!

♞c5?! {11...♞e5 12 ♞h5 ±} 12 b4! ±) is our recommendation:

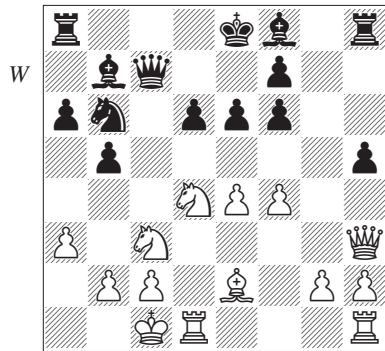


c1) The natural 11 0-0-0 (11 ♞h5? ♞c5!) simply allows Black to develop his pieces. 11...♞d7 12 ♞h5 ♞c5 13 f5 0-0-0 14 fxe6 fxe6 15 ♞h3 (this should be compared to line 'b31'; then it becomes clear that the tempo spent on a3 has not helped White too much) 15...♞g7!? (the idea is to exchange queens and play with the bishops; however, 15...♞d7 is perfectly viable; e.g., 16 ♙e2 h5 17 b4?! e5!) 16 ♞xe6 ♞h6+ 17 ♞f4+ ♞xh3 18 ♞xh3 ♙h6+ 19 ♞b1 ♞xe4 is at least equal for Black.

c2) 11 ♙e2! is apparently inoffensive, but there is a hidden idea to it. 11...h5! (11...♞d7? is what White was counting on: 12 f5 e5 13 ♞e6! fxe6 14 fxe6 ♞c5 15 ♞xf6 +-) 12 0-0-0 ♞d7 13 ♞h3 and now:

c21) 13...0-0-0?! is the theoretical recommendation, but the machine easily refutes it: 14 f5 e5 15 ♞e6!! fxe6 16 fxe6 ♞b8 (16...♙h6+ 17 ♞b1 ♞b6 18 e7+ ♞d7 19 ♙xh5 +-) 17 exd7 ±. White should be better here.

c22) We suggest 13...♗b6! (D) once again, getting ready to meet White's f5 ideas. Now:

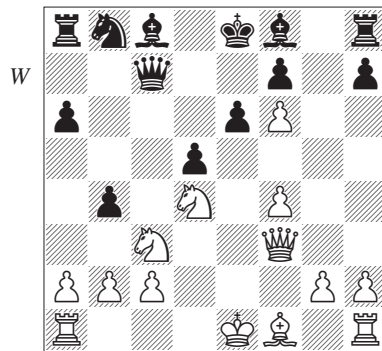


c221) 14 ♕xh5 0-0-0 15 ♖g4 ♗b8 gives Black enough play for the pawn. His king is safe and he is now ready to play along the c-file.

c222) 14 ♗xe6!? is a sacrifice that must always be taken into account. 14...fxe6 15 ♖xe6+ (Black can now choose either to enter a balanced endgame or to try for more in an unclear middlegame) 15...♖e7!? (this leads to an equal ending; 15...♗e7!? is the real man's move: 16 e5! { 16 ♕xb5+?! ♗f8 17 ♕d3 ♕c8 18 ♖b3 ♖b8 ♞ } 16...dxe5 17 fxe5 ♗f8 18 ♖hf1 ♖h6 is a real mess; White is in a very threatening position, but Black's bishops defend quite well in these situations) 16 ♖xd6 ♗c4 17 ♕xc4 bxc4 18 ♗d5 (18 ♖hd1 ♖xe6 19 ♖xe6+ ♕e7 20 ♖b6 ♖a7 =) 18...♕xd5 19 exd5 ♖xe6 20 ♖xe6+ ♗f7 21 ♖c6 h4! =. The h-pawn is quite important in these endings because it fixes White's kingside pawns, which can later be attacked by Black's rooks.

10...d5 11 exf6 b4! (D)

Black has mainly tried 11...♗d7 here, but in our view the text-move represents the critical continuation. Now White must either sacrifice the knight or retreat it to a less active square.



12 ♗xd5

It is hard to believe that White can fight for an advantage by playing 12 ♗ce2. After 12...♗d7 13 f5 (absolutely necessary, for otherwise it would be too simple for Black) 13...e5! 14 ♗e6 (again forced; 14 ♖xd5? ♕b7 15 ♗e6 fxe6 16 ♖xe6+ ♗d8 gives White very little for the sacrificed piece) 14...fxe6 15 fxe6 ♗xf6! (Black returns the booty, but he retains the usual advantages: the two bishops and a strong pawn-centre; now he must find a shelter for his king; on the other hand, 15...♗b6?! 16 ♖h5+ ♗d8 17 e7+ is somewhat better for White) 16 ♖xf6 ♕g7 17 ♖f5 and then:

a) The logical move appears to be 17...♖e7?, but then White can continue 18 ♖h5+ ♗d8 19 c4!, which