

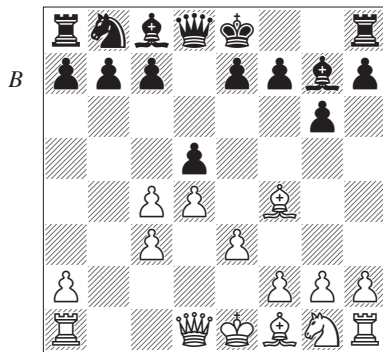
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as we are about to see, this break can be incredibly powerful if Black can make it work.

Game 27
Hertneck – Anand
 Munich 1996

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♖c3 d5 4 ♙g5
 ♜e4 5 ♙f4 ♜xc3 6 bxc3 ♙g7 7 e3 (D)



7...c5!

I suggest that it is best to attack the centre immediately and generally to meet White's cxd5 with the tit-for-tat-like ...cxd4; only after White has played cxd4 should you recapture with the queen on d5. The point is that when White plays ♖b3 Black is normally obliged to capture on b3 and if Black hasn't yet taken on d4 White can achieve a favourable endgame by taking back on d4 with the e-pawn, which would be generally undesirable without the queen exchange.

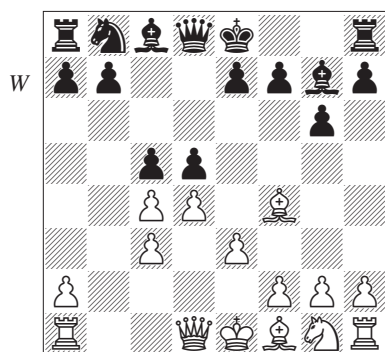
7...0-0 8 cxd5 ♙xd5 9 ♖b3 ♙a5 10 ♖b4 ♙xb4 11 cxb4 c6 is slightly better for White according to GM Ernst but

this line is by no means the whole story because if nothing else Black can try 11...e5!?, which is much less compliant and more in the spirit of the Grünfeld. It seems to me that this move equalizes and it's well worth understanding something about the resulting positions. 12 ♙xe5 ♙xe5 13 dxe5 ♜c6 14 a3 ♜xe5 15 ♙e2 looks like a plausible continuation. White obviously wants to play ♜f3 and take back on f3 with the bishop unless Black unwisely allows the knight to hop to the d4-square. In such positions the position of the kings and White's plan of a minority attack potentially make Black's queenside very weak so Black is well advised not to play passively as White would then have good chances of creating a queenside weakness, winning it and then pressing with the extra kingside pawn.

GM Keith Arkell has practically made a living out of such strategies and I assure you that Black has to think carefully here. Even if you are somewhat bored by such positions, it is all too easy to lose them by thinking that they are easy to play. 15...♙f5?! 16 ♜f3 ♜d3+ 17 ♙xd3 ♙xd3 is a case in point. This may look like a try to play for the advantage of bishop against knight in an open position but White's knight is unassailable on d4 and Black's bishop has nothing to attack. Moreover, White's prospects for queenside pressure remain, and Black has no counterplay. Instead of such a blind transformation, we should ask: what is positive about the black position? The queenside majority? No! As

I've just explained, Black's potential problem is that his queenside majority is very susceptible to attack. Black's lead in development is significant, however, and so I like 15...a5! 16 b5 ♗d7!, which disrupts White's smooth development plan and seems to offer Black good chances since ...c6 is on the cards. I mention this to highlight once again the importance of understanding Grünfeld endgames well, but of course from a theoretical perspective I would definitely advise avoiding this and sticking with Anand's chosen move-order.

Returning to the position after 7...c5 (D):



8 ♖f3

Or 8 cxd5 ♗xd5 (8...cxd4! 9 cxd4 ♗xd5) and now:

a) 9 ♗f3 is a creative effort to achieve a small endgame plus but White's coordination is found wanting after 9...♗d8!, e.g. 10 ♗b5+ ♖d7 11 ♖e2 cxd4! 12 exd4 (12 cxd4 ♗a5+) 12...0-0, when Black has an excellent position.

b) 9 ♗b3!? has not been tried to my knowledge but it would seem that White has good chances for an edge here and this is why Black should prefer 8...cxd4!.

8...0-0 9 cxd5

9 ♗b1 is likely to transpose to the note to White's 9th in Game 25, but 9 ♗e2!? is an important alternative. If Black is not careful he can fall under a slight disadvantage, as suggested in the game Portisch-Kramnik below. The reason that this Exchange Slav line is unlikely to be a direct transposition is that the Grünfeld player has the benefit of the tension between c5 and d4. This is in his favour because in most cases it is only in Black's interest to release it. Moreover, White normally castles before playing c4 in the Exchange Slav line so Black can consider taking advantage of White's centralized king. I have two suggestions here after 9...dxc4 10 ♗xc4:

a) 10...♗a5!? 11 0-0 ♖d7 as in Gofshtein-Kožul, Zagreb 1993.

b) Or my own idea: 10...♖c6 11 0-0 ♖a5 12 ♗e2 b6!?. Note that 13 dxc5?! is not dangerous on account of 13...♗d7.

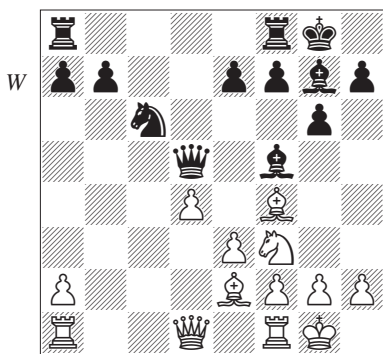
9...cxd4 10 cxd4 ♗xd5 11 ♗e2 ♖c6 12 0-0 ♗f5! (D)

I prefer this move to ...b6 for two main reasons: (1) it doesn't weaken the queenside or the knight on c6; (2) it controls b1 and so prevents White putting a rook there.

13 ♗a4

Alternatively:

a) 13 ♗b3 has been tried by Hungarian GM Varga, who seems to love



playing Grünfeld endgames for White. However, although untried thus far, 13...♙e6! looks like a very effective remedy because 14 ♖xb7 ♜xd4 15 ♗xd5 ♜xe2+ 16 ♚h1 ♙xd5 is not great for White, but then neither is anything else since when Black gets the bishop to d5 he will have a very active position in the endgame (as long as he endeavours to involve the g7-bishop!).

b) 13 ♜c1 was played by Anand himself in the Wall Street Blitz tournament against GM Patrick Wolff. That game continued 13...♗xa2 14 d5 ♜fd8 15 ♙c4 ♗a5 16 ♗b3 ♜b4 17 d6 and Black was in deep trouble since 17...e6 18 e4! is a problem. However, I suspect Anand was just being practical because it seems to me that 14...♜ad8! (not weakening f7) 15 ♙c4 ♗a3! (leaving a5 for the knight) suggests that White's position has run out of steam.

c) 13 ♜h4!? was tried by a leading exponent of this system for White and so it deserves to be taken seriously. Zviagintsev-Kosebay, Iraklion ECC

1996 now continued 13...♜ad8? and after 14 ♜xf5 ♗xf5 15 ♙c7! White was clearly better. However, I think it is better to play 13...♙e6. Then 14 ♙f3!? looks like the most obvious follow up, but after 14...♗a5 15 d5 (15 ♜b1!? ♙c4!?) 16 ♜e1 ♙a6 is obviously not conclusive but I figure if Black can hold things together, White will have serious coordination problems on the kingside) 15...♜ad8 16 e4 f5! Black's forces are much the more coherent and 17 ♙d2 ♗a3 doesn't change anything. Note that these two moves, ...♜ad8 combined with ...f5, are a common tactical theme in the Grünfeld, which shows another good reason why Black's king's rook is often best left on f8. Still, I suspect Zviagintsev may have intended 14 ♜b1!?, when Black can't play 14...g5 in view of 15 ♜b5. However, I now like the calm retreat 14...♗d7!? when a2 is *en prise*, ...♜a5-c4 is possible, White's h4-knight is poor and 15 ♗a4? ♜xd4 is simply a sign of the times. If that all seems too sharp, Zviagintsev-Leko, Tilburg 1998 saw 13...♙c8!? 14 ♗a4 (14 ♜f3 repeats) 14...♜xd4!? 15 exd4 ♗e4 16 ♜xg6 hxg6 17 ♙e3 ♙g4!, when Black was definitely not worse.

13...♗a5! (D)

It may surprise you to see Anand moving his centralized queen to offer herself in exchange for White's less obviously useful lady. Still, this move can be seen as Anand's acute recognition of the threat of ♜ac1-c5, which would be very disruptive, and Black also has some hopes of using the c4-square after the queen exchange.