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Game 66

V. Anand – V. Bologan

Dortmund 2003
Caro-Kann Defence

1 e4 c6
2 d4 d5
3 Nc3 dx4
4 Nxe4 Nd7
5 Ng5

This line became popular in the 1980s. At first it looks like no more than a crude trap (5...h6?! 6 Nxe6!), but there is much more to it than this since Black doesn't find it easy to expel the knight from g5 without allowing a sacrifice on e6.

5 ... Ngf6
6 Qd3 e6
7 Nf3 (D)



7 ... Qd6

It's still too early for 7...h6?, since
8 Nxe6! Qe7 9 0-0 fxe6 10 Qg6+

Qd8 11 Qf4 gives White a very dangerous attack, as was proved in the famous last game of the Deep Blue-Kasparov match in 1997.

8 Qe2 h6

Now the sacrifice on e6 no longer works and the knight must retreat, but White has arranged to recapture on e4 with his queen, bringing it to an active position.

9 Ne4 Nxe4
10 Qxe4 Qc7

The other main line runs 10...Nf6
11 Qc2 Qc7 12 Qd2 b6 13 0-0-0,
with a slight advantage for White.

11 0-0

At first sight 11 Qg4 looks good as it more or less forces 11...Qf8, but after 12 0-0 c5 13 c3 b6 it's not so easy to exploit Black's inability to castle, and White has not been able to demonstrate more than an edge.

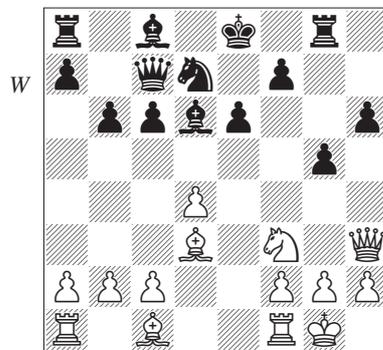
11 ... b6

Anand was very happy to see this move, since he had a powerful novelty prepared at move 14. 11...Nf6 is still possible, although this is rather different from the note to Black's 10th move because White has already castled kingside.

12 Qg4 g5?!

After this, Black cannot back away from the line he has chosen. 12...♔f8 is still possible, although his options are more limited here as Black is already committed to ...b6. After 13 b3 ♖b7 14 ♖b2 ♜f6 15 ♗h4 ♞d5 White has a slight advantage.

13 ♗h3 ♜g8 (D)



14 ♜e1!

This was the new move. Previously, White had countered the threat of ...g4 by playing the more passive 14 ♞d2, which is less dangerous for Black, although the position still isn't especially pleasant for him. Anand had realized that he can ignore the threat of ...g4, as playing to win the knight allows White to launch a powerful sacrificial attack. Anand relates, "I played this move and looked at his face a bit, just to see if there was any reaction. Unfortunately, I got the same deadpan poker face that he always presents." Playing over

the rest of this game superficially gives the impression that it's simply a sacrificial crush with White battering Black with one spectacular blow after another. However, that isn't really the case and the success of White's attack is far from guaranteed. Black only needs to play two moves, ...♖b7 and ...0-0-0, when his king will be totally safe and he will have a ready-made kingside attack. Despite the fact that Black could have improved his play later, the impact of this game was such that Black essentially abandoned the line with ...g5.

14 ... ♖f8

There's nothing wrong with this, but Black could also have considered accepting the sacrifice, although it would require a very brave player to go down this route. The main line runs 14...g4 15 ♗xh6 gxf3 16 ♜xe6+! fxe6 (16...♖e7? loses at once to 17 ♜xe7+! ♔xe7 18 ♖f4 ♜xg2+ 19 ♔h1) 17 ♗xe6+ ♖e7 (after 17...♔f8 18 ♖h6+ ♜g7 19 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 20 ♗g6+ ♔f8 21 ♖c4 ♖xh2+ 22 ♔h1 Black will have to surrender two pieces to avoid mate) 18 ♗xg8+ ♞f8 19 ♖g6+ ♔d7 (19...♔d8? loses to 20 ♖g5!) 20 ♖f5+ ♔e8 21 ♖h6! ♗d6! (21...♖xf5? 22 ♜e1 ♔d7 23 ♜xe7+! ♔xe7 24 ♗g7+ is winning for White) 22 ♖xf8 ♖xf8 23 ♜e1+ ♔d8 24 ♗f7 ♖e7 25 ♖xc8 ♜xc8 26 ♗xf3, reaching a position in which White's attack is over but he has

accumulated four pawns for the piece. However, all White's pawns bar one are still on the second rank, and while queens remain on the board, the pawns are not a dominant factor. It seems likely that White has an edge, but I would say that the odds are heavily on a draw.

15 ♖f5

White could also have tried sacrificing at once on e6 by 15 ♖xe6+ ♔d8, and now:

1) 16 ♖e1 ♗e5! 17 ♕f5 g4 18 ♖h5 ♗xf3+ 19 gxf3 ♕xf5 20 ♖xf5 ♖d7! gives Black fair play for the pawn.

2) 16 ♖xh6 ♗f6! (after 16...♗e5? 17 ♖g3 ♗xf3+ 18 ♖xf3 ♕xh6 19 ♖f6+ ♖e7 20 ♖xc6 ♕b7 21 ♖xh6 White has three pawns for the exchange) 17 ♕f5 g4 18 ♖h4 ♕xh6 19 ♖xf6+ ♖e7 20 ♖xc6 gxf3 21 ♖d5+ ♔c7! 22 ♕xh6 ♖xg2+ 23 ♔h1 ♖xh2+ 24 ♔xh2 ♖h4+ 25 ♔g1 ♕xf5 and it is time for White to give perpetual check.

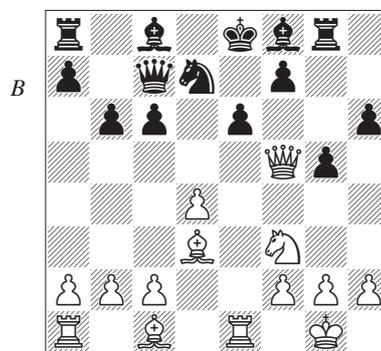
3) 16 ♕h7! with another branch:

3a) 16...♗c5?! 17 ♕xg8 ♕xe6 18 ♖h5 (not 18 ♖g3? ♕d6! 19 ♗e5 ♔c8 followed by ...♔b7, after which White's pieces totally lack coordination) 18...♗e4 19 ♗e5 ♗f6 20 ♕xg5 hxg5 21 ♖xg5 ♕e7 22 ♕xf7 ♕xf7 23 ♗xf7+ ♔c8 24 ♖e1 ♔b7 is similar to the note to Black's 14th move in that White ends up with four pawns for the piece, but here White has a more definite advantage since

his knight has an excellent square on e5.

3b) 16...♗f6! 17 ♖xf6 ♕xh3 18 ♕xg8 ♕e6 19 ♕xf7 ♕xf7 20 ♗e5 ♕e8 21 ♖xf8 ♖g7 22 ♖f3 ♔c7 allows White just an edge.

We now return to 15 ♖f5 (D):



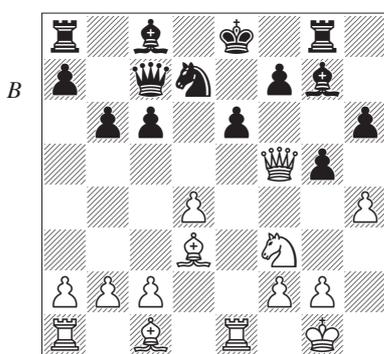
The queen move genuinely threatens to take on e6 as Black can no longer reply ...♔d8.

15 ... ♕g7?

The upshot of this move is that Black's king has to stay on the king-side and then White's attacking chances are extremely dangerous. 15...♖g7! is correct, since by supporting the second rank, Black prevents a sacrifice on e6 and renews the threat to complete his development by ...♕b7 and ...0-0-0. 16 h4 ♕e7 is fine for Black, while after the natural continuation 16 c4 ♕b7 17 d5 cxd5 18 cxd5 0-0-0 19 dxe6 fxe6 20 ♖xe6 ♔b8, Black's lead in development gives him sufficient

compensation for the sacrificed pawn. Therefore White's best reply is the modest 16 a4 ♖b7 17 a5 0-0-0 18 axb6 axb6 19 ♖e4, with just a slight advantage.

16 h4! (D)



Now Black is in trouble, since the attack on g5 cannot be ignored and 16...gxh4 loses to 17 ♖f4 followed by ♗xe6+.

16 ... ♔f8

Forcing the queen to return to h3, but condemning the king to a precarious existence.

17 ♖h3

17 ♗xe6? fails to 17...♘c5!.

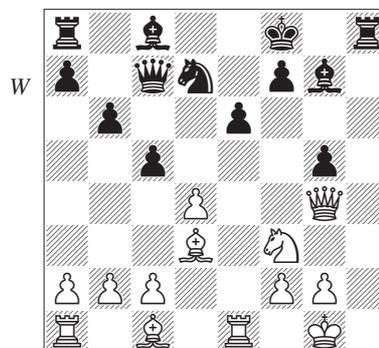
17 ... ♗h8

The best continuation, since the veiled threat to the queen forces White to waste a tempo after exchanging on g5.

18 hxg5 hxg5

19 ♖g4 c5 (D)

With this move, Bologan rather optimistically offered a draw. Despite



the time White has spent on his several queen moves, his kingside pressure is very dangerous.

20 ♖xg5

20 ♖xg5! is probably even stronger, since after 20...♖b7 21 ♖f4 ♗d8 22 ♖g3! Black is in serious trouble:

1) 22...cxd4 23 ♖c4! sets up a lethal sacrifice on e6.

2) 22...♘f6 23 dxc5 ♘h5 24 ♖d6+ ♔g8 25 ♖g4 bxc5 26 ♗ad1 gives White an extra pawn and an attack.

3) 22...♖xf3 23 ♖xf3 cxd4 24 ♖c4 leaves Black with no reasonable way to meet the threats at e6.

20 ... cxd4?!

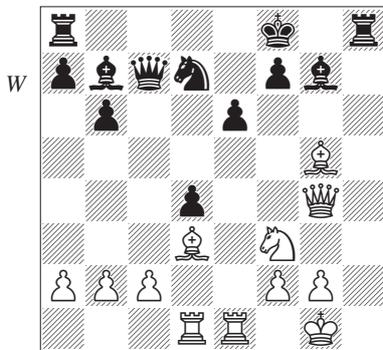
Black restores the material balance but gives White time to bring his last piece into play. 20...♘f6 was the only chance to play on, although after 21 ♖f4 ♖xf4 22 ♖xf4 cxd4 23 ♘xd4 ♖b7 Black is a pawn down in an ending.

21 ♗ad1

This is an especially clear example of the principle of moving all your pieces into attacking positions before cutting loose with sacrifices. The immediate 21 Rxe6 ? is premature since 21... Nde5 ! 22 Nxe5 Qxe6 23 Qf3 Qxe5 24 Qxa8 + Qg7 25 Qe4 f5 26 Qf3 Qg6 followed by ... Qh7 gives Black good counterplay for the pawn.

21 ... Qb7 (D)

After this, White's attack crashes through, but there isn't really a satisfactory move: 21... Nc5 22 Qf4 e5 23 Qxg7 + Qxg7 24 Qxe5 + gives White a winning ending, while after 21... a5 22 Qe4 ! f5 (22... Ra7 loses to 23 Qe7 ! Qg8 24 Rxd4) 23 Qf4 ! fxg4 24 Qxc7 Ra7 25 Nxd4 Qf7 26 Nb5 White wins the exchange.



22 Rxe6 !

Now that Black's bishop is not on the same diagonal as the white queen, the sacrifice on e6 proves decisive.

22 ... fxe6

Or 22... Qxf3 23 Qxf3 Rc8 24 Qe7 Qh2 + 25 Qf1 f6 (25... Nde5 26 Qf5 is also winning for White) 26 Qf4 Qh1 + 27 Qe2 Qxd1 + 28 Qxd1 Qxe7 29 Qd5 Nde5 30 Qb7 + and White wins.

23 Qe7 !

A beautiful conclusion to White's attack.

23 ... Qxe7

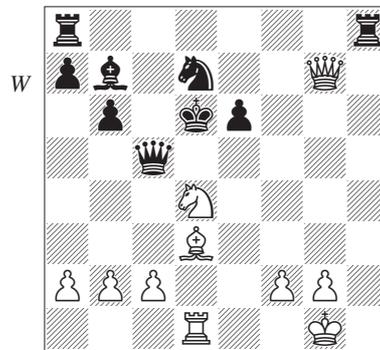
24 Qxg7 + Qd6

25 Nxd4

Now the rook on d1 proves its worth.

25 ... Qc5 (D)

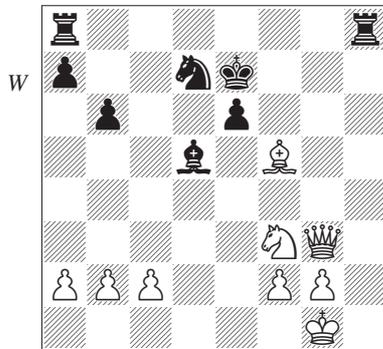
Hoping in vain to play 26... Rh1 + 27 Qxh1 Qh5 +. If 25... Qd8 , then 26 Nb5 + Qc6 27 Qc3 + Nc5 28 Qe4 + Qxb5 29 a4 +! Nxa4 30 Qd3 + is crushing.



26 Qf5

Good enough, but 26 Nb5 ! Qc6 27 Qe2 ! Ra8 28 b4 Qxb5 (Black must watch out for mate on d6) 29 Qxb5 + Qxb5 30 Rxd7 is simpler.

26 ... ♔e5
 Or 26...♙d5 27 ♙xe6 ♙xe6 28
 ♘xe6+ ♚xe6 29 ♖xd7+ ♚f6 30
 ♗d6+ ♖xd6 31 ♖xd6+ and White
 wins easily with his pawns.
 27 ♘f3+ ♖d5
 28 ♖g3+ ♚e7
 29 ♗xd5 ♙xd5 (D)



30 ♖g5+ ♚d6
 31 ♖f4+ ♚e7
 32 ♙e4

The simplest way to win is by exchanging the defensive bishop. With a material advantage and threats against the exposed black king, White's task is not difficult.

32 ... ♗h5
 33 ♘h4 ♗g8

33...♙xe4 34 ♖xe4 ♗g8 35 ♘g6+
 ♚f7 36 ♖b7 ♗d5 37 c4 ♗d1+ 38
 ♚h2 is also decisive.

34 ♘g6+ ♚d8
 35 ♖f7 ♗e8
 36 ♙d3 1-0

After 36...♙c6 (or else ♙b5) 37
 ♘f8 ♗e5 38 ♘xd7 ♗e1+ 39 ♚h2
 ♙xd7 40 ♖f6+ ♗e7 41 g4 Black's
 position is hopeless.

In August, Anand played an eight-game rapid match against Judit Polgar, which was notable because every game ended decisively. At first the players traded blows, with Polgar winning games 1, 3 and 5 and Anand scoring in the even-numbered games (the colours were switched each day so that Anand had White in games 2, 3, 6 and 7). Anand was only able to pull ahead on the final day by breaking the pattern and winning both games. The fourth game featured an interesting battle in the Sicilian Najdorf.