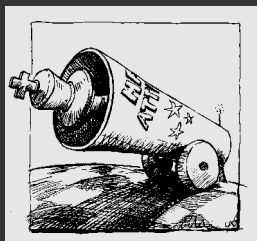


# Hack



# Attack

If anyone ever lends you £20,000, I suggest you start a company with it, even if it is in the boiler room of a cinema. After all, that's what Cliff Stanford did, and a few years on he sold that company, Demon Internet, for £66 million. As a consequence Mr Stanford has a few quid to spare. He has been known to put some of it towards expeditions to hunt for giant octopuses off the Bermudan shelf, and for the last four years he has sponsored the Redbus knockout in Southend. I won the first of these tournaments but then got knocked out in the first round of each of the other three.

In 2000 I lost the first game of my match with Luke McShane with the white pieces and so had to win with Black in the second game in order to make it to the blitz play-offs.

Here is what happened.

### L. McShane - J. Plaskett Redbus Knockout, 2000

1 e4 e5 2 ♖f3 ♗c6 3 ♘b5 ♘c5  
4 0-0

I think that 4 c3 has a deservedly superior reputation.

4...d6

This move is little played, but in my opinion it is a neglected sideline.

5 c3

5 d4 exd4 6 ♗xd4 ♘d7 7 ♗c3  
♗ge7 8 ♘e3 0-0 9 ♗xc6 bxc6  
10 ♘xc5 cxb5, with  
equality, is one line.

5...♘d7 6 d4 ♘b6 7  
dxe5

Understandable. 7 a4  
is the main line. In  
Iceland in 1985 Short,  
and later Sigurjonsson,  
tried 7 ♘g5 against  
me. Both games contin-  
ued 7...♗f6 8 dxe5  
♗xe5 9 ♘xd7+ ♖xd7  
10 ♗bd2 0-0-0 and v  
Nigel after 11 ♗xe5  
dxe5 12 ♘xf6 gxf6 13  
♗c4 ♖e6 Black stood  
ok, and even went on  
to win.

7...dxe5

Forced. I played  
7...♗xe5? versus  
Bednarski in a blitz  
tournament in  
Manchester in 1979,  
and found myself lost after 8

♗xe5 dxe5 9 ♖d5!  
8 ♘xc6 ♘xc6 9 ♗xe5 ♖xd1  
10 ♖xd1 ♘xe4 11 ♖e1 f5 12  
♗d2

12 ♘e3 ♘xe3 13 ♖xe3 0-0-0 14  
♗a3 ♗h6 is a harmless continu-  
ation.

12...♗f6 13 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 14  
♘e3 ♘xe3 15 ♖xe3 0-0 16 ♖d1

Luke must have been happy  
with his choice of opening.

16...♖fe8 17 ♗f3 ♗d6 18

♖xe8+ ♖xe8

Mestel is of the opinion that



really strong players play end-  
ings with rooks and knights  
very well.

19 ♗f1 ♗f7 20 ♖e1 ♗e4

Keeping some more pieces on  
the board, for the time being.

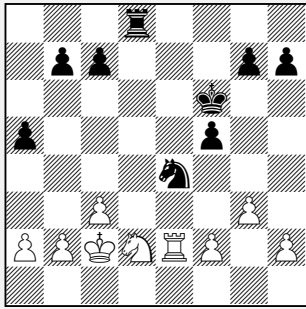
21 ♖e2 ♖d8

'Might as well keep trying,' I  
thought.

22 ♗e1 ♗f6 23 g3

A slight weakening, and that is  
not a facetious remark.

23...a5  
Trundling.  
24 ♖d2 ♗c5 25 ♔d1 ♗e4 26  
♕c2



I decided to now take the same pawn ending which I had spurned two moves earlier. My

where most of the moves produced by both Karpov and Kasparov were erroneous. I also warn them to watch out for stalemate tricks.

28...♔g5 29 h3

Forced. Allowing the king into f3 is bound to lose in the long run, and 29 f3? f4 would leave the creation of the terrific asset of an outside passed pawn a very real possibility for Black.

29...f4 30 ♔d3

A simpler plan was just 30 ♕e2, coming to f3, and there is little then that Black could hope to achieve, e.g. 30...♔f5 31 ♔f3 g5 32 g4+ ♔e5 33 ♔e2 and there is

31 a4

Annotating the next few moves is remarkably difficult. Despite the absence of pieces, there are still a heck of a lot of pawn move alternatives!

31 g4+? ♔g5 32 ♔e4 ♔h4 33 ♔xf4 ♔xh3 results in the black king still the more active and White faced with insuperable problems through the latent black outside passed h-pawn.

31 ♔d4! is the most active and most natural move. Black may try to effect an entry on the kingside but by maintaining the tempo of his own advances, plus keeping the option of shifting backwards, White keeps equality, e.g. 31...h5 32 a4 g5 33 b4 fxg3 34 fxg3 h4 35 gxh4 gxh4

# 'But we came here to have fun, didn't we?'

Never one to duck a challenge, James Plaskett finds that despite his advancing years he can still almost beat Luke McShane

king is more active and I can try to complicate things a little with my f-pawn. Any better ideas?

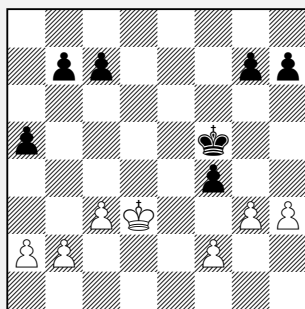
26...♗xd2+ 27 ♗xd2 ♗xd2 28 ♔xd2

I always tell my students that most pawn endings lead to queen endings and that pawn endings are usually played very badly, even at high GM level. More recent cases include Timman resigning in a drawn pawn ending against Shirov and a game from Las Palmas

now way in.

30...♔f5

Now it is a complex ending, with play across the whole board.



and now the races lose for White after either 36 ♔d5 ♔f4 37 ♔e6 ♔g3 38 ♔d7 ♔xh3 39 ♔xc7 ♔g4 or 36 bxa5 ♔f4.

But the face-off holds. 36 ♔e3! ♔e5 37 bxa5! ♔d5 38 ♔d3 ♔c5 39 ♔d2 ♔c4 40 ♔c2 c6 41 ♔b2 ♔d3 42 ♔b3 c5 43 a6! bxa6 44 a5 ♔e4 45 ♔c4 ♔f3 46 ♔xc5 and now Black must work to draw the queen ending. Or 36...axb4 37 cxb4 ♔e5 38 b5 ♔d5 39 ♔d3 ♔c5 40 ♔c3 b6 and there is nothing to do.

31...♔e5

Now the black king is the more advanced, and White must be

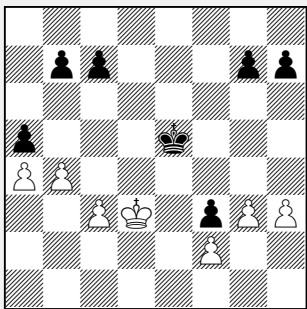
on his toes.

### 32 b4

Starting his own business on the queen's wing. Retreating the king loses after Black takes on g3 and plays 33...♙e4 when inevitably he must achieve a decisive penetration. 32 h4? loses to 32...♙f5 and the white kingside crumbles.

### 32...f3!?

A shift of direction to complicate matters. The promoting of the f-pawn becomes a consideration.



### 33 g4

Or

a) 33 bxa5 ♙d5 and eventually the king will enter to take either the c or f-pawns with decisive effect, e.g. 34 c4+ ♙c5 35 ♙c3 c6 36 g4 g5 (Black may always ensure that the reserve tempi are in his favour) 37 ♙b3 ♙d4 38 ♙b4 h6 39 a6 bxa6 40 ♙a5 ♙d3 41 ♙xa6 ♙e2 42 a5 ♙xf2 43 ♙b6 ♙g3 44 a6 f2 45 a7 f1 ♖ 46 a8 ♗ ♗xc4 with a won queen ending. Or 34 ♙d2 ♙c4 35 ♙c2 g5 36 g4 h6 37 ♙d2 ♙b3 38 ♙d3 c5 39 c4 ♙b4 and wins.

b) 33 bxa5 ♙d5 34 ♙e3 ♙c4 35 ♙xf3 ♙xc3 36 ♙e4 c5 and Black will queen *Two* moves before White.

c) 33 ♙e3 ♙d5 Black now uses the gap that 32 b4 made. 34

♙xf3 ♙c4 and White loses as in (b), or 34 ♙d3 axb4 35 cxb4 c5 similar to the game.

d) But by going for it on the queenside White could still be all right: 33 ♙c4! ♙e4 and again Black's reserve tempi mean White will soon have to let him in. Yet after 34 g4! g5 35 bxa5 h6 36 ♙b5 ♙d3 37 c4 ♙e2 38 c5 ♙xf2 39 c6 bxc6+ 40 ♙b4 ... (40 ♙xc6?? will drop the queen to a skewer at h1) 40...♙g3 41 a6 f2 42 a7 f1 ♖ 43 a8 ♗ the a4 pawn is a big asset which must enable White to hold.

### 33...♙d5

A kingside pawn move would have allowed transposition to line (d) of the previous note by 34 ♙c4!, and after 33...♙f4 34 ♙c4 ♙g5 34 bxa5 ♙h4 35 ♙b5 ♙xh3 36 c4 ♙g2 37 c5 ♙xf2 38 c6 bxc6+ 39 ♙b4 ♙g3 40 a6 f2 41 a7 f1 ♖ 42 a8 ♗ and again the passed a-pawn saves the game for White, even if he goes a full three pawns behind.

### 34 h4

Alternatives lead back to play considered at move 33 and following 34 c4+? ♙c6 Black will rapidly exploit the undermined white queenside pawns, e.g. 35 bxa5 ♙c5 36 ♙c3 g5 etc.

### 34...axb4

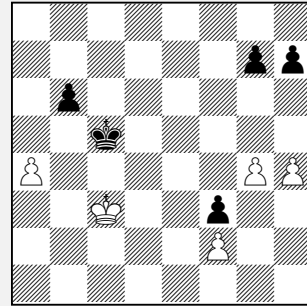
What else? On 34...b6 35 b5! ♙c5 36 ♙d2 g6 37 g5 c6 38 bxc6 ♙xc6 39 c4! and Black can make no progress.

### 35 cxb4 c5 36 bxc5?

This was his first real mistake of the game. On 36 ♙c3 cxb4+ 37 ♙xb4 ♙d4 38 ♙b5 ♙d3 39 ♙b6 ♙e2 40 ♙xb7 ♙xf2 41 a5 ♙g3 and, again, a queen check at h1 will terminate matters. But 36 b5! c4+ 37 ♙c3 b6 38 ♙c2 ♙c5 39 ♙c3 results in a sit-

uation where Black lacks the one killer tempo move to push White over the edge, and after 39...h6 40 h5 it ends in a draw. Alternatively 37...♙c5 38 b6! holds.

### 36...♙xc5 37 ♙c3 b6?



It was far more precise to have fixed the kingside pawns with 37...g6! 38 g5 and only then 38...b6. Defence will be much harder for White in the resultant queen ending. 39 ♙b3 ♙d4 40 ♙b4 ♙d3 41 ♙b5 ♙e2 42 ♙xb6 ♙xf2 43 a5 ♙g3 44 a6 f2 45 a7 f1 ♖ 46 a8 ♗ and Black will, at the least, reach a ♖ + g-pawn v ♗ position with chances.

### 38 h5!

A key difference.

38...h6 39 ♙b3 ♙d4 40 ♙b4 ♙d3 41 ♙b5 ♙e2 42 ♙xb6 ♙xf2 43 a5 ♙g3 44 a6 f2 45 a7 f1 ♖ 46 a8 ♗ ♗f6+ 47 ♙c5 ♙xg4 48 ♗e8!

It emerges that Black has great difficulty in picking off the last pawn whilst avoiding perpetual checks. This should now be drawn.

48...♙f5 49 ♙d5 ♙g4 50 ♙c5 ♗f5+ 51 ♙d4 ♙h4

Fiddling about.

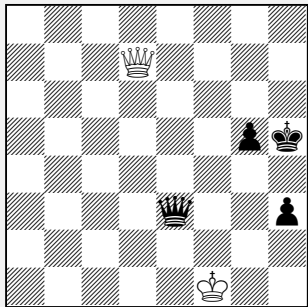
### 52 ♙e3??

And it pays off! A moment's loss of concentration pushes McShane, at last, over the edge.

### 52...♗xh5

And now the checks meet with an interpolation and queen exchange at g5.

53 ♖f8 ♖e5+ 54 ♔d3 ♔g4 55 ♖b4+ ♔g3 56 ♖b6 ♔g4 57 ♖g6+ ♔f4 58 ♖g1 ♔f5 59 ♖g2 g5 60 ♖f3+ ♔g6 61 ♖c6+ ♖f6 62 ♖e8+ ♖f7 63 ♖c6+ ♔h7 64 ♔e2 h5 65 ♖c7+ ♔h6 66 ♖c6+ ♖g6 67 ♖c8 ♖f6 68 ♖d7 ♔g6 69 ♖e8+ ♔h6 70 ♖d7 h4 71 ♔e1 ♔g6 72 ♖d3+ ♖f5 73 ♖a6+ ♔f7 74 ♖b7+ ♔f6 75 ♖a8 ♔g6 76 ♖e8+ ♖f7 77 ♖c4+ ♔h6 78 ♖g4 ♖f4 79 ♖e6+ ♔h5 80 ♖e2+ ♔g6 81 ♖e6+ ♖f6 82 ♖d7 ♖e5+ 83 ♔d2 ♔h5 84 ♔d3 ♖g3+ 85 ♔d2 ♖f4+ 86 ♔e1 ♖e3+ 87 ♔f1 h3?? The finale of this game reminds me of the plot of the film *The Great Escape* where Gordon Jackson warns one of his men that when masquerading as a German he should never fall into the well-known trap of responding in English to someone speaking to him in English. Jackson himself later falls prey to this very ploy.



88 ♖f7+ ♔g4 89 ♖f5+ ♔h4 90 ♖h7+ ♔g3 91 ♖xh3+ ♔xh3 stalemate.

Two years later I again played him in the first round. This time the first game, again with me White, was a draw. Here is the second.

### McShane - Plaskett

Redbus, Southend 2002

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 ♘b5

One of the main lines, but it does move a developed piece twice, doesn't it?

5...d6

Although I beat Mednis and drew with Chandler and Judit Polgar with 5...♗c5, it is not a move that ought to receive a future outing. 6 ♗f4 ♖f6 7 ♖c1! Leaves Black very badly placed, as I found to my cost when losing quickly to Gufeld and Mokry. 7 ♗g3 may be less effective there after the wacky, but consistent 7...h5!?, 8 h4 ♘h6!? as in Comben-Plaskett, Brighton Zonal, 1984, which carried on with 9 ♘c7+ ♔d8 10 ♘xa8 ♘g4 11 f3 ♘e3. 5...♘f6, of course, leading us back towards Pelikan or Four Knights territory, is quite acceptable.

6 ♗f4

This is less highly-regarded than the Maroczy middlegame that comes after 6 c4.

6...e5 7 ♗e3

When I had this position against Luke at Hastings 1997-98 I did not do well with 7...♘f6 8 ♗g5 ♗e6 9 ♗xf6 gxf6 10 ♘d2 d5 11 exd5 ♗xd5 12 ♗c4!.

7...♗e6

Probably a better move.

8 ♘d2 ♘f6 9 ♗g5 ♗e7

Thus Black gambits the d6 pawn, but this game vindicates the view that its loss does not prevent him from gaining good chances. Indeed, as a winning attempt this line is a non-starter for White.

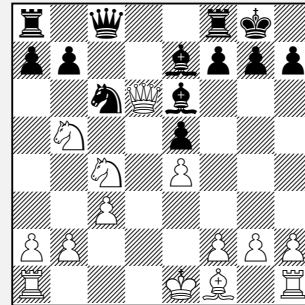
10 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 11 ♘c4 0-0 12 ♖xd6 ♖c8

and the battle begins.

13 c3

Very well motivated. Control of d4 is bound to be critical.

13...♗e7



14 ♖d1?!

The first new move for me. 14 ♖c7 ♗xc4 15 ♗xc4 a6 16 ♖xc8 ♗axc8 17 ♘a3 ♗xa3 obviously gives White no chance of an advantage. Neil McDonald had played 14 ♖d2 against me at a 1998 Adam Raof Hampstead GM tournament and play carried on 14...♗d8 15 ♖e3 ♘d4!? leading to merry mayhem.

McDonald tried 16 cxd4 ♗xc4 17 ♗c1. The alternatives of 17 dxe5 ♗xb5 18 ♗xb5 ♖c2 or 17 d5 f5 are not clearly better for White, 17...♗b4+ 18 ♔d1 exd4 and now the trickiest lines result from not taking on d4 but rather trying to make something of the pin on the c4 bishop, e.g. 19 ♖f4 d3 20 e5.



I at first thought that Black could 'bail out' here with 20...♗xb5 21 ♗xc8 ♗axc8 22

♖xb4 d2 when following the capture on d2 Black's initiative fully compensates him for the pawn, i.e. 23 ♖xd2 ♜xd2+ 24 ♜xd2 ♜d8+ 25 ♜c1 ♜c8+ 26 ♜b1 ♙c6 27 f3 ♜e8 28 f4 ♙e4+. Alternatively there is 23 ♙b5 ♜c1+ 24 ♜e2 ♜xh1 25 ♙a4. But here it is not out of the question that White might yet keep an edge in one of the queen versus two rooks endings, e.g. 25...b6 26 ♖e7 d1 ♖ 27 ♙xd1 ♜hxdl 28 ♖xa7.

20...♙xa2!? is a more interesting continuation when 21 ♜xc8? fails to 21...♙b3+, and after 21 ♖xb4 ♖f5 Black has real compensation and attack for his material investment.

McDonald blundered with 19 ♜xd4? and now simply 19...b5! would have led to a decisive advantage. In the game I played the inferior 19...♙c5? but still went on to win. Objectively McDonald's way is better, for now White finds himself already very close to the edge. With such a pleasant memory, and McShane over half an hour behind on the clock, I felt good.

14...♜d8 15 ♖c1

Now there is the wimpish 15...♙xc4 16 ♙xc4 a6 17 ♜a3 ♙xa3 18 bxa3 ♖g4 for at least equality, but we came here to have fun, didn't we?

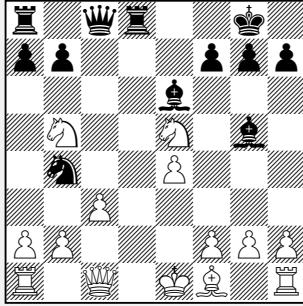
15...♜b4! 16 ♜xc5

16 cxb4? ♙xb4+ results in White having to give his piece straight back. On 16 ♜ba3 ♜xa2!? 17 ♜xa2 ♙xa3 18 ♜xa3 ♙xc4 is very pleasant for Black, and he might well try for even more with the speculative 16...b5!? 17 ♜xb5 ♙xc4, e.g. 18 ♜xa7 ♖g4!? 19 ♙xc4 ♖xe4+ 20 ♙e2 ♖xg2 21 ♜f1 ♙g5 and

wins.

16...♙g5

I was unsure about the critical alternative of 16...♜xa2 17 ♖f4. However, since 16...♙g5 is a winning move the consequences of 16...♜xa2 are not so important.



17 f4

Necessary. The immediate 17 ♖xg5 ♜c2+ leaves him in a terrible pickle. This way, at the cost of the f-pawn, he gets his king out and maintains coordination of a sort.

17...♙xf4 18 ♖xf4 ♜c2+ 19 ♙f2 ♖c5+ 20 ♙g3

Luke observed afterwards that he thought his king to be perfectly well placed here.

20...♜xa1 21 b4 ♖c8?

Unquestionably the simplest and strongest move here was 21...♖e7!, meeting, e.g. 22 ♙e2 with 22...♜c2 23 ♜c1 g5 24 ♖f3 ♜d2 and staying the exchange ahead. But I had not considered his reply and thought that by staying on the c3 pawn I would cause him insuperable difficulties.

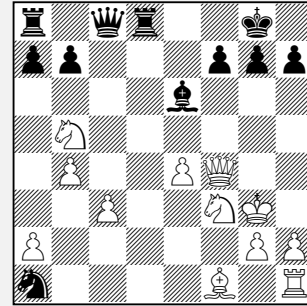
22 ♜f3!

The only chance and an excellent regrouping. White may now cover the c-pawn by dropping his knight into c7.

22...♜d7?

A truly atrocious decision, prompted by the dislike of the

knight arriving at c7, the assumption that I had him on the run and also panic at the realisation that 22...♜d1 23 ♜c7 ♜b8 24 ♜xe6 fxe6 25 ♙c4! ♜xh1 26 ♙xe6+! ♖xe6 27 ♖xb8+ ♙f7 28 ♜g5+ wins for White.



The critical moves are bringing the knight out or grabbing the a2 pawn. After 22...♜c2 23 ♜c7 ♜b8 24 a4 White, with his active pieces and one pawn for the exchange, has some practical chances.

The computers, as you might expect, like 22...♙xa2, but sticking the men offside like that looks *so* dodgy to me, whatever any machine says. 23 ♖c1 ♜b3 24 ♖b2 a5 25 ♖xa2 ♖xc3 suggest Black comes out of the complications favourably, as 26 b5 now drops a piece to 26...♜c1. But 23 ♜c7 ♜b8 24 ♙e2 ♜b3 would probably leave Black regretting having two men out of the game, even if he is for the time being a clear exchange up, e.g. 25 ♙c4 ♜f8 26 ♜e1.

23 ♖c1

Simply rounding it up.

23...a5

Nothing better.

24 ♖xa1 axb4 25 cxb4 ♜xa2 26 ♖e5

Some of the smoke clears and White has two knights for a

rook. Yet he has not yet completed development and his king is out in the streets. Something like 26...♖a6 would have put up more resistance than my next mistake.

26...♖d1? 27 ♘c3!

A backwards knight fork. You will not see too many of these.

27...f6 28 ♖c5 ♖b8+ 29 e5 ♖c2

Or 29...♖c1 30 ♘c4 and wins.

30 ♘c4! ♖xh1

Even here 30...b6 was tougher although Black is still dead lost after 31 ♘xe6+ ♘h8 32 ♖c6 ♖xc3 33 ♖xc3 ♖xh1. 30...♖xc3 fails to 31 ♘xe6+ ♘h8 and now either 32 ♖xc3 ♖xh1 33 ♖c8+ with a won ending or 32 ♖axd1 ♖xc5 33 bxc5 with too many bits for the queen.

31 ♘xe6+ ♘h8 32 ♘c8!

and Black cannot defend against the white queen's incursions, so 1-0

As you get older you make more blunders.

'The good player is always lucky.'  
José Raúl Capablanca

'The great talents are also lucky.'  
Tibor Karolyi, in *Kingpin*

But a reductionist science cannot note the truth of that last remark, and so facts like Kasparov scoring two draws and a win from three games in which he was a rook down (v Timman, Korchnoi and Ljubojevic) gets overlooked.

Born to win!?

I would welcome critical comments on my analysis of these two games.

# Is it always correct to play the best move?

Simon Williams

What on earth I am talking about? Of course it's always right to play the best move – or at least to try and play the best move in any position! Yet I sometimes wonder. In my experience there are times when the most 'interesting' move is the one that should be played. Still confused? Let me explain.

There has been the ongoing debate whether chess is sport, science, art, etc... Each player has his own view, and this is one of the great attractions of chess. For me, the beauty of chess is its artistic side, and maybe more importantly this is the one part of the game where computers will never overtake humans. I am often tempted not to play the best move but the one which is going to steer the game towards complications, which is going to ask more questions than it answers.

**S. Williams – Z. Yuan Zong**

World U20 Championship,  
Yerevan 1999

1 f4

I normally play this move when I have been too lazy to do any preparation. A Dutch with an

extra tempo can't be bad!

1...d5 2 ♘f3 g6

The most precise move order from Black, as it stops White placing his bishop on b2.

3 e3 ♘g7 4 ♘e2 c5 5 0-0 ♘c6 6 d3 ♘f6

So a Classical Dutch position has been reached with an extra tempo for White.

7 a4

Nearly always a useful little move for Black (White!) in the Classical Dutch, as it establishes a hold on the b5 square.

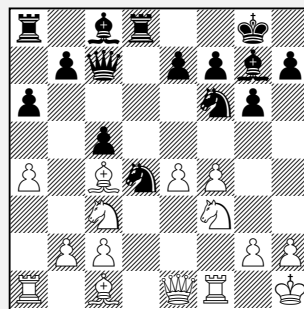
7...0-0 8 ♘h1

Great use of the extra tempo.

8...♖c7 9 ♘c3 a6

9...d4?! is a typical mistake as it allows White to achieve the all-important e4 advance after 10 ♘b5 ♖b6 11 e4+=.

10 e4 dxe4 11 dxe4 ♖d8 12 ♖e1 ♘d4 13 ♘c4?!?!



An interesting idea: White lets Black win a rook and pawn for

a couple of extra tempi! There's some venom in the idea, but a rook is a rook. I rather doubt whether I would have chosen this move had I stuck to orange juice the night before. A place like Yerevan where you can buy cans of vodka from a vending machine is bound to have some strange effects on visitors.

13  $\text{♙d1=}$  is the 'correct' move, when White's central pawns compensate for Black's strong knight.

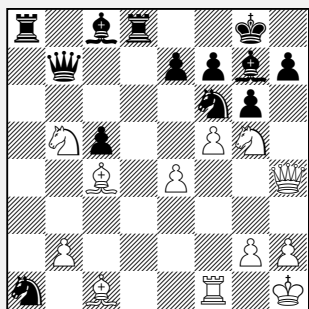
13... $\text{♜xc2}$  14  $\text{♞h4}$   $\text{♜xa1?!}$

This is Fritz's first choice. The computer gives Black a +4 advantage! Yet Black's other choice is far superior, showing how greed can cloud the judgement of a silicon beast! 14... $\text{♞d4!}$  would have stopped any funny business, swapping off some of White's better placed pieces, yet such a move is difficult to see, especially when a whole rook is up for grabs! Maybe White's should try 15  $\text{♙xf7+}$   $\text{♜xf7}$  16  $\text{♞b1}$ , but Black has to be winning.

15  $\text{f5}$   $\text{b5!}$

The idea behind this move is to break the coordination of White's pieces.

16  $\text{axb5}$   $\text{axb5}$  17  $\text{♜xb5}$   $\text{♞b7}$  18  $\text{♜g5}$



Best to keep throwing pieces at the black king. Something's

bound to turn up.

18... $\text{e6}$

18... $\text{♞a4!}$ ? is another idea, trying to line up against the queen, but White has a strong riposte in 19  $\text{fxg6}$ :

19... $\text{♞xc4}$  20  $\text{gxf7+}$   $\text{♜xh7}$  (20... $\text{♜h8?}$  21  $\text{♜xf7\#}$  or 20... $\text{♜f8}$  21  $\text{h8♞}$  do not impress) 21  $\text{♞xh7+}$   $\text{♜f8}$  22  $\text{♞h5}$  and White is close to winning.

19... $\text{hgx6}$  20  $\text{♙xf7+}$   $\text{♜f8}$  21  $\text{♞h7!}$   $\text{♙f5!}$  (otherwise 22  $\text{♞g8+}$   $\text{♜xg8}$   $\text{♜xh7\#}$ ) 22  $\text{♜e6+}$   $\text{♜xf7}$  23  $\text{♜xd8+}$   $\text{♜f8}$  24  $\text{♜xb7}$   $\text{♜xh7}$  25  $\text{♜xc5}$  (25  $\text{exf5!?$   $\text{♞b4}$  26  $\text{fxg6+}$   $\text{♜f6}$  27  $\text{♜xc5}$   $\text{♞xb5}$  28  $\text{b4}$  is unclear)  $\text{♞a5}$  26  $\text{♜c7}$   $\text{♜g8}$  27  $\text{b4}$  with a small edge for White.

19  $\text{♜xh7}$

I had a strange feeling in this game that many of my pieces and pawns were destined to die young, to inspire the rest of my army! Such a noble sacrifice.

19... $\text{♜xh7}$

Another option was 19... $\text{♜xe4}$  where White can force an immediate draw or play for more. 20  $\text{♞xd8+}$   $\text{♜xh7}$  21  $\text{♞h4+}$   $\text{♜g8}$ .

22  $\text{♞d8+}$  (=)  $\text{♙f8?}$  23  $\text{♜c7}$  with a big advantage to White.

22  $\text{fxg6!?$  is more in the spirit, when the position is just one big mess.

20  $\text{♞xd8+}$   $\text{♜f8}$  21  $\text{♞h4?!}$

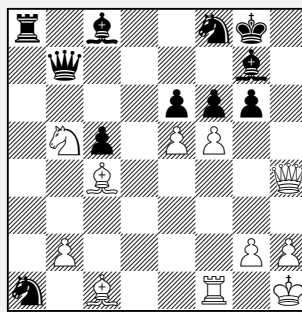
A lazy move. I could have put a stop to Black's resistance with 21  $\text{f6!}$   $\text{♙h8}$  22  $\text{♙h6}$  (the last white piece lands home) 22... $\text{♙d7}$  23  $\text{♞e7}$   $\text{♙c6}$  and now White can regain the piece with 24  $\text{Bxf8}$  but better is the aesthetic 24  $\text{♜d6!}$ .

21... $\text{f6?!}$

Too passive. Black had to play 21... $\text{♙e5}$  to give the bishop some air. Now the bishop is a sitting duck on g7.

22  $\text{e5!}$

Keep them coming!



22... $\text{g5}$  23  $\text{♞g4}$   $\text{♞e7}$  24  $\text{♙xg5!?$

24  $\text{exf6!}$  is a cleaner way to finish Black off but I felt like sacrificing some more bits first. I figured that the bishop on c1 had been pretty lazy up to this point anyway, so I might as well let it have a sniff of the action. After 24  $\text{exf6}$  Black loses after 24... $\text{♙xf6}$  25  $\text{♙xg5}$   $\text{♙xg5}$  26  $\text{f6}$ .

24... $\text{fxg5}$  25  $\text{f6}$   $\text{♞f7}$  26  $\text{♙d3}$

Big advantage to White. 26  $\text{♜d6}$  also springs to mind but sometimes it's nice to play a calm move such as  $\text{♙d3}$  to show your opponent who's boss. The bishop has done a great job on the a2-g8 diagonal, but now its time for it to find richer pickings on the b1-h7 diagonal.

26... $\text{♙xf6}$

A move like 26... $\text{♙h8}$  doesn't really impress after 27  $\text{♜d6}$   $\text{♞c7}$  28  $\text{♞xg5+}$ .

27  $\text{exf6}$   $\text{♜h7}$  28  $\text{♜d6}$   $\text{♞d7}$  29  $\text{f7+}$   $\text{♜f8}$  30  $\text{♙xh7}$

The f-pawn will soon finish its triumphant march!

1-0