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20...♙c6 21 ♜xf6 gxf6 22 ♖xf6+ ♜g7 23 ♜xg7 ♖xg7 24 ♖xg7+ ♗xg7 25 ♜xe6+ ♗h6 26 ♜xc5 ♙xf3+ 27 ♗g1 the ending should be a win for White. However, had Black played 14...b5 rather than 14...♙d7 then this line would be unclear as the Black's queen's guard of h7 would not be blocked by the bishop on d7.

18 e5!

We have already seen how opening the d3-h7 diagonal is often a key element in the attack.

18...dxe5

18...♙xd4 19 ♙xd4 ♜e8 20 f6 g6 21 ♖h6 ♜g8 22 ♜e4 followed by ♜g5 wins easily.

19 ♜xg7! (D)

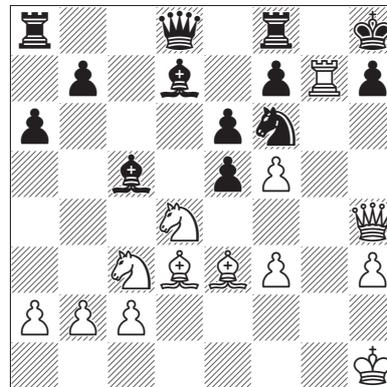
Black's defences are blasted away as White gives up his other rook.

19...♜g8

There is nothing better, since 19...exf5 20 ♙g5 and 19...♗xg7 20 ♙h6+ ♗h8 21 ♙g5 ♙e7 22 fxe6 win for White, while 19...♙xd4 20 ♜xh7+ ♜xh7 21 f6 leads to mate.

20 ♜xg8+ ♗xg8

B



Or 20...♜xg8 21 f6! ♜xf6 22 ♙g5 and White wins.

21 ♙g5 ♙e7 22 ♜e4 ♜d5 23 f6

White's forces rush in to murder the defenceless king.

23...♖b6 24 ♜c5

One of many quick wins.

24...♖xc5 25 ♖xh7+ 1-0

Game 105

Judit Polgar – Ilia Smirin

Istanbul Olympiad 2000

Pirc Defence, Austrian Attack

1 e4 g6 2 d4 ♙g7 3 ♜c3 d6 4 f4 ♜f6 5 ♜f3 0-0 6 ♙e3

White has tried a wide range of moves here. 6 ♙d3 and 6 ♙e3 are the most popular at present, but you also sometimes see the older moves 6 ♙e2 and 6 e5.

6...b6

The most common reply, preparing both ...♙b7 and ...c5.

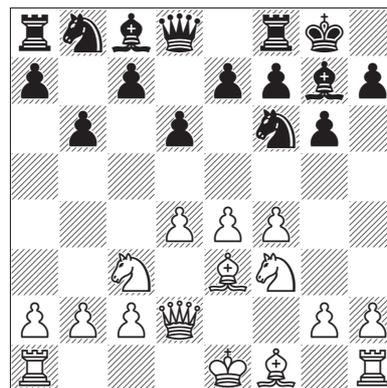
7 ♖d2 (D)

This is the modern way of playing the ♙e3 system. Previously, White had continued 7 e5 (7 ♙d3 c5 is fine for Black) 7...♜g4 8 ♙g1 c5 9 h3 ♜h6 10 d5, but this is now thought fully satisfactory for Black.

The idea behind 7 ♖d2 is to continue with queenside castling and reach a position rather similar to a Sicilian Dragon.

7...c5?!

B



The key alternative is 7...♙b7 8 e5 ♜g4 9 0-0-0 (this line differs from 7 e5 in that White makes no attempt to preserve his dark-squared bishop) 9...c5 10 dxc5 bxc5 (10...♜xe3 11 ♖xe3 bxc5 12 h4 gives White a dangerous attack

against the poorly defended kingside) 11 ♖xc5 ♗a5 12 ♖a3 dxe5 13 h3 ♖h6 with unclear complications. Such was the impact of the current game that 7...c5 all but disappeared, and current practice is almost entirely focused on 7...♖b7.

8 0-0-0

The most natural follow-up to White's previous move, but 8 d5 is also playable.

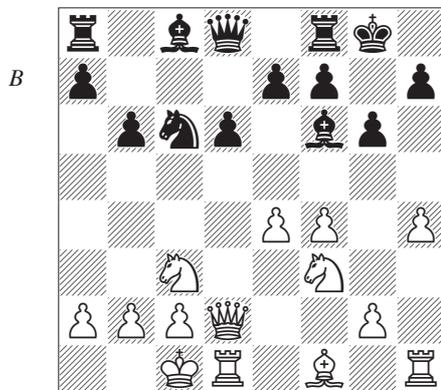
8...cxd4 9 ♖xd4!

An interesting move, very much in the modern style of play in which each position is treated on its individual merits. The alternative 9 ♗xd4 ♖b7 10 e5 ♗g4 is unclear, but at first sight Polgar's move looks no better since after the obvious reply 9...♗c6 White will either have to retreat the bishop with loss of time or allow it to be exchanged. At one time, players would have reacted with horror to the idea of exchanging their dark-squared bishop for a knight in a Dragon structure – think of all those lines in the Dragon in which White is reluctant to part with this bishop even in return for a rook. However, the point of 9 ♖xd4 is to gain time to launch a direct kingside attack. If Black never gets time to organize some play on the long diagonal, then the lack of a dark-squared bishop won't be of much concern for White. However, this move does commit White to rapid kingside action; any delay, and the missing bishop will prove a serious problem.

9...♗c6 10 ♖xf6

This is the idea; a key defender of Black's kingside is removed.

10...♖xf6 11 h4 (D)



A quick follow-up is essential. As MegaBase curiously puts it (notes by Finkel), "Polgar's play is fantastic: she simply doesn't give Smirin time to breeze!". Certainly Smirin was quickly wafted out of the tournament hall.

11...♖g4

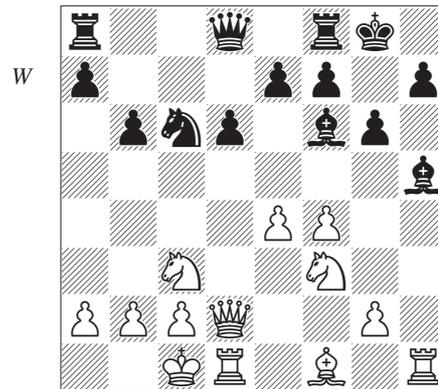
It is clear that once White plays h5 and hxg6, Black will be facing a dangerous attack, and the text-move is the obvious way to try to prevent this. However, White's brilliant reply essentially refutes the idea. Perhaps Black should already have resorted to a desperate move such as 11...b5 (11...h5 is strongly answered by 12 f5).

12 h5!

White crashes through in any case.

12...♖xh5 (D)

Alternatives such as 12...♗b4 13 hxg6 hxg6 14 f5 and 12...gxh5 13 ♗d5 ♖g7 14 ♖b5 ♗a5 15 ♗e3 also look grim for Black.



13 ♖xh5! gxh5 14 ♗d5

This is the point; the attack on c6 gives White a tempo to transfer her queen to the kingside.

14...♖c8

Judit Polgar's notes give this as dubious, but in fact Black doesn't have a satisfactory continuation. After 14...♖xc3 15 bxc3 ♗a5 (or 15...♖c8 16 ♗xh5 ♗e6 17 ♖b5 ♗a5 18 ♖h1 ♗g6 19 ♗h4 with the crushing threat of 20 ♖h3) 16 ♗xh5 f6 17 e5 ♗e8 18 ♗h4, for example, White has a massive attack. The continuation might be 18...♗f7 19 ♖d3 dxe5 20 fxe5 ♖fc8 21 exf6 exf6 22 ♖e4 ♖d8 23 ♗d4 ♗g7 24

♖b1 ♜ac8 25 ♞h1 ♞d7 26 ♙f5 ♞e8 27 ♜e6 with overwhelming threats.

15 ♞xh5 ♙g7

15...♙xc3? 16 ♜g5 results in a quick mate, while 15...♜b4 16 e5 ♙g7 17 a3 ♜c6 18 ♙d3 h6 19 ♞f5 ♞e8 20 e6 leads to a slightly slower mate.

16 e5 ♞e8

16...h6 is no better since it weakens the king-side; after 17 ♙a6 ♞c7 18 g4 ♞e8 (or else g5 wins) 19 ♜d5 White gains too much material.

17 ♞h3!

17 ♙b5 f5 18 ♞xe8 ♞fxe8 19 exd6 exd6 20 ♞xd6 ♙xc3 21 bxc3 ♜a5 22 ♙xe8 ♞xe8 23 ♜e5 also looks very good, but Polgar correctly plays to settle matters in the middlegame.

17...h6

White also wins after 17...dxe5 18 ♜g5 h6 19 ♞f5! hxg5 20 ♙d3 f6 21 ♞h7+ ♖f7 22 ♙g6+ ♖e6 23 f5# and 17...♜b4 18 ♙b5 ♜xa2+ 19 ♖d2 ♞d8 20 ♙d3 h6 21 ♞f5.

18 ♙d3

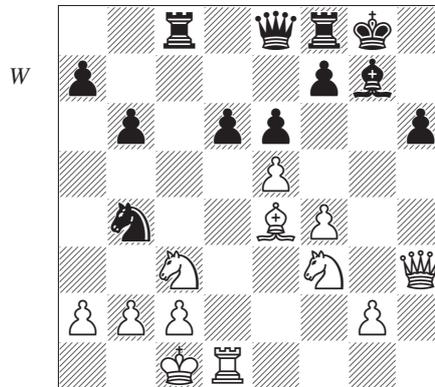
Threatening 19 ♞f5.

18...♜b4

18...e6 19 ♜e4 ♞e7 20 ♜f6+ ♙xf6 21 ♞xh6 mates.

19 ♙e4 e6 (D)

19...d5 20 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 21 ♞f5 also leads to mate.



20 f5!

Polgar conducts the final breakthrough with the same energy as the rest of the game.

20...♞xc3

20...♜xa2+ 21 ♜xa2 ♞a4 22 ♞d4 ♞xa2 23 f6 wins, while 20...dxe5 21 f6 ♙xf6 22 ♞xh6 is another mating line.

21 f6 ♞b5

21...♞a4 22 bxc3 ♜xa2+ 23 ♖b2 ♜xc3 (or 23...♞xe4 24 ♞g3 ♞g6 25 ♞xg6 fxg6 26 fxg7) 24 ♞d4 ♜d1+ 25 ♞xd1 ♞b4+ 26 ♖c1 ♞xe4 27 ♞g3 will leave White a piece ahead.

22 ♞g3! 1-0

White forces mate after 22...♞xc2+ 23 ♙xc2 ♜xa2+ 24 ♖d2 ♞b4+ 25 ♖e3 ♞c5+ 26 ♞d4.

Game 106

Alexei Shirov – Veselin Topalov

Wijk aan Zee 2001

Sicilian Defence, Perenyi Attack

1 e4 c5 2 ♜f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♜xd4 ♜f6 5 ♜c3 a6 6 ♙e3 e6 7 g4!? (D)

This is surely one of the sharpest variations in the whole of opening theory. As early as move seven, White commits himself to sacrificing a piece. Theory in these very sharp variations often tends to stabilize with a forced drawing variation, but the odd thing about this line is that although it has always been considered satisfactory for Black in theory, most top-level encounters have ended in wins for White. Apparently the practical difficulties involved in

defending are so great that even leading grandmasters often go wrong.

7...e5

Black takes up the challenge. If he wants to back down, then 7...h6 is an acceptable continuation.

8 ♜f5 g6

Here, too, Black can decline the sacrifice with the interesting idea 8...h5.

9 g5

Although White is now committed to giving up a piece, he at least has a choice about how to