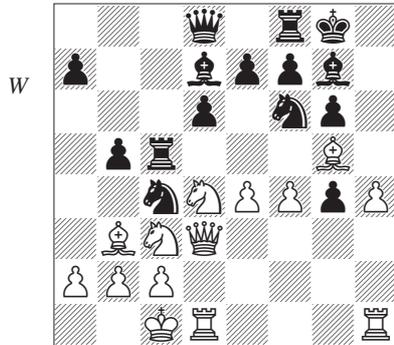


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with the white queen (e.g. because the b3-bishop pins the f7-pawn to the black king).

16...b5 (D)



White now has these options:

- B1: 17 e5** 99
- B2: 17 f5** 100
- B3: 17 h5** 101
- B4: 17 ♗xf6** 102

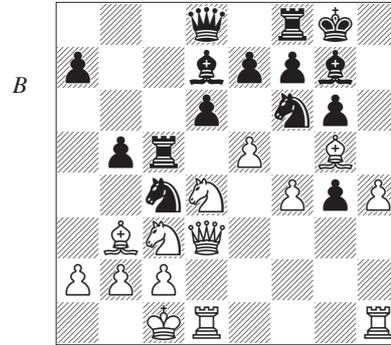
In terms of minor alternatives it is worth noting 17 ♗dxb5?. Black should be ever vigilant of such captures when playing these lines, as there is a risk that Black can suddenly find himself missing an important pawn and with a piece on c4 hanging (which, incidentally, is the case here!). Fortunately, most of the time these cheeky pawn-grabbing antics don't work, either because they leave the e4-pawn insufficiently protected, or because they allow Black to exact some retribution on the old h8-a1 diagonal: 17...♗xb2! 18 ♖xb2 ♗xe4 19 ♗xe4 ♗xb5 20 ♗d4 ♗c6 21 ♗d5 ♗xd5 22 ♗xd5 ♗a5 23 ♖c1 ♗xd4 24 ♗b3 ♗g7 25 ♗xe7 ♗c3 26 ♗e1 ♗a1+ 27 ♖d2 ♗c3+ 0-1 Bendana Guerrero-Isaev, corr. 1988.

B1)

17 e5 (D)

Black has tried various approaches here, but the direct approach seems best:

- 17...dxe5! 18 ♗dxb5**
- 18 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 transposes to Line B4.
- 18...♗xb2!**
- 18...♗c8!? has also yielded Black satisfactory results in this line, but objectively the text-move is probably preferable.
- 19 ♖xb2**



If 19 ♗xg6 then 19...e6 20 ♗xf6 fxg6 21 ♗xd8 ♗xd1 ♠.

19...e4! 20 ♗d2

20 ♗d4? runs into 20...♗xb5 21 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 22 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 23 ♗xd7 ♗c5 -+.

After the text-move (20 ♗d2), Black must choose between four equally unclear options:

a) 20...♗xb5 gives rise to an endgame in which Black has good compensation for the exchange according to Habermehl; e.g., 21 ♗xb5 ♗xb5 22 ♗xd8 ♗d7+ 23 ♖b1 ♗xd8 24 ♗xe7 ♗e8 with compensation.

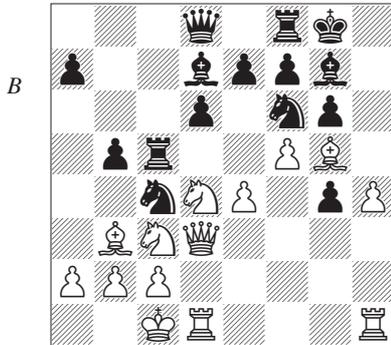
b) Moingt's 20...♗d5 throws more wood on the fire. Moingt maintains that Black is winning after 21 ♗xd5 ♗xb5 22 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 23 ♗xd8 ♗xc3+ 24 ♖c1 ♗xd8 25 ♗xd8 e3 -+ and this analysis is cited with apparent approval by Mayer. However, White's play in this line was rather compliant, and I suspect something like 21 ♖c1! could give Black problems, because 21...e3 can be met by 22 ♗xd5! ♗xd5 23 ♗xd5, when White has a rook and two knights for the queen, and may well be better.

c) 20...♗b6! is Schneider's preference, and may well be best. The only practical example with it went 21 ♗d4 ♗fc8 22 ♗ce2 a5! ♠ 23 a4 ♗xa4 24 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 25 ♖a2 ♗xc2+ 26 ♗xc2 ♗xc2+ 0-1 Atri-Vescovi, Moscow OL 1994.

d) 20...e3!? 21 ♗d3 e2 (21...♗xb5!? is also interesting; play might continue 22 ♗xd8 ♗xd8 23 ♗xd8+ ♗e8 24 ♗xe7 ♗xc3 25 ♖c1 e2 when Black's passed e- and g-pawns provide definite compensation) 22 ♗xe2 (22 ♗d2? ♗a8 23 ♗e1 ♗xb5 24 ♗xg6 ♗c4 25 ♗xc4 ♗xc4 26 ♗d3 ♗e4 wins for Black, Cordes-Jakobsen, Esbjerg 1986) 22...♗a5 (22...♗d5! looks stronger, although things are still very unclear) 23 ♗xe7 ♗e4 24 ♗xd7 ♗xb5 25 ♗xf8+ ♖xf8 26 ♗xf7+ ♖e8 27 ♗e7+ 1-0 Lacey-Jobe, corr. 1999.

B2)

17 f5 (D)



With this kingside thrust White abandons all notions of delivering mate down the h-file and instead focuses on generally cracking open the black kingside. Theory has established that Black now has two satisfactory responses.

17...♖e5

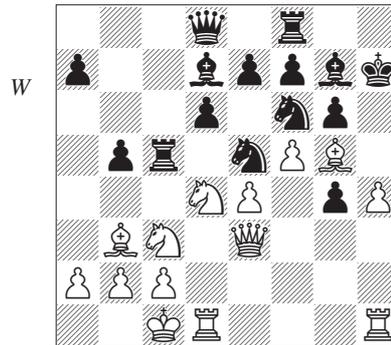
The other option is 17...gxf5:

a) 18 ♗xf5? ♕xf5 19 exf5 ♗xb2! (surprisingly this thematic blow goes unmentioned by all sources; however, Attila Schneider does demonstrate an advantage for Black by alternative means following 19...♗d7 20 ♖df1 ♖fc8 ♠ with the threat of 21...♗xb2) 20 ♗xb2 ♖xc3! →. If 21 ♗xc3 then 21...♗e4 wins the queen.

b) 18 exf5 ♖c8!. With this move Black enhances the pressure on the c-file and, more immediately, creates the threat of capturing the f5-pawn. White must defend f5 and has a choice of which rook to deploy to the task: 19 ♖df1 (19 ♖hf1 ♗e5 20 ♗e3 ♖xc3 21 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♖c8 23 ♗e2 ♗f8 24 ♕d5 1/2-1/2 Sax-Georgiev, Montreal 1986) 19...♗e5 (19...♗d5 has also been played with good results; to the best of my knowledge the move 19...b4!? has never been played in either practical or correspondence chess, but if I were faced with this position over the board this is the move that would most appeal to me, and I would submit that it deserves serious consideration) 20 ♗e3 ♖xc3!? 21 bxc3 (21 ♗xc3 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♖c8 23 ♗b2 a5 gives Black excellent compensation for the exchange) 21...a5 22 h5 ♗h7 23 h6 ♕h8 24 ♕xf6 ♕xf6 25 ♖h5 ♗c5 26 ♖g5 a4 27 ♖g7+ ♗h8 28 ♕e6 fxe6 29 fxe6 ♕c6 30 ♖f5 ♗d5 0-1 Jandovsky-Hadraba, corr. 1987.

18 ♗e3 ♗h7!? (D)

18...b4! is probably best: 19 ♗d5 (19 ♕xf6 ♕xf6 20 ♗d5 gxf5! 21 ♗xf6+ exf6 22 exf5 a5 ♠ Kulozewski-Nizynski, Poland 1986) 19...♗xd5 20 ♕xd5 gxf5 21 ♕h6 (21 ♗xf5 ♕xf5 22 exf5 ♗a5 23 ♗b3 ♖fc8 24 ♖d2 ♗c4 25 ♕xc4 ♖xc4 ♠ Simola-Froberg, Finland 1996) 21...e6 22 ♕b3 ♗f6 23 ♕g5 f4 24 ♗e1 (24 ♕xf4 ♗f3! →) 24...♗g6 25 ♕e7 ♖fc8 ♠ Bakalarz-Pekarek, Myslowice 1985.



The text-move was Curt Hansen's contribution to this variation. It caused quite a stir at the time (prophylaxis and whatnot), but I suspect it is probably not Black's best. I include it here because it embodies a particularly memorable example of how Black can employ the king in its own defence.

19 h5?!

Better is 19 fxg6+! ♗xg6 20 ♖df1, which gave rise to an unclear position in Rachels-Rao, USA jr Ch 1986; although Black eventually won I suspect White may have been better at various points.

19...gxf5!

Black sidesteps the oncoming attack, using White's h-pawn as a shelter for the black king, and breaking up White's centre. Now:

a) 20 exf5 ♖xc3 21 bxc3 a5 22 h6 ♕h8 23 ♕f4 (23 a3!? is probably White's best here; 23 ♕xf6? ♕xf6 24 ♗e4 ♗c8 25 ♖h5 a4 26 ♕e6 ♗xc3 27 ♕xd7 ♗c4 0-1 Gasseholm-E.Pedersen, corr. 1986) 23...a4 24 ♕xe5 axb3 25 ♕xf6 ♕xf6 26 axb3 e5 27 ♗e4 exd4 28 ♗xg4 ♕c6 29 ♖h2 ♖g8 30 ♗h5 ♕d5 31 cxd4 ♗a5 32 ♖h4 ♕xh4 33 ♗xh4 ♗a1+ 0-1 Mortensen-Cu.Hansen, Danish Ch 1986.

b) 20 h6 ♕h8 reveals another important aspect of the repositioning of the black king on