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2 Opposite-Side Castling

When the kings are situated on opposite wings, there is a stronger case for sending the pawns forward into the attack, and moving all the pieces towards the opposite wing to the one where our own king is located. Indeed, this strategy becomes not only advisable but even sometimes essential.

We are familiar with the scenario where both sides are attacking with all their might and, as in a race, the first past the post claims victory. The winning-post is reached when the enemy king's defences are overwhelmed, concluding in mate or a decisive advantage. The outcome is often uncertain almost until the end of the struggle.

The outcome is clearer when the contest is of a different sort, where one side attacks while the other only defends. Since it is possible that the defending side might not be able to use all his forces in the defence, the outcome is usually a bad one for him.

There is a third scenario, which consists of combining the attack with prophylactic measures on the wing where one's own king is located, in order to hinder, slow down, or even completely halt the opponent's progress; this type of struggle is more common in today's chess.

Game 6

Andras Adorjan – Zoltan Ribli

Candidates playoff match (game 4), Budapest 1979

Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation

In this game White's attack does not encounter any serious opposition and is carried out in a straightforward and effective manner.

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 ♙e3

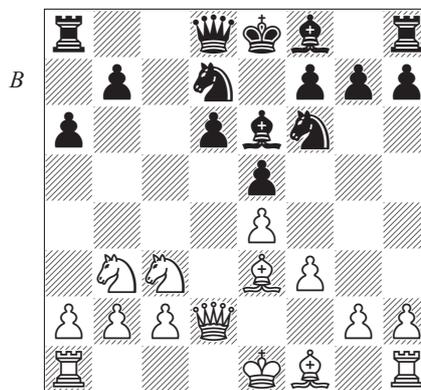
This move was a rare guest in the 1970s. Its popularity began to grow in the following decade with the rise of the 'English Attack' and at present it is the main line against the Najdorf Sicilian.

6...e5 7 ♘b3 ♙e6 8 ♚d2 ♘bd7 9 f3 (D)

White has shown his cards; his main plan is queenside castling, followed by the advance g4. At present there is a great deal of theory on this position. Black frequently plays with his king in the centre, delaying a decision as to its long-term future, so as not to offer a clear target.

9...♗c8

Black decides to continue playing 'normal' moves on the queenside, postponing any decision about what to do on the kingside. In the



same spirit, it is possible to play 9...b5, which we discuss in the context of Supplementary Games 6.1 and 6.2, both of them much more modern examples.

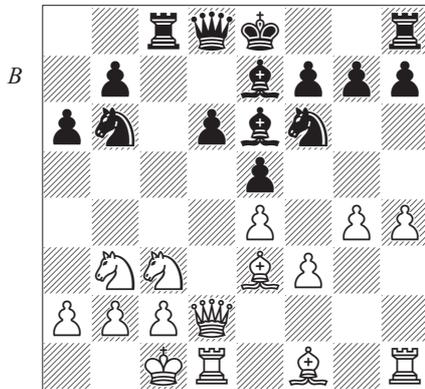
10 g4 ♙e7

Continuing his development. Another idea is to play ...h6 (now or later), which is the modern

treatment of the line. Black hinders White's attack by keeping the f6-knight on its natural square, although of course it provides a contact-point on g5 for the future.

11 0-0-0 ♖b6 12 h4 (D)

In this and many similar positions it is possible (but not always better) to dislodge the f6-knight with 12 g5, since after 12...♗h5, although the knight moves away from the centre, it also makes it harder for White to open lines on the kingside. White tries to prevent this possibility by bringing a pawn to h4 before playing g5. This plan is a slow one, and normally Black can make constructive use of these two tempi, although that was not the case in this game.



12...0-0?!

Very risky, since it provides White with an obvious target without having any clear idea of where his counterplay will come from; it does not seem possible to counter-attack against the white king, so Black will need to come up with something special.

With the same ideas as in the game, it was possible to play 12...♗c4, keeping the king in the centre, and after 13 ♙xc4 ♗xc4 14 h5, there is the 'modern' resource 14...h6.

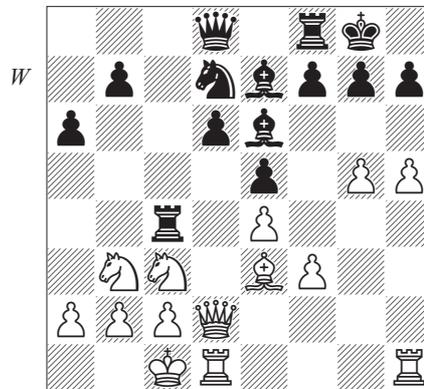
13 h5 ♗c4?

This is the decisive error. Instead, 13...d5 was to be considered, although White is slightly better after 14 g5!, when best seems 14...♗xe4 15 fxe4 d4 16 ♗xd4 exd4 17 ♖xd4 (not 17 ♖g2 ♗xc3! 18 bxc3? ♙a3+ 19 ♖b1 ♗a4, winning) 17...♙xg5 18 ♙xg5 ♖xg5+ 19 ♖b1, although of course the position remains complicated.

On the other hand 14 ♙xb6?! ♖xb6 15 g5 is not as good as it looks, since after 15...d4 16 ♗a4 ♖c6 17 gxf6 Black does not play 17...gxf6? since he would be mated with 18 ♗ac5! ♙xc5 19 ♗g1+ ♖h8 20 ♖h6. 17...♙xf5! is playable, and Black's limited threats on the c-file prove far from harmless after 18 ♗ac5 ♙xb3! 19 ♗xb3 ♙g5, when it is Black who wins.

Another idea is 13...♗fd7!, not waiting passively for 14 g5 but seeking complications with the defensive resource 14...f5!, as played in Iordachescu-Neuerov, Dubai open 2005.

14 ♙xc4 ♗xc4 15 g5 ♗d7 (D)



What should White do now? If the position were a 'normal' one (i.e. if each tempo were of the utmost value, since normally the first to open lines against the enemy king gains the advantage), then the first idea that should be considered is the thematic sacrifice 16 g6, which is good, but here White is in no hurry and can attack with maximum force without sacrificing anything.

16 ♗dg1!

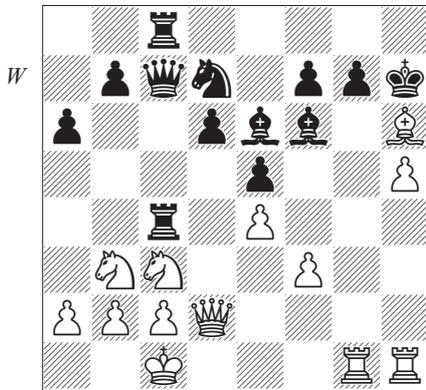
The g6 break, opening lines, cannot be prevented, and this move is not a waste of time, since the rook will be very useful on the g-file.

16...♖c7 17 g6 ♗c8

Black's castled position is demolished after 17...♗f6 18 ♙h6! ♗e8 19 ♙xg7! ♖xg7 (or 19...♗xg7 20 ♖h6) 20 h6+ ♖g8 21 g7, with a material advantage and an attack.

17...♙f6 will probably transpose into the game.

18 ♙h6!! ♙f6 19 gxh7+ ♖xh7 (D)



20 ♗xg7!

Opening up Black's castled position is worth more than the piece. This sacrifice is based on concrete calculation, which is possible in this position.

20...♗f6 21 h6!

This is the right way. White should not get carried away with 21 ♖xg7+? since, as Adorjan indicates, after 21...♗xg7 22 ♖g5+ ♗f8 23 h6 Black does not play 23...♖xc3? 24 h7 ♖xc2+ 25 ♗b1 ♖xb2+ 26 ♗xb2 ♖c3+ 27 ♗a3, after which he is mated, but instead defends with 23...♗d8! and retains a decisive material advantage.

21...♗f6

The other bishop moves also lead to mate: after 21...♗h8, 22 ♖g5 wins, while if 21...♗f8 White wins with 22 ♖g5 f6 23 ♖g6+ ♗h8 24 h7.

22 ♖g2!

With the unstoppable threat of 23 ♖g7+!, followed by mate.

1-0

The success of White's attack is unquestionable, although in the 21st century we rarely see so 'cooperative' a defence in a game between two world championship candidates, which the two Hungarian grandmasters were when this game was played.

Black was unable to halt the attack on his king or create serious threats against the enemy king. Of course, some major defensive ideas on the kingside were unknown or underestimated at the time: ...h5 by Black to prevent or delay White's g4, or else, after g4, playing ...h6, to prevent the f6-knight from being dislodged, or the ...f5 resource mentioned in the note to move 13.

So let us now, as promised, consider two more modern encounters in this same opening line.

Supplementary Game 6.1

Viswanathan Anand – Boris Gelfand

Wijk aan Zee 2006

Sicilian Defence, Najdorf Variation

1 e4 c5 2 ♖f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5 ♗c3 a6 6 f3 e5 7 ♗b3 ♗e6 8 ♗e3 ♗bd7 9 ♗d2 b5 10 0-0-0 ♗b6 11 ♖f2 (D)

11...♗c4

If 11...♗fd7 White can change plan and play 12 f4, taking advantage of the absence of the f6-knight. Thus the text-move is more fashionable.

12 ♗xc4 bxc4 13 ♗a5

This 'spectacular' move has replaced 13 ♗c5.

13...♗d7

The knight is immune since 13...♖xa5? runs into 14 ♗b6 ♖b4 15 a3, winning the queen.

