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113	J.Polgar – Berkes, Budapest 2003	9	N	621
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Game 78
Alexander Beliavsky – John Nunn
Wijk aan Zee 1985
King's Indian Defence, Sämisch Variation

The Players

Alexander Beliavsky (born 1953) is a Ukrainian grandmaster who made an impact on the international scene at a relatively early age by winning the World Junior Championship in 1973. The following year saw another major success – joint first with Tal in the USSR Championship. Thereafter he became one of the regulars on the international circuit, achieving consistently good results and participating in many top tournaments, but without breaking into the very highest level of world chess. He has never achieved any particular success in world championship cycles, and is stronger in tournaments than in match play. After a few years of (for him) modest results in the early 1990s, he regained his form and he occupied joint 9th position on the January 1998 rating list.

John Nunn (born 1955) won several junior titles in Britain before his first international success – winning the European Junior Championship in 1974/5. He gained his grandmaster title in 1978 and won the British Championship in 1980. In 1981 he became a professional player, having previously been a mathematics lecturer at Oxford University. Since then he has won a number of international tournaments, including three victories at both Wijk aan Zee (one shared) and Hastings (twice shared). His best tournament results were in the 1988/9 World Cup cycle, in which he finished sixth. He has played for England in ten Olympiads, his best result being at Thessaloniki 1984 where he gained three individual gold medals. In the 1990s, he turned his energies more to writing and twice won the British Chess Federation Book of the Year Award.

The Game

Black adopts a slightly unusual line against White's Sämisch King's Indian. Beliavsky, never one to shirk a confrontation, tries to refute it directly. Black's response is a surprising piece sacrifice which traps White's king in the centre of the board. Detailed analysis shows that the position is roughly level but, as so often, the defender is under more psychological pressure and is the first to crack. Black sacrifices another exchange and his pieces are soon swarming around White's hapless king.

1	d4	♘f6
2	c4	g6
3	♘c3	♙g7
4	e4	d6

5	f3	0-0
6	♙e3	♘bd7

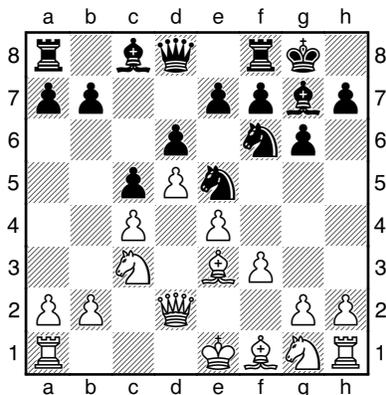
The most common moves are 6...c5, 6...e5 and 6...♘c6, but after this game

the 6...♖bd7 line became established as a genuine alternative, although it has never become as popular as the three main continuations.

7 ♖d2 c5
8 d5

A Benoni pawn-structure has arisen, in which Black's usual plan would be to chip away at White's centre by ...e6. However, this cannot be played immediately because the d6-pawn is hanging after the reply dxe6.

8 ... ♞e5

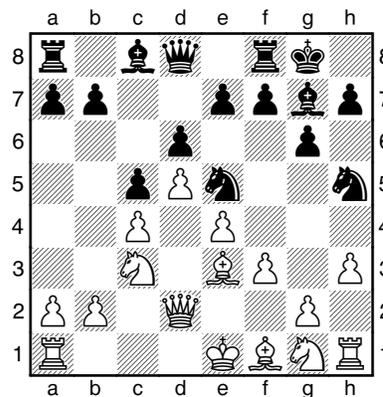


Not only covering d6 in anticipation of ...e6, but also preventing ♖h3 and ♗ge2 and so obstructing the development of White's kingside pieces.

9 h3?!

White cannot play 9 f4 because of 9...♗eg4, but now he threatens to drive the knight back with 10 f4. If White were to achieve this aim, then Black's plan would be exposed as a waste of time. However, it turns out that Black has adequate resources against this direct attempt to drive the e5-knight away. White soon turned to 9 ♙g5, again preparing f4, and this is considered the critical continuation today.

9 ... ♞h5



Taking aim at g3 and so immediately exploiting the slight dark-square weaknesses created by h3.

10 ♙f2

Probably best. 10 ♙f2 is unwise because of 10...e6, when ...♖h4+ is hard to stop, while after 10 ♖f2 e6! (the safest move, which enables Black to maintain the position of his knights) 11 f4 (11 g4 exd5 12 cxd5 ♙f6 13 h4 ♙xg4 14 fxg4 ♗xg4 leaves Black quite favourably placed, with three pawns and domination of the dark squares in return for his piece) 11...♙f6! and White has no good move, e.g. 12 g3 ♗xg3 13 fxe5 ♙h4 14 ♗f3 ♗xf1 15 ♗xh4 ♗xe3, 12 h4 ♗g4, or 12 ♗f3 ♗xf3+ 13 ♖xf3 ♗g3.

10 ... f5

Other moves are too slow, for example after 10...e6 11 g4 Black's knights are driven back.

11 exf5

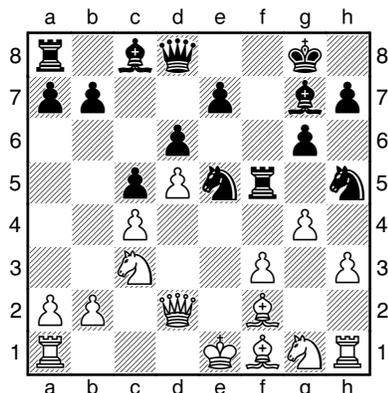
Better than 11 f4 ♙h6 12 g3 fxe4 13 ♗xe4 ♙f5 14 ♗g5 ♙xg5 15 fxg5 ♙e4 16 ♖h2 ♖f3 with advantage for Black.

11 ... ♖xf5!

After 11...♙xf5? 12 g4 Black simply loses a piece for nothing, while 11...gxf5 12 f4 ♙h6 13 g3 does not provide the necessary activity: here the c8-bishop is shut in, and the threat of ♖e2 forces an immediate knight retreat.

12 g4

If the piece is declined, then ...♗f4 and ...♙h6 can follow and Black gets an aggressive position all the same.



12 ... ♗xf3

13 g4

Again White cannot do better. If 13 0-0-0, then 13...♗f7! 14 g4 ♖f8 and Black regains his piece favourably, for example 15 ♗e4 ♙h6 16 ♙e3 ♙xe3 17 ♖xe3 ♗xf1.

13 ... ♗f8

Black's strong initiative and White's poor king position provide sufficient compensation for the piece, but no more. Now Beliavsky finds an excellent defensive plan.

14 ♗e4!

The alternatives are inferior:

1) 14 ♗h2 ♙h6 15 ♖d1 (15 ♖e2 ♗d3+ 16 ♖xd3 ♗xd3 17 ♙xd3 ♖f4 and 15 ♖c2 ♖f4 16 ♗g2 ♙f5 17 ♖d1

♗xf2! 18 ♗xf2 ♖e3+ are also good for Black) 15...♖f4 16 ♗g2 ♙f5 with a strong attack, for example 17 ♙e2 ♗xf2 18 ♗xf2 ♖g3 or 17 ♗ge2 ♖xc4 18 ♗g1 ♖f4 and the loss of the c-pawn has only made White's situation worse.

2) 14 ♗d1 ♙f5 with the awkward threat of 15...♙h6. After 15 b3 (15 ♖e2 ♙d3 also wins) 15...♗d3+ 16 ♙xd3 ♗xd3 17 ♖xd3 ♙f5, followed by ...♙xc3+ and ...♖e4+, White loses too much material.

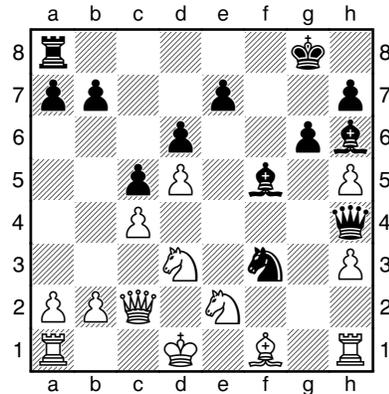
3) 14 hxg6 ♙f5 (14...hxg6 is less good because a little later the queen comes to bear on g6 – see the note to Black's 18th move) 15 gxh7+ ♙xh7! 16 ♗d1 (16 ♗h2 ♙h6 17 ♖d1 ♖f4! 18 ♗g2+ ♖h8 19 ♙e2 ♗xf2 20 ♗xf2 ♖g3 21 ♖f1 ♗g8 favours Black) 16...♙h6 17 ♖e2 ♙d3 18 ♖xe5 (18 ♗xd3 ♗xd3+ 19 ♖xd3 ♗xd3 20 ♙xd3 ♖f4 is very good for Black) 18...dxe5 19 ♗xf3 ♙xf1 20 ♗xe5 ♙g7 21 ♗g6 ♖f6 22 ♗xf1 ♖xg6 23 ♗g1 offers White some drawing chances.

4) 14 ♖e2 ♗d3+ 15 ♖xd3 ♗xd3 16 ♙xd3 ♙f5 17 ♗d1 (17 ♙e2 ♙xc3+ 18 bxc3 ♙e4 19 ♗h2 ♖f4 wins material, while after 17 ♙xf5 ♙xc3+ 18 bxc3 ♖xf5 19 ♗e2 ♗f8 20 ♙g3 ♖e4 21 ♗g1 ♗f3 White's pieces are too poorly coordinated to resist Black's attack) 17...♙xd3 18 ♗xd3 ♖f5 19 ♗f3 ♙xc3+ 20 bxc3 ♖b1+ 21 ♖e2 ♖e4+! 22 ♖d2 ♗f8 and Black wins.

These lines indicate the problems facing White: Black's enormously active pieces both prevent queenside castling and interfere with his normal development. White has no counterplay and must restrict himself to purely defensive moves, always a difficult situation in over-the-board play.

22...♖e1+ 23 ♘c2 ♗d2+ 24 ♖b3 ♙a4+ 25 ♖xa4 ♗b4#) 22 ♙g2 (22 ♗xh6 ♗e1+ 23 ♘c2 ♙f5+ 24 ♖b3 ♗b4#) 22...♞d4 23 ♗d3 (23 ♞e1 ♗e3) 23...♗xg2 24 ♞g1 ♗f2 and Black wins easily.

19 ... ♙f5



This time the threat is 20...♞e1 21 ♞xe1 ♙xc2+ 22 ♞xc2 ♗g5 and wins, because White's pieces are unable to defend d2.

20 ♞e1?

It is only at this point that White's position becomes definitely lost, although finding the following saving line over the board would be little short of a miracle. White should have played 20 ♗c3! ♙g7 21 ♗b3 ♙xd3 22 ♗xd3 ♗e1+ 23 ♘c2 ♗xa1 24 ♗xf3 ♗xb2+ 25 ♖d1 ♗a1+ (25...♞f8 26 ♗e3 ♗xa2 27 ♞c1 is unclear) 26 ♞c1 (if the king moves, two more pawns go, leaving Black with four against a knight) 26...♙h6 27 ♗a3 ♞f8 (threatens both 28...♞f3 and 28...♞f2) 28 ♙e2 (absolutely forced) 28...♞f2 29 ♞e1 ♞h2 (threatening 30...♞xh3) 30 ♘c2 ♙xc1 31 ♗xc1 ♗xa2+ 32 ♖d1 (32 ♗b2 ♗xc4+) and now:

1) Following 32...♞xh3 White survives with the amazing defence 33 hxg6! hxg6 (33...♞b3 34 gxh7+ ♖h8 35 ♞f1) 34 ♞f1!! ♞b3 35 ♙g4 ♞b1 36 ♙e6+, drawing by perpetual check as the pinned queen covers h6!

2) After 32...♗b3+ 33 ♗c2 ♗xc2+ 34 ♖xc2 gxh5 Black has five pawns for the bishop, but his pawns are so widely scattered that he cannot hang on to them.

Thus it seems that, thanks to an astounding defence, 20 ♗c3 would have kept the game alive. After the text-move Black's task is easier.

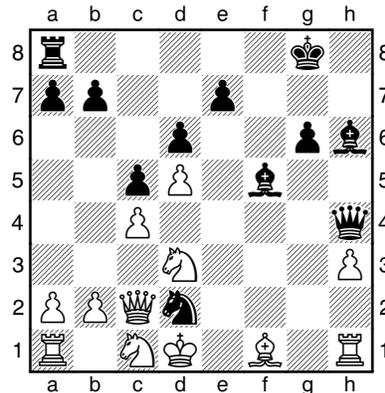
20 ... ♞d2!

A strangely powerful move, threatening above all 21...♗e4 22 ♞g1 ♗e3, and if 23 ♞h1, then 23...♗f3+.

21 hxg6 hxg6

Not 21...♗e4? as White gets counterplay by 22 gxh7+ ♖h8 (22...♙xh7 23 ♞g1+ and 22...♖xh7 23 ♞e1! are also good for White) 23 ♗c3+ ♖xh7 24 ♞f2! ♗f4 25 ♞cd3 and suddenly White's knights have come alive.

The text-move renews the threat of 22...♗e4.



22 ♙g2

Despite White's extra rook, there is no defence:

1) 22 ♖xd2 ♙xd2 23 ♗xd2 ♜xc4, and with no knight at c3 the d-pawn disappears at once, since attempting to hold it by 24 ♙g2 loses to 24... ♖d4 25 ♗e2 c4.

2) 22 ♖g1 is refuted by 22... ♖d4 23 ♖h1 (23 ♗e2 ♜e3 24 ♖c3 ♗e4 wins) 23... ♜e4 24 ♖g1 ♜e3.

3) 22 ♙e2 ♗xc4 23 ♖b3 ♗e3+ 24 ♗d2 c4 25 ♖xb7 ♗xd5+ 26 ♗c2 ♗e3+, followed by 27... ♙e4, is catastrophic for White.

4) 22 ♖c3 ♙e4 23 ♖g1 ♗xc4 24 ♗f4 (24 ♖g3 ♖xg3 25 ♖xc4 ♖g5 26 ♖c3 ♖f8 27 ♙e2 c4 and Black wins) 24... ♖f2 25 ♖xc4 ♖xg1 26 ♗e6 ♙g2 27 ♗e1 ♙xh3 28 ♗b3 (White is paralysed) 28... ♙e3 wins for Black.

5) 22 ♗e2 and 22 ♗b3 are both met by 22... ♗xc4, when the knight is heading for e3.

22 ... ♗xc4
23 ♖f2

The only other possible attempt, 23 ♖e1, loses to 23... ♖h5+ followed by 24... ♗e3+.

23 ... ♗e3+

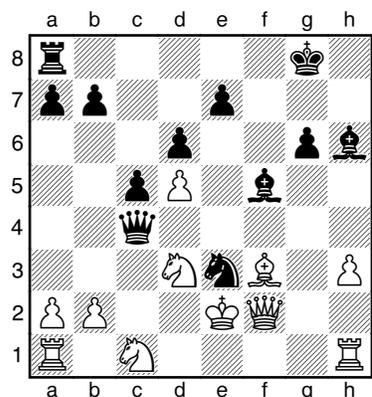
Black is justified in playing for more than just a favourable endgame by 23... ♖xf2 24 ♗xf2 ♗e3+.

24 ♗e2 ♖c4!

Now that the white queen has managed to crawl painfully across to f2, Black switches his own queen to the unguarded queenside. The chief threat is 25... ♙xd3+ 26 ♗xd3 ♖c2+ 27 ♗e1 ♖xd3, etc.

25 ♙f3

25 ♖xe3 is met by 25... ♖c2+ 26 ♗f3 ♙xe3.



25 ... ♖f8

There are now several routes to victory. 25... ♙xd3+ 26 ♗xd3 ♖c2+ 27 ♗e1 ♖xd3 28 ♙d1 ♖f8 is equally effective.

26 ♖g1 ♗c2

Even stronger than 26... ♙xd3+, because ... ♗d4+ will win two pieces.

27 ♗d1 ♙xd3

0-1

Lessons from this game:

- 1) If your opening strategy depends on keeping the initiative, then you must keep going even at the cost of material sacrifice.
- 2) If you have sufficient attacking forces in play, it can be worth a piece to trap your opponent's king in the middle of the board.
- 3) If you play a game such as this, thinking of it will give you a warm glow for at least the next 25 years.