

- 1 e4 e5
- 2 Nf3 Nc6
- 3 Nc3 Nf6
- 4 Bb5 Bb4
- 5 O-O O-O
- 6 d3 Bxc3
- 7 bxc3 d6
- 8 Bg5 Qe7
- 9 Bxc6

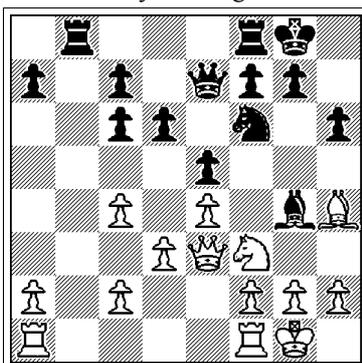
Opening the b-file. In this variation of the Four Knights, the central pawn structure usually remains solid, and so knights tend to be more useful than the bishops.

- 9 ... bxc6
- 10 Qd2!?

A new move (the second edition of ECO gives 10 Nd2), threatening to play 11 c4 and then move the queen to the queenside to harass the weakened black pawns.

- 10 ... h6
- 11 Bh4 Rb8
- 12 c4 Bg4!
- 13 Qe3

Queenside play by 13 Qa5 would be answered by 13 ... g5 14 Bg3 Bxf3 15 gxf3 c5 16 Qxa7 (else 16 ... c6) 16 ... Ra8 17 Qb7 Rfb8 18 Qc6 Qd7! 19 Qxd7 Nxd7 when Black, despite his pawn deficit, has the advantage because the a-pawn is easily blockaded, while White's bishop is imprisoned and will be unable to rejoin the game.



(position after 13 Qe3)

- 13 ... Bxf3
- 14 Qxf3?

After this Black has a clear advantage. White had two better lines:

- a) 14 Bxf6 Qxf6 15 Qxf3 when Black's advantage is difficult to build upon
- b) 14 gxf3 when 14 ... g5? allows 15 Bxg5! (and not 15 Bg3 when the bishop is locked up as per the

game continuation) 15 ... hxc3 16 Qxg5+ Kh8 17 Qh4+ Kg7 18 Qg5+ (but not 18 Kh1? Rg8!) with perpetual check, so Black would have to settle for 14 ... c5 with just a slight edge.

- 14 ... g5
- 15 Bg3 Rb2
- 16 Rfc1 c5

The fate of the game revolves around the plight of White's bishop. If it remains in it's prison, Black must win, as he is playing with an extra piece. Black's last move over protects the d4 square. Nonetheless, White should now play 17 Qd1, to prepare for an eventual pawn push to d4 after moves such as f3, Bf2 and c3, and also to make Rcb1, fighting for possession of the open file, possible.

Instead, he wastes valuable tempos opening the h-file with eventual disastrous consequences.

- 17 h4? Rfb8
- 18 hxg5? hxg5
- 19 Qd1 c6
- 20 f3 Kg7!?

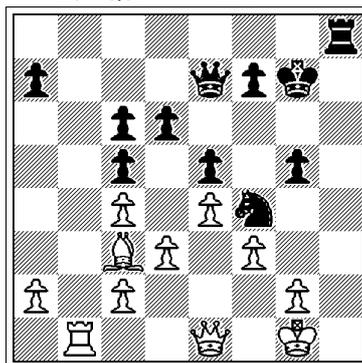
White has defended his queenside and is now in a position to challenge for control of the open b-file. However, by playing 17 h4? and 18 hxg5?, he has given Black a choice of possible ideas. 20 ... Qb7 would have maintained the grip on the file and ensured a lasting advantage. 20 ... Kg7!? opts for a more aggressive plan.

- 21 Be1 Nh5
- 22 Bc3 R2b7
- 23 Rab1 Rxb1!

The point!

Black sacrifices the b-file in order to obtain a decisive attack along the h-file.

- 24 Rxb1 Rh8
- 25 Qe1 Nf4



(position after 25 ... Nf4)

- 26 Bd2

If White tries to kick the knight away with 26 g3, Black will reply 26 ... Rh3!! and now :

- a) 27 Qf2? loses to 27 ... Rxc3+!
- b) 27 Kf2 Rh2+ 28 Kg1 Rg2+ 29 Kf1 Qe6 and the threat of 30 ... Qh3 is decisive
- c) 27 gxf4 gxf4 28 Kg2 (worse is 28 Kf2 Qh4+ 29 Ke2 Rh2+ 30 Kd1 Rh1) 28 ... Rg3+ 29 Qxg3 (29 Kf2 Qh4 30 Ke2 Qh2+ 31 Kd1 Rg1 concedes an additional pawn to main line while 29 Kf1 Rxf3+ 30 Kg2 Rg3+ 31 Kf1 Qh4 is clearly hopeless) 29 ... fxg3 30 Kxg3 Qg5+ 31 Kf2 Qh4+ 32 Kg2 Qf4 and Black should win the ending

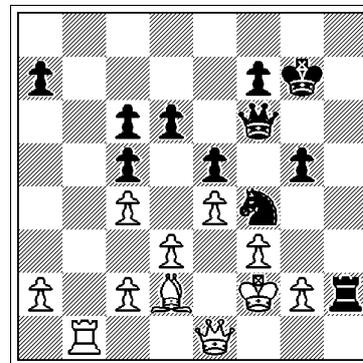
- 26 ... Qf6

Black's pieces co-ordinate perfectly, while White's rook at b1 cannot participate in the kingside action.

- 27 Kf2?

White's last chance to attempt to defend himself lies in 27 Bxf4 exf4 28 c3, but after 28 ... Rh4 the Black attack will continue unabated.

- 27 ... Rh2



(position after 27 ... Rh2)

Now 28 Bxf4 is forced and Black will respond 28 ... exf4.

After this the desperate attack 29 Kg1 Qh6 30 Qc3+ Kg6 31 Rb8 fails to 31 ... f6 32 Rg8+ Kf7 33 Ra8 g4! and it is Black whose attack bursts through.

29 c3 loses straight away to 29 ... g4! 30 Kg1 (or 30 fxg4 f3 etc) 30 ... g3 with the threat of 31 ... Qh4.

White's other option is a slow death by 29 Qg1 g4! 30 Ke2 (30 Rf1 Qh4+ 31 Ke2 Qg3 32 Rf2 gxf3+ and 30 Qxh2 g3+ both lose straight away) 30 ... Qh4 31 Qf2 (other moves lose immediately) 31 ... g3 32 Qg1 Qh3 33 Kf1 Qh8! 34

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Ke2 Kg6 35 a4 a5 36 Rc1 (there is nothing else eg 36 Rb3 Rh1 or 36 Kd2 Qh3) 36 ... Qb2 37 Kd1 f6 (not allowing tricks based on a subsequent pawn push to e5) and Black will pick up the a-pawn at his leisure whilst retaining his bind.

Having seen all this White (an IM at OTB chess) decided to save himself some stamps!

28 Resigns