

1 e4 c5
2 Nf3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 Nxd4 Nf6
5 Nc3 g6

The Sicilian Dragon, one of the most heavily analysed of the openings.

6 Be3 Bg7
7 f3 O-O
8 Qd2 Nc6
9 O-O-O

9 Bc4 instead tends to lead to incredibly double-edged positions. The text heads for a more positional type of game and has a reputation for being difficult for Black to obtain equality against, albeit the advantages that White often obtains tend to be only relatively slight ones.

9 ... d5
10 exd5 Nxd5
11 Nxc6 bxc6
12 Bd4

White can grab a pawn here by 12 Nxd5 cxd5 13 Qxd5, but after 13 ... Qc7 14 Qc5 Qb7 15 b3 Bf5 Black has good counterplay.

12 ... e5
13 Bc5 Be6
14 Ne4

Black would obtain a fearsome attack in the event of 14 Bxf8 Qxf8 (threatening 15 ... Bh6) 15 Kb1 Rb8.

The text controls the d6-square and reserves White the options of pawn thrusts to either c4, g4 or h4 as a follow-up.

14 ... Re8
15 h4 h6

Read v Grohde, Abonyi Memorial 1993/95 had continued 15 ... f5 16 Ng5 Bh6 17 Ba6 with the type of slight edge to White that was alluded to above in the note to his 9th move. In that game Black's position proved difficult to play accurately and White picked up the full point in 28 moves.

16 g4 Qc7
17 g5

Gaining more space and strengthening the position of his knight.

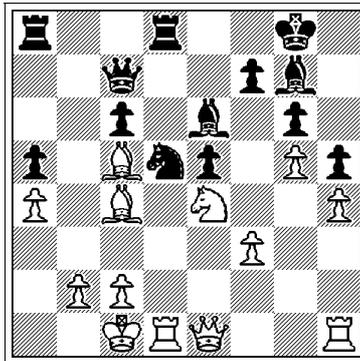
17 ... h5
18 Bc4 Red8

The queen's rook is destined for the b8 square so he contests the d-file with this one.

19 Qe1

19 Qf2 with pressure on the g1-a7 diagonal is also good. The text vacates the second rank so that the king's rook may journey via h2 to the d2 square.

19 ... a5
20 a4



(position after 20 a4)

This was as far as the theory books of the time analysed. The position on the board had not been reached before in practical play to the best of my knowledge, but the books generally agreed that it is slightly in White's favour.

20 ... Bf8

The king's bishop, usually such a powerful piece in the Dragon, is anemic in this position and so Black offers to exchange it.

21 Rh2 Rab8
22 Bb3!

22 Rhd2?! would allow 22 ... Bxc5 23 Nxc5 Qb6 when White's currently well-placed knight would be forced back to the weak b3 square.

22 ... Bf5

Threatening the knight that defends the bishop at c5.

23 Qg1!

Continuing to apply positional pressure. White strengthens his black squared bind.

23 ... Bxc5?

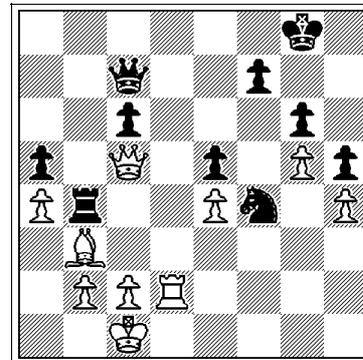
This plan turns out to be flawed. Black should settle for 23 ... Be7! 24 Rhd2 Nf4 contesting the d-file, in order to keep his disadvantage to a minimum.

24 Qxc5 Bxe4
25 fxe4 Nf4
26 Rhd2 Rxd2
27 Rxd2 Rb4

When embarking on the exchanges of

the last few moves Black had pinned his hopes on this counterattack.

Instead 27 ... Rd8 fails to 28 Rxd8+ Qxd8 29 Qxc6 Ne2+ 30 Kb1 Qd1+ 31 Ka2 Nc1+ 32 Ka3 Nxb3 33 Qe8+! Kg7 34 Qxe5+ Kf8 35 Kxb3.



(position after 27 ... Rb4)

28 Rd6!

Black had expected hitherto to hold the balance after this move with 28 ... Rxe4 29 Rxc6 Qd8 (threatening 30 ... Re1 mate) 30 Rd6 Qe7.

However White had planned to meet 28 ... Rxe4 with the subtle 29 Kb1!! instead. Then there would be no defence to the threat of 30 Rxc6 followed by a decisive attack on the king eg 29 ... Qb8 30 Rxc6 Qb4 31 Rc8+ Kg7 32 Qc6 etc.

28 ... Rd4

Black has now seen White's idea and realises that he is lost. Of course 28 ... Rb6 allows 29 Qxe5 with decisive threats.

29 Rxc6 Qd7
30 Kb1

White's king will be safe now, and meanwhile he threatens 31 Rc8+ Kh7 32 Qf8 as well as 31 Rc7.

If 30 ... Qe8 then 31 Rf6 Rd7 (or 31 ... Ne6 32 Qxe5) 32 Qxa5 with a two pawn advantage so ...

30 ... Resigns