

London Chess League 2009-2010

London, 4 Feb 2010

Cavendish 2 vs. Athenaeum 1

White: Simon Williams (Athenaeum 1) ECF 234 FIDE 2548

Black: Zaki Harari (Cavendish 2) ECF 195 FIDE 2197

Board 1 Difference in Ratings: ECF 39 points FIDE 351 points

Time control: 75 minutes in 30 moves + 15 minutes for all moves

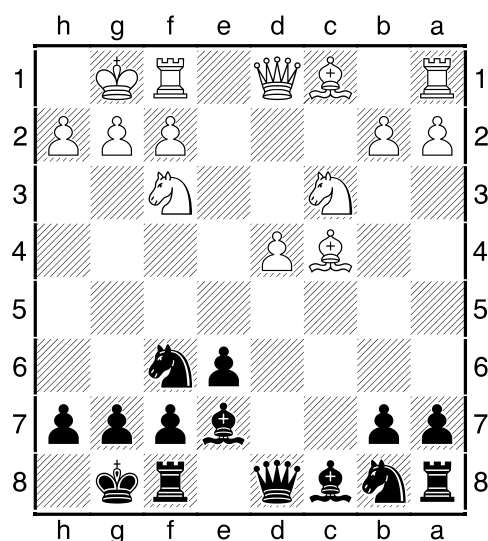
Opening: D26: Queen's Gambit Accepted

Notes: Zaki Harari (ZH), Simon Williams (SW) and Fritz 11 (Fritz)

White: SW

Black: ZH

- | | |
|---------|-----|
| 1. d4 | d5 |
| 2. c4 | dx4 |
| 3. Nf3 | Nf6 |
| 4. e3 | e6 |
| 5. Bxc4 | c5 |
| 6. 0-0 | cx4 |
| 7. ex4 | Be7 |
| 8. Nc3 | 0-0 |



I'm very fond of this position. Although I played it 8 times in the last year with a modest 50% result (+3, -3, =2), I believe the position is very dynamic giving good chances of counterplay for

Black (in other words, I'm trying to play for a win!). I have learned a lot playing this line against 3 Grandmasters with a 2500+ rating (J Parker, N Perth and S Williams) and although I lost 2 and drew one (N Perth), not once a had an inferior opening and was able to equalise rather easily. (ZH)

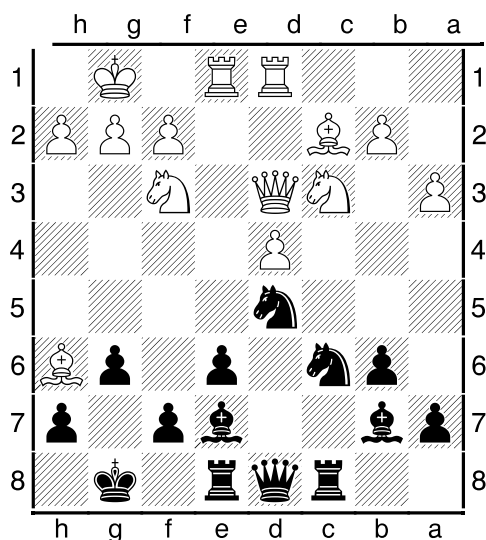
9.Bb3

White's idea is to play Re1, a3, Bc2 and Qd3.

There are other moves for White, such as: 9.Qe2, 9.Re1, 9.a3

9. -----	Nc6	
10. Re1	b6	
11. a3	Bb7	
12. Bc2	Rc8	the position is equal =(0.00) (Fritz)
13. Qd3	g6	
14. Bh6	Re8	
15. Rad1	Nd5! =	

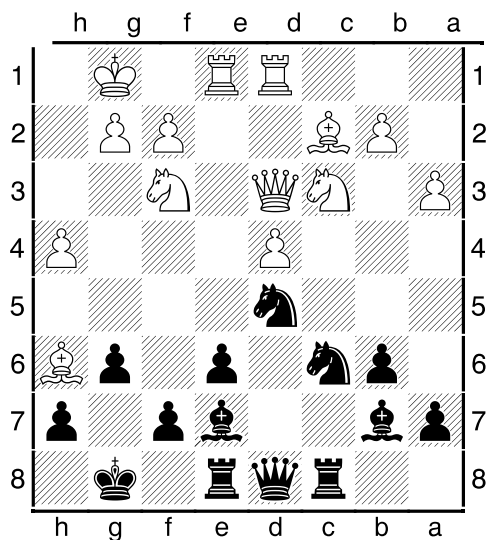
Position after 15.....Nd5!



The exclamation mark is mine. Black has no problems (ZH)
Fritz gives =(0.02)

16. h4!

Posiiton after 16. h4!



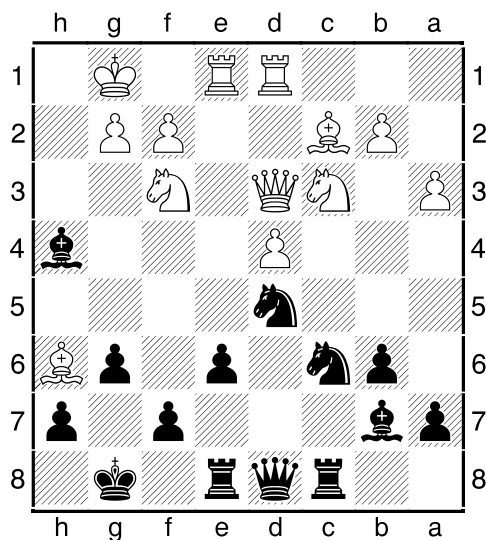
I like this move even if it didn't worry me much in the game as objectively it's flawed. However, it's thematic, going for a King's side attack. SW plays very sharply as his move involves a pawn sacrifice either on the h4 square or on a3 square after the exchange of knights on c3 – take your pick! (see next diagram). Interesting, at this point, I was ahead by about 6 minutes on the clock! (ZH). Fritz gives two other harmless continuation 16. Nxd5 or 16. Ba4 with equality.

16.....

Bf6

Here it is important to first analyse what happens if Black accepts the pawn offer 16....Bxh4?

Analysis after 16....Bxh4?



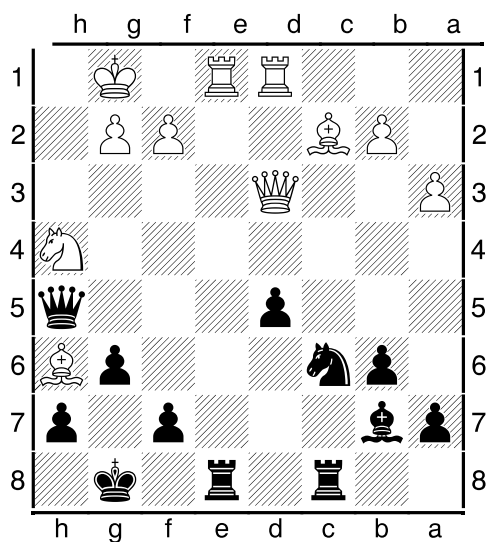
I rejected 16...Bxh4? because of the simple continuation 17.Nxd5 – exd5, losing a piece after 18.Rxe8 – Qxe8; 19. Nxf4. After the game SW pointed out that if I took the knight on d5 with the Queen (17...Qxd5), I could have recovered the piece by playing Qh5 after 18. Nxf4 – Qh5. However, the whole idea doesn't work because of the following continuation:

17. Nxd5 Qxd5
 18. Nxf4 Qh5 (SW)
 19. d5!(SW)

Here, SW thought once the knight moved to a5, he would have d6 with an advantage. 19....Na5; 20.d6?! – Rc4!(Fritz) and it's not clear if white has any advantage. The correct sequence is:
 19. d5! – Na5; 20. Ba4! (Fritz); 20....Rd8; 21.Qe3 – Bxd5;
 22. Bg5 – Nc4; 23. Qf4 winning (Fritz)

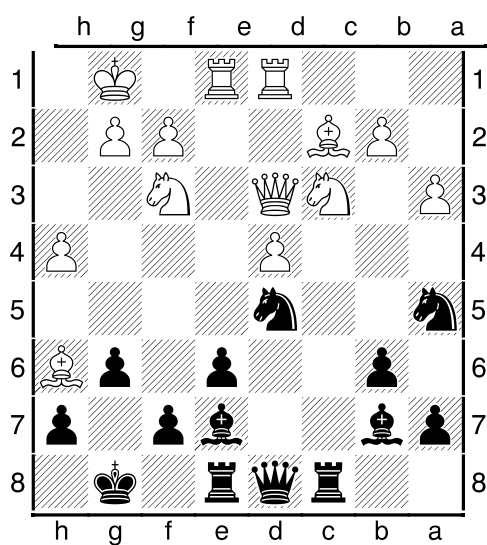
ANALYSIS

Back to the analysis after 19. d5! – exd5



20. Nf5! (Fritz) gxf5
 21. Qg3+ Qg4
 22. Bxf5 Qxg3
 23. Bxc8! winning the exchange (Fritz)

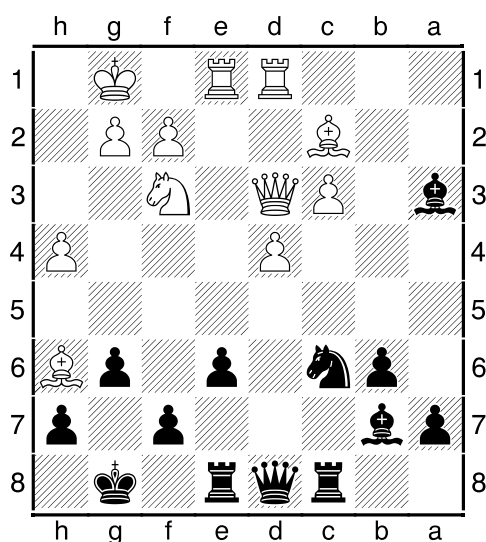
Back to the game after 16....Na5



Here instead of the move played in the game 16...Na5, more accurate is 16...Nxc3 with a small advantage to Black =+ (-0.36) (Fritz).

On page 3, I mentioned the possibility of taking a pawn on a3 after 16....Nxc3; 17. bxc3 – Bxa3!?. Let's take a look at it. (ZH)

ANALYSIS after 17.....Bxa3!?



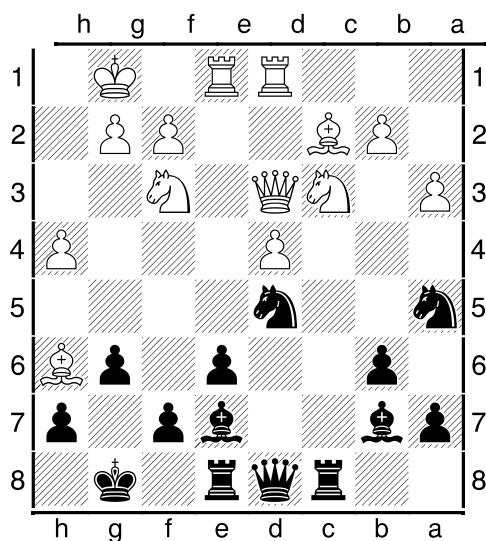
18. h5 Bd6
 19. Ng5 Ne7
 20. hxg6 hxg6
 21. Nxe6! fxe6
 22. Rxe6 Qd7
 23. Rxc6! Nxc6
 24. Qxc6+ Kh8
 25. Qf6+ Kg8
 26. Bb3+ winning (ZH; Fritz)

However, it's not clear that White gets any advantage after the more stubborn defence with 18....Qd5! = (Fritz)

So it appears, that after SW's speculative move 16.h4!, Black can't capture with 16....Bxh4 but it's possible to take the pawn on a3 after 16. h4! – Nxd5; 17. Bxc3 – Bxa3!?. with complications.

On principle, I avoided accepting these pawns offerings but perhaps 17....Bxa3!?. might have put some pressure on my opponent to prove the correctness of the pawn sacrifice. (ZH)

Back to the game after 17...Na5



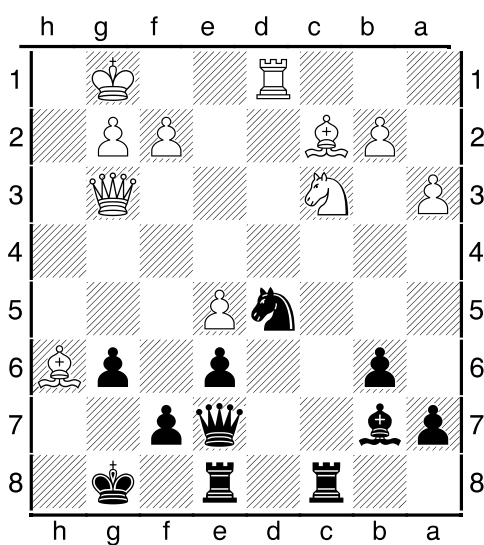
17. h5 Bf6?!

Here I missed an opportunity to play 17----Nxc3!; 18.bxc3 - Qd5 as pointed out by SW in our analysis. SW believes that it's unclear but Fritz evaluation is black has a small advantage of =+(-0.48).

18. hxg6

Stronger is 18. Ne4!(Fritz)with a small advantage. The idea is to keep the h5 pawn and not exchange it yet, perhaps to later play it to h6!

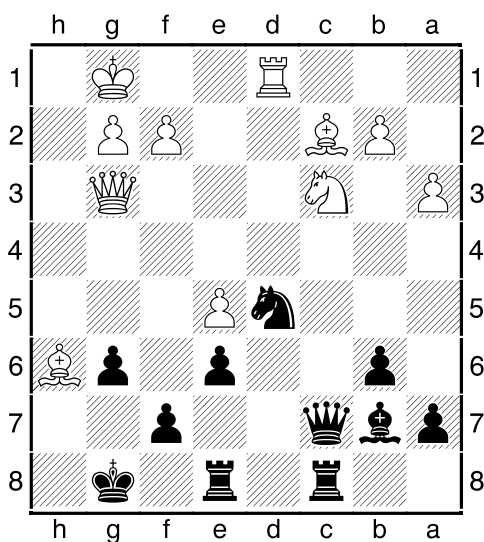
18.....	hxg6
19. Ne5	Bxe5
20. Rxe5	Nc4
21. Qg3!	Nxe5!
22. dxe5	Qe7??



Position after Black's 22----Qe7?? - The losing move.

Correct was 22----Qc7! With excellent chances of holding the position as follows:

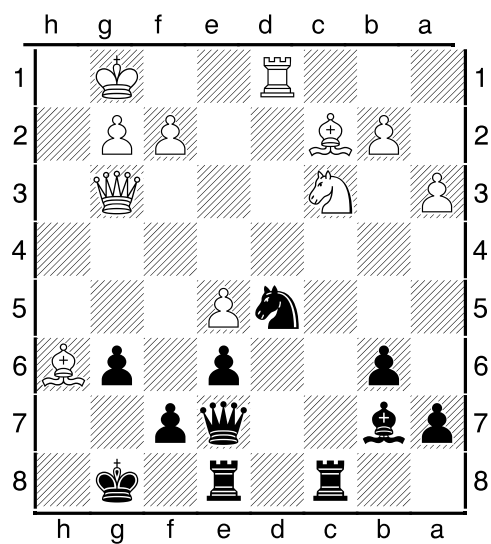
Analysis after 22----Qc7! (Fritz)



- | | |
|-----------|------|
| 23. Bxg6 | fxg6 |
| 24. Qxg6+ | Kh8 |
| 25. Nxd5 | Bxd5 |
| 26. Qf6+ | Kh7 |
| 27. Qh4 | Qc2 |
| 28. Bd2+ | Kg8 |
| 29. Qg5+ | Kf7 |

30. Qf6+ Kg8
 31. Qg5+ Kh8
 32. Qf6+ Kg8
 33. Qg5+ Kh8
 34. Qf6+ Kg8 =

Back to the game after 22....Qe7??

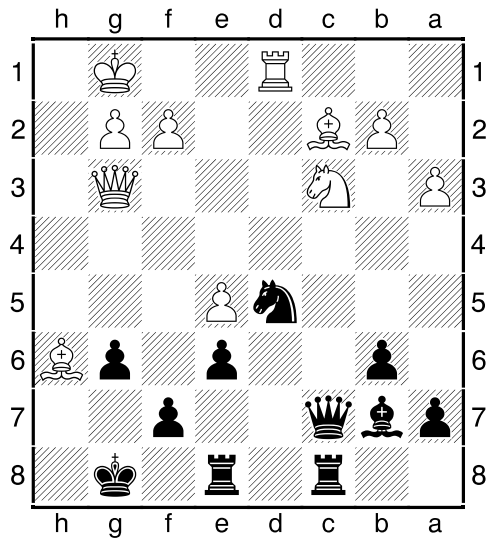


23. Bxg6! fxg6
 24. Qxg6+ Kh8
 25. Nxd5 Rg8
 26. Nxe7 Rxg6
 27. Nxg6+ Kh7
 28. Ne7

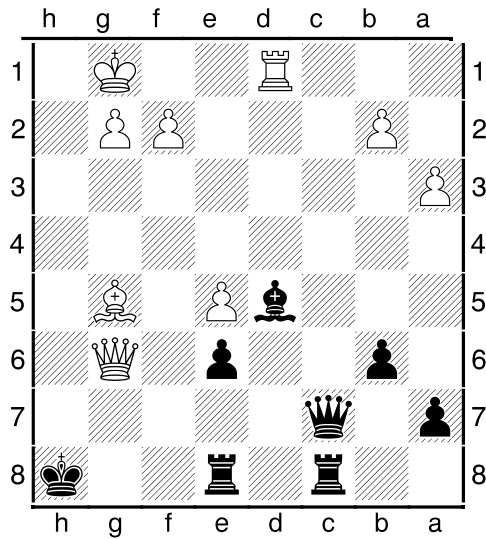
1-0

Analysis of position after 22----Qc7!

This is the diagram of the position that shows the difference between a draw with 22-----Qc7! and the losing move played 22----Qe7??



- | | |
|-----------|------|
| 23. Bxg6 | fxg6 |
| 24. Qxg6+ | Kh8 |
| 25. Nxd5 | Bxd5 |
| 26. Bg5?? | Rf8! |



After 26.Bg5??, White is not attacking the Queen at e7 as played in the game. Now the Queen is on c7, thus Black gains a crucial tempo to defend with 26...Rf8 and can cover the crucial f6 square. White can't win anymore, it has to settle with 26. Qf6+ draw as after 26.Bg5?? Black wins in the diagram above:

26. Bg5?? Rf8!
 27. Rd3 Qg7! winning (ZH + Fritz)