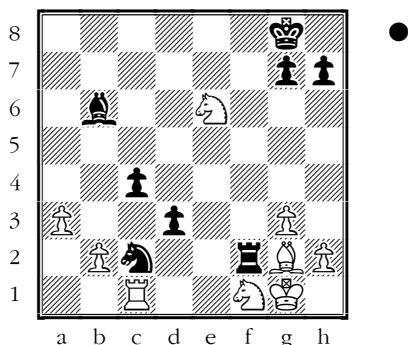


Test Yourself!

Odnorozhenko – Oleksienko
Ch-UKR Semifinal Alushta UKR (4.15),
06.05.2011



World Chess News

Saint Louis Chess Festival

On the second day of the rapid match, Hikaru Nakamura repeated his performance from the first day, scoring a win and a draw against Ruslan Ponomariov.

Final scores:

Nakamura vs Ponomariov 3½-2½
(classical), 3-1 (rapid)
Robson vs Finegold 4-2 (classical), 2-2 (rapid)

[Official website](#)

Soon, Ruslan Ponomariov will have a chance to rehabilitate himself at the strong Ukrainian championship (Kiev, 9-21 June) where all the best, by ELO, of the country's players with the exception of Ivanchuk (who will play in Bazna, Romania) will participate: GMs Ponomariov, Eljanov, Efimenko, Areshchenko, Moiseenko, Volokitin, Korobov, Miroshnichenko, and also four qualifiers from the [semifinal](#): GMs Kryvoruchko, Kovchan, Yu.Vovk and Vysochin.

Annotated Game

by GM Mikhail Golubev

I am glad that at least the last game of the Candidates Final in Kazan turned out to be decisive. So I have something valuable to annotate in, according to the archives, my 1000th full issue for Chess Today. (The first issue, prepared by me, was [CT-316](#), 19th September 2001, with a report from the strong Ukrainian championship in Ordzhonikidze).

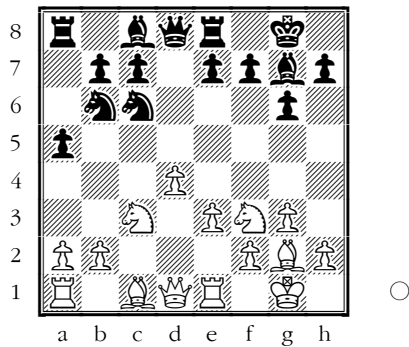
My congratulations to Boris Gelfand, who masterfully achieved his goal in Kazan. And I am sorry for Alexander Grischuk who, I believe, was better in the majority of games in the final match, but this is chess and only one player can win.



Boris Gelfand at the press conference after the decisive game (video.russiachess.org).

B. Gelfand 2733 A. Grischuk 2747
WCh Candidates Kazan RUS (3.6),
25.05.2011
Neo-Gruenfeld, - [D76]

**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗f3 ♕g7 4.g3
d5 5.cxd5 ♗xd5 6.♕g2 ♖b6 7.♗c3
♗c6 8.e3 0-0 9.0-0 ♖e8 10.♞e1 a5
(D)**

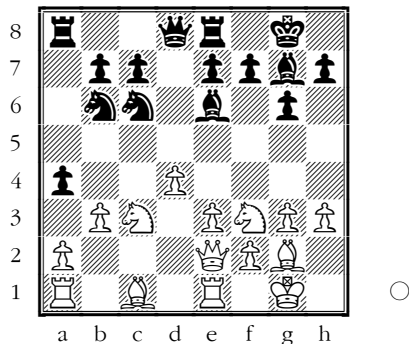


In recent years Black has had many successes in this line. But Gelfand was prepared to show that things are not so simple objectively.

11. ♖e2 ♕g4!?

Black provokes h3, hoping to attack the h3 pawn later. The immediate 11... ♖e6 is the most common move. And the second most common move is 11...e5 as Grischuk played against Ljubojevic in the Villarrobledo 2009 rapid game. Topalov against Gelfand in the Monaco 2011 blindfold game went for 11... ♖f5.

12. h3 ♖e6 13. b3 a4 (D)



14. ♖b1!N

A modest move, which preserves a very slight plus for White. After 14. ♖g5 Black plays 14... ♖d7! (Rather than 14...axb3 15. ♖xe6 fxe6 where White certainly has an initiative for the pawn).

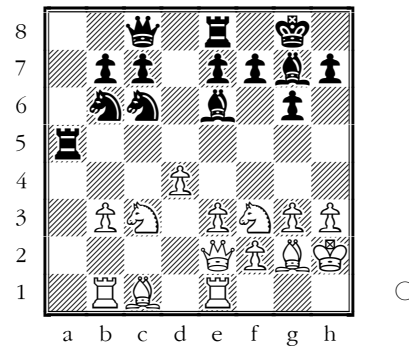
14...axb3 15. axb3 ♖c8

The alternative was 15... ♖a5 where White has a number of options. Maybe he shall go for 16. b4 (16. ♖d2 allows 16...c5! 17. b4 cxd4! 16. ♖c2 ♖c8 and if 17. ♖g5 ♖f5 18. e4 ♖d7 ⇒. 16. ♖g5 fails to 16... ♖xb3 17. ♖xb7? ♖c4) 16... ♖ac4 and here 17. ♖g5!?

16. ♖h2

Also possible was the more radical 16. g4!?

16... ♖a5!? (D)

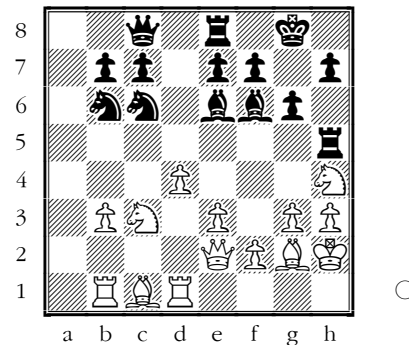


An interesting and, most likely, not bad idea, which resembles what Black is doing sometimes in the King's Indian. Alternatives were 16... ♖a5 and 16... ♖d8.

17. ♖d1

After 17. ♖b5 ♖b4! (not 17... ♖f5 18. ♖d2! Khaifman & Glukhovsky) 18. ♖d2 c6= Black is OK. Also possible here was 17. g4∞ with tense play.

17... ♖h5 18. ♖h4 ♖f6 (D)



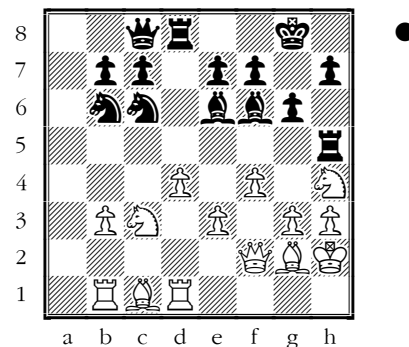
19. f4!?

A more obvious continuation was 19. ♖f3 ♖a5 (of some interest is 19... ♖xh4! 20. gxxh4 ♖xh3) - now White has 20. ♖g2 ♖xh3 21. b4 ♖a8 22. ♖f4 ♖ and I am not sure whether 22... ♖f5! 23. b5 ♖xd4 24. exd4 e5 25. ♖fd5 ♖xd5 26. ♖xd5 ♖g7 gives Black full equality.

19... ♖d8!

Definitely, Black could not go for 19... ♖xh4? 20. gxxh4 ♖xh4? because of 21. ♖g3! ♖h5 22. d5 ♖xh3 23. ♖f3.

20. ♖f2 (D)



Gelfand continues to play solidly. A surprising alternative was 20.f5!? ♖xf5 (20...♗d7!?) 21.♗xf5 ♖xf5 about which Khalifman was highly sceptical in his live commentary, but White has 22.b4!♞ which prevents ...♖a5. After 20.♗f3 Black could have played simply 20...♖a5 (But not the bizarre 20...♖h6?! 21.d5 ♖xc3 22.dxe6).

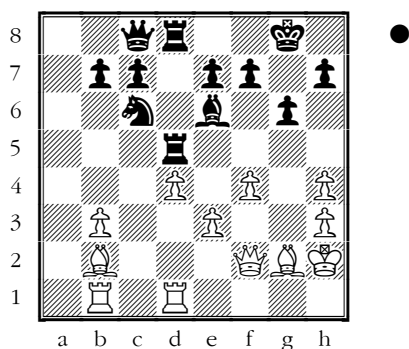
20...♗xh4?

A strategic mistake, which eventually led Black to catastrophe in this game. Black could have played 20...♖a5∞ with a complex position: 21.g4! (21.b4 ♖a8 22.b5 ♗a5 23.e4 allows 23...♗b3!⇒). He also could have sacrificed the exchange, preserving the important dark squared bishop for the time being: 20...♗d5! 21.♗xd5 ♖hxd5 (here Black can also try 21...♖dx5! which cannot be refuted by 22.♗f3 ♗xh3 23.e4 ♖xd4 24.♗xh5 gxh5 25.♖xd4 ♗xd4 26.e5 ♗xh4 27.♖xd4 ♗f1 28.e6 ♖xe6 29.♖d8+ ♔g7 30.♗b2+ f6, etc.) and after 22.♗xd5 (Or 22.♗b2 ♖b5 23.♖e2 ♖h5 24.♗f3 ♖a5 25.♗c3 ♖a8 and Black has his chances). 22...♗xd5 Black's compensation is more or less sufficient. Indeed, Grischuk must have seen that White can transfer the h4 knight to e5 in this line, but probably Black can survive this.

21.gxh4 ♗d5 22.♗xd5! ♖hxd5

Forced as 22...♗xd5? loses a piece after 23.e4.

23.♗b2!± (D)



It turns out that White is not obliged at all to accept the exchange sacrifice. Instead, he prepares e3-e4 and Black's position is close to strategic collapse.

23...♖b5?

23...f5 would have been answered by 24.h5!± with a difficult position for Black. The best chance was 23...♖d7 with the idea of meeting the direct 24.e4 by 24...♖xd4 25.♗xd4 ♗xd4 -

This issue is prepared by GM Mikhail Golubev; technical editor: Graham Brown

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but even there White is clearly better.

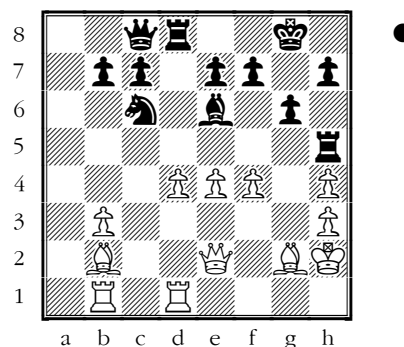
24.♖e2!

The line 24.e4 ♗xb3 (24...♖xb3 fails to 25.d5 ♗xh3 26.dxc6) was overly optimistically assessed by Grischuk during the game. It is also much better for White in fact. Though after 25.♖dc1! e6 26.d5 exd5 27.♖xc6 bxc6 28.♖d4 (proposed by Khalifman) Black continues the resistance by 28...f6! 29.♖xf6 d4! 30.♗xd4 ♖xd4. One way or another, Gelfand's move is cleaner.

24...♖h5

Not 24...♖xb3? 25.d5.

25.e4! (D)



Simple and strong. In the line 25.♗f3?! ♖xh4 26.d5 ♗xd5 27.♖xd5 ♖xh3+ 28.♖g1 ♖xd5 29.♗xd5 ♖g4+ 30.♗g2 ♖xg2+ 31.♖xg2 ♖xe3+ Black gains five pawns for the rook and who knows what can happen.

25...♗xb3

25...♖xh4 is 'as usual' answered by 26.♖g3!+-.

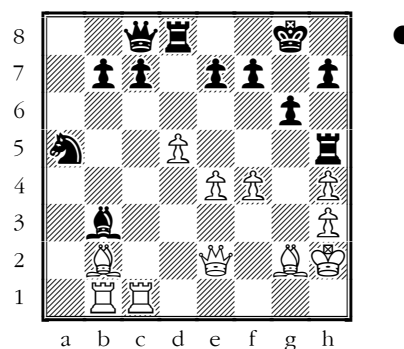
26.♖dc1

The exchange sacrifice 26.d5?! ♗xd1 27.♖xd1 may look promising, but White was absolutely not obliged to go for it.

26...♗a5

During the game I thought that Black could have tried the bizarre 26...♖e6 preventing d4-d5 for a moment. But perhaps it was as bad as anything.

27.d5 (D)



White has achieved a strategically ideal position. Not only has he managed to advance his central pawns, but also his dark squared bishop has no opposition. The rest is, as they say, a matter of technique.

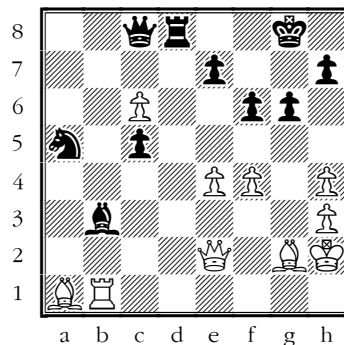
27...b6 28.♙e5 c5 29.dxc6!?

Somewhat more precise seems to be 29.♖b5!+- . One more good idea is 29.f5.

29...f6 30.♙a1

A decent alternative here was 30.c7 ♖d7 31.♖b5.

30...♖c5 31.♖xc5 bxc5 (D)



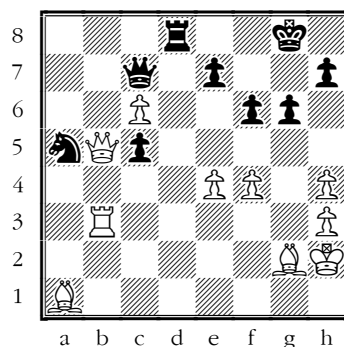
32.♖b5

Not 32.♖xb3? ♗xb3 33.♖c4+ ♕g7 34.♖xb3 ♖xc6 and Black has chances for a draw. As well as the text, a strong move is 32.e5.

32...♖c7?!

Black's last chance was 32...♙a2! but after 33.♖b2! ♖c7 34.e5! White should win without much trouble.

33.♖xb3+- (D)



Now Black is lost completely.

33...♗xc6

Or 33...♗xb3 34.♖xb3+ followed by 35.e5.

34.e5 ♗d4 35.♖c4+

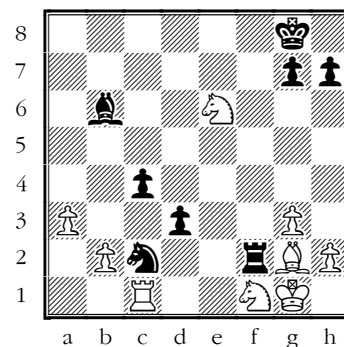
White's next move would have been ♖b7. So, Grischuk resigned.

1-0

Solution to our Quiz:

Odnorozhenko - Oleksienko

Ch-UKR Semifinal Alushta UKR (4.15),
06.05.2011



27...♗e1!!+- 28.♙d5

28.♖xe1 ♖e2+ 29.♗h1 ♖xe1

28...♖g2+ 0-1

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