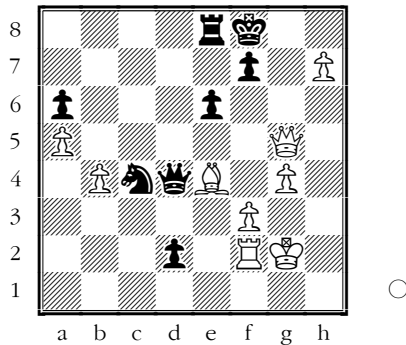


Test Yourself!

Efimenko(2701) – Korobov (2660)
 80th ch-UKR, Kiev (5), 14.06.2011



World Chess News

Russian Higher League

After his victory in round 8 over Artyom Timofeev, Alexander Morozevich leads the tournament for the first time.

Round 9 (of 11) top pairings:

Morozevich (6) – Sjugirov (5½)
 Timofeev (5½) – Inarkiev (5½)
 Galkin (5½) – Vitiugov (5)

In the women's tournament Elena Zaiatz is leading with 6½ points out of 7; Valentina Gunina is half a point behind.

[Official website](#)

Annotated Game

by GM Mikhail Golubev

From 10–21 June I assisted Ruslan Ponomariov at probably the strongest Ukrainian championship ever, and of course I am very happy with Ruslan's result. The previous time I (together with GM Yuri Kruppa) assisted him at the 2007 Candidates match in Elista versus Sergey Rublevsky, many things went wrong and Ruslan lost 2½–3½.

Now, he won a round robin with an average Elo of 2650 by a full point margin and, as I understand, in July Ponomariov should return to the Top-10, for the first time since April 2006.

I will annotate today the decisive game from the final round where Ruslan needed a draw to secure first place, but his opponent, GM Alexander Moiseenko, against whom Ruslan played not so well lately, had White and was only half a point behind. It was an extremely tense encounter; Ruslan's only game in the tournament where he was considerably worse at some points.

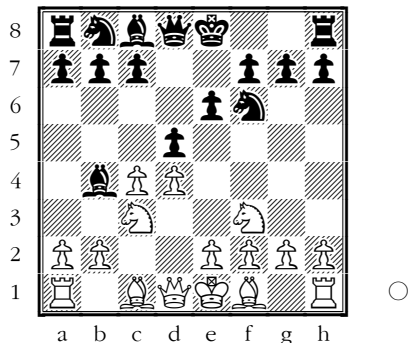
Before that I should say a few words about the organisation of the tournament. Indeed, it was a success of the Ukrainian chess federation. The championship was organised in Kiev for the first time after obtaining the independence of the country (!), and attracted attention by the media, including the central TV channels. Which is always good, because in recent years chess has virtually disappeared from the Ukrainian mainstream media, and is covered here and there sporadically with rare exceptions like the Ukrainian victory at the Olympiad when all the media suddenly have to recall that chess exists.

One way or another, I am sure that the faster forms of chess are more attractive to the media and spectators. At the closing ceremony of the tournament Kirsan Ilyumzhinov was present and informed that FIDE is (finally) planning to introduce the rapid and blitz ratings. This must help. Note that in 2002 FIDE already had the rapid chess rating list, which is still available at the TWIC website.

The championship's [Facebook page](#) has various material in English.

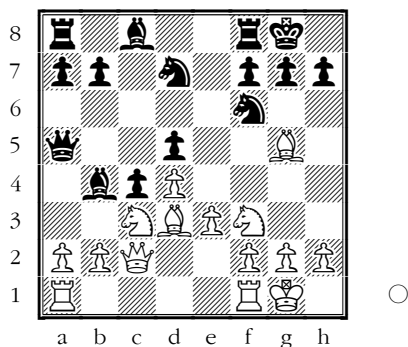
Moiseenko2679 – Ponomariov 2754
 80th ch-UKR, Kiev (11), 21.06.2011
 QGD/Ragozin System – [D38]

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.♗c3 ♕b4 (D)



Both opponents have been playing from time to time The Ragozin Defence with both colours.

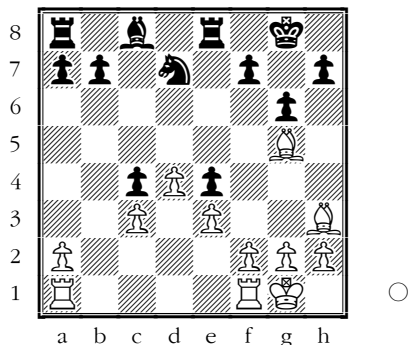
5.cxd5 exd5 6.♗g5 ♘bd7 7.e3 c5 8.♗d3 ♖a5 9.♖c2 0-0 10.0-0 c4 (D)



11.♗f5

Instead of this usual move, the rare 11.♗e2!? was successfully tried in Grischuk–Kramnik, Monaco Blindfold 2011.

11...♞e8 12.♘d2 g6 13.♗h3 ♗xc3 14.♖xc3 ♖xc3 15.bxc3 ♘e4 16.♘xc4 dxc4 (D)

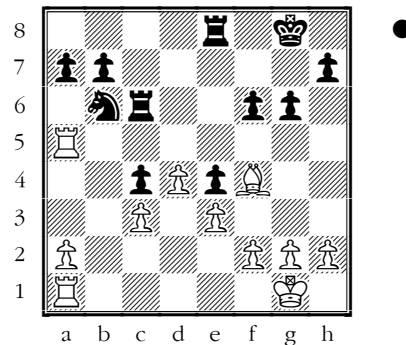


This sharp endgame is known in the theory, but perhaps is still not sufficiently researched.

17.♞fb1 ♘b6 18.♗xc8 ♞axc8 19.♞b5 ♞c6 20.♞a5!N

Somewhat passive is 20.♞c1 as in Pitkaenen–Sanchez Rodenas, ICCF email 2002.

20...f6 21.♗f4 (D)



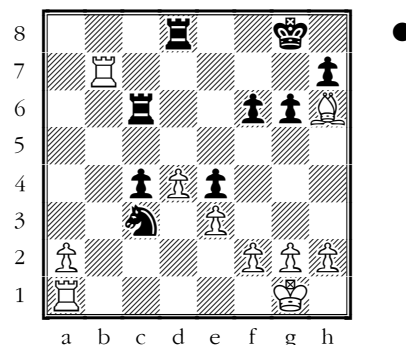
21...♞d8!?

Black faced certain problems and decided to sacrifice a pawn in order to put his knight on the key square d5, obtaining counter-play because White's bishop cannot be easily transferred to the queenside. A crazy fight begins.

22.♞xa7 ♘d5

Instead of this desperate move better was 22...♞d7! and White should avoid 23.♞b1 ♘d5 24.♞bxb7?! ♞xb7 25.♞xb7 which can only favour Black after 25...♘xc3 (or 25...g5 first)

23.♞xb7 ♘xc3 24.♗h6 (D)

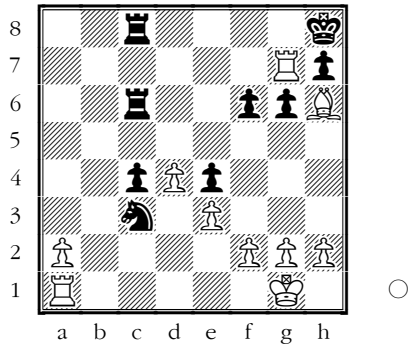


White's chances are higher now. But the position remains very complicated.

24...♞dc8!? 25.♞g7+

Safer was 25.a4!? but White probably wished to avoid 25...♞8c7 (25...♘d5!? Ponomariov) 26.♞xc7 ♞xc7±

25...♞h8 (D)



26.a4?!

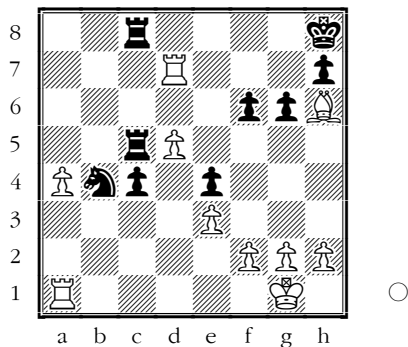
A natural advance. But in fact 26.♞d7! (supporting d4–d5) was stronger.

26...♞d5?

Instead, very good was 26...♞b6! ⇒ with dangerous counter-play, where 27.a5? (the best 27.g4! after 27...♞e2+ 28.♞f1 ♞b2 29.d5 c3 30.d6 c2 31.d7= ♞b1+ 32.♞xe2 c1♞ 33.dxc8♞+ ♞xc8 34.♞xb1 ♞c2+ 35.♞f1 ♞xb1+ 36.♞g2 ♞d1 37.♞f7 ♞xg4+ 38.♞h1 leads to a draw) 27...♞b1+ 28.♞xb1 ♞xb1 favours Black: 29.♞b7 ♞a3 30.♞g7+ ♞g8 31.♞xf6 c3 32.♞g7+ ♞f8 33.♞xh7 ♞c6 34.♞e7+ ♞g8 35.♞xa3 ♞xh7 36.♞f1 ♞a6 37.♞e2 ♞xa5 38.♞b4 ♞a2+ 39.♞d1 ♞xf2 40.♞xc3 ♞xg2. **27.♞d7 ♞b4**

Objectively, preferable could have been 27...♞b6!? 28.♞b7 c3 29.a5!? ♞c4 30.♞c1 ♞xa5 31.♞b5 ♞a8±

28.d5! ♞c5! (D)

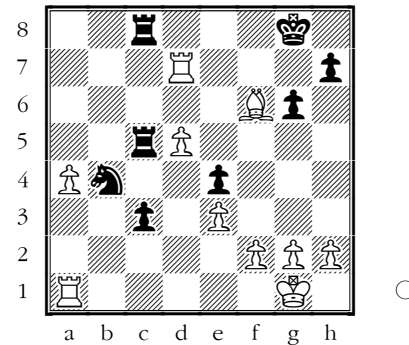


29.♞g7+?

Moiseenko misses his, possibly, most interesting chance in this game: 29.d6!! c3 30.h4!↑ (or maybe 30.h3, but not 30.♞c1 ♞a2!-) where Black faces problems: if 30...c2 31.♞c1 ♞d5 (there are alternatives, but 31...♞d3? loses to 32.♞e7! ♞xc1 33.d7 ♞e2+ 34.♞h2 ♞g8 35.♞g7+ ♞xg7 36.d8♞+ ♞g8 37.♞e8 ♞xe8 38.♞xe8+ ♞g7 39.♞e7+ ♞g8 40.♞xc5! c1♞ 41.♞xc1 ♞xc1 42.a5+-

and Black is unable to stop White's a-pawn) 32.♞h2 and here 32...♞d1? is bad because of 33.♞c7! ♞d8 34.♞7xc2+-

29...♞g8 30.♞xf6 c3± (D)



And Black is better! Or should not lose, at least.

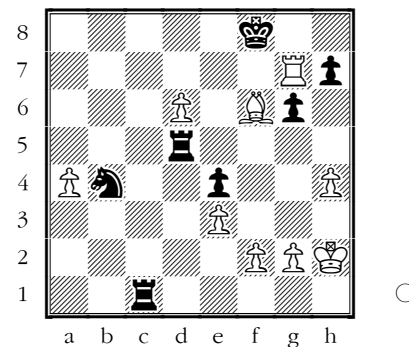
31.d6?! c2 32.h4 ♞d5!

Much stronger than 32...c1♞+ 33.♞xc1 ♞xc1+ 34.♞h2.

33.♞h2 c1♞?!

Ponomarev missed a better continuation: 33...♞d1!± 34.♞g7+ ♞f8 35.♞xh7 (or 35.d7 ♞d8!) 35...♞c4! but his decision is understandable.

34.♞xc1 ♞xc1 35.♞g7+ ♞f8 (D)



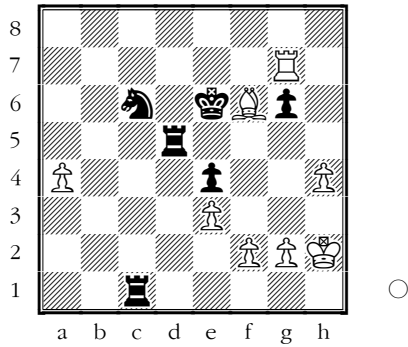
36.♞xh7?!

After 36.♞b7! ♞c6 37.d7!± White should not lose. But Moiseenko was in time trouble.

36...♞c6! 37.♞c7 ♞e8! 38.♞c8+?!

The best chance for a draw was 38.a5! ♞xd6 39.a6 ♞xf6 40.a7 ♞a1 41.♞c8+ ♞f7 42.a8♞ ♞xa8 43.♞xa8 ♞xf2 44.♞a4; Rather than the text or 38.♞e7±

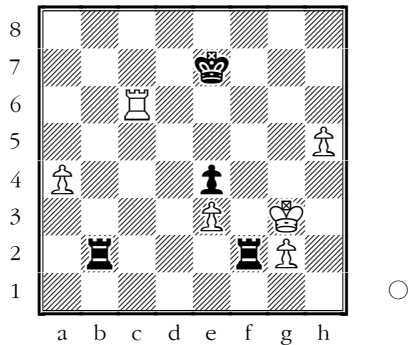
38...♞d7 39.♞c7+ ♞xd6 40.♞g7 ♞e6 (D)



The first time control is behind, and it became clear that in all probability Black should win.

41. ♕b2 The simpler **41. ♖xg6** could have preserved more practical chances for a draw.

41... ♖c2! 42. ♖xg6+ ♕f7 43. ♖f6+ ♕e7-- 44. ♕g3 ♖dd2 45. h5 ♖xb2 46. ♖xc6 ♖xf2 (D)



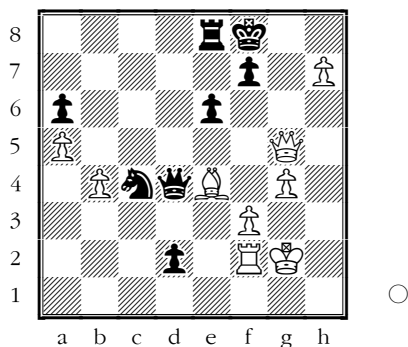
And, having an extra rook, Black won.

47. h6 ♖xg2+ 48. ♕f4 ♕f7 49. a5 ♖bf2+ 50. ♕xe4 ♖g4+ 51. ♕d3 ♖a2 52. a6 ♖ga4 53. h7 ♕g7 54. h8 ♕+ ♕xh8 0-1.

Solution to our Quiz:

Efimenko(2701) - Korobov (2660)

80th ch-UKR, Kiev (5), 14.06.2011



41. ♖xd2! 41. ♖xd2 ♗xd2 42. ♖c5+ ♖xc5 43. h8 ♖+ ♕e7 44. ♖h4+! 1-0.

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