

Michael Adams



Enigmatic variations in Spain

Variations on the game of chess are common, but few live up to the original: minor rule changes often have too many unintended consequences. So I was surprised to see that a tournament in Spain had employed an unusual idea that panned out well.

The players simultaneously played matches of two games against each other, one with each colour and with clocks running on both boards. It's certainly an innovation I would like to see more of in the future.

25.Be3-h6 Bg7-h8

26.Bh6-f4

The simple 26.f5xg6 f7xg6 27.Qd2-g5 Qb8-e8 28.Ne2-f4 also gets the job done.

26... Qb8-f8

If 26...Qb8-b7 27.Rh1xh8+ Kg8xh8 28.Rd1-h1+ Kh8-g8 29.Bf4-e5 eliminates the defenders.

27.e4-e5 Nf6-h5

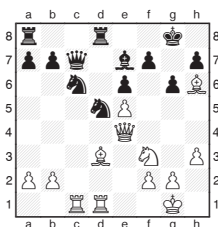
27...Nf6-e8 28.f5xg6 is no better.

28.Rh1xh5 g6xh5

29.Rd1-g1+ Kg8-h7

30.f5-f6

1-0



V. Gashimov - F. Izeta

San Sebastian 2011

20.h3-h4

The 'h' pawn will lever open Black's solid structure.

20... Nd5-b4

21.Bd3-b1 Rd8xd1+

22.Rc1xd1 Ra8-d8

23.Rd1-c1

It's important to retain rooks, denying Black entry squares.

23... Qc7-b6

24.h4-h5 Qb6-a6

25.h5xg6 h7xg6

26.Bh6-g5 Qa6-a5

Izeta had to bring his knight back into the centre, the line 26...Nb4-d5 27.Qe4-h4 Qa6-e2 28.Rc1xc6 b7xc6 29.Bg5xe7 Nd5xe7 30.Qh4xe7 Rd8-d1+ 31.Kg1-h2 Qe2xf2 is not so clear.

27.Qe4-h4 Be7xg5

27...Rd8-d7 28.Bg5xe7

Rd7xe7 29.a2-a3 Nb4-d5

30.Nf3-g5 is no better.

28.Nf3xg5 Nc6xe5

29.Bb1xg6

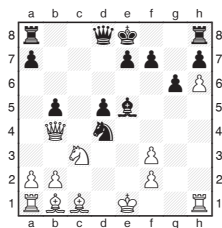
Black resigned as

29...f7xg6 30.Qh4-h7+

Kg8-f8 31.Ng5xe6+ Kf8-e8

32.Rc1-c5 wins easily.

Below we see the winner, Andrei Volokitin, in action. As well as receiving a healthy cheque, he also rode off on a new motorbike.



A. Naiditsch - A. Volokitin

San Sebastian 2012

16... Ra8-c8

Black has great compensation for a piece, but 16...a7-a5 was more energetic.

17.Nc3-e2 Rc8-c2

18.Ke1-d1

Surprisingly, the king should have moved the other way after 18.Ke1-f1 Rc2xe2 19.Bc1-e3 Black's pieces become entangled.

18... a7-a5

19.Qb4-a3 Rc2xe2

20.f3-f4

Naiditsch had to try 20.Bb1-d3 Re2xf2 21.Bc1-e3 Rf2-g2 22.Be3xd4 Be5xd4 23.Bd3xb5+ Ke8-f8 24.Ra1-c1 with chances to fight.

20... Qd8-d7

An excellent response.

Once Black's queen gets into the action the extra material tells.

21.Rh1-g1

21.f4xe5 Qd7-g4 leaves White powerless.

21... Be5-f6

22.Bc1-e3 Re2xb2

23.Qa3xb2 Nd4-f3

Now that the stranded rook has escaped, it is all plain sailing.

24.Qb2-b3 Nf3xg1

25.Bb1-d3 O-O

26.Ra1-c1 Qd7-g4+

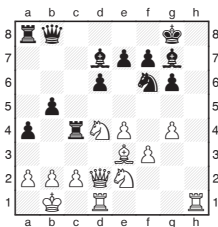
27.Kd1-c2 Ng1-e2

28.Rc1-e1 Rf8-c8+

29.Kc2-b1 Ne2-c3+

30.Kb1-c2 a5-a4

0-1



T. Gharamian - A. Hoffman

San Sebastian 2012

23.Nd4-f5

Due to the draughty 'h' file, opening more lines around Black's king proves decisive.

23... Bd7xf5

After the pawn capture, Black's monarch soon dies of exposure:

23...g6xf5 24.Be3-h6

Qb8-f8 25.Bh6xg7 Qf8xg7

26.g4xf5 Nf6xe4 27.f3xe4

Rc4xe4 28.Qd2-d5.

24.g4xf5 d6-d5

It's hard to give good advice.

24...b5-b4 25.Be3-h6 Bg7-

h8 26.f5xg6 f7xg6 27.e4-e5

d6xe5 28.Qd2-d3 also wins

for White.