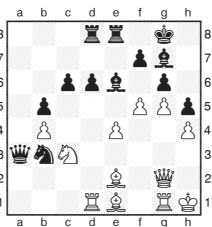


**Michael Adams**



## Hard to think as the clock is ticking

Defending against a strong initiative is never easy, but with less time on the clock the problems multiply. For example, take a look at these three encounters from the World blitz and rapid events.



**V. Topalov - T. Radjabov**  
World Rapid Astana 2012

**32... Be6-c4**

The bishop should have retreated 32...Be6-d7 where it can defend the kingside if necessary.

**33.Be2xh5 g6xh5**  
**34.f5-f6**

The threat to the bishop is less important than the idea of g5-g6 ripping open the file where the white queen and rook are lurking.

**34... Bg7-h8**

The queen should have hurried back, as 34...Qa3-a8 35.g5-g6 Bg7xf6 holds for now.

**35.g5-g6 Bh8xf6**  
**36.Nc3-d5**

Black's king flees after 36.g6xf7+ Kg8xf7 37.Qg2-g6+ Kf7-e7. The strongest move is 36.Qg2-f3 as 36...Re8-e6 37.g6xf7+ Kg8xf7 38.Qf3xh5+ Kf7-f8 39.Nc3-d5 is very dangerous. Topalov's move, blunting the influence of the light-squared bishop, is also

not easy to handle.

**36... Bc4xd5**

Black had to play 36...c6xd5 37.g6xf7+ Kg8-f8 38.f7xe8Q+ Rd8xe8 with good chances to survive.

**37.e4xd5 Qa3-b2**

After 37...c6xd5, the beautiful 38.Be1-c3 brings all White's pieces into the attack and Black's king can't escape. One finish is:

38...Bf6xc3 39.g6xf7+ Kg8xf7 40.Qg2-g6+ Kf7-e7 41.Qg6-h7+ Ke7-e6 42.Rg1-g6+ Ke6-e5 43.Rg6-g5+ Ke5-e6 44.Rd1-e1+ Bc3xe1 45.Qh7-f5+ Ke6-e7 46.Rg5-g7mate.

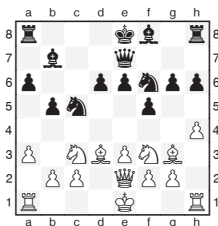
**38.g6xf7+ Kg8-f8**

38...Kg8xf7 39.Qg2-g6+ Kf7-e7 40.Qg6-h7+ is deadly.

**39.Qg2-g8+ Kf8-e7**

**40.f7-f8Q+**

Black resigned, as 40...Re8xf8 41.Qg8-e6 is mate.



**A. Morozevich - M. Carlsen**  
World Blitz Astana 2012

All looks calm but it doesn't take Morozevich long to conjure up chaos.

**14.O-O-O e6-e5**

**15.h4-h5 e5-e4**

15...Nc5xd3+ was much more practical.

**16.Bd3xb5+ a6xb5**

**17.Nf3-d4**

Although Carlsen has snagged a piece, he is fire-fighting all over the board.

**17... b5-b4**

**18.a3xb4 Bb7-a6**

**19.b4-b5 Ba6-b7**

**20.h5xg6 Qe7-d7**

**21.Kc1-b1 d6-d5**

21...Rh8-g8 was wiser.

**22.Bg3-e5 Bf8-g7**

**23.Be5xf6 Bg7xf6**

**24.Qe2-h5 O-O-O**

**25.Qh5xf5 Bf6xd4**

**26.Qf5xd7+ Nc5xd7**

**27.Rd1xd4 Nd7-e5**

**28.Rh1-h5 Ne5xg6**

**29.Nc3xd5 Kc8-b8**

29...Bb7xd5 30.Rh5xd5 Rd8xd5 31.Rd4xd5 Rh8-f8 was a better try.

**30.c2-c4 Rh8-f8**

**31.Rh5xh6 Ng6-e5**

**32.Nd5-b6 Rd8-e8**

White's last move was a slip and with 32...Rd8xd4 33.e3xd4 Rf8xf2 Black is suddenly back in the game as if 34.d4xe5 e4-e3 the tables turn completely.

**33.c4-c5 Bb7-c8**

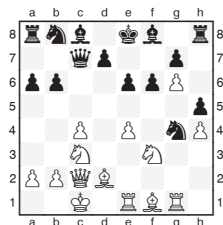
**34.Rh6-h7 Rf8xf2**

**35.c5-c6 Ne5-d3**

**36.Rd4-a4**

36.Rd4-d8 was another nice option, but it's hard to argue with the game move.

**1-O**



**S. Mamedyarov - P. Kotsur**  
World Blitz Astana 2012

**17.Nc3-d5 e6xd5**

**18.e4xd5+ Ke8-d8**

18...Ng4-e5 was better.

**19.Nf3-g5 f6xg5**

**20.Rg1xg4 Qc7-c5**

20...h5xg4 21.Bd2xg5+ leads to mate. 20...Qc7-a7 was relatively best now.

To add to his woes, Black's queen is trapped.

**21.b2-b4 Qc5xb4**

**22.Bd2xb4 Bf8xb4**

**23.Qc2-b2 Bb4xe1**

**24.Qb2xg7**

24.Qb2xb6+ Kd8-e7

25.Rg4-e4+ Ke7-f8 26.Qb6-d8 mate would have been a neater ending.

**24... Rh8-e8**

**25.d5-d6 Bc8-b7**

**26.Qg7-f6+ Kd8-c8**

**27.g6-g7**

Black resigned, as

27...h5xg4 28.Qf6-f8 wins.