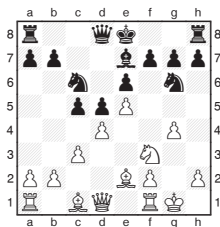


Michael Adams



Shirov on the attack again

One of the reasons why Alexei Shirov's play is so popular is his ability to generate attacking chances in any position. In the game below from the Russian Team Championship, he finds an intriguing plan that would have occurred to very few players:



A. Shirov - A. Dreev
Russian Teams 2013

13.g4-g5

13.Bc1-e3 would be standard, but rather than being concerned about the airy position of his king, Shirov pushes the pawns further forward to go on the offensive.

13... Qd8-b6
14.h2-h4 c5xd4
15.c3xd4 f7-f6

Black had other good options, but it is hard to blame him for opening lines towards White's king. However, with an imaginative response the play becomes double-edged.

16.e5xf6 g7xf6
17.Be2-d3 f6xg5
18.Rf1-e1

Another shocking move, ignoring the option to recapture.

18... O-O-O

One possible variation runs: 18...g5-g4 19.Nf3-g5 Ng6xh4 20.Qd1xg4 Qb6xd4 21.Qg4xe6 Qd4xd3 22.Qe6-f7+ Ke8-d7 23.Re1xe7+

Nc6xe7 24.Qf7-e6+ with perpetual check.

19.Re1xe6 Qb6-c7
19...Ng6xh4 20.Nf3-e5 looks dangerous.

20.Nf3xg5 Nc6xd4

Both players make a serious oversight here. 20...Kc8-b8 was better.

21.Re6xe7

Not bad, but the obvious

21.Bd3xg6 wins material

21...Nd4xe6 (21...Be7xg5

22.Bc1xg5 Nd4xe6

23.Ra1-c1) 22.Ng5xe6

Qc7-b6 23.Qd1-c2+ Kc8-b8

24.Ne6xd8.

21...

22.Qd1-g4+

23.Qg4xd4

24.Qd4-f4

25.Qf4-g3

26.Bd3-e2

27.Be2-g4

28.Bc1xg5

The smoke has partially cleared and Alexei is on top, but it's not easy to convert with his exposed monarch.

29.Ra1-c1

30.Bg4xf5

31.f2-f4

32.h4-h5

Black could also have looked for counterplay with

32...d5-d4 33.h5-h6 d4-d3.

33.Rc1-e1 Nd4-e6

34.h5-h6

Best was the hard-to-find

34.Qg3-g4 Ne6xg5

35.Re1-e5.

34...

35.f4xg5

36.Re1-e5

37.Re5-e3

Black could hold with

37...Qc7-c1+ 38.Kg1-h2

Qc1-f1.

38.Qg3-g2

The unnatural 38.Qg3-h4, using the whole range of the board wins, as 38...Rf5xg5+ 39.Re3-g3 forces decisive exchanges.

38...

Rf5xg5

Black was still all right with

38...Qd8-c7.

39.Re3-g3

40.Rg3-g7+

Now Black's king is in trouble as well.

40...

Kb7-c6
40...Kb7-a6 41.Qg2-g3

would not be any better.

41.Qg2-c2+ Kc6-d6

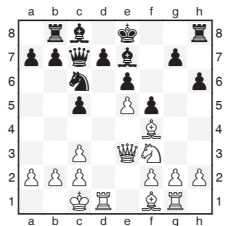
42.Rg7-g6+ Re5-e6

43.Qc2-h2+ Kd6-c5

44.Rg6xe6 Qd8-g8+

45.Kg1-f1

Black resigned, as 45...Qg8xe6 46.h6-h7 Qe6-f6+ 47.Qh2-f2+ forces the exchange of queens.



V. Yemelin - R. Hasangatin
Russian Teams 2013

15.Rd1-d6

A spectacular move. With the rook lodged in his windpipe, Black faces severe difficulties.

15...

Qc7-a5

You can't blame Black for looking for counterplay, but

15...g5xf4 16.Qe3xf4 Rh8-f8 might have been better.

With a lengthy sequence of excellent forcing blows White hunts down his quarry.

16.Nf3xg5 h6xg5

17.Bf4xg5 Qa5xa2

18.Bg5xe7 Nc6xe7

19.e5-e6 d7xe6

Now there is no way for the king to slip away to the queenside.

20.Rg1-g7 Qa2-a1+

21.Kc1-d2 Qa1xf1

22.Qe3-g5 Qf1xf2+

23.Kd2-c1 Qf2-e1+

24.Rd6-d1 Qe1xd1+

25.Kc1xd1 Ne7-c6

26.Qg5-g6+ Ke8-d8

27.Qg6-f6+ Kd8-e8

28.Qf6-f7+ Ke8-d8

White decides to repeat

moves before the finale.

29.Qf7-c7+ Kd8-e8

30.Qc7-f7+ Ke8-d8

31.h2-h4

Black resigned, as there is an unanswerable plan of advancing the 'h' pawn, if 31...b7-b6 32.Qf7-c7+ picks up the knight.