

Michael Adams



A sight for sore eyes

Blindfold games don't often create a lasting impression unless you like blooper reels. However, occasionally they can be a bit special, and this brutal battle between two creative and adventurous adversaries will be remembered a little longer.

Standard structures are an aid to the players when keeping track in this format of the game, but here an unconventional beginning leads to a maelstrom of imbalances, requiring complex calculation and judgment - tasks that both participants negotiate with aplomb despite the swift time limit.

B. Jobava - H. Nakamura
SportAccord Blindfold
Beijing Rapid 2012



9.Nc3-d5

White has a decent position after 9.Nc3-e4, but this concept is what makes the game special.

9... **Qe7-f7**
10.f4xe5 **f6xe5**
11.0-0 **Qf7xd5**
12.Bb5-c4 **Qd5-a5**

12...Qd5-c5 13.Nf3-g5 d4xe3 14.Kg1-g2 is similar to the game. Although White is a whole piece down, Black's king remains stuck in the centre.

13.Nf3-g5 **Ng8-h6**

14.Qd1-h5+ **Ke8-d8**

15.Rf1-f7
Another option was 15.Ng5-e6+ Bc8xe6 16.Bc4xe6 when the bishop cuts Black's position in two.

15... **Qa5xd2**
16.Ra1-f1 **Qd2xe3+**
17.Kg1-g2 **Bc8-g4**
18.Qh5-h4 **Kd8-c8**
19.Rf7xg7 **Rh8-f8**

20.Bb2-c1
20.Qh4xh6 Qe3-d2+ 21.Kg2-g1 Qd2-e3+ could lead to a draw, but Jobava wants more.

20... **Qe3-c3**
21.Ng5-f7 **Qc3xc2+**
22.Kg2-g1 **Nh6xf7**
23.Qh4xg4+ **Kc8-b8**
24.Rg7xf7 **Rf8-e8**

A small slip, which Jobava immediately exploits.

25.Qg4-e6 **Re8-d8**
The queen can't be captured due to 25...Re8xe6 26.Rf7-f8+.

26.Bc1-g5 **a7-a6**
27.Rf7-f2 **Qc2-c3**
28.Bg5xd8 **Nc6xd8**
29.Qe6-d7 **Nd8-c6**
30.Qd7xh7 **Kb8-a7**

Although White is now material ahead, the black monarch has finally found sanctuary.



31.Kg1-g2 **Nc6-b4**
32.a2-a3 **Nb4-c6**
33.Qh7-e4 **Bd6xa3**
34.h2-h4 **Ra8-h8**
35.Rf2-f3

The rooks have no real targets down the 'f' line, so 35.Rf2-c2 was better.

35... **Qc3-a5**
36.Kg2-h3 **Ba3-d6**
37.Rf3-f7

The logical plan of

advancing the kingside pawns weakens White's king, especially now his opposite number is safely tucked away. 37.g3-g4 is well met by 37...Qa5-d2.

37... **Qa5-d2**
38.Rf1-f6 **Qd2-b4**
39.Rf7-d7 **Nc6-a5**
40.Bc4-d5 **Qb4-b5**
41.Rd7-f7 **Rh8-d8**
42.Rf6-f3 **Bd6-b4**
43.Bd5-c4 **Na5xc4**
44.b3xc4 **Qb5xc4**
45.g3-g4

With seven passed pawns on the board, time is of the essence, so 45.Qe4xe5 was understandably rejected in favour of this advance, but removing this pawn was essential.

45... **Qc4-d5**
Great judgment. With the queens exchanged, Black's central pawns carry the day.

46.Qe4xd5 **Rd8xd5**
47.g4-g5 **d4-d3**
48.Rf3-f1 **e5-e4**

49.g5-g6
49.Rf7-f4 e4-e3 50.Rf4xb4 e3-e2 51.Rf1-b1 Rd5-b5 52.Rb4xb5 a6xb5 leaves White's rook outwitted by the foot soldiers.

49... **e4-e3**
50.g6-g7 **Rd5-d8**

The impressive power of two connected passed pawns is starkly demonstrated by the fact that even 50...e3-e2 51.g7-g8Q d3-d2 is winning for Black.

51.Rf7xc7 **e3-e2**
52.Rf1-f7 **Ka7-b6**
53.Rc7xb7+ **Kb6-a5**

The king gives the rooks the slip, and the game is soon wrapped up.

54.Rb7-d7 **e2-e1Q**
55.Rd7xd8 **Qe1-e6+**
56.Kh3-g3 **Bb4-d6+**
57.Kg3-g2 **Qe6-g6+**
58.Kg2-h3

White resigned before 58...Qg6-g3 mate.