

Michael Adams



Stars come out for the Grand Prix

The second FIDE Grand Prix cycle in London began in style with a spectacular star-studded party at Somerset House, and has seen much hard fighting over the board.

In the game below, former world champion Veselin Topalov shows the increasing power of pawns as they march up the board:



V. Topalov - L. Dominguez Perez
FIDE Grand Prix London 2012

24... **Qa6-b7**
Black would have been better off sitting tight with 24...Ra8-a7 keeping control of the 'a' file.

25.Rc1-a1 **Ra8xa1**
26.Qe1xa1 **Nf6-d5**
27.Nc3xd5 **Be6xd5**
28.Qa1-a5

White's knight has nowhere to go, but it isn't easy to trap it without Topalov picking up a lot of pawns.

28... **Qb7-c8**
The alternatives - 28...Kg8-h7 29.Qa5-d8 Qb7-a7 30.f4-f5 and 29...f7-f6 30.Ne5-d7 - look dangerous.

29.Bh4xe7 **Qc8-e8**
30.Qa5-c7
The opposite bishop

ending after 30.Qa5-d8 Qe8xd8 31.Be7xd8 Bg7xe5 looks drawish, so Veselin maintains the tension.

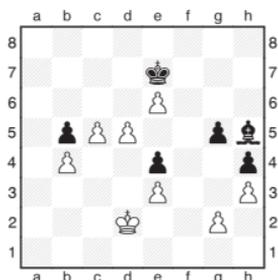
30... **f7-f6**
31.Qc7-d7 **Bd5-f7**
31...Qe8xd7 32.Ne5xd7 Kg8-f7 33.Be7-d6 gives drawing chances, but White is still pressing with his extra pawn.

32.Be7xf6 **Bg7xf6**
33.Qd7xc6 **Bf6xe5**
It was better to try 33...Qe8xc6 34.Ne5xc6 Bf7-c4. After the exchange the trio of passed pawns prove impossible to control.

34.Qc6xe8+ **Bf7xe8**
35.f4xe5 **h5-h4**

Dominguez tries to prevent the White king entering the fray but this enables the pawns to advance too far. However, he is also in difficulties in the variation 35...Be8-c6 36.Kh2-g3 Kg8-f7 37.Kg3-f4 Bc6-d5 38.Kf4-g5 Kf7-g7 39.h3-h4 Kg7-f7 40.e5-e6+ Bd5xe6 41.Kg5-f4 Be6-f5 42.Kf4-e5 Kf7-e7 43.d4-d5 Ke7-d7 44.c5-c6+ Kd7-c7 45.g2-g3 where White frequently uses zugzwang to progress.

36.d4-d5 **Kg8-f7**
37.Kh2-g1 **Kf7-e7**
38.Kg1-f2 **g6-g5**
39.Kf2-e1 **Be8-f7**
40.e5-e6 **Bf7-h5**
41.Ke1-d2



41.. **Ke7-d8**
Black is too slow to create his own passed pawns in the lines: 41...g5-g4 42.h3xg4 Bh5xg4 43.Kd2-c3 Bg4-f3 44.Kc3-d4 Bf3xg2 45.Kd4-e5 h4-h3 46.d5-d6+ Ke7-e8 47.c5-c6 h3-h2 48.c6-c7 or

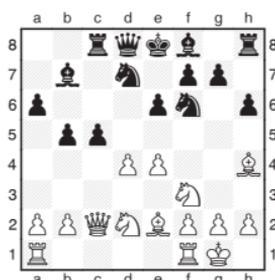
41...Bh5-f3 42.g2xf3 e4xf3 43.c5-c6 Ke7-d6 44.e3-e4 g5-g4 45.e4-e5+.

42.d5-d6 **g5-g4**
43.h3xg4 **Bh5xg4**
44.e6-e7+ **Kd8-e8**
45.c5-c6 **Bg4-e6**

With Black paralysed, Topalov has the pleasant task of sauntering his king up the board to conclude proceedings.

46.Kd2-c3 **Be6-d5**
47.c6-c7 **Bd5-b7**
48.Kc3-d4 **Ke8-d7**
49.Kd4-c5

Black resigned, as after 49...Bb7-a6 50.Kc5-b6 Ba6-c8 51.Kb6-a7 Kd7-e8 52.Ka7-b8 the journey is complete.



S. Mamedyarov - A. Giri
FIDE Grand Prix London 2012

13.d4-d5
With Black lagging in development, Mamedyarov, who is very strong when he acquires attacking chances, hurries to open the centre.

13... **e6xd5**
13...Qd8-b6 was a better try.

14.e4-e5 **g7-g5**
15.Bh4-g3 **Nf6-e4**
16.Nd2xe4 **d5xe4**
17.Nf3-d2 **h6-h5**
18.Nd2xe4 **Rh8-h6**

The planned 18...h5-h4 fails to 19.e5-e6 f7xe6 20.Ne4-d6+.

19.Ra1-d1 **Bf8-e7**
20.Be2xh5 **Rh6xh5**
21.e5-e6

Black resigned, as 21...f7xe6 22.Ne4-d6+ Ke8-f8 23.Qc2-g6 is fatal.