

Chess

Boom and bust

AS MOST multi-millionaires tell us, making a success of something usually entails taking a risk. The major hazard is not to overextend. A similar sort of delicate balance can operate in chess, and this week's game sees an over-optimistic aggressor, for once, thoroughly bankrupted.

Fortunately the loser, Yugoslav Grandmaster Vlatko Kovacevic, drops only the point on the score-table for being victim of this magnificent counter-attacking effort by Yasser Seirawan. The game was played in the Wijk aan Zee tournament in Holland, 1980, an event where Seirawan and his compatriot Walter Browne scored a joint victory for the US. However the wild Kovacevic, who numbers Bobby Fischer among his scalps, has decided he knows how to handle these Americans. Within a few moves he is storming the Black position with his kingside pawns.

The attack is a little naive, but still very dangerous — it is the same variation in which the Chinese player Liu scored his famous victory over Dutch Grandmaster Donner at the Buenos Aires Olympiad in 1978. Seirawan defends circumspectly at first, and Kovacevic is enticed into incautiously opening the h-file for his rook. At first the relevance of this open file is not apparent, but then an imaginative king march by Seirawan dramatically transforms the scenario. White's plan rebounds when Black's pieces, instead of his own, come swarming down the open line.

This marvellous encounter is also annotated by Jon Speelman in his book *Best Chess Games 1970-80*, and he considers it his favourite.

PIRC DEFENCE

V. KOVACEVIC	Y. SEIRAWAN
1. d4	g6
2. e4	d6
3. Nc3	Bg7
4. Be2	Nf6
5. g4!	c6

This is better than Donner's 5...h6?! against Liu. I believe I published that game at the time it occurred, but for those who haven't seen it, it is well worth repeating: 6.h3 c5 7.d5 0-0? 8.h4! e6 9.g5 h×g5 10.h×g5 Ne8? 11.Qd3! exd5 12.N×d5 Nc6? 13.Qg3 Be6 14.Qh4 f5 15.Qh7 ch Kf7 16.Q×g6 ch!! (the Chinese seem to specialise in queen sacrifices on the g-file) 16...K×g6 17.Bh5 ch Kh7 18.Bf7 ch Bh6 19.g6 ch! Kg7 20.B×h6 ch Resigns.

6. g5	Nf7
7. h4	b5
8. h5	Rg8!

Now 9.h6 can be answered by 9...Bh8.

9. h×g6?	
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Kovacevic opens the h-file. Later he will have ample time to regret this decision. 9.a3 was correct, with a complex position.

9. ...	h×g6
10. Nf3	

Speelman considers 10.a3 more sen-

sible, as now Black gains a lot of space on the queenside.

10. ...	b4
11. Nb1	a5
12. a4?!	

White, firmly believing he controls the kingside play, starts to block the queen's wing.

12. ...	c5!
13. d5	Nb6
14. c4?	Kd7!

Chess players are often asked how many moves ahead they see. I think Kovacevic's answer, in this case, might be "none".

15. Nbd2	Rh8!
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Seirawan assumes control of the open file, never to relinquish it. Instead of his last move, 15.Nbd2, White could have tried taking his own king for a walk with 15.Kd2. However after 15...Ba6 it would be evident that he could not both challenge for the h-file and defend his c-pawn.

16. Rg1	Kc7
17. Rb1	Rh3
18. b3	Qh8!

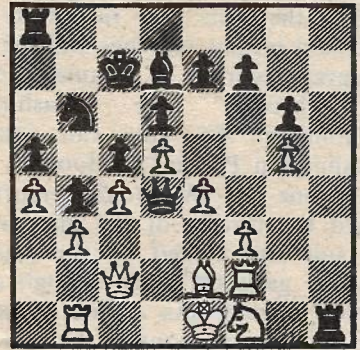
The unlikely h8 square becomes a vital pivot point for the Black pieces to penetrate the enemy camp.

19. Nf1	N8d7
20. Bf4	Ne5
21. N×e5	B×e5
22. B×e5	Q×e5
23. f3	

If White tries to defend his e-pawn with 23.Qc2 there follows 23...Rc3.

23. ...	Bd7
24. Qc2	Qd4
25. Rg2	Rh1
26. Rf2?!	

The last chance was to swap queens with 26.Qb2. However after 26...e5 27.Q×d4 c×d4 the ending would be vastly advantageous to Seirawan. White's bishop is "bad", hemmed in by his own pawns, and in a short while Black will arrange to transfer his knight to the now vacant e5 outpost.



26. ...	Qh8!
27. f4	Qh4
28. Rd1	f6!
29. g×f6	e×f6
30. e5	

After this the centre is opened up, but otherwise Black's next is ...Re8 with irresistible pressure on the White position.

30. ...	f×e5
31. f×e5	Rf8
32. e×d6 ch	

Or 32.Bd3 Bg4 33.Rd2 Nd7! 34.e6 Ne5 with murderous threats.

32. ...	Kb7
33. Bd3	Re8 ch!
34. Resigns	

On 34.Be2 Seirawan could end with the fitting mate 34...R×f1 ch 35.K×f1 Qh1. A superb example of positional play.

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