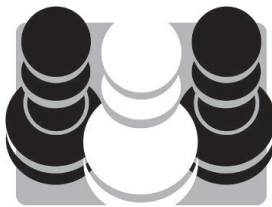


Grandmaster Repertoire 1B

The Queen's Gambit

By

Boris Avrukh



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Preface

Having dealt with the Catalan in volume 1A, this book continues the reworking of my original *Grandmaster Repertoire* on 1.d4, by offering an elite repertoire against Black's remaining possible answers to the Queen's Gambit. The book spans 24 chapters, which have been divided into three main sections:

The Queen's Gambit Accepted

This marks the single biggest change from *Grandmaster Repertoire 1*, as I made the bold decision to replace 3.e3 with the more ambitious 3.e4, in order to put more immediate pressure on Black. True, this requires a good level of theoretical knowledge, but the effort should pay off in the long run. These first six chapters contain a multitude of fascinating positions which White players can greatly enjoy.

The Slav Defence

My core recommendation against the Slav remains the same, with 3.d3 d6 4.e3 my preferred weapon. The theory has developed significantly since 2008, and my coverage has expanded from 95 pages (spread over nine chapters) to 203 pages over twelve chapters. The biggest single change came after 4...g4, when I have switched from 5.d3 to 5.h3. But even in those variations where my recommendation has remained broadly the same, I have added numerous improvements and refinements to bring the repertoire fully up to date.

Smaller Lines

The final six chapters cover all of Black's remaining defences. My recommended line against the Chigorin has become extremely popular since *GM 1* was published, so the coverage has now been split across two chapters in order to accommodate the many new developments. Next is the Albin Counter Gambit, where I have kept the same basic set-up for White, but recommended something completely new against Black's main line. The Tarrasch Defence benefited from the *Grandmaster Repertoire* treatment in the 2011 book of Aagaard and Ntirlis, who found a nice way to neutralize my previous recommendation. Hopefully, the devotees of that defence will not have such an easy time against the new weapons featured in Chapter 22 of this work. The final chapters of the book deal with the rare defences 2...f5, 2...d6 and 2...c5; even these unusual moves are no picnic for White, although I have some nice ideas of course...

I hope that you will find a lot of useful material in this book, which will bring you many more successes with the Queen's Gambit.

Boris Avrukh
Chicago, July 2016

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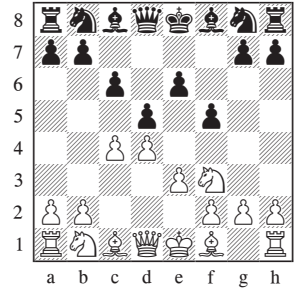
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Chapter 10

Slav



Stonewall

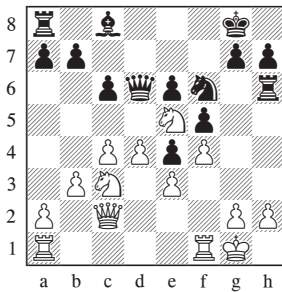
Variation Index

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 e6 4.e3 f5

5.♙d3 ♘f6 6.0-0 ♙d6 7.b3

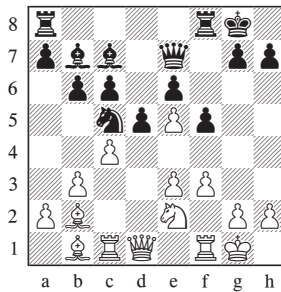
A) 7...0-0 8.♙a3	150
A1) 8...♘e4	150
A2) 8...♙xa3	152
B) 7...♚e7 8.♙b2 0-0 9.♘c3!?	153
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A1) note to 10...♘d7



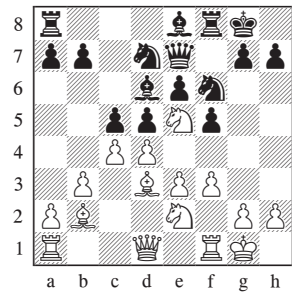
15.a4!N

B2) after 15...♙c7



16.b4!N

B3) after 12...c5

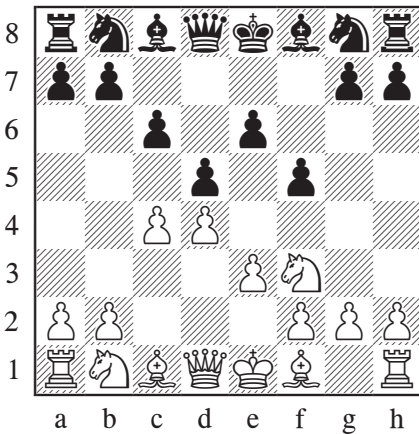


13.♘f4!N

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘f3 e6 4.e3 f5

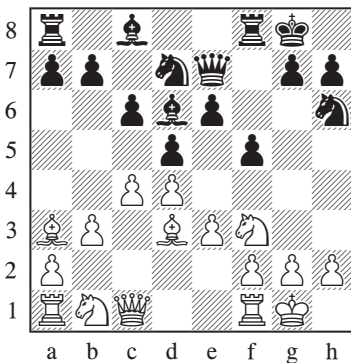
This blend of the Slav and the Stonewall Dutch is quite playable against an early e2-e3. Our main line will be different from that of *GM 1*.

4...♙d6 does not have any real independent significance after 5.b3, as 5...f5 will transpose to this chapter while 5...♘f6 will lead to the Meran set-up of Chapter 11.



5.♙d3 ♘f6

Black can also develop his knight in a different way: 5...♙d6 6.0-0 ♘h6 7.b3 (Another concept worthy of consideration is: 7.♘e5!? 0-0 8.f4 ♘d7 9.♘c3 ♘f6 10.♙d2 ♙d7 11.♖c1 ♙e8 12.a3 ♙h5 13.♗e1 White had a lasting advantage in Meier – Aronian, Antalya 2013.) 7...♗e7 8.♙b2 0-0 9.♗c1 ♘d7 10.♙a3 Exchanging the dark-squared bishops is a thematic plan against the Stonewall structure. A good example continued:



10...♘f6 11.♙xd6 ♗xd6 12.♘bd2 ♘f7 13.♗b2 ♗e7 14.b4 White had started his play on the queenside and had the much easier game in Gallego Jimenez – Alonso Martinez, Mondariz 2002.

6.0-0 ♙d6

6...♙e7 is much less popular. The simplest continuation is 7.b3 0-0 8.♙a3, when 8...♙xa3 9.♘xa3 transposes to variation A2 below.

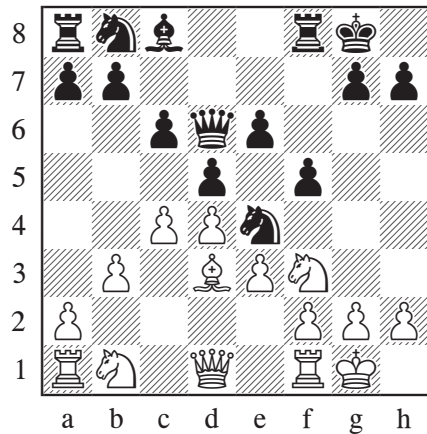
7.b3

I will first consider A) 7...0-0, although B) 7...♗e7 is by far Black's most popular move.

A) 7...0-0 8.♙a3

As a rule, allowing the bishop exchange gives White easy play, although some accuracy will still be needed. I considered A1) 8...♘e4 and A2) 8...♙xa3.

A1) 8...♘e4 9.♙xd6 ♗xd6

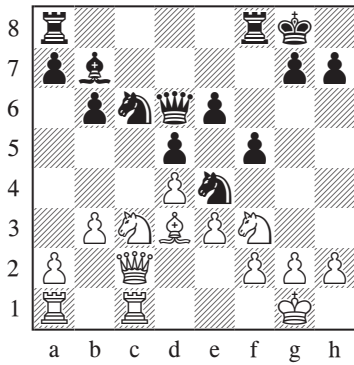


10.♗c2!

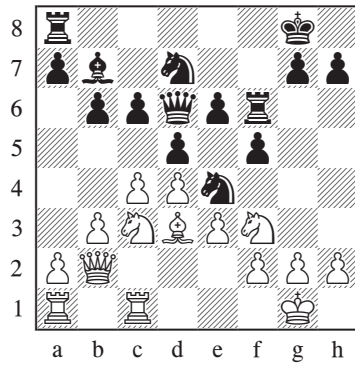
White's plan involves a quick ♖c1, trying to complicate Black's queenside development.

10...♘d7

Another line is: 10...b6 11.cxd5 cxd5 (11...exd5 12.♘e5 is unpleasant for Black) 12.♖c1 ♙b7 13.♘c3 ♘c6



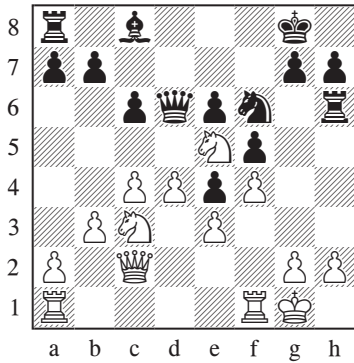
14.♖b2 ♕e7 15.a3 ♖ac8 16.♞e2 ♖c7 17.♞c2 ♖fc8 18.♞ac1 ♞d8 19.♞xc7 ♞xc7 20.h4±
White maintained the upper hand in Ivanhoe – Stockfish, engine game 2012.



14.♞e2N ♖h6 15.b4± The fact that ...c5 has not been played makes White's advantage obvious, as Black is going to suffer with his passive light-squared bishop.

10...♖f6 fails to impress: 11.♞e5 ♞d7 12.f4!
A thematic idea in such positions. 12...♞h6
13.♙xe4! dxe4 14.♞c3 ♞f6

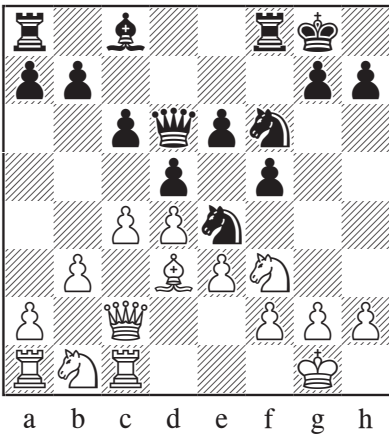
The text move is a principled option, intending to put the knight on g4. In Davidov – Pilkin, corr. 2014, I believe White should have reacted in the following way:



This position occurred in Tripp – Allen, corr. 2014, and now 15.a4!N would have been clearly better for White. He is starting to develop an initiative on the queenside, while Black does not have much happening on the kingside and his light-squared bishop is poor.

11.♞c1 ♞df6!?

The other obvious try is: 11...♖f6 12.♞c3 b6 13.♖b2 ♙b7 (13...a5 makes the b6-pawn vulnerable after 14.♞a4!) In Schultheiss – Meissner, email 2010, a logical continuation would have been:

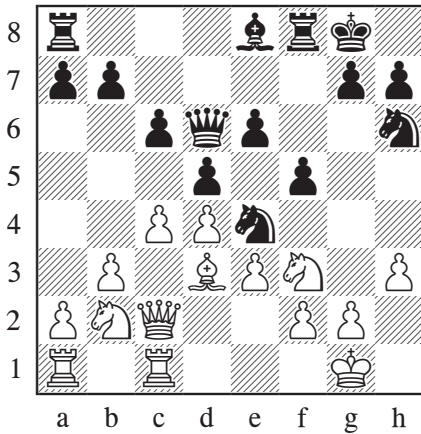


12.♞c3!N ♞g4 13.♞d1

This may not look like a great square for the knight, but this piece is actually on its way to e5!

13...♙d7 14.h3 ♞h6 15.♞b2 ♙e8

15...♞f7 16.♙f1 g5 17.♞d3 g4 18.♞fe5± also favours White.



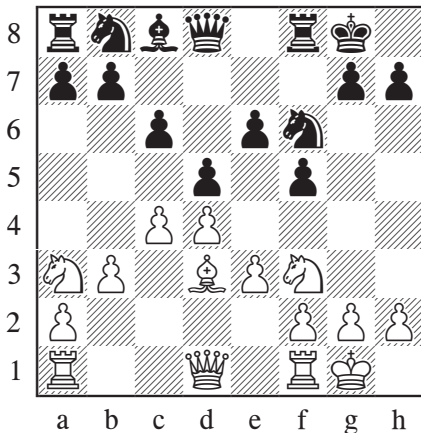
16. ♖f1 f4 17. exf4 ♜xf4 18. ♗d3 ♜f6 19. ♞e1 ♗f5 20. ♞b2

White preserves a nice positional pull.

A2) 8... ♗xa3

This is the usual choice, drawing the white knight away from the centre.

9. ♗xa3



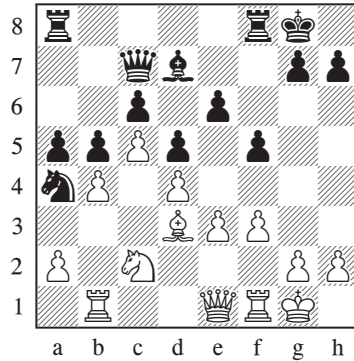
9... ♞e7

9... ♗e4

This has been just as popular as our main line, but it makes it easier for White to develop a queenside initiative:

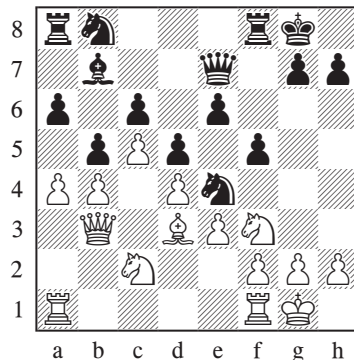
10. b4! ♞e7

Another nice game continued: 10...a6 11. ♗c2 b5 12. c5! ♗d7 13. ♗e5 ♜c7 14. f3 ♗c3 15. ♞e1 ♗a4 16. ♗xd7 ♗xd7 17. ♞b1 a5



18. f4! axb4 19. ♗xb4± In P.H. Nielsen – Tikkanen, Sweden 2008, White had a clear positional advantage due to the poor position of Black's minor pieces.

11. ♞b3 a6 12. ♗c2 b6 13. a4 ♗b7 14. c5 b5

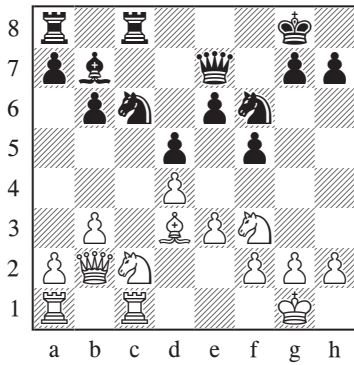


15. axb5 cxb5 16. ♞ad1 ♗c6 17. ♗e5±

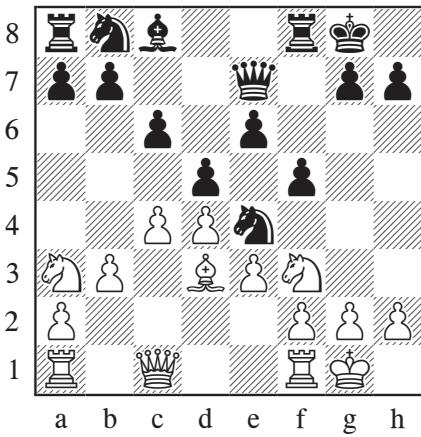
This was Ilincic – Doncea, Timisoara 2008. White's passed c-pawn should be an important factor in the long run.

10. ♞c1 ♗e4

Another instructive example continued: 10...b6 11. ♞b2 ♗b7 12. cxd5! A well-timed tension release, as Black cannot recapture with the e-pawn. 12...cxd5 13. ♞fc1 ♗c6 14. ♗c2 ♞fc8 In Tratar – Wiesinger, Aschach 2004, White should have played:

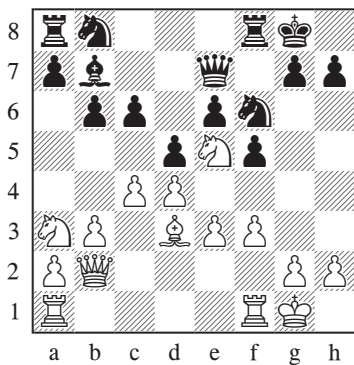


15. ♖ce1! N a6 16. ♕f1 Followed by ♜d3, retaining a long-term positional edge.



11. ♗b2 ♜d7

11...b6 has been played twice and Black went on to win both games, but White can get a good position with: 12. ♖e5! ♗b7 13. f3 ♜f6

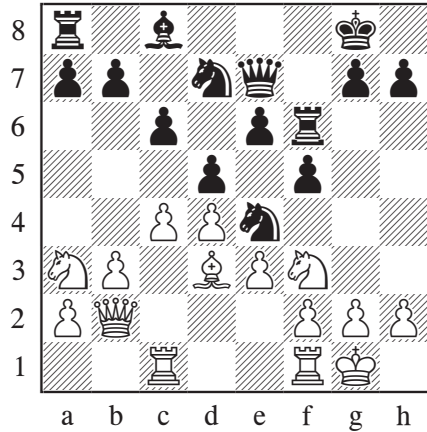


14. cxd5! ♜xd5 (14...cxd5 15. ♖ac1± is similar

to the previous note) 15. ♖ac4 ♜d7 16. ♜xd7 ♗xd7 17. ♖fe1 White keeps the upper hand.

12. ♖ac1 ♖f6

This has occurred in several correspondence games, but for some reason the most natural continuation has never been tried:



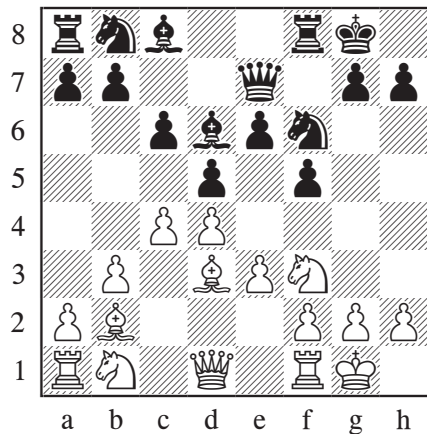
13. b4! N

I checked the following logical line:

13...b6 14. ♜b1 ♗b7 15. ♜c3 ♖h6 16. ♜e2

I prefer White, as Black has no real initiative on the kingside.

B) 7... ♗e7 8. ♗b2 0-0



9. ♜c3!?

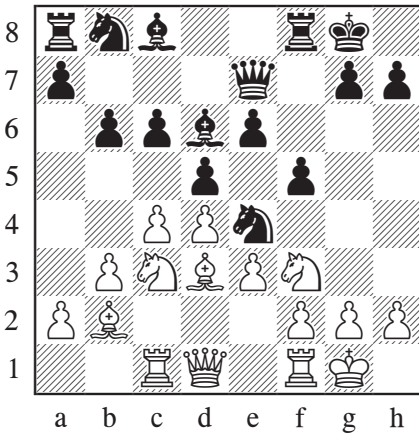
I decided to deviate from my previous recommendation of 9.♖c1, as Black has recently shown some improvements after 9...b6 10.♙a3 c5.

We will consider **B1) 9...b6, B2) 9...♘e4** and our main continuation of **B3) 9...♙d7**.

9...♘bd7 has no special significance, as 10.♖c1 leaves Black with nothing better than transposing to variation B2 with 10...♘e4. However, White may also try to punish Black's move order with 10.cxd5 ♘xd5 11.e4!↑.

B1) 9...b6 10.♖c1 ♘e4

10...♙b7 is met by the typical 11.cxd5! intending 11...♘xd5 12.e4, or 11...cxd5N 12.♘b5, in both cases with better chances.



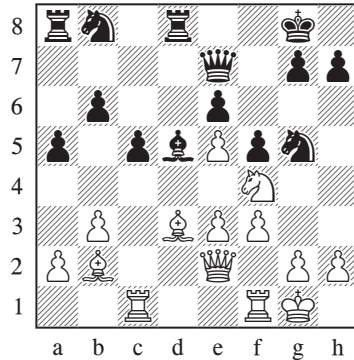
White has more than one promising continuation here.

11.cxd5!N

Objectively this probably isn't any stronger than the alternative – but it's an interesting option against the particular move order chosen by Black.

11.♘e2 ♙b7 12.♘e5 is the normal plan, when Black's options include:

a) 12...♙xe5?! 13.dxe5 c5 14.f3 ♘g5 15.♘f4 ♙d8 16.cxd5 ♙xd5 17.♖e2 a5?! White eventually won a long game in Gelfand – Morozevich, Astana (rapid) 2012, but it could have been over a lot sooner if he had found:

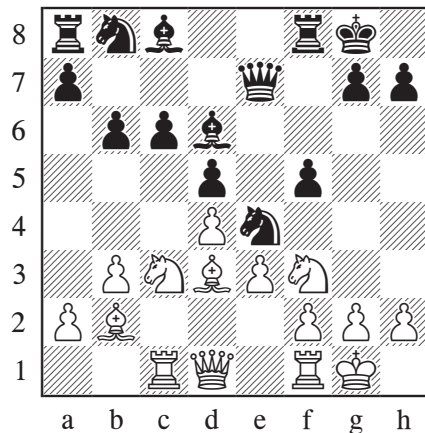


18.h4!N ♘f7 19.e4! White is already winning, as 19...fxe4 20.fxe4 ♙b7 21.♘xe6! would be devastating.

b) 12...♘d7 is best; this position will be covered under variation B2 below, where it occurs via the move order 9...♘e4 10.♖c1 ♘d7 11.♘e2 b6 12.♘e5 ♙b7, when 13.f3 is my recommendation for White.

11...cxd5

I also checked 11...♘xc3 12.♖xc3 exd5 (White is also better after 12...cxd5 13.♘e5 ♙b7 14.♖e2) 13.♖c2 ♙b7 14.♘e5! and White gets some annoying pressure.



12. ♖e2 ♜b7

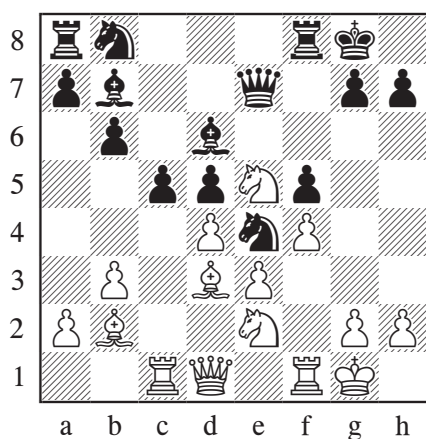
12...c5? would be premature in view of 13.dxc5! bxc5 14.♙xe4 dxe4 15.♗d5†.

13. ♖e5

I believe that White's chances are preferable in this complex position. Here is an illustrative line:

13...c5 14.f3 ♖g5 15.f4! ♖e4

15...♖e6 allows 16.g4! fxg4 17.♖g3 when White seizes a dangerous initiative on the kingside.



16.dxc5!?

This method of playing on the dark squares greatly appeals to me.

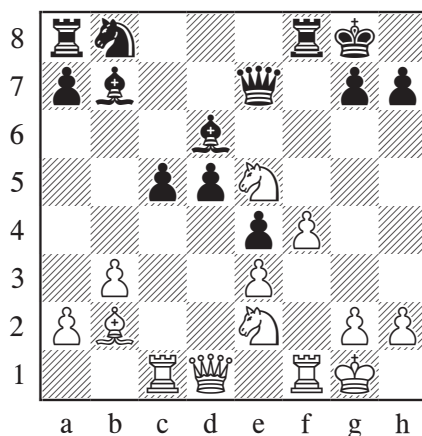
16.♖c3 ♖xc3 17.♞xc3 ♖c6 seems less convincing.

16...bxc5

16...♙xc5 can be met by 17.♞f3 ♖d7 18.♖xd7 ♗xd7 19.♙xe4 fxe4 20.♞g3 ♞f7 21.♙e5 with a solid positional advantage.

17.♙xe4 fxe4

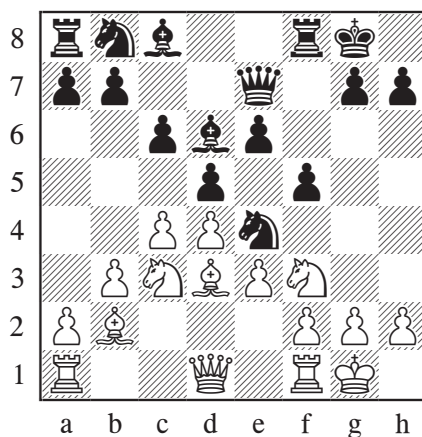
17...dxe4 is even worse: 18.b4! ♖a6 (18...cxb4? 19.♗b3† ♖h8 20.♞fd1+–) 19.bxc5 ♖xc5 20.♙a3! White has a clear plus.



18.b4! cxb4 19.♖g3!

White has a promising initiative on the kingside. Of course, we also had the simple option of 11.♖e2, which is likely to transpose to the variation below, so it's a pleasant choice for White.

B2) 9...♖e4



10.♞c1

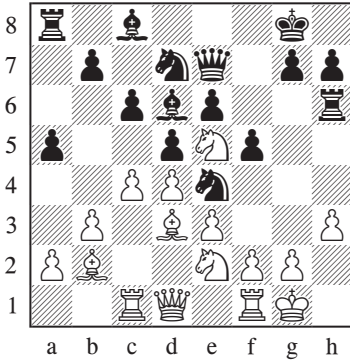
10.♖e2 is likely to lead to the same thing after a subsequent ♞c1.

10...♖d7

10...b6 leads back to variation B1.

11.♖e2 b6

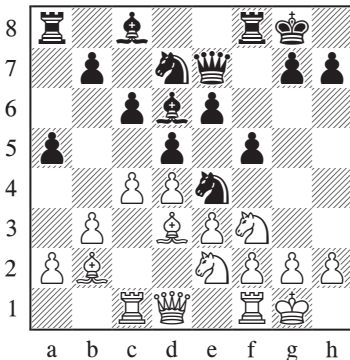
11...♖f6 12.♗e5 ♗h6 should be met by the precise: 13.h3! (13.f3 ♗h4 14.h3 ♗g5 led to double-edged play in Sandipan – Megaranto, Biel 2013) 13...a5 (White is ready for 13...♗h4 14.♗f4, when 14...g5? is not possible in view of 15.♗f3! and the black queen is trapped) This happened in Serban – Pirs, corr. 2011, and now simplest would have been:



14.f3!N ♗g5 15.♗c2 Black's play on the kingside looks rather fruitless.

11...a5

This is Scherbakov's main line for Black. I found a natural improvement:



12.♗f4!N

12.a4 g5!? 13.♗e5 ♗xe5 14.dxe5 ♖b4 was okay for Black in Meier – Krasenkow, Sestao 2010.

12.♗c2 b6 was also pretty double-edged in Lautier – Pridorozhni, Khanty-Mansiysk 2005.

12...b6

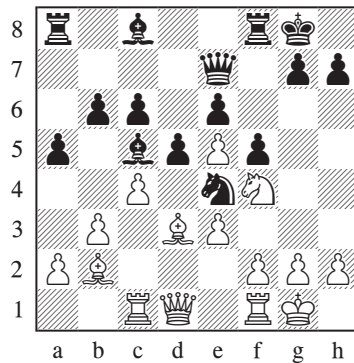
12...a4 13.bxa4 doesn't make much sense for Black.

It is important to appreciate that 12...g5 can be met by 13.♗h5! when the knight is quite stable, as 13...♗f7 14.♗e5! is excellent for White.

13.♗e5 ♗xe5

13...♖b7 14.cxd5 cxd5 15.♖b5 is definitely better for White.

14.dxe5 ♖c5



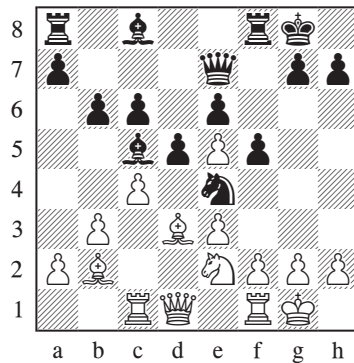
15.♖d4! ♖d7 16.♖xe4 fxe4 17.♖xc5 bxc5 18.f3±

White keeps the better chances.

12.♗e5 ♖b7

This seems like the most natural move to me.

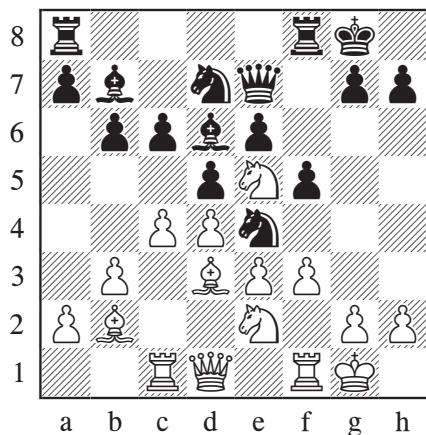
Scherbakov gives 12...♗xe5 13.dxe5 ♖c5, after which I found a simple improvement for White:



14.♖d4!N (14.♖f4 a5 was roughly equal in Gasanov – Zhigalko, Rijeka 2010) 14...♙b7 15.cxd5 cxd5 16.♜f3 ♘g5 17.a3 a5 18.♞f2 ♞fc8 19.♞fc2± White keeps the better chances.

13.f3

Logically driving the strong black knight away.



13...♖ec5

In the event of 13...♖ef6N 14.♖f4 c5 15.♞e2 ♞ac8 (it is hardly a good idea for Black to release the tension with 15...cxd4?! 16.exd4 dxc4 17.♙xc4±) 16.♖h1 White retains some pressure.

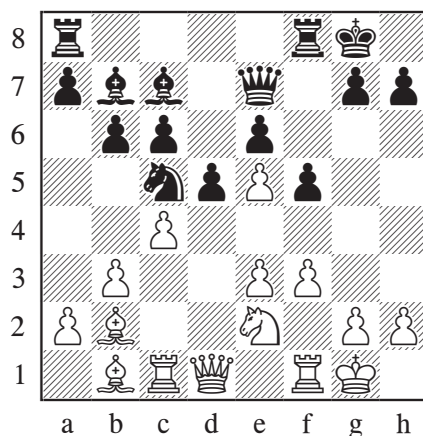
14.♙b1 ♖xc5?!

Even though this move is not the best, it is worth having it as the main line to see the instructive refutation.

14...♖a6 is a safer choice although, in K. Schneider – Nyberg, Internet 2013, White could have continued improving his position with 15.♖f4N ♞ac8 16.♞e2±.

15.dxe5 ♙c7

In Osipov – Korepanov, email 2007, White missed a powerful idea:



16.b4!N ♖d7

16...♖a6 is met by 17.cxd5 cxd5 18.a3 when the black minor pieces on the queenside look totally misplaced.

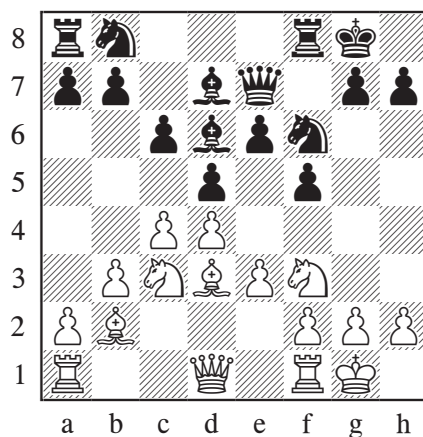
17.cxd5 exd5 18.f4! ♞xb4 19.♙a1!

The knight is coming to d4 with a lot of power, for instance:

19...g6 20.♖d4 ♖c5 21.g4!

White has a devastating attack.

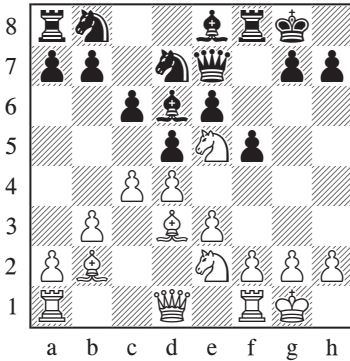
B3) 9...♙d7



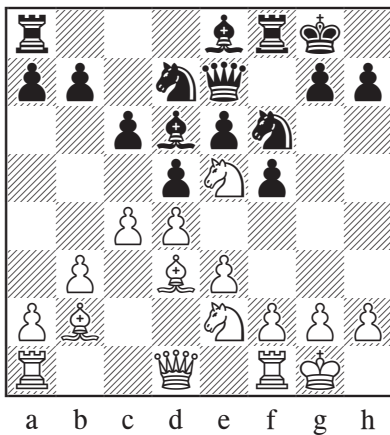
This move is quite thematic for the Stonewall structure; the light-squared bishop is heading for h5.

10. ♖e5 ♙e8 11. ♗e2 ♗bd7

Black has also tried 11...♗f7!?, when White should continue with:



12. ♗f4!N (Black was alright after 12.f4 ♗f6 13.c5 ♙c7 14.b4 ♙h5 in Van Wely – Krasenkov, Polanica Zdroj 2000) 12...a5 (White is not worried about 12...♗xe5 13.dxe5 ♙c7 14.♖c1, when the e5-pawn cramps Black's pieces) 13. ♙e2 ♗a6 14. ♖c1± White keeps the more pleasant game.



12.f3!

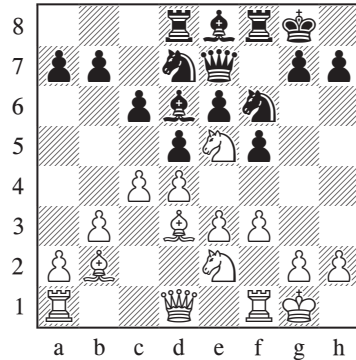
A strong positional move: White takes control over the e4-square and looks forward to having an opportunity to break with e3-e4 one day.

12...c5

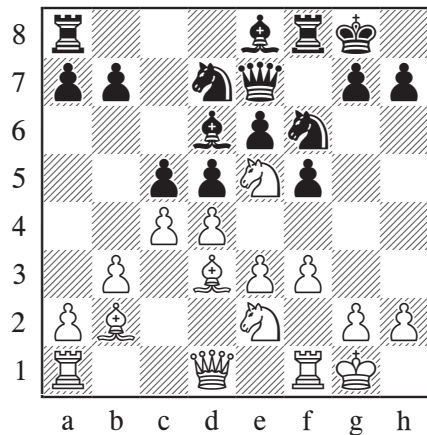
I also checked 12...dxc4N 13. ♗xc4 ♙c7,

when White has the following nice idea: 14.a4! ♗d5 15. ♙a3 ♗b4 16.a5±

After 12...♖d8, which occurred in Danner – Nikolac, Maribor 1980, I would suggest:



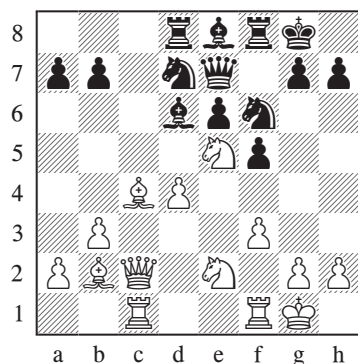
13.c5!N ♙c7 14.b4 White can easily develop his initiative on the queenside, while Black has no counterplay in sight. The following line looks logical: 14...♗xe5 15.dxe5 ♗d7 16.f4 ♙h5 17.♖c2 ♙xe2 Otherwise the knight will come to d4 and Black's bishop will be stranded. 18. ♙xe2 b6 19. ♙d4 White has a clear advantage.



13. ♗f4!N

I found this improvement myself, though it was also proposed by Mihail Marin in *ChessBase Magazine* 163.

13.♞c1 ♜d8 14.♞c2 dxc4 15.♙xc4 cxd4
16.exd4 occurred in Gelfand – Tomashevsky,
Baku 2014, but now Black has an improvement:



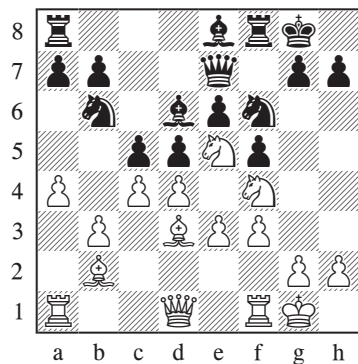
16...♘h5!N Taking control over the f4-square,
with an unclear game.

13.♙h1 led to an eventual victory for White
in Iturrizaga Bonelli – Shabalov, Montevideo
2015, but it seems too slow.

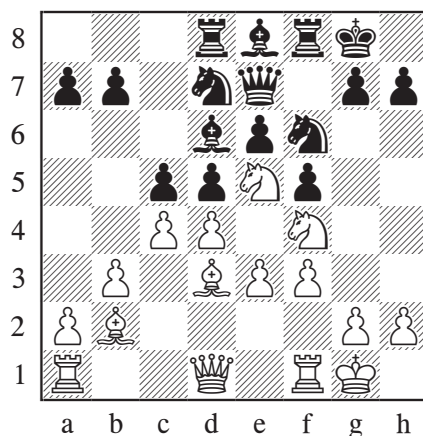
13...♞d8

After the premature 13...g5?! 14.♘h3 h6
15.♞e2 (or 15.♘f2, as given by Marin) Black
has only weakened his position.

13...♘b6 14.a4! is an important move, when
play may continue:



14...dxc4 15.♙xc4 ♘xc4 16.♘xc4 ♙c7
17.♘d3± White dominates the dark squares.



14.♞c2!

This is the best square for the queen.

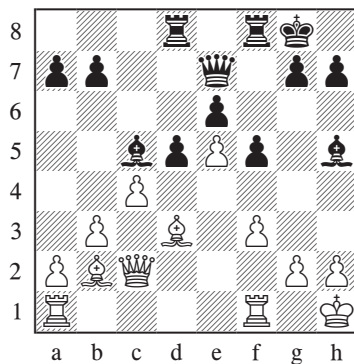
14.♞e2 allows Black to equalize by means
of: 14...cxd4 15.exd4 ♘xe5 16.dxe5 ♙c5†
17.♙h1 ♘h5=

14...♘b6

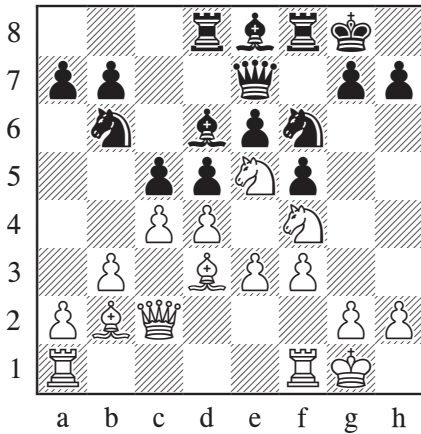
This seems as good a try as any for Black.

Marin mentions 14...♙c7 15.♞ad1 when
White keeps the advantage.

I also analysed: 14...cxd4 15.exd4 ♘xe5
16.dxe5 ♙c5† 17.♙h1 ♘h5 18.♘xh5 ♙xh5



19.cxd5! ♞xd5 20.♙c4 ♜d7 21.♙xe6† ♞xe6
22.♞xc5 White is a pawn up.

**15.a4!**

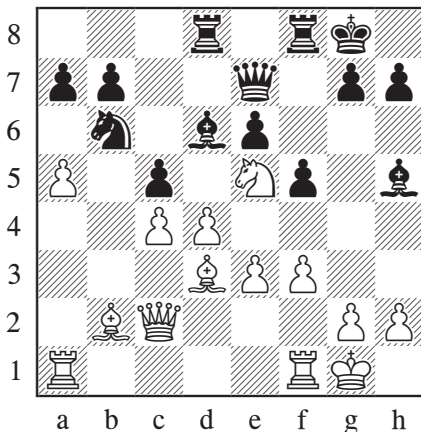
Just as in the 13...♖b6 line above, White is going to harass the enemy knight.

15...♗h5

15...dxc4 16.♕xc4± is similar to the aforementioned note on 13...♖b6.

16.♗xh5

16.a5 dxc4 17.bxc4 ♖a4!± is not so clear.

16...♕xh5 17.a5 dxc4 18.bxc4**18...♗d7 19.f4±**

White retains some pressure.

Conclusion

The Slav-Stonewall hybrid is a valid option against our 4.e3 set-up. I recommend simple development with 5.♕d3 ♖f6 6.0-0 ♕d6 7.b3, when Black must make a choice. 7...0-0 8.♕a3 by no means a disaster for him, but the exchange of dark-squared bishops is a definite achievement for White, whose subsequent plans may include preparing a queenside advance, or perhaps manoeuvring the queen's knight towards d3 and e5. 7...♗e7 is the main line, which makes it harder for White to carry out the desired bishop exchange. After 8.♕b2 0-0 I recommend a change of direction from *GM 1* with 9.♗c3!?, intending ♗e2, ♖c1 and ♗e5 at some point. A complicated game lies ahead, but my analysis shows that Black is under some pressure in all variations.