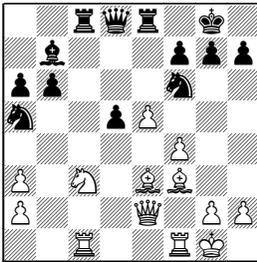


A2. 15. ♖e2 ♜c7!

It seems that here 15...d5?! is premature. The opposition of rook vs. queen on the e-file makes this break-trough attractive, but White's dark-squared bishop turns out to be very strong:

16.cd5 ed5 17.e5 ♕a3 18.ba3

A critical position.



18...b5!? (18...♗c4 looks more natural, but White has a bind after 19.♕d4 ♗e4 20.♞fd1 ♗c3 21.♞c3±. The text leaves more prospects to the c8-rook.)

19.♕d4! (19.♞fd1 ♗c4 20.♕d4 ♜a5↑ is excellent for Black; 19.ef6 ♗c4 20.♗d1 ♗e3 21.♗e3 ♜b6 22.♞f2 looks like the refutation of Black's idea, but computer analysis shows that 22...♞e3 23.♕d5 ♞ce8 24.♕b7 ♜b7 25.fg7 ♞e4! 26.♞c2 ♔g7 levels the game.)

19...♗e4 20.♞fd1 ♗c3 21.♕c3 ♞c4 22.♞d2 ♞a4

Despite the exchanges White has the upper hand. The four rook endgame is clearly in his favour following 23.♕d5 ♕d5 24.♞d5 ♞d5 25.♞d5 ♞a3 26.♕a5.

16.b4

The game Mannion – Lauti-

er, Barcelona 1993 followed with 16.♗a4?! ♕e4 17.♕b6 ♜c6 and Black has a pleasant game. The exchange of the central pawn for b6 is good for White only without queens. Karpov proved that against Kasparov in a famous game from the World title K–K series.

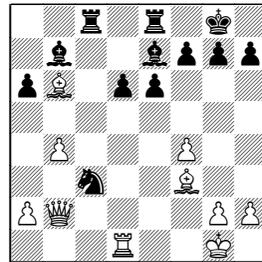
16.♞f2 is also harmless: 16...♞b8! 17.♕b6 ♗c4 18.♗c4 ♞c4∞.

After the text Black can stage a hazy queen sacrifice:

16...♗c4 17.♗c4

17.♗a4 b5 18.♗b6 ♞b8 19.♗bc4 bc4 20.♞c4 is about equal.

17...♜c4 18.♞b2 ♞d3 (18...♜c7=) 19.♕b6 ♗e4 20.♞fd1 ♜c3 21.♞c3 ♗c3.



Now both **22.♞c1 ♕f3 23.♞c3 ♕d5∞** or **22.♕b7 ♗d1 23.♞a3 ♞c3 24.♞a6 ♞c1 25.a3 d5** are unclear. The diagram position is not for faint-hearted players, but it deserves testing.

B. 12. ♜b3 ♗d7

12...♗a5?! 13.♞b6± led to a better endgame in Karpov – Kasparov, 1984.

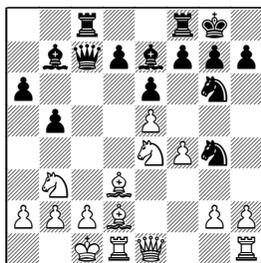
13.♞fd1

13.f3 is inconsistent. Black

knight on e4 enable plenty of tactical blows.

C2a) 16. ♖e4?!; C2b) 16.h3; C2c) 16. ♖e2!?

C2a) 16. ♖e4?! 0-0



17. ♖b1

This move admits that White got nothing from the opening.

It took me two games to understand that 17.h3?! should be met with:

17... ♖4e5!!

The game V. Dimitrov – Delchev, Bulgaria 2004 saw 17...f5?! 18. ♖d6 ♖d6 19.hg4 ♖e5 20.fe5 ♖e5. The design is good, but it needs correction.

18.fe5 ♖e5 19. ♖g3

19. ♖e3 ♖d3 is the same; 19. ♖b1 f5 ensures full compensation.

19... ♖d3 20. ♖d3 f5! 21. ♖g3 f4! 22. ♖f1 b4!! White is in an awkward situation, e.g. 23. ♖g1 ♖f5 24.c3 ♖d5 25. ♖c2 a5+. Therefore he must play 23. ♖b1, when 23... ♖g2 24. ♖g1 ♖h3 leads to an overwhelming advantage.

17...f5!

Black achieved this thematic

break without sacrifices. The play is balanced now.

18.ef6 ♖f6 19. ♖f1 ♖d5 20. ♖a5 ♖c6 21. ♖f6 ♖f6 22.g3

This position occurred in Zufic – Lazarev, Trieste 2005. Black can equalise with:

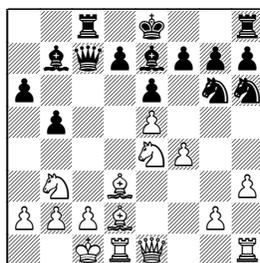
22...e5 23. ♖g6 hg6 24.fe5 ♖c2 25. ♖a1 ♖b3 26.ab3 ♖g5 (26... ♖ce8 27. ♖c3 ♖c3 28. ♖c3 ♖e5=) 27. ♖d7 ♖f1 28. ♖f1 ♖b3 29. ♖c3 ♖c3 30.bc3 ♖c3 31. ♖a2 ♖e5= or maintain tension with:

22... ♖c4!? 23. ♖e2 ♖e7.

C2b) 16.h3 ♖h6

Dominguez suggests in Informator 94 16... ♖h4!? 17.g3 ♖4e5 18.fe5 ♖h1 19. ♖e3 ♖e5 20.gh4 ♖b7 assessing the position in Black's favour, but the situation is highly unusual and needs a practical test.

17. ♖e4 f5!?



After 17...0-0 White could prevent the vital push f7-f5 by 18. ♖f1!? or 18. ♖b1!?

18.ef6 ♖f4 19. ♖b1 ♖f6 20. ♖h4 ♖d3 21.cd3 ♖e4 22. ♖e4 ♖f7∞.

C2c) 16. ♖e2!? f5

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 e6 3.d4 cd4 4.♞d4 ♞c6 5.♞c3 ♖c7 6.♙e3

After 16...♞h6 17.♞hf1! and 18.♞e4± Black is unable to achieve f5 any more.

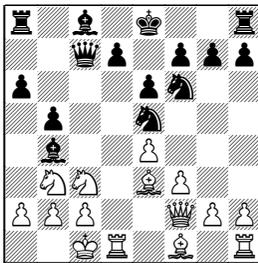
17.h3 ♞h6 18.a3 0-0.

The only game with a similar pawn formation is Vehi Bach – Rodriguez Guerrero, Albacete 2005 which saw 16.♖e2 ♞h6?! 17.♞hg1?! f5 18.♞df1?! b4 19.♞d1 0-0 20.♞b1 a5 21.h3 a4 22.♞c1 ♙c5 23.♙e3 d6 24.♙c5 ♖c5 25.ed6 ♖d6f.

19.♞hf1 d6!?!±

Perhaps this break-through equalises: 20.♞d4 ♖d7 21.ed6 ♙d6 22.♖e6 ♖e6 23.♞e6 ♞fe8 24.♞d4 ♙g2 25.♞f5 ♞f5 26.♙f5 ♞cd8 27.♞f2 ♞h4 with full compensation for the pawn.

D. 11. ♖f2



According to my database, this very interesting move was introduced in the game Sulc – Zivanic, Bizovac 2005. I suppose that we'll be seeing more of it in future. White's design is to impose domination on the dark squares with ♙b6, ♞a5 or ♙c5. The second wave of pressure comes with the rooks doubled on d-file. The same idea is seen after 11.♙d4 ♙e7 12.♖f2, but here it would be with an extra tempo in some variations. Note that

most endgames are in White's favour who has clear targets to attack on the queenside.

In the source game there was 11...♞c4!? 12.♙c5 ♙c3? 13.bc3 d6, when 14.♖g3! would have earned White the edge. Instead he lost and 11.♖f2 passed unnoticed. Six months later in Tseshkovsky – Perunovic, Vrnjacka Banja 2005 Black was crushed following 11...♙b7? 12.♙b6 ♖b8 13.♙c5 ♙c5 14.♖c5 ♞c6 15.♙e2 ♖f4 16.♞b1 ♖e5 17.♞d6±.

Then I became really worried and started my own investigation. The publishers from Chess Stars joined in the analysis and provided additional information. It turned out that at the Russian team championship in April Romanov played 11.♖f2. His opponent chose 11...♙e7. This is a consistent plan. It is sufficiently tested against 11. ♞b1, e.g. 11...♙e7 and White commonly has some initiative with g4-g5, ♞g1, f4. Romanov decided to get the most of the unusual move order and opted for 12.h3 d6 13.f4 ♞c6 14.♙d3, but has not got an advantage – see **game 27 Romanov – J. Geller, Sochi 2005.**

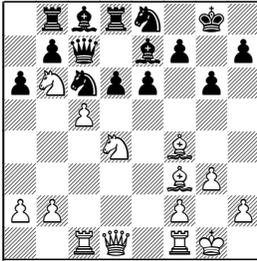
In the next lines I'll provide you with an ample material for further analysis. We have spent days on this work, but the position is so complex that it needs much more effort before some definite conclusions could be reached.

11...♞c4!?

My first reaction to 11.♖f2 was 11...♙c3 12.bc3 d6 13.♙b6 ♖b8 and

becomes more significant with every exchange, for example: 18. ♖b3 ♘d5 19. cd6 ♙d6 20. ♖fd1 ♚e5 21. ♗e2 ♜d1 22. ♞d1 ♛c7 23. a4 e5 24. ♗c8 ♗c8 25. ♞c1 ♚e7)

17...d6

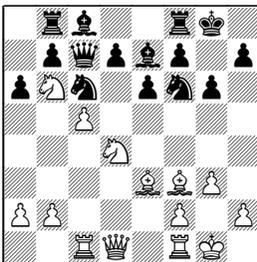


18. ♗c8

The pin along the diagonal f4-c7 looks dreadful, but g6-g5 saves the day: 18. ♞e1 g5=; 18. ♗c4 g5 19. cd6 ♗d6 20. ♗d6 (20. ♗c6 bc6 21. ♗d6 ♗d6 22. ♗d6 ♞d6 23. ♚e2 f6 24. ♖fd1 c5=) 20...gf4 21. ♗c8 ♞bc8 22. ♗c6 bc6 23. ♚g4 ♗h8 24. ♞c6 ♚e5=.

18...♞bc8 19. ♗c6 bc6 20. cd6 ♗d6 21. ♞c6 ♚b8 22. ♞c8 ♚c8 23. ♗d6 ♗d6 24. ♚a4 ♗b5=;

After 15. ♗b6 Black realises his main idea:



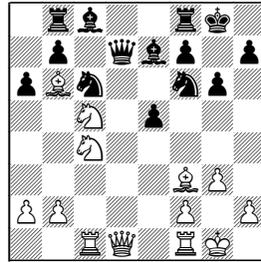
15...e5

Karpov introduced 15...♞d8!?

which is probably also enough for equality. The text move is more straightforward.

16. ♗b3 d6 17. cd6 ♗d6 18. ♗c4 ♗e7 19. ♗b6 ♚d7 20. ♗c5

With queens Black has the initiative after 20. ♚e2 e4 21. ♗e4 ♗e4 22. ♚e4 ♚h3=.



20...♚d1

Black cannot avoid simplification since 20...♚f5 fails to 21. ♗e3!±. More tangled is 20...♚h3 21. ♗g2 ♚h6, but White gradually neutralises Black's temporary activity remaining with the better game: 22. ♞e1 ♗g4 23. ♚d3 ♗d4 24. ♞c3 ♖fd8 25. ♚f1 ♗c5 26. ♗c5 e4 27. ♗e5 (27. ♗e7 ♚h5 28. ♗f6 ♗e2=) 27...♚h5 28. ♗g4 ♚g4 29. ♗e7 ♚f5 30. ♗d8 ♞d8 31. ♞d1±.

21. ♖fd1 ♗d4

White regains his pawn, but at the price of trading his light-squared bishop. 21...♗f5 22. ♗c6 bc6 23. ♗a6 ♞a8 24. ♗c7 ♞a2= leads to total annihilation of the queenside.

22. ♗e5 ♗f3 23. ♗f3 ♗g4 24. ♗g2 ♖fe8 25. h3 ♗c5 26. ♗c5 ♗e6 27. ♗d4 ♗e4=.

C2. 10. ♗c6 bc6 11. ♗b6 ♞b8 12. ♗c8 ♚c8