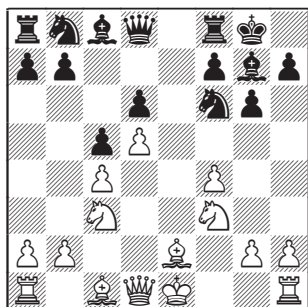


Chapter 18a 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♕g7 4.e4 d6
 5.f4 0-0 6.♗f3 c5 7.d5 e6 8.♖e2
 exd5 9.exd5



White wishes to break his opponents defence with the move f4-f5, using his pawn as a spearhead, while the pawn remaining on c4 impedes the organization of Black's queenside counterplay. This line used to be popular during the 50ies-60ies of the past century, but then it was gradually almost forgotten. It was never really refuted by Black, in fact White's play looked logical despite being a bit too slow. Black demonstrated that he could counter it with numerous promising plans like: 9...♗f5, fighting for the e4-square, or 9...♞e8 10.0-0 ♗g4, followed by the deployment of the

knight to e3, as well as the interesting and smart idea 9...♗h5!? 10.0-0 ♗xc3 11.bxc3 f5.

We believe however that our readers are not so much interested in the comparison between the advantages and disadvantages of the different set-ups for Black, but they expect concrete practical recommendations. We have made our choice upon a relatively seldom played move, after which the game develops in the spirit of the Benko Gambit (You have already encountered this approach in our book.). Accordingly...

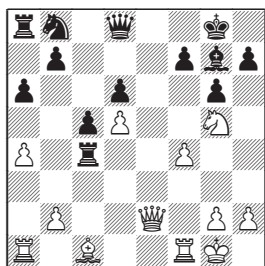
9...a6!?

Black's idea is evident – he wishes to push b7-b5, after which White's d5-pawn will become a potential weakness and the pawn on f4 will look ridiculous, since he will have to forget about his idea to attack on the kingside.

10.0-0

The alternative here is 10.a4, preventing the Benko gambit ideas. It looks like however that the inclusion of the moves a4 and a6

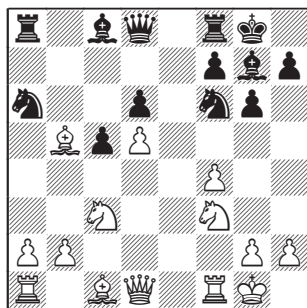
is in favour of Black. He has covered the b5-square, while White has weakened the b4-square. After this, Black can begin his fight for the e4-outpost: 10...♙f5!? 11. 0–0 ♖e8 12.♙d3 (He can counter 12.♘h4 with the typical tactical strike 12...♘xd5!, for example: 13.♘xd5 ♗xh4 14.♘c7 ♘c6 15.♘xa8 ♘d4 16.♙f3 ♙c2 17.♗d2 ♘xf3+ 18.gf ♙d4+ 19.♘h1 ♗h3 20.♗g2 ♗xg2+ 21.♘xg2 ♗xa8= Fedorowicz – Ivanovic, Naleczow 1979.) 12...♘e4 13.♘xe4 ♙xe4 14.♙xe4 (Black has an excellent counterplay after 14.♘g5 ♙xd3 15.♗xd3 h6 16.♘f3 f5 17.♙d2 ♘d7 18.♗a1 ♘f6= Malesevic – Burwick, Sweden 1998.) 14...♗xe4 15.♘g5 ♗xc4 16.♗e2 Lineykin – Shianovsky, Kiev 2003.



Now, Black can follow with a very interesting positional queen-sacrifice: 16...♗b4!? 17.f5 (It looks like White's idea triumphs.) 17...♘d7! 18.fg hg 19. ♗xf7 (It is a draw by a perpetual after 19.♘xf7 ♗e8 20.♗c2 ♘f6 21.♗xf6 ♙xf6 22.♗xg6+ ♙g7 23. ♘h6+ ♘h8 24.♘f7+) 19...♙d4+ 20.♘h1 ♘e5 21.♘e6 ♘xf7 (It

seems too risky for Black to opt for 21...♗h4?! 22.♗g7+ ♘h8 23. ♙g5.) 22.♘d8+ ♗xd8= White has problems completing the development of his queenside, while all Black's pieces are tremendously active.

10...b5 11.cxb5 axb5 12. ♙xb5 ♘a6



13.♖e1

The prophylactic moves with the rook-pawns would not change the character of the fight at all: 13.a3 ♙f5 (or 13...♘c7 14.♙c4 ♖e8= Shirov) 14.♙c6 ♗b8 15.♗e2 ♗b6 16.♘h1, draw, C.Hansen – Tella, Aalborg 1991.

13.h3, Scarella – Garcia Raimundo, Buenos Aires 1991, 13...♘b4!= followed by ♙f5 (Shirov);

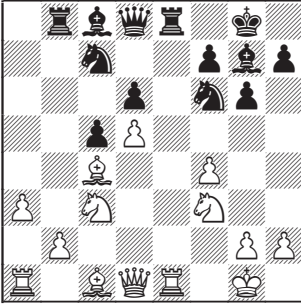
It is dubious for White to choose 13.♘g5?! ♘b4 14.♙d2 ♙f5 15.a3, Oswald – Puschendorf, Germany 1999, 15...♗b6!±

13...♘c7 14.♙c4

After 14.♙c6 ♗b8 and later ♙b7!? Black has a good position.

14...♗b8 15.a3 ♖e8

4.e4 d6 5.f4 0-0 6.♘f3 c5 7.d5 e6 8.♙e2 ed 9.ed



16.♙a2

In case of 16.h3 ♙f5 17.g4 ♙e4 18.g5 ♙xf3 19.♗xe8+ ♖xe8 20.♖xf3 ♗e1+ 21.♖f1 ♗g3+ 22.♖g2, Black has a pleasant choice between 22...♗e1+ repeating the position, or playing for a win with the move 22...♘h5!?. (Shirov).

16...♗xe1+ 17.♖xe1 ♙b7 18. ♖d1 ♘d7 19.♘a4 ♘f6= Baga-turov – Shirov, Frunze 1989.

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