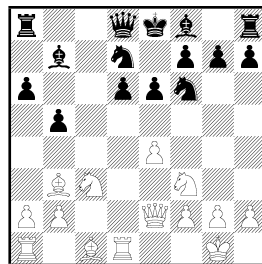


- Garcia, F. (1813)
- Winwood, J. (2029)

Golden Triangle Open, Pittsburgh, 2006
Morra Gambit – B21

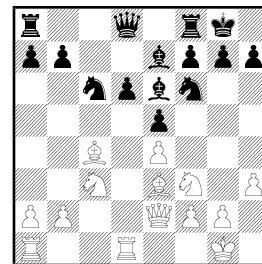
1. e4 c5 2. d4 cxd4 3. c3 dxc3 4. ♖xc3 a6. In a previous game between the same contestants, the jump of a knight to b5 opened the road to a quick win for White. 5. ♗f3 e6 6. ♘c4 b5 7. ♙b3 ♙b7 8. ♙c2!? Black has adopted the Queen-bishop fianchetto setup against the Morra. Normal play here would be 8. ♖e2 d6 9. 0-0 ♗d7 10. ♚d1 ♗gf6 (D), where 10... a3, 10... ♙f4, and 10... ♚d4!? have been tried. The gambit 8. 0-0?! b4 9. ♗a4 ♙xe4 10. ♙e3 is unsound. 8... d6 9. 0-0 ♗d7 10. ♚e1 ♙e7 11. ♙e3 ♗gf6 12. ♗d2? This is too slow. I was influenced by Garcia-Lelis in the same tournament, where 1. e4 c5 2. d4 cxd4 3. c3 dxc3 4. ♗xc3 ♗c6 5. ♗f3 d6 6. ♘c4 e6 7. 0-0 ♙e7 8. ♖e2 ♗f6 9. ♚d1 e5 10. h3 0-0 11. ♙e3 ♙e6 (D) the move 12. ♗d2!? made some sense.

Analysis



10... ♗gf6

Garcia-Lelis, 2006

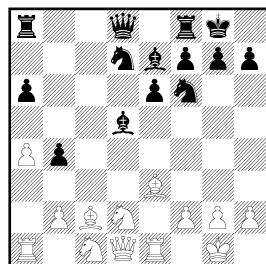


11... ♙e6

But in this position Black has renounced the push ...d5. In the present game, retreating the knight only makes this push more powerful, because Black does not have to be concerned about the reply e5. 12... 0-0 13. a4? b4 14. ♗a2 d5!± 15. exd5 ♙xd5?! [△15... ♗xd5] 16. ♗c1 (D). Black has achieved the ideal Sicilian setup, with an extra pawn. White will have to spend some time bringing his pieces back to a decent life. But, as the game proves, it is not hard for Black to miss the right path.

16... ♖c7 17. ♗cb3 ♚ac8? This, surprising as it might sound, is the mistake of the game. As far-fetched as it would seem, White's pieces are full of potential, and the lack of protection of the a6 pawn allows them to realize it. After all, White's camp features no weaknesses, and therefore an immediate attack is likely to fail. It is Black's a-pawn, and in fact

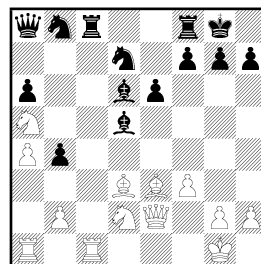
Winwood, J.



Garcia, F.

16. ♖c1

Winwood, J.

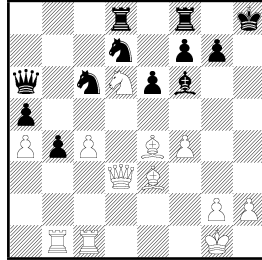


Garcia, F.

22... ♔a8

the whole f1–a6 diagonal, that can be a target. 18. ♕d3! ♚b7?! There was still time for acknowledgment with 18... ♖a8. 19. ♚e2!⇒ ♜b8 20. f3?! [△20. ♜a5] 20... ♕d6 21. ♖ec1 ♜fd7? Black returns the favor by shutting back up his queen’s way. The idea was to cover c5 before moving the ♕d6, but trading—often a good idea when there is issues of overcrowding—with 21... ♕xb3 was advisable. 22. ♜a5!⊞ ♚a8 (D). The confinement of the Black pieces is more permanent than the two players had realized only a few moves before. Now White can consolidate. On his part, Black will pursue a false plan. 23. b3 ♕e5?! 24. ♖ab1 ♕c3? 25. ♜e4! and the knight cannot be traded, because the queen would fall. The Black bishop on c3 is a liability, not a threat. Black now tries to recover it, but precious time is lost. 25... ♕e5? [△25... ♜e5] 26. ♜c4 ♕xc4?! [26... f5!? keeps the tension. Then 27. ♜ed2 (27. ♜xe5? fxe4 28. fxe4 ♜xe5 29. exd5 ♜xd3 30. ♚xd3 ♚xd5⊞) 27... ♕c3 and the position is very complex, as exploiting Black’s weaknesses can be very dangerous for White. After the text move, White weakens his structure, but keeps the initiative by transferring the pressure onto a new target. There is a smell to a kingside attack, and in any case the c-pawn, supported by a mighty bishop pair, might prove powerful.] 27. bxc4!? a5 28. f4! ♕f6?! Black decides to keep the bishop close to the castle. Objectively, defending d6 turns out to be more urgent, but 28... ♕c7 certainly looks like abandoning the king to the coming storm. 29. ♜d6! ♖cd8 30. ♕e4! ♚a6?! I had calculated 30... ♜c6 31. c5, and the combined ideas of a king-side and of ♜c4–b6 (starting to clear obstacles for the c-pawn) ensure White’s advantage. The text is a mistake, since it allows 31. ♚d3! (threatening both the h-pawn and 31... ♕b7, winning the queen) 31... ♜c6 [△31... ♕e7] 32. ♕xh7+ ♚h8 33. ♕e4 (D).

Winwood, J.

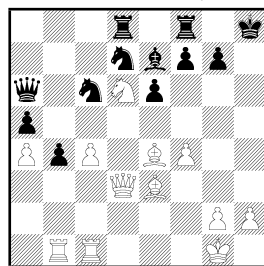


Garcia, F.

33. ♖e4

The immediate opening of the third rank with 33. ♖f2 is met by 33... g6, after which 34. ♖h3 ♖g7 simply traps the bishop. After the retreat of the text, Black had to lessen the impetus of the third-rank threat with 33... g6 or 33... ♖g8. Instead, 33... ♖e7? (D) allows the following combination: 34. ♖d4!! f5□ 35. ♖xg7+!□ ♖xg7 [35... ♖g8 36. ♖g3! ♖xd6 37. ♖xc6 ♖xc6 38. ♖g6! ♖f7□ 39. ♖h6+ ♖h8 40. ♖xf7 ♖g8 41. ♖g5! ♖g7□ 42. ♖e8+ ♖f8 (42... ♖g8 43. ♖f6+ ♖xf6 44. ♖xc6) 43. ♖e1+-; 35... ♖h7 36. ♖h3+ ♖xg7 37. ♖g3+ transposes to the game] 36. ♖g3+ The quid: the pawn and the knight stop the King's flight through the backdoor: 36... ♖f6? 37. ♖g5#. 36... ♖h7 37. ♖b3!! (D)

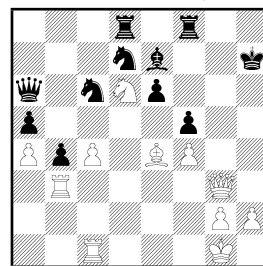
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33... ♖e7?

Winwood, J.



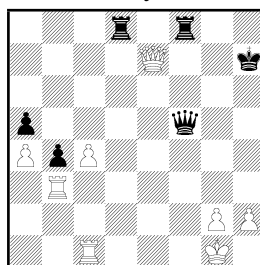
Garcia, F.

37. ♖b3!!

A beautiful 'quiet' move. The mating threat of course is 37... ♖h3+ 38. ♖g7 ♖g3+. Black has four conceivable defenses:

- Removing the knight to free f7, by 37... ♖×d6, doesn't help: I had calculated 38. ♖h4+ ♖g7 39. ♖g3+ ♖f7 40. ♖h5+! ♖f6 41. ♖g6+ ♖f7 42. ♖h6+ ♖e7 43. ♖h7+ and mate follows, but 38. ♖g5! is even more elegant.
- 37... ♗f6, bringing a new piece to interpose itself between the White heavy pieces and the Black king, fails because the queen and the bishop are enough to mate: 38. ♖h3+ ♖g7 39. ♖g3+ ♗g4 40. ♖×g4+! ♗×g4 41. ♖×g4+ ♖h8 42. ♖h5+ ♖g8 43. ♖h7#.
- The best try is the truly imaginative 37... ♗ce5! (giving back the two pieces that White has offered) 38. ♗×e5 ♗×e5, and now White has to thread very carefully: obviously 39. ♖h3+? is bad because of 39... ♖g7 40. ♖g3+ ♗g6, but even 39. ♖×e5?! is inferior. The right move is 39. ♗×f5!: the knight was lost anyway, and in this way a pawn is taken and the initiative kept. There follows 39... ♗×f5 40. ♖×e5 ♖f6 and now simplest is 41. ♖×f5+ ♖×f5 42. ♖×e7+ (D). Two pawns up and an attack that is still powerful ensure White's decisive advantage.

Analysis



42. ♖×e7+

The game continued with the fourth option, namely the interposition of a rook: 37... ♖f6 38. ♖h3+ ♖h6? [⊖38... ♖g7 39. ♖g3+ ♖g6 40. ♗×f5+! ♗×f5 41. ♖×g6+ ♖×g6 42. ♖×f5+ ♖f8 43. ♖h6+ ♖f7 44. ♖d5+ ♖e8 45. ♖g6+ ♖f8 46. ♖f7#] 39. ♖×f5! ♗×f5 40. ♖×f5 ♖g6 41. ♖h3+. Mate follows.

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