

Zenón Franco

Rubinstein

move by move

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About the Author

Zenón Franco is a Grandmaster from Paraguay, now living in Spain. He represented Paraguay, on top board, in seven Chess Olympiads, and won individual gold medals at Lucerne 1982 and Novi Sad 1990. He's an experienced trainer and has written numerous books on chess.

Also by the Author:

Test Your Chess

Anand: Move by Move

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Introduction

There are not many books about Akiba Rubinstein, despite his having been for several years one of the best players in the world – and, according to Chessmetrics.com, at various points between 1908 and 1914, even the very best. Rubinstein was certainly among the top five in the world from 1907-16, and even later, but his results then suffered a considerable decline as he had increasing health problems.

Rubinstein is perhaps the strongest player who never managed to become world champion. There are often considered to have been several outstanding players who came close to gaining the world championship, or who deserved to do so. David Bronstein, Paul Keres and Viktor Korchnoi are especially mentioned, and the claims on their behalf are beyond dispute. The difference with Rubinstein is that, while the others were at least able to compete for the world title – because a formal procedure for selecting the challenger had by then been established by the international body, FIDE – in Rubinstein’s time this was not the case; he never had the opportunity to play for the title.

When I wrote my book on Boris Spassky, I noted that the tenth world champion’s contribution to chess literature was remarkably slight. In Rubinstein’s case this is even more extreme: he wrote almost nothing, and when he did write, his commentaries were relatively simple, although anything that someone of his strength might have to say is always interesting.

Yuri Razuvaev, the author of one of the few books about Rubinstein, put it this way: “Akiba Rubinstein did not write about himself and about his credo; he has left this opportunity to others, who may judge upon his creative work.”

Some of Rubinstein’s games are very well known, in particular his “Immortal Game” against Rottlewi at Lodz 1907, and his wins against Lasker at St Petersburg 1909 and Capablanca at San Sebastian 1911. For anyone not acquainted with these works of art, it will surely be a pleasure to view them for the first time; but even for those who have already seen them, it should still be interesting. These games will generally have been played through “long ago”, and will not be recalled in detail, so looking at them again in greater depth should be a pleasant experience. We don’t need to do quite what Boris Gelfand, one of Rubinstein’s greatest admirers, did regarding Rubinstein-Salwe, Lodz 1908. He said: “This game made a deep impression on me; I played it over many times”.

The task of writing this book, after studying Rubinstein games more deeply, was a very enjoyable one, and I can say that I now appreciate Rubinstein's marvellous play more fully. I hope I can convey what I felt on looking at his games. In many of them, both in the mid-dlegame and the ending, I seemed to be witnessing a work of art, in which the various parts are united or connected and where, for most of the time, harmony reigns.

GM Zenón Franco Ocampos,
Ponteareas 2015

With special thanks to Jonathan Tait for his very useful suggestions and improvements.

The Structure of the Book

The book is organized around Rubinstein's playing style, in which we can distinguish three main characteristics:

1. His style was markedly positional.
2. He was possibly the first person to create systems of play in various openings, with plans linked to the middlegame.
3. He was an extraordinary endgame player, whose handling of rook endings in particular is among the best in the history of the game.

After an introductory chapter discussing Rubinstein's style, showing how he dealt with various positions – in the opening, positional middlegames, and the endgame – which to some extent exemplify his play, there follows five chapters of annotated games:

1. Positional play (11 games)
2. The initiative and the attack (4 games)
3. Endgame mastery (6 games)
4. Rook endings (6 games)
5. Linking the opening and the middlegame (7 games)

As well as the 34 main games, you will also find a few supplementary ones, annotated in less detail, which are intended to shed light on the associated games. At the end of the book is a short biographical chapter, outlining the most significant parts of Rubinstein's career.

Chapter Two

Playing for the Initiative and the Attack

“Rubinstein’s Immortal”

1907 was a very successful year for Rubinstein; he won the tournaments in Ostend and Carlsbad as well as the Fifth All-Russian tournament of 1907/08, held in his adopted city of Lodz.

Lodz was the scene of this stunning creation: “Rubinstein’s Immortal”, which is possibly the best known of all his games. After a quiet opening White wastes some tempi and stands slightly worse. Seeking to keep the position closed, he weakens his position too much and allows one of the most beautiful finishes in the history of our game.

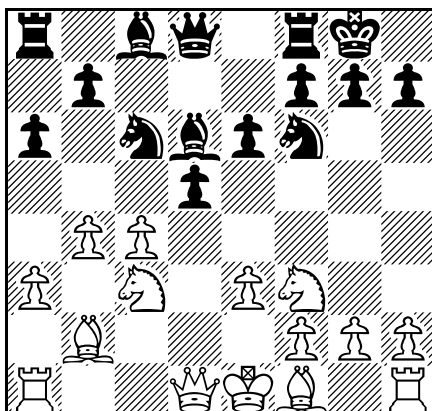
The marvellous final combination received lavish praise, while the modest Rubinstein commented: “The combination which now begins has been considered to be one of the most brilliant and the game itself a jewel; in reality the secret consisted of eliminating or deflecting the defending piece.”

Game 12
G.Rotlewi-A.Rubinstein
Lodz 1907
Semi-Tarrasch Defence [D40]

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 e3 c5 4 c4 ♘c6 5 ♘c3 ♘f6 6 dxc5

The main alternative is 6 a3, after which 6...a6 might follow with a possible transposition to the game. More than a hundred years ago now, Rubinstein himself recommended 6...♘e4, which was used by Fischer to beat Petrosian in the eighth game of the Candidates Final in Buenos Aires 1971; this is still considered to be a valid option.

6...♙xc5 7 a3 a6 8 b4 ♙d6 9 ♙b2 0-0



10 ♖d2?!

Question: This is a strange move, isn't it?

Answer: White doesn't want to develop his bishop yet, since he would like to recapture on c4 without losing a tempo, but while this is a developing move, it will not prove useful, as Rubinstein will demonstrate. With the same idea, 10 ♖c2, as suggested by Tartakower, was more appropriate, and years later this became the main line.

Alternatively, 10 cxd5 exd5 11 ♙e2 reaches a typical IQP structure; this continuation was considered the best by Schlechter.

Exercise: What did Rubinstein play in this position to call 10 ♖d2 into question?

Answer:

10... ♖e7!

A pawn sacrifice for the sake of accelerating Black's development – the imminent arrival of a black rook on d8 will be uncomfortable for the white queen.

11 ♙d3?!

Inconsistent with his previous move. Almost the only virtue of 10 ♖d2 was to put pressure on the d5-pawn, and while winning the pawn was risky, with the aid of a computer it can be verified that White's best course was 11 cxd5 exd5 12 ♘xd5!? ♘xd5 13 ♖xd5, when Black has compensation for the pawn after 13... ♖d8 or 13... ♙e6, but no more than that.

And if that was a difficult decision to take over the board, rather than 11 ♙d3?!, White might have opted for 11 cxd5 exd5 12 ♙e2; of course this would be in worse circumstances than after 10 cxd5, given that he has spent a tempo on ♖d2, which is of doubtful usefulness.

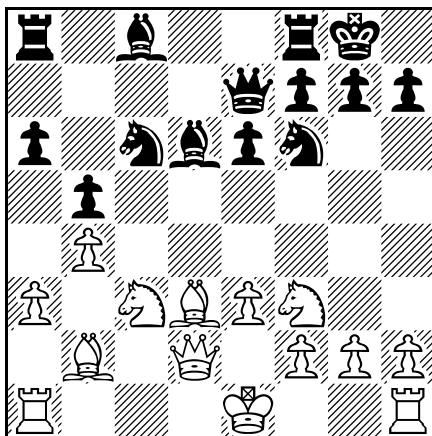
Exercise (easy): What's the snag with 11 ♙d3 - ?

Answer:

11...dxc4!

Unlike Black's king's bishop, White's will have spent two tempi recapturing the c-pawn, with the further snag, as will become apparent, that the queen is badly placed on d2.

12 ♖xc4 b5 13 ♙d3



Exercise (easy): How should Black continue?

Answer:

13...♖d8

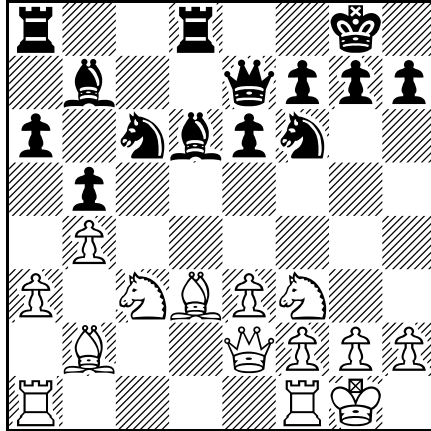
Of course; the white queen is under X-ray pressure from the d8-rook and sooner or later will be forced to lose another tempo.

14 ♙e2

Question: White was already “playing with Black” – in a symmetrical position with Black to move – but now he will be two tempi down. Was 14 0-0 better?

Answer: White rejected 14 0-0 in view of 14...♙xh2+! 15 ♖xh2 (or 15 ♙xh2? ♗d6+) 15...♗e5, when 16 ♙xh7+ ♗xh7 17 ♗c2 ♗c4 is advantageous to Black.

14...♙b7 15 0-0



Exercise: How can Black exploit his slight advantage in development?

Answer:

15...♞e5!

With the exchange of knights White's castled position loses an important defender, and the two black bishops will be aimed menacingly at his kingside.

16 ♞xe5 ♙xe5

With the familiar threat of 17...♙xh2+.

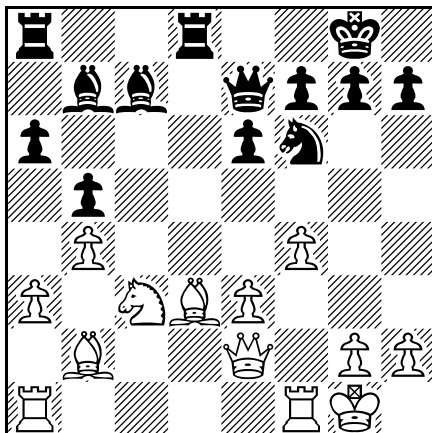
17 f4

Closing the h2-b8 diagonal, at the cost of weakening his kingside.

If 17 h3 then 17...♞d6! is strong, when 18 ♖fd1? allows 18...♞c6! with a double attack, winning material after 19 e4 ♙xc3 20 ♖ac1 ♞xe4!; so White has to play the sad 18 ♞d1, with advantage to Black after the simple 18...♖ac8.

The best defence was the calm 17 ♖fd1, when 17...♖ac8 keeps a slight advantage for Black but nothing clear. Instead, 17...♞c7 can be met by 18 ♖ac1! (not 18 f4? on account of 18...♙xc3 19 ♖ac1 ♞d5 and wins) 18...♙xh2+ 19 ♔h1 ♞b8 20 ♙xh7+ ♞xh7 21 ♖xd8+ ♞xd8 22 ♔xh2 and the position is about equal.

17...♙c7



With the idea of opening the game with 18...e5.

18 e4

To answer 18...e5 with 19 f5.

After 18 ♖fd1, the planned 18...e5 activates Black's position advantageously; for example, 19 ♖ac1 (here 19 f5 can be met by 19...e4! 20 ♙c2, when Black has 20...♗e5 21 g3 ♗xf5, among other things) 19...exf4 20 exf4 and Black can benefit from the opening of lines with 20...♙b6+ 21 ♔h1 ♗e3! and if 22 f5, there are various strong moves available, such as 22...♗g5 (with the threat of ...♘g4) or 22...♗h6 (intending 23...♙c7 etc) with a winning initiative.

18...♖ac8

Question: How significant is Black's advantage?

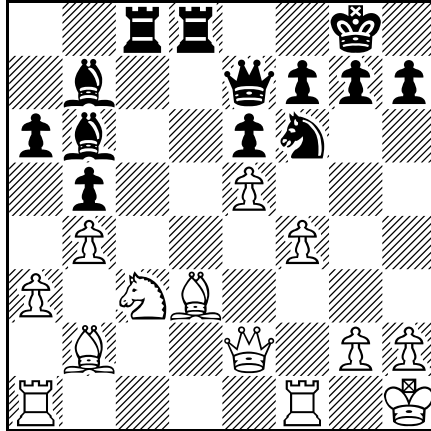
Answer: Black has just developed his last inactive piece and both his rooks occupy active posts. In contrast, the white rooks are still passive. This is not a decisive advantage, but any tactical complications arising are likely to benefit the side whose pieces are more active, so White is clearly at risk.

19 e5?

Seeking to simplify after either 19...♘d5 or 19...♘d7 20 ♙e4, but this weakening of the long diagonal allows a marvellous sequence of tactical blows.

It was preferable to play 19 ♖ad1, though White's position remains difficult in any case after 19...♙b6+ 20 ♔h1 ♙d4, followed by 21...e5.

19...♙b6+ 20 ♔h1



Exercise: How did Rubinstein continue here?

Answer:

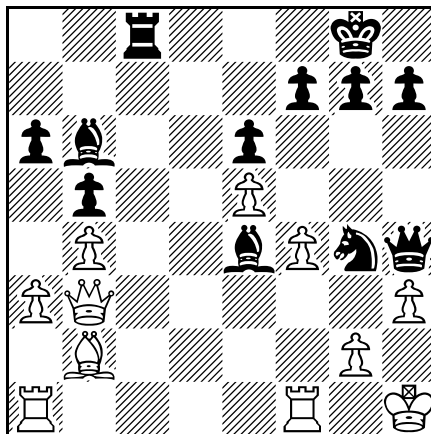
20... ♖g4!

“In playing 19 e5? ♗b6+ 20 ♕h1 White clearly underestimated this reply.” – Kasparov. Rubinstein exploits the fact that the white queen is overworked; the threat is now 21...♖h4.

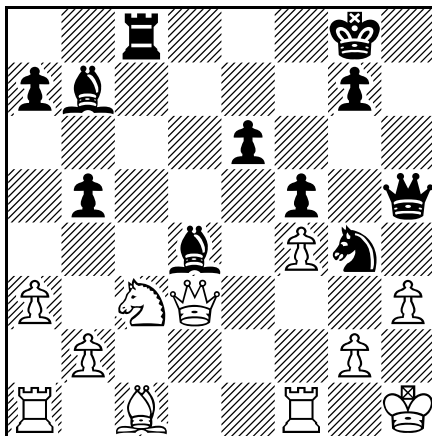
21 ♗e4

After 21 ♖xg4 ♗xd3, threatening ...♗xc3, Black’s initiative triumphs; for example, 22 ♖e2 ♗c2 23 ♗c1 (23 ♗ab1 loses to the same move) 23...h5! 24 ♖xh5 ♗xg2+ 25 ♕xg2 ♖b7+ and mates; 21 ♗xh7+ ♕xh7 22 ♖xg4 is no better, because of 22...♗d2.

If 21 ♖e4, the simplest continuation is 21...♖h4 22 h3 ♗xd3! 23 ♖xd3 ♗xe4 24 ♖xe4 ♖g3! and mates. In this line Kavalek pointed out that in the event of 24 ♖b3,



Black has several winning continuations, including 24...♙e3!, which occurred in a remarkably similar modern game:



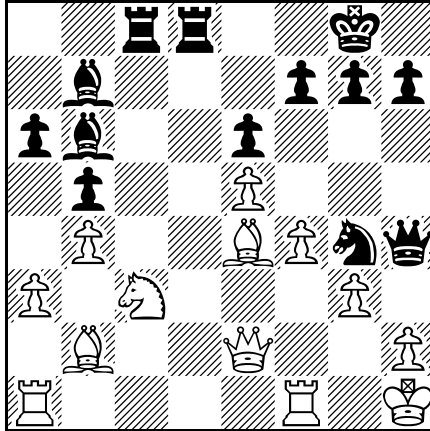
In L.Aronian-V.Anand, Wijk aan Zee 2013, Black forced resignation with 23...♙e3!. Anand himself stated that, during play, he was aware of the similarity between the two games, two works of art played more than 100 years apart.

21...♙h4

Although it takes nothing away from the following brilliancy, there was actually an immediate win with 21...♘xh2!; for example, 22 ♖fe1 (or 22 ♙h5 ♙xe4 23 ♚xh2 ♙xg2! 24 ♚xg2 ♜d2+ etc) 22...♜xc3! 23 ♙xc3 (or 23 ♙h5 g6 24 ♙xh2 ♜b3) 23...♙h4 24 g3 ♙xg3 25 ♙xh2 ♙xe4+ 26 ♜xe4 ♙xc3 27 ♜ae1 (or 27 ♜ee1 ♜d2) 27...♜d1!, winning in all cases.

22 g3

If 22 h3 then 22...♜xc3! wins; for example, 23 ♙xc3 (23 ♙xb7 allows mate with 23...♜xh3+; the white king is also blown away after 23 ♙xg4 ♜xh3+! 24 ♙xh3 ♙xh3+ 25 gxh3 ♙xe4+ 26 ♚h2 ♜d2+ with rapid mate, such as 27 ♚g3 ♜g2+ 28 ♚h4 ♙d8+ 29 ♚h5 ♙g6 mate) 23...♙xe4 24 ♙xg4 (if 24 ♙xe4 we already know that 24...♙g3 wins) 24...♙xg4 25 hxg4 ♜d3!, when the threat of 26...♜h3 mate allows Black to win the bishop on c3.



Exercise: How did “Rubinstein’s Immortal” continue?

Answer:

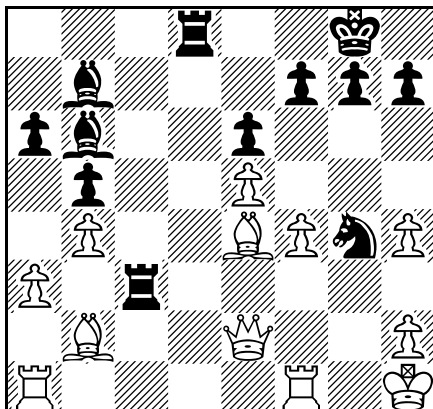
22...♖xc3!!

“An astonishing queen sacrifice, combining pins and deflections. White can’t stop the attacking fury.” – Kavalek.

“One of the best combinations ever made. Black’s next, uncommonly spectacular move reveals the depth of Rubinstein’s combinative idea.” – Romanovsky.

23 gxf4

Here 23 ♕xc3 allows 23...♕xe4+ and mate; while on 23 ♕xb7, Kmoch pointed out the following finish: 23...♖xg3 24 ♖f3 (or 24 ♕f3 ♖xh2 25 ♗xh2 ♖h3) 24...♖xf3 25 ♕xf3 ♖f2+ 26 ♔g1 (or 26 ♔g2 ♗h3+ 27 ♔g1 ♖e4+ with mate in three) 26...♖e4+ (the engines indicate that the “inhuman” 26...♗h3! mates more quickly, but this changes nothing) 27 ♔f1 ♖d2+ 28 ♔g2 ♖xf3 29 ♗xf3 (or 29 ♔xf3 ♗h5+) 29...♖d2+ etc.



Exercise: What is the spectacular key to the combination?

Answer:

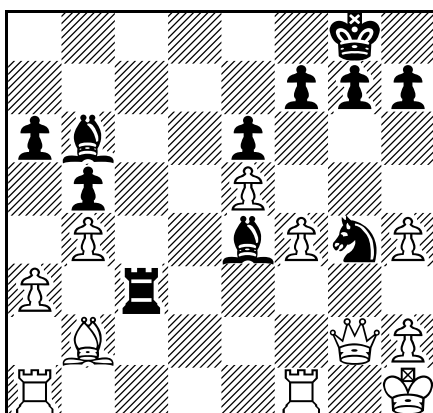
23...♖d2!!

“Such moves bear the stamp of eternity! Black is a queen down, and nearly all his pieces are en prise.” – Razuvaev & Murakhveri.

24 ♕xd2

There is mate in five moves after 24 ♕xg4 ♗xe4+ 25 ♖f3 ♖xf3, and mate in three after 24 ♗xc3 ♗xe4+; finally, 24 ♗xb7 ♖xe2 25 ♗g2 allows the same decisive finish we shall see in the game.

24...♗xe4+ 25 ♕g2



Exercise: How did Rubinstein force resignation?

Answer:

25...♖h3! 0-1

“A clincher! Black uses a pin to deliver a pretty mate.” – Kavalek.

Rotlewi resigned, in view of 26 ♖f2 (or 26 ♖f3 ♘xf3) 26...♙xf2 27 ♚xe4 ♖xh2 mate.

“The Rubinstein Attack”

This is another of the Rubinstein’s great contributions to the opening, linked to a middle-game plan. It could have been placed in Chapter Five but is included here because it is also a magnificent attacking game. I have added three supplementary games to help readers improve their understanding of the type of position arising.

After an opening featuring Rubinstein’s own original ideas, a middlegame with castling on opposite sides is reached, which is finally rounded off with a brilliant attack.

This is a model game, a true work of art, about which Rubinstein commented simply, with his usual modesty: “Castling on opposite sides is always more spectacular on account of the complexity of the attacks”.

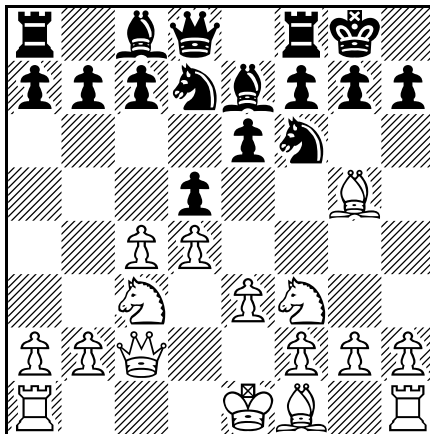
Game 13

A.Rubinstein-R.Teichmann

Vienna (4th matchgame) 1908

Queen’s Gambit Declined [D55]

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♙g5 ♘bd7 5 e3 ♙e7 6 ♘f3 0-0 7 ♚c2



Rubinstein plays the variation that bears his name, the “Rubinstein Attack”, which he employed almost exclusively until 1912. This line (“formidable” was how Kasparov described it) is one of his many contributions to opening theory and, as always with Rubinstein, it is an idea linked to the middlegame.

From 1914 onwards (Rubinstein was inactive in 1913), he turned to the more popular move 7 ♖c1.

Question: What are the differences between 7 ♖c2 and 7 ♖c1 - ?

Answer: Both moves can be categorized as “the struggle for tempo”. White delays the development of his king’s bishop, hoping for a quick ...d5xc4 so that he can play ♗xc4 without losing a tempo. The main difference with 7 ♖c2 is that White keeps open the possibility of castling on the queenside.

7...b6

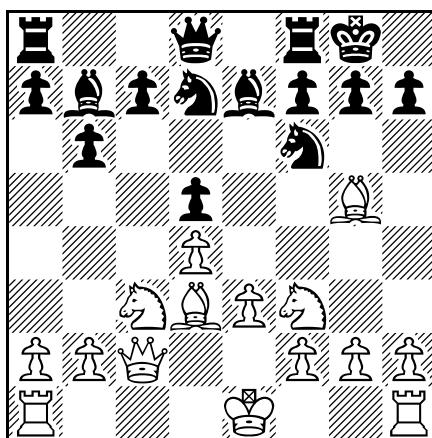
The main objection to 7 ♖c2 is the counterblow 7...c5!, played in the World Championship matches between Lasker and Capablanca (1921) and Capablanca and Alekhine (1927), with good results for Black. One of the ideas is that after 8 0-0-0 (or 8 ♖d1), it is possible to play 8...♗a5 with good counterplay.

The young Kasparov, keen to attack, played this line against D.Marovic at Banja Luka 1979; after 8 0-0-0 ♗a5 9 ♖b1 h6, he opted for the sharp 10 h4!?, maintaining the tension. The game continued 10...dxc4 11 ♗xc4, and now Kasparov recommends 11...cxd4 12 exd4 ♘b6 13 ♗b3 ♗d7 14 ♘e5 ♖ac8 15 ♖h3! “with chances for both sides”.

Many years after the Teichmann game, Rubinstein himself, as Black against Kashdan at Prague 1931 – with the insertion of 7...h6 8 ♗f4 (in the event of 8 ♗h4, White no longer has the option of Kasparov’s h2-h4 idea) – played 8...c5 9 cxd5 cxd4 (refusing to be left with an isolated d-pawn, which would be the case after 9...exd5) 10 exd4 ♘xd5 11 ♘d5 exd5 and eventually won in a complex struggle.

Instead of the double-edged 8 0-0-0, White can also choose the quiet 8 cxd5 ♘xd5 9 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 10 ♘xd5 exd5 11 ♗d3 with a minimal advantage in view of Black’s IQP, but nothing significant.

8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♗d3 ♗b7



10 0-0-0

Two years later, Alekhine preferred 10 h4 in Supplementary Game 13.1.

Question: It looks more natural to castle queenside and only then decide what to do with the pawns.

Answer: There's a specific reason: 10 h4 prevents 10...♘e4, which might not be serious, but Alekhine did not want to allow it. Besides, h2-h4 is not a wasted move – as we shall see, it is useful in the attack.

10...c5

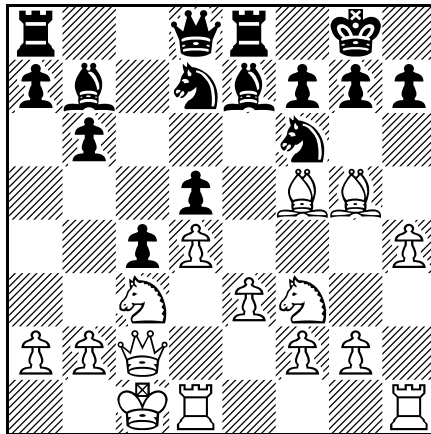
Znosko-Borovsky indeed played 10...♘e4 in Supplementary Game 13.2.

11 h4! c4?!

Although Black gains a tempo by attacking the bishop, the race between the competing pawn storms will prove unfavourable to him. 11...♖c8 is better, as played earlier by Teichmann in Supplementary Game 13.3.

12 ♟f5 ♞e8

Since we are in an attacking race with the kings castled on opposite wings, a logical move here would have been 12...a6, planning ...b6-b5. In response, 13 ♘e5 is reasonable, after which F.Marshall-J.Te Kolste, Scheveningen 1905, continued 13...g6 14 ♟xd7 ♘xd7 15 ♟h6 ♞e8 16 h5. White could also play 13 g4, analogous to what we will see in this game.



Exercise: How do you think Rubinstein continued his offensive?

Answer:

13 ♟xf6!

With two ideas: firstly it prevents Black from bolstering his kingside defences with 13...♘f8 (which was his intention in playing 12...♞e8); secondly, as we shall see, it is consis-

tent with White's plan of attack against the black monarch.

13... ♖xf6

Exercise: How does White demonstrate that 13 ♗xf6 was consistent with his attacking plans?

Answer:

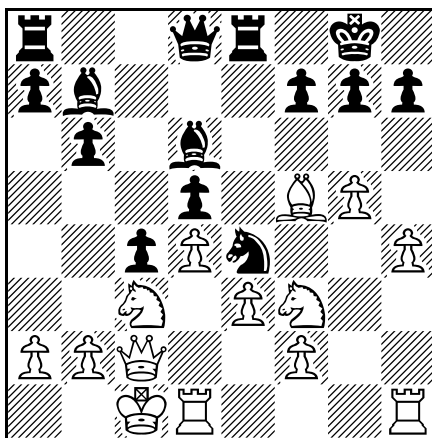
14 g4!

Of course; White continues with the infantry attack initiated with 11 h4, Now 14...g6 would be answered by 15 g5.

14... ♗d6

Black prepares a square for his knight on e4.

15 g5 ♖e4



Exercise: How did Rubinstein respond to Black's last move, which closes the attacking b1-h7 diagonal?

Answer:

16 h5!

Rubinstein continues playing with iron consistency, not caring about the loss of the pawn, since this would open lines against the black king. Or in other words, "Rubinstein's play, as always, is consistent and logical: in the given instance he is thinking only of attack!" – Kasparov.

In the event of 16 ♖xe4 dxe4 17 ♖d2, as well as the line 17...c3! 18 ♖xe4 cxb2+ 19 ♗xb2 (or 19 ♗b1 ♗a3) 19...♗b4 20 f3 ♖d5 21 ♗xh7+ ♗h8 (which is "unclear and unnecessary for White", according to Kasparov), there is the simple 17...♗e7, intending ...b6-b5, when Black's attack starts to make itself felt.

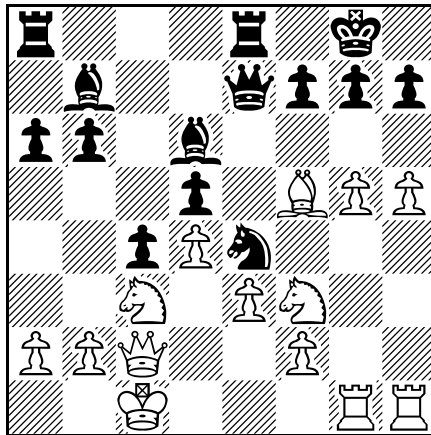
16...♖e7

Taking the g5-pawn would be virtually suicidal: after 16...♘xg5? 17 ♗xg5 ♜xg5, Tarasch analysed 18 ♙xh7+ ♚f8 19 h6! gxh6 (or 19...g6 20 ♖dg1 ♜f6 21 ♙xg6!) 20 ♖dg1; for example, 20...♜f6 (or 20...♜d8 21 ♜f5) 21 ♚h5 ♜e6 22 ♜f5, threatening 23 ♖g6 with a decisive attack.

17 ♖dg1 a6?

This attempt at counter-attack comes too late, as Rubinstein will demonstrate.

Having seen the course of the game it is clear that 17...g6 was essential, although after 18 hxg6 hxg6, there are several promising-looking continuations: such as 19 ♙xe4 dxe4 20 ♗d2, or the sacrifice 19 ♙xg6 hxg6 20 ♚h6 etc. The strongest seems to be 19 ♚h6! ♙g7 (or 19...gxh6 20 ♖gh1 and Black is defenceless) 20 ♗xe4 dxe4 21 ♗h4, when there is no good defence against 22 ♙xg6; for example, 21...♜g8 22 ♙xg6 fxg6 23 ♜xg6+ ♚f8 24 ♜xc4! and wins.



Exercise: How did Rubinstein proceed with his attack on the black king?

Answer:

18 ♙xh7+!!

“Now the black position is ripped open with a Morphy-like assault.” – Knoch.

“Like lightning from a clear sky! Such a combination cannot be calculated to the end, and this is the main difficulty in taking a decision in similar situations.” – Razuvaev.

Rubinstein (who awarded this move only one exclamation mark) commented, with his usual lack of self-praise: “This sacrifice serves to enhance the offensive action of the attacking pawns on the kingside.”

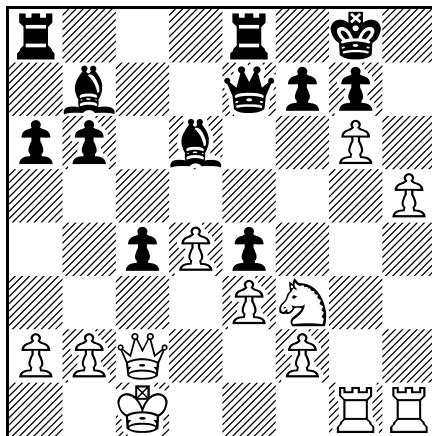
The alternative was 18 g6, good but not as strong,

18...♙h7 19 g6+ ♙g8

In the event of 19...fxg6, White concludes the attack with 20 ♗xe4 dxe4 21 ♗g5+ ♚h6

(or 21...♙g8 22 ♖xc4+) 22 ♗f7+! and mates.

20 ♗xe4 dxe4



Exercise: What did Rubinstein have in mind when he sacrificed the bishop?

Answer:

21 h6!!

“The crux of White’s attack! Black cannot prevent the opening of both the g- and h-files, after which the white rooks quickly decide matters. 22 gxf7+ and ♖xg7+ is now threatened.” – Euwe.

“This impressive picture is the culmination of the entire game.” – Kasparov.

This lavish praise contrasts sharply with Rubinstein’s own comment; with his customary modesty he wrote: “Completely demolishing Black’s kingside. The connected sacrifices are of merely visual interest.”

21...f6

As Euwe indicated, 21...exf3 loses simply: 22 gxf7+ ♖xf7 (or 22...♙xf7 23 ♖g6+ ♙g8 24 hxg7) 23 hxg7!, with the double threat of 24 ♖h8 mate and 24 ♖h7 mate.

Instead, 21...fxg6 is more complicated; Knoch pointed out one of the most accurate ways to cut through the complications: 22 ♗h4 or prefacing this with 22 h7+. The direct 22 ♖xg6? is less clear, as after 22...exf3 23 ♖xc4+ (or 23 ♖xg7+ ♖xg7 24 hxg7 ♙e4! is not decisive either) 23...♙h7! 24 ♖xg7+ ♙h8 25 ♖xe7 ♖xe7, Black has enough material to fight on.

The winning line is 22 h7+! ♙f7 (not 22...♙h8? 23 ♗h4) 23 ♗h4! g5 24 ♗f5 ♖f6 (or 24...♖e6 25 ♖xg5 g6 26 ♖h6!) 25 ♖xg5 ♖xg5 26 ♗xd6+ ♙e7 27 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 28 ♖xc4! ♙d6 and now 29 ♖g8 is one way.

Alternatively, 22 ♗h4! g5 23 h7+ ♙f7 24 ♗f5 transposes; via this move order, 23 ♗g6 looks less strong: 23...♖f6 24 h7+ ♙f7 25 h8 ♖xh8 26 ♗xh8+ ♙e6 and Black is still playing.

22 hxg7!

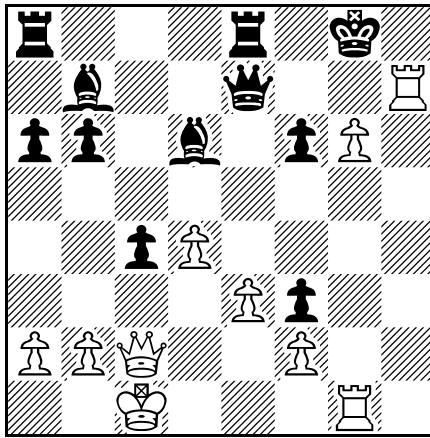
Threatening 23 ♖h8+ ♔xg7 24 ♖h7+ etc.

22...exf3

In the event of 22...♙e6, White has 23 ♖h8+ ♔xg7 24 ♖h7+ ♔f8 25 ♖xb7 exf3 26 g7+ ♔g8 27 ♗h7+ with mate in two moves, according to Euwe.

If Black tries 24...♔g8, the strongest continuation is 25 ♖gh1!, threatening 26 ♖h8+ ♔g7 27 ♖1h7+ ♔xg6 28 ♘h4+ ♔g5 29 ♖g7 mate; for example, 25...f5 (25...♔f8? loses to the simple 26 ♖xb7) 26 ♘g5! ♗d5 and here there are several winning lines, the quickest being 27 ♗e2! (or 27 ♗d1!), followed by 28 ♗h5 or else 28 ♖f7, threatening mate with 29 ♖h8+ and 30 ♗h5+ etc.

23 ♖h8+ ♔xg7 24 ♖h7+ ♔g8



Exercise: What is the strongest move now?

Answer:

25 ♗f5!

With various threats, such as 26 ♗h5, 26 g7, and 26 ♖xe7. Naturally, 25 ♖xe7 was also winning.

25...c3 26 ♖xe7 1-0

Supplementary Game 13.1
A.Alekhine-F.Yates
 Hamburg 1910
Queen's Gambit Declined [D55]

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♙g5 ♙e7 5 e3 ♗bd7 6 ♘c3 0-0 7 ♗c2 b6 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♙d3 ♗b7