

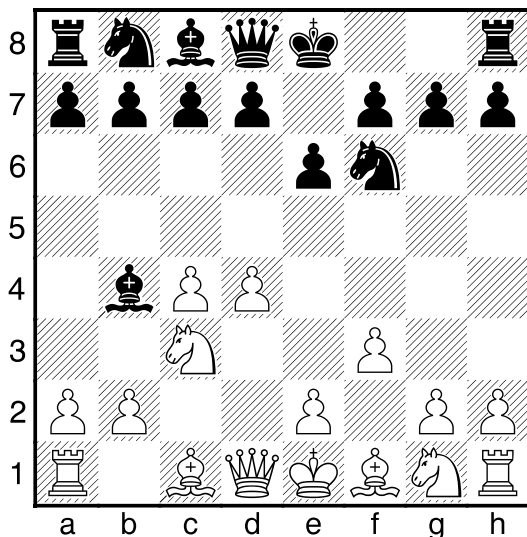
□ Anand, Viswanathan

■ Kramnik, Vladimir

WCC Bonn (2)

15.10.2008

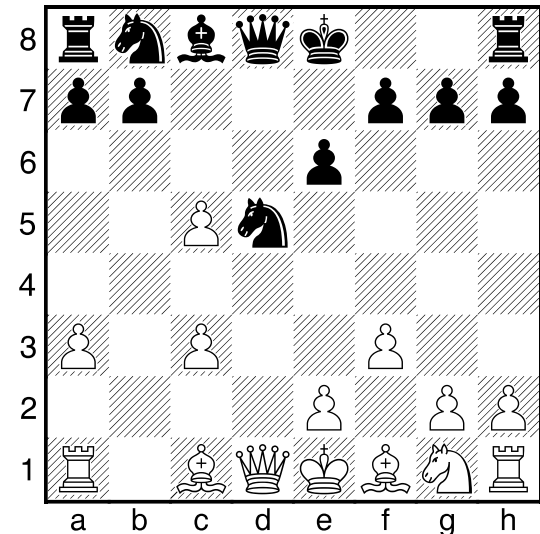
There was a lot of expectation about the opening moves. We can presume that Anand will start with his beloved 1.e4, but black's answer can't be easily anticipated. Will it be the solid Russian Defence? Maybe the Anti-Kasparov weapon, the Berlin wall? A respectable Caro-kann? Or a sharp sicilian? Only Kramnik knows... **1.d4** ; Kind of surprise! Of course Kramnik should be ready... **2.f6** **2.c4** **e6** Main Kramnik's weapon **3.Nc3** Second surprise: in most of the games Anand was avoiding the Nimzoindia with **3.Nf3** **Bb4** **4.f3**



And the third and last surprise from white. The fashion here is now **4.Qc2**, "a la Capablanca". From the very top players, only Shirov was playing this aggressive approach in the 90's. Anand never had played this move before and Kramnik was never before facing it! **d5** **5.a3** **Bc3** **6.bc3** **c5** **7.cd5** **Nd5** Black is following the main line **8.dc5**

(Diagram)

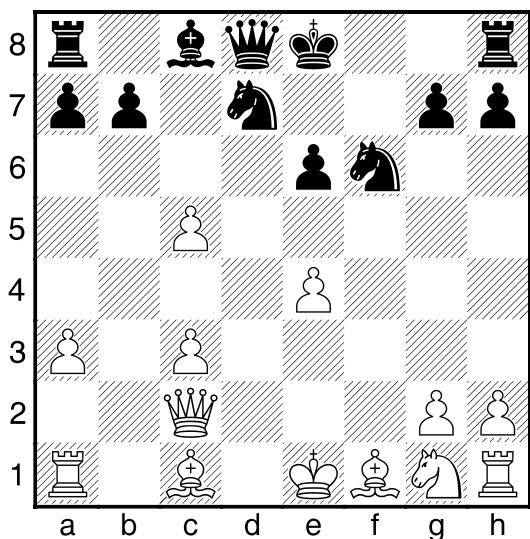
The last try from white. Grab the pawn and try to keep it, very much in "computer style". Practical and psychological factors may have been taken into account by Anand when making this choice. Kramnik likes the pair of bishops, here he has to fight against them. Kramnik doesn't like to give material so early,



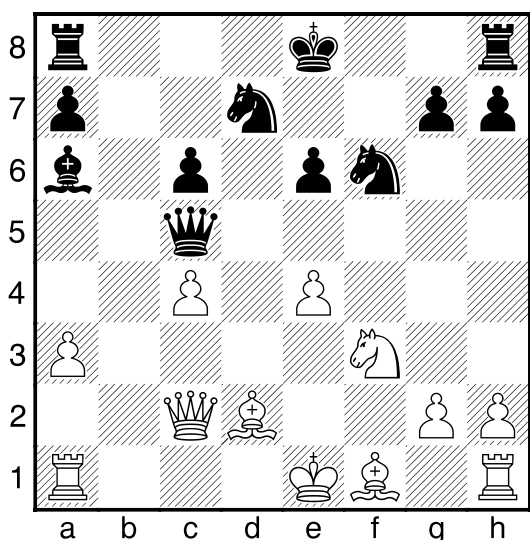
here he is pawn down. And most important: Kramnik likes to have the initiative in the opening battle: here he may be less prepared than his opponent. Nice plan but Kramnik had something to say... **f5!**? The second choice of strong players, a very dynamic move which fights versus the advance e2-e4. Now it is Kramnik who is probably surprising his opponent. [The main line is **8...Qa5** favourite of Karpov] **9.Qc2** Most logical, insisting on playing e4 [Another popular moves are the quiet **9.Nh3** or the aggressive; **9.e4** **fe4** **10.Qc2**] **9...Nd7!**? And here it comes the second surprise from Kramnik. This early knight move is almost a novelty. It shows how deep knowledge and understanding has Kramnik when dealing with openings. [The natural **9...0-0**; and the bizarre **9...f4** have been tried] **10.e4** **fe4** [Seirawan was proposing **10...N5f6!**? but it seems to me that after **11.ef5** **0-0** **12.Bf4!** it becomes strategically very risky for black] **11.fe4** **N5f6**

(Diagram)

12.c6! The best chance, spoiling black's pawn structure. [It is dubious **12.Be3!**? **Ng4**; And after **12.Nf3** **Nc5** and black is fine] **12...bc6** [Again Seirawan was claiming for active play. After **12...Nc5!**? **13.e5** **Nfe4** white should probably refrain from taking on b7, and after **14.Be3** **0-0** **15.Nf3** white is doing fine] **13.Nf3** **Qa5!** [Much more passive was **13...Qc7** **14.Bd3** **0-0** **15.0-0** **Ng4** **16.h3** **Nge5** **17.Ne5** **Rf1** **18.Bf1** **Qe5**



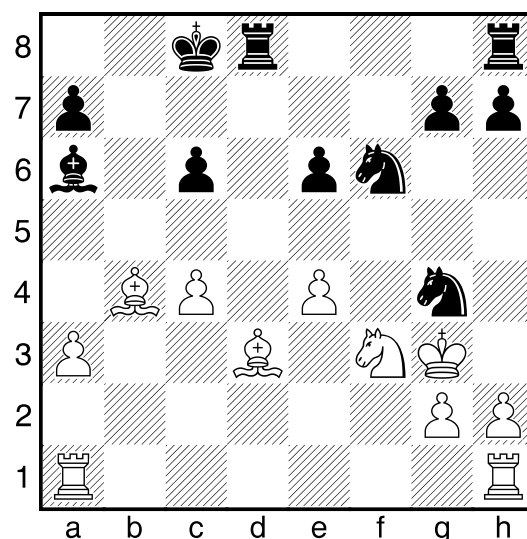
19.♘e3 ♖f6 20.♙d3 and white was better in Portisch,L-Kluger,G/Budapest 1962 (25); The computer proposes 13...♗g4!? 14.♙e2 0-0 and after 15.h3 ♜f3! and the game becomes a real mess] 14.♙d2N Strictly speaking this is the new move in this game. Anand is preparing c4 to prevent the exchange of the light squared bishops. Very logical. [Worst for white was 14.♙e3?! ♗g4 15.♙g1 0-0 and black is slightly better, Moehring,G-Neukirch,D/Annaberg-Buchholz 1965] 14...♙a6 15.c4 ♜c5



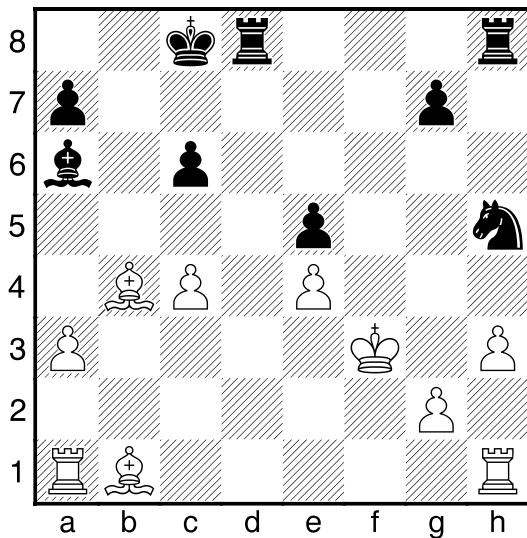
White will have problems to castle. The opening battle was won by black who has an easy game. 16.♙d3 ♗g4!? [Very reasonable was 16...0-0 17.♙b4 ♜e3 18.♜e2 ♜e2 19.♙e2 c5 with a good game for black.] 17.♙b4 ♜e3 [Black could take some risk with

17...♜b6!? but Kramnik went for the most solid continuation.] 18.♜e2 0-0-0 This move was criticized by Anand. [Very safe was 18...c5 19.♙d2 ♜e2 20.♙e2 h6 preventing ♗g5 and getting a comfortable position for black.; Anand suggested 18...♜e2 but after 19.♙e2 ♗ge5 20.♗e5 ♗e5 21.♙d6!? white may be slightly better even after ♗d3 22.♙d3] 19.♜e3

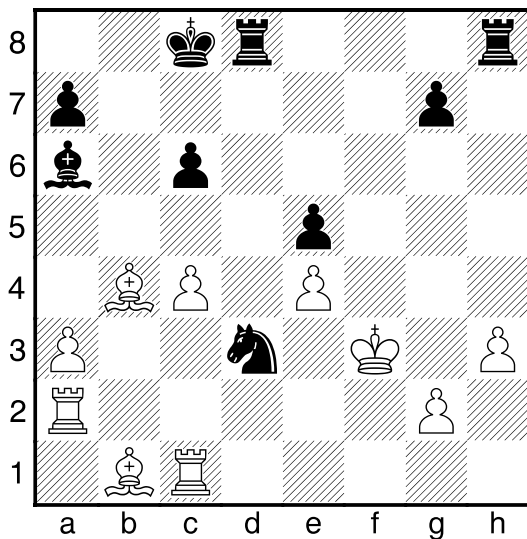
[Maybe it makes sense for white to try 19.♙e7!? ♜de8 20.♙d6] 19...♗e3 20.♙f2 ♗g4 [Of course is weak 20...♗c4?! 21.♜ac1 ♗db6 22.♙c4 ♗c4 23.♜c2 where white gets a dangerous initiative] 21.♙g3 ♗df6? This looks like a real mistake as both players admitted after the game. Black is losing coordination. [The natural 21...♗ge5 seems to hold the equality without much trouble.]



22.♙b1! Here Kramnik understood that he was overoptimistic and thought for a long time. h5! The best defence! [After 22...♙c4 23.e5 or; 22...♗e3 23.♗e5 white would be much better thanks to his strong knight] 23.h3 h4! The russian GM is going to play a string of precise defensive moves. [Again the alternatives were bad for black. If 23...♗h6 24.♗e5 ;Or if 23...♗e3 24.♗e5 ♗c4 25.♗f7 in both cases with a white advantage.] 24.♗h4 ♗e5 25.♗f3 ♗h5! 26.♙f2 ♗f3! 27.♙f3 e5! After this active play things are not so easy for white. He needs to coordinate his queenside. 28.♜c1 [I like to give the pawn back. After 28.♙c2!? ♙c4 29.♜hd1 It looks very promising for white, thanks to the pair of

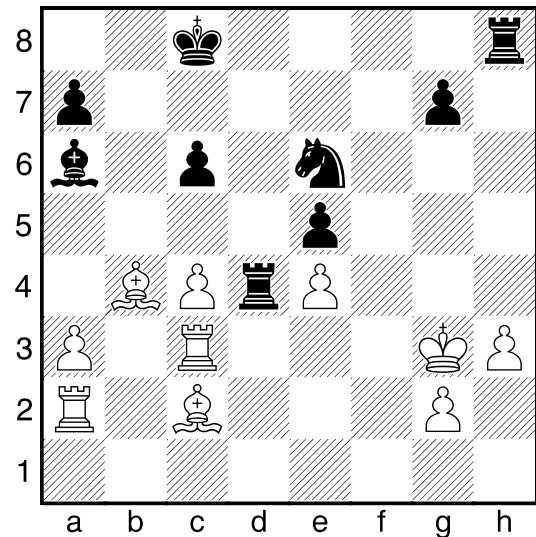


bishops and his better pawn structure.]
28...♘f4! Again Kramnik is going to find the more stubborn defence. **29.♖a2!** ♘d3!



30.♖c3 [White could get some practical chances with 30.♙d3!? ♖d3 31.♙g4]
30...♘f4 Of course black should be happy with the draw. **31.♙c2?!** Ugly move. White's rook on a2 was probably very unhappy with this decision. [After 31.♖f2 ♖d1 32.♙c2 white is slightly better but black gets serious counterplay.] **31...♘e6** [Probably stronger was 31...♖h6! keeping the white king on the center.] **32.♙g3!** Good move. White king goes to a safer place and the pawn up remains. ♖d4 [32...♖d4 On the press conference Anand said that after 33.c5 he couldn't see a way to make progress. Well, white is pawn up and he can try to play ♖f3,

♙c3, for example. It seems to me that white was still better and could go on with little risk. A demo variation: ♘f4 34.♖e3 ♖h6 35.♙h2 ♖g6 36.g3 ♙c4 37.♖b2 ♘d3 38.♙d3 ♖d3 39.♖d3 ♙d3 40.♙c3 ♖e6 41.♖b4 and white is undoubtedly pressing]



a natural move which came with a powerful complement: a draw offer. Surprisingly, Anand agreed, probably worried at the clock (he had less than 3 minutes to reach the 40 moves control) or maybe dissatisfied with the lack of coordination of his pieces.

1/2-1/2