

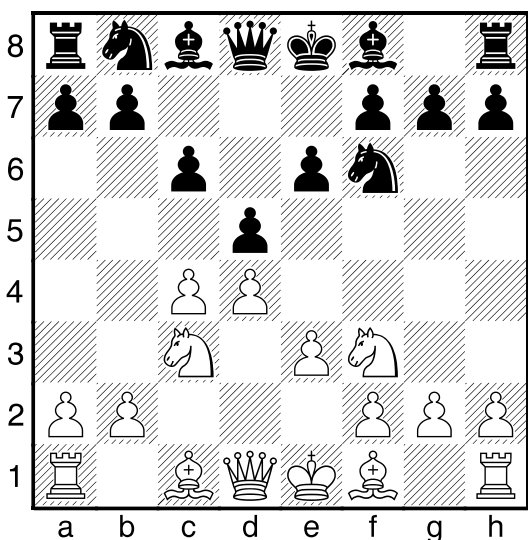
□ Kramnik,Vladimir
 ■ Anand,Viswanathan

WCC Bonn (3) 17.10.2008

Today we witnessed a brilliant game which ended with the victory of Anand playing the black pieces. Of course a very important point with great psychological impact.

I wrote some thoughts before the beginning of the third game which I would like to share with you: after the rest day, we should expect Kramnik playing a more ambitious variation in case Anand repeats the Slav Defence. Will it be a Meran or a sharp Moscow gambit? Or will Anand try to avoid the theoretical battle? Probably not, but who knows! Maybe the Russian will come with a surprise on his first move like Anand did on the previous game? I don't think so... **1.d4** As expected, Kramnik is ready to show his weapons versus the Slav Defence. **d5 2.c4 c6** And Vishy doesn't refuse the theoretical battle. **3.♘f3 ♗f6 4.♗c3 e6 5.e3** .

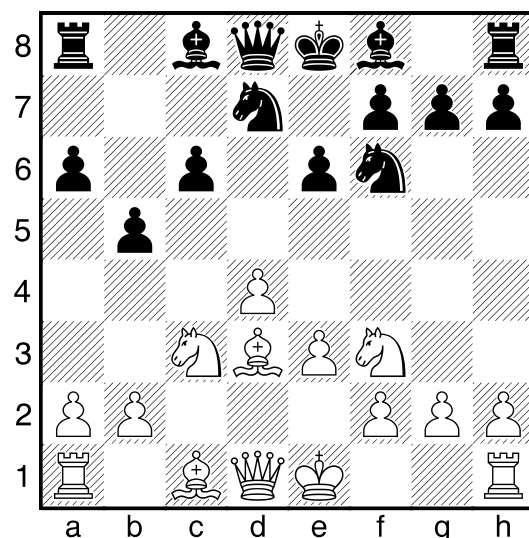
----- Position after 5.e3 -----



Here we are. White doesn't want to test his opponent on the ultra-sharp **5.♗g5** lines. **♗bd7 6.♗d3 dc4 7.♗c4 b5** The Meran variation, which both players know very well. **8.♗d3** [In the world championship in Elista Kramnik used **8.♗e2** against Topalov, but he didn't get an advantage after the opening.] **8...a6!?** The fashionable move is **8...♗b7**. The move played by Anand is considered to be too

risky by the experts. So, we have a little surprise, but Kramnik is for sure well prepared. .

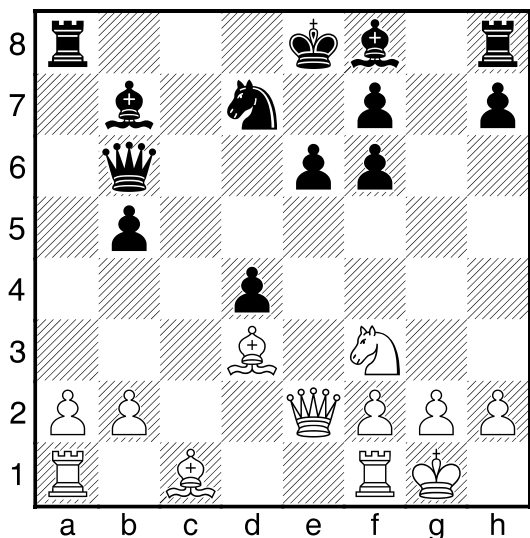
----- Position after 8...a6 -----



9.e4 c5 10.e5 The direct attempt to refute black's play. [The previous experience of Anand was with the variation **10.d5 ♖c7 11.0-0 ♗b7 12.de6 fe6** which leads to a very complex struggle as in Karpov,A (2740)-Anand,V (2715)/Monte Carlo 1994] **10...cd4 11.♗b5 ab5** [Kramnik had already played this line with white. His most recent game with it went **11...♘e5 12.♘e5 ab5 13.♗b5 ♗d7 14.♗d7 ♖a5 15.♗d2 ♗b5 16.♗f8 ♖f8** reaching a position that actual theory considers to be good for white in Kramnik,V (2751)-Kasparov,G (2812)/Wijk aan Zee 1999] **12.ef6 gf6 13.0-0 ♖b6 14.♗e2** [Kramnik had some experience in this position but playing with the black colour: **14.♗e4 ♗b7 15.♗b7 ♖b7 16.♗d4 ♖g8** was Kamsky,G (2695)-Kramnik,V (2710)/Linares 1994, which ended in a quiet draw.] I was wondering what the hell has Anand prepared since this line is considered to be complicated but quite good for white... **14...♗b7!** And this is the big surprise prepared by Anand and his team. Leaving undefended the **b5** pawn black means taking a great risk. This is a novelty at top level since this move was only seen in a few amateur games. [The experts are playing **14...b4** but the last results are not encouraging for black.;

The former 14...♔a6 is also in big trouble according to modern theory.]

----- Position after 14...♔b7 -----



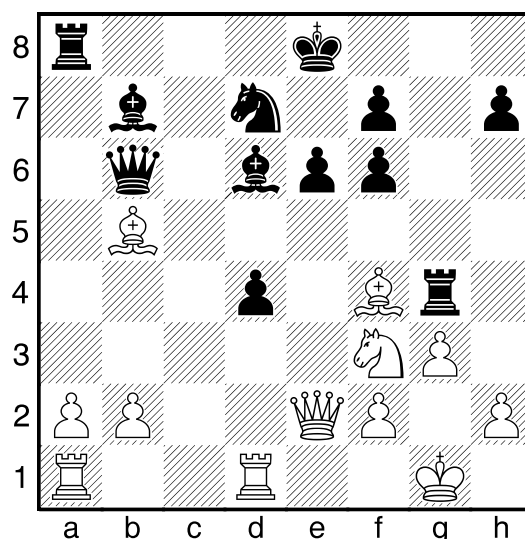
15.♔b5 Kramnik thought about 15 minutes before answering with this natural move. [15.♔f4!? with the standard idea of bringing the bishop to g3 is worth investigating.]

15...♔d6! Aimed to prevent the white bishop going to g3 via f4. [After 15...♖g8 16.♔f4 white will protect well his king with the bishop on g3.] **16.♖d1!** The best. [Very dubious is 16.♘d4? ♖g8! 17.♘f3 ♔e7 and black got a strong attack in Doepner,T-Voigt,M (2305)/Germany 1993] **16...♖g8** **17.g3!** Again the strongest move. White wants to take on d4, and things look dangerous for black; but of course, Vishy was still in his home preparation. **♖g4!** The rook protects d4, preserving the harmony on the black camp.

[Anand's move is a novelty and a clear improvement over 17...♔c5? which led to a quick collapse for black after 18.b4! ♔b4 19.♘d4 ♔d5 20.♖b1 ♔c5 21.♔e3 ♖a2 22.♔d3 ♖a3 23.♔h7 ♖f8 24.♘e6 1-0 D'Israel,D (2259)-Gerbelli Neto,E (2234)/Americana 2000] Now Kramnik got into deep think, more than 40 minutes. **18.♔f4!!** [The "natural" move seems to be 18.♘d2 but here I am sure Anand had prepared a deviously trap: ♔e7!! (Of course after 18...f5?! 19.♘c4 ♔c7 20.♘d6 ♔d6 21.f3 ♖g6 22.♔e3 white would be very happy.) 19.♔d7 (If 19.♔g4 ♔b5 and there is too much

compensation for the exchange.) 19...♖ag8! 20.♔b5 And now black has a pleasant choice: d3 (To play for a win it is worth analysing 20...♔g3!? 21.fg3 d3 22.♔f2 ♔b5 with good compensation for the knight.) 21.♔d3 ♖g3 22.hg3 ♖g3 23.♔f1 ♖d3 24.♔d3 Despite white's material advantage black is not worse, for example: ♔d4 25.♘b3 ♔d5 26.♔e3 ♔b4 27.♘d4 ♔g2 28.♔e2 ♔g4 29.f3 ♔g2 30.♔f2 ♔c5 31.♔e1 ♔b4 32.♔e2 ♔c5 with a draw; Another alternatives suggested by the computer were 18.a4 ♔c5!? ; or even the "original" 18.b4!? ♔e7 (18...♔b4? 19.♖b1) 19.a4 and the game becomes really unclear.]

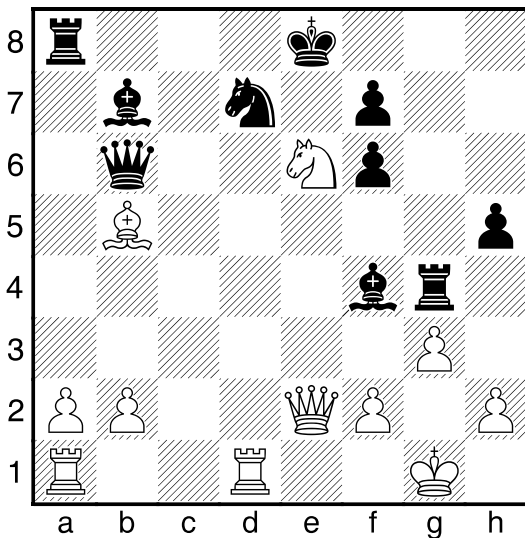
----- Position after 18. ♔f4 -----



A brilliant move! White sacrifices the bishop in order to take on d4 and start a direct attack. At the same time Kramnik avoids the "mine-field" that his opponent had probably set up on the other complex lines. **18...♔f4** Anand answered quite fast, showing that he was still on his home preparation. His clock was now on 1h 51m **19.♘d4** Kramnik spend barely 2 minutes to come with this move which he had calculated in advance. A practical decision, very understandable, and he got the prize to surprise his opponent. Vladimir's clock was now: 42 minutes [It was probably stronger the amazing 19.♖d4!? where probably Anand was better prepared. The position is very difficult to play but it seems that white has good chances to fight for

an advantage, for example: 0-0-0!? (19...♙f3?! 20.♚f3 ♔d4 21.♖d1! ♙d2 22.♚a8 ♔e7 23.♚b7 and white is better) 20.♖ad1! ♙d5 21.♖b4 ♔c7 22.♖dd4! ♞c5 23.♞e1! f5 24.♖f4 ♖f4 25.♖f4 ♙a2 and I like white, since his king is better protected.] For the first time in the game we saw Anand thinking. 19...h5 After 43 minutes Vishy plays the more natural move. [It was interesting 19...♖g6!? since after 20.♞e6 fe6 21.♖d7 ♔f8 there is not the strong ♚d3 which happened in the game. But white has still resources, for example: 22.♙d3! ♖g7 probably the best (The alternatives 22...♖g5?! 23.♖b7! ♚b7 24.♙e4 ♚a7 25.♙a8 ♚a8 26.♚e6; or 22...f5?! 23.♙f5! look good for white) After the logical sequence 23.♖g7 ♔g7 24.gf4 ♔h8 25.♔f1 ♖g8 we reach a position similar to the one which occurred in the game. Black has compensation and only very deep analysis may show if this version is better.] 20.♞e6! [After 20.♙d7? ♔d7 21.♞e6 ♙d6 there is no way to reinforce the attack].

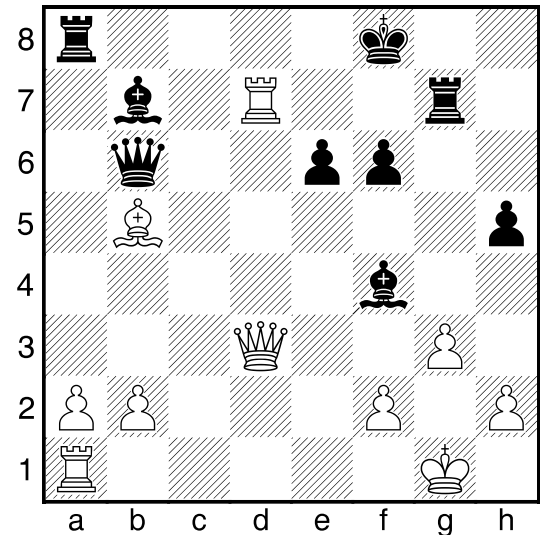
----- Position after 20. ♞e6 -----



A forced move but still nice. 20...fe6 21.♖d7 ♔f8 22.♚d3! Excellent play by Kramnik so far. There is a deadly threat to enter on h7 that black needs to meet. ♖g7! Very logical: black wants to get rid of the strong white rook, even if that means to give back material. Anand was thinking a lot on his last moves so the tension was growing and growing. [22...♙c8?!

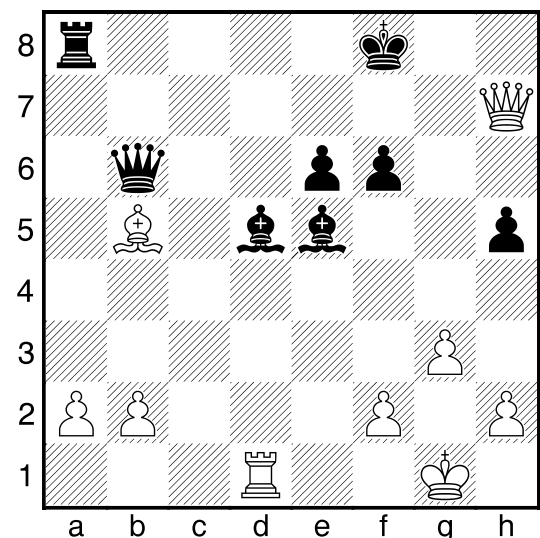
23.♖h7 ♔g8 24.♖e7].

----- Position after 22... ♖g7 -----



23.♖g7 [After the game Kramnik offered 23.♖d1!? as an interesting alternative. In fact it is, and probably it may lead to a draw with precise play. Here are some analysis: ♖d7 24.♚d7 ♙e5 25.♚h7 ♙d5 .

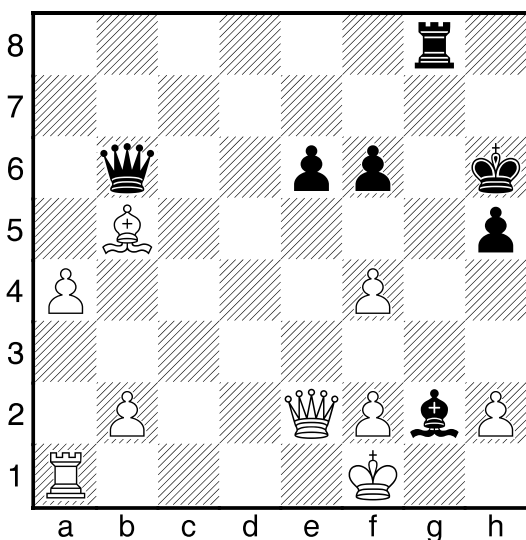
----- ANALYSIS BOARD -----



26.♚h8 ♔f7 (It looks too risky 26...♔e7 27.♚g7 ♔d6 28.♚d7 ♔c5 29.♖c1 ♔b4 30.♙c6 with attack) 27.♚h7 (Now it is white who should not risk. After 27.♚h5 ♔g7 28.♚g4 ♔f8 black should be better.) 27...♔f8 28.♚h8 ♔f7 29.♚h7 and draw by perpetual

check.] **23...♔g7 24.gf4** White emerged with a clean material advantage. However, the queenside pawns are not dangerous yet and black gets excellent counterplay attacking the weakened position of the white's king. **♖d8!** Very precise again. Before going to g8 the black rook hits the queen forcing white to choose a worst square. **25.♖e2** A very human move and maybe a good one! [It was playable 25.♖b3!? leaving the e2 square as an exit for the white king. After ♔h6 white has a choice: 26.♖e1!? (After 26.a4 ♖g8 27.♔f1 the move ♕g2 is not so strong anymore but black may play ♖g2! 28.♖e3 ♖e3 29.fe3 ♖h2 with at least equal chances) 26...♖g8 27.♔f1 ♖g2 28.♖e3 ♖d4 and the game could end in a draw after 29.♖a3! ♖f4 30.♖f8 ♔h7 31.♖f7 ♔h6 32.♖f8 with perpetual check.] **25...♔h6 26.♔f1 ♖g8 27.a4!** [Kramnik's original idea was 27.f5?! but he understood that after ♕g2 28.♔e1 ♕c6! white is in trouble, for example: 29.♖d2 ♔h7 30.♕c6 ♖c6! 31.♔e2 ♖b5 32.♔f3 ♖g4! 33.♖e1 ♖f5 34.♔e2 ♖e4 and black is playing for a win.] **27...♕g2** .

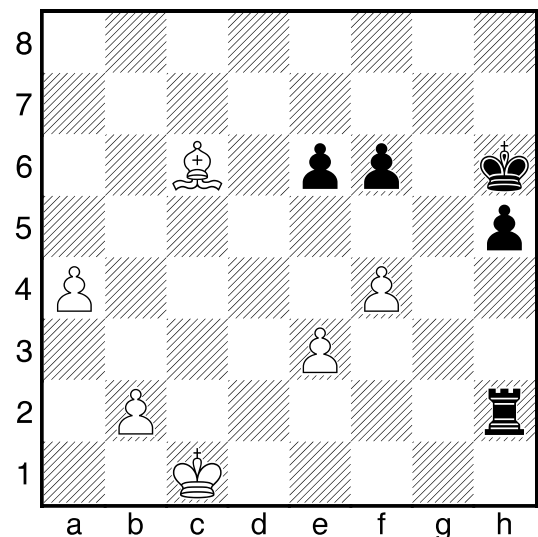
----- Position after 27... ♕g2 -----



28.♔e1 ♕h3!? Very ambitious. With little time on his clock Anand decides to go for the full point. [The natural move was 28...♕d5 and after 29.♔f1 if black wants to avoid the draw he can try ♖g2 The game remains very complicated, probably with equal chances. A sample variation: 30.♖a3 ♖h2 31.♖d2 ♖h4

32.♔e1 ♖h1 33.♔e2 ♖c7 34.♖c3 ♖f7 35.f5 ♔g7 36.♖f4 ♖h5 37.f3 e5 38.♖c7 ♔g8 39.♖c8 ♔g7 40.♖c7 and draw again!] **29.♖a3?!** Maybe this was the first mistake, as Kramnik pointed out at the press conference. [It was probably better 29.♖d1! , a very difficult move to find. Black can take the exchange after ♕g4?! (maybe better 29...♖g1 30.♔d2 ♖g2 31.♖e3 ♖f2 32.♕e2 ♖a5 33.♔c1 ♖c7 34.♔b1 ♖e2 35.♖e2 ♕f5 36.♔a2 ♕g4 37.♖d3 ♕d1 38.♖d1 ♖f4 39.a5) 30.♖e3! ♖e3 31.fe3 ♕d1 32.♔d1 ♖g2 33.♔c1! ♖h2 34.♕c6 .

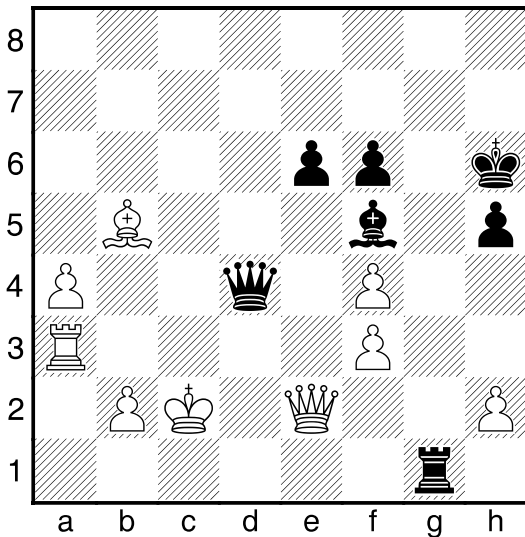
----- ANALYSIS BOARD -----



and here white would have more than enough compensation.] Back to the game: **29...♖g1 30.♔d2 ♖d4 31.♔c2 ♕g4?!** [Probably better was the natural 31...♕f5! **A)** If 32.♕d3 ♖g2! 33.♕f5 ♖f2 34.♕d3 ♖e2 35.♕e2 ♖f4 black is better; **B)** And after 32.♔b3 ♖c1! 33.a5 ♖d5! is very strong. (33...♖c2?! 34.♖c2 ♕c2 35.♔c2 ♖c5 36.♔b1 ♖b5 37.a6 and black must give perpetual check since after ♖d5 38.a7 ♖a8 39.♔a1 ♔g6 40.b4 he has no realistic options to win.) 34.♕c4 ♖b7 35.♔a4 ♖c2 36.♕a6 ♖d7 37.♖b5 ♖c4 38.♔b3 ♖d3 39.♔a2 ♖b1 40.♔b3 ♖c2 41.♔a2 ♖d4 42.♖b8 ♖b1 43.♔b3 ♖d1 44.♔c3 ♖d8 and black has a decisive attack; **C)** 32.♖d3!?! the best practical chance. ♖g2 33.♔b3 ♕d3 34.♖d3 ♖f2 35.♖c3 ♖f4 36.a5 ♖f2 and black is better] **32.f3?** [It was necessary to give the

exchange in order to get some peace for the white king. After 32.♖d3! ♕f5 33.♔b3 ♕d3 34.♕d3 black is probably slightly better but things are not easy.] 32...♕f5! Black is back on the driver's seat .

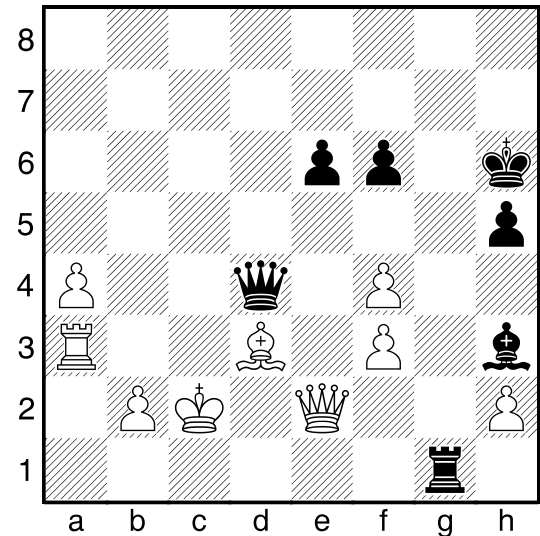
----- Position after 32... ♕f5 -----



So far we have witnessed a high class game from both players, but now it came... 33.♕d3? In a difficult position and with less than 5 minutes on his clock white makes a horrible mistake. A pity for Kramnik, specially after he reacted so well to his opponent's preparation. Tiredness, nerves, Kramnik only said after the game that he didn't like the alternatives. [The only hope was 33.♔b3 but after ♖c1! 34.a5 ♖d5! black gets a very strong attack. (Anand said after the game that he was considering also 34...e5 35.♖a4 ♖c5 but there is not a win for black: 36.♕c4! ♕c2 37.♖c2 ♖c2 38.♔c2 ♖f2 39.♔b3 ♖f3 40.♔a2 e4 41.a6 ♖c6 42.b3 ♖g2 43.♔a3 ♖f2 44.a7 ♖c5 with perpetual check.; 34...♖c2 35.♖c2 ♕c2 36.♔c2 ♖c5 37.♔b1 ♖b5 38.a6 and the draw is clear in this endgame, as we previously analysed.) 35.♕c4 ♖b7 and it looks like black should be winning. Some analysis: 36.♕b5 (36.♔a4 ♖c2 37.♕a6 ♖d7 38.♖b5 ♖c4 39.♔b3 ♖d3 40.♔a2 ♖b1 41.♔b3 ♖c2 42.♔a2 ♖d4 43.♖b8 ♖b1 44.♔b3 ♖d1 45.♔c3 ♖d8 with a decisive attack) 36...♖c2 37.a6 ♖b6 38.♖f1 ♖e3 39.♔a2 ♖d2 40.♖b3 ♖c1 and black is close to win; It is already late for

33.♖d3? ♕d3 34.♕d3 ♖a4 winning] 33...♕h3?! Black is still better after this, but this move shows that Anand was also a bit nervous. [It was much easier 33...♕d3! forcing the mate in a few moves: 34.♖d3 (34.♖d3 ♖g2 35.♔d1 ♖g1 and mate) 34...♖c4 35.♔d2 ♖c1# mate!].

----- Position after 33... ♕h3 -----



34.a5? The last mistake, now it's over. [White could fight much more with 34.♖d2 ♖g2 35.♕e2 Black is much better but he needs to find some precise moves: ♕f5 36.♔c1 ♖g1! 37.♖d1 ♖h2! and black must be winning.] 34...♖g2 Black takes the queen and white is not in time to promote his a pawn. 35.a6 [If 35.♖g2 ♕g2 36.♕e4 ♕f1 winning] 35...♖e2 36.♕e2 ♕f5 37.♔b3 [If 37.♔c1 ♖f4 38.♔d1 ♖d4 black is easily winning, for example: 39.♔e1 (39.♔c1 ♖e5!) 39...♖g1 40.♔d2 ♖b1] 37...♖e3 38.♔a2 ♖e2 39.a7 ♖c4 40.♔a1 ♖f1 41.♔a2 ♕b1 A fantastic fight!

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