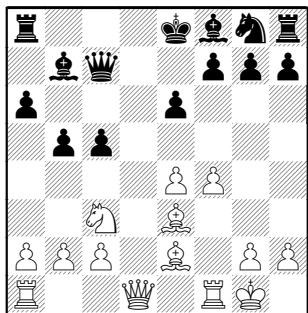


(77) Kramnik,V (2770) –
 Leko,P (2743)
 Cologne TV 2000
 Informator 79/151
 [Variations by Kramnik,V]



Examining this position for the first time we notice one exceptionally important detail: all four black pieces on the kingside are still standing on their starting positions. And our first thought is to mate such a "brave" king! But how to do it? We map out three main directions:

1) to try and prevent Black from castling;

2) to try and prevent his normal development;

3) to try to open up the position and to win the game with a direct attack on the black king, most likely involving sacrifices.

The conclusion after the first two paragraphs is to immediately cause Black some serious problems; the point is to NOT GIVE HIM TIME to castle and develop his pieces!

As for paragraph number three: how to open up the position? Of course with the move **11 f5!**

11 ♕f3 ±

a) 11...b4!/? 12 ♖a4 (12 ♖e2)

♗f6;

b) 11...♗f6 12 e5 ♜d8 13 ♞e2↑

11...♞d8N

1) 11...b4?! 12 fxe6 fxe6 13 ♕f4 ± ♞c6 14 ♕h5+ g6 15 ♕e5 bxc3 16 ♕xh8 +–;

2) 11...♗f6?! 12 fxe6 fxe6 13 ♕h5+ ♗xh5 14 ♞xh5+ g6 15 ♞g4 ±;

3) 11...♕d6!/? 12 fxe6

A) 12...♕xh2+?! 13 ♖h1 fxe6

A1) 14 ♕xb5+ axb5 15 ♞h5+ g6 16 ♞xh2 ♞xh2+ 17 ♖xh2 ± b4 18 ♗b5;

A2) 14 ♗xb5!/? ♞e5□;

A3) 14 ♕h5+ g6 15 ♕g4;

B) 12...fxe6 13 ♕h5+ g6 14 ♕g4 ↑

12 ♞e1 ♗f6

Black will succeed in developing his kingside minor pieces, but he won't have time for castling...

12...♕d6 13 fxe6 (13 ♞h4↑) fxe6 14 ♞h4↑

13 fxe6

"To take is first, especially..."

13 ♕f4 e5 14 ♕g5 c4⇌

13...fxe6 14 ♕f4!

Do you see? The move 11 f4–f5 has not only disturbed the black king's position but, as usual, has given White the f–file for the rook and the square f4 for the bishop. We had already seen these ideas in the previous games!

14 e5!/? ♞xe5 15 ♕f4 ♞d4+ 16 ♖h1

14...e5

This was a very important move: now the black king is even more naked than before!

a) 14...♕d6? 15 e5;

b) 14...♞c6 15 ♕f3 ±

15 ♕g5

Each move – a new problem!

15...♙e7 16 a4!

And now a very typical blow on the weakened queenside!

16 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 17 ♙h5+ ♗e7 ±

16...c4

○16...b4 17 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 18 ♜d5 ♙xd5 19 exd5 ± ♗d6

a) 20 ♙h5+!? g6 21 ♙g4;

b) 20 ♙c4 0-0 21 ♗e4 a5;

c) 20 a5 0-0 21 ♙c4 e4□

17 axb5 axb5 18 ♗h1 b4

a) 18...♗b6 19 ♗g3 (19 ♙e3 ♙c5) 0-0 20 ♗xe5 ±;

b) 18...0-0 19 ♜xb5 ♗c6 20 ♗c3±

19 ♖xf6 ♖xf6 20 ♜d5!

White is not afraid of a position with opposite-colored bishops. On the contrary! Opposite-colored bishops are advantageous for the attacker. It looks like he has one piece more in his attack! Why? There are two reasons for this:

a) the attacker's bishop won't have an opponent on its way, therefore it will be the only master on the squares of the same colour;

b) it is possible to create positions where there will be more attackers than defenders.

Moreover, the bishop on f6 very slightly differs from a pawn in these circumstances.

20 ♙h5+ ♗e7 21 ♜d5+ ♙xd5

a) 22 ♗xb4+ ♗d6 23 ♖a7+ ♖d7 24 ♖xd7+ ♗xd7 ±;

b) 22 exd5 ♖d6!? 23 ♗xb4 ♖b8 24 ♗a3

20...♙xd5 21 exd5 ♗c5

21...0-0 22 ♗xb4 +

22 ♙h5+

Here is the extra piece in the

attack!

22 ♖a6!? Δ22...0-0 23 ♖c6

22...♗e7

The first two paragraphs of our plan have been fulfilled: the black king has lost the right to castle, and both the bishop and the rook on h8 are effectively out of play.

23 ♗g3!

White has some good options at this point. V.Kramnik preferred the third of the directions mentioned above, thus creating a brilliant example of attacking an uncastled king!

23 ♙f3 ±

23...g6?

1) 23...♗xd5? 24 ♖xf6 +;

2) 23...♖hg8□ 24 ♖a6!? (24 ♙f3±)

A) 24...♖d6 25 ♖xf6!

A1) 25...♗xf6 26 ♗f3+ ♗g5 27 h4+ ♗h6 28 ♖xd6+ ♗xd6 29 ♙f7 g6 30 ♙xg8 +;

A2) 25...gxf6 26 ♗xg8 ♖xa6 27 ♗e8+ ♗d6 28 ♗d8#;

A3) 25...♖xf6 26 ♗xe5+ ♗d8 27 ♖a8+ ♗d7 28 ♙g4+;

B) 24...♗xd5 25 ♙g4!→ ♖d6 26 ♖a7+

24 ♖xf6!

Who said that V.Kramnik doesn't like to attack? And he is playing in this game, not against a weak grandmaster, but against one of the strongest in the world! The smallest inaccuracy can turn into catastrophe.

Incidentally, a typical "**blow back**"! Black attacked the bishop, but White struck a stronger blow.

And once again (for the last time!) let me remind you that once there used to be a pawn on f4. Do you like

the position without this pawn? In this way great prospects have opened up for the white pieces!

24...♔xf6 25 ♖f1+

In the place of one rook appears another one, and the black king is doomed now. White's attack is so swift that Black finds no single tempo to help his own king.

25...♔g7

25...♔e7 26 ♜xe5+ ♔d7 27 ♙g4#

26 ♙xg6!

What can one say here? Wonderful!

26 ♜xe5+ ♔h6 27 ♙xg6 ♜xd5

26...hxg6□

a) 26...♞hf8 27 ♙f7+ ♔h8 28 ♜xe5# Dembo;

b) 26...♞d6 27 ♙xh7+ ♔xh7 28 ♖f7+ ♔h6 29 ♜g7+ ♔h5 30 ♖f5+ ♔h4 31 ♜g3# Dembo

27 ♜xe5+

The queen begins pursuing the black king and the remaining white rook comes to its help.

27...♔g8

27...♔h6 28 ♖f4! ♔g5 29 ♜f6+ ♔h5 30 ♜f7+ ♔h6 31 ♖f6#

28 ♜e6+ ♔h7 29 ♖f7+ ♔h6 30 ♜h3+ ♔g5 31 ♜g3+ ♔h5 32 ♜e5+!

g5

32...♔h6 33 ♖f4 +—

33 ♖g7

A beautiful game and an even more beautiful finish!

1-0