



**(c) 6... Nc6 7 Nc3 d6-  
Waterloo**

Very simple, very dangerous  
-WRONG!

With fierce determination, first by surprise, then by exploiting a weak reaction, the Miami Variation System works the sands of analysis into pearls.

**8 Qh5!**

“This came out of the blue. I had expected 8 Qe2, but now face the mortal blow, 9 Qxf7. White provokes premature weakness rather than immediate development of pieces, however awkward.” - Acers

Again recall the danger for the defense - the desire to “get creative” (-A. Yermolinsky, *The Road to Chess Improvement*.)

- 8...Qe7? 9 Nd5 +- 8...Qf6? 9 Nd5 +- IDEA(9...Qd8? 10Nb6! +-)
- 8...Be6?! 9 Bxe6 g6 10 Bxf7+ Kxf7 11 Qe2 ± leaving Black’s King in shaky quarters following 11...Qd7 12 Nd5 Kg7 13 f4! N8e7 14 0-0-0 Rhe8 (Laven-Acers, test game 2002)
- 8...Qd7 (best under the circumstances) 9 Nd5 N8e7 10 NXL7+ (9...Nf6 10 Qg5 is hard to meet) where White can now play 9 Nf6+ gxf6 10 Qxf7+ Kd8 11 Qxf6 Re8 12 Bf7 with advantage in both cases. It is a matter of chess arrogance even to consider...

**8...g6?**

“A chess player must learn to suffer.” - GM Paul Keres

Indefensible weakening of the King’s wing. A pawn plus with a solid defense in prospect was not enough for Black. He must now live with danger, creating good positional compensation for White,

already justifying the Queen sortie, filling the board with weak squares where there were none - h6 and f6 are now huge holes.

It is never too late to prepare for the future...

Most people do not like to lose games and take defeat badly. People who want to improve should take their defeats as lessons, and endeavor to learn what to avoid in the future. *Nothing is so healthy as a thrashing at the proper time*, and from few won games have I learned as much from most of my defeats. Of course, I would not like to be beaten at a critical moment, but otherwise, I hope that I may at odd times in the future lose a few more games, if thereby, I derive as much benefit as I have obtained from defeats in the past... There have been times in my life when I came very near thinking that I could not lose even a single game. Then I would be beaten, and the lost game would bring me back from dreamland, to earth.

- J.R. Capablanca, Havana, Cuba, *My Chess Career*, 1920.



**9 Qe2 Be6 (diagram)**

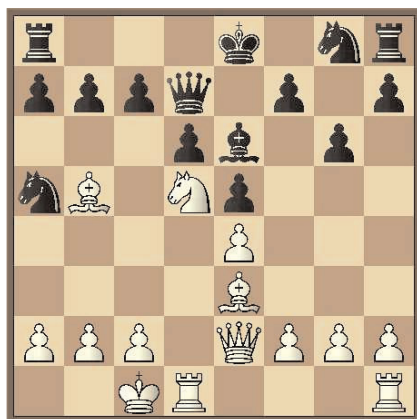
Played with prayer. 10 Nd5? Nd4! uses the extra pawn as a foothold for survival. 11...c6 is coming, promptly evicting the errant horse, of course. - Acers

**10 0-0-0 Qd7**

Black recognized 10...Bxc4 11 Qxc4 Nge7 12 Bg5 Qd7 was a difficult defense. However I should have considered playing it.

**11 Nd5 Na5**

Again second best. 11...Nce7 12 Bg5 Bxd5 attempts to hold both position and pawn. Not 12...c6? 13 Nxe7 Nxe7 14 Bf6 Rg8 15 Bxe5 ± Blockade is the idea.



**12 Bb5!?**

“Attempting to destroy Black’s unbroken wall of pawns, but instead 12 Bd3 (!) ± leaves the N dangling”  
- Laven

The alert reader will also note that White is playing the “House of Stone” formation.

**12...c6?**

“There comes a time in every chess player’s life when one must eat a little crow.” - GM Yasser Seirawan

Here 12...Nc6 (sitting tight) was the better alternative, whether Black liked it or not. 13 Bh6?! Bxd5 14 Bg7 Be6 (the idea overlooked) 15 Bxh8 f6 - leaving the Bishop on h8 forever, with counterplay.

**13 Bd2! Bxd5**

Naturally White’s mighty connected pieces “do not care” how the position is opened - 13...b6 14 Bxa5 bxa5 15 Ba4± or 14...cxb5 15 Bb4+-

**14 exd5 cxb5 15 Bxa5**

White’s advantage sweeps the board. King safety, superior pawn structure, lead in development, strong Bishop versus dormant Knight. There is much more to come.

**15...f6 16 f4 b6 17 Bc3 Ne7 18 g4! h6**

The alternative was 18...0-0-0 19 g5

**19 Rhf1 0-0-0 20 h4 Rdf8 21 fxe5 fxe5**



**22Rxf8+ Rxf8 23 Bd2!**

To establish a distant outside passed pawn on the King's wing after 23...Nxd5 24 Bxh6 Rh8 25 Bg5 with h5 to follow if needed. Also strong is 24 Qe4 - centralization with penetration by the Queen.

**23...Ng8**

On 23...Rh8 24 Qe4 with the general plan of 25 Rf1, 26 Rf6, 27 Bb4 and so on (-Acers); 23...Rh8 24 Qe4 Qc7! 25 Rf1(?) Qc4 ♯ where the general plan meets up with specific obstacles at the moment. It seems the best White has after 23...Rh8 is 24 Qf3 planning 25 Qf6, though here too, the edge is dissipating. (-Laven)

**24 Rg1 a6 25 Qd3 Qf7 26 a4! Qf3**

“Black stays very active. It was impossible to foresee the remarkable continuation that keeps the attack burning, especially from a “hit and miss” opponent that had never shown such ability in key games before. It was fabulous to watch unfold.” - Acers

**27 Qxg6 Qxd5 28 Be3! Qf3 29 Bxb6**

Even 29 Re1± can be played.

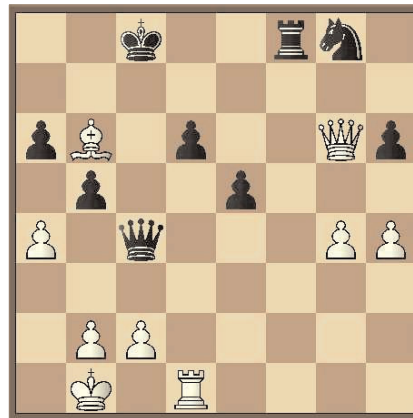
**29...Qf4+ 30 Kb1 Qc4**

Black counters and will exchange Rooks with a draw, or mate after 31 Qxd6? Rf1+. Here 31 axb5 was expected. Both Laven and I likewise noticed 31...axb5 32 Qxd6? Rf1+ 33 Rxf1 + Qxf1

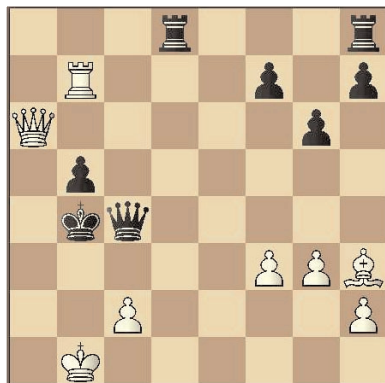
34 Ka2 Qc4+ draw. Real progress for White after 31 g5 hxg5 32 hxg5 Ne7 or 32...e4 was an all-consuming analysis. Certainly no unforgettable moment was expected from the Laven entourage. It was THE moment in the entire *Italian Gambit* project.

**31 Rd1!! (diagram)**

“Pure computer analysis recommended 31 axb5, and was all but insistent in playing it. 31 Rd1 was recommended somewhere on the pecking order. Laven liked it. This amateur was sticking with basics - Rooks belong on open files, and it was clear. The d-file was soon to be a wide-open highway. A full day of test runs to prove a point, and 31 Rd1!! was delivered at the “speed of light” through cyberspace to the awaiting chess master.” - Laven



In another world, deep in the night Jude Acers frowned, reached for a postcard, penned 31...Rf1 as planned in all events, returned to reviewing Pirc Defense games for recommendations as White (Book II), with Kasparov’s nineteen pages of remarks on his desk. Acers looked at the diagram: “Game of the Century” Wijk Aan Zee, Holland 1999.

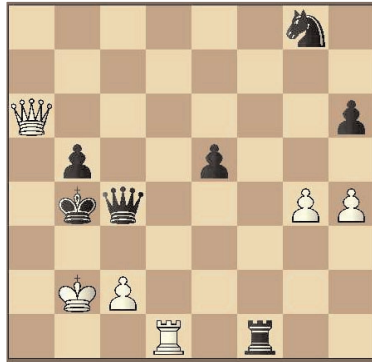


The World #1 played 33 c3+ Kxc3  
34 Qa1+ Kd2 35 Qb2+ Kd1 36 Bf1!!+-  
(Look at the key variation for practice)  
turn off the light, good night.

3 a.m. Blindfold chess...

Suddenly I realize that Laven can force Black’s King to b4. Can White just move Kb2 with Kasparov’s mating threats? Seized with fear...

*My God, White’s Team is actually trying to mate me right now!*

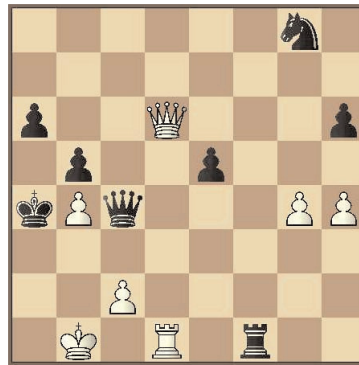


How dare they! the lights go ablaze as the line is checked by chess set. (Diagram)

Ah. Black plays 1...Qc3+ winning. False alarm. Good night.

Then Acers saw it! What if White does not cooperate, not driving Black's King to b4, but leaving it on a4? Back on went the lights.

White to move, (diagram) wins. 38 Kb2!! suddenly Black must protect his Rook while facing the instant threat 39 Qxa6+ Kxb4 40 Qa3 mate. Unbelievably, there is only 38...a5 39 Rxf1 Qxf1 40 Qc7!! Faced with checkmate (41 Qxa5) Black sees at last 40...Kxb4 41 Qc3 Ka4 42 Qa3 mate. This is not good. Acers now carefully examined the postcard to be mailed at dawn's early light. 31...Rf1 32 Qe8+ Kb7 33 Qd7+ Kxb6 Tragic but forced. 33...Kb8 permits the exchange of Queens, losing the Rf1 after 34 Qc7+! or mate. 34 a5+! only now revealing precisely why Laven adamantly refused to ever play axb5 - the Pawn is an extra Bishop or Queen in the attack. Never give it away. 34...Kxa5 (34...Kc5 35 Qxd6 mate) 35 Qd8+! Kb4 36 Qxd6+ Ka5 37 b4+ winning in all variations 37...Ka4 (diagram!) And then it hits - even White's last move is not required. 37 Qd8+ Kb4 38 Qd2+ mates immediately or removes Black's Queen. Computer revenge *extraordinaire*. Ten sprightly moves deep. Speechless, I could not even reply for five days." - Acers



**31...Nf6 32 Rxd6 Qf1+ 33 Ka2**

The end is near.

**33...Qf4 34 b3 e4 35 Bc5 Qc1 36 Rc6+ Resigns 1-0**