

Subject: Australia makes winning start to Chess Olympiad

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Australia makes winning start to Chess Olympiad

By Paul Power, Australian Chess Federation, from Budapest

Australia won both Open and Women's matches in round 1 of the 45th Chess Olympiad starting today in Budapest, Hungary.

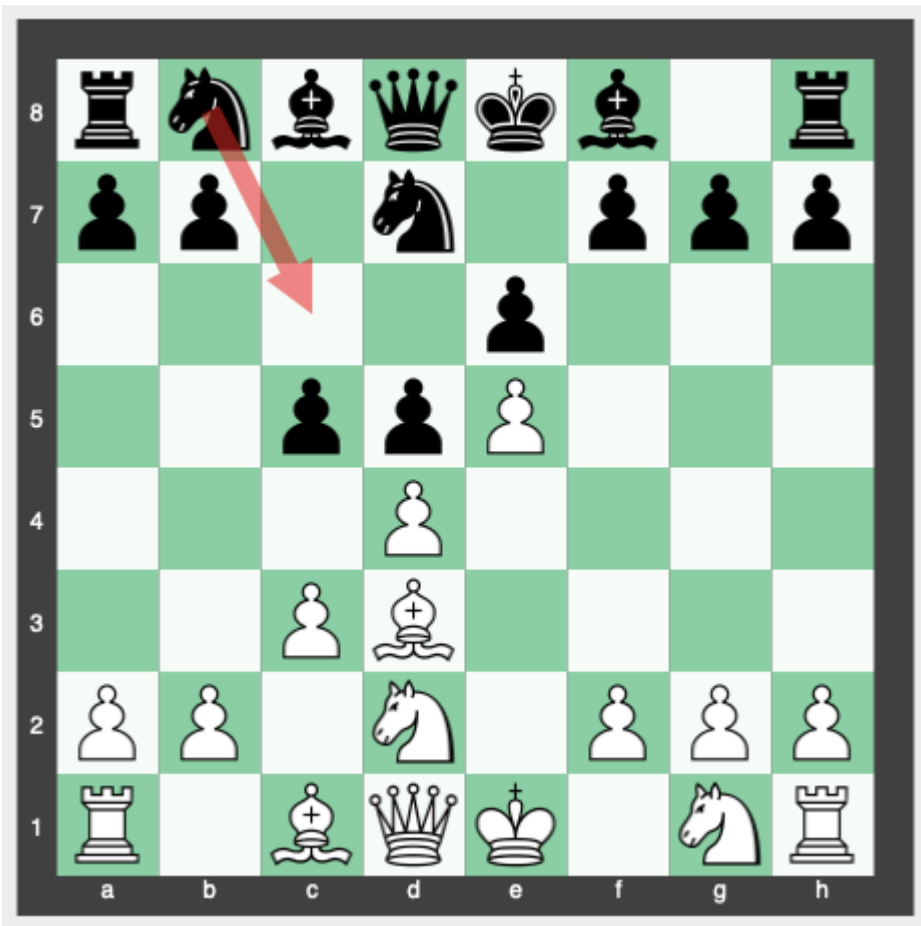
Almost 200 nations are competing for the premium teams event held every two years by the chess peak body, FIDE (Fédération Internationale des Échecs).

Australia's Open and Women's teams bring youth and experience to this Olympiad, with David Smerdon and Giang Nguyen returning for their eighth Olympiads and current Australian Champion, Rishi Sardana, and Zhiyuan Shen and Alaina Vincent playing their first.

Playing board 3 for the Women's team, Zhiyuan Shen (White)

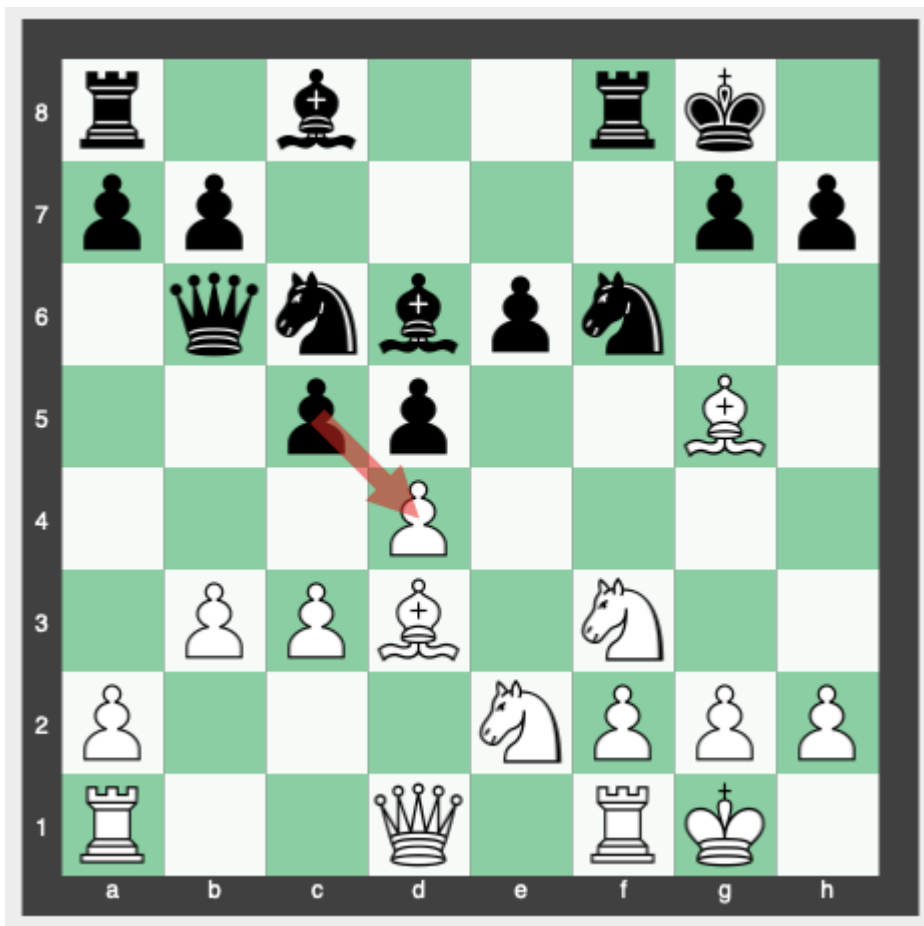


met a French Defence from Fazreena Hussein of Brunei, reaching the same position after 6 ...Nc6 as Carlsen v Ponomarev, World Blitz Championship, 2010



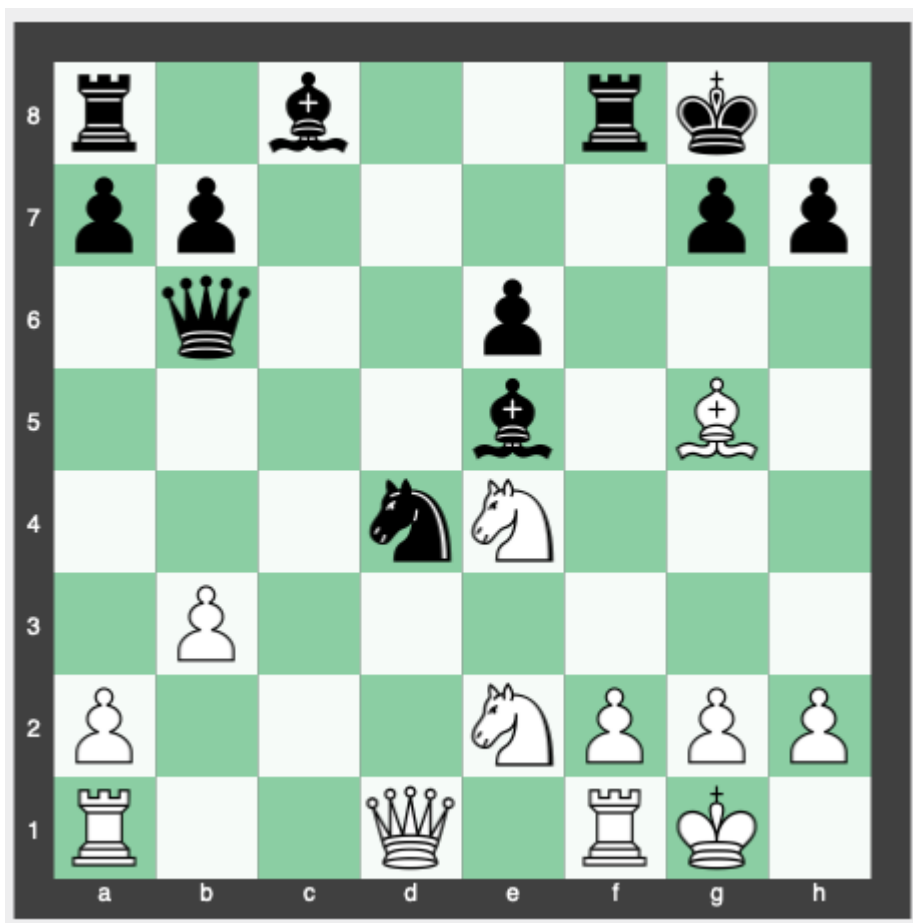
where Carlsen continued 7. Nf3; Zhiyuan Shen chose 7. Ne2

A critical position occurred after 12. b3, where 12... cxd4 preserves the balance.



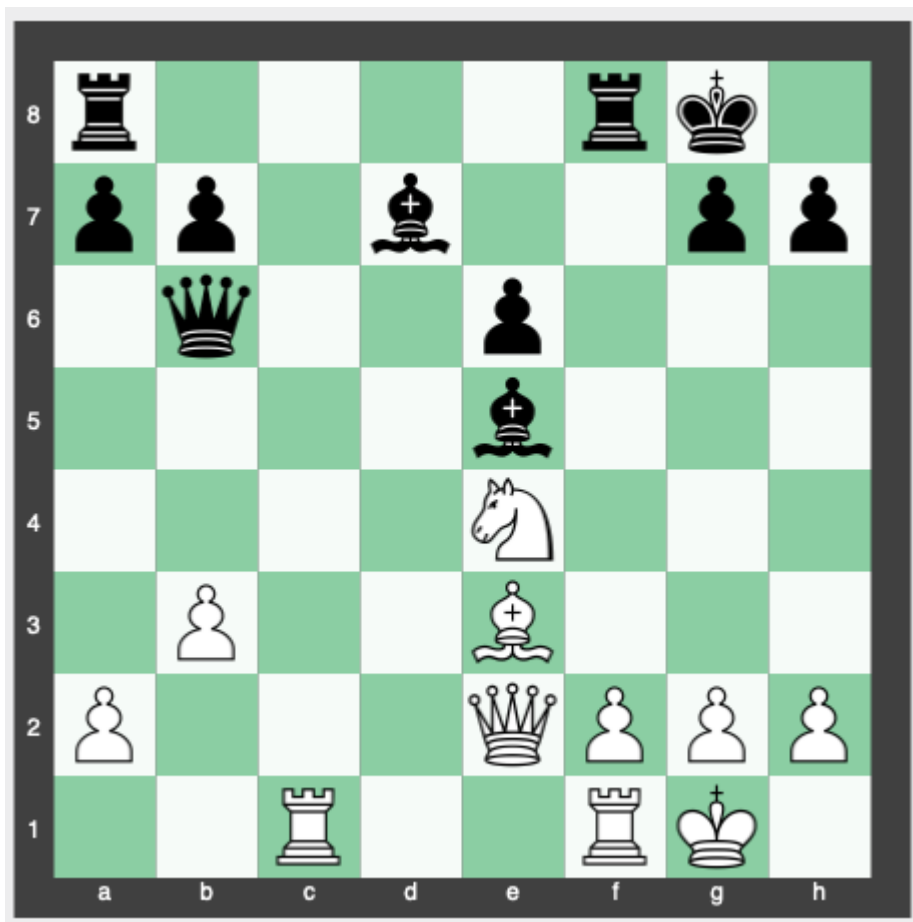
But, instead, Fazreena Hussein played 12... Ne4

There followed 12... Ne4 13. Bxe4 dxe4 14. Nd2 cxd4 15. Nxe4 Be5 16. cxd4 Nxd4



And Black is saddled with a weakened pawn structure, with the isolated pawn on e6 and is behind in development.

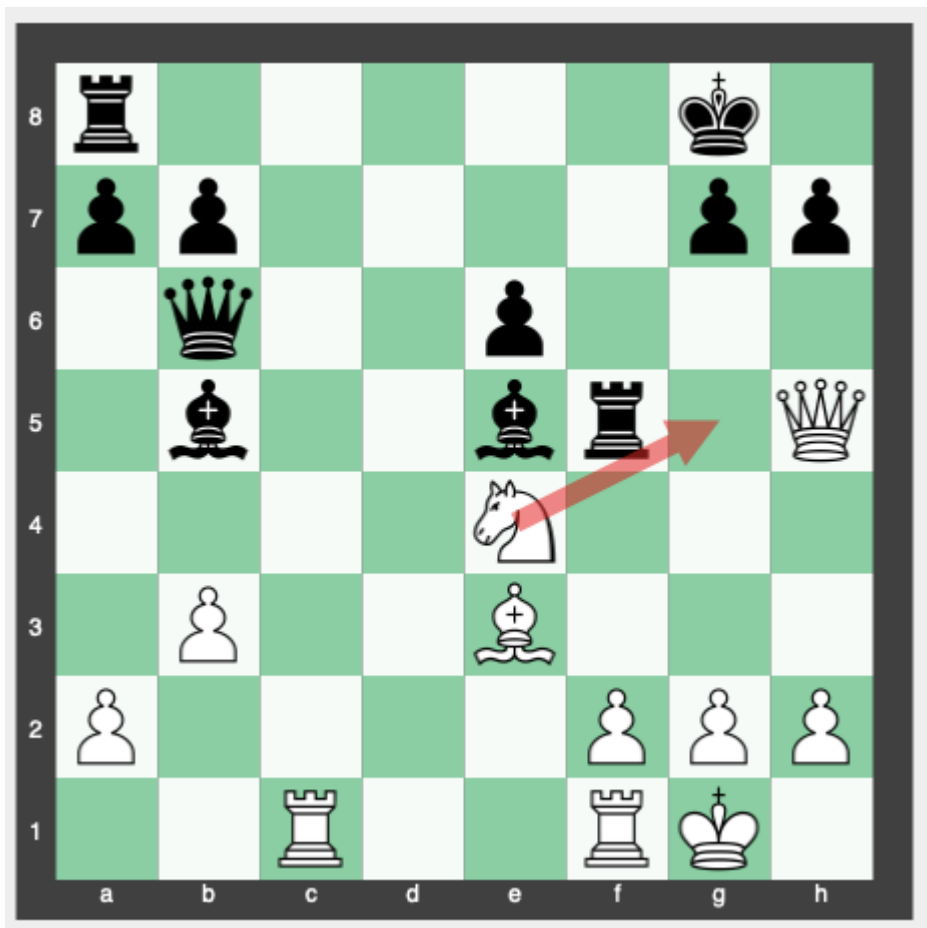
After 19. Be3



White maintains the initiative.

(Even stronger was 19. Nc5 Bb5 20. Qxe5 Bxf1 21. Kxf1 Rae8)

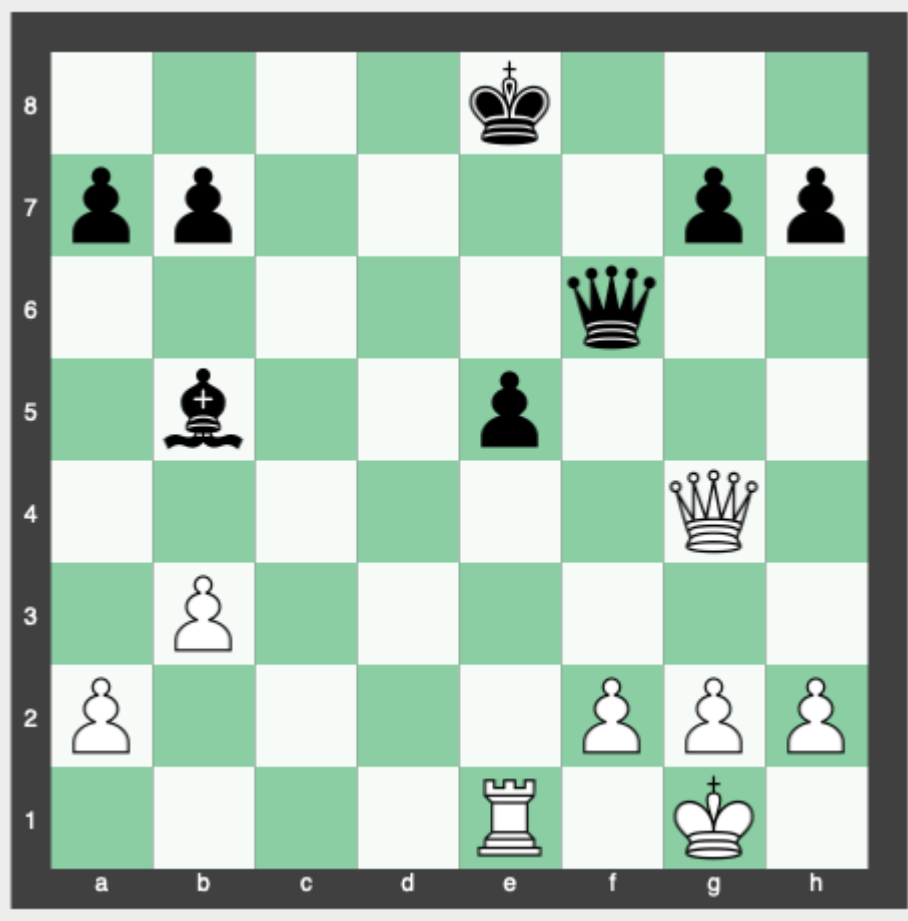
There followed 19... Bb5 20. Qh5 Rf5 21. Ng5



Attacking Black's Queen and Black King's vulnerable position.

Black minimised the damage with 21... R_xg5 but at the cost of losing the Exchange of Rook for Knight, which proved decisive.

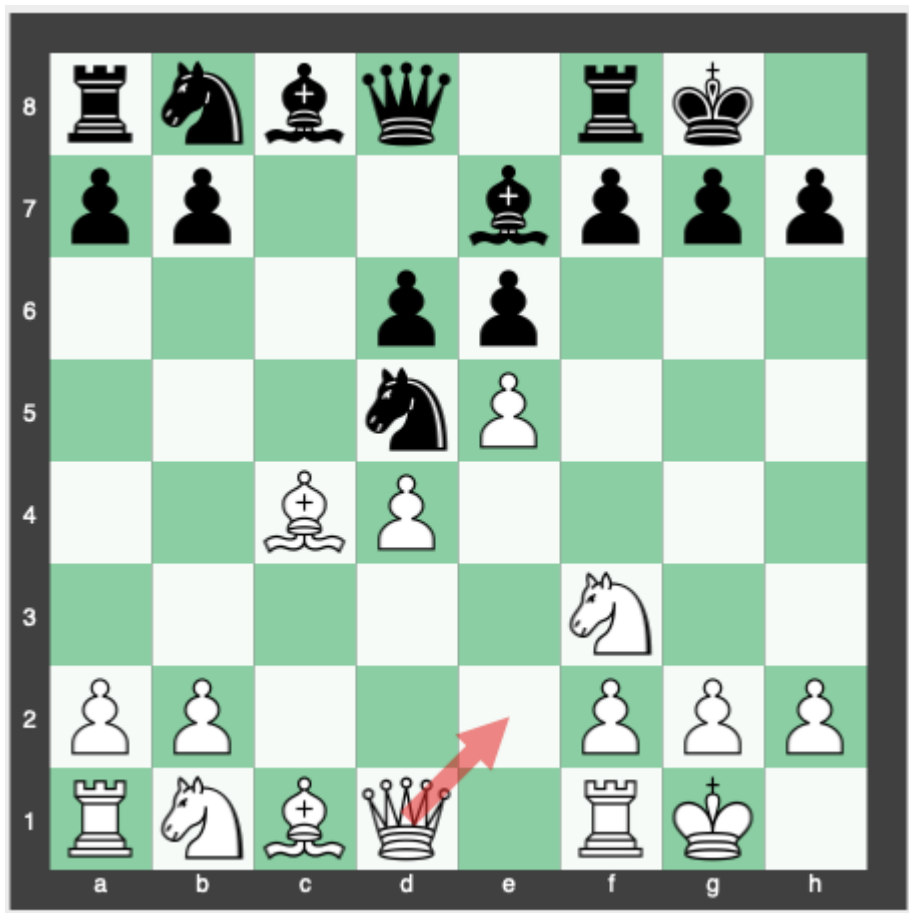
Shen finished cleanly, with Hussin resigning after 28... K_xe8



Playing board 4 for the Open team, David Smerdon (White)

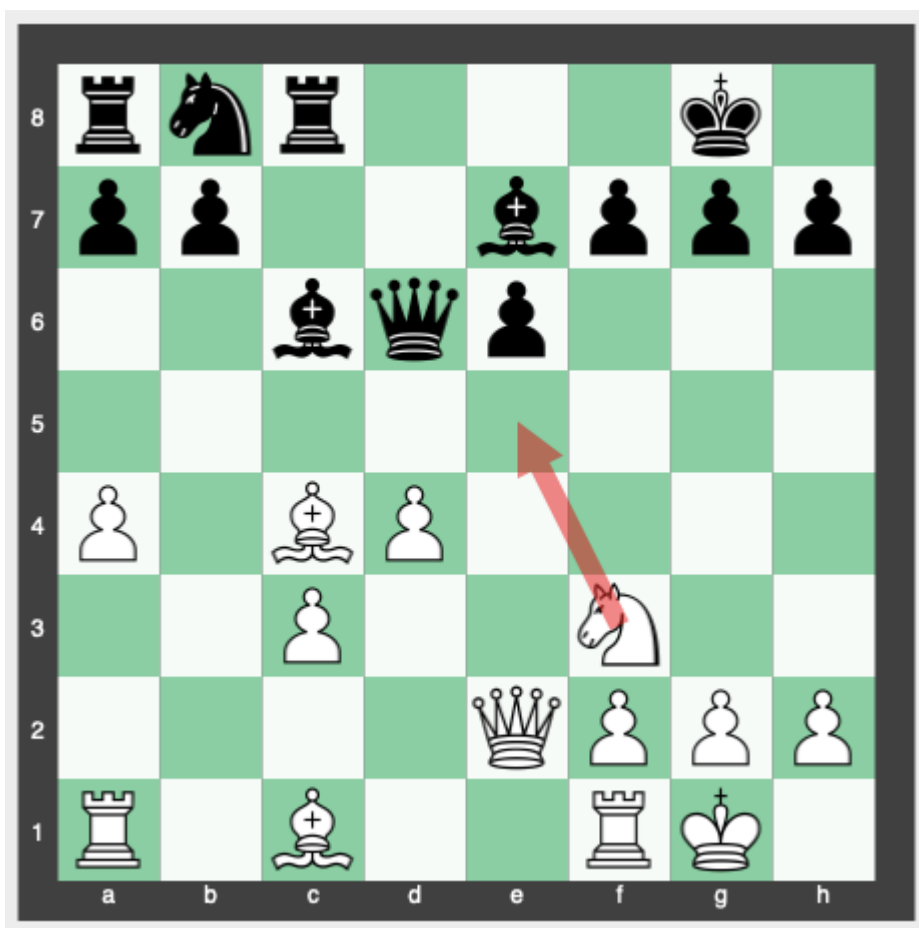


played his favourite Alapin (2. c3) against the Sicilian of Saudi Arabia's Zeyad Saleh Al Abdali, reaching the same position, after 9. Qe2, as Carlsen-Duda, Aimchess US Rapid, 2021



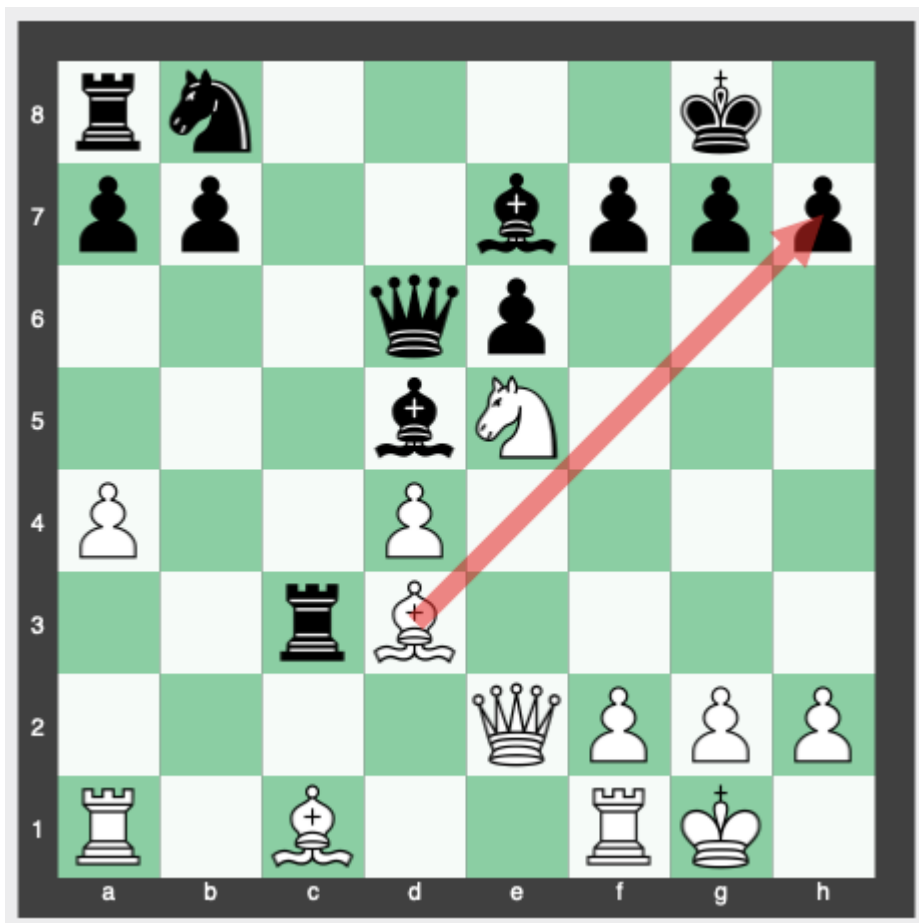
where Duda played 9... b6; Al Abdali chose 9... Bd7

After 13... Rc8, Smerdon seized the initiative with 14. Ne5

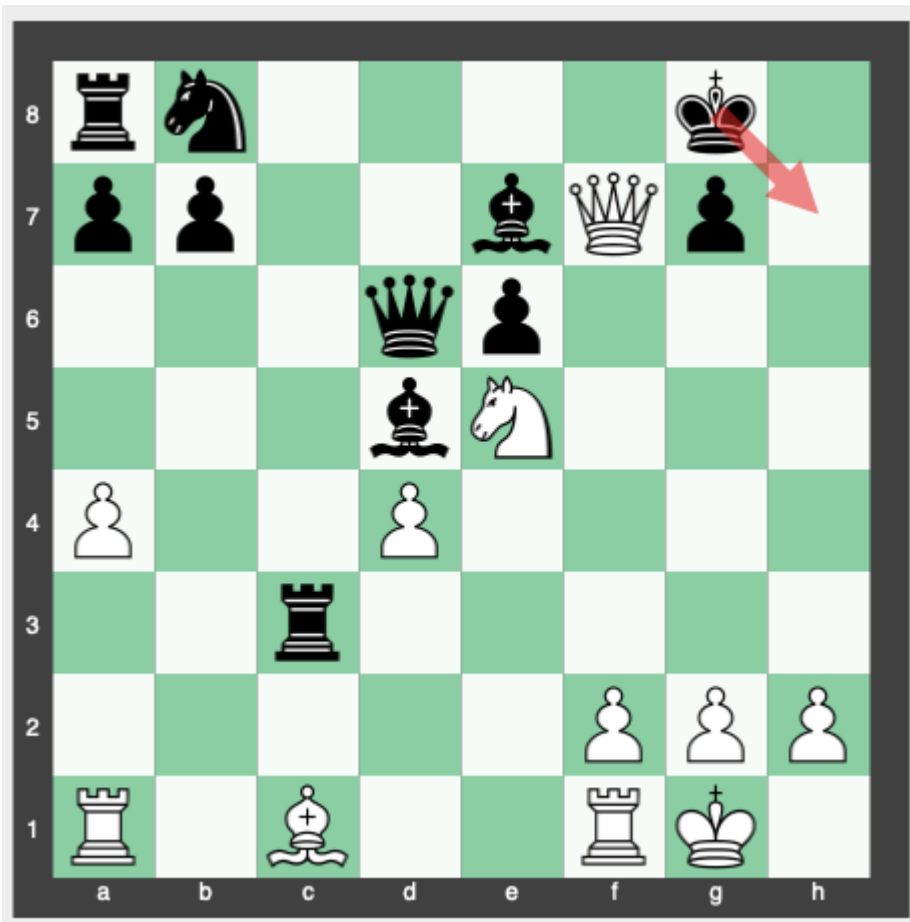


There followed 14... Bd5 15. Bd3 Rxc3

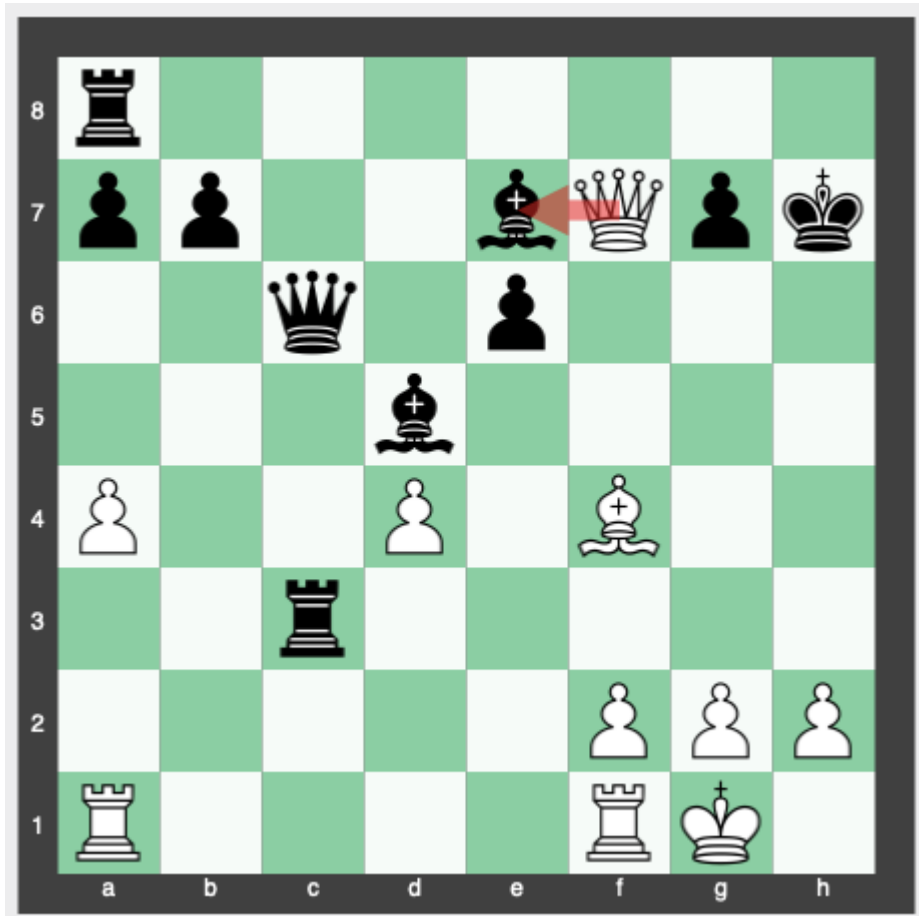
And Smerdon pounced with 16. Bxh7+



There followed 16... Kxh7 17. Qh5+ Kg8 18. Qxf7+ Kh7

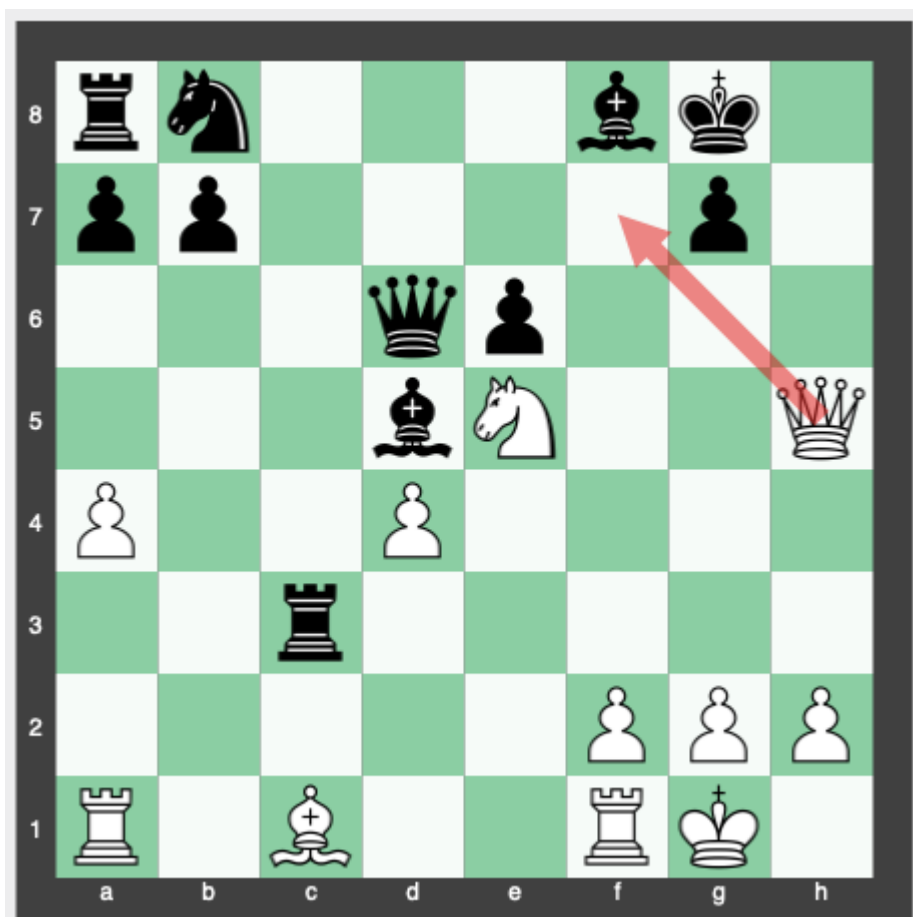


There followed 19. Bf4 Nc6 20. Nxc6 Qxc6 21. Qxe7 recovering the sacrificed Bishop.



(But stronger was continuing the attack 19. Qh5+ Kg8 20. Qe8+ Bf8 21. Qf7+ Kh7 22. Qh5+

Kg8 23. Qf7+ (Not immediately 23. Nf7 Qe7 24. Ng5 g6 25. Qxg6+ Qg7)



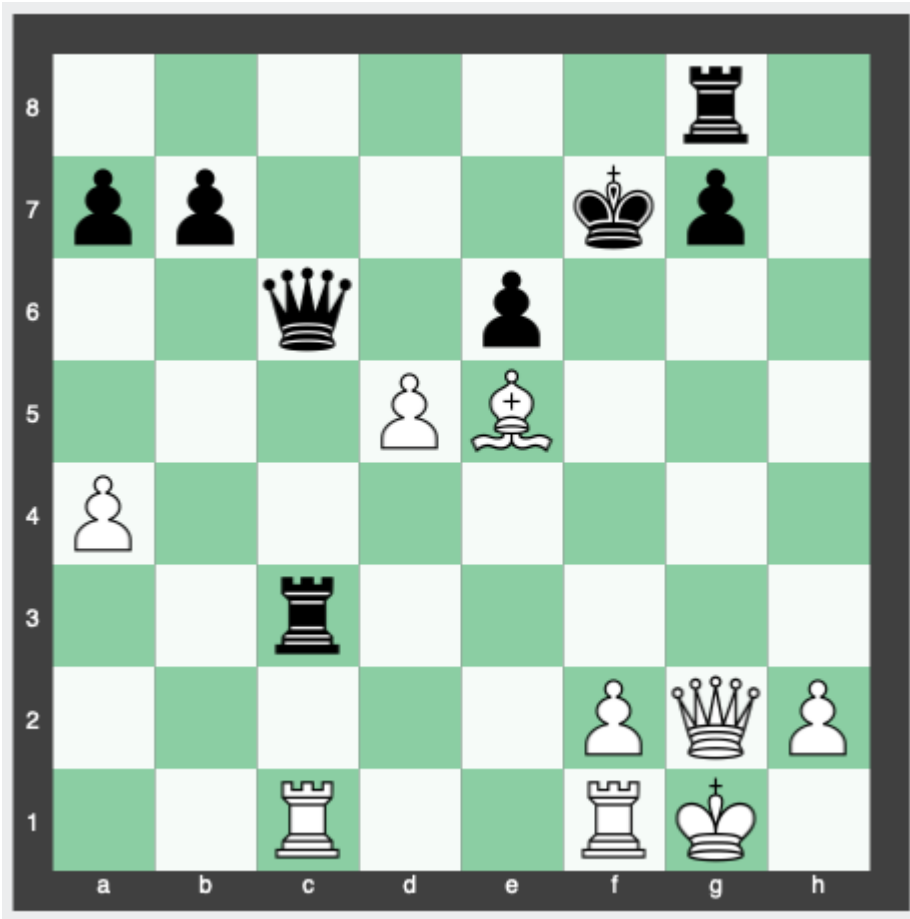
23... Kh7 (23... Kh8 24. Ng6+ Kh7 25. Nxf8+)

so now 24. Qg6+! immobilising the g-pawn 24... Kg8 25. Nf7, with the threat of Ng5 winning.)

21. Qxe7 arrived at a critical position, but only because of Black's reply 21... Bxg2 (Correct was 21... Qe8, bringing the Queen to the defence of the g7 square.)

Once again Smerdon pounced, with 22. Be5 then 22... Rg8 (forced) 23. Qh4+ Kg6 24. Qg4+ Kf7 25. Qxg2, netting a whole Bishop.

Black resigned on 27. d5



Australia's round 1 results are

Open

37	Saudi Arabia	-	Australia
●	Alrehaili Ahmed Abdullah S	1-0	● Cheng Bobby
●	Al Thebaiti Ahmed M	0-1	● Sardana Rishi
●	Alshnaiber Yazeed	0-1	● Zhao Zong-Yuan
●	Al Abdali Zeyad Saleh	0-1	● Smerdon David C

Women

46	Australia	-	Brunei Darussalam
●	Ryjanova Julia	1-0	● Pg Hj Janudin Dk Siti Haziqah
●	Zhang Jilin	1-0	● Saiful Azmi Nur Farzana
●	Shen Zhiyuan	1-0	● Hussin Fazreena
●	Vincent Alaina	1-0	● Zakaria Liyana

The Olympiad runs 11 to 23 September marking the 100th anniversary of FIDE.



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