

New Mexico Champions - Peter Cook

Peter Cook won the New Mexico Championship in 1967. I have ten games played by Peter in my New Mexico Champion database - all against me. No, we didn't play here in New Mexico. We played in the Washington, DC area where we both lived for many years.

Peter's play is classical in a strategic sense, but he always played to avoid normal lines. You never knew what you were going to get when you played him. The following, played on the Arlington Chess Club Ladder, is a good example. He doesn't really do anything. He seems to wait to see what I am going to do. The result? I become impatient and make one weakening pawn move after another - leading directly to his win.

Cook, Peter - Grinberg, Matthew M., 1:0
Arlington Chess Club Ladder
Arlington, Virginia, 3/7/1986

Torre Attack

1. d4 This is only the second time Peter played 1. d4 against me. **1... e6** I deviate from my usual 1... Nf6. At the time I was toying with playing the French Defense and hoped he would answer with 2. e4. **2. Nf3 Nf6 3. Bg5** The Torre Attack

[After 3. c4 b6 we have something normal - the Queen's Indian Defense]

3... h6 4. Bh4 c5 5. e3 cxd4 6. exd4 Nc6 Perhaps not bad, but it is rarely played.

[The usual move is 6... Be7 7. Bd3 O-O 8. c3 b6 9. Qe2 Bb7 10. Nbd2 Nc6 11. Bxf6 Bxf6 12. O-O-O g6 13. h4 Bg7 14. Kb1 Ne7 15. Ne4 Nd5 16. Qd2 d6 17. Bc2 Rc8 18. Rde1 Re8 19. Rh3 b5 20. h5 f5 21. hxg6 fxe4 22. Bxe4 Qf6 23. Nh2 b4 24. Ng4 Qg5 25. Qxg5 hxg5 26. Nh6 Bxh6 27. Rxh6 Bc6 28. Rh7 a5 29. c4 Nf4 30. Bxc6 Rxc6 31. b3 d5 32. cxd5 Nxd5 33. Reh1 Rec8 34. g4 R8c7 35. Rh8 Kg7 36. R1h7 Kf6 37. Rh1 Nf4 38. Rf8 Kxg6 39. Rg8 Kf6 40. Rf8 Kg7 41. Rfh8 Ng6 42. Ra8 Rf7 43. Rxa5 Rf4 44. Rd1 Kf6 45. Rb5 Ne7 0-1, Sokolov Ivan (NED) 2630 - Karpov Anatoly (RUS) 2775 , Linares 1995 It (cat.17)]

7. Nbd2 Be7 8. c3 O-O 9. Bd3 a6!? I ambitiously play for space on the queenside.

[But either 9... b6;
or 9... d6 would be safer]

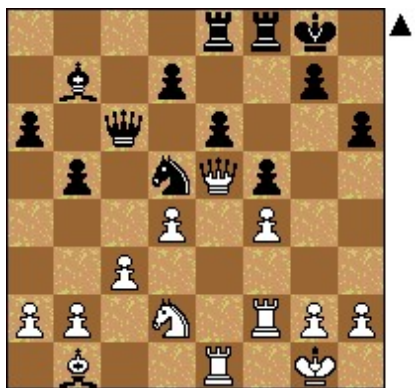
10. O-O b5 11. Qe2 Qb6 12. Ne5!? Peter misses the chance to exploit my over aggressive play.

[12. a4! bxa4 13. Nc4 Qc7 14. Rxa4 The weak a-pawn gives White the edge]

12... Nd5 13. Bxe7 Nxe7 14. f4 f6 Yes, it is good to push back the knight, but 14... d6 looks safer. **15. Ng4 f5 16. Ne3**

[Not 16. Ne5?? d6 17. Nef3 Nxf4 18. Qe3 Ned5 winning the bishop. Evidently this is what I had in mind when playing f6 followed by f5, but Peter is too sharp to fall for that]

16... Bb7 17. Rae1 Rae8 18. Bb1 Qd6 19. Nxd5 Nxd5 20. Qe5 Qc6 21. Rf2



21... g5? Black (not me) mistakenly thinks he has the better game and plays to open the kingside with the idea of opening the g-file to coordinate his rooks with the queen and bishop to attack White's king.

[A more careful approach is called for. 21... Qb6 22. Bc2 Rc8=]

22. fxg5 hxg5 23. Nf3 d6?! It is too late for this. Now it just leaves the e-pawn weak.

[The best chance is to simply let the pawn go. 23... Re7 24. Nxc5 Rg7 Black has some attacking chances in exchange for the pawn.]

24. Qg3 g4 25. Ng5 Rf6 26. h4?!

[26. h3! wins at least a pawn. 26... Qd7 (Or 26... Rg6? 27. Qh4 Black has too many weaknesses and White too many threats. Something has to give. 27... Qd7 28. Bxf5 exf5 29. Rxe8 Qxe8 30. Qh7 Kf8 31. Re2 Ne3 32. Qh8 Ke7 33. Rxe3 Be4 34. Qxe8 Kxe8 35. Nxe4 fxe4 36. Rxe4) 27. hxg4 f4 28. Qf3 White has an extra pawn and the initiative]

26... Re7?? I miss a deadly threat.

[26... Qd7! 27. Rfe2 Bc6 28. Kh2 Nc7 White has the initiative, but Black has a solid defense]

27. Rfe2?? But so does Peter.

[27. Nxe6!! Black's position crumbles. 27... Rxe6 28. Rxe6 Rxe6 29. Bxf5 Re1 30. Kh2 Kh8 31. Qxg4 Nf6 Other tries are worse. (31... Qc7?? 32. Be6 Nf6 33. Rxf6 d5 34. g3 Rxe6 35. Rf8 Kh7 36. Qg8 Kh6 37. Qxe6 Kh7 38. Qg8 Kh6 39. Rf6 Kh5 40. Qg6#; 31... Re7?? 32. Qh5 Kg8 33. Qg5 Kh8 34. Qh6 Kg8 35. Be6 Rxe6 36. Rf8#) 32. Qg6 d5 33. Bd3 Qc7 34. g3 Qg7 35. Rxf6 Qxg6 36. Rxg6 White wins]

27... Nc7 28. Nh3 Kh8 29. Nf4 Qd7 30. h5 Rh7 31. Qh4



31... Rfh6?? The fatal blunder. It is more important for Black to give his king some air than to continue vain attempts to attack.

[31... Rhh6 32. Qg5 Qg7 33. Ng6 Kh7 34. Bc2 White's pieces are much more active, but black still has chances]

32. Qg5 Qg7 33. Ng6 Kg8?? As painful as it is, the knight must be taken.

[33... Rxc6 34. hxc6 Qe7 35. Qf4 Rg7 36. Qxf5 Kg8 37. Qxc6 White wins]

34. Qd8 Black resigns. Peter didn't really do anything brilliant; he just played solid chess and was there to pick up the pieces when I shot myself in the foot.

[34... Kf7 35. Qxc7 Kf6 36. Rxe6 The end is near]

[1:0]

Matt Grinberg, 3/9/2016