

[Event "Opera Euro Rapid KO 2021"]
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[Date "2021.02.13"]
[Round "3.12"]
[White "So, Wesley"]
[Black "Carlsen, Magnus"]
[Result "0-1"]
[BlackElo "2862"]
[BlackFidId "1503014"]
[BlackTitle "GM"]
[ECO "C58"]
[EventDate "2021.02.09"]
[Opening "Two knights defence"]
[WhiteElo "2770"]
[WhiteFidId "5202213"]
[WhiteTitle "GM"]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6

The Two Knights Defense in the Italian Game.

4.Ng5

Perhaps The most popular attacking line in scholastic chess and it's easy to see why. White develops just two pieces and then uses those pieces to immediately attack the bellybutton. fun stuff

4...d5

Since you can't block white's knight, you better block their bishop.

5.exd5 Na5

Knights on the rim are usually grim but not here as Black is glad to let white have the pawn on d5 as it blocks their bishop's attack on f7. Furthermore, since white's bishop is threatened, black has given up the pawn on d5 in exchange for the initiative. Known as The Polerio Defense, this is how we teach the kids to defend as playing Nxd5 allows white to either enter the Loli Attack with 6. d4 or the Fried Liver Attack with 6. Nxf7.

5...Nxd5 6.d4

The Lolli attack is similar to the Fried Liver Attack but with a couple added bonuses such as occupying the center and opening the diagonal for the bishop on c1.

6.Nxf7

Forks the queen and rook.

6...Kxf7

The king must take which makes the knight on d5 the new target as it is pinned and exposed.

7.Qf3+ Ke6

Now black has two defenders to match white's two attackers.

8.Nc3

so white adds a third attacker.

8...Nd4

In the game, Alonzo abandoned his knight on d5 in favor of creating some big threats.

9.Bxd5+

but white gets to capture d5 with check and the rest is history.

9...Kd6 10.Qf7 Be6 11.Bxe6 Nxe6 12.Ne4+ Kd5 13.c4+ Kxe4 14.Qxe6 Qd4 15.Qg4+ Kd3
16.Qe2+ Kc2 17.d3#

Is the Fried Liver Attacking line Paul Morphy used to defeat his father Alonzo Morphy in 1850. Although, in that game, Paul Morphy played at rooks-odds and therefor the game finished spectacularly with 17... Kxc1 followed by 18 0-0 checkmate.

6...exd4

Black's most common response is to capture the pawn that white offered.

7.O-O

but it was a gambit and now white has the dangerous fried liver style attack with the benefit of being castled.

7...Be7 8.Nxf7

play continues similarly to in the Fried Liver.

8...Kxf7

9.Qf3+ Ke6 10.Nc3

and we even add the third attacker to d5 in the same fashion but with Lollisque tactical motifs.

10...dxc3 11.Re1+ Ne5 12.Bf4

Both of black's knights are pinned, exposed and threatened twice.

12...Bf6

black adds a second defender but Morphy will force a win with a outstanding tactical flourish.

13.Bxe5 Bxe5 14.Rxe5+ Kxe5 15.Re1+ Kd4 16.Bxd5 Re8 17.Qd3+ Kc5 18.b4+ Kxb4 19.Qd4+ Ka5
20.Qxc3+ Ka4 21.Qb3+ Ka5 22.Qa3+ Kb6 23.Rb1#

Is how Paul Morphy used the Loli Attack to great effect against an unnamed adversary in 1858.

6.Bb5+

Before re treating, white checks to damage black's queenside pawn structure.

6...c6

and now we see how black's knight is actually perfectly placed on the rim.

7.dxc6 bxc6

black's a and c pawns are now isolated but white will likely retreat because the knight on a5 is defending c6.

8.Bd3

Be2 is the traditional move although Hikaru Nakamura played the bishop to d3 retreat in his final game of the 2009 US Chess Championship. More on this in a bit. However, it is worth noting that an alternative to retreating the bishop is to play Qf3.

8.Qf3 Rb8

stepping the rook out of the pin. here white has a lot of different bishop moves to think about. But, before i digress too far, let's get back to our main game.

8...Nd5

8...Be7 9.Nc3 O-O 10.O-O Rb8 11.h3 c5 12.b3 Rb4 13.Re1 Bb7 14.Ba3 Rf4 15.g3 Rd4 16.Nf3
Rxd3 17.cxd3 Qxd3 18.Nxe5 Qf5 19.g4 Qf4 20.d4 Rd8 21.Qe2 Rxd4 22.Bc1

and black resigned in Hikaru Nakamura vs Joshua Friedel and in winning this game, Hikaru Nakamura was crowned the sole winner of the 2009 US Chess Championship.

9.Nf3 Bd6

black certainly has compensation in terms of space and development in exchange for the pawn.
10.O-O O-O 11.Re1 f5

Certainly, moves like Bg4 and Re8 are possibilities for black here.

11...Bg4 12.h3 Bh5 13.Bf5

Allowing for Bg4 to break the pin. For instance, if...

13...Bc7 14.Bg4 Bxg4 15.hxg4

which is why I prefer 11. Re8

11...Re8 12.Nc3 Nb4

Threatening to exchange the knight for the bishop on d3 removing one of white's key pieces and giving white double isolated pawns after the recapture.

13.Bf1

So white should retreat the bishop.

13...Bg4

and now black can pin the knight without white's light squared bishop interfering.

12.Nxe5

white captures black's center pawn but it takes two tempi.

12...Qf6

because after black develops the queen with a threat to the knight, white must retreat back as pawn to d4 is unplayable and pawn to f4 won't work with black's knight on d5.

13.Nf3 g5

Yes, it's risky to storm forward with the pawns protecting your castled king. However, here, white is underdeveloped and no threat and by Magnus playing g5 he keeps attack going with the threat of playing g4.

14.c4

Wesley attacks white's knight with a pawn before his adversary can do the same with pawn to g4.

14...Nf4

Magnus responds by moving the threatened knight closer to white's king while also threatening the undefended bishop on d3.

15.Bf1

Wesley So would love to play pawn to d4 but must first save his bishop.

15...g4

And Magnus Carlsen doesn't waste anytime returning to his plan of moving the pawn ahead to g4 and threatening white's knight.

16.d4

With his knight trapped on f3, Wesley So plays the strong d4 move and will now be able to develop his remaining pieces with ease. And remember, white was ahead in material, so Wesley is simply giving some material to catch up on development.

16...gxf3 17.Qxf3

and now material is actually even again.

17...Ne6

And all this follows a 2020 chess.com game between Wesley So and Abdusattorov.

17...Qxd4

is interesting but probably too greedy. For instance, play might continue...

18.Rd1 Nh3+ 19.gxh3 Qe5 20.Qg3+ Kf7 21.Qxe5 Bxe5 22.Nd2 Rg8+ 23.Kh1 Be6 24.Rb1 Rad8 25.Re1 Bd4 26.Nf3 Bxc4 27.Bxc4+ Nxc4 28.Bg5

unifying the rooks is better than the knight check on g5.

28...Bf6 29.b3 Bxg5 30.bxc4

and it's actually white who ends up ahead material not black.

18.Qc3

Interesting that Wesley chooses Qc3 over c5 as...

18.c5 Nxd4 19.Qc3 Bc7 20.b4 Nb7 21.Bc4+ Kg7 22.Bb2 Rd8 23.Nd2 a5 24.Nb3 axb4 25.Qxd4 Rxd4 26.Bxd4 Qxd4 27.Nxd4 Kf6 28.Nxc6 Nxc5 29.Nxb4

and white won in Wesley So vs Nodirbek Abdusattorov in the 2020 Chess.com Speed Chess Championship.

18...Nb7

Magnus avoids the complexities of 18.. Nxd4.

18...Nxd4

and 19. Qxa5 and 19 c5 are alternative paths to the same possibility.

19.Qxa5 Nc2 20.c5 Be5 21.Bc4+ Be6 22.Bg5 Qxg5 23.Bxe6+

is very sharp.

19.c5 Be5 20.Qxa5 Nc2 21.Bc4+ Be6 22.Bg5 Qxg5 23.Bxe6+)

19.c5

Wesley So is down in development but the boss of space on the queenside.

19...Bc7 20.b4 a5

Magnus strikes back to undermine Wesley spatial control on the queenside before white can develop with ease.

20...Nbd8 21.Bc4 Nf7 22.Nd2 Neg5 23.Bb2

and again, white has ideal piece coordination.

20...Nxd4 ?

gives white easy development and dangerous piece coordination.

21.Bb2 Rd8 22.Bc4+ Kf8 23.Nd2

and everyone would prefer the white pieces here.

20...Qxd4?

is likewise a mistake.

21.Qxd4 Nxd4 22.Bc4+ Ne6 23.Bxe6+ Bxe6 24.Rxe6

and white is ahead material with a nice endgame looming.

21.b5 Qxd4?!

21...cxb5

is another possibility with play continuing something like this...

22.Bxb5 Qh4 23.h3 a4 24.Nd2 Qf6 25.Rb1 Nbxc5 26.Ba3 Ba5 27.Qg3+ Qg6 28.Qxg6+ hxg6 29.dxc5 Bxd2 30.Re2 Bc3 31.Bc4 Re8 32.Rb6 Kf7

22.Qxd4

A slight improvement would be playing Bc4+ immediately.

22.Bc4 Qxc3

22...Qf6 23.Bb2 Qxc3 24.Nxc3 Nxc5 25.Ba3 Ne4 26.Nxe4 fxe4 27.Bxf8 Kxf8 28.bxc6

22...Rd8 23.b6 Bb8 24.Bb2 Qxc3 25.Nxc3 Nxc5

Similar to the other variations but with one big difference. There is no Rook on f8 to pin the knight on c5 to. I would prefer to be white because of the nicely coordinated pieces but black seems to be ok here. Play could continue...

26.b7 Bxb7 27.Bxe6+ Nxe6 28.Rxe6 Rd2 29.Re2 Rxe2 30.Nxe2 c5

black has the strong bishop pair but no immediate access to his rook and all four of his pawns are isolated.

23.Nxc3 Nxc5 24.Ba3 Ne4 25.Bxf8 Kxf8 26.Nxe4 fxe4 27.bxc6

white would be a full point ahead and black's pieces lack good coordination.

22...Nxd4 23.Bc4+

Both Kg7 and Kh8 would lose because of Bb2:

23...Be6

so, Magnus wisely interposes the check with his bishop.

23...Kg7 24.Bb2 Rd8 25.Re7+

23...Kh8 24.Bb2 Rd8 25.Na3 Nxc5 26.Rad1 Ne6 27.Rxe6 Bxe6 28.Rxd4 Rxd4 29.Bxd4+ Kg8 30.Bxe6+ Kf8 31.b6 Bd6 32.Nc4 c5 33.Bc3 Rd8 34.f3

so, there's no back rank mate.

34...Bb8 35.Bxf5 a4 36.Bc2 Ke7 37.Bxa4 Ke6 38.Bb3 Kd7 39.a4 Kc6 40.a5 Kb7 41.Ne5 Bxe5 42.Bxe5 Rd7 43.Bc4 Rd1+ 44.Kf2 Rb1 45.f4 Kc6 46.f5 Rb4 47.f6 Rxc4 48.f7 Rc2+ 49.Ke3 and black's position is hopeless.

24.Bxe6+ Nxe6 25.Rxe6

Magnus Carlsen may be temporarily down a pawn but all of his pieces are in the game.

25...Nxc5

Wesley So's piece placement is bad. The rook he has developed is under threat of capture and he still has a rook on a1, Knight on b1 and bishop on c1.

26.Re2

Wesley must spend time to save his rook rather than developing a new piece.

26...Rfe8

Magnus threatens the rook again keeping the initiative.

27.Nc3

Developing the knight to c3 is the obvious choice here as it develops a piece and defends the rook on e2.

27.Rxe8+?

Is an obvious mistake as it trades off white's only developed piece and allows black to improve his a8 rook with a threat of mate.

27...Rxe8

27...cxb5

Magnus regains his pawn and now has a dangerous 2-on-1 pawn majority on the queenside.

28.Be3

Wesley So develops another piece with a threat.

28.Rxe8+

would allow white to win a pawn.

28...Rxe8 29.Nxb5 Re1#

but black gets a mate.

28...Be5

the best way to threaten the knight on c3.

28...b4

is not as good as Be5 and could lead to a draw.

29.Nd5 Be5 30.Rae1 Nd3 31.Rd1 Nb2 32.Rde1 Nd3

29.Bxc5

29.Rc1 Nd3 30.Rd1 (30.Rcc2 \$2 f4 \$1

and white is in serious trouble.

30...Bxc3 31.Rxd3 Rad8 32.Rxd8 Rxd8 33.f3 a4 34.Kf2 b4

and material may be even but black's extra pawn on the queenside is a threat to promote into a queen.

29...Bxc3 30.Rxe8+ Rxe8

and now, with fewer pieces to on the board, that 2-on-1 queenside pawn majority seems Magnus has seems more menacing.

31.Rb1 b4 32.Kf1 Re5 33.Be3

33.Bd6 Rd5 34.Bf4 a4 35.Rc1 b3 36.axb3 axb3 37.Rxc3 b2 38.Rb3 Rd1+ 39.Ke2 b1=Q 40.Rxb1 Rxb1

and white seems to have better chances at a draw with black having no passed pawns on the queenside

33...a4

and even more menacing.

34.Rc1?!

34.Rd1 b3 35.axb3 axb3 36.Bd2 Rd5 37.Ke2 b2 38.Bxc3 Rxd1 39.Bxb2 Rb1 40.Bd4 Kf7 41.h3 Ke6 42.g3 Rh1 43.h4 Kd5 44.Bc3 Rb1

and despite the deficit in material, white must have better drawing chances when black does not have the passed pawns on the queenside.

34...a3

Magnus is threatening to play b3 which in turn threatens to create a passed pawn for black on a2.

35.g3?!

stopping Magnus from playing b3 immediately. see note after 35... Rb5. and certainly not the immediate 35. Ke2 because...

35.Rc2 Rb5 36.Ke2

36.Bd2

looks like it might be good enough to draw. Play might continue...

36...Be5 37.Rc8+ Kf7 38.Ra8 Bc3 39.Ra7+ Ke6 40.Ra6+ Kd5 41.Ke2 b3 42.axb3 Bxd2 43.Kxd2 Rxb3

and now white's king is unable to join the fight on the queenside while protecting its second rank pawns on the kingside.

44.h4

I like playing h4 here to make sure it is preserved and black doesn't get a passed pawn on the h-file as well.

44...Kc4

but now black's king is in position to cause harm.

45.Kc1 h5 46.Ra4+ Kc3 47.Ra8 f4 48.Ra6 Kd3 49.Ra4 Ke2 50.Kc2 Rb2+

36...b3 37.axb3 Rxb3 38.Bd2 Bd4 39.Rc8+ Kf7 40.Ra8 h5 41.Ra6 h4 42.g3

35.Ke2 \$2

the immediate King to e2 en route to b3 make sense strategically but fails miserably to a simple tactic.

35...f4

35...Rb5

35...b3

doesn't work because...

36.Rxc3 b2

36...bxa2 37.Rxa3

is losing for black.

37.Rb3

prevents the b2 pawn from promoting so white is just a bishop ahead.

36.Rc2 b3 37.axb3

37.Rxc3 \$4

taking the bishop would be a greedy blunder.

37...b2

because now black gets a queen.

37...Rxb3 38.Kg2

The only way to activate the king as...

38.Ke2?!

allows black to pin white's rook to the king with devastating effect.

38...Rb2

38...Kf7

The king must be active in the endgame.

39.Bd2

39.Bc5 \$2

doesn't work out well for white.

39...Bb2 40.Bxa3 Bxa3

39.Ra2 Bb2

is a cool way for black to trap white's rook.

39...Be5 40.Bf4?

Is a mistake, but I am not sure say 40. Bc1 is actually any better because...

40.Bc1 Bb2 41.h3

Leaving the rook and bishop where they are so black can not play a2 and then a1.

41...Ke6

41...a2 42.Bxb2 Rxb2 43.Rc7+ Ke6 44.Ra7 Kd5

42.Rc8

putting the rook in position to move behind the passed pawn.

42...Kd5

But black's king is so much more active than white's and can easily pivot to the king or queenside depending on what white does.

43.g4 fxg4 44.hxg4

white manufactures his own passed pawn.

44...Ke4

but as I alluded to earlier, black's king can easily reach the most important squares.

45.Rc5 Kd3

to support placing black's rook on c3 after which, white's best move would be to resign because...

46.Rc8 Rc3 47.Bxb2 axb2 48.Rb8 Kc2 49.f3 b1=Q 50.Rxb1 Kxb1

40...Bxf4

This is winning and so was 40... Rb2.

40...Rb2 41.Rc4 a2 42.Bxe5 a1=Q 43.Rc7+ Kg6 44.Bxb2 Qxb2 45.Rc6+ Kh5 46.Rc5 Qb7+ 47.f3 Kg6 48.Rc2 Qd5 49.Kf2 Kg5

41.gxf4 Rb7

en route to a7.

42.Ra2 Ra7

Rooks belong behind passed pawns. Magnus' rook is in the ideal position. Wesley's is not.

43.Kg3?!

Wesley's king moves up a rank but what can it actually accomplish. Not much, since Magnus' passed pawn is clear on the other side of the board and black would have to play very impractically for white obtain any prospects on the kingside.

43.Kf3

is another try, but after...

43...Ke6 44.Ke3 Kd5 45.Kd3 Ra4 46.Kc3 Rxf4 47.Kb3 Rf3+ 48.Kb4

black is easily winning.

43...Ra4?!

Black's rook is threatening f4 while remaining behind the passed pawn.

44.Kh4

Wesley So offers Magnus f4 with a check.

44...Kg6

but the pawn on f4 isn't going anywhere and capturing it would allow white's king to complicate things by moving to g5.

45.Kg3 Kf6 46.h3?

46.Kf3 Ke6 47.Ke2 Kd5 48.Kd2 Ke4 49.Kc2 Kxf4 50.Kb3 Ra6 51.Kc4 Kf3 52.Kc5 Ra4 53.Kc6 f4 54.Kc5 Ra7 55.Kc4 Ra6

46...h5

46...Ke6

is more accurate according to computer analysis but allows white more counter play.

47.Kh4 Kd5 48.Kg5 Kc4

and black should still win but the situation is messy so I prefer Magnus' technique using 46... h5.

47.Kh4 Kg6 48.Kg3 Kg7

taking a moment to triangulate to claim opposition on the kingside if white plays kh4.

49.Kf3

But Wesley played Kf3. Had he played Kh4 then...

49.Kh4 Kh6

Defending h5 and taking opposition. Now white must play Kg3 or lose f4 to the rook.

50.Kg3 Kg6 51.Kf3 h4

seals off white's king from threatening the h-pawn.

52.Ke3 Kf6 53.Kd3 Rxf4

because white a3 is guarded by a skewer.

54.Rxa3 \$4 Rf3+ 55.Kd2 Rxa3

49...h4

Again, just good technique here using sealing the king off from creating any counterplay on the kingside flank.

50.Ke2 Kf6 51.Kd1 Ke6 52.Kc1 Kd5 53.Kb1

53.Kd1

and white would also lose if they try to pivot back to defend the kingside pawns.

53...Ke4 54.Ke2 Kxf4 55.Kf1 Ke4 56.Ke2 Ra8 57.f3+ Kf4 58.Kf2 Ra4 59.Kg2 Ke3 60.f4 Kxf4

61.Kf2 Ra8 62.Kg2 Ke3 63.Ra1 a2 64.Re1+ Kd4 65.Rf1

53...Ke4 54.Rd2

Wesley is able to reactivate the rook now that the king is in position to stop the a-pawn from promoting. But it's too late.

54...Kf3

because Magnus's king is enroute to create a passed pawn on the opposite flank as well.

55.Ka2 Kg2

Wesley So resigns here as he will not be able to stop Magnus Carlsen from manufacturing a passed pawns on the kingside as well. For example... if rook d3 to defend h3

56.Rd3 Rxf4

and white can't play

57.Kxa3 Rf3

57.Rxa3 Rxf2+ 58.Kb1 and h3 will fall as well after Rf3

0-1

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[WhiteTitle "GM"]

1.e4 e5 2.Nf3 Nc6 3.Bc4 Nf6 { The Two Knights Defense in the Italian Game. } 4.Ng5 { [%csl Gf7][%cal Gc4f7,Gg5f7]Perhaps The most popular attacking line in scholastic chess and it's easy to see why. White develops just two pieces and then uses those pieces to immediately attack the bellybutton. fun stuff } 4...d5 { [%csl Gf7]Since you can't block white's knight, you better block their bishop. } 5.exd5 { [%csl Gf7] } 5...Na5 { Knights on the rim are usually grim but not here as Black is glad to let white have the pawn on d5 as it blocks their bishop's attack on f7. Furthermore, since white's bishop is threatened, black has given up the pawn on d5 in exchange for the initiative. Known as The Polorio Defense, this is how we teach the kids to defend as playing Nxd5 allows white to either enter the Loli Attack with 6. d4 or the Fried Liver Attack with 6. Nxf7. } (5...Nxd5 6.d4 { [%csl Gd4][%cal Gc1g5]The Lolli attack is similar to the Fried Liver Attack but with a couple added bonuses such as occupying the center and opening the diaganol for the bishop on c1. } ({ [%csl Gf7][%cal Gf7d8,Gf7h8] } 6.Nxf7 { Forks the queen and rook. } 6...Kxf7 { [%csl Gd5][%cal Gc4f7] The king must take which makes the knight on d5 the new target as it is pinned and exposed. } 7.Qf3+ { [%csl Gd5][%cal Gf3f7,Gf3d5,Gc4f7] } 7...Ke6 { [%csl Gd5][%cal Gf3d5,Rd8d5,Re6d5,Gc4d5] Now black has two defenders to match white's two attackers. } 8.Nc3 { [%cal Gc4d5,Gc3d5,Gf3d5,Re6d5,Rd8d5]so white adds a third attacker. } 8...Nd4 { [%cal Gc4d5,Gc3d5,Gf3d5,Rd4f3,Rd4c2] In the game, Alonzo abandoned his knight on d5 in favor of creating some big threats. } 9.Bxd5+ { but white gets to sapture d5 with check and the rest is history. } 9...Kd6 10.Qf7 { [%cal Gc3e4] } 10...Be6 11.Bxe6 Nxe6 12.Ne4+ Kd5 13.c4+ Kxe4 14.Qxe6 Qd4 15.Qg4+ Kd3 16.Qe2+ Kc2 17.d3# { [%cal Gc2c1,Ge1g1,Gh1f1]Is the Fried Liver Attacking line Paul Morphy used to defeat his father Alonzo Morphy in 1850. Although, in that game, Paul Morphy played at rooks-odds and therefor the game finished spectacularly with 17... Kxc1 foloowed by 18 0-0 checmate. }) 6...exd4 { Black's most common response is to capture the pawn that white offered. } 7.O-O { [%cal Gg5f7,Gc4f7]but it was a gambit and now white has the dangerous fried liver style attack with the benefit of being castled. } 7...Be7 8.Nxf7 { play continues similarly to in the Fried Liver. } 8...Kxf7 { [%csl Gd5][%cal Gc4f7] } 9.Qf3+ { [%csl Gd5][%cal Gc4f7,Gf3d5] } 9...Ke6 10.Nc3 { and we even add the third attacker to d5 in the same fashion but with Lolliesque tactical motifs. } 10...dxc3 11.Re1+ Ne5 12.Bf4 { [%cal Gc4e6,Ge1e6,Gf3d5,Gf4e5] Both of black's knights are pinned, exposed and threatened twice. } 12...Bf6 { black adds a second defender but Morphy will force a win with a outstanding tactical flourish. } 13.Bxe5 Bxe5 14.Rxe5+ Kxe5 15.Re1+ Kd4 16.Bxd5 Re8 17.Qd3+ Kc5 18.b4+ Kxb4 19.Qd4+ Ka5 20.Qxc3+ Ka4 21.Qb3+ Ka5 22.Qa3+ Kb6 23.Rb1# { Is how Paul Morphy used the Loli Attack to great effect against an unnamed adversary in 1858. }) 6.Bb5+ { Before retreating, white checks to damage blacks queenside pawn srtructure. } 6...c6 { [%cal Ga5c6,Gb7c6] and now we see how black's knight is actually perfectly placed on the rim. } 7.dxc6 bxc6 { black's a and c pawns are now islated but white will likely retreat because the knight on a5 is defending c6. } 8.Bd3 { Be2 is the traditional move although Hikaru Nakamura played the bishop to d3 retreat in his final game of the 2009 US Chess Championship. More on this in a bit. However, it is worth noting that an alternative to retreating the bishop is to play Qf3. } ({ [%cal Gf3a8,Gb5e8] } 8.Qf3 Rb8 { [%csl Ga4,Gc6,Gd3,Ge2][%cal Gb5c6,Gb5a4,Gb5d3,Gb5e2]stepping the rook out of the pin. here white has a lot of different bishop moves to think about. But, before i digress too far, let's get back to our main game. }) 8...Nd5 (8...Be7 9.Nc3 O-O 10.O-O Rb8 11.h3 c5 12.b3 Rb4 13.Re1 Bb7 14.Ba3 Rf4 15.g3 Rd4 16.Nf3 Rxd3 17.cxd3 Qxd3 18.Nxe5 Qf5 19.g4 Qf4 20.d4 Rd8 21.Qe2 Rxd4 22.Bc1 { [%cal

Gc1f4]and black resigned in Hikaru Nakamura vs Joshua Friedel as his queen is trapped and he can not avoid losing mega material by force. In winning this game, Hikaru Nakamura was crowned the sole winner of the 2009 US Chess Championship. }) 9.Nf3 Bd6 { black certainly has compensation in terms of space and development in exchange for the pawn. } 10.O-O O-O 11.Re1 f5 { Ceratinly moves like Bg4 and Re8 are possibilities for black here. } (11...Bg4 12.h3 Bh5 13.Bf5 { Allowing for Bg4 to break the pin. For instance if... } 13...Bc7 14.Bg4 Bxg4 15.hxg4 { which is why I prefer 11. Re8 }) (11...Re8 12.Nc3 Nb4 { Threatening to exchange the knight for the bishop on d3 removing one of white's key pieces and giving white double double isoalted pawns after the recapture. } 13.Bf1 { So white should retreat the bishop. } 13...Bg4 { and now black can pin the knight without white's light squared bishop interfering. }) 12.Nxe5 { white captures black's center pawn but it takes two tempi. } 12...Qf6 { because after black develops the queen with a threat to the knight, white must retreat back as pawn to d4 is unplayable and pawn to f4 won't work with black's knight on d5. } 13.Nf3 g5 { Yes, it's risky to storm forward with the pawns protecting your castled king. However, here, white is underdeveloped and no threat and by Magnus playing g5 he keeps attack going with the threat of playing g4. } 14.c4 { So Wesley attacks white's knight with a pawn before his adversary can do the same with pawn to g4. } 14...Nf4 { Magnus responds by moving the threatened knight closer to white's king while also threatening the undefended bishop on d3. } 15.Bf1 { Wesley So would love to play pawn to d4 but must first save his bishop. } 15...g4 { And Magnus Carlsen doesn't waste anytime returning to his plan of moving the pawn ahead to g4 and treating white's knight. } 16.d4 { With his knight trapped on f3, Wesley So plays the strong d4 move and will now be able to develop his remaining pieces with ease. And remember, white was ahead in material so Wesley is simply giving some material to catch up on development. } 16...gxf3 17.Qxf3 { and now material is actually even again. } 17...Ne6 { And all this follows a 2020 chess.com game between Wesley So and Abdusattorov. } (17...Qxd4 { is interesting but probably too greedy. For instance, play might continue... } 18.Rd1 { [%cal Gd1d6] } 18...Nh3+ 19.gxh3 Qe5 20.Qg3+ Kf7 21.Qxe5 Bxe5 22.Nd2 Rg8+ 23.Kh1 Be6 24.Rb1 Rad8 25.Re1 Bd4 26.Nf3 Bxc4 27.Bxc4+ Nxc4 28.Bg5 { unifying the rooks is better than the knight check on g5. } 28...Bf6 29.b3 Bxg5 30.bxc4 { and it's actually white who ends up ahead material not black. }) 18.Qc3 { Interesting that Wesley chooses Qc3 over c5 as... } (18.c5 Nxd4 19.Qc3 Bc7 20.b4 Nb7 21.Bc4+ Kg7 22.Bb2 Rd8 23.Nd2 a5 24.Nb3 axb4 25.Qxd4 Rxd4 26.Bxd4 Qxd4 27.Nxd4 Kf6 28.Nxc6 Nxc5 29.Nxb4 { and white won in Wesley So vs Nodirbek Abdusattorov in the 2020 Chess.com Speed Chess Championship. }) 18...Nb7 { Magnus avoids the complexities of 18.. Nxd4. } (18...Nxd4 { and 19. Qxa5 and 19 c5 are alternative paths to the same possibility. } 19.Qxa5 (19.c5 Be5 20.Qxa5 Nc2 21.Bc4+ Be6 22.Bg5 Qxg5 23.Bxe6+) 19...Nc2 20.c5 Be5 21.Bc4+ Be6 22.Bg5 Qxg5 23.Bxe6+ { is very sharp. }) 19.c5 { Wesley So is down in development but the boss of space on the queenside. } 19...Bc7 20.b4 (20.d5 cxd5 21.Qxf6 { the players agreed to a draw in Mateusz Bartel vs Grzegorz Nasuta, Krakow Open 2021. }) 20...a5 { Magnus struck back to undermine Wesley's space control on the queenside before white can develop with ease. } (20...Nbd8 21.Bc4 Nf7 22.Nd2 Neg5 23.Bb2 { and again white has ideal piece coordination. }) (20...Nxd4 \$2 { gives white easy development and dangerous piece coordination. } 21.Bb2 Rd8 22.Bc4+ Kf8 23.Nd2 { and everyone would prefer the white pieces here. }) (20...Qxd4 \$2 { is likewise a mistake. } 21.Qxd4 Nxd4 22.Bc4+ Ne6 23.Bxe6+ Bxe6 24.Rxe6 { and white is ahead material with a nice engage looming. }) 21.b5 Qxd4 \$6 { +0.67/17 } (21...cxb5 { is another possibility with play continuing

something like this... } 22.Bxb5 Qh4 23.h3 a4 24.Nd2 Qf6 25.Rb1 Nbx5 26.Ba3 Ba5 27.Qg3+ Qg6 28.Qxg6+ hxg6 29.dxc5 Bxd2 30.Re2 Bc3 31.Bc4 Re8 32.Rb6 Kf7) 22.Qxd4 { A slight improvement would be playing Bc4+ immediately. } (22.Bc4 Qxc3 (22...Qf6 23.Bb2 Qxc3 24.Nxc3 Nxc5 25.Ba3 { [%cal Ga3f8,Gc4g8] } 25...Ne4 26.Nxe4 fxe4 27.Bxf8 Kxf8 28.bxc6) (22...Rd8 23.b6 Bb8 24.Bb2 Qxc3 25.Nxc3 Nxc5 { Similar to the other variations but with one big difference. There is no Rook on f8 to pin the knight on c5 to. I would prefer to be white because of the nicely coordinated pieces but black seems to be ok here. Play could continue... } 26.b7 Bxb7 27.Bxe6+ Nxe6 28.Rxe6 Rd2 29.Re2 Rxe2 30.Nxe2 c5 { black has the strong bishop pair but no immediate access to his rook and all four of his pawns are isolated. }) 23.Nxc3 Nxc5 24.Ba3 { [%cal Ga3f8,Gc4g8] } 24...Ne4 25.Bxf8 Kxf8 26.Nxe4 fxe4 27.bxc6 { white would be a full point ahead and black's pieces lack good coordination. }) 22...Nxd4 23.Bc4+ { Both Kg7 and Kh8 would loose because of Bb2: } 23...Be6 { so Magnus wisely interposes the check with his bishop. } (23...Kg7 24.Bb2 { [%cal Gb2g7] } 24...Rd8 25.Re7+ { [%cal Gb2g7,Ge7g7,Ge7c7] }) (23...Kh8 24.Bb2 { [%cal Gb2h8] } 24...Rd8 25.Na3 { [%cal Ga1d1] } 25...Nxc5 26.Rad1 Ne6 27.Rxe6 Bxe6 28.Rxd4 Rxd4 29.Bxd4+ Kg8 30.Bxe6+ Kf8 31.b6 Bd6 32.Nc4 c5 33.Bc3 Rd8 34.f3 { so there's no backrank mate. } 34...Bb8 35.Bxf5 a4 36.Bc2 Ke7 37.Bxa4 Ke6 38.Bb3 Kd7 39.a4 Kc6 40.a5 Kb7 41.Ne5 Bxe5 42.Bxe5 Rd7 43.Bc4 Rd1+ 44.Kf2 Rb1 45.f4 Kc6 46.f5 Rb4 47.f6 Rxc4 48.f7 Rc2+ 49.Ke3 { and black's position is hopeless. }) 24.Bxe6+ Nxe6 25.Rxe6 { Magnus Carlsen may be temporarily down a pawn but all of his pieces are in the game. } 25...Nxc5 { [%csl Ra1,Rb1,Rc1,Re6] Wesley So's piece placement is bad. The rook he has developed is under threat of capture and he still has a rook on a1, Knight on b1 and bishop on c1. } 26.Re2 { Wesley must spend time to save his rook rather than developing a new piece. } 26...Rfe8 { Magnus threatens the rook again keeping the initiative. } 27.Nc3 { Developing the knight to c3 is the obvious choice here as it develops a piece and defends the rook on e2. } (27.Rxe8+ \$2 { Is an obvious mistake as it trades off white's only developed piece and allows black to improve his a8 rook with a threat of mate. } 27...Rxe8) 27...cxb5 { Magnus regains his pawn and now has a dangerous 2-on-1 pawn majority on the queenside. } 28.Be3 { Wesley So develops another piece with a threat. } (28.Rxe8+ { would allow white to win a pawn. } 28...Rxe8 29.Nxb5 Re1# { but black gets a mate. }) 28...Be5 { the best way to threaten the knight on c3. } (28...b4 { is not as good as Be5 and could lead to a draw. } 29.Nd5 Be5 30.Rae1 Nd3 31.Rd1 Nb2 32.Rde1 Nd3) 29.Bxc5 (29.Rc1 Nd3 30.Rd1 (30.Rcc2 \$2 f4 \$1 { and white is in serious trouble. }) 30...Bxc3 31.Rxd3 Rad8 32.Rxd8 Rxd8 33.f3 a4 34.Kf2 b4 { and material may be even but black's extra pawn on the queenside is a threat to promote into a queen. }) 29...Bxc3 30.Rxe8+ Rxe8 { and now, with less pieces to on the board, that 2-on-1 queenside pawn majority seems Magnus has seems more menacing. } 31.Rb1 b4 32.Kf1 Re5 33.Be3 (33.Bd6 Rd5 34.Bf4 a4 35.Rc1 b3 36.axb3 axb3 37.Rxc3 b2 38.Rb3 Rd1+ 39.Ke2 b1=Q 40.Rxb1 Rxb1 { and white seems to have better chances at a draw with black having no passed pawns on the queenside }) 33...a4 { and even more menacing. } 34.Rc1 \$6 { -1.25/20 } (34.Rd1 { -0.92/20 } 34...b3 35.axb3 axb3 36.Bd2 Rd5 37.Ke2 b2 38.Bxc3 Rxd1 39.Bxb2 Rb1 40.Bd4 Kf7 41.h3 Ke6 42.g3 Rh1 43.h4 Kd5 44.Bc3 Rb1 { and despite the deficit in material, white must have better drawing chances when black does not have the passed pawns on the queenside. }) 34...a3 { [%cal Gb4b3,Ga3a2,Ra2b3] Magnus is threatening to play b3 which in turn threatens to create a passed pawn for black on a2. } 35.g3 \$6 { stopping Magnus from playing b3 immediately. see note after 35... Rb5. and certainly not the immediate 35. Ke2 because... } (35.Rc2 { -0.32/20 })

35...Rb5 36.Ke2 (36.Bd2 { looks like it might be good enough to draw. Play might continue... }
 36...Be5 37.Rc8+ Kf7 38.Ra8 Bc3 39.Ra7+ Ke6 40.Ra6+ Kd5 41.Ke2 b3 42.axb3 Bxd2 43.Kxd2
 Rxb3 { and now white's king is unable to join the fight on the queenside while protecting its
 second rank pawns on the kingside. } 44.h4 { I like playing h4 here to make sure it is preserved
 and black doesn't get a passed pawn on the h-file as well. } 44...Kc4 { but now black's king is in
 position to cause harm. } 45.Kc1 h5 46.Ra4+ Kc3 47.Ra8 f4 48.Ra6 Kd3 49.Ra4 Ke2 50.Kc2 Rb2+)
 36...b3 37.axb3 Rxb3 38.Bd2 Bd4 39.Rc8+ Kf7 40.Ra8 h5 41.Ra6 h4 42.g3) ({ [%cal
 Ge2d3,Gd3c2,Gc2b3] } 35.Ke2 \$2 { the immediate King to e2 en route to b3 make sense
 strategically but fails miserably to a simple tactic. } 35...f4) 35...Rb5 (35...b3 { doesn't work
 because... } 36.Rxc3 b2 (36...bxa2 37.Rxa3 { is losing for black. }) 37.Rb3 { prevents the b2 pawn
 from promoting so white is just a bishop ahead. }) 36.Rc2 b3 37.axb3 (37.Rxc3 \$4 { taking the
 bishop would be a greedy blunder. } 37...b2 { because now black gets a queen. }) 37...Rxb3
 38.Kg2 { The only way to activate the king as... } (38.Ke2 \$4 { allows black to pin white's rook to
 the king with devastating effect. } 38...Rb2) 38...Kf7 { The king must be active in the endgame. }
 39.Bd2 (39.Bc5 \$2 { doesn't work out well for white. } 39...Bb2 40.Bxa3 Bxa3) (39.Ra2 Bb2 { is
 a cool way for black to trap white's rook. }) 39...Be5 40.Bf4 \$2 { Is a mistake, but i am not sure
 say 40. Bc1 is actually any better because... } (40.Bc1 Bb2 41.h3 { Leaving the rook and bishop
 where they are so black can not play a2 and then a1. } 41...Ke6 (41...a2 42.Bxb2 Rxb2 43.Rc7+
 Ke6 44.Ra7 Kd5) 42.Rc8 { putting the rook in position to move behind the passed pawn. }
 42...Kd5 { But black's king is so much more active than white's and can easily pivot to the king or
 queenside depending on what white does. } 43.g4 f4 44.h4 { white manufactures his own
 passed pawn. } 44...Ke4 { but as i eluded to earlier, black's king can easily reach the most
 important squares. } 45.Rc5 Kd3 { to support placing black's rook on c3 after which, white's best
 move would be to resign because... } 46.Rc8 Rc3 47.Bxb2 axb2 48.Rb8 Kc2 49.f3 b1=Q 50.Rxb1
 Kxb1) 40...Bxf4 { This is winning and so was 40... Rb2. } (40...Rb2 41.Rc4 a2 42.Bxe5 a1=Q
 43.Rc7+ Kg6 44.Bxb2 Qxb2 45.Rc6+ Kh5 46.Rc5 Qb7+ 47.f3 Kg6 48.Rc2 Qd5 49.Kf2 Kg5) 41.gxf4
 Rb7 { en route to a7. } 42.Ra2 Ra7 { Rooks belong behind passed pawns. Magnus' rook is in the
 ideal position. Wesley's is not. } 43.Kg3 \$6 { Wesley's king moves up a rank but what can it
 actually accomplish. Not much, since Magnus' passed pawn is clear on the other side of the
 board and black would have to play very impractically for white obtain any prospects on the
 kingside. } (43.Kf3 { is another try, but after... } 43...Ke6 44.Ke3 Kd5 45.Kd3 Ra4 46.Kc3 Rxf4
 47.Kb3 Rf3+ 48.Kb4 { black is easily winning. }) 43...Ra4 \$6 { Black's rook is threatening f4 while
 remaining behind the passed pawn. } 44.Kh4 { Wesley So offers Magnus f4 with a check. }
 44...Kg6 { but the pawn on f4 isn't going anywhere and capturing it would allow white's king to
 complicate things by moving to g5. } 45.Kg3 Kf6 46.h3 \$2 { -2.80/22 } (46.Kf3 { -1.56/24 }
 46...Ke6 47.Ke2 Kd5 48.Kd2 Ke4 49.Kc2 Kxf4 50.Kb3 Ra6 51.Kc4 Kf3 52.Kc5 Ra4 53.Kc6 f4 54.Kc5
 Ra7 55.Kc4 Ra6) 46...h5 (46...Ke6 { is more accurate according to computer analysis but allows
 white more counter play. } 47.Kh4 Kd5 48.Kg5 Kc4 { and black should still win but the situation
 is messy so I prefer Magnu's technique using 46... h5. }) 47.Kh4 Kg6 48.Kg3 Kg7 { taking a
 moment to triangulate to claim opposition on the kingside if white plays kh4. } 49.Kf3 { But
 Wesley played Kf3. Had he played Kh4 then... } (49.Kh4 Kh6 { Defending h5 and taking
 opposition. Now white must play Kg3 or lose f4 to the rook. } 50.Kg3 Kg6 51.Kf3 h4 { [%csl
 Gg4,Gg3][%cal Gf5g4,Gh4g3]seals off white's king from threatening the h-pawn. } 52.Ke3 Kf6
 53.Kd3 Rxf4 { because white a3 is guarded by a skewer. } 54.Rxa3 \$4 Rf3+ 55.Kd2 Rxa3) 49...h4

{ [%csl Gg4,Gg3][%cal Gf5g4,Gh4g3] Again, just good technique here using sealing the king off from creating any counterplay on the kingside flank. } 50.Ke2 Kf6 51.Kd1 Ke6 52.Kc1 Kd5 53.Kb1 (53.Kd1 { and white would also lose if they try to pivot back to defend the kingside pawns. } 53...Ke4 54.Ke2 Kxf4 55.Kf1 Ke4 56.Ke2 Ra8 57.f3+ Kf4 58.Kf2 Ra4 59.Kg2 Ke3 60.f4 Kxf4 61.Kf2 Ra8 62.Kg2 Ke3 63.Ra1 a2 64.Re1+ Kd4 65.Rf1) 53...Ke4 54.Rd2 { Wesley is able to reactivate the rook now that the king is in position to stop the a-pawn from promoting. But it's too late. } 54...Kf3 { because Magnus's king is enroute to create a passed pawn on the opposite flank as well. } 55.Ka2 Kg2 { Wesley So resigns here as he will not be able to stop Magnus Carlsen from manufacturing a passed pawns on the kingside as well. For example... if rook d3 to defend h3 } 56.Rd3 Rxf4 { and white can't play } 57.Kxa3 (57.Rxa3 Rxf2+ 58.Kb1 f4 { [%cal Gf2f3]and h3 will fall as well after Rf3 }) 57...Rf3 { [%cal Gf3a3] } 0-1