

2020-2021 Candidates Tournament

ROUND 14



KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE (E60)

GM Ding Liren (2791)

GM Ian Nepomniachtchi (2789)

2020-2021 Candidates Tournament,
Yekaterinburg, RUS (14.3), 04.27.2021

Annotations by GM Jacob Aagaard

1. d4 Nf6 2. c4 g6 3. f3 e6 4. e4 c5 5. d5 d6



6. Bd3

Deviating from past Ding - Nepomniachtchi battles in the KID: 6. Nc3 exd5 7. cxd5 Bg7 8. Nge2 0-0 9. Ng3 a6 10. a4 Nbd7 11. Be2 Ne8 12. 0-0 Rb8 13. Re1 Nc7 (13. ... Bd4+ 14. Kh1 Qh4 15. Rf1 Ne5 (15. ... Ng7!?) 16. f4 Ng4 17. Bxg4 Bxg4 18. Qe1 Nf6 (18. ... f5 with counterplay) 19. e5! with advantage in Ding Liren - Nepomniachtchi, Internet 2019) 14. Bf4 Qe7 15.

Qd2 Re8 16. a5 b5 17. axb6 Rxb6 with equality, Ding Liren - Nepomniachtchi, 2019.

6. ... Bg7

The sharp 6. ... b5!?N might be worth a try.

7. Ne2 exd5 8. cxd5 Nbd7 9. Nec3

Technically a novelty, but of course a very logical move.

9. ... a6 10. a4



10. ... Nh5!?

Nepomniachtchi tries to exploit White's quirky bishop move with quick action on the dark squares of the kingside. 10. ... 0-0 was also reasonable.

11. 0-0 Bd4+ 12. Kh1 Ne5 13. Ne2

Black also gets counterplay after 13. Bc2!? 0-0 14. Ne2 Qh4, even though it is possible White can apply a little pressure.

13. ... Qh4! 14. Nxd4



14. ... Nxd3?

A horrible mistake. Nepomniachtchi's main weakness is his impulsive and intuitive play. In a concrete position, this is not going to do him much good. Here simple calculation could have warned him.

Black would have sufficient counterplay after 14. ... cxd4 15. Kg1 g5! with the idea ... g5-g4-g3.

15. Qxd3 Ng3+ 16. Kg1 Nxf1 17. Nc2 Nxh2 18. Qe3!

(see diagram top of next page)



2020-2021 Candidates Tournament

ROUND 14



One can only guess that Nepomniachtchi had missed this idea. White is taking over the dark squares and in the long run winning the black knight.

18. ... 0-0?!

This goes down without resistance. But it was probably already too late anyway.

18. ... g5!? was necessary, but Black's position is immensely difficult all the same. White could develop his pieces, or go for a direct attack with: 19. e5!? (19. Qxg5? Nxf3+ 20. gxf3 Qxg5+ 21. Bxg5 Rg8 is the tactical idea for Black's attempt to fight for the dark squares) 19. ... Bf5 20. exd6+ Kf8 21. Nba3! Re8 22. Qf2 Qxf2+ 23. Kxf2 Rg8 24. Be3 and here White has an overwhelming advantage. For example: 24. ... Re5 25. b4! Bxc2 26. Nxc2 c4 27. Rd1 and it is hard to believe that Black will survive this endgame.

19. Qg5 Nxf3+ 20. gxf3 Qh3 21. Bf4!

Ding brings out his pieces and dominates on the dark squares. The game is over and White has many ways to win it.



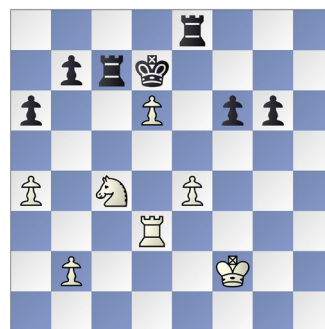
21. ... Qxf3 22. Nd2 f6



Black has no alternative other than to go for this lost endgame. After 22. ... Qd3 23. Qf6 White's attack plays itself. There are ideas with Bf4-h6 and Bf4xd6 followed by Bd6-e5. A sample variation: 23. ... Bg4 24. Re1 Rae8 25. Re3 Qxc2 26. Bh6 with mate.

23. Qxg6+ hxg6 24. Nxf3 Bg4 25. Nd2 Be2 26. Kf2 Bd3 27. Ne1 c4 28. Bxd6 Rfe8 29. Nxd3 cxd3 30. Bc7 Kf7 31. Ra3 Rac8 32. d6 Ke6 33. Rxd3 Kd7 34. Nc4 Rxc7

(see diagram top of next column)



35. Nb6+, Black resigned.

