

New Mexico Champions

Lior Lapid

Lior Lapid won the New Mexico Championship three out of four successive years in 2008, 2009 (a four way tie with Douglas Thigpen, Silas Perry and Chad Schneider) and 2011. He probably would have continued winning New Mexico Championships if it were not for the fact that he moved to Colorado in 2012. However, he has continued to do well in his adopted state, winning the Denver Open in 2013 and the Colorado Closed Championship in both 2015 and 2016.

The game below is taken from the 2011 Albuquerque/Rio Rancho Open where Lior took first place with a perfect 5-0 score! His opponent, Silas Perry, is one of Lior's fellow champions from the 2009 New Mexico Championship. At the beginning of the third round they were the only players at 2-0. Before the game is even out of the opening, it is clear that both players are all out for the win and first place.

Perry, Silas - Lapid, Lior, 0-1
Albuquerque/Rio Rancho Open, Round 3
Rio Rancho, New Mexico, 6/26/2011

Nimzo-Indian defense

1. d4 e6 2. c4 Nf6 3. Nc3 Bb4 Nimzo-Indian Defense 4. f3!? What is White trying to do with this move: stop ... Ne4; get in e4? Either way he is better off with normal development than this weakening move.

[White has his normal opening advantage after either 4. e3 O-O 5. Bd3 d5 6. Nf3 c5 7. O-O;
or 4. Qc2 O-O 5. a3 Bxc3 6. Qxc3 b6 7. Bg5]

4... d5 5. e3

[The normal move here is 5. a3 which led to a draw in the following game. 5... Bxc3 6. bxc3 c5 7. cxd5 Nxd5 8. Qd2 Qa5 9. e4 Qxc3 10. Qxc3 Nxc3 11. dxc5 Na4 12. Be3 Bd7 13. Rb1 b6 14. cxb6 axb6 15. Bb5 Bxb5 16. Rxb5 Nd7 17. Ne2 Nac5 18. Bc1 Nd3 19. Kd2 Nxc1 20. Rxc1 Ke7 21. Rc3 Rhc8 22. Rxc8 Rxc8 23. h4 Ra8 24. Rb3 Nc5 25. Rxb6 Rxa3 26. Nf4 Ra2 1/2-1/2, Aronian Levon (ARM) 2782 - Grischuk Alexander (RUS) 2756, Linares 2/13/2010 It (cat.21)]

5... c5 6. a3 Ba5 7. dxc5 Bxc3 8. bxc3 Qa5 9. cxd5 exd5 10. Kf2!? I am guessing that the point of this, rather than preparing to castle, is to go for a kingside attack by pushing the h-pawn backed by the rook. But it is awfully risky to leave the king in a vulnerable position.

[The following game bares a resemblance to Perry vs Lapid in that White also plays his king to f2 and ends up losing quickly. 10. Qc2 O-O 11. Bd3 Bd7 12. Ne2 Na6 13. Kf2 Ba4 14. Qb1 Nxc5 15. Bc2 Bxc2 16. Qxc2 Qc7 17. Bd2 Rfe8 18. Nd4 Rac8 19. h4 Ne6 20. Qf5 Nc5 21. a4 Nce4 22. fxe4 Nxe4 23. Kg1 Nxd2 24. Rh3 Qxc3 25. Re1 g6 26. Qxd5 Rcd8 27. Nb5 Nf3 28. Qxf3 Qxe1 29. Kh2 Rd1 0-1, Hurme Harri M (FIN) 2274 -

Kiik Kalle (EST) 2415, Espoo (Finland) 1991;

Best is normal development. 10. Ne2 Nbd7 11. Nd4 Nxc5 12. Be2 O-O 13. Bd2 Bd7 14. c4 Qc7 15. O-O=]

10... O-O 11. Bd3 Nbd7 12. Bc2 Nxc5 13. Ne2 Bd7 14. Rb1 Qa6 15. Nf4 Ba4 16. Bxa4 Nxa4 17. Qd4!? He defends the c-pawn, but misses a little trick.

[The pawn doesn't need to be defended. 17. Rb4! Nc5 (Grabbing the pawn is bad. 17... Nxc3? 18. Qb3 Rfc8 19. Bb2 There is no direct way to defend the knight. 19... g5 20. Bxc3 gxf4 21. exf4 White has regained the pawn and now Black's king is more vulnerable than White's) 18. Qd4 Qc6 19. Rd1 Ne6 20. Qd3 Qc7 21. Kg1= He has completed his development and "castled."]

17... Rac8 18. Bd2 Nb6 19. g4?! White is determined to carry out his planned kingside attack, but it just isn't there.

[In spite of his weak pawn structure, White still has a decent position if he just completes his development and "castles." 19. Rhd1 Rfe8 20. Kg1]



19... Rc4! Black wins a pawn by forcing White's queen off of the defense of the bishop. 20. Qd3? White misses the point.

[Best is 20. Qe5 Qxa3 Now White cannot win the pawn back with 21. Ra1 because 21... Qb2 attacks the undefended bishop. That was the point of 19... Rc4]



20... Nxc4!! The king's exposed position begins to do him in. 21. Kg3

[21. fxg4?? Rxf4! 22. Ke2 Rf2! 23. Kxf2 Qxd3 Black is up a queen for a rook]

21... Ne5 22. Qf5 White is down a pawn, has an exposed king, bad pawn structure and disorganized pieces. It is just a matter of time. 22... Ng6 23. Nh5 Qxa3 24. Rhg1 Qd6 25. Kf2?? Letting in Black's queen is disaster.

[The best try is 25. Nf4 But White is down two pawns with a rotten position. Black wins] 25... Qxh2 26. Rg2 If he plays any other move, he either loses the rook or the bishop.



26... Qxg2! Ding!! White resigned.

[27. Kxg2 Nh4 28. Kh3 Nxf5 Black is a rook up - not to mention a bunch of pawns] [0:1]

Matt Grinberg, 7/27/2016