

Watson *Pf-2 p. 161*) 20 ♖h3 ♗d6 (20 ... d3! immediately) 21 ♗e1 d3! ♣♣ and 0-1, 35 (time). This classic win has been annotated many times but White's losing error has never been remarked on, except by Watson ('?' *MtCO p. 308*). Instead of 20 ♖h3?!, White stands no worse after 20 ♖b3!, ∞/±. White's plan is so slow that Black has no need to force complications: simply 16 ... ♗ce7 ♣ is preferable.

B: 16 ♗xc3!?—problem and solution

In a multitude of ways the bishop is awkwardly placed on d4, giving Black a tempo after ... ♖xf4 or ... ♗g4 or ... e5, and for good measure in the last of these getting in the way of ♖xd5. With 16 (or 17 or 18) ♗xc3!? White neatly sidesteps all these issues and robs ... f6 of much of its force.

So how should Black respond? One way is 13 ... 0-0-0 14 ♗d4 ♗xd4 15 ♗xd4 ♗f5! (or 13 ... ♗f5 14 ♗d4 ♗cxd4! 15 ♗xd4 0-0-0). After 16 ♗xc3? Black gained an advantage with 16 ... d4? ♣ in **Anuța-Miroiu, Romanian Ch, Sărata Monteoru 2011** (0-1, 41), but there is an immediate refutation via 16 ... ♗b5! ♣♣, e.g. 17 ♖d2 ♗xf1 18 ♗xf1 d4 19 ♗a5 ♖c6 20 ♗xd8 ♗xg2!. And with the move order 13 ... ♗f5 14 ♗d4, Black has the additional option 14 ... ♗xc3 ('?' Moles *MLW p. 30*).

If Black nevertheless ends up in Janev-Quillan after 16 ♗xc3!?, what then? It's best to admit error via 16 ... ♗e7!?, heading to f5 with ... ♗a4 and play down the c-file to follow, when Black has adequate compensation for the pawn deficit. ▶

1 e4 e6	2 d4 d5	3 ♗c3 ♗b4	4 e5 c5	5 a3 ♗xc3+	6 bxc3 ♗e7	7 ♖g4 ♖c7	8 ♖xg7 ♗g8	9 ♖xh7 cxd4	10 ♗e2 ♗bc6	11 f4 ♗d7	12 ♖d3 dxc3	13 ♗e3 ♗f5	14 ♗d4
14 ...	15	16	17	18									
♗fxd4	♗xd4	0-0-0(1)	♗b1?! f6	exf6 ♖xf4	♗xc3 d4	♣							
...	g3 f6	exf6 e5	fxe5? ♗g4!	♣♣							
...	♗xc3! d4	∞/=							
...	0-0-0 ♗xd4	♖xd4 ♖a5	♖b4	=							
...	♗xc3! f6?	exf6 ♖xf4	g3 ♖g5!	±							
...	♗e7			∞							
♗cxd4!	♗xd4	♗f5	♗xc3? ♗b5!			♣♣							

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THE NEW WINAWER REPORT

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Compare and Contrast

In the early development of the main line Poisoned Pawn variation White's try 13 ♗e3 was a favoured line, even the recommended approach. But it has long since fallen from favour and these days serves mainly as a cautionary tale of what can befall White with unfocussed play, with Black's resources vividly illustrated by a showcase of spectacular victories. And these successes even require no more than natural developing moves: ... ♗f5, ... 0-0-0, and ... d4 in virtually any order, followed by breaking open the centre with ... f6, and Black can hardly go wrong.

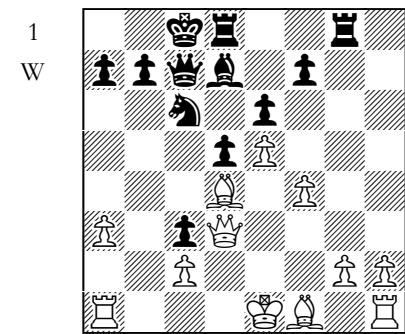
But is anything ever quite as simple as that? A game from this year's Gibraltar Masters showed that there is poison in the most innocuous-looking moves in this variation. White's continuation, though strangely ignored by theory, was natural and straightforward, but it rendered Black's standard plan the wrong one. Why, and how should Black have responded?

* * *

Janev-Quillan 11th Gibraltar Masters 2013

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗c3 ♗b4 4 e5 c5 5 a3 ♗xc3+ 6 bxc3 ♗e7 7 ♖g4 ♖c7 8 ♖xg7 ♗g8 9 ♖xh7 cxd4 10 ♗e2 ♗bc6 11 f4 ♗d7 12 ♖d3 dxc3 13 ♗e3

13 ... 0-0-0
 14 ♗d4 ♗xd4
 15 ♗xd4 ♗c6(1)
 16 ♗xc3! f6?



Each side has several alternatives over these past few moves, some considered below, though Black's moves are all quite standard. White's last seems obvious

but has been entirely neglected by theory. In response Black sticks to the first-choice plan, which also appears to be virtually the only constructive approach. But it turns out to be bad here ...

17 exf6 ♖xf4

On 17 ... e5?!, computers choose the fearless 18 ♖xd5±, leading to complications that seem to resolve in White's favour, e.g.:

a) 18 ... ♗d4! 19 ♕a5! ♖xc2 20 f7! ♖g8 21 ♖c4+ ♕c6 22 ♕xd8 ♖e4+ 23 ♕e2 ♖xd8 24 fxe5! ♕d5 25 ♖d3±±;

b) 18 ... ♕h3 19 ♖c4 ♕xg2 20 f7 ♖g6 21 ♕xg2 ♖xg2 22 ♖d1±±;

c) 18 ... ♕g4 19 ♖c5! exf4 20 ♖b1±.

18 g3 ♖h6?

The losing move. It was essential to play 18 ... ♖g5!, with the less-than-obvious difference that after 19 ♕g2 d4 20 ♕xd4? ♗xd4 21 ♖xd4, instead of 21 ... ♕c6? 22 ♖c3!±± Black can turn the tables with 21 ... ♖a5+! 22 ♖b4 ♖e5+ with a winning attack. White must settle for a more modest advantage after either 19 ♕g2 d4 20 ♕d2 ♖e5+ 21 ♕e4 ♖xf6± or 19 ♕e2 d4 20 f7 ♖g8 21 ♕d2 ♖g7 22 0-0±.

Stolle-Kummer, E. German S corr 1969, went instead 18 ... ♖d6?! 19 ♕g2 ♕e8 (19 ... d4? 20 0-0±±) 20 0-0 ♕g6 21 ♖d2 ♖c5+ 22 ♖h1±, though White later went astray and even lost (0-1, 52).

19 ♕g2 d4?!

20 f7?! (20 ♕xd4! ♕e8 21 ♖e3±±; 20 ... e5 21 f7 ♖g8 22 ♕e3±±) 20 ... ♖g8 21 ♕d2 ♖h5 22 0-0 ♖xf7 23 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 24 ♖f1± and White won (1-0, 56).

For a sense of how atypical was Black's fate in this game, here is one of

Black's most spectacular successes, involving a closely parallel continuation:

Tanin-Sanakoev

6th USSR Corr Ch ½-final 1960-61

TA pp. 19-21 (game 4)

From (1), in effect (via 13 ♖b1 0-0-0 14 ♕e3 ♗f5 15 ♗d4 ♗xd4 16 ♕xd4):

16 ♖b1

'The game follows a theoretical line on which the verdict, at that time, was unequivocal: White's control of the dark squares, his central preponderance and his passed h-pawn guarantee him the advantage. Black's plan with 16 ... f6 changes this verdict.'—Sanakoev *TA p. 17*.

16 ... f6!

17 exf6

Of the other tries, the only one that is not hopeless is 17 ♖xc3 ♗xd4 18 ♖xd4 ♖xc2 19 ♕d3! (19 ♖b2? ♖c1+±± **Baturin-Sanakoev, 1st category corr, USSR 1959-60** *TA pp. 17-18 (game 3) (0-1, 24)*) 19 ... ♖xg2∞/±: White is clearly worse but possibly no more so than after 17 exf6.

17 ... e5!?

Here 17 ... ♖xf4 is good, indeed more accurate, since Black can start rolling the centre pawns: 18 ♕xc3 d4 19 ♕d2 (19 ♖b5? ♖e4+! and 20 ... ♗e5±) 19 ... ♖xf6. 'With a massacre in prospect' according to Moles *MLW pp. 7-8*, citing **Sandin-Stoltze, corr 1961**: quite an exaggeration but still a solid ±.

18 ♕c5

If 18 fxe5 ♖g4! Black has at least some advantage, e.g. 19 ♕xc3 ♗xe5 20 ♕xe5 ♖xe5+ 21 ♕e2±.

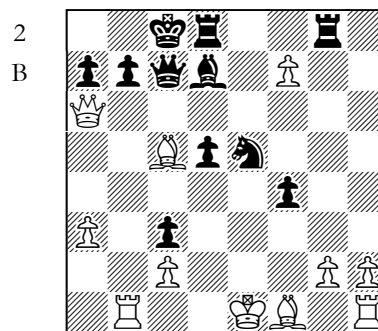
But 18 ♕xc3 is less clear: 18 ... d4 19 f7 ♖g8 20 ♕d2 ♖xf7 21 ♖c4∞/±; hence Black should prefer 17 ... ♖xf4.

18 ... exf4

19 f7 ♗e5

20 ♖a6(2)

The queen is immune: 20 ... bxa6? 21 ♕xa6+, a familiar theme in the Poisoned Pawn main line after ♖b1. Black has a rook *en prise* and White threatens ♖d6, ♕d6, and ♖xa7. Black's next deservedly features in Emms' book *The Most Amazing Chess Moves Ever Played (pp. 161, 173)*.



20 ... ♖de8!!

Not only entering a fork, but allowing a capture with check. After 21 fxe8=♖+ ♖xe8, Black threatens 22 ... ♗d3+ 23 ♖d1 ♖e1 mate as well as a capture on a6, and 22 ♖e2 ♗d3+ or even better 22 ... ♖xc5! are devastating.

21 fxg8=♖ ♗d3+

22 ♖d1 bxa6

And now White must give up the second queen also.

23 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8

Material is roughly level but White's difficulties coordinating his pieces give Black a decisive advantage. The finish was 24 ♕xd3 ♖xc5 25 ♖b3 ♖e3! 26 ♖xc3+ ♖d8 27 ♖f1 ♕h5+ 28 ♖f3 ♕xf3+ 29 gxf3 ♖xf3+ 30 ♖e1 ♖e3+ 31 ♖f1 f3 32 ♖c6 ♖d2 33 ♖f6 ♖g2+ 34 ♖e1 ♖g1+ 0-1.

A. The heyday of 13 ♕e3

Only in the latter half of the 1950's did 13 ♕e3 enjoy the approval of theory. Its debut in **Panov-Ragozin, Moscow Ch 1944-45** saw Black gain an excellent game with 13 ... ♖a5 (½-½, 43), which deterred further trials for over ten years. Keres recommended it *FZ p. 133* and it appeared in four high-profile games between 1956 and 1959. The results were so unpromising that by 1960 the verdict once again shifted to disapproval, where it has stayed ever since.

Examples (Janev-Quillan to 13 ♕e3):

a) **Fuchs-Uhlmann, E. Germany 1956** 13 ... ♗f5 14 ♕f2 0-0-0 15 ♖b1 d4 16 ♗g3 f6! 17 ♗xf5 exf5 18 exf6 ♖xf4 19 ♕g3? (19 f7 ♖g7±) 19 ... ♖h6±± Euwe *TdSE-2 p. 80 (0-1, 23?* (only in unsourced on-line databases)).

b) **Barden-Sterner, Hastings 1957-58**, 13 ... ♗f5 14 ♗d4 ♗fxd4 15 ♕xd4 0-0-0(1) 16 g3 (usually given '?' because of the next game, but see below; 16 0-0-0 ♗xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♖a5=) 16 ... ♖b8?! (same comment) 17 ♕e2 ♗xd4 18 ♖xd4 ♖c8 19 ♖f2± ♖g6 20 ♕d3 ♖h6 21 ♖ab1 ♖f8?! 22 ♖b3± (1-0, 30).

c) **Padevsky-Bertholdt, Bulgaria-E. Germany, Kienbaum 1958**: 13 ... ♗f5 14 ♗d4 ♗fxd4 15 ♕xd4 0-0-0(1) 16 g3 (?) f6 (!) 17 exf6 e5! 18 fxe5 ♖g4! ±± (0-1, 33). All this has never been disputed but the overlooked capture on c3 again changes matters: 18 ♕xc3! exf4 19 0-0-0∞/=.

d) **Fichtl-Golz, Dresden 1959 (10 ... dxc3 11 f4 ♗b6 12 ♕e3 ♕d7 13 ♖d3)**: 13 ... ♗f5 14 ♕d4 0-0-0 15 ♕xc3?! d4 16 ♕d2 f6 (almost always given '!') 17 exf6 e5 '! (± Korchnoi *C18-19 p. 65*) 18 0-0-0 Rge8 (±± Euwe) 19 g4 e4 (±