

**Peter Boel and Merijn van Delft**

# **Chess Buccaneer**

**The Life and Games of Manuel Bosboom**

**New In Chess 2021**

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## Foreword by Manuel Bosboom

Dear reader!

Many times I've been asked to write a book about my chess career. So here it is, the result of more than 50 years of chess experience.

Then and now, chess for me has always meant to play, play, play! As a kid, I liked all kinds of games: football, card and board games, puzzles and magic. Later, video games could be added to the list.

When I was about seven years old, my father took me and my older brother to his chess club and I became fascinated. My first (small) tournament ended in an unexpected success for me, and so my career started...

With big spectacles, pimples and a slightly autistic lifestyle, I definitely was something of a chess nerd. Later, my bad eyesight saved me from having to do military service. Unfortunately, there are few games left from my early period, but believe me, the level was quite awful! I remember a game where I castled queenside after having moved my king already. Of course, I won the game...

Even so, one improves, becomes more serious, and gets a trainer. Together with my enthusiastic clubmate Hans Plukker at Het Witte Paard, I studied Suetin and started to analyse my own games. He also drove me to all kinds of tournaments in his old Peugeot, with Neil Young's music in the background. Later my buddy Mark van Schaardenburg got a driver's license to perform this sometimes risky task.

Meanwhile, I developed an affection for players like Alexander Alekhine, Mikhail Tal and Leonid Stein. My games became wilder, often leaving the opponent wondering: was this move a blunder or a sacrifice?! I didn't mind! From my many blitz games I learned that you just had to keep going, regardless of the situation. A diehard attitude, quick board view and deft movements earned me a reputation in blitz. An unorthodox repertoire (see for instance my 1.a4 g6 2.h4 in Bosboom-Rogers) supported my success. Still later the term 'Bosboomian' appeared in chess circles, meaning something like 'interesting but suspicious'. Quite an achievement, I think!

I did have two problems: recurring time-trouble and a murky opening repertoire. On the other hand, I also developed some special lines that were outlandish and tricky. My early use of the g- and h-pawns became something of a trademark.

Entering the nineties, I started doing drugs – XTC to begin with. Later, mushrooms and LSD followed. With a few friends we would stay at home, play some special music and have profound experiences. We were vegetarians (shouldn't we all



be?!) and went through a very inspiring period. Chess came in second place now, but otherwise things went on as usual. In general I can say it was a positive time, without any serious setbacks as might perhaps have been expected. I kept changing teams in the Netherlands and played competition chess in Belgium, Germany and Iceland. All these teams are totally different, but it's always fun! I think the 'chess family' is a great invention, as is the game of chess itself – if only they would change the starting position every now and then.

Being an International Master with three GM results to my name, I'm a happy and dangerous player, as you will learn from this book. I also hope you enjoy it and that we will meet at the board one day! Chess can be simple: I sacrifice my pieces and you buy me a beer...

I would like to express my thanks to my friends Peter & Merijn for producing this manuscript and to New In Chess for publishing it. Also a big THANK YOU to my fans, who have supported me in all kinds of ways - especially my father, who is my biggest fan.

Follow your Heart and use your Mind. Play without Dogma!

Manuel Bosboom  
Zaandam, September 2021

## Preface

If Manuel Bosboom didn't exist, he would have to be invented. His unique, fascinating personality is bound to enrapture every true chess fan. That's why the idea to write this biography came so naturally to us. At the New In Chess office in 2019, while talking about another project with publisher Allard Hoogland, suddenly we looked at each other and said, 'Yes, that's what we're going to do!'

The two authors of this book, both born and raised in Apeldoorn, have known Manuel and been captivated by his bold chess exploits for quite a long time: Peter already played against him in the IBM Junior tournament in 1980 and in several blitz and rapid tournaments from a quite early age. Merijn has also met him in many tournaments and became Manuel's team captain when the latter joined the Apeldoorn chess club (then called BIS Beamer Team) in 2002.

Manuel is a chess artist of true cult status, not only in the Netherlands but also internationally. Iossif Dorfman, the former trainer of Kasparov, Karpov and the French school, once said: 'Bosboom is a player who sees the dynamics of the game and the pieces like no other.' His old trainer Cor van Wijgerden called Manuel the biggest chess talent he had ever seen, as big as his contemporary, GM Friso Nijboer, and has often said it's a pity he never got more out of it. But besides that, so many stories about him are going around that we thought it was worthwhile to compile them and give them to the chess world.

We had already started gathering quite a lot of material – chess-wise and otherwise – when we told Manuel about our plans. He replied that he had long been considering to write such a book himself! But he also admitted that he simply wouldn't be able to summon up the discipline to finish such a project. Ever since we broke the news to him, he has been extremely cooperative and open. We had a couple of sessions at his picturesque home on the famous Zaanse Schans. He was a welcoming and entertaining host, providing the necessary beverages and excellent vegetarian food. For another intensive session, Manuel himself travelled to Peter's home in Arnhem. His brother David and his father Adriaan too have been very hospitable and forthcoming.

Roughly, the distribution of the work for this book was that Peter compiled the biographical stories, while Merijn analysed the games. For the biographical information, Manuel's family members as well as a

number of his friends were consulted. As far as the games are concerned – there are plenty of occasions to shout out ‘Oooohh’ and ‘Aaaahh’ at many of Manuel’s moves, but Merijn has endeavoured to scrutinize all the material in a level-headed and objective manner. With Manuel’s super-adventurous style, his games are bound to contain mistakes. Often these contribute strongly to the entertainment value of the game. But as understandable as such mistakes may be in tense time-scrambles, in this book any move that turns a winning position into a drawn one, or a drawn position into a lost one, gets a remorseless ‘??’. This may seem harsh at times, but we feel that objectivity is even more important with Manuel’s daredevil games than ‘normally’. On the other hand, Manuel’s swashbuckling style has a very healthy positional foundation – a number of games have also been included in which he defeated renowned opponents (Garry Kasparov, for example!) in a quiet, strategic style, or in a technical endgame.

This book features 66 amazing games, as well as a number of other striking fragments that have been gathered and annotated by Peter in the chapters ‘Swindles’ and ‘Curiouser’. And of course we couldn’t leave out a collection of 36 combinations that the reader can try his hand at solving, with three different levels of difficulty.

We mixed this explosive material into a heady cocktail that we hope will get you pleasantly tipsy, and no hangover!

Chess is an adventure with many beautiful vistas. The great appeal of Manuel Bosboom is that he shows us that you can do things differently – in chess as well as in life. This is a marvellous gift for which we will never be able to thank him enough.

We would like to express our gratitude to Allard Hoogland and Remmelt Otten who made this project possible. We also thank Manuel, David and Adriaan Bosboom, Loek van Wely, Arthur van de Oudeweetering, Frenk van Harreveld, Piet Peelen, Karel van Delft, Dirk Sebastian, Harrie de Bie, Richard Vedder, Guido de Romph, René Hennipman, Mark van Schaardenburg, Gerard Welling, René Olthof, Yuri Eijk, Frank Peeters, Bas Beekhuizen and Lennart Ootes, all of whom have contributed in one way or another to this book. Thanks are also due to our families who have been very supportive throughout the intensive process of writing it.

Peter Boel/Merijn van Delft,  
Arnhem/Amsterdam  
July 2021

## CHAPTER 2

# Mate-weaver

In late January, in the heart of the horrendously cold winter of 1963, a boy-child was moved in a pram over the river Zaan to a small, black-painted wooden shed next to a big oil mill called 'De Bonte Hen'. The mill stood at the outer end of the Zaanse Schans, a picturesque row of mills in Zaandijk, on the outskirts of the small city of Zaandam, some 15 kilometres north of the Amsterdam city centre.

After an icy north-eastern storm, the entire country of the Netherlands was covered with ice. In Frisia, on the other side of the IJsselmeer, the Ice Masters had given the green light for the 18th annual skate marathon along all the small rivers, canals and other waterways between eleven old cities in the province – the famous *Elfstedentocht* held on January 18; six days before our child was born, and exactly on the same date as that blitz game from the previous chapter 36 years later. And all but three months after this 18th of January, on 13 April, chess legend Garry Kasparov was born in Baku.

The ice on the river Zaan was thick, and it was the only accessible thoroughfare in the city. Cars and trucks were moving slowly over it, and a couple of days after Marretje Bosboom had given birth to Manuel on 24 January, she was released from the Johannes hospital and driven home in a taxi. At the Juliana bridge, the taxi couldn't go any further. Marretje had to walk over the frozen river, supported by her young husband Adriaan and his mother. They arrived safely at De Bonte Hen, and Manuel's cradle was positioned in the tiny attic of the house, in the same room where his almost two-year-older brother David also slept.

In this little shed, Manuel and his brother spent a childhood that was not exactly wealthy. Their father Adriaan (born 1940) was a talented but commercially not very successful painter. He and his wife Marretje (*née* Kok, 1941) had to get by with odd jobs. Adriaan sometimes worked as a dishwasher in a nearby restaurant; Marretje eventually got a job as a cook in a nursing home, and later in one of the local cacao factories for which Zaandam was famous.

The parents got married in 1960. On Monday mornings before 10 am, couples could get married for free in the town hall. So Adriaan and Marretje went there at 9.30 am on a Monday morning, dressed in plain clothes since they didn't have anything else to wear. When it was almost ten o'clock, the official on duty muttered: 'Now I hope they'll be here soon,

otherwise they're going to have to pay anyway.' Quickly the plain-dressed young man and woman beside him told him they were the couple, and the ceremony was conducted just in time.

They moved into the little old storage depot next to the oil mill that was abandoned at the time. In 1963, the year Manuel was born, the Zaanse Schans was refurbished as a separate neighbourhood of Zaandam, at the edge of a peat landscape alongside the river. To create a picturesque row of mills in which different old trades could be presented to the public, several mills were moved there from other places. De Bonte Hen had been standing on this spot since the 17th century. A sawmill of that name was first mentioned in 1662, but it was broken down in 1693 and rebuilt as an oil mill in the same year. It was restored by the Vereniging De Zaanse Molen in 1975. Father Adriaan made some alterations: a passageway was rebuilt into a wall, and when they got central heating the two old stoves were removed from the room. It's a tiny and simple but very charming house with its black wooden boards and white window-sills.

Adriaan was an aspiring artist who had moved out of his parental home at an early age. He came from a Jewish socialist working-class family; his grandfather Salomon (born in 1883) was a day labourer who often joined the great strikes during the 1910s and was a left-wing idealist. He had to divorce his wife Marjan during World War II to keep her and her children from harm, and sought refuge in Frisia himself. Later it turned out that Sal was almost the only member of his entire family to survive the war. The home of little Adriaan and his parents in Zaandam functioned as a hiding place for other refugees. His mother Dinah was even more involved with the refugees at their home than his father Nathan. She suffered from PTSD after the war and received mental help at a convalescent home called Kareool near Aerdenhout, a good twenty miles to the west of Amsterdam.

Nathan (born 1911) is depicted in the family as a strong and clever guy. 'He could sell sand to an Arab,' Manuel recalls from the stories he heard about his grandfather. The latter is said to have been a proficient local football player too. The story goes that once a scout for the Dutch team visited the Zaandam club ZCFC where Nathan Bosboom came on the pitch as the striker when the team was trailing 4-0. Nathan made four goals, equalling the score, but the scout selected a defender.

Adriaan described the life of his father in a series of lively sketches in one of five books he wrote, titled *Nathan Nussbaum*, and written after the latter's death. The 'real Nussbaums' were colourful characters with distinct opinions. There could never be, for instance, such a thing as a 'good boss' – a boss will always be 'an exploiter and a villain'. This was Sal's creed, some of which must have seeped through to Manuel's view of the working life.



Another character trait that may have seeped through is the fact that the men in the family were, almost without exception, great storytellers.

Marretje, their mother, was more the sensitive type – warm, loveable, hospitable and caring. She came from a large, poor family and had been in a children's home in her youth.

Manuel was quite a smart aleck already at a young age. David says: 'He had a big inner world, but usually he would react rather than act.' His main interests were football and, gradually, chess. Manuel's father taught him the rules when he was 5 or 6. Adriaan had been taught the moves by an artist friend on a vacation in the eastern Dutch province of Drenthe. 'I was so thrilled by this game that the shivers were running down my spine,' Adriaan recalls. 'So I taught the rules to David, to have a partner to play with at home. I thought Manuel was still too young, but he was watching us play. A few weeks later he beat his brother, and a few months after that he beat me too.' Adriaan took the boys to the Hoogovens Tournament in Wijk aan Zee, on the North Sea coast. They watched the grandmasters play, and Adriaan remembers his son Manuel creeping under the ropes that separated the professionals from the public.

Adriaan Bosboom made a sensitive portrait of his youngest son at seven that is still hanging in the living room.

There was also hardly any money when David and Manuel were kids. Their parents would exchange food and utensils with other artists, and for holidays they changed houses with friends in other towns. To the boys it never felt like they were poor. They were always outside, and they had the feeling they could just do everything they wanted. And if there was some kind of problem, a solution would always be found.

Whenever there was any money, it was quickly gone again. Manuel's mother got an inheritance in 1962 and the only thing they bought was a record player. The rest of the money was spent on a trip to Yugoslavia with



**Portrait of Manuel as a 7-year-old by his father Adriaan.**

one-year-old David, and Manuel in his mother's belly. Whenever Adriaan managed to sell some paintings, they would go on a weekend trip to Paris or something like that.

At 40, Adriaan decided to look for a steadier income for his family, and he took a job as a humanistic counsellor at the local De Heel (= The Heal) hospital, today's Zaans Medisch Centrum (= Zaan Medical Centre). His painting aspirations slowly faded into the background and he kept the job until he was 60, when finally, with a sigh of relief, he started going on sailing trips with his wife – a dream he had been cherishing for many years.

The parents were not strict, and quite open-minded. The boys' upbringing was liberal, and they were sent to an anti-authoritarian primary school, De Werf (= The Wharf), a libertarian institution where there wasn't a lot of discipline. Both boys were intelligent, self-willed and also playful, and both skipped one class at this school. After that, first David and then Manuel went to grammar school at the Zaanlands Lyceum, the same school their father had gone to.

The two brothers played a lot of football on various squares on the other side of the river with two boys who were also brothers, the Niedekkers. The eldest, Roeland, died at an early age; the other, Donald, who is twelve days older than Manuel, became a poet and a writer of, among others, travel books and novels. At school, the two of them already created a comic book together called *Doni Doon and Mani Maan*. Donald is still one of Manuel's best friends. Manuel never really had any aspirations as a writer, but his brother David did; he started writing short stories.

Their parents never pushed them to lead a bourgeois life and pursue a career. They were Manuel's 'biggest fans' when he started having success in chess, just as they thought it was fine that David wanted to become a writer. In 1970, at seven, Manuel enrolled with the local club Het Witte Paard (= The White Knight) in Zaandam, where there was a good chess atmosphere, with active players like Hans Plukker, Kees Dekker and Cor van Dongen.

René Hennipman came to Zaandam when he was ten and Manuel was eight. They met when they started playing football with the local club ZVV, in the sports park Schanzzicht on the other side of the Juliana Bridge. But by now chess was swallowing up Manuel completely. Once he rode his bike against a car that was standing on the road, totally immersed in chess variations he was repeating in his head.

'Manuel was a little nerdy back then,' says Hennipman, formerly a journalist and currently a teacher, and an amateur chess player who became a life-long friend. 'He was wearing big glasses and was always

During the Donner Memorial tournaments in 1995 and 1996, Bosboom had taken Van Wely along to Zaandam to play football in the park on sunny summer evenings. Loek, who was just over 20 at the time, enjoyed it, and decided to join the Zilvermeeuwen team, which played on Sunday afternoons. He kept travelling there from the other side of the country for a couple of years. ‘I thought that was very special,’ Hennipman says. ‘Loek even skipped a simul now and then, sometimes taking a plane and a taxi to get here in time.’ Bosboom would want to play in a wing position, you would expect, but he was always a defensive midfielder. Why? ‘I don’t know,’ he says, ‘perhaps because I feel kind of heroic when defending against a superior attacking force.’ Van Wely was a defensive midfielder too, but he also had an uncontrollable itch for moving forward and trying to score goals. ‘Manuel was more defensively inclined. Especially in futsal he was very good at this – you just couldn’t get past him, he would keep coming back.’ In recent years, Van Wely is still known to organize football matches on rest days in Wijk aan Zee with that other fan, Magnus Carlsen.

There is also a quite fanatical side to Manuel, which manifests itself especially in physical sports. He made several mountain biking trips with Van Wely. At Crete, during the Chania Open in 1993, they went up a mountain with several other Dutchmen. When they started going downhill, there were big holes in the road, large stones, and an abyss gaping on their right. Several of the other Dutchmen decided that this was too much and proceeded to walk down, but Van Wely and Bosboom started flying down in a death-defying frenzy. ‘My bike was bouncing like crazy,’ Van Wely remembers, ‘Suddenly there was a wall before me and I had to pull the brakes instantly. Then I heard someone muttering “you arsehole!” between his teeth. Manuel had been right behind me all the time.’

Chess-wise, 1997 was probably Manuel’s best year ever. Throughout the year, he played an endless series of wild attacking games, even against solid grandmasters. It was one elongated outburst of creativity.

It started with 7 out of 9 in an event in the German town of Willsbach. He only lost to Igors Rausis, the Latvian-Czech GM who was caught consulting his mobile phone in a toilet in Strasbourg 22 years later, in 2019. In 1997 there were no mobiles with chess engines yet, and Rausis was just a strong player.

Manuel narrowly missed the Dutch Championship final by losing a match to Karel van der Weide, but then went all out again and played in three summer opens. In the Dutch Open in Dieren, things didn’t go too well after an unnecessary loss to the eventual winner, Israeli GM Alex Finkel (see the ‘Curiouser’ chapter). He did share first prize there in the

traditional blitz side-event with another specialist, Alexei Barsov from Uzbekistan. Then, in Vlissingen, he played brilliantly in several games, only to go horribly wrong in time-trouble. But he showed no fear at all for reputed grandmasters. In August he went to Antwerp to play in the Lost Boys tournament. He made only 5/9 there, but beat the strong Bulgarian Kiril Georgiev, a former World Junior Champion.

Manuel played the sharpest line against Georgiev's Benko Gambit and landed in a losing position. He decided to muddle on for a bit.

Game 38 Benoni Defence

**Manuel Bosboom** 2430

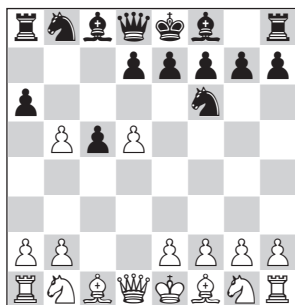
**Kiril Georgiev** 2670

Antwerp 1997 (4)

### 1.d4

In 1996, Manuel added 1.d4 to his repertoire, which certainly helped broaden his horizon.

**1...♟f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6**



### 5.♟c3

The main line of the Benko Gambit starts with 5.bxa6.

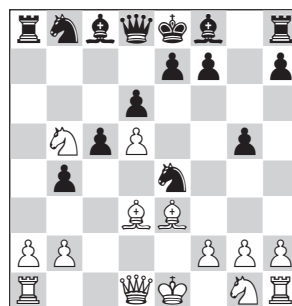
**5...axb5 6.e4 b4 7.♟b5**

This funny variation was invented in 1975 and leads to very unclear play.

**7...d6 8.♟f4 ♟xe4**

The roles are reversed, as now Black is the one with a pawn up and White is playing for compensation.

**9.♟d3 g5 10.♟e3**



### 10...♟f6

Returning the pawn to get his pieces coordinated. The rare 10...♟b6 looks promising for Black.

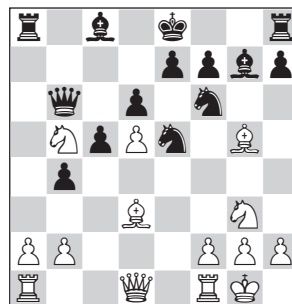
**11.♟xg5 ♟g7 12.♟e2 ♟bd7**

Both sides are slowly but surely bringing their pieces into play.

**13.♟g3 ♟e5**

Including 13...h6 first was certainly worth considering.

**14.0-0 ♟b6**



**15. ♖e1?**

A novelty at the time, with some cool tactics in mind, but it's not correct.

White should stabilize the knight with 15.a4.

**15...c4**

Black accepts the challenge and goes after the knight, but this piece actually becomes the hero of the game.

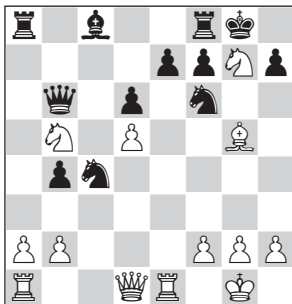
**16. ♙xc4 ♜xc4 17. ♞h5!**

The point behind the piece sacrifice.

**17...0-0!**

Castling right into it, but this is where the king is safest.

**18. ♞xg7**



**18... ♔xg7?**

After this logical recapture, White gets enough play for the piece. The intermediate move 18... ♙g4! would have been strong. After 19. ♖c1 ♖xb5 20. ♙h6 and now 20... ♖xd5, Black remains a piece up. The knight on g7 is remarkably helpless.

**19. ♖xe7?**

This move is too optimistic. 19. ♖c1 was the way to keep the position dynamically balanced.

**19... ♞g8?**

Black gets confused in the tactics. 19... ♖xb5 20. ♖d4 ♞e5 turns out to be winning for Black.

White can keep sacrificing all his pieces, but it won't be enough for a perpetual: 21. ♖xe5 dxe5 22. ♙xf6+ ♔xf6 23. ♖h4+ ♔g6 24. ♖g3+ and now 24... ♔h5 25. ♖xe5+ f5.

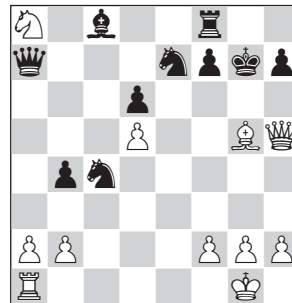
**20. ♞c7**

The frivolous knight is still alive and kicking.

**20... ♞xe7 21. ♞xa8 ♖a7**

Black will be material up, but as opposite-coloured bishops favour the attacker, White will have enough compensation.

**22. ♖h5**



**22... ♞e5?**

Possibly Black saw the perpetual check after 22... ♞g8 23. ♙h6+ ♞xh6 24. ♖g5+ ♔h8 25. ♖f6+ and wanted to play for more, but this backfires badly.

**23. ♙h6+ ♔g8 24. ♙xf8 ♔xf8**

**25. ♖h6+ ♔g8 26. ♖xd6**

It's not clear what Black missed, but after losing this key pawn, his position collapses.

**26... ♞g4 27. ♞b6 ♙f5 28.h3**

Stabilizing the knight with 28.a4 would have decided the game immediately.

**28... ♖xf2!**

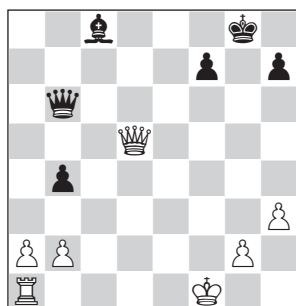
Black finds his last fighting chance.

**29. ♖xf2 ♗xd5**

29... ♗c8 30. ♖xb4 ♗xb6 31. ♖d4 wins as White has too many pawns.

**30. ♖xd5 ♖xb6+ 31. ♖f1 ♖c8!**

Transferring the bishop to the a6-f1 diagonal. White still needs to be careful.



**32. ♖g5+ ♖f8 33. ♖d1!**

A good square for the rook, enabling the king to crawl around it, and heading for safety on the queenside.

**33... ♖a6+ 34. ♖e1 ♖e6+**

34... ♖g1+ 35. ♖d2 ♖d4+ 36. ♖c1 was very similar.

**35. ♖d2 ♖d6+ 36. ♖c1 ♖d3!**

Black keeps finding moves to keep the fight going.

**37. ♖e3 ♖c6+ 38. ♖d2 ♖g6 39. ♖e1!**

Now the kingside is safest after all. White has calculated that he can force the exchange of queens if Black takes the pawn.

**39... ♖xg2 40. ♖d8+ ♖g7 41. ♖d4+!**

The final key move.

**41... f6**

41... ♖h6 42. ♖d2+ was the point.

**42. ♖d7+ 1-0**

In August, at the AKN Open in Haarlem, he played a fantastic tournament, coming first with 5½/6 after a final-round draw with Mikhail Gurevich (who ended on 3½) and beating GMs Attila Groszpetter and Mikhail Ivanov in superior style. In round 2, Manuel played one of his best games ever.

Game 39 Slav Defence

**Manuel Bosboom**

2410

**Igor Khenkin**

2575

Haarlem 1997 (2)

This is the third of three games that were published before in *Mastering Positional Sacrifices*. As a matter of fact, while working on that project, we came to realize that Manuel's life and games deserved a book of their own.

The three games that appear in both books connect these two projects.

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3. ♗c3 dxc4 4. ♗f3**

4.e4 and 4.e3 are the main lines of this particular variation of the Slav.

**4...b5 5.a4 b4 6. ♗e4 ♖d5?**

A very unfortunate move, leading to a losing position.

6... ♗f6 7. ♗xf6+ exf6 is perfectly fine for Black.

**7. ♖e5!**

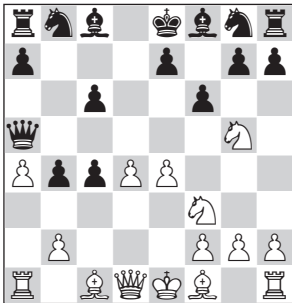
This move is spot-on, giving White a murderous initiative.

**7...f6**

Not a pretty move to make, but there was nothing better. At least this forces White to show some creativity.

7... ♖f6 loses to 8. ♖e5.

**8.e4 ♖a5**



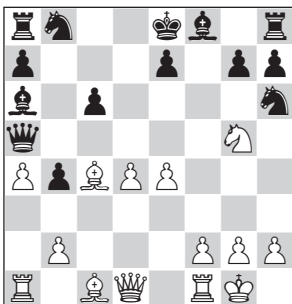
**9. ♖xc4!**

This positional piece sacrifice hardly requires any calculation. Black remains with too many weaknesses in his position.

**9...fxg5 10. ♖xg5 ♖h6 11.0-0**

White is almost done with his development, while Black hardly knows where to start.

**11... ♖a6**



**12. ♖e6!**

Turning the piece sacrifice into a rook sacrifice, resulting in total domination with a board full of pieces.

**12... ♖xf1 13. ♖xf1**

White has everything he can wish for, positionally speaking, and Black nothing.

**13... ♖a6 14. ♖d1**

In the spirit of the sacrifice – no rush.

**14... ♖d7 15. ♖f4**

Systematically bringing the final pieces into play.

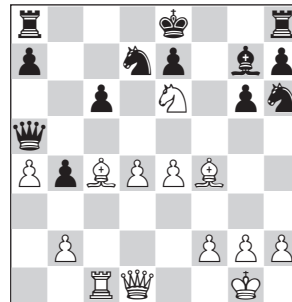
**15...g6 16. ♖c1 ♖g7**

Finally Black can develop a few pieces, but it's too little, too late.

**17. ♖c4!**

Impressive replacement of the front piece.

**17... ♖a5 18. ♖e6**



The harmony in White's position has reached perfection, and Black can no longer prevent heavy material losses.

**18... ♖f7 19. ♖f3**

Adding more threats, before cashing in.

**19... ♖h5 20. ♖xh6+ ♖xf3 21. ♖xg7+**

Picking up two pieces in a row.

**21...e6 22. ♖xe6+ ♖e7 23.gxf3**

The battle is over.

23...♖ac8 24.e5 ♖c7 25.♗b3 ♘b6  
26.♗g5+ ♔d7 27.♗e6#

The poor bugger was completely devastated,' wrote Rini Kuijff

about Khenkin in Schaaknieuws. SchaakMagazine published a picture of Manuel in samurai pose (see picture below).

He was used to going through the chess year like a fuddled tramp in a shopping street, alternating brilliant performances with appalling accidents, but in this year the brilliant performances were considerably more frequent than the accidents. It culminated in his first grandmaster norm in the FRIGEM tournament in Leeuwarden, where he scored 6 out of 9. Along the way, he beat grandmasters Landa, Yakovich and Van Wely.

In the seventh round he even beat the strong and enigmatic Russian GM Semen Dvoiryys. What happened at the end of that game is described in the 'Curiouser' chapter further on in this book.

In the next round, former Candidate Jonathan Speelman was too strong. However, a draw in the final round with Evgeny Gleizerov was enough to pocket the norm, as well as third prize behind Gleizerov and Ivan Sokolov, who ended on 6½.

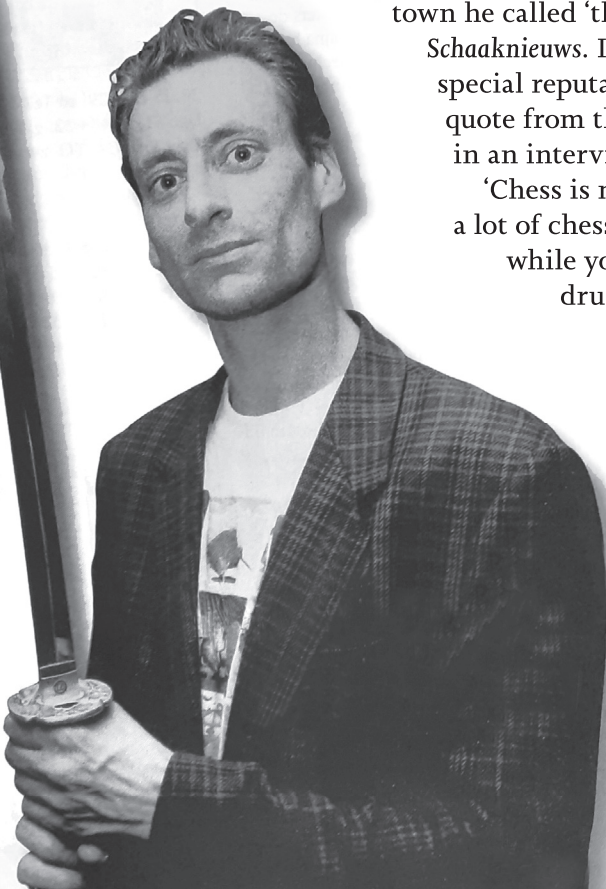
At the end of this year, Manuel went on his first trip to Iceland, making 5½/9 in a tournament in Hafnarfjörður, a small

town he called 'the Zaandam of Iceland' in Schaaknieuws. Icelandic chess has a rather special reputation, as witnessed by this quote from the famous local singer Björk in an interview with *Hot Press* in 1994:

'Chess is massive in Iceland. There's a lot of chess-playing and telling stories while you're getting hilariously drunk. Falling asleep on the

chess table is very much part of Icelandic culture.'

Just the ticket! So, Manuel enjoyed his stay on the entrancing northern island immensely. He beat the up-and-coming Russian Alexander Raetsky in a very sober strategic game.





looking on as well. But he wasn't so surprised, since a few minutes earlier Dvoirys had already crept under his table to search for some other thing he had dropped...

On the night prior to the crucial league match between HSG and Panfox (the club in Breda for which Manuel played) in March 1998, Manuel took a pill, and on the playing day he told Rudy Douven in bright colours how wonderful the experience had been. 'He must have played his game with Dennis de Vreugt in a state of dreaming,' Douven wrote in *Schaaknieuws*.

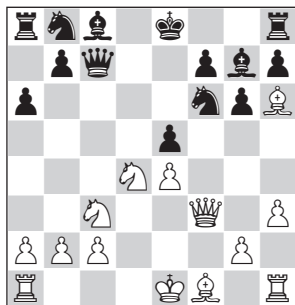
Curiosum 9 Sicilian Defence

**Dennis de Vreugt**

**Manuel Bosboom**

Netherlands tt 1997/98 (7)

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.f4 ♖c7 7.♖f3 g6 8.♙e3 ♙g7 9.h3 e5 10.fxe5 dxe5 11.♙h6!**



'Wake up Bosboom,' Douven wrote. 'This is how Kasparov lost horribly to Ivanchuk in the VSB tournament.'

**11...♗h5!?!?**

So he's walking into some trap. But it never ends there with Manuel. He will always come up with something crazy.

Kasparov had to give up his queen after 12...♙xh6 13.♖xf6 0-0 14.♗d5 ♖a5 15.b4 ♖d8 16.♗e7+. Bosboom felt quite OK after the text. Douven: 'Do you understand it? I don't. Is Bosboom crazy, or is Kasparov a duffer, or was that pill still working?'

De Vreugt, who had probably been counting on a quick win, still has a significant advantage, but psychologically he was in big trouble now and he didn't manage to keep his act together:

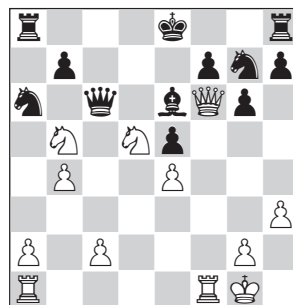
**12.♙b5+?!**

12.♗d5! was best.

**12...axb5 13.♗dxb5 ♖c5?! 14.♙xg7 ♗xg7 15.b4! ♖c6 16.♗d5 ♗a6**

**17.0-0 ♙e6 18.♖f6??**

18.c4 was still okay for White.



**18...♙xd5 19.♖xg7 ♖f8??**

He should have played 19...♖b6+ followed by queenside castling, remaining a piece up and surviving the attack.

**20.exd5??**

Now White could have won again by taking on e5 with check, or playing 20.♖ad1 first.

**20...♖xb5 21.♗xe5+ ♔d7 22.♗ae1? ♖xb4 23.d6?**

23.♖b1.

**23...♖c5+ 0-1**

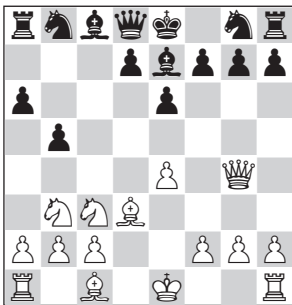
Here is a game Manuel played in the VAM tournament in 1999 against the ultra-solid Sergei Tiviakov. It was already quite an achievement that he managed to lure the ex-Russian from Groningen into a totally chaotic position.

Curiosum 10 Sicilian Defence

**Sergei Tiviakov** 2611  
**Manuel Bosboom** 2476

Hoogeveen 1999 (4)

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 a6 5.♗c3 b5 6.♗d3 ♗c5!? 7.♗b3 ♗e7 8.♖g4**



**8...♗f6!?**

A French pawn sacrifice in a Sicilian that Manuel employed more frequently in the day. For quite a while, Black won't be able to win back the g2-pawn, but the position becomes irrational enough.

**9.♖xg7 ♖g8 10.♖h6 ♗c6**

10...♖xg2? 11.e5 was out of the question.

**11.♗d2 ♗e5 12.f4**

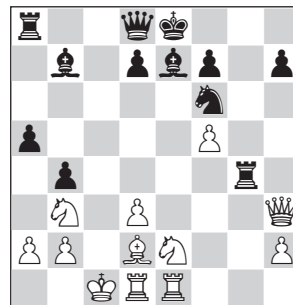
In Hafnarfjörður later that year, Jacob Aagaard, later a well-known grandmaster, trainer and book publisher, played 12.♗e2, which also led to chaos. You can see how it ended in the 'Combinations' chapter.

**12...♗xd3+ 13.cxd3 b4 14.♗e2 ♖xg2**

**15.♖h3 ♖g6 16.f5 exf5 17.exf5 ♖g4**

Always be wary of Bosboom's rooks!

**18.0-0-0 ♗b7 19.♖he1 a5**



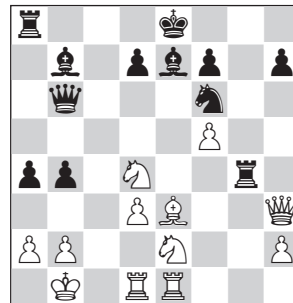
**20.♗b1**

Strong was 20.♗f4, when White comes first, e.g. 20...a4 21.♗h5!.

**20...a4 21.♗bd4**

21.♗f4 axb3 22.♗xb4 ♗e4!? must have been just a little too chaotic for Tiviakov's taste.

**21...♖b6 22.♗e3?**



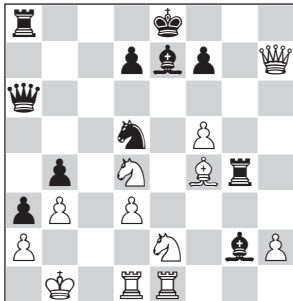
**22... ♖a6?**

What about 22... ♖g2 23. ♖h6 ♖f8, catching the queen? After 24. ♗b5! ♖d8 25. ♗c7+ ♖xc7 26. ♖xf6 ♖g7, Black leads the dance.

**23. ♖f4 a3 24. b3 ♖g2**

Now he sees it, but now the queen can go to e3.

**25. ♖h6? ♗d5 26. ♖xh7**



**26... 0-0-0**

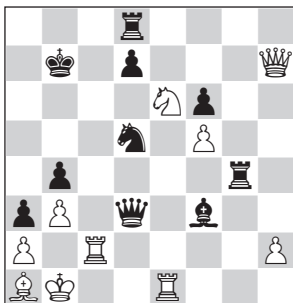
Not a record, but not everyday either. Black is not worrying about pawns – he’s taking over.

**27. ♖e5 f6 28. ♖g3 ♖c5 29. ♖f2 ♖xd4 30. ♖xd4 ♖f3 31. ♖a1 ♗e3?**  
31... ♖e8!, with the idea ... ♖e3.

**32. ♖c1+?**

Must have been time-trouble. He shouldn’t have let go of the d3-pawn and should have played 32. ♖h3!

**32... ♖b7 33. ♗f4 ♗d5 34. ♗e6 ♖xd3+ 35. ♖c2**

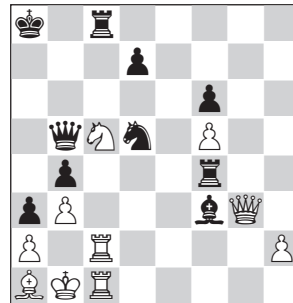


Quick, the threat is 36. ♗c5+. Now 35... ♗c3+! 36. ♖xc3 ♖c8! wins because d7 is covered by the queen. However, Manuel finds another winning move – a real show-stopper:

**35... ♖a8!?! 36. ♗c5**

36. ♗xd8 leads to unstoppable mate after 36... ♖d1!.

**36... ♖b5 37. ♖h3 ♖f4 38. ♖g3 ♖c8 39. ♖ec1**



Now White is ripe for the slaughter:

**39... ♖xc5! 40. ♖xc5 ♖e4+ 41. ♖5c2 ♖xc2+ 42. ♖xc2 ♖f1+ 43. ♖c1 ♗c3+ 44. ♖xc3 ♖xf5+**

And White resigned.

There are at least five games in the databases in which Manuel sacrificed two exchanges: against Duhayon in Geraardsbergen 2003, against Carlier, Netherlands tt 2006 (see Chapter 7), against Van der Wiel in the 2007 Dutch Championship, against Graf, Netherlands tt 2018, and against Nijboer in the 2020 Batavia tournament – all five of them in this millennium!

Curiosum 11

**Manuel Bosboom**

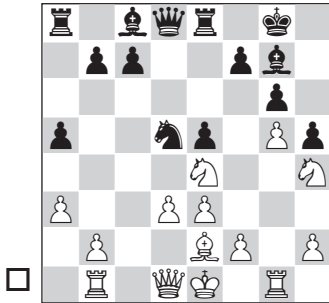
2419

**Henk van der Poel**

2280

Amsterdam 2005 (4)

This game illustrates how difficult things usually are for a defender against a sacrificing opponent.

**17. ♖xh5!?**

‘What else?’ is Manuel’s comment.

**17...gxf5 18. ♖xh5 ♕f8?!**

Immediately 18...♖a6 would have been strong.

**19. ♖g3 ♖a6 20. ♖f3 ♖e7 21. ♖c1**

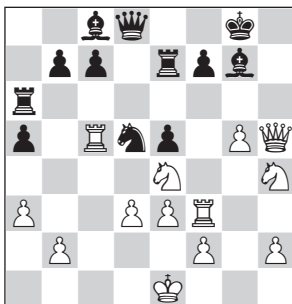
Bringing on the final piece.

**21...♕g8**

A loss of precious time, but Black is still alive.

**22. ♖c5**

All quite ‘normal’.

**22...♕e6?**

Now the game is quickly over. The brilliant counter-shot 22...♖b4!!

would have saved Black, e.g.

23. ♖f6+ (23. ♖c3 ♖d5; 23. axb4 ♖xd3

24. ♖f6+ ♖xf6 25. gxf6 ♖b1+ 26. ♕e2

♖d7) 23...♖xf6 24. gxf6 ♖xd3+

25. ♕f1 ♖xf6 26. ♖xf6 (26. ♖xa5

♖xh4 27. ♖xh4 ♖e8 28. ♖g3+ ♕f8

and White has to give perpetual

check) 26...♖xc5 27. ♖h6 ♖d3+

28. ♕g2 ♖e4+ 29. f3 (29. ♕g3 ♖g4+!)

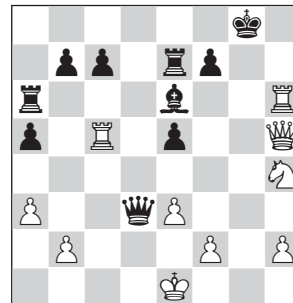
29...♖xe3 30. ♖h8+ ♕g7 31. ♖h7+=.

Even 22...f5!! seems to work, e.g.

23. ♖xf5 ♖xf5 24. ♖xf5 ♖f4! 25. exf4

♖xd3 26. f3 ♖d6! 27. ♖xd6 ♖e3+

and also here Black’s counterplay is enough for the draw.

**23. ♖f6+ ♖xf6 24. gxf6 ♖xf6 25. ♖xf6****♖xd3 26. ♖h6**

Now the white king has a way out:

**26...♖b1+ 27. ♕e2 ♖xb2+ 28. ♕f3****e4+ 29. ♕g3 f5 30. ♖g6 f4+ 31. ♖xf4****♖g7+ 32. ♖g5 1-0**

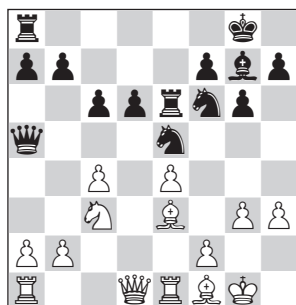
Throughout his life, Bosboom has played the King’s Indian with black. In the Fianchetto Variation, he has managed to play the same trick on White three times over thirty years – and it has been said that he did it in more than one blitz game too.

Curiosum 12 King's Indian Defence

**1.d4 d6 2.♘f3 g6 3.g3 ♕g7 4.♙g2  
♜f6 5.0-0 0-0 6.c4 ♜bd7 7.♜c3 c6  
8.e4 e5 9.h3 exd4 10.♜xd4 ♚a5  
11.♞e1 ♜e5 12.♙f1 ♞e8 13.♙e3**

As was indicated in a Forum piece in Yearbook 131 by Peter Boel, 13.♜b3 is possible, but GM Rustem Dautov beat Bosboom in the Germany Bundesliga 1993/94 with 13.♞b1 ♙e6 14.b4 ♚c7 15.f4 ♜ed7. 15...♙xc4, as Bosboom tried in Amsterdam 2012 against Prieto Arangura, is no improvement.

**13...♙e6 14.♜xe6 ♞xe6**



Here is the position.

Now the trick is 15.a3? ♜xe4!, since 16.♜xe4 loses to 16...♚xe1! 17.♚xe1 ♜f3+. The first occasion of this trap was A.Vaisman-N. Levin, Kiev ch-URS 1968. The same thing happened in Miezis-Bosboom, Dieren 2005, and it was also repeated in a game between Jan Smeets and Jeroen Bosch in 2011. Another way to fall for the trick is 15.f4!? (a little less disastrous is 15.♞b1 ♜xe4! 16.b4 ♜xc3 17.bxa5 ♜xd1 18.♞exd1 b6! 19.axb6 axb6 20.♞xb6 h5 and Black is 'just'

better, Leski-P.Cramling, France tt 1998), and here is where Manuel discovered the same idea by himself. One night in 1989, Manuel visited Albert Blees at his home in Amsterdam. Blees had an issue of Yasser Seirawan's magazine *Inside Chess* lying on the table, opened at a theoretical article on this line in which Walter Browne recommended 15.f4. Manuel saw that Albert had been looking at this and thought 'Mmm..., this could really be an assault on my repertoire.' Back at home, he investigated the position further and found the pseudo-sacrifice which, as said, had been played in a 1968 game that was unknown to anyone twenty years later. The next week, the game Blees-Bosboom was on the program in the club competition of Zukertort Amstelveen. Albert played the novelty 15.f4, Manuel replied with his novelty 15...♜xe4! and soon after, White had to resign.

For Manuel, this was the start of an impressive series of games with this trick. In a Dutch league game in 2019, 16-year-old Belgian Warre de Waele continued with 16.fxe5 ♜xg3 17.♙g2 ♜f5 18.♙f2 ♙xe5 and White wasn't even that badly off, but now Manuel was in his element and brought the point home without any trouble.

15.♙g2! is the way for White to solve the problem. It has been known since 1964 from a Kiev game Borisenko-Petersons, and Manuel faced the move five times as well:

against Pentala Harikrishna (2001), Nils Grandelius (2012), Ilias van der Lende (2015), Jaap de Jager (2016), and Edwyn Mesman (2019). In 1988, Pawel Stempin had already played the more passive 15. ♕d2 against Bosboom in the Bielsko Biala tournament.

So probably the created morpho-genetic field will enable white players to avoid this disaster in the future. Or most white players.

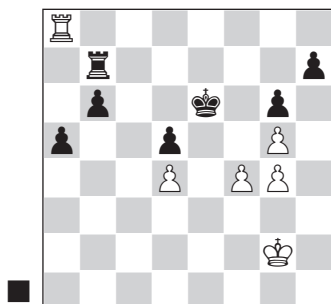
To save the match against HMC Calder for Apeldoorn and help the team qualify for the European Cup in 2007, Bosboom had to beat Mikhail Saltaev. This was a pretty tough task, considering that he was a pawn down in a tricky rook ending against a solid GM. But there appears to be something called the Bosboom Law stating that one passed pawn runs faster than two!

Curiosum 13

**Manuel Bosboom** 2390

**Mikhail Saltaev** 2505

Netherlands tt 2006/07 (8)



39... ♕d6?

A mistake just before the time control. He should have played 39... ♖f7! first and after 40. ♕f3, 40... ♗d6, which should be winning. **40.f5!**

Now he gets that one passed pawn! This already equalizes.

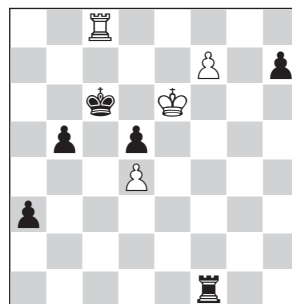
**40...gxf5 41.gxf5 ♖g7 42.♗d8+? ♕c6?**

42... ♕c7 was better.

**43.♕f3 ♖xg5 44.♗f4 ♖g1 45.f6 a4**

**46.♕f5 b5 47.f7 ♖f1+ 48.♕e6 a3**

**49.♖c8+**



**49... ♕b6??**

And now he's even handed his ticket to Kemer! It was still a draw after 49... ♕b7 50. ♖c1! (since 50.f8 ♖?? loses to 50... ♖xf8 51. ♖xf8 a2 52. ♖f1 b4) 50... ♖xc1 51.f8 ♖ a2 52. ♖e7+ ♕b6 (52... ♖c7 53. ♖a3 ♖c6+ 54. ♕xd5 ♖a6 55. ♖e7+ etc.) 53. ♖d8+ ♖c7 54. ♖a8 ♖a7 55. ♖b8+ ♕a6 56. ♖c8+ ♕a5 57. ♖c3+ and Black can't escape the checks.

**50.f8 ♖ ♖xf8 51. ♖xf8 ♕c6**

51...b4 52. ♖b8+ ♕a5 53. ♕xd5 a2

54. ♕c5 also loses.

**52. ♖c8+ ♕b7 53. ♖c3!**

After 53...b4 54. ♖b3 a2 55. ♖xb4+ and 56. ♖a4, White is on time. Utterly devastated, Saltaev resigned.