All,

Pull up your armchair, and settle in, as this is a rarity in itself; Rossie goes attacking, sacrifices and mates!!  
Indeed, it is infrequent that my attacking skills are called upon, but in this neat game, black’s lacklustre play gets short shrift. By no means a weak opponent, but his audacious attempt to defend by running the king up the H-file is intriguing in itself.   
The principal learning feature of this game is the way in which “attacking” pieces are used simultaneously as “defensive” forces. A challenge to achieve both at the same time, but this setup against the Modern permits white to demonstrate this admirably.

This variation has been kicking around now for several years. I have even dabbled with it myself, as it throws up some complex positions. White can over-stretch very easily. Fortunately, I have had some good top-level coaching on the strategies against this, and was duly prepared with a suitable plan.  
Enjoy!

[Event "Bedfordshire League Matches 2013-2014"]

[Site "Milton Keynes, ENG"]

[Date "2014.02.06"]

[Round "6.1"]

[White "Ross, Chris"]

[Black "Freeman, Richard"]

[Result "1-0"]

[ECO "B06"]

[Annotator "Chris Ross"]

[PlyCount "57"]

[EventDate "2014.02.06"]

[WhiteTeam "Northampton"]

[BlackTeam "Milton Keynes A"]

{B06: Modern Defence: Ujtelky/Hillarp-Persson variation}

1. e4 g6

2. d4 Bg7

3. Nc3 d6

4. Be3 a6

{The hyper-modern way to play this variation. Hilliarp-Persson has written a great deal on this variation and it is still being debated. Black is ultimately delaying the development of his king-side, to attempt to develop his minor pieces favourably and attack the centre from the fringes, in the style of the Alekhine. White is not provoked though to venture willingly forward through the centre with direct threats though.   
White’s greatest danger in this variation is ambition. White can burn his bridges far too easily and allow black to consolidate superior piece placement. Patience is essential in this opening.}

5. Qd2 Nd7

6. O-O-O b5

{White’s development is swift and natural, but complications will be arising soon enough. With the black king in the centre, it is not easy to mate quickly. White has to then set out cautiously and prepare for the time when the black king flees to either side of the board, the king-side being the most likely.}  
7. h4   
{Putting an immediate question to black. White’s king is safe enough on the queen-side, so king-side expansion is natural. The king’s knight though has to find a square to develop. Since e2 is needed for the queen’s knight if chased, and f2-f3 being required to solidify the centre, h3 is the only other candidate route. Also, the knight is headed for the d5 outpost.}  
7... h5

{A big decision, for this pawn can never be retreated. 7... h6 has also featured predominantly in the top-level games. Permitting h4-h5-h6 is unwise, but this restraining move has received mixed plaudits. The only real virtue of the move is that the h6 square is freed up for a minor piece. A feature that needs to be taken into account later on.}  
8. Nh3 Bb7  
9. f3   
{This is now needed, as b5-b4 could be dropping a pawn on e4. The solidification of the centre is acceptable though, as now the pawn break g2-g4 is in the offing. Since this is the only pawn-break on the board for white really (a2-a4 being possible potentially in an ending), white sets up to achieve this.}  
9... Rc8   
{Another committal move by black, but again, one that has been featured before. The rook focuses on the white queen-side and wishes to stand on an open file when the break c7-c5 is achieved. However, there are still discussions to whether this rook does indeed belong on c8. Despite standing on a half-open file, it has been voiced that for attacking potential, the rook may stand best on b8. The pawn-break with c7-c5 does not then need the preparatory rook’s support. An intriguing feature, which is explored later as well.}  
10. Kb1   
{White takes time to remove the king off the C-file, effectively saying to black that the rook on c8 is misplaced. The c1-h6 diagonal is also not an issue now and Bh6 pins do not have to be feared. prophylactic moves such as this have to be timed accurately.}  
10... c5   
11. dxc5   
{White is not afraid of open lines. Indeed, he wishes to demonstrate that the rook on c8 is poorly placed. Black cannot be permitted to advance the C-pawn to c4 and have a rapid pawn-storm. Also, the “Dragon” bishop needs to be challenged. Since Bh6 has been taken out of the equation, the bishop has to be challenged from the only other diagonal.}  
11... Nxc5   
11... dxc5 has been tried, but not with much success. The D-file is open and white has a space advantage, which has fared well for him across the many attempts.}   
12. Bd4   
{Here, an instructive feature of “attacking” pieces is introduced into this game, and also clearly demonstrated on move 17. A grandmaster once told me that the pieces that you are using for attack, should also serve their duties defensively. That requires some contemplation, for how can a piece be used as an attacking force, but also defensively? Subtle implementation is the key there then. The success to the most effective piece is that it is attacking in one specific direction, but is actually simultaneously defending in the reverse direction, or even more cleverly, horizontally. This latter point is more apparent in the case of rooks. For rooks can be, and should be used, attackingly in a vertical way, but also serve defensively horizontally. An objective which is sometimes difficult to achieve.  
Here, in this variation of the Modern, white can achieve this concept splendidly with two pieces. First, being this bishop. Whilst challenging the long diagonal and attacking the black king-side, it is defending white’s most vulnerable square, that being b2. This hinders black’s tactical tricks with Na4/Nc3+/Nxb2 ideas. Continuing that thread of thought, it brings up the question of the rook on c8. For on c8, the rook has no attack on b2. If the rook were to be on b8, Na4/Nc3+ ideas could be valid for if the b-pawns were to take on c3, there could be a discovered attack, giving the rook a purpose. Hence, why there is a debate to where the rook could potentially belong.

With the text-move too, the Dragon bishop’s potential is minimalized and the white king is offered more protection.}  
12... Nf6   
{Black has no wish for exchanges and to weaken his dark-squares any more than which have already been done so. He also strives to castle. Additionally, breaks through the centre with e4-e5 could be looming.}  
13. Nd5   
{Exploiting the pin on the f6-knight whilst it is possible. Due to the damage threatened to the black pawn structure, black has no option but to take on d5, thereby giving white the bishop pair, which is a potent ingredient in the attacking possibilities. More importantly though is that the only white minor piece vulnerable to attack on the white queen-side is moved and exchange for a dangerous black light-squared bishop.}  
13... Bxd5   
14. exd5

{Positionally speaking now, the black e7-pawn has become a focus point. This pawn is backward and will require protection, which is another feature that is targeted in the proceeding manoeuvres.}  
14... O-O   
15. Nf4   
{Developing the knight, offering the d5-pawn protection (although strictly speaking, it does not need protection, due to the tactics with Bxg7), but preparing the launch of the king-side at the same time.}  
15... Qc7   
{Black appears to be doing rather OK here, since he has developed, castled and seemingly has good squares for his knights. White now needs to consider very carefully on how he is to carry out the king-side attack. White has now reached the start of the critical phase of the game. How to conduct such an attack effectively.  
Experience has shown me though, how to carry out this attack and I was able to utilise that experience here. Another product of careful contemplation of why you play certain variations, and learn how you are meant to conduct yourself with them.   
Consideration is now required.)

16. g3!  
{A remarkably deceptive move, and contra to instinct. The automatic response is for white to be lashing out with g2-g4 and attempting to bust black open as fast as possible. Although extremely tempting, the break-g2-g4 is both tactically and positionally flawed.   
16. G4? Nfe4! 17. Fxe4 Bxd4 18. Qxd4 Ne6! 19. Qd2 Nxf4 and white has a very poor position with a bad bishop verses a good knight and the white queen-side being very vulnerable.

There are also variations where black can cheekily take on g4 and meet h4-h5 with g6-g5, which is not such a ridiculous variation as it first appears.

Now come the positional considerations. White is behind in development and his “problem” piece is his light-squared bishop. Although the bishop pair is an advantage in many positions, the black knights provide more than enough defensive cover to make the bishop a redundant piece for the time-being. In addition, the bishop has no real squares. On e2 it does very little and only hinders things for white’s future ambitions on move 17. The bishop is needed though to control the c4 square, which could be a point of penetration for black.

Essentially though, the e4 square is weak. When white breaks with g2-g4, if black takes this with hxg4 and white recaptures with f3xg4, both the e4 square is available for Nfe4 or Nce4, and the e5-outpost becomes very vacant for black to switch a knight around to.

This is then for many reasons why the break, g2-g4 is not possible. But is it?! That is the only break that will open up things. So, it will have to be played, but played at a time when the black forces have been encouraged to less effective squares.  
So, now we come to the black pieces, and their positioning. The rook on c8 is still black’s problem in many ways, and especially so with white’s 16th move, for now, suddenly, the h3 square has become available for the light-squared bishop. Bh3 is an option for white, but is not his intended square for the piece.  
Black’s major concerns are on the queen-side, naturally, and keeping white occupied on the mating ideas on the c2 or b2 squares. Move 12 has defended the b2 square adequately, which is a big plus. White can throw in Bc4 if the black B-pawn were to advance and the a6-pawn may be left en prise. Playing a6-a5 only drops the b5 pawn too. Black needs a plan now.}

16... Kh7  
{Possibly a “waiting” move, which doesn’t turn out well for black, as the king proves to be very sensitive on this square. Afterwards, black expressed concerns about the light-squares and wanted to have Rg8/Rh8 as a defensive option. These are valid concerns. However, white can now adapt another excellent positional move, in a similar vein to that taken on move 12.}  
17. Rh2

{The rook is developed to it’s best square. Black’s principal threats were against the c2 square, thereby preventing the white queen to venture away for attacking duties. This rook’s lift to h2 defends the c2 pawn and cuts out all of black’s tricks. The rook is equally as good on the second rank as on the first, as it serves the same purpose vertically. Indeed, the h1 square is freed up for the rook on d1.  
Rooks should be doubled though, and on open files, or half-open files. So, in fact, the rook is not immediately destined for the H-file, although g3-g4 is a break that is desired and ultimately accomplished. No, the rook is actually headed for the E-file to pressurise the backward E-pawn. Although slightly unusual, aesthetically, the rook is being “doubled” in the more unorthodox way, instead of Rhe1 and Re2, it is going via h2 and then e2.  
Once again though, this is a demonstration on how the piece is are being utilised as an offensive potential, down the H-file if g3-g4 were to be permitted, but horizontally, defending the queen-side. A double-purposed feature, which is over-looked by many players in setups.}.

17... Ncd7

{It is difficult to find a constructive plan for black here. The knight is re-routed to a more central square, where black hopes to create tactics and hold up g3-g4 for as long as possible.}

18. Bd3

{With the knight’s retreat, the bishop can land on d3 with more effect, targeting the black king on h7. There are vague threats now of Bxf6 and after any re-capture with the bishop or pawn, Nxh5 is playable, as the g6-pawn is pinned. How effective that win of the pawn is may be up for debate, but it gives black pause for concern if nothing else.}

18... Ne5   
19. Qe2   
{The queen re-locates to a light-square, since black no longer has that coloured bishop. The threat to f3 is protected and g3-g4 is supported. The black queen cannot wander away from the b8-h2 diagonal, due to a possible sneaky snatch of a pawn on e5 if it is tactically possible, for any discovery with the knight’s departure from f6, could allow a Qxh5+ trick with the bishop on d3 pinning the pawn on g6.  
As all of the squares down the C-file are covered, it is extremely difficult now to find a productive plan for black. White is now just about prepared for g3-g4 and the launch of the final stage of the attack.}  
19... Nxd3?

{After which, black is simply lost, positionally and tactically. Strange as it may appear, 20... Bh6 was the only move I could really see for black. White has a decision then whether to retreat with 21. Be3, or 21. Nh3, both of which, are not ideal, but give white the opportunity to carry on with the king-side attack soon after.}   
20. Rxd3   
{With this simple move, the rook is lifted onto the third rank, blocking the light squares – making Qc4 by black an unnecessary move – and allowing a tripling on the E-file. The final attack will now be too overwhelming.}  
20... Qd7

{Black strives to prevent g3-g4 at all costs. Once g3-g4 is achieved, the black king-side is blown apart and the open files and diagonals will soon yield mate.}

21. Re3   
{As Qc4 is never an option now for black, white can happily gang up on the E-pawn and allow his queen to step to a better light-square. Black does not have time for any constructive defence.}  
21... Rfe8   
22. Qd3 Kh6

{An ambitious move if there ever was one! Black was worried about the tactics previously mentioned with Bxf6 and Nxh5, as the g6-pawn is weak. A move that is bravely played, but can never be correct. Again, white has to resist the temptation to put a piece on the c1-h6 diagonal and attempt to exploit the king’s precarious position on h6, but this is not necessary. The build-up on the light-squares is sufficient to convert this massive position.}

23. Rhe2

{There are many good moves in this position. 23. Rg2 preparing g3-g4 is not out of the reckoning. I simply wanted to play this in classical fashion and prepare g3-g4 in a more  stylistic sense.}  
23... Rc4

{This move achieves nothing, but again, a constructive plan for black is difficult to see. Black could push his queen-side pawns, but it is all far too slow. White’s threats on the king-side are coming through far too quickly. The text-move may have some vague threats of Rxd4 and a discovery on the white queen if she recaptures. I deemed it time-effective to simply avoid complications and also impossible for black to find an adequate response in his time-trouble to formulate a plan.}

24. c3 Rc7  
{Effectively conceding, as there is no productiveness to this retreat, apart from the sole feature that it defends the e7-pawn. I have no interest in that pawn though and the final blow now lands with decisive effect.}  
25. Re6!  
{A devastating move to meet in a time-scramble. The principal objective of the move is to block-up the c8-h3 diagonal to permit white to play g3-g4 without losing a pawn and position. The black queen is blocked out of the defence and black has no time or resources to defend against the oncoming assault.}  
25... Kh7   
{25... fxe6 26. Qxg6# is not clever, and black tries to run away with the king. 25... Nxd5 is neatly met by 26. Rxg6+, once again, the demonstration how exposed the black king is. The pawn chain around the king has been compromised and something will fall if the black night wanders away from it’s support.}

26. g4   
{White has waited ten moves to play this, from move 16. Ten moves later, he achieves his goal. Now, because all of his pieces are developed, ultimately best placed, he can play it with its true maximum effect. The black king-side is torn apart. There is no defence against 27. Gxh5 or 27. G5.}    
26... fxe6   
{As good as resigning. There are many attractive ways to win this position. I can simply recapture on e6 and play it slowly. So much to play with. I saw no reason in delaying the inevitable though.]  
27. Qxg6+ Kg8   
{27... Kh8 involves lots of other very attractive variations with 28. Nxe6 Rg8 and smothered mates with Qh6+ but I’ll let you figure out those on your own. If nothing else, 29 g5 will bring the house down. 29... Bf8 30. Qh5 with mate!}   
28. dxe6 Qc6   
{Black should resign here, as there is nothing for him. Although a rook up, he is being mated without any difficulty.}  
29. Nxh5

{And black cannot avoid being mated on g7. 29... Nxh5 30. Gxh5 and there is no defence to 31. Qxg7#}

29... 1-0

Opening references  
  
A.  
12. Nd5 Bxd5 13. exd5 Na4 14. Bd4 Bxd4 15. Qxd4 Nf6 16. Nf4 Qb6 17. Be2 Qxd4 18. Rxd4 Nb6 19. b3 Rc5 20. Rhd1 a5 21. a3 O-O 22. b4 Rc3 23. bxa5 Na8 24. a4 bxa4 25. Rxa4 Rb8+ 26. Kc1 Nc7

Ter Sahakyan,S (2486)-Gelashvili,T (2609)/Gyumri ARM 2009/0-1 (56)

B.  
13. Ng5 O-O 14. Nd5 e5 15. Nxf6+ Qxf6 16. Be3 Rfd8 17. Qb4 Qe7

18. Bd3 f6 19. Nh3 Qc7 20. Rc1 Bf8 21. Qe1 Qf7 22. Rg1 d5 23. g4 hxg4 24. Bxc5 Bxc5 25. Rxg4 d4 26. Qg3 Kh7 27. f4 Bd6

Wang,M (1728)-Bennett,P (2040)/Uplands Park ENG 2011/1-0 (34)})

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