All,  
Here is my 5th game from the recent Lichtenberger Sommer tournament, which took place in Berlin. Similar to my last performance in this tournament, I started the tournament well, scoring 3.5/4 and had to face a titled player with the black pieces. Three years ago, I lost an extremely instructive game against GM Rabiega, who won the tournament this year with 7.5/9. This time around, I scored 6/9, a satisfactory, if uninspiring score. Too many draws in the middle part of the tournament prevented me from equalling that great score from 2010.   
Once again though, my loss to a titled player proved to be very interesting. IM Rene Stern will soon become a GM, I have no doubt and the extraordinary patience he demonstrates in this game is worthy of annotation. The display of calmness and the effective way in which he coolly increases his advantages, without seeking immediate reward for his superior position is deserving of the highest regard.   
Enjoy.  
[Event "12. Lichtenberger Sommer"]

[Site "Berlin, GER"]

[Date "2013.08.21"]

[Round "5"]

[White "Stern, IM Rene"]

[Black "Ross, Chris"]

[Result "1-0"]

[WhiteElo "2504"]

[BlackElo "2240"]

[Annotator "Chris Ross"]

[PlyCount "89"]

{E11: Bogo-Indian}   
1. d4 e6   
2. c4 Nf6   
3. Nf3   
{A surprise on move 3. In previous games in the tournament, he played 3. Nc3. Looking through his games in the pre-match preparation, 3. Nc3 and the Nimzo-Indian appeared to be his first choice of play.}  
3... Bb4+   
4. Bd2 Qe7   
5. Nc3   
{Which came as no surprise, as the transposition into Nimzo-Indian setups is logical. I was now back into the pre-game preparation. I had studied a couple of his games and found a line, which he had not faced before. I also discovered that he liked playing e2-e3 and Bd3 setups (after having played 4. Bd2 in the Nimzo). In that sense then, I wanted to break him away from his typical setup and force him into a king-side fianchettoed setup. Potentially, taking him out of his comfort zone.  
To do this then, I had to switch the position into a Dutch-like structure. Since the control of the e4 square is one of the main principals of the Nimzo-Indian Defence, this was not difficult to accomplish. Again, database analysis helped me in my construction of the setup I aimed for.}  
5... Bxc3   
{Voluntarily giving up the dark-squared bishop, but ensuring that white cannot maintain the bishop pair shortly afterwards. Black is now aiming to control the light-squares with pieces and pawns.}  
6. Bxc3 Ne4   
{Thus securing back the bishop pair and controlling the all-important e4 square.}  
7. Qc2 f5   
8. g3   
{Having now achieved my objective, I continued with my preparation. Computer analysis demonstrated to me though that the maintenance of the knight on e4 could be a problem though in this type of position. If I were to contest the long diagonal, I had to be wary of Nd2 ideas, when the knight on e4 could be pinned. Hence, why this knight has to be exchanged immediately and to facilitate the light-squared bishop to replace its duty of controlling the central square.}  
8... Nxc3   
9. Qxc3 b6   
10. Bg2 Bb7   
11. O-O   
{If the black knight had still been on e4, Nd2 would have been a problem. As it is, games had shown me that black was apparently fine in this type of position. His strategy is logical enough. The push of the E-pawn, with d6 and Nd7 and a potential attacking possibilities on the king-side. Black will not get wiped out quickly.}  
11... O-O   
{Interestingly enough, I had not gone any further in my pre-match analysis of this particular line, as games had shown me that this setup was fine. However, there may be a slight subtlety in the move-order here. 11... d6 may be best first, as Nd7 can be played quickly. The uncastled king is not an immediate problem.  
What I was concerned about though was white attempting to get in e2-e4 at his earliest convenience. Once the white knight has retreated to d2, for example, black will have to play a rapid e6-e5, to meet e2-e4 with f5-f4. When that happens, black would like to have the option of re-capturing on f4 with the rook.   
At the board, I suddenly perceived possibilities of 11... d6 12. Nd2 Bxg2 13. Kxg2 e5 14. Qf3 which seemed to be rather problematic!}    
12. Rac1   
{Curiously, in all of the games I studied, the white players put their rooks on d1 rather quickly. Either rook could stand on d1 and the concentration down the C-file did not appear to be a plan. Possibly then, this could be the subtlety I mentioned in the move-order.}  
12... d6  
13. C5   
{If white does not play this, black would simply play Nd7 and continue with his plan. Black may even be able to play c7-c5 himself at some stage. The e5 square would need protection, but black should be OK.  
As it were, the International Master clearly sees that black’s slight lack of development is causing him some considerable difficulties.}   
13... Bd5?!   
{The start of all black’s consequent difficulties. For essentially, this loses a whole tempo, which should have been used to develop the final black minor piece.  
I was wanting to secure up the light-squares, and occupy the newly weakened d5 square. Naturally, the development of the queen’s knight to d7 is no longer possible, due to c5-c6 forks. If white does not act quickly, this development plan would be possible, as the blockading move c5-c6 is not in white’s interest.    
White now considered for some time, clearly contemplating the deep positional elements to this position. His approach is excellent and well thought out. The position deserves thought here, as the correct plan of action is not easy to find.

13... Nc6 14. cxd6 cxd6 is possibly the best plan for black.}  
14. cxd6 cxd6   
15. Ne1!  
{Impressively, white understands that the newly weakened d5 square is the key to the position. His opening up of the C-file is only a precursor to permit some entry points in the future. The focus is indeed, down the D-file. White now strives to control the d5 square and to undermine it. In effect, white is wanting to force through d4-d5 himself, forcing either an outpost on c6 or creating “pawn islands” for black to save in the ending. White is, effectively, playing for the end-game!  
The exchange of the light-squared bishop is only in his interest, but by doing this, he cleverly reroutes the knight around to it’s most effective square, that being f4. White ignores the natural e2-e4 break and finds the ideal outpost for the minor piece.  
This instructive demonstration of positional understanding is artistic in its conception.}  
15... Bxg2   
16. Nxg2 Re8   
{Black is now grovelling to find a good plan. The white major pieces are threatening to penetrate down onto the 7th rank. Black needs to protect his pieces and especially so, his weak e6 square. Once the white knight lands on f4, black can not permit Ne6 to occur with gain of tempo on the rook on f8. Nf8 needs to be a possibility for black too to evict the knight on e6.}   
17. Qa3!  
{Yet another excellent positional move by white. White not only pressurises the d6 pawn, preventing the black queen from developing, but hinders black from playing Na6, a natural and potentially, liberating developing plan. With Na6 and Qb7 as possible ideas, black may untangle his pieces. As it were now, the black knight is practically stuck for the time being, since jumping out to d7 only allows Rc7 pinning motives. Note how the c6 square has also become a point of entry for a white rook if the knight is developed, and with the white queen attacking d6, the pawn would have to advance to d5 cutting out all of black’s counter-chances in the centre of the board.}  
17... a6   
{Desperately attempting to develop. The queen’s rook has to be developed in an unorthodox manner. This little pawn move just creates another pawn weakness though, that now being on b6.

17... b5 18. Nf4 g5 19. Nh3 did not appeal to me, but may be black’s best plan here.}   
18. Qf3   
{Slightly surprising, but logical enough in its intent. I expected  18. d5 Nd7 when white can decide on where to penetrate, either c6 or c7.}  
18... Ra7   
19. d5   
{White initiates the creation of black’s “pawn islands”. Black will be left with 3 whereas white will have two. Black’s D-pawn will be sickly and his F-pawn is advanced, creating fatal light-squared weaknesses. Black’s task now of salvaging this position is becoming increasingly difficult to do.}  
19... Nd7   
20. a3   
{The sheer calmness of white’s play is awe-inspiring. He appreciates his total grip on the position and realises that there is no need to rush in the slightest. It is black, who is seeking ways, in which to save his position. By this quiet little move, white wipes out all possibilities of counter-play by snatching pawns on the queen-side by the black queen.}   
20... Qf6   
{It was impossible to find a constructive plan here. I simply needed to force white into the decision of capturing on e6, giving black some hope of counter-play along the open ranks and diagonals. 20... Ne5 21. Qe3 achieved absolutely nothing for black and the knight may well be needed to drop into f8, once Nf4 has been played by white. Capturing on d5 is impossible, as Nf4/Nxd5 is just too strong.}   
21. dxe6 Qxe6   
22. Nf4 Qf7  
23. Rfd1 Ne5   
24. Qd5   
{Neatly demonstrating that the end-game is impossible for black in the long-run, due to his three pawn islands and weakened light-squares.}  
24... Qxd5   
25. Rxd5 Rd7   
26. h4   
{There is no haste in this titled player. The securing of the knight outpost on f4 is done before any more pressure is exerted onto the weak black pawns. Absolute control is essential.}  
26... g6   
27. Rd2   
{White vacates the d5 square, permitting the knight to land on there. That all-important square, which has been remarkably demonstrated as the focus-point to the white strategy. The rook’s retreat also ensures that there are no weaknesses to the white pawns.}  
27... Kf7   
28. b3   
{Once again, absolute control is necessary. Before pressure is piled onto the weak D-pawn, white ensures that Nc4 is not a possibility for black, thereby giving him some ideas of counter-play.}  
28... Rb8   
29. Rcd1 Ke7   
30. a4   
{If black was not convinced already, white puts another indication down that he is in utter control of the position. Black can strive to open things up and exchange, but this only weakens his position further.}  
30... b5   
31. a5 Nc6   
{Black is just about in zugzwang now. White can switch from the D-file to the C-File at his leisure. 31... Rbd8 32. Nd5+ Ke6 33. Rc2 is good enough.}   
32. Nd5+ Kf7   
33. Nf6!  
{Beautifully displaying tactical awareness in a positional masterpiece! Black has played industriously to establish a substantial positional advantage and has accumulated all of the minor plusses. The climax of that pressure is a tactic, which rips apart black’s position. A final few positional touches and the job is concluded aesthetically.}  
33... Re7   
{33... Rdd8 34. Nxh7 Nxa5 35. Ng5+ Ke7 is nothing for black.}  
34. Nxh7 Nxa5   
35. Ng5+ Kg7   
36. Rxd6 Nxb3   
37. Ne6+ Kh7   
38. Rxa6 b4   
39. Kg2   
{Calm to the absolute end! White removes the king off the back rank, so that black’s hopes of pushing his B-pawn to create distractions is proven worthless. White can now simply gang up on the pawn and not worry about any black rook landing on the 8th rank on c1 or a1 and cause pins along the back rank.}  
39... Reb7   
40. Ng5+ Kg7   
41. Ne6+   
{Professionally calm to the finish line. The coolness of this type of play can only be applauded.

41. Rdd6 Nc5 42. Rxg6+ Kh8 43. Rh6+ Kg8 44. Rag6+ is not conclusive. The black king could run away and the B-pawn can cause complications. White’s 41st move prevents the black knight from edging out to c5 immediately  and Nd8+ tactics have to be avoided. However, the irony of the move is that the knight is headed back to its previously occupied outpost, where it can jump back to d3 and head off the B-pawn, and add insult to injury to the double-rook attack along the 6th rank, thereby setting up mating nets.}   
41... Kh8   
42. Nf4 Nc5   
43. Rc6  
{Calm, calm, calm!}  
43...  Nd7   
(43... Ne4 44. Nxg6+   
[not 44. Rxg6 b3 which is a problem for white]  
44... Kh7 45. Ne5 and that is that.}  
44. Nxg6+ Kg7   
45. Ne7   
{And the only thing left was for me to hold out my hand and congratulate a very strong player on a wonderful display of attractive, excellent, correct and well-executed display of “chess”.}

45... 1-0  
  
Opening references  
A.  
12. Rfd1 d6 13. Qe3 Nd7 14. d5 e5 15. Nd4 Rf6 16. Bh3 g6 17. b4 Nf8 18. Rac1 Re8 19. Nb3 Qf7 20. Qd2 f4 21. f3 g5 22. e4 fxg3 23. hxg3 Rxf3 24. Qxg5+ Qg6 25. Qxg6+ hxg6 26. Kg2 Rf6

Reisert,W-Schmidt,R/Wuerzburg  1988/EXT 2002/1-0 (40)})   
  
B.  
12. Rad1 d6 13. Rfe1 Nd7 14. d5 e5 15. e4 f4 16. g4 g5 17. b4 h5 18. h3 hxg4 19. hxg4 Qg7 20. Nh2 Kf7 21. Bf1 Rh8 22. Rd3 Rh6 23. f3 Rah8 24. Re2 Bc8 25. Rdd2 R6h7 26. Rc2 Qh6   
Rakitskaja,M (2160)-Sudakova,I (2180)/St Petersburg 1998/EXT 2000/1/2-1/2})