Progress in Chess

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Mark Dvoretsky

Opening Developments

School of Chess Excellence 4

Edited and translated
by Ken Neat

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And my chronicle is ended.
Aleksandr Pushkin

Without detailed comments it is absolutely impossible to understand a game…
and to master its content. I have made each game the object of a thorough study,
the results of which I offer to the readers.
Siegbert Tarrasch

Preface

It is no secret that, although the foreword to any book stands at its very beginning, it is usually written at the very end, when the book is practically ready. And now here, before sending off the manuscript to the publisher, I sense an enormous relief – the work, which I embarked on many years ago, back in 1987, has at last been completed. Before you is the fourth, concluding book in the series *School of Chess Excellence*.

It is constructed on the same principles as the three preceding titles: *Endgame Analysis*, *Tactical Play* and *Strategic Play*. You will continue your acquaintance with the results of the work of our creative laboratory – games and game fragments, played by the author of these lines or his pupils, and also with examples by other players, thoroughly analysed by us at study-training sessions. Before you is fresh material, which has either not been examined at all in other books, or which here has been subjected to a creative reinterpretation. With its help I will talk about problems that are important to any player. This will cover both general principles and improvement methods, preparing for a competition or an individual game, the technique for finding a move directly at the board, and the secrets concealed behind a specific position.

As in the preceding books, you will be offered numerous tests (sometimes quite difficult) for independent solving. They are divided into 'questions' (signified by a letter Q followed by the number of the part of the book and the number of the question), answers to which you will find in the subsequent text, and 'exercises' (letter E) with answers at the end of the book. There you will also find a thematic index: after deciding on the proposed type of training (the particular playing skill that you wish to develop), with the help of the index you can choose appropriate exercises to solve.

But what is it that distinguishes this book from the previous books (of course, apart from the specific chess material)?

1) Here it is largely games that are analysed (from beginning to end), and not their fragments.

2) Compared with the other books in this series, substantially more space is given to the analysis of the opening problems that confront a player in a particular game. The first half of the book is altogether devoted to opening preparation (although, as you will see, not only to this), and also in the second half nearly every game is accompanied by detailed opening information.

The main attraction of chess is its thematic content. I hope that this book, like the preceding ones, will provide a guide for you through the rich and diverse world of chess ideas, will help you to perceive the depth and beauty of schemes generated at the board, in tournament or match play, to disclose the causes of mistakes and to be aware of the hidden forces that determine the plans of chess encounters. As a result you will significantly improve your understanding of chess, and your practical playing strength will rise.

Part Eight

The Opening

I have to admit that I have never been fascinated by opening research and therefore I do not feel particularly confident here. But to avoid this topic altogether is not possible – the opening plays too important a role in modern chess. And besides, I have nevertheless managed to accumulate a certain amount of useful experience – first as a player, and then as a trainer, helping my pupils to master new opening systems or to prepare for a forthcoming game.

The mastery of a player in the initial stage of the game is made up of many factors – and not merely a good knowledge of opening theory. Incidentally, to say 'good knowledge of theory' is easy, whereas to achieve this is difficult. Numerous problems immediately arise. What are the principles of building an opening repertoire, how broad should it be, and which systems accord best with your style of play? How to cope with the enormous and ever-increasing volume of opening information? Required here is not only a purely technical, but also a creative treatment of the information – objective evaluation and understanding of book recommendations, old and recently played games, the search for effective novelties etc. And when at a tournament we are preparing for the next game, it is very important, on the basis of a rapid acquaintance with the opponent's play, to be able to guess which opening will be the most unpleasant for him.

However well prepared we are, sooner or later our 'book' knowledge will end and we will have to act independently. This can happen even at the very start of the game – after all, the opponent has the right at any moment to deviate from familiar paths. And here it is immediately revealed to what extent the two players have a mastery of the general principles of opening play, which of them understands more deeply the strategic and tactical ideas of the resulting position, and to what extent they are ready to solve the new problems facing them.

Earlier I have already expressed my views on various aspects of improvement in opening play, but it is impossible to exhaust such a difficult topic within the framework of one monograph. Even for the readers who are familiar with the book by Dvoretsky and Yusupov *Opening Preparation*, based on material from the 2nd session of our school for talented young players, it will, I hope, be of interest to see the analysis of new, instructive episodes, which have occurred with the author of these lines and his pupils.

In the commentaries on the games analysed in the book you will meet not only a discussion of general opening problems, but also a concrete analysis of the opening variations that occur in them. When grandmasters familiarise themselves with systems that are new to them, first with the help of a computer they collect complete information of the topic in question. Then they quickly look through the games, decide on the most topical branches and critical positions, requiring additional analysis, the controversial points where the previously employed strategy may be improved upon etc. Such work is difficult, and it demands a

high standard of play and a considerable expenditure of time. It is clear that, within the framework of the given book, aiming for the analysis of a large number of games is inapplicable – this is a matter for specialised monographs.

We will operate differently – we will give up the idea of complete information and endeavour to logically understand opening problems with the help of only the most important games. Such an approach is more economical, but, of course, it too has its drawbacks. The choice of key games and, more important, their interpretation, the evaluation of events occurring in the opening – all this is determined by the subjective perception of the author. It may prove to be inaccurate, incomplete or even incorrect, and therefore I call on the reader to adopt a critical approach to the recommendations offered to him. Indeed, any other approach to the opening is unthinkable – after all, here only one new game that has just been played, or one fresh idea found in analysis, can sometimes changed completely the existing evaluation of an entire opening system.

Opening Disasters

How does a strong player come to lose in just 18 moves? I should know, because I have lost several games just as quickly. If you want to lose a miniature, then here are three helpful tips. First of all, it is a big help if you are Black. Losing in under 20 moves with White requires a special talent which few possess. Secondly, choose a provocative opening in which you try to realise strategic ambitions, but at the cost of backward development and delayed castling. Thirdly, if something goes slightly wrong, don't reconcile yourself to defending a bad position – seek a tactical solution instead! Don't worry about the fact that tactics are bound to favour the better developed side; just go ahead anyway. Follow this advice and at least you will get home early. John Nunn

In the games that we will now examine, success was achieved by Black, since the first 'prescription' of Dr. Nunn was not used. On the other hand, the other two were rigorously applied.

Makarychev – Dvoretsky

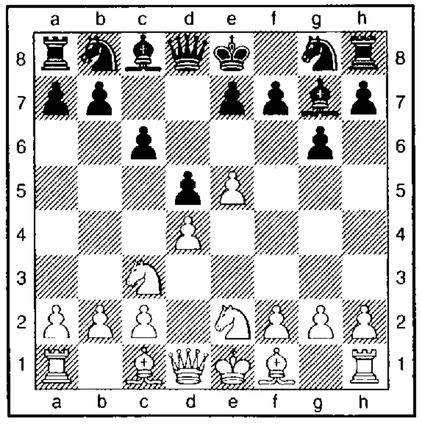
Training game, Moscow 1970

1	**e4**	**g6**
2	**d4**	**♗g7**
3	**♘c3**	**c6**
4	**♘ge2?!**	**d5**

In the event of 4...d6 5 g3 followed by ♗g2 and 0–0 White harmoniously deploys his pieces.

5 e5

1



Why did Sergey Makarychev place his knight on e2? With this pawn structure Black sooner or later has to play ...e7–e6. But first he needs to free his c8 bishop, as otherwise it will have no future. Had the white knight been at f3, there would have followed 5...♗g4!. In the event of 4 f4 d5 5 e5 Black has a choice between 5...h5 6 ♗e3 ♘h6 7 ♘f3 ♗g4 8 ♗e2 e6 and 5...♘h6 6 ♗e2 f6 7 ♘f3 ♗g4 8 ♗e3 e6. In both cases he successfully solves the problem of his light-square bishop (which, however, does not signify the solving of all his opening problems – White nevertheless retains an appreciable advantage in space).

But with the knight on e2, the bishop has nowhere to go – it will feel uncomfortable both at f5, and at g4.

However, too high a price is paid for this (in the spirit of Nunn's second piece of 'advice'!). For the sake of hindering the opponent's plan, White has violated ***two basic opening principles (rapid development and the battle for the centre).*** His knight has stood in the way of his own bishop and in addition he is not controlling the important central square e5. It is against this that Black immediately directs his attack.

5	**. . .**	**f6!**
6	**♗f4?**	

White is consistent: he does not want to play f2–f4, to avoid giving the enemy bishop the

g4 and f5 squares. But nevertheless he should have supported his e5 with the pawn, since he does not have sufficient pieces to do this – the result of the unfortunate development of his knight at e2.

6 . . . ♘d7

Since it is not possible either to defend the e5 pawn, or to advance it (7 e6? ♘f8), White has to exchange on f6, conceding the centre and aiding the development of the black pieces.

7 exf6

Take note: the e-pawn has made three moves and then disappeared from the board – this means that the tempi spent on advancing it have been wasted. Aron Nimzowitsch called such pawns (or pieces) 'tempo-devourers'.

7 . . . ♘gxf6
8 ♕d2 0–0
9 ♘g3

One can understand Makarychev's desire to bring his kingside pieces into play as quickly as possible. But even so, this should still have been delayed a little – it was better to play 9 f3!?, covering the important g4 and e4 squares.

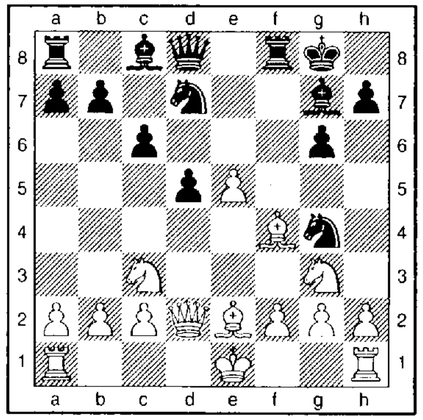
9 . . . e5!

With a lead in development you should energetically open up the game.

10 dxe5 ♘g4
11 ♗e2

see next diagram

2



Q 8-1. What should Black play?

The tempting 11...♘xf2? does not work on account of 12 0–0! (or 12 ♖f1!). The most natural move is 11...♘dxe5, when the opponent cannot castle on either side (12 0–0? ♘xh2!). Of course, Black has to reckon with 12 f3, after which the knight has no good retreat. However, his position is so strong that he has the right to go in for material sacrifices.

11 . . . ♘dxe5!
12 f3?!

Makarychev also follows Nunn's third 'recommendation' – he boldly goes in for tactical complications. However, here it is already hard to offer any good advice. If 12 h3 the simplest way to retain the advantage is with 12...♕b6!?. The sharper 12...♘xf2 is also good, intending variations such as 13 ♖f1 d4!? or 13 0–0 ♘xh3+!? 14 gxh3 ♗xh3 15 ♖f2 ♕h4.

It was probably better, using Alekhine's apt expression, to declare 'testimonium paupertatis' (evidence of poverty), by playing 12 ♘d1. But in this case too White's position is unenviable.

12 . . . ♖xf4!
13 ♕xf4 ♗h6

13...♕b6 is much weaker in view of 14 ♘d1!.

14 ♕a4

I thought that 14 ♕d4 ♗e3 15 ♕a4 was slightly more tenacious (the bishop at e3 is powerful, but the knight there is even more dangerous). Black continues the attack with 15...♗f2+ 16 ♔f1 ♕h4 17 fxg4 ♗xg3. Later it transpired that even with the queen on d4 it is possible to play 14...♘e3!!, and if 15 ♕xe5 ♗f4! (the queen has nowhere to go).

14 . . . ♘e3
15 ♘d1

15 ♔f2 ♕b6 was also hopeless. But now, before taking the g2 pawn, it is important to secure the b6 square for the queen.

15 . . . b5!
16 ♕b3 ♘xg2+
17 ♔f2 ♗h3

White resigns, since he has no defence against the threat of 18...♕b6+. If 18 ♘f1, then 18...♕h4+.

Csom – Dolmatov

Frunze 1983

1 c4 c6
2 ♘f3 d5
3 b3 ♘f6
4 ♕c2 e6
5 ♗b2 ♘bd7
6 d4?!

Why does István Csom defer the development of his light-square bishop? He wants first to see where the enemy bishop will go to. In reply to 6...♗e7 there follows 7 e3 and 8 ♗d3, while if 6....♗d6 (with the idea of quickly preparing ...e6–e5: 7 e3 0–0 8 ♗d3 ♖e8), White fianchettoes his bishop and after 7 g3 0–0 8 ♗g2 ♖e8 9 0–0 the move ...e6–e5 significantly loses in strength.

Guessing his opponent's strategic idea, Sergey Dolmatov changes the character of the play.

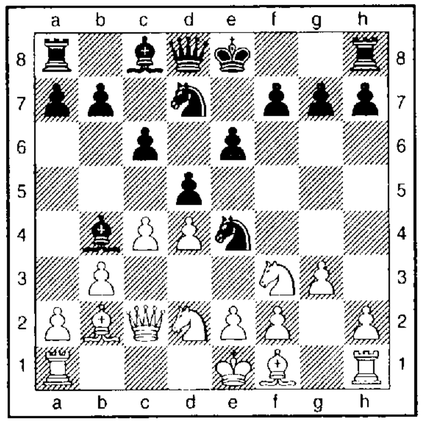
6 . . . ♘e4!

Every player should be aware of the basic ideas of any opening, and not only those that are part of his opening repertoire – after all, sometimes positions are reached that are not at all typical of the opening that was played. Thus here after 7 e3 f5 a favourable version for Black of the 'stonewall' variation of the Dutch Defence arises. The Hungarian grandmaster does not want to play such a position and so he fianchettoes his bishop.

7 g3?! ♗b4+
8 ♘bd2?

White still does not sense the danger. Of course, 8 ♘c3? ♕a5 9 ♖c1 ♕xa2 was bad, but 8 ♘fd2 was necessary.

3



Q 8-2. What should Black play?

Dolmatov's next strong move sets his opponent insoluble problems. It is amazing how quickly White's apparently solid position has become critical.

8 . . . ♕f6!

Threatening 9...♗xd2+ 10 ♘xd2 ♕xf2+.

9 ♖d1

Csom gives up the exchange. The alternative was the pitiful move 9 ♗c1, after which

there would have followed 9...e5 10 ♗g2 exd4 11 0–0 ♘dc5.

9	**. . .**	**♗xd2+**
10	**♖xd2**	**♘xd2**
11	**♘xd2**	**0–0**

Subsequently, exploiting a few inaccuracies by his opponent, White prolonged the resistance, but he was unable to save the game.

Dvoretsky – Sukhanov

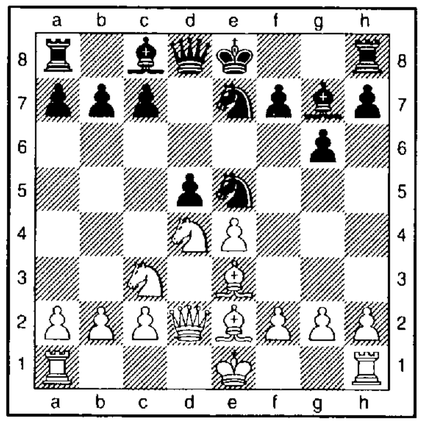
Moscow 1969

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**d6**
3	**♗c4**	**♘c6**
4	**d4**	**exd4**
5	**♘xd4**	**g6**
6	**♘c3**	**♗g7**
7	**♗e3**	**♘ge7?!**

From f6 the knight would have had far more influence on the central squares.

8	**♕d2**	**♘e5**
9	**♗e2**	**d5?**

4



E 8-1. The aggressive thrust in the centre looks premature. How can White demonstrate this?

How a Player Develops

*In experiments it has been shown that people are the most active, when the probability of success is roughly 50%. An activity which is '50-50' **demands belief** in success and at the same time **allows belief** in it. If the belief is not necessary (100% success is guaranteed) or not possible (100% failure is expected), the work becomes soulless, repellent, and hence ineffective.*

Simon Soloveychik

The first competitive aim that I usually decided on, when beginning work with a young player, was within a couple of years for him to become the strongest player in his age group and to demonstrate this, by winning the title of world junior champion. An objective which was certainly very difficult, but feasible. It was successfully achieved by many of my pupils – there have probably been more champions among them than among the representatives of any other country in the world, with the exception of the former USSR.

A high aim has always served as a stimulus for extensive and tenacious work on the perfecting of chess mastery. Certain features of such work will become clear to you from an account of Alexey Dreev's preparations.

I met Alexey early in 1980, when he was just turned 11. Within two years he was already contending for a place in the World Cadet Championship (for juniors up to the age of 16). In a qualifying tournament Dreev shared first place with Evgeny Bareev, who was more than two years older than him (at such a young age, this is an enormous handicap). The place in the championship was given to Bareev, but it became clear that the following year would be ours.

In the Russian Championship among lads of his age, Alexey won all his games. Then in an adult master tournament he finished second and achieved the master norm. At the time this was a record – at the age of 13 no one in our country had become a master: neither Karpov nor Kasparov had achieved this. Finally, in the next year, 1983, Dreev won the bronze medal in the USSR Schoolboys' Championship (up to the age of 18). All these considerable and, what was important, stable successes convinced the USSR Chess Federation that he should be given the place in the next World Cadet Championship in Columbia without any qualifying tournament. There were still six months to go before the championship, and we were faced with preparing in the best way possible for this important competition.

For training purposes Dreev took part in a qualifying tournament for the World Under-20 Championship, and here, for the first time over a long period, he suffered a very serious set-back. Analysing the causes of this failure after the tournament (at which I wasn't present), I singled out two main factors:

1) serious time trouble;

2) extremely narrow opening repertoire.

Dreev lost as many as six games with Black in one and the same opening – the Dutch Defence. We had prepared, although not yet tested in practice, other opening systems. Why then, during the tournament, had Alexey not stopped playing an opening which, although well-practised beforehand, was not now proving successful? Clearly, the reason was purely psychological – a fear

of new openings, and an unwillingness to set out along unfamiliar opening paths.

Before the world championship he was due to participate in an international junior tournament in Leningrad. Practically all the opponents were much older than the 14-year-old Alexey, and among them were future starts such as Valery Salov, Alexander Khalifman, Julian Hodgson, Vladimir Epishin, Lembit Oll... I was not interested in the competitive result (it turned out to be not bad: 6th out of 14 players); it was far more important to resolve the problems facing us.

Dreev was given a strict anti-time trouble directive – he was obliged in every game to control his time expenditure, avoiding even a hint of time trouble, even at the cost of a possible worsening of the quality of his play. Alexey coped confidently with this task and later in Columbia he no longer experienced any problems with the clock, despite the fact that the time control there was more severe than in our internal competitions (40 moves in two hours instead of two and a half hours).

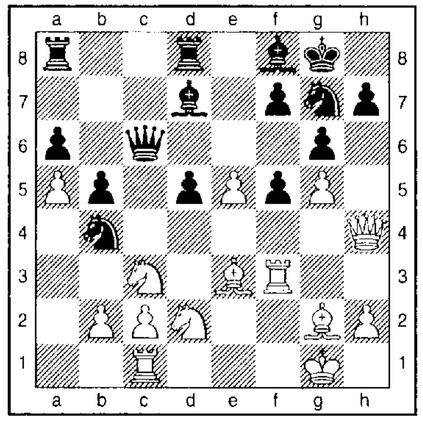
In the most critical games in Leningrad against his older opponents, who had an excellent knowledge of opening theory, at my insistence Dreev employed openings which he had previously never played: with Black against Evgeny Bareev – the sharp Botvinnik Variation in the Slav Defence, and with White against Alexander Shabalov – the open variation of the Sicilian Defence. Both games were won in excellent style. Here is one of these wins.

Dreev – Shabalov

Leningrad 1983

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4! (a 'novelty' for Dreev) **3...cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 d6 6 g3 ♘c6 7 ♗g2 ♗d7 8 0–0 a6 9 a4 ♗e7 10 ♘b3 0–0 11 f4 b6 12 ♗e3 ♕c7 13 g4 ♖fd8 14 g5 ♘e8 15 ♕h5 ♘b4 16 ♖ac1 b5 17 a5 ♕c4 18 ♘d2 ♕c6 19 ♖f3 g6 20 ♕h6 ♘g7 21 f5! ♗f8 22 ♕h4 exf5 23 e5! d5** (23...dxe5 24 ♖h3).

5



Q 8-3. What should White play?

An ability to see immediately the entire board is an indication of great talent. Dreev would appear to be attacking the king, but he gains a decisive advantage by exploiting the unfortunate position of the knight that has lost its way on the queenside.

24 ♖f4! ♗e6 25 ♖xb4 ♗xb4 26 ♕xb4 ♖ac8 27 ♘e2 ♖d7 28 ♘f4 ♕c7 29 ♗d4 ♕d8 30 h4 h6 31 ♗b6 ♕f8 32 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 33 gxh6 ♘e8 34 ♘b3 ♔g8 35 ♘c5 ♖e7 36 ♘xa6 ♖c4 37 ♘d3 ♗c8 38 ♘ab4 ♘c7 39 b3 ♖xh4 40 ♘c6 ♖e6 41 ♘a7. Black resigns.

As a result, Dreev realised that opening surprises by his opponents were not something that he had to fear – the level of mastery that he had achieved enabled him at the board to solve quite difficult problems. This had already been clear to me for a long time, but so that Alexey himself genuinely, in fact (and not just in words) believed in his powers, they had to be tested in practice: by achieving success against strong opponents in unfamiliar situations, which he had previously avoided.

Dreev won the world championship by an enormous margin – in eleven games he scored nine wins with two draws. Factors developed during our preparations – self-confidence, composure, the ability to solve independently an opening problem set him by his opponent – all these consistently showed themselves during the tournament. Perhaps the most convincing illustration of the benefit of our work was the game with the talented American player Patrick Wolff, after which Alexey took the lead.

Dreev – Wolff

World Junior Championship, Bucaramanga 1983

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
3	**♘xe5**	**d6**
4	**♘f3**	**♘xe4**
5	**d4**	**d5**
6	**♗d3**	**♗e7**
7	**0–0**	**♘c6**
8	**♖e1**	**♗g4**

Alexey himself sometimes used to employ the Petroff Defence, but only the then fashionable variation 8...♗f5, and he was not familiar with the theory of 8...♗g4. As a result, without being aware of it he was drawn into some very sharp, forcing variations, which had been studied during the previous ten or so years, and which were, apparently, well familiar to his opponent.

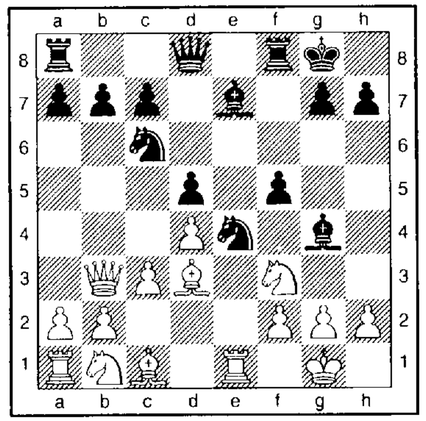
9	**c3**	

The play takes a different direction after 9 c4. According to modern theory, White does better to play this slightly earlier, without the inclusion of 8 ♖e1 ♗g4.

9	**...**	**f5**
10	**♕b3**	**0–0**

see next diagram

6



White wins the b7 pawn, but his king comes under attack. I have to admit that at this moment my mood was sombre – I knew very well how dangerous White's position is, and how difficult it is for him to neutralise his opponent's activity, especially if you are seeing the position for the first time in your life. Here even an experienced player can become rattled. For example, in the game **Ljubojevic–Makarychev** (Amsterdam 1975) a young master (who, incidentally, has made a considerable contribution to the theory of the Petroff Defence) inflicted a rapid defeat on one of the world's leading grandmasters: **11 ♘fd2? ♘xf2! 12 ♔xf2** (12 ♗f1 is better) **12...♗h4+ 13 g3 f4! 14 ♔g2 fxg3 15 ♗e4?** (after 15 hxg3 Black has a choice between 15...♗xg3 16 ♔xg3 ♕d6+ and 15...♕d6 16 gxh4 ♖f2+!) **15... ♗h3+! 16 ♔g1** (16 ♔xh3 ♕d7+ 17 ♔g2 ♖f2+) **16... gxh2+ 17 ♔xh2 ♕d6+ 18 ♔h1 ♗xe1 19 ♕xd5+ ♕xd5 20 ♗xd5+ ♔h8 21 ♘f3 ♗g3 22 ♘g1 ♗f1 23 ♘d2 ♖ae8 24 ♘e4 ♖xe4! 25 ♗xe4 ♖f2 26 ♘f3 ♗g2+ 27 ♔g1 ♗xf3 28 ♗xf3 ♖xf3.** White resigns.

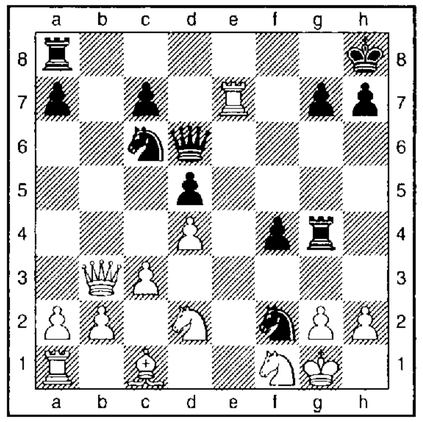
11	**♘bd2**	**♔h8**
12	**♕xb7**	**♖f6**
13	**♕b3**	**♖g6**

Black intends 14...♕d6 and 15...♖f8, after

which all his pieces will be taking part in the attack. Here is a practical example, illustrating the dangers lying in wait for White.

Tukmakov–Dvoretsky (USSR Championship First League, Odessa 1974): **14 ♗e2 ♕d6 15 ♘f1 f4 16 ♘3d2 ♘xf2!** (16...♗h3 is unconvincing: 17 ♗f3 ♘g5 18 ♗h5! ♖h6 19 ♕d1) **17 ♗xg4 ♖xg4** (17...♘xg4) **18 ♖xe7?!** (after 18 ♖e2 ♘e4 Black would also have been excellently placed, e.g. 19 ♘xe4 dxe4 20 ♖xe4 ♕g6 21 ♕c2 f3 22 ♘g3 ♖f8).

7

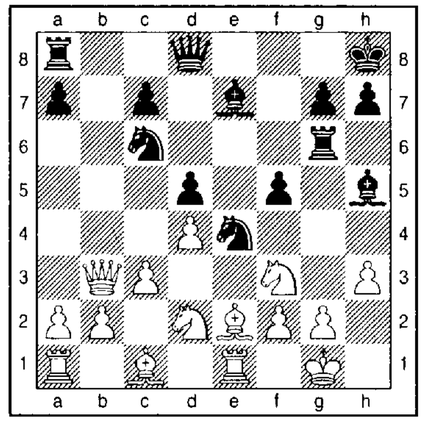


Q 8-4. Can Black play for a win?

The game ended in perpetual check: **18...♘h3+ 19 ♔h1 ♘f2+ 20 ♔g1 ♘h3+.** Draw. In the variation 18...♘xe7! 19 ♔xf2 ♕g6 20 g3 ♖f8 21 ♘f3 I, unfortunately, did not find any way to strengthen the attack, but there was one: 21...fxg3+ 22 hxg3 ♕h5! 23 ♕d1 ♘g6! with the threats of 24...♕h3 and 24...♘h4!.

In the 6th game of the **Karpov–Korchnoi** final candidates match in 1974 the future world champion, obviously on the advice of his trainer, Sergey Makarychev, did not take the b7 pawn immediately, but included the moves **12 h3 ♗h5** (Black has an inferior game after both 12...♗h4?! 13 ♖f1! ♘xd2 14 ♘xd2 ♗h5 15 ♕xb7, Makarychev–Shershukov, 1975, and 12...♗xf3?! 13 ♘xf3 ♖b8 14 ♗f4 ♗d6 15 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 16 ♖e2). There followed: **13 ♕xb7 ♖f6** (weaker is 13...♘a5 14 ♕a6 c5 15 ♗e2 ♖b8 16 ♘e5 ♗e8 17 ♕d3 cxd4 18 cxd4, when White's position is preferable – this occurred in the game Ligterink–Dvoretsky, Wijk aan Zee 1975) **14 ♕b3 ♖g6 15 ♗e2.**

8



Q 8-5. What should Black play?

The point of h2–h3 is that now 15...♕d6? is not possible on account of 16 ♘e5! – Black's light-square bishop is undefended. 15...♘xf2? does not work: 16 ♔xf2 ♗h4+ 17 ♔f1 ♗xe1 18 ♘xe1 ♗xe2+ 19 ♔xe2 ♕e7+ 20 ♔f1 ♖e8 21 ♕d1 (Botvinnik). Victor Korchnoi's choice was also unsuccessful: **15...♗h4? 16 ♖f1 ♗xf3 17 ♘xf3 ♗xf2+ 18 ♖xf2 ♘xf2 19 ♔xf2 ♕d6 20 ♘g5!** and White obtained a winning position.

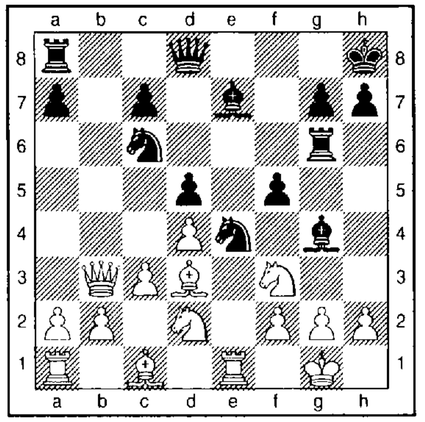
15...♖b8 looks logical, as played in the correspondence game Steig–Mende (1976), but after 16 ♕d1 ♗d6 17 ♘xe4! fxe4 18 ♘e5 ♘xe5 19 ♗xh5 ♘d3 20 ♗xg6 ♕f6 White's chances in the forthcoming complicated battle are nevertheless preferable.

Later the correct way of handling the attack was found: 15...♗d6!. If 16 ♘f1, then 16...♖b8 17 ♕a4(c2) ♗xf3 18 ♗xf3 ♕h4.

The main variation runs 16 ♘e5 ♘xe5 17 ♗xh5 (17 ♘xe4 ♘f3+!) 17...♖xg2+! 18 ♔xg2 ♕g5+ 19 ♔f1 (bad is 19 ♗g4? fxg4! 20 ♘xe4 gxh3+ 21 ♔f1 ♕g2+) 19...♕h4! 20 ♘xe4 ♕xh3+ with a draw (O'Kelly).

After this excursion into the theory of the variation, let us return to the game between the two young players.

9



Since the moves 12 h3 ♗h5 have not been included, White can no longer build up his game as Karpov did – 14 ♗e2 leads to a position from the Tukmakov–Dvoretsky game, which is far less advantageous to him. My pupil did not become confused in this complicated situation and he found an excellent strategic solution.

14 ♗b5!!

Simple and logical! Black has a weak point at e5, and Dreev attacks its only defender – the knight at c6. All the variations work in his favour, for example:

14...♖b8 15 ♕a4 ♕d6 16 ♗xc6 ♗h3 17 g3! (weaker is 17 ♘xe4 ♖xg2+ 18 ♔h1 fxe4 19 ♘e5 ♕f6!) 17...♘xg3 18 fxg3 ♖xg3+ 19 ♔f2 ♖g2+ 20 ♔e3 f4+ 21 ♔d3 ♗f5+ 22 ♘e4 and White parries the threats to his king, retaining his extra material;

14...♘xd2 15 ♘xd2 ♗d6! (15...f4?! 16 ♗d3 ♖h6 17 ♗e2 ♖b8 18 ♕d1 ♗xe2 19 ♕xe2 ♗d6 20 ♘f3 with an obvious advantage to White, as in the game Jung–Müller, Hamburg 1989) 16 g3! ♘e7 – Black retains some compensation for the sacrificed pawn, but nevertheless insufficient.

Since there appears to be no reliable way to equalise here, Petroff Defence devotees subsequently had to refine their actions – rejecting 13...♖g6 in favour of 13...♖b8! 14 ♕c2 (or 14 ♕a4) 14...♗d6! with a double-edged game.

14 . . . f4?!

15 ♕d1?!

Here Alexey 'took his opponent at his word', but this was wrong. He rejected 15 ♗xc6!, fearing the attack after 15...♗h3 16 g3 fxg3 17 hxg3 ♘xg3. But instead of 16 g3, 16 ♘xe4! ♗xg2 17 ♘e5! wins easily. And if 15...♘xd2, then, apart from the simple 16 ♘xd2 ♖xc6 17 f3, White can also choose the sharper 16 ♘e5!. For example: 16...♘xb3 17 ♘f7+ ♔g8 18 ♘xd8 ♖xd8 19 axb3 ♔f8 20 ♗b5(a4) with an extra pawn in the endgame.

15 . . . ♗h3

16 ♗f1 ♕d6?

16...♗f5 was essential. In reply Patrick did not like 17 ♘xe4 dxe4 18 ♘e5, but the position after 18...♘xe5 19 dxe5 ♕xd1 20 ♖xd1 e3! 21 fxe3 ♗c5 is not at all clear, despite White's two extra pawns. 17 ♘b3 ♗d6 18 ♘c5 is stronger.

17 ♘xe4 dxe4

18 ♖xe4

Now things are bad for Black, and Dreev confidently converts his advantage into a win.

18 . . . ♖f8

19 ♔h1 ♗g4

20 b4! ♕d5

21 ♕e2 ♖f7

22 b5 ♗f5

23 ♖xf4

Black resigns.

The reader may rightly ask why the trainer did not demonstrate beforehand the theoretical variations, which he himself knew very well.

What can I say? To familiarise a pupil with the given variation of the Petroff Defence is a fairly simple matter. But 'it is impossible to encompass the unbounded' (Kozma Prutkov) – how could one guess precisely which variations would be needed in the world championship? But what was bound to come in useful for Alexey was optimism, the ability not to be discouraged when encountering new problems at the board, and to confidently solve them.

Of course, 'it is better to be rich, but healthy, than poor, but unwell' – a player also needs a good knowledge of the opening. Here it is all a question of time (which, after all, is restricted) and priority. Become carried away by the opening, and there will be no time left for anything else – after all, the information that has to be assimilated and creatively processed is practically unlimited. Of course, we also studied opening theory, but much more attention was paid to what I considered and consider incomparably more important, especially for a young player – the mastery of chess as a whole, the raising of chess culture, the development of the skills in taking decisions at the board, the cultivation of psychological stability, fighting qualities etc. The development of overall chess mastery influences results much more strongly than an improvement in opening knowledge, since it tells in the most varied situations in all stages of the game, and not only in the opening phase.

Alexander – Mallison

Brighton 1938

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
3	**♘xe5**	**d6**
4	**♘f3**	**♘xe4**
5	**d4**	**d5**
6	**♗d3**	**♗d6**
7	**0–0**	**♗g4?!**

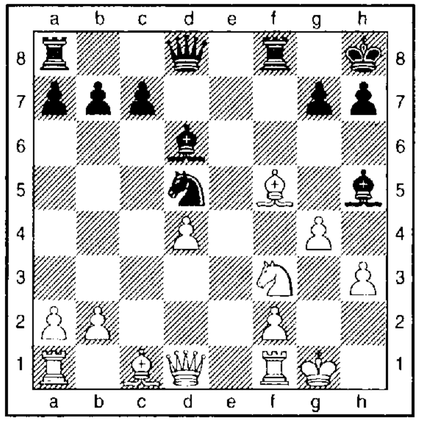
The start of a risky gambit variation. It was popular at the start of the 20th century, but then went out of fashion, because White found a convincing way to gain an advantage. Nowadays 7...0–0 8 c4 c6 is usually played.

8	**c4**	**0–0**
9	**cxd5**	**f5**
10	**♘c3**	**♘d7**
11	**h3**	**♗h5**
12	**♘xe4**	**fxe4**
13	**♗xe4**	**♘f6**
14	**♗f5**	**♔h8**
15	**g4**	

15 ♗e6 ♘e4 16 g4 ♗g6 17 ♗e3 was also strong.

15	**. . .**	**♘xd5**

10



E 8-2. How should White continue?

Risk in a Decisive Game

At times, even great masters have little faith in the real sacrifice.
And in chess, once faith is gone, the right move is seldom found!
Rudolf Spielmann

In many openings, when fighting for an advantage, at some point you have to decide on a sharp attack, involving material sacrifices, the consequences of which are difficult to predict. Sometimes the overall evaluation of an opening variation may depend on the correctness of the attack. Players, relying on their home analysis of the resulting problematic positions, launch into theoretical duels, which are then actively discussed on the pages of magazines. Finally, a definite verdict is brought in, either White or Black begins avoiding the given variation, and the theoretical discussions move onto different territory.

Some players willingly enter such critical debates, but this is by no means to everyone's taste, especially when the tournament position is not conducive to excessive risk. But what can be done – otherwise you are forced to make psychological concessions, by giving up the fight for an opening advantage.

The following game was exceptionally important for Sergey Dolmatov. It was played in the last round of the world junior championship. Sergey was half a point ahead of his friend and only rival, the previous year's champion Artur Yusupov. In such a situation he would have liked to play for a win, so to speak, 'with the draw in hand', without taking any particular risks. But it did not work out: his opponent was in a fighting mood and he challenged Dolmatov to a theoretical duel.

Dolmatov – Sisniega

World Junior Championship, Graz 1978

1	**e4**	**e6**
2	**d4**	**d5**
3	**♘d2**	**♘c6**
4	**♘gf3**	**♘f6**
5	**e5**	**♘d7**
6	**♗e2!?**	**f6**
7	**exf6**	**♕xf6**
8	**♘f1**	

The development scheme chosen by White is highly venomous. The knight goes to e3, so that in the event of ...e6–e5 the d5 pawn will be under attack. And if Black avoids this advance, White hopes to occupy the e5 square or attack the enemy centre with c2–c4.

I had shown Dolmatov this plan only a few months earlier. Sergey tested it for the first time in that same year, 1978, in the qualifying tournament for the world junior championship.

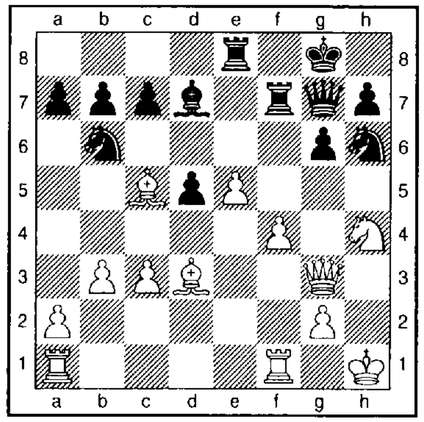
Dolmatov–Yurtaev (Sochi 1978): **8...♗d6 9 ♘e3 0–0 10 0–0 ♘b6.** Leonid Yurtaev had also played this earlier: against Albert Kapengut (Kiev 1977). After 11 ♘g4 ♕g6 12 ♘fe5 ♗xe5 13 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 14 dxe5 ♗d7 15 b3 c5 16 ♗d3 ♕e8 17 c4 ♗c6 a position with chances for both sides was reached. Dolmatov and I knew about this game and we had prepared an improvement for White.

11 ♘g4 ♕g6 12 h3! e5?! (an easily predictable, but not too successful reply) **13**

♘**gxe5! ♗xe5 14 dxe5 ♗xh3 15 ♘h4!** (15 ♘g5!? ♗d7 16 ♗h5 also comes into consideration) **15...♕e4 16 f4! ♗d7 17 ♗d3 ♕d4+ 18 ♔h1 g6 19 c3 ♕c5 20 ♕e1 ♕e7 21 ♕g3.** We had aimed for this position, which is clearly favourable to White, in our opening preparation.

There followed: **21...♖ae8 22 b3 ♕g7 23 ♕g5!** (it is important to prevent ...g6–g5!) **23...♘d8 24 ♗e3 ♘f7 25 ♕g3 ♘h6 26 ♗c5 ♖f7.**

11



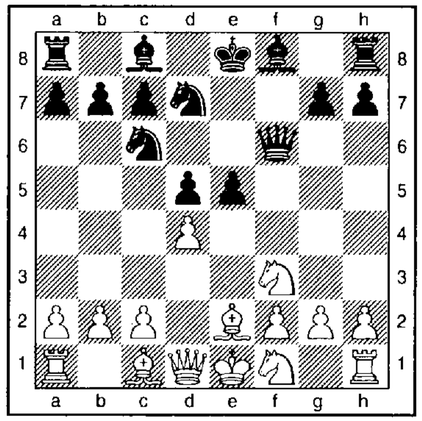
Q 8-6. What should White play?

Here it was possible to sacrifice a pawn for the sake of opening lines: 27 e6!! ♖xe6 (27...♗xe6 28 ♗d4 ♕f8 29 ♗xg6!) 28 ♗d4 ♕f8?! (28...♖ef6 is more tenacious) 29 f5!, and Black's defences collapse. Sergey did not notice the combination and played less energetically: **27 ♘f3?! ♘f5 28 ♕h2**, but even so he was able to win.

8 . . . e5?!

Marcel Sisniega chooses the critical path. From the standpoint of present-day concepts of the variation it is easy to condemn his choice, but then few knew what the complications begun with this move led to. Dolmatov and I probably knew better than anyone. When preparing for the game with Yurtaev we had looked at the resulting position, and we were also familiar with the analyses of Sergey Makarychev, at that time the main researcher of this opening variation.

12



White must now decide whether he should win a pawn at the cost of falling behind in development: 9 dxe5 ♘dxe5 10 ♕xd5, or, on the contrary, himself sacrifice a piece by 9 ♘e3 e4 (9...exd4 10 ♘xd5 ♕d6 11 ♗c4 is unsatisfactory for Black) 10 ♘xd5 ♕d6 11 c4 or 11 ♗c4.

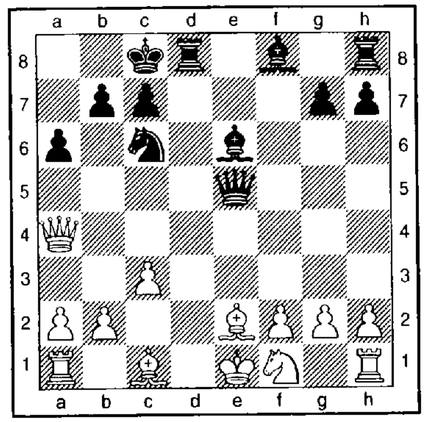
Q 8-7. What do you think about this?

The faultiness of the pawn capture was brilliantly demonstrated by the game **A. Petrosian–Panchenko** (Odessa 1973).

9 dxe5? ♘dxe5 10 ♕xd5?! (better is 10 ♘e3 with equality; Bogatyrev–Magergut, Moscow 1947) **10...♗e6 11 ♕b5 a6! 12 ♕a4** (12 ♕xb7?? ♖a7) **12...0–0–0 13 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 14 c3.**

see next diagram

13



Q 8-8. How should Black continue the offensive?

There is the interesting stroke 14...♘d4 15 cxd4 ♖xd4, but it is good enough only for a draw: 16 ♕e8+ (16 ♕c2? ♗f5 17 ♕b3 ♗b4+ 18 ♗d2 ♖e8 or 18...♗d3 19 0–0–0 ♗xe2) 16...♖d8 17 ♕a4 ♖d4.

14...♗b4!!. Spectacular and very strong! Black not only clears the way for his rook from h8 to the centre, but also gains the important d4 square for his pieces.

15 cxb4 ♗c4 16 ♘g3 ♗b5! 17 ♕a3 ♖d3 18 ♗f4 ♕e6 19 b3 ♖xg3 20 0–0 ♖xg2+ 21 ♔xg2 ♗xe2 22 f3 ♖f8 23 ♗g3 ♕e3 24 ♕c1 ♗xf3+ 25 ♖xf3 ♕xf3+ 26 ♔g1 ♖e8 and a few moves later White resigned.

In the same year, 1973, I was taking part in the USSR Championship First League in Tbilisi. Also playing there was the young master Sergey Makarychev. Before his game with grandmaster Rafael Vaganian – a devoted supporter of and expert on the French Defence – Sergey asked for my advice. He was expecting Vaganian to go in for this variation and he said that he was intending to play like Arshak Petrosian, since he considered Black's attack to be not altogether correct. I remarked that in his place on the 9th move I would prefer not to win, but rather to sacrifice material. If only because Vaganian is an excellent tactician and to concede the initiative to him is extremely dangerous.

Sergey nevertheless decided to trust his home analysis (regarding this, remember Spielmann's thought, taken as the epigraph for this chapter). The first 15 moves of the game **Makarychev–Vaganian** (Tbilisi 1973) were the same as in the previous game. On the 16th move Sergey employed his prepared improvement: **16 ♘e3 ♗xe2 17 ♔xe2 ♘d4+ 18 ♔e1** (18 ♔f1 ♖hf8 and White's f2 is weak). There would appear to be no immediate threats, and White wants to play his bishop to c3. In fact there is no cause here for optimism – being unable to castle, the king is caught for ever in the middle of the board and Black is bound to be able to find a way to exploit this factor.

18...♖he8! 19 ♗d2 ♕e4! (threatening both 20...♕xg2 and 20...♘c2+) **20 ♔d1 ♕d3 21 ♖e1.** More tenacious is 21 b5! (in the hope of saving the game after 21...♘b3 22 ♕g4+ ♔b8 23 ♕e2), but by continuing 21...♘f3 Black retains the advantage.

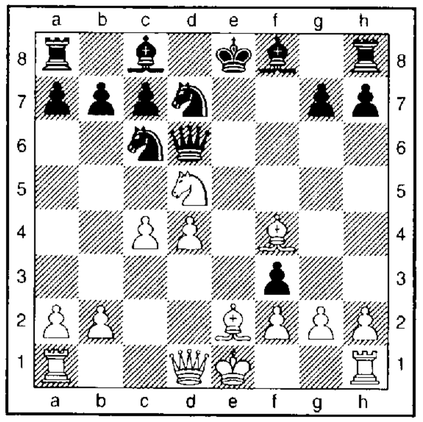
21...♘b3 22 ♖e2 ♘xa1 23 ♔e1 ♖xe3! 24 fxe3 ♘c2+ 25 ♔d1 ♘xe3+ 26 ♔e1 ♕b1+ 27 ♔f2 ♘g4+. White resigns.

It had now become clear to Makarychev that only the piece sacrifice should be analysed. The results of his searchings were used in the game **Makarychev–Hübner** (Amsterdam 1975).

9 ♘e3! e4 10 ♘xd5 ♕d6 11 c4 exf3 12 ♗f4 (12 ♗xf3 does not work in view of 12...♘f6 13 ♗f4 ♕e6+ or 13 0–0 ♘xd5 14 ♗xd5 ♘e7).

see next diagram

14



Q 8-9. How should Black defend?

The most unfortunate continuation is 12... fxe2? 13 ♕xe2+ ♘de5 14 dxe5 ♕d8, when White gains a winning position by 15 0–0–0 ♗f5 16 ♖he1 ♗b4 17 g4! ♗g6 18 ♘f6+. This occurred in the game Korchmar–Aratovsky, Saratov 1948 (see how long ago the study of this variation began!). Incidentally, Makarychev's recommendation 15 e6 ♗d6 16 ♖d1 is weaker in view of 16...0–0 (16...♗xf4 17 ♘xf4 ♕g5 18 ♘d5 0–0 19 0–0, intending f2–f4–f5) 17 c5! ♗xc5! (17...♗xf4? 18 e7) 18 0–0 ♖xf4 19 ♘xf4 ♗d6.

Also incorrect is the queen sacrifice made by Robert Hübner: **12...♕xf4? 13 ♘xf4 ♗b4+ 14 ♔f1 0–0 15 ♗xf3 ♖xf4.** After **16 ♗xc6 bxc6 17 c5!** Black's downfall is caused by the unfortunate placing of his bishop at b4. There followed: **17...♘xc5!? 18 a3!** (18 dxc5? ♗a6+ 19 ♔g1 ♗xc5) **18...♘e4 19 axb4 ♖xf2+** (19...♘xf2 20 ♕b3+ ♔h8 21 ♕e3 does not help) **20 ♔g1 ♖f6 21 ♕e1 ♘d6 22 h3 ♗e6 23 ♔h2 ♗d5 24 ♕h4 h6 25 ♖hf1 ♖e6 26 ♖ae1.** After successfully consolidating, White subsequently converted his material advantage.

As was shown by Makarychev, the queen sacrifice should have been prepared by interposing 12...fxg2!. After 13 ♖g1 ♕xf4! 14 ♗h5+ (14 ♘xf4?? ♗b4+) 14...g6 15 ♕e2+ ♔f7 16 ♘xf4 ♗b4+ 17 ♔d1 ♘f6! an irrational position arises – Black has only two pieces for the queen, but the white king is in serious danger.

In the course of this prolonged excursion into theory we appear to have forgotten that we were talking about the game Dolmatov–Sisniega from the last round of the 1978 world junior championship. But now imagine Sergey's feelings. Of course, it is interesting to contest such a wild position, but not at a moment when your entire future depends on the result! And I am not exaggerating – in a closed society, such as the Soviet Union was, success in a world championship was of great significance. The further development of the young player would be sharply accelerated: he would be given a place in the USSR Championship First League, the international master title awarded for the victory would shorten the path to the grandmaster title, and, most important, he would be guaranteed the opportunity, even if only occasionally, to travel to international competitions, without which it was not possible to gain either renown, or money, or titles.

Of course, Dolmatov would have preferred a quieter situation, in which he could have exploited his high standard of play, without being subjected to excessive risk, without standing together with his opponent on the edge of the abyss, into which either might fall. But he no longer had any choice. Sergey realised that in sharp opening variations one has to choose the critical course – a striving to play cautiously usually leads to conceding the initiative to the opponent. And besides, he knew where White's play could be improved.

9	**♘e3!**	**e4**
10	**♘xd5**	**♕d6**
11	**♗c4!**	

This move is more dangerous for Black than the 11 c4 chosen by Makarychev.

11	**...**	**exf3**

11...♘b6?! 12 ♗f4 ♕xd5 13 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 14 ♕e2 ♗f5 15 ♗g5! h6 (15...♗e7 16 ♘h4 or 16 ♘e5) 16 ♕b5 ♗e6 17 ♕xb7 ♔d7 18 ♘e5+! ♘xe5 19 dxe5 ♗b4+ 20 c3 ♖hb8 21 ♕a6 with advantage to White (Polajzer–Szabo, Maribor 1978).

12	**♗f4!**	

Makarychev suggests 12 0–0 ♕g6 13 ♘xc7+ ♔d8 14 ♘e6+ ♔e7 15 ♗g5+ ♘f6 16 ♖e1 ♗xe6 17 ♗xf6+ gxf6 18 ♖xe6+ ♔d7 19 ♕xf3 with a powerful attack. But if Black replies 12...♘b6! 13 ♗f4 ♕g6 14 ♘xc7+ ♔d8, then White's kingside castling may turn out to be a waste of a tempo: 15 ♕xf3 ♗g4 with an unclear position.

12	**...**	**♕g6!**

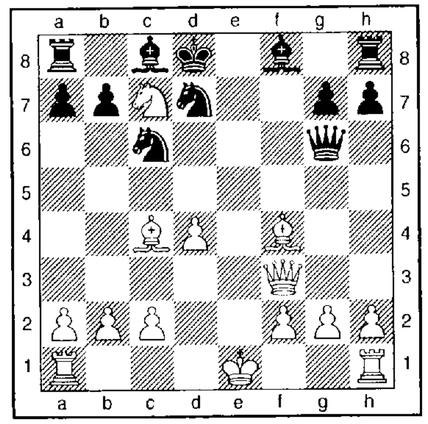
Completely bad is 12...♕e6+? 13 ♔d2 with the threats of 14 ♘xc7+ and 14 ♖e1. A year later in the game Varlamov–Monin (Leningrad 1979) Black tried 12...fxg2 13 ♖g1 ♕e6+ 14 ♔d2 ♗d6 and lost quickly: 15 ♖e1 ♘de5 16 dxe5 ♗b4+ 17 c3 0–0 18 ♘f6+ gxf6 19 ♕g4+ ♔f7 20 exf6 ♗xc3+ 21 bxc3 ♖d8+ 22 ♔c1 Black resigns. On the 14th move it was possible to defend more tenaciously, but apparently this would not have changed the evaluation of the position: 14...♕f5!? 15 ♕e2+ ♗e7 16 ♘xc7+ ♔f8 17 ♘e6+ ♔f7 18 ♖xg2 g6 19 ♘c7+ ♔g7 20 ♕e3!, or 14...♗b4+!? 15 c3 ♔f8 16 ♕f3! ♕f7 17 cxb4 ♘xd4 18 ♕e3 ♘f5 19 ♘xc7 ♘xe3 20 ♗xf7.

With the move in the game Sisniega does not allow his opponent to castle. If 13 ♕xf3?! there follows 13...♗d6 with an unclear position, and so White first captures the c7 pawn. In fact this was a very difficult decision: behind the seemingly obvious pawn capture is concealed a combination with the sacrifice of a rook, the consequences of which, at the board, were impossible to calculate to the end.

13	**♘xc7+!**	**♔d8**
14	**♕xf3!**	

It was possible not to sacrifice, but, on the contrary, to capture the rook: 14 ♘xa8, but then the initiative would have passed to the opponent.

15



14	**...**	**♘b6**

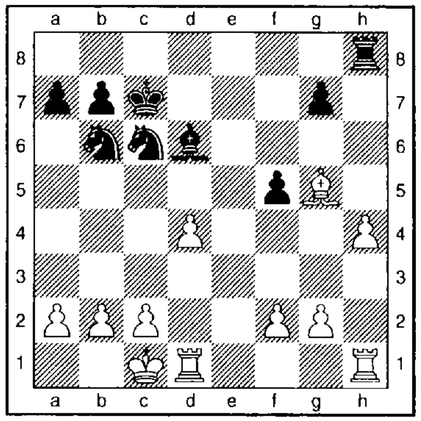
The main variation found by Dolmatov looks like this: 14...♘xd4 15 ♕d5 ♘xc2+ 16 ♔d1 ♘xa1 (16...♘b4 17 ♕d2 with the threats of 18 ♘xa8 and 18 ♖e1) 17 ♘e6+ ♔e8 18 ♗d3! ♕g4+ 19 f3 ♕xg2 20 ♖e1 and the attack apparently achieves its aim. It is interesting that White's offensive is successful, even though he is a rook and a knight down. Note, however, that Dolmatov was insured by the perpetual check available to him.

After the move played, the game goes into an ending that is favourable to White.

15	**♗d3**	**♗g4**
16	**♕g3**	**♗f5**
17	**♕xg6**	**hxg6**
18	**♘xa8**	**♘xa8**
19	**0–0–0**	**♘b6**
20	**♗g5+**	**♔c7**
21	**♗xf5**	**gxf5**

22	**h4**	**♗d6**

16



Q 8-10. What should White play?

The rook and three pawns are, of course, stronger than the two knights. Sooner or later White will advance his pawn mass on the queenside, but it is not easy to do this immediately – the enemy pieces are carrying out quite well their blockading functions.

Note that for the moment the white rooks are not very active – they have available only the open e-file, the invasion squares on which are easily covered by Black. To activate the rooks, lines must be opened on the kingside. The strongest plan began with 23 h5!. Then at a convenient moment (especially if the rook moves from h8) there follows h5–h6.

23	**♖he1?!**	

Dolmatov makes a routine move, which, although it does not change the evaluation of the position, makes it somewhat harder to convert his advantage.

23	**. . .**	**♔d7**
24	**c3**	**a6**
25	**♔c2**	**♘d5**
26	**♔d3**	**b5**
27	**♖a1**	

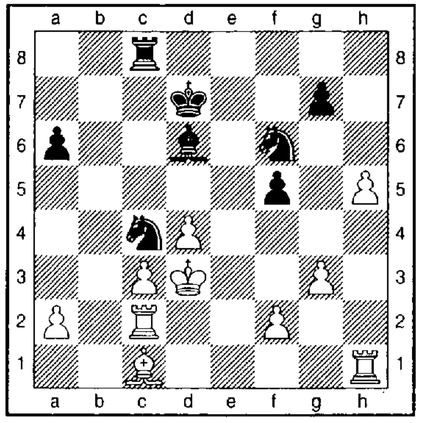
Here Sergey now sensed the need to open lines for his rooks and he tried to prepare a2–a4.

27	**. . .**	**♖b8**
28	**♖e2**	**♘a5**
29	**g3**	**♖c8**
30	**♖c2**	**♘c4**
31	**♖h1!**	

Finally White has arrived at the correct plan: h4–h5–h6.

31	**. . .**	**b4?!**
32	**♗c1**	**bxc3**
33	**bxc3**	**♘f6**
34	**h5**	

17



White has a clear advantage. However, at this moment Artur Yusupov's game ended in a draw, and to win the title of world champion Sergey now needed only a half point. Therefore he offered a draw, which, of course, was accepted.

Playing for Mate

The h-file has on its conscience many victims.
Saviely Tartakower

In 1986 Artur Yusupov defeated Jan Timman in their semi-final candidates match for the world championship. The two adversaries played boldly and interestingly – it is no accident that I have included in my books nearly all the games from this match. Observing events in the press centre, and then analysing in the hotel room (together with Sergey Dolmatov, who was also helping Artur in Tilburg), I at times felt myself to be not a trainer, but simply a chess enthusiast, a gourmet savouring some excellent chess dishes.

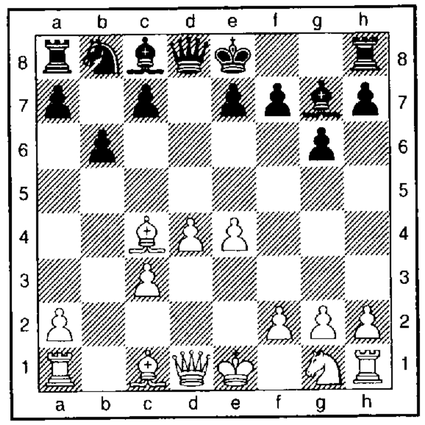
The romantic times of the 18th and 19th century masters have irrevocably passed, but even modern grandmasters sometimes act in the 'good old style' – already at an early stage of a game they begin a fierce storming of the enemy king's defences. The grounds for the attack may be opening mistakes by the opponent (say, the neglect of development). But often it is not a matter of mistakes, but simply that an attack is one of the possible ways of interpreting the chosen opening set-up.

Yusupov – Timman

Candidates match, 7th game, Tilburg 1986

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**g6**
3	**♘c3**	**d5**
4	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**
5	**e4**	**♘xc3**
6	**bxc3**	**♗g7**
7	**♗c4**	**b6!?**

18



Instead of the generally adopted 7...c5 the Dutch grandmaster employs a rather rare variation, which does not enjoy a good reputation. How is his choice to be explained?

Firstly, by the situation in the match. In the first game Yusupov gained a great advantage, but in time trouble he went wrong and lost. Then came three fighting draws, after which Artur gained two successive wins and took the lead. Understandably, Timman wanted to recoup his losses – therefore he rejected the Queen's Indian set-ups that he had employed in the first half of the event and chose a sharp variation of the Grünfeld Defence.

Secondly, Timman took account of the fact that earlier his opponent had constantly played 7 ♘f3 c5 8 ♖b1 and had only recently switched to the plan beginning with 7 ♗c4, and so he would not have had time to gain

sufficient experience here. It was easy to assume that Yusupov would have been quite well prepared in the main branches, but that he would not have had time to reach the 'side' variations and at best would remember the recommendations of official theory, and perhaps not even those. Therefore an opening surprise could have proved highly unpleasant for him.

All this looks logical. However, apart from the arguments 'for', there are also arguments 'against' Timman's choice, which, in my view, were underestimated by him.

To try and confuse Yusupov is a completely hopeless matter. He is a splendid fighter, who never gets into a panic. On encountering an opening problem, he displays a healthy appetite in trying to solve it, relying on his great strategic mastery. When Artur is in form, he is capable of finding the solutions to very difficult problems, and during this match he was in excellent form.

Apart from that, Timman had analysed insufficiently deeply the opening variation that he was intending to employ. ***I think that it is possible to play almost any variations, even those that are seemingly very risky or are reputed to be dubious, but only after thorough preparation. When going in for a big risk, passing along the edge of the abyss, to avoid stumbling you must think beforehand about your every step, relying on ideas found at home that are unknown to your opponent.***

Timman, in my view, was wrong not to claim a postponement before the 7th game, although he had the right to do this. A free day would have helped him, even if only a little, to restore himself psychologically after the two successive defeats, and more important – to prepare rather better his planned opening variation.

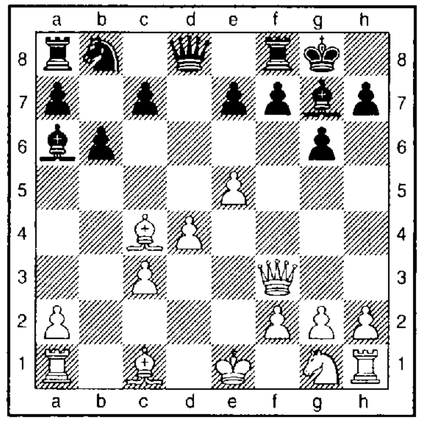
8 ♕f3!?

Artur immediately demonstrates his fighting mood, by choosing the sharpest and most critical continuation. 8 ♗e3, 8 ♘e2 or 8 ♘f3 is more usual.

8 . . . 0–0
9 e5!? ♗a6!

In the game Balashov–Ree (Wijk aan Zee 1973) Black replied with the passive 9...c6? and after 10 ♘e2 ♕d7 11 h4 ♕g4 12 ♕xg4 ♗xg4 13 h5 ♖c8 14 hxg6 hxg6 15 ♘f4 he ended up in a bad position.

19



10 ♗d5!

Incorrect is 10 ♕xa8? ♗xc4 11 ♕f3 f6! 12 e6 ♕d6 with advantage to Black (Kane–Benko, USA 1973). The move in the game is more accurate than 10 ♗b3, after which Black has the tempting possibilities of 10...♕c8!? followed by 11...♗b7 and 10...♕d7!?, intending 11...♘c6 – in both cases it is unfavourable for White to take the rook on a8.

10 . . . c6
11 ♗b3 ♕c7

This move seems absolutely natural – Black prepares ...c6–c5 and he places his queen beforehand on the c-file that is about to be opened. And a future motif will be a piece sacrifice on e5.

It is also possible to threaten the immediate strike on e5, by playing 11...♘d7. If 12 ♗f4, then 12...c5 13 h4 cxd4 14 cxd4 (14 h5 g5!) 14...e6 15 h5 ♕e7, and the threat of a check on b4 secures Black good counterplay. However, White is not obliged to waste precious time on the defence of the pawn.

12 h4! ♗xe5! 13 h5 (13 dxe5? ♘xe5 and 14...♘d3+) 13...♗g7 14 hxg6 hxg6 15 ♕h3 ♘f6 16 ♗g5 (16 ♘f3 ♕d7, and if 17 ♕h4 or 17 ♕h2 there follows 17...♕g4) 16...♕d7 17 ♕h4 ♖fe8 18 ♘f3 ♘h5 (not 18...e5 19 ♗xf6 exd4+ 20 ♔d1 dxc3+ 21 ♔c1 with the terrible threat of 22 ♕h8+) 19 g4 e5 20 0–0–0! and Black is in trouble. Apart from 15 ♕h3, also very strong is 15 ♗h6!?, intending the fine variation 15...♘f6 (15...♗xh6 16 ♕h3!; 15...e5 16 ♕h3 exd4 17 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 18 ♕h6+ ♔f6 19 0–0–0) 16 ♕e3!! ♘g4 17 ♗xg7 ♘xe3 (17...♔xg7 18 ♕g5 ♕d7 19 f3 also fails to save Black) 18 ♗e5 with inevitable mate.

12 h4!

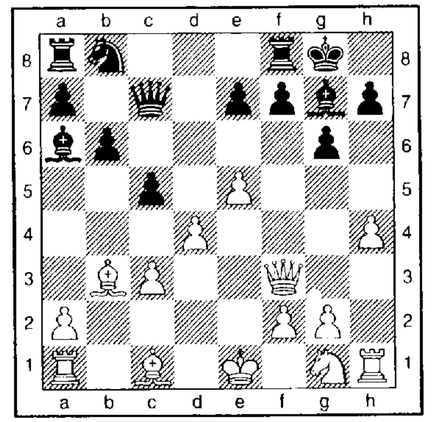
A bold (after all, the white king in the centre feels uncomfortable) but completely correct decision.

12 . . . c5

Too slow is 12...♘d7 13 ♗f4! e6. Here is an approximate variation, showing how menacing White's attack is: 14 h5 c5 15 hxg6 hxg6 16 ♕h3 ♖fd8 17 ♗h6! ♘xe5 (17...cxd4 18 ♗xg7 ♕xc3+ 19 ♕xc3 dxc3 20 ♗h8!? or 17...♗xe5 18 ♗f4! cxd4 19 cxd4 ♘c5 20 ♗xe5 ♕xe5+ 21 dxe5 ♘d3+ 22 ♕xd3 – in both cases with a decisive material advantage) 18 ♗xg7 ♘d3+ 19 ♕xd3 ♗xd3 20 ♗f6 and mate is inevitable.

see next diagram

20



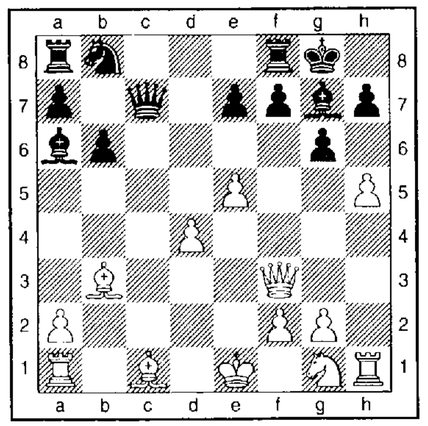
Q 8-11. How should White continue?

In such a position you should aim for mate, and not go chasing material! Against 13 ♗d5? Timman had prepared 13...cxd4 14 cxd4 (14 ♗xa8 ♕xe5+) 14...♘c6! 15 ♗xc6 ♖ac8, and if 16 ♗d5, then 16...♕xc1+! 17 ♖xc1 ♖xc1+ 18 ♔d2 ♗h6+.

13 h5 cxd4
14 cxd4

14 hxg6?! is weaker on account of 14... ♕xe5+ 15 ♗e3 hxg6 16 cxd4 ♕b5.

21



14 . . . gxh5?

Positional capitulation! Black's position now becomes completely hopeless. It was here, apparently, that Timman's psychological shock after his two preceding defeats revealed itself. However, it is not easy to offer him any good advice. Let's analyse Black's possibilities.

14...♗xe5? loses immediately to 15 hxg6 hxg6 16 ♕h3.

In reply to 14...♗b7 15 ♕g3 ♗xg2 the bishop can be taken: 16 ♕xg2 ♕c3+ 17 ♔e2 ♘c6 18 ♘f3. But simpler is 16 ♖h4 (threatening 17 hxg6) 16...e6 17 hxg6 hxg6 18 ♗h6 ♘d7 19 ♖c1 ♕b7 20 ♕h2.

The attempt to block the terrible bishop at b3 by 14...♗c4 leads after 15 ♕h3! (more accurate than 15 hxg6 fxg6 16 ♕h3 h5 17 ♘e2, which, however, is also pretty strong) 15...♗xb3 16 hxg6 fxg6 17 ♕xb3+ ♔h8 18 ♘f3 (with the threat of 19 ♖xh7+!) to a lost position for Black.

The best practical chance was to try to initiate complications by **14...♘c6!? 15 hxg6 ♘xe5!** (but not 15...hxg6? 16 ♕h3 ♖fd8 17 ♕h7+ ♔f8 18 ♗h6). During the game, Dolmatov, Timman's second Ulf Andersson and I enthusiastically analysed in the press centre the resulting very sharp variations. In the end we concluded that White retains an advantage sufficient to win. This conclusion is apparently correct, although subsequently some variations had to be refined.

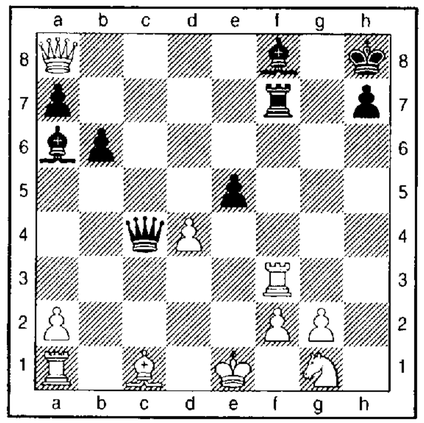
16 gxf7+!. Much less convincing is 16 dxe5 ♕xe5+ 17 ♘e2 (threatening 18 ♗xf7+) 17...hxg6! 18 ♖b1 ♖ad8 or 18...♖ac8, and Black has excellent compensation for the sacrificed piece.

16...♘xf7 (16...♔h8?? 17 ♖xh7+!) **17 ♗xf7+ ♖xf7 18 ♕xa8+ ♗f8.** After 18...♖f8 19 ♕d5+ e6 20 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 the most accurate way to win was demonstrated many years later by Viswanathan Anand: 21 ♕e4! ♕c3+ 22 ♔d1 ♗d3 (22...h6 23 ♗xh6! ♕xa1+ 24 ♗c1+ ♔g8 25 ♕h7+ ♔f7 26 ♖h4 or 26 ♘f3) 23 ♖xh7+! ♔g8 24 ♖xg7+ ♔xg7 25 ♗h6+! ♔xh6 26 ♕e3+ ♔g7 27 ♖c1.

But 21 ♕e3 (with the idea of ♘f3–e5) is also quite possible, and if 21...♕c6!? (Lautier), then 22 ♘f3 ♖e8 23 ♘e5 ♗xe5 24 dxe5 ♕xg2 25 ♖h6 ♕g1+ 26 ♔d2 ♖f8 27 ♖f6 ♖d8+ 28 ♖d6 ♖f8, and now not 29 f4? ♕g2+ 30 ♔d1 (30 ♔c3 ♖c8+ 31 ♔b4 ♕c2 with dangerous threats) 30...♖c8!, and not 29 ♖f6?! ♖d8+ with a repetition of moves, but 29 ♔c3!.

19 ♖h3! (19 ♘e2? ♗xe2! 20 ♔xe2 ♕c4+) **19...♕c4 20 ♖g3+! ♔h8 21 ♖f3.** Now 21...♖xf3 22 ♕xf3, 21...♕xd4 22 ♖b1 or 21...♖f6 22 ♗b2 ♖e6+ 23 ♔d1! is hopeless for Black. His best try is **21...e5!.**

22



Q 8-12. What should White play?

A draw results from 22 ♕e4? ♕f1+ 23 ♔d2 ♗h6+ 24 ♔c2 ♖c7+ 25 ♖c3 ♖xc3+ 26 ♔xc3 ♕c4+ with perpetual check. White's problems are due to the fact that even now, at the very height of the middlegame, he has still not completed his development – four of his pieces have not in fact moved from their initial squares. He must make use of an appropriate opportunity to bring one of them out.

22 ♗b2! ♗b7. Black fails to save the game with 22...exd4 23 ♖c1! ♖e7+ 24 ♔d1 ♕f1+ 25 ♔c2 ♖c7+ 26 ♔d2 or 22...♖xf3 23 ♕xf3 ♕f1+ 24 ♔d2 ♗h6+ 25 ♔c2 ♕c4+ 26 ♗c3! ♕a4+ 27 ♔b2 ♕b5+ 28 ♔a3.

23 ♕e8! (but not 23 ♖xf7 ♕b4+!) **23...♗xf3 24 ♘xf3 ♕b4+ 25 ♔f1.**

15	**♖xh5**	**♗b7**

Other moves are no better: 15...♕c6 16 ♗d5; 15...♘d7 16 ♗d2 (or 16 ♘e2); 15...♘c6 16 ♕f5 h6 17 ♖xh6 (or 17 ♗c2).

16	**♕d3**	**♖d8**
17	**♕xh7+**	**♔f8**
18	**♘e2**	**♖xd4**
19	**♗h6**	

Black resigns.

Thus, Yusupov increased his lead to two points. The following, 8th game of the match ended in a draw (it is analysed in the supplement to my lecture about building up an opening repertoire from the book *Opening Preparation*). To win the match it was sufficient for Artur to gain one draw from the two remaining games.

Yusupov – Timman

Candidates match, 9th game, Tilburg 1986

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**g6**
3	**♘c3**	**d5**
4	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**
5	**e4**	**♘xc3**
6	**bxc3**	**♗g7**
7	**♗c4**	**b6!?**

An unpleasant surprise! After the 7th game Artur and I had gained the impression that it was time to shelve the plan with 7...b6 – White had refuted very convincingly the opponent's opening strategy. It seemed improbable that after such a severe defeat Timman would repeat the variation, and therefore we did not check thoroughly our analysis. However, the Dutch grandmaster demonstrated that he was prepared to stick to his principles.

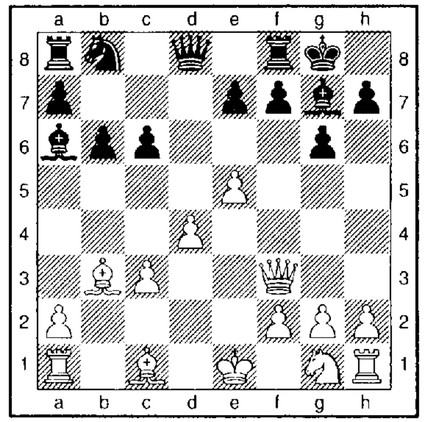
8	**♕f3**	**0–0**
9	**♘e2!?**	

Yusupov declines to pick up the gauntlet, thrown down by Timman, and does not repeat the move 9 e5 that had brought him success. This was quite sensible: at such an important moment it hardly made sense to take a risk, by trying to counter at the board the opponent's home analysis.

But what was his idea? What was concealed behind Timman's opening choice: bluff, a mistake in analysis, or an important improvement for Black? The answer was obtained a few months later in the game **Yusupov–Timman** (Bugojno 1986).

9 e5 ♗a6 10 ♗d5 c6 11 ♗b3.

23



Instead of the move tried in the 7th game, the natural 11...♕c7, which would appear to have been a decisive mistake, Timman played **11...♕d7!.** Here Yusupov realised that in reply to 12 h4 Black had prepared the rook sacrifice 12...c5! 13 ♗d5 cxd4! 14 ♗xa8 (14 cxd4 ♘c6!) 14...dxc3. Such a turn of events did not appeal to him. Here is one

of the possible variations: 15 ♘e2 c2 16 0–0 ♗xe5 17 ♗h6 ♗xa1 18 ♗xf8 ♕d1.

12 ♘e2 e6 13 0–0 c5 14 ♖d1 ♘c6 15 ♗g5 cxd4 16 cxd4 ♗xe2 (16...♘a5!?) **17 ♕xe2 ♘b4 18 h4! ♖fc8.** A complicated and, apparently, roughly equal position has been reached. After a tense struggle the game ended in a draw. Timman had shown that the 7...b6 plan is viable, and that it is not possible to refute it by force.

I will repeat once more my point of view: the inclusion of sharp and seemingly risky variations in your repertoire is quite permissible, but only after serious analysis at home – they demand extreme accuracy and resourcefulness.

And now – let us return to Tilburg, to the last game of the candidates match.

9 . . . ♘c6

10 h4!?

Although for victory in the match it was sufficient for Yusupov to draw, he nevertheless launches a risky attack. But Black is able to meet it fully armed, and therefore it was objectively better to play 10 ♗e3 or 10 ♗g5!? h6 11 ♗e3.

10 . . . ♘a5!

10...h5? or 10...e5?! was much weaker because of 11 ♗g5!.

11 ♗d3 e5

All in accordance with the rules: Black meets a flank offensive with a counter-blow in the centre.

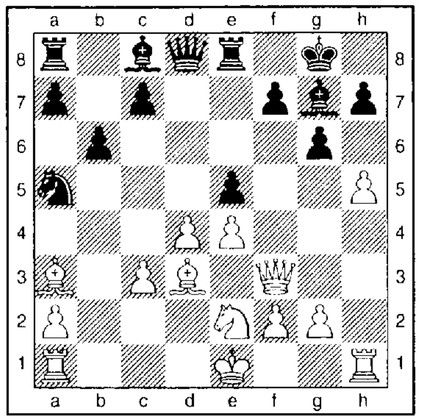
12 ♗a3 ♖e8

If now White plays 'cautiously': 13 d5 or 13 ♖d1, then after 13...h5! his attack will come to a halt, without managing to begin, and the black bishop will gain the excellent square g4. Therefore the storm has to be continued.

13 h5!

see next diagram

24



13 . . . ♕d7!

The black queen is ready, depending on circumstances, to jump to a4 or g4. Less convincing was 13...exd4 14 cxd4 c5 (14...♗xd4?! 15 ♖d1 is dangerous) 15 e5!? ♗e6 16 ♕g3, intending ♕h2 (immediately or after the exchange of pawns on g6).

14 ♖d1

If 14 d5 there would have followed 14...♕a4 15 ♗c1 ♘b7! and 16...♘c5, after which Black completely holds the initiative. So as not to allow this, Yusupov abandons the a2 pawn to its fate.

14 . . . ♕a4

In view of the match situation, Timman probably did not even consider 14...♕g4. Objectively it would have led to an ending that is slightly better for White.

15 ♗c1 c5

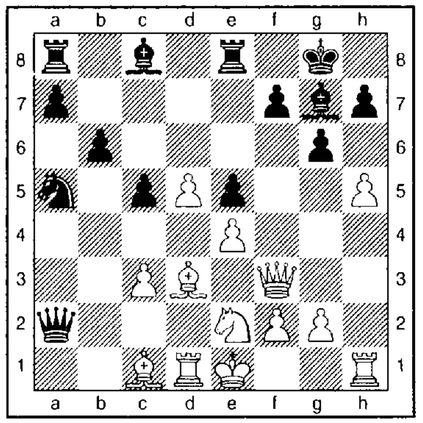
A questionable decision. With the centre closed it is easier for White to attack on the kingside. Timman underestimated the dangers threatening his king.

It was possible to take the pawn immediately: 15...♕xa2, after which there follows 16 d5!, preventing the return of the queen to e6. A complicated battle with chances for both sides would have been in prospect.

After the game Timman suggested 15...exd4 16 cxd4 ♘c6 17 hxg6 hxg6. Artur would probably have replied 18 0–0 ♘xd4 19 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 20 ♗c2!, retaining quite good positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn. But the critical 18 e5! is stronger. If 18...♗b7, then 19 ♕h3 followed by 20 ♕h7+ ♔f8 21 ♗h6. The tempting piece sacrifice 18...♘xd4?! can, it would seem, be refuted: 19 ♘xd4! (much weaker is 19 ♕xa8 ♗g4 20 ♕e4? ♗xe2 or 20 ♕b7 ♗xe5 with dangerous counterplay) 19...♗xe5 (19...♕xd4 20 ♕xa8 ♕xe5+ 21 ♗e3 ♗g4 22 ♕c6 is hopeless), and now not 20 ♘e2? ♗g4, but 20 0–0! ♗xd4 21 ♕xa8 ♗g4 (21...♗xf2+ 22 ♔xf2 ♗g4 23 ♕d5 ♗xd1 24 ♗xg6) 22 ♗c2 ♗xd1 23 ♗xa4 ♖xa8 24 ♖xd1 and White should win the endgame.

16 d5 ♕xa2

25



Q 8-13. How should White continue?

On the queenside Black has a great advantage – he is threatening ...c5–c4 or ...♗d7–a4. But on the other hand his queen is cut off from the kingside, where the main events are now developing.

In order to strengthen the attack, it is important to exchange the bishop at g7 – the only piece covering the king. How can this be achieved? 17 ♗g5 is tempting, but firstly, for the moment 18 ♗f6 is not a threat in view of the reply 18...♗g4!, and secondly, the opponent has the successful rejoinder 17...f6!. If 17 hxg6, then 17...fxg6! 18 ♗h6 ♗h8, after which the manoeuvre ♗g5–f6 becomes in principle impracticable, because the black rook will always be able to pin the bishop on the f-file.

17 ♗h6!!

This powerful blow finally clarifies if not the result of the game, then at least the outcome of the match. Now the only reasonable continuation was the capture of the bishop, but then in all variations White is guaranteed at least a draw.

17...♗xh6 18 hxg6 fxg6 (18...hxg6? 19 ♖xh6 ♔g7 20 ♖h7+!) 19 ♖xh6. The threat is 20 ♖xh7. How can Black defend?

19...♖f8 20 ♕g3 and the e5 pawn is attacked.

19...♕a4 20 ♖xh7 (20 ♕f6 ♕d7 21 ♖xg6+ hxg6 22 ♕xg6+ ♔f8 23 ♗b5! ♕xb5 24 ♕f6+ leads to a draw) 20...♔xh7 (20...♖f8? 21 ♖h8+!) 21 ♕f7+ ♔h6 22 ♔d2 ♘b3+ 23 ♔e3 ♗g4 24 ♖h1+ ♗h5. Now it is wrong to play 25 ♘g3? ♕d4+!! 26 cxd4 cxd4 mate, but after 25 g4! there appears to be no satisfactory defence against 26 ♖xh5+ gxh5 27 g5+! ♔xg5 28 ♕g7+ ♔h4 29 ♕g3 mate. If 25...♖g8, then 26 f4! exf4+ 27 ♔xf4 with inevitable mate.

19...♗d7 20 ♕f6 ♖f8 21 ♖xg6+ with perpetual check or 21 ♕xe5 ♗a4 with an unclear position.

17 . . . ♗h8?

18 ♗b5 ♖d8

19 ♗g5!

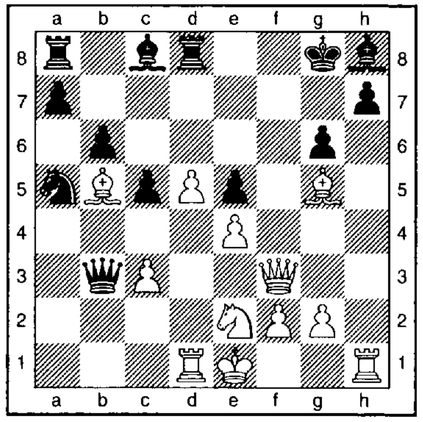
Eric Lobron – one of Timman's seconds – suggested 19 0–0!?, beginning then a pursuit of the black queen. Yusupov preferred to play for mate.

19 . . . ♕b3

If 19...f6, then 20 hxg6! is decisive – here we see why it was so important to lure the black bishop to h8. And no better is 19...♗d7 20 hxg6 fxg6 21 ♖xh7! ♖f8 (21...♔xh7 22 ♕f7+ ♗g7 23 ♗f6 ♖g8 24 ♕xd7) 22 ♖xh8+ ♔xh8 23 ♗f6+ ♔g8 24 ♗xd7.

20 hxg6 fxg6

26



21 ♖xh7! ♔xh7
22 ♕f7+ ♗g7
23 ♗f6 ♖g8
24 ♗e8!

This fine concluding move worthily crowns Yusupov's inspired play in this match. Black resigned in view of inevitable mate: 24...♗f5 25 exf5 ♖axe8 26 ♕xg6+ ♔h8 27 ♕h6 mate.

An Unrealised Dream

Surprising your opponent can be effective, but there is a danger. Every player develops a 'feel' for the positions resulting from his regular openings; memorising the theory of a new opening is not the same as having a close familiarity with the resulting positions.

John Nunn

In 1977 I began training Nana Alexandria. Our aim was to win the highest title in women's chess – that of world champion. And we were close, very close to success...

At that time Nana was a mature, strong player, and there was no doubting her enormous talent. But the fulfilment of her dream was hindered by an obvious deficiency in general chess culture, a restricted arsenal of strategic ideas and procedures, and a number of serious competitive defects. Intensive joint work enabled us gradually to achieve noticeable progress in all these aspects. However, certain problems remained unresolved.

Alexandria did not cure herself completely of her time trouble illness, although her time scrambles became less severe than before. For a complete cure she needed to play a couple of tournaments with the same aim that Dreev had in Leningrad (cf. the chapter 'How a chess player develops'). But each time, in striving for victory in a tournament, my pupil forgot about the training goals that she had been set, and she violated the anti-time trouble aims.

An even greater problem was Nana's highly emotional nature, her impressionability and lack of psychological stability, which often led to failures at decisive moments. It proved possible to neutralise only partially this deficiency too – it continued to show, although comparatively more rarely than before. I once again realised how important it is to solve the main problems of a player's improvement (in particular, psychological) in their youth, and how much more difficult it is to do this at a mature age.

In 1981 Alexandria won the qualifying cycle and earned the right to a match against world champion Maya Chiburdanidze. In match play, where many games have to be played against the same opponent, thorough opening preparation becomes a very important (although, of course, by no means the only) factor of success. And in the opening Nana was simply splendidly prepared, clearly better than her opponent. The main credit for this belongs not to me, but to Nana's other helpers, in particular the well-known openings expert Viktor Gavrikov.

At the start of the match Chiburdanidze tried to fight it out in her favourite variations, but she completely lost the opening battle. Then she decided to try and neutralise our preparation, by each time changing opening, even choosing systems that she had previously never employed. But not once was she able to catch her opponent unawares – we had anticipated such tactics and had prepared Nana in advance for any surprises.

Alexandria was stronger not only in the opening, but also in the creative sense – her play was more vivid, deep and interesting. Why then was she nevertheless unable to celebrate victory? The reason lay in the deficiencies mentioned above.

To illustrate what has been said, I propose to analyse the 14th game of the match – one of the most fighting and interesting. At this point the scores were level.

Alexandria – Chiburdanidze

World championship match, 14th game, Borzhomi/Tbilisi 1981

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**g6**
3	**♘c3**	**d5**

Chiburdanidze was a devotee of the King's Indian Defence, and those openings that she employed in the second half of the match – the Grünfeld, Nimzo-Indian, Benoni and Queen's Indian Defences – evidently had to be absorbed during the course of the event. A heavy burden for her and her trainers!

4	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**
5	**♘f3**	**♗g7**
6	**e4**	**♘xc3**
7	**bxc3**	**c5**
8	**♖b1**	

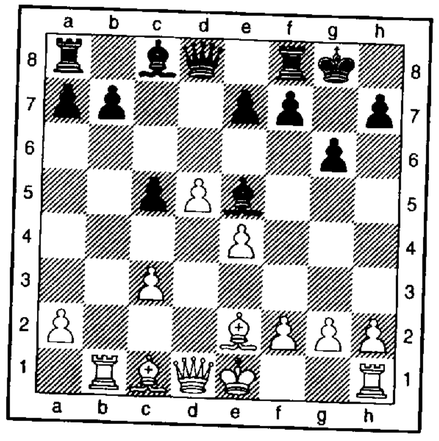
Since the Grünfeld Defence was not part of Chiburdanidze's repertoire, there was, of course, no point in studying the extensive theory in the main line (after 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♗g7 7 ♗c4). A more economic way was chosen – the rapid assimilation of a rare and little-used, but quite good branch, involving 5 ♘f3 and 8 ♖b1. This will no doubt produce an ironic smile with the well-versed reader – he will know that in the 1980s the theory of this variation grew significantly, and that hundreds, if not thousands, of games were played with it. In one of them (Novikov–Tukmakov, Lvov 1984) White employed a novelty on the 36th move and his home analysis extended beyond move 50! Yes, this is all so, but at that time the variation was still in its infancy.

8	**...**	**0–0**
9	**♗e2**	**♘c6**
10	**d5!**	

It was on account of this energetic advance that Black's last move then seemed inaccurate. In the game Kasparov–Natsis (Olympiad, Malta 1980) there followed 10...♗xc3+ 11 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 ♘d4? (later it was established that it is better to play 12...♘a5) 13 ♘xd4 cxd4 14 ♕xd4 ♕a5+ 15 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 16 ♔xd2 ♖d8 17 ♔e3 with an obvious advantage for White in the endgame. The reply by the lady world champion was a theoretical novelty.

10	**...**	**♘e5**
11	**♘xe5**	**♗xe5**

27



12	**♕d2!!**	

A brilliant strategic decision! As can be seen, even good opening preparation sometimes does not relieve one of the need to look independently at the board for the strongest, most accurate continuations. Subsequently this was played numerous times, but the first to blaze the correct trail was Nana Alexandria.

How did Nana arrive at this, at first sight rather strange, move (the queen stands in the path of its own bishop)? ***It required a deep and concrete evaluation, which usually signifies an ability to establish logically, or sense intuitively, the most important elements that define the content of a position, its essence, and the main problem that has to be solved.***

For example, the key to the position reached after Black's 13th move in the Dreev–Wolff game, examined earlier, was the weakness of the e5 square, against which Dreev began playing. Here the essential point of the position is the need for White to advance her central pawns. If the c3 pawn is defended in some other way (for example, 12 ♕c2 or 12 ♕b3), the opponent replies 12...♕c7, not allowing f2–f4 and at the same time preventing castling. To prepare play in the centre by g2–g3 is unfavourable, since the enemy bishop obtains a menacing post at h3. But after 12 ♕d2!! it is no longer possible to prevent 13 f4. In addition, the bishop at c1 is shut in only for a time: White's plans include c3–c4, after which the bishop will come out at b2.

12	**...**	**e6**
13	**f4**	**♗c7**

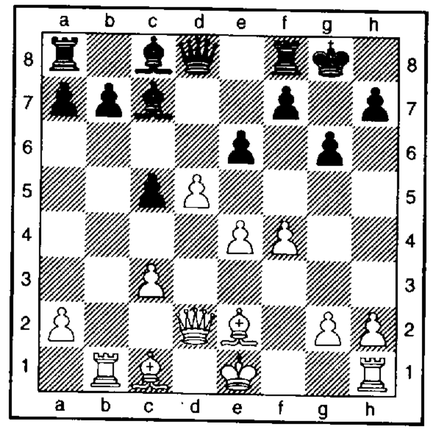
The move made by Chiburdanidze certainly has its point – in this way she does not allow either 14 d6, or 14 c4. However, the bishop abandons the kingside and as a result White's chances of creating an attack there are increased. It was safer to retreat the bishop to g7, as subsequently everyone began playing. However, in the 1990s some Grünfeld devotees again reverted to 13... ♗c7.

see next diagram

Nana was not satisfied with 14 ♗a3?! exd5! (the passive 14...b6? is inferior in view of 15 c4) 15 ♗xc5 dxe4! 16 ♗xf8 ♕xd2+ 17 ♔xd2 ♗xf4+ 18 ♔c2 ♔xf8 with good compensation for the exchange.

After the pawn exchange on d5 White would prefer not to recapture with the e-pawn.

28



Q 8-14. What should White play?

Since 14 c4? is not possible because of 14...♗a5, 14 ♗c4 suggests itself. However, in the opening White makes a second move with the same piece, without having completed her development or removed her king from the centre, so is it not possible for the opponent to exploit this factor? Yes, it is. Alexandria avoided 14 ♗c4 because of the reply 14...b5!? 15 ♗xb5 ♖b8 or 15 ♖xb5 ♗a6 16 ♖xc5 ♗b6 with counterplay for Black.

Many years later the Canadian player Knut Neven continued this last variation with 17 dxe6 ♗xc5 18 exf7+ ♖xf7 19 ♗xa6. White has three pawns for the exchange, and although his king is caught in the centre, the position is probably in his favour. Therefore in his game against Ilya Smirin (Calgary 1996) Neven modified Alexandria's idea by playing 14...a6!? 15 a4 b5! 16 axb5 axb5. Now after 17 ♖xb5 ♗a6 18 ♖xc5 ♗b6 White cannot play 19 dxe6? ♗xc5, since the bishop at a6 is defended. Smirin chose 17 ♗xb5 exd5 18 ♗c6 ♖a6 19 ♗xd5 ♖d6 20 0–0 and the excellent counter-stroke 20...♗f5! enabled Black to equalise.

14	**0–0!**	**exd5**
15	**exd5**	**♖e8?!**

White is threatening to launch a dangerous attack by playing c3–c4, followed by ♗d3, ♗b2 and f4–f5. The lady world champion counters this plan by using the open e-file for an exchange of pieces. A tempting idea, but not the best, which puts Black in a difficult position.

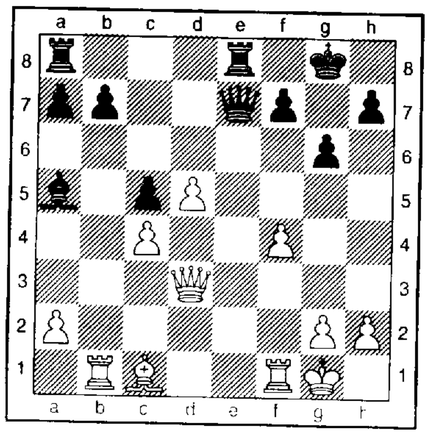
Remember the warning by John Nunn, taken as the epigraph for the present chapter. Chiburdanidze does not play the Grünfeld Defence and is not familiar with the situations that arise here. Therefore the strategic inaccuracies committed by her are by no means accidental.

An interesting counter-plan was demonstrated in the game Donchenko–Perelstein (USSR 1985): 15...♖b8 16 c4 ♗a5 17 ♕c2 b5! 18 ♖xb5 ♖xb5 19 cxb5 ♕xd5 20 ♖d1 ♗f5 21 ♖xd5 ♗xc2. The series of exchanges has led to an ending that is slightly better for White.

Experience has shown that the strongest move is the prophylactic 15...♗a5!, preventing White's important c3–c4 advance.

16	**c4**	**♗a5**
17	**♕c2**	**♗f5**
18	**♗d3**	**♗xd3**
19	**♕xd3**	**♕e7**

29



Q 8-15. What should White play?

Black is intending to exchange queens on e4. This can be prevented by making the natural attacking move 20 f5 (20...♕e4? 21 ♕xe4 ♖xe4 22 fxg6 and 23 ♖xb7). However, Alexandria rightly judged that after 20...♗c7! her attack would not achieve its aim, since the opponent is blocking the passed d-pawn and controlling the central squares. For example, 21 f6 ♕d7 22 ♖xb7 ♗xh2+ 23 ♔xh2 ♕xb7 and mate is not possible. Therefore White forcibly transposes into a favourable ending.

20	**d6!**	**♕e4**
21	**♕xe4**	**♖xe4**
22	**♖xb7**	

Now 22...f5 23 ♗b2 is bad for Black, and after any other move (for example, 22...♖xc4 or 22...♖d8) White advances her pawn to f5, which ensures a dangerous attack even in the endgame.

22	**...**	**♗c3**
23	**f5!**	**gxf5**
24	**♗g5!**	

By threatening to queen the d-pawn, White provokes a weakening of the 7th rank.

24	**...**	**f6**
25	**♗f4!**	

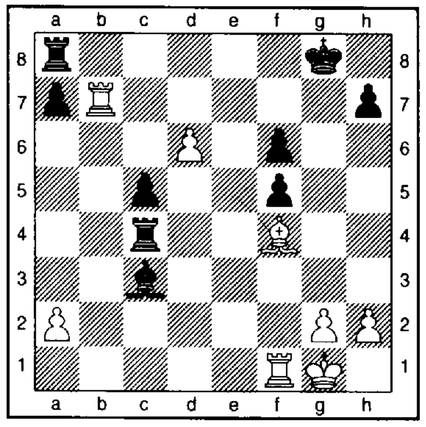
Nana avoided the obvious 25 ♗h6 because of 25...♗d4+ 26 ♔h1 ♗e5 with the threats of 27...♗xd6 and 27...♖h4. If, for example, 27 ♖g7+ ♔h8 28 d7 (hoping for 28...♖h4 29 ♖e7, when White wins) Black has the powerful counter-stroke 28...♗f4!.

25	**...**	**♖xc4**

In the event of 25...♗d4+ 26 ♔h1 ♗e5 White has a pleasant choice between 27 ♗xe5 and 27 g3.

see next diagram

30



26 g3??

Incomprehensible hesitancy when one step away from a deserved win. After the natural 26 ♖f3! things are bad for Black. Here are some illustrative variations:

26...♗e5 27 ♖g3+ ♔h8 28 ♗xe5 fxe5 29 ♖h3;

26...♗e1 27 ♗h6! (intending 28 ♖g7+ ♔h8 29 ♖e7) 27...♖h4 28 ♖e3!;

26...♗d4+ 27 ♔f1 ♖c3 28 d7 (or 28 ♖e7);

26...♖b4 27 ♖e7! (threatening 28 d7 ♔f8 29 ♗d6) 27...♗d4+ 28 ♔f1 ♖b1+ 29 ♔e2 ♖b2+ 30 ♔d3.

26	**...**	**♖d4**

The win has already been missed. After 27 ♖f3 there follows 27...♗d2! 28 ♗xd2 ♖xd2 29 ♖xf5 ♖e8. If 27 ♖e7, then 27...♗d2? 28 ♗xd2 ♖xd2 29 d7 ♔f8 30 ♖fe1 is now bad, but there is the worthy reply 27...♖e4!.

27	**♖f2**	**♖b4!**
28	**♖e7**	**♖e4**

The most accurate, although Black also does not lose after 28...♗d4 29 d7 ♗xf2+ 30 ♔xf2 (30 ♔g2? ♖e4) 30...♖xf4+! 31 gxf4 ♔f8.

29	♖e2	♖xe2
30	**♖xe2**	**♖d8**
31	**♖e7**	**♗e5!**
32	**d7**	**♔f8**
33	**♖xh7**	**♔g8**
34	**♖e7**	**♔f8**

Draw.

The outcome of this game seriously upset Nana, and it was not only the loss of a very important half point. She was also depressed by the fact that her excellent idea had remained incomplete. I sensed that her disillusionment would tell in the next, penultimate game of the match. However, in the first half of it Nana played quite confidently.

Chiburdanidze – Alexandria

World championship match, 15th game, Borzhomi/Tbilisi 1981

1	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
2	**b3**	**d5**
3	**♗b2**	**♗g4**
4	**e3**	**♘bd7**
5	**h3**	**♗h5**

The variation 5...♗xf3 6 ♕xf3 e5 7 c4 c6?! 8 cxd5 cxd5 is analysed in my book *School of Chess Excellence 2 – Tactical Play*. White should play 9 ♘c3!, but not 9 ♗b5 ♗d6 10 ♘c3 e4 11 ♕f5 in view of 11...g6!! 12 ♗xd7+ ♔f8! 13 ♕g5 h6 14 ♕h4 g5, when the queen is trapped (Yusupov).

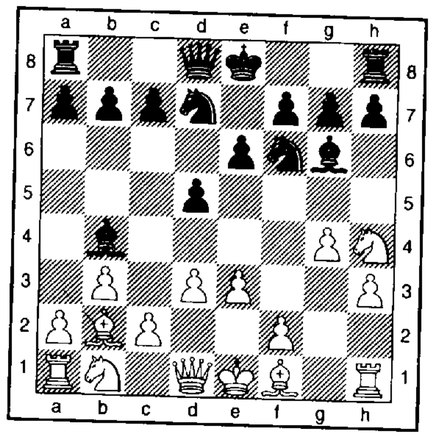
6	**d3**	**e6**
7	**g4**	**♗g6**
8	**♘h4**	

I think that in this position White should wait until the bishop moves from f8, and then play g4–g5, aiming at the g7 pawn. The move played runs counter to this plan.

8	**...**	**♗b4+**

see next diagram

31



9 c3

Typical of Chiburdanidze's rather superficial manner of play. She sees that 9 ♘d2 can be met by 9...♘e4 and so without particular hesitation she makes the positionally dubious move c2–c3. In fact the variation 9 ♘d2 ♘e4?! 10 ♘xg6! ♗xd2+ 11 ♔e2 is advantageous to White.

9 ... ♗d6

10 ♘xg6

This exchange was worth delaying.

10 ... hxg6

11 ♗g2 g5

Black's position is already preferable.

12 ♘d2 ♘e5

13 ♘f3 ♘xf3+

14 ♕xf3 ♕e7

15 c4 c6

16 ♔e2

16 ♔d1 and 17 ♔c2 came into consideration.

16 ... ♖h7

A rather awkward move, but quite a good one, preparing the activation of the knight.

17 ♖hc1 ♘d7

18 ♔f1 ♘e5?!

Now White could have equalised by 19 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 20 d4. She should not have been granted such an opportunity – the exchange of the dark-square bishops by 18...♗a3! looks stronger. Of course, this could also have been played a more or two earlier, so that it would have made sense for White to include a2–a3 somewhere.

19 ♕d1?! ♘g6

20 a3 ♗c7

21 ♔e2?! 0–0–0

Objectively, a good move. Its only drawback is that it makes it easier for the opponent to find a plan – it becomes clear that White is obliged to launch an energetic offensive on the queenside. 21...f5!? was probably simpler, intending 22...fxg4 23 hxg4 ♖h2 and only then 24...0–0–0. After 22 gxf5 exf5 or 22 cxd5 exd5 the unpleasant threat of 23...♘f4+ would have emerged. For example, 22 gxf5 exf5 23 cxd5 ♘f4+ 24 ♔f1 ♘xg2 25 ♔xg2 g4 and the white king is in danger.

22 b4

Now I must make a digression, which is necessary for an understanding of the subsequent events.

Chess enthusiasts, who followed the matches for the world championship with the participation of Karpov or Kasparov, can probably imagine the harsh, scandalous atmosphere of these events. What told were both the enormous nervous tension of playing at the highest level, as well as certain unattractive character traits of the champions and their opponents.

Unfortunately, in this respect women's matches sometimes resemble the men's. The event in question was no exception.

From the very start Chiburdanidze sensed that the playing advantage was not on her side. The simple explanation for this – Alexandria's superior preparation – did not satisfy the champion. Of course, the real reason had to be some secret and illegal support to her opponent.

There came a stream of accusations, protests and demands. The demonstrators, film crew and press centre officials were accused of helping Nana... Even the arbiters were not above suspicion – Chiburdanidze demanded that the arbiters' desk should always be arranged behind Alexandria's back, to exclude any possibility of the arbiters prompting Nana, when she was thinking over her move. On one occasion police (or KGB?) officials searched the press centre, tapping on the walls in the search of a device with which the trainers were transmitting moves to Nana on the stage. Maya did not even trust her own trainers – they were effectively kept under house arrest and were forbidden to attend the playing venue.

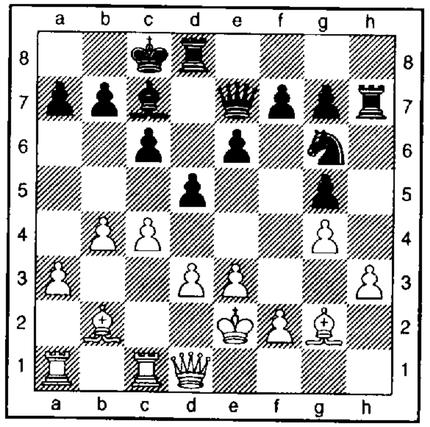
Nana anticipated that her opponent would try in some way to upset her emotional equilibrium and she endeavoured not to pay any attention to the off-the-board intrigues. She succeeded in this – until the 15th game.

The two participants were each given a small rest room alongside the stage. With the game in full swing, when thinking over her move, Nana suddenly noticed the world champion heading not into her own room, but into hers, Nana's. (As it transpired, Chiburdanidze had announced to the arbiters that in the room allotted to her there was an unpleasant smell). Nana became agitated. What should she do: appeal to the arbiters? create a scandal? not pay any attention? Her thoughts were distracted from chess, her concentration broken, her mood hopelessly spoiled. Alexandria lost the thread of the game and in a few moves she wrecked an excellent position. The world champion's psychological attack proved successful.

Chiburdanidze's behaviour was not surprising. After all, for several years she had been trained by grandmaster Eduard Gufeld – an interesting player, but not always a correct opponent, and a great lover of all sorts of psychological tricks.

(I should mention in brackets that with the years Maya's character and her attitude to her colleagues changed sharply for the better, which quite deservedly won her general sympathy. As I learned from Nana, a few years later Maya Chiburdanidze apologised to her for her behaviour in that match.)

32



Q 8-16. How should Black continue?

Her advantage would have been emphasised by the central breakthrough 22...d4! 23 ♗xd4 ♘f4+ with dangerous threats to the white king.

22 ... f5

23 ♕a4 fxg4?

Here 23...d4! was now simply essential. If 24 ♕xa7, then 24...dxe3 25 fxe3 ♕d6!, attacking the d3 pawn and threatening 26...♕g3(h2). 24 b5 dxe3 is also bad for White, while after 24 ♗xd4 there follows 24...♖xd4 25 exd4 ♘f4+ 26 ♔f1 ♘xg2 27 ♔xg2 fxg4 with an attack for Black.

24 ♕xa7

24 b5! came into consideration.

24 ... gxh3

25 ♗h1 ♗b8

26	**♕a8**	**♕d6?**	

Now if 26...d4 there was the unpleasant reply 27 ♗e4, but even so this could have been played in view of 27...♖h4!, and if 28 ♗xg6, then 28...♕f6 29 ♗e4 ♖xe4!. Black could also have considered 26...♕f7!?.

27	**cxd5**	**exd5**
28	**♗d4?!**	

28 b5! was more energetic, and if 28...c5, then 29 d4! c4 30 ♖xc4+. After the move in the game Black could have diverted the opponent from her direct attack by 28...♖f8!, for example: 29 ♗c5? (29 b5!) 29...♖xf2+! 30 ♔xf2 ♕h2+. But by now Nana had lost her bearings and she went down without a fight.

28	**...**	**♔d7??**
29	**♕xb7+**	**♕c7**
30	**♕a6**	**♖e8**
31	**b5**	**♘e7**
32	**♗b6**	**♕c8**
33	**bxc6+**	**♘xc6**
34	**♕b5**	**♖h6**
35	**♕xd5+**	**♖d6**
36	**♖xc6**	**♕xc6**
37	**♕f5+**	

Black resigns.

In the last game Alexandria gained a good win and squared the match, but the title of world champion remained with her opponent.

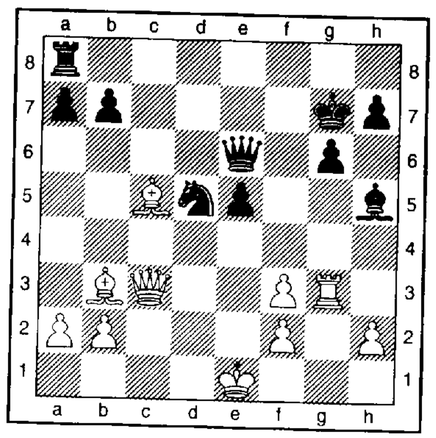
I should now like to explain why, in a book devoted to questions of how to improve, I have included a description of these events. Authors usually avoid such incidents, and perhaps wrongly. Young players should understand clearly that chess is not only creativity, and not only a beautiful, interesting game, but also a struggle – stern, nervy and, unfortunately, not always honest.

Our mood during preparations for a game or its actual course may voluntarily or involuntarily be influenced by the opponent, other people, and various attendant circumstances. This happens not so rarely, and it is important always to be prepared for this. It is essential from childhood to become accustomed to maintaining the maximum concentration in such situations, and to play not worse, but perhaps even better than before. Otherwise you will not achieve any great successes in chess.

As an exercise I offer a position that Yusupov and I reached when analysing one of the variations of the Grünfeld Defence.

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗g7 5 ♕b3 dxc4 6 ♕xc4 0–0 7 e4 ♗g4 8 ♗e3 ♘fd7 9 ♕b3 ♘b6 10 ♖d1 ♘c6 11 d5 ♘e5 12 ♗e2 ♘xf3+ 13 gxf3 ♗h5 14 ♖g1 ♕d7 15 ♖g3 f5 (15...c6 is better) **16 d6+ ♔h8 17 dxc7 ♕xc7 18 ♘b5 ♕b8 19 exf5 ♖xf5 20 ♘d4! ♖d5 21 ♘e6 ♖xd1+** (21...♕d6) **22 ♗xd1!** (weaker is 22 ♕xd1 ♗f6 23 ♗d4 ♘d5, as in the game Karolyi–Doncevic, Budapest 1985) **22...♕d6** (also bad is 22...♗f6 23 ♘g5!) **23 ♘xg7 ♔xg7 24 ♕c3+ e5 25 ♗b3 ♘d5** (25...♖c8 26 ♕d2 with an obvious advantage to White) **26 ♗c5! ♕e6.**

33



E 8-3. What should White play?

Dubious Innovations

I have lost interest in scientific books
Not because I have become lazy;
The root of studying is too bitter,
And the fruit, as a rule, is worm-eaten.
Igor Guberman

Chess theory is constantly being renewed. Many innovations make a significant contribution to it, disclosing new and promising directions of play, or changing or refining the evaluation of opening lines previously employed.

Also often encountered are 'one-day butterflies': innovations for one game, the aim of which is to surprise the opponent, dislodge him from familiar lines and force him to solve fresh problems at the board. Occasionally the initiator of such an innovation knows perfectly well that it is of inferior quality, but he takes a risk, hoping to exploit the effect of surprise. But sometimes he believes sincerely in the strength of his idea and trusts his analysis, which in fact contains a 'hole'.

Some players, without checking critically the information that they obtain from opening articles or monographs, *Informator* or computer databases, happily follow the latest recommendations. It is here that they can be caught. But for this, of course, you have to do your own analytical work.

Veroci – Alexandria

Interzonal Tournament,
Rio de Janeiro 1979

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘f3**	**d6**
3	**d4**	**cxd4**
4	**♘xd4**	**♘f6**
5	**♘c3**	**a6**
6	**f4**	**e6**
7	**♗e2**	**♕c7**
8	**0–0**	**♘c6**
9	**♗e3**	**♗d7**
10	**♕e1**	

In those times the plan of playing the queen to g3 was very popular. Nowadays White usually prefers to restrict the opponent's activity on the queenside by a2–a4.

10	**...**	**b5**
11	**a3**	**♗e7**
12	**♕g3**	**0–0**
13	**♖ae1**	**♘xd4**
14	**♗xd4**	**♗c6**
15	**♔h1**	**♖ab8**

15...♕b7 is more often played. I should like to mention a comparatively recent example on this theme – the game Shirov–Benjamin (Horgen 1994), which continued as follows: 16 ♗d3 b4 17 ♘d1!? g6 (17...bxa3 18 bxa3 ♖ad8!?) 18 ♘f2! bxa3 19 bxa3 ♘h5 20 ♕e3 ♘xf4?! (20...f5) 21 ♕xf4 e5 22 ♘g4!! and White won in excellent style.

16	**e5**	**♘e8**
17	**♗d3**	**g6**
18	**exd6**	

An innovation, employed a year earlier in the game **Sznapik–Niklasson** (Helsinki 1978). Alexander Sznapik attached an ex-

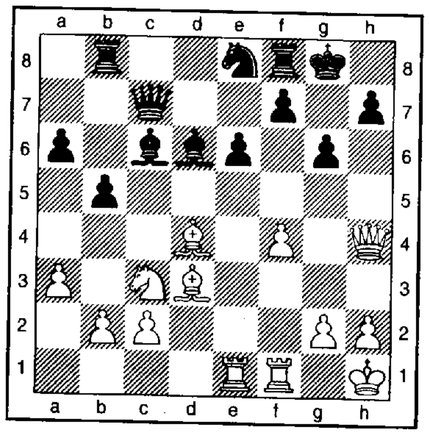
clamation mark to his move. But in fact 18 ♘e4 is stronger and more natural.

18 . . . ♗xd6

18...♘xd6? is bad in view of 19 f5! exf5 20 ♕e5.

19 ♕h4

34



Q 8-17. What should Black play?

White is threatening 20 f5, or 20 ♖e3 with the idea of ♕xh7+!. In the afore-mentioned game Black chose **19...♕d8 20 ♕h6 ♗xa3 21 ♘e2 ♗e7**, but after **22 f5!** he came under a terrible attack. There followed **22...♕d5** (22...♗g5 23 fxg6!; 22...exf5 23 ♖xf5! with the threat of 24 ♕xh7+!) **23 ♖f3 e5 24 ♘f4! ♕xd4** (24...exf4 25 ♕xh7+!) **25 fxg6 fxg6 26 ♗xg6 hxg6** (26...♘f6 27 ♘h5) **27 ♕xg6+ ♘g7 28 ♘e6 e4 29 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8 30 ♘xd4**. Black resigns.

There's no denying that this was a convincing rout! However, during Nana's preparations for the Interzonal Tournament it was decided to check the entire variation more carefully. After all, the exchange of the strong central e5 pawn, which was restricting the black knight at e8, looks suspicious in the strategic sense. Such apparently abstract doubts often provide the stimulus for further, already quite concrete searchings.

What is the essence of the position? Black appears to be alright – solid pawn formation, and strong bishop at c6. The only problem is how to defend against the attack on the king. The leading role in the attack is played by the powerful dark-square bishop, and it is this piece that in the first instance must be neutralised!

19 . . . ♗e7!

20 ♕h6

The accurate 20 ♕f2 is sounder, but after the retreat of the queen White's attack would cease to be dangerous.

20 . . . ♖d8!

Weaker is 20...♗f6 21 ♗e5! with somewhat the better position for White.

21 ♗g1

If 21 ♗e5, then 21...♕b7 with the threats of 22...♗xg2+ and 22...f6. For example, 22 ♗e4 f6! or 22 ♘e4 f5!.

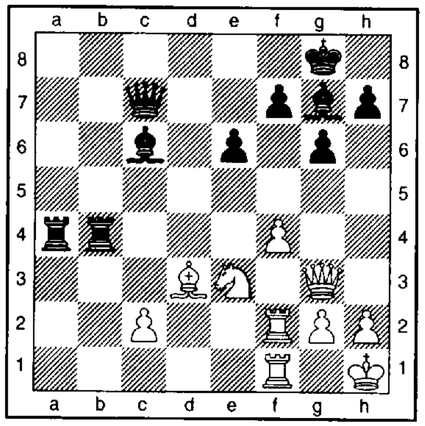
21 . . . ♗f6

The attack has been parried and Black has a positional advantage. Her bishops are clearly stronger than the opponent's, and soon her knight too will come into play. Subsequently White's queenside will be attacked (by ...b5–b4 immediately, or after the preparatory ...a6–a5).

The opening duel has been won, and Sznapik's innovation refuted. But the game does not end at this; success in the opening does much to influence its outcome, but by no means determines it. Alas, for some reason Alexandria subsequently began acting uncertainly – she spent a mass of time on each move and committed one inaccuracy after another. See how in the time scramble the advantage was finally lost.

see next diagram

35



Q 8-18. How should Black continue?

From the positional viewpoint 35...f5! is an attractive move, restricting the mobility of literally all the white pieces. Then Black would have continued 36...♗h6 or 36...♗f8.

35 . . . ♗h6?

36 ♘g4 ♗xf4

Black has won a pawn, but the enemy pieces have woken up. The rooks are dangerously pressing on the f-file, and the queen and knight create unpleasant threats to the king.

37 ♘f6+

If 37 ♕h4 Nana was intending to reply 37...f5 (37...e5 is better), but what would this have led to? White would have played 38 ♕f6 or 38 ♘f6+ ♔h8 39 c3. It is clearly very difficult to calculate the variations at the board, especially in time trouble. Why then, with an excellent position, did she provoke such complications?

37 . . . ♔f8

If 37...♔h8, then 38 ♕h3!, but not 38 ♕h4? h6 39 ♖xf4 ♕xf4! 40 ♖xf4 ♖b1+ 41 ♗f1 ♖xf1+ 42 ♖xf1 ♖xh4.

38 ♘xh7+

38 ♕h4 h6 39 c4 is stronger.

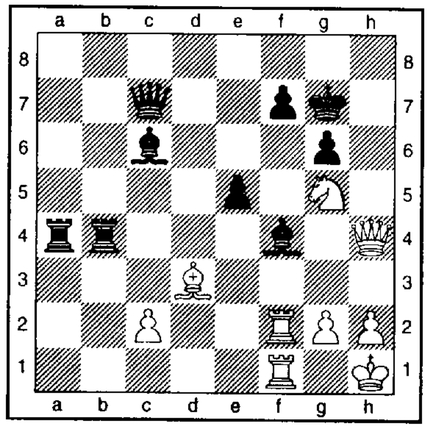
38 . . . ♔g7

39 ♕h4 e5

If 39...♕e5 White replies 40 ♘f6!, since the tempting 40 c4?! (40...g5? 41 ♘xg5) is refuted by 40...♖b2!.

40 ♘g5

36



40 . . . ♗d5?

The last move before the time control proves fatal – now the advantage passes to White. The game was adjourned here and on the resumption Zsuzsa Veroci won. Yet after the simple 40...♗xg5 41 ♕xg5 ♖f4 Black is alright. Nana was concerned about the rook capture on f7, but needlessly – the variation 41 ♖xf7+? ♕xf7 42 ♖xf7+ ♔xf7 is clearly in her favour.

We will analyse another example of an unfortunate innovation. Early in 1986 I was helping Artur Yusupov to prepare a review of the Exchange Variation of the Slav Defence for the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. In the 40th volume of *Informator*, which had only just been published, our attention was drawn to a new idea that had occurred in two games by Eugenio Torre.

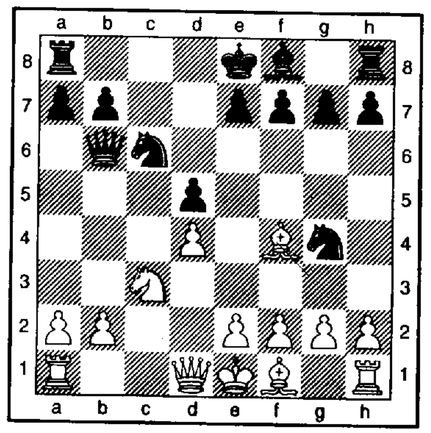
1	**d4**	**d5**
2	**c4**	**c6**
3	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
4	**cxd5**	**cxd5**

5 ♘c3 ♘c6
6 ♗f4 ♗g4?!

The start of a sharp counterattacking plan. The obvious defect of this move is the possibility of the knight leap to e5 with gain of tempo.

7 ♘e5! ♕b6
8 ♘xg4 ♘xg4

37



Q 8-19. What do you think of Torre's idea? How should White continue?

The first thing to notice is that the d5 pawn is en prise. The grandmaster's opponents were tempted by the bait, but after 9 ♘xd5?! ♕a5+ 10 ♘c3 e5! Black created counter-threats:

11 dxe5? ♕b6! 12 ♗g3 ♕xb2 13 ♖c1 ♗b4 14 ♕d2 ♕a3 15 e3 ♖d8 16 ♕c2 ♖d5! with the irresistible threat of 17...♖c5;

11 e4?! ♗b4! 12 ♗d2 exd4 13 ♘b1 ♘f6 (13...♘ge5 is stronger) 14 ♗d3 0–0 15 0–0 ♘e5 16 ♕e2 ♖fe8 17 a3 ♗xd2 18 ♘xd2 ♖ad8 with equality (Schroer–Torre, New York 1985);

11 d5 ♕b6 12 ♗g3 ♕xb2 13 ♖c1 (13 ♕c1? ♗a3) 13...♘d4 14 ♕d2 (14 e3 ♖c8!?) 14...♗a3!? 15 ♖b1 ♕xb1+! 16 ♘xb1 ♗b4 with complicated play (Partos–Torre, Inter-zonal Tournament, Biel 1985);

11 ♗xe5 ♗b4 12 ♗f4! (12 ♖c1? ♘gxe5 13 dxe5 ♖d8) 12...♖d8!? (12...♗xc3+ is also good enough for equality) 13 ♕c1! ♘xd4 14 e3 ♘b5 15 ♗xb5+ ♕xb5 and Black has sufficient compensation for the sacrificed pawn (Martynov–Serper; this game was played in the following year, 1986).

Everything would appear to be fine for Black. Nevertheless I was immediately mistrustful of Torre's idea. Let's look more closely at the diagram position.

Yes, Black has certain tactical resources. But his knight at g4 occupies a vulnerable position and after e2–e3 or e2–e4 it comes under attack by the queen. Even more important is the fact that White only needs to dislodge the knight from c6 and, in view of the absence of the light-square bishop, the very first check on the a4–e8 diagonal may prove fatal.

Unfortunately, the simple 9 e3 does not work – after 9...♕xb2 it is not possible to defend both the knight and the f2 pawn. Whereas after 9 e4 there is such a defence: ♗d2!. It is here that a refutation should be sought. Let's analyse the variations.

9 e4!! ♕xb2

No better is 9...♘xd4 10 ♕xg4 ♕xb2 (10...♘c2+ 11 ♔d1 ♘xa1 12 ♗b5+) 11 ♖c1. In this variation both the mentioned defects of Black's position are fully disclosed.

Of course, the desperate 9...e5 also does not help. White has a wide choice of tempting possibilities: 10 ♘xd5 ♕xb2 11 ♗e2, 10 ♗d2!? and, finally, 10 ♗b5!?.

10 ♗d2

Black's position is hopeless: 11 ♖b1 or 11 exd5 is threatened and his knight at g4 is attacked. If 10...♘xd4, then 11 ♕a4+ ♔d8 12 ♖b1 or 11...b5 12 ♗xb5+ ♘xb5 13 ♖b1.

I offered the diagram position as an exercise to Yusupov, and later also to Dolmatov – within 10–15 minutes both gave the correct answer. Here an accurate analysis is not even required: one only has to hit on the correct idea, and the evaluation becomes obvious.

Artur and I hesitated over whether to give the refutation of Torre's variation in our opening review – after all, it could have been used against some trusting opponent, especially since the Exchange Variation of the Slav was part of Yusupov's repertoire. In the end it was decided not to reveal the secret, since we assumed that while the *Encyclopaedia* was being prepared for printing, someone was bound to find and publish the correct way for White – it was just too simple. In the next, 41st volume of *Informator* I was very surprised to see some new games in which the Torre variation was successfully employed (alas, many players are accustomed to unthinkingly following the recommendations of the experts). And it was only six months later that the move 9 e4!! was finally made in a tournament game (Guseinov–Sideif-Zade, Baku 1986).

'Your Own Theory'

Every player should have his own theory of the openings, which is not known to others.
Mikhail Botvinnik

The range of measures with which players strive for success in the opening stage of the game is highly varied.

It is not a bad thing to lure the opponent into opening territory that is little-known or completely unknown to him. Such territories will certainly exist – nowadays theory has grown immeasurably, and the human memory is limited.

One can 'aim for precedence' – employ a fresh idea, observed in one of the recent tournaments, with which the opponent will probably not yet be acquainted.

It is useful to see what the opponent plays, and then try to discover vulnerable points in his opening repertoire, and to find out in which set-ups he most often encounters difficulties.

Such methods often give good results, but nevertheless in themselves they cannot guarantee stable successes. After all, to successfully employ them a broad and deep knowledge of 'official theory' is required, and the assimilation of it is an exceptionally laborious undertaking. Besides, a mass of time has to be constantly spent on maintaining your opening knowledge at the required level.

'Your own theory' is another matter. Here, of course, a great deal of work is also required, but it is of a more creative nature. The centre of gravity is shifted from the memorising of other players' moves to their logical understanding, to analytical checking and to a search on this basis for your own ideas.

It is very important to introduce into your repertoire opening variations and systems, in which your views differ, even if only very slightly, from the theoretical views.

How might the ideas found by you look? This might be a concrete novelty, thanks to which a scheme that was considered bad is rehabilitated, or a particular opening variation is re-evaluated. But occasionally it is simply a non-traditional evaluation of a well-known position. Suppose that a position is considered not too favourable, but it appeals to you. You make a plan of action and are prepared to go in for it.

The generally-acknowledged legend of opening preparation, Mikhail Botvinnik, recommended that you *'develop systems that are suitable for not just one game and not just one event, but are capable of being maintained for a number of events over the course of several years'*. This is an ideal, of course, but it useful to bear in mind.

I will describe how a couple of seemingly modest discoveries, which did not demand too deep an analysis, enabled Sergey Dolmatov and the author of these lines to solve several years in advance the problem of one of the branches of the Panov Attack in the Caro-Kann Defence.

Dolmatov – Lechtynsky
Hradec Kralove 1981

1	e4	c6
2	d4	d5
3	exd5	cxd5
4	c4	♘f6
5	♘c3	♘c6

Here 5...g6 and 5...e6 are also played. The first move is analysed in my comments on the game Dolmatov–Adams, included in the book *School of Chess Excellence 3 – Strategic Play* (in the chapter 'The Initiative'). And 5...e6 6 ♘f3 ♗b4 7 ♗d3!? will most probably lead to a position with an isolated pawn in the centre for White, typical of the Nimzo-Indian Defence. Two convincing wins gained in this variation against Janos Flesch and Bent Larsen were described by Dolmatov in a lecture 'In jazz style', which he gave to the Dvoretsky–Yusupov school for talented young players. The lecture can be found in our book *Attack and Defence*.

6	♘f3	

Botvinnik used to prefer 6 ♗g5 – at one time this move was almost forgotten, but in the 1990s interest in it flared up anew.

6	...	♗g4
7	cxd5	♘xd5
8	♕b3	♗xf3
9	gxf3	e6

9...♘b6 is considered to be an equivalent alternative. We will return to this continuation later.

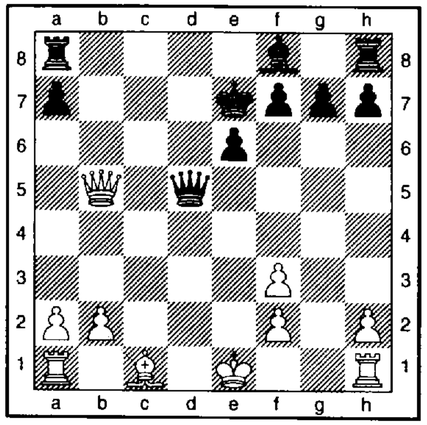
10	♕xb7	♘xd4
11	♗b5+	♘xb5
12	♕c6+!	♔e7
13	♕xb5	♕d7

According to theory, weaker is 13...♘xc3 14 bxc3 ♕d7 (14...♕d5 15 ♕xd5 exd5 16 ♖b1) 15 ♖b1 (Fischer–Euwe, Olympiad, Leipzig 1960), since White exploits the opening of the b-file to his advantage.

14	♘xd5+	♕xd5

see next diagram

38



15	♗g5+!!	

A mysterious check, thought up by Dolmatov not long before this game. The point of it will become clear a little later.

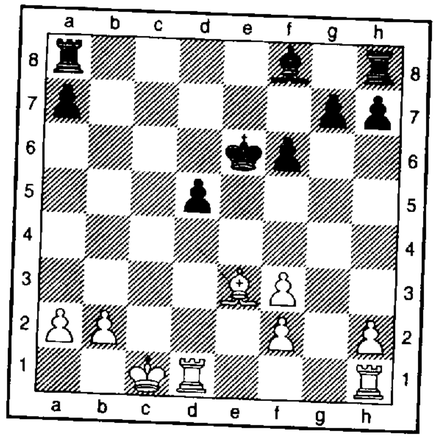
15	...	f6
16	♕xd5	exd5
17	♗e3	

The same position, only without ...f7–f6, can be obtained by 15 ♕xd5 exd5 16 ♗e3. After 16...♔e6 the most natural move is 17 0–0–0 (one rook attacks the d5 pawn, the other is ready to create threats to the king along the f-file). However, Black has a reliable way to equalise: 17...♖c8+ 18 ♔b1 ♗c5 19 ♖he1 ♔d6, for example: 20 ♗f4+ (nothing is also achieved by 20 ♖d3 ♖hd8!, as in the game Kavalek–Rogoff, USA Championship 1975) 20...♔c6 21 ♖e2 ♖hd8 22 ♖c1 ♔d7 23 ♖e5 ♗xf2 24 ♖xd5+ ♔e6 25 ♖e5+ ♔f6 26 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 27 ♖d5 ♖c5 (J.Polgar–De Jong, Wijk aan Zee 1990).

But now after **17...♔e6 18 0–0–0** it is unfavourable for Black to defend in the same way.

see next diagram

39



In the variation 18...♖c8+?! 19 ♔b1 ♗c5 20 ♖he1 ♔d6 21 ♗f4+ ♔c6 White exploits the e6 square, which has been weakened thanks to the interposed check on the 15th move. He continues 22 ♖e6+! ♔d7 23 ♖e2! (but not 23 ♖a6?! d4 24 ♗e3 ♖c6!? or 24...♖hd8!? 25 ♗xd4 ♔c7 26 ♖a4 ♔b7) 23...♔c6 (now 23...d4 24 ♗e3 leads to the loss of a pawn without any compensation) 24 ♖c2! a5 25 ♗e3 ♔d6 26 ♖cd2 and the d5 pawn nevertheless falls (analysis by Dolmatov). And after 20...♗xe3 21 ♖xe3+ ♔d6 the intention was 22 ♖a3 ♖c7?! (the sharp 22...♖he8! 23 ♖xa7 ♖e2 is better) with advantage to White.

Later Black succeeded in improving the defence. It turns out that he should leave the rook at a8, to avoid weakening the a-pawn. The c-file should be occupied by the other rook. Let us examine a game played 12 years later, **Dolmatov–Christiansen** (World Team Championship, Lucerne 1993).

18...♗b4! 19 a3 ♖hc8+ 20 ♔b1 ♗a5. Also possible is 20...♗c5 21 ♖he1 ♗xe3! (but not 21...♔d6? on account of the familiar 22 ♗f4+ ♔c6 23 ♖e6+! ♔d7 24 ♖e2 ♔c6 25 ♖c2) 22 ♖xe3+ ♔d6 23 ♖de1 ♖c4!, and in the game Belikov–Dreev (Moscow 1992) Black was able to maintain the balance.

21 b4 ♗b6 (inferior is 21...♗c7 22 ♖he1 ♗e5 23 f4! ♗c3 24 ♖e2) **22 ♖he1 ♔d6!.** In contrast to the Belikov–Dreev game, here the exchange on e3 is bad: 22...♗xe3? 23 ♖xe3+ ♔d6 24 ♖ed3. On the other hand, the king move works, since after 23 ♗f4+?! ♔c6 24 ♖e6+ (24 ♔b2 d4) 24...♔b5 25 ♖xd5+ ♔a4 Black gains dangerous counterplay. This is how, using imperceptible nuances, Black's defences hold in the variation in question.

23 ♖d3! ♗xe3! 24 fxe3 a5!. Larry Christiansen sacrifices a pawn – the only way to escape from an unpromising position. White must accept the challenge, since the restrained 25 ♔b2? axb4 26 axb4 ♖a4! (26...♖ab8? 27 ♔b3 ♖c4 28 ♖xd5+!) 27 ♔b3 ♖ca8 leads to an obvious draw.

25 ♖ed1! axb4 26 ♖xd5+ ♔e6 27 axb4 ♖a4. 27...♖a3!? 28 ♖1d3 ♖cc3 came into consideration.

28 ♖5d4 ♖c3!. The rook must be active! Much weaker was 28...♖b8? 29 ♖e4+! ♔f7 30 ♖d7+ followed by 31 ♖dd4.

29 ♖e4+ ♔f7 (29...♔f5!?) **30 ♖d7+.**

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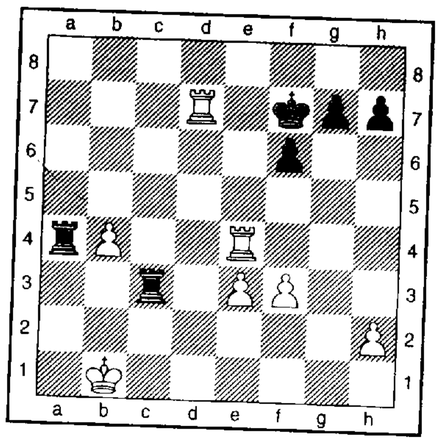

Q 8-20. To where should the king move?

Whereas the American grandmaster figured out correctly the question of the activity of his rooks, it would seem that he simply forgot about the need to deploy his king actively in the endgame. By playing 30...♔g6! Black would have retained excellent drawing chances.

30...♔f8? 31 ♖d8+?! ♔f7 32 ♖d7+ ♔f8? 33 ♔b2 ♖aa3 34 ♖a7! ♖cb3+ (34...♖ab3+ 35 ♔a2) **35 ♔c2 ♖c3+ 36 ♔b2 ♖cb3+ 37 ♔c2 ♖c3+ 38 ♔d2 ♖d3+ 39 ♔e2 f5.** Black also has a difficult position after 39...♖xe3+ 40 ♖xe3 ♖xa7 41 ♔d3 ♖a2 42 h3!.

40 ♖xa3 ♖xa3 41 ♖e5 ♖a2+? (41...g6 was more tenacious) **42 ♔d3 ♖xh2 43 ♖xf5+ ♔e7 44 b5 ♔d6** (44...♖b2 45 ♔c3 ♖b1 46 ♖d5!) **45 ♖f7 g6 46 b6 ♖b2 47 b7.** Black resigns.

Since objectively this endgame should have ended in a draw, it was now White who began looking for an improvement. In several games the young grandmaster Alexander Onischuk has successfully tried 19 ♔b1!? (instead of 19 a3). This looks logical: if 19...♖hc8 White can immediately concentrate on the d5 pawn, by playing 20 ♖d3 followed by 21 ♖hd1, while after 19...♖hd8 there is a choice between 20 a3 and the same move 20 ♖d3. The theoretical discussion is continuing!

17	**...**	**♔f7**

Jiri Lechtynsky immediately places his king out of reach of White's king's rook, and he intends to defend his d5 pawn by playing his rook from a8 to d7. His idea certainly has its point and is not easily called into question. However, Dolmatov copes splendidly with this task.

18	**0–0–0**	**♖d8!**
19	**♖d3!**	

Nothing was achieved by 19 ♗xa7 ♖a8 20 ♗b6 (20 ♗e3 ♖xa2 21 ♔b1 ♖a5) 20...♖xa2 21 ♔b1 ♖a6.

19	**...**	**♖d7**
20	**♖hd1**	**♘e6**

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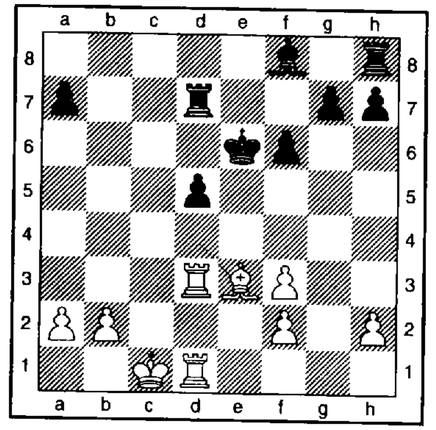


Q 8-21. How can White strengthen his position?

Dolmatov thought for a long time over his next move. When he showed me the game, he was frankly proud of it and maintained that only in this way can White continue playing for a win. Unfortunately, none of the variations illustrating his idea were preserved. I will present certain considerations, although I am not convinced that they reproduce exactly the logic that Sergey followed.

It is not possible to strengthen the pressure on d5. The d3 rook has to be activated, by breaking into the opponent's position. On the b-file there is nothing for it to do (there are no invasion squares), which means that ♖c3 has to be played.

After the immediate 21 ♖c3 there follows 21...♗d6, and 22 ♖c6 is pointless on account of 22...♖c7! 23 ♖xc7 ♗xc7. Firstly, the h2 pawn is hanging, and secondly, if the a7 pawn is captured Black can reply ...♖a8 followed by ...♖xa2. It is now clear that it would be useful to defend the a2 pawn in one way or another.

21 ♔b1 suggests itself. But the opponent can forestall White's plan by 21...♗b4!?, for example 22 ♖b3 ♖b8 (intending ...♗d6), or 22 a3 ♗a5.

21 a3!!

White takes away the b4 square from the bishop and strengthens the threat of 22 ♖c3 (in variations with the capture of the a7 pawn, the white a-pawn will no longer come under attack). As long as the rook remains on d3, the black bishop cannot be developed on its best square d6, and it is most likely that 21...♗e7 will subsequently turn out to be a waste of a tempo. 21...a5?! is extremely dangerous in view of 22 ♗d2! (22...♗d6? 23 ♖e1+; 22...♗c5 23 ♗xa5; 22...a4 23 ♖d4). Finally, it is quite probable that at some point it will be useful for White to advance his queenside pawns (together with his king), and with this aim it is also necessary to play a2–a3.

21	**...**	**♗e7**
22	**♖c3**	**♖hd8?**

Too passive. It would have been better to place the rook at b8.

23	**♖c6+**	**♗d6**
24	**h3!**	

By placing his pawns at a3 and h3, White has prevented the exchange of rooks by 24...♖c7, and now he simply wants to strengthen his position: ♔c2, b2–b4, ♔b3 etc.

24	**...**	**♔e5**
25	**f4+**	**♔e4**

The black king rushes forward, to gain at least some kind of counterplay.

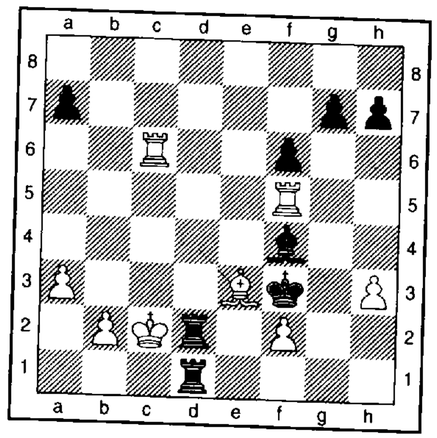
26	**♖d4+**	**♔f3**
27	**♖xd5**	**♗xf4?!**

Better practical chances were offered by 27...♔g2!?.

28	**♖f5**	**♖d1+**
29	**♔c2**	**♖8d2+**

see next diagram

42



30 ♔b3!

After 30 ♗xd2 ♖xd2+ 31 ♔c3 ♖xf2 the position would have become sharper. Dolmatov prefers to remain in a rook ending, where he will have an overwhelming advantage.

30	**...**	**♖d3+**
31	**♔a4**	**g5**

Of course, Black could have insisted on the idea of the exchange sacrifice by 31...♖xe3 32 fxe3 ♔xe3, but this would have been a far less favourable version of it than in the above variation. White wins most simply by returning the exchange: 33 ♖e6+ ♗e5 34 ♖fxe5+ fxe5 35 ♖xe5+ ♔f4 36 ♖e7.

32	**♖cxf6**	**♔g2**
33	**♗xf4**	**gxf4**
34	**♖xf4**	**♖xh3**
35	**♖g4+**	**♔f1**
36	**♖g7**	

When he made this move, Dolmatov overlooked the opponent's clever defensive chance. In his opinion, 36 b4!? was safer, and if 36...♖dd3 37 ♖g3.

36	**...**	**♖d4+**
37	**b4**	**a5!**

By exchanging a pair of pawns, Lechtynsky prevents the creation of connected passed pawns on the queenside.

38	**♖g3**	**♖h5**
39	**f4**	**axb4**
40	**axb4**	**♖c5?!**

40...♔f2 was more tenacious.

41	**♖d3**	**♖e4**
42	**♖h6**	**♖cc4**
43	**♖b3**	**♖xf4**
44	**♖xh7**	

It's all over! Black's king is not taking any part in the play (indeed, in some cases it is in danger of succumbing to a mating attack), and without it the b-pawn cannot be stopped.

44	**...**	**♔g2**
45	**♖d7**	**♖c2**

Black has to defend against the threat of 46 ♖d2+.

46	**♖dd3**	**♖a2+**
47	**♖a3**	**♖b2**
48	**♖db3**	**♖e2**
49	**♔a5**	**♖f8**
50	**b5**	**♖a8+**
51	**♔b6**	**♖g8**
52	**♔a6**	**♖a8+**
53	**♔b7**	**♖g8**
54	**b6**	**♖e7+**
55	**♔a6**	**♖a8+**
56	**♔b5**	**♖e5+**
57	**♔c6**	**♖e6+**
58	**♔b7**	

Black resigns.

In 1996 I took part in two successive tournaments in Spain, close to Barcelona. I had last sat down at the board five years previously, and naturally I did not have any high expectations. But unexpectedly in the second tournament things went well and before the last round I was sharing first place with three other participants, one of whom I had to play. The other two rivals (Jesus Nogueiras and Mario Gomez Esteban) were unable to win in the last round, and so my game became the decisive one.

Dvoretsky – Izeta

Terrassa 1996

1	**e4**	**c6**
2	**d4**	**d5**
3	**exd5**	**cxd5**
4	**c4**	**♘f6**
5	**♘c3**	**♘c6**
6	**♘f3**	**♗g4**
7	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**
8	**♕b3**	**♗xf3**
9	**gxf3**	**♘b6**

Black plays this, if he wants to avoid a gruelling defence in a somewhat inferior endgame, which arises almost by force after 9...e6 10 ♕xb7. In reply White usually chooses 10 ♗e3, without, however, achieving much in particular. At one time I analysed the variation 10 ♗e3 e6 11 ♖g1!?, but after convincing myself that it did not promise even a hint of an advantage, I switched to another move, which for some reason was out of favour with modern theory.

10	**d5**	**♘d4**
11	**♗b5+**	

Great complications, which many years ago were analysed in detail in opening guides, result from 11 ♕d1 e5!. But I was interested in another, less forcing way.

11	**...**	**♘d7**

Weaker is 11...♘xb5 12 ♘xb5 (threatening 13 ♗f4) 12...a6 13 ♘c3 followed by 14 ♗e3.

12	**♕a4**	**♘xb5**

In the game Yusupov–Timoshchenko (Kislovodsk 1982) Black chose the incorrect 12...e5? 13 dxe6 ♘xe6 – with the Morphy-style move 14 ♗g5!! White could have gained a decisive advantage, for example: 14...♕xg5 15 ♗xd7+ ♔e7 16 f4!? ♘xf4 17 0–0–0!. Unfortunately, Artur played the

weaker 14 ♗e3? a6 15 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 16 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7, although he nevertheless managed to win the ending. This instructive game can be found in full in my lecture 'The improvement of positional mastery', included in the book *Positional Play* by Dvoretsky and Yusupov.

Taking on f3 is dangerous – Black is just too far behind in development. True, in the variation 12...♘xf3+ 13 ♔e2 ♘fe5 14 ♗f4 a6! (but not 14...♘g6 15 ♗g3 a6 16 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 17 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 18 ♘a4 and Black resigned, Carlier–Boersma, Amsterdam 1987) 15 ♗xd7+ (after 15 ♗xe5 axb5 White cannot play 16 ♕xb5? ♖a5) 15...♘xd7 he can still hold on. In my opinion, 13 ♔f1! is stronger. Now in the event of 13...♘fe5 14 ♗f4 a6 there is a pleasant choice between 15 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 16 ♖e1 and 15 ♗xe5 axb5 16 ♕xb5 ♖a5 17 ♕e2. Better chances of a successful defence are given by 13...a6 14 ♗xd7+ (14 ♕f4 ♘fe5! 15 ♕xe5 axb5) 14...♕xd7 15 ♕f4 ♕h3+ 16 ♔e2 ♘h4 17 ♗e3 ♘g6 18 ♕a4+ ♕d7 19 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 20 ♘a4 ♖d8 21 ♘b6+ ♔e8.

13 ♕xb5 g6

13...e5? 14 dxe6 fxe6 15 ♗e3 ♕c7 16 ♖c1 a6 17 ♕b3 ♘c5?! 18 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 19 0–0! leads to great difficulties for Black (Alburt–Dorfman, 43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975). Meanwhile, the move in the game is considered quite safe.

see next diagram

At one time, some twenty years earlier, I had pondered over this position. It was clear that the capture of the b7 pawn is too risky – the opponent will certainly gain good counterplay thanks to the numerous weaknesses in White's position. I was also not satisfied with 14 ♗g5, which was examined in the notes by Balashov and Kozlov to the aforementioned Alburt–Dorfman game. Black

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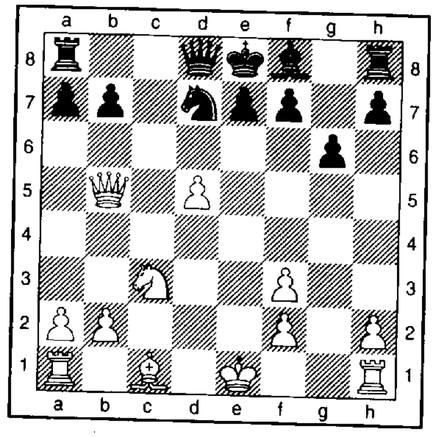

immediately drives back the bishop with 14...h6 and then at the necessary moment will relieve the pressure on e7 by playing ...g6–g5.

I decided that I should first castle, place my rook on e1, and only then bring out my bishop to g5 with gain of tempo – then the opponent will not have time to shut it out of the game. The resulting situation seemed advantageous to White.

Over a period of many years neither the author of these lines, nor Sergey Dolmatov, was able to test this recommendation in practice – our opponents did not go in for this variation. And then, finally, a suitable moment presented itself to extract the innovation from my opening store.

14 0–0! ♗g7
15 ♖e1 0–0
16 ♗g5

It cannot be denied that this was an unpleasant surprise for my opponent Felix Izeta. The Spanish grandmaster began thinking for a long time over his moves and soon ended up in serious time trouble, but he was not in fact able to solve his defensive problems.

16 . . . ♘e5

If 16...♖e8, then 17 d6 is unpleasant; after 16...♘f6 the capture on b7 gains in strength, since the e7 pawn also comes under attack, while if 16...♗f6, then 17 ♗xf6 exf6 (17...♘xf6 18 ♕xb7) 18 ♖ad1 ♘e5 19 ♔g2 or 19 ♕e2 followed by d5–d6. However, I can predict that supporters of the Caro-Kann Defence, not wishing to give up the 9...♘b6 variation, will nevertheless find an acceptable defence. One very rarely succeeds in burying a strategically sound variation – usually one has to be satisfied with at least creating some temporary difficulties for its supporters.

17 ♖e3! ♖e8
18 ♗f4

Weaker is 18 ♕xb7?! ♖b8 19 ♕xa7 ♕c8!? with counterplay.

18 . . . ♘d7

A dismal retreat, but Black could hardly contemplate 18...♕c7 19 ♖ae1 f6 20 ♗xe5 fxe5 21 ♘e4 followed by 22 ♖c3.

19 ♕xb7 ♘b6
20 ♖d1 ♖c8

The opening duel has been unreservedly won by White.

21 d6!?

21 ♕xa7 ♘c4 22 ♖e2 ♘xb2 did not appeal to me, because White changes the pattern of the position. However, I am not sure about my decision – after all, the d5 pawn was seriously cramping the opponent.

21 . . . exd6
22 ♖xd6 ♕h4
23 ♗g3 ♕c4?!

After 23...♕b4 White would have retained the advantage by 24 ♘d5! ♘xd5 25 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 26 ♕xd5 ♗xb2 (26...♕xb2 27 ♖d7) 27 ♖d7 ♖e7 28 ♖d8+ ♔g7 29 ♗d6 ♕e1+ 30 ♔g2. I was a little afraid of 23...♕h3 and I would possibly have restricted myself to the quiet 24 ♖d1!?, since I was unable to calculate to the end the consequences of the forcing variation 24 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 25 ♘e4 (with the threat of 26 ♕xf7+!) 25...f5! 26 ♖xb6!. In fact, both 26...axb6 27 ♕d7 ♖f8 28 ♘g5 ♕h6 29 ♗f4!? ♕h4 30 ♕d5+ ♔h8 31 ♘f7+ ♖xf7 32 ♕xf7 ♕d8 33 b3 and 26...fxe4 27 ♕d5+ ♔h8 28 ♖b8! ♖xb8 29 ♗xb8 lead to an ending with good winning chances for White.

The move made by the opponent makes things easier for me.

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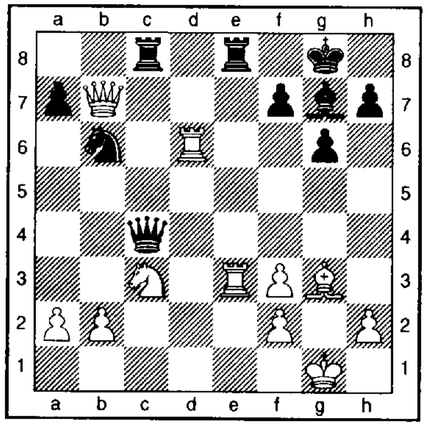

Q 8-22. How should White continue?

A simple tactical stroke enables White to achieve favourable simplification.

24 ♖c6! ♕d4

The endgame is also cheerless: 24...♕xc6 25 ♕xc6 ♖xe3 26 ♕xc8+ ♘xc8 27 fxe3 ♘b6 28 ♘d1!?.

25 ♖xc8 ♖xc8
26 ♕xa7

Black's position is now completely hopeless. By winning this game (although not without some subsequent adventures), I secured first place on my own, ahead of such grandmasters as Vadim Zviagintsev, Jorge Magem Badals, Walther Arencibia, Amador Rodriguez and others. After many years, completely devoted to training and literary work, I have to admit that it was very pleasant to 'relive the good old days'.

Duels in the Pirc-Ufimtsev Defence

The event was not a great success for me; I experimented with different openings, but learned the hard way that openings have to be thoroughly prepared before being used in tournament play.

John Nunn

Not long before the 1980 USSR Championship, one of Dolmatov's future opponents, grandmaster Gennady Kuzmin, employed as Black an interesting novelty in a variation of the Pirc-Ufimtsev Defence that featured in Sergey's opening repertoire with White. I drew his attention to this game and suggested checking the correctness of the analysis by G. Cabrilo in the 29th volume of *Informator*, which tried to demonstrate that the novelty enabled Black to equalise.

Dolmatov found a way to gain an advantage. When the pairings were announced and it transpired that he would have White against Kuzmin, we were, understandably, pleased. Before the game we hastily checked the analysis together – it appeared that everything was correct...

Dolmatov – G.Kuzmin

48th USSR Championship, Vilnius 1980

1	**e4**	**d6**
2	**d4**	**♘f6**
3	**♘c3**	**g6**
4	**f4**	**♗g7**
5	**♘f3**	**0–0**
6	**♗d3**	**♘c6**
7	**0–0**	**e5!?**

The main continuation is considered (or at least it was then) to be 7...♗g4. The position arising after 8 e5 dxe5 9 dxe5 ♘d5 10 h3 ♘xc3 11 bxc3 appealed to Dolmatov – White has a spatial advantage and the bishop at g7 is shut out of play for a long time.

8	**fxe5**	

The alternative is 8 dxe5 dxe5 9 f5, but after 9...gxf5! 10 exf5 e4 11 ♘xe4 ♗xf5 12 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 13 ♗g5 ♕e6 Black gains equality (Sax–Hazai, Hungarian Championship 1977).

8	**...**	**dxe5**
9	**d5**	**♘e7**
10	**♘xe5**	

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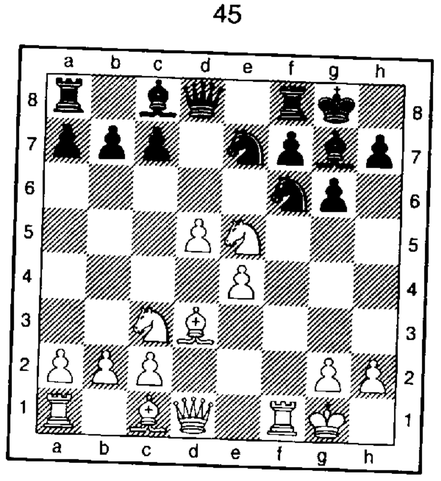

10	**...**	**c6!?**

Kuzmin's innovation! Previously only moves by the knight from f6 to d5 or e4 had been considered. In his preparations Sergey had also checked these variations.

After 10...♘xe4 he suggested 11 ♘xe4! (the obvious 11 ♘xg6 promises less) 11...♗xe5 12 ♗g5 f5 13 ♗c4! ♔h8 (both 13...fxe4 14 d6+ and 13...♔g7 14 ♕d2! are bad for Black) 14 ♗h6 and then ♘g5 with an overwhelming advantage.

In the event of 10...♘fxd5 theory considered only 11 ♘xf7, but after 11...♘xc3 it is not apparent how White can gain an advantage. Nothing is achieved by 12 ♕f3 ♕e8! 13 ♗c4 ♘cd5! 14 exd5 ♘f5 15 ♘g5 ♘d6. The recommendation by the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* 12 bxc3 ♖xf7 13 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 14 ♗c4+ is unconvincing in view of 14...♗e6. In the correspondence game Yudovich–Lujk (1967/68) there followed 12 ♘xd8 ♘xd1 13 ♗c4+ ♔h8 14 ♖xf8+ ♗xf8 15 ♘f7+ ♔g8 16 ♘g5+ ♔h8! (but not 16...♔g7? 17 ♗d2; now if 17 ♗d2 Black has 17...♘xb2 18 ♗c3+ ♗g7) 17 ♘f7+ ♔g8 18 ♘g5+. Draw.

Dolmatov found a way of avoiding the unclear complications: 11 ♘xd5! ♘xd5 (11...♗xe5 12 ♗g5) and only now 12 ♘xf7! ♖xf7 13 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 14 exd5 or 14 ♗c4 with a winning position.

11	**♗g5**	

Of course, not 11 dxc6?? ♕d4+. Also harmless is 11 d6 ♕xd6 12 ♘c4 ♕e6! (Cabrilo).

11	**...**	**cxd5**

Q 8-23. What should White play?

The game **Cabrilo–Kuzmin** (Kladovo 1980) continued as follows: **12 exd5 ♘exd5 13 ♕f3 ♕c7** (weaker is 13...♘xc3? 14 ♗xf6, but 13...♕b6+ 14 ♔h1 ♕xb2 is possible) **14 ♖ae1 ♗e6 15 ♔h1 a6** (it is important to prevent ♘b5 followed by c2–c4) **16 ♗c4 ♘xc3** (16...♖ae8!?) **17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♕xf6 ♗xc4 19 ♘g4 h5 20 ♘h6+ ♔h7 21 ♘f5! ♖g8! 22 ♕g5 gxf5 23 ♕xh5+ ♔g7 24 ♕g5+.** Draw.

12	**♗xf6!**	

Here is Dolmatov's counter-innovation. At first sight this move seems weak, since after 12...♕b6+ the opponent regains the piece and gains control of the dark squares. But the variation should be continued.

12	**...**	**♕b6+**
13	**♔h1**	**♗xf6**
14	**♘xd5!**	**♘xd5**
15	**♘c4!**	

This interposition is the point of White's idea. He is aiming for the win of a pawn, for which the opponent may possibly not gain sufficient compensation. However, the position is not yet determined, so that it is too early to terminate the analysis.

15	**...**	**♕d8!**

The best defence. Hopeless is 15...♘e3? 16 ♘xb6 (16 ♘xe3? ♕xe3 17 ♖xf6 ♕d4!) 16...♘xd1 17 ♘xa8. If 15...♕d4 16 exd5 Black loses after 16...♗g4? in view of 17 c3! ♕xc4 (the only way of not losing a piece) 18 ♗xc4 ♗xd1 19 ♖xf6, while if 16...♗g7 there follows 17 ♕f3 ♗g4 18 ♕f4 with a clear advantage.

16	**exd5**	**b5**

Black cannot delay – if 16...♗g7 there would have followed 17 ♕f3, intending to completely consolidate by 18 a4.

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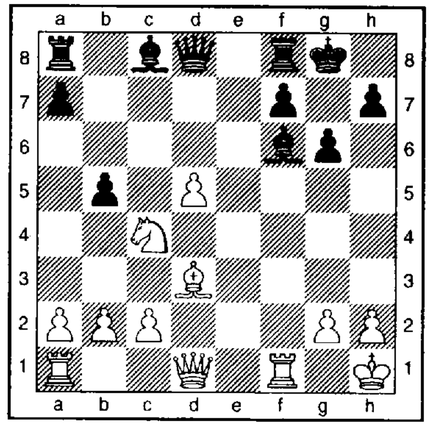

Q 8-24. What should White play?

On reaching this position in our analysis we observed that White has two tempting moves: 17 ♘d2 and 17 ♘a5. Both seemed quite strong, and we did not bother to clarify which of them is better. A pity – the problem proved to be a difficult one, and at the board Dolmatov did not cope with it.

It is clear that in this case our preparations were incomplete – the analysis should have been continued. But in general such omissions have occurred on numerous occasions with any grandmaster. After all, time is restricted, and it is not easy to guess on precisely which positions attention should be focused. Only in the large training brigades of Karpov and Kasparov has it been possible to check any opening idea in all its details, and to continue the analysis virtually to mate. But such an approach, in which a player makes wide use of the fruits of many months, or perhaps even many years of work by a group of people analysing for him, seems to me to be creatively unproductive and contrary to the spirit of honest competition. There are few who can permit themselves this and therefore the opponents are obviously operating under unequal conditions. In the end, chess is interesting as a contest of intellects, of personalities, and not of 'teams'.

17 ♘d2?!

Now Kuzmin is able to achieve good counterplay. 17 ♘a5!? is more dangerous, when 17...♗xb2? 18 ♘c6 ♕d6 19 ♖b1 is bad for Black. Dolmatov decided that after 17...♗g5 unnecessary complications would arise. In fact, by playing 18 ♕e1! White retains the advantage, for example: 18...♖e8 19 ♕f2 (19 ♕g3!? ♖e3 20 ♕f2) 19...♕xd5 20 c4!.

Many years later a game was played, showing that even after 17 ♘a5 Black can hope to equalise: 17...♗h4! (depriving the queen of the e1 square) 18 ♕d2 ♕xd5 19 ♕f4 (nothing is changed by 19 ♕b4 ♕h5 20 ♕xb5 ♕xb5 21 ♗xb5 ♖b8) 19...♕g5 20 ♕xg5 ♗xg5 21 ♗xb5 ♖b8 22 a4 a6 23 ♗c4 ♖xb2 24 ♗b3 ♗e6 with a rapid draw (Hector–C.Hansen, Copenhagen 1995).

17 . . . ♖b8

Of course, not 17...♕xd5?? 18 ♗e4 and not 17...♗b7?! 18 c4. The immediate pawn capture 17...♗xb2!? seemed impossible to Black in view of 18 ♖b1 ♗g7 19 ♖xb5 ♗a6 20 ♖b3 with a lost position. However, instead of 18...♗g7? he has 18...♗c3! 19 ♖xb5 ♗a6 20 ♖b3 ♗xd3 (the rook is not controlling the d3 square) or 19 ♘e4 ♗e5! 20 ♖xb5 (20 ♗xb5? ♕h4) 20...a6 21 ♖b3 ♕xd5.

18 ♕f3 ♗xb2!

Black is not afraid of allowing his opponent two connected passed pawns, and then also the exchange. In return he is able to weaken the white king's defences.

19 ♖ab1 ♗e5
20 ♖xb5

Dolmatov considered the interesting variation 20 ♗xb5 ♕c7 21 c4 ♗xh2 22 c5! ♕xc5 23 ♘e4 ♕c7 24 g3, but rejected it because of the interposition 21...♗f5!.

20 . . . ♖xb5
21 ♗xb5 ♕c7

This double attack on the c2 and h2 pawns is the point of Black's defensive (or, more precisely, counter-attacking) strategy. Now nothing is achieved by 22 ♗d3 ♗xh2 23 c4 ♗e5 24 ♘e4 ♕e7!. In this variation, as in many similar ones in the future, what tells is the exposed position of the white king.

22 c4 ♗xh2
23 ♘e4 ♗e5
24 ♘f6+

If 24 c5 there would have followed 24...♕d8 or 24...♕e7.

see next diagram

Of course, the exchange on f6 is hopeless – the two connected passed pawns will quickly decide the outcome. In the event of the obvious 24...♔h8? White has the very strong reply 25 ♕e3! (creating the terrible threat of 26 ♕h6), and if 25...♕e7 26 ♖e1!, after which the exchange of the dark-square bishop cannot be avoided. And it is only with

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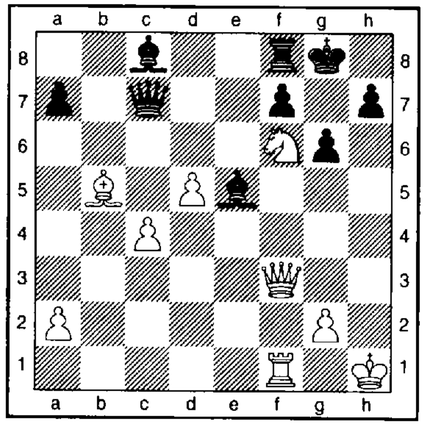

Q 8-25. What should Black play?

this bishop that Black has hopes of counterplay. Therefore he has to sacrifice the exchange and, moreover, straight away: after 24...♔h8 25 ♕e3 ♔g7 26 ♘e8+ ♖xe8 27 ♗xe8 the white queen at e3 would be better placed than in the game.

24 . . . ♔g7!
25 ♘e8+ ♖xe8
26 ♗xe8 ♗f5

26...♕xc4 did not work in view of 27 ♕xf7+ ♔h6 28 ♕f8+ ♔g5 (28...♔h5 29 ♖f5+!) 29 ♕e7+ ♔h6 30 ♖e1 ♗g3 31 ♕e3+ ♗f4 32 ♕e4 ♕c7 33 ♕e7 and White forces the advantageous exchange of queens.

Q 8-26. What should White play?

He must parry the very dangerous threat of 27...♕e7(d8). 27 g4? ♕xc4! would be a mistake.

27 ♖e1!

The only correct reply. Now if 27...♕e7 White has 28 ♕f4! f6 29 ♗c6.

27 . . . ♗f6!

Again 28 g4? ♕xc4! will not do.

28 ♗c6 ♕a5!

The queen is a very mobile piece! Its direct route to the kingside is blocked, and it hurries to force its way through to there via the opposite side of the board.

29 ♖f1

After 29 ♖e2 there is the strong reply 29... h5.

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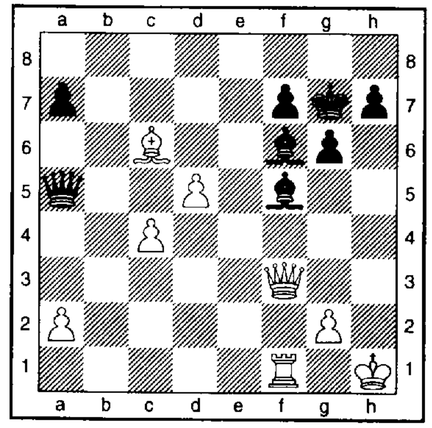

Q 8-27. What should Black play?

Up to this moment the two opponents had played excellently, and the game had taken a very interesting course. But here Kuzmin fails to withstand the tension and he commits a fatal mistake.

29 . . . ♕xa2?

This momentary diversion from the main aim – the attack on the king – is severely punished. Meanwhile, by continuing 29... ♕d2!, and if 30 ♕f4 ♕e2, Black would apparently have maintained the balance.

In making his last move, Kuzmin was attracted by the variation 30 g4? ♗e5 31 ♕f2 (31 ♕g2? ♗e4) 31...♕xc4 (of course, not 31...♗e4+ 32 ♔g1 ♗d4, since the bishop is captured with check) 32 gxf5 ♕e4+ 33 ♕g2 ♕h4+ 34 ♔g1 ♗d4+ (simpler is 34...♕d4+ 35 ♖f2 ♕d1+ with perpetual check) 35 ♖f2, and now even the exchange of all the pieces on f2 leads to a draw. He simply overlooked the stroke that occurred in the game.

30 ♗d7! ♕xc4

31 ♗xf5 gxf5
32 ♕xf5

After the exchange of a pair of bishops Black's attacking chances have disappeared, and with them any hopes of saving the game.

32 . . . ♕d4

32...♕h4+ 33 ♔h3 ♕d4 34 ♕g3+ ♔f8 35 ♕b8+ ♔g7 36 ♕f4 would not have changed anything.

33 ♕f4!

Dolmatov accurately converts his advantage. The exchange of queens is forced, since if 33...♕c3, then 34 d6 is decisive.

33 . . . ♕xf4
34 ♖xf4 ♗e7
35 g4 a5
36 ♔g2 ♗d6

If 36...♔f8 the most accurate is 37 ♖e4!, preventing the black king from moving into the centre.

37 ♖e4 ♔f6
38 ♔f3 a4
39 ♖xa4 ♔e5
40 ♖f4 ♔xd5
41 ♖xf7

Black resigns.

Six months later the theoretical duel was resumed.

Dolmatov – G.Kuzmin

USSR Team Championship, Moscow 1981

1 e4 d6
2 d4 ♘f6
3 ♘c3 g6
4 f4 ♗g7
5 ♘f3 0–0
6 ♗d3 ♘c6
7 0–0 e5!?
8 fxe5 dxe5
9 d5 ♘d4!?

The previous game had convinced Kuzmin that 9...♘e7 leads to an indifferent position, and he tries another new move. On this occasion Dolmatov was not prepared for it and he had to seek a refutation at the board.

To complete the picture I should mention that in the game Balashov–Timman (Moscow 1981) another knight move was tried: 9...♘b4. After 10 ♗c4 (10 ♗g5!?) 10...♘e8 11 ♗g5 f6 12 ♗e3 ♘d6 13 ♗b3 a5 14 a4 ♔h8 (14...f5 15 ♘g5 f4 16 ♘e6! or 15...♗h6 16 ♕c1!) 15 ♕d2 b6 16 ♖ae1 ♗a6 17 ♖f2 ♕d7 18 ♗h6 ♘b7?! 19 ♗xg7+ ♔xg7 20 ♖e3! ♘c5 21 ♘h4! ♘xb3 22 cxb3 ♖ad8?! (22...♖f7) 23 ♖h3 ♔g8 24 ♖g3 White built up dangerous pressure on the kingside.

10 ♘xe5 ♘xd5

Later 10...♘xe4 11 ♗xe4 ♗xe5 12 ♗f4 ♗xf4 or 12...♗g7!? was also tried.

11 ♘xd5 ♗xe5
12 ♗f4

Dolmatov plays logically. By forcing the exchange of bishops, he hopes to mount an attack on the weakened dark squares in the vicinity of the opponent's king.

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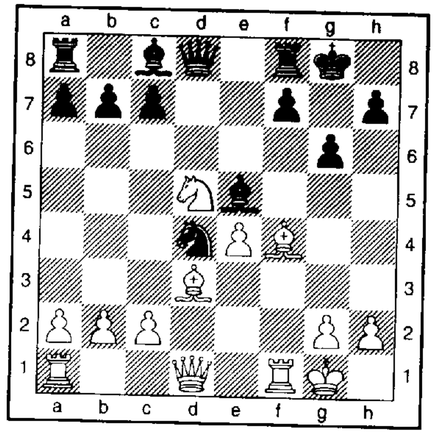

12 . . . ♗xf4?!

Black should not have assisted the doubling of the opponent's heavy pieces on the f-file.

Now his position becomes difficult. We see that Kuzmin (like Dolmatov in the previous game) had not worked out his innovation in all its details.

Black would also have stood markedly worse after 12...♕d6?! 13 ♗xe5 ♕xe5 14 ♘f6+ ♔g7 15 ♕e1 followed by ♕h4, ♖f2 and ♖af1, while 12...f6 13 ♗xe5 fxe5 14 ♖xf8+ and 15 c3 looks no less risky for him.

Probably the best chances of a successful defence are promised by **12...♘c6!?**. This was played ten years later in the game **Dolmatov–Ehlvest** (Philadelphia 1991), in which White did not find a way to gain an advantage: **13 ♕d2** (13 ♕e1!?) **13...♗e6 14 ♗xe5 ♘xe5 15 ♘f6+ ♔g7 16 ♕c3 ♕d6 17 ♖ad1 ♖ad8 18 ♗e2 ♕b6+ 19 ♔h1 ♖xd1 20 ♘h5+ gxh5 21 ♕xe5+ f6 22 ♕g3+ ♔h8 23 ♖xd1 h4** (weaker is 23...♕xb2 24 ♕xc7) **24 ♕a3.** Draw.

13 ♖xf4 ♕g5
14 ♕f1 ♗e6

A clever idea: after 15 ♘xc7? Black would have seized the initiative with the unexpected counter 15...♘xc2!. But Dolmatov, of course, does not fall into the trap.

15 ♕f2! c5

Black would like first to exchange the menacing knight, but after 15...♗xd5? 16 exd5 c5 17 c3 the knight at d4 has nowhere to go. And if 15...♘c6? there would now have followed 16 ♘xc7.

16 ♘f6+ ♔g7

see next diagram

Despite the active placing of White's pieces, it is not apparent how he can play for mate. Dolmatov keenly observes a latent defect in the opponent's position – the cramped position of his queen. True, now the queen has available the excellent square e5. It is this that must be taken away, even if it means sacrificing a pawn.

17 e5! ♕xe5

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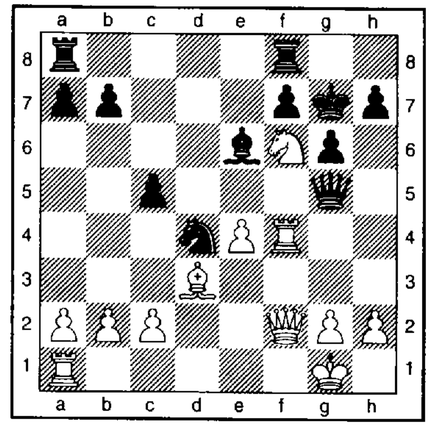

Q 8-28. How should White continue?

18 ♖e1 ♕c7

The queen is obliged to abandon the kingside to its fate, since if 18...♕g5, then 19 h4 ♕h6 20 g4 is unpleasant.

19 ♕h4 h6
20 ♘h5+! ♔h7

20...gxh5 21 ♕f6+ ♔g8 22 ♕xh6 is also hopeless, for example: 22...f6 23 ♕xh5 ♕f7 24 ♕xc5.

21 c3

This move quickly decides the outcome. There was also a more spectacular way: 21 ♕f6 ♖g8 22 ♖h4! (with the terrible threat of 23 ♕g7+!! ♖xg7 24 ♘f6+ ♔h8 25 ♖xh6+) 22...♕d8 23 ♖xe6!.

21 . . . c4

Desperation, but 21...♘f5 22 ♗xf5 ♗xf5 23 ♖xf5 gxf5 24 ♕f6 ♖g8 25 ♖e7 would also not have helped.

22 ♕f6 ♖g8
23 ♕xd4 ♖ad8
24 ♘f6+

Black resigns.

Thus in this opening debate the practical success, if not the theoretical one, remained on Dolmatov's side.

The Ball is in White's Court

Knowledge is aggressive. Accumulating and progressing,
it generates chain reactions of searches for new knowledge.
Viktor Shatalov

The chess pieces request: 'please like us when we are black – when we are white everyone likes us', as the well-known theoretician and trainer Semion Abramovich Furman used to say. All or nearly all players prefer the white pieces. And yet when preparing for a game it is the player with White who sometimes has the more difficult problem. After all, he must choose an opening system that promises him, if not an advantage, then at least a promising position in which he can play for a win. Those variations (and there are, oh, so many of them!), where sound ways for Black to equalise have been found, will not do – since it is quite probable that the opponent will be familiar with the theoretical recommendations. You must either avoid such variations (but not always do you have something instead), or seek an improvement, a fresh idea, capable of breathing new life into them.

In the course of theoretical and practical discussions, sometimes lasting many years, evaluations constantly change. In the end certain variations or even entire opening systems are exhausted – a final diagnosis on them is reached. And then they cease to be employed, they are put away on the shelf, from where they are retrieved only occasionally, counting on the effect of surprise.

I should like to show you one such buried (at least in my eyes) system, and describe how the burial process proceeded. I will be talking about a solid plan for White in one of the branches of the Exchange Variation of the Ruy Lopez.

Dvoretsky – Romanishin
Zonal Tournament, Vilnius 1975

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘c6**
3	**♗b5**	**a6**
4	**♗xc6**	**dxc6**
5	**0–0**	**♕d6**

From the standpoint of the general principles of opening play, this is a strange move: it is not recommended that the queen is developed before the remaining pieces. And yet this is one of the most popular systems of defence in the Exchange Variation. Its main strategic idea is to prepare queenside castling as quickly as possible and then begin a pawn offensive on the kingside.

In reply White usually chooses between 6 d4, 6 ♘a3 and the continuation in the game.

6	**d3**	**f6**
7	**♗e3**	**♗e6**

7...♗g4 has also been tried many times.

8 ♘bd2

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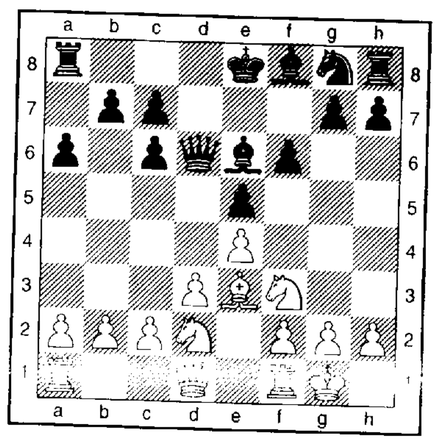

White completes his development and then, depending on the opponent's actions, he carries out one of the following two plans:

1) A pawn offensive on the queenside: by ♖b1 (sometimes ♕b1 or ♕e2 and ♖fb1), b2–b4, a2–a4 and b4–b5.

2) The opening of the centre by d3–d4.

Readers who are familiar with the book by Dvoretsky and Yusupov *Opening Preparation* will probably remember that there (in my lecture 'Middlegame problems') there is an analysis of several games in which the first plan was successfully carried out. I will give another instructive example: Gaprindashvili–Veroci, Yugoslavia 1974.

8...0–0–0 9 ♕e2 g5 10 ♖fb1 ♘e7 11 b4 ♘g6 12 a4 g4 13 ♘e1 ♘f4 14 ♕d1 b6 15 c4!? (15 b5 is also strong) 15...♘xd3 (16 c5 was threatened; if 15...♕d7, then 16 b5 cxb5 17 axb5 a5 18 c5) 16 c5 bxc5 17 bxc5 ♘xc5 18 ♕c2 ♗e7 19 ♘c4 ♗xc4 20 ♕xc4 ♕e6 21 ♕c2 ♘b7 22 ♖b2 (preparing 23 ♖ab1) and White's attack more than compensates for the two sacrificed pawns.

I should mention that in the event of 8...♘e7 White can advance his b-pawn immediately: 9 b4!?, since 9...♕xb4 10 ♖b1 and 11 ♖xb7 is unfavourable for Black. 9 d4!? is also not bad.

In the game Adorjan–Timman (Hastings 1973/74) Black made yet another opening move with the queen 8...♕d7?!, after which there immediately followed a blow in the centre: 9 d4!. The play developed to White's advantage: 9...exd4 (9...♗d6? 10 dxe5 fxe5 11 ♘xe5!) 10 ♘xd4 ♗f7 11 ♕e2 c5?! 12 ♘4b3 b6 13 ♖ad1 ♘e7 14 ♘b1! ♕c6 15 ♘c3 ♘g6 16 f4 ♗d6 17 e5! fxe5 18 f5 ♘f8 19 ♗g5! h6 20 ♗h4 ♘d7 21 ♘e4 and soon his attack proved successful.

8	**...**	**c5!?**
9	**♕e2**	

The attempt to prevent the knight manoeuvre to c6 by playing 9 a3 is interesting. After 9...♘e7 White has the unpleasant 10 b4!, while if 9...0–0–0, then 10 ♕e2 followed by 11 ♖fb1 and b2–b4. However, in the game Grief–Bisguier (USA Championship 1975) Black maintained the balance by 9...♕d7! 10 ♕e2 ♖d8 11 ♖fd1 ♗d6 12 c3 ♘e7 13 d4 (13 b4!?) 13...cxd4 14 cxd4 ♕b5!.

Perhaps more chances of gaining an advantage are offered by 9 ♘c4!?. In the event of the exchange on c4 Black remains with a bad bishop. It is bad not only in the abstract sense (the black pawns are fixed on squares of the colour of their bishop), but also in a number of concrete variations such as 9...♗xc4 10 dxc4 ♕xd1 11 ♖axd1 ♗d6 12 ♘e1 (or 12 ♘h4) 12...♘e7?! 13 b4!.

Usually Black moves his queen. In the game Glek–Almasi (Kattolika 1993) after 9...♕c6 10 ♘fd2 ♘e7 11 a4 b6 12 f4 exf4 13 ♗xf4 ♘g6 14 ♗g3 ♗d6 15 ♘xd6+ cxd6 16 ♘c4 ♖d8! (inferior is 16...♗xc4?! 17 dxc4 ♖d8 18 a5! b5 19 cxb5 ♕xb5 20 ♕d5! with advantage to White, Schneider–Romanishin, Olympiad, Buenos Aires 1978) 17 ♘e3 0–0 18 c4 b5 19 b3 ♖b8! a roughly equal position was reached.

However, Black has to reckon with the knight sacrifice on e5, which occurred in the game Van der Wiel–Nikolic (Wijk aan Zee 1993): 10 ♘fxe5!? fxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♕d6 12 ♕h5+ g6 13 ♘xg6 ♗f7 14 ♕e5+ ♕xe5 15 ♘xe5. This position has been reached almost by force. White's chances in it look preferable, although in the end the game finished in a draw.

9 ... ♘e7!

In the event of 9...0–0–0 White's plan is clear: 10 a3, then 11 ♖fb1 and 12 b4. Therefore Black is not in a hurry to castle, but first plays his knight to c6. The subsequent events are easy to explain. The threat of an invasion at d4 forces White to play c2–c3 and then (so as not to remain with a weak d3 pawn) also d3–d4.

10 c3

If now 10 ♘c4, then after 10...♕c6 11 ♘fd2 (the sacrifice on e5 no longer works) 11... ♘g6 Black is excellently placed. Even worse is 10 ♘b3?! b6 11 c3 ♕c6! 12 ♘fd2 ♘g6 13 d4 cxd4 14 cxd4 ♕b5! 15 ♖fe1 ♕xe2 16 ♖xe2 exd4 17 ♘xd4 ♗d7 18 a4 ♘e5 19 h3 0–0–0 and Black has the advantage – in particular, thanks to his two bishops (Ristic–Mikhalchishin, Vrnjacka Banja 1978). Incidentally, it is time to remember that in the Exchange Variation of the Ruy Lopez Black remains from the very start with two bishops against bishop and knight. Therefore White must be cautious about opening the position – in this case the power of the two bishops may tell.

10	**...**	**0–0–0**
11	**d4**	

In the game Krnic–Mikhalchishin (Copenhagen 1979) White played the weaker 11 ♘b3?! ♗xb3 12 axb3 ♘c6 13 ♖fd1 ♗e7 (13...♕e6!?) 14 d4 cxd4 15 cxd4 exd4 16 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♕e6 and Black's position was preferable in view of the opponent's pawn weaknesses.

11	**...**	**cxd4**
12	**cxd4**	**exd4**
13	**♘xd4**	**♘c6**

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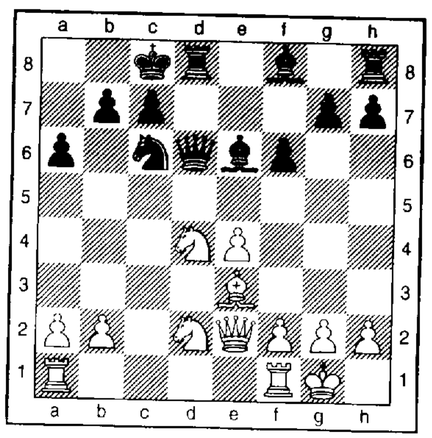

Q 8-29. What would you now play?

In the first instance White would like to deprive the opponent of the two bishops. But the position after 14 ♘xe6 ♕xe6 is by no means better for him: the enemy pieces are actively acting on the centre and in particular the knight is ready at any moment to jump to d4.

I decided to eliminate not the bishop, but the knight – in the given concrete situation it seemed to me to be a more important piece. But how to do this in the most exact way? If 14 ♘2f3 I was concerned about 14...♗g4!?. Also unimpressive is 14 ♘2b3 ♘xd4 15 ♘xd4 ♗d7, since it is not apparent how White can develop any initiative. In the later game Balbum–Mikhalchishin (Copenhagen 1979) there followed 16 ♖ac1 ♕e5! 17 ♘f3 ♕e6 (17...♕xe4? 18 ♖xc7+!) 18 ♗f4 ♗d6 and Black was quite alright.

White must exchange immediately on c6, and then place a rook on c1 and leap with the knight to c4, creating certain threats on the queenside. It is not clear whether it will be possible to transform his initiative into something real, but in any case this is the only way to fight for an advantage.

14	**♘xc6!**	**♕xc6**
15	**♖fc1**	**♕b5**

The more modest 15...♕d7 deserved serious consideration. In reply to this neither 16 ♗b6? ♕xd2 nor 16 ♗f4 ♗d6 17 ♘c4? ♗xc4 works for White. I would have played simply 16 ♘c4!, considering that 16...♕d3? is not possible in view of 17 ♘b6+ ♔b8 18 ♖d1!.

16	**♘c4**	**♗c5?**

Oleg Romanishin underestimates the danger threatening him. The prophylactic move 16...♔b8! was essential, and if 17 a4 ♕b4 18 ♖c3 only then 18...♗c5.

17	**a4**	**♕b4**

see next diagram

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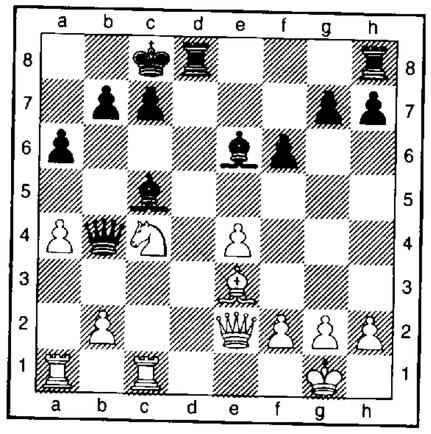

Q 8-30. What should White play?

It is not easy to maintain the initiative – my pressure on the queenside is compensated to a certain degree by my opponent's control of the central d-file. And it is well known that predominance in the centre usually helps to neutralise a flank attack.

18 ♗f4?! ♖d7 does not promise anything. 18 ♗xc5 ♕xc5 19 b4 looks tempting, since 19...♕xb4? 20 ♖ab1 ♗xc4 21 ♕g4+! is bad for Black. But he can oppose the pawn storm with play in the centre: 19...♕d4!, and if 20 b5, then possible is 20...♗xc4 21 ♕xc4 (forced) 21...♕xc4 with a roughly equal double rook ending, as well as 20...♕d3!?.

I was fortunate to find an unusual bishop manoeuvre, setting my opponent insoluble problems.

18	**♗d2!!**	**♕b3**

Of course, not 18...♗xc4?? 19 ♕g4+!.

19	**♗a5!**	

White's main threat is not even 20 ♖c3 (to which there is the reply 20...♗xc4), but 20 ♘e5!. For example: 19...♖d7 20 ♘e5! fxe5 (if 20...♗xf2+ White wins by both 21 ♕xf2 fxe5 22 ♕a7 and 21 ♔xf2 fxe5 22 ♖c3) 21 ♖xc5 ♖hd8 22 h3 and the e5 pawn cannot be defended. The consequences are similar after 19...♕d3 20 ♕xd3 ♖xd3 21 ♘e5! (21 ♘b6+? cxb6! 22 ♗xb6 ♖d1+! 23 ♖xd1 ♗xb6 24 ♖d6 ♗c7 25 ♖xe6 ♔d7) 21...fxe5 22 ♖xc5. Finally, the desperate attempt 19...b6 is refuted combinatively: 20 ♘xb6+! ♗xb6 21 ♖a3! ♗c4 22 ♕g4+ ♗e6 23 ♖xb3 ♗xg4 24 ♗xb6 ♖d1+ 25 ♖xd1 ♗xd1 26 ♖c3 ♔b7 27 ♗a5!. In all these variations White remains a healthy pawn to the good – the opponent's saving chances are problematic.

19	**...**	**♗xc4**

Positional capitulation! Black turns to passive defence, giving up his two bishops and hopes of counterplay in the centre. But what could he have done?

20	**♖xc4**	**♗d6**
21	**♖ac1**	**♖d7**
22	**g3**	

While the back rank is weak there is no point in trying to calculate the more aggressive 22 ♕g4. Now I want to intensify the pressure on the queenside, simultaneously shutting the enemy queen out of the game, by 23 ♖1c3 ♕a2 24 ♕c2. If the opponent prevents this, by playing 22...♗e5, then 23 ♕g4! now gains in strength, for example: 23...♔d8 (23...b6 24 ♖b4) 24 ♗xc7+ ♗xc7 25 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 26 ♖xc7 ♔xc7 27 ♕xg7+.

22	**...**	**♔b8**
23	**♖1c3**	**♕a2**
24	**♕c2**	**♖c8**

If 24...b6 there follows 25 ♖b3, preparing the bishop sacrifice on b6 (premature is 25 ♗xb6? cxb6 26 ♖c8+ ♖xc8 27 ♖xc8+ ♔a7 28 ♕c6 ♖b7 29 ♕xd6 ♕b1+ 30 ♔g2 ♕xe4+ with perpetual check).

25	**♖b3!**	

see next diagram

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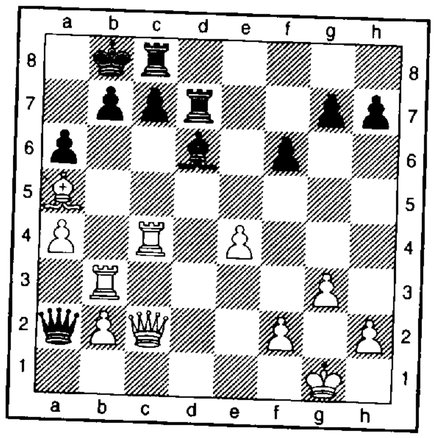

25 . . . ♗e5?

This move leads to an immediate finish, but all the same Black's position was very bad. For example, if 25...c6 there follows 26 ♖d3!, and the mortal pin on the bishop decides the outcome (the obvious 26 ♖xc6?! is far less convincing: 26...♖xc6 27 ♕xc6 ♕xb3 28 ♕xd7 ♗e5 29 ♕xg7 ♕xb2 30 ♕xh7 ♗d4, or 29 ♕d8+ ♔a7 30 ♗d2 ♕xb2 31 ♗e3+ b6). If 25...♔a8 it is simplest to make the useful waiting move 26 ♔g2!?, when it is hard to offer the opponent any good advice (26...c6 27 ♖d3!).

26 ♖xb7+! ♔a8

After 26...♔xb7 White gives mate in four moves: 27 ♖b4+ ♔a7 28 ♕c5+ ♔a8 29 ♕c6+ and 30 ♕b7 mate.

27 ♖b6 ♔a7

27...cxb6 28 ♖xc8+ ♔a7 29 ♗xb6+ or 27...♖d6 28 ♖cc6 and wins.

28 ♖b7+

Here I saw that the planned 28 ♖cc6 would allow Black to prolong the resistance by 28...cxb6 29 ♗xb6+ ♔b7 30 ♖xc8 ♕e6 and I found a quicker way to win.

28 . . . ♔a8

29 ♖cb4!

It is not possible to defend simultaneously against all the threats (30 ♕c6; 30 ♕c5; 30 ♖a7+).

29 . . . ♕e6

30 ♕c5

Black resigns.

I sensed that at some point Black was very close to equalising. Even so, the resulting position appealed to me and I was ready to go in for it again. But in the next few years an appropriate occasion did not present itself and then, after switching completely to training work, I began playing increasingly rarely. And it was only in the early 1990s that an opponent of mine, finally, chose the same opening plan with Black.

Dvoretsky – A. Ivanov

Philadelphia 1991

1	**e4**	**e5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘c6**
3	**♗b5**	**a6**
4	**♗xc6**	**dxc6**
5	**0–0**	**♕d6**
6	**d3**	**f6**
7	**♗e3**	**c5**
8	**♘bd2**	**♗e6**
9	**♕e2**	**♘e7**
10	**c3**	

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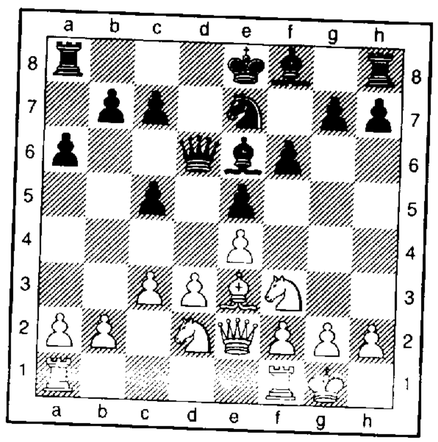

10 . . . ♘c6

When I played Romanishin I reckoned with this move and I thought that after 11 ♖fd1 0–0–0 12 ♘c4 ♕d7 13 d4 the initiative would remain on my side. However, grandmaster Alexander Ivanov strengthens the defence.

11 ♖fd1 ♕d7!

An important subtlety! Black wants to castle, pressing on the d3 pawn, and ♘c4 is now pointless on account of the reply ...b7–b5!. The knight has to be moved to the less good b3 square.

12 ♘b3 ♗xb3

The exchange on c4 is unfavourable for Black, whereas on b3 it is quite appropriate.

13 axb3

Obviously, White's next move will be d3–d4. It is especially strong after queenside castling: 13...0–0–0? 14 d4 cxd4 15 ♖xa6! and wins. The attempt to harass the white pawns with the queen also does not succeed: 13...♕e6 14 d4! exd4 15 cxd4 ♕xe4?! 16 dxc5 ♗xc5? 17 ♘d2 ♕e7 (17...♕e5 18 ♘c4) 18 ♕h5+.

13 . . . ♗d6

Black simply completes his development, preparing kingside castling.

14 d4 cxd4

15 cxd4 exd4

16 ♘xd4 ♘xd4

17 ♗xd4 ♕e6!

see next diagram

The position is almost equal. The only question is on whose side the initiative will remain, and which of the two players will try to play for a win. After 17...0–0 18 ♗c5 followed by 19 ♗xd6 White would have retained somewhat the better chances. With the move in the game Ivanov unpins his bishop and takes aim at the b3 and e4 pawns. If he should succeed in castling without harm, the initiative will pass to him, since White has the inferior pawn structure. But how can this be prevented? The obvious 18 ♕c4 does not solve the problem: after 18...♔f7 followed by ...♖he8 Black's position is preferable.

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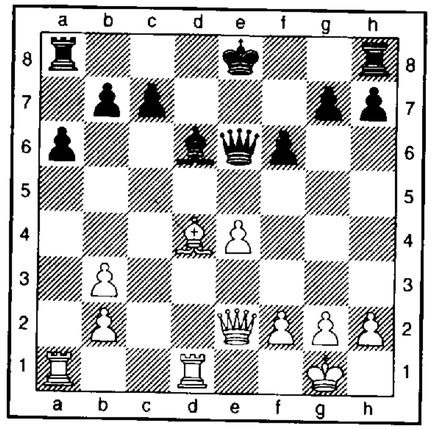

Q 8-31. What should White play?

18 ♗c5!

It is obvious that after 18...♗xc5? 19 ♕h5+ ♕f7 20 ♕xc5 Black experiences difficulties, while 18...0–0 19 ♗xd6 leads to the type of position that I wanted to obtain. But can't Black win a pawn by 18...♗xh2+ 19 ♔xh2 ♕e5+ ? Ivanov thought for a very long time, and in the end he rejected this possibility because of 20 f4! ♕xc5 21 ♖d5!? ♕e7 (if 21...♕b6, then 22 ♕h5+ g6 23 ♕h6 is strong) 22 ♖ad1 with a dangerous initiative for White. He was probably right. During the game I also analysed 21 ♖ac1 ♕e7 (21...♕b6 22 ♕h5+ g6 23 ♕h6) 22 ♕h5+ (if 22 ♕c4, then either 22...c6 23 e5 fxe5 24 fxe5 ♖d8, or immediately 22...♖d8!?) 22...g6 23 ♕d5 c6 (23...♖b8!?) 24 ♖xc6 bxc6 25 ♕xc6+ ♔f7 26 ♖d7, but this position is most probably drawn.

18 . . . ♖d8!

19 ♗xd6 ♖xd6

20 ♖xd6 cxd6!

Again an accurate defence. After the exchange of a pair of rooks this structure is no longer so unpleasant for Black, as with all four rooks on the board. The natural 20...♕xd6?! would have led to difficulties after 21 ♖d1 in view of the threats of 22 ♕h5+ and 22 ♕c4. For example: 21...♕c6 22 ♕h5+ g6 23 ♕h6 ♕c2 24 ♖e1 with a dangerous attack.

21 ♖c1

The exchange of queens on c4 cannot be avoided, but White should go in for it only after the black king has moved away from the centre.

21 . . . 0–0
22 ♕c4 ♕xc4
23 ♖xc4 ♖d8!?

With the idea of meeting 24 ♖c7 with the advantageous pawn exchange 24...d5.

24 ♔f1

Draw. Black continues 24...♖d7 25 ♔e2 ♔f7 26 ♔e3 ♔e6 and 27...d5.

In this game the most accurate, in my view, way of defending was demonstrated. White nowhere had even a hint of an advantage. Can his play be improved? I don't know. In the comments on the opening stage various attempts to play differently were considered, and nowhere did White achieve anything (except perhaps that Van der Wiel's idea 9 ♘c4 ♕c6 10 ♘fxe5!? inspires some hopes).

Does this mean that White's entire plan should be shelved? Perhaps yes, but for how long? We know an enormous number of examples of variations, which appeared to be securely buried, suddenly coming to life again. I can quite accept that in the given case too this will happen sooner or later. As Bertrand Russell said: *'In all affairs it's a healthy thing now and then to hang a question mark on the things you have long taken for granted'.*

Opening Subtleties

The more objective the evaluation of a position,
the more accurately that variations are calculated,
the narrower the choice that remains...
When an average pianist plays some piece,
he may do this in various ways.
But for Rosenthal or Paderewski there is only one way of performing it.
Emanuel Lasker

A comparison of the two games analysed in the previous chapter demonstrates the importance of taking into account all details and nuances when playing the opening. A minimal deviation, a change in the move order – and the play immediately takes a different direction. This means that it is not enough to have a mastery of the main ideas of the chosen opening set-up; the most accurate way of putting them into effect must also be sought. How difficult this can sometimes be is shown by the examples given below.

Furman – Dvoretsky

43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975

1 c4 g6
2 d4 ♗g7
3 ♘c3 d6
4 e4 e5
5 ♗e3?!

White has a wide choice of strong continuations: 5 dxe5, 5 d5 or 5 ♘f3. But the move played is a poor one.

5 . . . exd4!

Black lures the bishop to d4, in order to then develop his knight at c6 with gain of tempo.

6 ♗xd4 ♘f6
7 f3 0–0
8 ♘ge2 ♘c6

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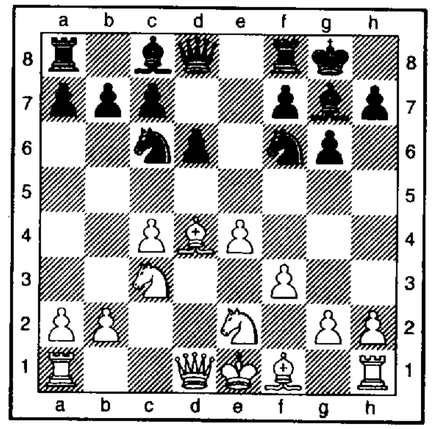


Q 8-32. How should Black continue in reply to 9 ♗e3 and 9 ♗f2 ?

Black's plan after 9 ♗e3 was known to me.

9 ♗e3 ♘e5! 10 ♘f4 c6 and now:

(a) 11 ♗e2?! g5! 12 ♘h3 ♗xh3 13 gxh3 ♘h5 14 ♕d2 ♘f4 15 0–0–0 ♘eg6 with advantage to Black (Popov–Gheorghiu, Varna 1971);

(b) 11 ♕b3 ♘fd7 12 ♖d1 ♕h4+! (stronger than 12...♕e7 13 ♗e2 ♘c5 14 ♕c2 f5 15 b4 fxe4 16 bxc5 exf3 17 cxd6 ♕e8 18 gxf3 ♘xf3+ with great complications, Donner–Ivkov, Wijk aan Zee 1971) 13 g3 ♕e7 followed by 14...♘c5 and 15...f5;

(c) 11 ♗d3!?. This move, not mentioned by

theory, would appear to promise White the best chances of equality, but not more than that, of course.

The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* recommends 10 ♘d4 (instead of 10 ♘f4). But then Black's play develops of its own accord: 10...c6 11 ♗e2 d5, and if 12 exd5 cxd5 13 c5, then 13...♖e8 followed by ...♘c4 or immediately 13...♘c4.

9	**♗f2!?**	**♘e5?!**

Black follows the familiar plan. Alas, here it is by no means so effective as after 9 ♗e3.

Only after the game did I find the correct solution: 9...♖e8!. After 10 ♘d4 Black can strike at the centre with 10...d5!, which was not possible with the bishop on e3. And if 10 ♘f4 he can act by analogy with the variations considered above: 10...♘e5 11 ♗e2 c6 with the positional threat of 12...g5.

10	**♘d4!**	**♘h5**

The opening of the centre by 10...c6 11 ♗e2 d5 did not appeal to me because of 12 exd5 cxd5 13 c5! ♖e8 14 0–0 ♘c4 15 ♕c1. Here the advantage of the bishop's position at f2 is obvious.

Another plan is 10...a6 11 ♗e2 c5 12 ♘c2 ♗e6 13 ♘e3 (or 13 ♘a3), and here it would appear that a pawn has to be sacrificed by 13...b5. I did not bring myself to do this.

11	**♕d2**	**f5**
12	**exf5**	**♗xf5**
13	**0–0–0**	

Of course, not 13 g4? c5, but 13 ♘xf5!? ♖xf5 14 0–0–0 came seriously into consideration.

13	**...**	**♗d7**
14	**♗e3**	**a6**
15	**♗e2**	

White's position is preferable. It cost me considerable efforts to gain a draw.

Dolmatov – Lein

Moscow 1989

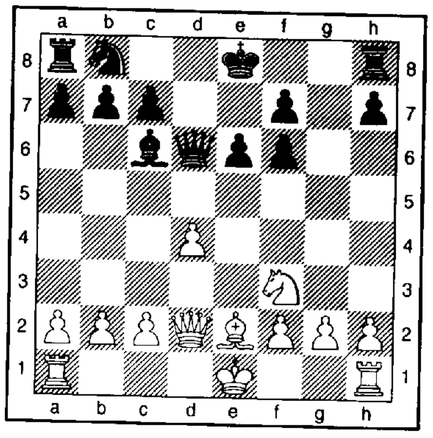
1	**e4**	**e6**
2	**d4**	**d5**
3	**♘c3**	**♘f6**
4	**♗g5**	**dxe4**
5	**♘xe4**	**♗e7**
6	**♗xf6**	**♗xf6**
7	**♘f3**	**♗d7**

This is played very rarely. The usual continuation is 7...0–0.

8	**♕d2**	**♗c6**
9	**♘xf6+**	**gxf6**

A new move. In the game Spassky–Donner (Leiden 1970) Black recaptured with his queen, which led to a difficult position for him: 9...♕xf6 10 ♘e5! 0–0 11 0–0–0 ♖d8 12 ♕e3 ♗e8 13 g3 ♘d7 14 ♗g2 c6 15 f4 and in the subsequent play White successfully converted his spatial advantage.

10	**♗e2**	**♕d6**



Q 8-33. Find the most accurate continuation for White.

Black wants to complete his development: 11...♘d7 and 12...0–0–0. Dolmatov rightly decided that there was no point in him

castling long, since with his king on the queenside he would be unable to mount a pawn storm there. After 11 0–0–0?! ♘d7 12 c4 0–0–0 White cannot play 13 d5 on account of 13...exd5 14 cxd5 ♕c5+ 15 ♕c2 (15 ♔b1 ♘b6) 15...♗xd5, while if 13 ♕a5!? there is a sharp counter-attacking attempt: 13...♘b6!? 14 ♕xa7 (14 c5 ♕f4+ 15 ♔b1 ♘d5 16 ♕xa7 ♘b4) 14...♕b4!.

The game went **11 0–0 ♘d7 12 c4** (12 ♕a5!?) **12...0–0–0 13 ♖fd1 ♗xf3!?** (13...♘f8!?) **14 ♗xf3 ♘e5 15 ♗e2 c5** (weaker is 15...♘c6 16 d5 e5 17 ♗h5) **16 d5 exd5** (16...♘c6 17 ♗h5!) **17 cxd5** and now, by playing simply 17...♔b8, Black would have retained an acceptable position. He chose the weaker **17...h5?! 18 b4!? c4** (18...cxb4 19 ♖ab1 ♔b8 20 ♖xb4, intending ♖h4) **19 ♖ac1** with advantage to White. In the subsequent complicated play, which was not without its mistakes, Dolmatov went on to win. However, his choice on the 11th move was nevertheless not the strongest.

The moves c2–c4 and ♖d1 suggest themselves, in one order or another. The idea is to create the threat of d4–d5 and thereby hinder Black's development. But which move order is the more accurate?

In the event of 11 c4?! the opponent can exploit the weakening of the d4 pawn by replying 11...♗xf3! 12 ♗xf3 ♘c6. Reasoning in this way, we finally arrive at the solution to the position.

11	**♖d1!!**	**♖g8!?**

If 11...♘d7 there follows 12 c4! with the threat of 13 d5 – for this reason Black does not have time to castle. 12...♘f8 13 d5 is also clearly in White's favour, while after 12...♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 0–0–0 14 ♕e3 c6 (Black has to reckon with the threat of c4–c5–c6) 15 0–0 followed by b2–b4 he has an undisputed advantage.

12	**0–0**	**♘d7**
13	**c4!**	**0–0–0**

Now 14 d5? does not achieve anything in view of 14...exd5 15 cxd5 ♘e5.

14	**♕a5!**	

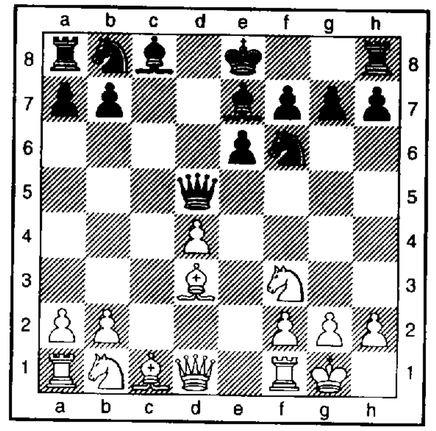
Black's position is difficult: both 15 ♕xa7 and 15 d5 are threatened. If 14...♗xf3 15 ♗xf3 ♕b6, then 16 ♕a3 (intending 17 c5) 16...c5 17 ♖d3 followed by 18 ♖b3.

As an exercise I offer a simpler episode from one of my games, involving the determination of the correct move order.

Arkhipkin – Dvoretsky

USSR Cup, Ordzhonikidze 1978

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c3 d5 4 exd5 ♕xd5 5 d4 ♘f6 6 ♗d3 ♗e7 7 0–0 cxd4 8 cxd4.



E 8-4. What should Black play?

Exercises for Analysis

If analysis is carried out with maximum intensity, this contributes to the development and improvement of the player.

Lev Polugayevsky

Dvoretsky – Muratov

Moscow Championship 1973

1	**c4**	**♘f6**
2	**♘c3**	**g6**
3	**g3**	**d5**
4	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**
5	**♗g2**	**♘xc3**
6	**bxc3**	**♗g7**
7	**♖b1**	**♘d7**

Of course, not 7...0–0? 8 ♖xb7!. Black has defended against the capture on b7 with the rook, and the capture with the bishop will also not do: 8 ♗xb7? ♗xb7 9 ♖xb7 ♘b6 and the rook is trapped.

8	**♘f3**	**0–0**
9	**0–0**	**c5**

The alternative and probably stronger plan is 9...♘b6 with the idea of ...♗d7–c6.

10	**d4**	

White more often chooses 10 c4. He can also consider 10 ♕a4, intending ♕h4 and only then d2–d4.

10	**...**	**♕a5**

The game Timman–Kramer (Leeuwarden 1969) went 10...♘b6 11 e4 ♗g4?! 12 dxc5 ♕xd1 13 ♖xd1 ♘a4 14 ♖xb7 with an obvious advantage to White.

11	**♕b3!**	**♘b6**

Black ends up in a difficult position after 11...e5 12 ♗e3! or 11...♘f6 12 ♕a3! ♕xa3 13 ♗xa3 ♘e4 14 ♖fc1 b6 15 ♘g5 ♘xg5 16 ♗xa8 (Gheorghiu–Stoica, Bucharest 1973).

12	**♕a3**	**♕xa3**
13	**♗xa3**	**♘a4?!**

Better is 13...♗f5!? 14 ♖b5 cxd4 15 ♘xd4 ♗g4 16 h3 ♗d7 (Behul–Lanc, Trnava 1990).

14	**♖fc1**	**♖b8**

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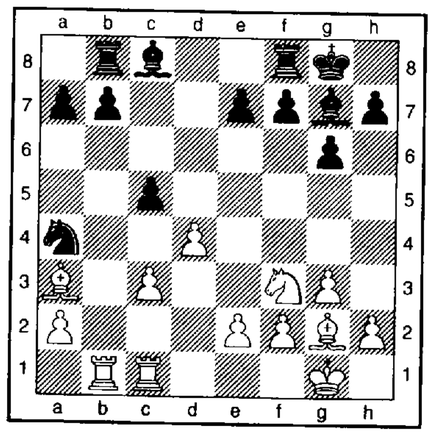

E 8-5. How should White continue?

Gurieli – Matveeva

Zheleznovodsk 1985

1	**e4**	**e6**
2	**d4**	**d5**
3	**♘c3**	**dxe4**
4	**♘xe4**	**♗d7**
5	**♘f3**	**♗c6**
6	**♗d3**	**♘d7**
7	**c4**	**♘gf6**
8	**♘c3**	**♘b6?!**

After this poor move Black's position becomes difficult. For the sake of a threat to win a pawn: ...♗xf3 followed by ...♕xd4, which cannot in fact be put into effect, Svetlana Matveeva places her knight on a bad square, conceding to her opponent's knight the e5 square.

The main idea of the opening set-up chosen by Black is the exchange of the light-square bishop followed by ...c7–c6. For example, 8...♗e7 9 0–0 ♗xf3! (9...0–0? 10 d5!) 10 ♕xf3 c6, as in the game Klovans–Nogueiras (Yurmala 1978). The same idea can also be carried out in a somewhat different version, by giving up the bishop for the other knight: 6...♗xe4 7 ♗xe4 c6 followed by 8...♘f6. In both cases Black obtains a passive but solid position. Possibly such defensive strategy may not be to your taste, but then you should choose a different opening variation.

9	**0–0**	**♗e7**
10	**♘e5**	

A tempting sortie. White could also have considered 10 ♕e2!? (intending 11 ♖d1) 10...♗xf3 11 ♕xf3 ♕xd4 12 ♘b5 ♕d7 13 ♕xb7 c6 (13...0–0 14 ♖d1), and now either 14 ♕xd7+ ♔xd7 15 ♘c3 with the better endgame, or the sharper 14 ♘c7+!? ♔d8 15 ♗f4.

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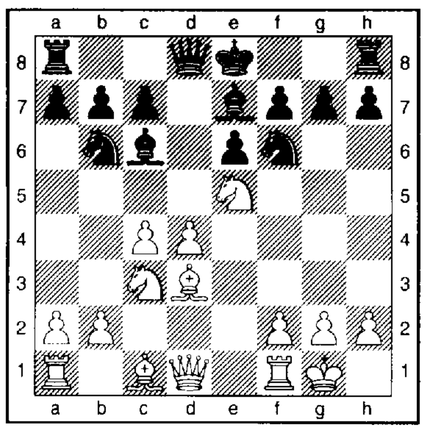

E 8-6. How should Black defend?

Andersson – Karpov

Moscow 1981

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**g3**	**d5**
4	**♘f3**	**♗e7**
5	**♗g2**	**0–0**
6	**0–0**	**dxc4**
7	**♕c2**	**a6**
8	**♕xc4**	**b5**
9	**♕c2**	**♗b7**
10	**♗g5**	**♘bd7**
11	**♗xf6**	**♘xf6**
12	**♘bd2**	**♖c8**
13	**♘b3**	**♗e4**

The opening variation chosen by White has (and rightly so) the reputation of being drawish. It is considered that, by achieving ...c7–c5, Black equalises. This move can be made immediately. For example, in the 20th game of the 3rd match between Kasparov and Karpov (London/Leningrad 1986) this is what Karpov played. After 13...c5 14 dxc5 (14 ♘xc5? ♗xf3 15 ♗xf3 ♕xd4) 14...♗d5 15 ♖fd1 ♗xb3 (15...♕c7 is also good) 16 ♕xb3 ♕c7 17 a4 ♕xc5 18 axb5 axb5 19 ♘d4 b4 20 e3 ♖fd8 21 ♖d2 ♕b6 the players agreed a draw.

14	**♕c3**	

White wants to take on c5 with his knight, whereas after 14 ♕c1 this is not possible for the reason already known to us: 14...c5 15 ♘xc5? ♗xf3!.

14	**...**	**♘d5**
15	**♕c1**	**c5!**
16	**♘xc5**	

Or 16 dxc5 ♗xf3 17 ♗xf3 ♗xc5! 18 ♘xc5 ♕e7 with equality (Kochiev–Khuzman, Pavlodar 1982).

see next diagram

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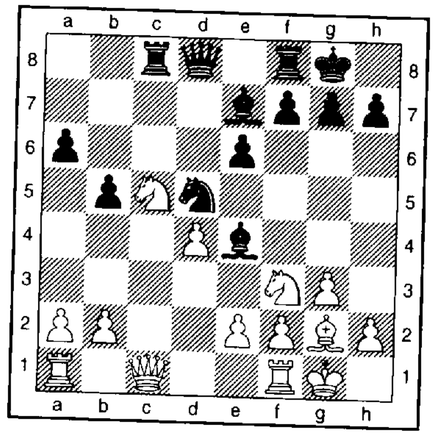

E 8-7. Which would you prefer: 16...♗xc5 or 16...♕b6 ?

Keres – Richter

Munich 1942

1	**c4**	**e5**
2	**♘c3**	**♘f6**
3	**♘f3**	**♘c6**
4	**d4**	**exd4**
5	**♘xd4**	**♗b4**
6	**♗g5**	**h6**
7	**♗h4**	**g5?!**

Modern theory recommends 7...♗xc3+ 8 bxc3 d6.

8	**♗g3**	**d6**

The game Tal–Georgadze (Lublin 1974) developed differently: 8...♘e4? 9 ♕d3 d5 10 ♘db5! ♘xg3 11 ♕xg3 d4 12 0–0–0 0–0 13 ♘d5 a6 14 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 15 ♘xb4 c5 16 ♘d5 – White has both an extra pawn and the significantly better position.

9	**♖c1?!**	

In many branches of this opening system, this rook move, which has the aim of avoiding doubled pawns, proves useful (without waiting for it, Black often exchanges immediately on c3). But here it was possible to play far more energetically: 9 ♘xc6! bxc6 10 ♕a4 with advantage to White.

9	**. . .**	**♘xd4!**
10	**♕xd4**	**♗f5**
11	**h4?!**	

To attack with development incomplete is hardly appropriate. White should have played 11 f3.

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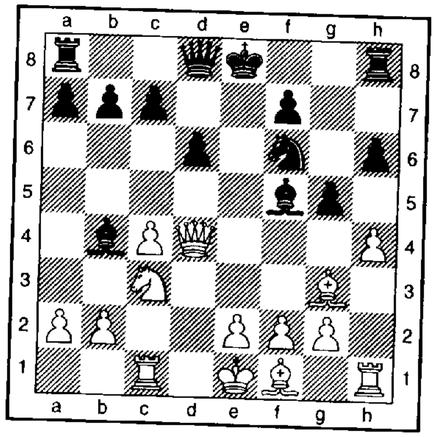

E 8-8. How should Black continue?

Part Nine

Games

The games that are analysed in the concluding part of the book are arranged in chronological order. Here there is no special methodological idea. Each game is a separate chapter with its own topic, which is fairly intense and, in my view, interesting, but not too closely linked with the other topics. I do not see a system, determining the 'correct' order in moving from one story to the next, and therefore I have chosen the chronological principle.

Who is Attacking Whom?

Of the pre-war champions, I have always had the greatest admiration for Lasker. His amorphous style is hard to define, and evidently his contemporaries also had problems getting to grips with it. I have always regretted that there is no really good book analysing Lasker's games throughout his career. One day, perhaps, I will write it myself.

John Nunn

I share the admiration of grandmaster Nunn for the second world champion, although I am not sure about his evaluation of the books devoted to the games of Emanuel Lasker. The monographs published in Russian by Vladimir Zak *Lasker* and Boris Vainstein *Myslitel* (The Thinker) are rich in content and interesting. But there is no doubt that many remarkable games that are analysed in them demand a reappraisal – their traditional interpretation is inaccurate, and sometimes simply incorrect. The reader can easily convince himself of this, from my analysis of the games Réti–Lasker (Märisch Ostrau 1923) in the book *Training for the Tournament Player* and Tarrasch–Lasker (4th game, match 1908) at the end of the book *School of Chess Excellence 2 – Tactical Play*.

The game which we will now examine is perhaps the sharpest and most intricate of all those ever played by Lasker. I published an analysis of it in the magazine *64 – Shakhmatnoe Obozrenie* (1997 No.3), and then in the Russian edition of my book (in early 1998). Soon in England the book *The World's Greatest Chess Games* was published, and in it, independently from me, it was annotated in detail by Nunn. New additions and refinements were made by Colin Crouch in the book *How to Defend in Chess*. I will use the opportunity to supplement my initial notes with certain discoveries by Nunn and Crouch.

Lasker – Napier

Cambridge Springs 1904

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘c3**	**♘c6**
3	**♘f3**	**g6**
4	**d4**	**cxd4**
5	**♘xd4**	**♗g7**
6	**♗e3**	**d6**
7	**h3?!**	**♘f6**
8	**g4**	

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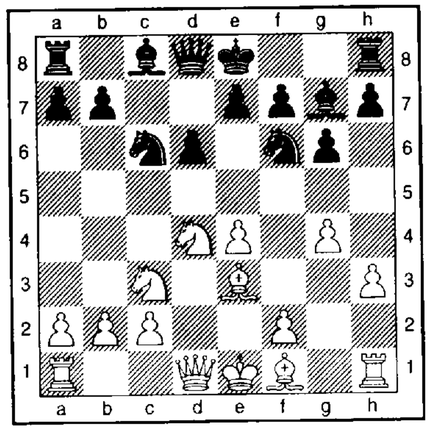


Such an early pawn attack on the flank with the centre not closed has little chance of success. Why then did Lasker begin it? 'On psychological grounds', explain some of the old books. Here, for example, is the commentary of Richard Réti.

'The opponent, in choosing this opening, was undoubtedly prepared for a prolonged, tenacious defence, the reward for which he imagined to be an advantageous, thanks to his extra pawn in the centre, endgame. Meanwhile, we know that the only defence against a premature attack, such as that undertaken by Lasker, is an energetic counterattack in the centre.

However, it is psychologically very difficult to reject a plan, which has perhaps been thoroughly studied beforehand at home or successfully tried in previous games, in favour of a new, quite different and little-known strategic method.'

The naivety of this explanation is obvious. What is this favourable endgame that Black is hoping to obtain? How could it be known to Réti (and to Lasker) what Napier had prepared, or whether he had seriously analysed the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defence (almost certainly he had not: those were different times)? And why was the standard technique – a counterattack in the centre – 'a little-known strategic method'?

After the passage of many decades it is hard to give a reliable description of the motifs by which Lasker was guided: it is probably not worth even trying. I will merely mention that his play in general was characterised by a careless or risky handling of the opening. *'Lasker is the only grandmaster who even in the initial stage can allow himself to make average moves'* (Tartakower). The mighty fighter clearly recognised his strength in a tactical middlegame, and believed that in complications he would always be able to outplay his opponent, and therefore he did not attach particular significance to the opening.

8 . . . 0–0

9 g5

The game Milu–Marin (Bucharest 1994) went 9 ♗g2!? ♘xd4 10 ♗xd4 ♗d7 11 0–0 ♗c6 with roughly equal chances.

9 . . . ♘e8

In Nunn's opinion, 9...♘h5!? 10 ♘xc6 (10 ♗e2 ♘f4) 10...bxc6 11 ♗e2 ♖b8 was also not bad.

10 h4

'This is going too far. White continues with his plan of attacking on the kingside, but every pawn move is a non-developing move, and he simply cannot afford to leave his king in the centre for so long. 10 ♕d2 followed by 11 0–0–0 would have been safer and better' (Nunn).

10 . . . ♘c7

11 f4

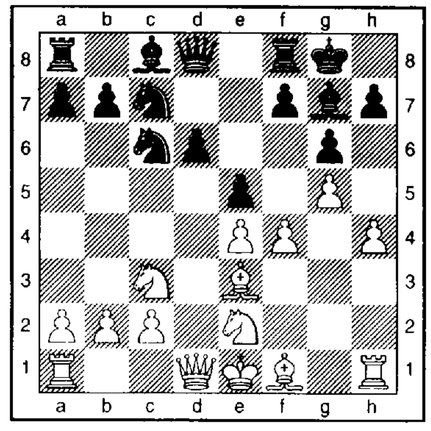
A continuation of the same risky strategy. 11 ♗g2 ♘e5 12 ♕e2 was more prudent. Now Black begins active play in the centre.

11 . . . e5

A natural and strong move. Of course, 11...d5 12 e5 looks worse, when the bishop at g7 is shut out of the game. However, Zak's recommendation of 11...♗xd4!? 12 ♗xd4 d5 came seriously into consideration.

12 ♘de2

65



12 . . . d5!?

In all the books it is this move that is considered to be objectively incorrect. *'In his calculations Napier exceeded the limit of*

human possibilities, but even so he calculated insufficiently far' (Réti). But in fact Black diverged from the correct path much later.

Of course, it was possible to play more quietly. Zak recommends 12...exf4 13 ♘xf4 ♘e5 and Réti – 12...♗g4.

Nunn considers the latter move to be correct in view of the following variations: 13 ♖g1 ♕d7 14 ♕d2 exf4 followed by 15...♘e5, or 13 ♕d2 exf4 14 ♗xf4 ♘e5 15 0–0–0 ♘e6 16 ♗g3 ♘c4 17 ♕d3 ♖c8 (threatening 18... ♘xb2) and the position is clearly in Black's favour. However, in reply to 12...♗g4 Zak suggested a promising pawn sacrifice: 13 f5! gxf5 14 exf5 ♗xf5 15 ♘g3 ♗e6 16 ♗d3 d5 17 ♕h5 e4 18 ♘cxe4 dxe4 19 ♘xe4 and White's attack is quite dangerous. Apart from 19 ♘xe4 one can also consider 19 ♗xe4 h6 20 ♖g1 and, in order in this variation to strengthen the action of the rook on the g-file – 18 ♘gxe4 (instead of 18 ♘cxe4).

13 exd5

Weaker is 13 ♘xd5, after which Black can choose between 13...exf4, 13...♗g4 and 13...♘xd5 14 ♕xd5 (14 exd5 ♘d4) 14...♕xd5 15 exd5 ♘b4 16 0–0–0 ♗f5.

13 . . . ♘d4

The commentators do not mention another interesting possibility: 13...exf4!?.

(a) 14 ♘xf4 ♖e8! 15 ♕d2 (15 dxc6 ♖xe3+ 16 ♔f2?! ♗d4; 15 ♔f2!?) 15...♗d4 16 dxc6 ♗xe3;

(b) 14 ♗xf4 ♘e5 15 ♗g2 ♘e8!. The knight wants to occupy the excellent square d6, which will give Black counterplay compensating for the sacrificed pawn. For example: 16 ♘e4 ♗f5 17 ♘2g3 (inferior is 17 0–0 ♗xe4 18 ♗xe4 ♘d6 19 ♗g2 ♕b6+ 20 ♔h1 ♕xb2) 17...♗g4 18 ♕d2 ♕b6!? (18...♘c4?! 19 ♕b4).

Q 9-1. Find the forcing series of best moves for both sides that occurred in the game.

14 ♘xd4

Of course, after 14 ♗xd4? exd4 15 ♘xd4 ♘xd5 or 14 fxe5? ♘f3+ 15 ♔f2 ♘xe5 White's position would have made a pitiful impression.

14 . . . ♘xd5!

A powerful counter, which would have secured Black the advantage after 15 ♘xd5? exd4!. However, it was not so easy to catch Lasker unawares – he had prepared an excellent reply.

15 ♘f5! ♘xc3

After 15...♗xf5? 16 ♕xd5 ♕xd5 17 ♘xd5 ♗e4 18 ♘e7+ ♔h8 19 ♖h3(h2) the advantage is with White.

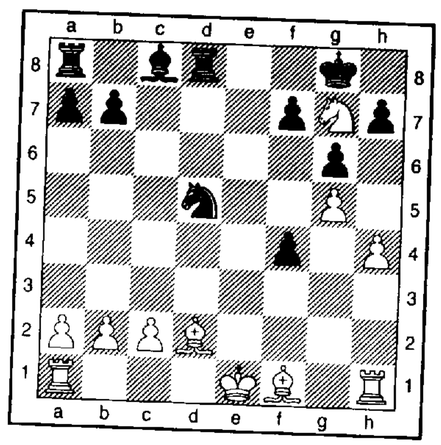
16 ♕xd8 ♖xd8

17 ♘e7+!?

For many years it was thought that 17 ♘xg7 was unfavourable in view of 17...♘d5 18 0–0–0 ♗g4!.

Crouch rightly mentioned that after 18 ♗d2 (instead of 18 0–0–0?) 18...exf4! (Diagram 66) 19 ♗c4 or 19 c4 (but not 19 0–0–0? ♗g4 – Nunn) White would have stood at least equal. The question is whether he has any advantage here.

66



After 19 ♗c4 ♔xg7 20 ♗xd5 ♖xd5 21 0–0–0 ♗e6 22 ♗xf4 the position is preferable for

White, but, of course, drawn. More dangerous is 19 c4!? ♘e3 and now not immediately 20 ♗c3?, but first 20 ♗a5!! (pointed out by Burgess) 20...b6 21 ♗c3 ♘c2+ 22 ♔f2. With the pawn at b7 Black would have played 22...♘xa1, but here this move is bad because of 23 ♗g2. And after 22...♗b7 23 ♗g2 ♗xg2 24 ♔xg2 ♘xa1 25 ♖xa1 White has a clear advantage.

In their analysis the English authors Nunn, Crouch and Burgess undoubtedly made active use of computer playing programs. Computers increase the accuracy and depth of calculation, help to avoid oversights and find unexpected tactical resources such as the intermediate move 20 ♗a5!!. Working with computers also has it drawbacks: in particular, a tendency, under the influence of the heartless machine, to underestimate positional sacrifices of material (however, without a computer the opposite tendency is sometimes seen). That is the case here: I think that by continuing 20...♗g4! (instead of 20...b6) 21 ♗xd8 ♖xd8 22 ♖h2 ♔xg7 23 ♖d2 ♖e8 24 ♔f2 h6!? Black would have retained an acceptable position. Whether I am right or not – the reader can check on his own computer.

17 . . . ♔h8!

Inferior is 17...♔f8 18 ♗c5.

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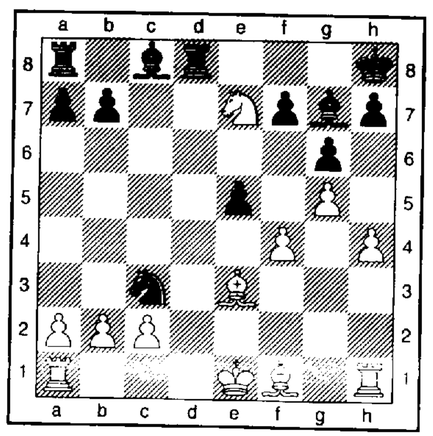

Q 9-2. Decide on the candidate moves for White. Which of them seems to you to be the most promising?

For the present it is hard to decide who should have the upper hand. This depends wholly on the accuracy and resourcefulness of the two players in this fascinating tactical struggle. The primitive 18 bxc3? exf4 19 ♗d4 ♖e8 (19...♗xd4 20 cxd4 ♖e8 – Réti) 20 ♗f6 ♖xe7+, or 18 ♘xc8? exf4! (weaker is 18...♘d5 19 0–0–0 ♖axc8 20 ♗xa7) 19 ♗xf4 ♖axc8 20 ♗d3 ♖e8+ 21 ♔f2 ♘d5 22 ♗c1 ♘b4 (Nunn) leads to positions that are clearly advantageous to Black. In order not to concede the initiative to his opponent, Lasker is obliged at any cost to continue the offensive against the enemy king that he began already in the opening.

18 h5!?

'The only continuation that retains the advantage for White' (Zak). As we will see, in fact after the move in the game White has no advantage. In view of this, serious consideration should be given to the recommendation of Joël Lautier: 18 f5!?. In the event of 18...♘e4 19 f6 ♗f8 20 ♗c4 ♘d6 (Black is also worse after 20...♗xe7 21 fxe7 ♖e8) 21 ♗b3 White's advantage is clear. The capture on f5, giving up the c3 knight, must also be examined. 18...♗xf5 19 bxc3 ♗e4 is hopeless because of 20 ♖h2! ♗f8 21 ♗c5 b6 22 ♗a3 ♖e8 23 ♖e2. And if 18...gxf5!? 19 bxc3 ♗e6, then 20 ♗h3! f4 21 ♗f2 e4 22 ♗d4. The position remains tense, but I would nevertheless put my money on White.

18 . . . ♖e8!

There is no time for 18...exf4? in view of 19 hxg6 fxg6 20 ♘xg6+ ♔g8 21 ♗c4+. Also unfavourable is 18...gxh5?! 19 f5, 18...♘d5?! 19 ♘xd5 (19 0–0–0? ♗e6) 19...♖xd5 20 ♗c4, or 18...♗f8?! 19 hxg6 ♗xe7 20 ♖xh7+ ♔g8 21 bxc3.

19 ♗c5

It is thought that after other continuations Black would have retained an excellent position:

19 f5 gxf5 20 ♘xc8 ♘d5 21 ♘d6 ♘xe3 22 ♘xe8 ♖xe8!? (Zak);

19 h6 ♗f8 20 bxc3 ♖xe7 21 ♗c5 exf4+ 22 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 23 ♖g1 ♗e6 (Nunn);

19 hxg6 ♖xe7 20 ♗c5 ♘d5 21 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 (Nunn).

However, in this last variation White's play can be improved with 21 ♖d1! (or 21 0–0–0!).

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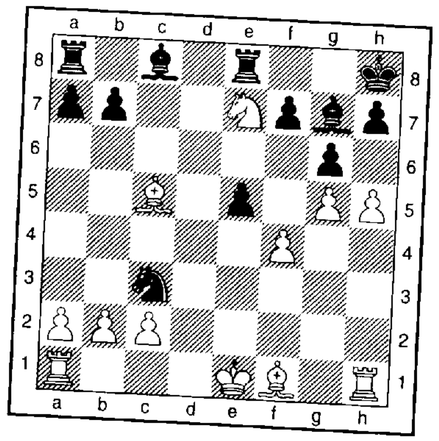

Black parried the threatened capture on g6 by playing 19...gxh5. His decision was unanimously approved by all the commentators... and wrongly so! Let us carefully analyse the resources of the two players at the culminating point of this fierce battle.

Q 9-3. Evaluate 19...♘e4.

In the variation 19...♘e4 20 ♗b5! ♖xe7 (20...♘xc5 21 ♗xe8 with the threat of 22 ♗xf7 or 22 hxg6) 21 ♗xe7 exf4 22 0–0–0 White gains a great advantage. If 22...♗g4 23 ♖de1 ♘g3 the move 24 h6! is very strong.

19...exf4!? looks more tempting. If 20 bxc3 there follows 20...♖xe7+! (more accurate than 20...♗xc3+ 21 ♔f2 ♗xa1 22 ♗c4! with approximate equality after 22...♗c3 23 ♗xf7 ♖xe7 24 hxg6 ♖xf7 25 gxf7 ♗e6! 26 f8♕+ ♖xf8 27 ♗xf8 ♗d4+ 28 ♔e1 f3, or 22...b6 23 ♗xf7 ♗b7 24 ♖xa1 bxc5 25 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 26 ♖e1) 21 ♗xe7 ♗xc3+ 22 ♔f2 ♗xa1 23 ♗c4 (23 hxg6 fxg6 24 ♗d3 ♗d4+ 25 ♔f3 ♔g7) 23...♗d4+ 24 ♔f3 ♗f5 and Black's position is preferable (analysis by Georg Marco).

Q 9-4. Find the strongest continuation for Black after 19...exf4 20 ♗c4.

20...gxh5?! 21 ♗xf7 ♘e4 transposes into a position that occurred in the game – we will return to it later.

Bad is 20...♗f5? 21 ♗xf7 (threatening 22 hxg6) 21...♖xe7+ (21...♘e4 22 hxg6) 22 ♗xe7 ♘d5 23 ♗xd5 ♖e8 24 0–0–0 ♖xe7 25 h6 ♗e5 26 ♖he1 ♗g4 27 ♗f3 (Zak).

The correct way: 20...b6!!, was pointed out by Sergey Dolmatov.

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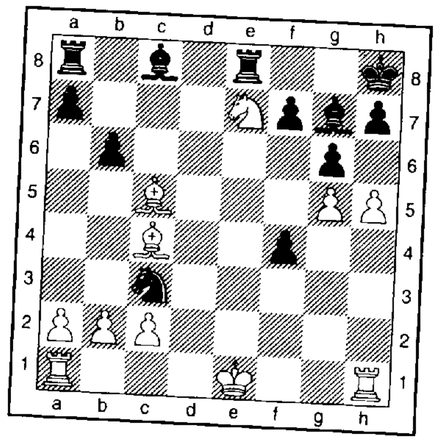

21 ♗xf7 ♗b7 22 ♔f2 (22 hxg6 ♗xh1; 22 ♖h4 bxc5) 22...♘e4+ 23 ♔g1 ♘xc5, and again 24 hxg6 ♗xh1 is pointless.

21 hxg6 fxg6:

(a) 22 ♗f7? ♗b7 23 ♔f2 ♖xe7 (23...♘e4+ 24 ♔g1 ♗xb2 is also strong) 24 ♗xe7 ♗d4+ and wins.

(b) 22 bxc3 ♗xc3+! (it is essential to interpose this check; 22...bxc5 23 0–0–0! is unfavourable for Black, for example: 23...♗f5 24 ♘xf5 gxf5 25 g6 h6 26 ♖d7! with the irresistible threat of 27 ♖xh6+!, or 23...♗e6 24 ♘xg6+ ♔g8 25 ♗xe6+ ♖xe6 26 ♘xf4 with advantage to White in the endgame, or, finally, 23...♗xc3 24 ♘xg6+ ♔g7 25 ♘xf4 ♗d4 26 ♖xd4! cxd4 27 ♗d3 and, despite the numerous exchanges, White retains a powerful attack) 23 ♔f2 bxc5 (or 23...♗xa1). Black has a decisive advantage.

(c) 22 ♔f1!? ♗f5 23 ♘xf5 gxf5 24 g6 (24 ♗f7 ♘e4!) 24...h6 25 ♗d6 ♖e4! 26 ♗d3 ♖d4 and although a draw is the most probable outcome, White still has to demonstrate this.

It should be mentioned that in the event of 20 hxg6 (instead of 20 ♗c4) 20...fxg6 21 ♗c4 it is simplest for Black to play 21...b6!, obtaining a position that has just been examined. But, according to analysis by Zak, also possible is 21...♗f5 22 ♗f7 ♘e4, or 22 bxc3 ♖ac8 (22...♗xc3+ 23 ♔f2 ♗e4 24 ♘d5 ♗xd5 25 ♗xd5 – Nunn) 23 ♗f7 ♖xc5 24 ♗xe8 ♖e5+ 25 ♔f2 ♖xe7 26 ♖ae1 ♖c7 with good compensation for the lost exchange.

19 . . . gxh5?!

20 ♗c4?

This point was also given an incorrect evaluation. Much stronger (and Nunn agrees with me) was 20 bxc3!. The authors of previous books gave the capture of the knight a question mark, assuming that after 20...♗f8 21 ♗b5 ♖xe7 (21...♗xe7 22 ♗xe8 ♗xc5 23 ♗xf7 exf4 24 ♖xh5! ♔g7 25 g6! hxg6 26 ♗xg6) 22 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 Black is excellently placed. This would be so, if he had time to make the consolidating move 23...♗g4. Alas, he does not have time: there follows 23 ♖xh5! (with the threat of 24 ♗d3) 23...♗f5, and now not 24 fxe5? ♗xc2! with chances for both sides, but 24 ♗d3! e4 25 ♗f1. In the resulting position White has the advantage – Black is unable to create counterplay. compensating for the missing exchange. For example: 25...♖c8 26 ♗h3!, or 25...♗d6 26 ♖h4 f6 27 gxf6 ♖f8 28 ♖d1 (28 ♗h3) 28...♖xf6 29 ♗h3.

Crouch observed that White would also have retained the better chances with 20 ♖xh5!? ♘e4!? 21 ♗d3 ♗f5! 22 ♘xf5 ♘xc5 23 ♗b5!. However, in the variation given by him 20...♗f8 21 g6 fxg6 22 ♘xg6+ (22 ♖xe5 ♗xe7! 23 ♗xe7 ♘d5) 22...♔g7 23 ♗xf8+ (23 ♘xf8 exf4+) 23...♔xg6 24 ♖g5+ ♔f7 25 ♖xe5 ♖xe5+ 26 fxe5 ♔xf8 27 bxc3 the most probable outcome is a draw – for example, 27...♗g4!? is good, intending in one order or another ...♖e8(c8), ...♔e7 and ...h7–h5.

After the move in the game Black could have obtained a promising position.

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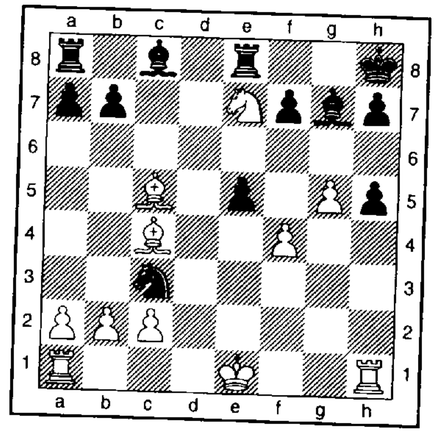

Q 9-5. What would you recommend for Black?

Apart from Napier's move 20...exf4?, which involves giving up rather too much material, the commentators studied only 20...♗e6? and showed that this continuation is unsatisfactory. Here is their analysis: 21 ♗xe6 fxe6 22 bxc3 ♗f8 and now either 23 ♖xh5 ♗xe7 24 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 25 fxe5 ♖c8 26 0–0–0 ♖xc3 27 g6 (Réti), or 23 ♗d6! ♗xe7 (23...exf4 24 ♗e5+ ♗g7 25 ♗f6!) 24 ♗xe5+ ♔g8 25 ♖xh5 ♖ad8 (25...♗f8 26 0–0–0) 26 ♕e2 ♗f8 27 ♖ah1 followed by g5–g6! (Zak).

Nunn suggested the quite good move 20...♗f8, with unclear consequences: 21 ♗xf7 ♗xe7 (inferior is 21...♖xe7 22 ♗xe7 ♗xe7 23 bxc3 exf4 24 ♖xh5 ♔g7 25 ♗d5) 22 ♗xe8 ♗xc5 23 bxc3 ♗f5 24 ♗xh5 exf4. Incidentally, exactly the same position could have arisen in a variation that we have already analysed: 20 bxc3! (instead of 20 ♗c4?) 20...♗f8 21 ♗b5 ♗xe7 22 ♗xe8 ♗xc5 23 ♗xf7 exf4, if here White had played not 24 ♖xh5!, but 24 ♗xh5.

But I found a stronger continuation (later also pointed out by Nunn), namely 20...♘e4! 21 ♗xf7 ♗g4! 22 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 23 ♗a3 exf4 (or 23...♘g3 24 ♖h2 exf4). Having parted with the exchange, in return Black has coordinated his pieces. For whom would you prefer to play in this position? It is unlikely that it would be for White!

20	**...**	**exf4?**
21	**♗xf7**	

It was possible simply to take the knight – 21 bxc3!?, for example: 21...♗xc3+ 22 ♔f2 ♗xa1 23 ♖xa1 ♔g7 (Crouch) 24 ♗d4+ ♔f8 25 ♘xc8 ♖axc8 26 ♗d3, or 21...b6 22 ♗d6 ♗g4 23 ♗xf7 ♗xc3+ 24 ♔f2 ♗d4+ 25 ♔g2 f3+ 26 ♔g3 with advantage to White.

21	**...**	**♘e4?!**

'This brilliant rook sacrifice is the best chance for Black. It is possible that, had his opponent been a less skilful tactician, he would yet have won this game!' (Réti). Yes, Black acted boldly and resourcefully (although not too accurately), but as for the possibility of him winning – this is going too far! A rook down in the endgame, it is hard to count on a favourable outcome.

Meanwhile, as shown by Nunn, Black could still have saved the game by restricting himself to the more modest 21...♖f8!. Here is his analysis: 22 ♗xh5 (22 ♘g6+ hxg6 23 ♗xf8 ♗xf8 24 bxc3 ♗f5) 22...♘e4 23 ♘g6+ ♔g8 (but not 23...hxg6 24 ♗xg6+ ♔g8 25 ♗xf8 ♗xb2 26 ♗xe4 ♗xa1 27 ♗d6 with advantage to White) 24 ♘e7+ with perpetual check, or 24 ♘xf8 ♗xb2 25 ♖d1 ♗c3+ 26 ♔f1 ♘xc5 with an unclear position.

Crouch tried to cast doubts on Nunn's conclusion by suggesting 22 g6!?. However, his arguments are not convincing. Even the win after 22...♘e4 23 ♖xh5 is by no means obvious: 23...h6 24 ♗a3 ♘g4 25 ♖h4 h5. An interesting ending arises in the main variation of Crouch's analysis: 22...♗g4!? 23 bxc3 ♗xc3+ 24 ♔f2 b6! 25 ♖ag1! (25 ♗a3 ♗d4+ 26 ♔g2 f3+ 27 ♔g3 ♗e5+ with a draw; 25 ♗d6 ♖ad8 26 ♗xf4 ♗xa1 27 ♖xa1 hxg6! 28 ♘xg6+ ♔g7 29 ♘xf8 ♖xf8 and Black regains the piece) 25...bxc5 26 ♖xg4 ♗d4+ 27 ♔f1 ♖xf7 28 gxf7 hxg4 29 f8♕+ ♖xf8 30 ♘g6+ ♔g7 31 ♘xf8 ♔xf8 32 ♖xh7. In the commentator's opinion White wins in view of 32...f3 33 ♖h4 g3 34 ♖f4+. I think that after 32...g3 (with the threat of 33...f3) 33 ♔g2 c4 Black should gain a draw. The c4 pawn will be lost, of course, but to queen the c-pawn White has to support it with both his rook and his king, and it is not easy to do this, since he has to keep an eye on the kingside pawns. For example: 34 ♔f3 ♗e3 35 ♖c7 ♔e8 36 ♖xc4 ♔d7 etc.

22	**♗xe8**	**♗xb2**
23	**♖b1**	

Inferior is 23 ♖d1 ♗c3+ 24 ♔f1 ♗g4.

23	**...**	**♗c3+**
24	**♔f1**	**♗g4**

Black would have lost after 24...♘xc5 25 ♗xh5, for example: 25...♘e4 26 ♔g2 ♘g3 27 ♗g6 ♘xh1 28 ♖xh1 (Nunn), or 25...♗e6 26 ♗g6 ♔g7 27 ♖xh7+ ♔f8 (Crouch) 28 ♖d1! ♗xa2 29 ♘d5.

see next diagram

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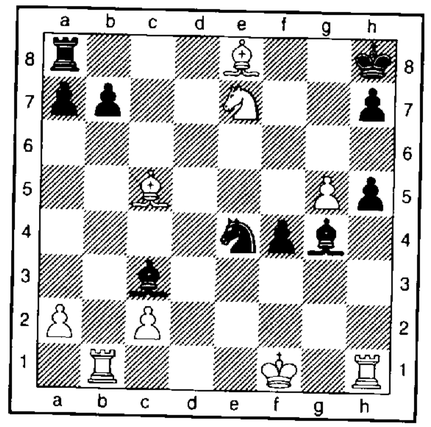

A picturesque position! Black has numerous threats: 25...♖xe8, 25...♘xc5, 25...♘d2+ and 25...♘g3+. *'Unfortunately, nearly all the threats stem from one and the same knight, and it cannot divide itself in two'*, aptly comments Vainstein.

25	**♗xh5!**	**♗xh5**
26	**♖xh5**	**♘g3+**

26...♘d2+ 27 ♔f2 ♘xb1 28 g6 is hopeless for Black.

27	**♔g2**	**♘xh5**
28	**♖xb7**	

How quickly the situation has cleared! Despite having restored material equality, Black's position is difficult. His pieces lack coordination, whereas the white pieces are very active. With a small force Lasker organises a decisive attack on the opponent's king, thereby logically completing the plan begun by him back in the opening.

28	**...**	**a5**
29	**♖b3**	**♗g7?!**

Black loses immediately after 29...♗e5? 30 ♖h3 ♘g3 31 ♘g6+. More tenacious was 29...♗a1!? 30 ♖h3 ♘g7, although, as mentioned by Nunn, after 31 ♖h6 ♘e8 32 ♔f3 ♔g7 33 ♔xf4 White should win.

30	**♖h3**	**♘g3**
31	**♔f3**	**♖a6**
32	**♔xf4**	**♘e2+**
33	**♔f5**	

As should happen in the endgame, the king personally leads the offensive.

33	**...**	**♘c3**
34	**a3**	

There is no point in White including 34 g6?! h6 – the opponent gains the opportunity for a rook check at f6.

34	**...**	**♘a4**
35	**♗e3**	

Black resigned in view of the irresistible threat of 36 g6. For example, if 35...♗f8, then 36 ♗d4+ ♗g7 37 g6! is decisive.

Although Napier lost this fascinating game, he considered it to be the best one he ever played.

The inaccuracies committed by the two players are quite excusable. To find your way faultlessly though such wild complications is beyond the power of a human: here the help of a computer is required. Incidentally, I have no doubt that the commentaries in my books also contain analytical mistakes. By switching on his computer, the careful reader will discover them. But it is better (at any event – much more useful) if he does this independently, using (as expressed by the hero of the Agatha Christie novels, the detective Hercule Poirot) 'his little grey cells'.

My books *School of Chess Excellence 1 – Endgame Analysis* and *School of Chess Excellence 2 – Tactical Play* describe an effective form of training – the playing of specially selected positions. For this aim, made is use of studies or carefully analysed game fragments, in which one of the sides has to find a series of the best moves. With an analysis of the position at his disposal,

the trainer can subsequently make a precise evaluation of his pupil's quality of play, point out mistakes made by him and discuss their causes.

Usually a player plays against the trainer (today his role may be performed by a computer program prepared by me). But the most effective examples, in which the two sides are equivalent and both players have to solve interesting and difficult problems, are suitable for 'reciprocal playing', when two players compete against each other.

The Lasker–Napier game is an excellent proving ground for reciprocal playing, and I have several times used it in this capacity. I will now show one of these training games (I hope that the two players will not bear me a grudge).

The position suggested for playing was the one reached after Black's 13th move. The time control was one and a half hours for each player.

Lautier – Zviagintsev

Moscow 1994

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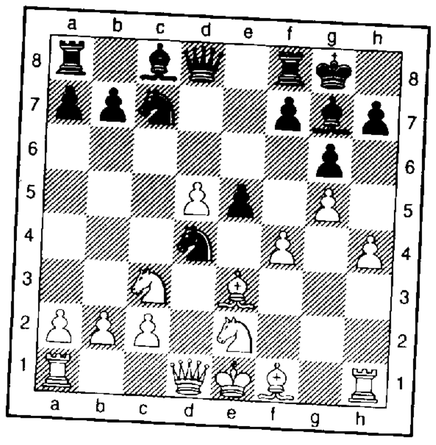

14 ♘xd4 ♘xd5! 15 ♘f5! ♘xc3 16 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 17 ♘e7+!? ♔h8! 18 h5!? ♖e8! 19 ♗c5 exf4!. Here is the first deviation from the Lasker–Napier game, and moreover, as we already know, a successful one.

20 hxg6 fxg6 21 ♗c4 b5?!. But this is the first mistake. Black should have played either 21...♗f5!? (Zak) or 21...b6! (Dolmatov).

22 ♗f7 ♗b7 23 ♖h4! ♘d5. With his pawn on b6 Black would have simply taken the bishop, whereas now he is forced to seek new defensive resources. In reply to 23...♖ac8 grandmaster Lautier had prepared 24 bxc3 (24 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 is worse, but 24 ♗xg6! is very strong) 24...♖xc5 (24...♗xc3+ 25 ♔f1 ♗xa1 26 ♗xg6 ♖xe7 27 ♗xe7 ♔g7 28 ♗d3 with an obvious advantage) 25 ♗xe8 ♖e5+ (bad is 25...♗xc3+ 26 ♔f1 ♗xa1 27 ♗xg6) 26 ♔f1 ♖xe7 27 ♗xg6 and Black has no real compensation for the exchange.

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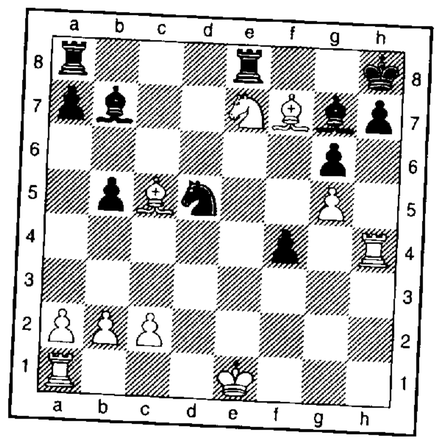

24 ♗xd5?!. A mistake in reply. 24 ♗xe8! ♖xe8 25 0–0–0 ♘xe7 26 ♗xe7 f3 27 ♖d7 ♗c6(c8) 28 ♖c7 would have led to an advantage for White.

Nunn also came to roughly the same conclusion. He considered 23 ♖h2 (instead of 23 ♖h4) 23...♘d5 24 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 25 0–0–0 ♘xe7 26 ♖d7 (weaker is 26 ♗xe7 ♗xb2+ 27 ♔xb2 ♖xe7 – but with his rook at h4, here White would have simply played 28 ♖xf4; on the other hand he would not have 26 ♖d7 because of the reply 26...♘f5) 26...♗c6

27 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 28 ♗xe7 f3 *'with an advantage for White, although winning this endgame would be far from easy'.*

The move in the game seemed more convincing to Lautier, but he underestimated the opponent's defensive resources.

24...♗xd5 25 0–0–0 ♗f3! 26 ♖d7 ♗h5. The bishop manoeuvre to h5 is the only way to avoid being crushed. In the event of 26...♖ad8?! 27 ♘xg6+ ♔g8 28 ♘e7+ ♔h8 White does not play 29 g6? h5!, but simply 29 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 30 c3.

27 ♖xf4 ♖ad8 28 ♖fd4! ♖xd7 29 ♖xd7 a5 (29...a6!?) **30 c3 h6! 31 gxh6 ♗xh6+ 32 ♔c2 ♗g7 33 ♖b7 ♗f3.** Already here mutual time trouble began to have its effect. Black could have gained a draw by 33...♖d8!? 34 ♔b3 (not 34 ♖xb5? because of 34...♗d1+ and 35...♗a4) 34...b4!. However, the move in the game is also quite possible.

34 ♖xb5 ♗e4+ 35 ♔b3 ♗f6.

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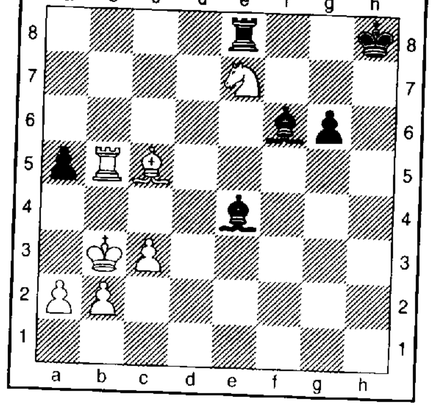

36 ♗d6?. A time trouble error. 36 ♘xg6+! ♗xg6 37 ♖xa5 should have been played.

36...♗xe7. Only here did Lautier notice that his planned 37 ♖e5 would allow the terrible 37...a4+!.

37 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 38 ♖xa5 ♔g7 39 c4 ♔f6 40 ♔c3 g5 41 ♔d4 g4 42 ♖a6+ ♔f5. White resigns.

In the following game the Dragon Variation also occurred, but in a more modern version. Try independently taking the correct decision in a position arising immediately after the opening.

Tseshkovsky – Rajcevic

Vrnjacka Banja 1982

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘f6 5 ♘c3 g6 6 ♗e3 ♗g7 7 f3 0–0 8 ♕d2 ♘c6 9 ♗c4 ♗d7 10 h4 ♕c7 11 ♗b3 ♘a5 12 ♗h6 ♘xb3 (12...♘c4) **13 axb3** (13 ♘xb3!?) **13...♗xh6 14 ♕xh6 d5 15 exd5.**

The tempting 15 0–0–0?! dxe4 16 h5 ♘xh5 17 ♘d5 ♕e5 18 g4 ♕xd5 19 ♘f5 (19 gxh5 g5), which occurred in the game Abramovic–Ristic, Yugoslavia 1977, is refuted by 19...♕xd1+! followed by 20...♗xf5 (Tiviakov).

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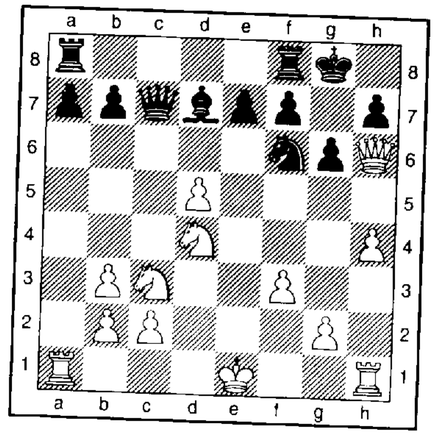


E 9-1. What should Black play?

The Accumulation of Small Advantages

Steinitz's thought became at once fertile when he insisted on knowing wherein an advantage could exist, and hazarded that the answer was not only in a single important advantage but also in a multitude of insignificant advantages. For instance, if my bishop has four squares to move to, the hostile bishop only three squares, I hold, ceteris paribus, an advantage, which, it is true, is minute, but by accumulation of such minute advantages at last a big plus is collected. The big plus arising by accumulation is discharged in a combination.

Emanuel Lasker

The game which we will now examine developed quietly for a long time. Initially the position was equal, then nearly equal, and, finally, a marked advantage for White took shape. The only question was whether it was sufficient for a win. The key moment of switching from the accumulation of small advantages to their direct exploitation (by technical or combinative means) seems to me to be the most difficult and instructive, and it is for this reason that I have annotated the present game.

Simagin – Kholmov

USSR Championship Semi-Final, Moscow 1947

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**♘f3**	**b6**
4	**g3**	**♗b7**
5	**♗g2**	**♗e7**
6	**0–0**	**0–0**
7	**♘c3**	**♘e4**
8	**♕c2**	**♘xc3**
9	**♕xc3**	**d6**

Modern theory recommends 9...c5.

10 ♕d3

By threatening to occupy the centre with e2–e4, Vladimir Simagin provokes the reply ...f7–f5, slightly weakening Black's position (the e6 square). But with the same aim 10 ♕c2 was more accurate, since in the future the queen at d3 will come under attack with gain of tempo (...♘c5 or ...♘e5).

10 . . . f5

11 ♘e1

11 ♘g5? does not work: 11...♗xg2 12 ♘xe6 ♕c8.

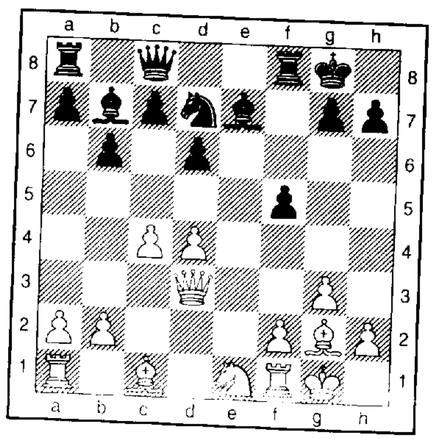
11 . . . ♕c8

11...♗xg2 12 ♘xg2 ♕d7 13 e4 fxe4 14 ♕xe4 d5 has also been tried. The game Averbakh–Bilek (Palma de Mallorca 1972) went 15 ♕g4 ♗d6 16 cxd5 exd5 17 ♕xd7 ♘xd7 18 ♗f4, reaching an ending that was a little better for White.

12 e4 ♘d7

13 exf5 exf5

76



14 d5

A debatable decision. Simagin consolidates certain pluses in his position: his spatial advantage and the slightly greater mobility of his g2 bishop compared with its opponent at b7. But in return Black obtains a good diagonal for his other bishop and squares in the centre for his knight.

14 ♗h3!? g6 15 ♗h6 came into consideration.

14 . . . ♘e5

15 ♕e2 ♗f6

16 ♘f3

A sober evaluation of the position! Of course, White would like not to exchange his knight, but direct it via d4 towards the weak e6 square. But with his lag in development he simply does not have time to carry out this plan – the opponent is the first to begin active play. For example: 16 ♘c2 ♗a6 (16...♖e8!?) 17 b3 ♖e8 18 ♗e3 (18 ♕d1 b5) 18...f4! 19 gxf4 ♘g6. If 16 f4, then 16...♘d7 (weaker is 16...♘g4 17 ♘f3 followed by h2–h3) 17 ♗e3 ♖e8! with the unpleasant threat of 18...♗xb2.

16 . . . ♘xf3+

17 ♗xf3 ♕d7

18 ♗e3 ♖ae8

19 ♕d2 ♗e5!

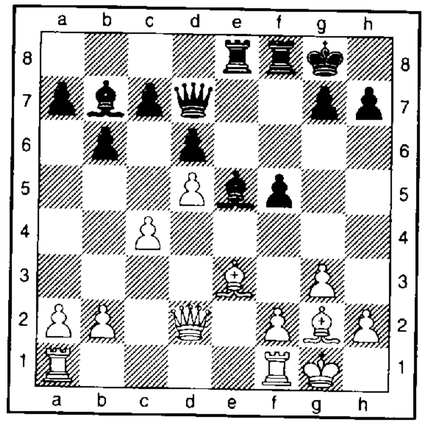
20 ♗g2

see next diagram

One of the fundamental principles of chess states: actively impose your will on the opponent, fight for the initiative! The possession of the initiative guarantees if not a purely chess advantage, then at least a psychological one.

In the given position Black's only active possibility is the ...f5–f4! advance. After 20...f4!? 21 gxf4 ♗f6 he has excellent compensation for the sacrificed pawn in view of the opponent's broken pawn structure on the kingside. His next move will be 22...♗c8, and then at some point ...g7–g6 and ...♗g7–h6.

77



Q 9-6. How should Black continue?

If desired, ...f5–f4 can also be carried out without giving up a pawn: 20...♕f7!? 21 ♖fe1 (21 f4? ♗xb2) 21...f4 22 gxf4 ♗xf4 23 ♗xf4 ♖xe1+ 24 ♖xe1 ♕xf4 25 ♕xf4 ♖xf4 (threatening 26...♖xc4 or 26...♔f8) 26 ♖e8+ ♖f8 (dangerous is 26...♔f7 27 ♖b8 ♗a6 28 b3) 27 ♖e7 ♖f7 with a draw. The choice between these two continuations is a matter of taste.

20 . . . ♖f7?!

Ratmir Kholmov restricts himself to passive defence. Wrongly! Although his position remains sound, the initiative passes to his opponent. It will now be easier and more pleasant playing White, and under such conditions there is the probability of new inaccuracies, leading to a further deterioration of Black's position.

21 ♖fe1 ♗c8

22 ♖ac1

22 f4 was objectively more accurate. Simagin did not hurry with this move, since he sensed that his opponent was not ready to sacrifice a pawn.

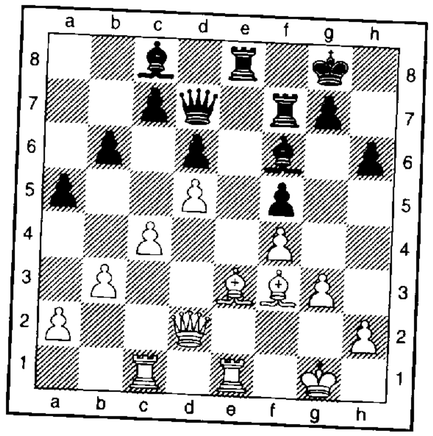
22	**...**		**a5**
23	**b3**		**h6**

This was the last moment for ...f5–f4!.

24	**f4**		**♗f6**
25	**♗f3**		

Threatening 26 ♗h5.

78



Q 9-7. How should Black defend?

The question is whether Black should stabilise the kingside by 25...g6, or prepare ...g7–g5 by playing 25...♔h7 and 26...♖g8.

25	**...**		**♔h7?!**

Black should have played more safely – the convenient moment for activity has been missed. His planned pawn thrust is impracticable.

26	**h4!**		**♖g8**

26...g6 is strongly met by 27 h5!, breaking up the enemy pawns. The attempt to resolve the problem tactically – 27...g5 28 fxg5 hxg5 29 ♗xg5 ♗xg5 30 ♕xg5 ♖g7 does not work: White can reply both 31 ♕f4!? ♖eg8 32 ♔f2 ♖xg3 33 ♖e6 (or even 33 ♕xg3), and also 31 ♕h4!? ♖eg8 32 ♔f2, when 32...♖xg3? fails to 33 ♖e7+.

If 27...♖g7, then 28 hxg6+ ♖xg6 29 ♗f2! ♖xe1+ (29...♖eg8 30 ♗h5! ♖xg3+ 31 ♗xg3 ♖xg3+ 32 ♔h2, or 30...♖6g7 31 ♔h2) 30 ♕xe1! followed by 31 ♗h5 with advantage to White (but not 30 ♖xe1? ♕g7!, when Black has simultaneously two threats: 31...♗c3 and 31...♗h4).

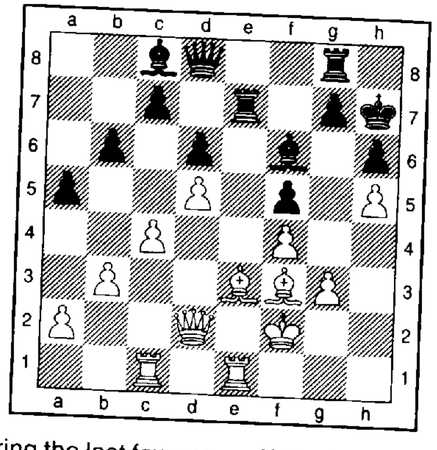
27			**♔f2?!**

Simagin probably refrained from 27 h5! since he was afraid of counterplay on the g-file after 27...g5 28 hxg6+ ♖xg6. In fact, here White gains a positional advantage: 29 ♔f2 (29 ♗f2 followed by 30 ♗h5 is also possible) 29...♖fg7 30 ♖h1! (but not 30 ♖g1? ♖xg3! 31 ♖xg3 ♗h4 32 ♖cg1 ♖xg3 33 ♖xg3 ♕g7), and 30...♖xg3? is not possible because of 31 ♖xh6+!.

After the move in the game the opponent could have strengthened his kingside by 27...g6! (with the idea of 28...h5), since if 28 h5 there follows 28...g5.

27	**...**		**♕d8?!**
28	**h5**		**♖e7**

79



During the last few moves White's positional advantage has increased slightly – he now controls more space not only in the centre, but also on the kingside. The strong h5 pawn paralyses the opponent's position, preventing him from supporting his f5 pawn, which may prove vulnerable. But this alone is insufficient for a win – new efforts are required to break up the opposing defences.

The natural plan of action is a pawn offensive on the queenside: a2–a3, b3–b4 and then either c4–c5, or the preparatory occupation of the a-file by a rook. In connection with this plan White must decide now on the advisability of exchanging rooks and the dark-square bishops.

It is clear that if all four rooks are exchanged, the effect of the play on the queenside will be significantly reduced. But one pair of rooks should be exchanged – otherwise the pressure of the opponent's heavy pieces on the e-file will restrict White.

It is more difficult to assess the advisability of the exchange of bishops. It has some point, since the bishop at f6 is quite active and it also deprives a white rook of the a1 square, which it will need in the future. On the other hand, with an advantage in space it is usually recommended that you should keep as many pieces on the board as possible, avoiding exchanges that are not forced. So that the exchange of bishops is debatable: it is possible, but not essential.

And how should Black defend? He has already irrevocably conceded the initiative and he is not now in a state to do anything significant – he can only wait. However, there is one factor that, in my view, he should have definitely taken into account while defending: control of the a-file after its opening. If it is seized by White, this will add yet another plus to the achievements he has already collected, and who knows, perhaps then his advantage will become decisive.

29			**♗d4**

A rather straightforward move, which makes it easier for the opponent to plan his actions. I would have recommended 29 a3!? and if 29...♖ge8, then 30 b4 axb4 31 axb4 followed by 32 ♖c2, and then ♔g2 and ♗f2, exchanging a pair of rooks. However, if Black had surmised that he should reply 29...♗d7. he would have succeeded in contesting the a-file.

29	**...**		**♗xd4+**
30	**♕xd4**		**♖xe1**
31	**♖xe1**		**♖e8**
32	**♖c1!**		

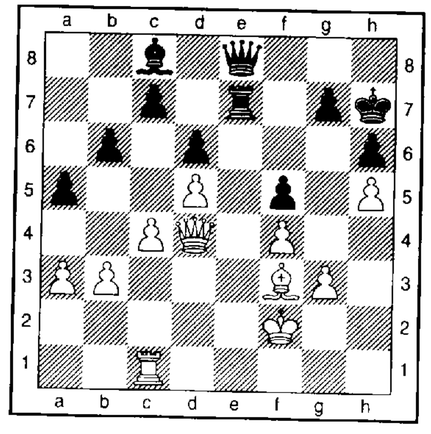
Of course, the exchange of rooks would have left White without any real chances of success. Instead of the move played, 32 ♖a1 may seem more accurate, but then White's intentions would have become too transparent and it would have been easier for the opponent to find the correct defensive set-up: 32...♗d7 33 a3 ♕e7 34 b4 ♖a8!.

32	**...**		**♖e7?**

An imperceptible, but very serious positional mistake. Here too 32...♗d7 33 a3 ♕e7 was necessary. Instead of this Black plays for a primitive trap, which is easily parried, whereas the a-file will now inevitably fall into White's hands.

33	**a3**		**♕e8**

80



Q 9-8. What should White play?

34 b4? is premature in view of 34...axb4 35 axb4 ♕a4! 36 ♕c3 ♕a2+ and the activity of the queen, which has broken into the enemy position, secures Black sufficient counterplay.

34	**♖a1!**		**♕d7**

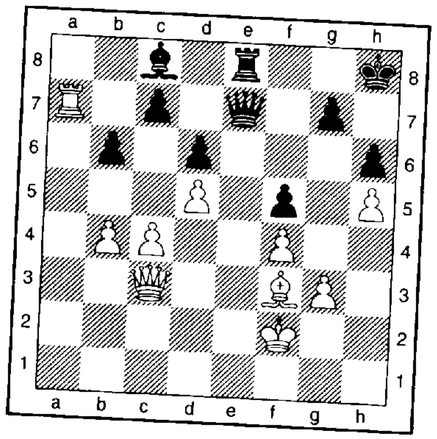
Hardly better was 34...♗d7 35 b4 ♕a8 36 ♕c3 ♕a7 37 ♔g2 followed by 38 bxa5 bxa5 39 c5 (or 39 ♖b1).

35 b4 axb4

Hopeless was 35...♕a4 36 ♕c3 with the threat of 37 b5 and 38 ♗d1.

36 axb4 ♖e8
37 ♖a7 ♕e7
38 ♕c3 ♔h8

81



Q 9-9. Indicate all the promising further options available to White.

Simagin has already accumulated quite a number of strategic pluses and his position is close to being won. Now the game enters a new phase. Earlier it was possible to act mainly on 'general grounds', calculating only short and simple variations. But now the time has come for the concrete exploitation of the advantage gained, and here deep and accurate calculations can no longer be avoided. ***Such a situation is altogether typical of the process of converting an advantage: at some point you are definitely obliged to seek a concrete solution to the position – a forcing way to win or at least the transformation of positional gains into material.*** And this task becomes a stumbling-block for many players, especially those who prefer to use purely technical means, avoiding any sharpening of the play.

When beginning a calculation, you should first establish all the 'candidate ideas' – ways available to you of breaching the enemy defences. Of course, we will play c4–c5, and the only question is whether immediately or after 39 ♔g2, moving the king a little further away from the influence of the enemy queen. Black will capture twice with his pawns on c5, after which three ways of continuing the offensive are possible:

1) the sacrifice of a pawn for the sake of exchanging queens: ♕e5;

2) the regaining of the c5 pawn: ♖a5;

3) attack on the c7 pawn: ♕a5.

It is clear that the position of the king at f2 makes sense only with the first of these plans: in the endgame it is sensible to keep the king as close as possible to the centre, whereas in the middlegame it is better to put it in a safer place. So, let us check 39 c5 dxc5 40 bxc5 bxc5 41 ♕e5 (if 41 ♖a5, then 41...c4 is quite good).

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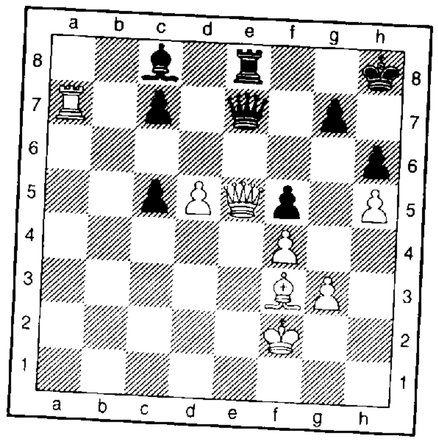


Q 9-10. How would you evaluate this way of breaking through?

The ending arising after 41...♕xe5 42 fxe5 ♖xe5 43 ♖xc7 ♖e8 is lost for Black – all his pieces are just too passively placed. The simplest plan is 44 ♗e2, then 45 ♗b5 and ♔f3–f4–e5. Also possible is the more direct 44 d6 ♖d8 (44...♗e6 45 ♗d5!) 45 ♗d5! (weaker is 45 ♗c6 ♗e6 46 d7? ♔g8, and if 47 ♗d5, then 47...♔f7) 45...f4!? (45...♗d7 46 ♗f7! ♗a4 47 ♗e6 followed by 48 d7, or 46...♔h7 47 ♗g6+ ♔g8 48 ♔f3 ♔f8 49 ♔f4) 46 gxf4 ♗g4 47 ♖e7! ♗xh5 48 d7 ♔h7 49 f5! and White wins.

However, the exchange of queens is not obligatory. Stronger is 41...♕d8(f8)! 42 ♕xc7 ♕f6 – after both 43 ♔g2 ♗a6! and the more accurate 43 ♖a2! (intending ♖c2) 43...♕c3 44 ♔g2 Black retains counterchances.

39 ♔g2!? ♔g8?

Strangely enough, here the location of the black king plays an enormous role. It turns out that with the king at g8 (and the white king at g2) the third breakthrough plan, involving ♕a5, is very strong – it was this that Simagin carried out in the game. Whereas the second plan: ♖a5 and ♖xc5 is more justified with the king on h8.

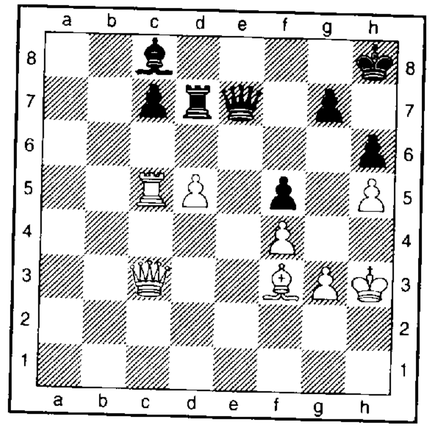
In 1984 at one of our training sessions in the calculation of variations when converting an advantage I played this position with Artur Yusupov. Instead of the move made by Kholmov, I tried the more tenacious **39... ♔h7!**. Let us see how our game developed.

40 ♔h3!? ♔h8. 40...♔g8!? also came into consideration. With the king at h3 the breakthrough involving ♕a5 is not so strong as with the king at g2 – this will become clear to you when we analyse the ending of the Simagin–Kholmov game.

41 c5 dxc5 42 bxc5 bxc5 43 ♖a5!? ♖d8. No better is 43...c4 44 ♖a4 or 43...♕d8 44 ♖xc5 ♖e7 45 ♖c6 with the threats of 46 ♖xh6+ and 46 d6.

44 ♖xc5 ♖d7.

83



45 ♖c6!. White would not have had this important tempo (46 ♖xh6+ is threatened) with the king on h7 or g8.

45...♔h7 46 ♖e6 ♕f8 47 ♕e3. 47 ♕e5 suggests itself, but then Black has 47...♖f7 48 ♖e8 ♕a3!.

47...♖d8 (47...♖f7 48 ♖e8; 47...♕f7 48 ♕e5) **48 ♖e7 ♗d7?!.**

Too passive. Black should have attacked the d5 pawn: 48...♗b7! with good chances of saving the game.

49 ♕e5 ♖e8 50 ♖xe8 ♗xe8 51 ♕xc7 ♕a3 (accuracy is still required of White) **52 ♗e2 ♕a1 53 ♔g2 ♕a2 54 ♕c4 ♕xc4 55 ♗xc4 ♔g8 56 d6+ ♔f8 57 ♗e6 ♗xh5 58 ♗xf5.** Here the game was cut short. Analysis showed that the bishop endgame is won.

In reply to 39...♔h7! White could have followed the first plan: 40 c5 dxc5 41 bxc5 bxc5 42 ♕e5. Now the counterattack 42...♕f8 43 ♕xc7 ♕f6 disturbs him much less than with the king on f2.

After 42...♕xe5 43 fxe5 ♖xe5 44 ♖xc7 ♖e8 the black king is slightly better placed, and the white king slightly worse, compared with the analogous variations that we have already examined. Therefore the evaluation of the endgame is not so clear. For example,

45 d6 ♗e6 (followed by 46...♖d8) or 45 ♗d1 ♖d8 46 ♗a4 ♗a6 is ineffective. Stronger is 45 ♔f2 ♖d8 46 ♗e2 ♗d7 47 ♗d3!? with an obvious advantage, although there is still no certainty of a win for White.

However, Black can avoid the unpleasant endgame by choosing 42...♕d7! 43 ♕xc7 (43 ♖xc7 ♖xe5 44 ♖xd7 ♖e2+! 45 ♗xe2 ♗xd7) 43...♖e7! 44 ♕xd7 ♖xd7. With the king on the 8th rank White would have pinned the bishop: 45 ♖a8, whereas here this move has no point (45...♗b7) and therefore he has nothing special.

Now let us see what happened in the game.

40 c5! bxc5?!

41 bxc5?!

Both players overlooked 41 b5!?, creating the terrible threat of 42 b6, which also remains in force after 41...♕d8. Black would have had to defend by 41...♕f8 42 ♖xc7 ♖e7.

41 . . . dxc5

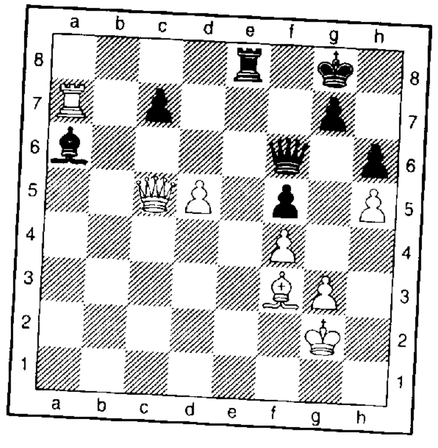
42 ♕a5! ♕f6

43 ♕xc5!

The position arising after 43 ♕xc7 ♗a6! is familiar to us from the variation 39 c5 dxc5 40 bxc5 bxc5 41 ♕e5.

43 . . . ♗a6

84



44 d6!

This is why the position of the king at g8 is important – Black cannot play 44...cxd6? 45 ♕d5+ and 46 ♖xa6. With the king on a different square White would have had to play 44 ♖xc7, and then 44...♖b8 gives Black counterplay.

44 . . . ♕a1!

44...♕b2+ 45 ♕f2 is hopeless for Black.

45 ♕d5+!

If 45 d7? Black would have saved the game by 45...♕f1+ 46 ♔h2 ♖e2+. There was a quite good alternative 45 ♕f2!? cxd6 (45...♗f1+ 46 ♔h2) 46 ♗d5+ ♔h7 47 ♗c4 ♗xc4 (47...♖a8 48 ♗xa6! ♖xa7 49 ♕xa7 ♕a2+ 50 ♔h3 ♕a1 51 ♕b7) 48 ♖xa1 ♖e2 49 ♖a5, but White is aiming for more.

45 . . . ♔h7

46 d7?!

Had Black played 45...♔h8, this move would have gained in strength. But here 46 ♕xf5+ ♔h8 47 ♖xa6! ♕xa6 48 dxc7! ♕c8 49 ♗e4! was simpler.

46 . . . ♕b2+

With the queen on d5, 46...♕f1+ 47 ♔h2 ♖e2+ does not work because of 48 ♗g2!. No better is 46...♗f1+ 47 ♔h2 ♕b2+ 48 ♔g1, and there are two black pieces en prise.

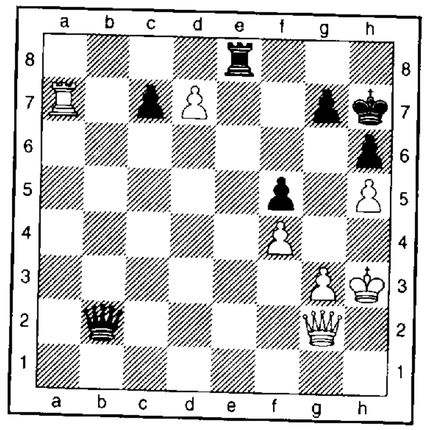
47 ♔h3 ♗f1+

48 ♗g2 ♗xg2+

49 ♕xg2

see next diagram

85



49 . . . ♕xg2+

The exchange of queens leads to a rook ending that is hopeless for Black. He should probably have tried to confuse the opponent with **49...♖e2!?**. Although objectively after **50 ♕h1!** White's position is won, he would have had to display accuracy and resourcefulness.

In reply totally bad is 50...♕d4? 51 ♕c6! – 50...♕d2 and 50...♖d2 must be examined.

1) 50...♖d2 51 ♖a8! (51 ♖xc7? would be a blunder in view of 51...♕b5 with a draw) 51...♕f6 (51...♖xd7 52 ♕c6 ♖d6 53 ♕e8) 52 ♕e1! ♖xd7 (52...♕b2 53 ♕xd2 ♕xd2 54 d8♕; 52...♕c6!? 53 ♕xd2 ♕h1+ 54 ♕h2 ♕xa8 55 ♕g2) 53 ♕e8. In this variation the main idea of the position is strikingly revealed: the role of the d-pawn is not to become a queen – it should divert the enemy pieces from the 2nd rank, enabling White to launch an attack on the opponent's king.

2) After **50...♕d2** White has a choice between 51 ♖a2 and 51 ♖xc7. Simagin thought the first move to be bad in view of 51...♕xa2 52 d8♕ ♕f7!. Indeed, if 53 ♕h4 or 53 ♕f3 there follows 53...♕a2!, and it is not apparent how White can exploit his enormous material advantage – both his queens are too passive. However, he has 53 ♕hd5! ♕xh5+ 54 ♕h4 and wins.

An even more curious situation arises after **51 ♖xc7 ♖f2** (51...♖e4 52 ♕a1! ♖e2 53 ♕xg7+! ♔xg7 54 d8♕+).

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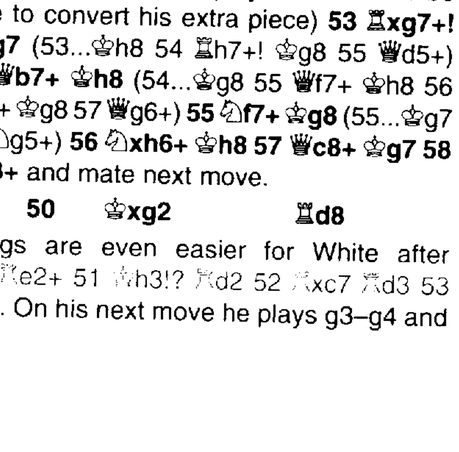


Q 9-11. How should White continue?

The obvious 52 ♖c8? has to be rejected in view of 52...♕e2! (52...♕xd7? 53 ♕a8) 53 ♖h8+ ♔xh8 54 d8♕+ ♔h7 55 ♕h4 (55 ♕dd1 ♖h2+) 55...♔h8 with a draw, as has 52 ♖c2? ♕xc2 53 d8♕ ♕e2 which leads to the same result. Also incorrect is 52 d8♕? (hoping for 52...♕xd8? 53 ♕c6! and wins) 52...♖h2+!! 53 ♕xh2 ♕xh2+ 54 ♔xh2 – stalemate! The only correct solution was found by I.Yanvarev.

52 d8♘!! ♕e2 (52...♕a2!? is more tenacious, but with careful play White should be able to convert his extra piece) **53 ♖xg7+! ♔xg7** (53...♔h8 54 ♖h7+! ♔g8 55 ♕d5+) **54 ♕b7+ ♔h8** (54...♔g8 55 ♕f7+ ♔h8 56 ♕f6+ ♔g8 57 ♕g6+) **55 ♘f7+ ♔g8** (55...♔g7 56 ♘g5+) **56 ♘xh6+ ♔h8 57 ♕c8+ ♔g7 58 ♕g8+** and mate next move.

50 ♔xg2 ♖d8

Things are even easier for White after 50...♖e2+ 51 ♔h3!? ♖d2 52 ♖xc7 ♖d3 53 ♔h4. On his next move he plays g3–g4 and

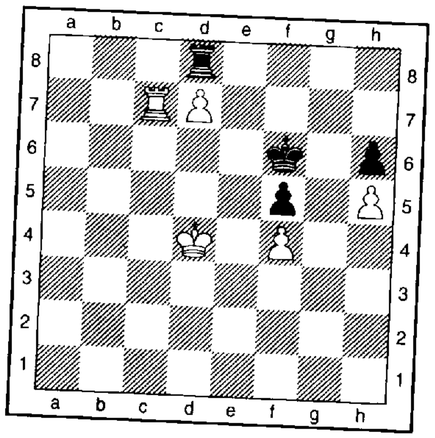
then takes his king to the d-pawn – whereas the black king is tied for ever to the h7 square.

51	**♖xc7**	**g5**
52	**♔f3**	

52 hxg6+ ♔xg6 53 ♔h3 would undoubtedly also have won, but the move in the game is simpler.

52	**. . .**	**♔g7**
53	**♔e3**	**♔f7**
54	**♔d4**	**gxf4**
55	**gxf4**	**♔f6!**

87



A last trap: 56 ♔d5?? ♖xd7+! 57 ♖xd7 – stalemate!

56	**♔c5!**	**♔e7**
57	**♔c6**	**♔e6**
58	**♖b7**	

58 ♖c8 is also good.

58	**. . .**	**♔e7**
59	**♖a7**	**♖b8**
60	**♖a5**	

Black resigns.

Dispute of Equals

Imagination is more important than knowledge.
Albert Einstein

The following little-known game is one of my favourites. It is attractive for the high standard of play, demonstrated by both players, and the unusual, spectacular arguments that were (or could have been) used by them in this dispute.

Unzicker – Larsen
Santa Monica 1966

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘f3**	**♘c6**
3	**d4**	**cxd4**
4	**♘xd4**	**♘f6**
5	**♘c3**	**d6**
6	**♗g5**	**♗d7**
7	**♕d2**	**♘xd4**
8	**♕xd4**	**♗c6**

I like annotating old games for the added reason that usually they diverge very early from modern theory, which means that I don't have to prepare a detailed opening report or describe the latest trends of fashion in the given opening variation. That is also the case here: 6...♗d7 is made rather rarely, and if it is made, then with the idea of playing 7...♖c8 (instead of 7...♘xd4) 8 0–0–0 ♘xd4 9 ♕xd4 ♕a5 and of possibly sacrificing the exchange on c3.

9	**0–0–0**	**♕a5**
10	**h4!?**	

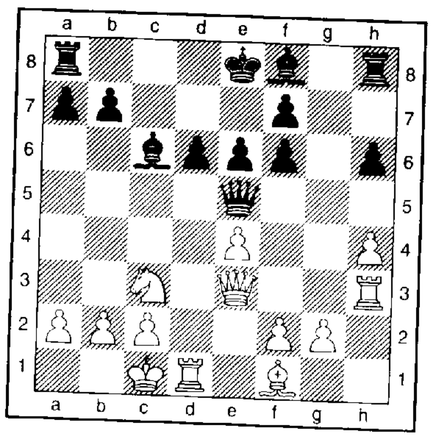
The *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* mentions the game Lukin–I.Ivanov (Leningrad Championship 1974), in which White achieved a definite opening advantage by continuing 10 f4 h6 11 ♗xf6 gxf6 12 ♗c4 ♖g8 13 ♕d2 ♕c5 14 ♗b3 e6 15 f5 ♕e5 16 ♕f2. With the resulting pawn structure the attack on the e6 pawn by f2–f4–f5 is the main plan – in one form or another it has been used in numerous games.

Wolfgang Unzicker carries out another, less standard strategic idea, involving the development of the rook along the 3rd rank. Readers who are familiar with my book *School of Chess Excellence 3 – Strategic Play* will possibly remember that this idea was examined there in the chapter 'Routes for the rook'.

10	**. . .**	**h6**
11	**♗xf6**	**gxf6**
12	**♖h3!**	**♕e5**
13	**♕e3**	**e6?!**

13...h5 is more accurate.

88



The obvious 14 f4 does not promise White

any particular gains after 14...♕c5 (14...♕a5). He can play quietly: 14 ♔b1 or 14 ♗e2, and it also makes sense to prevent the emergence of the black bishop onto the c1–h6 diagonal by 14 h5. So, which of these moves should be made?

By why only of these moves? Have we taken account of all White's resources? After all, ***first a complete list of candidate moves should be compiled, and only then a choice made among them.***

Q 9-12. Find some new and promising possibilities for White.

If we do not ask ourselves such a question, we risk missing all the most interesting that is contained in a position. What precisely? First, the tactical blows 14 ♗b5 and 14 ♘b5, with the idea after the capture on b5 of playing 15 f4. Second, the surprising prophylactic move **14 b4!!**, strengthening the threat of f2–f4, since the black queen is now denied the c5 and a5 squares. Unzicker, annotating the game in the tournament book, considers this last move to be the strongest, and I agree with him.

White is threatening 15 f4 ♕h5 16 ♗e2 ♕g6 17 ♖g3 or 17 g4, after which the queen on the kingside will be shut out of the game and on the remaining part of the board White will gain an overwhelming advantage in force. What can be done to oppose this? **14...f5!? 15 f4 ♕f6** suggests itself, aiming to create counterplay on the a1–h8 diagonal, which has been weakened by b2–b4.

Unzicker gives the variation 16 exf5 ♕xf5 17 g4! ♕xg4 18 b5 ♗d7 19 ♘d5. Let us continue it: 19...♔d8 20 ♕c3, and now:

(a) 20...♗g7? 21 ♕c7+ ♔e8 22 ♖e3 and Black has no defence.

(b) 20...exd5!? 21 ♕f6+ (21 ♕xh8 ♕xf4+ 22 ♔b1 ♗xh3 23 ♕xf8+ ♔c7 24 ♕xa8 ♕b4+ with perpetual check) 21...♔e8 22 ♖e3+ ♗e6 23 ♕xh8 ♕xf4 24 ♕d4 ♕xd4 25 ♖xd4 ♗g7 with an unclear ending (if 26 ♖xd5, then 26...♗e5).

(c) 20...♕g7!? 21 ♕c7+ (21 ♕a5+? b6 22 ♘xb6 ♕a1+ 23 ♔d2 ♕d4+) 21...♔e8 22 ♖g3!? (22 ♕xb7 ♖c8) 22...♕xg3 (22...♕a1+ is also possible) 23 ♘f6+ ♔e7 24 ♕xd6+ (there is nothing better) 24...♔xf6 25 ♕e5+ ♔e7 (25...♔g6? 26 f5+) 26 ♕d6+ and things end in perpetual check.

Thus the variation suggested by Unzicker does not give an advantage. White has available a far more effective way of conducting the attack.

16 e5! dxe5 17 ♘b5 ♗xb4 (17...♕e7 18 ♕xe5 is little better) **18 ♘c7+ ♔f8** (18...♔e7 19 fxe5 is equally hopeless) **19 fxe5 ♕e7 20 ♘xa8 ♔g7 21 ♕xa7** with a decisive advantage.

Let us think about why spectacular combinations give joy both to ordinary chess enthusiasts, and to experienced grandmasters. The point is that, in sacrificing material, a player acts against the routine, and against the most important thing to which we become accustomed from our first steps in chess – the customary correlation in the strength of the pieces. And, in fact, unconventionality, originality is one of the most important criteria of beauty in all aspects of life.

In our consciousness there also exist numerous other stereotypes, the rejection of which may be no less unexpected and beautiful, than the deliberate disruption of the material balance. Have you often seen a pawn advancing in front of its own king, seemingly hopelessly weakening its protection and in so doing not even attacking anything? I know very few examples of this sort and therefore the move 14 b4!! seems to me to be exceptionally beautiful. Any grandmaster would be proud of it, on finding it at the board.

In order for you to develop the ability to think non-routinely, it is useful to analyse games with an unusual pattern of play, and to solve appropriate exercises. But from where should

they be taken? For my pupils this is not a problem – I have accumulated in my card index much excellent material of this sort. But what can I advise to the readers? Look at the games of players with an unusual, dynamic style of play. In the field of tactics, there is, of course, Mikhail Tal, and of the young grandmasters – Alexey Shirov. In strategy – Victor Korchnoi, Bent Larsen, Leonid Stein, Jonathon Speelman... Also interesting and instructive can be the games of players of a slightly lower rank, for example, such unusual players as Bukhuti Gurgenidze, Duncan Suttles and Julian Hodgson. But remember, first, that you should study well-annotated games, and second, that the solutions that interest you should be not only original, but at the same time also very strong (like 14 b4!!). To play originally and weakly is not difficult – everyone is capable of this.

14 ♗b5!?

Also quite a strong move, setting the opponent difficult problems. 14 ♘b5, in my view, is less convincing. True, it is unfavourable for Black to take the knight: 14...♗xb5? 15 f4 ♕h5 16 g4 ♕xg4 17 ♗xb5+ ♔d8 (17...♔e7 18 ♖xd6!) 18 ♖g1 ♕h5 19 f5! (with the threat of 20 ♗e2) etc. However, after 14...♔d7!? the vulnerability of the central e4 pawn is felt.

14 . . . ♖g8!

A cool defence. The move f2–f4, which cannot be prevented, will create weaknesses in White's position on the g-file and Larsen wants to exploit them. He would have had a difficult position after 14...♗xb5? 15 f4 ♕h5 (15...♕c5 16 ♕xc5 dxc5 17 ♘xb5 ♔e7?! 18 ♖hd3) 16 g4 ♕xg4 17 ♘xb5 (apart from anything else, 18 ♖g1 ♕h5 19 f5 is threatened).

15 f4 ♕c5

Q 9-13. What do you think, should White exchange queens?

The question is a rather difficult one. After 16 ♕xc5 dxc5 17 ♗xc6+ bxc6 Black's pawn structure is broken. If White can successfully consolidate, he will gain a great positional advantage. But does he have time to do this? His g2 pawn is attacked – now it is clear why it was necessary to place the rook on g8. If 18 ♖d2 (with the idea of ♖hd3), then either 18...♖d8, or 18...♖g4, and Black has sufficient counterplay. Another possibility is 18 g3!?, intending ♘e2 and ♖hh1. The opponent replies 18...h5! (18...c4 19 ♖d4 is inferior) 19 ♘e2 e5!?, intending ...♗h6, ...♖g4 and ...c5–c4. I analysed the resulting situation and came to the conclusion that White does not have time to set about the technical exploitation of the pluses of his position. The middlegame promises him more.

16 ♕e2! a6?!

16...h5! was preferable, immediately taking control of the important g4 square.

17 ♗xc6+ bxc6

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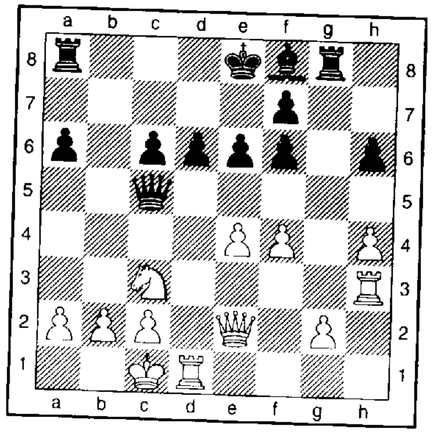

Now White had available the simple and strong move 18 g4!, getting rid of his backward pawn on the g-file. Unzicker preferred another solution: to try and breach the enemy defences immediately.

18 e5

Q 9-14. Evaluate the move made in the game.

The terrible threat of 19 ♘e4 has been created. If 18...d5 there follows 19 exf6 (19 f5!? also comes into consideration), intending f4–f5 or g2–g4–g5, for example: 19...♖g6 20 g4 ♖xf6 21 f5 ♗d6 22 ♔b1, or 19...♗d6 20 f5 e5 21 ♘e4!? (21 ♖hd3! with the threats of 22 ♘xd5 and 22 ♘e4) 21...dxe4 22 ♖c3 ♕b5 23 ♕xb5 axb5 24 ♖xd6 – everywhere Black's position is difficult due to the chronic vulnerability of his king.

18 . . . f5!

Had Unzicker not foreseen anything concrete here and played, say, 19 exd6 ♗xd6, then the move 18 e5 would have to be deemed anti-positional, since it has led to a marked worsening of White's pawn formation. But the grandmaster had in mind a spectacular tactical blow.

19 g4!!

Q 9-15. How should Black defend?

If 19...fxg4? or 19...♖xg4?, then 20 ♘e4! is decisive. Also unsuitable is 19...d5? 20 gxf5 exf5 21 ♕d3 with advantage to White.

19 . . . ♕b4!

In attacking the f4 pawn, the queen moves out of range of the tempo move ♘e4.

20 ♕f3!

The sharp 20 gxf5 ♕xf4+ 21 ♔b1 (hoping for 21...♕xf5? 22 ♕c4) would hardly have promised White any advantage – the opponent replies 21...d5 or 21...♕xe5.

20 . . . d5

21 gxf5

Q 9-16. What should Black play?

He loses immediately after 21...exf5? 22 ♘xd5! cxd5 23 ♕xd5.

21 . . . ♖b8!

An essential interposition. Now 22 fxe6?! ♕xb2+ 23 ♔d2 ♗b4! leads to an unclear position.

22 b3 exf5

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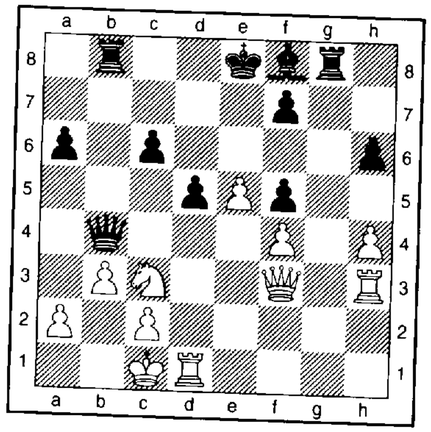

Black has managed to avoid being immediately crushed, but all the same he stands markedly worse. It can be concluded that the pretty breakthrough 18 e5! f5! 19 g4!! has justified itself (although the simple move 18 g4! was possibly even stronger).

Now the sacrifice on d5 does not work. The most natural plan is to play the knight to d4.

Q 9-17. Evaluate 23 ♘e2.

If Black replies to 23 ♘e2 with 23...♗c5?, then after 24 ♖g3 (24 c4!?) 24...♔e7 25 ♖xg8 ♖xg8 26 ♘g3 he runs into great difficulties. Only 23...♕e4! is correct. In the endgame after 24 ♕xe4 fxe4 Black is alright, while 24 ♘d4? even loses: 24...♗a3+ 25 ♔b1 ♖g1!! 26 ♖xg1 ♕xd4 27 ♖g8+ ♔e7 28 c3 ♕d2. A draw results from 24 ♕c3 ♗a3+ 25 ♔b1 ♕xe2 26 ♕xc6+ ♔f8 27 ♕xh6+ ♔e7 28 ♕f6+ ♔f8. An ending that is hard to evaluate arises after 24 ♖d4 ♖g1+!? 25 ♔b2 ♕xf3 26 ♖xf3 ♖h1 27 ♖a4 ♖b6 28 ♘g3 ♖xh4.

Unzicker found a way of preparing the knight manoeuvre to d4.

23 ♖g3!? ♖g4!

24 ♘e2 h5!?

White wanted to take twice on g4. 24...♖xh4 25 ♘d4 (25 ♖g8) is risky for Black. Therefore Larsen simply supports the rook with his pawn, reconciling himself to the appearance of the knight on d4.

Q 9-18. Evaluate 24...♕e4.

It is clear that this is a less favourable situation for exchanging queens, than after the immediate 23 ♘e2. But the middlegame is also extremely dangerous for Black, and therefore it is worth checking carefully the ending that arises after 24...♕e4!? 25 ♕xe4 dxe4 26 ♖xg4 fxg4.

Unzicker suggests 27 ♖d4 ♖d8 28 ♖xd8+ ♔xd8 29 ♔d2, but after 29...♗c5 30 ♘g3 ♗f2 31 ♘xe4 (31 ♘f5 g3 32 ♔e2 ♔d7, and 33 ♘xh6? ♗c5 34 ♔f1 e3 is bad for White) 31...♗xh4 Black's position is not worse.

If 27 ♘g3 Black does not reply 27...e3? 28 ♖d3, but 27...♗c5! 28 ♔d2 (28 ♘xe4 ♗e3+ 29 ♔b1 ♗xf4 30 ♘f6+ ♔e7) 28...♖d8+ 29 ♔e2 ♖xd1 30 ♔xd1 ♗e3 31 ♘xe4 (31 ♘h5 f5!?) 31...♗xf4 32 ♘f6+ ♔e7 33 ♘xg4 ♔e6! (but not 33...h5 34 ♘f6 ♗xe5 35 ♘xh5 followed by ♔e2–f3) 34 ♔e2 ♗xe5 (or 34...h5 35 ♘f6 ♗g3! 36 ♘xh5 ♗xh4), and in the event of 35 ♘xh6 f5 White has to sacrifice his knight.

It can be concluded that the endgame is most probably drawn, which means that the exchange of queens is justified.

25 ♘d4 ♖b6

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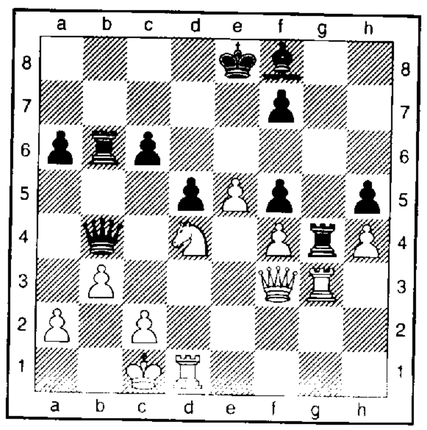


It was here, in Unzicker's opinion, that White threw away his advantage. He thinks that he should have broken through on the e-file by 26 e6 ♕a3+ 27 ♔b1 ♗g7 (an attempt at a counterattack against the white king) 28 ♕e3.

Q 9-19. Calculate the consequences of the variation suggested by him.

Things appear to be bad for Black: 28...c5 29 exf7+ ♔xf7 30 ♖e1, and if 30...♗xd4?, then 31 ♕e8+ ♔f6 32 ♕f8+ (32 ♕d8+) 32...♔g6 33 ♖xg4+ hxg4 (33...fxg4 34 f5+) 34 h5+. The grandmaster overlooked the spectacular rejoinder 30...♕b2+!! 31 ♔xb2 ♗xd4+ 32 ♕xd4 cxd4 with an unclear endgame.

Q 9-20. Can the opponent's play in this variation be improved?

Yes, it can. Instead of 28 ♕e3? White plays either 28 ♖xg4! hxg4 29 exf7+ ♔xf7 30 ♕d3! ♗xd4 31 ♕xd4, or 28 exf7+ ♔xf7 29 ♖xg4! ♗xd4!? 30 ♖xd4 hxg4 31 ♕d3 – in both cases with an obvious advantage.

But earlier Black's play was not the best. He should not have launched an immediate counterattack (26...♕a3+? 27 ♔b1 ♗g7). Even worse was the transposition of moves: 26...♗g7? 27 ♘xf5 ♕a3+ 28 ♔d2 and White wins. 26...fxe6?! 27 ♖xg4 fxg4 28 ♕e3 is dangerous for Black, while if 26...♗c5?!, then 27 ♘xf5 fxe6 28 ♘g7+ followed by 29 ♘xh5 or 29 ♖xg4 is strong.

Black should make the consolidating move 26...♕d6!, strengthening the position of his king and attacking the f4 pawn. After 27 exf7+ ♔xf7 28 ♘xf5 ♕xf4+ 29 ♔b1! ♕xf3 30 ♖xf3 ♔e8! (but not 30...♔g8? 31 ♘e3!) 31 ♖e1+ ♔d7 32 ♘g3 ♗a3 Black has the right to count on a draw.

The conclusion: the e5–e6 breakthrough is not so strong. In the game Unzicker played better.

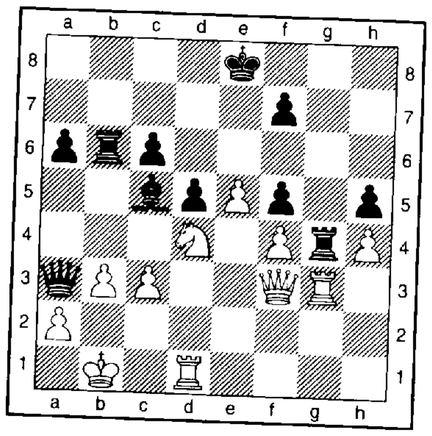
26 ♔b1! ♗c5

27 c3

Not 27 ♘xc6? ♖xc6 28 ♕xd5 ♕b6. Nothing special would have been given by 27 ♘xf5 ♕xf4.

27 . . . ♕a3

92



Q 9-21. What should White play?

As we will soon see, the capture on f5 that occurred in the game does not give White any advantage. But what else could he have done?

In the event of 28 e6?! ♗xd4 29 exf7+ ♔xf7 30 cxd4 ♕e7 (or 30...♕d6) Black would have been excellently placed.

The knight sacrifice on c6 is sufficient only for a draw: 28 ♘xc6?! ♖xg3 29 ♕xd5 ♔f8 30 ♕d8+ ♔g7 31 ♕f6+ ♔h7 32 ♕xf7+ ♖g7 33 ♕xf5+ ♔h6 (33...♔g8 34 ♕e6+) 34 ♕f6+ ♔h7.

The only way to play for a win was by the unexpected exchange of rooks, with the aim of freeing the white queen for active play (we have already seen this idea in one of the variations examined earlier). And so, 28 ♖xg4! fxg4 (or 28...hxg4) 29 ♕d3 ♗xd4 30 ♕xd4 (30 cxd4 a5 would seem to be less good). In the heavy piece ending White has a clear advantage, since his king is much better protected. The threat of opening lines by e5–e6 hangs over the black position like a Sword of Damocles.

28 ♘xf5?!

Q 9-22. Does the rook sacrifice on b3 work?

The rook sacrifice 28...♖xb3+! 29 axb3 ♕xb3+ 30 ♔c1 ♕a2! (with the threat of 31...♗a3 mate) was possible. In the event of 31 ♖d3 Black saves himself with the unexpected 31...♗f2!!, after which the king can no longer hide from the checks at e2 in view of ...♕e1 mate. After 31 ♖d2 ♗a3+ 32 ♔d1 ♕b1+ the knight at f5 is en prise, while if 31 ♘d6+ ♔f8 32 ♖d2, then 32...♕a1+ 33 ♔c2 ♕a4+ 34 ♔b1 (34 ♔d3 ♗xd6 35 exd6?? ♖xg3 36 ♕xg3 ♕e4 mate) 34...♖xg3 35 ♕xg3 ♕b3+ 36 ♖b2 ♕d1+ with perpetual check.

28 . . . a5!

The move made by Larsen is by no means weaker. White has no direct threats (in the event of the double capture on g4 there follows the rook sacrifice on b3), and this means that Black has time to strengthen his position, by creating the threat of 29...a4. For example, 29 ♘d4 ♗xd4 30 ♖xd4 a4 31 b4 ♖xg3 32 ♕xg3 c5 33 ♕g8+ (33 ♖xd5?? ♖xb4+; 33 e6 fxe6) 33...♔e7 34 ♕g5+ ♔e8 and either White or Black will inevitably give perpetual check.

After checking these variations, Unzicker realised that his advantage had been lost and he reconciled himself to a draw.

29	**♘d6+**	**♔f8**
30	**♖xg4**	**hxg4**
31	**♕xg4**	**♖xb3+**
32	**axb3**	**♕xb3+**
33	**♔a1**	**♕xc3+**
34	**♔b1**	**♕b3+**
35	**♔a1**	**♕a3+**
36	**♔b1**	**♕b3+**
37	**♔a1**	**♕a3+**
38	**♔b1**	

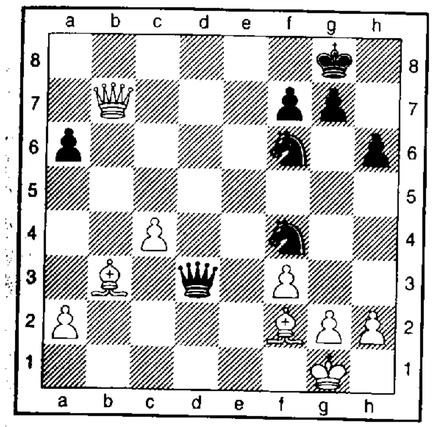
Draw.

A fascinating battle, in which both sides played almost faultlessly and were worthy of each other!

In the analysis of this game you were invited to solve quite a number of tactical exercises. Even so, I should like to add a couple more.

E 9-2

93

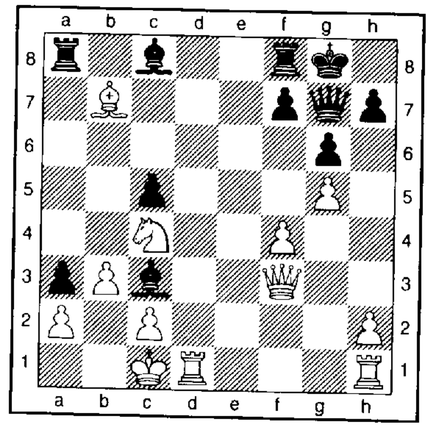


White to move

Which is stronger, 29 h3 or 29 ♕b4 ?

E 9-3

94



Black to move

A Desperate Struggle for the Initiative

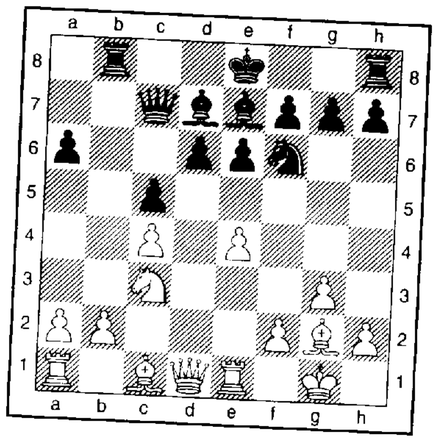
We think in generalities,
we live in details.
Alfred North Whitehead

Dvoretsky – Tseitlin
Moscow Championship 1972

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘f3**	**e6**
3	**♘c3**	**a6**
4	**d4**	**cxd4**
5	**♘xd4**	**d6**
6	**g3**	**♗d7**
7	**♗g2**	**♘c6**
8	**0–0**	**♕c7**
9	**♖e1**	

The white player's opening knowledge in the given variation was very modest. I knew the plan of action after 9...♘f6, which at that time was (and, probably still is) considered the strongest: 10 ♘xc6 bxc6 (10...♗xc6? 11 ♘d5!) 11 ♘a4 ♖b8 12 c4 c5 13 ♘c3 ♗e7.

95



14 ♗f4!? (a recommendation of Boleslavsky)

14...e5 (otherwise 15 e5) 15 ♗c1! 0–0 16 b3. By provoking ...e6–e5, White has achieved an enduring positional advantage. Black has to guard the d5 square against the invasion of the knight, whereas it is a very long way for his knight to reach the analogous d4 square. With his next move (f2–f4) White will begin an offensive on the kingside, whereas the counterplay with ...a6–a5–a4, which is usual for this pawn structure, does not succeed. If Black plays ...a6–a5, there follows a2–a4! and then ♘b5.

9	**. . .**	**♗e7**
10	**♘xc6**	**bxc6**

10...♗xc6 is probably preferable. I was intending to reply 11 ♕g4!? h5! 12 ♕e2, hindering the opponent's castling, but it is not clear whether White has any advantage in this variation.

11 ♘a4?!

Without thinking for long, White carries out the arrangement of the forces that is familiar to him. Meanwhile, much more dangerous for the opponent was 11 e5! dxe5 12 ♕h5 ♘f6 (there is nothing better) 13 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 14 ♖xe5, and Black has to defend a rather unpleasant ending (Motwani–Plaskett, Edinburgh 1983).

The temporary pawn sacrifice e4–e5! is not an accidental chance, but a typical procedure in such positions. As evidence, here are a couple more examples on the same theme.

In the branch examined above 9...♘f6 10

♘xc6 bxc6 Fischer against Nicevski (Rovinj/Zagreb 1970) did not play 11 ♘a4, but 11 b3!? ♗e7 12 e5! dxe5 13 ♗b2 0–0 14 ♕e2 ♘d5 15 ♘xd5 exd5 16 ♗xe5 ♗d6 17 ♗xd6 ♕xd6 18 c4 ♗e6 19 ♖ad1 and he achieved the better position.

I once analysed the following variation of the Sicilian Defence: 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 ♗b5 e6 4 0–0 ♘ge7 5 ♖e1 a6 6 ♗xc6 ♘xc6 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♘xd4 d6 9 ♘xc6 bxc6 10 ♕g4 ♕f6 (10...e5 11 ♕g3 ♗e6 is preferable).

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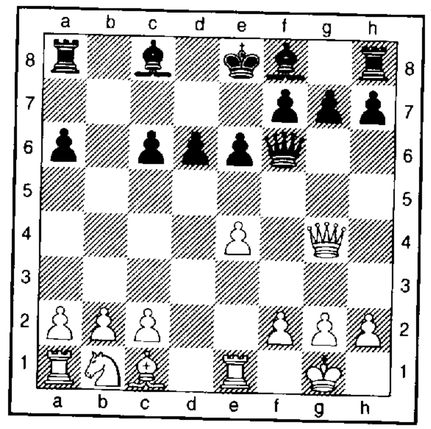

The only way for White to retain the initiative is the pawn sacrifice 11 e5! dxe5 12 ♕c4 ♗d7 (12...♕d8!?) 13 ♘c3 followed by ♗e3, ♘e4 and ♖ad1.

11 . . . ♖b8

Black is obliged to move his rook (to here, or to d8), in order to meet c2–c4 with ...c6–c5. Otherwise White himself will advance his pawn to c5.

12	**c4**	**c5**
13	**♘c3**	

13 ♗f4!? should have been seriously considered. If Black parries the threat of e4–e5 by 13...e5, then 14 ♗c1 (or 14 ♗d2) leads to the pattern of play, advantageous to White, that we have already discussed. 13...g5 should be answered not by 14 ♗e3 (because of 14...♗f6 followed by 15...♘e7), but 14 ♗d2! ♗f6 15 ♗c3.

For Black I can recommend 13...♕a5! 14 b3 ♗xa4 15 bxa4 e5 16 ♗d2 ♕c7, and the position remains unclear. If 17 ♕g4 he has the worthy reply 17...h5! (weaker is 17...♗f6 18 ♖ab1 with the unpleasant threat of 19 ♗a5!).

13 . . . ♗f6!

13...♘f6 would have transposed into a theoretical position already familiar to us. The continuation chosen by Mikhail Tseitlin is stronger and more logical.

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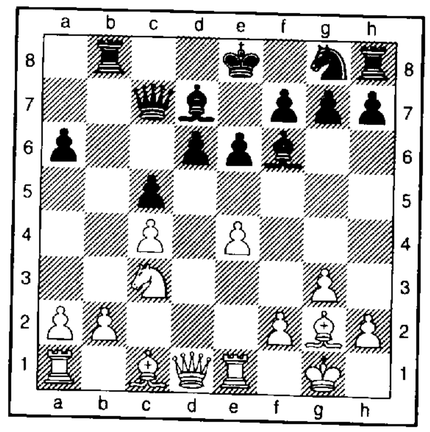


Q 9-23. What should White play?

It immediately became clear to me: I had to undertake something, to change at any cost the pattern of the position. If events develop quietly, Black's position will be, if not better, than at least more promising. His immediate moves are obvious: ...♘e7, ...0–0 and ...♘c6 with the occupation of the important central square d4. Whereas for White it is not so easy to decide on a sensible program of action.

A few months later I again played the very same variation, but this time with Black. My opponent did not sense the strategic danger of his position, made an indifferent move

and soon ran into serious difficulties. The result was a textbook positional game.

Ludolf–Dvoretsky (Viljandi 1972): **14 ♕c2? ♘e7 15 ♗e3 ♘c6 16 ♖ad1 0–0 17 ♕d2 ♗d4 18 b3 ♖fd8.** Black is ready to exchange bishops on e3, which did not work here in view of 19 fxe3, winning the d6 pawn.

19 ♘e2 e5 20 h3?!. 20 ♘c3 really was better, when I was intending 20...♗xc3 21 ♕xc3 ♘d4.

20...a5. As you already know, the advance of the a-pawn is a standard plan for Black with this pawn structure.

21 ♗xd4 ♘xd4!?. I thought it useful to exchange knights, since otherwise from c1 the white knight would have defended the queenside pawns and at a convenient moment would have moved to the good blockading square d3. The opponent cannot reply 22 ♘c3? on account of 22...♗xh3!.

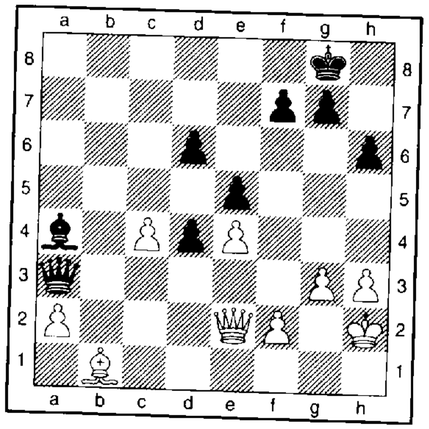
22 ♘xd4 cxd4 23 ♗f1 ♕c5 24 ♖b1 ♖b7 25 ♔h2?!. 25 ♖b2 ♖db8 26 ♖eb1 was more tenacious, hindering ...a5–a4.

25...♖db8 26 ♗d3 h6. The principle 'do not hurry' in action! White can no longer prevent the breakthrough on the queenside, but before carrying it out it is useful, just in case, to safeguard the king.

27 ♖ec1 a4 28 bxa4 ♗xa4 29 ♕e2 ♕a3 30 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 31 ♖b1 ♖xb1 32 ♗xb1.

see next diagram

98



Q 9-24. How can Black strengthen his position?

Two black pieces are attacking the queenside, and two white pieces defending it. With this balance of force it is not possible to win material, and that means that the king, which up till now has remained in reserve, must be included in the offensive. On arriving on the queenside it will decisively disrupt the balance in Black's favour.

32...♔f8! 33 ♗d3 ♔e7 34 ♔g2 ♔d8 35 ♔f1 (35 ♕d2 ♕c3!) **35...♕c3 36 ♕f3.** This leads to loss of material, but everything else was equally hopeless.

36...♗c2 37 ♔e2 ♕b2 38 ♕xf7 ♗b1+ 39 ♔f3 ♗xd3. White resigns.

What then can White do, to avoid conceding the initiative? 14 ♗f4 suggests itself, but then the opponent has a choice between 14...♗d4 15 ♘e2 e5 16 ♘xd4 cxd4, and the perhaps even stronger 14...♗e5! 15 ♗xe5 dxe5, as in the game Suetin–Zikiki (Tunis 1977). The resulting position, in my view, is not in White's favour – he has a bad bishop and his d4 square is weak.

If 14 ♕h5 (with the idea of 14...♘e7 15 ♗g5) Black replies 14...♗d4!.

14 f4! ♗d4+

14...♘e7? is a mistake in view of 15 e5! dxe5 16 fxe5 (16 ♘e4 is also strong) 16...♗xe5 17 ♖xe5! ♕xe5 18 ♗f4 ♕d4+ 19 ♕xd4 cxd4 20 ♗xb8 dxc3 21 b3! and, after regaining the c3 pawn, White achieves an obvious advantage in the endgame.

It perhaps made sense for Black to play 14...♗xc3!? 15 bxc3 ♘e7, but this possibility did not concern me, since here the problem of the d4 square no longer exists.

15 ♗e3!

The sacrifice of the b2 pawn is a necessary consequence of White's previous move, since 15 ♔h1? ♘e7 would have preserved the type of position that I wanted to avoid.

15 . . . ♗xe3+

Tseitlin accepts the challenge. After 15...♖xb2 16 ♗xd4 cxd4 17 ♕xd4 ♕c5(b6) the resulting endgame is difficult for Black in view of his lag in development. If 15... ♕b6(a7) there follows 16 e5! dxe5 17 fxe5 and 18 ♘e4, greatly sharpening the position.

16 ♖xe3 ♖xb2

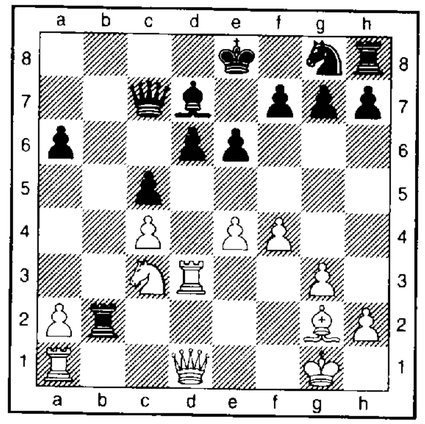
Now White has a choice between 17 ♖d3 and 17 ♕g4. Without much thought I made the move that seemed more logical.

17 ♖d3

In reply to 17 ♕g4 bad is 17...g6? 18 ♖d1 ♘e7 (the complications after 18...♗c6 19 ♖ed3 ♘h6 20 ♕h4 ♘f5 21 exf5 ♖xg2+ 22 ♔f1 0–0 23 ♖xd6 are in my favour) 19 ♕g5, and if 19...♘c6 or 19...♗c6, then 20 ♘d5!. Much stronger is 17...♔f8! 18 ♖d1 ♘e7 (18...♘f6!? 19 ♕h4 ♗c6) 19 ♖ed3 d5! (but not the passive 19...♘c8? 20 e5 ♗c6 21 ♗e4 with advantage to White).

see next diagram

99



Q 9-25. What should Black play?

The d6 pawn is attacked. After 17...♔e7 the move 18 ♕g4 (with the threats of 19 ♕xg7 and 19 ♖ad1) gains in strength – after all, the g7 pawn is best defended by the king. But if 17...♖b6, then the queen can be developed not only at g4, but also at d2 followed by ♖d1 with terrible pressure on the d-file. Now you will understand why it was the rook move that I chose. And it would indeed have led to me seizing the initiative, had it not been for my opponent's excellent reply.

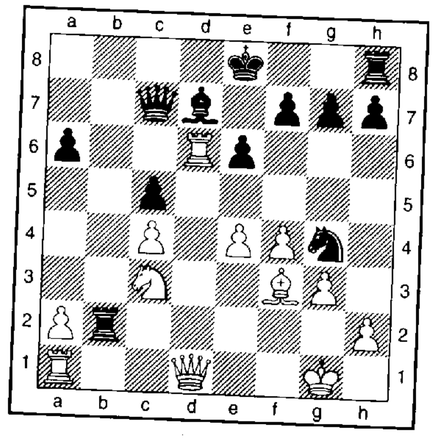
17 . . . ♘f6!

It turns out that the pawn does not have to be defended! If 18 ♖xd6 there follows 18...♘g4! (but not, of course, 18...♘d5? 19 ♖xd7), and what can White do? 19...♘e3 or 19...♖xg2+ is threatened, and 19 ♖d3? ♘f2, 19 ♕xg4? ♕xd6 20 ♖d1 ♖d2, or 19 ♖xd7? ♕xd7 20 ♕xg4 ♕d4+ is hopeless for White. After 19 ♖d2 ♘e3 20 ♕e2 ♖xd2 21 ♕xd2 Black does not even need to ponder over the capture of the c4 pawn – the simple 21...♘xg2 and 22...♗c6 (22...0–0) guarantees him an enduring initiative for the entire remaining part of the game, since his bishop is markedly stronger than the knight, and the white king's defences are weakened. After

analysing these variations, I rejected 18 ♖xd6.

Later in analysis I found the best defensive resource for White: 19 ♗f3!.

100



Of course, the opponent can immediately force a draw by 19...♘f2 20 ♕c1 ♘h3+ 21 ♔h1 ♘f2+, but can he hope for more?

19...♘xh2? 20 ♗e2 ♖xe2 (forced) 21 ♘xe2 ♘f3+ 22 ♔f2 ♘d4 23 ♖xa6;

19...♘e3? 20 ♕d3;

19...h5?! 20 ♖xa6! (weaker is 20 e5?! ♘xh2 21 ♗e2 ♘g4);

19...♘f2 20 ♕c1 ♕xd6!? (20...♘h3+ 21 ♔h1 ♖f2?! 22 ♖d3 with the threat of 23 ♗g2) 21 ♕xb2 ♘d3 22 ♕d2 ♕d4+ 23 ♔f1 (or 23 ♔g2 ♘xf4+ 24 ♕xf4 ♕xc3 25 ♖d1) 23...e5!? 24 ♖d1 with unclear consequences.

It appears that everywhere White holds on, but this becomes clear only as a result of a detailed analysis. But in a practical game one goes in for a position in which, with a guaranteed draw, the opponent has a mass of tempting possibilities, only if there is a complete absence of any sensible alternative. In the given instance things are not yet so bad for White, although it is not easy for him to choose the correct path.

The cautious 18 ♗f3 ♗e7 followed by 19...♖hb8 did not impress at all. If 18 ♕f3 (with the idea of 19 ♖ad1) I did not like the reply 18...e5!?. for example, 19 f5 ♗c6 20 ♖ad1 ♔e7 21 ♖xd6 ♕xd6 22 ♖xd6 ♔xd6, or 21 g4 h6 22 h4 ♘e8 and Black's position is preferable. In this variation White should not block the position with f4–f5 – 19 h3!? is stronger. The move ♖ad1 can also be prepared by playing the queen to another square: 18 ♕e1!?. White would appear to retain quite good compensation for the sacrificed pawn, but not more.

I found another, more dynamic way to fight for the initiative.

18 ♕c1!?

The idea of this move is to evict the bothersome rook from the second rank and then place all the heavy pieces on the d-file.

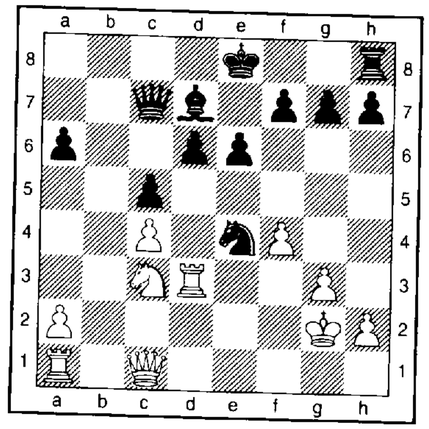
Q 9-26. How should Black continue?

In the event of 18...♖b6 19 ♕d2 and 20 ♖d1 White has an easy game. If 18...♕b8 there follows 19 ♗f3 (but not 19 e5 dxe5 20 fxe5 ♘g4) 19...♗c6?! 20 ♘b5!. My opponent decided to go for the c4 pawn, having in mind the advantageous variation 18...♖b4 19 ♕d2 ♖xc4 20 ♖xd6 ♖xc3 21 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 22 ♕xc3 0–0, but it was precisely here that I had something prepared.

To avoid conceding the initiative, Black should have decided on 18...♖xg2+! 19 ♔xg2 ♘xe4 (19...♗c6 is also possible, considering that after 20 ♕e3 ♘xe4 21 ♘d5 exd5 22 cxd5 f5 23 dxc6 ♕xc6 the two pawns and centralised knight more than compensate for the white rook).

see next diagram

101



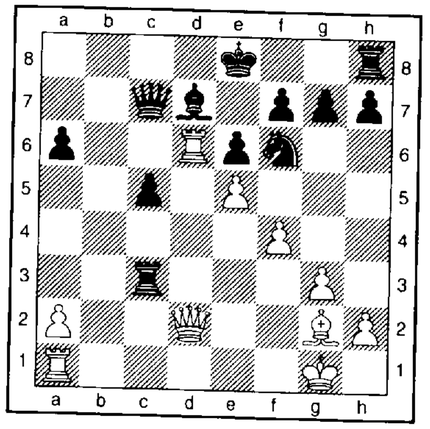
I have to admit that during the game I did not notice this exchange sacrifice. When many years later grandmaster Viorel Bologan drew my attention to it, I initially believed that in this way Black gains the advantage, and that hence my move 18 ♕c1 was objectively bad. Now I no longer think this – after all, White too has his chances. It is important only not to go in for passive defence.

Counterplay can be sought only on the queenside, on the b-file, However, the direct 20 ♕b2 ♗c6 21 ♔g1 (or 20 ♔g1 ♗c6 21 ♕b2) is refuted by 21...♘xc3 22 ♖xc3 ♗a8! (after 22...0–0 23 ♖b1 and 24 ♕b6 White's idea would have been justified) 23 ♖b1 ♕c6!. Therefore correct is 20 ♘xe4 ♗c6 21 ♖e3 f5 22 ♕a3!? ♗xe4+ 23 ♔g1, intending ♕xa6 and ♖b3.

18	**...**	**♖b4?!**
19	**♕d2**	**♖xc4**
20	**♖xd6**	**♖xc3**
21	**e5!**	

see next diagram

102



An unpleasant surprise! The piece is regained and Black's one or two extra pawns are of no significance – the position becomes too sharp. When I began this entire operation, it stands to reason that I could not, and did not try, to calculate the variations accurately. It was sufficient to sense intuitively that the problems that my opponent would have to face were difficult, and that all three results were now possible.

21 . . . ♘d5?!

At first sight, logical – Black avoids the spoiling of his pawn structure on the kingside. But abstract logic is not suitable for such a sharp situation – everything is decided by concrete calculation. Now the rook at c3 finds itself in a difficult position.

Let us consider 21...♖c4 22 exf6 gxf6 23 ♖d1. What do you think about this position?

I believe that objectively the chances are roughly equal here. Even with the cautious 23...♖d4 24 ♖xd4 cxd4 25 ♕xd4 e5! (but not 25...♗b5? 26 a4! ♗e2 27 ♖d2 ♗g4 28 ♗c6+ ♔f8 29 ♕xf6) 26 ♖e1 0–0 27 fxe5 fxe5 28 ♖xe5 ♕c1+ Black gains a draw. 23...♗a4!? is more interesting, hoping for 24 ♖d8+? ♔e7 25 ♖xh8 ♖d4!. However, White has an excellent counter: 24 ♗c6+!! ♔f8 (bad is 24...♗xc6? 25 ♖xc6) 25 ♗xa4 ♖xa4 26 f5! with unclear complications.

22 ♗xd5

Now the rook has only the a3 square available. But after 22...♖a3 23 ♗b3 it is no longer easy to make the next move. If 23...c4, then White has a good choice between 24 ♕b4 and 24 ♗xc4 (22...♕xc4? 25 ♖c1 ♕b5 26 ♖c8+!), while after 23...♗b5 there follows 24 f5! (with the threats of 25 ♕g5 and 25 fxe6), for example, 24...c4 25 ♕g5! cxb3 26 ♖ad1 ♕c5+? 27 ♖1d4 0–0 28 f6 g6 29 ♕h6 with unavoidable mate. But Black can save himself, if he finds the only defence: 26...♔f8! 27 ♖d8+ ♗e8 28 ♖1d7 ♕c5+ with perpetual check.

22 . . . ♕a5?

'In sharp Sicilian positions a single error can have far-reaching consequences' (John Nunn).

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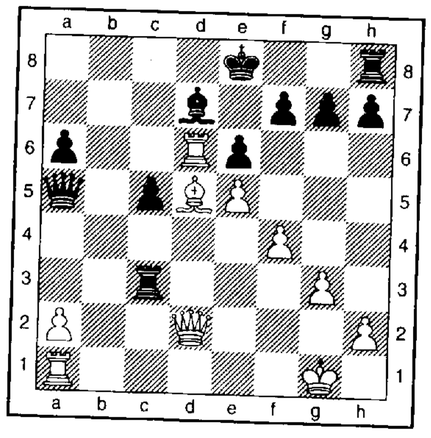

It should be said that the game was of great competitive importance for both players and we were both very excited. At such moments there is often an invisible psychological contact with your opponent, and you begin to sense his mood, intentions and hopes. As soon as Tseitlin placed his queen on a5, it became clear to me that he was hoping to play ...♖xg3+. I immediately realised that I could catch him in a trap and therefore I made my next move practically without any calculation.

23 ♖xd7?!

The next move was made instantly and was met by an equally instant reply.

23 . . . ♖xg3+?

24 ♗g2!

And praised be rashness for it... let us know
Our indiscretion sometime serves us well,
When our deep plots do pall...
(William Shakespeare)

Black resigns.

Later, when I had calmed down after this exciting encounter, I again set up the pieces and realised that in the position in the last diagram there was no need for any psychological traps. The game would have been won by force in two moves: 23 ♗g2! (threatening 24 ♖xd7; if 23...♗a4, then 24 ♖d3 is decisive) 23...♗b5 24 a4! with the irresistible threat of 25 ♖a3 (24 ♖b1!, intending 25 ♖b3, is equally good).

In reply to 23 ♖xd7?!, 23...exd5? 24 ♕xd5 0–0 25 e6 is hopeless, and therefore my opponent was obliged to take the rook: **23...♔xd7.** I had in mind **24 ♗xe6+! ♔xe6** and then 25 ♕d6+ or 25 f5+. In a sense my intuition did not let me down – here White does indeed achieve a big advantage. But, after examining the analysis below, you will see how much more difficult things would have been for him compared with the cool 23 ♗g2!.

Of the two possible checks, only the one with the queen is correct: after 25 f5+? ♔xe5 26 ♖e1+ ♔xf5 it is not apparent how the attack can be continued. If, for example, 27 ♕f4+ ♔g6 28 ♖e5, then 28...f6.

25 ♕d6+! ♔f5 26 ♕d7+ ♔e4 (26...♔g6? 27 ♕g4+ ♔h6 28 ♕g5 mate) **27 ♖e1+ ♖e3** (27...♔f3? 28 ♕d1 mate!) **28 ♕b7+ ♔d4** (28...♘d3? 29 ♕b3+ or 29 ♕d5+) **29 ♖d1+ ♔c4** (29...♔c3? 30 ♕b3 mate; 29...♖d3? 30

♕d7+) **30 ♕xf7+!.** The check from d5 is weaker – in anticipation of the inevitable win of queen for rook, it is important for White to eliminate the f7 pawn beforehand.

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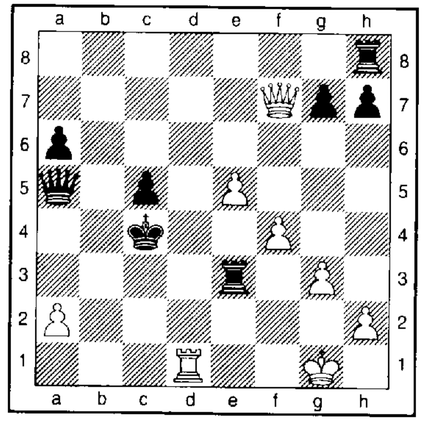


Now it is best for the black king to move to b5. After 30...♔b4? White successfully concludes his mating attack: 31 ♖b1+ ♔c3 (31...♔a3? 32 ♖b3+!; 31...♔a4? 32 ♕c4+ ♕b4 33 ♖xb4+ cxb4 34 ♕xa6 mate) 32 ♕b3+ ♔d4 (32...♔d2 33 ♕d1+) 33 ♖d1+ ♔e4 34 ♕c2+ ♔f3 35 ♖f1+ ♔g4 36 h3+! ♔xh3 37 ♕f5+ ♔xg3 38 ♕g5+ ♔h3 39 ♕g2+ ♔h4 40 ♔h2! h6 41 ♖g1.

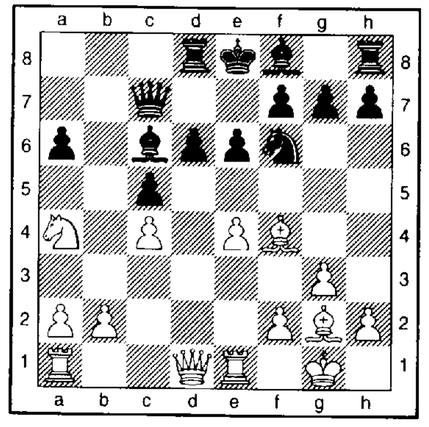
30...♔b5! 31 ♖b1+ ♕b4! 32 ♕b7+ ♔c4! (32...♔a5 33 ♖xb4 cxb4 34 ♕d5+ ♔a4 35 ♕c6+ and the rook at e3 is lost) **33 ♕xa6+ ♔c3 34 ♖xb4 cxb4.** This position has been reached by force. The queen and two pawns are stronger than the two rooks, and I believe that White should win. Although, he will certainly have to overcome certain technical difficulties, associated with the threat of the rooks penetrating onto the 2nd rank and the weakness of the a2 pawn.

To conclude this chapter I should like to demonstrate one more game. In it you will again meet the now familiar strategic ideas, typical of this variation of the Sicilian Defence. And the unusual combination, with which White transformed his opening initiative into a menacing attack, will, I am sure, give you pleasure.

Wedberg – Ogaard
Oslo 1980

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 ♘c3 a6 6 g3 ♕c7 7 ♗g2 ♘f6 8 0–0 d6 9 ♖e1 ♗d7 10 ♘xc6 bxc6 11 ♘a4 ♖d8!? 12 c4 c5 13 ♗f4! ♗c6. Black does not want to play 13...e5, and 13...♗e7 14 e5 dxe5 15 ♗xe5 ♕a5 16 ♘c3 leads to an inferior position.

105



Q 9-27. How should White continue?

With his last move Leif Ogaard parried the threat of e4–e5 – now it is understandable why he placed his rook on d8. In reply to any developing move he will play 14...♘d7, obtaining an acceptable position. And 14 ♘xc5 e5 leads to the loss of a piece. Nevertheless...

14 ♘xc5!! e5 15 ♘xa6!. The alternative is 15 ♘d3 exf4 16 e5 dxe5 17 ♖xe5+ ♗e7 18 ♗xc6+ ♕xc6 19 ♕e2. Now 19...♔f8? is a mistake: 20 ♖xe7 f3 21 ♕e3 ♖xd3 22 ♕xd3 ♔xe7 23 ♖e1+ ♔f8 24 ♕d8+ ♘e8 25 ♕e7+, but the simple 19...0-0! 20 ♖xe7 fxg3 21 hxg3 ♕xc4 gives Black equality.

15...♕b6 16 b4!!. This unexpected pawn thrust is the idea of the combination. The same move 16 b4!! would also have followed in reply to 15...♕b7, for example, 16...exf4 17 b5 ♗e7 18 ♘b4 ♗xe4 19 ♘c6 (or 19 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 20 ♘d5).

But now these variations are possible:

16...♕xa6 17 b5 ♕c8 (17...♗xb5 18 cxb5 ♕xb5 19 a4 with a big advantage to White) 18 bxc6 exf4 19 e5 dxe5 20 ♖xe5+ ♗e7 21 ♕e2 ♕c7 (21...♘g8 is equally hopeless) 22 ♖b1 with the decisive threat of 23 ♖b7.

16...exf4 17 b5 (threatening 18 e5, which also works in the event of 17...♗e7) 17...f3 18 ♗xf3 ♗e7 19 e5 ♗xf3 20 ♕xf3 dxe5 21 ♖xe5 followed by 22 ♖ae1. With three pawns for a piece and the opponent's king caught in the centre, White can expect to win.

16...♗d7 17 b5 exf4 18 e5! dxe5 19 ♖xe5+ ♗e6. Black loses quickly after 19...♗e7 20 c5! ♕a5 21 ♖xe7+ ♔xe7 22 ♕d6+ ♔e8 23 ♘c7+.

20 ♗c6+ ♔e7. 20...♕xc6 21 bxc6 ♖xd1+ 22 ♖xd1 is equally hopeless.

21 ♕e2 fxg3 22 hxg3 ♘d7 23 c5 ♕a5 24 ♖xe6+! fxe6 25 ♖e1 ♘xc5 (25...e5 26 ♗xd7 ♔xd7 27 c6+ ♔c8 28 ♕g4+) **26 ♘xc5 ♖d6 27 ♘xe6 ♕xe1+ 28 ♕xe1 ♖xe6 29 ♕b4+ ♔f7 30 ♕c4.** Black resigns.

How to Beat Karpov

Oh, what a task so harsh
to drag a hippo out of a marsh!
Korney Chukovsky

For some time in the late 1960s Anatoly Karpov was a student at Moscow University, where I too was studying. We became friends, analysed together, and played numerous blitz games. I wasn't a bad blitz player, but I constantly lost to Karpov. I was sometimes able to outplay him in the opening or to catch him with an unexpected tactical blow, but in the art of manoeuvring it was completely impossible to compete with him – so subtly did Karpov sense the latent coordination of the pieces. You would obtain from the opening an unclear or even better position, make seemingly sensible moves, but within 10–15 moves for some reason you would run into insuperable difficulties. Already then his play made a strong impression on me.

Subtle positional feeling (the manifestation of chess intuition) by no means infers great strategic mastery (related to the logic and organisation of a player's thinking). Karpov, in my view, is not a deep strategist and the formulation of the game was always his 'Achilles' heel', even in later years, when his powerful team of helpers provided him with a solid and detailed opening repertoire. (Anyone wishing to check this is recommended to look at Karpov's games, played in his candidate matches against Artur Yusupov, Viswanathan Anand and Nigel Short – you will see how often his opponents outplayed him strategically.)

But obtaining an opening advantage against Karpov is not even half the job: much less!

One of the strongest aspects of the 12th world champion's play is his ability to defend coolly in inferior positions. The slightest inaccuracy by the opponent is sufficient for the resourceful Karpov to slip out or even seize the initiative. Remember several of the early games from his first match with Kasparov, in which the young challenger was still trying to act aggressively (then for almost a couple of dozen games he played only for a draw, not only with Black, but also with White) – how easily and confidently the champion parried any attack, even the most dangerous!

And so, my prescription against Karpov is simple (of course, in words, but not in fact): try to outplay him in the early stage of the game, and if you are successful, then subsequently – demonstrate the utmost concentration, energy and accuracy, so as not to allow him to escape. However, such a prescription is not bad against any opponent.

Larsen – Karpov
San Antonio 1972

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**♘f3**	**e6**
3	**c4**	**b6**
4	**g3**	**♗b7**
5	**♗g2**	**♗e7**
6	**0–0**	**0–0**
7	**b3**	

Typical of Bent Larsen – already at any early

stage he usually deviates from the well-trodden opening paths (7 ♘c3), aiming to introduce some novelty into the position.

7 . . . c5

7...d5 is considered sounder.

8 ♗b2 cxd4

9 ♕xd4 ♘c6

At that time the 'hedgehog' set-up (9...d6, then ...a7–a6 and ...♘bd7) had not yet come into practice – it only became popular a few years later.

10 ♕f4 d5

11 ♖d1

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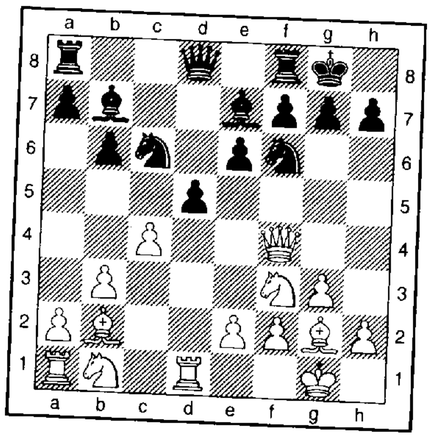

11 . . . ♕c8?!

Theory recommends 11...♕b8, for example: 12 ♕xb8 ♖axb8 13 ♘e5 ♖bc8 with equality. However, after 12 ♘e5 ♗d6 13 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 14 ♕h4 ♗e5 15 ♘c3 ♘e4 16 ♖ac1 (Reshevsky–Kashdan, USA 1945) or 12 ♘c3 dxc4 (12...♕xf4 13 gxf4 dxc4 14 ♘e5) 13 ♕xc4 White's position would appear to be preferable.

The position of the queen would be justified in the event of 12 ♘c3?! dxc4 13 ♕xc4 ♘b4. White should defend his c4 with a knight and then place his rook on c1 – then the queen will have to waste time moving from c8.

12 ♘bd2!?

12 ♘a3!? also came into consideration.

12 . . . ♖d8

13 ♖ac1 ♕b8

13...♕d7!?.

14 ♘e5 ♗d6

15 ♘xc6!

Much weaker was 15 ♘df3, when both 15...dxc4 and 15...♘e7!? are possible, and the white pieces are not very harmoniously placed.

15 . . . ♗xc6

16 ♕h4 ♗e5

After 16...♗e7 there is the strong reply 17 cxd5, and if 17...♗xd5 18 ♘e4.

17 ♗xe5 ♕xe5

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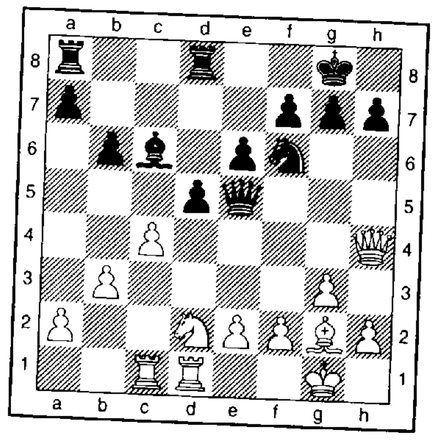

White's advantage is determined mainly by the pin on the h1–a8 diagonal and by the insecure position of the bishop at c6. But imagine that Black plays ...♖ac8 and ...♗a8 – then White will have nothing. This means that this is the time for White to concentrate and seek a concrete way to transform his temporary advantages into something more tangible.

In Larsen's opinion, he should have played 18 cxd5 ♗xd5 19 e4 ♗b7 (19...g5 20 ♕h6) 20 ♘c4. He writes: *'I find it hard to explain*

why I abandoned my original plan... Maybe drawing a game in round three does not decide the outcome of the tournament, but I had the feeling that this was where I lost first prize!'

Q 9-28. Do you agree with the grandmaster's evaluation? How should Black defend?

Larsen analysed the variation 20...♖xd1+ 21 ♖xd1 ♕c7 (if 21...♕c3, then 22 ♕f4! with the threat of 23 ♕c7 is unpleasant) 22 e5 ♘d5 (22...♗xg2?? 23 exf6 ♗f3 24 ♕g5) 23 ♘d6. Here White's advantage is indeed obvious. 23...♘c3 24 ♗xb7 or 23...♗c6 24 ♖c1 is bad for Black, while if 23...♗a6, then 24 ♗xd5 exd5 25 ♕d4 is strong. During the game Larsen was concerned about 23...♕c2, but after the simple 24 ♖f1 (with the threats of 25 ♘xb7 and 25 ♗e4) the queen is forced into an ignominious retreat.

How can Black's defence be strengthened? All his problems stem from the unfortunate position of his light-square bishop. It is very important in reply to e4–e5 to be able to exchange it. For this the queen has to be moved to another square.

I suggest 20...♕c5!. 21 ♘d6? ♖xd6 is not possible, while if 21 e5, then 21...♖xd1+ 22 ♖xd1 ♗xg2! 23 exf6 (23 ♔xg2 ♘d5) 23...♗f3 and the important g5 square is guarded by the black queen. Little is changed by 21 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 22 e5 ♗xg2 23 ♔xg2 ♖d4!. It is probable that after 21 ♕f4 White nevertheless retains a slight initiative, but it is not too dangerous (21...♕e7 or 21...♘e8).

In the game Larsen played better.

18 ♘f3!

Of course, Black cannot take the pawn: 18...♕xe2?? 19 ♘d4. Larsen recommends 18...♕e4!?.

see next diagram

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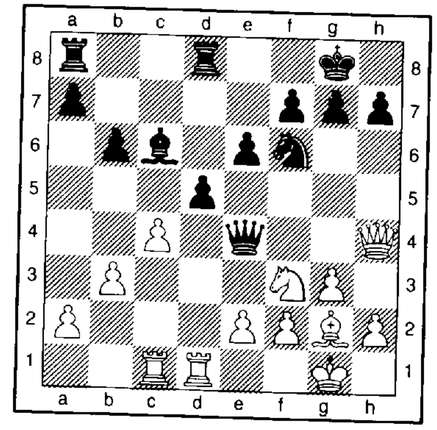

Q 9-29. How should White continue?

The queen exchange 19 ♕xe4 dxe4 leads to an acceptable ending for Black. White has an extra pawn on the queenside, but the doubled pawn at e4 seriously cramps his position, shutting in the bishop at g2.

19 ♕h3 or 19 ♕g5 is tempting, after which the queen at e4 will feel uncomfortable. But where precisely should the white queen move?

19 ♕h3? is incorrect in view of 19...dxc4! (there is also 19...♗b7!? – the queen at h3 is out of play) 20 ♖xd8+ (20 ♘h4? ♖xd1+ 21 ♖xd1 ♕xe2) 20...♖xd8 21 ♘h4 (21 ♘e1? ♕xe2 22 ♗xc6 ♕d2) 21...♕xe2 22 ♗xc6, and now 22...g5, if there is nothing else.

19 ♕g5! is much stronger. Now the similar combination no longer works: 19...dxc4? 20 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 21 ♘e1! ♕xe2 22 ♗xc6, and if 22...♖d1, then either 23 ♖xd1 ♕xd1 24 ♕e5, or 23 ♕e3! ♕xe3 24 ♖xd1!. Black probably does best to choose the restrained 19...h6 20 ♕d2 ♗b7, but it is clear that here too the initiative remains with White.

Karpov did not risk penetrating with his queen deep into enemy territory and he played more cautiously.

18 . . . ♕b8?!

19	**♘d4**	**♗b7**
20	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**

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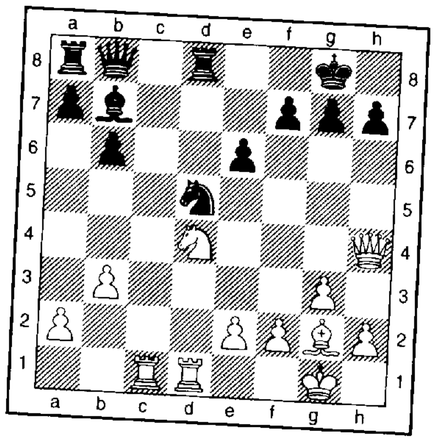

Q 9-30. What should White play?

Here it is, the decisive moment of the game! Larsen chose 21 ♘c6, which guaranteed him an enduring advantage, but one that is really too insignificant. Of course, sometimes it is possible to defeat the opponent even in such a tedious position, but against Karpov, with his fine technique, the chances of success here are slight. Let's see whether it isn't possible to achieve more.

Nothing is given by 21 e4?! ♘f6 (inferior is 21...♘b4 22 ♕e7) 22 e5 ♘d5 (threatening 23...♕xe5) 23 ♕e4 ♖d7 (threatening 24...♘c3) 24 ♕e1 ♕d8 (or 24...♕f8).

On the other hand, very strong is Larsen's suggestion of 21 ♘b5!, creating the threat of 22 ♗xd5 followed by ♘c7. If 21...♖c8 there is also 22 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 23 e4 ♗c6?! 24 ♘xa7! ♕xa7 25 ♖xc6 and White remains a pawn up.

I also checked 21...♕e5. White continues 22 ♘c7! ♖ac8 23 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 and now not 24 e4?! g5 25 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 26 ♕g4 ♗c6! (26...♗b7 27 h4 with the threat of 28 ♖d7) 27 h4 h6 28 f4 ♕c5+ 29 ♔h2 ♔g7! 30 b4 ♕c2 31 fxg5 h5! 32 ♕xh5 ♘xe4 with counterplay, but 24 ♕e7!, gaining an obvious advantage.

21	**♘c6?!**	**♗xc6**
22	**♖xc6**	**♕e5!**

Excellently played! The e2 pawn is attacked and it cannot be defended by 23 ♕c4 on account of the counterblow 23...♘e3! which immediately forces a draw (24 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 25 ♖c8! ♕a1+ 26 ♕c1 ♕xc1+ 27 ♖xc1 ♘xg2). White is forced to exchange queens, taking play into a slightly better ending.

23	**♕e4**	**♕xe4**
24	**♗xe4**	**♘f6**
25	**♖xd8+**	**♖xd8**
26	**♗d3**	

'I believed that I still had some chances with bishop vs knight in a rather open position and a more active rook.' (Larsen).

26	**...**	**♘d5**

In Karpov's opinion, 26...♘e8! followed by ...♔f8–e7 was sounder.

27	**a3**	**♔f8**
28	**♗b5**	

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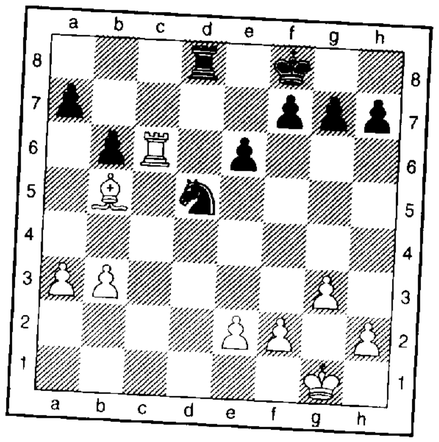

Q 9-31. What should Black play?

With his last move White prevented the further progress into the centre of the enemy king (28...♘e7? 29 e4 and 30 ♘c7+).

28	**...**	**g5!**

A typical defensive procedure in such positions. Now in case of necessity the king will be able to move to g7, but, most important, the mobility of White's kingside pawns is restricted. Now Larsen should have tried 29 ♔g2, but after 29...g4! Karpov would probably have nevertheless gained a draw.

29	**♔f1**	

Q 9-32. How should Black continue?

If the white king reaches e1, Black will have to defend for a long time in a slightly inferior position. Therefore Karpov exploits a convenient opportunity to force matters – he achieves the exchange of the queenside pawns, thereby securing the desired draw.

29	**...**	**♘e7!**
30	**♖c7**	**♖d1+**
31	**♔g2**	**♖b1**

If 32 ♖xa7 there follows 32...♖xb3, while if 32 b4 a5!. Incidentally, here we see how important for the black king was the escape square created by 28...g5!.

32	**♗c4**	**a6!**
33	**a4**	

Draw, in view of 33...b5!.

E 9-4

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White to move

A Positional Sacrifice

Sacrifices have one common aim, that of increasing the effectiveness of other pieces outside of the normal routine.
Rudolf Spielmann

The positional sacrifice is one of the most difficult procedures in chess.

First, sometimes the possibility of it simply does not occur to you. *'When a player chooses his move, a knowledge of the material balance involuntarily cuts off in his consciousness those moves that place stronger pieces under attack... This is the greatest psychological difficulty that a player encounters during a game'* (Tigran Petrosian).

Second, when going in for the risk that is inevitably associated with a sacrifice of material, we do not rely on a precise, exhaustive calculation. And the general perception, on which we are forced to depend, may let us down – after all, unusual situations, difficult to evaluate, normally arise.

And third, even after a successful sacrifice it is psychologically very difficult to proceed calmly. There is the pressing fear that the opponent will manage to neutralise the onslaught and then his material advantage will tell. Therefore it is clear that only a player who is very composed and sure of his own powers can allow himself regularly to go in for problematic sacrifices of material.

Such a player in his young years was grandmaster Oleg Romanishin. His 'patent' procedure was the positional pawn sacrifice. In his opening repertoire he even included many variations, in which he had to play a pawn down, and he also developed his own systems with the same strategic content.

In the game that we will now examine, Romanishin sacrificed on positional grounds not only a pawn, but also the exchange, and quite justifiably. Let us follow how he was able to outplay an expert in sharp and intricate situations, Mikhail Tal.

Romanishin – Tal

43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975

1	**e4**	**c5**
2	**♘f3**	**d6**
3	**♗b5+**	**♘c6**
4	**0–0**	**♗d7**
5	**c3**	**♘f6**
6	**♖e1**	**a6**
7	**♗f1**	

Often the bishop also retreats to a4. If Black wants to exclude the possibility of 7 ♗f1, he should play ...a7–a6 a move earlier.

7 . . . e5

7...♗g4, hindering d2–d4, is more usual.

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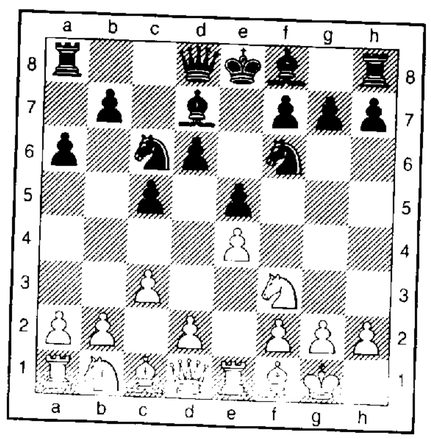

8 d4?!

I would have preferred to prepare the occupation of the centre with the prophylactic move 8 h3. After 8...♗e7 9 d4 a 'Spanish' construction arises with the white bishop at f1. To me this type of position seems advantageous to White. It is true that his queen's knight no longer has the standard route ♘d2–f1–g3(e3), but it can be developed by ♘a3–c2–e3; in some cases the move ♗g5 makes sense. In addition, if Black tries to advance his queenside pawns, the standard undermining move a2–a4 gains in strength, thanks to the position of the bishop on f1.

This is how the game Dvoretsky–Belyavsky (Vilnius 1978) developed: 9...♕c7 (9...0–0 10 d5!? and 11 a4) 10 dxc5 (10 ♘a3!? b5 11 ♘c2 ♘a5?! 12 ♗g5 with advantage to White, Ciocaltea–Kertesz, Romania 1970) 10...dxc5 11 ♗g5 0–0 12 ♘bd2 ♖fd8 13 ♕c2 b5 14 a4 ♕b6 (14...c4!? 15 axb5 axb5 16 b3) 15 axb5 axb5 16 ♗e3 (threatening 17 b4) 16...♕b7 17 ♘b3 c4 18 ♘c5 ♗xc5 19 ♗xc5 (now Black has to reckon with b2–b3!) 19...♗e6 20 ♘g5 ♘a5 21 ♘xe6 fxe6 22 ♖ad1 and White stands markedly better.

8 . . . cxd4
9 cxd4 ♗g4
10 ♗e3

In Tal's opinion, after 10 d5 ♘d4 11 ♗e3 (nothing is achieved by 11 ♘bd2 ♖c8) 11...♘xf3+ 12 gxf3 ♗h5 White's position is preferable. However, instead of 12...♗h5 stronger is 12...♗d7! (intending 13...♘h5), and if 13 f4 ♘g4!.

10 . . . exd4

The exchange of pawns is necessary – otherwise White will play 11 d5. Of course, 10...♘xe4? did not work because of 11 d5 ♘b8 12 ♕a4+.

11 ♗xd4 ♗e7

11...♘xd4 12 ♕xd4 ♗e7 (or 12...♗xf3 13 gxf3 ♗e7) was also perfectly possible. Tal thought that, by playing 13 e5, White would gain the advantage, since he succeeds in keeping the enemy king in the centre. In fact, in the position arising after 13...dxe5 14 ♕xe5 ♗xf3 15 gxf3 ♔f8 16 ♘c3 ♗d6 followed by 17...♕c7 or 17...g6 Black has good counterplay.

12 ♗c3

A bold decision. By preserving his bishop from exchange, White falls somewhat behind in development and risks soon running into the central counter ...d6–d5. 12 ♘c3 or 12 ♗e2 would have led to equality.

12 . . . 0–0
13 h3 ♗h5

After 13...♗xf3?! 14 ♕xf3 d5 15 exd5 ♕xd5 (15...♘xd5? 16 ♖d1) 16 ♘d2 ♕xf3 17 ♘xf3 ♘d5 a draw becomes the most probable outcome, although White nevertheless retains slightly the better chances after 18 ♘d4 ♘xd4 (18...♖ac8 19 ♘f5; 18...♗f6 19 ♘xc6) 19 ♗xd4 or 18 ♘e5 ♖ac8 19 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 20 ♖e5! ♖d8 21 ♖d1 ♘c7 22 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 23 ♖e1. Tal did not want to so openly 'sound the retreat', of course, and there was no need for him to do so.

The bishop could also have withdrawn to e6, although the move in the game is the most critical. If 14 ♘bd2 Black had prepared 14...d5 15 e5 d4 16 exf6 ♗xf6 with the better game. Not wishing to concede the initiative, Romanishin undertakes a highly risky operation.

14 g4! ♗g6
15 ♘h4!

see next diagram

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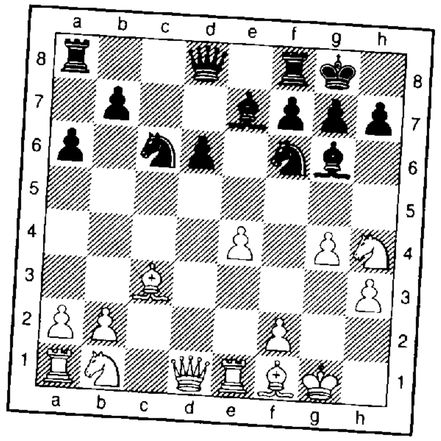

Again, not 15 ♘bd2?! d5!. Now White wants, by playing 16 ♘xg6 hxg6 17 ♗g2, to prevent ...d6–d5. 15...♘xe4?? 16 ♘xg6 is bad for Black. Tal has two tempting continuations: 15...d5 and 15...♗xe4. To make the choice is very, very difficult.

Q 9-33. Assess the consequences of 15...d5.

In reply to 15...d5 White should exchange immediately on g6, since 16 e5? ♘e4 17 ♘xg6 fxg6! is clearly not in his favour. After 16 ♘xg6 hxg6 (16...fxg6? 17 exd5) he faces a difficult choice.

17 ♗xf6 is unfavourable: 17...♗xf6 18 exd5 ♗xb2 19 dxc6 bxc6 20 ♘a3 ♗xa3 with the better chances for Black.

Grandmaster Adrian Mikhalchishin recommends 17 e5 ♘e4 18 ♗g2, with the variation 18...♘xc3 19 ♘xc3 d4 20 ♘d5 in mind. But why exchange on c3, developing the white pieces? 18...♗c5! 19 ♗xe4 dxe4 is far more energetic. Here it is White who has to try and achieve equality:

(a) 20 ♘d2 e3! 21 fxe3 ♕e7!? 22 ♘f3 ♖ad8 (or 22...♗b4);

(b) 20 ♕xd8 ♖axd8 21 ♖xe4 (21 ♘d2 e3 22 fxe3 ♘xe5, or immediately 21...♘xe5) 21...♖d1+ 22 ♖e1 (otherwise the pin on the 1st rank becomes deadly) 22...♖xe1+ 23 ♗xe1 ♘xe5.

Romanishin would probably have had to abandon any ambitious plans and take the game into the haven of a draw by 17 exd5! ♘xd5 18 ♗g2 ♘f4 19 ♕xd8 ♗xd8 20 ♘d2. Thus 15...d5!? was good and safe for Black. But possibly Tal wanted to achieve more, and so he took the risk of launching into irrational complications.

Q 9-34. What choice would you have made? Try to calculate (as deeply and accurately as you can) the move 15...♗xe4 and then take a decision.

15	**...**	**♗xe4!?**
16	**g5**	**♗xb1**
17	**♖xe7!**	

Weak is 17 gxf6? ♗xf6 18 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 19 ♖xb1 ♕xh4. In the event of 17 ♖xb1?! ♘e8 it is not easy for White to demonstrate that he has sufficient compensation for the pawn deficit. For example, 18 f4 (18 ♘f5!? ♗xg5 19 ♕g4) 18...d5 19 ♘f5 (19 ♗d3 g6) 19...♗c5+ 20 ♔h2 d4 21 ♗d2 ♘d6.

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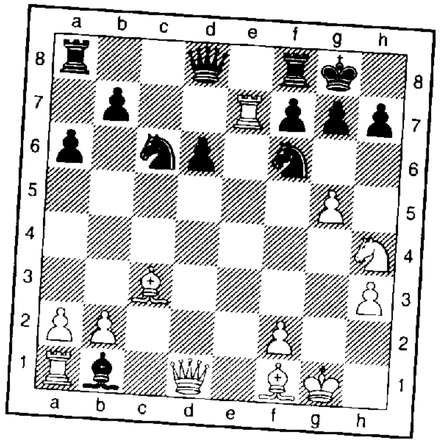

17 ... ♘e4!

Q 9-35. Apart from the move made in the game, 17...♘d5, 17...♕xe7 and 17...♘xe7 must also be considered. Calculate these possibilities.

17...♘d5? 18 ♕xd5 ♘xe7 does not work, since the queen moves with gain of tempo: 19 ♕d4! (Tal).

Also incorrect is 17...♕xe7? 18 gxf6 ♕e4 19 ♕h5! (threatening 20 ♕g5) 19...♘e5. Mikhalchishin continues 20 ♖xb1, but this is an obvious mistake in view of 20...♕xh4!. The endgame after 20 ♗xe5 ♕xe5! 21 ♕xe5 dxe5 22 ♖xb1 favours White, although Black can still resist. White wins by 20 ♗g2! ♕c2 21 ♗xe5 (threatening 22 ♕g5) 21...♕c1+ 22 ♔h2 dxe5 23 ♖xb1.

I should mention that 19...♘d8? (instead of 19...♘e5?!) does not work in view of 20 fxg7 (20 ♕g5? ♘e6) 20...♖e8 21 ♖xb1! ♕xb1 22 ♘f5 ♖e6 23 ♕g5! followed by 24 ♗f6. The tactical defence 19...♘d4! (hoping for 20 ♖xb1? ♕xh4!) is more tenacious, although in the variation 20 fxg7 ♖fc8 21 ♗xd4 ♕xd4 22 ♖xb1 ♖c2 23 ♕f5 White still stands better.

But it is not possible to refute 17...♘xe7!? 18 gxf6 ♘g6, when Black remains the exchange up. Tal considers that after 19 ♕g4 White has the advantage – this is questionable! For example, 19...♕c8! 20 fxg7!? (20 ♕g3 ♗f5 or 20...♗e4) 20...♕xg4+ 21 hxg4 ♖fe8 22 ♖xb1 ♘xh4 with a complicated, non-standard ending.

18 ♖xb7

Now Black could have exchanged the dangerous bishop on c3 and gone into an ending with an extra pawn: 18...♘xc3 (or 18...♕xg5+ 19 ♕g4 ♕xg4+ 20 hxg4 ♘xc3) 19 bxc3 ♕xg5+ (19...♗e4?! 20 ♕g4) 20 ♕g4 ♕xg4+ 21 hxg4 ♗e4. But after 22 ♖b6! he would at the least not have stood better (23 f3 is threatened, and the a6 and d6 pawns are vulnerable). Incidentally, the immediate 22 f3 ♗d5 (22...♘a5 23 ♖b6 ♗c6 24 ♗xa6 with advantage to White) 23 ♖d1 is much weaker because of 23...♘d4!.

This variation apparently did not satisfy Tal. He saw an opportunity to remain the exchange up.

18	**...**	**♘c5?!**
19	**♖xb1**	**♕xg5+**

If 19...♘xb7, then 20 ♕d5 is strong.

20 ♗g2 ♘xb7

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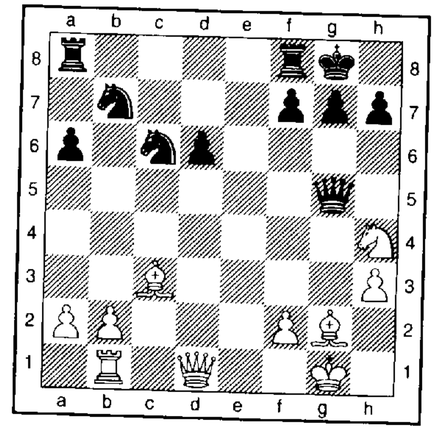

Q 9-36. How should White continue?

The following very strong move had to be seen in advance by Romanishin.

21 ♕g4!!

A surprising decision! The exchange and a pawn down, White himself offers the exchange of queens. But now his knight reaches the excellent f5 square and his bishops develop terrible pressure on the long diagonals. Despite his significant material deficit, White has an appreciable advantage. Incidentally, it was also possible to transpose moves: 20 ♕g4! (instead of 20 ♗g2) 20...♕xg4+ 21 hxg4 ♘xb7 22 ♗g2.

21	**...**	**♕xg4**
22	**hxg4**	**♘bd8**

22...♘cd8? 23 ♘f5 f6 24 ♖e1 g6 25 ♘h6+ (25 ♗d5+ is also good) 25...♔g7 26 g5 and wins.

22...♖ac8 23 ♘f5 ♖fe8 24 ♗xg7 with an attack.

23 ♘f5 f6

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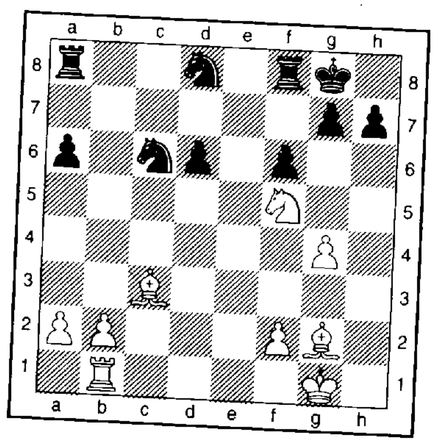

The cowardly regaining of the exchange 24 ♘e7+?! ♘xe7 25 ♗xa8 is sufficient only for equality: 25...♘dc6 26 ♗b7 a5 followed by 27...♖b8 or 27...d5. However, serious consideration should have been given to the simple 24 ♖d1!?, for example: 24...♖a7 25 ♖xd6 ♘e5 26 ♗d5+ ♔h8 27 ♗d4 ♖c7 28 ♖xa6 and the passed pawns on the queenside will soon become dangerous.

Romanishin chose another, sharper (it is not clear, however, whether it is stronger) plan of an offensive on the kingside.

24	**g5!?**	**♖a7**

24...fxg5? 25 ♗d5+ ♘f7 26 ♘xd6 would have lost quickly.

25	**♗d5+**	**♔h8**
26	**gxf6**	**gxf6**
27	**♖e1**	

Threatening 28 ♗xf6+. Bad is 27...♘e5 28 f4.

27	**...**	**h5**
28	**f4**	**♔h7**

There is almost nothing that Black can move. He tries at least to somehow upset the harmonious construction of the enemy pieces, by attacking the powerful f5 knight with his king from g6. Perhaps here or later it made sense to include the moves 28...a5 (with the idea of ...♘b4) 29 a3.

29	**♖e3**	

The rook is ready to occupy the g-file. The same aim could have been achieved by moving the king from g1. It is true that 29 ♔f2?! ♘e5! 30 fxe5? fxe5 31 ♗e4 d5 is unsuccessful, but 29 ♔h2!? was strong, intending a possible ♔h3–h4xh5.

29	**...**	**♔g6**

29...♖d7 would have led to the position that occurred in the game after the 33rd move.

30	**♘h4+**	

Evidently weaker was 30 ♘xd6 ♖d7 31 ♗e4+ ♔g7 32 ♖g3+ ♔h8 33 ♘f5 ♘e7.

30	**...**	**♔h7**
31	**♗e4+**	**♔g8**
32	**♘f5**	**♖d7**

Threatening 33...d5. 32...♖e8? would have lost to 33 ♗xc6! ♖xe3 34 ♗d5+ ♖e6 35 ♘d4.

33	**♗d5+**	**♔h7**

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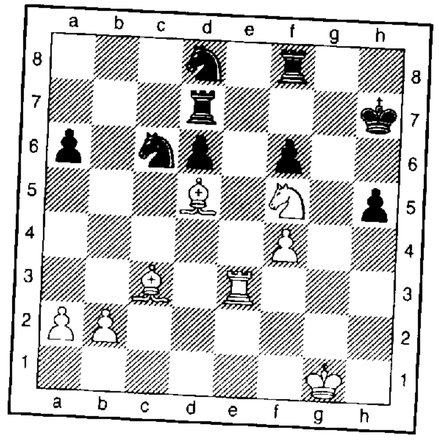

Q 9-37. How should White continue?

It would appear to be here that Romanishin missed his chance of success. The opponent again wants to attack the knight by 34...♘g6, and this should have been prevented by the prophylactic move 34 ♖g3!. What then is Black to do? He has a great material advantage, but it is not felt at all – the white pieces control the entire board. It is not possible to exchange knights by ...♘e7 either immediately, or after 34...♖e8 35 ♔h2!? (35...♘e7? 36 ♖g7+ ♔h8 37 ♖xe7). And if he stays passive, White strengthens his position by bringing forward his king or advancing his queenside pawns: b2–b4, a2–a4 etc.

34	**b4?!**	**♔g6!**
35	**♘h4+**	**♔h7**
36	**♗e4+**	**♔g8**
37	**♗d5+**	**♔h7**
38	**♗e4+**	

After 38 a4 there is 38...♘e7, while if 38 ♘f5 ♔g6.

38	**...**	**♔g8**
39	**♘g6**	

Romanishin still plays for a win, but without success. He would also not have achieved anything with 39 ♖g3+ ♖g7 40 ♘g6? ♖e8 41 ♗d5+ ♔h7 42 f5 ♘e5.

39	**...**	**d5!**

Tal happily gives back the exchange, in order to activate his pieces.

40	**♘xf8**	**♔xf8**
41	**♖d3!**	

Of course, not 41 ♗g2? d4 42 ♖d3 dxc3 43 ♖xd7 c2.

41	**...**	**♖g7+**

Here the game was adjourned and the players agreed a draw without resuming. The two sides' chances are indeed now equal. There could have followed: 42 ♗g2 ♘e6 43 ♗d2!, and now either 43...♘cd4 44 ♔f1 ♘e2! 45 ♗xd5 ♘6xf4 46 ♗xf4 ♘xf4 47 ♖d4 ♘xd5 48 ♖xd5 (Tal), or 43...♖g4 44 ♖xd5 ♘xf4 45 ♗xf4 ♖xf4 46 a3 ♘d4 47 ♖xh5 ♘b5 48 a4 ♘c3 49 b5 axb5 50 axb5 ♖b4 (Mikhalchishin).

Continuation of a Discussion

If to the analyst something seems unclear, he should continue his searches until everything becomes clear.
Siegbert Tarrasch

The clash between Garry Kasparov and Tigran Petrosian at the 1981 Moscow International Tournament took an exceptionally tense course. Already at an early stage of the game the young grandmaster seized the initiative (not surprisingly: after all, the opening has always been the strongest side of Kasparov's play, which can certainly not be said of his opponent) and retained it almost to the end. However, White's attack foundered on the steadfast defence of the ex-world champion, who in the end celebrated victory. Later Kasparov made a thorough analysis of the game in his book *The Test of Time*. He came to the conclusion that on the whole he conducted the offensive correctly, but then twice missed a forced win.

A discussion on this game began in 1986 with the appearance in the magazine *New in Chess* of an article by Jan Timman. The grandmaster tried to demonstrate that both the ways of winning suggested by Kasparov were unconvincing. Unfortunately, Timman's variations contained some analytical mistakes – they were pointed out in letters to the editor by readers of the magazine Albert Termeulen, Robert Timmer, Frank Schonthier and Kasparov himself.

In the early 1990s, at one of our training sessions, I showed this game to Artur Yusupov. We carefully analysed it, aiming not so much to check and correct the variations already found, but rather to reappraise the character of the play, the strategic decisions taken by the two players, and to seek alternative ways of approaching the position. New and important ideas were found in 1997 after a joint analysis with Vadim Zviagintsev, and then with Viorel Bologan.

In offering to the readers my version of a commentary, uniting all that was found before us with the results of our research, I, of course, am far from thinking it to be complete. New searches will no doubt lead to the correction or even the refutation of certain variations, and hence to a revision of the conclusions drawn from them. The process of gradually approaching the truth is constantly occurring in chess. I don't know about you, but for me it is very interesting to observe this process and sometimes take part in it.

Kasparov – Petrosian
Moscow 1981

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**♘f3**	**b6**
4	**a3**	

The Petrosian Variation, characterised by White's last move, which prevents the development of the enemy bishop at b4, was for many long years Kasparov's favourite weapon against the Queen's Indian Defence. He was happy to employ it even in a game with the author of the variation.

4	**...**	**♗b7**
5	**♘c3**	**d5**
6	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**
7	**e3**	**♗e7**
8	**♗b5+**	**c6**
9	**♗d3**	**♘xc3**
10	**bxc3**	**c5**
11	**0–0**	

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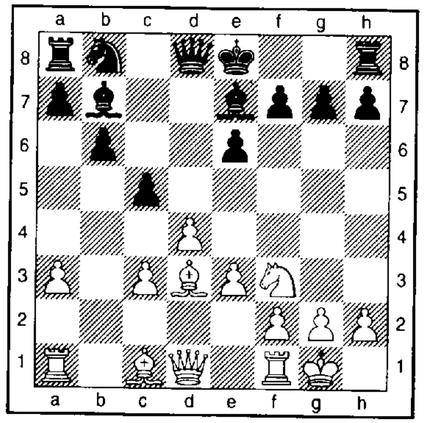

One of the opening 'tabiyas' from the late 1970s to the early 1980s has arisen.

11 ... 0–0

Kasparov considers this move to be inaccurate, since now, by attacking the h7 pawn, White can provoke a weakening of the kingside. He recommends 11...♘c6, in order to castle only after 12 e4 or 12 ♗b2 ♖c8 13 ♕e2. Incidentally, one of the most important questions for White in such positions is where to develop his dark-square bishop, at b2 or e3. Not being an expert on the given variation, I will refrain from expressing my own preference.

12 ♕c2

The author of the corresponding section in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, Mikhail Gurevich, apparently does not agree with Kasparov's evaluation, since he attaches an exclamation mark to 12 e4. He continues 12...cxd4 13 cxd4 ♘c6 14 ♗e3 ♖c8, reaching a position that could also have arisen after 11...♘c6 (12 e4 ♖c8 13 ♗e3 cxd4 14 cxd4 0–0). It is evaluated, however, as unclear. The question is whether White achieves more with the move in the game.

12 ... g6

12...h6!? is a serious alternative. The game Ribli–Hort (Germany 1991) continued 13 e4 ♘c6 14 ♗b2 ♖c8 15 ♕e2 ♘a5 16 ♖ad1 cxd4 17 cxd4 ♗f6!? 18 ♖fe1 ♕c7 19 h3 (19 h4!?) 19...♖fd8 20 ♖c1 ♕b8 21 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 22 ♖c1 ♕b8 23 ♗b1 ♖c8 with a roughly equal game.

13 e4 ♘c6

A little later Petrosian tried to strengthen the variation by 13...♕c7 with the idea of vacating the d8 square for the rook. The attempt was unsuccessful. The queen move has a significant drawback: control of the h4 square is removed and White acquires the important attacking resource h2–h4–h5. The game Polugayevsky–Petrosian (Moscow 1981) continued 14 ♕e2 ♖d8 15 h4! ♘c6 16 ♗e3 ♗f6 (16...e5!? is sounder, although in the game Cebalo–Toth, Budva 1981 White retained the better chances after 17 d5 ♘a5 18 h5 c4 19 ♗c2) 17 e5 ♗g7 18 h5 ♖d7 19 hxg6 (in the opinion of Lev Polugayevsky, 19 ♖ad1!? is more accurate, with the possibility of ♘g5 and ♘xh7 in mind) 19...hxg6 20 ♖ad1 cxd4 21 cxd4 ♕d8 22 ♗e4! (with the threats of 23 ♘g5 or 23 ♗g5) and White has an obvious advantage.

14 ♗h6 ♖e8
15 ♖fd1

see next diagram

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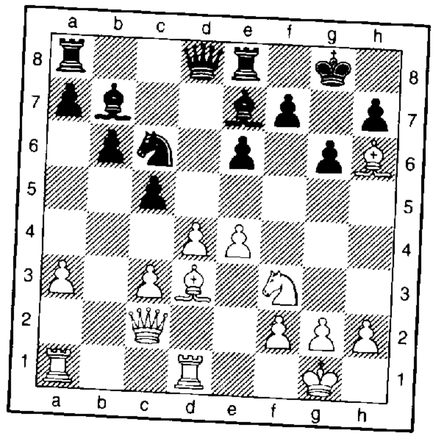

Q 9-38. Evaluate 15...cxd4 16 cxd4 ♘xd4.

In the strategic sense Black's position is unpleasant. The opponent controls more space and is preparing an offensive on the kingside, whereas for the moment there is no counterplay on the opposite wing. Therefore it makes sense to check carefully the attempt suggested above to change sharply the character of the play. Several chapters in my book *School of Chess Excellence 2 – Tactical Play* are devoted to such 'escape operations'.

'Perhaps Black should have parted with the exchange, since the ending after 15...cxd4 16 cxd4 ♘xd4 17 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 18 ♗b5 ♕xe4 19 ♕xe4 ♗xe4 20 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 21 ♖d7 a5 promises him good drawing chances. Black's unwillingness to go in for simplification allows White to carry out a favourable regrouping.' (Kasparov).

Kasparov's conclusion would appear to be correct. Indeed, 22 a4 ♗c5 is harmless. If 22 ♗e3, then not 22...♗c6?! (hoping for 23 ♖c7 ♗d5 24 ♗xb6 a4 followed by ...♗b3 and ...e6–e5) 23 ♖a7!, but simply 22...b5, and the attempt to sharpen the play by 23 ♖c1 ♗xa3 24 ♖cc7 is too risky.

Thus in the endgame White has no real advantage. This means that doubts have to be cast on his tempting 14th move. By continuing simply 14 ♗e3! he would have retained the better chances.

15	**...**	**♕c7?!**
16	**♕e2**	**♖ed8**
17	**♕e3!**	

White's further plan is already known to us from the Polugayevsky–Petrosian game: e4–e5 and h2–h4–h5. If 17...♖d7, then 18 ♗f4! ♕d8 19 ♗b5 is strong. Therefore Petrosian decides to change the pawn structure in the centre.

17	**...**	**e5**
18	**d5**	

'It would not be worth dwelling on this move, had not White spent on it... 58 minutes! I very much wanted to exploit immediately the newly-opened a2–g8 diagonal by playing 18 ♗c4, although I sensed that variations such as 18...exd4 19 cxd4 cxd4 20 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 21 ♕b3+ ♔e8 22 ♖ac1 ♕d6! or 22 e5 ♗c5 23 ♘g5 ♕e7 were extremely dubious. At any event a whole hour was spent in vain, and I soon had cause to regret this.' (Kasparov).

18	**...**	**♘a5**

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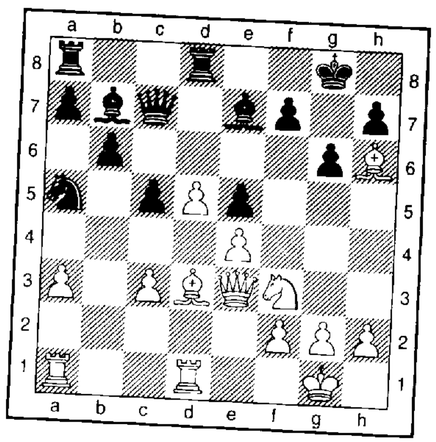

'Now White should choose one of two good plans: prevent ...c5–c4 or immediately begin active play on the kingside. At the board it is impossible to establish the truth. In such cases do not waste too much time and make up your mind!' (Yusupov).

19	**c4**	

In his comments written soon after the game was played, Kasparov awarded this move an exclamation mark, but later he changed his opinion and recommended 19 ♘g5!? c4 20 ♗e2 followed by h2–h4–h5. Yusupov and I continued this variation: 20...♗c8 (intending ...f7–f6) 21 ♕g3 f6. Dubious now is 22 ♘e6?! ♗xe6 23 dxe6 ♕c6, when the e6 pawn is weak (White has to reckon not only with 24...♕xe6, but also with 24...♘b3 followed by ...b6–b5 and ...♘c5). Correct is 22 ♘f3 ♗f8 (otherwise 23 ♘h4! is unpleasant) 23 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 24 h4 ♕g7 25 ♘d2!. By retreating his knight, White attacks the c4 pawn and simultaneously prepares f2–f4. By combining threats on different parts of the board, he retains a dangerous initiative.

19	**...**	**♘b3**

The manoeuvre of the knight to d4 is tempting, of course, but not indisputable. The knight was blocking the queenside, and after its exchange the white pawns become more mobile. 19...f6!? 20 h4 ♗a6 21 ♘d2 ♗f8 should have been considered, intending the possible manoeuvre ...♘b7–d6. However, this plan too would not have got Black out of his difficulties.

20	**♖a2**	**f6**
21	**h4**	**♗c8?!**

An inaccuracy, which up till now has not been mentioned in any comments on the game. Wishing to be able to reply to 22 h5 with 22...♗g4, Petrosian temporarily severs the communications between his rooks, and this may become dangerous.

21...♗f8 was sounder, although here too the initiative would apparently have remained with White: 22 ♗xf8 (22 h5 ♗xh6 23 ♕xh6 ♕g7) 22...♖xf8 23 ♖b1 ♘d4 (23...♘a5) 24 ♘xd4 cxd4 25 ♕d2 (Black has to reckon with ♕b4 and a3–a4–a5) 25...♗a6 26 a4. Now 26...♗xc4?? loses to 27 ♖c1, and 26...♖fc8 27 ♕b4 ♗xc4?! (27...♖ab8) 28 ♖c2 ♗xd3 29 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 30 ♕d6 is also unfavourable. If 26...♕c5 an unclear position arises after 27 ♕b4 ♖ac8! (Yusupov, Dvoretsky), but consideration should be given to the pawn sacrifice suggested by grandmaster Bologan: 27 a5!? ♗xc4 28 ♗xc4 ♕xc4 29 ♖c2.

22	**♖b1!**	**♘d4**
23	**♘xd4**	**cxd4**
24	**♕g3**	

After provoking the exchange of knights, White has prepared f2–f4.

24	**...**	**♗f8**
25	**♗d2!**	**♗d6**
26	**♖f1**	**♕g7**

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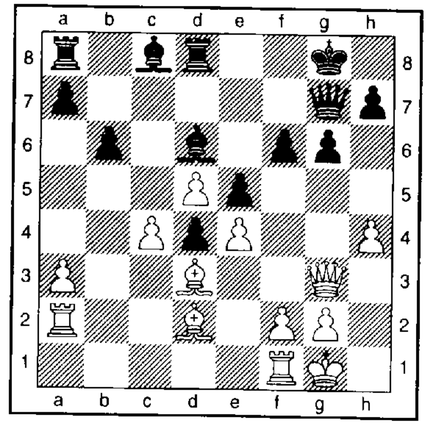

Q 9-39. How should White continue?

In the first instance, of course, the thematic advance of the f-pawn should be checked.

'Black is prepared for f2–f4: 27 f4 ♗d7 28 fxe5 ♗xe5 29 ♗f4 ♖f8 30 ♖af2 ♖ae8 with a solid defence. Therefore White opens a second front, hoping to divert the black pieces.' (Kasparov).

27 a4?!

A deep strategic conception: so as not to allow a4–a5, Black will obviously reply 27...a5; then it will be possible to attack the b6 pawn, diverting the bishop from d6, and only then, in more favourable circumstances, advance f2–f4. Alas, for all its apparent attractiveness, Kasparov's idea is not too successful. *'White should not have weakened his queenside so seriously'* (Petrosian). The a4 pawn becomes vulnerable, and this factor gives Black counter-chances, which up till now he did not have.

In the opinion of Yusupov and myself, the strongest continuation was 27 ♗b4!. The main idea is not the exchange of bishops (White could have carried this out earlier), but the prevention of Black's normal development by 27...♗d7. In addition there is now the possibility of using the 2nd rank for the rook after f2–f4.

The exchange on b4 is unfavourable for Black, and so he would most probably reply 27...♕e7. Then there follows 28 f4! exf4 (if 28...♗d7, then either 29 fxe5 fxe5 30 ♕g5!? or 29 f5 ♔g7 30 fxg6 hxg6 31 h5) 29 ♗xd6 (29 ♕xf4!?) 29...♕xd6, and now 30 ♖xf4 (hoping for 30...♖f8 31 e5! ♕xe5 32 ♖e2) 30...♕e5! 31 ♖af2 ♖f8 32 ♕f3 ♔g7 33 g4 h6 is unclear, but the simple 30 ♕xf4! ♕xf4 31 ♖xf4 secures White the advantage.

27 . . . a5

28 ♖b2 ♗c5

28...♖b8? will not do in view of 29 ♖fb1 ♗c5 30 ♗xa5.

29 f4

see next diagram

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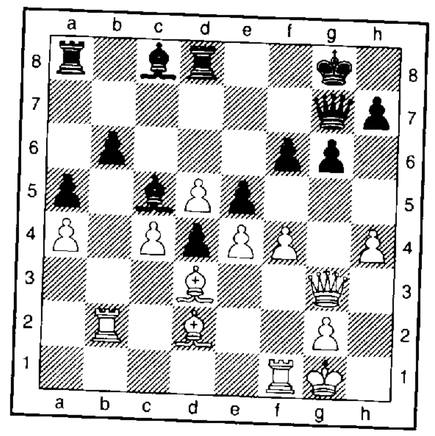

29 . . . ♗d7

Q 9-40. Does Black have an alternative to the move in the game?

Let us ask ourselves how White is intending to intensify the pressure. There is the obvious threat of 30 fxe5 fxe5 31 ♗g5 – by connecting his rooks, Black neutralises it. Another attacking resource is 30 h5! (and if 30...gxh5, then 31 ♕h4).

Petrosian suggested the interesting prophylactic move 29...h6!?, directed simultaneously against both of the opponent's threats. For example, 30 h5 g5 31 fxg5 fxg5 32 ♔h1 ♗d7 33 ♗e2 ♖f8 34 ♖bb1 ♖f4!? (a typical Petrosian exchange sacrifice!).

White should not close the position. 30 ♕e1! is stronger, intending to create new threats by 31 ♕b1 or 31 fxe5 fxe5 32 ♕c1. The dangers awaiting Black are seen from the variation 30...♗d7?! 31 fxe5 fxe5 32 ♕c1! ♗a3 (32...♔h7 33 ♗xh6 ♕xh6 34 ♖f7+) 33 ♗xh6 ♗xb2 34 ♕g5 ♕h7 35 ♖f6. But there is a defence: 30...♖a7! 31 ♕b1 (31 fxe5 fxe5 32 ♕c1 ♔h7) 31...♖b7 (it is essential to parry the threat of 32 ♖xb6) 32 fxe5 (32 ♗c1!? comes into consideration, intending 33 fxe5 fxe5 34 ♖bf2) 32...fxe5 33 ♖b5 (threatening 34 ♕c1 ♔h7 35 ♗xa5) 33...♔h7! (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

Even so, here Black's position looks shaky, therefore the opinion of the commentators, who considered 29...h6 to be the only correct move, seems to me to be debatable at the least. The game continuation is hardly any weaker.

30 h5! ♗xa4?

'Black should have taken the more dangerous pawn – 30...gxh5, although even in this case White retains a strong initiative after 31 ♕h4 (31...♗g4 32 fxe5 fxe5 33 ♗g5 ♖e8 34 ♖bf2). Relying on the solidity of his position, Petrosian hopes subsequently to exploit his passed a-pawn, but White's attack develops swiftly.' (Kasparov).

Instead of 33...♖e8, 33...♖f8 should be checked. In reply 34 ♖bf2 ♖xf2 35 ♖xf2 suggests itself, and if 35...♖f8, then 36 ♗f6 ♕h6 37 ♗xe5 ♕e3 38 ♗f4! ♕e1+ 39 ♔h2 h6 40 ♕g3 ♗d6 41 ♗xd6 ♖xf2 42 ♗f4!? (42 c5), or 37...♖xf2 38 ♕xf2 ♕e3 39 ♕xe3 dxe3 40 ♔f1 ♗d1 41 ♗f4 – in both cases with advantage to White. However, instead of 35...♖f8?! stronger is 35...♖e8! 36 ♗f6 ♕g6! (intending 37...h6), and 37 d6? does not work: 37...♗xd6 38 c5 ♗xc5 39 ♗c4+ ♗e6 40 ♗xe6+ ♖xe6 41 ♖f3 d3+ 42 ♔f1 d2.

White can also avoid the exchange of rooks. Let us consider 34 ♗f6!? ♕h6 (34...♕g6!? 35 ♗xe5 ♖xf1+ 36 ♔xf1 ♕h6 37 ♕e1) 35 ♖bf2. Now 35...♕e3 36 ♗xe5 ♖xf2 37 ♖xf2 ♖f8 38 ♗f4! leads to an advantageous position for White, which we have already seen when studying the variation 34 ♖bf2 ♖xf2 35 ♖xf2 ♖f8?!. If 35...♖ae8 a combinative breakthrough looks attractive: 36 d6 ♗xd6 37 c5 ♗xc5 38 ♗c4+ ♗e6 39 ♖f5!? (39 ♗xe6+ ♖xe6 40 ♖f3 d3+ 41 ♔h2 d2 42 ♖g3+ ♕g6 is unclear) 39...♗xc4 (bad is 39...♖xf6? 40 ♖xf6 ♕e3+ 41 ♔h2 ♗xc4 42 ♖1f3 or 42 ♕xh5) 40 ♖g5+ ♔f7? 41 ♗g7+. Alas, by playing 40...♕g6 41 ♕xh5 ♔f7!! Black parries the attack. Therefore instead of the sacrifice of two pawns White must choose a more modest continuation: 36 ♕g3 ♕e3 37 ♗xe5. But the opponent finds an unexpected reply: 37...♖xe5! 38 ♕xe5 ♗b4! and after, say, 39 c5 ♗e1 40 ♕g5+! ♕xg5 41 ♖xf8+ ♔g7 it would appear that White has to restrict himself to perpetual check (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

Thus the consequences of the complications after 30...gxh5 31 ♕h4 ♗g4 are completely unclear. Black also has available a quieter method of defence, suggested by Bologan: 31...♖f8!? (instead of 31...♗g4). By giving up the h5 pawn, Black does not allow the opponent to connect his rooks on the f-file. The main variation is 32 ♕xh5 ♗xa4 (inferior is 32...♗g4? 33 ♕h4 ♗e2 34 ♗xe2 d3+ 35 ♔h1 dxe2 36 ♖e1) 33 fxe5 fxe5 34 ♖xf8+ ♖xf8! (34...♗xf8 35 ♖xb6 would appear to be weaker) 35 ♗h6 ♕g6 36 ♕xg6+ hxg6 37 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 38 ♔f1 ♗d7 39 ♔e2 a4. As further analysis has shown, White's exchange advantage does not bring him any real winning chances.

31 h6 ♕c7

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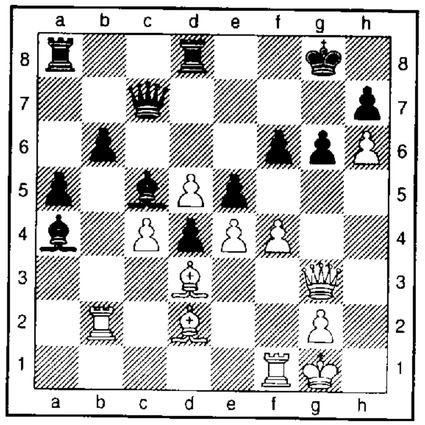

Q 9-41. How should White continue?

A choice has to be made between 32 f5 and 32 fxe5. Which of the two moves is stronger? To calculate the variations accurately is impossible – the decision has to be taken intuitively. In my lecture 'On the

development of chess intuition' that features in the book by Dvoretsky and Yusupov *Attack and Defence* I mention that intuitive action in complicated positions is far from the strongest aspect of Kasparov's play. And this was the case here: Kasparov did not guess right!

32 f5?

The correct way was **32 fxe5! fxe5 33 ♗g5 ♖f8** (Petrosian pointed out the variation 33...♖e8 34 ♗f6 ♖ac8 35 ♖f5 ♗d6 36 c5! bxc5 37 ♗c4! with the terrible threat of 38 ♖xe5 ♖xe5 39 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 40 d6+ and 41 ♕xe5) **34 ♗f6.** *'Although the position is complicated, it is unlikely that White's attack can be parried'* (Kasparov).

An attempt to contest Kasparov's evaluation (which was supported by a serious analysis) was made by Jan Timman. A discussion flared up on the pages of the magazine *New in Chess*. I will now acquaint you with its results, corrected by me together with Yusupov and Zviagintsev.

The e5 pawn is under attack. 34...♖fe8 is obviously illogical, therefore three continuations have to be examined: 34...♖xf6, 34...♗d6 and 34...♖ae8.

A) 34...♖xf6? 35 ♖xf6 ♖f8 36 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 37 ♖f2+! ♔g8 38 ♖f6 ♗d6 39 c5! bxc5 (39...♕xc5 40 ♖xg6+! hxg6 41 ♕xg6+ ♔f8 42 ♕f6+! ♔e8 43 h7) 40 ♗c4 and White has a winning attack (Kasparov). Instead of 39 c5, 39 ♕g4! is more simply decisive.

B) 34...♗d6 35 ♖bf2. There is a very strong alternative to this move – 35 ♖f5!?, suggested by Zviagintsev. The idea is, by attacking the e5 pawn, to prevent Black's most tenacious defensive plan of ...♖f7 and ...♖af8. Now 35...♖f7 leads to a hopeless ending after 36 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 37 ♖xe5 ♖e7 38 ♖g5 ♕xg3 39 ♖xg3. No better is 35...♗d7 36 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 37 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 38 ♖xe5. In the event of 35...♖xf6 36 ♖xf6 ♖f8 37 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 38 ♖f2+ (38 ♕f3+ ♔g8 39 ♕f6 is no less strong) 38...♔g8 39 ♖f6 a position from the above variation by Kasparov is reached. There, it is true, it was White to move and he broke through with c4–c5! But even with Black to move the evaluation of the position does not change, since, apart from the breakthrough mentioned, he also has to reckon with the threats of ♕g4 and ♗e2–g4.

There remains 35...♖ae8, on which 36 ♖bf2 follows, and 36...♗d7 is not possible on account of 37 ♖g5 with the irresistible threat of the sacrifice on g6. The best defence is 36...♗b3!, intending if 37 ♖g5?! to reply 37...♕f7! with chances for both sides (incidentally, if the rook had been standing not at f2, but at f1, 38 ♗g7 would have won). Here, as in many other variations, White carries out the thematic breakthrough 37 c5!, with the aim of activating his light-square bishop. For example, 37...bxc5 38 ♗b5 ♖b8 39 ♖g5! (39 ♕xb3? c4!) 39...♕f7 40 ♕xb3 ♗e7 41 ♖xg6+!! hxg6 42 h7+ ♕xh7 43 d6+ ♕f7 44 ♕xf7+ ♖xf7 45 dxe7 and wins. And after 37...♗xc5 the most accurate move is the preparatory 38 ♔h2!?, intensifying the threats of 39 ♗b5 and 39 ♖g5.

Now let us consider 35 ♖bf2. The dismal consequences for Black of the variation 35...♖ae8 36 ♖f5 ♗b3 (36...♗d7 37 ♖g5) 37 ♖g5 ♕f7 38 ♗g7 have already been mentioned in our analysis of Zviagintsev's idea (here the white rook is at f1 and therefore the decisive bishop move to g7 has become possible). Black must play 35...♖f7.

see next diagram

36 ♗d8?! ♖xd8 37 ♖xf7 ♕xf7 38 ♖xf7 ♔xf7 is unconvincing. Kasparov found the following spectacular variation: 36 c5! bxc5 (36...♕xc5 37 ♗xe5 ♖xf2 38 ♖xf2 ♗xe5 39 ♕xe5 ♕c1+ 40 ♔f1 ♕xh6 41 d6) 37 ♗c4 ♖af8 38 ♗xe5!! (38 ♕g5 ♗e8! – Timman)

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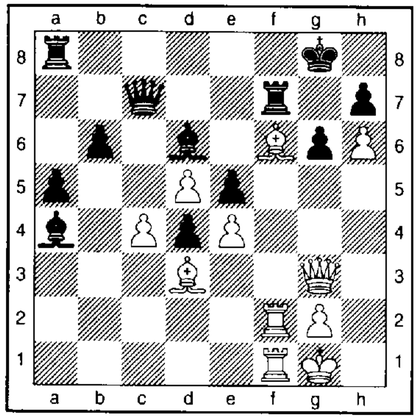

diagram after 35...♖f7

Q 9-42. How should White continue the offensive?

38...♗xe5 39 ♖xf7 ♖xf7 40 d6 ♗xg3 41 dxc7 and White wins.

The Dutch grandmaster suggested 40... ♕xd6!. Now 41 ♖xf7? ♗xg3 will not do, nor will 41 ♕xe5? ♕xe5 42 ♖xf7 ♕e8! (as was pointed out by Robert Timmer, incorrect is 42...♗b5? 43 ♖f5+ ♗xc4 44 ♖xe5 d3 45 ♖xc5 d2 46 ♖c8+ ♔f7 47 ♖d8) 43 ♖e7+ (43 ♖f6+ ♔h8 44 e5 d3 45 ♗xd3 ♗b3) 43...♔f8 44 ♖xe8+ ♔xe8 45 ♔f1 ♔f8 46 ♔e2 ♗c2 and Black's extra pawns are decisive (Timman).

41 ♗xf7+ ♔h8 42 ♕g5 (intending 43 ♗d5) 42...♗b5 (bad is 42...d3 43 ♗c4 ♗d4+ 44 ♔h1 d2 45 e5 d1♕ 46 exd6 – Termeulen). Now Timman considered only 43 ♖f3 ♗e2 44 ♖f2? (44 ♖f5!) 44...d3. Albert Termeulen, a reader of the magazine, found an improvement: 43 ♖f5! and supported it with the following analysis:

43...♗g3 44 ♖d5 ♗f4 45 ♕xf4;

43...♕d7 44 ♗e6 ♕xe6 45 ♖f8+;

43...♗e8 44 ♗e6:

43...♕f8 44 ♗xg6;

43...♗h2+ 44 ♔h1 (threatening 45 ♖d5) 44...♗c6 45 ♖f6 ♕e7 (45...♕c7 46 ♖xc6) 46 ♖xc6!;

43...d3 44 ♖xe5 d2 45 ♗b3 d1♕+ 46 ♗xd1 ♕xd1+ 47 ♔h2 ♕h5+ (47...♔g8 48 ♕f6 ♕d7 49 ♖e8+; 47...♕d6 48 ♕f4 with the threat of ♖e8+) 48 ♕xh5 gxh5 49 ♖xc5 ♗d7 50 ♖d5. In all these variations White wins.

C) **34...♖ae8.** Here too it possible to play 'à la Zviagintsev' – 35 ♖f5. Then 35...♗d6 leads to a favourable position for White, already familiar to us from the variation 34...♗d6 35 ♖f5!? ♖ae8. It is harder to evaluate the consequences of 35...♗d7!? 36 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 37 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 38 ♖xe5 a4, although they are most probably in White's favour.

If **35 ♖bf2** there follows **35...♗d7** (but not 35...♗d6 36 ♖f5 ♗d7 37 ♖g5).

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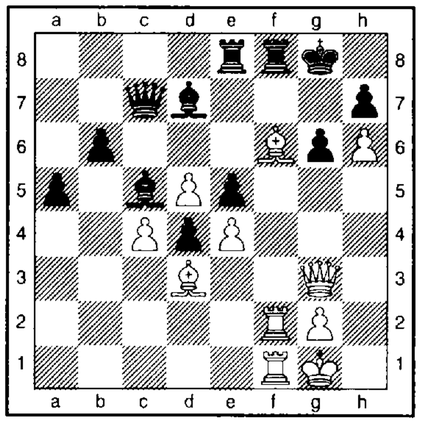

Q 9-43. How here should White conduct the attack?

Kasparov and Timman analysed 36 ♔h2 (with the idea of ♗e2). These were the resulting variations:

36...♕d6 37 ♕g5 ♖f7!? (White's attack achieves its aim unhindered after 37...a4 38 ♗e2! d3 39 ♘h5 ♗xf2 40 ♖xf2 ♖xf6 41 ♕xf6 ♕e7, and now either 42 ♗xg6! hxg6 43

♖xg6+ ♔h8 44 ♖g8+! ♖xg8 45 ♕xe7 d2 46 ♕xe5+ ♔h7 47 ♕d4, or 42 d6!) 38 ♗e2 d3 39 ♗h5 ♗xf2. Here 40 ♖xf2 ♖ef8! 41 ♗xg6 (41 ♗xe5 ♕e7) 41...♖xf6 42 ♗h5+ (42 ♗xh7+ ♔f7) 42...♖g6 no longer works (Timman), but there is 40 ♗xg6! ♕xf6 (40...♖xf6 41 ♗xh7+!) 41 ♗xf7+ ♔xf7 42 ♖xf2 ♕xf2 43 ♕g7 mate (Kasparov, Termeulen).

36...♗c8! 37 ♕g5 (37 ♗e2 d3 38 ♗h5 ♗xf2 39 ♖xf2 ♕f7) 37...♕d7 38 ♗e2 d3 39 ♗h5 ♗xf2 40 ♖xf2 (40 ♗xg6? ♕g4) 40...♕f7 41 ♗xe5 ♕e7! 42 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 43 ♗f6 ♕xe4 and Black retains good chances of defending himself (Timman).

However, in the position from the last diagram White has a more convincing way of conducting the attack.

36 ♗g7! ♖f4 (36...♖xf2 37 ♕xf2 ♗c8 38 d6! ♗xd6 39 c5) **37 ♖xf4** (37 ♗xe5 is also strong) **37...exf4 38 ♖xf4 ♗d6 39 e5! ♖xe5** (39...♗xe5 40 ♖f8+! ♖xf8 41 ♗xe5 followed by 42 ♗xg6) **40 ♖f8+** (40 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 41 ♗xg6 is perhaps simpler) **40...♗xf8 41 ♗xe5 ♕d8 42 ♗xg6 ♗xh6 43 ♗xh7+!** (43 ♗e8+!) **43...♔xh7 44 ♕d3+ ♔g8 45 ♕g6+** and wins (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

The move made by Kasparov in the game also looks menacing, but objectively it is much weaker and it probably throws away the advantage.

32 . . . g5

33 ♗xg5!

Of course, White is obliged to sacrifice his bishop. But what should Black do, to take or not to take?

33 . . . fxg5

'After this mistake White should have won. Only 33...♔f7! gave chances of a defence. White would have had to be content with a solid positional advantage after retreating with 34 ♗d2.' (Kasparov).

After 33...♔f7 34 ♗d2 ♖g8 35 ♕h4 ♔e7 (35...♗e8) 36 g4 ♗e8! 37 g5 fxg5 38 ♗xg5+ ♔d7 39 ♔h1 ♗f7 (Black intends ...♕d6 followed by ...a5–a4–a3) a complicated position with chances for both sides would have arisen (Yusupov, Dvoretsky). However, the offensive can be conducted more accurately: 34 ♗c1! ♖g8 35 ♕h3! ♔e7 36 g4 (threatening both 37 g5 fxg5 38 f6+, and the simple 37 ♖g2) 36...♖af8 37 ♖g2 and the unavoidable 38 g5 breakthrough secures White a decisive advantage (Bologan).

But after the acceptance of the bishop sacrifice, it would appear that, contrary to Kasparov's opinion, Black could have defended himself.

34 ♕xg5+ ♔f8

Of course, not 34...♔h8? 35 ♕f6+ ♔g8 36 ♖f3.

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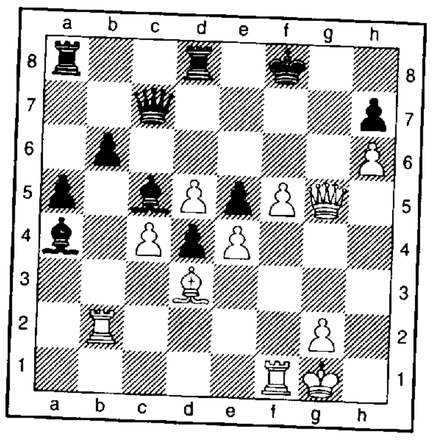

Q 9-44. What should White play?

In such a sharp position it is not possible to get by without calculation, but it is not necessary to calculate far (all the same it is practically impossible to exhaust the position by variations) – one only needs to sense in which continuation White will advantageously be able to maintain the tension.

35 ♕f6+?

A serious mistake, explained by time trouble (this is where Kasparov's unjustifiably long

think on the 18th move had its effect). **35 f6! ♕f7** (defending against 36 f7) **36 ♕xe5** was necessary.

A) 36...♕g6 37 ♖xb6! ♕xh6 38 ♕e7+!! ♗xe7 39 fxe7+ ♔xe7 40 ♖xh6 and wins (Kasparov).

B) 36...♗d7. White has a pleasant choice between 37 ♖xb6!? ♗xb6 (37...♖e8 38 ♖e6 ♗xe6 39 dxe6 ♖xe6 40 ♕xc5+) 38 ♕d6+ ♔g8 39 ♕xb6 (intending e4–e5–e6) 39...♔h8 (39...a4 40 e5 ♖e8 41 ♕xd4 a3 42 e6; 39...♖e8 40 ♕xd4) 40 e5 ♖g8 41 ♕xd4 (but not 41 e6? ♖xg2+ 42 ♔xg2 ♖g8+) 41...♖g4 42 ♕c3 ♖ag8 43 ♖f2 and 37 ♕g5!? ♕g6 38 ♕xg6 hxg6 39 e5 ♗f5 40 g4!! (40 e6 ♔g8 is less clear) 40...♗xg4 (40...♗xd3 41 h7) 41 ♖g2 – in both cases Black is helpless (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

C) **36...♖e8 37 ♕g5.** Instead of this move Bologan and I analysed 37 ♕f4!? ♕h5! (Black prepares 38...♖e5 and 39...♔f7) 38 ♖xb6!? ♗xb6 (38...♖a7 39 f7 ♖xf7 40 ♖f6 with a dangerous attack) 39 ♕d6+ ♔f7 40 ♕xb6 ♖ad8. A strange position, difficult to assess, has been reached. The chain of central white pawns compensates to some extent for the sacrificed rook, but, apparently, not more. Apart from the sacrifice on b6, White can also choose 38 f7!?, which leads to an unclear ending in the variation 38...♖e7 39 ♖bf2 ♗d7 40 ♕f6 ♕e5 41 ♕g7+ ♕xg7 42 hxg7+ ♔xg7 43 f8♕+ ♖xf8 44 ♖xf8 ♗e8! (followed by 45...a4 or 45...♗g6).

37...♕g6 38 ♖f5!.

see next diagram

B1) 38...♕xg5 39 ♖xg5 ♔f7 40 e5 (40 ♖g7+ is simpler, because 40...♔xf6 leads to a forced mate: 41 ♖f2+ ♔e5 42 ♖f5+ ♔d6 43 e5+! ♖xe5 44 ♖f6+) 40...♖g8 41 ♖g7+ ♖xg7 42 fxg7! ♔g8 43 ♖f2 ♗d7 (43...♗e8 44 ♖f8+! ♗xf8 45 ♗xh7+) 44 e6 ♗a4 45 d6! ♗xd6 46 e7! ♗xe7 47 ♗f5! ♗f7 48 ♗xh7+ (48 ♗e4+! Dvoretsky) 48...♗f6 49 g8♕+ ♖xg8 50 ♗xg8+ ♔xg8 51 ♖xf6 (Kasparov).

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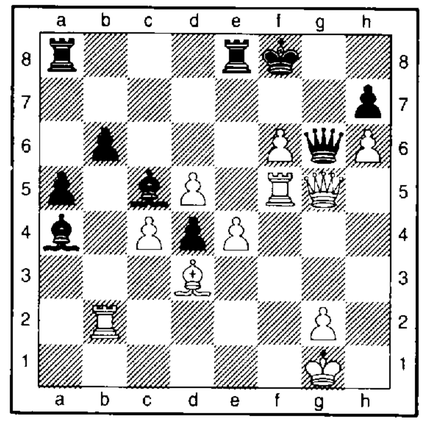

diagram after **38 ♖f5**

B2) 38...♖a7 39 e5 ♖xe5 40 ♖xe5 ♕xd3 41 f7 (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

B3) **38...♗d7! 39 ♕xg6 hxg6 40 ♖g5 ♔f7!** (40...a4 41 e5 a3 42 h7!) **41 e5.**

Zviagintsev's suggestion leads to a drawn rook endgame: 41 ♖f2 ♖h8 42 e5 ♖xh6 43 e6+ ♗xe6 44 ♗xg6+! (inferior is 44 dxe6+ ♔xe6 with advantage to Black) 44...♖xg6 45 dxe6+ ♔xe6 46 ♖xg6 d3 47 f7+ ♔e7 48 ♔f1 ♗xf2 49 ♔xf2 a4 50 ♖xb6 a3 51 ♖b1.

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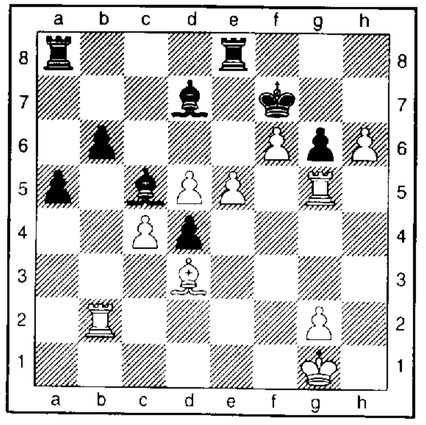

Q 9-45. How should Black defend?

This position also gave rise to an animated discussion, which, however, immediately proceeded in what I consider to be an incorrect direction. But let's take everything in order.

In his book Kasparov gave the winning variation 41...♖xe5 42 ♖xe5 ♔xf6 43 ♖be2 a4 (43...♗f5 44 ♖e8; 43...♖h8 44 ♖e6+ ♗xe6 45 ♖xe6+ ♔g5 46 ♖xg6+ ♔h5 47 ♔h2! or 46...♔f4 47 ♔f2!) 44 g4 (Kasparov awarded this move an exclamation mark) 44...♗xg4 (44...a3 45 g5+ ♔f7 46 d6! ♗xd6 47 ♖d5 a2 48 ♖xa2) 45 ♖e8 ♖a7 46 ♖8e6+ (46 ♖2e6+) 46...♗xe6 47 ♖xe6+ ♔g5 48 ♖xg6+ ♔f4 49 ♖g7 ♖a8 50 h7.

Timman showed that Black can save himself by moving his king to another square after the check: 48...♔h5! 49 ♖g7 ♖e7! 50 ♖xe7 ♗xe7 51 h7 ♗f6 52 d6 ♔h6 53 d7 ♔g7.

Instead of the exchange sacrifice on e6, White achieves more by placing his rook behind the passed pawn: 46 ♖h2!. Here is an interesting variation suggested by Frank Schonthier: 46...♖h7 47 ♖g2 ♗f5 48 ♖e6+ ♗xe6 49 ♖xg6+ ♔f7 50 ♖xe6 ♖h8 51 ♗g6+ ♔g8 52 d6 ♗xd6 53 h7+ ♔g7 54 ♖xd6 a3 55 ♗b1 ♖a8 56 ♗a2 (56 ♖xd4! a2 57 ♖g4+ ♔h8 58 ♖g8+ Dvoretsky) 56...♖b8 57 ♖d7+ ♔h8 58 ♖xd4 b5 59 c5 b4 60 c6 ♔xh7 61 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 62 c7. Yusupov and I checked 52...d3+!? (instead of 52...♗xd6) 53 ♔f1 ♗xd6 – it turned out that White also wins here. 54 ♖xd6 ♖xh6 55 ♖d8+ ♔g7 56 ♗xd3 ♖h1+ 57 ♔f2! (57 ♔e2? a3; 57 ♔g2 ♖d1) 57...a3 58 ♗f1 is not bad, but stronger is 54 h7+ ♔g7 55 ♖xd6 a3 56 ♗xd3 ♖a8! 57 ♖g6+! ♔h8 58 ♗b1 (58 ♖g8+ ♖xg8 59 hxg8♕+ ♔xg8 60 ♗b1 also wins) 58...a2 59 ♖g8+.

Later Kasparov also considered some other possibilities instead of 44 g4!?.

44 ♖e6+?! ♗xe6 45 ♖xe6+ ♔f7 46 ♗xg6+ ♔g8! 47 d6 d3+ and Black maintains the balance.

44 d6! a3 45 g4 ♗xg4 (45...a2 46 g5+ ♔f7 47 ♖e7+ and 48 ♖xa2) 46 ♖e8 ♖a7 47 ♖8e7 ♖xe7 48 dxe7 and wins. To 47 ♖8e7 Black can reply 47...♖a8, therefore 47 ♖2e7 ♖xe7 48 dxe7 a2 49 ♖a8 is stronger.

Apart from 44...a3, there is also 44...♖h8 – in this case White again wins with 45 g4! ♗xg4 46 ♖e8 ♖xh6 47 ♖f2+ ♔g7 48 ♖ef8! (more accurate than 48 ♖e7+ ♔g8 49 ♖f6, which, however, is also good enough to win) 48...♗f5 (48...♗e6 49 d7; 48...♖h3 49 ♖2f7+ ♔h6 50 ♖h8+ ♔g5 51 ♖xh3 ♗xh3 52 d7) 49 d7 ♗e7 50 ♗xf5 (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

Let us return to the position after White's 41st move (cf. the last diagram). Why should Black give up a whole rook, if he can restrict himself to a much smaller sacrifice? After Zviagintsev's suggestion of **41...♗f5! 42 ♗xf5 ♖xe5 43 ♗xg6+ ♔xf6** it would appear that White has no advantage (and that means, no win after 35 f6). If, for example, 44 ♖xe5 ♔xe5 45 ♖e2+, then not 45...♔f6? 46 ♖e6+ ♔g5 47 ♗d3 a4 48 ♖g6+ ♔f4 49 h7, but 45...♔f4! 46 ♗d3 a4 47 h7 a3 48 ♔f1 ♔g5 followed by ...♔h6–g7.

35 . . . ♔e8

36 ♖a1

'The point of White's play. Now, in the event of the retreat of the bishop, White's 35th move is fully justified, but... the bishop is not obliged to retreat!' (Kasparov).

36 . . . ♕e7!!

see next diagram

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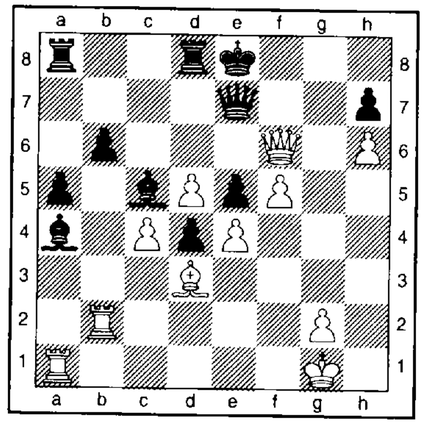

'Petrosian made this brilliant move almost without thinking. White's attack evaporates, since his rooks are tied up on the queenside. Realising that the ending after 37 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 38 ♖xa4 ♖d6 was completely unpromising, I attempted to 'muddy the water'.' (Kasparov).

37 ♕e6!?

37 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 38 ♖xa4 ♖d6 (38...♖g8 39 ♔h2 ♖af8 40 g3 ♖f6 is equally good) 39 g3 ♖g8!? 40 ♔g2 ♖xh6 41 ♖a1 (41 ♖b3 ♖h4) 41...♖h5 42 ♖f2 ♖hg5 43 ♖f3 h5 and Black has a great advantage (Yusupov, Dvoretsky). Less accurate is 39...♖xh6 (instead of 39...♖g8) 40 ♖h2 ♖xh2 41 ♔xh2 ♔f6, although this position too is difficult for White. *'Then Black exchanges his h-pawn for the white g-pawn, the king reaches f4 – and it is hard for White to defend. Note that Black's bishop is far stronger than its opponent, and the passed a- and d-pawns are clearly superior to the blocked white d- and f-pawns.'* (Petrosian).

However, by avoiding the exchange of queens, White merely accelerates his defeat.

37 . . . ♖d6!

Of course, not 37...♕xe6 38 fxe6 ♗d7 39 exd7+ ♖xd7 40 ♖f2 with equal chances.

38 ♕g8+ ♕f8

39 ♕g3

39 ♕xf8+!? ♔xf8 40 ♖xa4 ♔e7 or 40...♖xh6 leads to the same positions as after 37 ♕xe7+.

39 . . . ♕xh6!

40 ♖xa4??

If 40 ♖f2, then strong is 40...♔f7!? 41 ♖xa4 ♖g8! (41...♕c1+ 42 ♖f1 ♕e3+ 43 ♕xe3 dxe3 also comes into consideration) 42 ♕xe5 ♕c1+ 43 ♖f1 ♕e3+ 44 ♖f2 ♕xd3 (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

'Not a trace of White's attack remains, but he could still have resisted by 40 ♖e2. Now 40...♗d7 gives White quite good counter-chances: 41 ♕xe5+ ♔f7 42 ♕g3 ♖g8 43 ♕f3, and his pawn trio cannot be underestimated. The much stronger 40...♗b3! with the threat of ...♗xc4 would have left Black with the advantage, but at any rate he would still have had to solve a number of problems.' (Kasparov). Also quite good is 40...♔f7!? 41 ♖xa4 ♖g8, as in the 40 ♖f2 variation given above (Yusupov, Dvoretsky).

40 . . . ♕c1+

41 ♔f2 ♕xb2+

42 ♔f3 ♔f7

White resigns.

'At the conclusion of the tournament I was interested to learn of the opinion that my result (2nd-4th place) was partly explained by good luck...' (Kasparov). I don't know how it was regarding the other games of the tournament, but regarding the present game the grandmaster's allusion to bad luck is hardly justified. Misfortune befell him not due to some accidental slip, but as a consequence of his incompetent conduct of the attack, which manifested itself in not just one, but several episodes.

What is Meant by High Class

I hear the speech not of a boy, but of a man.
Alexander Pushkin

Almost every gifted young player can boast of energetic attacks, crowned by spectacular combinations. Such games are an indication of the young player's talent, but not necessarily of mature, high class play. After all, ***a player's class is inseparably linked with versatility, with an ability to take independent decisions in a variety of situations that arise during play.***

In the chapter 'How a player develops' I described the preparation of Alexey Dreev, which was crowned in 1983 by him winning the honourable title of world 'cadet' champion – for juniors up to the age of 16. The following year in Champigny (France) Alexey repeated his success and became champion for the second time. And, finally, in the world junior (under-20) championship in Kiljava (Finland) the fifteen-year-old Dreev, scoring 10 points out of 13, finished ahead of almost all his rivals, many of whom were several years older, and won the silver medal (the winner with 10½ points was the Danish player Curt Hansen). It is noteworthy that in all three world championships Dreev did not lose a single game!

An analysis of Alexey's games, played in Champigny, showed that his skill in playing endings was not up to the mark. At a training session before Kiljava we made a serious study of endgame theory and technique. The results of this work told immediately (you will sense this in the game examined below). But what is far more important is the fact that since then technique has become one of the strong aspects of Dreev's play and it hardly ever lets him down.

Thorsteins – Dreev

World Junior Championship, Kiljava 1984

1	**d4**	**d5**
2	**c4**	**c6**
3	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
4	**♘c3**	**a6!?**

Black has chosen a variation proposed by the well-known trainer from Kishinev, Vyacheslav Chebanenko. Now it is regularly employed by Alexey Shirov, Vladimir Epishin, Julian Hodgson and other well-known grandmasters, but then it had not yet become fashionable.

In our preparations for the world championship we decided to expand Dreev's opening repertoire, by adopting several such 'sidelines'. The advantages of such an approach are obvious: we did not require too much time to study the new systems, and the opponents might not be fully prepared for a battle away from fashionable variations.

Generally speaking, such a way of developing an opening repertoire is questionable and it should not become a long-term one, but as a temporary measure when preparing for a specific event it is acceptable.

The first time that the 4...a6 variation was employed in the tournament was in the **Wells–Dreev** game. At that point both players had 3 points out of 3. Their encounter, although it ended in a quick draw, took a very tense course.

5 cxd5 cxd5 6 ♗f4 ♘c6 7 ♖c1 (7 e3!? ♗g4) **7...♘e4! 8 a3!?.** This move is explained by the variation 8 e3 ♘xc3 9 ♖xc3? e5! followed by 10...♗b4. In the game Belyavsky–Gavrikov (49th USSR Championship, Frunze 1981) White preferred 8 ♘e5, but after 8...♘xc3 9 ♖xc3 ♗d7 10 ♕b3 f6! 11 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 12 e3 e6 13 ♗d3 ♗e7 14 0–0 ♔f7! Black gained equality.

8...♗f5 9 e3 e6 10 ♕a4!? f6! 11 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 12 ♘d2 ♗f5 13 ♖xc6!?. In the event of 13 ♗e2 the game is roughly equal. The young English player aims for complications.

13...bxc6 14 ♕xc6+ ♔f7 15 ♗xa6.

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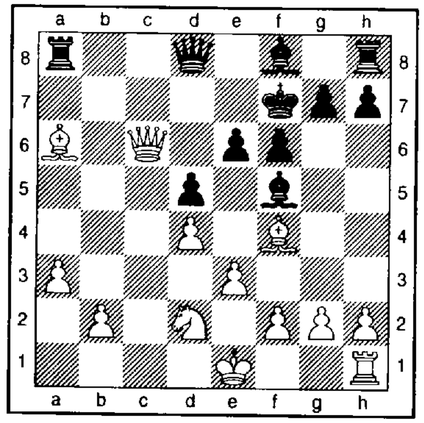

Q 9-46. What should Black play?

He must think not only about defence, but also about a future counter-attack. In connection with this the strongest move would seem to be the aggressive pawn thrust 15...g5!. 16 ♗c7? is not possible on account of 16...♖xa6, while after 16 ♗b7?! gxf4 17 ♗xa8 fxe3 18 fxe3 ♗h6 White's position becomes dangerous. Events can develop roughly as follows: 19 ♗b7 ♗xe3 20 ♕c3 (20 ♘f3!?) 20...♗xd2+ 21 ♔xd2 ♕b6 22 ♗c6 ♖c8 (22...♖g8!?) 23 ♖c1 ♖xc6! 24 ♕xc6 ♕xd4+ etc. There remains 16 ♗g3 ♖a7!. Black is threatening 17...♕a5 (in reply, say, to 17 0–0). If 17 b4, then 17...♕a8 is strong, while after 17 ♘b3, apart from 17...♕a8, he can also consider 17...h5!? 18 h4 gxh4 19 ♖xh4 ♖g8 with the threat of 20...♖xg3 21 fxg3 ♕b8.

Unfortunately, Dreev played less actively and conceded the initiative to his opponent.

15...♗e7?! 16 ♗b7 ♖a7 17 0–0 (incorrect is 17 ♗c7? ♕e8 18 ♕b6 ♕d7!) **17...♕a5 18 ♘b3 ♕a4 19 ♕b6?!.** The exchange of queens would have led to a better ending for White: 19 ♕xa4!? ♖xa4 20 ♖c1 ♖c4 (20...♖a7 21 ♖c7; 20...♗d3 21 ♘c5) 21 ♖xc4 dxc4 22 ♘a5.

19...♗d8 20 ♗c7 ♗xc7 21 ♕xc7+ ♔g6 22 ♕g3+ ♔f7 23 ♕c7+. Draw. Peter Wells was perhaps too hasty in agreeing a draw – he could still have played for a win: 23...♔g6 24 ♘c5! ♕a5 25 ♕c6! ♖b8 26 b4! (but not immediately 26 ♗c8? ♖c7 27 ♕e8+ ♔h6) 26...♕xa3 27 ♗c8 ♕xb4 28 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 29 ♕xe6 and White's position remains preferable.

In the 8th round Dreev again employed the same variation – this time against the future bronze medal winner, Karl Thorsteins.

We managed to guess the opponent's choice of opening. It was not hard to assume that, in searching for an opening weapon against 4...a6, the Icelandic player would turn to the latest *Informator* (the recent article by Chebanenko's pupil, grandmaster Viktor Gavrikov 'A new system in the Slav Defence', published at the end of 1983 in the magazine *Shakhmaty v SSSR*, which served as our main source of information, was almost certainly not known to him). The 36th volume of *Informator* gave Vladimir Tukmakov's notes to a game won by him with White – it was this that Thorsteins decided to take as a starting point.

After studying the game **Tukmakov–Bagirov** (USSR 1983), Dreev and I came to the conclusion that Black could have achieved good play. The result was an interesting opening duel.

5	**♗g5**	**♘e4**

6	**♗f4**	**♘xc3**
7	**bxc3**	**dxc4**
8	**g3**	

In reply to 8 e4 b5 9 ♘e5 Gavrikov recommended 9...♗e6, intending 10...f6.

8	**. . .**	**b5**
9	**♗g2**	**♗b7**
10	**♘e5**	

This move serves as a prologue to interesting combinative complications. White goes in for them, since otherwise the opponent will play 10...♘d7 and the compensation for the pawn will become problematic.

10	**. . .**	**f6!**

Black accepts the challenge. If 10...♕c8 Tukmakov gives the following variation: 11 ♖b1 ♘d7 12 ♘xc4! bxc4 13 ♕a4 e5 14 dxe5 ♘c5 15 ♕xc4, and 15...♕e6? 16 ♕xe6+ fxe6 17 ♖xb7 is bad for Black.

11	**♘xc4!**	

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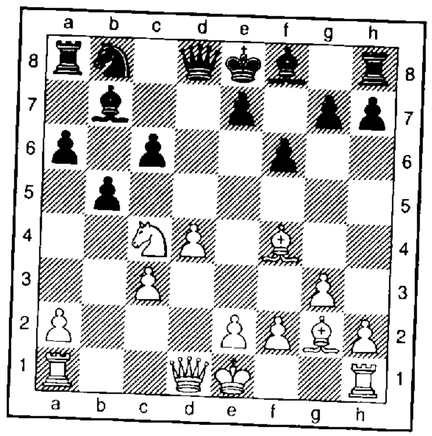

Q 9-47. What should Black play?

In the afore-mentioned source game Vladimir Bagirov continued 11...bxc4?! 12 ♖b1 e5 13 ♖xb7 exf4, and after 14 ♕a4?! ♕c8 15 ♖b6 ♗d6 16 ♕xc4 ♔e7 he was able to repel the first wave of the attack and obtain a promising position. However, as Tukmakov pointed out, White could have played more strongly: 14 ♕b1! ♗e7 (14...♗d6 15 ♖xg7) 15 ♕e4! ♕d6 16 0–0 ♘d7 (16...fxg3 17 hxg3 g6 18 ♖fb1 is hardly any better) 17 ♕xc6 ♕xc6 18 ♗xc6 0–0–0 19 ♖fb1 ♗d6 20 ♖a7 with advantage.

Black also has a difficult position after 11...e5?! 12 dxe5 ♕xd1+ 13 ♖xd1 bxc4 14 e6! ♗c8 15 ♖b1.

It turns out that here, as at the critical moment of the Wells–Dreev game analysed earlier, the key to the position is the interposition of ...g7–g5!, improving Black's chances in the forthcoming struggle.

11	**. . .**	**g5!!**
12	**♗xb8**	

Many years later Viswanathan Anand tried 12 ♗e3! bxc4 13 ♖b1 ♕c7 14 h4 against Alexey Shirov, with good compensation for the sacrificed piece.

12	**. . .**	**bxc4!**

Unexpectedly White's bishop is trapped. How can he sell it most dearly? Sergey Dolmatov suggested the paradoxical move 13 ♗e5! with the aim of avoiding further exchanges and of weakening in advance the black king's shelter on the kingside. For example, 13...fxe5 14 ♖b1 ♕c7 15 ♕a4 ♔f7 (or 15...♖c8 16 dxe5) 16 ♕xc4+ e6 17 d5! exd5 18 ♗xd5+ ♔f6 19 f4!. It is hard to say where White has better chances of an attack, here or in the variation by Anand given above – the answer can be given only by further experience.

13	**♖b1**	**♖xb8**
14	**♖xb7**	**♖xb7**
15	**♗xc6+**	**♖d7**
16	**♕a4**	**e6**
17	**0–0**	

see next diagram

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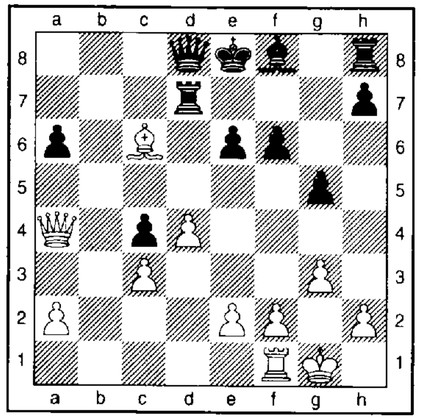

In his comments Tukmakov considered this variation and continued it as follows: 17...♔e7 18 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 19 ♕xa6 ♗g7 20 ♕xc4 ♖c8 21 ♕d3. In our preparations for the game we decided that the concluding position was acceptable for Black, and we also noticed the possibility of developing the bishop on another, better diagonal: 19...♔f7!? (instead of 19...♗g7) 20 ♖b1 ♗e7.

However, at the board Dreev did not blindly repeat the moves that had been prepared at home. He pondered over the position and found the most accurate development scheme for his pieces.

17	**. . .**	**♗d6!**

Such decisions display not only good positional understanding, but, and this is even more important, independence of thought and confidence in your own powers. Having developed these qualities in himself, already in his youth Dreev became a mature player of quite high class, of which I, as his trainer, am of course proud. After all, the point of my work with young players is not the training of them in the countless opening variations and not the pursuit of rapid successes in second-rate events, but the development of personality, character and chess thinking, which serves as a guarantee of great competitive and creative achievements in the future.

18	**♕xa6**	

It becomes clear that Dreev has won the opening duel – White has not managed to mount an attack and must now try and gain a draw. However, he has the right to count on one – for the missing bishop he will have a sufficient material equivalent: three pawns.

It is not easy to give a correct evaluation of the subsequent events – the resulting positions are highly unusual. It was even more difficult for the two players. An accurate calculation of the variations was not possible and they had to rely on their intuition. In such a struggle what was bound to tell (and gradually did so) was Dreev's higher class, those technical skills that he had developed at the training session before the world championship.

Instead of the move in the game White could have chosen 18 ♖b1 ♔e7 19 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 20 ♕xa6 ♖c8 21 ♖b7!? ♖c7 22 ♖xc7 ♕xc7. Now the direct 23 a4? is incorrect in view of 23...♗b4!! 24 cxb4 c3 25 d5 (25 ♕d3 c2 26 ♕xh7+ ♔d6) 25...exd5 26 ♕d3 c2 27 ♕e3+ ♔d7 28 ♕c1 ♕c4 and the pawn will soon queen. 23 ♕b5! is essential. Then it makes sense for Black to harass the enemy king with 23...h5! 24 a4 h4 (preparing ...h4–h3 and ...♕b8). If 25 ♔g2, then either immediately 25...♕b8 26 ♕xc4 ♕b1, or first 25...f5 – in both cases it is not easy for White to defend.

18	**. . .**	**♔f7!**

From here the king will be able to defend the h7 pawn if necessary. In the variation 18...♔e7 19 ♗xd7 ♕xd7 20 ♕xc4 ♖b8 (or 20...♖c8) 21 ♕d3 ♔f8 22 c4 for the moment the black queen is tied to this pawn.

19	**♗xd7**	**♕xd7**
20	**♕xc4**	

The position arising after 20 ♖b1 ♖c8 21 ♖b7 ♖c7 22 ♖xc7 ♕xc7 has already been

considered, but with the king on e7, where it is slightly better placed. The difference tells in the variation 23 a4!? ♗b4?! 24 cxb4 c3 (24...♔g7? does not work in view of 25 b5 c3 26 b6 ♕c6 27 ♕a7+ ♔g6 28 ♕c7) 25 ♕d3 ♔g7 26 ♕c2 ♕c4 27 b5 (but not 27 ♔f1? ♕xb4 28 ♔e1 ♕b2 29 ♔d1 ♕a1+ 30 ♕c1 ♕xa4+ and 31...♕xd4) 27...♕xd4 28 ♕b3 with a probable draw.

20 . . . ♖b8
21 a4

Another possibility is 21 ♕d3 ♔g7 22 c4, as was played nine years later in the game Rashkovsky–Rublevsky (Kurgan 1993). Black will probably win the a2 pawn, but it is hard to say whether this will give him real winning chances. After all, the pawn chain h2–g3–f2–e3–d4–c5 restricts the mobility of the black bishop.

21 . . . ♕c8
22 ♕d3 ♔g7
23 f4?

Here, at last, is a positional mistake! White is afraid of 23...♖b3 and he prepares to defend his pawn with his rook from f3. However, this move weakens the king's defences and gives Black chances of an attack. White should have played on his a-pawn: 23 ♖a1 ♖b3 24 a5, or 23 c4 ♕a6 (this is the point of Black's 21...♕c8) 24 ♖d1 ♕xa4 25 c5.

23 . . . gxf4
24 gxf4

see next diagram

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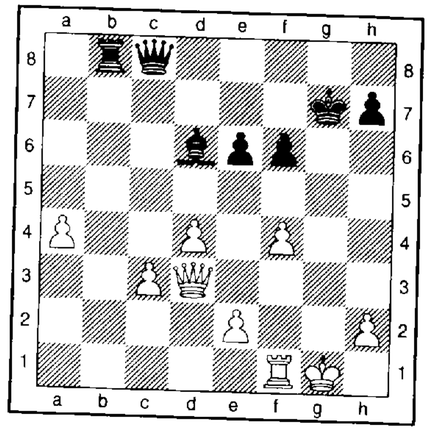

Q 9-48. How should Black continue?

He has to reckon with e2–e4 or f4–f5. He must immediately block the opponent's pawns.

24 . . . f5!

After 25...♕c6 Black will control the entire board. Therefore Thorsteins decides to give up material with the aim of exchanging as many pawns as possible.

25 e4 fxe4
26 ♕xe4 ♕xc3
27 ♕xe6 ♕xd4+
28 ♔h1

Dreev has only his rook's pawn left, and its queening square is inaccessible to the bishop, which would guarantee White a draw if he were able to exchange all the heavy pieces. This means that Black must play for an attack, avoiding exchanges. This is easier said than done – after all, the black king is also exposed and he has to reckon with the threat of the a-pawn advancing. In a number of variations it is evident that Black will nevertheless have to agree to the exchange of queens – in so doing it is important only that he achieves the optimum arrangement of his pieces.

28 . . . ♖f8

Of course, not 28...♗xf4?? 29 ♕g4+. 28...♔h8 looks the most natural, and if 29 f5? ♖g8 30 f6 ♗c5 with unavoidable mate. Dreev was concerned about the reply 29 a5, when 29...♖g8 30 a6 ♗c5 is not good on account of the exchange of queens: 31 ♕e5+ ♕xe5 32 fxe5 with a probable draw. And after 29...♗xf4 30 a6 White is threatening 31 a7.

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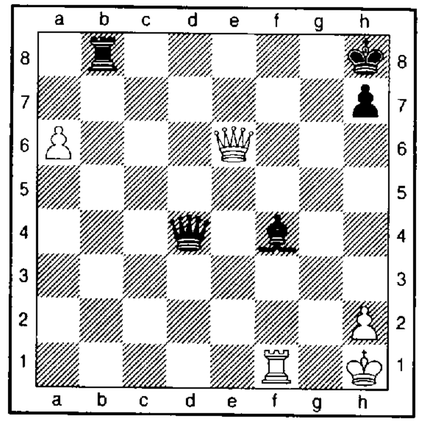

Q 9-49. How should Black continue?

30...♗e5 is tempting, creating the threat of 31...♕e4+. However, White plays 31 ♖e1! and 31...♖b1 does not work in view of 32 ♕e8+ (32 ♕c8+? ♔g7 33 ♖xb1 ♕e4+ 34 ♔g1 ♗d4+ 35 ♔f1 ♕f3+ 36 ♔e1 ♗c3+) 32...♔g7 33 ♕e7+ ♔g6 34 ♕e6+ (34 ♕e8+ is also possible) 34...♔g5 35 ♕g8+! with a draw (but not 35 ♕e7+? ♗f6 and Black wins).

The problem is solved by 30...♕b2! 31 ♕h3 (31 ♖xf4? ♕c1+) 31...♗e5 and 32 a7? is not possible because of 32...♕b7+. In the event of 32 ♕g2 for the moment the exchange of queens is premature: 32...♕xg2+?! 33 ♔xg2 ♖b2+ 34 ♖f2 or 33...♖a8 34 ♖e1 and the a6 pawn restricts Black. 32...♕d4! is much stronger. and if 33 ♕f2, then 33...♕xf2 34 ♖xf2 ♖b1+! 35 ♔g2 ♖a1. By establishing his rook 'in accordance with the rules' – behind the passed pawn – Black should win.

However, the way chosen by Dreev is also not bad.

29 ♕a2

An unexpected reply! After 29 a5!? Black was planning 29...♗c5 30 a6 (30 f5 ♔h8 followed by 31...♖g8; 30 ♖e1 ♖xf4 31 ♕e5+ ♕xe5 32 ♖xe5 ♗f8!? and 33...♖a4) 30...♖xf4 31 ♖b1 ♖f7! and it is not easy for White to defend. If 29 f5, then either 29...♔h8, or 29...♖f6 30 ♖g1+ ♔h6.

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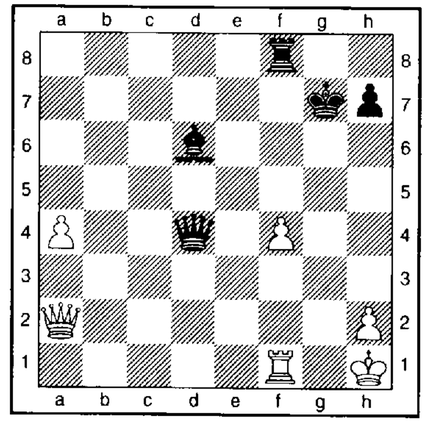

29 . . . ♗b4!

Excellent technique! Black prevents the advance of the passed pawn: 30 a5 ♕e4+ 31 ♕g2+ ♕xg2+ 32 ♔xg2 ♗xa5. Also useless is 30 ♕a1 ♗c3.

30 ♕f2

White nevertheless forces the exchange of queens, but in a situation where the a-pawn has not managed to advance too far.

30 . . . ♕xf2
31 ♖xf2 ♖a8
32 ♖a2 ♖a5!

The passed pawn must be blockaded – otherwise the opponent will play 33 a5!.

33 ♔g2 ♔f6
34 ♔f3 ♔f5

35 ♖e2

Otherwise Black would have played 35... ♗d6, winning the f4 pawn. In White's place I would nevertheless have preferred to give up this pawn, but preserve the a-pawn, which restricts the enemy rook. However, in any case the win for Black is merely a question of time.

35	**. . .**	**♖xa4**
36	**♖e5+**	**♔f6**
37	**♖h5**	**♖a7**
38	**♖h6+**	**♔g7**
39	**♖b6**	

39 ♖c6 was slightly more tenacious.

39	**. . .**	**♗c3**
40	**♔g4**	

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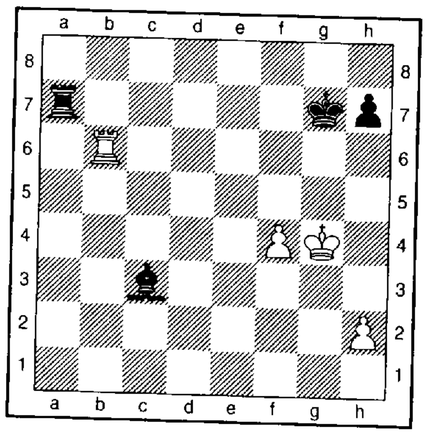

40	**. . .**	**♖a5!**

By frightening the opponent with the check 41...h5+, Dreev wants to 'persuade' him to advance his pawn to f5, which will make it much easier for Black to convert his advantage. The tactical justification of Black's move is provided by the variation 41 ♖b7+ ♔g6 42 f5+ ♖xf5 43 ♖xh7 ♖g5+ 44 ♔h4 ♗f6! and wins (but not 44...♗e1+? 45 ♔h3, and 45...♔xh7 leads to stalemate).

41	**f5**	**♖a4+**

Here the game was adjourned.

42 ♔h5?!

Directly into a mating net! True, all the same things were bad for White. If 42 ♔f3, then 42...♗e5 is strong, while in the event of 42 ♔g5 we decided in our analysis not to put the pawn on h6 for the moment, but to choose 42...♗d2+ 43 ♔h5 ♗e3! (but not 43...♗e1? in view of 44 ♖b7+ ♔f6 45 ♖b6+ ♔xf5 46 ♖b5+ ♔f4 47 ♖b7) 44 ♖c6 (44 ♖b7+ ♔f6 45 ♖xh7 ♗f2 and mate is inevitable) 44...♗f2 45 f6+ (45 ♖c7+ ♔f6 46 ♖c6+ ♔xf5 and there is no check from c5) 45...♔f7 with the decisive threat of 46...♖h4+ 47 ♔g5 h6+ 48 ♔f5 ♖h5+ and 49...♖xh2.

42	**. . .**	**♗f6!**
43	**♖b7+**	**♔g8**
44	**♖b8+**	**♔f7**
45	**♖b7+**	**♗e7**
46	**f6**	

The only defence against mate.

46	**. . .**	**♔xf6**
47	**♖b3**	**♔g7**
48	**♖g3+**	**♔h8**
49	**♖h3**	**♖e4**

49...♖f4 would have won one move more quickly.

50	**♔h6**	**♖e5**
51	**♖f3**	**♗c5**

White resigns.

Here are two further fragments of Dreev's play from the same world championship.

E 9-5

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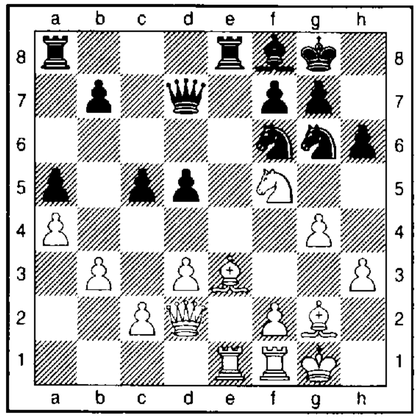

Black to move

E 9-6

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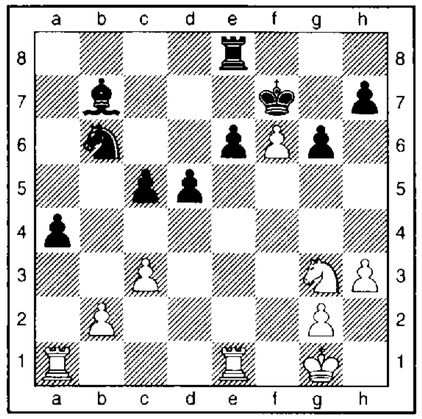

White to move

A Storm on the Chess Board

There is rapture in battle,
And dark chasms on the edge.
Alexander Pushkin

In his younger years Artur Yusupov was weak in tactics and therefore he played in a strictly positional style, avoiding combinative complications. He realised, of course, that it was not possible to become a great player without a mastery of all forms of chess weapons, and so he began serious efforts to make his play more harmonious. He had to solve or play numerous exercises from my card index, aimed at developing his combinative vision and technique in calculating variations.

However, on its own, training at home is insufficient. It is important to learn to conduct a complicated struggle in the tense atmosphere of a real event, and to develop in yourself the appropriate psychological skills – a constant striving for the initiative, composure, and belief in your own powers. And therefore Artur decided to play several tournaments in an ultra-aggressive manner, deliberately provoking complications even when the situation did not demand it. He realised that initially such an approach would inevitably entail competitive failures, but he went in for in order to acquire the necessary experience.

I should remind the readers that in 1977 the seventeen-year-old Yusupov won the honourable title of world junior champion. In the following year's world championship he finished second, behind only Sergey Dolmatov. In 1979 Artur earned the right to participate in a strong grandmaster tournament in Amsterdam. However, the Soviet powers did not allow him to go there, insisting that he play (for the third successive time) in the world junior championship that was taking place at the same time. It is not hard to guess Artur's mood and the reasons why it was this tournament that he decided to devote to training aims. According to my calculations, there he sacrificed a total of 15 (!) pawns. The competitive result was, of course, not a good one (7½ points out of 13), but on the other hand useful experience was acquired. A few months later Yusupov won the silver medal in the USSR Championship.

In the strong Moscow Championship of 1981 Artur sacrificed not just pawns, but pieces, but also without particular success. And at the end of the same year in the USSR Championship he went in for complications in all his games and scored 7 wins, but he suffered 7 defeats.

The work carried out by Yusupov told in the following year, 1982, when he gained an excellent victory in the zonal tournament for the world championship. His play had become harmonious. Artur was not afraid to take risks and in sharp situations he outplayed his opponents, but at the same time he acted quite soberly and did not lose a single game.

Since that time Yusupov's tactical mastery has served him faithfully. It also played a highly important role in his quarter-final candidates match against Jan Timman. We will now analyse the most tense and complicated game from this match.

Timman – Yusupov

Candidates match, 6th game, Tilburg 1986

1	**d4**	**d5**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**♘c3**	**♘f6**
4	**♘f3**	**♗e7**
5	**♗g5**	**h6**
6	**♗xf6**	**♗xf6**
7	**♕b3**	**c6**

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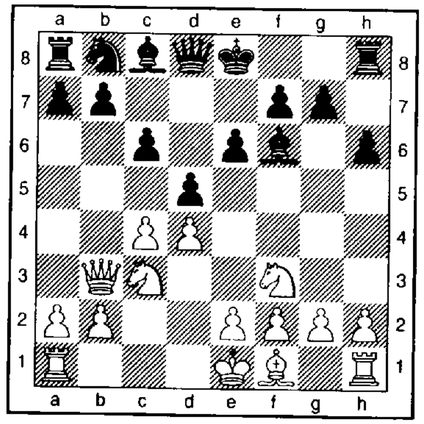

The third game of the Kasparov–Karpov world championship match (Moscow 1985) went 8 e3 ♘d7 9 ♖d1 0–0 10 ♗d3 b6 11 cxd5?! cxd5 12 e4 dxe4 13 ♗xe4 ♖b8 14 0–0 b5! and Black equalised.

Instead of the pawn exchange on d5, more promising is 11 0–0 ♗b7 12 ♖fe1! (but not the hasty 12 e4 because of the reply pointed out by Garry Kasparov: 12...c5! 13 e5 cxd4 14 exf6 ♘c5! 15 ♕c2 dxc3 16 fxg7 ♔xg7 17 ♕xc3+ ♕f6), for example:

12...♖e8 13 ♗b1 ♖c8 14 cxd5 exd5 15 e4 ♘f8 16 e5 ♗e7 17 ♕c2 ♖c7 18 a3 ♗c8 19 h3 g6 20 ♕d2 ♔g7 21 ♘h2 with the better chances for White (Yusupov–Short, Barcelona 1989);

12...♗e7!? 13 e4 dxc4 14 ♗xc4 b5 15 ♗d3 ♕b6 16 e5 ♖fd8 17 ♗e4!? ♖ac8 18 h4 a6 and Black has an acceptable position (Yusupov–Spraggett, candidates match, 1st game, Quebec 1989).

The question suggests itself: since White's opening strategy (as follows from the above examples) involves advancing his pawn to e4, why not play it in one go, without wasting a tempo on e2–e3 ?

The immediate 8 e4?! is not dangerous for Black in view of 8...dxe4 9 ♘xe4 ♕a5+!, and every way of blocking the check has its drawbacks.

8 ♖d1 0–0 9 e4 dxe4 10 ♘xe4 ♘d7 (interesting is 10...♗e7 11 ♗e2 ♕a5+! 12 ♖d2 ♘d7 13 0–0 e5, as in the game Lerner–M.Gurevich, 53rd USSR Championship, Kiev 1986) 11 ♗e2 e5 has occurred many times, for example:

12 0–0 exd4 13 ♘xd4 ♗xd4 14 ♖xd4 ♕e7 15 ♘g3 ♘f6 16 ♖fd1 ♗e6 with equality (Dolmatov–Pigusov, Kharkov 1985);

12 d5!? ♕a5+ 13 ♘fd2! ♗d8 14 0–0 ♘c5 15 ♕g3 cxd5 16 cxd5 ♘xe4 17 ♘xe4 ♕xa2 18 ♕xe5 and the initiative remained with White (Nikolic–Yusupov, Reykjavik 1988).

8 0–0–0!?

It is strange, but this logical move turned out to be a novelty. It is an indication of Timman's fighting mood – having just lost the 5th game, he wanted to gain revenge immediately and again take the lead.

8 ... dxc4

The logical reaction: otherwise after 9 e4 the exchange of pawns on c4 will lose its strength – White will recapture with the bishop. 8...♕b6 is too risky in view of 9 ♕c2! dxc4 10 ♘e4!? (10 e4 ♕a6 is less clear).

9 ♕xc4 b5

10 ♕b3

The queen could also have retreated to d3; then Black would have continued 10...♘d7 11 e4 ♕a5 with the threat of 12...b4 – the a2 pawn could have come under attack.

10 ... a5!?

Yusupov is in an equally aggressive mood as his opponent. He hurries to advance his queenside pawns, to build up an attack on the enemy king. This is risky strategy, since in the process Black falls behind in development. Another way of handling the position was 10...♘d7 followed by ...♗b7 and ...a7–a6.

11 e4 a4
12 ♕c2 ♘d7

12...♕a5? 13 ♘xb5 was incorrect, but the development of the knight at a6 came into consideration.

'There was one thing during the game that, I think, I sensed correctly. Black should not be in a hurry to castle, since after the move ...h7–h6 the position of his king proves vulnerable. White will begin a pawn storm with h2–h4 and g2–g4–g5 and in the given situation he may get there first' (Yusupov). I should add that, in the event of castling, Black would have also had to reckon with another, no less dangerous plan of attack: e4–e5, followed by ♕e4 and ♗d3.

13 d5!?

Timman again chooses the sharpest and most critical, although by no means indisputable continuation. By opening lines, he emphasises the drawbacks of the black king's position in the centre. However, in so doing he opens the diagonal of the bishop at f6, which may become extremely dangerous.

If White desired, be could have directed the play along quieter lines by 13 e5 ♗e7 14 ♘e4 ♗b7 15 ♔b1. The immediate 13 ♔b1!? also had its point, not revealing for the moment his plans in the centre.

13 . . . cxd5

Bad was 13...b4? 14 dxe6 bxc3 (14...fxe6 15 ♘xa4) 15 exd7+ ♗xd7 16 e5 (Timman).

14 exd5

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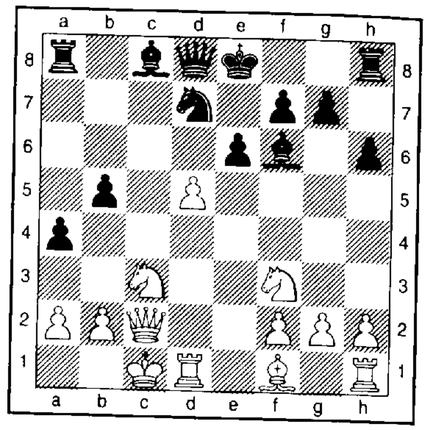

Q 9-50. How should Black continue?

It is now, after the opening of the centre, that the appropriate moment to evacuate the king from there has arrived. By playing 14...0–0! 15 dxe6 fxe6 Black would have retained good counterplay. His threat of 16...a3 is rather unpleasant. Here are some possible variations:

16 ♕e4 ♕a5 or 16...♗xc3;

16 ♘xb5 a3! 17 ♘xa3 ♖xa3! 18 bxa3 ♕a5 with good compensation for the sacrificed exchange;

16 ♗xb5 a3 17 ♗c4 axb2+ 18 ♔b1 ♕a5! with the better chances for Black.

14 . . . a3?!

Yusupov oversteps the bounds of acceptable risk and ends up on the verge of defeat. His problems were soon aggravated by severe time trouble: for his last twenty-odd moves he left himself only a few minutes. I have to admit that both I, and Sergey Dolmatov, who was helping Artur in this match, had lost all hope of a favourable outcome to the game. And only Artur himself retained his optimism.

15 dxe6 axb2+
16 ♔b1

A standard defensive procedure: the king

finds itself a secure shelter by hiding behind an enemy pawn.

16 . . fxe6

The piece sacrifice 16...0–0 17 exd7 ♕a5 (17...♗xd7 18 ♗xb5) is incorrect in view of 18 ♕b3! (inferior is 18 dxc8♕? ♖fxc8) 18...♗xc3 19 dxc8♕ or 18...♗b7 19 ♘d4 (19 ♘d5) 19...b4 20 ♘cb5.

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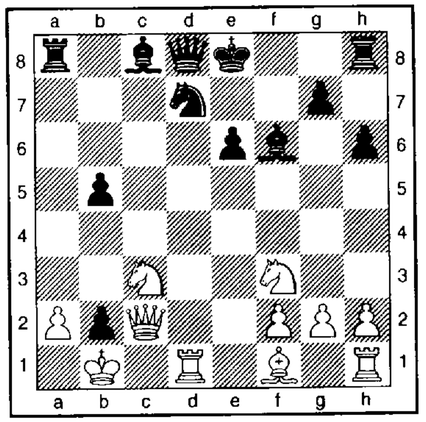

Q 9-51. What should White play?

We have already seen the position arising after 17 ♗xb5 0–0 18 ♗c4!? in our discussion of the variation 14...0–0! 15 dxe6 fxe6 16 ♗xb5, while 17 ♘e4?! 0–0 is ineffective. After 17 ♘xb5 0–0 18 ♘c7?! Black cannot play 18...♗b7? 19 ♘xa8 ♕xa8 20 ♖xd7 ♖c8 (20...♗c6 21 ♖a7!) 21 ♗c4 ♗e4 22 ♖d3. Yusupov had prepared a worthy reply: 18...♖a7! and the e6 pawn is indirectly defended (19 ♘xe6? ♖xa2!).

Of course, the queen check is tempting, but after 17 ♕g6+ ♔f8 it is now pointless to play 18 ♕e4 ♕a5, since the e6 pawn cannot be captured with check. Also, nothing is achieved by 18 ♘d4 ♕b6 19 ♕e4 ♗b7 20 ♘xe6+ ♔g8, while to Mikhalchishin's recommendation of 18 ♘xb5 there follows the simple 18...♕e7! (but not 18...♕a5?! 19 ♗c4 ♘b6? 20 ♘d6 and not Yusupov's suggestion of 18...♗b7?! 19 ♘d6 ♕e7! 20 ♘xb7 ♘b6! in view of 21 ♘d6 ♕a7 22 a3!). In addition, the bold 17...♔e7!? is possible – the complications after 18 ♘d4 ♕b6 19 ♘f5+ ♔d8 20 ♘d6 ♗xc3 21 ♘f7+ ♔e7 22 ♘xh8 ♕xf2 (or 22...♕a6!?) favour Black.

Grandmaster Timman found the strongest continuation of the attack.

17 ♕e4!

What should Black do now? 17...♖a6 18 ♗xb5 ♖b6 19 ♗xd7+ (19 ♘d4) 19...♗xd7 20 ♘d5 is unpromising for him. He would like to play 17...♕a5, but after 18 ♕xe6+ ♔f8 19 ♗xb5 it is not apparent how to defend against the threats of 20 ♗c4 and 20 ♗xd7.

I thought that Black would have to admit the faultiness of his preceding strategy and go in for the variation 17...♖b8 18 ♕xe6+ ♕e7 19 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 20 ♘d5+. The prospect of a gruelling struggle for a draw in an endgame where he was a pawn down did not satisfy Artur at all, and he decided on a bold positional exchange sacrifice.

17 . . . ♗xc3!!
18 ♕xa8

'In principle, Black's problems are associated not with his material deficit, but with his slight lag in development. If he should succeed in successfully 'unravelling himself', the b2 pawn, supported by the dark-square bishop, will secure him very dangerous counterplay. On whose side the scales will tip depends on the resourcefulness of the two players over the next few moves. Objectively White's prospects are better. But a practical game is not home analysis, and under conditions of restricted time it is almost impossible to find one's way faultlessly through the resulting wild complications.' (Yusupov).

18 . . . 0–0

During the game, the grandmasters observing the struggle from the press centre

thought that before castling Black should have played his queen to c7, since now White can take away this square with 19 ♕c6. Apparently Timman was of the same opinion.

19 ♕c6

Let's analyse the consequences of 19 ♗xb5!?. Bad then is 19...♕b6? 20 ♕a3! (Timman), while after 19...♕f6? 20 ♕c6 Black's pieces are completely tied down – it is not clear what his next move should be.

During the game I thought that 19...♕e7!? was an acceptable reply, but the analysts were attracted by another continuation: 19...♕c7!?. Probably because the same position would have been reached after 18...♕c7!? 19 ♗xb5 (19 ♖d6!?) 19...0–0.

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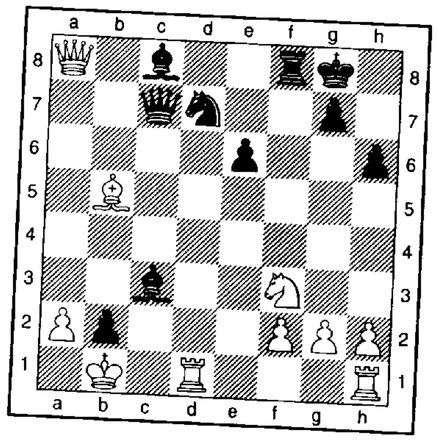

White can exchange the queens: 20 ♕c6 ♕xc6 21 ♗xc6 ♘c5. The opinions of the experts on the resulting endgame were divided. Timman's second, grandmaster Ulf Andersson, thought that Black was alright. Timman himself considers that White can gain a decisive advantage by returning the exchange with 22 ♖he1!. It is probable that the truth lies somewhere in between. After 22...e5!? (22...♗xe1 23 ♖xe1 ♗a6 24 ♖e3) 23 ♖xe5! ♗f5+ 24 ♖xf5 ♖xf5 White certainly has an advantage, but how great is it?

Even stronger, in Timman's opinion, is 20 ♕e4!?. Here is his analysis: 20...♘c5 21 ♕c4 ♗f6 22 ♘d4 (inferior is 22 ♖he1 ♗b7) 22...♗xd4 23 ♕xd4 e5 24 ♕d6 ♗f5+ 25 ♔xb2 and White should win. Where can Black's defence be improved? Probably at the very start of the variation, by playing 20...♘f6!? (instead of 20...♘c5).

19 . . . b4!

We already know that 19...♕f6? (hoping for 20 ♖xd7? ♗xd7 21 ♕xd7 ♖d8) will not do because of 20 ♗xb5, and this means that the move in the game is the only one possible.

'This game is in some sense a game of one idea. Black seized on one, perhaps even abstract positional conception or, more accurately, construction: bishop on c3, pawns on b2 and b4. I realised that in it my only hope, which I had to exploit, was to aim somewhere to leap with my bishop to f5 or sacrifice something on a2. Thanks to this attitude of mind, it was easier for me to play, easier to find a solution to the problems facing Black.' (Yusupov).

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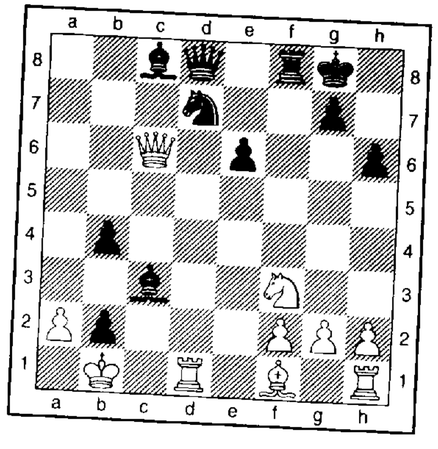

Now it is easy to discard 20 ♗a6? ♕f6 21 ♗xc8? ♕f5+. Timman had been intending 20 ♗b5?!, with the variation 20...♕f6 21 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 22 ♕xd7 ♕g6+? 23 ♗d3 ♕xg2

24 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 25 ♖g1 ♕xf3 26 ♕g6 in mind (incidentally, it leads only to a draw after 26...♔g8), but he noticed in time the murderous zwischenzug 22...♖d8!.

Things are much more difficult for Black after **20 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 21 ♗b5.**

Q 9-52. What possibilities does he have?

21...♕f6 suggests itself, since 22 ♗xd7? ♕xe6 23 ♗xe6 ♗xe6 favours Black. Alas, White plays simply 22 ♕xf6 ♘xf6 23 ♘h4! ♔h7 24 ♖he1!, achieving an obvious advantage (Thipsay, Tilak).

Pondering in the press centre over the defensive resources, I noticed a fantastic idea: **21...♘c5!!? 22 ♖xd8 ♖xd8!** (22...♘xe6? 23 ♖xf8+ ♘xf8 24 ♖d1! or 23 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 24 ♗d7) **23 ♕g6 ♗e6!.**

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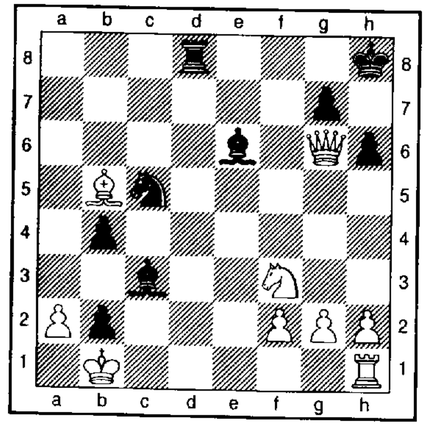

An amazing position! For the queen Black has only a bishop, but the battle is in full swing – the threats of ...♖a8!, ...♗g8! (followed by ...♗h7) and in some cases ...♗xa2+! are very dangerous.

Of course, this spectacular sacrifice was mentioned in my notes, published in the magazine *New in Chess* and in *Informator*. The very next, 42nd volume of *Informator* published the game **Thipsay–Barua**, Dhaka 1986, in which the queen sacrifice was subjected to a practical test. Yusupov admitted to me that, when he saw this game, he even suspected that it had been composed. He could not understand why the players needed to repeat so many moves that were not their own, many of which, as we have seen, are by no means obligatory.

Although the game ended in a draw, according to a thorough analysis by Thipsay and Tilak, White could have gained a decisive advantage. After checking the variations, Artur and I did not fully agree with the conclusions of the commentators.

24 ♘g5!?. A draw results from 24 h4 ♖a8! (but not 24...♗g8? 25 ♘g5) 25 ♗a4 ♗xa2+! 26 ♔xa2 ♖xa4+ 27 ♔b1 ♖a1+ 28 ♔c2 ♖xh1 29 ♕e8+ ♔h7 30 ♘g5+! hxg5 31 ♕h5+.

24 ♕h5! deserves serious consideration. In reply 24...♗g8? or 24...♗d5? is bad because of 25 ♘g5, while if 24...♖d5?, then 25 ♕e8+ ♔h7 26 ♗a4! is decisive. 24...♗xa2+? also does not work: 25 ♔xa2 ♖a8+ 26 ♔b1 ♖a1+ (26...b3 27 ♕e8+) 27 ♔c2 ♖xh1 28 ♕e8+ ♔h7 29 ♘g5+! hxg5 30 ♕h5+ ♔g8 31 ♗c4+.

That only leaves 24...♘e4!, after which the commentators gave the variation 25 ♗c6! ♘f6 26 ♕c5! ♖c8 (26...♗g8 27 ♘h4) 27 ♘h4! ♗d7 28 ♘g6+ ♔h7 29 ♘f8+ and wins. The defence can be improved by playing 27...♘e4! (instead of 27...♗d7?) and for the moment the outcome remains unclear. In Yusupov's opinion, it is not essential to retreat the knight to f6: there is also 25...♘xf2!?. However, after White's only reply 26 ♖g1! (not 26 ♖f1? ♗c4) it is not apparent how Black continues the offensive.

24...hxg5 25 h4 ♖a8?!. A serious error, which was not mentioned by the commentators. Black rejected 25...g4! because of 26 ♕h5+ ♔g8 27 ♕xc5, but he was wrong to do so: 27...♖d5! 28 ♕xd5 ♗xd5 29 ♖d1 ♗xg2 would have led to an unclear ending.

26 hxg5+ ♔g8 27 ♗a4?. A mistake in reply! The queen check on h7 would also not have

given anything, but White could have won by 27 ♔c2! ♖d8 (27...♗xa2 28 ♕h7+ ♔f7 29 ♕f5+; 27...♗f7 28 ♕f5) 28 ♗d3!. The bishop is invulnerable and the threat of 29 ♖h8+! is deadly.

27...♗xa2+! 28 ♔xa2 ♖xa4+ 29 ♔b1 ♖a1+ 30 ♔c2 ♖xh1 31 ♕e8+ ♔h7 32 g6+ ♔h6 33 ♕h8+ ♔xg6. Interesting was 33...♔g5!? 34 ♕xh1 ♘e4 (threatening both 35...♘d2, and 35...b3+ 36 ♔xb3 b1♕+ 37 ♕xb1 ♘d2+) 35 f4+! with unclear consequences.

34 ♕xh1 ♘e4 35 g4! ♘d2 (35...b3+?! 36 ♔xb3 ♘d2+ 37 ♔xc3 b1♕ 38 ♕h5+ ♔f6 39 ♔xd2) **36 ♕h5+ ♔f6 37 ♕f5+ ♔e7 38 ♕c5+ ♔f7 39 ♕f5+ ♔e7 40 ♕c5+ ♔f7.** Draw.

For a long time I did not see any other possibility for Black, apart from going in for the complications examined above. However, many years later grandmaster Joël Lautier found a sounder and more convincing way. He suggested 21...♘f6!!. After 22 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 the white queen is now unable to retain control of the f5 square, while if 22 ♕e2, then 22...♗f5+ (22...♕a5? 23 ♘h4!) 23 ♗d3 b3! followed by 24...♕a5, or immediately 23...♕a5! 24 ♗xf5 b3!.

Jan Timman chose the strongest move.

20 ♗c4! ♔h8

21 ♕e4?

Up till here the Dutch grandmaster had played excellently, but from this point on he loses the thread and his game gradually begins to go downhill.

But what should he have done? 21 ♗xe6? ♕f6 22 ♗xd7? ♕f5+ (or 22...♕xc6) did not work. Timman suggests two good ways of conducting the attack: 21 ♖d6 and 21 ♗b3.

A) 21 ♖d6!? ♕f6! (21...♕e7? or 21...♕e8? is bad because of 22 ♖xe6). Incorrect now is 22 ♖xd7? ♗xd7 23 ♕xd7 ♕g6+ 24 ♕d3 ♕xg2, or 22 ♖xe6? ♕f5+ 23 ♕e4 ♕xe4+ 24 ♖xe4 ♘c5; if 22 ♖hd1 there follows 22...♘e5 with chances for both sides. In Timman's opinion, 22 ♗d3! ♘e5 23 ♘xe5 followed by 24 ♕e4 is stronger. However, after 23...♗xe5!? 24 ♕e4 ♕f5 the struggle continues.

B) 21 ♗b3!? ♕e7 (21...♕f6 22 ♗c2 with the threat of 23 ♕e4; 21...♕b6 22 ♕xb6 ♘xb6 23 ♖d6 ♘d5 24 ♖d1 ♗f6 25 ♗xd5 exd5 26 ♘d4! and Black cannot play 26...♗xd4? 27 ♖xd4 ♖xf2 28 ♖d8+) 22 ♗c2 ♘c5 23 ♘h4! ♕xh4 24 ♕xc5 ♕f6.

The grandmaster is right: in both variations White retains the better chances, but nevertheless it is not possible to demonstrate a direct win, and there is still play left in the position.

After the move in the game I began examining another queen sacrifice, similar to the one that we analysed earlier: 21...♘c5?!! 22 ♖xd8 ♖xd8. The consequences of 23 ♕g6 ♗b7 24 ♘g5!? hxg5 25 f3 are not altogether clear; similar situations arise from 23 ♕e2 ♗b7 24 ♘g5 hxg5 25 ♕h5+ ♔g8 26 f3 and 23 ♕c2 ♗b7 24 ♘e5 (24 ♖e1? ♗xf3) 24...♗xe5 25 f3. The most convincing way of refuting this idea is 23 ♕h4! ♗f6 24 ♕h5, attacking the knight and intending 25 ♘e5 or 25 ♖e1.

21 . . . ♕c7!

'The correct reply, which simultaneously pursues several aims. Black prepares ...♘f6 and creates the threat of ...♖f4. Here I sensed that the initiative was passing into my hands.' (Yusupov).

22 ♘h4 ♘e5

see next diagram

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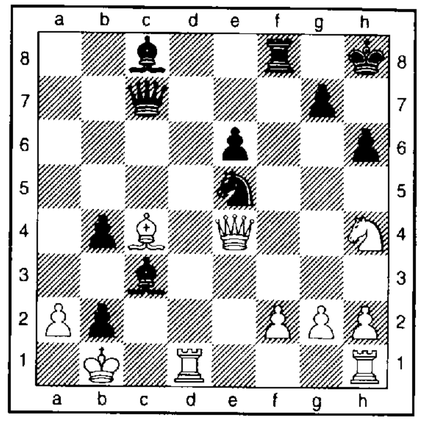

23 ♗d3?

White should have played 23 ♗b3, after which 23...♗b7 is unfavourable in view of 24 ♘g6+ ♘xg6 25 ♕xg6. Black would have replied 23...♖f6!. Timman gives the following variations:

24 ♗c2 ♔g8 (24...g6!?) 25 ♕h7+ ♔f7 with the terrible threat of 26...♘c4;

24 f4 ♗b7 25 ♕xb7 ♕xb7 26 ♖d8+ ♔h7 27 ♗c2+ (27 fxe5 ♖f2) 27...♘g6 and the threat of 28...b3! gives Black the advantage;

24 ♕a8! g5 25 ♘f3 ♘xf3 26 gxf3 ♔g7 with unclear play.

The mistake made by Timman in the game apparently involved an hallucination. He had reckoned only with the reply 23...g5, whereas the exchange on d3 seemed impossible to him because of the knight check on g6.

23 . . . ♘xd3!

Much weaker was 23...g5 24 ♘g6+ ♘xg6 25 ♕xg6. Even though seriously short of time, Artur realised that it was not essential for him to weaken his king's position.

24 ♘g6+?!

An impulsive check, which would have made sense only if followed up by ♘xf8. But since there is no time to take the rook, the knight would have done better to remain on h4. This becomes evident if you compare the consequences of the variation 24 ♖xd3 ♖xf2 25 ♖f3 ♖xf3 26 gxf3 ♕d6 27 ♕c2 with that which occurred in the game.

24 . . . ♔g8

25 ♖xd3?!

In boxing,Timman's condition would be called 'groggy'. He has lost his bearings and he commits one mistake after another. Of course, he would have lost after 25 ♘xf8? ♘c5! 26 ♕h7+ (26 ♕f3 ♗b7) 26...♔xf8, but 25 ♕xd3 was better. In this case it is unfavourable to take the pawn: 25...♖xf2?! 26 ♕d8+ ♕xd8 27 ♖xd8+ ♔h7 28 ♖xc8 ♔xg6 29 a4!. Black would have had to restrict himself to the modest 25...♖e8!, which, however, retains the better chances in view of the possible manoeuvre ...♗b7–d5 or even ...e6–e5. Yusupov gives the illustrative variation 26 ♕b5?! ♕f7 27 ♘e5 ♕f5+ 28 ♖d3 ♖f8 and White's position is difficult.

25 . . . ♖xf2

26 ♖f3

If 26 ♖hd1 there follows 26...♗f6 27 ♖f3 ♖d2!.

26 . . . ♖xf3

27 gxf3

In the event of 27 ♕xf3 both 27...♗b7 and 27...♕f7 are strong.

see next diagram

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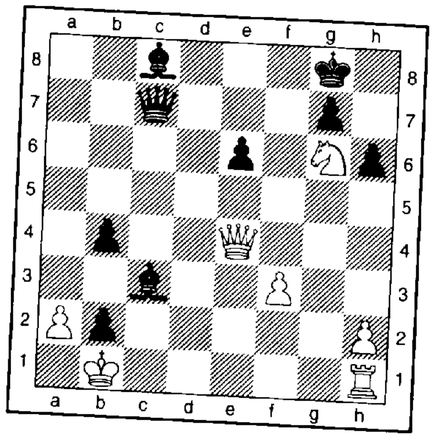

Q 9-53. What should Black play?

It is important to prevent the white rook from going to d1 and to prepare the inclusion of the light-square bishop in the attack. This is achieved by the following excellent move.

27 . . . ♕d6!

Threatening both 28...♗a6 and 28...♗b7!.

28 ♕c2

28 ♔c2 ♗d7; 28 ♘f4 ♗d7 (or 28...♗a6!? with the threat of 29...♕xf4!).

28 . . . e5!

An essential complement to the previous move. If 29 ♖d1 Black wins by 29...♕xd1+! 30 ♕xd1 ♗f5+. Much weaker was 28...♗b7? 29 ♖d1 ♗d5 30 ♖xd5!? exd5 31 ♕f5 when White can defend.

29 ♘h4 ♗e6

29...♕f6 30 ♕a4 ♗f5+ 31 ♘xf5 ♕xf5+ 32 ♕c2 ♕xf3 was also good, but, in Yusupov's opinion, the move in the game wins more simply.

30 ♖d1 ♗d4!

The tempting 30...♗xa2+? is sufficient only for perpetual check: 31 ♔xa2 ♕a6+ 32 ♔b3 ♕e6+ 33 ♔a4.

31 ♕a4

If 31 ♕xb2, then 31...♕d8! (31...♕e7 32 ♖xd4 exd4 33 ♕xd4 is less accurate) 32 ♕f2 ♕f6 33 ♕g3 ♗xa2+!. Equally hopeless is 31 ♘f5 ♕a6 or 31 ♕g6 ♕d7 with the threat of 32...♗xa2+.

31 . . . ♕d8!

32 ♕c6

32 ♕a6 was slightly more tenacious, when there could have followed 32...♕d5! 33 ♕a4 ♔f7 and 34..g5.

32 . . . ♗d5

33 ♖xd4

33 ♕b5 ♕a8!.

33 . . . exd4

34 ♕b5 ♕a8!

35 ♔xb2 ♕xa2+

36 ♔c1 ♕a1+

37 ♔d2 ♕c3+

38 ♔d1 ♗b3+

White resigns.

In the opinion of both players, this mind-boggling game decided the match. And it was not just that Yusupov took the lead: to regain one point in the remaining four games was a quite feasible objective. It was something else that was more important: Artur had demonstrated that he felt fine in a sharp tactical struggle, in which before the match the experts had given preference to his opponent. The result was an increase in Yusupov's confidence in his own powers and, in all probability, a certain perplexity with Timman. All this told in the very next, 7th game of the match, which we analysed in the chapter 'Playing for mate'.

Uneven Play

Everything that a person wants will without fail happen. If it does not happen, it means that there was not the desire, and if it is something else that happens, the disappointment is only apparent: that is what was meant to happen.

Alexander Blok

In his final candidates match against Andrey Sokolov, Yusupov had a lead of two points almost throughout. Alas, at the finish he lost three games in succession. However, in most of the preceding games too his play was far below that high level that he had demonstrated in the interzonal tournament, the candidates tournament and the match with Timman. Why? I know the reasons, Artur knows them, but I do not have the right to talk about everything on the pages of this book. I will restrict myself to a basically correct, although superficial comment about poor form.

The game which I am about to show you is typical of that match – fighting, interesting, but very uneven. Both players made mistakes, the advantage switched hands several times, and any outcome was possible.

Yusupov – A.Sokolov

Candidates match, 6th game, Riga 1986

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**♘f3**	**b6**
4	**g3**	**♗a6**
5	**b3**	**♗b4+**
6	**♗d2**	**♗e7**
7	**♗g2**	

This position occurred four times in the match, and it has to be admitted that the opening duel in the Queen's Indian Defence was won by Sokolov. Not once was Artur able to breach the opponent's defences.

In the 4th game of the match Andrey made the main theoretical move 7...c6, but then he switched to the less well-studied variations beginning with 7...d5.

7 . . . d5

8 ♘e5 0–0

A typical feature of Sokolov's match strategy was a striving in each game to change, even if only slightly, his interpretation of the opening variation.

Yusupov–Sokolov (8th game): **8...♗b7 9 0–0 ♘bd7 10 ♘c3 c5!? 11 ♗f4.** If 11 cxd5 there follows 11...♘xe5!, and the standard combination 12 d6 ♗xg2 13 dxe7 does not work because of 13...♕xd4.

11...0–0 12 cxd5 ♘xe5 13 ♗xe5 (13 d6?! ♗xg2 14 dxe7 ♕xe7 15 dxe5? ♗xf1 16 exf6 ♕xf6 17 ♘e4 ♕g6) **13...♘xd5 14 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 15 e4 ♗b7 16 ♕g4.**

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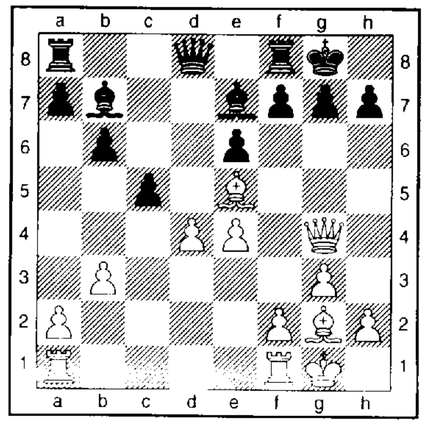

16...f6!. The start of some interesting complications, in which neither player is able to gain an advantage.

17 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 18 ♗f4 cxd4 19 ♖fc1 ♗c5 20 b4! ♗xb4 21 ♖c7 ♗c8! 22 ♕c6 ♗g4 23 h3 ♗e2 24 ♕b7 ♖b8. Black has no right to play for a win – 24...♖g8? (with the idea of 25...d3) is met by the strong 25 e5! d3 26 ♖d7 or 25...♗a6 26 ♕xa6 ♕xc7 27 exf6 ♕f7 28 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 29 fxg7+ ♕xg7 30 ♖c1.

25 ♕xa7 ♖a8 26 ♕b7 ♖b8 27 ♕a7 ♖a8 28 ♕b7 ♖b8. Draw.

Yusupov–Sokolov (10th game): **8...c6 9 ♗c3 ♘e4!? 10 0–0 ♘xc3 11 ♘xc3 0–0 12 ♖e1 ♗b7.** The game Vyzhmanavin–Bareev (57th USSR Championship, Leningrad 1990) went 12...f6 13 ♘d3 dxc4 14 ♘f4 ♗b4 15 ♖c1 ♖e8 and now, in Bareev's opinion, White would have gained the advantage with 16 ♗h3! e5 17 ♘e6 ♕e7 18 d5 followed by 19 e4. However, 12...dxc4!? deserves serious consideration.

13 cxd5. The immediate 13 e4 would appear to be stronger, as occurred in another game between Alexey Vyzhmanavin and Evgeny Bareev, played in the Zonal Tournament in Lvov in the same year 1990.

13...cxd5 14 e4 ♗b4!? 15 ♖c1 ♗xc3 16 ♖xc3 dxe4 17 ♗xe4 ♗xe4 18 ♖xe4 ♘d7 19 ♘c6 ♕e8. The black knight intends to switch via f6 to the excellent central square d5. Now the tempting 20 d5? ♘f6 21 d6 does not work because of 21...♘xe4 22 d7 ♘xc3 with advantage to Black. 20 ♖e2!? ♘f6 21 ♖c1 followed by ♖ec2 was possible, but Artur preferred a sharper continuation.

20 ♖f4!?.

see next diagram

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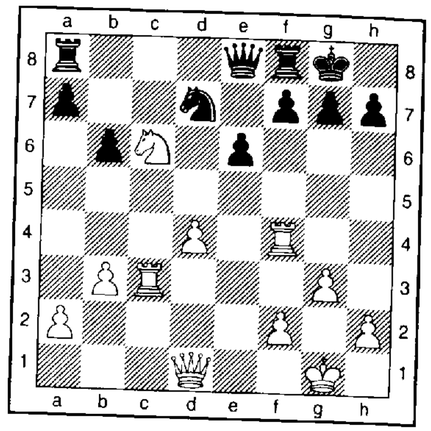

Q 9-54. Calculate the consequences of 20...♘f6.

White wants to prevent the knight manoeuvre, by preparing an apparently promising exchange sacrifice.

20...♘f6!. Sokolov accepts the challenge. Now the game ends in a draw almost by force. Timid continuations would have led to serious difficulties for Black, for example:

20...♖c8? 21 ♕c2 ♔h8 22 ♘e7! ♖xc3 23 ♕xh7+!;

20...f5?! 21 d5 e5 22 ♖fc4 (or 22 ♖h4) ;

20...♘c5?! 21 dxc5 (21 ♕f3!?) 21...♕xc6 22 b4 (22 ♕c2).

However, 20...b5!? 21 d5 ♘b6 was quite possible.

21 ♖xf6! gxf6 22 ♕g4+ ♔h8 23 ♕h4 ♔g7! (23...♖g8? 24 ♕xf6+ ♖g7 25 h4 leads to a dangerous position for Black) **24 ♖f3!?** (24 g4? h6!) **24...♕xc6 25 ♕xf6+ ♔g8 26 ♖f4 ♕c2!.** Less accurate was 26...♕c1+ 27 ♔g2 ♕xf4 28 ♕xf4, when Black still faces certain problems in view of the threat of h2–h4–h5–h6.

27 ♖g4+ ♕g6 28 ♖xg6+ hxg6 29 h4 ♖fd8 30 h5. No better was 30 g4 ♖d5 31 f4 (31 h5 gxh5 32 g5 ♖f5 33 ♕h6 ♖e8!?) 31...♖ad8 32 h5 gxh5 33 gxh5 ♖xd4.

30...gxh5 31 ♕g5+ ♔f8 32 ♕xh5 ♖ac8 33 ♕h6+ ♔e7 34 ♕g5+ ♔e8 35 ♕g8+ ♔e7 36 ♕g5+. Draw.

9	**0–0**	**♗b7**
10	**♘c3**	**♘bd7**

This natural move would appear to be a novelty. Previously 10...♘a6 had occurred.

11	**cxd5**	**♘xd5**

It was also possible to take with the pawn, but usually in such situations Black strives to exchange as many pieces as possible. Incidentally, here (in contrast to the 8th game) 11...♘xe5? is incorrect: 12 d6! ♗xg2 13 dxe7 ♕xe7 14 dxe5 ♗xf1 15 exf6.

12	**♘xd5**	**exd5**
13	**♘d3**	

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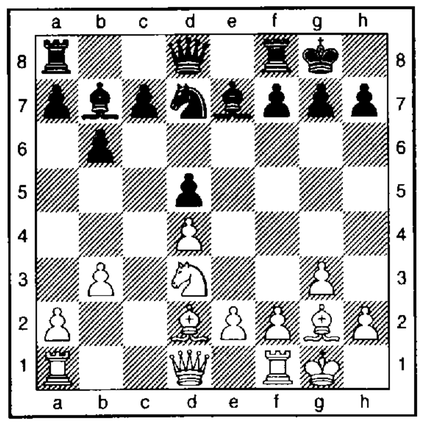

The two sides' chances are almost equal, perhaps slightly better for White. But this by no means signifies that things will soon conclude with an amicable agreement (of course, this is not ruled out, but only if neither player is in a fighting mood). It is simply that here it is not possible to put into effect any straightforward, aggressive plan – the struggle will be conducted on very fine nuances. A decisive role is assumed by a correct feeling for the spirit of the position, the ability to manoeuvre skilfully with the pieces, to react sensitively to various actions by the opponent and to determine the correct moment for switching to active play. Anatoly Karpov is a great master of this type of strategy, and it is no accident that he often achieves success in similar positions.

13	**. . .**	**a5**

Black does not allow b3–b4, which would squeeze his queenside. 13...c5 was also possible, but Sokolov did not want to create tension in the centre. Indeed, Black's central pawns could have been put under pressure (for example, by ♗e3, ♖c1 and ♗h3) and he has no active play of his own.

14	**♖c1**	**♖e8**
15	**♖c2!?**	

With the idea of creating pressure on the c-file by 16 ♕c1.

15	**. . .**	**♘f8**

The knight is heading for e6, but White does not allow it to go there.

16	**♘f4**	**c6**

16...♗a3!? was also possible, depriving the queen of the c1 square, when there would probably have followed 17 ♗c1!? (the exchange of the dark-square bishops is advantageous to White).

17	**♖e1**	

After Black has blocked the diagonal of his bishop, Yusupov switches to the preparation of the central break e2–e4!.

17	**. . .**	**♗a3**
18	**♗c3**	**♕d6**

If 18...♘e6, then simply 19 ♘xe6 and 20 e4.

19	**e4**	**dxe4**
20	**♖xe4**	

The capture with the bishop also came into consideration.

20	**. . .**	**♗b4**

see next diagram

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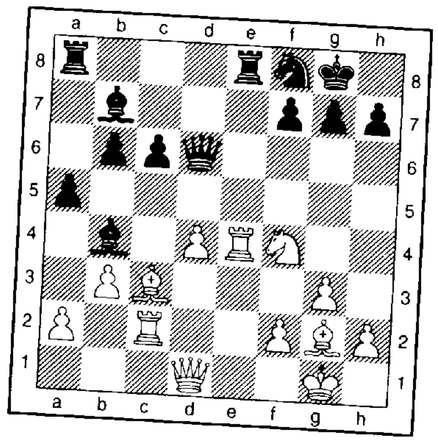

21 ♗b2!

The situation has changed, and now White declines the exchange offered by the opponent. He plans to begin an attack on the king, in which the bishop will play an important role after the long diagonal has been opened by the thematic d4–d5. Note that the bishop retreated to b2, since here it is better placed than at a1. In a practical struggle such 'trifles' should not be ignored.

Up till now Yusupov had played logically and strongly, but – this was the trouble – he had spent too much time. I suspect that in his place Karpov would have made the same moves, but much more quickly. The imminent time trouble played an enormous role in the subsequent events.

21 ... ♖xe4
22 ♗xe4 a4!?
23 bxa4

Perhaps White should not have responded to the opponent's flank provocation – 23 d5!? axb3 24 axb3 looks good, intending ♘h5 and ♕g4.

23 ... ♖xa4
24 ♕g4

Now 24 d5?! is useless in view of 24...♗a3!. As you can see, the position of the rook on a4 provides Black with certain counter-attacking possibilities.

24 ... ♗a3
25 ♗c3

White is ready to play ♗a1 only with the black bishop on b4, where it will impede its own rook.

25 ... g6

A committing move – squares around the black king are weakened. 25...♘g6 looks sounder.

26 ♘h5

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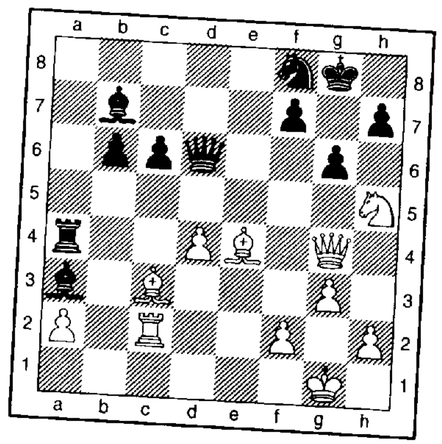

26 ... f5?!

Black's position has become anxious: d4–d5 and ♕g5 is threatened. Realising this, Sokolov sharply changes the character of the play. His idea is clever but, as will soon become clear, not altogether correct. Objectively stronger was Bareev's suggestion 26...♕d8! (intending 27...♗c8) and if 27 d5?, then either 27...♗e7 or 27...f5.

27 ♗xf5 c5!

By continuing 27...♔f7 Black would have won a piece, but at too high a price – his king would have been in danger of being mated. Sokolov prefers to counter-attack – he finally includes his light-square bishop in the game and attacks the enemy centre, exploiting the pin along the 4th rank.

Q 9-55. What would you recommend for White?

Earlier White was faced with strategic problems, which, in principle, can be solved (more or less successfully) comparatively quickly. But in the double-edged position now reached, when it is essential to sit and calmly calculate variations, it is very important to have a reserve of time. Unfortunately, Yusupov had very little left. This is why he was unable to make the correct choice. The move he chose, 28 ♕g5, was a poor one.

The clever 28 ♗d7?, suggested by Alexander Koblencs, also does not work: 28...♘xd7 29 ♕xd7 ♕xd7 30 ♘f6+ ♔f7 31 ♘xd7 cxd4 32 ♘xb6 in view of 32...♗e4! 33 ♘xa4 ♗xc2 34 ♗b2 ♗b4 and a piece has to be given up for the passed d-pawn.

Other continuations promise White significantly more.

28 dxc5 ♖xg4 29 cxd6 gxf5 30 ♘f6+ ♔f7 31 ♘xg4 fxg4 32 ♗d4 (inferior is 32 ♗b4 ♗xb4 33 ♖c7+ ♔e6 34 ♖xb7 ♘d7) 32...♗xd6 33 ♗xb6 – in such positions a rook and two pawns are much stronger than two minor pieces. Therefore Black should choose 28...♗xc5!? 29 ♘f6+ ♔f7 30 ♘e4 ♕c6, when White has to go into a drawn endgame by 31 ♘g5+ ♔g8 32 ♗e6+ ♘xe6 33 ♕xe6+ ♕xe6 34 ♘xe6.

28 ♖d2!? cxd4 (if 28...♕e7, then 29 ♗e4! ♗xe4 30 ♕xe4, for example: 30...cxd4 31 ♕d5+ ♘e6 32 ♖e2 dxc3 33 ♖xe6 ♕f7 34 ♘f6+ ♔g7 35 ♕e5 with a winning attack) 29 ♖xd4! (not 29 ♗xd4 ♗c5! 30 ♗xc5 ♕xd2) 29...♖xd4 30 ♗xd4 ♗c5 (to 30...♔f7 there is the very strong reply 31 ♗c2!) 31 ♗c3! ♗xf2+ (there is nothing better) 32 ♔xf2 ♕c5+ 33 ♗d4 ♕xf5+ 34 ♕xf5 gxf5 35 ♗xb6 with chances of success in the endgame.

28 ♗d3!? cxd4 and now the simplest is 29 ♗d2 with excellent attacking chances. It is far more difficult to assess the consequences of the sharp variation 29 ♗b5!? dxc3 30 ♗xa4 ♔h8! 31 ♘f4 ♕b4 32 ♗b3 ♕e4 33 f3.

28 ♕g5? cxd4?

A mistake in reply. The queen move came as a surprise to Sokolov and, also short of time, he did not notice that he could have placed his opponent in a critical position by playing 28...♖xd4! 29 ♗xd4 ♕xd4.

29 ♗d2 ♕e5

The active move 29...d3! suggests itself. Bad in reply is 30 ♗xd3? ♕xd3 31 ♘f6+ ♔h8 or 30 ♖c3? ♗b2! 31 ♖xd3 ♕c6. White would have had to play 30 ♘f6+ ♔f7 (30...♔h8? 31 ♘e8) 31 ♗xd3, after which 31...♕xf6? or 31...♕xd3? is unfavourable in view of 32 ♖c7+, but 31...♘e6! is possible with chances for both sides.

30 ♘f6+ ♔h8?

30...♔f7 31 ♘g4 ♕e7! was essential.

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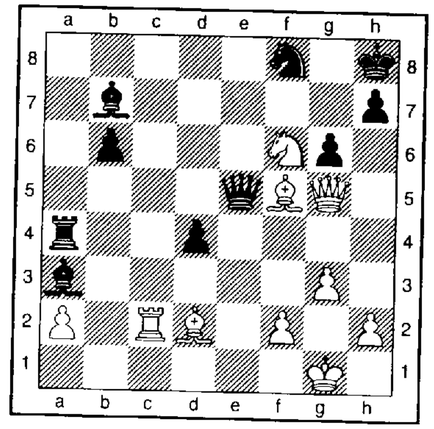

Q 9-56. What possibilities does White have available, and which would you prefer?

Where to move the bishop? After the exchange of queens White's primary objective is to break through with his rook to c7 – then the mating threats to the black king will be extremely dangerous, despite the small

number of pieces remaining on the board. In order not to allow the opponent time to cover the c7 square, it is important to move the bishop away with gain of tempo.

A) The first move that comes to mind is probably 31 ♗e4!?. After 31...♕xg5 32 ♗xg5 ♗xe4 33 ♖c7! (of course, not 33 ♘xe4 d3 34 ♗f6+? ♔g8 35 ♖c7 ♘e6) White is threatening 34 ♗h6 with inevitable mate. After 33...♗f5 there follows 34 ♗h6 ♘d7 35 ♘xd7 (35 ♖c8+ ♘f8) 35...♗xd7 36 ♖xd7 ♔g8 37 ♖g7+ ♔h8 38 ♖b7 ♔g8 39 ♖xb6, winning a pawn. And if 33...♖b4, then 34 ♘xe4! (incorrect is 34 f3? ♖b1+ 35 ♔g2 ♖b2+ with a draw, since bad is 36 ♔h3? ♗f5+ 37 g4 ♗d6!) 34...♘e6 35 ♗f6+ ♔g8 36 ♖a7!, intending 37 ♗e5. White's advantage in these variations is undisputed, although it is probably insufficient for a win.

B) But the endgame that arises by force after the unexpected blow 31 ♗xg6!! is most probably won. The main variation runs 31...♕xg5 (31...♘xg6 32 ♕xe5 ♘xe5 33 ♖c7) 32 ♗xg5 ♘xg6 33 ♖c7 ♗e7 34 ♖xb7 h6 35 ♖b8+ ♔g7 36 ♘h5+ ♔f7 37 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 38 ♖xb6.

C) 31 ♗c8!! (another unusual stroke) 31...♕xg5 32 ♗xg5. Now how should Black defend?

C1) After 32...♗f3?! it is important for White to avoid the temptation to 'play for brilliance': 33 ♗b7?! ♘e6! (33...♗xb7? 34 ♖c7 with the threat of 35 ♗h6; 33...d3? 34 ♖c7 ♖a7 35 ♗h6) 34 ♗xf3 ♘xg5 35 ♖c7!. He does not achieve too much in the variation 35...♘xf3+ 36 ♔g2 ♘g5 37 h4 ♗d6! 38 ♖c8+ (or 38 ♖d7 ♗e5 39 hxg5 ♗xf6 40 gxf6 ♔g8) 38...♔g7 39 ♘e8+ ♔f7 40 ♘xd6+ ♔e7, and even less after 35...♗d6! 36 ♖c8+ (36 ♖d7 ♗e5) 36...♔g7! (but not 36...♗f8? because of 37 ♗d5! ♔g7 38 ♘e8+ ♔h6 39 h4) 37 ♗c6 ♖xa2 38 ♘e8+ ♔h6 39 ♘xd6 d3, and if 40 h4, then 40...♘h3+!.

The simple 33 ♖c7! is much stronger. Black loses quickly after 33...♗d6 34 ♖f7! (there is also the spectacular 34 ♘g4!) 34...♖xa2 35 ♗h3 ♖a1+ 36 ♗f1 with the irresistible threat of 37 ♗h6. He also faces insuperable problems in the variation 33...♖b4 34 ♗h3! ♖b1+ 35 ♗f1 ♖e1 (35...♗e2 36 ♗h6), after which all three of White's tempting continuations prove successful:

a) 36 ♗h6 ♗e7 (36...♖e7 37 ♖c8 ♖f7 38 ♗c4! ♖xf6 39 ♖c7) 37 ♗xf8 ♗xf6 38 ♖c8 ♗g4! 39 ♖b8 ♖c1 40 ♗h6+ ♖c8 41 ♖xb6;

b) 36 ♖f7! (threatening 37 ♗h6) 36...♗c1 37 ♗xc1! (simpler than 37 ♖xf8+ ♔g7 38 ♖e8! ♖d1 39 ♖e7+ ♔f8) 37...♖xc1 38 ♘e8! with a double attack on f8 and f3;

c) 36 ♘g4!, suggested by Bareev, creating the threats of 37 ♗f6+ ♔g8 38 ♘h6 mate and 38 ♖g7+ ♔h8 39 ♖xg6 mate. 36...♘e6 37 ♗f6+ ♔g8 38 ♘h6+ ♔f8 39 ♖c8+ does not help Black, while if 36...♘d7, then 37 ♘h6!.

C2) 32...♗xc8 33 ♖xc8 d3 34 ♗h6 ♖a7 (defending against 35 ♖c7) 35 ♔f1!? with an obvious advantage (but not the over-hasty 35 ♗xf8? ♗xf8 36 ♖xf8+ ♔g7 37 ♘xh7? ♖d7!).

C3) 32...d3 33 ♖c7 ♗xc8 34 ♗h6!! (34 ♖xc8 ♖d4) 34...♗d7 35 ♘xd7! (35 ♗xf8?! is weaker in view of 35...♗xf8! 36 ♖xd7 ♗g7 37 ♖d8+ ♗f8) 35...♘xd7 36 ♖xd7 ♖a8 37 ♖xd3 and White should win the endgame.

In reply to 31 ♗c8!! Black can also try 31...♕e2!? 32 ♗g4! (the exchange sacrifice 32 ♗xb7 ♕d1+ 33 ♔g2 ♕xc2 34 ♘e4 ♕c7! 35 ♕d5 ♕g7! is apparently only sufficient for a draw) 32...♕e7! (32...♗f3 33 ♗xf3 ♕xf3 34 ♘g4 ♕f5 35 ♘h6!).

see next diagram

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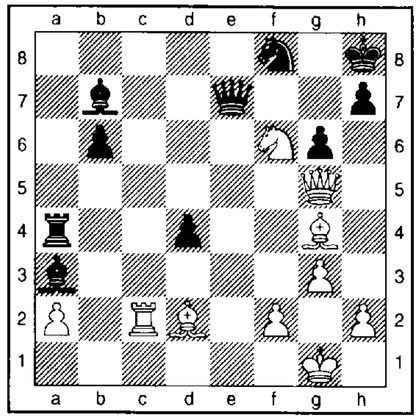

Q 9-57. How should the offensive be continued?

White is attacking the king, but to overcome the opponent's defences he needs to make an unexpected diversion on the opposite wing.

33 ♕b5!! ♖a8 (33...♖a6 34 ♗c8! ♕xf6 35 ♗xb7 ♖a7 36 ♗g5 with dangerous threats) 34 ♕xb6! ♖a6 35 ♕xd4 ♕xf6 (35...♖xf6 36 ♗c3 ♔g7 37 ♖e2) 36 ♗c3 ♕xd4 37 ♗xd4+ ♔g8 38 ♖c7.

31	**♗d3?**	

After this mistake Black succeeds in blocking the c-file and the initiative passes to him.

31	**...**	**♕xg5**
32	**♗xg5**	**♗c5**
33	**♘e4?!**	

33 ♗h6 was better, trying at least for a time to keep the black king imprisoned in the corner of the board.

33	**...**	**♘e6**
34	**♗f6+**	**♔g8**
35	**f3?**	

35 ♗e5! was essential, after which the enemy bishop cannot go to d5 because of ♘f6+. After 35...♖a3 there is 36 ♘xc5 followed by 37 ♗c4, while if 35...♔f7 36 ♘d6+.

35	**...**	**♔f7**
36	**♗e5**	**♗d5**
37	**♘d6+**	**♔e7**
38	**♘c4**	**♗xf3**

38...♗xc4 39 ♖xc4 ♖xa2 was also strong.

39	**♖b2**	**♗d5?**

After 39...♗c6 40 ♘xb6 ♖a3 White's position would have remained difficult. The move in the game allows him to exchange one of the black bishops.

40	**♘xb6**	**♗xb6**
41	**♖xb6**	**♖xa2**

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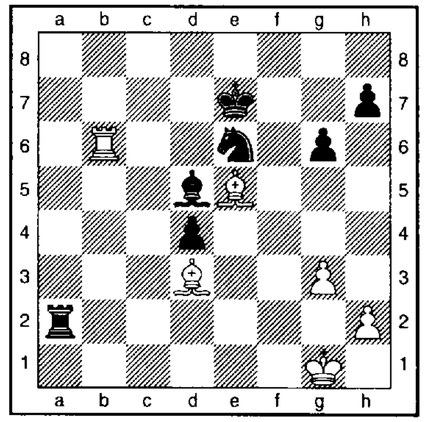

The time trouble adventures finally concluded and the game was adjourned. Analysis showed that White retains excellent drawing chances, since his bishop pair compensates to some extent for the pawn deficit.

Q 9-58. How should White defend?

He has to reckon with the threats of 42...♖d2 and 42...♖g2+. It is a mistake to play 42 ♖b5? ♗c6 43 ♖b6 ♘g5!, and a difficult ending for him arises after 42 h4?! ♖d2 43 ♗f1 (43 ♖d6 ♘c7!) 43...d3 44 ♗c3 ♖c2! 45 ♗b4+ ♔f6 46 ♗xd3 ♖g2+ 47 ♔f1 ♖xg3. We also thought that 42 ♕d6!? was bad in view of 42...♖a1+ 43 ♔f2 ♘c5!, but in fact White

saves himself here by 44 ♗xg6! hxg6 45 ♖xd5 ♘d3+ 46 ♔f3 ♔e6 47 ♗xd4 ♖f1+ 48 ♔e4 ♖e1+ 49 ♗e3 ♘f2+ 50 ♔f3. And if 42... ♘g5 (instead of 42...♖a1+), then 43 ♖xd5 ♔e6 44 ♖xd4 ♔xe5 45 ♖d7 (or 45 ♖b4) 45...♘f3+ 46 ♔f1 ♘xh2+ 47 ♔g1 ♘f3+ 48 ♔f1 and Black will most probably be unable to convert his extra pawn.

Yusupov played differently.

42 ♖a6!

A very important defensive resource. After the exchange of rooks the draw becomes more or less obvious, but otherwise the white rook becomes active, gaining the possibility of giving a check on the 7th rank. For example, 42...♖g2+ 43 ♔f1 ♖xh2 44 ♖a7+ ♔f8 45 ♖d7 ♖d2 (45...♗b3 46 ♖b7, threatening perpetual check by ♖b8–b7–b8) 46 ♗b5 followed by ♖xh7.

42	**. . .**	**♖d2**
43	**♗b5!**	**♖b2**
44	**♗f1!**	**♗b7**

For the moment 44...♘g5? is not possible because of 45 ♗f6+. In the event of 44...♖b1 White has to find the only moves to save himself: 45 ♖a7+! ♔e8 46 ♔f2! ♘g5 47 ♗xd4 ♘e4+ 48 ♔g1! ♘d2 49 ♖a1! ♘f3+ 50 ♔f2, and 50...♖xf1+? does not work: 51 ♖xf1 ♘xd4 52 ♖d1.

45 ♖a3!

If the rook had moved to another square, 45...♘g5 would have led to a win for Black. But now this is met by 46 ♗xd4 ♖c2 (46...♘f3+? 47 ♖xf3) 47 ♖e3+ ♔d7! 48 ♗d3 (48 ♗e2?? ♖c1+ 49 ♔f2 ♘h3 mate), and although after 48...♘h3+ or 48...♖g2+ Black picks up the h2 pawn, the position is nevertheless drawish.

45	**. . .**	**♖b1?!**
46	**♔f2**	**♖b2+**

46...♘g5 47 ♗xd4.

47 ♗e2

Black's desire to repeat moves to gain time on the clock has not succeeded – by avoiding the repetition, White has taken his king out of the danger zone and equalised.

47	**. . .**	**♗d5**
48	**♔e1**	**♖b1+**
49	**♔d2**	**♖b2+**
50	**♔e1**	**♖b1+**
51	**♔d2**	**♖b2+**
52	**♔e1**	

Draw.

The Treatment of Hanging Pawns

We have the right to expect some measure of initiative in hanging pawns which have attained to a 'blockaded' security. Dead passivity has no prospects before it.

Aron Nimzowitsch

Yusupov – A.Sokolov

Tilburg 1987

1	**d4**	**♘f6**
2	**c4**	**e6**
3	**♘f3**	**b6**
4	**g3**	**♗a6**
5	**♘bd2**	

In the candidates matches both Yusupov and later Karpov chose 5 b3 against Sokolov. On this occasion Artur preferred another variation, in which his opponent had less experience.

5	**. . .**	**♗b7**
6	**♗g2**	**♗e7**
7	**0–0**	**0–0**
8	**♕c2**	**d5**

Two years later, in the 7th game of the Yusupov–Spraggett candidates match (Quebec 1989), the new and seemingly quite good move 8...♘a6!? was tried.

9	**cxd5**	**exd5**
10	**♘e5**	**c5**
11	**dxc5**	

In the game Korchnoi–A.Sokolov (candidates tournament, Montpellier 1985) Black obtained an excellent position from the opening: 11 ♘df3 ♘a6 12 ♗h3?! ♘e4 13 ♗e3 ♗d6 14 a3 ♕e7 15 ♖fd1 c4! (with the threat of 16...f6) 16 ♘h4 g6 17 ♘ef3 ♗c8!.

11	**. . .**	**bxc5**

In the same tournament in Tilburg – against Jan Timman and Predrag Nikolic – Sokolov took on c5 with his bishop. The capture with the pawn is more critical.

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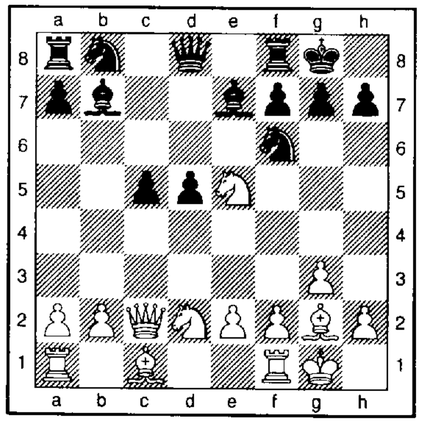

A position has been reached where Black has hanging pawns, which for the moment control quite well the central squares. It is possible to fight against them in two ways: either mount piece pressure on the enemy centre, or undermine it with b2–b4 or (in the given case this is more probable) e2–e4. Of course, these two plans may be combined in some way.

The undermining can be carried out immediately, the only question being whether it is sufficient to gain an advantage. The game Spacek–Hardicsay (Trinec 1981/82) developed as follows: 12 e4 ♘a6! 13 exd5 ♗xd5 14 ♘dc4 (14 ♘c6 ♘b4!) 14...♗xg2 15 ♔xg2 ♕d5+ and the activity of Black's pieces compensates for the slight defects in his pawn structure.

The quiet plan of development beginning with 12 b3!? is not bad. White intends ♗b2,

♖ac1, ♖fd1 and then at an appropriate moment e2–e4. However, Yusupov prefers a sharper course.

12 ♘dc4!?

An idea of Rafael Vaganian, which he successfully carried out in a game with Timman (Amsterdam 1986). His opponent made an unfortunate reply and White soon obtained a big advantage: 12...♕c8?! 13 ♘a5! ♗a6 14 ♗f4 ♕e6 15 ♖fd1 h6 16 e4 d4 17 ♕b3! ♕xb3 18 axb3 ♗d6 19 ♘ac4 (19 ♘d3!?) 19...♗xe5 20 ♗xe5 ♗xc4 21 bxc4 ♘fd7 22 ♗xd4! cxd4 23 e5.

But how should Black have defended? The pin on the h1–a8 diagonal seriously ties him down and there is no easy way of releasing it (12...♕c8 allows the knight the important a5 square, and after 12...♕c7 he has to reckon with 13 ♗f4), and meanwhile White wants to intensify the pressure by ♖d1, ♗f4(g5) etc.

The evaluation of White's plan depends on the outcome of the complications beginning after 12...♕c7!? 13 ♗f4 (bad is 13 ♕b3 ♘c6 14 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 15 ♗f4? dxc4) 13...g5! (but not 13...dxc4? 14 ♘g6 ♕d7 15 ♖fd1; 13...♘h5?! 14 ♘e3 is also unfavourable for Black) 14 ♗xg5 dxc4 15 ♕f5 or 15 ♗xb7. In his preparations for the game Yusupov tried to delve as deeply as possible into the rather complicated variations that arise here. An interesting theoretical duel could have resulted, but Sokolov was evidently not prepared for it and he chose a different method of defence.

12 ... ♖e8?!
13 ♗f4

13 ♖d1 is also strong, since Black loses after 13...♕c7 14 ♗f4 dxc4? 15 ♘xf7!.

13 ... ♕c8?!

Sokolov nevertheless embarks along the same fatal path as Timman against Vaganian. The logical follow-up to the previous rook move was 13...♘bd7 14 ♖fd1 ♗f8, not fearing 15 ♕b3 in view of 15...♘xe5! 16 ♗xe5 (16 ♕xb7? ♘xc4; 16 ♘xe5 ♕b6) 16...♗a6 17 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 18 ♗xd5 ♖xe2. However, the simple 15 ♘xd7 ♕xd7 16 ♗g5 would have retained the better chances for White.

14 ♘a5

The natural move, but before making it Yusupov convinced himself that after 14 ♕b3?! ♘c6! 15 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 16 ♘a5 Black gains strong counterplay by sacrificing a pawn: 16...♗d7! 17 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 18 ♕xd5 ♗f6 19 ♕d2 ♗b5.

14 ... ♗a6
15 ♖fd1 ♘bd7

If 15...♕e6 White would have responded as in the Vaganian–Timman game: 16 e4 d4 17 ♕b3!.

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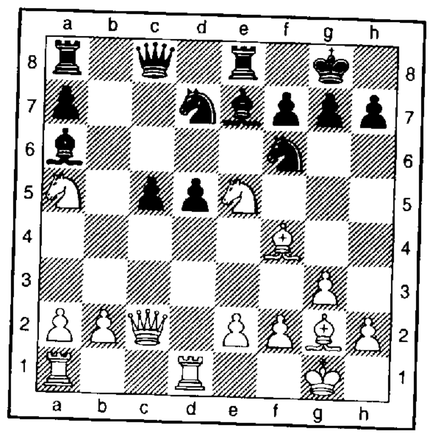

Q 9-59. What should White play?

'Very often, the side with a large positional advantage has to make a decision as to when to cash it in for some material... This is one of the most difficult areas of chess judgement. Too soon, and you will not have extracted the best value for the positional advantage. But it is also possible to manoeuvre too long; the optimum moment passes, and then the defender's chances start to increase again.' (John Nunn).

Here we encounter precisely the problem mentioned. Is it worth taking the d5 pawn? Yusupov decided, rightly in my view, that it is not: after 16 ♗xd5?! ♘xd5 17 ♖xd5 ♘b6 (or 17...♘f6 18 ♖d2 ♕h3) 18 ♖d2 ♕e6 Black gains quite good counterplay, since his pieces become active. 16 ♖xd5? ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 ♘xe5 is even worse. And indeed, why should White go in for unclear complications, if he can successfully continue his policy of restricting the opponent's forces?

16 ♗h3! ♕c7
17 ♘ec4

Of course, not 17 ♘xd7?! ♕xa5.

17 ... ♕c8

White also had to reckon with 17...♕d8 18 ♘c6 ♕c8. Then he was intending 19 ♘4e5 (19 ♘xe7+ ♖xe7 20 ♘e5 is also good) 19...♗f8 20 e4! with an obvious advantage.

18 ♘e3!

The variations 18 e4 ♗xc4 19 ♘xc4 dxc4 20 e5 ♕a6 and 18 ♕a4 dxc4 19 ♖xd7 ♗f8 seemed less convincing to Artur. However, 18 ♘e5!? came into consideration.

18 ... d4
19 ♘ec4

Yusupov had aimed for this position when he played 16 ♗h3!. By forcing ...d5–d4, he has gained control of the c4 square. Apart from the direct threat of 20 ♗g2, the opponent now has to reckon with the typical undermining moves e2–e3 and b2–b4.

19 ... ♗xc4

It is painful to make such a move, of course, but what else can be suggested for Black?

20 ♘xc4 ♕a6
21 e3!

The decisive undermining of the enemy centre.

21 ... ♘b6
22 ♘xb6 ♕xb6
23 exd4 cxd4
24 ♗c7!?

Yusupov finally sets about winning material – the move played leads by force to the win of a pawn. 24 ♗e5 ♗c5 25 ♗xf6 gxf6 26 ♖ac1 was also pretty strong.

24 ... ♕c5
25 ♕xc5 ♗xc5
26 ♖ac1 ♘e4?

This sortie makes things easier for the opponent. More tenacious was 26...♗b6 27 ♗xb6 axb6 28 ♖xd4 ♖xa2 29 ♖b4 h5 30 ♖xb6 ♘g4 (30...♖e2 31 ♖c8+ ♔h7 32 ♗f5+) 31 ♗f1 ♘e5, intending 32...♖d8, when White still has to overcome some technical difficulties.

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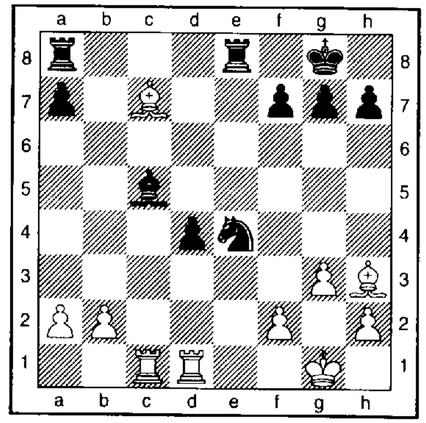

27 ♗f5! ♗b6
28 ♗d7!

Playing for the maximum! The simple 28 ♗xb6 axb6 29 ♖xd4 was also good enough to win, but Yusupov finds the most convincing way to his goal.

28 ... ♖e7
29 ♗c6 ♖f8

29...♖c8 would have lost immediately to 30 ♗xb6 axb6 31 ♗xe4.

30 ♗xb6 axb6
31 ♖e1! f5
32 f3 d3
33 ♘cd1 d2

34 ♗d5+ ♔h8
35 ♖xd2!

Of course, not 35 ♖e2? ♘c3!.

35 . . . ♘xd2
36 ♖xe7

White has not only picked up his 'rightful' pawn, but has also trapped the enemy knight.

36 . . . g6
37 ♖e2 ♘b1
38 ♖e1 ♖d8
39 ♖d1!

Black resigns, since he is helpless against the march of the king to d4. A clean win!

From the Opening into the Endgame

Truth is an object of debate.
Strength is easy to recognise – it is self-evident.
Blaise Pascal

Dolmatov – Shirov

USSR Championship First League, Klaipeda 1988

1 e4 c5
2 ♘f3 d6
3 d4 cxd4
4 ♘xd4 ♘f6
5 ♘c3 g6
6 ♗e3 ♗g7
7 f3 0–0
8 ♕d2 ♘c6
9 g4

This is how Dolmatov usually plays the Dragon Variation as White.

9 . . . ♗e6

Alexey Shirov choose the main, most critical continuation. 9...e6 followed by 10...d5 is also possible. On this theme I recommend that you study Dolmatov's commentary to his game with Kiril Georgiev, included in the book *Opening Preparation* by Dvoretsky and Yusupov.

10 0–0–0 ♘xd4
11 ♗xd4 ♕a5
12 a3

Both players already had experience of the resulting position. The game Dolmatov–Watson (Sochi 1988) went 12...♖ab8!? 13 h4 b5 14 ♘d5 ♕xd2+ 15 ♖xd2 ♗xd5! (after 15...♘xd5 16 exd5 Black cannot play 16...♗xd5? 17 ♗xg7 ♗xf3 18 ♗xf8, while 16...♗xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗d7 18 ♗d3 leads to a better ending for White) 16 exd5 a5 17 ♗e2 ♘d7 18 ♖e1 ♖fc8. Who stands better here? I don't know. William Watson later had an excellent position, but in the end it was nevertheless Dolmatov who won.

12 . . . ♖fc8
13 h4

Depending on White's choice, this move may be the start of an attack on the kingside, but it may also be treated as a preparation for the transition into the endgame. In the event of the hasty 13 ♘d5? ♕xd2+ 14 ♖xd2 ♗xd5 15 exd5 ♗h6 White loses the exchange.

13 . . . ♖ab8

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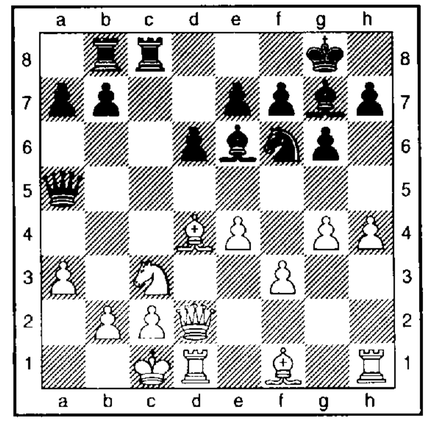

14 ♘d5

In 1988 it was thought that the complications arising after the critical 14 h5!? b5 were advantageous to Black. For example, 15 h6 b4! 16 ♘b5! (White loses after 16 hxg7 bxa3

17 ♕h6 axb2+ 18 ♔d2 ♗xg4! 19 ♗xf6 ♗h5, Plaskett–Watson, Brighton 1983) 16...♖xb5! 17 ♗xb5 ♕xb5 18 hxg7 bxa3 with chances for both sides, as in the game Shirov–Golubev (Yurmala 1985).

Instead of 15 h6, more dangerous for Black is 15 hxg6! b4! (if 15...hxg6, then 16 ♕g5! is strong) 16 gxh7+ (the immediate 16 ♘d5 is also possible) 16...♔h8 17 ♘d5! ♗xd5 18 g5!? or 18 exd5!? ♕xd5 19 g5. In the 1990s several games were played on this theme, but as yet it seems to me to be too early to bring in a final verdict.

If White nevertheless intends to go into the endgame, there is no point in including the moves 14 ♔b1 b5. The game I.Gurevich–Shirov (World 'Cadet' Championship, Timisoara 1988) continued 15 ♘d5 ♕xd2 16 ♖xd2 ♘xd5 (16...♗xd5!? 17 exd5 a5) 17 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 18 exd5 ♗d7 and by then playing 19...a5 Black developed some pressure on the queenside.

Finally, it should be mentioned that, if he desires, White can transpose into the aforementioned Dolmatov–Watson game by 14 ♗e2 b5 15 ♘d5 ♕xd2+ 16 ♖xd2 ♗xd5 17 exd5.

14 . . . ♕xd2+
15 ♖xd2 ♘xd5

The capture with the bishop is not justified, if after 15...♗xd5 16 exd5 Black wastes a tempo on 16...a6. Then strong is 17 ♗h3! ♘d7 (17...♖c4!?) 18 g5 ♖c7 19 ♗xd7 ♖xd7 20 h5 (Miles–Keene, London 1982). But the immediate 16...b5!? comes into consideration, for example: 17 ♗xa7 ♖a8 18 ♗d4 b4 19 g5 bxa3 20 bxa3 ♘h5 21 ♗xg7 ♔xg7.

16 exd5

16 ♗xg7 is quieter. Black can go into an ending with opposite-colour bishops by 16...♘e3 17 ♗d4 ♘xf1 18 ♖xf1, but White's chances in it are clearly better. After 18...b6 19 g5! it is not easy to neutralise the attacking possibilities h4–h5 or f3–f4–f5.

This evaluation was confirmed by the game Short–Sax (Hastings 1983/84).

However, 16...♔xg7 17 exd5 ♗d7 18 h5 h6 19 hxg6 fxg6 20 ♗d3 ♖h8 leads to an equal game (Nunn–L.Karlsson, Helsinki 1983).

Dolmatov aims for a more favourable version of this endgame (16 exd5 ♗xd4 17 ♖xd4 ♗d7 18 ♗d3), but in so doing he allows a promising sacrifice of a bishop for three pawns.

16 . . . ♗xd5!
17 ♗xg7 ♗xf3

Watson could not play this against Dolmatov: his rook would have remained en prise at f8.

18 ♖h3 ♗xg4
19 ♖g3

19 ♗d4!? ♗xh3 20 ♗xh3 was tempting. If Black retains the rook (at the cost of the a7 pawn), his position will, I think, be difficult. The pair of bishops supports White's play on the queenside and simultaneously halts the advance of the enemy pawns on the opposite side of the board. Here are some illustrative variations: 20...e6 21 ♗xa7 ♖a8 22 ♗e3 followed by the seizure of the dark squares, or 20...♖c4 21 ♗xa7 ♖xh4 22 ♗g2! ♖a8 (22...♖c8 23 ♗xb7 ♖c7 24 ♗f2) 23 ♗f2 and 24 ♗xb7.

20...b6 (or 20...a6) 21 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 is better. Roughly the same position arises as in the game, but White retains not his light-square, but his dark-square bishop. At first sight it appears more active, but is this so clear if account is taken of Black's obvious plan of ...f7–f6, ...♔f7, ...e7–e5 and ...♔e6, sharply restricting the bishop's activity? Also in Black's favour is the departure from the board of one pair of rooks. Here a general rule operates: ***the fewer the pieces remaining on the board, the greater the power that pawns acquire compared with pieces***.

19 . . . ♔xg7
20 ♖xg4

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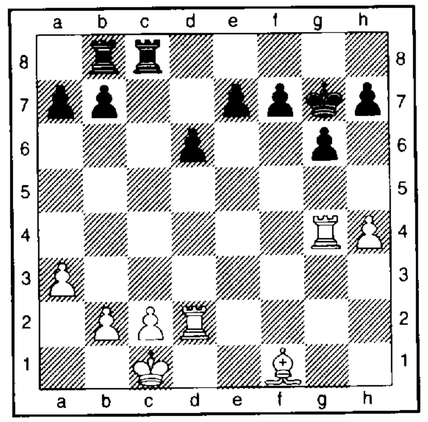

Q 9-60. What should Black play?

The natural move chosen by Shirov in the game is inaccurate, in my view.

20 . . . f5?!
21 ♖a4! a6
22 ♖b4

Black wants to strengthen his position by ...♔f6, ...h7–h6, ...g6–g5 etc. By provoking the advance of the enemy pawn to a6, White has gained a pretext for counterplay on the queenside: a3–a4, ♖d3–b3, and in reply to ...♖c7 he has ♗xa6. This could have been avoided by the prophylactic move 20...♖c7! (instead of 20...f5?!), and if 21 ♖a4, then 21...b6. I hesitate to give an evaluation of the resulting position, whereas in the game it is definitely in White's favour.

22 . . . h6

Little would be changed by 22...♔f6 23 a4. If 22...b5, then 23 a4 ♖c5 24 axb5 axb5 25 ♖d3 is strong. If instead Black rearranges his queenside pawns by 22...a5 23 ♖b5 (23 ♖b6 ♖c6) 23...b6, then White breaks through by playing 24 ♖d3 (with the threat of 25 ♖db3) 24...♖c5 25 ♖db3 ♖xb5 26 ♖xb5 ♔f6 27 a4! followed by 28 b4 axb4 29 a5.

In the game Jansa–Mortensen (Denmark–Czechoslovakia match 1982) Black chose 22...a5 23 ♖b5 ♖c5, and after 24 ♖xc5 dxc5 25 ♖d7 ♔f6 26 ♖c7 b6 White was unable to exploit the advantages of his outwardly attractive position. But he could have played differently, in the spirit of the breakthrough plan mentioned above: 24 ♖d5!? b6 25 a4 and then b2–b4.

23 ♖d5?!

This prophylactic move, directed against ...g6–g5, turns out to be inaccurate. White should have directly put his plan into operation by playing 23 a4!. If 23...g5, then very strong is 24 ♖d5! ♖c5 (24...♔f6 25 ♗d3 ♖c5 26 ♖xc5 dxc5 27 ♖b6+) 25 ♖xc5 dxc5 26 ♖b6 with an obvious advantage.

However, it was almost impossible to foresee that after the move in the game White's advantage would be lost – after all, this occurs in a variation in which he wins an important pawn.

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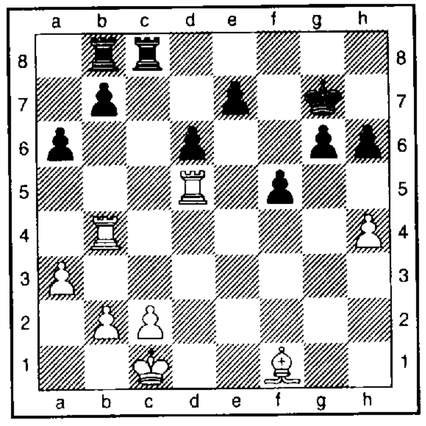

Q 9-61. How should Black defend?

To the credit of the young Alexey Shirov (he was then just 16 years old), he managed to guess the only way of playing that gave him real chances of a draw. 23...♖c6 (with the basically sound positional idea of restricting the enemy bishop with the pawns after ...e7–e6 and ...d6–d5) is refuted in two

ways: 24 ♖a5 (threatening the capture on a6) 24...♖cc8 25 ♗g2, and also 24 ♗g2 e6?! 25 ♖xf5!. If 23...♖d8 (with the same idea of ...e7–e6 and ...d6–d5), then 24 ♖b6 is strong; 23...♖c7? 24 ♗xa6 is also not possible. And if 23...♔f6, then simply 24 a4, and what is Black to do next?

23	**...**	**b5!**
24	**a4**	**♖c5**
25	**♖xc5**	**dxc5**
26	**♖b3**	**♔f6**

The black rook could have broken into enemy territory after 26...♖a8 27 axb5 axb5 28 ♗xb5 ♖a1+ 29 ♔d2, but this position is obviously advantageous to White (29...♖h1 30 ♖c3 ♖xh4 31 ♖xc5). The inclusion of 26...g5!? 27 h5! would have changed little.

27	**axb5**	**axb5**
28	**♖xb5**	**♖xb5**
29	**♗xb5**	

It is not easy to make an objective evaluation of this unusual ending. But one thing can be said with certainty: such an endgame is always in favour of Dolmatov, whichever colour he is playing. Sergey is better than anyone at identifying study-like endgame subtleties, and deeply and accurately calculating the most complicated variations. Numerous brilliant examples of his endgame play can be found in my book *School of Chess Excellence 1 – Endgame Analysis*.

29	**...**	**e5**
30	**♔d2**	**g5**
31	**h5!**	

see next diagram

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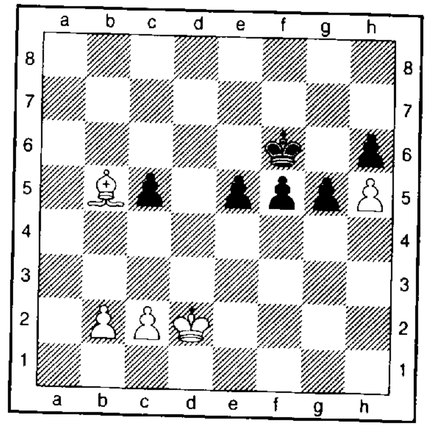

The exchange on g5 would have led to a simple draw. White can quickly create a passed b-pawn, which will divert the opponent's king to the queenside. But it would be naïve to expect that he would be able to eliminate all the enemy pawns without losing his own. By playing h4–h5! White retains the additional strategic prospect of breaking through with his king to the h6 pawn.

31	**...**	**e4?**

Shirov cannot be reproached for this mistake, which leads to his defeat. He plays logically: he advances his pawns, at the same time approaching the queenside with his king. But strangely enough, he should have aimed it in the opposite direction, trying to eliminate the h5 pawn. The correct move was 31...g4!. In the event of 32 c3 g3 or 32...e4 followed by 33...g3 Black has no problems. Incidentally, note this positional draw which is important for an understanding of the subsequent play: with his pawns on e3–f4–g3 Black's king can calmly stand on duty on the queenside, since the pawns are immune.

Let us consider 32 ♔e3 ♔g5 33 c3 ♔xh5 34 b4 cxb4 35 cxb4 ♔g5 36 ♗d7. Now 36...f4+? is bad because of 37 ♔e2!, for example:

37...g3 38 ♗c6 ♔f6 39 b5 ♔e7 40 b6 ♔d6 41 b7 ♔c7 42 ♔f3 followed by ♔g2–h3–h4–h5;

37...e4 38 ♗c6! ♔f5 39 b5 g3 40 b6 g2 41 ♔f2 f3 42 ♗xe4+!;

37...♔f6 38 ♗xg4 e4 (38...♔e7 39 ♔f3 ♔d6 40 ♔e4 ♔c6 41 ♗e2) 39 b5 ♔e5 40 ♗f5! e3 41 ♔f3 h5 42 ♗d3 h4 43 ♗f1 and Black is in zugzwang.

36...♔f6! 37 b5 is necessary, and now either 37...f4+ 38 ♔e2 (38 ♔e4 g3 39 ♗h3 ♔e7, and White does not manage to advance his pawn to b7) 38...♔e7 39 ♗xg4 ♔d6 40 ♔f2 ♔c5 41 ♗e2 e4, or 37...♔e7 38 ♗xf5 h5 with an obvious draw.

33...f4+ (instead of 33...♔xh5) 34 ♔e4 g3! is even simpler and stronger.

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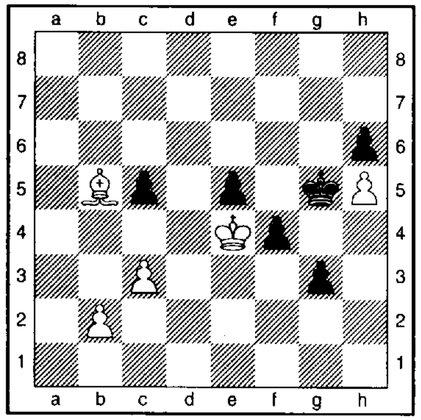


Q 9-62. What should White play?

If he makes the obvious move 35 ♗f1?, then after 35...c4! I do not see how he can gain even a draw: 36 ♔f3 ♔h4! (zugzwang) 37 ♗g2 (37 ♗xc4 e4+; 37 ♔g2 e4) 37...♔xh5, or 36 ♗g2 ♔xh5 37 ♔xe5 ♔g4 38 ♔e4 h5 39 ♗f3+ ♔h3 40 ♔xf4 g2 and the pawn endgame is lost. This means that 35 ♔f3! e4+ 36 ♔g2 is necessary. Since the attack 36...♔g4 37 ♗d7+ ♔h4 is not dangerous in view of 38 ♗c6! f3+ 39 ♔g1, it is clear that things end in a draw.

32	**♔e3!!**	

Why does the king move into a check? It turns out that this king move is the first part of a prophylactic operation aimed at halting the opponent's pawns. For a start the black king is diverted away from the kingside (32...g4? 33 ♔f4 is bad for Black).

32	**...**	**♔e5**
33	**♗d7!**	

The point of White's plan is to answer 33...g4!? with 34 ♔f2!, when none of the enemy pawns can advance further. However, here things are by no means so simple. After we have concluded our analysis of the game, I invite endgame devotees to familiarise themselves with the analysis of the resulting position.

33	**...**	**f4+**
34	**♔e2**	

White's plan is to play his king to g4, after which the opponent will be in zugzwang.

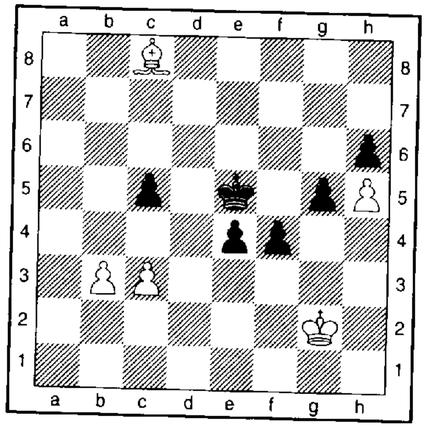
34	**...**	**♔d4**
35	**c3+**	**♔d5**
36	**b3**	**♔d6**
37	**♗c8**	**♔e5**
38	**♔f2**	**♔d5**
39	**♔f1!?**	

An attempt to outwit the opponent! Dolmatov sees that the position with the king on g2, the bishop on c8 and the enemy king on e5 is one of mutual zugzwang, and he tries to obtain it with Black to move. After 39...♔e5?! 40 ♔g2 ♔d5 41 ♔h3 he does not have to fear 41...e3 in view of 42 ♗b7+ ♔e5 43 ♗f3. Shirov sees through this idea.

39	**...**	**♔d6!**
40	**♔g1**	**♔d5!**
41	**♔f2**	**♔d6**
42	**♔g2**	**♔e5**

see next diagram

163



Q 9-63. What should White play?

It is White to move, and now 43 ♔h3? e3 44 ♗g4 ♔e4 45 ♔g2 ♔d3 will not do. He has to play not so directly.

43 ♗g4! ♔d5?!

Black nevertheless ends up in the zugzwang position about which we have already spoken. However, even after the more tenacious 43...♔d6 White would have won: 44 ♗f5 ♔d5!? 45 ♔h3 e3 (45...♔e5 46 ♗g4 ♔d5 47 ♗c8) 46 ♔g2 ♔e5 47 ♗g4 ♔e4 48 b4 (White also wins by 48 ♗e2 f3+!? 49 ♗xf3+ ♔d3 50 c4 ♔c3 51 ♔f1 ♔xb3 52 ♗d5 ♔c3 53 ♔e2 ♔d4 54 ♗f7 ♔e4 55 ♗g8 ♔d4 56 ♗d5 g4 57 ♗e6 g3 58 ♗d5 g2 59 ♗xg2 ♔xc4 60 ♔xe3) 48...cxb4 49 cxb4 ♔d4 50 ♗e2! g4 51 ♗xg4 ♔c4 52 ♔f3 e2 53 ♔xe2 ♔xb4 54 ♔f3 ♔c5 55 ♔xf4 ♔d6 56 ♔f5 ♔e7 57 ♔g6 ♔f8 58 ♗e6.

44 ♗f5!

Zugzwang!

44 . . . ♔e5

45 ♗c8

Zugzwang!

45 . . . ♔d5

46 ♔h3 ♔e5

As already mentioned, after 46...e3 there follows 47 ♗b7+ and 48 ♗f3, while if 46...f3, then 47 ♔g3 ♔e5 48 ♗h3 (zugzwang) 48...♔d5 49 ♔f2 and 50 ♔e3 with an easy win.

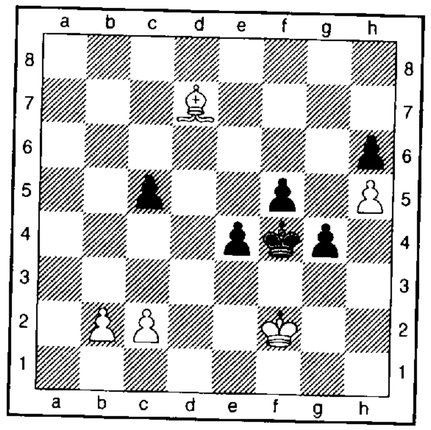
47 ♔g4 ♔d6

48 ♗b7

Here the game was adjourned, and Black resigned without resuming. After 48...♔e5 49 ♗c6 he again ends up in zugzwang and is forced to make a decisive weakening of his pawn structure: 49...f3 50 ♔g3 followed by the manoeuvre of the king to e3, or 49...e3 50 ♗f3 ♔e6 51 b4 cxb4 52 cxb4 ♔e5 53 b5 and after the diversion of the black king, White breaks through to the h6 pawn.

Now let us return to the position that could have arisen after **33...g4!? 34 ♔f2! ♔f4.**

164



Here every tempo counts. Unsuitable, for example, is 35 b3? ♔g5! 36 c3 (36 ♔e3? g3) 36...f4 37 b4 cxb4 38 cxb4 g3+ 39 ♔g2 ♔f6 with a draw (I should remind you that pawns on e3–f4–g3 are immune). If 35 ♗c6? there follows 35...♔g5! 36 c3 ♔h4 37 b4 cxb4 38 cxb4 ♔h3 (with the threat of 39...♔h2) 39 ♔g1 e3 40 b5 f4 41 b6 f3 (41...e2? 42 ♔f2 f3 43 ♗d7 e1♕+ 44 ♔xe1 ♔g2 45 ♗b5) 42 ♗xf3 (42 ♗d7 ♔g3; 42 b7 e2 43 ♔f2 g3+) 42...gxf3 43 b7 e2 44 ♔f2 e1♕+ 45 ♔xe1 ♔g2 with a draw. Or 37 ♔g2 (instead of 37 b4) 37...e3 38 b4 (38 ♗b5 ♔xh5 or 38...f4! 39 ♗e2 c4!) 38...cxb4 39 cxb4 f4 40 b5 e2 41 ♔f2 f3 42 ♗xf3 gxf3 43 b6 ♔h3 44 b7 e1♕+ 45 ♔xe1 ♔g2.

35 c3! is necessary, when the best reply is **35...c4!** (both 35...g3+ 36 ♔g2 and 35...e3+ 36 ♔e2 are hopeless).

Let us study the obvious 36 ♗e6. In sharp variations Black is just one tempo short. For example: 36...♔g5 37 ♗xc4 f4 38 b4 f3 (38...g3+ 39 ♔g2 ♔g4 40 ♗e6+ ♔h4 41 ♗d5! f3+ 42 ♔g1 and wins) 39 b5 ♔f4 40 b6 g3+ 41 ♔g1 and the white pawn queens with check. Nothing is changed by 36...♔e5 37 ♗xc4 f4 38 b4.

But 36...e3+! sets White very serious problems. Analysing this endgame, Dolmatov and I were staggered by the radical change in the character of the play: instead of the race to queen a pawn, which is natural in such positions, we discovered a whole series of mutual zugzwang positions, which were then again replaced by a speed competition.

Let us consider the different moves of the white king.

A) 37 ♔e2 g3! 38 ♗d5 ♔e5 39 ♗b7!? f4 40 ♗g2.

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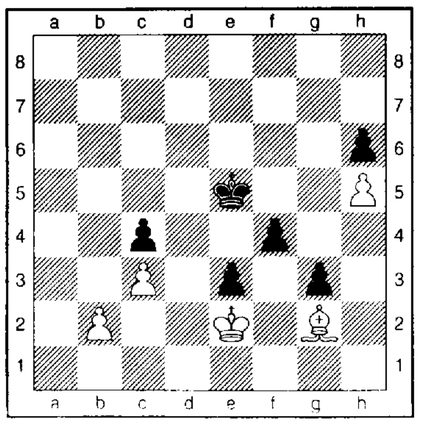

Q 9-64. What should Black play?

The natural 40...♔d6? loses to 41 ♔f3 (zugzwang) 41...♔c5 (after 41...♔d5 or 41...♔c6 the f4 pawn is captured with check) 42 ♗f1 (again zugzwang) 42...♔d5 (42...♔b5 43 b3 or 43 b4) 43 ♔xf4 e2 44 ♗xe2 g2 45 ♗f3+ and 46 ♗xg2.

The only correct move is 40...♔e6!! 41 ♔f3 ♔d6 42 ♗h3 ♔c6(d5)! 43 ♗f1 ♔c5!. Here all the zugzwang positions are reached with White to play, and it is impossible to give the opponent the move.

B) 37 ♔e2 g3! 38 ♔f1. Now neither 38...♔e4? 39 ♗xc4 f4 40 ♔g2 nor 38...♔f3? 39 ♗d5+ ♔g4 40 ♔g2! f4 41 ♗f3+ ♔f5 42 ♗e2 will do. But after 38...♔g4! a new position of mutual zugzwang is reached.

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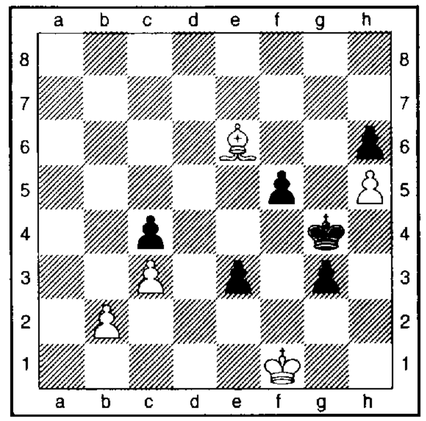

If it were Black to move, he would lose: 39...♔f4(g5) 40 ♗xc4; 39...♔h3 40 ♗xf5+ ♔h2 41 ♗e4; 39...♔f3 40 ♗d5+ ♔g4 41 ♔g2!.

But it is White's turn to move! If 39 ♗xc4 there follows 39...f4 40 ♗e6+ ♔h4 41 ♗d5 ♔h3 42 b4 e2+ (42...♔h2 43 b5 g2+ 44 ♗xg2 e2+ 45 ♔xe2 ♔xg2 46 b6 f3+ is also possible, with a probable draw in the queen ending) 43 ♔xe2 g2 44 ♔f2 f3! 45 ♔g1 (45 ♗xf3 ♔h2) 45...f2+! 46 ♔xf2 ♔h2 47 ♗xg2 – stalemate!

Giving Black the move does not succeed: 39 ♗c8 ♔f4 (39...♔g5 40 ♗d7 ♔f4! is also possible, but not 40...♔g4? 41 ♗e6!) 40 ♗b7 (40 ♗a6 ♔g4!) 40...♔e5 41 ♔e2 f4 42 ♗g2 ♔e6!! etc., as in variation A.

C) 37 ♔f1 ♔e4!.

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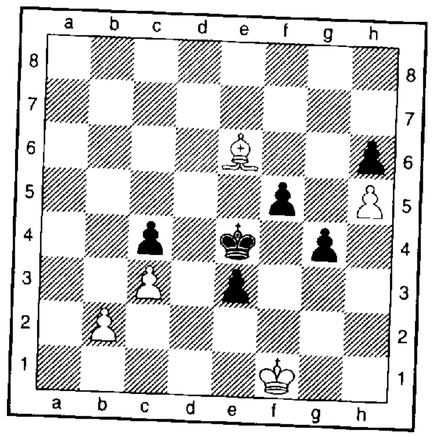


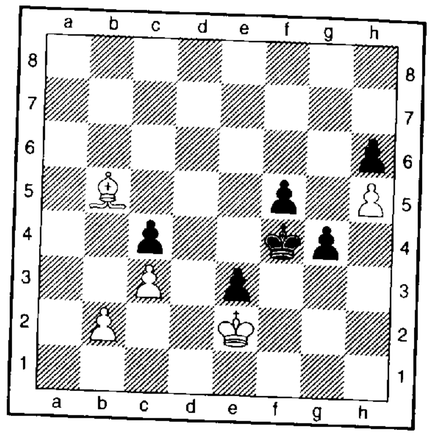
And again White is in zugzwang! 38 ♗xc4? is not possible on account of 38...f4 39 ♗e6 g3; if 38 ♔e2 there follows 38...g3. And if 38 ♔g2, then 38...♔d3 39 ♗xf5+ ♔d2 40 ♗xg4 e2 41 ♗xe2 ♔xe2 with a draw.

D) 37 ♔g2!?. Now 37...♔e5(g5)? 38 ♗xc4 f4 39 ♗e2 will not do. After 37...♔e4 38 ♔f1! (38 ♗xc4? f4) we reach the familiar position from the last diagram, but with Black to move. 38...g3? 39 ♗xc4 f4 40 ♔g2 is hopeless, while after 38...♔f4?! 39 ♗xc4 ♔g3 40 b4! (40 ♔e2 f4 41 ♗e6 f3+! 42 ♔xe3 f2 43 ♗c4 ♔g2 and 44...g3) 40...f4 41 b5 ♔h2 42 b6 g3 43 ♗d5 g2+ 44 ♗xg2 e2+ 45 ♔xe2 ♔xg2 46 b7 f3+ 47 ♔e3(d2) f2 48 b8♕ f1♕ White probably wins the queen endgame. However, Black finds 38...f4! 39 ♗xg4 ♔d3 40 ♗d1 ♔d2 41 ♗e2 ♔c2 42 ♗xc4 ♔xb2 and then 43...♔xc3, when his king cannot be prevented from reaching h8.

Thus, after 36 ♗e6? Black saves the game. And yet White has a clear-cut way to win!

36 ♗b5!! e3+ (36...g3+ 37 ♔g2 ♔g4 38 ♗xc4 f4 39 ♗e6+ ♔h4 40 ♗d5) **37 ♔e2.**

168



Here 37...g3 38 ♗c6 is hopeless for Black, since his king cannot move to e5 with gain of tempo, as in the variation 36 ♗e6 e3+ 37 ♔e2 g3 38 ♗d5.

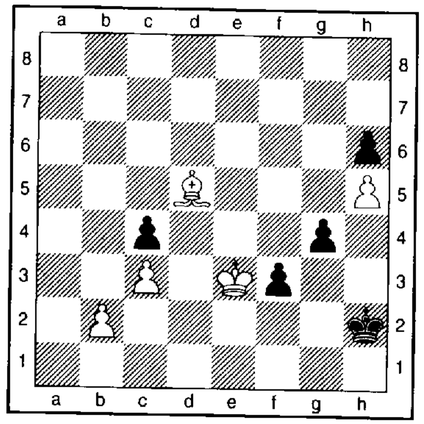
37...♔g3 38 ♔xe3! (38 ♗xc4? f4 39 b4 ♔h2 or 39 ♗e6 f3+!) **38...f4+ 39 ♔e2 ♔g2.** No better is 39...f3+ 40 ♔f1 ♔h2 41 ♗c6 ♔h3 42 ♔g1 or 42 ♗d7, but not 42 ♔f2? g3+ 43 ♔xf3 g2 44 ♔f2 ♔h2 with the already familiar stalemate.

40 ♗c6+ f3+ 41 ♔e3 ♔g3. If 41...♔h3, then 42 ♗d5 or 42 ♗d7. Incorrect is 42 ♔f2? g3+ 43 ♔g1 f2+ 44 ♔f1 ♔h2 45 ♗d5 ♔h3 and White cannot strengthen his position.

42 ♗d5 ♔h2.

see next diagram

169



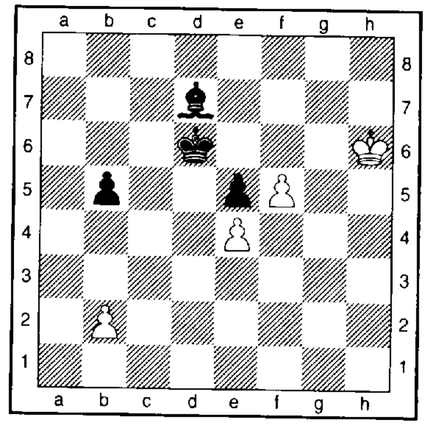
43 ♗xf3! gxf3 44 ♔xf3 ♔h3 45 ♔e4 ♔g4 46 ♔d4 ♔xh5 47 ♔xc4 ♔g4 48 b4 h5. Now 49 b5 h4 leads to a queen endgame where White is a pawn up. But he can achieve more.

49 ♔d3! h4. After 49...♔g3 White's pawn queens with check, while in the event of 49...♔f3 he wins the queen by a check on the long diagonal.

50 ♔e2 ♔g3 51 ♔f1 ♔h2 52 b5 h3 53 b6 ♔h1 54 b7 h2 55 ♔e2! and the game is over.

E 9-7

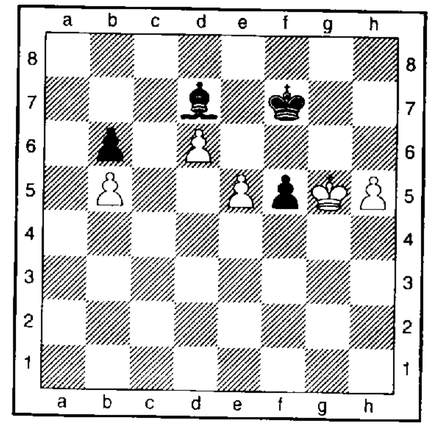
170



White to move.
Can he save the game?

E 9-8

171



Black to move.
Can he win?

Advanced Technique

If I have ever made any valuable discoveries,
it has been owing more to patient attention, than to any other talent.
Isaac Newton

Bareev – Shirov
Linares 1994

1	**d4**	**d5**
2	**c4**	**c6**
3	**♘f3**	**♘f6**
4	**♘c3**	**e6**
5	**e3**	**♘bd7**
6	**♗d3**	**dxc4**
7	**♗xc4**	**b5**
8	**♗d3**	**♗b7**
9	**e4**	**b4**
10	**♘a4**	**c5**
11	**e5**	**♘d5**
12	**dxc5**	

This is one of the popular branches of the Meran Variation. Rather than the move in the game, White often prefers 12 0–0 cxd4 13 ♖e1 (or 13 ♘xd4), and if he does take on c5, then more often with the knight than the pawn. The point is that now 12...♕a5!? 13 0–0 ♗xc5 is quite good for Black, whereas after 12 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 (or 12...♗xc5) 13 dxc5 the reply 13...♕a5 is no longer so good on account of 14 ♕e2 with the idea of 15 ♗b5+ (the queen does not have to defend the knight at a4).

12 . . . ♘xc5
13 ♘xc5

13 ♗b5+!? ♘d7 14 ♗g5 deserves serious consideration.

13 . . . ♗xc5
14 0–0

Here the check no longer gives anything: 14 ♗b5+ ♔e7 15 0–0 (15 ♗g5+ f6 16 ♗h4 ♕a5) 15...♕b6 with a good game for Black, as in the 6th game of the Uhlmann–Larsen candidates match (Las Palmas 1971).

If 14 ♘g5 there is the strong reply 14...♕c7!.

14 . . . h6

For the moment castling is not possible on account of the standard bishop sacrifice on h7.

15 ♘d2

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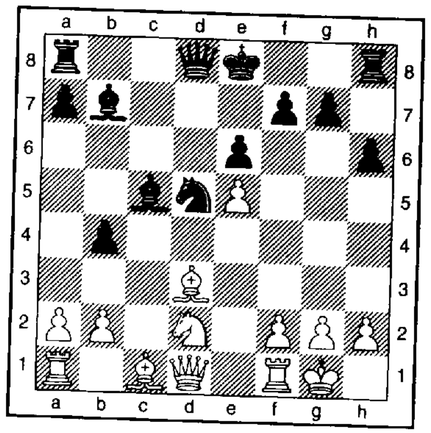


In this variation it is with the manoeuvre of his knight to e4 that White usually pins his hopes of seizing the initiative. As we will see, in this way he does not in fact gain any advantage. But 15 ♕e2 ♕b6 16 ♗d2, as tried in the game Karpov–Polugayevsky (41st USSR Championship, Moscow 1973), also does not promise anything real. Apparently an improvement for White should be sought somewhere earlier.

15 . . . 0–0

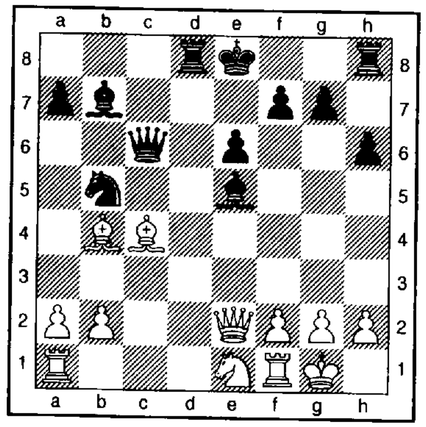
In the mid-1970s a theoretical discussion developed around the move **15...♘c3.** Let us analyse the resulting complications!

16 ♕c2! ♕d5 17 ♘f3 ♖d8 18 ♘e1! ♗d4! 19 ♗d2 (bad is 19 bxc3? ♗xc3 with the threats of 20...♗xe1 and 20...♗xa1) **19...♘b5** (inferior is 19...♘e4 20 ♗xb4 ♗xe5 21 ♕a4+ ♗c6 22 ♕xa7 ♖d7 23 ♕a3) **20 ♗xb4 ♗xe5.** Not 20...♗b6? 21 ♕c4 ♘d4 22 ♕xd5 ♖xd5 23 ♗d6 and White has a clear advantage (Polugayevsky–Mecking, Manila 1975).

21 ♗c4. In the game Magerramov–Bagirov (Baku 1976) 21 ♖c1 a6 22 ♕a4 ♗d6 23 ♗xd6 ♖xd6 24 ♕b4 0–0 led to equality. However, 21 ♖d1!? is worth testing.

21...♕c6 22 ♕e2.

173



22...♗a6!?. Vladimir Bagirov gives the variation 22...♘d4 23 ♕xe5 ♕xc4 24 ♕xg7 ♕xb4 25 ♕xh8+ ♔e7 26 ♕xh6 ♗a6, evaluating the position as somewhat better for White.

23 ♘f3. 23 ♕xe5 ♕xc4 24 ♕xg7 is incorrect because of 24...♕d4! with advantage to Black.

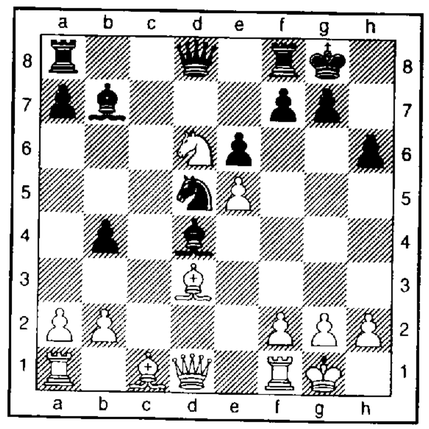
23...♘d4 24 ♕xe5 ♘xf3+ 25 gxf3 ♕xc4 26 ♕xg7 ♕xb4 27 ♕xh8+ ♔e7 28 ♕xh6 ♗xf1 29 ♕g5+ ♔e8 30 ♖xf1 ♕xb2 and White's position is preferable.

The last moves are taken from the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*. Unfortunately, this analysis contains a 'hole', and not just one. By playing 28...♖g8+! (instead of 28...♗xf1?) 29 ♔h1 ♗b7! 30 ♕e3 ♕g4! Black wins. And earlier 26...♕d4! wins. Therefore instead of taking the g7 pawn, White should play 26 ♗c5!? with roughly equal chances.

Thus 15...♘c3!? is a perfectly possible move. Nevertheless, when 20 years later the variation again began to occur frequently in tournament play (the laws of fashion are incomprehensible!), Black switched to castling. And in the game Epishin–Dreev (Tilburg 1994) Black demonstrated a third, and, apparently, also quite good possibility: 15...♕c7!? 16 ♖e1 (after 16 ♘e4 ♗e7 the e5 pawn is under attack, while if 16 ♘c4, as pointed out by Alexey Dreev, there follows 16...♖d8 17 ♕e2 ♘e7!?) 16...♖d8 17 ♘e4 ♗e7 18 ♘g3 g6 19 ♗d2 ♔f8 20 ♖c1 ♕b6 21 ♕e2 ♔g7 with an equal game.

16 ♘e4 ♗d4
17 ♘d6

174



17 . . . ♗xe5!?

A clever novelty, apparently prepared in advance by Alexey Shirov. He sacrifices a bishop, hoping soon to restore material equality, since the knight will have nowhere to go from b7.

The usual continuation is 17...♗c6. Victor Korchnoi gained an advantage against Mikhail Gurevich (Antwerpen 1993) by continuing 18 ♕e2 f5 19 ♖d1 ♕e7?! 20 ♗a6! ♗c5?! (20...♗b6) 21 ♗d2! (with the idea of 22 ♖ac1), when 21...♗xd6? 22 exd6 ♕xd6 is bad because of 23 ♗xb4! ♕xb4 24 ♕xe6+ ♔h8 25 ♕xc6. But it is unclear whether White would have achieved anything real against a more accurate defence, and besides, in the game Gagarin–Stripunsky (Russia 1995) Black obtained a good position by playing 18...♕h4!? (instead of 18...f5).

A less tense situation arises after 18 ♗h7+!? ♔xh7 19 ♕xd4. There can follow 19...f6 20 ♗d2 fxe5 21 ♕xe5 ♕d7 (Gagarin–Mukhametov, Potsdam 1994) and now, according to analysis by Vasily Gagarin, 22 ♘c4!? ♖f5 23 ♕g3 ♖af8 24 ♘e5 ♕e8 25 ♖fc1 ♗b5 26 f3 retains somewhat the better chances for White.

18 ♘xb7 ♕b6

Unconvincing is 18...♕c7 19 ♗a6!.

19 ♕h5!

At the board grandmaster Evgeny Bareev finds the most energetic reply to his opponent's novelty. 19 ♕e2 ♗f6 20 ♕e4 ♖fc8! did not promise White anything, for example: 21 ♗f4! ♘xf4 (21...♕xb7? 22 ♕h7+ ♔f8 23 ♗d6+ ♔e8 24 ♕g8+ ♔d7 25 ♕xf7+) 22 ♕xf4 ♕xb7 23 ♗e4 ♕b8! 24 ♕d2 (24 ♕f3 ♗xb2 with two pawns for the exchange) 24...♖d8 25 ♕c1 (25 ♕e2? ♕e5; 25 ♕c2? ♕c8) 25...♖c8 26 ♕b1 (26 ♕d2 ♖d8) 26...♕e5 27 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 and the b2 pawn is lost.

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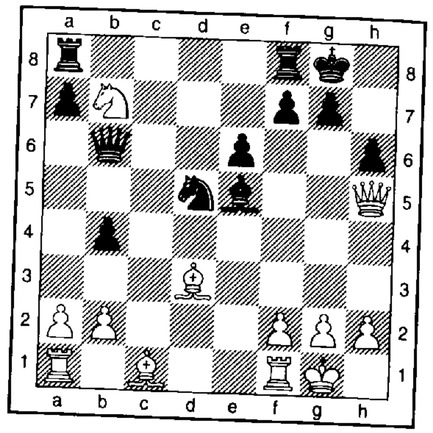

Q 9-65. How should Black continue?

With his last move White not only threatened the capture on e5, but he also prepared the sacrifice of his bishop on h6. For example: 19...♗f6?! 20 ♗xh6! ♖fc8 (totally bad is 20...gxh6 21 ♕xh6) 21 ♗e3! ♕xb7 (or 21...♘xe3 22 ♕h7+ ♔f8 23 fxe3 ♕xb7 24 ♗e4) 22 ♕h7+ ♔f8 23 ♗e4 with advantage to White (Bareev).

Since the move 19...♗f4 chosen by Black in the game also did not solve his defensive problems, it may seem that his novelty was unsuccessful and led to a difficult position. In any event, it was with this evaluation that the game was published in chess magazines and in *Informator*. In fact Shirov's idea was correct, but he should have prepared it better at home, and analysed the position more deeply.

The correct solution was found by grandmaster Uwe Bönsch: 19...♗d4!. Now the bishop sacrifice is not dangerous: 20 ♗xh6?! gxh6 21 ♕xh6 f5 and it is not easy for White to gain even a draw. For example: 22 ♖ae1 ♖f6! 23 ♕g5+ ♔f7 24 ♕h4 ♖g6! (Yusupov) and Black wins, since 25 ♘d6+ ♕xd6 26 ♕xd4 ♖xg2+! is bad for White and 25...♖h8 is threatened. Or 22 ♘c5!? ♕xc5! (22...♗xc5 leads to perpetual check) 23 ♕xe6+ ♔g7 24 ♖ac1 ♘f4! 25 ♕d7+ ♖f7, and White is

forced to go into a difficult endgame by 26 ♕xf7+ ♔xf7 27 ♖xc5 ♗xc5 28 ♗xf5.

Instead of 20 ♗xh6?! stronger is 20 ♕g4. In reply 20...♘f6? 21 ♕h4 (threatening 22 ♘a5) 21...e5 22 ♗xh6 is unsuccessful. A complicated position with chances for both sides arises after 20...♗f6 21 ♗xh6 ♕xb7. The more risky 20...f5 also comes into consideration, although after 21 ♕e2 (21 ♕g3 ♕xb7 22 ♗xh6 ♗xb2) 21...♖f6 (21...♖ae8?! 22 ♖d1 ♕xb7 23 ♗b5) 22 ♗c4 (22 ♗a6 ♘c7) 22...♕xb7 23 ♖d1 ♗b6 (23...♕b6? 24 ♕d2) 24 ♕f3 ♖d8 25 ♗f4 White obtains good positional compensation for the lost (or sacrificed?) pawn.

19 . . . ♗f4?!
20 ♘c5!

In this way White wins the exchange. The other tempting move 20 ♘a5? is incorrect in view of 20...♗xc1 21 ♘c4 ♕d4 22 ♖d1 ♗xb2 23 ♗h7+ ♔xh7 24 ♖xd4 ♗xd4 with a won position for Black (Bareev).

20 . . . ♕xc5
21 ♗xf4 ♕d4
22 ♗d6 ♕xd3

22...♖fd8? 23 ♖ad1 with the threat of 24 ♗h7+.

23 ♗xf8 ♖xf8

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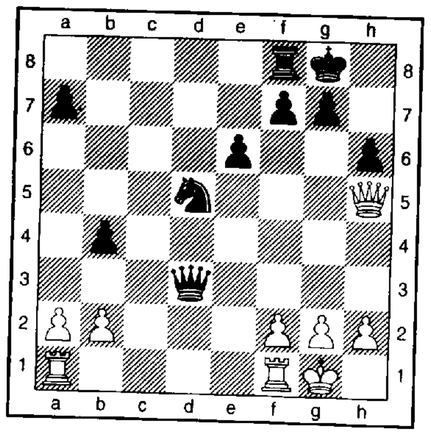


Q 9-66. What should White play?

In the first instance he must neutralise active possibilities for the opponent such as 24...♕d4 or 24...♘f4. In reply to 24 ♕d1? there follows 24...♕c4!, after which White again has to reckon with ...♘f4. Bareev chooses a better square for his queen.

24 ♕e5!

From here the queen defends the b2 pawn and takes control of the important f4 and d4 squares. This is how the grandmaster evaluates the resulting position:

'Nominally White's advantage amounts to only half a pawn, and one may gain the impression that Black's impregnable knight at d5 guarantees him a quiet life. But the centralisation of the queen at e5 (one of Capablanca's favourite techniques) shows that this is not altogether so. In the position there is an open file, and in view of the fact that an exchange of rooks is unfavourable for Black, White can develop his initiative.'

Bareev's commentary is instructive in several respects:

1) It is clear that in his time he has made a careful study of the chess classics, since he was able to observe in Capablanca's games such a specific technique as the centralisation of the queen.

2) The exchange of a pair of rooks (with the subsequent invasion by the remaining rook along an open file) is a typical technique in positions with an exchange advantage.

3) Bareev does not give a definite evaluation of the position, and this is no accident. It is evidently clear to him that it lies somewhere on the boundary between a win and a draw: White has real winning chances, but Black too, with no less justification, has the right to hope to save the draw. This means that the result of the game is unpredictable, and everything will depend on the subsequent skill of the two players. Any 'trifle' may tip the scales one way or the other, and therefore great accuracy and the utmost resourceful-

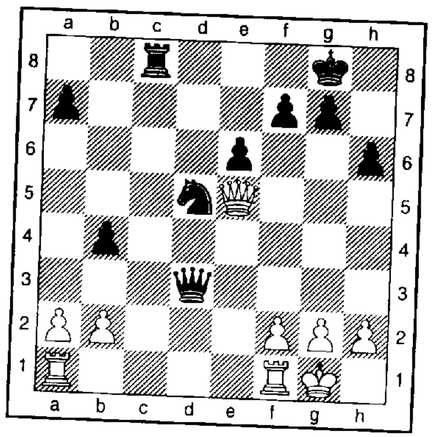
ness are demanded of both sides.

When I initially looked at the game (with Bareev's commentary) a strong impression was made on me by the fine technique, demonstrated by the Moscow grandmaster. On the whole this impression was not deceptive – Bareev did indeed play excellently. Even so, subsequent analysis enabled me on a couple of occasions to cast doubts on his decisions.

After delving into the variations and arguments given below, you will, I hope, see what I imply by an advanced standard of technical mastery and how hard it is to achieve.

24 ... ♖c8

The move made by Shirov looks rather strange – after all, now the opponent will place a rook on c1, and an exchange of rooks, according to the general evaluation given above, is advantageous to White. However, everything is not so clear as it appears at first sight. In fact here we encounter a deep and subtle technical problem, which can be formulated very simply: which rook should go to c1?



Q 9-67. Give the arguments 'for' and 'against' each of the two possibilities: 25 ♖ac1 and 25 ♖fc1. Try to make a choice.

Here the first question is especially important: after all, without seeing the source of coming difficulties, it is impossible to make an informed choice.

So, let us begin our reasoning. In the event of the exchange on c1 there is no difference between the moves: the position arising after 25 ♖c1 ♖xc1 26 ♖xc1 a5 27 g3!? a4 28 ♔g2 is lost for Black. 29 ♖c8+ ♔h7 30 ♖a8 is threatened, and bad is 28...a3 29 bxa3 ♕xa3 30 ♖c8+ ♔h7 31 ♕e4+.

If the black rook moves off the c-file, either rook move proves justified, although in this case 25 ♖ac1 looks more natural.

Let us concentrate on seeking active possibilities for the opponent. Although in principle the exchange of rooks is to White's advantage, such an evaluation will not be so clear if the black queen prevents the remaining rook from coming into play on the c-file. And this means that the replies 25...♖c4 and 25...♖c2 must be examined.

Bareev reckoned only with the first possibility – this is why he awarded an exclamation mark to the move 25 ♖fc1 that he made in the game. Now 25...♖c4? is pointless in view of 26 ♖xc4 ♕xc4 27 ♕b8+ ♔h7 28 ♕xa7 and Black does not gain any compensation for the lost pawn (if 28...♘f4 there follows 29 ♕e3).

For some reason the grandmaster did not consider the second reply: 25...♖c2!. I think that this is what Black should have played. If 26 ♕b8+ ♔h7 27 ♕xa7, then 27...♖xc1+ 28 ♖xc1 ♘f4 (threatening in particular 29... ♘e2+) 29 ♔h1 ♕d5 with counterplay. But after 26 ♖xc2 ♕xc2 the black queen controls the c-file and the white rook is not in play; if 27 ♕b8+ ♔h7 28 ♕xa7 there follows 28...♕xb2 with gain of tempo.

It is not hard to see that in the analogous position, but with the rook on f1, arising after 25 ♖ac1 ♖c2 26 ♖xc2 ♕xc2, strong is 27 ♕b8+ ♔h7 28 ♕xa7 ♕xb2 29 ♕xf7 (with the threat of 30 ♕xe6) and White must win. This

means that after 25 ♖ac1 the reply 25...♖c2? will not do.

On the other hand there is 25...♖c4!?, which is what concerned Bareev. If 26 ♖fd1? Black has the excellent counter 26...♘f4! (but not 26...♕d2? in view of 27 ♕e1!). Another attractive variation is 26 ♕b8+ ♔h7 27 ♕b5 ♘e3!. If 26 g3, then 26...♖e4! (weak is 26...a5? 27 ♖fd1 ♖xc1 28 ♖xc1) 27 ♕b8+ ♔h7 28 ♕xa7 (28 ♖fe1 ♖e2!? or 28...♕d2!?) 28...♘f4! (28...♕f3! with the idea of ...♘f4 is also possible) 29 gxf4 ♕f3 and perpetual check cannot be avoided.

White should go in for 26 ♖xc4 ♕xc4 27 ♕b8+ ♔h7 28 ♕xa7, although after 28...♘f4! there is the direct threat of 29...♘e2+ 30 ♔h1 ♘g3+, and 29...♕e4 and 29...♕d5 also have to be reckoned with. And, in general, the queen + knight pairing in the vicinity of the king can, as is well known, cause considerable problems.

We now see that each of the two possible moves of the white rooks has its drawbacks. But which one of them should be preferred? As yet we don't have an answer – the analysis has to be continued.

We should probably concentrate on the last variation – after all, in it White won a pawn and only needed to find a way of parrying the opponent's immediate threats, after which everything would become clear. True, it is not so easy to do this.

see next diagram

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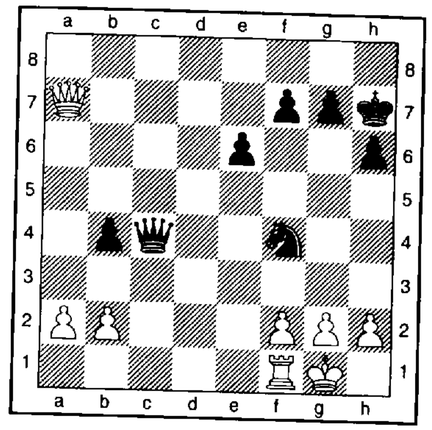

First let us consider 29 ♕xf7. From f7 the queen unexpectedly defends its rook, as is apparent from the variation 29...♘e2+ 30 ♔h1 ♘g3+? 31 fxg3!. Black replies 29...♕e4 30 f3 ♕e3+ 31 ♔h1 ♕d2 (weaker is 31...♘d3 32 h3 ♘xb2) 32 ♖g1 ♘e2 33 ♕xe6 ♘xg1 34 ♕e4+ ♔h8 35 ♔xg1 ♕xb2, and in the queen endgame a pawn down he retains good drawing chances.

29 ♖e1!? is quite good: 29...♕d5 30 f3 ♕g5 (the pawn ending arising after 30...♕d2 31 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 32 ♔xf2 ♘d3+ 33 ♔e2 ♘xe1 34 ♔xe1 is almost certainly lost – White is guaranteed an outside passed pawn on the queenside) 31 g3 ♘h3+ 32 ♔h1 ♕d2 33 ♕e3 ♕xb2 34 ♖e2 or 34 ♕e2. Here the unfortunate position of the knight at h3 is bound to tell – for example, the threat of f3–f4 is extremely unpleasant. Even so, this variation is too complicated – its consequences can be evaluated in analysis, but not at the board, with limited time for thought. One would like to find something more convincing. The prescription is well known: ***before delving into a study of such variations, it is important first to concentrate on a search for candidate moves.***

For example, there is some point in playing the rook not to e1, but to a1! But there is also

a more clear-cut decision, suggested by grandmaster Patrick Wolff: 29 g3!. It is not hard to see that Black's attack immediately comes to a standstill.

But since this is so, there is no reason to avoid the natural move 25 ♖ac1!.

25 ♖fc1?! ♖d8?!

White's inaccuracy remains unpunished – Shirov fails to exploit his best chance 25...♖c2!. And in general, as you will see, he defended badly in this game, demonstrating neither inspiration, nor tenacity. Apparently the unsuccessful outcome of the opening duel spoiled too much the mood of the emotional and impressionable grandmaster.

26 h3!

The king obviously needs an 'air-vent', but why was it is this pawn that Bareev advanced? 26 g3 weakens the f3 square, which in some cases might be exploited by the black queen (the knight will hardly succeed in reaching there – the path from d5 is really too long). But this argument does not look significant. It is something else that is more important. It is not clear whether White will be able to win only by manoeuvring with his pieces. If not, which is quite probable, then he will have to undermine the opponent's defences in the centre by f2–f4–f5. And it is in this case that the minuses of g2–g3 compared with the move in the game will tell: the white king will be too open and Black will acquire opportunities for a counterattack.

26 ... ♔h7

26...a5!? should have been preferred.

see next diagram

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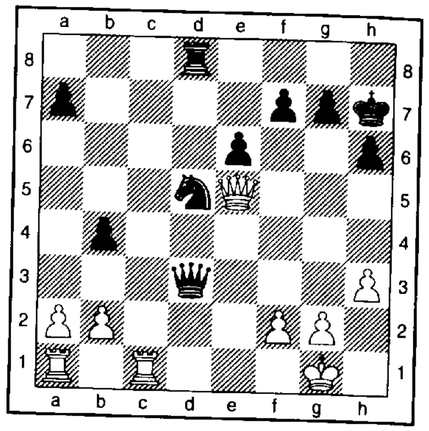


Q 9-68. How should White continue?

Now the time has obviously come to include the a1 rook in the game, but in what way? Bareev rejected 27 a3?! because of 27... bxa3!? 28 ♖xa3 ♕d2 when Black acquires hopes of a counterattack.

27 ♖e1?!

Bareev awarded this move an exclamation mark. Here is his logic: after 27 ♖d1? ♕c4! 28 ♖ac1 ♕xa2 29 ♖a1 ♕b3 there is no time to take the a7 pawn, since the rook at d1 is attacked by the queen, therefore it should be placed at e1 and then 28 ♖ac1 played.

In this reasoning I do not like White's readiness to exchange the a-pawns. After all, the invasion of the 7th rank by the rook does not yet decide the outcome – Black has sufficient resources for the defence of his kingside. ***In such cases it is usual to try and stretch the opponent's defences, by creating in his position another weakness on the opposite flank.*** But on the opposite flank there is only the b4 pawn, securely defended by the knight. This is why it is important to keep the rooks' pawns on the board!

For this reason, incidentally, I would not have considered seriously 27 a3?! – not only because of 27...bxa3!?, but also in view

of 27...a5!? 28 axb4 axb4.

But what should White have played? It is very simple: 27 ♖c5! or 27 ♖c6!, clearing the way for the queen's rook and at the same time not abandoning the important c-file (incidentally, this is a typical way of including a rook in the play – I have met it in many similar situations). For example, 27 ♖c5 ♖d7 28 ♖e1!, intending 29 ♕e4+ (28 ♖ac1?! is less accurate in view of 28...f6!, and 29 ♕xe6? fails to 29...♘f4).

27 ... ♕c4!

Black is not afraid of the exchange of queens, since then he occupies the important c-file: 28 ♕e4+? ♕xe4 29 ♖xe4 ♖c8, threatening 30...♖c2.

28 ♖ac1 ♕xa2

29 ♖a1 ♕b3?

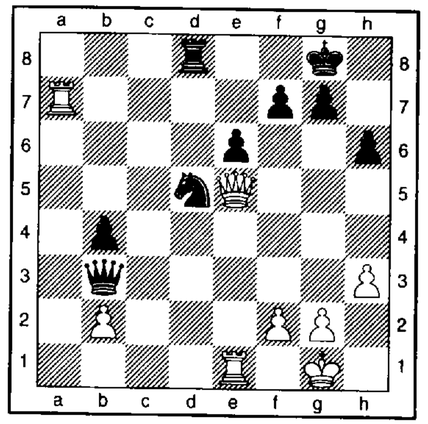
The decisive mistake, after which Bareev wins the game with a series of fine moves. 29...♕c4! 30 ♖xa7 ♔g8 was essential. Here it is not easy to breach Black's defences. Shirov probably did not want to give his opponent a tempo for the switching of the rook to the kingside: 31 ♖e4. But the endgame arising after 31...♕c1+ 32 ♔h2 ♕g5 33 ♕xg5 hxg5 is possibly not lost. For example, if 34 ♖e5?! there follows 34...♖c8! with counterplay.

Bareev would most probably have played 31 ♖ea1, intending the exchange of rooks. But, first, it can be prevented by 31...♕c6!?, and second, even after the exchange the outcome of the game is still unclear. And all because in Black's position there is only one weakness (f7), and the second possible weakness (the a7 pawn) has already been exchanged by White.

30 ♖xa7 ♔g8

see next diagram

180



Q 9-69. What should White play?

Bareev chose the strongest plan (in the style of Karpov!) – playing for domination. With his next two excellent moves he takes away all the squares from the enemy queen.

31 ♕d4!! ♖e8

32 ♖xe6! was threatened.

32 ♖e2!

An amazing position! The black queen has nowhere to go, if the rook moves the e6 pawn is lost, and if the knight moves – the b4 pawn (32...♘f6 33 ♖e3 ♕c2 34 ♕xb4 ♘d5 35 ♕b5). And if Black makes waiting moves with his king ...♔g8–f8–g8, White plays 33 ♔h2 and then carries out with decisive effect the plan about which we have already spoken: f2–f4–f5. Therefore Shirov immediately parts with the pawn.

32 ... ♖c8

33 ♖xe6 ♘c3!

Black has simultaneously attacked the rook and the b2 pawn. However, this should not help him: after the elimination of the important e6 pawn there must certainly be a way for White to win, and not even only one.

34 ♖xf7 immediately suggests itself. Bareev rejected it, and not without reason – here lengthy variations have to be calculated,

and accuracy is still required of White. The opponent replies 34...♘e2+! 35 ♖xe2 ♖c1+ 36 ♔h2 ♕xf7 37 ♕xb4 ♕c7+ 38 g3 (38 f4? ♖c4 39 ♕b3 ♕xf4+ 40 g3 ♕f7 and Black has the right to count on a draw) 38...♕c6. Now 39 ♕e4? ♕xe4 40 ♖xe4 ♖c2 is incorrect. A choice has to be made between 39 ♕b3+!? ♔h8 40 f3 and 39 ♖e1!? ♕c2!? 40 ♖e8+! ♔h7 41 ♕f8. For a practical game this is rather complicated – a clearer way must be sought.

The simple 34 ♖e3!? or 34 ♖e5!? ♕xb2 35 ♕e3 is strong, but the way chosen by Bareev appeals to me more. The grandmaster calculated it to the end.

34	**♖ae7!**	**♕xb2**
35	**♖e8+**	**♖xe8**
36	**♖xe8+**	**♔h7**
37	**♕d3+**	**g6**
38	**♕c4!**	**♕b1+**

Of course, there are also no hopes after 38...♕a2 39 ♕xb4.

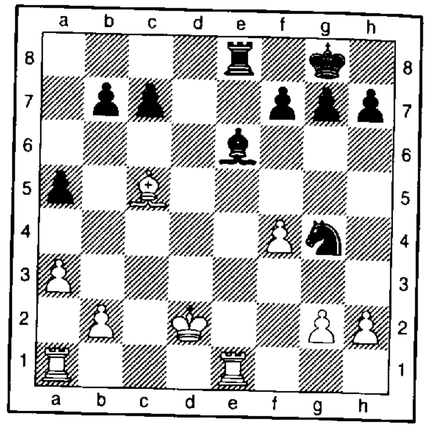
39	**♔h2**	**♕f5**
40	**♕d4**	

Black resigns.

In the solving of the following two exercises, some of the techniques mentioned in the analysis of the above game will come in useful.

E 9-9

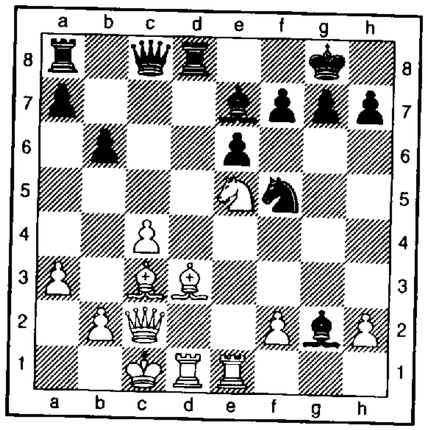
181



White to move

E 9-10

182



White to move

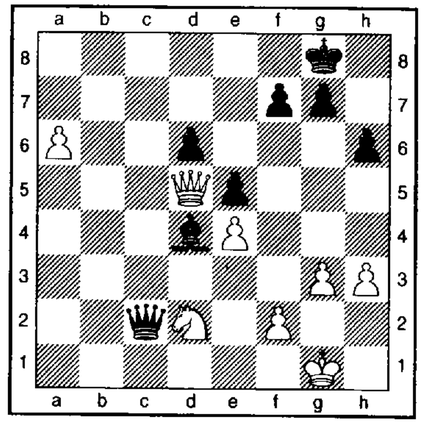
Exercises for Analysis

Don't despair when your analysis does not immediately lead to success.
If you dig a well for a very long time, even in a desert sooner or later water will be reached.
Grigory Sanakoev

I should warn the readers that most of the exercises offered in this chapter are rather difficult. In addition, not all of them have a clear-cut and single solution. As in a real, practical game, you will sometimes be unable to discover a path that completely satisfies you, and you will have to choose the continuation that at least promises the best practical chances.

E 9-11

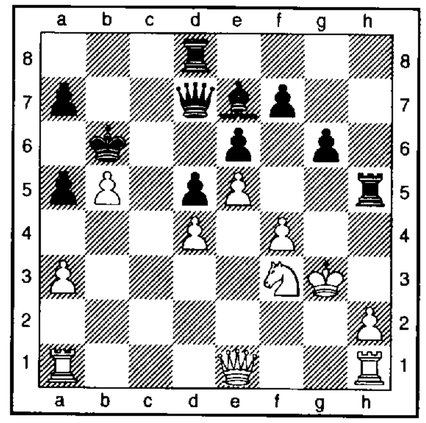
183



White to move

E 9-12

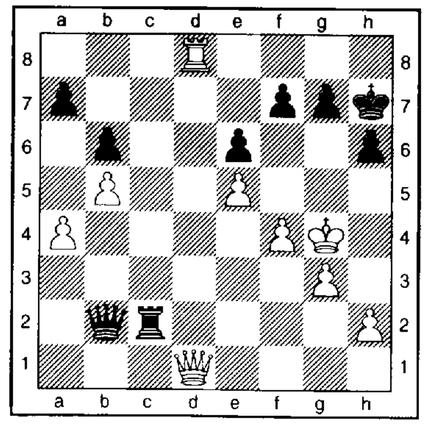
184



White to move

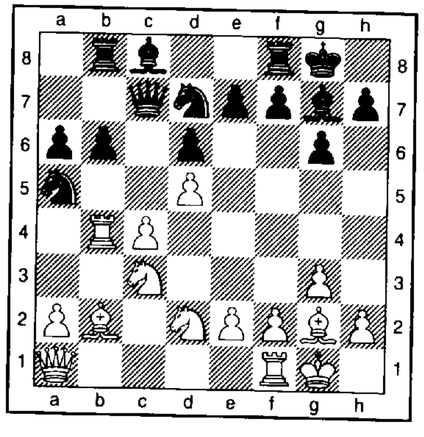
E 9-13

185



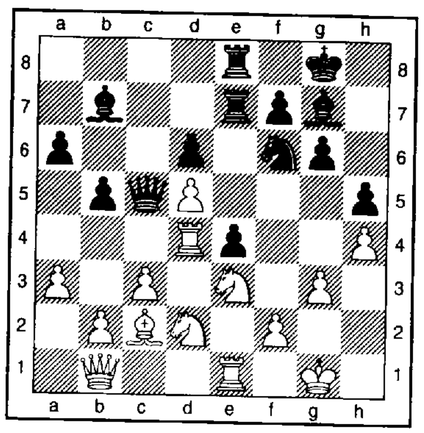
Black to move. Can he win?

E 9-14
186



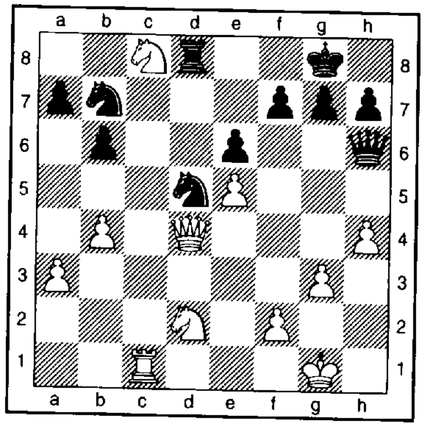
White to move

E 9-15
187



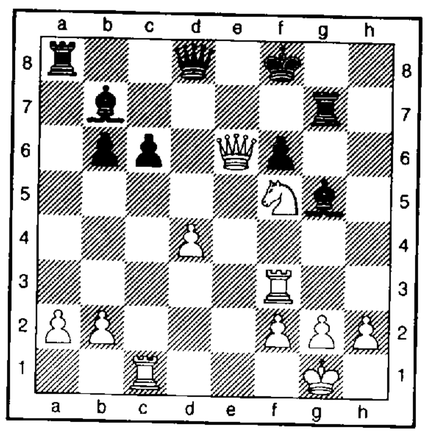
Black to move

E 9-16
188



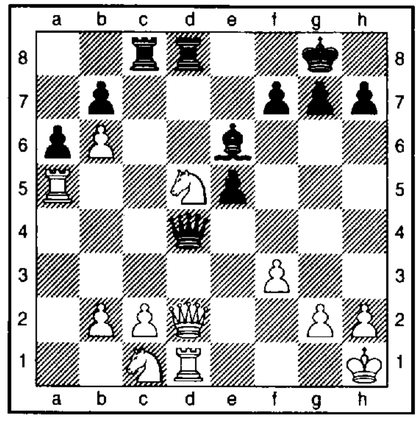
Black to move

E 9-17
189



Calculate 27...♗xc1

E 9-18
190



Black to move: with what should he capture on d5?

Solutions to Exercises

E 8-1. Dvoretsky–Sukhanov (Moscow 1969).

The key to the position is the exchange of the dark-square bishops.

10 ♗h6!

If now 10...0–0, then 11 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 12 exd5 and 12...♘xd5? fails to 13 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 14 ♘f5+, while after 10...♗xh6 11 ♕xh6 there is the terrible threat of 12 ♕g7.

10...♗xh6 11 ♕xh6 ♘g4 12 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 13 h3! ♗e6 (no better is 13...c5 14 hxg4 cxd4 15 ♕g7 or 13...dxe4 14 ♕g7 ♖g8 15 ♕e5) **14 0–0–0 c6 15 exd5 cxd5 16 ♖he1** (Black's position is completely hopeless) **16...♕d7 17 ♕e3 0–0 18 ♘xe6 fxe6 19 ♕xe6+ ♕xe6 20 ♖xe6 ♘c6 21 f3 d4 22 ♘e2 ♖ad8 23 ♖e4 ♖fe8 24 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 25 ♘xd4** and Black soon resigned.

E 8-2. Alexander–Mallison (Brighton 1938).

White has numerous tempting possibilities, but far from all of them retain the advantage. For example, nothing is achieved by the developing move 16 ♗g5? on account of the simple 16...♗e7.

In the game Spielmann–Marshall (Hamburg 1910) there followed 16 ♕d3? ♘b4 17 ♕e4 ♗f7 18 ♗g5 (18 ♗xh7? ♗d5) 18...♕e8 19 ♘e5 ♗d5 20 ♕e2 (20 ♕e3 ♖xf5 21 gxf5 ♘c2) 20...♘c6 with good counterplay for Black.

A cunning trap could have been set, by playing 16 ♘g5?!. The obvious 16...♖xf5? is a mistake because of 17 gxf5! with advantage (17...♗xd1 18 ♘f7+ ♔g8 19 ♘xd8). However, Black replies 16...h6!? 17 ♘e6 ♕h4, for example: 18 ♕b3 (18 ♕f3? ♖xf5!

19 ♕xf5 ♕xh3 20 ♕xh5 ♗h2+ 21 ♔h1 ♕xf1+ 22 ♔xh2 ♕xf2+) 18...♖xf5 19 gxf5 c6 20 ♕xb7 ♖g8 21 ♕xc6 ♕xh3 22 ♕xd6 ♗f3 23 ♕h2 ♕g4+ 24 ♕g3 ♕h5 with a draw.

16 ♗xh7!? ♔xh7 17 ♘g5+ ♔g8 18 gxh5 ♖f5!? leads to a rather complicated position. It is probably in White's favour, but he has a more convincing continuation, which was found by Conel Alexander.

16 ♗e6! ♗f7

17 ♘g5! ♗xe6

17...♗g8 18 ♗xg8 does not change anything.

18 ♘xe6 ♕h4?!

18...♕f6 19 ♘xf8 ♖xf8 is better, although Black's compensation for the exchange and pawn is clearly insufficient.

19 ♕b3!

Black's position has become hopeless – White is threatening not only 20 ♕xd5 or 20 ♘xf8, but also 20 ♗g5 trapping the queen.

E 8-3. Yusupov, Dvoretsky (1985).

27 ♕d2 ♖d8 28 ♕g5 suggests itself, but after 28...♕e8 (or 28...♕f6) the position is unclear: if 29 ♕xh5, then 29...♘f4 is strong.

27 ♕a5!!

Now the rook cannot go to d8. 28 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 29 ♗f8+ is threatened. Black has no defence.

E 8-4. Arkhipkin–Dvoretsky (USSR Cup, Ordzhonikidze 1978).

After 9 ♘c3 I was intending to retreat my queen to d6 (9...♕d8 is too passive, while if 9...♕h5 the reply 10 ♗e2 is unpleasant). In principle, this is a sensible plan, but in the game Black carried in out inexactly.

8...0–0?! 9 ♘c3 ♕d6 10 ♘e5! (definite problems have arisen: if 10...♘c6 White replies 11 ♗f4 or 11 ♘xc6) **10...♖d8? 11 ♘b5 ♕b6 12 a4** with a great advantage to White. *'A little neglect may breed great mischief'* – Benjamin Franklin.

Black should first have developed his knight, taking control of the important e5 square.

8 . . . ♘c6!

9 ♘c3 ♕d6

For example, 10 ♕e2 0–0 11 ♖d1 ♘b4 12 ♗b1 b6 13 ♘e4 ♗a6! and Black has a good game.

This example, like the Dolmatov–Lein game, shows that ***in the opening you should purposefully and very specifically implement your plans, while simultaneously countering the plans of your opponent. Even such a natural move as castling may sometimes turn out to be a loss of time.***

E 8-5. Dvoretsky–Muratov (Moscow Championship 1973).

I was tempted by **15 ♘e5?!**, but after **15...♗xe5 16 dxe5** the simple reply **16...♖d8!** enabled Black to equalise. He wants to play 17...♖d2 or 17...b6 18 ♗c6 ♗d7. There followed **17 ♗c6 ♘b6 18 ♗f3** (18 ♗b5? ♗f5) **18...♘a4** (but not 18...♘d7? 19 ♖d1 ♖f8 20 ♗xb7) **19 ♗c6 ♘b6 20 ♗f3 ♘a4 21 ♗c6.** Draw.

It was another exchange that was correct.

15 ♗xc5! ♘xc5

16 dxc5

White intends 17 ♘d4 (for example, in reply to 16...♗e6). Note this construction: the rook at b1 on the open file and the bishop at g2 on the diagonal press on the weak point b7, and the c3 pawn serves as a support for the knight at d4. Such a strategic pattern is typical of a number of variations of the English Opening and the Grünfeld Defence, and it also occurs in other openings. Grandmaster Oleg Romanishin was one of the first to appreciate the advantages of such a set-up and he successfully employed it in many games.

Black's position is not eased by 16...♗f5 17

♖b4!? ♖fc8 18 ♘d4, when if 18...♖xc5, then 19 ♘c6 is strong.

E 8-6. Gurieli–Matveeva (Zheleznovodsk 1985).

10 . . . ♕xd4!!

In the strategic sense Black's position is difficult. Therefore Svetlana Matveeva quite correctly decided to change sharply the unfavourable pattern of the game, by going in for combinative complications. She provokes her opponent into a tempting combination, which at first sight secures White great material or positional gains.

11 ♘xf7

White accepts the challenge. The quiet 11 ♘xc6 bxc6 12 ♕f3 ♘fd7! (12...0–0 13 ♖d1 ♕h4 is also possible) did not promise any advantage.

11 . . . ♔xf7!

Bad is 11...♖f8? 12 ♗e3 ♕g4 13 f3 ♗xf3 14 ♖xf3 ♖xf7 15 ♗e2.

12 ♗g6+ hxg6

13 ♕xd4 ♖ad8!

14 ♕e3

The only possible move. If 14 ♕f4 or 14 ♕e5 there follows 14...♗d6.

14 . . . ♖xh2!

The only way! Of course, 14...♘g4? 15 ♕f4+ or 14...♘xc4? 15 ♕e2 would not do. The clever try 14...♗d6?! is interesting, with the idea of 15 h3? ♗h2+! 16 ♔h1 (16 ♔xh2 ♘g4+) 16...♘xc4 17 ♕c5 ♖xh3 18 ♕xc6 ♖h7. But White replies 15 ♖e1! ♖de8 (if 15...♖xh2, then, if there is nothing better, 16 ♕xe6+ ♔f8 17 ♕xd6+ and 18 ♔xh2 winning the exchange) 16 h3, and now 16...♗h2+ 17 ♔f1 is hopeless for Black.

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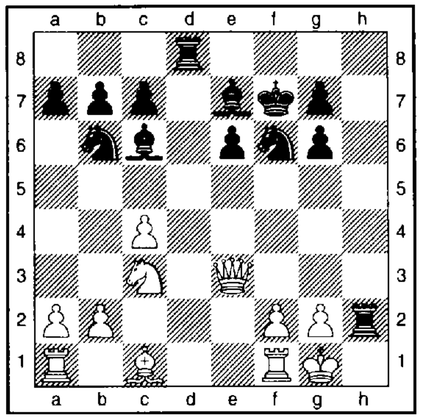

Black has only two minor pieces and a pawn for the queen, but her pieces are so active that it is now White who has to find a way to save the game. I think that she was obliged to play 15 f3!, restricting the terrible light-square bishop and at the same time the knight at f6. What would have happened in that case?

The rook retreat 15...♖h5?! (with the threat of 16...♗c5) will be met by 16 ♕e2! ♘xc4!? (16...♗c5+ 17 ♗e3 ♖e5 18 ♘e4) 17 ♕xc4 ♗c5+ 18 ♖f2 b5 (18...♖h1+ 19 ♔xh1 ♗xf2 20 ♗f4 ♖h8+ 21 ♗h2 ♗g3 22 ♔g1) 19 ♕b3 ♖dh8 20 ♔f1 b4 21 ♘e4! and Black's attack comes to a standstill.

An unclear position results from 15...♖dh8 16 ♖e1 (16 ♕d3 is much worse in view of 16...♗d6 17 ♘e2 ♘bd7! and 18...♘e5) 16...♖h1+ 17 ♔f2 ♖xe1 18 ♔xe1 ♘xc4.

15...♘xc4!? is perhaps the most attractive. Let us examine White's possibilities.

16 ♔xh2 ♘xe3 17 ♗xe3. Material is roughly equal. Black's pawns are broken, but her pieces are more active – I would prefer to play Black.

16 ♕f4 ♗c5+ 17 ♔xh2 ♗d6 or 17...♖h8+ 18 ♔g3 ♗d6 – again an ending is reached with two pawns for the exchange, which is hard to evaluate.

16 ♕e2 ♖h4 (after 16...♗c5+ 17 ♔xh2 ♖h8+ 18 ♔g3 Black can give perpetual check: 18...♘h5+ 19 ♔g4 ♘f6+, or go into a roughly equal endgame: 18...♘d6!? 19 ♗e3 ♗xe3 20 ♕xe3 ♘f5+ 21 ♔f2 ♘xe3 22 ♔xe3 g5) 17 g3 (17 ♘e4 ♖xe4! 18 fxe4 ♗c5+) 17...♗c5+ 18 ♔g2 ♖h5 19 ♕xc4 ♖dh8 and White is saved only by 20 ♗h6!! ♖8xh6 21 ♖h1.

15	**♔xh2?!**	**♘g4+**
16	**♔g1**	**♘xe3**
17	**♗xe3**	

If 17 fxe3+, strong are both 17...♔e8(g8), and 17...♗f6, intending 18...♘xc4 or 18...♔e7.

17	**. . .**	**♘xc4**

Black has restored material equality and the positional superiority is undoubtedly on her side.

18 ♗f4? (18 b3) **18...e5 19 ♗g3 ♘xb2 20 ♗xe5 ♖d7 21 ♘d1 ♘c4 22 ♗f4 ♗f6 23 ♖c1 ♘e5 24 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 25 ♘e3 ♖d4 26 ♖fe1 ♖h4 27 ♖xc6?! bxc6 28 ♖c1 ♖a4 29 ♖c2 ♗d6 30 g3 ♔e6** and Black won.

The loss of the opening duel does not at all decide the fate of the battle. Tenacity and resourcefulness, displayed in a difficult situation, are capable of changing the course of the struggle.

E 8-7. Andersson–Karpov (Moscow 1981).

The immediate exchange on c5 guarantees Black equality.

16	**. . .**	**♗xc5!**
17	**dxc5**	**♕e7**

17...♕c7 is also good.

18	**c6**	**♘b4**
19	**♘d4**	**♗xg2**

Or 19...♘xc6 20 ♗xe4 ♘xd4 21 ♕d1 ♖fd8 22 ♗d3 e5.

20	**♔xg2**	**♘xc6**
21	**♘xc6**	**♕b7**

It is time to agree a draw.

But in what way is **16...♕b6**, as recommended in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings*, worse? That is what Karpov played. The game continued only a few more moves: 17 ♕d2 ♗xc5 18 dxc5 ♖xc5 19 ♖fc1 ♖fc8 20 ♖xc5 ♕xc5 21 ♘e1 ♗xg2 22 ♔xg2 ♕e7. Draw.

Serious consideration should be given to the sacrifice of queen for rook, bishop and pawn. Let us ponder over the position arising after **17 ♘xe4! ♖xc1 18 ♖fxc1.**

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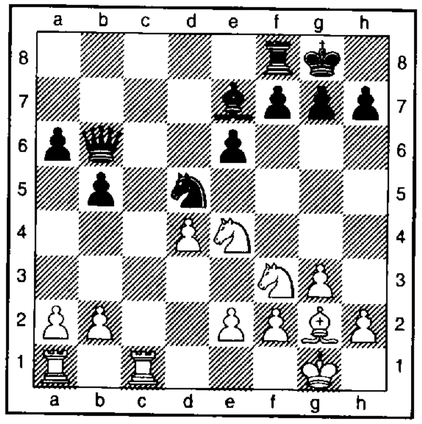

White intends 19 e3, then 20 ♘e5 and the doubling of rooks on the c-file. The attempt to exchange a pair of rooks by 18...♕b7 after 19 ♘e5 ♖c8 20 ♘c3! followed by the exchange of knights leads to the creation of a weak pawn at d5.

As can be seen, by sacrificing the queen you risk practically nothing, whereas the opponent has to be careful – otherwise White's initiative will become dangerous. In my view, it is harder to play with Black in such a position than with White.

But now I should like to return to the 20th game of the match for the world championship between Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov, which was mentioned in the review of the opening variation. I should remind you that Kasparov played splendidly in that

match and was confidently leading, but then he unexpectedly suffered three successive defeats. Five games before the end his advantage had become minimal: just one point.

Of course, the quick draw with White in the 20th game is explained mainly by his desire to recover at least slightly after the series of failures. But was the world champion really prepared to give up the advantage of the white pieces just like that, without even trying to set the opponent any problems? Let us suppose that in his preparations for the match he had found the queen sacrifice suggested above and had decided to try it. After all, the probability of the opponent again choosing the method of defence that he had successfully employed against Ulf Andersson was quite high. But on this occasion too Karpov's famous sense of danger did not betray him. He thought for a long time in the opening and decided to deviate from the course he had taken earlier. Or perhaps he too knew about the idea of the queen sacrifice?

However, all this is mere supposition, and we will probably never know how well-founded it is. It is quite possible that Kasparov did not have any 'mine' prepared at home, and simply with his customary caution he wanted to make a draw as quickly as possible, without even the appearance of a struggle.

I think you may be surprised by my words about caution – after all, the thirteenth world champion has the reputation of being an aggressive player. Yes, but the one does not contradict the other: an aggressive style of play can be combined perfectly well with practicality, with worldly circumspection. I should remind you that Kasparov has several times (and very successfully!) resorted to drawing tactics. For example, in his first match against Karpov in the stretch between the 8th and 26th games all ten of Kasparov's 'White' games ended in draws, nine of them practically without a struggle (they lasted between 15 and 23 moves). In the match against Viswanathan Anand (New York 1995) 18 games were played and Kasparov offered a draw in as many as 15 of them!

E 8-8. Keres–Richter (Munich 1942).

How to defend against the capture on g5? The opening of the h-file after 11...♖g8 12 hxg5 hxg5 favours White. If 11...g4, then 12 h5! with the unpleasant threat of 13 ♗h4 is strong. 11...♗c5 12 ♕d2 is also unfavourable – the g5 pawn is attacked for a second time, and there is no compensation for the pawn after 12...♘h5 13 hxg5 ♘xg3 14 fxg3 h5 15 ♘d5. Instead of 13...♘xg3 Black can try 13...♕xg5, hoping for 14 ♕xg5?! hxg5 15 ♘d5 ♔d8 16 e4 ♗g6 with an unclear position. But White gains an advantage by continuing 14 ♗h4! ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2.

Kurt Richter found an exceptionally clever solution to the problem.

11	**. . .**	**♔d7!!**

The rook is now defended and therefore pointless is 12 hxg5 hxg5 13 ♖xh8 ♕xh8 with the better chances for Black. He himself wants to play 12...♘e4, threatening to double and isolate virtually all of the white pawns. If 12 ♗e5, then 12...♗c5! 13 ♗xf6 ♗xd4 14 ♗xd8 ♖axd8 and Black has the advantage in the ending. The game continuation **12 ♖d1 ♘e4 13 ♕e5 ♗xc3+ 14 bxc3 ♘xg3 15 fxg3?! ♗g6 16 hxg5 ♕xg5** (16...hxg5!?) led to a very difficult position for White in view of his numerous pawn weaknesses.

Even so, it is too early to conclude our analysis. The charm of original and pretty ideas should not influence our objectivity when evaluating them. We have not yet considered White's natural reply 12 f3!. For some reason it also escaped the attention of various book authors, who unanimously evaluated the position as better for Black.

Now 12...♘h5 13 ♗f2 does not promise anything, and measures have to be taken against 13 e4. After 12...♕e7 Black has to reckon with both 13 e4 (the piece sacrifice 13...♗xe4? does not work in view of 14 fxe4 ♘xe4 15 ♔d1! or 15 ♗e2!? ♖ae8 16 ♖c2) and 13 hxg5 hxg5 14 ♖xh8 ♖xh8 15 ♕xa7 ♗c5 16 ♕a4+. The position after 12...♖e8!? 13 hxg5 hxg5 14 ♕d2! (not allowing the manoeuvre ...♗c5–e3) looks advantageous to White.

Of course, all this is in no way a refutation of the brilliant king move, but only an argument for seeking an alternative to it. In my view, such an alternative exists.

11	**. . .**	**c5!?**
12	**♕xd6**	

Or 12 ♕e3+ ♕e7 13 hxg5 ♕xe3 14 fxe3 ♘e4 15 ♗f4 h5.

12	**. . .**	**♕xd6**
13	**♗xd6**	**♘e4**
14	**♗e5**	**f6**
15	**a3**	**♗a5**
16	**f3**	**fxe5**
17	**fxe4**	**♗e6!**
18	**hxg5**	**h5**

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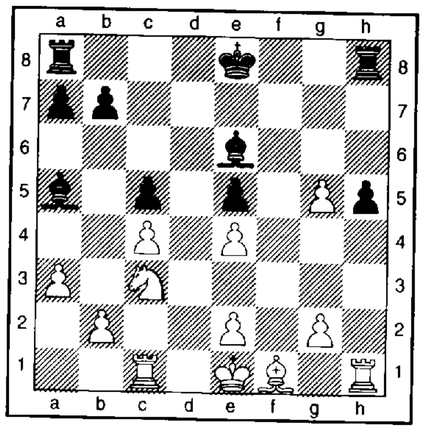

The resulting position (like that arising after 12 ♕e3+) is unusual and hard to evaluate. I think that Black's chances in it are not worse.

E 9-1. Tseshkovsky–Rajcevic (Vrnjacka Banja 1982).

Of the three candidate moves: 15...♕g3+, 15...♕e5+ and 15...♘xd5, it is essential that the only correct one is chosen.

15	**. . .**	**♕e5+!**
16	**♘de2**	**♘xd5**
17	**♕g5!?**	

After 17 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 18 ♖d1 ♕a5+ 19 b4?! ♕xb4+ 20 c3 it is simplest to play 20...♕b5!, in order if 21 h5 to have 21...g5. But also possible is 20...♕a4 21 h5 ♗f5 22 hxg6 ♗xg6 23 ♖d4 ♕a1+ 24 ♔f2 ♕xb2 25 ♖g4 ♕b6+ 26 ♔f1 ♔h8 27 ♘f4 ♕b1+ 28 ♔f2 ♕b6(c2)+, and White must be satisfied with a draw, since 29 ♔g3? ♖g8 30 ♘xg6+ ♕xg6! will not do.

17	**. . .**	**♕xg5**
18	**hxg5**	**♘xc3**

And then ...f7–f6! with a roughly equal ending.

The attempt to transpose moves by 15... ♘xd5? 16 ♘xd5 ♕e5+ is incorrect in view of 17 ♘e3! ♕xd4 18 ♖d1 ♕b4+ 19 c3 ♕b5 20 ♖d5 ♕c6 21 h5.

In the game Vladimir Rajcevic was tempted into interposing a check at g3, which turned out to be bad.

15...♕g3+? 16 ♔d2!!. Black did not expect this. He was counting after 16 ♔f1 ♕e5 on regaining his pawn in more favourable circumstances (compared with the immediate 15...♕e5+). However, here too he was wrong, since in fact the pawn cannot be regained: 17 ♕d2! ♘xd5 18 ♖e1 ♕d6 19 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 20 ♖xe7. But, the move made by Vitaly Tsesh-kovsky is evidently even stronger. After 16...♕e5 there now follows 17 ♕e3, while if 16...♘xd5 17 ♘xd5 ♕e5, then 18 ♘xe7+. Extremely dangerous is

16...♕xg2+ 17 ♘ce2, when the queen is trapped – at the least 18 ♖ag1 ♕f2 19 h5 is threatened.

16...♖ad8 17 ♕g5 ♕d6 18 ♖ad1 ♔g7 (bad is 18...e5? 19 dxe6 ♕xd4+ 20 ♔c1) **19 ♔c1** (19 ♖he1 b5!) **19...h6 20 ♕e3 ♖fe8 21 g4** and White has an undisputed advantage.

E 9-2. Tal–Dvoretsky (Wijk aan Zee 1976).

A queen and knight, located close to the enemy king, are a rather powerful tandem, capable of creating dangerous threats, so White must be attentive.

29	**h3!**	

If Mikhail Tal had played this, I would have evidently been unable to create counterplay compensating for the missing pawn. Fortunately for me, the grandmaster made a mistake. He decided to include his queen in the defence and overlooked an unexpected tactical blow.

29 ♕b4? ♘e4!! 30 fxe4 ♕xe4 31 ♕b8+ ♔h7 32 ♗c2! ♕xc2 33 ♕xf4 ♕d1+ 34 ♗e1 ♕xe1+ 35 ♕f1 ♕xf1+ 36 ♔xf1 ♔g6. Events have developed by force. The resulting pawn endgame is advantageous to Black, but nevertheless drawn. The game soon concluded peacefully.

E 9-3. Dolmatov–Anikaev (47th USSR Championship, Minsk 1979).

Black was obliged to make use of a fortunate chance to force a draw in spectacular fashion.

23	**. . .**	**♗d2+!!**
24	**♔xd2**	

It is not possible to take with either the knight or the rook; 24 ♔b1 ♗xb7 25 ♕xb7 ♗xf4 is also unfavourable for White.

24	**. . .**	**♕d4+**
25	**♔c1**	

Of course, not 25 ♔e2? ♖e8+ and 26...♗xb7.

25	**. . .**	**♕a1+**
26	**♔d2**	**♕d4+**

I don't know whether Yuri Anikaev overlooked 23...♗d2+!! or if he deliberately rejected it, but after the game continuation **23...♗xb7? 24 ♕xb7** Black's position became difficult. He is a pawn down and the impregnable knight at c4 securely protects its king. And the familiar combination now no longer works: after 24...♗d2+ 25 ♔xd2 ♕d4+ (or 25...♖ad8+) the white king can hide on the kingside: 26 ♔e2! ♖fe8+ 27 ♔f3.

Black should probably have played for a trap: 24...♖ab8!? in the hope of 25 ♕d5? ♖bd8! 26 ♕xd8?! ♗d2+!, but Dolmatov would have simply replied 25 ♕f3!.

24...♗b4 25 ♔b1 ♖ad8 26 ♕f3 ♖d4 27 ♖xd4 cxd4 28 ♕d5 and subsequently White converted his material advantage.

E 9-4. Karpov–Portisch (Tilburg 1986).

White has numerous tempting possibilities, but he can gain an advantage only by the way pointed out by Igor Zaitsev.

24	**♕c4!!**	**♘xc5**
25	**♘xf7!**	**♖ab8**

25...♕xf7? 26 ♗d5.

26	**♘d8(e5)+**	**♔h8**
27	**♘c6**	**♕f6**
28	**♘xb8**	**♕xf2+**
29	**♔h1**	**♖xb8**
30	**♖f1**	**♕e3**
31	**♕f7**	

A double attack: both 32 ♕f8+ and 32 ♕xa7 are threatened.

31	**. . .**	**h6**

Or 31...♕e8.

32	**♕xa7**	

White has won a pawn and he retains excellent winning chances.

None of the remaining continuations promises anything real.

24 c6?! ♖ad8 (24...♘c5 25 ♘b7 ♘xb7 26 cxb7 ♖ad8 is also good) 25 ♖d1 ♘c7.

24 ♘f5?! looks tempting. In reply 24...♕xe2? is bad in view of 25 ♕d4! f6 26 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 27 ♕d5+. Karpov suggests 24...♕e6, having in mind the variation 25 ♕xe6 fxe6 26 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 27 cxb6? exf5 28 b7 ♖f8! (but not 28...♖b8? 29 ♖c6) 29 ♖c6 ♘b8. However, instead of 25 ♕xe6? much stronger is 25 cxb6!, for example:

25...axb6 26 ♕xe6 fxe6 27 ♗xa8;

25...♕xb6 26 ♕e5;

25...♖ac8 26 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 27 bxa7!;

25...♖ad8 26 ♕xe6 fxe6 27 bxa7! exf5 28 ♗b7! (threatening 29 ♖c6) 28...♖a8?! 29 ♗d5+! ♔h8 30 ♗xa8 ♖xa8 31 ♖c6.

Nevertheless, 24 ♘f5 is not so threatening – the cool 24...♕f6! 25 cxb6 axb6 eliminates the danger.

The game went **24 cxb6?! axb6 25 ♖c6 ♕xe2 26 ♗f1 ♕e1 27 ♔g2!?.** Typical Karpov! Realising that after 27 ♖xb6 ♘c7 the game immediately becomes equal, he does not hurry to regain the material, preferring to maintain the tension and hoping to provoke the opponent into making a mistake. And his reckoning is justified!

27...♘c5 28 ♗c4 ♖ad8!? 29 ♖xb6 ♘e6 30 a4! ♘c7 31 ♕f3 ♖d7 (31...♕e7 32 ♘f5 ♕e5 came into consideration) **32 ♕g4!.**

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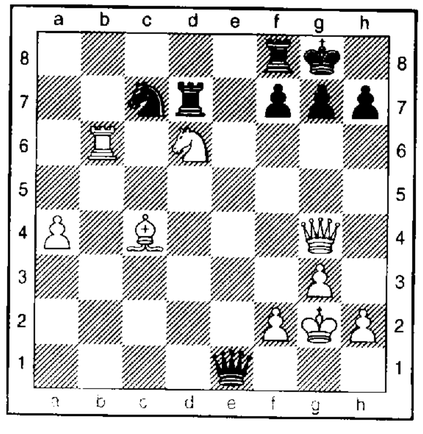

Try to establish how Black should defend now.

32...♖fd8? 33 ♕xd7! or 32...♕e7? 33 ♘f5 ♕e5 34 ♘h6+ will not do. The only correct move was 32...♘e6!, after which White could not have played 33 ♘xf7? on account of 33...♖dxf7 34 ♗xe6 ♕xf2+ and 35...♕xb6.

32...♖e7? 33 ♖c6?. Karpov misses his chance. 33 ♘f5! ♕e4+ 34 f3!! would have won.

33...♘e8 34 ♘b5 ♕a1 35 ♗d3 ♘f6 36 ♕f5 ♖e5 37 ♕f4 ♘d5 38 ♕c4 ♕b2 39 ♔f3 ♘e7 40 ♖d6 ♕a1 41 ♔g2 ♖e1. Draw.

E 9-5. Oll–Dreev (World Junior Championship, Kiljava 1984).

19	**. . .**	**d4!**
20	**♗f4**	**♖xe1**
21	**♖xe1**	**c4!**

A deadly blow. In view of the threat of 22...♗b4, White's position instantly disintegrates.

22 ♕c1 cxd3 23 ♗d2 (23 cxd3 ♖c8) **23...♖c8 24 ♗f1 dxc2 25 ♗c4 d3 26 ♗xa5 ♖c5 27 ♗d2 ♘e5.** White resigns.

E 9-6. Dreev–Kir.Georgiev (World Junior Championship, Kiljava 1984).

For the exchange Black has a good material equivalent: a pawn, or more correctly even two, seeing as the f6 pawn is bound to fall. But more important are Black's positional gains. His central pawns will soon begin advancing, and for the moment the enemy rooks are unable to develop any activity.

White's position would have had to be deemed difficult, had it not been for the brilliant reply foreseen in advance by Dreev.

38	**c4!!**	**♘xc4**

There is nothing better.

39	**♖xa4**	

Having opened a file for his rook, White has almost equalised.

39...♘d6 (40 ♘e4! was threatened) **40 b3 ♔xf6 41 ♖a5 c4** (41...♖c8 42 ♖c1 c4 43 bxc4 ♖xc4 was somewhat stronger) **42 bxc4 ♘xc4 43 ♖a7 ♘d6 44 ♖b1 ♖e7.**

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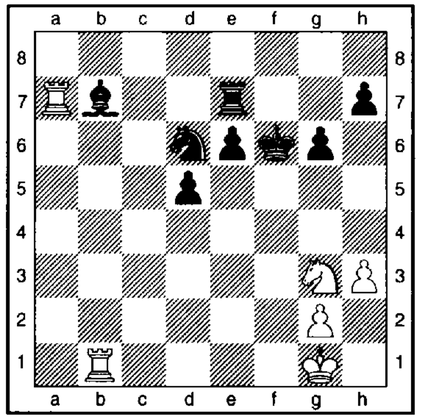

45 ♘e2! (45 ♖b6 ♗c8 was inferior) **45...♖d7.** Or 45...♗c6 46 ♖f1+ ♘f5 47 ♖xe7 ♔xe7 48 g4 ♘d6 (48...♘e3 49 ♖a1) 49 ♘d4 ♗d7 50 ♘f3 with a probable draw.

46 ♖b6 ♔e7. After 46...♔e5 47 ♘c1! Black would be tied hand and foot.

47 ♘d4 e5 48 ♘f3 e4 (48...♔e6 49 ♘g5+ ♔f5 50 ♘xh7 with the better chances for White) **49 ♘d4 ♗c8.** Draw.

E 9-7. Yusupov (1986).

1	**b4!**	

The only move. White loses after 1 f6? ♗e6 2 b4 (2 ♔g7 ♔c5) 2...♔d7 3 ♔g7 ♔e8, while if 1 ♔g7?, then 1...b4! (but not 1...♔c5? 2 ♔f6 ♔d4 3 ♔e7!) 2 f6 ♗e6 3 f7 ♗xf7 4 ♔xf7 ♔c5 5 ♔e6 ♔d4 6 ♔f5 b3 and he is in zugzwang.

1	**. . .**	**♔e7**
2	**♔g7**	**♗e8**

2...♔e8 3 ♔f6 ♗c6 4 ♔xe5 ♔e7 5 ♔d4 ♔f6 6 ♔c5 ♗e8 7 ♔b6 and Black cannot strengthen his position. For example: 7... ♔e5 8 ♔c5 ♔xe4 9 f6 and 10 f7 with a draw.

3	**f6+**	**♔e6**
4	**♔f8!**	**♗g6**

4...♔xf6 5 ♔xe8 ♔g5 6 ♔d7 ♔f4 7 ♔c6 ♔xe4 8 ♔xb5 and the pawns queen simultaneously.

5	**♔g7**	**♗f7**

Or 5...♗h5 6 ♔h6.

6	**♔f8!**	**♗g8**

6...♔xf6 – stalemate.

7	**♔g7!**	**♗f7**
8	**♔f8!**	

The bishop cannot escape from the pursuit of the white king – the position is drawn.

E 9-8. Fidel–Ramis (Spain 1980).

In this sharp ending any result is possible: from a win to a loss. Everything depends on Black's first move.

1...♗xb5?? 2 h6 ♗d7 (2...f4 3 e6+ or 3 h7 ♔g7 4 e6) 3 h7 ♔g7 4 h8♕+ ♔xh8 5 ♔f6 f4 6 e6 and White wins.

1...♗e6?? 2 h6 f4 3 h7 ♔g7 4 h8♕+ ♔xh8 5 ♔f6 f3 6 ♔xe6 f2 7 d7 f1♕ 8 d8♕+ with a won queen endgame for White.

1...♔g7?? 2 h6+ ♔h7 3 ♔f6 f4 4 e6 and again a lost queen ending for Black is reached.

1...f4? (with correct play this move leads to a draw) 2 ♔xf4 ♗xb5 and now White has two roughly equivalent possibilities:

A) 3 h6 ♗d3! (but not 3...♗d7? 4 ♔g5 b5 5 h7 ♔g7 6 h8♕+ ♔xh8 7 ♔f6 b4 8 e6 and again Black is short of one tempo) 4 d7 (also possible is 4 ♔e3 ♗f5 5 ♔d4 ♗e6! 6 ♔c3 ♔g6 7 ♔b4 ♔xh6 8 ♔b5 ♔g5 with a draw) 4...♔e7 5 e6 b5 (5...♔d8? 6 ♔e5 ♔c7 7 ♔f6 or 6...♔e7 7 ♔d5 and wins) 6 ♔e3 (6 ♔e5 b4 7 ♔d4 ♗f5! comes to the same thing) 6...♗f5! 7 ♔d4(d2) b4 and White is unable to attack the b4 pawn with his king, without losing his own pawns in the process.

B) 3 ♘e4 ♗d7! 4 ♘d5 b5 5 h6 b4 6 h7 (6 ♔c4 ♔g6 7 ♔xb4 ♔xh6) 6...♗e6+! 7 ♔c6

♔g7 8 d7 ♗xd7+ 9 ♔xd7 b3 10 e6 b2 11 e7 b1♕ with equality.

However, Black also has the right to play for a win.

1	**...**	**♗c8!!**
2	**h6**	

The game went **2 ♔f4?! ♔g7! 3 ♔g5 f4! 4 ♔xf4** (no better is 4 h6+ ♔h7 5 ♔f6 f3 6 e6 f2 7 d7 f1♕+ 8 ♔e7 ♗xd7 9 exd7 ♕xb5 10 d8♕ ♕g5+ and 11...♕xd8+) **4...♔h6 5 ♔e4 ♗e6! 6 ♔d4** (6 d7 ♗xd7 7 ♔d5 ♗xb5 8 ♔d6 ♗e8 9 ♔e7 ♗xh5 or 9...♗a4) **6...♔xh5 7 d7 ♗xd7 8 e6 ♗xb5!.** White resigns.

2	**...**	**f4!**
3	**h7**	

After 3 ♔xf4 ♔g6 4 ♔e4 ♗e6! Black wins in similar fashion to the game.

3	**...**	**♔g7**
4	**h8♕+**	**♔xh8**
5	**♔f6**	**f3**
6	**e6**	**f2**
7	**d7**	**f1♕+**

Or 7...♗xd7 8 exd7 f1♕+.

8	**♔e7**	**♗xd7**
9	**exd7**	

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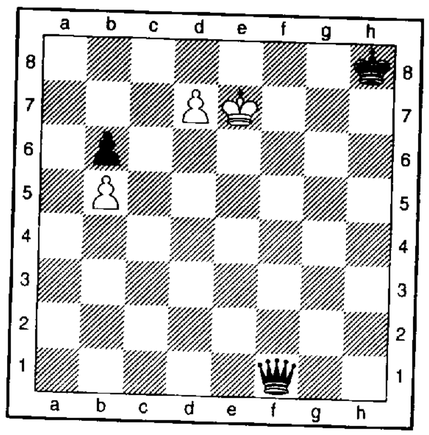

This position has been reached by force. Milic and Bozic, annotating the endgame in the 30th volume of *Informator* (later their analysis was reproduced in the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Endings*) judged it to be drawn. They gave the following variations:

9...♕e1+ 10 ♔d6 ♕b4+ 11 ♔c7 ♕c5+ 12 ♔b7!;

9...♕e2+ 10 ♔d6 ♕xb5 11 d8♕+ ♔g7 12 ♕e7+ ♔g6 13 ♕e6+ ♔g5 14 ♕e5+!.

The endgame would indeed by drawn if the white king were able to get over to c7. But it can be prevented from reaching there. Black's winning plan – playing his queen to g5 – can be carried out in many ways. For example:

9	**...**	**♕e2+**

Also good is 9...♕e1+ 10 ♔d6 (10 ♔d8 ♕c3!) 10...♕g3+!.

10	**♔d6**	

10 ♔d8? ♕xb5 is completely bad. If 10 ♔f8 Black wins by 10...♕f3+ (or 10...♕f2+) 11 ♔e7 ♕e4+ 12 ♔d8 ♕c4! 13 ♔e7 ♕c5+ 14 ♔f7 ♕g5 15 ♔e8 ♕xb5.

10	**...**	**♕h2+!**

The only move that does not allow the king across to the queenside (White loses immediately after 11 ♔c6 ♕b8 or 11 ♔e6 ♕h4).

11	**♔e7**	**♕e5+**

11...♕h4+ 12 ♔e8 ♕h5+ 13 ♔e7 ♕g5+ was equally good. But Black can win more quickly with 11...♕c7 12 ♔e8 ♔g7! 13 d8♕ ♕f7 mate.

12	**♔f7**	**♕g5!**

Or 12...♕f5(h5)+ 13 ♔e7 ♕g5+. 12...♕d6 13 ♔e8 ♕e6+ (hoping for 14 ♔f8 ♕f6+ 15 ♔e8 ♔g7 with mate) is inferior in view of 14 ♔d8!, when Black has to play 14...♕c4!, and then again gradually approach the key g5 square with his queen.

13	**♔e8**	**♕xb5**

E 9-9. Ivkov–Korchnoi (Baden-Baden 1981).

Borislav Ivkov played inaccurately and allowed the opponent to fortify his position.

22 ♔c3? g6 23 ♗g1 ♘f6 24 ♖ad1 ♖a8! 25 ♖e5 c6 26 ♖d4 ♘d5+ 27 ♔d2 a4. The knight has been moved to an excellent central post, and the white rooks have nowhere to expand, since all the files are blocked by the black pieces. The game should end in a draw. That is in fact what happened, although only after great adventures, caused by mistakes by both sides.

The attempt to prevent the manoeuvre of the knight to the centre by 22 ♗d4!? ♖d8 23 ♔c3 is interesting. If 23...♘xh2 there follows 24 ♖ad1 or 24 ♖e5 and Black's position remains anxious. But nevertheless this is probably what he should play.

Instead of taking the pawn, 23...c5?! may be tried. In the event of 24 ♗xc5 ♖c8 25 ♔d4 ♖d8+ the activity of the black pieces enables him to count on saving the game: 26 ♔e4 ♗d5+ (evidently weaker is 26...f5+ 27 ♔f3 ♖d3+ 28 ♔e2 ♗c4, and now not 29 ♖ac1?! ♖d4+ with perpetual check, but 29 ♖ec1 ♖d4+ 30 ♔e1 ♖xf4 31 ♗b6 with the better chances for White) 27 ♔f5 (27 ♔d3!? ♗xg2+) 27...♘h6+ 28 ♔g5 ♗xg2 (28...f6+ 29 ♔h4 ♗xg2 is also possible) 29 f5 (29 ♗e7? ♖d5+; 29 ♖ad1 f6+ 30 ♔h4 ♖xd1 31 ♖xd1 ♘f5+ 32 ♔g4 g6 33 ♖d8+ ♔f7 34 ♖d7+ ♔g8) 29...f6+ 30 ♔f4 ♘xf5!.

White does not need to take on c5 – the simple 24 ♗g1! gives him a winning position. The point is that the c-pawn has jumped past the d5 square, which it should have defended, and now the knight can no longer be established in the centre. For example, 24...♘f6 25 ♖ad1 ♘d5+ 26 ♔c2 ♖c8 27 g3 or 27 ♖e5.

The most accurate way to win is a positional pawn sacrifice, pointed out after the game by Victor Korchnoi. Its aim is to force an exchange of rooks (as you will remember, this is a typical technique for converting an exchange advantage).

22	**f5!!**	**♖d8+**
23	**♔c3**	**♗xf5**
24	**♖ad1**	**♖c8**
25	**♗e7!**	

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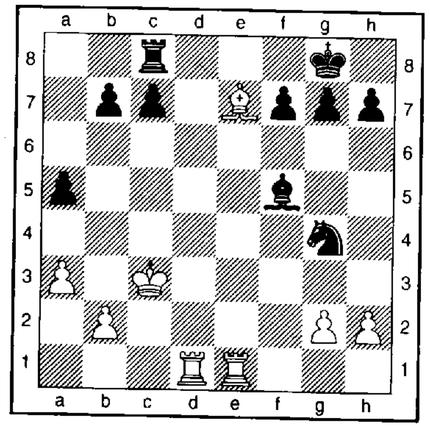

There follows 26 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 27 ♗xd8 after which Black's queenside is left undefended.

E 9-10. Gelfand–Delchev (European Junior Championship, Arnhem 1988/89).

White should attack on the open g-file, gaining time by exploiting the position of the enemy bishop, which has just captured the g2 pawn. But how to do this?

18 f3?! ♗h3 is unconvincing, since if 19 ♖g1 there is the good reply 19...♗f5.

It should be mentioned that Boris Gelfand had first obtained this position six months earlier, when he had been unable to find the correct solution. This was the course taken by the game **Gelfand–Dimitrov**, played in the 1988 World Junior Championship in Adelaide.

18 ♖g1?! ♕b7 19 f3. 19 f4?! ♗e4 is useless. If 19 ♖de1 there follows 19...♗c5!, for example: 20 b4?! ♗d4 21 ♗xd4 ♖xd4 22 ♖e3 ♗e4 23 ♘g4 ♗g6 24 ♘xf6+ gxf6. Stronger is 20 ♘xf7! ♔xf7! 21 ♗xf6 gxf6 22 ♘f1! ♘e4! 23 ♖xe4 f5 24 ♖h4 ♕f3! 25 ♖xh7+ ♔f6 with great complications.

19...♗xf3 20 ♖df1 ♖xd3!. White was counting on 20...♗h5? 21 ♗xh7+! ♘xh7 22 ♘xf7. By sacrificing the exchange, Black neutralises the opponent's attack.

21 ♕xd3 (21 ♘xd3 ♖d8) **21...♗e4 22 ♕h3** (22 ♕g3 ♗g6) **22...♗f5 23 ♖xf5?!** (23 ♕h6) **23...exf5 24 ♕xf5 g6!** (weaker is 24...♖c8 25 ♘g4 ♘xg4 26 ♖xg4!) **25 ♘xg6 hxg6 26 ♗xf6.** Here the players agreed a draw, which can be explained only by Vladimir Dimitrov's lack of confidence in his own powers. By continuing 26...♗xf6 27 ♕xf6 ♕e4! he could have played for a win without any risk.

After analysing this game, Gelfand found the correct way to conduct the attack. Soon he gained an opportunity to test his analysis in practice.

18 ♖e3!!

Remember the commentary to the 27th move in the Bareev–Shirov game. Both there and here one rook should make way for the other along the first rank, by moving not to the side, but forwards and for the moment maintaining control of the file on which it is situated (in particular of the important e4 square). White prepares 19 ♖g1 and then 20 ♖eg3.

18 ... ♕b7
19 ♖g1

Threatening 20 ♖g3; if 19...g6 White wins by 20 ♗xg6! fxg6 21 ♘xg6. Probably Black's only chance was 19...♖xd3!?, but here the exchange sacrifice is much less effective in comparison with the one made in the Gelfand–Dimitrov game.

19 ... ♗f8
20 ♖g3 ♗e4
21 ♘g4!

see next diagram

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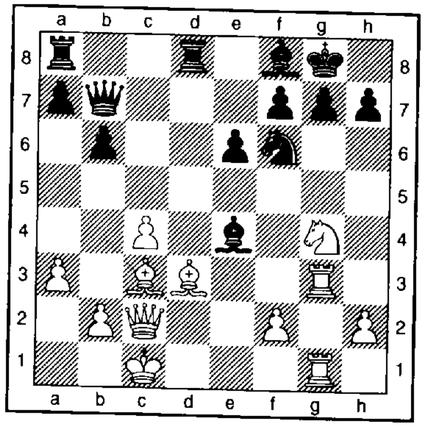

It is not hard to see that Black has no defence.

21...♗g6 22 ♗xg6 hxg6 23 ♗xf6 ♖dc8 (23...gxf6 24 ♘xf6+ ♔g7 25 ♖xg6+, or 24...♔h8 25 ♖h3+ ♔g7 26 ♕c3) **24 ♔b1 b5 25 ♘h6+! gxh6 26 ♖xg6+ fxg6 27 ♕xg6+ ♗g7 28 ♗xg7 ♕f7 29 ♕xh6 ♕f5+ 30 ♔a1 ♔f7 31 ♗c3 ♖f8 32 ♖g5 ♕e4 33 ♖g7+ ♔e8 34 ♕h5+ ♔d8 35 ♗a5+.** Black resigns.

E 9-11. Dvoretsky–Geller (43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975).

In the game **31 a7?** was played, and Yefim Geller unexpectedly offered a draw, which, of course, was immediately accepted. It is hard to understand why the grandmaster did not play on – since after 31...♗xa7 he would have remained a pawn up in all variations: 32 ♕a8+ (32 ♕xd6 ♕d1+ 33 ♔g2 ♕e2) 32...♔h7 33 ♕xa7 ♕xd2 and if 34 ♕xf7, then 34...♕e1+ 35 ♔h2 ♕xe4.

31 ♕b7? is also incorrect in view of 31...g6!, and if 32 a7 there is even 32...♕xd2! 33 a8♕+ ♔g7 34 ♕b1 ♕xf2+ 35 ♔h1 ♕f3+ 36 ♔h2 ♗f2.

By the method of elimination we arrive at the only correct solution.

31 ♕c4! ♕xd2

31...♗xf2+ 32 ♔xf2 ♕xd2+ 33 ♔f3 and Black's extra pawn does not play any role: he has to be satisfied with perpetual check in order to prevent the a-pawn from queening.

32 ♕c8+ ♔h7
33 ♕f5+

But now it is White who gives perpetual check.

E 9-12. Gipslis–Dvoretsky (USSR Championship Semi-Final, Odessa 1972).

Both kings feel uncomfortable. In such situations it is important to act energetically, to be the first to create threats.

In the game Aivar Gipslis delayed with **22 a4?**, which allowed me to launch an attack by **22...g5!?** (22...♖c8 was also good). There followed **23 ♖c1** (the material-grabbing 23 fxg5 ♗xg5 24 ♔g4 would have led to disaster: 24...♖g8 25 ♔xh5 f5!) **23...gxf4+ 24 ♔xf4?!** (24 ♔f2) **24...f6 25 ♖c6+ ♔b7 26 exf6 ♖f8** and the white king is in great danger.

The attempt to halt Black's activity on the kingside by playing 22 h4?! is ineffective in view of the reply 22...♖c8.

22 ♕e3!? is quite good, not allowing 22...g5 and preparing 23 ♖hc1. But after 22...♖c8 23 ♖hc1 ♖xc1! (23...♖hh8 is dangerous in view of 24 ♖c6+!) 24 ♖xc1 ♖h8 Black retains an acceptable position. If necessary he will be able to fortify his queenside with ...♗d8.

22 ♖c1!

From the practical viewpoint this move is the strongest, since it sets Black the most difficult problems. For example, he may be tempted by the capture of the a3 pawn. Incidentally, Gipslis did not play 22 ♖c1 precisely because of 22...♗xa3 23 ♖c6+ ♔xb5 (bad is 23...♔b7 24 ♕xa5). However, with the rook sacrifice 24 ♕e2+! White wins: 24...♔xc6 25 ♕a6+ ♔c7 26 ♕xa7+! (stronger than 26 ♖b1 ♗b4 27 ♕xa7+ ♔c6! 28 ♕a6+ ♔c7 29 ♖c1+ ♔b8 30 ♕b6+ ♔a8 31 ♖c7 ♕xc7) 26...♔c8(c6) 27 ♕a8(a6)+ ♔c7 28 ♕xa5+ ♔c8 29 ♕a8+ ♔c7 30 ♕xa3 with a rapid mate.

The other temptation that Black had to resist was the 'active' 22...g5?, which leads to a difficult position for him after 23 ♖c6+ ♔b7 24 ♕xa5 gxf4+ 25 ♔f2 and 26 ♖hc1.

22 ... ♖c8!

The only correct defence. Now White should be satisfied with the modest 23 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 24 ♕e3 or 23 ♕e3 ♖xc1! 24 ♖xc1 with somewhat the better game. The attempt to achieve more with the pawn sacrifice 23 ♖c6+?! is unjustified: 23...♖xc6 24 bxc6 ♕xc6 25 ♕b1+ ♕b5 26 ♕a2 (26 ♕c2 ♗xa3) 26...♕d3! and Black launches a counter-attack (27...♖h3+! is threatened).

E 9-13. Alekhine–Levenfish (All-Russian Olympiad, Moscow 1920).

In the game there followed **32...♖xh2?! 33 ♕d3+ g6 34 ♖d7 ♔g7 35 ♖xf7+!.** Draw.

In the opinion of Grigory Levenfish, he could have won. Let us check his analysis.

32 ... h5+!
33 ♔xh5

33 ♔g5? f6+.

33 ... ♖xh2+
34 ♔g4 ♕g2!
35 ♕d3+

If 35 ♖d7? Black wins by both 35...♖h6! and 35...♔h6! with the idea of 36...♖h4+! 37 ♔xh4 ♕h2+ 38 ♔g4 ♕h5 mate.

35 ... g6

Again the rook sacrifice on h4 is imminent, for example: 36 ♖d7? ♔h6 37 ♖xf7 ♖h4+!.

36 ♔g5 ♔g7

The white king must not be allowed to go to f6.

see next diagram

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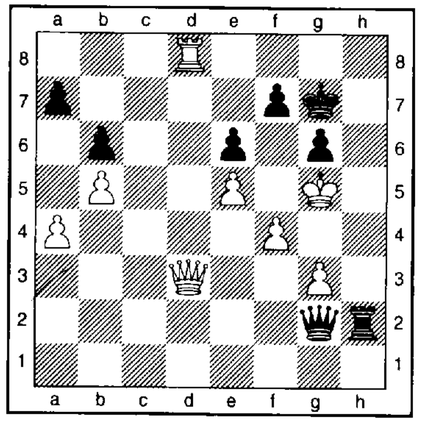

Levenfish considered only 37 ♖d7?, which leads to the mate with which we are already familiar: 37...♖h5+ 38 ♔g4 ♔h6! 39 ♖xf7 ♖h4+!. But White can also create counter-threats in another way.

37	**♕a3!**	**♖h5+**
38	**♔g4**	**♖h4+**

Here 38...♔h6 is no longer possible, while if 38...♕e2+ there follows 39 ♕f3. Black has to be satisfied with a draw.

39 ♔g5!

E 9-14. Gutman–Dvoretsky (USSR Spartakiad, Riga 1975).

15 ♘b5? ♗xb2 is not dangerous for Black. After 15 ♖b1?! ♘b7 16 ♘a4 ♗xb2 17 ♕xb2 ♘bc5! the b6 pawn is indirectly defended by the knight fork on a4.

White's primary objective is to prevent the manoeuvre ...♘a5–b7–c5, which would enable the opponent to consolidate.

15 ♘a4!

After 15...♗xb2 16 ♕xb2 White is threatening 17 ♖b1, and 16...♘b7? 17 ♘xb6 leads to the loss of a pawn. Black's problems are also not solved by either 16...b5 17 cxb5 axb5 18 ♖c1 ♕a7 19 ♘c3 or 16...♘c5 17 ♘xb6 ♖xb6 (17...♗f5 18 ♕a3!) 18 ♖xb6 ♘a4 19 ♕b4 – in both cases with an obvious advantage to White.

Black would probably have had to reply 15...♗h6!? (instead of 15...♗xb2), but after 16 e3 White would have stood better – he has seized the long diagonal and the bishop at h6 is badly placed.

Lev Gutman played less accurately.

15 ♘ce4?! ♗xb2 16 ♕xb2 ♘b7! 17 ♖b1 ♘bc5 18 ♘xc5?! ♘xc5!. The b6 pawn is immune. Now the initiative passes to Black.

19 ♘b3 (19 ♕d4!?) **19...♗f5 20 ♖c1 a5 21 ♘xc5 bxc5 22 ♖b5.**

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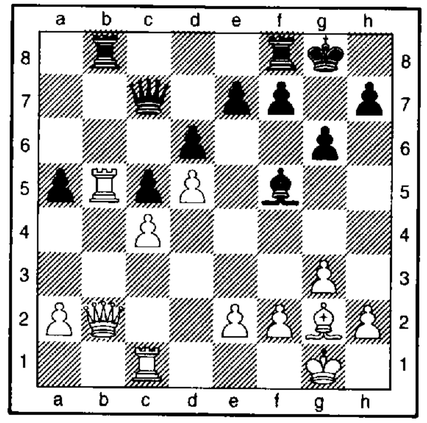

For the moment there is no point in exchanging on b5: 22...♖xb5 23 cxb5 ♖b8 24 a4. 22...♗d7 suggests itself, but I was concerned that after 23 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 24 ♕c3 White would acquire the good defensive manoeuvre 25 ♗e4 followed by ♖b1 or ♗d3(c2).

22...a4!. A useful waiting move. Black provokes e2–e4 (after 23 e4?! ♗d7 24 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 the white bishop can no longer move across to the defence of the queenside). In addition, now the exchange on b5 also gains in strength, since White will be unable to support his b-pawn with a2–a4.

23 ♕d2?. A serious mistake. White should have waited with 23 h4!.

23...♖xb5 24 cxb5 ♖b8 25 ♖c4?! (White's idea of giving mate on the h-file is unrealistic – 25 ♕f4 was more tenacious) **25...♖xb5 26 ♖h4 ♖b1+ 27 ♗f1 h5 28 h3 ♕b7! 29 f3.** In the event of 29 g4 I would have chosen between 29...♖a1! (with the threat of 30...♕b1) and 29...♕b4! 30 ♕xb4 ♖xb4 31 a3 ♗d7!?.

29...♖a1. White resigns.

E 9-15. Sambursky–Postovsky (correspondence 1975/76).

35...♗xd5?! 36 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 37 ♖dxe4 leads only to equality. Also, 35...♘g4?! 36 ♘xg4 hxg4 (36...♗xd4? 37 cxd4), hoping for 37 ♖dxe4? ♕xd5, does not achieve anything in view of 37 ♘b3! ♕a7 (37...♕b6 38 ♖dxe4 ♗e5! is unclear) 38 ♖dxe4 ♗xd5 39 ♖xe7 ♖xe7 40 ♘d2! followed by 41 ♗e4.

35 . . . ♘xd5!!

The move in the game involves a positional queen sacrifice.

36 ♘b3

Completely bad is 36 ♖xe4? ♘xe3 or 36 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 37 ♘xe4 ♗xd4 38 cxd4 ♕xd4 39 ♖d1 ♖xe4! 40 ♖xd4 ♖e1+. But better practical chances were offered by 36 ♘xe4! ♗xd4! 37 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 38 ♗b3! (38 ♘g2 ♖e2 39 ♖f1 ♘e3 or 39...♖xf2 is hopeless for White) Now 38...♘xe3? fails to 39 ♕xg6+. Black must choose between 38...♔g7 39 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 and the more direct 38...♗xe3 39 fxe3 ♖xe3 40 ♖xe3 ♖xe3, for example: 41 ♔f2 ♖f3+! or 41 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 42 ♕d1 ♖xg3+ 43 ♔h2 ♖g2+ 44 ♔h3 ♗e4 45 ♕xd6 ♖xb2. Black's advantage is indisputable, but even so the outcome is not yet altogether clear.

36	**. . .**	**♗xd4!**
37	**♘xc5**	**♗xc5**

see next diagram

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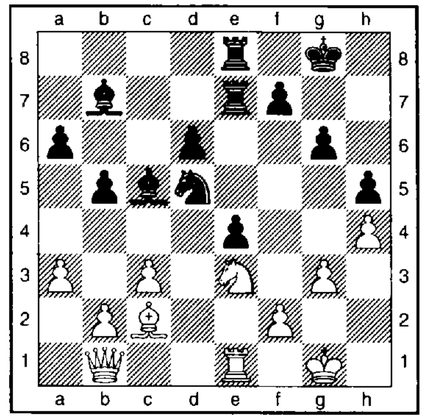


For the sacrificed queen Black has gained an almost full material equivalent: rook, bishop and pawn. To me his position appears to be strategically won – after all, he can calmly build up the pressure, whereas White is condemned to a hopeless defence and is unable to do anything active.

38 ♕d1 ♘xe3 39 fxe3. In the event of 39 ♖xe3 there is no need to hurry with the capture of the rook – the simple 39...♖e5 is stronger. If the rook moves Black will open lines with ...e4–e3.

39...♖e6 40 ♕d2 ♖f6 41 ♔g2 ♖e5 42 ♗d1 ♔g7 43 g4 ♖d5 44 ♕c1 g5!? 45 gxh5 ♖df5 46 ♕d2?! gxh4 47 ♗g4 ♖d5 48 ♕c1 ♖g5 (with the idea of 49 ♔h3 ♖xg4! 50 ♔xg4 ♖f3) and Black won.

E 9-16. Dvoretsky–Ubilava (USSR Spartakiad, Riga 1975).

Black's position is difficult – White is threatening 26 ♘xa7 or 26 ♖c2 followed by 27 ♘e4. Leaps by the knight from d5 do not achieve anything, for example:

25...♘f4? 26 ♕xf4 ♕xf4 27 gxf4 ♖xd2 28 ♖c7 ♘d8 29 ♘d6;

25...♘xb4? 26 ♘d6 (26 ♕xb4 ♕xd2 27 ♕xd2 ♖xd2 28 ♖c7 is also strong) 26...♘xd6

27 ♕xd6!;

25...♘c7?! 26 ♘d6! (26 ♕e4 ♘c5!) 26...♘b5 (26...♘xd6 27 ♖xc7; 26...♘e8 27 ♖c8) 27 ♕d3 ♘7xd6 28 exd6 e5 (28...♘xd6 29 ♕xd6!) 29 d7 ♘d4 30 ♖c8 ♕f6 31 ♘e4 ♕e7 32 ♘g5 with decisive threats, or 27...♘5xd6 28 exd6 ♕g6!? (28...e5 29 d7 ♔f8 30 ♕d5!; 29...♕d6 30 ♕xd6 ♘xd6 31 ♘e4!) 29 ♘e4 f5 30 ♕a6! fxe4 31 ♕xb7 e3! 32 ♖c8! exf2+ 33 ♔xf2 with a won queen endgame.

Elzibar Ubilava found the only, but quite adequate defence.

25 . . . ♔f8!!

Black prepares 26...♘e7. Remember: ***the king is a strong piece and is capable of taking part in fighting operations not only in the endgame!***

What should White do now? If 26 ♘xa7 there follows 26...♘e7 27 ♕e4 ♕xd2 28 ♖c7 ♘f5! (stronger than 28...♘d6 29 exd6 ♕xd6 with somewhat the better chances for White) 29 ♖xb7 (29 ♕xb7 ♕e1+ 30 ♔g2 ♘e3+) 29...♘xg3!.

If 26 ♘b3 (intending 26...♘e7? 27 ♕e4), then 26...♘c5! 27 bxc5 ♖xc8 28 c6 ♕h5 with unclear play.

26 ♖c2 ♘e7

Now I should have been satisfied with the draw that results after 27 ♕e4 ♖xc8! 28 ♖xc8+ ♘xc8 29 ♕xb7 ♕xd2 30 ♕xc8+ ♔e7. The game continuation **27 ♘d6?! ♘xd6 28 exd6 ♘f5 29 ♕c3 ♘xd6 30 ♕c7 ♕f6 31 ♕xa7 ♕d4** led to an inferior position for White. Fortunately for me, after **32 ♘f1** Ubilava offered a draw, which, of course, was accepted. After 32...♘c4!? or 32...♘e4!? 33 ♕c7 g5! White would have faced a difficult defence.

E 9-17. Euwe–Bisguier (New York 1948).

The position is very sharp. White has quite good compensation for the sacrificed piece, but not more. Max Euwe recommended 27...♖h7!? 28 ♖d1 ♕d5 29 ♕xd5 cxd5, when 30 h4 ♗xh4 31 ♖h3? does not work because of 31...♗c8! 32 ♖xh4 ♗xf5.

The capture of the rook that occurred in the game led by force to a favourable endgame for White. In order to decide on it, Black was obliged to calculate the variations extremely deeply and accurately. To carry out such a calculation at the board is beyond the bounds of human capabilities. This is sufficient to reject the move 27...♗xc1 on practical grounds.

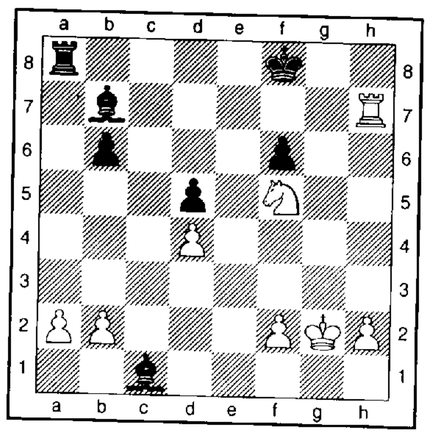
Euwe thought that with correct defence Black could nevertheless have saved himself. I will try to show that objectively Black's position would have become difficult.

27 . . . ♗xc1?
28 ♖h3! ♖xg2+!

28...♖g8? 29 ♖h7 was completely bad. But now neither 29 ♔f1? ♖g8 30 ♖h7 ♗a6+ 31 ♔e1 ♖g1 mate, nor 29 ♔h1? c5 will do. White is obliged to take the rook, allowing the exchange of queens.

29 ♔xg2 ♕d5+
30 ♕xd5 cxd5
31 ♖h7!

202



Black will soon have to return his extra piece. The only question is how to sell it most advantageously.

If 31...♗c6?, then 32 ♖c7 is decisive. Also hopeless is 31...♖a7? 32 b3! (but not 32 ♘d6? ♗xb2 with a draw) 32...♗f4 33 a4 or 32...♗a3 33 h4.

In the game there followed **31...♖xa2? 32 ♖xb7 ♖xb2 33 h4.** *'Material is equal but White's h-pawn wins for him thanks to his excellently placed knight'* (Euwe).

33...♗d2 (threatening 34...♗e1) **34 ♔f1 ♖b1+ 35 ♔e2 ♗c3.** The following is an interesting variation: 35...♗f4 36 h5 ♖h1 37 h6 ♗xh6 (37...♔g8 38 ♘e7+) 38 ♖h7 ♖h5 39 ♘xh6 (threatening 40 ♖f7+ ♔e8 41 ♖xf6) 39...♔e8 40 ♘g4!.

36 h5 b5 37 h6 ♔g8 38 ♘e7+ ♔h7 39 ♘xd5+ ♔xh6 40 ♘xc3. Black resigns.

31 . . . ♗c8!
32 ♖h8+ ♔f7
33 ♘d6+ ♔e6!
34 ♘xc8

After 34 ♖xc8? ♖xc8 35 ♘xc8 ♗xb2 36 ♘xb6 ♗xd4 it is White who has to try to gain a draw by 37 ♘a4 (37 ♘a8!?) 37...♔d6 38 ♔f3 ♔c6 39 ♔e2 ♔b5 40 ♔d3 ♗xf2 41 ♘c3+.

34 . . . ♗xb2

34...♖xa2!? is possibly more tenacious, although the rook endgame after 35 ♖e8+! ♔d7 36 ♖e1 ♔xc8 (otherwise 37 ♘xb6+) 37 ♖xc1+ is most probably won.

35 ♖e8+ ♔d7
36 ♘xb6+ ♔xe8
37 ♘xa8 ♔d7

Of course, not 37...♗xd4? 38 ♘c7+ and 39 ♘xd5.

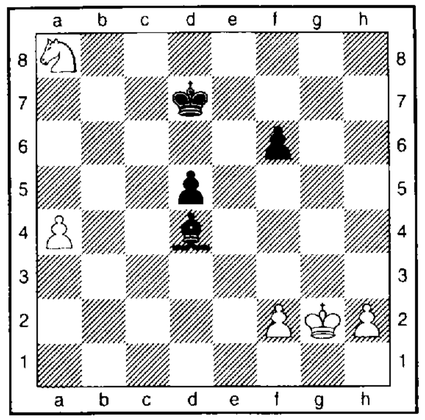
38 a4!

There is no point is wasting precious tempi on moves by the knight, since after 38 ♘b6+? ♔c6 39 ♘c8 ♗a3 it will all the same be trapped.

38 . . . ♗xd4

see next diagram

203



Euwe continues the variation as follows: 39 a5 ♗c3! 40 ♘b6+ (40 a6? ♗d4! followed by ...♔c8–b8) 40...♔c6 41 ♘a4 ♗xa5 with equality. But it is not hard to improve White's play. He should not hurry with the advance of his a-pawn – after all, it will be able to come to the aid of the knight at any moment. He must create a threat on the opposite flank.

39 h4!

If now 39...♔c6, then 40 a5 ♗c3 (40...♔b7 41 ♘b6) 41 a6! and the black king is no longer able to attack the knight. If 39...♗c3 (with the threat of 40...♔c6) there follows 40 ♘b6+ ♔c6 41 ♘c8, intending ♘a7–b5 or ♘e7+. Little is changed by 39...f5 40 h5 and at some point ♔f3 or ♔f1. It would appear that White should win such an endgame.

E 9-18. Faibisovich–Gavrikov (Vilnius 1983).

As often happens, at the most tense moment the game suddenly concluded: the players agreed a draw. A pity – the play could have turned out to be very interesting.

Objectively their decision was justified – after either capture on d5 the position would have remained roughly equal. This means that the task you were set does not have a

solution – both possibilities are practically equivalent. However, this conclusion can be drawn only on the basis of exact calculation, which all the same would have to be made, if you had reached this position in a game. Here a decision cannot be made on 'general grounds' – you need to calculate to the end at least one of the two continuations.

I

1 . . . ♗xd5!?

2 ♕e1!

Harmless is 2 ♕xd4? exd4 3 ♖xd4 ♖xc2 (3...♗c4? 4 ♖c5!) 4 ♘d3 ♖e8! (but not 4...♖dc8? 5 ♖axd5 ♖c1+ 6 ♘xc1 ♖xc1+ 7 ♖d1) and the bishop is immune: 5 ♖axd5?? ♖c1+ 6 ♘xc1 ♖e1 mate.

2 . . . ♕c4

The tempting queen sacrifice 2...♕xd1?! 3 ♕xd1 ♗b3 (hoping for 4 ♕e1? ♗xc2 and 5...♖d1) is refuted by 4 ♕e2! ♖xc2 (4...♗xc2 5 h3) 5 ♕e1.

3 b3 ♕c6

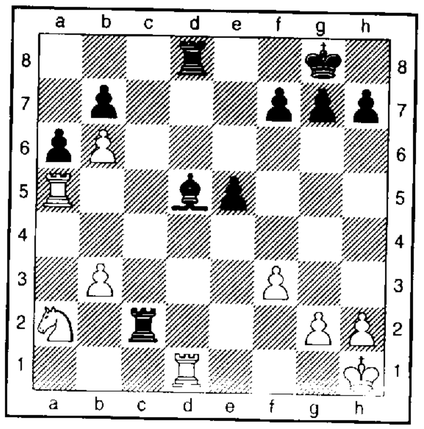
Not 3...♕xc2? 4 ♖axd5 ♖xd5 5 ♖xd5 ♕xc1 6 ♖d8+!.

4 ♕d2! ♕xc2!

5 ♕xc2 ♖xc2

6 ♘a2!

204



It appears to be all over: 7 ♖axd5 or 7 ♘b4 is threatened. But nevertheless there is a defence.

6 . . . ♖d7!

It turns out that only the second threat is important – this is the one that must be parried. If now 7 ♘b4, then 7...♗xf3, and White is let down by the weakness of his back rank.

7 ♖axd5 ♖xd5

8 ♖xd5 f6

9 ♖a5 ♖b2

10 h3

If 10 ♘c1, then 10...♖d2.

10 . . . ♖xb3

With his next move Black will take on b6 and with three pawns for a knight he can count on a draw.

II

1 . . . ♖xd5!?

2 ♖xd5 ♗xd5

3 ♕e1

After 3 ♕xd4 exd4 4 ♖xd4 bad is 4...♖xc2? 5 ♘d3, but the simple 4...♗e6! is possible, intending 5...♔f8 and 6...♖c6. For example: 5 ♘e2 ♔f8 6 c3 ♗c4! (the immediate 6...♖c6 7 ♖b4 a5 8 ♘d4 is inferior) 7 ♘g3 (7 ♘f4 ♖c6) and now not 7...♖c6? 8 ♘f5, but 7...♗e6!, preparing 8...♖c6 or 8...♔e7. It would appear that White has no advantage.

3 . . . ♕c4

3...♕c5? 4 ♕xe5 ♕xc2 5 ♕xd5 ♕xc1 6 h3 ♕c6 7 ♕xc6 and White has a won rook endgame.

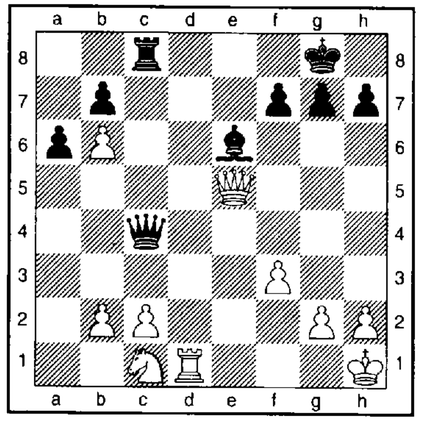
4 ♕xe5

4 b3 ♕c6 is pointless.

4 . . . ♗e6

see next diagram

205



Here too White is hardly able to exploit his extra pawn. It is important that 5 ♕c7?! does not work on account of 5...♕xc7 6 bxc7 ♔f8 7 ♖d8+ ♔e7.

Index of Exercises by Thinking Skills and Types of Problems to be Solved

Do you want to find your way confidently in various situations, arising on the board, and to develop the skills necessary for taking correct decisions? A sound way to make progress is training in the field that interests you. This thematic index will help you to choose appropriate exercises.

Many exercises can be used for various aims and therefore they appear simultaneously in several sections of the index.

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