

# Excelling at Technical Chess

**L<sup>A</sup>T<sub>E</sub>X** *Edition*

*Compiled by* **mg/thirdtim3**

## About this Publication

---

*"And the rest is a matter of technique"*

...is an annoyingly common phrase used in chess literature. The implication from the author is that the task of converting a typically winning position into a full point or converting a drawing position into half-a-point is relatively straightforward. However, as all of us practical players realise, it's not always as simple as this, and many hard-earned points are wasted through *"a lack of technique"*

In this valuable book Jacob Aagaard aims to solve this perennial problem. He arms the reader with several endgame weapons that every strong technical player has in his toolbox. These include important skills such as schematic thinking, domination, preventing counterplay, building fortresses and utilising zugzwang. These tools are illustrated in deeply analysed games containing numerous different themes. A serious study of this book will ensure that the reader need no longer need fear the word *"technique"*!

Jacob Aagaard is a Grandmaster from Denmark who has carved out a deserved reputation as a diligent and outspoken chess author.

---

# 1: The Endgame

---

There are two kinds of endgame books. Firstly, those dedicated to the theory of the endgame, often with a very limited number of pieces. The most famous of these is probably Averbakh's five-volume 'Endgame Manual', about 25 years old but recently reissued in corrected and computer-checked form on DVD from Chess Assistant. Also important are Informator's big encyclopaedias of chess endings; the analysis in these books is of variable quality, but they are still an excellent source of material. Of the single volume books most notable is 'Dvoretsky's Endgame Manual' (Russell Publications 2003), written by the world's best chess trainer, Mark Dvoretsky. Also excellent is Müller & Lamprecht's 'Fundamental Chess Endings' (Gambit 2002). There are many other good books too, but these are the ones I recommend to anyone interested in theoretical endgame positions. — The second type of books are dedicated to more complex endings. Here the most famous are 'Endgame Strategy' by Mikhail Shereshevsky, 'Technique for the Tournament Player' by Mark Dvoretsky and Artur Yusupov, and 'Rate Your Endgame' by Mednis (edited by Crouch). These books are concerned with the art of endgame thinking, and the current book is considered as an extension of these earlier works.

In a kind of limbo, there are also untheoretical works such as 'Endgame Virtuoso' (Smyslov), 'Endgame Secrets' (Lutz), 'School of Chess Excellence 1 - The Endgame' (Dvoretsky), 'Practical Rook Endings' (Korchnoi), and many more. I mention these four because I can warmly recommend them, along with all those listed above. They are excellent books every one of them.

What I have tried to do in this book is present seven basic modes of thinking and endgame technique, which are helpful for understanding and playing the endgame well. I have explained them to the best of my ability and tried to give some examples. It is my belief that abstract rules alone have no value to anyone. They need both to be explained and seen to work in practice. The main point here is that a rule is only valuable if you understand why it is a rule. It is hard to grasp the practical application of a rule (such as 'a knight on the rim is dim') unless you comprehend the background to the soundbite. No one in their right mind would approach a position with a bag full of rules and then switch off their common sense. Rather, rules are just useful tools, in the same way as concentration, theoretical knowledge and the ability to calculate variations accurately.

— One of the biggest misconceptions among chess players is the axiom: the exception that proves the rule. What rubbish! There are no exceptions to rules, or they would not be rules. 'All swans in the world are white' is a rule, but once we discover a green swan, the rule is no longer valid. In chess, the main point is that a rule has a limited reach. Often they are called principles or guidelines, which is in some ways more meaningful. 'A knight on the rim is dim' simply means that the knight has a limited power on the edge of the board. Just look at it! On the edge it can only control four squares, fewer still nearer the corner, whereas in the centre it can control eight. Furthermore, the central squares are usually more important than those on the edge of the board. This is all it means. So how can such a principle be useful to the improving player? Well, it is not so difficult. In order to place your knight on the rim you need it to have a specific function. Otherwise you may soon find that instead of a knight you have a limp goat. The same

goes for the principles and techniques explained in this book.

The idea behind this book is not to introduce a lot of new ideas and knowledge, though something might slip by, but to help the improving player understand the principles already presented by others - such as Shereshevsky, Dvoretsky, et al. - through deeply annotated and analysed examples. Therefore you will find one chapter outlining seven technical tools for use in the endgame (and elsewhere), followed by a chapter with more advanced examples, primarily involving the minor pieces. The techniques in Chapter 2 are of universal importance and will always be present in the mind of a strong endgame player. The themes in Chapter 3 are of a more specific nature. The strength of the bishop pair, for example, obviously has little relevance in the knight endgame.

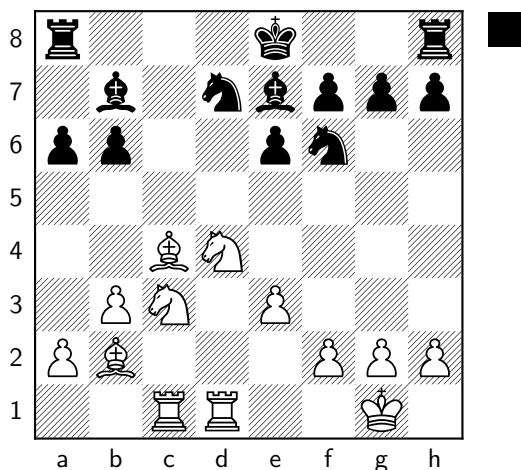
— My agenda in this book is to show how endgame technique is used in practice by strong players, and in doing so, I will try to explain, at length, how the different moves are found. With words when the moves should be understood abstractly, and with variations when these are appropriate. Often these two aspects will arise in the games in that order. First a general plan is drawn out, the pieces are manoeuvred and the position is improved to the maximum; then comes a moment when confrontation should no longer be postponed, and concrete action is taken. This often requires exact calculation, and the answer to why one move is better than another can be explained in no better way than through analysis and variations. This is because the positions become more tactical in nature once direct attacks on the opponent's pieces are executed, or once a passed pawn is pushed forward in an attempt to promote it. If the passed pawn is promoted the game will probably be won. If a knight is captured for free, the game is probably won as well. Assumptions have little use in determining if this is really the case, or if the pawn can be promoted at all. Concrete calculation will have to do the job.

---

# What is the endgame?

---

Before launching into these seven crucial techniques it is appropriate to discuss what the endgame really is. And in that respect, what the middlegame is, and also the opening. There is not really any easy answer. Let me try to explain the complexity with the following position: Spassky-Fischer, Sveti Stefan (4th match game) 1992.



## Black to move.

It would be easy to argue that this is a position from the opening, and in some respects it is. Black still needs to find a good square for the king and to get his rooks into play. The easiest way to define the opening phase is to say that it is where the players develop their pieces. On the other hand, the position could also be called a middlegame position. White has fully developed his forces and is ready to improve his position with the pawn moves f2-f3 and e3-e4 (as he played in the game). So, maybe this is a middlegame without queens? — The third option is that this is an endgame. For what is most

characteristic about the endgame? That there is no attack against the king. In the endgame the king can play actively as a piece and only seldom will it be threatened with mate. Another common feature of the endgame is the promotion of passed pawns. This is not coming up right now, but on the other hand there are pawnless endings as well. What makes this an ending in some respects is that pawn weaknesses play a major part in evaluating the position and creating a plan. But then, dynamics play a lead role as well. — Normally this would be called a queenless middlegame, but it is a definition without much meaning. What is important is the position itself and how it is going to be played. — *(see the following game for Fischer's continuation)*

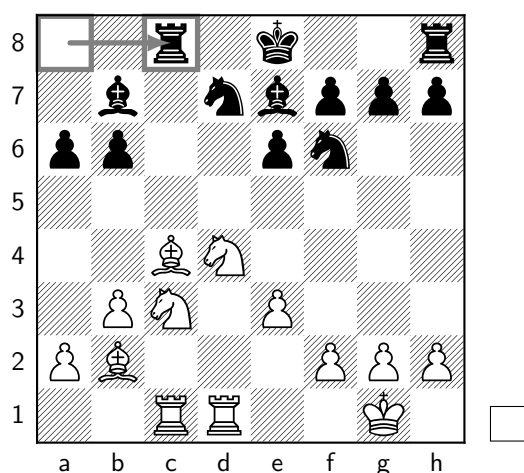
---

White: Spassky, B.  
 Black: Fischer, R.  
 Opening ECO: D27  
 Result: 1-0

Sveti Stefan (4th match game)

1992

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 f3 f6 4 e3 e6 5 fxc4  
 c5 6 O-O a6 7 dxc5 ♖xd1 8 ♗xd1 ♕xc5 9  
 b3 ♗bd7 10 ♕b2 b6 11 ♗c3 ♕b7 12 ♗ac1  
 ♕e7 13 ♗d4 ♗c8



### 13...O-O? 14 ♗xe6!

14 f3 b5 15 ♕e2 ♕c5 16 ♖f1 ♖e7 17 e4 g5  
 18 ♗b1 g4 19 ♕a3 b4 20 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 21  
 ♕xb4 ♗hd8 22 ♗a3 gxf3 23 gxf3 ♗d7 24  
 ♗c4 ♕a8 25 ♖f2 ♗g8 26 h4 ♗c7 27 ♗c2  
 ♗b8 28 ♕a3 h5 29 ♗g1 ♖f6 30 ♖e3 a5 31  
 ♗g5 a4 32 b4 ♗b7 33 b5 ♗bc5 34 ♗d4 e5  
 35 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 36 ♗f5+ ♖g7 37 ♗xe5 ♗xe4  
 38 ♕d3 ♗c3 39 ♕b4 ♗xd3+ 40 ♖xd3 ♗f6  
 41 ♕d6 ♗c8 42 ♗g5+ ♖h7 43 ♕e5 ♗e8 44  
 ♗xh5+ ♖g6 45 ♗g5+ ♖h7 46 ♕f4 f6 47 ♗f5  
 ♖g6 48 b6 ♗d8 49 ♗a5 ♕xf3 50 h5+ . — So  
 there is really no satisfactory definition of  
 the position. And this will be the case with  
 many positions, which are in no man's land  
 between the opening and middlegame, or  
 middlegame and endgame. In his  
 'Endgame Manual' Mark Dvoretsky  
 considers an endgame to be a position  
 where neither of the players has more than

one piece left. Although he includes rook  
 and bishop vs. rook, it is not a bad  
 definition from a practical point of view.  
 Positions where neither player has more  
 than one piece can hardly be anything else  
 than an endgame. But what about  
 positions with two pieces each? Again it  
 seems to me hard to imagine a situation  
 where this would not be an endgame. But  
 once both players have three pieces, it  
 becomes a grey zone. Sometimes this,  
 sometimes that. — This book is dedicated  
 to practical endgame technique. This  
 means that it does not include endgame  
 theory (see above) nor tactical endgames  
 (for which John Nunn's 'Tactical Chess  
 Endings' is hereby recommended, as is  
 Müller & Meyer's 'The Magic of Chess  
 Tactics'; both are excellent books on the  
 subject, though the latter also has a lot of  
 middlegame positions). The idea of the  
 book is to illustrate the technical aspects of  
 complex endings (most often starting with  
 more than one piece each) in as clear a  
 fashion as possible. — Theoretical and  
 tactical endgames - the majority of which  
 are known as studies - are fascinating and  
 every player should devote all of his life to  
 them, or at least as much of it as he can  
 spare, but they will not be found here for  
 simple reasons. I believe that my style of  
 writing is well suited for writing exactly this  
 kind of book, and that the books by  
 Shereshevsky, Dvoretsky, Mednis, etc.  
 cannot fully teach the principles of  
 endgame technique to a young and  
 aspiring player. If for no other reason, than  
 because the instructive material is limited.  
 — While trying to do so I will only rarely go

into positions where there is a doubt whether it is really an endgame or not. But as such I do not want to discuss where the endgame begins and the middlegame ends. For the practical player it has little importance. He knows when the king is safe or not, and he will not march his king to the centre after move 40, irrespective of what the position looks like, and get instantly mated (as a 1970's chess computer did, according to legend). — The main difference between the middlegame and the endgame is not just the absence of queens (therefore queenless middlegames), but the absence of consistent mating threats. This makes the king a valuable piece in the endgame. Julian Hodgson has said that the king is worth four pawns in the endgame.

**1-0**

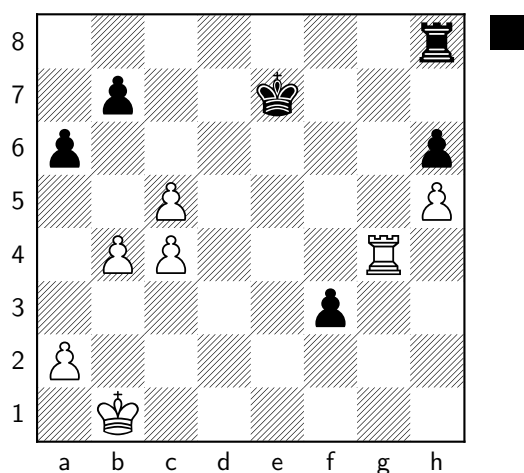
---

White: Timman, J.  
Black: Karpov, A.

Belfort

1988

Result: 0-1

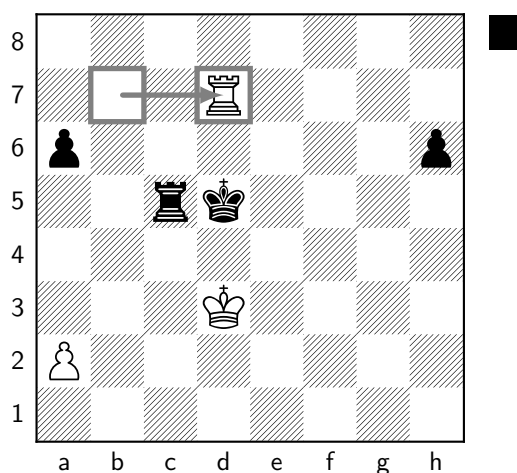


**38...♖f8 39 ♗g1 ♜f4 40 ♜f1 ♔e6 41 ♔c2!**

Timman realises that if he clings on to the queenside pawns then Black will advance his king to assist the passed f-pawn. Then the black rook will be freed to roam the board unequalled.

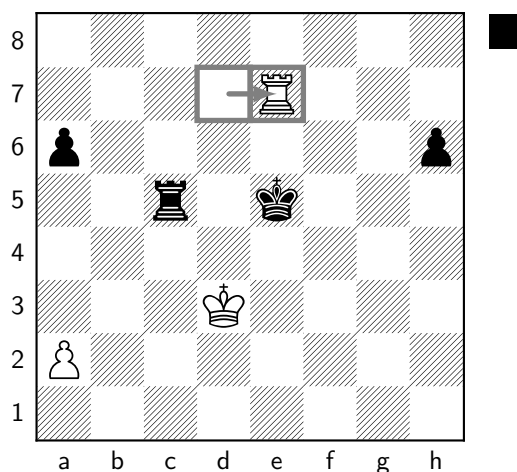
**41...♜xc4+ 42 ♔d3 ♜xb4 43 ♜xf3 ♜h4 44 ♜f1!** Again Timman shows his quality. The rook needs to be activated and this can only be achieved on the b-file.

**44...♜xh5 45 ♜b1 ♜xc5 46 ♜xb7 ♔d5 47 ♜d7+**



**47 ♜h7!**

**47...♔e5 48 ♜e7+?** White plays without a plan.



**48 ♜h7**

**48...♔f5 49 ♜f7+ ♔g6 50 ♜f4** The white rook is less active here, and the black rook is still not tied down to passive defence of the pawns.



**50... ♖g5 51 ♜a4 a5 52 ♖e2 ♜f5**

Everything has gone wrong for White. The black pawns have advanced one rank before being blocked, while the white rook on a4 is now hardly active at all. Black managed to take advantage of this change of events and bag the point.

**53 ♜a3 ♖g4 54 ♜c3 h5 55 ♜c8 h4 56 ♜g8+ ♜g5 57 ♜a8 ♖g3 58 ♖f1 ♖f3 59 ♜c8 ♖e3 60 a4 ♜g4 61 ♜c5 h3! 62 ♜e5+ ♖f3 63 ♜h5 ♖g3 64 ♖g1 ♜x a4 65 ♜g5+ ♖h4 66 ♜c5 ♜g4+ 67 ♖h2 a4 68 ♜c3 ♜g2+ 69 ♖h1 ♜g4 70 ♖h2 ♜g2+ 71 ♖h1 ♜g3 72 ♜c4+ ♜g4 73 ♜c3 ♜b4 74 ♜a3 ♜g4 75 ♜c3 ♖g5 76 ♖h2 ♜h4 .** — This is not a book on rook

endings, but the principle from this game that the rook should be activated first, and only then the king, is universal. Pieces should be activated in descending order. This means queen before rook, rook before king, and king before minor pieces. And hence, of course, queen or rook before minor pieces. — But now, after having failed to answer the question of what an endgame really is, though at least given one good piece of advice, I will turn to the seven techniques which have an universal character.

**0-1**

---

## 2: Seven Technical Tools

---

In this chapter we shall scrutinize seven important techniques in the endgame. They are not related to any specific material constellation. They are attitudes and understandings which relate to most endgames. They are more mindsets than rules, and their aim is only to assist players in making correct decisions in tournament play, not to save him from having to think at all.

- 1) Schematic thinking**
  - 2) Weaknesses**
  - 3) Domination**
  - 4) Do not hurry, and the prevention of the counterplay**
  - 5) Passed pawns**
  - 6) How to arrange your pawns in the endgame**
  - 7) Freaky aspects of the endgame**
-

## 1) Schematic thinking

---

Good endgame technique requires the ability to think schematically. This means being able to search for specific positions or placements of the pieces in a given position, and then try to reach them by means of calculation. Great endgame specialists such as Ulf Andersson have a tendency to think this way. When they see an endgame position they do not think in terms of my move, his move, my move, etc., but look for the perfect placement of their pieces. This might sound like a plan, but there is a difference, however slight. A plan is a progression in a position: I will do this and then I will do that. Schematic thinking is when you see, for example, that when my knight is there and his bishop is there, then I will win like this, or I will achieve that. Then you would work on a plan of how to carry it out. Schematic thinking comes before planning. A fortress is a perfect sign of schematic thinking: if the pieces are placed like this, then I cannot lose. — The following excellent endgame illustrates how White, in a few positions, thought schematically and then used a simple plan to push his agenda forward (see the following game).

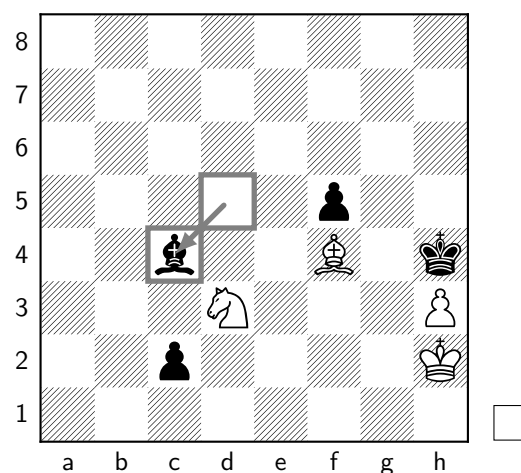
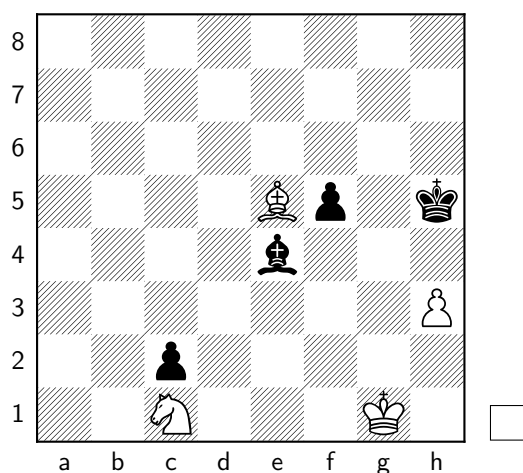
---

White: Danielsen, H.  
Black: Petrosian, A.

Schwerin

1999

Result: 1-0



**57 ♖f4** White needs to formulate a plan in order not to lose whatever winning chances he retains here. The correct plan runs as follows: get the pawn to h4 and the knight to f4; together these form a barrier against the black king. Then the white king will be free. Meanwhile the white bishop will eye the c-pawn, and Black will not be able to do anything constructive on the light squares. — White now starts his manoeuvring.

**57... ♖h4 58 ♖h2 ♖d5 59 ♖d3** Phase one is in action. White is on his way to promoting his pawn.

**59... ♖c4** Black has no illusions about blockading the h-pawn.

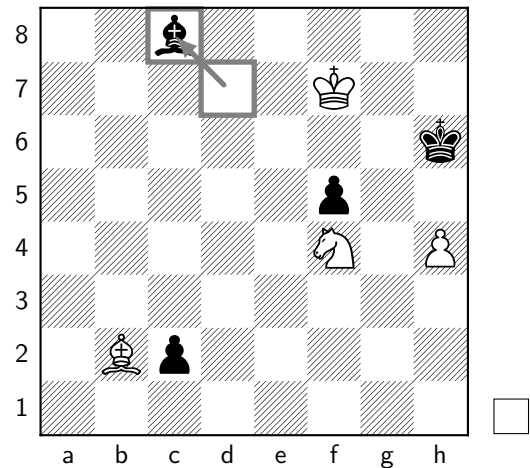
**59... ♖c6 60 ♖e5 ♖e4 61 ♖c1 ♖b7 62 ♖g6+ ♖h5 63 ♖f4+ ♖h4 64 ♖b2 ♖g5 65 ♖g3**

**60 ♖e1 ♖b3 61 ♖f3+ ♖h5 62 ♖g3 ♖d5 63 ♖d4 ♖e4 64 ♖c1 ♖d3 65 ♖e6 ♖c4 66 ♖f4+ ♖g5 67 h4+ ♖h6** The first part of the plan has been achieved. White has prevented all kinds of counterplay against the h-pawn and can now use his king actively rather than defensively. So what is White's winning plan? Let us have a fresh look at the position. The knight is excellently placed on f4, the bishop hangs back keeping an eye on the c-pawn, while the h-pawn is ready to march on, once the signal is given (this could be the black king trying to get into the game again somehow). The black bishop cannot counter White's ambitions, as these can be pursued on the dark squares. — However, Black does not necessarily need active counterplay. If White advances the h-pawn it will be difficult to defend. For instance, if 68 h5? Black will instantly play 68...Kg5!

when there is no adequate defence against ...Bf7-xh5 with an immediate draw. White could just sit tight and move his king around hoping something turns up before the game is drawn under the 50-move rule. But what would this be? The concept of Do not hurry [see 4) Do not hurry, and the prevention of counterplay] cannot really be attributed to this position. Black will not feel any extra pressure if White does nothing or takes things slowly; all he can do is move the bishop aimlessly around anyway. — So what does White want to achieve? Basically he wants to break the blockade of the h-pawn, but how? If the knight moves away then the black king comes to h5. If the bishop gets as far as f8, then the white king would have to stay behind with the c-pawn, and it will be difficult to get the h-pawn through to the eighth rank. Still, this plan should not be abandoned immediately, since it is currently the best one we have found. — It is here that schematic thinking once again comes in handy: if the white king was on h8 then Bg7 would be mate. As Black can do nothing White wins by simply moving the king to h8.

**68 ♖b2 ♜a6 69 ♖f2 ♜b7 70 ♖e3 ♜c6 71 ♖d4 ♜b7 72 ♖e5 ♜c8** If Black does not protect his f-pawn (electing to keep the white king out of g8 by placing the bishop on the a2-g8 diagonal) White wins simply by taking the f-pawn, returning for the c-pawn and then promoting his h-pawn (having the right coloured bishop for the corner).

**73 ♖f6 ♜d7 74 ♖f7 ♜c8**



**74... ♖h7 75 ♜h5 ♖h6 76 ♜f6 f4 77 ♜c1 ♜e8+!? 78 ♜x e8 ♖h5 79 ♜x f4 ♖x h4 80 ♜f6**

**75 ♖g8 ♜e6+ 76 ♖h8** The final position deserves a diagram. Black has no defence against Bg7# next move.

**1-0**

White: Andersson, U.  
 Black: Ivanov, S.  
 Opening ECO: E02  
 Result: 1-0

Swedish Team Championship

2000

**1 ♖f3 d5 2 d4 ♗f6 3 c4 e6 4 g3 dxc4 5**

**♔a4+** A favourite of Andersson. Not very dangerous for Black, but equally not at all risky for White.

**5... ♖bd7 6 ♕g2 a6 7 ♖c3 ♜b8 8 ♔xc4 b5 9**

**♔d3 ♕b7 10 O-O c5 11 dxc5 ♕xc5 12 ♕f4**

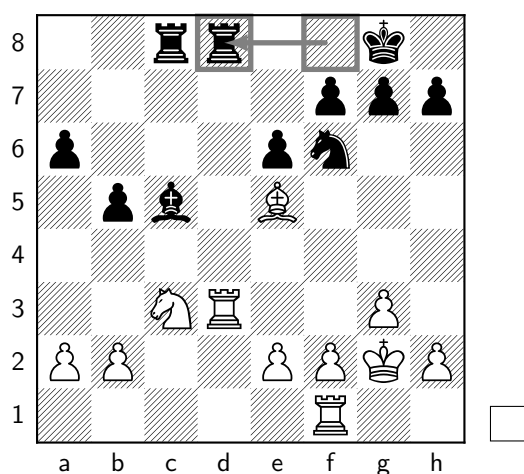
**♜c8 13 ♜ad1 O-O 14 ♖e5** The natural progression in the position is towards simplification. White has no more promising plan here since he has no way to attack the black pawn structure on the queenside, and there are no other weaknesses in Black's position, apart from the potential holes on the sixth rank.

**14... ♕xg2 15 ♖xg2 ♖xe5 16 ♕xe5 ♔xd3**

**17 ♜xd3 ♜fd8?!** After this move all possible dynamics leave Black's position and the endgame will be a long and hard journey in the desert of defence.

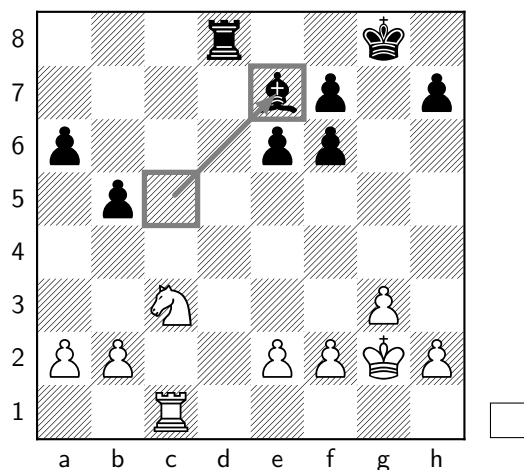
when he is in an aggressive mood. — By giving up bishop for knight White inflicts a minor weakness in Black's kingside pawn structure and creates a very tiny imbalance in the position which makes it more difficult to play, especially for Black. And as we shall see, Andersson is able to exploit his opponent's inaccuracies fully. The dynamic aspects of the position which characterise the open positions in the middlegame are no longer present, and only the minor weaknesses of the ruined pawn structure on the kingside and the weakness of the c6-square count. If you really want to look for aspects in the position beyond pawn structure, then it should be mentioned that the c-file is more important than the d-file. These kinds of small ad-vantages have a tendency to increase in the hands of the great masters like Andersson and Karpov.

**19... gxf6 20 ♜c1 ♕e7** Again this is hardly a big mistake, but it is the beginning of a bad plan. With this move we can already see the next move coming up which will cause serious long-term damage to the black position.



**17... ♕e7!**

**18 ♜xd8+ ♜xd8 19 ♕xf6!** This is the sort of winning attempt you see from Andersson

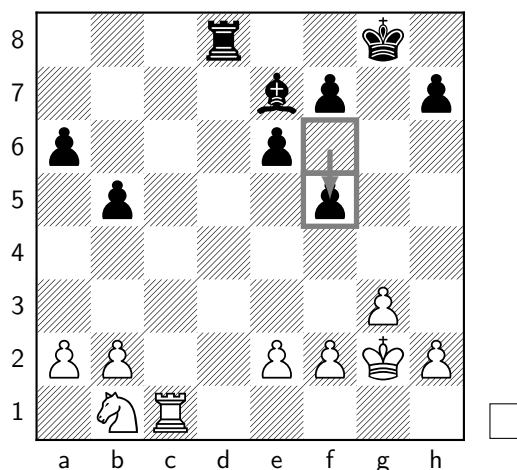


20... ♖d4!? 21 ♖d1 ♔f8 22 e3 ♗b6 23 ♖×d8+ ♗×d8

**21 ♖b1!** This move is truly an example of Andersson's strength in schematic thinking. His idea is to get the king to e2 in order to cover the possible penetration squares on the d-file. The white knight belongs on d3 from where it is threatening both to jump to the kingside with Nf4-h5 (threatening f6) and to the queenside with Nc5 or Nb4, attacking Black's weakest points on that side of the board. Now the advantage of the c-file will become important. Black should therefore think about this and take steps to eliminate this advantage.

**21...f5** This is far from being a decisive mistake, but it is the source of a lot of headaches to come. Black is playing a move that seems logical in many ways, but fails on deeper investigation of the position. It seems right to put the pawn on the opposite colour to the bishop and it seems right to activate the bishop. Except that this is not really what happens. After b2-b3 the bishop is shooting into thin air from f6 and the rook has no way of coming to its assistance. Black is treating the position as if it were the middlegame where activity was still important. But though time always matters in chess, this position

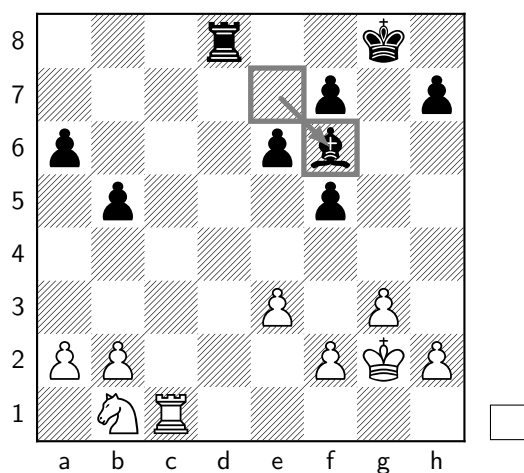
is not a matter of dynamics. What is worst about ...f5 is that it radically weakens Black's kingside defensive formation. White now has a way to open the h-file or, by threatening to do so, provoke Black to create a further weakness. — We are coming close to a situation in which Black has two weaknesses (for the principle of two weaknesses see section 2 below), one on the kingside and one on the queenside. As White has no weaknesses of his own this spells trouble for Black. The right defence would have been to understand that White is planning to use his king to rule out any penetration on the d-file, in order then to get his rook to c6 and put pressure on the black position. Therefore Black should not play for activity, but calmly retaliate by protecting the c-file with his own king.



21... ♖f8 22 e3 ♖e8 23 ♖f3 ♖d7 24 ♜d1+  
 ♜c6 25 ♜x8 ♞x8 26 ♖g4 ♞e7 27 ♖h5  
 ♞f8

**22 e3** White starts implementing his plan, which is to create the set-up with the king and knight (as described in the note to White's previous move), and then play h3 and g4 in order to give Black problems on the kingside. Again Black does not really seem to understand the danger this plan poses to him and so does nothing to meet it.

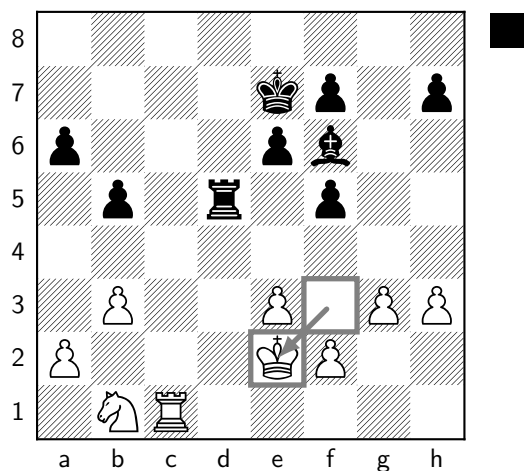
**22... ♖f6?!** In principle this is not a good square for the bishop. Black does not realise how White will place his pieces and therefore has no idea about how best to place his own accordingly. The great difficulty in defending such positions is that it is hard to guess what you need to defend against. — The player with the advantage can to some extent form his plan as he goes along, but the defender may need to anticipate the opponent's plan far in advance, often before the opponent has even conceived it himself.



**22... ♖f8**

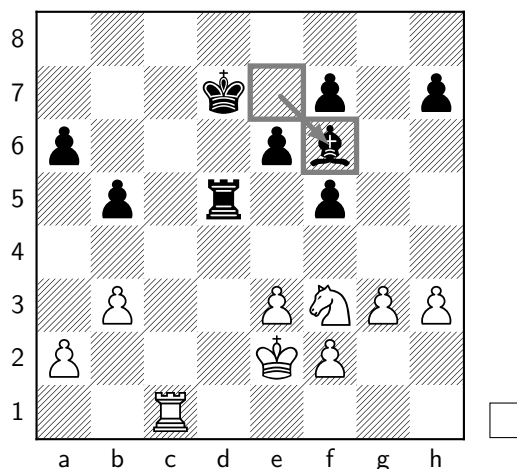
**23 b3** White continues with his plan.

**23... ♖f8 24 ♖f3 ♖e7 25 h3 ♖d5 26 ♖e2**



**26 g4?! f×g4+ 27 h×g4 h5 28 g×h5 ♖×h5 29 ♖c6 ♖h2 30 ♖×a6 ♖h4**

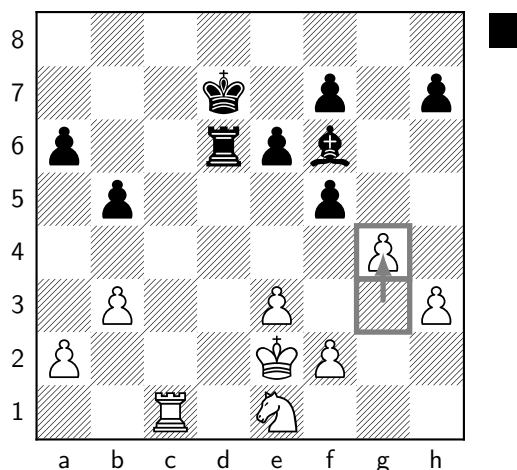
**26... ♖d7 27 ♖d2 ♖e7 28 ♖f3 ♖f6**



**28... h5!? 29 ♖e1 ♖d6 30 ♖d3**

**29 ♖e1 ♖d6!** Ivanov correctly evaluates that only White benefits from having the rooks on the board.

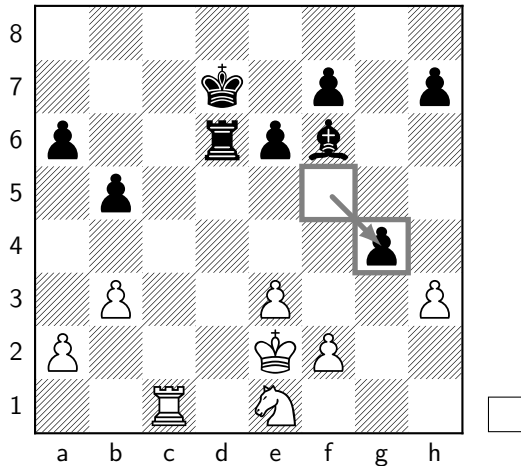
**30 g4!** If White has a way to force a real advantage it will have to be this way, entering the knight vs. bishop ending, where Black will have to play accurately in order to survive.



**30 ♖d3 ♖c6 31 ♖d1 ♖c2+! 32 ♖f3 ♖e7 33 ♖b4 ♖b2**

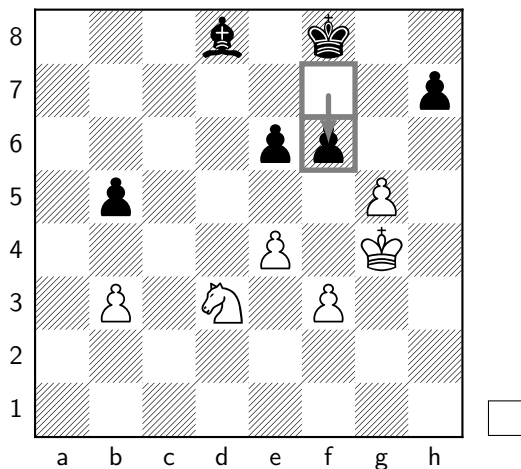


**30...fxg4!** Black correctly gets rid of his doubled pawn and now has only to live with the h-pawn as a weakness. This is acceptable only because of the exchange of rooks to come.



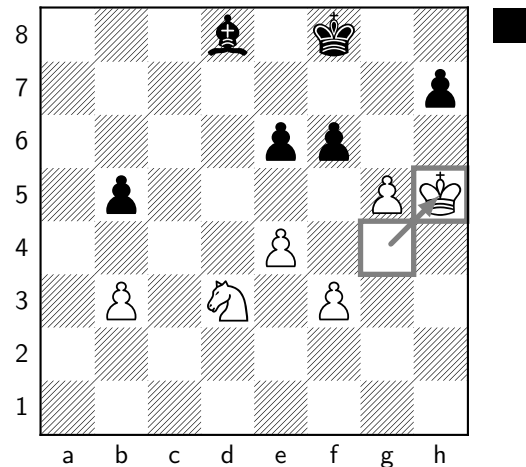
**30...♖d5 31 ♘d3 ♕e7 32 ♖g1**

**31 h×g4 ♜c6! 32 ♜×c6 ♖×c6 33 ♘d3 a5 34 e4 a4 35 ♖e3 a×b3 36 a×b3 ♖d6 37 ♖f4 ♕d8 38 g5 ♖e7 39 ♖g4 ♖f8 40 f3 f6!?** After this Black is left with a lot of isolated pawns, all of them difficult to defend. White takes advantage by penetrating with his king, something that can no longer be stopped.



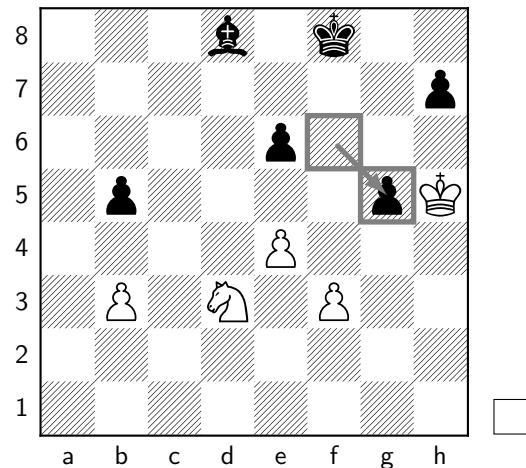
**40...♖g7 41 ♖h5 ♕e7 42 f4 ♕d6 43 f5 exf5 44 exf5 f6 45 g6**

**41 ♖h5!** With exceptional clarity Andersson shows what is important here and what is not.



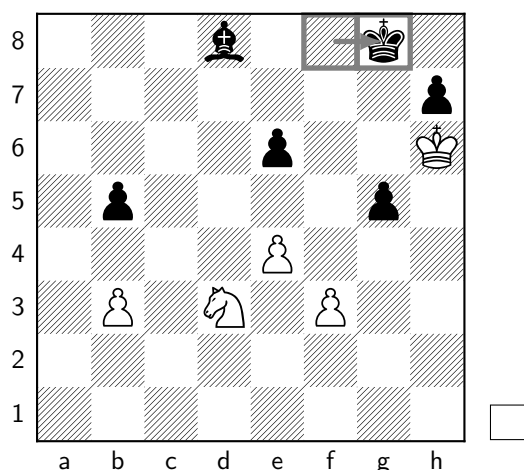
**41 g×f6 ♕×f6 42 ♖h5 ♕d4! 43 ♖h6 ♖g8**

**41...f×g5**



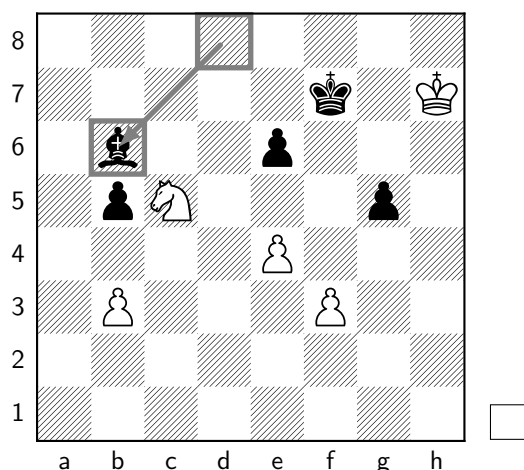
**41...♖g7 42 ♘c5 ♖f7 43 ♖h6 ♕e7 44 ♖×h7!**

**42 ♖h6 ♖g8**



42... ♔f7 43 ♕xh7 ♖f6 44 ♖g8 g4 45 f×g4  
 ♕g5 46 ♖f7 ♗×g4 47 ♗×e6 ♖f3 48 ♖d5  
 ♖e3 49 ♘c5 ♙e7 50 b4 ♖d2 51 ♖c6

43 ♘c5 ♖f7 44 ♕xh7 ♙b6

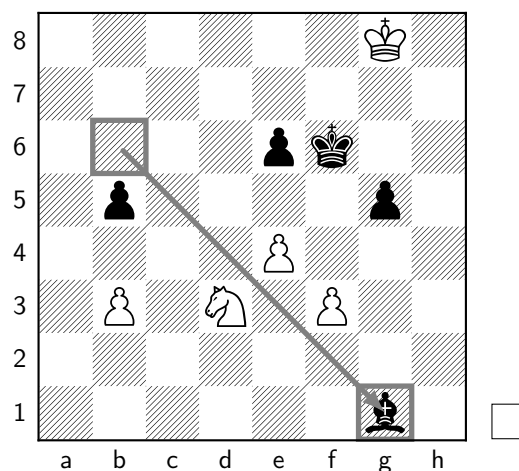


44... ♖f6 45 ♘d7+! ♖e7 46 ♘e5 ♖f6 47  
 ♘g4+ ♖e7 48 ♖g6

45 ♘d3 ♖f6 46 ♖g8! The white king has  
 discovered a new weakness in the black  
 camp: the pawn on b5.

46... ♙g1? This move seems a little useless.  
 What is Black trying to achieve? Again  
 schematic thinking would have assisted  
 Black. It is not hard to see that White will  
 try to go to the queenside, and that Black  
 therefore will have to play ...e5. This

knowledge alone should be enough for  
 Black to find the right move.

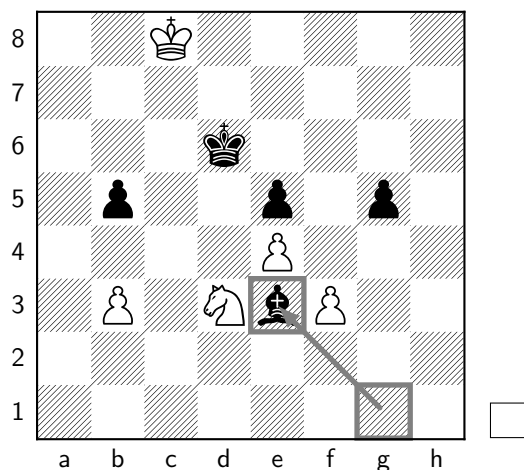


46... ♙d4! 47 ♖f8 e5 48 ♖e8 ♖e6 49 ♘b4!  
 ♙c3 50 ♘d5 ♙b2! 51 ♖f8 ♖d6 52 ♖f7 ♖c5  
 53 ♖f6 ♖d4 54 ♖×g5 ♖d3 55 ♖f5 ♖c2 56  
 b4 ♖b3 57 ♖e6 ♙d4 58 ♖d6 ♖c4 59 ♖c6  
 ♙b2 60 ♘c7 ♖×b4 61 ♘×b5 ♖c4 62 ♘d6+  
 ♖d3 63 ♖d5 ♖e2 64 ♘c4 ♙c3 65 ♘×e5  
 ♖e3 66 ♖e6 ♖f4

47 ♖f8 e5 A sad necessity, but this can only  
 postpone the inevitable.

48 ♖e8 ♖e6 49 ♖d8 ♖d6 50 ♖c8 The  
 weakness of the e-pawn is now a very  
 decisive factor. Black should probably try  
 to give it up in order to defend, but it would  
 not succeed.

50... ♙e3



50... ♖c6 51 ♜x e5+ ♖c5 52 ♜f7! ♖b4 53 e5 ♖x b3 54 e6 ♜c5 55 ♖d7 ♜f8 56 ♜x g5 ♖c4 57 ♜h7 ♜c5 58 ♜f6 b4 59 ♜e4 b3 60 ♜d2+!

**51 ♖b7 ♜d4 52 b4** Black has no defence now. His king is passive and the b-pawn is lost.

**52... ♖d7 53 ♜c5+ ♖d6 54 ♖b6 ♜c3 55 ♖×b5 ♜d2 56 ♜b7+ ♖c7 57 ♜a5** Planning  
58.Nc4 Bc3 59. Kd5 followed by Nxe5.

**57... ♖e3 58 ♔a6!** Black cannot prevent the white b-pawn from running all the way to the eighth rank. — An important lesson from this game is that it is not essential to have a winning position, it is sufficient to have winning chances! At least this was what our great Danish hero Bent Larsen once wrote. And of course he was right. What happens is that once a player is under pressure he will be obliged to play accurately on every move in order not to hasten towards defeat, while the opponent has the opportunity of stalling, of trying one thing, and then return to another plan. The life of a passive defence is a tough one indeed. — It is one of the most important points in technical chess that an advantage does not have to be decisive in order to win. Obviously it is better to have a winning advantage than a clear advantage, but as it is harder to defend in the endgame

than to play for a win, a clear or even a tiny advantage often has a tendency to increase over time and prove sufficient to win the game. — It is important to understand this as a defender as well. I know many people would have thought that there was nothing much wrong with 17...Rfd8, 21...f5 and 40...f6 in this game, and that 46...Bg1? was entirely to blame for Black's defeat. But this would be missing one of the simplest truths about chess - that chess is a game. The defender has to find the best defence all the time, and if you go through the annotations, you will see that his problems are multiplying as the game proceeds. At move 17 the improvement is one half move long, while at move 46 the proof that Black was still not lost has increased to half a page, and most of the lines are drawn by the smallest possible margin of a single tempo. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that I have not missed something in my analysis, and that White actually has a winning plan against 46...Bd4. But this would not change the evaluation of 46...Bg1?, since after this move White wins barely without comment, at least compared to what a possible refutation of 46...Bd4 might contain. So again the important thing is to see chess as a game, which has to be played! We are humans and we make mistakes. In simple positions we are less likely to make them than we are when every move but one is a mistake. This is what we call being under pressure or being clearly worse. — What Andersson achieved with his play in this game was to bring the knight to d3 after he had created weaknesses in the black camp. From d3, well assisted by the pawns, the knight limited the black king wonderfully and allowed for the white king to run around and cause mayhem.

1-0

## 2) Weaknesses

---

It is my experience that the nature and definition of weaknesses are among the most difficult for the chess student to learn. I remember an occasion when I was attending a training session with Mark Dvoretsky, years after becoming an IM, where I clearly was the only one in the room who did not understand why White was winning in a certain position. Everybody else saw White's structural advantage as similar to a material advantage. It is my hope that I will be able to explain here exactly what constitutes a weakness, the principle of two weaknesses (or the principle of two advantages, which is easier to understand) and a hook. These will be recurrent themes throughout the book, as endgames are all about weaknesses. So please fasten your seatbelt, buy a big bucket of popcorn and prepare for the long explanation.

---

## Basic definition of a weakness

---

I have already written about weaknesses in this series, in the middlegame book 'Excelling at Positional Chess'. Though I am perfectly happy with what is written there, I also know that it is far from the whole story. The whole story would probably account for a million pages and a similar amount of practical examples. Here we shall try to get under the skin of some basic aspects of weaknesses, what they are and what forms they can take. We shall look at pawn islands, doubled pawns, weak squares, backward pawns, hooks, potential weaknesses and the principle of two advantages, also known as the principle of two weaknesses. We shall also discuss the creation of weaknesses and the elimination of weaknesses, as two important parts of endgame play. — But first, an attempt at an abstract definition: A weakness is a defect in one's position. It can take the form of a pawn, a square, a file or a diagonal. A weakness is of a permanent nature. A pawn hanging for a brief moment is not a weakness, but a hanging pawn. In order for the weakness to be of lasting importance it has to stay where it is for some time.

Also, for something to be a weakness the opponent needs to be able to exploit it. A weak pawn on a dark square is not so important when the opponent has just a light-squared bishop, and the king has no chance of getting access to the pawn. Marovic deals with these basic questions in his book 'Secrets of Positional Chess', which I can recommend, though authors who repeat the same old examples known from the books of Euwe, Kotov, Dvoretsky, etc., do irritate me a bit. But, that criticism aside, I think the average club player will find the Croatian trainer and grandmaster easy to understand and the examples instructive. I appreciate that many readers today are not familiar with the old books, and therefore do not have a problem with repetition of famous examples. — Anyway, in his book Marovic writes the following about weak squares:

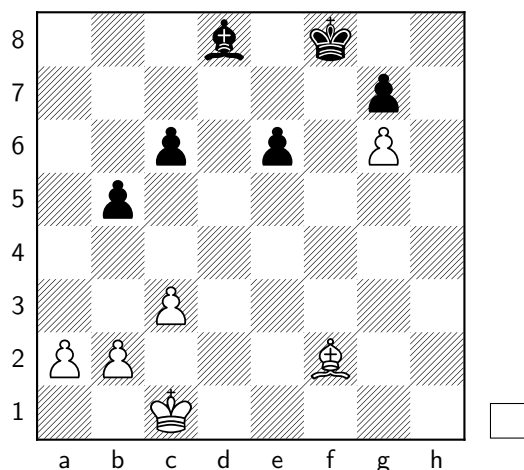
*'Every weak square is a static feature. Its weakness is not functional in itself, but it depends on both sides' actions on the board. As long as an active plan is being carried out, all the static weaknesses - weak squares included - are irrelevant, unless they themselves are targets. In our time the chess master has acquired a new awareness of the complex, dialectic relationship between dynamic forces and static elements. Today we should say pragmatically that only those squares which can be exploited are weak.'*

— I quite like this explanation of the importance of weaknesses. They are of lasting importance, and the weaknesses we might have in our position in the endgame, are often ones we have taken upon ourselves in the middlegame, usually in order to be active. But the main point is that a weakness is only a weakness if it can be exploited.

---

## Basic pawn weaknesses

---



### White to move.

When a chess writer talks about a weakness he is most often referring to a pawn weakness. A weak pawn is often one that is under direct or indirect attack, and cannot advance. Either because it is physically blocked, or because advancing would mean certain capture, or because it is weak on a file and therefore cannot run away from the problem. Endgames are often decided by the exploitation of pawn weaknesses. The following endgame is a basic example of how great a liability a pawn weakness can be. Motylev-Willemze, Hoogeveen 2003.

In this endgame White is already winning because of his two advantages. The first one is difficult to hide from anyway: after a2-a4 on one of the next few moves White will have a distant passed pawn to occupy one of the black pieces. Meanwhile White will be able to attack the g7-pawn. Black is not able to put up a credible defence of this obvious pawn weakness. For this is indeed a pawn weakness in its purest form. Black cannot remove the weakness without capturing the g6-pawn, and this is not

going to happen easily. (Actually, it is not going to happen at all unless Black allows the white a-pawn to queen, and that is a high price to pay to rid oneself of a weakness!) — An important reason why the g7-pawn is very (fatally) weak is that it is on the same colour as the bishops. This means that White can attack the pawn with his bishop, whereas Black cannot do the same to the white g-pawn. It is also important for the evaluation of the position that the white g-pawn is close to the back rank. This means that once the black g-pawn falls the white pawn will quickly rush to promote; and for the same reason Black cannot allow the exchange bishops on f6 (with Bxf6 gxf6) as the g6-pawn would sail over the finish line. — It should be mentioned that the black e-pawn does not have the same qualities. Usually when we talk about two advantages, it is two against zero. Here Black does have a passed pawn, but if it is doing anything it is just sitting in the path of the white king on its way to the kingside. So it is not a strong trump at all (see the following game).

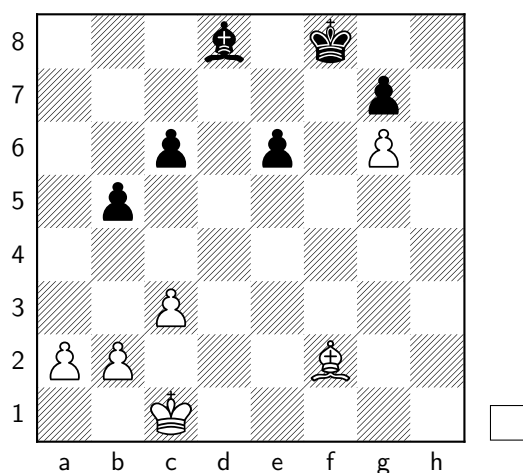
---

White: Motylev, A.  
Black: Willemze, T.

Hoogeveen

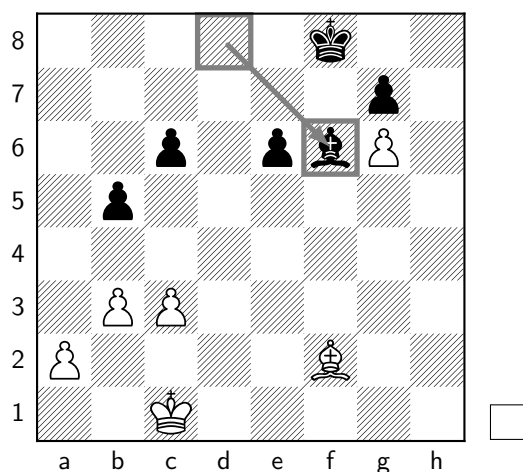
2003

Result: 1-0



**33 b3!** White has no reason to hesitate with the creation of a passed pawn on the queenside. This at once must attract Black's attention.

**33... ♖f6**



**33... ♗g5+ 34 ♖c2 ♖e7 35 ♗d4 ♗h6 36 ♗e5! ♖d7 37 a4 ♖c8 38 ♖d3 ♖b7 39 ♖e4 bxa4 40 bxa4 ♖a6 41 ♗f4! ♗xf4 42 ♖xf4**

**♖a5 43 ♖e5 ♖xa4 44 ♖xe6 ♖b3 45 ♖d6 ♖xc3 46 ♖xc6**

**34 ♖c2** White's plan is simple: the a-pawn is advanced only to the point that it is passed and threatening to advance (why run into the arms of the black king?); then the king is brought into the centre and the bishop is activated. Black has no chance against this basic strategy.

**34... ♖e7 35 a4 bxa4 36 bxa4 ♖d6 37 ♖d3 ♖c7 38 ♗d4!** Almost any move wins here, but the best thing White can do is to make it as simple for himself to collect the full point. After calculating a few moves ahead, White confidently provokes a series of exchanges, after which Black retain his two weaknesses and has no defence.

**38... e5** This is of course forced. Now White continues with accurate moves.

**39 ♗c5!** Again domination. White plans Kd3-e4 followed by Bc5-d6. This will be possible because the black king cannot defend against the a-pawn and keep control over d6 at the same time.

**39... e4+** A decent try.



**40 ♔×e4 ♚×c3 41 ♚d4** Once again, Black cannot go into the pawn ending because White has the distant passed pawn and because the g7-pawn is weak. Had the g-pawns been at g2 and g3, White would require a lot of pawn moves in order to promote the pawn, and maybe, just maybe, Black would be able to create some counterplay with his c-pawn. Now he is not even close.

**42 ♖xg7 ♔d7 43 ♔d3 ♙g5 44 ♙d4** White has won a pawn and is in no hurry. As Piket once said when he was asked if he was not irritated that his opponent played on for a long time in a lost position. 'No, why? I was enjoying myself! 'It is important to trust our own ability. Those waiting for the opponent to resign are either nervous in case they make some blunder (perhaps because of previous experiences), or simply fail to realise that miracles only occur when you are down on your knees begging for them!

**49... ♔a8 50 ♕e4 .** — This game is a clear example of what a fixed pawn weakness can look like. It also clearly illustrates the strength of a distant passed pawn in a minor piece ending. But of course things are seldom that clear and games between strong players are often a complicated and dynamic fight for such advantages. A strong grandmaster knows that a position like this is won for White, and would not go as peacefully into the endgame as Black did here (before we came in). Still, endgame technique is not something that can be acquired over a weekend, but needs to be perfected over years of study. One player who has done so is the Russian grandmaster Alexei Dreev.

1-0



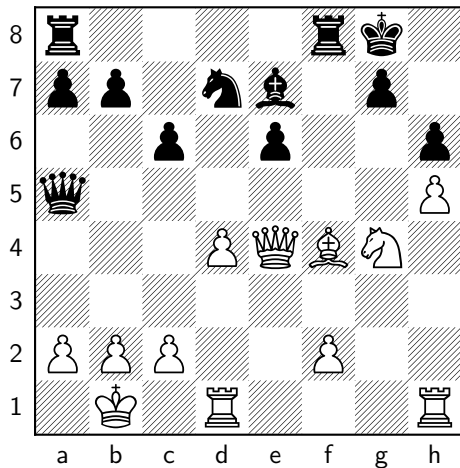
White: Nielsen, PH.

North Sea Cup

Black: Dreev, A.

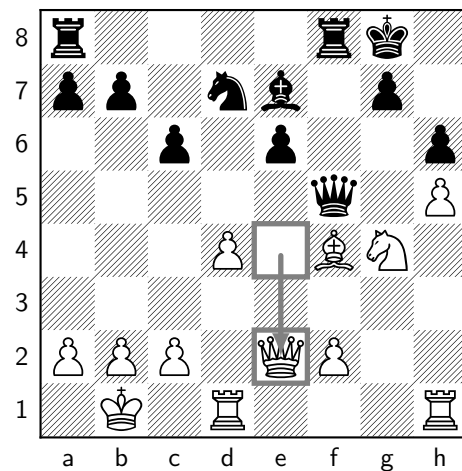
2003

Result: 0-1



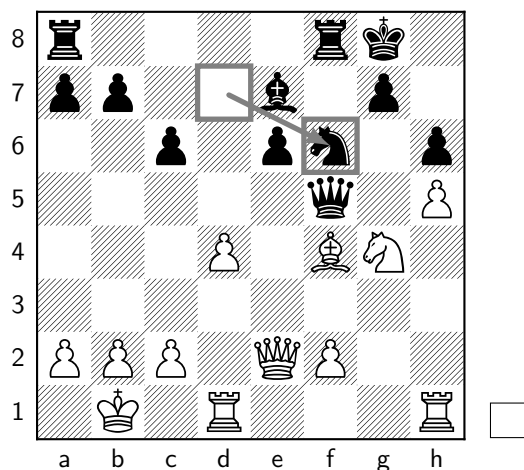
**18... ♖f5 19 ♖e2?** This looks like a positional mistake to me. The problem comes when we consider the possible pawn structure arising after Black's next move. — The pawn on h5 could be said to be fixing the g7-pawn as a weakness, but actually this is far from the case. Black can easily protect the g7-pawn with the bishop and king without in any way having to place his pieces awkwardly. The same cannot be said for White, whose h5-pawn will eventually have to be passively defended by a rook, if Black persists in putting pressure on it along the fifth rank. The f2-pawn is also a potential weakness. It is not easy for Black to attack it, and in the game he never did, but still it is not impossible to imagine a situation where Black plays ...Bg5 or something, with the idea of exchanging bishops and thereby eliminating the defence of the f-pawn. Eventually b2 will become a little vulnerable too. This comes from the power of the black bishop on f6 - an apparatus in the terminology of our national hero Bent

Larsen - unchallenged on the long diagonal, because the white bishop will be tied to the defence of the f-pawn. — So White cannot allow the position to simplify into an endgame.



**19 ♖e2 ♖f5 20 ♖e2 ♖f5 21 ♖e2 ♖f5 22 ♖e2 ♖f5 23 ♖e2 ♖f5 24 ♖e2 ♖f5**

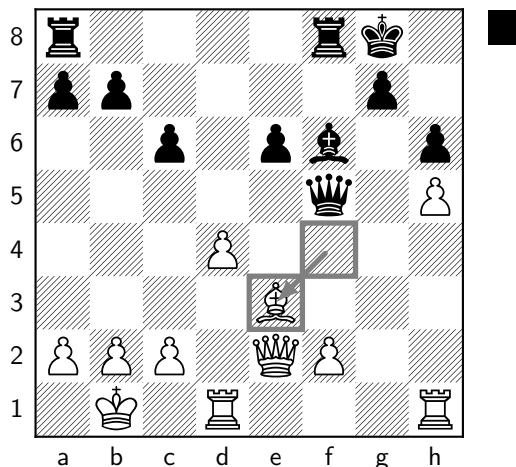
**19... ♖f6!** Black has no problems with exchanges, as soon all White's threats are gone.



19... ♖×f4 20 ♗×e6+ ♜f7 21 ♗×d7

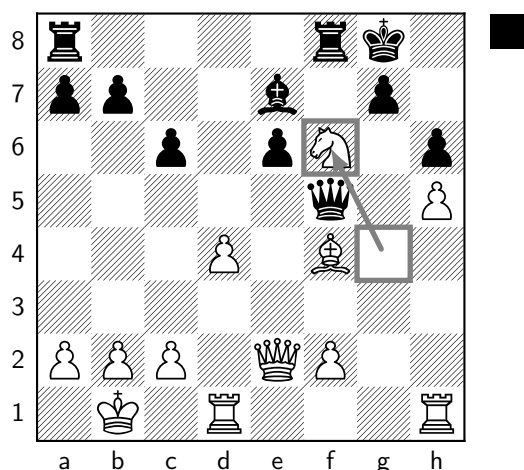
20 ♘×f6+ Forced.

weakness, the pawn on e6, by exchanging it for the white d-pawn. To achieve this, he first takes control of the d5-square, so that ...e6-e5 cannot be met with d4-d5.



21 ♙d6 ♜f8 22 ♙e5 ♙×e5 23 d×e5 ♜×d1+  
24 ♙×d1 ♜f8

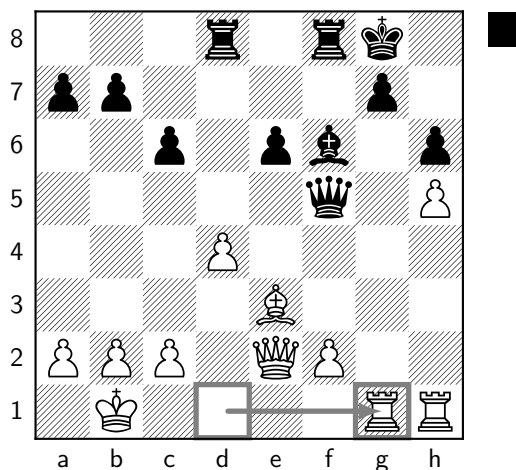
21... ♜ad8 22 ♜dg1



20 ♘×h6+? g×h6 21 ♙×h6 ♜f7 22 ♜dg1+  
♙h7 23 ♙e3 ♜g8

20... ♙×f6 This is the so-called apparatus - a bishop which protects a weakness and yet is extremely active at the same time.

21 ♙e3 Here the bishop is rather passive, but White was running out of sensible options. — Black has achieved the first part of his plan, the neutralisation of White's counterplay on the kingside. Now he starts the real technical work: the slow improvement of his position. The initial idea is to eliminate his only potential



22 ♙a1 ♙h7 23 c4 b5!

22... ♙h7 23 ♜g4 Peter Heine Nielsen writes about this position: 'Somewhere around here I believed White was fine and I offered a draw. But this is a misunderstanding, Black is clearly better. The white activity on the g-file is purely

optical. More important is the black bishop on f6. It protects g7 solidly and will soon become active in a very aggressive manner.’ — It is interesting that so strong a player as the Danish no.1 and occasional training partner with Anand can misevaluate the position so badly. Nielsen is a very strong middlegame player and, in my opinion, is no worse than average in the endgame, but here he overrated the activity of his pieces and underestimated the weaknesses of his fragmented pawns. This is a common mistake. He assessed the position according to middlegame criteria, but it is already so close to the endgame, that endgame criteria have become much more important.

**23...e5** Now there are no problems associated with it, Black carries out his prepared advance.

**24 dxe5 ♖xe5 25 c3 ♗f5+ 26 ♖c2?!** It is not really clear that this move is dubious from an objective point of view, but it does strike me as a questionable decision from a practical point of view. Without the queens the relevance of an open king position is reduced, while the importance of weaknesses increases. With the queens on the board White could at least have kept his options open, if nothing else. Now he is in for a cruel endgame.

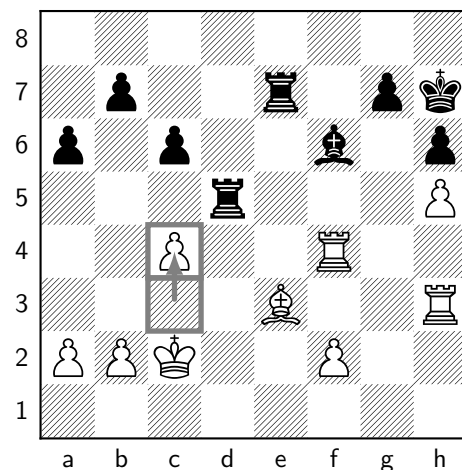
**26...♗xc2+** Naturally Black does not hesitate.

**27 ♔xc2 a6** Black puts his pawns on the squares advocated by Philidor: those of opposite colour to his bishop. That this advice should not be taken as dogma can be seen on the kingside, where White has a weak pawn on a light square, and Black has wonderful pawns on the dark squares. — The reason for this is the black bishop: on f8 it would have a terrible relationship with the pawns, but on f6 it is in synergy and grows off the pawn chain like a big fruit from a tree.

**28 ♖b4 ♜f7** Black refrains from pushing the b-pawn forward just yet. As it can go to b5 at any time, but never go back, the pawn is better left on b7, simply to give Black more options. This is an important point about technical endgames. The dynamic part of chess is virtually non-existent here, and so a tempo does not matter in the preparation phase, where the player with the advantage tries to improve his position to the maximum and find the best possible moment to exploit his collected advantages.

**29 ♜h3** White is without counterplay as Black has no weaknesses and White has no way to provoke any.

**29...♜e7 30 ♜f4 ♜d5 31 c4** Nielsen writes that this is a slight mistake, accelerating what might already be inevitable. But I am not sure that this is really the case. True, the advance of the pawn weakens the queenside, especially on the dark squares (b2), but White would soon be provoked to play this advance anyway.

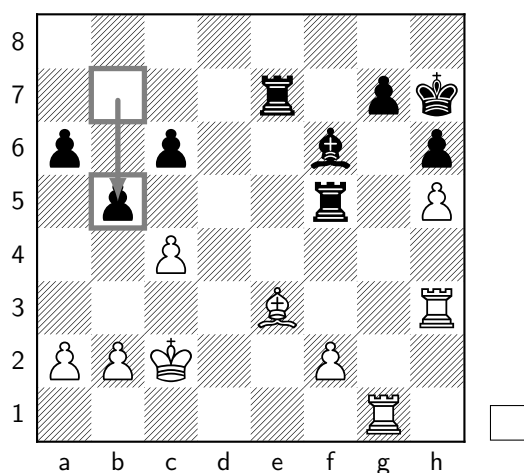
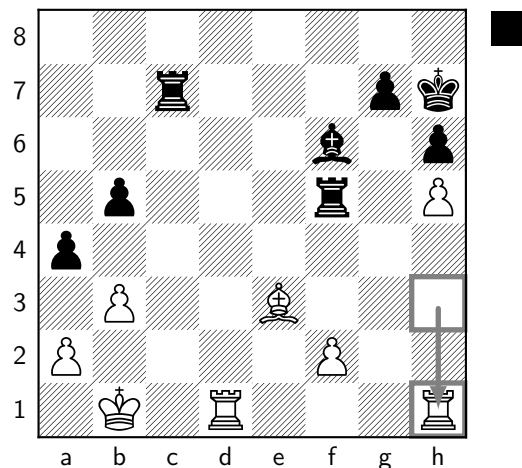


**31 a3 ♜ee5 32 c4 ♜d7!**

**31...♜de5 32 ♜g4 ♜f5** Threatening to attack h5 with ...Ree5.

**33 ♜g1** Preparing to defend with the ugly Rg1-h1.

**33...b5!** This is a typical feature of the rule of two advantages. White is forced into defending the h-pawn, and in that way loses a lot of the flexibility in his position. Meanwhile Black plays on the other side of the board as well, where he tries to create a second weakness (a third if we include the f2-pawn, though it is not clear if we should do so or not). Once White has two clear weaknesses he will be unable to defend them both. (See below for a clearer explanation of the rule of two advantages.)



### 33...♖e5 34 ♖gh1

**34 c×b5 c×b5 35 ♖d1 a5 36 b3?!** This move was really not necessary. It was much better to wait and see what Black would come with. Black wanted to advance on the queenside so he could create a weakness, and White weakened himself without much provocation. Now the path to victory is easy for Black to follow.

**36...♖c7+ 37 ♔b1 a4** The b-pawn becomes weak, and the scope of the black bishop is increased.

### 38 ♖hh1?!

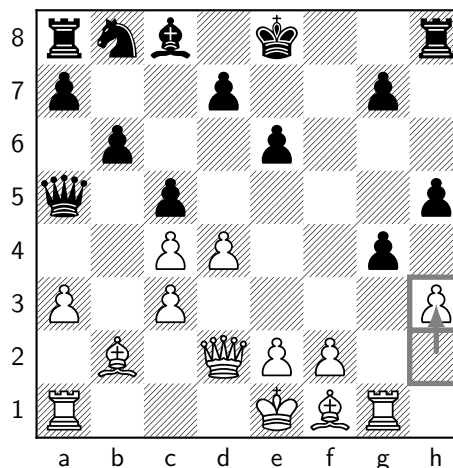
### 38 ♖d3

**38...a×b3 39 a×b3 ♖c3 40 ♔a2 b4** White resigned in view of ...Ra5+. White had now made the time control, and with good time on his clock could convince himself that the battle was over. With weaker players there might still be reason to play on, but between these 2600+ players it is as if Black was a rook up. — So this is what pawn weaknesses (h5 and to some extent f2) and weaknesses of squares (b2 and later all round the king) look like in a complex competitive setting. Aspiring players are often advised to go through the games of the great masters of around 100 years ago - Rubinstein, Alekhine, Capablanca, Réti, Nimzowitsch and so on - and I would like to pass on this recommendation. These players seldom came up against equal opposition, and therefore had the chance to prove their skills without their opponents preventing the most obvious plans in the positions. This way the most natural plans can be seen without the complications of a strong defence.

0-1

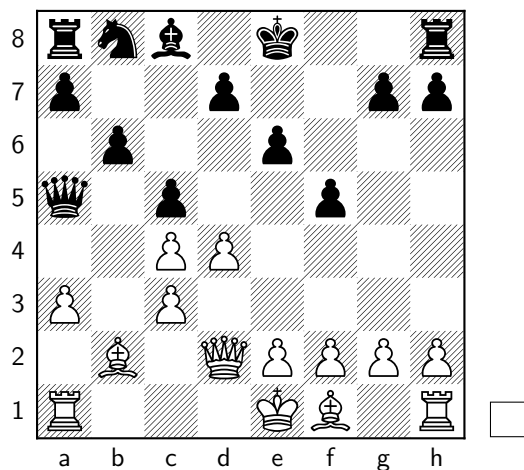
# Hooks

One of the most complicated things to understand about weaknesses has, for my part, been the function of hooks. The classic example, mentioned in all the Russian books, can be repeated here due to its clarity. — In this position, which might be from a game or might not, taken from the classical book by Lipnitsky that in English would be called 'Problems of Modern Chess Theory', White would have a lot of positional problems, were it not for the black pawn on f5. The bishop on b2 is stupid and the c4-pawn so weak that it will soon vanish from the face of the board after ...Ba6, ...Qa4 and, if necessary, ...Nc6-a5 and ...Rc8 followed by ...cxd4 as well, just to make sure, Schwarzenegger style, that the pawn is really dead. So White would be in trouble if it was not for the move



**1... ♖a6 2 ♗g2 ♘c6 3 gxf5**

The f-pawn in this position is what we call a hook. Though not in itself weak, the pawn provokes a counter-thrust, after which the position behind the pawn can fall like a house of cards when it has to make its sad choice.



**1 g4!**, exploiting that the black f-pawn has made it all the way to f5 so soon.

White will have strong counterplay after either **1... f×g4 2 ♖g1 h5 3 h3**

White: Leko, P.  
Black: Adams, M.  
Opening ECO: C42  
Result: 1-0

Dortmund

2002

**1 e4 e5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♜×e5 d6 4 ♘f3 ♜×e4 5 d4 d5 6 ♙d3 ♜c6 7 O-O ♙e7 8 c4 ♘f6** The line with 8...Bb4 is usually considered a better attempt at equalising. In the game Black gets a slightly passive position, which is defensible but requires that he does not make the first mistake (as he does in the game), when White will be able to give Black some serious problems to solve.

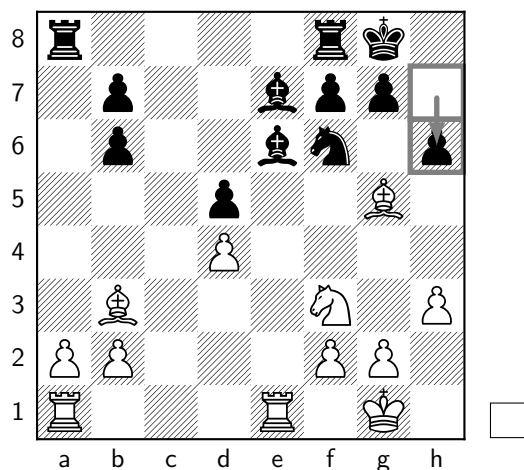
**9 h3 O-O 10 ♘c3 ♘b4 11 ♙e2 d×c4 12 ♙×c4 c6 13 ♙g5 ♘bd5** This set-up with the knights is rather defensive in nature. Black is hoping to make it to the endgame where the d-pawn is likely to become a liability for White. In the middlegame it is an asset, as it gives White the advanced outpost on e5 to the knight. Not that any of the players were struggling with such basic considerations, which are second nature for any titled player. Rather the players were scheming in order to twist the situation in their favour. Besides, this is still all opening theory and White seems to get a slightly better position without too much effort.

**14 ♙e1 ♙e6 15 ♚b3 ♚b6 16 ♜×d5 c×d5 17 ♚×b6 a×b6** We have now reached the late middlegame/early endgame straight from the opening, and Leko is still playing book moves.

**18 ♙b3!** White is slightly better. Black has a potentially weak pawn structure on the queenside and his set-up in the centre is a bit passive in comparison to White's. The pressure down the a-file is not really annoying at the moment, as the bishop guards a2 excellently. Notice that, although White can always play a2-a3, he would

prefer to avoid it. There is no guarantee that this pawn set-up will be the best in all lines and, for that reason, he would rather avoid advancing the a-pawn for now. The bishop is also well placed on b3 because it attacks the d5-pawn. White would like manoeuvre the knight to d3, from where it can go to both b4 and f4 in order to put more pressure on the d-pawn. At the same time he is seeking the right exchanges. While the g5-bishop looks active, in reality it cannot do much more than exchange itself against the one on e7, but this would be highly satisfactory. Despite the fairly open position, Black's other bishop on e6 is restricted in its movement by the d5-pawn, which it might actually be doomed to defend passively.

**18...h6** This was a new move. — Is ...h7-h6 really an improvement to the black position? I do not see it. Black does get out of the pin, but he also changes his pawn formation permanently: not much and not clearly to the worse, but he loses some flexibility and weakens the (seemingly irrelevant) g6-square (see the annotations to Black's 20th move). The evaluation of the position, and the whole opening as such, is that White is slightly more active, but that with accurate play Black can slowly neutralise the pressure. But this is not what he is doing in this game. I think he would have been better off following Fridman's examples from above, although Leko was likely to have had an improvement ready somewhere, possibly on the 19th move.



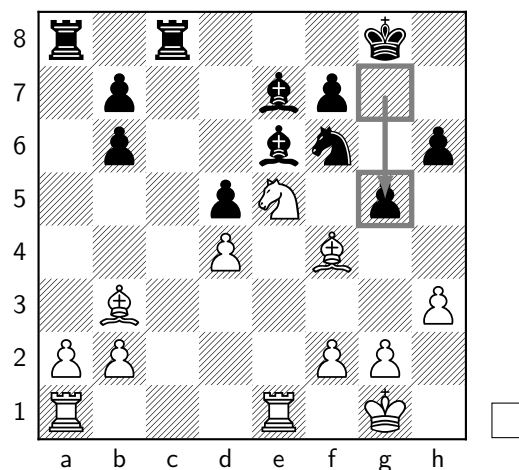
**18... ♖b4 19 ♜e5 ♞d7 20 ♜e2 ♜fc8 21 ♞e1 ♞b8! 22 ♞d3 ♞c6 23 ♞x♗b4 ♞x♗b4 24 ♔g4 ♔h6 25 ♜f4 ♔g5 26 ♜e3 ♜d7 27 a3**

**19 ♜f4** The bishop might look more natural here than on g5, but it is not clear what function the bishop really has. Besides the potential for attacking the b6-pawn the bishop is doing very little. But it would also be doing very little on h4, and should Black play ...g7-g5, then Bg3 could be met by ...Ne4 with further gain of tempi, whereas now White is ready to play Bh2 in one go, should it ever be relevant. The flip side to this is that the bishop is occupying the favourite square of the white knight.

**19... ♜fc8 20 ♞e5** The knight is headed for d3, while also considering Ng6 in some strange situations.

**20... ♔g5!?** It is easy to criticise this move, but very hard to come up with convincing alternatives. Notkin gives it "?" in his annotations in *Super Tournaments 2002* and Leko's *Hundred Wins*, both by Soloviov. Leko, on the other hand, gives the move !? in *Informator*, and thus do not have the same kind of criticism for his opponent. This is probably because he realises that Black does not have that easy a choice, and that Adams' move is not clearly worse than others. — Therefore we should go through the pluses and minuses of this

move, and see how the alternatives compare. The plus is not that it wins a tempo or threatens to take the bishop, but that White cannot now use the f4-square for the knight, and is forced to decide on the placement of the bishop now, before Black starts his manoeuvres. The minus is that Black has a permanent weakness of his kingside and, as we shall see, this becomes a great liability in the game - but this is only in connection with further mistakes later, as Leko points out in his annotations. In fact Black's position already seems to be slightly awkward to defend and Notkin's improvements do not survive serious analysis. — So the conclusion is that 20...g5 leaves Black with some structural problems, but it is hard to work out whether this move is dubious or not. The differences between the various moves are slim and Adams was forced to make a practical decision at the board. I think that I would personally have tried to avoid a structural disadvantage here, but this is probably as much a question of taste as anything else.



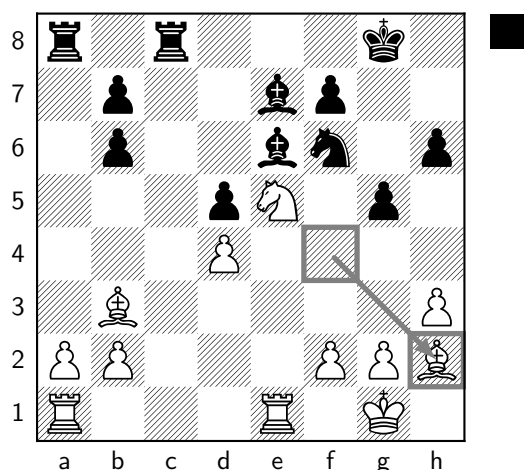
**20... ♞e4 21 ♔f3! ♞d6? 22 ♞g6!**

**20... ♖b4 21 ♜e2 ♞e8 22 ♞d3! ♜f8 23 ♜h2! ♞f6 24 ♞f4 ♜c6**



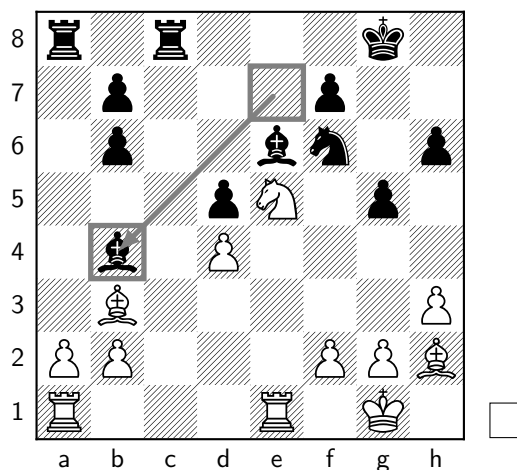
20... ♖e8 21 ♗h2! ♗f6 22 ♖ad1 ♘d6? 23 ♗xf7!

**21 ♗h2!** Leko retains the bishop on this diagonal where it has the best chance of becoming active, or at least creates some tricks with Ng6 because of the control over d6.



**21 ♗e3 ♘e4**

**21... ♗b4?!** Leko dislikes this move somewhat, though Notkin has nothing to say about it. As the game proceeds Black actually loses a tempo with this move. White has nothing against placing his rook on e2, which later turns out to be a clear improvement of his position, while he also is guaranteed to gain a tempo by hitting the bishop with the knight. Black does avoid some tactics, but this should not be a goal in itself. Rather the tactics here seem to work out OK for Black.



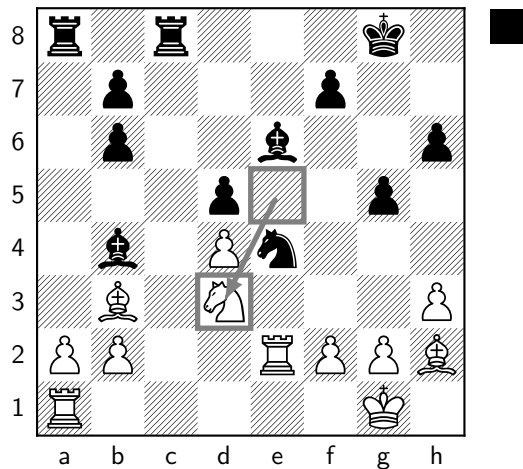
**21... ♖g7 22 ♖e2**

**21... ♗e4! 22 ♖e2**

**22 ♖e2 ♗e4** It seems Black still gets his knight to c4, but White will do what he can to prevent it. — Now there are two strategies: one is to try to squeeze something out of the positional advantage immediately; the other is to manoeuvre around and let Black suffer in the uncomfortable position of defender for as long as possible. The latter is the most practical decision (though objectively the two seem to be of the same value) and a superb technical player like Leko would not be in much doubt. The continuing pressure which arises after the text move is more uncomfortable, and probably more difficult, to play against. At least the game supports this observation. One of my favourite quotes is from Alekhine who claimed that a strong player would always prefer to have an advantage with material equality and the initiative, than to have a material advantage but have to defend it. Though White does not really have much initiative here the same practical logic applies. White would rather have Black defend long and hard to prove equality, than win a pawn and have to defend long and hard to prove that Black's compensation is inadequate.

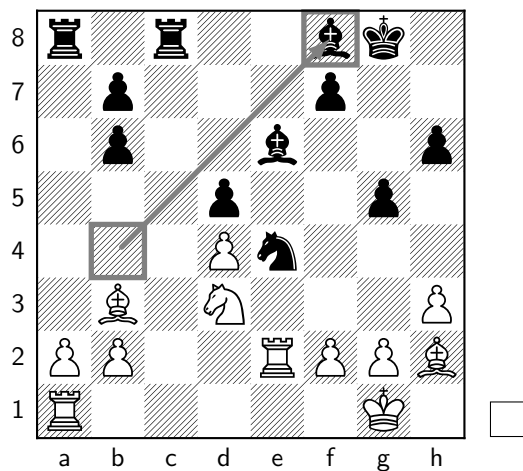


**23 ♖d3!** White slowly improves his position and prevents the intended ...Nd2.



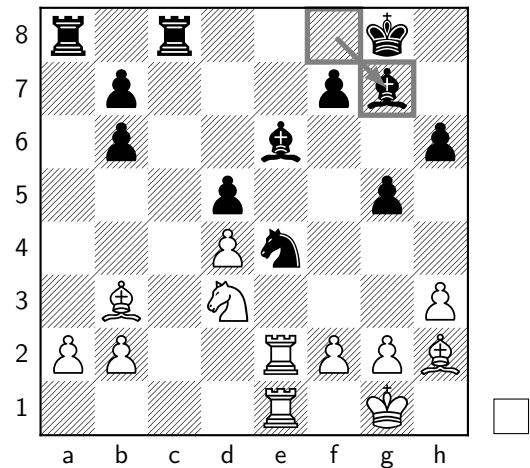
**23 ♖g4!? h5! 24 ♖e3 ♜a5 25 ♖xd5 ♙xd5  
26 ♙xd5 ♜xd5 27 ♜xe4 ♜c2**

**23... ♙f8**



**23... ♙a5!? 24 ♜d1!**

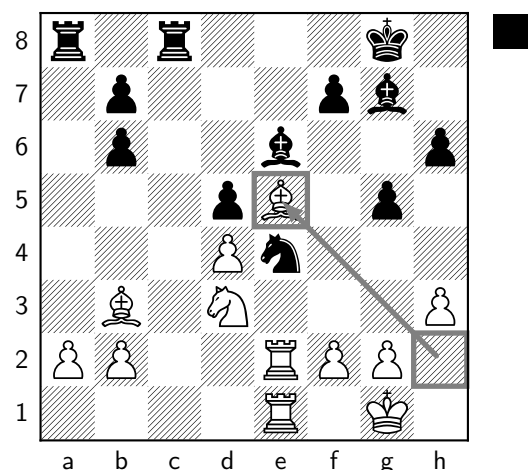
**24 ♜ae1 ♙g7**



**24... ♖d6? 25 ♙xd6 ♙xd6 26 ♜xe6! fxe6  
27 ♜xe6**

**24... ♜a5!?**

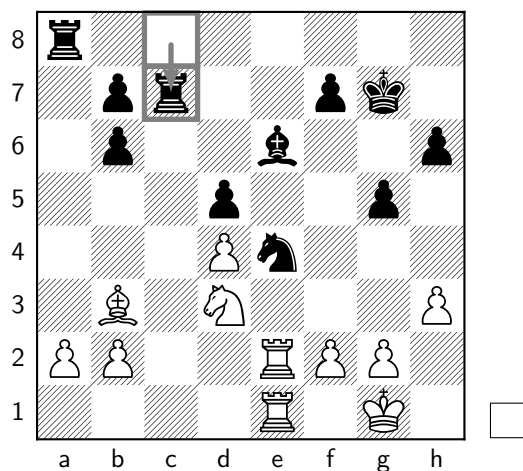
**25 ♙e5** After this Black is certainly under pressure. White had another option, but once again Leko chooses to delay his moment of action and improve his position gradually. As long as this is possible, and Black does not have similar opportunities, it is a very strong plan. The choice is by no means obvious.



**25 ♖b4!? ♜a5 26 ♙e5 ♙xe5 27 dxe5 ♜d8  
28 ♖xd5 ♙xd5 29 ♜d1 ♙f8 30 ♜xe4 ♙xe4!  
31 ♜xd8+ ♙e7 32 ♜d6 ♜xe5 33 ♜xh6 ♙g6**

**25... ♖×e5 26 ♜×e5 ♔g7 27 ♞d3** White has achieved first part of his plan. After Nb4, his pieces are all where they want to be, while Black has some serious weaknesses: the d-pawn is a bit vulnerable and needs attention; the double b-pawns are moving closer to becoming a weakness (though it is still not clear how White will ever exploit it); and on the kingside Black would very much love to be without the move ...g5. Later we shall see how White proves that this move is indeed a weakness, by first fixing it and then attacking it, thus creating clear weaknesses in its back yard.

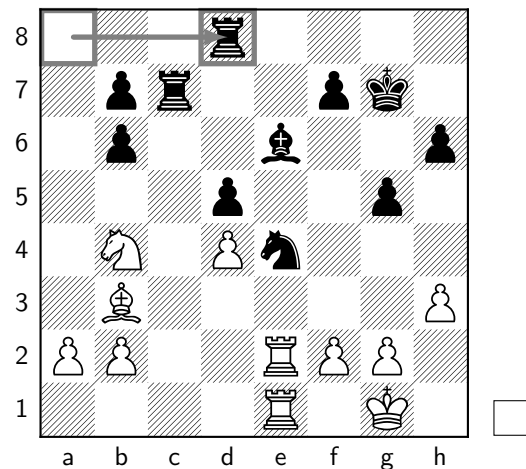
**27... ♜c7?!** It is again easy to dislike this move. The natural progression for Black was to send the knight to c4 without hesitation. From there it would defend d5 by blocking the white bishop, and put some pressure on b2 to occupy one of the white rooks.



**27... ♞d6! 28 ♞b4 ♞c4**

**28 ♞b4 ♜d8?** This is a bad mistake. Up to this moment I have my doubts that White would really be able to win the game against the best possible defence, but after this I have little faith in the black position. The problem is that the manoeuvre ...Nd6-c4 is now no longer possible. It is really difficult to explain how such a

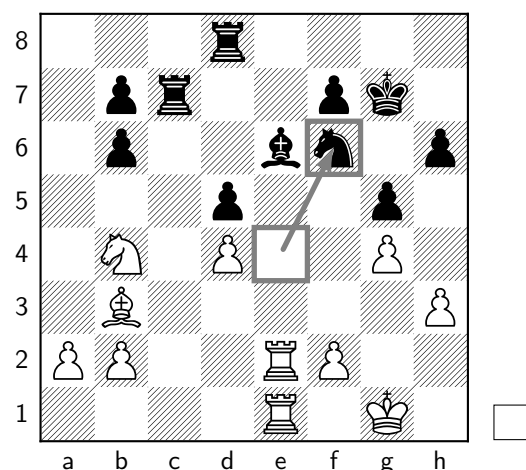
natural player as Michael Adams, a top ten player, fails to understand the necessity of becoming active.



**28... ♜a5! 29 g4 ♞d6**

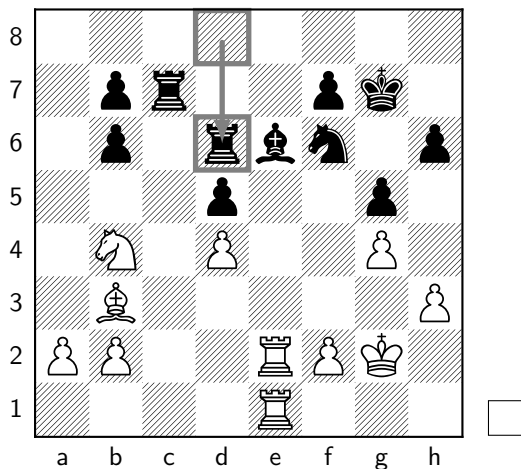
**29 g4!** An excellent move by Leko. White will now advance slowly on the kingside, kicking the knight away and then put pressure on the black pawns in order to prove his structural advantage.

**29... ♞f6**



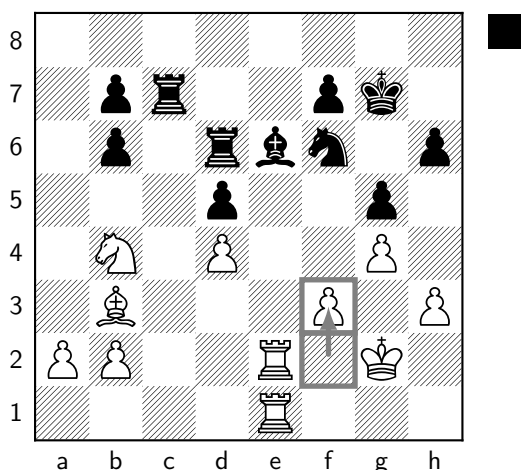
**29... ♞d6 30 ♖×d5 ♖×d5 31 ♞×d5 ♜c4 32 ♜d2 ♞b5 33 ♞e3! ♞×d4 34 ♔g2 ♜a4 35 b3 ♜b4 36 ♜ed1**

**30 ♖g2 ♜d6** Black is in a terrible situation. He has more than one weakness and no activity.



**30... ♗g8 31 f4! g×f4 32 ♗d3**

**31 f3!** (The pawn on g5 is the hook on which the high rated fish is caught. All Leko has to do in the game is reel it in. Once he has played h3-h4, the black pawn structure collapses. But this is simply because he failed to dynamically justify this weakness. Here this simplicity is presented in its complex reality.)



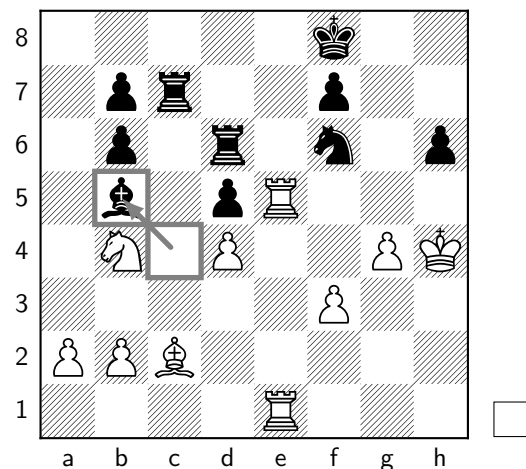
**31 f4!?**

**31... ♙d7 32 ♖g3 ♗f8 33 h4!** The black pawn structure is being put under greater and greater pressure.

**33... ♙b5 34 ♜e5** Now Black can no longer hold the pawn on g5 and the disadvantage of the pawn advance has now been clearly proven. But there were disadvantages earlier on with every possible move. It is only that, when Adams chose to weaken his structure for dynamic considerations, he obliged himself to play as actively as possible afterwards, something he did not live up to.

**34... g×h4+ 35 ♖×h4** Black's pawn structure is horrible. — Black has problems with all his pawns. We will return to this discussion below under the heading 'pawn islands'. For now all we will say is that the white structure is more healthy.

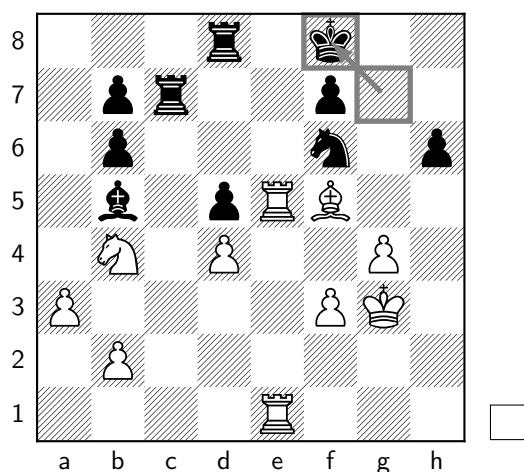
**35... ♙c4 36 ♙c2 ♙b5**



**36... ♙×a2 37 b3 ♜×c2 38 ♗×c2 ♙×b3 39 ♗e3 ♗d7 40 ♜e7!**

**37 a3 ♜d8 38 ♖g3** After creating a further weakness in the black camp Leko goes back to finding the best possible squares for his pieces. The king belongs on f4 and the knight on f5.

**38... ♖g7 39 ♙f5 ♖f8**



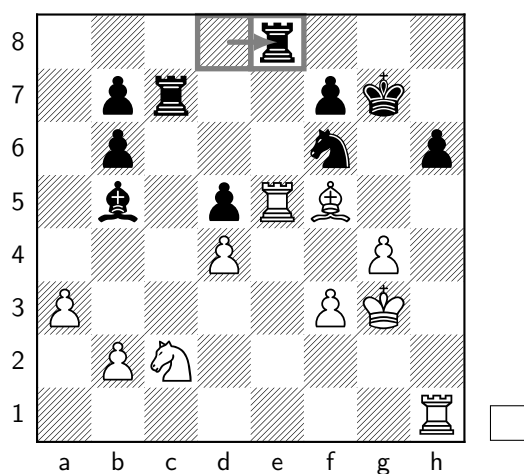
effort by Peter Leko. — I hope this gave a deeper understanding of what hooks are. It will be a recurring topic in the rest of the book, so this is not the end of the story.

1-0

**39... Rxc4 40 Rd1 Qa4 41 Rb2**

**40 Rb1 Qg7 41 Nc2!** White is threatening to put his knight on f5. Black manages to avoid this, but his kingside is so weak that White has no problem finding another way in.

**41... Re8**



**41... Rxc4 42 g5 h×g5 43 Qd3 Rxc7 44 R×g5+ Qf8 45 Rh8+ Qe7 46 Re5+ Qd7 47 Qf5+ Qd6 48 R×d8+**

**42 Ne3 Rce7 43 Qf4 Qc6 44 Qc2 Qd7**  
Preventing Nf5+, but...

**45 g5!** Black loses both his h- and d-pawns, while White's position is only getting better. — A superb strategic and technical

## Pawn islands

---

*'Together we stand, divided we fall'* were the words Roger Waters sang in the classic Pink Floyd song 'Hey You' from the album 'The Wall'. It is really the chorus of the pawns, in chess as in war. Pawns which are divided are weak and likely to come under fatal pressure. We saw this in the end of the Leko-Adams game above. The position after move 35 is a textbook example of weak and divided pawns.

— The real reason for pawns' weakness when divided, is that in open battle they are no match for the pieces. They are like peasants armed with a knife, fighting the cavalry. Only if taking a pawn entails certain recapture will a piece refrain. If the pawn is for free, the head will roll. So this means that pawns which are divided or otherwise isolated, need extra attention from the pieces. If both players have five pawns, it is naturally an advantage only to have to defend one of the pawns, because it is the root of a strong structure, than to have to defend many pawns, because they are divided and unable to defend themselves.

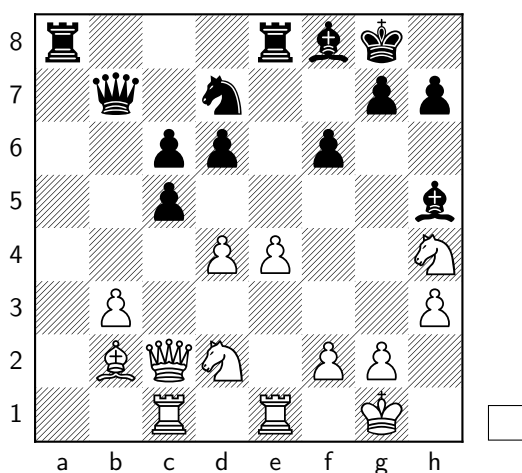
---

White: Bologan, V.  
Black: Leitaó, R.

Pamplona

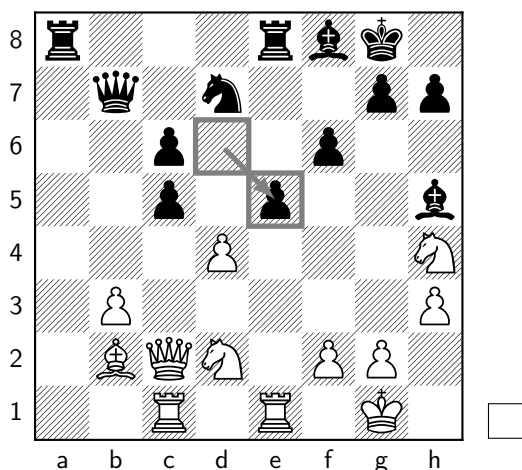
2001

Result: 1-0



**21 e5!** White had no manoeuvring possibilities anyway, so this is a logical reaction. Only in this way can the black pawn structure be tested.

**21...dxe5**



**21...fxe5 22 dxe5 dxe5 23 e4**

**21...cxd4! 22 exf6 dxf6 23 dxd4 exel+ 24 exel d5 25 df3**

**22 dxe5 dxe5 23 dxe5 fxe5 24 e4**

Bologan thinks White is already better.

**24...h6 25 dxc5 dxc5 26 exxc5 exxb3**

This position could be called a middlegame, but it also has a lot of endgame properties. The main point is that, though Black is temporarily a pawn up, he now sits back with two pawn islands against one (once c6 is gone). The weakness of the black pawns is obvious.

**27 f5 exf6 28 d4!** White now wins the remaining pawn. Later he won the game, starting with...

**28...exf7 29 dxc6 e4 30 e5 exf5 31 exxc4+ gh7 32 exxe4 exxe4 33 exxe4 exf7 34 exxc5 exa2 35 g4 exf8 36 g2 exa6 37 g3** White's winning chances are so great that, with good play, the position might actually be won against any defence. But this is not that interesting for the practical player. The important thing is that White has great practical chances, and eventually did win the position, after mistakes from both sides.

**1-0**

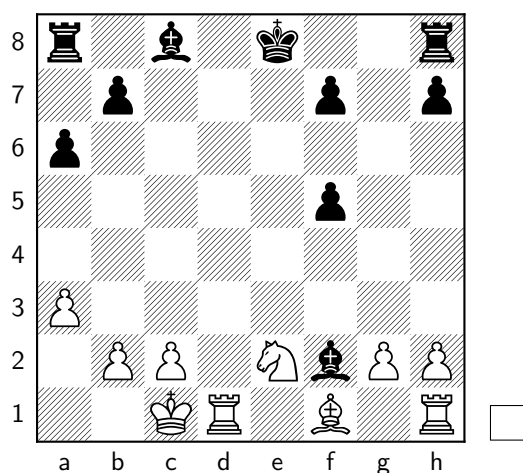
White: Shirov, A.

Dortmund

Black: Lutz, C.

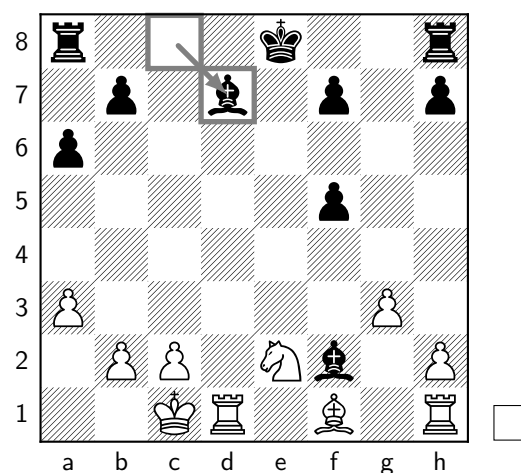
2002

Result: 1-0



**23 g3!** This move is not really up for discussion. White cannot allow 23...Be3+ followed by 24...f4! when the g2-pawn will suddenly be a weakness.

**23... ♖d7** Black plays the most obvious plan, based on rapid development. However, this is an endgame not an opening, and development is no longer a goal in itself, as it is in the opening. I am not saying that 23...Bd7 is not logical and good, only that it is less obvious than it would usually be.

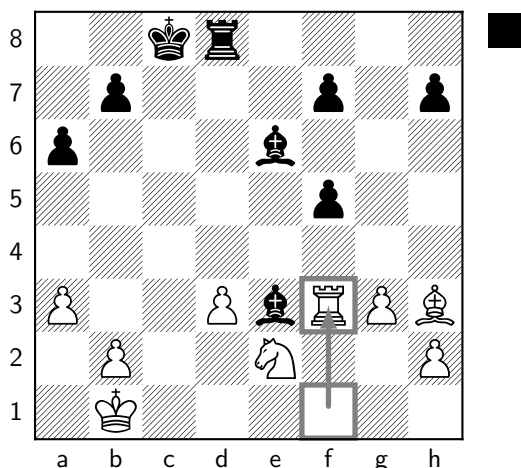


**23... h5!? 24 h4 f4! 25 gxf4 ♕g4 26 ♖d3 ♗d8**

**24 ♕h3** Now this opportunity exists. Shirov is not a guy to hesitate, and he immediately exploits his slight lead in development to put pressure on f5.

**24... O-O-O 25 ♖hf1 ♕e3+ 26 ♔b1 ♕e6** Black hopes to obtain counterplay on the d-file, e.g. 27 Rxd8+ Rxd8 28 Bxf5 Bxf5 29 Rxf5 Rd1+ 30 Ka2 Rd2 when Black has excellent counterplay and should make the draw. For this reason White decides to keep the d-file closed with a move which is easy to miss.

**27 ♖d3! ♗xd3 28 cxd3 ♖d8 29 ♖f3** There is no time to waste.



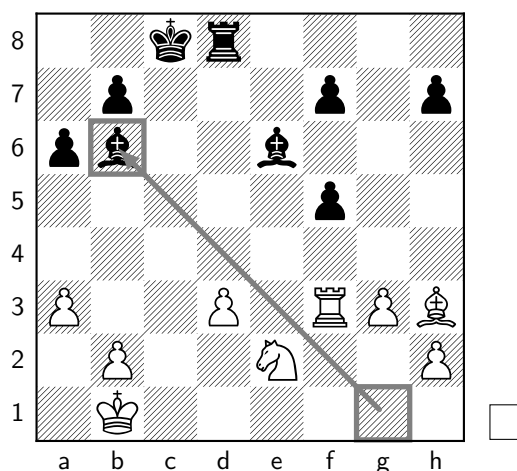
## 29 ♖c2 ♜d5

**29... ♜b6 30 ♘c3** Once again preventing ...Rd5. If White now had the time he would play Kc2 and Bxf5 with a winning position, so Black is forced to irritate him as much as possible. This is done by attacking one of the two white weaknesses, the pawn on h2. — If we talk pawn islands here, then it is clear that b2, d3 and h2 are all weak to some degree, though b2 less so than the others. In the same way it is clear that b7 and especially f7, f5 and h7 are all weak. White's advantage here is quite small, but it is enough to allow the opponent to make mistakes. As we shall see later it is easy to make slightly dubious moves that make the task of defence first harder, and in the end impossible, even for such a strong player as Lutz, who has written one of my favourite books on the endgame, *Endgame Secrets* from 1999.

**30... ♜g1!** Now White has to attend to his own Achilles' heel.

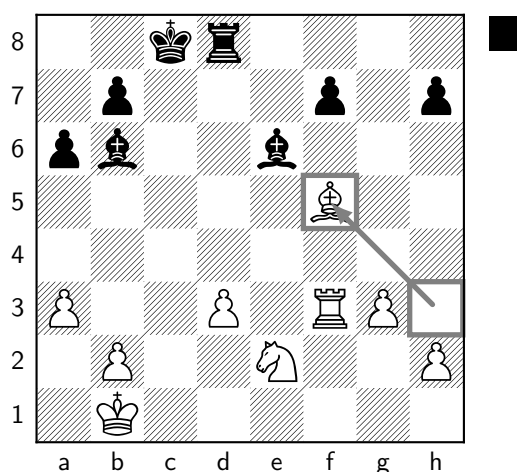
**31 ♘e2 ♜b6?!** Black has defended well. Not with particular brilliance, but then brilliancy was not in the position. Here, however, he commits a slight error, which only goes to show how difficult it can be to calculate even simply endgame positions in chess. A writer, assisted by a strong chess playing computer program and

unlimited time, can find solid improvements on even the strongest player's games over and over again.



**31... ♜xh2!! 32 ♜xh2 ♜xh2 33 ♜xh2 ♜xh2 34 ♖c2 ♜e3 35 ♖d2 ♜b3 36 ♖c2 ♜e3**

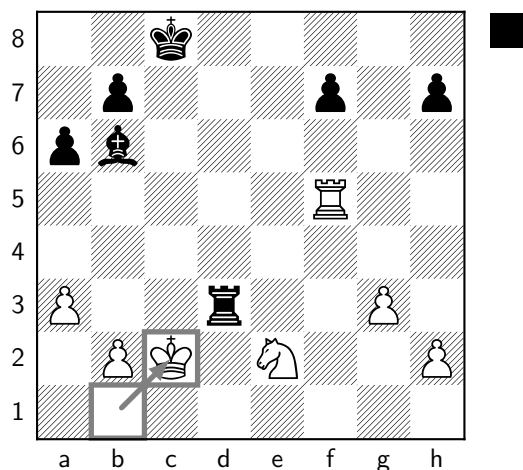
**32 ♜xh2!**



## 32 ♖c2?! ♜d5

**32... ♜xh2 33 ♜xh2 ♜xh2 34 ♖c2!** In his excellent book of his own games, 'Fire on Board', Shirov writes that his best phase of the game is actually the endgame, since his accurate calculation often gives him an edge over the other players. Here he correctly evaluates that this is the most uncomfortable continuation for Black.





**34 ♖xf7!? ♜d2 35 ♜e7 ♘d8 36 ♜e4 b5! 37 ♜e3! ♙f6 38 b4**

**34...♜d7 35 ♘c3** The pawn islands. — The knight is heading for d5. — Here we have the concept of pawn islands illustrated in its purest form. White has two pawn structures and therefore has two potential pawn weaknesses at b2 and h2, while Black, with his three pawn islands, has problems with b7, f7 and h7. But this is not just about pawn weaknesses: Black's pawns also work less well. The effect is that White has a strong rook on f5 and, in just a moment, a strong knight on d5. Though these factors should not be overestimated, they are obviously still an advantage for White.

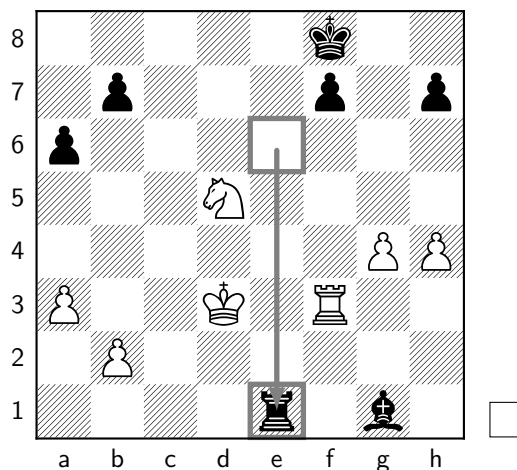
**35...♙g1 36 h4 ♚d8!** Lutz is a very experienced grandmaster and here he performs a good defensive manoeuvre. The king goes to the kingside to protect the weakest spots.

**37 ♘d5 ♜d6** White has established control with the pieces, so it is time for the king to join the game.

**38 ♚d3 ♚e8 39 ♚e4 ♙f8 40 g4 ♜c6!** Now that the king has taken over the job of safeguarding the weakest pawns, Black can activate the rook. He is still under pressure, but there are good reasons to believe that

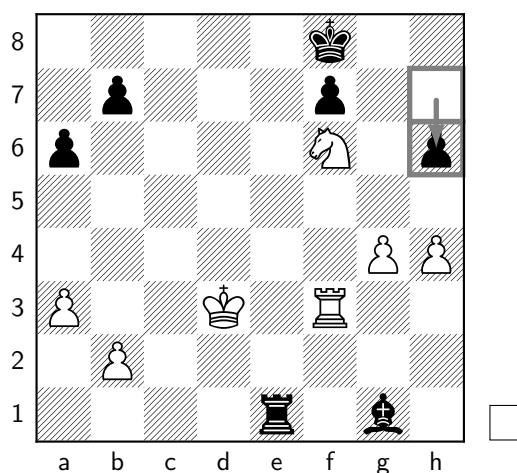
this is of a temporary nature.

**41 ♜f3 ♜e6+ 42 ♚d3 ♜e1** Though not a mistake, I am not completely happy with this move. It looks active, but allows White to trade advantages and create a passed pawn.



**42...♙h2!?**

**43 ♘f6 h6**



**43...♙g7 44 g5**

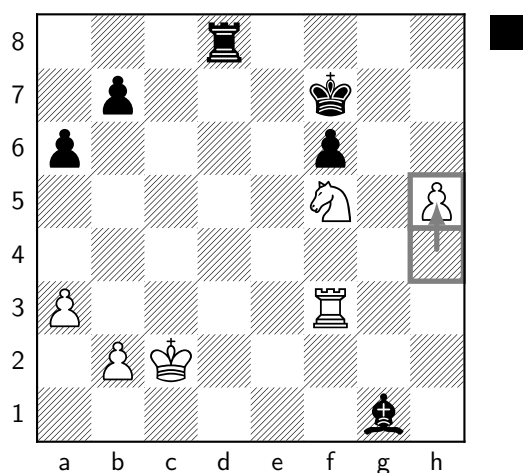
**44 g5!?** Shirov is a great master of endgame principles, just like another great attacking player, Alexander Alekhine. The point is that attacking players are as bound as positional players to end in endgames

(though perhaps a pawn or exchange down more often, having unsuccessfully sacrificed on the altar of the attack). Here Shirov has accurately calculated a long sequence leading to a continued advantage. It is nothing critical for Black objectively, but it is easy to imagine Black's clock ticking away while he has constantly to defend against all these minor details in the position.

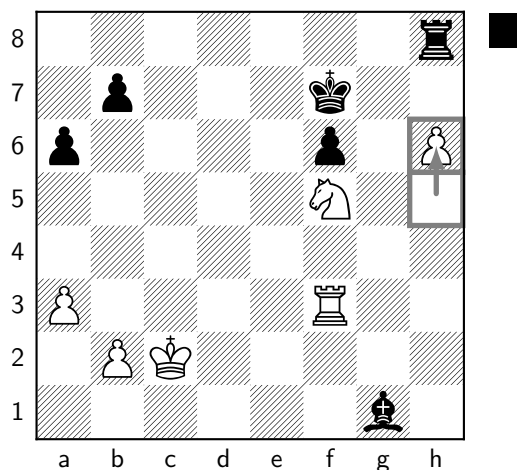
**44...h×g5 45 ♖h7+** The point. White of course wants to retain his h-pawn.

**45...♔e7 46 ♖×g5 f6 47 ♖e4 ♜d1+ 48 ♔c2 ♜d4 49 ♖g3** This move had to be anticipated, otherwise everything would have been in vain.

**49...♔f7 50 ♖f5 ♜d8 51 h5?!** Black has defended well so far and White's advantage has almost been neutralised. But this is only the objective evaluation. It is still Black who will have to prove it.

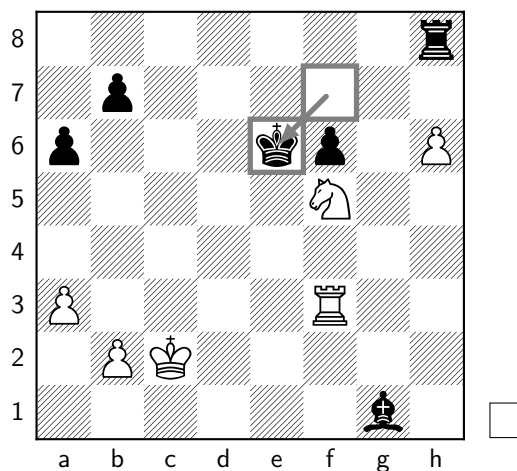


**51 ♜g3!? ♜h2! 52 ♜g7+ ♔e6 53 ♖e3 b5 51...♜h8 52 h6**



**52 ♜h3**

**52...♔e6?!** Black has played well for a very long time and was probably running short on time. This is the beginning of a series of minor inaccuracies that in the end lead to the downfall of the black position.



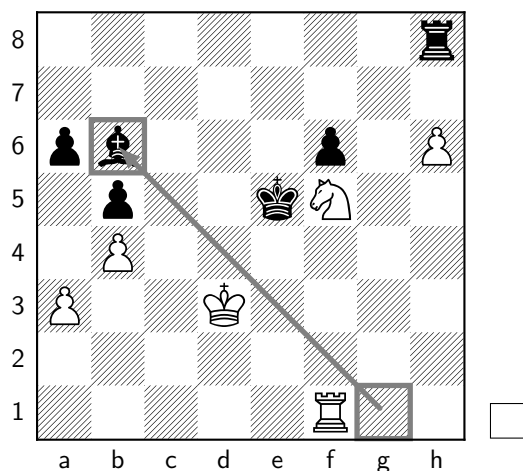
**52...♜c5! 53 ♜c3 ♜f8 54 ♜c8 ♜h7! 55 b4 ♔g6 56 ♖h4+ ♔f7 57 ♖f5 ♔g6**

**53 ♔d3 ♔e5** The king is well centralised here, but Black did not solve the problem of the h-pawn, and is therefore in for a little bit of defending again. This is the nature of such technical endgames: if you are on the defending side, you can make a lot of excellent moves for a long time, but one

slip and you suddenly have to make a lot of good defensive moves again. If you then make another slip, as Lutz does in this game, you can soon find yourself in trouble.

**54 b4 b5** Why this improves the black position is not obvious. Normally we prefer to have the base of the pawn chain as far back as possible. On a6 it is more susceptible to attack than on b7.

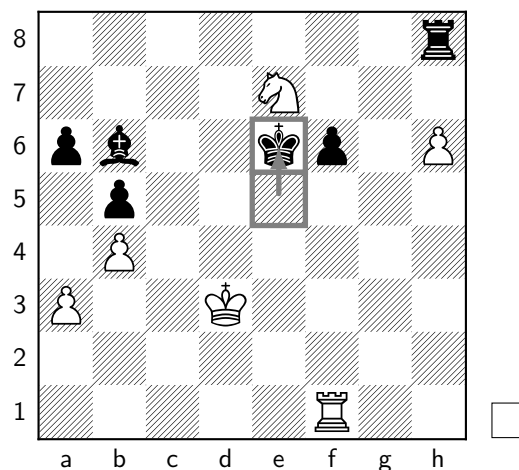
**55 ♖f1 ♗b6?!**



**55... ♗h2!**

**56 ♘e7!** A sneaky move by White. With the aid of tactics he manages to reorganise the knight, exploiting the brief moment when Black is preoccupied with taking care of the h-pawn.

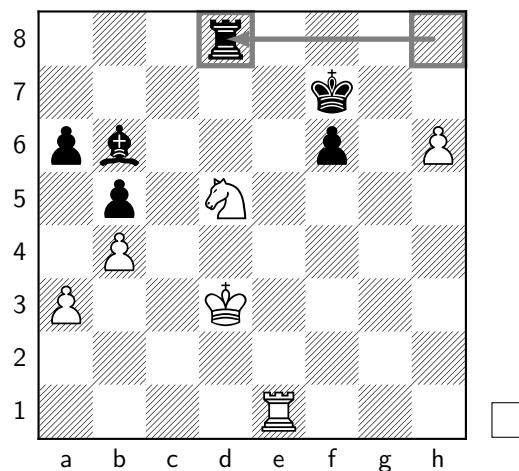
**56... ♖e6**



**56... ♖xh6?? 57 ♖e1+!**

**56... ♖d8+!? 57 ♖e2 ♖e6 58 ♘g6**

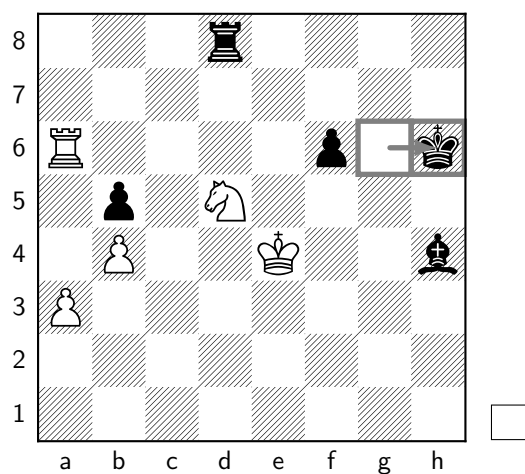
**57 ♖e1+ ♖f7 58 ♘d5 ♖d8?** After having been under pressure for some hours - basically all of the game - Lutz commits the final mistake.



**58... ♗d8 59 ♖h1 f5! 60 ♖h5 ♖h7 61 ♖xh5+ ♖g6 62 ♖f8 ♖d7 63 ♖e4 ♖xh6 64 ♖e8 ♖g7 65 ♖e6 a5**

**59 ♖e7+!** Now White is able to attack the queenside.

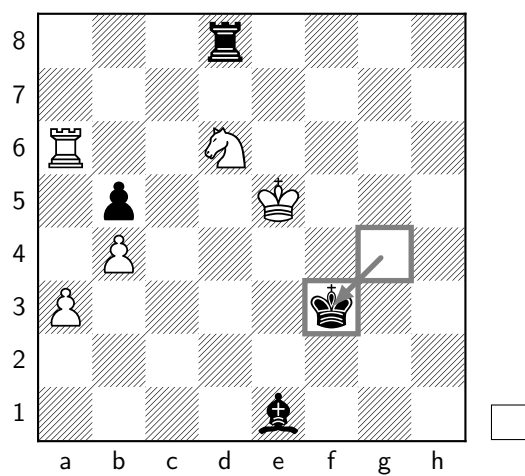
**59... ♖g6 60 ♖e4 ♗f2 61 ♖e6 ♗h4 62 ♖xh6 ♖xh6** Black no longer has an adequate defence.



**62...Rb8!? 63 h7 Qxh7 64 Qxf6+ Rxf6 65 Rxf6 Qg7 66 Rf5 Qg6 67 Rxc5**

**63 Qxf6** White now clearly has two advantages. He will win the b-pawn and Black will have to resign.

**63...Qg5 64 Qe5 Re1 65 Qe4+ Qg4 66 Qd6 Qf3**



**66...Qg3+ 67 Qd5**

**67 Qxb5 Qg3+ 68 Qe6 Qe4 69 Qd6+ 1-0**

## Doubled pawns

---

I am not going to go deeply into this aspect of weaknesses. It is probably well known that having your pawns doubled is a weakening of the pawn structure, but can also give some advantages. If you go back to the Leko-Adams game, you will see that the doubled b-pawns never really caused Black much trouble. They could not be attacked frontally, nor from the sides, and therefore were less weak than one might think, though still suffering from the problem of being two and being divided in some sense. In the Andersson-Ivanov game the black pawns were really weak on the kingside, but the main problem was that the h7-pawn was weak, not so much the f6- and f7-pawns. That doubled pawns are fragile to frontal attack and to attack from the sides is intrinsic to their nature. They are not a long line of connected pawns (not usually anyway). On the other hand they can have good defensive attributes. In the Leko-Adams position the black pawns safely guard a5, a6, c5 and c6 and in this way assist the rooks on these open and half-open files. Doubled pawns are very rarely good at moving forwards. They have a defensive aspect to them, and they need to be assisted by pieces in order to do well.

— Here we are going to see a short example of how doubled pawns can affect a position. It is important to underline that this game is not representative of the theme in itself, but is just a good background for some general comments.

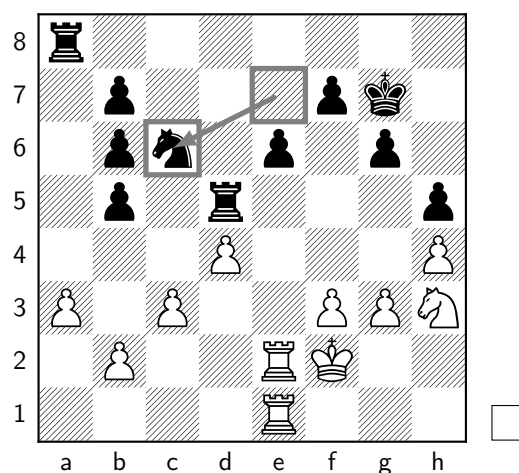
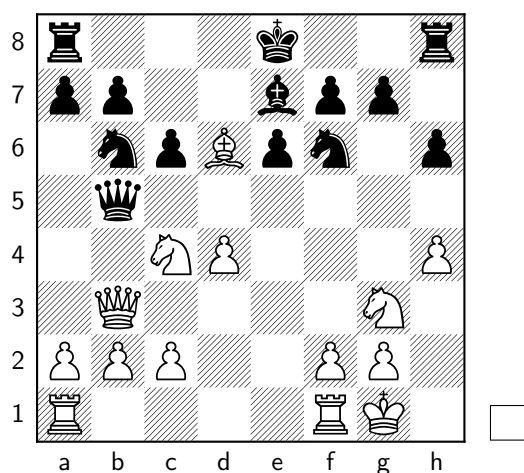
---

White: Topalov, V.  
Black: Anand, V.

Monte Carlo

1999

Result: 1-0



**16 ♖xb5 cxb5 17 ♗xb6 axb6 18 ♕xe7 ♖xe7 19 a3 ♜hd8 20 c3** With these natural moves White re-strains the black pawns, though accepts that he will not be able to make pawn pushes himself.

**20...h5 21 f3!** A strong move, anticipating g2-g4 and controlling the e4-square.

**21...g6 22 ♜ae1 ♜d5 23 ♖f2 ♖f8 24 ♗e4 ♖g7 25 ♜e2 ♗g8 26 ♜fe1 ♗e7 27 ♗g5!** The beginning of a strong manoeuvre. White will be better once his knight arrives at f4. From there it both supports a kingside pawn advance and controls the d5-square.

**27...♗f5** This move is pretty useless. Black should instead play ...Rh8 or prepare ...Nd5.

**28 g3 ♗e7** What Black achieved here is not at all clear.

**29 ♗h3 ♗c6** It was hardly the intention behind Black's decision in the opening to allow tripled pawns, that the knight should guard the penetration square e5.

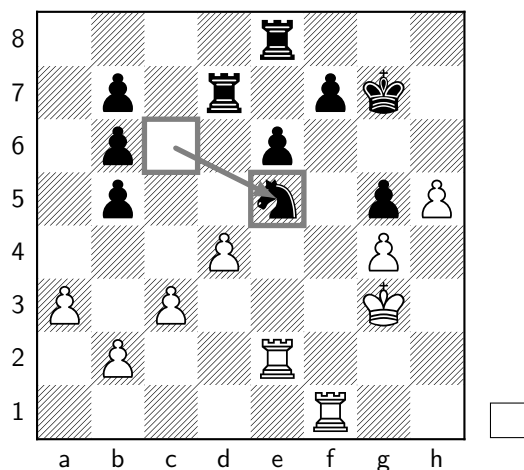
**29...♜d7 30 ♜e5 ♗d5 31 g4 h×g4 32 f×g4 ZZ- 33 ♖g3 ZZ- 34 ♗f4**

**30 ♗f4 ♜d6 31 g4** Now everything is perfect for White. The h5-pawn is used as a hook and the black pieces are passive.

**31...h×g4 32 f×g4 ♜ad8 33 ♖g3 ♜h8** Again it was hard to guess what Black intended here.

**34 ♜f1 ♜d7 35 h5 g5 36 ♗d3 ♜e8 37 ♗e5!** Black now falls to tactics.

**37...♗×e5**



**37...♖de7 38 h6+! ♕×h6 39 ♘×f7+ ♕g6  
40 ♖ef2 ♖g8 41 ♖f6+ ♕h7 42 ♘d6**

**38 ♖×e5 f6 39 ♖×b5** The rook endgame is hopeless for Black.

**39...♖d6 40 ♖e1 ♕f7 41 a4!** This opens a route for further attack on the doubled pawns, and clearly illustrates that isolated doubled pawns are weak to frontal attack, something Black had hoped he never needed to think about here.

**41...♖a8 42 ♖a1 ♕g7 43 ♖a3 ♕h6 44 ♖ab3 ♖a6 45 ♖3b4 f5 46 ♖c4 ♖a8 47 ♖cb4 ♖a6 48 ♖e5 ♖a8 49 g×f5 e×f5 50 ♖×f5 ♕×h5 51 ♖bb5 ♖g8 52 ♖f7** And they are fragile to attack from the sides too. Black now loses the remaining pawns on the queenside.

**52...♖e6 53 ♖h7+ ♕g6 54 ♖×b7 ♖e3+ 55 ♕g4 ♖e4+ 56 ♕f3 ♖f4+ 57 ♕g3 ♖gf8 58 ♖5×b6+ ♕f5 59 ♖e7 ♖g4+ 60 ♕f3 ♖f4+ 61 ♕e2 ♕g4 62 a5 ♕g3 63 a6 .** — I think it goes without saying that this game is way below the level we would usually expect from Anand. But then again Anand is a funny character who has spoken publicly about his crisis of motivation as a reason for his occasional weak play. It is obvious that if a player does not care about the result or the game itself, it is hard to play good moves. Especially when we talk about Anand, who used to play very quickly as a young man. Here it is possible that he fell

into these old habits. — These will be the final words on weaknesses for now, at least in this chapter. For the improving player I can only once again recommend the book 'Secrets of Positional Chess' by Marovic. I think the examples in this book are well chosen and the text and explanations should be easy to follow for most club players. The first chapter, concerned exclusively with weak squares, is essential knowledge for all players wishing to grasp even an iota of chess strategy. And it is my experience as a chess coach, that many club players have a very weak understanding of these phenomena. I simply hope that my text here and Marovic's book will be a help to those wanting to understand this aspect of chess better.

**1-0**

### 3) Domination

---

An important thinking tool in the endgame, which is not usually seen in the middlegame or the opening, is domination. With very few pieces on the board it is more likely to be the case that one piece is able to dominate another piece, or maybe two pieces dominate two others. In the following pages we shall consider such situations. — In his 'Endgame Manual' Mark Dvoretsky only considers positions with complete domination. But his book also defines the endgame as a position where both players have no more than one piece. Here we are talking about any number of pieces, and also about different degrees of domination. In order to explain how a bishop can possibly be better than a knight in an endgame where the bishop is unable to attack anything, it is impossible to exclude the concept of domination. Together a king and a bishop will at times dominate knight and king. For one example, see the game Lesiege-Andersson in Chapter 3.

— Often an active piece dominates a passive piece indirectly, by forcing it to stay passive and defend a certain weakness. This is what is happening in the following example (see the following game).

---

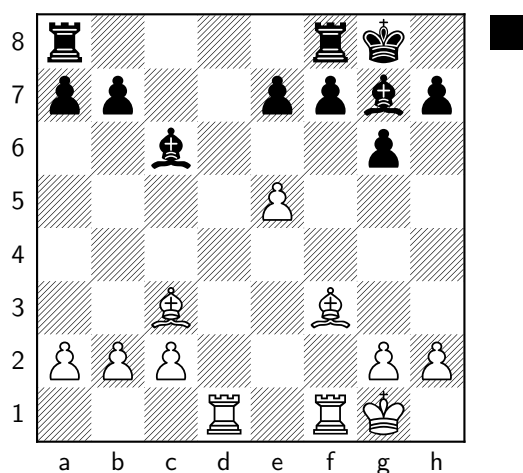


White: Kiroski, T.  
Black: Bogdanovski, V.

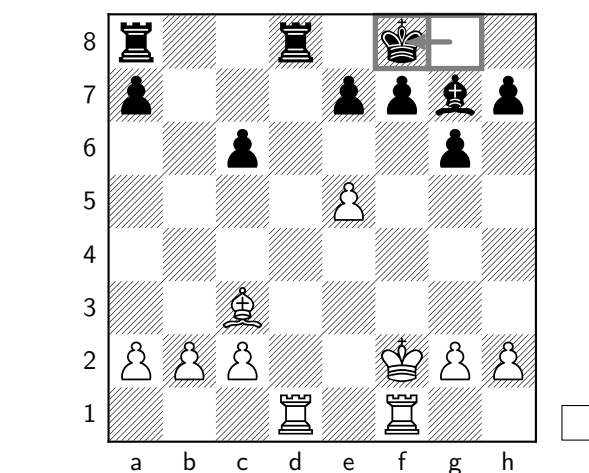
Struga

1991

Result: 1-0

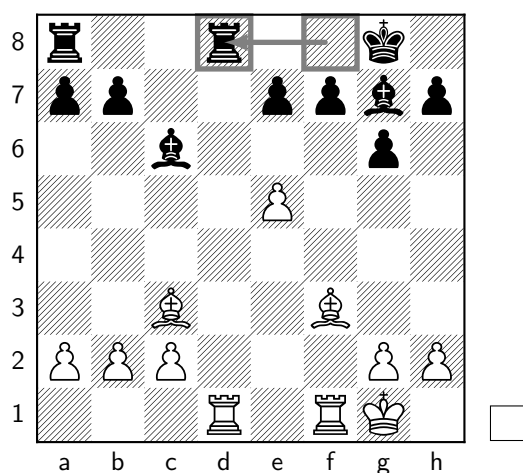


17...**Rfd8!** This move cannot be questioned.



19...**Rd5!** 20 **Rxd5 cxd5** 21 **Rd1 e6** 22 **Qe3 Rc8**

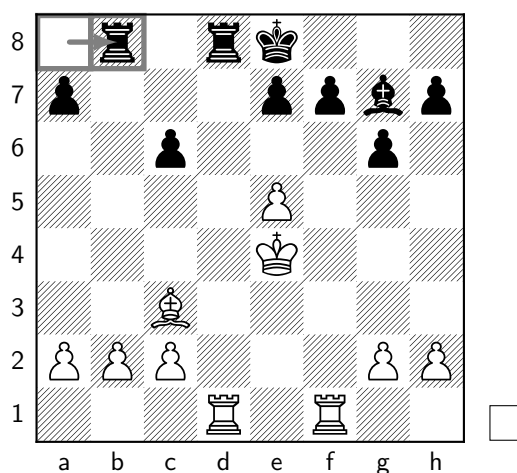
20 **Qe3 Qe8** 21 **Qe4 Rab8?** This allows White to improve his position, while it is not easy to see in what way this move is meant to improve Black's own position.



17...**Qxf3?** 18 **Rxf3 Rfd8** 19 **Rfd3**

18 **Qxc6 bxc6** 19 **Qf2!** White wisely brings his king to the centre. Black now chooses to do the same.

19...**Qf8?!** But it is not really the same. The black king on e8 will not be as active as the white king on e4.

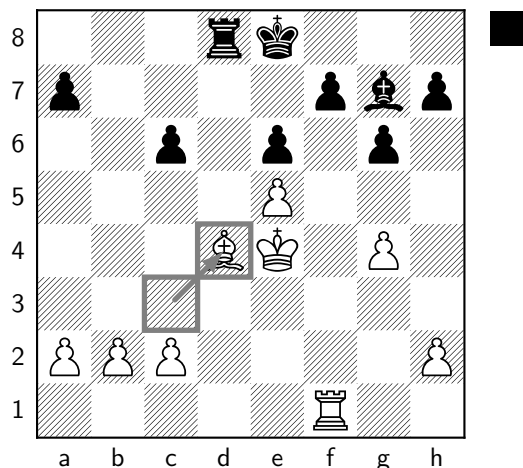


21...**Rxd1** 22 **Rxd1 Rd8** 23 **Rd4 f5+!** 24 **exf6 exf6**

**22 g4!** Preventing ...f5.

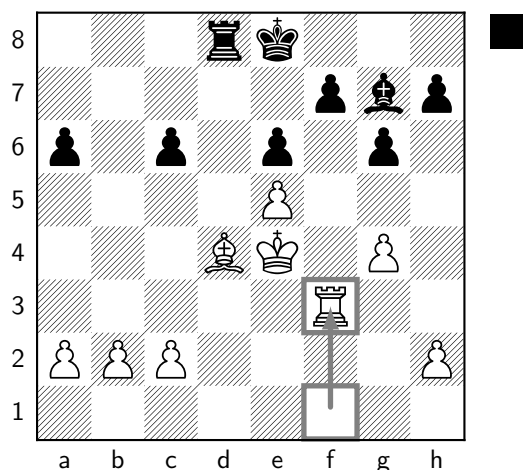
**22...e6** With the intention of ...Rd5, but now of course White will not allow it.

**23 ♖xd8+! ♗xd8 24 ♕d4** Closing the d-file.



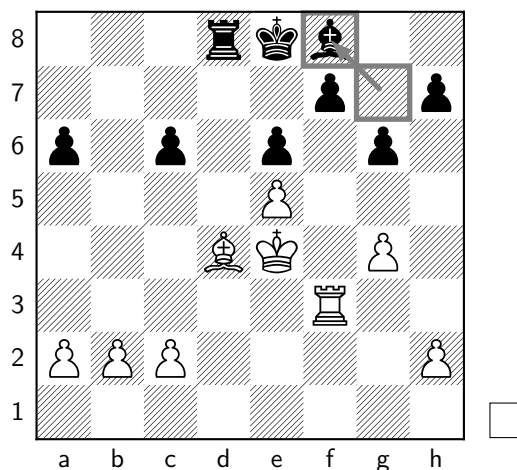
**24 ♖f3 ♗d1!**

**24...a6 25 ♖f3?** This walks into a trap that Black did not even realise he had set.



**25 b4! ♖a8 26 a4**

**25...♕f8??** But Black just plays passively and allows White is to dominate.



**25...c5! 26 ♕xc5 ♕xe5! 27 ♖xe5 ♗d5+**

**26 ♗b3** Now Black will be completely dominated, as the rook will have to protect the a-pawn and the bishop simply cannot get out: the white bishop on d4 limits its options crucially.

**26...c5 27 ♕e3 ♕e7 28 ♖b6 ♖a8 29 ♖b7 ♗c8 30 ♗b6 ♖a8 31 b3 ♕d8 32 ♖b7 a5 33 a4 ♕e8 34 ♖b5 c4** The point of showing this game is to state clearly what I mean about domination: which is when your own pieces are playing and, at the same time, you do not allow your opponent's pieces to play. You restrict his possibilities to an absolute minimum.

**1-0**

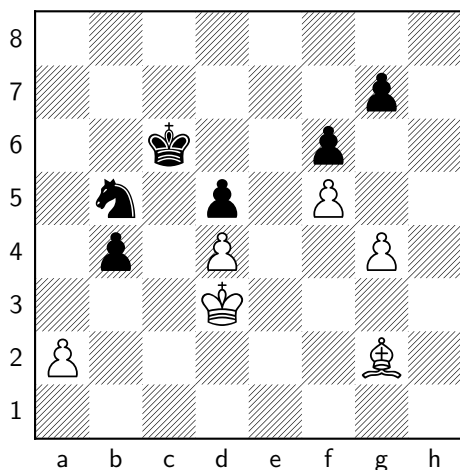
White: Nepomnjatschij  
Black: Polovodin

Leningrad

1988

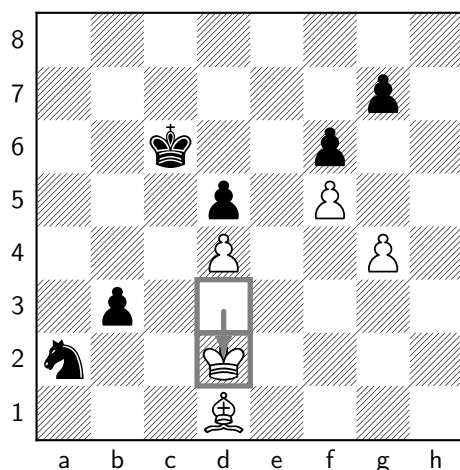
Result: 0-1

4 ♔d2



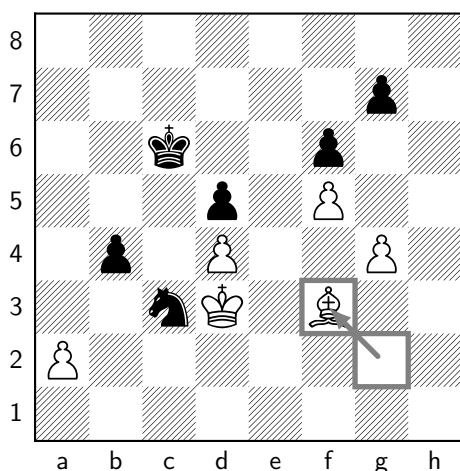
1... ♖c3! This attack on a2 is based on a nice tactic. Black now wins a pawn.

2 ♜f3 The a-pawn can no longer be defended so White tries to bring the bishop to the queenside.



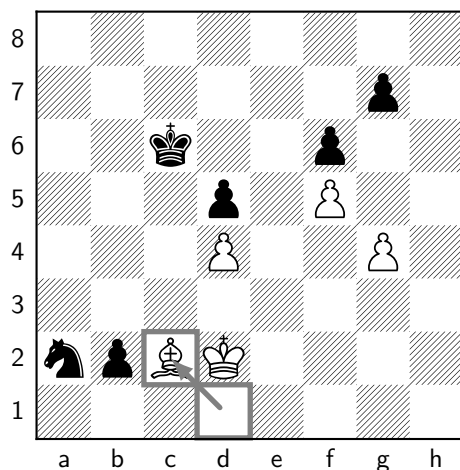
4 ♜x b3 ♖c1+ 5 ♔c2 ♖x b3 6 ♔x b3 ♔b5

4... b2 5 ♜c2 Again a matter of domination. In confined space the knight is often stronger than the bishop.



2 a3?! ♖e2!! 3 ♔x e2 bxa3

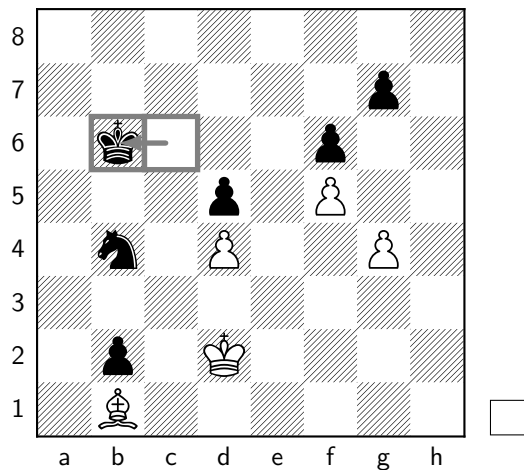
2... ♖x a2 3 ♜d1 b3! The pawn ending will win for Black, so he uses this chance to advance the pawn to the second rank.



5 ♔c2 ♖c3!

**5... ♖b4 6 ♙b1** Again the bishop is completely dominated. Now it is time to think. Everything is going Black's way, but that could easily end here.

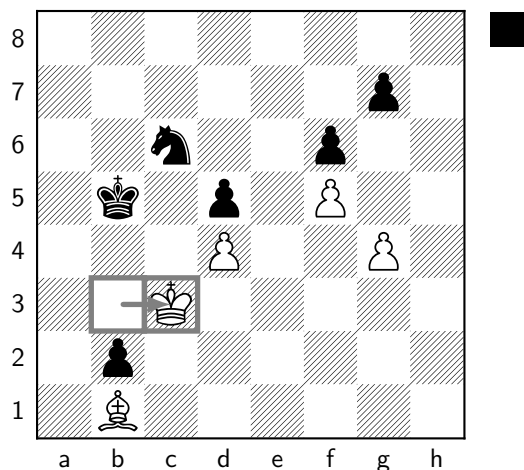
**6... ♖b6!**



**6... ♖b5? 7 ♙c3 ♖c6 8 ♙a2 ♖e7 9 ♖b3!**

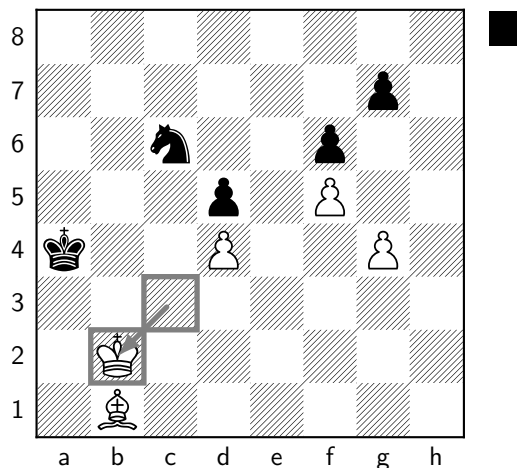
**7 ♙c3 ♖b5!** Now White is in zugzwang again. White's next is forced, since if 8 Kxb2 Kc4 with a direct win.

**8 ♖b3 ♖c6 9 ♙c3**



**9 ♙d3+ ♖a5 10 ♙x b2 ♖b4!**

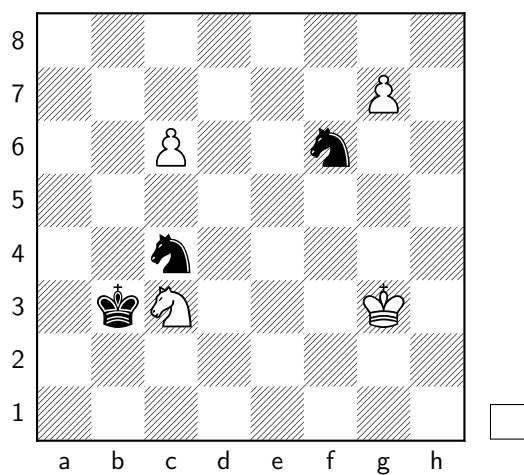
**9... ♖a4 10 ♙x b2**



**10 ♙a2 ♖a3 11 ♙b1 ♖b4 12 ♙d2 ♖b3 13 ♙d1 ♖c3 14 ♖e2 ♖c2**

**10... ♖b4 11 ♙c3 ♖a3!** The final finesse. White is once more in zugzwang. He cannot accept the pawn ending, and on 12 Kd2 comes 12...Kb2. — Before we move on to examples of domination in more complex settings, here are six studies for solving. An exercise, for those who wish to do so, is to set the positions up and play them against 'Fritz' or a similar program. It is necessary to give the computer only a few seconds to decide upon its moves. White is to play and win in all positions (see the following games).

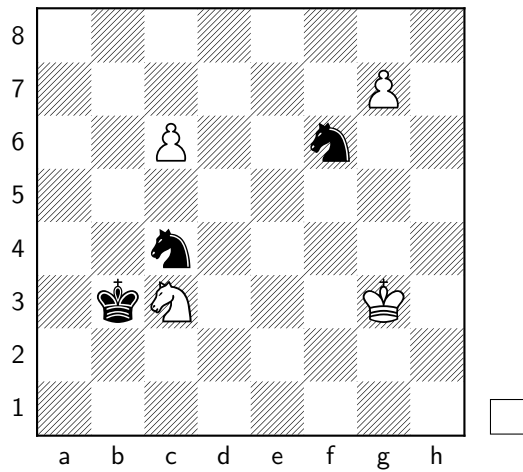
**0-1**



**Solution:** Sackmann, F.

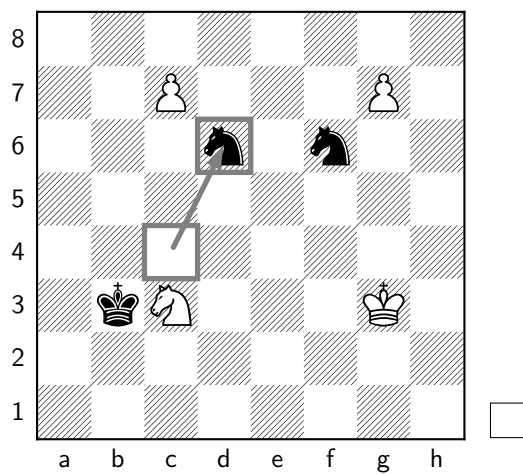
*Deutsche Schachzeitung* 1908

Result: 1-0



**1 c7** The only winning move.

**1... ♞d6**

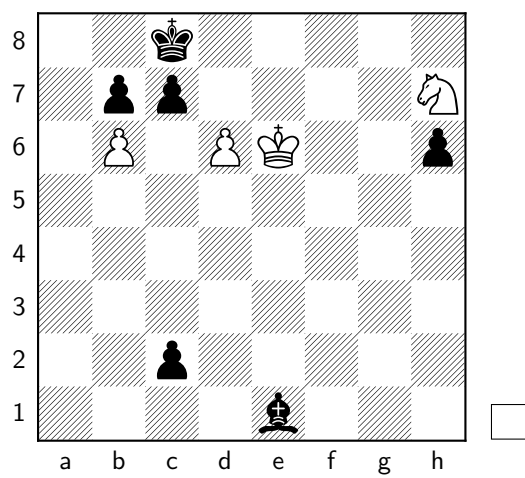


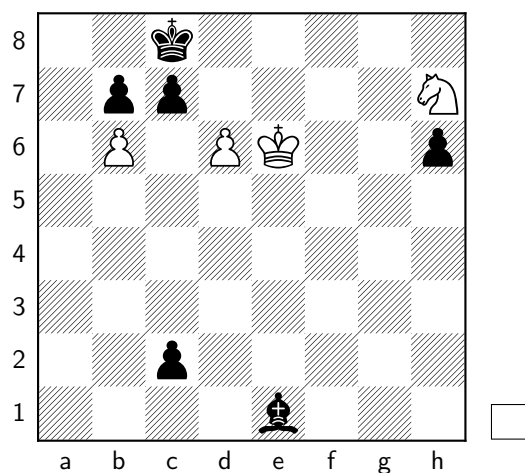
**1... ♞b6 2 ♞d5!**

**2 ♞e4!** A fantastic knight fork. White wins two tempi by sacrificing his knight.

**2... ♞f×e4+ 3 ♞f4 ♞f6 4 ♞e5!** White wins. The two knights are completely dominated by the king and pawns.

**1-0** \_\_\_\_\_





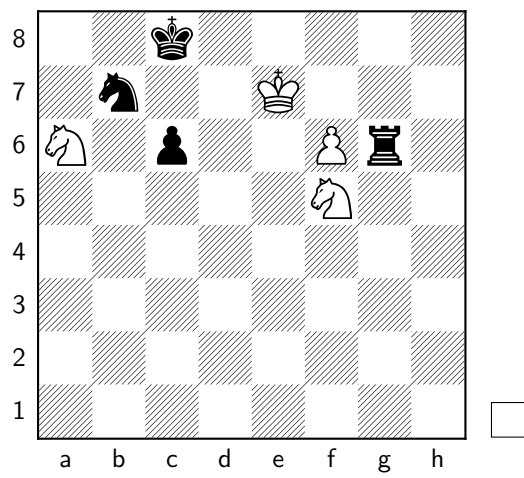
**1 d7+ ♔d8 2 ♘g5!** All other moves than these are worthless, as Black simply queens his c-pawn.

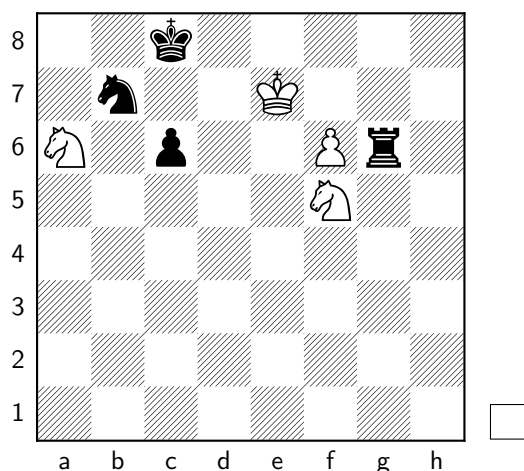
**2... h×g5 3 b×c7+ ♔×c7 4 ♔e7** Again it is the particular position of the pieces that defines Black's fate.

**4... ♙b4+ 5 ♔e8 c1 ♚ 6 d8 ♚+ ♔c6 7 ♚c8+** and White wins.

**1-0** \_\_\_\_\_

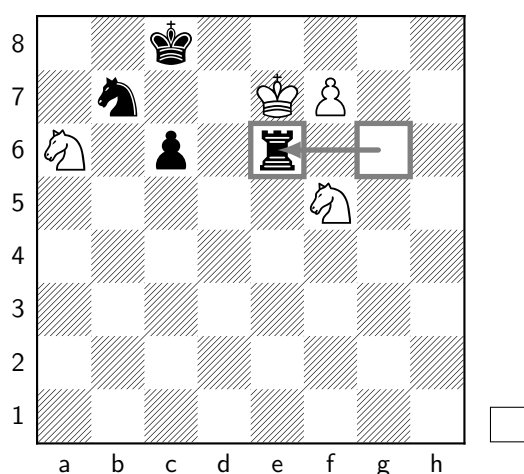






**1 f7** When you solve a study, perhaps by playing them against the computer, you will often find that some moves (often the first move) are not up for discussion. For the practical player wanting simply to improve his tournament play, this is a good exercise in decision-making. If there is only one move, make it, and see what the opponent has to offer in his defence.

**1... ♖e6+** This seems to be the only move;

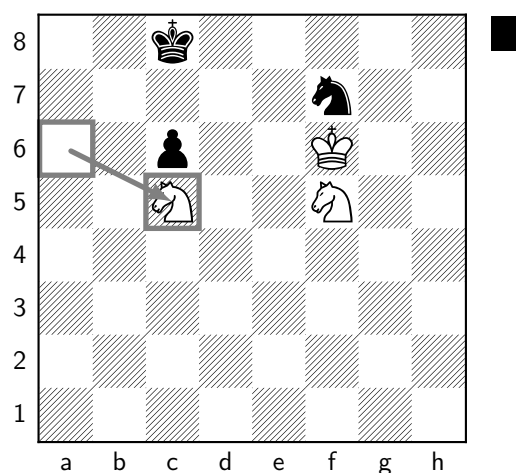


**1... ♖d8!? 2 f8 ♖!! ♖b7 3 ♖c5+ ♖b6 4**

**♖cd7+ ♖a5 5 ♖xg6 ♖b7 6 ♖ge5 c5 7 ♖c4+**

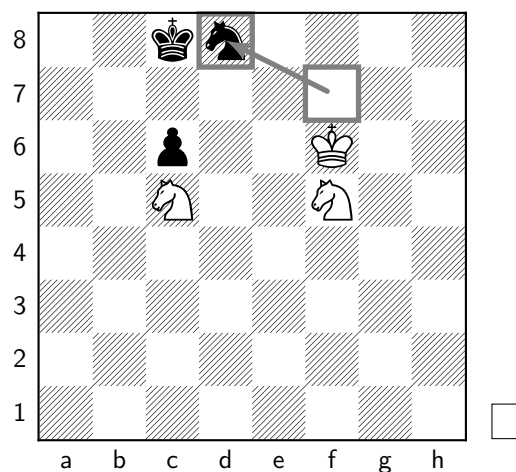
**2 ♖xg6 ♖d8+ 3 ♖f6!** White is dominating the black knight.

**3... ♖xg7 4 ♖c5!**



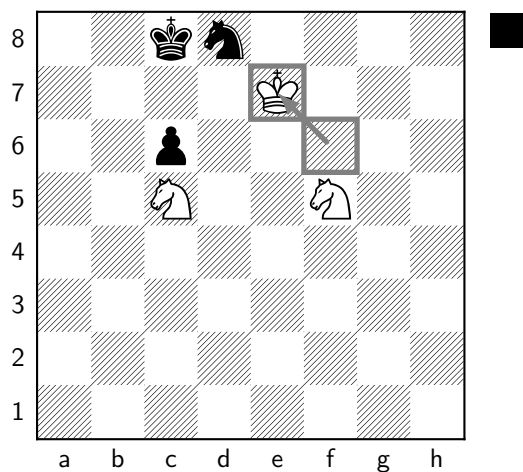
**4 ♖xg7? c5!**

**4... ♖d8**



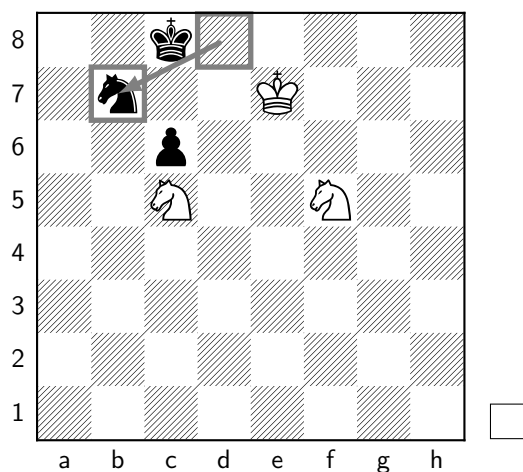
**4... ♖c7 5 ♖xg7 ♖b6 6 ♖d7+ ♖b5 7 ♖d6+ ♖b4 8 ♖e5**

**5 ♖e7!** Domination again.



5 ♖d6+? ♚b8! 6 ♜e7 ♜c7

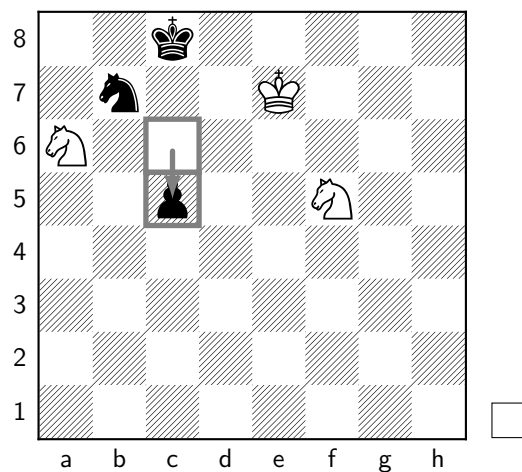
5... ♖b7



5... ♜c7 6 ♖d6 ♚b6 7 ♖a4+ ♜c7 8 ♖e8+ ♜c8 9 ♖b6+ ♜b7 10 ♖c4 ♜c8 11 ♖cd6+ ♜b8 12 ♜x d8

6 ♖a6!! Domination again.

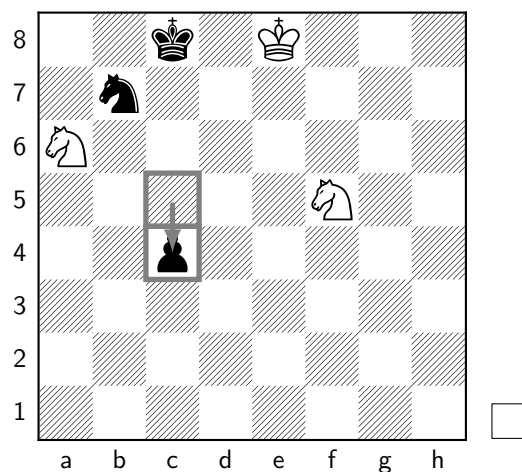
6... c5



6... ♖a5 7 ♖d6#

7 ♜e8! Now Black is mated on the next move.

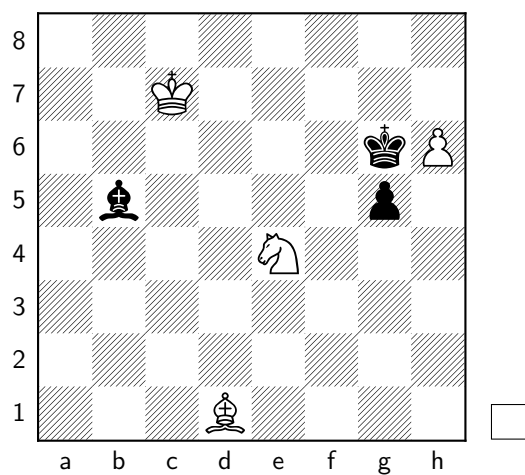
7... c4

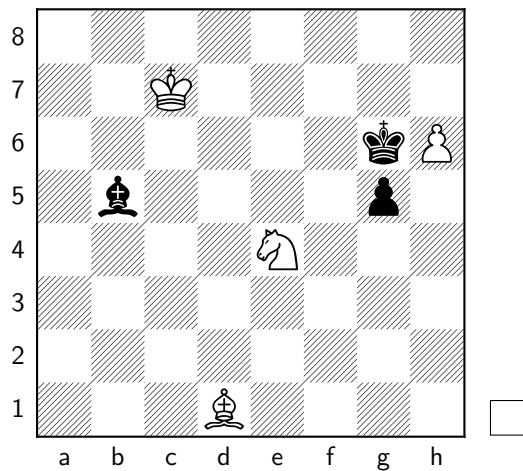


7... ♖a5 8 ♖d6#

8 ♖e7#.

1-0





**1 ♖c2!** This first move is not too hard to find, as no other moves make sense. Now, incredibly, the bishop has no safe squares, so Black is left with only one course of action.

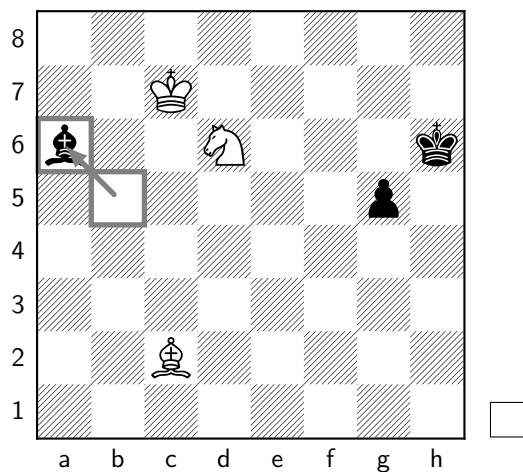
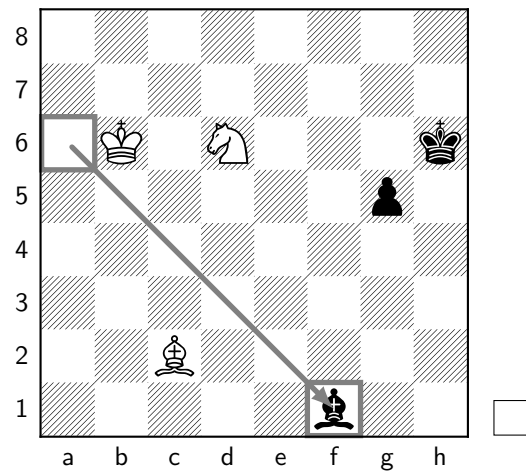
**1... ♙xh6 2 ♘d6!** The second point. Again the bishop lacks a safe resting point.

**2... ♜a6**

**3... ♜e2 4 ♘f5+**

**4 ♘f5+** and White wins.

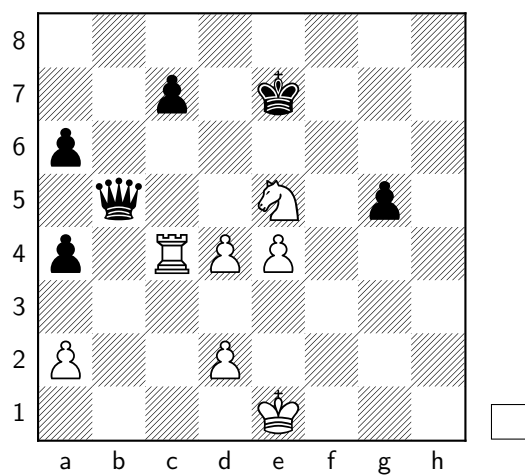
**1-0**



**2... ♜f1 3 ♘f5+**

**3 ♙b6!** Now the bishop is trapped.

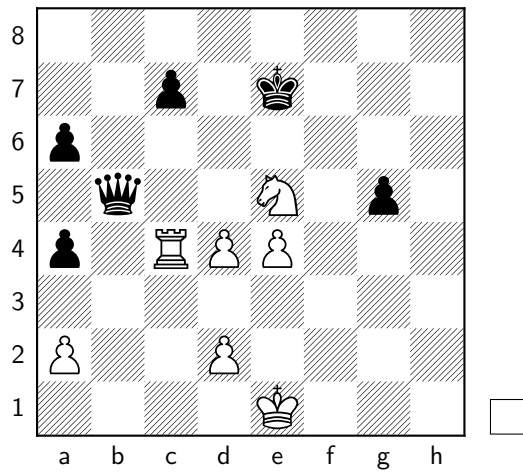
**3... ♜f1**



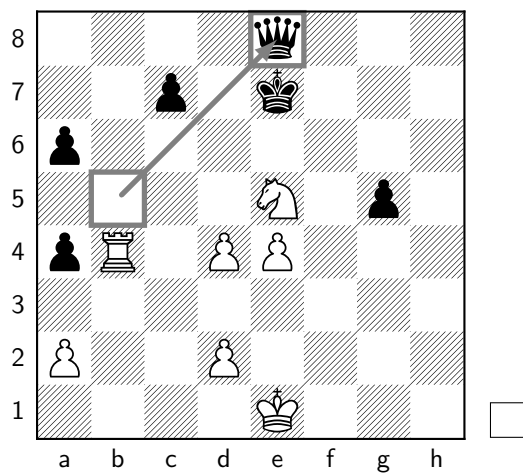
**Solution:** Rinck, H.

Result: 1-0

*Deutsche Schachzeitung* 1903

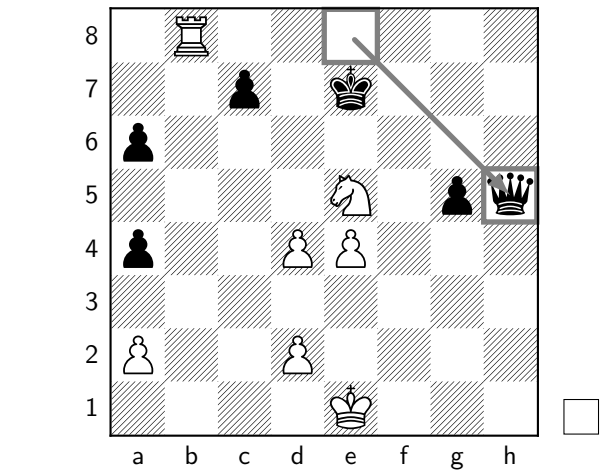


1 ♖b4! ♜e8



1... ♜xh8 2 ♘c6+

2 ♖b8! ♜h5

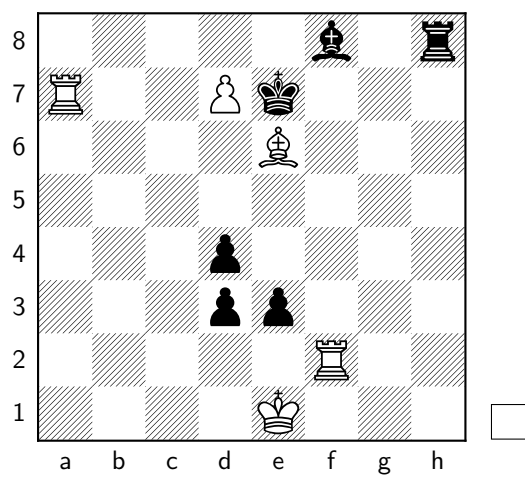


2... ♜xh8 3 ♘c6+

3 ♖h8! Now the black queen is trapped.

3... ♜xh8 4 ♘g6+ ♜f6 5 ♘xh8 ♜g7 6 d5  
♜xh8 7 a3 ♜g7 8 ♜f2 ♜f6 9 ♜f3 ♜e5 10 d3  
a5 11 ♜g4 and Black cannot save the pawn  
endgame.

1-0

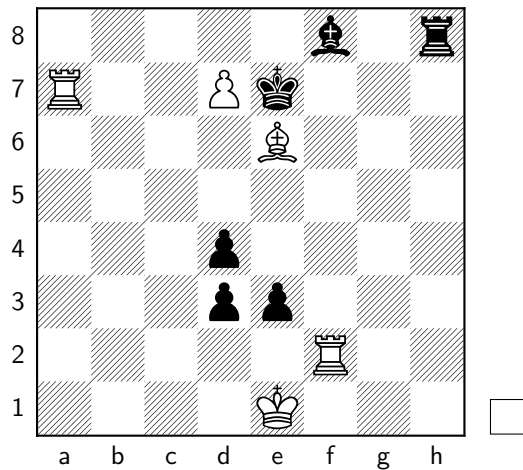




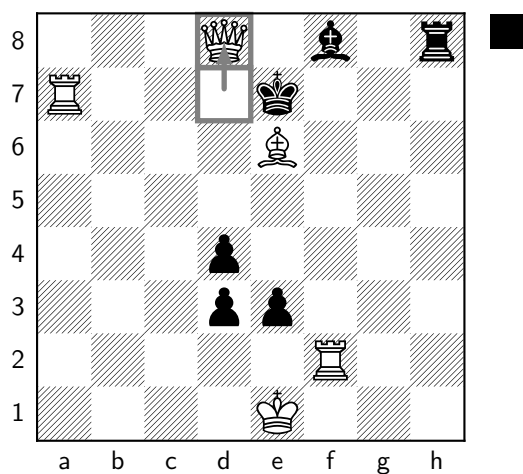
**Solution:** Horwitz, B.

Result: 1-0

*The Chess Monthly* 1885



**1 d8♔+!** This is the only move which gives White any hope of winning the game.



**1 ♙g4**

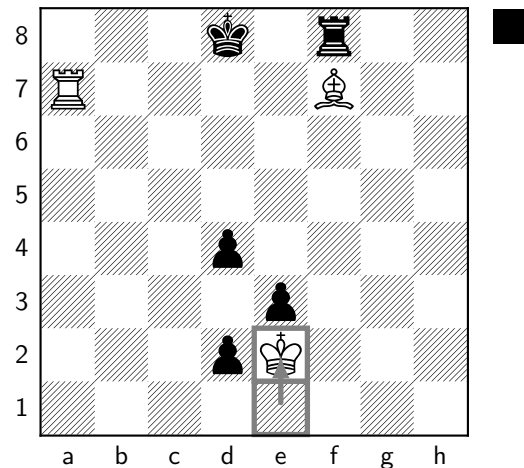
**1 ♖f7+ ♙xg4 2 ♖f6+ ♙e5 3 ♖a5+ ♙c5!! 4 ♖f1 ♙e4 5 ♖xc5 d2+ 6 ♙d1 ♙d3**

**1...♙xg4 2 ♖f6+!!** A brilliant resource.

**2...♖f8 3 ♙f7!!** Pure domination. Now Black can do nothing but move his pawns forward, after which he will soon face

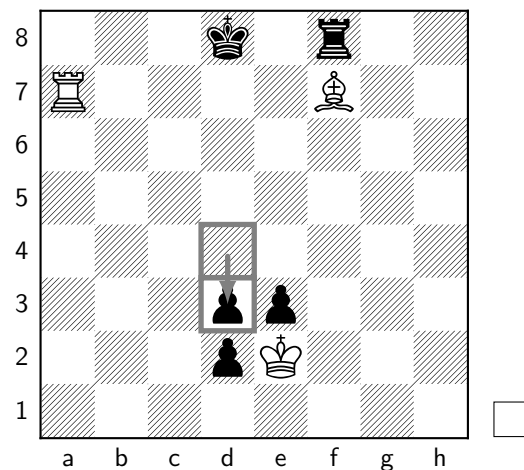
zugzwang. Both king and rook moves are answered by 4 Ra8+ winning the rook.

**3...d2+ 4 ♙e2!**



**4 ♙d1? d3 5 ♖b7 ♙c8 6 ♖e7 ♙b8**

**4...d3+** Black will run out of moves no matter what.



**4...d1♔+ 5 ♙xd1 d3 6 ♙e1**

**5 ♙d1 e2+ 6 ♙xd2** and White wins.

**1-0**

White: Krasenkow, M.  
 Black: Sakaev, K.  
 Opening ECO: E12  
 Result: 1-0

Copenhagen

2003

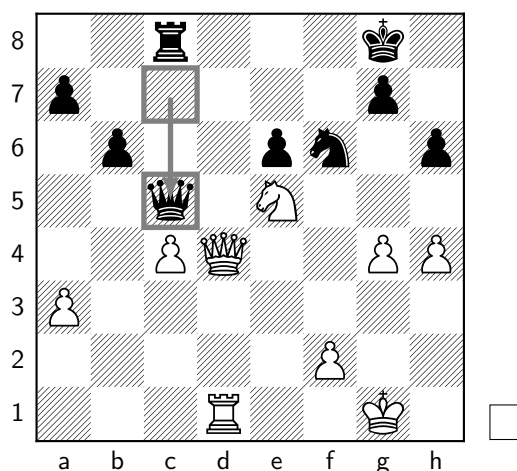
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 ♘c3 ♙b7 5 a3 d5 6 c×d5 ♘×d5 7 ♚c2 ♘×c3 8 b×c3 ♙e7 9 e4 O-O 10 ♙d3 c5 11 O-O ♚c8 12 ♚e2 ♙a6 13 ♚d1 ♙×d3 14 ♚×d3 ♘d7 15 e5 ♚c6 16 ♙g5 ♚ae8 17 ♚ad1 f6 18 e×f6 ♙×f6 19 ♙×f6 ♘×f6 20 ♘e5 ♚c7 21 c4! To some players this must seem an automatic move, but I cannot help being impressed. With this move White takes d5 away from the black knight, accepting that the c-pawn will be isolated. But this is all appearances. The strong knight on e5 cannot be challenged and protects c4 just fine. One should also note that White had no way to avoid getting an isolated pawn, so it is hardly a concession.

21...c×d4 22 ♚×d4 ♚d8 I am not sure these exchanges are in Black's interest. It will be harder for him to create counterplay with only one pair of rooks on the board.

23 ♚e3 ♚×d4 24 ♚×d4 ♚c8 25 g4! White decides that he has such firm control over the centre that he can afford to weaken his own kingside to challenge the black knight. I think he is right, but the game should not be over for that reason.

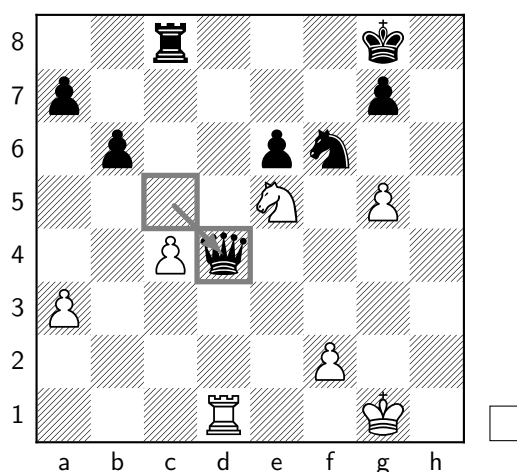
25...h6 26 h4 ♚c5? This is really weak and seems to indicate that, while Sakaev might have great strength in positions with a technical advantage, he has little talent for defence (relative to his peers, that is; I do not compare him with me). White has control over the centre, a brilliant knight, and control over the d-file; whereas Black has problems with his own knight and cannot get his pieces to work. The only plus he has right now is that White has opened his king. So by forcing the

exchange of queens Black is basically doing White's job for him. All dangers to White's king disappear and all his advantages remain.



26... ♚f8! 27 ♚d6 ♚×d6 28 ♚×d6 ♘e4 29 ♚×e6 ♚×f2 30 h5 ♘g5! 31 ♚e8+ ♚f8 32 ♚e7 ♘f3+ 33 ♘×f3 ♚×f3 34 ♚×a7 ♚g3+ 35 ♚f2 ♚×g4

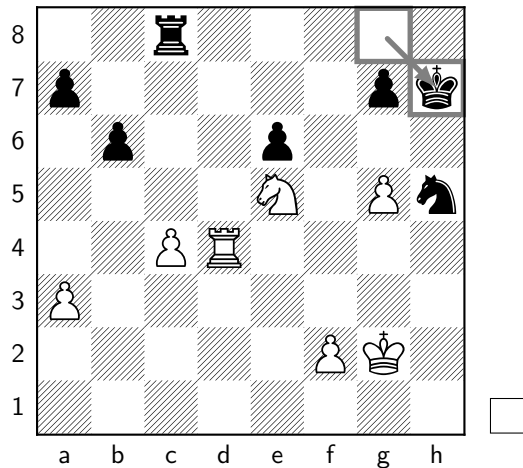
27 g5 h×g5 28 h×g5 ♚×d4



**28... ♖h5 29 ♔xc5 ♕xc5 30 g6 ♖c8 31 ♖d7 ♖a8**

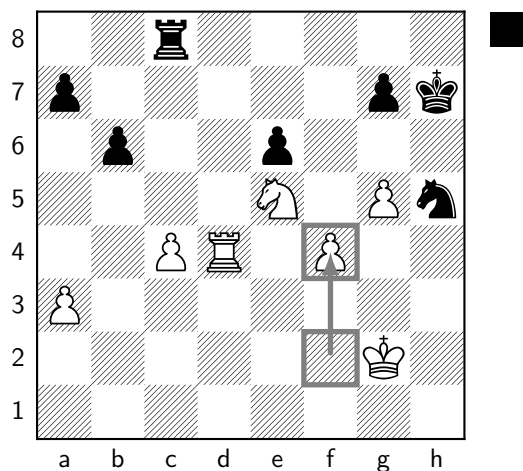
**29 ♖xd4 ♖h5 30 ♔g2!** White is preparing f2-f4 to shut the knight out of play, after which the king will protect the pawn.

**30... ♔h7**



**30... ♖f8 31 ♖g6! e5!? 32 ♖h4! ♖f4+ 33 ♖xf4 exf4 34 ♖xf8 ♔xf8 35 ♔f3**

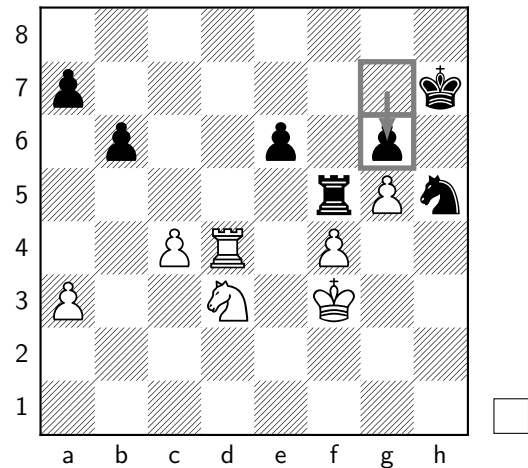
**31 f4?** A very careless move by Krasenkow that offers Sakaev a real chance of counterplay.



**31 ♔f3! ♖c5 32 ♔e4 b5 33 ♖d8 bxc4 34 g6+ ♔h6 35 f4 ♖f6+ 36 ♔e3**

**31... ♖f8 32 ♔f3 ♖f5** This was the resource Sakaev hoped would save the game for him. Now, although White easily prevents ...Nxf4, he is not able to eliminate all counterplay.

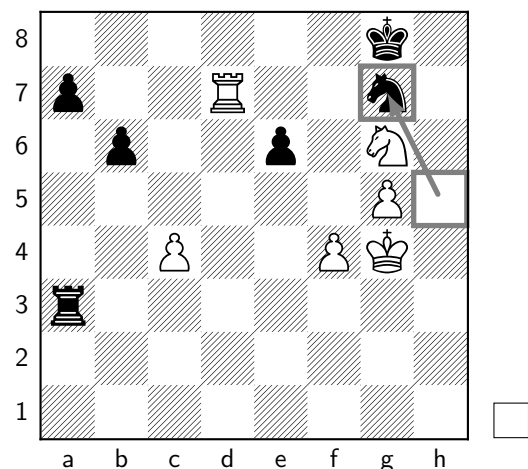
**33 ♖d3! g6?**



**33... e5! 34 ♔g4! exd4 35 ♔xf5 ♖g3+ 36 ♔e5 ♔g6! 37 a4 ♖e2 38 a5!? bxa5! 39 c5 ♖c3 40 ♖e1! a4 41 ♖f3 d3 42 f5+ ♔f7 43 ♖d4 ♖b5+ 44 ♔xd3**

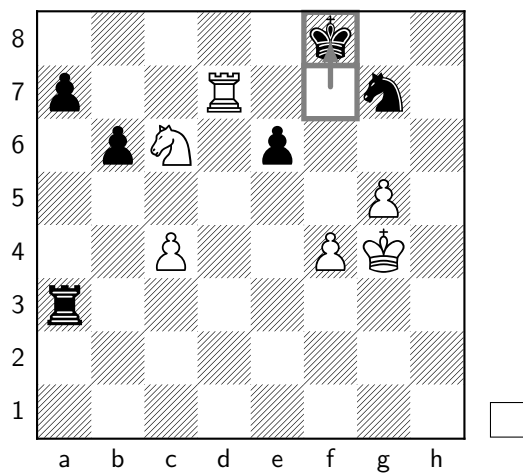
**34 ♖d7+ ♔g8 35 ♔g4!** Preventing all counterplay. Now Black can choose between giving up the queenside and giving up the kingside. He chooses the latter.

**35... ♖a5 36 ♖e5 ♖xa3 37 ♖xg6 ♖g7?!**



37... ♖g3 38 ♜e7 ♘f5 39 ♜×e6 ♘e3+ 40  
 ♙h5 ♘×c4 41 ♘e7+! ♙f8 42 ♘f5

38 ♜d8+ ♙f7 39 ♘e5+ ♙e7 40 ♘c6+ ♙f7  
 41 ♜d7+ ♙f8 Black has no defence.

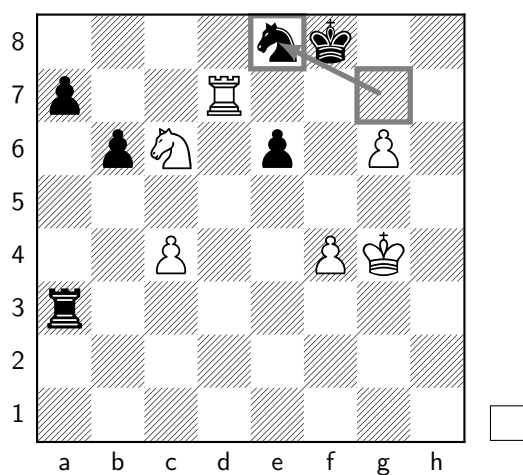


41... ♙g8 42 g6! ♘f5 43 ♙g5

41... ♙g6 42 ♘e7+ ♙f7 43 ♘f5+ ♙e8 44  
 ♜×g7 e×f5+ 45 ♙×f5 ♙f8 46 ♙g6

42 g6! With the threat of Rf7+, Ne7+ and  
 Rf8 mate.

42... ♘e8



42... ♘f5 43 ♙g5

43 ♜f7+

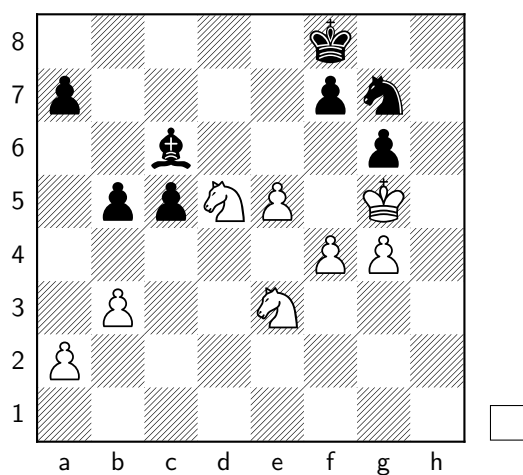
1-0

White: Anand, V.  
Black: Ponomariov, R.

Linares

2003

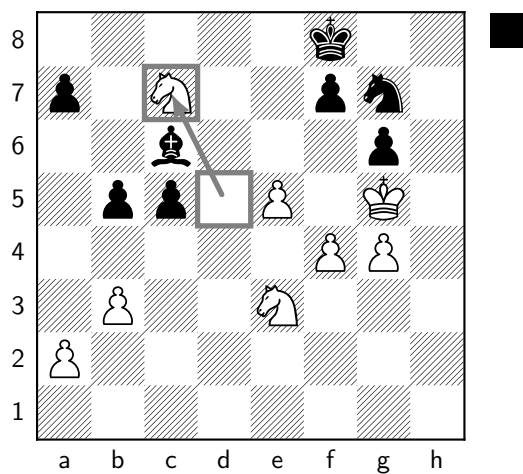
Result: 1-0



39 ♖c7!

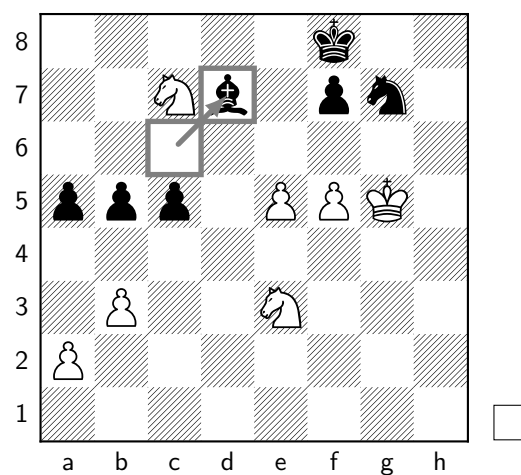
39... ♔e7 40 f5 gxf5 41 gxf5 ♕f8

40 f5 gxf5 41 gxf5 ♔d7



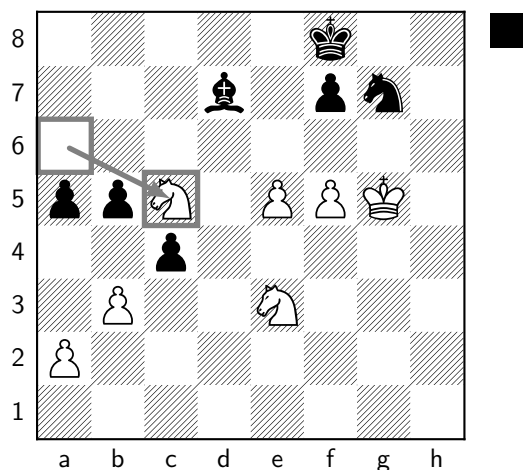
39 f5!?

39... a5 Attempts to activate the king unfortunately fail.



41... ♘e8 42 ♘xe8 ♕xe8 43 ♕f6

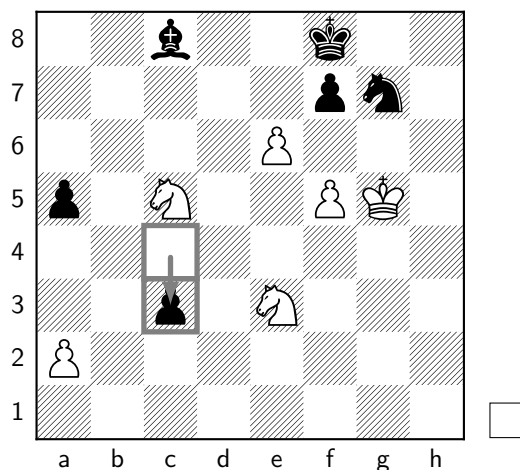
42 ♘a6! c4 43 ♘c5!



**43 bxc4 bxc4 44 dxc4?? b5**

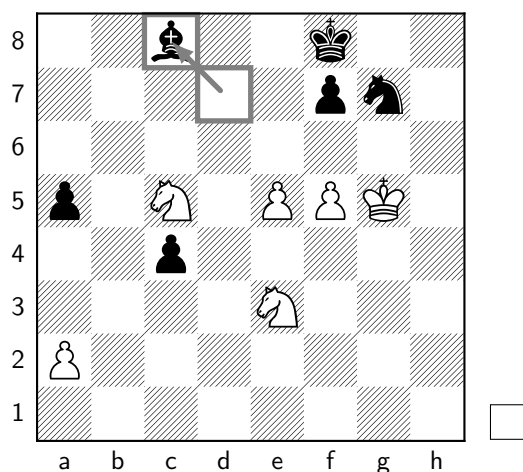
**43... bxc4 44 bxc4 bxc4 45 d4!?**  
Threatening Nd6xc4.

**45... d7 46 c5 c8**



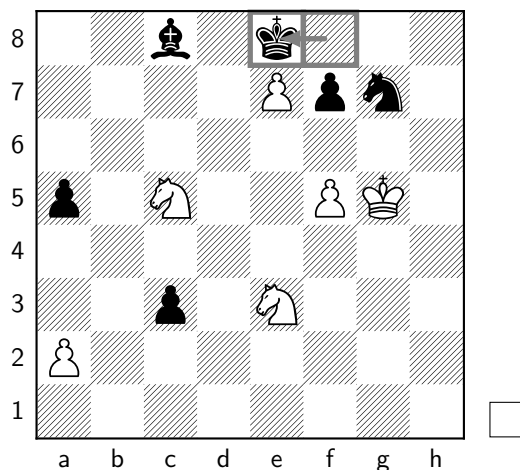
**47... fxe6 48 f6 d5 49 dxc4 e5 50 b6**  
**d6 51 dxc8 dxc8 52 g6 d6 53 d7+**  
**e8 54 dxe5 a4 55 a3! f8 56 d7+ e8**  
**57 b6**

**48 e7+! e8**



**46... b5? 47 a4**

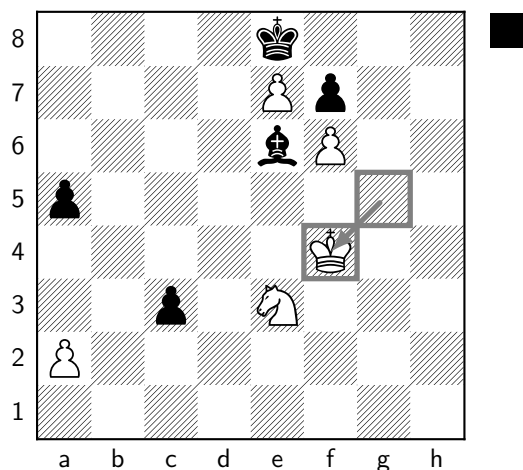
**47 e6!! c3**



**48... e7 49 f6+ f8 50 fxg7+ g7 51**  
**d4 e6 52 a3**

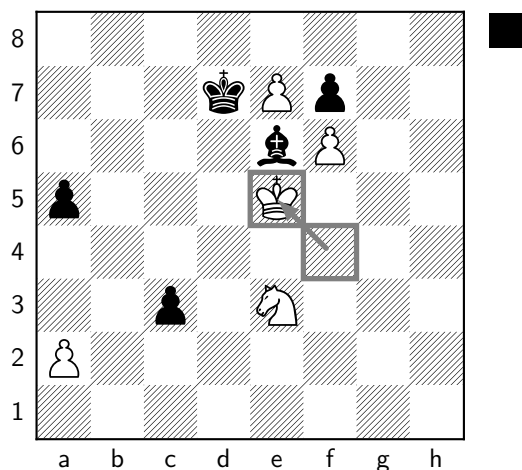
**49 f6** White is now completely winning.  
The safely protected passed e-pawn cannot  
be combated.

**49... d6+ 50 dxe6 exd6 51 f4** Anand  
calculates correctly that this manoeuvre  
wins.



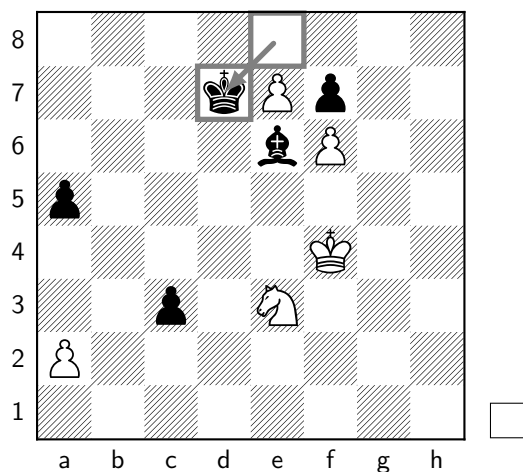
51 a3!? ♔d7 52 ♔h6! ♔e8 53 ♔g7 a4 54 ♔g8

51...♔d7



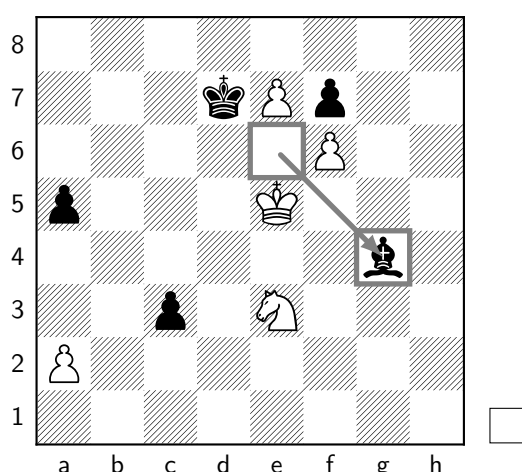
52 a3? ♔b3! 53 ♖g4 c2 54 ♖e5+ ♔e8 55 ♖d3 ♔c4 56 ♖c1

52...♔g4



51...♔x a2 52 ♖f5

52 ♔e5! Anand had to foresee this.



52...♔x a2 53 ♖f5 c2 54 ♖d6 c1 ♔ 55 e8 ♔+ ♔c7 56 ♔c8+

53 ♔d4 ♔d1 54 ♔xc3 ♔a4 Now Black can activate his king but will lose a piece in the process.

55 ♔d4 ♔e6 56 ♖d5 ♔f5 57 ♔c5 ♔e5 58 a3 ♔e6 59 ♖c7+ ♔xf6 60 e8 ♔ ♔xe8 61 ♖xe8+ ♔e6 62 ♔b5 ♔e5 63 ♔xa5 f5 64 ♖g7 The f-pawn cannot escape the knight.

1-0

## 4) Do not hurry and the prevention of counterplay

---

One of the most important aspects of the endgame is that it is not the middlegame. Though some dynamic features of the position remain, and though good calculation is definitely as valuable in the endgame as in any other phases of the game, and tactics still occur, the static elements in the position will generally increase in importance. If you remember the endgame above between Nielsen and Dreev, you might recall that the Danish number one evaluated the position incorrectly simply because he overrated the dynamic factors in the position (a common middlegame phenomenon) and underestimated the static features of the position. So an important part of improving your technical abilities is learning to realise when the position is becoming an endgame, so you can then react accordingly. This entire book could probably be said to have this as its main point.

— One of the sub-points that then emerges is the principle of *Do not hurry*, a result of a different frame of mind than appropriate for the middlegame, which could be called faster, heavier and with lots of cream, thank you (though this probably makes no sense to anyone!). The point is that the endgame is usually going through two phases of its own, and at times even three. These phases are different in nature and usually require a different frame of mind and method of play.

The first one is the purely technical phase, the phase we are discussing here in the book. Here the static features are of primary importance. The player with the advantage is looking for the best moment to go into the second phase. We will return to this first phase in a moment.

— The second phase starts the moment one of the players seeks a confrontation. Often this is through a pawn race or a pawn break. It can also be a rook leaving its defensive responsibilities behind in the hope of gains through active measures. In this phase the tactical aspects of the position are paramount and it is necessary to calculate correctly when entering this phase.

— The third phase only occurs occasionally. It is that of theoretical endgames with very few pieces and pawns on the board. Here I am only talking about positions that can be checked with tablebases and similar theoretical positions from endgame manuals.

The principle of *Do not hurry* applies to the first of these three phases. It simply means that the player with the advantage should not try to prove his advantage before the absolutely most preferable moment. It also means that sometimes it pays off psychologically to manoeuvre around a bit before seeking the confrontation. The number of games where the defending side helpfully worsens his position are endless. Capablanca was famous for not wishing to win too soon, and Karpov has the same reputation. The flipside to this is that even these two great endgame players have occasionally missed the most favourable moment for seeking confrontation, and after this faced additional problems in winning, or even failed to win altogether. The balance is not easy, and only good experience from practical play and from analysing your own and others' endgame performances can develop a strong intuition. But before this is possible, it is of course necessary to understand that it should be developed at all.

---

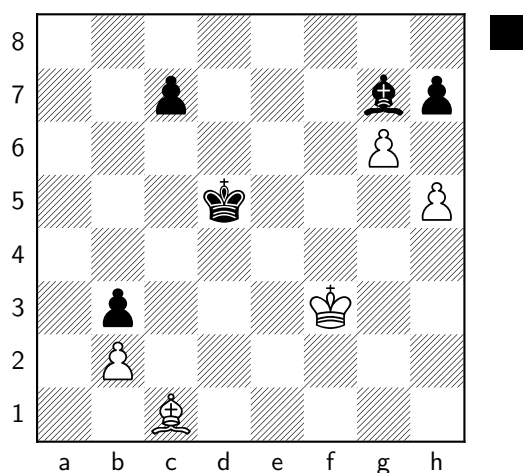


White: Spiridonov, N.  
Black: Spassky, B.

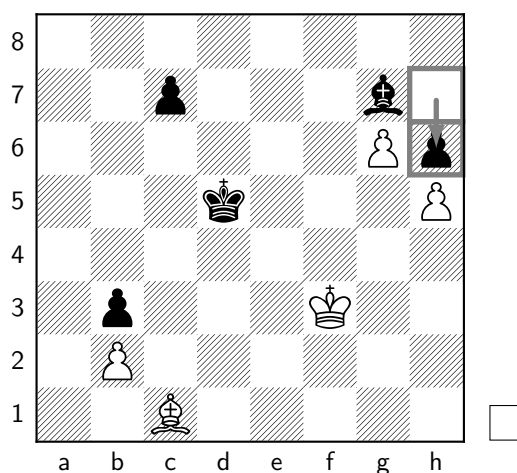
Sochi

1973

Result: 1/2-1/2



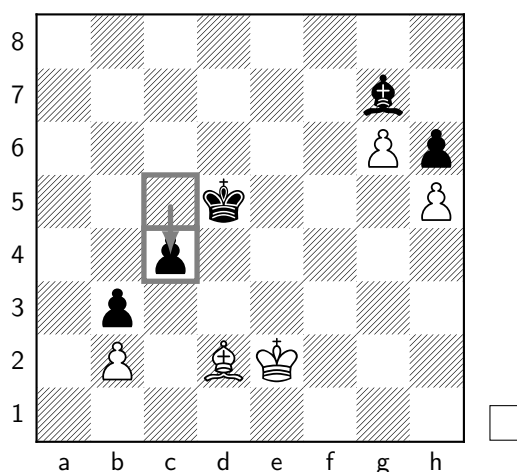
**35...h6?** Spassky played this incorrect move, probably thinking that the exchange of a couple of pawns would lead to a draw because of the limited amount of material remaining on the board. However, analysis shows that this is probably not the case. If we consider the abstract reasoning behind this move being a mistake, then we should talk about weaknesses. White has a weak pawn on b2 and Black has a majority on the queenside, so this is where he should win the game. With the text move he creates a weakness of his own on h6 and helps White by not undermining the g6-pawn, which otherwise would be up for grabs.



**35...h6 36 h6xg6 c5 37 ♖e3 c4 38 ♜f3 ♜e5 39 ♜d2 ♜f5 40 ♜c1 ♜d4 41 ♜e2 ZZ-**

**36 ♜e2** Now Black has a weakness of his own, while White has a passed pawn on the sixth rank. The draw is imminent.

**36...c5 37 ♜d2 c4** Black cannot win.



**37...♜xb2 38 ♜xh6 ♜e6 39 ♜d3 ♜d4 40 ♜c1 b2 41 ♜xb2 ♜xb2 42 ♜c4 ♜d4 43 h6**

♔f6 44 h7 ♔g7 45 ♔d5 ♔×g6 46 h8♙ ♙×h8  
47 ♔×c5  
38 ♙c3 ♙×c3 39 b×c3 ♔e6  
1/2-1/2

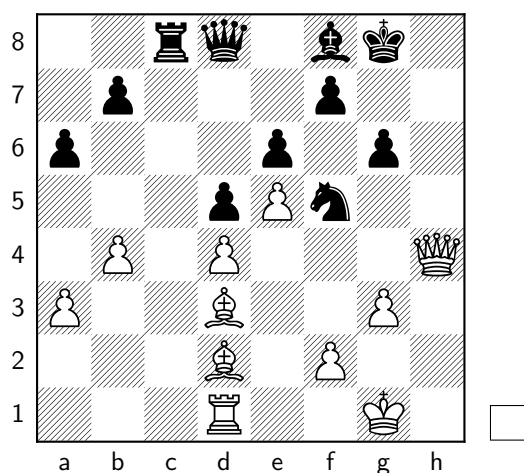
---

White: Anand, V.  
Black: Karpov, A.

Candidates match, Brussels

1991

Result: 1/2-1/2



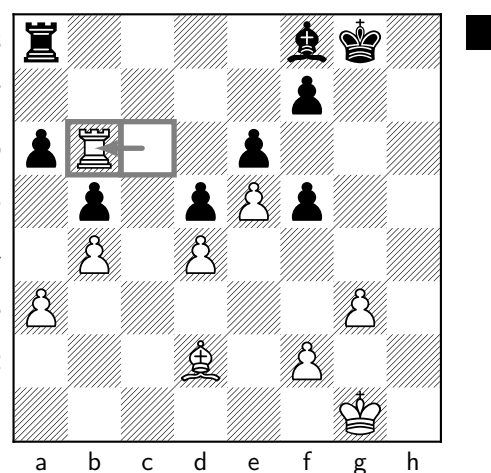
**30 ♖×d8** White goes for the endgame through a series of exchanges.

**30... ♜×d8 31 ♙×f5 g×f5 32 ♖c1** With a solid position and control over the only available open file White has a clear advantage.

**32... b5** Otherwise White could have considered 33 a4 with the idea 33...b5 34 a5, when the a6-pawn is fixed and the white a-pawn is closer to the back rank.

**33 ♜c6** Forcing Black into a passive position.

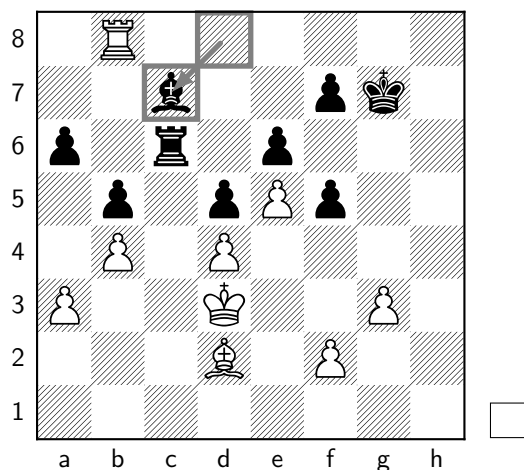
**33... ♜a8 34 ♜b6!** Do not hurry. Instead use your time to prevent all counterplay.



**34 ♜c7 a5!**

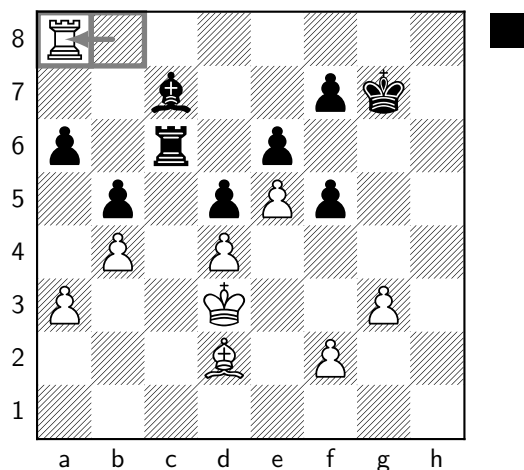
**34... ♙e7 35 ♙f1 ♙d8 36 ♜b7 ♙g7 37 ♙e2 ♜c8 38 ♙d3 ♜c6 39 ♜b8!** White has a definite advantage due to the intrusion of his rook into the black position. What Black hopes for is to play ...f6 at some point and create counterplay. This is a situation along the lines that if nothing happens, then White is likely to win, though it is a delicate balance as to whether the position is winning or not.

**39... ♙c7?** This is a definite mistake as Black now gets into a nasty pin that forces him into zugzwang.



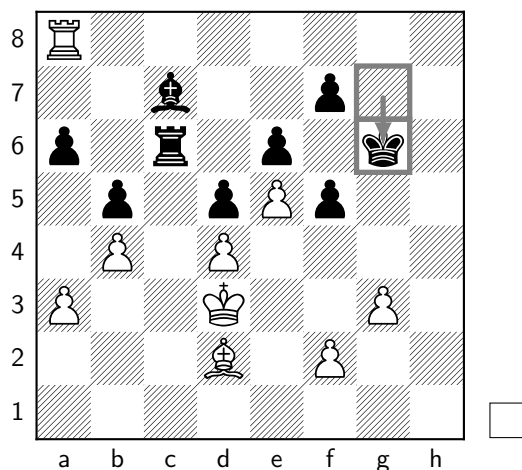
39... ♕e7

40 ♖a8?!



40 ♖c8!

40... ♖g6

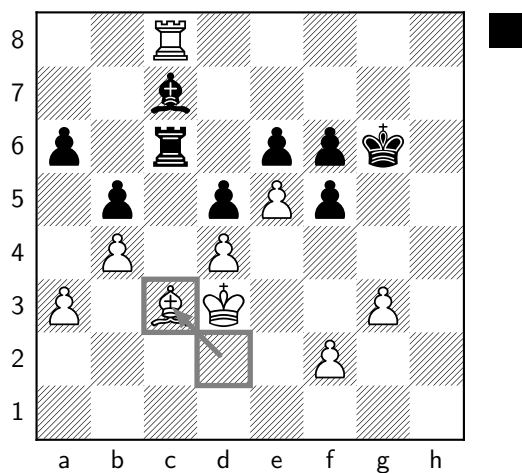


40... f6!? 41 ♕f4 ♖g6 42 ♖g8+ ♖h7 43 ♖c8  
♖c4 44 ♖e8 ♖c6 45 ♖f8 f×e5 46 ♕×e5 ♕×e5  
47 d×e5

41 ♖c8? Anand played this inaccurate  
move, and after

41... f6! Black had good counterplay. The  
game continued

42 ♕c3



42 ♕f4 ♖c4

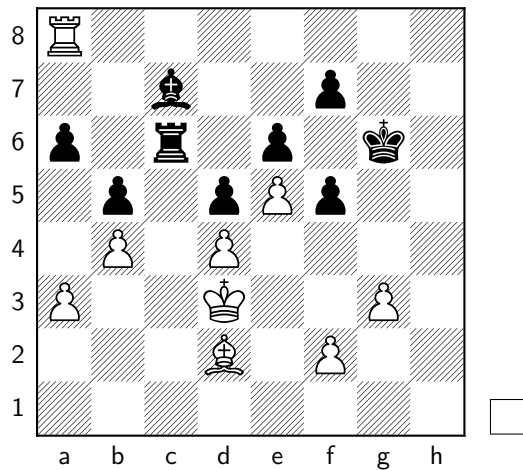
42... ♖f7 43 e×f6 ♖×f6 44 ♕d2 ♖c4 45  
♖f8+ ♖g6 46 ♖a8 ♖c6 47 ♖g8+ ♖f7 48 ♖c8  
♖c4 49 ♖a8 ♖c6 50 ♖a7 ♖g6 51 ♕e3 ♕d6  
52 ♕d2 ♕c7 53 ♖a8 ♕d6 54 ♖h8 ♖g7 55  
♖h6 ♕c7 56 ♖h1 ♕d6 57 f3 ♕c7 58 g4 f×g4  
59 f×g4 ♕d6 60 ♖h6 ♕f8 61 ♕g5 ♖g8 62

**♖h1 ♗g7 63 ♜e7** and a draw was agreed. —  
How should White have continued after  
40...Kg6 - ? (see the following game).

**1/2-1/2**

---

# Analysis Anand - Karpov



**41 ♖g8+!** This prevents Black from playing ...f6 and, at the same time, is an illustration of the correct frame of mind. Do not rush to prove your advantage; instead make small improvements throughout the endgame, and proving the advantage will be easy in the end.

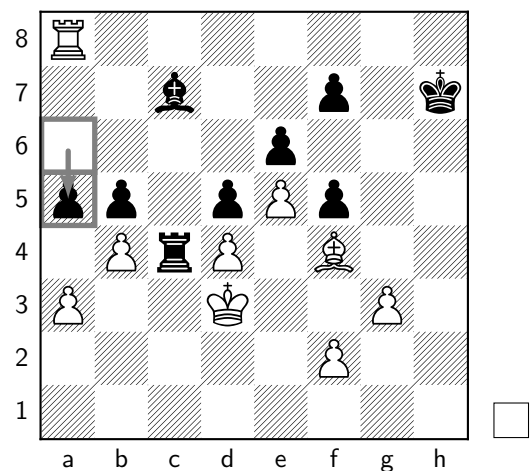
**41... ♖h7 42 ♜c8 ♖g6** All White has achieved with his last two moves is to improve the rook's position slightly, but together with his next move this is enough to prevent Black's idea of ...f6.

**43 ♜f4! ♜c4** Forced.

**43... ♖g7 44 ♜g5!**

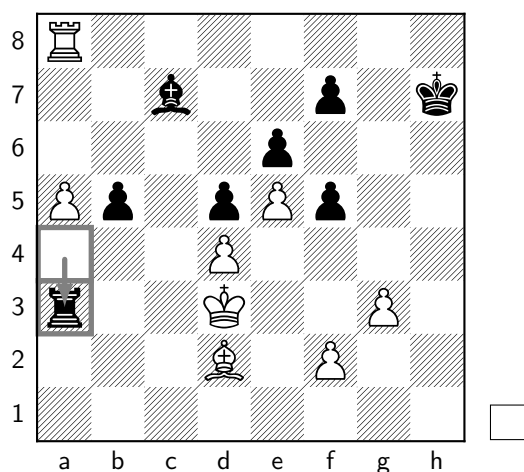
**44 ♜g8+!** This time the check is given to force the black king away from its strong position on g6.

**44... ♖h7 45 ♜a8 a5!?** Black needs to try something.



**45... ♜c6 46 ♜g5 ♖g6 47 ♜e7**

**46 bxa5 ♜a4 47 ♜d2 ♜xa3+**



**47... ♖b6 48 ♗b4!**

**48 ♖e2 ♗g7 49 ♗b4 ♖a4 50 ♗f8+ ♗g6 51 a6 ♗b6 52 ♗c5 ♗xc5 53 dxc5** and one of the passed pawns will queen quickly. — When I was younger I noticed that when I had positions I could not possibly win, I would often win anyway if I changed my strategy from trying to win the position to letting the opponent try to draw. It turned out that once I did not force my advantage, which would not be enough anyway, but just manoeuvred around, my opponent's position would quickly collapse. Sometimes when we have the advantage, but grieve because we sense that we cannot possibly win the position, we should remember the task of the opponent. While we cannot find a forced win after a certain move, the opponent needs to make sure all the time that all lines do not lose. To defend is to be OK in all variations. To win is to succeed in only one. For this reason a much greater practical pressure is put on the defender in an endgame. The majority of players cannot cope well with this and crack under the pressure. Or else they simply overlook a detail, and suddenly their position becomes difficult, and every move becomes a possible loss. This is one way to achieve victory in a drawn position. — Obviously the same strategy is possible in lost positions. Do not despair if your

position is untenable. The game is not lost before the arbiter stops the clock. — With one of my pupils the first thing we did together was talk about lost positions. He had them constantly. Instead of trying to attack when he had lost a pawn or a piece, he would play on as if nothing had happened. Very soon his results improved dramatically and we could go on to discuss things such as how to get an advantage. — An important aspect of Do not hurry is so important that I have given it its own place in this chapter. It deals with having a significant static advantage and transforming it into a full point by preventing the opponent's attempts at creating counter-chances. So with the patient frame of mind we have already adopted, we move on to: (see the following game).

## The prevention of counterplay

---

The German grandmaster Ludger Keitlinghaus once said to me:

*'Chess is in some ways like football: if you win a pawn and nothing happens, you win.'*

— He is right of course. If you win a pawn and your opponent is unable to create counterplay, then you will eventually win the endgame. Or as GM Henrik Danielsen always says, 'you only need one pawn to win.' Meaning that you have no need to chase further material gains if it gives your opponent active possibilities. This does not count just when you have an extra pawn. You can have other advantages than material advantages, such as a bishop being stronger than a knight, assisted by a distant passed pawn.

Like so many other aspects of the endgame this is very much about frame of mind. Most reasonable players can find the different possibilities in a typical endgame, but the ability to choose between them and to evaluate them correctly is all to do with frame of mind. The strongest technical players, Karpov, Andersson, Capablanca and so on, are all excellent at prophylaxis, the prevention of the opponent's ideas. This is often referred to as a middlegame concept, but it is just as present in the endgame. One example of failure to prevent the opponent's counterplay is the following game from the 1992 candidates match (see the following game).

---

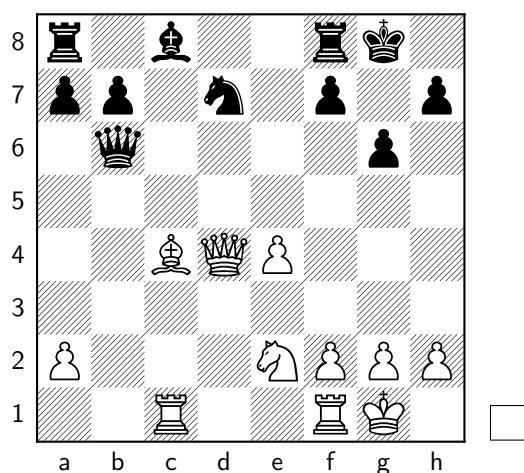


White: Yusupov, A.  
Black: Timman, J.

Candidates match, Linares

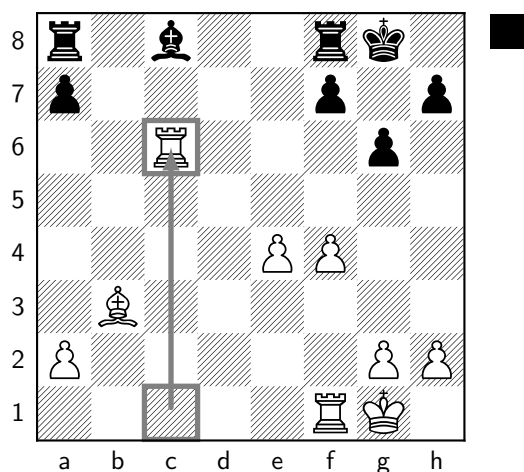
1992

Result: 1/2-1/2



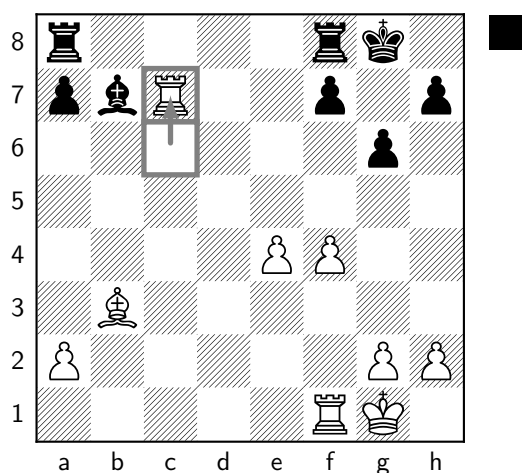
**18 ♖b3!** It is hard to suggest a good continuation here for Black. Timman chooses to give up a pawn. By tactical means he regains it immediately, but he has other problems to face.

**18... ♙×d4 19 ♘×d4 ♘e5 20 f4 ♘c6 21 ♘×c6 b×c6 22 ♖×c6!**



**22 e5**

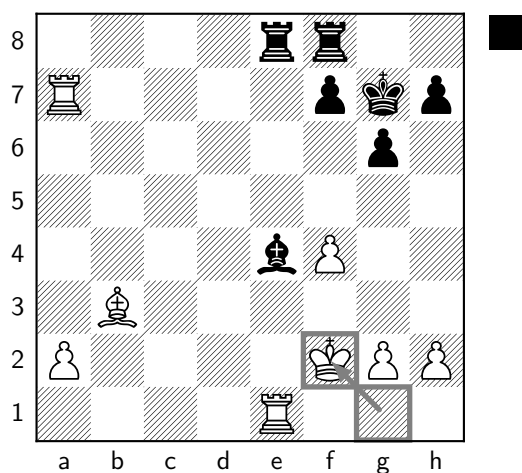
**22... ♖b7 23 ♖c7**



**23 ♖c4? ♖a6**

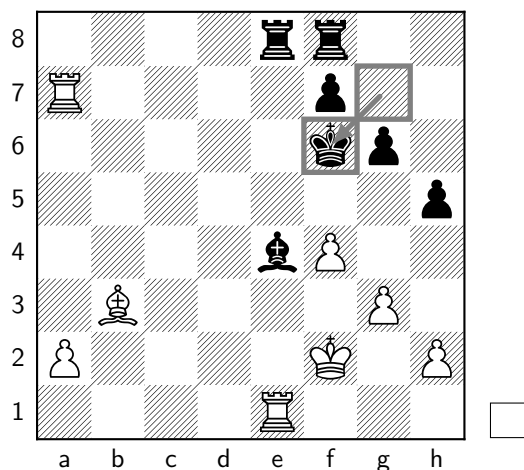
**23... ♖×e4 24 ♖e1!** The final piece enters the game with deadly effect. Black cannot allow Re1-e7 winning the f7-pawn. Therefore he has to give up the a-pawn.

**24... ♖ae8 25 ♖×a7 ♔g7 26 ♔f2**



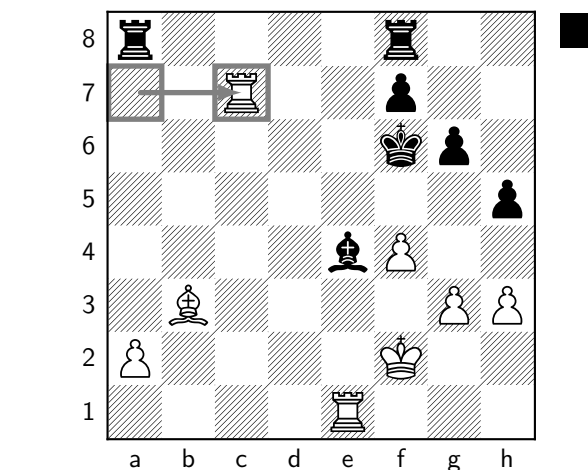
**26 g4!?**

**26... h5 27 g3 ♔f6** Black still cannot free himself.



**27... Ra8 28 Rxa8! Qxa8 29 Re7**

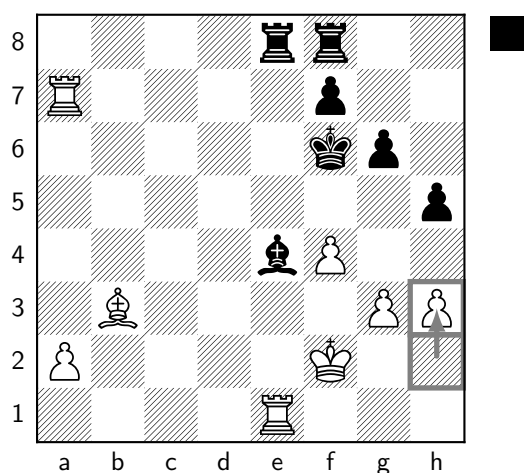
**28 h3?!** White wants to play g3-g4, a sound desire, but now Black has a move that gives him a little freedom.



**29 Rxa8! Qxa8 30 Rc1 Qd8 31 Rd1!**

**29... Qf5 30 h4** A sound move. Other moves were also possible.

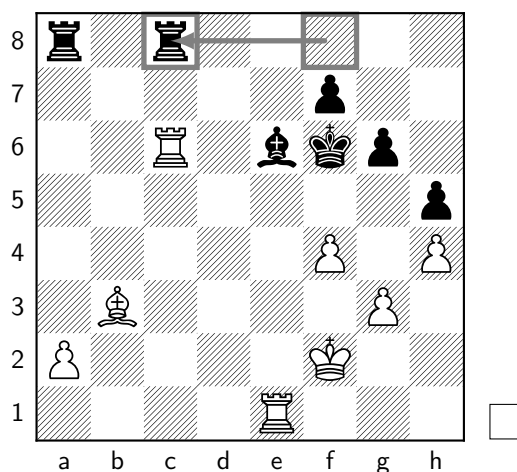
**30... Qe6 31 Rc6 Qfc8?!** White is very pleased to exchange of a pair of rooks, as it limits Black's counterplay.



**28 Rc7!**

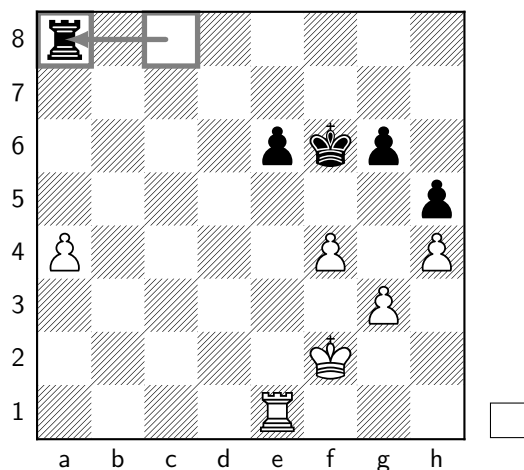
**28... Ra8!** Given only half a chance Timman takes himself a bit of freedom.

**29 Rc7**



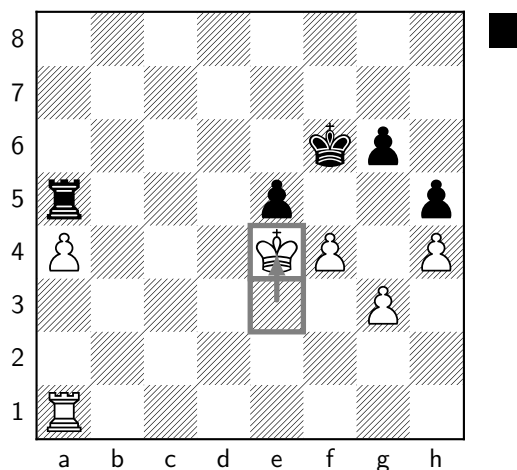
**31... Qfe8!? 32 a4 Qg7 33 Qxe6 fxe6 34 Qe4**

**32 Rxc8 Rxc8 33 Qxe6 fxe6 34 a4 Ra8**



34... ♖c4 35 ♖a1 ♖c2+ 36 ♔e3 ♜c3+ 37  
 ♔e4 ♜xg3 38 a5 ♜b3 39 a6 ♜b4+ 40 ♔d3  
 ♜b8 41 a7 ♜a8 42 ♜a5! e5!? 43 fxe5+ ♔f5  
 44 ♔d4 g5 45 h×g5 ♔xg5 46 ♔c5 h4 47  
 ♔c6 h3 48 ♔b7 h2 49 ♜a1

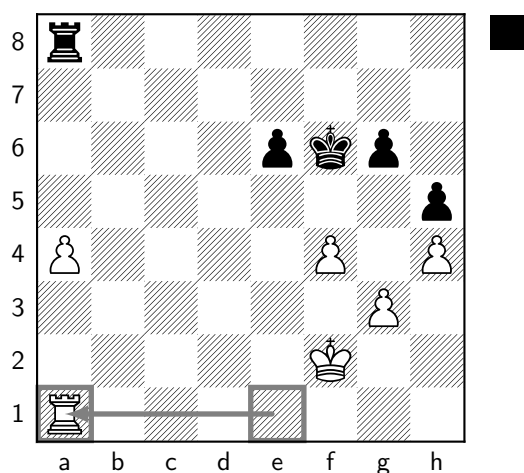
35 ♜a1?? The final mistake, throwing the  
 win away.



37 fxe5+ ♔x5 38 ♔d3 ♔d5 39 ♔c3 ♔c6  
 40 ♔b4 ♜e5

37... e×f4 38 ♔×f4 ♔e6 39 ♔e4 g5 40 h×g5  
 ♜×g5 41 ♔f3 ♜a5 42 ♜e1+ ♔f5 43 ♜e4 ♜c5  
 44 ♜e3 ♜a5 45 ♜a3 ♔e5 46 ♔e3 ♔e6 47  
 ♔e2 ♔d6 48 ♔f2 ♔e6 49 ♜e3+ ♔d5 50 ♜a3  
 ♔e6 51 ♔e3 h4 52 g4 ♔f6 53 ♔f4 ♔g6 54  
 ♔f3 ♔g5 55 ♜a2 h3

1/2-1/2



35 ♜e4!

35... ♜a5 36 ♔e3 e5! Black manages to  
 create counterplay with his rook against  
 the white pawns.

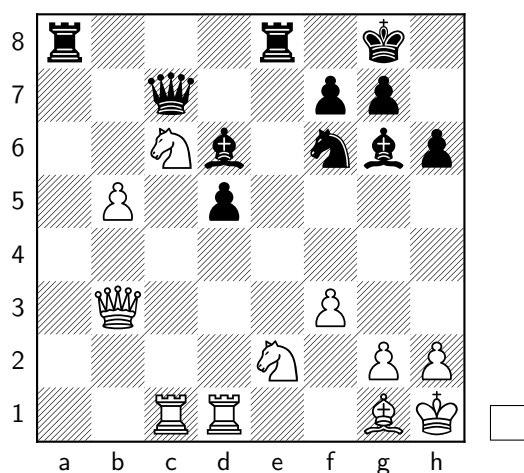
37 ♔e4

White: McShane, L.  
Black: Sakaev, K.

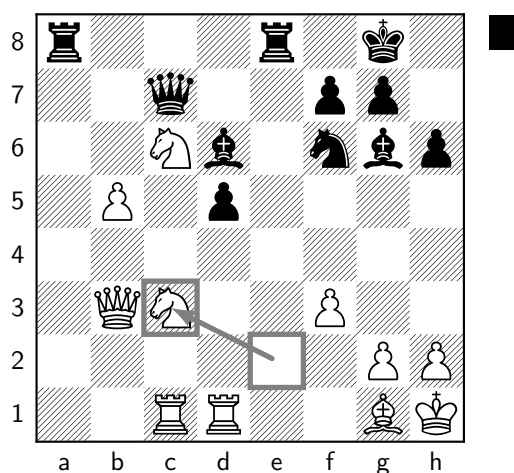
Copenhagen

2003

Result: 0-1



**39 ♖c3?** Nimzowitsch said that isolated pawns should be blockaded, whereas Larsen rather wanted to win them. I think that Larsen lived on his enormous imagination and resourcefulness. The d4-square is more important than the black d-pawn. Now White wasted time and Black manages to create counterplay. As White would probably have won if he had focused his energies on preventing counterplay and just advanced the b-pawn patiently, there are good reasons to question his strategy.

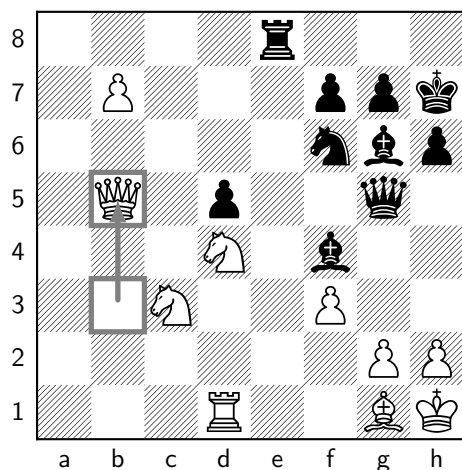


**39 b6 ♕b7 40 ♖ed4 ♗f4 41 ♖a1 ♖xal 42 ♖xal**

**39... ♗f4 40 ♖a1 ♖xal 41 ♖xal** Now Black is allowed a moment's peace to create counterplay. As we shall see, things can quickly go the other way. The d5-pawn might be weak, but there is no reason to win this pawn; in fact it is almost an advantage for White to keep it on the board.

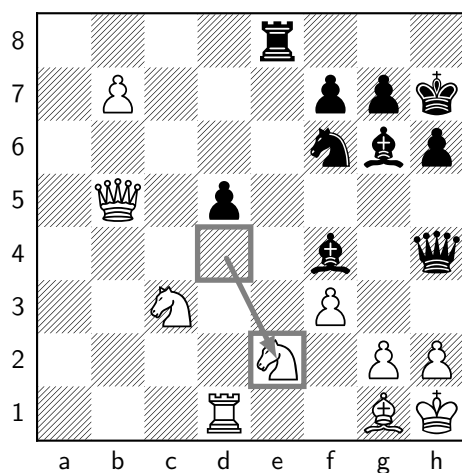
**41... ♕d6 42 ♖d1 ♕e6 43 ♖d4 ♕e5 44 b6 ♕g5 45 b7 ♖h7** Objectively White might still be doing fine, but practically speaking it is another matter. Black has managed to get the queen to the kingside (as opposed to being stuck on b7 blockading as after 39 b6) and now has a lot of counterplay.

**46 ♕b5!** A nice move, keeping control.



**46 ♖c6 ♗h5?! 47 ♜f2!**

**46... ♜h4 47 ♗de2!** White pays attention to his opponent's ideas and tries to prevent them in advance, as he should.

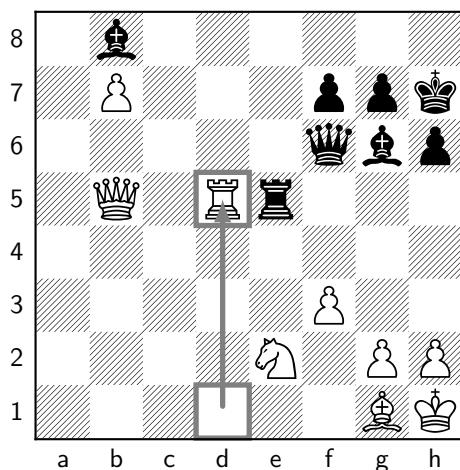


**47 ♗xh5?! ♗h5! 48 g4 ♜xg4! 49 ♗xf4 ♗xf4 50 ♜f1 ♜d7 51 ♗e2 ♜f5 52 ♗xf4 ♜xf4 53 ♜a7 ♜b4 54 b8 ♜ ♜xb8 55 ♜xb8 ♜xb8**

**47... ♜b8 48 ♗xh5** White has now won the pawn, but will it make him happy?

**48... ♜e5!** The rook is brought to the kingside as well.

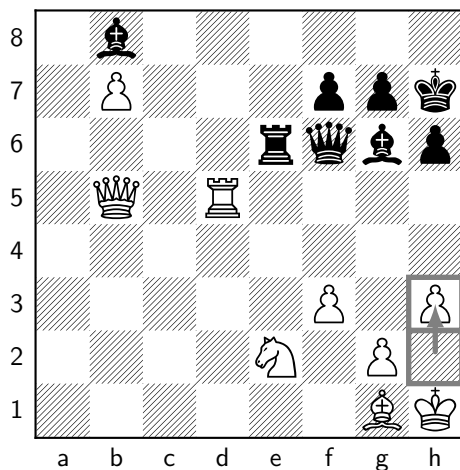
**49 ♗xf6+ ♜xf6 50 ♜d5**



**50 ♜c4!?**

**50... ♜e6** How should White continue?

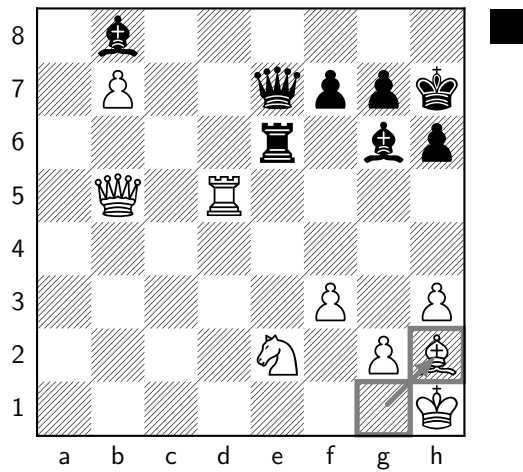
**51 h3?!** The mistake on move 39 is starting to show. White could probably still have won the game with correct play, but for the practical player it is important to understand that his task should be made as easy as possible.



**51 ♜c4! ♜e8 52 ♜c8 ♜e7 53 ♗d4 ♜e1! 54 ♜c5 ♜f4 55 ♜c4!! ♜e3 56 ♗e2 ♜xc8 57 bxc8 ♜ ♜xe2 58 ♜xe3 ♜xe3 59 ♜c1**

**51... ♜e7!** Black immediately takes the opportunity of putting the queen on this excellent square. What was once a trivial win is now hardly even an advantage.

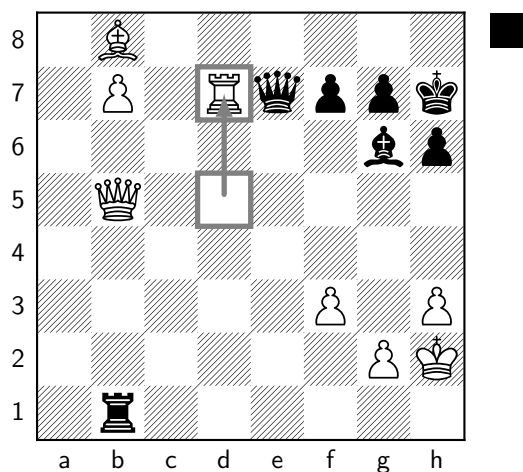
**52 ♖h2** After this there is no longer any advantage.



**52 ♖d2!? ♖e5 53 ♖b2**

**52... ♖×e2!** Black can live with a white pawn on the seventh rank as long as he has counterplay.

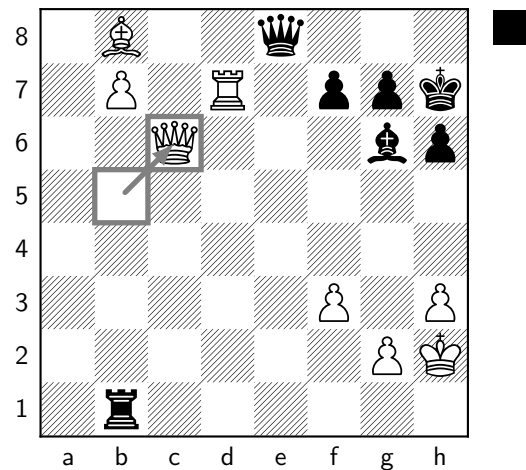
**53 ♖×b8 ♖e1+ 54 ♖h2 ♖b1 55 ♖d7??** The heat seems to have got to our young English hero. Or perhaps he just could not really accept that he had thrown his win away.



**55 ♖g3**

**55... ♖e8!** Now White has too many hanging pieces.

**56 ♖c6**



**56 ♖×b1 ♖×b8+**

**56... ♖×b8+ 57 ♖c7 ♖b2 58 f4 ♖c2 59 ♖c8 ♖×f4+ 0-1**

## 5) Passed pawns

---

Passed pawns do have some importance in the middlegame, but they generally only attract real attention in the endgame. And the main reason why they are attributed with any importance at all in the middlegame, often has to do with the different potential endgames. In the endgame they are everything. As Shereshevsky writes in 'Endgame Strategy': 'In comparison with the middlegame, in the endgame the value of the pawn increases.' He then goes on to give some examples of pawns vs. pieces. If there is an attack on the king then obviously pieces are more important than pawns, but in the endgame, even shattered and weak, three pawns can outweigh a full piece. In the following example Black wins a piece, but White has a lot of pawns for it, so the defensive task is with Black (see the following game).

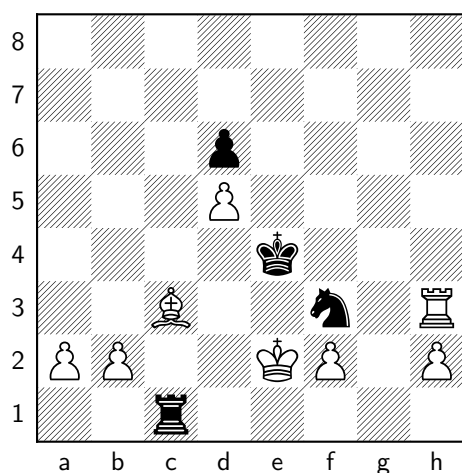
---

White: Svidler, P.  
Black: Anand, V.

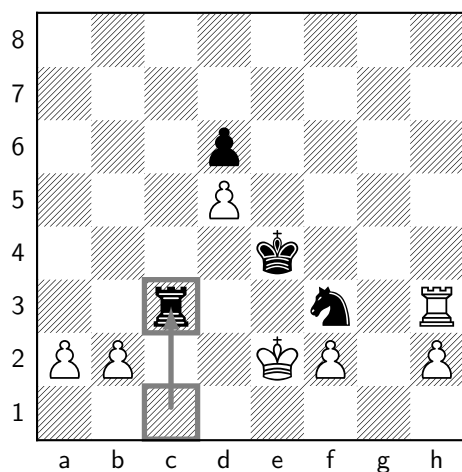
Dos Hermanas

1999

Result: 1/2-1/2



**43...Rxc3** This move was criticised by Sergei Ivanov, though as Seirawan has pointed out there is room for improvement in his analysis. Actually this move should be good enough for a draw - but only just!

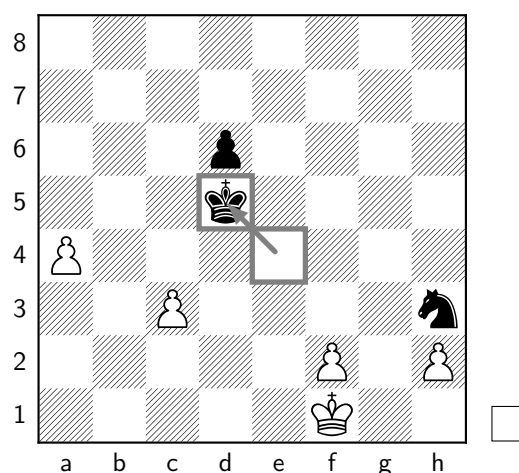


**43...Rxc3+!? 44 Qd1 Rxf2**

**43...Bg1+ 44 Qd2**

**44 bxc3 Bg1+ 45 Qf1 Bxh3 46 a4!** White sends his passed pawn away immediately. Black's problem is that he has three white passed pawns to look after, while his own pawn is easily stopped. Here the importance of a distant passed pawn is very explicit.

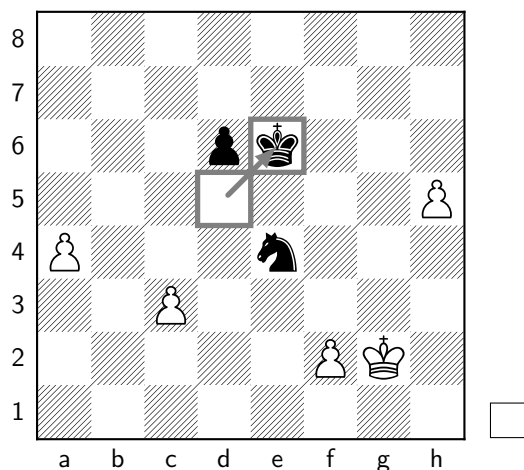
**46...Qxd5**



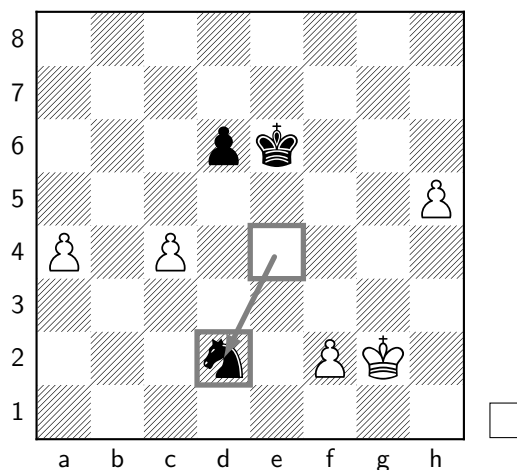
**46...Bf4? 47 c4 Qd4 48 a5 Qxc4 49 a6 Bxd5 50 a7 Bc7 51 h4 Qd5 52 h5 Qe5 53 f4+ Qf5 54 Qe2 d5 55 Qd3 d4!**

**47 Qg2 Bg5 48 h4 Be4 49 h5 Qe6**





**49... dxc3? 50 h6 dxe2 51 Qf3 Nd4+ 52 Qg4 Nc6 53 h7 Ne5+ 54 Qf5 Nf7 55 Qf6 50 c4!**

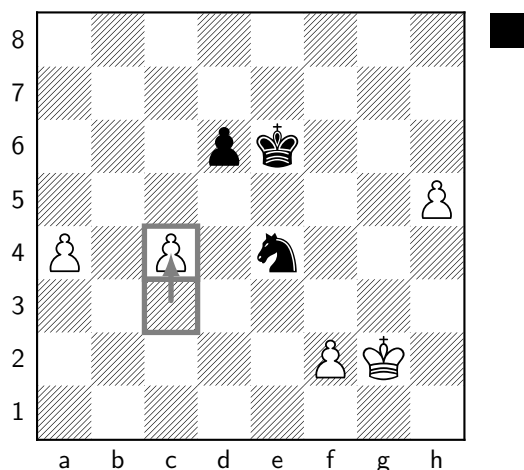


**50... Qf5 51 a5 Nc5 52 f4**

**51 a5 Nxc4 52 a6 Nb6 53 a7 Qf5** We have now reached a form of pawn ending, where the knight adds complexity. Black will set his whole defence based on the pawn on d4 and the knight on c7, so that White cannot take the d-pawn without losing his a-pawn to ...Nb5+.

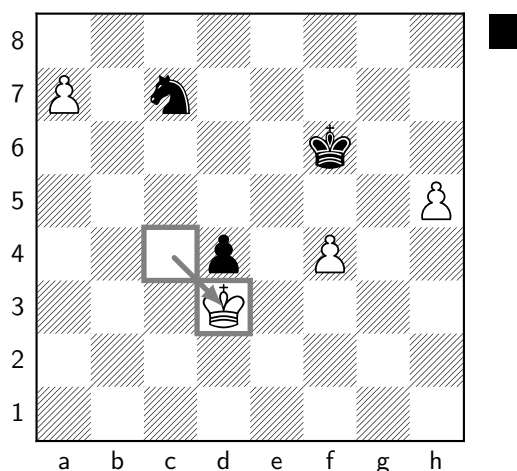
**54 f4 Na8 55 Qf3 d5 56 Qe3 Nc7 57 Qd2 Qf6 58 Qc2 Qf5 59 Qb3** White is threatening to play Kb3-b4-c5-c6 winning, so Black has to push his pawn.

**59... d4! 60 Qc4 Qf6 61 Qd3**



**50 a5 Nxc3 51 a6 Nb5 52 f4 Qf5 53 Qf3 Nc7 54 a7 d5 55 Qe3 d4+**

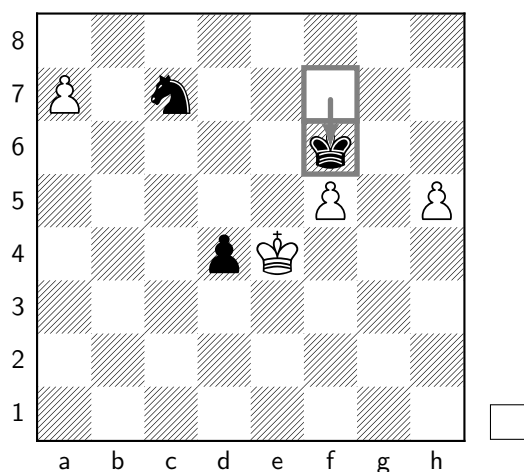
**50... Nd2!** Black has to eliminate the c-pawn, so he can get at least some counterplay out of his d-pawn.



**61 Qxd4 Nb5+**

**61... ♖f5 62 ♔e2 ♖f6 63 ♖f2! ♖f5 64 ♖f3**  
**♜a8 65 ♖e2 ♜c7 66 ♖d3** Black is now in zugzwang and White is able to advance his f-pawn a little further.

**66... ♖f6 67 ♖e4 ♖f7 68 f5 ♖f6??** A grave mistake, allowing White to push his h-pawn.



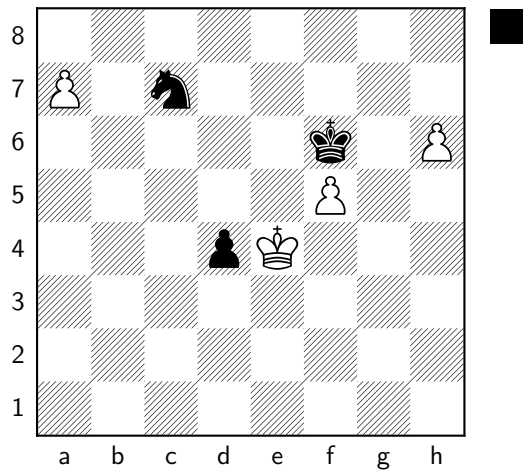
**68... ♖g7! 69 ♖d3 ♖g8! 70 ♖c4 ♖g7 71 ♖b3 ♖g8**

**69 h6!** White of course plays this once allowed.

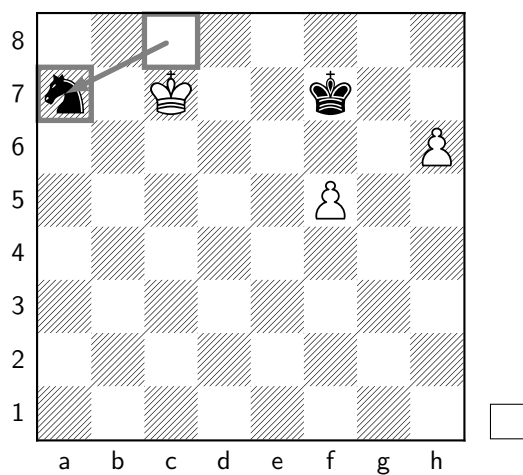
**69... ♖f7** Here something strange happened: the game was agreed a draw. Svidler had probably grown tired of looking in vain for a way to improve his position, and therefore decided to call it a day without even examining the final position. — How should White have continued after 69...Kf7 - ? (see the following game).

**1/2-1/2**

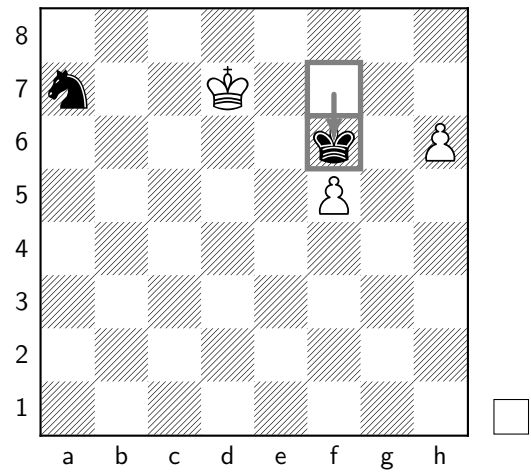
# Analysis Svidler - Anand



69... ♖f7 The winning move was  
 70 ♖×d4! ♜b5+ 71 ♖c5 ♜×a7 72 ♖b6  
 ♜c8+ 73 ♖c7! and now:  
 73... ♜a7



73... ♜e7 74 h7! ♖g7 75 f6+!  
 74 ♖d7 ♖f6



74... ♜b5 75 h7 ♖g7 76 f6+ ♖×h7 77 f7  
 ♖g7 78 ♖e7

75 h7 ♖g7 76 f6+ ♖×h7 77 f7 ♖g7 78 ♖e8!  
 and Black must resign. — The weird finish  
 to this game brings to mind  
 Kramnik-Svidler, Linares 2004, where  
 Svidler resigned in a position not too  
 difficult to defend.

White: Tkachiev, V.  
 Black: Lobron, E.  
 Opening ECO: E12  
 Result: 1-0

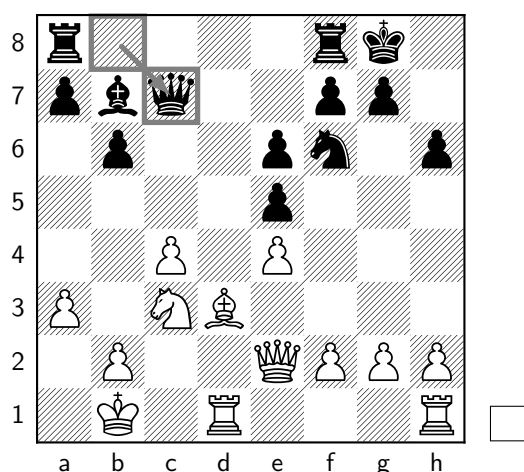
Bastia (rapid)

2003

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 a3 ♙a6 5 ♖c2 ♙b7 6 ♘c3 c5 7 e4 cxd4 8 ♘xd4 ♙c5 9 ♘b3 ♘c6 10 ♙g5 h6 11 ♙h4 ♘d4 12 ♘xd4 ♙xd4 13 ♙d3 ♖b8 14 ♙g3 ♙e5 15 O-O-O O-O 16 ♖b1 d6 I feel a bit sceptical about this pawn constellation for Black. If he was able to bring a knight to d4 relatively easily it would be fine, but as it is now it seems that White will have a lasting advantage on the queenside with the potential of gaining a passed pawn.

17 ♙xe5 This exchange gives White this superiority in the endgame, at the cost of making it very difficult to create any real threats on the kingside. Black should therefore have ambitions towards tactics and an attack in the middlegame, though these are not so easy to realise.

17...dxe5 18 ♖e2 ♖c7



18...♖d8

19 f3 ♖fd8 There is nothing to find but exchanges on the d-file. Now Black will have to combine play on the only fully

open file with the pawn-break ...b6-b5, but he never achieves this.

20 ♖e3 ♙a6 21 b3 ♖d4 22 ♘e2 ♖d6 23 ♖b2 ♖b8 Black has been too slow to build up counterplay.

24 ♖c1! Directed against 24...b5, while making room for the h1-rook.

24...♘d7 25 ♖hd1 ♖d8 26 ♙c2 ♘b8 The black knight is aiming for d4, but this plan did not bring him success. White exchanges the rooks and ensures himself of good winning chances in the endgame.

27 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 28 ♖d1 ♘c6 29 ♖d3! White is not about to give up control of the d4-square. Instead he takes control over the d-file.

29...♖f8 30 ♖d2 ♖xd3 31 ♖xd3 ♖e7 32 h3 ♙c8 33 b4 a5 34 ♙a4 ♘a7 35 ♘c3 axb4 36 axb4 ♙a6 37 ♙b3 ♘c8 38 ♘a4 ♖d6? This exchange only emphasises White's advantage. With the queens on the board, Black could still dream of counterplay against the white king.

39 ♖xd6+ ♖xd6 40 ♖c3 g5 41 ♙c2 ♖c7 42 ♙d3 h5 43 b5 ♙b7 44 c5 White's patience has paid off and he is able to create a passed pawn.

44...bxc5 45 ♘xc5 h4 46 ♖b4 ♘b6 47 ♖a5 ♙c8 48 ♙e2 ♙b7 49 ♖b4 White does not hurry; his advantage will not go away.

49...♙c8 50 ♙d1 ♙b7 51 ♙b3 ♙c8 52 ♖a5 ♘d7 53 ♘xd7 ♙xd7 54 b6+ ♖b7 55 ♙c4 f5 56 ♙b5 The passed pawn has decided the game.

1-0

White: Dreev, A.  
 Black: Hansen, C.  
 Opening ECO: E12  
 Result: 1-0

Esbjerg

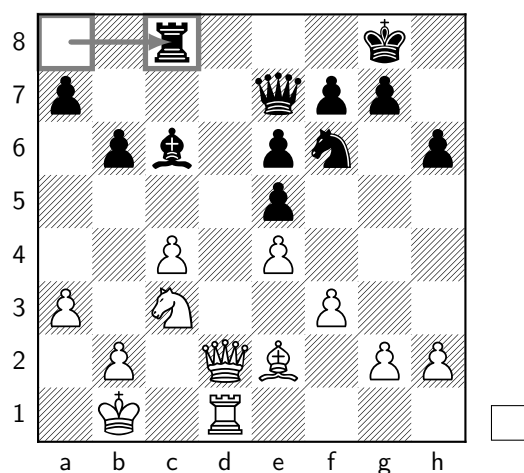
2003

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 a3 ♙a6 5 ♖c2 ♙b7 6 ♘c3 c5 7 e4 c×d4 8 ♘×d4 ♙c5 9 ♘b3 ♘c6 10 ♙g5 h6 11 ♙h4 ♘d4 12 ♘×d4 ♙×d4 13 ♙d3 ♙e5 14 ♙g3 ♖b8 15 O-O-O O-O 16 ♖b1 d6 17 f3!?

Here White deviates from the previous game with a novelty, though theoretically it makes little difference at this point.

17... ♖d8 18 ♙×e5 d×e5 19 ♙e2! This, however, is a new concept. White is well aware of the advantage awaiting him in the endgame, and therefore seeks to enter it sooner rather than later.

19... ♙c6 20 ♖×d8+ ♖×d8 21 ♖d1 ♖e7 22 ♖d2 ♖c8



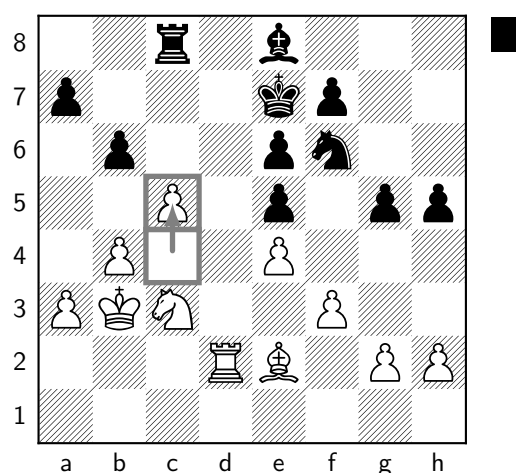
22... ♙e8!?

23 b4! Dreev is not afraid of phantoms. This move does not weaken his king's position, as Black has no easy way to attack. Rather it allows the white king to march to b3, where it is ready for the endgame.

23... ♖f8 24 ♖b2 ♙e8 Once again Black should have considered whether the endgame was really something he wanted to play. Presumably Black believed that he would be able to control the c5-square, and thereby prevent White from creating real threats on the queenside. As we shall see, this was both right and wrong.

25 ♖d6! ♖×d6 26 ♖×d6 ♖e7 27 ♖d2 g5 28 ♖b3 h5 This is the critical moment in the game. Black is trying to block any further advances on the queenside while White has absolutely no chances of gaining space on the kingside. If you study the position carefully, you will find that White needs to do something special in order to make progress. 29 Na4 and c4-c5 will not be sufficient, as Black has both ...Bxa4+ and ...Nd7 at the right moments. Therefore Dreev decided on a pawn sacrifice in order to create a passed pawn.

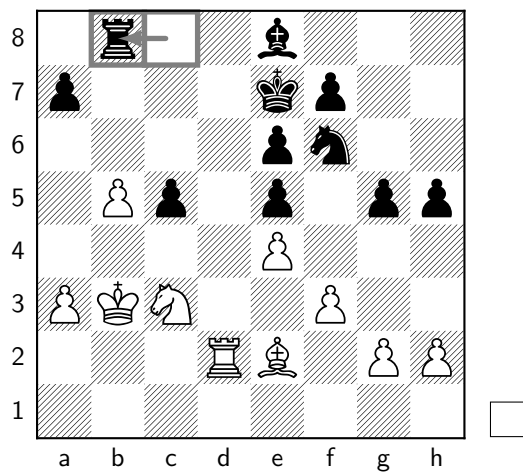
29 c5!!



29 a4? a5!

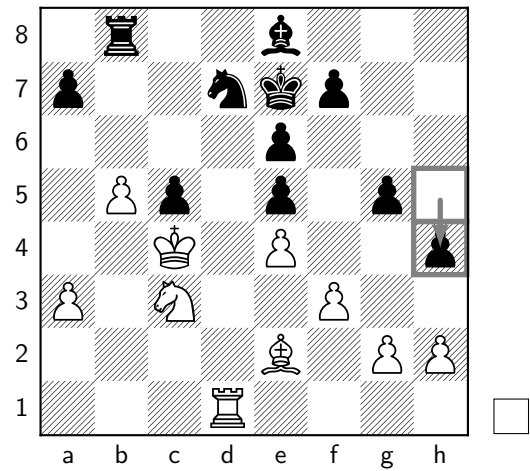
**29...bxc5 30 b5** The actual idea in this position is not at all revolutionary, but it can be hard to evaluate when it works and when it does not. White sacrifices a pawn in order to create a distant passed pawn and a very nice square for his king at c4. Instead of having a pawn structure suited for the black pieces, we now have a pawn structure suited for the white pieces. Black's extra pawn on e5 does him little good right now, while the c5-pawn can quickly turn out merely to be a weakness.

**30...♖b8**



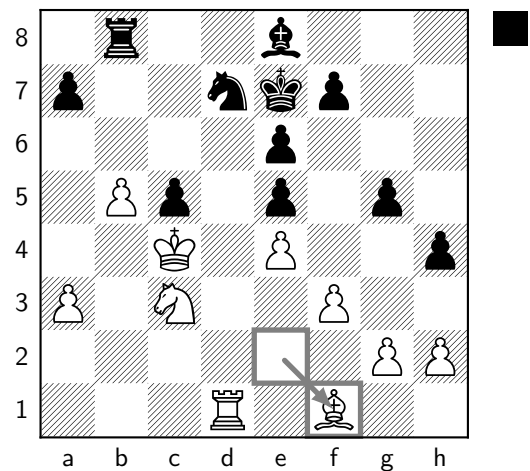
**30...c4+ 31 ♕xc4 ♖d7 32 ♖b4**

**31 ♖c4 ♖d7 32 ♖d1 h4?!** Black adopts a waiting strategy, which might be OK, but this particular move creates a further weakness on the kingside which White uses to the maximum in the game.



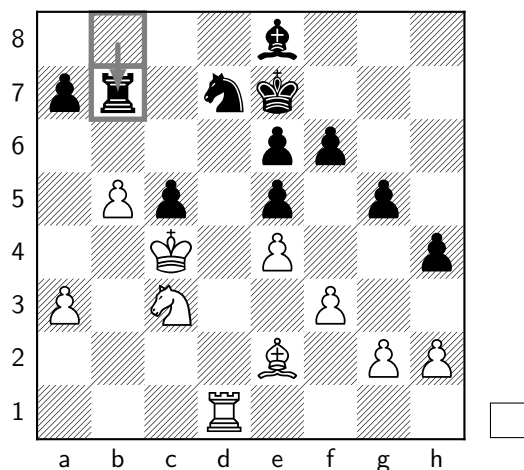
**32...♖b6 33 a4 a5 34 bxa6 ♖xa6 35 ♖b3! ♖a8 36 ♕b5 ♖b6 37 ♕xe8 ♖xe8 38 ♖d6 ♖b8 39 ♖b5**

**33 ♕f1** Dreev was probably slightly short of time here and so decides to do nothing for a short while.



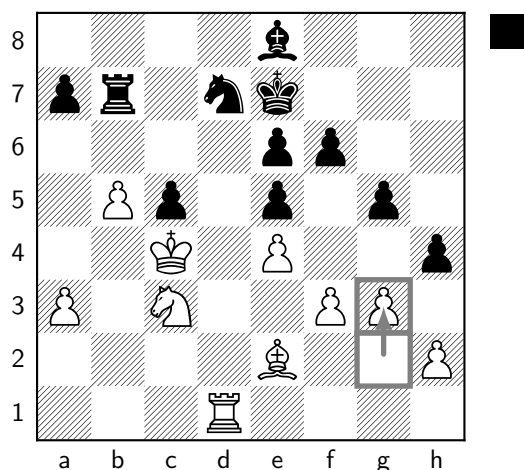
**33 a4!?**

**33...f6 34 ♕e2 ♖b7** With this move Black weakens his back rank, and thereby provokes White into opening a second front on the kingside.



**34...Rd8 35 a4**

**35 g3!?** White decides to open the kingside, as his rook will gain access there first.



**35 a4**

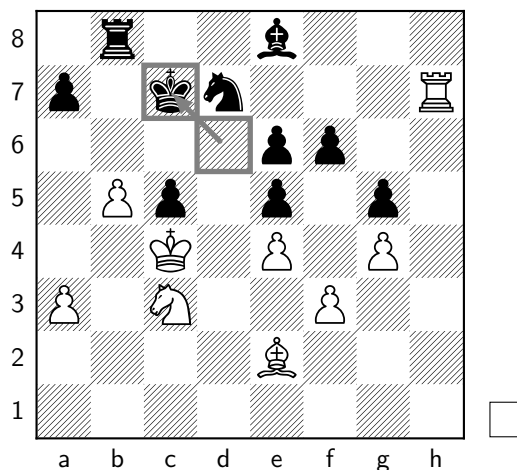
**35...h×g3 36 h×g3 Rb8**

**36...g4!?**

**37 g4!** Dreev has one of the best endgame techniques in the business. With this move he prevents any possible counterplay with ...f5 and ...g4.

**37...Rb7 38 Rh1 Qd6 39 Rh8 Rb8 40 Rh7** White has invaded the black position and Black clearly has his back against the wall.

**40...Qc7**



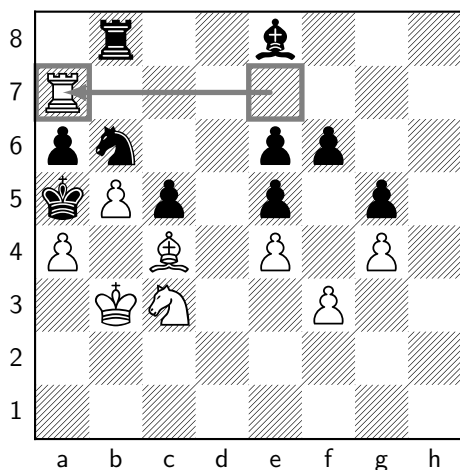
**40...Qg6 41 Rg7 Qe8 42 a4 a5 43 b×a6 Rb4+ 44 Qd3 Qb6 45 a7 c4+ 46 Qd2 Qa8 47 Qb5+ Q×b5 48 a×b5 R×b5 49 Rg8 Qc7 50 Rd8+ Qc6 51 a8Q+ Q×a8 52 R×a8 Rb2+ 53 Qd1**

**41 a4 Qb6 42 Re7** An important aspect of technical chess is to collect advantages and

later cash them in together. White first created an advantage on the queenside, then consolidated, then opened the kingside to invade with the rook. Only now is he actually trying to use his advantages actively, and as White has been able to collect so many, Black is not able to put up much resistance.

**42... ♖a5 43 ♖b3** Planning 44 Bc4. Black needs to take action.

**43... a6 44 ♗c4 ♘b6 45 ♖a7** This leads to a winning endgame due to the passed pawn, but White already had a wide choice of good moves.

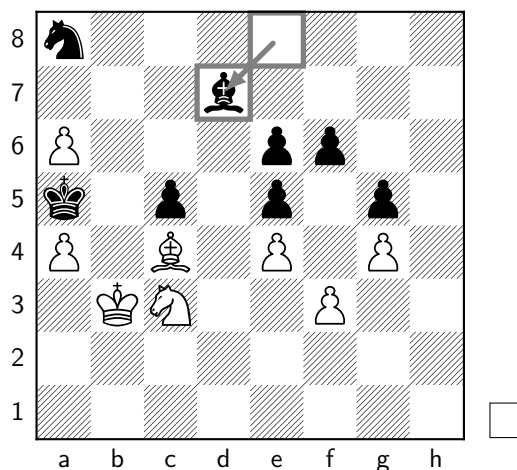


**45 bxa6!? ♗xa4+ 46 ♖b7 ♖a8 47 ♗xa4 ♗xa4+ 48 ♖c3**

**45 ♗xe6**

**45... ♖a8 46 ♖xa8 ♗xa8 47 bxa6 ♗d7**

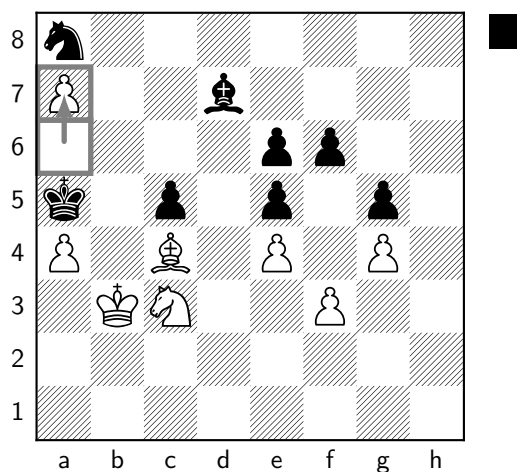
Black has no defence against the dangerous passed pawns. — Now White avoids the small trap Black set with his last move.



**47... ♖b6 48 ♗b5**

**47... ♗c7 48 ♗b5!**

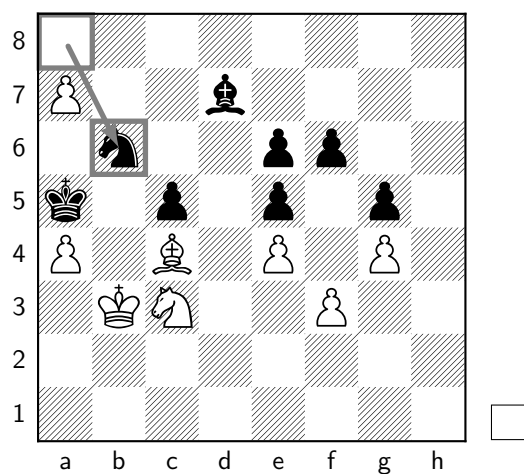
**48 a7** The endgame is also about calculation. Tactics exist in all phases of the game.



**48 ♗b5? ♗xb5 49 axb5 ♗b6 50 a7 c4+! 51 ♖a3 ♗a8**

**48... ♗b6**





**48... ♖b6 49 ♜b5 ♜c8 50 ♖c4 ♞c7 51 a5+ ♜x a7 52 ♖x c5**

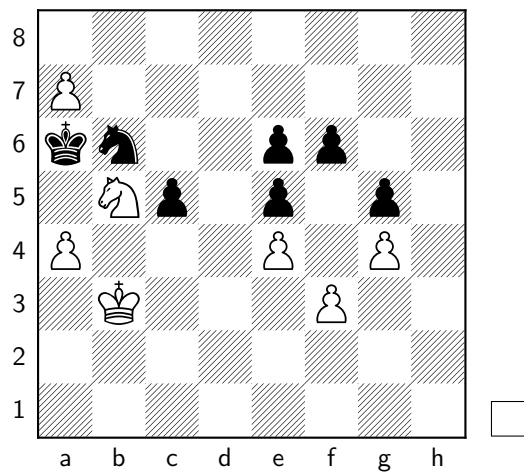
**49 ♜b5 ♜x b5 50 ♞x b5!** As we have seen above, White should not recapture with the pawn.

**50... ♖a6 51 a5 .** — How should the Game have continued ? (see the following game).

**1-0**

## Analysis Dreev - Hansen

---



**51 a5** Black had no hopes for the future, as most easily illustrated by

**51...** ♖a8 **52** ♔c4 ♕×a5 **53** ♕×c5 ♕a6 **54** ♕c6 ♖b6 **55** a8♙+ ♖×a8 **56** ♖c7+ ♖×c7 **57** ♕×c7 and White has a winning pawn endgame.

---

White: Leko, P.  
 Black: Topalov, V.  
 Opening ECO: B45  
 Result: 1-0

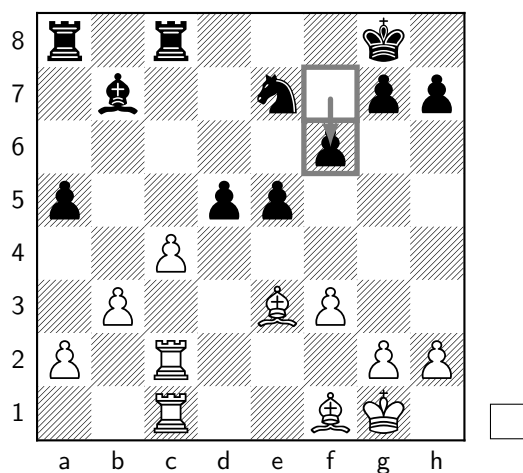
Candidates final, Dortmund

2002

1 e4 c5 2 f3 e6 3 d4 cxd4 4 fxd4 f6 5  
 c3 c6 6 fxc6 bxc6 7 e5 d5 8 e4  
 b7 9 e2 c5 10 O-O c7 11 d6+ xd6  
 12 exd6 c6 13 f3 c4 14 d4 O-O 15 xc4  
 f6 16 b3 xd6 17 f2 b6 18 b2  
 xd4 19 xd4 b4 20 c3 d5 21 f1 c6  
 22 e3 e7 23 c1 a5 24 f2 e5 25 c4!

White is fully prepared and now he starts by creating a passed pawn on the queenside.

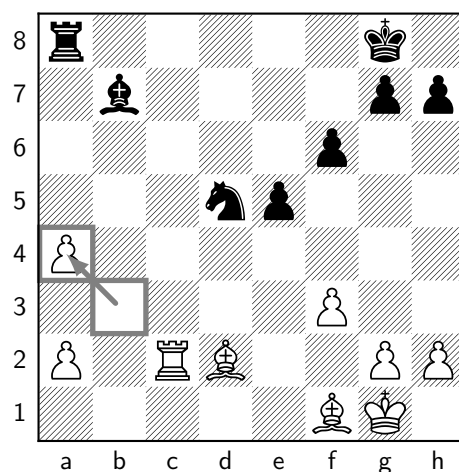
**25...f6?! Topalov** is a fantastic player with the initiative, but hardly the man you would pick first for the defence of a slightly worse endgame. Here he fails to create counterplay, while allowing White to create a position in which he has the two bishops as well as a 95% guarantee of a passed pawn on the queenside. Though the win is not a sure thing, it is still a living hell for Topalov.



**25...d4 26 f2 c6 27 a3 f5 28 d3!**

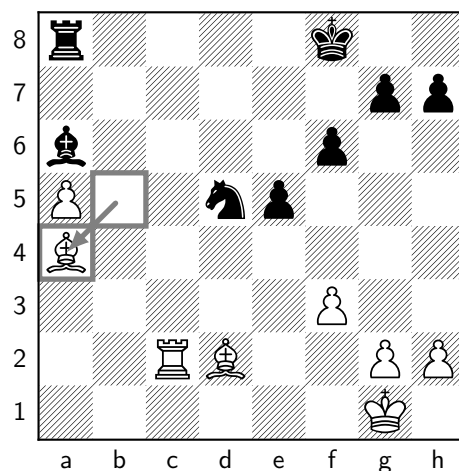
**26 cxd5 fxc2 27 fxc2 dxd5 28 d2 a4 29 bxa4!?** For a long time I believed that this

was the correct decision and would actually make White's task easier. A passed pawn on the a-file and two bishops... what can go wrong? Well, it can prove difficult to win, as we shall see in the game.



**29 b4!**

**29...fxa4 30 b5 fa8 31 a4 f8 32 a5  
 a6 33 a4**



### 33 ♖×a6

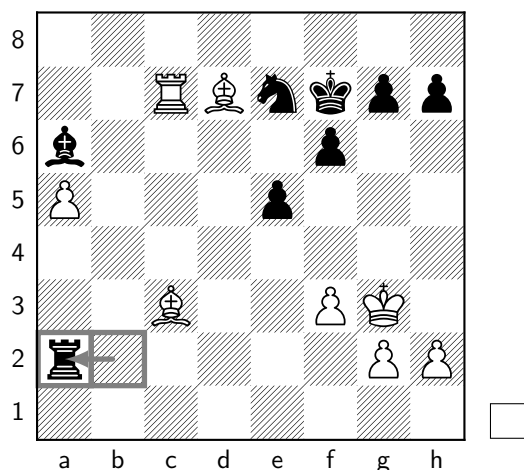
**33... ♜b8!** After the latest white concession, Black has the chance to activate his rook and create real counterplay.

**34 ♖f2 ♜b1 35 ♜c1** Played simply to gain a little time.

**35... ♜b2 36 ♜c2 ♜b1** It would be illogical for Black to exchange rooks as this would increase the value of the distant passed pawn. Suddenly it would take a long time for Black to pick it up and return to the kingside.

**37 ♖g3 ♜e7 38 ♜d7!** Preventing ...Nf5-d4.

**38... ♖f7 39 ♜c7 ♜b2 40 ♜c3 ♜a2?** In his last move before the time control Black slides into real trouble.



### 40... ♜d5 41 ♜×b2 ♜×c7

**41 ♜h3!** This powerful move sets up a series of threats against the black king, as well as helping to advance the white a-pawn.

**41... ♜a4** The only move; Black cannot allow 42 Bb4.

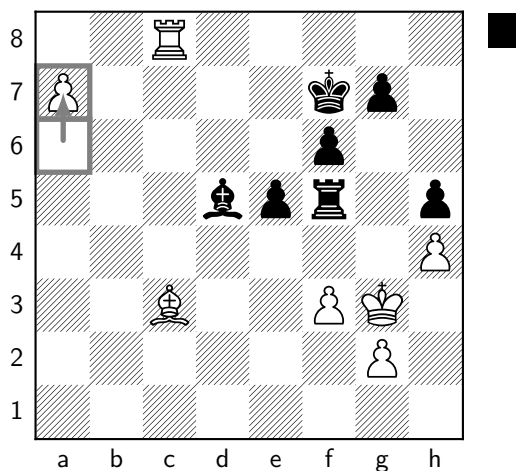
**42 ♜a7 ♜b5 43 ♜f5!** The bishop is brought back into the game, forcing Black to compromise his pawn structure. Rather

than weaken f6, Black chooses to move his h-pawn.

**43... h5 44 h4!** To remain in control.

**44... ♖f8 45 ♜a8+ ♖f7 46 ♜c2 ♜f4 47 a6** The triumph of the passed pawn. The a-pawn will now cost Black his bishop.

**47... ♜c6 48 ♜d8 ♜f5+ 49 ♜×f5 ♜×f5 50 ♜c8 ♜d5 51 a7** This is sufficient to win;



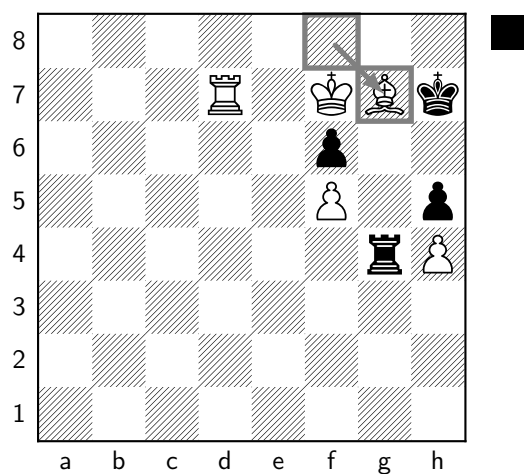
### 51 ♜c5! ♜a8 52 ♜d2! ♖e6 53 ♜c8 ♜d5 54 a7

**51... ♜f4 52 a8 ♖ ♜×a8 53 ♜×a8** The endgame now is won rather easily, though it requires some time to prove this. Leko, the fabulous technician that he is, takes as long as it takes.

**53... ♜c4 54 ♜d2 ♖g6 55 ♜a7 ♜d4 56 ♜e3 ♜c4 57 ♜b7 ♜c3 58 ♜d2 ♜c2 59 ♜a5 ♜a2 60 ♜d8 ♜a8 61 ♜b6 ♜c8 62 ♜c7 ♜b8 63 ♜c5 ♜e8 64 ♖f2 ♜h8 65 ♖e3 ♜a8 66 ♖d3 ♜a4 67 g3 ♜a8 68 ♖e4 ♜h8 69 ♖d5 ♜d8+ 70 ♖e6** White is making slow but constant progress.

**70... ♜a8 71 ♜d6 ♜e8+ 72 ♜e7 ♜a8 73 ♜b7 ♜a6+ 74 ♜d6 ♜a8 75 f4!** White now forces Black backwards.

**75... e×f4 76 g×f4 ♜a6 77 ♜d7 ♜a8 78 f5+ ♖h7 79 ♖f7 ♜a4 80 ♜f8 ♜g4 81 ♜×g7!**



81 ♖xg7! ♜xg7+ 82 ♔e6 ♜xg7 83 ♔xg7  
 ♔h6 84 ♔e6 ♔g7

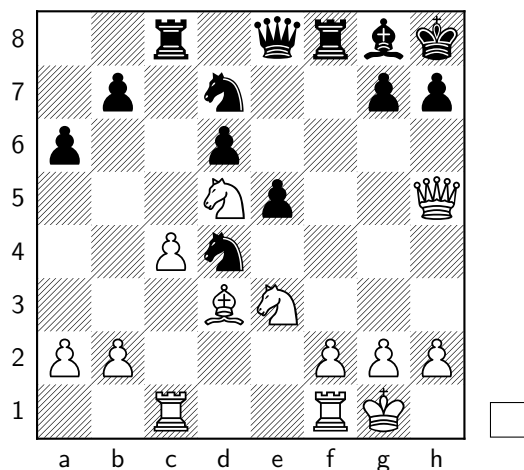
1-0

White: Thipsay, P.  
Black: Shariyazdanov, A.

India

2000

Result: 1-0



**20** ♔×e8 ♜f×e8 **21** ♜fd1 ♞f6 **22** ♞c3! White does not want to improve the black pawn structure, nor to have a pawn on d5.

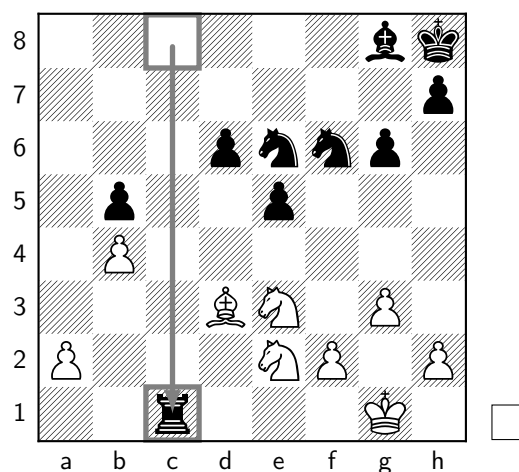
**22...g6 23** ♞e2 ♞e6 **24** b4 ♜c6 **25** g3 ♜ec8 **26** ♜c2 The position is roughly equal. If either of the players could be said to have better chances, it would be White, who has two pawn islands to Black's three, but Black is very active and should be able to keep the balance without too much trouble. Now, however, Black creates a weakness on the queenside. His idea is to fix the white pawns and make them weak, but the white a-pawn is not weak once the rooks are exchanged. So it seems to me that by, provoking exchanges on the queenside, Black is merely making it easier for White to create a passed pawn later on.

**26...b5!?** Very risky. ...Kg7-f8-e7 would have been much more natural, when I seriously doubt that White would have been able to claim an advantage. However, the text move is not completely bad. It is only after the exchange of both sets of

rooks that Black finds himself in real trouble.

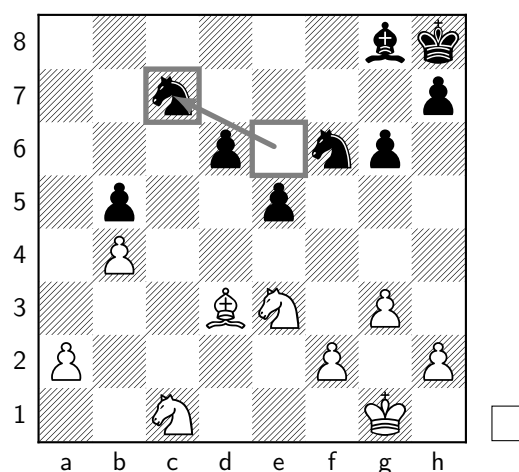
**27** c×b5 a×b5 **28** ♜d3! White immediately targets the black pawn, and makes it apparent that the pawn is a weakness rather than a strong blockader.

**28...♜×c1 29** ♜×c1 ♜×c1+



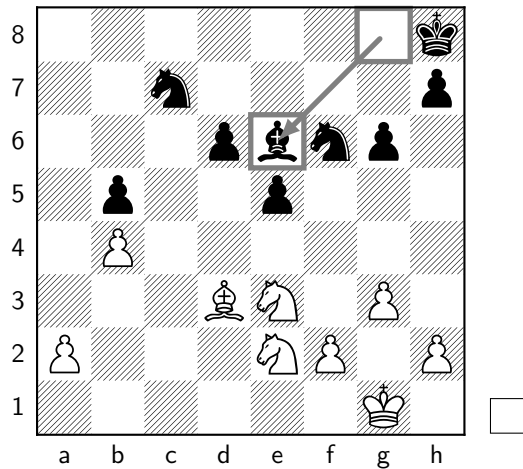
**29...♜a8!**

**30** ♞×c1 ♞c7?!



**30... ♖d4! 31 ♖c2 ♗xc2 32 ♕xc2 ♖c4 33 ♕d3 ♕xd3 34 ♖xd3 ♖d5!**

**31 ♖e2! ♕e6**



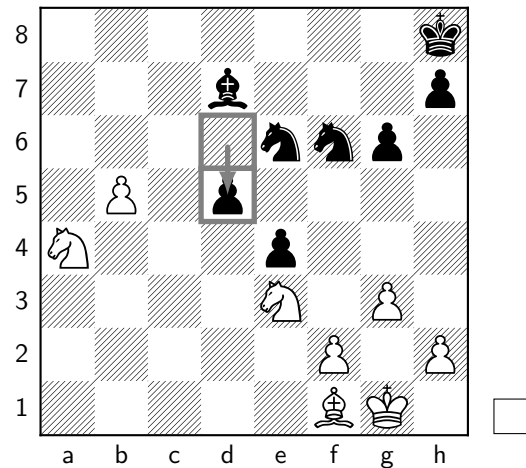
**31... d5 32 f4! e4 33 ♕c2 ♖e6 34 ♕b3! ♖c7 35 ♖d4**

**32 ♖c3 ♕d7 33 a4!** With this powerful move White exchanges the pawns on the queenside and creates a passed pawn. That the white b-pawn is superior to Black's passed pawn on the d-file is due to the exchange of all heavy artillery. Movements between the flanks now take up more time.

**33... bxa4 34 b5** With the deadly threat of b5-b6-b7-b8Q. Black has no choice but to return the pawn immediately.

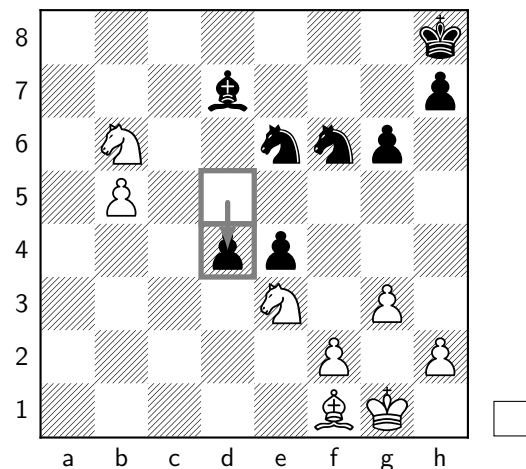
**34... e4 35 ♕f1!** Obviously White wants the a-pawn, not the e-pawn.

**35... ♖e6 36 ♖xa4 d5** I am a little sceptical about this move. White can now capture the black bishop and thereby gain the advantage of bishop vs. knight with passed pawns on both sides of the board.



**36... ♖d4 37 ♖c3**

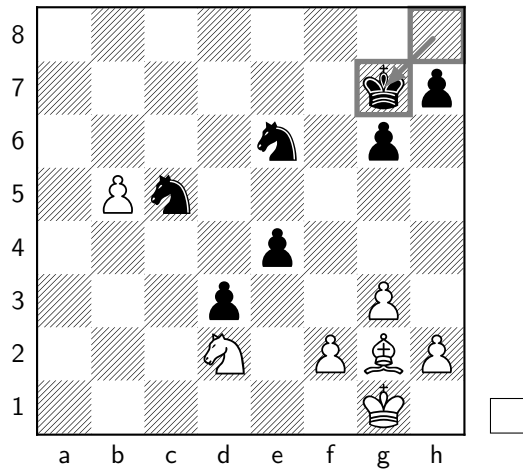
**37 ♖b6! d4?** But this is a definite mistake. The d-pawn is easily blockaded by the white knight, while the e-pawn now becomes a target.



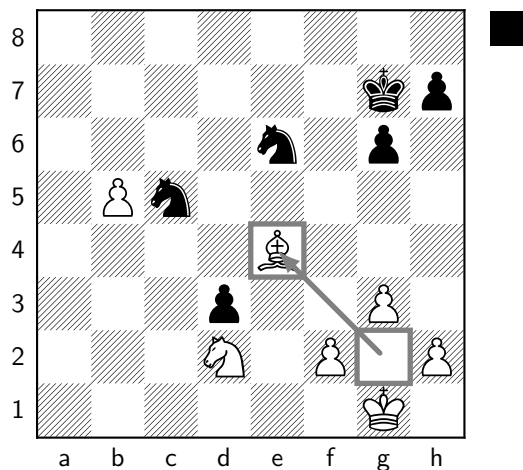
**37... ♖c7 38 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 39 ♖c2**

**38 ♖xd7 ♖xd7 39 ♖c4** Suddenly White is able to advance his pawn beyond the b5-square and it becomes truly dangerous. Now we see a standard finish in such games: the pawn attracts the attention of the black king, after which White has a free hand to molest the centre and attack the kingside.

**39... ♖dc5 40 ♜g2 d3 41 ♖d2 ♔g7** Black loses in all lines here.



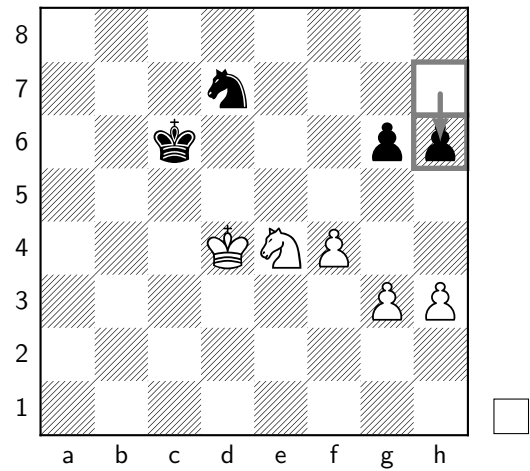
**41... ♖c7 42 b6 ♖d5 43 b7! ♖x b7 44 ♜x e4  
42 ♜x e4**



**42 b6!?**

**42... ♖x e4 43 ♖x e4 ♖c5 44 ♖d2 ♔f6 45 f4!**  
Opening a passage for the white king into the centre, while the black king is kept out of play.

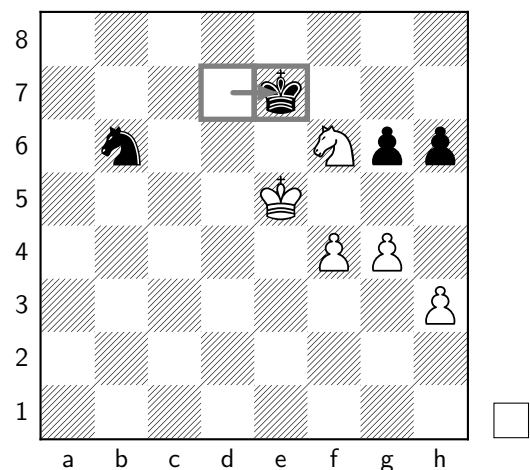
**45... ♔e6 46 ♔f2 ♔d5 47 ♔e3 ♖d7 48  
♔x d3 ♔c5 49 ♖e4+ ♔x b5 50 ♔d4 ♔c6 51  
h3 h6**



**51... h5 52 h4!**

**52 g4!** Black is now in zugzwang, unable to keep the white king at bay.

**52... ♖b6 53 ♔e5 ♔d7 54 ♖f6+ ♔e7**



**54... ♔d8 55 ♔e6**

**55 ♖d5+ ♖x d5 56 ♔x d5 ♔f6 57 ♔d6 h5 58  
♔d7 hxg4 59 hxg4**  
**1-0**

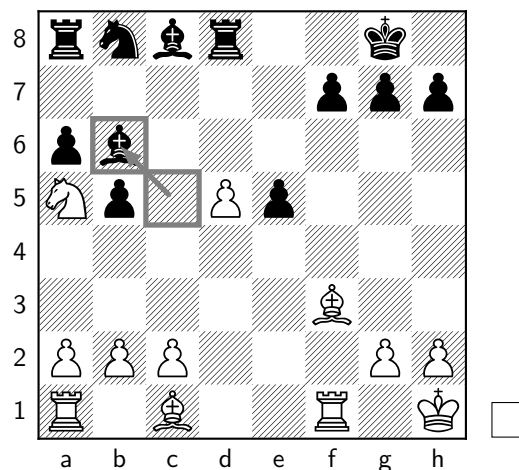
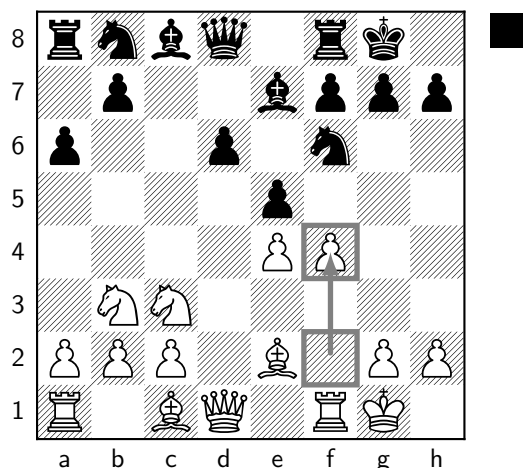


White: Yurtaev  
 Black: Carlsen, M.  
 Opening ECO: B92  
 Result: 0-1

Moscow

2004

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♗xd4 ♗f6 5  
 ♗c3 a6 6 ♕e2 e5 7 ♗b3 ♕e7 8 O-O O-O 9 f4



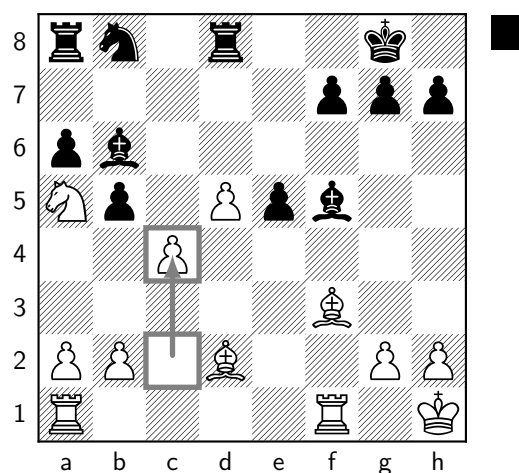
16...f5!? 17 ♕g5 ♖e8 18 ♖ad1 e4 19 ♕e2  
 17 ♕d2 ♕f5 18 c4

9 ♖h1

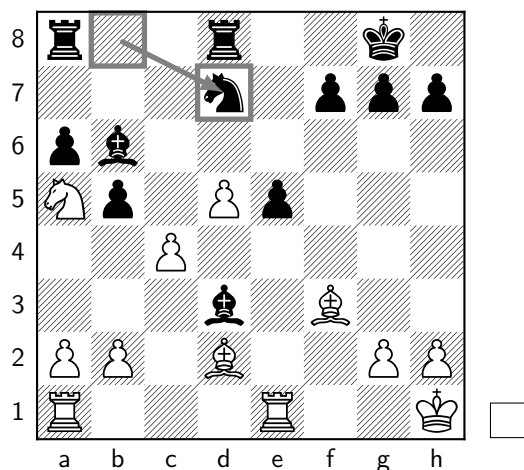
9...b5! Now there is counterplay against e4, so Black can allow himself this advance.

10 ♕f3 ♕b7 11 fxe5 dxe5 12 ♖xd8 ♖xd8  
 13 ♗a5 White is playing very ambitiously: he first exchanges into a level endgame, and then tries to prove that it is winning. With very sound play Carlsen shows that he cannot be run over so easily.

13...♕c8 14 ♗d5 ♗xd5 15 exd5 ♕c5+ 16  
 ♖h1 ♕b6

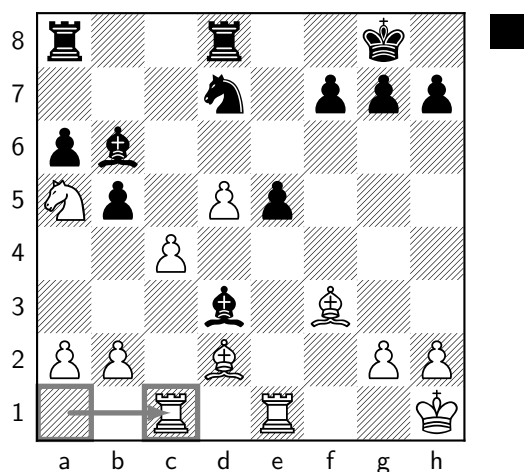


18 ♖ae1!? f6 19 d6 e4! 20 ♕xe4 ♕xe4 21  
 ♖xe4 ♖xd6 22 ♕b4 ♖d8  
 18...♕d3 19 ♖fe1 ♗d7



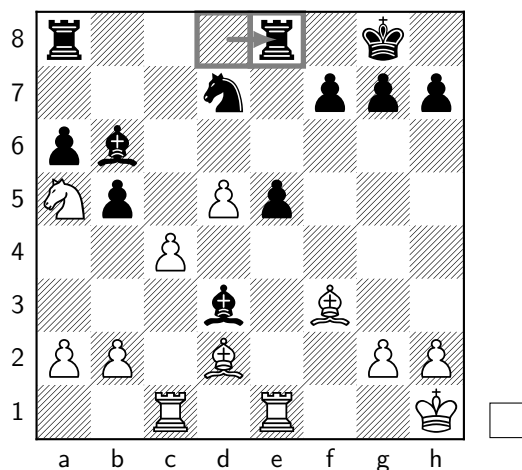
**19...bxc4? 20 Rxe5 d4 21 Re7 dxb2 22 Rael**

**20 Rac1?** This move is not in the spirit of the position. Although the queens have come off and we can with some justification call the position an endgame, it is still governed by dynamics, and White needs to play very aggressively not to be worse following his soft 18th move.



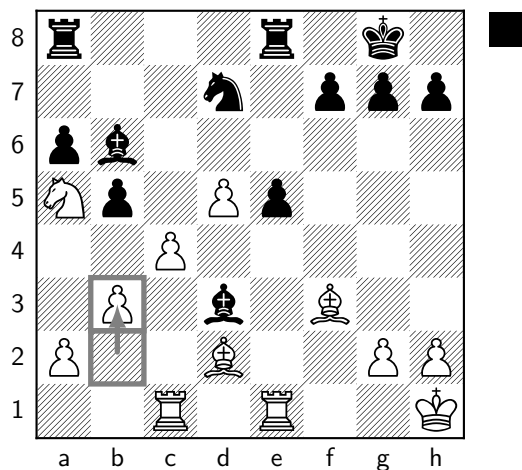
**20 c6! bxc4! 21 dxd8 Rxd8 22 Sc3 Sf2 23 Rxe5 dxe5 24 Sxe5 Sc5 25 b3**

**20...Re8?** Black lacks the same feeling of urgency.



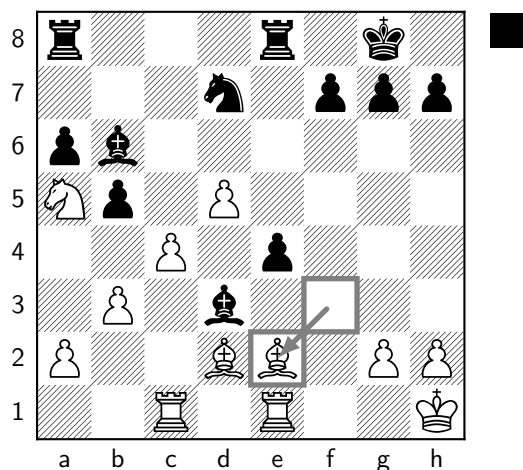
**20...Sf2! 21 d6 Sxe1 22 Rxe1 bxc4! 23 Sxa8 Rxa8 24 Rc1 f5 25 Sc4 Rc8 26 b3 Rc6**

**21 b3?**



**21 cxb5! axb5 22 Sc6 e4 23 Sb4 Sf2 24 Red1 Se5 25 Sf4 dxf3 26 dxd3 exd3 27 gx3 Ra4 28 Sg2 Sa7 29 Sg3**

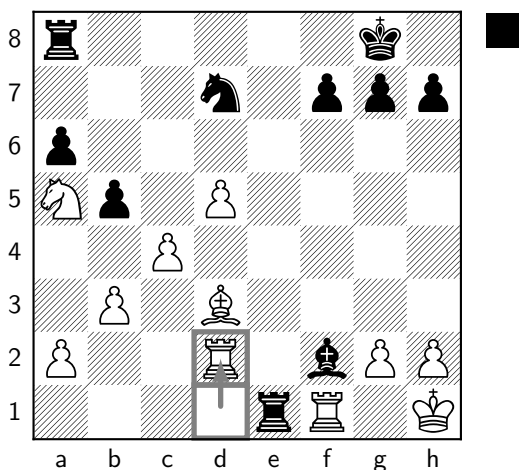
**21...e4 22 Se2**



**22 ♖g4?! ♜e5**

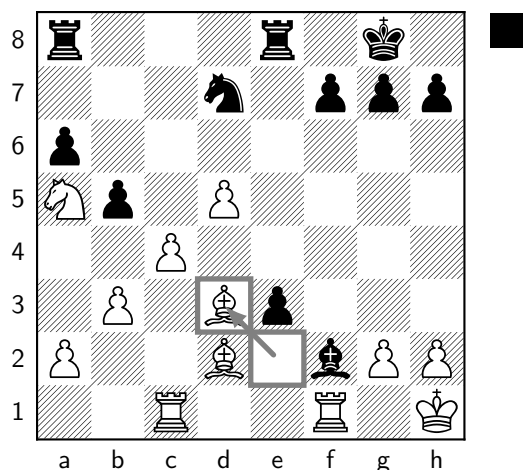
**22... ♜f2 23 ♜f1 e3!** This was the move Black was scheming for a long time. Now White is facing a difficult choice.

**24 ♜x d3?!**



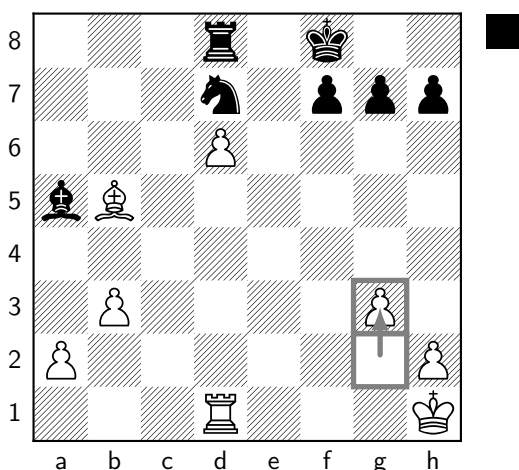
**26 g3 ♜e5 27 ♜c2 ♜x f1 +! 28 ♜x f1 ♜b6 29 ♜c6 ♜x c6 30 d x c6 b x c4 31 b x c4 ♜e8**

**26... ♜x f1 + 27 ♜x f1 ♜e1 28 ♜d1 ♜x a5 29 c x b5 a x b5 30 ♜x b5 ♜d8 31 d6 ♜f8 32 g3?!** This makes the win even simpler.



**24 ♜x e3! ♜x e3 25 ♜x d3 ♜x c1 26 ♜x c1**

**24... e x d2 25 ♜cd1 ♜e1 26 ♜x d2?** After this it is all over.



**32 a3 ♜f6 33 d7 ♜c3 34 ♜d3 ♜e5 35 b4 ♜e7 36 ♜e3 ♜e6 37 ♜c4+ ♜d6**

**32... ♜f6 33 d7 ♜e7 34 a3 ♜x d7 35 b4 ♜e5 36 ♜x d8 ♜x d8 37 a4 ♜d6 .** — It is impossible to exhaust such a subject as the passed pawn in the endgame, but I hope the few pointers in this chapter concerning exchanges, blockades and distant passed pawns, will be useful to you in your future games. Also, I think the games here have

been of high quality and therefore should  
be able to teach you a thing or two.

**0-1** \_\_\_\_\_

## 6) How to arrange your pawns in the endgame

---

It would be folly to present any rules to be followed mechanically on how to arrange your pawns in the endgame, but there are a few ground rules that, once understood, can help the player wishing to improve his technical abilities. The easiest example concerns same-coloured bishop endings, where the general rule is that you should place your pawns on the opposite colour to the bishop. But this is too general to be of much real use. We often find that the pawns are actually well placed on the same colour as the bishop, but this is very much based on where the bishop is located. If it is outside the pawn chain the pawns can often support the bishop and vice versa. We shall see this below in the main example of this chapter. — Another discussion is how best to arrange the pawns defensively. Obviously it is important not to place them so that they become weaknesses, and most players know how to avoid that. However, fewer players have enough sense also to avoid creating hooks for the opponent. The following example is an illustration of this (see the following game).

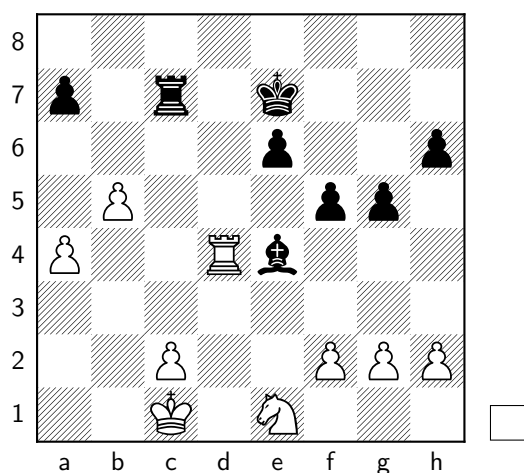
---

White: Houska, M.  
Black: Aagaard, J.

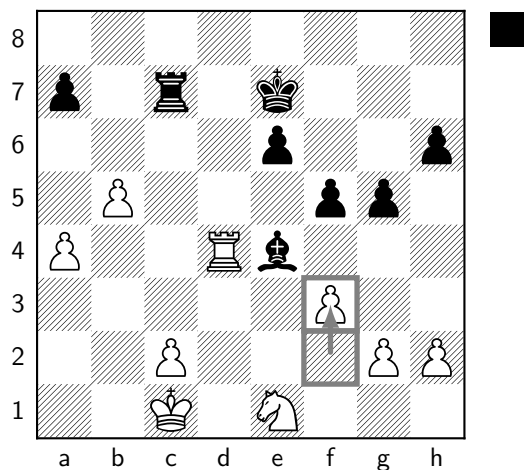
London

1997

Result: 0-1



27 f3?

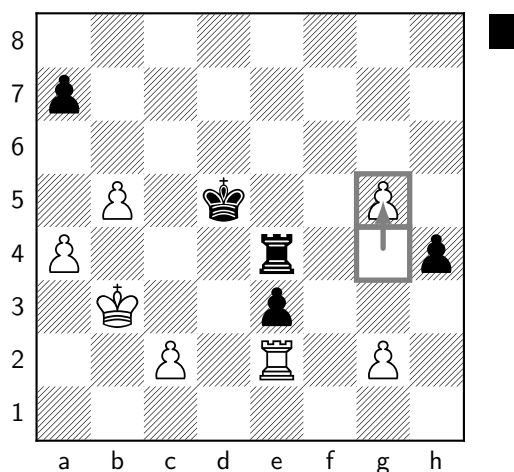


27 ♔d2 ZZ- 28 g3 ZZ- 29 ♘d3

27...e5 28 ♖d2 ♜b7 29 ♔b2 ♕e6 30 ♘d3 h5 31 ♜b4 h4! Exploiting the weakness by forcing White to make further weaknesses - and all of them on the light squares. Think if he had played g3 instead of f3. How was I ever going to attack f2 successfully?

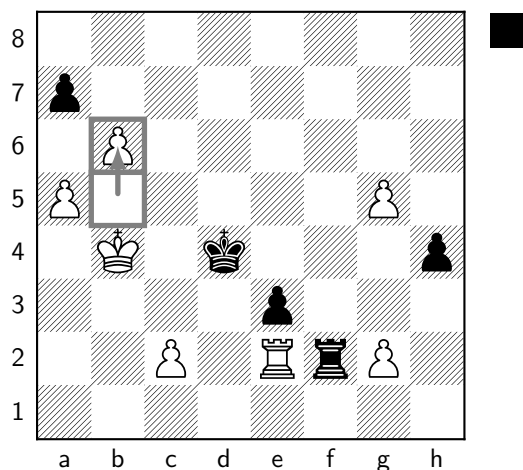
32 h3 g4 33 h×g4 f×g4 34 f×g4 ♖c4 35 ♘d3 e4 36 ♕b3 e3 37 ♖e2 ♜d5 38 ♜b4 ♖e4+ 39 ♕c3 ♖c4+ 40 ♕b3 ♖e4+ 41 ♘×d5 ♕×d5 Despite being two pawns up in the rook endgame White is not winning any more. The e-pawn is very strong, and White should focus on making a draw.

42 g5



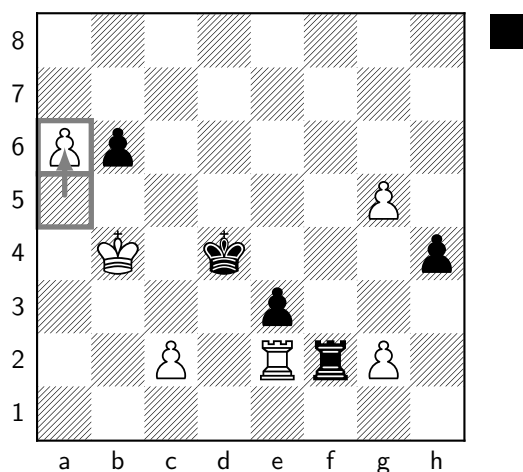
42 c3 ♖e5! 43 a5 ♕e4 44 ♕c4 a6! 45 b6 ♖×a5 46 ♖b2 ♖b5 47 ♖×b5 a×b5+ 48 ♕b3 e2 49 b7 e1 ♔ 50 b8♖

42... ♕d4 43 ♕b4 ♖f4 44 a5 ♖f2 45 b6?



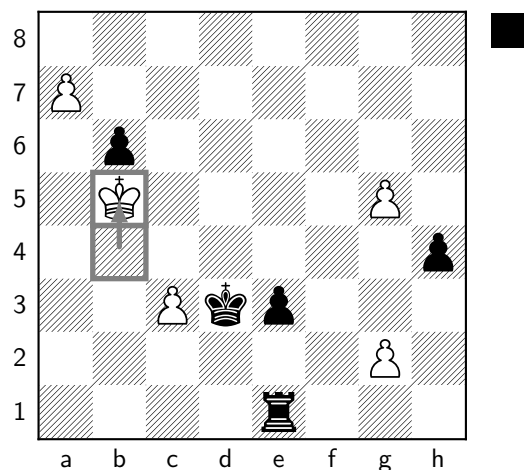
45 ♖e1 ♜xc2 46 b6 a×b6 47 a×b6 ♜xg2 48 ♜h1!

45...a×b6 46 a6



46 a×b6 ♜xe2 47 b7 ♜e1!

46...♜xe2 47 a7 ♜e1 48 c3+ ♔d3 49 ♔b5



49 a8 ♜ ♜b1+!

49...♜a1 . — I believe that these sorts of mistakes are based on three different faulty thought processes. The first is basically laziness: some people become immediately bored with the position once the dynamics have gone, and with no ambition towards accuracy thereafter, they naturally play quite weakly. The second is a lack of knowledge about the endgame: for some people the endgame is hard to study and really hard to comprehend, especially if they get the impression that it either involves memorising theoretical positions or calculation. The third reason is that we know that a move is wrong for static reasons - for instance that the pawn later will become weak - but we think that perhaps it is not so important. This is often because we look at the endgame in a similar way to the middlegame, where dynamic considerations are often just as important as static considerations. Obviously it is important to keep the pieces active in the endgame, and there is such a thing as having the initiative in the endgame, but the scope for tactics is considerably less, and so are the general importance of these factors.

0-1

White: Murey, J.  
 Black: Savon, V.  
 Opening ECO: B95  
 Result: 0-1

Sukhumi

1972

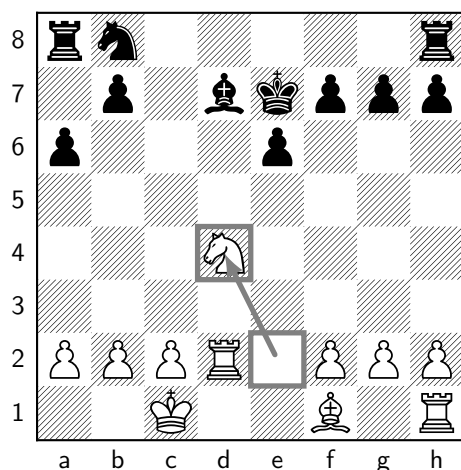
1 e4 c5 2 f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 fxd4 f6 5  
 c3 a6 6 g5 e6 7 e2?! This idea did not  
 gain a great following.

7... e7 8 O-O-O x4! This is the  
 downside to White's creativity. Black enters  
 a good endgame right from the opening.

9 x7 There is no alternative.

9... xc3 10 xd8 xe2+ 11 xe2 xd8  
 12 d6+ e7 13 d2 d7! Black could  
 also develop his bishop to b7, after 13...b6  
 or 13...b5, but there is no guarantee that  
 the b-pawn won't prove to be better placed  
 on b7 later on (in fact there is a great  
 chance that it will), so it is a sin to move it  
 forward.

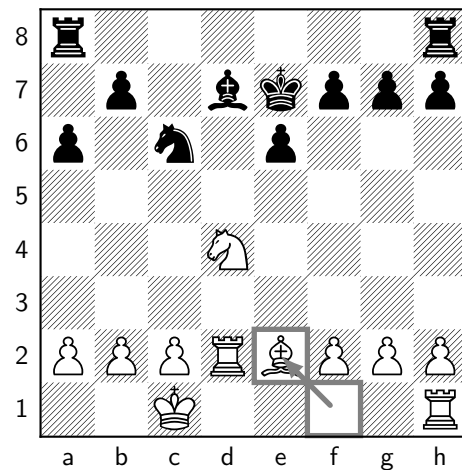
14 d4



14 c3 c6

14 g3!? c6 15 g1

14... c6 15 e2



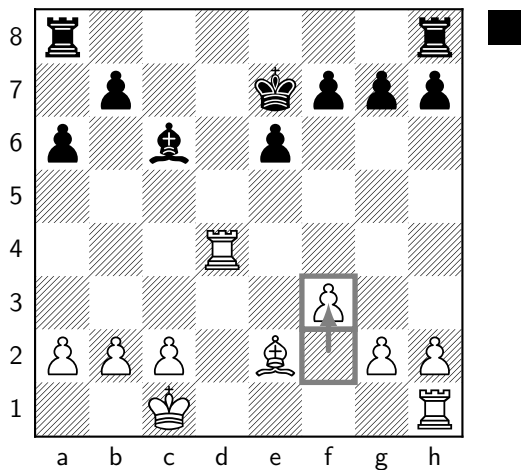
15 b3!?

15... xd4 16 d4 c6 Black has now  
 achieved a strong position. It could be  
 argued that White has a lead in  
 development, but first of all this would be  
 very narrow view, and secondly, it is not  
 really what we are playing for in a position  
 like this. With other positions in this book  
 there is some ambiguity regarding their  
 being an endgame or a late middlegame  
 and so on, but this is clearly an endgame.  
 There are no possibilities of a mating  
 attack, and structure is infinitely more  
 important than dynamics. For this very  
 reason White now has a difficult choice to  
 make. Black clearly has the advantage of a  
 better placed bishop, aiming at g2 and  
 indirectly at h1, so White has to do  
 something about this. The reader can  
 probably guess White's next move on the  
 basis of the previous game, but what about  
 finding the only sufficient move?

17 f3? The problems concerning this move  
 are obvious. White has a majority on the



queenside, so this is where he is strongest and will eventually try to create a passed pawn. In exactly the same way Black is strongest on the kingside and will play on that side of the board, so White cannot afford to weaken his position there - and yet this is what he does! I have analysed the alternatives and found that White is actually in a pretty bad fix and already needs to be very careful.



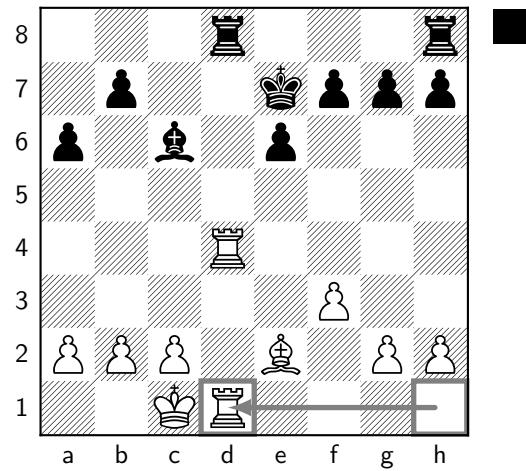
**17 Rhd1!? ♕xg2! 18 Rg1 ♕c6 19 R×g7 ♖ag8 20 Rg3 e5 21 Rh4 Rg6 22 R×g6 f×g6 23 ♖d2!**

**17 Rg1 ♖ad8 18 Rd3 e5 19 g3 e4!? 20 R×d8 R×d8 21 Rd1 Rd6!? 22 R×d6 ♔×d6 23 h4 ♖e5 24 ♖d2 f5 25 ♖e3 g6 26 c4 h6 27 b4 g5 28 h×g5 h×g5 29 b5 a×b5 30 c×b5 ♕d5 31 a4 f4+ 32 g×f4+ g×f4+ 33 ♖d2 b6 34 ♖c3**

**17 ♕f3?! ♕×f3 18 g×f3 ♖ad8 19 Rhd1 R×d4 20 R×d4 R×c8!**

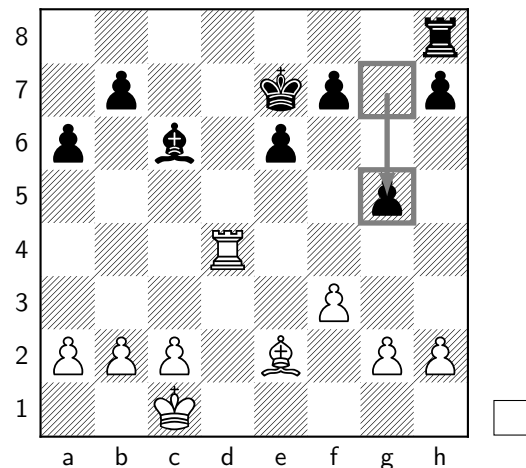
**17...♖ad8** Black wisely chooses to exchange a pair of rooks, thus eliminating the possibilities that White might later intrude on the d-file. This is often seen as a technique of preventing counterplay.

**18 Rhd1**



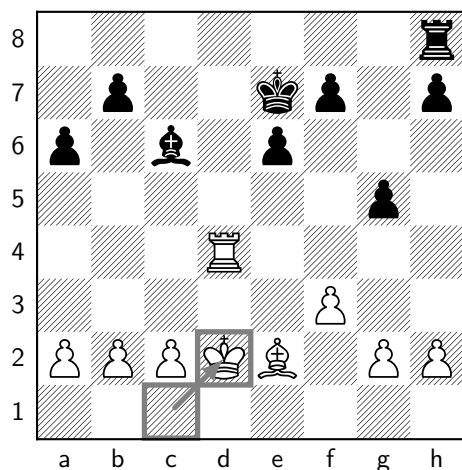
**18 R×d8!? R×d8 19 Rd1 Rg8 20 h4!?**

**18...R×d4 19 R×d4 g5!** A standard decision. Black wants to attack the hook on the kingside and begins with a move taking care of the dark squares.

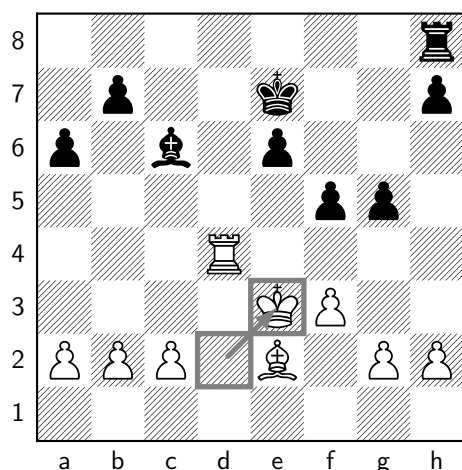


**19...h5? 20 h4!**

**20 ♖d2?** This seems rather natural, but in the endgame accuracy is often demanded of the defender on every move so that his position does not worsen. Here White really needed to think about counterplay, but how to achieve it is hard to see.



**20 c4 a5! 21 a3 a4! 22 c5 f5 23 ♖d1 ♜a8**  
**20 h4 h6! 21 h×g5?! h×g5 22 ♜g4?! ♜h5!**  
**20 b4! e5 21 ♜d2 f5 22 c4**  
**20...f5 21 ♔e3**



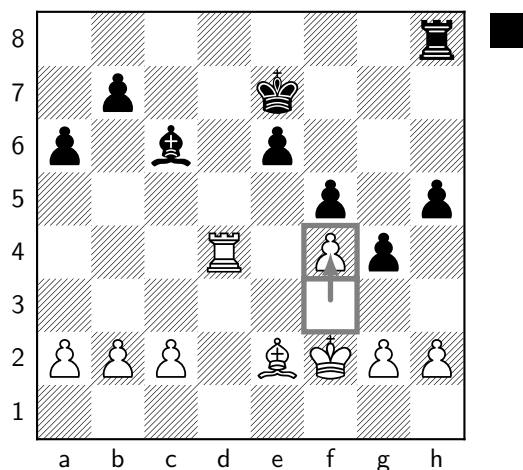
**21 b4 e5 22 ♜d3 f4 23 c4 e4**  
**21 h4 e5 22 ♜b4 ♜g8 23 h×g5 ♜×g5 24 ♜h4**  
**♜×g2 25 ♜×h7+ ♔f6 26 ♔e1 ♜g1+ 27 ♔d2**  
**f4!**

**21...h5!** Computer software programs, such as Fritz 8, have great difficulty appreciating the seriousness of White's problems here. Black will advance his pawns on the light squares in order to create weaknesses in White's structure.

This plan might seem awkward in some respects, as Philidor's rule states that pawns should be on opposite colour squares to the bishop. But as has hopefully been made clear by now, the rules of chess are often in contradiction with each other and all have a limited application. It is true that the black pawns might be weaknesses if they get stuck on light squares, but other factors are also important here. First of all White is not in a position to attack the pawn chains at their bases (b7, e6 and h5), so we are only talking about potential weaknesses that Black should be wary of. Meanwhile the black pawns dominate White's bishop and pawns, while in no way limiting the scope of the bishop on c6. In fact there is a great deal of co-operation going on. Furthermore Black's pawns are not fixed on the light squares, nor are they likely to be. They are mobile and dynamic, and threaten to come rolling down over the dark squares. At the same time White has a potential weakness on h2, as after ...g4, fxg4 hxg4 the h-pawn would simply fall. It is for this reason that White rushes his king to the kingside. No other piece can help the white pawns.

**22 ♔f2 g4** Black decides that he does not need to play ...e5 just yet. This is probably a very wise decision. He can always play this later on, but never take it back.

**23 f4?!** After this move White is not able to save the game anymore. The weakness of the kingside is too great. His best chance was to allow ...gxf3 at some point, while ...h4 could be answered with fxg4. White's position is poor but it might not be decisive with strong defence.

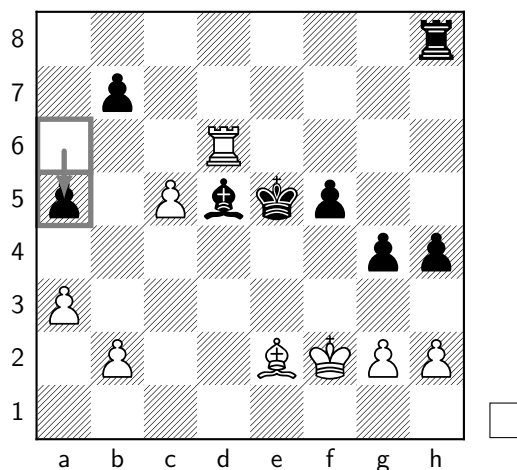


### 23 b4!

**23...h4 24 c4 e5!** Black takes the chance to invade on the dark squares. Now he can finally activate the king.

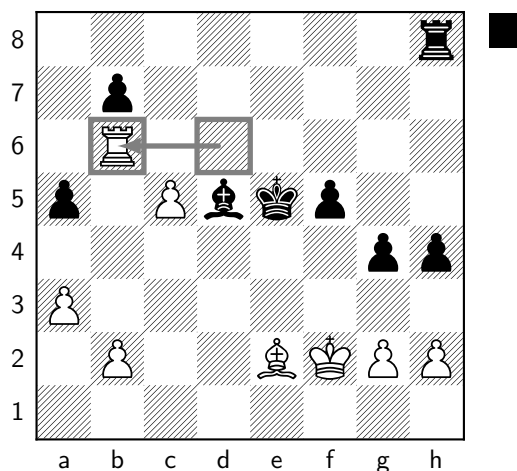
**25 fxe5 e6 26 d6+ e5 27 c5 d5!** Domination once again. White would have liked to play 28 Bc4 with a hint of counterplay.

**28 a3 a5?** This move seems a bit pointless, but the idea is in line with general endgame thinking. White would like to create counterplay on the queenside which he will begin with b2-b4. Black therefore takes measures against this, preparing ...Ra8-a2 as a direct response. — The problem with this line of thinking is set out in another rule that is important to remember in the endgame: the player with the advantage usually wants to exchange pieces, while the defender usually wants to exchange pawns. Here Black cares too much about the activity of his rook and preventing counterplay on the queenside. It would have been stronger to play where he is strongest, which is on the kingside. The pawn move on the queenside weakens his position there, if only by offering White the chance to exchange pawns.



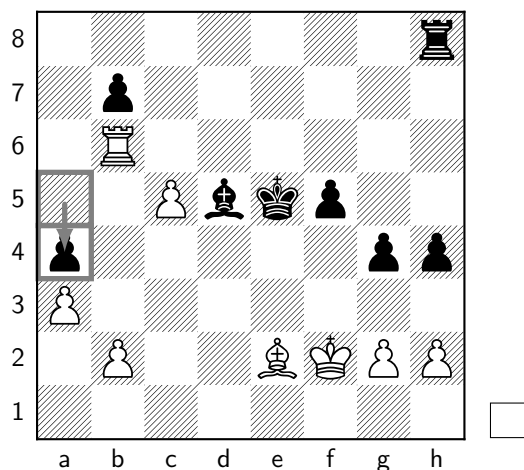
**28...g8! 29 h6 g3+ 30 hxg3 hxg3+ 31 f1 e4 32 h3 f4 33 h4+ e3 34 h6 d8 35 g6 f4 36 e6 d2! 37 f3 f2+ 38 g1 xxf3 39 gxf3 e3xf3 40 h6 e3 41 h3 f3 42 xg3 e2**

**29 b6?!** This leads neither to counter-chances nor exchanges.



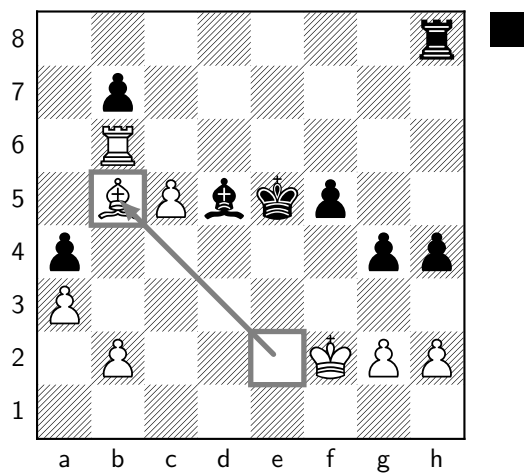
**29 b4! axb4 30 axb4 Ra8 31 g3 Ra1 32 h6 h3 33 f1 b1 34 b5! b2+ 35 g1 g2 36 d3 e4 37 f1 c2 38 b6! bxc6 39 bxc6 xxc6**

**29...a4?** Black is trying to be too perfect.



**29...Rg8! 30 g3 Rh8 31 Rd6 h×g3+ 32 h×g3 Rh2+ 33 Kf1 Kd4 34 b4 Rh3 35 Kf2 f4 36 g×f4 g3+ 37 Ke1 Ke3 38 R×d5 Rh1+ 39 Kf1 g2**

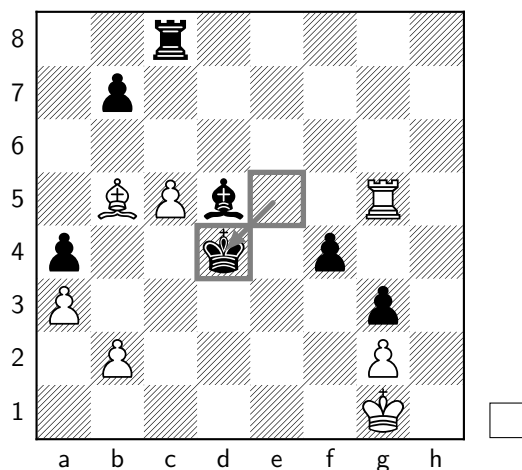
**30 Kf1 g2?** This horrible move allows Black to play ...f4 for free.



**30 Rb4 Kc6 31 Kb5! Rd8 32 K×c6 b×c6 33 R×a4 Rd2+ 34 Kf1 R×b2 35 h3 g×h3 36 g×h3 f4 37 Ra6! Kd5 38 Ra4!**

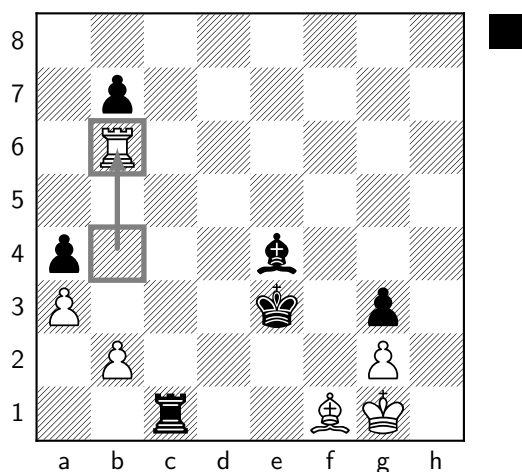
**30...f4 31 Rg6 g3+ 32 h×g3 h×g3+ 33 Kg1 Rc8!** The most accurate move. Black is now probably able to calculate the game to the end.

**34 Rg5+ Kd4**



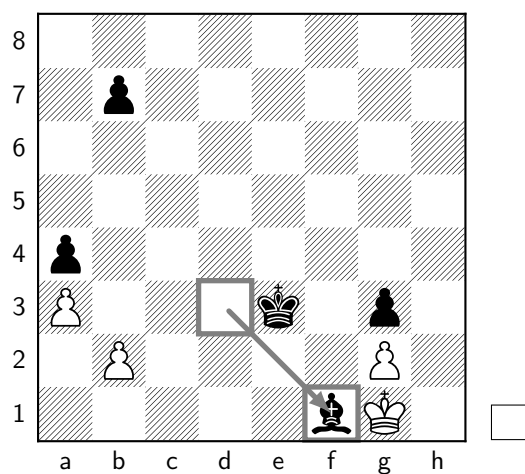
**34...Ke4**

**35 Rf5 R×c5 36 R×f4+ Ke3 37 Rb4 Rc1+ 38 Kf1 Ke4! 39 Rb6**



**39 Rc4 R×f1+!**

**39...Kd3 40 Rf6 R×f1+ 41 R×f1 K×f1**



41... ♖xf1 42 ♙xf1 ♔d2 43 ♙g1 ♙e2 44  
 ♙h1 ♙f2 45 b4 a×b3 46 a4 b2 47 a5 b1 ♚#

0-1

## 7) Freaky aspects of the endgame

---

Some aspects of the endgame are less positional and more concrete. When we are talking about endgame strategy, rather than endgame theory, they appear to be standing on the border or on both sides of it. For instance, true understanding of the endgame is impossible without the concept of zugzwang (which a lot of my students are unaware of, so perhaps some of my readers are in the same situation?) or the knowledge of stalemate defences and fortresses. Therefore I have decided to insert a small chapter with some examples of these concepts in action, in order to say a few things about them.

— The first example has a bit of everything. Black defends by entering an endgame where White has a bishop more, but only one pawn, and one that is heading for the wrong corner. White therefore tries to stalemate the black king in order to create zugzwang. However, Black is able to dance away and in the end White has to end his endeavours. Famously he did so by stalemating his opponent, due to his reluctance either to accept or offer him a draw (see the following game).

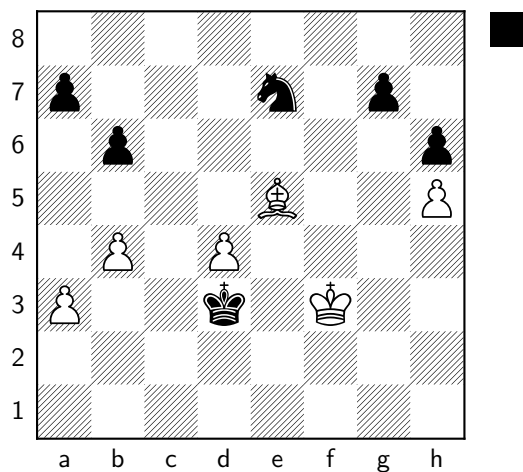
---

White: Korchnoi, V.  
Black: Karpov, A.

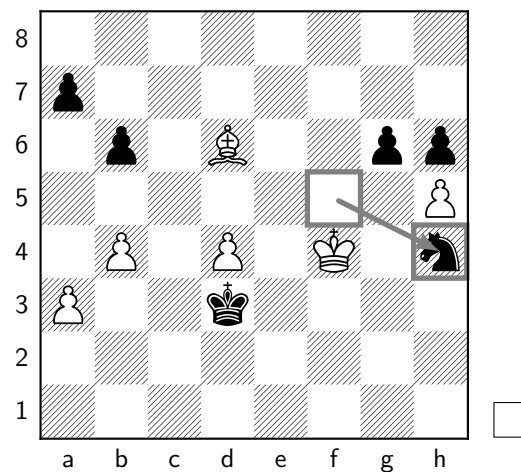
Baguio City (5th match game)

1978

Result: 1/2-1/2

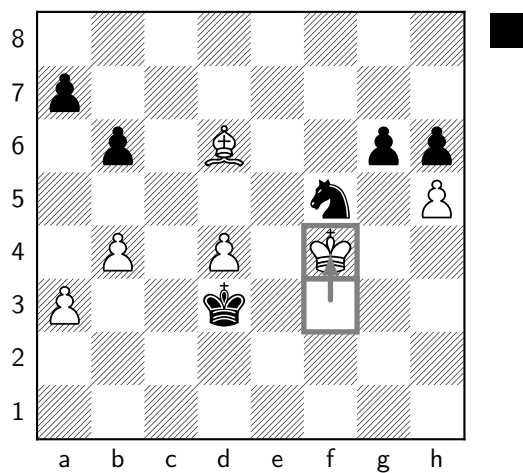


60...g6 61 ♖d6 ♜f5 62 ♔f4



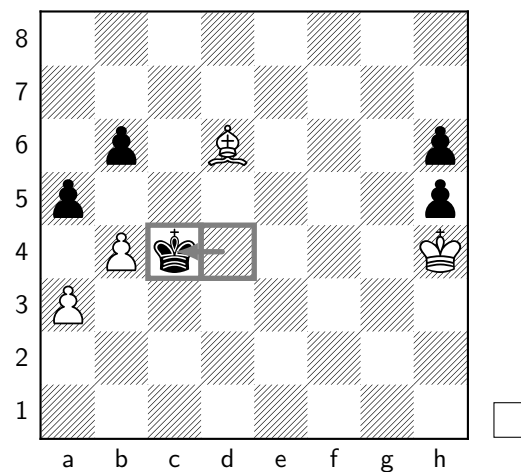
62... ♜xg6?? 63 h×g6 ♜e8 64 d5

63 ♔g4 g×h5+ 64 ♔×h4 ♔×d4 65 ♖b8 a5  
66 ♖d6 ♔c4



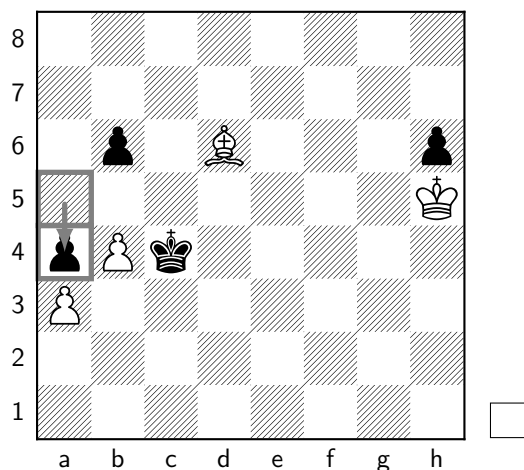
62 h×g6?! ♜h4+ 63 ♔g4 ♜xg6 64 ♔h5  
♔×d4 65 ♔×g6 ♔c4 66 ♔×h6 ♔b3 67 b5  
♔a4

62... ♜h4! This is what Black was aiming for.



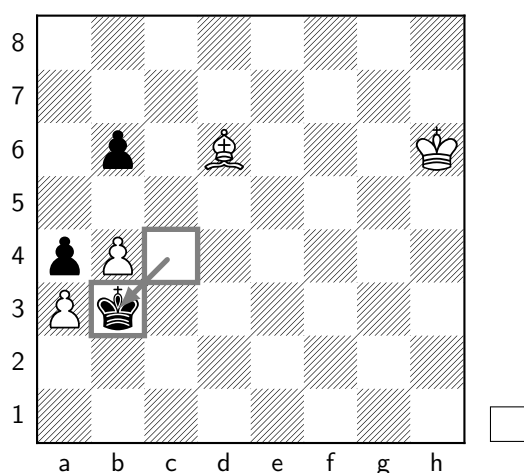
66... a×b4 67 a×b4

67 ♔×h5 a4



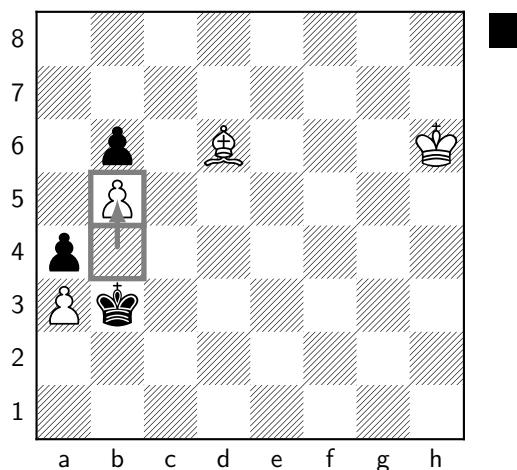
**67... ♖b3 68 ♖xh6 a4**

**68 ♖xh6 ♖b3!** Black needs to conduct his defence with accuracy, as he only draws by the grace of a single tempo.



**68... b5? 69 ♖g5 ♖b3 70 ♖f4 ♖xh6 71 ♖e4 ♖b3 72 ♖d5 a3 73 ♖c5 a2 74 ♖e5**

**69 b5!**

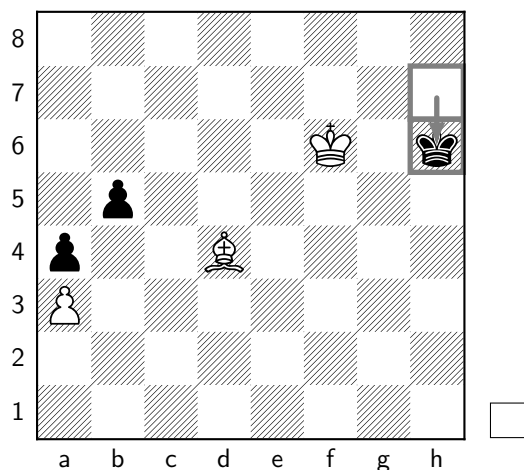


**69 ♖g5 ♖xh6 70 ♖f5 ♖b3 71 ♖e5 a3 72 ♖d5 a2 73 ♖e5 ♖xh6**

**69... ♖c4 70 ♖g5 ♖xh6** Now we have an interesting endgame. The bishop is of the wrong colour to promote the a-pawn, so White cannot capture the black pawns. Instead he would like to stalemate Black's king, which would put him in zugzwang and force him to advance the b-pawn. Then White could transform his useless a-pawn into a winning b-pawn. Unfortunately, there is no way to force Black to do this.

**71 ♖f5 ♖a6 72 ♖e6 ♖a7 73 ♖d7 ♖b7 74 ♖e7 ♖a7 75 ♖c7 ♖a8 76 ♖d6 ♖a7 77 ♖c8 ♖a6 78 ♖b8 b5 79 ♖b4 ♖b6 80 ♖c8 ♖c6 81 ♖d8 ♖d5 82 ♖e7 ♖e5 83 ♖f7 ♖d5 84 ♖f6 ♖d4 85 ♖e6 ♖e4 86 ♖f8 ♖d4 87 ♖d6 ♖e4 88 ♖g7 ♖f4 89 ♖e6 ♖f3 90 ♖e5 ♖g4 91 ♖f6 ♖h5 92 ♖f5 ♖h6 93 ♖d4 ♖h7 94 ♖f6 ♖h6**





**94... ♔h8?? 95 ♕g6+ ♕g8 96 ♖g7!**

**95 ♖e3+ ♔h5 96 ♖f5 ♔h4 97 ♖d2 ♕g3 98 ♖g5 ♕f3 99 ♖f4 ♕g2 100 ♖d6 ♕f3 101 ♖h2 ♕g2 102 ♖c7 ♕f3 103 ♖d6 ♕e3 104 ♕e5 ♕f3 105 ♕d5 ♕g4 106 ♕c5 ♕f5 107 ♕x b5** White now decided to take the black b-pawn. But as he cannot keep the black king away from the corner and win the a-pawn at the same time, the position remains a draw.

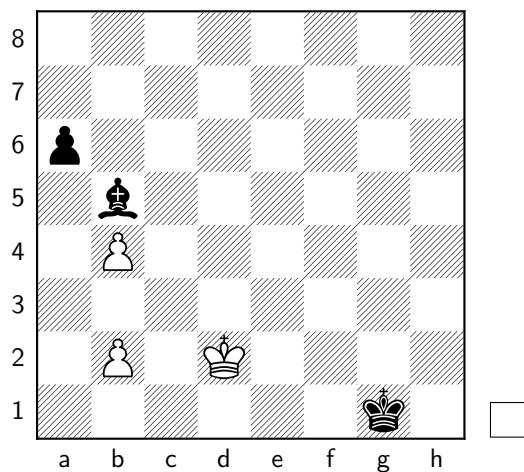
**107... ♕e6 108 ♕c6 ♕f6 109 ♕d7 ♕g7 110 ♖e7 ♕g8 111 ♕e6 ♕g7 112 ♖c5 ♕g8 113 ♕f6 ♕h7 114 ♕f7 ♕h8 115 ♖d4+ ♕h7 116 ♖b2 ♕h6 117 ♕g8 ♕g6 118 ♖g7 ♕f5 119 ♕f7 ♕g5 120 ♖b2 ♕h6 121 ♖c1+ ♕h7 122 ♖d2 ♕h8 123 ♖c3+ ♕h7 124 ♖g7**  
1/2-1/2

White: Short, N.  
Black: Kasparov, G.

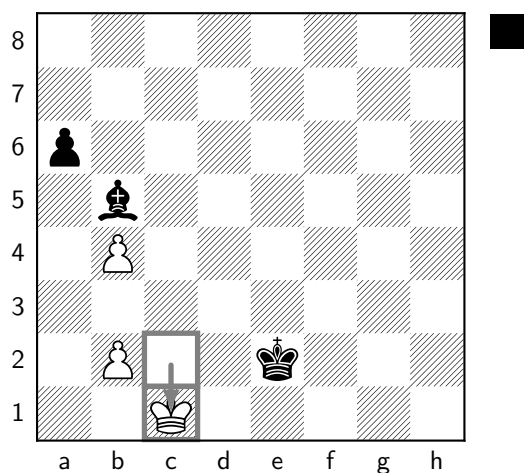
Belgrade

1989

Result: 0-1



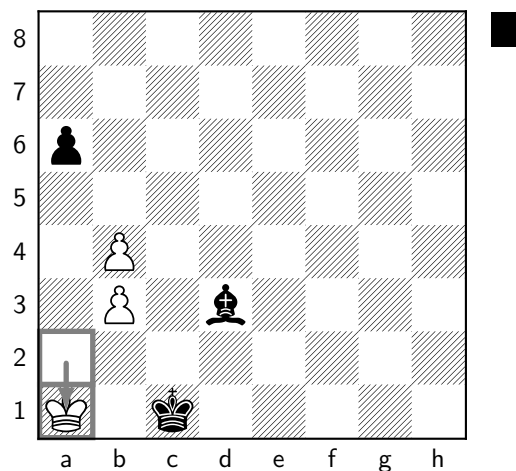
93 ♖e1 ♗g2 94 ♖d1 ♗f3 95 ♖d2 ♗e4 96  
♜c3 ♜e3 97 ♜c2 ♜e2 98 ♜c1 White  
cannot avoid going into the corner.



98 ♜c3 ♖d1 99 ♖d4 ♖c2 100 ♜e3 ♜x**b2**  
101 ♖d2 ♜c4 102 ♖d1 ♜b3+ 103 ♖d2 ♜c2  
104 ♖e2 ♖c3 105 ♖e3 ♜x**b4**

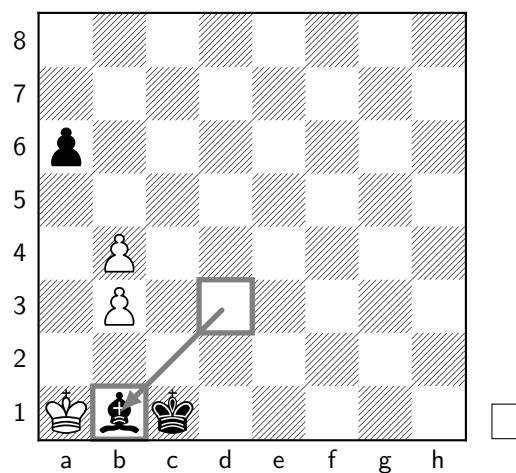
98... ♜d3! Black is on the way to forcing  
zugzwang.

99 b3 ♖e1 100 ♖b2 ♖d2 101 ♖a1 ♖c2 102  
♜a2 ♜c1 103 ♖a1



103 ♖a3 ♖b1 104 ♖a4 ♖b2 105 ♖a5 ♖x**b3**  
106 ♖b6 ♖x**b4**

103... ♜b1!



103... ♜b1! 104 b5 a**x**b5 105 b4

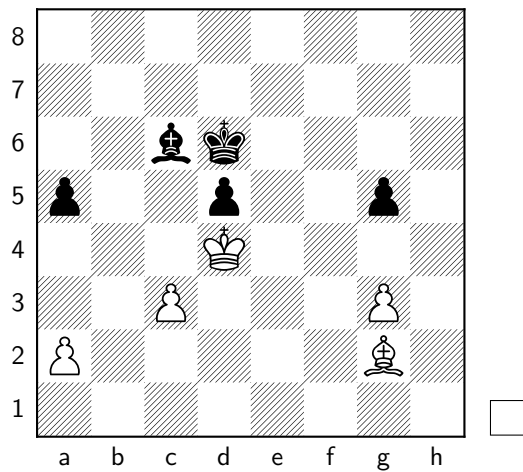
0-1

White: Fedorov, A.  
Black: Korchnoi, V.

Batumi

1999

Result: 1-0

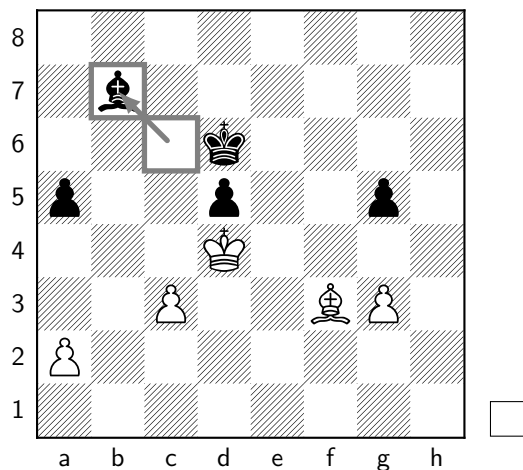


47... ♖c8 48 ♗×d5 ♗g4 49 c5+ ♔c7 50 ♖e5  
♗e2 51 ♖f5 g4 52 ♖f4 ♗d7 53 a3 ♗d1 54  
♗e4 ♖c7 55 ♗f5 ♖c6 56 ♗×g4 ♗a4 57 ♖e5  
♖×c5 58 ♗e6 As his bishop is the right  
colour for the a-pawn's queening square  
(a8), White can safely trade his g-pawn for  
the black bishop.

1-0

**46 ♗f3!** Black has no reply to this simple  
move.

**46... ♗b7** Everything else fails as well.



**46... ♖e6 47 c4!**

**46... a4 47 a3!**

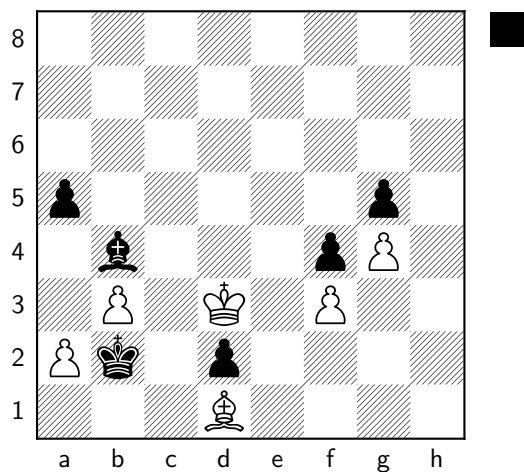
**47 c4!** Now that the bishop is undefended,  
Black loses a pawn.

White: Alterman, B.  
Black: Karpov, A.

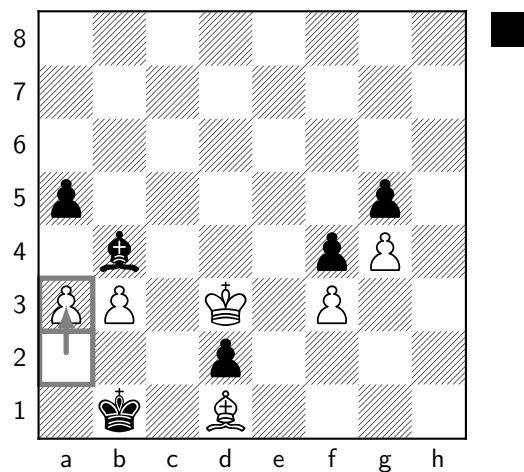
European Cup

1995

Result: 0-1

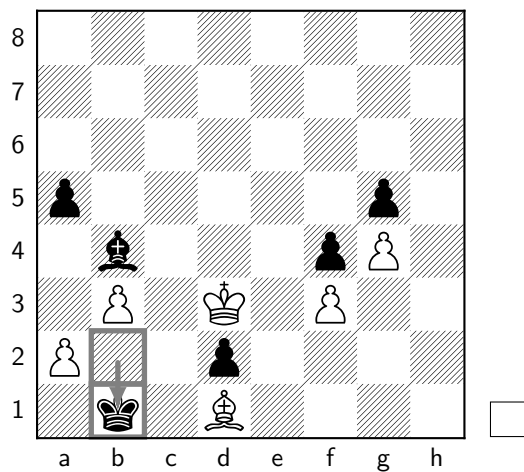


50...♔b1!!



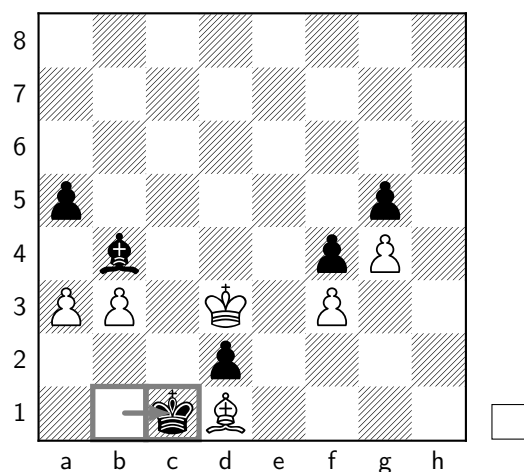
51 ♖e2 ♜c1 52 a4 ♙c5

51...♜c1! An important in-between move.



50...♙x a2? 51 ♜c2

51 a3



51...♙x a3? 52 ♜x d2

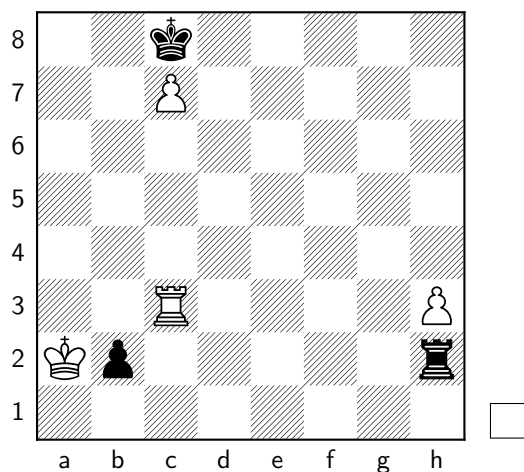
52 ♜e2 ♙x a3 Now White has to play b3-b4, but then there is little he can do against two passed pawns.

53 b4 axb4 54 ♙a4 ♙b2 55 ♙d1 ♙d4 56

♙b3 ♙e3 57 ♙a4 ♚b2 58 ♚d1 b3 59 ♙c6  
♚a1  
0-1

---

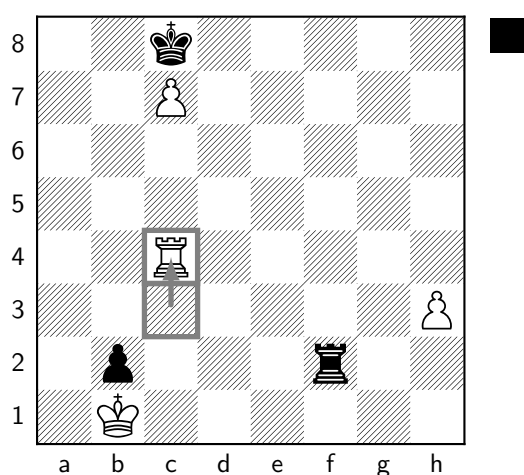
Result: 1-0



**1 ♖b1!** The only move that leaves the rook keeping an eye on both white pawns. If White did not have this move, he would be in zugzwang and the game would be a draw.

**1... ♜f2** Black has to move the rook along the second rank, much against his will.

**2 ♜c4!** White prepares the advance of the h-pawn.

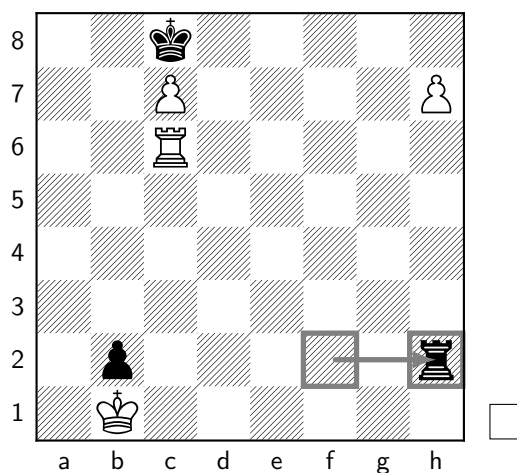


**2 h4 ♜f4 3 h5 ♜f5 4 h6 ♜f6 5 h7 ♜h6 6 ♜a3!**

**2... ♜h2 3 h4 ♜f2 4 ♜c5!** And so the story goes.

**4... ♜h2 5 h5 ♜f2 6 ♜c6 ♜h2 7 h6 ♜f2 8 h7!** The rook can no longer protect the h-pawn, but now White wins with simply tactics.

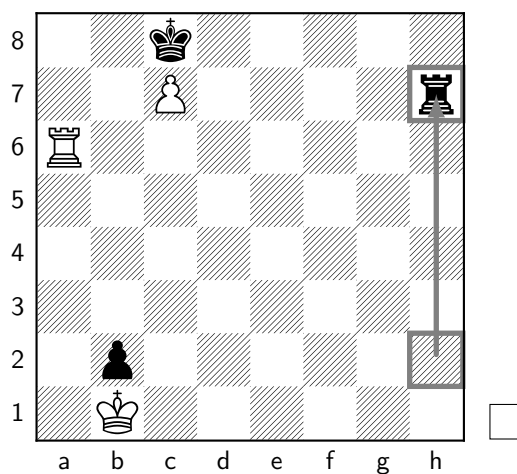
**8... ♜h2**



**8... ♜f8 9 ♜g6**

**9 ♜a6!** And White wins in all lines.

**9... ♜xh7**



**9...♔d7 10 c8♚+ ♔xc8 11 h8♚+ ♖xh8 12 ♜a8+**

**10 ♜a8+! ♔xc7 11 ♜a7+** And wins was the point of White's play.

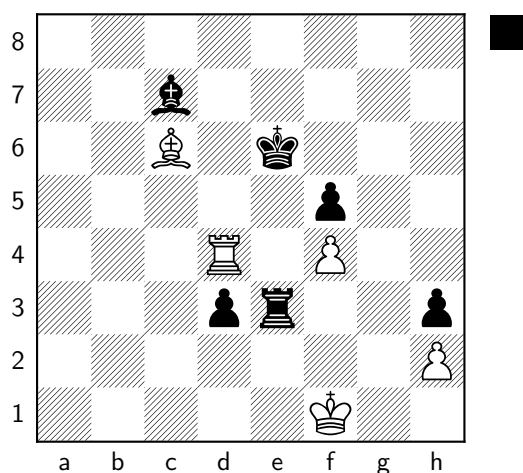
**1-0**\_\_\_\_\_

White: Gulko, B.  
Black: Short, N.

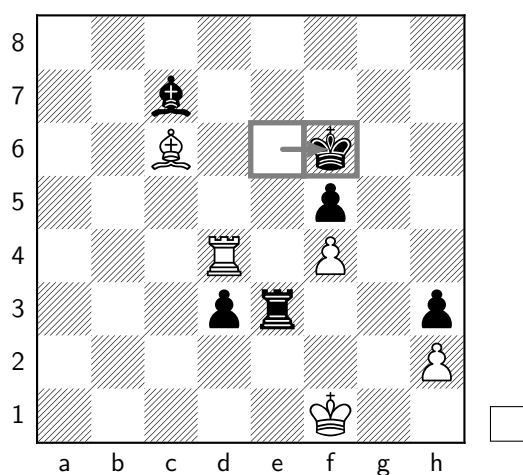
Elenite

1995

Result: 0-1



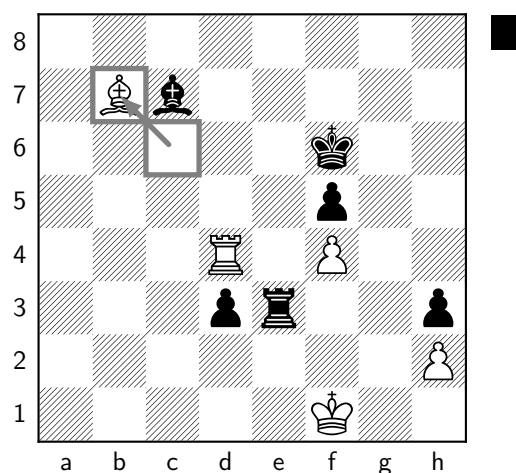
**63... ♕f6!** After this move White is in zugzwang.



**63... ♖b6!?**

**63... ♖x f4? 64 ♖x f4 d2 65 ♖a4!**

**64 ♖b7** White cannot do anything.



**64 ♖b5 ♖f3+ 65 ♕e1 ♖a5+ 66 ♕d1 ♖f1#**

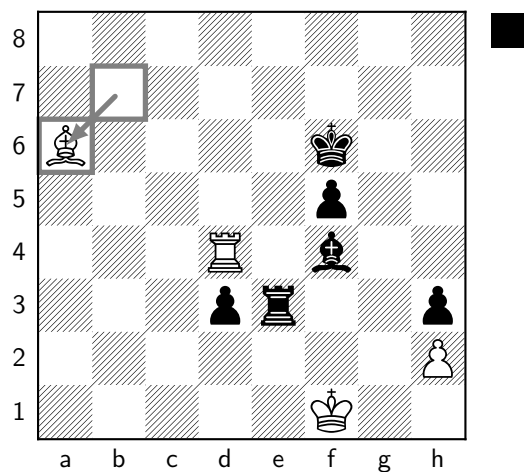
**64 ♕f2 ♖e6! 65 ♖c4 ♖e2+ 66 ♕g3 ♖c2**

**64 ♖c4 d2 65 ♖a4 ♖e1+ 66 ♕f2 ♖b6+ 67 ♕g3 ♖c1 68 ♖b4 ♖c3+ 69 ♕h4 ♖f2+ 70 ♕h5 ♖c8**

**64... ♖x f4!** Now that the white bishop can no longer defend d1 in one move, Black can use this bishop sacrifice to decide the game.

**65 ♖a6** White has no defence.





65 ♖×f4 d2 66 ♖d4 ♖e1+

65... ♖f3+ 66 ♖e1 ♗×h2 67 ♖×d3 ♗g3+ 68  
 ♖e2 ♖f2+ 69 ♖e3 h2 70 ♖d1 f4+ 71 ♖d3  
 ♖b2 72 ♗c4 ♖e5 73 ♖c3 ♖g2 74 ♖d5+ ♖e4  
 75 ♖h5 f3 76 ♗d5+ ♖e3 77 ♖h7 ♗e5+ 78  
 ♖c4 ♖g1

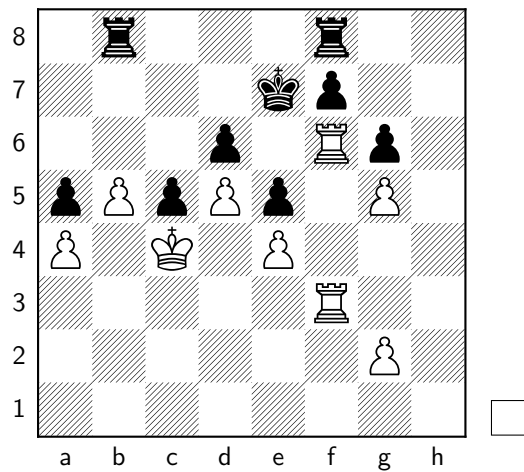
0-1

Madrid

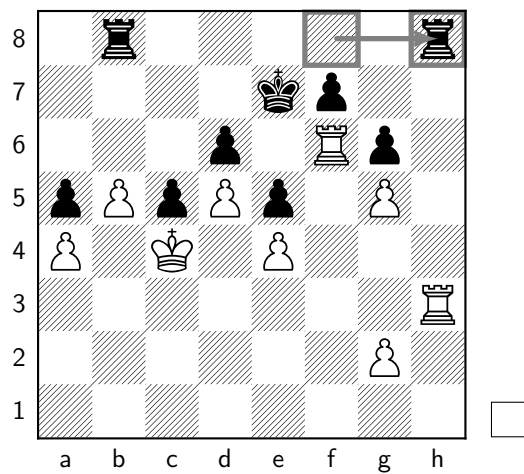
Black: Salov, V.

1994

Result: 1-0



**49 ♖h3! ♜h8**



**49...♖b6 50 ♖h7 ♔e8 51 g3!**

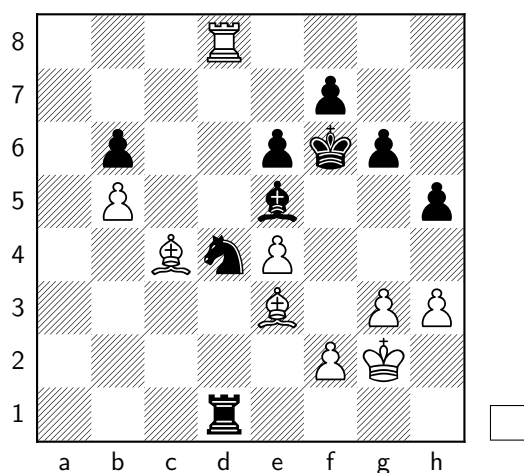
50 ♖xh8 ♜xh8 51 b6 ♜h1 52 ♔b5 c4 53 b7  
c3 54 ♔a6 ♜b1 55 ♜f3 c2 56 ♜c3  
1-0

White: Kasparov, G.  
Black: Ivanchuk, V.

Manila Olympiad

1992

Result: 1-0

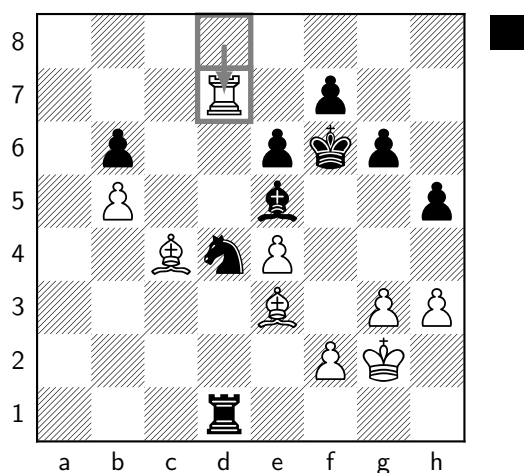


**39 ♖d7!!** Preventing ...Kf6-e7 and attacking f7 this move is more than just zugzwang, but it retains its most important aspects.

**39...♔g7 40 ♕xg7**

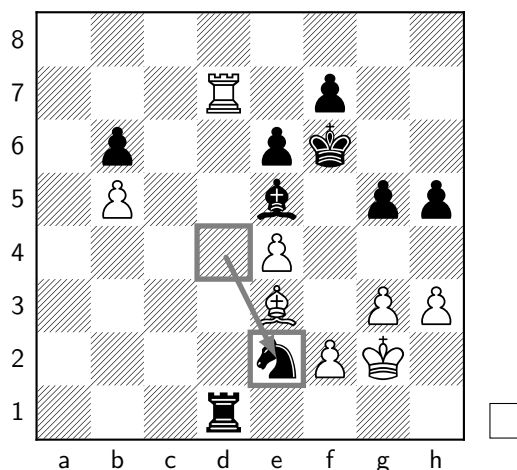
**40 ♕e2!** Now the h5-pawn hangs.

**40...♘xg2**



**39 ♕e2?! ♔e7!**

**39...g5** This weakens the h-pawn, but Black has no moves.



**40...♖e1 41 ♕xh5**

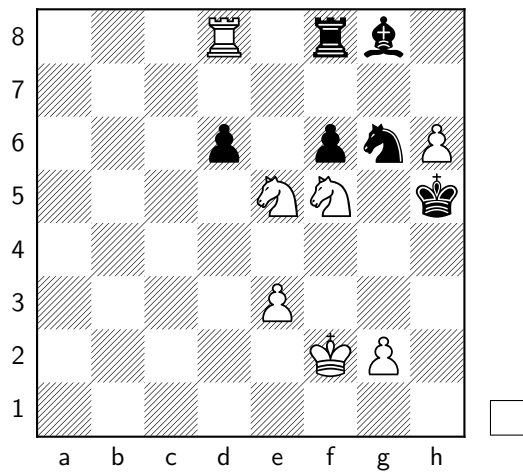
**41 ♖xh1 ♘c3 42 ♖d8 ♘xg2 43 ♕xb6 ♘c3**

**44 ♖g8 ♘xb5 45 ♕d8+ .** The above examples have all been pretty simple, but zugzwang also occurs in more complicated

situations and have been the basis of many a study.

**1-0**

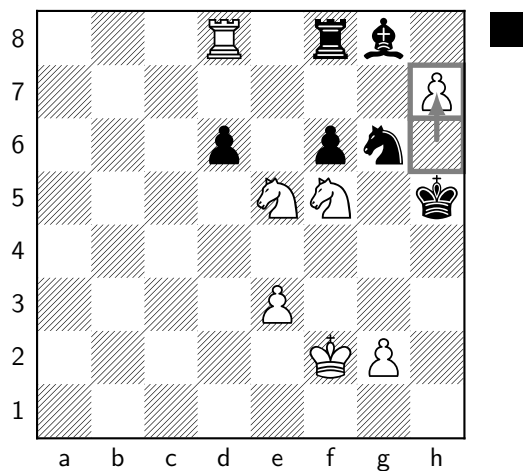
---



**1 h7!!** This fabulous starting move forces Black to block his king's escape path with the bishop.

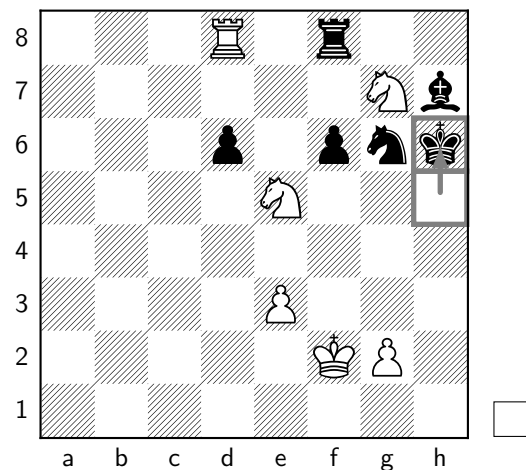
**1... ♖×d8 2 g4+ ♔g5 3 h×g8 ♖×g8 4 ♜f7+ ♜×g4 5 ♜5h6+ ♜h3 6 ♜×g8 f5 7 ♜f6 ♜h4 8 ♜×d6 ♜g2 9 ♜d5 ♜×e3 10 ♜f4+ ♜g4 11 ♜×e3**

**2 ♜g7+ ♜h6** The only move.



**1 ♖×f8? ♜×f8 2 ♜c6 ♜h7 3 ♜cd4 ♜g5 4 ♜×d6 ♜×h6**

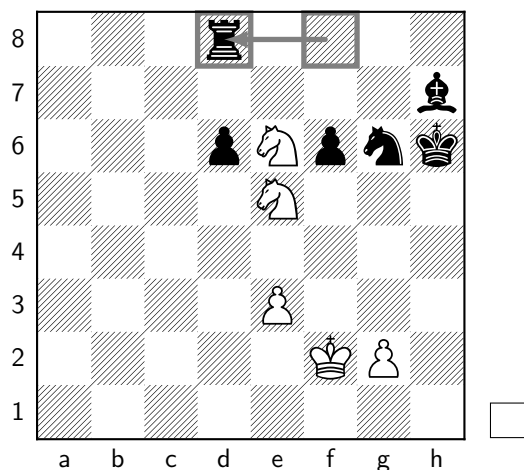
**1... ♜×h7** Black has no choice but to take the pawn.



**2... ♜h4 3 ♜×g6+**

**2... ♜g5 3 ♜e6+**

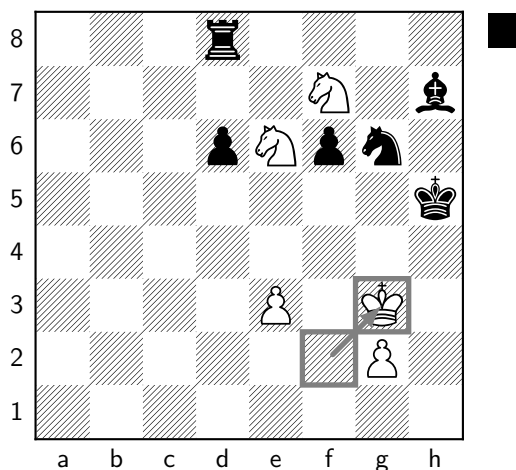
**3 ♜e6 ♖×d8** Again Black has no alternatives.



**3...dxe5 4 Nxf8**

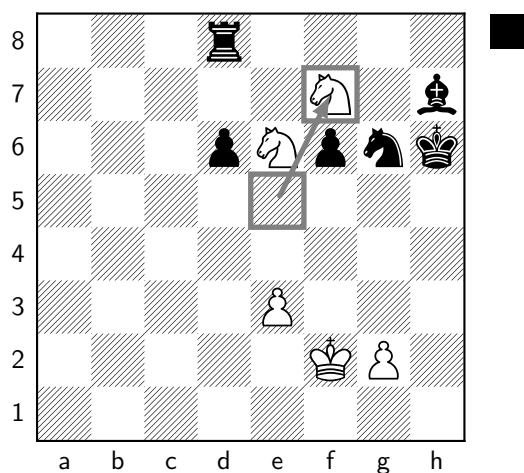
**3...Rh8 4 Nf7+**

**4 Nf7+!** White begins to set up a mating net.



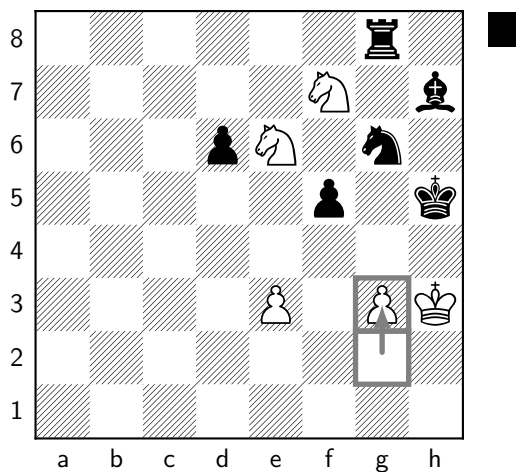
**5 Ng7+ Kh4 6 Nxd8 Ne5**

**5...Rg8 6 Kh3 f5 7 g3!** Black is now in zugzwang.



**4 Ng4+? Kh5 5 Nxf6+ Kh6**

**4...Kh5 5 Kg3!!** With the rather direct threat of 6 Ng7 mate, White gives up the rook because of a forthcoming zugzwang.



**7 e4? f4!**

**7 g4+? fxg4+ 8 Kg3 d5**

**7...d5 8 g4+! fxg4+ 9 Kg3 d4 10 exd4** And whatever Black does now, he will be mated on the next move.

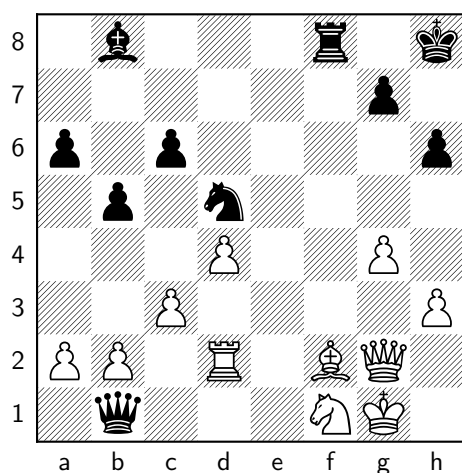
**1-0**

White: Ivanchuk, V.  
Black: Adams, M.

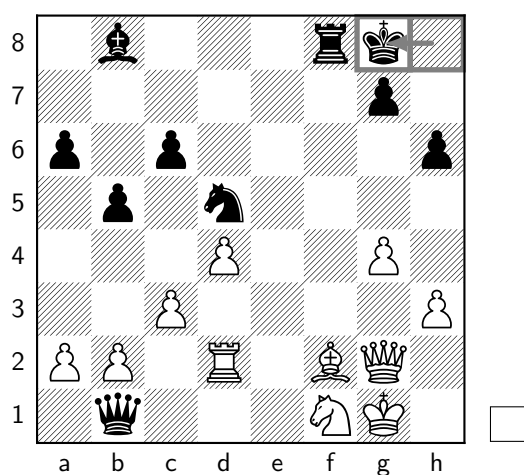
Terrassa

1991

Result: 0-1



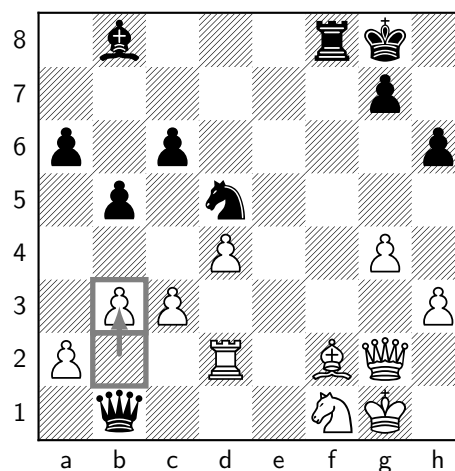
**35... ♔g8!!** prophylactic thinking (which is also the thinking behind preventing counterplay) where Black has asked himself 'what will White do next?', and come up with the answer that he would rather not move at all!



**35... ♖x a2? 36 ♘g3!**

**36 b3** Although this costs the c3-pawn and loses, it is probably still the best move.

Here at least White is threatening to dislodge the knight from d5.



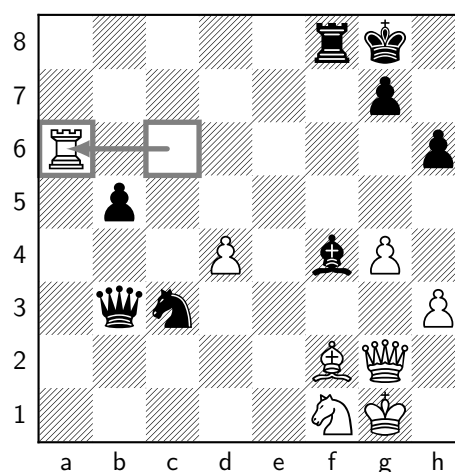
**36 ♖e2 ♘f4**

**36 ♖h1 ♘e3**

**36 ♔h1 ♘e3! 37 ♖g1 ♖e4+**

**36 a3 ♔h8!**

**36... ♘f4 37 ♖e2 ♘x c3 38 ♖e6 ♖x a2 39 ♖x c6 ♖x b3 40 ♖x a6**



**40 ♖e1 ♔b1!**

**40...** ♘e2+ **41 ♔h1** White has managed to escape the zugzwang without losing any material, but now Black has a killing attack against the white king.

**41...** ♜b8! With the deadly ...Nf4 coming. White cannot defend himself anymore.

**42 ♖e1 ♔d1**

**0-1**

---

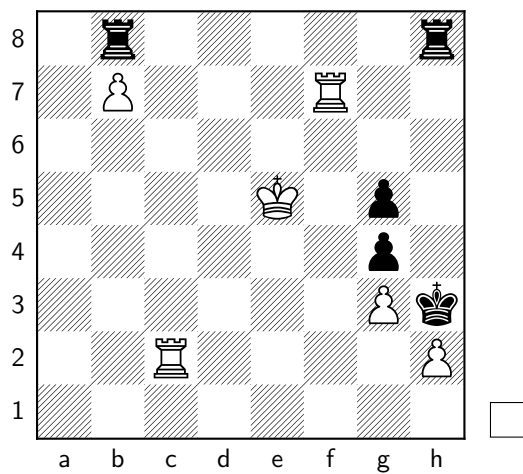


White: Huebner, R.  
Black: Salov, V.

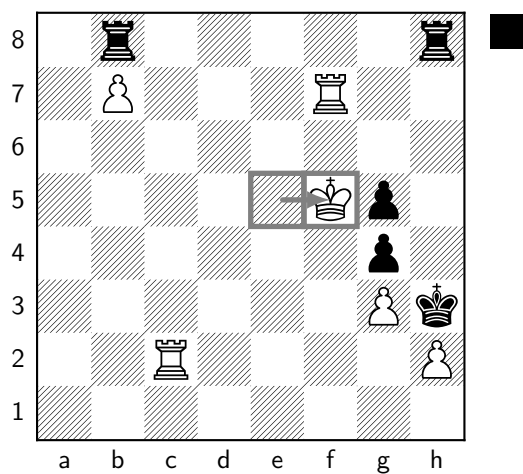
Skellefteå

1989

Result: 1/2-1/2



53 ♔f5??



53 ♖c4

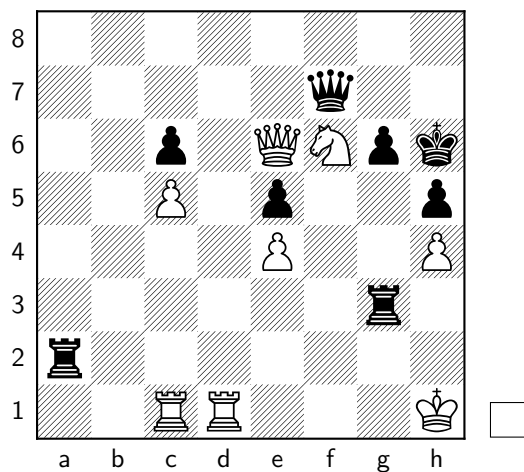
53...♖×b7!! 54 ♖×b7 ♖f8+ 55 ♔e4 ♖e8+  
56 ♔d3 ♖e3+ 57 ♔d2 ♖d3+ 58 ♔e2 ♖e3+  
59 ♔d1 ♖e1+ 60 ♔d2 ♖d1+  
1/2-1/2

White: Beliavsky, A.  
Black: Christiansen, L.

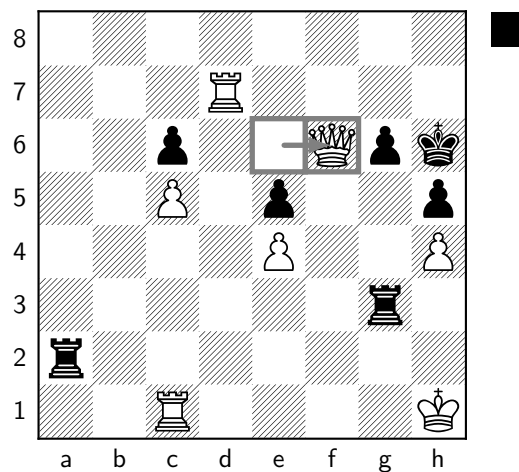
Reggio Emilia

1987

Result: 1/2-1/2



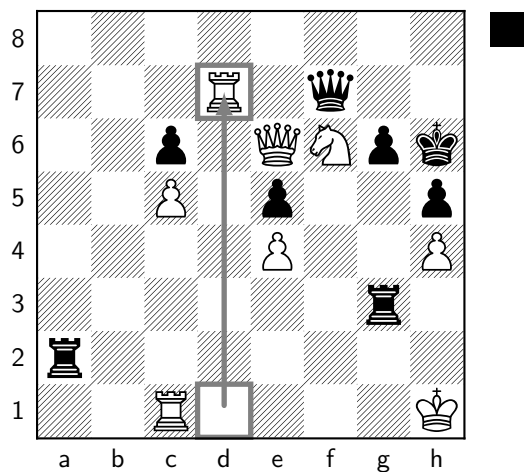
37 ♖d7



38 ♕h7+!

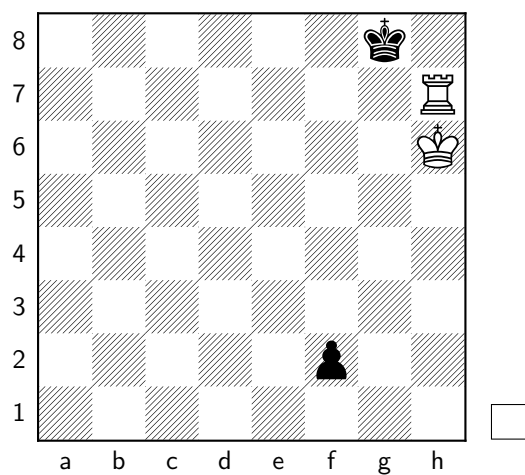
38... ♖h2+!!

1/2-1/2



37 ♘g4+!? h×g4 38 ♕×f7

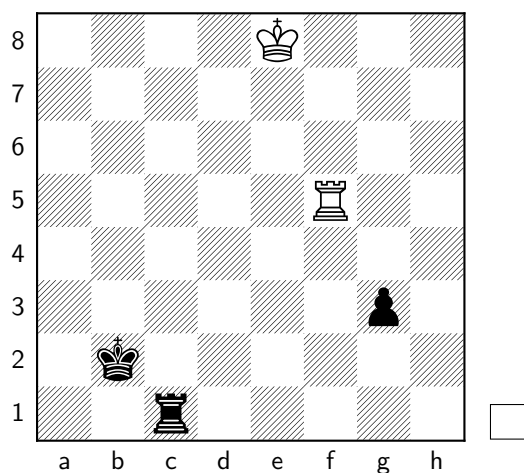
37... ♕×f6 38 ♕×f6?? White falls into the trap.



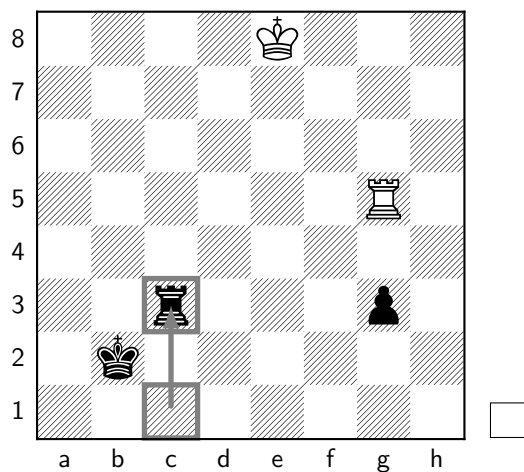
**1 ♖g7+ ♔f8 2 ♖g5!** The only move to save the game.

**2... f1 ♕3 ♖f5+ ♕×f5** Stalemate is an important tool for the defender.

**1/2-1/2**



1...Rg5 Rxc3



1...Rg1 2 Kf7 Kc2 3 Kg6 Kd2 4 Kh5 Ke2  
5 Kh4 Kf3 6 Rf5+ Kg2 7 Rc5 Rf1 8 Kg4!  
Rf3 9 Rc2+ Rf2 10 Rc3!

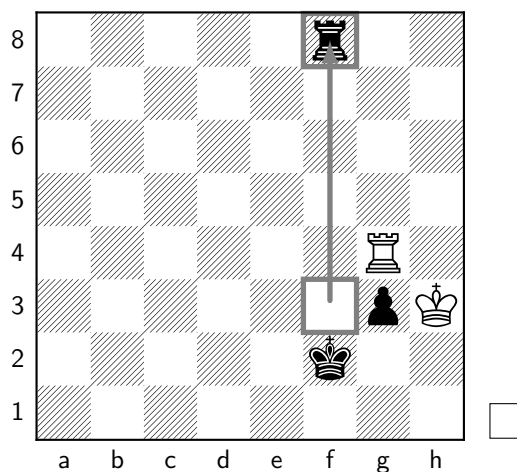
2 Kf7 Kc2 3 Kg6 Kd2 4 Kh5 Ke2 5 Kh4!

5 Kg4??

5...Kf2 6 Kh3 Rf3 It looks as if Black is doing well. He is threatening ...g3-g2+ and also ...Rf8 with the idea of ...Rh8+. Against this White only has one defence.

7 Rg4!! A wonderful idea. There is nothing Black can do to escape the coming stalemate.

7...Rf8



7...g2+ 8 Kh2

8 Rf4+! Rxf4 stalemate.

**1/2-1/2**

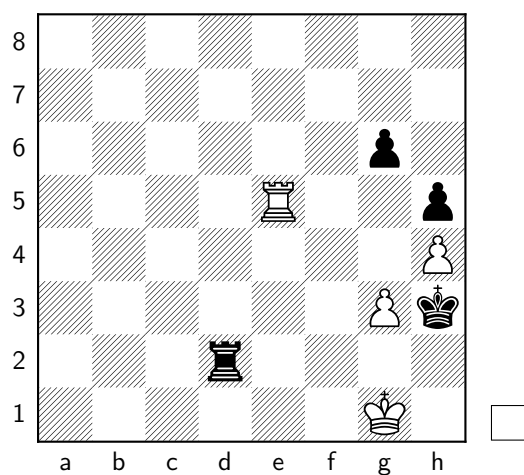
---

White: Trabattoni, F.  
Black: Barlov, D.

La Valetta

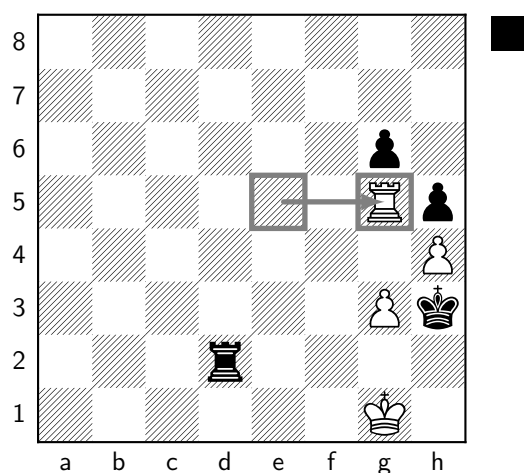
1979

Result: 0-1



4 ♖a5 ♜f3 5 g4 ♜g3+ 6 ♔h1 ♛×g4 7 ♜a4+  
♔h3  
0-1

1 ♜g5? Intending 1...Rg2+ 2 Kh1 R×g3? 3 R×g6! with a draw. Unfortunately Black has an additional opportunity.



1 ♜e6! ♜g2+ 2 ♔h1 ♜×g3 3 ♜×g6!

1...♜g2+ 2 ♔h1 ♜f2! 3 ♔g1 ♜f6!! Now instead achieving stalemate, White finds himself in zugzwang. He lost after a few more moves.

White: Kubbel, L.

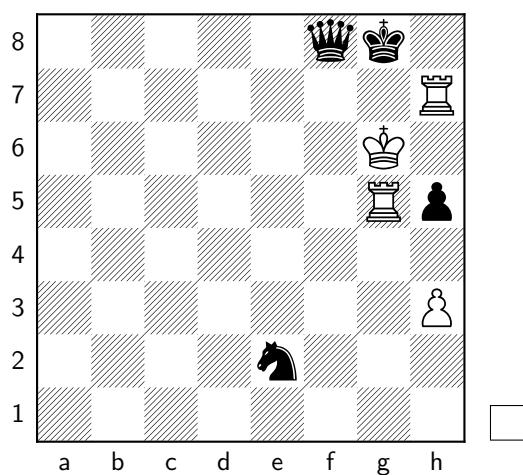
Black: ?

Deutsche Schachzeitung

1909

Result: 1/2-1/2

---



**1 ♖g7+!!** The only move leading to a draw.

**1... ♕xg7+ 2 ♔xh5** At first it looks as if White will win the queen and thereby force a draw, but on second glance it appears that Black will be able to bring his knight back and prevent this. However, White has a third glance...

**2... ♘f4+ 3 ♕h4!! ♘g6+ 4 ♖xg6 ♕xg6**  
Stalemate.

**1/2-1/2**

---

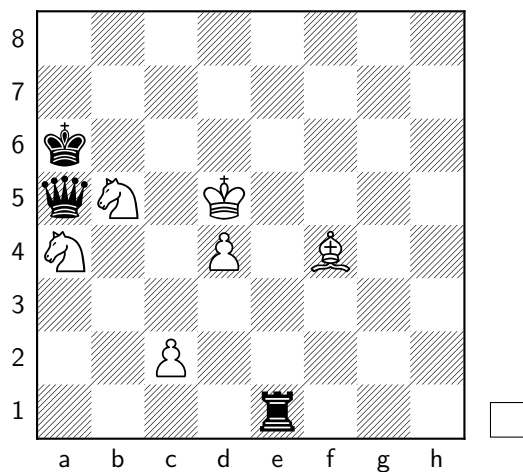
White: Kubbel, L.

Rigaer Tageblatt

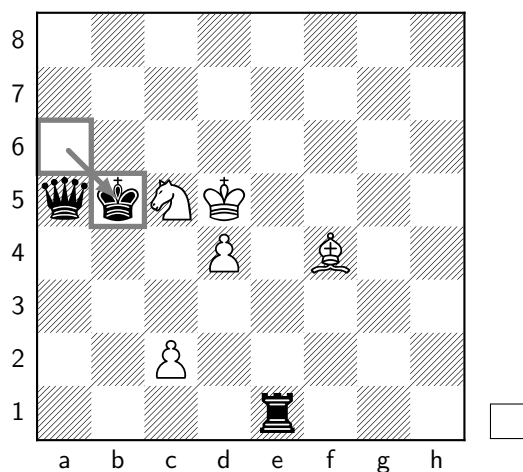
Black: ?

1909

Result: 1/2-1/2



1 ♖c5+! ♙×b5



1... ♙b6? 2 ♖c7+

2 ♙c4+ ♙b6

2... ♙b4? 3 ♖d2+

3 ♖c7+! ♙×c7 stalemate. — Stalemate is an important aspect of the endgame. I have nowhere near done it justice here, but equally, there is no way that I would ever be able to do so.

1/2-1/2



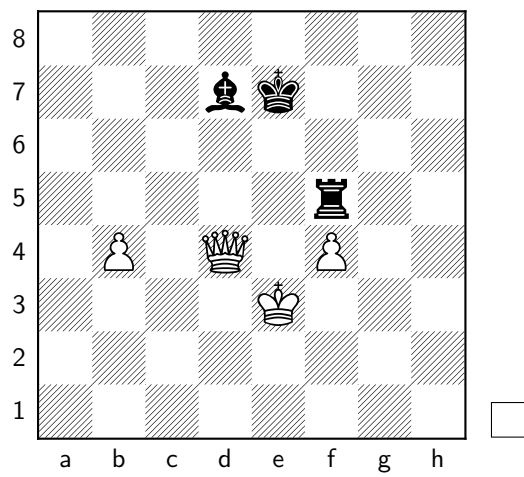
White: Hyldkrog, L.  
Black: Varberg, K.

Lyngby

1990

Result: 1/2-1/2

---



**1/2-1/2**

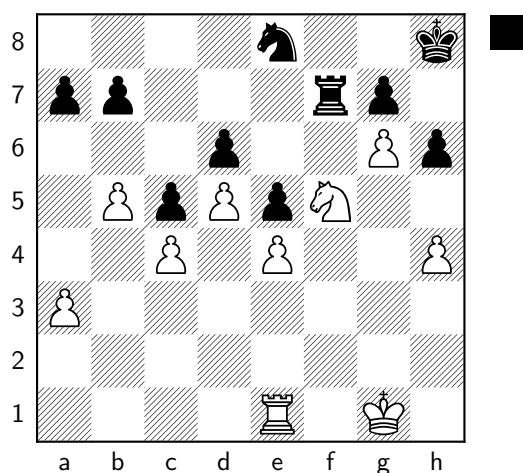
---

White: Larsen, B.  
Black: Torre, E.

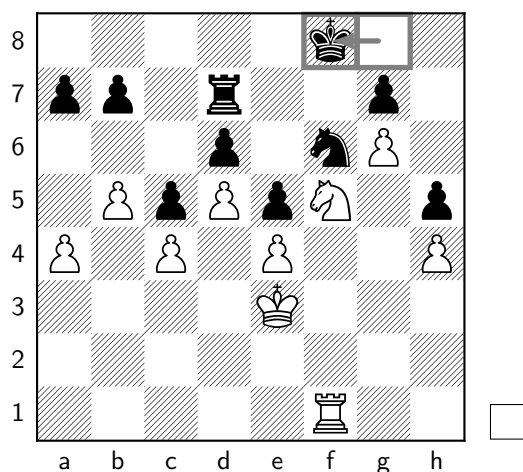
Brussels

1987

Result: 1-0

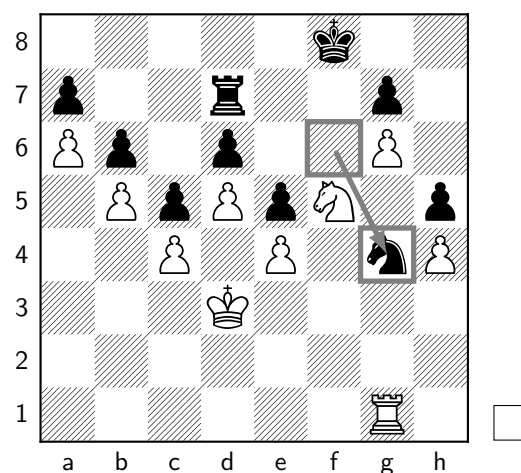


37...♖d7?? 38 ♖f1 ♔g8 39 a4 h5 40 ♔f2  
♜f6 41 ♔e3 ♔f8



41...b6 42 a5

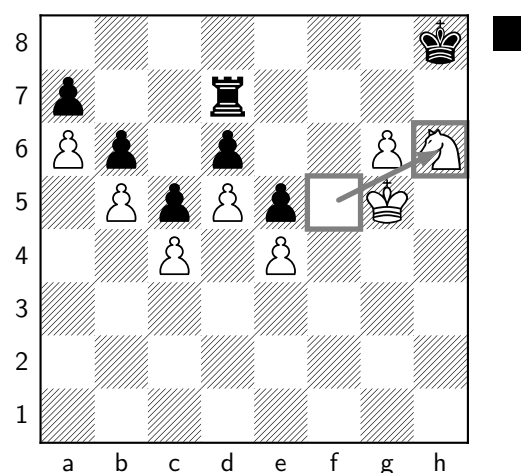
42 a5 ♖d8 43 ♔d3 ♖d7 44 a6 b6 45 ♖g1  
♜g4



45...♖d8 46 ♖g5 ♖d7 47 ♜g3

46 ♖xg4! As the black rook is completely  
inactive, this sacrifice wins the game  
without too much trouble.

46...h×g4 47 ♔e3 ♖d8 48 ♔f2 ♔g8 49 ♔g3  
♖d7 50 ♔×g4 ♔f8 51 ♔g5 ♔g8 52 h5 ♔h8  
53 h6 g×h6+ 54 ♜×h6



54 ♔×h6 ♖h7+ 55 ♔g5! ♖h1 56 ♔f6

54... ♖g7 55 ♜f5+ ♖f8 56 ♖f6  
1-0

---

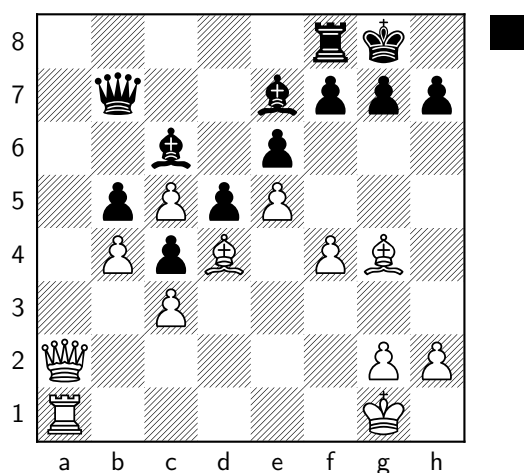
White: Anand, V.

Biel

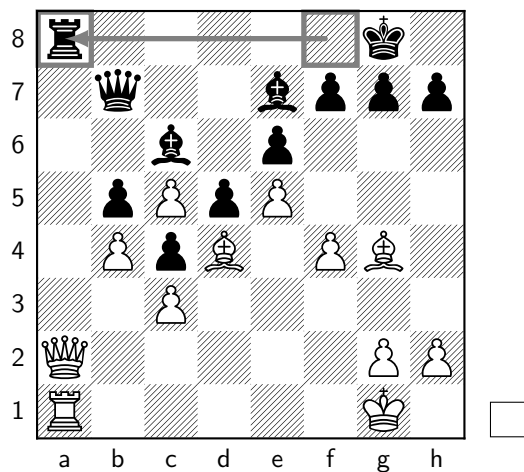
Black: Dreev, A.

1993

Result: 1/2-1/2



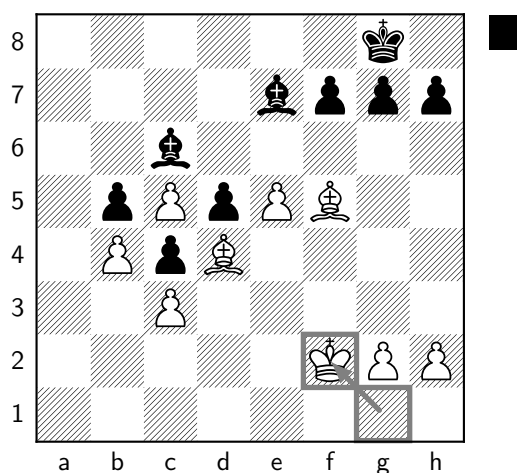
22...Ra8!



22...g6? 23 Rf1 Ra8 24 Qf2 Qa6 25 Qg3

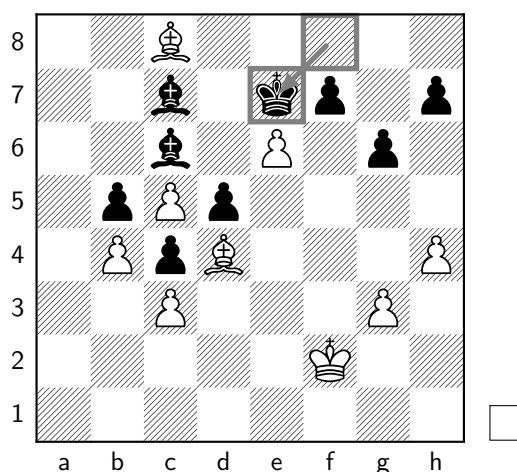
23 Qxa8+ Qxa8 24 Rxa8+ Rxa8 25 f5  
exf5 26 Rxf5 Rc6! Black will be able to  
defend the position easily with the bishops  
on c6 and c7.

27 Qf2



27 Rxc8 Rd8 28 e6 f6 29 Rd7? Rxd7 30  
exd7 Qf7 31 c6 Qe6 32 Rc5 d4 33 Rxd4  
Qd6

27...Rd8 28 g3 Rc7 29 h4 g6 30 Rc8 Qf8  
31 e6 Qe7!



31...f5? 32 Rd7! Rxd7 33 exd7 Qe7 34 c6  
Qd6 35 Rf6

32 exf7 Qxf7 33 g4 h6 White has no way to

enter the black position. The fortress is  
immaculate.

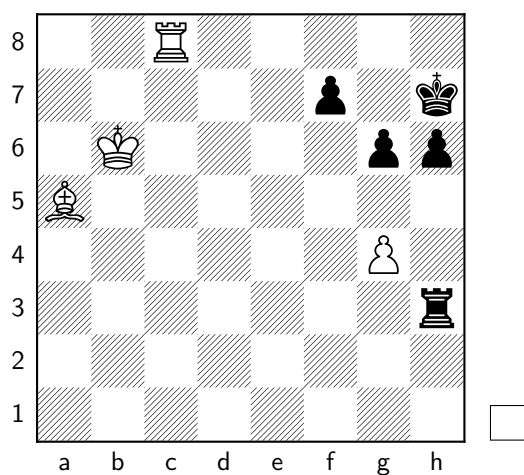
1/2-1/2

White: Zilber  
Black: Seirawan, Y.

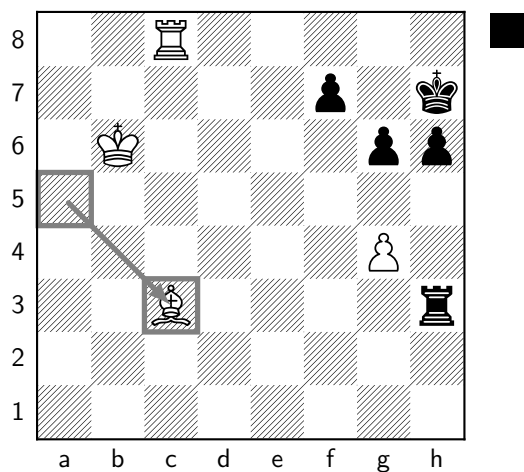
Hastings

1979

Result: 1/2-1/2



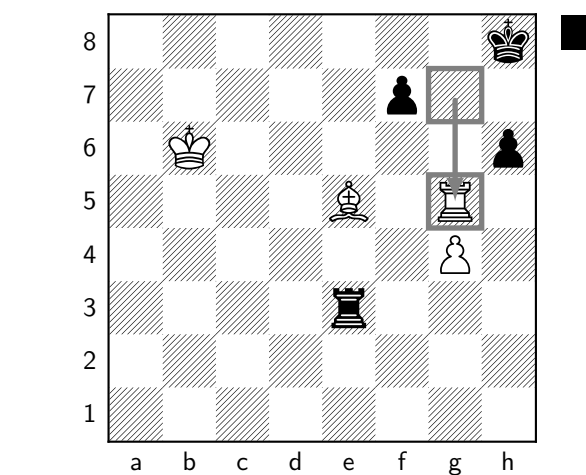
53 ♖c3?



53 g5!! h×g5 54 ♖c3

53...g5 54 ♖h8+ ♔g6 55 ♖g8+ ♔h7 56 ♖g7+ This surely looks dangerous, but Black can continue to harass the white bishop and thereby make a draw.

56...♔h8 57 ♖e5 ♖e3! 58 ♖×g5+



58 ♖a1 ♖e1 59 ♖c3 ♖e3

58...♔h7 59 ♖f5 ♔g6 60 ♖c5 ♖e4 And Black succeeded in eliminating the white pawn, after which the position is no longer winning for White, who nevertheless tried to win for another 20-odd moves.

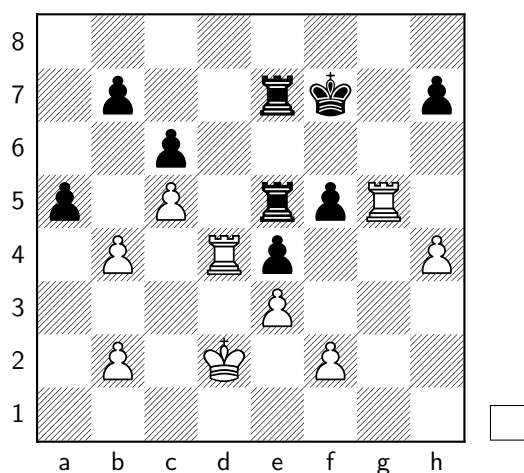
1/2-1/2

White: Sørensen, T.  
Black: Bjerring, K.

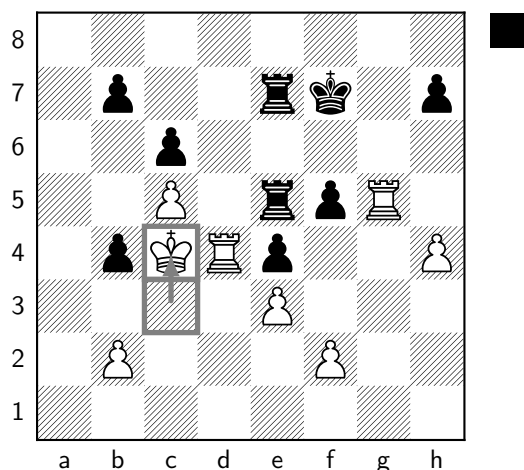
Copenhagen

1996

Result: 1-0



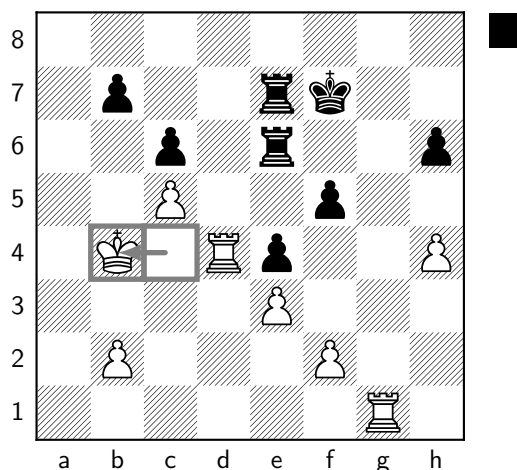
**31 ♔c3! a×b4+ 32 ♔c4!** The black pawn will not run away. White does not care that he cannot take it in this very instance, as he has superior activity, which provides him with winning chances.



**32 ♔×b4 b6!**

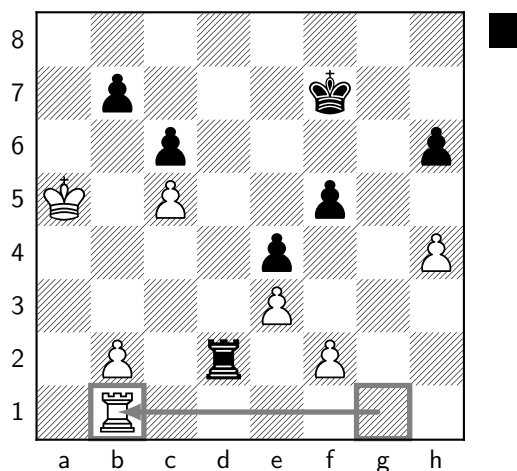
**32...h6 33 ♖g1 ♕5e6!** Black wisely decides to eliminate one white rook to relieve the pressure.

**34 ♔×b4**



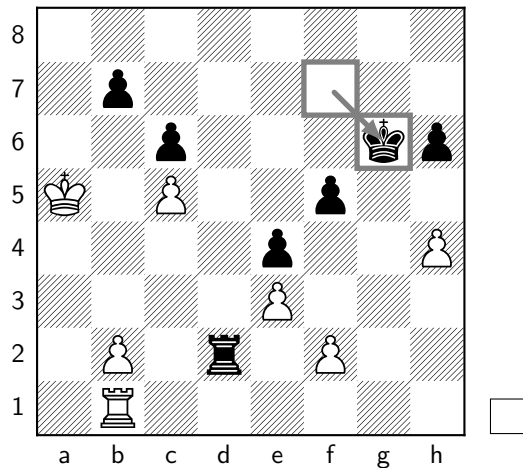
**34 ♖d8!? ♕e8!**

**34...♗g6 35 ♖dd1 ♖×g1 36 ♖×g1 ♖d7 37 ♔a5 ♖d2 38 ♖b1?** White plays this passive move as a winning attempt. Objectively he should probably have been more cautious, but it should be said that both players were in bad time trouble at this point.



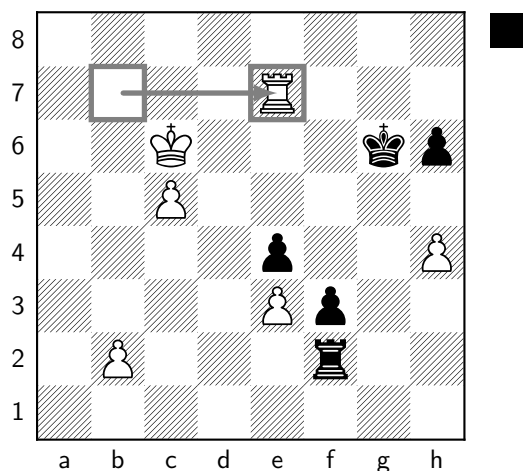
**38 b4 ♖xf2 39 ♔b6 ♜b2 40 ♔xb7 ♜xb4+  
41 ♔xc6 ♜b3**

**38...♔g6?** A crucial loss of tempo, sending the king in the wrong direction.



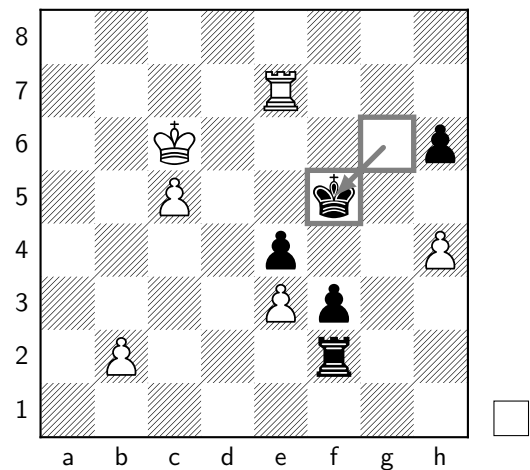
**38...♜xf2! 39 ♔b6 ♜e2 40 ♔xb7 ♜xe3 41  
♔xc6 f4 42 b4 f3 43 b5 f2 44 ♜f1 ♜f3 45 b6  
e3 46 b7 e2**

**39 ♔b6 ♜d7 40 ♜a1 f4 41 ♜a7 ♜d2 42  
♜xb7 f3 43 ♔xc6 ♜xf2 44 ♜e7!** White  
needs to be active.



**44 b4? ♜e2 45 ♜b8 ♔f7 46 ♜b7+ ♔e6 47  
♜b8 ♜xe3 48 ♜f8 ♜b3 49 ♜e8+ ♔f5 50 ♔d5  
e3 51 c6 e2 52 ♔c4 f2**

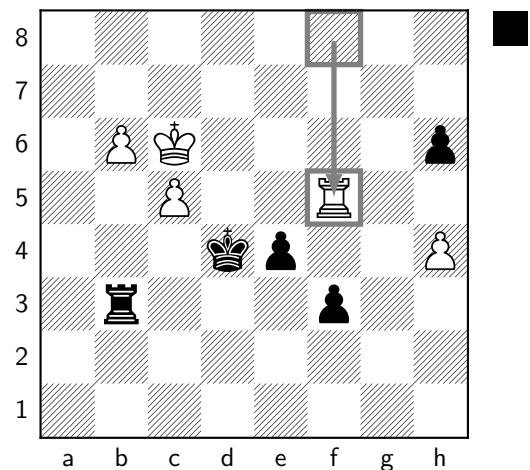
**44...♔f5?**



**44...♜xb2! 45 ♜xe4 ♜e2 46 ♔c7! ♜c2 47  
c6 ♜c3 48 ♔b7 ♜b3+ 49 ♔c8 ♜b5! 50 c7 f2  
51 ♜f4 ♜f5 52 ♜xf5 ♔xf5 53 ♔b7 f1 ♜ 54  
c8 ♜+ ♔g6**

**45 ♜f7+ ♔e6 46 ♜f4 ♔e5 47 b4** White used  
the checks to get his rook to the best  
possible position and now takes the  
chance to run with his pawns.

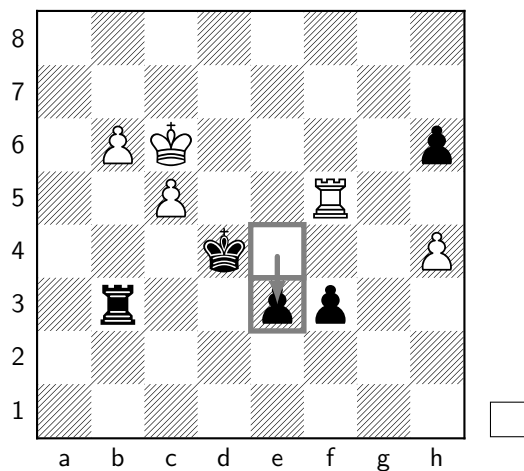
**47...♜e2 48 ♜f8 ♜xe3 49 b5 ♜b3 50 b6  
♔d4 51 ♜f5?**



**51 b7! ♜xb7 52 ♔xb7 e3 53 ♜f4+? ♔xc5 54  
♜xf3 ♔d4 55 ♜f6 e2 56 ♜e6 ♔d3 57 ♔c6  
♔d2 58 ♔d5 e1 ♜ 59 ♜xe1 ♔xe1 60 ♔e4  
♔d2!! 61 h5 ♔c3 62 ♔f5 ♔d4 63 ♔g6 ♔e5  
64 ♔xh6 ♔f6**



**51...e3?** Black returns the favour immediately.



**51...♔e3! 52 ♔b7! ♔f2 53 c6 e3 54 c7 ♖c3**

**52 ♖f4+!** Black had completely overlooked this check. The look on his face was of utter surprise and horror. White wins easily.

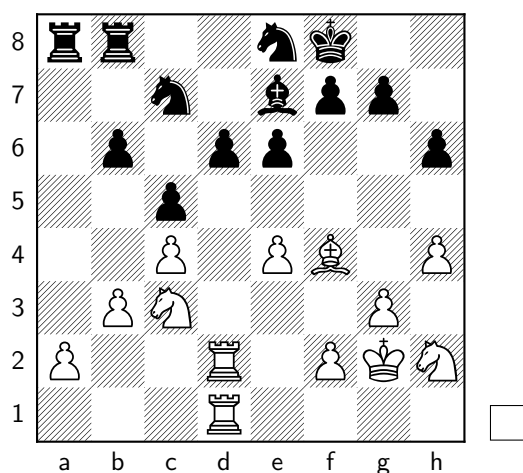
**52...♔e5 53 ♖x f3 e2 54 ♖f8 ♖e3 55 b7  
♔d4 56 b8♖ ♖e6+ 57 ♔d7 e1♖ 58 ♖f4+  
♔xc5 59 ♖a7+ ♔b5 60 ♖a4+  
1-0**

White: Karpov, A.  
Black: Polgar, J.

Buenos Aires

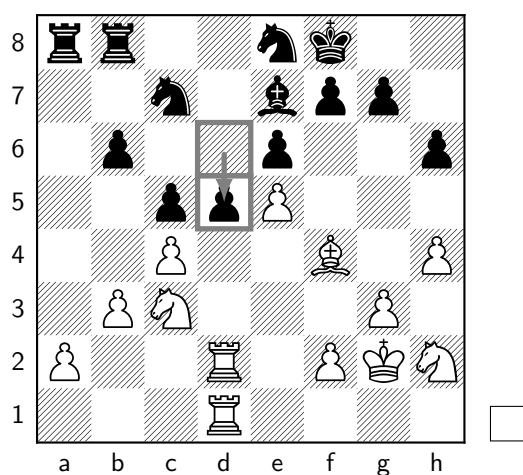
2001

Result: 1-0



**21 e5!** Karpov opens the d-file for the invasion of his rooks.

**21...d5** Polgar chooses a tactical solution which leads to some relief through the exchange of a pawn of knights.

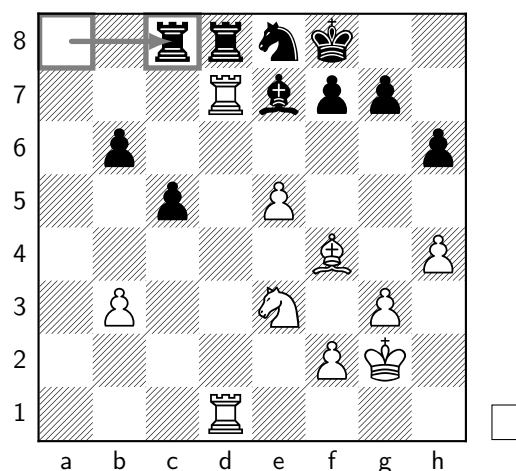


**21...dxe5 22 exd5 f6 23 exd7 exd7**

**22 cxd5 exd5 23 exd5 exd5 24 exd5 exa2 25 exd7 exa8!** The only move. White is planning to play 26 Ng4 and 27 e6, after which the white knight comes to e5 and totally dominates the position, or even sacrifices itself on h6, as Black cannot recapture without ending in deep trouble.

**26 Ng4 exd8!** This was the point of the last move. Black has to protect herself against the direct threats.

**27 exd3 exa8** It is not easy to be Black here.



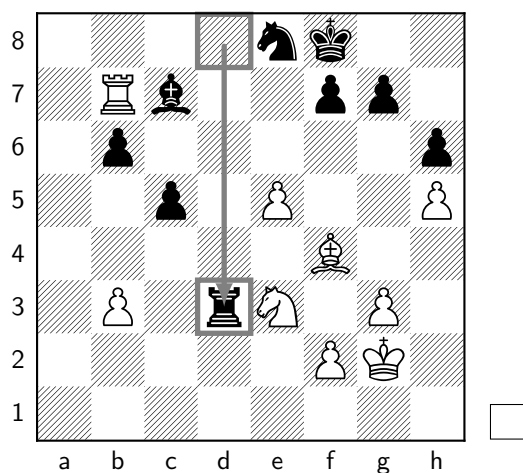
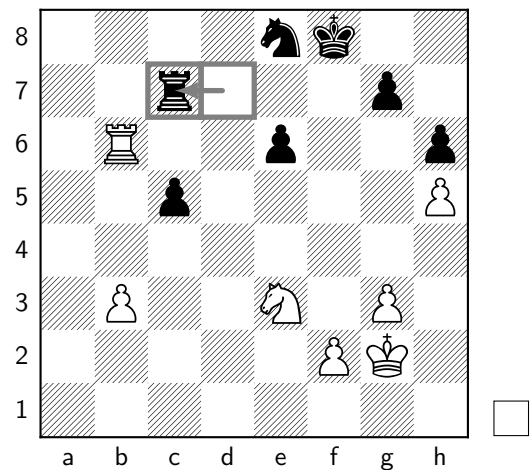
**27...g5 28 exf5 exd7 29 exd7 gxf4 30 exd7 fxd3 31 exf5 exd8 32 exd8 exd7 33 exd7 exd7 34 exd7**

**27...exd7 28 exd7 exd8 29 exb7 exd3 30 exd3 exb3 31 exb8! exd3 32 exd3 exb6 exd8 33 exd8**

**28 exf5 exd7 29 exd7 exd8 30 exb7 exd3 31 h5!** Karpov is possibly the supreme technical player of all time, his only weakness being that he sometimes hesitates before striking, which sometimes

has cost him points. Similar to Capablanca, Karpov is excellent at improving his position and is (which many people tend to forget because of his playing style) a gifted tactician. Except that he does not use tactics so much to attack the king, but to prevent counterplay and secure himself long-term advantages.

**31...♖d8 32 ♜e3 ♜d3!** Polgar enters into a dangerous rook and knight endgame, where her king constantly will be under threat.



**32...♜d7? 33 ♜c4 ♖e7 34 ♜x♖b6 ♜x♖b6 35 ♜x♖b6 ♜c7 36 ♜e3 ♜e6 37 ♖f3**

**33 e6!** White takes the chance to win a pawn.

**33...fxe6 34 ♜xc7 ♜d7 35 ♜x♖b6 ♜xc7**

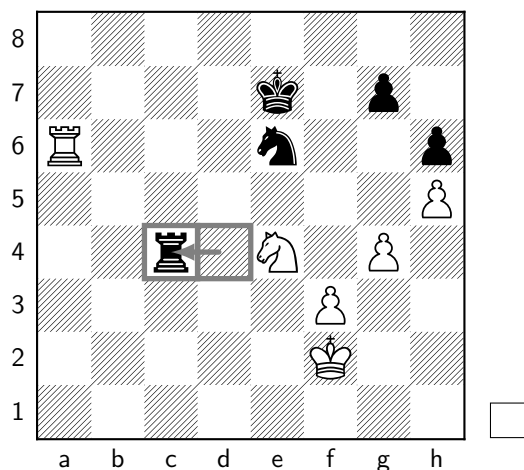
**35...♜xc7?! 36 ♜c6 ♜d5 37 ♜c4 ♜b7 38 ♜d2**

**36 ♜xe6 ♜b7 37 ♜e5 ♜xb3 38 ♜xc5** The following endgame is virtually impossible to analyse. What we can see is that Black is constantly threatened because of her weaker king, and once White is able to bring his king close to the black king, the black defences have to yield.

**38...♜f6 39 g4 ♜a3 40 ♜c8+ ♖f7 41 ♜c4 ♜a7 42 f3 ♖e6 43 ♜c5 ♜d5 44 ♜c6+ ♖e7 45 ♜e5 ♜f4+ 46 ♖g3 ♜a4 47 ♜c2 ♖f6 48 ♜d7+ ♖e7 49 ♜c5 ♜d4 50 ♜a2 ♖f7 51 ♜a7+**

White is manoeuvring around, looking for the perfect moment to improve his king, while also making it possible for Black to make mistakes. All in all, Do not hurry!

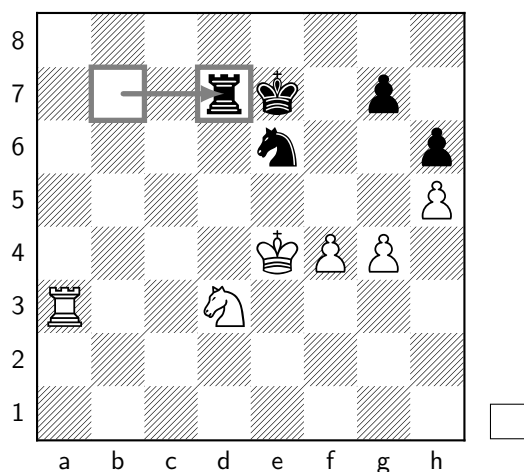
**51...♖f8 52 ♜e4 ♜e6 53 ♜a6 ♖e7 54 ♖f2 ♜c4**



54...Rb4 55 Ra7+ Kf8 56 Nd6 Rb3 57 Nf5  
Rb2+ 58 Kg3 Rb3 59 Nh4 Nd4 60 Ng6+  
Ke8 61 Ne5 Ne6

55 Ke3 Rc1 56 Ra7+ Rc7 57 Ra4 Rb7 58  
Ra3 Rc7 59 Ng3 Kf6 60 Nd4+ Ke7 61 Nc3  
Rd7 62 f4 White has to advance the pawns  
in order to create real threats against the  
black king.

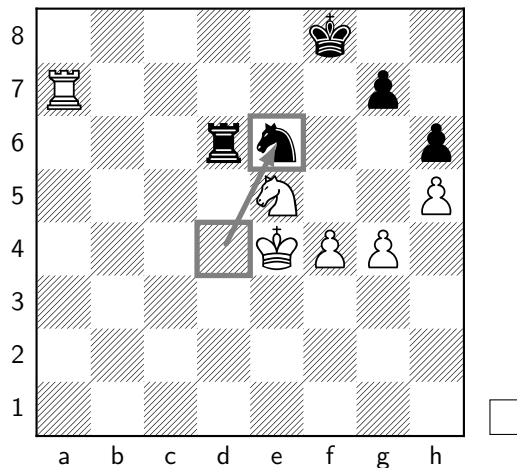
62...Nc5 63 Ne2 Kf7 64 Nd4 Ne6 65 Nf3  
Rb7 66 Ne5+ Kf6 67 Nd3 Ke7 68 Ke4  
Rd7? Black cracks under the pressure. Now  
the white king is allowed to cross to the  
fifth rank, after which Black can no longer  
defend herself.



68...Rb5

69 Kf5! Given the chance White does not  
hesitate.

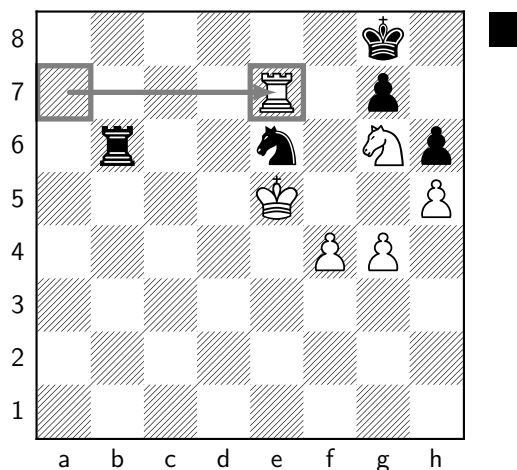
69...Rd6 70 Ra7+ Kf8 71 Ne5 Nd4+ 72  
Ke4 Ne6 All pawn endings win for White.



72...Nc6 73 Ra6 Rd4+ 74 Ke3

72...Rd8 73 Nd7+

73 Ng6+ Kg8 74 Ke5 Rb6 75 Re7



75 Re7 Nf8 76 Re8 Rf6 77 Nxg8 Rxg8 78  
Rxg8+ Kxg8 79 Ke6 Ke8 80 f5 Kf8 81 f6  
Kg8 82 e7 gxf6 83 Kxf6 Kh7 84 Kf7  
Kh8 85 Kg6

1-0

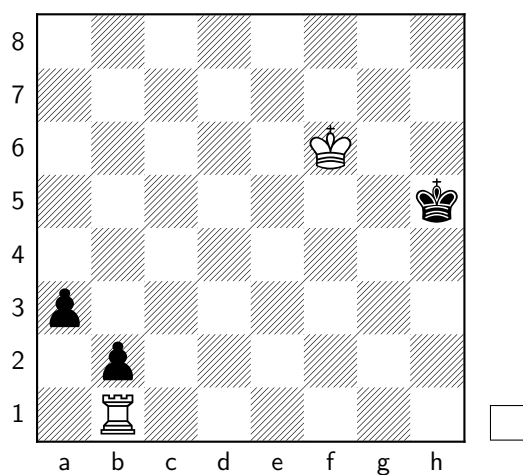
White: J.Kling & B.Horwitz

Chess Studies

Black: ?

1851

Result: 1/2-1/2



5 ♔d3 ♔f3 6 ♔c2 Now Black has escaped the checks, but White gained time for his king to come to the queenside and save the day.

6...a2 7 ♔xb2

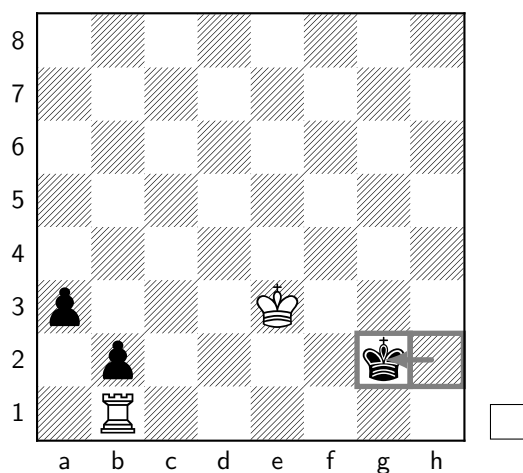
1/2-1/2

1 ♔f5 With the threat of 2 Rh1 mate.

1... ♔h4 2 ♔f4 ♔h3 3 ♔f3 ♔h2 4 ♔e3!

Now Black cannot advance the a-pawn, as he would lose to 5 Rxb2+!.

4... ♔g2



4... ♔g3 5 ♔g1+ ♔h4 6 ♔f4 ♔h3 7 ♔f3 ♔h2?? 8 ♔b1!

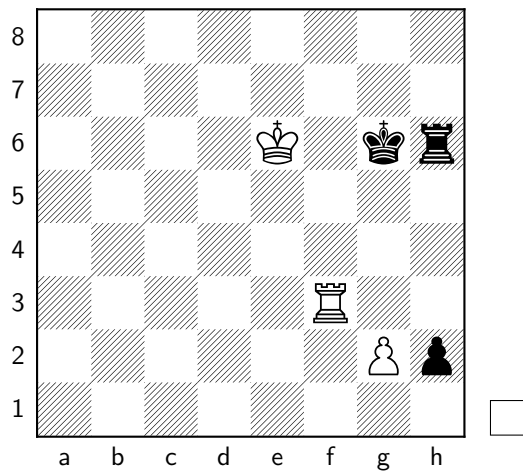
White: Pogosiants, E.

Shakhmaty v SSSR

Black: ?

1978

Result: 1/2-1/2



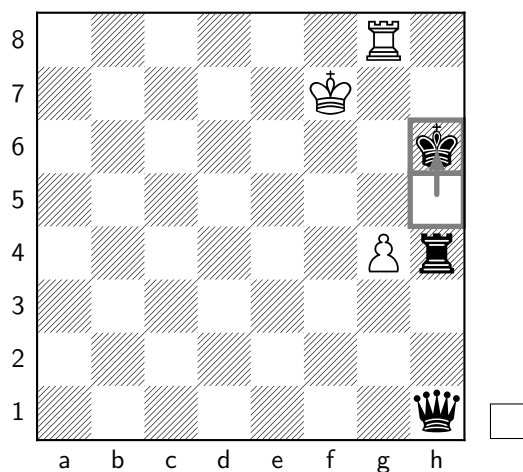
9 ♖g6+ ♔h7 10 ♖g7+ ♔h8 11 ♖g8+ ♔h7  
12 ♖g7+ ♔h6 13 ♖g6+ White has  
perpetual check.

1/2-1/2

1 ♖g3+ ♔h7 2 ♔f7 ♖g6 3 ♖h3+ ♔h6 4  
♖g3 ♔h4 5 ♖g7+ ♔h6 6 ♖g6+ ♔h5 7 ♖g8!  
Black now has to queen his pawn, as there  
is no other way to make progress.

7...h1♚ 8 g4+! The key move.

8...♔h6



8...♖xg4 9 ♖h8+

White: Dzjaja, D.

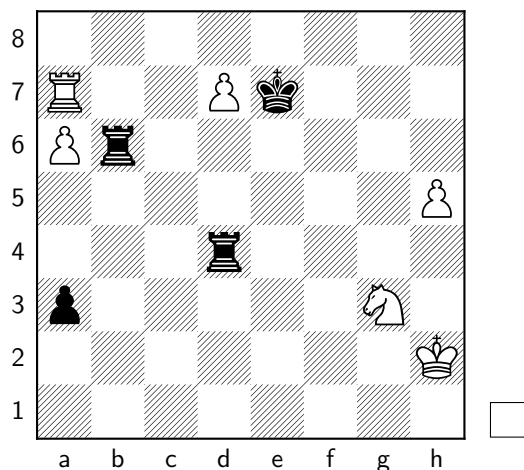
Politiken

Black: ?

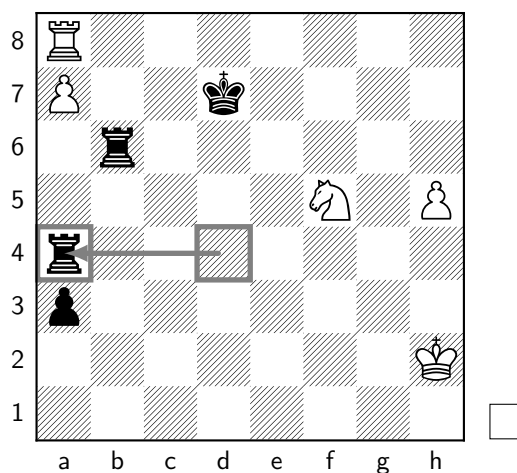
1972

Result: 1/2-1/2

3...♖a4



1 ♖f5+ ♔d8 2 ♖a8+! There is a flaw to this study, which means that perhaps it should be started from move three.



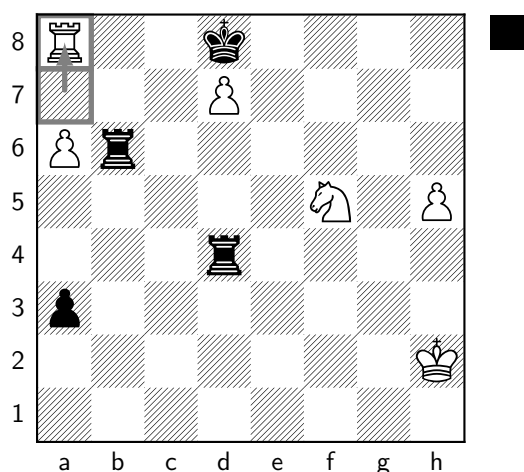
3...♖a6? 4 ♖x d4

4 ♖g8 With the threat of 5 a8Q.

4...♖ba6 Now comes the point of this study.

5 ♖h6!! Now whatever Black does, his rooks cannot leave the a-file, so there is no way for him to avoid the perpetual check.

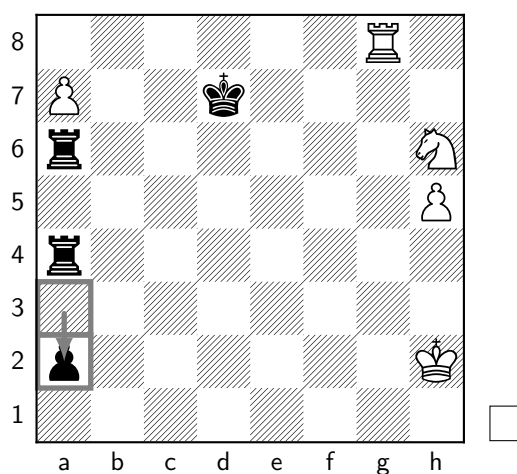
5...a2



2 ♖x d4!? a2 3 ♖b7! a1 ♖ 4 ♖x b6 ♖x d4 5 a7! ♖e5+ 6 ♖g2 ♖d5+ 7 ♖g3 ♖x d7 8 h6!

2...♖x d7 Now only a seemingly ridiculous series of moves ensures the draw.

3 a7! The only move. Black has only one way to proceed.



5...♖xa7

6 ♖g7+ ♔d8 7 ♖g8+ ♔e7 8 ♖g7+ ♔f6 9  
♖g6+ ♔e5 10 ♖g5+ ♔f4 11 ♖g4+ ♔f3 12  
♖g3+ ♔f2 13 ♖g2+ ♔f1 14 ♖g1+  
1/2-1/2

---

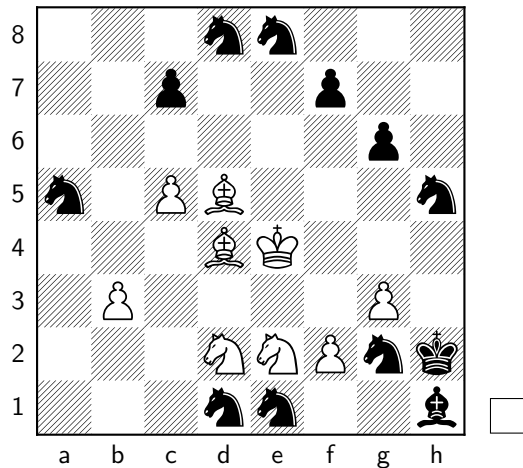


## First Prize, Feenschach

Black: ?

1954

Result:  $1/2-1/2$



1 ♖f1+ ♘h3 2 ♗g1+ ♙g4 3 ♗h2+ ♙g5 4  
 ♗h3+ ♙h6 5 ♗g4+ ♙h7 6 ♗g5+ ♙g8 7  
 ♗h6+ ♙f8 8 ♗h7+ ♙e7 9 ♗g8+ ♙d7 10  
 ♗f8+ ♙c8 11 ♗e7+ ♙b8 12 ♗d7+ ♙a7

Black has made it halfway along the runway. White has no reason to stop giving checks.

13 ♖c8+ ♔a6 14 ♖b8+ ♔b5 15 ♖a7+ ♔b4  
16 ♖a6+ ♔a3 17 ♖b5+ ♔a2 18 ♖b4+ ♔b1  
19 ♖a3+ ♔c1 20 ♖a2+ ♔d2 21 ♖b1+ ♔e2  
22 ♖c1+ ♔f1 23 ♖d2+ ♔g1 24 ♖e2+ ♔h2  
and we are back where we started. If Black  
really wanted to, he could play another 24  
moves before White claimed a draw on  
threefold repetition.

1/2-1/2

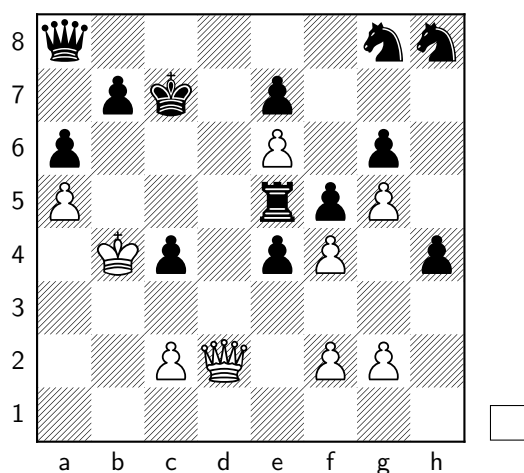
White: Blathy, O.

Black: ?

Vielzügige Schachaufgaben

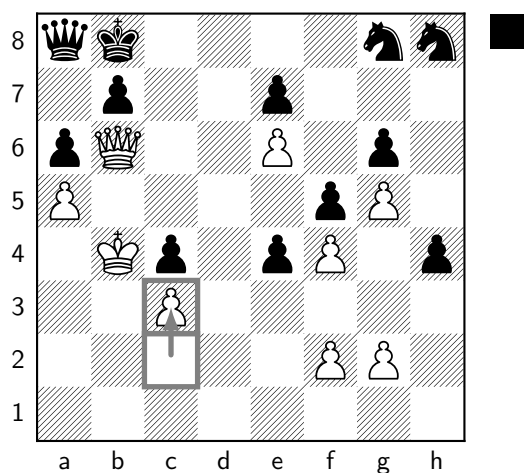
1890

Result: 1-0



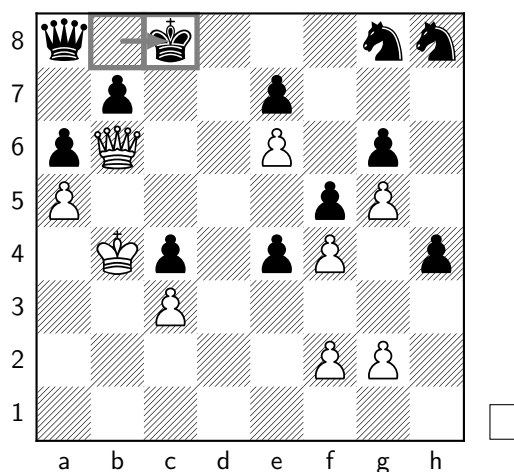
1 ♖d7+ ♔b8 2 ♖d8+ ♔a7 3 ♖d4+ ♖c5 4 ♖xc5+ ♔b8 5 ♖e5+ ♔c8 6 ♖d5 ♔c7 7 ♖d7+ ♔b8 8 ♖d8+ ♔a7 9 ♖b6+ ♔b8 This is the key position in which White gets to make his free improvement, as Black can do nothing but move his king. The first stage in the plan is to win the h4-pawn.

10 c3



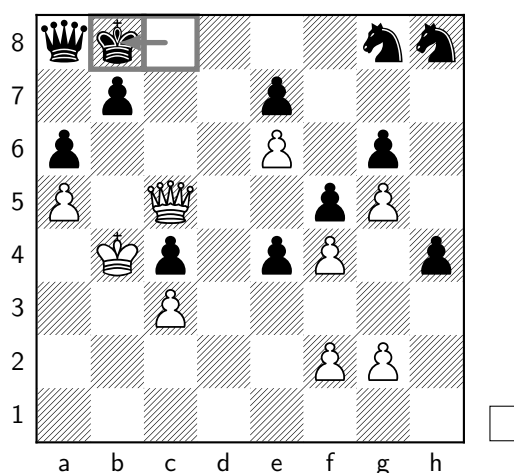
10 ♖xc4?? ♔c8 11 ♖c5+ ♔d8 12 ♖d4+ ♔e8 13 ♖g7 ♖c8+!

10... ♔c8



10... ♖a7 11 ♖d8#

11 ♖c5+ ♔b8

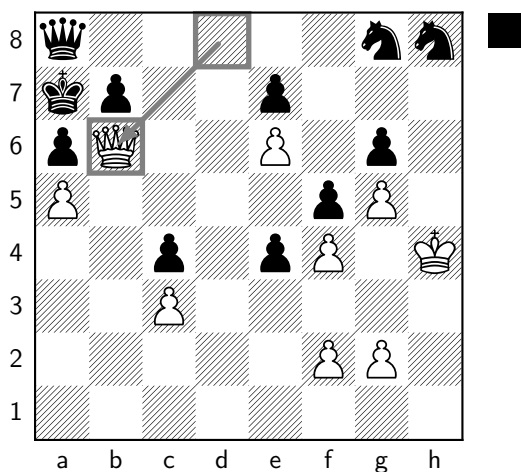


11... ♔d8?! 12 ♖d4+ ♔e8 13 ♖g7!

12 ♖e5+ ♔c8 13 ♖d5 ♔c7 14 ♖d7+ ♔b8 15 ♖d8+ ♔a7 16 ♖b6+ ♔b8 17 ♔a3 ♔c8

18 ♖c5+ ♜b8 19 ♖e5+ ♜c8 20 ♖d5 ♜c7  
 21 ♖d7+ ♜b8 22 ♖d8+ ♜a7 23 ♖b6+  
 ♜b8 24 ♜b2 ♜c8 25 ♖c5+ ♜b8 26 ♖e5+  
 ♜c8 27 ♖d5 ♜c7 28 ♖d7+ ♜b8 29 ♖d8+  
 ♜a7 30 ♖b6+ ♜b8 31 ♜c1 ♜c8 32 ♖c5+  
 ♜b8 33 ♖e5+ ♜c8 34 ♖d5 ♜c7 35 ♖d7+  
 ♜b8 36 ♖d8+ ♜a7 37 ♖b6+ ♜b8 38 ♜d1  
 ♜c8 39 ♖c5+ ♜b8 40 ♖e5+ ♜c8 41 ♖d5  
 ♜c7 42 ♖d7+ ♜b8 43 ♖d8+ ♜a7 44  
 ♖b6+ ♜b8 45 ♜e2 ♜c8 46 ♖c5+ ♜b8 47  
 ♖e5+ ♜c8 48 ♖d5 ♜c7 49 ♖d7+ ♜b8 50  
 ♖d8+ ♜a7 51 ♖b6+ ♜b8 52 ♜f1 ♜c8 53  
 ♖c5+ ♜b8 54 ♖e5+ ♜c8 55 ♖d5 ♜c7 56  
 ♖d7+ ♜b8 57 ♖d8+ ♜a7 58 ♖b6+ ♜b8  
 59 ♜g1 ♜c8 60 ♖c5+ ♜b8 61 ♖e5+ ♜c8  
 62 ♖d5 ♜c7 63 ♖d7+ ♜b8 64 ♖d8+ ♜a7  
 65 ♖b6+ ♜b8 66 ♜h2 ♜c8 67 ♖c5+ ♜b8  
 68 ♖e5+ ♜c8 69 ♖d5 ♜c7 70 ♖d7+ ♜b8  
 71 ♖d8+ ♜a7 72 ♖b6+ ♜b8 73 ♜h3 ♜c8  
 74 ♖c5+ ♜b8 75 ♖e5+ ♜c8 76 ♖d5 ♜c7  
 77 ♖d7+ ♜b8 78 ♖d8+ ♜a7 79 ♖b6+  
 ♜b8 White has completed the first stage of  
 his plan and can now eliminate the black  
 pawn on h4.

80 ♜xh4 ♜c8 81 ♖c5+ ♜b8 82 ♖e5+ ♜c8  
 83 ♖d5 ♜c7 84 ♖d7+ ♜b8 85 ♖d8+ ♜a7  
 86 ♖b6+

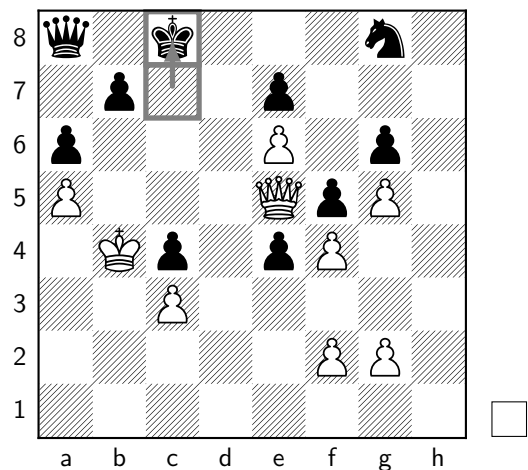


86 ♖d4+ ♜b8 87 ♖xh8? ♜c7 88 ♖e5+  
 ♜c6

86... ♜b8 87 ♜h3 ♜c8 88 ♖c5+ ♜b8 89  
 ♖e5+ ♜c8 90 ♖d5 ♜c7 91 ♖d7+ ♜b8 92

♖d8+ ♜a7 93 ♖b6+ ♜b8 94 ♜h2 ♜c8 95  
 ♖c5+ ♜b8 96 ♖e5+ ♜c8 97 ♖d5 ♜c7 98  
 ♖d7+ ♜b8 99 ♖d8+ ♜a7 100 ♖b6+ ♜b8  
 101 ♜g1 ♜c8 102 ♖c5+ ♜b8 103 ♖e5+  
 ♜c8 104 ♖d5 ♜c7 105 ♖d7+ ♜b8 106  
 ♖d8+ ♜a7 107 ♖b6+ ♜b8 108 ♜f1 ♜c8  
 109 ♖c5+ ♜b8 110 ♖e5+ ♜c8 111 ♖d5  
 ♜c7 112 ♖d7+ ♜b8 113 ♖d8+ ♜a7 114  
 ♖b6+ ♜b8 115 ♜e2 ♜c8 116 ♖c5+ ♜b8  
 117 ♖e5+ ♜c8 118 ♖d5 ♜c7 119 ♖d7+  
 ♜b8 120 ♖d8+ ♜a7 121 ♖b6+ ♜b8 122  
 ♜d1 ♜c8 123 ♖c5+ ♜b8 124 ♖e5+ ♜c8  
 125 ♖d5 ♜c7 126 ♖d7+ ♜b8 127 ♖d8+  
 ♜a7 128 ♖b6+ ♜b8 129 ♜c1 ♜c8 130  
 ♖c5+ ♜b8 131 ♖e5+ ♜c8 132 ♖d5 ♜c7  
 133 ♖d7+ ♜b8 134 ♖d8+ ♜a7 135 ♖b6+  
 ♜b8 136 ♜b2 ♜c8 137 ♖c5+ ♜b8 138  
 ♖e5+ ♜c8 139 ♖d5 ♜c7 140 ♖d7+ ♜b8  
 141 ♖d8+ ♜a7 142 ♖b6+ ♜b8 143 ♜a3  
 ♜c8 144 ♖c5+ ♜b8 145 ♖e5+ ♜c8 146  
 ♖d5 ♜c7 147 ♖d7+ ♜b8 148 ♖d8+ ♜a7  
 149 ♖b6+ ♜b8 150 ♜b4 ♜c8 151 ♖c5+  
 ♜b8 152 ♖e5+ ♜a7 153 ♖d4+ ♜b8 With  
 his king back on b4, White is now able to  
 capture the knight on h8.

154 ♖xh8 ♜c7 155 ♖e5+ ♜c8



155... ♜c6? 156 ♖c5#

156 ♖d5 ♜b8 157 ♖d8+ ♜a7 158 ♖b6+  
 ♜b8 159 ♜a3 Now the knight has been  
 won White can send the king back to the  
 kingside.

159... ♖c8 160 ♜c5+ ♖b8 161 ♜e5+ ♖c8  
 162 ♜d5 ♖c7 163 ♜d7+ ♖b8 164 ♜d8+  
 ♖a7 165 ♜b6+ ♖b8 166 ♖b2 ♖c8 167  
 ♜c5+ ♖b8 168 ♜e5+ ♖c8 169 ♜d5 ♖c7  
 170 ♜d7+ ♖b8 171 ♜d8+ ♖a7 172 ♜b6+  
 ♖b8 173 ♖c1 ♖c8 174 ♜c5+ ♖b8 175  
 ♜e5+ ♖c8 176 ♜d5 ♖c7 177 ♜d7+ ♖b8  
 178 ♜d8+ ♖a7 179 ♜b6+ ♖b8 180 ♖d1  
 ♖c8 181 ♜c5+ ♖b8 182 ♜e5+ ♖c8 183  
 ♜d5 ♖c7 184 ♜d7+ ♖b8 185 ♜d8+ ♖a7  
 186 ♜b6+ ♖b8 187 ♖e2 ♖c8 188 ♜c5+  
 ♖b8 189 ♜e5+ ♖c8 190 ♜d5 ♖c7 191  
 ♜d7+ ♖b8 192 ♜d8+ ♖a7 193 ♜b6+ ♖b8  
 194 ♖f1 ♖c8 195 ♜c5+ ♖b8 196 ♜e5+  
 ♖c8 197 ♜d5 ♖c7 198 ♜d7+ ♖b8 199  
 ♜d8+ ♖a7 200 ♜b6+ ♖b8 201 ♖g1 ♖c8  
 202 ♜c5+ ♖b8 203 ♜e5+ ♖c8 204 ♜d5  
 ♖c7 205 ♜d7+ ♖b8 206 ♜d8+ ♖a7 207  
 ♜b6+ ♖b8 208 ♖h2 ♖c8 209 ♜c5+ ♖b8  
 210 ♜e5+ ♖c8 211 ♜d5 ♖c7 212 ♜d7+  
 ♖b8 213 ♜d8+ ♖a7 214 ♜b6+ ♖b8 215  
 ♖h3 ♖c8 216 ♜c5+ ♖b8 217 ♜e5+ ♖c8  
 218 ♜d5 ♖c7 219 ♜d7+ ♖b8 220 ♜d8+  
 ♖a7 221 ♜b6+ ♖b8 White is now ready for  
 the final breakthrough on the kingside!

222 g4 ♖c8 223 ♜c5+ ♖b8 224 ♜e5+ ♖c8  
 225 ♜d5 ♖c7 226 ♜d7+ ♖b8 227 ♜d8+  
 ♖a7 228 ♜b6+ ♖b8 229 g×f5 g×f5 230  
 ♖h4 ♖c8 231 ♜c5+ ♖b8 232 ♜e5+ ♖c8  
 233 ♜d5 ♖c7 234 ♜d7+ ♖b8 235 ♜d8+  
 ♖a7 236 ♜b6+ ♖b8 237 ♖h5 ♖c8 238  
 ♜c5+ ♖b8 239 ♜e5+ ♖c8 240 ♜d5 ♖c7  
 241 ♜d7+ ♖b8 242 ♜d8+ ♖a7 243 ♜b6+  
 ♖b8 244 ♖g6 ♖c8 245 ♜c5+ ♖b8 246  
 ♜e5+ ♖c8 247 ♜d5 ♖c7 248 ♜d7+ ♖b8  
 249 ♜d8+ ♖a7 250 ♜b6+ ♖b8 Suddenly  
 White does not need to use the mechanics  
 anymore, as Black cannot defend himself  
 against normal moves.

251 ♖f7 ♖c8 252 ♖e8 ♖b8 253 ♖d7 e3 254  
 f×e3 ♖f6+ 255 g×f6 And Black is mated in  
 two further moves.

1-0

---

White: 3: Advanced Ideas

?

Black: ?

????

Result: \*

---

\*

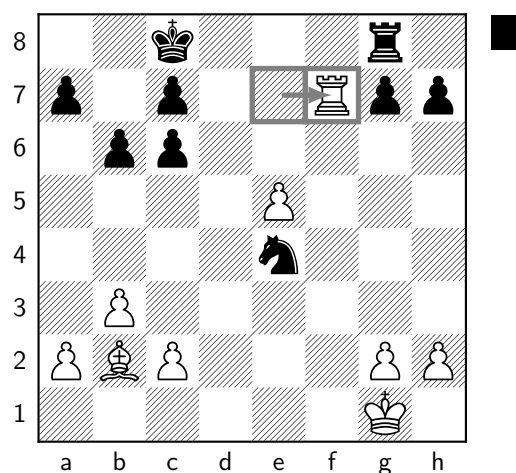
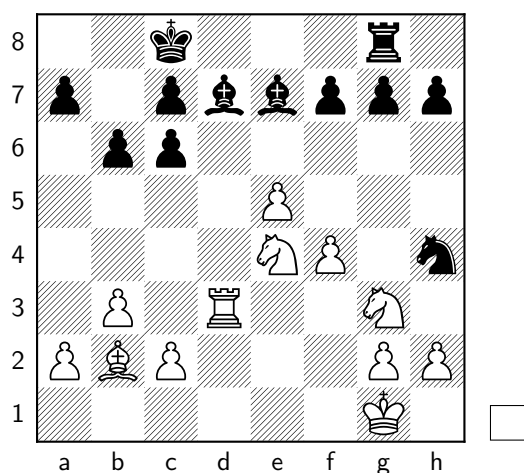
---

White: Venkatesh, M.  
Black: Harikrishna, P.

India

2003

Result: 0-1



**21 f5!?** In itself this move is playable, but not if White follows the most obvious route.

**21... ♖xf5** Black accepts the challenge to the seemingly forced variation coming up.

**22 ♖xd7 ♗xg3 23 ♖xe7 ♗xe4 24 ♖xf7?**

This was apparently what White was heading for. Or else he did not realise that Black could actually take on f5 at all. What is important is that White now ignores the dangers of the coming endgame and allows Black to establish his blockading knight without a fight.

**24 e6!?** fxe6 25 ♖xe6 ♗d6 26 ♖e7 ♖e8 27 ♖xg7 ♖e2 28 ♖xh7 ♖xc2 29 ♗e5 ♖xa2 30 g4

**24... ♗g5** In the game White could use abstractions such as bishop vs. knight in an open position and pawns on both flanks, as well as rook and bishop vs. rook and knight, to argue the merits of his position. But this is too simple an evaluation. The white bishop cannot get to work and the passed pawn is more of a limitation than an advantage. This is not too hard to see if you look concretely at the position after Black's next two moves. — Some mid-level players have a tendency to avoid the excruciating task of actual thinking and hide between abstractions, which could just as well be reversed as they are unrelated to the specific position on the board. Bishops are generally better than knights with pawns on both flanks, but this is not set in stone. It is only true if all things are equal and is based on the pieces' properties. If we look at the position in that

light, we can see that the bishop cannot act on both flanks (which is its supposed advantage) and is actually limited by only being able to operate on the dark squares, when it is the light squares it really needs to do something about. The knight is best fighting at close quarters, and is therefore excellently placed on e6, from where it controls many important squares.

**25 ♖f5 ♜e6** Black has a much better endgame. He won in 61 moves.

**26 ♖f2 ♜d8 27 ♖e2 ♖d7 28 g3 ♖e7 29 ♜h5 h6 30 ♜h4 a5 31 a4 ♖f7 32 ♜e4 ♜f8 33 ♜f4+ ♖e6 34 h4 c5 35 ♜g4 ♖f7 36 ♜f4+ ♖e7 37 ♜f3 ♖e6 38 ♜f4 h5 39 ♜f1 ♜g6 40 ♖e3 ♜e7 41 ♜f2 ♜d1 42 ♖f4 ♜g1 43 c4 ♜g6+ 44 ♖f3 ♜d1 45 ♖e2 ♜b1 46 ♖d3 ♜g1 47 ♜f3 ♜g2 48 ♜c3 ♜x e5+ 49 ♜x e5 ♖x e5 50 ♖e3 ♜b2 51 ♜f7 ♜x b3+ 52 ♖f2 g6 53 ♜x c7 ♜b4 54 ♜g7 ♜x a4 55 ♜x g6 ♜b4 56 ♜g5+ ♖e4 57 ♜x h5 ♜b2+ 58 ♖e1 a4 59 ♖d1 a3 60 ♖c1 ♜b4 61 ♜h8 a2 .** — In this

way the following chapter will try to discuss some situations and techniques.

We will discuss broadening, the importance of playing accurately once we have the advantage, the difference between knight and bishop in the endgame, pure bishop endings, and some really complex examples. The main point in this chapter is the complicated nature of the endgame and how general factors alter according to the specific reality of a position. To understand the different pieces' properties is very useful, but to make something of this it is necessary to look at how the pieces interrelate. It is my hope that the previous and forthcoming analysed examples will illustrate this dynamic understanding well. — The first of our subjects is a less well known idea, which is the opposite concept of fortresses.

**0-1**

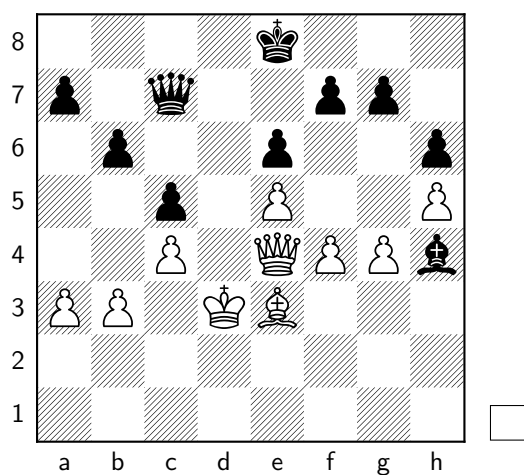
---

White: Geller, E.  
Black: Hort, V.

Skopje

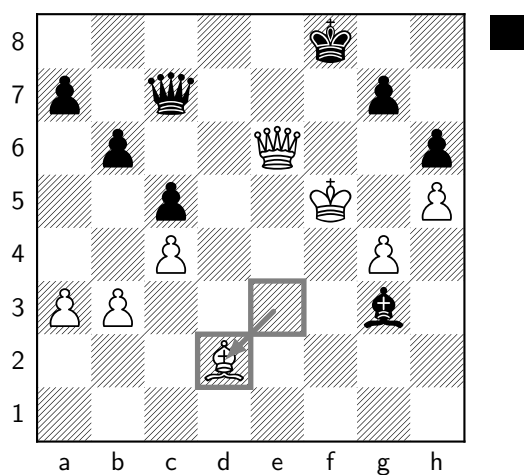
1968

Result: 1-0



**34 f5** With ideas like 35 f6, undermining the defence of the h6-pawn. Black's reply seems to be forced.

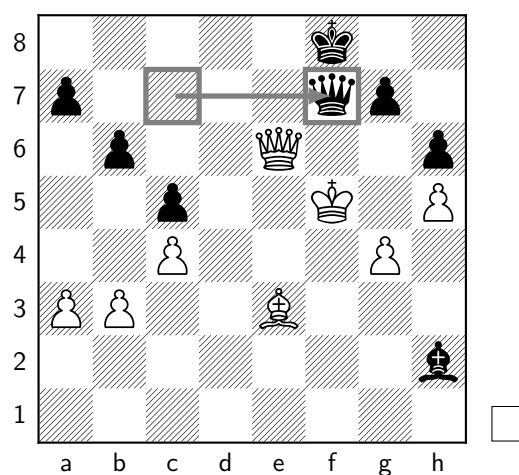
**34... ♟g3 35 f×e6 f×e6 36 ♔g6+ ♚f8 37 ♔×e6 ♟×e5 38 ♚e4 ♟h2 39 ♚f5 ♟g3 40 ♟d2**



**40 b4**

**40... ♟h2 41 ♟e3 ♔f7+** Black resigned, not needing to see how White would win the

endgame. Black cannot move his king, as Kg6 would give him serious problems, so he will not be able to defend the queenside.



**41... ♔f7+ 42 ♔×f7+ ♚×f7 43 ♟d2 ♟d6 44 ♟c3 ♟g3 45 ♚e4 g6 46 ♚d5**

**1-0**

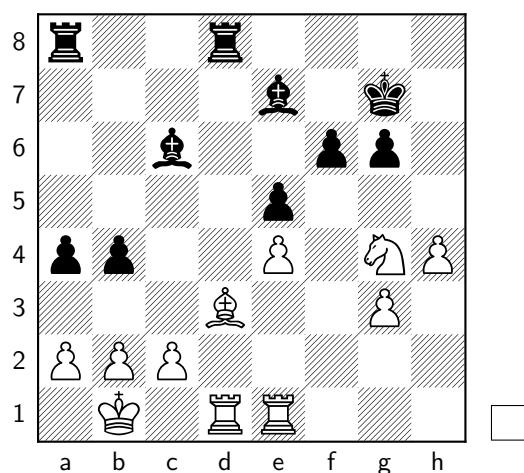


White: Timmermans, I.  
Black: Estegard, T.

Stockholm

2003

Result: 1/2-1/2



32 ♖h2 Heading for f3.

32... ♜a7 33 ♖f3 ♙c5 With the unsubtle threat of ...Bf2.

34 ♜f1 ♜ad7 With the idea of ...Bxe4.

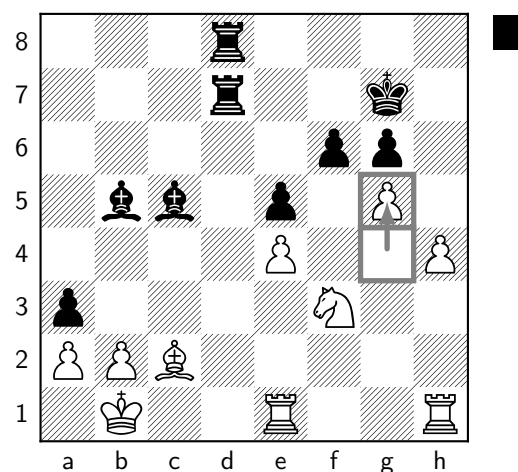
35 ♜de1 b3! Black creates counterplay on the queenside and should not be any worse here.

36 g4! The e5-pawn is now coming under pressure.

36... bxc2+ 37 ♙xc2 ♙b5 38 ♜h1 a3

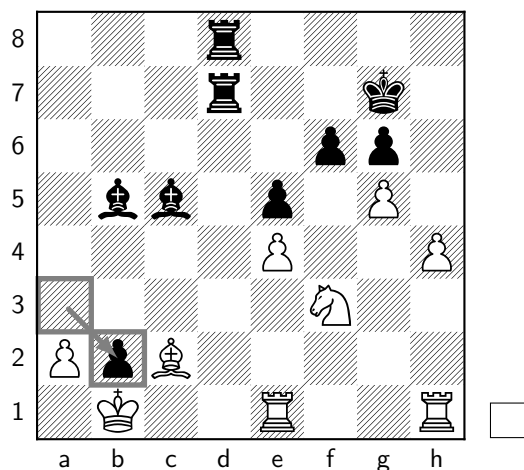
38... ♙f2!

39 g5



39 h5 g5

39... axb2?

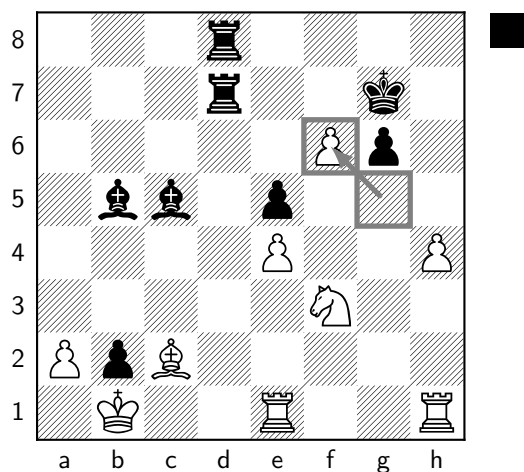


the king or the pieces, is seen in many types of positions including the middlegame, but is mainly a trait of the endgame. The next subject, the importance of keeping full concentration when the opponent is in trouble, counts for all phases of the game. I have decided to include it all the same, as it should be found somewhere in this Excelling series. And it is in the endgame where I have most often seen my pupils disregard this important wisdom.

1/2-1/2

**39... ♟f2 40 ♜c1 ♟e3**

**40 g×f6+?** White should have thought of broadening. The target was, and still should be, the e5-pawn. Instead he decided to create a knight outpost on the g5-square, but the knight is not attacking anything in particular and, therefore, is not really that strong.



**40 h5! g×h5 41 g×f6+ ♟×f6 42 ♜×h5**

**40... ♟×f6 41 ♞g5 ♟d4** Black is no worse now.

**42 ♜h3!? ♟c4 43 ♜f3+ ♟g7 44 ♟b3 ♟×b3 45 ♜×b3 ♟h6 46 ♞e6 ♜c8 47 ♞×d4 ♜×d4 48 ♜×b2! ♜cc4 49 ♜be2 ♟h5 50 ♟b2 . —**

Broadening, the opening of the position for

## Tying the knot

---

*Sometimes now is not tomorrow* - Esben Lund.

Artur Yusupov relates that, when he played in the Soviet Championship for the first time, he noticed a trend among the more experienced participants. They did not play very aggressively in general, seemingly not to care too much about the positions or about playing the best move (remember, this was during the reign of Karpov). But once a mistake was committed and the experienced player had the advantage, his attitude would change and he would concentrate fully. The reason is this: **when you have the advantage every move matters and a mistake may throw the advantage away again.** Once you have the advantage you should really focus, was Yusupov's advice.

— Experienced Scottish trainer Donald Holmes explains it in the following way: *'When your opponent has made a mistake you should concentrate fully, because if you play the best move, the game is over and you win.'* Intuitively he always understood this, he explains, but for some reason it does not come naturally to everyone. *'It is like boxing: when a boxer gets in a good punch he quickly follows up with the killer punch, because he has the chance.'* As Lasker, and many after him, said: **'When you have a strong move, you quite often have an even stronger move, and this is really the move you want to find.'** This idea of concentration, of punishing the opponent when you have the chance, might seem in conflict with the idea presented in Chapter 2 of Do not hurry, but this is not the case. Rather it is a balance between two important aspects of playing the endgame existing side by side. On one side you should develop a good feeling for when you have the chance to decide the game immediately. But on the other hand you should also learn not to be impatient and try to prove your advantage in any other than the most favourable circumstances, if you have this choice.

— Now let us turn to a practical example where a very strong amateur outplays a grandmaster, but fails to push through at the critical moment (see the following game).

---

White: Hector, J.  
 Black: Larsen, K.  
 Opening ECO: C45  
 Result: 1/2-1/2

Copenhagen

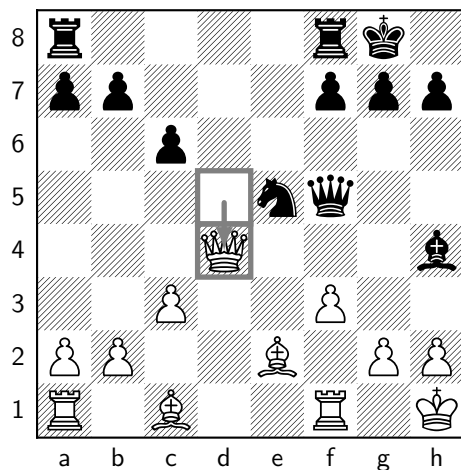
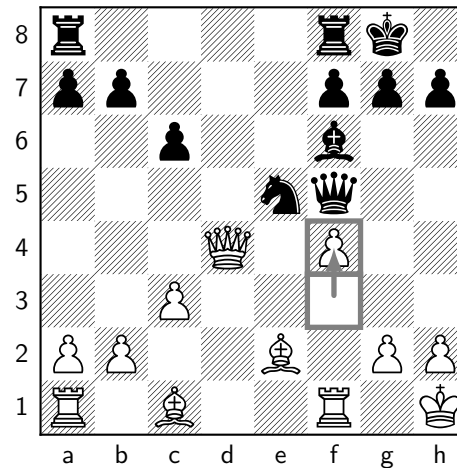
2003

1 e4 e5 2 f3 c6 3 d4 exd4 4 xd4 c5 5  
 e3 f6 6 c3 ge7 7 c4 e5 8 e2 g6  
 9 O-O d6 10 f3 O-O 11 d2 d5 12 h1  
 dxe4 13 xe4 d5 14 c1 e7!?

According to my database this is a new  
 move, but I am not sure the position needs  
 too much opening study anyway.

15 g3 h4! 16 df5 This seems to be  
 forced.

16... xf5 17 xf5 xf5 18 xd5 c6 19  
 d4

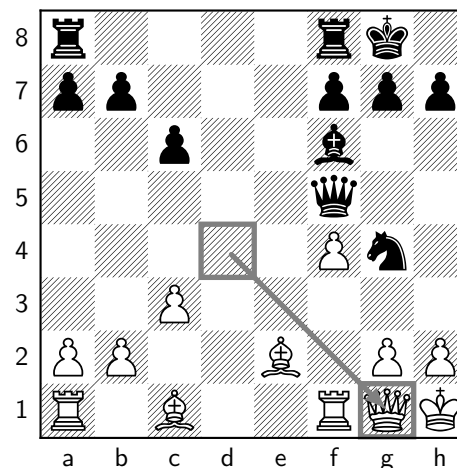


19 b3 b6 20 e3 h5 21 g1

19... f6 20 f4

20 g4 c2 21 d2 xd2 22 xd2 ad8 23  
 ad1 d3

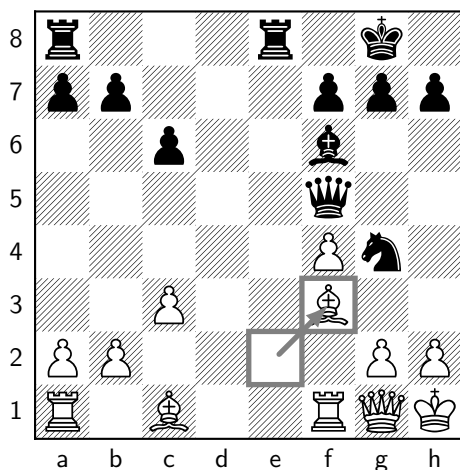
20... g4 21 g1? You need to be an  
 original thinker to find this square for the  
 queen, but most likely White simply  
 overlooked Black's 22nd move.



21 d3 xd3 22 xd3 fe8 23 h3 ad8  
 24 xh7+ gxh7 25 hxg4 e2

## 21 ♖b4 ♜ab8 22 h3

**21... ♜fe8 22 ♘f3** This is still the middlegame, but the technical aspects of the position are already starting to show. Black has the advantage: he has better development and is more active. For this reason he needs to focus in order to keep his advantage. So, how should Black continue here?

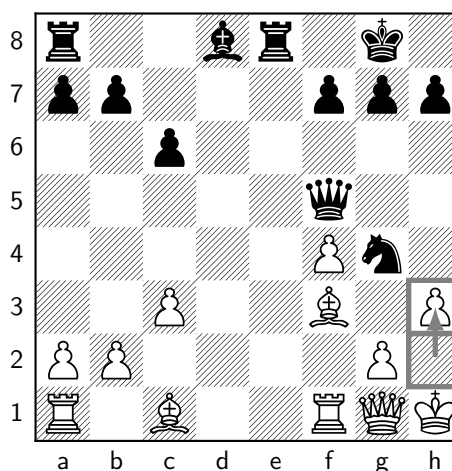


## 22 ♘d8!! ♖xg4 ♜xg4

**22... ♘d8!!** A beautiful regrouping of the bishop which exposes the silly position of the white queen. There are many ways of finding a move like this. The 'ideal square' exercise is one I really like. You simply think of where the pieces are placed best. — When I wrote about the ideal square in 'Excelling at Positional Chess', an American reviewer noted that an example could also be explained in another way, trying to show that the idea was not so original. Well, I do not think it is original at all. I think players have always understood that there are squares where the pieces belong, and there have always been players who knew this. And to mention that a position has more than one aspect is as ridiculous as mentioning that the pieces move differently or that they are placed on different squares. Rules and guidelines

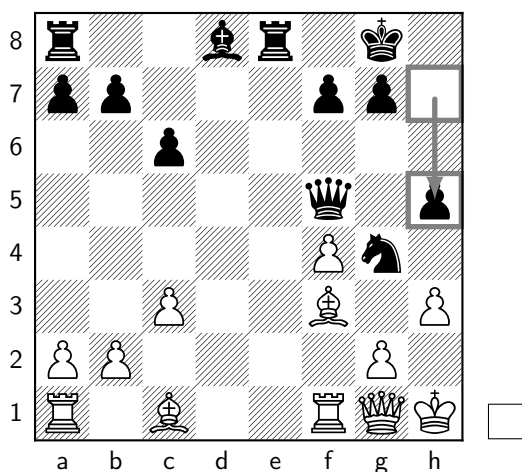
exist and have a function. There cannot be exceptions to rules, but their application can be limited by the presence of other factors in the position, to an extent that they can be disregarded altogether. This does not mean that they are not present, but it would be like defending a murderer's garbage. Who cares? — But the primary rule is always the player himself. What works best for the individual? There are definitely transcendental truths in chess beyond concrete variations, but how the individual chooses to make use of them in his search for the best move often has more to do with temperament and the nature of the position than anything else. — As a trainer I place myself close to the ideas of Mark Dvoretsky, Lipnitsky and the Russian tradition in general. One of these ideas is that we should try to find the general truths in the positions by analysing them. A rule or guideline that cannot be used in practice, or to develop your intuition at home, is irrelevant. If you read their books you will find them loaded with general truths, but also with variations. You need to prove your theory with analysis and actions if it is to have any importance.

**23 h3?** After this move White is probably lost.



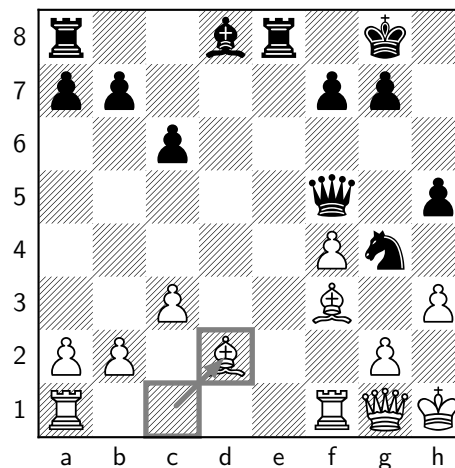
**23 ♖xg4! ♗xg4 24 ♖e3 a6**

**23...h5!** The opening of the h-file fully justifies the sacrifice of the knight. — This kind of sacrifice can be played intuitively with only a little calculation as assistance. The point is that Black needs only to assure himself that White has no way of refuting the attack. That there is no direct win is not so important. Often we are forced to take decisions far beyond what we can calculate, and our play becomes weaker if we exclude any form of sacrifices from our games because we cannot work them out to the end. We have a natural tendency to try to keep positions under control, but what we actually need to do is to keep ourselves under control, so that we should not be confined by doubt in our own evaluations, logic and intuition, and therefore play lesser moves in order to remain 'in control'. — But like everything else, this is a balance act. Why sacrifice a piece when you are a pawn up for no compensation, if you cannot calculate it to the end? Common sense will guide you much better in these issues than your fears and strict guidelines.



**23... ♖b6? 24 ♖xg4 ♗b5 25 a4 ♗c4 26 ♖f2 ♗c5 27 ♖f1 ♗c4**

**24 ♖d2?!**



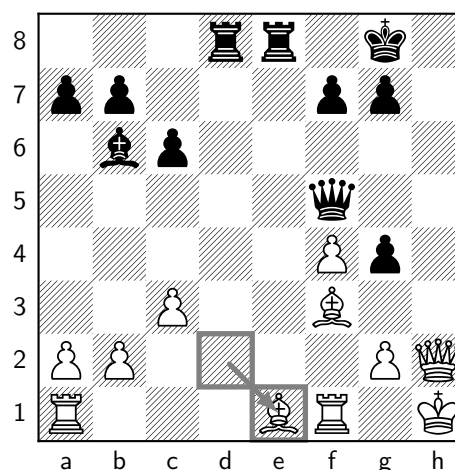
**24 g3 ♖e5 25 ♖g2 ♖d3**

**24 c4 ♖b6! 25 c5 ♖xg4 h×g4 27 ♖xg4 ♗h7+ 28 ♗h2 ♗d3!! 29 ♖g1 ♖xg1 30 ♗xg1 ♗g3!**

**24... ♖b6 25 h×g4 h×g4 26 ♗h2 ♖ad8!**

Players who need control to ease their nerves might again succumb to fear and play the awful 26...gxf3. But you should keep your concentration and find the best move in the position, not just regain your piece. Keep this in mind for the critical position arising two moves later.

**27 ♖e1** The only move.

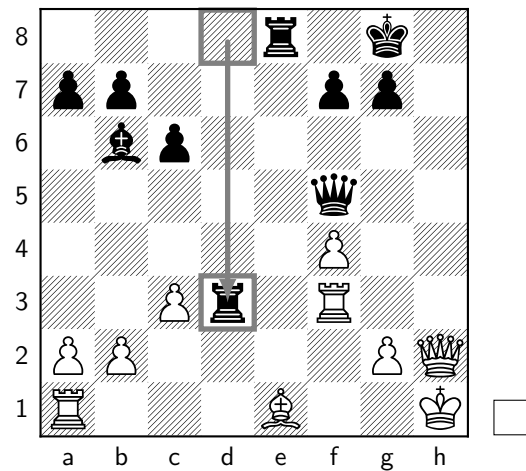


**27 ♖ad1? g×f3 28 g×f3 ♖e6**

**27...gxf3 28 ♖xf3** What now for Black? Tie the knot!

**28...♗d3?** Who can blame Black for this natural move. He eliminates the only active white piece and ensures himself of a winning endgame. Karsten Larsen was probably very happy here. With a victory in this game the high school professor would acquire his first IM-norm. Quite an achievement for a player well beyond the age where his talent is discussed. Later, when I talked to him about this game, he confessed that after this point he completely lost concentration and gave in to the feeling that the game would somehow win itself. This is something I see very often with my pupils. I could repeat some of the stories they tell, especially about the incredible luck of their opponents in surviving completely lost positions. Well, chess is a game and it should be played until it is finished. If you give your opponent a chance to improve his position gradually, he will take it. — A now 16-year-old pupil I started working with in 2002 learnt this important aspect of chess immediately, and it was possible for him to improve his playing strength from 1500 to a 2300 performance in little over a year, achieving a fantastic second place in the Danish championship in his age group and thus qualifying for the Nordic championships. Obviously he made some other improvements in his chess, but the major one was clearly that he learnt to keep on playing every move, constantly trying to find the best solution. He has won more games a piece or several pawns down in the endgame than anyone I have ever seen. The main point is that he realised that when he cannot draw the position, it is better to let the opponent try to win it. Sometimes that is not so easy. — The same thing happens to Karsten Larsen here. Hector cannot hold the position and he has no illusions. Jonny is strong in the

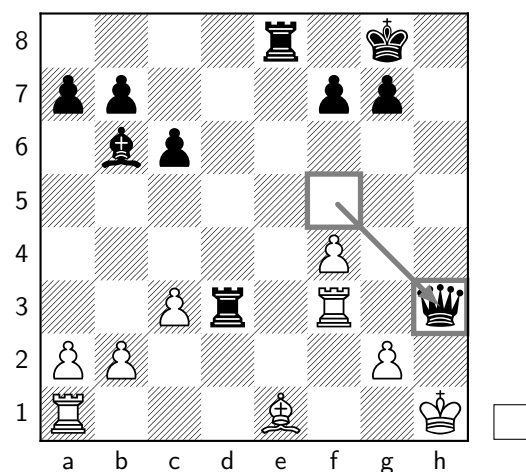
endgame and so just plays according to general principles. Now we shall see how easy it is for a clearly winning position to evaporate to nothing.



**28...♗b5!! 29 b3?! ♗e2!**

**29 ♗h3!** Hector knows that the middlegame holds no joy for him. Without the queens, at least he will not be mated.

**29...♗xh3+** Again this was played without really looking for opportunities.



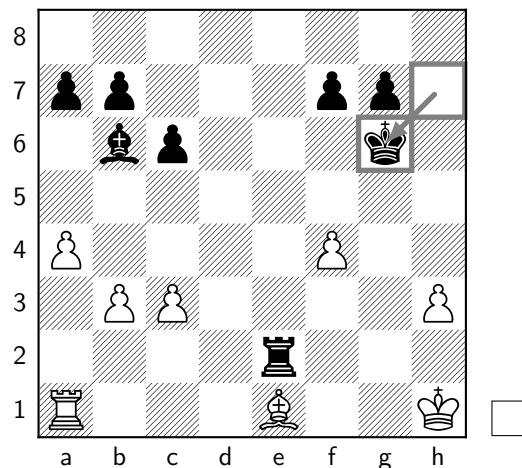
**29...♗c5!? 30 ♘h4 ♗xf3 31 ♗xf3 ♗f5 32 ♘f2 ♘xf2 33 ♗xf2 ♗h5+ 34 ♖g1 ♗e2 35 ♗g3 ♗xb2**



**30 ♖×h3 ♜×h3+ 31 g×h3 ♜e2** Neither can this. Despite his inaccuracy Black should win the endgame easily. But now, continuing Donald Holmes' boxing analogy, Black is leading on points, so why oh why did he let White get back to his corner to rest?

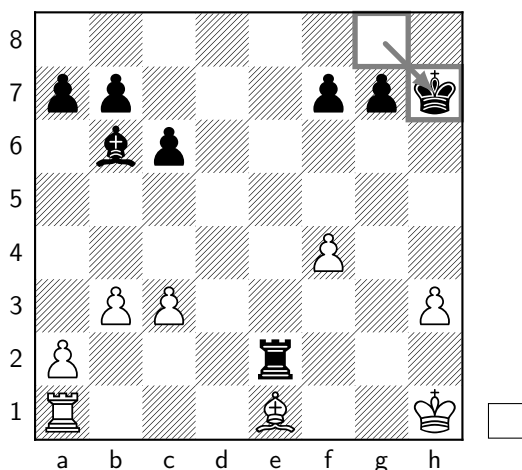
**32 b3** This is the moment to stop and think really hard. If you stop here and form a strategy, a plan, you will probably not have to think much again in this game. — How should Black proceed?

**32... ♔h7?!** It would be waste of space to discuss the ideas behind this move as, according to Larsen himself, there were none. Black wants to bring the king to f5, but this is hardly an idea, but more a concrete series of moves which relies fully on the inactivity of the opponent.



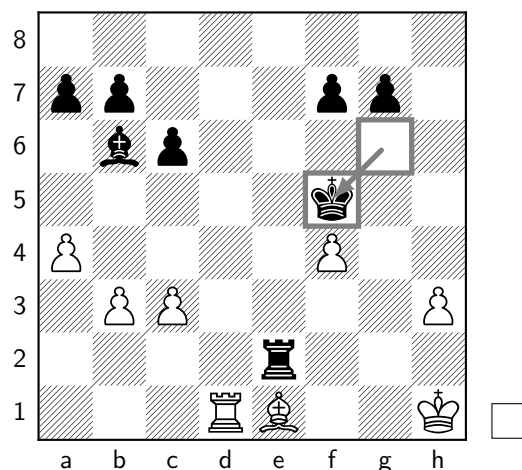
**33... ♙c7!? 34 ♙g3 ♜e3 35 ♙g2 ♜×c3 36 ♜d1 ♜×b3 37 ♜d7**

**34 ♜d1 ♙f5?!** Again this is inaccurate. Larsen is continuing down the slippery path of carelessness.



**32... ♙f8! 33 a4 ♙c7 34 ♜d1 ♙×f4**

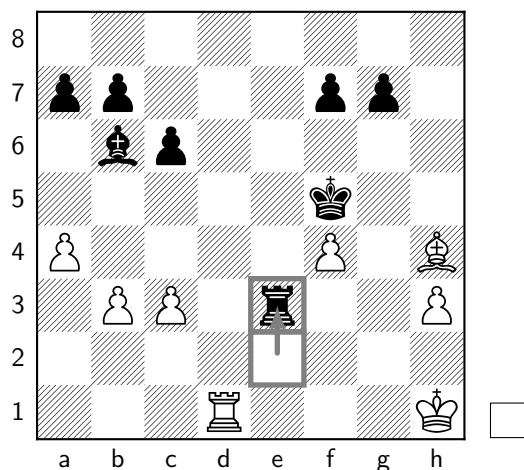
**33 a4 ♙g6**



**34... ♜b2 35 b4 ♙e3 36 ♙g3 ♙d2!**

**35 ♙h4 ♜e3?** Larsen has completely lost track of the game. He was probably aware that things were going wrong here, but it is difficult to change your mode thinking and attitude, unless you are very aware of how important this is, and have some experience in it.

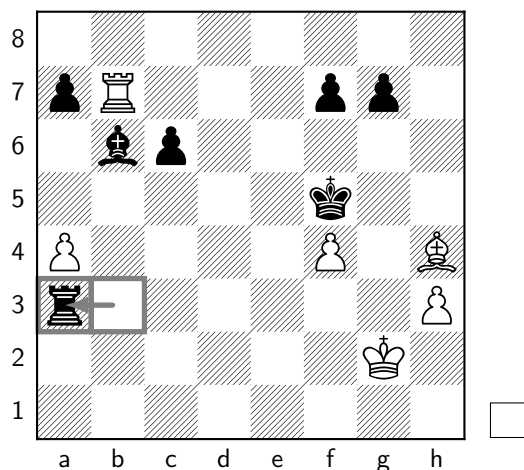




**35... ♖e6! 36 f5+ ♖×f5 37 ♖d7 g5 38 ♗g3 ♗e6 39 ♖×b7 f5**

**36 ♗g2 ♖×c3 37 ♖d7** White has now achieved real counterplay and his king is no longer tied to the back rank. The knot is untying.

**37... ♖×b3 38 ♖×b7 ♖b2+ 39 ♗f3 ♖b3+ 40 ♗g2 ♖a3?** After this move I find it hard to believe that Black can ever win. The king is simply in too much trouble and too far from the scene of action.



**40... ♗g6!? 41 a5 ♖b2+ 42 ♗f3 ♗d4 43 ♖c7 ♗h5**

**41 ♖×f7+ ♗g6 42 ♖f8!** With this move White restricts the black king to the

kingside and Black no longer has any winning chances.

**42... ♖×a4 43 f5+ ♗h7 44 ♗g5 ♗d4 45 ♖d8 c5 46 ♖d7** The threat of f6-f7-f8Q is very real and must be respected.

**46... ♖a6 47 ♗f3 ♗f6 48 h4 c4 49 ♖c7 c3 50 ♗e4 ♖d6 51 ♖×a7 ♗×g5 52 h×g5 ♖c6 53 f6 c2 54 ♖×g7+ ♗h8 55 g6 ♖e6+ 56 ♗d5 ♖×f6**

. — Attitude is an important part of the endgame. At times it is important to relax and improve your position gradually, while at other times it is important to concentrate fully and find the best move in the position. — From these minor subjects which could equally concern other phases of the game, we now move to the topic of the minor pieces in the endgame. In the pages below we will examine the differences between knights and bishops, pure bishop endgames, and the advantage of having the two bishops, before we finish off with some more complex examples. I could have included examples of opposite-coloured bishops or pure knight endings as well, but decided against it for several reasons. Opposite-coloured bishop endgames are already well portrayed in Dvoretzky's 'Endgame Technique for the Tournament Player' where there is an exceptional article on the subject, and in the very recent book by Rumanian grandmaster Mihail Marin, 'Learn from the Legends'. And knight endings are not something I feel I understand that well, so anything I would have to say about them would not necessarily be worth that much.

**1/2-1/2**

## Good knight vs. bad bishop

---

One of the most portrayed forms of advantageous endgames is good knight vs. bad bishop, that is an endgame where the knight is superior to the bishop. This is often based on a few basic concepts (with room for unorthodox situations of course), which are:

- 1) Positions with pawns on one wing only.
  - 2) Positions where the majority of pawns are placed disadvantageously for the bishop, most usually on squares of the same colour.
  - 3) Positions of a somewhat closed nature where the bishop has difficulty finding scope.
- Generally we can say that in positions where the knight is thriving, the bishop is often deprived of opportunities. But these kind of generalities are too abstract to be of much value to the practical player. Let us instead take two examples of the knight being stronger than the bishop.

— The first will be a pure knight vs. bishop ending, where White has the advantage, but Black should be able to make a draw comfortably, if he had only sensed any danger at all. The second is a famous game where, after passive play, White finds it problematic to make use of his bishop (see the following game).

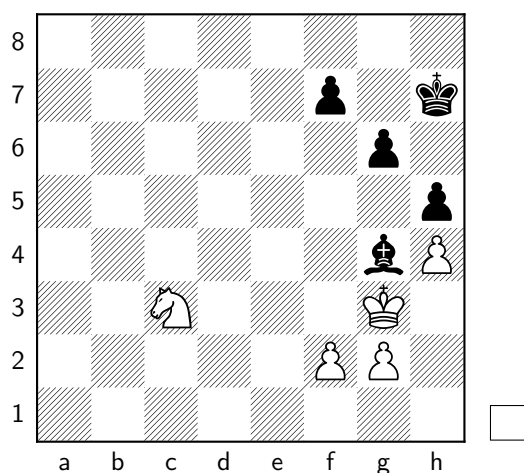
---

White: Hachatrian, V.  
Black: Barbitskij, A.

St Petersburg

2000

Result: 1-0

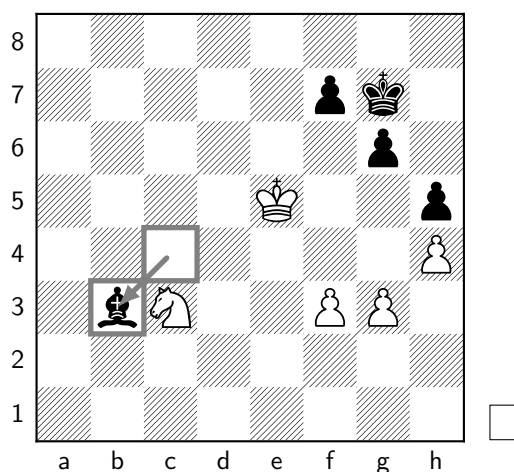


**56 ♖f4** White has a theoretical advantage based on knight vs. bishop with pawns on only one flank, but in order to take advantage of this he will have to provoke weaknesses. Black could easily prevent this with a basic plan of ...f6 and maybe later ...g5 to exchange pawns. In the game he decides that nothing evil can happen to him, and therefore does absolutely nothing. — Unfortunately he is dead wrong. By taking control of the dark squares White manages to prove that some dangers do exist, no matter how small. The main danger is that, with complete control over the dark squares, White is able to attack the light squares and eventually create two weaknesses in the black camp by exchanging the g6-pawn. Once this has been done, both the f- and h-pawns are weak and White is able to use this to win the game. — If we go back to the diagram, we will see that Black easily can prevent this. As is well known by now, Philidor's rule concerning the pawns is to put them on squares of opposite colour to the

bishop. Though we have plenty of situations where this rule cannot be applied, we also have situations where it should be applied. As always the idea is to know when, and why. Here it is necessary to play with the pawns on the dark squares in order not to be completely defenceless. Had Black chosen to do so, White would never have been able to threaten him.

**56... ♜g7 57 f3** White knows that he will need a pawn formation of f4, g3 and h4 in order to give Black any difficulties. The main point is to break with f4-f5.

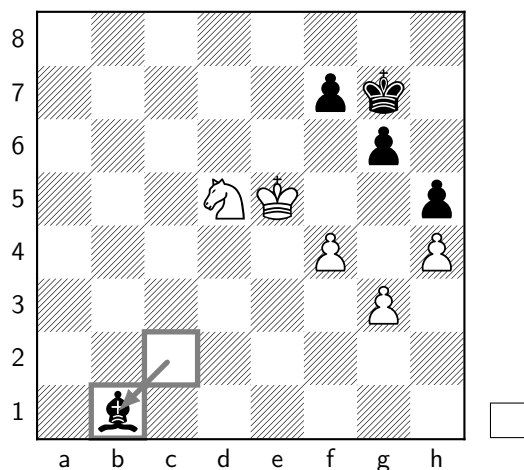
**57... ♜e6 58 ♖e5 ♜c4 59 g3 ♜b3** Black is stalling.



**59... f6+ 60 ♖d6 ♜b3 61 ♜e4 ♜d1 62 f4 ♜f3**

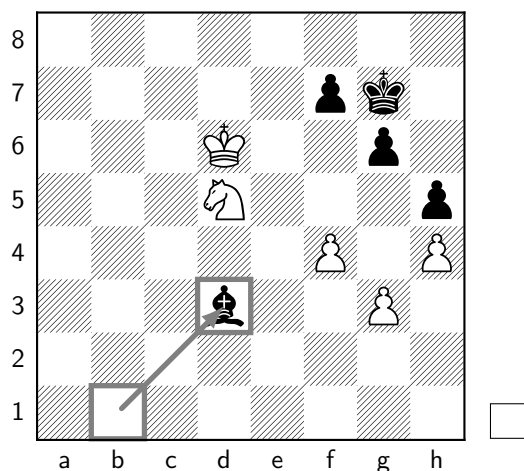
**60 ♜e4** White is beginning to take control over the dark squares, while Black is doing nothing.

**60... ♜a2 61 f4 ♜b1 62 ♜f6 ♜c2 63 ♜d5 ♜b1**



**63...♙b3**

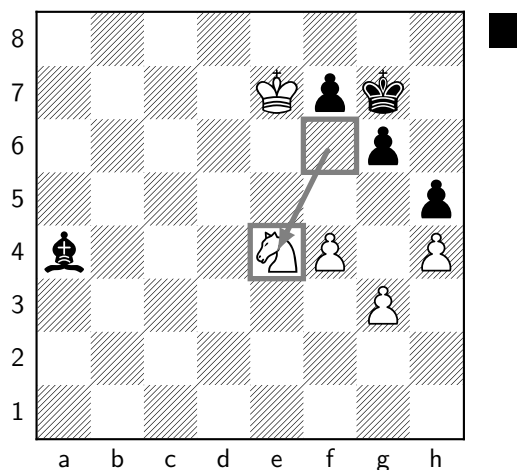
**64 ♔d6 ♙d3?** It is not so surprising that the feeling of 'no harm can reach me' does not go away as the danger is slowly creeping closer. After this move Black is actually already lost!



**64...♙a2 65 ♖e3 f6**

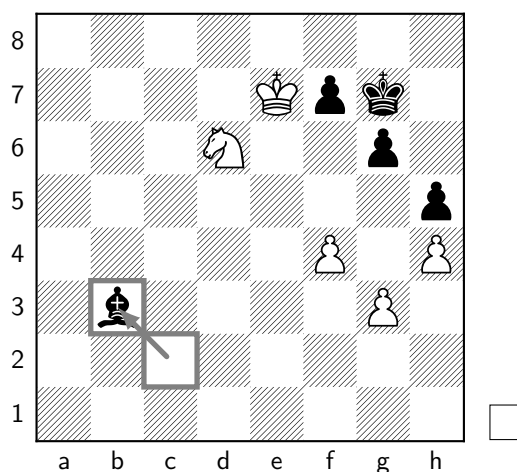
**65 ♔e7!** Now White is able to dominate the black king and take advantage of the knight's extended possibilities over the bishop. Nevertheless, accuracy is required for White to prove the win.

**65...♙c2 66 ♖f6 ♙a4 67 ♖e4!** White is alert.



**67 ♖e4+ ♙x e8 68 ♔x e8 ♖g8**

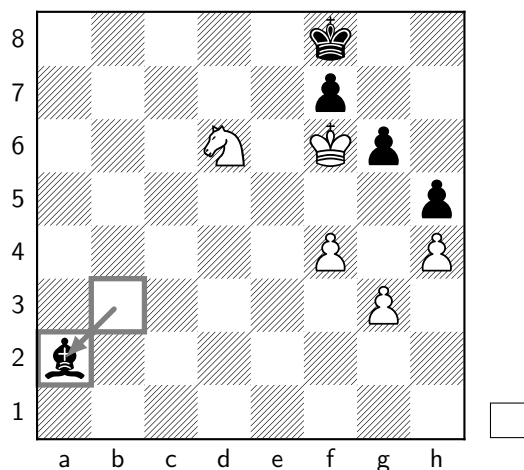
**67...♙c2 68 ♖d6 ♙b3**



**68...f5 69 ♖e8+ ♔h6 70 ♔f6 ♙a4 71 ♖d6 ♔h7 72 ♖f7 ♙b5 73 ♖e5 ♙e8 74 ♔e7 ♙b5 75 ♔f7**

**69 ♖e8+!** Gaining the dominating f6-square for the king.

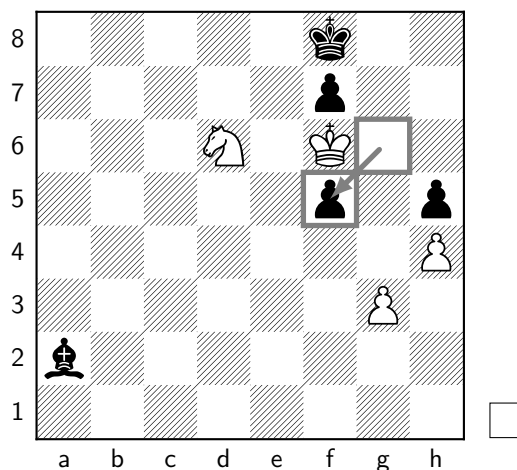
**69...♔g8 70 ♔f6 ♔f8 71 ♖d6 ♙a2** Black cannot save the game anymore.



71... ♖d5 72 f5 gxf5 73 ♗xf5 ♜f3 74 ♗e3  
 ♜e8 75 ♗c4 ♜d5 76 ♗e5 ♜f8 77 ♗d3 ♜f3  
 78 ♗f4 ♜d1 79 ♜g5 ♜f3 80 ♗xh5 ♜e2 81  
 g4 ♜d1 82 ♗f6 ♜g7 83 h5 ♜c2 84 h6+ ♜f8  
 85 ♜f4 ♜g6 86 ♜e5 ♜c2 87 g5 ♜g6 88 ♜d6  
 ♜c2 89 ♗d7+ ♜g8 90 ♜e7 ♜b3 91 ♗e5

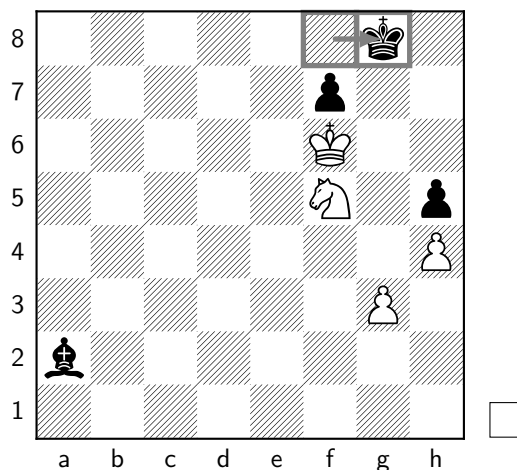
**72 f5!** With this break White is able to create weaknesses. It is clear that, although Black did not think any danger existed, White's will to win eventually proved essential. Chess is a difficult game and holds a large amount of possibilities in even simple positions. Anyone who thinks that chess can be played with the hands alone, without the assistance of the head, will find themselves losing similar games quite often.

**72...gxf5**



**72... ♜b1 73 ♗xf7 gxf5 74 ♗h6**

**73 ♗xf5 ♜g8**



**73... ♜b1 74 ♗g7 ♜g6 75 ♗e6+ ♜g8 76  
 ♗f4 ♜h7 77 ♜g5**

**74 ♗g7** The downside of putting the bishop on a2 is highlighted, but really it did not matter much anymore.

**74... ♜b3 75 ♗xh5 ♜a2 76 ♗g7 ♜b3 77  
 ♗f5 ♜a2 78 ♗d6 ♜b3 79 g4 ♜a2 80 g5 ♜b3  
 81 h5 ♜a2 82 h6 ♜b3 83 ♗xf7!** The final blow. Black was evidently unhappy about his performance and played on a bit longer.

**83... ♜xf7 84 h7+ ♜xh7 85 ♜xf7 ♜h8 86  
 ♜g6 ♜g8 87 ♜h6 ♜h8 88 g6 ♜g8 89 g7 . —**  
 Of course this example was a bit silly since

the position was completely drawn to begin with. White's advantage of the knight in a position with pawns on only one flank should not really amount to much, but after Black lost the fight for the dark squares (domination), and was then unable to defend against f4-f5 (exploiting Black's earlier ...h5 to create weaknesses), this eventually became too much for him to cope with. Once the f-pawn was exchanged for the g-pawn, Black had two weaknesses and quickly lost.

**1-0**

---

White: Gurevich, M.  
 Black: Short, N.  
 Opening ECO: C01  
 Result: 0-1

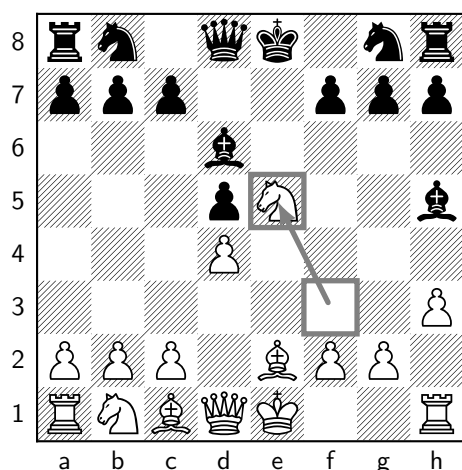
Manila Interzonal

1990

**1 d4 e6 2 e4 d5 3 exd5** Not very ambitious, but White only needed a draw.

**3...exd5 4 f3 g4 5 h3 h5** This later proved to be a bad line for Black. Kasparov was able to prove advantage for White with 6 Qe2+!, but that is not very relevant for this game.

**6 e2 d6 7 e5?! White is seeking exchanges only to seek exchanges.**



Besides creating an imbalance, Black is able to develop his pieces rapidly.

**14 d2 f6 15 f3 c6 16 b3 b6!** One of the important rules about games you have to win is that you need to continue playing the best move in order to be successful. Here this means entering the endgame early, acknowledging the risk of a draw. But this is often a strong strategy, because the opponent somehow starts to get even more careful, as he feels closer to his goal.

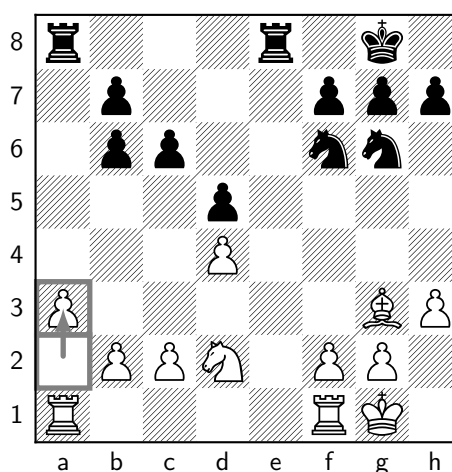
**17 bxb6 axb6 . 18 a3 or 18 a4?** — In this kind of position, where you are slightly worse, it is very important to play with the utmost accuracy. In this case it means that White should try to make the positionally strongest move work tactically.

**18 a3?** Most other annotators have given this move '?!'. But this is where the game is changing from White being slightly worse to becoming almost impossible to defend in practice, so the full question mark seems more appropriate.

## 70-0

**7...e2 8 e2 e7 9 O-O O-O 10 f4 e8 11 g4** Here 11...Nbc6 can be strongly answered by 12 Nc3! and White is fine. Therefore Short uses Smyslov's old advice to those seeking the full point: exchange knight for bishop, or the other way around. After the move played in the game White is stuck with his bad bishop. And while it is not as bad as all that, it does bring some imbalance to the game, which can be used by Black to his advantage.

**11...e5! 12 e5 g6 13 g3 d7**



**18 a4! ♖e4 19 ♖×e4 ♗×e4 20 c3 ♗e2 21 b3! ♗ae8 22 ♙c7 ♗c2 23 ♗ac1 ♗ee2?! 24 ♗×c2 ♗×c2 25 ♗e1!**

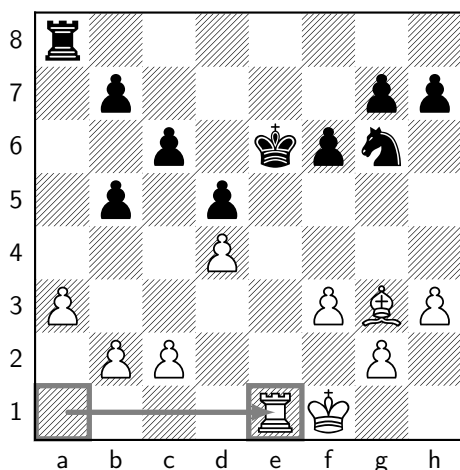
**18... ♖e4!** The difference between the black knight and the inactive bishop on g3 becomes more apparent with this exchange.

**19 ♖×e4 ♗×e4 20 ♗fd1 b5!** Black has a very comfortable advantage. He is better on both wings. White cannot create counterplay on the queenside, whereas, when the time comes, Black can break through with ...b7-b6, ...c6-c5 and ...b5-b4.

**21 ♙f1 f6!** It is moves like this that makes me like this game so much. There is nothing special about it, only Black realises what White will play next, and he therefore prepares to meet it in the best possible way.

**22 f3 ♗e6 23 ♗e1 ♙f7!** The obvious point behind 21...f6!. White really needs to exchange the rooks to get the one on a1 into the game, so Black uses the chance to bring his king into the centre. On d7 it will be much better placed than on f7 as, on the queenside, the king can support Black's eventual breakthrough.

**24 ♗×e6 ♙×e6 25 ♗e1+**

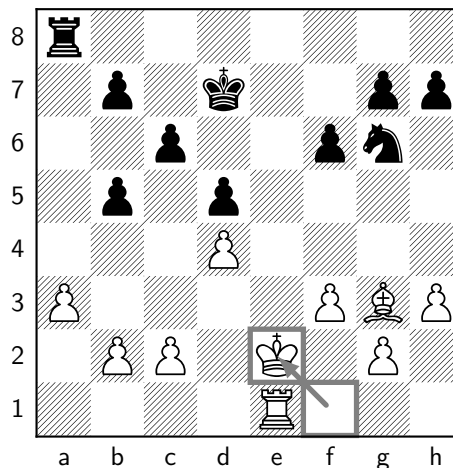


**25 ♙e1!?**

**25... ♙d7** Prophylaxis. What is Black's next

move?

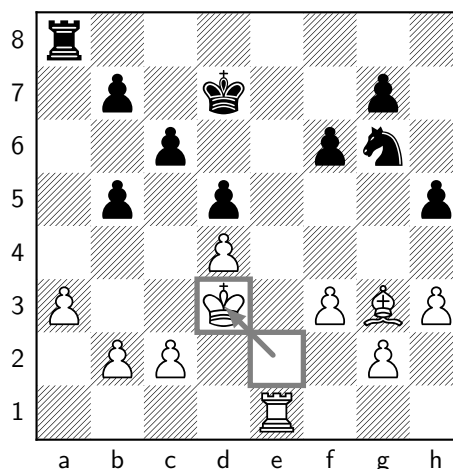
**26 ♙e2?** It is easy to see what is about to happen after the game and, usually, such a strong technical player as Gurevich would not have made this kind of mistake. Black is slowly improving his position based on the principle of Do not hurry and White should be able to anticipate how he will continue this next.



**26 ♙f2! h5 27 g4**

**26... h5!** Now Black will be able to establish g2 as a permanent weakness and, because of the placement of the white king, White will not be able to play the bishop to f2.

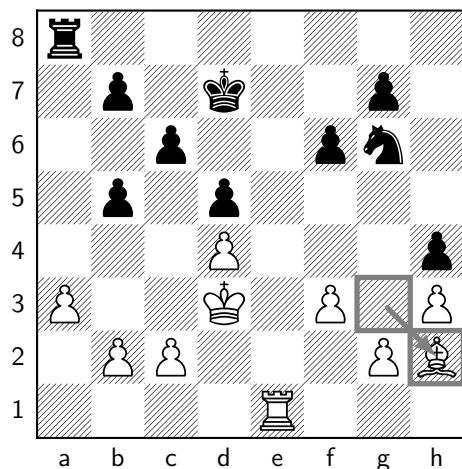
**27 ♙d3**





27 h4!?

27...h4 28 ♖h2

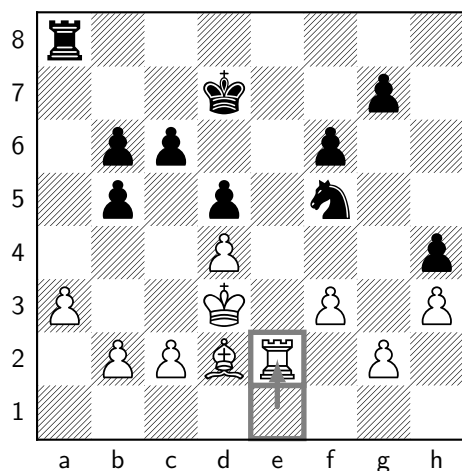


28 ♖f2 ♘f4+ 29 ♔d2 g5

28...♘e7! The knight has done all it could on the kingside and is now redirected to better squares. Again Short shows that he is in no hurry and that, instead of playing for qualification, he is simply playing chess. If Gurevich had done the same he would never have lost as he did.

29 ♖f4 ♘f5 30 ♖d2 b6 Now Black cannot improve his structure anymore, so a need for an active plan is apparent. This will be through a pawn break on the queenside.

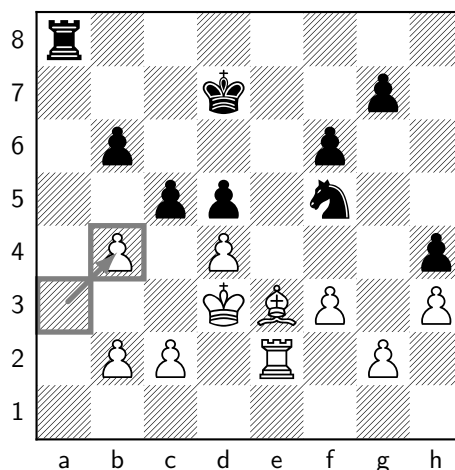
31 ♜e2



31 ♖b4 ♜c8

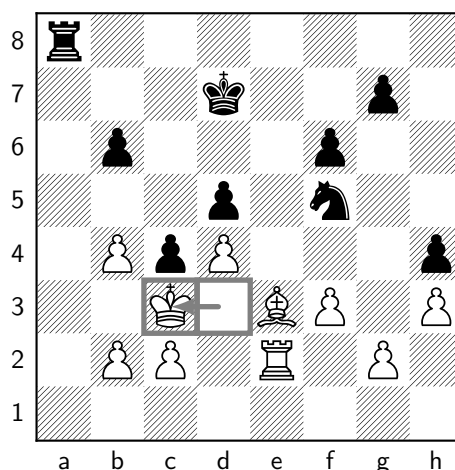
31...c5 32 ♖e3 b4! With this temporary pawn sacrifice Black increases the difference between knight and bishop, as well as opening the a-file for his rook. The position might not be won yet, but it is getting awfully close.

33 a×b4



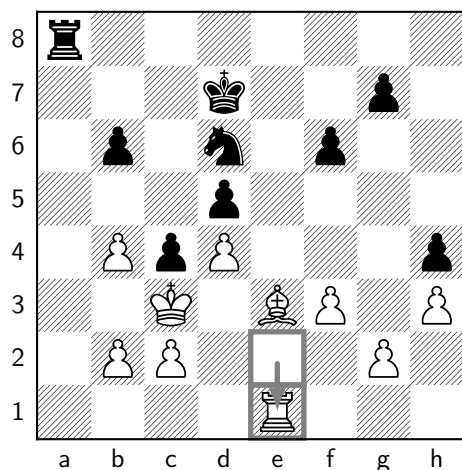
33 d×c5 b×a3

33...c4+ 34 ♔c3 White cannot avoid this move.



34 ♔d2 ♜a2 35 ♔c1 ♜a1+ 36 ♔d2 ♜b1 37 ♔c3 ♘d6

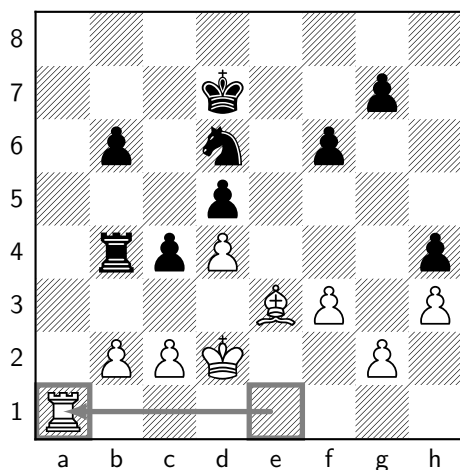
34...♘d6 35 ♜e1



**35 b3?! ♖a2! 36 bxc4? ♖a3+**

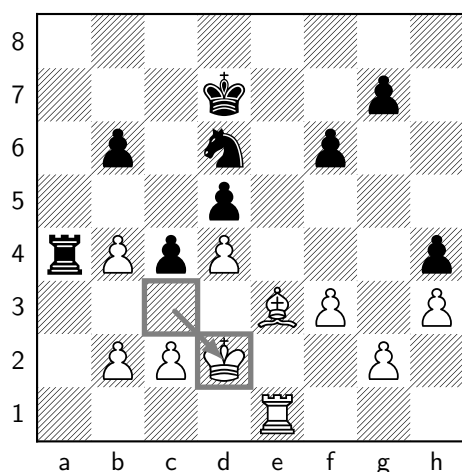
**35...♖a4** Last chance to defend.  
Prophylaxis again.

**36 ♖d2?**



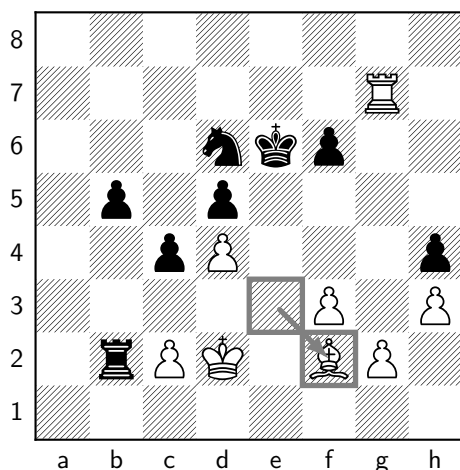
**37 ♖c1 ♖a4 38 ♖b1 ♖f5 39 ♖f2 ♖a8**

**37...♖xb2 38 ♖a7+ ♖e6 39 ♖xg7 b5 40 ♖f2**



**36 ♖b1! ♖b5+ 37 ♖d2 ♖xb4 38 b3! ♖a3 39 ♖c3!**

**36...♖xb4 37 ♖a1?!** This act of desperation does not work, but it is hard to find a satisfactory continuation for White now. The black knight remains vastly superior and, after a more modest continuation, White will most likely lose the endgame without much chance of resistance.



**40 ♖a7 b4 41 ♖c1 c3 42 ♖a6 ♖d7 43 ♖a7+ ♖c8 44 ♖a5 ♖c4 45 ♖c5+ ♖b7 46 ♖f4 ♖a3**

**40...b4 41 ♖c1 c3 42 ♖xh4 ♖f5 43 ♖g4 ♖e3 0-1**

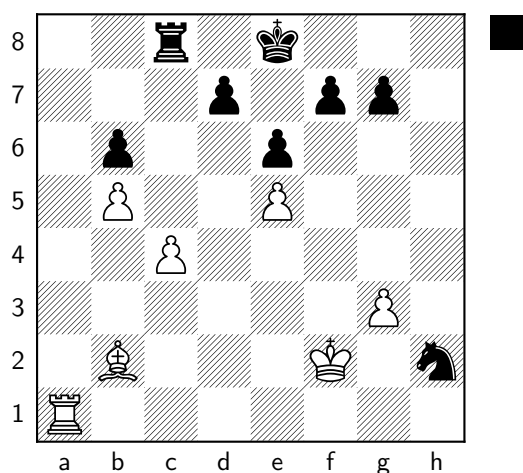
White: Østergaard, J.

Denmark

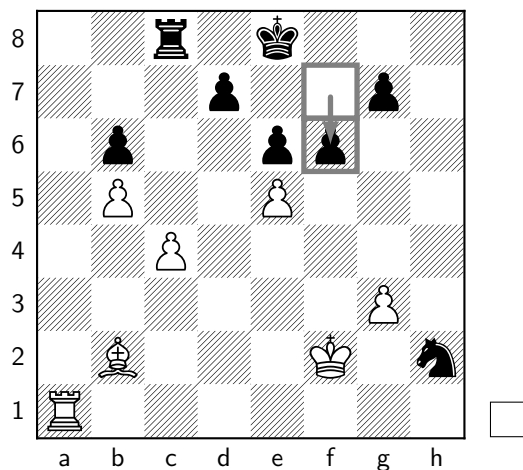
Black: Aagaard, J.

2002

Result: 0-1

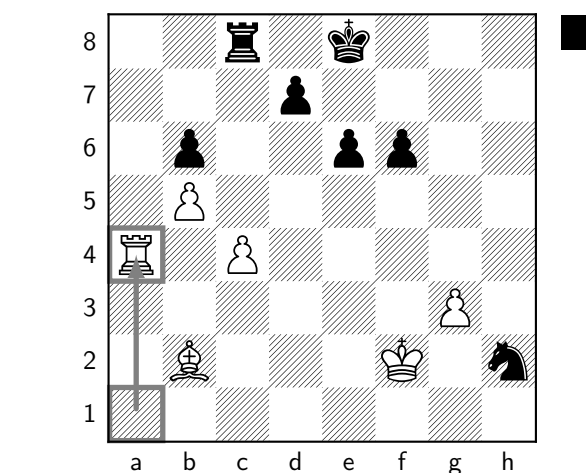


28...f6!



28... ♔e7 29 ♙a3+ ♔d8 30 ♙d6 ♖xc4 31 ♙e2! ♜g4 32 ♖a6

29 e×f6 g×f6 30 ♖a4 An awkward move to play, but it is only in the short term that the rook will be misplaced. Soon the king comes across to defend the pawn and the rook will become active again.



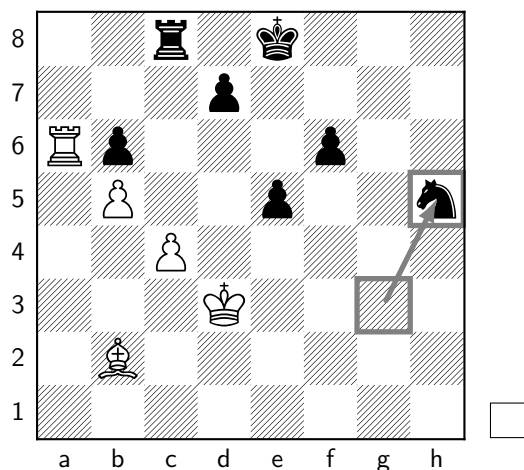
30 ♙e2 ♜g4 31 ♙d3 e5 32 ♖a6 ♜f2+ 33 ♙e2 ♜e4!

30...e5! Black's plan in this game is to combat the bishop with his pawns and then use the knight to attack the remaining white pawns. This strategy proves to be sufficient to win in practice. Whether the position is really winning is less clear and cannot be decided with any degree of certainty.

31 ♙e3!? White decides to activate his king. This allows Black to utilise the potential of the knight.

31... ♜f1+! Black is now winning the g-pawn, but White had no real choice, as otherwise he would not be able to activate the rook.

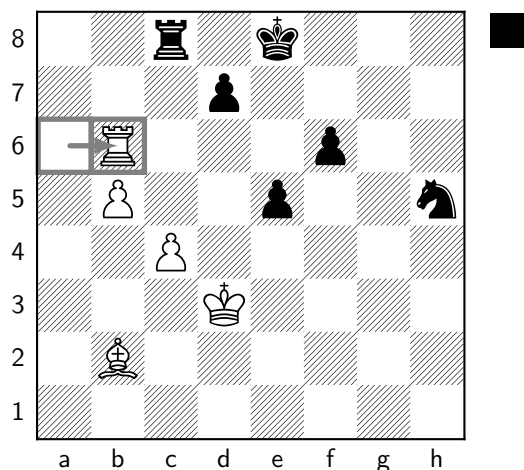
32 ♙d3 ♜xg3 33 ♖a6 ♜h5? Black decides to exchange pawns. This helps keep the position simple, but also throws a pawn away.



**33... ♖b8!**

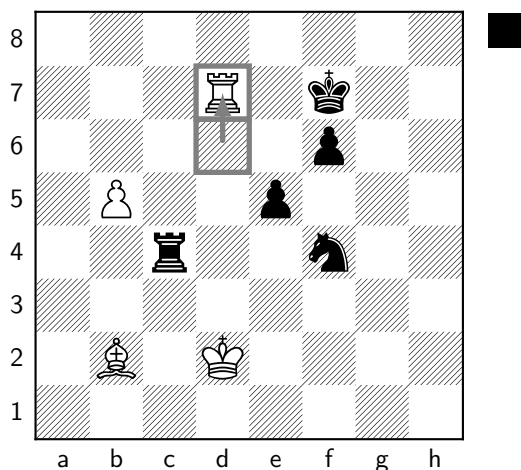
**33... ♘h1?! 34 ♜x b6 ♘f2+ 35 ♔e2 ♜x c4**

**34 ♜x b6** White cannot prevent ...Nf4+.



**34 ♙c1 d5! 35 ♜x b6 ♜x c4**

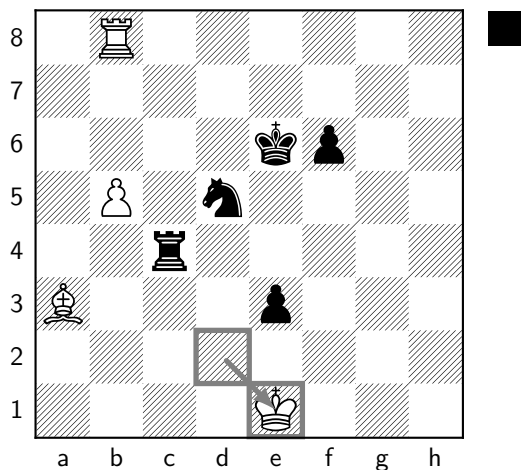
**34... ♘f4+ 35 ♔d2 ♔f7 36 ♜d6 ♜x c4 37 ♜x d7+?** I had anticipated this move when I played 33...Nh5, but once the position appeared at the board I realised my mistake. After 37 Rxd7+ the black king gets easily into the game and Black can push the two passed pawns.



**37 b6! ♜b4 38 ♙a3! ♜b5 39 ♜x d7+ ♔e6 40 ♜e7+! ♔d5 41 ♜d7+! ♔c4 42 b7 ♘e6 43 ♙e7 ♘c5 44 ♜c7 ♜x b7 45 ♜x b7 ♘x b7 46 ♙x f6**

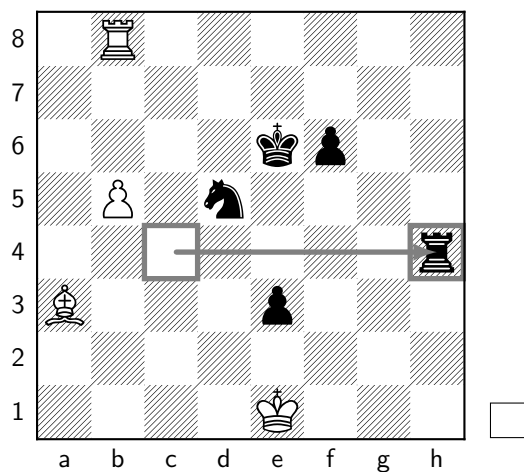
**37... ♔e6 38 ♜b7 ♘d5 39 ♙a3 e4 40 ♜b8 e3+!** I calculated variations based on ...Ra4 for a long time before I realised that the rook was much better placed on the other side of the board.

**41 ♔e1!** How should Black continue?



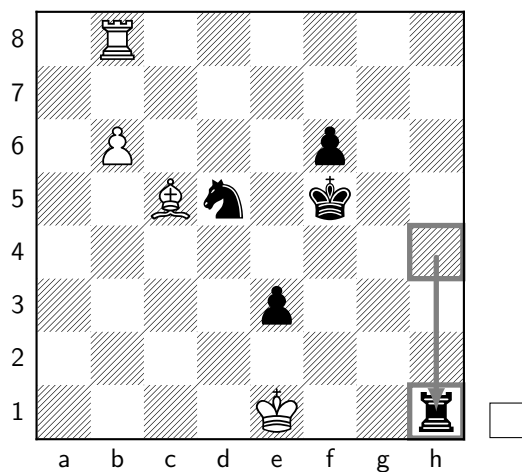
**41 ♔e2 ♜c3!**

**41... ♜h4!!** In this kind of position only calculation can show the way.



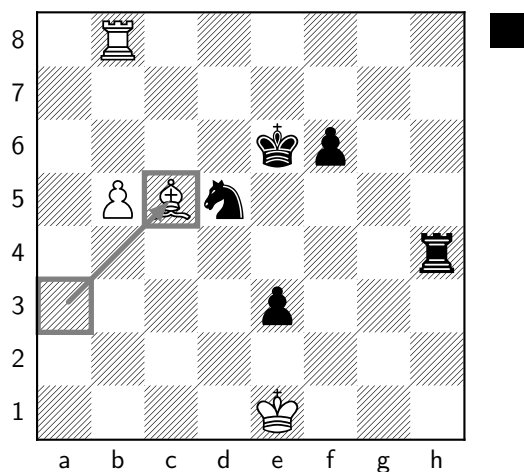
41... Rxc3? 42 b6! Rxa3 43 b7 Ra1+ 44 Ke2 Ra2+ 45 Kg3 Rf2+ 46 Kg3

42 Kc5



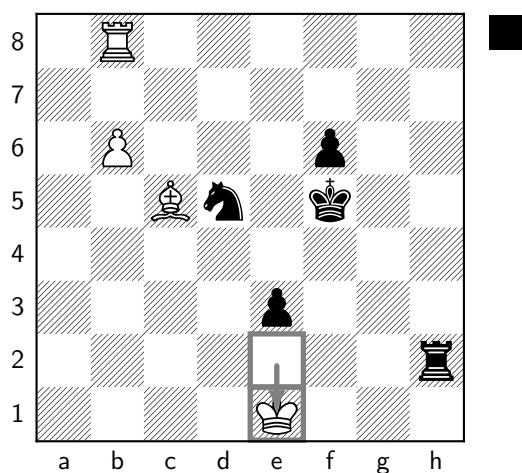
43... Ke4?? 44 Kxe3! Kxe3 45 Ke8+ Kf3 46 b7

44 Ke2 Rh2+ 45 Ke1 White has no possible defence.



42 b6 Kf5! 43 Ke8 Rh1+ 44 Ke2 Rf4+ 45 Kxe3 Re1+

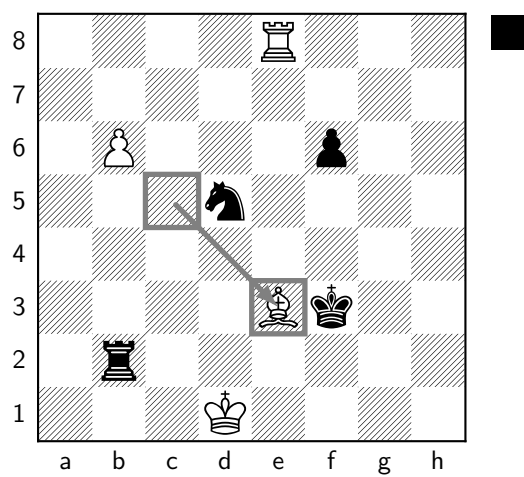
42... Kf5 43 b6 Rh1+! Accuracy to the end.



45 Kf3 Rh3+!

45 Kd3 e2 46 Kd2 Rf4 47 Ke8 e1 R+ 48 Kxe1 Rd3+ 49 Kf1 Rxc5 50 Kc8 Rd7 51 b7 Rb2 52 Kc7 Ke6

45... Ke4 46 Ke8+ Kf3 47 Kd1 Rb2! 48 Kxe3



**48 ♔c1 ♚b5**

**48... ♘×e3+ 49 ♔c1 ♚×b6**

**0-1**

## When bishops are stronger than knights

---

We have looked at when the knight holds the advantage over the bishop. To give positions where the bishop is superior to the knight is close to being a reversal of these situations, though not quite. They are:

1) Positions with pawns on both wings.

2) Positions with a flexible pawn structure which is not working against the bishop.

Usually this means having your own pawns on squares of opposite colour to the bishop, and with your opponent's pawns on the same colour as your bishop.

3) Mainly open positions where the bishop has no problem finding scope to operate.

4) Positions with rooks. Rook and bishop have a tendency to work better together than rook and knight. The old rule is that queen and knight work better together than queen and bishop as well, but I have great doubts about the quality of this claim. The situations where queen and bishop are superior to queen and knight are too many for the reverse to be a general tendency.

5) Asymmetrical positions: positions in which there are pawn majorities on both wings, and especially those with passed pawns.

As can be seen, the bishop is superior to the knight in more situations, though we have examined realistic examples of the reverse case. Now it is time to look at some examples where the laws of nature are obeyed in full (see the following game).

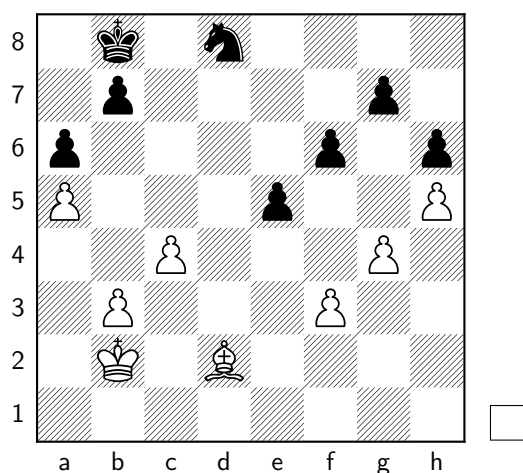
---

White: Georgiev, Kir  
Black: Nisipeanu, L.

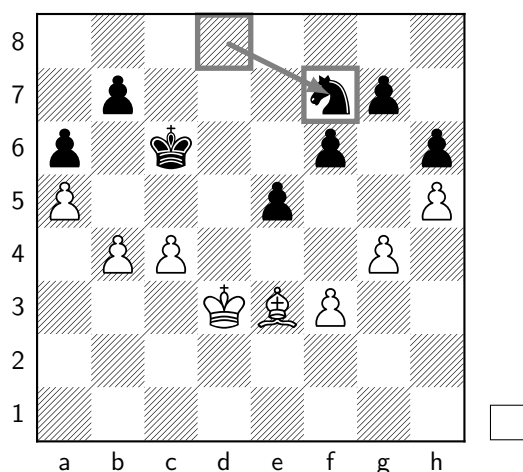
New Delhi

2000

Result: 1-0

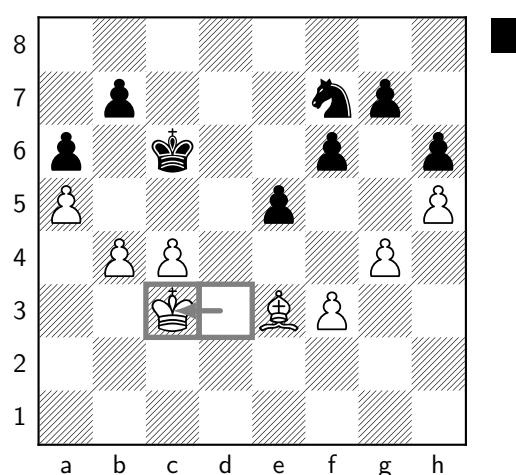


**40 ♖e3 ♔c8 41 ♔c3 ♔d7 42 b4 ♔c6 43 ♔d3 ♜f7** Black is lost, as is easily concluded from the long list of White's advantages given above. Therefore it is hard to discuss whether or not any other moves offered a better defence.



**43... ♜e6 44 ♔e4 ♔d6 45 f4! e×f4 46 ♜×f4+ ♔c6 47 ♜g3 ♜f8 48 ♔f5 ♔d7 49 c5 ♜e6 50 ♜d6**

**44 ♔c3!?** This move is played under the notion of Do not hurry. White is stalling because he does not have a winning plan, and therefore tries to improve his position instead.



**44 ♔e4 ♜d6+**

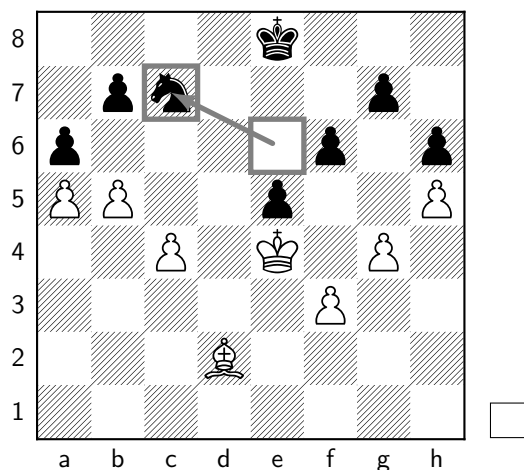
**44 f4! ♔d7! 45 ♔e4 ♔e6 46 f5+ ♔d6 47 ♜c5+ ♔c6 48 ♜f8 ♜d6+ 49 ♔d3 ♜e8 50 ♔e3! ♔c7 51 b5 b6!? 52 a×b6+ ♔×b6 53 b×a6 ♔×a6 54 ♔e4 ♔b7 55 g5! f×g5 56 ♔×e5 ♔c7 57 ♜×g7 ♜×g7 58 f6**

**44... ♜d8 45 ♔c2 ♔d7 46 ♔d3 ♜c6 47 ♜c5 ♔e6 48 ♔e4 ♜d8 49 b5** White has managed to make progress, but at some time he will need to push his luck.

**49... ♜f7 50 ♜f8 ♜g5+ 51 ♔e3 ♔f7 52 ♜b4 ♜e6 53 ♔e4 ♔e8 54 ♜d2** It seems that White is finally preparing for f3-f4!

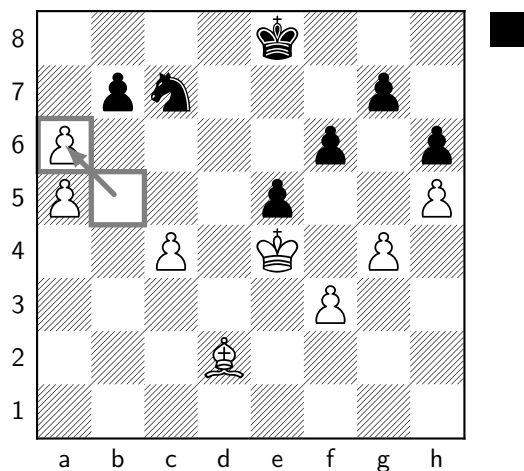
**54... ♜c7**





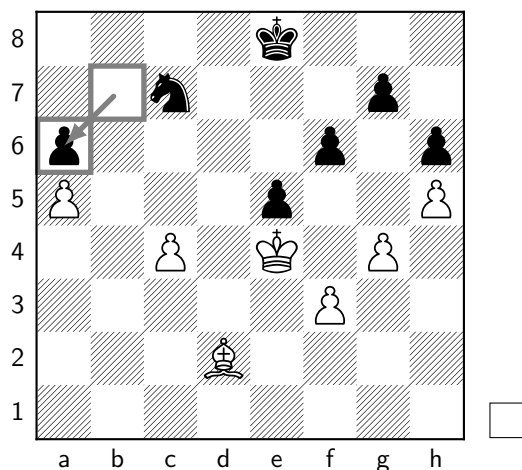
**54... ♔d7 55 f4! ♘c5+ 56 ♖f5 ♘d3 57 g5!! exf4! 58 g×h6 f3 59 h×g7 f2 60 g8 ♖ f1 ♖+ 61 ♖g6 ♘e5+ 62 ♖h6 ♖×c4 63 ♖×c4 ♘×c4 64 ♖g7!**

**55 b×a6?** With this move White loses a lot of his flexibility; it only works out well because Black replies with a horrible decision.



**55 f4! a×b5 56 f×e5 f×e5 57 c×b5 ♘×b5 58 ♖×e5 ♖e7 59 ♖d5 ♖d7 60 ♖c5 ♘d6 61 ♖b6 ♖c8 62 ♙c3 ♘e8 63 g5! h×g5 64 ♙×g7 ♘d6 65 h6 ♘f7 66 h7 ♖b8 67 ♙e5+ ♖c8 68 ♙f6! g4 69 ♙e5!**

**55... b×a6?** This leaves White with a dangerous passed c-pawn.



**55... ♘×a6! 56 f4! ♘c5+ 57 ♖f5! exf4 58 ♙×f4 ♖f7**

**56 f4!** Now this breakthrough comes with great strength. The passed c-pawn and the weak g7-pawn eventually decide the game.

**56... exf4 57 ♙×f4 ♘e6 58 ♙d6 ♖d7 59 ♖d5** Black is not really in zugzwang since, even if he was able to pass, White would not complain about being allowed to push his c-pawn.

**59... ♘d8 60 c5 ♘c6** Black is trying to create counterplay against the g4-pawn. Though insufficient, this is certainly the best try.

**61 ♙f8 ♘e5 62 g5!** Once again this breakthrough decides the game.

**62... h×g5 63 ♙×g7 g4 64 ♙×f6 ♘f7 65 ♙h4 ♘h6 66 c6+ ♖c8 67 ♙g3 ♘f5 68 ♖e5 ♘h6 69 ♖e4**

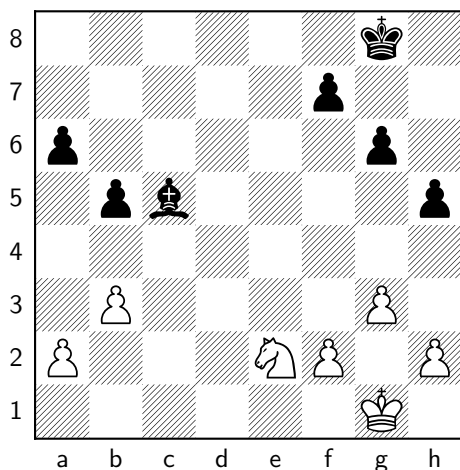
**1-0**

White: Lesiege, A.  
Black: Andersson, U.

Elista Olympiad

1998

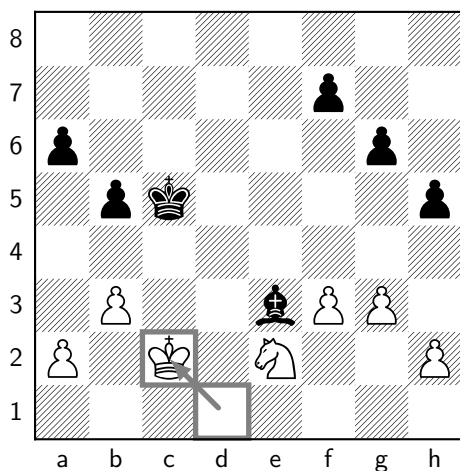
Result: 0-1



**33... ♔f8!** This is stronger than 33... Kg7 - the point being that White is weak at a3 and Black therefore needs to move quickly towards the queenside, rather than to the fifth rank.

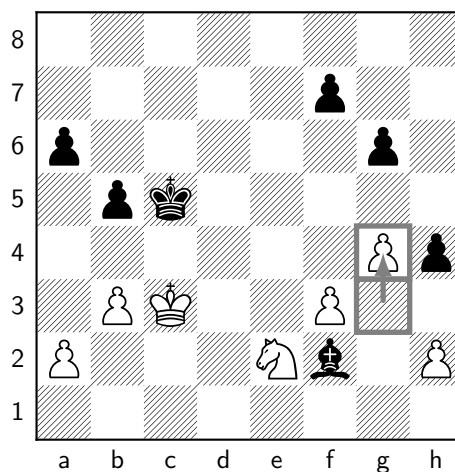
**34 ♕f1 ♔e7 35 f3 ♔d6 36 ♔e1 ♕e3!** With this natural and strong move, the bishop both dominates the white king and, at the same time, clears the way for his own king.

**37 ♔d1 ♕c5 38 ♔c2**



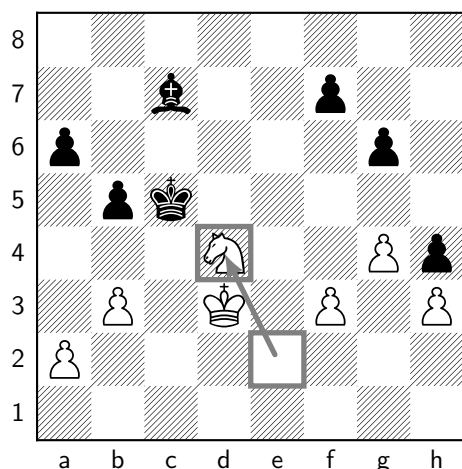
**38 a3!? ♔d5 39 ♔c2 ♕c5 40 b4 ♕f2! 41 ♔d3 h4**

**38... ♕f2 39 ♔c3 h4 40 g4** 'It is very difficult to decide exactly, is it a lost position for White, or maybe White played bad. I think it's lost...' (Tsesarsky). I believe the good annotator is right about this. The black bishop is able to dominate the knight completely, as well as create threats on both sides of the board. How White should defend himself I do not know'. — An important point is that putting his pawns on light squares will not make the game safe for White, since the light squares can be attacked by the black king on the dark squares. White is unable to set up a fortress that covers all the entry points - for instance a knight on d3 would leave open the d4-square - so it is impossible for White to prevent forever the black king from penetrating.



**40 g×h4 ♕×h4**

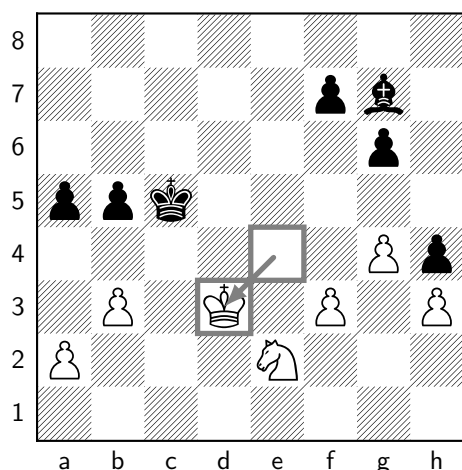
40... ♖e1+! 41 ♔d3 ♜a5 42 h3 ♜c7 43 ♘d4  
It is very difficult to find a move for White here.



43 a3 ♜e5! 44 b4+ ♔d5 45 f4 ♜b2 46 ♔c2  
♜x a3! 47 ♔b3 ♔e4 48 ♔x a3 ♔f3 49 ♘c3  
♔g2

43... ♔d5 44 ♘e2 ♜e5! Andersson is one of the endgame's great masters, and here he uses his bishop actively to dominate the white knight and king. It must have been very uncomfortable to defend the white position here.

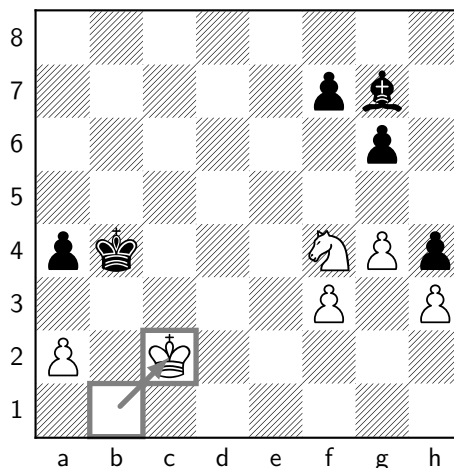
45 ♔e3 a5 46 ♔d3 ♔c5 47 ♔e4 ♜g7 48 ♔d3



48 g5 ♔b4 49 ♔d5 ♔a3 50 ♔c5 b4 51 ♔b5  
♔x a2 52 ♔a4 ♔b2 53 ♘f4 ♔c3 54 ♘g2  
♜d4 55 ♘x h4 ♜e3 56 f4 ♜x f4 57 ♘f3 ♜c7

48... ♔b4 49 ♔c2 ♔a3 50 ♔b1 Black has now managed to force the white king back to the first rank. His strategic ambitions are close to realisation.

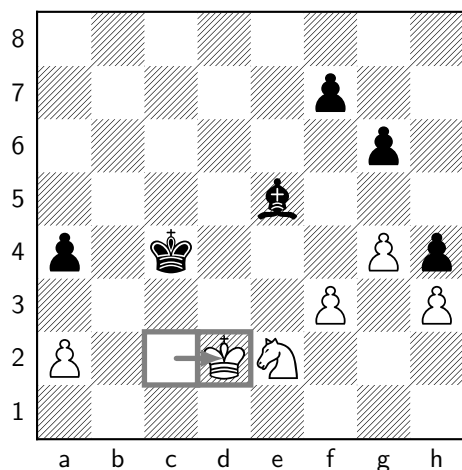
50... a4 51 bxa4 bxa4 52 ♘f4 ♔b4 53 ♔c2



53 ♘g2 g5! 54 f4 f6 55 ♔c2 ♜f8 56 f x g5  
f x g5 57 ♘e3 ♜g7 58 ♘f5 ♜f6 59 ♘d6 ♜e7  
60 ♘f5 ♜c5 61 ♔b2 ♔c4 62 ♔c2 ♜f8 63  
♔d2 ♜b4+ 64 ♔c2 ♜a3! 65 ♔d2 ♔d5 66  
♔d3 ♔e5 67 ♔c4 ♜f8 68 ♔b5 a3 69 ♔c4  
♔f4 70 ♔d5 ♔f3 71 ♔e5 ♜b4 72 ♔f6 ♜d2  
73 ♘d6 ♔g2 74 ♘e4 ♔x h3! 75 ♘x d2 ♔g2

53... ♔c4 54 ♘e2 ♜e5! Domination again. The white knight still cannot find any play in the position.

55 ♔d2

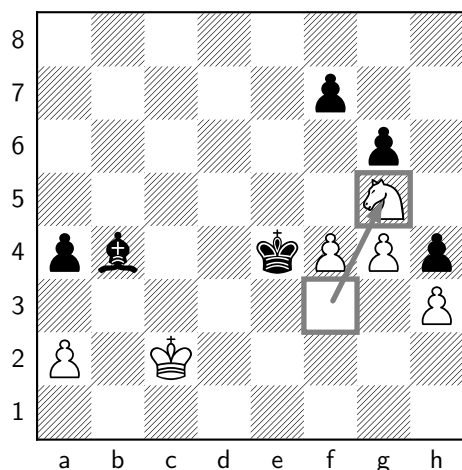


55 f4 ♖d6! 56 ♗c3 a3 57 ♗e2 f5 58 gxf5  
gxf5 59 ♖d2 ♖c7! 60 ♖c2 ♖b8 61 ♖d2 ♖a7  
62 ♖c2 ♖e3

55... ♖c7! The bishop is relocated once again in order to annoy the white king.

56 ♖c2 ♖a5 Once again zugzwang comes up and White cannot avoid making a concession. He elects to weaken the e4-square, which proves useful for Black virtually straight away.

57 f4 ♖b4 58 ♗g1 ♖d4 59 ♗f3+ ♖e4 60 ♗g5+



60 ♗xh4 ♖xf4 61 ♗g2+ ♖f3! 62 ♗h4+ ♖g3

60 ♗e5 ♖xf4 61 ♗d3+ ♖g3 62 ♗xb4 ♖xh3  
63 ♖d2 ♖g2! 64 ♗d3 h3 65 ♖e3 h2 66 ♗f2  
h1 ♖ 67 ♗xh1 ♖xh1 68 g5 ♖g2 69 ♖d3  
♖f3 70 ♖c4 ♖e4 71 ♖b4 ♖f5 72 ♖xa4  
♖xg5 73 ♖b4 ♖f6 74 a4 ♖e7 75 ♖b5 ♖d6  
76 ♖b6 g5! 77 a5 g4 78 a6 g3 79 a7 g2 80  
a8 ♖ g1 ♖+ 81 ♖b5 ♖c5+ 82 ♖a4 ♖c6+

60... ♖xf4 61 ♗xh4 ♖g3 . — After these two examples I would like to present one in which the superior side (Black) was favoured with all five advantages of bishop vs. knight listed above. That these do not in themselves guarantee a full point should be obvious from the game. However, they certainly make Black's game a great deal easier and White's really difficult, so for the practical player they give useful information about the state of the position.

0-1

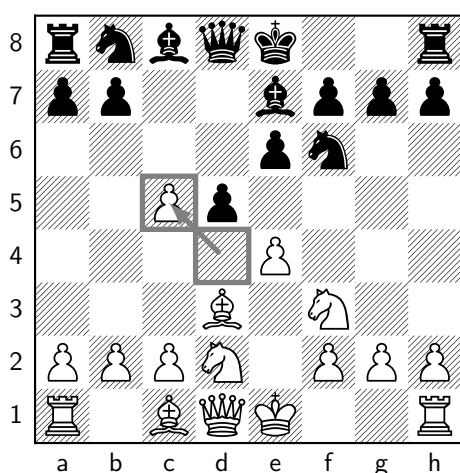
White: Paaske, A.  
 Black: Lund, E.  
 Opening ECO: C03  
 Result: 0-1

Copenhagen

2003

**1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♖d2 ♙e7** A tricky sideline. Black delays ...c7-c5 until White has played Bd3, thus avoiding the main line where White usually develops his bishop to b5.

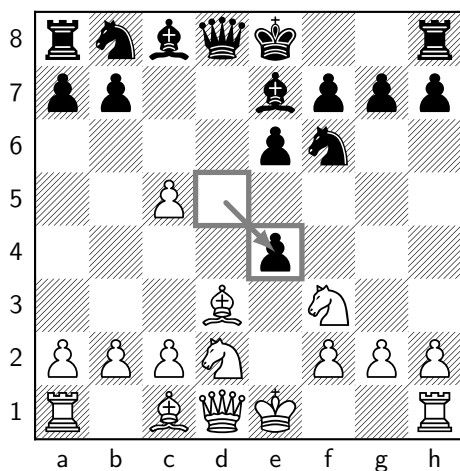
**4 ♘gf3 ♗f6 5 ♙d3 c5 6 dxc5?!**



**6 exd5 exd5 7 dxc5**

**6 e5 ♗fd7 7 c3 ♘c6 8 O-O**

**6...dxe4** I go for the endgame.

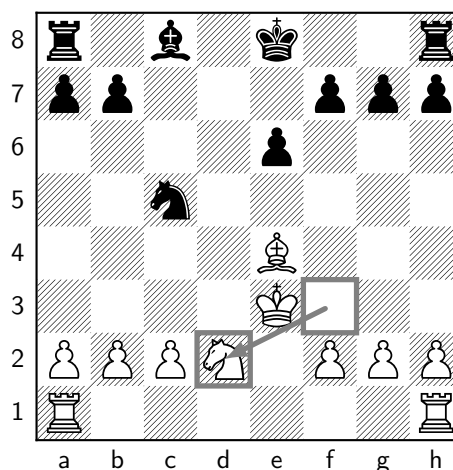


**6... ♙xc5**

**7 ♗xex4 ♗xex4 8 ♙xe4 ♙xd1+ 9 ♙xd1 ♙xc5 10 ♙e2 ♗d7** Not much is happening here. The position is equal, but then the best player just has to win! In the same tournament Yusupov commented on his game with Black against Michelakis from South Africa (Yusupov won), and in a similar situation to mine he said: 'First I play for equality, then I start to play for a win.' One shouldn't be afraid of equal positions.

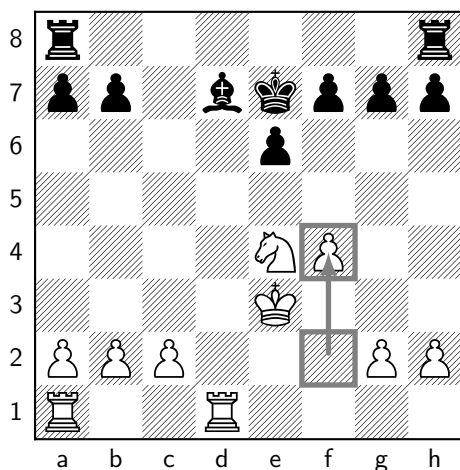
**11 ♙e3?!** Now Black gets a bishop vs. knight in an endgame with pawns on both side of the board.

**11... ♙xe3 12 ♙xe3 ♗c5 13 ♗d2**



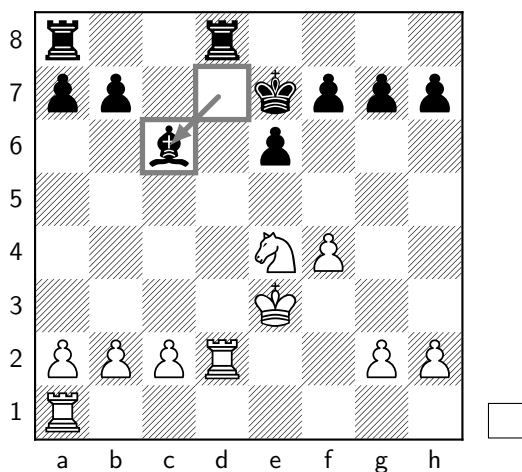
**13 ♙hd1 ♗xe4 14 ♙xe4 ♙e7 15 ♙d4 ♙d8 16 ♙ad1 ♙xd4+ 17 ♙xd4**

**13... ♗xe4 14 ♗xe4 ♙e7 15 ♙hd1 ♙d7 16 f4?**



16 ♖d2 ♜c6 17 ♖ad1 ♜hd8?! 18 ♖x d8  
♜x d8 19 ♖x d8 ♞x d8

16... ♜hd8 17 ♖d2 ♜c6

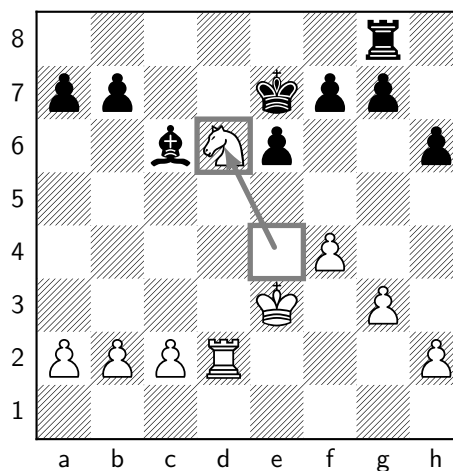


17... ♜a4?! 18 ♖ad1 ♜xc2 19 ♖x d8 ♜x d8  
20 ♖x d8 ♞x d8 21 ♞d6! ♞e7 22 ♞x b7

18 ♖ad1 ♖x d2 19 ♖x d2 h6 20 g3 ♜g8! With the last two moves Black's plan is clear: I want to play ...g5 to create some weaknesses on the kingside and maybe create an open or half-open file for my rook. Right now only the d-file is open, and the white rook controls it, so I would very much like a file for my own rook. It is logical for Black to attack on the kingside, as I have a 4 vs. 3 pawn majority over there. When I played this move I couldn't help

thinking about the classical game Znosko Borovski-Alekhine, Paris 1933. In that game both players had two rooks and a bishop each, and first part of Alekhine's plan was the same as in my game: exchange one pair of rooks to minimise counterplay, and keep one rook to create weaknesses. In fact ...Rg8 was also played by Alekhine in that game! One should know the classical games.

21 ♞d6

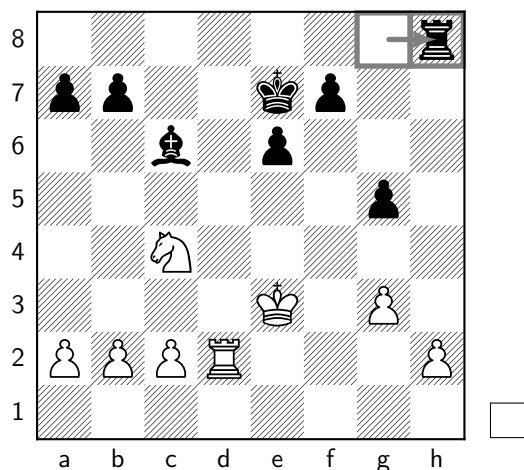


21 h4!? f6 22 ♖h2! ♖d8 23 ♖d2!

21... g5 22 fxg5?! Maybe White should avoid this exchange. On the other hand, giving the opportunity I would capture on f4 with the g-pawn. If White takes back with the g-pawn I have the newly opened g-file for my rook, while if Kxf4 then the minority attack ...h5-h4 will create weaknesses on the kingside.

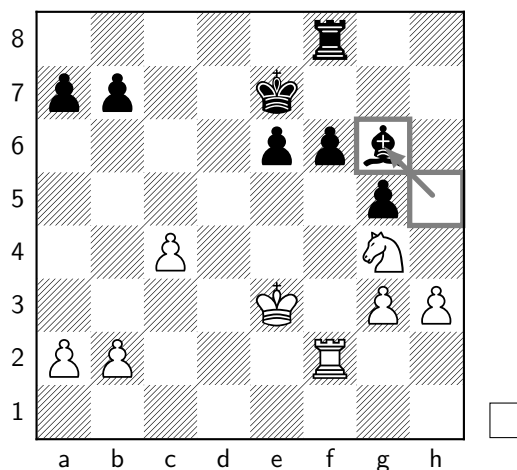
22... hxg5 23 ♞c4 Threatening Ne5 and especially Na5.

23... ♜h8! This was one of the most difficult moves of the game.



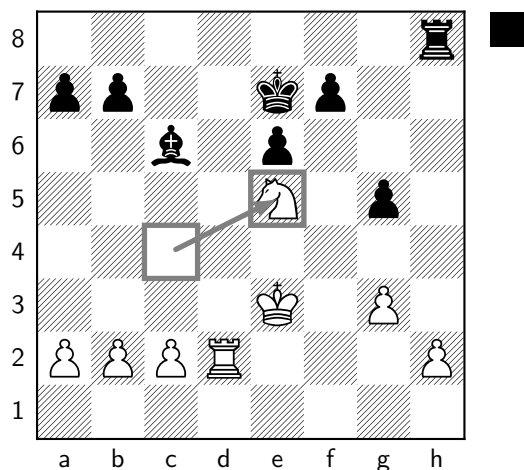
**23...b6**

**24 ♖e5**



**28... ♙xg4?! 29 h×g4**

**29 ♖d2 ♜c8 30 b3**

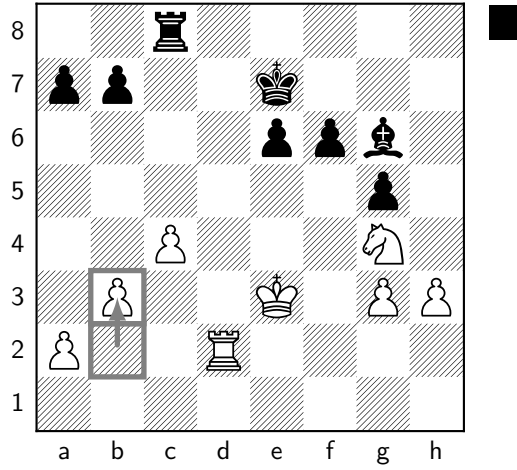


**24 ♖a5 ♙h1 25 ♜d1? ♜xh2**

**24... ♙e8 25 ♜f2 f6 26 ♖g4 ♜f8 27 c4?!** This creates further weakness; the best advice for White was possibly to do nothing. It is hard to criticise the move as White tries to create some counterplay, but it gives Black a hook for a future ...b7-b5.

**27... ♙h5!** Forcing White to play yet another pawn move. The h-pawn is easy to defend on the second rank, but on h3 (also a light square) it becomes a real target.

**28 h3 ♙g6**



**30 ♜f2? ♙f5 31 b3 ♜h8**

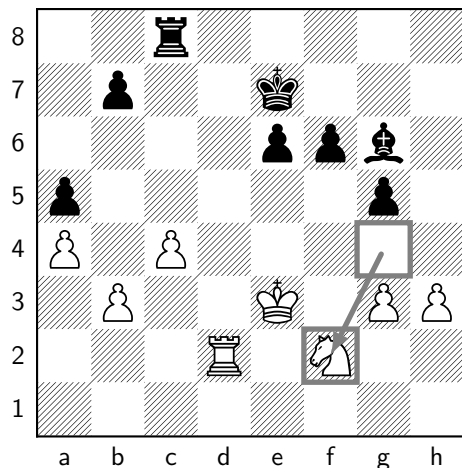
**30... a6!** Now Black threatens to play ...b5 (attacking c4) and if White exchanges on b5, the black rook penetrates via c3. Note that h2-h3 has made the g-pawn weak as well.

**31 a4 a5!** After this move the white pawns are left on light squares, the same colour as my bishop. Until now I have avoided advancing my central pawns. This was a wise strategy as a premature ...e6-e5, for instance, gives White the opportunity for Rd5, attacking the pawn on a5. The pawns



are ideally placed beside each other on e6 and f6, where they co-operate to the maximum.

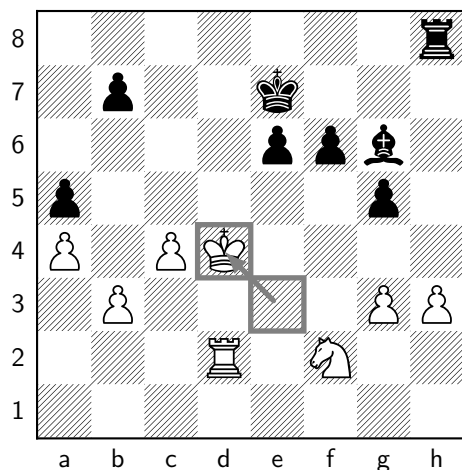
**32 ♖f2**



**32 ♖b2 ♕e8! 33 b4? a×b4 34 ♖×b4 ♕c6**

**32... ♖h8!** The black rook keeps shuffling back and forth on the back rank. Now White has no sensible moves, while Black threatens to play his bishop to c6 and then I'm ready to advance the central pawns.

**33 ♖d4?!**

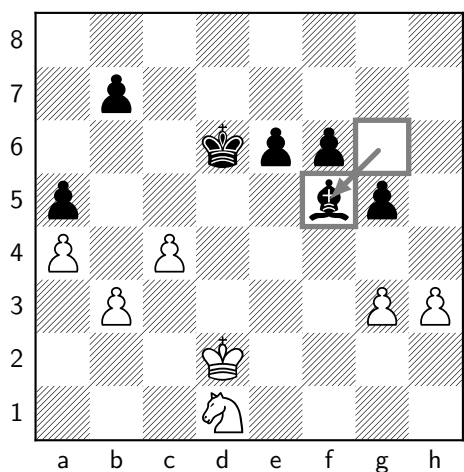


**33 ♖b2 ♕e8**

**33 c5 ♖c8 34 ♖d4 e5+ 35 ♖c4 b6 36 ♖b5 b×c5 37 ♖×a5 ♖b8**

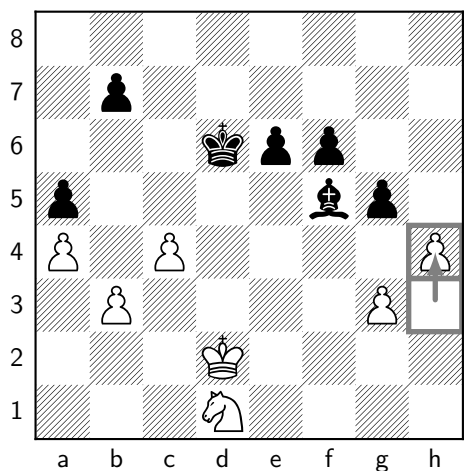
**33... ♖d8+ 34 ♖c3 ♖×d2!** An important moment in the game. With the aid of the rook, Black has created enough weaknesses in the white camp so that an exchange of rooks is now favourable for him. The bishop versus knight endgame is now hopeless for White. He has placed his pawns on light squares on the kingside - an object for attack for the bishop - and added Black's strong connected passed pawns in the centre, it is enough for a win.

**35 ♖×d2 ♖d6 36 ♖d1?! ♕f5!?**



**36... f5**

**37 h4**





**37 g4 ♗g6 38 ♖c3 ♖c5 39 ♜b2 e5 40  
♜d3+? ♗x d3 41 ♖x d3 ♖b4—+**

**37 ♜f2 ♗g6**

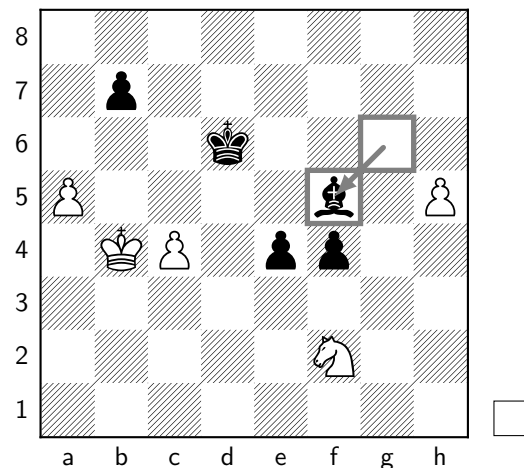
**37...g×h4 38 g×h4 ♗g6** This move is obvious, but it is worth mentioning the benefits of stopping White's pawn at h4. The bishop can hold the pawn on two squares before it promotes: h5 and h7. However, if the white pawn gets to h6, my bishop would suddenly be very inflexible, as it can only work on the b1-h7 diagonal. As long as I stop the pawn one step earlier (on h4) my bishop gains in mobility: on g6 it works successfully on both the e8-h5 and the b1-h7 diagonal.

**39 ♖c3 f5** I find some aesthetic pleasure with this move: only once the path has been completely cleared does Black start his pawn roller.

**40 b4 a×b4+ 41 ♖x b4 f4 42 a5** White's only defensive idea consists of the following plan: 1) He plays a5-a6 at the right time, forcing me to capture with the pawn, transforming the b-pawn into a a-pawn. — 2) When Black advances his pawns, he will sacrifice his knight for both of them. — 3) White reaches the saving corner a1 in time with the king, when Black cannot win as the bishop is of the wrong colour for the corner. — This plan is hard to fulfil in practice, but it's the only one I can think of!

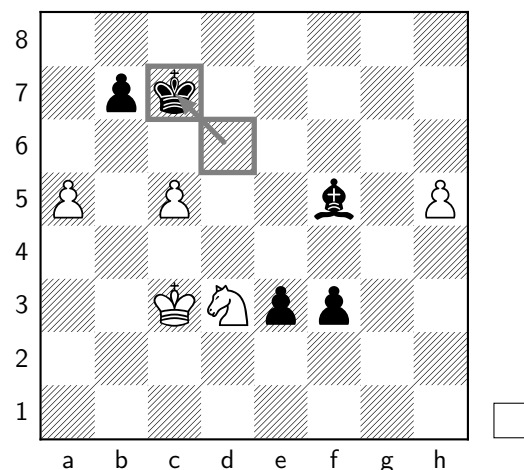
**42...e5 43 ♜f2 e4 44 h5!** Now Black cannot hold back the h-pawn anymore, but his pawns will soon decide the game. You cannot have everything!

**44...♗f5** Dominating of the knight, which is a common theme in bishop vs. knight endings.



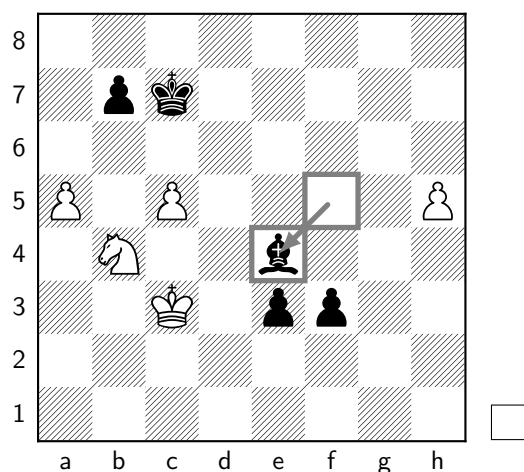
**44...e3?? 45 h×g6 ♖e7? 46 ♜d3 f3 47 g7!  
♖f7 48 ♜e5+ ♖xg7 49 ♜x f3**

**45 ♖c3 e3 46 ♜d3 f3 47 c5+ ♖c7**



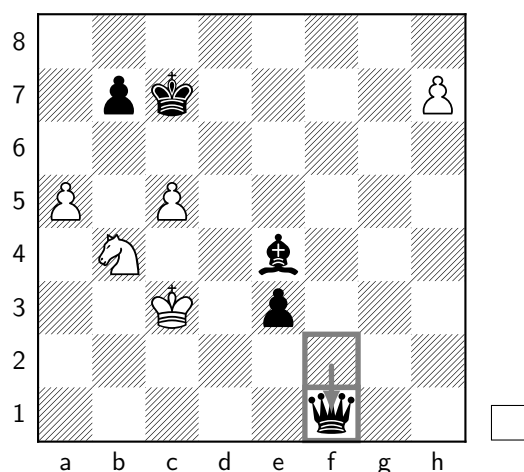
**47... ♖d5 48 c6!? b×c6 49 a6 f2 50 a7 f1 ♖  
51 ♜b4+ ♖c5 52 a8 ♖ ♖c4+ 53 ♖b2  
♖x b4+ 54 ♖a2 ♖b1+ 55 ♖a3 ♖c1+ 56  
♖b3 ♗e6+ 57 ♖a4 ♖a1#**

**48 ♜b4 ♗e4** Again domination of the knight.



**48...f2?? 49 Nxd5+ Kc6 50 Nxe3**

**49 h6 f2 50 h7 f1 ♔**



**50...Qxh7?? 51 Nxd5+ Kc6 52 Nxe3**

**51 h8 ♔ ♔a1+** White loses his new queen.

— With this I will end the discussion of the difference between knight and bishop. The above is by no means the whole, or half, or even a quarter of the story. However, I do believe that careful study of these examples will help the reader increase his feeling for the different properties of these two pieces and how they can be used constructively against each other.

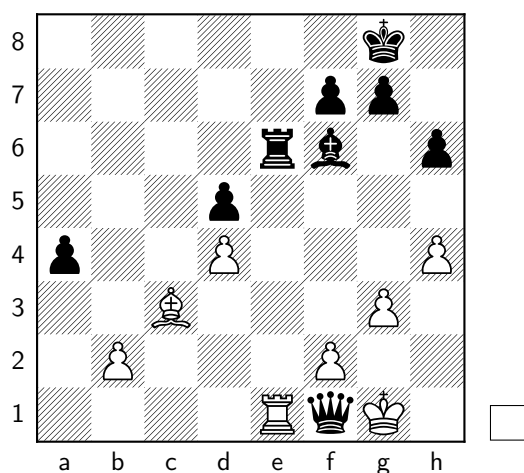
**0-1**

White: Milos, G.  
Black: Morozevich, A.

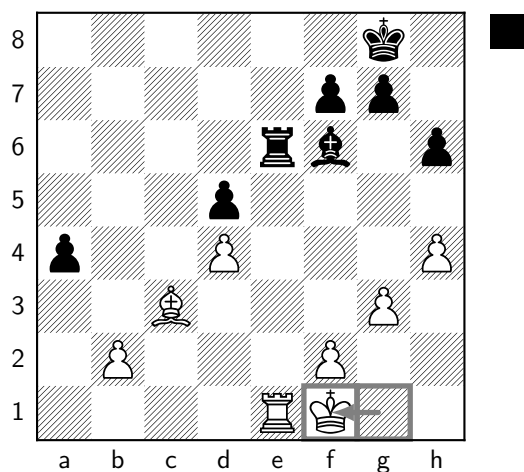
New Delhi

2000

Result: 0-1



40 ♔×f1



40 ♖×f1!?

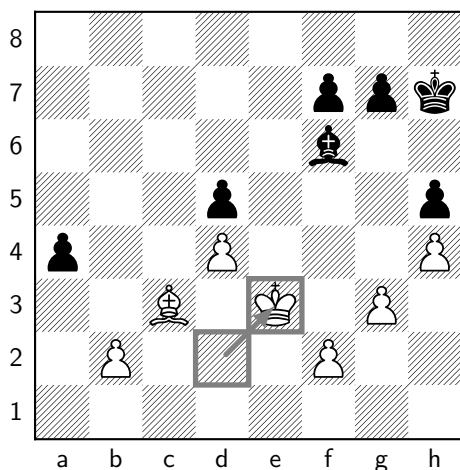
40... ♖×e1+

40... h5 41 ♖a1!

40... ♖c6 41 ♔e2!

41 ♔×e1 h5! First of all Black secures the pawn structure. If allowed White would have hurried to play h4-h5 himself since, as we know, it is usually an advantage to have the pawns on the opposite colour squares to your bishop, though this is not a senseless dogma that should be followed in all positions.

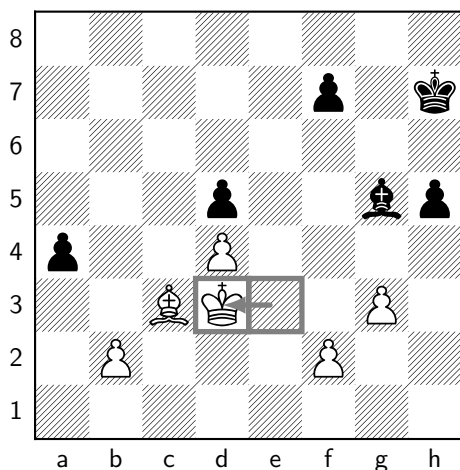
42 ♔d2 ♔h7 43 ♔e3? White is trying to oppose the black king and thereby neglects his most urgent problem, the elimination of one of his weaknesses. Soon his dynamic advantage of a more active king will be gone, and all that remains are two weaknesses.



**43 ♖c2! ♗g6 44 b3 a×b3+ 45 ♖×b3 ♗f5 46 f3 g5 47 h×g5 ♗×g5 48 ♗e1! ♖e6 49 ♖c3 f5 50 f4!**

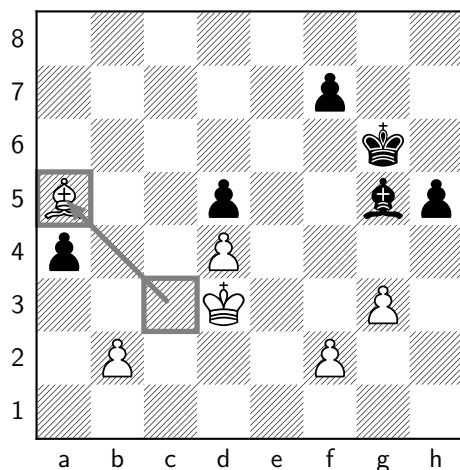
**43...g5!** Black uses the pawn on h4 as a hook to create weaknesses in the white camp. It might look as if Black is damaging his own structure, but in reality he is starting to create a weakness on g3 and a potential passed h-pawn. Black does not desire symmetry here!

**44 h×g5 ♗×g5+ 45 ♖d3**



**45 f4 ♗h6 46 ♖f3 ♗g6 47 g4 h×g4+ 48 ♖×g4 f5+ 49 ♖f3 ♗h5 50 ♖g3 ♗g7 51 ♖h3 ♗f6 52 ♖g3 ♗e7 53 ♗d2 ♗h4+ 54 ♖f3 ♗f6 55 ♗c3 ♖h4 56 ♗e1+ ♖h3 57 ♗f2 ♗h4 58 ♗e3 ♖h2 59 ♗d2 ♖g1**

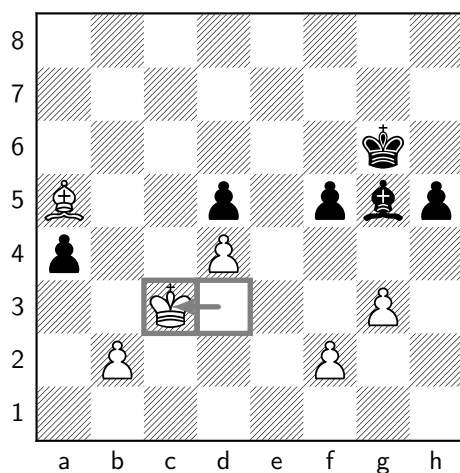
**45... ♗g6 46 ♗a5**



**46 ♗d2 ♗×d2! 47 ♖×d2 ♗f5 48 f3 ♗g5 49 ♖e3 f5! 50 f4+ ♖g4 51 ♖f2 h4 52 g×h4 ♖×h4 53 ♖f3 ♖h3 54 ♖f2 ♖g4 55 ♖e3 ♖g3**

**46...f5!** Black intends ...f5-f4 and ...Kf5-g4 forcing White to take on f4 and give him a passed h-pawn. — White is in trouble.

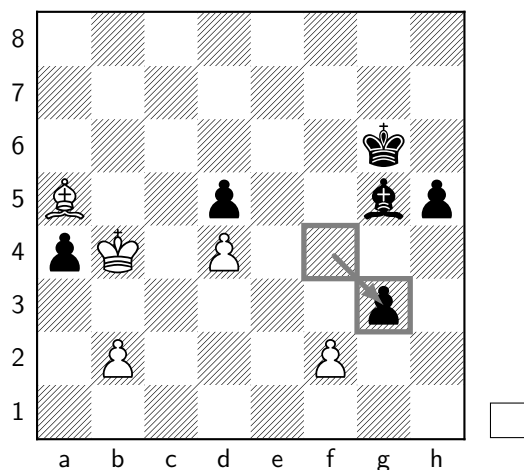
**47 ♖c3**



**47 ♗c7 f4! 48 g×f4 ♗e7 49 ♖e2 ♖f5 50 ♖f3 ♗b4! 51 ♖g3 ♗c3!**

**47...f4** The logical move, though 47...h4 also wins.

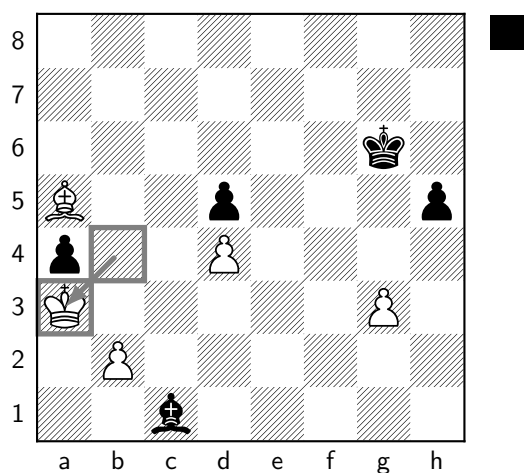
**48 ♖b4 f×g3**



**48... ♖f5!? 49 ♔×a4 ♕e4 50 ♖b5 ♕×d4 51 ♕c6 ♕e4 52 b4 f×g3 53 f×g3 ♜d2!**

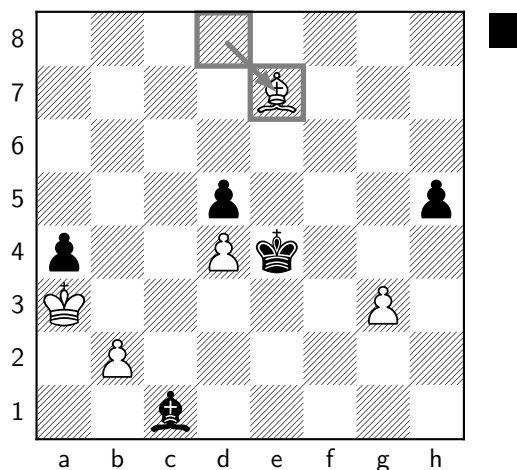
**49 f×g3 ♜c1!** Reminding White that he never got rid of this weakness.

**50 ♕a3** White decision not to exchange pawns seems hopeless, but White is lost in all lines anyway.



**50 ♕×a4 ♜×b2 51 ♜b6 ♕f5 52 ♕b3 ♜a1! 53 ♕a2 ♜c3 54 ♕b3 ♜e1**

**50... ♕f5 51 ♜d8 ♕e4 52 ♜e7**



**52 ♜f6 ♜e3! 53 ♕×a4 ♜×d4 54 ♜×d4 ♕×d4 55 b4 ♕e3 56 b5 d4 57 b6 d3 58 b7 d2 59 b8 ♖d1 ♕+ 60 ♕a5 ♖a1+ 61 ♕b6 ♖b2+ 62 ♕c7 ♖×b8+ 63 ♕×b8 ♕f3**

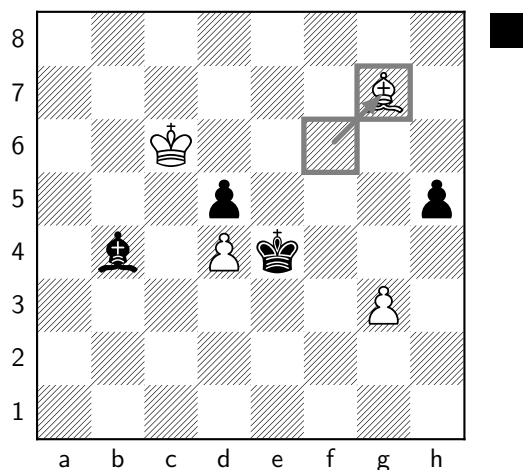
**52... ♕d3 53 ♜d8 ♕c2!** This is cleanest. Morozevich proves that Black can also win with 53...Be3, but why bother?

**54 ♕×a4 ♜×b2 55 ♕b5 ♕d3 56 ♕c5 ♕e4 57 ♜f6** It looks as if White has survived. He has not lost any pawns and now has counterplay against the d5-pawn. However, this is all abstract twaddle. What matters here is that White will very soon be in zugzwang.

**57... ♜a3+ 58 ♕c6** Where does the bishop belong?

**58... ♜b4!!** The bishop is heading for the ideal square f2.

**59 ♜g7**

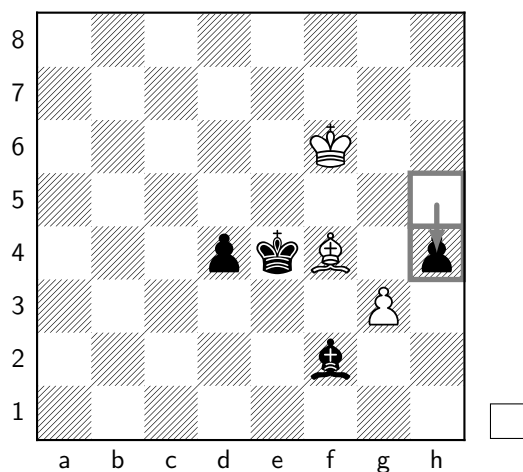


**59 ♗e5 ♜c3 60 ♔c5 ♜d2 61 ♜g7 ♜e1 62 ♜e5 ♜f2**

**59... ♜c3!** Creating zugzwang by losing a move.

**60 ♔c5 ♜e1 61 ♜e5 ♜f2!** Reaching the zugzwang position again. White now loses a pawn and the game.

**62 ♔d6 ♜x d4 63 ♜f4 ♜f2 64 ♔e6 d4 65 ♜f6 h4** This move ruins all White's dreams of reaching h1 with the king and drawing thanks to the wrong black bishop.



**65... ♜xg3 66 ♜xg3 d3 67 ♜e1 h4**

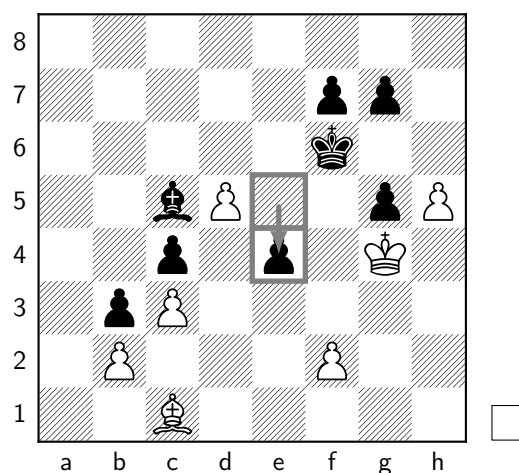
**0-1**

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♘c3 ♘×d5 5 ♘×d5 e×d5 6 ♖×d5 ♙e7 7 e4 O-O 8 ♙c4 d6 9 O-O ♘c6 10 c3 ♙e6 11 ♖d3 ♘e5 12 ♘×e5 d×e5 13 ♖e2 ♙×c4 14 ♖×c4 ♖d7 15 a4 ♖fd8 16 ♙e3 ♖ac8 17 ♖b5 ♖c6 18 h3 a6 19 ♖e2 ♖g6 20 ♖h5 ♖c7 21 ♖ad1 ♖×d1 22 ♖×d1 ♖d6 23 ♖e2 ♖c6 24 ♖×d6 ♙×d6 25 ♖c4 b5 26 a×b5 a×b5 27 ♖a2 c4 28 ♖a5 h6 29 ♖d8+ ♔h7 30 h4 b4 31 g4 b3 32 ♔h2 ♙c5 33 ♖d5 ♖×d5 34 e×d5 ♙d6 35 ♔g3 ♔g6 36 h5+ ♔f6 37 ♔f3 ♙a3 38 ♙c1 ♙c5 I have included the game up to here to

support my claim of the grandmaster lacking ambition. I think he started to realise at this point that it would take something extraordinary to beat this Danish amateur (rated 2295). If White moves his bishop then ...Ba3 repeats the position immediately, and the king has no moves. So to avoid the draw the grandmaster came up with:

**39 g5+!** A pawn sacrifice that passes this commentator's scrutiny. But perhaps I am overlooking something?

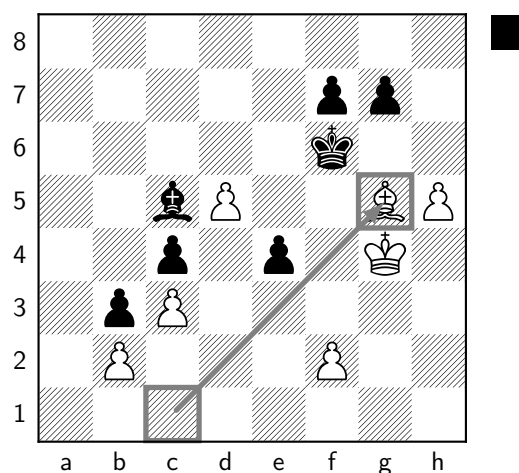
**39...h×g5 40 ♖g4 e4?!** This does not objectively change the evaluation of the ending: it is probably drawn all the same. But now White will have all the chances. Instead it could have been Black trying for a full point. — It all comes down to variations here, as it is hard to prove with words that this move is wrong, even though I will try.



40... ♔e7! 41 ♚xg5+ ♔d6! 42 ♚f6! ♚a3! 43 ♚xg7 ♚xb2 44 h6 f5+! 45 ♔xf5! ♚xc3 46 h7 b2 47 h8 ♔ b1 ♔+ 48 ♔f6 ♔b6!? 49 ♔g5 ♔xd5! 50 f4 ♔e6! 51 ♔h1+! ♔d6 52 ♔a8! ♚d4 53 ♚f6! c3 54 fxe5+ ♚xe5 55 ♔a6+ ♔d5 56 ♔a2+ ♔d6 57 ♔a6+

40... ♖xf2?? 41 ♖xg5#

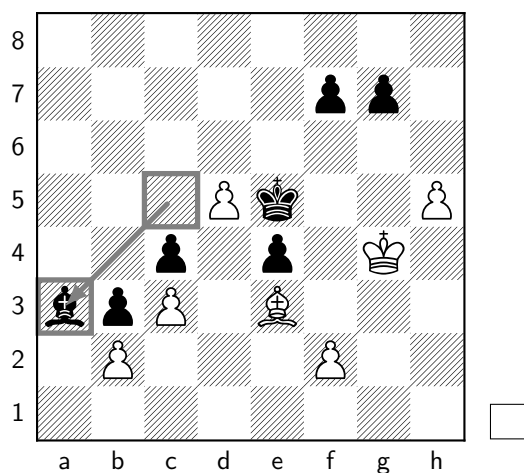
**41 ♖xg5+?** Here White commits a grave, though very understandable error.



**41 ♖e3! ZZ-**

**41... ♔e5 42 ♜e3** Black to play and win!

**42... ♜a3?** After this White gets a strong attack on the black king and takes the full point.



**42... ♕xg6 43 ♜xg6 ♔xg6 44 ♖f5 ♔d5 45 ♖f4 e3!**

**42... ♜f8!! 43 ♜d4+ ♔xg6 44 ♖f5 g6+! 45 hxg6 fxg6+ 46 ♖xg6 ♜a3!**

**43 ♜d4+ ♔xg6 44 ♜xg7 ♜xg6 45 h6 ♜a3 46 h7 b2 47 h8 ♖b1 ♖a8+ ♔e6 49 ♖c8+ ♔d5 50 ♖d7+ ♜d6 51 ♖xg7+ ♔c6 52 ♖xg6+ ♔d7 53 ♖f7+ ♔c6** So far everything was forced, and now it is not possible to dream up a situation in which White fails to win this ending with his extra pawn, better king and attacking chances.

**54 ♜d4 ♖d1+ 55 ♔g5 ♖d2+ 56 ♔g6 ♖d3 57 ♖f5 ♔b7 58 ♔f6 ♜c7 59 ♔e7 ♜b6 60 ♖d5+**

**1-0**

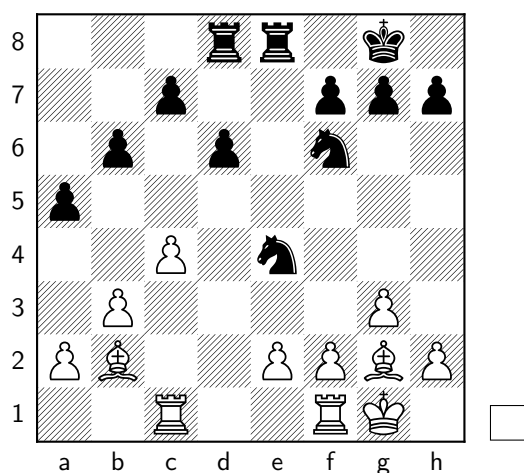


White: Kramnik, V.  
Black: Ulibin, M.

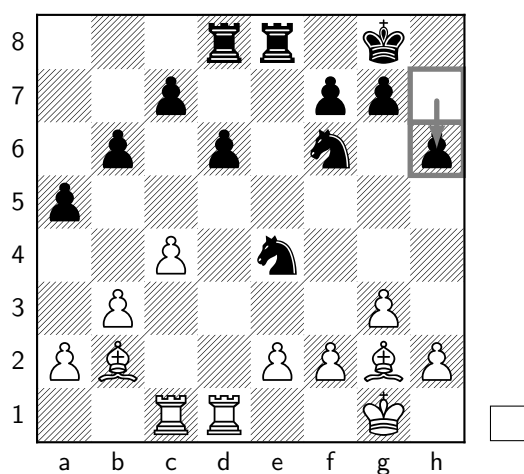
Halkidiki

1992

Result: 1-0



**21 ♖fd1 h6?** Ulibin shows one of the reasons why his enormous talent has never taken him to the highest level. This move creates a weakness on the kingside, which might seem completely harmless. But after going through this book the reader is hopefully not deluded. The weakness is permanent, and later (at move 36 to be exact) assists White in creating a breakthrough.



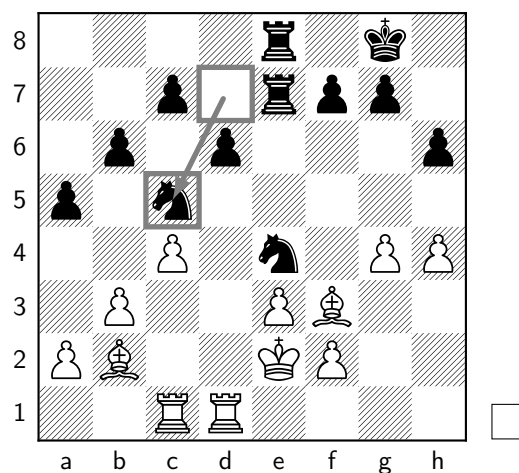
**21... ♘d7**

**22 e3 ♘d7 23 ♔f1** Before advancing the kingside pawns, White brings the king to the centre. There is no great hurry as Black has no active counterplay.

**23... ♜e7 24 ♔e2 ♜de8 25 g4!** White naturally wants to exploit the weakening of the kingside to open lines so that his rooks, assisted by the bishops, can create threats against the black king and pawns.

**25... ♜e6 26 h4 ♜6e7** Black has nothing to offer except waiting.

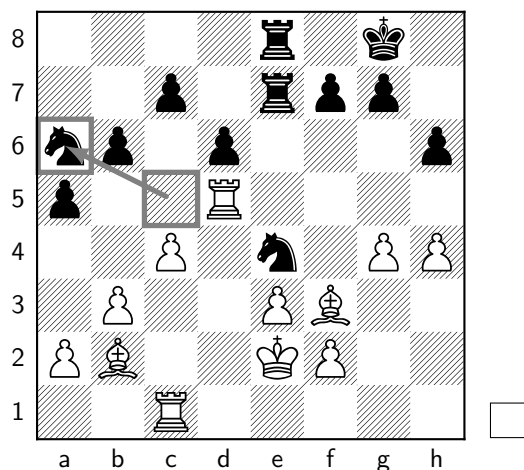
**27 ♕f3 ♘dc5**



**27... f6**

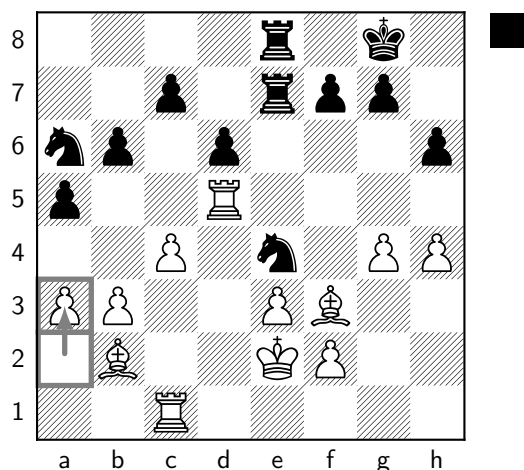
**28 ♜d5** With the idea g4-g5.

**28... ♘a6** Threatening ...Nb4.



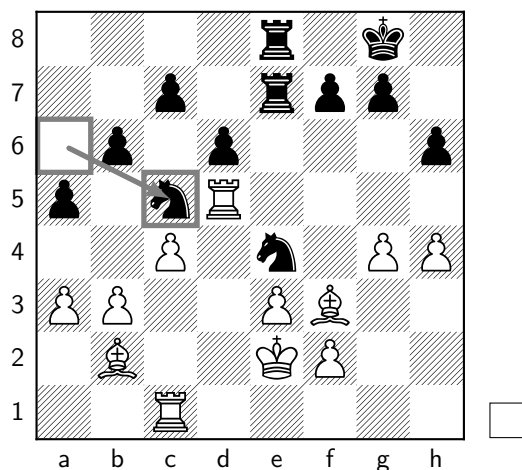
**28...f6 29 ♖g2!**

**29 a3!** Preventing Black's little idea.



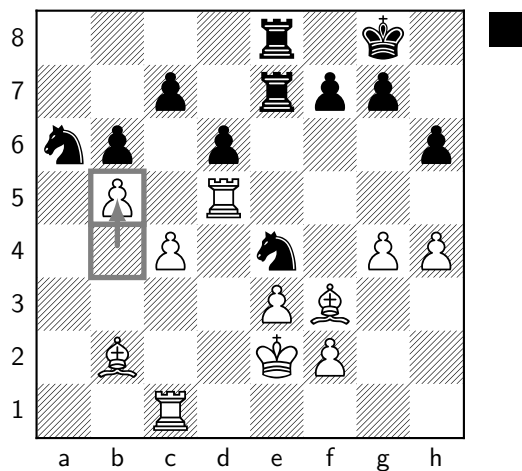
**29 ♜h5 ♗b4 30 a3 ♗g3+!**

**29...♗ac5** Black needs to keep the control over g5.



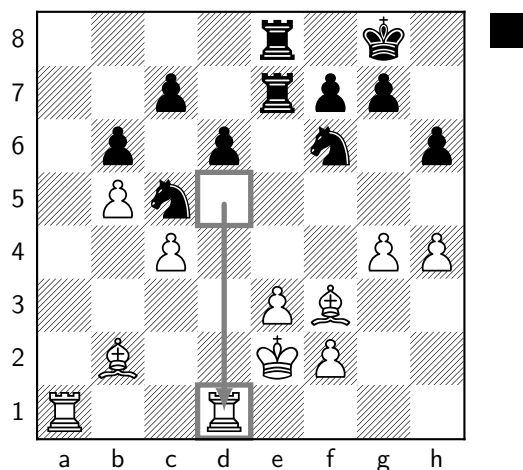
**29...♗ec5 30 g5! ♗x b3 31 ♜g1**

**30 b4 axb4 31 axb4 ♗a6 32 b5!** This move might seem controversial as White allows the black knight to return to c5, where it is solidly placed; but White makes up for this by seizing control of the a-file.



**32 ♖a3**

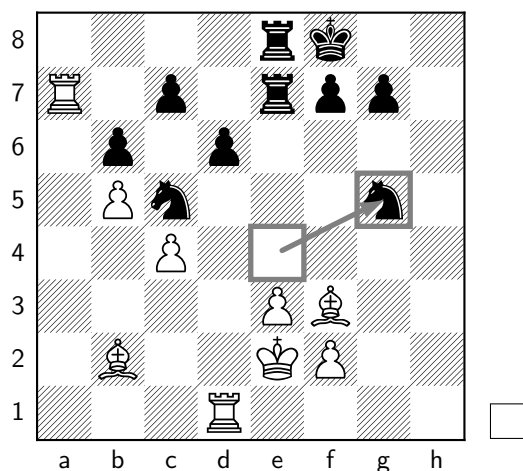
**32...♗ac5 33 ♜a1 ♗f6 34 ♜dd1**



34 ♖×f6

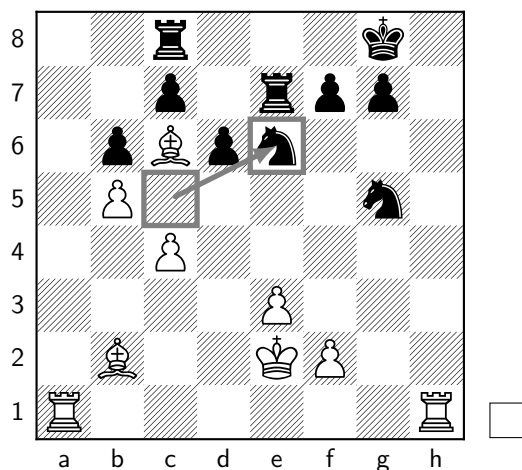
34... ♗fe4 35 ♜a7 ♕f8 36 g5!! As we shall see below in the two Kasparov games, it is often a good idea to open the position for the two bishops, even if it costs a pawn. Here White gains an absolutely winning endgame where his bishops cut through the black position like a hot knife through butter.

36... h×g5 37 h×g5 ♗×g5



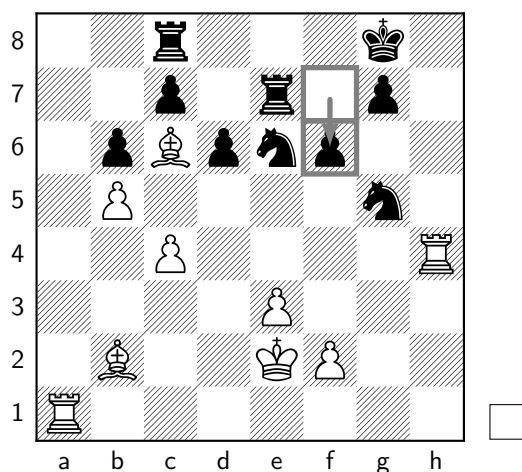
37... ♕g8!? 38 ♜g1? ♗×f2!

38 ♖c6 ♜c8 39 ♜h1 ♕g8 40 ♜aa1! ♗ce6 At first glance Black's defence might look feasible, but the bishops are so much stronger than the knights, which can do nothing to limit their power.



40... f6 41 ♖d5+ ♗f7 42 ♖×f6!! g×f6 43 ♜ag1+ ♕f8 44 ♜h8+ ♗×h8 45 ♜g8#

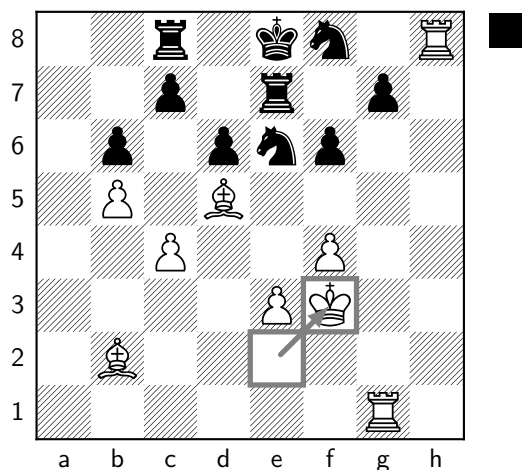
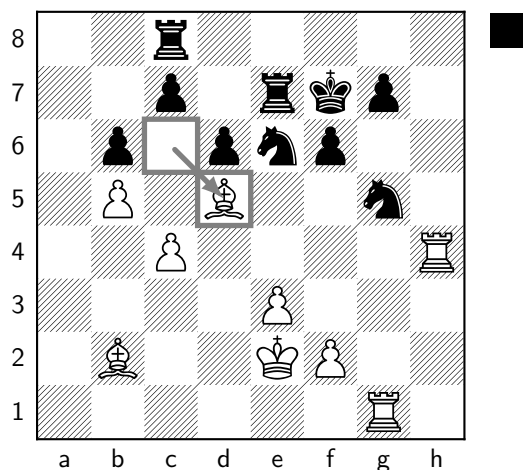
41 ♜h4 f6



41... ♗h7 42 ♜ah1 ♗ef8 43 ♖e4 g6 44 ♖d5! ♜d8 45 ♜g1 ♜b8 46 ♜×h7! ♗×h7 47 ♜×g6+ ♕f8 48 ♜g7

42 ♜g1 ♕f7 The only move. On anything else White would play Bd5 followed by f4-f5 winning a piece.

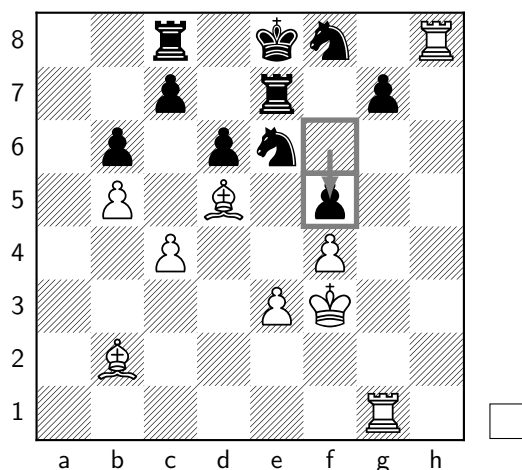
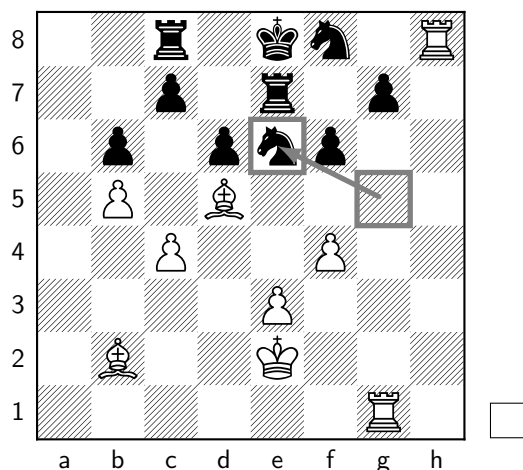
43 ♖d5



43 f4 ♖h3!? 44 ♜g3 ♖hxf4+ 45 exf4 ♖xf4+ 46 ♙d1

43... ♙e8 44 ♜h8+ ♖f8 45 f4 ♖e6 Black has no defence.

46... f5



45... ♖h7 46 ♜h1 ♙d7 47 ♜1xh7 ♖xh7 48 ♙c6+

45... ♖f7 46 ♙c6+

46 ♙f3

46... ♜b8 47 ♙xg6!? ♜xg6 48 ♜xg7 ♜e7 49 ♙xg6 ♜f7 50 ♙d4

47 ♜g6! Now Black loses pieces. Again it is the domination of the two bishops which decides the game.

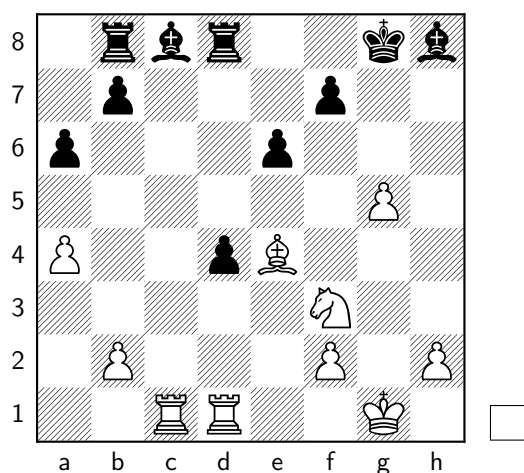
47... ♖c5 48 ♙xg7 ♜f7 49 ♙xg8 1-0

White: Van Wely, L.  
Black: Kasparov, G.

Internet

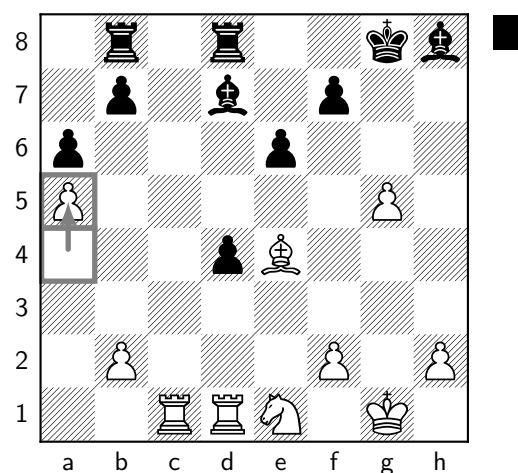
2000

Result: 0-1



**26 ♖e1** White is hoping to set up a blockade with Ne1-d3, after which he will have a lot of things going his way. He has a passed pawn on the kingside, a strong bishop in the centre and pressure against b7. However, Black has the two bishops and will not suffer becoming passive without a fight.

**26... ♗d7 27 a5?!** This move looks thematic. White fixes the black pawn on b7 as a weakness and prepares to put pressure on it by Nd3-c5.

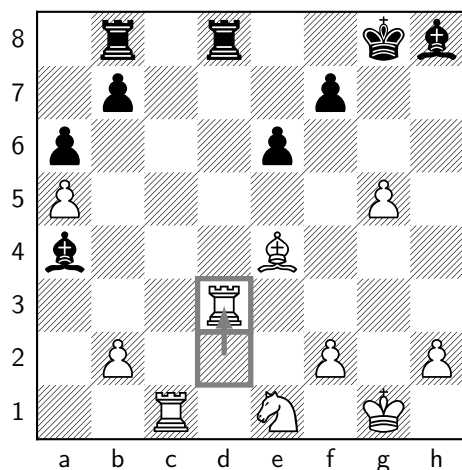


### 27 b3!?

**27... ♙a4** Black has already decided on the next move, and prepares it by disrupting the co-ordination of the white forces.

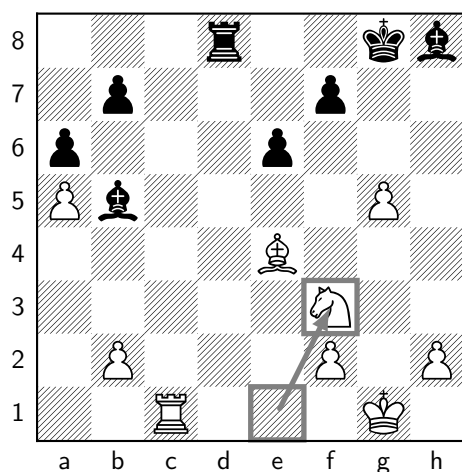
**28 ♖d2 d3!!** A fantastic pawn sacrifice. This move seems to solve all Black's problems immediately, and although it should not give him the advantage, it does make the position more difficult to play and therefore increases the chance of avoiding a draw, which Kasparov must have seen as a positive aspect of the decision. — The key idea is that White will find it hard to protect the several weak points in his position once the Bh8 is in play. Three of his pawns are in the firing line to start with.

### 29 ♖×d3?!



**29 ♖xd3!? b6 30 a×b6 ♖×b6 31 ♘f4!  
♖×d2?? 32 ♖c8+ ♔g7 33 ♘h5#**

**29... ♖b5 30 ♖×d8+ ♖×d8 31 ♘f3?** White is trying to be active, but he does not really have the firepower, and he should not have allowed Black to eliminate the b2-pawn so easily. After the text move White has a weakness on a5, far away and on a colour square he finds hard to defend.



**31 b3! ♖b2 32 ♖b1 ♖c3 33 ♖×b7 ♖×a5 34 ♘f3**

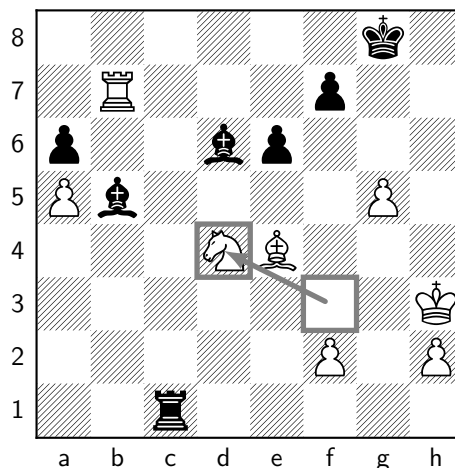
**31... ♖×b2 32 ♖c7** This was White's hope. With the active rook on the seventh rank he hoped to create counterplay against the king later on. As things turn out, it is his

own king that is most fragile. Big surprise? Who has the bishops!

**32... ♖a3 33 ♖×b7 ♖d1+ 34 ♔g2 ♖d6!** Threatening ...Bf1+ with great devastation.

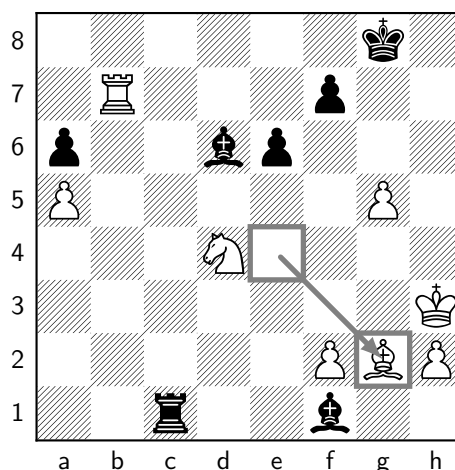
**35 ♔h3 ♖c1!** Now White has to look out for ...Rc3 and ...Rc4, both disturbing moves in their own time.

**36 ♘d4**



**36 ♖b6 ♖c7 37 g6!? ♖×b6 38 a×b6 ♖c8 39 b7 ♖b8 40 g×f7+ ♔×f7 41 ♔g3 a5 42 ♔f4 a4**

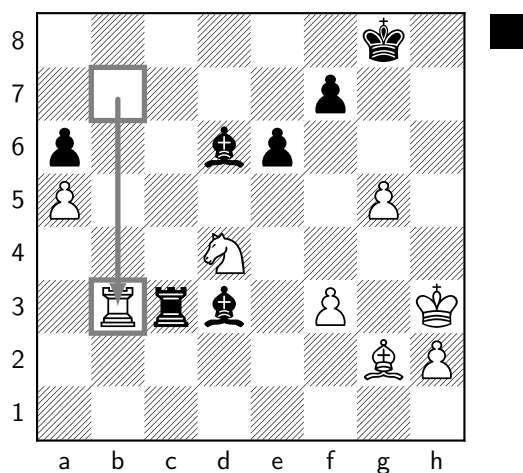
**36... ♖f1+ 37 ♖g2**



**37 ♔g4? ♖c4**

**37...♖c3+ 38 f3 ♜d3!** Now the white bishop is completely ridiculous at g2 and Black can continue to harass the white king and work on his project of creating a passed pawn on the queenside undisturbed. Actually, White no longer has any defence.

**39 ♜b3** This is unfortunately forced. Now a5 is really a long way away for the white pieces.



**39 ♜d7 ♜e5! 40 ♜d8+ ♔h7 41 ♜d7 ♜c4**

**39...♜x b3 40 ♜x b3 ♜b4 41 f4 ♜c4** Black now wins the a-pawn, and White has no choice but to give up a piece for it. The game is over.

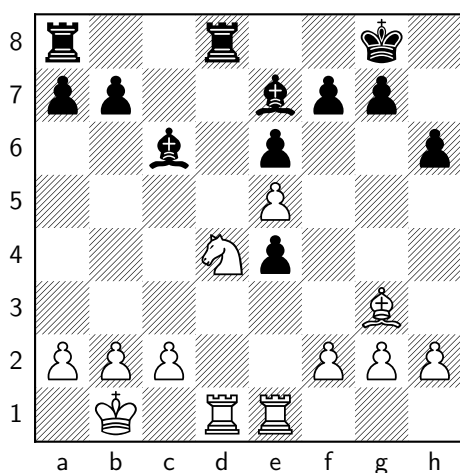
**42 ♜d4 ♜x a5 43 f5 ♜c3 44 ♜c6 a5 45 ♜x a5 ♜x a5 46 ♜e4 ♜d5 47 ♜d3 ♜c7 48 f6 ♜f4 49 ♔g4 ♜x h2 50 g6 e5 51 ♔f5 ♜e6+ 52 ♔g5 ♜f4+ 53 ♔h5 ♜d5 54 ♔g4 fxg6 55 ♜xg6 ♜e6+ 56 ♔f3 ♜g5**  
**0-1**

White: Svidler, P.  
Black: Kasparov, G.

Linares

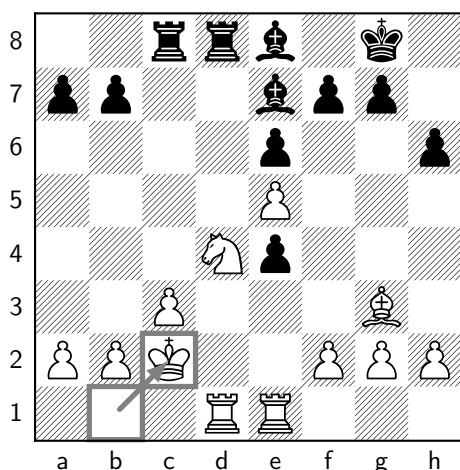
1999

Result: 0-1



**17...♙e8! 18 c3 ♖ac8** Black could fight to defend the pawn, but as in the previous example, he hopes the bishops will show their strength in the long run.

**19 ♔c2**



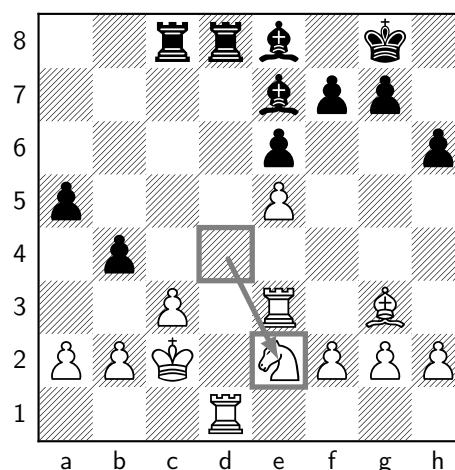
**19 ♖c1!? ♗g5 20 ♖c2 h5 21 h4 ♗h6 22 b3**

**19...b5!** Black needs to create weaknesses in the white camp in order to prove

compensation. The beauty of the situation is that White cannot create real threats of his own, but will need to defend against the black bishops. Not an easy task!

**20 ♖×e4 b4 21 ♖e3 a5** Black has compensation for his pawn, but probably no more. With his next move White releases the black bishop from its prison at e8 and suddenly finds himself under an eternal attack!

**22 ♘e2?**

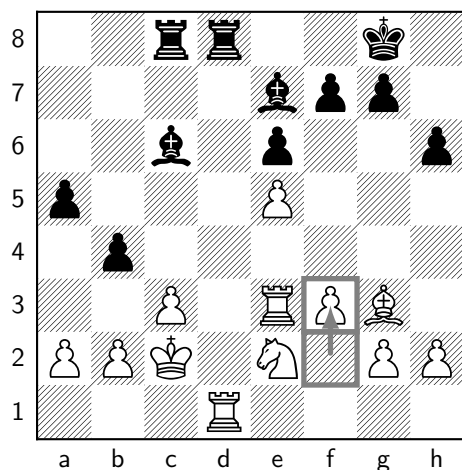


**22 ♖ed3! ♔h7! 23 b3 f6 24 c4! ♗g6 25 ♘×e6 ♖×d3 26 ♖×d3**

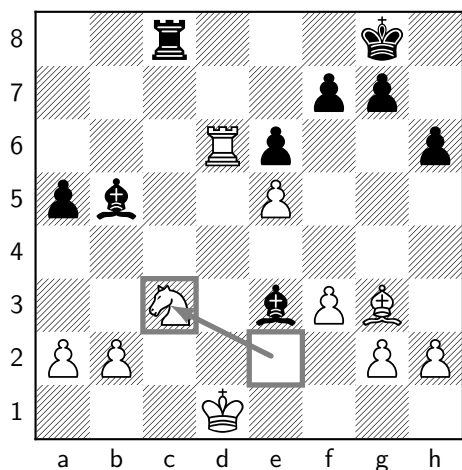
**22...♗c6!?** Now the bishop comes into play. White hoped to ease the pressure with his last move, but what he actually did was to open a Pandora's box. — Nevertheless, 22...Bc6 might not be the strongest move (see the next note).

**23 f3**

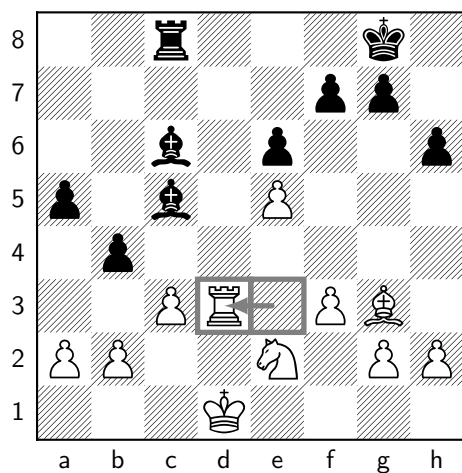




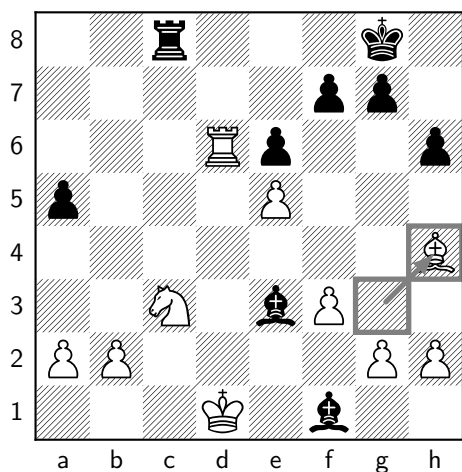
23 ♖×d8+ ♜×d8 24 f3 ♜b6 25 ♖d3 ♜b5 26  
 ♖d2! ♜e3 27 ♖d1! ♜×e2 28 ♖e1 b×c3 29  
 ♖×e2 c×b2+ 30 ♖×b2 ♜d4+ 31 ♖b3  
 23... ♖×d1 24 ♖×d1 ♜c5 25 ♖d3



28 b×c3 ♜c4 29 ♖c1! ♜f1 30 ♖b3 a4 31  
 ♖d2 ♜×g2 32 ♖c2 ♖b8 33 ♖c4  
 28... ♜f1! 29 ♜h4



25 ♖d4 b×c3! 26 b×c3 ♜b5! 27 ♖e1 ♜c4  
 25... ♜b5 26 ♖d2 ♜e3 27 ♖d6 b×c3 28  
 ♖×c3?! The knight seems to be going  
 nowhere from here.



29 ♜e1 ♜×g2 30 ♖e2 ♜f4 31 ♜g3 ♜c1  
 29... ♜g5 30 ♜e1 ♜×g2 31 ♖e2 ♜f4 Now  
 Black gets the same position an useful  
 tempo up.  
 32 ♜g3 ♜c1 33 ♖a4 h5 34 ♖d1



34 h4 g×h4 35 ♖×h4 ♜c4 36 ♖f6 ♜×a4 37 ♜d8+ ♖h7 38 ♜h8+ ♖g6 39 ♜g8+ ♖f5 40 ♜×g2 ♜×a2

**34...h4 35 e1 f4 36 c3**

**36...♖c6!**

**37 ♖b6 ♜h8 38 ♔f2 h3 39 ♙d2?** This is a blunder that fails to put up any resistance.

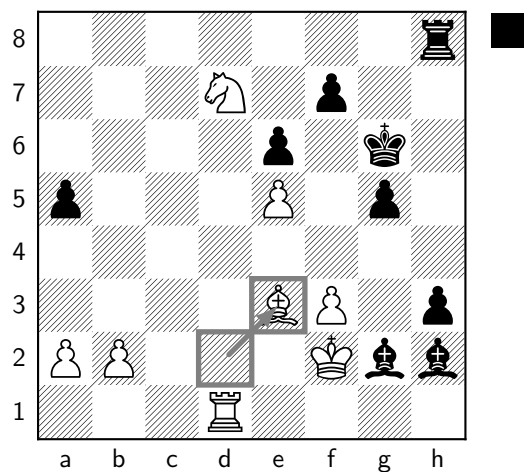


36 ♖xa5 ♗xe5 37 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 38 ♗xd8 g4!  
39 f×g4 h3 40 ♘c3 ♗×h2 41 ♗b6 ♗b7

**36... ♔g7?!**

39 ♖c4! g4! 40 ♖d4! ♙xh2 41 ♖xg4+ ♔f8  
42 ♖xg2 h×g2 43 ♔xg2 a4 44 ♙d2 ♖h4! 45  
b3 a×b3 46 a×b3 ♙f4

**39... ♖×h2 40 ♘d7 ♔g6 41 ♖e3**



**41 ♕×a5 ♖h4! 42 ♕d2 ♖d4 43 ♘c5 ♕×e5  
44 b4 g4 45 f×g4 ♖×g4**

**41...g4!** Letting the light-squared bishop escape. Now the h-pawn will cost White at least a piece.

**42 f×g4 ♕c6**

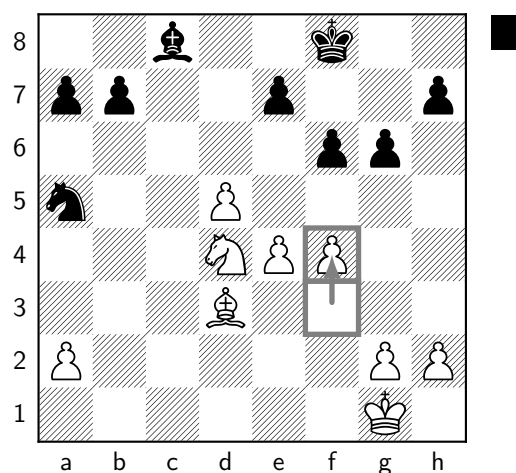
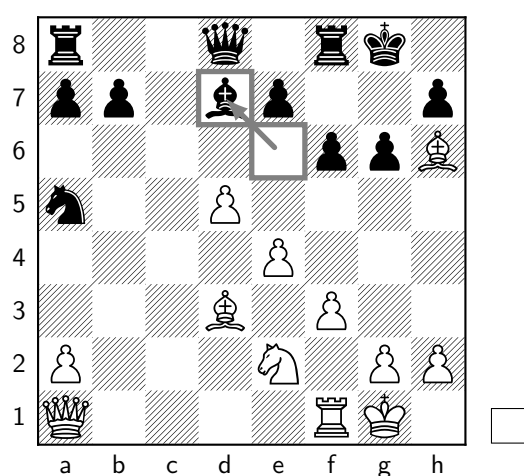
**0-1**

White: Palo, D.  
 Black: Ruck, R.  
 Opening ECO: D89  
 Result: 1-0

Istanbul

2003

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5  
 e4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 ♙g7 7 ♙c4 c5 8 ♘e2 ♘c6 9  
 ♙e3 O-O 10 O-O ♙g4 11 f3 cxd4 12 cxd4  
 ♘a5 13 ♙d3 ♙e6 14 d5!? ♙xa1 15 ♚xa1 f6  
 16 ♙h6 ♙d7?



22 ♙f2?! e5 23 dxe6 ♙e7 24 ♙e3 ♙xe6 25  
 ♘xe6 ♙xe6 26 ♙d4 g5

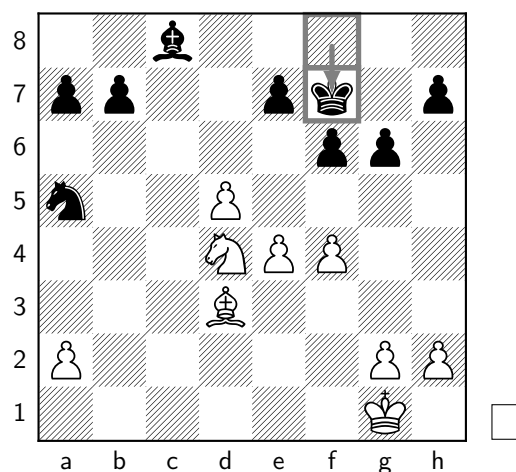
22... ♙f7

16... ♙e8 17 ♙h1 ♙c8 18 ♘f4 ♙d7

17 ♙xf8 ♙b6+ 18 ♙d4! This is the best move. White ensures himself a better endgame due to his space advantage.

18... ♙xd4+ 19 ♘xd4 ♙xf8 20 ♙c1 ♙c8 21 ♙xc8+ ♙xc8 White prevents the next black move.

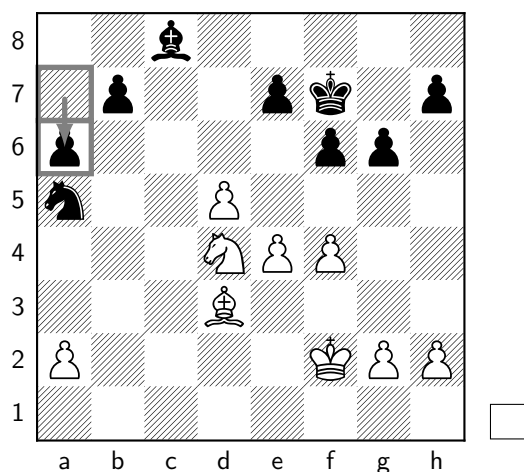
22 f4! In his book Understanding the Grünfeld Jonathan Rowson gives this move as the main reason why he did not want to play the black position. White obviously wants to put his pawns on the dark squares so that they work better with the bishop. But f2-f4 also has the point that Black will have to weaken his queenside in order to play the freeing move ...e7-e6.



22... e6 23 ♘xe6+ ♙xe6 24 dxe6 ♙e7 25 f5

23 ♙f2 a6 Because Black's development has been made a little more awkward, he now runs into all kinds of problems. — In the game Black will certainly regret having

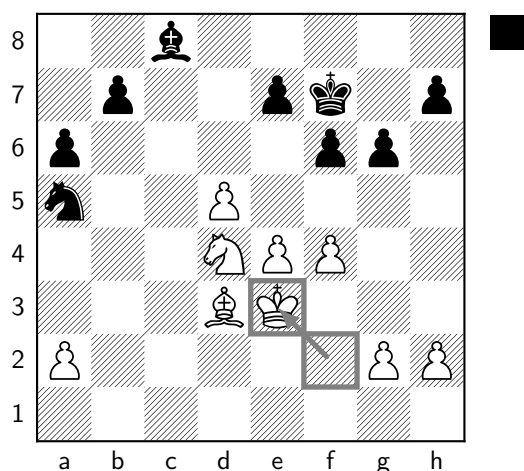
placed the pawn on a6, as it severely weakens his defence on the dark squares and exposes the pawns to possible attack.



**23...e6 24 ♖b5!**

**23...♙d7!?**

**24 ♔e3!**



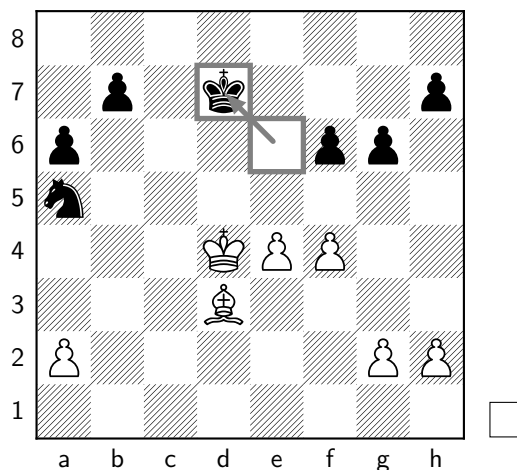
**24 e5 fxe5 25 fxe5 e6 26 d6 ♙d7**

**24...e6 25 ♖xe6 ♙xe6 26 dxe6+ ♔xe6**

White has a large advantage here. He has the possibility of creating a passed pawn in the centre, the black pawns are easy to target, and his more active white king will constantly threaten to invade on the dark squares.

**27 ♔d4** That Black cannot protect the c5-square with the b-pawn, because of the hanging a-pawn, is very inconvenient for him. Also the black knight is obviously badly placed on a5.

**27...♔d7**



**27...♔d6 28 e5+ fxe5+ 29 fxe5+ ♔e6 30 ♔c5! ♔xe5 31 ♔b6 ♖c6 32 ♙xa6 ♖b4 33 ♙c4 ♔d4 34 ♙g8**

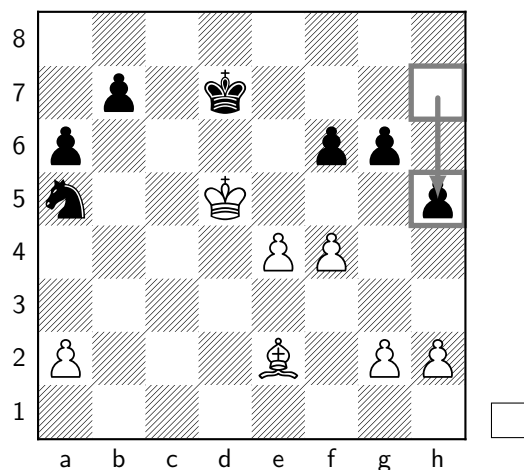
**28 ♔c5 ♔c7** White would like to kick the black king away, but this cannot be done from a dark square. Fortunately he can use the principle of two weaknesses to force the king onto a light square.

**29 ♔d5!** White does not want to allow ...b6 with check.

**29...♔d7** Black is trying to keep the white king out of the game, but the superiority of bishop over knight is simply too great.

**30 ♙e2!** This wonderfully patient move is clearly the strongest in the position. White would have good winning chances with 30 e5, but now the threat of 31 Bg4+ is very strong. Black decides that he is forced to create an additional weakness in his position. As with 23...a6, it is a move Black did not really want to play. Now White wins without too much hassle.

**30...h5**



**30...b5 31 ♖g4+ ♔e7 32 ♖c8 ♞c4 33 ♖xg6 ♞e3+ 34 ♔c6 ♞xg2 35 ♖xh3 ♞xh3 36 a4**

**31 e5!** Now the g6-pawn is clearly weak.

**31...fxe5 32 ♔xe5!** Simplest. White keeps control over g5 and makes sure that his passed pawns will be far away on the kingside. In this way he is able to exploit the advantage of bishop over knight to the maximum.

**32...♔e7 33 ♔d5!** The white king once again threatens the black queenside, and this time Black cannot defend both sides of the board.

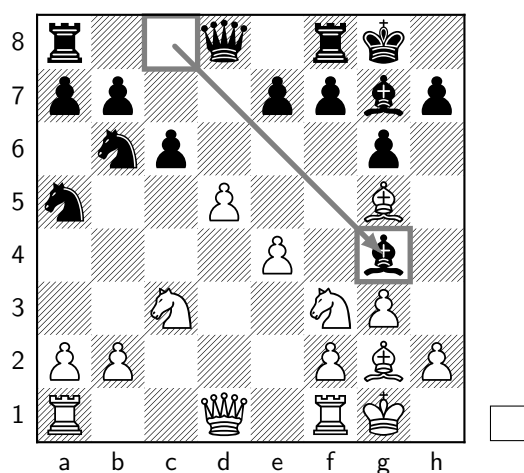
**33...♔d7 34 ♔c5 ♔c7 35 ♖d3 ♞c6 36 ♖xg6 b6+ 37 ♔c4 h4 38 ♖e4 ♞e7 39 g4 ♔d6 40 ♔d4 ♔e6 41 ♖b7 a5 42 ♔c4 ♔d6 43 ♖e4 h3 44 ♔b5 ♞d5 45 ♖xd5 ♔xd5 46 g5 ♔e4 47 g6**  
**1-0**

White: Hansen, C.  
 Black: Kasparov, G.  
 Opening ECO: D76  
 Result: 1/2-1/2

Thessaloniki Olympiad

1988

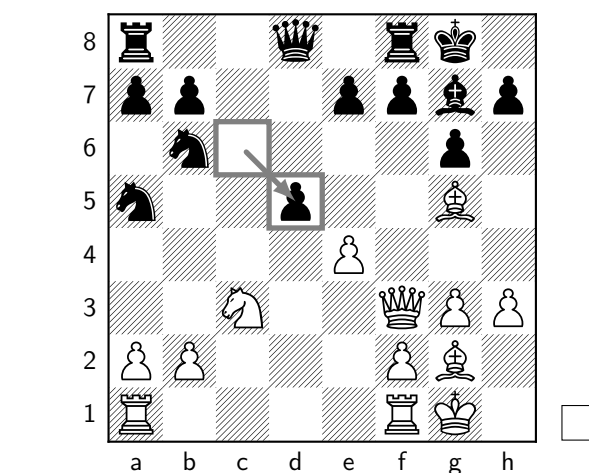
1 ♖f3 ♜f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♙g7 4 ♙g2 O-O 5 d4 d5 6 cxd5 ♜xd5 7 O-O ♜b6 8 ♜c3 ♜c6 9 d5 ♜a5 10 e4 c6 11 ♙g5 ♙g4!? This was a new move at the time.



### 11...h6

12 h3 ♙xf3 13 ♙xf3 White has achieved a slight technical superiority. The two bishops are definitely a lasting advantage.

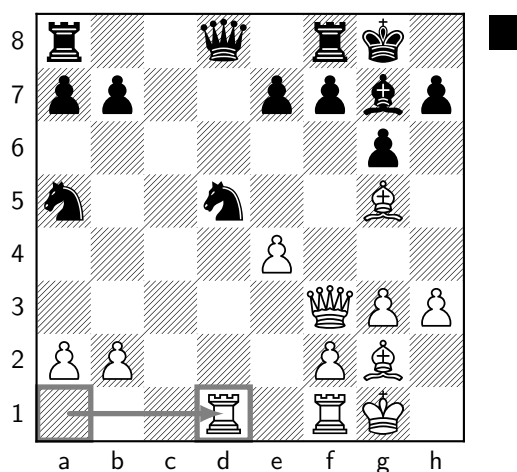
13...cxd5? This is a mistake because of the pressure against e7 and the misplaced knight on a5.



13...h6 14 ♙f4 cxd5 15 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 16 ♜ad1 ♙b6

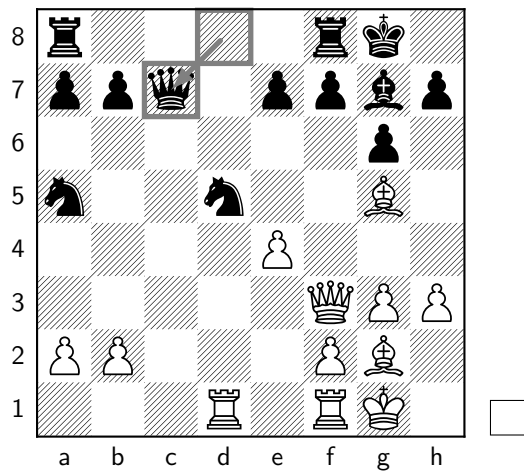
14 ♜xd5 ♜xd5 White keeps up the pressure.

15 ♜ad1!! White keeps up the momentum. He has not yet decided how he wants to recapture on d5, but will make his decision depending on Black's reply.



**15 e×d5 h6**

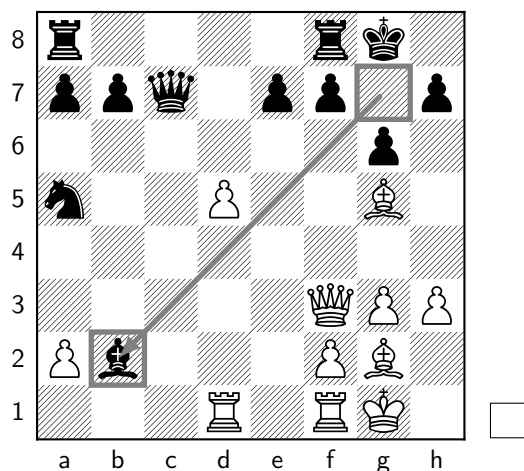
**15... ♖c7**



**15... h6 16 ♖×d5**

**15... ♖b6 16 e×d5 ♖fe8 17 b3**

**16 e×d5 ♗×b2** It is hard to come up with recommendations for Black.

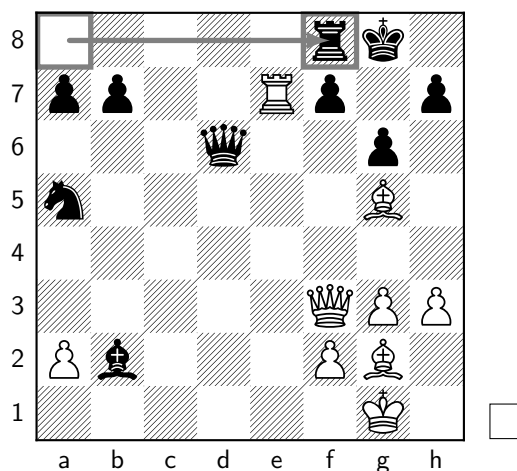


**16... ♘c4?! 17 ♖e2! ♖fe8 18 ♖c1 b5 19 b3 ♖e5 20 ♖×e5 ♘×e5 21 d6**

**17 ♖fe1 ♖fe8 18 ♖×e7!** Hansen sees a long way, and realises that he can trade his strong d-pawn for a rook on the seventh rank. As no advantage will ever stay the same, it is a good idea to change its nature on your own terms.

**18... ♖×e7 19 d6 ♖e1+!** Obviously the only move.

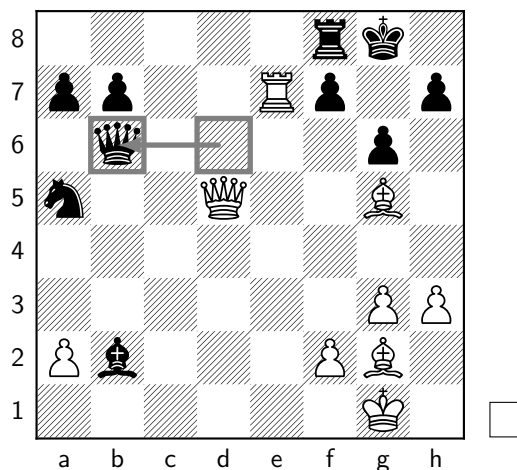
**20 ♖×e1 ♖×d6 21 ♖e7 ♖f8**



**21... f6 22 ♖×b7!! ♘×b7 23 ♖b3+ ♗h8 24 ♖×b2**

**22 ♖d5!** The exchange of queens is very logical. Black is tied down to the defence of the f7 pawn and, in the meantime, White can pillage the queenside and add some material to his other advantages.

**22... ♖b6**

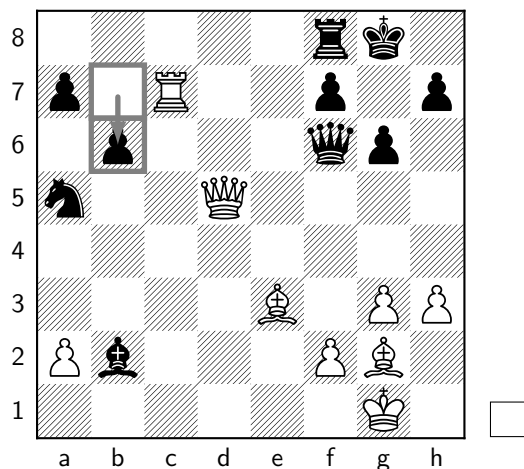


**22... ♖×d5!? 23 ♗×d5 a6 24 ♗h6 ♗g7 25 ♗d2 ♗f6 26 ♖d7 ♘c6 27 ♖×b7 ♘e7 28 ♗c4**



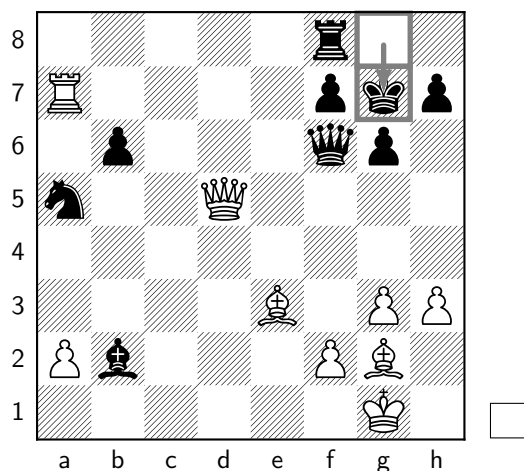
22... ♖b4 23 ♜e4! ♜b6 24 ♙e7 ♜e8 25 ♙c5  
 ♜d8 26 ♜e7!

23 ♙e3 ♜f6 24 ♜c7 b6



24... ♙c3 25 ♜c5! ♙e1 26 ♙d5! b6 27 ♜d4  
 ♜x d4 28 ♙x d4

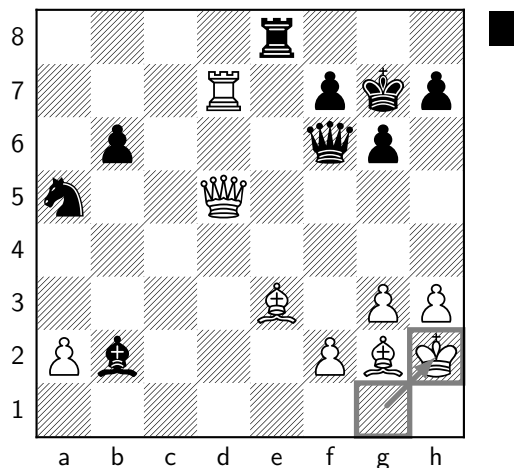
25 ♜x a7 ♙g7



25... ♜d8 26 ♜b5 ♙d4 27 ♙d5 ♙x e3 28  
 ♜x f7 ♙x f2+ 29 ♙g2 ♜x f7 30 ♙x f7+ ♙x f7  
 31 ♙x f2 ♜d6

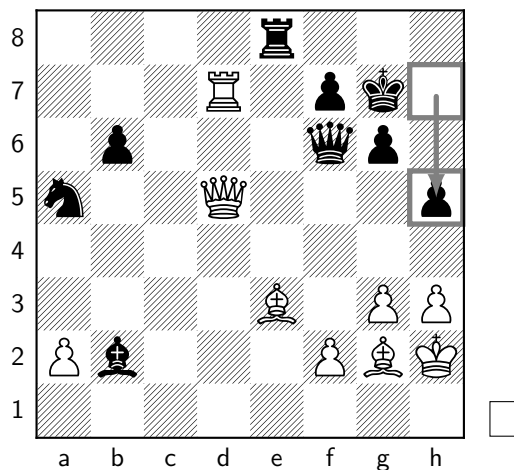
26 ♜d7! Simple elimination of counterplay.

26... ♜e8 27 ♙h2



27 ♜d6!? ♜c3 28 ♙x b6 ♙c4 29 ♙d4+  
 ♜x d4 30 ♜x d4+ ♙x d4 31 ♜x d4

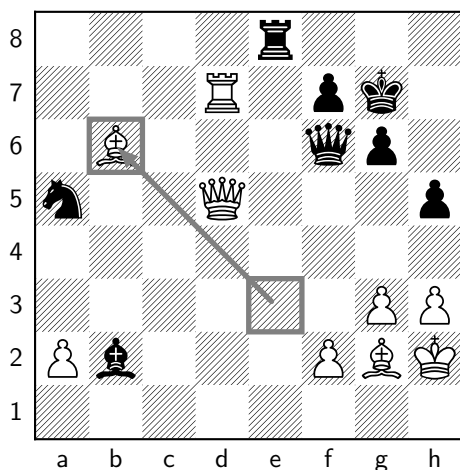
27... h5 Black is desperately trying to create counterplay. — When we need to convert an advantage to a full point, it is a known necessity to prevent all counterplay. Here White could have won in different ways, all based on exact calculation. Instead he allowed Black to create real counterplay, and in the end only drew the game.



27... ♜e5 28 ♜d2!

27... ♜e6 28 ♙g5

28 ♙x b6?!

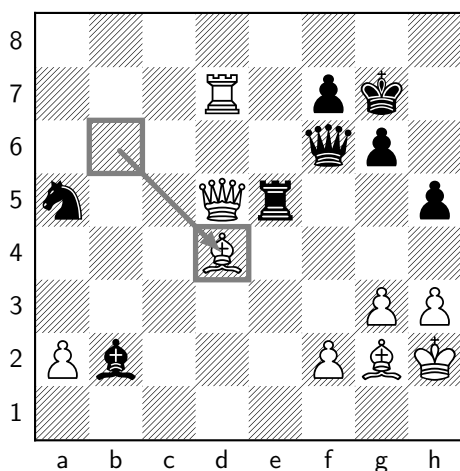


28 ♖d6!? ♜e6 29 ♜xex6 ♞xex6 30 ♞xex6 fxe6  
31 ♙xb6 ♜c4 32 ♙c7

28 ♞b5! ♙c3 29 ♙d5 ♜e7 30 ♜xe7 ♞xe7  
31 ♙xb6 ♞b4 32 ♞a6 h4 33 ♞a7 h×g3+ 34  
f×g3 ♞b2+ 35 ♙f2

28... ♜e5! Now at least Black has a little  
activity, which is what he has been dying  
for all game.

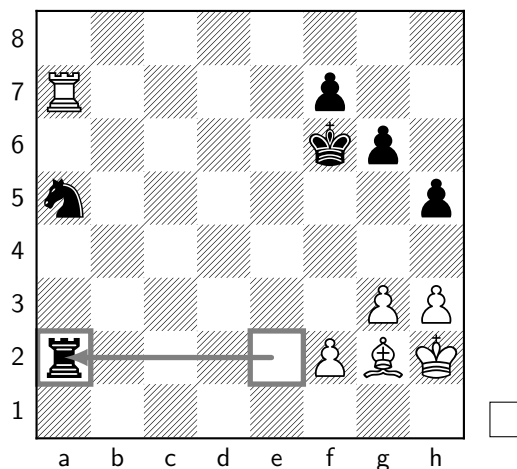
29 ♙d4?!



29 ♜d6! ♜xex6 30 ♜xf6 ♜b5 31 a4 ♜b3 32  
♜d6 ♜c4 33 ♙d4+ ♞f8 34 ♜d7 ♞e8 35 ♜d5  
♜b6 36 ♜e5+ ♞d7 37 ♙xb2 ♜xb2 38 a5

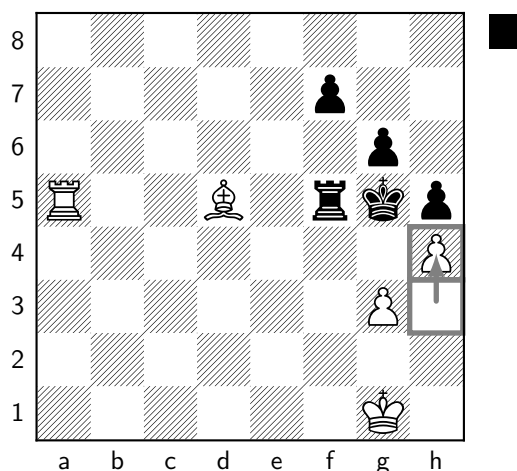
29... ♙d4 30 ♞xex6 ♜e2! 31 ♞xf6+ ♞xf6  
32 ♜a7 ♜xa2?! Kasparov goes for a defence  
based on the wrong-coloured bishop for

the h8-square. Though this is successful, it  
is not necessarily the best defence.



32... ♜c4 33 ♙d5?! ♜xf2+ 34 ♞g1 ♜c2 35  
♜c7 ♜e3 36 ♜xc2 ♜xc2 37 a4

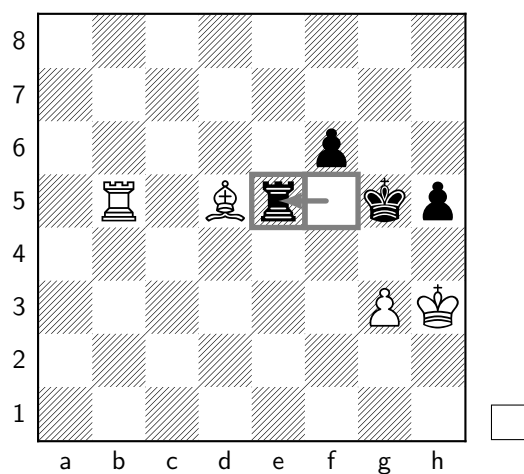
33 ♙d5 ♜xf2+ 34 ♞g1 ♜f5 35 ♜xa5 ♞g5 36  
h4+?? White was in time trouble.



36 ♜b5! ♞h6 37 ♙c4 ♜xb5 38 ♙xb5 ♞g5  
39 ♞f2 f6! 40 ♞f3 ♞h6 41 ♞f4 ♞g7 42 ZZ-

36... ♞h6 Now it is just a draw as White  
cannot prevent the exchange of rooks or  
pawns.

37 ♜b5 f6 38 ♞g2 g5 39 h×g5+ ♞×g5 40  
♞h3 ♜e5



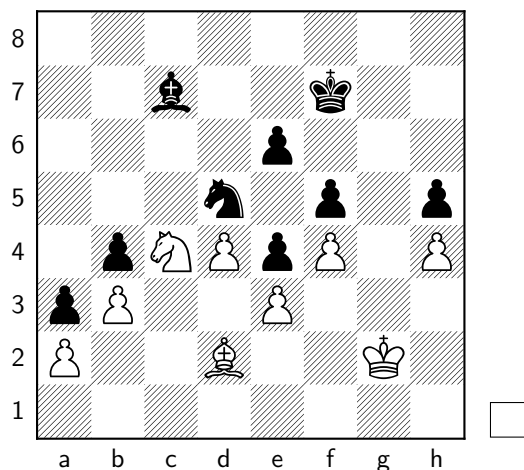
40...♖e5 41 ♘c6 ♜×b5 42 ♘×b5 f5 43 ♘d7  
h4 44 g×h4+ ♔h6

1/2-1/2

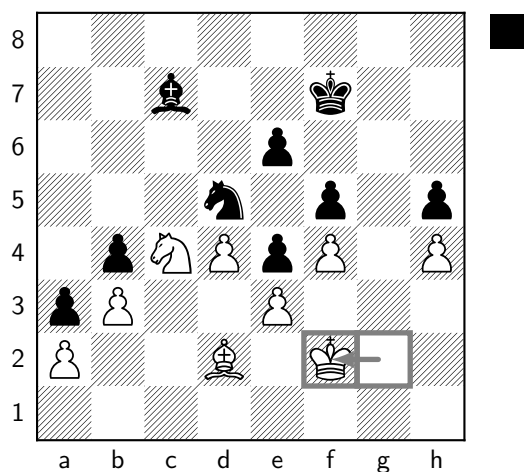
White: Avrukh, B.  
 Black: Dautov, R.  
 Opening ECO: D10  
 Result: 0-1

Istanbul Olympiad

2000



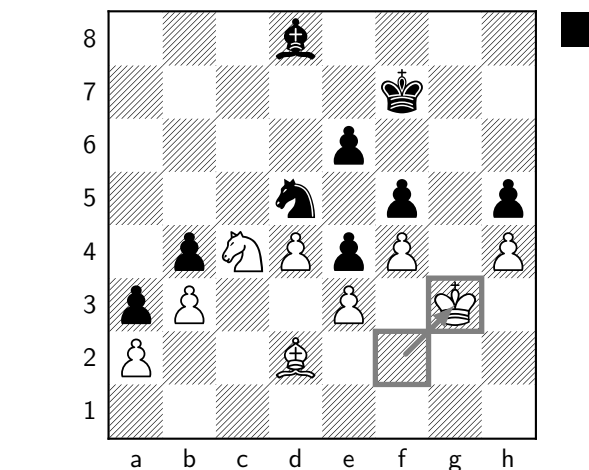
41 ♔f2?



41 ♔f1! ♕e8 42 ♕e2 ♖d8 43 ♖e1 ♔d7 44 ♕d1 ♕c6 45 ♕c2 ♖e7 46 ♖f2 ♕b5 47 ♖e1 ♖f6 48 ♕d1 ♖h7 49 ♖e5

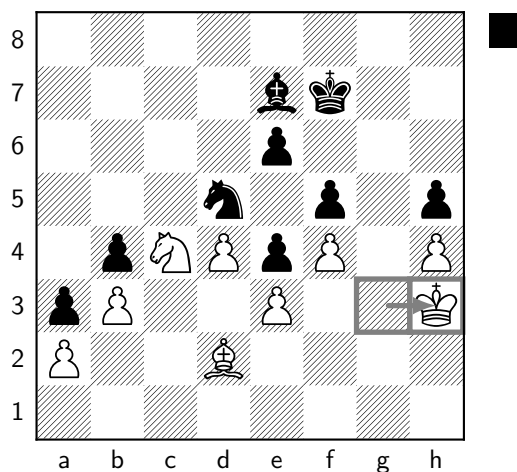
41... ♖d8!! This forces White to protect the h-pawn with the king, and therefore guarantees a breakthrough on the queenside. After this the endgame is won.

42 ♕g3



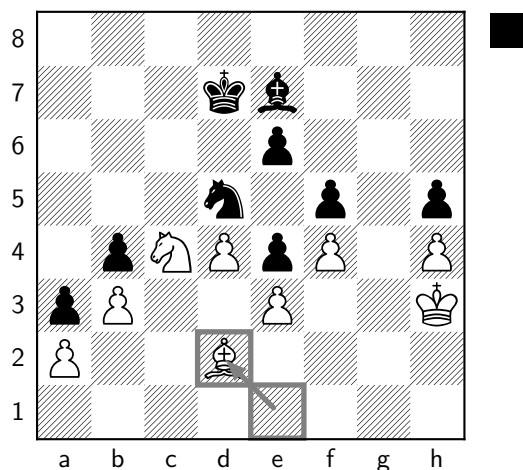
42 ♖e5+ ♕e8! 43 ♖g6 ♖c3! 44 ♖xc3 bxc3 45 ♕e2 ♕f7 46 ♖e5+ ♕g7 47 ♖c4 ♖e7!! 48 ♕d1 ♖xh4 49 ♖xa3 ♖e7 50 ♖c2 h4 51 ♕e2 ♕h6 52 ♕f2 ♕h5 53 a4 ♕g4 54 a5 ♖d8 55 a6 ♖b6 56 b4 h3 57 b5 h2 58 ♕g2 h1 ♖+ 59 ♕xh1 ♕f3 60 ♕g1 ♕e2

42... ♖e7 43 ♕h3!



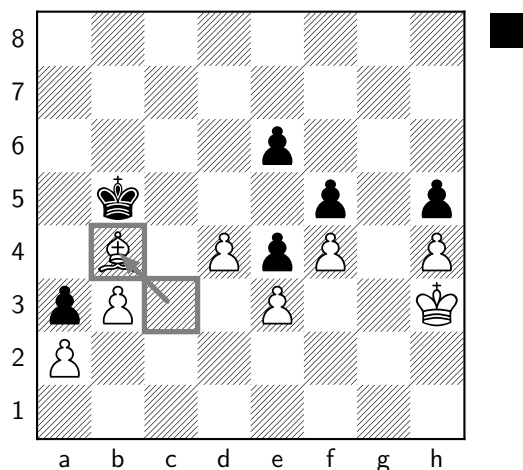
43 ♖e1? ♖c3 44 ♖xa3 ♖e2+ 45 ♕f2 ♖xf4!

43... ♕e8 44 ♖e1 ♕d7 45 ♖d2



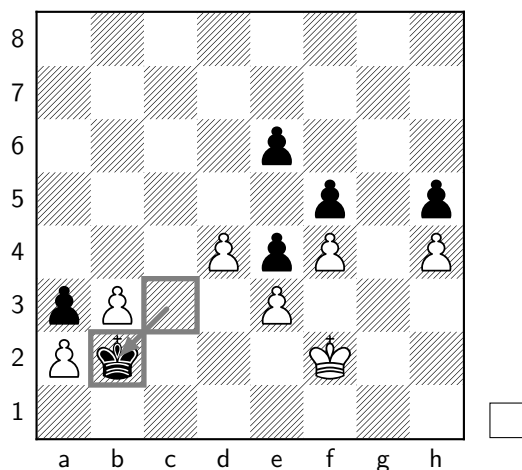
45 ♔g2 ♕c6 46 ♕f1! ♖b5! 47 ♔g2 ♜c3! 48 ♜xh3+ ♔a3 49 ♜xh4 50 ♔h3 ♜e7 51 ♜d2 ♜b4 52 ♜c1 ♜e1! 53 ♔g2 ♖b4 54 ♕f1 ♜c3 55 ♔g2 h4 56 ♕f2 h3 57 ♔g3 ♜e1+ 58 ♔xh3 ♖c3 59 ♜xh3 ♜d2 60 d5 exd5 61 ♜c5 ♖d3 62 a4 ♜xe3 63 ♜xe3 ♖xe3 64 a5 d4 65 a6 d3 66 a7 d2 67 a8 ♔d1 ♔

45... ♔c7 46 ♜e1 ♖b7 47 ♜d2 ♖c6 48 ♜e5+ ♖b5 49 ♜c4 ♜c3! 50 ♜xh3+ ♔a3 51 ♜xh3 ♜b4! 52 ♜xb4



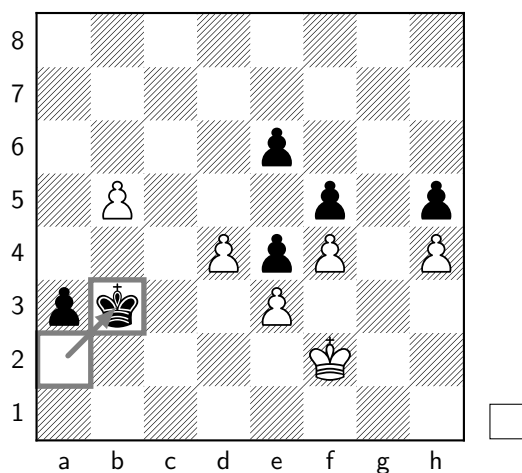
52 ♜a1 ♜d2 53 d5 exd5 54 ♜d4 ♜e1 55 ♜f6 ♜f2 56 ♜d4 ♖b4

52... ♖xb4 53 ♔g3 ♖c3 54 ♖f2 ♖b2!



54... ♖d3? 55 b4 ♖c4 56 ♖e2 ♖xb4 57 ♖d2

55 b4 ♖xa2 56 b5 ♖b3?



56... ♖b1! 57 b6 a2 58 b7 a1 ♔ 59 b8 ♔+ ♖b2+

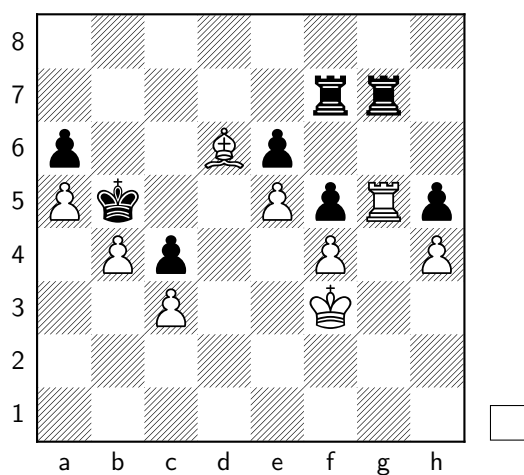
57 b6 a2 58 b7 a1 ♔ 59 b8 ♔+ ♖c3 60 ♖c8+ ♖d2 61 ♖xe6 ♖e1+ 62 ♖g2 ♖e2+ 63 ♖h1 ♖f1+ 64 ♖h2 ♖f2+ 65 ♖h1 ♖xh4+ 66 ♖g2 ♖g4+ 67 ♖h2 ♖xe3 68 ♖b3+ ♖xd4 69 ♖b6+ ♖d3 70 ♖b1+ ♖e2 71 ♖c2+ ♖f3 0-1

White: Topalov, V.  
Black: Kasparov, G.

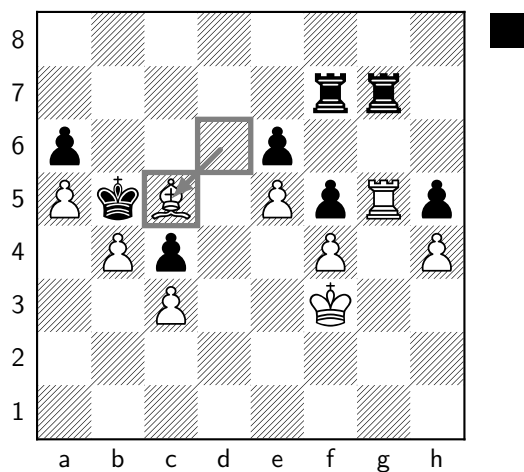
Linares

1999

Result: 0-1

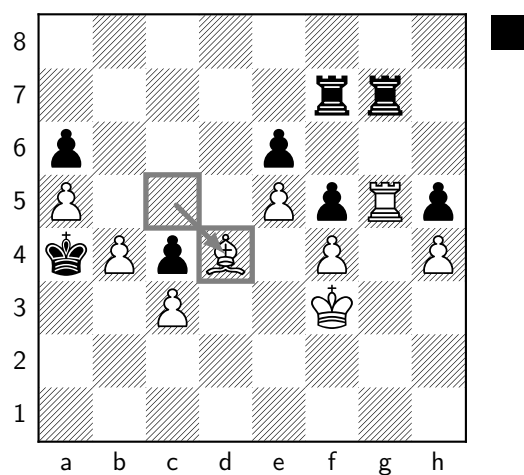


46 ♖c5



46 ♖xh5 ♜h7! 47 ♖xh7 ♜xh7 48 ♔g3 ♔a4  
49 ♖c5 ♔b3 50 ♖d4 ♜h8!! 51 b5 axb5 52  
a6 ♜a8 53 h5 ♜xa6 54 h6 ♔c2 55 ♔h4 ♜a1  
56 ♔g5 ♜h1 57 ♔g6 ♔d3

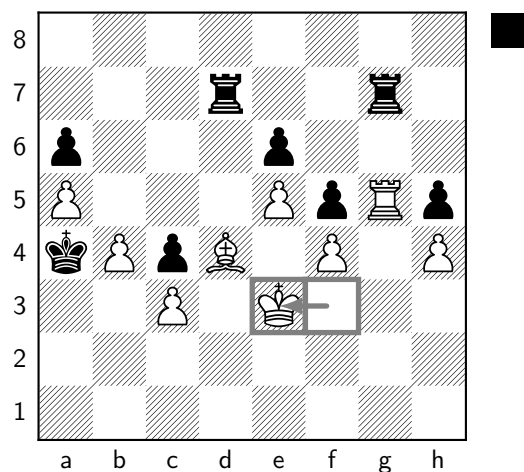
46... ♔a4 47 ♖d4



47 ♜xh5 ♜h7

47... ♜d7! This indicates what we will see happening in the game. Black wants to play ...Rxd4 to get a passed c-pawn and there is little White can do about this.

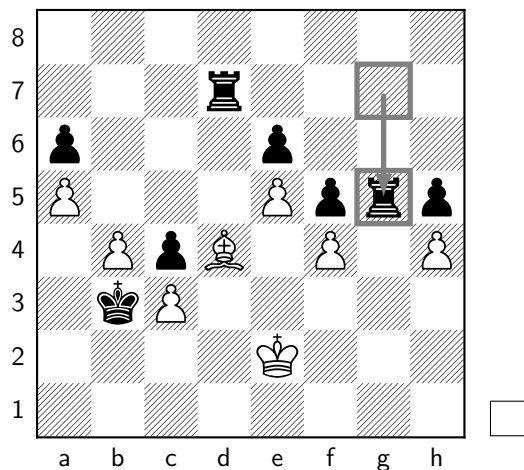
48 ♔e3



48 ♜xh5 ♜xd4! 49 cxd4 c3 50 ♔e2 c2 51  
♔d2 ♔b3 52 ♜g5 ♜xg5 53 f×g5 ♔b2

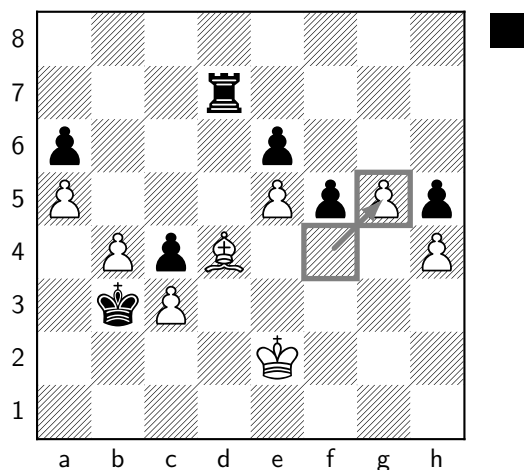
**48 ♖e2 ♜b3 49 ♖e3 ♜b2**

**48... ♜b3 49 ♖e2 ♜xg5!** Black is ready for this and cannot improve substantially, so there is no need to hesitate.



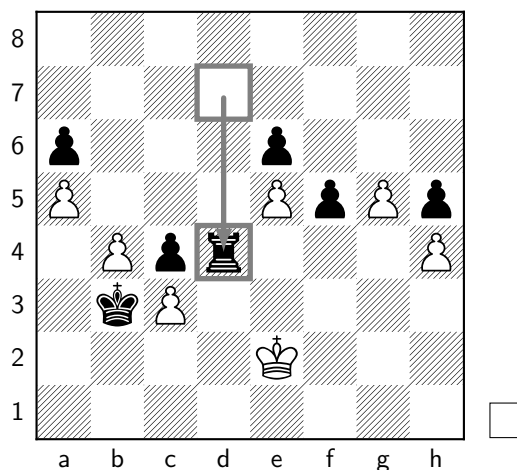
**49... ♜xg5! 50 ♜xg7 ♜xc3 51 ♜a7 ♜xf4 52 ♜xa6 ♜xb4 53 ♜xe6 ♜xa5 54 ♜f6 ♜e4+ 55 ♜d2 ♜xe5 56 ♜c3 ♜b5**

**50 f×g5** The only move.



**50 h×g5?! h4 51 ♜f3 h3 52 g6 ♜g7 53 ♜g3 ♜xg6+ 54 ♜xh3 ♜c2**

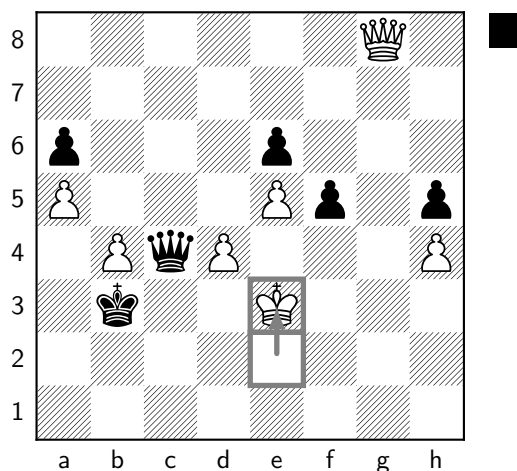
**50... ♜xg5?** Kasparov judges that the resulting queen endgame is lost for White despite all the extra pawn.



**50... f4 51 b5!? a×b5 52 a6 b4 53 a7 ♜d8 54 c×b4 ♜×b4 55 ♜b6 ♜a8 56 ♜f3 c3 57 ♜×f4 c2 58 ♜e3 ♜×a7 59 g6 ♜c4 60 ♜g5 ♜a3 61 ♜f4 ♜f3 62 ♜c1 ♜f1 63 ♜e3 ♜d3**

**51 c×d4** I have found this tendency in my own endgame play at times. I want to be in control and therefore tend to play more forcing than is needed. Being an exchange up should be control enough! Here Kasparov went for the variation he could calculate furthest, but at the end of it he no longer is an exchange up, and White's counterplay with b4-b5 cannot be prevented anyway.

**51... c3 52 g6 c2 53 g7 c1 ♜ 54 g8 ♜ ♜c4+ 55 ♜e3** White has no alternatives.

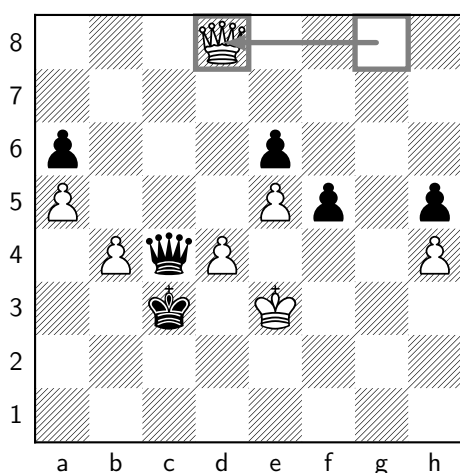
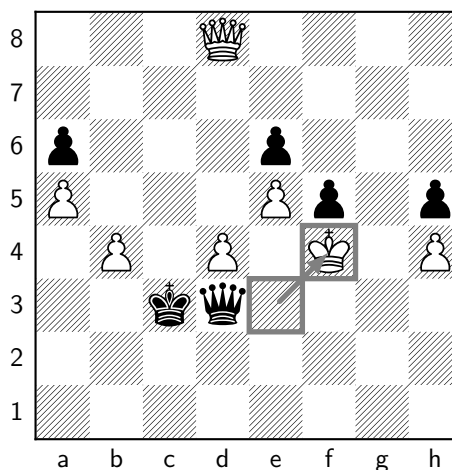


55 ♔e1? ♚×b4+

55 ♔f3 ♚f1+ 56 ♔e3 ♚e1+ 57 ♔f3 ♚e4+  
58 ♔g3 f4+ 59 ♔f2 ♚×d4+

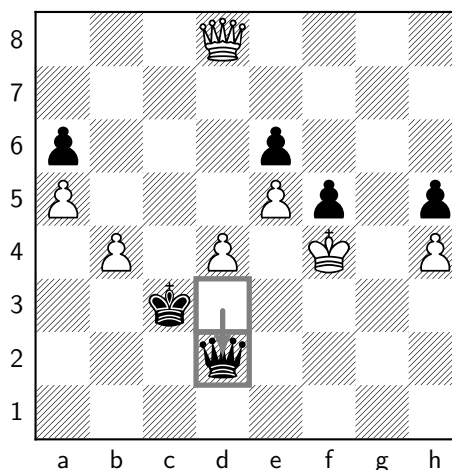
55... ♔c3! The black king and queen can together organise a winning attack against the white king, as the white queen is way out of play. Against this there is no sufficient defence. — Time for desperate measures?

56 ♚d8? White needed to realise the desperation of his situation.



57 ♔f2 f4 58 ♚g5 ♚×d4+ 59 ♔f1 ♚d3+ 60  
♔f2 f3 61 ♚c1+ ♔×b4 62 ♚b2+ ♔c4

57... ♚d2+?! Again making it harder for himself.



56 ♔f3? ♚f1+ 57 ♔e3 f4+ 58 ♔e4 f3 59  
♚c8+ ♔b2! 60 ♚×e6 ♚e2+ 61 ♔d5 f2

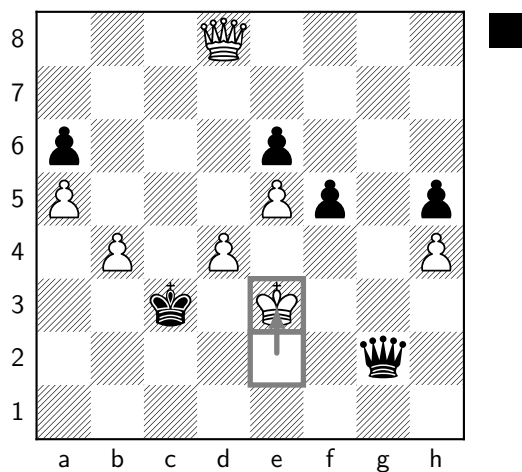
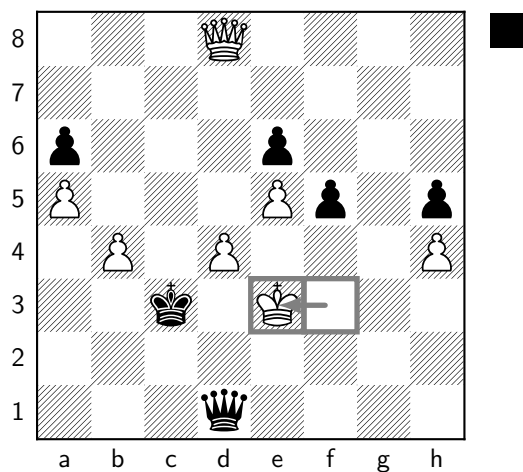
56 b5! ♚×d4+ 57 ♔f3 ♚d5+ 58 ♔f2 a×b5  
59 ♚c8+ ♔d3 60 a6 ♚d4+ 61 ♔f1 ♚f4+ 62  
♔g2 ♚e4+ 63 ♔g1

56... ♚d3+ 57 ♔f4

57... ♔d2! 58 ♔g5 f4! 59 ♚f6 f3

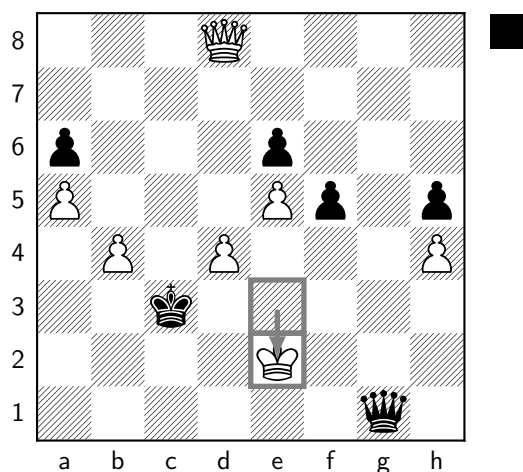
58 ♔f3 ♚d1+ 59 ♔e3?! This loses with little resistance, but White was doomed no matter what.





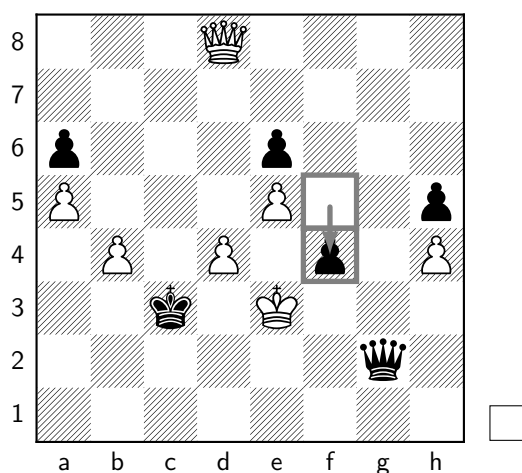
59 ♖f2 f4! 60 ♜c8+ ♔d2 61 ♜×a6 ♜e1+  
62 ♖g2 ♜g3+ 63 ♖h1 f3 64 ♜f1 ♜×h4+ 65  
♔g1 ♜g3+ 66 ♖h1 ♜e1! 67 ♖g1 f2+ 68  
♔g2 ♔e3 69 a6 h4 70 a7 h3+

59... ♜g1+ 60 ♔e2



61 ♔e1 ♔d3

61... f4+!! Time to finish the game!



61... f4+ 62 ♔×f4 ♔d3 63 ♜g5 ♜f2#

0-1

60 ♔f3 ♜f1+ 61 ♔e3 f4+ 62 ♔e4 ♔d2!

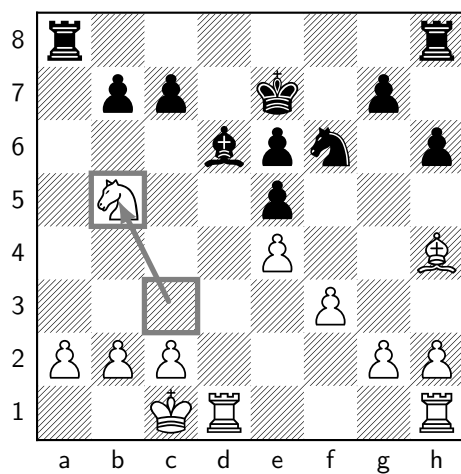
60... ♜g2+ 61 ♔e3

White: Rublevsky, S.  
 Black: Hernandez, Gi  
 Opening ECO: B07  
 Result: 1-0

French League

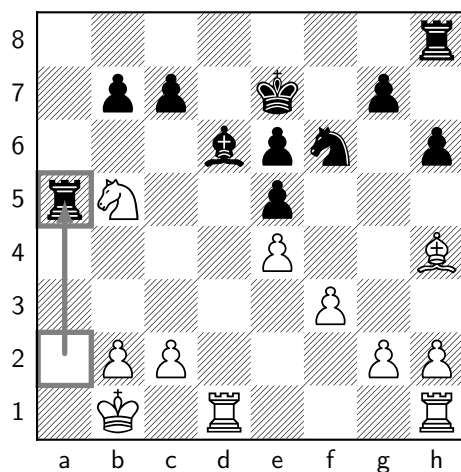
2004

1 e4 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 e5 4 d×e5 d×e5 5  
 ♙×d8+ ♖×d8 6 ♙c4 ♙e8 7 ♘f3 ♙d6 8 ♙g5  
 ♙e6 9 ♘d2 ♘bd7 10 O-O-O h6 11 ♙h4  
 ♙e7 12 ♙×e6 f×e6!? 13 ♘c4 ♘b6 14 ♘×b6  
 a×b6 15 f3 b5! 16 ♘×b5!?



16 a3 c6

16... ♖×a2 17 ♙b1 ♖a5



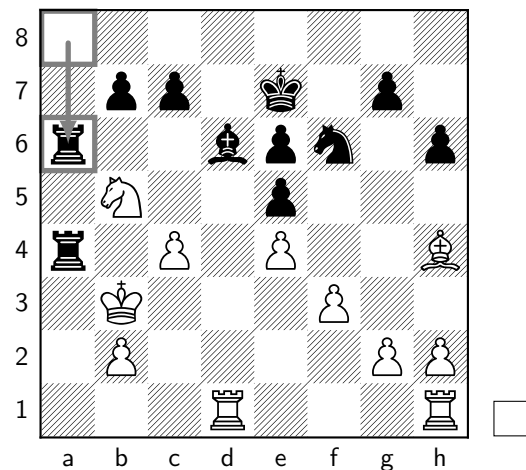
17... ♖ha8?? 18 ♘a3!

17... ♖a4!?

18 c4! White is planning to put pressure on the black bishop at d6.

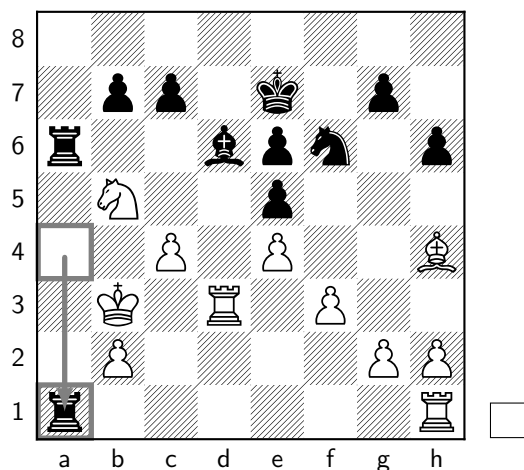
18... ♖ha8 19 ♙c2 ♖a4 20 ♙b3 How should Black proceed?

20... ♖8a6? Black has accepted a permanent pawn weakness which obliges him to play very actively. The text move is too passive for my taste.



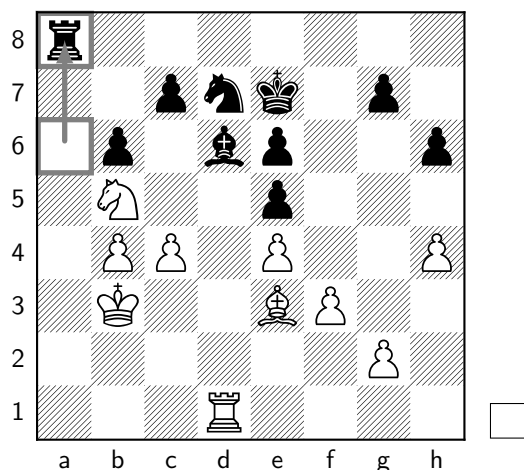
20... ♙c5! 21 ♘×c7 ♖b4+ 22 ♙c3 ♖aa4 23  
 ♘b5! ♖×c4+ 24 ♙d3 ♖cb4 25 ♘c3 ♖a6 26  
 ♙c2

21 ♖d3 ♖a1



21... ♖c5? 22 ♗xh6+ ♗xh6 23 ♖hd1 ♗d6 24  
 ♗xc7? ♖b4+ 25 ♗c3 ♖c6 26 b3 ♖bb6 27  
 ♗b5 ♖xb5 28 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 29 ♖xd6 ♗xd6!  
 30 cxb5 ♗c5 31 g4 ♗xb5 32 b4 ♗c6 33  
 ♗c4 b5+ 34 ♗d3 ♗d7 35 ♗e3 ♗e7 36 ♗f2  
 ♗f7 37 ♗g3 ♗g6 38 ♗h4 ♗g7 39 ♗h5 ♗h7  
 40 h4 ♗g7 41 g5 h×g5 42 h×g5 f×g5 43  
 ♗×g5 ♗f7 44 ♗h5 ♗g7

22 ♖hd1 ♖xd1 23 ♖xd1 ♖a5 24 ♗c3 ♖a4  
 25 b4! b6 26 ♗e1 ♖a2 27 ♗d2 ♗d7 28 ♗b3  
 ♖a8 29 ♗e3 ♖a6 30 h4 ♖a8

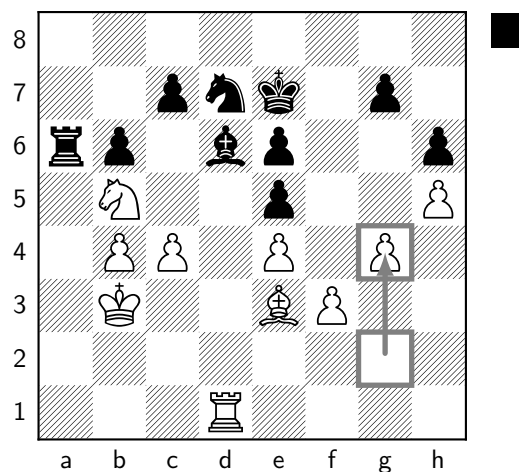


30...h5 31 ♗g5+ ♗f6 32 g3!

31 h5 ♖a6 Sadly all other moves make  
 Black's position worse.

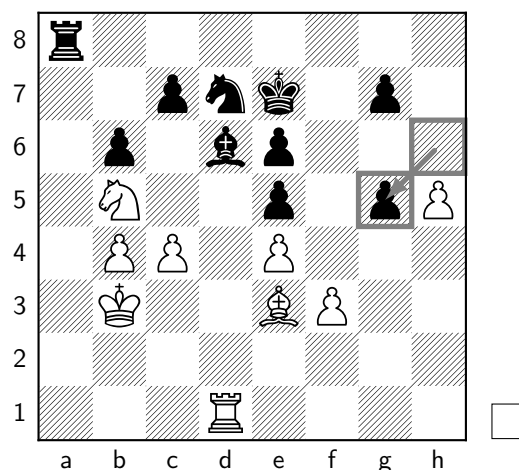
32 g4!? This is a very slight inaccuracy as it  
 weakens f3 a move sooner than necessary

and allows Black to create a little  
 counterplay.



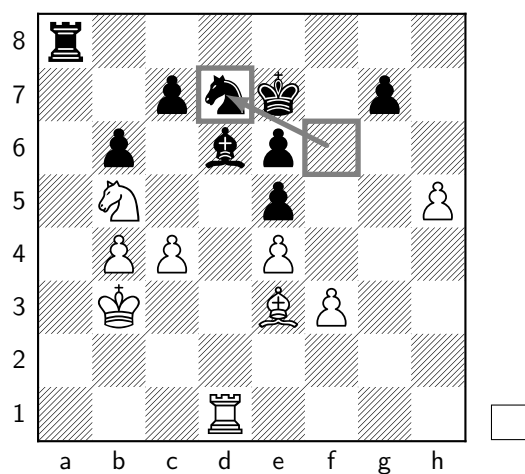
32 ♗f2! ♖a8 33 ♗h4+ ♗f6 34 g4! ♖f8 35  
 ♗a7! ♗f7 36 ♗c6 ♖a8 37 f4!! ♗d7 38 ♗d8+  
 ♖xd8 39 ♗xd8 ♗e8 40 f×e5 ♗×e5 41 ♗h4  
 ♗×g4 42 ♖g1 ♗f6 43 ♗×f6 g×f6 44 ♖g6 ♗f7  
 45 ♖×h6 f5 46 e×f5 e×f5 47 c5 b×c5 48 b5  
 f4 49 b6 f3 50 b7 f2 51 ♖h7+ ♗e6 52 b8♖  
 f1♖ 53 ♖e8+ ♗d5 54 ♖f7+ ♖×f7 55 ♖×f7

32... ♖a8 33 g5 h×g5? Here Black simply  
 cracks and White wins easily.



33... ♖f8! 34 ♖f1 h×g5 35 ♗×g5+ ♗e8 36  
 ♗a4 ♖h8 37 ♖h1 ♖f8

34 ♗×g5+ ♗f6 35 ♗e3 ♗d7



35... ♖b8 36 ♖a1 ♞xh5 37 ♖a7 ♙d7 38  
♙a4

36 ♖g1 ♙f7 37 h6 g×h6 38 ♙xh6 ♖h8 39  
♖g7+  
1-0

---