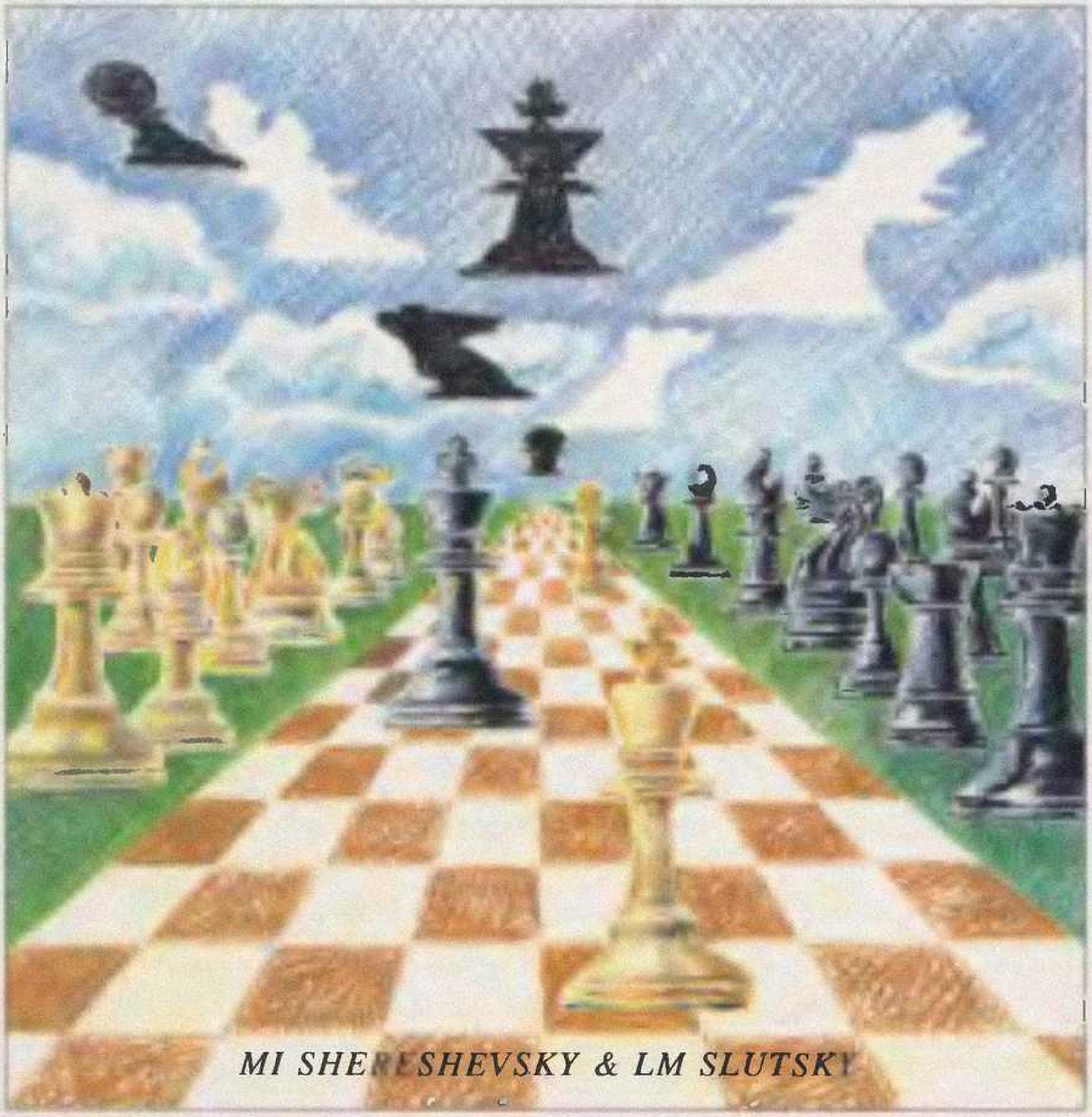
MASTERING THE ENDGAME

VOLUME 2



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Mastering the Endgame
Volume 2:
Closed Games

by
M.I.Shereshevsky & L.M.Slutsky

Translated and Edited by
Ken Neat

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Introduction

When working on the second volume of this book, the authors decided to change the order in which the material is presented. In games begun with the open and semi-open openings, the endgame for a long time retains its individuality; thus one does not confuse a Sicilian endgame with a Ruy Lopez, or a Caro-Kann endgame with one from Petroff's Defence. In the closed openings things are more complicated. In many of them identical pawn structures arise and, for example, openings so dissimilar in spirit as the Queen's Gambit and the Grünfeld Defence can lead to analogous endings.

The strategy of systematic pressure, carried out by White in the closed openings, can be opposed by Black with various means of counterplay. In principle, all the various closed openings can be arbitrarily divided into two parts: in the first Black allows the creation of a white pawn centre, while in the second he actively prevents this. Methods used by modern theory in the struggle with the enemy centre include impeding it with pawns (King's Indian set-ups) and piece pressure (Grünfeld Defence). Black can also oppose the creation of a pawn centre in different ways – 'physically' (Queen's Gambit set-ups) and by piece pressure on the light squares (Nimzo-Indian, Queen's Indian and Dutch Defences). It was this that led to the plan of the second volume: to present all the material not by opening classification, but in accordance with the strategy of the struggle for the centre.

The reader will rightly notice the relatively large number of 'King's Indian' endings, presented in the 'Dark-Square Strategy' section. The King's Indian Defence occurs increasingly rarely in top-level tournaments. The charm of its novelty has largely been lost, whereas the degree of risk has grown several-fold. White has a wide range of possibilities for developing his initiative – from direct play 'for mate' in the Sämisch Variation to 'emasculating's set-ups with the exchange on e5. By including in the book some King's Indian clashes from the 1950s and 1960s, the authors wanted to recall the happy times of the King's Indian Defence, when it was called 'the main contemporary opening problem'. (In recent years, however, thanks to the successes of the World Champion, there is a justification for talking of another burst in popularity of the King's Indian Defence.)

The chapters 'Light-Square Strategy', 'Symmetry' and 'Asymmetry' are not so extensive, but in our opinion they will give the reader an impression of the link between the chosen opening strategy and the resulting ending.

In the closed openings, Black from the very first moves has to solve the problem of fighting for the centre. In all the diversity of the closed openings, two basic strategies for Black can be traced: either he allows the formation of an enemy pawn centre, or else he does everything possible to prevent it. In the first case, exploiting the time spent by White on the formation of his centre, Black strikes a blow at the weakest point – the d4

pawn – by ... e5 or ... c5, with subsequent play on the dark squares. This has been given the name of *dark-square strategy*.

In practice the second path can be carried out in two ways: by the classical blocking of the d4 pawn (1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6), or by piece pressure on the light squares (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4, or 3 ♘f3 b6 etc). This latter example typifies *light-square strategy*.

Translator's Note

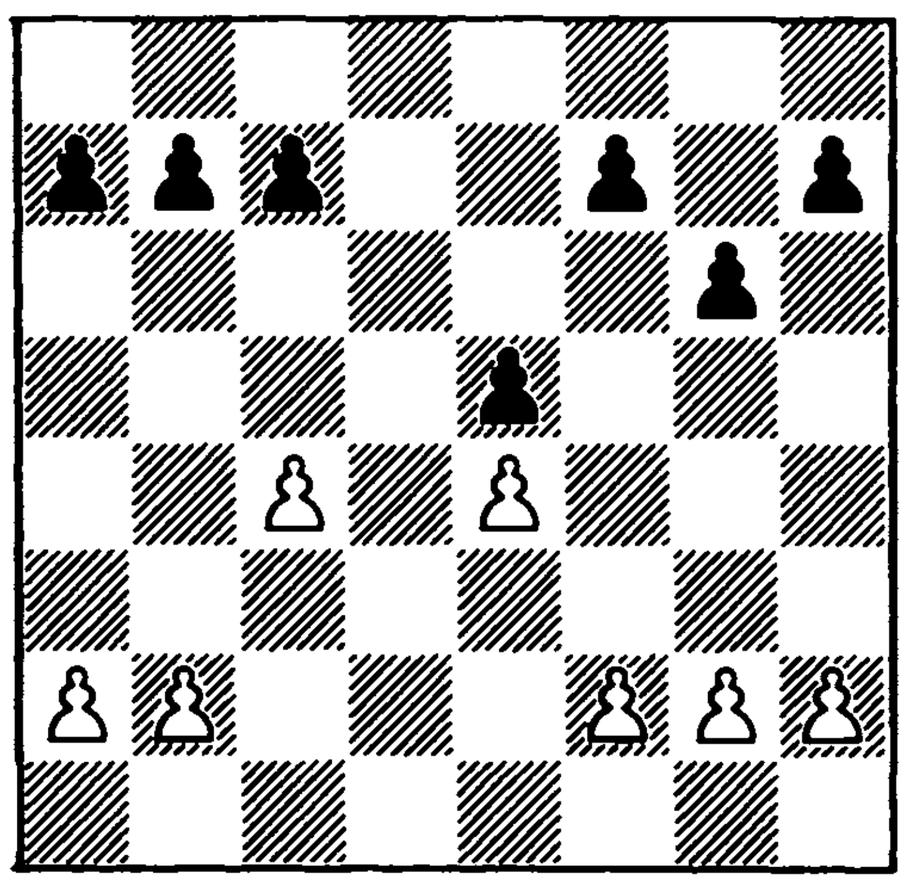
To reduce the original manuscript to a manageable size for publication, several games have had to be omitted. Where they are readily available in other books currently in print, this has been indicated in the text – it is recommended that these games be studied in conjuction with the appropriate chapter.

1 Dark-Square Strategy

Dark-square strategy is mainly represented by Indian (i.e. King's Indian and Benoni) set-ups, which in recent times have occurred rather rarely in top-level tournaments. There are many reasons for this, the main one being White's advantage in space. But the possession of more space demands additional care in maintaining it, and in the resulting complex positions a slight inaccuracy by White will allow the opponent to develop a dangerous counterattack. Indian set-ups have brought a number of striking victories to players such as Boleslavsky, Bronstein, Geller, Tal, Gligorić, Stein, Fischer and Kasparov.

Black usually aims to realise his counterchances in the middlegame, since with simplification White's spatial advantage becomes increasingly perceptible. This does not mean that any Indian ending is bad for Black, but in general White's prospects are more favourable.

1



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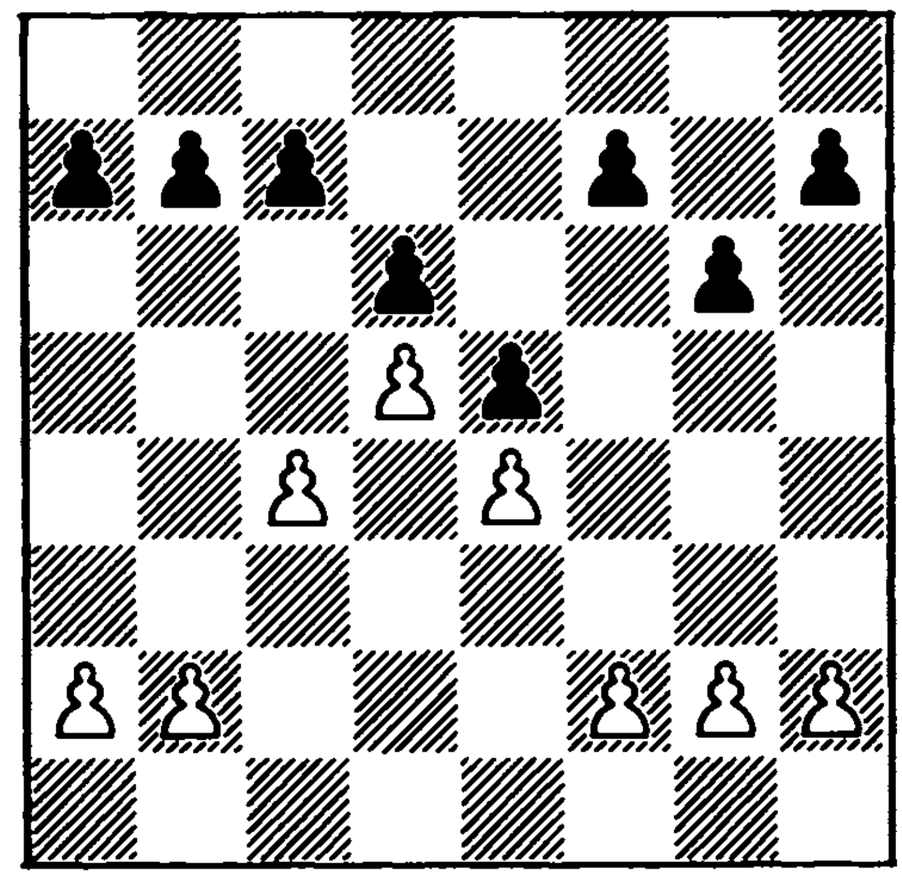

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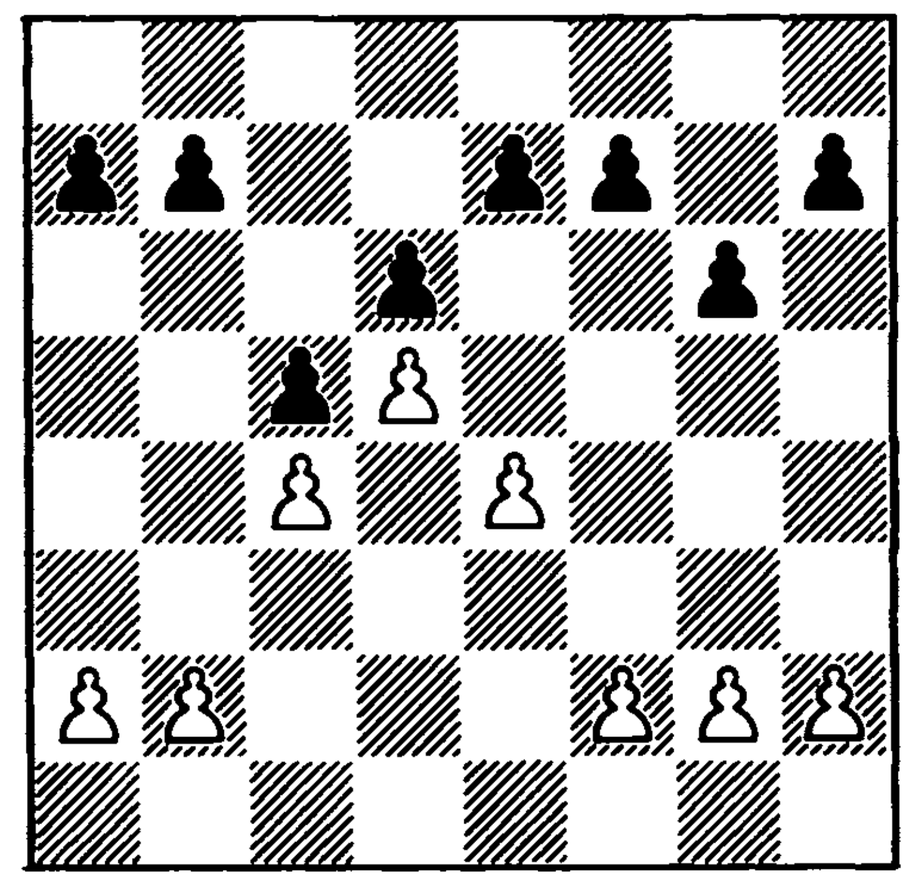
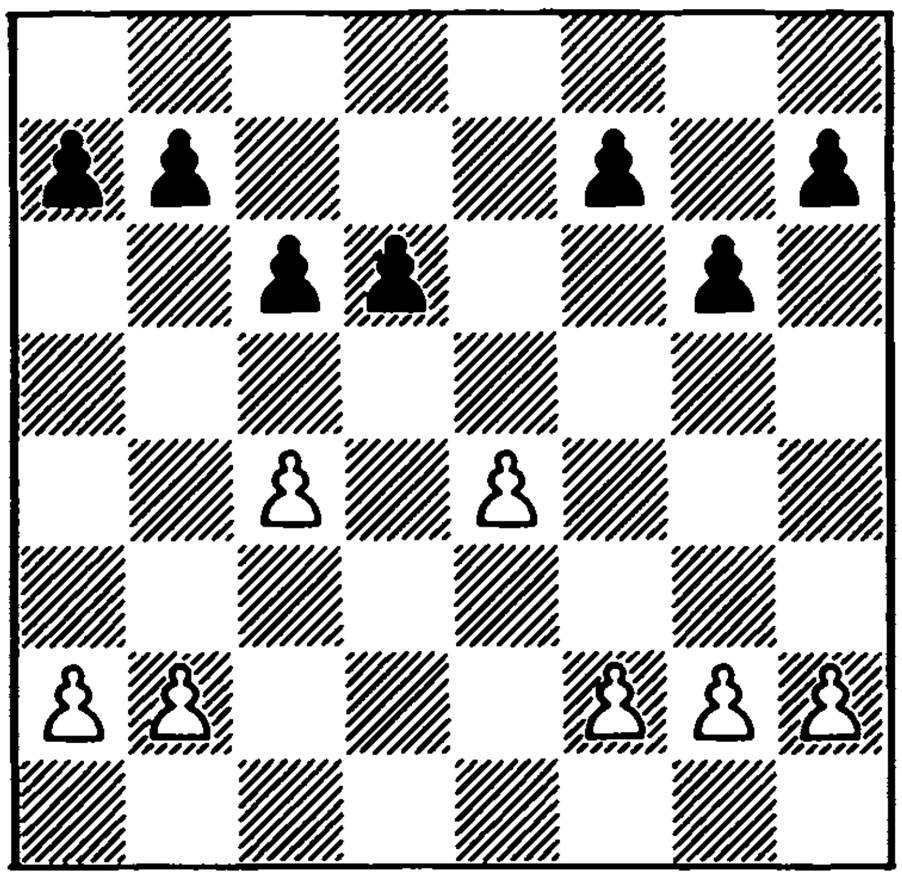


Black's counterblow against the d4 pawn by ... e5 or ... c5 can lead to positions with various pawn structures. In reply to ... e5 (or ... c5) White can choose three different methods of play: he can advance his d-pawn, exchange on e5 (c5), or maintain the tension in the centre. These are schematically depicted in the three diagrams above.

Usually Black is not able to maintain the central tension for long, and then the exchange ... exd4 leads to the following pawn formation:

4



Positions with the exchange dxc5 are considered in the 'Symmetry' section, and those with the exchange ... cxd4 under the 'Maroczy Bind'.

1.1 VARIATIONS WITH THE CENTRAL EXCHANGE dxe5

Any player choosing King's Indian set-ups as Black must be able to handle competently the endings arising after the central exchange dxe5 followed by the exchange of queens. There are a number of masters who as White often solve in this way the problem of the King's Indian Defence, especially since in many opening positions dxe5 is the best move.

By what is White guided when he chooses the 'unpretentious' exchange in the centre? After all, the drawbacks here are patently obvious. Back in the 1930s it was observed that the exchange of queens on the 5th move (after 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 e5 4 dxe5 dxe5) does not bring White any advantage. "The e5 pawn", it was said then, "is stronger than the c4 pawn". The exchange dxe5 looks even more strange in the Classical Variation (after 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5), irreparably weakening the d4 square. And yet this is played, and quite often. There are several reasons.

Firstly, after the exchange in the centre White normally gains one or two tempi for the development of his pieces, for example: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 e5 4 dxe5 dxe5 5 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 6 ♘f3 ♘fd7 (interesting here is the idea of the Soviet master Chebanenko: *6 ... ♘c6!? 7 ♘g5 ♔e7!*) 7 b3, or 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♗g5 ♖e8 10 0-0-0, or 1 d4 g6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 ♘f3 e5 5 dxe5 dxe5 6 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 7 ♗g5+ f6 8 0-0-0+.

Secondly, White can remove the opponent's pressure on d4 by the simple move ♘c3-d5, after which the exchange ... ♘xd5, cxd5, positionally favourable to White, is usually forced.

Thirdly, the exchange dxe5 is not without its psychological implications. The King's Indian Defence is usually chosen by players of aggressive style, who prefer complicated play with many pieces on the board, and have a certain dislike for 'simple' positions.

Thus the central exchange dxe5 predetermines the plans for the two sides in the resulting ending:

For White – active piece play, to prevent the opponent from exploiting the weakness of the d4 square. By pressure on the d-file White aims to force ... c6 and to become established on the important d6 square (preferably, in combination with the move c4-c5), as in the game Smyslov-Polugayevsky (Palma de Mallorca 1970).*

---

* Cf. Smyslov's *125 Selected Games* p.186 (Pergamon, 1983).

He may be able to exploit the passed pawn at d5, created as a result of piece exchanges on this square (cf. **Botvinnik-Tal**), or occupy d5 or b5 with his bishop, followed by exchanging it for a knight at c6 and 'working on' the resulting queenside weaknesses (**Larsen-Hübner**). To take account of all the diversity of plans is not possible, but the basic theme of White's play – rapid mobilisation, control of the centre, attack on the queenside – is clear.

Black's strategy is to neutralise the pressure and to exchange the opponent's active pieces, especially the dark-square bishop (cf. the games **Flohr-Geller, Larsen-Fischer** and **Berger-Gligorić**), followed by exploiting the opponent's dark-square weaknesses in the centre (d4!) and on the queenside.

It is obvious that a 'clash of interests' of the two sides is inevitable, and the exchange dxe5 promises play which is no less interesting than after the other thematic King's Indian moves: d4-d5 and ... e5xd4.

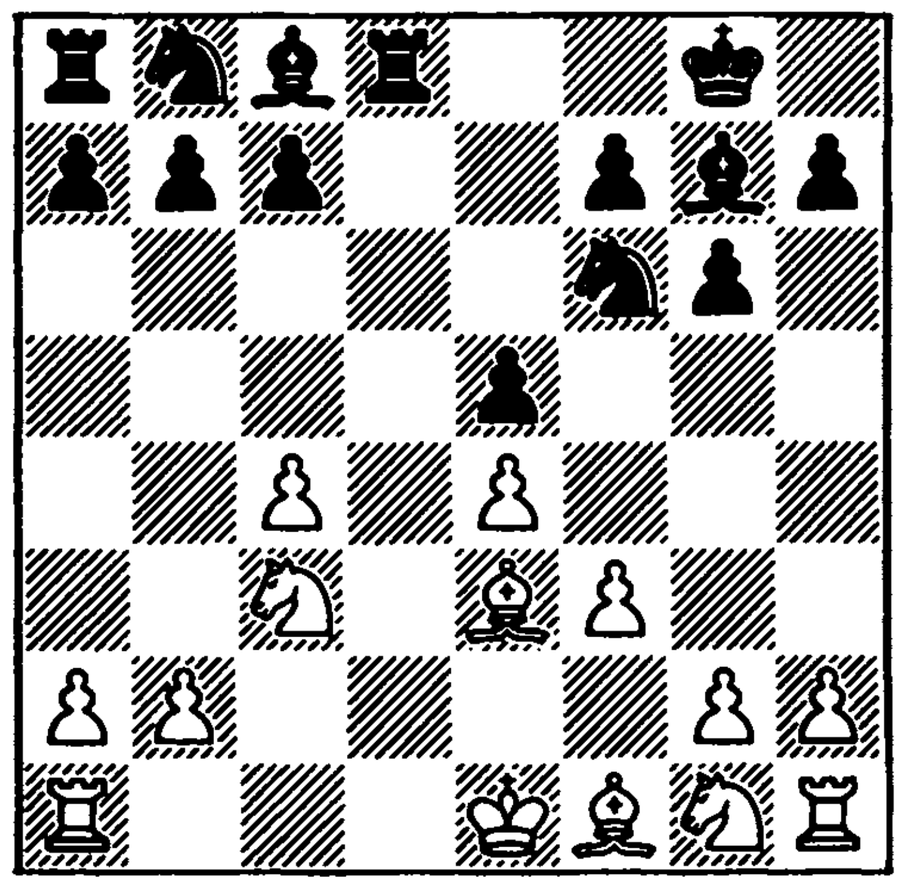
Botvinnik-Tal
World Championship Match (13)
Moscow 1961
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 dxe5

The Sämisch Variation was always a formidable weapon in Botvinnik's hands; his victories became renowned, while his defeats were very rare and in them his opening strategy was least to blame. Botvinnik would usually 'drive in a wedge' with 7 d5, and then mercilessly squeeze Black in the centre and on the kingside (memorable, for example, is the 21st, concluding game from the same match with Tal). His decision to exchange queens was therefore due to psychological factors and was dictated mainly by match tactics: "... after winning the 12th game, Tal was in an aggressive mood, as indicated by his choice of opening. Taking account of this, White correctly decides that first and foremost he must exchange queens" (Botvinnik).

7 ... dxe5
8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 *(5)*

5



9 ♘d5 ♘xd5

Here, in contrast to the Classical Variation, the e4 pawn is defended (compare the game **Ivkov-Tal**, p.13), and the exchange on d5 is the most advisable. 'Tal-style' play could have ended dismally: 9 ... ♘e8?! 10 0-0-0 ♖d7 11 ♗d3 c6 12 ♘c3 ♘a6 13 a3 ♘ec7 14 ♘ge2 ♘e6 15 ♗c2 ♘ac5 16 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 17 ♖d1 ♗f8 18 b4! a5 19 c5, and Black is thoroughly cramped (Sokolov-Janošević, Belgrade 1961).

10 cxd5 c6
11 ♗c4 b5

Tal is not satisfied with the simple path, known since the game Boleslavsky-Najdorf (Zürich Candidates 1953): 11 ... cxd5 12 ♗xd5 ♘c6, and he tries to seize the initiative on the queenside. Meanwhile, as later shown by Geller, here Black can perfectly well count on good play: 13

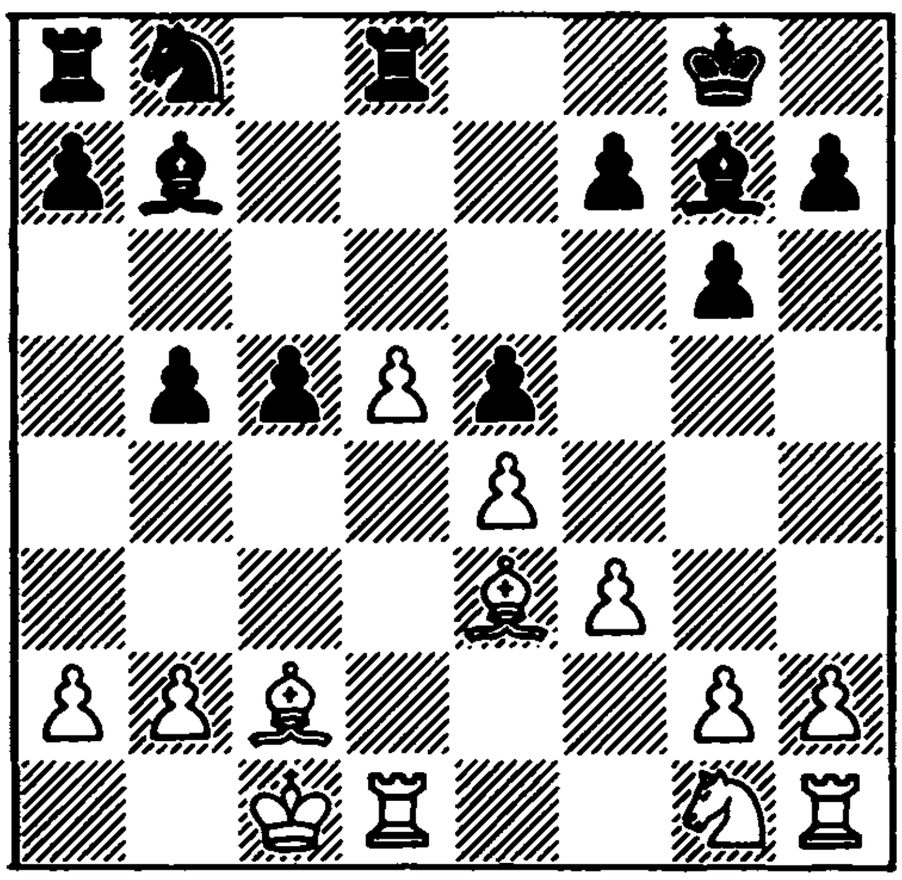
0-0-0 ♘d4! 14 ♗xd4 exd4 15 ♘e2 ♗f5! (Calero-Geller, Havana 1963), and after missing the chance to equalise by 16 ♗xb7!, within a few moves White ended up in a desperate situation: 16 ♔d2? ♖ac8 17 ♖c1 ♗h6+! 18 f4 ♖xc1 19 ♘xc1 (*19 ♖xc1 d3!*) 19 ... ♗xf4+.

12 ♗b3 ♗b7
13 0-0-0

13 ♖c1 would have been more dangerous for Black, when after 13 ... cxd5? 14 ♖c7 ♖d7 15 ♖xb7! White wins. 13 ... ♖d7?! 14 ♘e2 cxd5 15 ♗xd5 ♘a6 16 ♗xb7 ♖xb7 17 ♘c3 is also not good for Black (Perez-Gligorić, Havana 1962), but 13 ... a5!, found by Boleslavsky, solves all his problems. "White is less well developed than his opponent", wrote Boleslavsky, "and wishes to gain an advantage by tactics. Such play is positionally unjustified, and Black *must* be able to find a sufficient antidote". From the interesting analysis of this outstanding grandmaster we give one of the variations: 14 a4 bxa4! 15 ♗xa4 (if *15 ♗a2?* then *15 ... cxd5!*, when *16 ♖c7 ♖d7 17 ♖xb7 ♖xb7 18 ♗xd5* is now bad on account of *18 ... ♖xb2 19 ♗xa8 a3*, and Black wins) 15 ... cxd5 16 ♖c7 ♗c8 17 exd5 ♘a6 18 ♖c1 ♘b4 19 ♗c6 ♖a6, with the better game for Black.

13 ... c5
14 ♗c2 *(6)*

6



Botvinnik plans to attack Black's queenside pawns with b2-b3 and a2-a4.

14 ... ♘d7

The thoughts expressed by Bronstein about Black's future prospects make interesting reading: "... Tal has achieved definite counterchances. His immediate aim should be to blockade the pawn with his knight, which in this case would be fulfilling a mass of useful functions, without itself being in any danger. After this the queenside pawns could have gradually begun to advance. In concrete terms this could have taken the following form: 15 ♘e2 ♖ac8, 16 ... ♘f6, 17 ... ♘e8 and 18 ... ♘d6. Of course, while manoeuvring Black would have to adapt to the opponent's plans and moves. But even if there occurred 17 ... ♘f6, 19 ... ♘e8 and 21 ... ♘d6, this would do Black no harm. After rejecting this plan, Tal was faced with the sad necessity of blocking the pawn with his rook. The blockade theorist – Nimzowitsch – would have condemned him for this. One should blockade with a piece which in doing so retains its ability to attack. These general thoughts are embodied by Botvinnik in concrete variations".

15 ♘e2 ♗f8
16 ♘c3 a6?!

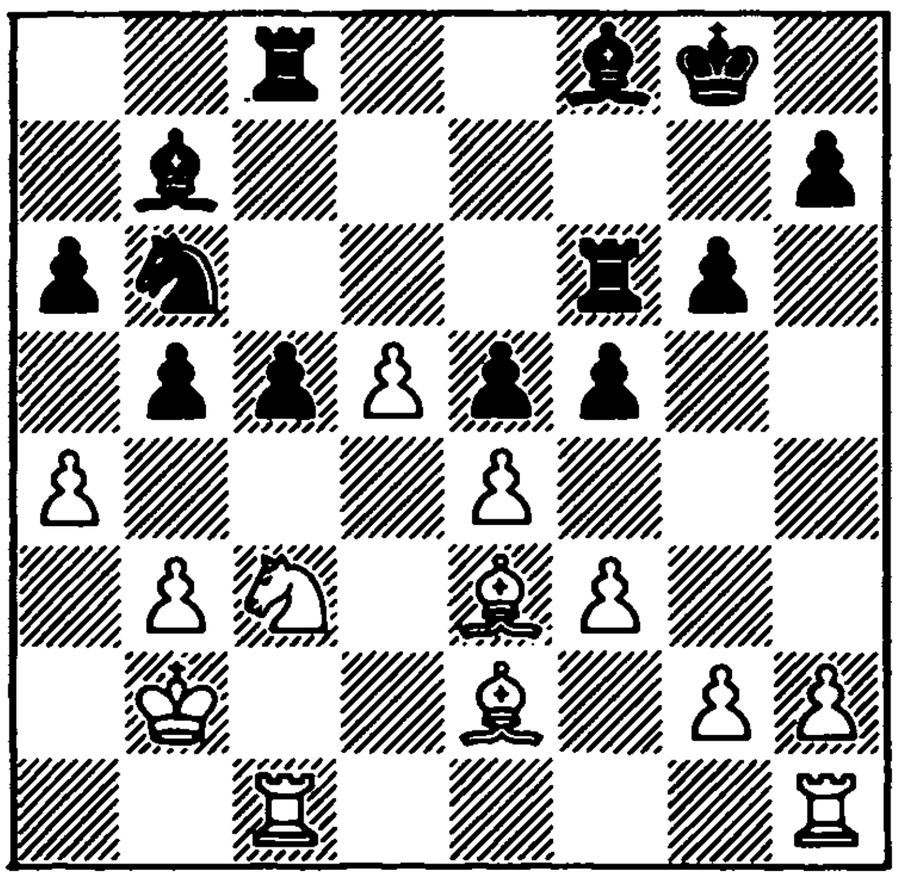
"Perhaps the losing move. The bishop at b7 is shut out of play for a long time, and most important – White can carry out his plan unhindered. Black should have decided on 16 ... b4" (Botvinnik).

17 b3 ♖ac8 18 ♗d3 ♘b6 19 ♗e2 ♖d6 20 ♔b2

White parries the threat of 20 ... b4 21 ♘b1 c4, on which there now could follow 22 bxc4 ♘xc4+ 23 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 24 ♖c1, breaking through on the c-file (indicated by Botvinnik).

20 ... f5 21 ♖c1 ♖f6 22 a4 *(7)*

7



White has carried out his plan in full. Irreparable weaknesses are now created in Black's queenside pawns.

22 ... bxa4 23 bxa4 a5 24 ♔c2 c4 25 ♖b1 ♗b4 26 ♘a2 ♗c5 27 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 28 ♘c3!

White has a decisive positional advantage, and the way in which he realises it is a matter of taste. Botvinnik saw the possibility of 28 f4, but did not want to allow the opponent counterchances after 28 ... exf4 29 e5 ♖f8 30 ♖xb6 ♗xd5 or 28 ... fxe4 29 fxe5 ♖f2 30 ♔d2 ♘xd5 31 ♖xb7 e3+. As Capablanca put it: the prettiest way to win is the simplest.

28 ... ♗c8
29 ♖b2 ♗d7

"Rather more tenacious was 29 ... fxe4 30 fxe4 (*30 ♘xe4 ♗f5*) 30 ... ♗d7 31 ♖hb1 ♗xa4+ 32 ♘xa4 ♘xa4 33 ♖b8+ ♖f8 (in the game this move was not possible, since White would have won by *f3-f4*). But after 34 d6 ♖cc8 35 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 36 ♖b7 White would clearly be winning" (Botvinnik).

30 ♖hb1 ♗xa4+ 31 ♘xa4 ♘xa4 32 ♖b8+ ♔g7 33 ♖1b7+ ♖f7 34 d6 ♖xb7 35 ♖xb7+ ♔f6 36 ♖xh7 ♖c8 37 d7 ♖d8 38 ♗xc4 ♘c5 39 ♖f7+ ♔g5 40 ♗b5 fxe4 41 fxe4 Black resigns

Geller-Boleslavsky
20th USSR Championship
Moscow 1952
King's Indian Defence

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 g6 3 e4 d6 4 d4 ♗g7 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 ♘ge2 ♘bd7 8 ♕d2 c6 9 0-0-0 ♕a5

This queen sortie was evidently an experiment, one which was not employed again. In itself the move is not as bad as its reputation. The point is that Boleslavsky linked it with the unfortunate plan of maintaining the centre (... ♖e8) and attacking on the queenside with ... b5. But because of the insecure position of the queen, only the first part of the plan could be carried out, and so subsequently Black would play ... a6 and ... b5 with his queen at d8. An interesting idea was put forward by the Soviet master Petrushin: 9 ... a6 10 ♔b1 b5 11 ♘c1 exd4!? 12 ♗xd4 ♖e8. His first attempt was a success, and after 13 ♗f2 ♗f8 14 ♘b3?! b4 15 ♘a4? c5 16 ♗g3 ♖e6 17 ♘c1 ♗b7 18 b3 ♗c6 19 ♘b2 a5 Black obtained a strong attack on the king (Meshkov-Petrushin, Kazan 1980).

10 ♔b1 a6
11 ♘c1 ♖e8?!

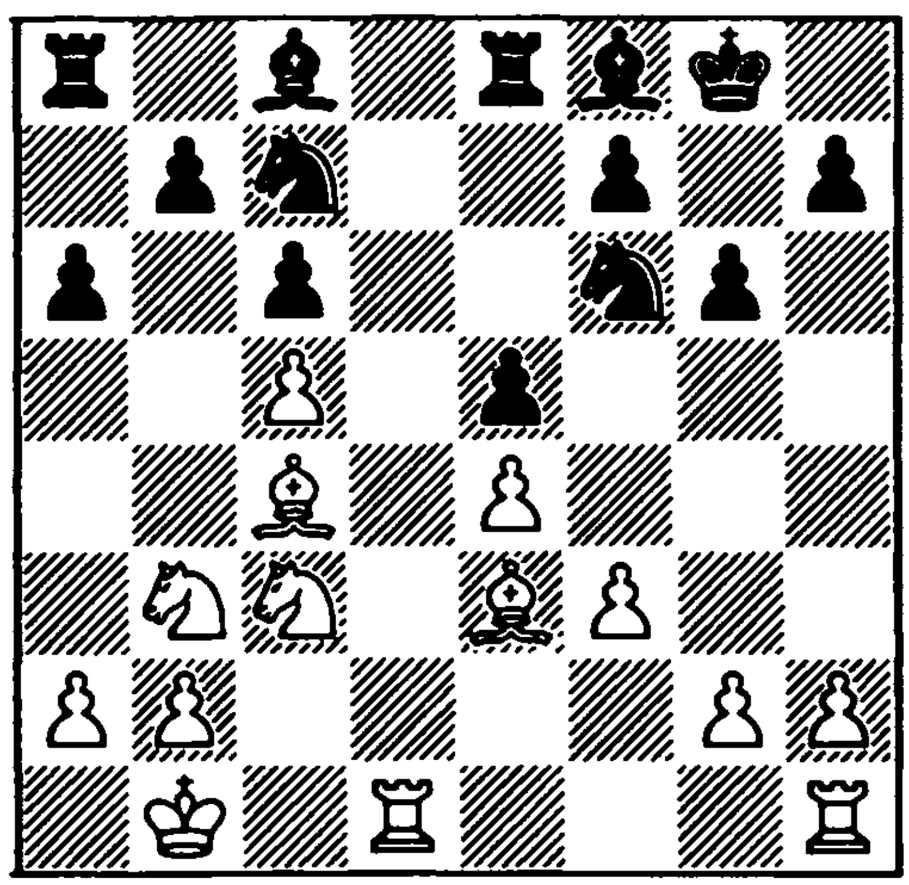
White is already threatening to drive away the queen by ♘b3 and to press in the centre with dxe5 and c4-c5. Therefore Black's last move is a poor one. As shown in the tournament bulletin by Goldberg and Rovner, he had to play 11 ... exd4!, when after 12 ♗xd4 ♘c5 a tense situation arises, for example: 13 a3 ♘a4! 14 ♘xa4 ♕xa4 15 ♔a2 c5! After the move played Geller quickly squeezes Black's position and forces a won ending.

12 ♘b3 ♕c7 13 dxe5 dxe5 14 c5 ♘f8

This same position arose 20 years later in the game Savon-Brond (Mar del Plata, 1971). By 14 ... ♗f8 Black avoided the exchange of queens, but after 15 ♘a4 ♗e7 16 ♕c3! ♘f8 17 ♘b6 ♖b8 18 ♘c4! ♘6d7 19 h4 ♘e6 20 ♘d6 ♖d8 21 ♗c4 ♘dxc5 22 ♘xf7! his position collapsed.

15 ♕d6 ♘e6 16 ♗c4 ♗f8 17 ♕xc7 ♘xc7 *(8)*

8



White already has a decisive advantage, since Black has no way of opposing the invasion of the white knights on the dark squares on the queenside.

18 ♘a5 ♖b8 19 ♘a4 ♗e6 20 ♗xe6 ♘xe6 21 ♘c4

Black has no counterplay, and White calmly strengthens his position.

21 ... ♘c7

The active 21 ... ♘f4 would have been simply met by 22 ♖d2, with the threat of 23 ♘xe5.

22 ♘ab6 ♘e6 23 b4 ♘f4 24 ♖d2 ♖bd8 25 ♖hd1 ♖xd2 26 ♖xd2 ♗g7 27 ♘a5 ♖b8 28 ♗xf4

The simplest. White takes play into a technically won ending. The remainder does not require any commentary.

28 ... exf4 29 ♘d7 ♖d8 30 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 31 ♖xd8+ ♗xd8 32 ♘xb7 ♗c7 33 ♔c2 ♔f8 34 ♘d6 ♔e7 35 ♘c4 ♔e6 36 ♔d3 h5 37 ♘d2 ♗e5 38 ♘b3 ♔d7 39 ♘d4 ♗f6 40 ♔c4 ♗e5 41 a4 ♗f6 42 b5 cxb5+ 43 axb5 a5 44 ♘c6 Black resigns

Larsen-Fischer
Monaco 1967
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗e2 0-0 6 ♘f3 e5 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 ♗e3

This move of Reshevsky's allows White to avoid without risk the intricate variations, which have been analysed almost as far as move 30, of the Taimanov-Aronin Variation, arising after 8 d5 ♘e7.

8 ... ♖e8

Reshevsky's first opponents usually replied 8 ... ♘g4, but without particular success: thus Najdorf, in one of their match games (1953), made all the 'King's Indian' moves: 8 ... ♘g4 9 ♗g5 f6 10 ♗c1 (nowadays *10 ♗h4!* is preferred) 10 ... ♔h8?! 11 d5! ♘e7 12 ♘e1 f5 13 ♗xg4 fxg4 14 f4!, but ended up in an unpleasant situation.

Later, however, it was found that by playing 10 ... f5!? immediately, or 10 ... exd4!? 11 ♘xd4 f5, Black could gain sufficient counterchances, but this did not add to the popularity of 8 ... ♘g4. Firstly, because after 9 ♗g5 f6 (Fischer's move *9 ... ♗f6!?* has not been properly studied; he played it against Reshevsky both in their match, New York 1961, and in the 1960-61 USA Championship; but after both times ending up in an inferior position and gaining only half a point in the two games, he never again returned to

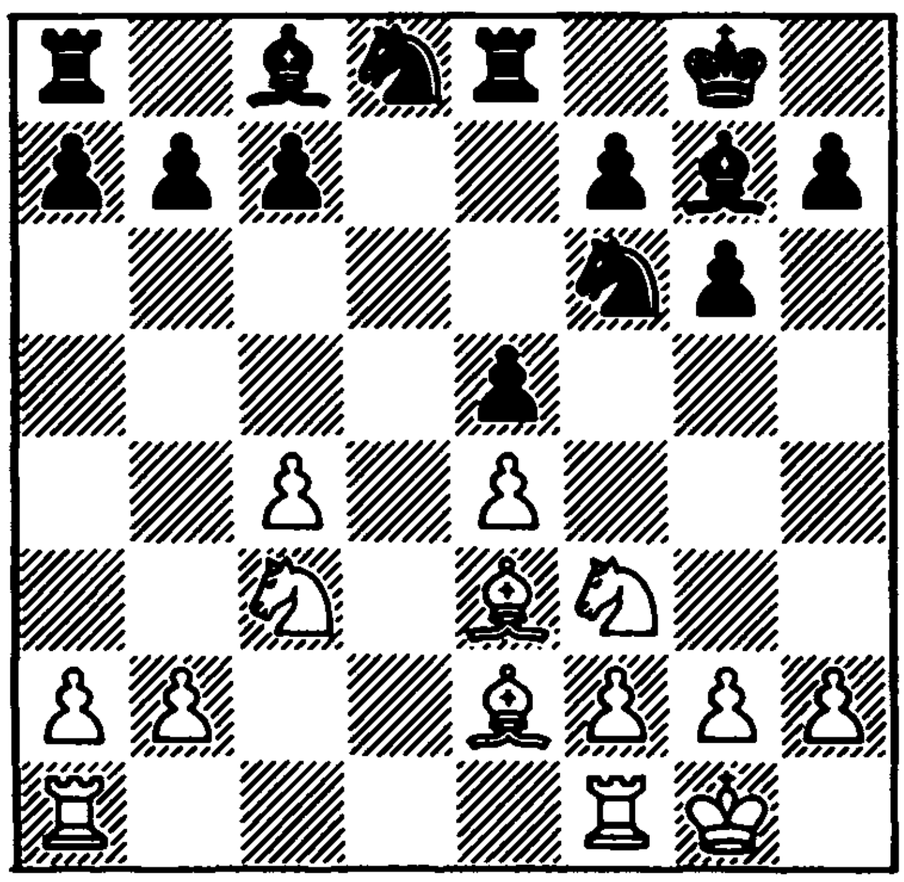
his invention) 10 ♗h4! he is faced with certain difficulties: for example, 10 ... g5 11 ♗g3 ♘h6 12 dxe5 fxe5 13 c5! leads to a clear advantage for White (Chekhov-M.Tseitlin, USSR Ch. 1st League, Telavi 1982). Secondly, because 8 ... ♖e8, first employed by Najdorf against Reshevsky in the Zürich Candidates (1953), easily equalised. In time, however, it transpired that it was not so easy for Black to equalise after 8 ... ♖e8.

9 dxe5!

It is this move that causes Black the most inconvenience. Najdorf's idea is revealed after 9 d5?! ♘d4, when his game with Reshevsky lasted only another five moves: 10 ♘xd4 exd4 11 ♗xd4 ♘xe4 12 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 13 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 14 ♕c2 ♖e8, draw. Attempts to demonstrate an advantage for White did not succeed. After 14 ♖c1?! ♕f6! 15 ♗f3?! ♖d4 16 ♕b3 b6 17 ♕a4?! ♗f5 Black seized the initiative in Ilivitsky-Suetin (21 USSR Championship, Kiev 1954).

9 ... dxe5
10 ♕xd8 ♘xd8 *(9)*

9



Also possible here is the capture with the rook, to which Fischer gives preference in his comments on the game. After 10 ... ♖xd8, in reply to 11 ♗g5 ". . . Black must not play 11 ... ♖d7? (after which Benko's *12 ♗d1!!* followed by *♗a4* is very strong), but 11 ... ♖f8! solves all his problems" (Fischer). Illustrations are provided by the following games:

Addison-R.Byrne (USA 1969): 11 ... ♖f8 12 ♖fd1 ♗g4 13 ♖ac1 (*13 ♖d3!* is interesting, as in an analogous position from the Ruy Lopez Exchange Variation; in Chekhova-Chiburdanidze, 1982, White gained an advantage after *13 ... ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 ♘d4 15 ♘d5 ♘d7 16 ♗e7 ♘xf3+ 17 gxf3!*) 13 ... h6 14 ♗e3 ♖fd8 15 h3 ♗xf3 (*15 ... ♗e6!* is even stronger) 16 ♗xf3 ♘d4, with an equal game.

Chekhov-Bukić (Banja Luka 1983): 11 ... ♖d7 12 ♗d1! h6! (weaker is *12 ... ♘e8 13 ♗a4 f6 14 ♗e3* ±, Chekhov-Ehlvest, Tallinn 1980) 13 ♗xf6! ♗xf6 14 ♗a4 ♖d6 15 c5 ♖e6 16 ♘d5, with the initiative for White.

11 ♘b5

Larsen puts into operation the main idea of the 9 dxe5 variation: White's active piece play compensates for the defects in his pawn formation.

11 ... ♘e6 12 ♘g5! ♖e7 13 ♖fd1

According to analysis by Najdorf, 13 ♘xa7 ♘f4! 14 ♗xf4 exf4 15 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 16 f3 ♘d7 17 ♖ab1 ♖a8 18 a3 ♗d4+ 19 ♔h1 h6 is not dangerous for Black.

White also does not achieve anything by 13 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 14 f3 c6, Reshevsky-Fischer, Santa Monica 1966.

13 ... b6

The pawn sacrifice 13 ... c6!, offered by Fischer against Reshevsky (9th match game, New York 1961), is interesting. Reshevsky declined the sacrifice, but after 14 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 15 ♘c3 ♖d7 he did not achieve anything. Of course, 14 ♘xa7 is

more critical (*14 ♘d6?! ♘d4! 15 ♗xd4 exd4 16 ♖xd4 ♘e8 17 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 18 ♖d2 ♗h6* gives Black the advantage – analysis by Fischer), but it may leave the knight stranded at a7, and Black takes the initiative: 14 ... ♘f4! 15 ♗xf4 (*15 ♘xc8 ♘xe2+ 16 ♔f1 ♖xc8 17 ♔xe2 h6 18 ♘f3 ♘xe4* =) 15 ... exf4 16 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 17 f3 ♘h5 18 ♖d2 c5 – analysis by Boleslavsky. Fischer's recommendation of 14 ... ♗d7 15 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 16 f3 ♖d7! with the threat of ... ♖d4 is also quite good.

13 ... h6!? is a little-tried continuation. In the game Chekhov-Karsa (Lvov 1983) White gained the advantage after 14 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 15 f3 b6?! 16 a4! c6 17 ♘c3 ♖b8 18 c5!, but as shown by Chekhov, 15 ... c6! was stronger.

14 c5!?

Larsen plays energetically, but perhaps 14 a4!? should have been preferred.

14 ... ♘xc5 15 ♖d8+ ♗f8 16 ♘xa7 ♖xa7!

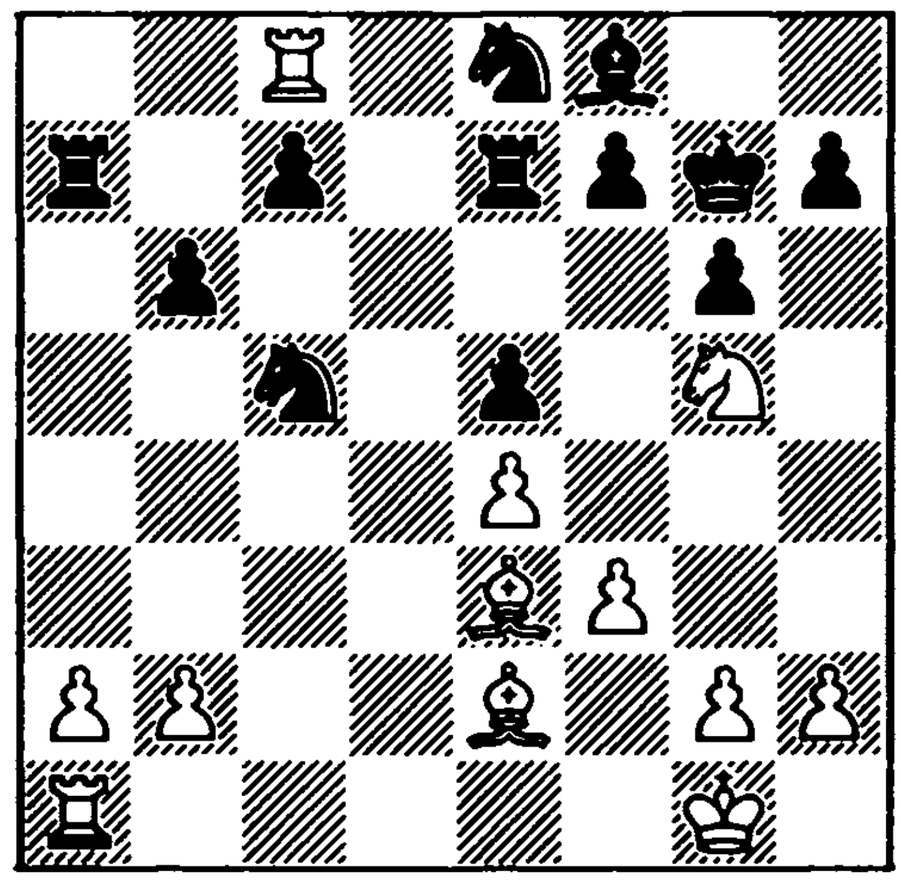
A subtle evaluation of the position. Fischer parts with his light-square bishop, counting on gaining sufficient counter-chances by play on the dark squares. By contrast, after 16 ... ♗b7 17 ♖xa8 ♗xa8 18 f3 White would have retained the better prospects, since on 18 ... c6 he has the reply 19 ♘c8!.

17 ♖xc8 ♔g7

Of course, the e4 pawn could not be taken in view of 19 ♗h6 after the exchange of knights, but the most accurate continuation was 17 ... h6! 18 ♘f3 ♔g7 19 ♗xc5 bxc5 with approximate equality (a line indicated by Fischer). Now White has time to support his e4 pawn with a pawn.

18 f3 ♘e8 *(10)*

10



19 a3?

"Larsen's reluctance to simplify will soon backfire. Correct is 19 ♗xc5! bxc5 20 ♖b8 with theoretical winning chances because of the passed a-pawn. But it would be difficult to make headway because of the opposite coloured bishops" (Fischer).

19 ... ♘d6
20 ♖d8?!

Again White overrates his chances. It was better to play 20 ♖b8, which could have led to a draw after 20 ... ♘d7 21 ♖d8 ♘b7 22 ♖c8 ♘d6 etc.

20 ... h6 21 ♘h3 ♘e6 22 ♖b8 ♖e8 23 ♖xe8 ♘xe8

Fischer's position is now preferable. After the exchange of dark-square bishops, the black knights will acquire an excellent post at d4.

24 ♗b5

This attempt to prevent the bishop from going to c5 does not succeed. 24 ♘f2 looks preferable.

24 ... ♘d6! 25 ♗f1 ♘b7! 26 ♘f2 ♗c5 27 ♗xc5 ♘bxc5 28 ♖d1 h5!

Suppressing the opponent's counter-

play.

28 ... ♘d4 was premature on account of 29 ♘g4 f6 30 f4!.

29 ♖d5?

"Larsen still has illusions, but his game is fast deteriorating. More prudent is 29 ♘d3 ♘xd3 30 ♗xd3 ♘d4 31 ♔f2. White probably should hold the ending despite Black's creeping pressure" (Fischer).

29 ... ♔f6
30 h4 ♔e7!

This modest king move heralds a broad offensive by Black.

31 ♗c4

The e5 pawn could not be taken on account of 31 ... c6, trapping the White rook.

31 ... c6 32 ♖d2 ♘d4 33 ♔f1 f5!

Fischer again combines the solving of strategic problems with tactical nuances in the position. White cannot exchange on f5 on account of 34 ... ♘xf5, with the twin threats of 35 ... ♘e3+ and 35 ... ♘xh4.

34 b4 b5!

An answering blow.

35 ♗g8

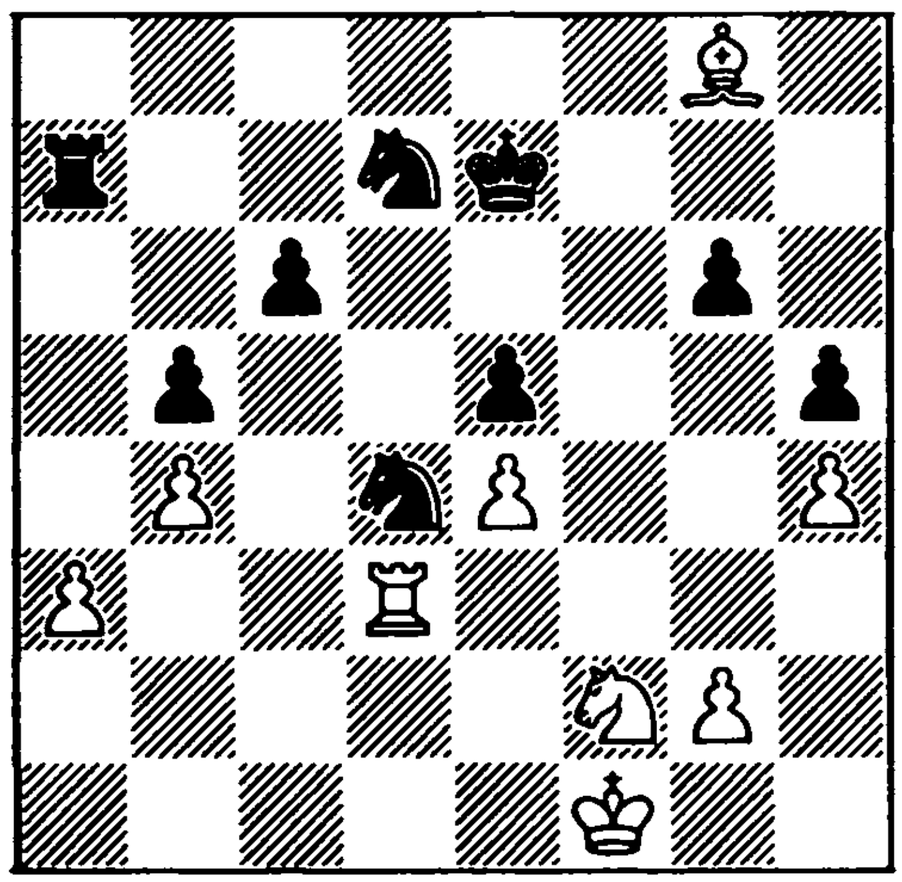
35 ♗xb5 would have failed to 35 ... ♘cb3.

35 ... fxe4!

More tactics! White has to agree to another weakness at e4, since 36 bxc5 is bad on account of 36 ... e3 37 ♖d3 (*37 ♖xd4 exd4* is also hopeless) 37 ... exf2 38 ♔xf2 ♖a8! 39 ♗a2 b4.

36 fxe4 ♘d7
37 ♖d3 *(11)*

11



37 ... ♖a6!

A splendid move, the depth of which is revealed a little later. For the moment Black threatens 38 ... ♘c2, which did not work immediately on account of 38 ♖c3.

38 ♖c3 c5!

How many tactical ideas Fischer discovers in such a seemingly insipid position!

39 g4?

The decisive mistake in time trouble. In Fischer's opinion, the only way for White to battle on was by 39 bxc5 b4 40 ♖c1 ♖xa3 (*40 ... bxa3 41 ♗a2*) 41 c6 ♘b6. But now Black obtains a protected passed pawn on the queenside, which decides the outcome.

39 ... c4!

Not 39 ... ♘f6? 40 ♖xc5.

40 gxh5 gxh5 41 ♗d5 ♘f6 42 ♖g3 ♘xd5 43 exd5 ♖f6 44 ♔g2

The sealed move. It is hard to suggest anything better.

44 ... ♘f5 45 ♖h3 ♖g6+ 46 ♔f3 ♘d4+ 47 ♔e3

47 ♔e4 was no better on account of 47 ... ♔d6.

47 ... ♖g2 48 ♖h1 ♔d6 49 ♘e4+ ♔xd5 50 ♘c3+ ♔e6 51 ♖c1

51 ... ♖c2 was threatened.

51 ... ♖h2 52 a4 ♖h3+ 53 ♔f2 ♘b3 54 ♔g2 ♘xc1 55 ♔xh3 bxa4 56 ♘xa4

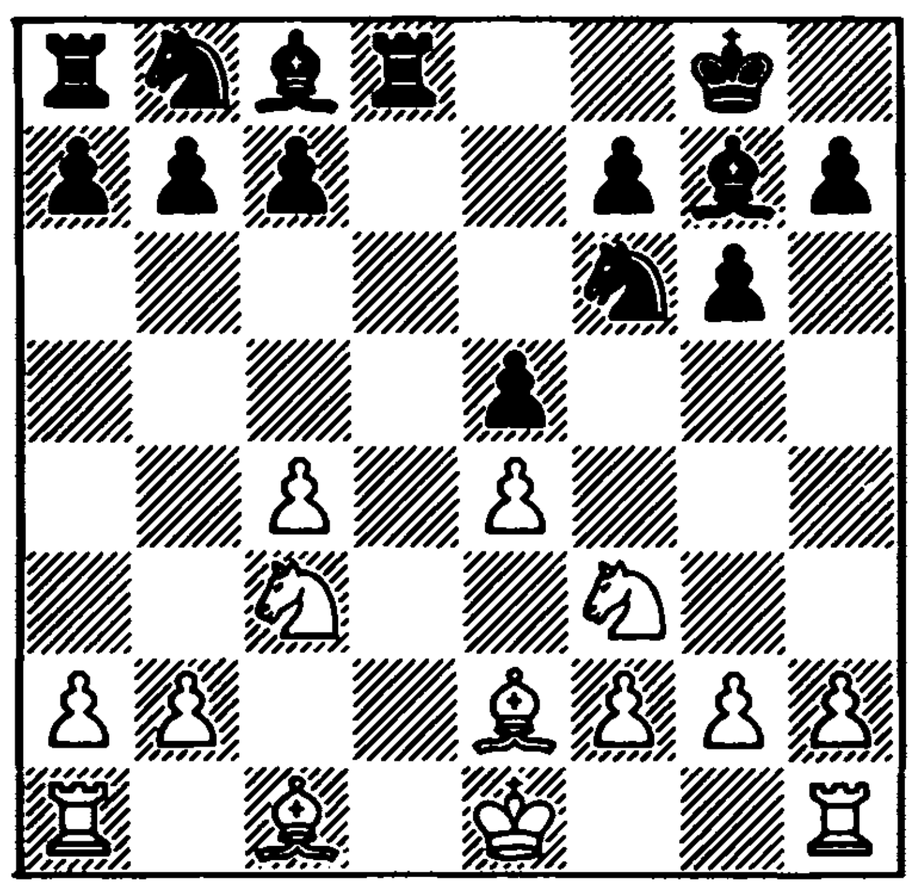
The knight ending is hopeless for White. Now comes an energetic finish:

56 ... ♘e2 57 b5 c3 58 b6 c2 59 ♘c5+ ♔d5 60 ♘b3 (60 ♘d3 ♘f4+) **60 ... ♔c6 61 ♔g2 ♔xb6 White resigns**

Flohr-Geller
17th USSR Championship
Moscow 1949
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 *(12)*

12



9 ♗g5

The most common and probably the strongest move. 9 ♘xe5? is weak: 9 ... ♘xe4 10 ♘xe4 ♗xe5 11 0-0 ♘c6 12 ♖e1 ♔g7, with advantage to Black, Sanchez-Geller, Stockholm Interzonal 1952. And after 9 ♘d5 Black is not obliged to simplify by 9 ... ♘xd5; Tal's move 9 ... ♖d7! gives him good play (cf. Ivkov-Tal, p.13).

9 ... ♘bd7

Not a bad move, but nevertheless not the best. In the event of the natural reply 10 0-0-0 Black must play 10 ... ♖f8 (*10 ... ♖e8? 11 ♘b5*), and after 11 ♘e1 c6 12 ♘c2 ♘c5 13 f3 a5 he has to waste a tempo on . . . ♖e8 (interesting, however, is *11 ♘e1 ♘c5!? 12 f3 ♘e6 13 ♗e3 ♘d4 14 ♘d3 c6!*, with an excellent game for Black. Dragomaretsky-Vepkhvishvili, Moscow 1972). For comparison, after the best continuation 9 ... ♖e8 10 0-0-0 ♘a6! 11 ♘e1 c6 12 ♘c2 ♘c5 13 f3 a5 the black rook is already at e8.

10 ♘d5?!

Now Black obtains an excellent position.

10 ... c6 11 ♘e7+ ♔f8 12 ♘xc8 ♖dxc8!

A subtle move. Geller avoids weakening his a7 pawn, and prepares a different, and surprising, route for his queen's rook.

13 ♘d2 ♘c5
14 f3 ♔e8!

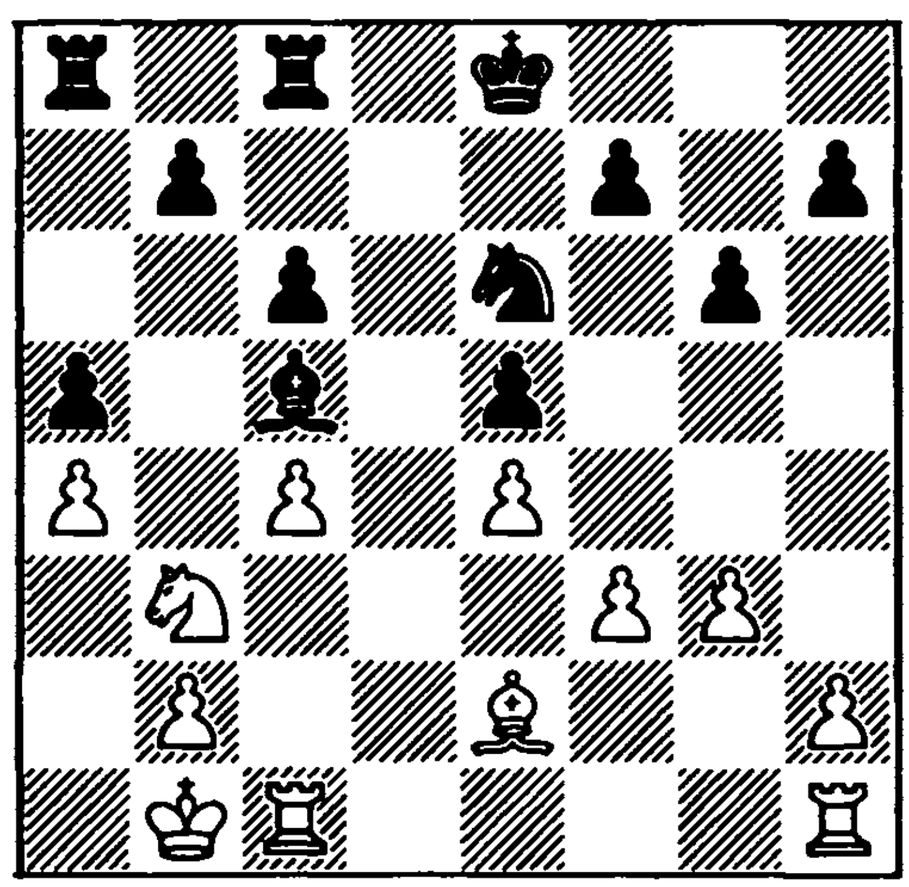
Again splendidly played. The f8 square is vacated for the bishop, which is ready to go to c5. The reader should note the similarity of the plans carried out by Geller in this game, and by Fischer in the previous one, despite the different pawn structures.

15 ♗e3 ♗f8
16 ♗xc5

After this exchange Black's advantage is undisputed, although White can hope for the drawing tendencies of opposite-colour bishops. Other moves also do not promise equality, e.g. 16 ♘b3 ♘xb3 17 axb3 ♘d7 and 18 ... ♗c5.

16 ... ♗xc5 17 ♘b3 ♗b4+ 18 ♔d1 a5 19 a3 ♗e7 20 a4 ♘d7 21 ♔c2 ♘f8 22 ♖ac1 ♘e6 23 ♔b1 ♗c5 24 g3 *(13)*

13



Both sides have completed their mobilisation, and Black must find a plan to strengthen his position.

24 ... ♖a6!

Brilliantly played! Geller succeeds in probing the most vulnerable weakness in White's position. The rook is transferred to b4.

25 ♗f1 ♖b6 26 ♔c2 ♖b4 27 ♗h3 ♖xc4+?

A hasty move, which cancels out the fruits of his excellent preceding play. After 27 ... ♗e3! Black would have won a pawn for not the slightest compensation. Now the game goes into a rook ending.

28 ♔b1 ♖xc1+ 29 ♖xc1 ♗b4 30 ♘c5 ♗xc5 31 ♗xe6 fxe6 32 ♖xc5 b6 33 ♖xe5 ♔f7

In the rook ending White has to play accurately to gain a draw, in view of the dangerous position of his rook.

34 ♖g5?

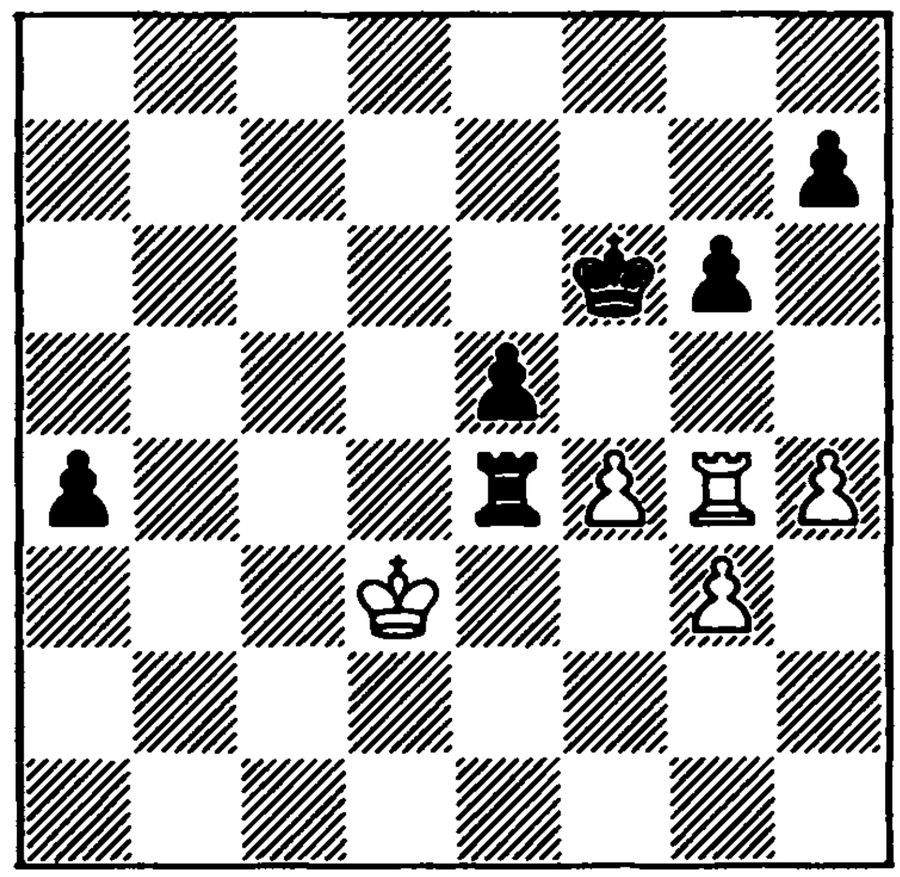
The decisive mistake, in time trouble. 34 f4 or 34 ♔c2 was correct.

34 ... ♖d8 35 ♔c2 ♖d4 36 b3 ♔f6 37 h4

37 ♖g4 e5 38 ♖h4 h5 would not have changed things.

37 ... e5 38 ♖g4 b5 39 axb5 cxb5 40 ♔c3 a4 41 bxa4 bxa4 42 f4 ♖xe4 43 ♔d3 *(14)*

14



43 ... ♔g7!!

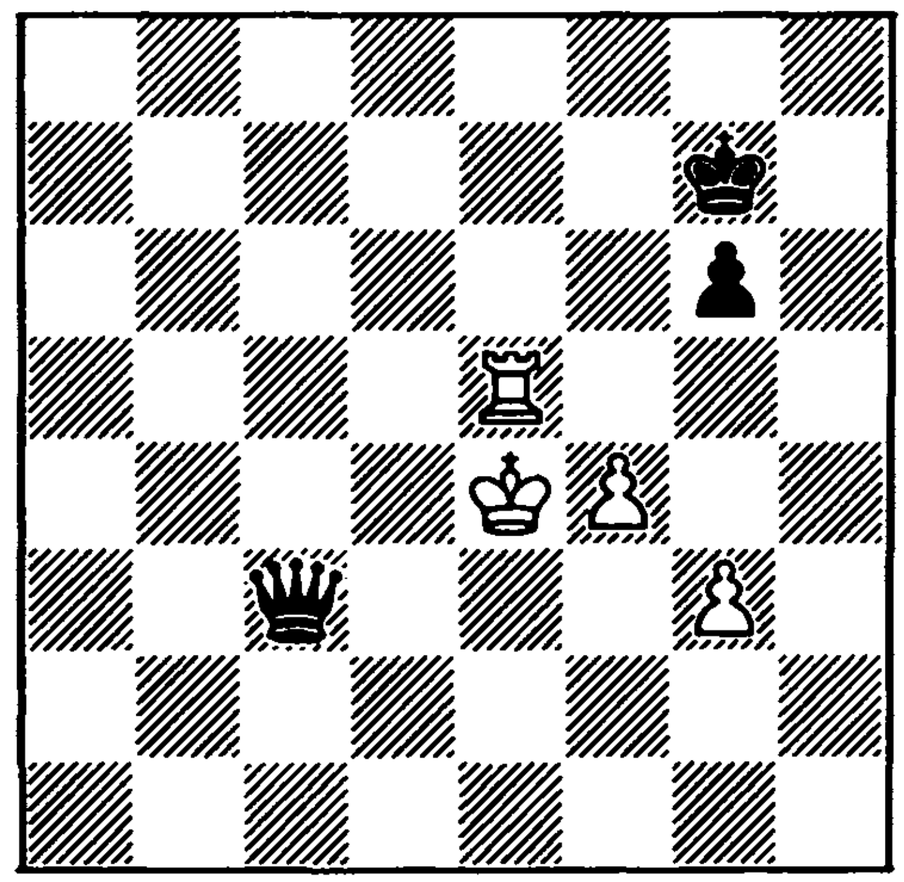
The desperate position of the white rook allows Black to make this pretty move.

44 h5 a3?!

44 ... ♖b4 45 ♔c3 a3 would not have allowed White to prolong the resistance.

45 ♔xe4 a2 46 hxg6 hxg6 47 ♖g5 a1=♕ 48 ♖xe5 ♕c3 *(15)*

15



To gain a draw White was short of just one move. Were his king able to reach g2, the win for Black would become impossible. But now Black drives the white king to the edge of the board, after which, by the use of zugzwang, the rook is forced to leave g5 and the g3 pawn is won. The game concluded:

49 ♖g5 ♔f6 50 ♔d5 ♕d3+ 51 ♔c5 ♔f7 52 ♔c6 ♕d4 53 ♔b5 ♕c3 54 ♔b6 ♕c4 55 ♔b7 ♕e6 56 ♔c7 ♔f6 57 ♔b7 ♕d6 58 ♔c8 ♕c6+ 59 ♔d8 ♕b7 60 ♖e5 ♕b6+ 61 ♔c8 ♔f7 White resigns

After 62 ♖g5 ♔e7 he ends up in zugzwang.

Lisitsin-Ragozin
21st USSR Championship
Kiev 1954
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 d6 2 d4 ♘f6 3 c4 g6 4 ♘c3 ♗g7 5 e4 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♗g5 ♖e8 10 0-0-0

In recent tournaments 10 ♘d5 has occasionally been played. Black must be careful, since the position is not yet simplified, and superficial play can lead to difficulties. For example: 10 ... ♘xd5 11 cxd5 c6 12 ♗c4 cxd5 13 ♗xd5 ♘c6 14 0-0-0 ♘b4 15 ♗b3 ♗e6?! 16 ♗xe6 ♖xe6 17 ♔b1 ♘a6 18 ♖d5!, with a great advantage to White, Andersson-Gunawan, Indonesia 1983.

Uhlmann has an interesting way of handling this position: 13 ... ♘a6! 14 ♔e2 (after *14 a3 ♘c7! 15 ♗b3 ♗g4* the knight is quickly switched to d4) 14 ... ♘b4 15 ♗c4 ♗g4 16 ♖hc1 ♘c6 17 ♔f1 ♗xf3 18 gxf3 ♘d4, and Black has overcome all his difficulties (Chekhov-Uhlmann, Halle 1984).

10 ... h6

The immediate 10 ... ♘a6 is also perfectly possible, when 11 ♘xe5?! is dubious in view of the strong reply 11 ... ♘c5! (an idea which first occurred in the present game). For example: 12 ♘f3 ♘fxe4 13 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 14 ♗e3 ♘xf2! 15 ♗xf2 ♗h6+! 16 ♔b1 ♖xe2, and Black has a decisive advantage (Malich-Peterson, Riga 1961).

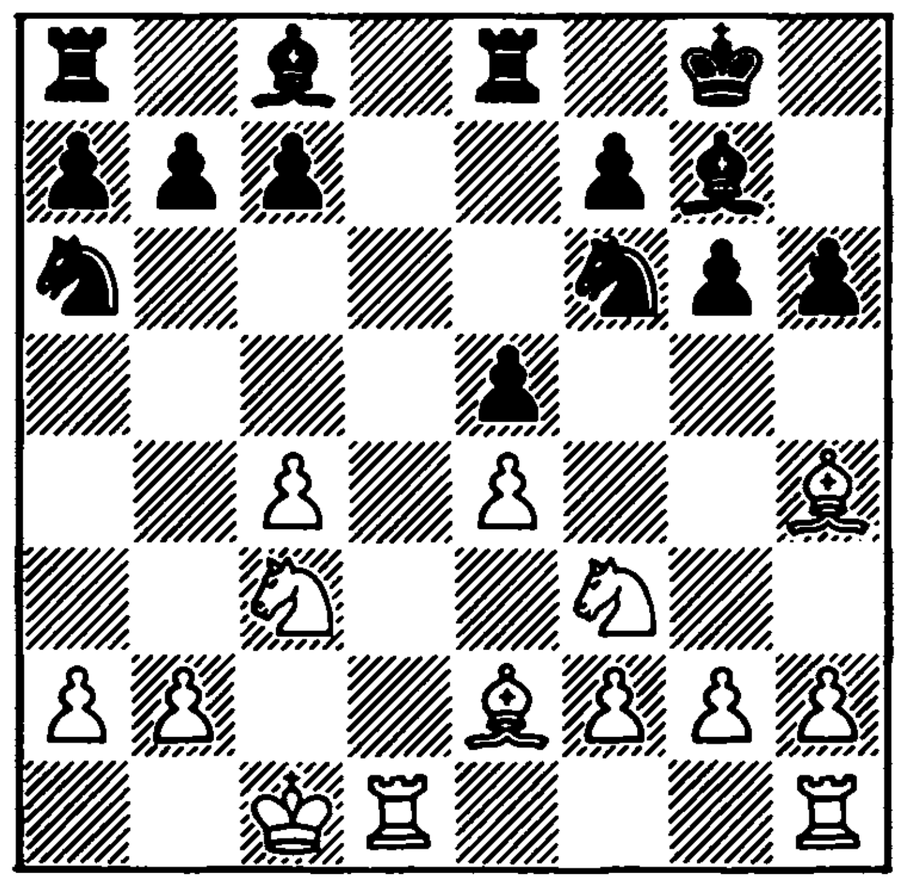
But the careless 10 ... c6?! is energetically refuted: 11 ♘xe5! ♘xe4 12 ♘xe4 ♗xe5 13 f4! ♗f5 14 ♘g3 ♗c7 15 ♘xf5 ♖xe2 16 ♘h6+!, when the game Orenburg-Volgograd (Russian Federation Towns' Championship by Telegraph, 1952) continued 16 ... ♔f8 17 g3 a5? (*17 ... ♗a5* is more tenacious) 18 ♖he1! ♖xe1 19 ♖xe1 ♗d6 20 ♘f5!, and Black resigned.

11 ♗h4

Nei-Tal (Tallinn 1973) went 11 ♗e3 c6 12 ♘e1 ♗e6, after which indecisive play by White allowed Black to assume the initiative: 13 f3?! (*14 ♘c2* was better, followed by doubling rooks on the d-file and the advance of the queenside pawns) 13 ... ♗f8 14 b3?! (*14 ♘c2* was again more logical) 14 ... ♘a6 15 ♘c2 ♔g7 16 ♖d2 ♘d7 17 ♖hd1 ♘b6! – Black's knights control the queenside, and the kingside situation is also more favourable for him.

11 ... ♘a6 *(16)*

16



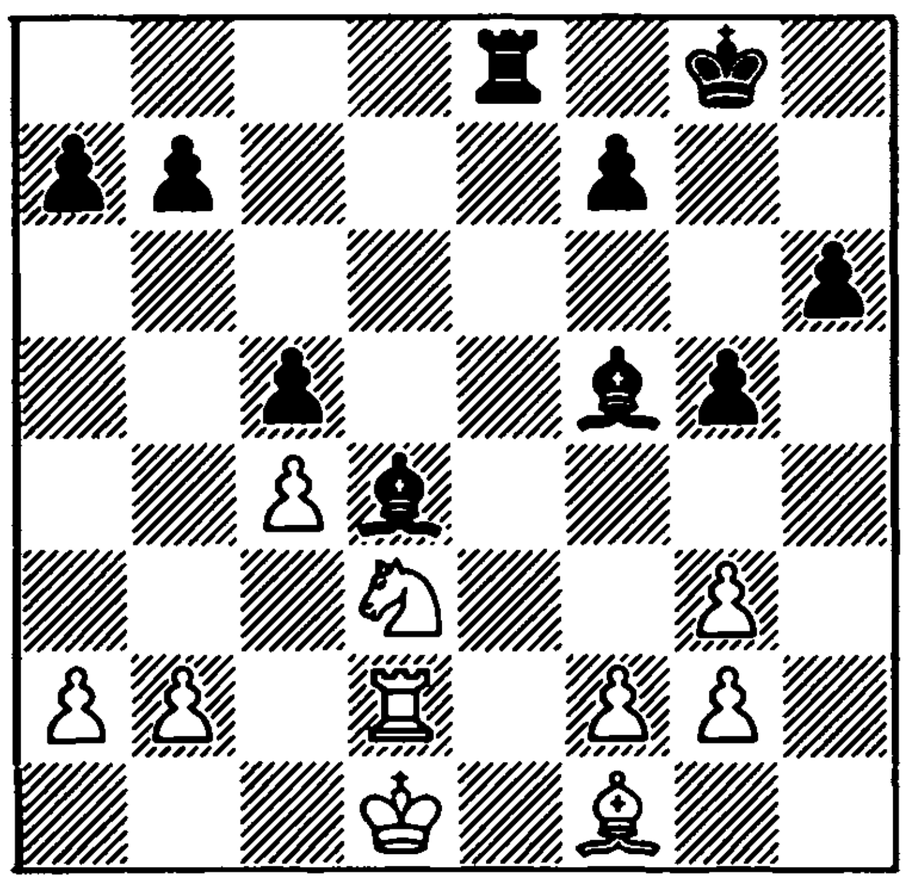
12 ♘xe5?! ♘c5!

An excellent idea. White was counting on 12 ... ♖xe5 13 ♖d8+ ♘e8 14 f4 ♖e6 15 ♗g4 ♔f8 16 ♗xe6 fxe6 17 e5 with the better position. But now Black regains his pawn and seizes the initiative.

13 ♘d3 ♘fxe4 14 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 15 ♖he1 g5! 16 ♗g3 ♗f5 17 ♗f1 ♘xg3 18 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 19 hxg3 ♗d4 20 ♖d2 c5 21 ♔d1 *(17)*

White has no compensation at all for the opponent's advantage of the two bishops. The dark-square bishop, supported by the c5 pawn, is especially strong. Strategically, Black's game is close to being won, but in order to win he must gradually and unhurriedly strengthen his position, seizing space over the entire board. Here the improvement of the king's position by 21 ... ♔g7 suggests itself.

17



21 ... a5

In positions with the advantage of the two bishops, the way for the bishops should be cleared by pawns. In such cases the advance of the rook's pawns is employed quite often, assisting the seizure of space and the squeezing of the enemy position from the flanks. In itself the move of the a-pawn is not bad, but it is not altogether opportune. Possibly Black wanted to prevent 22 b4, but there was no need for this, since on 22 b4? there would have followed 22 ... ♗c3 23 ♖c2 ♗xd3 24 ♗xd3 ♖e1 mate.

22 ♘e1 ♗b1 23 a3 ♗a2 24 ♘c2 ♗xb2?

A mistake. The game now goes into an ending with rooks and opposite-colour bishops; Black has an extra pawn, but it is doubtful whether it can be realised. 24 ... ♗b3 was correct, when he retains all the advantages of his position, since on 25 ♔c1 there follows 25 ... ♖e5 26 ♘xd4? ♖e1+.

25 ♘a1!

Perhaps this unusual move was overlooked by Ragozin.

25 ... ♗c3 26 ♖xa2 ♖e1+ 27 ♔c2 ♗xa1 28 ♗d3 ♗d4 29 ♔b3 ♖d1 30 ♗e4 ♖f1

Black gives up his queenside pawns, in return picking up two pawns on the kingside. White gains sufficient counterplay with his outside passed a-pawn, but other continuations too did not promise Black any real winning chances. For example, 30 ... b6 31 f3 ♖c1 32 ♗d5.

31 ♔a4 ♗xf2 32 ♗xb7 ♗xg3 33 ♔xa5 ♖b1 34 ♗c6 ♗c7+ 35 ♔a4 ♖f1?

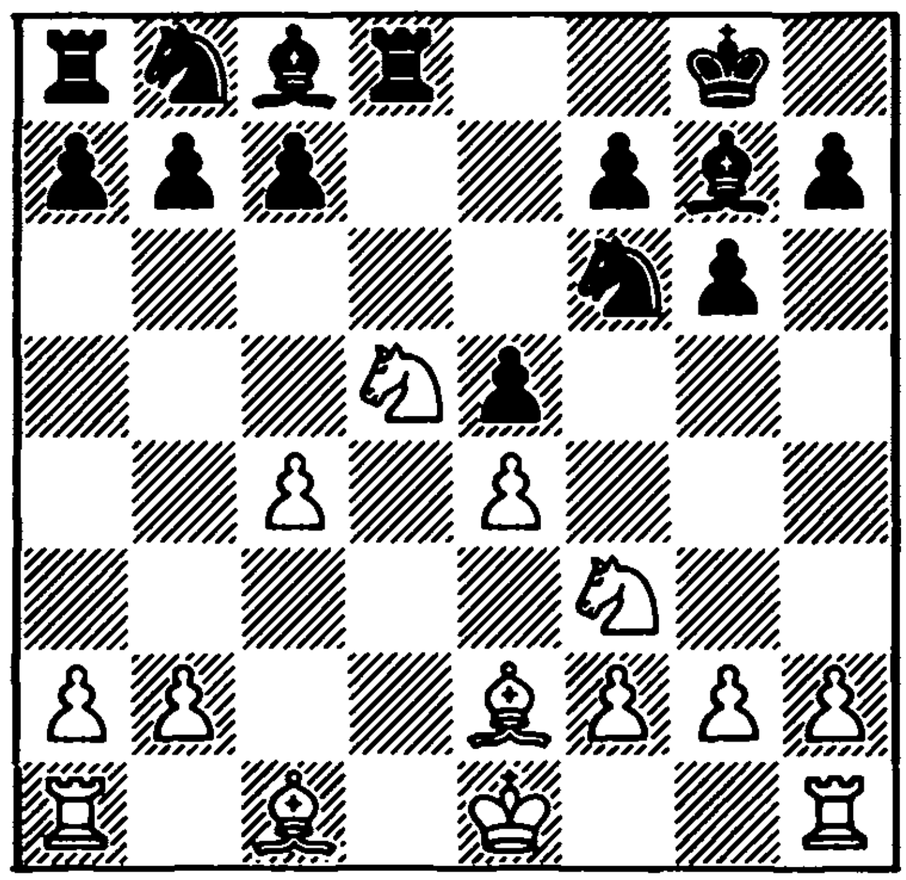
A time trouble mistake. The white king should not have been allowed onto the b-file. Now Black even loses. Correct is 35 ... f5 with a probable draw.

36 ♔b5 ♗d6 37 ♗d5 ♖b1+? 38 ♔c6 ♗f4 39 a4 ♔g7 40 a5 f5 41 a6 ♗b8 42 a7 ♗xa7 43 ♖xa7+ ♔f6 44 ♔xc5 h5 Black resigns

Ivkov-Tal
Bled 1961
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♘d5 *(18)*

18



White's direct ninth move essentially signifies a peace offer. Black seems obliged to exchange in the centre – 9 ... ♘xd5 10 cxd5 c6, but then comes 11 ♗g5! "... and by accurate play Black gains only a draw. 9 ... ♘a6 10 ♗g5 ♖d6 11 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 12 ♗xf6 ♖xf6 13 ♘xe5 ♖e6 14 f4 f6 15 ♘g4 is also unfavourable" (Tal). And yet Black has a possibility of complicating the play!

9 ... ♖d7!

A brilliant move. In contrast to the similar position in the Sämisch Variation (cf. the game Botvinnik-Tal p.3) White's e4 pawn is not defended, a factor which Tal emphasizes with his seemingly eccentric move. White has a choice: to simplify the position by 10 ♘xf6+ or to accept the challenge with 10 ♘xe5. The forcing variation 10 ♘xe5 ♘xd5 11 ♘xd7 ♘b4 12 ♘xb8 ♘c2+ 13 ♔d1 ♘xa1 14 ♗f4 ♗xb2 15 ♗xc7 a5! leads to an unusual position ". . . in which White must somehow prevent the manoeuvre ... a4-a3 followed by ... ♘b3, whereas it is much more difficult for his knight to escape from b8, although he is a pawn up" (Tal). We should add that Tal's idea was destined to have a great future. No one in fact risked taking the e5 pawn on move 10, which is equivalent to the above variation being evaluated in favour of Black. In addition, the move ... ♖d8-d7 also proves to be good in other lines of the King's Indian Defence, for example: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 dxe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♘d5 ♖d7! (Tal-Gligorić, Candidates, Belgrade 1968).

10 ♘xf6+

Over this move Ivkov thought for an hour and a half, evaluating the consequences of 10 ♘xe5. In the end the difference in time on the clocks was to play a decisive role in deciding the outcome of the game.

10 ... ♗xf6
11 c5 ♘c6

Of course, Black could have played the quiet 11 ... ♖d8, but Tal does not object to gaining the advantage of the two bishops at the cost of a worsening of his queenside pawn structure.

12 ♗b5 ♖d8 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 0-0 ♗g4 15 ♗e3

White does not have time to put pressure on the e5 pawn by developing his bishop on the long diagonal, since on 15 b3 there follows 15 ... ♖d3.

15 ... ♖ab8 16 b3 ♗g7 17 h3

On 17 ♘d2 Black has the unpleasant 17 ... f5 18 h3 f4!.

17 ... ♗xf3

The Ex-World Champion, annotating the game in the tournament bulletin, questions this decision, and suggests 17 ... ♗d7.

18 gxf3 f5
19 ♖ad1?!

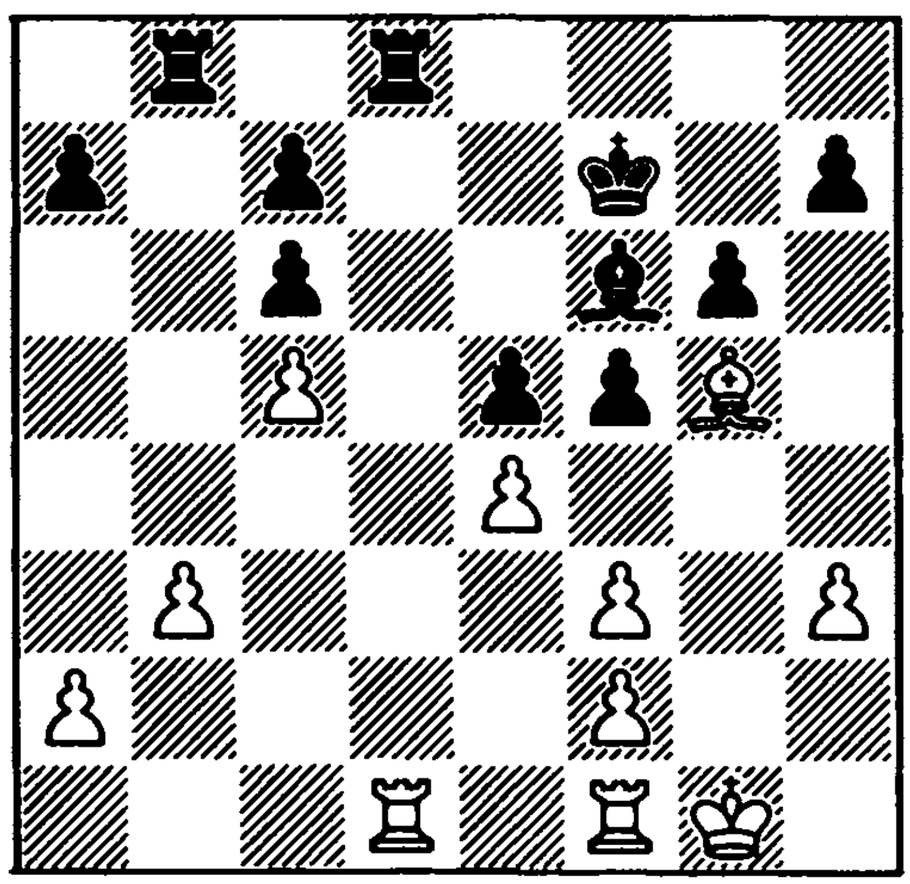
As shown by Tal, 19 ♖fd1! was stronger, leaving open the manoeuvre ♖ac1-c4-a4 for his queen's rook. In this case White was evidently afraid of 19 ... f4, but he overlooked that after 20 ♗d2 ♖d3 21 ♗a5 Black cannot take the f3 pawn on account of 22 ♔g2.

19 ... ♔f7
20 ♗g5?!

The prelude to a mistake. The time deficit begins to tell increasingly on Ivkov's play. Correct was 20 ♗d2! ♖d4 21 ♗g5 (indicated by Tal).

20 ... ♗f6 *(19)*

19



21 ♗xf6?

A positional mistake. After the exchange of bishops the way is opened for Black's king to attack the weak white pawns at h3 and f3.

21 ... ♔xf6
22 ♖fe1 ♖d4?

Gligorić has found an apt expression for such instances: "the law of mutual mistakes". The opponent's uncertain play in time trouble and the anticipation of a quick win make Tal less careful, and this allows the Yugoslav grandmaster to gain excellent drawing chances. Black should first have played 22 ... f4.

23 ♖xd4 exd4
24 exf5!

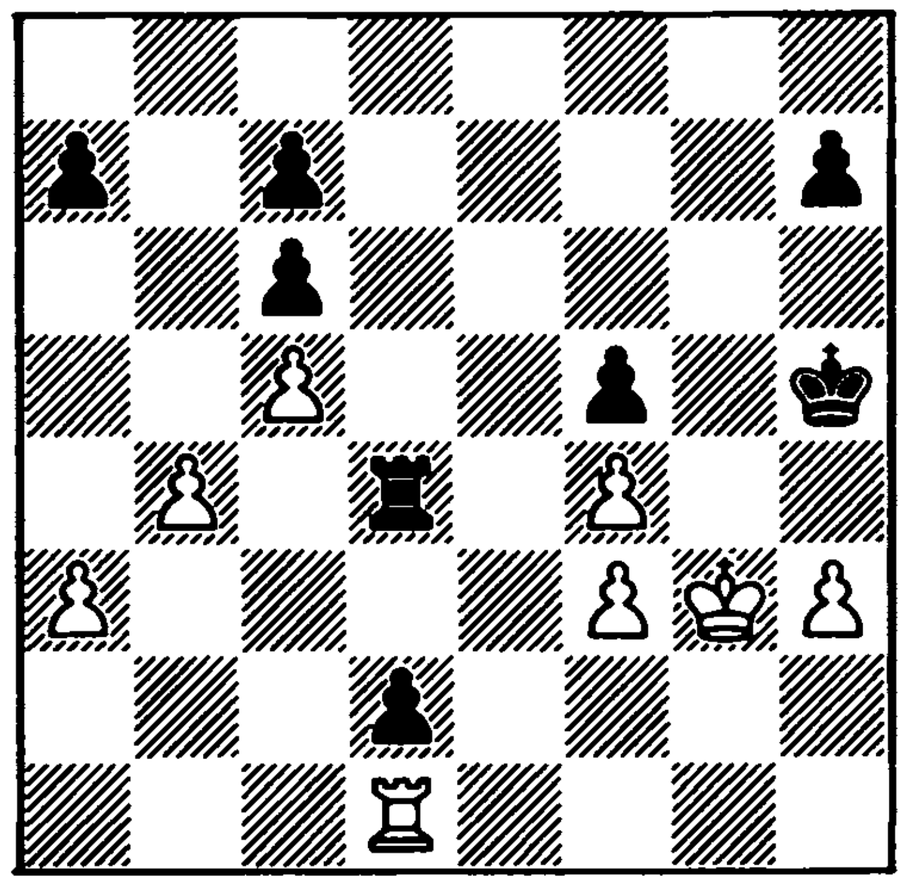
Black underestimated this strong move, expecting only 24 e5+ ♔e6 25 f4 ♔d5 26 e6 d3 27 ♖e5+ ♔d4 28 ♔f1 ♔c3 29 ♔e1 ♔c2.

24 ... gxf5
25 f4!

The main idea of White's defence is to cut off the enemy king from the passed d-pawn.

25 ... d3 26 ♔g2 d2 27 ♖d1 ♖d8 28 ♔f3 ♔g6 29 b4 ♔h5 30 ♔g3 ♔g6 31 f3 ♔h5 32 a3 ♖d4 *(20)*

20



33 ♔f2?

A mistake in time trouble. 33 h4! was stronger, exploiting the fact that the h-pawn is immune after the withdrawal of the white king to f2 on the following move, on account of mate by the rook at h1.

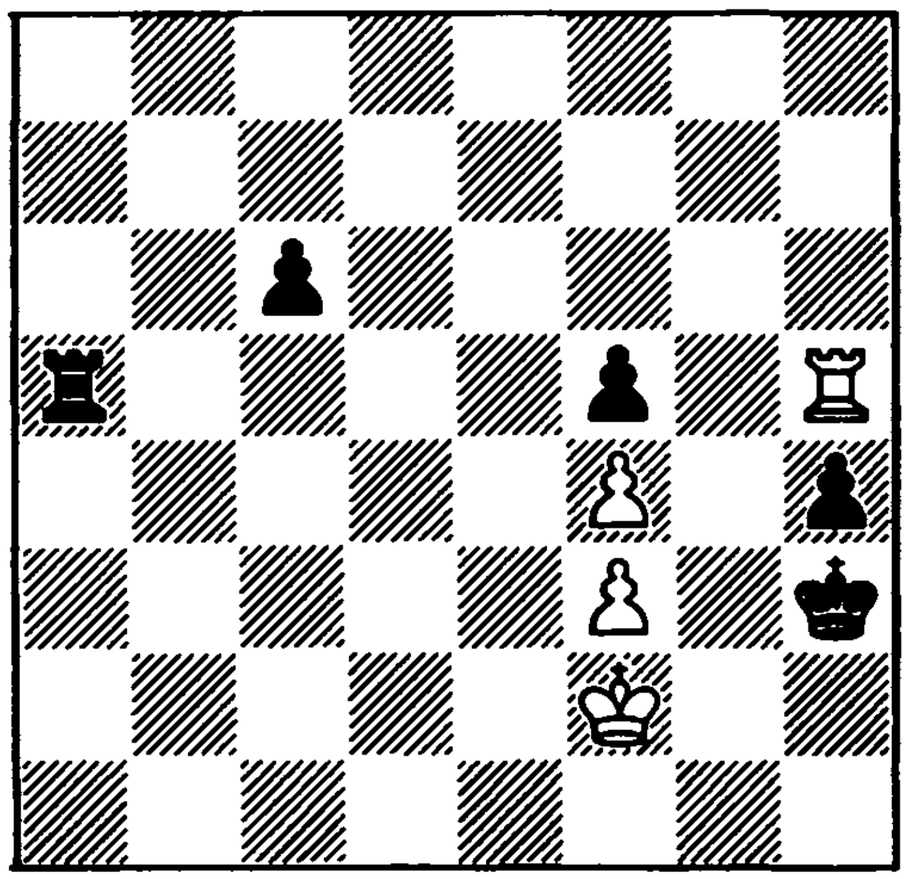
"After 33 h4 White's only concern would probably have been to avoid losing on time" (Tal).

33 ... ♔h4 34 ♔g2 ♖d3 35 ♔f2 h5 36 ♔g2 ♖xa3 37 ♖xd2 ♖b3 38 ♖a2?

The decisive error. After 38 ♖d7! the best that Black can count on is a theoretically drawn ending with h- and f-pawns.

38 ... ♖xb4 39 ♖xa7 ♖b2+ 40 ♔f1 ♖c2 41 ♖xc7 ♖xc5 42 ♔f2 ♔xh3 43 ♖g7 h4 44 ♖g5 ♖a5 45 ♖h5 *(21)*

21



"In this position Black has a fairly quiet way to win, based on zugzwang: after 45 ... ♖b5 46 ♖g5 ♖c5 White must either let the black king through to h2 (*47 ♖h5 ♖c2+ 48 ♔e3 ♔g3 49 ♖g5+ ♔h2*), when the h-pawn begins advancing, or allow the advance of the c-pawn (*47 ♖g8 ♖c2+ 49 ♔e3 c5*). In my adjournment analysis I was unable to find a defence for White in this variation, but not long before the resumption I managed to find another winning plan, which I decided to carry out. This plan is based on the tactical features of the position and came as a surprise to my opponent" (Tal).

45 ... ♖a2+
46 ♔e3 ♔g2!

Very pretty. The h4 and f5 pawns are left undefended.

47 ♖xh4

47 ♖xf5 h3 48 ♖g5+ ♔f1 was totally bad, while on 47 ♖g5+ Tal had prepared 47 ... ♔f1 48 ♖h5 c5! 49 ♖xh4 ♖a3+ 50 ♔d2 ♖xf3, and wins.

47 ... ♖a3+ 48 ♔e2 (48 ♔d4 ♔g3) **48 ... ♖xf3 49 ♖h5 ♖xf4 50 ♖g5+ ♔h3 51 ♔e3 ♖f1 52 ♔e2**

This loses quickly. The main variation of Tal's analysis was 52 ♖g6 c5 53 ♖c6 ♔g3 54 ♖g6+ ♔h4 55 ♖c6 f4+ 56 ♔e4 (*56 ♔e2 ♖c1 57 ♔f3 ♔g5*) 56 ... ♔g5! 57 ♖xc5+ ♔g4.

52 ... ♔h4!

Now Black coordinates his pieces and obtains an easily won ending with two extra pawns.

53 ♖g6 ♖c1 54 ♔f3 ♖c4 55 ♔e3 c5 56 ♔f3 ♖g4 57 ♖c6 c4 58 ♖c5 ♔g5 59 ♖c6 ♖e4 60 ♖c8 ♔f6 61 ♖c5 ♔e6 62 ♔g2 f4 63 ♔f3 ♖d4 64 ♖c7 ♔d5 65 ♖c8 ♖d3+ 66 ♔xf4 c3 67 ♖c7 ♔d4 68 ♖c8 ♖d2 White resigns

Larsen-Hübner
Leningrad Interzonal 1973
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 g6 2 c4 ♗g7 3 d4 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 0-0 5 e4 d6 6 ♗e3

This move, often employed by the famous Danish grandmaster, is a fairly dangerous weapon against the King's Indian Defence. White exploits the fact that, for the moment, the preparatory move h2-h3 is not essential, and prepares an attack on the kingside. It is curious that the idea of 6 ♗e3, which most probably belongs to grandmaster Sultan Khan, was not appreciated by his contemporaries, and had to await its time for more than thirty years . . .

6 ... e5

The most natural reply. 6 ... ♘g4 is hardly good enough for equality, since after 7 ♗g5 h6 8 ♗h4 or 7 ... c5 8 d5 the black knight at g4 is badly placed. On 6 ... ♘bd7 White can transpose into a favourable line of the Makogonov Variation: 7 h3! e5 8 d5 ♘c5 9 ♘d2 a5 10 ♗e2 ♘fd7 11 g4 f5 12 gxf5 gxf5 13 exf5 ♘f6 14 ♕c2 e4 15 0-0-0 ♗xf5 16 ♖dg1 (Larsen-Reshevsky, Sousse Interzonal 1967), or 9 ... ♘e8 10 h4 f5 11 h5 ♘f6 12 hxg6 hxg6 13 ♕e2! a6 14 0-0-0 (Larsen-Garcia, Havana 1967).

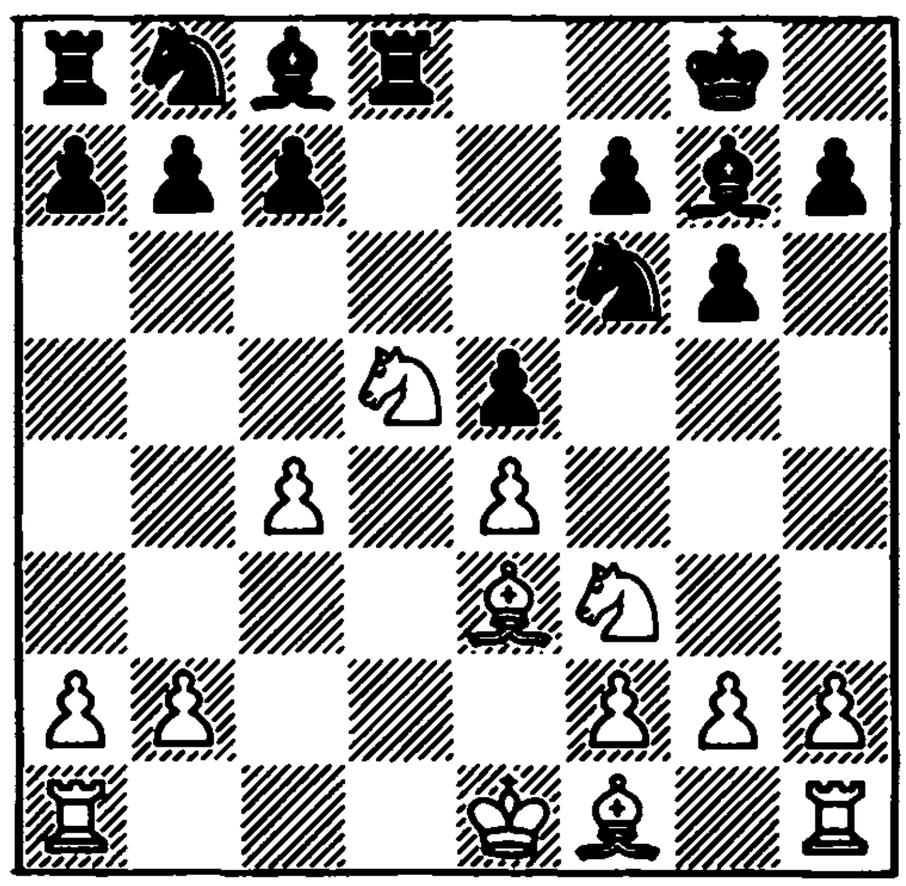
Black can also consider undermining the white centre by 6 ... c5!? 7 dxc5 (*7 d5* leads to a Benoni formation) 7 ... ♕a5 8 ♗d3 dxc5 9 h3 ♘c6 10 0-0 ♘d7! 11 ♗d2 ♕d8!, e.g. 12 ♖e1 b6 13 ♗f1 ♗b7, with a good position. This set-up was suggested by the Soviet master Petrushin.

7 dxe5!?

It is the exchange on e5 that, strictly speaking, constitutes Larsen's idea. White hopes to gain a slight advantage in the endgame, relying on his better development, well placed bishop at e3, and the possibility of finding for his light-square bishop a better square than the classical e2.

7 ... dxe5 8 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 9 ♘d5 *(22)*

22



9 ... ♘xd5?!

Black follows the path of least resistance. His defensive problems are also not solved by 9 ... ♘e8?!: after 10 0-0-0 (threatening ♘*e7*+) 10 ... ♖d7 11 ♗e2 c6 12 ♘c3 f6 13 c5! he has a dismal position (Larsen-Miagmarsuren, Sousse Interzonal 1967).

But Tal's idea of 9 ... ♖d7! came particularly into consideration. Tal himself was unable to combat his invention: in the game Tal-Gligorić (Candidates Match, Belgrade 1968) Black gained a slight advantage after 10 0-0-0?! ♘c6 11 ♗d3 ♘g4! 12 ♗c5 ♘d4! In his game against Kavalek (Bugojno 1980), Larsen played more strongly: 10 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 11 c5! ♖e7 (instead *11* ... ♘*c6* or *11* ... ♖*d8* is interesting) 12 0-0-0 ♘c6 13 ♗c4 ♗g4 14 ♗d5 ♘d8 15 h3 ♗xf3 16 gxf3 c6 17 ♗c4 ♘e6 18 ♖d6!.

Fischer's recommendation of 9 ... ♘a6 is also quite good, for example: 10 0-0-0 ♗g4 11 h3 ♗xf3 12 gxf3 c6 13 ♘xf6+ ♗xf6 14 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 15 c5 ♘b4, with sufficient counterchances for Black (Rivas-Kupreichik, Hastings 1981/82).

10 cxd5 c6 11 ♗c4 cxd5 12 ♗xd5 ♘c6 13 ♗xc6 bxc6 14 0-0

White's position is the more pleasant, but that is all. Black has serious compensation for the weakness of his queenside pawns in the shape of his two bishops.

14 ... f5?

An impulsive move. Black's activity on the kingside is illusory, whereas the weakness of his e5 pawn becomes serious. Much stronger was the manoeuvre 14 ... ♗a6 15 ♖fc1 ♗d3 16 ♘d2 ♗f8, and if 17 a3 f5!, suggested by B.Vladimirov.

15 ♖fc1 a5
16 ♖c5! a4

As a result of his incautious 14th

move, Black is forced to seek counter-chances in a position with opposite-colour bishops, since 16 ... ♖e8 is quite hopeless for him.

17 ♖ac1 ♖b8
18 ♘xe5 ♗xe5

18 ... ♖xb2 19 ♘xc6 ♖e8 20 ♘d4 is even worse for Black.

19 ♖xe5 ♖xb2
20 h4! ♖b4!

In endings with rooks and opposite-colour bishops the placing of the kings plays a major role. Had he captured the a2 pawn, Hübner would have risked coming under a strong attack, for example: 20 ... ♖xa2 21 ♗g5 ♖f8 22 ♗h6 ♖d8 23 ♖e7, and no defence is apparent against the threat of ♖xc6-c7.

21 ♗g5 ♖f8 22 ♗h6 ♖d8 23 ♖e7 ♖xe4 24 ♖g7+ ♔h8 25 ♖a7!

Temporarily Black has even won a pawn, but his king is in danger. 26 ♗g7+ and 27 ♗a1 is threatened.

25 ... ♔g8
26 f3

On 26 ♗g7? Black had prepared 26 ... ♖d7!.

26 ... ♖e6 27 ♖c4 ♖d7 28 ♖cxa4?!

The Danish grandmaster evidently assumed that, with the exchange of one pair of rooks, the passed a-pawn would ensure him a great advantage. As the further course of the game shows, 28 ♖cxa4 gives Black serious saving chances, whereas 28 ♖a8! ♖d8 29 ♖cxa4 would have forced him to conduct a difficult defence.

28 ... ♔f7
29 ♖xd7+

Now on 29 ♖a8 Black had the reply 29 ... ♖e8.

29 ... ♗xd7 30 ♖a7 ♖d6 31 ♖a8

Larsen tries to worsen the opponent's position by the threat of an attack on the h7 pawn. The immediate 31 a4 c5 32 a5 ♔e6 would have given Black good counterplay.

31 ... ♔e6

Hübner avoids the passive 31 ... ♗e8 and parts with a pawn, pinning his hopes on active counterplay.

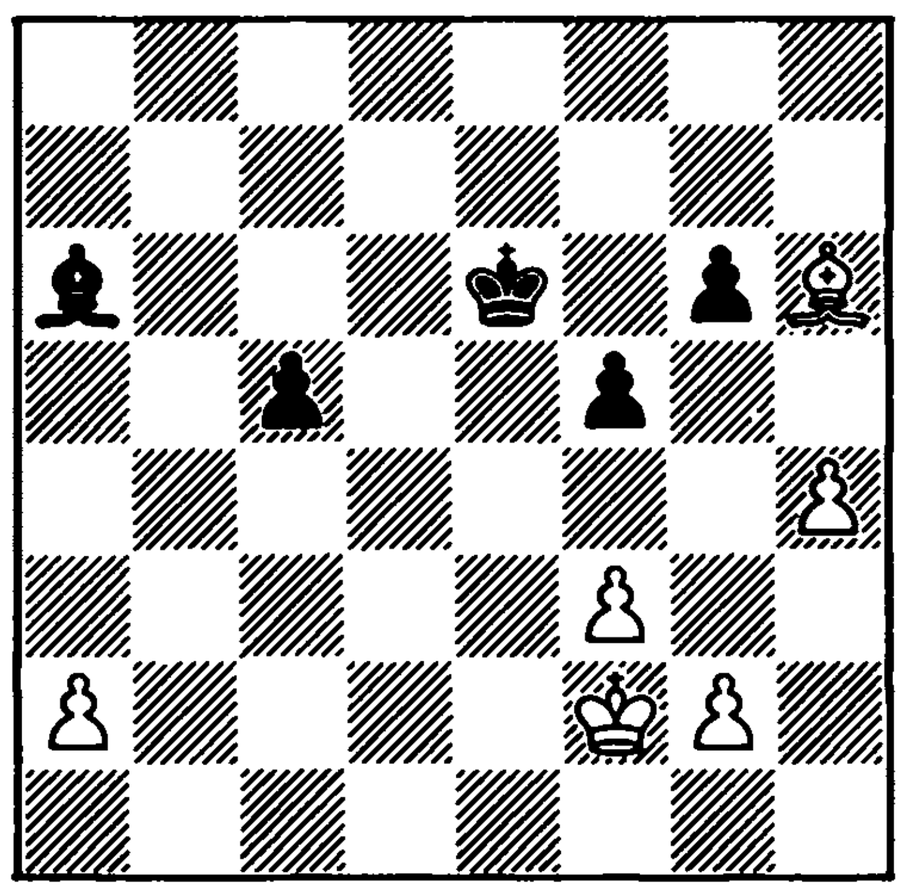
32 ♖h8 c5
33 ♖xh7 ♗b5?!

Black was probably short of time. There was no need to allow White the chance of returning his rook to the queenside. After 33 ... c4! Hübner did not have to fear either 34 ♖g7 ♗e8, or 34 ♗f8 ♖d1+.

34 ♖a7 ♖a6 35 ♖xa6+ ♗xa6 36 ♔f2

(23)

23



An ending with opposite-colour bishops has been reached, with White a pawn up. White's plan is to create a passed pawn on the kingside, which will divert one of the enemy pieces, and then to approach with his king that passed pawn which is being blockaded by the bishop. Black must try to prevent the white king from reaching

g5 and to create counterplay by advancing his c-pawn.

36 ... ♗b5?

The advance of the a-pawn did not present much of a threat. Correct was 36 ... ♔d5!, and if 37 a4 c4 38 ♔e3 c3. It is difficult for White to strengthen his position, since on 39 ♔f4 there follows 39 ... ♗f1, and 40 g3?? is not possible on account of 40 ... c2.

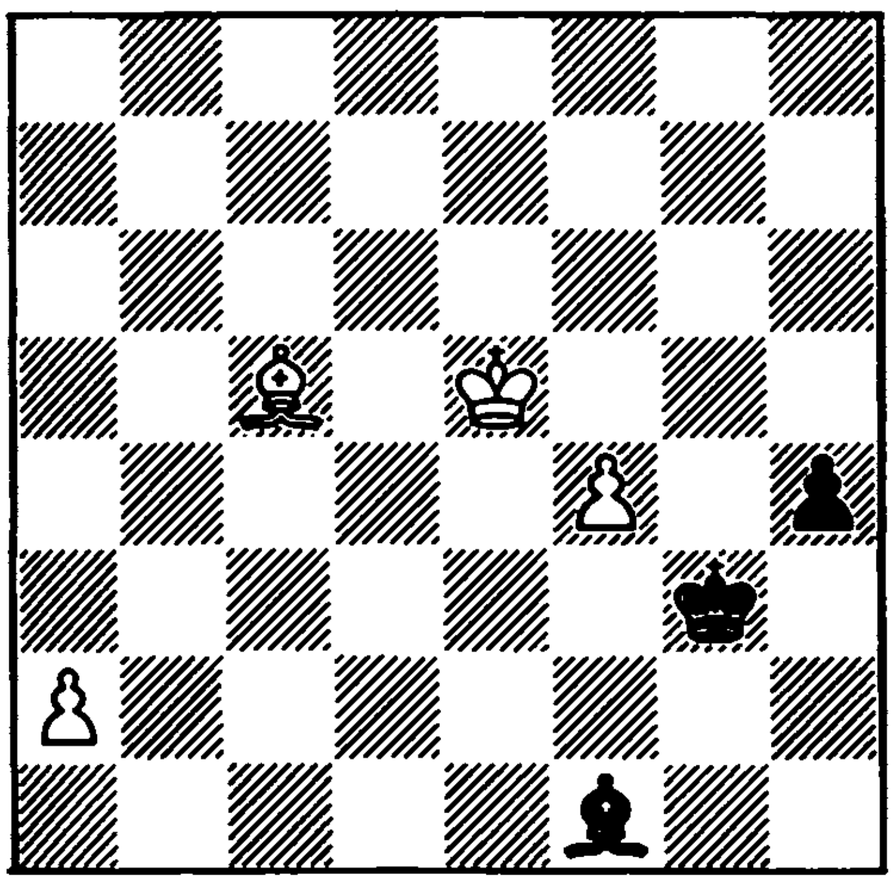
37 ♔e3 ♔e5 38 ♗g7+ ♔e6 39 ♗f8?!

For this move there was no necessity. 39 ♔f4 was more accurate.

39 ... ♔d5
40 ♔f4 c4?!

In the tournament bulletin Vladimirov showed that after 40 ... ♔d4 Black could have counted on saving the game. The main variation of his analysis runs 41 h5 gxh5 42 ♔xf5 ♗f1 43 g3 ♔e3 44 f4 ♔f2 45 ♗xc5+ ♔xg3 46 ♔e5 h4 *(24)*.

24



The Soviet master considers this position to be drawn. But later it was established that after 47 f5 h3 (*47 ... ♔f3 48 ♔d5! h3 49 ♗d6 ♗d3 50 f6 ♗b1 51 a4 ♗a2+ 52 ♔d4!*) 48 ♗e3! White wins. Thus the decisive mistake was evidently Black's 36th move.

41 ♗g7 ♔e6 42 ♗c3 ♗d7 43 ♔g5 ♔f7 44 a3 (zugzwang) **44 ... ♗c8 45 a4 ♗d7 46 a5 ♗c8 47 ♗b2** (again zugzwang) **47 ... ♗a6 48 h5 gxh5 49 ♔xf5 Black resigns**

Polugayevsky-Stein
34th USSR Championship
Tbilisi 1966/67
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗e2 e5

The mid-1960s was the time when the modern interpretation of the Averbakh Variation developed. Somehow unexpectedly, it transpired that playing Black against this "harmless" (in the opinion of opening books) variation was by no means easy. Indeed, the prescription of that time, which was approximately 5 ... 0-0 6 ♗g5 c5 7 d5 e6! 8 ♕d2 exd5 9 exd5 ♕b6! "with a good game for Black", today merely provokes a smile.

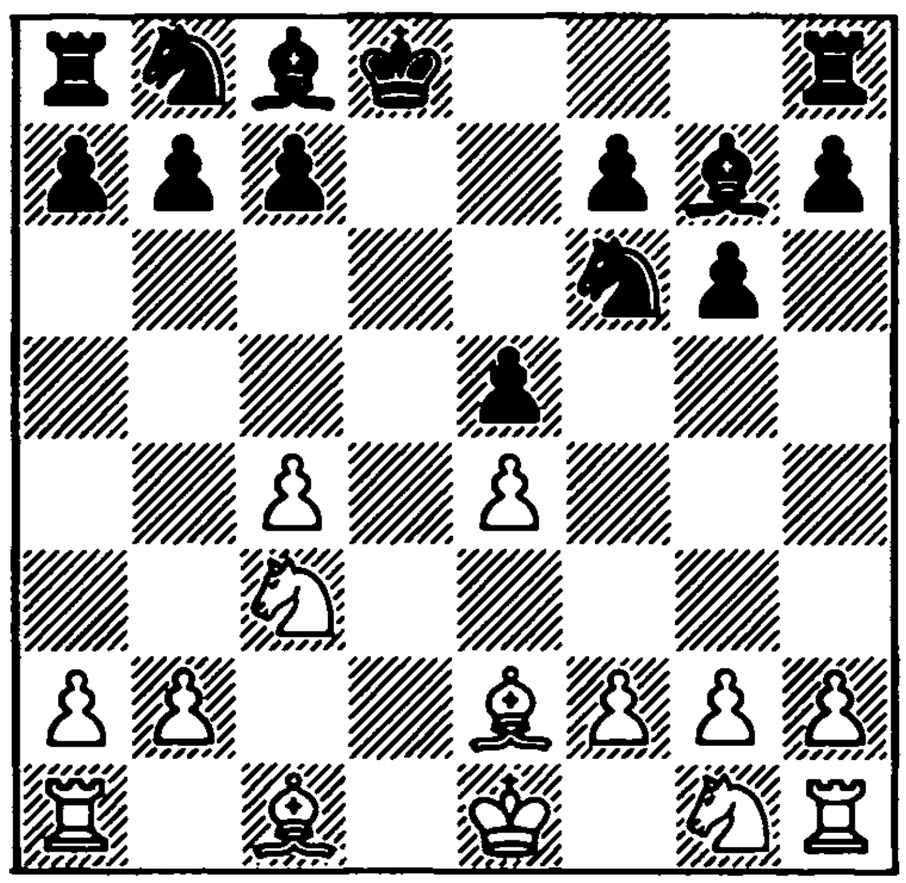
Not long before the present game Polugayevsky had gained a great advantage in the 'theoretical' variation: 10 ♘f3 ♗f5 11 ♘h4 ♘e4 12 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 13 f3 ♕xb2 14 ♖c1 h6 15 ♗xh6 ♕xd2+ 16 ♗xd2 ♗f6 17 g3 g5 18 fxe4 (Polugayevsky-Gufeld, Tallinn 1965). At that time Stein too was having difficulties in the Averbakh Variation. Playing Black against an expert on the variation G.Borisenko (Moscow 1961), after 6 ♗g5 c5 7 d5 h6 8 ♗e3 a6 9 a4 e6 10 h3! he ended up in an inferior position, and only 80(!) moves later was he let off with a draw. It is very likely that in 1966 no one knew how to combat the Averbakh Variation.

All this may be regarded as a 'justification' for Black's 5th move. It was little studied, except that everyone knew of the fascinating clash Taimanov-Bronstein (Moscow 1956), where after 6 d5 a5 7 ♗g5

♘a6 8 h3 ♕d7?! 9 ♘f3 0-0 10 g4! White got his attack in first. However, commenting on this game, Romanovsky already then suggested that the exchange of queens would lead to an advantage for White.

6 dxe5 dxe5
7 ♕xd8+! ♔xd8 *(25)*

25



8 f4!

A strong and logical move. White consistently plays for the opening of files and diagonals, in order to exploit his lead in development and the insecurity of the black king. However, it would also be interesting to test the unhurried plan suggested by Romanovsky: 8 ♘f3 ♘bd7 9 b3! followed by ♗a3 and 0-0-0.

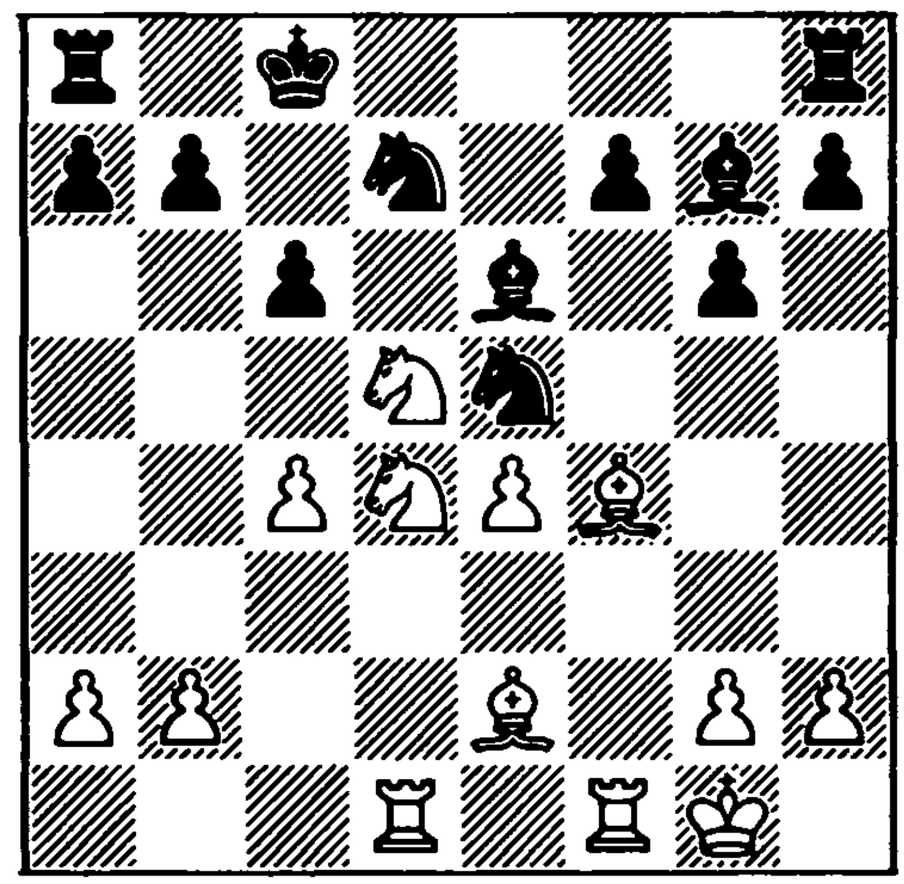
8 ... ♗e6

Things turned out no better for Black in Panno-Minic (Palma de Mallorca 1970) when he tried to maintain his hold on e5: 8 ... ♘fd7 9 ♘f3 h6 10 0-0 ♘c6 11 ♗e3 ♘d4 12 ♖ad1 ♘xe2+ 13 ♘xe2 exf4 14 ♗xf4 ♖e8 15 e5!, with a clear advantage to White.

9 ♘f3 ♘c6 10 0-0 exf4 11 ♗xf4 ♘d7 12 ♖ad1 ♔c8 13 ♘d5 ♘ce5 14 ♘d4 c6 *(26)*

White has completed his development and has concentrated his pieces in the

26



centre. Black has established himself at e5 and now tries to drive away the centralised white knight. Energetic play is demanded of Polugayevsky, otherwise his initiative may evaporate.

15 ♘e7+ ♔c7

Black has to move his king into the pin, since 15 ... ♔d8? would have lost to 16 ♘xe6+ fxe6 17 ♗xe5 ♗xe5 18 ♘xc6+! bxc6 19 ♖f7.

16 ♘ef5! ♗xf5
17 exf5 ♖ae8

As a result of the little tactical skirmish, White's isolated pawn has moved to f5, and he has gained the advantage of the two bishops. Black has completed his development and is maintaining the important e5 post. On the whole, White's prospects are better.

18 ♗g3 ♔c8
19 ♘b3 ♘b6?!

Stein allows a fresh tactical blow by the opponent. 19 ... h5 was more circumspect.

20 fxg6 f6

There is nothing better. 20 ... fxg6 is bad on account of 21 ♖f7!.

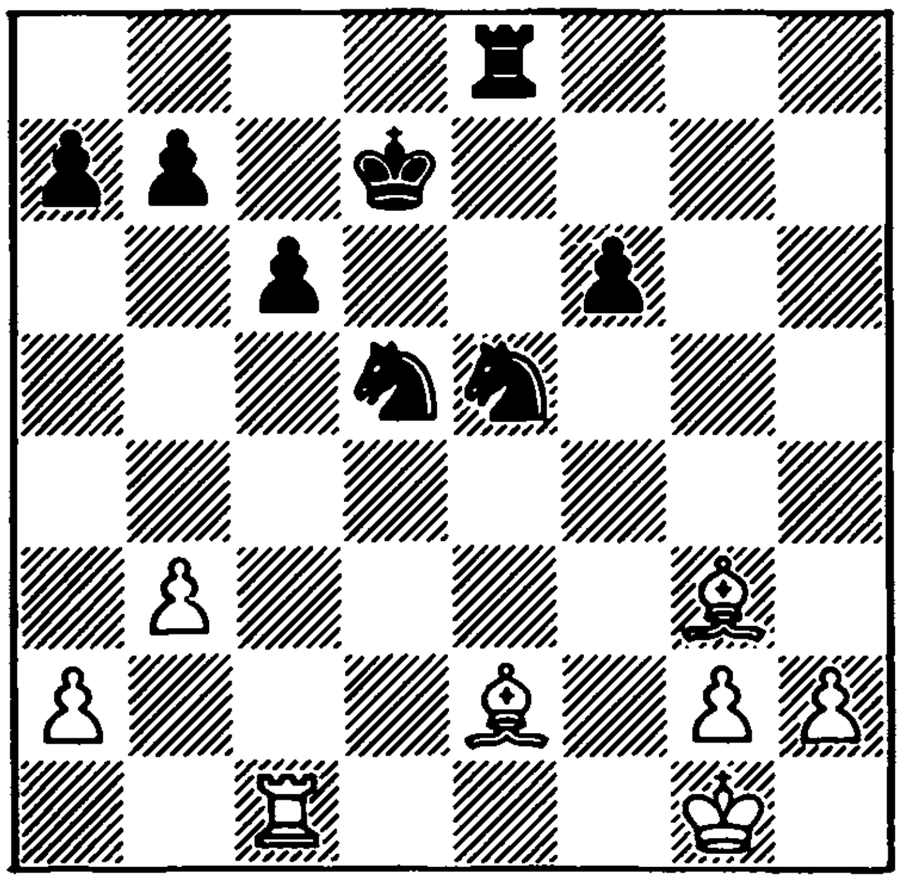
21 gxh7 ♘bxc4

22 ♘d4 ♖xh7

On 22 ... ♘e3 there would have followed 23 ♘f5.

23 ♘f5 ♗f8 24 b3 ♘b6 25 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 26 ♖xd6 ♘d5 27 ♖c1 ♖d7 28 ♖xd7 ♔xd7 *(27)*

27



Polugayevsky has succeeded in exchanging the second enemy bishop for a knight, and White's advantage has increased. The outside passed h-pawn, supported by the bishops, promises to become a formidable force. Black's only trump is the excellent placing of his knights on strong points in the centre.

29 ♖d1 ♔e6 30 ♖e1 ♖g8 31 a4 ♔d7 32 ♖d1 ♔e6 33 ♖e1 ♔d7 34 ♗d1 ♘g4?!

Stein incorrectly moves one of his knights away from the centre, and now the coordination of his pieces is gradually disrupted. Instead 34 ... ♔d6 was preferable.

35 ♗f3 f5

This pawn move makes Black's position in the centre even less secure, but otherwise it was difficult to ensure the retreat of his knight from g4.

36 h3 ♘gf6

37 ♔h2 ♖e8

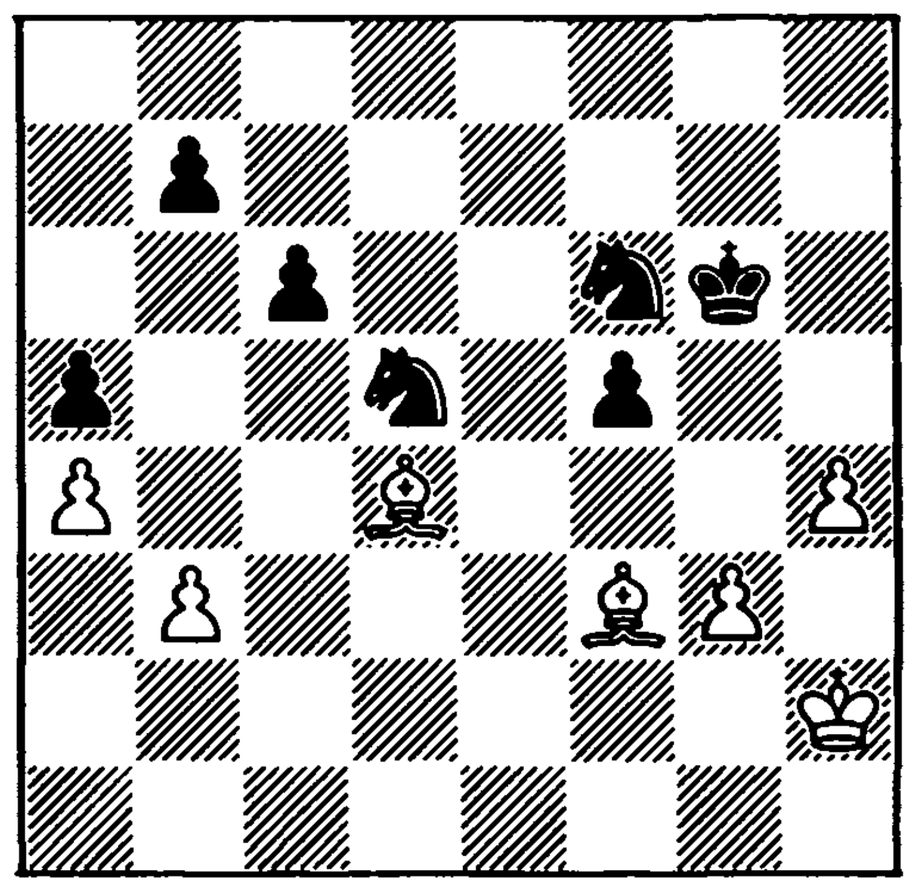
The exchange of rooks is yet another achievement for White: his king gains freedom to manoeuvre. But Stein had no other defence against 38 ♖e5.

38 ♖xe8 ♔xe8 39 ♗e5 ♔f7 40 ♗d4 a5

This pawn becomes very weak and in the end is lost, but 40 ... a6 would have been met by 41 a5, 'freezing' Black's queenside.

41 h4 ♔g6
42 g3 *(28)*

28



42 ... ♘b4

Realising that passive play will lead gradually to defeat, Stein decides on a desperate counterattack.

43 ♗b6 ♘d3 44 ♗xa5 ♘c5 45 ♗d1 ♘g4+ 46 ♔g1 ♘e3 47 ♗b6!

White's defence is based on this tactical nuance. A prosaic minor piece ending is reached where Polugayevsky is a pawn up. The game concluded:

47 ... ♘xd1 48 ♗xc5 ♘c3 49 ♔g2 ♘d5 50 ♗d6 ♔f6 51 ♔f3 b6 52 ♗a3 c5 53 ♗b2+ ♔g6 54 ♗e5 ♘b4 55 ♔e3 ♘c6 56 ♗c7 ♘e7 57 ♗d6 ♘d5+ 58 ♔d3 Black resigns

Knaak-Vadasz
Budapest 1977
Modern Defence

1 d4 g6 2 c4 ♗g7 3 ♘c3 d6 4 e4 e5

4 ... ♘c6 or 4 ... ♘d7 is more in keeping with the Modern Defence.

5 ♘f3 ♘c6?!

But here this move is not good. 5 ... ♗g4?! is also bad, on account of 6 d5!, when the bishop is out of play, since its exchange after h2-h3 or ♗e2 and ♘d2 is positionally unfavourable, while retreating it costs time. For example: 6 ... ♘d7 7 h3 ♗xf3 8 ♕xf3 a5 9 b3 ♗h6 10 ♗a3 (Polugayevsky-Kagan, Petropolis Interzonal 1973), or 7 ♗e2 ♗xf3 8 ♗xf3 h5 9 b3 ♗h6 10 ♗b2 (Polugayevsky-Gurgenidze, Kharkov 1967), in both cases with the better position for White. However, it was not yet too late to play 5 ... ♘d7!.

6 dxe5! ♘xe5

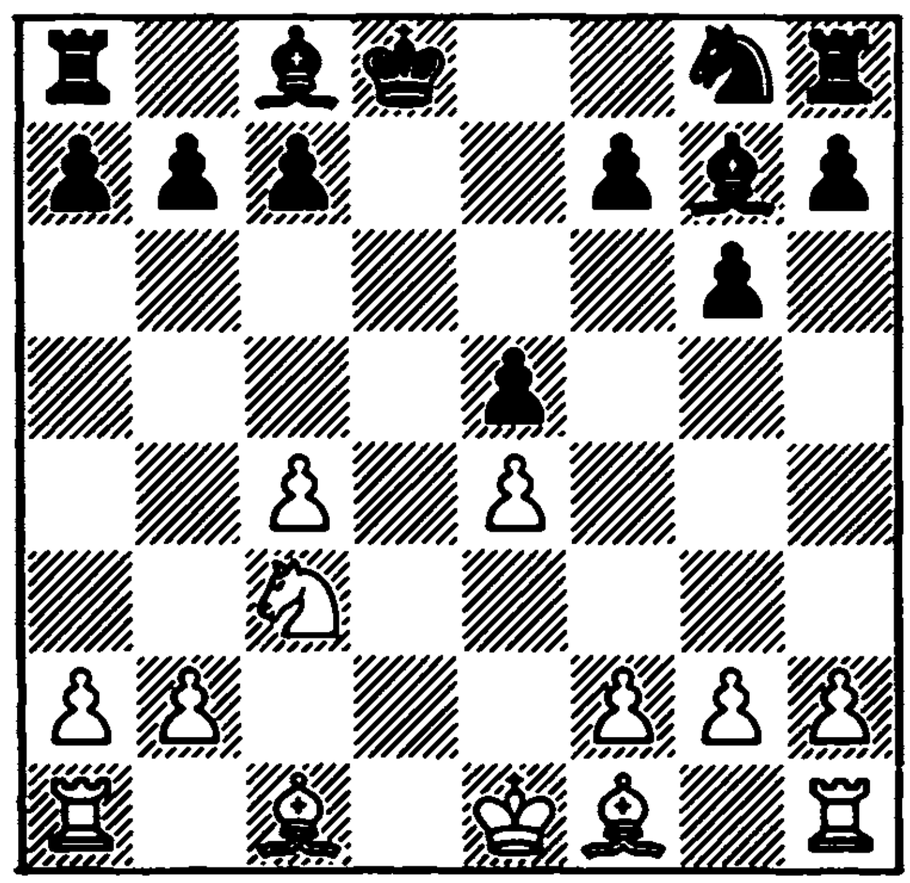
The best move. It was possible to lose immediately: 6 ... dxe5?! 7 ♕xd8+ ♘xd8 8 ♘b5 ♘e6 9 ♘g5.

7 ♘xe5

7 ♘d4 is also not bad, switching to positional pressure.

7 ... dxe5
8 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 *(29)*

29



9 ♗g5+ f6 10 0-0-0+ ♗d7 11 ♗e2!?

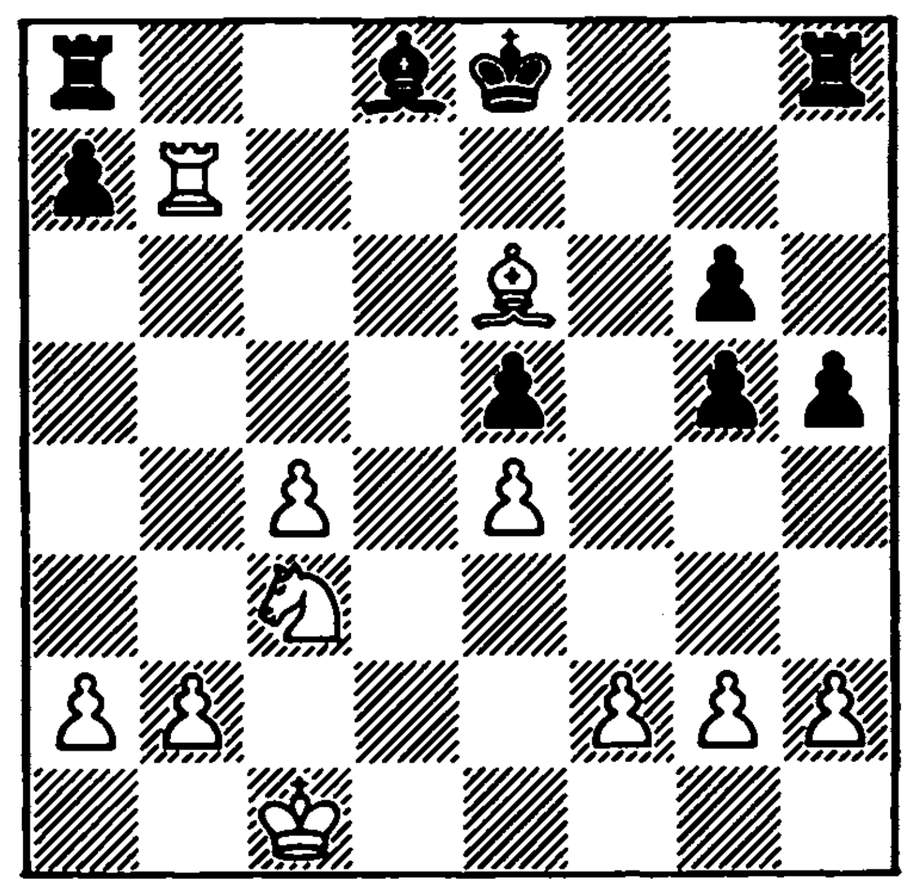
A pretty developing move, the idea of which lies in a positional exchange sacrifice.

11 ... fxg5?

Black incorrectly accepts the challenge. 11 ... ♔c8 was more circumspect.

12 ♗g4 ♘f6 13 ♖xd7+! ♘xd7 14 ♖d1 h5 15 ♖xd7+ ♔e8 16 ♗e6 ♗f6 17 ♖xc7 ♗d8 18 ♖xb7 *(30)*

30



Here we can take stock. White has two pawns for the exchange and an overwhelming position.

18 ... ♖f8 19 ♘d5 ♖xf2 20 c5

Knaak energetically conducts the game. White's passed pawn will cost the opponent at least his bishop.

20 ... a5 21 c6 ♔f8 22 ♔d1!

This is stronger than the prosaic 22 c7. White threatens to win immediately after 23 ♔e1 ♖xg2 24 ♖f7+.

22 ... ♖a6 23 ♗d7 ♔g8 24 ♖b8 ♖f8 25 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 26 c7 ♖f8 27 c8 =♕ ♖xc8 28 ♗xc8

Black's position is hopeless. Now imagination must give way to technique.

28 ... ♖d6 29 a4! ♔g7 30 ♗b7 ♖d8 31

♗a6 g4 32 ♗e2 ♔h6 33 g3 ♔g5 34 b4! axb4 35 a5 b3 36 a6 ♖c8 37 ♗d3 h4

Black does not achieve anything by 37 ... b2 38 ♔d2 ♖c1 39 ♘c3.

38 ♘b6 ♖d8 39 a7! ♖xd3+ 40 ♔c1 hxg3 41 hxg3 Black resigns

Vaganian-Mestel
Skara 1980
Modern Defence

1 d4 g6 2 e4 d6 3 c4 e5 4 ♘c3!

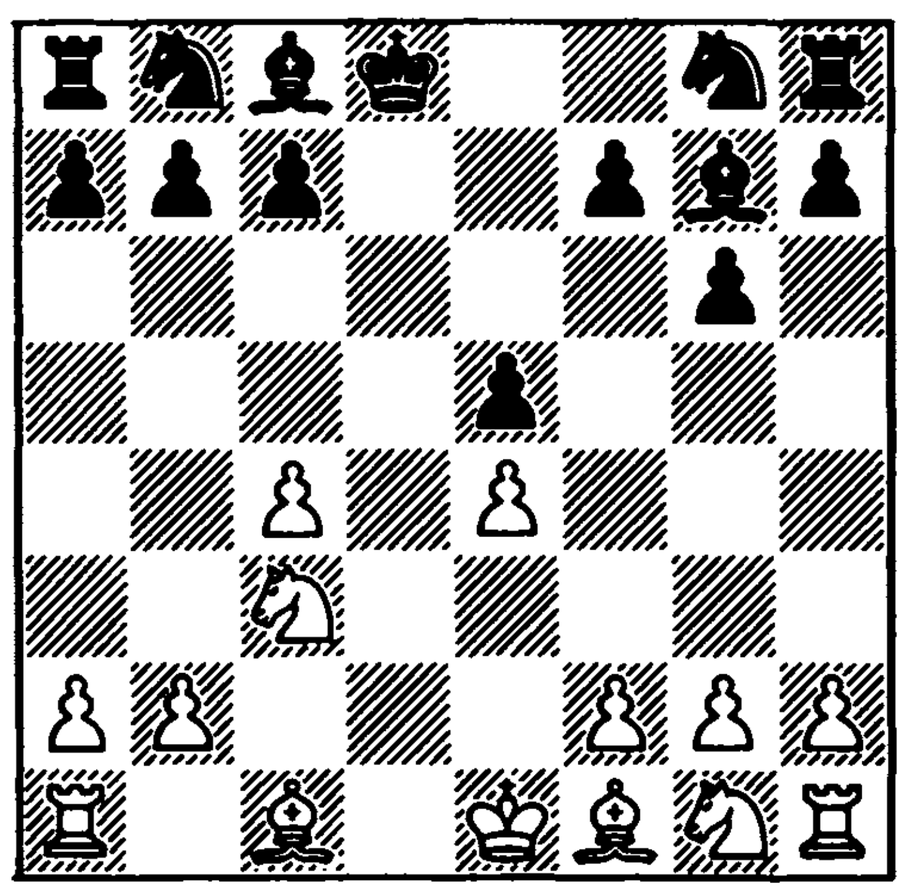
White plans to exchange on e5, but waits for the bishop to be developed at g7.

4 ... ♗g7
5 dxe5

Although the transition into the endgame is less favourable for White here than in the Geller-Ivkov game analysed later (♘f3 is a much more useful move than e2-e4), Vaganian decides to try for an advantage in the ending, hoping to exploit the insecure position of the black king.

5 ... dxe5
6 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 *(31)*

31



7 f4!

A typical move in such positions. White aims to open up the position to the greatest degree and to attack the enemy king with all his pieces. In general, the play is of a middlegame nature.

7 ... ♘c6
8 ♘f3

The alternative here is 8 fxe5!?, when it is not easy for Black to defend, for example: 8 ... ♗e6 9 ♗g5+ ♔c8 10 ♘f3 h6 11 ♗f4 g5 12 ♗e3 ♘ge7 13 0-0-0 ♘xe5 14 ♘d5 ♘7g6 15 ♗d4! (Uhlmann-Larsen, Aarhus 1971), although, as shown by the Yugoslav player Marić, 15 ... c6! 16 ♘e7+ ♘xe7 17 ♘xe5 ♖g8 would have offered Black saving chances.

Perhaps stronger is 11 ♗h4! ♘xe5 12 0-0-0 g5 13 ♗g3 ♘xf3 14 gxf3 c6 15 h4 g4 16 fxg4 ♗xg4 17 ♗h3 ♗xh3 18 ♖xh3 h5 19 e5! (Uhlmann-Biyiasas, Manila Interzonal 1976). A more natural reply to 8 fxe5 is 8 ... ♘xe5, but even here Black is not guaranteed equality: 9 ♗g5+ f6 10 0-0-0+ ♗d7 11 ♗h4 ♘h6 12 ♘f3 ♘hf7 13 ♘d5! (Ornstein-Matulović, Le Harve 1977).

Even so, Vaganian's choice is understandable. Of two equivalent continuations he prefers the more aesthetic.

8 ... f6

Purposeful strategy was demonstrated by White in reply to 8 ... ♘d4 in the game Tukmakov-Kantsler (Nikolayev 1981): 9 ♗d3 ♘xf3+ 10 gxf3 c6 11 fxe5 ♗xe5 12 ♗e3 ♔e8 13 0-0-0 ♗g7 14 ♖he1 f6 15 e5! f5 16 ♗f1 ♔f7 17 f4 ♗e6 18 ♘e2!, with a winning position.

9 ♗e3 ♗e6
10 ♖d1+!

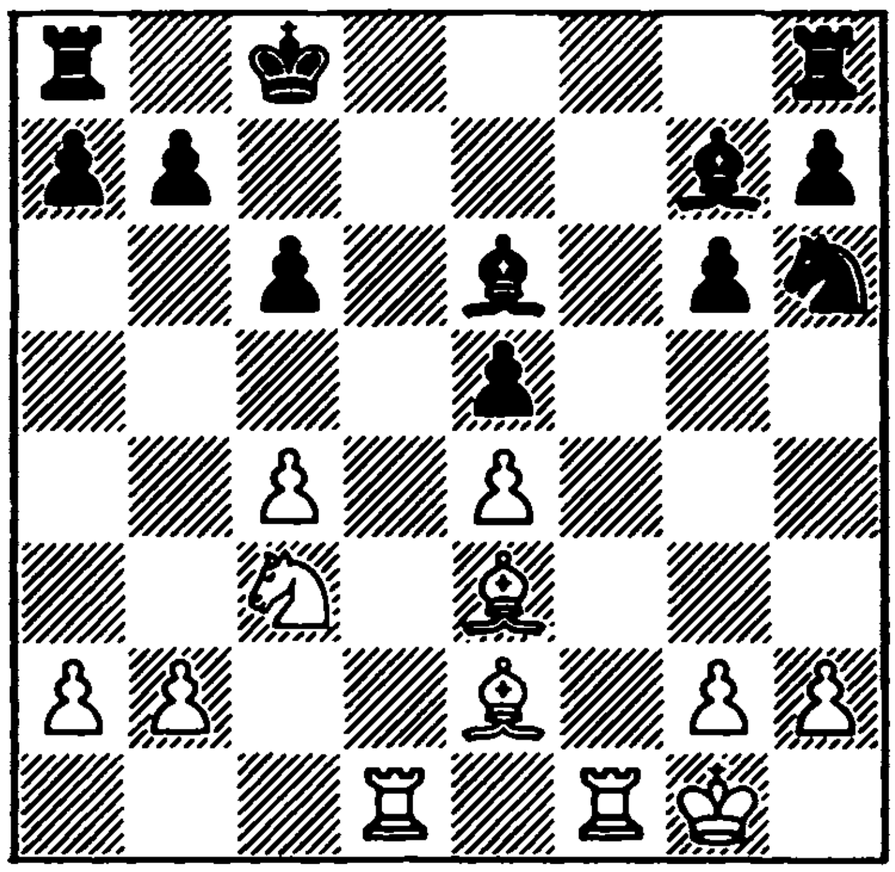
In the event of queenside castling, Black in some cases would have had a good defensive resource – ... ♗h6.

10 ... ♔c8

In reply to 10 ... ♔e8 Vaganian had prepared the resolute 11 fxe5 fxe5 12 ♘d5 ♖c8 13 c5!, followed by ♗c4 and an overwhelming position.

11 ♗e2 ♘h6 12 fxe5 ♘xe5 13 ♘xe5 fxe5 14 0-0 c6? *(32)*

32



With this last move the English player allows an elegant combinational attack by White. As shown by Vaganian, Black could not play 14 ... ♘f7? on account of 15 ♖xf7! ♗xf7 16 ♗g4+ ♔b8 17 ♖d7 ♖f8 18 ♗c5, but the best practical chance was 14 ... ♘g4 15 ♗c1 ♗f8!, although after 16 ♖d5! White would have retained a solid positional advantage.

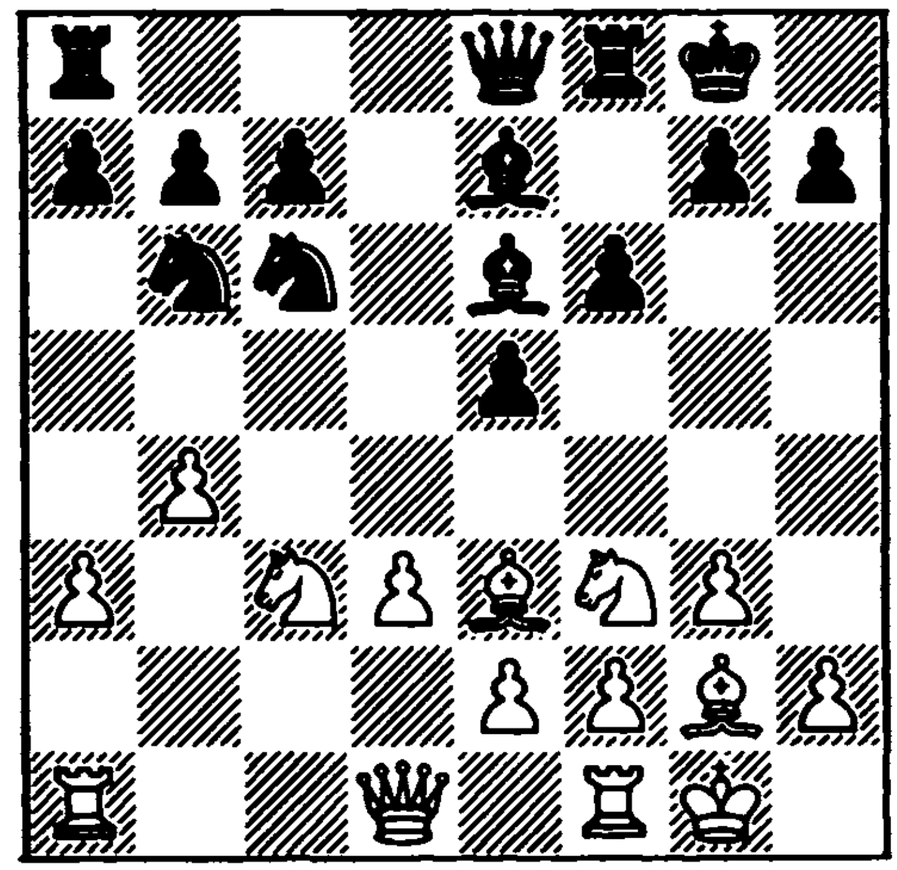
15 ♖d6 ♖e8
16 ♗xh6!

To certain players, their excessively 'high chess culture' would not even have allowed them to consider such an exchange, but a routine approach to the evaluation of a position is alien to Vaganian. One recalls his game with Psakhis from the Yerevan Zonal Tournament of 1982.

(diagram 33)

In this position White completely unexpectedly played 12 ♗xb6! axb6 13 d4! and it transpired that Black stood badly.

33



Vaganian-Psakhis

16 ... ♗xh6 17 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 18 ♗g4 ♗e3+ 19 ♔h1 ♔d7 20 ♘d5!

The attempt to play for mate by 20 ♖f7+?! ♔d6 21 b4 would have only led to equality after 21 ... b6 22 ♘a4 ♖ae8.

20 ... cxd5
21 exd5?

A mistake. As shown by Vaganian, after 21 cxd5! ♔d6 (*21 ... ♔e7 22 ♗xe6 ♖f8? 23 d6+!*) 22 ♗xe6 ♖e8 23 ♖f7 ♖e7 24 ♖f8 White would have gained a decisive advantage.

21 ... ♔d6
22 dxe6

Forced. In the event of the capture by the bishop, Black would have gained excellent counterplay by 22 ... ♔c5 23 b3 e4!.

22 ... h5
23 ♗f3 ♖f8!

A strong move. Black seizes the f-file and almost equalises.

24 ♖e1 ♗d4 25 ♗xb7 ♔xe6 26 ♗e4 g5?

A mistake. With the simple 26 ... ♗xb2 27 ♗xg6 h4 Mestel could have attained a drawn position.

27 b4 ♗c3?! 28 ♖b1 ♗xb4 29 g4!

This strong blow was evidently overlooked by Mestel on his 27th move. White gains an extra passed pawn on the kingside, which reaches h7 and secures him a decisive advantage.

29 ... a5
30 a3!

Splendidly played. The possibility of invading with the rook is more important than a pawn.

30 ... ♗xa3 31 ♖b6+ ♔f7 32 gxh5 ♗c5 33 ♖b7+ ♔f6 34 h6 a4 35 ♖b5 ♖c8 36 ♖a5 a3 37 ♖a6+ ♔e7 38 h7 ♔f7 39 ♖c6! a2 40 ♖a6 ♔g7 41 ♖xa2 ♗d4 42 ♔g2 ♖f8 43 ♖a6 g4 44 ♖c6 ♔h8 45 c5 ♗f2 46 ♖c7 ♗h4 47 ♖a7 Black resigns

Berger-Gligorić
Amsterdam Interzonal 1964
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♘f3 ♘bd7 7 0-0 e5 8 e4 c6 9 h3 ♕b6 10 ♖b1

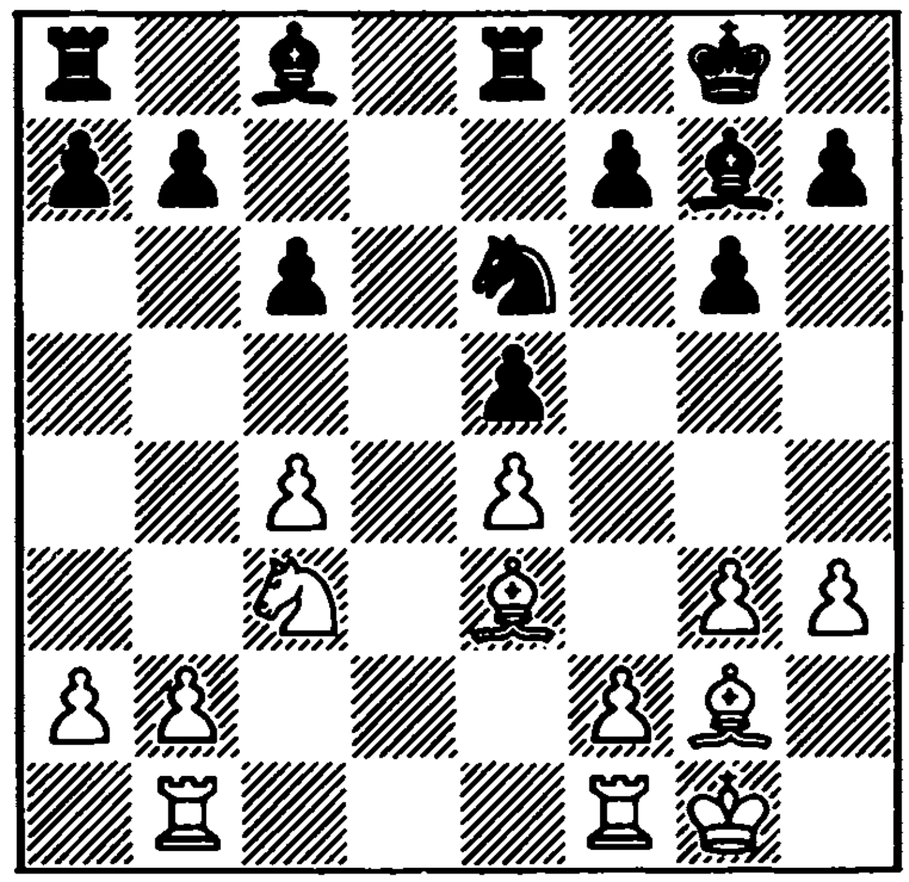
White's handling of the position is very simple: by 10 ♖b1 he defends the b2 pawn, preparing ♗e3. However, the quiet move in the game could have led to great complications after 10 ... exd4 11 ♘xd4 ♘xe4!? Theory states that here Black can maintain the balance, but this same result is achieved much more simply by Gligorić's move 10 ... ♕b4! White is practically forced to exchange in the centre.

10 ... ♕b4
11 dxe5 ♘xe5!

We think that this move is stronger than the usual 11 ... dxe5. Black quickly completes his development and already stands perhaps slightly better.

12 ♘xe5 dxe5 13 ♕d3?! ♘d7 14 ♗e3 ♖e8 15 ♘e2?! ♘c5 16 ♕c3 ♕xc3 17 ♘xc3 ♘e6 *(34)*

34



The passively played opening with the early exchange of queens indicates that White is aiming for a draw. However, openly playing for a draw with a stronger opponent is by no means the easiest way of achieving the desired result. Many players, when meeting a less skilful opponent, artificially avoid exchanges, and provoke complications in the hope of confusing the opponent, and often lose points as a result. But there is also another way of playing for a win – to play strictly in accordance with the demands of the position, all the time aiming to maintain a moderate initiative. That was how Capablanca and Smyslov played, and of the current generation of players that is how Karpov and Andersson operate. They are not afraid of skirting close to a draw, since maintaining the balance is one of the most difficult problems that players have to face, and few are capable of doing so.

Gligorić's position is preferable. The black knight has a strong point at d4, whereas White's active play on the queenside, involving c4-c5 and the penetration of his knight at d6, is not a reality.

18 ♖fc1?

Neither fish nor fowl. If White was aiming for activity on the queenside, he should have played 18 c5.

A more appropriate plan was 18 ♘e2 followed by 19 ♖bd1, aiming to consolidate the position.

18 ... ♘d4 19 ♗f1 f5! 20 ♔g2 ♗e6 21 f3 ♖ad8

A single glance at the position is sufficient to decide that Black has completely seized the initiative.

22 ♘e2 ♖d7 23 ♗g5 h6 24 ♗e3 h5!?

Gligorić intends to exchange the dark-square bishops.

25 ♗g5 fxe4 26 fxe4 ♔h7 27 ♘xd4 exd4 28 ♗d3 ♗h6 29 ♗xh6 ♔xh6

White has confidently exchanged a further pair of minor pieces, but he is no closer to a draw. A chronic weakness has appeared in his position – the e4 pawn.

30 ♖f1 ♔g7
31 h4

On 31 b4 Black has the unpleasant 31 ... g5.

31 ... c5 32 a4? a5! 33 b3 ♗f7 34 ♖f4 ♖e5 35 ♖bf1 ♖de7

White's position is unpleasant. Black can combine an attack on the e4 pawn with pressure on the b3 pawn. Berger decides to reduce the pawn material on the kingside.

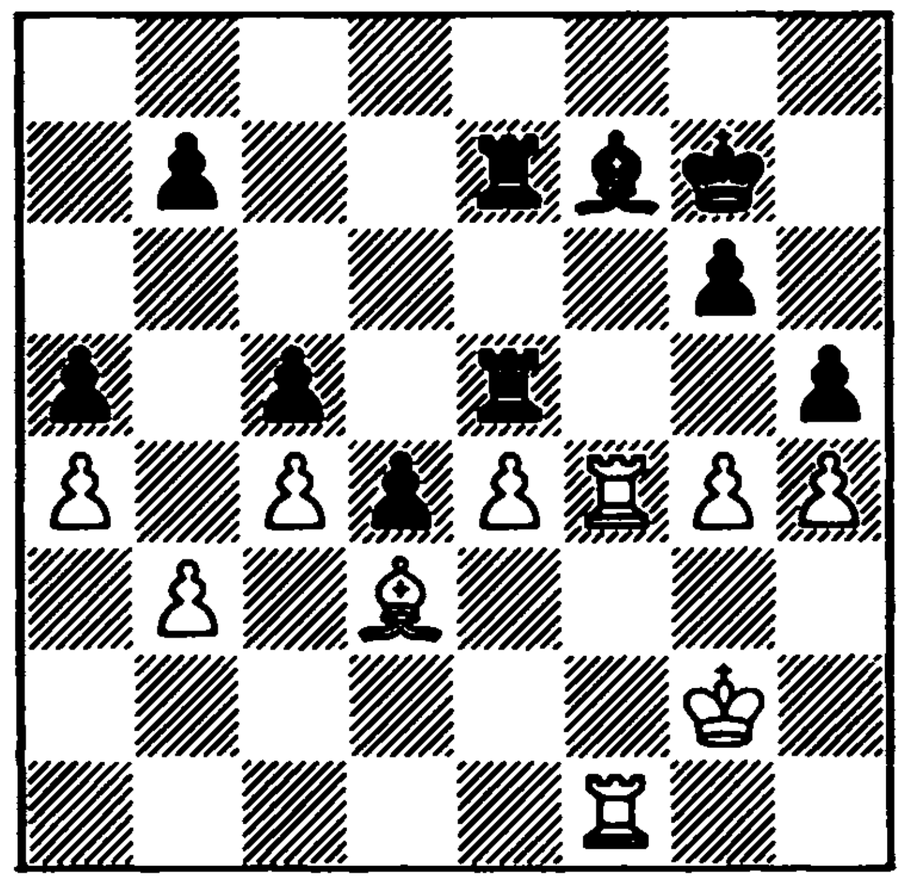
36 g4?

(diagram 35)

36 ... g5!

A pretty stroke, although one which is fairly standard.

35



37 hxg5 ♖xg5
38 ♖f5

There is no longer any defence. On 38 ♔h3, 38 ♔g3 or 38 ♗e2 Black has the decisive 38 ... ♗e6.

38 ... ♖xg4+ 39 ♔f2 b6 40 ♖g1 ♖xg1 41 ♔xg1 ♗g6 42 ♖d5 ♗xe4 43 ♗xe4 ♖xe4 44 ♖d6 ♖g4+ White resigns

Geller-Ivkov
Sukhumi 1966
Modern Defence

1 c4 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 ♘c3 d6

One of the ideas of the flexible Modern Defence is to put pressure on the central d4 square. This is why Ivkov is not in a hurry to develop his knight at f6: it may prove more advantageous to manoeuvre the knight via h6 and f5 to d4, or to play an early ... f5 and only then ... ♘f6 or ... ♘h6 (more rarely ... ♘e7). Another possible plan is the reinforcement of the e5 square by ... ♘h6, ... f6 and ... ♘f7.

4 ♘f3

An important point. Geller does not wish the fate of the game to be decided in unclear complications such as 4 e4 ♘c6 5

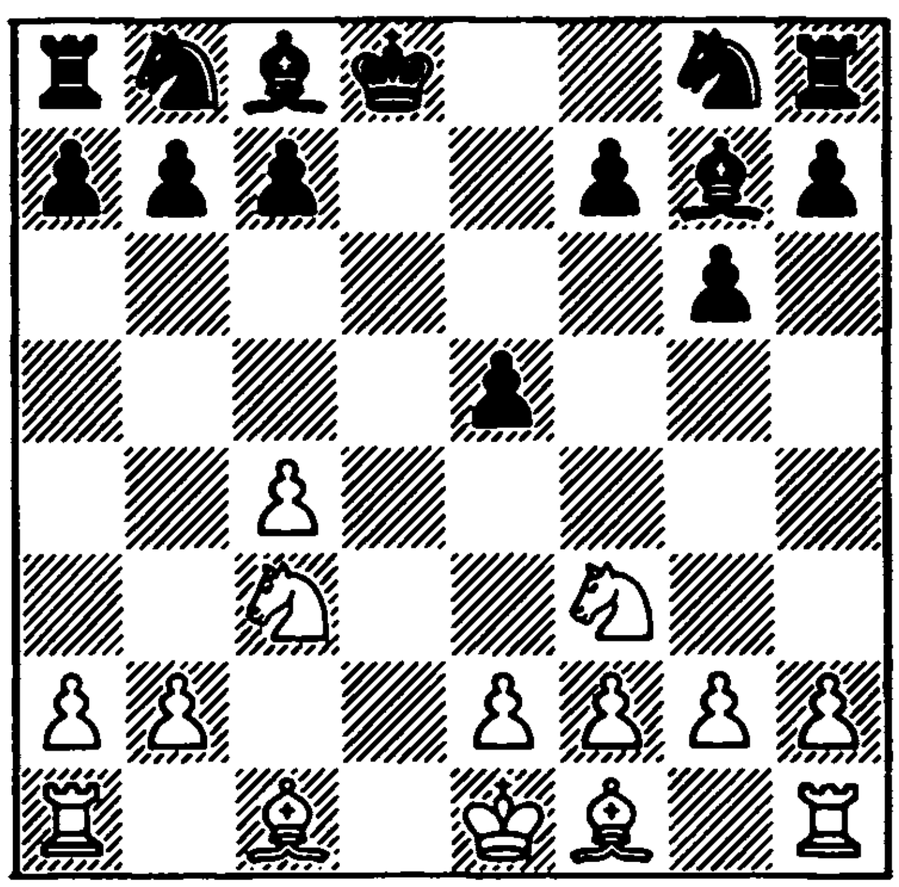
♗e3 e5 6 d5 ♘ce7 7 g4 f5 8 gxf5 gxf5 9 ♕h5+ ♘g6!? 10 exf5 ♕h4, and for the moment he avoids weakening his d4.

4 ... e5?!

Premature. In contrast to the Ukrainian Variation 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 e5, here the exchange of queens is unfavourable for Black: the bishop is not especially well placed at g7, and his pawn structure is weakened precisely where White is planning an offensive – on the kingside. But especially unpleasant are the consequences of the time wasted on ... g6. It would have been better for Black to choose the flexible 4 ... ♘d7!, for the moment not revealing his plans.

5 dxe5! dxe5
6 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 *(36)*

36



7 ♗g5+!

White consistently plays for a lead in development and brings new forces into play with gain of time.

7 ... f6

No better was 7 ... ♔e8 8 0-0-0 ♗d7 9 ♘b5 ♘a6 10 ♗d2! ♘e7 11 ♗c3, with a clear advantage to White (Ivkov-Suttles, Palma de Mallorca 1970).

8 0-0-0+!

With the white pawn still at e2 this is stronger than 8 ♖d1+, since Black does not have the possibility of exchanging bishops and easing his defence by ... ♗h6.

8 ... ♘d7

On 8 ... ♔e8 *ECO* recommends the strong 9 ♗e3!, with the threat of ♘b5.

9 ♗d2!

Weaker is 9 ♗e3 ♗h6!, when the worst for Black is over (Filip-Robatsch, Vienna 1961).

9 ... ♘h6
10 ♖g1

This plan of a kingside offensive is much more dangerous for Black than in the Ukrainian Variation, since his forces are scattered and find it difficult to parry White's onslaught.

10 ... ♘f7
11 g4! ♘d6

Ivkov tries to reduce the tempo of White's offensive. With the move in the game he attacks the c4 pawn, blocks the d-file, and prepares to develop his bishop at b7 after ... b6. No better is 11 ... c6 12 ♘e4! ♔c7 13 e3 ♗f8 14 ♗c3, when White still has the better chances (Portisch-Keene, Teesside 1972). In Keene's opinion, 13 ♗b4!, intensifying the pressure on d6, was even stronger.

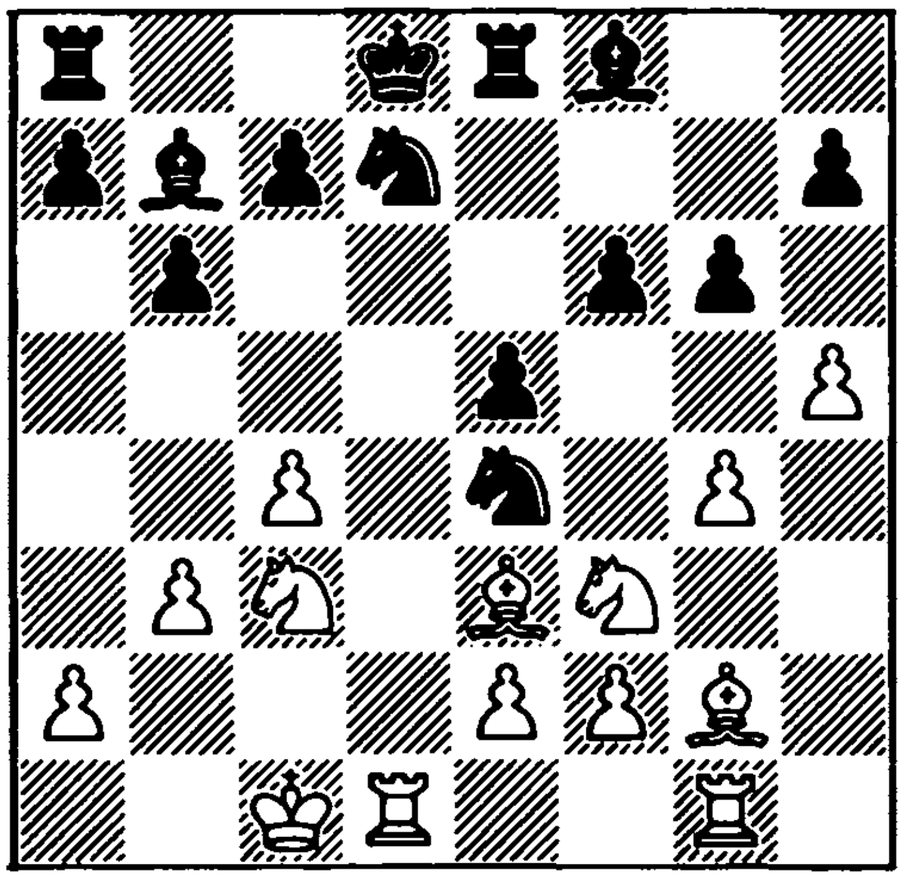
12 b3 b6 13 ♗g2 ♗b7 14 ♗e3 ♖e8?!

An inaccuracy. Black should have defended his knight with 14 ... ♔e7, although even in this case after 15 ♘d5+ ♗xd5 16 ♖xd5 c6 17 ♖dd1 ♖ac8 18 ♘d2 White's chances are better (Schmidt-Matulović, Niš 1977).

15 h4! ♗f8
16 h5 ♘e4 *(37)*

Black tries to divert the opponent's attention from the kingside, but without success. Better chances of a defence were offered by 16 ... g5, although even then Black's position is strategically close to being lost.

37



17 ♘b1!

Excellently played. Impending over Black's position are threats to exploit the pins in the centre, and he does not have time to block the kingside by 17 ... g5 on account of 18 ♘fd2.

17 ... ♔c8 18 hxg6 hxg6 19 ♘h4 g5 20 ♘f5 ♘dc5 21 ♖h1

White's pieces very comfortably 'drive' into the enemy position.

21 ... ♘e6 22 ♖h7 a5 23 ♖dd7 a4 24 ♗xb6

This completes the rout. Ivkov obviously made the remaining moves merely from inertia.

24 ... axb3 25 axb3 ♘4c5 26 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 27 ♗d5 ♗b6 28 ♘d6+ cxd6 29 ♗xb7+ ♔b8 30 ♗d5 ♘c5 31 ♖b7+ ♘xb7 32 ♖xb7+ ♔c8 33 ♖xb6 ♖a2 34 ♘c3 Black resigns

Polugayevsky-Tal
39th USSR Championship
Leningrad 1971
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 g6 3 b3

This move begins a solid and unhurried variation, which does not pretend to be a 'refutation' of the King's Indian, but which has nevertheless brought considerable disillusionment to players of the defence with Black.

At the basis of White's development plan is the idea of neutralising the bishop at g7 with the bishop at b2. Smyslov and Flohr played this way in the 1950s, and with a fair degree of success. True, the move order chosen by them – 1 d4 (or *1 c4*) 1 ... ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 b3 – is not now considered the strongest (cf. the game Flohr-Geller), but the idea itself of counter-pressure on the a1-h8 diagonal is highly attractive and fairly popular even today.

3 ... ♗g7
4 ♗b2 d6

An important point. Black 'insists' on a King's Indian. There were also other possibilities, for example 4 ... 0-0 5 ♗g2 c5! The positional threat of 6 ... d5 forces White to reply 6 c4, when 6 ... d6! is good. (This move order was introduced by Kasparov.) Now on 7 d4 there follows 7 ... ♘e4!, while if 7 0-0 e5!.

Also possible is development in the spirit of the Grünfeld Defence (4 ... d5 5 c4 c6) or the Queen's Indian Defence (4 ... b6).

5 d4 0-0

Strangely enough, this is Black's first inaccuracy. Now White is able to carry out his plan, whereas it could have been disrupted by striking an immediate blow

at the centre: 5 ... c5! Some sample variations:

(a) 6 c4 ♘e4 7 ♘fd2 (Begun-Kapengut, Minsk 1977, was a spectacular miniature: *7 ♗g2 ♕a5+ 8 ♔f1?!* – 8 ♘fd2 was better – ... *♘c6! 9 e3 0-0 10 ♘e1 f5 11 f3 cxd4! 12 exd4 e5 13 fxe4? fxe4+ 14 ♔g1 ♗g4 15 ♕d2 ♗h6!!* White resigns) 7 ... ♕a5! 8 ♗g2 ♘xd2 9 ♗c3 ♘xb3!? 10 ♗xa5 ♘xa5 11 ♕a4+ ♘ac6 12 ♘d2 0-0 13 ♖b1 cxd4, with a complicated game, Black having positional compensation for the sacrificed material (Psakhis-Magerramov, Baku 1978).

(b) 6 d5 e6 7 dxe6 fxe6 8 ♗g2 0-0 9 0-0 d5, with an active position for Black (Smyslov-Tal, 44th USSR Championship, Moscow 1976).

(c) 6 ♗g2 cxd4 7 ♘xd4 d5 8 c4 dxc4 9 ♘d2!? cxb3 10 ♕xb3 ♘bd7 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♘c4, and for the pawn White has a strong initiative (Taimanov-Gavrikov, Moscow 1983).

6 ♗g2 e5

Here too 6 ... c5 7 c4 ♕a5+ 8 ♗c3 ♕c7! is better (Bilek-Ribli, Zalaegerszeg 1969). 6 ... ♘bd7, on the contrary, does not promise Black an easy life. After 7 0-0 e5 8 dxe5 ♘g4 9 c4 dxe5 10 h3 ♘h6 11 e4 f6 12 ♕c2 ♘f7 13 ♖d1 White has a splendid position (Ghitescu-Marović, Zagreb 1971).

As is evident from these examples, Black does better to give up the idea of ... e5 and switch to set-ups with ... c5.

7 dxe5 ♘g4
8 h3!

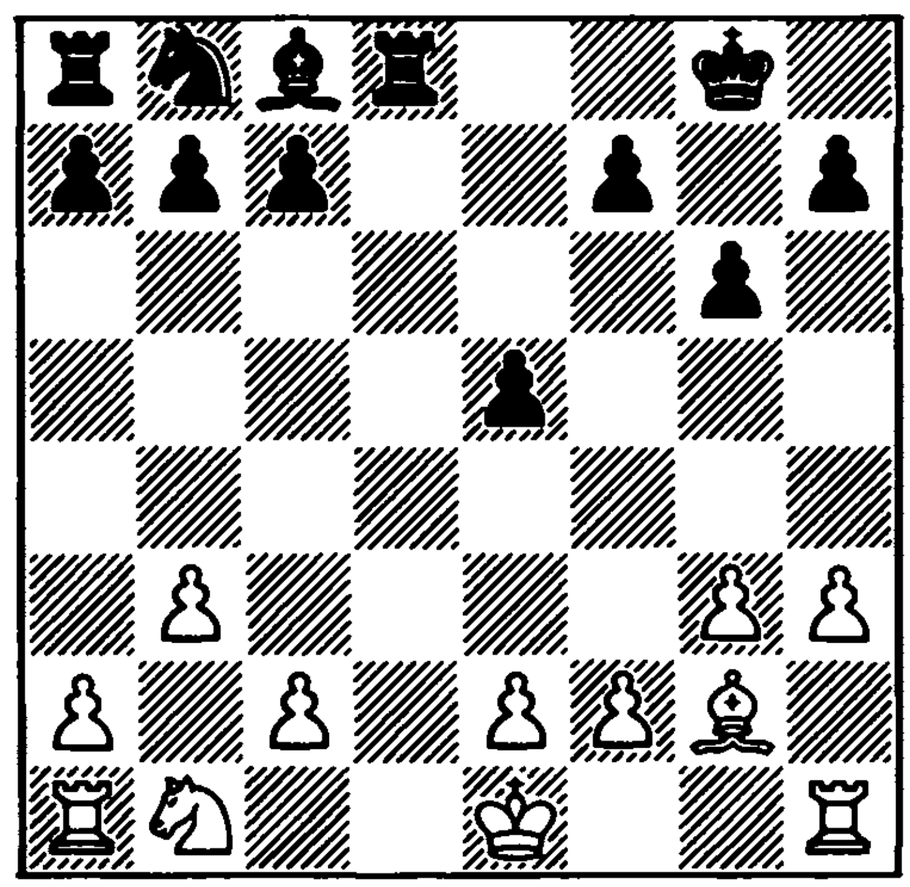
This move and the associated plan of transposing into an endgame belong to the Hungarian grandmaster Barcza. The older continuation 8 0-0 is also quite good, e.g. 8 ... ♘c6 9 c4 ♘gxe5 10 ♕d2 ♖e8 11 ♘c3 a6 12 ♘d5 with advantage to White (Ruban-Tukmakov, Rostov-on-Don 1967).

9 ... ♘xe5
10 ♘xe5 ♗xe5

Polugayevsky knew the strength of White's set-up from his own bitter experience. In a game with Smyslov (Palma de Mallorca 1970) he chose 9 ... dxe5 here, but after 10 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 11 ♘d2 ♘d7 12 0-0-0 ♖e8 13 ♘c4 ♘b6 14 ♘a5! ♖b8 15 ♖d2 c6 16 ♖hd1 f6 17 ♖d8 ♔f7 18 ♖xe8 ♔xe8 19 ♗a3 he found himself in a critical situation.

10 ♗xe5 dxe5
11 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 *(38)*

38



In some ways the diagram position reminds one of the Catalan Opening, and in the first instance Black must solve the problem of neutralising the white bishop.

12 ♘d2 ♘d7

In a correspondence game Barcza-Yudovich (1965) Black defended with 12 ... ♘a6, and after 13 0-0-0 c6 14 ♘c4 ♖e8 15 ♖d2 ♗e6 16 ♘xe5 ♗xh3 17 ♖xh3 ♖xe5 he was fortunate to escape from his difficulties. His task would have been more complicated after 14 ♘e4!, and 16 ♘a5! would also have left White with the advantage.

Other continuations favour White:

(a) 12 ... c6 13 0-0-0 ♗e6 14 ♘c4 ♖xd1+

15 ♖xd1 ♘d7 16 f4 exf4 17 gxf4 ♘b6 (Tal-Rashkovsky, Sochi 1977), and here, as shown by Hort, 18 ♘a5 ♖b8 19 c4! would have been strong. However, Tal's choice of 18 ♘d6 also left White with some advantage.

(b) 12 ... a5 13 0-0-0 a4 (Timman-Gheorghiu, Helsinki 1972) 14 ♘c4! ± (Hort).

13 0-0-0 ♖e8 14 ♘e4 ♔g7 15 g4!

A typical move in this type of position. White secures for his knight an excellent post in the centre, since ... f5 is now too risky for Black.

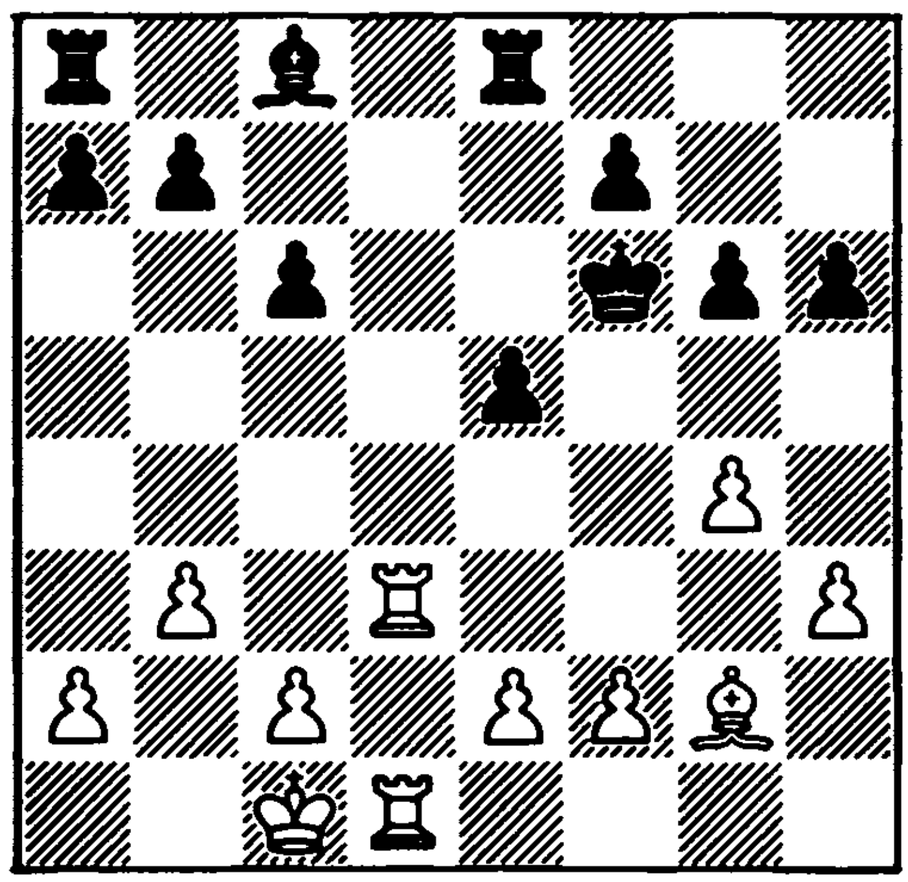
15 ... h6
16 ♖d3 ♘f6

Black is forced to go in for the exchange of knights, but this increases the probability of a successful siege of his queenside.

17 ♘xf6 ♔xf6
18 ♖hd1 c6 *(39)*

Tal straightforwardly solves the problem of neutralising the white bishop, but in doing so he seriously weakens the d6 square. 18 ... ♖b8 would perhaps have been preferable. True, all this is easy to explain when one has played through the game and seen the excellent manoeuvre by Polugayevsky, which prevents Black from successfully completing his development. To foresee this during the game would have been much more difficult.

39



19 ♖f3+!

Very strong. Black was threatening to equalise fully with 19 ... ♗e6 followed by 20 ... ♔e7. Polugayevsky succeeds in tying the opponent to the e5 pawn and in preventing the enemy king from covering d8.

19 ... ♔g7

19 ... ♔e7 20 ♖e3 is even more unpleasant.

20 ♖e3!

Now 20 ... ♗e6 is not possible, and on 20 ... ♔f6 there follows 21 f4.

20 ... g5

There appears to be nothing better.

21 a4 ♔f6?!

Black should have responded with 21 ... a5.

22 a5! a6
23 ♔b2!

Black's queenside pawns are immobilised, and the time has come for the white king to pay a 'friendly' visit to that part of the board.

23 ... ♗e6 24 ♔c3 ♖ac8 25 ♔b4 h5

Tal tries to obtain at least some sort of counterplay. 25 ... ♗d5 was bad because of 26 ♗xd5 cxd5 27 ♖xd5 ♖xc2 28 ♖d7, and 25 ... c5+ 26 ♔c3 ♖c7 27 ♖d6 would not have improved his position.

26 ♗f3 hxg4 27 ♗xg4 ♖cd8 28 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 29 ♔c5

Black has finally wrested control of the d-file, but he has hopelessly lost the battle

on the queenside. His position is indefensible. It is interesting to follow how Polugayevsky has exploited the opponent's slight mistakes, and has transformed the evaluation of the position from ± to +– (using *Informator* language) in just 17 moves.

29 ... ♖d4
30 c4!

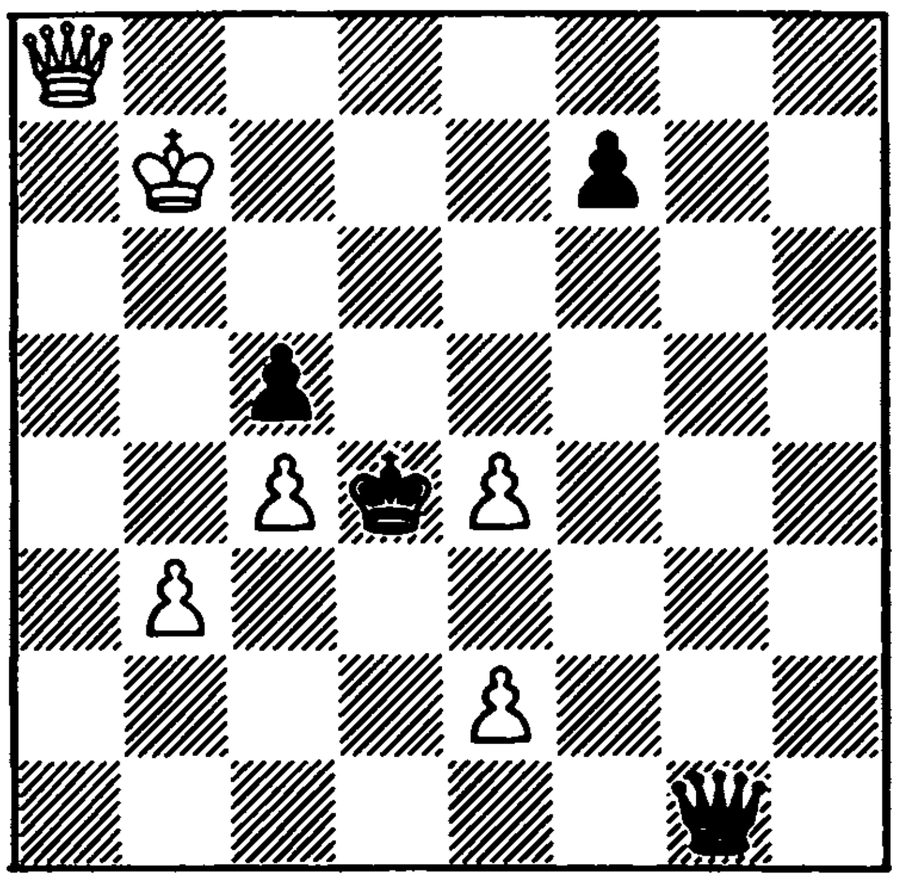
The concluding accuracy. The black rook's access to b4 is blocked.

30 ... ♗xg4 31 hxg4 ♖xg4 32 f3?!

Trying to play securely once a winning position has been reached can often have the opposite result. 32 ♔b6 ♖g2 33 ♔xb7 ♖xf2 34 ♔xa6 would have won quickly. But now Tal exploits an additional chance and takes play into a queen ending where White is two pawns up. As a result the game drags out.

32 ... ♖f4 33 ♔b6 e4! 34 ♔xb7 ♔e5 35 ♔xa6 ♔d4 36 ♖xe4+ ♖xe4 37 fxe4 g4 38 ♔b7 g3 39 a6 g2 40 a7 g1=♕ 41 a8=♕ c5 *(40)*

40



The realisation of an advantage in a queen ending is often much easier than in other endings. In the given instance Polugayevsky merely has to demonstrate technique which is elementary for a grandmaster. The game concluded:

42 ♔b6 ♔c3 43 ♕d5 ♕g8 44 ♔xc5 ♔xb3 45 ♕d3+ ♔b2 46 ♕d6 ♔b3 47 ♕b6+ ♔c2 48 ♔b5 ♕g4 49 ♕d4 ♕xe2 50 ♔b6 ♕h2 51 e5 ♔b3 52 c5 f6 53 c6 fxe5 54 ♕d5+ ♔a4 55 ♕b5+ ♔a3 56 c7 Black resigns

Petrosian-Bannik
25th USSR Championship
Riga 1958
English Opening

1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 ♘c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 g3 d6?! 5 d4! g6?!

Black plays the opening unsystematically. If he was intending to play ... e5 and ... d6, it would have been better to do this immediately: 1 c4 e5 2 ♘c3 d6, so that after d2-d4 he could maintain his centre with ... ♘d7, and develop his knight at c6 only in reply to d2-d3. More logical continuations in the Four Knights Variation are 4 g3 ♗b4 or 4 g3 d5, hindering White's control of the centre. Finally, ... g6 should have been played on the 3rd move or even the 4th: 4 ... g6, and although White nevertheless retains some opening advantage after 5 ♗g2 ♗g7 6 0-0 0-0 7 d4 exd4 8 ♘xd4 ♖e8 9 ♘xc6 dxc6 10 ♗f4! (Tukmakov-Romanishin, Yerevan 1980), Black's position would not have been so cheerless as in the present game.

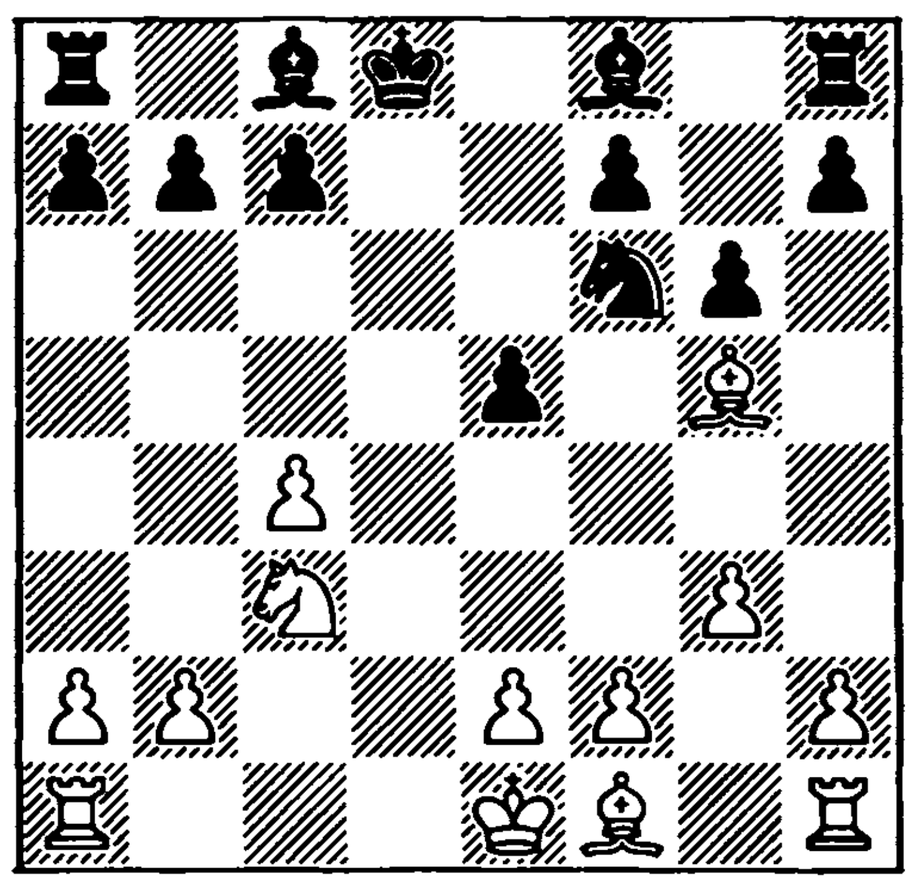
6 dxe5! ♘xe5

6 ... dxe5? 7 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 8 ♗g5 ♗e7 9 0-0-0+ was even worse.

7 ♘xe5 dxe5 8 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9 ♗g5 *(41)*

The exchange of queens has allowed White to make several tempo-gaining moves and to obtain an enduring initiative.

41



9 ... ♗e7
10 0-0-0+ ♘d7

The only move. Black would have lost immediately after 10 ... ♗d7 11 ♗h3 or 10 ... ♔e8 11 ♘b5.

11 h4!

A subtle move, by which Petrosian skilfully maintains the initiative. The plausible 11 ♗xe7+ ♔xe7 12 ♘d5+ ♔d8 13 ♗h3, as shown by Petrosian, would have allowed Black to gradually neutralise the activity of the white pieces after 13 ... f5 14 e4 c6 15 ♘e3 f4 16 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 17 ♘g4 ♖e8 18 ♘f6 ♖e7.

11 ... f6!

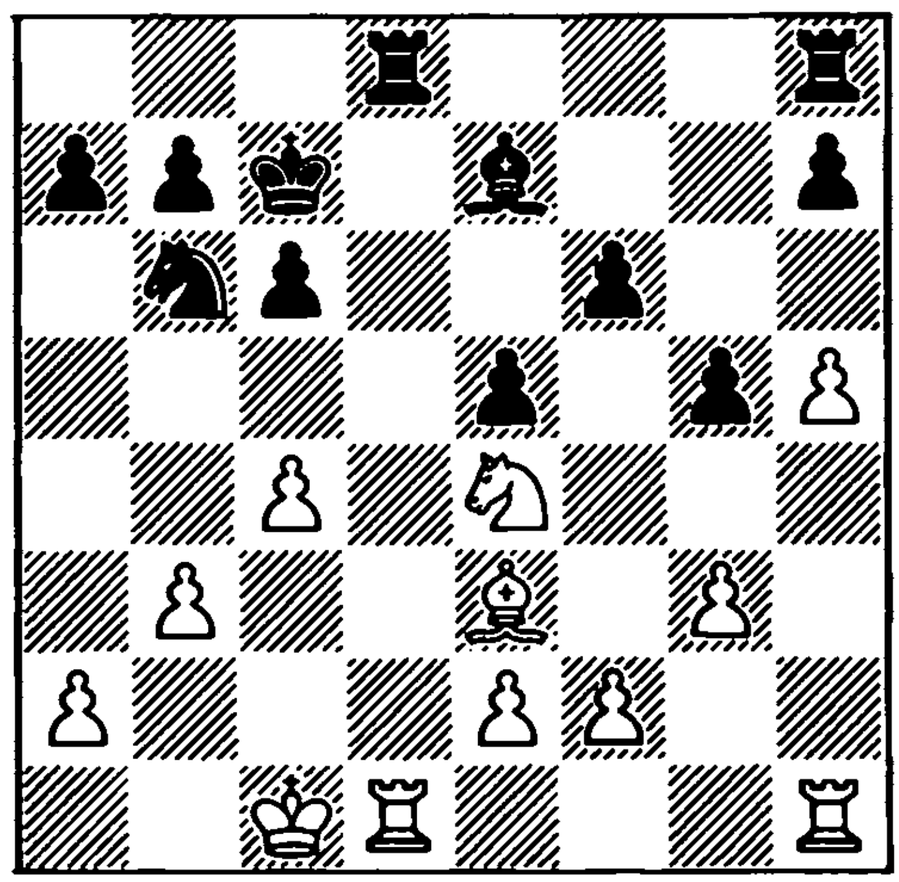
In the event of 11 ... c6 White was intending 12 ♘e4 h6 13 ♘d6 ♖h7 14 ♗xe7+ ♔xe7 15 ♗h3 f5 16 e4, with an overwhelming position.

12 ♗e3 c6 13 h5 g5 14 ♗h3 ♔c7 15 ♘e4 ♘b6 16 ♗xc8 ♖axc8 17 b3 ♖cd8 *(42)*

After 17 ... g4 Black would have had to reckon with 18 h6 and 19 ♖h5.

Black has avoided a direct attack and completed his development, and is now offering to begin a series of exchanges along the only open file. The drawbacks to his position are his 'bad' bishop and the complex of weakened light squares on the kingside. White is faced with a difficult exchanging problem.

42



18 ♗c5!!

Brilliantly played. The natural and routine solution would have been to exchange on b6 and continue according to the scheme g3-g4, ♘g3, ♘f5, the transfer of the king to e4, and so on, but Black would have taken play into a minor piece ending in which it would have been hard for White to count on a win. Instead of this Petrosian exchanges the enemy bishop which, although 'bad', is cementing together the kingside, and the weakness of Black's pawns immediately becomes appreciable.

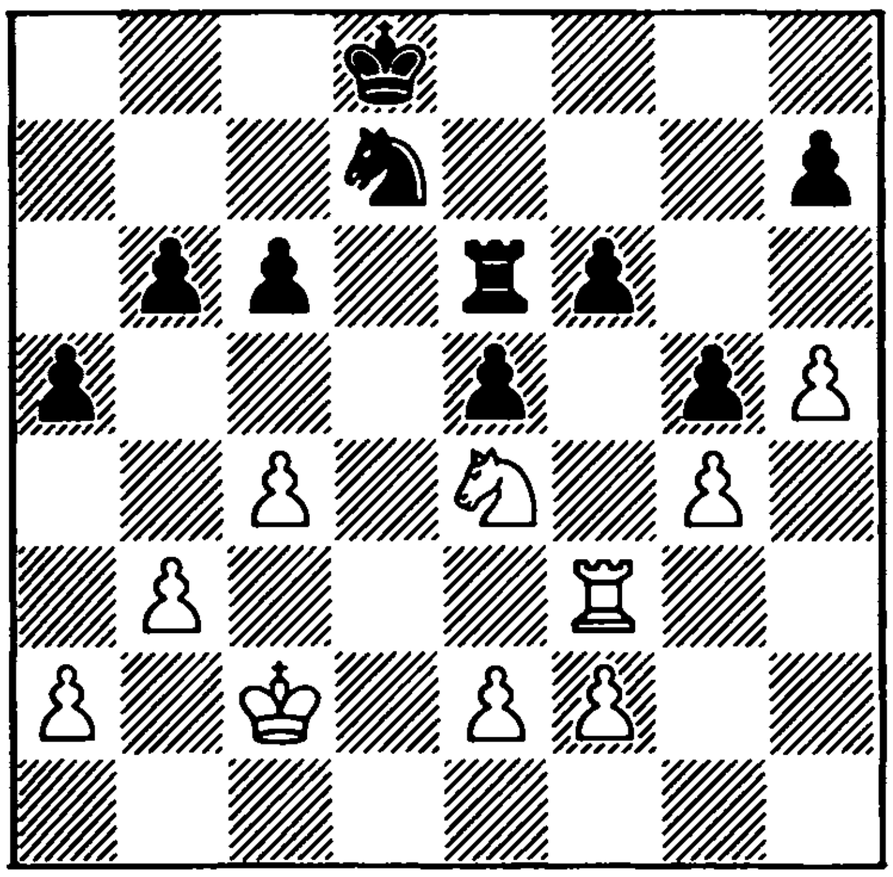
18 ... ♖xd1+?!

The flexibility and originality of the ninth World Champion's thinking is typified by the following comment: "It would probably have been better to play 18 ... ♗xc5 19 ♘xc5 ♖he8, although this is a far from obvious continuation. Black would have lost a pawn – 20 ♖xd8 ♔xd8 21 ♘xb7+ ♔c7 22 ♘c5 e4, but on the other hand he could have gained quite good counterplay, since the knight at c5 is poorly placed (for example, *23 ... a5*

followed by *24* ... ♖*e5* is threatened)." (Petrosian).

19 ♖xd1 ♗xc5 20 ♘xc5 ♖e8 21 ♘e4 ♖e6 22 g4 a5 23 ♖d3 ♘d7 24 ♔c2 b6 25 ♖f3 ♔d8 *(43)*

43



White has tied the opponent's pieces to the defence of the f6 pawn, but the win is still a long way off, since there are no other vulnerable points in the black position. Therefore White's immediate task is to create weaknesses in Black's position on the other side of the board.

26 a3 c5

Bannik immediately gives up control of the important d5 square, but otherwise he could not have prevented the pawn advance b3-b4 and c4-c5, breaking up his queenside.

27 ♔c3 ♔e7 28 ♖d3 ♖c6 29 ♖d5 ♘f8 30 ♘g3 ♘e6 31 ♘f5+ ♔e8 32 e3 ♘c7

As shown by Petrosian, Black would have done better to play his knight to f7 via d8.

33 ♖d1 ♘e6 34 ♔d3 ♖c7 35 ♔e4 ♖c6 36 ♘d6+ ♔e7 37 ♘f5+ ♔e8 38 ♘d6+ ♔e7 39 ♘f5+ ♔e8 40 a4 ♘d8

The time control has been reached, and White sealed his next move.

41 ♘h6!

Petrosian prevents ... ♘f7 and prepares an attack on the f6 pawn.

41 ... ♘e6

Black is obliged to choose his moves very carefully. 41 ... ♖e6 42 ♔f5 ♖c6 43 ♘g8 was bad, while on 41 ... ♔e7 there would all the same have followed 42 ♘g8+ and 43 ♔f5.

42 ♘g8 ♘f8

Again the only move. On 42 ... ♔f7 White would have won prettily by 43 ♖d7+! ♔xg8 44 ♔d5 (indicated by Petrosian).

43 ♖d2!

"This puts Black in zugzwang. Now on 43 ... ♖e6 there follows 44 ♔f5 ♔f7 45 ♖d8 ♖c6 46 ♘h6+ ♔g7 47 ♔e4! followed by 48 ♘f5+ (*47* ... ♘*e6* fails to save the game because of *48* ♖*d7+! ♔xh6 49 ♔d5*)." (Petrosian). It should be added that White is very watchful of the opponent's counterplay. On the natural 43 ♔f5? there could have followed 43 ... ♔f7! 44 ♘h6+ ♔g7 45 ♖d8 ♘e6 46 ♖e8 ♘c7!, when White loses his knight.

43 ... ♔f7

On 43 ... ♘d7 White had prepared 44 ♔f5 ♔d8 45 e4 ♔e8 46 f3 ♔d8 47 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 48 ♘xf6+, with an easy win.

44 ♘h6+ ♔e8
45 ♘f5 ♘e6

In the event of 45 ... ♘d7 Petrosian was intending to win by 46 ♔d5 ♘b8 47 ♘h6 ♔f8 (*47* ... ♔*e7 48* ♘*g8+ ♔f7 49 ♔e4!*) 48 ♔e4! ♔e8 49 ♔f5 ♘d7 50 ♘g8 followed by the exchange sacrifice on d7.

46 ♖d6!

In the knight ending Black has no defence against the invasion of the white king at d5 or f5.

46 ... ♖xd6 47 ♘xd6+ ♔d7 48 ♘b5 ♘g7 49 h6 ♘e8 50 ♔d5

Black is again in zugzwang. There was no point in him continuing the game. The conclusion was:

50 ... f5 51 ♔xe5 fxg4 52 ♘c3 ♔e7 53 ♘e4 ♔f7 54 ♔f5 g3 55 fxg3 g4 56 ♘g5+ ♔g8 57 ♔e6 ♘c7+ 58 ♔d7 ♘a6 59 e4 ♘b4 60 e5 ♘d3 61 e6 Black resigns

Flohr-Geller
22nd USSR Championship
Moscow 1955
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 b3

In the last years of his tournament appearances, against the King's Indian Defence Flohr invariably chose variations with the development of his bishop at b2. Of course, such a system is not so dangerous for Black as, say, the Sämisch Variation, but it would be wrong to regard it as totally harmless. Black can of course gain good counterplay, but by no means 'just as he pleases'. Here is a typical example: 3 ... ♗g7 4 ♗b2 0-0 5 g3 d6 6 d4 c5 7 ♗g2 ♘e4 8 0-0 ♘c6 9 ♘bd2 ♘xd2?! 10 ♕xd2 ♗g4?! 11 d5! ♗xb2 12 ♕xb2 ♗xf3 13 ♗xf3 ♘a5? 14 h4!, and already Black's position is probably lost (Keres-Szabo, Hastings 1954/55).

In the present game White chooses a not especially happy moment for b2-b3 (however, it was in this game that Geller demonstrated this!). Nowadays 1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 g6 3 b3 is usually played.

3 ... ♗g7 4 ♗b2 0-0 5 g3

In later games Flohr preferred to develop his bishop at e2 after 5 e3.

5 ... d6
6 d4 ♘bd7!

Here ... e5 is more promising than ... c5.

7 ♗g2 e5
8 dxe5 dxe5!

This move is the point of Geller's plan. Capturing on e5 with a knight would have led to a difficult game, e.g. 8 ... ♘g4 9 0-0 ♖e8 10 ♘c3 ♘gxe5 11 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 12 ♕d2 a5 13 ♖ac1 f5 14 ♖fd1 ♘d7 15 ♘d5! (Barcza-Westerinen, Leningrad 1967).

9 0-0

Of course, not 9 ♘xe5? ♘g4 10 ♘d3 ♗xb2 11 ♘xb2 ♕f6, when Black wins, or 9 ♗xe5? ♘xe5 10 ♘xe5 ♘g4.

9 ... e4
10 ♘e1 ♖e8

Black also has a good game after 10 ... ♕e7!? 11 ♘c2 ♖d8 12 ♘c3 ♘c5 (Balashov-Kochiev, Lvov 1978).

8 dxe5 has already handed the initiative to Black. Comparatively best was the transposition into a 'normal' King's Indian by 8 0-0.

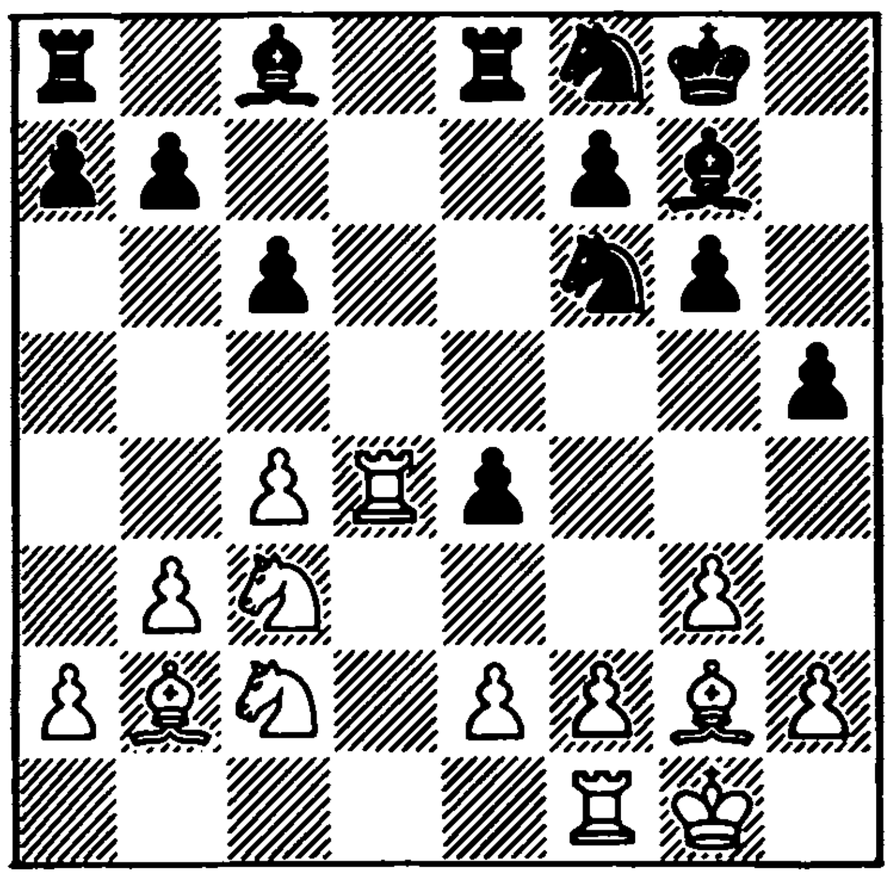
11 ♘c2 c6 12 ♕d2 ♕e7 13 ♘c3

A few months after this USSR Championship Flohr again returned to this variation in the Moscow Championship, and played 13 ♖d1 against Vasyukov. There followed 13 ... ♕c5! 14 ♘e3 ♕h5 15 ♕c2 ♘e5 16 ♘c3 ♘eg4!, and Black launched a direct attack on the king.

13 ... ♘f8 14 ♖ad1 ♕e5 15 ♕d4 ♕xd4 16 ♖xd4 h5! *(44)*

Black secures the post for his bishop at f5, where it will securely defend the cramping e4 pawn.

44



17 ♗a1

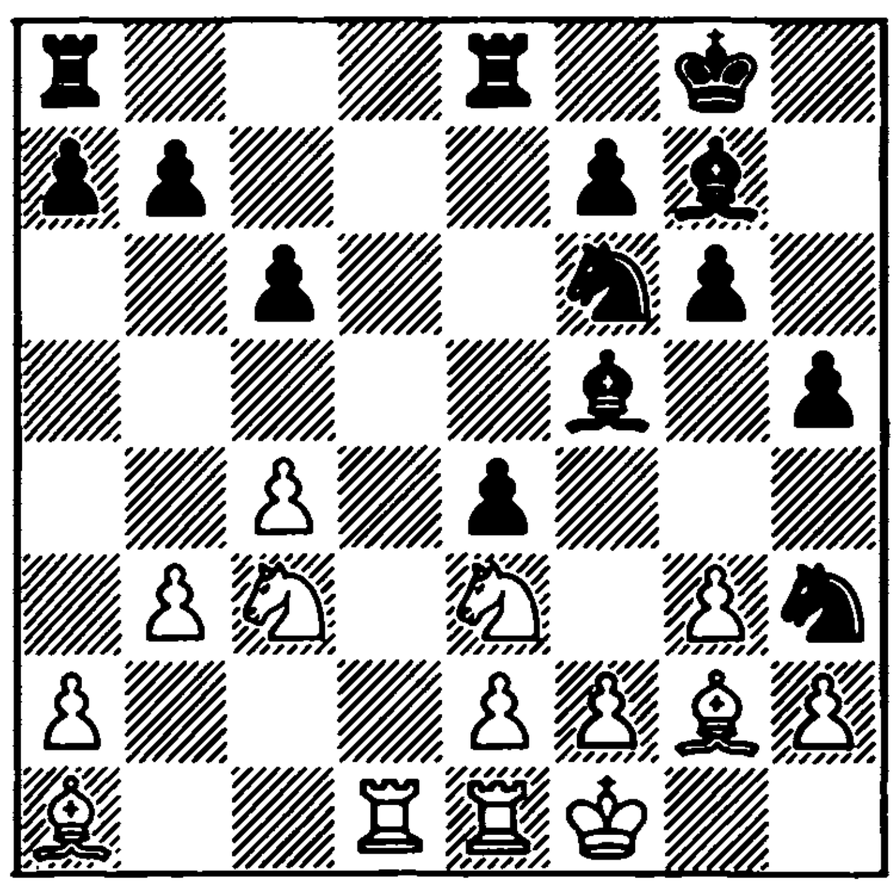
After the game Flohr suggested 17 h3, with the possible resource g3-g4 in mind.

17 ... ♘e6 18 ♖dd1 ♘g5 19 ♖fe1?!

A passive move. 19 ♘e3 was stronger and more natural.

19 ... ♗f5 20 ♘e3 ♘h3+ 21 ♔f1 *(45)*

45



21 ... ♘g4!

'Only' threatening mate in one move.

22 ♘xg4 hxg4
23 f3?

Flohr is totally confused and he goes down without a fight. As shown by Chistyakov, annotating this game in the tournament bulletin, White could have put up a stubborn resistance by 23 ♘a4 ♘g5 24 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 25 ♘c5 ♖ab8 26 ♖d4, or 23 ♗xh3 gxh3 24 ♘a4.

23 ... exf3 24 exf3 ♖xe1+ 25 ♔xe1

25 ♖xe1 would have lost immediately to 25 ... ♗xc3 26 ♗xc3 ♗d3+.

25 ... ♖e8+
26 ♔f1

An elegant mate follows after 26 ♔d2 gxf3 27 ♗xf3 ♗h6.

26 ... gxf3
27 ♗xh3

27 ♗xf3 loses a piece to 27 ... ♖e3.

27 ... ♗xh3+

Black is a pawn up with an overwhelming position.

28 ♔f2 ♗g2 29 g4 f5 30 gxf5 gxf5 31 h4 ♗f6 32 ♔g3 f4+ 33 ♔h2 ♗xh4 34 ♘a4 ♗g3+ 35 ♔g1 ♗h3 White resigns

Spassky-Gheorghiu
Siegen Olympiad 1970
Old Indian Defence

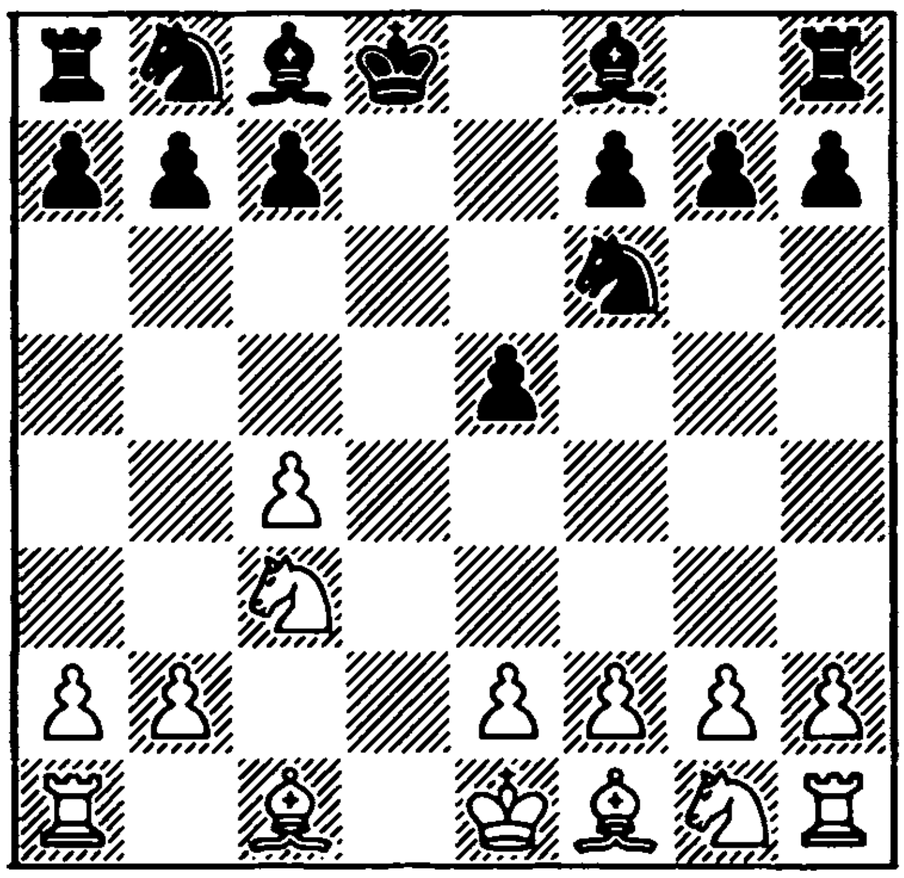
1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 e5

This move order, suggested by Reti, was introduced into tournament play by Ukrainian players in the mid-1930s with the aim of avoiding dangerous lines of the Sämisch Variation. Initially it was met with mistrust. Players of that time were not accustomed to giving up castling 'for nothing'. Soon, however, this mistrust was replaced by recognition. After the exchange of queens (*4 dxe5 dxe5 5 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8*) there was no way for White to exploit the exposed position of the black

king, which (after ... *c6*) would usually settle at c7, and gradually Black would set about realising his trumps: the strong pawn at e5, play on the dark squares, and the unfavourable position of the c4 pawn, which restricts White's light-square bishop and weakens his queenside. It reached the stage where 4 dxe5 began to be given a question mark, which, of course, was completely out of touch with reality. It stands to reason that White cannot so quickly lose the advantage of the first move, and it was quite logical that ways should be found to develop his initiative. However, a significant advantage for White has still not been found, and, instead of 4 dxe5, Ragozin's method of 4 ♘f3 ♘bd7 5 ♗g5! occurs much more frequently.

4 dxe5 dxe5
5 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 *(46)*

46



This 'opening' position has been quite deeply studied. Active, purposeful play is demanded of White, since the pawn structure is not in his favour.

6 ♘f3!

The strongest move. 6 f4?! ♗b4! 7 ♗d2 ♗e6 8 e3 ♘fd7! is not worth considering (Pomar-Kottnauer, Leysin 1967), and also insufficient is 6 ♗g5 c6! 7 ♘f3 ♘bd7 8 0-0-0 ♔c7 9 a3 ♘g4 10 ♗h4 f6, with an excellent game for Black (Sanchez-Kotov, Stockholm Interzonal 1952).

6 ... ♘fd7

For a long time this was thought to be the only defence, since 6 ... ♘bd7 was considered bad on account of 7 ♘g5 ♔e8 (or *7... ♔e7 8 b3!*) 8 ♘b5. But in the 1950s this 'refutation' was shown to be harmless after 8 ... ♗d6. Here are some of the possibilities after 6 ... ♘bd7:

(a) 7 g3 c6 (also good is *7... h6 8 ♗h3 c6 9 ♗e3 ♗b4! 10 ♖c1 ♖e8*, Shatskes-Vasyukov, Moscow 1964) 8 ♗h3 ♗d6!? 9 ♗e3 h6 10 0-0 ♖e8 11 ♘h4 ♗f8 12 b3 ♔c7 13 ♖fd1 ♘b6, and Black equalised in Bronstein-Panno (Amsterdam Olympiad 1954).

(b) 7 a3 h6 8 e4? a5 9 ♗e2 ♗d6 10 b3 ♘c5 11 ♘d2 c6 12 0-0 ♔e7 13 ♖b1 ♘e6, and Black already had a great positional advantage (Arlamowski-Bronstein, Lodz 1955).

(c) 7 ♗g5 c6 8 0-0-0 ♔c7 9 ♗h4?! ♗b4 10 ♔c2 ♖e8 11 ♗g3 ♘h5 12 ♘d2 f5, and White was already forced to defend (Germek-Petrosian, Bled 1961).

(d) 7 ♖g1! (as in the 6... ♘fd7 variation, this plan of a kingside pawn offensive is the most promising) 7 ... ♗b4 (or 7 ... c6 8 g4 h6 9 h4 e4 10 *♘d4 ♘e5 11 g5*, and White's initiative was quite dangerous, Karasev-Dvoretsky, Minsk 1976) 8 ♗d2 ♖e8 9 a3 ♗xc3 10 ♗xc3 ♘e4 11 ♖c1 a5 12 g4!, with the more pleasant position for White (Sliwa-Fuderer, Göteborg Interzonal 1955).

After the move made by Gheorghiu the e5 pawn is securely defended, but now he has to spend time 'untwisting' his knot of pieces: king, bishop and knights. And meanwhile White too will not sit twiddling his thumbs.

7 ♗d2

One of the strongest continuations. White's plan is to quickly mobilise his forces and seize space on the kingside.

Quiet, planless development is inappropriate here, for example: 7 g3 f6 8 ♗g2?! (*8 ♗h3!*) 8 ... c6 9 0-0 ♔c7 10 a3?! ♘b6 11 b3 ♗f5 12 e4?! ♗e6, and Black has the advantage (Ragozin-Kan, Moscow 1936), or 9 ... a5 10 b3 ♘a6 11 ♖d1 ♔c7 12 ♘d2 ♘dc5 13 f4 exf4 14 gxf4 ♗g4, again with the better position for Black (Kopylov-Lilienthal, Moscow 1949).

The correct plan is to advance the kingside pawns, in order to create weaknesses in Black's pawns on that side of the board. This can be embarked on immediately: 7 g4!? c6 8 b3 f6 9 g5 ♘c5 10 h4 ♗e6 11 h5 ♘bd7 12 h6 f5 13 ♗h3 a5, with very sharp play (Bronstein-Fuderer, Kiev 1959), or 8 ♗e3 ♗b4!? 9 ♗d2 ♘a6 10 ♖d1 ♘ac5 11 g5 ♖e8 12 a3 ♗xc3 13 ♗xc3, with a slight advantage to White (Hort-Ciocaltea, Skopje 1969).

Slightly delaying g2-g4 is also quite good: 7 b3 f6 8 ♗b2 c6 9 0-0-0 ♔c7 10 g4! ♘a6 11 g5! ♘dc5 12 h4 ♗e6 13 ♗h3, with the better game for White (analysis by Boleslavsky), or 7 ♗e3 f6 8 0-0-0 c6 9 g4! ♔c7 10 ♖g1 ♘b6!? 11 b3 ♗a3+! (but not *11 ... ♘a6?! 12 ♔b2 ♗e6 13 g5! ♖g8?! 14 gxf6 gxf6 15 ♖xg8 ♗xg8 16 ♗h3*, with a great advantage to White, Averbakh-Suetin, Minsk 1952) 12 ♔b1 ♘a6 13 ♗c1 ♗b4 14 ♔b2 h6 15 a3 ♗xc3+ 16 ♔xc3 ♗e6, with approximate equality (Chistyakov-Konstantinopolsky, Moscow 1954).

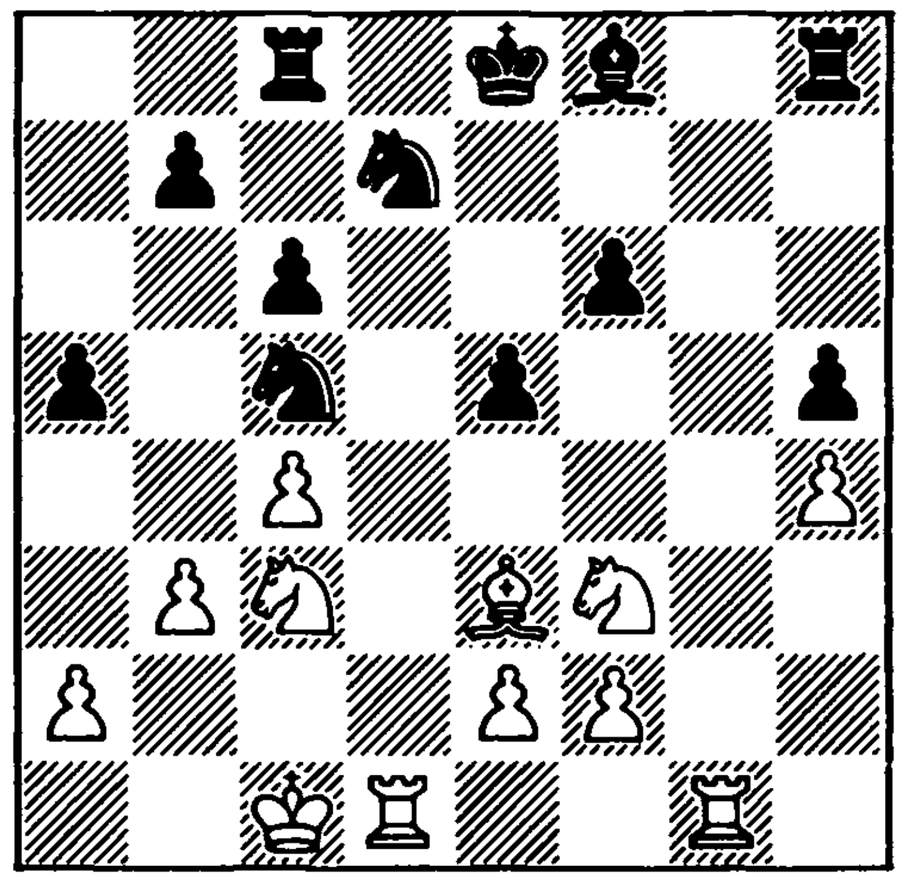
The flexible move 7 ♗d2 has the advantage of preventing the pin ... ♗b4.

7 ... c6 8 g4! a5 9 g5 ♘a6 10 h4 ♘ac5 11 ♗e3 f5 12 gxf6 gxf6 13 0-0-0 ♔e8

In such positions the black king usually ends up at c7, but Gheorghiu decides to keep it on his kingside, which has been weakened by the advance of the white g-pawn.

14 ♗h3 ♘b6 15 ♗xc8 ♖xc8 16 b3 h5 17 ♖hg1 ♘bd7 *(47)*

47



The two players have made their thematic moves, and an advantage for White has emerged. Black has a complex of weakened light squares on the kingside, his h5 pawn requires defending, and on the two open files the white rooks are dominant. But how can White exploit the defects of the opponent's position? Spassky plans to manoeuvre a knight to g3.

18 ♘d2 ♔f7

18 ... f5 was not good on account of 19 ♖g5 f4 20 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 21 ♘de4.

19 ♘de4 ♔e6
20 ♔b2!

White does not hurry, but makes a useful waiting move, removing his king from the same file as the black rook, and as though gives his opponent the move. There are no direct threats facing Black, but to make a move in such a situation, without worsening one's position, is sometimes more difficult than parrying the most dangerous threat.

20 ... ♗e7

21 ♖g7

Black's bishop has moved from f8, and the white rook immediately exploits this, creating the threat of 21 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 22 ♖xe7+.

21 ... ♘xe4 22 ♘xe4 ♖cg8 23 ♖dg1 ♖xg7 24 ♖xg7 ♗f8 25 ♖g1 b6

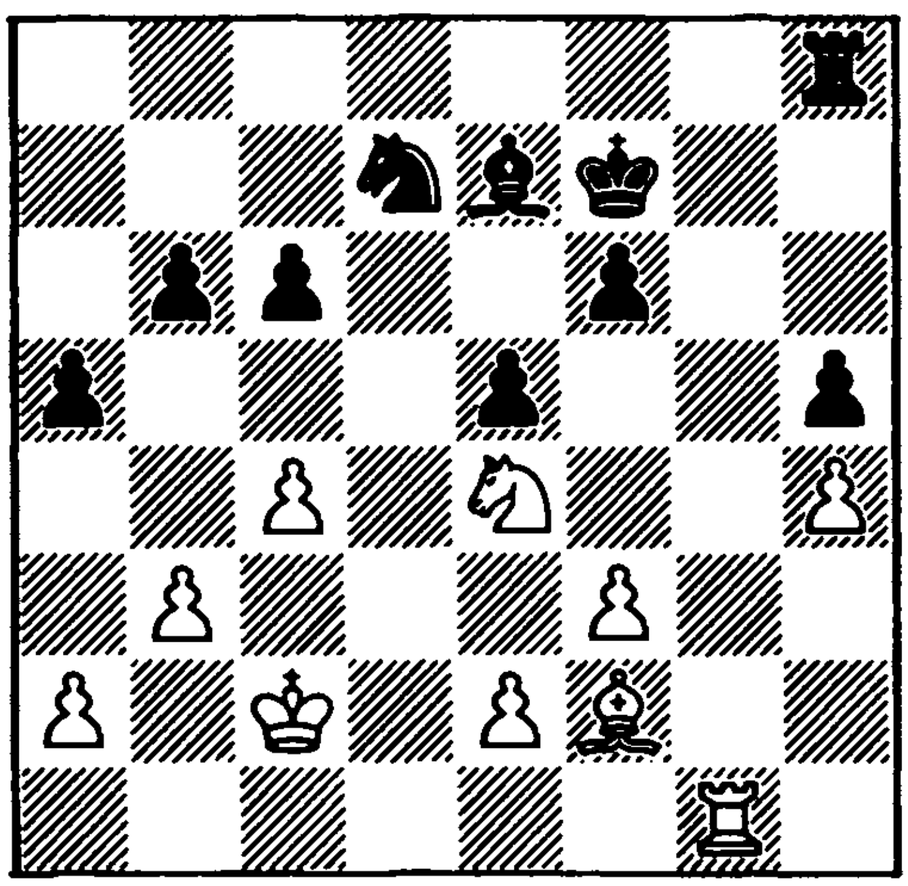
Black has managed to exchange one pair of rooks, but the d-file remains a potential weakness in his position. 25 ... f5 26 ♘g5+ ♔f6 (*26 ... ♔e7 27 ♗d2 b6 28 f4! ♗g7 29 ♗c3*) 27 ♖d1! ♔e7 28 ♘f7! is unpleasant for him, while 25 ... ♔e7 is well met by 26 ♗d2 followed by ♘g3 and e2-e4.

26 ♔c2!

Spassky again makes a useful move, allowing the opponent himself to play actively.

26 ... ♗e7 27 f3! ♔f7 28 ♗f2! *(48)*

48



28 ... f5?!

Black fails to withstand the unhurried, non-concrete play imposed on him by the opponent. But psychologically one can understand Gheorghiu – he did not want to observe passively as White transferred his knight to g3, and then after e2-e4 to f5, further strengthening his position.

29 ♘g5+ ♗xg5

After 29 ... ♔f6 30 ♖d1! familiar motifs creep in, for example: 30 ... ♖d8 31 ♗g3, and to relieve the pin on the d-file Black has to further weaken his position by 31 ... f4, since if the knight moves there follows 32 ♗xe5+.

30 ♖xg5 f4 31 e3 fxe3 32 ♗xe3 ♖h7 33 ♔d3

White's 26 ♔c2 comes in useful.

33 ... c5 34 ♗d2! ♔f6 35 ♗c3 ♔e6 36 ♔e3!

Black is in an unusual form of zugzwang. Any move by a piece will worsen his position.

36 ... ♖h8
37 ♔e4!

Accuracy to the end. After 37 f4? exf4+ 38 ♔xf4 ♖f8+ 39 ♔e4 ♖f2 Black would have emerged unscathed.

37 ... ♘f6+ 38 ♔d3 ♘d7 39 f4 ♖d8 40 fxe5 ♘f6+ 41 ♔c2 Black resigns

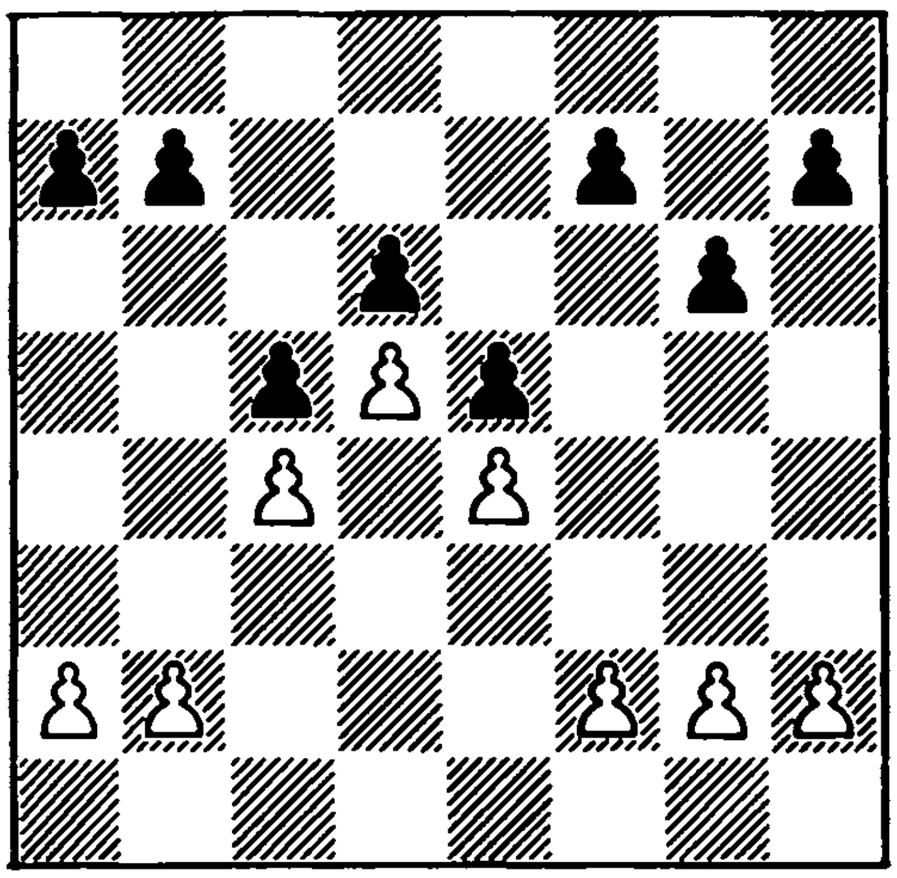
1.2 PAWN WEDGE IN THE CENTRE

In the classical variations of the King's Indian Defence, Black blocks the advance of the enemy centre by playing ... e5. In reply White can close the centre with d4-d5, and this leads to pawn formations united under the general name of 'wedge in the centre'.

We will consider two types of position, illustrated in diagrams 49 and 50.

The wedge in the centre normally ensures White a spatial advantage, and his prospects in the coming endgame are better.

49



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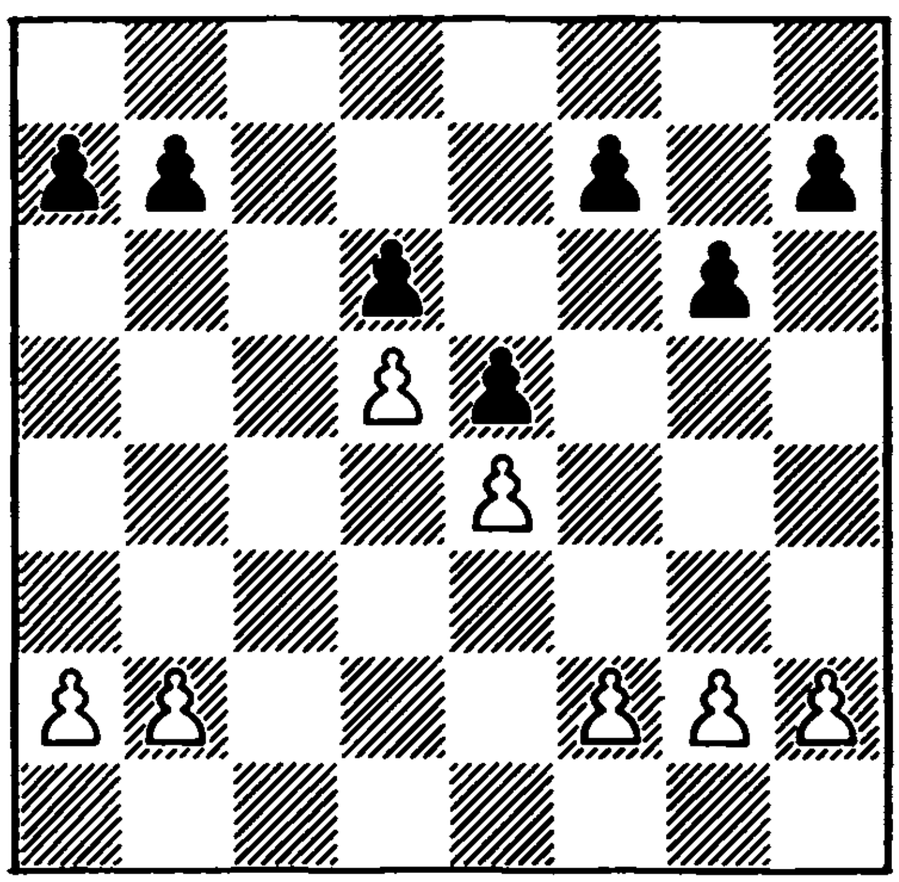


His plan is usually to develop an initiative on the queenside. In the first type of position White has to prepare the opening of the b-file by the pawn advance b2-b4, while in the second he should occupy the c-file and tie down the opponent's forces by putting pressure on the d6 pawn.

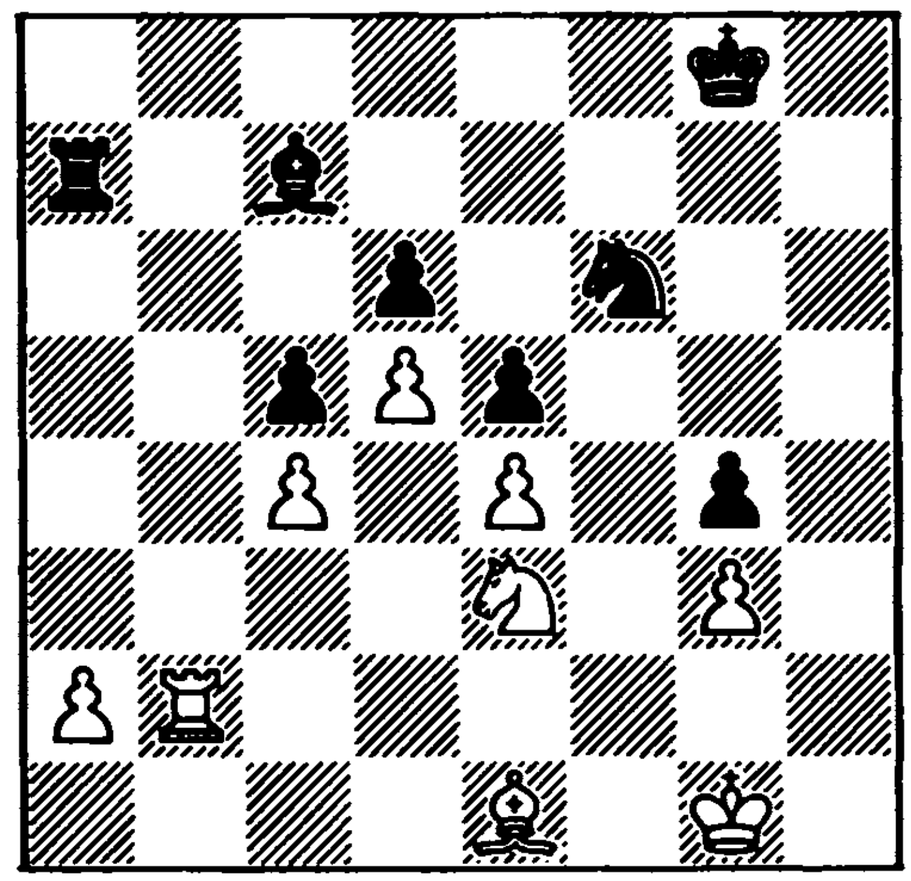
Black's chances lie on the kingside (active play on the opposite side of the board can be regarded as an exception).

A comparison of the two diagram positions suggests that the presence of the c-pawns would appear to make Black's position more solid: the weakness of the d6 pawn is not so appreciable.

In positions from the second diagram Black often has to block the c-file by playing a knight to c5, but then to secure its position the move ... a5 is necessary, seriously weakening the queenside.

From the pawn structure, Black's formidable King's Indian bishop has to be classified as 'bad'. In the majority of cases this is so, but the reader should bear in mind that in recent times the concepts of 'good' and 'bad' bishops have become much more complicated.

51



This position is taken from the game Gligorić-Geller, Zürich Candidates 1953. The white e4 pawn cannot be defended, and Black has an undisputed advantage. An important role in the defence is played by Black's 'bad' bishop at c7, whereas White's 'good' bishop is of little use. ". . . It turns out that it is not always favourable to deploy the pawns on squares of the opposite colour to one's own bishop. While there are other pieces on the board, the pawns can often be in danger." – (Bronstein).

The move 30 ... ♗c7! in the game **Sherwin-Fischer**, USA 1966-67 (cf. p.46) was undoubtedly prompted by the same ideas.

This section is opened by the following classic game, in which Black's premature activity on the kingside is precisely refuted by White's counterblow f2-f4, breaking up the black centre.

Alekhine- Tartakower
Dresden 1926
Benoni Defence

1 d4 c5

Tartakower liked to employ 'semi-correct' set-ups, pinning his hopes on his tactical skill in the middlegame. The classic Benoni Defence, chosen by him, does indeed lead to tense situations, but they usually favour White. In modern tournaments a different move order is preferred: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e5 – here White is denied the possibility of transferring his knight to a strong post at c4.

2 d5 d6 3 e4 e5 4 ♘c3!

Alekhine leaves the c4 square free for the possible manoeuvre ♘f3-d2-c4.

4 ... ♗e7

"Black intends to play ... f5 as soon as possible, but in doing so he allows White the chance to exchange queens, after which the weakness of the c5/d6/e5 pawn formation really makes itself felt" – (Alekhine). As we see, already in the opening Alekhine was evaluating the possible transition into the endgame, and he concluded that it was there that the defects of Black's strategic plan would be most clearly seen.

5 ♗d3

A good and logical move, which has nowadays been forgotten – even the *Encyclopaedia of Chess Openings* has nothing to say about it. Meanwhile, if White does not want to play 5 ♗b5+, his bishop is more actively placed at d3 than at e2 – there is an extra attack on the f5 square in the event of the centre being undermined. Alekhine evidently decided to defer ♘f3, to avoid the variation 5 ♘f3 ♗g4 6 h3 ♗xf3 7 ♕xf3 ♗g5.

5 ... ♗g5
6 ♘f3!

With gain of tempo.

6 ... ♗xc1
7 ♕xc1 ♘h6

Black consistently plays for ... f5. But whether it will turn out well – that is the question.

8 h3

A subtle move. An immediate reply is demanded of Black: the advance ... f5 is possible only now, since on the next move White can play g2-g4, when it will be off the agenda.

8 ... f5

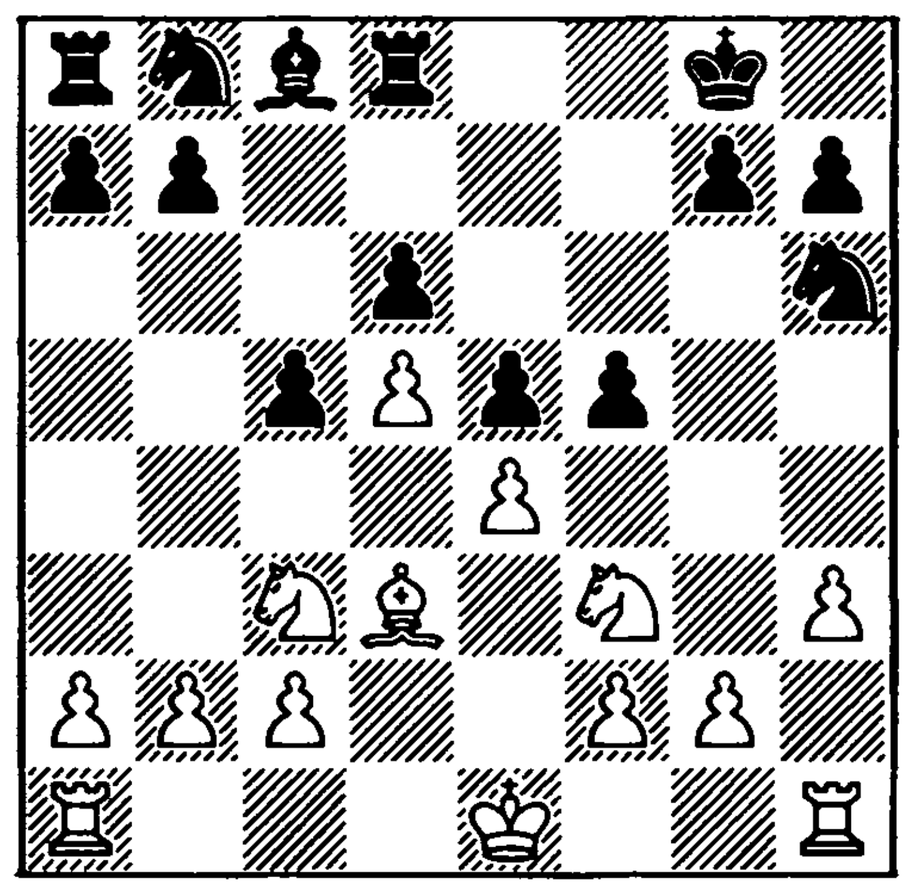
Of course!

9 ♕g5!

And here is the refutation, promised by Alekhine in his comment on 4 ... ♗e7. Black is forced to agree to the exchange of queens.

9 ... 0-0
10 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 *(52)*

52



11 ♘g5!

Energetically played. White aims to exploit the opponent's lack of development

and to open up the position.

11 ... g6

The attempt to prevent 12 f4 would also have led to a difficult position. After 11 ... f4 12 ♘b5! ♘a6 13 ♗c4 White plays his knight to e6 and gains a decisive advantage.

12 f4! exf4 13 0-0 ♘a6 14 ♖xf4 ♘b4 15 ♖h4!

White's energetic and purposeful actions have borne fruit. Black loses a pawn without the slightest compensation, since 15 ... ♔g7 is not possible on account of 16 ♖xh6.

15 ... ♘xd3
16 ♖xh6

A romantic decision. Alekhine is attracted by playing for an attack, but the game drags out for a further forty moves. The move played retains an advantage for White, but the simple 16 cxd3 was objectively stronger, transposing into a technically won position with an extra pawn.

16 ... ♘xb2 17 ♖xh7 ♘c4 18 exf5 ♗xf5 19 ♖xb7 ♖e8!

Tartakower defends resourcefully. Black intends to reply with a counterattack on the e-file, without contesting the seventh rank, since on 19 ... ♖d7 there would have followed 20 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 21 ♖b1 and 22 ♖b7.

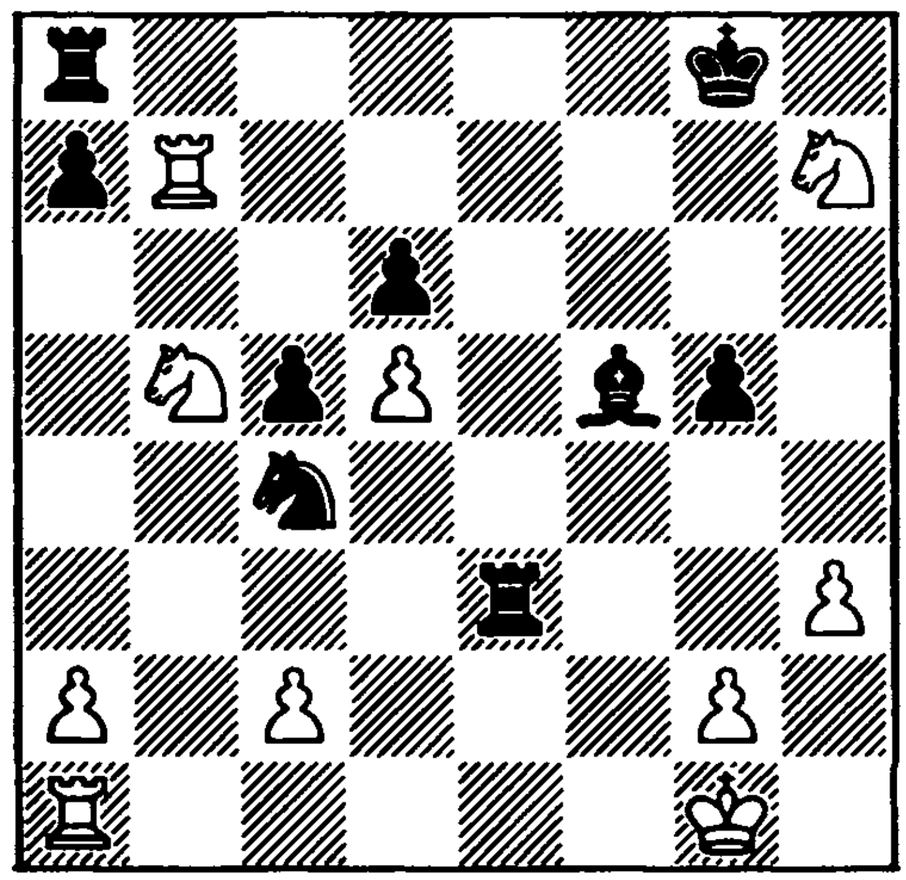
20 ♘h7 ♖e3 21 ♘f6+ ♔f8 22 ♘h7+ ♔g8 23 ♘b5!

White's cavalry attacks from both sides.

23 ... g5! *(53)*

"Or 23 ... a6 24 ♘f6+ ♔f8 25 ♘c7 ♖e7 26 ♖ab1 ♖c8 27 ♘e6+ ♔f7 (*27 ... ♗xe6 28 dxe6 ♖xe6 29 ♖f1*) 28 ♘h7! ♗xe6 29 dxe6+ ♔e8 (*28 ... ♔xe6 29 ♘g5+*, winning the exchange) 30 ♘f6+ ♔d8 31 ♘d5 ♖xe6 32 ♖f1, with a winning position for White" – (Alekhine).

53



24 ♘f6+!

Alekhine is in his element. In this position playing for an attack wins more certainly than capturing material. After 24 ♘xg5 ♖e2 Black could have hoped for definite counterplay.

24 ... ♔h8
25 ♖f1 ♗xc2

If 25 ... ♗g6, then 26 ♘g4 and 27 ♖f6, winning.

26 ♖c1! ♘a5 27 ♖c7 ♗g6 28 ♘xd6

Alekhine has again won a pawn, this time with an overwhelming position. 29 ♘f7+ is threatened.

28 ... ♖f8 29 ♘g4 ♖e2 30 ♖xa7 ♖xa2 31 ♖xc5 ♘b3 32 ♖xa2 ♘xc5

Tartakower has managed to avoid losing a piece, but, two pawns down in a quiet position, he has no hopes of saving the game. The remaining moves were unnecessary.

33 ♘e5 ♔g7 34 ♖a7+ ♔h6 35 ♖c7 ♘d3 36 ♘xd3 ♗xd3 37 ♘f7+ ♔h5 38 d6 ♗g6

39 d7 ♗xf7 40 ♖c8 ♗e6 41 ♖xf8 ♗xd7 42 ♖f7 ♗a4 43 ♔f2 ♔g6 44 ♖a7 ♗c2 45 ♖a6+ ♔g7 46 ♔e3 ♔f7 47 ♔d4 ♔g7 48 ♔e5 ♗d3 49 ♖a3 ♗c2 50 ♖g3 ♔g6 51 h4 ♔h5 52 ♖xg5+ ♔xh4 53 ♔f4 ♗d1 54 g3+ ♔h3 55 g4 Black resigns

Bertok-Geller
Kiev 1959
Czech Benoni Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e5 4 ♘c3 d6 5 e4 ♗e7 6 ♘ge2

One of the most dangerous plans in the Benoni Defence. White aims to 'squeeze' his opponent on both flanks, and with this aim he first strives to gain control over the strategically important f5 square.

6 ... 0-0?!

Here castling is premature, allowing White to gain a firm initiative. Black should have awaited the development of events with 6 ... ♘bd7, 6 ... ♘a6 or 6 ... a6 (the last two moves, it is true, are less reliable), in order after 7 ♘g3 to harass the knight by the familiar manoeuvre ... g6 and ... h5!.

7 ♘g3 ♘e8
8 h4! g6

Without this move, weakening the king's position, Black apparently cannot get by. After 8 ... a6 9 a4 b6? 10 ♘f5! ♗xf5 11 exf5 e4 (otherwise there is simply nothing for Black to move) 12 ♘xe4 (*12 g4!* is also good) 12 ... ♘f6 13 ♘g5 ♖e8 14 ♗e2 ♘bd7 15 ♔f1 White has an obvious advantage (Simagin-Taimanov, Kislovodsk 1966).

9 ♗d3

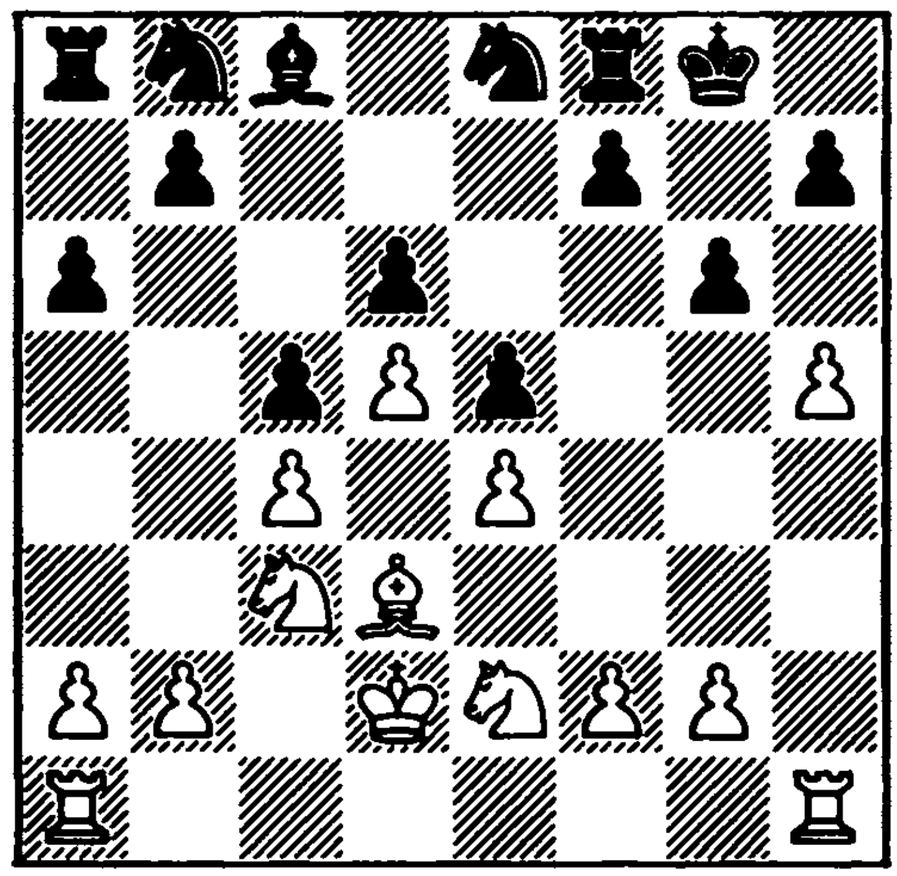
Portisch played actively in a game with Jimenez (Havana 1966), cramping Black over the entire board: 9 ♗h6 ♘g7 10 ♗e2 ♘a6 11 ♕d2 ♘c7 12 h5 ♗f6 13 a3! ♗d7 14 b4 b6 15 ♔f1.

9 ... a6 10 h5 ♗g5 11 ♗d2 ♕f6

In this way Black gains control of the dark squares on the kingside. Unfortunately, he gains little from this: the opponent can easily provoke the exchange of queens, and the weakness of Black's pawns (remember Alekhine) forces him onto the defensive.

12 ♕c1! ♗xd2+ 13 ♕xd2 ♕f4 14 ♘ge2! ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 *(54)*

54



The exchange of queens has led to a difficult position for Black. White has a big spatial advantage and a clear plan for developing his initiative on the queenside. The theoretical advantage of the 'good' bishop at c8 over the 'bad' bishop at d3 is little consolation to Black, since his 'good' bishop is completely restricted by the white pawns and has no play at all.

15 ... ♘g7
16 ♘g3 ♘d7

The apparently active 16 ... f5 brings Black no benefit after 17 h6 ♘e8 18 exf5 gxf5 19 ♖h5.

17 a3 ♘f6 18 hxg6 fxg6 19 b4 ♘d7 20 f3

♖b8 21 ♖ab1 ♘e8 22 ♖b2! ♘c7 23 ♖hb1

White's initiative develops of its own accord. 24 ♘a4 is threatened. The obvious difference in chess strength between grandmaster Geller and international master Bertok is of no great significance in such a position. White's aims are too clear.

23 ... ♖a8

So as to answer 24 ♘a4 with 24 ... b5.

24 ♘ge2!

The other knight begins moving towards c5.

24 ... cxb4 25 axb4 a5 26 bxa5 ♖xa5 27 ♘c1 ♔f7 28 ♗c2 ♘c5 29 ♘b3 ♘xb3+ 30 ♖xb3

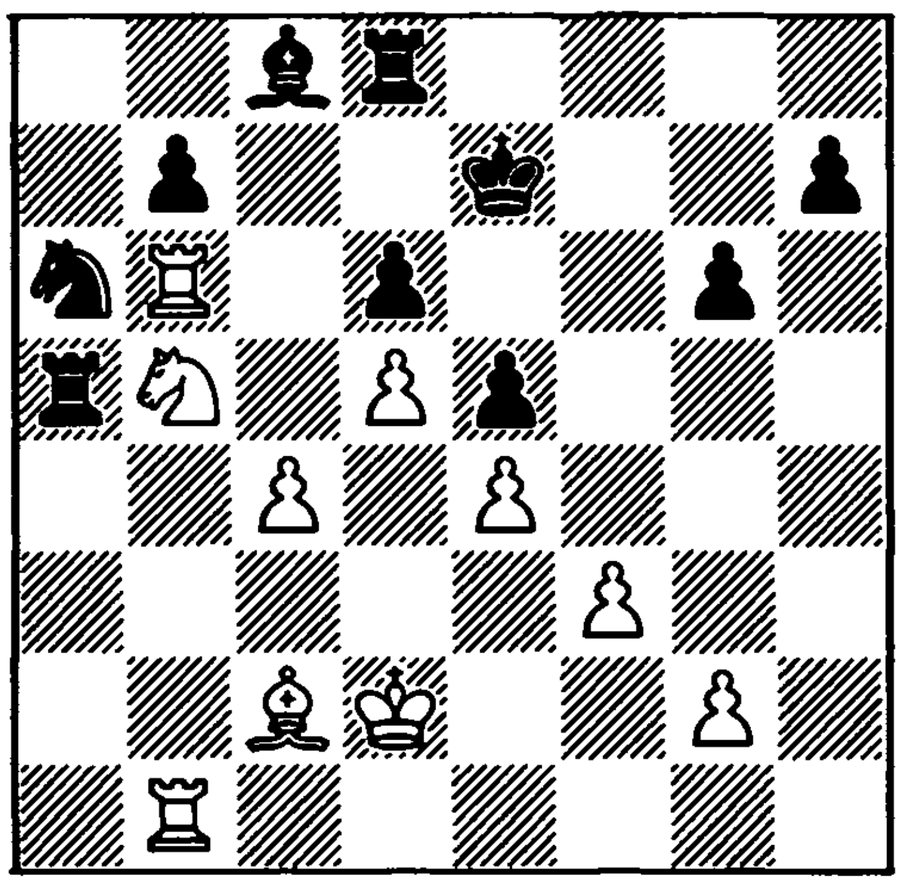
The Yugoslav player persistently tries to break down the opponent's defences on the queenside.

30 ... ♔e7
31 ♖b6 ♘a6?

"A very serious mistake; Black should not have allowed the invasion at b5. In the given position the knight is ineffectively placed at c5, although it appears to stand well" – (Bertok).

32 ♘b5 ♖d8 *(55)*

55



33 g4!

An unexpected shift in the direction of the attack. It transpires that Black has no way of opposing the opponent's play on the h-file.

33 ... ♖a2 34 g5 ♖f8 35 ♘c3! ♖a3 36 ♖h1 ♖f7 37 ♘b5!

With two leaps the white knight has totally disrupted Black's defences.

37 ... ♖a2

37 ... ♖axf3 38 ♘xd6 ♖f2+ 39 ♔d1 ♖f1+ 40 ♖xf1 ♖xf1+ 41 ♔e2 ♖f8 42 ♘xc8 was also hopeless.

38 ♘xd6 ♖xf3 39 ♘xc8+ ♔d8 40 ♖f6! ♖g3 41 ♖f8+ ♔c7 42 ♖xh7+ Black resigns

Gligorić-Quinteros
Manila 1973
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 g6 4 ♘c3 ♗g7 5 e4 d6 6 ♘f3 0-0 7 ♗e2 e5 8 ♗g5!

Petrosian's method (more common in the variation *1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 d5* and *8 ♗g5*) is also strong in this position.

8 ... h6
9 ♗h4

9 ♗d2! is good here, with the idea of breaking up Black's kingside, which has been compromised by ... h6. For example, after 9 ... ♘e8 10 ♕c1 ♔h7 11 h4 f5 12 h5 Black has a poor position (Soos-Minić, Bucharest 1966). 9 ... ♘h5 or 9 ... ♔h7 is stronger.

9 ... ♕c7

Black must get rid of the unpleasant pin, but this is not so easy to do. The place for the queen seems to be e8, but here the

bishop at e2 is lying in wait for it. White only needs to play ♘d2, and after, say, ... ♘h7 and ... f5 there follows exf5! gxf5, ♗h5.

Lokvenc-Geller, Varna Olympiad 1962, went 9 ... a6 10 ♘d2 ♘bd7 11 0-0 ♕e8 12 a3 ♘h7 13 ♖b1 h5 (necessary) 14 f3 b6 15 b4, with the better chances for White.

9 ... ♕d7!?, a move devised by the Yugoslav grandmaster Velimirović, contains an original idea. In Hamman-Velimirović, Harrachov 1967, White played the routine 10 0-0?, and after 10 ... ♘h5! 11 ♖e1 ♘f4 12 ♗f1 f5 13 ♘d2 g5! 14 ♗g3 ♘xg2! he quickly came under an irresistible attack. 10 ♘d2! is correct. After 10 ... ♘h7 11 0-0 f5 12 f3 f4 13 a3 b6 14 b4 ♘a6 15 ♕a4 g5 16 ♕xd7 ♗xd7 17 ♗f2 ♖fc8 18 ♖fb1 White retained the advantage in Gligorić-Velimirović (Vrnjačka Banja 1962).

9 ... g5 and 9 ... ♘a6 are less logical continuations, and lead to an advantage for White: 9 ... g5 10 ♗g3 ♘h5 11 ♘d2 ♘f4 12 0-0 ♘d7 13 ♗g4! (Polugayevsky-Vasyukov, Baku 1961), or 9 ... ♘a6 10 ♘d2 ♕e8 11 0-0 ♘h7 12 ♘b5! ♕d7 13 ♗g3 ♘c7 14 f4! (Geller-Ljubojević, Petropolis Interzonal 1973).

9 ... ♕c7 is the most popular move.

10 ♘d2 ♘h7
11 ♘b5!?

All the same Gligorić forces his opponent to resort in the future to ... a6, since he plans, after opening the b-file, to invade at the important point b6. Another plan consists of energetic play on both flanks. After 11 g4! a6 12 ♘f1! ♘d7 13 ♘e3 ♘df6 14 ♕c2, according to analysis by Boleslavsky, White suppresses the opponent's counterplay on the kingside and prepares a breakthrough on the queenside.

11 ... ♕d7 12 f3 a6 13 ♘c3 ♕c7 14 ♖b1 ♘d7 15 a3 ♘df6?!

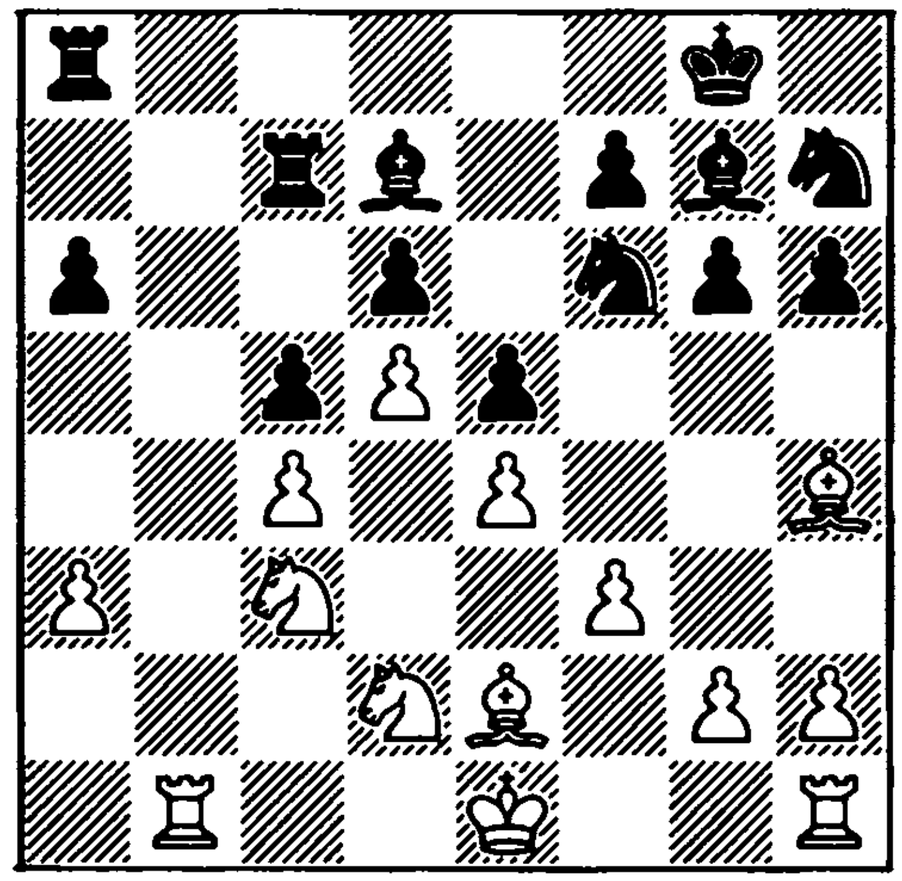
A strange move. The undermining ... f5 is Black's natural plan, and he should have made this important move immediately.

16 b4 b6 17 ♕b3 ♗d7 18 bxc5 bxc5 19 ♕b6! ♖fc8?

Gligorić's last move involved a positional exchange sacrifice and, whether good or bad, Black should have accepted this sacrifice: 19 ... ♕xb6 20 ♖xb6 ♖fb8! 21 ♖xd6 (otherwise the entire manoeuvre loses its point) 21 ... g5 22 ♗g3 ♗f8 23 ♖xf6 ♘xf6 24 ♗xe5. White, of course, has compensation for the exchange, but there could still have been a struggle. Quinteros's timid move leads to a depressing ending for Black, where his only joy is that 'everything is defended'.

20 ♕xc7 ♖xc7 *(56)*

56



21 0-0 ♘e8 22 ♖b6 ♗f6 23 ♗xf6!

Note that Gligorić exchanges the 'bad' enemy bishop. After 23 ♗f2? ♗d8 Black's chances of a successful defence would have improved.

23 ... ♘hxf6 24 ♖fb1 ♗c8 25 ♗d1 ♖aa7 26 ♗a4 ♖ab7 27 ♗c6 ♖xb6 28 ♖xb6 ♘d7 29 ♖b1 ♔f8 30 ♘a4 ♔e7 31 ♔f2 f5

On the queenside White has complete

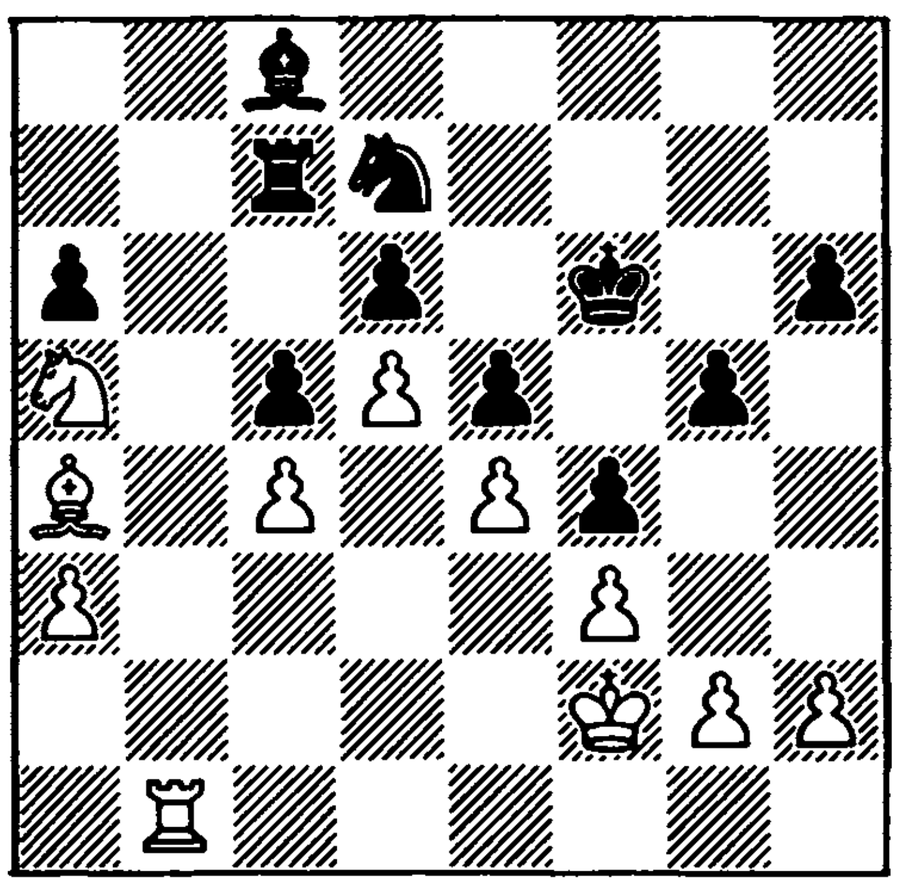
domination, but Black is managing to withstand the onslaught of the enemy pieces. If White should fail to gain a decisive superiority on this part of the board, he will have to set his sights on the opposite flank. Quinteros's striving to gain counterplay is understandable and justified, but he must also remember about the possible adverse consequences of advancing his kingside pawns.

32 ♔e3 f4+?!

This advance is hardly justified. Now it is easier for White to 'latch' on to his opponent on the kingside.

33 ♔f2 ♘ef6 34 ♘b3 g5 35 ♘a5 ♔f7 36 ♘b6 ♘xb6 37 ♖xb6 ♔e7 38 ♗a4 ♘d7 39 ♖b1 ♔f6 *(57)*

57



40 g3!

As in the previous example, White opens a 'second front'.

40 ... ♔e7 41 h4! fxg3+ 42 ♔xg3 gxh4+?

This move is completely bad, although it is unlikely that 42 ... ♘f6 could have saved Black.

43 ♔xh4 ♔f6?!

43 ... ♔f7 was stronger.

44 ♔h5 ♔f7
45 ♗xd7!

This cracks Black's defences.

45 ... ♖xd7 46 ♘c6 ♖c7 47 ♔xh6 ♗h3 48 ♔g5 ♗g2 49 ♘d8+ ♔e8 50 ♖b8 ♖g7+? 51 ♔f6 Black resigns

Sherwin-Fischer

USA Championship 1966/67
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 g6 3 ♗g2 ♗g7 4 0-0 0-0 5 d4 d6 6 c4 ♘bd7 7 ♘c3 e5 8 e4 c6 9 h3 ♕b6

This move became especially popular after Tal's brilliant win in the sixth game of his 1960 World Championship match with Botvinnik. The black queen is quite well placed at b6: the important d4 point is under fire, and an attack on the c4 pawn by ... ♕b4 is also possible.

10 ♖e1

If White finds unappealing the prospect of the game being opened after ... exd4, he chooses the immediate 10 d5. It is considered that, playing in this way, White does not achieve anything, and indeed Tal, in the aforementioned game with Botvinnik, obtained an excellent position after 10 ... cxd5 11 cxd5 ♘c5 12 ♘e1 ♗d7 13 ♘d3 ♘xd3 14 ♕xd3 ♖fc8(!) 15 ♖b1(?!) ♘h5!. But subsequently, more effective plans were found for White, for example: 10 ... cxd5 11 cxd5 ♘c5 12 ♕e2! ♗d7 13 ♗e3 ♖fc8 14 ♖ab1 (Antoshin-Barczay, Budapest 1969), or 10 ... ♘c5 11 ♕c2 cxd5 12 cxd5 ♗d7 13 ♗e3 ♖fc8 14 ♘d2 ♕d8 15 a4 (Hort-Biyiasas, Manila 1976) – in both cases with advantage to White.

On the contrary, the immediate attempt to win the game by 10 c5?! is premature. Black, not surprisingly (since as yet there

is no reason for him to be 'punished') finds powerful counterplay: 10 ... dxc5 11 dxe5 ♘e8 12 ♗g5 ♘xe5! (Kirov-Jansa, Vršac 1975).

10 ... ♖e8

It is difficult to object to a move made by such a great expert on the King's Indian Defence, and yet it would seem that ♖e1 is a more useful move for White than ... ♖e8 for Black. After Sherwin's reply 11 d5 it transpires that there is nothing for the rook to do at e8: for play on the kingside its place is at f8, and for play on the queenside – at c8. However, Fischer understood all this no worse than us and than you, the reader, and it is possible that the aim of 10 ... ♖e8 was after 11 d5 to take the play along strategic lines. In a battle of plans, a knowledge of specific opening variations counts for little. Nowadays 10 ... exd4 is more often played.

11 d5 c5

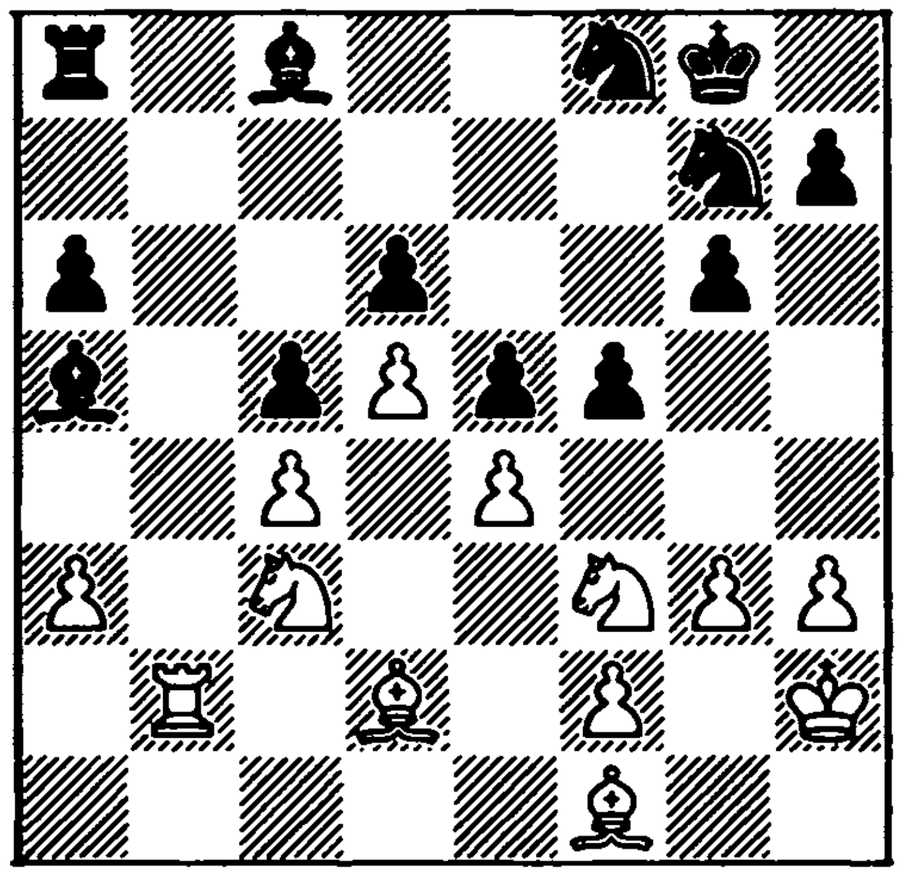
It is interesting that profound experts on the King's Indian Defence, such as Fischer and Gligorić, used to avoid ... cxd5 in the given situation. They evidently assumed that after this exchange the weakness at d6 would become more acute, and it is difficult not to agree with this.

12 a3 a6

All the same this move cannot be avoided. The game Lengyel-Gligorić (Amsterdam Interzonal 1964) developed in roughly the same vein: 12 ... ♕d8 13 ♘b5 ♘f8 14 b4 a6.

13 ♖b1 ♕c7 14 ♗e3 b6 15 ♗f1 ♘f8 16 b4 ♗d7 17 ♔h2 ♖eb8 18 ♕c2 ♘e8 19 ♖b2 f5 20 ♖eb1 ♕c8 21 bxc5 bxc5 22 ♖b6 ♖xb6 23 ♖xb6 ♗f6 24 ♖b2 ♘g7 25 ♗d2 ♗d8 26 ♕b3 ♗c7 27 ♕b7 ♗a5 28 ♕xc8 ♗xc8 *(58)*

58



A complicated position. White controls the open b-file, while Black has 'latched' on to White in the centre. With his next few moves Sherwin tries to take the initiative by invading with his knight at b6.

29 ♗d3 ♘d7!
30 ♘a4 ♗c7!

Discussions about good and bad bishops, based only on the colour of the pawn chains, are usually meaningless in positions of this type. Exchanging the defender of the b6 square would clearly be to White's advantage.

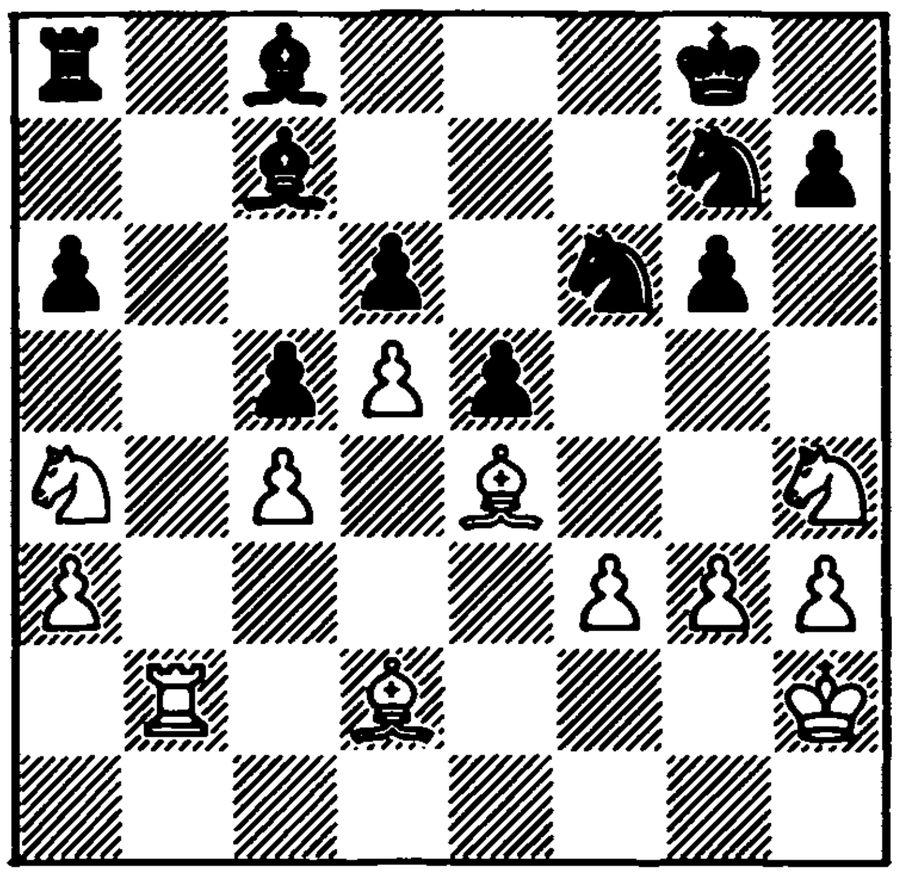
31 ♘h4?

31 ♗c1 was much stronger, threatening at an appropriate moment the invasion of the knight at b6. In this case White's position would have been preferable.

31 ... fxe4! 32 ♗xe4 ♘f6 33 f3?! *(59)*

The King's Indian Defence has its own laws. Bishops in this opening are normally more valuable pieces than knights. But whereas in a number of positions it makes sense to exchange the dark-square bishop for a knight, the exchange of the light-square bishop, irrespective of whether it is good or bad with regard to the pawn chain, rarely proves advantageous.

59



33 ... ♘xe4!

Fischer promptly exploits the opponent's error. This is yet another confirmation of the humorous saying: "The worst bishop is better than the best knight".

34 fxe4 ♘e8 35 ♘c3 ♗a5 36 g4?

A weak move. 36 ♘f3 was preferable, when after 36 ... ♘f6 the e4 pawn can be defended by the manoeuvre ♘c3-b1-c3.

36 ... ♘f6!

Loss of material for White is inevitable.

37 ♘b1 ♗d8! 38 ♘c3 ♘xg4+ 39 hxg4 ♗xh4 40 g5 ♗g4 41 ♗e3 ♖f8

Beginning a genuine attack on White's kingside.

42 ♘b1 ♖f3 43 ♖b3 ♗g3+ 44 ♔g2 ♗f4! 45 ♖b8+ ♔f7 46 ♗xf4 exf4 47 ♖b7+ ♔e8 48 ♖b8+ ♔d7 49 ♖b7+ ♔d8 50 ♖f7 ♔e8 51 ♖f6 ♔e7 52 ♖e6+ ♔d7 53 ♖f6 ♗h5

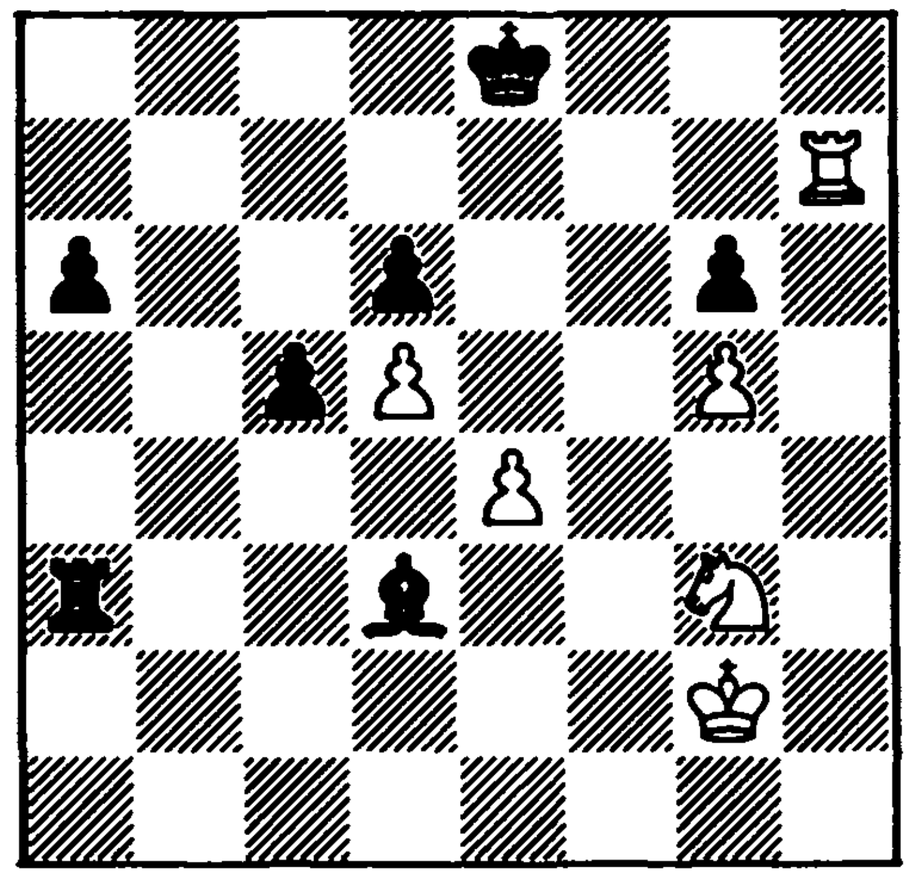
At last Black has got away from the persistent white rook. White's position is lost.

54 ♘d2 ♖g3+ 55 ♔f2 ♖d3 56 ♘f1 ♖f3+ 57 ♔g2 ♖xa3 58 ♖xf4 ♗e2!

Black energetically realises his advantage.

59 ♘g3 ♗xc4 60 ♖f7+ ♔e8 61 ♖xh7 ♗d3 *(60)*

60



62 ♖h8+ ♔e7 63 ♖h7+ ♔f8 64 ♖h8+ ♔g7 65 ♖c8 ♔f7! 66 ♖c7+ ♔e8 67 e5 dxe5 68 ♖xc5 ♔d7 69 ♖c6 ♖a5 70 ♔f3 ♖xd5

White's last burst of activity has faded away. Here Sherwin could have resigned with a clear conscience. The game concluded:

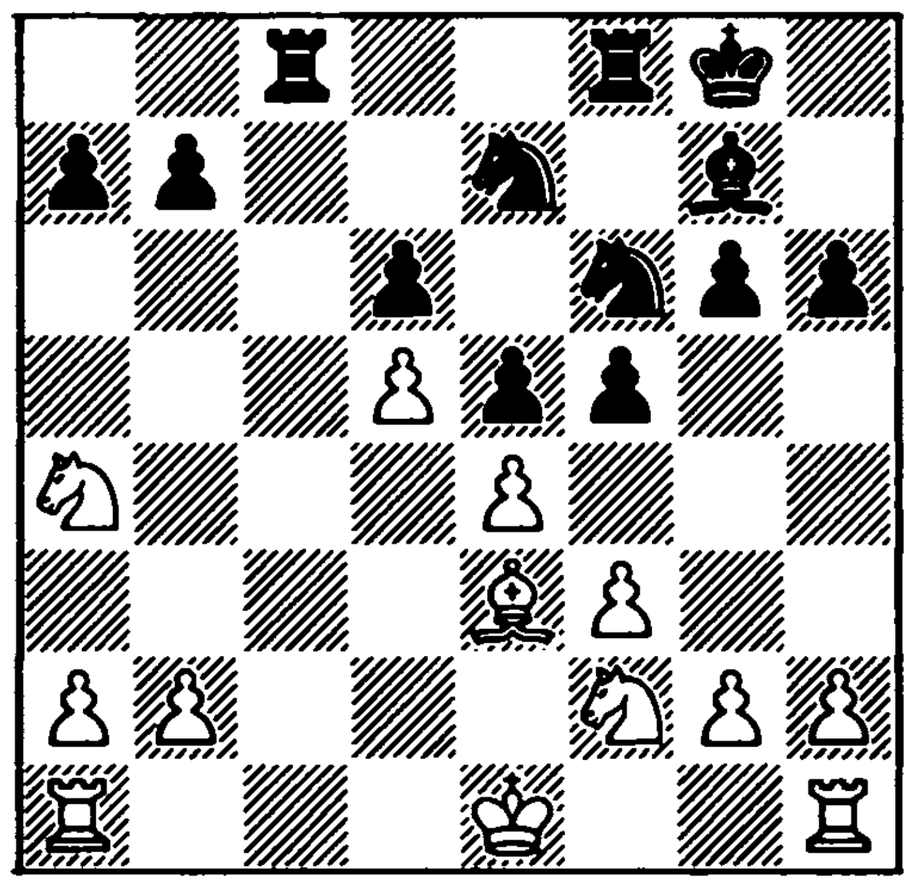
71 ♖f6 ♖d6 72 ♖f7+ ♔e6 73 ♖a7 ♔d5 74 ♔e3 ♔e6 75 ♖a8 ♗b5 76 ♖f8 ♔e7 77 ♖g8 ♔f7 78 ♖b8 ♖d3+ 79 ♔f2 ♗c6 80 ♖b6 ♖f3+ 81 ♔g2 ♖c3+ 82 ♔f2 a5 83 ♖a6 a4 84 ♘e2 ♖c5 85 ♘g3 ♔e6 86 ♖a7 ♖c2+ 87 ♔f1 ♖c3 88 ♖a6 ♖xg3 89 ♖xc6+ ♔f5 White resigns

Petrosian-Ivkov
Bugojno 1982
Modern Defence

1 c4 g6 2 e4 ♗g7 3 d4 d6 4 ♘c3 ♘c6 5 ♗e3 e5 6 d5 ♘ce7 7 c5 f5 8 cxd6 cxd6 9 ♗b5+ ♗d7 10 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 11 f3 ♘f6 12 ♘h3 h6 13 ♘f2 0-0 14 ♕a4 ♕xa4 15 ♘xa4 ♖ac8 *(61)*

In the 'Modern Defence' 5 d5 is perhaps a more popular continuation than 5 ♗e3. After the check 9 ♗b5+ Ivkov agreed to

61



the exchange of light-square bishops.

The game Henley-Suttles, Indonesia 1982, took an interesting course: 8 ♗b5+ ♔f8!? 9 f3 ♗h6 10 ♕d2 ♔g7 11 cxd6 cxd6 12 ♘ge2 a6 13 ♗d3 ♗xe3 14 ♕xe3 ♘f6 15 h3 f4 16 ♕f2 g5, with quite good prospects for Black.

Instead of 12 ... h6?!, stronger was 12 ... fxe4 13 fxe4 ♘g4 14 ♕f3 (*14 ♗d2 0-0* ∓) 14 ... ♖f8 15 ♕g3 ♘xe3 16 ♕xe3 ♘g8, with a complicated game (indicated by Petrosian).

By 14 ♕a4! White offered to take play into an ending, in which the pawn formation largely determines the plans for the two sides. White's pawn wedge in the centre gives him the opportunity for play on the queenside. With ... f4 Black can create a similar set-up on the kingside, but it is fairly clear that he will not be able to obtain any serious counterplay on this part of the board. Summing all this up, it is apparent that White has a positional advantage, but to transform it into a win is a far from simple matter. Let us see how Petrosian solves this problem.

16 ♘c3!

Threatening to capture on a7, which was not possible immediately on account of 16 ... ♖a8.

16 ... a6

17 ♔e2 ♔h7

Ivkov plans to exchange his 'bad' bishop by ... h5 and ... ♗h6.

18 ♖ac1 ♘d7?

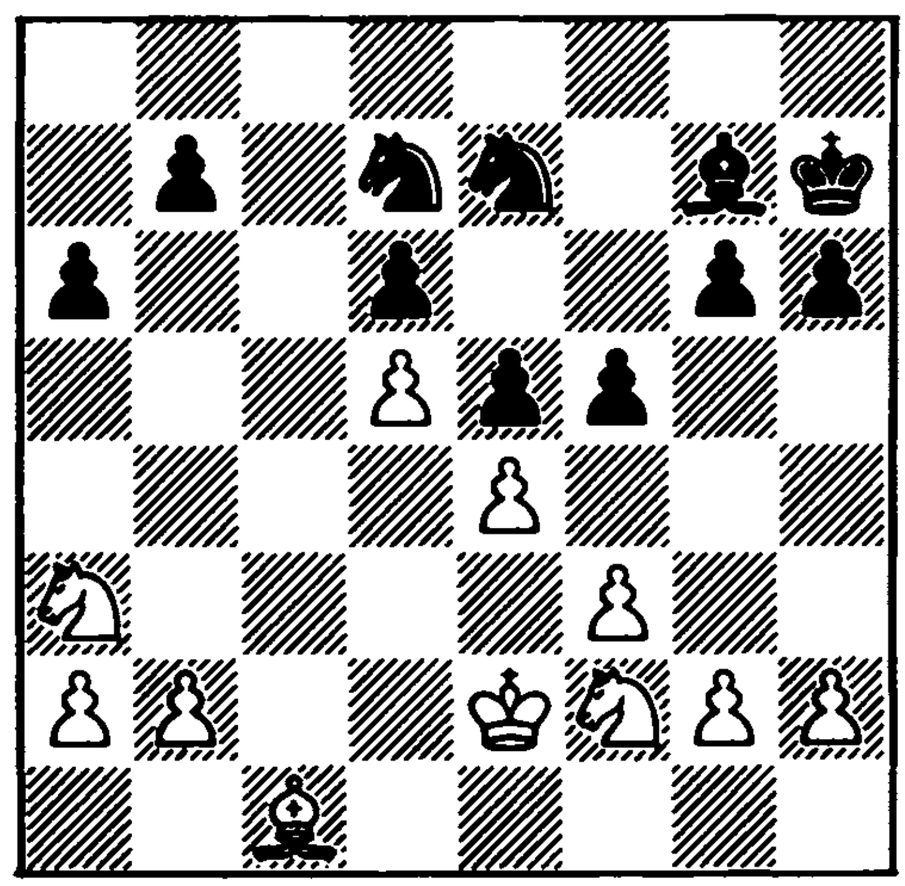
Black is inconsistent. He should have played 18 ... h5, with chances of a successful defence. In the Yugoslav grandmaster's defence, it must be said that to anticipate Petrosian's following manoeuvre was extremely difficult. The position is fairly blocked, and it was hard to imagine that to play ... h5 on the next move would already be too late.

19 ♘b1!

Aiming for the d6 pawn! It is all brilliantly simple. After this move has been made, everything becomes clear. But to find the plan of transferring the knight from c3 to c4, in doing so exchanging both pairs of rooks, was possible only for a player with an absolute mastery of endgame technique, which is what Petrosian undoubtedly was.

19 ... ♖xc1 20 ♖xc1 ♖c8 21 ♘a3 ♖xc1 22 ♗xc1 *(62)*

62



With the disappearance of the rooks, White's advantage has significantly increased, thanks largely to the difference

in the placing of the kings. Petrosian's plans now include weakening the opponent's queenside and creating a passage for his king, exploiting the remoteness of the enemy king from the queenside.

22 ... h5

This attempt to exchange the dark-square bishop is now too late.

23 ♘c4 ♘c8
24 ♗d2! ♗f6

On 24 ... ♗h6 there would of course have followed 25 ♗b4.

25 ♘a5 b6 26 ♘c6! ♔g7 27 ♗e3 ♔f7 28 ♘d3 ♔e8 29 a4! ♗d8 30 ♘db4 a5 31 ♘a2!

The path for the king is prepared. Petrosian has precisely and consistently carried out his plan, and he now has a decisive advantage.

31 ... f4 32 ♗f2 g5 33 ♔d3 ♘f8 34 h3 ♘g6 35 ♘c3 ♗f6 36 ♔c4 ♔d7 37 ♔b5 ♔c7 38 ♔a6

The king's walk concludes, and 39 ♘b5+ is now threatened. Ivkov makes a desperate attempt at a counterattack.

38 ... g4!? 39 hxg4 hxg4 40 fxg4 ♗h4 41 ♘d1!

With this Black's counterplay is exhausted. 41 ♘b5+ would have been technically less accurate.

41 ... ♗xf2
42 ♘xf2 ♘ce7

42 ... ♘h4 would have been met by 43 g5, followed by the manoeuvre of the knight from f2 to f3 via h3.

43 ♘xe7 ♘xe7 44 g5 ♘g6 45 ♘g4 ♘h4 46 ♔a7 ♘g6 47 ♘h2 ♘h4 48 ♘f3 ♘g6 49 b3 ♘f8 Black resigns, without waiting for the obvious 50 ♘h4.

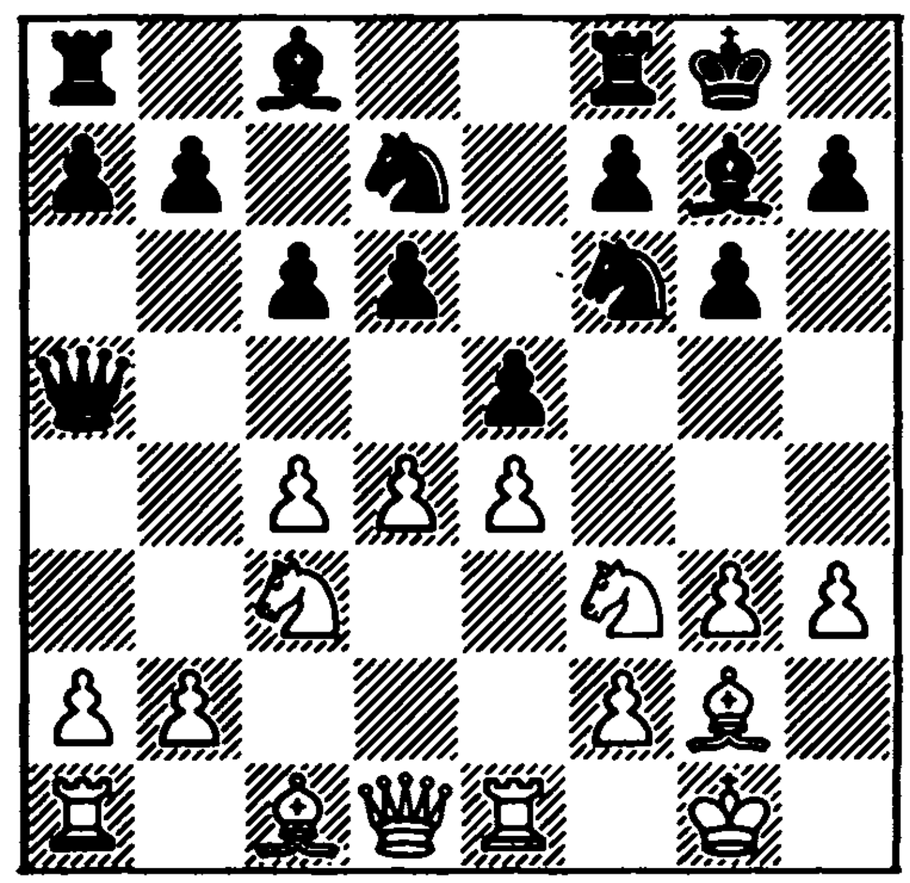
Geller-Mecking
Sousse Interzonal 1967
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 0-0 d6 6 d4 ♘bd7 7 ♘c3 e5 8 e4 c6 9 h3 ♕a5

9 ... ♕a5 was introduced into tournament play by Boleslavsky in a game with Guimard (Buenos Aires 1954). The variation has experienced periods of popularity and oblivion, and is occasionally employed even today. The most accurate evaluation of it was probably given by the inventor himself: "Black aims to initiate immediate piece play in the centre. Given correct play by White, this plan does not promise Black any particular benefit, but it also does not entail any great danger".

10 ♖e1! *(63)*

63



Before it was established that this move is the strongest reply to Black's queen sortie, much water flowed under the bridge . . . Moves immediately fixing the centre were fairly quickly rejected:

(a) 10 dxe5 ♘xe5! 11 ♘xe5 dxe5 12 ♕a4 ♕b6 (the immediate *12 ... ♕c7* is stronger) 13 ♗e3! ♕c7 14 ♗c5 ♖e8 15 ♖fd1 ♗e6 (Eliskases-Bronstein, Munich 1958).

(b) 10 d5 cxd5 11 cxd5 b5! 12 ♘d2 b4 13 ♘b3 ♕a6 14 ♘b1 ♕b5 15 a4 ♕b8 16 a5 ♗a6! (Furman-Polugayevsky, Tbilisi 1959), and in both cases Black has no reason to complain.

For a long time preference was given to 10 ♗e3 (suppose that the king's rook could be moved straight to d1 – then after ♕*c2*, ♖*fd1*, ♖*ab1* and *b2-b4* the move *9*... ♕*a5* would be refuted!), but Polugayevsky's brilliant discovery of 10 ... exd4 11 ♘xd4 (*11* ♗*xd4* is more circumspect) 11 ... ♘b6 12 ♕d3 ♕a6 13 b3 d5 14 ♕c2 c5! 15 exd5 ♘fxd5!! (weaker is *15 ... cxd4?! 16* ♗*xd4* ♖*d8 17* ♖*fd1* ♗*f5 18* ♕*d2* ♘*e8 19 g4!* when, despite being a piece down, White has a clear advantage, Gligorić-Minic, Yugoslav Championship 1962) 16 ♘xd5?! (*16* ♘*db5* was stronger) 16 ... ♘xd5 17 ♗xd5 cxd4 18 ♗d2 ♗xh3 (Lengyel-Polugayevsky, Lugano 1968) sharply reduced the number of its supporters.

10 ... ♖e8?

A poor move. After 11 d5! there is nothing for the rook to do at e8, and Black's initiative with 12 ... b5 is instantly extinguished – 13 ♗f1!.

He should have first exchanged in the centre: 10 ... exd4, and only then played ... ♖e8.

11 d5 cxd5 12 cxd5 b5 13 ♗f1! b4

Black's lot is also not eased by the more modest 13 ... a6, e.g. 14 ♗d2 ♕c7 15 b4 ♗b7 16 a4! (Ribli-Szilagyi, Hungarian Championship 1974).

14 ♘a4 ♗a6?!

It is easy to condemn such a move. With the yawning holes on the light squares, the exchange of light-square bishops is antipositional, but to suggest anything acceptable instead is difficult.

15 ♗xa6 ♕xa6

16 b3 ♘b6

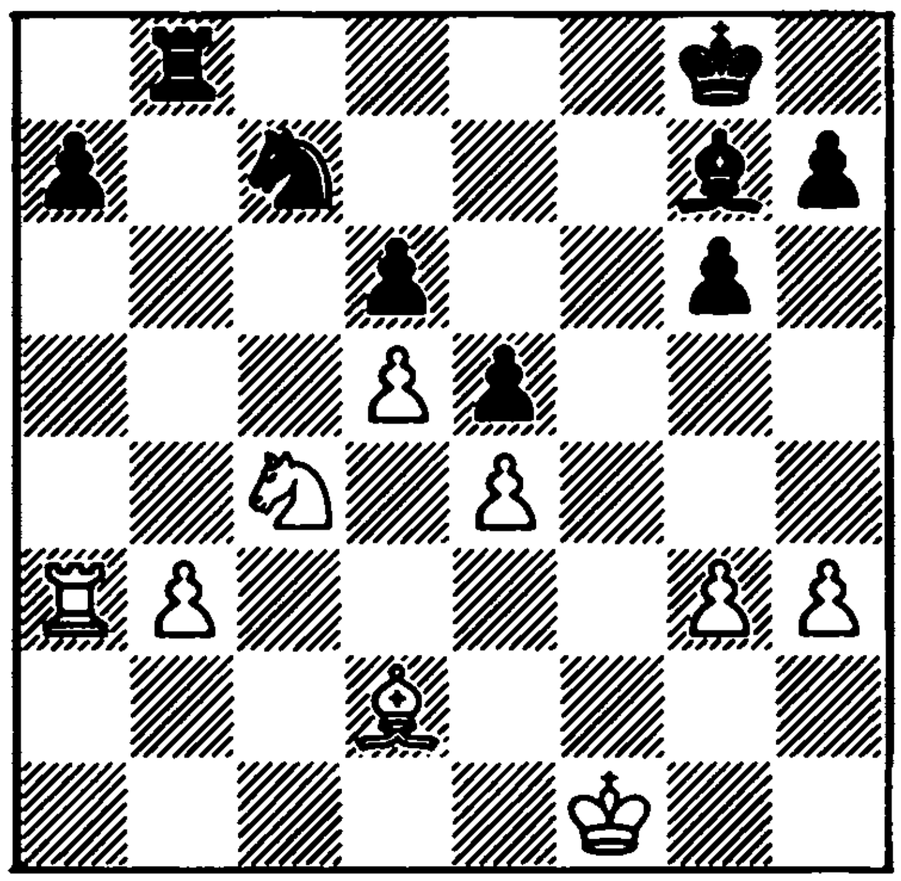
It is interesting that, a year after the present game, this position arose in the game Bagirov-Kupreichik (Gomel 1968). There the more natural 16 ... ♖ac8 did not solve Black's defensive problems: 17 ♘d2 ♕d3 18 ♘b2 ♕b5 19 ♘bc4 ♗f8 20 a3 bxa3 21 ♗xa3 ♕b8 22 ♘a5, and White's advantage became decisive.

17 ♘xb6 ♕xb6 18 ♗e3 ♕a6 19 ♘d2!

As soon as this knight reaches c4, the outcome will be decided.

19 ... ♖ec8 20 ♕b1 ♖c7 21 ♘c4 ♕c8 22 ♔g2 ♘e8 23 ♗d2 ♖b8 24 ♕d3 f5 25 f3 ♖f7 26 a3! bxa3 27 ♖xa3 ♕d8 28 ♖ea1 fxe4 29 fxe4 ♕f6 30 ♕e2 ♘c7 31 ♖f1! ♕xf1+ 32 ♕xf1 ♖xf1 33 ♔xf1 *(64)*

64



Positions of this type can arise from two openings – the King's Indian Defence and the Ruy Lopez. Usually White, with his advantage in space, has a positional superiority. In the given instance this superiority is decisive. Black is cramped, all his pieces are positioned worse than the opponent's corresponding pieces, and he has two pawn weaknesses at a7 and d6, which White has already begun to attack. It is not surprising that the game concludes within fifteen moves.

33 ... ♘b5 34 ♖a6 ♗f8 35 b4 ♔f7

After this move Black loses a pawn, which merely hastens his inevitable defeat.

36 ♘a3! ♘xa3 37 ♖xa7+ ♗e7 38 ♖xa3 ♖c8 39 ♔e2 ♖c4 40 ♗c3!

A pretty move, which sets the seal on White's victory. Black's further resistance was pointless. It would seem that Mecking made the remaining moves merely from inertia.

40 ... ♔e8 41 ♔d3 ♖c7 42 ♖a8+ ♔f7 43 ♗d2 ♗f6 44 b5 ♖b7 45 ♔c4 ♔e7 46 ♗a5 ♔d7 47 b6 ♗d8 48 ♔b5 Black resigns

Benko-Tatai
Málaga 1969
King's Indian Defence

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 g6 3 e4 d6 4 d4 ♗g7 5 f3 e5

This move order was popular in fairly distant times, about a quarter of a century ago, although it did not bring Black any particular achievements. Black's main idea, developed by the Soviet master Borisenko, was not to waste time on castling, but to begin play on the kingside, for example: 6 d5 ♘h5 7 ♗e3 f5 8 ♕d2 f4 9 ♗f2 ♗f6! However, it remained unclear whether Black's play in this and other variations was sufficient for equality, and also whether he could hold the position after 6 dxe5, since White had available a third alternative:6 ♘ge2! And it was because of this move that the early 5 ... e5 went out of use.

6 ♘ge2!

Benko, of course, is well informed. He played this back in the Portoroz Interzonal Tournament in 1958, when the very young Fischer found no way of countering White's plan: 6 ... exd4 7 ♘xd4 0-0 8 ♗g5! ♘c6 9 ♘c2! ♗e6 10 ♗e2 h6 11 ♗h4 g5 12 ♗f2, and Black had a very indifferent position.

6 ... 0-0
7 ♗g5!

This move is the point of White's set-up. Now, without making positional concessions, it is very difficult for Black to develop his forces.

7 ... c6
8 ♕d2 ♕a5?!

A dubious sortie. Black's activity leads almost by force to the exchange of queens and a difficult ending. 8 ... ♘bd7 was stronger, e.g. 9 d5 cxd5 10 cxd5 a6! 11 g4 b5!? 12 ♘g3 ♘c5 (Stupen-Geller, Odessa 1962). It would also be interesting to try 11 ... h6!?, since 12 ♗e3 h5 leads to a position known by theory to be satisfactory for Black. But Black should be warned against 9 ... c5? By 10 g4 a6 11 ♘g3 ♖e8 12 h4 White built up a winning attack in Tal-Tolush (24th USSR Championship, Moscow 1957).

9 d5! cxd5

Black has no choice: after 9 ... c5? events would have developed in similar fashion to the Tal-Tolush game.

10 ♘xd5!

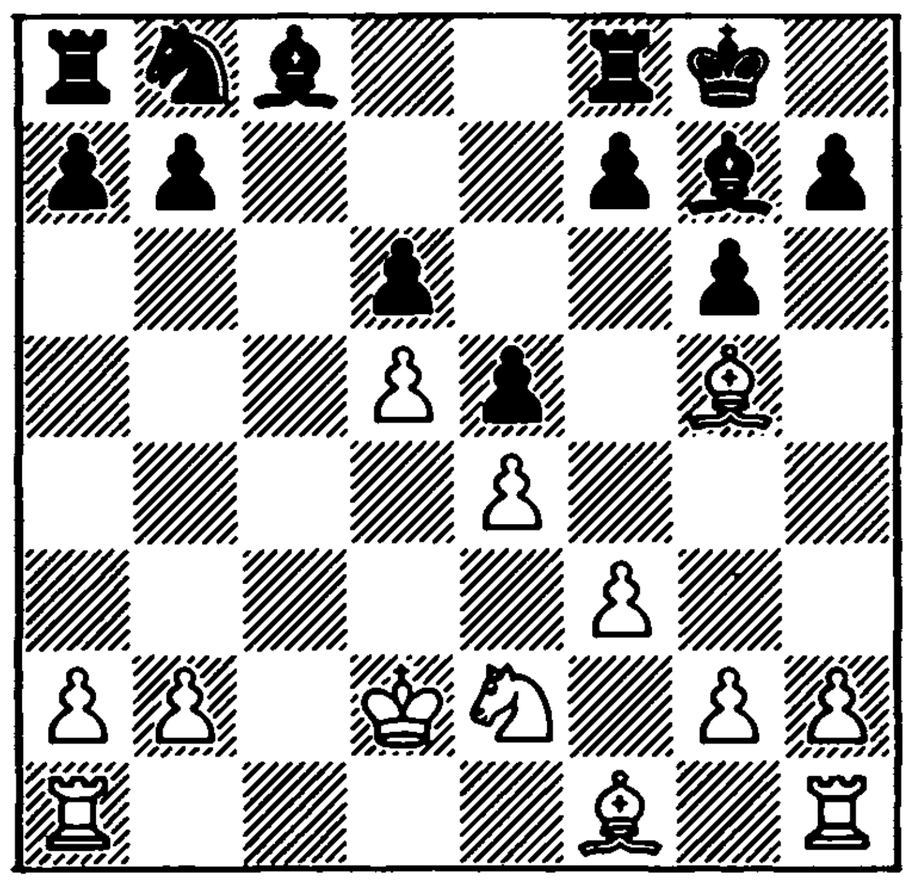
This is even stronger than 10 cxd5, which, however, is also quite good. In the game Sanguinetti-Fischer (Santiago 1959) Black ended up in a difficult position after 10 ... ♘a6 11 g4 ♗d7 12 ♘g3 ♘c5 13 ♘b5! ♕xd2+ (*13 ... ♕b6* was stronger – Boleslavsky) 14 ♔xd2 ♗xb5 15 ♗xb5.

10 ... ♕xd2+

Practically forced.

11 ♔xd2 ♘xd5
12 cxd5 *(65)*

65



In the ending White has a clear superiority. He has a spatial advantage, better placed pieces, and all the preconditions for active play on the queenside.

12 ... f6 13 ♗e3 ♗d7 14 ♘c3 a6 15 a4 ♖c8 16 a5 f5?

A futile waste of time: 16 ... ♗e8 was more sensible.

17 ♗d3 f4 18 ♗f2 ♗f6 19 ♖a3 ♗e8 20 b4 ♗d8 21 ♖ha1 ♘d7 22 ♘a4!

The white knight begins moving towards the c4 square and, as in the previous examples, Black's position starts to deteriorate sharply.

22 ... ♔f8?!

22 ... ♔f7 looks more 'cultured'.

23 ♘b2 ♘f6?

Black's play is beneath criticism.It was essential to make the preparatory move 23 ... h6. Now comes a rapid showdown.

24 ♘c4 ♗c7 25 ♗h4 ♔f7 26 ♖c3 ♗b5 27 ♖ac1 ♗xc4 28 ♖xc4 ♘e8 29 g3! Black resigns

He is unable to prevent the white bishop from moving to h3, after which major loss of material will be inevitable.

Bronstein-Gligorić
Zürich Candidates 1953
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 h3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 d5 ♘bd7 8 g4

The solid variation with h2-h3, developed by the Soviet players Makogonov and Sokolsky, often occurs even today. Here it is not easy for Black to obtain counterplay. White takes a 'pincer-like' grip on f5 and prepares an attack on the king. All, as in the Sämisch Variation, but . . . "there are also minuses, the chief of which is that there is no pawn defending e4, which later Gligorić skilfully exploits" (Bronstein).

We should add that Black's counterattack is considerably assisted by the slightly premature advance of the white g-pawn. After ... ♘c5 the e4 pawn has to be defended by the queen from c2, and this increases the effect of the undermining move ... c6. Nowadays the more flexible manoeuvre ♘g1-f3-d2 is preferred, for example: 8 ♘f3 ♘c5 9 ♘d2 a5 10 g4 ♘e8 11 h4 f5 12 gxf5 gxf5 13 ♕e2 ♘a6 14 ♗g5! (Bagirov-Sigurjonsson, Tbilisi 1974).

Bronstein himself handled this variation in an interesting way, 20 years after his game with Gligorić: 1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 (White has successfully avoided the Grünfeld Defence) 4 ... 0-0 5 d4 d6 6 h3 e5 7 d5 ♘a6 8 ♗g5!? h6 9 ♗e3 ♘c5 10 ♘d2 ♘h7 11 b4! ♘a6 12 a3 f5 13 ♘b3 ♘f6 14 c5 ♘xe4 15 ♘xe4 fxe4 16 ♗c4 ♕e8 17 c6! (Bronstein-Kapengut, Baku 1972).

In both the above examples White took a firm hold on the initiative.

8 ... ♘c5!
9 ♕c2 c6!

Gligorić finds the correct plan, which he later was also to employ successfully in the Sämisch Variation. The c-file is opened

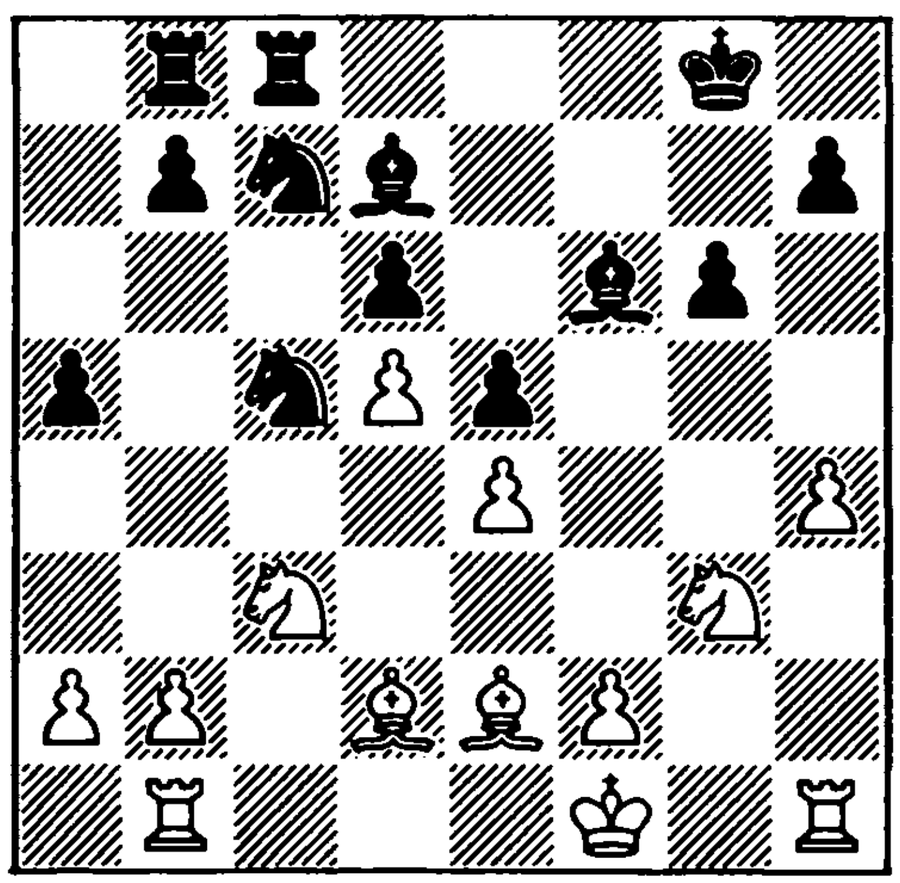
before the enemy king castles on the queenside.

10 ♘ge2 cxd5
11 cxd5 ♕a5?!

But this is wrong. Gligorić probably decided in the first instance to exclude queenside castling by White. Indeed, in this case the set-up ... ♗d7, ... ♖fc8 and ... b5-b4 would quickly have led to a murderous attack on the white king. But at a5 the queen is badly placed, a fact that White emphasises with his splendid 14th move, and the loss of time on the manoeuvre ... ♕d8-a5-d8 allows him to regroup. Moreover, his king is comfortably deployed at f1. According to analysis by Boleslavsky, Black should immediately have 'harassed' White on the c-file: 11 ... ♗d7! 12 ♘g3 ♖c8! (threatening the unpleasant ... ♘*a4*) 13 ♕d2 ♕a5! (only now!) 14 ♖b1 ♘a4 15 ♘xa4 ♕xa4 16 b3 ♕a3, with good counterplay for Black.

12 ♘g3 ♗d7 13 ♗d2 ♖fc8 14 ♖b1 ♕d8 15 ♕d1 a5 16 ♕f3 ♖ab8 17 g5 ♘e8 18 h4 f6 19 ♗e2 ♘c7 20 ♔f1 ♕e7 21 gxf6 ♕xf6 22 ♕xf6 ♗xf6 *(66)*

66



The position can be considered roughly equal.

23 h5

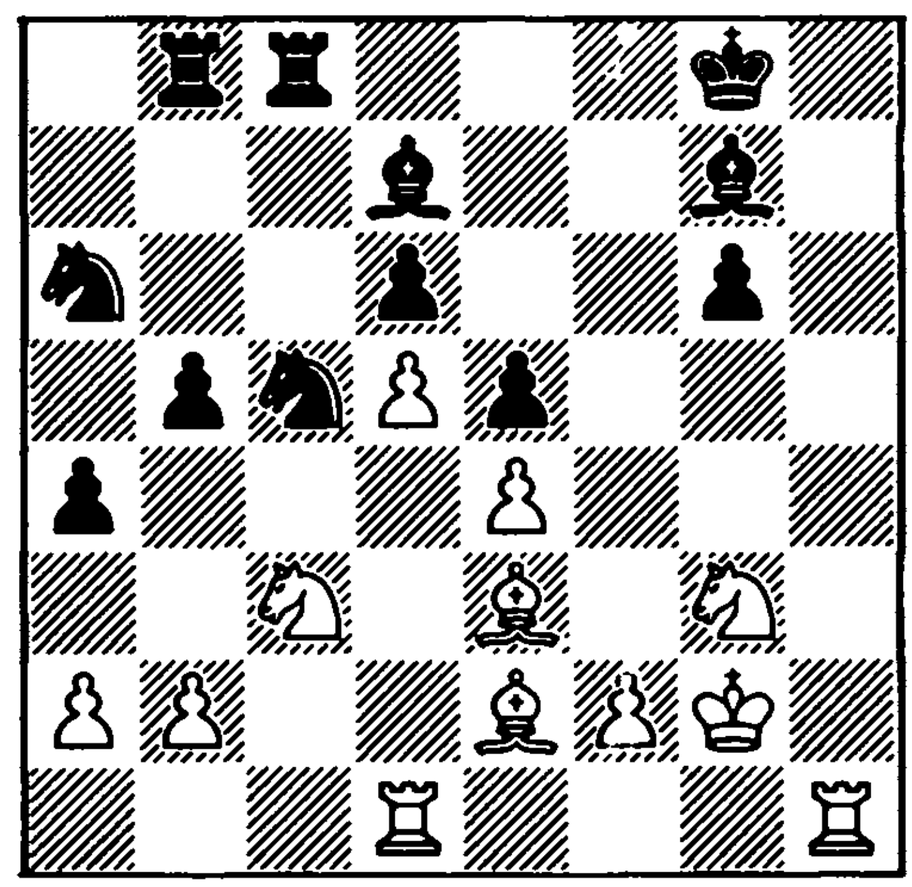
This move, a threatening one in the 'King's Indian' middlegame, has a modest aim in the endgame. White wants to rid himself of a potential weakness – the pawn at h4.

23 ... ♖f8 24 hxg6 hxg6 25 ♔g2 ♗g7 26 ♗e3 b5 27 ♖bc1 ♘7a6 28 ♘d1 ♖fc8 29 ♘c3

Bronstein avoids taking any active measures, granting this possibility to his opponent. Gligorić did not need much persuasion, and this is what came of it ...

29 ... a4
30 ♖cd1 *(67)*

67



30 ... b4?

The Yugoslav grandmaster weakens c4, a key square in this type of endgame. This is what Bronstein had to say: "Both players are fighting for a win in a roughly equal position. White manoeuvres with his pieces, while Black advances his pawns, trying to break through to the b2 pawn. He vacates the b5 square, in order to exchange here the light-square bishops and gain access for his knight to d3. But Black's achievements are temporary, whereas the minuses are permanent. The knight, which now retreats to the back rank, will later be able to make for c4".

31 ♘b1 ♗b5 32 ♗xb5 ♖xb5 33 ♔f3 ♖b7 34 ♔e2 ♖bc7 35 ♖c1

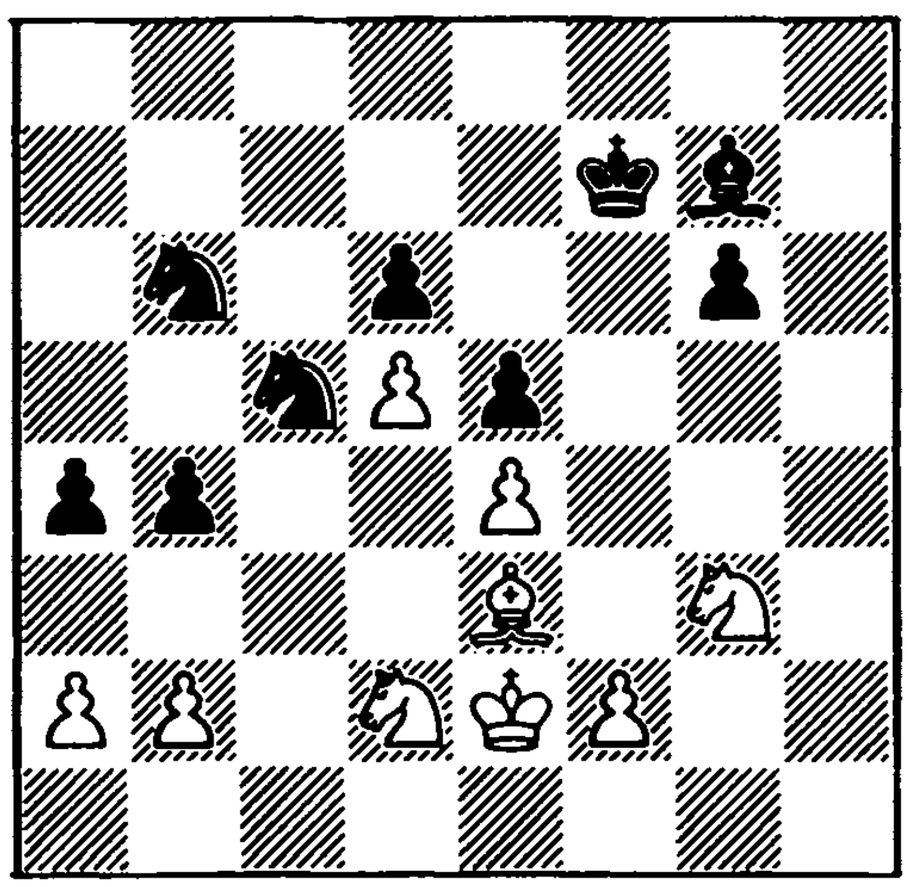
White has successfully neutralised the opponent's initiative and intends to begin active play by transferring his knight to c4.

35 ... ♘d7 36 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 37 ♖c1! ♖xc1 38 ♗xc1

The exchange of both pairs of rooks has opened a path for the white king to the queenside (as in the Petrosian-Ivkov game).

38 ... ♘ac5 39 ♗e3 ♔f7 40 ♘d2 ♘b6 *(68)*

68



"White had to seal his next move, and he could not resist playing 41 ♗xc5, which, firstly, gives him a protected passed pawn, and secondly, gives the opponent a weak blockaded pawn at c5 and eases the passage of the king to b5. Even so, this is not the best move; it does not throw away the win, but makes it significantly more difficult. The bishop was a good piece, and this was not the time to exchange it. 41 ♘gf1 was correct, bringing up the knight which for 30 moves has been standing idle, and maintaining all the threats. The difference is that the bishop at e3 would have prevented the black king from advancing via g5, whereas for the moment White could have calmly strengthened his position, by transferring his knight, say, via h2 to g4, after which ♗xc5 dxc5, ♔d3 would have led to an easy win" (Bronstein).

41 ♗xc5?! dxc5 42 ♔d3 ♔f6 43 ♘c4 ♘d7 44 ♘f1 ♔g5 45 ♔e3 ♗h6 46 ♘h2 ♔f6+

In the event of 46 ... ♔h4+ White was intending to play 47 ♔e2! (*47 ♔f3? ♗f4!*) followed by moving his knight from h2 to d3 via f3.

47 ♔e2 ♗f4
48 ♘g4+ ♔e7

48 ... ♔g5 48 f3 would not have changed things.

49 ♔d3 ♔d8 50 ♘d6 ♔c7 51 ♘f7 a3?!

This hastens Black's defeat, but all the same his position was lost.

52 bxa3 bxa3 53 ♔c4 ♔b6 54 ♔b3 ♔a5 55 ♘d6 ♗c1 56 ♘c4+ ♔b5 57 ♘gxe5 Black resigns

Stein-Petrosian
USSR Team Championship
Moscow 1964
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗d3 e5

Petrosian chooses the classical system of development.

6 d5 ♘bd7

6 ... ♘h5 also looks quite good.

7 ♘ge2 c6!?

The c-file is opened in the event of queenside castling by White. Passive play could have led to a cheerless position: 5 ...

0-0 6 ♘ge2 e5 7 d5 a5?! 8 f3! ♘a6 9 ♗g5! (the position is a favourable line for White of the Sämisch Variation) 9 ... h6 10 ♗e3 c6 11 ♕d2 ♔h7 12 g4!, with advantage to White (Larsen-Hort, San Antonio 1972).

8 h3

Stein decides to take play into the Makogonov Variation, although at this point 8 f3! was possible, transposing into the Sämisch Variation. After the inevitable exchange on d5 White would have castled kingside and obtained good prospects on the c-file.

8 ... 0-0 9 ♗e3 cxd5 10 cxd5 ♘c5 11 ♗c2 ♗d7 12 g4 a5!

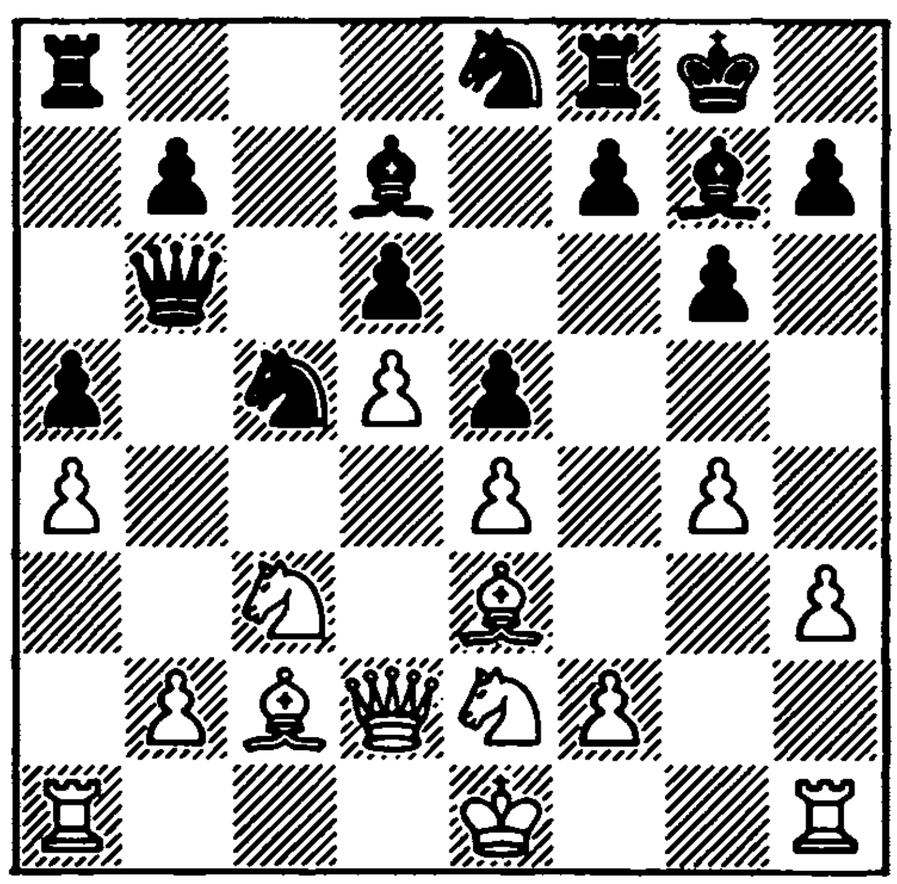
A good move. Now on 13 ♘g3 there follows 13 ... b5!.

13 a4

Parrying the threat of ... b5.

13 ... ♘e8
14 ♕d2 ♕b6! *(69)*

69



Petrosian has subtly outplayed his opponent. With the existing queenside pawn formation White needs a knight at c4, but in the given position this is not possible, and the weakness of the d6 pawn is therefore imperceptible. On the contrary, the b6 square is now available to Black, and Petrosian uses it to play his queen to b4, after which the white pawns at e4, a4 and b2 come under attack; the b2 pawn becomes especially vulnerable.

15 ♔f1 ♘c7

Not of course 15 ... ♕xb2 16 ♖b1 ♕a3 17 ♕d1, when the queen cannot escape without loss of material.

16 ♔g2 ♕b4
17 ♘g3 f6!

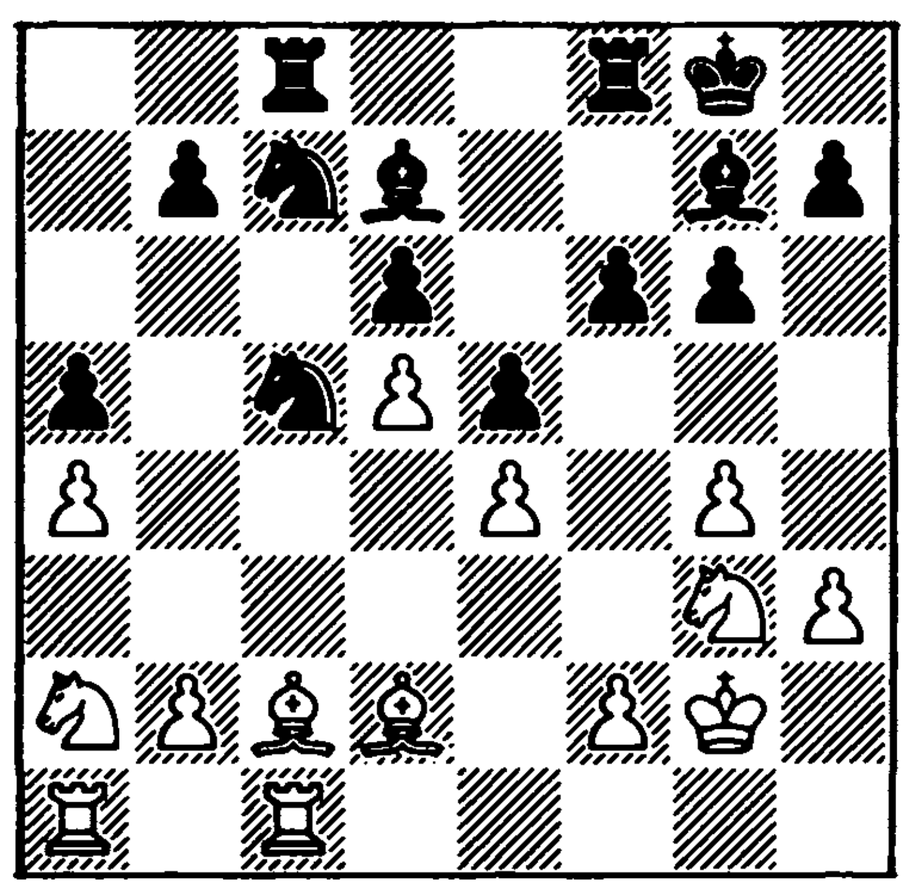
Otherwise there would have followed g4-g5.

18 ♖hc1 ♖ac8
19 ♘a2

To defend against the mounting attack on the queenside, Stein decides to go into a difficult ending.

19 ... ♕xd2
20 ♗xd2 *(70)*

70



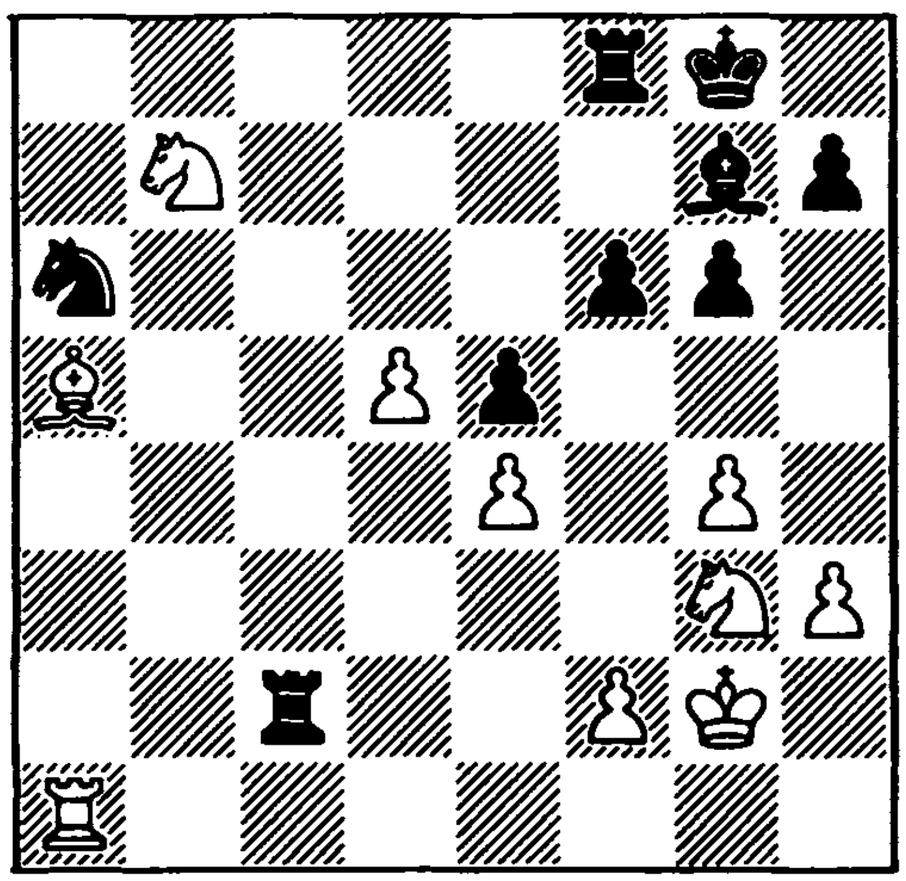
It is Black to move, and he is the first to begin eliminating the enemy pawns on the queenside, and, moreover, he is able to do this 'more often' than the opponent.

20 ... ♗xa4 21 ♗xa4 ♘xa4 22 ♗xa5 ♘a6 23 ♘c3

A courageous decision. In difficult positions the best practical chance for the weaker side is often to change sharply the material balance. Realising that using normal methods to try and hold such a position against Petrosian is unlikely to succeed, Stein goes in for a variation involving an exchange sacrifice.

23 ... ♘xb2 24 ♘b5 ♘c4 25 ♖xc4 ♖xc4 26 ♘xd6 ♖c2 27 ♘xb7 *(71)*

71



The impression is that White has gained quite good compensation for the exchange in the form of his passed d-pawn. But the positional exchange sacrifice was the favourite stratagem of Petrosian himself, and it was not very difficult for him to find the defects in his opponent's position, since he played such positions perhaps better than anyone.

27 ... ♖b8!
28 ♘d8 ♘c5

The black pieces are pressing towards the most vulnerable point in White's position – f2.

29 ♖d1 ♗h6 30 ♘c6 ♖bb2 31 ♗e1 ♗e3! 32 ♘b4 ♖c1 33 ♖xc1 ♗xc1

Black has required only seven moves to clarify the situation. White's position is lost.

34 ♔f1 ♖b1 35 ♔e2 ♗f4 36 d6 ♔f7 37 ♘d5 ♗xg3 38 fxg3 ♔e6 39 ♗b4 ♘xe4 40 ♘c7+ ♔d7 41 ♘d5 ♖b3 White resigns

Buslayev-Stein
Moscow 1963
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 e5 7 d5 c6 8 ♗d3

This move of Polugayevsky commences what is perhaps the most dangerous strategic set-up for White against the 7 ... c6 variation. White's reasoning is simple and logical: one of the basic ideas in the King's Indian is to break through on the queenside with c4-c5, followed by cxd6 and an invasion on the c-file. Normally all this involves lengthy preparation, where account has to be taken of the opponent's counterplay on the kingside. But here everything is much easier. The queenside pawn formation is determined of its own accord, by the efforts of Black. Now White does not castle queenside, which is just what the opponent is waiting for, but instead changes plan: he castles kingside and plays his rooks to the c-file.

For example: 8 ... cxd5 9 cxd5 ♘bd7 10 ♘ge2 ♘c5 11 0-0 ♘h5?! 12 b4! ♘xd3 13 ♕xd3 f5 14 ♖ac1 ♖f7 15 ♖c2 f4?! 16 ♗f2 g5 17 h3! ♘f6 18 ♖fc1 ♘e8 19 ♘b5 a6 20 ♘c7!, and Black stands badly (Bagirov-Bednarski, Marianske Lazne 1962). Gligorić also failed to gain counterchances in the source game: 11 ♗c2 ♗d7?! 12 b4! ♘a6 13 ♖b1 ♘h5 14 0-0 ♘f4 15 ♕d2 ♘xe2+ 16 ♘xe2 ♘c7 17 a4 ♘e8 18 ♖bc1 f5 19 exf5 gxf5 20 f4 (Polugayevsky-Gligorić, Lvov 1962).

In recent times Black has begun linking 7 ... c6 with the sharp reply 8 ... b5!?, but the theory of this variation is only just beginning to develop, and for the moment

it is hard to draw any conclusions.

8 ... cxd5
9 cxd5 ♘bd7

Black has two quite different strategic defensive methods: the immediate counter-attack on the kingside (*9 ... ♘e8* or *9 ... ♘h5*) and the creation of fortifications on the queenside (*9 ... ♘bd7* or *9 ... ♘a6*, followed by ... *♘c5*, ... *♗d7* etc.), chosen by Stein.

In the first case the play can develop roughly as follows: 9 ... ♘e8 10 ♕d2! (Black was threatening *10 ... ♗h6!*) 10 ... f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 ♘ge2 ♘a6 13 0-0 ♘c5 14 ♗c2 a5 15 b3!, with slightly better chances for White (analysis by Boleslavsky).

9 ... ♘h5 is more risky. After 10 ♘ge2 f5 11 exf5 gxf5 12 0-0 ♘d7 13 ♖c1! a6 14 ♔h1 ♘df6 15 ♗g5! ♕e8 16 ♕c2 (Popov-Krogius, Kishinev 1976), or 13 ♔h1! ♔h8 14 ♖c1 ♘df6 15 ♕b3 (Furman-Gligorić, Bad Lauterberg 1977) Black has serious difficulties. It is said that, after losing this game, Gligorić exclaimed: "Have I really been playing a bad variation all my life?!"

10 ♘ge2 ♘c5 11 ♗c2 a5 12 0-0 ♗d7 13 a3 ♕b6!

As in the Stein-Petrosian game, Black exploits the absence of a knight from c4 to create pressure on the queenside.

14 ♖b1

With this move White goes in for a lengthy forcing variation, which, although it secures an advantage, demands a great deal of calculation. More solid is 14 ♔h1!, as chosen by Petrosian against Reshevsky at the Tel Aviv Olympiad (1964). Then 14 ... a4 is not possible on account of 15 ♗xa4 ♗xa4 16 ♘xa4 ♖xa4 17 ♗xc5. Reshevsky replied 14 ... ♖fc8, but after 15 ♖b1 ♕a6 16 a4 he had a somewhat inferior position. According to Boleslavsky, 15 b3! ♕a6 16 ♖a2! would have been even stronger, e.g. 16 ... b5 17 ♕d2 ♕b7 18 ♖fa1, with a positional advantage for White.

14 ... a4
15 ♘xa4

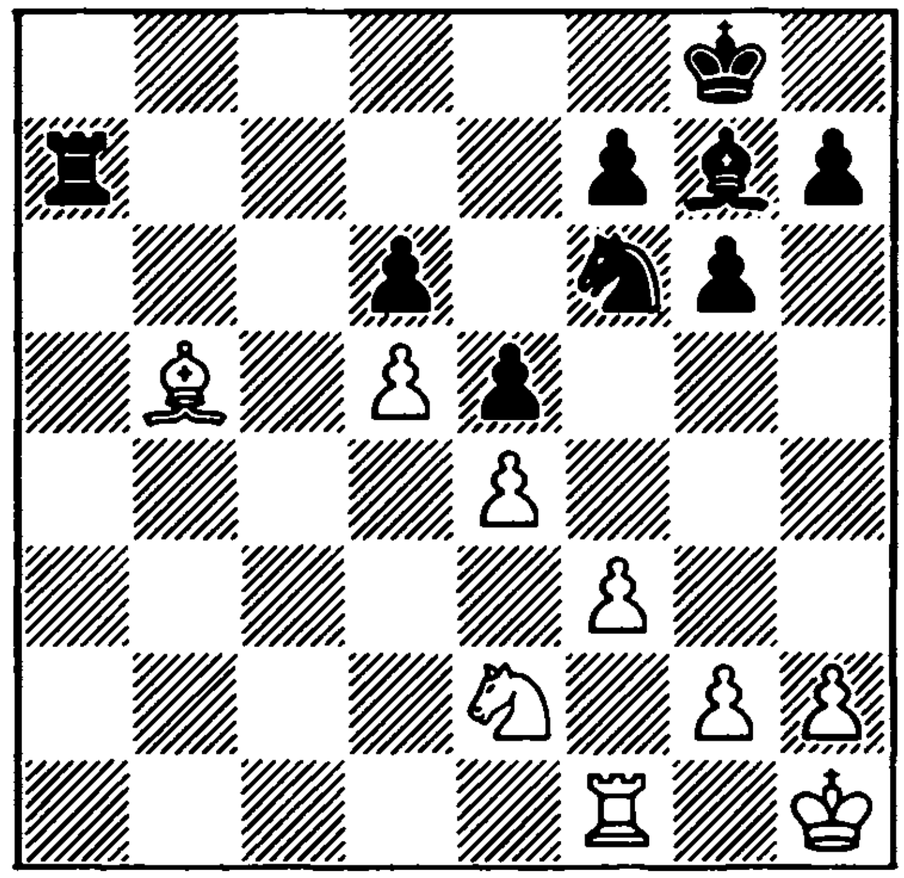
An exchange of blows commences.

15 ... ♖xa4 16 b4! ♖xa3! 17 bxc5 ♕a7 18 ♕c1! ♖a8 19 ♗b3 ♗b5! 20 c6?

Only here does Buslayev lose the correct thread by 20 ♖e1! he would have retained the advantage, whereas now it is Black who has a slight superiority.

20 ... ♕a6 21 cxb7 ♖b8 22 ♗a4 ♖xe3! 23 ♗xb5 ♕a7 24 ♖a1 ♖a3+ 25 ♔h1 ♖xa1 26 ♕xa1 ♖xb7 27 ♕xa7 ♖xa7 *(72)*

72



A 'dead draw' – that is the first impression. But a deeper investigation of the position reveals that White is experiencing some difficulties. His entire army, with the exception of the h2 pawn, is on light squares, and over the dark squares he has no control. In such conditions the black pieces can easily infiltrate into the opponent's position and take up comfortable posts at c5 and d4. White is not able to prevent the black bishop from reaching the g1-a7 diagonal,and so it would have

been sensible to try for counterplay by at least playing his rook into the enemy position by 28 ♖c1 ♗h6 29 ♖c8+ ♔g7 30 g3. Instead of this there followed:

28 ♔g1?! ♗h6 29 ♔f2 ♖a3 30 ♖b1 ♗e3+ 31 ♔e1?! h5 32 ♔d1?

Where is the king heading for? It has to be assumed that Buslayev, who had the reputation for being a great time-trouble addict, had spent the greater part of his time considering the complications provoked by 14 ♖b1. Since White has chosen passive defence, it would have been advisable to place his kingside pawns at h4 and g3 and to keep his king at g2, and try not to allow the enemy knight into his position. So that 32 h4 came into consideration.

32 ... ♖a2
33 ♗c4?!

The bishop should keep control of d7 and e8. It would have been better to 'take a move back' and play 33 ♔e1.

33 ... ♖d2+
34 ♔e1 ♘d7!

The knight comes into play.

35 ♖b3 ♗h6 36 ♖d3 ♖c2 37 ♗b3 ♖b2 38 ♗d1 ♘c5 39 ♖a3 ♔g7 40 ♖a1 h4 41 ♔f1 ♗d2

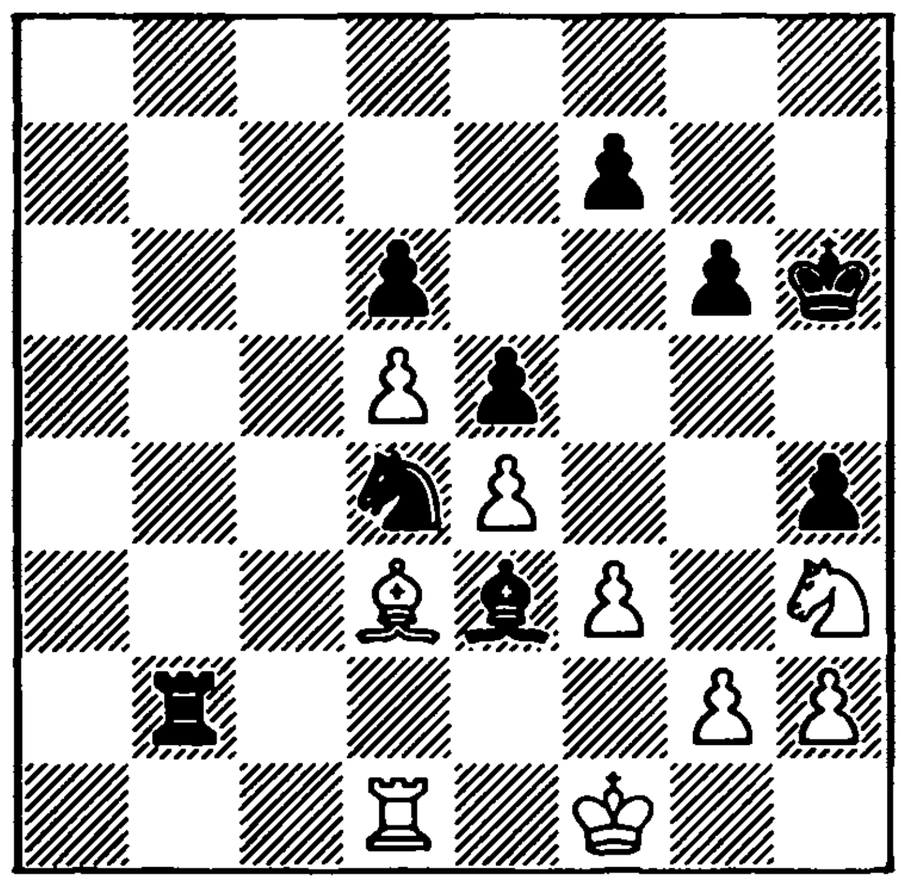
It is difficult to comment on time trouble events, but it is obvious that White has been totally outplayed.

42 ♘g1 ♗e3 43 ♘h3 ♔h6 44 ♗e2 ♘b3 45 ♖d1 ♘d4 46 ♗d3

(diagram 73)

The black pieces dominate the board, and Stein finds an elegant way to realise his advantage.

73



46 ... ♘xf3! 47 gxf3 ♖xh2 48 ♘g1 ♔g5 49 ♗b5 h3 50 ♘xh3+

There was no other way of stopping this pawn.

50 ... ♖xh3 51 ♔g2 ♖h8 52 ♖b1 ♖a8 53 ♖b2 ♔f4 54 ♗e2 ♖a1 55 ♖b7 White lost on time. After the obvious 55 ... f5 things are very bad for him.

1.3 THE EXCHANGE ... exd4

Black's dark-square strategy is most clearly revealed in positions where he concedes the centre. The white c4 and e4 pawns fix the pawn at d6, and the squares c5 and e5 are transformed into outposts for the black knights. Pressure on the e4 pawn along the-file often forces f2-f3, after which Black obtains additional possibilities involving play along the g1-a7 diagonal. An important role is allotted to the black a-pawn. Its advance to a4, and sometimes a3, often breaks up the opponent's queenside. Black's queen is developed at a5 or b6 to put pressure on the b2 and c4 pawns (... ♕a5-b4), and sometimes even the h3 pawn (... ♕a5-h5). With the exchange of queens the sharpness

of the struggle is reduced, and since the black queen is more active than the opponent's, it can be expected that the transition into an ending favours White. In the endgame the pawn at d6 becomes a real weakness, and in the majority of the games analysed in this section White had the advantage. However, there is no rule without exceptions. Consider the following example:

Donner-Geller, Wijk aan Zee 1969. 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♘f3 ♘bd7 7 0-0 e5 8 e4 c6 9 ♖b1 exd4! 10 ♘xd4 ♖e8 11 ♖e1 ♘g4! 12 ♕xg4 ♗xd4 13 ♕d1 ♗g7 14 ♕c2 ♕a5 15 ♗d2 ♕h5 16 ♕d1 ♕xd1 17 ♘xd1 ♘e5 – here the weakness of the d3 and f3 squares in White's position is more acute than the weakness of the d6 pawn. With his next move Donner went wrong: 18 ♘e3? ♘d3!, and his position immediately became hopeless, but even after the correct 18 b3 ♗g4! Black's game would have been preferable.

Barcza-Eliskases
Stockholm Interzonal 1952
King's Indian Defence

1 c4 ♘f6 2 d4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 0-0 5 ♘f3 d6 6 ♗e2 ♘bd7

An old continuation. In refraining from 6 ... e5, Black avoids the exchange variation 7 dxe5 dxe5, and at the same time demonstrates his readiness to go in for the complications arising after 7 e5!?.

7	**0-0**	**e5**
8	**♖e1**	**♖e8**

An inflexible move. Both sides are endevouring to deploy their forces in the best way possible, both in the event of the central tension being relieved by ... exd4, and of the centre being closed by d4-d5. From this point of view 8 ... ♖e8 is less logical than 8 ♖e1: now White could have played 9 d5!, when the rook at e8 is idle, since for counterplay with ... f5 it is better placed at f8.

And in the event of 9 d5 ♘c5 White has the very strong 10 ♗g5! h6 (essential, othewise after *10 ... a5 11 ♘d2* the pin is very painful for Black) 11 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 12 b4 ♘d7 13 ♘d2, with advantage (Lputian-Av.Bykhovsky, Kiev 1984).

At the same time the white bishop is best placed at f1 in this variation, since after ... exd4 the defence of the e4 pawn is not hindered, while after d4-d5 Black's ... f5 can sometimes be suppressed by g2-g3, ♗h3 and ♘h4.

9	**♗f1**	**c6**
10	**♖b1**	

Here 10 d5! would have led to an appreciable advantage for White, for example: 10 ... c5 11 g3! ♘f8 12 a3 ♘g4 13 ♘h4 a6 (*13 ... f5* is bad on account of *14 exf5 gxf5 15 ♗h3!*) 14 ♗d2 h5 15 h3 ♘f6 16 b4 (Taimanov-Geller, Zürich Candidates 1953). Black also cannot be satisfied with 10 ... cxd5 11 cxd5 a5 12 ♘d2! ♘c5 13 ♖b1 ♗d7 14 a4! ♕c7 15 b3 ♖ec8 16 ♘c4 (Darga-Udovčić, Bled 1961). With the move played, Barcza risked losing his opening advantage.

10	**...**	**exd4**
11	**♘xd4**	**♘c5**

Black fails to pay attention to some 'fine' details. Now was the time to exploit the waiting move 10 ♖b1 and land a blow in the centre: 11 ... d5!, immediately equalising. For example, 12 cxd5 cxd5 13 exd5 ♖xe1 14 ♕xe1 ♘b6 (Eliskases-Saborido, Torremolinos 1961).

12	**f3**	**a5**

Here too 12 ... d5!? was interesting, for

example: 13 exd5 ♖xe1 14 ♕xe1 ♘xd5 (recommended by Hort).

13 ♗e3

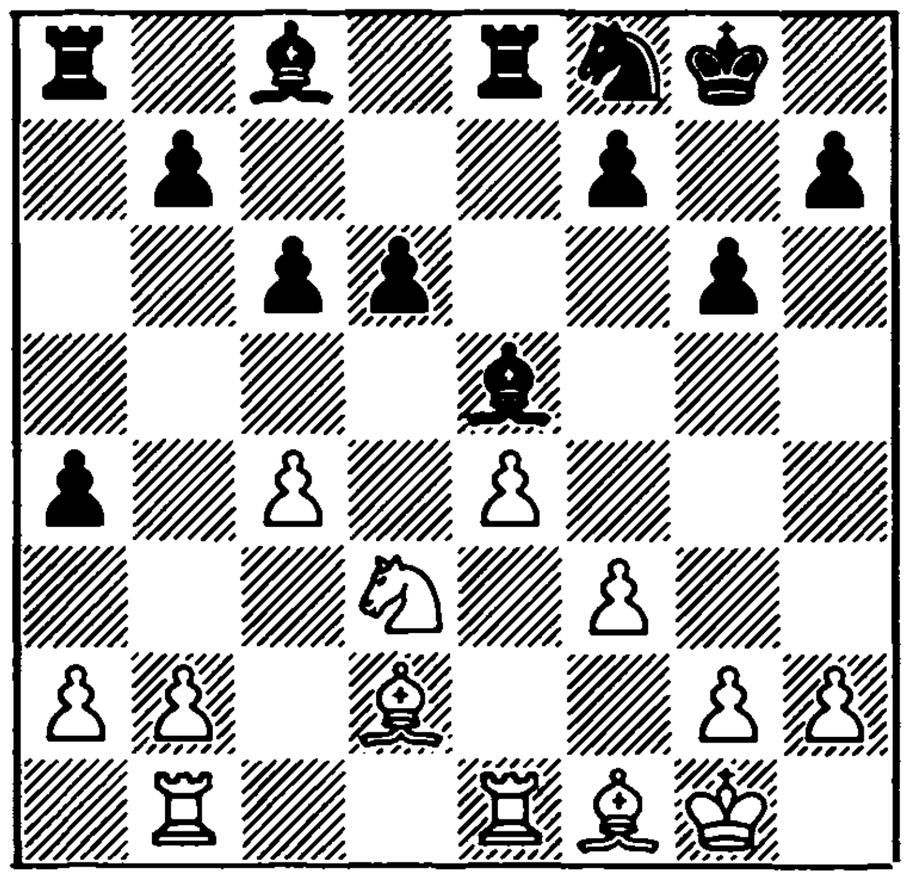
Later it was established that 13 ♗f4! is stronger, after which a position, favourable for White, from the game Tal-Grigorian (Leningrad 1977) is reached: 13 ... d5 14 exd5 ♖xe1 15 ♕xe1 ♘xd5 16 cxd5 ♗xd4+ 17 ♗e3 ♗xe3+ 18 ♕xe3, with advantage to White.

13 ... ♘fd7 14 ♕d2 a4 15 ♘c2 ♗e5 16 ♘e2 ♕c7 17 ♘f4 ♘f8 18 ♘b4 ♕a5?!

Eliskases overrates his position, allowing the opponent to transpose by force into an ending. The correct way was demonstrated, not long before this game, by Najdorf: 18 ... ♘fe6! (Reshevsky-Najdorf, Helsinki 1952).

19 ♘bd3 ♕xd2 20 ♗xd2 ♘xd3 21 ♘xd3 *(74)*

74



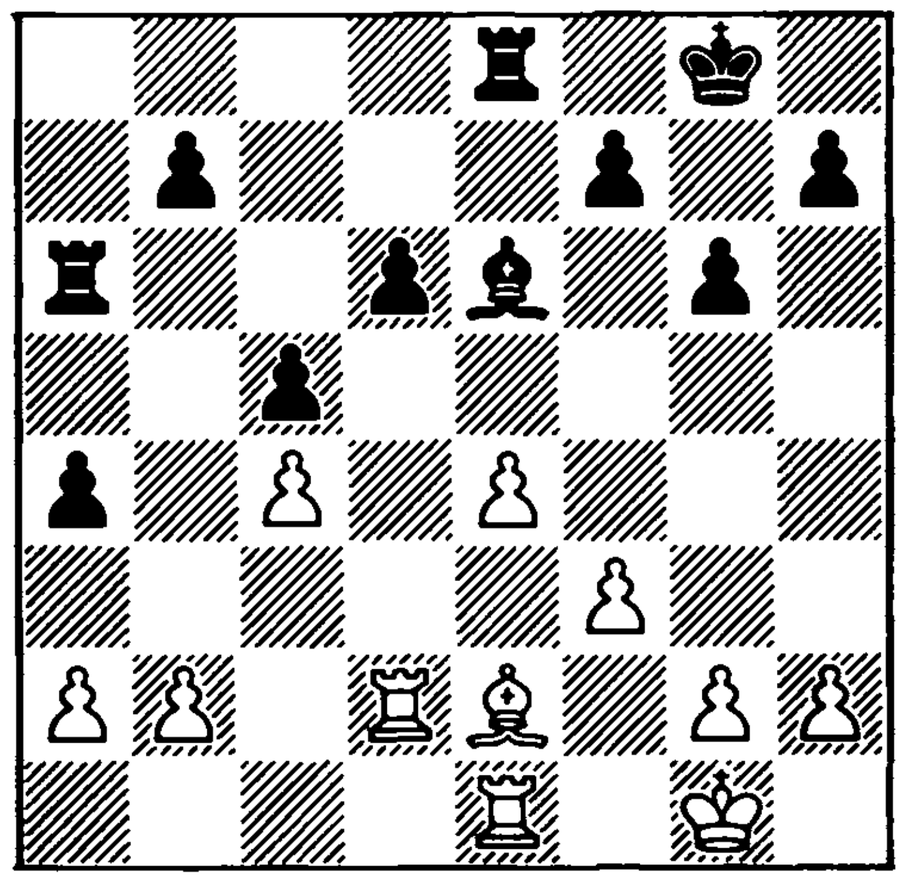
After the opening Black has been left with a weak pawn at d6. White has succeeded in neutralising the opponent's piece play, which Black gains in this variation of the King's Indian Defence as compensation for the weakness of his central pawn, and taken play into an ending. Nevertheless, White's advantage is insignificant, since apart from the d6 pawn there are no other defects in Black's position. With the next few moves the players begin a battle for the d4 square. Black wishes to establish a piece there, but White forestalls his opponent's intentions.

21 ... ♗d4+ 22 ♗e3 ♘e6 23 ♗xd4 ♘xd4 24 ♖bd1 c5

Black cannot get by without this move.

25 ♖d2 ♗e6 26 ♘f4 ♖a6 27 ♘e2 ♘xe2+ 28 ♗xe2 *(75)*

75



The position has simplified. White has a slight positional advantage, which is very difficult to realise. In the majority of cases where material is equal, the existence of one weakness in the opponent's position is insufficient for a win. He must be given another weakness, so that success can be achieved by alternately attacking them. In the given case it is only possible to try and give Black a second weakness on the kingside. But in doing so f3-f4 will have to be played, weakening the e4 pawn, after which the opponent may gain counterplay.

28 ... ♔f8
29 ♖c1 g5?

A serious mistake. Black himself creates a 'hook', enabling White to latch onto the

kingside. What evidently prompted him to make this move was stereotyped reasoning about good and bad bishops. Indeed, nearly all the white pawns stand on squares of the same colour as his bishop, but this is not the determining factor in the position. The white bishop will still come into play, whereas the black pawns can no longer move back. If Black wanted to create counterplay, he should have thought about preparing ... b5 with ... ♖b8 and ... ♗d7, while on the kingside he could have restricted himself to ... ♔e7 and ... f6.

30 ♔f2 h6 31 h4 ♔e7 32 ♖h1 ♖b6 33 a3!

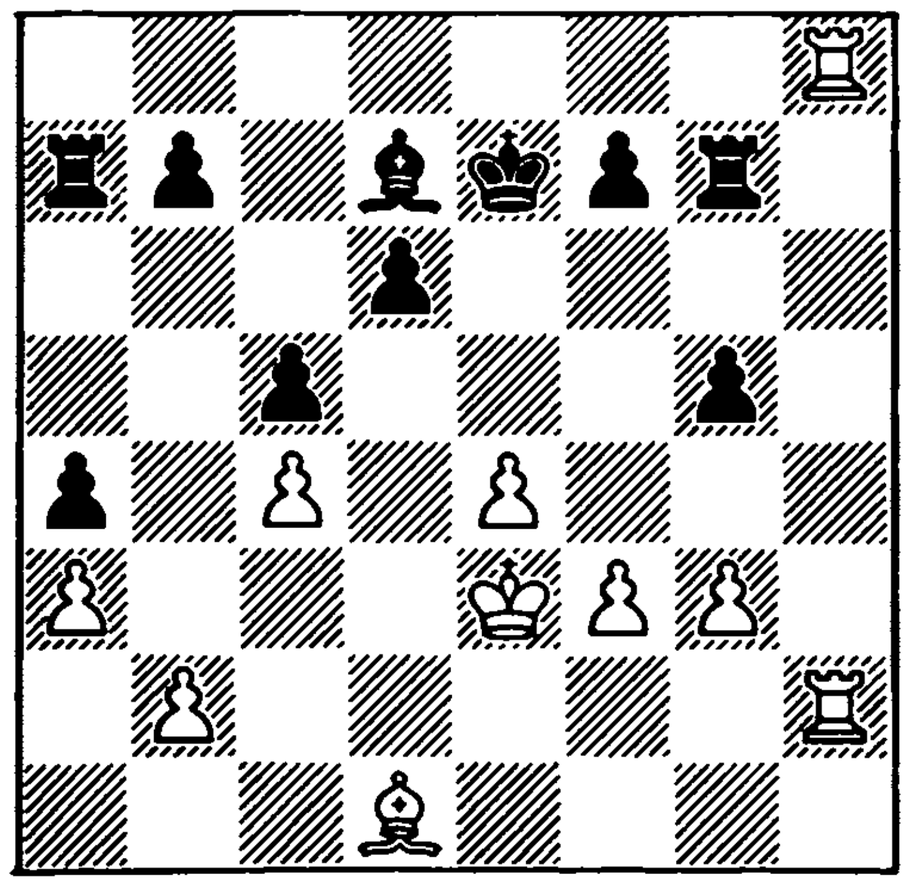
Barcza does not forget about the opponent's counterplay. There was no point in allowing the black rook to go to b4.

33 ... ♖g8 34 hxg5 hxg5 35 g3

A second weakness in Black's position has been created. This is the occupation of the h-file by the white rook. Now White clears the second rank of pieces and pawns, in order to transfer his second rook to the open file.

35 ... ♖g7 36 ♖h8 ♗d7 37 ♗d1 ♗c6 38 ♔e3 ♖a6 39 ♖h6 ♗d7 40 ♖h8 ♖a7 41 ♖dh2 *(76)*

76



The most striking feature is the difference in the placing of the rooks. The black rooks occupy pitiful positions, whereas White's are ready to take control of the whole board by doubling on the eighth rank.

41 ... b5 42 cxb5 ♗xb5 43 ♖b8 ♗d7 44 ♗e2 f5

Black realises that waiting tactics will lead to the further strengthening of White's position, and he makes some despairing attempts to obtain counterplay. But as a result of the opponent's sharp pawn advances, White acquires additional possibilities.

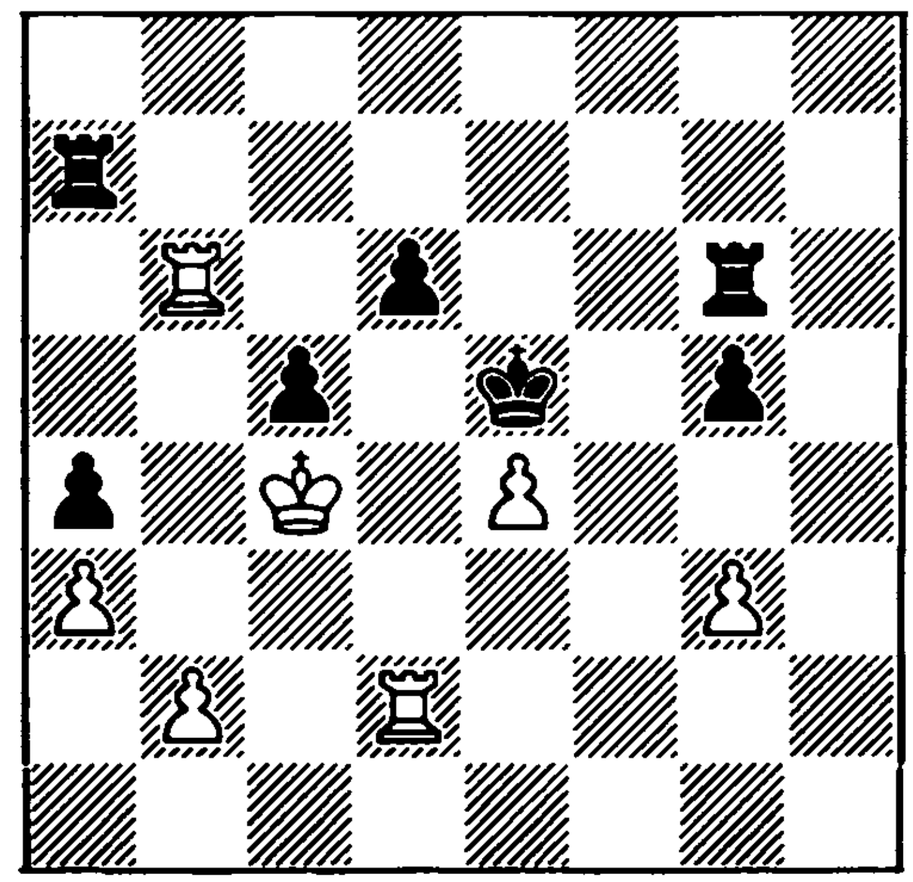
45 ♗c4 fxe4 46 fxe4 ♗e6 47 ♔d3 ♗xc4+ 48 ♔xc4

The game has gone into a rook ending and has entered its decisive phase. White must begin an attack on the opponent's pawn weaknesses, and everything will depend on whether or not Black is able to parry it without loss.

48 ... ♔e6 49 ♖b6 ♔e5 50 ♖d2! ♖g6 *(77)*

50 ... ♔xe4 51 ♖bxd6 ♔f3 would have lost a pawn, but it was Black's best chance.

77



51 ♔d3!!

A splendid manoeuvre, which Barcza must have foreseen in advance. Against ♔e3 followed by ♖d5+ Black has no satisfactory defence.

51 ... ♖d7 52 ♔e3 g4 53 ♖d5+ ♔e6 54 ♖xc5

Winning a pawn while retaining a great positional advantage; the game is decided.

54 ... ♖f6 55 ♖f5! ♖xf5 56 exf5+ ♔xf5 57 ♖b5+ ♔e6 58 ♖b4 ♖g7

58 ... ♖a7 would have prolonged the game, but could not have changed the result.

59 ♖xa4

This essentially concludes the game. There followed the further moves:

59 ... ♔d5 60 ♖d4+ ♔c6 61 a4 d5 62 b4 ♔d6 63 a5 ♔e5 64 a6 ♖c7 65 b5 ♖c3+ 66 ♖d3 d4+ 67 ♔d2 Black resigns

Kovačević-Hort
Rovinj/Zagreb 1970
King's Indian Defence

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 d4 0-0 6 ♗e2 e5 7 0-0 ♘bd7 8 ♖e1 exd4

For a long time this move order was considered the most accurate, but now, thanks largely to the efforts of Yurtayev, the immediate 7 ... exd4 8 ♘xd4 ♖e8 9 f3 c6 has become popular. After the strongest move 10 ♔h1 (*10 ♗f4?! ♘h5 11 ♗e3 f5!* is not good for White, Porath-Gligorić, Netyana 1965, while *10 ♖b1*, *10 ♖e1* and *10 ♗e3* are met by *10... d5!*) Black should not reply 10 ... d5? on account of 11 cxd5 cxd5 12 ♗g5! (Tal-Spassky, Montreal 1979), but 10 ... ♘bd7.

Yurtayev has an interesting way of handling this position: 11 ♘c2 ♘b6 12 ♗g5 h6 13 ♗h4 ♗e6 14 b3 ♘xe4!? (Khuzman-Yurtayev, Tashkent 1987) – Black gained quite sufficient compensation for the queen. Or 11 ♗g5 ♖e5!? 12 ♗f4 ♘h5! (Neverov-Yurtayev and Aseyev-Yurtayev, Frunze 1988). And Black has strong play for the sacrificed pawn after 11 ♗f4 ♘h5! 12 ♗xd6 ♕f6 13 ♘c2 ♘f4 (Karolyi-Watson, Kecskemet 1988).

9 ♘xd4 ♖e8
10 ♗f1 ♘c5

10 ... c6 looks more flexible. In this case the direct 11 ♘c2 ♘e5! 12 h3 ♗e6 13 b3 ♘h5! 14 ♘d4 ♕h4 hands Black the initiative (Rashkovsky-Dorfman, Moscow 1976), but 11 ♗f4! is very unpleasant (Averkin-Geller, Moscow 1969).

11 f3 c6 12 ♗e3 ♘fd7 13 ♕d2

As shown by Geller, the active 13 b4! ♘e6 14 ♖b1 creates more difficulties for Black.

13 ... a5 14 ♖ad1 a4 15 ♘c2

This was played by Taimanov against Reshevsky, back in the Zurich Candidates 1953.

15 ... ♗e5!
16 ♘a3?!

An unsuccessful attempt to deviate from the Taimanov-Reshevsky game, where after 16 ♗d4 ♘e6 Black safely achieved an equal position.

16 ... ♕f6!

A good reply. Black intensifies the pressure along the "King's Indian" diagonal and plans the future blow ... a3!.

17 ♘ab1 ♘e6
18 ♘e2

Obligatory. Black has established control over d4 and f4, and Kovačević, fearing

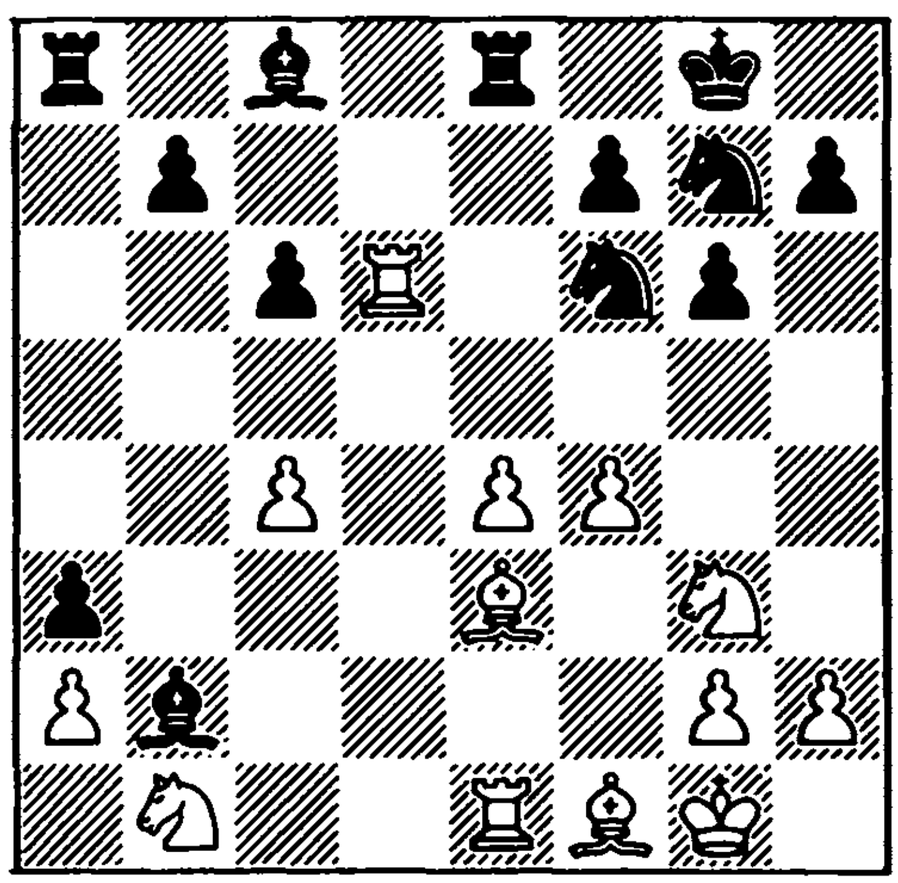
complete suffocation on the dark squares, is forced to allow the break-up of his queenside, by exchanging his strong b2 pawn for the weak one at d6. A strategic victory for Black.

18 ... ♗xb2
19 f4 a3!

A number of King's Indian endings have been won thanks to a strong pawn at a3; the most famous of them is perhaps Reshevsky-Bronstein (Zürich Candidates 1953).

20 ♕xd6 ♘g7 21 ♘g3 ♕xd6 22 ♖xd6 ♘f6 *(78)*

78



Black provokes the advance of the central enemy pawn, in order then to deploy his pieces at e6 and f5.

23 e5 ♘fh5
24 ♘xh5 gxh5!

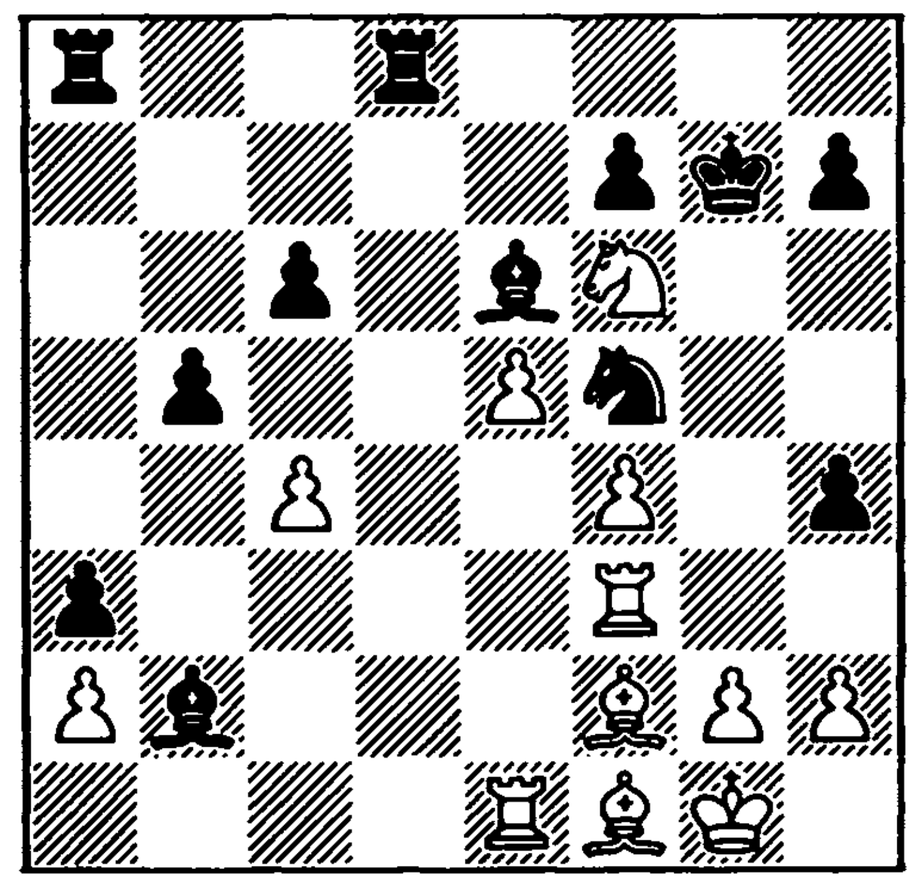
A subtle understanding of the position. Hort voluntarily goes in for a weakening of his kingside pawns for the sake of quickly bringing his knight and light-square bishop into play. At the same time Black reckons that the doubled h-pawns will restrain the opponent's pawn offensive on the kingside.

25 ♗f2 ♗e6 26 ♘d2 ♘f5 27 ♖d3 b5!

It only remains for Black to 'shift' the enemy knight, and his activity on the queenside will become threatening. White opposes this with a determined counter-attack on the opposite side of the board, and a fierce skirmish develops.

28 ♖h3 ♘g7 29 ♖g3 h4 30 ♖f3 ♖ed8 31 ♘e4 ♘f5 32 ♘f6+ ♔g7 *(79)*

79



It is clear that on the queenside Black has a decisive advantage. All White's hopes lie on the kingside. The next few moves should answer the question: whose trumps are the more important?

33 ♖h3 h6

34 g4 was threatened.

34 g4

Of course, the pawn capture 34 ♗xh4? was not possible on account of 34 ... ♘xh4 35 ♖xh4 ♗d4+ and 36 ... ♗f2.

34 ... hxg3 35 hxg3 ♗d4 36 g4 ♗xf2+ 37 ♔xf2 ♖d2+ 38 ♖e2 ♖xe2+ 39 ♗xe2 ♘d4 40 ♗f1?

Whether good or bad, it was essential to play 40 f5. After 40 ... ♘xe2 41 ♘h5+ ♔f8 42 fxe6 ♘c1 the impression is that Black is ahead of the opponent in the development of his initiative, but the text at once tips the scales in favour of Black.

40 ... b4 41 ♖d3 c5 42 ♖d1 b3 43 f5 bxa2 44 ♖a1 ♖b8! White resigns

Botvinnik-Smyslov
World Championship (16)
Moscow 1954
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 ♘c3 d6 6 e3

The Flohr Variation. White deploys his pieces behind his pawns, 'Philidor-style', planning to exploit the activity of his bishop at g2 for play in the centre.

6 ... ♘bd7

In this position Larsen played purposefully in his game against Petrosian (Santa Monica 1966): 6 ... c6!? 7 ♘ge2 a5! 8 b3 ♘a6 9 0-0 e5 10 ♗b2 ♖e8, restricting White's possibilities both in the centre, and on the queenside.

7 ♘ge2 e5 8 b3 ♖e8 9 ♗a3 ♖b8!

"An excellent plan! In view of the threat of ... a6 followed by ... b5-b4, winning a piece, White must play carefully" (Botvinnik). 9 ... exd4 is weaker. In Gulko-Petrushin (Barnaul 1984) White gained an advantage after 10 exd4 ♘f8 11 0-0 h5 12 ♕d2 h4 13 ♖ae1 h3 14 ♗h1 ♗e6 15 ♗c1 a6 16 ♕d1 ♖b8 17 d5.

10 0-0 a6
11 dxe5 ♘xe5

From the present-day viewpoint it is clear that this move, essentially conceding the centre, is not good, and that 11 ... dxe5! is correct, with a fully equal game. But it should be remembered that this game was played nearly forty years ago, and that Geller's famous games against Flohr (cf. p.34) and Filip (Amsterdam Candidates 1956), demonstrating the role of the pawn outpost at e5, had simply not yet been played.

12 c5!

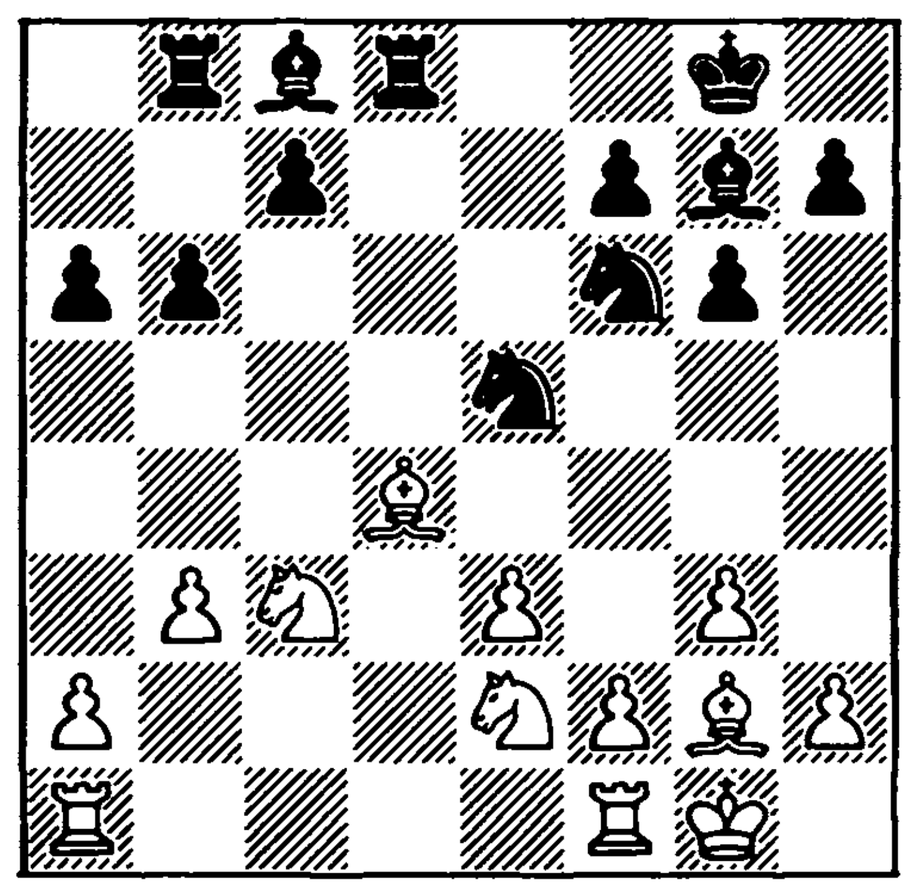
White's second bishop also comes into play.

12 ... dxc5
13 ♗xc5 b6

"Strangely enough, it would have been more favourable for Smyslov himself to exchange queens, although this would appear to lose a tempo in the battle for the open file. The point is that 13 ... ♕xd1 14 ♖axd1 b6 15 ♗d4 c5 16 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 leads to a position which later Black will unsuccessfully try to obtain" (Botvinnik).

14 ♕xd8! ♖xd8
15 ♗d4 *(80)*

80



15 ... ♖e8
16 e4!

White is no longer satisfied with equality (16 ♖ad1 c5 17 ♗xe5) and aims for more.

16 ... ♗b7?

This move is based on an oversight. As shown by Botvinnik, Black could still have maintained approximate equality by 16 ... ♘c6! 17 ♗e3 ♘b4 or 17 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 18 ♖ad1 ♘b4! But now his position

rapidly begins to deteriorate.

17 f4 ♘eg4?!

Smyslov continues along the fatal path. It would have been better to deviate with 17 ... ♘c6, although after 18 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 19 ♖ad1 the move 19 ... ♘b4 would have lost its point on account of 20 e5.

18 h3!

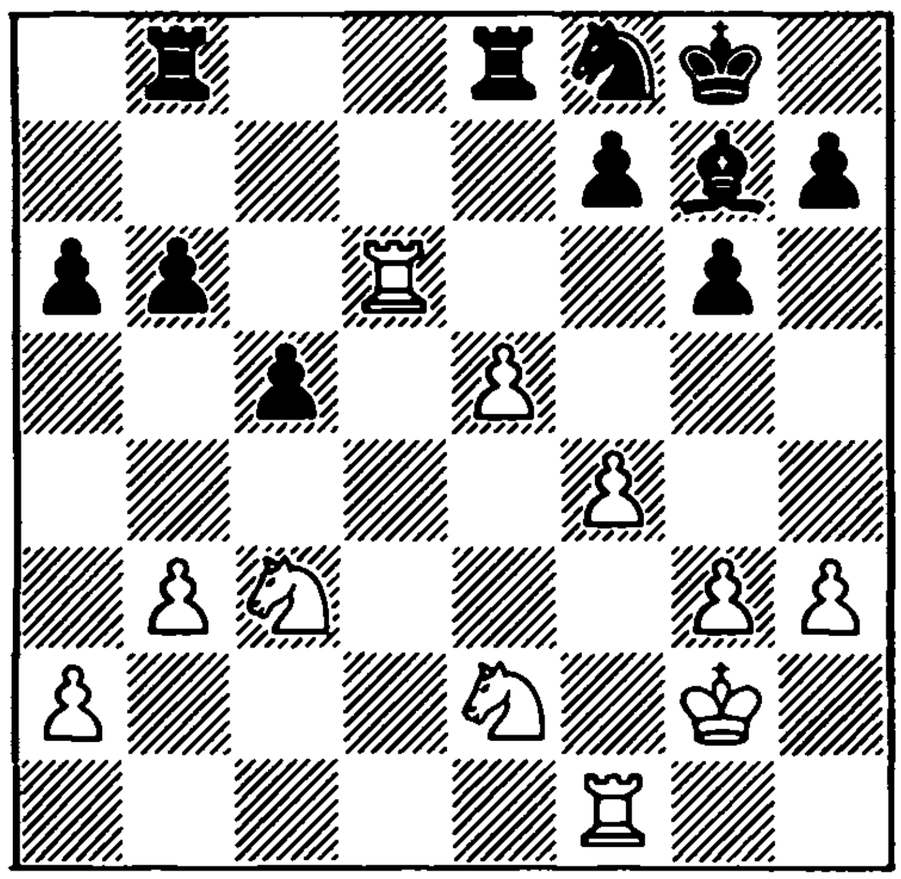
But not 18 e5? c5! 19 exf6 cxd4, with a decisive advantage to Black.

18 ... c5

It was evidently only at this moment that Smyslov saw that the planned 18 ... ♘xe4 would lose to 19 ♗xe4! ♗xe4 20 hxg4.

19 ♗xf6 ♘xf6 20 e5 ♗xg2 21 ♔xg2 ♘d7 22 ♖ad1 ♘f8 23 ♖d6 *(81)*

81



White has a decisive positional superiority. Spatial advantage, control of the only open file, better placed pieces, weaknesses in the opponent's position along the sixth rank – these pluses might prove sufficient to win several games. It is not surprising that soon Black loses a pawn.

23 ... ♘e6 24 ♘e4! ♖ed8 25 ♖fd1 ♗f8 26 ♖xd8 ♖xd8 27 ♖xd8 ♘xd8 28 ♘f6+ ♔g7 29 ♘d5

The rooks have disappeared, but Black's position has not improved. The white knight begins pursuing the enemy pawns.

29 ... b5 30 ♘c7 g5 31 ♔f3 gxf4 32 gxf4 c4 33 bxc4 bxc4 34 ♘xa6 f6 35 ♘c7!

Botvinnik does not bother to prevent the enemy king from breaking through to the h3 pawn. This is more energetic than 35 exf6+.

35 ... fxe5 36 fxe5 ♔g6 37 ♔e4 ♔g5 38 a4 ♔h4 39 a5 ♘c6 40 a6 ♔xh3 41 ♘b5 c3

41 ... ♗c5 would have failed to 42 ♔d5 ♘b4+ 43 ♔xc5 ♘xa6+ 44 ♔d6.

42 ♘bxc3 ♔g4 43 ♘d4 ♘a7 44 ♘d5! h5 45 ♘f6+ Black resigns

Pinter-Tal
Taxco Interzonal 1985
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 d6 3 ♘c3 ♘bd7 4 e4 e5 5 ♘f3 g6 6 ♗e2 ♗g7 7 0-0 0-0

By transposition of moves a well known position from the Classical Variation has been reached.

8 ♗e3 c6!

Black (probably correctly) avoids the direct 8 ... ♘g4, which with the knight at d7 does not look logical – the d4 point cannot be attacked. Tal awaits a convenient moment to transpose into a set-up with the exchange ... exd4, since now it will be somewhat more difficult for White to defend his e4 pawn.

9 ♕c2

An important moment. Pinter avoids the sharp variation 9 d5 c5 10 ♘e1 ♘e8 11 ♘d3 f5 12 f4! g5!?, which brought White success in the well known game Tal-Nunn

(London 1984).

9 ... ♕e7
10 ♖fe1 exd4!

Again Black should not be diverted by 10 ... ♘g4, since after 11 ♗g5 f6 12 ♗h4 g5 13 ♗g3 h5 14 h3 ♘h6 15 ♖ad1 White has the better game (R.Garcia-Pelikan, Argentina 1972).

11 ♗xd4

The slightly insecure position of the bishop at e3 begins to tell. If 11 ♘xd4 ♘c5, and 12 ♗f3 is forced, since 12 f3 d5! is bad for White, for example 13 cxd5 cxd5 14 ♗g5 ♕e5.

11 ... ♘c5
12 ♘d2

Not the best square for the knight in this variation.

12 ... ♖e8 13 ♖ad1 h5 14 h3 ♗h6

Black can be satisfied with the outcome of the opening. The game is roughly equal.

15 ♗f1 ♗f4! 16 ♘f3 ♘fd7 17 ♗e3 ♗xe3 18 ♖xe3 ♘e5 19 ♕d2 ♗e6 20 b3 ♘xf3+ 21 ♖xf3 ♖ad8 22 ♕h6 ♗c8 23 ♖d5

A showy move, but one which achieves little. The transition into the endgame is not dangerous for Black.

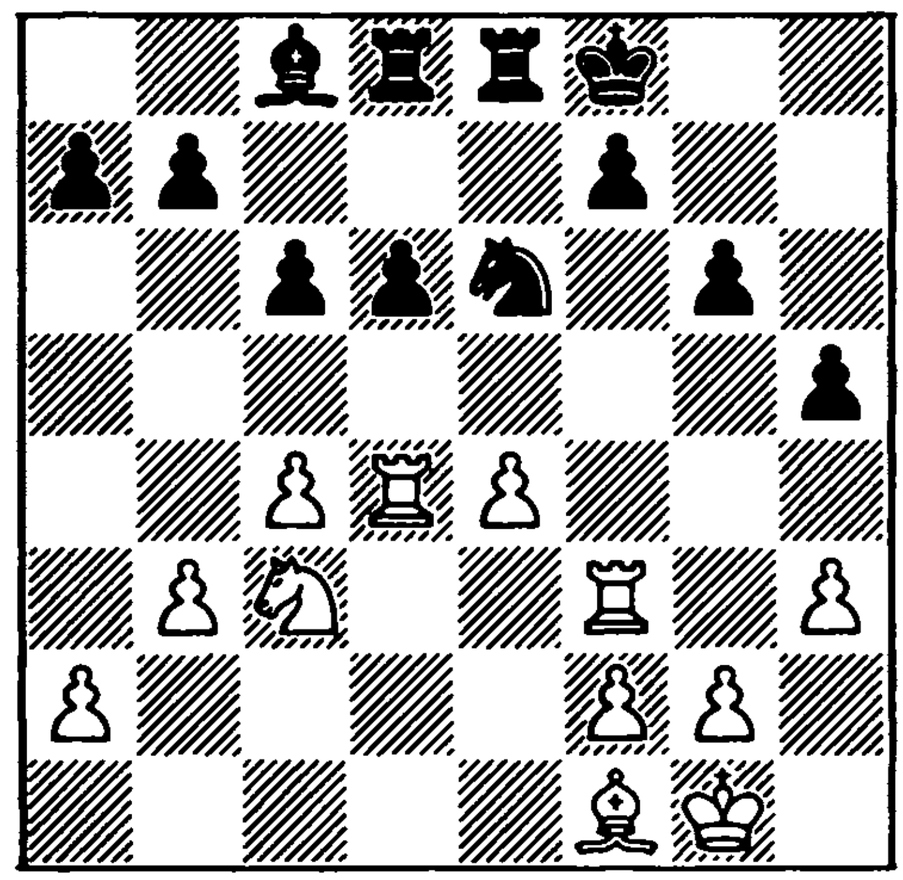
23 ... ♕f8! 24 ♕xf8+ ♔xf8 25 ♖d4

The position is equal. Black's only relative weakness – his d6 pawn – is largely symbolic, and is compensated by the better placing of his pieces.

25 ... ♘e6 *(82)*

The start of a manoeuvre, the aim of which is to activate his game by a pawn thrust. 25 ... a5 is steadier.

82



26 ♖d2 ♘g5
27 ♖e3 f5?

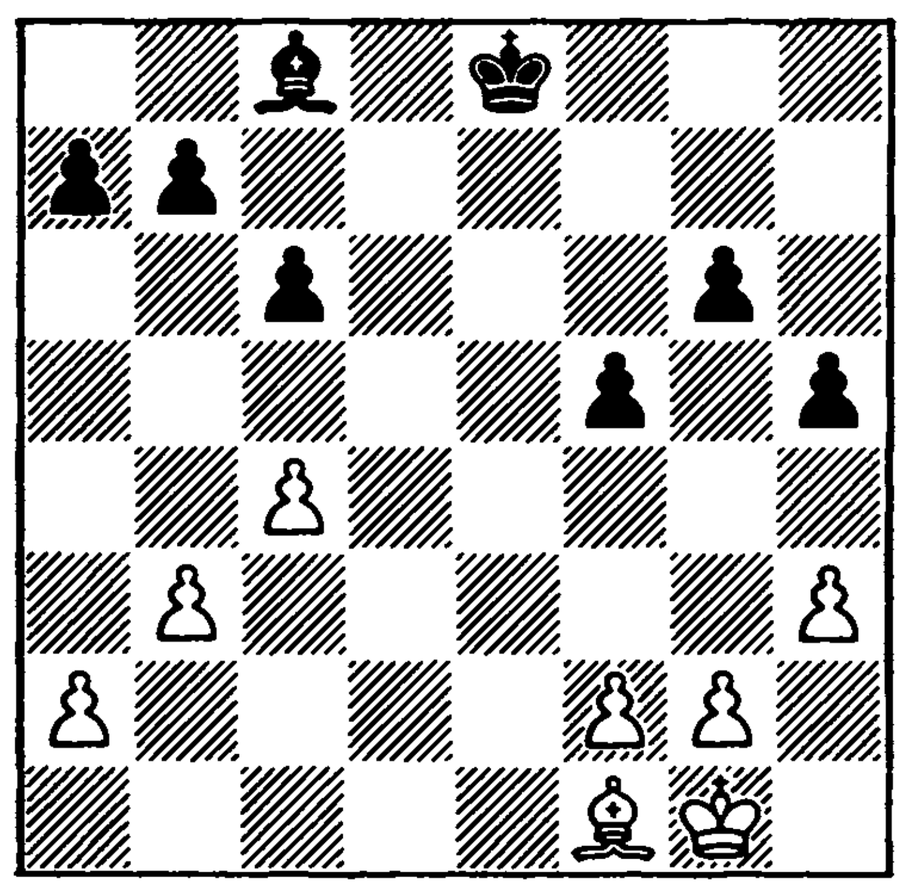
The completion of the manoeuvre begun two moves earlier. The idea itself is good, but the concrete situation on the board casts doubts on it.

28 ♖ed3?

A mistake in reply. As shown by Tal, after 28 ♖g3! ♘xe4 29 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 30 ♖xg6 White would have gained an advantage. Now, however, the game becomes completely level.

28 ... ♘xe4 29 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 30 ♖xd6 ♖xd6 31 ♖xd6 ♖e6 32 ♖d8+ ♖e8 33 ♖xe8+ ♔xe8 *(83)*

83



"The position is equal and, what is more, it is drawn. White should have played 34 f4, when 34 ... c5 is probably necessary, and neither king can pass through the pawn barricade" (Tal). Instead of this there followed:

34 c5? f4!

And it transpired that Pinter was in serious difficulties, since the c5 pawn is weak, and it is hard for the white king to reach the centre.

35 g3

If 35 ♗d3 Tal gives the following possible variation: 35 ... ♔f7 36 h4 ♔f6 37 ♔f1 ♗f5 38 ♔e2 f3+! 39 gxf3 ♗xd3+ 40 ♔xd3 g5, with a won pawn ending.

35 ... f3!

Space, first and foremost. White cannot exploit the fact that the black pawn has broken away from its remaining forces, and the possible movements of his king are still further restricted.

36 h4 ♔e7 37 ♗d3 ♗f5! 38 ♗c4

White could not go into the pawn ending.

38 ... ♔f6 39 ♔f1 ♔e5 40 ♔e1 ♔d4 41 ♔d2 a5!

All the same the c5 pawn is doomed. It is important not to allow b3-b4.

42 ♗f7 ♔xc5 43 ♔c3 b5 44 a3 b4+ 45 axb4+ axb4+ 46 ♔d2 ♔d4

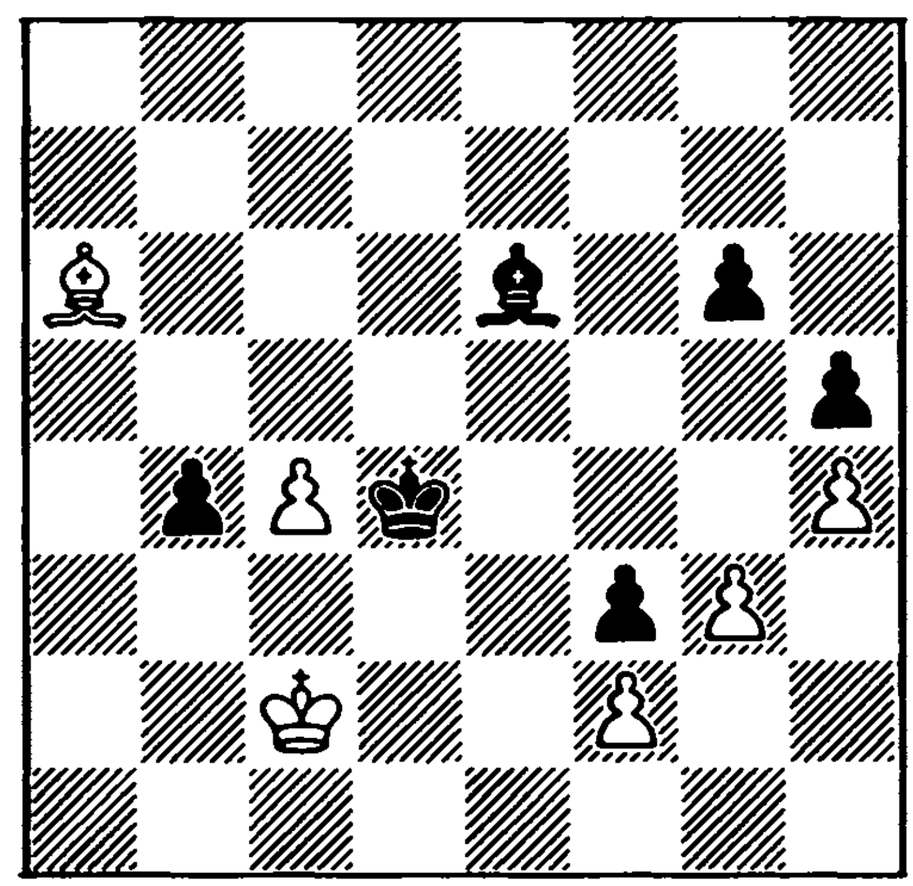
Black has won a pawn, but the realisation of his material advantage is not easy, because of all his kingside pawns being on squares of the same colour as his bishop.

47 ♗e8 c5 48 ♗b5 ♗e4 49 ♗a6 ♗d5 50 ♔c2 ♔e5 51 ♗b5 ♔f5 52 ♗d7+ ♗e6 53 ♗b5 ♔g4 54 ♗f1 ♗d5 55 ♔b2 ♔f5 56 ♔c2 ♗e4+ 57 ♔d2 ♔e5 58 ♗a6 ♔d5 59 ♗c4+ ♔d4 60 ♗b5 ♗f5 61 ♗a6 ♗e6 62 ♔c2 c4

Black had deferred this breakthrough until after the time control at move 56, which explains his meaningless manoeuvres.

63 bxc4 *(84)*

84



63 ... b3+!

This pretty sacrifice of a second pawn leads to victory. After 63 ... ♗xc4 White would have had a saving possibility, as indicated by Tal: 64 ♗b7 b3+ 65 ♔b2 ♔d3 66 ♗xf3 ♗e6 67 ♗c6! ♔e2 68 ♗e8 ♗f5 69 g4! hxg4 70 h5 g5 71 ♗g6 ♗e6 72 h6 ♗g8 73 ♗f7 ♗h7 74 ♗e6.

64 ♔b2 ♔d3 65 c5+ ♔d2 66 c6 ♔e1 67 c7 ♔xf2 68 ♗c4 ♗g4 69 ♗d3 ♔g1 70 ♗xg6 f2 71 ♗xh5 f1=♕ White resigns

Botvinnik-Tal
World Championship (15)
Moscow 1961
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 c6

The catastrophic match score (5-9) forced Tal to avoid the usual move 6 ... e5, in view of the possible reply 7 dxe5.

7 ♗d3 e5

Rather inconsistent. After ... c6 there usually follows ... a6, but Tal evidently did not want to repeat the variation that brought Botvinnik a win over Smyslov in their 1958 return match.

8 ♘ge2

8 d5 is more usual, transposing into familiar lines.

8 ... exd4

"8 ... ♘bd7 was better" (Botvinnik).

9 ♗xd4 c5?!

Tal's ninth move left no one indifferent, it would seem. Konstantinopolsky compared it with Lasker's famous f4-f5 in the Ruy Lopez Exchange Variation, while Bronstein wrote: "I, as a King's Indian player, admire Tal's move. To weaken the d6 pawn by playing ... c6 – to this we have long been accustomed. But to abandon it in the rear, leaving it no hope at all in life – this is simply too splendid". Even so, Tal did not find any followers. The defects of ... c5 are obvious, White's pieces in the centre stand very solidly, and Black does not succeed in developing an initiative. As for the endgame, Black's hopes there are faint . . .

Nevertheless, Tal's idea left its mark in other branches of the King's Indian Defence, as is clearly seen in variations such as 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 ♘c6 7 ♘ge2 a6 8 ♕d2 ♖b8 9 ♘c1 e5 10 ♘b3 exd4 11 ♘xd4 ♘e5 12 ♗e2 c5! (Varpus-Portisch, Budapest 1961, and Belyavsky-Gufeld, Moscow 1979), or 1 ♘f3 g6 2 d4 ♗g7 3 c4 d6 4 ♘c3 e5 5 e4 ♘c6 6 dxe5 ♘xe5 7 ♘d4 a6 8 ♗e2 c5!? (Polugayevsky-Petrosian, Moscow 1983).

The immediate blow in the centre – 9 ... d5!? is more promising for Black. This was played by Gligorić against Hübner in the Leningrad Interzonal 1973, and he could have obtained a good game, if after 10 cxd5 cxd5 11 e5 ♘fd7 12 f4 ♘c6 13 ♗f2 he had not delayed with 13 ... f6! (recommended by Hübner).

10 ♗f2 ♘c6 11 0-0 a6 12 ♕d2 ♗e6 13 ♖ad1!

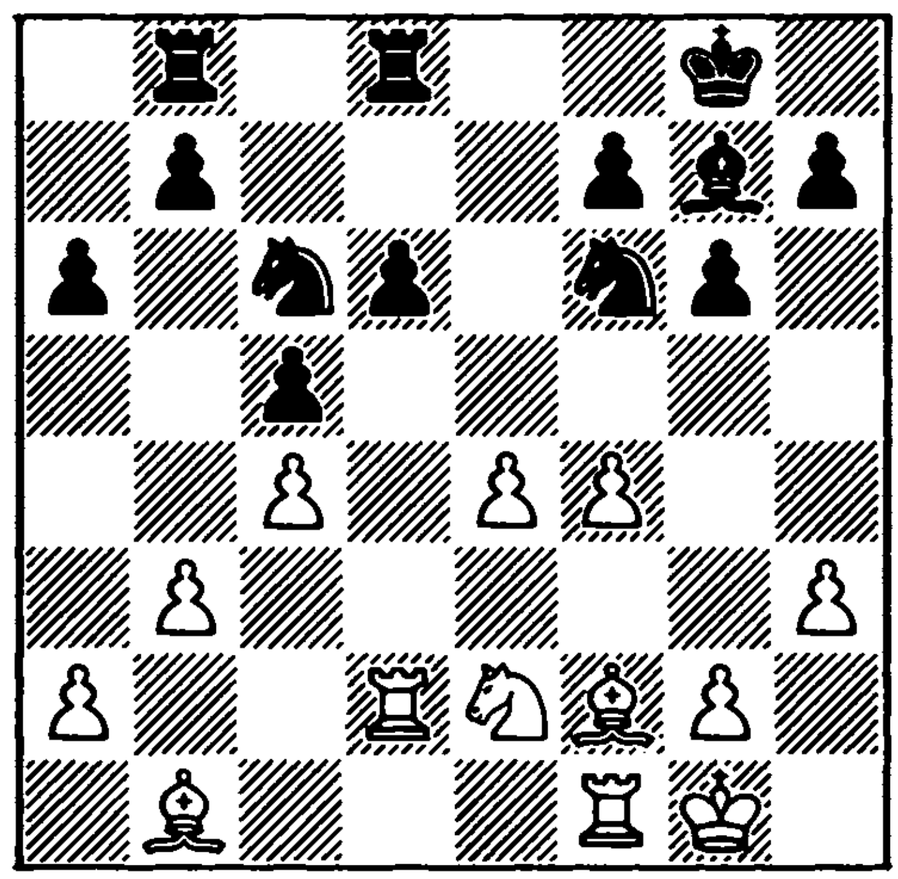
Bronstein once pointed out an effective way of countering a fianchettoed bishop: remove all the pieces from the long diagonal, when it turns out that the bishop is firing into thin air . . .

13 ... ♕a5 14 b3! ♖ab8 15 ♗b1 ♖fd8 16 f4!

This powerful move (threatening f4-f5) forces Black urgently to seek the exchange of queens.

16 ... ♗g4 17 h3 ♗xe2 18 ♘xe2 ♕xd2 19 ♖xd2 *(85)*

85



In the endgame the weakness of the d6 pawn is more strongly felt. Tal in turn tries to initiate counterplay against White's weakened central pawn.

19 ... ♖e8!? 20 ♘g3 ♗f8?! 21 ♖e1 ♖e6 22 ♘f1 ♖be8 23 ♖de2 ♗g7?!

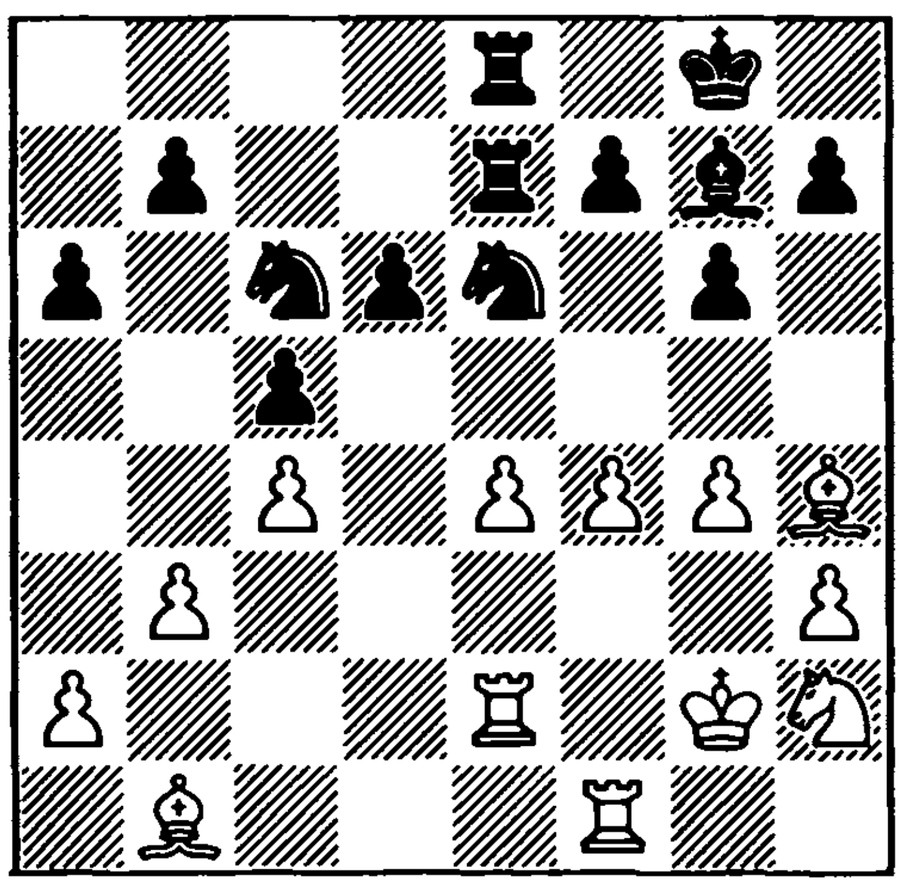
Up to here both sides have been engaged in improving the placing of their pieces.

Black's last move is not altogether opportune. As shown by Botvinnik, 23 ... h5 was preferable, preventing White from setting up a mobile pawn chain on the kingside.

24 g4! ♘d7 25 ♔g2 ♖6e7 26 ♘h2 ♘f8 27 ♗h4 ♘e6!? 28 ♖f1 *(86)*

Of course, White is not tempted into winning the exchange by 28 ♗xe7? ♘xf4+ 29 ♔f1 ♖xe7, with an excellent game for Black.

86



28 ... ♖d7?

"A serious error, after which Black's position becomes difficult to defend. One can understand Tal not wishing to restrict his most active piece – the bishop at g7, but even so it was essential to play 28 ... f6. Then White would have had a choice between 29 f5 ♘ed4 30 ♖ef2 and 29 ♗g3 f5, in both cases with counterplay for Black" (Botvinnik).

29 g5!

Resolute and strong. The white knight gains access to f6.

29 ... h5 30 gxh6 ♗xh6 31 ♘g4 ♗g7 32 ♘f6+ ♗xf6 33 ♗xf6 ♘g7?!

33 ... ♘ed4 was much more active.

34 ♖d2 ♘h5
35 ♗c3 ♖ed8

Black's position has become totally without prospects. All that he can do is to dejectedly wait for action by the opponent.

36 ♗c2 ♔f8 37 ♗d1 ♔e7 38 ♗g4 ♖c7 39 f5 ♔e8 40 f6?!

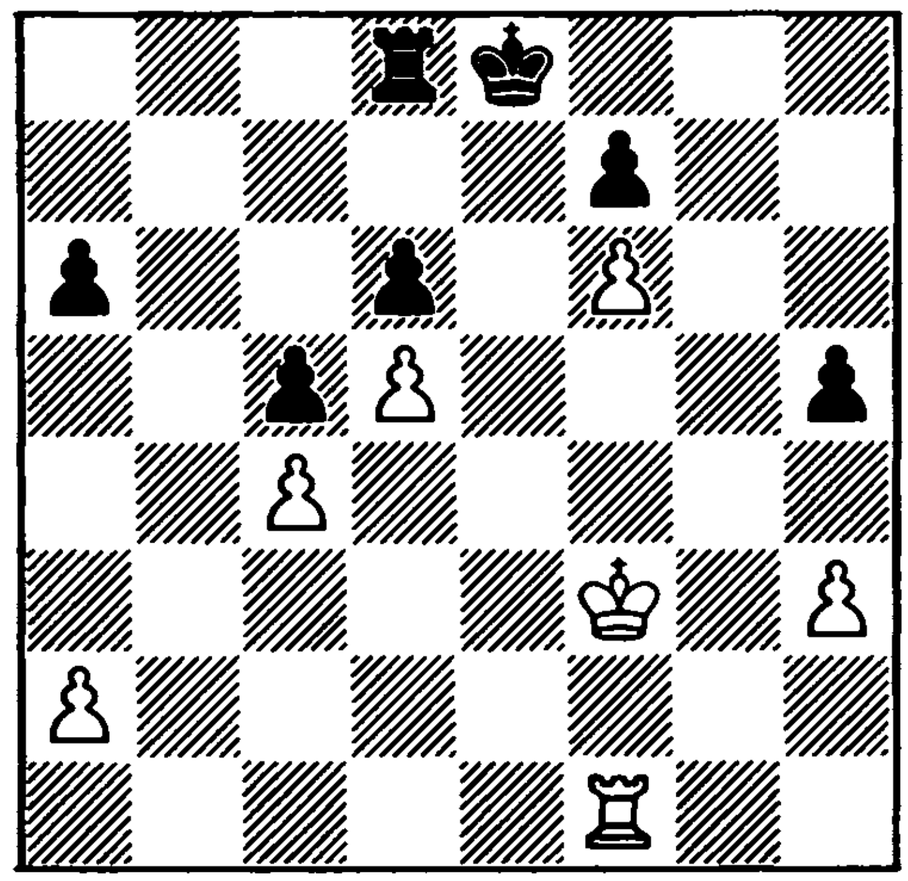
Botvinnik's first inaccuracy in an excellently conducted game. 40 ♖df2 with the threat of 41 fxg6 would have won immediately.

40 ... b5 41 ♖d5 bxc4 42 bxc4 ♖b7 43 ♔f3 ♖b4

For the second time in the game Tal offers an exchange sacrifice. This time White takes the sacrificed material, in order immediately to return it.

44 ♗xb4 ♘xb4 45 ♗xh5! ♘xd5 46 exd5 gxh5 *(87)*

87



47 ♖b1!

The concluding stroke. Rook endings, according to Tartakower, are won thanks to the quality, and not the quantity of the pawns. Despite the material equality, Black stands badly.

47 ... ♔f8 48 ♖b6 ♔g8 49 ♔f4 ♔h7 50 ♔g5 ♖g8+ 51 ♔xh5 ♖g3 52 h4 ♖e3

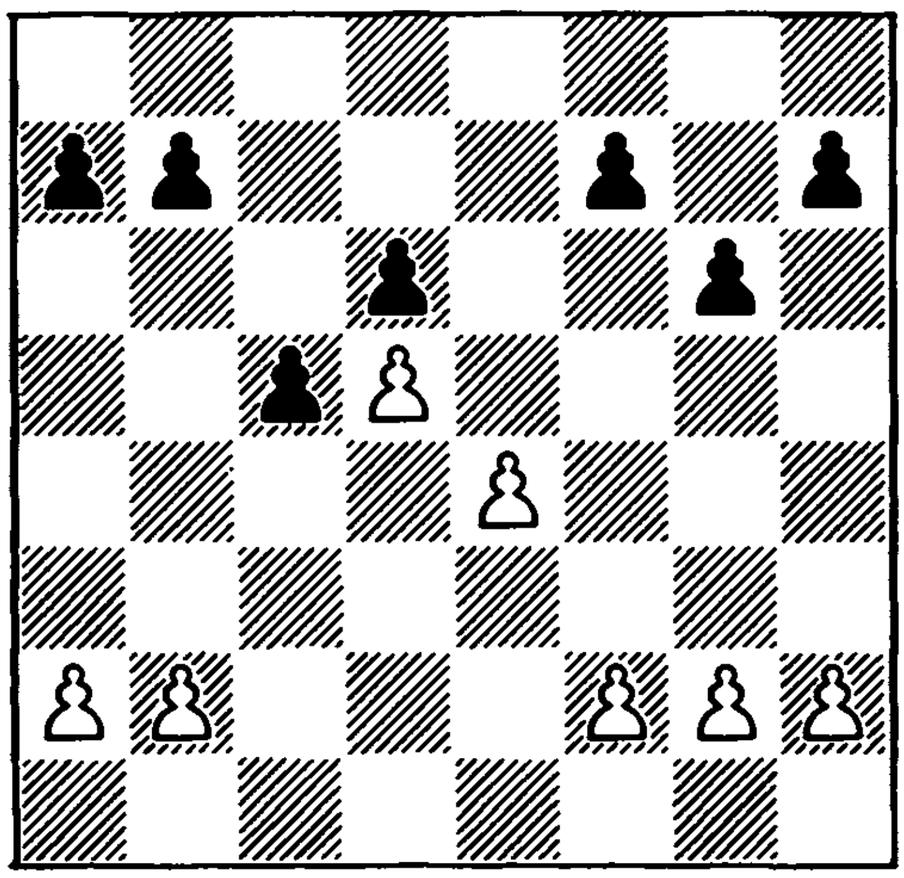
52 ... ♖c3 53 ♖xd6 ♖xc4 54 ♖d7 ♔g8 55 ♖d8+ ♔h7 56 ♖f8 was no better.

53 ♖xd6 ♖e5+ 54 ♔g4 ♔g6 55 ♔f4 ♖f5+ 56 ♔e3 ♖h5 57 ♖xa6 ♖xh4 58 ♔d3 ♔f5 59 ♖c6 ♖h2 60 ♖xc5 ♖xa2 61 ♖c7 ♔xf6 62 ♖d7 ♔e5 63 ♖e7+ Black resigns

1.4 ATTACK ON THE WHITE CENTRE WITH ... c5

Admirers of the King's Indian bishop often prefer to attack the white centre with ... c5 (rather than the 'classical' ... e5), hoping to open the a1-h8 diagonal. By playing d4-d5, White gains a spatial advantage and deprives the b8 knight of the important c6 square. Black normally attacks the d5 pawn with ... e6, and after the exchange in the centre two types of pawn wedge are possible.

88



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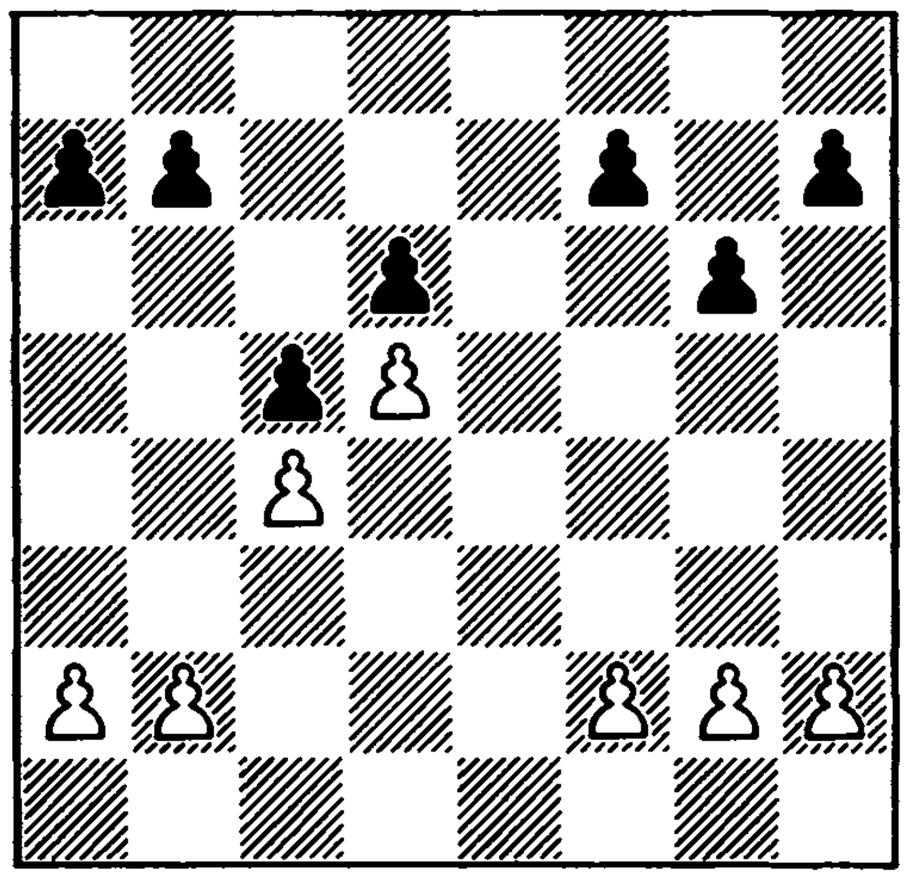


The pawn formation determines the plans for the two sides in the middlegame. In the first case White should combine pressure on the d6 pawn (usually this is aided by playing his knight to c4) with the e4-e5 breakthrough, whereas Black counterattacks on the queenside. The play becomes sharp, and often things do not get as far as the endgame.

If an ending is reached, the play here is no less sharp. For the weakness of his d6 pawn Black has solid positional compensation in the form of his queenside pawn majority, and the advance of these pawns is aided by the powerful bishop at g7. Therefore a definite evaluation of this type of ending cannot be given; everything depends on the concrete situation.

In the second case the evaluation of middlegame positions depends entirely on which of the players is able to establish control over e4. The manoeuvre ... ♘f6-e4 practically always guarantees Black a good game. But if this knight move is not possible, Black risks being squeezed on the back two ranks. An example is provided by the game Hort-Kagan, Skopje Olympiad 1972:

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗e2 0-0 6 ♗g5 c5 7 d5 a6 8 a4 ♕a5 9 ♗d2 ♕c7 10 ♘f3 e6 11 h3 exd5 12 exd5 ♗d7 13 0-0 a5 14 ♗d3 ♘a6 15 ♖c1 ♘b4 16 ♗b1 ♖ae8 17 ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 18 ♕xe1 ♖e8 19 ♕f1 h6 20 ♗f4 ♗f8 21 ♘d2 ♕d8 22 g4 b6 23 ♕g2 ♗c8 24 ♕h2 ♘h7 25 ♕g3 g5 26 ♗e3 ♗g7 27 ♘de4 ♗e5 28 f4 gxf4 29 ♗xf4 ♘g5 30 ♖f1 ♗xf4 31 ♖xf4 ♖e5 32 h4 ♘xe4 33 ♘xe4 ♕e7 34 ♘f6+ ♔h8 35 ♗e4 ♘a2 36 g5 ♘c1 37 ♔f1 h5 38 ♕c3 ♘a2 39 ♕f3 ♘b4 40 ♕xh5+ 1-0

In endings of this type White can hope to win only if he has the advantage of the two bishops. Such endings are analysed in the chapter 'The Two Bishops' in Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*, Pergamon

1985 (pp. 138-142). If White does not have the advantage of the two bishops, Black's endgame chances are normally no worse.

It is a different situation when Black does not attack the d5 pawn with ... e6, but immediately begins play on the queenside by ... b5. For this he normally has to pay the price of a pawn (the Benko Gambit) or of badly placed pieces (knight at a5 in the Yugoslav Variation of the King's Indian). An analysis of such positions with the pawn at e7 concludes the chapter.

Portisch-Gligorić
Vrnjačka Banja 1966
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 ♗e2 0-0 6 ♗g5 c5 7 d5 a6

Twenty-five years ago this move order was considered the most accurate; nowadays 7 ... h6 8 ♗f4 e6!? or 6 ... h6 7 ♗e3 e5 is preferred.

8 a4 ♕a5

In reply to 8 ... e6 a strong and interesting plan was employed by the late grandmaster Agzamov: 9 h3! ♕a5 10 ♗d2 exd5 11 exd5 ♖e8 12 ♘f3 ♗f5 13 0-0 ♕d8 14 g4! ♗c8 15 ♗d3 with advantage to White (Agzamov-Chekhov, Alma Ata 1977).

9 ♗d2!

9 ♕d2 is not bad, but it obliges White to be careful. After 9 ... ♘bd7 10 ♘f3? (*10 ♖a3* is better) a familiar mechanism goes into operation: 10 ... b5! 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♗xb5 ♘xe4! 13 ♘xe4 ♕xb5, with advantage to Black. This occurred, for example (with the inclusion of ... *h6* and *♗h4*) in the game Kristinsson-Olafsson (Reykjavik 1966).

9 ... e6
10 ♘f3

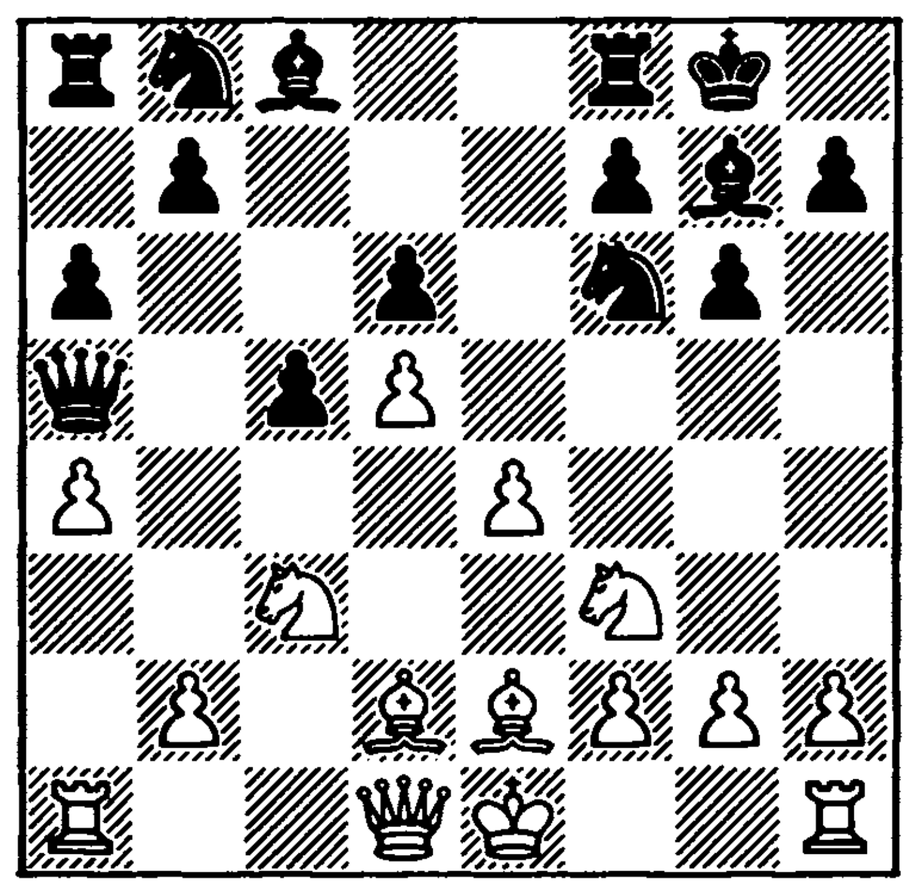
10 h3! came into consideration, transposing into the Agzamov-Chekhov game.

Ten years before the present game, Gligorić encountered the attacking move 10 g4!? In the first Alekhine Memorial Tournament (Moscow 1956) this was played against him by Ciocaltea. After 10 ... exd5 11 exd5 ♕d8 12 h4 ♖e8 13 ♔f1 ♘bd7 14 h5 ♘e4 15 ♘xe4 ♖xe4 16 hxg6 fxg6 both sides had chances.

10 ... exd5
11 cxd5 *(90)*

A crucial moment. Today it can be considered proven that the positions arising after 11 exd5! are definitely in favour of White, but for this it was necessary to establish that in the given situation the 'normal' cxd5 does not promise White anything.

90



11 ... ♗g4!

A subtle move. A Modern Benoni setup has been reached, and Gligorić transposes into a sound variation of it. Here the dangerous plan of ♘f3-d2, the strongest in reply to ... ♗g4, is ruled out, and in addition the white bishop, which usually occupies a threatening position at f4, is

modestly placed at d2.

12 0-0 ♕c7 13 h3 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 ♘bd7 15 b3

Subsequently Portisch returned several times to this position, but from the opening he failed to gain any tangible advantage: 15 ♕c2 ♖fe8 16 a5! ♖e7 17 ♖a4 ♖ae8 18 ♗e2 h6 19 ♔h2 g5 (Portisch-Ivkov, Santa Monica 1966), or 18 b3 c4! 19 ♘d1 ♘e5 20 bxc4 ♘ed7 21 ♘c3 ♘c5 22 ♖a3 ♘fxe4 (Portisch-Dueball, Raach 1969) – in both games Black achieved equality.

15 ... ♖fe8
16 ♕c2 c4!

Already here, probably, Gligorić was planning to sacrifice a pawn.

17 b4 ♖ac8 18 ♖ae1 ♘e5 19 ♗e2 ♘fd7 20 ♖c1 ♘d3!

The light squares in Portisch's position are significantly weakened, and to exchange the opponent's light-square bishop Gligorić does not begrudge a pawn.

21 ♗xd3 cxd3 22 ♕xd3 ♘e5 23 ♕b1 ♘c4 24 ♗e1 ♕e7!

On the dark squares too Black is stronger.

25 ♕b3 ♕g5 26 ♖c2 ♕f4 27 ♖a2 ♗e5!

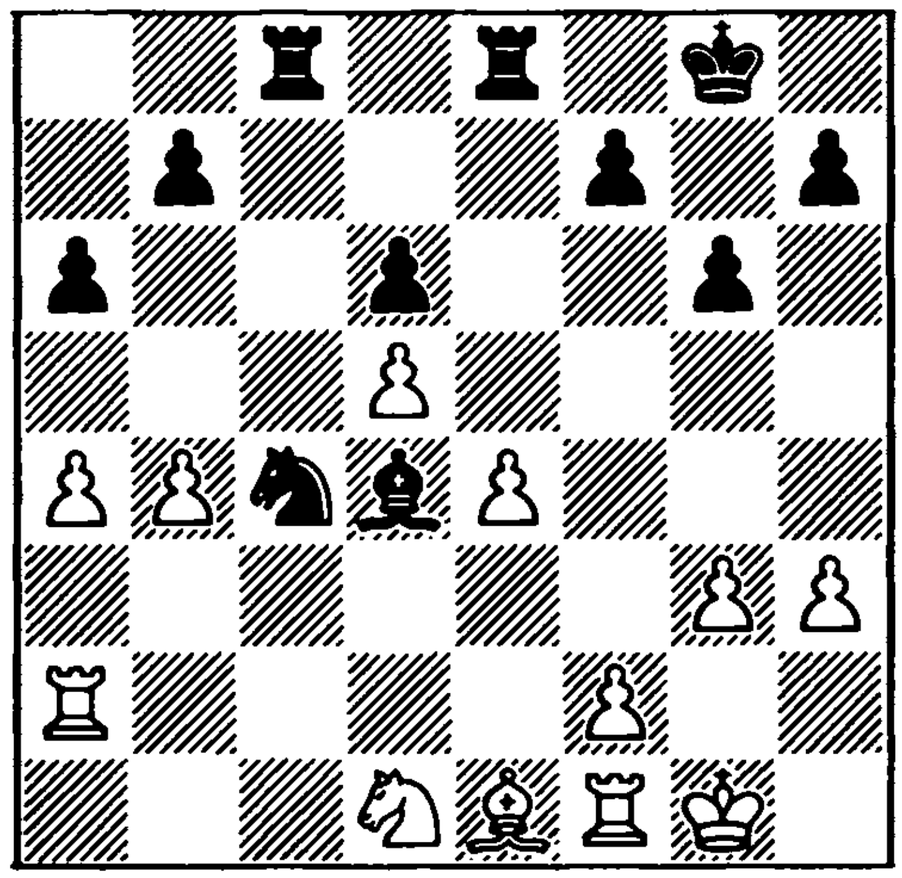
"Along with clever and subtle methods of weakening the king's pawn screen, one should not overlook such a threat as mate in one move" (Bronstein).

28 g3 ♕f3

Now Black's position is so threatening that Portisch considers it best to exchange queens and go into an ending, which is difficult for him despite his extra pawn.

29 ♕d1 ♕xd1
30 ♘xd1 ♗d4 *(91)*

91



31 ♖e2 ♘e5
32 ♘e3

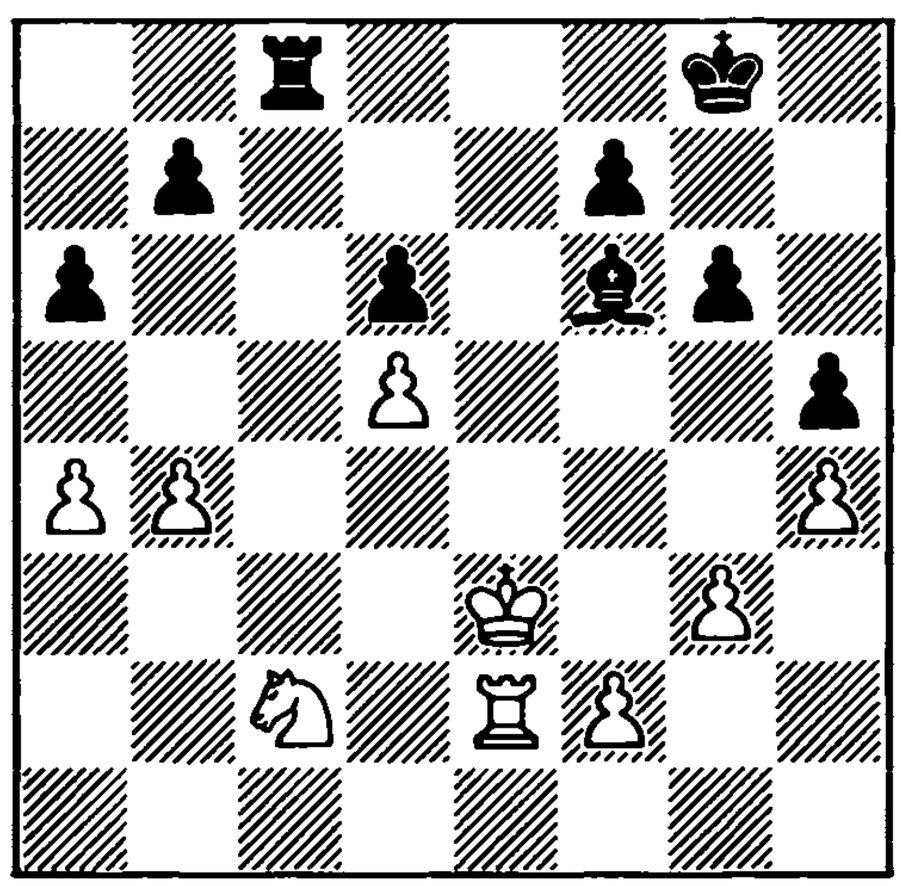
The black pieces dominate the entire board, and Portisch decides to return his extra pawn, if only to simplify the position.

32 ... ♘f3+ 33 ♔g2 ♘xe1+ 34 ♖fxe1 ♖xe4 35 ♘c2 ♖xe2 36 ♖xe2 ♗c3

Black has an enduring positional advantage. With pawns on both wings, rook and bishop are traditionally stronger than rook and knight, and in addition all White's pawns on the left side of the board are weak.

37 ♔f3 h5 38 ♔e3 ♗f6 39 h4 *(92)*

92



39 ... a5?!

A hasty move just before the time control. Gligorić begins attacking the opponent's pawn weaknesses, but it would have been better to make one more prophylactic move – 39 ... ♔f8!.

40 bxa5 ♔f8

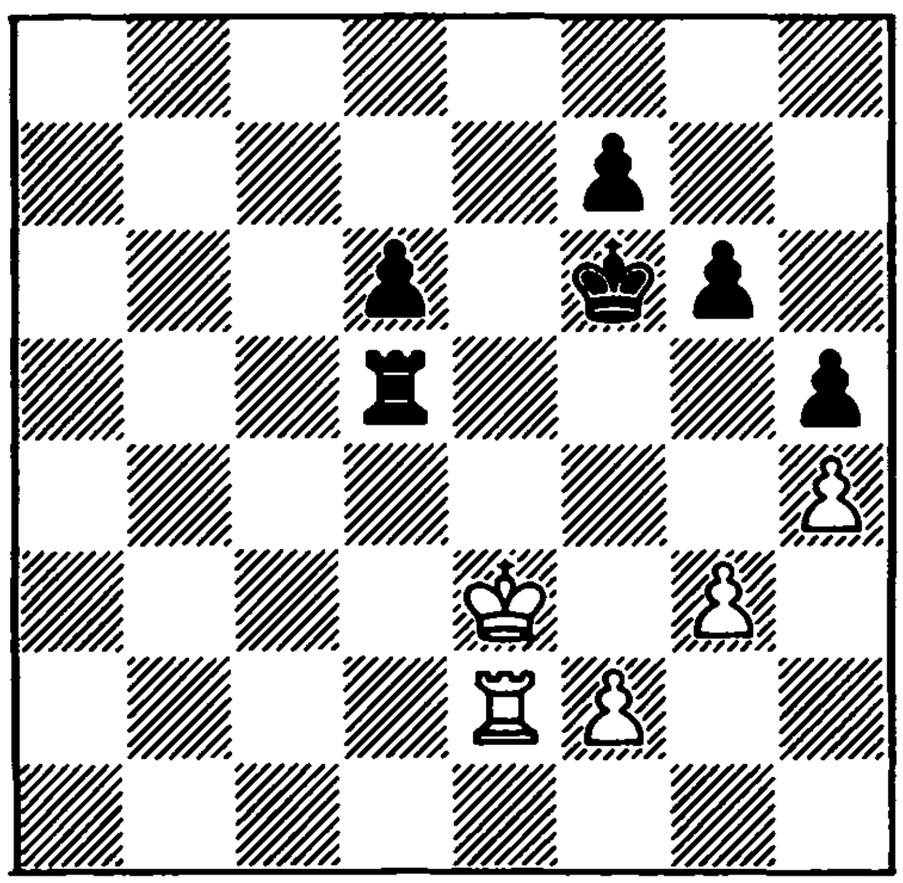
Here the Yugoslav had evidently been planning 40 ... ♖c5, but he rejected it in view of 41 a6! bxa6 42 ♘b4 a5 (*42 ... ♖a5 43 ♖a2 ♗c3 44 ♘c6*, and the position of the king at g8 tells) 43 ♘c6 ♖xd5 44 ♖d2!

41 a6! bxa6
42 ♘b4 ♖c3+

Black forces the win of a pawn, but play goes into a drawn rook ending. However, Gligoric did not have anything better.

43 ♔d2 ♖c4 44 ♘xa6 ♖xa4 45 ♘b8 ♖d4+ 46 ♔e3 ♖xd5 47 ♘d7+ ♔g7 48 ♘xf6 ♔xf6 *(93)*

93



In rook endings of this type it is advantageous to the stronger side for his extra pawn to be as far away as possible from the kingside. Since here the passed d-pawn is almost adjacent to the kingside pawns, Black has no serious winning chances.

49 ♖a2 ♖e5+ 50 ♔d2 ♔f5 51 ♖a7 f6 52 ♖g7 ♖e6 53 ♖g8 g5 54 ♖h8 ♔g4 55 ♖g8 ♖e5 56 ♖g6 ♔h3 57 ♖xf6 gxh4 58 ♖xd6! hxg3 59 fxg3 ♔xg3

The pawn material has been almost completely eliminated, and the position on the board is a theoretical draw. Black's further attempts to play for a win are pointless.

60 ♖g6+ ♔f3 61 ♖f6+ ♔g4 62 ♖g6+ ♔f5 63 ♖g8 h4 64 ♖f8+ ♔g4 65 ♖g8+ ♔h3 66 ♖g7 ♔h2 67 ♖g8 ♖e4 68 ♖g7 h3 69 ♖g8 ♖e7 70 ♖g6 ♖a7 71 ♔e2 ♖a2+ 72 ♔f1 ♖g2 73 ♖h6 ♖g4 74 ♖h8 ♖f4+ 75 ♔e2 Draw agreed

Furman-Dorfman
Minsk 1976
Modern Benoni

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 e6 4 ♘c3 exd5 5 cxd5 d6 6 e4 g6 7 f4

The three pawns variation is White's sharpest response to the Modern Benoni. He openly plays for a breakthrough in the centre by e4-e5.

7 ... ♗g7
8 ♗b5+!

Alatortsev's move, which greatly aggravates the already difficult problems facing Black. In reply to 8 ... ♗d7 or 8 ... ♘bd7 White carries out his threat: 9 e5!, and Black's position is difficult to hold. He has to make an awkward move with his already developed knight . . .

8 ... ♘fd7
9 ♗d3

The classical continuation. Nowadays White more often chooses the more flexible 9 a4! (an idea of grandmaster A.Zaitsev), not determining for the moment the position of the bishop.

9 ... a6

It may be worth weakening the enemy king's pawn screen by 9 ... ♕h4+! 10 g3 ♕e7. Double-edged play developed in the game Lukacs-Psakhis (Sarajevo 1981): 11 ♘f3 0-0 12 0-0 ♘b6!? 13 ♔g2 ♗g4 14 h3 ♗xf3+ 15 ♕xf3 ♘8d7.

10 a4 0-0
11 ♘f3 ♕c7

Black aims for counterplay in the centre and on the queenside, by preparing ... c4. It is true that this weakens his control over d4, and White's dark-square bishop, which up till now has had no particular prospects, obtains an excellent square in the centre. However, it is hard to find a continuation here that gives equal chances – White's advantage is felt both after 11 ... ♖e8, and in the event of 11 ... ♘f6, for example 11 ... ♘f6 12 h3! ♖e8 13 0-0 c4 14 ♗c2 ♘bd7 15 ♗e3 ♕c7 16 ♗d4 ♘c5 17 ♖e1 ♗d7 18 ♕d2 b5 19 e5!, Shereshevsky-Sarbay, Minsk 1980.

12 0-0 c4 13 ♗c2 ♘c5 14 ♗e3 ♗g4 15 h3?!

This 'automatic' reply hands the initiative to Black, whereas the consistent 15 ♗d4! would have retained White the advantage, since all the same Black has no better move than 15 ... ♗xf3. Also interesting is Razuvayev's recommendation of 15 ♕e1, with the idea of playing the queen to h4.

15 ... ♗xf3 16 ♖xf3 ♘bd7 17 a5

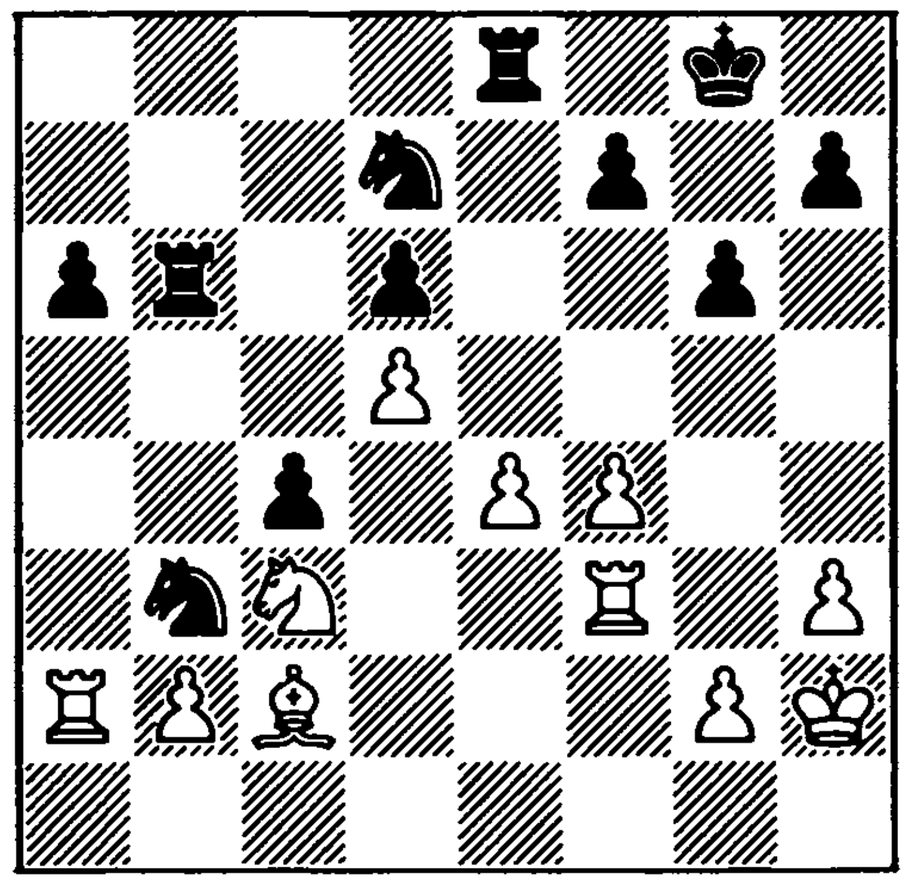
17 ♗d4 would now be dangerous: 17 ... ♗xd4+ 18 ♕xd4 ♕b6 19 a5 ♕xb2 20 ♖a2 ♕b4 21 e5 b6!.

17 ... ♖fe8 18 ♗d4 b5! 19 axb6 ♕xb6 20 ♖a2 ♖ab8 21 ♔h2 ♗xd4! 22 ♕xd4 ♘b3!

Excellently played. In the endgame Black will have a clear advantage.

23 ♕xb6 ♖xb6 *(94)*

94



White's 7th move 7 f4!?, which was so active in the opening, proves fatal for him in the endgame. The weakness of the e4 pawn, and also possibly the d5 pawn (after the undermining ... f5) together with the weakness of the b2 pawn, make his position highly unpleasant.

24 ♗xb3

The black knight was intending to take up a threatening position at d4, and it has to be exchanged.

24 ... cxb3
25 ♖a4?

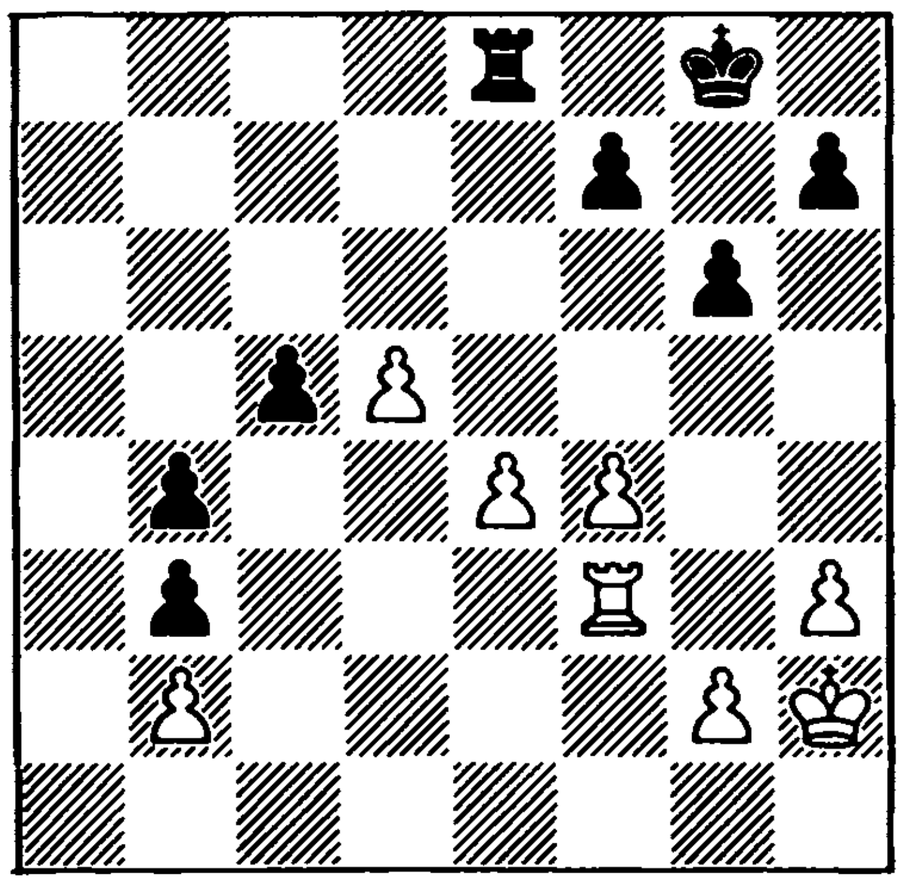
After this move Black's advantage quickly becomes decisive. Black attacks the opponent's central pawn with gain of tempo, and the attempt to hold it along the fourth rank proves ineffective. 25 ♖a5 would have been preferable.

25 ... ♘c5
26 ♖c4 a5!

It transpires that White cannot parry the threat of 27 ... ♖b4!.

27 ♘a4 ♖b4! 28 ♖xb4 axb4 29 ♘xc5 dxc5 *(95)*

95



The rook ending is lost for White. Black has a pawn majority on the queenside, and White in the centre, but whereas the black king can stand in the path of the white pawns, White's king is hopelessly remote from the queenside. Black is essentially playing the ending with an extra piece.

30 ♖xb3 ♖xe4 31 ♖d3 c4 32 ♖d1 ♔f8 33 ♔g3 ♔e7 34 ♔f3 f5 35 g4 ♔d6 36 gxf5 gxf5 37 ♖a1 ♔xd5 38 ♖a5+ ♔d4 39 ♖xf5 ♖e3+ 40 ♔g4 ♖e2 41 ♖f7 ♖xb2 White resigns

For an example of an ending where White had the advantage after recapturing cxd5, the reader is referred to **Kasparov-Suba**, Lucerne Olympiad 1982 (cf. *The Test of Time* by Kasparov p.127, Pergamon 1986).

Ghitescu-Fischer
Rovinj/Zagreb 1970
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 b6

Spassky's idea. Black prepares to strike at the centre with ... c5, but avoids preparing it with the rather passive move . . . ♘bd7, since he hopes to develop the knight more effectively at c6. For example: 7 ♖c1? c5 8 ♘ge2 ♘c6 9 g3 e5! 10 dxe5 ♘xe5 (Eliskases-Stein, Mar del Plata 1966). The 6 ... b6 variation became firmly established in the repertoires of King's Indian players, and it also occurs frequently in modern tournaments.

7 ♗d3! ♗b7

In view of the threat of e4-e5, Black must waste a further tempo, to secure himself on the h1-a8 diagonal. At the time when Fischer was still playing chess, ... ♗b7, an unusual move in the King's Indian Defence, was considered obligatory.

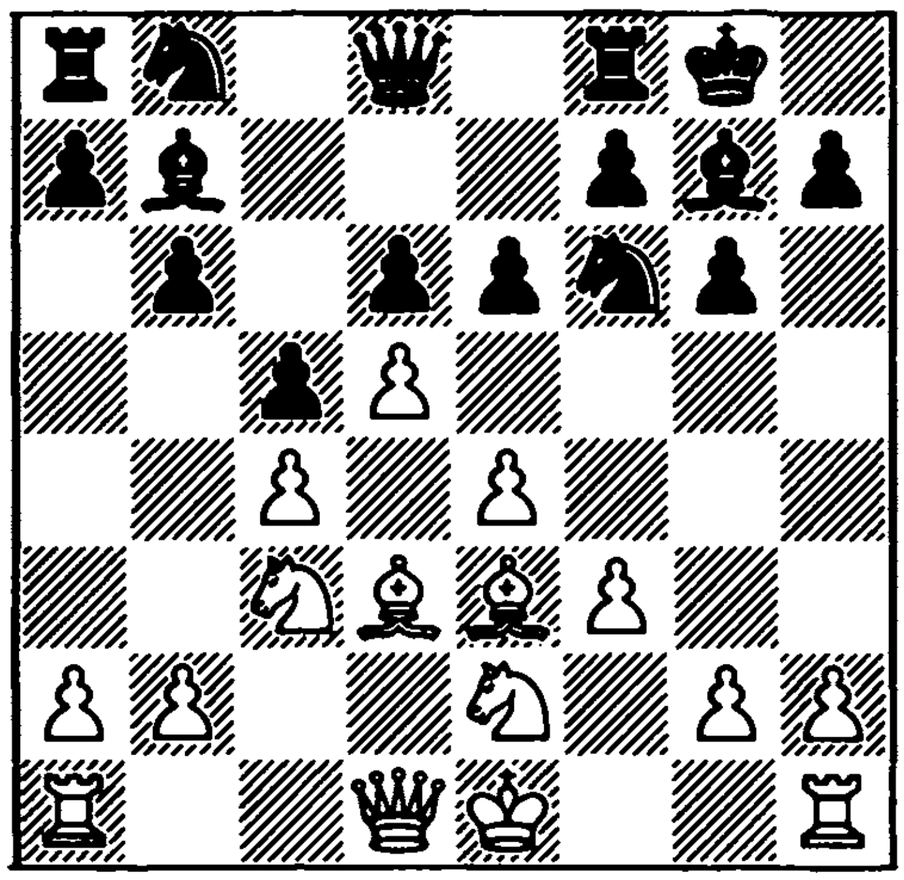
The more 'normal' ... a6 practically went out of use after the game Polugayevsky-Stein, (28th USSR Championship, Moscow 1961): 7 ... a6 8 ♘ge2 c5 9 e5! ♘fd7 10 exd6 exd6 11 0-0 ♘c6 12 ♗c2! ♗b7 13 ♕d2 ♘f6 14 ♖ad1, when Black clearly lost the opening battle.

Even the clever discovery of the Soviet master Kapengut did not get Black out of his difficulties: 9 ... ♘e8!? 10 exd6 ♘xd6 11 dxc5 bxc5 12 0-0! (the point of Black's idea is seen in the variation *12 ♗xc5 ♘d7 13 ♗f2 ♘e5 14 b3 ♘b5!*, Boleslavsky-Kapengut, Minsk 1968).

It is only recently that the move ... a6 would appear to have been vindicated. Grandmaster Rashkovsky has shown that after 8 ♘ge2 c5 9 e5 ♘fd7 10 exd6 cxd4! Black safely avoids danger, for example: 11 ♘xd4 ♘c5 12 dxe7 ♕xe7 13 ♘d5 ♕e5 14 f4 ♕d6 15 0-0 ♖e8! 16 ♗f2 ♗b7 17 ♖c1 ♘bd7 18 b4 ♘xd3 19 ♕xd3 b5! (Dorfman-Rashkovsky, Volgodonsk 1981).

8 ♘ge2 c5
9 d5 e6 *(96)*

96



10 0-0?!

An inaccurate move, not in itself, but in connection with White's intended plan. 10 ♗g5! was stronger. Here is what Boleslavsky has to say: "If White is aiming to recapture with his e-pawn, it is important to pin the knight at f6, since after 10 0-0 exd5 11 exd5 ♘e8! Black succeeds in playing his knight to c7 and advancing ... b5".

10 ... exd5
11 exd5

It follows from the previous comment that here 11 cxd5! is correct.

11 ... ♘bd7!

This is perhaps even stronger than 11 ... ♘e8. Now ... ♘e5 is threatened, exchanging White's important bishop, and 12 b3 can be met by 12 ... ♘e8! After the correct 10 ♗g5! Black would not have had such an easy life: 10 ... ♘bd7 11 b3 a6 12 a4 h6 13 ♗h4 ♖e8 14 0-0 ♕c7 15 ♕d2 (variation by Boleslavsky). Better chances are offered by Geller's recommendation: 10 ... exd5 11 exd5 ♘bd7 12 b3 a6 13 a4 h6 14 ♗h4 ♘e5 15 ♗c2 ♕d7!.

12 ♗g5

Effectively agreeing to the exchange of the bishop at d3.

12 ... h6 13 ♗h4 ♘e5 14 f4 ♘xd3 15 ♕xd3 ♕d7!

When making this move Fischer must have already foreseen the need to sacrifice a pawn, and correctly evaluated the resulting ending.

16 ♗xf6! ♗xf6
17 f5

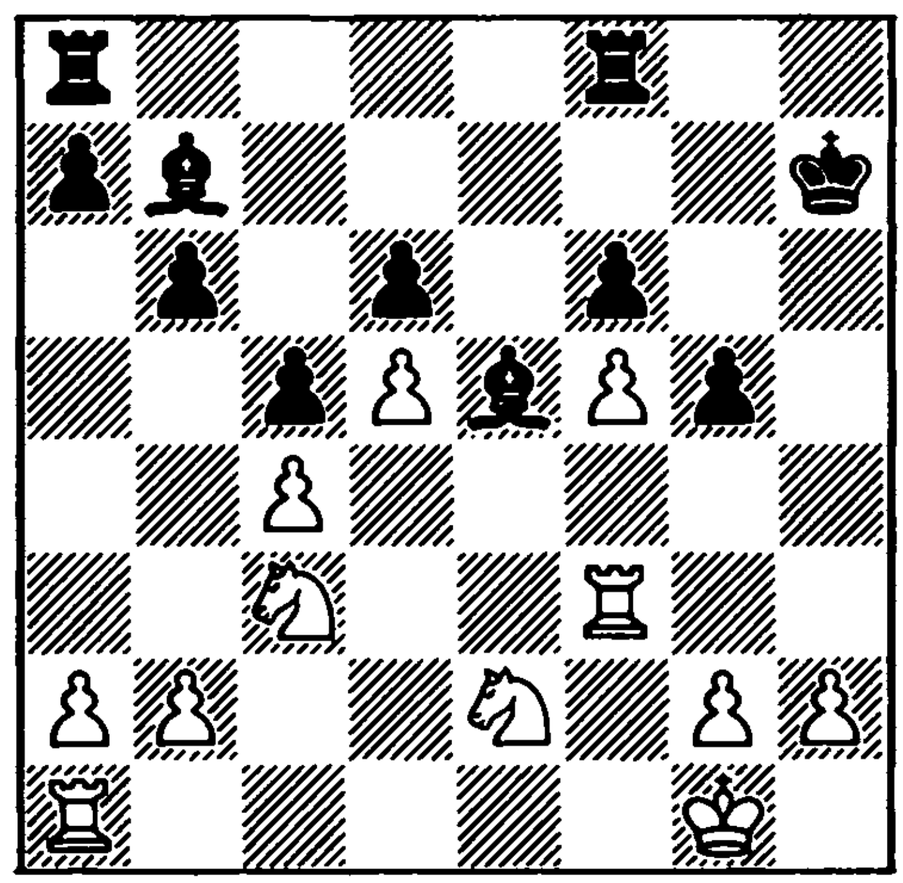
White's attack appears threatening.

17 ... g5
18 ♕h3 ♗e5!

This move is the point of Fischer's plan. He probably did not even consider 18 ... ♔h7 19 ♘g3.

19 ♕xh6 f6 20 ♖f3 ♕h7! 21 ♕xh7+ ♔xh7 *(97)*

97



Black's position is preferable. The two bishops, plus the prospect of active play on the queenside and in the centre along the open e-file, are more than sufficient compensation for White's extra pawn on the kingside.

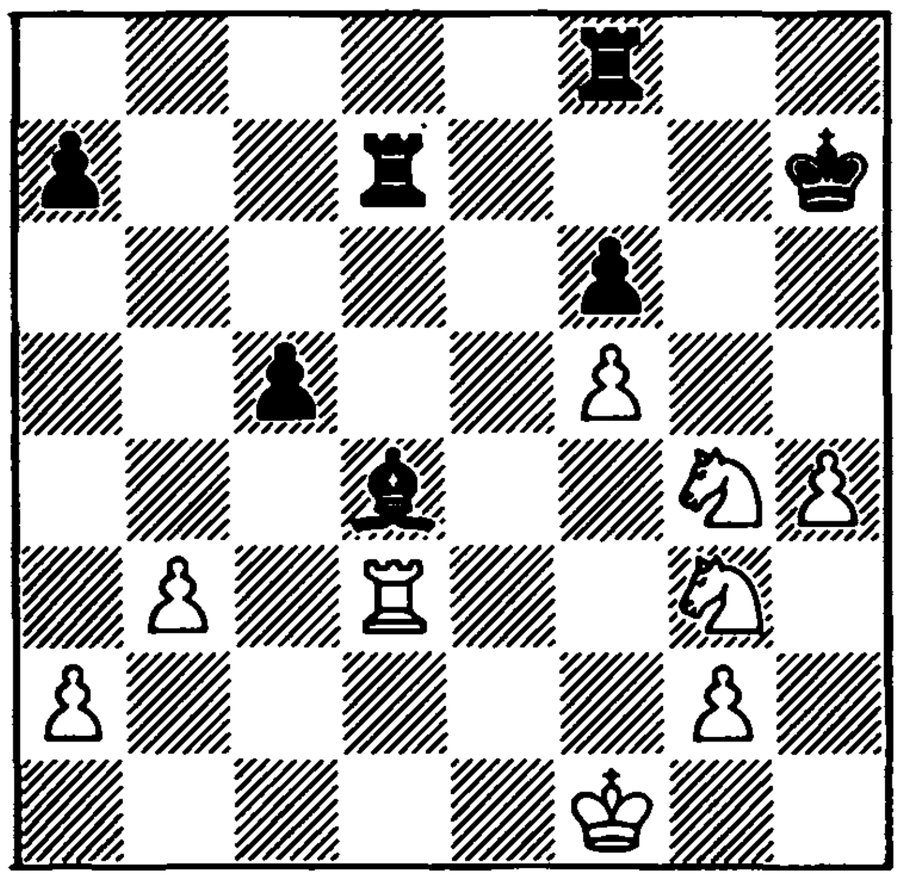
22 h4 g4 23 ♖d3 ♖ae8 24 ♘g3 ♗a6 25 b3 b5!

In the course of four moves Fischer has

literally torn apart the opponent's position on the queenside.

26 cxb5 ♗xb5 27 ♘xb5 ♗xa1 28 ♘xd6 ♗d4+ 29 ♔f1 ♖e5 30 ♘c4 ♖xd5 31 ♘e3 ♖d7 32 ♘xg4 *(98)*

98



Nominally White has quite adequate material compensation for the exchange, but his pieces are scattered. The large number of open and semi-open files for Black's rooks, and his bishop, excellently placed on a strong point in the centre, allow the American grandmaster to develop strong pressure on the opponent's position.

32 ... ♖g7 33 ♘f2 ♖fg8 34 ♘fe4 ♔h6 35 h5?

The difference in class of the two players begins to tell. The Rumanian player fails to see Black's positional threat, and ends up in a difficult position. White could have put up a worthy resistance by playing 35 ♘e2!.

35 ... ♖g4!

Now the white pieces are tied down by having to defend one another.

36 ♔e2 ♗e5 37 ♔f2 ♖4g7 38 ♖f3 ♖g4 39 ♖d3 a6

The reader should note how smooth and unhurried Fischer's actions have become, after he has 'gripped' his opponent. Black's plan includes the further advance of his a-pawn, but he does not hurry, giving White the illusion that his position is solid.

40 ♖f3 ♗d4+ 41 ♔f1 ♗e5 42 ♔f2 a5

The same tactics. The black pawn 'reluctantly' advances.

43 a4?! ♖d8!

The rhythm of the play changes sharply. Now comes an energetic conclusion.

44 ♔e3 ♖b8 45 ♔f2 c4! 46 bxc4 ♖b2+ 47 ♔f1 ♖b4! White resigns

An elegant finish.

Lilienthal-Shamkovich
21st USSR Championship
Kiev 1954
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 0-0 5 f3 d6

Lilienthal was obviously intending to develop his bishop at g5, and therefore he avoided 5 ♗e3, the usual move in this position. Now Black could have immediately played 5 ... c5!.

6 ♗g5 c5
7 d5 ♘bd7

Played in accordance with the theory of that time, which gave, as an example of Black's strategy, the brilliant and fascinating game Taimanov-Aronin (Tbilisi 1951): 8 ♕d2 ♖e8 9 g4 ♕a5 10 ♗h6 ♗h8 11 h4 ♘e5 12 h5 e6 13 0-0-0 exd5 14 exd5 ♗d7 15 ♗g5 ♗a4, and in the attacks on opposite wings Black was the first to get to the enemy king. However, if one looks without prejudice at the position, it has to

be acknowledged that Black's 7th move is too optimistic, and is of no help in the battle against White's strong pawn centre. It does not assist ... b5, and even hinders ... e6. White must merely avoid castling 'into the attack'. Sound development together with kingside castling should consolidate his opening advantage, and it is this plan that Lilienthal follows.

8 ♕d2 ♖e8
9 ♘ge2

Here the manoeuvre ♘h3-f2! is very strong.

9 ... a6
10 ♘g3 ♖b8

Black should perhaps have played 10 ... b5!?, in the spirit of the Benko Gambit.

11 ♗e2 ♕a5
12 a4 ♕b4

Black has no other play.

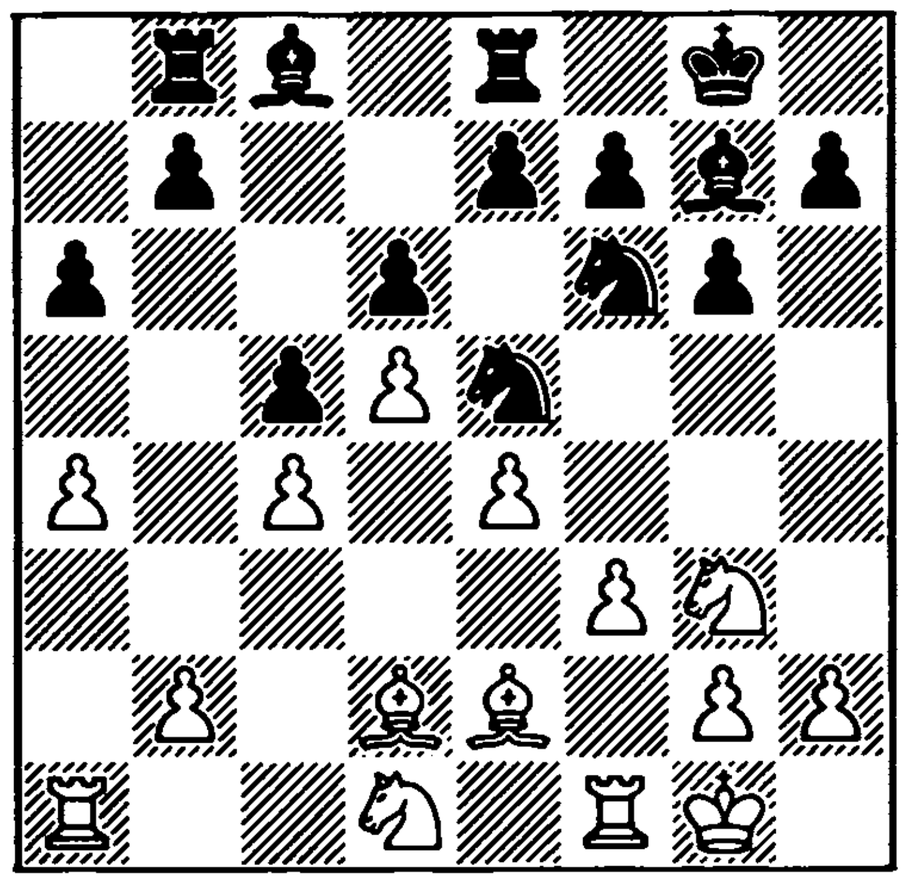
13 0-0 ♘e5
14 ♘d1!

When playing 13 ... ♘e5!?, Black had to take into account that after 14 ♕c1 he would be practically forced to sacrifice a piece: 14 ... ♘xc4 15 ♘a2 ♕xb2 16 ♗xc4 ♕xc1 17 ♖axc1 b5 18 axb5 axb5 19 ♗e2 ♘d7, with an unclear position. "Instead of this double-edged variation with completely unclear consequences, I preferred to exchange queens. Thanks to his dominant position in the centre, this promises White slightly the better prospects" (Lilienthal).

14 ... ♕xd2
15 ♗xd2 *(99)*

After the exchange of queens White has retained good chances of active play both on the queenside, and on the kingside. Black's prospects are more obscure.

99



15 ... h5
16 h3 e6?!

It would have been better first to drive the enemy knight to h1 with 16 ... h4.

17 ♘c3 exd5?

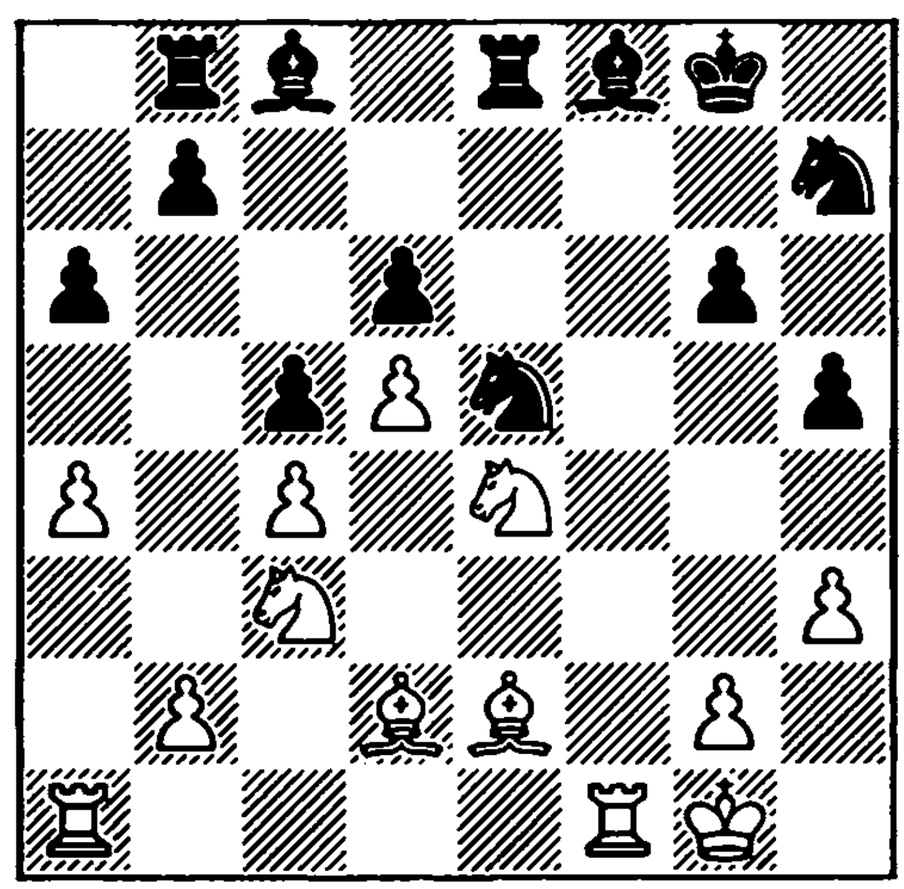
And this is a direct positional mistake. 17 ... h4 was essential.

18 exd5!

Of course. Now the knight at g3 obtains the excellent square e4. Strategically White already has possibly a winning position.

18 ... ♘h7 19 ♘ge4 ♗f8 20 f4! ♘d7 21 f5 ♘e5 22 fxg6 fxg6 *(100)*

100



23 ♖xf8+!

The logical sequel to all of White's preceding play. It is difficult even to call this move a sacrifice.

23 ... ♖xf8 24 ♘xd6 ♗d7 25 ♗h6 ♖f6

25 ... ♖fd8 26 ♗f4! would not have improved matters.

26 ♘ce4 ♖bf8 27 ♗xf8 ♖xf8 28 ♘xc5 ♗c8 29 a5 ♘f6 30 ♖f1 ♔g7 31 ♘dxb7 Black resigns

Milev- R.Byrne
Varna Olympiad 1962
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 ♗g7 4 e4 d6 5 f3 0-0 6 ♗e3 b6 7 ♕d2

This aggressive move is nevertheless weaker than Bronstein's strategic continuation 7 ♗d3!.

7 ... c5!

Black has managed without the preparatory 7 ... a6 or 7 ... ♗b7.

8 d5 ♘a6?!

In the 1950s and 1960s this was played quite often, until it was realised that, with rare exceptions, the manoeuvre ... ♘a6-c7 does not achieve its desired aims. More promising is 8 ... ♖e8 or 8 ... e6!.

9 g4 ♘c7
10 ♗h6!

Direct and strong.

10 ... ♗xh6
11 ♕xh6 e6

A typical manoeuvre. Black places one of his heavy pieces on his second rank, and after h4-h5xg6 he recaptures ... fxg6, defending the vulnerable h7 point.

12 0-0-0?!

Too hasty. As Milev pointed out in the tournament bulletin, White should first have played 12 ♘h3!.

12 ... exd5 13 exd5 ♕e7 14 ♗d3 ♘d7! 15 h4 f6?

A weak move. Black would have achieved an excellent position after 15 ... ♘e5.

16 h5 g5
17 f4!

Now Black's defence will entail great difficulties.

17 ... gxf4 18 ♕xf4 ♘e5 19 ♘f3! ♗d7

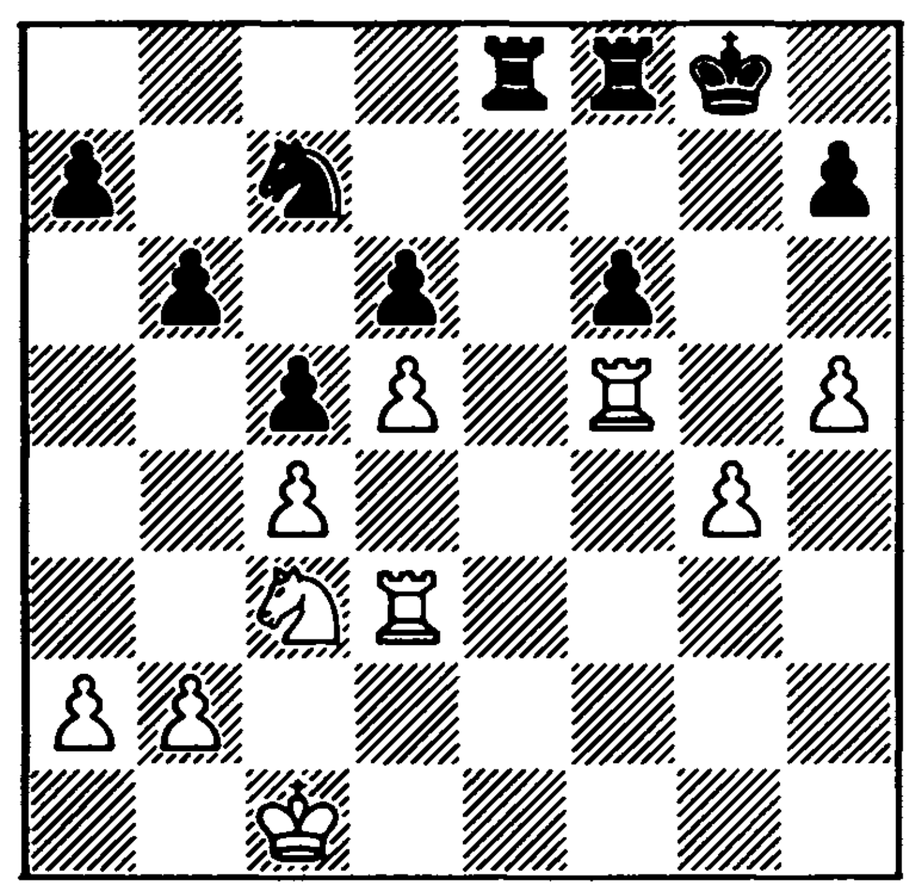
Taking the g4 pawn would have been suicidal.

20 ♘h4 ♘xd3+

Black activates his forces and, since it is not possible to give mate, in the next few moves Milev forces the transition into a better ending.

21 ♖xd3 ♕e5! 22 ♖f1 ♖ae8 23 ♘f5 ♗xf5 24 ♕xf5 ♕xf5 25 ♖xf5 *(101)*

101



In the ending White has a positional superiority, with a spatial advantage and the better pawn structure on the kingside.

25 ... ♖e5 26 ♖df3 ♖xf5 27 ♖xf5 ♔g7 28 ♘e4 ♘e8 29 ♔d2 ♖f7 30 ♔d3 a6!

The American grandmaster prepares counterplay on the queenside.

31 ♖f2 b5
32 b3 b4?

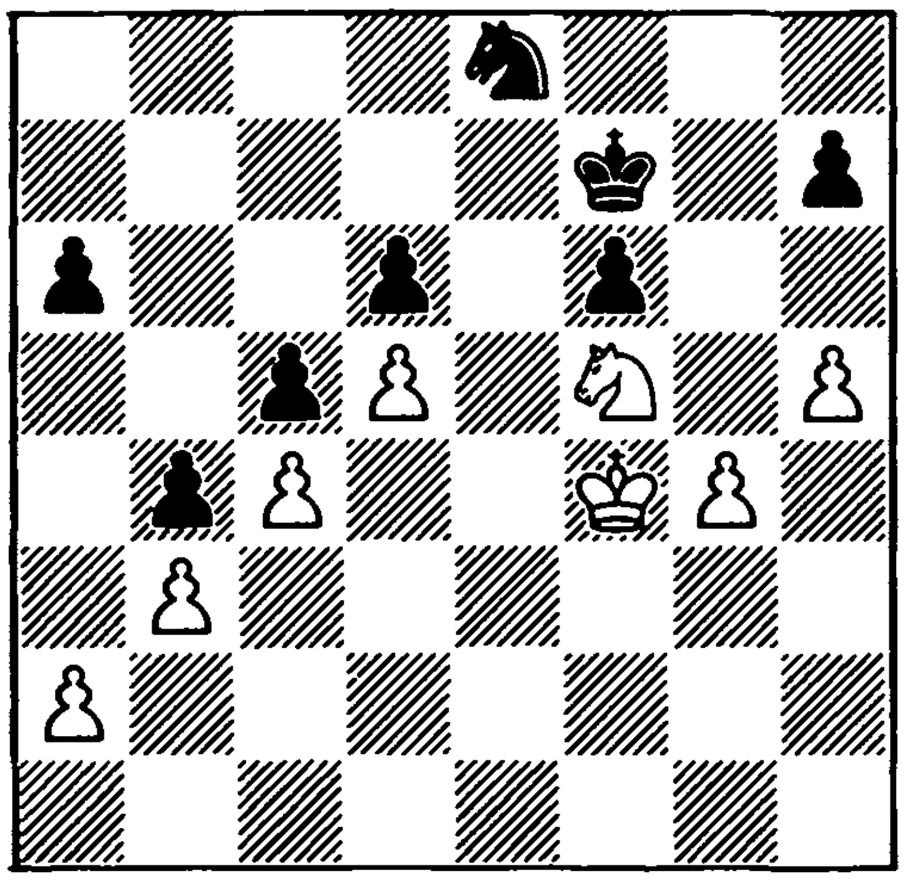
An inexplicable decision. The opening of the b-file by 32 ... bxc4+ was much more natural and strong.

33 ♖e2 ♔f8 34 ♘g3 ♖e7 35 ♖xe7 ♔xe7

In knight endings a spatial advantage is often a decisive factor. The given example is no exception.

36 ♘f5+ ♔f7 37 ♔e4 ♔f8 38 ♔f4 ♔f7 *(102)*

102



Black is totally without counterplay and can only move his king between f7 and f8. White must find a precise winning plan.

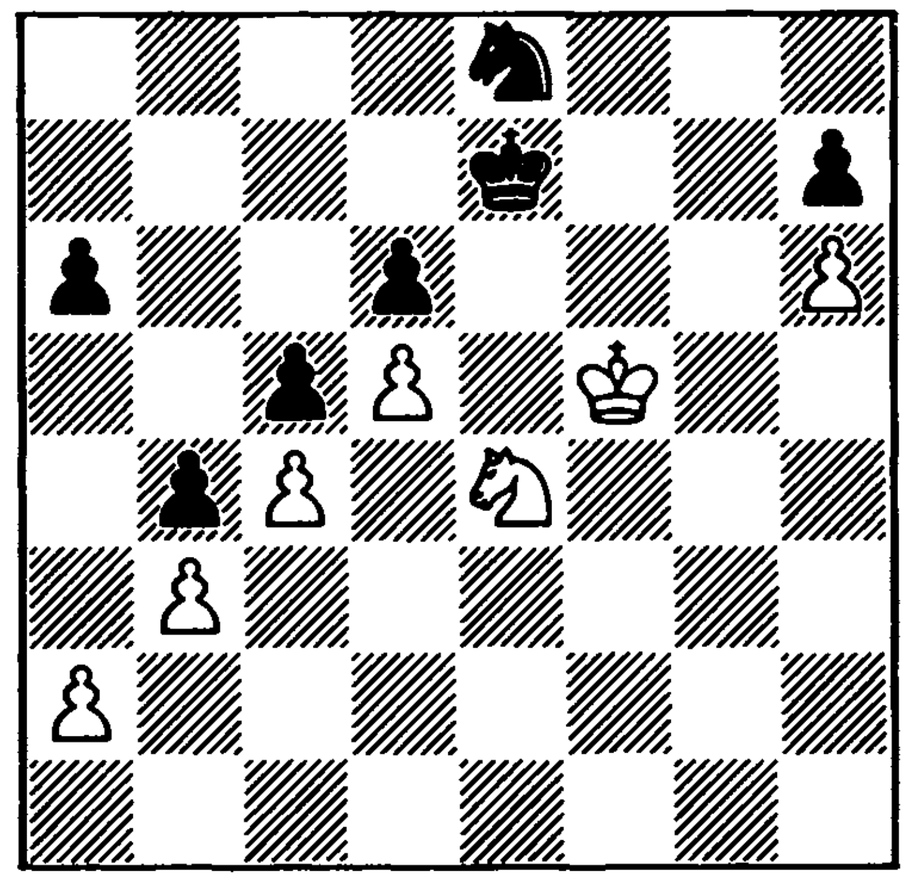
39 g5?

A mistake, which could have cost a half-point. White should be aiming to put his opponent in zugzwang, for which it is important to eliminate the reserve move ... a5. He should have transferred his king to b2, played a2-a3, provoked ... a5 and blocked the queenside by a3-a4, and only then broken through on the opposite side of the board.

39 ... fxg5+ 40 ♔xg5 ♔f8 41 ♘g3 ♔g7 42 h6+

The sealed move. In the tournament bulletin Bulgarian players made a detailed analysis of this position, and came to the conclusion that it was drawn. The main variation of their analysis runs 42 ... ♔f8 43 ♔g4 ♔f7 44 ♔f5 ♘f6 45 ♔g5 ♘e8 46 ♘e4 ♔e7 47 ♔f5 *(103)*

103



White has achieved his aim, but Black is saved by 47 ... a5!, after which a win is not possible, for example: 48 ♔f4 ♘f6 49 ♘g3 ♔f8 50 ♔g5 ♔f7! or 50 ♔f5 ♔e7.

In the game, however, it all turned out differently:

42 ... ♔f8
43 ♔g4 ♘f6+

A possible continuation.

44 ♔f4 ♔f7 45 ♔g5 ♘e8 46 ♘e4 ♔e7 47 ♔f5 a5 48 ♔f4 ♔f8?

Byrne stumbles on easy ground. After 48 ... ♘f6! White would not have got anywhere with 49 ♘g5 on account of 49 ... ♘g8!.

49 ♔g4!

In this way a very important tempo is gained, since Black cannot maintain the

distant opposition: on 49 ... ♔g8 50 ♔f5 ♔f7 White has the decisive 51 ♘g5+.

49 ... ♔f7 50 ♔g5 ♔e7 51 ♔f5 Black resigns

In the following game we encounter a pawn sacrifice, which essentially laid the foundations of the Benko Gambit.

Taimanov-Bronstein
Zürich Candidates 1953
Benoni Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 g6 4 ♘c3 d6 5 e4 b5!

We think that it will be interesting for the reader to read Bronstein's commentary on his experiment:

"What does Black achieve by sacrificing a pawn? Firstly, he disturbs the head of White's pawn chain – the d5 pawn, and then after the inevitable ... a6 and bxa6 he obtains the good diagonal a6-f1 for his bishop, which on the c8-h3 diagonal has much fewer prospects. Also in favour of the sacrifice is the fact that Black acquires two open files, giving him active play against the white a- and b-pawns. The bishop at g7 should also not be forgotten; since in this variation Black intends to keep his e-pawn at e7, the bishop's scope is automatically increased. Of interest too is a strategic idea, which is also encountered in other variations of the King's Indian Defence: to develop the queen's rook without moving it.

There are also, of course, drawbacks to this sacrifice, the chief one being the pawn. If White can gradually cope with his difficulties, in the endgame he will have clear winning prospects. For this latter reason, this variation was not employed in any subsequent games in the tournament. But I went for it, partly because I did not want to begin the tournament with the difficult defence to which Black is condemned in some of the 'normal' continuations."

From the present-day viewpoint Bronstein gave an excellent description of the advantages of Black's set-up, but modern theory and praxis do not share his pessimism regarding Black's prospects in the endgame. As a rule he always finds counterplay, and the exchange of queens has become a typical procedure for suppressing White's activity in the centre. Cold statistics state that in the Benko Gambit endgame Black achieves roughly equal results. As for the handling of the opening, nowadays ... b5 is played on the third move, and the exclamation mark to Bronstein's 5th move is attached for its unexpectedness and boldness.

6 cxb5 ♗g7
7 ♘f3?!

Strangely enough, this natural developing move is a significant inaccuracy. A modern player with a mastery of the Benko Gambit would without great difficulty find the way to refute Bronstein's opening experiment: 7 a4! Now, given the opportunity, White will play 8 a5, when an initiative for Black on the queenside is out of the question, while 7 ... a6 is very strongly met by 8 ♕b3! axb5 (*9 b6* was threatened) 9 ♗xb5+, when Black has to block the check with one of his pieces, which should not come into his plans.

For comparison, we give the game Karasev-Shereshevsky, Odessa 1975: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 e3 g6 (*5 ... e6* is more often played, leading immediately to a fierce skirmish in the centre) 6 ♘c3 ♗g7 7 a4 0-0 8 ♕b3 axb5 9 ♗xb5 d6 10 ♘ge2 ♘a6.

Black aims to play his knight to the square b4, which was weakened by 7 a4,

and use his remaining minor pieces to evict the enemy bishop from b5. This is why it is unfavourable for him to occupy d7 with a minor piece. One of his knights heads via a6 to b4, the other follows the route ... ♘f6-e8-c7, and the place for the queen's bishop is at a6.

11 0-0 ♘b4 12 e4 (*12 ... ♗f5* was threatened) 12 ... ♗a6 13 ♗g5 h6 14 ♗h4 ♕b6 15 ♔h1 ♖fb8 16 ♖a3 ♕b7! 17 f3 ♘e8 18 ♗xa6 ♘xa6! (note that Black himself offers to go into the endgame!) 19 ♘b5 ♘ac7! 20 ♖b1 ♖a5 21 ♘ec3 ♗xc3 22 bxc3 ♘xb5 23 ♖aa1 ♖a7 24 ♕d1 ♕a8 25 axb5 ♖xb5 26 ♖xa7 ♖xb1 27 ♕xb1 ♕xa7 28 h3 ♔g7 29 ♕b5 ♘f6 30 ♔h2? (it was better to exchange on f6, with a probable draw) 30 ... ♘h5 31 ♕b2 g5 32 c4+ f6 33 ♗e1 ♘f4 34 ♗g3 ♘g6 35 ♕b5 h5 36 h4 gxh4 37 ♗f2 ♕a2 38 ♔g1 ♕c2 39 ♕d7 ♕xc4, and Black easily realised his advantage.

Now let us return to the Taimanov-Bronstein game.

7 ... 0-0 8 ♗e2 a6 9 bxa6 ♗xa6 10 0-0 ♕c7 11 ♖e1 ♘bd7 12 ♗xa6 ♖xa6 13 ♕e2

The attempt to break through in the centre with e4-e5 does not bring White any particular gains. In similar positions he usually aims to remove his pieces from the long diagonal, deploying them accordingly to the pattern: ♕c2, ♖ab1, ♗d2, pawns at b3 and a4, trying to suppress the opponent's activity on the queenside.

13 ... ♖fa8
14 h3

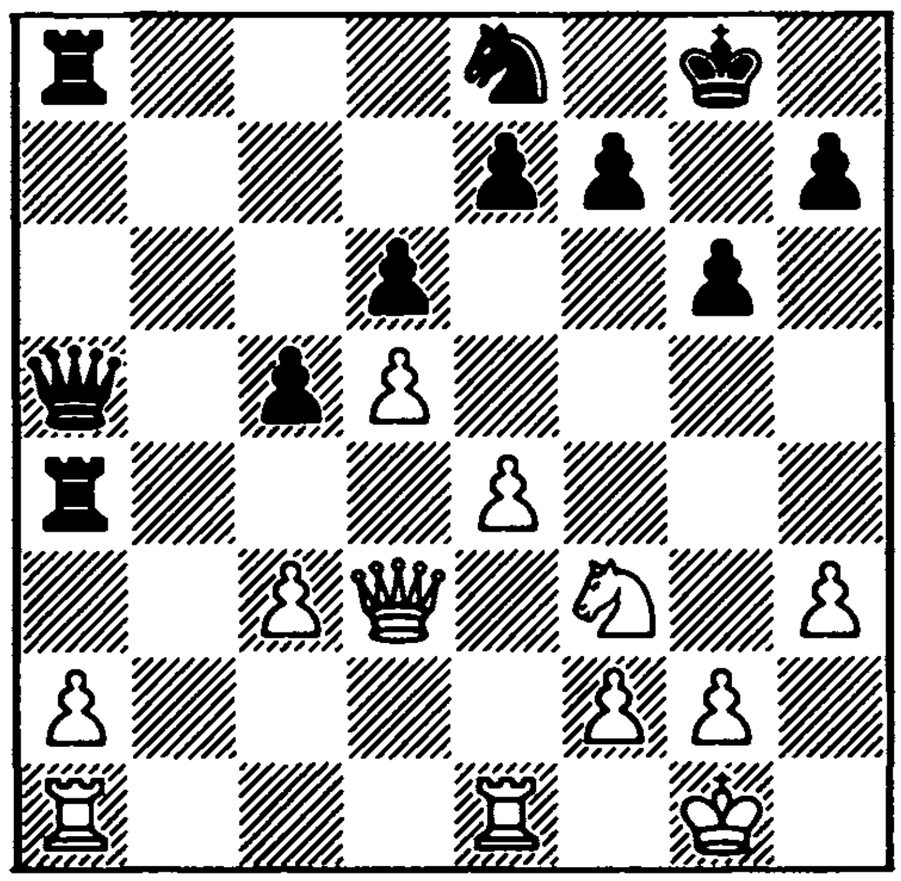
Evidently 14 e5 did not satisfy Taimanov because of 14 ... dxe5 15 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 16 ♕xe5 ♕xe5 17 ♖xe5 ♔f8.

14 ... ♘b6 15 ♗g5 ♘e8 16 ♗d2 ♘a4! 17 ♘xa4 ♖xa4 18 ♗c3 ♗xc3!

In the event of 18 ... ♖xa2? 19 ♖xa2 ♖xa2 20 e5! Black would have risked coming under an attack.

19 bxc3 ♕a5
20 ♕d3 *(104)*

104



20 ... ♕a6!

We will encounter this again. Black is eager for the endgame! This is what Bronstein has to say: "Black's advantage in the ending is based on the fact that his base e7 pawn is at the rear and is easily protected, whereas the white c3 and e4 pawns are splendid targets for the black rooks. If the e4 pawn advances, the d5 pawn becomes weak. In concrete terms this is seen in variations such as 21 ♕xa6 ♖8xa6 22 ♖e2 ♘f6, or 22 e5 ♘c7, or 22 ♖ab1 ♖xa2 23 ♖b8 ♖a8 24 ♖eb1 ♖a1. Taimanov correctly avoids exchanging queens at a6, but later too he should not have agreed to the exchange."

21 ♕d2 ♖xa2 22 ♖xa2 ♕xa2 23 e5? ♕xd2 24 ♘xd2 dxe5!

The strength of this simple move was probably underestimated by White.

25 ♖xe5 ♔f8
26 ♘b3?

Possibly the decisive mistake. White should have brought his king towards the

centre, with good hopes of a successful outcome.

26 ... c4 27 ♘c5 ♖a1+ 28 ♔h2 ♘f6!

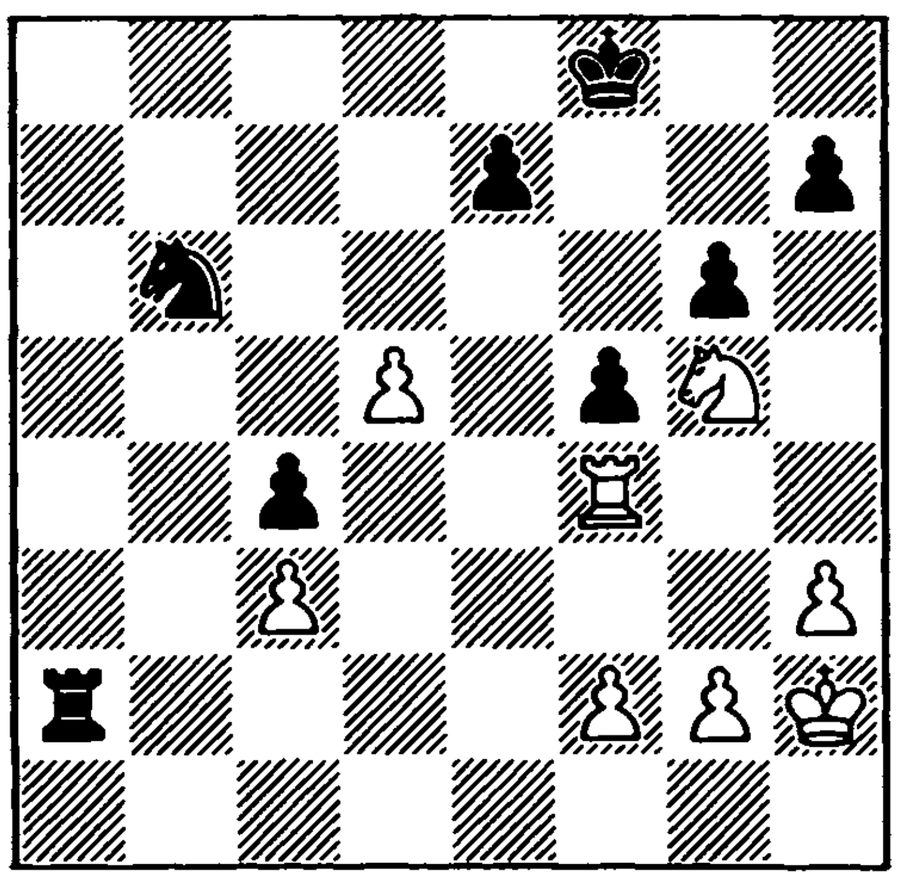
The white pawns at c3, d5 and even f2 are in danger.

29 ♘e4 ♘d7 30 ♖g5 ♖a2! 31 ♖g4

It transpires that the white knight is also threatened. If 31 ♔g3 f5, while on 31 ♔g1 there would have followed 31 ... ♖e2 32 ♘g3 ♖e1+ 33 ♔h2 f5 (indicated by Bronstein).

31 ... f5 32 ♖f4 ♘b6 33 ♘g5 *(105)*

105



33 ... ♘xd5!

A little bit of tactics. On 34 ♖xc4 Black had prepared 34 ... ♖xf2 35 ♘xh7+ ♔g7 36 ♘g5 ♖xg2+!.

34 ♖d4 ♘b6 35 ♖d8+ ♔g7 36 f4 h6 37 ♘e6+ ♔f7 38 ♘d4 ♘a4 39 ♖c8 ♘xc3 40 ♖xc4 ♘d5! 41 ♘f3 ♖xg2+ 42 ♔h1 ♖f2 White resigns

For another example of this type of pawn sacrifice, the reader is referred to the game **Uhlmann-Geller**, Palma de Mallorca Interzonal 1970 (cf. p.127 of *The Application of Chess Theory* by Geller, Pergamon 1984).

"Seeing is believing" runs the proverb. In chess language this can be rephrased roughly as follows: "In order to study and gain a feel for some opening variation, it is better to play it once than to examine it many times". For a long time the Benko Gambit has been in the opening repertoire of one of the authors, and it is much easier to expound on some questions using one's own games than those of other players. Therefore we have decided to give several games by Shereshevsky with the Benko Gambit.

Podgayets-Shereshevsky
Minsk 1972
Benko Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 bxa6 ♗xa6 6 ♘c3 g6 7 ♘f3 d6 8 e4 ♗xf1 9 ♔xf1 ♘bd7 10 g3 ♗g7 11 ♔g2 0-0 12 ♕e2 ♕b8

In the Benko Gambit it is very important for Black to deploy his queen correctly. The choice is wide: c7, b6 or a5 on the a5-d8 diagonal, and sometimes b7 or a8. There are instances where various decisions have their virtues and drawbacks, but it can also happen that the queen will coordinate successfully with the other pieces on only one single square. In this variation of the Benko Gambit, in our opinion, the black queen is best placed at b7, where it operates very effectively. Apart from putting pressure on the opponent's queenside, it also prevents the central break e4-e5 by standing opposite the enemy king on the long diagonal. But how to play the queen to b7 is a matter of taste. Various ways are possible: 12 ... ♕b8, 12 ... ♕c7 or 12 ... ♕b6, since in this last instance 13 e5 is not dangerous on account of 13 ... dxe5 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 ♕xe5 ♕b7!.

13 h3?!

This prophylaxis is unnecessary and is essentially a waste of time. 13 ♖b1 is more appropriate.

13 ... ♕b7 14 ♖d1 ♖fb8 15 ♖b1 ♘e8

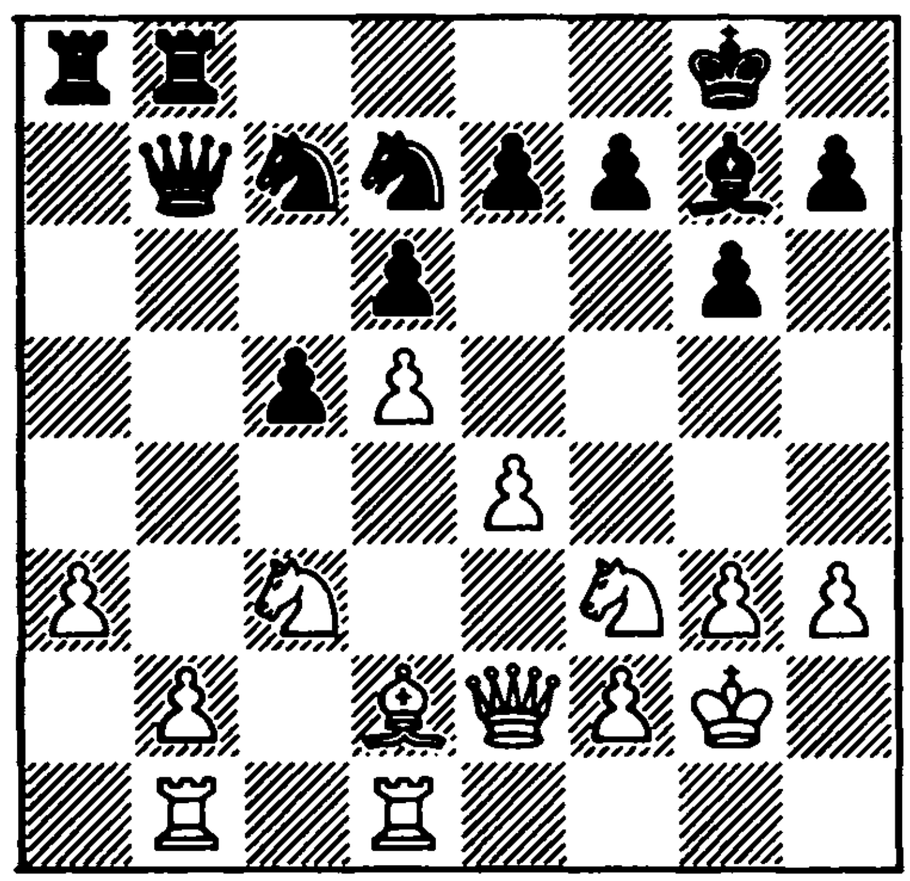
A typical manoeuvre. The knight opens the diagonal for the bishop at g7, and itself aims for b5, to exchange an important defender of the opponent's queenside.

16 ♗d2 ♘c7

Regaining the material by 16 ... ♗xc3!? came seriously into consideration, but Black did not want to change sharply the character of the play.

17 a3 *(106)*

106



How should Black play? 17 ... ♘b5 suggests itself, but then after 18 ♘xb5 ♕xb5 19 ♕xb5 ♖xb5 20 b4! White gains a great advantage after both 20 ... ♖xa3 21 bxc5 ♖xb1 (*21 ... ♖xc5 22 ♗b4*) 22 ♖xb1 dxc5 (*22 ... ♘xc5 23 ♖b8+* and *24 ♗h6*) 23 ♖b7, and 20 ... c4 21 ♗c1. It is clear that the queen invasion 17 ... ♕b3 is futile, since after 18 ♗e1 it is driven away by 19 ♘d2. To Black's aid comes a manoeuvre analysed in the preceding game.

17 ... ♕a6!

Into the endgame as soon as possible!

18 ♕xa6

White cannot concede the a6-f1 diagonal.

18 ... ♖xa6 19 ♖dc1 ♔f8 20 ♗f4 f5!?

This undermining of the enemy centre is typical of the Benko Gambit, and is much easier to carry out in the endgame than in the middlegame.

21 exf5 gxf5
22 ♘h4

Here Black accepted the opponent's offer of a **draw**, but perhaps wrongly. In the variation 22 ... ♗xc3 23 ♖xc3 ♘xd5 24 ♖f3 ♘xf4+ 25 ♖xf4 e6 26 g4 ♔f7 (*26 ... ♖xa3? 27 ♖e1*) 27 ♘f3 h6 28 gxf5 e5 29 ♖h4 ♖xa3 30 ♖xh6 ♘f6 the play becomes sharper, but Black retains the better prospects. However, the given variation is not forced.

Strategically the following game strongly resembles the previous one.

Kuindzhi-Shereshevsky
Vilnius 1974
Benko Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 bxa6 ♗xa6 6 ♘c3 g6

Kuindzhi usually used to begin 1 e4, but in this game he opened with the queen's pawn in expectation of the Benko Gambit. Black decided not to avoid an opening discussion, but to try at the board to deal with the opponent's innovation.

7 f4

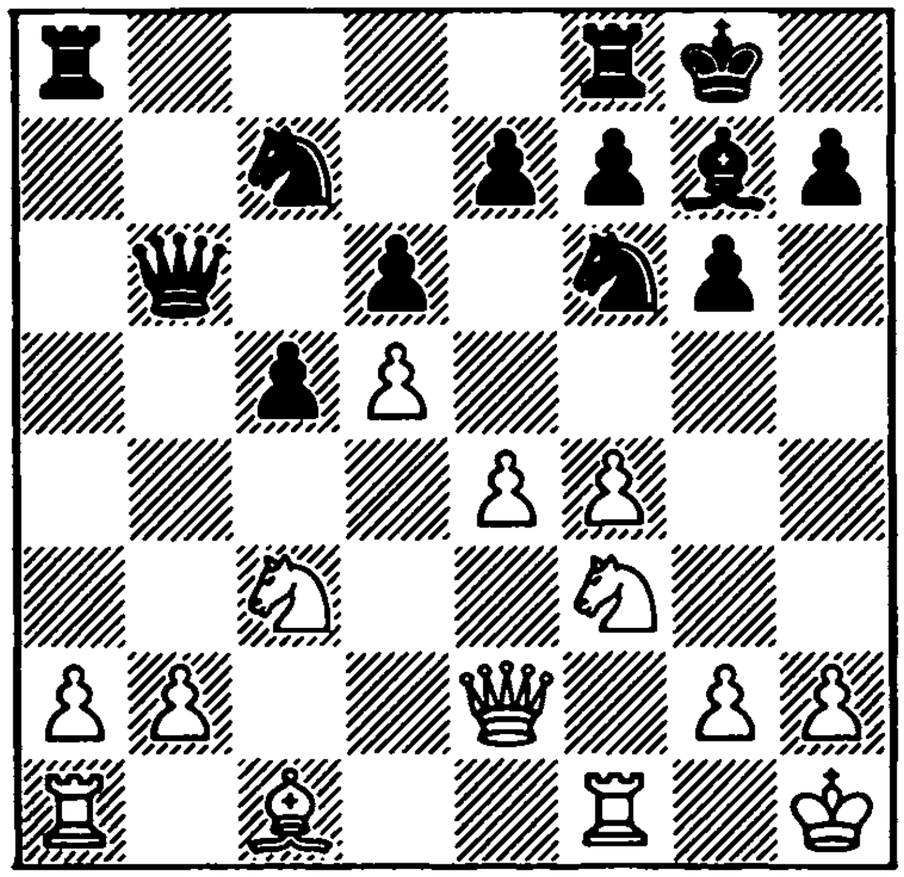
And here it is. At the time this was a new plan. This move, highly aggressive in the middlegame, may cause White nothing but trouble in the endgame. Therefore we will refrain from giving an evaluation of it.

7 ... ♗g7 8 ♘f3 0-0 9 e4 ♗xf1 10 ♖xf1 d6 11 ♔f2 ♕b6 12 ♔g1 ♘a6 13 ♕e2

Since White has played the opening so aggressively, 13 e5 would have been in the spirit of the preceding play.

13 ... ♘c7
14 ♔h1 *(107)*

107



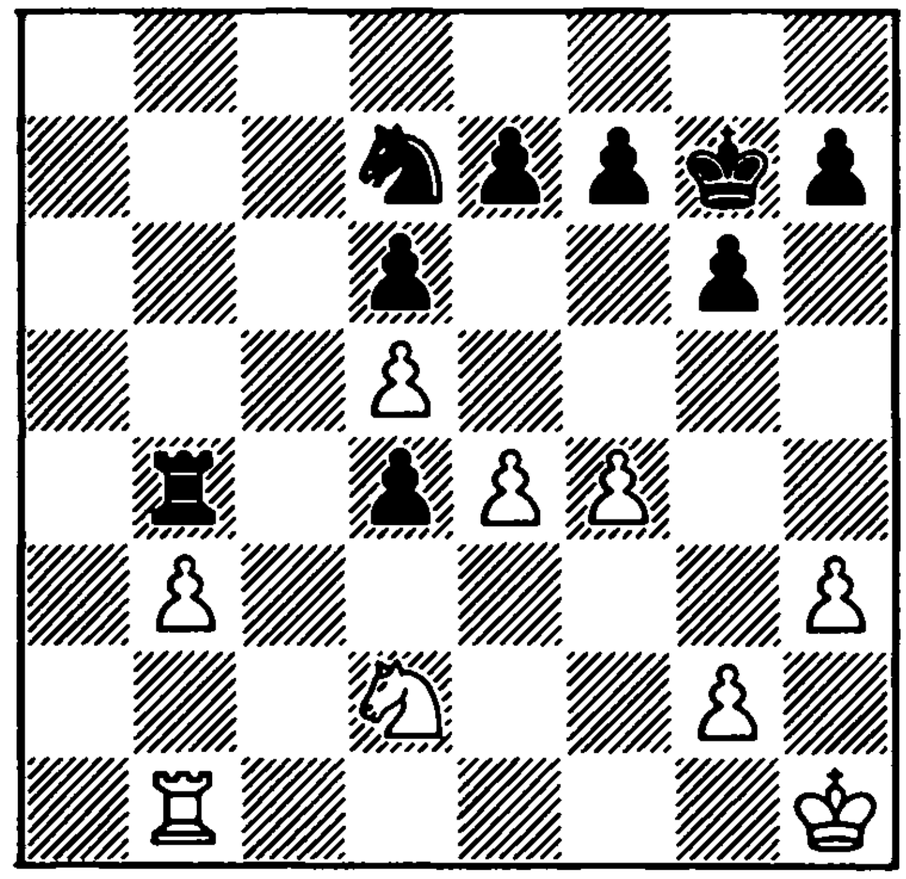
It will not be difficult for the reader to find Black's next move.

14 ... ♕a6!

Highly unpleasant for White.

15 ♕e1 ♖fb8 16 ♖b1 ♘b5! 17 ♗d2 ♘xc3 18 ♗xc3 ♕xa2 19 ♘d2 ♘d7 20 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 21 ♕e3 ♕a4 22 h3 ♕d4! 23 ♕xd4 cxd4 24 ♖f3 ♖b4 25 ♖b3 ♖ab8 26 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 27 b3 *(108)*

108



27 ... f5!

This move too is not at all difficult to find – it logically stems from the preceding play. White's centre collapses.

28 exf5 gxf5 29 ♖a1 ♘f6 30 ♖d1 d3 31 ♘f3 ♘xd5 32 ♖xd3 ♘xf4

Black is a pawn up with an excellent position. The remainder of the game is of no interest, although White put up an unavailing resistance for about thirty more moves.

In the middlegame Black is much more rarely able to undermine the enemy centre by ... f5. In the following game a sharp tactical battle developed in the middlegame, and the advantage achieved was realised by Black in the endgame.

Darzniek-Shereshevsky
Daugavpils 1973
Benko Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 bxa6 ♗xa6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 ♘f3 g6 8 g3 ♘bd7 9 ♗h3

A shrewd move. If Black follows the routine pattern of ... ♗g7, ... 0-0, ... ♕a5 and ... ♖fb8, he will not have the planned ... ♘e8 because of the knight at d7 being undefended.

9 ... ♘b6!?

Black forces White to 'stick' to the d5 pawn and prevents the development of the white queen at c2. This is why he needs to develop the queen's knight at an early stage.

10 0-0 ♗g7

The complications after 10 ... ♗c4 11 b3 are probably to White's advantage.

11 ♖e1 0-0
12 e4 ♘fd7

A typical manoeuvre for seizing the squares on the a6-f1 diagonal.

13 ♕c2 ♘c4
14 ♗xd7

Probably the correct decision. At the cost of exchanging his bishop, White prevents the enemy knight from going to e5.

14 ... ♕xd7
15 b3 ♘e5!

On the queenside Black has already 'regained' his losses, and he should now switch his attention to the other side of the board. First he must eliminate the white knight at f3, which is attacking the centre and defending the kingside. 15 ... ♕g4 would not have achieved anything because of the simple 16 ♔g2.

16 ♘xe5 ♗xe5
17 ♗b2 f5!

The most energetic. But 17 ... ♖fb8 is also quite good; after 18 ♘d1 ♗xb2 19 ♘xb2 ♖b4! (recommended by Belyavsky and Kart) 20 ♖e3 ♖d4 21 ♖ae1 ♕b7 22 ♖c3 ♕b4 23 ♖ee3 ♕a3 Black gained a clear superiority in Kneebone-Neat (correspondence 1986-87).

18 exf5

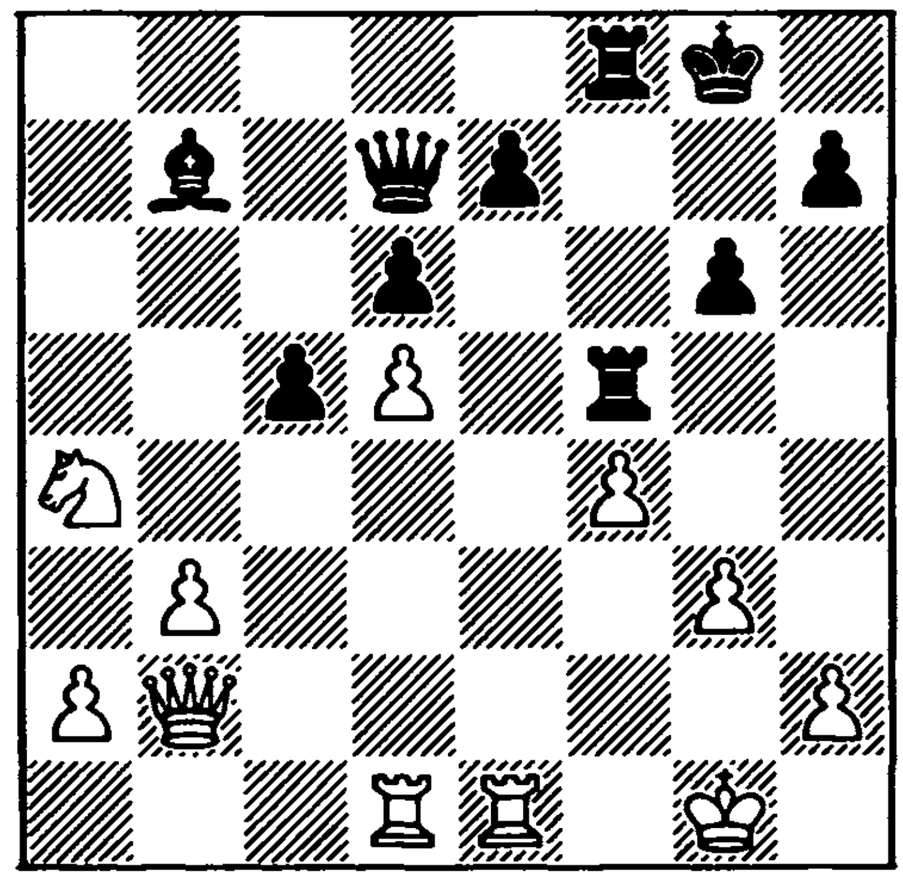
In the game Alekseyev-Sagalchik, Minsk 1986, White allowed ... f4, and this is what resulted: 18 ♘d1 ♗xb2 19 ♘xb2 f4 20 ♘c4 ♖f7 21 ♕e2 ♖af8 22 ♖ac1 ♕h3 23 ♖c2 ♗c8 24 ♕d3 g5 25 ♖c3 ♕h5 26 ♕e2 f3 27 ♕d3 ♖f6 28 ♘d2 ♗g4 29 ♖e3 ♖h6 30 ♘xf3 ♖xf3 31 ♖xf3 ♕h2+ 32 ♔f1 ♕h1+ 33 ♔e2 ♖f6 34 ♕e3 ♗xf3+ 35 ♔d3 ♕d1+ 0-1.

18 ... ♖xf5
19 ♘a4

19 ♘e2 was preferable, since at a4 the knight is remote from the main battlefield.

19 ... ♗xb2 20 ♕xb2 ♖af8 21 f4 ♗b7! 22 ♖ad1 *(109)*

109



22 ... e6!

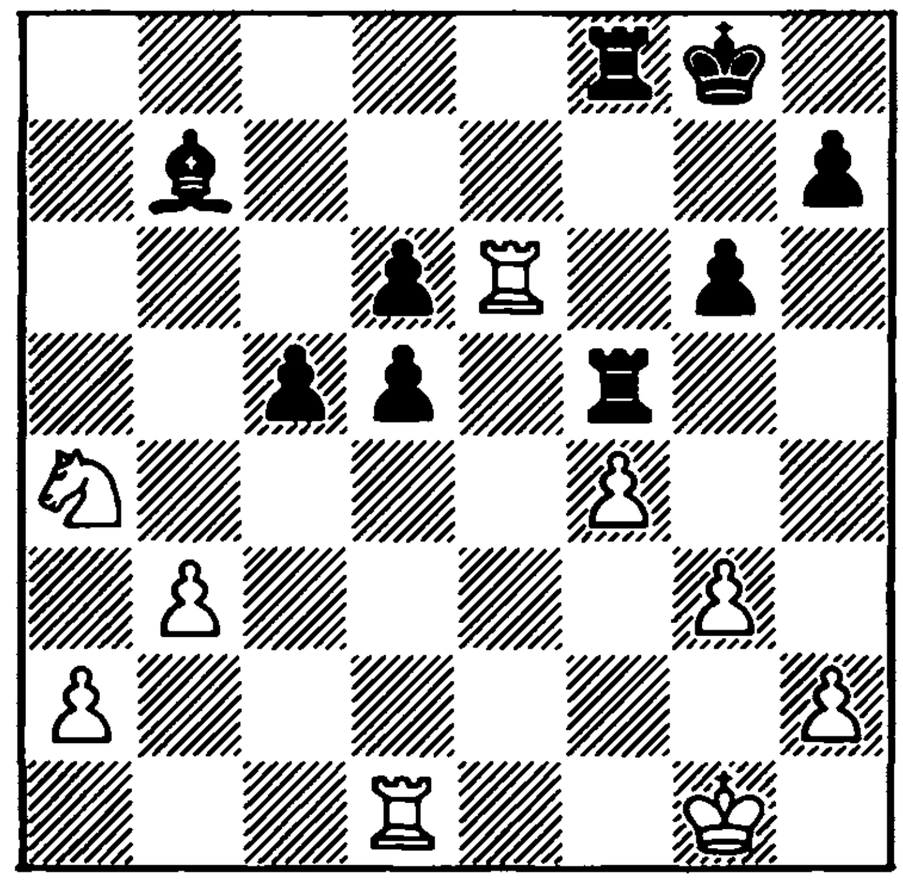
A pretty stroke, crowning Black's strategy. Now on 23 dxe6 there follows 23 ... ♕c6 with decisive threats, while in the event of 23 ♖xe6 Black gains an important tempo, thanks to the 'hanging' rook at e6, to set up the ♗b7/♕c6 battery against the white king.

23 ♕e2

To avoid the worst, White takes play into the endgame.

23 ... exd5 24 ♕e6+ ♕xe6 25 ♖xe6 *(110)*

110



In the ending White stands badly. The avalanche of black pawns in the centre, supported by the bishop, is very threatening.

25 ... ♖d8!
26 ♖de1 ♔f8

The last precise move. Now White's activity after 27 ♖e7 is easily suppressed by 27 ... ♖f7. The rest is easy.

27 ♘c3 ♗c6 28 a4 ♖f7 29 ♘b1 d4 30 ♘d2 ♗d5 31 ♖6e2 ♖b7 32 h4 ♗xb3 33 h5 ♗d5 34 hxg6 hxg6 35 ♘e4 d3 36 ♖e3 ♗xe4 37 ♖xe4 d5 38 ♖4e3 c4 39 ♖d1 ♖b2 40 g4 d4 41 ♖h3 d2 White resigns

Pertsikyavichus-Shereshevsky
Minsk 1972
Benko Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 bxa6 ♗xa6 6 ♘c3 g6 7 g3 d6 8 ♗g2 ♗g7 9 ♘f3 0-0

In modern tournaments Black more often tries immediately to 'stick' the opponent to the d5 pawn by 9 ... ♘bd7 10 0-0 ♘b6, preventing 11 ♕c2 and 12 ♖d1.

10 0-0 ♘bd7
11 ♖e1?!

A pointless move. 11 ♕c2 was more logical. White intends to prepare play in the centre with e2-e4, but that is exactly what Black is waiting for.

11 ... ♕c7

11 ... ♕a5 is perhaps more active.

12 e4?

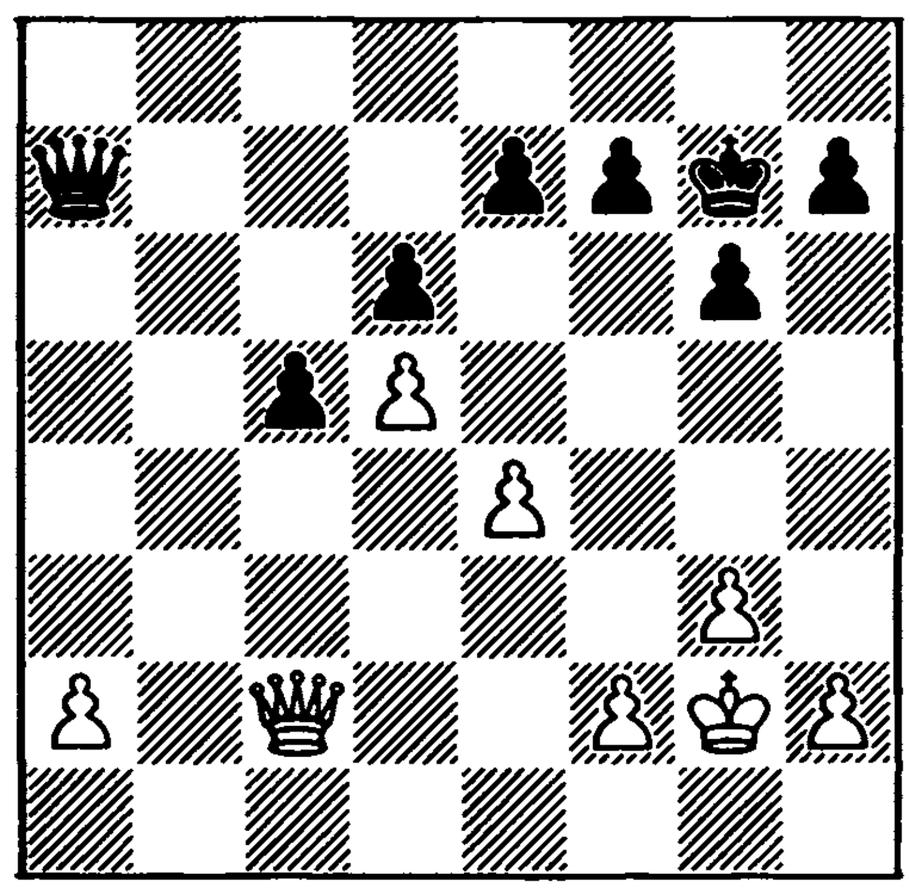
A weak move, allowing Black to establish control over the light squares on the f1-a6 diagonal by a typical manoeuvre. ♘f3-d2-f1-e3 was in the spirit of the position, justifying to some extent the position of the rook at e1.

12 ... ♘g4! 13 ♗f4 ♘ge5 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 ♗xe5 ♗xe5

White has had to part with his strong dark-square bishop, in order to neutralise the opponent's pressure on the light squares.

16 ♕c2 ♖fb8 17 ♖ab1 ♕a5 18 ♗f1 ♖xb2! 19 ♖xb2 ♗xc3 20 ♗xa6 ♗xb2 21 ♖b1 ♕xa6 22 ♖xb2 ♕a3 23 ♔g2 ♔g7 24 ♖b7 ♖a7 25 ♖xa7 ♕xa7 *(111)*

111



Black has succeeded in regaining his sacrificed pawn, and White – in greatly simplifying the position. But it is as yet early to call the game a draw. With the queens on, the advanced white pawn chain in the centre is a definite weakness, while Black's passed pawn on the queenside is more dangerous than the opponent's.

26 ♕c4?!

A second-rate move. It was more logical to check with 26 ♕c3+.

26 ... ♕a3! 27 h3 h5 28 h4 ♔f6!

The black king begins moving towards the centre, drawing the 'fire' of the white pawns.

29 ♔f1 ♕f3!
30 a4?!

This last move was provoked by Black. Now he acquires additional possibilities associated with playing his queen to b4; after the exchange on this square both sides queen a pawn, but the black queen appears first and attacks the e4 pawn.

30 ... ♕d1+ 31 ♔g2 ♕d2! 32 ♔f1 ♔e5 33 f4+ ♔f6

It is hard to assume that with correct play White was seriously in danger of losing in the position after 25 moves, but only eight moves have passed and he is already close to defeat.

34 ♕e2 ♕c3
35 ♔g2

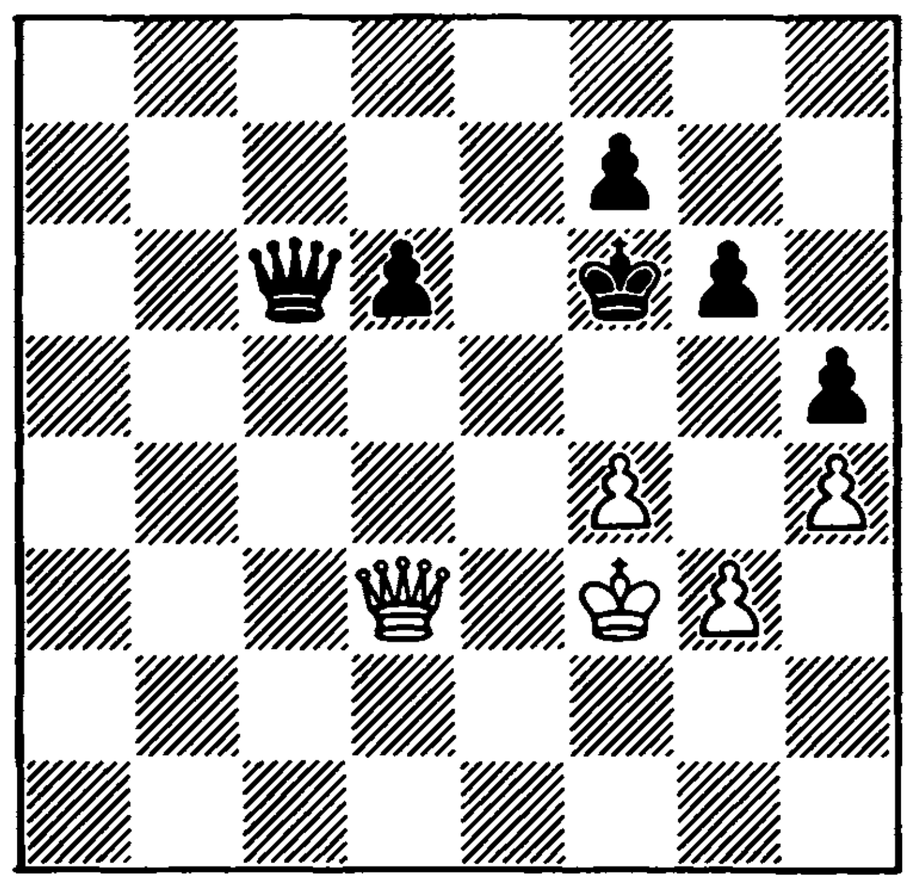
On 35 ♕a2 Black would have continued 35 ... c4 36 a5 ♕b3 or 36 ... ♕c1+.

35 ... ♕b4 36 e5+ ♔g7 37 exd6 exd6

With 'his own hands' White has weakened the d5 pawn, which he soon loses.

38 ♕a2 c4 39 a5 c3 40 a6 ♕e4+ 41 ♔h2 c2 42 ♕a1+ ♔h7 43 a7 ♕xd5 44 a8=♕ ♕xa8 45 ♕xa8 c1=♕ 46 ♕d5 ♕b2+ 47 ♔g1 ♕f6 48 ♔f2 ♔g7 49 ♔f3 ♕c3+ 50 ♔g2 ♕c5 51 ♕d3 ♔f6 52 ♔f3 ♕c6+ *(112)*

112



In this position the game was adjourned. White decided not to prolong the battle, and resigned without resuming. Black's winning plan is simple: 53 ♔f2 ♕c5+ followed by ... d5, ... ♕c4, ... d4 etc.

Yuferov-Shereshevsky
Minsk 1973
Benko Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c5 3 d5 b5 4 cxb5 a6 5 bxa6 ♗xa6 6 ♘c3 g6 7 ♘f3 d6 8 ♘d2

An original plan, but one which does not promise White any particular benefits, given correct play by the opponent.

8 ... ♕a5!

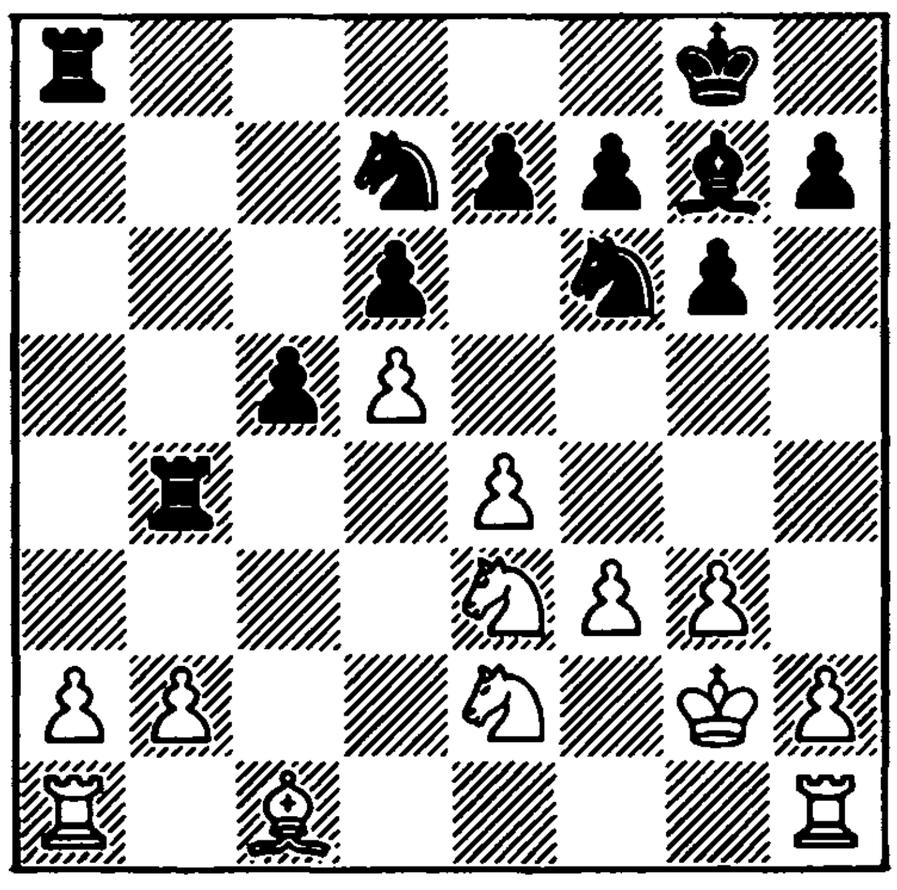
White was intending after 9 e4 ♗xf1 10 ♘xf1 to play his knight to e3, with a good game. Black prevents this.

9 e4 ♗xf1 10 ♔xf1 ♗g7 11 g3 0-0 12 ♔g2 ♘bd7 13 ♘c4 ♕a6!?

As has already been remarked, in the Benko Gambit it is important for Black to deploy his queen correctly. From a6 an important diagonal is controlled and a favourable ending is aimed for.

14 ♕e2 ♖fb8 15 f3 ♖b4! 16 ♘e3 ♕xe2+ 17 ♘xe2 *(113)*

113



Despite being a pawn down, Black's position is preferable. White's knights are awkwardly placed on the e-file, 15 f3 has weakened the second rank, and his rooks are uncoordinated. Black, meanwhile, has harmoniously deployed his pieces and has all the preconditions for developing strong pressure on the opponent's queenside.

17 ... ♘e5!

In endings arising from the Benko Gambit, actions no less concrete than those in the middlegame are demanded of both players. Black deploys his knights at d7 and e5, where to some extent they duplicate each other's actions, since he has in mind the pawn thrust ... c4. The routine manoeuvre of the f6 knight to c7 via e8 would have been weaker.

18 ♖d1 ♘fd7
19 ♘c3 c4!

Black should resort to this move with extreme caution. The weakening of the d4 square is by no means always compensated by the seizure of space on the queenside. In addition Black loses one of his main trumps – his mobile pawn structure. In the given instance the drawbacks of 19 ... c4 are fully compensated by his growing pressure on the opponent's queenside.

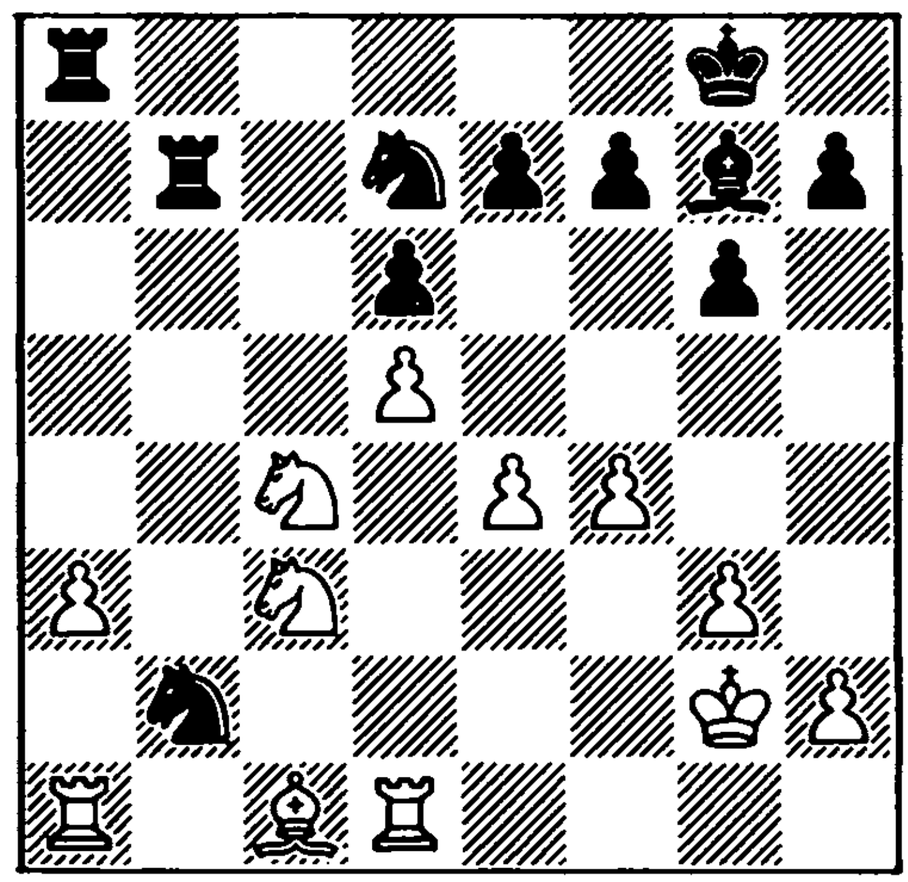
20 a3

White goes in for a forcing variation with the win of the c-pawn, which favours Black, but it is hard to suggest anything better.

20 ... ♖b7 21 f4 ♘d3 22 ♘xc4 ♘xb2! *(114)*

Black had to foresee this blow when he played 18 ... ♘fd7. White's position on the queenside instantly collapses.

114



23 ♗xb2 ♖c8 24 ♘e2 ♗xb2 25 ♘xb2 ♖xb2

The drawbacks to the advance of the white f-pawn are evident. Black invades the second rank with his rooks and regains the sacrificed pawn with interest.

26 ♔f3 ♖cc2 27 ♖e1 ♖b3+ 28 ♔f2 ♘c5 29 ♔f1 ♖bb2 30 a4 ♘xe4

With the winning of the e4 pawn, the strategic outcome is decided in favour of Black. It only remains for him to 'deal with' the enemy passed pawn on the queenside.

31 a5 ♘d2+ 32 ♔f2 ♘b3 33 ♖a3 ♘d4 34 a6 ♖a2 35 ♖xa2 ♖xa2 36 g4 ♔f8 37 a7 ♘xe2 38 ♖xe2 ♖xa7 39 ♔e3 f5, and Black easily realised his extra pawn.

To give a clear outline of White's strategic actions in endings arising from the Benko Gambit, and concluding in a win for him, is more difficult. Usually they consist in suppressing the opponent's active play and gradually neutralising his initiative, followed by the realisation of the extra pawn in a protracted struggle. But striking victories also occur; for an example, cf. **Vaganian-Rashkovsky**, Moscow 1981 (p.209 of Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*).

We conclude this chapter with a game in which Black succeeded in advancing ... b5 without sacrificing a pawn, but where his queen's knight found itself out of play.

Smyslov-Szabo
Havana 1965
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 ♘c3 d6 6 ♘f3 c5 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 d5 ♘a5 9 ♘d2 a6

9 ... e5 is more typical of this, the Yugoslav Variation, since White does not achieve anything by exchanging on e6: 10 dxe6?! ♗xe6 11 b3 d5!.

10 ♕c2 ♖b8 11 b3 b5 12 ♖b1

A profound idea. Smyslov intends to carry out a plan, first employed by Botvinnik against Geller, Moscow 1952 (cf. p.175 of Botvinnik's *Half a Century of Chess*, Pergamon 1984): after the opening of the b-file White exchanges rooks, when the breakthrough e2-e4-e5 will prove decisive, in view of the remoteness of the knight at a5 from the main battlefield. And to parry the advance of the black rook to b4, the white bishop will be developed directly at a3.

12 ... bxc4

On 12 ... ♗d7 White has the interesting reply 13 cxb5 axb5 14 b4!?.

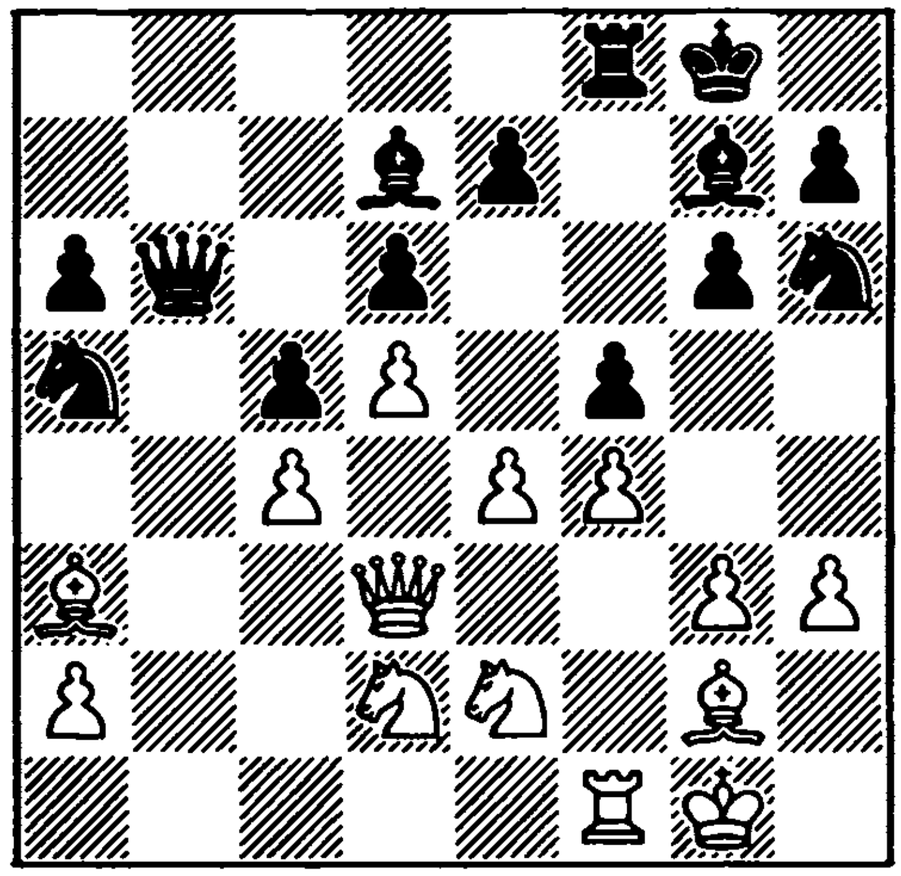
13 bxc4 ♖xb1
14 ♘cxb1 ♕b6

Pointless. Black not only fails to prevent the plan of exchanging rooks, but even "presents" White with an extra tempo (♖b1). The simple 14 ... ♗d7 was preferable.

In the game Lehmann-Cobo, played in the same tournament, Black achieved a satisfactory position after 15 ♘c3 ♕c7 16 ♗a3 ♖b8 17 h3 ♗e8 18 ♘ce4 ♘xe4 19 ♗xe4 ♕d7, but White's play can probably be improved.

15 ♘c3 ♗f5 16 e4 ♗d7 17 ♗a3! ♗h6 18 f4 ♘g4 19 ♕d3 ♗g7 20 ♘e2 f5 21 h3 ♘h6 *(115)*

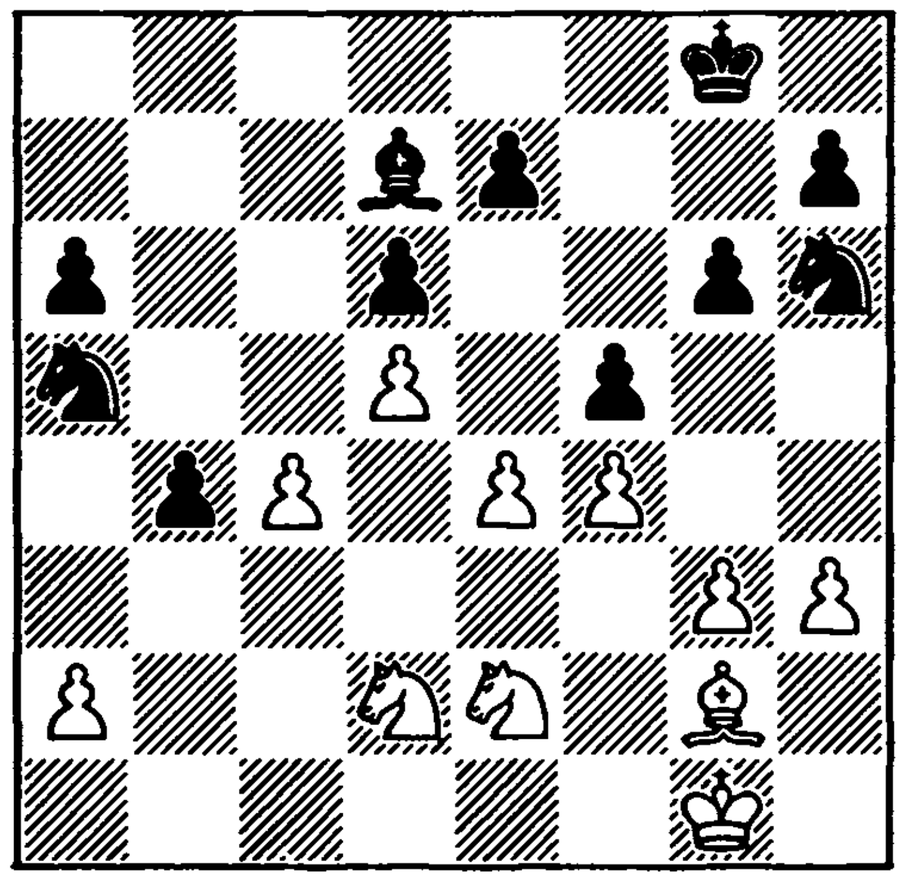
115



Events here develop in analogy with the Botvinnik-Geller game. The knight at a5 is out of play, which allows White to obtain a decisive advantage in the centre, and the exchange of heavy pieces, which soon takes place, does not improve Black's position.

22 ♖b1 ♕c7 23 ♗b2 ♗xb2 24 ♖xb2 ♖b8 25 ♖xb8+ ♕xb8 26 ♕c3 ♕b4 27 ♕xb4 cxb4 *(116)*

116



28 e5!

The exchange of the heavy pieces has completely freed White's hands in the centre. The pawn wedge cuts Black's position in two, and although the knight at a5 gains the chance to come into play, the status of his second knight is degraded.

28 ... ♘xc4?!

This tactical attempt to gain counterplay merely hastens Black's defeat. 28 ... ♘b7 was more tenacious.

29 ♘xc4 ♗b5 30 exd6 exd6 31 ♘xd6 ♗xe2 32 ♔f2 ♗d3 33 ♘b7!

Now Black has no time to attack the a2 pawn, and is forced to concentrate his efforts on stopping the passed d-pawn.

33 ... ♔f8 34 d6 ♗b5 35 ♔e3

With Smyslov everything is well timed. The white king reaches the centre at the required moment.

35 ... ♔e8 36 ♔d4 ♔d7 37 ♗d5!

In this game Szabo is unfortunate with his knights.

37 ... ♗c6 38 ♔c5 ♗xb7 39 ♗xb7 ♘g8 40 ♗xa6 ♘f6 41 ♗b5+ ♔d8 42 ♗c6 Black resigns

2 Light-Square Strategy

When Black, while rejecting classical methods (1 d4 d5), nevertheless wishes to prevent the formation of a powerful white pawn centre, he has at his disposal a method, devised by Nimzowitsch, which is given the concise name of 'light-square strategy'. The basic idea of this method is to exert pressure on the central squares using, in the first instance, pieces, and to a lesser extent – pawns. In very schematic terms, Black's arguments can be expressed as follows.

1. The formation of the 'phalanx' d4/c4 is not prevented by 1 ... d5, and therefore Black concentrates his efforts on the square e4: 1 d4 ♘f6! 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4! The move e2-e4 is hindered, and 'in passing' Black has managed to develop two minor pieces and to prepare castling. On 4 f3 there follows 4 ... d5, maintaining strict control over e4.

2. The light-square course is also clearly seen in the Queen's Indian Defence: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6! followed by ... ♗b7, and in various 'hybrids':

(a) Nimzo-Indian and Dutch Defences: 1 d4 e6 2 c4 ♗b4+ 3 ♘c3 f5 (Keres Variation).

(b) Nimzo-Indian and Queen's Indian Defences: 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 ♘c3 ♗b4 5 e3 ♗b7 6 ♗d3 ♘e4 7 ♕c2 f5.

3. Light-square strategy is typified by a flexible pawn chain, and so classical methods of counterplay in the centre, ... d5 and ... c5, are possible, as well as 'Indian themes' – ... d6 and ... e5, or ... d6 and ... c5, while sometimes after ... d6 both attacks on d4, ... e5 and ... c5, can be achieved.

4. Light-square strategy is an essential thematic component of the Ragozin Defence – a hybrid of the 'classical' Queen's Gambit and the 'hypermodern' Nimzo-Indian Defence. In a number of lines of this opening (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗b4) Black deforms the opponent's pawn chain by exchanging on c3, then by ... ♘a5 he forces the exchange cxd5 exd5, when a 'hole' in White's position at c4 is created. It only remains to exchange the light-square bishops and to 'suffocate' the opponent on the light squares, it being immaterial whether in the middlegame or the endgame. It was this method that the Soviet master Lipnitsky called 'light-square strategy', but to the authors it seemed logical to extend this extensive conception, introduced by a profound expert on chess, to a broader class of positions. In particular, along with the plans listed above, we have also assigned to it plans with an attack by a pawn majority on the queenside.

What are the prospects for supporters of light-square strategy in the endgame? We will say straight away that they are quite favourable. The point is that Black's pieces in 'light-square' openings are normally deployed such that they exert direct pressure on the central squares – here there are no 'ugly' pieces such as the 'French' bishop at c8, the 'Slav' bishop at h7, or the 'Spanish-King's Indian' knight at a5. Black's pawn chain is flexible (this

was mentioned by Alekhine, who exploited in classical style the advantages of the pawn formation in the game mentioned below against Sämisch) and is capable of halting the advance of the enemy pieces and pawns.

This does not signify, of course, that Black's chances are definitely bound to be better; we are only talking in general terms. Sometimes White succeeds in exploiting imperceptible defects in Black's set-up; thus after the exchange of light-square bishops the weakness of the light squares in the 'skeleton' a7-b6-c7-d6-e6 may begin to tell (Alekhine v. Znosko-Borovsky), plans of a central offensive by White are possible, and so on, but in general, the 'light-square' endgame promises Black good play.

Browne-Ljubojević
Lucerne Olympiad 1982
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗b4 5 cxd5 exd5 6 ♗g5 ♘bd7

The 'Westphalia Defence', introduced in the New York super-tournament of 1927, soon after the tournament was for a long time (and hardly justifiably) forgotten. The variation was revived at the 25th Chess Olympiad in Lucerne by the Yugoslav grandmasters Ljubojević and Kovačević. The effect of reviving this old variation surpassed all expectations: in four games with Black the Yugoslavs lost only half a point!

7 ♕b3?!

Not a happy move. But perhaps Browne should be criticised less, if it is remembered that this was how Capablanca himself reacted to Black's innovation in a game against one of the creators of the variation, Spielmann?!

7 e3! is nevertheless more natural and better, for example: 7 ... c5 8 ♗d3 ♕a5 9 0-0 c4 10 ♗f5 0-0 11 ♕c2 ♖e8 12 ♘d2 g6 13 ♗h3 ♔g7 14 a3 ♗xc3 15 bxc3! (after *15 ♕xc3 ♕xc3 16 bxc3 b5!* Black has a good ending, Tukmakov-Kovačević, Hastings 1982/83) 15 ... h6 16 ♗xd7! ♗xd7 17 ♗xf6+ ♔xf6 18 e4! with advantage to White (Ubilava-Oll, Tallinn 1983), or 15 ... ♘e4 16 ♘xe4 dxe4 17 ♗f4 ♘b6 18 ♗xc8 ♖axc8 19 f3! – with the same evaluation (Kir.Georgiev-Lalic, Sarajevo 1985).

7 ... c5!

This is the whole point. Compared with the analogous variations of the Ragozin Defence, Black's d5 pawn is securely defended, and with the white queen at b3 the blow at the centre, ... c5, is very strong.

8 a3

8 e3 is strongly met by 8 ... ♕a5! with the threat of ... ♘e4.

8 ... ♕a5

In the afore-mentioned New York game, Spielmann played 8 ... ♗xc3+ against Capablanca, and after 9 ♕xc3 c4 10 ♕e3+ ♕e7 11 ♕xe7+ ♔xe7 12 ♘d2?! h6 13 ♗f4 b5 he obtained the better ending. In the tournament book Alekhine recommended 12 e4!, with equal chances.

9 ♖c1!?

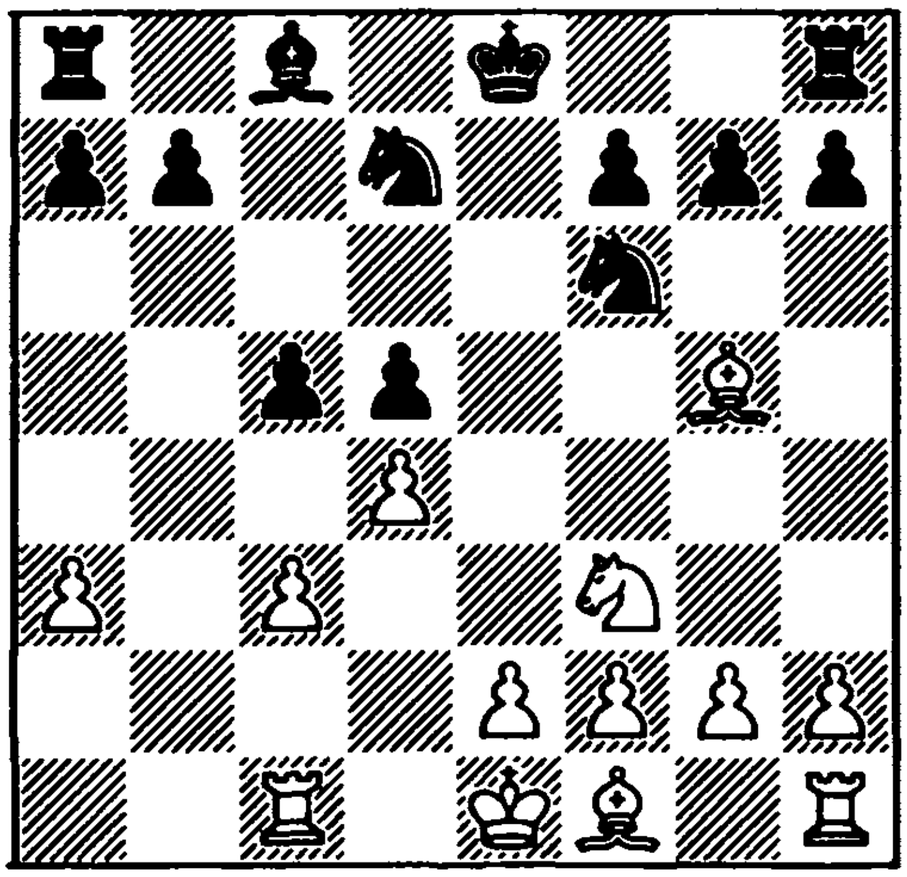
It would be interesting to know what Ljubojević had in mind against the 'theoretical' 9 ♗d2!?.

9 ... ♗xc3+ 10 ♕xc3 ♕xc3+ 11 bxc3 *(117)*

Here too Black's better pawn formation on the queenside gives him the advantage.

The two bishops are not a sufficient antidote to Black's trumps.

117



11 ... ♘e4 12 ♗f4 ♘b6 13 e3?!

A natural, but inaccurate move. Kovačević showed that 13 ♘d2 would have been more accurate, when Black does not have time for 13 ... ♗f5 on account of 14 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 15 dxc5 ♘a4 16 ♗d6 with equality. Therefore Ljubojević would have had to exchange on d2 immediately, but after 13 ... ♘xd2 14 ♗xd2 c4 White has time to play his rook to the b-file with 15 ♖b1, when his defensive chances are improved.

13 ... c4!

Now White's position on the queenside is squeezed, and Black merely has to forestall the opponent's possible counterplay in the centre.

14 ♘d2 ♗f5! 15 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 16 f3 ♗g6 17 h4 h5 18 g3 ♖c8!

The Yugoslav grandmaster acts decisively and accurately. For the attack on the opponent's queenside Black needs his rook on the sixth rank, and it must be transferred there immediately, since the natural 18 ... ♔e7?! could be met by 19 ♗h3!, making it much more difficult for Black to carry out his plan.

19 ♖h2 ♘a4!?

It is essential to prevent 20 ♖b2.

20 ♖a2?

A passive move. White should have decided on the advance in the centre: after 20 e4!? dxe4 21 fxe4 ♗xe4 22 ♖e2 f5 23 ♗g2 he would have had better chances of a successful outcome. After rejecting 20 e4, the American grandmaster soon finds himself in a complete bind.

20 ... ♖c6 21 ♔d2 ♔d7 22 ♖e1 ♖e8 23 ♗h3+?

White's last chance of displaying any activity was by Kovačević's suggestion of 23 ♗g2 ♖b6 24 e4 ♖b3 25 ♖e3.

23 ... ♔d8
24 ♗f1

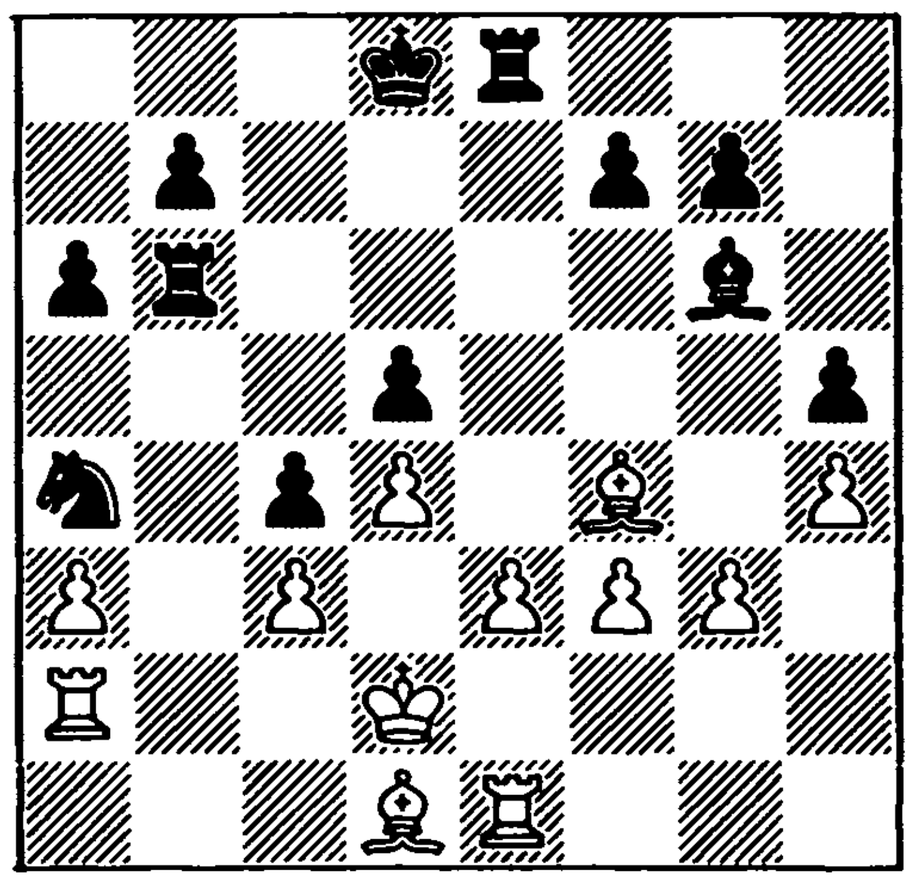
Now on 24 ♗g2 there could have followed 24 ... ♖b6 25 e4 ♖b3 26 ♖e3 ♖e6 (with his king at d7 Black would not have had this possibility, on account of the reply ♗h3), and Black concludes the game by invading with his rook at b2 after ... ♖eb6.

24 ... a6!

A subtle move. White is essentially in zugzwang. Ljubojević's move is much stronger than the 'crude' 24 ... ♖b6?!, since after 25 e4 ♖b3 26 ♖e3 White retains some hopes of counterplay by attacking the c4 pawn with his bishop. But now everything is propitious for Black's invasion of the opponent's position.

25 ♗e2 ♖b6
26 ♗d1 *(118)*

118



26 ... ♖b3!

Decisive. The bishop is no hindrance.

27 ♖a1 ♔d7!

Black plans 28 ... ♖c8, with the threat of capturing the c3 pawn with his knight.

28 e4

A desperate attempt to free himself.

28 ... dxe4 29 ♗xb3 cxb3 30 ♖ab1 b2 31 ♔c2 exf3+ 32 ♔b3

White resigned, without waiting for the obvious 32 ... ♖xe1.

Jasinkowski-Cvetković
Wroclaw 1978
Ragozin Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗b4 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 7 e3 0-0 8 cxd5?!

White has played the opening unsystematically. The exchange on d5 is better made on the 5th move, whereas in the chosen plan of development 8 ♖c1 is stronger. It soon transpires that White was planning to bring his queen out to b3. This should have been done immediately: 7 ♕b3!, as Alekhine played against Marshall (New York 1927), or after the preparatory 7 cxd5 exd5, but in general before playing e2-e3.

After White's passive 8th move Cvetković quickly advances ... c5-c4 and develops a 'pawn majority' attack on the queenside.

8 ... exd5 9 ♕b3 c5! 10 ♗e2

In reply to 10 dxc5 the variation given by Lipnitsky is possible: 10 ... ♗xc3+ 11 ♕xc3 (*11 bxc3 ♕c6!*) 11 ... ♕xc3+ 12 bxc3 ♗e6! 13 ♖b1 ♘d7! 14 ♖xb7 ♘xc5, with an excellent position for Black.

10 ... ♘c6
11 a3?!

After 11 0-0 c4 12 ♕d1 ♖d8 Black's game is better, but even so this was preferable to the move chosen by White.

11 ... c4! 12 ♕d1 ♗xc3+ 13 bxc3 b5!

Black has a clear offensive plan, ... b5, ... a5 and ... b4, which is difficult to counter, since for play in the centre (e3-e4) White is not prepared.

14 0-0 ♗g4 15 ♘d2 ♗xe2 16 ♕xe2 ♖fe8

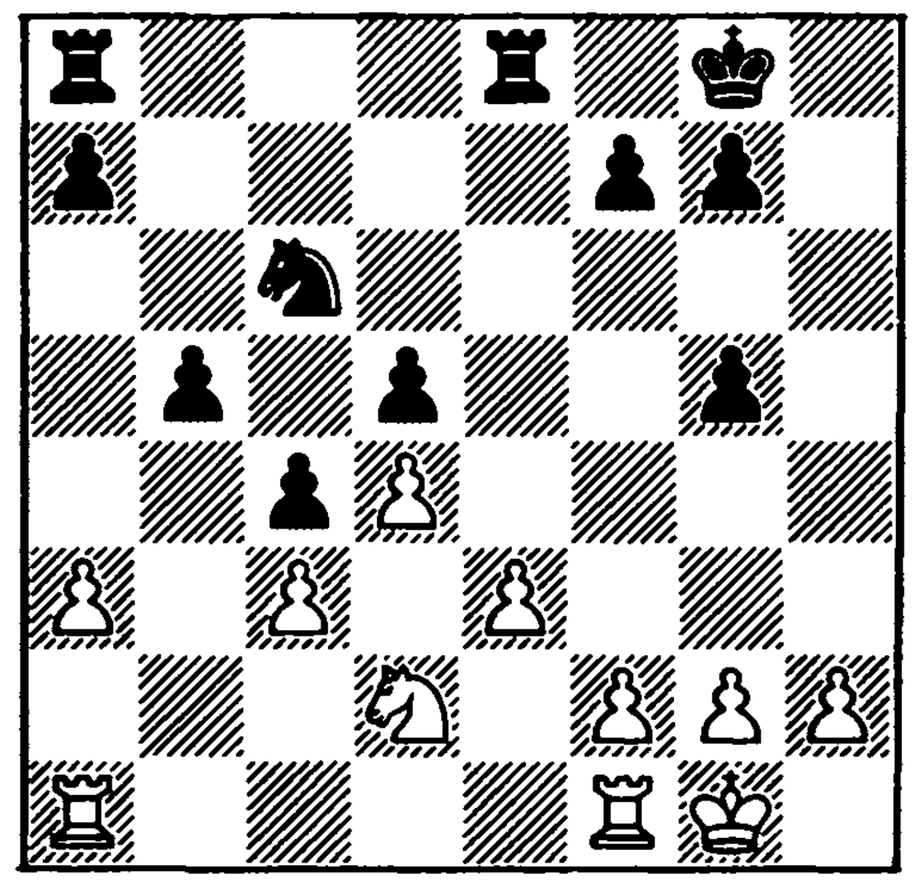
Black must keep e4 under attack!

17 ♕h5

This attempt too is easily suppressed.

17 ... ♕g5!
18 ♕xg5 hxg5 *(119)*

119



In the ending the advantage is with Black. He controls more space and has the possibility of conducting a 'majority attack' on the queenside.

19 ♖fe1

White does not want to be restricted to passive defence, and he aims for a counter-attack in the centre.

19 ... a5
20 e4 b4!

The two sides' pawns have come into contact, heralding a hand-to-hand fight.

21 axb4?

White promptly commits a serious mistake. The opening of the a-file allows Black to decide the game by the swift advance of his passed pawn on the c-file. As indicated by Cvetkovic, 21 exd5 bxc3 22 ♘e4 (*22 ♘f3 ♘b4!*) 22 ... ♘xd4 23 ♘xc3 should have been played, with only a slight advantage to Black.

21 ... axb4 22 exd5 ♖xe1+! 23 ♖xe1 bxc3 24 ♘e4 ♘xd4 25 ♘xc3 ♖a3!

This move has become possible as a result of White's incautious opening of the a-file on the 21st move.

26 ♘e4 c3 27 ♘xg5 ♖a8 28 ♘f3 ♘b3 29 ♘e5 c2 30 ♘d3 ♖d8

White has to give up his knight for the c2 pawn. The game concluded:

31 ♖e2 ♖xd5 32 ♖xc2 ♖xd3 33 g3 ♘d4 34 ♖c8+ ♔h7 35 ♔g2 ♘e6 36 ♖a8 ♖d2 37 h4 ♘c5 38 ♖e8 ♘d3 39 ♖d8? ♘e1+ White resigns

Botvinnik-Moiseyev
19th USSR Championship
Moscow 1951
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 b6 5 ♘e2

In reply to 4 ... b6 Botvinnik invariably developed his knight at e2, maintaining the flexibility of his pawn chain.

5 ... ♗a6 6 a3 ♗e7 7 ♘f4!

Here the knight is much more actively placed than at g3.

7 ... 0-0?!

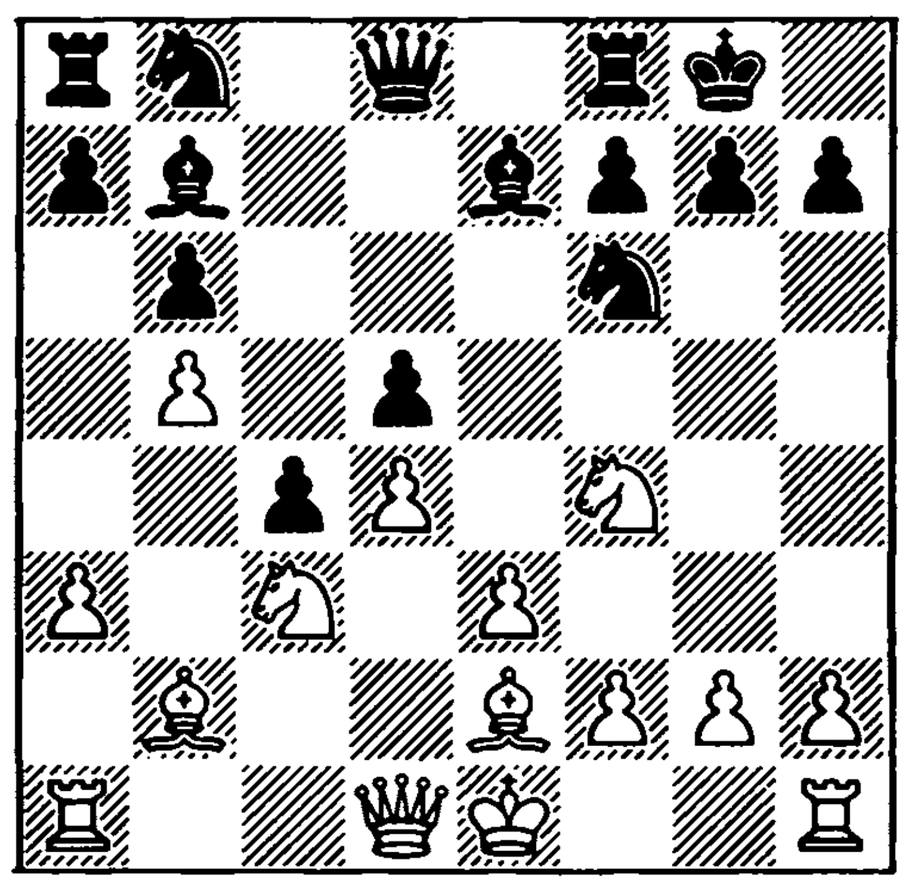
The second game of the 1954 Botvinnik-Smyslov match was a memorable one: 7 ... d5 8 cxd5 ♗xf1 9 ♔xf1 exd5 10 g4! c6?! 11 g5 ♘fd7 12 h4!, with a great advantage to White. Nowadays Black prefers 9 ... ♘xd5!?, having in mind the sharp variation 10 ♘cxd5 exd5 11 ♕h5 c6 (or even *11 ... g5!?*) 12 ♘e6 g6.

8 b4

The most energetic continuation here is 8 e4!.

8 ... d5 9 b5 ♗b7 10 cxd5 exd5 11 ♗b2 c5 12 ♗e2 c4?! *(120)*

120



A typical position in this variation. "The b5 pawn cramps the enemy pieces. This factor, and also the weakness of the d5 pawn, are by no means compensated by the passed c-pawn" (Botvinnik).

13 0-0 a6
14 a4

As shown by Botvinnik, the exchange on a6 followed by pressure on the b6 pawn was also perfectly possible.

14 ... ♗b4 15 ♕c2 ♕d7 16 ♖fb1

White prepares to exchange the dark-square bishops.

16 ... ♖e8 17 ♗a3 ♗xa3 18 ♖xa3 ♕d6 19 ♖a2

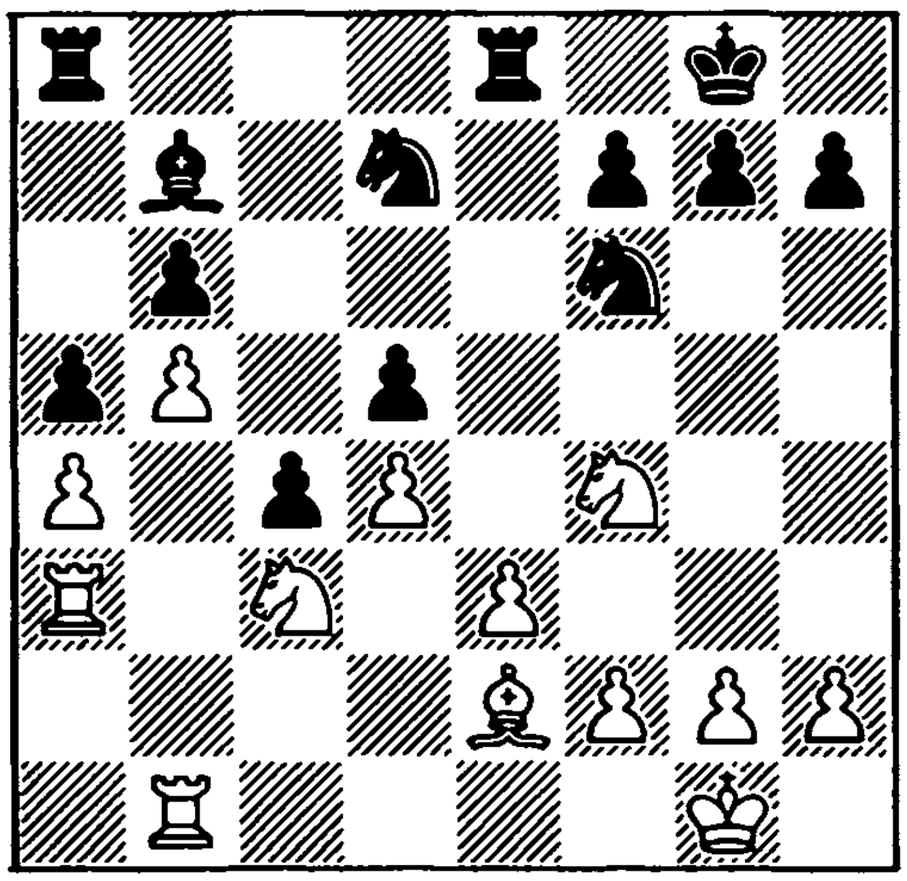
"This was the last opportunity to play 19 bxa6!, since 19 ... ♕xa3 20 axb7 ♖a6 21 ♘fxd5 ♘xd5 22 ♘xd5 ♕xa4 23 ♕xa4 ♖xa4 24 ♘xb6 is dubious for Black" (Botvinnik).

19 ... a5

Now White completes his plan by exchanging queens. In the ending the weakness of the d5 pawn will severely restrict Black's possibilities.

20 ♕c1! ♘bd7 21 ♕a3! ♕xa3 22 ♖xa3 *(121)*

121



Black's passed pawn on the queenside is securely blockaded, whereas on the kingside White has the initiative.

22 ... ♘f8 23 h4 ♖ad8 24 ♗f3 ♘e6 25 ♘h5

The exchange of knights at e6 does not suit White in view of 25 ... fxe6.

25 ... ♘xh5 26 ♗xh5 g6 27 ♗f3 f5

Black erects secure defences on the kingside.

28 ♖a2 ♔g7
29 ♔f1 h6

The 'crude' 29 ... h5! would have strengthened Black's position still further.

30 g3 ♔f6

"Here and later Black could have advanced his rook's pawn to h5, closing the position even more. Then, in order to break through, White would first have had to play f2-f3 – to some extent this all looks problematic.

In short, White would like to avoid such difficulties, and whereas he forced Black into playing ... a5, he now acts with great care, in order to avoid suggesting to the opponent the need to advance ... h5" (Botvinnik).

31 ♔g2 ♖h8 32 ♖h1 ♖he8 33 ♖d2 ♖e7 34 ♖e2 ♖ee8 35 ♔f1

The king is transferred to d2, and only then will the g3-g4 break be on the agenda.

35 ... ♖h8 36 ♔e1 ♖he8 37 ♔d2 ♖e7 38 ♖ee1

The rook makes way for the knight.

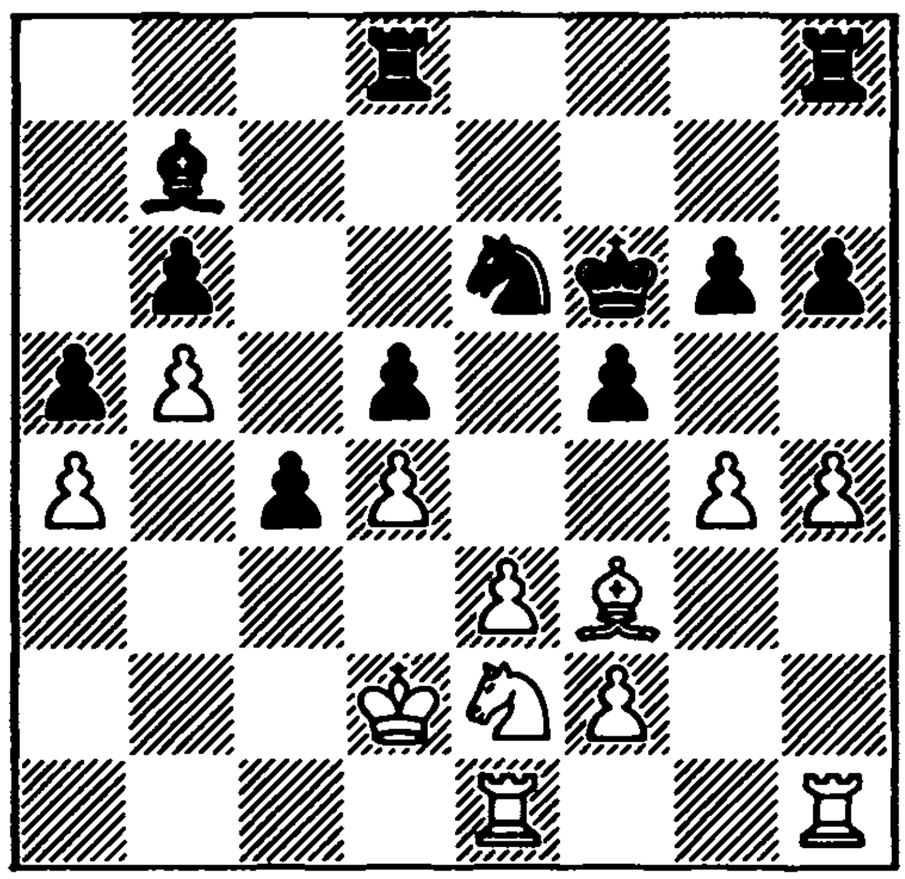
38 ... ♖ee8
39 ♘e2 ♖h8?

Here it was now essential to play 39 ... h5.

40 g4! *(122)*

One must have iron nerves to defer such an important advance to the last move before the time control.

122



40 ... ♖hg8
41 ♖eg1 fxg4?!

In Botvinnik's opinion, Black would have done better to allow the opening of the g-file.

42 ♗xg4 ♖df8?

The decisive mistake. As shown by Botvinnik, It was essential to include the bishop in the defence of the g6 pawn by 42 ... ♗c8.

43 ♗xe6! ♔xe6
44 ♘f4+ ♔d6

44 ... ♔f6 would also not have saved Black after 45 ♖h3, when the rook goes to f3 or g3.

45 ♖h2 ♖f6 46 ♖hg2 ♗c8 47 ♖xg6 ♖gxg6 48 ♖xg6 ♖xg6 49 ♘xg6

White's extra pawn and great positional advantage ensure him a straightforward win.

49 ... ♗f5 50 ♘e5 ♗b1 51 ♔c3 ♗a2 52 e4!

This essentially concludes the game.

52 ... dxe4 53 ♘xc4+ ♗xc4 54 ♔xc4 h5 55 d5 ♔e5 56 d6 ♔xd6 57 ♔d4 Black resigns

Mikenas-Savon
Moscow 1979
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 b6 5 ♘e2 ♘e4 6 ♕c2

Already at this early stage White could have fallen into a trap: 6 a3? ♕h4! (in the spirit of a famous Marshall trap: *1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘e4 4 ♘fd2! ♗b4*, and here Alekhine against Marshall, New York 1927, saw through his opponent's cunning idea – 5 a3? ♕f6!, which he avoided by *5 ♕c2*) 7 g3 ♕f6 8 f4 ♗xc3+ 9 ♘xc3 ♘xc3 10 bxc3 ♗b7, with a great advantage to Black (Veremeichik-Savon, Minsk 1976).

White's 6th move is logical, but it seems to us that more can be achieved by 6 ♗d2!, for example: 6 ... ♘xd2 7 ♕xd2 ♗b7 8 a3 ♗e7 9 d5 0-0 10 g3 c5 11 ♗h3 e5 12 f4 exf4 13 gxf4 d6 14 0-0-0 ♖e8 15 ♘g3, with the initiative for White (Szabo-Botvinnik, Oberhausen 1961). White also has the better chances after 7 ... 0-0 8 a3 ♗xc3 9 ♘xc3 f5 10 ♗d3 d6 11 0-0 ♘d7 12 f4 ♘f6 13 d5! (Petrosian-Kurajica, Banja Luka 1979).

6 ... ♗b7
7 f3

Not the strongest move. Fischer thought that the immediate 7 a3 was preferable.

7 ... ♘xc3!

Black follows a recommendation by Fischer. Right up to move 11 the game follows his analysis (cf. Portisch-Fischer, Santa Monica 1966, in Fischer's *My 60 Memorable Games* – Translator's note).

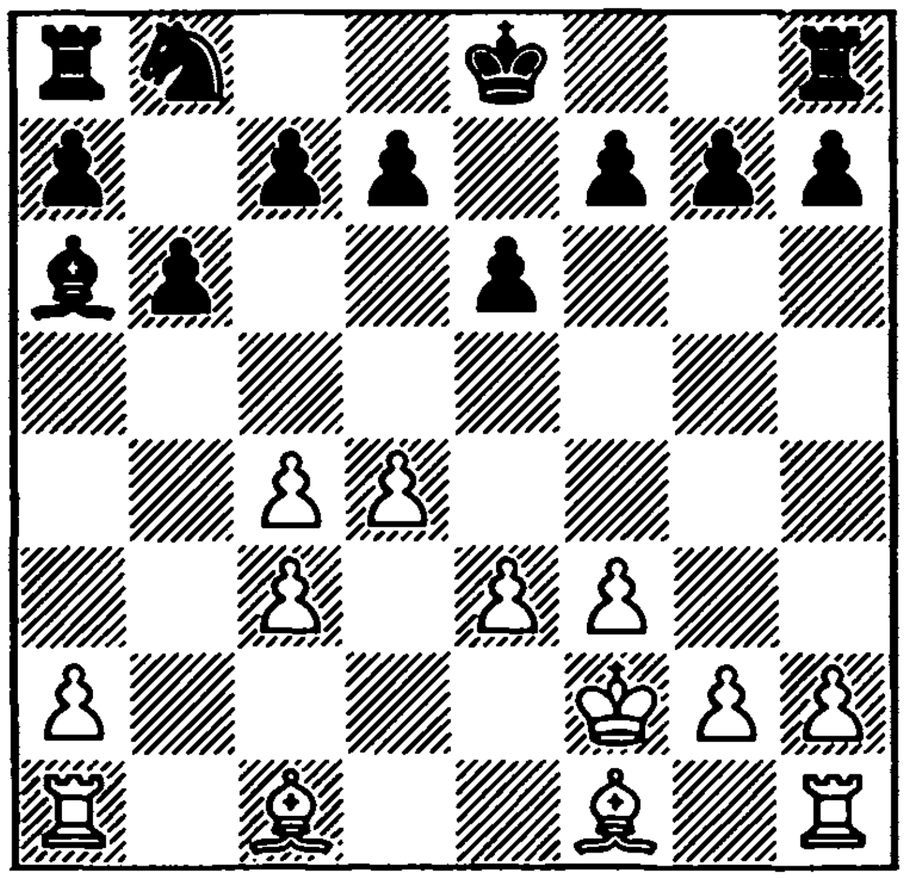
8 ♘xc3

"8 bxc3 ♗d6! 9 e4 ♘c6, with good play against White's doubled c-pawns" (Fischer).

8 ... ♕h4+ 9 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 10 ♔xf2 ♗xc3

11 bxc3 ♗a6! *(123)*

123



The ending favours Black, who has chances of exploiting the opponent's deformed pawn structure on the queenside.

12 ♗a3 d6
13 c5

White hurries to undouble his pawns on the c-file, since Black threatened to fix the weakness of the c4 pawn by ... c5.

13 ... ♗xf1 14 ♖hxf1 ♔d7 15 ♖fd1

15 cxd6 cxd6 16 c4 should have been considered.

15 ... d5!

The weakness of the light-square complex in the opponent's position gives Black the better game.

16 e4 b5 17 ♖ab1 a6 18 ♖e1 ♘c6 19 ♖e2 ♘a5 20 exd5

Otherwise there could have followed 20 ... c6, when Black would have been ready to recapture on d5 with his c-pawn.

20 ... exd5
21 ♖be1 ♘c6!

It suits Black to exchange only one pair of rooks.

22 ♔e3?!

After other moves, e.g. 22 h4, Black would have forced the desired exchange by 22 ... ♖ab8! (threatening ... *a5* and ... *b4*), and if 23 ♖b1 (or *23* ♖*b2*), then 23 ... ♖he8.

22 ... ♖ae8+ 23 ♔d3 ♖xe2 24 ♖xe2 h5!

Black begins seizing space on the kingside.

25 ♗c1 f6 26 h3 g5 27 ♗d2 a5!

The presence on the board of one pair of rooks makes the ... b4 break dangerous for White.

28 a3

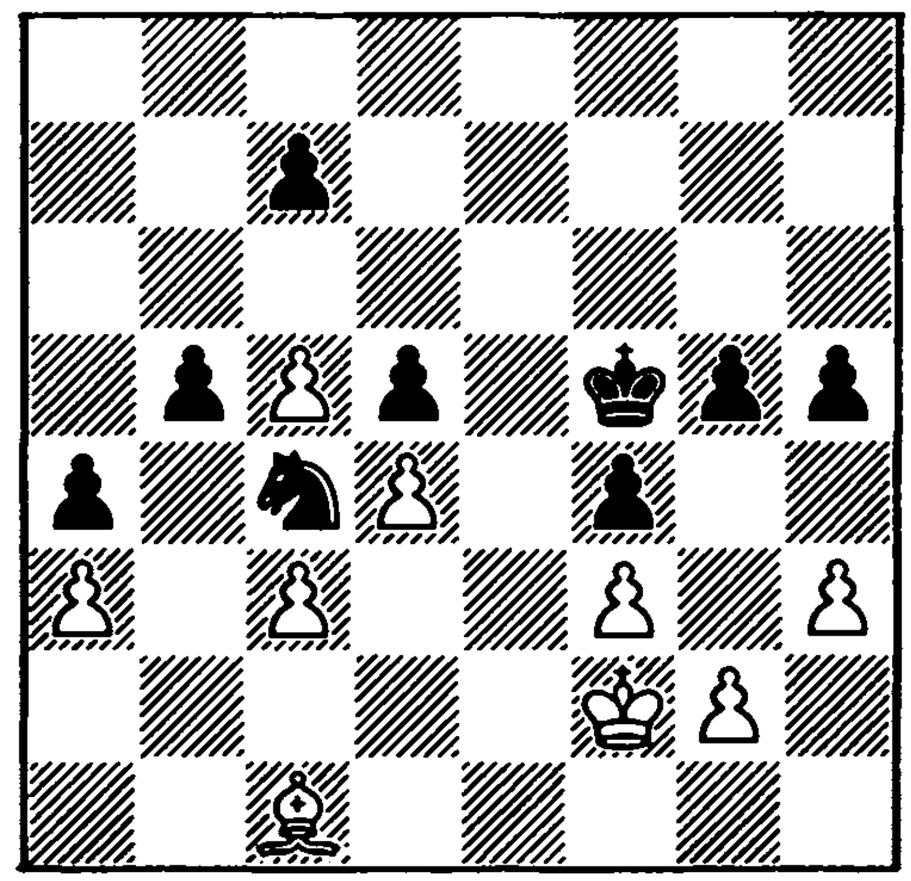
It was very important for Black to force this advance. The a3 pawn will be a serious weakness in White's position.

28 ... a4! 29 ♗c1 ♘a5 30 ♔c2 ♖g8 31 ♖e1 ♘c4 32 ♔d3 f5 33 ♔e2 ♖e8+!

Black's rook has supported the advance of his kingside pawns and provoked an important weakening of the opponent's queenside (28 a3). Now realising the advantage is easier in the minor piece ending than with the rooks on, and Savon goes in for the exchange of rooks.

34 ♔f2 ♖xe1 35 ♔xe1 f4 36 ♔e2 ♔e6 37 ♔f2 ♔f5 *(124)*

124



38 g4+

Passive play could not have saved White. Black, exploiting his reserve tempo ... c6, would have gradually put his opponent in zugzwang. Kotov gives the following variation: 38 ♔e2 g4 39 hxg4+ hxg4 40 ♔f2 ♘a5 41 ♔e2 ♘b3 42 ♗b2 ♔g5 43 ♔f1 ♔h4 44 ♔f2 c6!, and Black wins easily in analogy with the pawn ending.

38 ... fxg3+ 39 ♔xg3 ♘a5 40 h4 gxh4+ 41 ♔xh4 ♘b3 42 ♗e3 ♘a1 43 ♗c1 ♘c2 44 ♔xh5 ♘e1 45 ♔h6 ♘xf3 46 ♔g7 ♔e4 47 ♔f6 ♔d3 48 ♗b2 ♔c2 49 ♗a1 ♔b1

The triumph of Black's light-square strategy. The unfortunate bishop perishes in the corner, shut in by its own pawns.

50 ♔e6 ♔xa1 51 ♔xd5 ♔b2 52 ♔c6 ♔xc3 53 d5 ♔c4 54 ♔xc7 ♔xc5 White resigns

Zagoryansky-Romanovsky
Moscow 1943
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 b6 5 ♗e2

A rare, but perfectly logical continuation. White neutralises the pressure along the h1-a8 diagonal.

5 ... ♗b7
6 ♗f3 ♗xf3

Black has conceived a plan to 'suffocate' the bishop at c1. With this aim he needs to restrain (if possible, for ever) the advance e3-e4. Initially this will be done by ... d5, and therefore the exchange of light-square bishops fits in well with Romanovsky's plan.

Play in the spirit of the Dutch Defence would have resulted from 6 ... ♘e4 7 ♕c2 ♗xc3+ 8 bxc3 f5 (Kashdan-Santasiere, USA 1946).

7 ♘xf3

White succeeded with an interesting attack in the game Lputian-Ebeling (Moscow 1986): 7 ♕xf3! ♘c6 8 ♘e2 e5 9 0-0 ♗xc3 10 bxc3 e4 11 ♕f4 0-0 12 ♘g3 ♘a5 13 f3! exf3 14 ♖xf3 ♘xc4 15 e4! d6 16 ♘f5 ♖e8 17 ♕g3 g6 18 ♗g5 ♘xe4 19 ♘h6+ ♔g7 20 ♖xf7+ 1-0.

7 ... 0-0 8 0-0 d5 9 ♕b3 ♗xc3 10 bxc3 ♘c6!

The threat of the black knights seizing the light squares becomes a reality.

11 ♗a3 ♖e8
12 ♕a4

12 ... ♘a5 was threatened.

12 ... ♕d7!

Romanovsky plans to go into an ending, in which White's bad bishop will cause him considerable trouble.

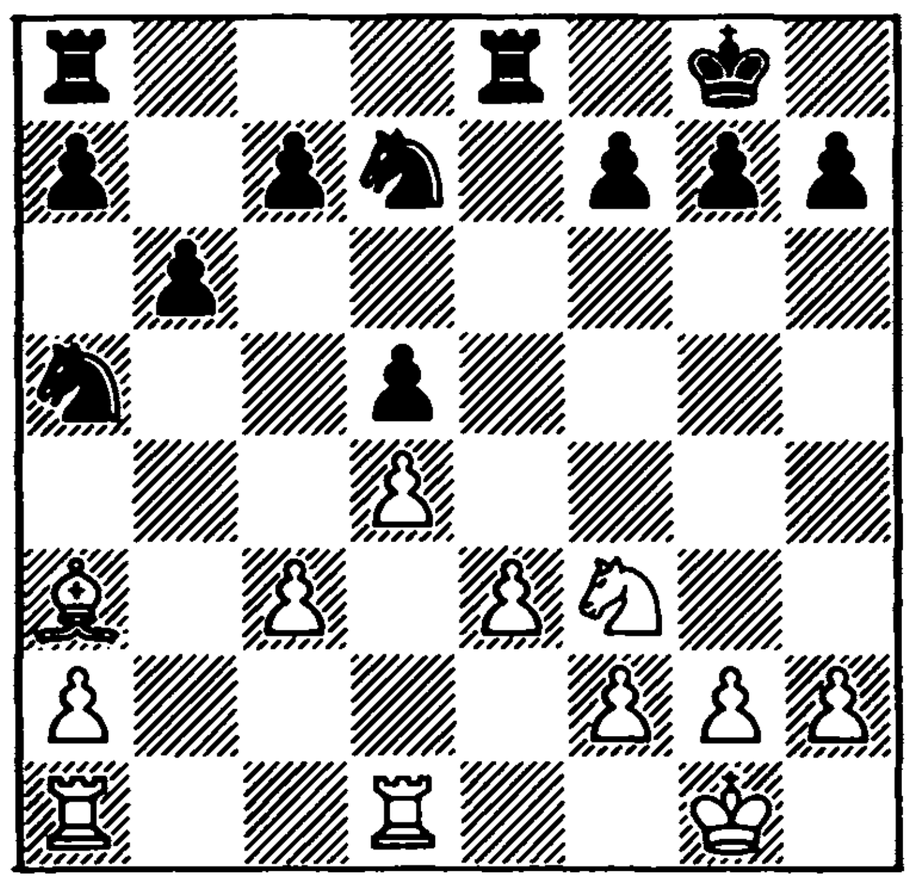
13 cxd5 exd5
14 ♖fd1?

Zagoryansky fails to anticipate the blockade on the light squares. 14 c4! was stronger, when after 14 ... ♘xd4 15 ♕xd7 ♘xf3+?! 16 gxf3 ♘xd7 17 cxd5 White has the advantage (pointed out by Neat). Better here is 15 ... ♘e2+ 16 ♔h1 ♘xd7 17 ♗b2! (*17 cxd5 ♘c3*) 17 ... d4! with an equal game.

14 ... ♘a5!
15 ♕xd7 ♘xd7 *(125)*

Black's positional advantage is obvious. His superiority on the light squares is undisputed, and it is hard for White's dark-square bishop to find useful employment. White's only counterplay consists in changing the pawn structure by c3-c4 or e3-e4.

125



16 ♗b4?

A featureless move. In this game White marks time and allows his opponent to create a textbook example of realising an advantage. Although the game lasts more than sixty moves, all the time the play is essentially 'at one end'. In modern-day chess everything happens less smoothly. The weaker side often loses much more quickly, but in a full-blooded struggle. For comparison one can take the game Smejkal-Hort, where White lost on move 39, but after a desperate fight.

In the diagram position White should have tried to free himself by 16 ♘d2!, and if 16 ... ♘f6 17 ♗b4. Now 17 ... ♘c6 can be met by 18 ♖ab1, while after 17 ... ♘c4 18 ♘xc4 dxc4 Black's pawn structure in the centre is worsened.

16 ... ♘c4
17 a4

The a4 pawn may become a target for attack, but how else can White defend against 17 ... a5?

17 ... a5 18 ♗a3 ♖e6 19 ♘d2?!

The exchange of knights merely simplifies things for Black.

19 ... ♘xd2 20 ♖xd2 ♖c6 21 ♗b2 ♖e8 22 ♔f1 ♘f6 23 ♖c2 ♘e4 24 ♔e2 ♘d6 25 ♔d3 f5 26 f3 ♘c4 27 ♗c1 ♖ce6

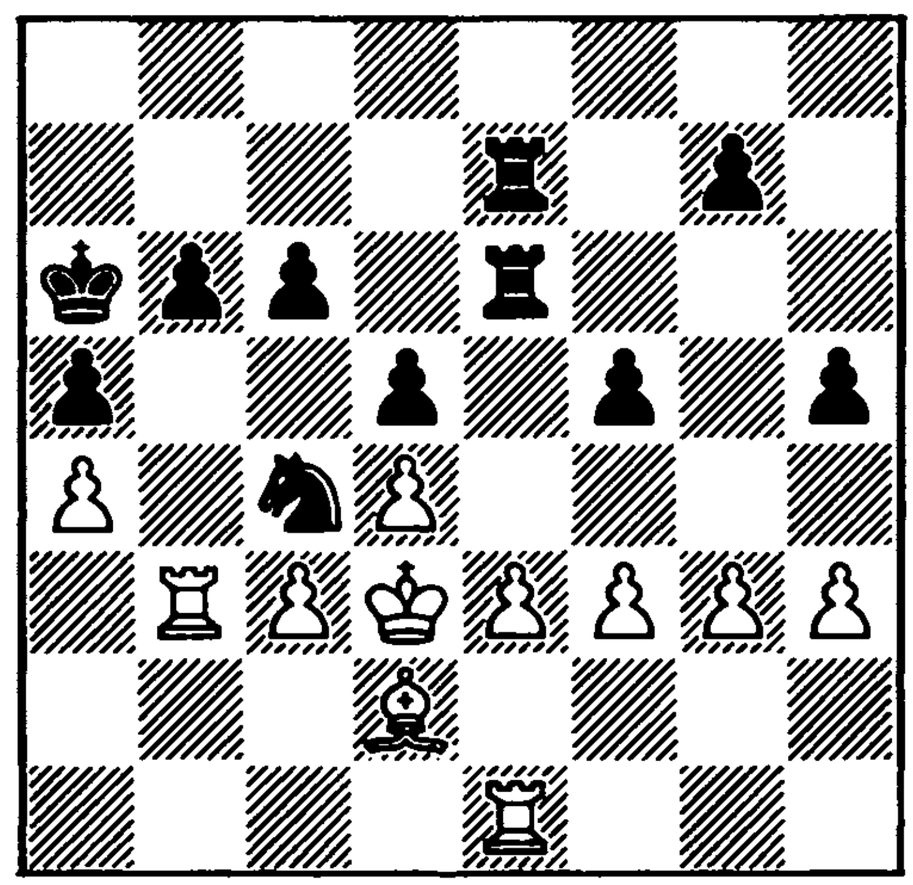
For Black the last ten moves have gone like clockwork, and he has completely squeezed the opponent's position. White has acquired a weak pawn at e3. Black's plans include giving the opponent a further weakness on the queenside, which is aided by the position of the white pawn at a4.

28 ♖e2 ♔f7

The black king heads for a6 to support the advance ... b5.

29 ♖e1 c6 30 ♖b1 ♖8e7 31 ♖e2 ♔e8 32 h3 h5 33 ♖b3 ♔d7 34 ♖e1 ♔c7 35 g3 ♔b7 36 ♗d2 ♔a6 *(126)*

126



Black is ready to play ... b5, after which White will be unable to hold the position on both flanks.

37 ♖eb1

White has parried the opponent's threat, but now comes a decisive blow at e3.

37 ... ♖xe3+! 38 ♗xe3 ♖xe3+ 39 ♔c2 ♖e2+ 40 ♔d1 ♖a2 41 g4 fxg4 42 fxg4 h4 43 g5 ♖xa4

Black has two pawns for the exchange, with an overwhelming position. The battle is essentially over.

44 ♔e2 ♖a2+ 45 ♔f3 ♘d2+ 46 ♔g4 ♘xb3 47 ♖xb3

In the rook ending Black merely needs to display a certain accuracy. The game concluded:

47 ... a4 48 ♖b1 ♖c2 49 ♔xh4 ♖xc3 50 g6 a3 51 ♔g4 ♖d3 52 h4 ♖xd4+ 53 ♔g5 ♖d2 54 ♖a1 a2 55 h5 b5 56 h6 gxh6+ 57 ♔xh6 ♖h2+ 58 ♔g5 ♖g2+ 59 ♔f6 b4 60 g7 b3 61 ♔f7 ♖xg7+ 62 ♔xg7 ♔b5 63 ♔f6 b2 White resigns

Donner-Keene
Lugano Olympiad 1968
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 b6 5 ♘e2 ♗a6 6 ♘g3

Bobby Fischer, the eleventh World Champion in the history of chess, disapproved of this move, and reckoned that 6 a3 was more in the spirit of the position. It would seem, however, that the American grandmaster was excessively severe in his evaluation of the knight move, which was successfully played by Petrosian, Portisch, Spassky and Geller, and which even today has many supporters.

6 ... ♗xc3+

6 ... 0-0?! is not good on account of 7 e4!, while 6 ... h5 is examined in the following game. Fischer regarded the exchange 6 ... ♗xc3+ as the best continuation.

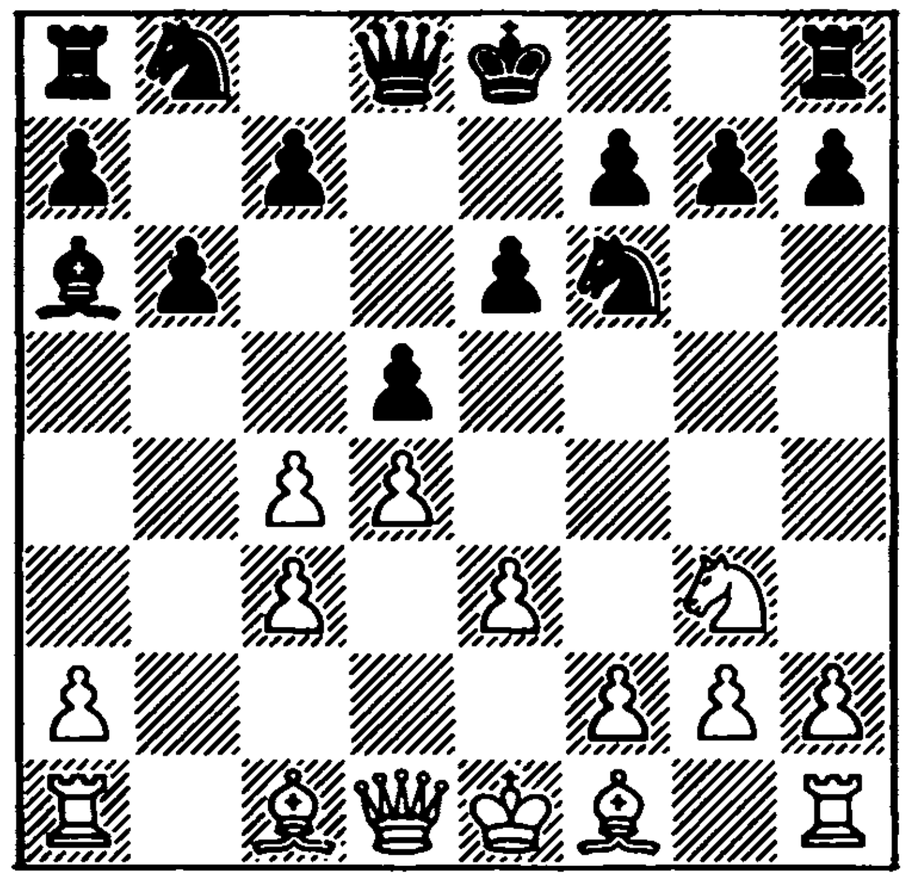
7 bxc3 d5

(diagram 127)

8 ♕f3

The position after Black's 7th move

127



was twice tested in crucial games between Portisch and Fischer. And whereas in Santa Monica (1966) Fischer quickly seized the initiative: 8 ♕f3 0-0 9 e4?! dxe4! 10 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 11 ♕xe4 ♕d7! (which evidently caused him to call 8 ♕f3 a "dubious idea"), at the Siegen Olympiad (1970) he avoided defeat only with great difficulty, after coming under a strong attack: 8 ♗a3! dxc4 9 ♗e2 ♕d7 10 e4 ♘c6 11 0-0 0-0-0 12 ♕c2 h5 13 ♖fd1. Perhaps after this game his evaluation of 6 ♘g3 changed . . .

8 ... 0-0 9 cxd5 exd5 10 ♗xa6 ♘xa6 11 0-0

11 ♕e2 is more often played, but usually this leads merely to a transposition of moves.

11 ... ♖e8
12 ♕e2 ♘b8

12 ... ♕c8 is also strongly met by 13 c4! c5 14 ♗b2 cxd4 15 cxd5! (Donner-Hecht, Wijk aan Zee 1974).

13 c4!

This consolidates White's opening advantage. Thanks to this mobile pawn mass in the centre, his chances are better.

13 ... ♘c6

14 ♗b2 ♘a5

Black 'probes' the weak light squares on the queenside. He has no other play: in the centre the black knights have nothing on which to catch hold.

15 cxd5 ♕xd5 16 ♖fc1 ♖ac8 17 f3!

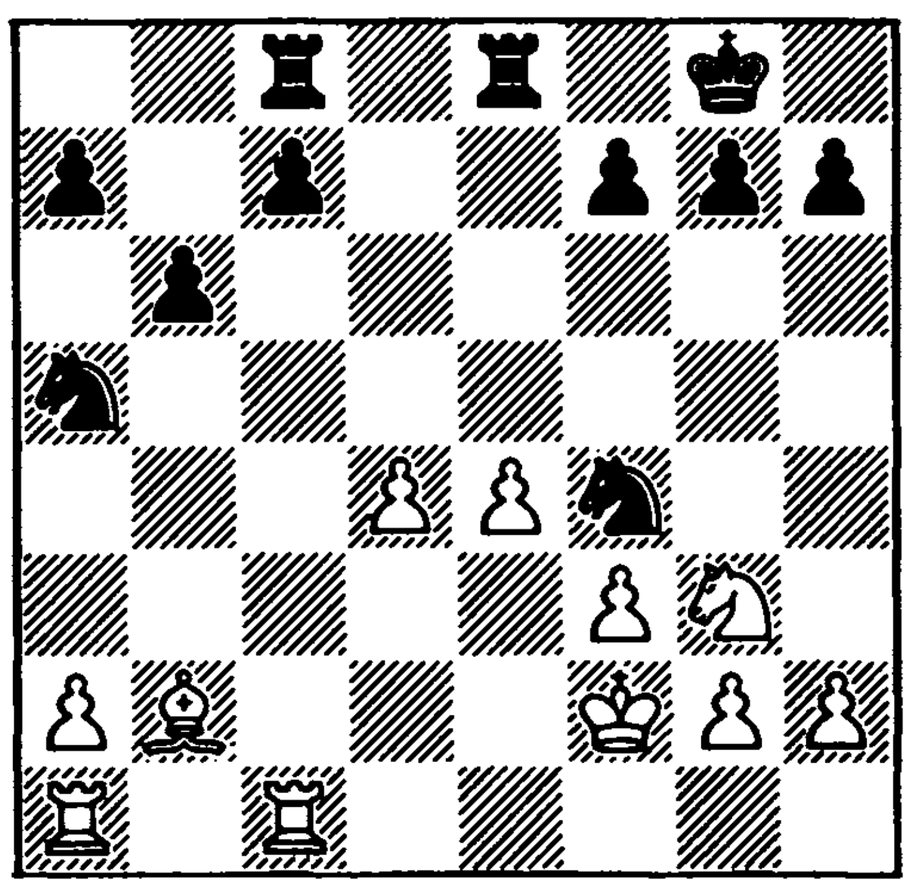
Donner conducts the game splendidly. The advance e3-e4 cannot be prevented, and this means that Black has lost the opening battle.

17 ... ♕g5 18 e4 ♘d5 19 ♕f1!

Another strong move. The thrusts of the black pieces are easily parried.

19 ... ♕d2 20 ♕f2 ♕xf2+ 21 ♔xf2 ♘f4 *(128)*

128



In the resulting ending White has the advantage, thanks to his powerful pawn centre and the badly placed knight at a5.

22 ♖c3 c5

Black allows the opponent to create a pair of connected passed pawns in the centre, but gains hopes of counterplay thanks to the strong point for his knight at d3.

23 d5 c4 24 ♖c2 ♘d3+ 25 ♔f1 g6 26 ♘e2!

The knight at g3 has carried out its duties. Now, depending on circumstances, White transfers it either to the queenside, or to the centre, or uses it to drive the enemy knight from d3.

26 ... b5

26 ... f5 can be calmly met by 27 ♘c3, and if 27 ... fxe4 28 ♘xe4.

27 ♗d4 a6
28 ♘c1!

The most unpleasant piece for White is the black knight at d3. With its exchange things begin to go rapidly downhill for Black.

28 ... ♘e5 29 ♗xe5! ♖xe5 30 ♘d3! ♖ee8 31 ♘b4

The difference in the placing of the knights at b4 and a5 is now especially marked.

31 ... ♖a8
32 ♔f2!

The way for the white king to the centre is clear.

32 ... ♘b7 33 ♔e3 f6 34 ♔d4 ♔f7 35 ♘c6 ♘d8 36 ♘a5!

White has an overwhelming positional advantage. It only remains for him to advance his passed pawns.

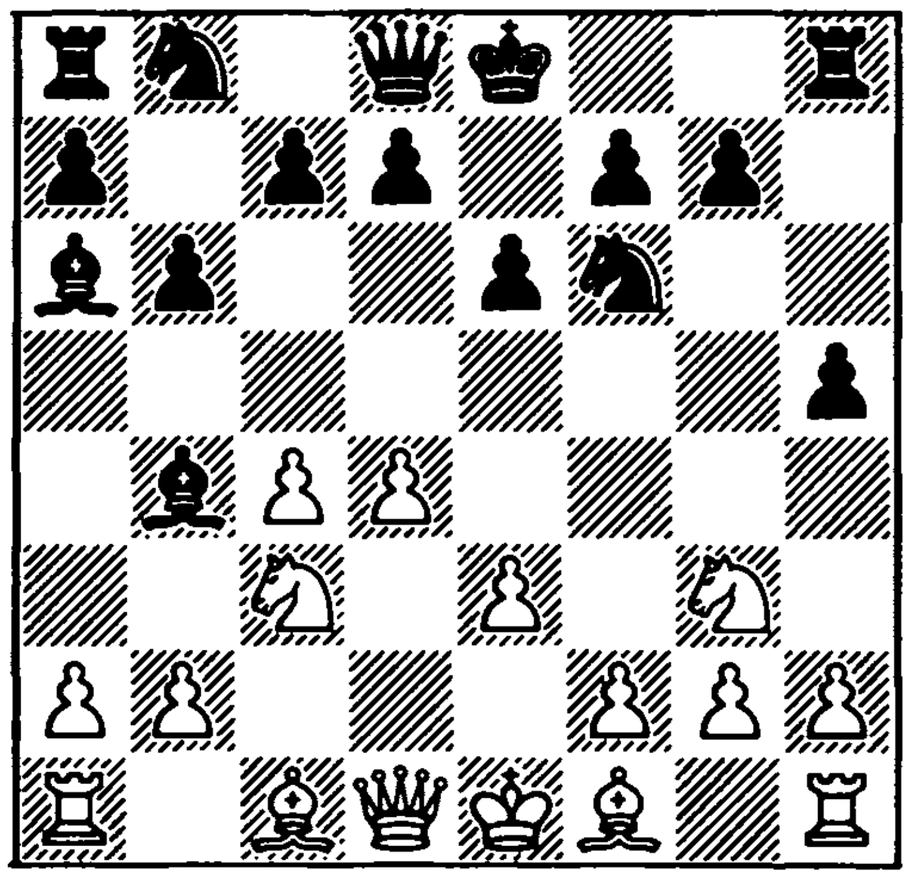
36 ... ♔e7 37 a4 ♘f7 38 f4 ♔d7 39 ♘c6 ♘d6 Black resigns

This game gives a good illustration of the difficulties awaiting Black in the endgame, in the event of his opponent breaking the light-square blockade.

Smejkal-Hort
Luhacovice 1971
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 b6 5 ♘e2 ♗a6 6 ♘g3 h5 *(129)*

129



Bronstein had been planning to employ this audacious move in the 17th game of his 1951 World Championship match against Botvinnik; the World Champion, however, preferred 6 a3. At grandmaster level 6 ... h5 was first employed in Geller-Keres (26th USSR Championship, Tbilisi 1959), where after 7 h4 ♗b7 8 ♗d2 a6 9 ♕c2 d5 10 cxd5 ♘xd5, as shown by Geller, 11 0-0-0! would have given White the advantage. 8 ♕d3! is also strong, as played by Knaak against Bronstein (Tallinn 1979).

7 ♗d3?!

Pointless! Now the move ... h5 is perfectly justified, and Black obtains excellent play on the light squares. Of course, White should have played 7 h4!.

7 ... h4 8 ♘e2 ♗b7 9 0-0 h3! 10 g3 ♗f3

White's position is inferior. In the subsequent play Smejkal defends resourcefully, but it is already unlikely that he can fully equalise.

11 ♕c2 ♘c6 12 a3 ♗xc3 13 ♘xc3 0-0 14 ♖e1!

Reminding Black that his h-pawn has advanced rather far – 15 ♗f1 is threatened.

14 ... ♗g2

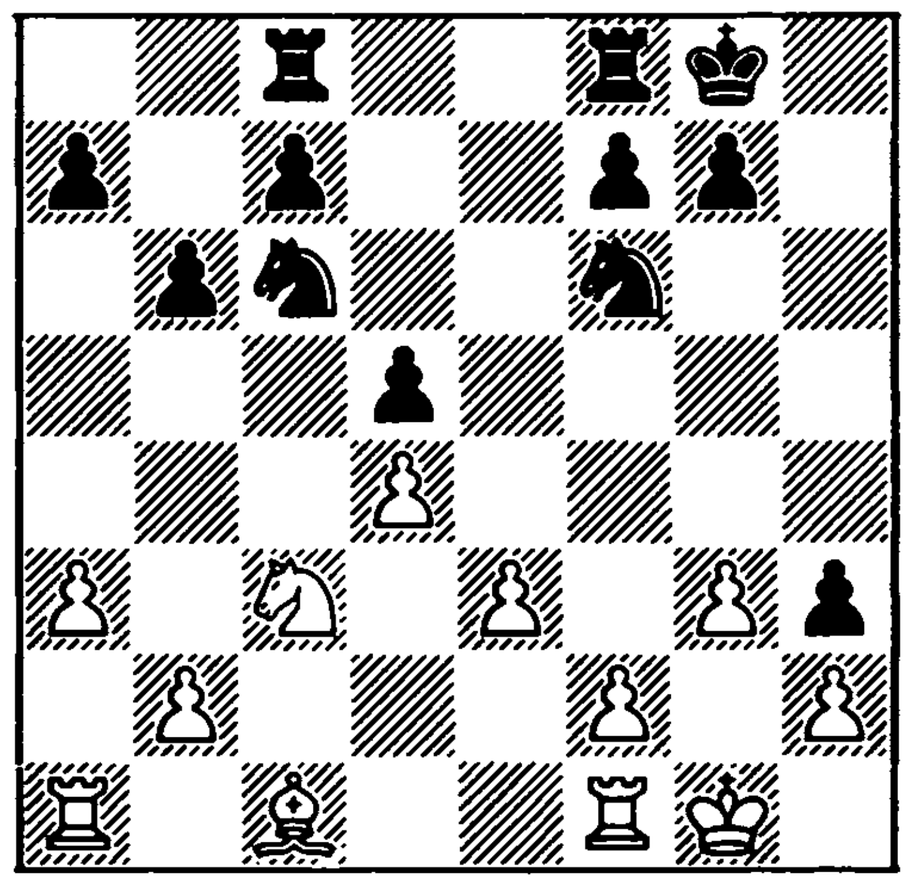
The only move.

15 ♗f1 ♗xf1
16 ♖xf1 d5!

As in the Zagoryansky-Romanovsky game, Black bases his 'light-square' play on restricting the mobility of the bishop at c1.

17 cxd5 exd5 18 ♕f5 ♕c8 19 ♕xc8 ♖axc8 *(130)*

130



If this position is compared with those from the two previous examples, a difference in White's pawn structure will be noticed (there is a pawn at b2, rather than c3). But in all three games there is a chief similarity – White has a bad dark-square bishop, and he is threatened with a light-square squeeze on the queenside. In the Donner-Keene game White succeeded in 'straightening himself' on the queenside and even gained an advantage, while in Zagoryansky-Romanovsky he did not attempt to free himself and lost ignominiously. In the present game the two players are well aware that the critical moment has been reached, and they embark on a fierce battle.

20 b4

White deprives the enemy knight of the a5 square.

20 ... ♘e7!
21 f3

The freeing of the c1 bishop is prepared.

21 ... ♘e8!
22 e4 ♘d6!

Black is not concerned about the temporary loss of the d5 pawn. The main thing is to establish his knight at c4.

23 ♗f4 ♘c4
24 ♖fc1

24 ♘b5 can be met by 24 ... ♘g6.

24 ... c6 25 b5 ♖fd8 26 bxc6 ♖xc6 27 ♘b5 ♖d7

Hort has managed to parry the opponent's onslaught, and the scales begin to tip in favour of Black.

28 e5

White is not able to maintain the tension in the centre and is forced to make a serious positional concession.

28 ... ♘g6
29 ♔f2 f6!

Very typical of modern chess. Black vigorously aims to build on his success.

30 a4 a6 31 ♘a3 fxe5 32 ♗xe5 ♘gxe5 33 dxe5 ♘xe5 34 ♖xc6 ♘xc6 35 ♖b1

White appears to have emerged comparatively safely from his difficulties. He has lost a pawn, but after 35 ... ♖b7 36 ♖c1 or 36 ♔e3 he can count on a draw. But now comes a counter pawn sacrifice, and it transpires that White stands badly.

35 ... ♘e5! 36 ♖xb6 d4! 37 ♘b1 ♖c7! 38 ♖b2?

An oversight in a lost position.

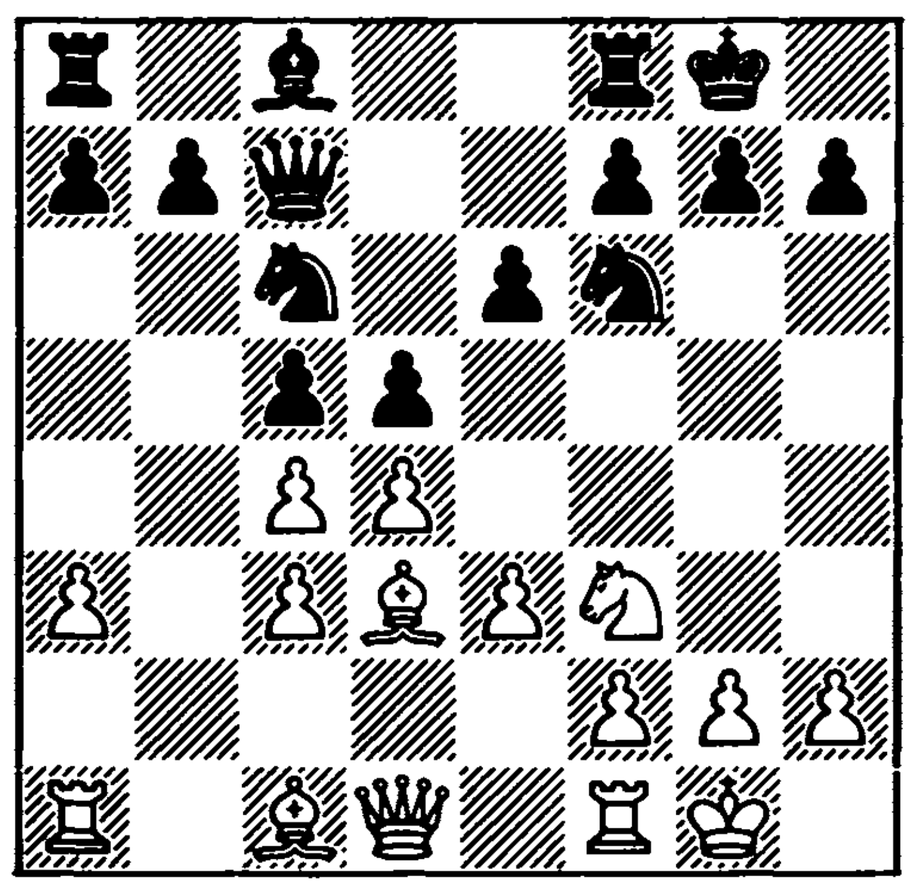
38 ... ♘d3+
White resigns

A number of splendid endings have been won using 'light-square' strategy by the Soviet grandmaster Yuri Averbakh, one of the greatest experts on the endgame. Apart from the games given below, two classic examples occurred in the Zürich Candidates Tournament, 1953: **Najdorf-Averbakh** and **Euwe-Averbakh**. The endings of these games are to be found in Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy* on pages 24 and 104 respectively.

Bannik-Averbakh
25th USSR Championship
Riga 1958
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 0-0 5 ♗d3 d5 6 ♘f3 c5 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 a3 ♗xc3 9 bxc3 ♕c7 *(131)*

131



Black's 9th move was suggested by the soviet master Khasin and quickly won recognition. Averbakh has successfully employed it in tournaments of the most varied standard. The main advantage of 9 ... ♕c7 is its flexibility. For the moment

Black avoids disclosing his plans: he can transpose into a favourable version of the main variation (for example, after *10 ♗b2*, *10 ♖e1* , *10 ♕e2* or *10 a4* he has the good reply *10 ... dxc4!*), or he can opt for light-square strategy. For example: 10 ♕c2 ♘a5! (here the position from the main variation – *10... dxc4 11 ♗xc4 e5 12 ♗d2 ♖e8 13 dxe5 ♘xe5 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 15 f3* – is not to everyone's taste) 11 cxd5 c4! 12 ♗e2 exd5 13 ♘d2 ♗g4 14 ♗xg4 ♘xg4 15 g3 f5! (Geller-Petrosian, Amsterdam Candidates 1956).

10 cxd5 exd5
11 a4?!

In time it transpired that 11 ♗b2 was more promising for White, with the idea of playing c3-c4, or else 11 ♘h4, with the aim of taking control of e4 by f2-f3. The indifferent move of the rook's pawn allows Black immediately to begin active play on the light squares in the centre and on the queenside.

11 ... ♖e8 12 ♗a3 c4 13 ♗c2 ♘e4! 14 ♕e1 ♕d8!

An excellent manoeuvre. Black makes it as difficult as possible for the opponent to advance e3-e4: the white knight can move neither to d2 (because of ... *♘xc3*) nor to h4. White cannot tolerate the knight at e4 for long, and so:

15 ♗xe4 ♖xe4

But now Black's play on the queenside outpaces the opponent's counter-measures in the centre.

16 ♘d2 ♖e8 17 f3 ♕a5 18 ♗b2 b5!

It can be considered that Black has won the opening battle, but it is still a long way to overall victory . . .

19 axb5 ♕xb5 20 ♗a3 ♘a5 21 ♕e2

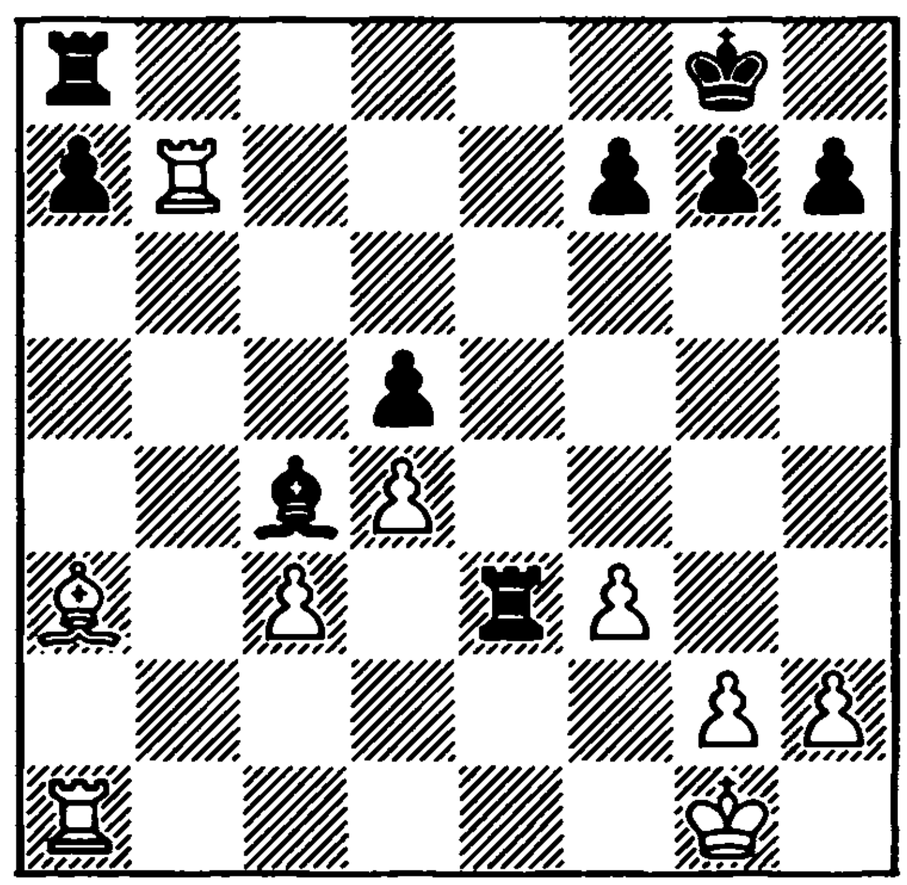
An important moment. White perhaps did not fully appreciate the danger of his position, and he decided to stick to passive tactics. On the immediate 21 e4 Averbakh would most probably have played 21 ... ♘b3, forcing the exchange of knights (no better is *22 ♖b1 ♕a4!*, when, in view of the threat of ... *♘xd2* and ... *dxe4*, White is forced to take on b3). Black would have obtained two connected passed pawns on the queenside, and the weakness of the c4 square and the c3 pawn would have been no adornment to White's position. But even so, this was White's last opportunity to play actively – now he altogether fails to achieve e3-e4.

21 ... ♗d7
22 ♖fb1 ♘b3!

Averbakh has subtly evaluated the resulting ending, and he forces the exchange of queens.

23 ♘xb3 cxb3 24 ♕xb5 ♗xb5 25 ♖xb3 ♗c4 26 ♖b7 ♖xe3 *(132)*

132

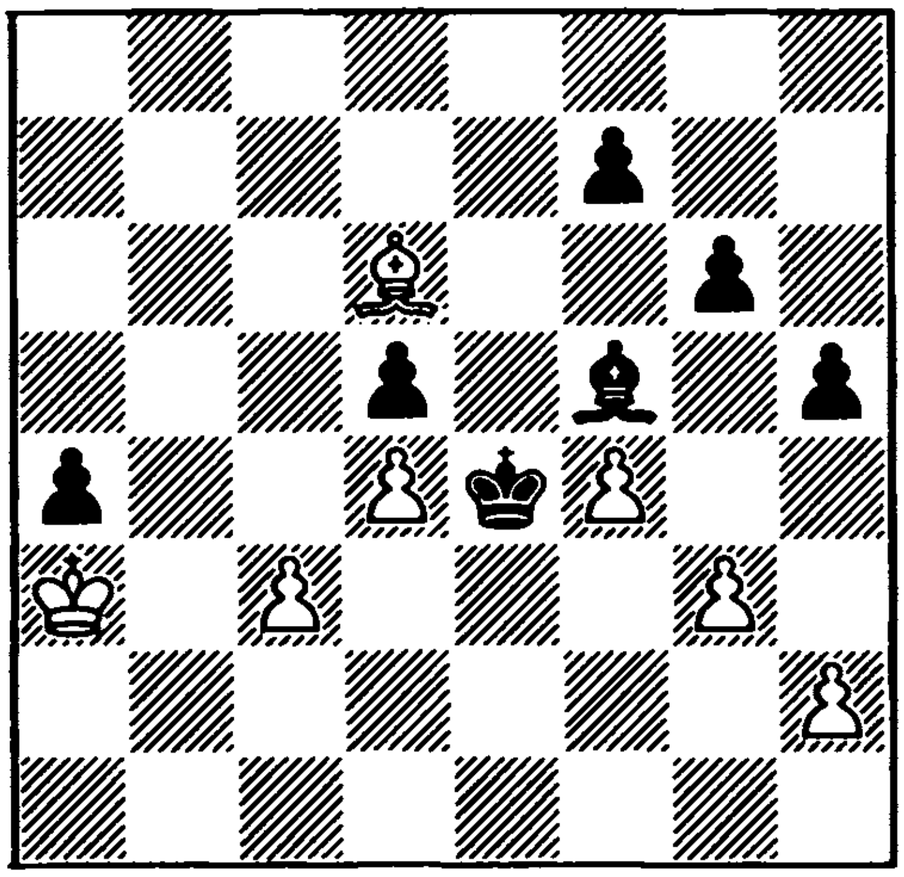


27 ♖ab1 h5 28 ♖b8+ ♖e8 29 ♗d6 a5 30 ♖xe8+ ♖xe8 31 ♖b8 ♖xb8 32 ♗xb8 ♔f8 33 ♔f2 ♔e7 34 ♔e3 ♔d7 35 ♗a7 ♔c6 36 ♗c5 ♔b5 37 ♔d2 ♗f1 38 g3 ♔c4 39 ♔c2 ♗g2 40 f4 ♗h3 41 ♗f8 g6 42 ♗d6 a4 43 ♗e7

The two players have completed a series of natural moves, and now Black sets about realising his positional advantage.

43 ... ♗f5+ 44 ♔b2 ♔d3 45 ♗d6 ♔e4 46 ♔a3 *(133)*

133



46 ... ♔f3!

Averbakh parts with his passed a-pawn; the game will be decided on the kingside.

47 ♔xa4 ♔g2 48 ♗e7 ♔xh2 49 ♗h4 ♗d3

Suppressing counterplay associated with c3-c4.

50 ♔b4 f6!

White's bishop cannot hold his kingside.

51 ♔c5 ♗c4 52 ♔d6 g5 53 fxg5

White also fails to save the game after 53 ♗xg5 fxg5 54 fxg5 ♔xg3 55 g6 ♗d3.

53 ... fxg5 54 ♗xg5 ♔xg3 55 ♔e5 h4 56 ♗f4+ ♔g2 57 ♔f5 h3 White resigns

Gligorić-Averbakh
Stockholm Interzonal 1952
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 a3 ♗xc3+ 5 bxc3 0-0

The blockading move 5 ... c5 is more popular. The text move has often occurred in the games of one of the most subtle interpreters of the Nimzo-Indian Defence, grandmaster Mark Taimanov.

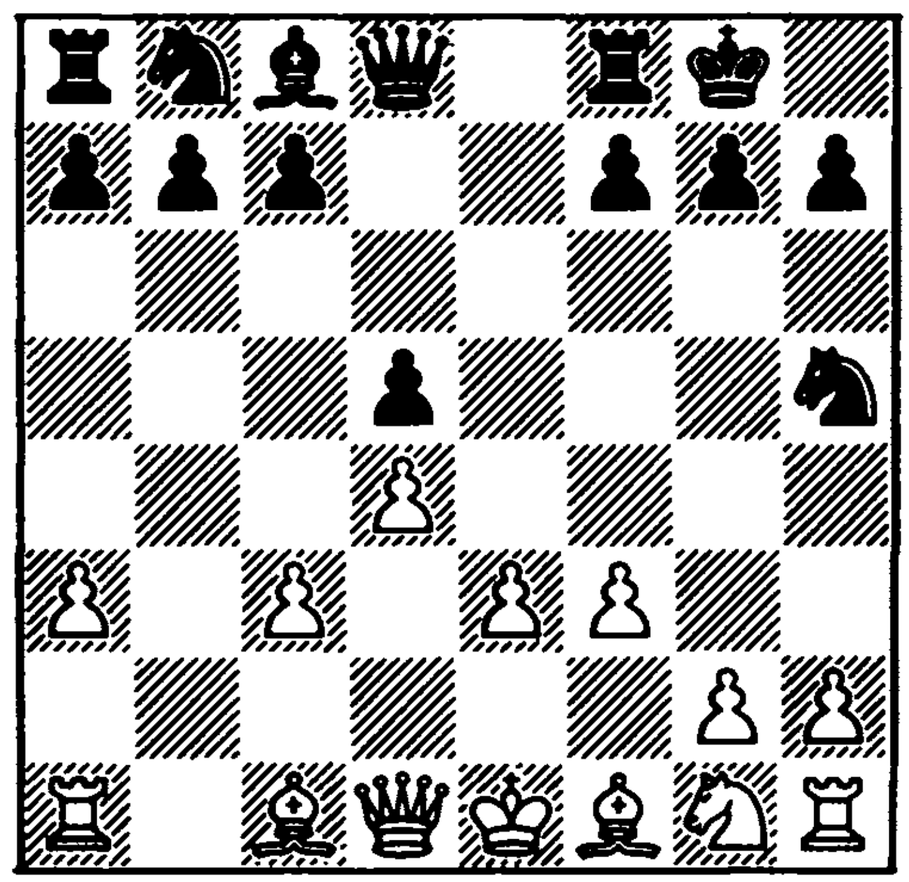
6 f3 d5

Here Taimanov used to prefer 6 ... ♘e8, with the main idea of being able to answer f3-f4 with ... f5, although ... b6, ... ♗a6 and ... ♘d6! is another possibility. After 6 ... d5 positions typical of the Botvinnik Variation are usually reached.

7 cxd5 exd5
8 e3 ♘h5 *(134)*

8 ... c5 9 ♗d3 leads to the initial position of the Botvinnik Variation. Black can also impede 9 ♗d3 by 8 ... ♗f5 – this, for example, was how Tal played in his first match against Botvinnik (Moscow 1960) – but in this position Averbakh regularly chose the knight manoeuvre. In general, neither 8 ... ♗f5, nor 8 ... ♘h5, nor the 'classical' 8 ... c5 gets Black out of his opening difficulties.

134



9 ♕c2

Important for the theory of this variation

are two crucial encounters between Taimanov and Averbakh, played within an interval of one month in Moscow (1958) and Tbilisi (1959). In both games Taimanov continued 9 ♘e2, and after 9 ... f5 he seized the initiative both with 10 c4 c6 11 ♔f2 ♔h8 12 ♕b3 dxc4 13 ♕xc4 ♘d7 14 ♘c3 ♘b6 15 ♕c5 (Moscow 1958), and after 10 g3 b6 11 ♗g2 ♗a6 12 0-0 ♘f6 13 ♖e1 ♘c6 14 ♘f4 ♕e8 15 h3 ♖d8 16 g4 (Tbilisi 1959).

The quiet 9 g3 is also good, as played by the Rumanian grandmaster Gheorghiu against Averbakh at Mar del Plata in 1965.

9 ... ♖e8
10 g4!

The critical reply. After Black has rejected the 'impeding' move ... f5, Gligorić considers himself obliged to begin an attack on the kingside. On 10 ♗d3 Black would have escaped from all his difficulties by the spectacular 10 ... ♕h4+ 11 ♕f2 ♘f4! 12 ♗f1 ♕f6, and would have even gained a slight advantage.

10 ... ♘f4 11 h4 c5 12 ♔f2!

The logical consequence of the two preceding pawn thrusts. The king is quite safe at f2, and thanks to his strong and flexible pawn chain, White has the better prospects.

12 ... ♘g6
13 h5

Somewhat direct. Gheorghiu played strongly against Fischer at the Havana Olympiad (1966), inflicting a sensational defeat on the American, who up till then had been performing brilliantly: 13 ♗d3! ♘c6 14 ♘e2 ♗e6 15 g5! ♖c8 16 h5 ♘f8 17 g6!.

13 ... ♘f8 14 ♘e2 ♘c6 15 ♘f4?!

This eases Black's defence – the exchange of knights is in his favour. 15 ♘g3! was more dangerous.

15 ... ♘e6! 16 ♘xe6 ♗xe6 17 ♗d3 h6!

White's offensive has been halted, and Black begins preparing a counterattack on the queenside.

18 ♗d2 ♖c8
19 ♕b2 ♘a5!

Aiming at the light squares.

20 ♖ag1 f6!
21 ♖e1

After suffering a fiasco on the kingside, White pins his hopes on a breakthrough in the centre. He has no play, other than that associated with e3-e4.

21 ... ♗f7 22 ♕b1 ♖e7 23 ♖e2 ♘c4! 24 ♗c1 ♕b6!

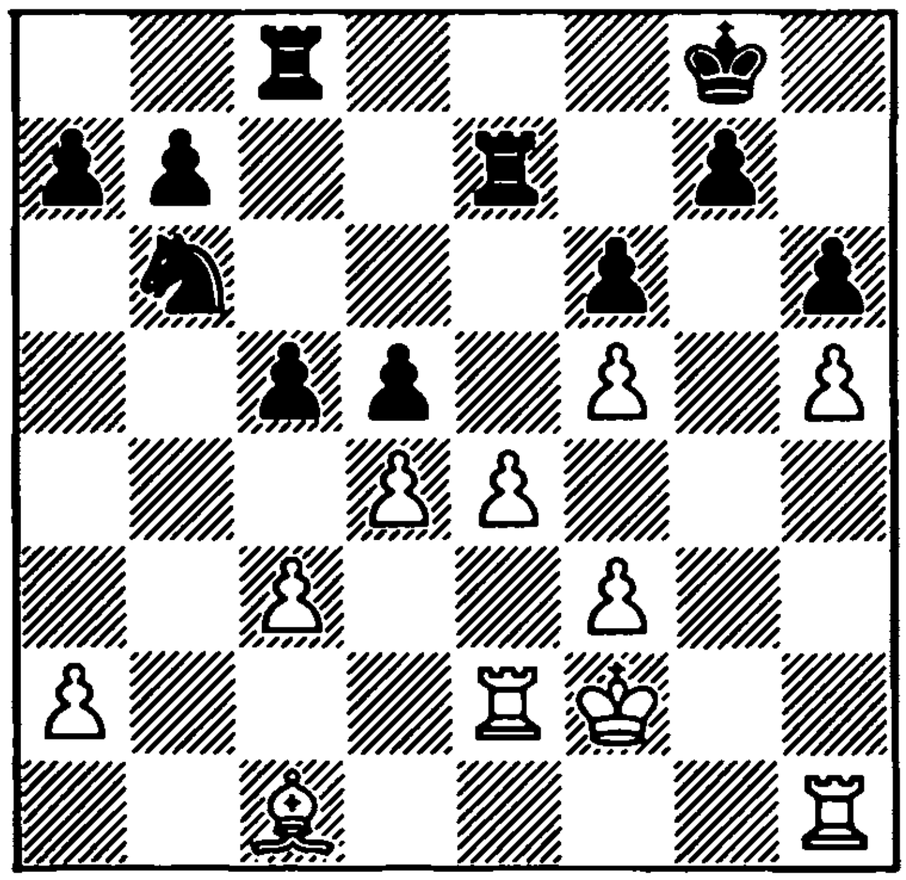
The exchange of queens is an essential link in Black's plan. Averbakh made the following interesting comment: "From the viewpoint of general principles, 24 ... ♕d6, not exchanging the queens, is perhaps best, but the move in the game is psychologically more correct. Having failed to create an attack on the kingside, White is trying to begin active play in the centre. However, the insecure position of his king makes this plan exceptionally double-edged. After the exchange of queens White decides that he need no longer fear for his king, and he immediately makes an advance in the centre, which, however, encounters a subtle refutation".

25 ♕xb6 ♘xb6 26 ♗f5?! ♗e6 27 e4?

This active move of the central pawn is a continuation of White's incorrect strategy.

27 ... ♗xf5
28 gxf5 *(135)*

135



28 ... ♘a4!

This flank thrust is highly unpleasant for White.

29 ♗d2 ♖ce8
30 ♖h4

It transpires that the natural 30 ♖he1 fails to 30 ... ♘b2!.

30 ... ♘b2!

Here too this move proves to be very strong.

31 ♔f1?

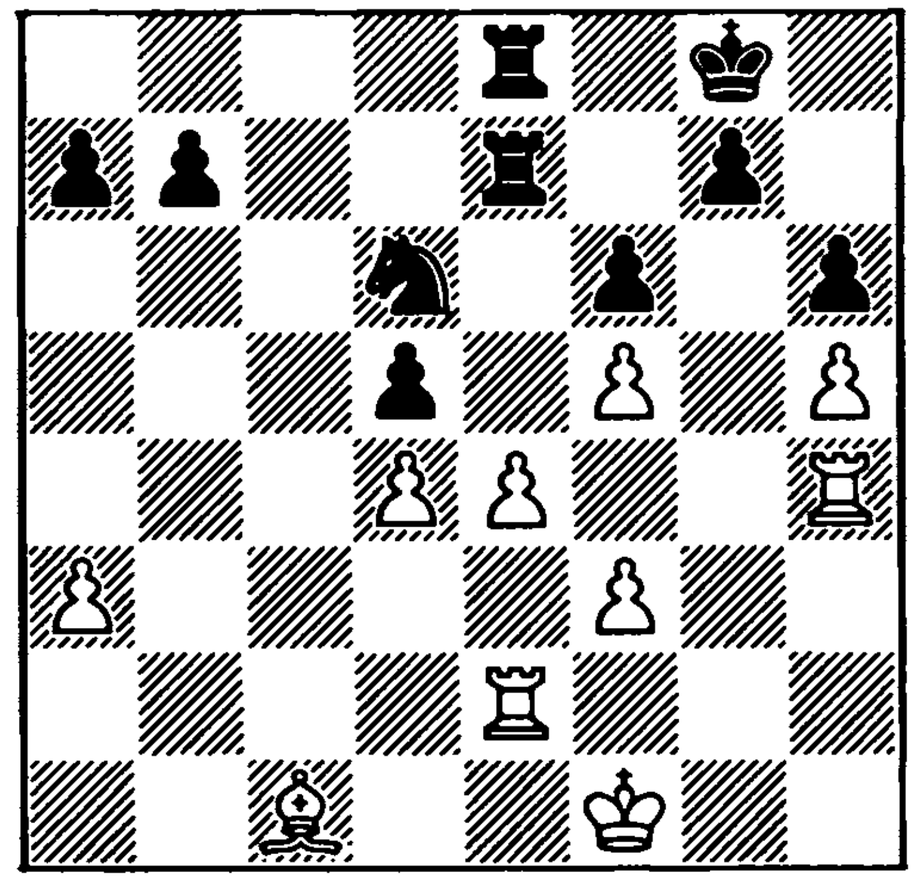
"The unexpected turn of events has unsettled White, and he makes a decisive mistake. 31 ♗e1 ♘c4 32 dxc5 was more tenacious, but even then after 32 ... dxe4 33 ♖hxe4 ♖xe4 34 fxe4 ♖c8 Black has the better ending" (Averbakh).

31 ... ♘c4
32 ♗c1

Now it is unlikely that 32 dxc5 would have helped White, on account of 32 ... dxe4 33 fxe4 ♖xe4 34 ♖hxe4 ♖xe4 35 ♗c1 ♖h4 (indicated by Averbakh).

32 ... cxd4
33 cxd4 ♘d6 *(136)*

136



The manoeuvre of the black knight from b6 to d6 via b2 has been successfully completed. White's position in the centre collapses, and loss of material is inevitable.

34 ♖g4 dxe4 35 ♗xh6 ♘xf5 36 ♗c1 ♘xd4 37 ♖exe4 ♘xf3 38 ♖xe7 ♖xe7

Black is two pawns up with a good position. Averbakh's conduct of the technical stage is sure and precise.

39 ♔f2 ♘e5 40 ♖d4 ♖d7 41 ♔e3 ♖c7! 42 ♖d1 ♔f7 43 ♖g1 ♖c2 44 ♔e4 ♖h2

Here resignation would have been quite in order, but Gligorić drags out his hopeless resistance for nearly another twenty moves.

45 h6 gxh6 46 ♔d5 ♖h5 47 ♔d6 b5 48 ♖g3 ♖h4 49 ♔d5 a6 50 ♗d2 ♖h5 51 ♗c3 ♖g5 52 ♖h3 h5 53 ♗d2 ♖f5 54 ♔e4 ♔e6 55 ♗f4 ♘g6 56 ♗e3 ♖e5+ 57 ♔f3 ♖d5 58 ♔e2 ♘e5 59 ♗f2 ♘c4 60 a4 ♖e5+ 61 ♔f3 b4 62 ♔g2 a5 White resigns

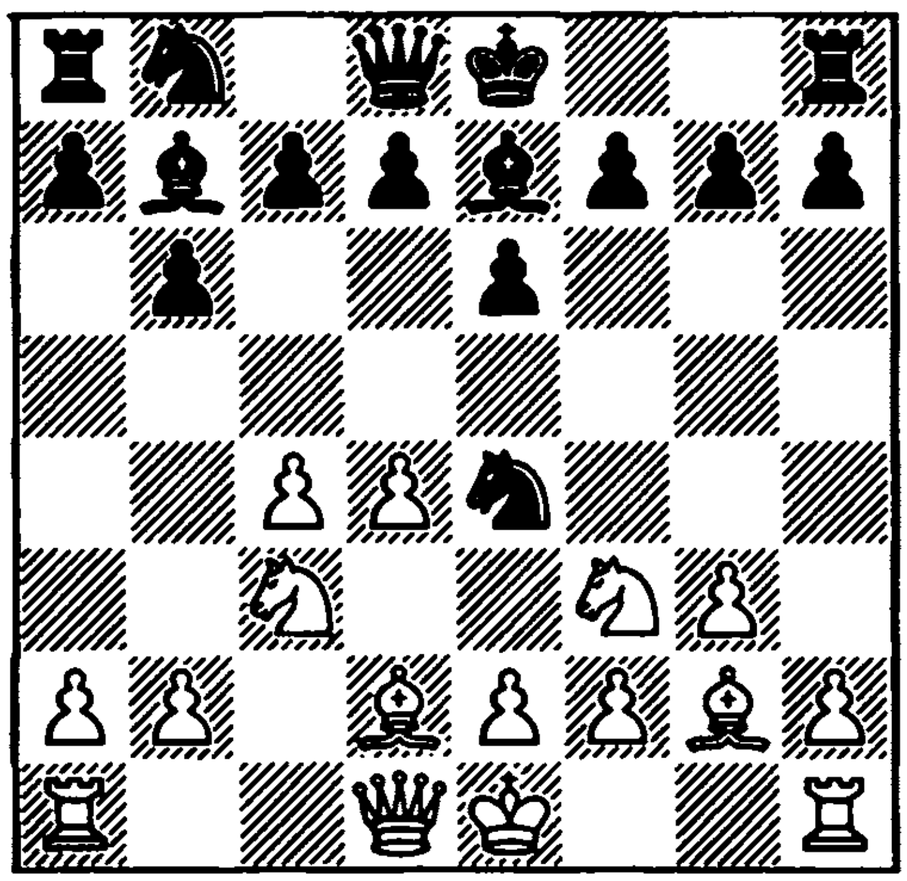
So that the reader should not gain the impression that all 'light-square' endings are won for Black, we give an example where it was White who was successful, and moreover, the player who lost was Averbakh himself. The reader is also

referred to the game **Alekhine v Znosko-Borovsky**, Birmingham 1926 (cf. p.84 of Alekhine's *On the Road to the World Championship 1923-1927*, Pergamon 1984).

Stahlberg-Averbakh
Zürich Candidates 1953
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 g3 ♗b7 5 ♗g2 ♗e7 6 ♘c3 ♘e4 7 ♗d2 *(137)*

137



This strong and logical move of Opocensky, which occurred only sporadically in the 1950s, has now become one of the most popular in the given position. White begins a battle for the e4 square; his queen will be comfortably deployed at c2. In the variation 7 ♕c2 ♘xc3 8 ♕xc3 the queen is diverted from the battle for the central squares, whereas here Black faces the constant threat of d4-d5.

7 ... f5

The 'classical' 7 ... d5 is more reliable, but at the present time 7 ... ♗f6 occurs most frequently. True, in this case it is White who is usually successful, for example: 7 ... ♗f6 8 0-0 0-0 9 ♖c1 c5 10 d5 exd5 11 cxd5 ♘xd2 12 ♘xd2 d6 13 ♘de4! ♖e8?! 14 ♕d2 a6 15 b4! (Kasparov-Ligterink, Malta Olympiad 1980), or 13 ... ♗e7 14 f4! ♘a6 15 f5 ♗f6 16 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 17 ♘e4 ♕e5 18 f6! (Pinter-Belyavsky, Lucerne 1985).

8 0-0

Many years later it was established that 8 d5! gives White the advantage. If now 8 ... 0-0 9 ♕c2 ♘xd2 10 ♘xd2 e5 11 0-0 d6 12 f4! exf4 13 gxf4 ♗f6 14 e4!, with a great advantage to White (Damjanović-Lengyel, Sochi 1967). The following pawn sacrifice is also inadequate: 8 ... ♗f6 9 ♕c2 ♘a6 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♘xe4 fxe4 12 ♕xe4 ♖e8 13 ♕c2 (Benko-Matanović, Winnipeg 1967). Perhaps best is 8 ... ♗f6 9 ♕c2 ♘xd2!?, as played in Tukmakov-Timman (Las Palmas Interzonal 1982), although even here White's chances are preferable.

8 ... 0-0
9 ♕c2

Now the advance d4-d5 is no longer so dangerous: 9 d5 ♗f6 10 ♖c1 ♘a6 11 a3 ♘ac5 12 b4 ♘xc3 13 ♗xc3 ♘e4 14 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 15 ♘d4 c6! with a good game for Black (Gheorghiu-Geller, Moscow 1981), or 11 ♗e1 ♕e7 12 ♘d4 ♘ac5 13 b4 ♘xc3 14 ♖xc3 ♘e4 15 ♖d3 a6, again with counterchances for Black (Pietzsch-Bilek, Salgotarjan 1967). However, Stahlberg's move is also not especially promising for White.

9 ... ♘xc3
10 ♗xc3 ♗e4

Now the battle for the e4 square demands some effort of White.

11 ♕b3 a5?!

11 ... ♗f6 was simpler, followed by ... ♕e7, ... d6, ... ♘d7 and so on.

12 ♘e1 a4 13 ♕d1 ♗xg2 14 ♘xg2

The advance of the pawn to a4 has not

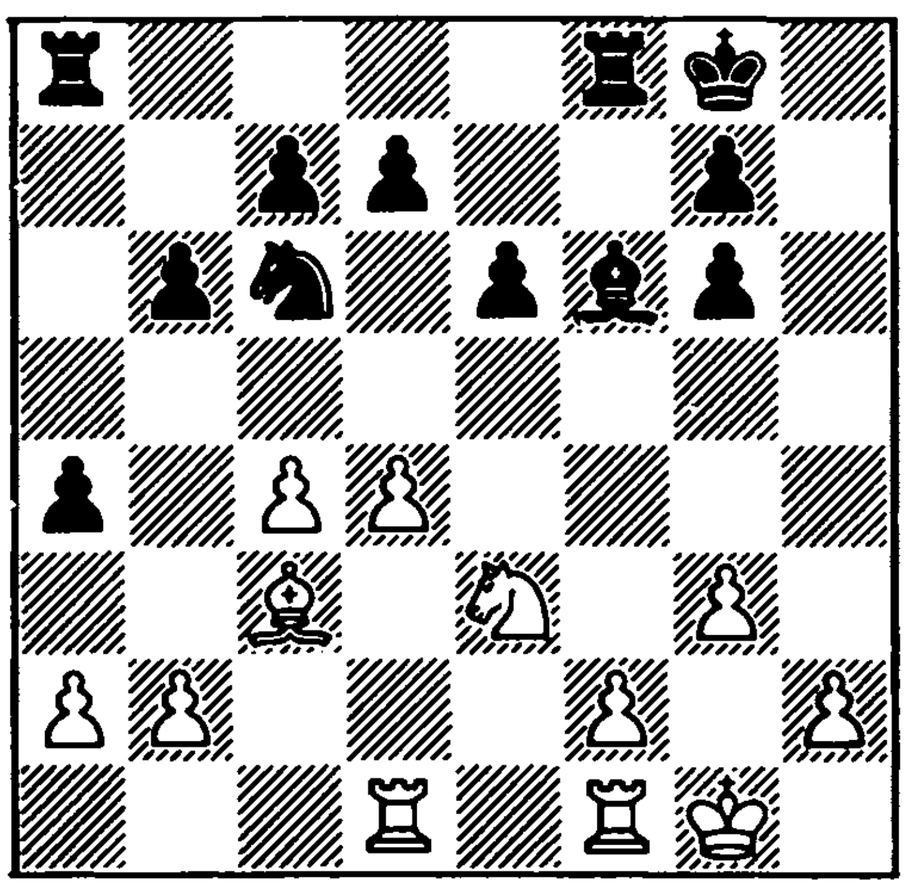
brought Black any gains. White regroups and quickly achieves e2-e4.

14 ... ♗f6 15 ♕d3 ♘c6 16 e4! fxe4 17 ♕xe4 ♕e8 18 ♖ad1 ♕f7 19 ♘e3 ♕g6

By offering the exchange of queens, Averbakh removes his worries about the a4 pawn, but the resulting ending is markedly better for White. It should be said that Stahlberg was a difficult opponent for the Soviet grandmaster: over a period of one year, three meetings between them (Stockholm 1952, and two at Zürich 1953) ended in wins for the Swede.

20 ♕xg6 hxg6 *(138)*

138



21 ♖fe1 ♘a5 22 ♖e2 ♖fe8 23 ♖c2 d6 24 ♔g2 ♔f7 25 ♖d3 ♔e7 26 h4 ♔d7 27 f4

White has fixed the opponent's pawn weaknesses on the kingside, concentrated his main forces in the centre, and is ready to begin active play. Black can merely keep a watch on the possible regroupings of the white pieces and take timely countermeasures.

27 ... ♘b7

Such a position is not easy to play as Black, in particular psychologically. Each of his moves has some drawbacks, and it is always difficult for a top-class player to force himself to make a move that worsens his position. The consequence of such a situation is usually time trouble.

28 ♘g4

Stahlberg exploits the temporary absence of pressure on the c4 pawn by the black knight, and creates a camouflaged trap.

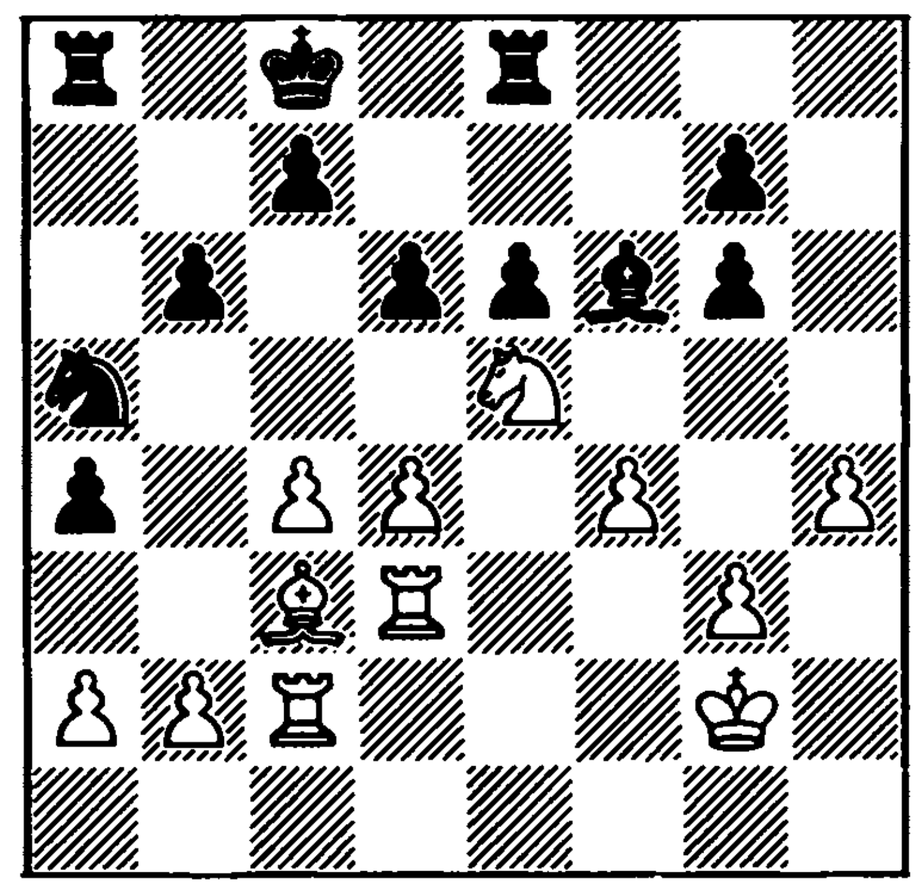
28 ... ♘a5

It is hard to say whether or not Averbakh foresaw his opponent's reply, but in the light of further events 28 ... ♔c8 looks sounder.

29 ♘e5+! ♔c8 *(139)*

The capture with either the pawn or the bishop would have immediately led to a strategically lost position for Black.

139



30 ♗xa5?!

The Swedish grandmaster aims in the first instance to insure himself against any possible surprises, and he takes play into a rook ending. In doing so White loses a significant part of his advantage. 30 ♘xg6!? ♘xc4 31 ♗b4 was a much more promising continuation. Now, as shown by Bronstein in the tournament book, Black has the possibility of an interesting piece sacrifice: 31 ... a3! 32 ♖xc4 axb2 33 ♖b3 ♖xa2,

with an unclear position. But White can decline the sacrifice by 32 b3! ♘b2 33 ♖dd2, with a clear advantage.

30 ... dxe5 31 fxe5 ♖xa5 32 exf6 gxf6 33 c5 bxc5 34 dxc5 ♖d8?

Black was obviously in time trouble. He should have played 34 ... e5, with a probable draw.

35 ♖f3! f5
36 ♖e3!

The white rook is transferred to a key square in the centre.

36 ... ♖e8 37 ♖e5 ♔d8 38 ♖ce2 ♖b5 39 ♔f3 ♖b4 40 c6?!

As shown by Bronstein, 40 a3 was sounder.

40 ... ♖e4?

"This is altogether pointless. Black should have attacked the pawn with 40 ... ♖b6, when 41 ♖xe6 ♖xe6 42 ♖xe6 ♖xb2 43 ♖xg6 ♖xa2 would have left him with some hopes" (Bronstein).

41 ♖2xe4 fxe4+ 42 ♖xe4 a3 43 ♖d4+ ♔c8 44 ♖a4 Black resigns

The varieties of pawn structure in endgames characterised by light-square strategy are not restricted to the examples given. The structure can change in the most varied ways, which in some cases favour White, and in other cases Black. Apart from the examples given here, the reader is also referred to the game **Sämisch-Alekhine**, Dresden 1926 (cf. p.104 of Alekhine's *On the Road to the World Championship 1923-1927*).

Simagin-Keres
Pärnu 1947
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 a3

Keres makes an interesting comment, which typifies the viewpoint of that time: "The Nimzo-Indian Defence (3 ♘c3 ♗b4) is not so dangerous, that to prevent it White should resort to the passive text move". Today masters have a more tolerant attitude to such strategy. True, a2-a3 is usually played after 3 ♘f3 b6 or 3 ♘f3 b6 4 ♘c3 ♗b7, when a currently popular set-up arises, one which, thanks to victories by Petrosian and especially by Kasparov, has become a formidable weapon for White against the Queen's Indian Defence.

3 ... b6

Black chooses a Queen's Indian set-up. Here 3 ... d5 or 3 ... c5! was good.

4 ♘c3 ♗b7?!
5 ♘f3?!

The players have exchanged 'compliments'. On 4 ♘c3 it was essential to play 4 ... d5, since after 4 ... ♗b7 White could have gained a spatial advantage by 5 d5!.

5 ... ♘e4

"A good move, forestalling the pin ♗g5 and securing Black control of e4" – Keres wrote in the tournament bulletin. During the intervening 40 years the evaluation of the knight move has changed, and today Black's main reply is considered to be 5 ... d5.

6 ♕c2?!

After this tame move Black secures control of e4 and gains the advantage in the centre. Of course, to think out in all its details the thematic 6 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 7 ♘d2!, introduced 34 years later by Kasparov, was not easy at the board, but even the simple 6 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 7 e3 ♗e7 8 ♗d3 would have given White a good game. But after the strongest move 7 ♘d2!

White evidently gains the advantage: 7 ... ♗g6 8 g3! ♘c6?! (*8 ... c6!* – Kasparov) 9 e3! a6 10 b4 b5 11 cxb5 axb5 12 ♗b2 ♘a7 13 h4! h6 14 d5! (Kasparov-Andersson, Tilburg 1981), or 7 ... ♗b7 8 e4 g6 9 ♗d3 ♗g7 10 ♘f3 d6 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♗g5 ♕d7 13 ♕d2 (Polugayevsky-Christiansen, Thessaloniki Olympiad 1984).

White's neglect of the centre costs him dearly.

6 ... ♘xc3 7 ♕xc3 ♗e7 8 ♗f4?!

It was not yet too late for 8 e3 and 9 ♗d3.

8 ... 0-0
9 h4

The direct consequence of 8 ♗f4: on 9 e3 Black has the unpleasant 9 ... f5!, when the bishop is in danger. But now White is even further behind in development.

9 ... f5
10 g3?!

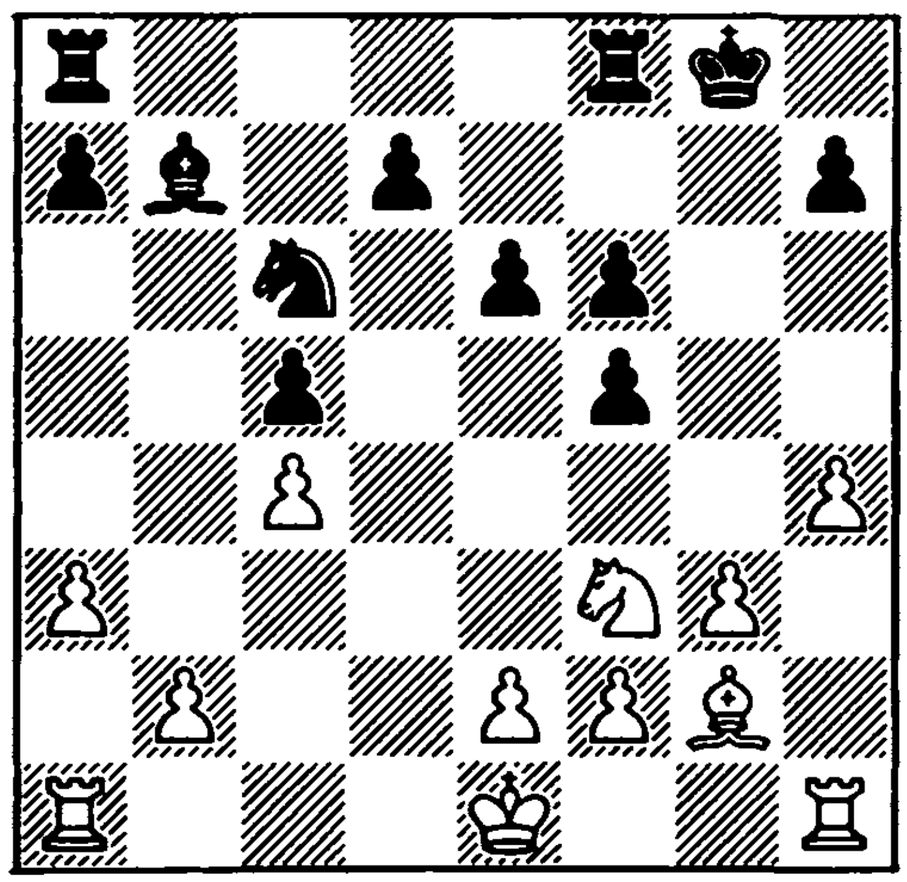
"The simple 10 e3 was better" (Keres).

10 ... c5! 11 dxc5 bxc5 12 ♗g2 ♗f6 13 ♗e5

Otherwise there follows ... e5-e4, when things become completely bad for White.

13 ... ♘c6 14 ♗xf6 ♕xf6! 15 ♕xf6 gxf6! *(140)*

140



With this last move Keres strengthens his position in the centre and avoids disrupting the coordination of his rooks.

16 0-0-0

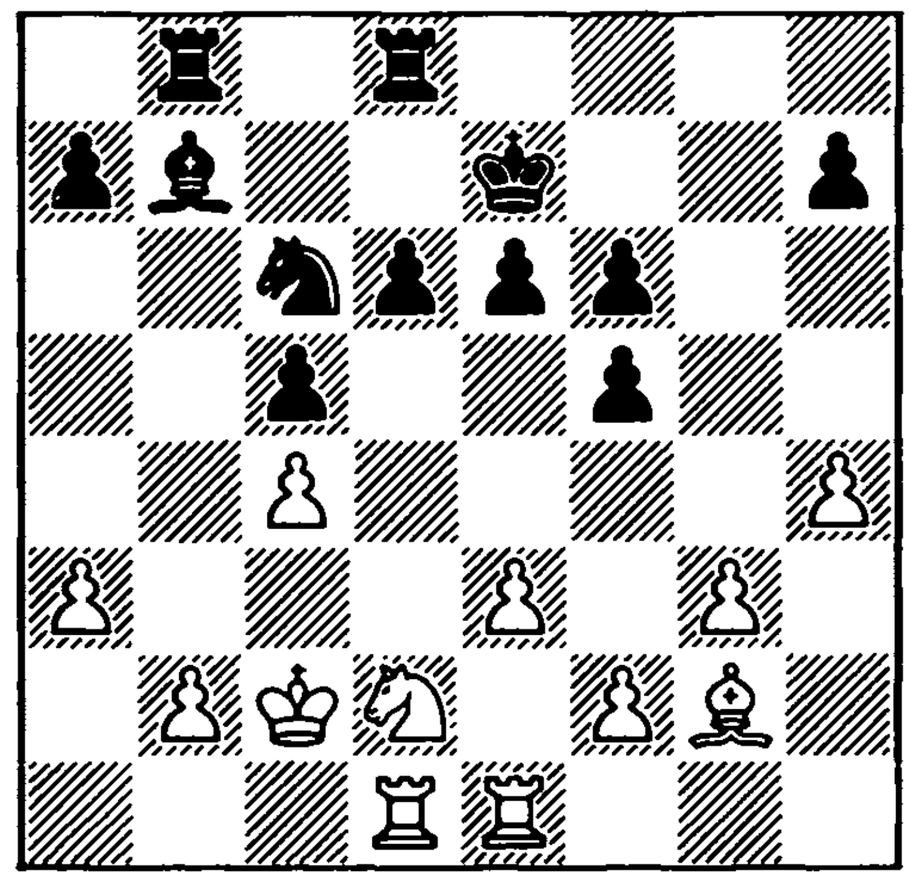
The correct decision. The white king must take part in the defence of the b-pawn.

16 ... ♖fd8

A solid continuation. As shown here by Keres, Black had available the interesting possibility of 16 ... ♘a5!? Now the capture of the d7 pawn loses immediately to 17 ... ♗e4, while after 17 ♘e1 ♗xg2 18 ♘xg2 ♖fd8 19 ♘e3 ♘b3+ and 20 ... ♘d4 Black maintains strong pressure on the opponent's position.

17 ♘d2 ♖ab8 18 e3 ♔f7 19 ♔c2 ♔e7 20 ♖he1 d6 *(141)*

141



21 b3?

"White's position was difficult, but probably defensible. For example, after 21 ♔c3 Black would have had various attacking possibilities, but there does not appear to be any forcing continuation to obtain a clear advantage. The text move is the decisive mistake, allowing Black to begin a strong attack on the queenside and to force the exchange of White's

strong bishop for the knight" (Keres).

21 ... a5!
22 ♗xc6

Forced, in view of the positional threat of 22 ... a4.

22 ... ♗xc6
23 a4 d5!

Black's pawn avalanche in the centre begins to advance.

24 ♔c3 d4+
25 ♔c2 ♖g8!

A subtle move, depriving White of his last hopes of counterplay associated with 26 e4, in view of 26 ... f4 27 gxf4 ♖g4.

26 exd4 cxd4
27 c5

A desperate attempt to gain counterplay.

27 ... ♖gc8
28 ♔b2

28 ♘c4 would have failed to 28 ... ♗e4+ 29 ♔b2 ♖xc5 30 ♖xd4? e5.

28 ... ♗d5 29 ♖c1 e5 30 ♘c4

Simagin takes play into a lost rook ending, but nothing better for White can be suggested.

30 ... ♖xc5 31 ♘b6 ♖xc1 32 ♘xd5+ ♔d6 33 ♖xc1 ♔xd5 34 ♖c7 ♔e4!

The quickest way to win.

35 ♖c6 ♔f3 36 ♖xf6 f4 37 gxf4 e4 White resigns

On 38 ♖e6 Black wins easily with 38 ... e3.

We conclude this chapter with an ending in which White makes a pretty breakthrough on the queenside.

Eingorn-Kupreichik
Minsk 1987
Ragozin Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗b4 5 cxd5 exd5 6 ♗g5 h6 7 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 8 ♕a4+ ♘c6 9 e3 0-0 10 ♗e2 ♗e6 11 a3 ♗d6!

The correct response to White's handling of the variation. After the exchange on c3 the pawn structure would favour White, who after advancing c3-c4 would develop strong pressure against the opponent's queenside on the semi-open b- and c-files.

Had White played a2-a3 on the previous move, Black would have had time to 'hook' onto the opponent's kingside by 10 ... ♗xc3+ 11 bxc3 ♕g6!, and finally, 10 ♗b5 can lead to complications not unfavourable for Black after 10 ... ♗g4 11 ♘d2 ♘xd4!? 12 exd4 ♕xd4.

12 ♘b5

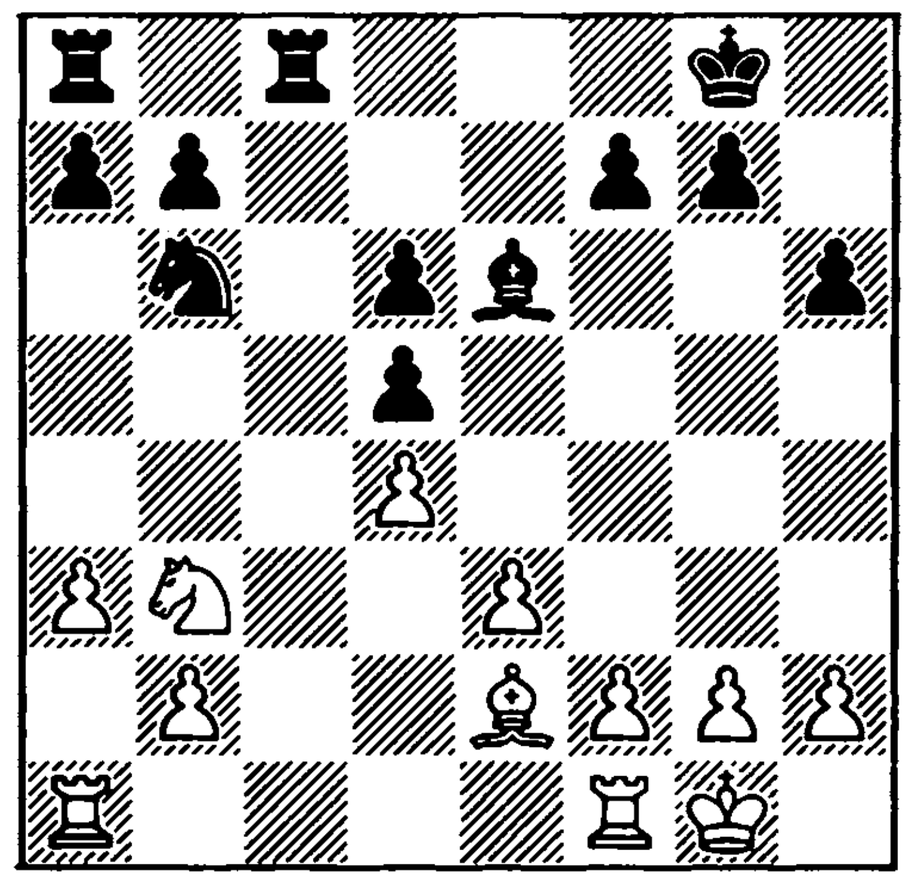
12 ♕b3 can be simply met by 12 ... a6, when both of the black pawns are immune (*13 ♕xb7?? ♘a5* or *13 ♘xd5?? ♕f5*).

12 ... ♖fc8?

But this is pointless. After 12 ... ♗g4 Black would not have experienced any difficulties.

13 ♘xd6 cxd6 14 0-0 ♕d8 15 ♘d2 ♕b6 16 ♕b3 ♕xb3 17 ♘xb3 *(142)*

142



At the first opportunity White has taken play into the endgame. It is obvious that the rooks will soon disappear from the board, and then a minor piece ending will arise where Black has doubled pawns on the d-file.

17 ... ♗f5 18 ♖fc1 ♘e7 19 ♘a5 ♖xc1+ 20 ♖xc1 ♖c8 21 ♖xc8+ ♗xc8 22 ♗b5 f5!?

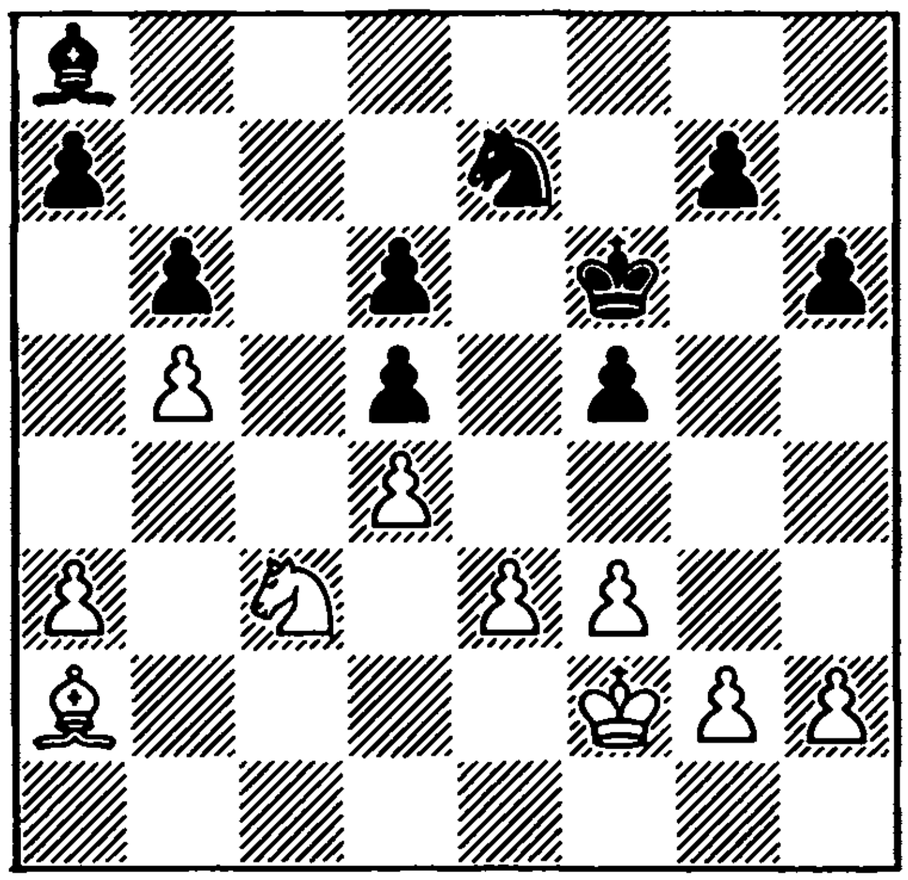
Black plans an active set-up on the kingside.

23 ♘b3 ♔f7 24 f3 ♔e6 25 ♔f2 ♗d7 26 ♗d3 ♘c6 27 ♔e2 ♘e7 28 ♘c1 ♔f6 29 ♘a2 ♗a4 30 ♘c1 ♗d7 31 b3 ♘c6 32 ♘a2 ♘e7 33 ♘c3 ♔e6 34 ♗b1 ♔f6 35 b4 b6

Perhaps there was some point in playing the 'crude' 35 ... b5?

36 ♗a2 ♗c6 37 b5 ♗b7 38 ♔f2 ♗a8 39 ♗b3 ♗b7 40 ♗a2 ♗a8 *(143)*

143



In this position the game was adjourned. White has managed to tie down the opponent to the defence of the d5 pawn, but it is very difficult for him to realise his advantage, in view of the closed nature of the position.

41 ♔e1 ♗b7 42 ♗b3 ♔g5 43 g3 ♔f6 44 ♔d2 g5

White's efforts at active play have to be concentrated on the queenside, and with his last move Black lets it be known that he is ready to make the break ... f4, in the event of the enemy king moving away towards b4.

45 ♔e1 ♔g6
46 ♘a2

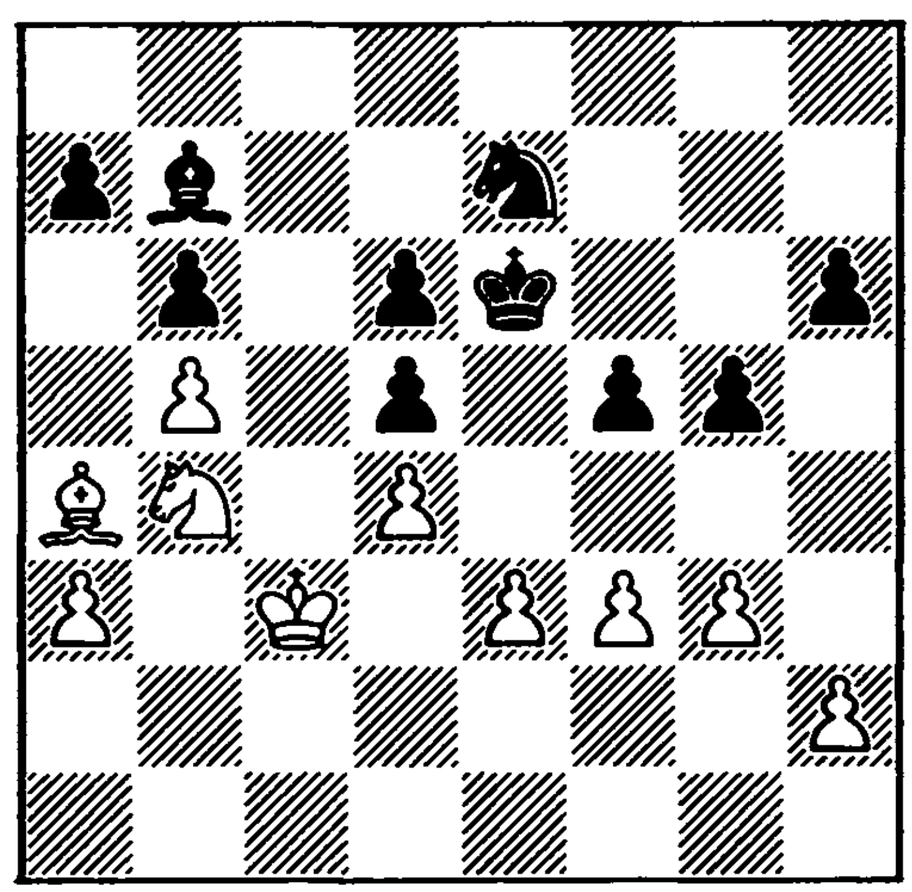
The knight is transferred to a more active post. From b4, apart from pressure on the d5 pawn, it will be threatening forays into the enemy position.

46 ... ♘g8
47 ♘b4 ♘e7

Black is controlling the possible invasion squares of the white knight. Eingorn therefore makes a series of waiting manoeuvres, hindering the opponent's orientation, and trying to lure at least one of the black pieces into an unfavourable position.

48 ♔f2 ♔f6 49 ♔e2 ♔g6 50 ♔d2 ♔f6 51 ♔d3 ♔g6 52 ♔e2 ♔f6 53 ♔d2 ♔g6 54 ♔d3 ♔g7 55 ♔c3 ♔f6 56 ♗a4 ♔e6 *(144)*

144



Black is ready to meet the advance of the enemy knight to c6. After 57 ♘c6?! ♗xc6 58 bxc6 a6 59 ♔b4 ♘c8 The piece sacrifice 60 ♗b5 axb5 61 ♔xb5 does not promise White any real gains, in view of

61 ... ♔e7 62 ♔a6 ♔d8 63 ♔b7 b5. Therefore Eingorn continues manoeuvring, with the aim of achieving the diagram position, but with the opponent to move.

57 ♗c2 ♔f7 58 ♗b3 ♔f6 59 ♔d2 ♔g6 60 ♗a4 ♔f6 61 ♔d3 ♔e6 62 ♔c3

The aim is achieved. Annotating this ending in the tournament bulletin, Bogdanov Eingorn's second, writes: "Now Black faces a choice. He can play 62 ... ♔d7, but this moves his king away from the kingside, and White can make the following regrouping: ♗b3, ♘a2, ♔b4 followed by a4-a5, when Black's counterplay on the kingside is less dangerous. Or he can play 62 ... ♗a8, but then he has to reckon with 63 ♗b3 ♔f6 64 ♘a6 ♗b7 65 ♘c7. Not seeing the danger, Black replied:"

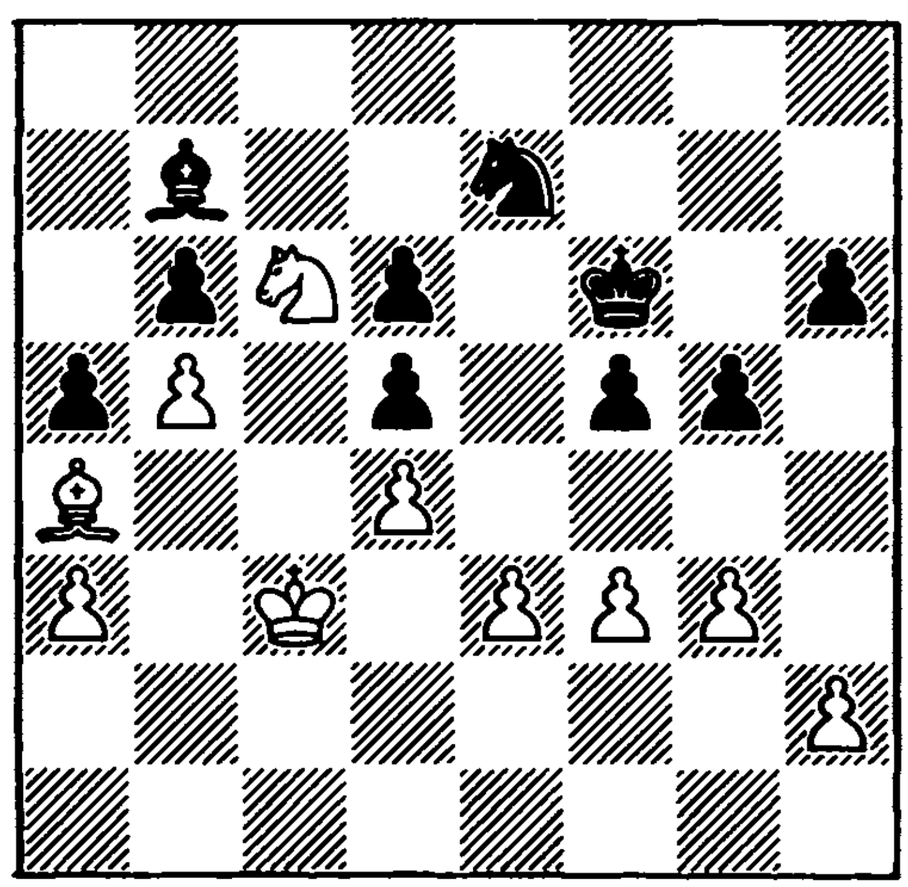
62 ... ♔f6
63 ♘c6!

The difference in the placing of the black king between e6 and f6 makes this move possible.

63 ... a5 *(145)*

Now 63 ... ♗xc6 no longer works: 64 bxc6 a6 65 c7 b5 66 ♗xb5 axb5 67 ♔b4, and so 63 ... a5 is practically forced.

145



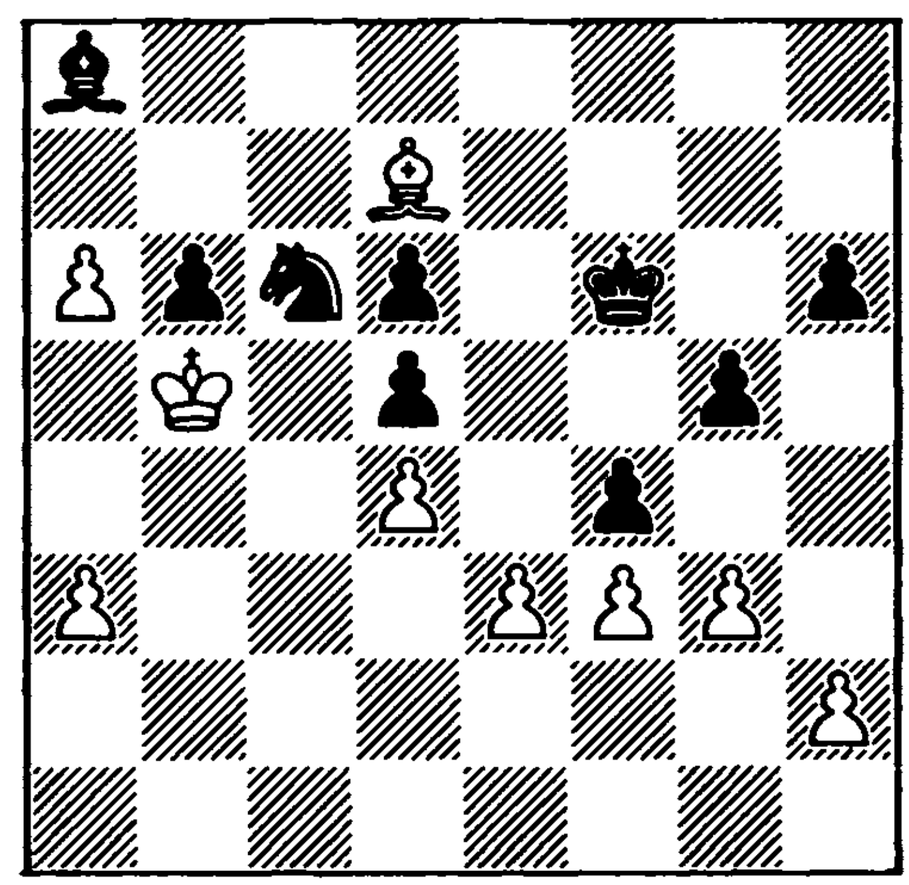
64 bxa6!

With a piece sacrifice White smashes the opponent's defences on the queenside.

64 ... ♗xc6 65 ♔b4! ♗a8 66 ♗d7 ♘c6+ 67 ♔b5 f4 *(146)*

Black's only hope.

146



68 ♗xc6!!

Brilliantly played. Eingorn allows the enemy pawn to queen, whereas White's passed pawn will still have two steps to make, but the black queen proves powerless, since the barrier of pawns on the d-file restricts its scope. As shown by Bogdanov, 68 exf4 ♘xd4+ 69 ♔xb6 gxf4 70 ♗c8 ♘c6 71 ♗b7 ♗xb7 72 ♔xb7 ♘a7 73 ♔xa7 d4 74 ♔b6 d3 75 a7 d2 76 a8=♕ d1=♕ 77 ♕f8+ ♔g6 78 ♕xf4 was also satisfactory for White (if *78 ... ♕b3+ 79 ♕b4 ♕xf3 80 a4*), but the continuation chosen by Eingorn is much more powerful and elegant.

68 ... fxe3 69 ♗xa8 e2 70 ♔xb6 e1=♕ 71 ♗c6 ♕c3

71 ... ♕b1+ 72 ♗b5 ♕b2 73 a7 would not have changed anything.

72 a7 ♕xd4+ 73 ♔b7 ♕b2+ 74 ♔c7 ♕xa3 75 a8=♕ ♕xa8 76 ♗xa8

The queens have disappeared, leaving White a bishop up. The rest is straightforward:

76 ... ♔e5 77 ♗c6 h5 78 ♔d7 h4 79 ♔e7 h3 80 ♗b7 d4 81 ♗a6 d3 82 ♗xd3 ♔d4 83 f4 Black resigns

3 Symmetry

In a number of modern opening set-ups the tension in the centre may be relieved by an exchange of the central pawns. The opening of the d- and c-files is then often used for the exchange of the heavy pieces, after which 'total calm' usually ensues. Usually, but not always. The relieving of the central tension leads to the two players having mutually symmetric pawn chains, and in the resulting ending the decisive role is played by other factors: the placing of the pieces and the initiative. It goes without saying that a highly important plus in symmetric positions is control of an open file. According to Nimzowitsch, the control of an open file is equivalent to the creation of a weakness in the opponent's position. The more active placing of the attacking pieces often forces the defender to make new concessions – in particular the creation of defects in his pawn formation – "a second weakness" according to Nimzowitsch. We will now examine some concrete examples of symmetric formations.

3.1 OPEN CENTRE

The exchange of the c- and d-pawns, opening the two files, is typical of certain variations of the Queen's Gambit (for example, 1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♗xc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 dxc5) and similar lines of the Nimzo-Indian Defence, the Grünfeld Defence (1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗g7 5 ♗f4 0-0 6 ♖c1 c5 7 dxc5 dxc4) and the English opening 1 c4 c5 etc. Moreover, all the resulting 'varieties' of pawn formation are one of two types:

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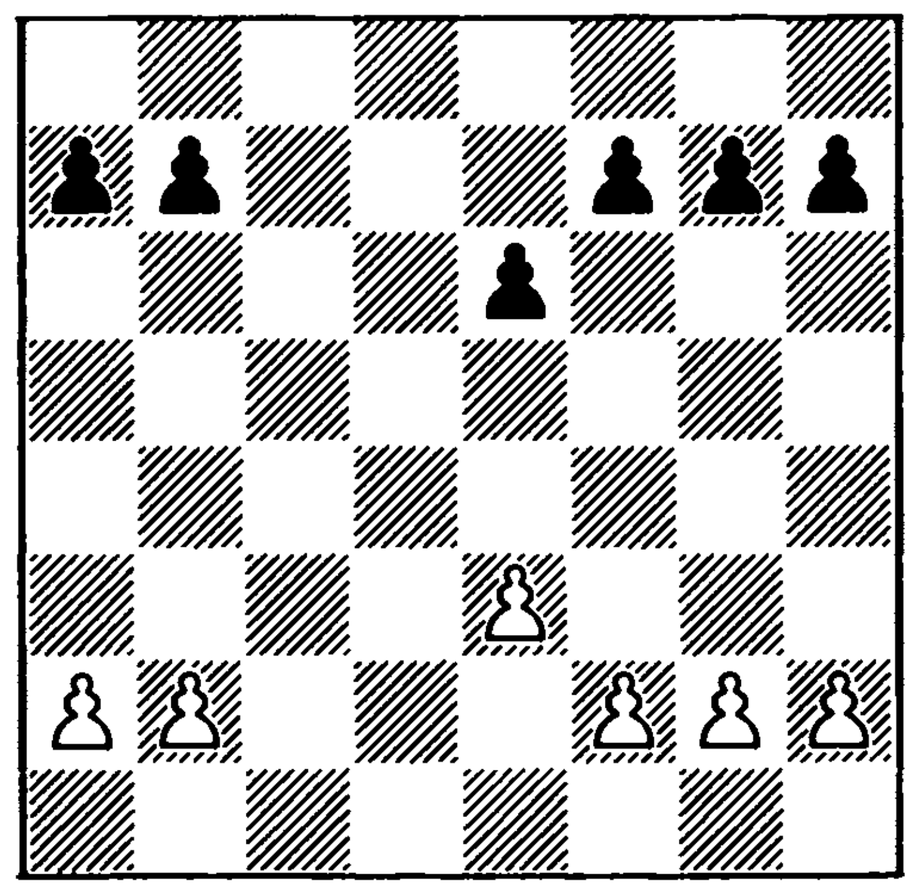

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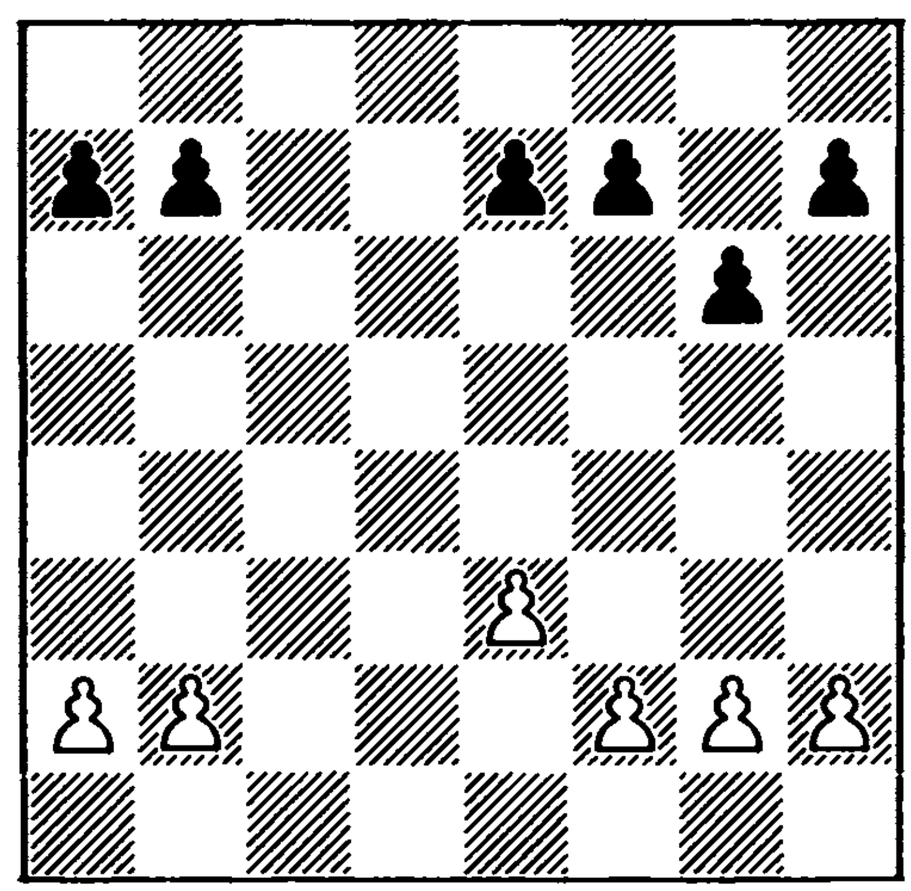


Of course, variations with colours reversed, for example: (White – a2, b2, e2, f2, g3, h2; Black – a7, b7, e6, f7, g7, h7) are also possible, but they do not change the essence of the matter. It is clear that, in the resulting situations, the placing of the rooks becomes of primary importance.

How many games have ended "♖a1-c1 (d1) ♖a8-c8 (d8) – Draw!" On the other hand, a competently played opening and an accurately determined moment for opening the centre and exchanging queens often produces the result of just one extra tempo, but what a tempo! "♖c1-c7 (♖c8-c2), and Black (White) stands badly". Of course, in practice things are much more complicated than in the 'picture' just described. We will merely name certain typical procedures, without pretending, of course, to a full description of the various resulting situations.

1. By studying the endgame from symmetric variations of the Tarrasch Defence and the Queen's Gambit, Rubinstein established that, in those cases where the extended fianchetto has been played (a2-a3, b2-b4 and ♗b2, or ... a6, ... b5 and ... ♗b7), the position of the knight at d7 (d2) is more favourable than at c6 (c3). Since Rubinstein's time the manoeuvre ... ♘b8-d7-b6-a4(c4) or ♘b1-d2-b3-a5(c5) has become standard (cf. the game **Vidmar-Rubinstein**).

2. When the opponent has carried out the extended fianchetto, it is often possible to break up his queenside by a timely thrust with the a-pawn (cf. the games **Bronstein-Spassky** and **Bronstein-Balashov**).

3. The development of the bishop by b2-b3 and ♗b2 (... b6 and ... ♗b7), which is more modest than the 'extended fianchetto', can also become a source of difficulties in the endgame, since the exchange of bishops will expose the weakness of the square c3 (c6), and the intrusion on this square of an enemy knight often leads to positions that Nimzowitsch compared with the onset of "paralysis".

4. The plan of advancing the e-pawn is double-edged. Whereas for an attack the advance e3-e4-e5 is nearly always good, in the endgame this advance and the establishment of an outpost at d6 may prove unfavourable. Moreover, the position of a pawn at e4 or e5 is often to the opponent's advantage (cf. the game **Smyslov-Kasparov**, Final Candidates Match, Vilnius 1984, on p.205 of Kasparov's *The Test of Time*).

The reader is also referred to three other games: **Nimzowitsch-Tarrasch**, Breslau 1925 (Game No.10 in Nimzowitsch's *My System*), **Andersson-Miles**, Tilburg 1981, the ending of which is analysed on p.206 of Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*, and the 2nd game of the 1986 **Kasparov-Karpov** World Championship Match (cf. p.5 of Kasparov's *London/Leningrad Championship Games*, Pergamon 1987).

All-knowing statistics record a large percentage of draws in symmetric endings with an open centre. But in games with a decisive result it is White who is more often successful, and this is understandable: the transition into the endgame is sometimes the only way of maintaining the initiative in a symmetric opening variation.

Vidmar-Rubinstein
Prague 1908
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 e3 ♘f6 3 ♘f3 c5 4 c4 e6 5 ♘c3 a6

It is customary to assume that the method of 'fighting for a tempo' in the Queen's Gambit began to be employed in the Orthodox Defence in the 1920s. But in fact, Rubinstein used to play this way at the very start of his career! Black avoids the 'normal' (as Tarrasch expressed it) position of the Queen's Gambit (5 ... ♘c6) and makes a useful move. A different route has been prepared for the knight at b8.

In passing, we should mention that the

attempt to chose Rubinstein's plan as White (after 5 a3) encounters a convincing refutation: 5 ... cxd4! 6 exd4 ♗e7! The absence of the knight from c6 makes the plan of c4-c5 harmless (7 c5 b6! 8 b4 a5!), and after 7 ♘c3 0-0 8 ♗f4 ♘c6 9 ♖c1 ♘e4! Black has an excellent game (Keres-Tal, 24th USSR Championship, Moscow 1957). True, this became known only some fifty years later . . .

6 dxc5?!

Vidmar gives up the 'fight for a tempo' – although in 1908 he would not have even known such a term! Even so, he should not have allowed the f8 bishop to develop 'in one go'.

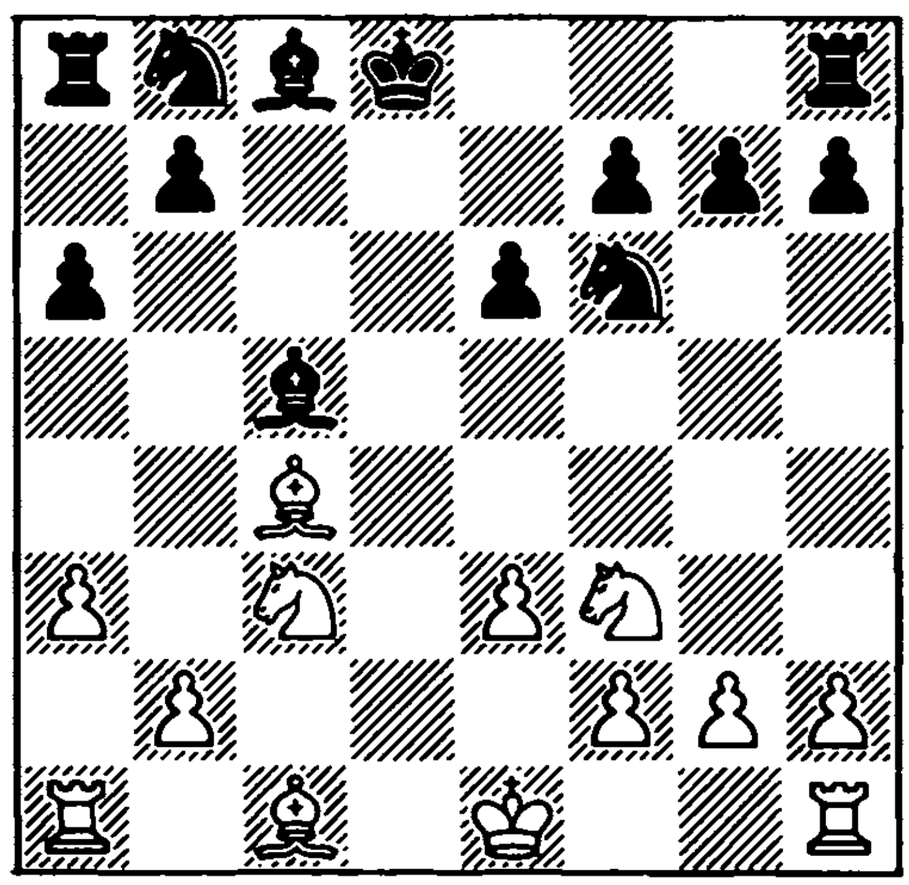
If the position after 6 a3 did not appeal to White, he could have chosen 6 cxd5!? Here is a recent example, Gavrikov-Mochalov, Vilnius 1983: 6 ... exd5 7 ♗e2 ♘c6 8 0-0 ♗d6 9 b3 0-0 10 ♗b2 cxd4 11 ♘xd4 ♖e8 12 ♖c1 ♗c7 13 ♖e1 ♕d6 14 g3 ♗e6 15 ♘xc6! bxc6 16 ♗f3 ♗f5 17 ♕d4 c5 18 ♕f4! ♕d7 19 ♕a4 ♕e6 20 ♘xd5! ♘xd5 21 ♖xc5 ♖ed8 22 ♕c4 1-0.

6 ... ♗xc5
7 a3 dxc4!

The simplest way to equalise.

8 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8
9 ♗xc4 *(149)*

149

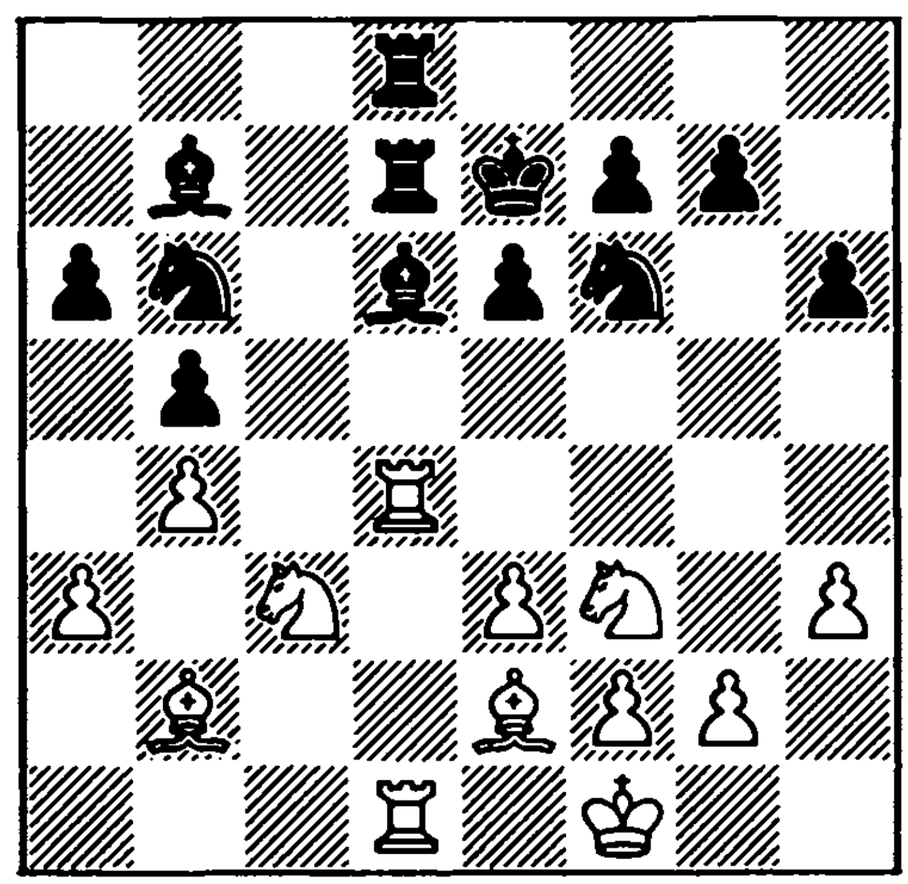


9 ... b5 10 ♗e2 ♗b7 11 b4 ♗d6 12 0-0 ♘bd7!

Rubinstein's plan begins to take shape. Black has taken play into an ending, in the hope of exploiting the advantage of the knight at b6 over the knight at c3.

13 ♗b2 ♔e7 14 ♖fd1 ♖hd8 15 ♖d2 ♘b6 16 ♖ad1 ♖d7 17 ♔f1 ♖ad8 18 h3 h6 19 ♖d4? *(150)*

150



Up till now White has made only micro-inaccuracies (instead of *10 ♗e2* it would have been preferable to play *10 ♗d3* and develop the king at e2, while *15 ♘d4* was stronger than *15 ♖d2*), but until the last move his position was perfectly defensible. With the rook move to d4 Vidmar commits a serious mistake, after which White's position sharply deteriorates. He should have transferred his knight from f3 to b3 via d4.

19 ... ♖c8!

Threatening 20 ... ♗xf3 21 ♗xf3 ♗e5.

20 ♖4d2?!

20 ♘d2 would have been better, although after 20 ... ♘fd5 White's position is unpleasant.

20 ... ♗xf3!

21 gxf3

Forced. Taking with the bishop would have lost to 21 ... ♘c4.

21 ... ♗e5
22 ♘a4?

This finally ruins White's game. As shown by Kmoch, he could have resisted with 22 ♖xd7+ ♘fxd7 23 ♖c1 ♘c4 24 ♗xc4 ♖xc4 25 ♘d1 ♘b6 26 ♖xc4 ♘xc4 27 ♗xe5 ♘xe5, transposing into a difficult knight ending.

22 ... ♖xd2 23 ♖xd2 ♗xb2 24 ♘xb2 ♖c1+ 25 ♖d1

25 ♔g2 is bad on account of 25 ... ♖c3.

25 ... ♖c2 26 ♘d3 ♖a2 27 ♘e5 ♘fd5

Parrying the threat of 28 ♘c6+.

28 ♖d3 ♖a1+ 29 ♔g2 ♘c4! 30 ♘c6+

After 30 ♘xc4 bxc4 31 ♖d1 Black has the immediately decisive 31 ... ♖a2!.

30 ... ♔f6 31 ♘b8 ♘xa3 32 ♘xa6 ♘c2 33 ♖d2 ♘e1+ 34 ♔f1 ♘c3! 35 ♗d1 ♘xf3 36 ♖d3 ♘xd1 White resigns

"This ending made a strong impression on Rubinstein's contemporaries, and it is striking even now. Rubinstein's method of play in this type of pawn formation has become classical" (Razuvayev).

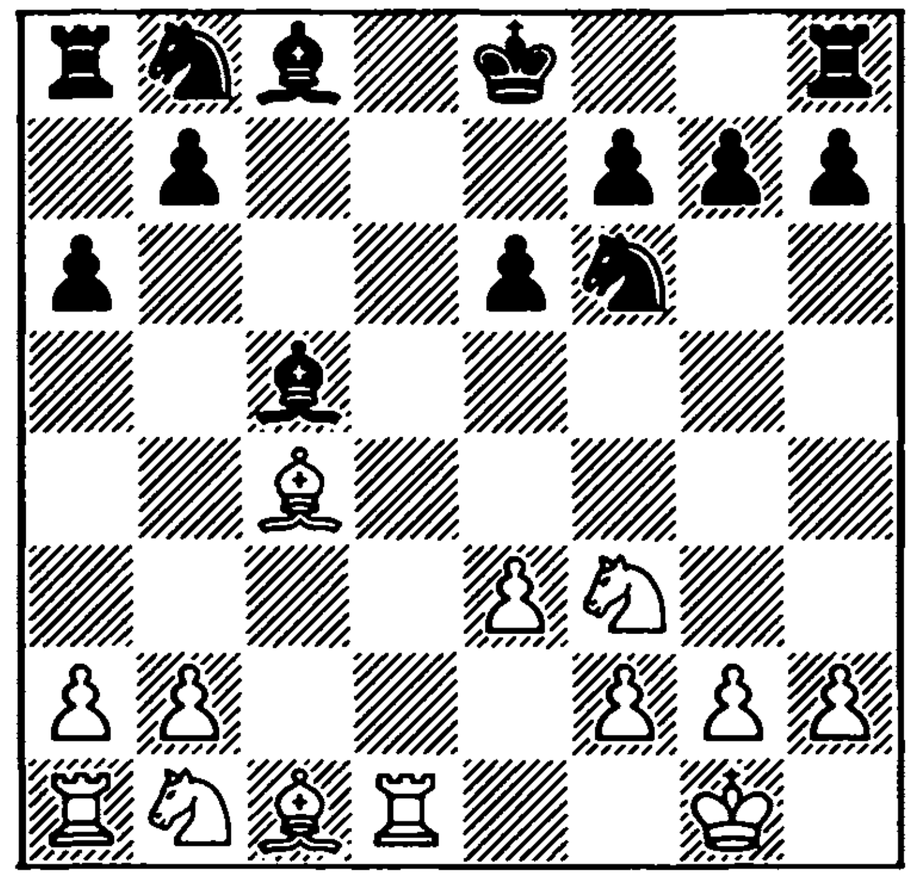
Bronstein-Spassky
USSR Zonal
Moscow 1964
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 d4 d5 3 c4 dxc4 4 e3 e6 5 ♗xc4 c5 6 0-0 a6 7 dxc5

Today this move has been forgotten, and perhaps wrongly so. In a practical struggle it is often no less dangerous than the fashionable continuations 7 a4 and 7 ♕e2.

7 ... ♕xd1
8 ♖xd1 ♗xc5 *(151)*

151



The two sides' chances are equal. The deceptive simplicity of such positions often misleads many players. It only requires a few superficial moves, and the position can be transformed from equal to significantly worse. The balance in such positions can be disturbed with surprising rapidity, as the reader will have seen in the previous game, and will see several times more.

9 ♘bd2

Following Rubinstein, White unhurriedly develops his forces, at the same time provoking the 'active' ... b5, after which he plans the seizure of the squares c5 and a5 and the undermining a2-a4! A similar plan was carried out by Antoshin against Mikenas in the 24th USSR Championship (Moscow 1957): 9 a3 b5?! 10 ♗e2 ♔e7 11 b4 ♗d6 12 ♗b2 ♗b7 13 ♘bd2 ♘bd7 14 ♘b3 ♖ac8 15 ♘fd4 ♘b6 16 ♘a5 ♗d5 17 ♖ac1 ♖xc1 18 ♖xc1 ♖c8 19 ♖xc8 ♘xc8 20 f3 ♗c7 21 e4 ♗a8 22 a4!, with advantage to White. Bronstein evidently decided to save time on the

moves a2-a3 and b2-b4, and to play a2-a4 in one go.

9 ... b5?!

Now White's idea is fully justified. Keres defended more accurately against Gligorić (Bled, 1961): 9 ... ♘bd7 10 ♘b3 ♗e7 11 ♗d2 b6 12 ♘fd4 ♗b7 13 ♖ac1 ♖c8, with an equal position.

10 ♗e2 ♗b7
11 ♘b3 ♗e7

The retreat of the bishop to b6 also does not get Black out of his difficulties, for example: 11 ... ♗b6 12 ♗d2 ♘c6 13 a4! bxa4 14 ♖xa4 0-0 15 ♖da1 ♘b8 16 ♘a5 ♗xa5 17 ♗xa5, and White has an obvious advantage (Trifunović-Bilek, 1962).

12 ♘a5 ♗d5
13 ♗d2 ♘c6

After 13 ... ♘bd7 White has the unpleasant 14 ♘d4.

14 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 15 ♘d4 ♗d5 16 f3 ♗c5 17 ♘c2 ♔e7

Determining the position of the king in such positions is a far from simple matter. For the endgame it is better kept in the centre, but often the activity of the stronger side can develop into an attack on the king, when it is in the thick of things. In the given instance Black would have done better to castle kingside.

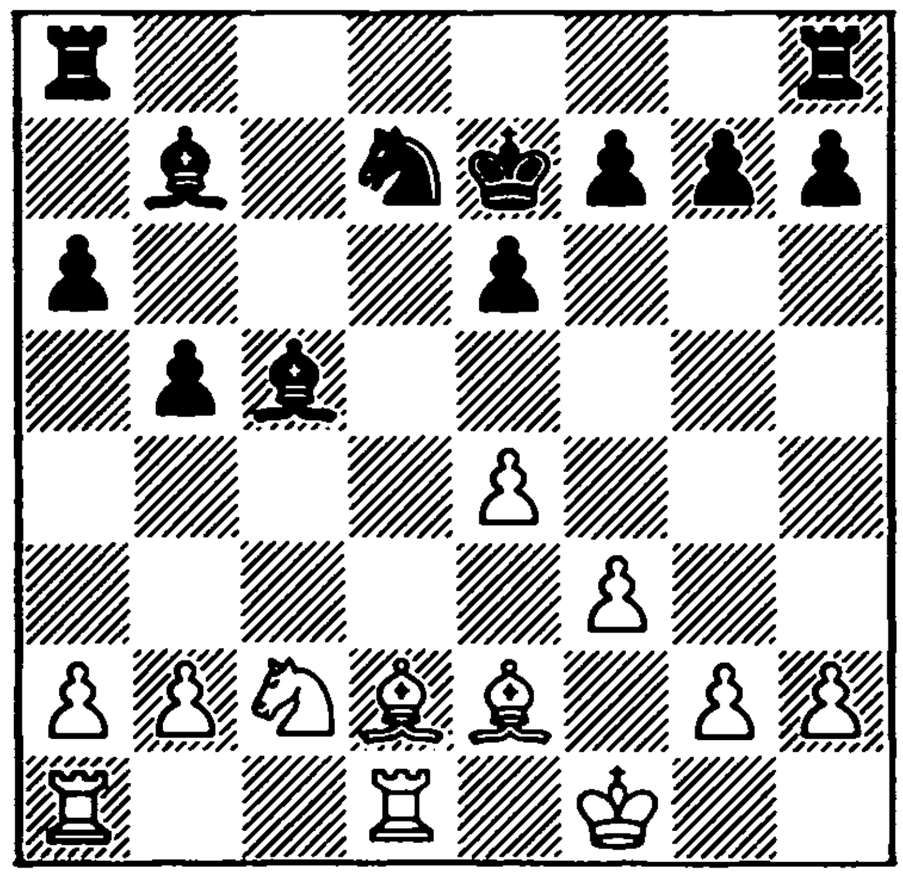
18 ♔f1 ♘d7
19 e4 ♗b7

(diagram 152)

20 a4!

This undermining pawn move on the queenside was planned by Bronstein back in the opening. White firmly seizes the initiative.

152



20 ... bxa4 21 ♖xa4 ♖hc8 22 ♗c3 f6 23 h4?!

In such positions energetic and resourceful play is demanded of the side holding the initiative, otherwise it can easily evaporate. The advance of the rook's pawn does not set Black any serious problems, whereas after 23 ♘d4! it would not have been easy for Spassky to defend. In this case the natural 23 ... ♗d6? loses to 24 ♘xe6! ♔xe6 25 ♖ad4! ♖c6 26 ♖xd6+ ♖xd6 27 ♗c4+ ♔e7 28 ♗b4, while if 23 ... ♘b6, then 24 ♖a2!? ♗d6 25 ♖da1 ♘c4 26 g3, with pressure on Black's position. Now Black emerges unscathed.

23 ... ♘b6 24 ♖a5 ♗d6 25 ♘e3 ♗f4! 26 ♗d4 ♘d7 27 ♘c4 ♗c6

For the first time in the game Spassky manages to 'snarl': he threatens 28 ... ♗b5, seizing the initiative. Bronstein could find nothing better than to force a draw:

28 ♘a3 ♗b7 29 ♘c4 ♗c6 30 ♘a3 ♗b7

However, he was able to carry out his plan in full in the following game.

Bronstein-Balashov
Moscow 1973
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♗d3 d5 6 ♘f3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 a6

The idea of the immediate relieving of the central tension (before castling) belongs to Ex-World Champion Vasily Smyslov. Black aims to avoid the variation 6 ... 0-0 7 0-0 dxc4 8 ♗xc4 a6 9 a3 ♗a5 10 dxc5!, in which White retains an opening advantage. For example: 10 ... ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♕a5 12 a4 (also strong is *12 ♗e2 ♘bd7 13 c6! bxc6 14 c4*, Mecking-Smyslov, Palma de Mallorca 1970) 12 ... ♘bd7 13 c6! (the source game Yudovich-Dely, Moscow 1962, took an amusing course: *13 ♕d4 ♖e8?! 14 ♗a3 ♕xa4 15 e4 e5?? 16 ♗xf7+* 1-0) 13 ... bxc6 14 ♕c2 c5 15 e4 ♕c7 16 ♖e1, and White's chances are clearly better (Petrosian-Kuzmin, Moscow 1973). But now on 8 a3 ♗a5 9 dxc5?! there follows simply 9 ... ♕xd1+.

8 0-0

The new move order was first played in the initial game of the Geller-Smyslov Candidates Quarter-Final Match (Moscow 1965). After 8 a3 ♗a5 9 0-0 b5?! 10 ♗e2 cxd4 11 ♘xd4 ♗b7 12 ♗f3 ♗xf3 13 ♕xf3 ♖a7 14 b4 ♗b6 15 ♘c6 ♘xc6 16 ♕xc6+ ♘d7 17 ♗b2 0-0 18 ♖fd1 ♕c8 19 ♕xc8 ♖xc8 20 ♖d6 White obtained the better ending. A complicated struggle developed in the later game Mikenas-Polugayevsky (Tallinn 1965): 9 ... ♘bd7 10 dxc5 ♗xc3 11 bxc3 ♕c7 12 ♕d4 ♘xc5 13 a4 ♗d7 14 ♗a3 ♖c8.

8 ... b5?!

Here too this move, weakening the queenside, is premature.

9 ♗e2 0-0
10 a4!

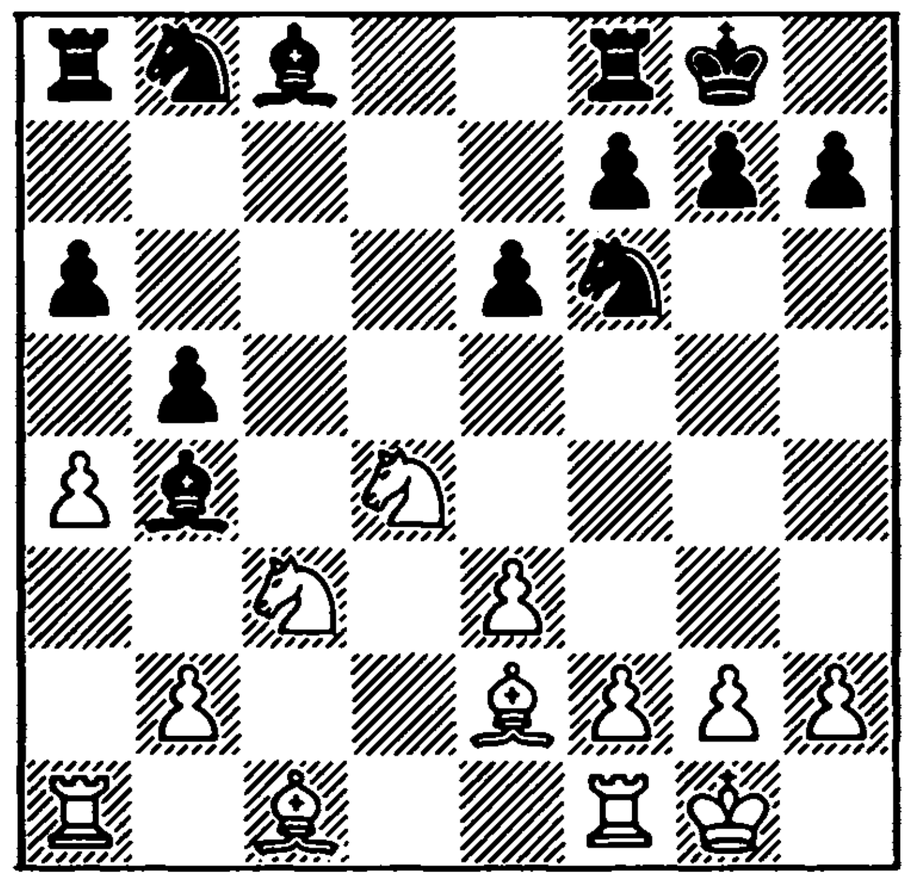
And here is the refutation. Bronstein breaks up the opponent's queenside, which secures White a great advantage in the endgame.

10 ... cxd4

10 ... bxa4 11 dxc5 ♗xc5 12 ♘xa4 is no better.

11 ♕xd4! ♕xd4
12 ♘xd4 *(153)*

153



12 ... bxa4 13 ♗f3 ♖a7 14 ♖xa4 ♗c5 15 ♘b3 ♗b6

White has a marked positional advantage.

16 ♖b4! ♘bd7?!

An inaccuracy. The main events are developing on the queenside, and it would be useful for Black to have an extra piece on that part of the board. Therefore 16 ... ♘fd7 came into consideration.

17 ♗d2 ♖c7 18 ♘a4 ♗a7 19 ♗c3 e5 20 ♘a5 ♖e8 21 ♖d1

The white pieces are in full control of the left side of the board, and in order to gain at least a little freedom Balashov decides on the further advance of his central pawn.

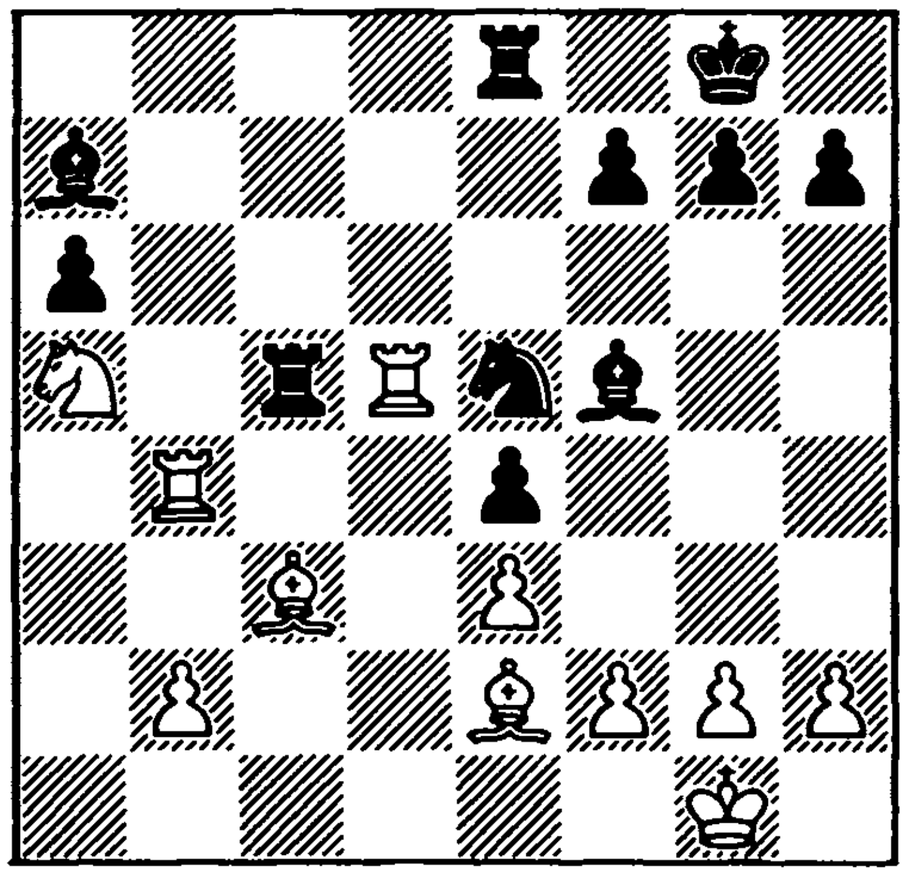
21 ... e4 22 ♗e2 ♘e5 23 ♘b6!

Bronstein, of course, is not tempted into winning a pawn by 23 ♗xe5 ♖xe5 24

♖d8+ ♖e8 25 ♖xe8+ ♘xe8 26 ♖xe4 ♖c1+. The initiative is worth more.

23 ... ♗f5 24 ♘d5 ♘xd5 25 ♖xd5 ♖c5 *(154)*

154



White finds a pretty way to conclude the game in his favour.

26 ♖xe5! ♖exe5
27 ♗xe5 ♖xa5

27 ... ♖xe5 fails to 28 ♘c6.

28 ♗d4!

The deciding move. Black loses on account of the weakness of his back rank.

28 ... ♗c5 29 ♖b8+ ♗f8 30 g4 ♗e6 31 b4 ♖a2 32 ♗c5 h6 33 ♔f1 ♖a1+ 34 ♔g2 ♖a2 35 ♗f1 Black resigns

Boleslavsky-Smyslov
Budapest Candidates 1950
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 dxc4 5 a4 c5?!

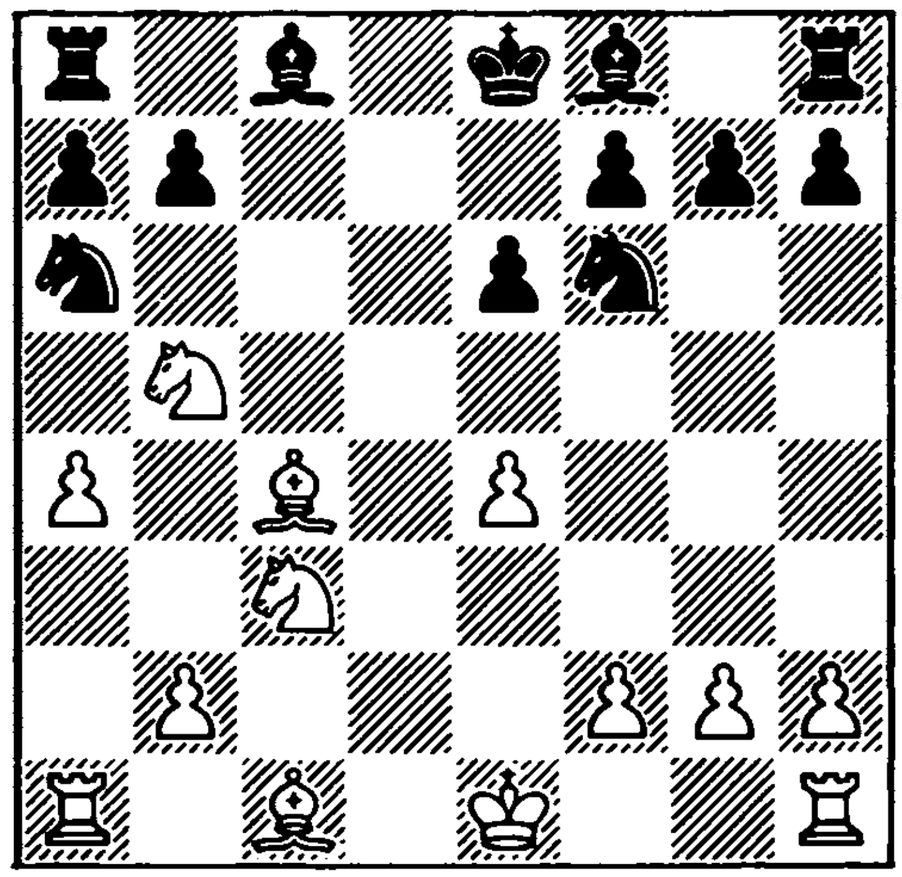
Nowadays this move has completely gone out of use, and not without reason. With the loss of a tempo (... c6-c5) Black transposes into the Queen's Gambit Accepted, and moreover, in by no means its best version.

6 e4

Commenting on Black's fifth move, grandmaster Boleslavsky wrote: "A continuation which leads by force to the exchange of queens . . . White gains a significant positional advantage, and Black's task is far from simple". To this evaluation we can today express some additional factors. By playing 6 e4, White avoids making use of his extra tempo, as though not noticing his pawn at a4. Meanwhile, after 6 e3!? e6 (it is doubtful whether Black has anything better) 7 ♗xc4 ♘c6 8 0-0 the Rubinstein Variation in the Queen's Gambit Accepted is reached with an extra tempo for White. 6 d5!? is also interesting.

6 ... cxd4 7 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 8 ♘xd4 e6 9 ♘db5 ♘a6 10 ♗xc4 *(155)*

155



White's position is better. He has an advantage in development and in space, and his pieces are better placed. Black must play extremely accurately to avoid quickly ending up in a lost position.

10 ... ♗c5
11 ♗f4 ♔e7?

"An incorrect evaluation of the position.

For the endgame the king stands better in the centre, but Black fails to take into account that, before an ending is reached, his king may come under attack. 11 ... 0-0 was better" (Boleslavsky).

12 0-0 ♗d7
13 e5!

As was pointed out by Boleslavsky, the position is not yet an endgame, and in attacking set-ups the strength of a pawn at e5 is very great.

13 ... ♘h5 *(156)*

Such moves are not made willingly, but on 13 ... ♘e8 White had prepared 14 ♗g5+ f6 15 exf6+ gxf6 16 ♗h4 ♖g8 17 ♖fe1 ♖g4 18 ♖e4 with an attack. Now, however, if White follows the same path, Black has 18 ... ♖ag8 with quite good play, but Boleslavsky finds a much stronger continuation.

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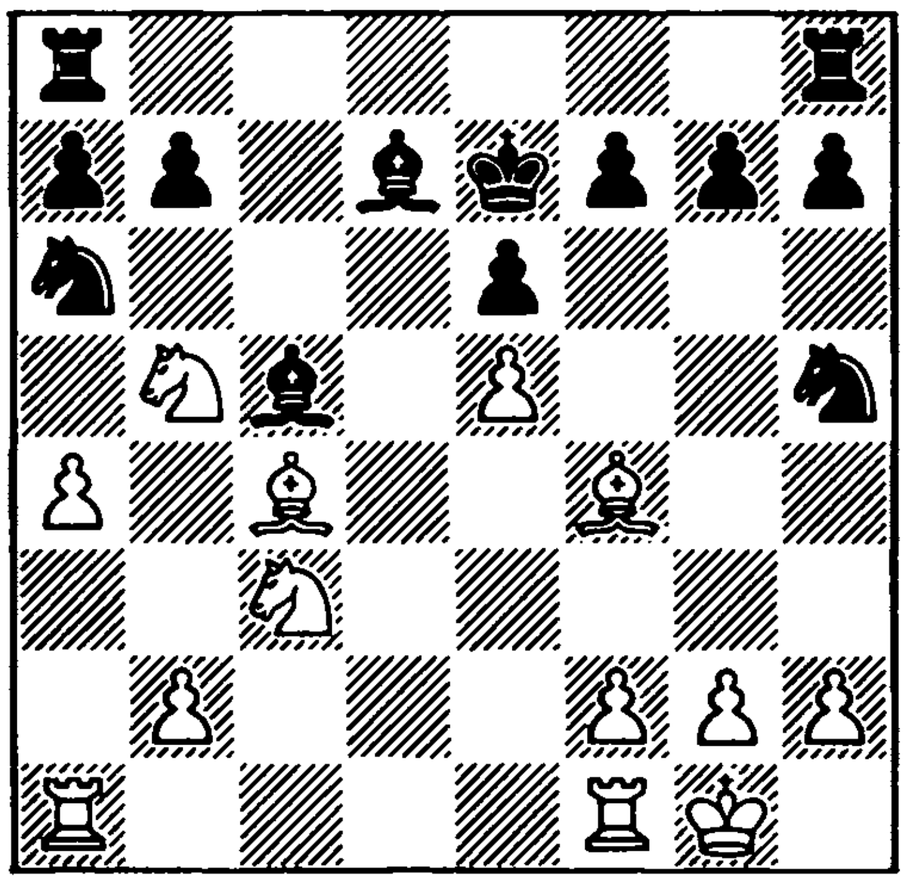


14 ♗e3! ♖hc8

14 ... ♗xe3 15 fxe3 g6 fails to 16 ♘d6, with attacks on the b7 and f7 pawns.

15 ♗e2 g6
16 ♘e4!

White forces the opponent to exchange on e3, since on 16 ... ♗b4 there follows 17 g4 ♘g7 18 ♘f6.

16 ... ♗xe3
17 fxe3 ♖c2?!

17 ... ♗c6 was more tenacious.

18 ♘bd6! ♖f8

If 18 ... ♖xe2, then 19 ♖xf7+ and 20 ♖f8+.

19 ♗xa6!

The decisive exchange. The black bishop is deprived of its strong point at c6, and White concludes the game by invading with his rook on the c-file.

19 ... bxa6 20 g4! ♘g7 21 ♘f6 ♗c6 22 ♖fc1! Black resigns

Bolbochan-Smyslov
Mar del Plata 1966
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 dxc4 5 a4 ♘a6

Lasker's Variation, which Smyslov revived in a game against Gligorić at the 1959 Candidates Tournament.

6 e3

Sharper play arises after 6 e4.

6 ... ♗g4 7 ♗xc4 e6 8 0-0

Black need not fear 8 ♗xa6 – after 8 ... bxa6 9 ♕e2 a5 he has an excellent position.

8 ... ♘b4
9 ♕e2

In the afore-mentioned game Gligorić played the modest 9 h3 ♗h5 10 ♗e2, and after 10 ... ♗e7 11 e4?! ♗g6! 12 e5 ♘fd5 Smyslov gained the advantage.

9 ... ♗e7 10 ♖d1 0-0 11 h3 ♗h5 12 ♗b3

Now, with an energetic blow in the centre, Black achieves a good position. 12 g4! is more resolute; after 12 ... ♗g6 13 e4 c5 14 ♗f4 ♕a5 15 ♘d2! White gained some advantage in Gerusel-Teschner (West Berlin 1971).

12 ... c5! 13 dxc5 ♕a5 14 e4 ♗xc5 15 e5

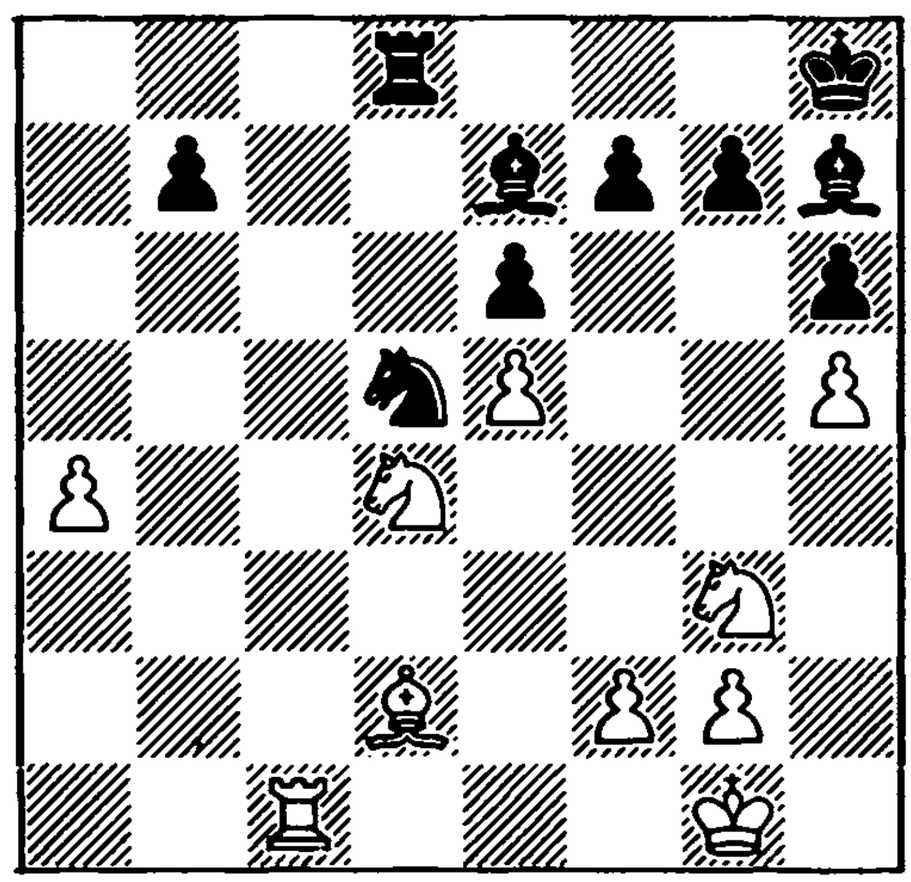
Excessively optimistic. White gives up all his strong points in the centre, the bishop at g6 becomes a formidable force, and he does not succeed in creating an attack. 15 ♗e3 was more circumspect.

15 ... ♘fd5 16 ♘e4 ♗e7 17 ♗d2 ♖fd8 18 ♘g3 ♗g6 19 h4 h6 20 h5 ♗h7 21 ♕c4 ♖ac8 22 ♕g4 ♔h8 23 ♖ac1 ♖xc1! 24 ♖xc1 ♕b6!

The threat of ... ♘d3 forces White to seek simplification.

25 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 26 ♕d4 ♕b3! 27 ♕xa7 ♕xb2 28 ♕d4 ♕xd4 29 ♘xd4 *(157)*

157



Here the white pawn at e5 is a weakness. The pawns at a4 and h5 may also become vulnerable. In addition, Black has the two bishops and an excellently placed knight at d5. White's position is difficult.

29 ... ♗a3!
30 ♖e1

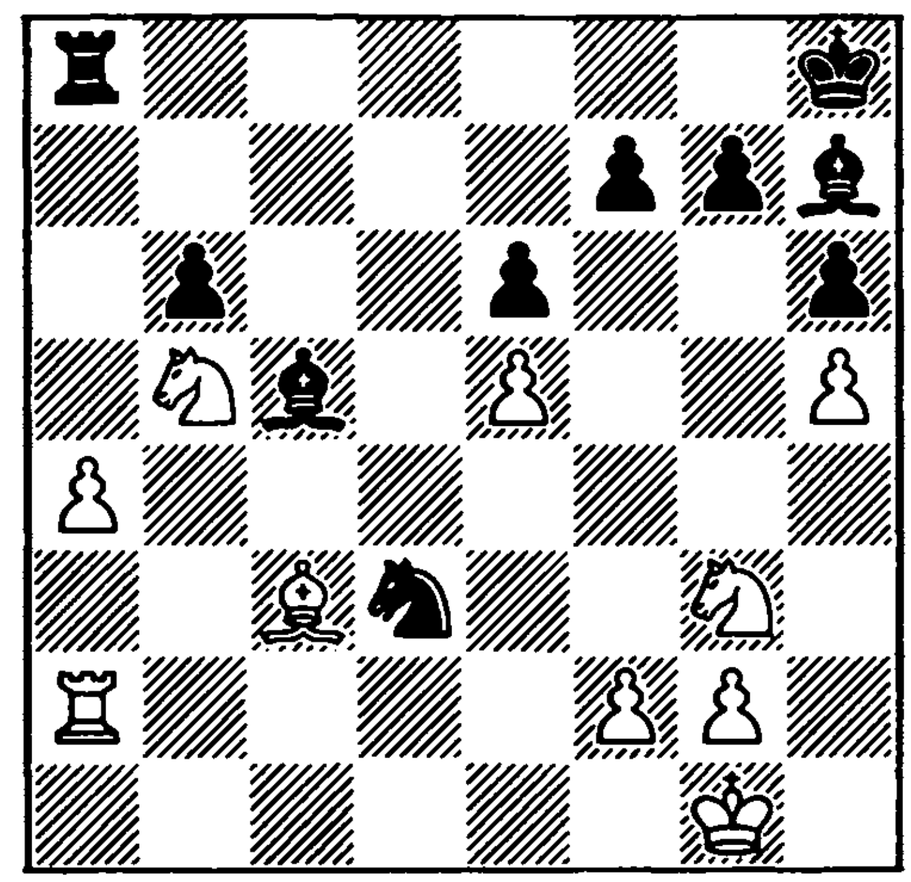
30 ♖c4 fails to 30 ... ♗d3.

30 ... ♘b4 31 ♗c3 ♘d3 32 ♖e2 ♗c5 33 ♘b5 b6!

The pawn at a4 is fixed, and an attack on it is prepared.

34 ♖d2 ♖a8
35 ♖a2 *(158)*

158



35 ... ♘xf2!

With a single blow Smyslov cuts the flimsy coordination of the white pieces. Black's rook and two pawns will be much stronger than the opponent's two minor pieces.

36 ♖xf2 ♖xa4 37 ♘d6 ♖f4 38 ♗e1 ♗d3!

From this square Black's light-square bishop 'cripples' both enemy knights.

39 ♘f1 ♔g8 40 g3 ♖a4 41 ♔g2 ♗xf2 42 ♔xf2 b5 43 ♘d2 b4 44 ♔e3 ♖a3 45 ♔d4 ♗c2 46 ♘2c4 ♖d3+ 47 ♔c5 b3

Black's passed pawn has adroitly kept behind the back of the enemy king. Now 48 ♔b4 would fail to 48 ... b2 49 ♘xb2 ♖b3+.

48 ♔c6 ♖e3!
49 ♗d2

On 49 ♗f2 there would have followed 49 ... ♖xe5.

49 ... ♖xg3
White resigns

"After 50 ♔d7 ♗d1 51 ♔e7 ♗xh5 White's kingside resembles a desert" (Smyslov).

Rubinstein-Mieses
St Petersburg 1909
English Opening

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 c5 3 c4 ♘f6?!

Mieses was a player with an active, aggressive style, an inveterate tactician. It is sufficient to say that in major tournaments he stayed faithful to the Danish Gambit and the Centre Counter Game! It is understandable that he should take the opportunity to immediately sharpen the play. However, nothing good comes of it - this was the wrong opponent to try it against. It was not too late to play the Tarrasch Defence - 3 ... e6!.

4 cxd5 cxd4
5 ♘xd4 ♘xd5

The attempt by 5 ... a6 to prevent the bishop check at b5, which is unpleasant in many variations, is refuted by a brilliant Alekhine manoeuvre: 6 e4! ♘xe4 7 ♕a4+! ♗d7 8 ♕b3 ♘c5 9 ♕e3! (Alekhine-Wolf, Pistyan 1922).

6 e4 ♘f6

According to opening books. 6 ... ♘c7 offers Black more chances. But in the game Timman-Miles, Bugojno 1986, after 7 ♗f4!? ♘e6 8 ♗b5+ ♘c6 9 ♘xe6 ♕xd1+ 10 ♔xd1 ♗xe6 11 ♗xc6+ bxc6 12 ♘d2 g6 13 ♗e5 f6 14 ♗c3 a5 15 ♔c2 ♗h6 16 ♘b3 a4 17 ♘c5 ♗f7 18 ♖hd1 White gained an appreciable advantage.

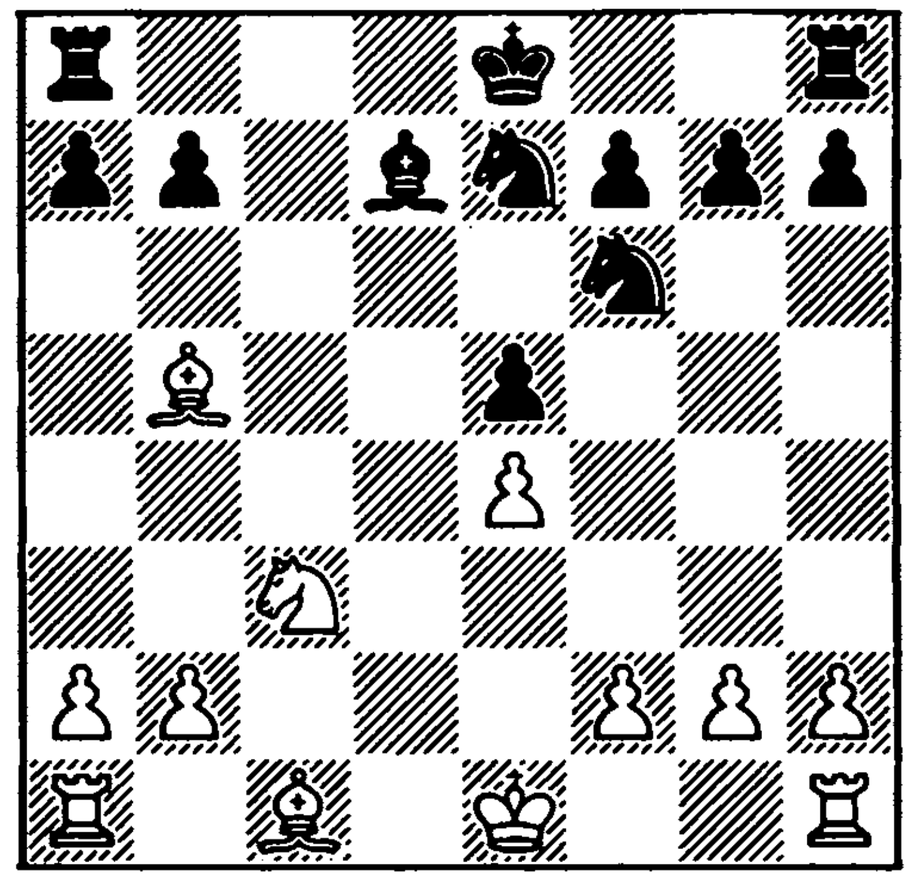
7 ♘c3 e5?

And this activity is simply inappropriate. White is better developed, and now Rubinstein inexorably intensifies the pressure.

8 ♗b5+! ♗d7 9 ♘f5 ♘c6 10 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 11 ♕xd6 ♕e7 12 ♕xe7+ ♘xe7 *(159)*

Completely bad is 12 ... ♔xe7? 13 ♗g5 ♗e6 14 f4! with a very strong attack.

159



13 ♗e3 a6 14 ♗xd7+ ♘xd7 15 ♔e2

In the given situation the place for the king is in the centre.

15 ... ♖c8 16 ♖hd1 ♘c5 17 ♗xc5!?

Such 'sharp turns' are very typical of Rubinstein's endgame technique. White unexpectedly exchanges his strong bishop, after subtly taking into account the concrete features of the position.

17 ... ♖xc5
18 ♖ac1 ♘c6

Black could not castle on account of 19 ♘d5, while on 18 ... ♖c7, as shown by Lasker, White has the unpleasant 19 ♘a4 ♘c6 20 ♔e3 0-0 21 ♘c5 ♘d4 22 ♘d3.

19 ♖d5! ♖xd5

No better is 19 ... ♖c4 20 b3 ♖d4 21 ♔e3 f6 22 ♘a4 ♔e7 23 ♘c5 ♖xd5 24 exd5 ♘b4 25 d6+ ♔xd6 26 ♘xb7+ with advan-

tage to White (pointed out by Lasker).

20 exd5 ♘d4+
21 ♔d3

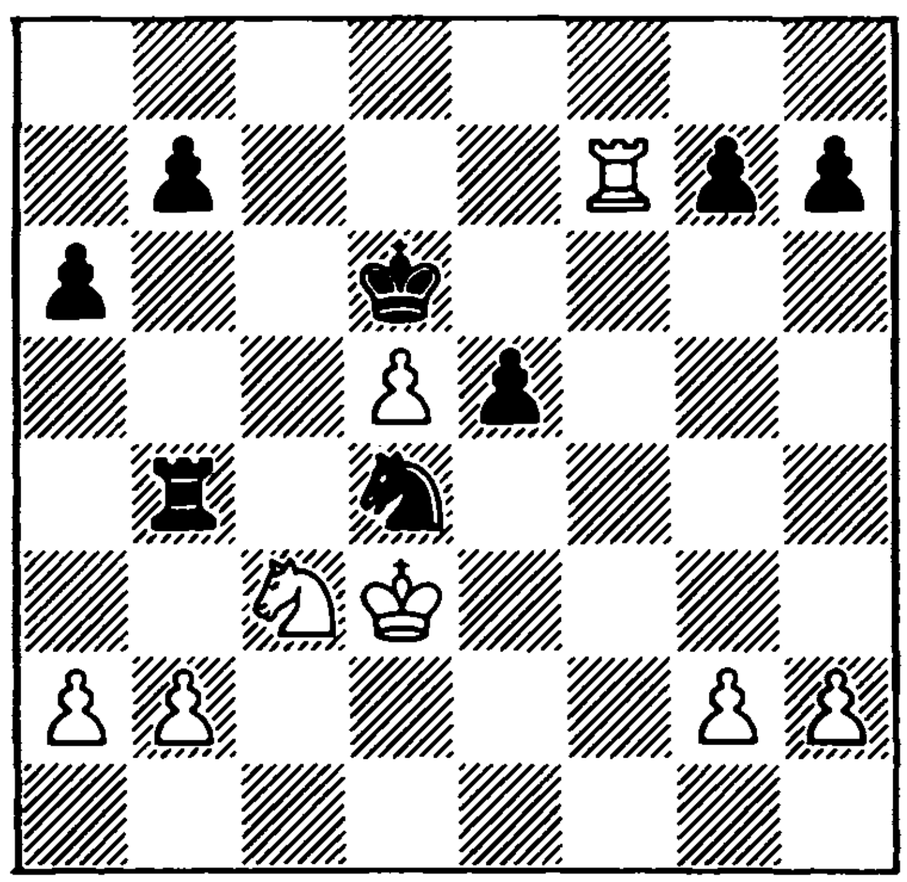
It was for this position that Rubinstein was aiming when he made his 17th move. He has a clear advantage. The strong passed pawn and the better placing of the white pieces make Black's position difficult.

21 ... ♔e7 22 f4! f6 23 fxe5 fxe5 24 ♔e4 ♔d6 25 ♖f1 ♖c8!

Mieses finds the best practical chance.

26 ♖f7 ♖c4
27 ♔d3 ♖b4 *(160)*

160



Once again an interesting moment. Black has attacked the b2 pawn, and the majority of players would have automatically played 28 b3. But Rubinstein is pinning his hopes on an attack, and is not afraid of the reduction in material.

28 ♖xg7!

In the event of winning a pawn by 28 b3, the black pieces would have become active after 28 ... g6 29 ♖xh7 ♘f5.

28 ... ♖xb2 29 ♖xh7 ♖xg2 30 ♖h6+ ♔d7 31 ♖h7+ ♔d6 32 ♖h6+ ♔d7 33 ♘e4! ♖xa2 34 ♖h7+ ♔d8 35 d6

Black has even won a pawn, but with his small army White has built up a formidable attack.

35 ... ♘b5 36 ♔c4 ♖a5 37 ♖xb7

The immediate 37 ♔d5 would have failed to 37 ... ♘c7++.

37 ... ♘a3+
38 ♔b4!

White does not avoid simplification even in such a position. The knight ending is lost for Black.

38 ... ♖b5+ 39 ♖xb5 ♘xb5 40 ♔c5 ♔d7 41 ♔d5 a5 42 ♘c5+ ♔e8 43 ♔xe5 ♔f7 44 ♘b7

The concluding tactical stroke. 45 d7 and 45 ♘xa5 are threatened. **Black resigns.**

Bondarevsky-Gligorić
Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1948
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 e3 ♗f5

A sound system of defence. Had White played ♘c3 (instead of *3 ♘f3*), ... ♗f5 would be risky: 5 cxd5 cxd5 6 ♕b3, and the retreat 6 ... ♗c8 is forced. But if on the third move the king's knight is developed, the pressure on d5 is weakened and Black has time to bring out his bishop, since b7 is easily defended, for example:

5 cxd5 cxd5 6 ♕b3 ♕c7 7 ♘a3 ♘c6 8 ♗d2 e6 9 ♖c1 ♘e4 10 ♗b5 ♘xd2 11 ♘xd2 ♗e7 12 ♕a4 0-0 with a good game for Black (Vidmar-Gligorić, Ljubljana 1946), or 6 ♘c3 e6 7 ♘e5 ♘fd7 8 ♕b3 ♕c8 9 ♗d2 ♘c6 10 ♖c1 ♗e7 11 ♗e2 ♘dxe5 12 dxe5 0-0 13 ♘b5 ♕d7 with equality, Alekhine-Euwe (11), The Hague 1935.

Black should merely beware of a trap in the variation 5 cxd5 cxd5 6 ♘c3 e6 7 ♘e5, when 7 ... ♘bd7? is bad on account of 8

g4! ♗g6 9 h4 h6 10 ♘xg6 fxg6 11 ♗d3, with a winning attack for White (Bogoljubow-Gotgilf, Moscow 1925). 7 ... ♘fd7! is correct.

5 ♘c3 e6
6 ♗d3

A quiet approach. White hopes to obtain a slight initiative in the centre.

6 ... ♗xd3 7 ♕xd3 ♘bd7 8 0-0 ♗b4?!

Black wrongly condemns his bishop to being exchanged. All the same he does not manage to set up a blockade on the light squares, and e3-e4 cannot be prevented. After the opening up of the position the white bishop may become dangerous. 8 ... ♗e7 was simpler and better.

9 ♗d2 ♗xc3

10 ♘xd5! was threatened.

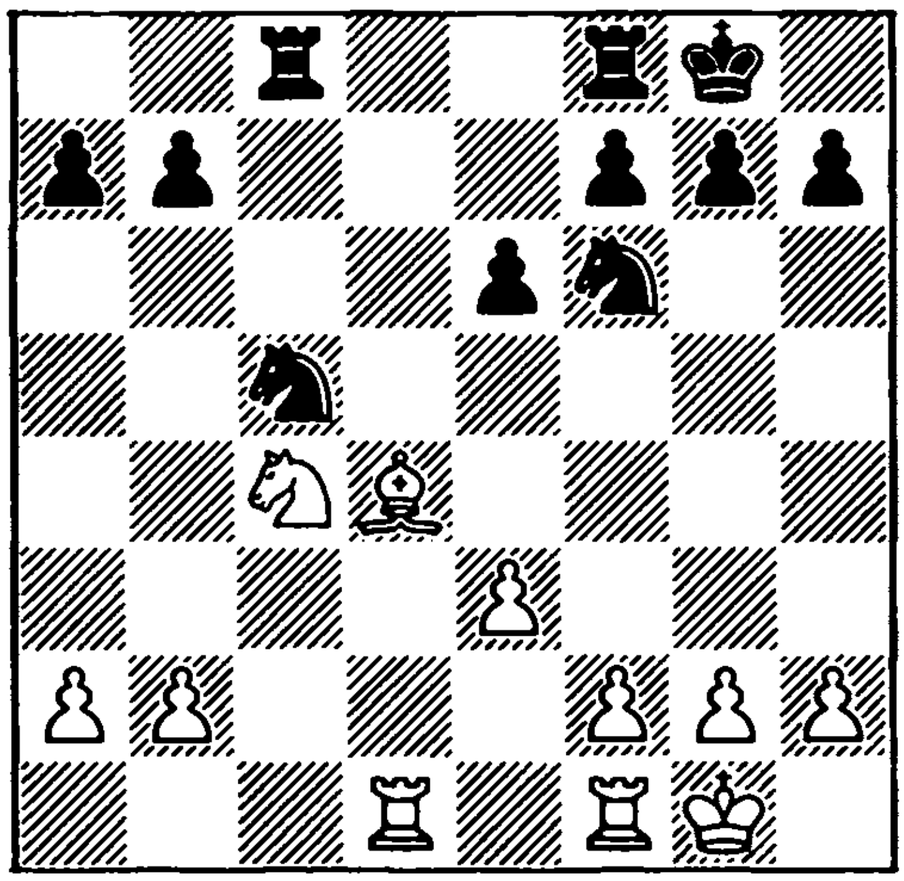
10 ♗xc3 0-0
11 ♘d2!

Now the e4 square is under White's control. It should be said that the resulting position was well known to grandmaster Bondarevsky. When, as a first category player, he first competed in the USSR Championship, back in 1937 in Tbilisi, Bondarevsky won brilliantly against Rauzer, then a master: 11 ... ♕e7 12 e4 dxe4 13 ♘xe4 ♘xe4 14 ♕xe4 ♕d6 15 ♖fe1 b5 16 b3 bxc4 17 bxc4 ♕a3 18 ♖e3 ♕a4 19 ♖h3 h6 20 ♕e2 ♘b6 21 ♖c1 ♘xc4 22 d5 cxd5 23 ♕g4 d4 24 ♖g3 g6 25 ♕xd4 e5 26 ♕e4 ♖fd8 27 h4 ♖d1+ 28 ♖xd1 ♕xd1+ 29 ♔h2 ♖c8 30 ♖xg6+ 1-0.

The move played by Gligorić prevents e3-e4 and leads to a rapid relieving of the central tension, but the strength of White's bishop is increased and he retains a certain advantage.

11 ... c5 12 dxc5 ♘xc5 13 ♕d4 ♖c8 14 ♖ad1 dxc4 15 ♘xc4 ♕xd4 16 ♗xd4 *(161)*

161



The position appears simple and almost equal, but this simplicity is deceptive. White's seemingly insignificant initiative is very difficult to neutralise and, without making a single obvious mistake, Gligorić gradually ends up in a lost position.

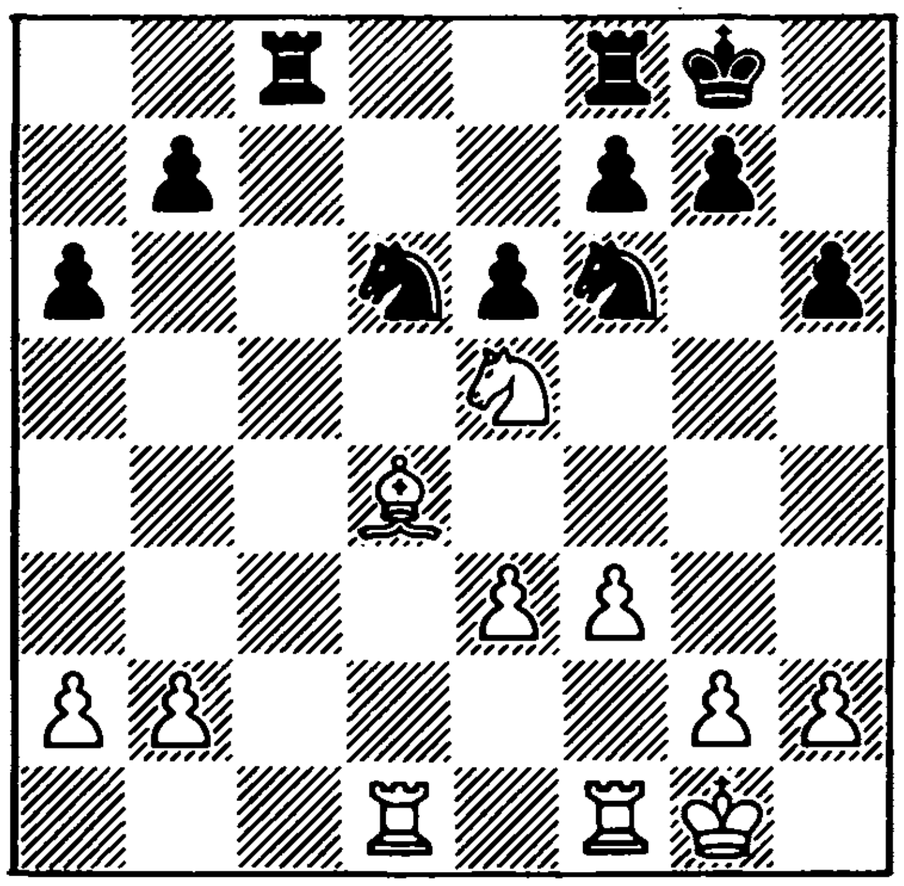
16 ... ♘ce4

It is hard to suggest anything better. Black has to reckon with 17 ♘d6.

17 ♘e5 a6
18 f3 ♘d6 *(162)*

All would appear to be well with Black. White's pressure in the centre has receded, and the c-file is controlled by Black. But Bondarevsky continues to simplify, and it unexpectedly transpires that in the minor piece ending White's initiative increases.

162



19 ♖c1! ♖xc1

Knowing the further course of events, one can condemn Black for exchanging the rooks, but during the game it would have been very difficult to play differently, especially since neither 19 ... ♘f5 20 ♗c5 ♖fd8 21 e4, nor 19 ... ♘b5 20 ♗c5 ♖fd8 21 a4 ♖d5 22 b4 ♖xe5 23 axb5 fully solves Black's defensive problems.

20 ♖xc1 ♖c8 21 ♖xc8+ ♘xc8 22 e4 ♔f8

It is hard for Black to find a square for his knight at c8. The attempt to drive the white pieces from the centre by ... f6 would not have brought any relief, for example: 22 ... ♘e8 23 ♘d7 f6 24 e5 followed by ♘c5.

23 ♔f2 ♔e7 24 ♗c5+ ♔e8 25 ♔e3 ♘g8 26 ♘c4 ♘ge7 27 a4

White gains more and more space, and a spatial advantage often becomes a decisive factor in a knight ending.

27 ... ♘c6 28 a5 e5 29 b4 ♔d7 30 ♔d3 f6 31 ♘e3

The knight vacates c4 for the king, and itself obtains excellent posts at d5 and f5.

31 ... ♘d8 32 ♔c4 ♔c6 33 ♘d5 ♘e6 34 h4!

White envelops the enemy position from both flanks. The advance of this pawn to h6 is threatened.

34 ... ♘xc5

The knight ending is lost for Black, but there was no longer any way of saving the game. 34 ... h6 35 h5 ♔d7 was slightly more tenacious.

35 bxc5 ♔d7 36 h5 h6 37 ♘e3 ♘e7 38 ♘f5!

The exchange of the last piece decides matters.

38 ... ♘xf5 39 exf5 ♔c6 40 g3 ♔c7 41 ♔d5 Black resigns

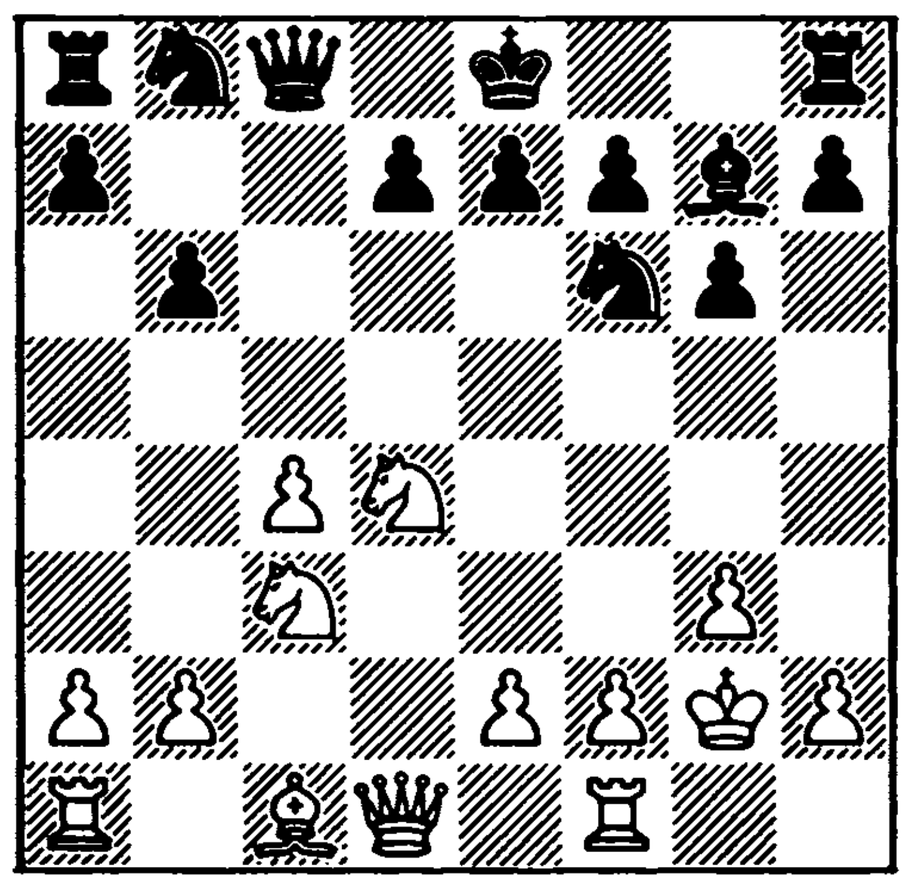
Polugayevsky-Spassky
Manila Interzonal 1976
English Opening

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 b6 3 g3 ♗b7 4 ♗g2 c5 5 0-0 g6 6 ♘c3 ♗g7 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♘xd4

Here 8 ♕xd4!? is possible, with the aim of avoiding the exchange of bishops. In reply to 8 ... ♘c6 White plays 9 ♕f4! (but not *9 ♕h4?! h6!*, when the threat of ... *g5* is rather unpleasant, Tal-Botvinnik, World Championship (13), Moscow 1960). In Ribli-Kouatly (Lucerne 1985) White obtained the freer game – 9 ... ♖c8 10 ♖d1 d6 11 b3!, and the naive 11 ... ♘e4? allowed him to build up a crushing attack: 12 ♘xe4! ♗xa1 13 ♗a3 ♗g7 14 ♘fg5 0-0 15 ♘xh7! ♔xh7 16 ♘g5+ ♔g8 17 ♕h4 ♖e8 18 ♗h3! ♔f8 19 ♘e6+!, and it was time for Black to resign.

8 ... ♗xg2
9 ♔xg2 ♕c8 *(163)*

163



Since the time of the game Capablanca-Botvinnik (Nottingham 1936) Black's last

move was considered the strongest, and, moreover, the only one leading to equality. But as the present game shows, Black is still a long way from equalising, and therefore in modern tournaments he usually continues 9 ... 0-0 10 e4 ♕c7!? (*10 ... ♘c6 11 ♗e3 ♕c8* is too passive; in the classic game Botvinnik-Lilienthal, Moscow 1936, White completely deprived his opponent of counterplay: *12 b3 ♕b7 13 f3 ♖fd8 14 ♖c1 ♖ac8 15 ♕d2*).

Now after 11 b3 ♘xe4!?, as occurred, in particular, in two games of the Karpov-Kasparov World Championship Match (Moscow 1984-85), unclear complications arise.

11 ♕e2 ♘c6 12 ♘c2 is sounder, but here too Black's position is not without counterchances, for example: 12 ... a6 13 ♗g5 e6 (or *13 ... ♕b7!?*, recommended by Chekhov; weaker is *13 ... b5?! 14 ♖ad1 bxc4 15 ♘e3!*, Chekhov-Psakhis, Irkutsk 1983) 14 ♖fd1 d6 15 ♖ac1 h6 (A.Petrosian-Adorjan, Riga 1981).

10 b3 ♕b7+
11 f3 d5

After 11 ... ♘c6 12 ♗b2 0-0 13 e4 ♖ac8 14 ♕d2 a6 15 ♖ac1 ♖fd8 16 ♖fd1 White has a stable advantage (Portisch-Tal, Varese 1976).

12 cxd5 ♘xd5 13 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 14 ♗e3!

In the aforementioned game with Botvinnik, Capablanca played the weaker 14 ♗b2 0-0 15 ♕d3 ♖d8 16 ♖fd1 ♘d7 17 ♖ac1 ♘c5 18 ♕b1 ♕b7, when Black even gained slightly the better position.

The move 14 ♗e3! was first employed in a little-known game Wright-Ree (London 1974), and made such a deep impression on Black that one move later he blundered: 14 ... 0-0 15 ♖c1 ♖d8?? 16 ♘f5!. Wright's idea was soon employed by Portisch (Portisch-Polugayevsky, Budapest 1975), but this game too did not receive a 'wide press'. In the present game Ex-World Champion Spassky had to solve some difficult problems at the board.

14 ... ♘c6?!

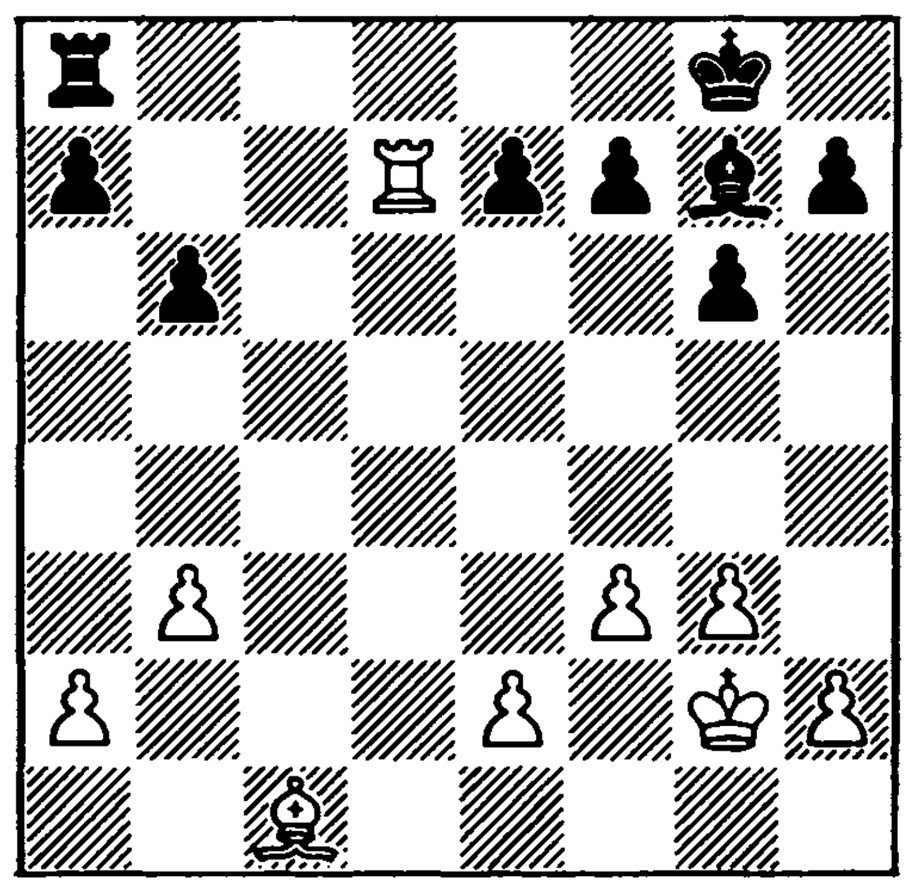
Polugayevsky, who made a deep study of this position, considered 14 ... 0-0 15 ♖c1 ♘a6 to be the strongest. After the move in the game White carries out the main idea of his plan beginning with 14 ♗e3!, which is to quickly occupy the c- and d-files with his rooks and invade the seventh rank.

15 ♘xc6 ♕xc6
16 ♖c1 ♕b7

16 ... ♕e6 is no better. In Polugayevsky-Smyslov (44th USSR Championship, Moscow 1976) after 17 ♕d3 0-0 18 ♖fd1! (Portisch against Polugayevsky played the weaker *18 ♖c4 f5! 19 ♖d1 ♔f7!*, and Black succeeded in defending, although not without difficulty) 18 ... ♖ac8 19 ♖xc8 ♕xc8 20 ♕d7! White obtained a clear advantage.

17 ♕d3! 0-0 18 ♖fd1 ♖fc8 19 ♕d7! ♕xd7 20 ♖xd7 ♖xc1 21 ♗xc1 *(164)*

164



The evaluation of the position is not in doubt, and the only question is whether

or not Black can manage to hold the position.

21 ... ♔f8!

Resourceful defence. Spassky has calculated that in the variation 22 ♗a3 ♗f6 23 e4 ♔e8 White cannot play 24 ♖b7? ♔d8 25 e5 on account of 25 ... ♔c8.

22 a4 ♔e8 23 ♖b7 ♔d8 24 ♗f4 ♗f6

The immediate 24 ... ♗c3 came into consideration.

25 h4 ♗c3

25 ... h6, with the idea of 26 ... g5, fails to 26 a5! bxa5 27 ♗xh6, while 26 ... g5 27 hxg5 hxg5 28 ♗d2 is rather unpleasant.

26 ♔f2 ♗b4 27 ♔e3 h6 28 g4

Of course, not 28 ♗xh6 ♔c8.

28 ... g5 29 hxg5 hxg5 30 ♗g3 ♖c8!

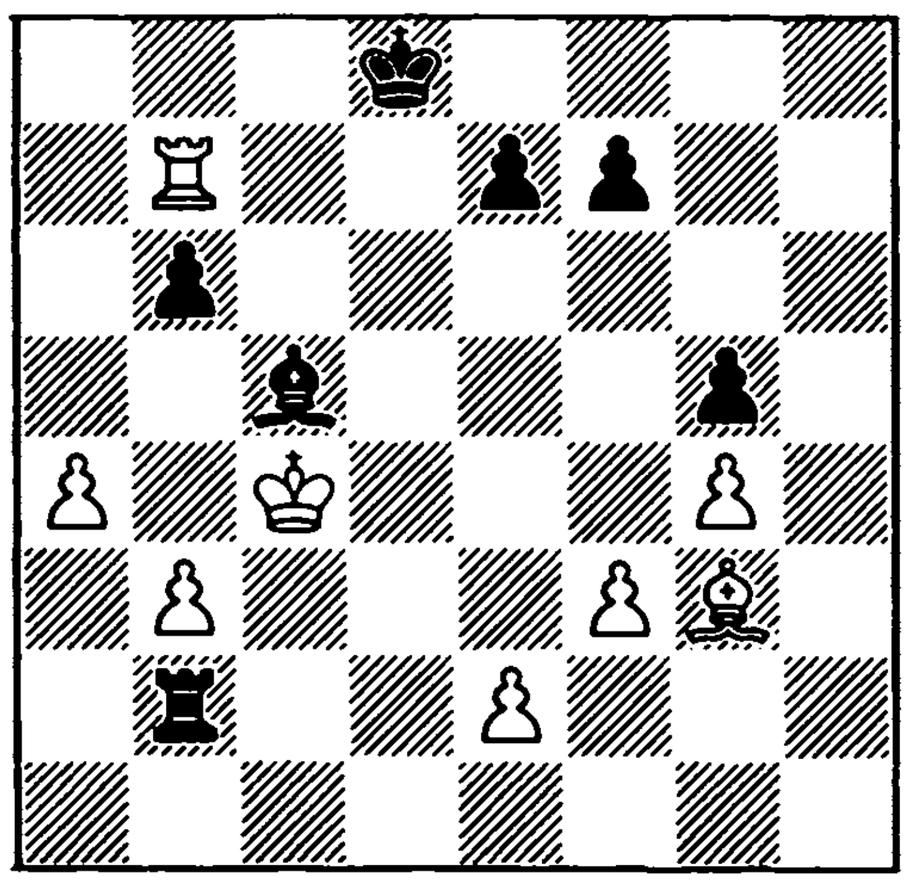
Black has strengthened his pawn chain on the kingside and now begins active counterplay. Passive defence would have led to defeat after the advance of the white king to c6.

31 ♖xa7 ♖c3+ 32 ♔d4 ♖c2 33 ♖b7

33 e4 ♗c5+ 34 ♔d5 ♖c3 or 34 ♔d3 ♖g2 held little promise for White.

33 ... ♗c5+ 34 ♔d3 ♖b2 35 ♔c4 *(165)*

165



Things appear to be totally bad for Black. He is a pawn down, and on 35 ... ♖xe2 there follows 36 a5! But Spassky finds a surprising possibility to continue the fight.

35 ... ♗g1!! 36 e4 ♖c2+ 37 ♔b5

White would not have achieved anything by 37 ♔d3 ♖b2.

37 ... ♖c3 38 b4 ♖xf3 39 ♗e5 f6?

This should have lost. 39 ... ♖f1 was essential.

40 ♗b2?

The 'law of mutual mistakes' operates. After 40 ♔c6! ♔e8 41 ♗c7 White would have won.

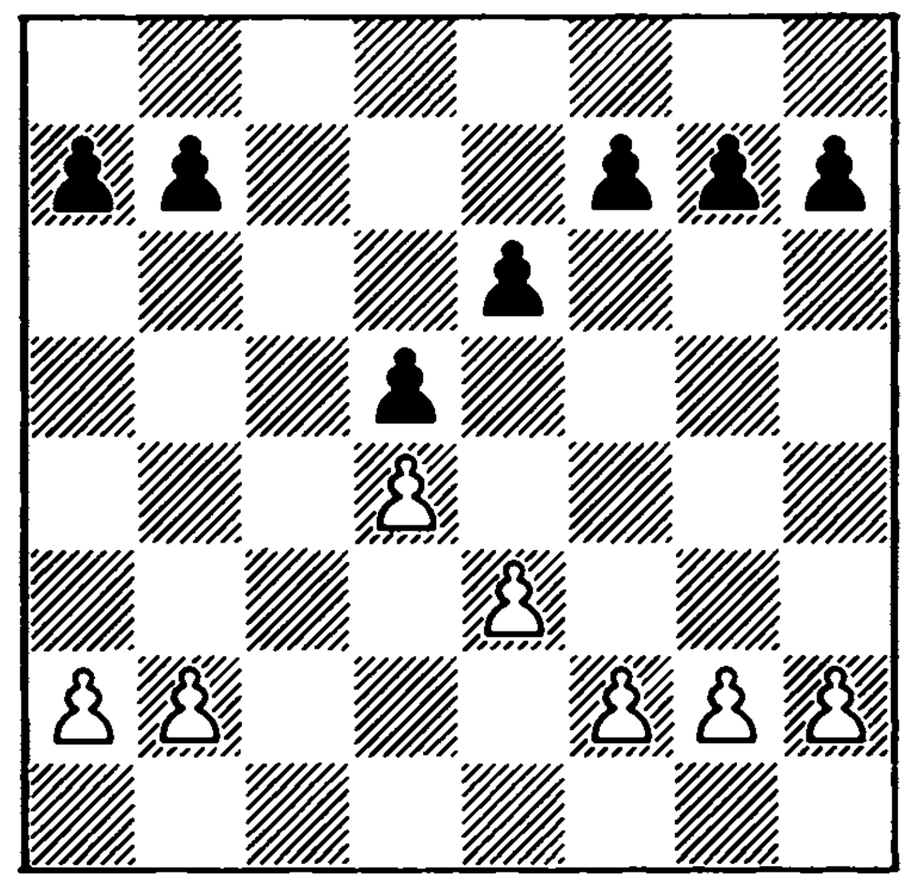
40 ... ♖b3 41 ♗c1 ♖c3 Draw agreed

As shown by Polugayevsky, the attempt by Black to play for a win with 41 ... ♖g3 is easily parried by 42 e5! followed by 42 ... ♖xg4 43 exf6 exf6 44 ♗b2.

3.2 CLOSED CENTRE: THE EXCHANGE cxd5 cxd5

In practice, pawn formations typical of the Slav Defence Exchange Variation often occur:

166



Pawn chains of this type can also arise in the Queen's Gambit, the Catalan Opening (white pawns at e2 and g3), the Grünfeld Defence, and the Schlechter Variation, which relates equally to the Slav Defence and the Grünfeld Defence (black pawns at e7 and g6).

What are the features of the play in endings of this type? The solid pawn formations of both sides suggest the reply: again, as in any symmetric positions, matters are decided by who seizes the initiative (in the first instance, of course, the c-file must be given priority!). True, in variations such as 1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 cxd5 cxd5 or 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 c6 4 ♗g2 d5 5 cxd5 cxd5 White cannot hope for much, but there are many players who are satisfied with a small gain. White's extra tempo sometimes allows him to create serious pressure on the queenside, and to force an advantageous weakening of the opponent's pawn chain. The seemingly fixed pawn chain can also be transformed, if in the middlegame it proves possible to make the central break e3(e2)-e4 (cf. the game **Ivkov-Smyslov**) or ... e6(e7)-e5.

It may seem that White's minimal opening advantage after cxd5 cxd5 will automatically be 'inherited' in the endgame. But as Karpov once remarked: ". . . of course, in symmetric positions White has an extra move, but this also means that he can be the first to make a mistake!" What happens in such cases can be seen in the game **Donner-Botvinnik**, Palma de Mallorca 1967 (cf. p.72 of Botvinnik's *Selected Games 1967-70*, Pergamon 1981): one mistake – and White is playing with the black pieces!

Botvinnik-Tal
World Championship (11)
Moscow 1961
Slav Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 ♗f4 ♗f5 7 e3 e6 8 ♗b5 ♗b4?!

White's 8th move probably came as a surprise to Tal. At that time the Exchange Variation of the Slav Defence served mainly as a means of quickly concluding peace, soon after the elimination of the heavy pieces on the c-file.

Meanwhile, it is rather dangerous for Black to maintain the symmetry here, since White, whose turn it is to move, is the first to create concrete threats. The basic idea of his plan is to seize control of the c-file, and it is instructive to follow how strongly Botvinnik carries this out. The present game, together with his game with Pomar (Amsterdam 1966), probably removed for ever Black's desire to play his bishop to b4. At present it is generally accepted that the strongest move is 8 ... ♘d7!, which was suggested long ago by Grünfeld.

9 ♘e5! ♕a5 10 ♗xc6+ bxc6 11 0-0 ♗xc3 12 bxc3 ♕xc3

Pomar's attempt 12 ... ♖c8 was quickly and decisively refuted: 13 c4! 0-0 14 g4! ♗g6 15 c5, and Black gradually died of suffocation.

13 ♕c1!

This move is the point of White's plan. He forces the transition into a favourable ending.

13 ... ♕xc1
14 ♖fxc1 0-0 *(167)*

In his notes to the game Botvinnik criticises Black's last move, suggesting 14 ... ♘d7. Now the remoteness of the black king from the centre will be felt. In addition, Tal constantly has to reckon with the manoeuvre ♘xc6-e7xf5.

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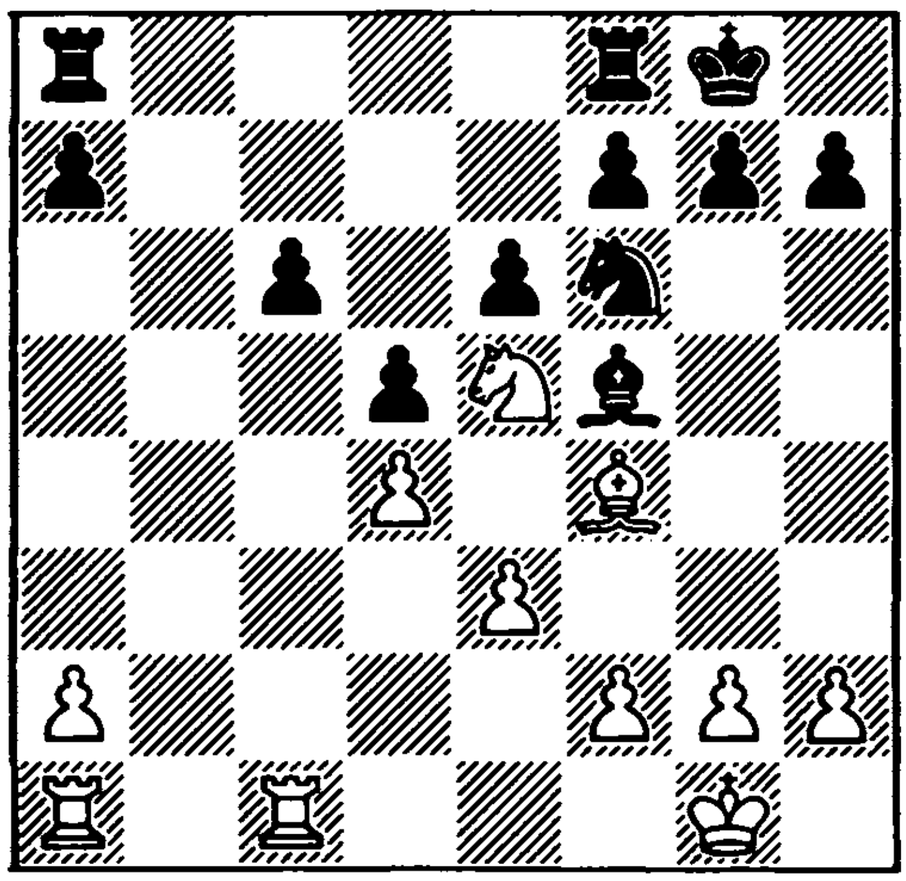


15 f3 h6 16 ♘xc6 ♖fe8 17 a4 ♘d7 18 ♗d6

White's intentions are clear. He is aiming to win the a7 pawn. It is hard for Black to counter the massed attack of the white pieces on the queenside.

18 ... ♘b6
19 ♗c5 ♗d3

19 ... ♘c4 is unpleasantly met by 20 e4, while 19 ... ♘c8 20 ♖a3 is completely cheerless for Black. Tal prefers temporarily to part with a pawn, pinning his hopes on the drawing tendencies of opposite-colour bishops.

20 ♘xa7 ♖xa7 21 ♗xb6 ♖a6 22 a5 ♗c4 23 ♖a3 f6

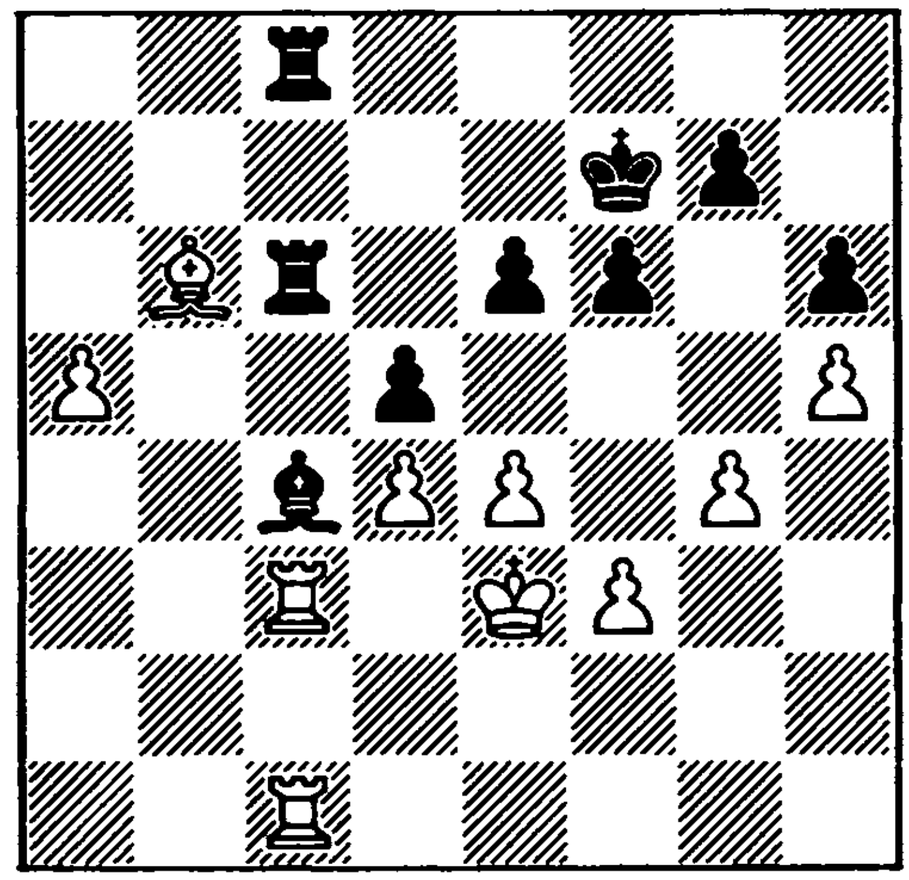
In Botvinnik's opinion, 23 ... f5 was preferable.

24 e4 ♔f7 25 ♔f2 ♖aa8 26 ♔e3 ♖eb8 27 ♖ac3 ♖c8 28 g4!

White has improved the placing of his forces in the centre, and he now sets about creating a second weakness in Black's position. (The first weakness is White's extra passed pawn on the queenside).

28 ... ♖ab8 29 h4 ♖c6 30 h5 ♖bc8 *(168)*

168



31 e5!

This signals the start of the offensive. By the advance of his f- and g-pawns White intends either to open lines on the kingside and break through with his rooks, or to create a passed pawn on this part of the board, which will be Black's second weakness.

31 ... g6

Black does not wish to 'idly' watch as he is outplayed, but the advance of the g-pawn merely makes things easier for White.

32 hxg6+ ♔xg6 33 ♖3c2 fxe5 34 dxe5 ♖h8 35 ♖h2 ♖cc8

Black cannot get rid of his weak h-pawn, since on 35 ... h5 there follows 36 ♖ch1.

36 ♔d2 ♗b3?! 37 a6 ♗c4 38 a7 ♖h7 39 ♖a1 ♖a8 40 ♗e3 ♖b7

All the same there was no defence against the threats of ♖ah1 and ♖a1-b1-b8.

41 ♖xh6+ ♔g7 42 ♖ah1 ♖b2+ and **Black resigned**

Plaskett-Yusupov
World Junior Team Championship, Graz 1981
Slav Defence

1 ♘f3 d5 2 c4 c6 3 d4 ♘f6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 ♘c3 ♘c6 6 ♗f4 ♗f5 7 e3 e6 8 ♗b5 ♘d7!

Probably the only correct move in the given position. About the difficulties awaiting Black in the event of the artless 8 ... ♗b4?!, the reader already knows from the notes to the preceding game.

9 ♕a4 ♖c8

Things are more difficult for Black after 9 ... ♕b6 10 ♘h4!.

10 0-0

10 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 11 ♕xa7? ♕c8 is bad for White (Tomaszewski-Borkowski, Poland 1979).

10 ... a6
11 ♗xc6

11 ♗e2?! is illogical: 11 ... ♘b6 12 ♕d1 ♗e7, and one might ask: who is playing White?!

11 ... ♖xc6 12 ♖fc1 ♗e7 13 ♘e2 ♕b6!

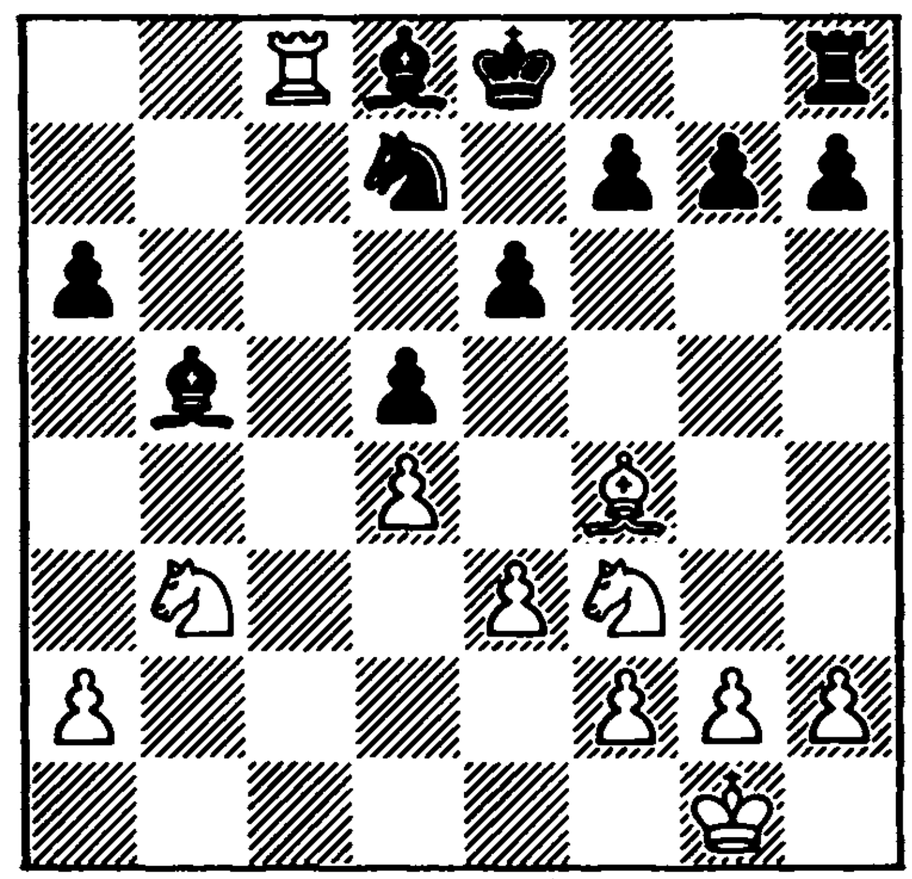
This strong move rehabilitates the entire variation, which previously was considered difficult for Black. The basis for this evaluation was provided by practical experience: 13 ... ♖xc1+ 14 ♖xc1 0-0 15 ♕b3 b5 16 ♖c6, or 13 ... ♗d3 14 ♖xc6 ♗b5 15 ♕xb5! axb5 16 ♖c7! (Rashkovsky-Belyavsky, Minsk 1979). In this latter variation 14 ... bxc6 is also bad on account of 15 ♘c1 ♗b5 16 ♕c2 (Petrosian-Sveshnikov, Moscow 1976).

14 ♖xc6 bxc6 15 ♖c1 ♗d3! 16 ♖xc6?!

White overestimates his position. He has no advantage, and therefore he should have taken the opportunity to deal with the opponent's strong bishop – after 16 ♕d1! the game is level (Rashkovsky-Dolmatov, Vilnius 1980-81).

16 ... ♕xb2 17 ♖c8+ ♗d8 18 ♘c1 ♗b5 19 ♕b3 ♕xb3 20 ♘xb3 *(169)*

169



20 ... 0-0
21 ♗d6?

An incorrect evaluation of the position. In White's set-up there is only one weakness – the a2 pawn, and by exchanging the rooks and the dark-square bishops Plaskett brings the enemy king nearer to this pawn. The Yugoslav master Ugrinović showed that 21 ♗c7! ♗e7 22 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 23 ♗a5, with the idea of meeting 23 ... ♘b8 with 24 ♘c5, would not have allowed Black to approach the a2 pawn, and would have left him with only insignificant chances of exploiting his two bishops.

21 ... ♗e7 22 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 23 ♗xe7+?

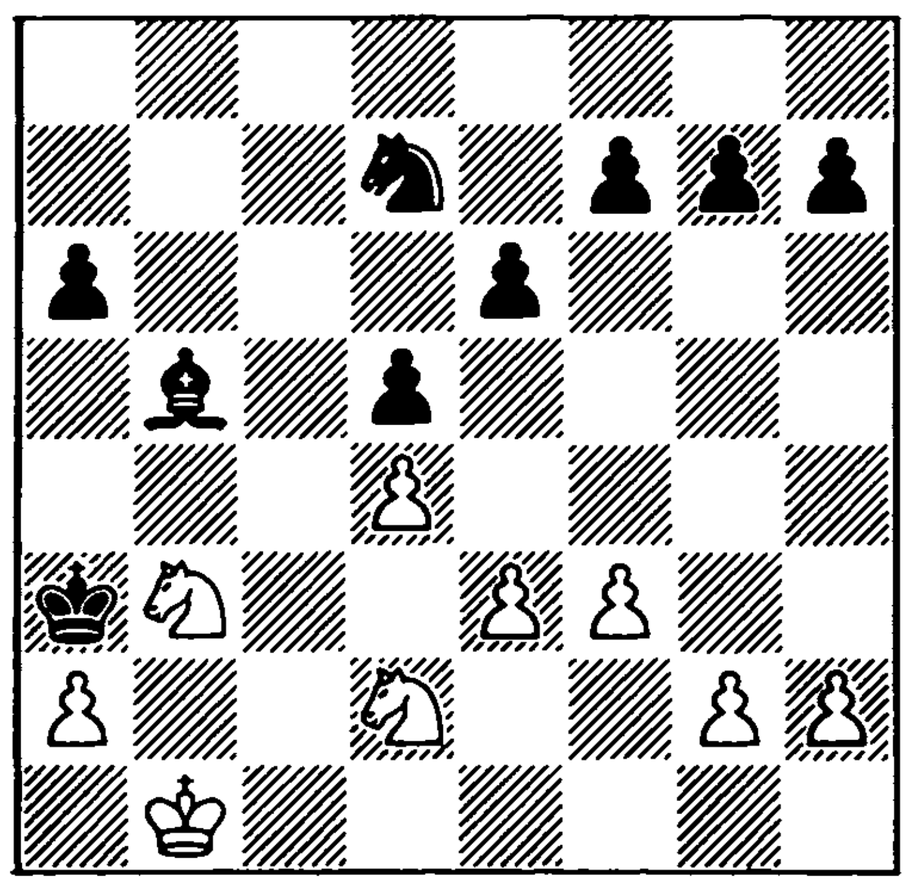
Here too 23 ♗c7! was much stronger.

23 ... ♔xe7 24 ♘fd2 ♔d6 25 f3 ♔c6

The black king approaches the a2 pawn. White's position is difficult.

26 ♔f2 ♗a4 27 ♔e2 ♔b5 28 ♔d3 ♔b4 29 ♔c2 ♔a3 30 ♔b1 ♗b5 *(170)*

170



With difficulty the white king has managed to defend the a2 pawn, but Black has a decisive spatial advantage on the queenside.

31 ♘c1 ♘b6 32 ♔c2 ♘c4! 33 ♘f1

The exchange of knights would have led to an easily won ending for Black. His plan would be to advance his pawn to a4, and then, with the white king at b1, play ... ♗f1-g2. The bishop would then be transferred to e4, driving the white king into the corner, and the black king would begin its victorious march to the kingside.

33 ... ♘b2 34 ♘g3 g6 35 e4 ♘a4 36 exd5 exd5 37 ♘h1?!

White's position is lost, but his last move hastens the end. However, even after 37 ♘ge2 Black could have placed his bishop at c4, waited for ♔a1, and then exchanged bishop for knight followed by ... ♔b4.

37 ... ♗f1 38 ♘f2 ♗xg2 39 f4 ♔b4 40 ♘b3 ♗e4+ 41 ♔d2 ♘c3 42 ♘c5 a5 43 a3+ ♔c4 44 ♔e3 f5 45 ♘b7 a4 46 ♘a5+ ♔b5 47 ♘b7 ♘b1 48 ♘d1 ♗c2 White resigns

Kotov-Pilnik
Stockholm Interzonal 1952
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♘f3 h6 7 ♗h4 ♘e4

In choosing Lasker's Defence, Black agrees for a certain time to a cramped, but very solid position – the exchange of minor pieces eases his defence. Often after the freeing moves ... b6 and ... c5 (more rarely ... *e5*) the game becomes level.

8 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 9 ♕c2 c6 10 ♗e2

Sharp play results from the deeply studied variation 10 ♘xe4 dxe4 11 ♕xe4 ♕b4+ 12 ♘d2 ♕xb2 13 ♖b1 ♕xa2 14 ♗d3. To avoid it, Black more often plays 9 ... ♘xc3 10 ♕xc3, and only then 10 ... c6.

10 ... ♘d7
11 0-0 ♘ef6

The exchange of knights is more in the spirit of Lasker's Defence: 11 ... ♘xc3 12 ♕xc3, and now the relieving of the central tension – 12 ... dxc4! After both 13 ♕xc4 e5! (Geller-Taimanov, Stockholm Interzonal 1952) and 13 ♗xc4 b6 14 e4 ♗b7 15 ♖fe1 c5! the game is level.

12 ♖ad1!

Preventing both ... e5 and ... c5.

12 ... a6
13 a3 b5!

The correct plan. White must now play energetically, otherwise after the obligatory 14 cxd5 cxd5 the unfavourable position of his queen at c2 will tell, since it can come under an 'X-ray' attack by a black rook at c8.

14 cxd5 cxd5
15 a4!

"The only way! Otherwise, by playing 15 ... ♗b7, 16 ... ♖ac8 and 17 ... ♘e4 or ... ♘d7-b6-c4, Black would have obtained

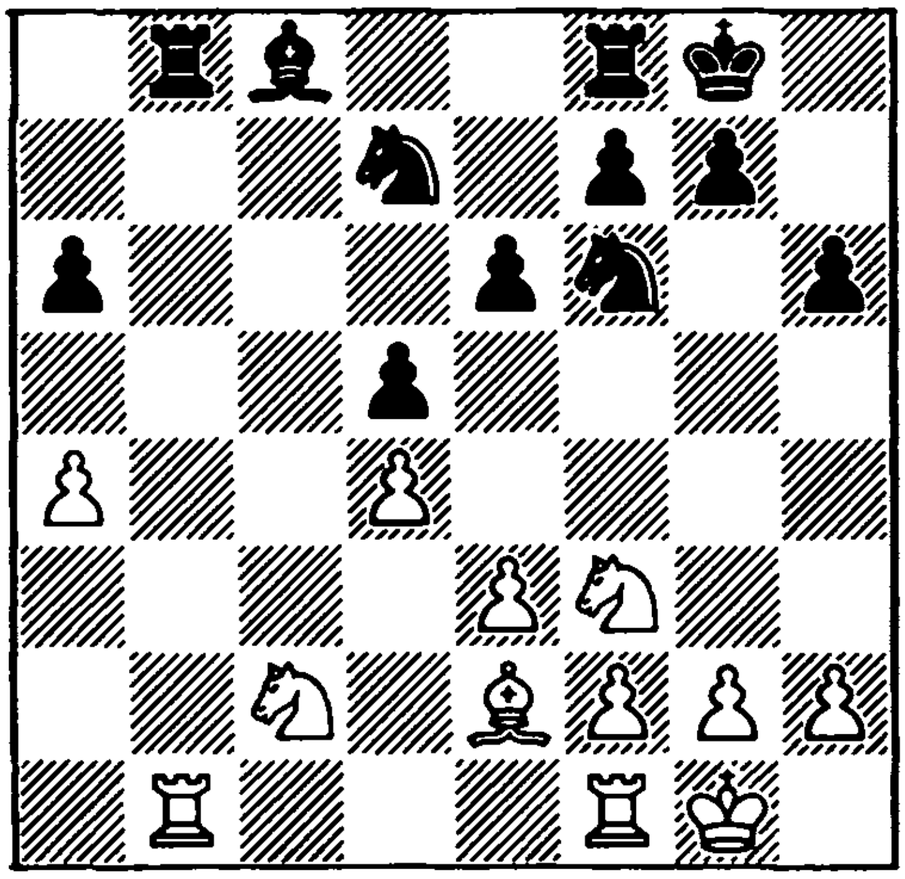
significantly the better position" (Kotov).

15 ... b4 16 ♘a2 ♖b8 17 ♘c1 b3!

The only move. The knight cannot be allowed to go to b3.

18 ♘xb3 ♕b4 19 ♘a1! ♕xb2 20 ♖b1 ♕xc2 21 ♘xc2 (171)

171



White holds the initiative. Black may be caused considerable trouble by his 'bad' bishop and the vulnerability of his a6 pawn. It is not surprising that at this point Kotov declined the offer of a draw.

21 ... ♘e4
22 ♗d3 ♘c3

As in the Botvinnik-Tal game, the position of the knight at c3 (with colours reversed) is highly unpleasant for the opponent. But whereas in the aforementioned game the knight received powerful support from the other pieces, here Kotov is gradually able to drive it away. First exchanging by 22 ... ♖xb1 came into consideration.

23 ♖xb8 ♘xb8
24 a5

White fixes the enemy a-pawn and seizes space on the queenside. It was difficult for Black to prevent this, since ... a5 would have seriously weakened the b5 square.

24 ... ♗b7 25 ♖a1 ♖c8 26 ♔f1 ♔f8 27 ♘d2 ♘e4

The black knight voluntarily leaves the enemy position, possibly fearing that it would be surrounded after 28 f3. On the other hand, the rook at c8 gains the opportunity of invading at c3.

28 ♔e2 ♘xd2?!

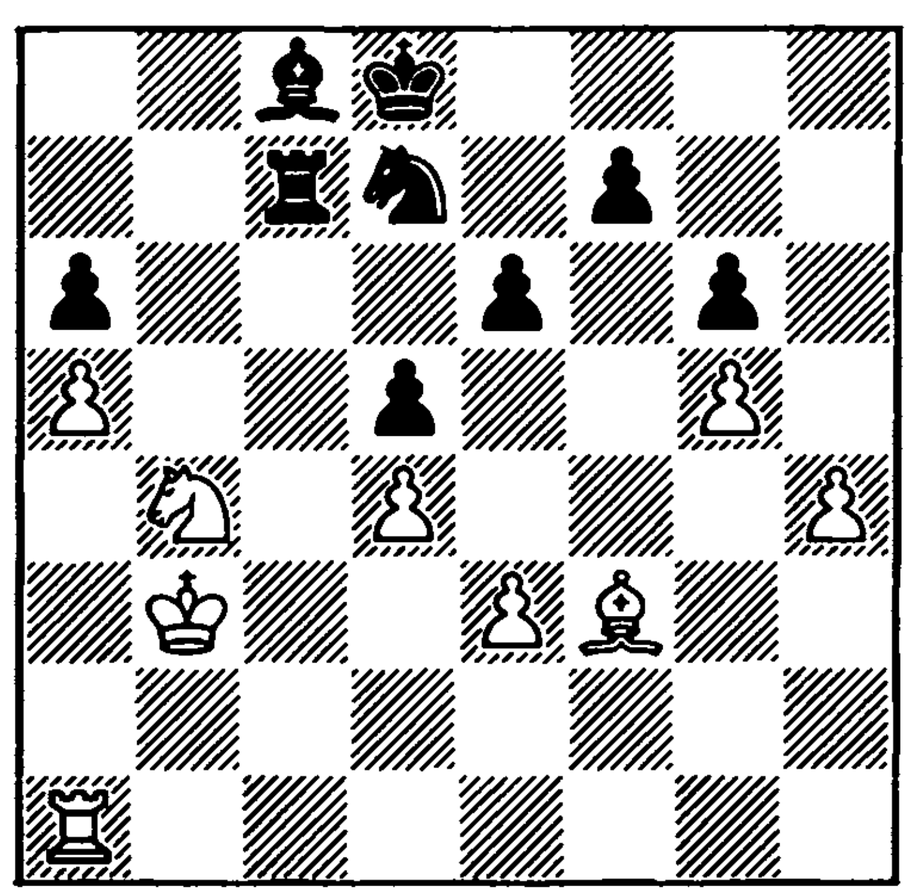
Inconsistent. As shown by Kotov, Black should have played 28 ... ♖c3, with the threat of 29 ... ♘xf2. Now on 29 ♖b1 there follows 29 ... ♖xc2 30 ♗xc2 ♘c3+ with favourable simplification. Therefore White was intending to continue 29 ♘b4 ♘xd2 30 ♔xd2 ♖b3 31 ♖a4, maintaining a definite advantage.

29 ♔xd2 ♖c7 30 ♘b4 ♔e7 31 ♗e2 ♔d8 32 ♘d3 ♘d7

White has deployed his pieces in active positions, but Black has covered his vulnerable points on the queenside. To obtain real winning chances Kotov must create weaknesses in the opponent's position on the opposite side of the board.

33 f4 ♗c8 34 g4 ♘f6 35 ♗f3 ♖b7 36 ♔c3 ♖c7+ 37 ♔b3 ♖b7+ 38 ♘b4 ♖c7 39 g5! hxg5 40 fxg5 ♘d7 41 h4 g6 *(172)*

172



In this position the game was adjourned. White's advantage is clear. Apart from his spatial superiority and the significantly better placing of his pieces, there are also vulnerable pawns in Black's position at a6 and f7, against which White can mount a combined attack. This is what Kotov wrote:

"White's plan for realising his advantage is simple: after preparatory manoeuvres he will choose a convenient moment to play h4-h5, creating after ... gxh5, ♗xh5 a decisive attack on the f7 pawn".

42 ♗e2 ♘b8 43 ♘d3 ♔e7 44 ♘e5 ♘c6 45 ♔b2!

White is not afraid of the exchange on e5, which would finally nail down the f7 pawn, and he threatens to transpose into a winning bishop ending by 46 ♘xc6+ and 47 ♖c1.

45 ... ♖b7+
46 ♔c3 ♔d6!?

A little tactical trick, which, however, cannot save Black.

47 ♘xc6

Of course, not 47 ♗xa6 ♖c7 48 ♗xc8 ♘xe5+ 49 ♔b3 ♘c4 with an equal game.

47 ... ♖c7 48 ♔b3 ♖xc6 49 ♖f1 ♖c7 50 h5

This essentially concludes the game. The white pawn cannot be allowed to go to h6, and after the following exchange the pawn at f7 cannot be defended.

50 ... gxh5 51 ♗xh5 ♖b7+ 52 ♔c3 ♖c7+ 53 ♔b3 ♖b7+ 54 ♔c3 ♖c7+ 55 ♔d2 ♖b7 56 ♖xf7 ♖b2+ 57 ♔e1 ♖g2 58 ♖g7 ♗d7 59 ♗f3 ♖h2 60 ♖g8 ♔e7 61 ♖g7+ ♔d6 62 ♗e2 ♖h1+ 63 ♔f2 ♖h2+ 64 ♔f3 ♗e8

64 ... ♗c8 65 ♖a7 ♖h3+ 66 ♔f4 ♖h4+ 67 ♔g3 would not have changed anything.

65 g6 ♖h8 66 ♗xa6 e5 67 dxe5+ ♔xe5 68 ♗b7 ♖f8+ 69 ♔g3 ♔f6 70 ♖c7 ♗xg6 71 a6 d4 72 exd4 ♖g8 73 ♔f2 Black resigns

Ivkov-Smyslov
Havana 1965
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 cxd5 cxd5 5 ♘c3 ♘c6 6 ♗f4 e6 7 e3 ♗d6 8 ♗xd6

It is doubtful whether other continuations promise White more, for example: 8 ♗g3 0-0 9 ♗d3 b6 10 ♖c1 ♗b7 11 0-0 ♗xg3 12 hxg3 ♕e7 (Portisch-Uhlmann, Halle 1967), or 8 ♗d3 ♗xf4 9 exf4 ♕b6 10 a3 ♗d7 11 ♘a4 ♕c7 12 g3 0-0 13 0-0 ♖fc8 (Andersson-Donner, Amsterdam 1979), in both cases with a solid position for Black.

8 ... ♕xd6 9 ♗d3 0-0 10 0-0 ♗d7

The freeing move 10 ... e5 is possible. White does not achieve anything by 11 ♘b5 ♕e7 12 dxe5 ♘xe5 13 ♖c1 ♗g4!, when 14 ♖c7? ♕d8 15 ♖xb7 ♘xf3+ 16 gxf3 ♗h3 17 ♖e1 ♘e4! 18 f4 ♘c5! is bad for him (Nilsson-Spielmann, Sweden 1924).

11 ♖c1 ♖ac8

11 ... e5 was again quite good, for example: 12 dxe5 ♘xe5 13 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 14 h3 ♗c6 15 ♗e2 ♖ad8 with equality (Lilienthal-Boleslavsky, Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1948).

12 a3 a6

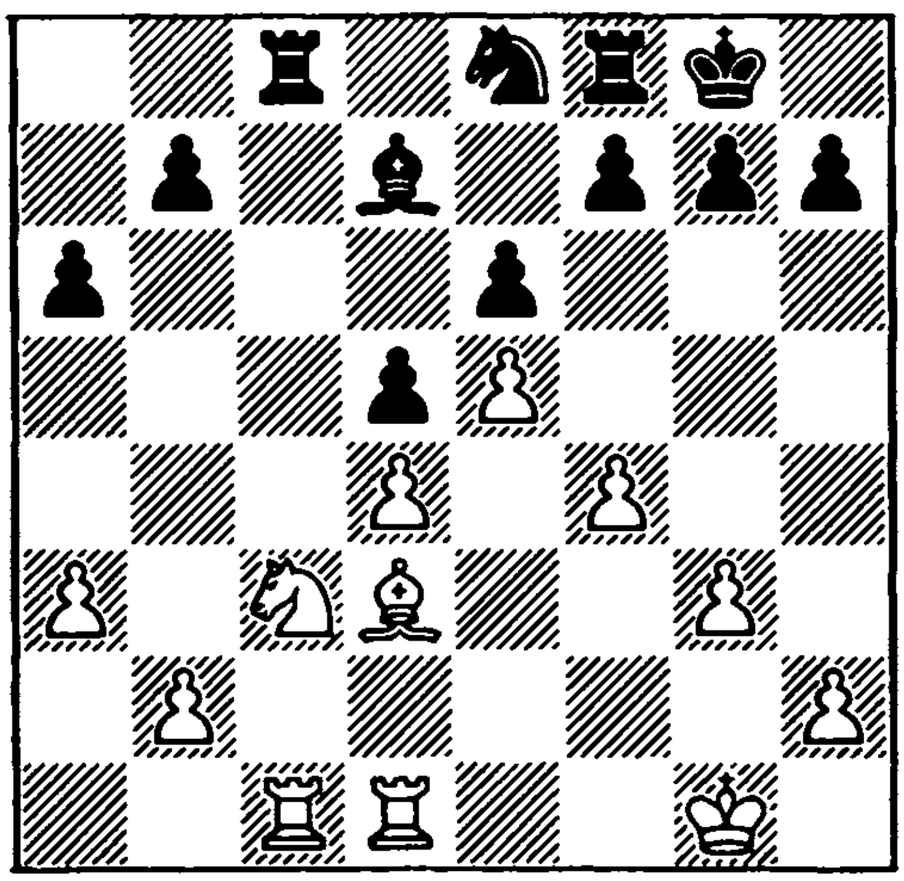
The last opportunity for playing ... e5 is missed, and meanwhile after 12 ... e5 13 ♘b5 ♕b8 14 ♘xe5 ♘xe5 15 dxe5 ♖xc1 16 ♕xc1 ♗xb5 the game is level (Flohr-Botvinnik, Noordwijk 1965).

13 ♗b1 ♘a5 14 ♘e5 ♘c4 15 ♘xc4 ♖xc4 16 e4! ♕f4

By exploiting the rather passive play of his opponent, Ivkov has succeeded in breaking through in the centre. Black's last move is criticised in *ECO*, but did he have anything better? The point is that the analysis of grandmaster Trifunović, given in *ECO* (*16 ... dxe4 17 ♘xe4 ♖xc1 18 ♘xf6+ gxf6 19 ♕xc1 ♗c6 20 ♕h6 f5 21 ♖d1 ♕d5 22 ♕g5+ ♔h8 23 ♖d3 ♕d8 24 ♕h6 ♖g8* =) is incorrect: by playing 21 ♗xf5, White wins.

17 g3 ♕g4 18 f3 ♕h5 19 e5 ♘e8 20 ♗d3 ♖c8 21 f4 ♕xd1 22 ♖fxd1 *(173)*

173



By its pawn structure the position bears a greater resemblance to the French Defence than to the Exchange Variation of the Slav Defence. The advantage is with White, mainly in view of his spatial advantage. The poor placing of Black's knight and bishop are a consequence of his lack of space. With his next few moves Smyslov tries to improve the positions of his minor pieces.

22 ... ♘c7 23 ♔f2 f6 24 ♔e3 fxe5 25 dxe5!

An important moment. Ivkov correctly solves an exchanging problem. With a spatial advantage it is favourable to keep as many pieces as possible on the board. White therefore keeps closed the f-file, along which the exchange of rooks could take place, and opens a path for his king to the queenside along the squares d4, c5 and b6. The exchange of rooks will now be unfavourable for Black.

25 ... ♗b5
26 ♗c2

Of course, the exchange on b5 would be to Black's advantage.

26 ... ♗c4 27 b3 ♗b5 28 a4 ♗e8 29 ♗d3 ♗h5

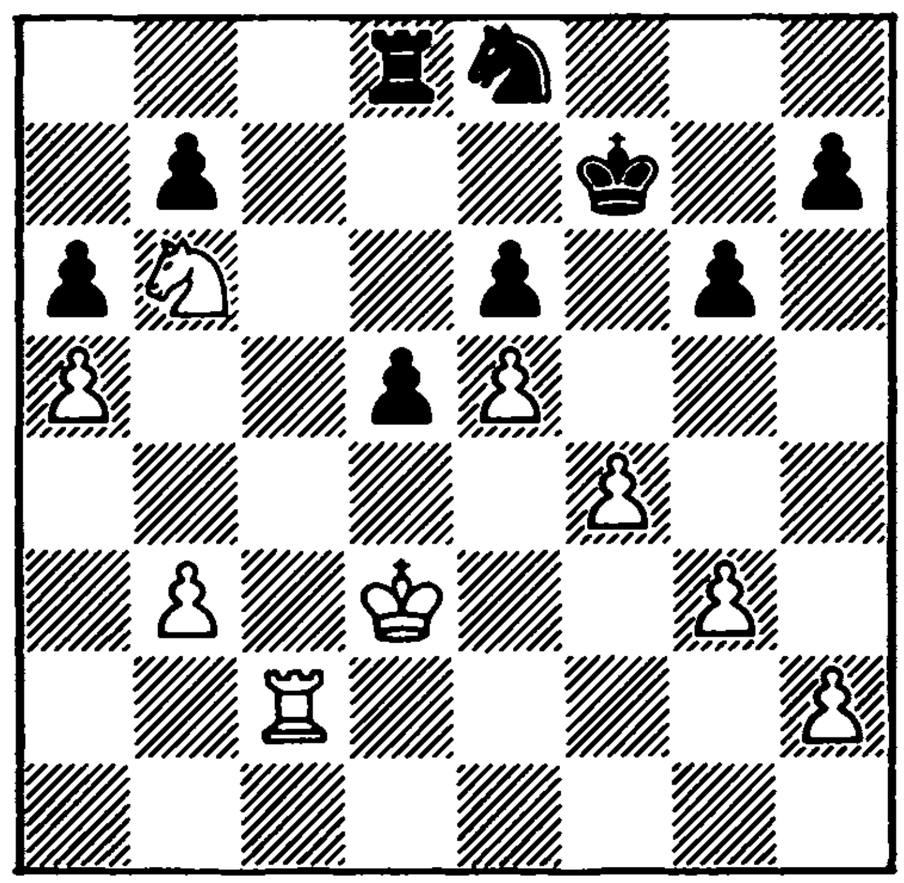
Having failed to achieve anything for his bishop on the queenside, Smyslov switches it to the kingside.

30 ♖g1 ♖fd8
31 ♔d4!

The white king takes an active part in the play. Black cannot drive it from its excellent post in the centre: he has too little space to manoeuvre his knight to c6.

31 ... ♗g4 32 ♖c2 ♘e8 33 ♖gc1 g6 34 a5! ♔f7 35 ♘a4 ♖xc2 36 ♖xc2 ♗f5 37 ♘b6 ♗xd3 38 ♔xd3 *(174)*

174



The position has simplified. Both sides

are consistently carrying out their plans. White has fixed the opponent's queenside pawns and and transformed them into a weakness, while Black has succeeded at last in getting rid of his bad bishop. It is clear that, if the game continues quietly, White will sooner or later exploit the weaknesses on the opponent's queenside. Smyslov therefore initiates sharp counterplay on the kingside, and the play becomes more complicated.

38 ... g5! 39 fxg5 ♔g6 40 h4 ♔f5 41 ♔d4 ♔g4 42 ♖c8!

A decision that demanded deep and exact calculation. To win a game against a high-class opponent by avoiding complications is not normally possible, and Ivkov boldly goes in for a sharpening of the play.

42 ... ♖xc8 43 ♘xc8 ♘g7 44 ♘d6 ♘f5+ 45 ♔c5 ♘xg3 46 b4

In knight endings the greatest danger is presented by wing pawns. Ivkov prepares to create a passed pawn on the a-file.

46 ... ♘e4+ 47 ♔d4 ♘d2 48 ♘xb7 ♘f3+ 49 ♔c5 ♘xe5 50 b5 ♘d7+ 51 ♔c6 d4

Black's last chance.

52 ♘d6! d3 53 ♘e4 ♔f4 54 ♘c3!

Black's passed pawn is halted at the last line of defence, and against the passed a-pawn he is powerless. The game concluded:

54 ... ♘e5+ 55 ♔c7 d2 56 bxa6 ♔e3 57 a7 ♔d3 58 ♘d1 ♔c2 59 a8=♕ Black resigns

3.3 THE EXCHANGE dxc5

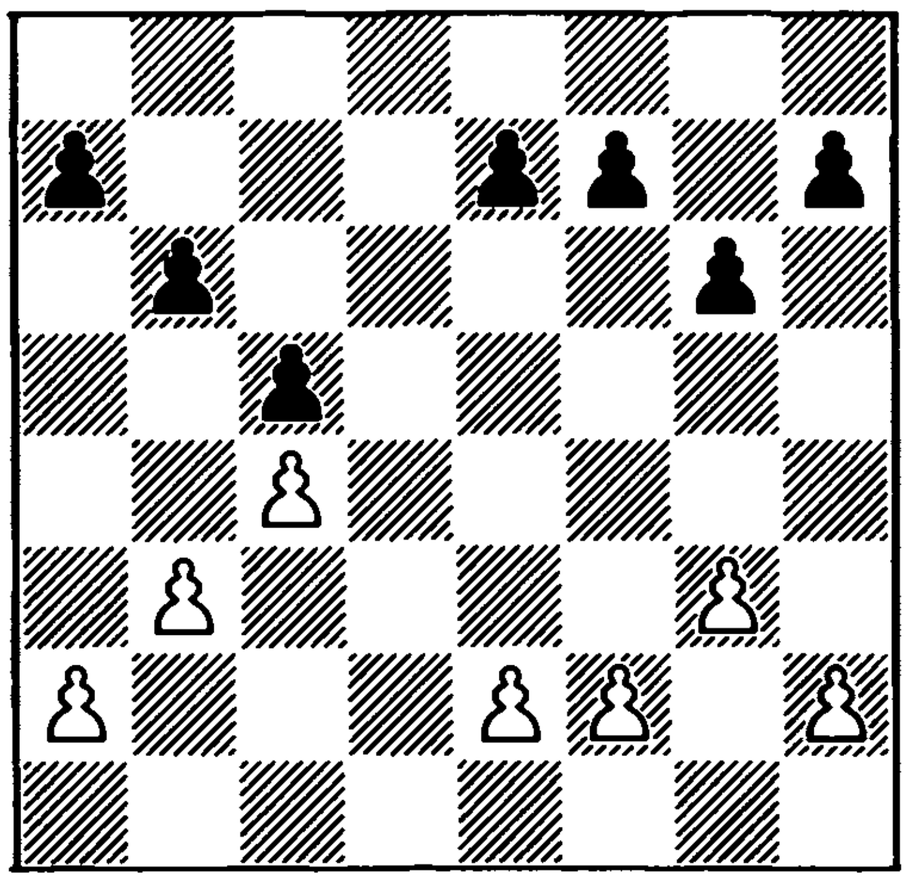
In the battle against the King's Indian Defence, today all methods would appear to have been tried. Such a number of 'antidotes' have been developed, that it sometimes seems surprising that anyone still plays the King's Indian. But – joking apart – the variation now to be described is indeed rather unpleasant for supporters of the bishop at g7.

If you are not trying immediately to smash the King's Indian opponent in the Four Pawns Attack or the Sämisch Variation, but are aiming for an enduring spatial advantage with harmonious development, it is hard to conceive of a better variation than "g2-g3". By the mid-1950s this had become more or less clear, but then Yugoslav players, in particular Udovčić and Gligorić, worked out a new method of play. After 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘f3 ♗g7 4 g3 0-0 5 ♗g2 d6 6 0-0, rather than the 'classical' (if in general this term is applicable in the King's Indian Defence) 6 ... ♘bd7 they gave decisive preference to the immediate attack on the centre 6 ... c5! In reply to 7 d5 came 7 ... ♘a6 followed by ... ♘c7, ... ♖b8, ... a6 and ... b5, while after 7 ♘c3 the Yugoslavs successfully employed 7 ... ♘c6 8 d5 ♘a5! 9 ♘d2 e5!.

A considerable time was to pass before it transpired that after both 7 d5, and 7 ♘c3 ♘c6 8 d5, White has chances of maintaining an opening advantage, But initially Black's successes stimulated searches for a white advantage in other directions. This was how the variation 7 ♘c3 ♘c6 8 dxc5 began to be developed, where White pins his hopes on his minimal advantage – not even in development, but in time. Only in general terms are White's plans typical in endings with the type of formation shown in diagram 175.

The play is on a narrow front – usually the queenside, and great skill is required to obtain here any tangible success. An

175



excellent example of high-class endgame technique is the game **Barcza-Soos**, in which the late Hungarian grandmaster carried out the classic strategy of weakening and eliminating his opponent's initially sound pawn defences.

Reshevsky-Kalme
USA Championship 1958-59
King's Indian Defence

1 c4 ♘f6 2 d4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5 ♘f3 c5 6 0-0 d6

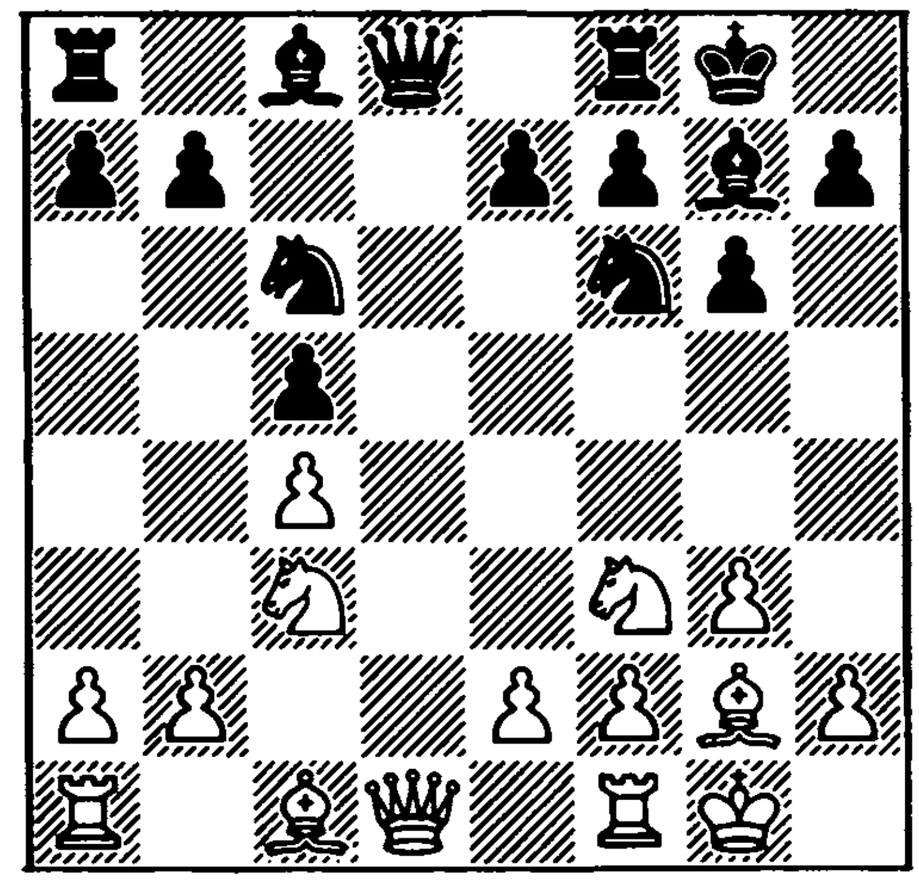
In the 1950s the Yugoslav Variation was employed even more often than the 'classical' ... ♘bd7 and ... e5.

7 ♘c3 ♘c6
8 dxc5

This exchange, which objectively does not give White an advantage, sometimes occurs even today. The point is that in the resulting absolutely symmetric position there is initially a slight initiative for White, who has the advantage of the first move. Of course, 8 d5 ♘a5 leads to more interesting play.

8 ... dxc5 *(176)*

176



9 ♗e3

The alternative is 9 ♗f4, to which Black usually replies 9 ... ♘h5 10 ♗e3 ♕a5, although the forgotten 9 ... ♗e6 10 ♘e5 ♘a5 is also not bad. For example, 11 ♗f3? ♘e8! with advantage to Black (Butsorgos-Kholmov, Kharkov 1967), or 11 ♕a4 ♘d7!, with a complicated game (Kalme-Reshevsky, New York 1960-61).

9 ... ♕a5

This is not as sound as 9 ... ♗e6. True, the continuation chosen by Reshevsky should not have brought White any advantage, but, on the other hand, a very interesting idea was employed by Petrosian in a game against Ghinda (Bagneux 1981): 9 ... ♕a5 10 ♕b3!? ♘g4 11 ♗f4 ♘d4 12 ♘xd4 cxd4 13 ♘d5!.

10 ♘d5 ♗f5 11 ♗d2 ♕d8 12 ♘h4 ♗d7

The correct way was found ten years later by Gligorić: 12 ... ♗g4 13 h3 ♗d7 14 ♗c3 e5! (Bukić-Gligorić, Belgrade 1969). It was sufficient for White to make two 'solid' moves: 15 e3 ♖e8 16 ♕d2?!, and after 16 ... ♘xd5 17 cxd5 ♘d4! it transpired that he had an indifferent position.

13 ♗c3 ♘g4

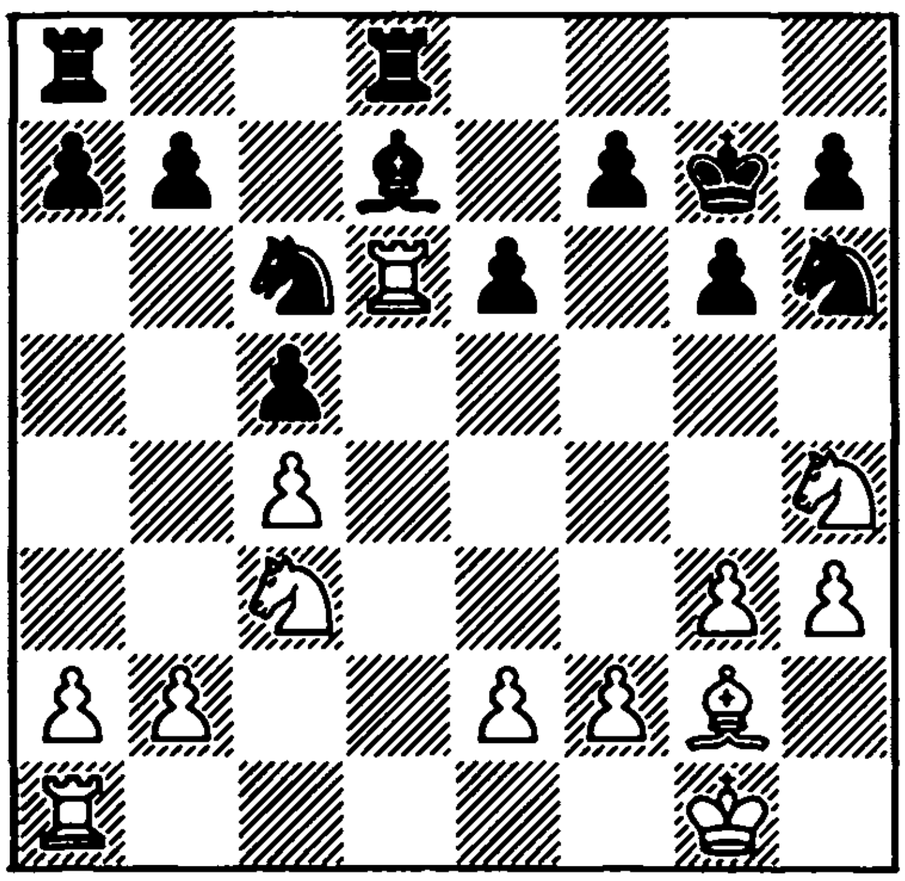
Here too 13 ... e5! came into consideration.

14 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 15 h3 ♘h6 16 ♕d3 e6 17 ♘c3 ♕e7 18 ♖fd1 ♖fd8

If Black should succeed in playing ... ♗e8, little will remain of White's advantage. Therefore Reshevsky, trying to hold on to the d-file, agrees to the exchange of queens.

19 ♕d6 ♕xd6
20 ♖xd6 *(177)*

177



In the ending White has the initiative. The knight at h6 is out of play, Black's pieces on the queenside are not altogether well placed, and the d-file will be occupied by the white rooks. Yet despite all these advantages, White succeeds in winning only thanks to the mistakes made by Black.

20 ... ♗e8 21 ♘e4 b6 22 ♖ad1 ♖dc8

It was not essential to give up the battle for the d-file. 22 ... ♖ac8 was possible.

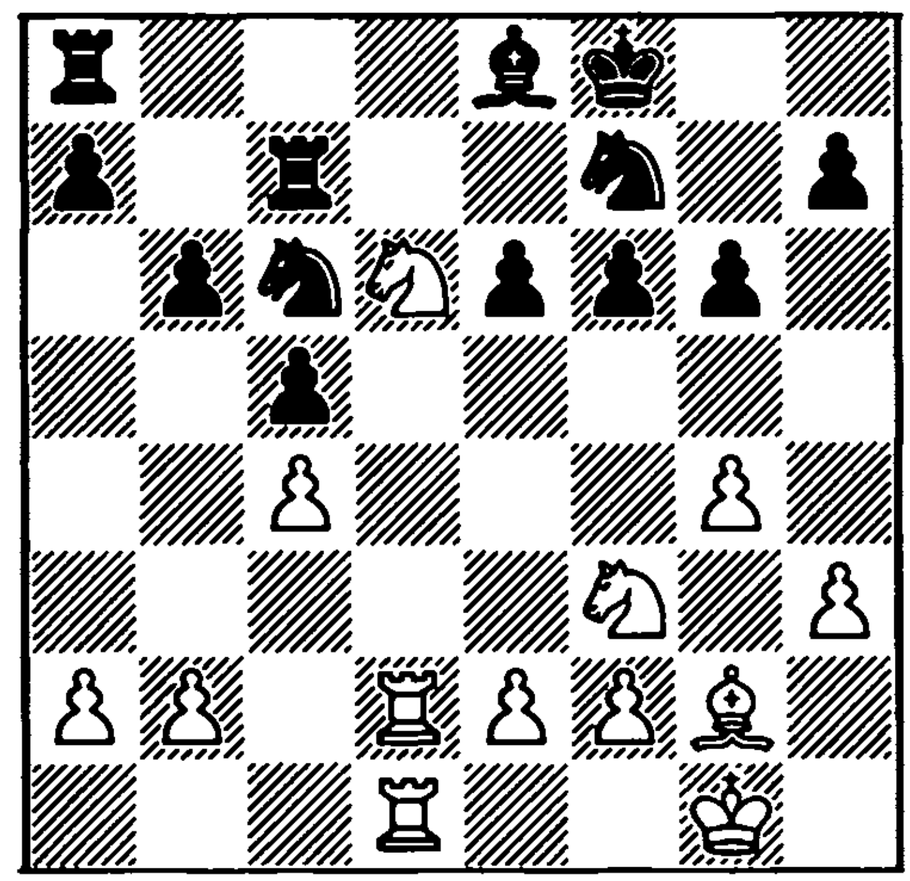
23 ♖6d2!

Reshevsky ensures the invasion of his knight at d6.

23 ... ♖c7 24 ♘d6 ♔f8 25 ♘f3 f6 26 g4 ♘f7 *(178)*

Black gradually begins driving the white pieces from their active positions. Therefore Reshevsky decides to give up a pawn, in order to maintain his initiative.

178



27 g5!?

Even so, perhaps 27 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 28 g5 should have been preferred, with a minimal positional advantage after 28 ... ♖ac8.

27 ... fxg5?

An inexplicable decision. Why not 27 ... ♘xg5 28 ♘xg5 fxg5? After all, 29 ♘e4 h6 30 ♘f6 ♖ac8 does not give White anything real. As shown by Neat, 29 ♘xe8 ♖xe8 30 ♖d7 ♖e7 31 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 32 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 33 ♖d7 is stronger, when after 33 ... h5 34 ♖xa7 the rook ending is better for White. But now White's positional advantage becomes clear.

28 ♘xf7 ♔xf7 29 ♘xg5+ ♔f6 30 f4 h6 31 ♘e4+ ♔e7 32 ♘d6 ♖d8?

A blunder in a difficult position.

33 ♗xc6 ♗xc6 34 ♘f5+ Black resigns

Stahlberg-Szabo
Stockholm Interzonal 1952
King's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 g3 ♗g7 4 ♗g2 0-0 5

♘c3 d6 6 ♘f3 c5 7 0-0 ♘c6 8 dxc5 dxc5 9 ♗e3 ♕a5

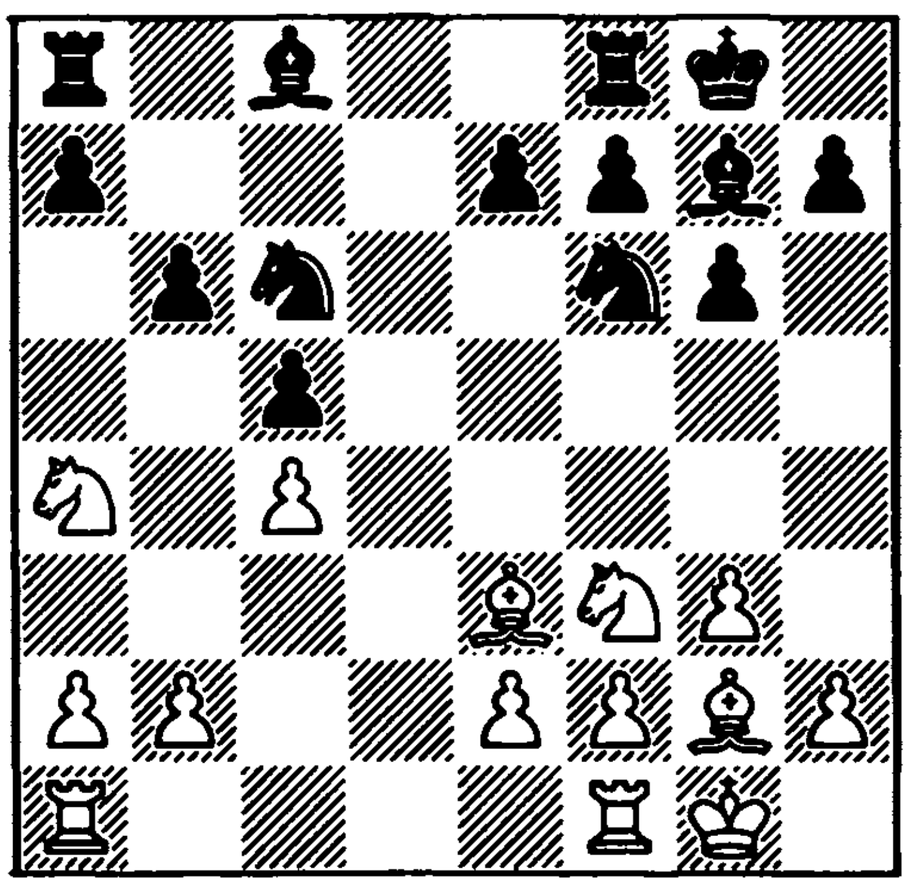
Some new ideas in the old variation 9 ... ♗e6 have been found by Kasparov. His game with Grigorian (USSR Team Championship, Moscow 1981) continued 10 ♕a4 ♘d4!? 11 ♖ad1 ♗d7 12 ♕a3 ♘c2 13 ♕xc5 b6 14 ♕g5 h6 15 ♕f4 g5 16 ♕e5 ♖c8, with active play for the pawn.

10 ♕a4

The most harmless continuation. 10 ♗d2 or 10 ♕b3 is more active.

10 ... ♕xa4
11 ♘xa4 b6! *(179)*

179



This 'opening' position is well known in theory, and does not promise White even a hint of an advantage. Moreover, it often happens that, if he plays too actively or (as in the present game) carelessly, he soon begins to experience difficulties. Now, of course 12 ♘e5?? is not possible: 12 ... ♘xe5 13 ♗xa8 ♗d7, and Black wins, but there is in general no way for White to gain an advantage. He does not achieve anything, either by the solid 12 h3, or the objectively strongest move, 12 ♘g5, or by other continuations: 12 ♖fd1, 12 ♖ac1, 12 ♘c3 or 12 ♘e1. For example:

12 h3 ♗b7 13 ♖ad1 ♖ad8 14 ♘c3 ♘b4! 15 ♗f4 ♘e4, with the initiative for Black (Teschner-Geller, Hamburg 1960).

12 ♘g5 ♗b7?! (better is *12 ... ♗d7! 13 ♖ad1 ♖ac8 14 ♘c3 ♖fd8* with absolute equality, Evans-Taimanov, New York 1954) 13 ♗xc5!? h6! 14 ♘e4 (not *14 ♘h3? bxc5 15 ♘xc5 ♗c8!*) 14 ... ♘xe4 15 ♗xe4 bxc5 16 ♘xc5 ♖ab8 17 ♘xb7 ♖xb7 18 ♗xc6 ♖xb2 19 ♗f3 ♖c8, with a total elimination of the fighting forces (Donchenko-Tikhanov, Moscow 1970).

12 ♖ad1

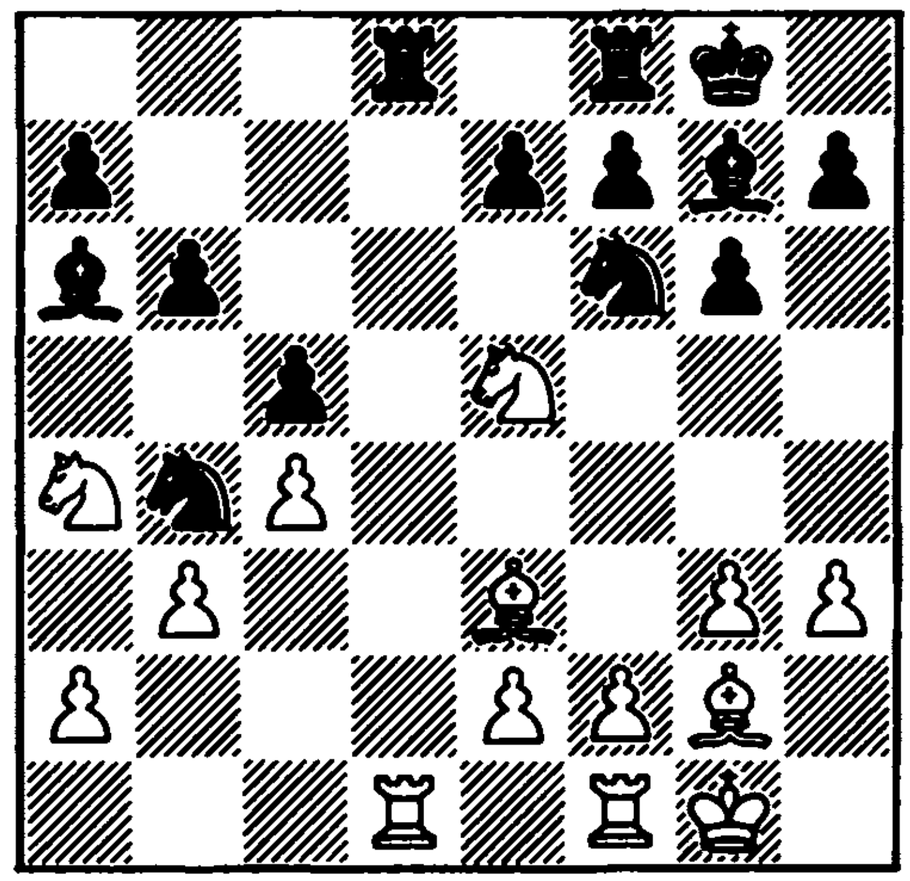
This move too does not cause Black any difficulty.

12 ... ♗a6 13 b3 ♖ad8 14 h3?!

White wastes time. He is already experiencing certain difficulties, on account of the poor position of his knight at a4. The aim of his last move was evidently to prepare the return of the knight to c3, which did not work immediately on account of 14 ... ♘g4. But Black also has another threat – to play his knight to b4. As Abramov correctly indicated in the tournament book, White should have played 14 ♗c1!, to answer 14 ... ♘b4 with the simple 15 a3.

14 ... ♘b4
15 ♘e5?! *(180)*

180



This energetic knight move meets with a spectacular refutation.

15 ... ♘fd5!

The simplicity of symmetric positions can sometimes be deceptive. Only four moves have passed since the queens were exchanged, and the game has entered a phase of great tactical complications.

16 ♗h6!

The best try.

16 ... ♗xh6 17 ♗xd5 ♘xd5 18 ♘c6 ♖d6 19 ♘xe7+ ♘xe7 20 ♖xd6 ♗c8 21 ♖fd1?

White has escaped from his difficulties comparatively well and has obtained a rook and pawn in exchange for the two enemy bishops. But Stahlberg's last move would seem to involve an oversight. After 21 ♔g2 it would not have been so easy for Black to realise his advantage.

21 ... ♗xh3 22 ♘c3 ♗g7 23 ♘b5 ♗e5!

Perhaps it was this move that the Swedish grandmaster overlooked. Now the game reduces to a purely technical phase.

24 ♖d8 ♘c6 25 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 26 f4 ♗d4+ 27 ♘xd4 ♘xd4 28 ♔f2 ♗g4 29 ♖h1 h5 30 e4 ♔e7

As shown by Abramov, 30 ... ♗f3! 31 ♖e1 ♘c2! would have won more simply.

31 ♖c1 ♔d6 32 ♖b1 ♔c6 33 ♖b2 b5! 34 cxb5+ ♔xb5 35 ♖b1 ♘e2 36 e5 ♘c3 37 ♖a1 ♔b4 38 ♔e3 ♗f5 39 ♖c1 a5 40 ♖a1 ♘b1! White resigns

Barcza-Soos
Varna Olympiad 1962
King's Indian Defence

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 g3 g6 3 b3 ♗g7 4 ♗b2 c5 5 c4 ♘c6

5 ... d6! is more accurate.

6 ♗g2 0-0 7 0-0 d6 8 ♘c3

And here White incorrectly allows 8 ... e5!. He could have played 8 d4!.

8 ... ♖b8?!

Soos assumes that the game will inevitably transpose into the Yugoslav Variation of the King's Indian Defence, and carelessly makes the 'King's Indian' moves that are essential for the undermining ... b5. But in fact things are by no means so simple.

9 d4! a6?!

Inviting the opponent to continue 10 d5 ♘a5 etc. The exchange on c5 was completely overlooked by Black, but it should be said that after the superficial 8 ... ♖b8?! Soos already had difficulty in choosing a plan. Thus after 9 ... ♗d7, as recommended in the tournament book, White could have accepted the 'invitation': 10 d5! ♘a5 11 ♕c2, transposing into a favourable line of the Yugoslav Variation, where ... ♗d7 is a superfluous move for preparing ... b5.

10 dxc5!

Barcza forces an ending where Black does not have even a hint of counterplay.

10 ... dxc5
11 ♕xd8 ♖xd8

(diagram 181)

12 ♘a4!

White seizes the initiative on the queenside. The c5 pawn is attacked.

12 ... ♘d7

Now Black comes under an unpleasant

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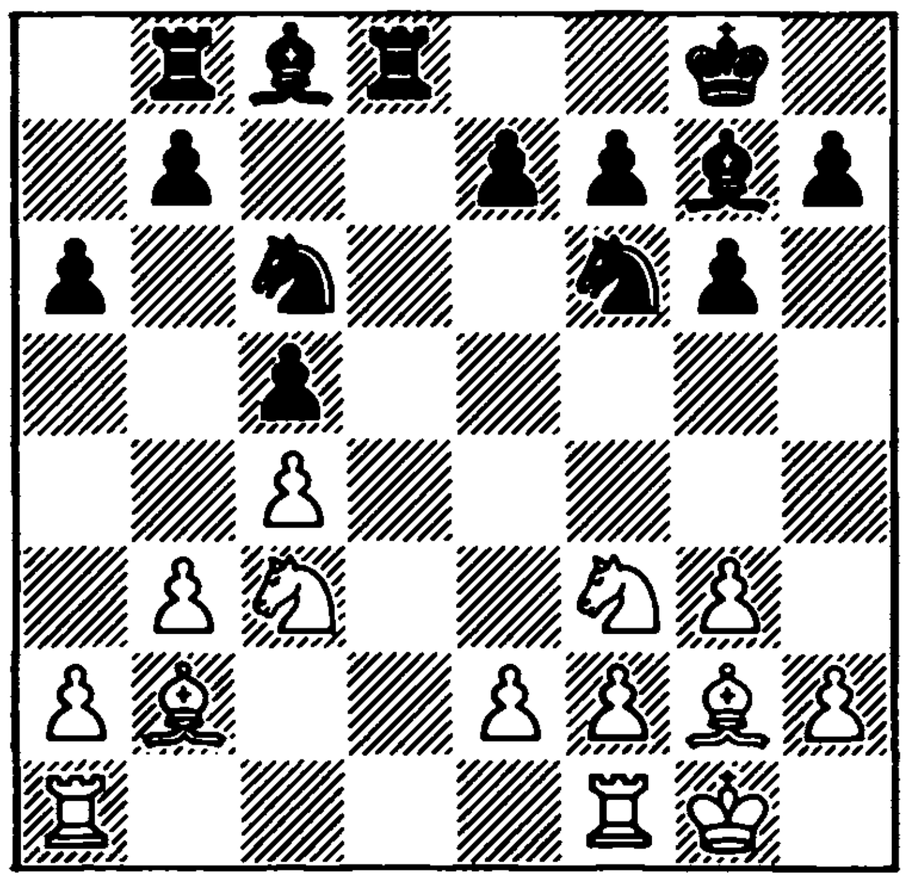

pin on the d-file, but 12 ... b6 13 ♘e5! ♘a7 14 ♖fd1 would also have left White with an enduring initiative.

13 ♗xg7 ♔xg7
14 ♖ac1

An important prophylactic move, preventing ... b5.

14 ... b6 15 ♖fd1 ♘f8 16 ♖xd8 ♘xd8 17 ♘e5

Barcza skilfully maintains the initiative. There is no way for Black to neutralise the opponent's pressure.

17 ... f6
18 ♖d1!

A strong interposition.

18 ... ♗f5 19 ♘d3 ♗d7 20 ♘c3 ♘c6?!

20 ... ♗c6 offered better chances of a successful defence.

21 ♘f4 ♘d4 22 e3 ♘f5 23 ♘fd5 e6 *(182)*

Black appears to have established order in his position. But in amazing fashion the white knight bursts in there, spreading alarm and confusion in the enemy ranks.

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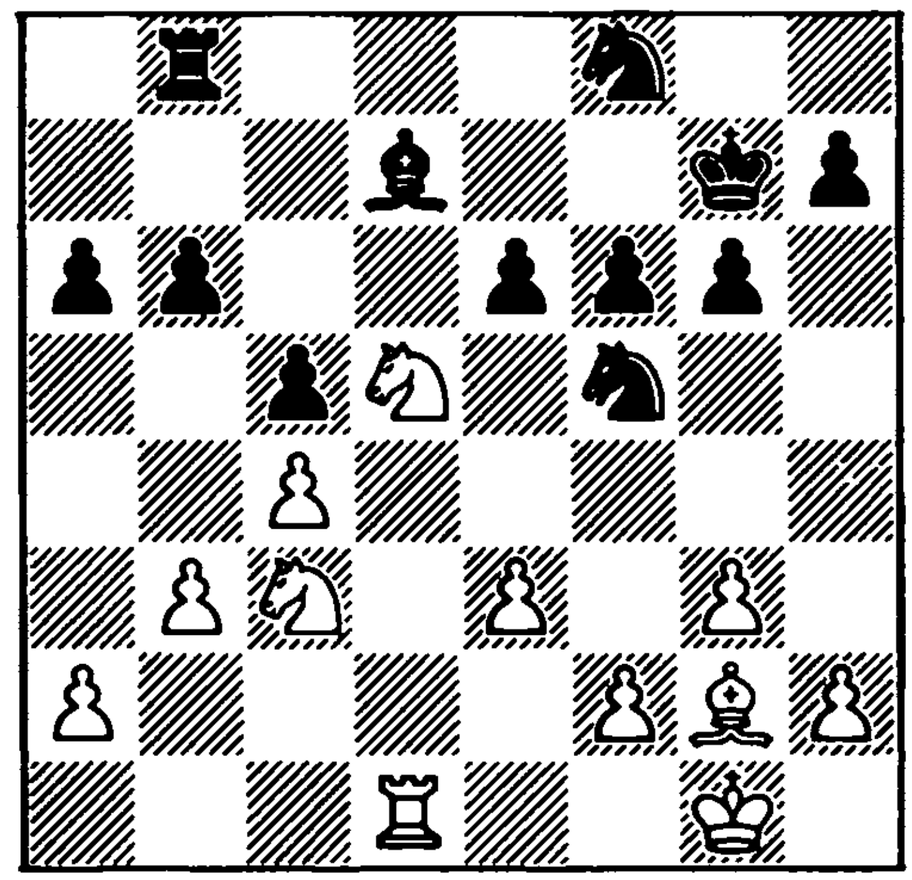

24 ♘c7 a5
25 ♘a6!!

This paradoxical move deprives the black pieces of their coordination.

25 ... ♖e8
26 ♘e4

The second white knight goes to the aid of its colleague.

26 ... ♗c8
27 ♘c7 ♖e7 *(183)*

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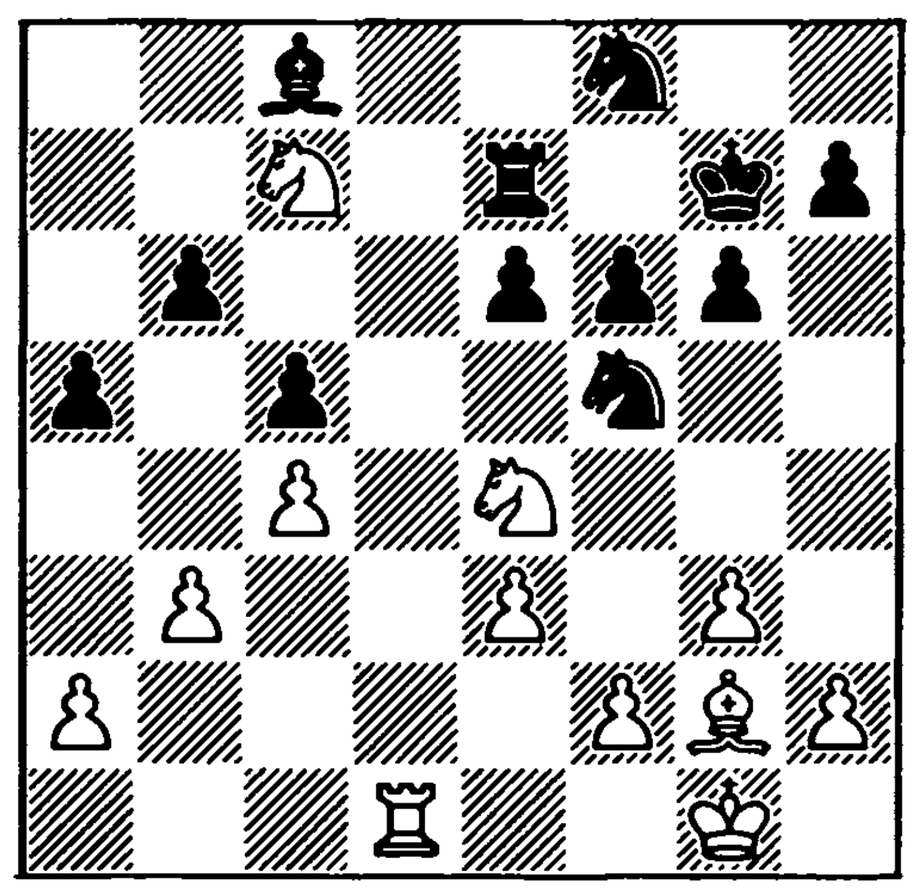

28 ♘a8!!

It is not often that one observes such fantastic leaps by a knight, deliberately

sent into the enemy position. Black cannot avoid loss of material.

28 ... ♖d7

On 28 ... ♖b7 there would have followed 29 ♘d6! ♖b8 30 ♘xc8.

29 ♖xd7+ ♘xd7 30 ♘c3! ♘d6 31 ♘a4 b5 32 cxb5 ♘xb5 33 ♗c6 ♘d6 34 ♗xd7 ♗xd7 35 ♘xc5

Black cannot get away with the loss of only one pawn.

35 ... ♗c6

After 35 ... ♗c8 36 ♘b6 ♔f7 37 ♘xc8 ♘xc8 38 ♘b7 the a5 pawn would have been lost.

36 ♘xe6+

The rest is elementary.

36 ... ♔g8 37 ♘b6 ♘e4 38 ♘d4 ♗e8 39 ♘c4 a4 40 bxa4 ♗xa4 41 ♘b6 ♗d1 42 a4 ♘c5 43 a5 ♔f7 44 f3 ♔e8 45 ♘d5 f5 46 ♘c3 ♗a4 47 a6! Black resigns

In conclusion we give a game in which dxc5 did not occur, but the d-file was opened by other means, and the character of the resulting ending was similar to the other examples in this section.

Romanishin-Grigorian
44th USSR Championship
Moscow 1976
English Opening

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 g6 3 ♘c3

This 'Anti-Grünfeld' Variation has a number of supporters. In both branches: 3 ... d5 4 ♕a4+ (or *4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 ♕a4+*) and 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4, Black's chances of obtaining active play are reduced to the minimum, and normally he has to defend accurately. It should be mentioned that Grünfeld players must play ... d5 on the 3rd move, otherwise after 3 ... ♗g7 4 e4! the possibility will no longer present itself.

3 ... d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 dxc3!?

This variation is not at all simple. It was apparently the Finnish master Böök who first began playing this way. True, the aim he set himself was a modest one – to gain a draw. At the Interzonal Tournament in Saltsjöbaden (1948) his opponents, Najdorf and Pachman, had no objection to this, and the variation was completely forgotten: as is known, if one wishes to draw with White this is not very difficult.

Top players also resorted to 6 dxc3 – Petrosian, when he was winning his match against Botvinnik (1963) and Larsen (against Hübner) when he was winning the Interzonal Tournament in Biel (1976). But as Black began achieving considerable successes in the Grünfeld Defence, increasing attention began to be paid to the variation. A great contribution to the handling of the resulting ending has been made by the Swedish grandmaster Andersson.

6 ... ♕xd1+
7 ♔xd1 *(184)*

In the similar ending after 1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 e4 ♘xc3 6 dxc3! ♕xd1+ 7 ♔xd1 things are a little better for Black (he does not have a pawn at g6), but even so the position favours White. Cf. the game **Timman-Tal**, Montreal 1979 (annotated by Tal on p.105 of *Montreal 1979, Tournament of Stars*, Pergamon 1980).

This 'opening' position *(184)* has already been studied quite deeply. On what is White counting, by so quickly simplifying the game? At first sight the position seems

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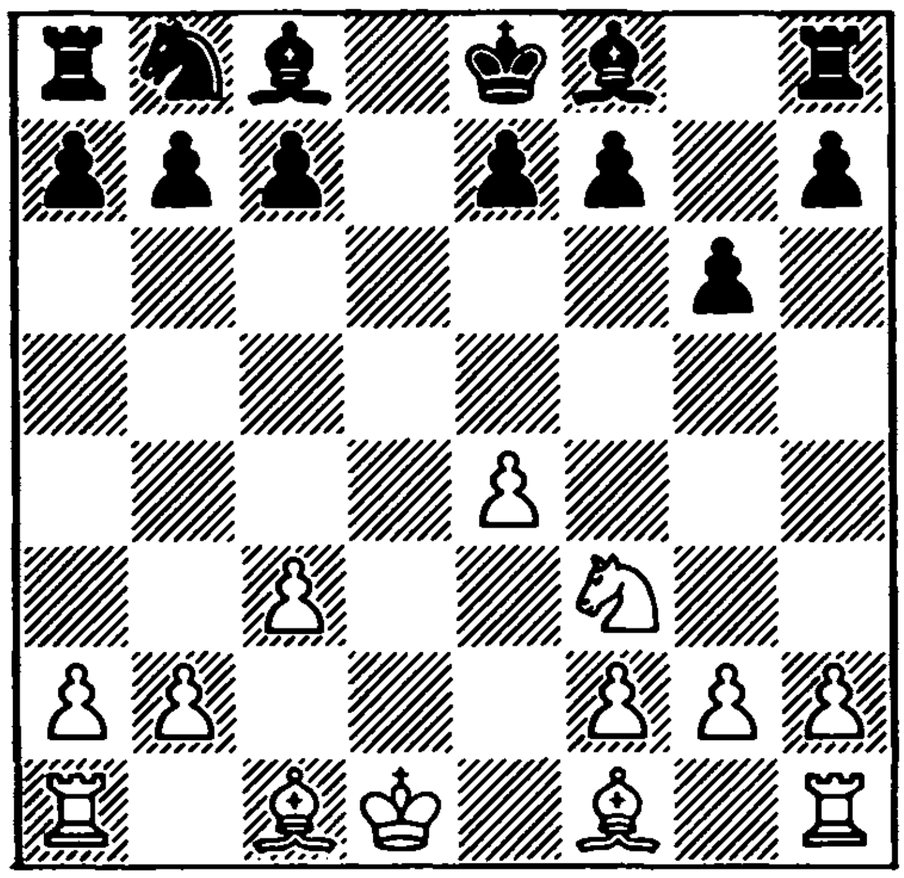

absolutely level, but a closer inspection reveals a number of significant pluses in White's set-up.

Firstly, the strong pawn at e4. If he should succeed in advancing e4-e5, Black's position will be significantly cramped. Secondly, the pawns at b2 and c3 ensure the king a convenient post at c2 and at the same time neutralise the enemy bishop, if it should be developed at g7. Play on the queenside is also possible: b2-b4, a2-a4 etc. Thirdly, it is much easier for White to deploy his pieces: ♔c2, ♗c4, ♗f4 (e3), ♖ad1, ♖fe1, e4-e5 etc. – all very simple and good.

But for Black things are not so smooth. First of all, the pawn at g6 is not doing anything: at g7 the bishop will have no future, and it is not worth developing it there. However, it is not clear where it should be developed. Most probably at c5, but then Black must also find time to play ... f6 and ... e5, when weaknesses appear in his kingside pawns. Where should the king go? In the centre it disunites the rooks, after castling kingside it does not participate in the battle for the d-file, while it is not easy to castle queenside. Where are the best squares for the queen's knight and queen's bishop? There are many questions, and not all can be answered. One thing is clear. Although White's position is better, it is not by a great deal, but Black has definite problems to solve in the battle for equality. Only outwardly does the position appear calm.

7 ... ♘d7

This move has the aim of establishing the pawn at e5, and it is a mistake by Grigorian that he later rejects this plan. If, with the same aim, 7 ... f6 is played, there can follow 8 h4! with the idea of further weakening Black's kingside – (Rashkovsky-Mikhalchishin, Moscow 1981). 8 ♗e3 e5 9 ♘d2! ♗e6 10 ♗c4 ♗xc4 11 ♘xc4 ♘d7 12 b4! is also good (Andersson-Franco, Buenos Aires 1979 – cf. p.184 of Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*, Pergamon 1985).

7 ... c5?! is unthematic, and in Andersson-Tempone (Buenos Aires 1979) White easily gained an advantage: 8 ♗e3 b6 9 a4! ♘c6 10 ♗b5! ♗d7 11 ♔c2 ♗g7 12 ♖hd1.

But perhaps there is some point in returning to Botvinnik's old move 7 ... ♗g4!? In Andersson-Mikhalchishin (Sarajevo 1985) there followed 8 ♔c2 (in the 21st game of their World Championship Match, Moscow 1963, Petrosian played *8 ♗e2* against Botvinnik, and after *8 ... ♘d7 9 ♗e3 e5 10 ♘d2* a draw was agreed) 8 ... ♗xf3 9 gxf3 ♘d7 10 ♗e3 h5, with a complicated game.

8 ♗c4

Along with 8 ♗e3, a good continuation.

8 ... ♗g7

ECO recommends 8 ... f6.

9 ♖e1 c6
10 ♔c2 0-0

As soon as Black chose to develop his bishop at g7, his king too had to be removed from the centre by castling. But

now it is unable to take part in the events developing on the queenside and in the centre.

11 ♗e3 h6 12 a4 a5 13 e5!

Energetically played. 14 e6 is threatened.

13 ... e6 14 ♖ad1 ♖e8 15 ♗d4 b6 16 ♗e3 ♗f8 *(185)*

Black gradually seems to be beginning to 'unravel himself', but Romanishin finds a way to maintain the initiative.

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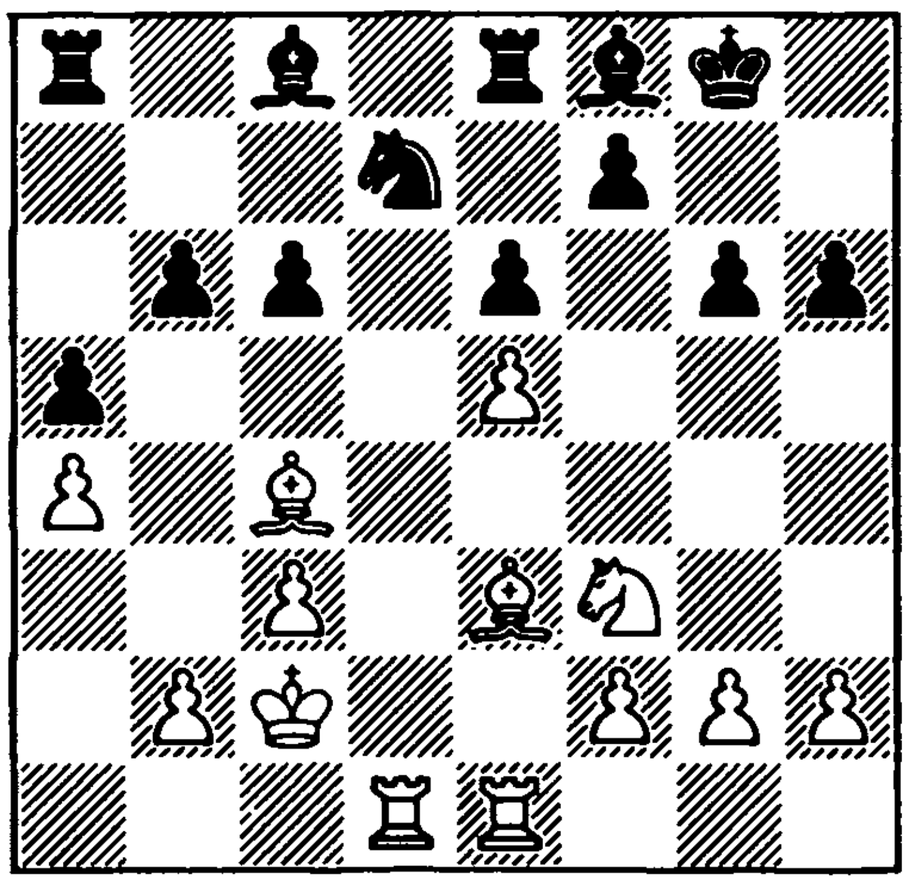

17 ♗e2!

White intends ♘f3-d2-c4.

17 ... g5?!

Grigorian tries to play actively and takes away f4 from the white bishop, but this weakens Black's position on the kingside. 17 ... ♖b8 was sounder.

18 g4! ♗g7
19 h4 ♘xe5

19 ... gxh4 would simply have been met by 20 ♗f4.

20 ♘xe5 ♗xe5 21 hxg5 hxg5 22 ♗f3!

White's queenside pressure is decisive. Black's position cannot be defended.

22 ... ♗b7 23 ♗xg5 ♗g7 24 ♗e3

Black cannot save the b6 pawn.

24 ... ♖a6 25 ♗e2 ♖a8 26 ♗xb6 c5 27 ♗b5 ♖eb8 28 ♗xc5

Now the end comes quickly.

28 ... ♗f3 29 ♖d3 ♗xg4 30 ♖g3 ♗f5+ 31 ♗d3 ♗xd3+ 32 ♔xd3 f6 33 ♖xe6 ♖e8 34 ♖xf6 ♖ad8+ 35 ♗d4 ♖xd4+ Black resigns

4 Asymmetry

Endings with a symmetric pawn structure are normally preceded by pawn tension on a relatively restricted central part of the board. Since the time of the great hypermodernists – Nimzowitsch, Reti, Tartakower, the interpretation of central strategy has changed significantly. In Nimzowitsch's book *Chess Praxis* there is even a chapter entitled "The Asymmetric Treatment of Symmetric Variations", which begins with the following sentences:

"The pseudo-classicist not only had a predilection, incomprehensible today, for symmetric variations, but they even succeeded in imparting to this unpleasing matter a scientific appearance. They gave it to be understood that many positions or openings have a supposed tendency towards symmetry, and that, consequently, any attempts to deviate from this God-given symmetry are intellectually flawed. Any such attempts, they said, are incorrect, and if countered correctly they must inevitably lead to defeat".

Nimzowitsch then gave examples demonstrating that deviations from symmetry are an effective means of creating interesting play.

In modern tournament play there is a predominance of asymmetric positions, and to describe all their varieties within the framework of one section is not possible.

In the first chapter of this section we consider the most typical asymmetric positions, in which, with material equal, one player has a pawn majority in the centre, or each player has a flank pawn majority.

Then follow chapters on the currently popular Maroczy Bind Formation, the Andersson Variation (also known as the 'Hedgehog' Formation), and various types of 'isolani' position. The section concludes with examples demonstrating the strength of the two bishops and the 'Catalan' bishop.

4.1 CENTRAL/KINGSIDE MAJORITY AGAINST QUEENSIDE MAJORITY

Rubinstein-Schlechter
San Sebastian 1912
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 c4 e6 4 ♘c3 c5 5 cxd5 ♘xd5

This was probably one of the first times that the Tarrasch Defence Deferred was tried.

6 e4

The critical reply. The more modest 6 e3 is of equal merit.

6 ... ♘xc3 7 bxc3 cxd4 8 cxd4 ♗b4+

Nowadays Fischer's continuation 8 ... ♘c6 9 ♗c4 b5!? is more often played, although this too does not solve all the problems facing Black. Here are two typical examples.

10 ♗e2! ♗b4+ 11 ♗d2 ♕a5, and now:

12 a4! bxa4 13 ♖xa4 ♗xd2+ 14 ♘xd2 ♕d8 15 d5! with a dangerous initiative for White (Geller-Mikhalchishin, Riga 1985).

12 d5! exd5 13 exd5 ♘e7 14 0-0 ♗xd2 15 ♘xd2 0-0 16 ♘b3 ♕d8 17 ♗f3 ♘f5 18 ♖c1 ♘d6 19 ♕d4! ♕b6 20 ♕f4 ♗d7 21 ♘d4, with a positional advantage for White (Yusupov-Ribli, Montpellier Candidates 1985).

Fischer's idea is only justified after the quiet 10 ♗d3 ♗b4+ 11 ♗d2 ♗xd2+ 12 ♕xd2 a6 13 a4 0-0, Spassky-Fischer (9), Reykjavik 1972.

9 ♗d2 ♕a5?!

This energetic move meets with a decisive refutation. 9 ... ♗xd2+ 10 ♕xd2 0-0 is stronger, although it cannot be said that Black's path to equality is strewn with roses. The threat of a breakthrough in the centre and an attack along the central files normally cause Black a mass of discomfort. We would remind the reader of White's classic victories in the games Spassky-Petrosian (5), Moscow 1969, and Polugayevsky-Tal, (37th USSR Championship, Moscow 1969).

10 ♖b1! ♗xd2+
11 ♕xd2 ♕xd2+

On 11 ... ♘c6 there follows 12 ♗b5! ♗d7 13 d5! ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♘a5 15 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 16 ♘e5+, with a clear advantage to White (Vorotnikov-A.Zaitsev, Leningrad 1963).

12 ♔xd2 0-0

No better is 12 ... ♔e7 13 ♔e3 ♖d8 14 ♗b5 a6 15 ♗d3 ♘c6 16 ♖hc1 (Muratov-Yurkov, Alma Ata 1967).

13 ♗b5! *(186)*

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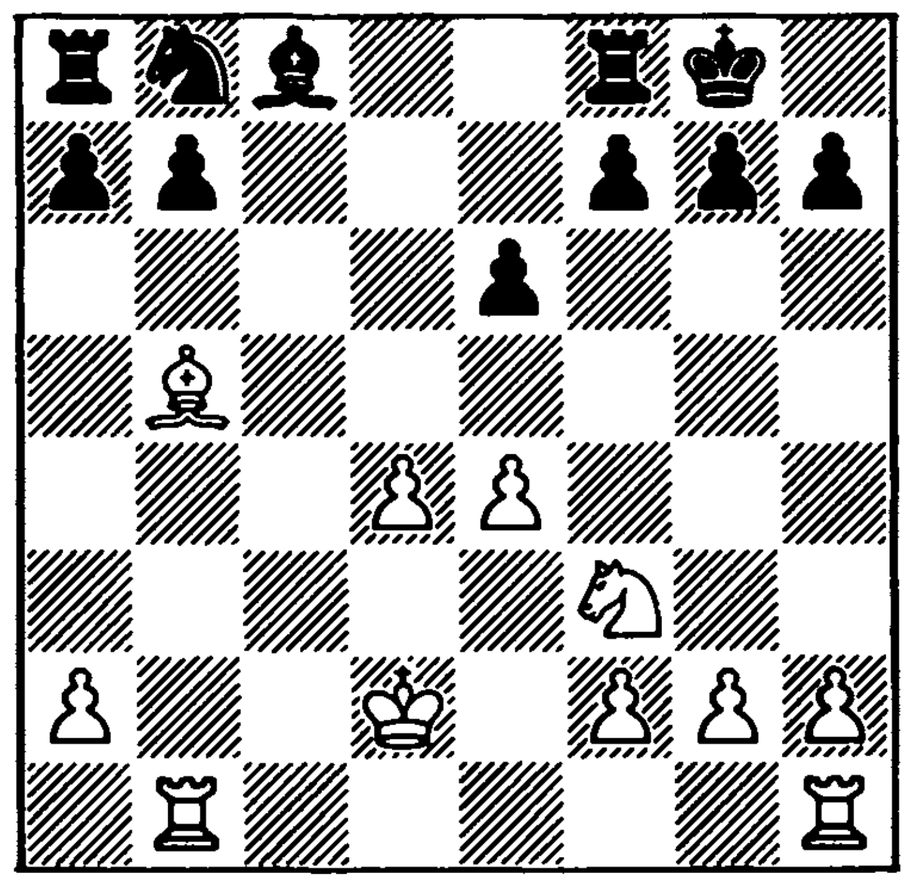

Brilliantly played. The development of Black's queenside is hindered, and any pawn move will present White with new targets for developing his initiative on that part of the board.

13 ... a6

There is nothing better. On 13 ... b6 White has the highly unpleasant 14 ♖hc1.

14 ♗d3 ♖d8
15 ♖hc1 b5

The drawbacks to Black's last move are evident, but 15 ... ♘c6 16 ♔e3 would have been no better for him.

16 ♖c7 ♘d7 17 ♔e3 ♘f6 18 ♘e5 ♗d7 19 g4!

White's pieces dominate on the queenside and in the centre, and now with a kingside pawn storm Rubinstein finally destroys the flimsy coordination of the enemy pieces.

19 ... h6

19 ... g5 is unpleasantly met by 20 h4.

20 f4 ♗e8 21 g5 hxg5 22 fxg5 ♘h7 23 h4

Now the black knight is shut out of play for a long time.

23 ... ♖dc8 24 ♖bc1 ♖xc7 25 ♖xc7 ♖d8?

Schlechter's last chance was 25 ... f6!.

26 ♖a7 f6 27 gxf6 gxf6 28 ♘g4 ♗h5 29 ♘h6+ ♔h8 30 ♗e2

A tactical finesse. 30 ... ♗xe2 is not possible on account of 31 ♘f7+.

30 ... ♗e8 31 ♖xa6 ♔g7 32 ♘g4 f5 33 ♖a7+! ♔h8

On 33 ... ♔g6 Kmoch gives an amusing variation: 34 h5+ ♔g5 35 ♖g7+ ♔h4 36 exf5 exf5 37 ♘h6 ♘f8 38 ♘xf5+ ♔h3 39 ♗f1+ ♔h2 40 ♖g2+ ♔h1 41 ♘g3 mate.

34 ♘e5 fxe4 35 ♗xb5! ♘f6 36 ♗xe8 ♖xe8 37 ♔f4! ♔g8 38 ♔g5 ♖f8 39 ♔g6 Black resigns

Taimanov-Uhlmann
USSR v. Rest of the World
Belgrade 1970
Grünfeld Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♗g5

In the Spring of 1970 this continuation was the latest word in fashion. The player responsible for the sudden interest in this half-forgotten move was Taimanov, who had already won two impressive games – against Savon (Moscow 1969) and Filip (Wijk aan Zee 1970).

4 ... ♘e4
5 ♗h4!

It was this move, maintaining the pressure on the e7 pawn, that was the basis of White's new plan.

5 ... c5

Fischer's continuation 5 ... ♘xc3 6 bxc3 dxc4 leads to sharp play. After 7 e3 ♗e6 8 ♖b1! b6 9 ♗e2! (weaker is *9 ♘f3 ♗g7 10 ♘d2 0-0 11 ♘xc4 ♗d5 12 ♕d2 ♕d7 13 ♘a3 c5*, with an excellent game for Black, Mecking-Fischer, Buenos Aires 1970) 9 ... ♗h6 (forced! – on the natural *9 ... ♗g7* there would have followed *10 ♗f3 c6 11 ♘e2* with the threat of *12 ♘f4*) 10 ♘f3 c6 11 ♘e5 ♗g7 12 f4 ♗d5 13 0-0 ♘d7 14 ♘xc4 White regained his pawn and retained a slight advantage (Taimanov-Fischer, Candidates, Vancouver 1971).

6 cxd5 ♘xc3 7 bxc3 ♕xd5 8 e3 cxd4?!

Uhlmann's evaluation of the resulting ending is over-optimistic, but this is not surprising. At that time similar endings, only with the bishop at f4, had been studied and pronounced safe, and even favourable for Black. But the slight difference – the bishop at h4 – radically changes things . . .

9 ♕xd4! ♕xd4
11 cxd4 ♘c6 *(187)*

10 ... e6 does not solve all Black's problems, in view of the 'Rubinstein' move 11 ♗b5+! K.Grigorian-Steinberg, Vilnius 1971, continued 11 ... ♗d7 12 ♗xd7+ ♔xd7 13 ♖b1 b6 14 ♘f3 ♘c6 15 ♗f6 ♖g8 16 ♘g5, when White exploited the weakening of the f6 square to win one of the kingside pawns. And although Black gained counterplay on the queenside and won the a2 pawn by 16 ... ♘b4, White's central pawn majority proved more mobile.

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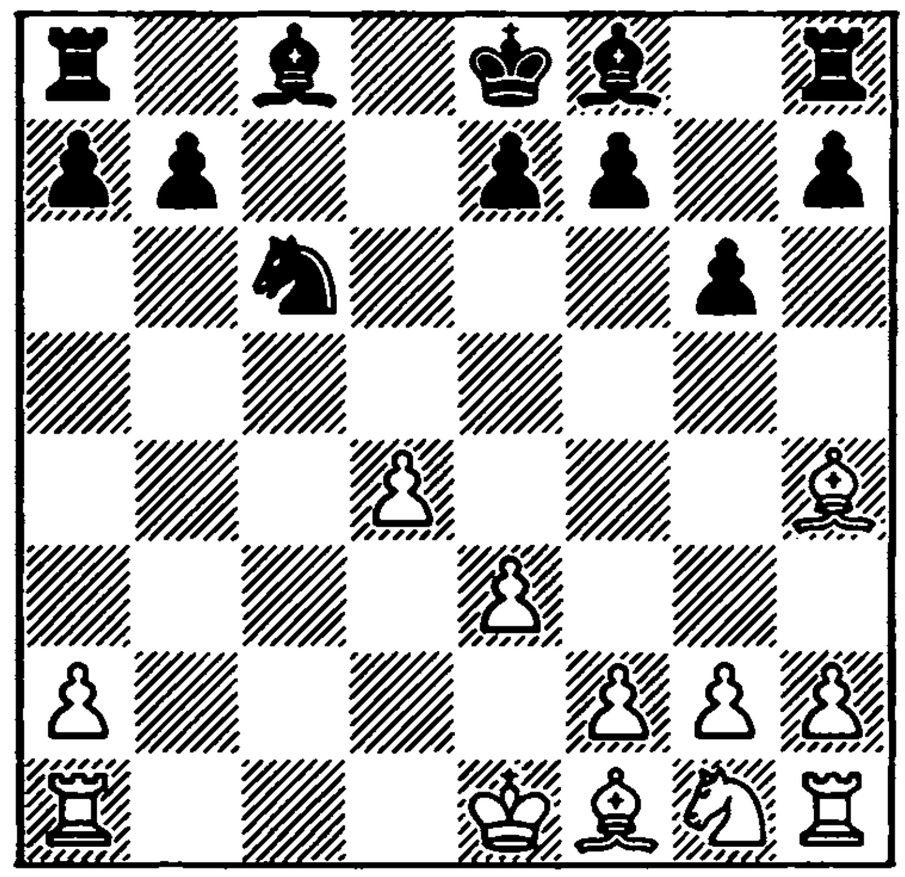

11 ♗b5 ♗d7 12 ♘f3 ♗g7 13 0-0 e6

It is always unpleasant to have to make such a move, but Black was unable to avoid this weakening of the d6 and f6 squares.

14 ♖b1 0-0
15 ♘d2!

The knight heads for c5 via e4.

15 ... f5
16 ♘b3

A change of route. Black is forced to make a further weakening.

16 ... b6 17 ♖fc1 ♖ac8 18 ♗a6 ♖ce8 19 ♗b7 ♘d8 20 ♖c7

Black is being completely outplayed. Loss of material is merely a question of time.

20 ... ♖f7 21 ♗a6 ♗a4 22 ♖bc1 ♗f8 23 ♖1c4 ♖xc7 24 ♖xc7 ♘c6 25 ♗c4 ♗g7
(188)

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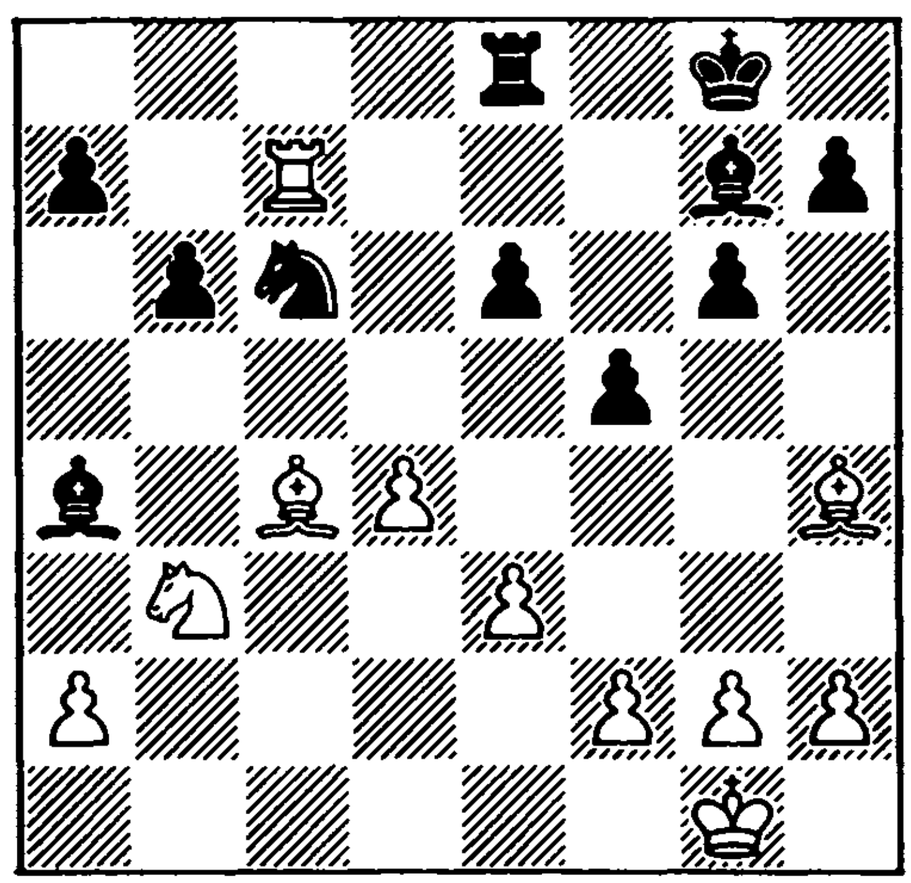


Black is putting up a last-ditch defence. 26 ♗f6 and 27 d5 was threatened. White only needs to 'squeeze' a little more, and Black's position will collapse. But there is an opportunity to win a pawn.

26 ♖c8?

Taimanov comments: "This wins a pawn but, strangely enough, seriously complicates White's task. In view of the importance of the event, I decided, without delay, to achieve some real gain. In a less tense situation I would have played 26 ♗g3. After this modest continuation there is simply nothing that Black can move. In the first instance 27 d5 is threatened, and Black also has to reckon with the manoeuvre ♘d2-f3-e5. In general, 26 ♗g3 was the correct decision".

26 ... ♖xc8 27 ♗xe6+ ♔f8 28 ♗xc8 ♘b4

With the disappearance of White's rook, his initiative has also evaporated. Moreover, Black begins to display his trumps on the queenside.

29 ♘c1 ♔f7

Depriving the white bishop of the e6 square.

30 ♗g3

White prevents 30 ... f4 and prepares to attack the black knight with 31 ♗d6.

30 ... ♗f8
31 ♗b7

31 ♗b8 ♘c6 32 ♗d7 was objectively stronger, but Taimanov did not want to afford his opponent the additional drawing chances associated with opposite-colour bishops.

31 ... ♔e6
32 ♗b8 ♔d7!

It transpires that the pawn cannot be taken on account of 32 ... ♔c7, and meanwhile Black threatens ... ♗b5-c4.

33 ♗f3

White has to switch to defence.

33 ... ♗b5

34 ♗d1 a5

Black's counterplay becomes increasingly real.

35 a4

To allow 35 ... a4 would have been undesirable for White.

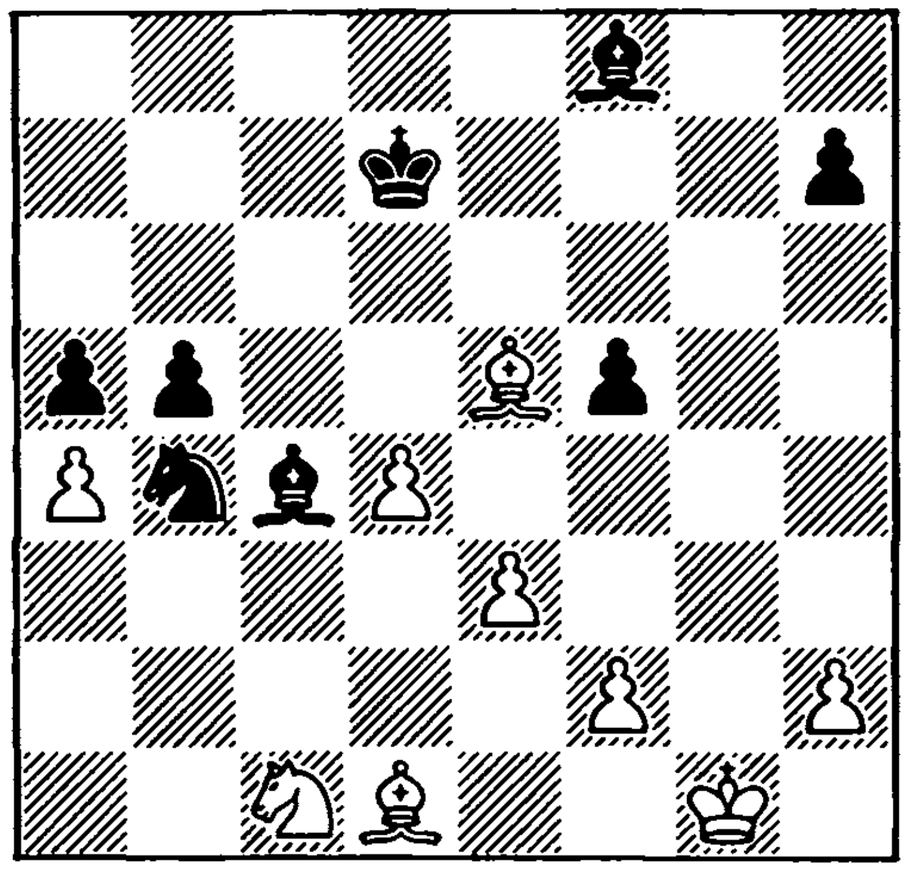
35 ... ♗c4
36 g4!

White's chief hopes involve creating a pair of connected passed pawns in the centre.

36 ... b5 37 gxf5 gxf5 38 ♗e5 *(189)*

"Measures have to be taken against the passed a-pawn. In addition, I wanted to provoke ... ♘c6 (I was afraid that the knight would go to d5)" – (Taimanov).

189



38 ... ♘c6?!

Uhlmann falls in with his opponent's plans. 38 ... ♘d5 was stronger.

39 ♗h8 ♗a3 40 axb5 ♗xc1?!

A further inaccuracy. As shown by Taimanov, 40 ... ♗xb5 was stronger, not fearing the variation 41 ♘b3 a4 42 ♘c5+ ♗xc5 43 dxc5.

41 bxc6+ ♔xc6 42 ♗a4+ ♔d5?

The decisive mistake. Black should have concentrated all his efforts on advancing his passed pawn, and not concerned himself with possible loss of material. After 42 ... ♗b5 43 ♗c2 a4 he would have retained hopes of saving the game. In the nervy struggle Uhlmann has failed to exploit all his defensive resources. Now White takes the initiative and confidently converts his advantage into a win.

43 ♗c2 ♔e6 44 ♔g2 ♗a3 45 ♗e5 ♗f8 46 ♗c7 ♗d5+ 47 f3 ♗b4 48 ♔g3 ♔f6 49 ♗e5+ ♔g6 50 ♔f4 ♗e6 51 ♗a4 ♗f8 52 e4 ♗h6+ 53 ♔g3 fxe4 54 fxe4 ♗d2 55 d5 ♗e1+ 56 ♔f3 ♗h3 57 ♗e8+ ♔h6 58 ♗f6 Black resigns

Gheorghiu-Jansa
Sochi 1976
Grünfeld Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 g6 3 ♘c3 d5 4 ♘f3 ♗g7 5 ♗g5 ♘e4 6 ♗h4 c5

The same idea – an immediate attack on the enemy centre – is pursued by 6 ... ♘xc3 7 bxc3 c5. Also to be considered is play in the spirit of Fischer's idea: 6 ... ♘xc3 7 bxc3 dxc4!?.

Here this variation is more favourable for Black than after 4 ♗g5 ♘e4 5 ♗h4 ♘xc3 6 bxc3 dxc4 7 e3 ♗e6 8 ♖b1 b6 9 ♗e2! (Taimanov-Fischer, Vancouver 1971), since f3 is already occupied by the knight.

In reply to 8 e3 (*8 ♕a4+* is unconvincing: *8 ... ♗d7 9 ♕xc4 ♗c6*, or *8 ... ♕d7 9 ♕xc4 b6*, recommended by Gipslis in *ECO*) Black can play either 8 ... b5!? (Lengyel-Gulko, Sombor 1974), or 8 ... ♗e6!?, transposing into Gligorić-Portisch (Amsterdam 1971): 9 ♗e2 0-0 10 0-0, and here, as suggested by Botvinnik and Estrin, 10 ... h6!.

7 cxd5 ♘xc3 8 bxc3 ♕xd5 9 e3 ♘c6 10 ♗e2 cxd4

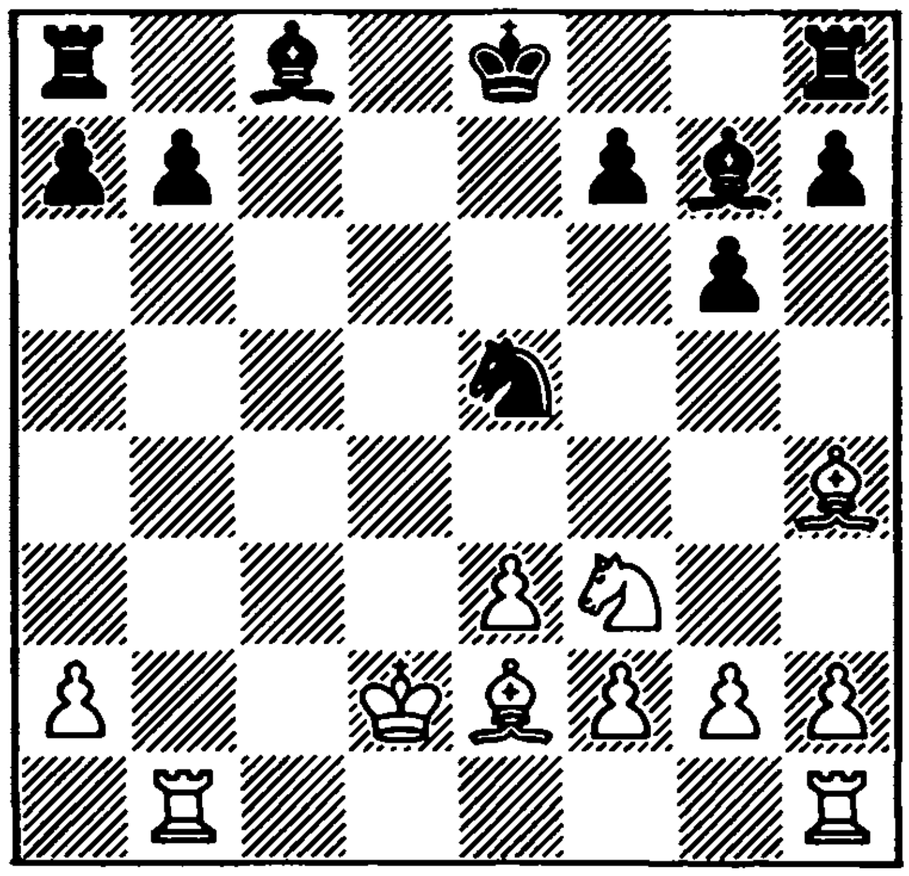
The pawn sacrifice 10 ... e5?! is dubious: 11 dxe5 ♕e6 12 0-0 0-0 13 ♕d6 (Minev-Forintos, Baja 1971), but the immediate 10 ... 0-0 is also possible.

11 cxd4 e5

A critical moment. Theory guides give preference to the plan with 11 ... 0-0 12 0-0, and here 12 ... b6 or 12 ... ♗f5.

12 dxe5 ♕a5+ 13 ♕d2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♘xe5 15 ♖ab1 *(190)*

190



In the ending White's strong queenside pressure gives him the initiative.

15 ... 0-0
16 ♘d4! ♘c6!

The correct decision. Jansa allows the creation of a weak isolated pawn on the c-file, but gains the chance to successfully complete his queenside development.

17 ♘xc6 bxc6 18 ♖hc1 ♗e6 19 ♗c4 ♖fe8 20 ♖b7 ♗f8 21 f4 c5 22 e4 ♖eb8!?

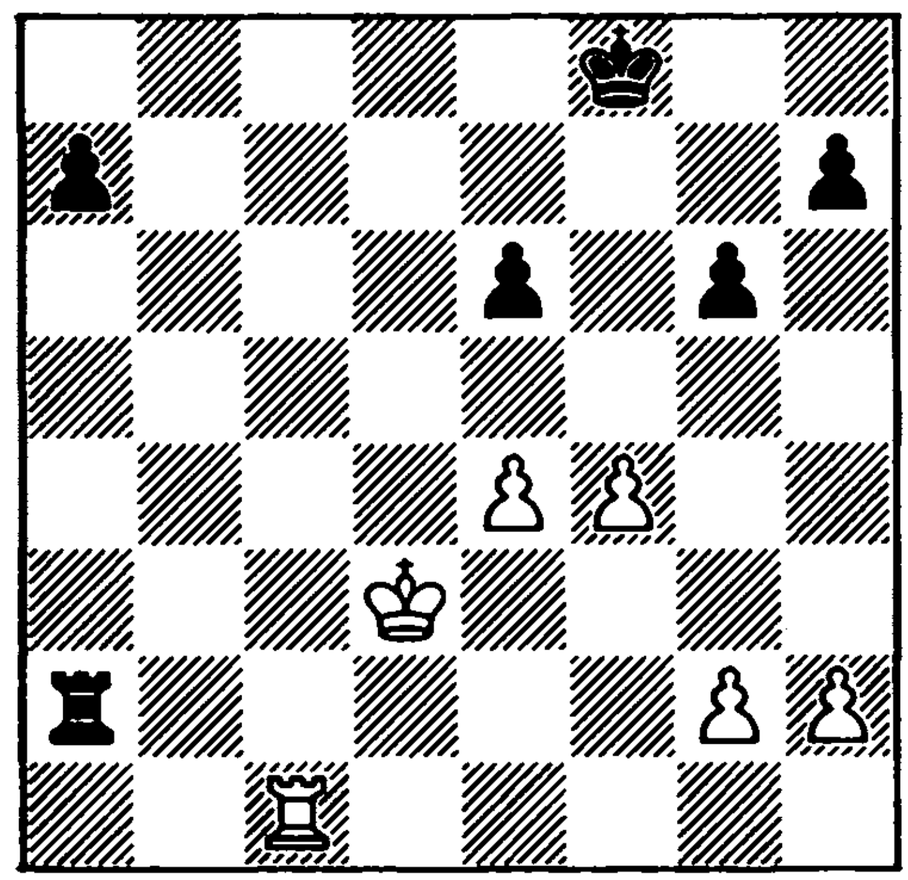
Black courageously allows a further worsening of his pawn formation, for the sake of exchanging the opponent's active pieces. Now, however, the Czech grandmaster must be especially careful, since both the bishop ending and the rook ending may be lost for Black.

23 ♖xb8 ♖xb8 24 ♗xe6 fxe6 25 ♗f2 ♖b4! 26 ♔d3 ♖a4! 27 ♗xc5

White has nothing better. 27 ♖c2 would have failed to 27 ... ♖a3+.

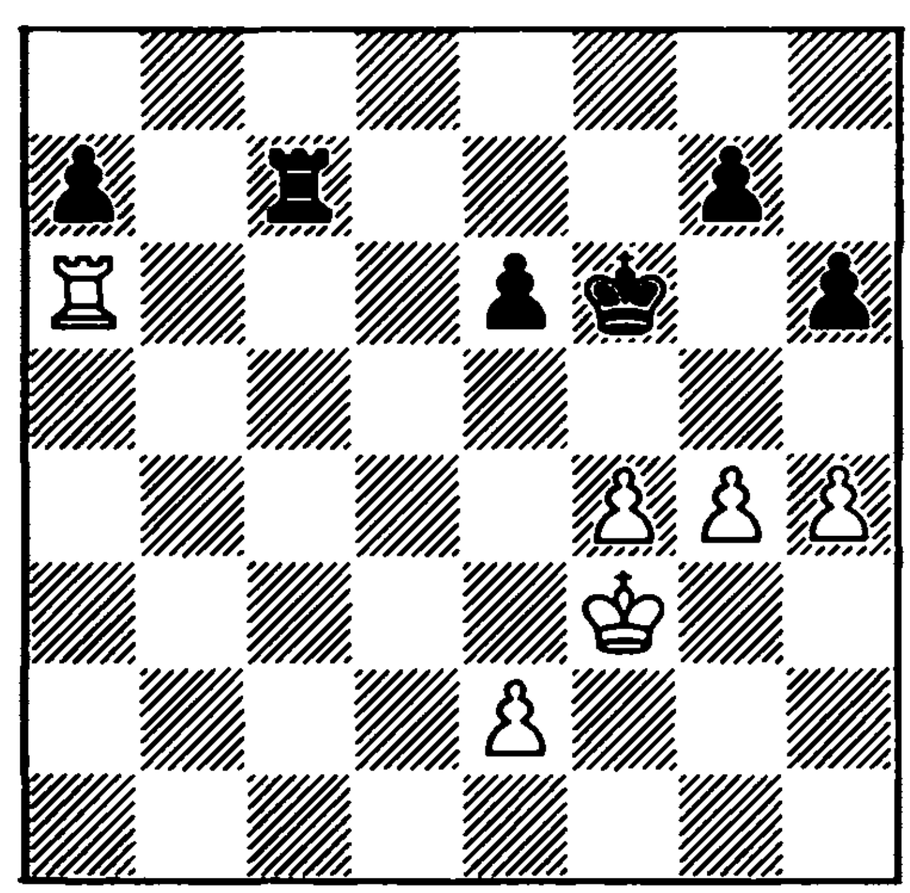
27 ... ♖xa2
28 ♗xf8 ♔xf8 *(191)*

191



In the rook ending White has a clear advantage, thanks to his integral pawn structure and active king; Black's hopes lie in his attack on the white pawns along the second rank. The pawn formation in a 'static' ending of this type evidently gives White a won position, as shown by Karpov in his game with Hort (Waddinxveen 1979).

192



The game continued: 34 ... g6 (defending against *35 f5* or *35 h5*) 35 ♖a5 ♖d7 36 e3 ♖b7 37 h5! g5 (in the event of *37 ... gxh5 38 ♖xh5* White transfers his rook to a6 and wins by *f4-f5*) 38 ♖a6 gxf4 39 exf4 ♖b3+ 40 ♔g2 ♖b7 41 ♔g3 ♔f7 42 ♖a4 ♔g7 43 g5 ♖c7 44 ♖a5 ♔g8 45 ♖b5! ♔f7 46 ♔g4 a6 47 ♖b8 ♖c1 48 g6+ ♔g7 49 ♖b7+ ♔f8 50 ♖b6 ♖g1+ 51 ♔f3 ♖f1+ 52 ♔e4 ♖e1+ 53 ♔d4 ♔e7 54 ♖xa6 ♔f6 55 ♖a7 e5+ 56 fxe5+ ♖xe5 57 ♖a6+ Black resigns (*57 ... ♔f5 58 g7 ♖e4+ 59 ♔d3 ♖g4* loses to *60 ♖g6*, while *57 ... ♖e6* is hopeless in view of *58 g7*).

But in our case the position is full of action.

29 ♔d4! ♔e7!

Much stronger than 29 ... ♖xg2? 30 ♔e5 ♖f2 31 ♖c7 h5 32 h4! a5 33 ♖a7.

30 ♖c7+ ♔d6
31 ♖xh7 ♖d2+?!

In rook endings activity is usually more important for the weaker side than winning material. From this point of view it was very important to break up the compact pair of white pawns in the centre by 31 ... e5+! 32 fxe5+ ♔e6, when Black is close to a draw.

32 ♔e3 ♖xg2
33 ♖xa7?

33 e5+! was essential.

33 ... ♖xh2?

The law of mutual mistakes! Of course, 33 ... e5! was correct, with a probable draw.

34 e5+! ♔d5?

The decisive mistake. Correct was 34 ... ♔c6 35 ♖e7 ♖g2! 36 ♖xe6+ ♔d7 followed by approaching the g6 pawn with the king. In this case Black could still have counted on a draw.

35 ♖d7+ ♔c5 36 ♖d6 ♖g2 37 ♖xe6 g5

Other moves also do not help.

38 f5 ♔d5 39 ♖e7! ♖g3+ 40 ♔f2 ♖g4 41 f6 Black resigns

Portisch-Ree
Wijk aan Zee 1975
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 e3 e6 5 ♘f3 ♘bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗d3 b4

The variation of the Swedish master Lundin leads to less complicated play than the main continuations 8 ... ♗b7 and 8 ... a6. When choosing this variation in the 13th game of his return match with Smyslov (Moscow 1958), Botvinnik wrote:

"The chief danger for Black is the advance e3-e4-e5; therefore he forces White to occupy e4 with his bishop, in order, if possible, to halt the advance of the e-pawn. It has to be admitted, of course, that here White retains the better prospects, but for a draw this variation is perhaps sufficient . . ."

During the intervening 35 years, many games have been played with the Lundin Variation; it has to be acknowledged that the evaluation given by Botvinnik is correct even today.

9 ♘e4 ♘xe4 10 ♗xe4 ♗b7 11 ♕a4

Portisch immediately emphasises the drawbacks to the early ... b4. The unhurried 11 0-0 ♗e7 12 ♘d2! ♕c7 13 b3 0-0 14 ♗b2 is also good (Tukmakov-Mikhalchishin, Frunze 1979). After 11 0-0 Botvinnik in the aforementioned game with Smyslov played 11 ... ♗d6, when 12 ♘d2! again looks strong.

11 ... ♕b6 12 ♘d2 ♖c8 13 a3 bxa3 14 ♘c4

White had available the interesting move 14 b3!, the idea of which is revealed in the variation 14 ... ♗a6 15 ♘c4 ♕b5 16 ♖xa3!, when Black ends up in an unpleasant situation (Tarjan-Silva, Odessa 1976). Black also has an inferior ending after 15 ... ♕b4+ 16 ♕xb4 ♗xb4+ 17 ♗d2.

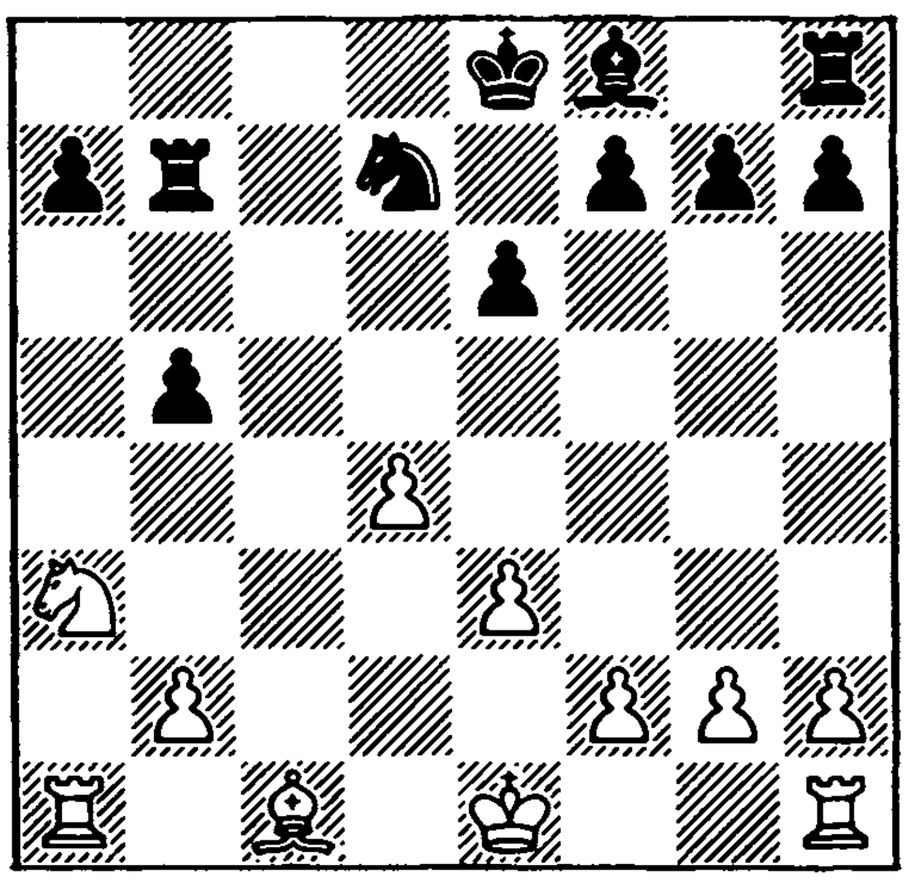
Given correct play by Black, Portisch's seemingly very attractive move 14 ♘c4 should have led only to equality.

14	**...**	**♕a6**
15	**♕b3**	**♕b5**

Ree incorrectly evaluates the resulting ending, where he faces a difficult and unpromising defence. The correct path was found later: 15 ... ♖b8 16 0-0 c5 17 ♗xb7 ♕xb7; after 18 ♕xa3 cxd4 19 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 20 ♕xd6 ♕b6 21 ♕a3 ♕c5 Black equalised in Tukmakov-Ornstein (Vrnjačka Banja 1979).

16 ♕xb5 cxb5 17 ♗xb7 ♖c7 18 ♘xa3 ♖xb7 *(193)*

193



This type of pawn structure can arise in many varieties of the Queen's Gambit. On the queenside Black has an extra pawn, while White has a pawn majority in the centre. It is pointless arguing about which is the more important; everything, of course, depends on the concrete features of the position.

In the given example White has an undisputed positional advantage. The a7 pawn is not a strength, but a chronic weakness. In practice, situations often arise where the white pawn is on the a-file. Then one of White's plans is the creation of an isolated black pawn on the queenside by an exchange of pawns on that part of the board. In the given example Portisch is saved the necessity of carrying out the preparatory work of creating weaknesses on the queenside.

19	**♗d2**	**♗xa3?**

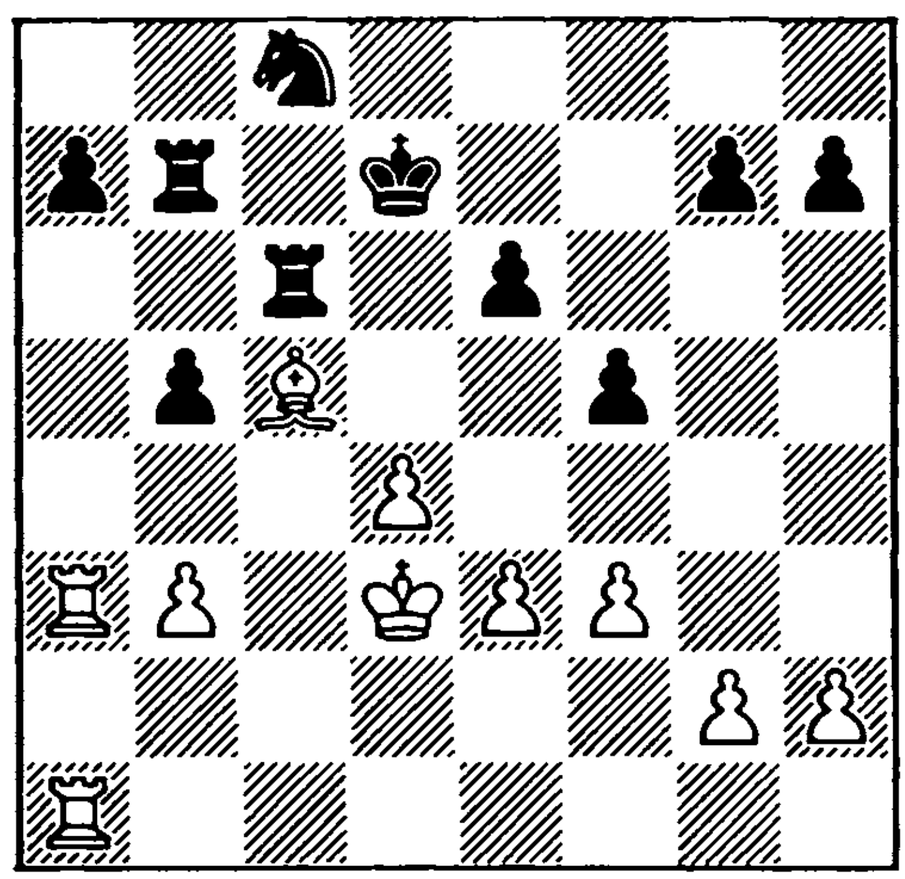
The decisive mistake. Black incorrectly solves the exchanging problem. Now the white bishop can attack the a7 pawn from c5, whereas the black knight has no good strong-point. 19 ... ♗d6 followed by 20 ... ♔e7 was essential, when the black bishop could have taken part in the defence of the a7 pawn from b8.

20 ♖xa3 ♘b6 21 b3 ♔d7 22 ♔e2 ♖c8 23 ♖ha1 ♖cc7

Both sides have completed their mobilisation. White has concentrated his efforts on attacking with his rooks along the a-file. The black rooks have taken up defensive positions along the seventh rank. It becomes clear that White only needs to press a little more on the a7 pawn, and it will be doomed. Portisch is not in a hurry to play his bishop to c5, since he realises that all the same Black cannot undertake anything, and he first makes a few moves to strengthen his position.

24 ♔d3 ♘c8 25 ♗b4 f5 26 f3 ♖c6 27 ♗c5 *(194)*

194



The black pieces are completely tied to the defence of the a7 pawn. In the event of the passive 27 ... ♖cc7 White has the possibility of calmly breaking up the opponent's position on the kingside and in the centre, creating a second weakness there. Therefore Ree makes a desperate attempt to obtain counterplay.

27 ... e5
28 ♖3a2!

Portisch plays carefully. The immediate capture of the a7 pawn would have failed to 28 ... b4 followed by the check at c3.

28 ... ♖bc7 29 ♖a5 ♖g6 30 ♖1a2 exd4 31 exd4 ♖e6 32 ♖xb5 ♖e1 33 ♖ba5

White has won a pawn and is ready to pick up a second. The activity of the black rook is largely symbolic.

33 ... ♖d1+ 34 ♔e2 ♖b1 35 b4 ♖c6 36 d5 ♖g6 37 ♔e3 ♖d1 38 ♗xa7 ♘e7 39 ♗d4 ♘c8 40 f4

In this hopeless position **Black lost on time.**

Kotov-Eliskases
Stockholm Interzonal 1952
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♘bd7 5 e3 c6 6 ♕c2

One of the opening preparations for the 1927 'Match of Titans'. Capablanca played this in the ninth game.

6 ... ♕a5 7 cxd5 ♘xd5 8 e4 ♘xc3

Weaker is 8 ... ♘b4 9 ♕c1 ♘c2+ 10 ♕xc2 ♕xg5 11 ♘f3, with advantage to White.

9 ♗d2 e5?!

The best continuation in this position was found by Alekhine directly at the board, and since then no one has managed to find a better alternative to his plan: 9 ... ♕a4! 10 ♕xc3 a5 11 ♘f3 ♗b4 12 ♕c1 0-0 13 a3 ♗xd2+ 14 ♕xd2 e5! 15 ♖c1 exd4 16 ♖c4 ♕b5 17 ♖xd4 ♕c5! with an equal game, Capablanca-Alekhine (9), Buenos Aires 1927.

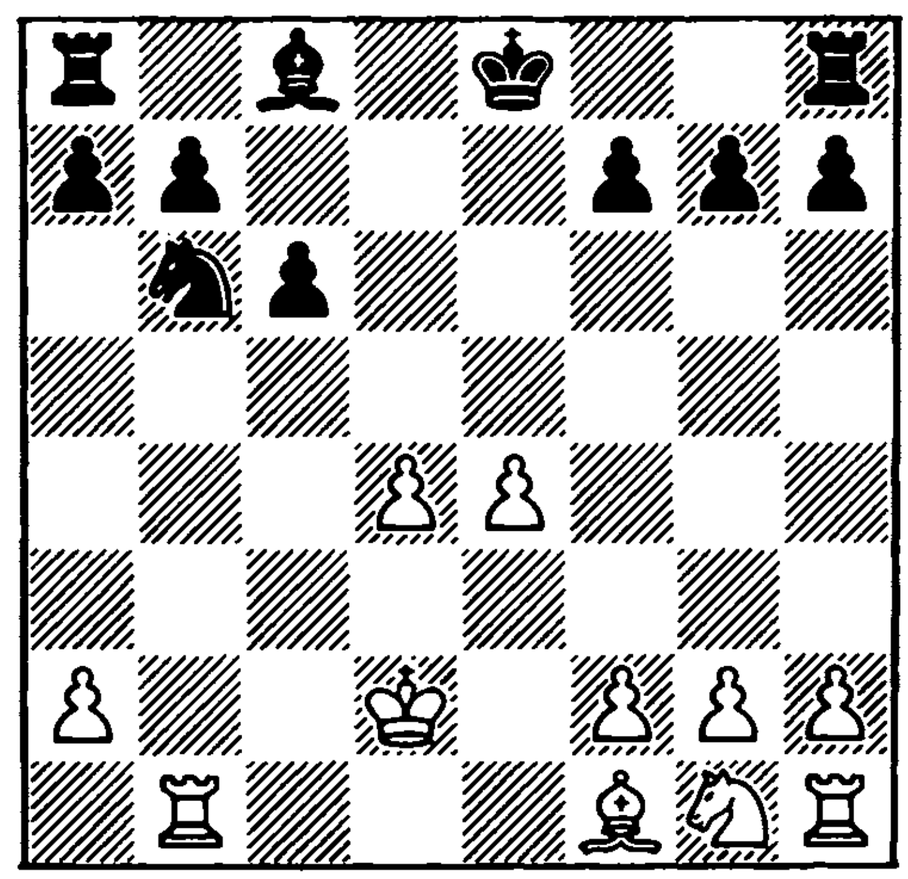
Eliskases was possibly afraid of some surprise, but the move played by him is weaker. Now Black ends up in an outwardly solid position, but one that holds little promise.

10 bxc3 exd4 11 cxd4 ♗b4 12 ♖b1!

Shades of the Rubinstein-Schlechter game.

12 ... ♗xd2+ 13 ♕xd2 ♕xd2+ 14 ♔xd2 ♘b6 *(195)*

195



15 ♗d3 ♗e6 16 a4 0-0-0 17 ♘e2

White must watch carefully for possible pawn thrusts at the centre by his opponent. 17 ♖b4? would have been a mistake because of 17 ... c5 18 dxc5 ♘d7.

17 ... ♘xa4 18 ♖a1 ♘b2! 19 ♖xa7 ♔b8 20 ♖ha1 ♗c4!

The correct solution to the exchange problem. After 20 ... ♘xd3? 21 ♔xd3 White would have quickly achieved a decisive advantage, by combining the advance of his pawn centre with the invasion of his knight on the dark squares.

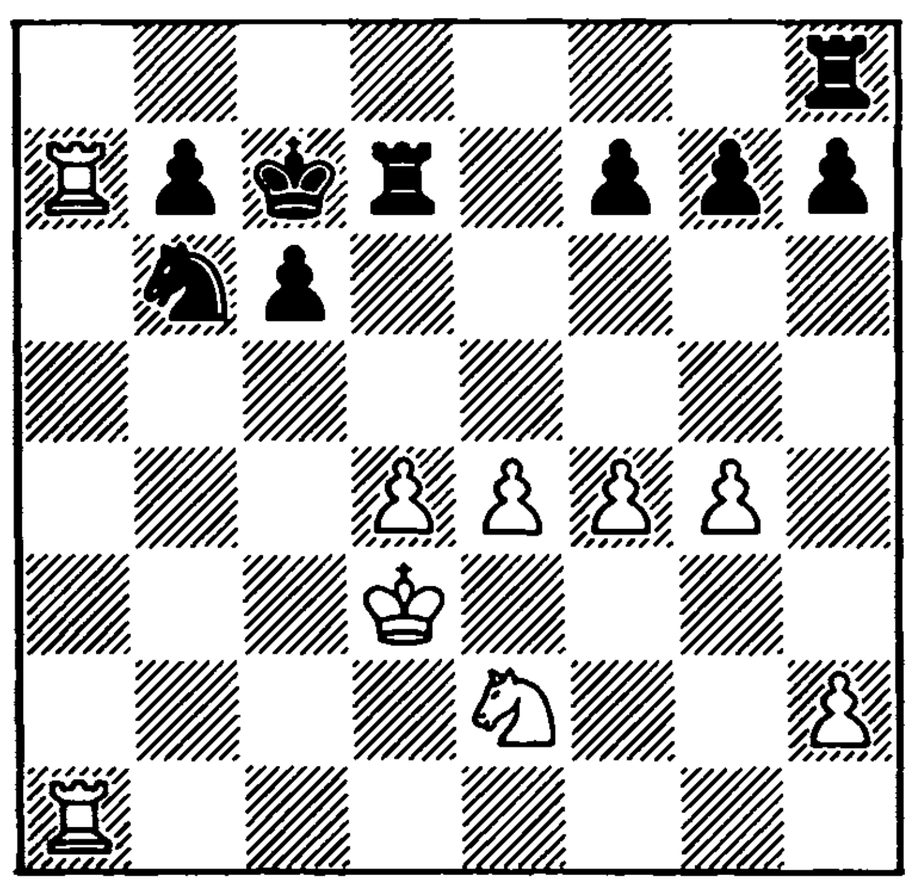
21 ♗xc4 ♘xc4+ 22 ♔d3 ♘b6 23 g4!

White begins seizing space on the kingside and in the centre by advancing his pawn mass.

23 ... ♔c7
24 f4 ♖d7! *(196)*

Eliskases defends subtly. The natural 24 ... ♖a8? would have led to a bad knight ending after 25 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 26 ♖xa8 ♘xa8 27 ♘g3! Kotov gives the following possible variation: 27 ... g6 28 e5 ♔d7 29 ♘e4 ♔e7 30 ♘f6 h6 31 ♘g8+, and Black loses a pawn.

196



White has to chose a plan for developing his initiative.

25 ♖7a5!

Splendidly played. Black's position is cramped, but it has no weaknesses. Before any further advance of his kingside pawns, by a rook manoeuvre along the fifth rank Kotov intends to provoke a pawn move by the opponent on that part of the board, in order to then have something to 'latch' on to.

25 ... ♖hd8 26 ♖g5 f6 27 ♖ga5

In Black's position there is now a weak square at e6, for which the white knight can aim after appropriate preparation.

27 ... ♘c8!

Again the best chance. The Argentine grandmaster transfers his knight to d6, from where it attacks the e4 pawn and can easily be switched to put pressure on White's other central pawn.

28 f5?!

After excellently conducting the preceding part of the game, Kotov is overhasty in trying to realise his advantage. He should have made one more useful move, 28 h4, and replied to 28 ... ♘d6 with 29 ♘c3. In this case it would have been difficult for Black to oppose the further advance of the white e- and f-pawns.

28 ... g5!

An important resource, which was evidently not taken sufficiently into account by the Soviet grandmaster. Now the mobility of the white pawn chain is sharply reduced.

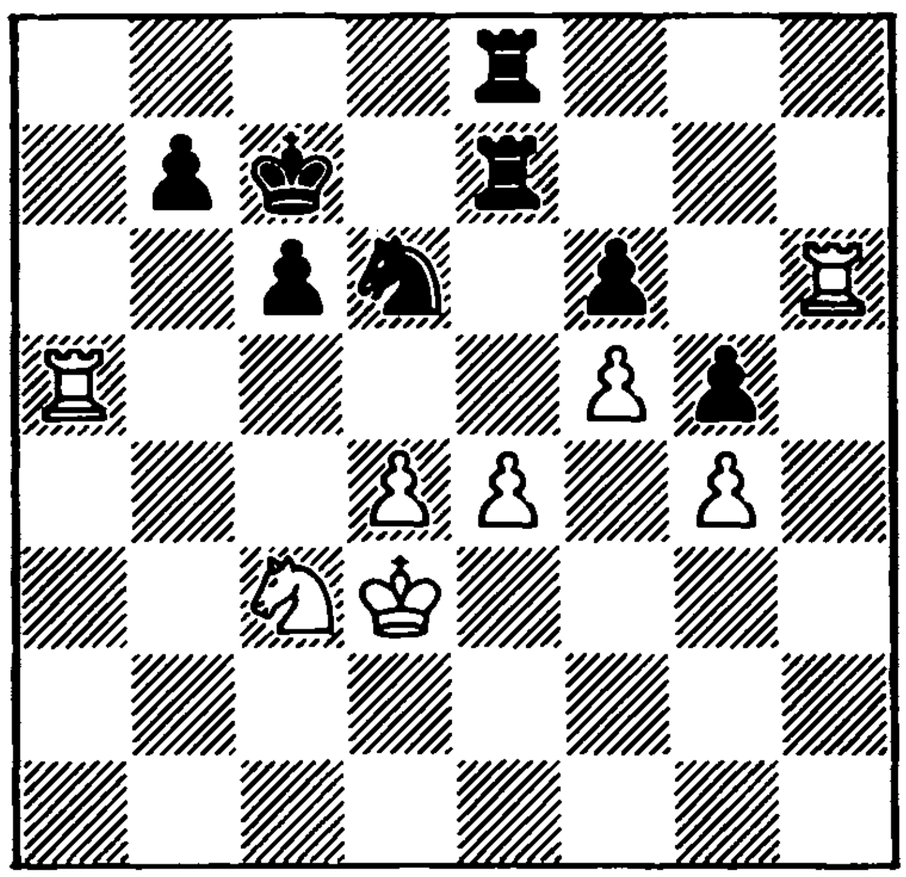
29 h4 h6 30 hxg5 hxg5 31 ♖h1 ♘d6 32 ♖h6!

Realising that it will be difficult to breach Black's position by quiet manoeuvring, Kotov prepares some interesting

tactical complications.

32 ... ♖e7
33 ♘c3 ♖de8 *(197)*

197



34 e5!

The start of a combination, leading to a better rook ending for White.

34 ... fxe5 35 ♘d5+ cxd5 36 ♖c5+ ♔b8 37 ♖xd6 exd4?!

"Better was 37 ... e4+ 38 ♔e3 ♖h8! 39 ♖cxd5 ♖h3+ 40 ♔e2 ♖h2+ 41 ♔f1 e3, but even then after 42 ♖e6 White would have had some winning chances" (Kotov).

38 ♖cxd5! ♖e3+
39 ♔c4!

Of course, not 39 ♔xd4? ♖8e4+, which would have led to an immediate draw. White's last move was evidently overlooked by Eliskases.

39 ... ♖c8+ 40 ♔xd4 ♖g3 41 f6

Here the game was adjourned. Black wins a pawn, but he can no longer save the position.

41 ... ♖xg4+
42 ♔e5 ♖f4

42 ... ♖e8+ 43 ♔f5 ♖f4+ 44 ♔xg5 ♖ee4 45 ♖f5 would not have helped (indicated by Kotov).

43 ♖d8!

This wins by force.

43 ... ♖xd8 44 ♖xd8+ ♔c7 45 ♖g8 ♔d7 46 ♖g7+ ♔e8

In rook endings with passed pawns on opposite wings, the king should normally support the advance of its own pawns, and the rook should deal with the enemy pawns. But here 46 ... ♔c6 would no longer have saved Black. Kotov gives the following variation: 47 ♖xg5 ♖f1 48 ♔e6 ♖e1+ 49 ♔f7 b5 50 ♔g7 ♔b6 (*50 ... b4 51 f7 ♖e7 52 ♔g8*, and the black king is cut off from its passed pawn along the fifth rank) 51 f7 ♖e7 52 ♔g8 ♖xf7 53 ♔xf7 ♔a5 54 ♔e6 ♔a4 55 ♔d5 b4 56 ♔c4.

47 ♖xb7!

Black's downfall is caused by the 'harmful' g-pawn, without which the position would be a theoretical draw.

47 ... ♖f2 48 ♔e6 ♖e2+ 49 ♔f5 g4 50 ♔g6!

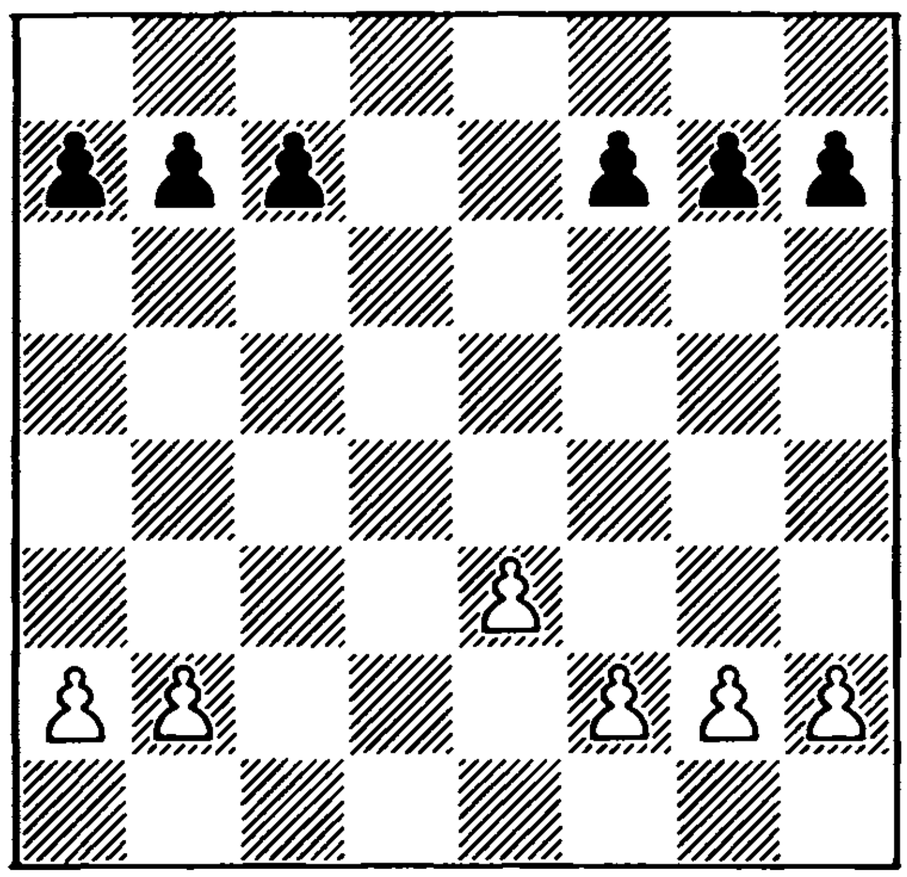
It was still possible to fall into a trap. After 50 f7+? ♔f8 51 ♔f6 ♖f2+ 52 ♔g6 g3 White cannot win.

50 ... ♖f2 51 f7+ ♔f8 52 ♖b8+ ♔e7 53 ♖e8+ Black resigns

One of the most common types of asymmetric position is that shown in diagram 198.

A detailed study has been made of the plans in this type of position. Each side should aim for occupation of the d-file and the advance of his pawn majority. Also possible is a pawn advance on the weaker flank, with the aim of neutralising the opponent's majority, so as then to exploit the pawn majority on the other

198

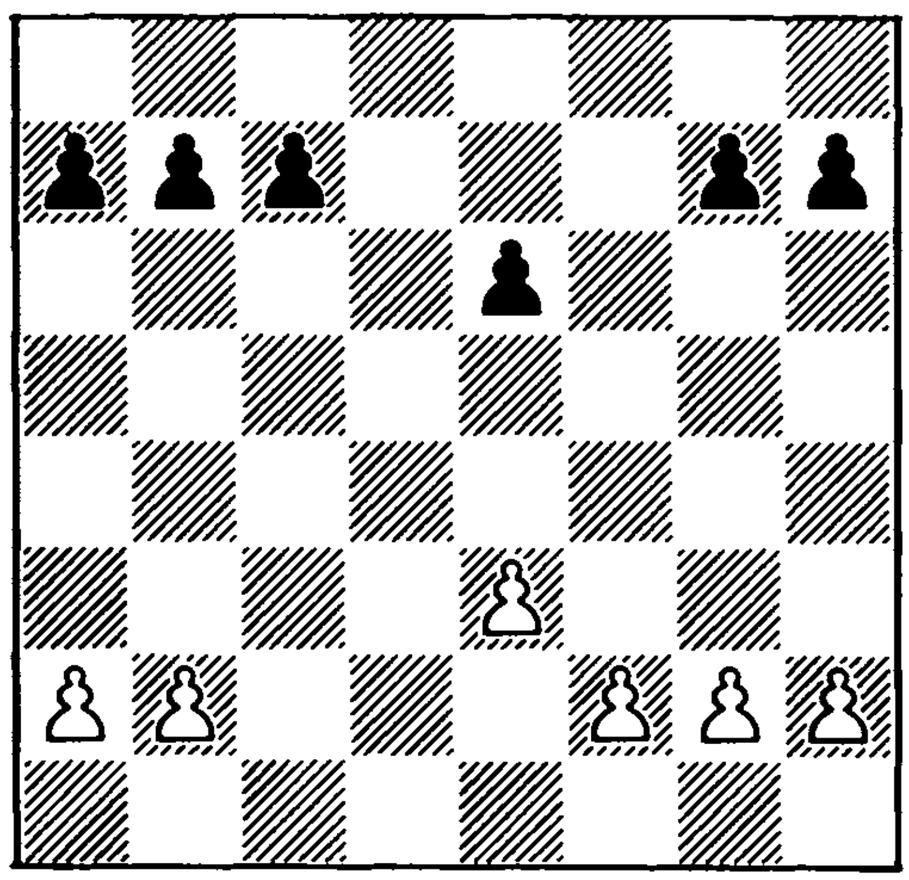


side of the board. Similar endings from the French and Caro-Kann Defences can be found in Volume 1 of this book, and those wishing to make a more detailed study of this section can be referred to the appropriate chapter (pp. 143-151) in Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*.

The pawn structure may also change in one of the ways shown in diagrams 199 and 200.

The reader will already have seen from the game **Gheorghiu-Jansa** that in the first case the change is clearly to White's advantage. On this theme we also give the game **Gligorić-Filip**. In the second case things are more complicated. The defects in White's pawn formation are not so significant, and it contains certain advan-

199



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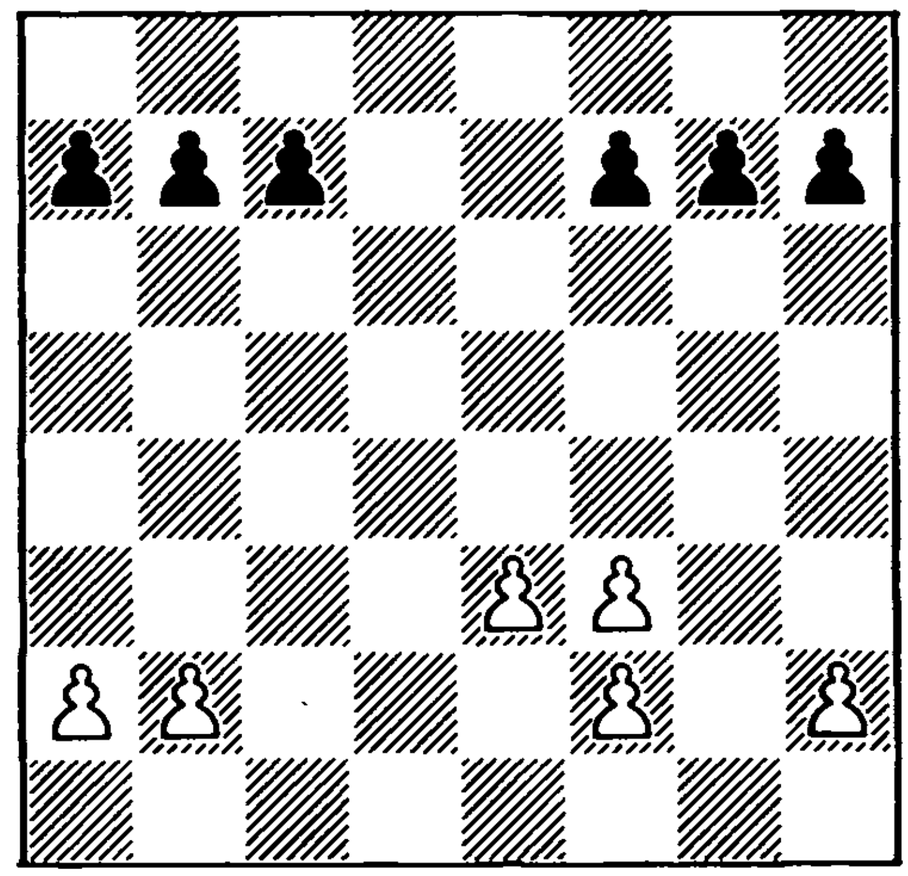


tages. Everything depends on the concrete situation, as is apparent from the game **Najdorf-Stahlberg**, Zürich Candidates 1953 (cf. p.153 of Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*).

Thomas-Maroczy
Hastings 1930
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 c4 d5 4 ♘c3 ♘bd7 5 ♗g5 ♗e7 6 e3 0-0 7 ♖c1 c6 8 ♗d3 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 ♘d5 10 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 11 0-0 ♘xc3 12 ♖xc3 e5

The Capablanca Variation in its 'pure form' was very popular in the 1920s and 1930s.

13 dxe5

Nowadays 13 ♕c2, 13 ♕b1 or 13 ♗b3 is more often played.

13 ... ♘xe5 14 ♘xe5 ♕xe5 15 f4

This was a common position in the 1930s and it occurred in tournaments of the most varied standard. Quite a long time was required in order to establish that, by playing this way, White does not gain any advantage.

15 ... ♕f6

One of the sound replies. 15 ... ♕e4!? is also quite good, but the retreat to e7 is unsatisfactory: 15 ... ♕e7? 16 f5!, and after the unavoidable f5-f6 White develops a very strong attack.

16 e4

Capablanca thought that 16 f5!? caused Black more trouble.

16 ... ♗e6!
17 e5 ♕e7

Now on 18 ♗d3 Black has the good reply 18 ... f5! (Capablanca-Lasker, Moscow 1936).

18 ♗xe6 ♕xe6?!

18 ... fxe6! was essential, paralysing the advance of the white pawns and beginning play on the f-file. White would be unable to switch to the d-file, in view of the pressure on the f4 pawn. When he recaptured with the queen, Maroczy must have overlooked his opponent's clever reply.

19 ♕b3!

With this 'sideways' move White seizes control of the d-file.

19 ... ♕xb3

No better is 19 ... ♕e7 20 ♖d1 ♖fd8 21 ♖cd3.

20 ♖xb3 b6

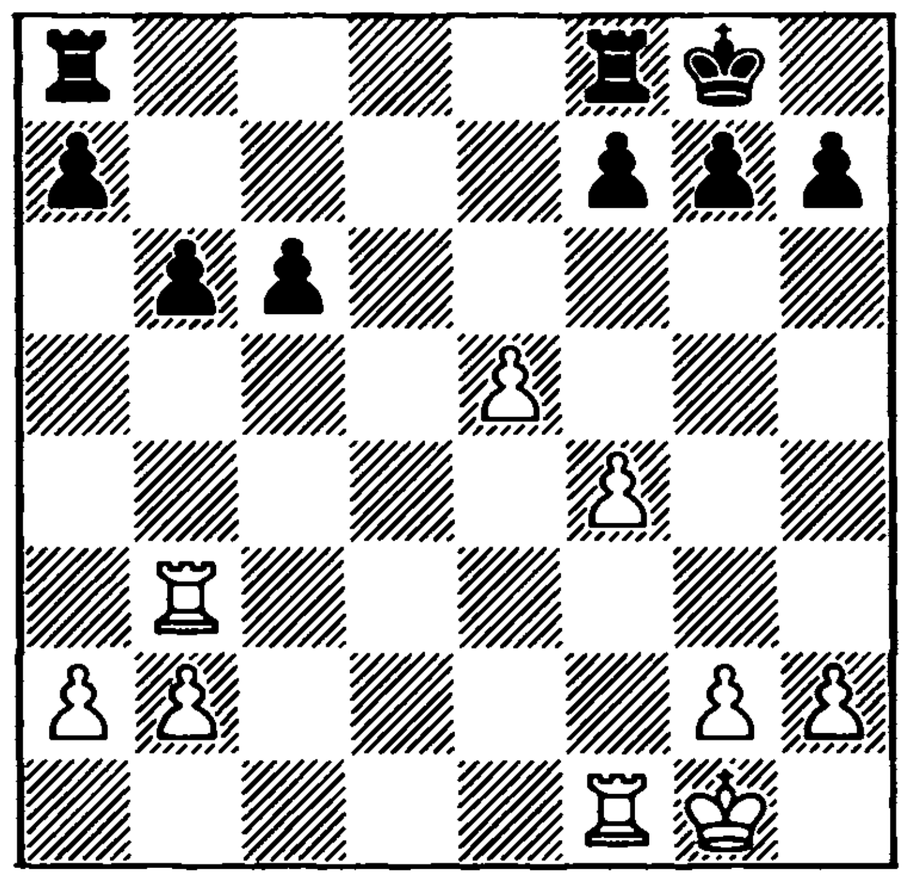
(diagram 201)

It is White's move, and he seizes the d-file.

21 ♖d1 ♖fe8

The exchange of one pair of rooks on the open file would only have worsened

201



Black's position.

22 ♖bd3 ♔f8
23 ♔f2 c5?!

There was no need to weaken the d5 square. Now Black's position is likely to be lost in the event of both pairs of rooks being exchanged. As shown by the Soviet master Grigoriev, it was better to play 23 ... ♖e7, not fearing the pawn ending after 24 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 25 ♖xd8+ ♖e8, and answering 24 ♖d6 with 24 ... ♖c8.

24 ♔f3 ♖e6

Here 24 ... ♖e7 is unacceptable on account of 25 ♖d8+.

25 ♖d7

A good move, but even stronger was 25 ♖d8+! ♖xd8 26 ♖xd8+ ♔e7 27 ♖b8 a6 28 ♔e4.

25 ... f6 26 ♖1d6! ♖xd6 27 exd6! ♖e8

Black must not allow the white king to approach the d6 pawn. 27 ... f5 is unpleasantly met by 28 g4!.

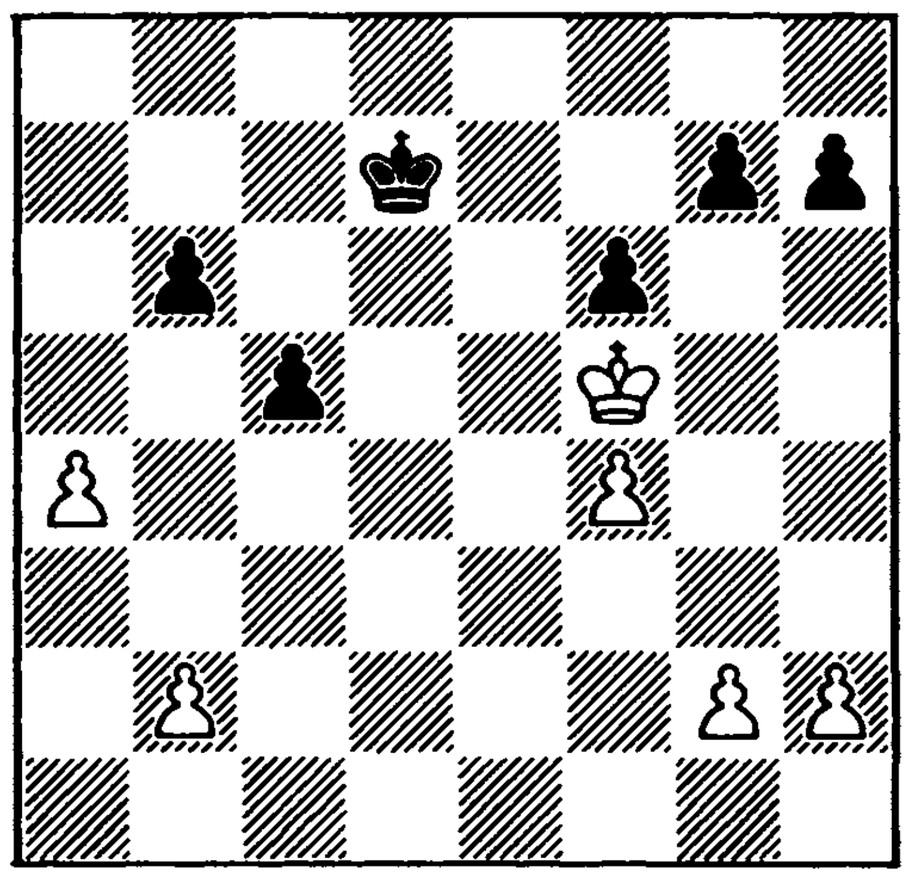
28 ♖xa7 ♖d8
29 d7 ♔e7

29 ... f5 does not help. According to analysis by Grigoriev, White wins in the

pawn ending: 30 a4! ♔e7 31 ♔e3 ♖xd7 32 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 33 ♔d3 ♔d6 34 ♔c4 ♔c6 35 h3 h6 36 h4 h5 37 g3 g6 38 b3 ♔c7 39 ♔b5 ♔b7 40 a5 bxa5 41 ♔xc5 ♔a6 42 ♔c6 etc.

30 ♔e4 ♔d6! 31 a4 ♔c6 32 ♔f5 ♖xd7 33 ♖xd7 ♔xd7 *(202)*

202



Black has created the maximum difficulties for his opponent, but in the pawn ending White has a pretty way to win.

34 h4 ♔e7 35 h5 ♔f7 36 ♔e4

The white king begins retreating, in order to make a decisive step forward from d3.

36 ... ♔e6 37 f5+ ♔d6 38 ♔d3!

Black resigns. The variation 38 ... ♔d5 39 b3 ♔d6 40 ♔c4 ♔c6 41 g3 h6 42 g4! ♔c7 43 ♔b5 ♔b7 44 a5 does not offer him any hope.

Smyslov-Gligorić
Moscow 1979
Queen's Gambit

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 d4 d5 3 c4 e6 4 ♗g5 h6 5 ♗xf6 ♕xf6

The so-called 'Moscow Variation'.

6 ♘c3 c6

7 e4

Here Smyslov usually used to continue 7 ♕b3, with which he scored a memorable victory over Petrosian in the Alekhine Memorial Tournament (Moscow 1971): 7 ... ♘d7 8 e4 dxe4 9 ♘xe4 ♕f4 10 ♗d3 ♗e7 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♖fe1 ♖d8 13 ♖ad1 ♕c7 14 ♗b1 ♘f8 15 c5!, with a great spatial advantage.

In present-day tournaments Black answers 7 ♕b3 with 7 ... a5 or 7 ... dxc4, with a tense struggle. In turn, rather than Alekhine's move 7 ♕b3 White more often prefers 7 e3, 7 ♕c2, or even 7 g3. In our opinion, the move made by Smyslov determines the position too soon.

7 ... dxe4 8 ♘xe4 ♗b4+ 9 ♘ed2

9 ♔e2 is more interesting (Ivkov-Minev, Maribor 1967).

9 ... c5!

Now Black has a good position.

10 a3

White has to hurry, otherwise Black will retain his two strong bishops.

10 ... ♗xd2+
11 ♕xd2 0-0!

Gligorić has played the opening very surely.

12 dxc5 ♖d8
13 ♕c2 ♘a6!

Black controls the central squares. His position is already, perhaps, the more pleasant.

14 ♗e2?!

White should have urgently developed his queenside by 14 ♖c1! ♘xc5 15 b4.

14 ... ♘xc5
15 0-0

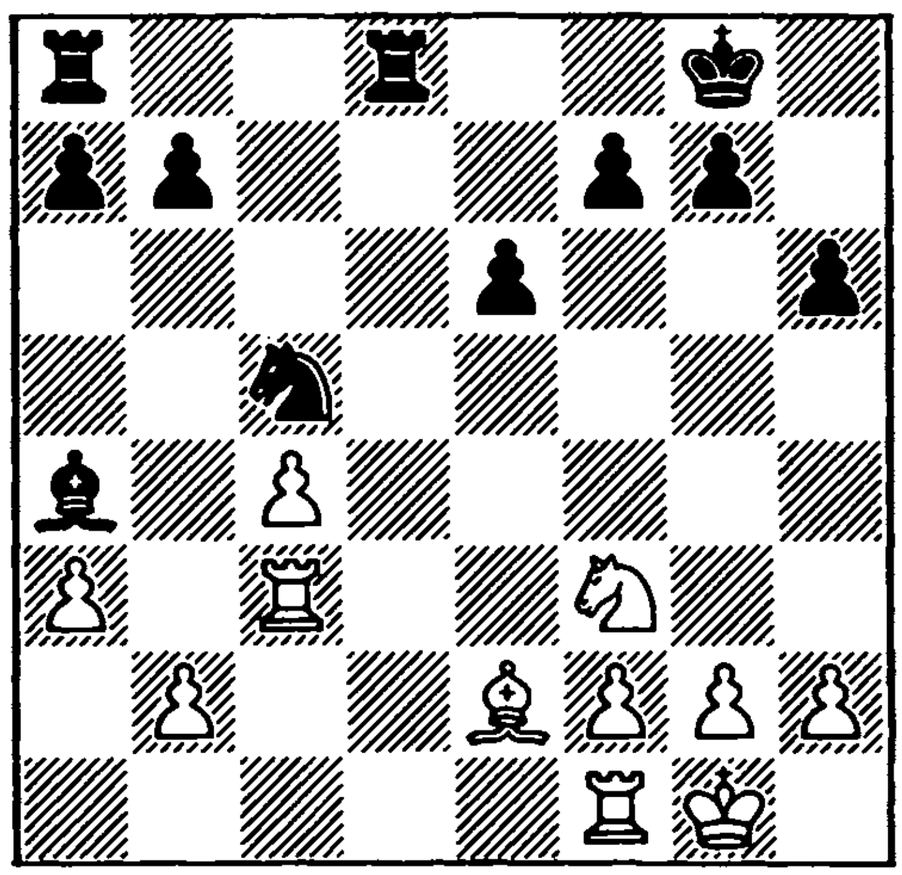
15 ♖c1!? was again better.

15 ... ♗d7!
16 ♖ac1?!

This allows Black to 'plug the hole' at b3. It was still not too late for 16 b3 or 16 b4, with only a slight advantage to Black. But now the game goes into an ending where the weakness at b3 neutralises White's queenside pawn majority, whereas in the centre Black dominates.

16 ... ♗a4! 17 ♕c3 ♕xc3 18 ♖xc3 *(203)*

203



18 ... ♗b3!

This move consolidates Black's advantage. White's queenside pawn majority is neutralised, and the d-file (the square d1) is under Black's control.

19 ♖fc1

The attempt to exchange the powerful enemy bishop by 19 ♖cc1 a5 20 ♗d1 a4 21 ♗xb3 axb3 would have led to a transformation of Black's positional advantages. His spatial superiority would be increased thanks to the pawn at b3, and he would gain the possibility of attacking the b2 pawn with his knight from d3 or a4.

19 ... a5!

The achievements on the queenside must be consolidated as soon as possible.

20 ♔f1 ♖a6 21 ♔e1 ♖ad6 22 ♖b1 a4 23 h3 f6 24 ♘h2 b6 25 ♘f1 ♔f7 26 f3 f5

Now Black can set about exploiting his extra pawn on the kingside.

27 ♘e3 g5
28 ♘c2 ♔f6

The avalanche of black pieces and pawns on the kingside inexorably advances.

29 ♘a1

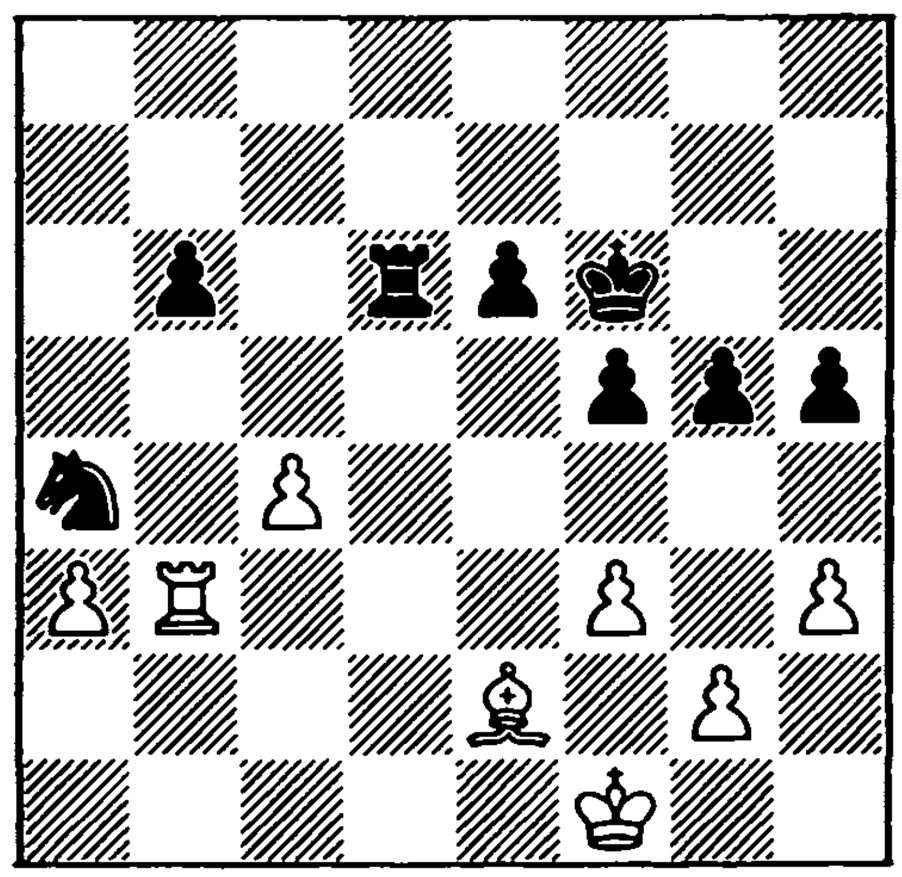
To tackle the black bishop, White's knight has had to 'gallop' right round the board, but its exchange does not bring any relief.

29 ... h5 30 ♘xb3 axb3 31 ♖d1 ♖xd1+ 32 ♗xd1 ♘d3+ 33 ♔f1 ♘xb2 34 ♗e2

34 ♗xb3 ♖d3 35 ♖xd3 ♘xd3 is altogether 'boring' for White, when the black king advances to d4.

34 ... ♘a4
35 ♖xb3 ♖d6 *(204)*

204



Here we can take stock. Smyslov's desperate attempts to free himself have not been successful. White's queenside pawn majority is still neutralised, while Gligorić has an excellent knight against a

bad bishop, and an overwhelming advantage on the dark squares. The game concluded:

36 g4 ♘c5 37 ♖b5 hxg4 38 hxg4 f4 39 ♔e1 ♔e5 40 a4 ♔d4 41 a5 bxa5 42 ♖xa5 ♖a6! 43 ♖b5 e5 44 ♔f2 e4 45 ♖b1 ♖a2 White resigns

Gligorić-Filip
Zagreb 1965
Queen's Gambit

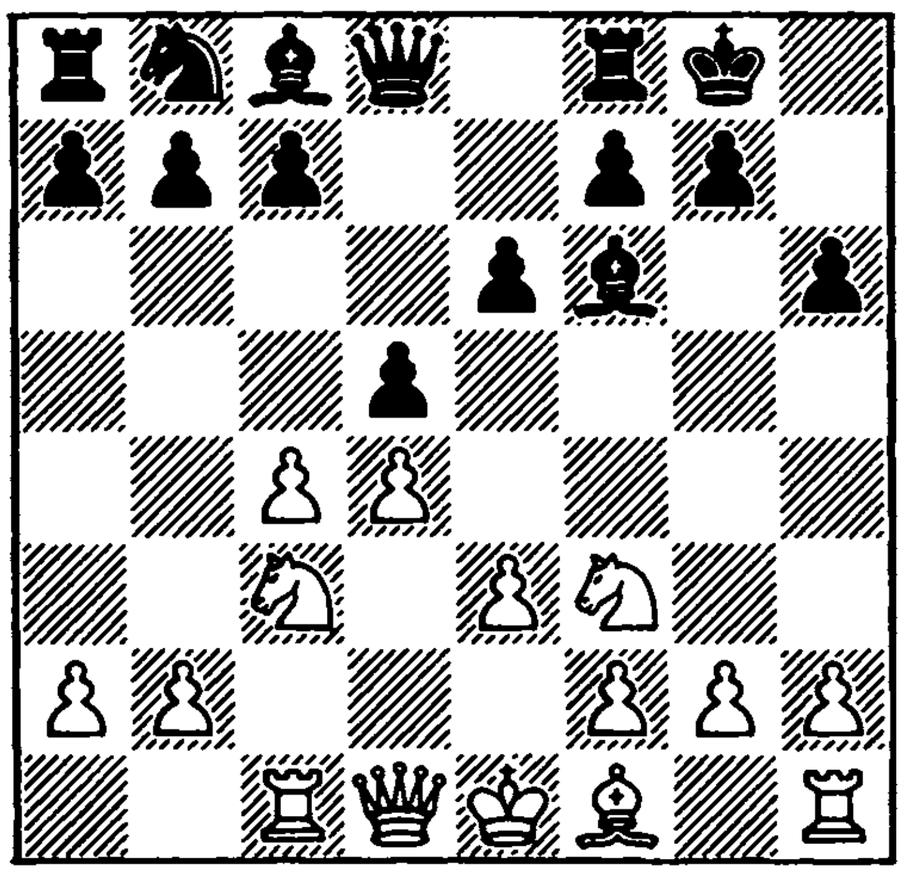
1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗e7 4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 ♗g5 0-0 6 e3 h6 7 ♗xf6

A radical way of avoiding both Lasker's Defence (*7 ♗h4 ♘e4*) and the Tartakower Variation (*7 ♗h4 b6*).

7 ... ♗xf6
8 ♖c1 *(205)*

The exchange on f6 is extremely popular in modern tournaments. It is sufficient to say that it was chosen by both participants in the three Kasparov-Karpov World Championship Matches between 1984 and 1986. Along with the text move, 8 ♕c2 and 8 ♕d2 have also been played.

205



8 ... c6

The variation chosen by Gligorić was in its infancy in 1965, but Filip chooses one of the best defences. The difficulties awaiting Black in this seemingly harmless position are shown by the game Furman-Bukhman (Tallinn, 1965): 8 ... ♖e8?! 9 ♗e2 dxc4 10 ♗xc4 ♘d7 11 0-0 c5 12 ♘e4! cxd4 13 exd4 a6 14 ♗b3 ♕a5 15 ♕e2 ♗e7 16 d5! White has slightly the better game after 8 ... b6 or 8 ... ♘c6.

9 ♗d3 ♘d7!

In the game Gligorić-Portisch, played a little earlier in the same tournament, the Hungarian grandmaster reacted less accurately: 9 ... dxc4?! 10 ♗xc4 ♘d7, and after 11 ♘e4! e5 12 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6 13 0-0 ♕e7 14 e4! White had the advantage. Filip, as we will see, had an opportunity to equalise.

10 0-0 dxc4 11 ♗xc4 e5 12 ♘e4

At the present time preference is given to the plan of rapidly mobilising the forces: ♕d2 and ♖fe1. White is agreeable to the isolation of his d4 pawn – in this case the knight at d7 is badly placed. A good example is the 23rd game of the second Kasparov-Karpov match (Moscow 1985): 12 h3! (evidently the most precise move, instead of the earlier *12 ♗b3*, with the same ideas) 12 ... exd4 13 exd4 ♘b6 14 ♗b3 ♖e8 15 ♖e1 ♗f5 16 ♖xe8+ ♕xe8 17 ♕d2 ♕d7 18 ♖e1 ♖d8 19 ♕f4 ♘d5 20 ♗xd5! cxd5 21 ♘e5!, with a great advantage to White.

12 ... exd4
13 ♘xf6+ ♕xf6?!

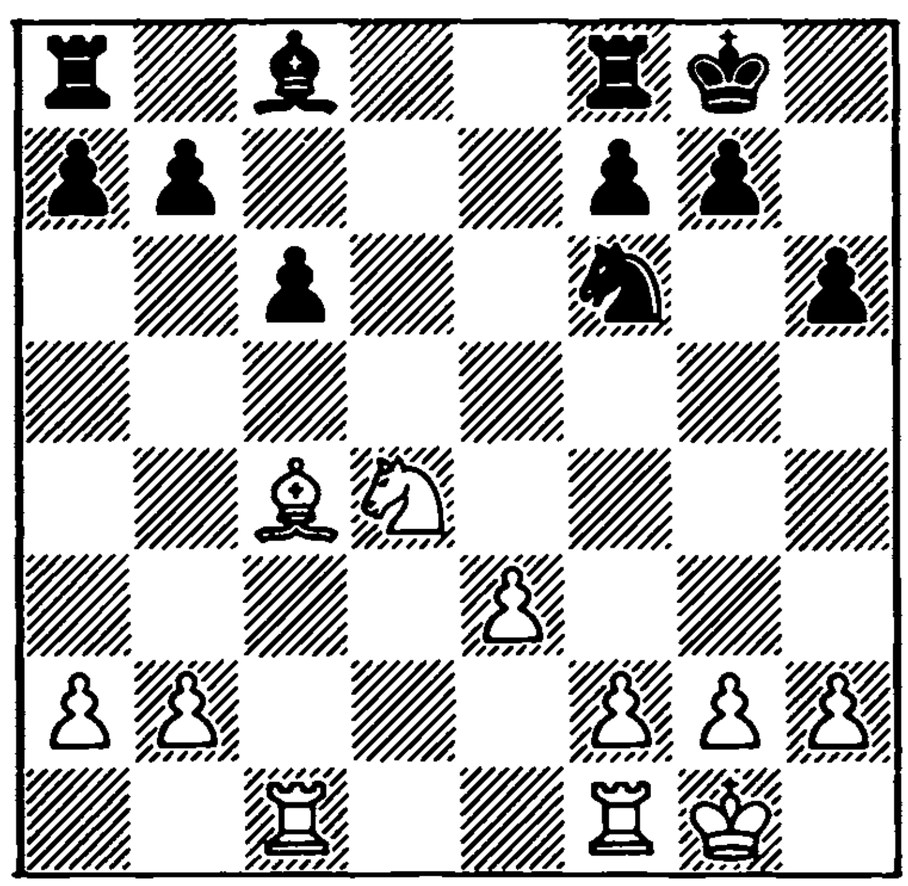
"In his pursuit of further exchanges, Black throws away the gains that he has achieved thanks to his accurate move order. By 13 ... ♘xf6! he would have gained time for development, and White would not have so quickly gained a spatial advantage in the centre" (Gligorić).

We would add that after 13 ... ♘xf6! Black easily equalised in Geller-Petrosian (Yerevan 1965): 14 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 (*14 ... ♗g4* is also good, Sanguinetti-Spassky, Nice 1974) 15 ♘xd4 ♖d8 16 ♖fd1 ♗d7 17 f3 ♔f8 18 ♔f2 ♔e7.

14 ♕xd4 ♕xd4
15 ♘xd4 ♘f6 *(206)*

Thus compared with the variation just given, Black has lost a whole tempo.

206



16 f3!

White restricts the opponent's minor pieces and seizes space in the centre. It is not easy for Black to find a good arrangement of his forces, it being especially difficult to 'fix up' his bishop.

16 ... ♗d7 17 ♖fd1 ♖ad8 18 e4 ♖fe8 19 b4!

As in the previous game, Gligorić begins playing to restrict the opponent's pawn majority on the queenside.

19 ... ♗c8 20 ♗b3 a6 21 ♔f2!

One of White's advantages is the possibility of activating his king.

21 ... g6
22 ♘e2

The knight heads for the weakened dark squares on the queenside.

22 ... ♗e6
23 ♗xe6 fxe6

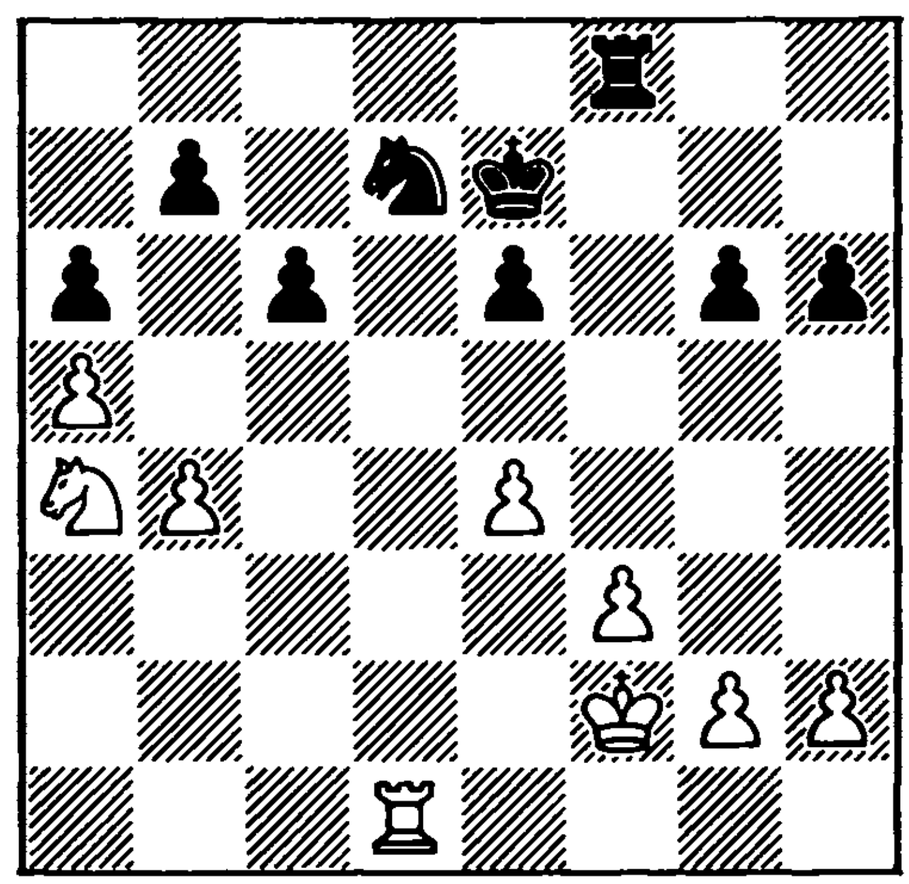
Black has at last got rid of his passive bishop, but his f-pawn has moved to e6. A warning sign!

24 ♘f4 ♔f7
25 ♘d3 ♘d7

"Not allowing the white knight to go to c5. There now begins a cavalry duel, in which the black knight is forced to yield, on account of the absence of a solid strong-point" (Gligorić).

26 ♘b2 ♘b6 27 a4 ♔e7 28 a5 ♖xd1 29 ♖xd1 ♘d7 30 ♘a4 ♖f8 *(207)*

207



31 ♘c5!

The simplest method. In the rook ending White essentially has an extra pawn, plus a great positional advantage.

31 ... ♘xc5 32 bxc5 ♖f7 33 ♔e3 ♔f6 34 h4 h5 35 ♔f4!

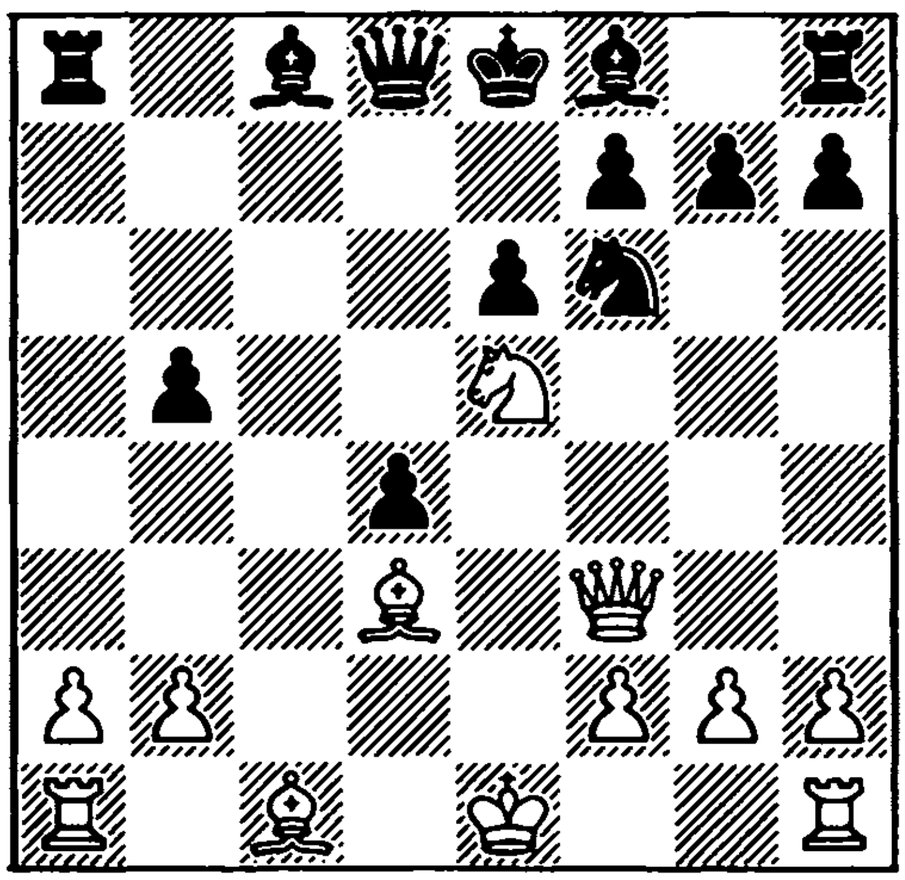
An unusual zugzwang position. Black is forced to weaken the sixth rank.

35 ... e5+ 36 ♔e3 ♔g7 37 g3 ♖e7 38 f4 exf4+ 39 gxf4 ♔f6 40 ♖d6+ ♔g7 41 e5 ♔f7 42 ♔e4 ♔g7 43 f5 gxf5+ 44 ♔xf5 Black resigns

Reshevsky-Botvinnik
USSR v USA, Moscow 1955
Slav Defence

1 d4 e6 2 c4 d5 3 ♘c3 c6 4 e3 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♘bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗d3 a6 9 e4 c5 10 e5 cxd4 11 ♘xb5 ♘xe5 12 ♘xe5 axb5 13 ♕f3 *(208)*

208



This move begins the famous Stahlberg Attack, which in its time caused Black considerable trouble; the stage was even reached when the entire Meran Variation was declared refuted! However, by the time of the Botvinnik-Bronstein Match in 1951 it was clear that neither 13 ♕f3, nor 13 0-0 (the Rellstab Attack), nor any other continuation was capable of giving White an advantage. Already then it was being suggested that Sozin's brilliant discovery of 11 ... ♘xe5! had neutralised 10 e5, and that better chances were offered by Reynold's continuation 10 d5.

In recent tournaments White has occasionally reverted to 10 e5, but without particular success. Thus in the game Smyslov-Torre (Bugojno 1984) the Ex-World Champion preferred the old move 13 ♗xb5+, but did not achieve anything after 13 ... ♗d7 14 ♘xd7 ♕a5+ 15 ♗d2 ♕xb5 16 ♘xf8 ♔xf8 17 a4?! ♕xb2 18 ♖b1 ♕a2 19 0-0 h6 20 ♖b4 ♖d8.

13 ... ♕a5+

The strongest reply, 13 ... ♗b4+, was employed by Botvinnik four years earlier in his World Championship Match with Bronstein (cf. p.141 of *David Bronstein - Chess Improviser* by Vainstein, Pergamon 1983).

13 ... ♕a5+ is a sharper move than 13 ... ♗b4+, and hence it is less sound.

14 ♔e2 ♗d6
15 ♕c6+

An important moment. After lengthy consideration Reshevsky avoids the complications, which are objectively favourable for White: 15 ♗d2! ♕a6 16 a4 0-0 17 ♗xb5 ♗xe5! 18 ♗xa6 ♗xa6+ 19 ♔d1. At the board he evidently decided not to test the quality of the World Champion's home preparation, and so he chose a quiet continuation.

15 ... ♔e7
16 ♗d2

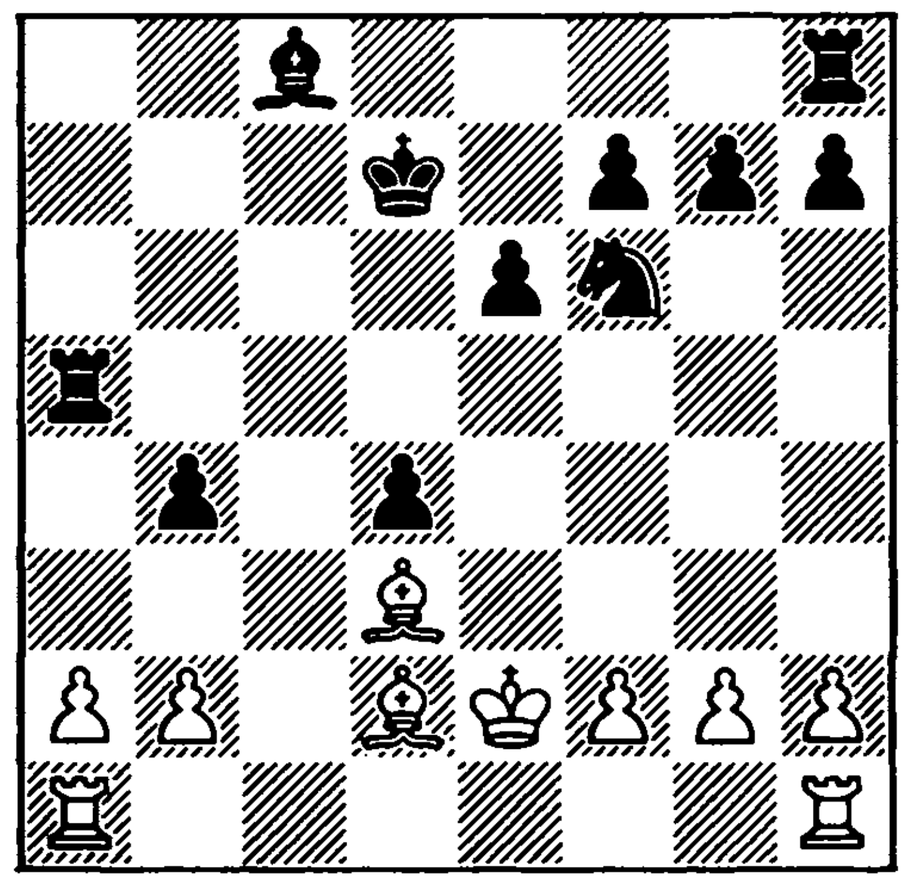
Of course, not 16 ♘xf7?? ♖a6.

16 ... b4
17 ♕xd6+

As shown by Reshevsky, here too 17 ♘xf7 is bad: 17 ... ♔xf7 18 ♕xd6 ♗a6! 19 ♗xb4 ♗xd3+ 20 ♔xd3 ♕b5+!.

17 ... ♔xd6 18 ♘c4+ ♔d7 19 ♘xa5 ♖xa5 *(209)*

209



The position has become greatly simplified, but this has not made it any less interesting. The asymmetric pawn structure promises a sharp struggle in the ending. After the obvious 20 ♗xb4 White's chances, at first sight, look favourable. The first impression, however, is by no means always correct. In reply to 20 ♗xb4 Botvinnik would have played 20 ... ♖e5+! 21 ♔d2 ♘e4+ 22 ♗xe4 ♖xe4, obtaining the so-called 'Meran endgame', which was first explained in detail by the Soviet theorist Vainstein in his book on the Meran Variation:

"However many such games were subsequently played, however much the Meran endgame was analysed (and it occurs in many other variations): it invariably turned out that Black's central pawns were more valuable than White's wing pawns.

If one ponders over the position, this does not seem so paradoxical. Firstly, the black pawns continue advancing along the central files, on the way disrupting the coordination of the enemy forces, whereas the white pawns, when they advance, do not attack anything on the way.

Secondly, the black pawns are defended and their advance is supported by the f-pawn, whereas the white pawns are left to their own devices, and pieces are required to guard them. Then, in the event of the exchange of queens the black king will play an active part, whereas the white king will at best be a spectator, if it is not subjected to checks by the black pawns. Finally, the black pawns have already made some steps forward towards the first rank, whereas White's have not yet moved.

All these advantages of the Meran endgame are more or less retained when there are knights and bishops on the board, and also after exchanges."

20 ♖hc1! ♗a6

Botvinnik deprives the opponent of the advantage of the two bishops, and secures for his knight an impregnable post in the centre at d5.

21 ♗xa6 ♖xa6
22 ♖c4 ♘d5

22 ... e5 is pointless in view of 23 f4.

23 ♖xd4 ♖b8

In this situation the exchange of the b4 and a2 pawns would be unfavourable for Black, since after 23 ... ♖ha8 24 ♗xb4 ♖xa2 25 ♖xa2 ♖xa2 White has 26 ♗a3.

24 ♔d3 h5!?

If the white king should reach b3, Black will have difficulty in defending his b4 pawn. After a deep study of the subtleties of the position, Botvinnik makes a useful waiting move and provokes his opponent into taking his king across via c4.

25 ♔c4

This game was annotated by both Botvinnik and Reshevsky, and we think that at times it would be interesting for the reader to compare their comments. "Provoking and forcing Black to go in for complications. This move was risky, but sometimes one has to take a risk, in order to gain winning chances" (Reshevsky).

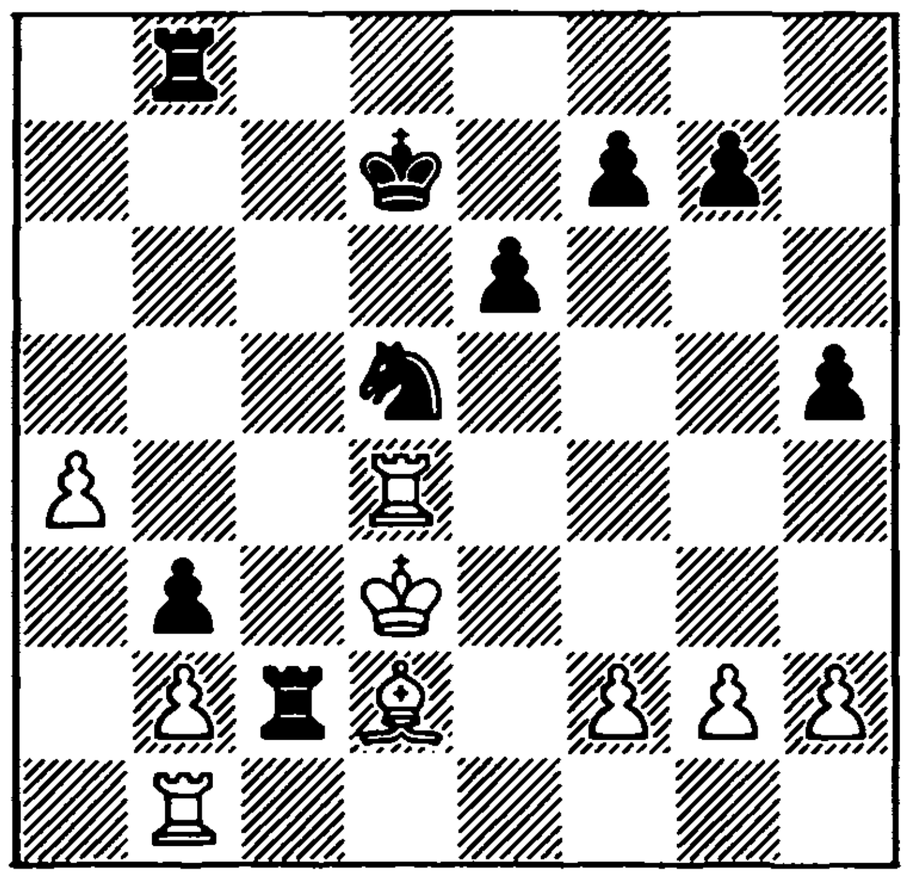
"The only correct continuation was the modest 25 ♔c2! b3+ 26 ♔b1 bxa2+ 27 ♖xa2 ♖xa2 28 ♔xa2 ♖a8+" (Botvinnik).

25 ... b3 26 a4 ♖c6+ 27 ♔d3 ♖c2 28 ♖b1 *(210)*

Here Botvinnik gives a deep evaluation of the position, enabling Black to plan his further actions:

"It is not difficult to see that White has ended up in a dangerous position: his queen's rook must defend the b2 pawn, his bishop – the second rank, and his king

210



– the bishop. Thus only one white piece can be active – the rook at d4. It follows that it will be sufficient for Black to exchange it for the rook at b8, in order to deprive White of any counterplay!"

28 ... ♖bc8?!

After finding the correct plan, Botvinnik does not implement it in the best way. By 28 ... ♖b6! with the threat of 29 ... ♖d6 and 30 ... e5, Black could have set his opponent difficult problems. As Botvinnik admitted, he rejected 28 ... ♖b6 on account of 29 ♖c4, overlooking the strong reply 29 ... ♖c6!.

29 a5! ♖8c6

Black also had the interesting possibility of 29 ... e5. Then Reshevsky was intending 30 ♖a4 (*30 ♖xd5+ ♔e6 31 ♖b5 ♖d8+*), with the possible variation 30 ... ♔c6 31 ♖c4+ ♔b5 32 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 33 ♖a1, threatening 34 ♖a3.

30 ♔e2 ♖d6
31 ♔e1

The difference in the placing of the white a-pawn begins to tell. Had it been at a4, 31 ... ♘b6 would have given Black a winning position.

31 ... ♘c7?!

"31 ... e5 was better. In the event of 32 ♖d3 ♘f4 33 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 34 ♗xf4 exf4 the position is equal. But White could obtain some chances by playing 32 ♖h4 ♘f4 33 ♗xf4 exf4 34 ♖xf4 f6 35 ♖a1 ♖xb2 (*35 ... ♖a6 36 ♖d4+ ♔c6 37 ♖d2*) 36 a6 ♖a2 37 ♖xa2 bxa2 38 ♖a4.

If Black plays 32 ... g6 (instead of *32 ... ♘f4*), then 33 ♖h3 ♖xd2 34 ♔xd2 ♘f4+ 35 ♔c3 ♘xh3 36 gxh3 ♔c6 37 ♖a1 ♔b5 38 ♔xb3, again with chances for White" (Reshevsky).

We see how it only required Black to commit one inaccuracy on his 29th move, for his position to be transformed from significantly better to slightly worse. Such is chess!

32 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6
33 ♗c3

"This natural move, defending the b2 pawn, I overlooked. Now ♖a1-a3xb3 is threatened, and it was absolutely essential for Black to reply 33 ... ♘d5!, when after 34 a6 (*34 ♗xg7 f6*) 34 ... ♔c7 35 ♖a1 ♔b8 36 ♖a3 ♘xc3 37 ♖xb3+ ♔a7 38 ♖xc3 ♖xb2 39 ♖c7+ ♔xa6 40 ♖xf7 ♖b7 he has drawing chances" (Botvinnik).

33 ... f6?!

Upset by the unexpected turn of events, the Soviet player makes another mistake.

34 ♖a1 ♘a6?!

The decisive error. The English player E.Keem showed that Black could have hoped to save the game by playing 34 ... ♔c5! After 35 ♖a3 (*35 a6? ♘xa6 36 ♖xa6 ♖xc3!*) 35 ... ♘b5 36 ♖xb3 ♘xc3! (an improvement by Botvinnik on the analysis of Keem, who recommended *36 ... ♔c4?! 37 ♖b4+ ♔d3*, but White has the reply *38 ♗d2!*) 37 bxc3 ♖a2 38 ♖b7 ♖xa5 the extra pawn does not guarantee White a win in the rook ending. After the move

played, the game quickly concludes in favour of White.

35 ♖a3 ♔c7 36 ♖xb3 ♘c5 37 ♖b5 ♘a4 38 ♗d4 e5 39 ♔d1 ♖c4 40 ♗e3 ♔c6 41 ♖b8 ♔c7 Black resigns

"After 42 ♖b3 ♖c6 43 ♖b5 Black is practically in zugzwang" (Reshevsky).

"A good game by Reshevsky!" (Botvinnik).

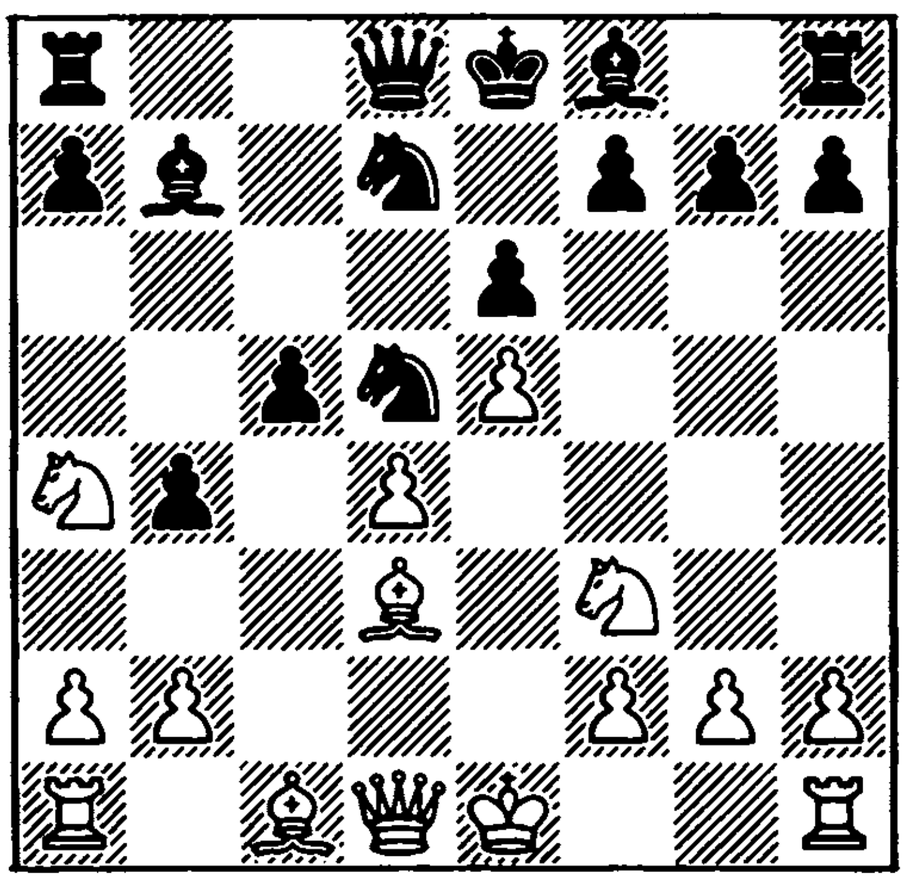
Tukmakov-Sveshnikov
Lvov 1978
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 c6 4 e3 ♘f6 5 ♘f3 ♘bd7 6 ♗d3 dxc4 7 ♗xc4 b5 8 ♗d3 ♗b7

This move of the English player Wade was not very popular until the mid-1960s, when it was taken up by Larsen. The effect of employing a forgotten variation surpassed all expectations: in his Candidates Match (Bled 1965) Larsen picked up two and a half points out of three against Ivkov! Nowadays the 'flexible defence' – that is what the 8 ... ♗b7 variation has begun to be called – is considered one of the most reliable in the Meran Variation, thanks to the successes, in particular, of Larsen, Sveshnikov, Polugayevsky and Ljubojević.

9 e4 b4 10 ♘a4 c5 11 e5 ♘d5 *(211)*

211



12 0-0

Larsen's discoveries mainly concerned the continuations recommended by theory at that time: 12 dxc5 and 12 ♘xc5. Here are two typical examples, where in each case Black achieved an excellent game.

12 dxc5 ♕a5 13 0-0 ♗xc5! 14 a3 ♗e7 15 ♗d2 0-0 16 ♖e1 ♖fd8 17 ♕b3 ♖ab8 18 ♗e4 ♗c6 19 axb4 ♗xb4 20 ♘c3 ♕c5 21 ♕c2 h6 (Uhlmann-Larsen, Monte Carlo 1968.

12 ♘xc5 ♗xc5! 13 dxc5 ♘xc5 14 ♗b5+ ♔f8! 15 ♕d4 ♕b6 16 ♗e2 h6 17 0-0 g6! 18 ♗d2 ♔g7 19 ♖ac1 ♖ac8 20 ♕h4 g5!! 21 ♕g4 ♘e4! (Ivkov-Larsen, Bled 1965).

12 0-0! is stronger than exchanging on c5, although in recent times after 12 ♘xc5 ♗xc5 13 dxc5 ♘xc5 14 ♗b5+ Black's prospects have been far from rosy. Thus in two games played in the USSR Championship Eliminator, Norilsk 1987, neither 14 ... ♔e7 nor 14 ... ♔f8 brought him equality:

Peshina-Sveshnikov: 14 ... ♔f8 15 0-0 h6 16 ♕d4 ♕b6 17 ♗c4 ♘d7 18 ♕g4 g6 19 ♖d1 ♖d8 20 h4 a5 21 b3! ♕c7 22 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 23 ♖xd5! exd5 24 ♗b2, with an attack for White.

Peshina-Kaidanov: 14 ... ♔e7 15 ♕d4 ♖c8 16 0-0 ♕b6 17 ♗c4! ♘d7 18 ♕h4+ f6 19 ♗d2 a5 20 ♖fe1, with advantage to White.

12 ... cxd4
13 ♖e1 g6

The credit for establishing this move in serious tournament play largely belongs to Sveshnikov. Black immediately attacks the basis of White's strategy – the e5 pawn, forcing his opponent to solve concrete problems in defending it. The natural 13 ... ♗e7?! gives White a powerful initiative after 14 ♘xd4 0-0 15 ♕h5! (recommended by Boleslavsky) 15 ... g6 16 ♕h6.

14 ♗g5 ♕a5

14 ... ♗e7 is less crucial. In a game between the same opponents, played a few months earlier in the 45th USSR Championship (Leningrad 1977), Tukmakov gained an advantage after 15 ♗h6 ♗f8 16 ♕d2 ♗xh6 17 ♕xh6 ♕a5 18 b3 ♘c3 19 ♘g5!.

15 ♘d2

The natural move 15 ♘xd4 is weaker: by 15 ... a6! 16 ♘f3 ♗c6 17 ♗c2 ♗g7 18 a3 0-0 Black achieved an excellent position in Averbakh-Sveshnikov (Lvov 1973).

15 ... ♗a6
16 ♗xa6?!

This hands the initiative to Black.

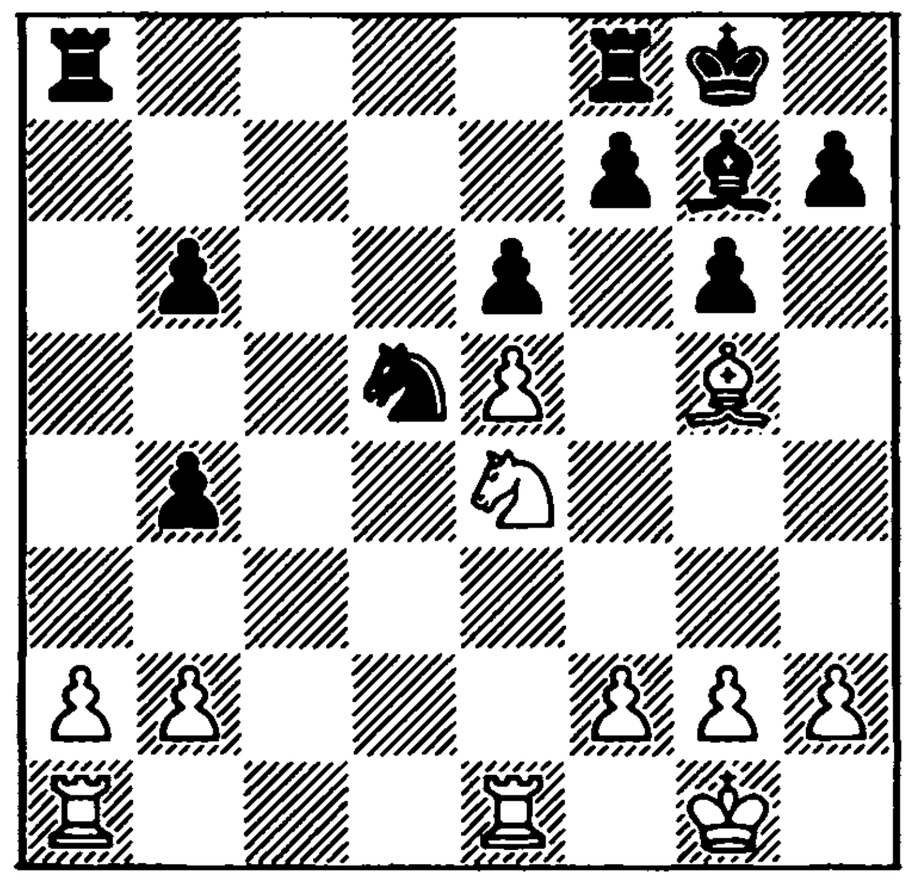
Gligorić's move 16 ♘c4! is more dangerous. White gains a dangerous initiative, but Black's defensive resources are considerable, for example: 16 ... ♗xc4 17 ♗xc4 ♗g7 18 ♕xd4 ♕xa4 19 ♗xd5 exd5 20 ♕xd5 ♘b6 21 ♕d6 ♕d7 22 ♕xb4 ♗f8! 23 ♕c3 ♕c8! In Rashkovsky-Sveshnikov (Sochi 1979) Black played the weaker 22 ... ♘d5? 23 ♕e4 h6 24 ♗f6 0-0 25 ♖ad1, with advantage to White.

16 ... ♕xa6 17 ♘e4 ♗g7 18 ♘ac5

After 18 ♘d6+ ♔f8 the e5 pawn is lost. White also stands worse after 18 ♘f6+ ♘7xf6 19 exf6 ♘xf6 20 ♕xd4 ♕xa4 21 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 22 ♕xf6 0-0.

18 ... ♘xc5 19 ♘xc5 ♕b5 20 ♕xd4 0-0 21 ♘e4 ♕b6 22 ♕xb6 axb6 *(212)*

212



White's position is inferior. On the queenside the pawn structure favours Black, since White has to concern himself with defending his a2 pawn.

The black knight is excellently deployed on a strong-point in the centre. The e5 pawn, which in the middlegame constitutes a strength, merely causes White trouble in the endgame. With his next move Tukmakov makes the e5 pawn practically immune to attack by the black pieces, but in doing so he makes a mistake in solving the exchanging problem.

23 ♘f6+? ♗xf6
24 ♗xf6

The threat to the e5 pawn has been removed, but Black's positional advantage has become decisive. The knight at d5 now has no opponent, and White has no way of opposing the attack by the black rooks along the a- and c-files.

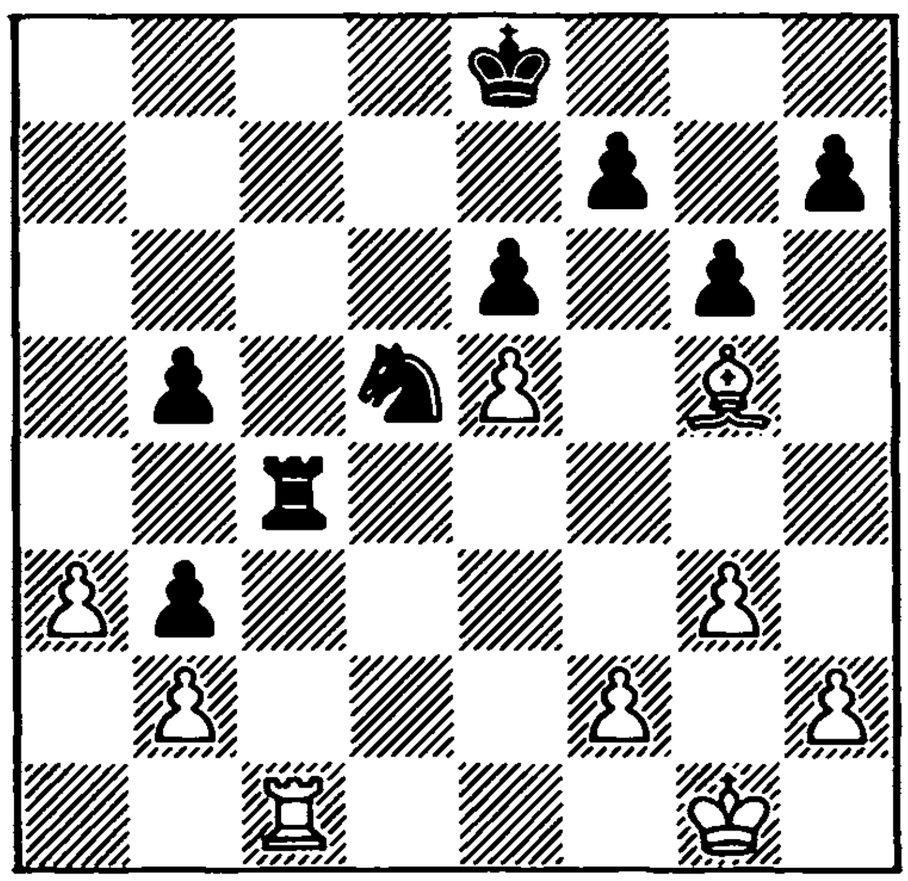
24 ... ♖fc8 25 ♖ec1 ♔f8 26 g3 ♖xc1+! 27 ♖xc1 ♔e8

Concrete play by Sveshnikov. To defend his a2 pawn White is forced to return his rook.

28 ♖a1 b5 29 ♗g5 b3! 30 a3 ♖c8 31 ♖c1 ♖c4! *(213)*

A picturesque position. All White's pieces and pawns are on dark squares, while Black's are on the opposite colour. From the light squares Black's pieces can calmly attack the weak pawns at b2 and e5. whereas White can only sadly contemplate his inevitable defeat. It is not surprising that the game lasts only another

213



five moves.

32 ♔f1 ♔d7 33 ♗h6 ♔c6 34 ♔e2 ♘b6

In accordance with all the rules of the endgame, Black's king and knight change places. The knight is aiming for the b2 pawn, and the king for the pawn at e5.

35 ♔d3 ♔d5 36 ♖c3 ♘a4 White resigns

Geller-Smyslov
20th USSR Championship, Moscow 1952
Slav Defence

1 d4 d5 2 c4 c6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♘c3 dxc4 5 a4 ♗f5 6 e3 e6 7 ♗xc4 ♗b4 8 0-0 a5

This variation was employed three times by Smyslov in this Championship – against Geller, Tolush and Boleslavsky. Black fixes the weakness at b4, but in doing so he falls significantly behind in development. It has to be assumed that Smyslov remained unhappy with the results of his innovation – as far as we can remember, he did not play 8 ... a5 in any subsequent games.

9 ♕e2 ♘e4
10 ♘a2 ♗d6

Smyslov played 10 ... ♗e7 against Tolush, but after 11 ♗d3 ♘f6 12 e4 ♗g4 13 ♗e3 0-0 14 ♘c3 ♘a6 15 ♖ad1 ♘b4 16 ♗b1 he failed to equalise.

11 ♗d3 ♗g6
12 ♘c3 ♘g5

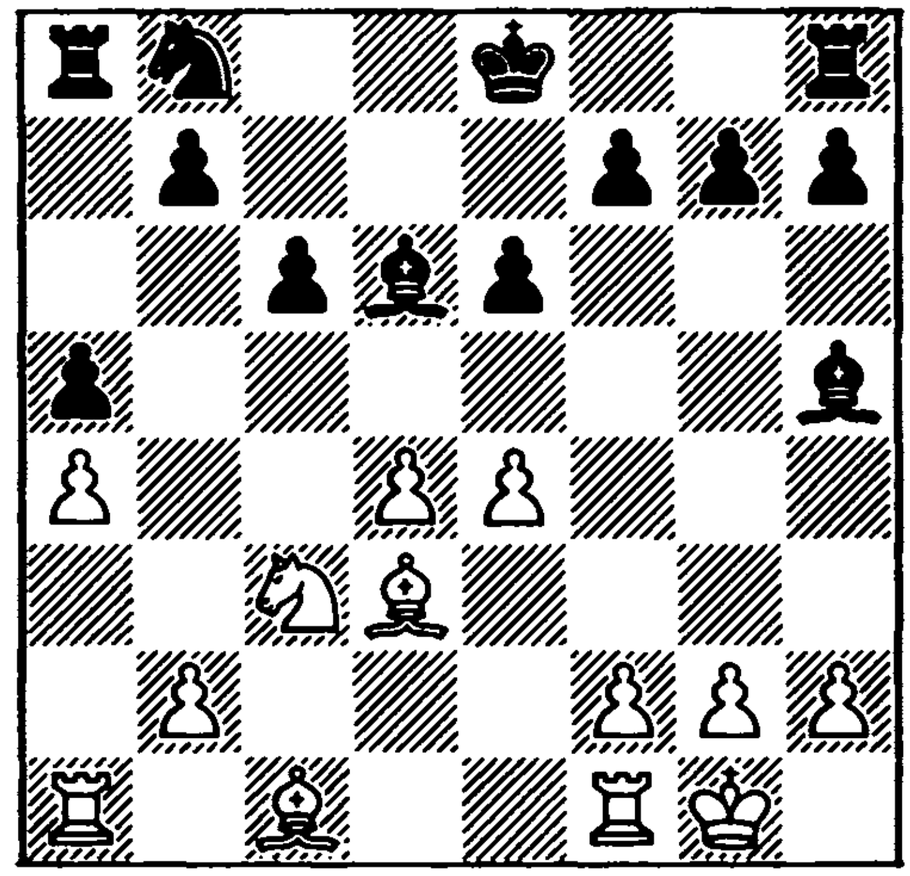
The exchange on c3, chosen by Smyslov against Boleslavsky, strengthens White's centre: 12 ... ♘xc3 13 bxc3 ♘d7 14 e4 0-0 15 ♖b1 ♖b8 16 ♘d2 ♗c7 – Black's position is passive.

13 ♘xg5

Euwe's recommendation of 13 ♘e1! is much stronger. By avoiding the exchange, White achieves a powerful set-up in the centre: 13 ... ♗xd3 14 ♘xd3 h6 15 e4!.

13 ... ♕xg5 14 e4 ♕h5 15 ♕xh5 ♗xh5 *(214)*

214



A complicated position. White, thanks to his pawn centre, has a spatial advantage, but his centre may come under attack by the black pieces and pawns, and be transformed from a strength into a weakness. White can of course simplify the game by 16 d5 with a probable draw, but an active player such as Geller would never take such a decision.

16 f4

White makes an aggressive thrust, and

the first impression one gains is that he has a very active position. But by skilful play Smyslov succeeds in emphasising the basic drawback of this move – pawns cannot move backwards. 16 ♗e3 followed by f2-f3 was more solid.

16 ... ♘a6!

Threatening 17 ... ♘b4 and 18 ... ♘c2.

17 ♖f2

17 h3 was preferable.

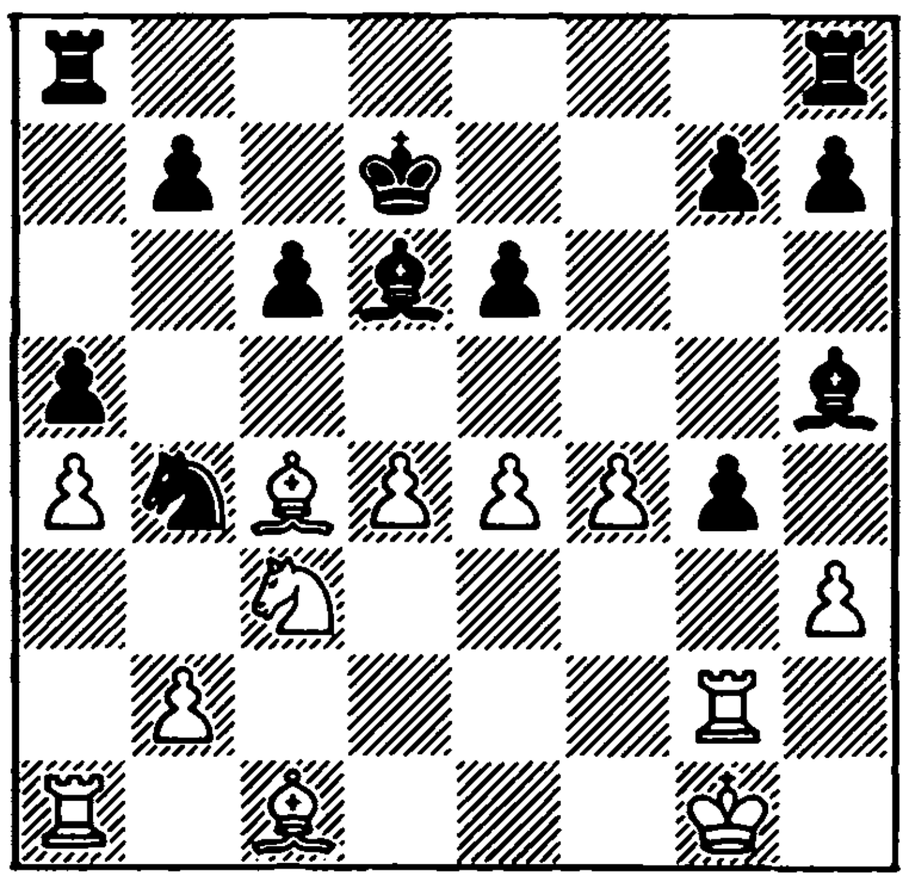
17 ... ♘b4
18 ♗c4 ♔d7!

A subtle move. The black king takes an active part in the play. The ability to determine correctly the position of the king after an early exchange of queens, evaluating the danger of a possible attack on it if it remains in the centre, and the drawbacks associated with removing it from the centre, is one of the indications of a top-class endgame player.

19 ♗e3

A serious mistake, which was difficult to detect. There is nothing for the bishop to do at e3. 19 h3!? f5 20 g4! fxg4 21 ♖g2 *(215)* looks interesting:

215



Black faces difficult problems. Very dangerous is 21 ... gxh3 22 ♖xg7+ ♗e7 23 f5! with a strong attack. Best is 21 ... g3! 22 ♖xg3 g6, with an unclear game.

19 ... ♖ae8!

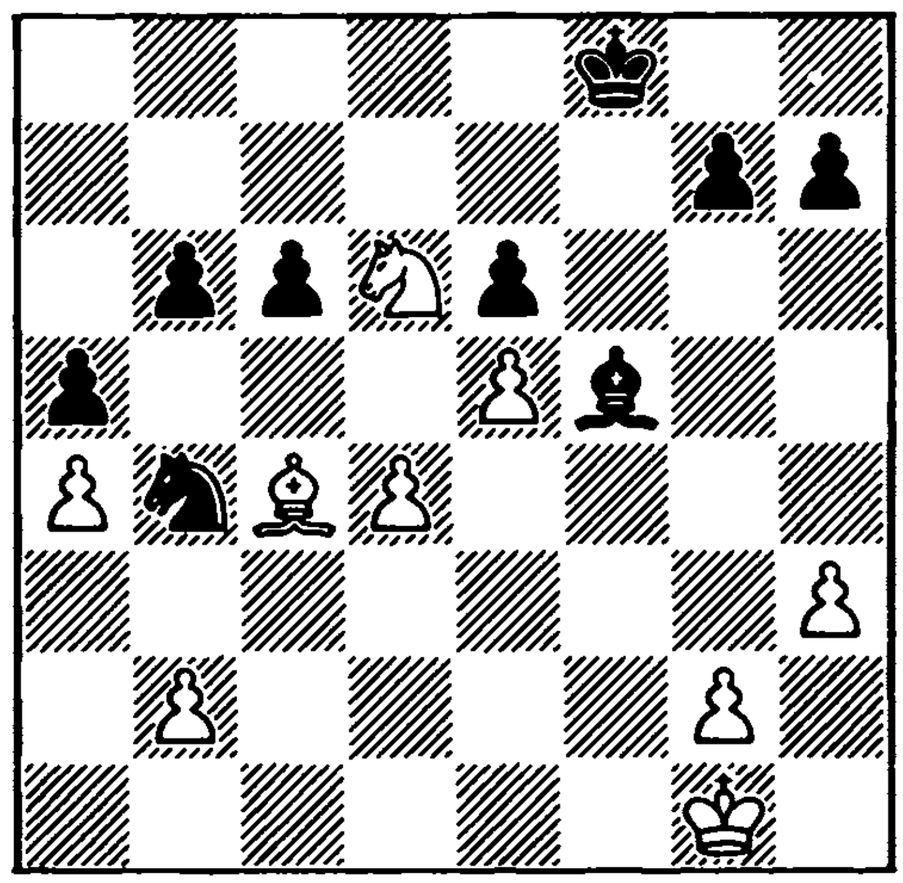
During the last four moves Black has completed his development and consolidated his position, and he now intends to strike at the centre with 20 ... f5.

20 e5 ♗e7 21 f5 ♗g4! 22 fxe6+ fxe6 23 ♘e4 b6 24 ♗g5 ♖ef8 25 ♗xe7 ♔xe7

With the exchange of the dark-square bishops, the white knight has gained access to d6. But the position is already deep into the endgame, and the occupation of d6 cannot bring White any particular gains, whereas his weaknesses on the queenside and in the centre are of a chronic nature.

26 ♖af1 ♖xf2 27 ♖xf2 ♖f8 28 ♖xf8 ♔xf8 29 h3 ♗f5 30 ♘d6 *(216)*

216



White has occupied d6 with his knight and threatens by 31 ♘c8 to win a pawn. But Smyslov has evaluated the position more deeply, and with the help of a little tactical manoeuvre he demonstrates the correctness of his preceding play.

30 ... ♔e7!
31 ♗b3

It transpires that White loses a piece after 31 ♘c8+ ♔d8 32 ♘xb6 ♔c7.

31 ... ♔d7
32 ♘xf5

The only defence against 32 ... ♗c2.

32 ... exf5
33 ♔f1 c5!

On 33 ... ♘d3 there would have followed 34 ♗c2.

34 dxc5

If 34 d5 Black has the decisive 34 ... ♘d3!.

34 ... bxc5 35 ♔e2 ♘c6 36 ♗g8 h6 37 e6+ ♔d6 38 ♔d3 ♘e5+ 39 ♔e3 g5

Black wants to eliminate the e6 pawn, without allowing the white king across to the queenside pawns.

40 b3 ♘c6 41 ♔d3 ♘e5+ 42 ♔e3 ♔e7 43 g3 ♘g6!

Smyslov embarks on decisive action, which demanded precise calculation.

44 ♔e2

As shown by Levenfish, 44 ♗h7 ♔f6 45 ♔d3 ♘e7 46 ♔c4 ♔g7 47 ♗xf5 ♘xf5 48 g4 ♘d4 49 ♔xc5 ♘xb3+ 50 ♔d6 ♔f8 51 ♔d7 ♘c5+ would not have saved White.

44 ... ♔f8
45 ♗h7 ♔g7

Black is just one move ahead in the pawn ending.

46 ♗xg6 ♔xg6 47 ♔d3 ♔f6 48 ♔c4 ♔xe6 49 ♔xc5 h5 50 b4 f4! 51 gxf4 g4 52 hxg4 h4 53 f5+

In the event of 53 b5 the black king would have stopped the pawn.

53 ... ♔d7 54 g5 h3 55 g6 ♔e7 56 bxa5 h2 57 a6 h1=♕ 58 ♔b6 ♔d6 White resigns

4.2 MAROCZY BIND FORMATION

The system of achieving a bind on the centre, analysed by the famous Hungarian grandmaster Geza Maroczy at the start of the century, usually arose from the Sicilian Defence: 1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 c4!. Maroczy recommended a powerful piece-pawn formation in the centre, almost completely excluding counterplay by the opponent: ♗e3, ♗e2, 0-0, ♕d2, ♖ac1, ♖fd1, b2-b3, f2-f3, ♘d5!.

The Maroczy set-up was a formidable weapon in the hands of Rubinstein and Botvinnik, who developed new ways of transposing into the bind directly from the opening: 1 c4 c5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 g3 d5 4 cxd5 ♘xd5 5 ♗g2 ♘c7 6 ♘f3 ♘c6 7 0-0 e5 (Rubinstein Variation, or Maroczy Bind with colours reversed), or 1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 b6 3 g3 ♗b7 4 ♗g2 c5 5 0-0 g6 6 d4 cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♗xg2 8 ♔xg2 ♗g7 9 ♘c3 0-0 10 e4 (Botvinnik-Lilienthal, Moscow 1936).

Of course, it cannot be said that the Maroczy Bind is a winning formation, but playing against it is quite difficult. (However, there have always been players who have been sceptical about the strength of the Maroczy formation – among those who have played successfully against it are Breyer, Nimzowitsch, Simagin, Larsen, Averbakh and Gurgenidze). Black's counterplay must naturally be based on undermining the pawn wedges by ... b5 and ... f5, but in doing so he should not forget Nimzowitsch's advice: from cramped positions a player should free himself gradually. Thus the premature advance ... b5 has often led to a lost position for Black, and in the games **Smejkal-Zukerman** and **Psakhis-Pigusov**, for example, it was the primary cause of his defeat.

Another possible plan is the blockade of the queenside by ... a5 and ... ♘f6-d7-c5. But in general it has to be admitted

that the Maroczy formation is favourable, and modern players happily employ it.

What has been said also relates to the 'Maroczy Bind endgame'. Moreover, the evaluation of many opening variations is based on the evaluation of an ending which can arise more or less by force after the opening, for example: 1 c4 g6 2 e4 c5 3 ♘f3 ♘c6 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 ♘xd4 7 ♕xd4 d6 8 ♗e3 ♗g7 9 f3 0-0 10 ♕d2 ♗e6 11 ♖c1 ♕a5 12 ♘d5 ♕xd2+ 13 ♔xd2 ±.

It is important to mention that the advance ♘d5, which in the middlegame normally completes White's strategic set-up, is strong in the endgame only when White is able to exploit the advantages associated with an exchange on d5: the c-file after cxd5 or an attack on the backward e-pawn after exd5. Otherwise Black escapes from all his difficulties, as in the following two examples:

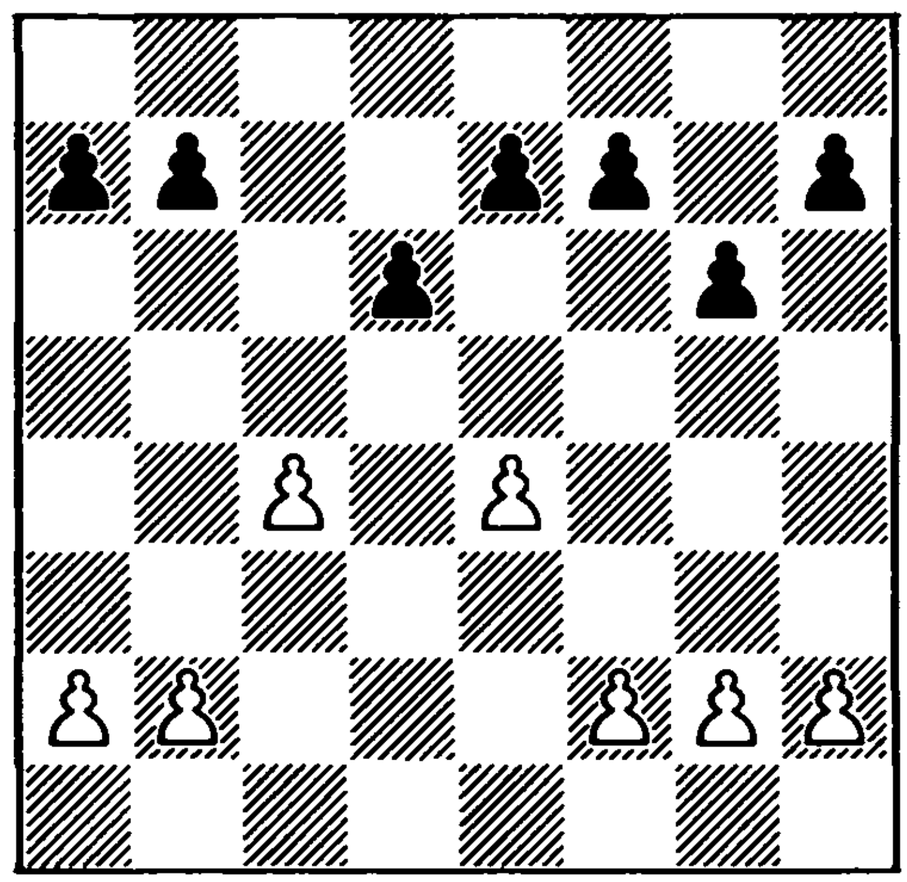
1 ♘f3 c5 2 e4 d6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 c4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 g6 7 ♗e2 ♘xd4 8 ♕xd4 ♗g7 9 ♗g5 h6 10 ♗e3 ♗e6 11 0-0 0-0 12 ♕d2 ♔h7 13 f3?! ♕a5 14 ♖ac1 a6 15 b3 ♖fc8 16 a4 ♘d7 17 ♘d5 ♕xd2 18 ♗xd2 ♗b2 19 ♖ce1 ♘c5 20 ♗e3 ♗xd5 21 exd5 b6= (Karasev-Tal, 39th USSR Championship, Leningrad 1971).

1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 g6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 e4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 f3 ♘xd4 8 ♕xd4 ♗g7 9 ♗e3 0-0 10 ♕d2 ♕a5 11 ♖c1 ♗e6 12 b3?! ♖fc8 13 ♗e2 a6 14 ♘d5 ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 ♘xd5 16 cxd5 ♗d7, with a quick draw (Petrosian-Fischer, Candidates, Buenos Aires 1971).

On the other hand, without ♘d5 it is in general difficult for White to count on an advantage. But on the whole it can be said that the Maroczy Bind also retains its strength in the endgame.

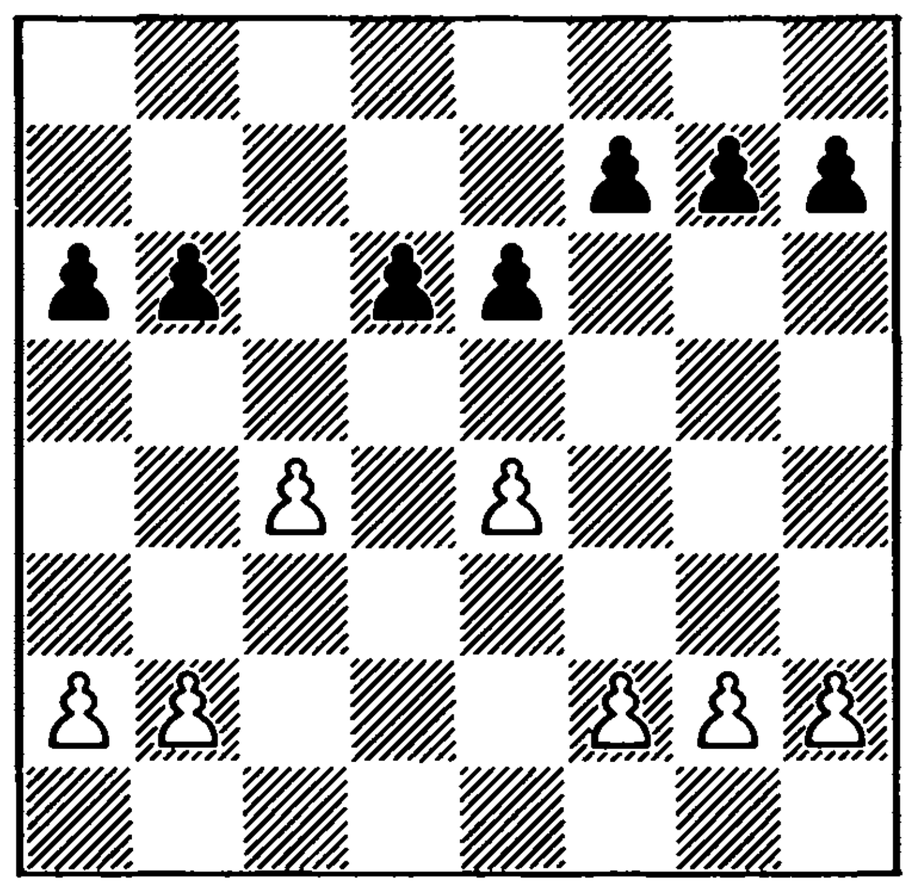
Positions with the following pawn formation have been assigned by the authors to the Maroczy Bind:

217



Positions with the following, similar pawn formation are considered in the next section – the Andersson ('Hedgehog') Formation.

218



Ree-Cornelis
Siegen Olympiad 1970
Sicilian Defence

1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 g6 4 d4 cxd4 5 ♘xd4 ♘c6 6 e4 ♘xd4 7 ♕xd4 d6

The Gurgenidze Variation. Black lures the enemy queen to the insecure square d4. He intends to exploit the gain of time, associated with the enforced retreat of the queen, in order to quickly develop his forces according to the approximate pattern: ... ♗e6 (more rarely ... ♗*d7*), ...

♕a5, ... ♖fc8, ... a6 and ... b5. However, in practice he is not always able to make the queenside break ... b5, and without this move Black's counterplay is normally doomed to failure.

8 ♗e3 ♗g7 9 f3 0-0 10 ♕d2 ♗e6

10 ... ♗d7, with the idea of advancing ... b5 as quickly as possible, does not achieve its aim. After 11 ♖c1 ♕a5 12 ♗e2 ♖fc8 13 0-0 a6 14 b3 it transpires that 14 ... b5 does not work: 15 c5! ♖c6 16 cxd6 exd6 17 ♖c2 ♖ac8 18 ♘d5, and White gains the advantage (Polugayevsky–Bednarski, Siegen Olympiad 1970). Black has to restrict himself to the modest 14 ... ♗c6, and after 15 ♗d4 ♘d7 16 ♗xg7 ♔xg7 17 ♔h1 ♔g8 18 f4 White has the better chances (Suetin-Forintos, Budapest 1970).

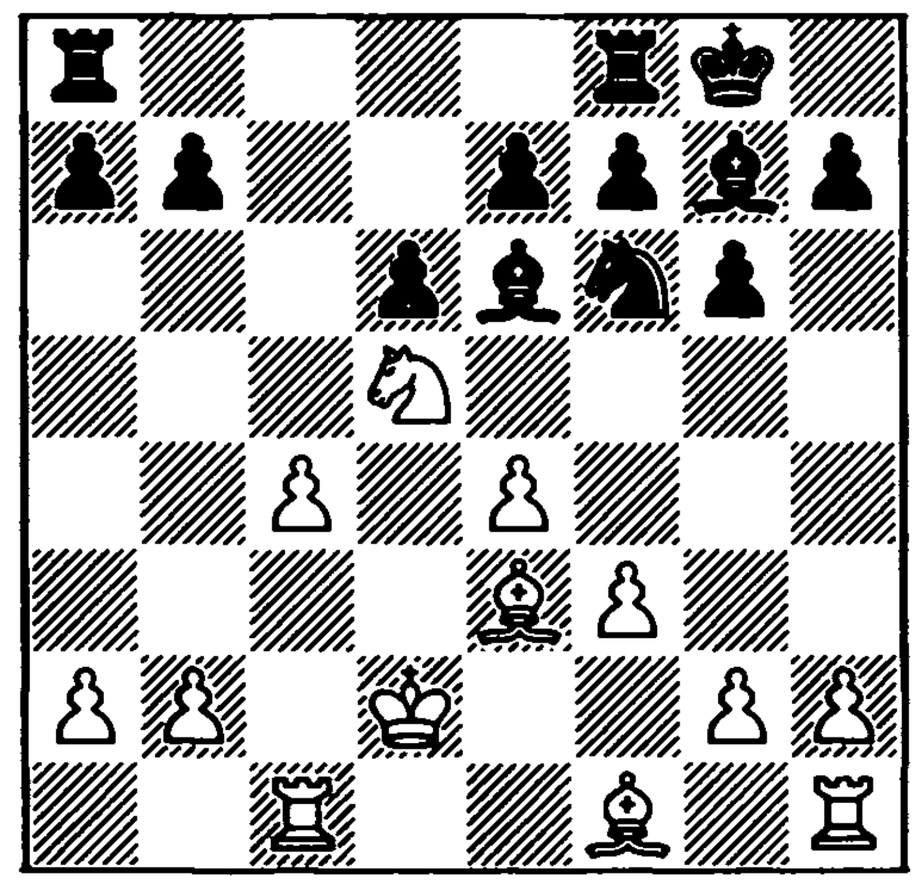
11 ♖c1 ♕a5

The plan chosen by Black in Tal-Ignatiev (Rostov-on-Don 1971) also does not get Black out of his difficulties: 11 ... a6 12 b3 ♖c8 13 ♗e2 ♕a5?! After 14 0-0 ♖fd8 15 ♖c2! ♖c6 16 ♗d4 ♖dc8 17 ♘d5! ♕xd2 18 ♖xd2 ♗xd5 19 exd5 ♖6c7 20 ♗b6 ♖d7 21 g4! White had an undisputed endgame advantage.

Much more interesting is the Benko Gambit-style idea devised by Vaganian: 13 ... b5!? 14 cxb5 axb5 15 ♘xb5 ♖xc1+ 16 ♕xc1 ♕a5+ 17 ♕d2 ♖a8! (Tukmakov-Vaganian, Kiev 1984). After 18 a3 ♗xb3 19 ♕xa5 ♖xa5 20 ♔f2 ♗a4 21 ♖b1 Tukmakov suggests that Black could have immediately equalised by 21 ... ♗xb5! White also fails to achieve anything by 20 ♗d2 ♖a8 21 ♔f2 ♘d7 22 ♖c1 ♘c5 23 ♗e3 ♗a4 (A.Kuzmin-Shachev, Moscow 1988).

12 ♘d5 ♕xd2+
13 ♔xd2 *(219)*

219



Up to move 12 this is a repetition of the 3rd game of the 1969 Spassky-Petrosian World Championship Match. Spassky played 12 ♗e2, and after 12 ... ♖fc8 Black gradually equalised.

In his game against Ivkov (Belgrade 1969) Polugayevsky improved White's play with 12 ♘d5!, and set his opponent a difficult choice. Black must either go into an unpromising ending, or agree to the exchange of the a2 and e7 pawns. The latter gives better chances of equalising – here is a possible variation, suggested by Bondarevsky: 12 ... ♕xa2 13 ♘xe7+ ♔h8 14 ♗e2 ♘g8! 15 ♘xg8 ♔xg8 16 ♗d4 ♗xd4 17 ♕xd4 ♕a5+ 18 ♔f2 (*18 ♕c3 ♕b6*) 18 ... ♕e5. With just one weakness, the d6 pawn, Black would have much better chances of a successful outcome than after the game continuation.

However, White is not obliged to exchange knights. After 15 ♘d5! ♗xd5 16 cxd5 ♖fc8 17 0-0 a5 18 ♗d4 ♕a4 19 ♗c3 his chances are better (Schmidt-Hug, European Team Championship, Bath 1973).

13 ... ♗xd5

It is clear that the enemy knight at d5 cannot be tolerated, and in any case there is no way of defending the e7 pawn (*13* ...

♖*fe8? 14* ♘*c7*). Now White gains the advantage of the two bishops. It is doubtful whether taking on d5 with the knight was any better, in view of the invasion of the white rook at c7.

14 cxd5 ♖fc8
15 ♖xc8+

This is even stronger than 15 ♗e2 a6 16 b4 ♔f8 17 a4 ♘d7 18 a5, which brought White a win in the original Polugayevsky-Ivkov game (cf. Polugayevsky's *The Sicilian Labyrinth Vol.2* p.135, Pergamon 1991).

15 ... ♖xc8

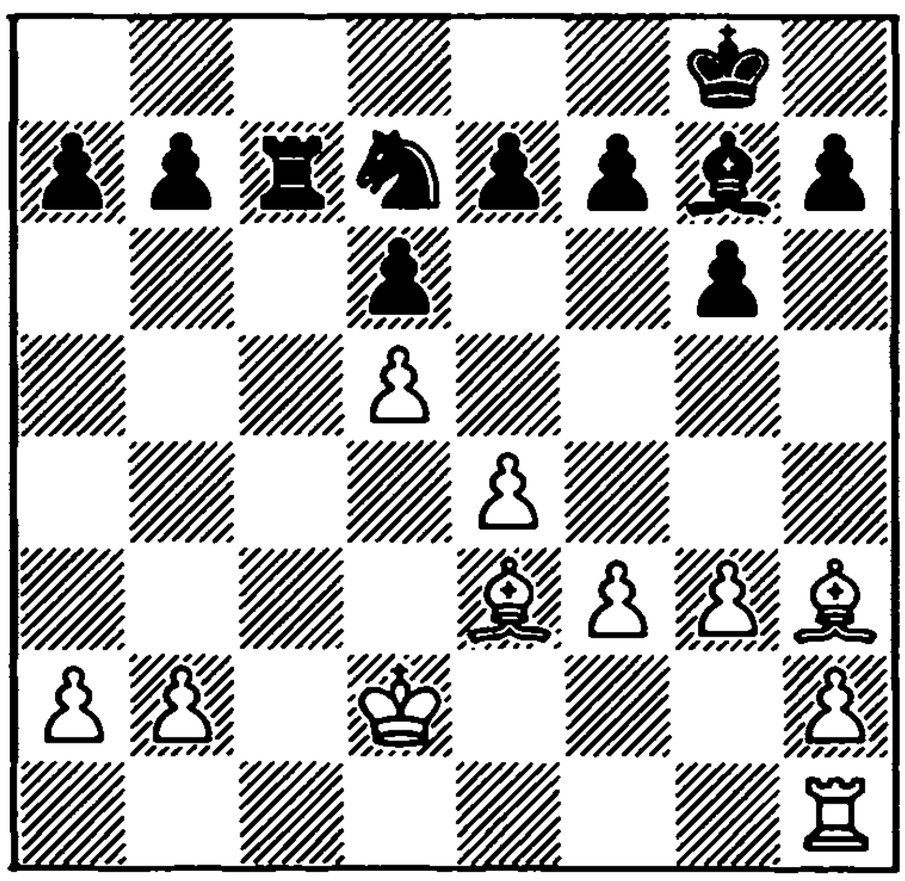
One gains the impression that things are by no means bad for Black. After the natural moves 16 ♗e2 ♘d7 he has definite counterplay on the queenside. But the following fine move puts everything in its place.

16 g3!

The light-square bishop is developed on the h3-c8 diagonal, taking control of the important squares d7 and c8.

16 ... ♘d7
17 ♗h3 ♖c7 *(220)*

220



Up till here the players have repeated the game Polugayevsky-Ostojić (Belgrade 1961), where White played 18 ♖c1! and gained a convincing victory (cf. the notes to the aforementioned Polugayevsky-Ivkov game). Ree chooses a different plan for realising his advantage, with which it will be useful to acquaint the reader.

18 ♗xd7!?

White parts with the advantage of the two bishops, for the sake of seizing the only open file with his rook.

18 ... ♖xd7
19 b3 a6?!

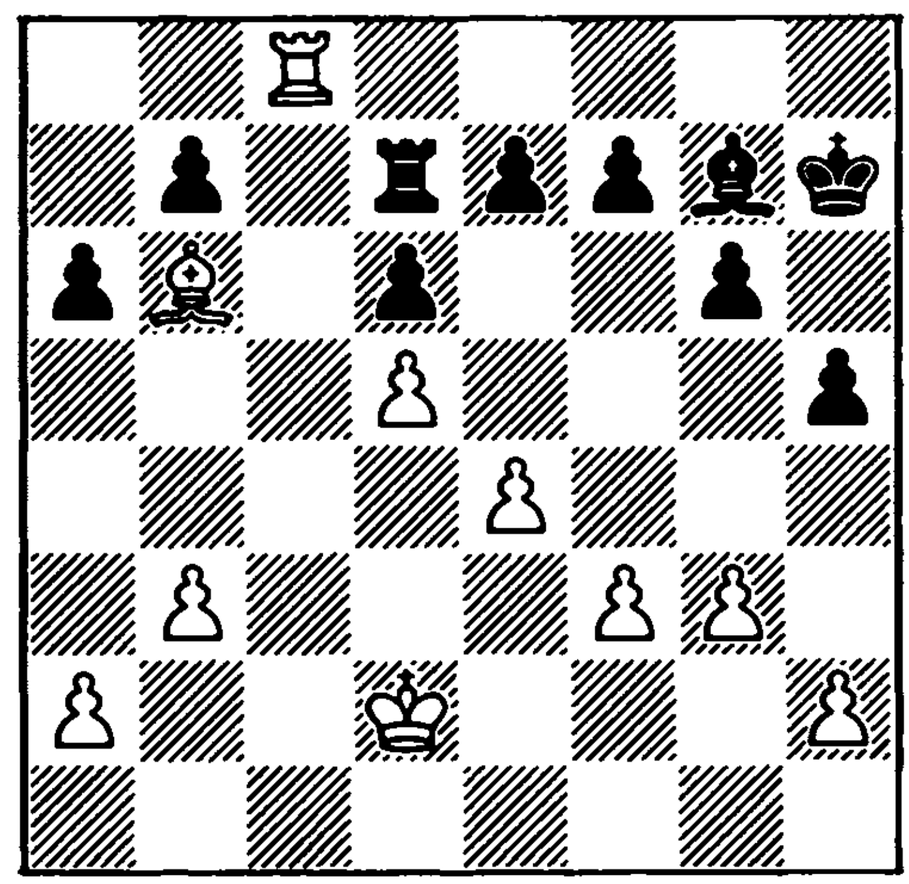
A positional mistake. 19 ... b6 would have been better.

20 ♖c1 h5?

Black is rattled. It was essential to play 20 ... f5, keeping his king in the centre.

21 ♖c8+ ♔h7
22 ♗b6! *(221)*

221



The white pieces dominate the entire board. The position of the black rook is especially pitiful. Now White's main problem is not to allow the opponent to free himself.

22 ... f5 23 ♔d3 fxe4+ 24 ♔xe4 ♗f6 25 a4 ♔g7 26 f4! ♔f7 27 f5! ♗e5 28 b4 ♔f6 29 fxg6 ♔xg6 30 b5 axb5 31 axb5 ♔f6 32 ♗e3

The white bishop must be replaced at b6 by the pawn, after which Black will be threatened with ♖c7.

32 ... e6
33 ♖h8!

Ree successfully changes the target of his attack.

33 ... exd5+ 34 ♔xd5 ♔g6 35 ♖h6+ Black resigns

Psakhis-Pigusov
Krasnoyarsk, 1980
Sicilian Defence

1 e4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘c6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 g6 5 c4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 d6 7 f3 ♘xd4 8 ♕xd4 ♗g7 9 ♗g5 0-0 10 ♕d2 ♗e6 11 ♖c1 ♕a5 12 b3 ♖fc8 13 ♗e2 a6

The reader will already have seen that endgame positions in the Maroczy formation after the advance of the white knight to d5 are fairly unpleasant for Black. In the given instance too White could have gained some advantage by playing 14 ♘d5 ♕xd2+ 15 ♔xd2 ♗xd5 16 cxd5. Instead he takes an unusual, non-standard decision (first seen in the game Karpov-Kavalek, Nice 1974), which opens new possibilities for White and casts doubts on Black's preceding play.

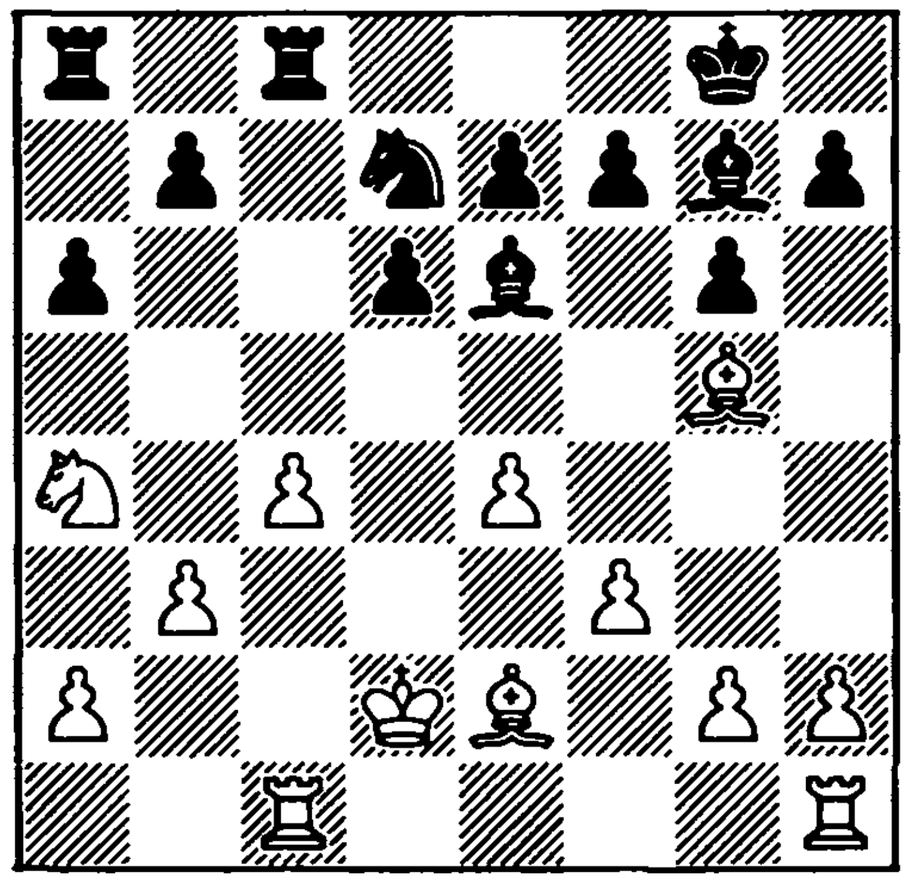
14 ♘a4! ♕xd2+

14 ... ♕d8 is unpleasantly met by 15 c5.

15 ♔xd2 ♘d7 *(222)*

Here Black deviates from the Karpov-Kavalek game, where after 15 ... ♖c6 16 ♘c3 ♖ac8 17 ♘d5 ♔f8 18 ♗e3! ♘d7 19 h4! ♗xd5 20 exd5 White held the initiative. (For comments on the ending of this game, cf. p.154 of Polugayevsky's *The Sicilian Labyrinth Vol.2*).

222



16 h4!

Psakhis follows the path laid by Karpov. White creates the threat of 17 ♗xe7 ♗h6+ 18 ♗g5.

16 ... ♔f8 17 h5 h6 18 ♗e3 g5 19 g3

White prepares a pawn offensive on the kingside. Black must take urgent countermeasures on the opposite wing.

19 ... ♖cb8

19 ... ♖ab8 would all the same have been met by 20 ♘c3.

20 ♘c3 b5
21 ♘d5!

After 21 f4 gxf4 22 gxf4 bxc4 23 f5 cxb3 24 fxe6 fxe6 the play would have become markedly more complicated. But now on 21 ... bxc4, apart from the simple recapture 22 ♗xc4, Black has to reckon with the sharp 22 ♘c7 cxb3 23 axb3 ♗xb3 24 ♘xa8 ♖xa8 25 ♗xa6.

21 ... ♗xd5
22 cxd5

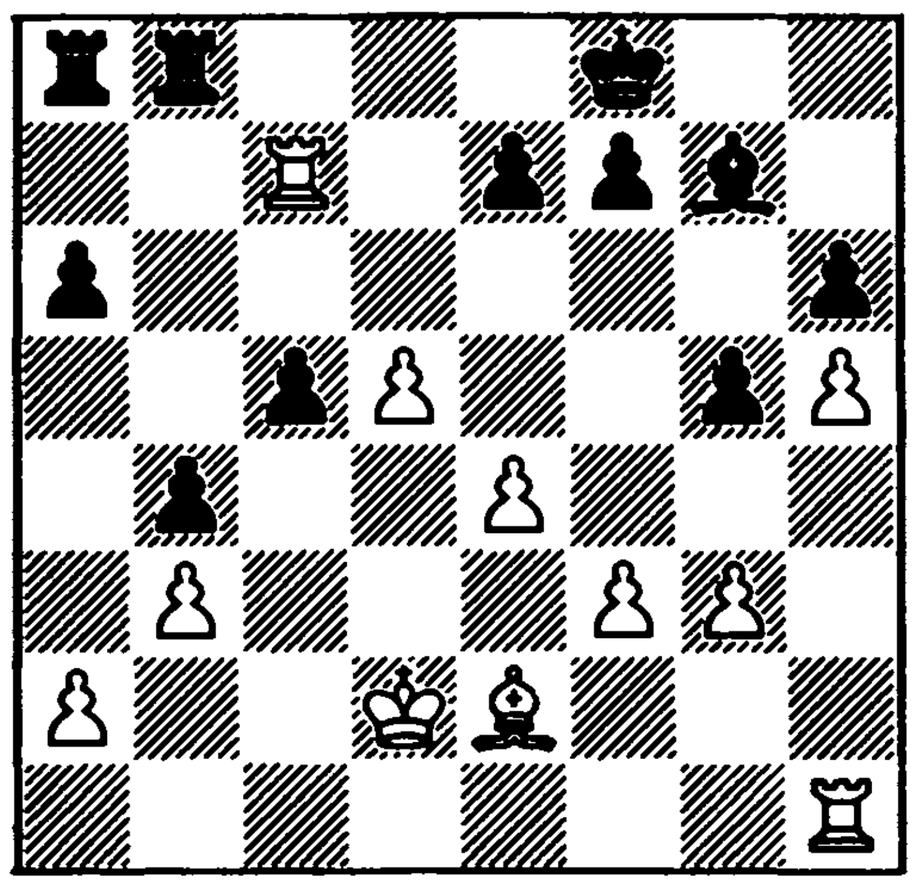
It transpires that 20 ... b5 has proved completely pointless, even harmful for Black.

22 ... b4

The following is an instructive variation: 22 ... ♖c8 23 ♖c6 ♘e5 24 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8 25 f4 gxf4 26 gxf4 ♘d7 27 ♗g4 ♖c7 28 ♗xd7! (remember the Ree-Cornelis game) 28 ... ♖xd7 29 ♖c1.

23 ♖c7 ♘c5
24 ♗xc5 dxc5 *(223)*

223



Here, as in the Karpov-Kavalek game, the opposite-colour bishops do not bring Black any joy.

25 f4!

Much stronger than 25 ♖xc5? ♗e5, when Black sets up a blockade on the b8-h2 diagonal.

25 ... ♗c3+
26 ♔e3 ♖c8

26 ... f6 does not work on account of 27 d6!, since the white king has moved off the d-file and Black does not have 27 ... ♖d8.

27 ♖xc8+ ♖xc8
28 e5

Pigusov has not managed to set up a defence on the dark squares. White has a decisive positional advantage.

28 ... ♔g7 29 ♔e4 ♖f8 30 ♗g4 f6 31 d6! fxe5 32 fxe5 exd6 33 exd6 ♖f2 34 ♔d5!

Much more accurate than 34 d7 ♖d2.

34 ... ♖g2 35 d7 ♖xg3 36 ♔c6 ♖d3 37 ♖h3!?

Psakhis chooses a pretty way to win. Of course, 37 ♖d1 was also good enough.

37 ... ♖d2

The only move.

38 ♖h2! ♖d3 39 ♗f5 ♖d1 40 ♗c2 ♖d4 41 ♖e2!

Pigusov's last chance was 41 ♔c7? ♖d1! 42 d8=♕ ♗e5+. But now **Black resigns**

Smejkal-Zukerman
Polanica Zdroj 1972
Sicilian Defence

1 ♘f3 c5 2 c4 g6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 e4 ♘f6 6 ♘c3 ♘xd4 7 ♕xd4 d6 8 ♗e2 ♗g7 9 ♗g5 0-0 10 ♕d2 ♗e6 11 0-0

At the given moment castling is not considered the strongest move: "After 11 0-0 a6 12 ♖c1 ♕a5 Black carries out ... b5 without difficulty" (Gufeld). This move is, however, rather shrewd: it may seem that Black can immediately seize the initiative . . .

11 ... ♖c8?!
12 b3 b5?

Black sees only his own play – an old, rather widespread error. As Tartakower put it: "Your opponent also has the right to exist". Smejkal's reply brings Black down to earth.

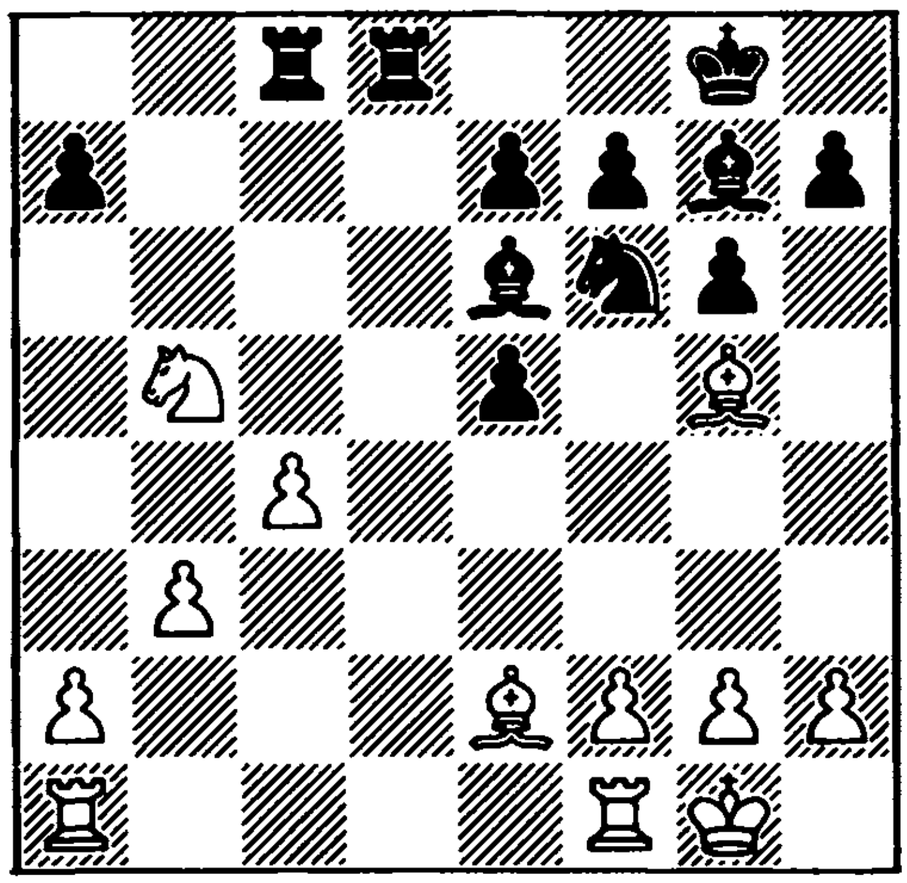
13 e5! dxe5

This leads to a difficult ending. He could also have chosen a difficult middle-game: 13 ... b4 14 exf6 exf6 15 ♗e3 bxc3 16 ♕xc3 f5 17 ♗d4 (Bukić-Romanishin,

Moscow 1977) – this is a matter of taste.

14 ♕xd8 ♖fxd8
15 ♘xb5 *(224)*

224



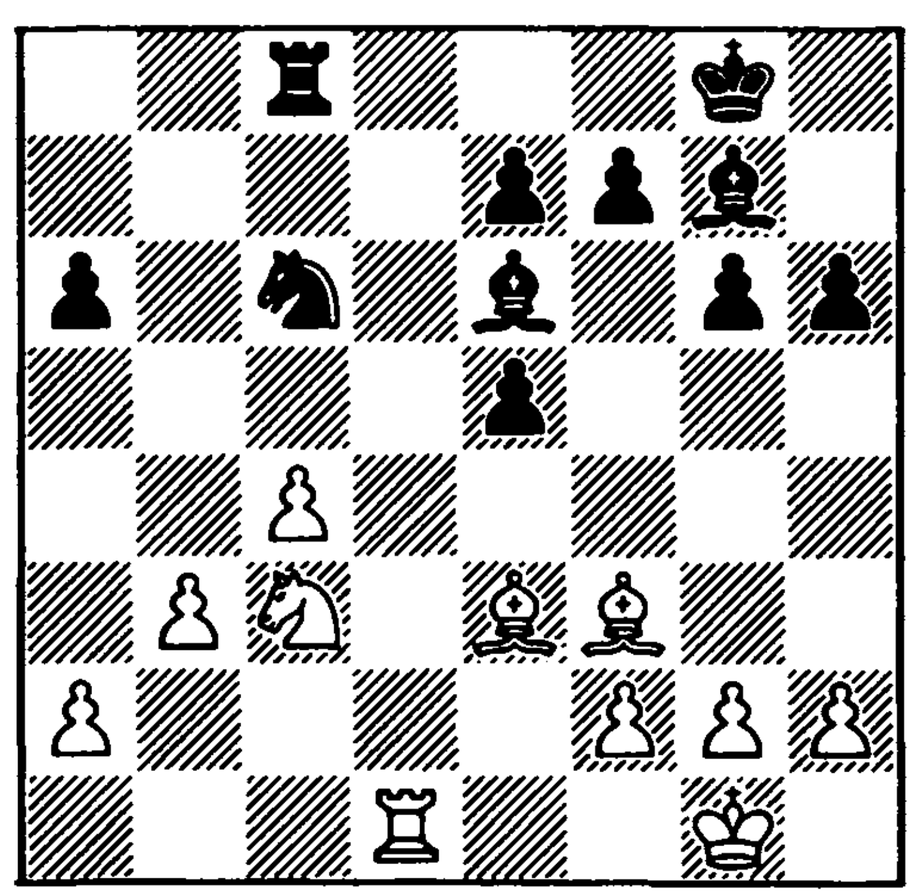
White's two extra connected pawns on the queenside demand of him merely accuracy and care in the process of realising his advantage.

15 ... a6 16 ♘c3 h6 17 ♗e3 ♘d7 18 ♖ad1 ♘b8

Only here does Black deviate from the game Boyarintsev-Alterman (USSR 1964), where after 18 ... f5 things were again difficult for him: 19 ♘d5 ♔f7 20 ♘b6 ♖c6 21 ♘xd7 ♖xd7 22 ♖xd7 ♗xd7 23 b4.

19 ♗f3 ♖xd1
20 ♖xd1 ♘c6 *(225)*

225



21 ♗xc6!

Smejkal finds a pretty way to realise his advantage.

21 ... ♖xc6
22 ♘d5! ♗xd5

Forced, since 22 ... ♔f8 fails to 23 ♘c7!,, while on 22 ... ♗f8 there would have followed 23 ♗xh6. Now the position is simplified and White's task becomes altogether easy.

23 ♖xd5 f5 24 f3 ♔f7 25 ♔f1 ♔e6 26 ♔e2 ♖d6 27 ♖a5 e4 28 fxe4 fxe4 29 ♗f4 ♖d3 30 ♖xa6+ ♔f5 31 ♗d2 h5 32 ♖a5+ ♔e6 33 ♖g5 ♗c3 34 ♗e3 ♗f6

Black's last chance. Suppose White were to play 35 ♖xg6 ♔f7 36 ♖h6?? ♖xe3+!.

35 ♖d5! ♖c3 36 ♔d2 ♔f7 37 ♖d8 e6 38 ♖d7+ ♔e8 39 ♖d6 ♔e7 40 ♗c5 e3+ 41 ♔e2 ♔f7 42 ♗xe3 Black resigns

Polugayevsky-Kapengut
39th USSR Championship
Leningrad 1971
Sicilian Defence

1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 g6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♘c6 5 e4 ♗g7 6 ♗e3 ♘f6 7 ♘c3 ♘g4 8 ♕xg4 ♘xd4 9 ♕d1 ♘e6

After it was found that 9 ... e5 is not very promising for Black, Simagin suggested 9 ... ♘e6!, with the idea of transferring the knight to the blockading square c5. In addition, there is now the positional threat of ... ♗xc3+, against which White has two defences.

10 ♕d2

The other, perhaps more flexible continuation is 10 ♖c1, when in reply to ... d6 or ... b6 White seizes the initiative with

the energetic 11 b4!, for example:

10 ... 0-0 11 b4 d6 12 ♗e2 a5 13 a3 axb4 14 axb4 ♗d7 15 0-0 ♗c6 16 ♕d2 ♖a3 17 ♘d5 ♔h8 18 ♗b6!, with a great advantage to White (Portisch-Pfleger, Manila 1974).

10 ... b6 11 b4 ♗b7 12 ♗d3 0-0 13 0-0 ♘d4 14 ♗b1 ♘c6 15 a3 d6 16 ♕d3 ♖c8 17 f4 ♕d7 18 ♖fd1, and Black is markedly cramped (Suba-Taimanov, Bucharest 1979).

10 ... d6 11 ♖c1 ♗d7 12 ♗d3 a5

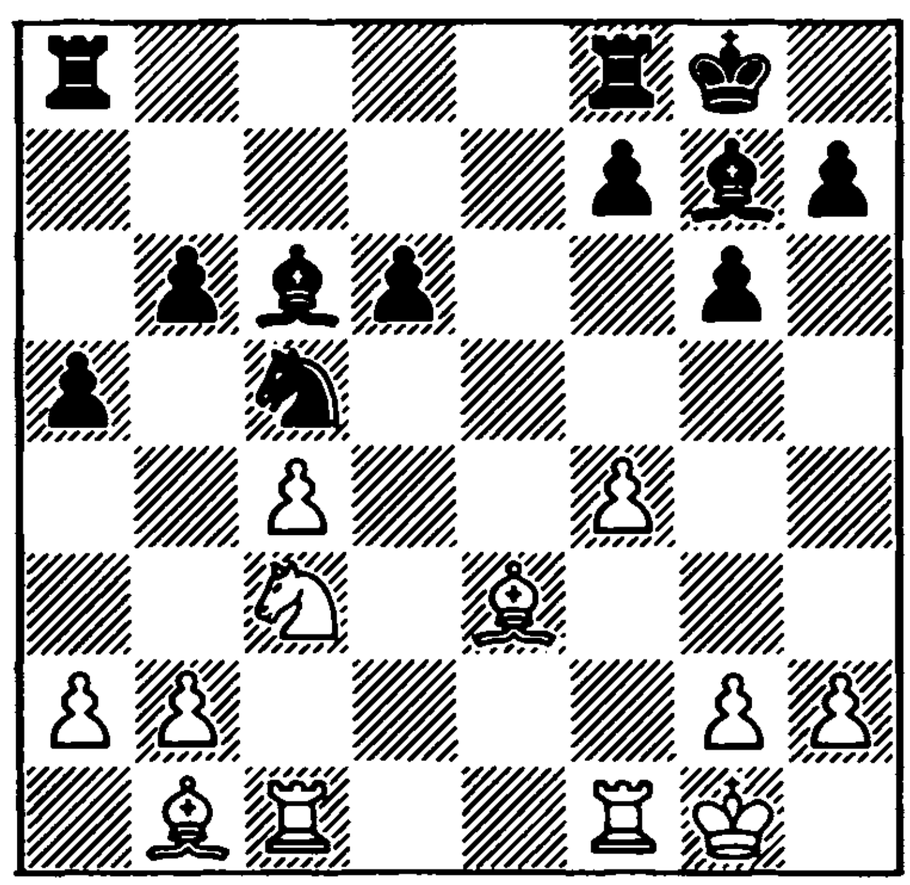
Black plans to set up a blockade on the queenside, but fails to do this by precisely one move . . . As shown by Kapengut, 12 ... ♘c5 was premature on account of 13 b4!, with advantage to White.

13 0-0 ♘c5 14 ♗b1 ♗c6 15 f4 0-0

Had Black tried to secure the position of his knight at c5 by 15 ... b6, after 16 f5! 0-0 17 ♘d5 White would have switched to a direct attack on the king – variation by Gufeld.

16 e5! b6 17 exd6 ♕xd6 18 ♕xd6 exd6 *(226)*

226



White has a slight but enduring positional advantage. The main, and indeed the only serious drawback to Black's position is the weakness of his d6 pawn. This is not enough for the game to be lost, but also not too little for him to be confident about a favourable outcome.

19 ♖fd1 ♖ad8 20 b3 ♖fe8 21 ♗f2 ♗xc3!

White was threatening by 22 ♘d5 to exchange Black's more important light-square bishop, while retaining all the advantages of his position. Now Black succeeds in getting rid of his weakness at d6.

22 ♖xc3 d5 23 cxd5 ♖xd5 24 ♖xd5 ♗xd5 25 ♖e3!

Polugayevsky goes in for further simplification, in order to deprive Black of counterplay associated with the excellent placing of his rook on the open e-file. Of course, White would not have achieved anything by 25 ♗xc5 bxc5 26 ♖xc5 ♖e1+ 27 ♔f2 ♖xb1 28 ♖xd5 ♖b2+, with an immediate draw.

25 ... ♖xe3
26 ♗xe3

The position has become greatly simplified. In order to gain real winning chances, the side with the advantage of the two bishops must advance his pawns in order either to give the opponent pawn weaknesses, or to create a passed pawn. In the given instance White's only attempt to develop an initiative can be by advancing his kingside pawns. Hence Kapengut's next move.

26 ... f5!

This hinders the opponent's plan, although in anticipation of a possible bishop ending it can in no way be called a good move.

27 h3 h5?!

Boleslavsky, annotating this game in the tournament bulletin, showed that 27

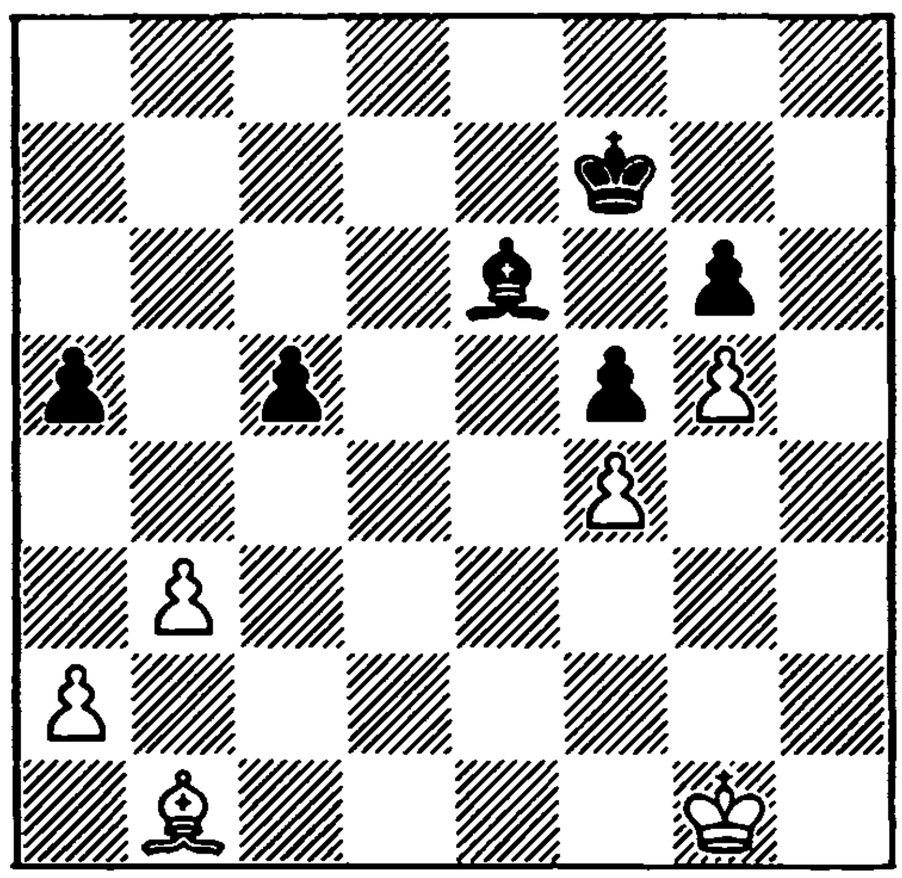
... ♗e6 was stronger, with the idea of playing the king to d6. In this case Black would have gained counterplay involving ... b5. The bishop ending arising after 28 ♗xc5 bxc5 29 ♔f2 ♔f7 30 ♔e3 ♔f6 31 ♗d3 h6 32 h4 g5 is harmless for Black, since he has no real weaknesses on the kingside. Now, however, Polugayevsky succeeds in fixing the opponent's kingside pawns on squares of the same colour as his bishop.

28 g4! hxg4
29 hxg4 ♗e6

"It is possible that 29 ... fxg4 30 ♗xg6 g3 would also not have lost, but it is natural that the Minsk master should avoid this continuation. With the opening up of the position the white bishops could have proved dangerous, and Black has no way to force drawing simplification. For example: 31 ♗c2 ♔f7 32 f5 ♗e4? 33 ♗xe4 ♘xe4 34 ♗xb6 ♘c3 35 a3! (both *35 a4 ♘xa4 36 bxa4 ♔f6*, and *35 ♗xa5 ♘xa2 36 ♗d2 ♔f6 37 ♔g2 ♔xf5 38 ♔xg3 ♔e4* lead to a draw) 35 ... ♘b1 (*35 ... ♔f6? 36 ♗d4+*, or *35 ... a4 36 bxa4 ♘xa4 37 ♗d4*) 36 a4 ♘d2 37 ♗xa5 ♘xb3 38 ♗c3, and White should win" (Boleslavsky).

30 g5 ♔f7
31 ♗xc5! bxc5 *(227)*

227



On the kingside Black has a fixed weakness – the pawn at g6, and on the queenside too not all is well. The white king is threatening to penetrate into the opponent's position via c4 or a4. Here are some possible variations, demonstrating Black's difficulties:

32 ♔f2 ♔e7 33 ♔e3 ♔d6 34 ♗d3 ♔c6 35 ♔d2 ♗d5 36 ♔c3 ♗f7 37 ♗c4 ♗e8 38 ♗g8 ♔b5 39 ♗e6 ♔b6 40 ♔c4 ♔c6 41 ♗d5+ ♔b6 42 a4 and wins.

Or 32 ♔f2 ♔e7 33 ♔e3 ♗d5 34 ♗d3 ♗f7 35 ♔d2 ♗e8 36 ♔c3 ♗f7 37 ♗b5!. Nothing is achieved by 37 ♗c4 ♗e8 38 ♗g8 ♗b5, when the black king is ready to defend the g6 pawn. But now Black is in zugzwang. On 37 ... ♔d6 White now wins by 38 ♗c4 ♗e8 38 ♗g8, while bishop moves fail to the advance of the white king via b2 and a3 to the a5 pawn (indicated by Boleslavsky).

32 ♔f2 ♗d7?!

Nevertheless Black had a draw, which was demonstrated after the game by Vaganian. He should have played 32 ... ♔e7 33 ♔e3 ♔d6 34 ♗d3 ♗f7 35 ♗b5 ♔e7 36 ♔d3 ♗d5! 37 ♔c3 ♗f3!! 38 ♔c4 ♔d6 39 ♗e8 ♗e2+ 40 ♔c3 ♗h5. The black bishop defends the g6 pawn, and if necessary it can drive the white king away from the c5 pawn by a check at e2. If the white king moves across to a4, Black keeps his king at a6 and b6. But Kapengut failed to find this plan, and went on to lose.

33 ♗d3 a4?

The decisive mistake. With correct defence, 33 ... ♗c6 or 33 ... ♔e7 would have led to a draw.

34 ♗c4+ ♔e7
35 bxa4

The possession of an outside passed

pawn, in addition to White's other positional pluses, makes the realisation of his advantage a straightforward matter.

35 ... ♗xa4 36 ♔e2 ♗e8 37 ♔d3 ♔d6 38 ♗b3 ♔c7 39 ♗d5 ♔d6 40 ♗b3 ♔c7 41 ♔c4 ♔b6

The sealed move. **Black resigned** without resuming. A possible variation: 42 ♔c3 ♔b5 43 ♗g8 ♔a5 44 ♔c4 ♔b6 45 a3 ♗b5+ 46 ♔b3 ♗e8 47 a4 etc.

We conclude this chapter with a game where Black was successful in combatting the Maroczy set-up in the endgame. For another example, with colours reversed, see the game **Timman-Hort**, annotated by Polugayevsky on p.142 of *Montreal 1979*.

Geller-Larsen
Monaco 1967
Sicilian Defence

1 ♘f3 c5 2 c4 g6 3 d4 cxd4 4 ♘xd4 ♗g7

"I allow the Maroczy variation . . . of which I am not especially afraid" (Larsen).

5 e4 ♘c6 6 ♗e3 d6 7 ♗e2 ♘h6

An idea of Simagin. Black pins his hopes on the undermining move ... f5.

8 0-0 0-0
9 ♕d2

9 ♘c3 looks more natural. In reply to 9 ... f5 there follows 10 exf5 gxf5 (no better is *10 ... ♘xd4 11 ♗xd4 ♗xd4 12 ♕xd4 ♘xf5 13 ♕d2 ♗d7 14 ♗f3 ♗c6 15 ♘d5*, with a great advantage to White, Tal-Kupreichik, Sochi 1970) 11 f4! ♗d7 (the immediate *11 ... ♕b6?!* leads after *12 ♘xf5 ♕xb2 13 ♘xh6+ ♗xh6 14 ♘d5* to the break-up of Black's position, Yermolinsky–Chepukaitis, Leningrad 1980) 12 ♕d2 (*12 h3 ♕b6* leads to wild complications, Kavalek-Larsen, Sousse 1967) 12 ... ♘g4 13 ♗xg4 fxg4 14 ♘d5! with advantage to White (Szabo-Larsen, Vinkovci 1970).

However, after 9 ♕d2, which radically prevents ... f5, it is also not at all easy for Black to gain counterplay.

9 ... ♘g4 10 ♗xg4 ♗xg4 11 ♘c3 ♕a5 12 ♖ac1 ♖fc8

Black begins preparing the other undermining move – ... b5.

13 b3 a6
14 ♖c2

Kasparov played more strongly against I.Ivanov (Daugavpils 1978): 14 ♘xc6 ♖xc6 (*14 ... bxc6 15 c5!* is worse) 15 ♗h6! (cf. Kasparov's *The Test of Time* p.4, Pergamon 1986).

14 ... b5!?
15 ♘d5

Geller declines the pawn sacrifice, since the consequences of capturing on b5 were difficult to evaluate: 15 cxb5 axb5 16 ♘dxb5 ♘b4 17 ♖b2 ♗d7 18 ♘d4 ♕a6 is unclear. ". . . but I would probably have played 15 ... ♗xd4 with a rather even game. Once Black has started his advance on the queenside, the absence of the king's bishop is not too grave a handicap because White does not get time to concentrate on a mating attack!" (Larsen).

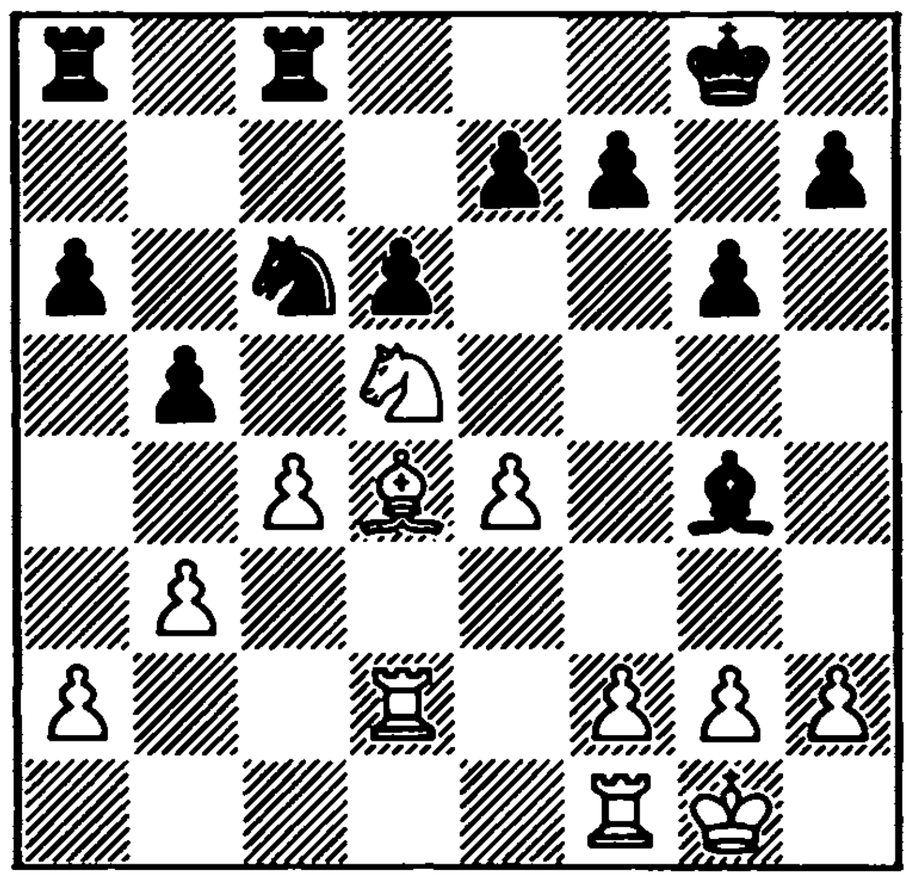
With the move in the game White forces the transition into an ending, which at first sight appears very attractive, but . . .

15 ... ♕xd2
16 ♖xd2 ♗xd4

Black is forced to exchange his dark-square bishop, otherwise loss of material cannot be avoided.

17 ♗xd4 *(228)*

228



17 ... ♖ab8!

Larsen is not concerned about the position of his rook at c8, which is open to possible attacks by the white knight, since White cannot extract any concrete gains from this. On 18 c5 Black was intending 18 ... ♗e6! 19 cxd6 ♗xd5 20 exd5 ♘xd4 21 ♖xd4 exd6, with the advantage in the rook ending.

18 ♖c1 ♔f8
19 ♗b2?!

Not the strongest move. As shown by Larsen, 19 ♗e3! was better, when the game would have probably ended in a draw after 19 ... bxc4 20 ♘b6 ♖d8 21 ♖xc4 ♘e5 22 ♖c7 ♘d7. But now Black can hope to take the initiative, especially since at this point Geller had only about half an hour left on his clock.

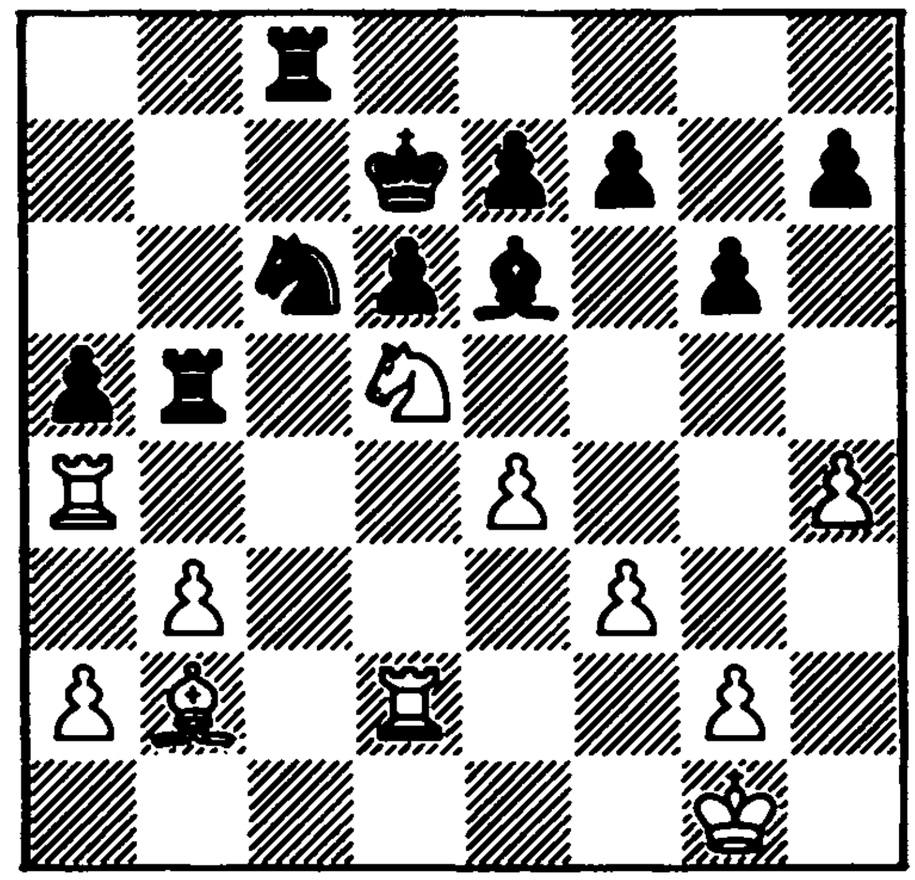
19 ... bxc4 20 ♖xc4 ♔e8 21 ♖dc2 ♔d7 22 f3 ♗e6 23 ♖d2 a5

Black gradually begins breaking up the opponent's position on the queenside.

24 h4 ♖b5
25 ♖a4

(diagram 229)

229



25 ... f6!

"A good move, and also very shrewd. In his hurry Geller did not see the point" (Larsen).

26 ♔h2?

As shown by the Danish grandmaster, the position demanded the more concrete move 26 ♗a3, although after 26 ... ♗f7 it is not very favourable for White to sacrifice a piece for three pawns with 27 ♘xf6+ exf6 28 ♖xd6+ and 29 ♖xf6.

26 ... ♗xd5!

With the pawn at f6 this exchange is very strong, since the black king has acquired a good shelter at f7 from checks by the white rook on the a-file.

27 ♖xd5 ♖xd5 28 exd5 ♘b4 29 ♖xa5

29 ♗a3 ♘d3! would not have changed things.

29 ... ♖c2
30 a3

After 30 ♗a3 ♘d3 31 b4 ♘f4 32 b5 ♘xd5 White cannot save the game.

30 ... ♖xb2

Solidly played. In Larsen's opinion, 30

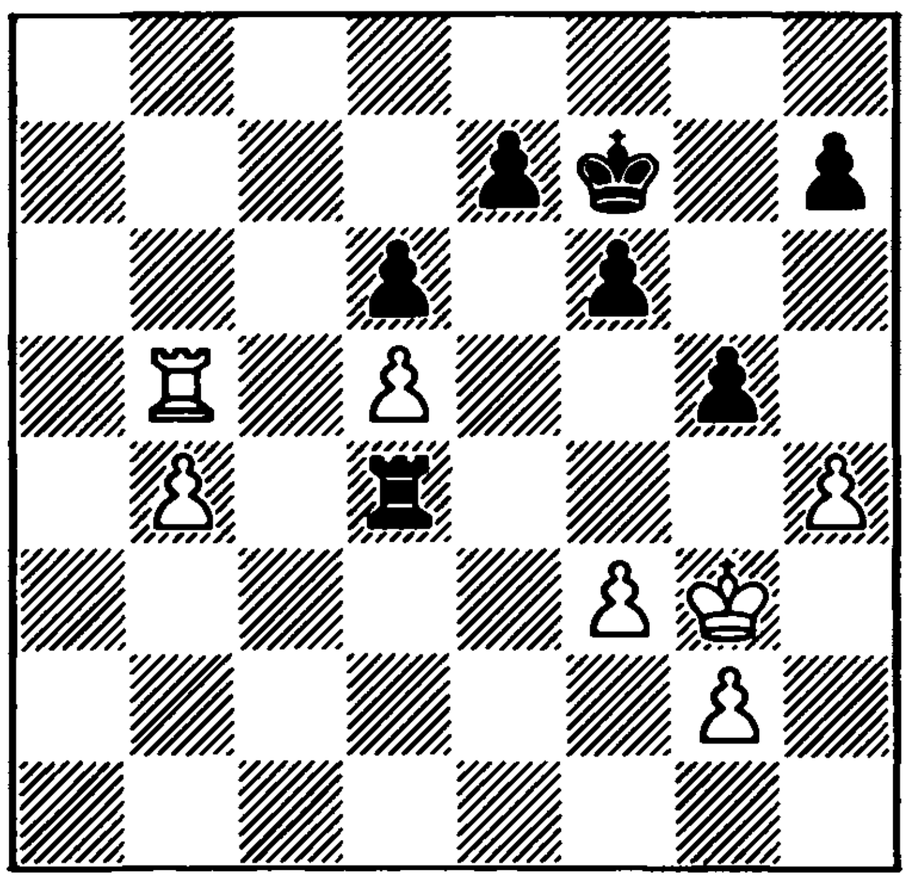
... ♘d3 31 ♗a1 ♘f4 32 ♔g3 g5 would also have won.

31 axb4 ♖xb3
32 ♖a7+

32 ♖b5?! was worse. Black would have replied 32 ... ♔c7, when the white rook has no moves.

32 ... ♔e8 33 ♖a8+ ♔f7 34 ♖b8 ♖d3 35 ♖b5 ♖d4 36 ♔g3 g5! *(230)*

230



37 hxg5

"If White should conceive the idea of a pawn sacrifice with 37 h5, Black has a choice between 37 ... ♖h4 and 37 ... f5 followed by ... ♔f6. But he can take the pawn safely enough: 37 ... ♖h4 38 ♖b8 ♖xh5 39 b5 ♖h4 40 b6 ♖b4 41 b7 h5, for instance 42 ♔f2 h4 43 g4 (else ... ♔*g7*, ... *f5* and ... *g4*) 43 ... ♖b2+ 44 ♔g1 ♔g7 45 ♔h1 h3 46 ♔g1 h2+ 47 ♔h1 ♔f7 with zugzwang; after the disappearance of the passed pawns Black wins easily" (Larsen).

After the exchange on g5 the black king acquires the important f6 square.

37 ... fxg5 38 ♔f2 ♖d2+ 39 ♔g3 h5 40 ♔h3 ♖d3 41 ♔g3 ♔f6 42 ♔f2 ♖d2+

The sealed move. Analysis showed that White's game was lost.

43 ♔g3 ♖d4 44 ♔h3 g4+ 45 fxg4 ♖xg4 46 ♖b8 ♖d4 47 ♖b5 ♖e4 48 ♖b8 ♖e5

The d5 pawn is lost.

49 ♖b5 e6 50 ♖b8 ♖xd5 51 b5 ♖d4 52 ♖h8

In the event of 52 b6 ♖b4 53 b7 ♔e5 the black king would have approached the b7 pawn via d5 and c6.

52 ... ♖b4 53 ♖h6+ ♔f7 54 ♖xh5 ♔g6 55 g4 d5 56 ♖e5 ♔f7! 57 ♔h4 ♖xb5

At last White's passed b-pawn has disappeared from the board, and Black easily realises his advantage.

58 ♖e1

58 g5 would have failed to 58 ... ♖b4+ 59 ♔h5 ♖e4! 60 ♖xe4 dxe4 61 ♔g4 e5! (indicated by Larsen).

58 ... d4! 59 ♖a1 ♔f6 60 ♖a8 ♖d5 61 ♔g3 d3 62 ♖a1 ♔e5 63 ♔f2 ♔d4 64 ♖a7 e5 65 g5 e4 66 ♖a4+ ♔e5 White resigns

4.3 ANDERSSON (HEDGEHOG) FORMATION

The moves 1 c4 c5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 g3 e6 4 ♘f3 b6 5 ♗g2 ♗b7 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♕xd4 (transpositions are possible) lead to a position that for a long time was considered safe for Black. As a clear-cut way to equality, theory suggested here 8 ... ♘c6 9 ♕f4 0-0. For example: 10 ♖d1 ♕b8. "This completely neutralises White's attempts to gain an opening advantage", wrote Bronstein, annotating the game Gligorić-Smyslov from the 1953 Zürich Candidates Tournament. After 11 ♕xb8 ♖axb8 12 ♗f4 ♖bc8 13 ♗d6 ♗xd6 14 ♖xd6 ♘e7! Black achieved a completely equal position, and then the incautious 15 ♘e5? cost White a pawn and the game after 15 ... ♗xg2 16 ♔xg2 ♘f5 17 ♖d2 d6.

In time, however, it transpired that this variation was only apparently harmless, and that the ending resulting after the exchange of queens was quite unpleasant for Black. Indeed, he has a backward pawn at d7, and his pieces are passively placed, which cannot be said about the opponent's. Moreover, White has several ways to gain a stable advantage. Smyslov himself, playing White against Benko (Szolnok 1975) did not hurry with the occupation of d6, and after 11 ♕xb8 ♖axb8 12 ♗f4 ♖bc8 13 e4! ♖fd8 14 e5 ♘e8 15 ♘b5 ♗a8 16 b3 he firmly seized the initiative.

In roughly the mid-1970s, when no one was wishing any longer to play the above ending, grandmasters Andersson and Ljubojević introduced a system of play, a characteristic feature of which was the placing of Black's pawns at a6, b6, d6, e6, f7, g7 and h7. This had also been played earlier, and the placing of the pawns on the sixth rank had been called simply the 'hedgehog', but this method had not enjoyed any great popularity. It was thought that here White could easily seize a great amount of space, and that Black could merely 'potter about' on the back ranks, grasping at chance opportunities.

The 'hedgehog' became a harmonious system only after several victories by Andersson. It turned out that, by deploying his pieces on the back two ranks, Black can quickly establish coordination between the flanks, all the time threatening to undermine the opponent's pawn outposts at c4 and e4 by ... b5 or ... d5, which normally leads to the seizure of the initiative. For White it is not easy to maintain his greater amount of space; a deep study of typical 'hedgehog' positions showed that White's apparently 'fine' set-up by no means guarantees him an advantage. Sometimes Andersson would outplay his opponents without moving any of his pieces further than the sixth rank – this resembled play from the baseline in tennis.

Here is an excellent example of Andersson's play at that time, when he alone was successfully upholding the 'hedgehog': 1 c4 c5 2 ♘c3 ♘f6 3 g3 e6 4 ♘f3 b6 5 ♗g2 ♗b7 6 0-0 a6!? 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♕xd4 d6 9 b3 ♘bd7 10 e4 ♗e7 11 ♗a3 ♕b8! 12 ♖ad1 ♘c5 13 ♖fe1?! 0-0 14 e5 dxe5 15 ♕xe5 ♕c8! 16 ♗b2 ♗c6 17 ♕f4 ♖a7! 18 ♘e5 ♗xg2 19 ♔xg2 ♘cd7! 20 ♘f3 ♖e8 21 ♔g1 b5! 22 cxb5 axb5 23 b4? ♕a6, and somehow imperceptibly it transpired that Black had a virtually decisive advantage (Portisch-Andersson, Milan 1975).

Gradually, however, White more often began to find the key to Black's 'impregnable' set-up. A curious factor emerged: Black's active defensive set-up ensures him good play in the middlegame, but in the endgame it loses the greater part of its attraction. Why does this happen? After all, in similar situations the 'Scheveningen endgame' is quite favourable for Black. The point is that in the Sicilian Defence White's forces are usually aimed for an attack on the opponent's king, and his pawns have been advanced – in general, his is by no means an 'endgame' set-up, and often he cannot manage to regroup.

In the Andersson Formation White's pieces are usually deployed such that they can immediately switch to working on the pawn weakness at a6, b6 and d6; sometimes he is able to become established at the weak square c6. The pressure on the central weakness at d6 often leads to the break-up of the 'hedgehog' after ... d5 or ... e5, with rather unpleasant consequences. Thus the Andersson Variation is not especially suitable for endgame play, and it is this that explains why the overwhelming majority of endings usually favour White. In the present chapter the authors have

endeavoured to emphasise the methods of breaking up the 'hedgehog' structure: here one finds the plan of rapid pressure on the d6 pawn (**Larsen-Gheorghiu** and **Andersson-Gheorghiu**), the plan with e4-e5, leading to a pawn majority for White on the queenside (**Ribli-Ambroz**), and the plan of a broad offensive in the centre and on the kingside (**Karpov-Gheorghiu**). The chapter is concluded by a game (**Pfleger-Karpov**) in which Black was able to demonstrate his trumps in the endgame.

Larsen-Gheorghiu
Las Palmas 1976
English Opening

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 g3 b6 4 ♗g2 ♗b7 5 0-0 c5 6 c4 cxd4 7 ♕xd4 d6 8 ♘c3 a6 9 ♖d1

In the initial years when the Andersson Variation was employed, it seemed that the move order chosen by Black was of no great importance. Larsen was the first to dispel this illusion. With his ninth move he has created an obvious threat to the central black pawn, and the opponent only needed to weaken his vigilance for an instant, for him to be 'punished'.

9 ... ♘bd7?
10 ♘g5!

Today the 'corresponding moves' are well known: on 9 ♖d1 – ♗e7!, and on 9 b3 – ♘bd7!, but for this it was necessary to anticipate White's threats – in the first case ♘g5-e4, and in the second ♗a3. Curiously, it was Gheorghiu who aided the establishment of this correspondence, by both times, against Larsen and Andersson, not 'guessing' the correct move.

10 ... ♗xg2
11 ♔xg2 ♕c7

Gheorghiu tries to parry the threat of ♘ge4 and simultaneously bring his queen's rook into play, but he overlooks White's strong 15th move. Good or bad, he should have moved an already developed piece: 11 ... ♘c5 would have radically prevented White's main threat.

12 ♘ge4 ♘xe4 13 ♘xe4 ♘e5 14 b3 ♖d8 15 ♗e3!

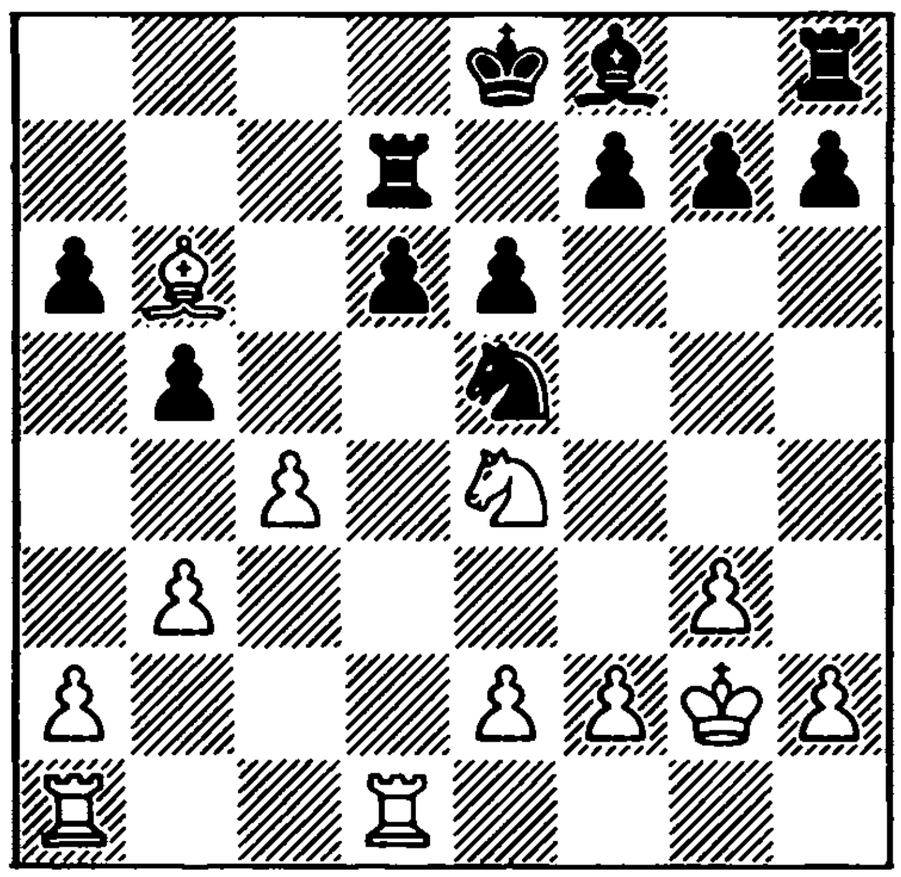
This attack on the second weakness breaks up Black's position. His next few moves are forced.

15 ... b5
16 ♕b6!

Not for a moment does Larsen relax the onslaught. Taking the play into an endgame is the simplest way of demonstrating the opponent's helplessness.

16 ... ♕xb6
17 ♗xb6 ♖d7 *(231)*

231



The resulting ending is hopeless for Black. His queenside is very weak, and the opponent's lead in development is enormous. The game is quickly decided.

18 cxb5 axb5 19 ♖ac1 f6 20 ♖c8+ ♔f7 21 f4

There is this move too!

21 ... ♘g4

Or 21 ... ♘g6 22 ♘c5.

22 h3 d5

This leads to loss of material, but there is no way out. On 22 ... ♘h6 there would have followed 23 ♘c5.

23 hxg4 ♖b7 24 ♖xf8+ ♔xf8 25 ♗c5+ ♔g8 26 ♘d6 ♖b8 27 f5 exf5 28 gxf5 h6 29 ♗a7 ♖d8 30 ♘xb5 ♔h7 31 a4 ♖he8 32 ♘d4 ♖e4 33 a5 Black resigns

Larsen exploited Black's opening mistakes with enormous power.

Andersson-Gheorghiu
Moscow 1982
English Opening

1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 g3 b6 4 ♗g2 ♗b7 5 0-0 e6 6 ♘c3 a6

Gheorghiu was probably interested in finding out 'at first hand' how to obtain an advantage with White in the Andersson Variation. Jumping ahead, we can say that he received a fully exhaustive reply.

7 b3!

A strong and subtle move. When preparing for the game, Gheorghiu must have noticed that from approximately 1980 Andersson had not played 6 ... a6, but had given preference to 6 ... ♗e7 or 6 ... ♘c6. The idea of White's seemingly strange move is that now it is not easy for Black to make a choice. How should he play? After 7 ... ♗e7 Andersson quickly 'pressed' on the d6 pawn, doing without ♖d1 and not allowing Black to develop his queen's knight at d7.

In the event of 7 ... d6 White could have transposed to a well known set-up from the Reti Opening: ♗b2, e2-e3, ♕e2, ♖fd1, ♖ac1 and d2-d4, where the advance of the black pawn to d5 loses a tempo, and also the move ... a6 is not always necessary. However, White's plan does not hold any particular dangers for Black. After 7 ... d6 8 ♗b2 ♗e7 9 e3 0-0 10 d4 ♘bd7 Black achieves an acceptable position, for example: 11 ♕e2 ♘e4! with equality (Smyslov-Kasparov, Moscow 1981), or 11 ♖c1 b5! with the initiative for Black (Speelman-Kasparov, Graz 1981).

7 ... ♗e7?! 8 d4! cxd4 9 ♕xd4 d6 10 ♗a3!

In the event of 10 ♖d1?!, by 10 ... ♘bd7 Black would have gained the opportunity to defend his d6 pawn: 11 ♗a3 ♘c5! But now the threat of ♖d1 forces Black to advance ... d5, after which the position is opened up, and Black's lack of development together with the slight weakness of his queenside begin to cause him great discomfort.

10 ... ♘c6 11 ♕f4 d5 12 ♗xe7 ♘xe7 13 ♖fd1 ♕b8 14 ♕xb8 ♖xb8 *(232)*

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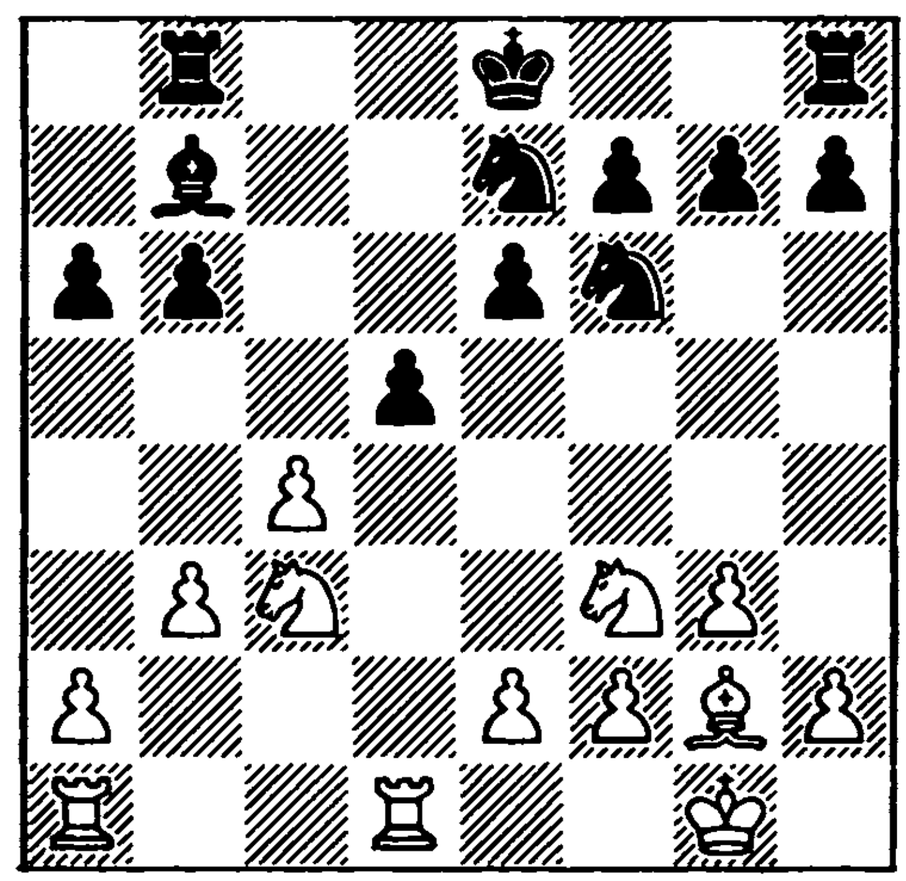

15 cxd5 ♘fxd5
16 ♘xd5 ♗xd5

Black must choose his moves very carefully. As shown by Kholmov, in the event of 16 ... ♘xd5 he does not have to fear the active 17 ♘e5 ♔e7! 18 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 19 e4 ♗xe4 20 ♖d7+ ♔f6 21 f4!

♖b7! 22 ♖ad1 ♖hb8 23 ♘xf7 ♗d5 24 ♘e5 g5, so much as the less committing 17 ♖ac1! 0-0 18 ♘e5! ♖fd8 19 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 (*19 ... ♖xd5 20 ♘d7*) 20 ♖c7 ♖bc8 (*20 ... f6 21 ♘d7!*) 21 ♖xf7 ♗xb3 22 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 23 axb3 ♖d5 24 ♖b7 ♖xe5 25 ♖xb6, with a won rook ending.

The given examples clearly demonstrate that, despite the apparent simplicity, it is not easy for Black to defend. And the only player capable of defending this position against such an outstanding endgame expert as Andersson would probably be Andersson himself.

17 ♖ac1 ♖b7 18 ♘e5 ♗xg2 19 ♔xg2 0-0

19 ... f6 was not possible on account of 20 ♘c6.

20 ♖d6 h6
21 e4 ♖e8?!

A loss of time. 21 ... ♖a8 was stronger, aiming for counterplay on the queenside.

22 ♔f3 ♖a8

Better late than never.

23 ♔e3 a5 24 ♖cd1! b5 25 ♖d8+ ♖xd8 26 ♖xd8+ ♔h7 27 ♘xf7 ♘c6 28 ♖c8

White has won a pawn, and the outcome of the game is decided.

28 ... ♘b4 29 ♖h8+ ♔g6 30 ♘e5+ ♔f6 31 f4 ♔e7

The a2 pawn could not be taken on account of 32 ♖f8+.

32 ♖g8 ♔d6 33 ♖d8+ ♔e7 34 ♖a8 ♘xa2 35 ♖xa5 ♘c3 36 ♔d3 b4 37 ♖a6 ♘b5 38 ♘c6+ ♔d7 39 ♘d4! ♘xd4 40 ♔xd4 ♔e7 41 g4

The rook ending with the isolated e6 pawn is completely hopeless for Black. **Gheorghiu resigned** without resuming.

Ribli-Ambroz
Baile Herculane 1982
English Opening

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 b6 3 ♘c3 c5 4 g3 ♗b7 5 ♗g2 e6 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♕xd4 d6 9 ♖d1

9 e4 is more dangerous. If Black simple-mindedly castles, then after 9 ... 0-0 10 ♖d1 ♘bd7 11 b3 a6 12 ♗a3 e5 (*12 ... ♘c5 13 e5!*) the 'hedgehog' is broken up, and White gains a clear advantage: 13 ♕e3 ♕b8 14 ♘e1 ♖c8 15 ♘c2 ♘c5 16 ♗b2 a5 17 ♘a3! (Gavrikov-Tseshkovsky, Frunze 1981). 9 ... a6! is correct, transposing into the present game.

9 ... a6 10 b3 ♘bd7 11 e4 ♕c7

An important moment. Black has to select a defence against the threat of 12 ♗a3 ♘c5 13 e5. Here 11 ... ♕b8 is more often played, when 13 e5 involves a pawn sacrifice. However, its acceptance is very risky: after 12 ♗a3 ♘c5 13 e5 ♗xf3 14 ♗xf3 dxe5 15 ♗c6+ ♔f8 16 ♕e3 ♖a7 17 b4 ♘cd7 18 c5! White has a strong attack (Mayorov-Andrianov, Yurmala 1983). In addition, 11 ... ♕b8 enables Black to avoid the exchange of queens: 12 ♗a3 ♘c5 13 e5 dxe5 14 ♕xe5 ♕a7, but whether he should do this is a debatable question.

12 ♗a3 ♘c5
13 e5

With this move Ribli discloses his plan. By taking play into an ending, he hopes to exploit a number of positional pluses: queenside pawn majority, occupation of the d-file, and the slight vulnerability of Black's queenside, which is especially emphasised by the inevitable exchange of light-square bishops (the c6 square!).

Black cannot avoid the exchange of queens; as shown by Donchenko, after 13

... dxe5 14 ♕xe5 ♕c8 15 ♘a4! he stands badly. For example: 15 ... ♘fd7 16 ♕xg7 ♗f6 17 ♕h6 ♗xa1 18 ♘xc5! (Donchenko-Korsunsky, Baku 1976), or 15 ... ♘cd7 16 ♕b2 ♗xa3 17 ♕xa3 b5 18 cxb5 axb5 19 ♘d4!!, and the weakness of the a3-f8 diagonal is ruinous for Black (Korsunsky-Morgulev, Baku 1977).

13 ... dxe5
14 ♕xe5 ♖c8

Annotating this game in *Informator*, Kovačević attaches a question mark to this move, which he evidently considers the primary cause of Black's defeat. It seems to us, however, that this evaluation is too severe and that Black's mistake was made later. It should be mentioned that the simple 14 ... ♕xe5 15 ♘xe5 ♗xg2 16 ♔xg2 ♖c8 was also possible. After 17 ♗xc5 ♖xc5 18 f4 ♖c7 19 ♖d3 0-0 20 ♖ad1 ♖fc8 Black gradually equalised in Krnić-Stoica (Athens 1981), although it is possible that White's play can be improved.

15 ♕xc7 ♖xc7 *(233)*

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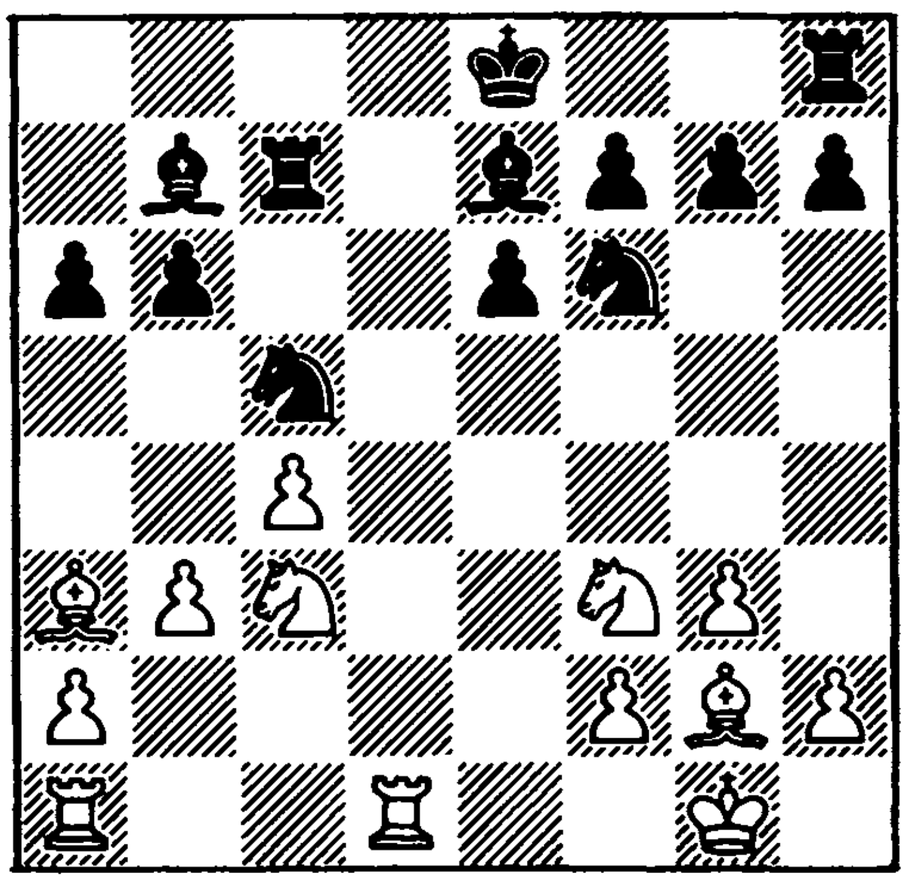

White has a slight advantage thanks to his better development and control of the d-file. It is interesting to follow how Ribli strengthens his position.

16 ♗c1!

The white bishop has no future at a3. The Hungarian grandmaster finds an excellent post for it at f4.

16 ... ♘fe4

Black hopes gradually to equalise by simplification.

17 ♗f4 ♖c8 18 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 19 ♗d6! ♗f6

The exchange of dark-square bishops would obviously have favoured White.

20 ♘e5!

Ribli has no objection to simplification, as a result of which his positional advantage becomes increasingly clear.

20 ... ♗xg2
21 ♔xg2 ♗xe5?

After this exchange White's advantage increases considerably. Black should first have played 21 ... ♘e4, in order after 22 f4 to exchange on e5 and try to support his knight in the centre with ... f5.

22 ♗xe5 f6
23 ♗d6 ♖c6

The exchange on c5 followed by ♖d6 was threatened.

24 ♖d4 e5 25 ♖d5 ♘e6 26 f4!

When the stronger side has a bishop against a knight, play with a pawn minority is often fully justified. In the given instance White simply needs to deprive the black knight of its outpost at d4.

26 ... exf4 27 gxf4 g6 28 ♔f3 ♔f7 29 ♗a3 ♘c5 30 ♗xc5! *(234)*

Immediately after the exchange of queens there were many pieces on the board, and White had a slight positional advantage. With the exchange of each pair of minor pieces White's advantage has all the time

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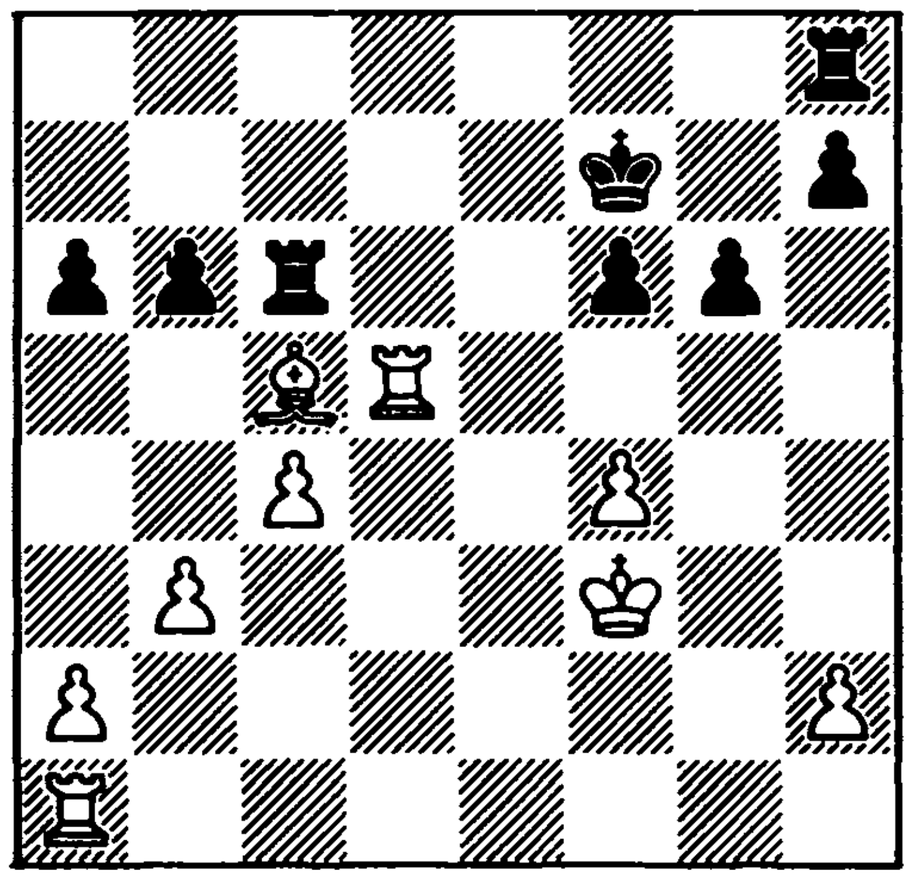

grown, and after the disappearance of the remaining bishop and knight his advantage has become decisive. The game illustrates well that, to gain a draw against a strong opponent, it is quite insufficient to go into an ending and exchange all the pieces in turn. On the other hand, it also shows that, in order to play for a win, it is by no means obligatory to avoid exchanges and artificially complicate the play. This was well expressed in his time by Alekhine, annotating his game with Znosko-Borovsky from the tournament at Birmingham in 1926:

"Every chess player, in my opinion, should exploit similar opportunities and try to solve the problem of winning without 'fear' of simplification. Playing for complications is an extreme measure, to which a player should resort only when he is unable to find a clear and logical plan."

30 ... ♖xc5

Despite the material equality, the double-rook ending is lost for Black in view of the dominating position of the white rooks. Little would have been changed by 30 ... bxc5 31 ♖d7+ ♔e6 32 ♖ad1.

31 ♖d7+ ♔e6 32 ♖ad1 ♖c6 33 ♖b7 h5

33 ... g5 34 fxg5 fxg5 35 ♔g4 was no better.

34 h4 ♖g8
35 ♖e1+ ♔d6

35 ... ♔f5 would have lost to 36 ♖f7 ♖e6 37 ♖xe6 ♔xe6 38 ♖b7.

36 a3!

Good technique, blocking the enemy king's path via d6 and c5 to b4.

36 ... ♖gc8
37 ♖g1 ♖8c7

37 ... ♖g8 is met by the decisive 38 f5 g5 39 ♖e1.

38 ♖b8

It would have been better to win the pawn immediately by 38 ♖xc7 ♔xc7 39 ♖xg6, and on 39 ... b5 play 40 cxb5 axb5 41 ♔e4.

38 ... ♖c8?!

38 ... ♖g7 came into consideration, since 39 f5 g5 40 ♖e1 is no longer so strong for White.

39 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 40 ♖xg6 ♔e6 41 ♖h6

More accurate than 41 ♔e4.

41 ... b5 42 ♖xh5 bxc4 43 bxc4 ♖xc4 44 ♖a5 ♖c3+

Passive defence would not have changed anything: White has available a standard winning plan. As shown by Kovačević, on 44 ... ♖c6 the following variation is possible: 45 ♔g4 ♔f7 46 ♔h5 ♔g7 47 f5 ♖b6 48 a4 ♖c6 49 ♖d5 ♖c7 50 ♖d6 ♖a7 51 a5 ♔f7 52 ♔h6 ♔e7 53 ♖e6+ ♔f7 54 ♖b6, and Black is in zugzwang.

45 ♔g4 f5+ 46 ♔h5 ♖g3 47 ♖xa6+ ♔f7 48 ♔h6 ♖g4 49 h5 ♖xf4 50 ♔g5 ♖f1 51 a4 ♔e7 52 h6 ♖g1+ 53 ♔xf5 ♖f1+ 54 ♔g6 ♖g1+ 55 ♔h7 Black resigns

Karpov-Gheorghiu
Moscow 1977
English Opening

1 c4 c5 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 ♘c3 e6 4 g3 b6 5 ♗g2 ♗b7 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 d4 cxd4 8 ♕xd4 d6 9 b3 0-0 10 ♖d1

10 ♗a3?! is unconvincing in view of 10 ... ♘a6! (Miles-Adorjan, Riga Interzonal 1979).

10 ... ♘bd7

10 ... a6?! would now have been very strongly met by 11 ♗a3!.

11 ♗b2 a6
12 ♕e3

For those times – a new plan. By exchanging the light-square bishops on the next move, Karpov 'probes' the weak c6 square.

12 ... ♕b8?!

12 ... ♕c7 was stronger, with the idea after 13 ♘d4 ♗xg2 14 ♔xg2 ♖ab8 of preparing ... b5.

13 ♘d4 ♗xg2 14 ♔xg2 ♕b7+ 15 ♕f3!

Karpov reveals his plan. He takes play into an ending, where the better placing of his pieces and pawns ensures him an enduring initiative, without any counterplay by Black. The exchange of queens is practically forced.

15 ... ♕xf3+
16 ♘xf3

(diagram 235)

16 ... ♖fc8 17 ♘d4 ♖ab8 18 ♖ac1 h6 19 e4 ♘e8?!

A not altogether successful manoeuvre. Black prepares to play his bishop to the long diagonal, but the knight at e8 merely

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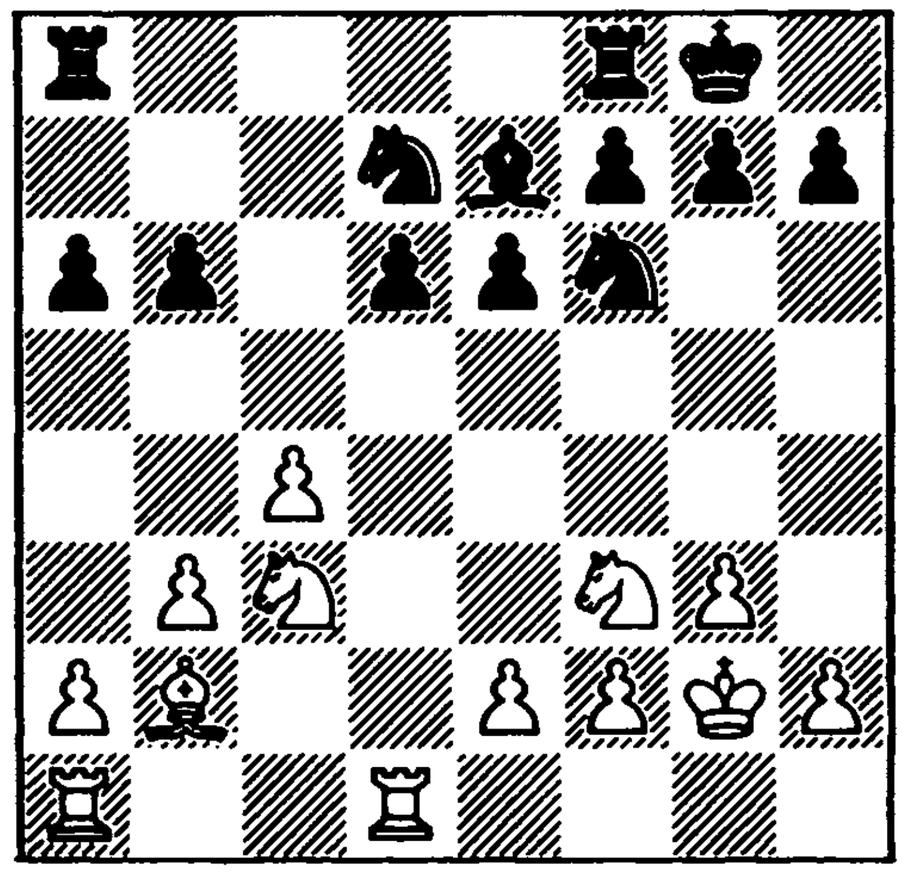

carries out defensive functions, and does not participate in creating counterplay against White's set-up. Gulko, annotating this game in the magazine *Shakhmaty v SSSR*, recommended here the manoeuvre ... ♘d7-e5-c6, in order to exchange the white knight at d4 and assist the advance ... b5. In the next game we will see that the knight move to c6 gives Black good play – true, in a much more favourable situation.

20 f4 ♗f6
21 ♔f3 ♖b7?!

Again a slight inaccuracy. As shown by Gulko, it would have been stronger to bring the king to e7, exploiting the fact that 22 e5 (after *21 ... ♔f8*) fails to 22 ... dxe5 23 ♘xe6+ ♔e7!.

22 ♗a3! ♖bc7
23 ♘ce2!

In the art of manoeuvring it is difficult to compete with Karpov. If a player of even master strength were to play through this game without any commentary, he would be unlikely to detect where Black went wrong.

23 ... ♘c5 24 ♖d2 g6 25 ♘c2!

All White's minor pieces, as if by order,

have concertedly moved off the long diagonal, artificially putting the opponent's bishop 'out of play'.

25 ... ♗g7

25 ... b5 would merely have created additional difficulties for Black after 26 ♘e3.

26 ♘e3 f5

In this way Black temporarily prevents g3-g4, but not for long.

27 exf5 gxf5 28 h3! h5 29 ♖g1 ♖f7 30 g4! hxg4+ 31 hxg4 fxg4+ 32 ♖xg4 ♔f8 33 ♘g3 *(236)*

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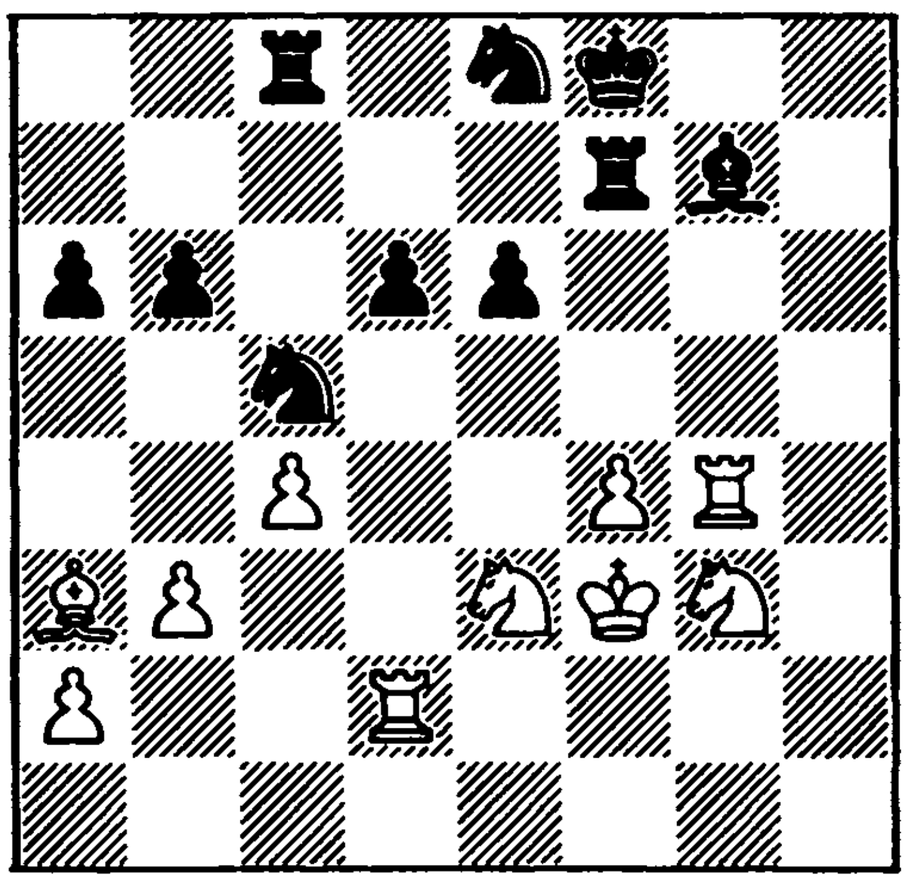

33 ... a5?

The decisive mistake; the Rumanian grandmaster fails to anticipate Karpov's plan. The passive move of the queenside pawn allows White to carry out an energetic attack on the opponent's central pawns. As shown by Gulko, 33 ... ♔e7 should have been played, to answer 34 ♖g6 with 34 ... ♖f6, and 34 f5 with 34 ... ♗h6.

34 ♖g6! ♔e7

Here too 34 ... ♖f6 was comparatively best, although after 35 ♖xf6+ Black cannot recapture with the knight since it leaves the d6 pawn undefended, and after 35 ... ♗xf6 White retains a great advantage by 36 f5.

35 f5!

Black's position collapses.

35 ... ♖f6 36 ♖xf6 ♘xf6 37 ♖e2! ♖f8

37 ... e5 38 ♗xc5 followed by 39 ♘e4 is also hopeless.

38 ♗xc5 bxc5 39 fxe6 ♔xe6 40 ♘ef5+ Black resigns

Pfleger-Karpov
Montilla 1976
English Opening

1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 e6 3 ♘f3 c5 4 g3 b6 5 ♗g2 ♗b7 6 0-0 a6 7 b3 d6! 8 ♗b2 ♗e7 9 d4 cxd4 10 ♘xd4

In playing this way, White as though demonstrates his peaceable intentions. Indeed, it is not easy for Black to complicate the play, but equally it is still a long way to a draw . . . Of course, the play is more interesting after 10 ♕xd4.

10 ... ♗xg2 11 ♔xg2 0-0 12 ♕d3

Pfleger's plan is clear: after the exchange of light-square bishops to occupy the h1-a8 diagonal, which Black can win back only by the exchange of queens. It was difficult to imagine that in the resulting ending Karpov would be able to play for a win! We should mention that it is already too late to fight for an advantage: for example, after 12 e4 ♕c7 13 ♕e2 ♘bd7 14 ♖fd1 ♖fe8 15 ♘f3 ♖ac8 Black has a good game (Taimanov-Ribli, Leningrad 1977).

12 ... ♕c7
13 ♕f3

Continuing to 'press' for a draw.

13 ... ♖a7! 14 ♖fd1 ♖c8 15 ♖ac1 ♕b7

16 ♕xb7 ♖xb7 *(237)*

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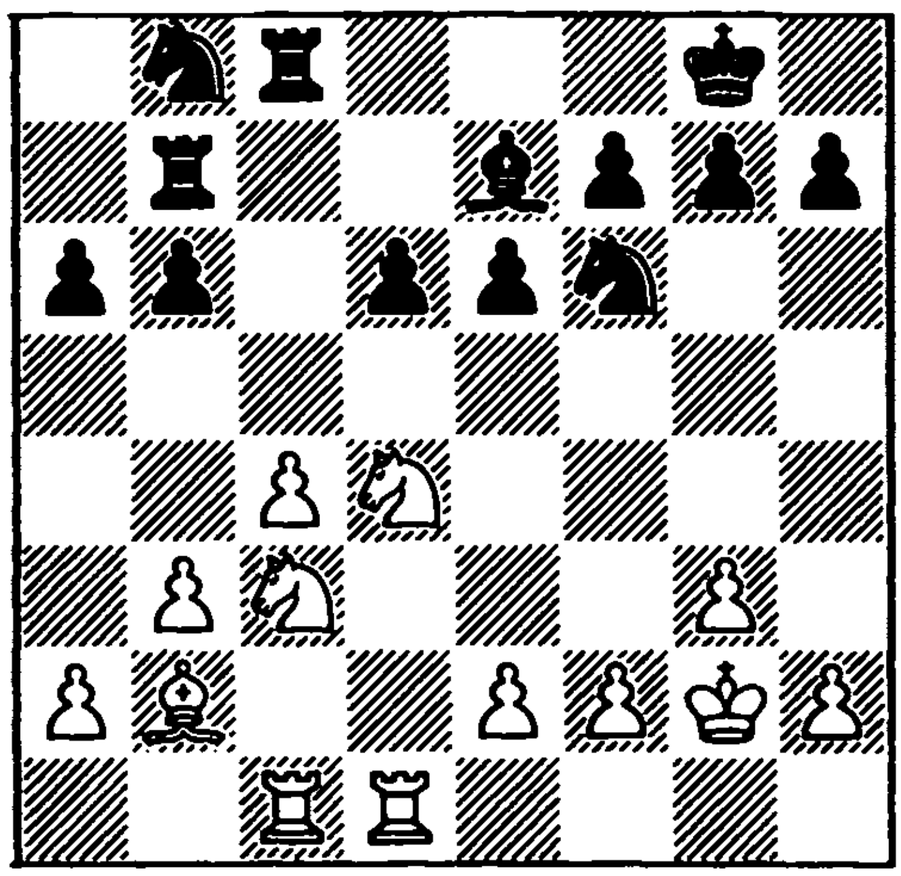

The evaluation of this position is surprising – White stands slightly worse. The point is that he can prevent the freeing advance ... b5 only by a2-a4, but then the black knight will occupy an ideal post at c5.

17 f3 ♘c6 18 ♗a3 ♘a7! 19 ♘c2 d5!

Black gets rid of his weak pawn on the d-file and completely seizes the initiative.

20 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 21 ♘e3 ♖ec7 22 ♘a4 ♖c6!

Karpov is attentive to the opponent's counterplay. The careless 22 ... b5? would have handed White the initiative after 23 ♘b6! ♖b8 24 cxd5! ♖xc1 25 ♖xc1 ♖xb6 26 ♖c7 (indicated by Byrne and Mednis in *Informator*).

23 ♖b1 dxc4 24 bxc4 b5 25 cxb5 ♘xb5 *(238)*

The position has clarified. Black has a slight but persistent advantage, thanks to the better placing of his pieces. Objectively White's position is defensible, but to defend it against an opponent, who is of superior class and is persistently seeking ways to win, is a difficult and thankless task.

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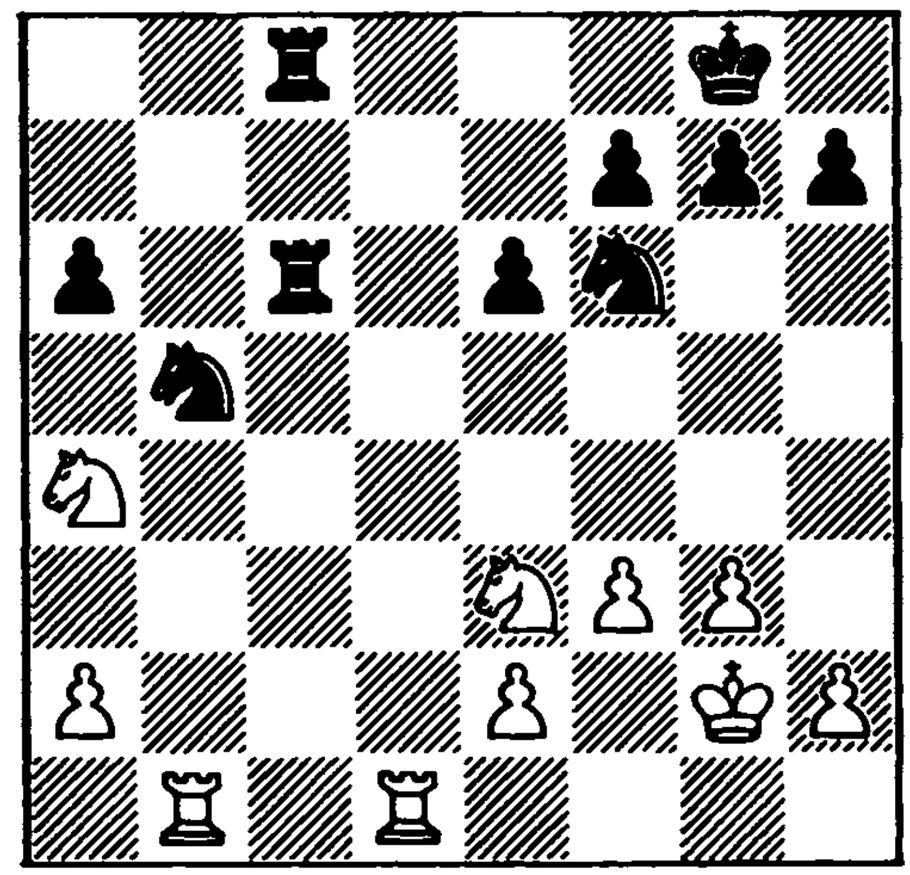


26 ♔f2 g5!

A typical endgame procedure, seizing space on the kingside.

27 ♖b4 ♔g7 28 h4 h6 29 ♖h1 ♖8c7 30 hxg5 hxg5 31 ♖a1 ♖d6 32 ♘b2 ♘d5!

Karpov boldly goes in for further simplification, for the sake of seizing space.

33 ♘xd5 ♖xd5 34 ♖c4 ♖xc4 35 ♘xc4 ♘c3 36 ♔e1 ♖d4

Black's rook and knight dominate in the centre, but White's resistance has not yet been broken. There is too little material on the board, and for the moment the weakness of the white a-pawn is quite tolerable.

37 ♘e3 ♖a4 38 a3 ♘b5 39 ♘c2 g4!

After trying the opponent's forces to the defence of the a3 pawn on the queenside, Karpov does not forget about the opposite side of the board.

40 fxg4

After this White's e2 and g3 pawns become isolated, but one can understand the German player. It is difficult for White to maintain the tension over the entire board. He needs somehow to clarify

the position.

40 ... ♖xg4 41 ♔f2 f5 42 ♔f3 ♔f6 43 ♖d1 ♖c4 44 ♘e3 ♖a4 45 ♘c2 e5 46 ♔f2 ♔e6 47 ♖d3 ♖c4 48 ♘e3 ♖c3 49 g4?

Up till now Pfleger has successfully solved the problems posed by his formidable opponent, but White's last move is a positional mistake. In knight endings, space and the activity of the pieces play a decisive role. White should not have allowed Black's central pawn pair onto the fourth rank. He should have played 49 a4! ♖xd3 50 exd3, with a probable draw.

49 ... f4 50 ♖xc3 ♘xc3 51 ♘c2 e4 52 a4?

Confusion. In a difficult position White simply places a pawn en prise, after which the outcome is clear.

52 ... ♘xa4 53 e3 f3 54 ♘d4+ ♔e5 55 ♘c6+ White resigns

55 ... ♔f6 56 ♘b4 ♘c5 does not offer any hope.

4.4 TRANSFORMATION OF THE 'ISOLANI'

The problem of the isolated d-pawn has not been solved to this day. Hundreds of articles have been written, many thousands of games played, and yet the question "strength or weakness?", which to Nimzowitsch appeared to have been settled, has still not been decided. There is no straightforward answer to it. One can always find players who, for the sake of opening lines and diagonals, are ready to weaken the central pawn and the surrounding squares. But equally, one always finds others who are ready to 'endure' the opponent's initiative, in order in the endgame to win the weak pawn, and with it the game.

Everything that has been said about the strength and weakness of the isolated pawn relates, of course, to the middlegame. In the endgame there is no argument: the 'isolani' is almost always a burden, a weakness, condemning its possessor to a gruelling and cheerless defence.

There is no shortage of examples where the weakness of the isolated central pawn is exploited, and in the present chapter only one ending is devoted to the 'isolani' proper. In the classic game **Flohr–Capablanca** (Moscow 1935), the third World Champion in the history of chess showed that the ending with light-square bishop against knight is unpleasant for the weaker side, but defensible with accurate play (cf. p.110 of Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*). Things may be much worse for the possessor of the isolated pawn in a bishop ending, which is emphasised by the ending **Averbakh-Matanović**, Belgrade 1961 (cf. p.104 of Averbakh's *Comprehensive Chess Endings Vol.1*, Pergamon 1983) and the game **Liptay-Portisch**, which opens the chapter.

However, the main content of this chapter is an analysis of the endings with an 'isolani' that has changed its form, by moving as a result of exchange to the c- or e-file, by being blocked by an enemy pawn (mutually isolated pawns), or by altogether disappearing from the board. In each concrete instance the typical ways of playing the endings are considered, but a general feature of all such endings is a tendency, first formulated by Nimzowitsch:

"What matter if the isolated pawn has vanished? It still has its say; indeed its shadow controls the whole game, and the pieces – its own as well as the opponent's – gather round it and seek to attack or to protect it, just as if it were still in existence." And later: ". . . the isolated queen's pawn is not only a pawn weakness, but also a

weakness of *squares*" (Nimzowitsch's italics).

Liptay-Portisch
Hungarian Championship
Budapest 1965
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 e3 ♗b7 5 ♗d3 c5

A sharp continuation. Botvinnik used to prefer 5 ... d5 6 0-0 ♗d6, with which he won a well-known game against Filip at the 1962 Varna Olympiad: 7 b3 0-0 8 ♗b2 ♘bd7 9 ♘e5?! c5! 10 ♕e2 ♕c7! 11 f4 ♘e4 12 ♘c3 ♘df6, and Black's position was already the more pleasant. Botvinnik's plan is also popular at the present time. Here is a typical example: 9 ♘c3 a6 10 ♕e2 ♘e4 11 ♖ac1 f5 12 ♗b1 ♖f6! with an attack for Black (Spassky-Miles, Bugojno 1984).

6 0-0 ♗e7
7 ♘c3

The alternative is 7 b3, when White keeps the option of developing his knight at d2.

7 ... cxd4!

7 ... d5? is premature in view of 8 cxd5! exd5 9 ♗b5+!, when to avoid the worst Black must give up the right to castle – 9 ... ♔f8 (Kotov-Botvinnik, 13th USSR Championship, Moscow 1944), since 9 ... ♗c6 10 ♕a4! is even more unpleasant (Petrosian-Keres, 19th USSR Championship, Moscow 1951).

8 exd4 d5
9 cxd5

9 b3 leads to a more tense situation, although here too Black has a strong reply – 9 ... ♘e4, securing him an equal game (Szabo-Unzicker, Göteborg Interzonal 1955).

9 ... ♘xd5
10 ♗b5+

Other continuations are also not dangerous for Black, for example: 10 ♘e5 0-0 11 ♕f3 ♘d7 12 ♘xd5 ♗xd5 13 ♕h3 f5 (Averbakh-Keres, 29th USSR Championship, Baku 1961), or 10 ♕e2 ♘c6 11 ♖d1 0-0 12 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 13 ♗e4 ♕h5 (Taimanov-O'Kelly, Havana 1967).

10 ... ♗c6
11 ♗xc6+

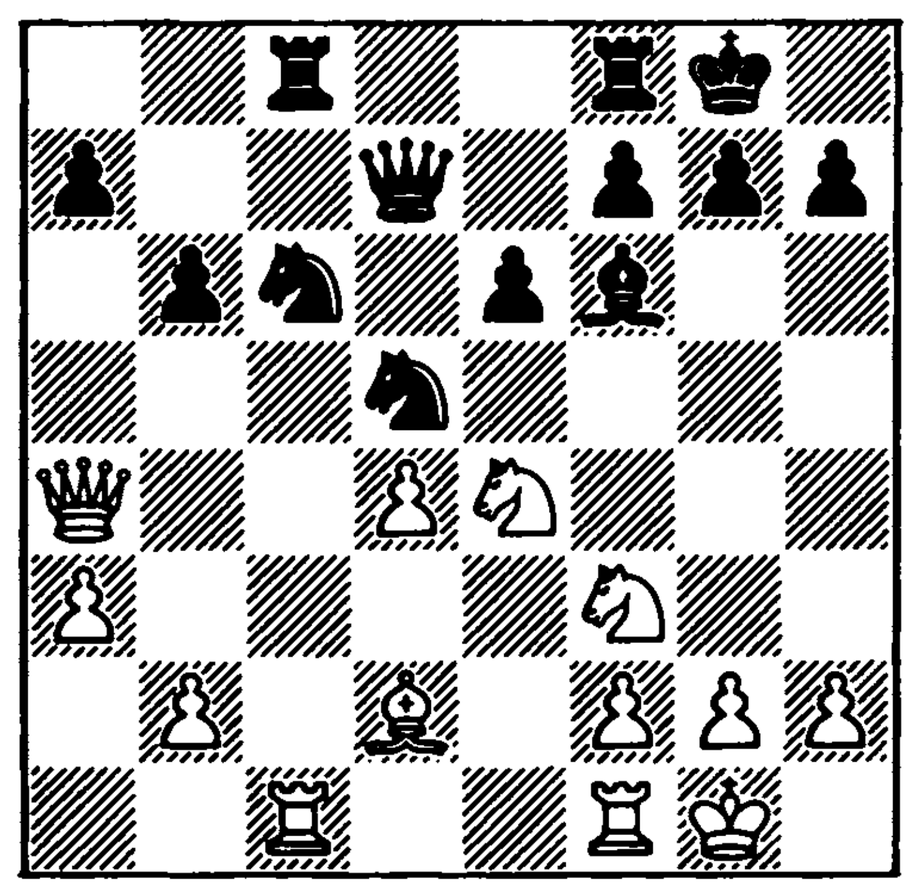
The apparently tempting 11 ♕a4 does not achieve anything on account of 11 ... ♕d7!, when 12 ♘e5? fails to 12 ... ♘xc3! But 11 ♗c4 0-0 12 ♘e5 ♗b7 13 ♕f3 ♘d7 14 ♗xd5 exd5 is possible, with an equal game (Petrosian-Keres, 22nd USSR Championship, Moscow 1955).

11 ... ♘xc6 12 ♕a4 ♕d7 13 ♗d2

Or 13 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 14 ♗e3 0-0 15 ♖fc1 b5! (Szabo-Euwe, Zürich Candidates 1953).

13 ... 0-0 14 ♖ac1 ♖ac8 15 a3 ♗f6 16 ♘e4

239



16 ... ♘e5!

An elegant move, practically forcing

the transition into a favourable ending, since after 17 ♕d1 ♘xf3+ or 17 ♘xf6+ ♘xf6 18 ♕b3 ♘xf3+ White loses his d4 pawn without sufficient compensation.

17 ♕xd7 ♘xd7

Black's position is preferable, but objectively the position is drawn.

18 ♘c3!? ♘xc3
19 ♗xc3

Taking with the pawn would have been a positional blunder.

19 ... ♖c7 20 ♗d2 ♖fc8 21 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 22 ♖c1 ♖xc1+ 23 ♗xc1

Here White's defence is eased by the fact that the stronger side's knight does not occupy the blockading square in front of the isolated pawn.

23 ... ♔f8
24 ♔f1

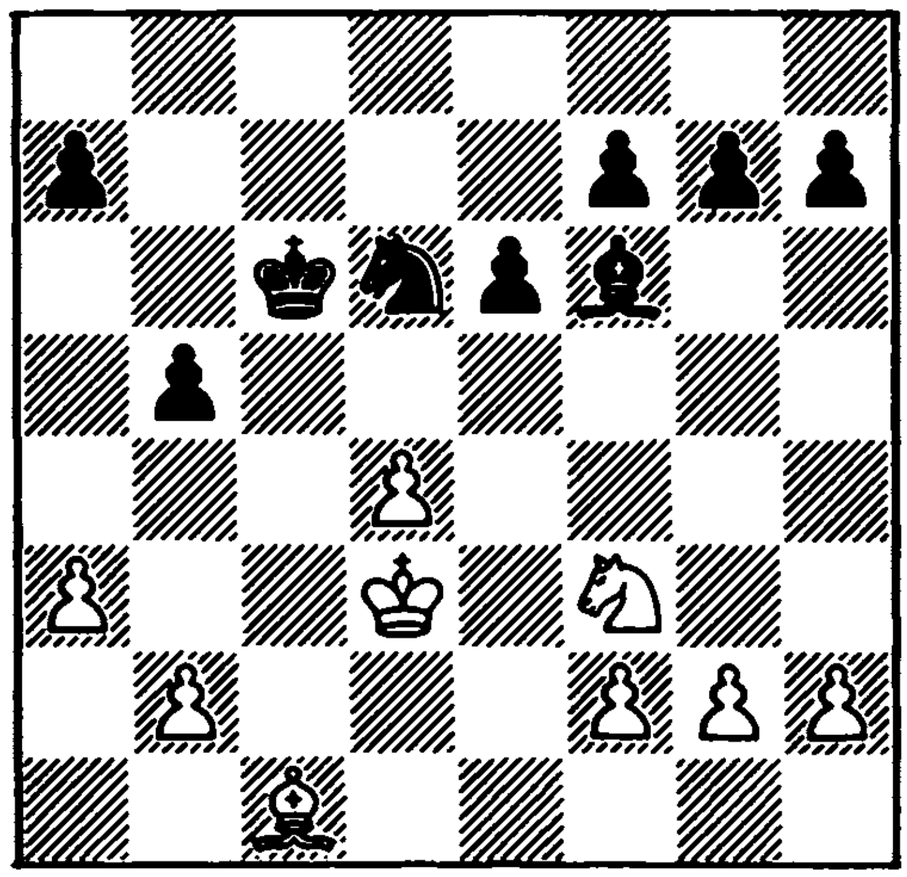
24 a4!? followed by 25 b3 came into consideration.

24 ... ♔e7 25 ♗f4! b5 26 ♔e2?

A case where the centralisation of the king is untimely. The correct 26 ♗c7! leaves Black with no real winning chances.

26 ... ♘b6 27 ♔d3 ♔d7 28 ♔e4 ♘c4 29 ♗c1 ♘d6+ 30 ♔d3 ♔c6 *(240)*

240



White's serious mistake 26 ♔e2? has led to a difficult position. Apart from his d4 pawn, additional weaknesses are taking shape on the queenside. Therefore he should aim to play his queenside pawns onto light squares, to which aim 31 b3 would have corresponded. Instead of this, White prevents the black king from going to d5.

31 ♘e1 a5! 32 ♘c2 a4 33 ♘b4+ ♔d7 34 g3

Placing the kingside pawns on squares of the same colour as the bishop cannot be approved, but to suggest a sensible plan is even more difficult. 34 d5 would hardly have eased the position. After 34 ... ♘f5 35 dxe6+ ♔xe6 36 ♔c2 ♗e5 37 h3 ♗d4 Black would have gradually broken up the opponent's kingside pawns and steered the play into a won knight ending.

34 ... ♘c4 35 f4 ♗e7 36 ♘c2

White aims for the exchange of knights, which leads to a completely hopeless bishop ending. The best chance was to play the knight to c3, although even then the win for Black would be merely a question of time. He could have played his king to c6, knight to d6 and bishop to a5, and then exchanged on c3, after which the ending with knight against bishop is easily won, in view of White's numerous weaknesses on both flanks.

36 ... ♔c6 37 ♘e3 ♘xe3 38 ♗xe3 ♔d5

The rest is very simple.

39 g4 ♗d8 40 g5 f6! White resigns

After 41 gxf6 gxf6 42 ♗f2 there follows 42 ... ♗b6, when White ends up in zugzwang, for example: 43 ♗e3 ♗a7! 44 ♗f2 e5, and 45 ♗h4 ♗xd4 46 ♗xf6 is not possible on account of 46 ... e4+.

Von Gottschall-Nimzowitsch
Hanover 1926
French Defence

1 e4 e6 2 d4 d5 3 ♗d3

Today this move looks naive.

3 ... c5 4 c3 dxe4 5 ♗xe4 ♘f6 6 ♗f3 ♘bd7 7 ♘e2 ♗e7 8 0-0 0-0?!

Black could have immediately solved his opening problems with 8 ... e5.

9 ♗e3 cxd4 10 cxd4 ♘b6 11 ♘bc3 ♕d7

Nimzowitsch attaches two exclamation marks to this move, but rightly points out that, with ♕b3 followed by playing his knight from e2 to d3 via f4, White could have caused his opponent considerable trouble.

12 ♖c1?

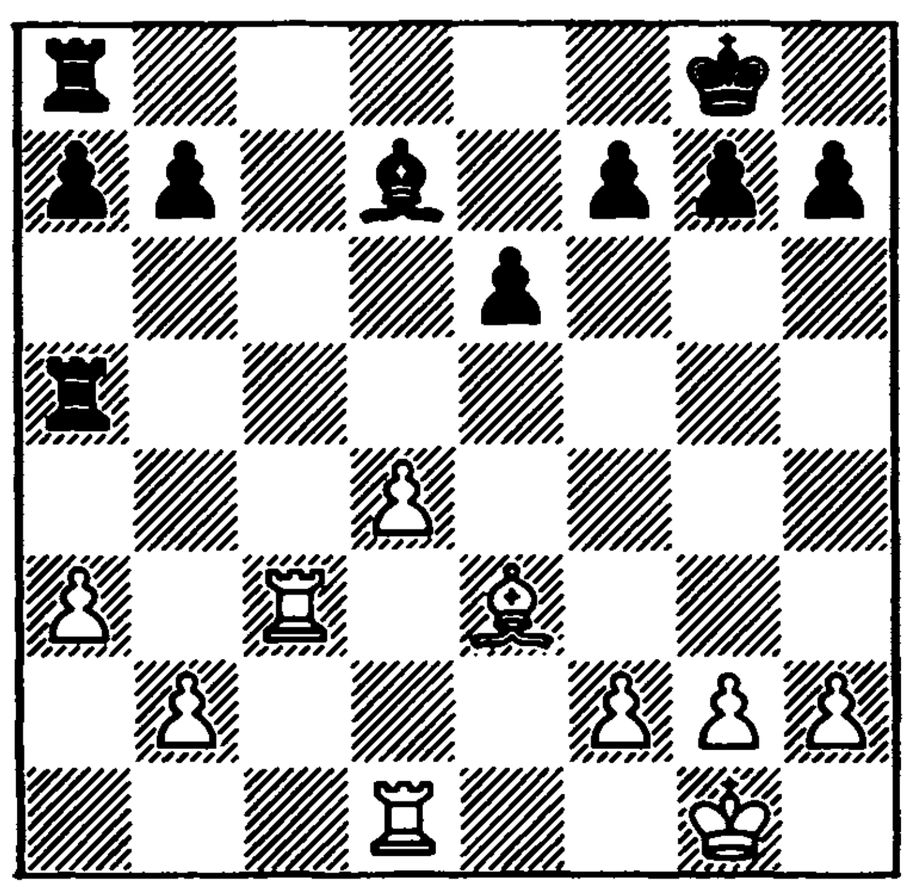
A passive move.

12 ... ♖d8 13 ♕b3 ♘fd5 14 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 15 ♗xd5 ♕xd5 16 ♕xd5 ♖xd5 17 ♘c3 ♖a5 18 ♖fd1 ♗b4

Black prevents 19 d5.

19 a3 ♗xc3
20 ♖xc3 ♗d7 *(241)*

241



Nimzowitsch makes the following interesting comments about this position: "A dead draw? The game is over!? No, there is still a great deal in the position, and the play has still to begin. The discussion about the pros and cons of the isolated pawn occurs only in the 'third act'!"

21 ♖c5 ♖xc5
22 dxc5 ♗c6

"The isolated queen's pawn is not only a *pawn* weakness, but also a *weakness of squares*. The neighbouring squares c4, d5 and e4 are difficult to protect, and even the elimination of the isolated pawn cannot alter that fact" (Nimzowitsch – the italics are his).

23 f3 f6 24 ♔f2 ♔f7 25 ♖d4 a5 26 g3?

Of course, White should have played 26 b3, not allowing the fixing of his queenside pawns. This would have left Black with little chance of success.

26 ... a4

Now Nimzowitsch essentially has an extra pawn in the centre.

27 f4 h5
28 h3 ♖h8

Nimzowitsch's favourite 'mysterious' rook move, preventing the opponent from improving his pawn structure with g3-g4.

29 ♖d1 ♔g6 30 ♖d4 ♔f5 31 ♗d2 ♖f8! 32 ♗e1 e5 33 fxe5 fxe5 34 ♖h4?!

It was better to play 34 ♖d6.

34 ... g5! 35 ♖b4 ♔e6+ 36 ♔e2 e4 37 ♗f2

37 ♖d4 looks more logical, and if 37 ... ♗b5+ 38 ♔d1.

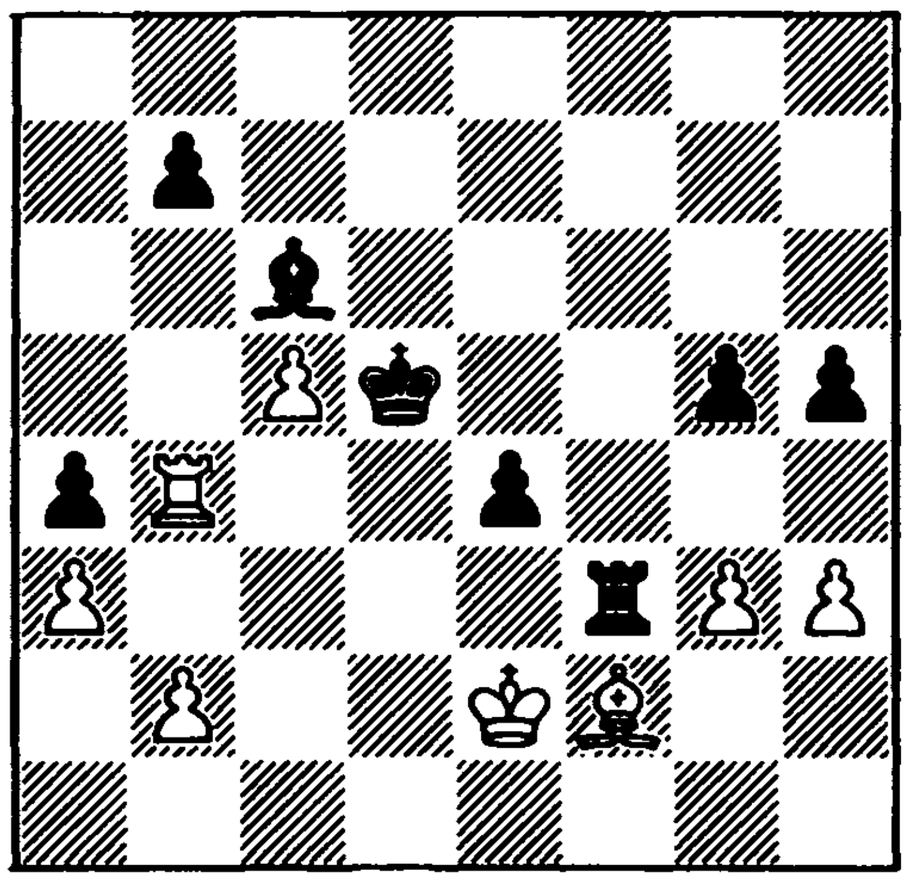
37 ... ♖f3
38 ♖b6

Not the happiest place for the rook, but

White's position is already fairly difficult.

38 ... ♔e5!
39 ♖b4 ♔d5 *(242)*

242



White has unexpectedly ended up in zugzwang, since after 40 ♖b6 h4 41 gxh4 gxh4 42 ♗xh4 ♔xc5 he loses a pawn, while on 40 ♖d4+ there follows simply 40 ... ♔xc5. Von Gottschall prefers to maintain material equality.

40 h4 gxh4
41 gxh4

But now some new weaknesses have appeared in White's position – the h4 pawn and the g4 square.

41 ... ♖h3 42 ♖d4+ ♔e5 43 ♖d8 ♗d5 44 ♖e8+ ♗e6 45 ♖d8

45 ... ♖b3 was threatened.

45 ... ♔f4 46 ♖f8+ ♗f5 47 ♖f7 ♖h2

There was no point in playing 47 ... e3 in view of 48 ♗g1.

48 ♖e7?

The difference in class of the two players gradually begins to tell. After the correct 48 ♔f1 it is far from clear whether Black would have managed to realise his positional advantage. He would probably have had to return his rook to h3 and after 49 ♔e2 try his luck on the queenside with 49 ... ♖b3, although White's defensive resources would have been quite considerable.

After Von Gottschall's mistake the finish comes quickly.

48 ... ♗g4+
49 ♔e1

Now 49 ♔f1 loses immediately to 49 ... ♖h1+ 50 ♗g1 ♔g3.

49 ... ♔f3 50 ♖f7+ ♔g2 51 ♔d2 ♔f1! 52 ♔e3 ♗f3

White's position collapses. The game concluded:

53 ♗g3 ♖xb2 54 ♗d6 ♖b3+ 55 ♔d4 ♔f2 56 ♖g7 e3 57 ♗g3+ ♔f1 58 ♖f7 e2 59 ♖e7 ♗c6 White resigns

"This game, which I think is one of my best, is also significant as to the weakness of the isolated pawn in the endgame" (Nimzowitsch).

Marshall-Maroczy
Ostende 1905
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e3 ♘bd7

This move order was employed in the past, and had the aim, in the event of the exchange on f6, of replying ... ♘xf6.

6 ♗d3

White avoids the 'battle for a tempo'.

6 ... dxc4!

The critical reply.

7 ♗xc4 a6?!

7 ... 0-0 8 ♘f3 c5! was probably more logical.

8 ♘f3?!

Here 8 a4! is stronger, when a position in the spirit of the Queen's Gambit Accepted arises, where Black's queen's knight 'should' be developed at c6. At d7 it is less well placed, for example: 8 ... 0-0 9 ♘f3 c5 10 0-0 b6 11 ♕e2 ♗b7 12 ♖fd1 ♕c7 (P.Johner-Rubinstein, Berlin 1926), and here, as suggested by Grünfeld, 13 d5! was very strong.

8 ... 0-0 9 0-0 c5 10 ♕e2 b5 11 ♗b3 ♗b7 12 ♖ad1 ♕c7!

Black has successfully deployed his forces. 12 ... ♕b6?!, as played nearly half a century later in the game A.Zaitsev-Arkhangelsky (Krasnoyarsk 1959), is weaker: after 13 ♘e5! ♖fe8 14 ♗c2 ♖ad8 15 f4 ♘f8 16 f5! White obtained a powerful attacking position.

13 ♗c2

Here on 13 ♘e5 Maroczy would have replied 13 ... c4!, but not 13 ... ♘xe5? 14 dxe5 ♕xe5 on account of 15 ♗f4 ♕f5 16 ♗c2 ♕h5 17 ♕xh5 ♘xh5 18 ♖d7, when White wins.

13 ... ♖fd8 14 ♗f4 ♕b6 15 ♘e5 ♖ac8 16 ♗g5 ♘f8!

A good defensive manoeuvre. Black's position is already, perhaps, the more pleasant.

17 ♗e4!

A clever tactical idea.

17 ... ♗xe4 18 ♘xe4 cxd4 19 exd4 ♘g6!

One of the venomous Marshall traps would have operated after the hasty 19 ... ♖xd4?: 20 ♕e3! ♖cd8 21 ♘c6!, and Black is lost.

20 ♕f3

The pressure on f6 appears to compensate White for the weakness of his d4 pawn, but Black finds an elegant solution.

20 ... ♘xe5! 21 dxe5 ♘xe4 22 ♗xe7 ♘d2!

This is the point! Black forces a favourable ending.

23 ♕e2

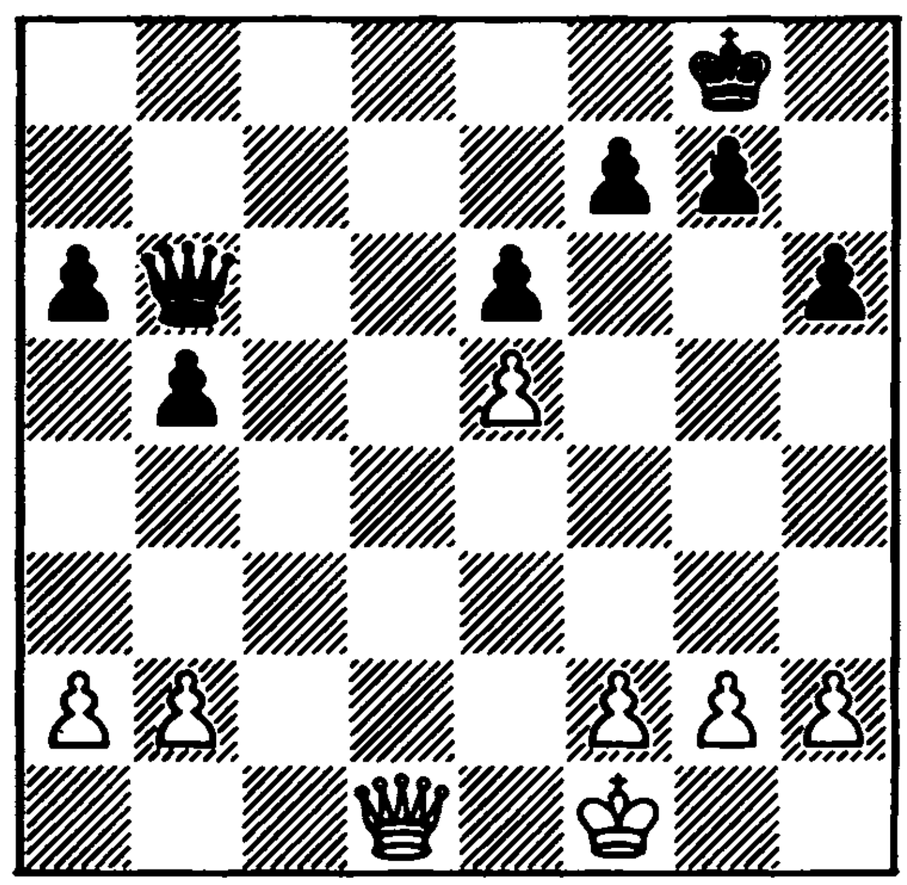
The subtlety of Maroczy's idea consisted in the variation 23 ♕g4 ♘xf1! 24 ♗f6 g6 25 ♖xd8+ ♖xd8 26 ♕g5 ♖d1!, and Black wins.

23 ... ♘xf1 24 ♗xd8 ♖xd8 25 ♔xf1 h6 26 ♕c2?

A careless move. The queen ending is by no means as harmless as White assumes. As shown by the further course of the game, 26 a3! was correct.

26 ... ♖xd1+
27 ♕xd1 *(243)*

243



It is Black's move, and the Hungarian grandmaster begins active play, directed in particular against the advanced e5 pawn.

27 ... ♕c5! 28 ♕d8+ ♔h7 29 ♕d3+ g6 30 ♕c3

By this forcing manoeuvre White has managed to maintain material equality,

but Black's initiative is an enduring one.

30 ... ♕d5!
31 a3?

This move should have been made earlier. Now it was essential to play 31 b3, although after 31 ... ♕e4 32 ♕b2 ♕d3+ 33 ♔e1 g5! the black king heads for the centre, and a difficult defence awaits White.

31 ... ♕d1+ 32 ♕e1 ♕d3+ 33 ♔g1 ♕c2!

Maroczy has gone down in history as a virtuoso of queen endings. Black energetically and consistently restricts the opponent's pieces.

34 ♕a1

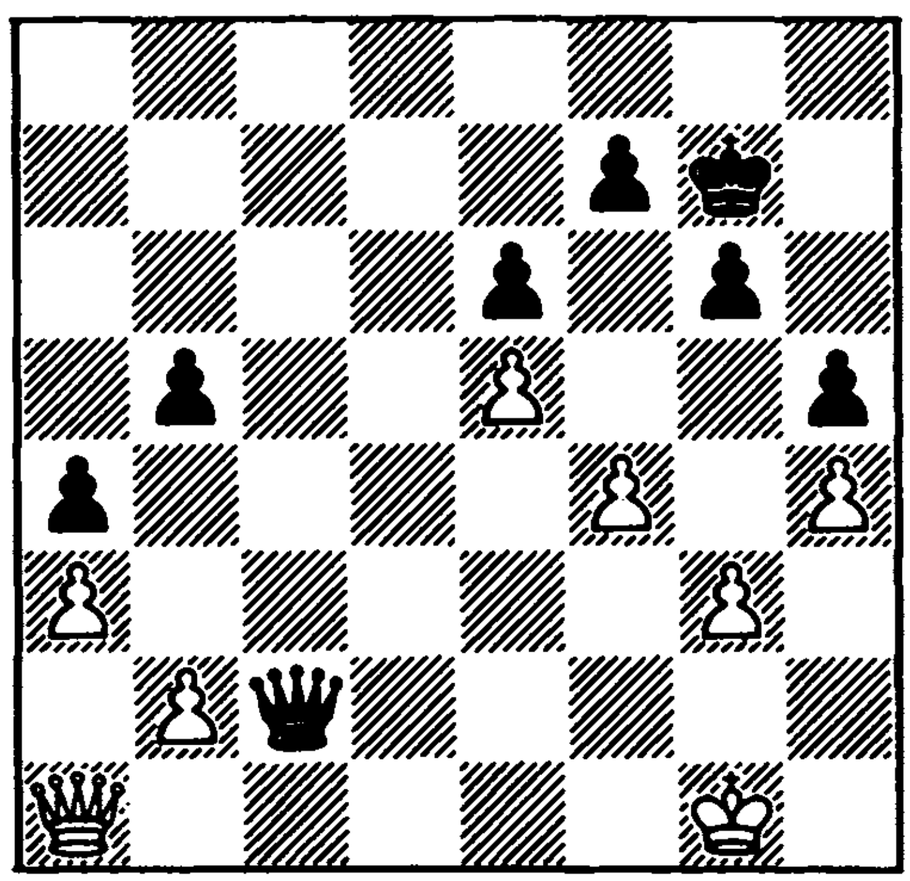
There is nothing better. After 34 b4 ♕b2 White loses his a3 pawn.

34 ... a5!

Not allowing the opponent to ease his position by 35 b4, on which there now follows 35 .. axb4 36 axb4 ♕e4, winning a pawn.

35 g3 a4! 36 f4 ♔g8 37 h3 h5 38 h4 ♔g7! *(244)*

244



White is in an usual form of zugzwang. In the event of 39 ♕a2 ♕d1+ the white queen will not have a single move, and the black king will gradually be able to penetrate into the opponent's position via the queenside. Marshall prefers to launch a desperate counterattack, which does not succeed.

39 ♔h1 ♕f2 40 ♕g1 ♕xb2 41 ♕c5 b4! 42 f5

What else can be suggested?

42 ... exf5 43 e6 bxa3! 44 exf7 ♔xf7

There is no perpetual check. The game concluded:

45 ♕c7+ ♔e6 46 ♕c6+ ♔e5 47 ♕xa4 a2 48 ♕e8+ ♔d5 49 ♕d7+ ♔e4 50 ♕c6+ ♔e3 51 ♕c5+ ♕d4 52 ♕a3+ ♕d3 53 ♕a7+ ♔f3 54 ♕xa2

White is forced to allow the pawn ending, since 54 ♕a8+ loses immediately to 54 ... ♕e4.

54 ... ♕f1+ 55 ♔h2 ♕f2+ 56 ♕xf2+ ♔xf2 57 ♔h3 ♔f3

57 ... ♔g1! would have won more quickly.

58 ♔h2 f4 59 ♔h3 g5 60 hxg5 fxg3 61 ♔h4 g2 62 g6 ♔f4 White resigns

Gligorić-Bajec
Ljubljana 1969
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 c5

The Petrosian-Spassky World Championship Match (Moscow 1969) had barely concluded, when the 'stock' of the Tarrasch Defence rose to unprecedented heights. This is not surprising: against such a virtuoso of 'anti-isolani' play as Petrosian, Spassky was able to demonstrate the soundness of the defence.

4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 g3 ♘f6 7 ♗g2 ♗e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 ♗g5 cxd4

9 ... c4 leads to sharper situations. Regarding 9 ... ♗e6, cf. the game Furman-Dementiev (p.206).

10 ♘xd4 h6

The immediate 10 ... ♖e8!? is an interesting alternative.

11 ♗e3 ♖e8!

This move was made by Spassky after 11 ... ♗g4?!, as played in the earlier games, met with a strong reply by Petrosian in the 12th game: 12 ♕a4!.

12 ♖c1

Today the most dangerous continuation for Black is 12 ♕b3!?, which Karpov successfully employed against Kasparov in their first World Championship Match (Moscow 1984-85).

12 ... ♗g4

12 ... ♗f8 is more flexible, as played by Spassky in the 18th game.

13 ♘b3 ♗e6
14 ♗d4!

A strong move. After being driven from g5, the white bishop again attacks the knight at f6, and therefore the d5 pawn is again in danger. Weaker is 14 ♘b5 ♕d7! 15 ♘5d4 ♗h3, or 14 ♖e1 ♕d7 15 ♗c5 ♖ac8!, as played in the 2nd and 4th games respectively of the Petrosian-Spassky match.

14 ... ♘e4

Black also does not escape from his opening problems after 14 ... ♘xd4 15 ♕xd4!.

15 e3 ♗f5
16 ♘xe4!

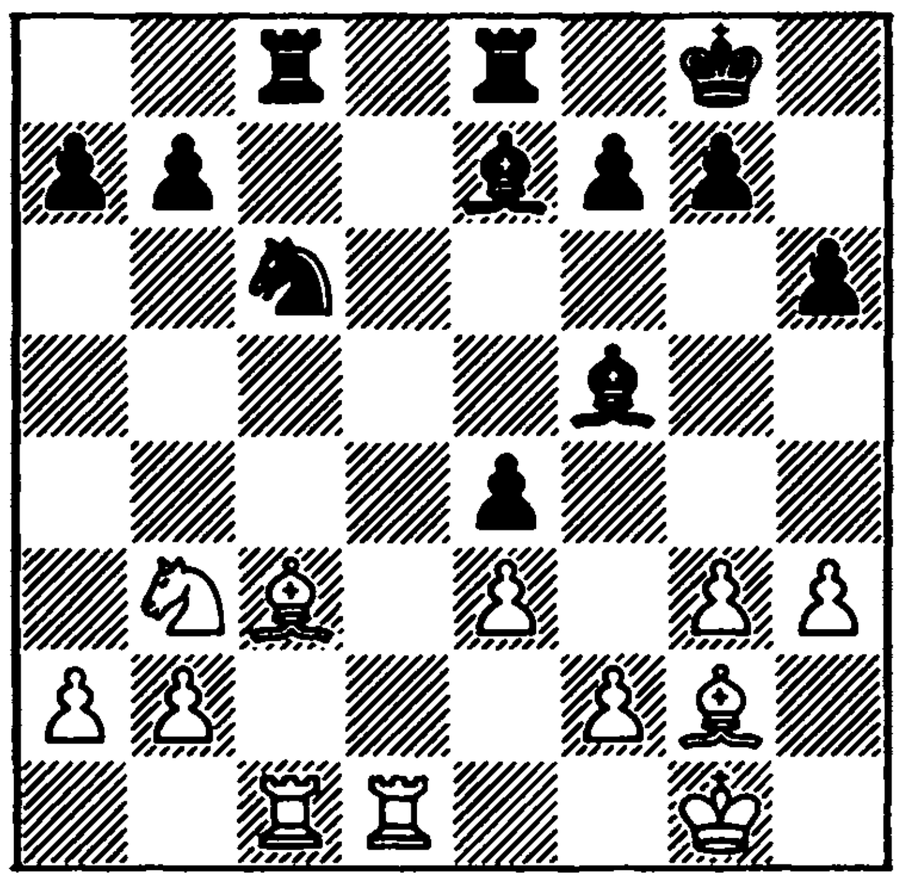
White unexpectedly changes the direction of the attack.

16 ... dxe4?!

16 ... ♗xe4 was preferable, but the temptation to get rid of the 'isolani' is too great. Gligorić convincingly demonstrates that, by moving to e4, the d5 pawn has not become any stronger.

17 ♗c3 ♖c8 18 h3! ♕xd1 19 ♖fxd1
(245)

245



The moving of the d5 pawn to e4 has not reduced, but rather has increased Black's difficulties. All the white pieces occupy excellent, secure positions and control strategically important points (the d4 and c5 squares, the a1-h8 diagonal, and the open c- and d-files). In addition, Black must all the time keep a watch on his e4 pawn, which has become very vulnerable. Not surprisingly, it only takes one superficial move by Bajec, and White's advantage becomes decisive.

19 ... ♖ed8?

The rook should have maintained its defence of the e4 pawn. 19 ... h5 or even 19 ... ♗f8 would have been better.

20 g4! ♗g6
21 ♘d2!

The e4 pawn cannot be defended, and Black's attempts to complicate matters do not succeed. The game continued:

21 ... ♘b4 22 ♗xb4 ♗xb4 23 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 24 ♘xe4 ♖c2 25 ♖d8+ ♔h7

Gligorić showed that 25 ... ♗f8 26 ♘d6 ♖xb2 would have lost immediately to 27 ♘c8 and 28 ♘e7+.

26 ♖d7 ♖xb2
27 h4!

Signalling the start of the attack.

27 ... ♔g8

An amusing alternative: 27 ... h5 28 ♘g5+ ♔h6 29 ♘xf7+ ♗xf7 30 g5+ ♔g6? 31 ♗e4 mate.

28 ♖d8+ ♔h7 29 h5 ♗xe4+ 30 ♗xe4+ g6 31 ♖d7 ♔g8 32 hxg6 fxg6 33 ♖xb7 g5 34 ♖xa7

White is two pawns up with an easily won position.

34 ... ♗e1 35 ♗d5+ ♔h8 36 ♖f7 ♖b4 37 ♔f1 ♗c3 38 ♖c7 ♗e5 39 ♖e7 ♗c3 40 ♗e6 ♖b1+ 41 ♔e2 ♖b2+ 42 ♔d3 Black resigns

Najdorf-Fischer
Buenos Aires 1970
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 c5 5 cxd5 ♘xd5 6 e3

Fischer frequently and quite successfully played the Tarrasch Defence Deferred. One recalls his memorable victory over Reshevsky in the fifth game of their 1961 match in Los Angeles. Today this variation is experiencing difficult times, with both the modest 6 e3 and the resolute 6 e4 frequently bringing White success.

6 ... ♘c6
7 ♗c4

After the famous game Botvinnik-Alekhine (AVRO Tournament 1938) this move has been employed along with 7 ♗d3, and it is still not clear which continuation is the stronger. Najdorf preferred Botvinnik's move; not long before this game he won prettily against Tal in the 'Match of the Century' (Belgrade 1970), although from the opening he did not gain any advantage.

7 ... cxd4

7 ... ♗e7?! is too optimistic: 8 ♗xd5 exd5 9 dxc5 ♗e6 10 0-0 ♗xc5 11 b3 0-0 12 ♗b2 with advantage to White (Larsen-Tal, Eersel 1969).

8 exd4 a6!? 9 0-0 ♗e7 10 ♖e1 0-0 11 a3

After 11 ♗xd5 exd5 12 ♕b3 ♗g4! White does not achieve anything (Osnos-Krogius, Budapest 1965).

Along with the move played, 11 a4 also looks quite good (in the spirit of the Queen's Gambit Accepted), or else 11 ♗b3, when Sokolov-Karpov (Linares 1987) went 11 ... ♘xc3 12 bxc3 b5 13 ♕d3 ♖a7!? 14 ♗c2 g6 15 ♗h6 ♖e8 16 ♕e3 ♖d7 17 h4, with a very complicated game.

By contrast, little is promised by 11 ♗d3 ♘f6 12 ♗g5 b5 (Spassky-Korchnoi, 30th USSR Championship, Yerevan 1962).

11 ... b5

Nowadays Black prefers first to exchange knights: 11 ... ♘xc3 12 bxc3 b5. Thus in P.Nikolić-Jurić (Yugoslavia 1983) Black gained counterchances after 13 ♗a2 ♗b7 14 ♕d3 ♘a5 15 a4 ♗d5.

12 ♗d3

12 ♗xd5! exd5 13 ♕d3! is more energetic (Tal-Psakhis, Sochi 1982).

12 ... ♗b7
13 ♘xd5

This exchange is practically forced, otherwise White cannot solve the problem of developing his queen's bishop. It is clear that Black has overcome his opening problems – the consequence of his opponent's rather passive play.

13 ... ♕xd5 14 ♗e4 ♕d7 15 ♗f4 ♖fd8 16 ♕c2 g6 17 ♖ad1 ♖ac8 18 ♕e2 ♗f6 19 ♘e5?!

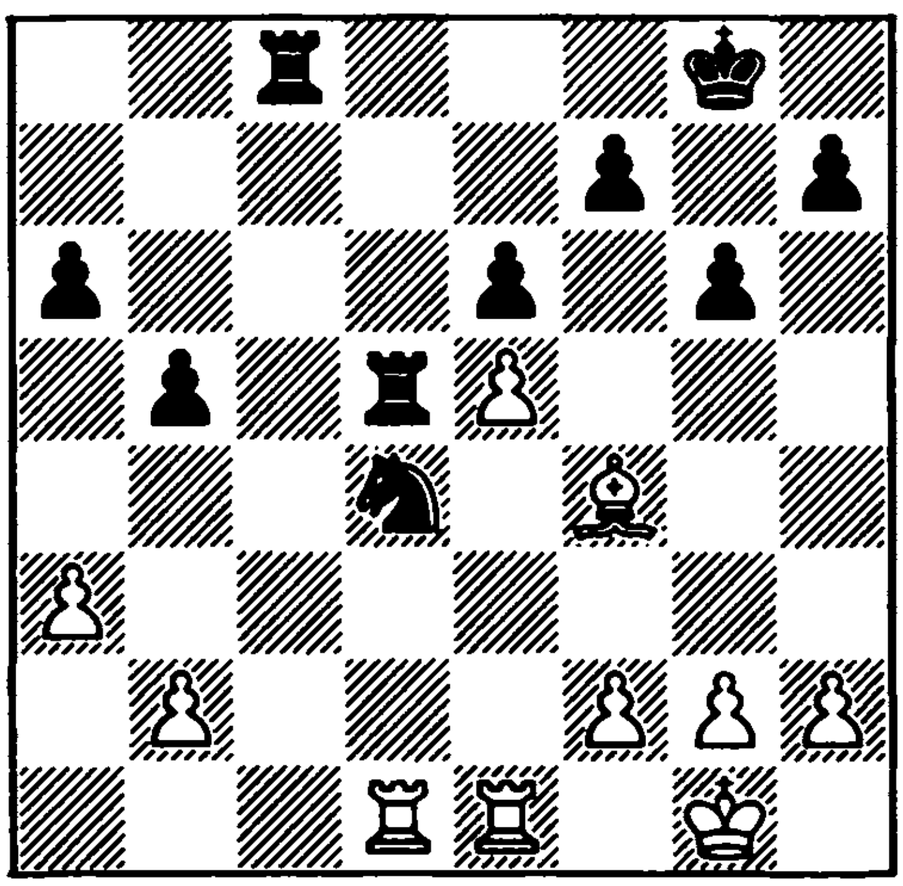
White has no advantage at all, and it would have been most sensible to offer a draw by 19 d5! The energetic knight move merely leads to difficulties, although to foresee Fischer's brilliant reply was not easy. Indeed, who in such a position would consider giving up his dark-square bishop for the knight?!

19 ... ♗xe5!
20 dxe5 ♘d4!

This is the point of the American grandmaster's concrete plan. It turns out that White is not able to exploit the weakness of the dark squares: the opponent's powerful pressure in the centre forces Najdorf to go into an inferior ending.

21 ♕e3 ♗xe4 22 ♕xe4 ♕d5! 23 ♕xd5 ♖xd5 *(246)*

246



The initiative is with Black, who controls the open file and has superiority in the centre. The sole defect of his position is the vulnerable placing of his king. If the g6 pawn were at g7, and the h7 pawn at h6, White's position could be considered lost.

24 ♔f1

24 ... ♘e2+ was threatened.

24 ... ♖c2
25 ♖d3!

A clever defensive resource. Now on 25 ... ♖xb2 there follows 26 ♖ed1, and if 26 ... ♘c2? 27 ♖xd5 exd5 28 ♖xd5 ♘xa3? 29 ♗h6!, when it is White who wins.

25 ... ♘c6 26 ♖xd5 exd5 27 ♗h6!

White is saved by this resource, which gives him counterplay against the enemy king.

27 ... d4 28 ♖d1 a5 29 ♖d2 ♖c4 30 f4 a4 31 ♔e2 ♘a5 32 ♔d3 ♘b3 33 ♖c2 ♘c5+ 34 ♔d2

Black has squeezed the maximum out of the position, by ideally arranging his forces on the queenside, but alas, this is not enough to win. His king is not in play.

34 ... f5 35 exf6 ♔f7 36 ♗g5 d3 37 ♖xc4 bxc4 38 ♔e3 ♘e6 39 g4

Najdorf avoids the last trap: 39 ♗h4?? ♘xf4, and so Fischer forces a draw.

39 ... ♘xg5
40 fxg5 Draw agreed

Larsen-Penrose
Palma de Mallorca 1969
Queen's Gambit

1 b3

During the period of his brilliant tour-

nament victories in the 1960s and 1970s, Larsen frequently employed this opening, first developed by Nimzowitsch. In the 1950s it was occasionally played by Simagin – it was he who drew the attention of the chess world to this forgotten opening.

Despite its apparent unpretentiousness, the 'Simagin-Larsen Opening' is quite venomous. Black has a wide choice of satisfactory continuations: 1 ... e5, 1 ... d5, 1 ... c5, 1 ... ♘f6 etc., but in each case White's flexible opening strategy can cause his opponent considerable trouble.

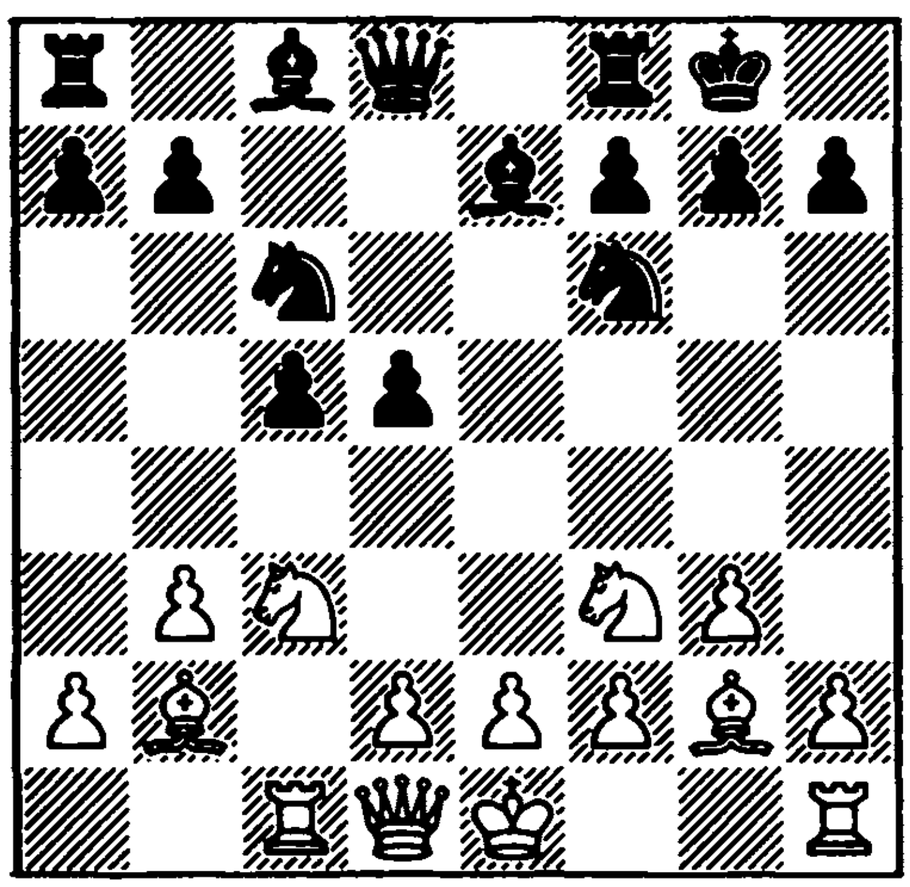
It was not without reason that Fischer, who was such a fan of 1 e4, three times employed the 1 b3 opening (Fischer-Tukmakov, Buenos Aires 1970, Fischer-Filip and Fischer-Mecking, Palma de Mallorca 1970) – and in all three games, incidentally, he won very convincingly.

1 ... c5 2 ♗b2 ♘c6 3 c4 e6

Penrose prefers a 'classical' set-up, and the game gradually transposes into a Queen's Gambit.

4 ♘f3 ♘f6 5 g3 ♗e7 6 ♗g2 0-0 7 ♘c3 d5 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♖c1!? *(247)*

247



An interesting moment. White avoids the routine transposition into the Tarrasch Defence after 9 d4 ♘e4! 10 0-0 ♗f6, and invites 'irrational' play in the variation 9 ... d4 10 ♘a4 ♘d7 11 ♘h4!?.

9 ... ♗e6

Black decides to play strictly towards the centre, but now Larsen does not object to the Tarrasch Defence: the bishop at e6 is rather passively placed.

10 d4! ♖c8
11 0-0 ♖e8

11 ... b6 is well met by 12 e3! ♘e4 13 ♘e2! ♕d7 14 ♘f4 with advantage to White (Uhlmann-Dietze, DDR 1976).

12 dxc5 ♗xc5 13 ♘a4 ♗e7 14 ♘c5

White's position is better.

14 ... ♘d7
15 ♘xd7

According to Larsen, 15 ♘xe6 fxe6 16 e4! was also strong.

15 ... ♕xd7
16 ♕d2 ♕d8

Black prevents ♘g5 and aims to neutralise the b2 bishop by ... ♗f6.

17 ♖fd1 ♗f6

Generally speaking, the exchange of dark-square bishops in such positions favours White, but Black is too worried by the powerful bishop at b2. This exchange is evidently the only way for Black to activate his forces, and he should not be condemned for it.

18 e3 ♕e7
19 h3

White does not hurry. The point of this plan is revealed within a few moves, and for the moment the pin after ... ♗g4 is ruled out.

19 ... h6 20 ♗xf6 ♕xf6 21 ♖c3 ♗f5

Exploiting the opportunity (*22 ♕xd5* is

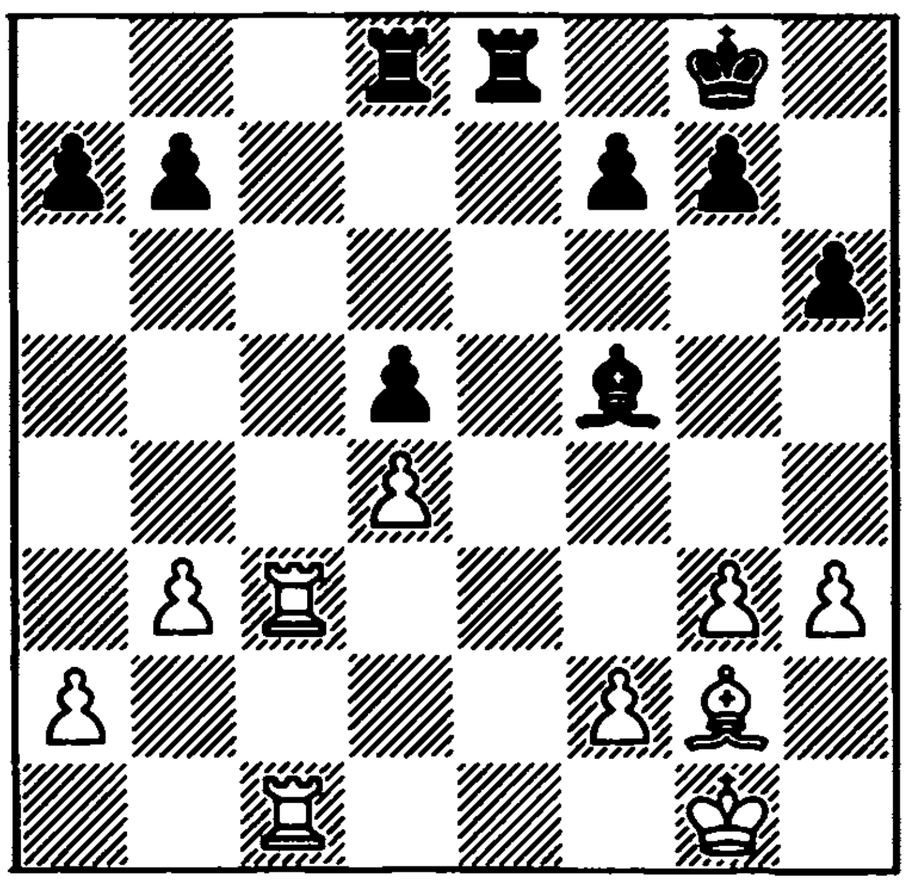
not possible – the rook at c3 is 'hanging'), Black places his bishop in an active position. He evidently plans to follow up with ... ♗e4, but things do not come to that.

22 ♖dc1 ♖cd8
23 ♘d4!

This is what Larsen had devised. Now a direct attack on the d5 pawn is not threatened, but Black is practically forced into an ending where he is condemned to complete passivity. White's only risk is 'not winning' this ending, but this is not a very great risk.

23 ... ♘xd4 24 ♕xd4 ♕xd4 25 exd4 *(248)*

248



The two isolated d-pawns are not of equal value. The black pawn is a weakness, demanding constant concern, whereas White's pawn controls the central squares e5 and c5 and restricts Black's possibilities.

25 ... ♖e7

Timidly played. 25 ... ♖e2 was more active.

26 g4 ♗g6
27 f4 f6

The rook ending after 27 ... ♗e4 28 ♖e1 ♖de8 29 ♖ce3 ♔f8 30 ♗xe4 favours White.

28 ♔f2 ♗f7 29 ♗f3 ♔f8 30 a4 ♖de8

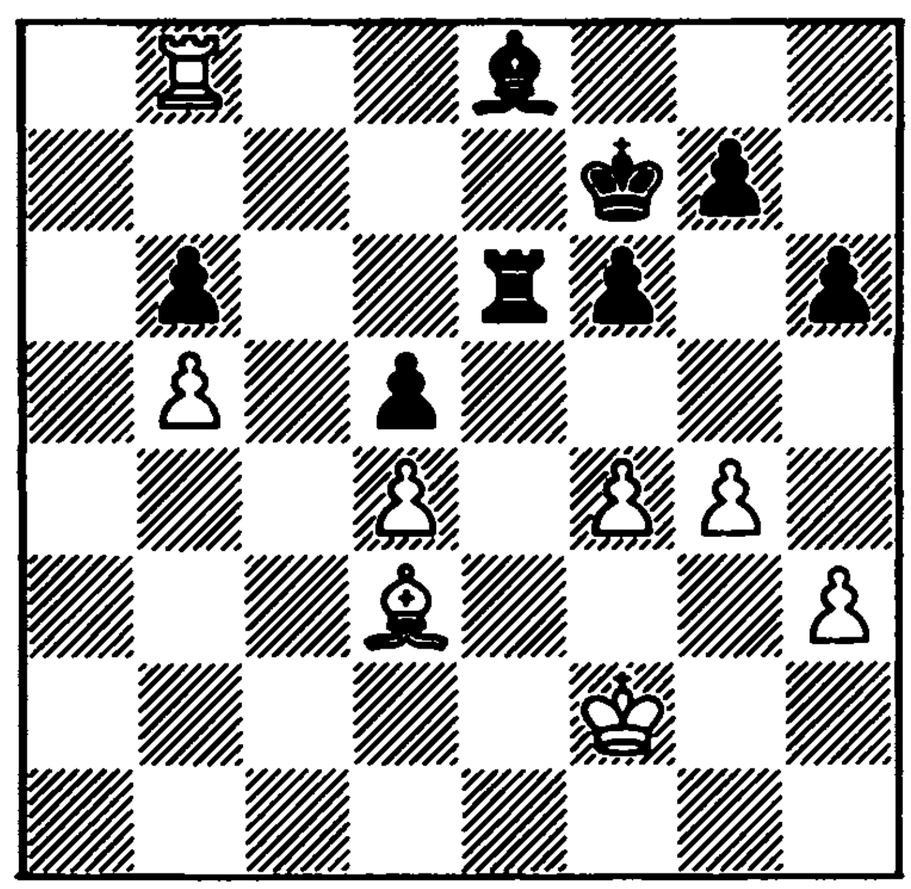
Black sticks to waiting tactics, and allows the opponent gradually to strengthen his position. In *Informator*, Larsen recommended 30 ... g5!?, with the intention of stabilising the position on the kingside.

31 a5 ♖d7 32 b4 ♖ed8 33 ♗e2 ♗e8 34 ♗d3 ♖e7 35 ♖c8!

The start of positive action. Black's position has become completely lost, and Larsen energetically realises his advantage.

35 ... ♖xc8 36 ♖xc8 ♔f7 37 b5 b6 38 axb6 axb6 39 ♖b8 ♖e6?! *(249)*

249



40 ♗g6+!

A little bit of tactics before the curtain.

40 ... ♔f8 41 h4 ♖e7 42 h5 ♖e6 43 ♔f3 ♖e7 44 g5! Black resigns

The pawn ending arising after the capture on g5 is an elementary win for White.

In conclusion we give a game which is of importance for the evaluation of an opening variation, in which the isolated d5 pawn is exchanged at an early stage.

Furman-Dementiev
Leningrad 1969
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 c5 4 cxd5 exd5 5 ♘f3 ♘c6 6 g3 ♘f6 7 ♗g2 ♗e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 ♗g5 ♗e6

For a long time this was considered Black's best reply to the white bishop sortie. Neither 10 ♖c1 ♘e4! nor 10 dxc5 ♗xc5 11 ♘a4 brought White any tangible advantage. This continued until, in the 16th game of his 1969 World Championship Match with Spassky, Petrosian employed an old forcing manoeuvre, leading to considerable simplification, but leaving Black with no hope of active play. The reputation of 9 ... ♗e6 was immediately tarnished, and nowadays Black generally chooses 9 ... cxd4 or 9 ... c4.

10 dxc5 ♗xc5
11 ♗xf6!

This was employed back at the start of the century by Schlechter.

11 ... ♕xf6 12 ♘xd5 ♕xb2 13 ♘c7! ♖ad8 14 ♕c1

This move is the point of White's entire preceding play. The exchange of queens is inevitable.

14 ... ♕xc1
15 ♖axc1

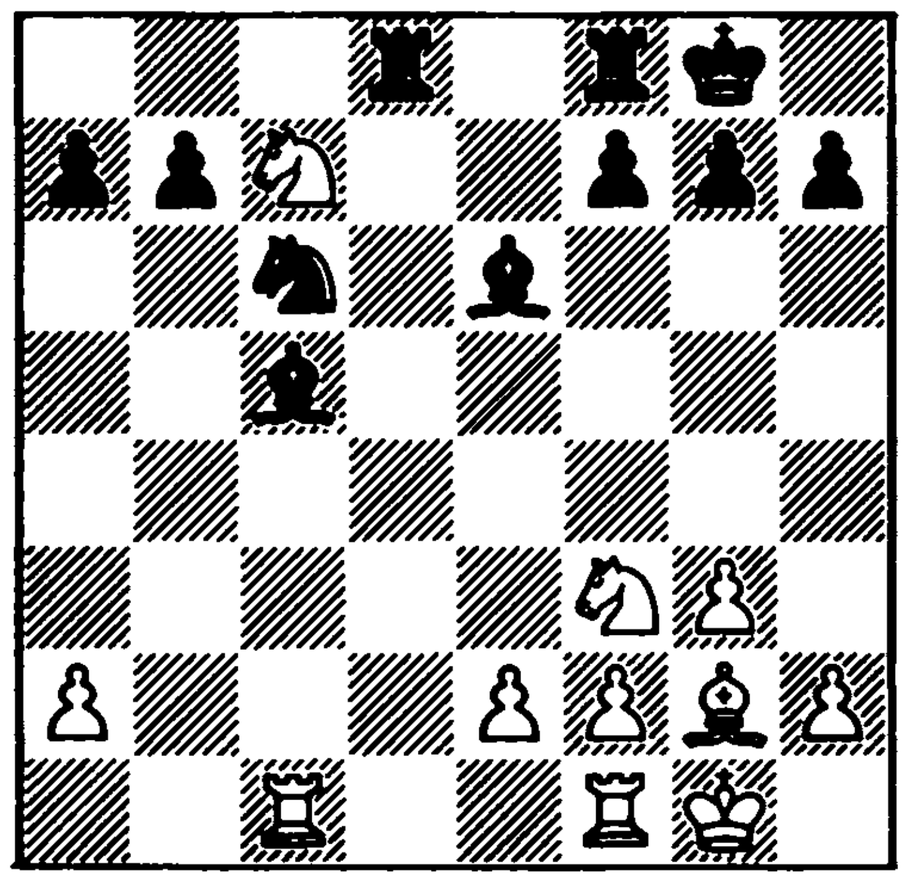
15 ♖fxc1 b6 16 ♘xe6 fxe6 17 e3 h6 18 ♖d1 ♖xd1+ 19 ♖xd1 ♖d8 is less promising for White (Rashkovsky-Espig, Sochi 1976).

(diagram 250)

15 ... ♗b6

This was how Black played in the source game Schlechter-Rubinstein (Prague 1908), where after 16 ♘xe6 fxe6 17 ♖fd1 ♖xd1+ 18 ♖xd1 ♖d8 19 ♖xd8+ ♘xd8 White gained slightly the better chances.

250



In the afore-mentioned match game Spassky preferred 15 ... b6, removing the pawn from the attack of the white bishop. After 16 ♘xe6 fxe6 the reply 17 ♖c4 allowed Black easily to hold the position by 17 ... ♘d4!, but after the strong 17 ♗h3!, suggested by Boleslavsky, the situation would have caused Black considerable anxiety.

16 ♘xe6 fxe6
17 ♖c4!

This is undoubtedly stronger than the meek 17 ♖fd1, chosen by Schlechter.

17 ... h6
18 ♖e4 ♔f7

White also retains some advantage after 18 ... ♖f6 19 e3 (Vukić-Müller, Varna 1975).

19 h4

White calmly strengthens his position, tying Black's forces to the defence of the e6 pawn.

19 ... ♖fe8 20 ♖b1 ♖e7 21 ♗h3 ♖d5 22 ♔g2 g6

Black has set up a defence, but it has to be said that defending such a position is a thankless task. Objectively his position is not lost, but in a practical game White can 'torment' his opponent as much as he likes, trying various active arrangements of his pieces. For his part, Black must always be in a state of tension, since his pawn structure is too damaged. Moreover, the exchange of pieces does not always help him; it is sufficient to recall that a rook ending with a solid phalanx of four pawns on the kingside against a-, e-, g- and h-pawns was won by Karpov against Hort (cf. p.154). In this game too Black is unable to cope with his defensive problems.

23 ♖c1 ♖c5

Black's desire to simplify the position is understandable. However, the rook at d5 was controlling the fifth rank and was taking an active part in the defence, and its exchange sharply increases the activity of the remaining white rook.

24 ♖xc5 ♗xc5
25 g4!

A strong move. The white pawn advances, seizing space and creating new targets for attack in the black position.

25 ... e5

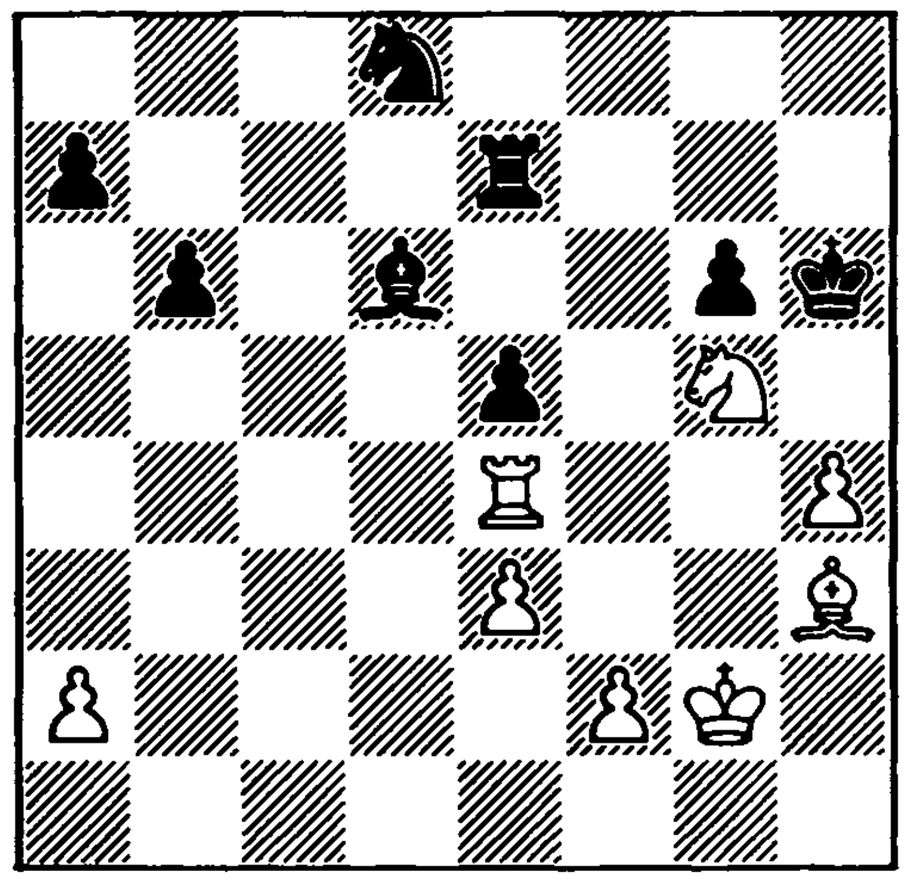
In general such moves are rarely good, but it is hard to condemn Black: to keep the pawn at e6, under attack by two enemy pieces, would have been pretty onerous.

26 g5 ♔g7?

But this is a clear mistake. 26 ... h5 was essential, although White would have had available many active piece arrangements, in particular playing his knight to e4 with the pawn at e3. But now his knight gains access to g5 and an attack on the g6 pawn becomes a possibility.

27 ♖c4 b6 28 gxh6+ ♔xh6 29 e3 ♘a5 30 ♖a4 ♘c6 31 ♖e4 ♗d6 32 ♘g5 ♘d8 *(251)*

251



Black appears to have covered his weaknesses and even to be considering counterplay by the advance of his queenside pawns. But Furman finds an excellent bishop manoeuvre, the aim of which is an attack on the g6 pawn, well camouflaged by White's two preceding moves.

33 ♗c8! b5 34 ♗a6 b4 35 ♖g4 ♖c7 36 ♗d3 a5

An oversight in a lost position. In the event of 36 ... ♖g7 the manoeuvre ♘g5-e4-g3 followed by h4-h5 would have won for White.

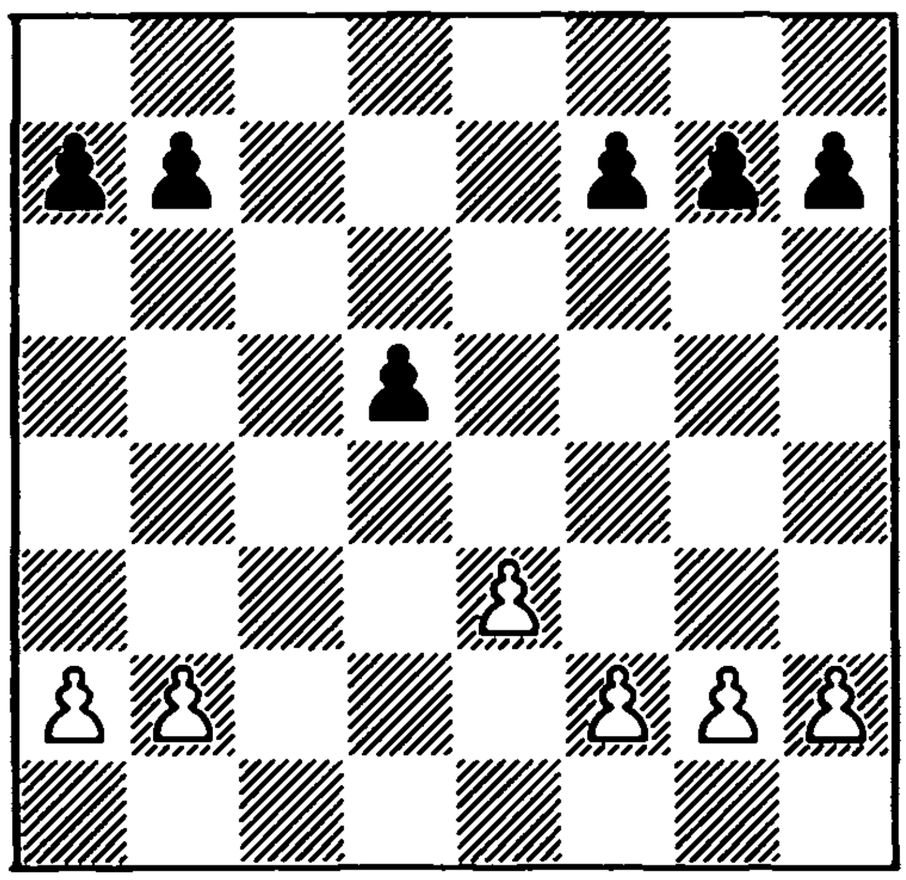
37 ♘e6! ♖d7
38 ♖xg6+ Resigns

4.5 BACKWARD AND HANGING PAWNS

Investigating the methods of play against the isolated pawn, Nimzowitsch in his *My System* suggests the following scheme of development:

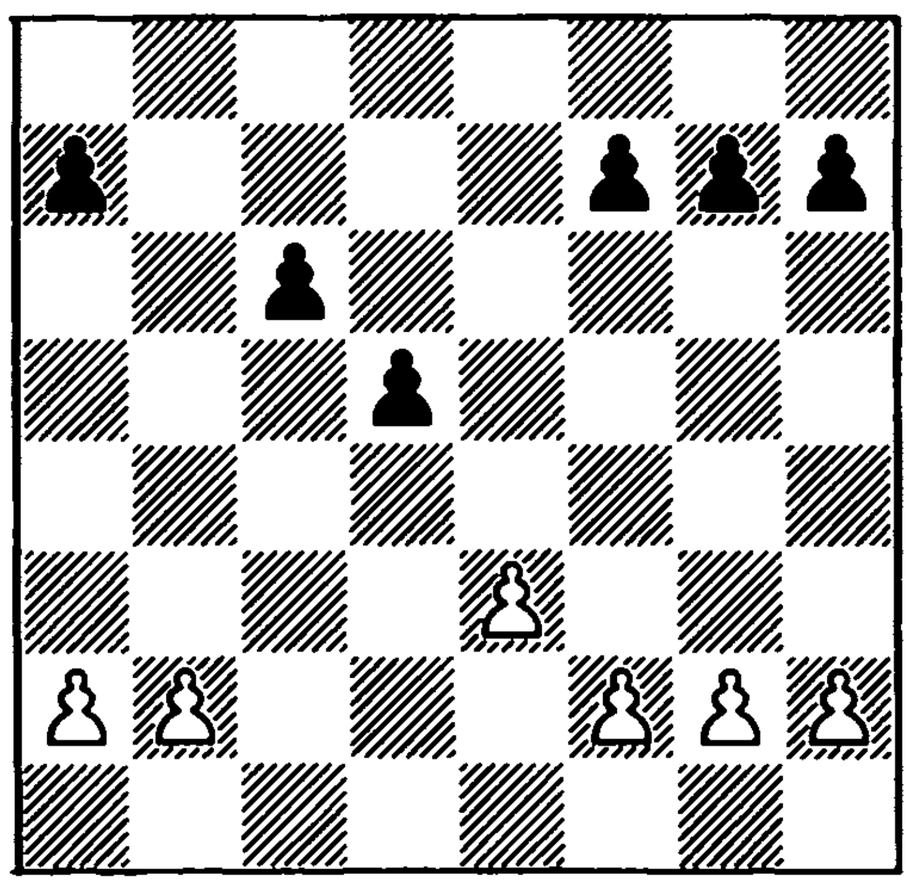
1. The 'isolani':

252



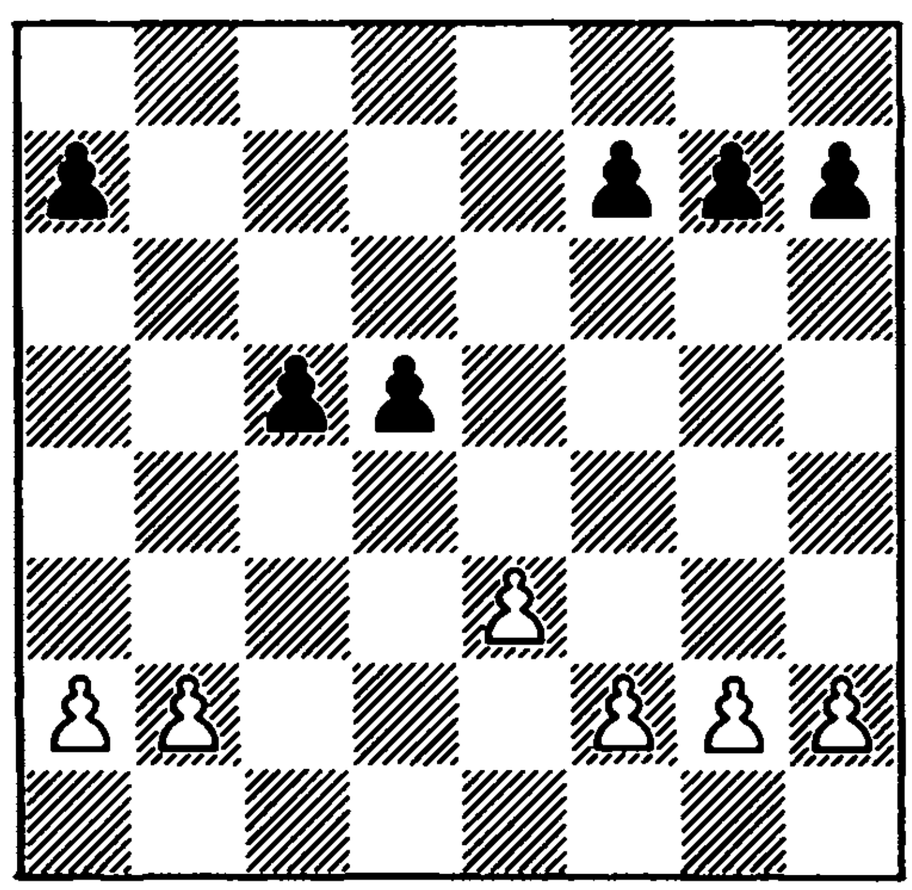
2. Then, after the exchange of knights at c6, the 'backward pawn-couple':

253



3. And finally, 'hanging pawns':

254



'Hanging pawns' occur quite often in modern tournament play, since they have been found to possess considerable dynamic strength, at any event, not less than that of the 'isolani'. Incidentally, the power of Black's attack after the classical breakthrough ... d4 was experienced by Nimzowitsch himself, when he lost a famous game to Tarrasch at St Petersburg in 1914.

But after the exchange of queens the situation changes, and hanging pawns, and especially the backward pawn-couple, do not bring any joy to their possessor in the endgame. Examples of play against the backward pawn-couple will be found in the games **Flohr-Vidmar** and **Petrosian-Belyavsky**.

In 1963 the 'hanging pawns' ending was defended by Botvinnik against Petrosian, and although Botvinnik managed to hold the position, on the whole the ending is unpromising for Black.

Nowadays, when classical central strategy has become predominant, positions with hanging pawns from the Queen's Indian Defence and the Queen's Gambit have been analysed extremely deeply. An example of the newest method of play against hanging pawns, where White opposes them with doubled pawns on the b-file, will be found in the game **Lputian-Dorfman**.

Flohr-Vidmar
Nottingham 1936
Queen's Gambit

1 c4 e6 2 ♘c3 d5 3 d4 ♘f6 4 ♗g5 ♗e7 5 e3 0-0 6 ♘f3 ♘bd7 7 ♕c2

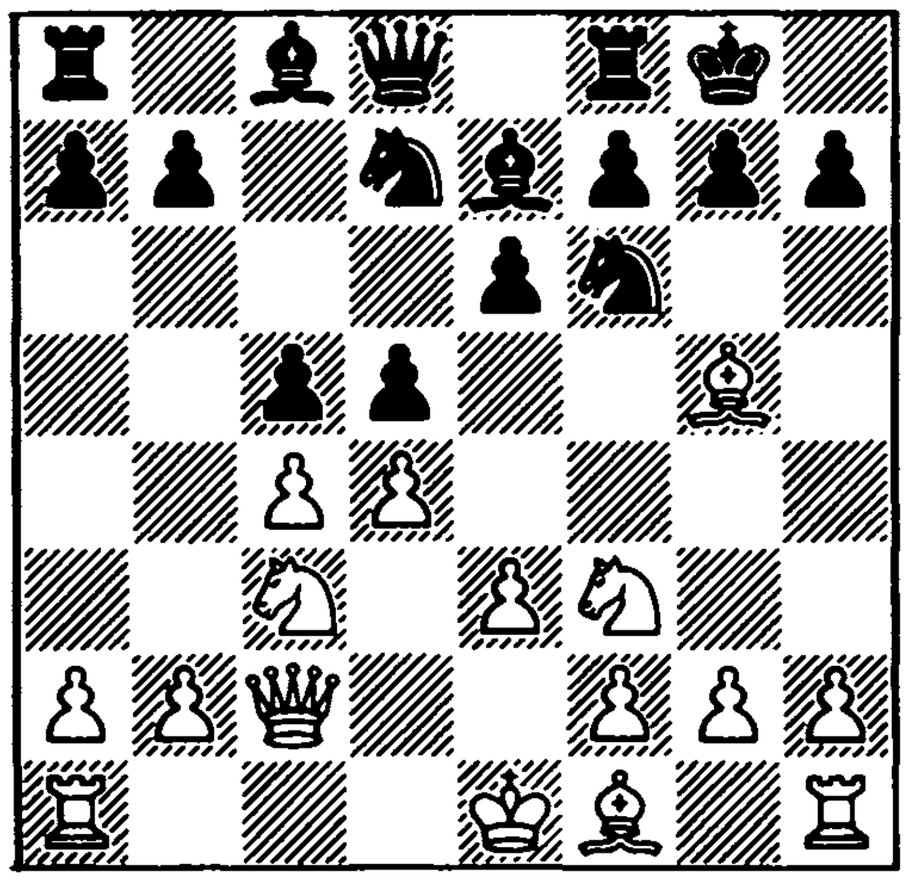
For a long time this continuation was a formidable weapon in the hands of Rubinstein – in particular, his victories over Teichmann (Carlsbad 1907) and Znosko-Borovsky (St Petersburg 1909) are well

known. Rubinstein linked 7 ♕c2 with queenside castling, and it quickly transpired that passive play on the part of Black: 7 ... c6, 7 ... a6 or 7 ... b6, is risky for him – White gains the chance to get his attack in first. Therefore the most logical reply to the early queen move is considered to be the plan employed by Teichmann at Carlsbad (1911) in his games against Kostich and Rotlevi.

7 ... c5 *(255)*

If Black wishes first to drive back the enemy bishop: 7 ...h6, he has to reckon with the sharp attack 8 h4!? and also with 8 cxd5!?, a recent idea of Yusupov. Thus in Kasparov-Portisch (Brussels 1986) after 8 cxd5 Black did not risk taking the bishop (*8 ... hxg5 9 dxe6 ♘b6 10 exf7+ ♖xf7 11 ♘xg5*, or *9 ... fxe6 10 ♘xg5 ♘b6 11 h4*), and after 8 ... exd5 9 ♗f4 c5 10 ♗e2 b6 11 0-0 ♗b7 12 ♖fd1 ♖c8 13 dxc5 bxc5 14 a4! ♕a5 15 ♘h4 White gained the advantage.

255



8 cxd5

Less good is 8 dxc5 ♘xc5 9 ♖d1 ♕a5 10 cxd5 exd5 11 ♗d3 ♘ce4, with the initiative for Black (Kostich-Teichmann, Carlsbad 1911). Sharp play arises after 8 0-0-0. In the source game Black gained the advantage: 8 ... ♕a5 9 cxd5 exd5 10 dxc5?! ♘xc5 11 ♘d4 ♗e6 12 ♔b1 ♖ac8 13 ♗d3 h6 14 ♗xf6 ♗xf6 15 ♗f5 ♖fd8 (Rotlevi-Teichmann, Carlsbad 1911).

8 cxd5 does not have any great pretensions: White is playing for a minimal advantage.

8 ... ♘xd5 9 ♗xe7 ♕xe7 10 ♘xd5 exd5 11 ♗d3

Nothing is achieved by 11 dxc5 ♘xc5 12 ♗e2 ♗g4! (Lilienthal-Lasker, Moscow 1936).

11 ... g6
12 dxc5 ♘xc5!

12 ... ♕xc5 13 0-0 is weaker.

13 0-0

Or 13 ♖c1 ♘xd3+ 14 ♕xd3 ♗f5! 15 ♕d4 ♗e4! with equality, Alekhine-Capablanca, World Championship (10) 1927.

13 ... ♗g4
14 ♘d4 ♖ac8

Also satisfactory is 14 ... ♖fc8 15 ♕d2 ♘e6, with an equal game (Flohr-Kotov, Saltsjöbaden Interzonal 1948).

15 ♕d2 a6
16 ♗c2 ♕g5

By simple means Black has achieved an acceptable position. His sole weakness, the d5 pawn, is easily defended. Flohr therefore decides to begin lengthy manoeuvres, with the aim of weakening the opponent's vigilance. Otherwise such a position cannot be won . . .

17 f3 ♗d7 18 ♖fe1 ♖fd8 19 ♖ad1 ♕f6 20 ♗b3 ♗a4!

This eases Black's defence.

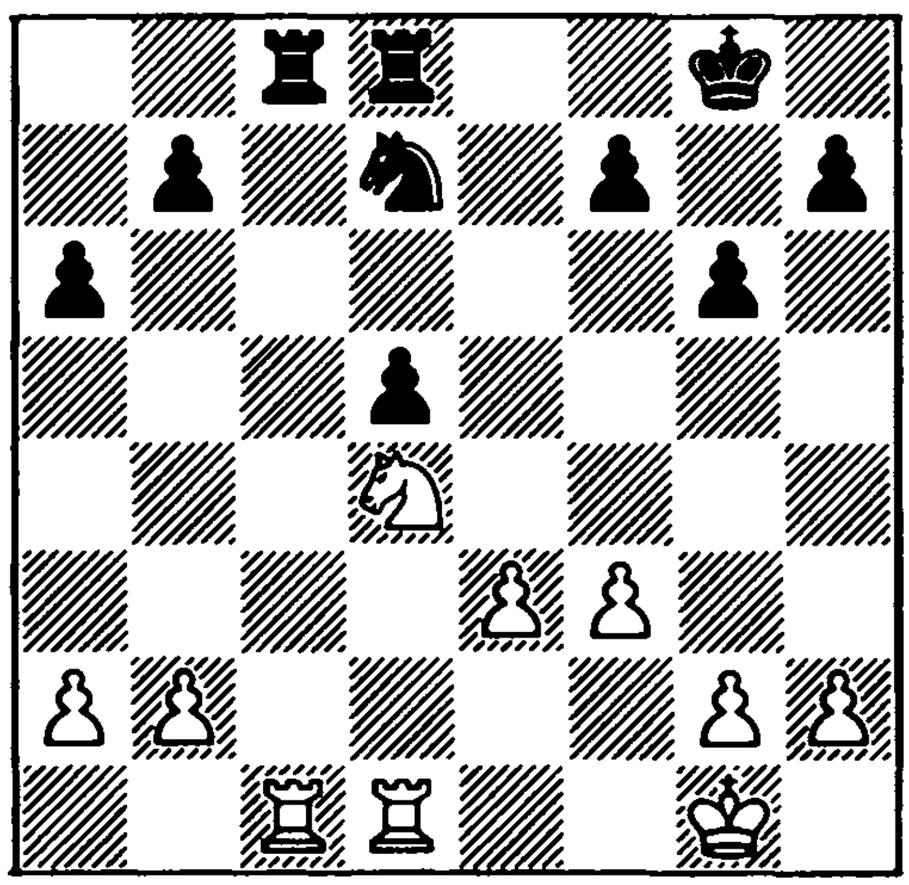
21 ♗xa4 ♘xa4 22 ♖c1 ♘c5 23 ♖ed1

♕b6 24 ♘e2 ♘d7

"Black has considerably improved his position in the last dozen moves, and could play here 24 ... ♘e6 25 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 26 ♘c3 ♘c7 with an easy draw" (Alekhine). However, the move played by Vidmar does not lose, of course.

25 ♕d4 ♕xd4
26 ♘xd4 *(256)*

256



A typical position with an isolated d-pawn. Black has no 'bad' pieces, and White's advantage is symbolic.

26 ... ♘e5 27 b3 ♔f8 28 ♔f1 ♖xc1?!

The start of an incorrect plan. The quiet 28 ... ♔e7 would have maintained approximate equality.

29 ♖xc1 ♘c6?

Black continues his incorrect tactics. After 29 ... ♔e7 the position would not have harboured any danger for Black.

30 ♘xc6! ♖c8
31 ♖c5?

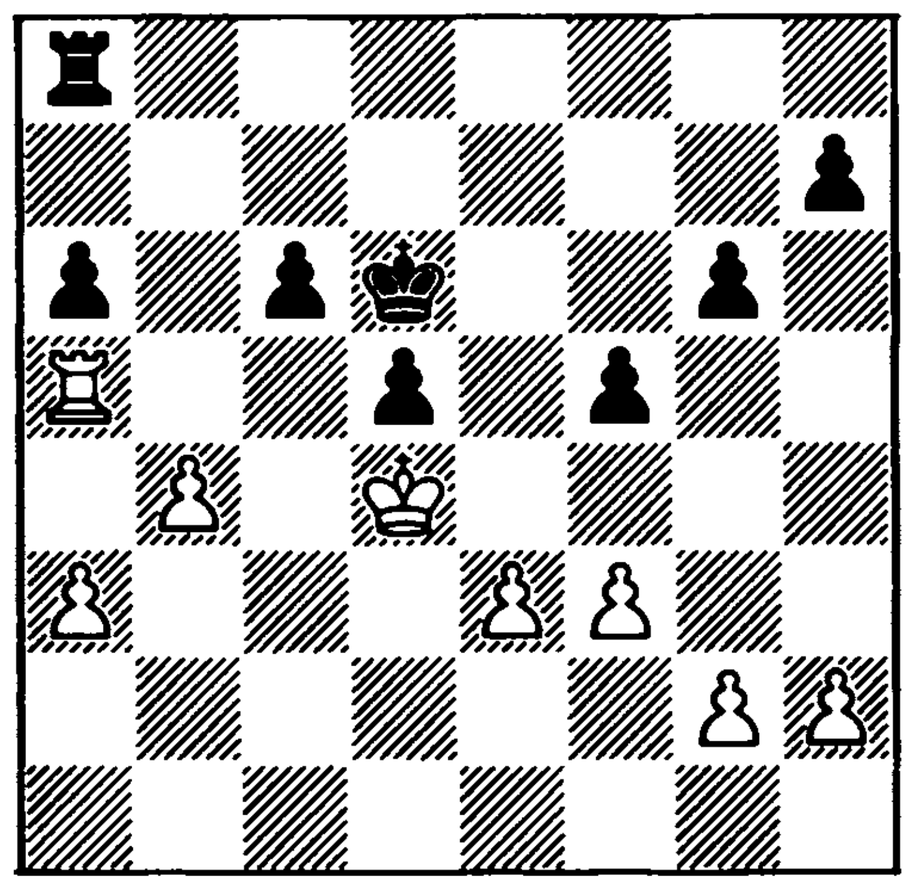
"Both players are 'swimming' – possibly through shortage of time. White should play here 31 ♔e2 ♖xc6 (or *31 ... bxc6 32 ♖c5* etc, as in the actual game) 32 ♖xc6 bxc6 33 b4 ♔e7 34 ♔d3 ♔d6 35 ♔d4, with a typical winning position" (Alekhine).

31 ... bxc6?

The law of mutual mistakes. The pawn ending after 31 ... ♖xc6! 32 ♖xc6 (*32 ♖xd5 ♖c2!*) 32 ... bxc6 33 b4 ♔e7 34 ♔e2 ♔d6 35 ♔d3 c5! promised Black an easy draw.

32 ♔e2 ♔e7 33 ♔d3 ♔d6 34 ♖a5 ♖a8 35 ♔d4 f5 36 b4 ♖b8 37 a3 ♖a8 *(257)*

257



A position which is important for understanding the methods of play against backward pawns. White has firmly fixed the weak a6 pawn and the backward pawn-couple in the centre. But to win the game, this is not enough: he must also give the opponent a weakness on the opposite side of the board. Therefore Flohr opens up the centre, in order to create a 'manoeuvring pivot' for play on two flanks.

38 e4! fxe4 39 fxe4 dxe4 40 ♔xe4 ♖a7 41 ♔f4 h6 42 h4 ♔e6 43 ♔g4 ♖a8 44 h5! g5

The aim is achieved. The h6 pawn is very weak. Now White must return his king to the centre, in order to begin a combined attack on both flanks.

45 g3 ♖a7 46 ♔f3 ♖a8 47 ♔e4 ♖a7 48

♔d4 ♔d6 49 ♔e4 ♔e6 50 ♖e5+

The decisive move. White forces the invasion of either his rook (followed by an attack on the h6 pawn), or of his king at f5.

50 ... ♔d6
51 ♖e8 c5

This leads to the loss of a pawn, but Black's position is already indefensible.

52 ♖d8+ ♔c6

52 ... ♔c7 does not help: 53 ♖h8 cxb4 54 axb4.

53 ♖c8+ ♔b6 54 ♖xc5 ♖h7 55 ♖e5 ♔c6 56 ♖e6+ ♔b5 57 ♔f5 ♖f7+ 58 ♖f6 Black resigns

Petrosian-Belyavsky
41st USSR Championship
Moscow 1973
English Opening

1 c4 c5
2 b3

Petrosian often used to choose this modest continuation, and with considerable success. He also played b2-b3 in other variations of the English Opening, for example: 1 c4 ♘f6 2 ♘c3 e6 3 ♘f3 ♗b4 4 ♕c2 0-0 5 b3 (Petrosian-Balashov, 45th USSR Championship, Leningrad 1977), or 1 c4 e5 2 b3 (Petrosian-Balashov, Moscow Spartakiad 1978).

2 ... ♘c6
3 ♗b2 ♘f6

Black avoids the ambitious 3 ... e5!? and prefers a classical course.

4 e3 e6
5 ♘f3 d5

Perhaps slightly premature. Now a favourable position for White from the Nimzowitsch Opening arises. The more restrained 5 ... ♗e7 would have led after 6 d4 cxd4 7 exd4 d5 8 ♗d3 b6 9 0-0 ♗b7 to a well known variation of the Queen's Indian Defence, usually giving a sharp game.

6 cxd5!

The accurate move order. After 6 d4?! cxd4 7 ♘xd4 ♗b4+! 8 ♗c3 ♗xc3+ 9 ♘xc3 e5 10 ♘xc6 bxc6 11 cxd5 cxd5 12 ♗b5+ ♗d7 13 ♗xd7+ ♕xd7 Black had the better game in Sajtar-Alekhine (Prague 1943).

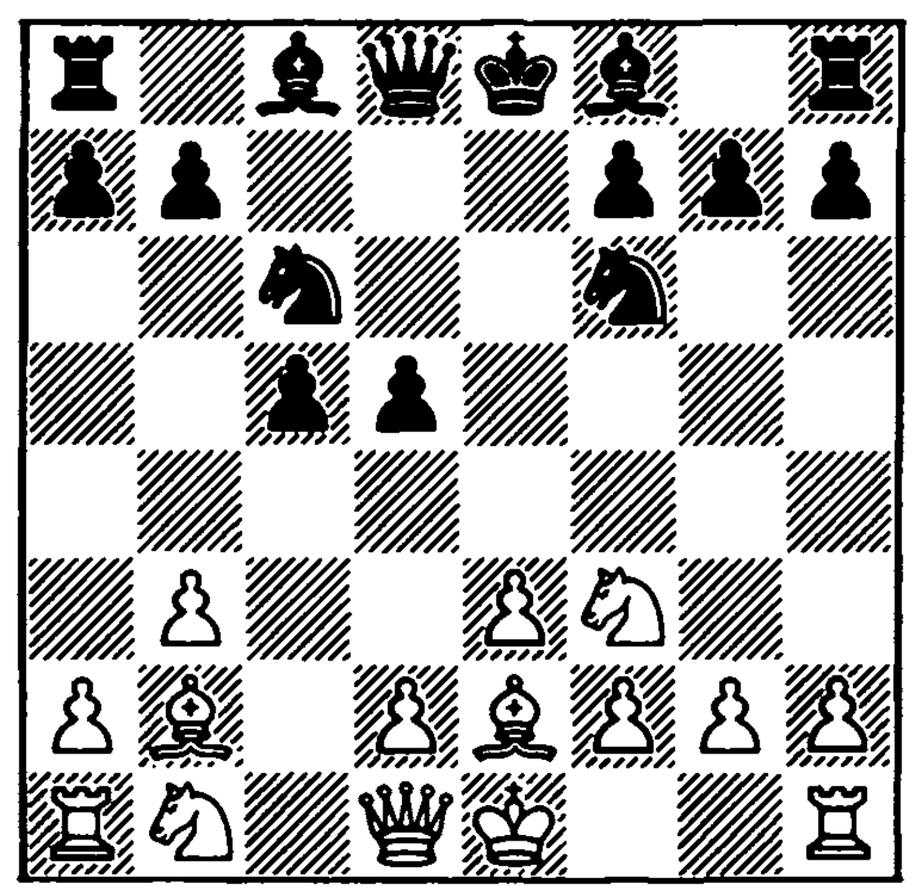
6 ... exd5

Probably stronger was 6 ... ♘xd5 7 a3 ♘f6! 8 ♗e2 ♗e7 9 0-0 0-0, with a roughly equal game (Andersson-Hübner, Biel Interzonal 1976).

7 ♗e2 *(258)*

7 ♗b5 is more typical of the Nimzowitsch Opening.

258



7 ... a6

It is hard to assert, of course, that Black already has an indifferent position, but he has some difficulties in his choice of plan. Thus 7 ... ♗e7 8 0-0 0-0 9 d4! leads to a favourable version for White of the

Tarrasch Defence: 9 ... ♗g4 10 dxc5 ♗xc5 11 ♘c3 ♖c8 12 ♖c1 ♗e7 13 ♘d4!, with an unpromising position for Black (Petrosian-Hort, Sarajevo 1972), while 7 ... d4 seems too risky, although in Flohr-Estrin (Moscow 1957) Black maintained the balance: 8 exd4 cxd4 9 ♗b5 ♗c5 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♕c2 ♕d5.

8 d4 cxd4?!

Now a position from the Queen's Indian Defence with colours reversed is reached, and essentially with an extra tempo for White – the move ... a6 does not count (*1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 b6 4 e3 ♗b7 5 ♗d3 c5 6 0-0 ♗e7 7 ♘c3 cxd4 8 exd4 d5 9 cxd5 ♘xd5*), and the win of a tempo on the next move (... *♗f8-b4+* instead of *♗f1-d3-b5+*) does not bring Black any advantage. He should have preferred the Tarrasch Defence: 8 ... ♗e7 9 0-0 0-0.

9 ♘xd4 ♗b4+

9 ... ♗d6 10 0-0 0-0 11 ♘c3 leads to a favourable position for White, considered in the notes to the game Vidmar-Rubinstein (p.119).

10 ♗c3 ♗d6

Nothing is achieved by 10 ... ♕a5 11 ♕d3 ♗xc3+ 12 ♘xc3 ♘xd4 13 ♕xd4 ♘e4 14 ♖c1 with advantage to White (pointed out by I.Zaitsev). 11 ♕d2 is also possible.

11 ♘d2 0-0
12 0-0 ♗c7

Black prepares the ♗c7/♕d6 'battery'.

13 ♘xc6!

Nimzowitsch's prescription: "from isolated pawn to isolated pawn-couple" is very strong here. Black is unable to 'straighten out' with ... c5, and with every move his position loses stability.

13 ... bxc6 14 ♕c2 ♖e8 15 ♗d4!

Gaining secure control over the key square c5.

15 ... ♕d6
16 g3 ♗g4?!

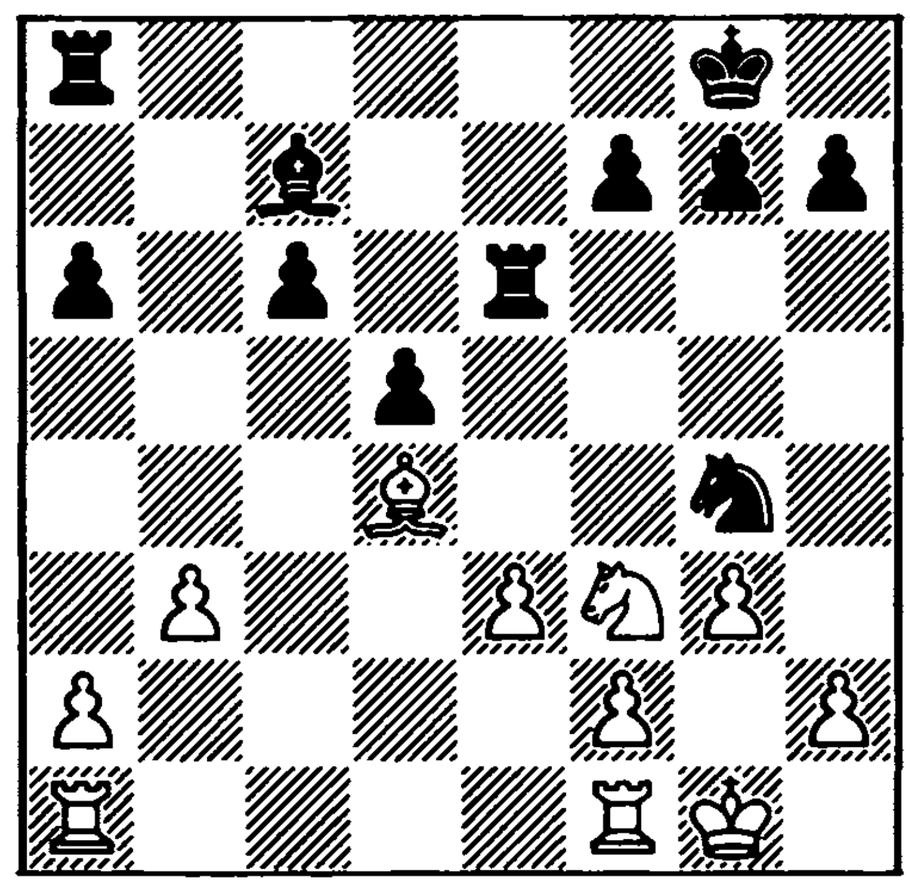
Black embarks on an attack on the king, but he has little in the way of forces, and it is not surprising that a refutation is easily found. The bishop should have been kept at d7 for the defence of the c6 pawn.

17 ♗xg4 ♘xg4 18 ♘f3 ♕h6? 19 ♕f5!

And here is the refutation. Now 19 ... ♕h3 20 ♕xf7+! is bad, and so Black is forced into a cheerless ending.

19 ... ♕e6
20 ♕xe6 ♖xe6 (259)

259



Black's pawn-couple in the centre is securely blockaded, and Petrosian begins a methodical siege of it. White's position can already be considered strategically won.

21 ♖ac1 f6 22 ♖c2 ♘e5 23 ♗xe5!

White happily exchanges his bishop for the enemy knight. Now Black has no way of preventing the white knight from going to d3 after suitable preparation. In addition, the bishop is insecurely placed at e5.

23 ... ♗xe5 24 ♖fc1 ♖c8 25 ♖c5 ♖d6

26 ♖xd5 was threatened. But the rook move has blocked the bishop's retreat diagonal.

26 ♖1c2 ♔f7
27 ♔f1

Petrosian does everything thoroughly, not forgetting about his king.

27 ... ♔e6
28 ♘e1!

This essentially concludes the game. 29 f4 is threatened.

28 ... d4

This desperate freeing attempt leads to the loss of a pawn.

29 f4 d3 30 ♖d2 ♗b2 31 ♖xd3

White has won a pawn. The rest is a matter of technique, which with Petrosian was always of a high standard.

31 ... ♖a8 32 ♖xd6+ ♔xd6 33 ♘d3 a5 34 ♖c4 ♗a3 35 ♖a4 ♗c5 36 ♘xc5! ♔xc5 37 b4+ ♔c4 38 ♖xa5 ♖b8 39 a3 ♔d3 40 ♔f2 ♖b7 41 ♖c5 ♖a7 42 ♖xc6 ♖xa3 43 ♔f3 Black resigns

Petrosian-Botvinnik
World Championship (3)
Moscow 1963
Queen's Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 ♘f3 e6 3 g3 b6 4 ♗g2 ♗b7 5 c4 ♗e7 6 0-0 0-0 7 ♘c3 ♘e4 8 ♘xe4 ♗xe4 9 ♘e1 ♗xg2 10 ♘xg2

The present-day popularity of the Queen's Indian Defence owes much to Petrosian. He successfully played it in the 1950s, when 'public opinion' was fairly accurately expressed by Bronstein, regarding the opening results of the 1953 Zürich Candidates Tournament: "In general it seems to me that the best way of playing against the Queen's Indian Defence is not to allow it. In this tournament, out of 15 Queen's Indians, White won two and Black won six. However, this is not typical. It would have been more typical if all 15 had ended in draws".

But in the World Championship Match, Botvinnik unexpectedly experienced significant difficulties in the Queen's Indian Defence. And they began imperceptibly, in the present game, when Botvinnik was leading 1½-½, and it appeared that the Challenger had chosen a 'colourless' variation with the sole aim of gaining a respite.

10 ... d5

The most logical. The alternatives 10 ... d6, 10 ... ♘c6 and 10 ... c5 are less promising for Black. For example: 10 ... c5 11 d5 ♗f6 12 e4 ♖e8 13 ♘e3 d6 14 ♖b1 with the better game for White (Lengyel-Portisch, Budapest 1970).

11 ♕a4 c5

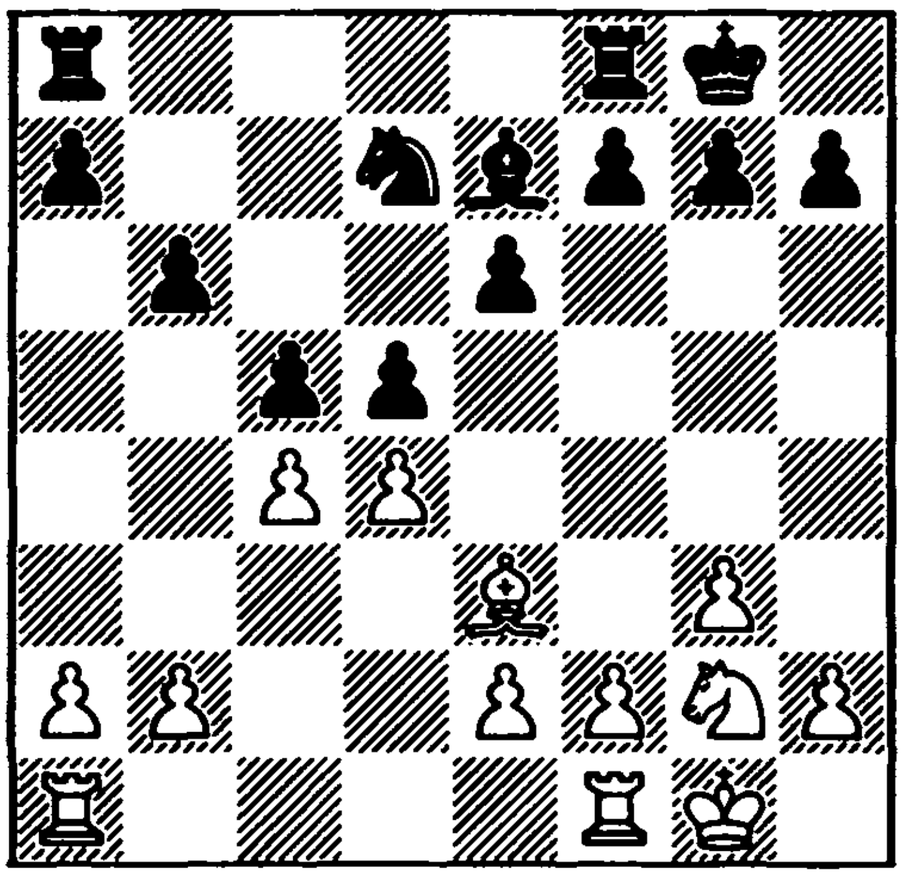
11 ... dxc4 12 ♕xc4 c5 is also quite possible, for example: 13 ♗e3 cxd4 14 ♗xd4 ♕c8 15 ♖fc1 ♕xc4 16 ♖xc4 ♖d8 – the game is level (Portisch-Karpov, Skara 1980).

12 ♗e3 ♕d7

Botvinnik is true to himself: at the start of matches he always played with great vigour, trying immediately to smash his opponent. And here he decided that it was not yet time to 'let White off' with a draw. The World Champion evidently underestimated the difficulties awaiting him in the ending, otherwise he would have chosen the simple 12 ... cxd4, transposing into the variation given in the previous note, and suggested by Kotov after the game.

13 ♕xd7 ♘xd7 *(260)*

260



14 cxd5 exd5 15 ♘f4 ♘f6 16 dxc5 bxc5 17 ♖ac1 d4

The consequences of attempting to avoid this generally unfavourable advance are not good: 17 ... ♖fb8?! 18 ♗xc5 ♗xc5 19 ♖xc5 ♖xb2 20 ♖a5 g5 21 ♘xd5 ♘xd5 22 ♖xd5 h6 23 ♖c1 ♖xe2 24 ♖c6 ♔g7 25 ♖a6, and Black's difficulties have not diminished (Furman-Antoshin, Moscow 1964).

18 ♗d2 a5

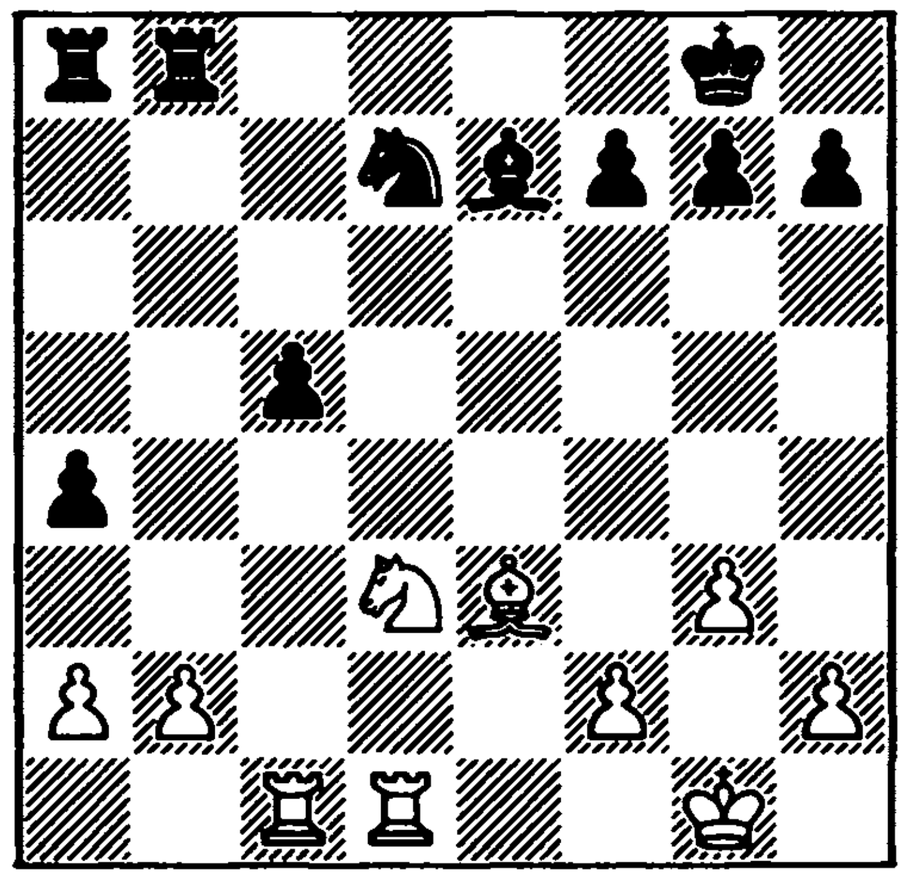
"Directed against b2-b3, to which Black replies ... a4" (Bondarevsky). This move could have been delayed, but this would not have changed the evaluation of the ending as difficult for Black: 18 ... ♖fb8 19 ♘d3 h6 20 ♖c2 a5 21 ♖fc1 ♘d7 22 e3! (Krogius-Matanović, Le Havre 1966).

19 ♘d3 ♘d7
20 e3!

Only in this way can White approach Black's weaknesses.

20 ... dxe3 21 ♗xe3 ♖fb8 22 ♖fd1 a4 *(261)*

261



White is besieging the c5 pawn and has a firm hold on the initiative. Black is aiming at the b2 pawn and preparing to parry the opponent's onslaught. Petrosian's favourite tactic in such situations, which Fischer picturesquely described as 'cat-and-mouse', was slow, unhurried play, where moves presenting a danger to the opponent would be submerged in a mass of meaningless moves, camouflaging them, and dulling the opponent's vigilance.

23 ♔g2 h6 24 ♖d2 ♖b5 25 ♘f4 ♘f6 26 ♔f3 ♖ab8 27 ♘d3 ♘d7 28 ♗f4 ♖8b7 29 ♗e3 f6?

Petrosian's manner of play had an effect even on Botvinnik. He should have either repeated the position with 29 ... ♖b8, or played 29 ... ♗f6. But now on the kingside Black acquires weaknesses, which in combination with the c5 pawn place him under a real threat of defeat.

30 h4 h5

Of course, Black did not want to allow the further advance of the h-pawn, but after the move played Petrosian wins material by an elegant manoeuvre.

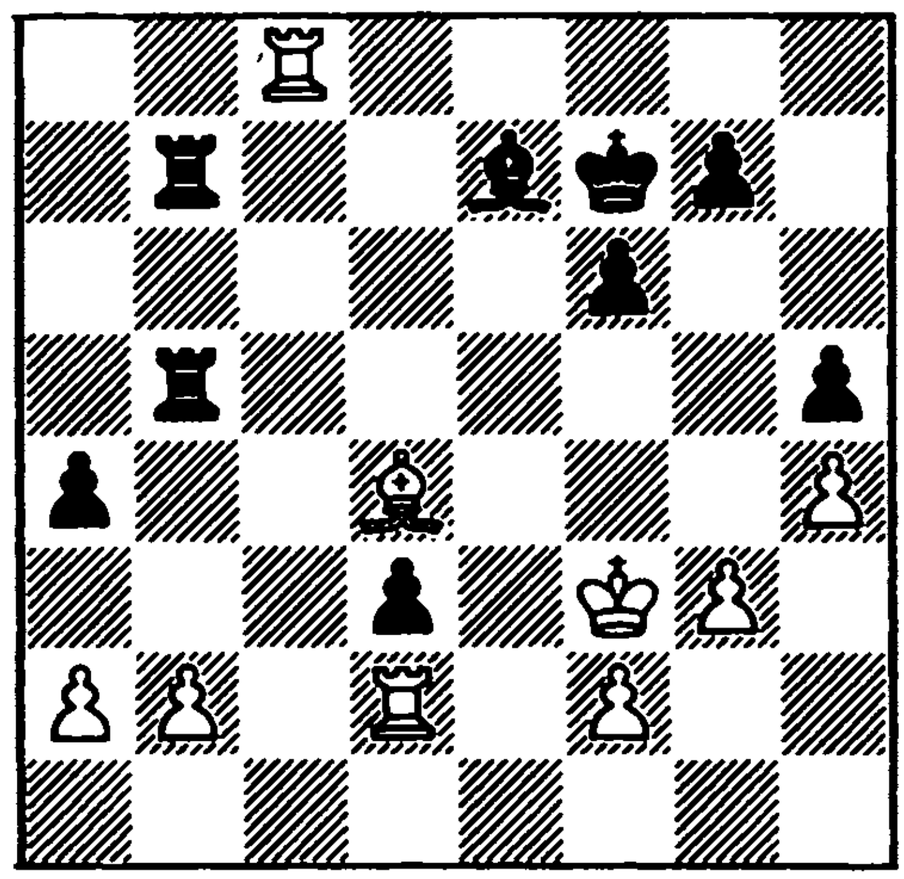
31 ♖c4! ♘b6
32 ♖cc2

It transpires that on 32 ... ♘d7 there follows 33 ♘f4, when Black loses a pawn.

32 ... c4 33 ♗xb6 cxd3 34 ♖c8+ ♔f7

35 ♗d4 *(262)*

262



The d3 pawn is doomed. Black's position is critical. He will gradually lose if he does not urgently find counterplay.

35 ... g5! 36 ♖c4 ♖b4 37 ♖xb4 ♖xb4 38 ♗c3

In the event of 38 ♖xd3 gxh4 39 gxh4 f5 Black should not lose.

38 ... ♖c4 39 hxg5 fxg5 40 ♖xd3 ♗f6 41 a3 h4 42 gxh4 ♗xc3 43 ♖xc3 ♖xh4

Botvinnik has managed to change the course of the game. The rook ending is drawish, White's winning chances being purely practical.

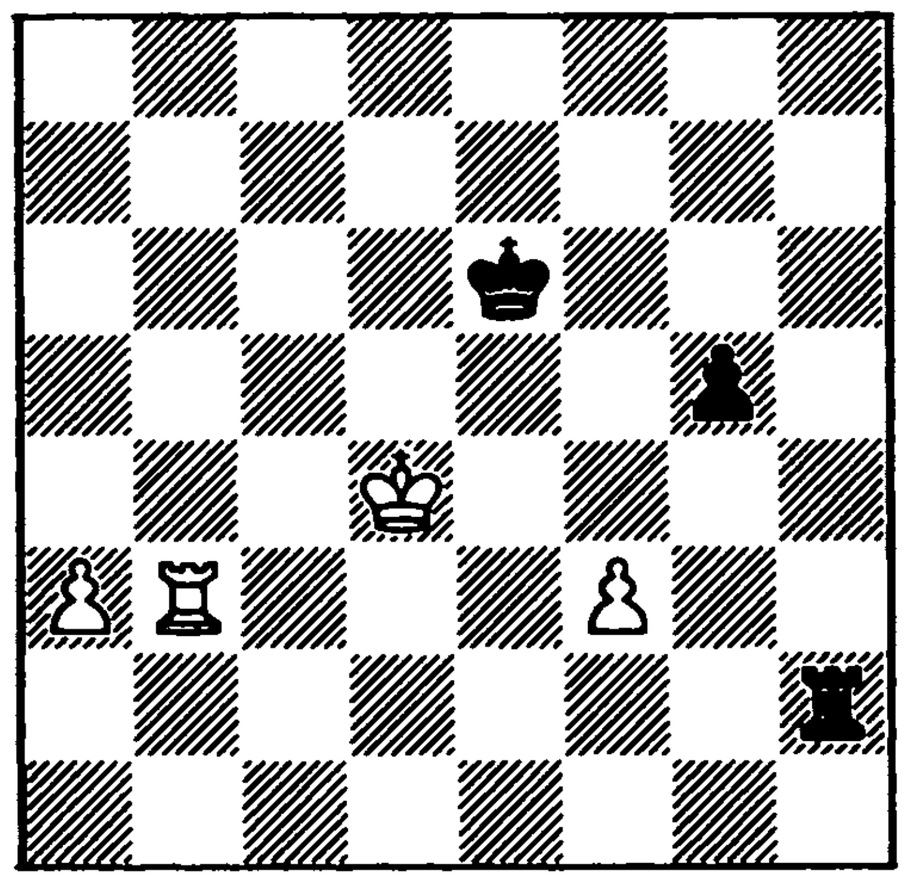
44 ♖c5 ♔f6 45 ♖b5 ♖f4+ 46 ♔e3 ♖h4 47 ♖b4 ♔e5

Black's method of defence is clear. He is not afraid of going into the pawn ending, and White's only chance lies in an exchange of pawns on the queenside. After a long series of waiting moves Petrosian makes this exchange.

48 ♔d3 ♔e6 49 ♖b5 ♔f6 50 ♔e2 ♖e4+ 51 ♔f1 ♖h4 52 ♔g1 ♖g4+ 53 ♔h2 ♖h4+ 54 ♔g2 ♖g4+ 55 ♔h3 ♖h4+ 56 ♔g3 ♖d4 57 ♔f3 ♖f4+ 58 ♔e3 ♖h4 59 ♖b8 ♔e6 60 ♖e8+ ♔f6 61 ♔d2 ♔f7 62 ♖e3 ♖f4 63 f3 ♖h4 64 ♔c3 ♖h3 65 ♔d4 ♖h2 66 b4 axb3

67 ♖xb3 ♔e6 *(263)*

263



There are very few pawns left on the board. For Black it is very important that the pawns remaining on the kingside are asymmetric. If the black pawn were at f5, White's winning chances would be significantly improved, since there would be no possibility of the pawns being exchanged, and quite a high probability of the f5 pawn being lost.

68 ♔c5 ♔d7
69 ♔d5 ♖e2

In Botvinnik's opinion, 69 ... ♔c7 was simpler.

70 a4

"By 70 ♖b7+ White could have set his opponent more difficult problems, although even then 70 .. ♔c8 71 ♖f7 ♖a2 72 ♔c6 ♔b8 should lead to a draw" (Kotov).

70 ... ♔c7 71 a5 ♖a2 72 ♖b5 ♖a4 73 ♔e5 g4 74 f4

The f- and g-pawns have passed one another. A draw is imminent.

74 ... g3 75 ♖b3 ♖xa5+ 76 ♔e6 ♖a6+ 77 ♔e7 ♖g6 78 ♖c3+ ♔b6 79 ♖c1 g2 80 ♖g1 ♔c7 81 f5 ♖g3 82 f6 ♖e3+ 83 ♔f7 ♖g3 84 ♔e6 ♖e3+ 85 ♔f5 ♖g3 86 f7 ♖f3+ Draw agreed

Lputian-Dorfman
Tashkent 1984
Queen's Gambit

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 d5 4 ♘c3 ♗e7 5 ♗g5 h6 6 ♗h4 0-0 7 e3 b6

Today the Tartakower Variation is regarded as Black's main defence in the Orthodox Queen's Gambit, and it has frequently occurred in the World Championship Matches between Karpov and Kasparov. The ideas put forward by the world's top grandmasters were immediately taken up by players of various strengths and in various parts of the world. The present game, played at the same time as the match in Moscow, was no exception.

8 ♖c1 ♗b7
9 cxd5 exd5

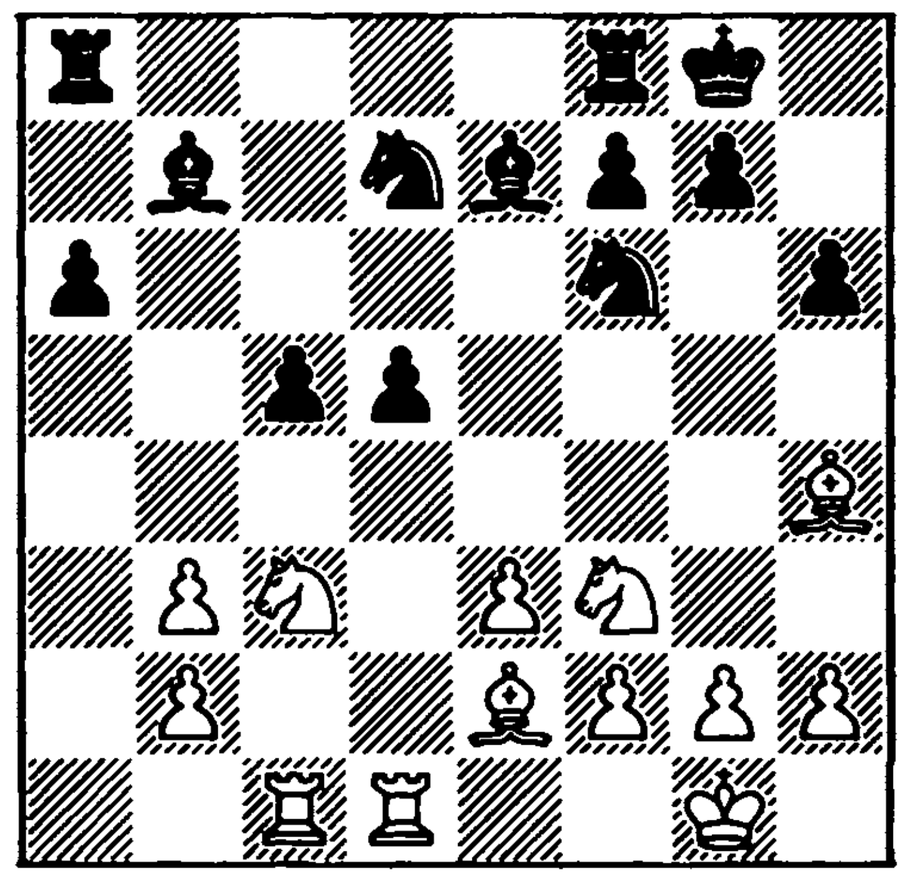
9 ... ♘xd5 is also played.

10 ♗e2 ♘bd7 11 0-0 c5 12 ♕a4

In the 25th game of the Moscow match, Karpov with White preferred here 12 dxc5 bxc5 13 ♖c2!, and after 13 ... ♖c8 14 ♖d2 ♕b6 he offered the exchange of queens: 15 ♕b3! In positions with hanging pawns it would appear that no one had played this way before, and it was only by accurate defence that Kasparov maintained the balance: 15 ... ♖fd8 16 ♖fd1 ♕xb3 17 axb3 ♘b6 18 ♘e5 ♔f8 19 h3 a6! 20 ♗f3 ♗a8! 21 ♘g4 ♘g8! Karpov's idea is employed by Lputian, with a slight change of move order.

12 ... a6 13 dxc5 bxc5 14 ♖fd1 ♕b6 15 ♕b3! ♕xb3 16 axb3 *(264)*

264



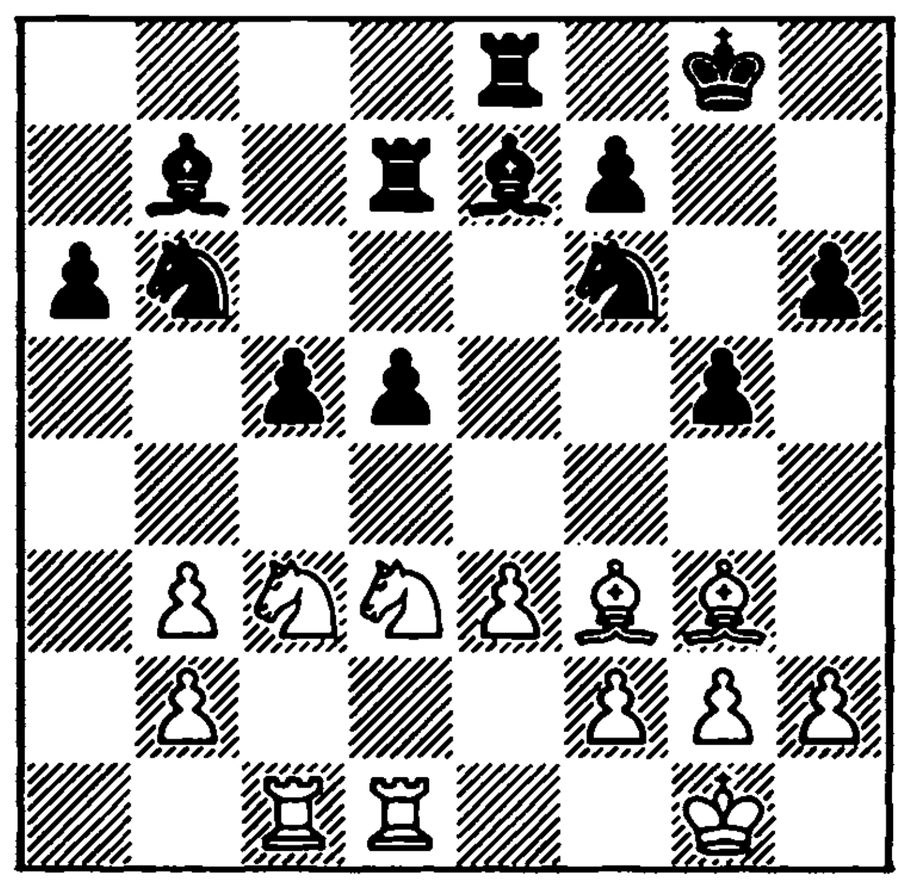
It was established by Nimzowitsch that doubled pawns possess increased stability, and that they are good in stopping the advance of mobile enemy pawns in the centre. In this case, however, the doubled b-pawns are isolated and are on an open file, and therefore White, when offering the exchange of queens, would have had to take account of possible counterplay by the opponent.

16 ... ♖fd8

A natural move, but perhaps consideration should have been given to 16 ... ♗c6, which does not meet the demands of aesthetics, but creates the grounds for counterplay by 17 ... ♖fb8.

17 ♘e1! ♘b6 18 ♗f3 ♖d7? 19 ♘d3 g5 20 ♗g3 ♖e8 *(265)*

265



"It is hard to believe, but in this position Black loses a pawn by force. The following manoeuvre by White is not

original, but it is instructive" (Razuvayev).

21 ♘e5 ♖dd8 22 ♘c4! ♘bd7 23 ♘a5 ♗a8 24 ♘xd5

With the loss of this pawn Black's position collapses. Lputian plays the technical part of the game very vigorously:

24 ... ♘xd5 25 ♗xd5 ♗xd5 26 ♖xd5 ♘f6 27 ♖xd8 ♗xd8 28 ♘b7 ♗e7 29 ♖c4! ♘d5 30 ♗d6 ♘b6 31 ♖c1 ♗xd6 32 ♘xd6 ♖d8 33 ♘f5 h5 34 g3 ♖d3 35 ♖xc5 ♖xb3 36 ♘d4 ♖xb2 37 ♖xg5+ ♔f8 38 ♖xh5 ♖a2 39 h4 a5 40 ♘f5 ♔e8 41 ♖h8+ ♔d7 42 h5 Black resigns

4.6 THE TWO BISHOPS

The character of the play in the opening stage sometimes demands an early exchange of minor pieces, and often a bishop is exchanged for a knight. One of the players becomes the possessor of the two bishops, which normally represent a definite advantage, especially in the endgame.

In this short chapter we examine some examples where the main feature of the play is not the pawn configuration or the method of fighting for the centre, but the advantage of the two bishops.

For some further examples the reader is referred to the games **Geller-Keres**, 20th USSR Championship, Moscow 1952 (cf. p.137 of Geller's *The Application of Chess Theory*) and **Kasparov-Smyslov**, Candidates Final (9), Vilnius 1984 (cf. p.203 of Kasparov's *The Test of Time*), as well as the chapter on the two bishops in Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy* (pp. 121-142).

Uhlmann-Larsen
Fredericia 1957
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 c5 5 ♘e2

Rubinstein's classical continuation. White avoids the doubling of his pawns.

5 ... d5

It is more promising first to exchange pawns in the centre: 5 ... cxd4 6 exd4 d5.

6 a3!

This move secures White the advantage of the two bishops and the more pleasant game.

6 ... cxd4?!

6 ... ♗xc3+ is more modest, and also sounder. Then Botvinnik's plan, 7 ♘xc3 cxd4 8 exd4 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 ♘c6 10 ♗e3 0-0 11 0-0 b6 12 ♕d3! promises White some advantage, for example: 12 ... ♗b7 13 ♖ad1 h6! (bad is *13 ... ♘e7 14 ♗g5 ♘g6 15 f4! h6 16 f5!*, Botvinnik-Tolush, Moscow v. Leningrad 1965) 14 f3 ♖c8 15 ♗a2 (Gligorić-Jurić, Vršac 1983).

7 axb4 dxc3
8 ♘xc3 dxc4?!

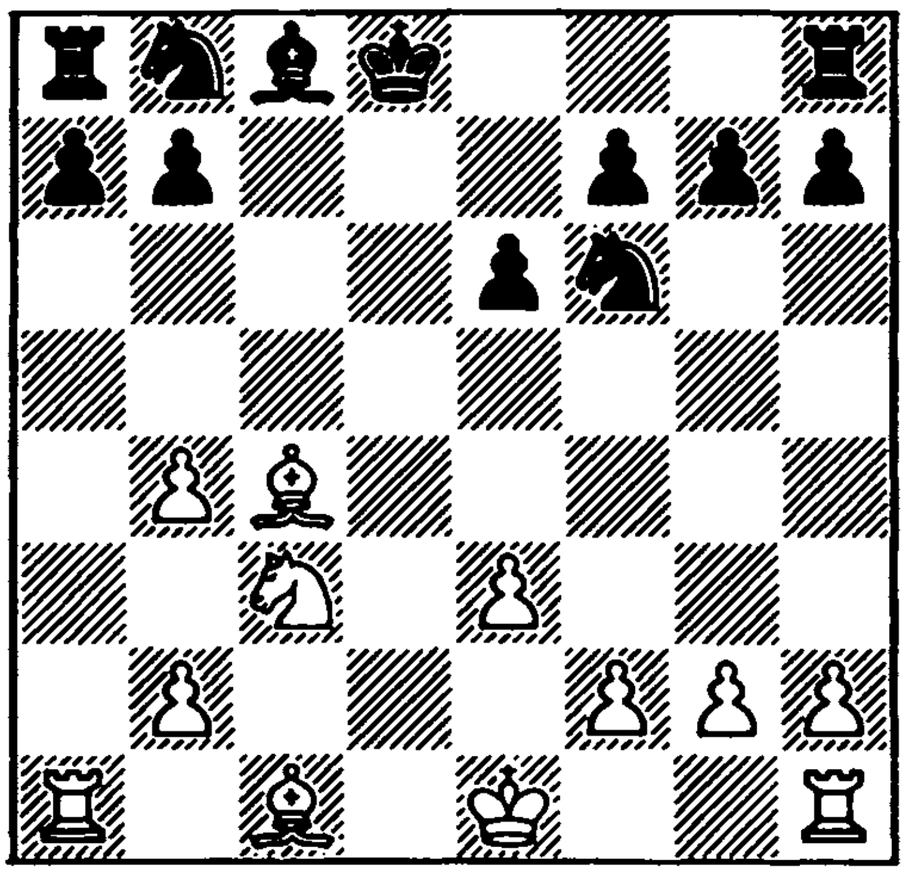
And this is playing with fire. In the ending Black has no way of opposing the white bishops. Najdorf played more cautiously against Botvinnik in the Alekhine Memorial (Moscow 1956): 8 ... 0-0 9 cxd5 ♘xd5 10 ♘xd5 ♕xd5 11 ♕xd5 exd5, although here too White's advantage was considerable.

9 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8
10 ♗xc4 *(266)*

In the ending White has a significant positional advantage, thanks to his two bishops and the possibility of creating

weaknesses on the opponent's queenside.

266



10 ... ♘bd7 11 0-0 ♔e7 12 e4 b6 13 f3 ♘e5?

An incorrect manoeuvre, which loses time. Playing the knight to d4 proves impracticable. It was better to develop simply with 13 ... ♗b7.

14 ♗e2 ♘c6
15 ♗e3!

Larsen had evidently overlooked this move. It is unfavourable for Black to capture on b4 in view of the loss of his b6 pawn.

15 ... ♗b7
16 ♖a4!

Again excellently played. Uhlmann skilfully combines defence with active play. White is preparing a decisive regrouping of his pieces.

16 ... ♘d7 17 ♖fa1 a6 18 b5! axb5 19 ♗xb5

Black's b6 pawn is very weak.

19 ... ♖ac8

Larsen is forced to concede the a-file, in view of the threatened ♘a4 after the exchange of rooks.

20 ♖4a3!

White builds up the pressure with inexorable consistency. The threat of 21 ♘a4 is renewed.

20 ... ♘ce5
21 ♖a7

After 21 ♘a4 Black could have successfully defended with 21 ... ♗c6.

21 ... ♗c6
22 ♖d1!

White should not be in a hurry to win the b6 pawn. After 22 ♗xb6?! ♗xb5 23 ♘xb5 Black could have gained counterplay by 23 ... ♖c2.

22 ... ♖a8 23 ♗xb6 ♖xa7 24 ♗xa7 ♗xb5 25 ♘xb5

Uhlmann has won a pawn, and the technical phase commences.

25 ... ♖c8 26 ♗d4 g5 27 ♗c3 ♖b8 28 ♘d6 ♘c6?

An oversight in a lost position. White wins a second pawn, and Black's further resistance becomes pointless. The game concluded:

29 ♘xf7 g4 30 fxg4 ♖g8 31 h3 ♘c5 32 ♘d6 ♖d8 33 e5 ♘e4 34 ♗e1 h6 35 ♖c1 Black resigns

Furman-Gipslis
USSR Championship Semi-Final
Riga 1955
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 0-0 5 ♗d3 d5 6 ♘f3 c5 7 0-0 ♘bd7

In the present game the reputation of 7 ... ♘bd7 was shaken for the first time.

8 a3! *(267)*

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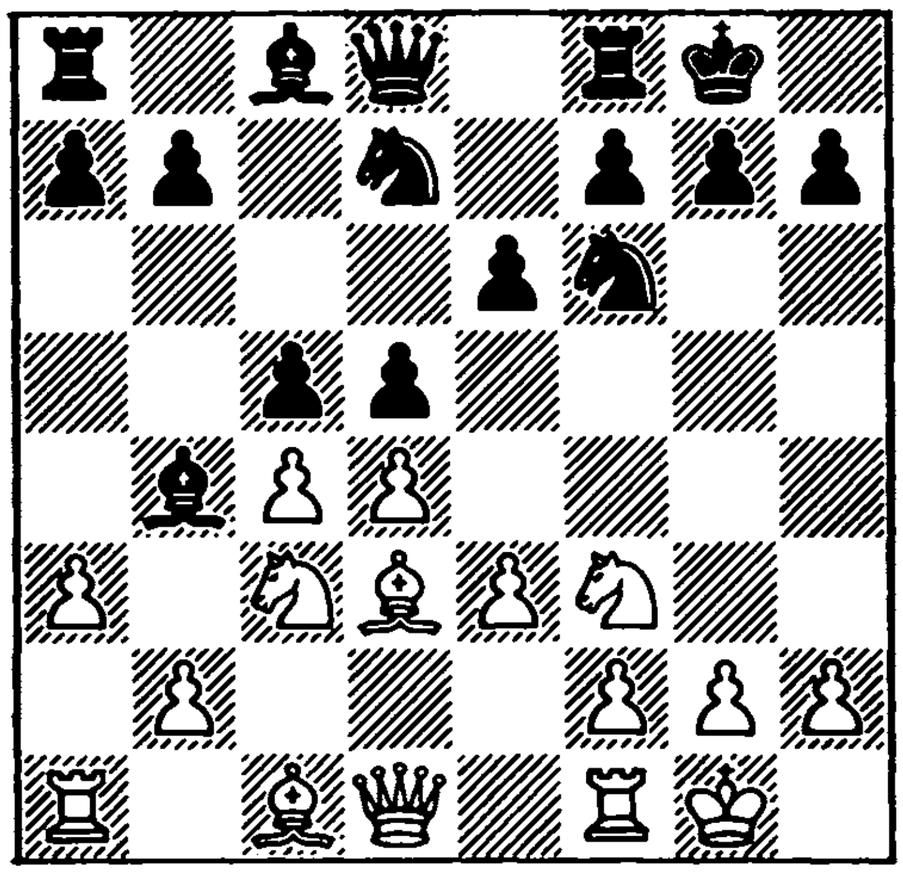


8 ... cxd4

After it transpired that the capture on d4 is bad, 8 ... dxc4 was the next move tried. The results were not very comforting: after 9 axb4 cxd4 10 ♗xh7+! ♘xh7 11 ♕xd4 it is hard to give Black good advice. The game Antoshin-Estrin (Leningrad 1957) concluded quickly: 11 ... ♘b6 12 e4 (also possible is *12 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 13 e4 ♗d7 14 ♗e3 ♘f6 15 ♘e5 ♖dc8 16 ♗xb6 axb6 17 ♖xa8 ♖xa8 18 ♘xc4*, winning a pawn, Taimanov-Barcza, Havana 1967) 12 ... ♕xd4 13 ♘xd4 ♗d7 14 ♗e3 ♘f6 15 f3 ♘c8 16 ♖fd1 ♘e7 17 ♘c2 a6 18 ♗c5 ♖fe8 19 ♘e3 b5 20 e5 ♘fd5 21 ♗xe7 ♖xe7 22 ♘exd5 exd5 23 ♘xd5 ♖xe5 24 ♘b6 1-0.

For a long time 8 ... ♗a5 was considered a sound reply, but Gligorić's brilliant discovery 9 cxd5 exd5 10 b4! cxb4 11 ♘b5! put this variation out of use.

Finally, 8 ... ♗xc3 9 bxc3 dxc4 10 ♗xc4 ♕c7 is also insufficient, since the black knight should be at c6, and the lack of pressure on d4 allowed White in Boleslavsky-Averbakh (18th USSR Championship, Moscow 1950) to seize the initiative by 11 ♕e2 e5 12 e4!.

9 ♘xd5!

It was never a laughing matter to fall into one of Furman's preparations. After this strong blow Black ends up by force in a poor position.

9 ... exd5 10 axb4 dxc4 11 ♗xc4 ♘b6 12 ♗b3 dxe3 13 ♗xe3 ♘fd5

Black's lot is not eased by either 13 ... ♗e6 14 ♗xe6 fxe6 15 ♕xd8 ♖fxd8 16 ♖xa7 ♖xa7 17 ♗xb6 (Korchnoi-Darga, Hastings 1955/56), or 13 ... ♘bd5 14 ♗c5 ♖e8 15 ♖e1 ♖xe1+ 16 ♕xe1 b6 17 ♗d4 ♗b7 18 ♖d1 ♕e8 19 ♗e5! (Tal-Tolush, 25th USSR Championship, Riga 1958).

14 ♗c5 ♖e8 15 ♖e1 ♗e6 16 ♘d4!

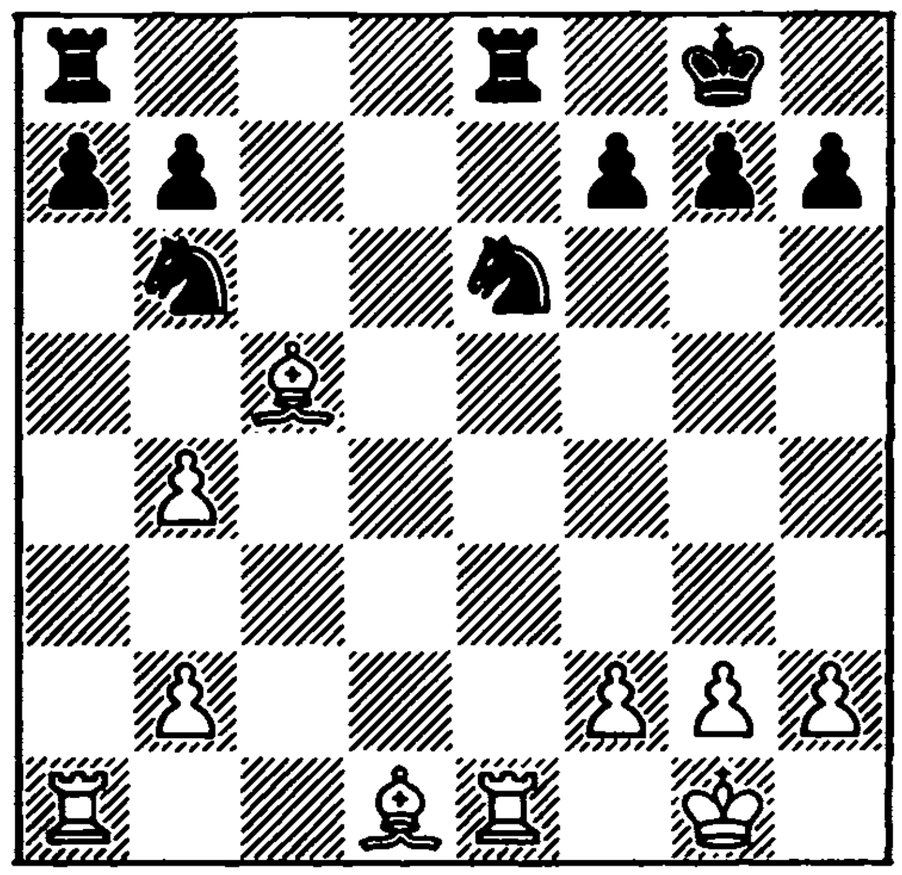
Forcing an ending, in which White's two ferocious bishops will smash Black's position within literally a few moves.

16 ... ♘f4
17 ♘xe6 ♕xd1

After 17 ... ♘xe6 18 ♕xd8 the a7 pawn is immediately lost. However, even now it does not have long to 'live'.

18 ♗xd1 ♘xe6 *(268)*

268



19 ♗f3

The second white bishop is aimed at the opponent's queenside.

19 ... ♖ab8

Defence by tactical means. The a7

pawn is immune, in view of the weakness of White's back rank.

20 ♗e3!

White renews the threat to the a7 pawn, against which there is no defence, since 20 ... ♘c8? loses immediately to 21 ♗f4.

20 ... ♖e7
21 ♖xa7!?

Concrete play. Furman does not fear the exchange of one of his bishops, and even agrees to the breaking up of his kingside pawns, since he correctly assumes that the superiority of his remaining bishop over the knight and the weakness of the b7 pawn will give White a decisive advantage.

21 ... ♘d4 22 ♖d1 ♘xf3+ 23 gxf3 ♘c4 24 ♗c5 ♖c7?!

Gipslis does not wish to allow the invasion of the white rook at d7 after 24 ... ♖ee8, but an unpleasant surprise awaits him.

25 f4!

It transpires that the knight is trapped.

25 ... ♘xb2 26 ♖d2 ♘c4 27 ♖d4 ♖c6

27 ... ♘b2 would also not have saved Black after 28 ♖a2 b6 29 ♗d6.

28 ♖xb7! Resigns

Boleslavsky-Taimanov
20th USSR Championship
Moscow 1952
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 ♘c6

In the 1950s and 1960s Taimanov regularly used to reply 4 ... ♘c6 to Rubinstein's move 4 e3. Now the entire 4 e3 ♘c6 variation bears the name of the Leningrad master.

5 ♘f3 0-0 6 ♗d3 d5 7 0-0 dxc4

In the same tournament Botvinnik played against Taimanov 'Rubinstein-style' – 5 ♘e2, Smyslov played 'Sämisch-style' – 5 a3, while Boleslavsky transposes into a variation of the Ragozin Defence.

8 ♗xc4 ♕e8

Rather directly played – in the spirit of those times. Nowadays preference is given to manoeuvring tactics and to the 'battle for a tempo' – 7 ... a6 or 7 ... h6. The innovation introduced by Taimanov in the present game was instead of the then popular 8 ... ♗d6!? Black aims for ... e5, and intends to retreat his bishop as soon as it is attacked by a2-a3. 8 ... ♕e7?!, with the same aim, is weaker on account of 9 a3 ♗d6 10 e4 e5 11 ♗g5!, when the pin is rather painful for Black. In particular, 12 ♘d5 is threatened.

9 e4

It is dangerous to accept this pawn sacrifice, which gives White fine chances. Here is one of the variations suggested by Boleslavsky: 9 ... ♗xc3 10 bxc3 ♘xe4 11 ♖e1! ♘xc3 12 ♕d3 b5 13 ♘g5! g6 14 ♕xc3 bxc4 15 d5 ♘e7 16 dxe6 f6 17 ♗a3, and Black's position is in pieces.

9 ... e5
10 d5 ♘d4?

This impetuous move turns out to be an irreparable mistake. The modest 10 ... ♘b8 11 ♗g5 ♘bd7 was correct, with only slightly the better game for White.

11 ♘xd4 exd4 12 ♕xd4 ♗xc3 13 bxc3 ♕xe4 14 ♕xe4 ♘xe4 *(269)*

Black's knight manoeuvres have led to a great simplification of the position. He

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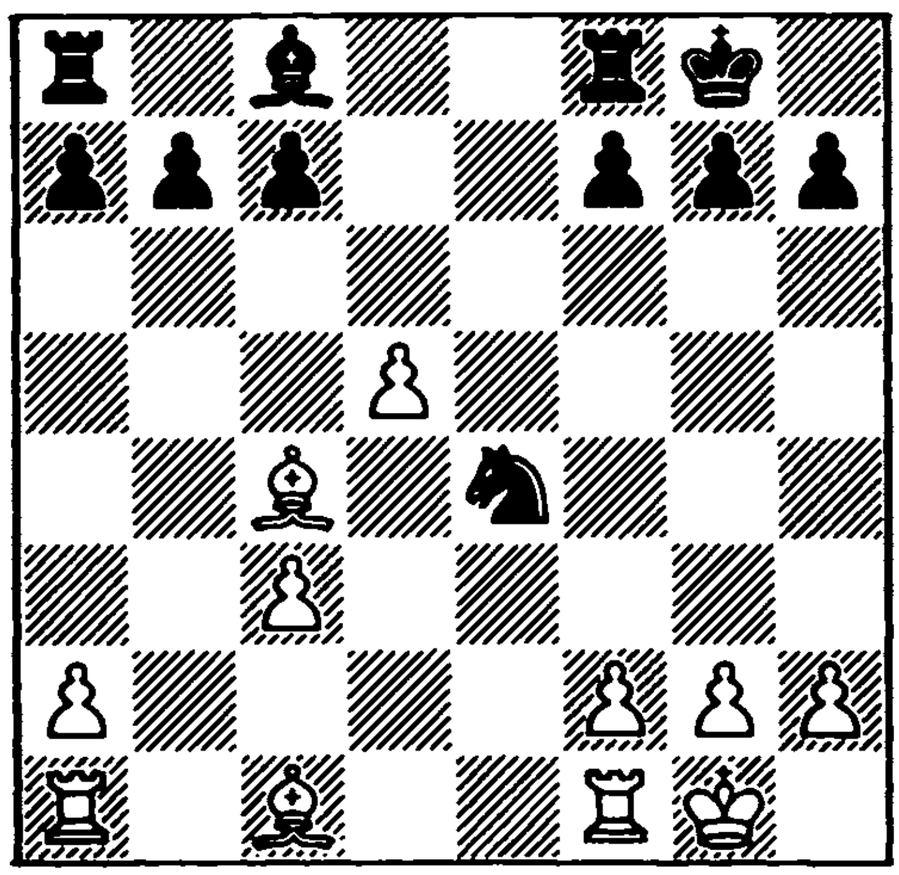


is obviously hoping to achieve a draw in an inferior ending. At this point Taimanov was leading in the USSR Championship, two points ahead of his nearest rivals with just five rounds to go. Boleslavsky convincingly refutes these tactics, and demonstrates that the advantage of the two bishops in an open type of endgame position can prove decisive.

15 ♖e1!

A little bit of tactics! It transpires that 15 ... ♘xc3 is bad, since after 16 ♗a3 ♖d8 17 ♗e7 Black loses material.

15 ... ♘d6

As shown by Levenfish, 15 ... ♗f5 would not have improved Black's position, in view of the possible variation 16 ♗d3 ♖fe8 17 ♗f4 c6 18 f3 ♘d6 19 ♗f1.

16 ♗f1 ♗d7
17 ♗f4

The advantage of the two bishops is especially appreciable if the pawn structure is asymmetric. In this case the bishops give excellent support to the advance of the pawns. Here White's plan includes the advance of his c-pawn. Boleslavsky does not hurry with 17 c4, preferring to complete the mobilisation of all his pieces, since the attempt to halt the advance of the white pawn by 17 ... b5 meets with a concrete refutation: 18 a4 a6 19 ♖e7 ♖fd8 20 axb5 ♔f8 21 ♖xd7! ♖xd7 22 bxa6, with a decisive positional advantage.

17 ... ♖fe8 18 c4 ♖xe1 19 ♖xe1 ♖e8 20 ♖c1!

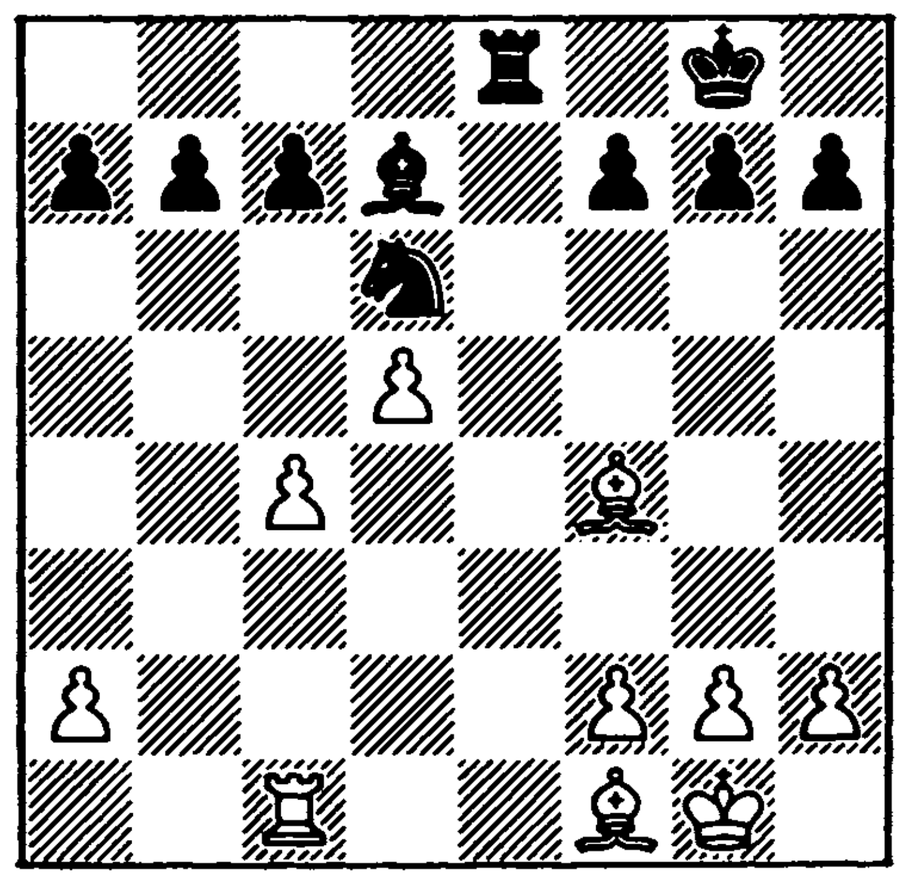
In the endgame a player is constantly faced with the problem of exchanging, on the correct solution to which the outcome of the game sometimes depends. Of course, there was no point in White exchanging rooks. Now Black is not able to set up a pawn barrier on the queenside, since after 20 ... b6 21 c5 bxc5 22 ♖xc5 the attack by the white rook on the opponent's pawns leads to gain of material.

20 ... ♖e4
21 ♗e3 ♖e8

Black has parried the threat of 22 ♗xa7, on which there now follows 22 ... ♖a8.

22 ♗f4! *(270)*

270



Boleslavsky does not hurry with the decisive advance of his pawns, but places his pieces in ideal positions. After 'testing' the opponent once, White reverts to the previous position.

22 ... ♖e4 23 g3 ♗g4 24 h3 ♗f3 25 c5!

White chooses a very successful moment to make this advance. The black pieces are completely uncoordinated, and Boleslavsky's very next move wins material.

25 ... ♘e8
26 ♖c3!

The end. If the bishop moves, the advance d5-d6 is decisive.

26 ... g5 27 ♗xg5 ♗d1 28 ♗g2 ♖e1+ 29 ♔h2 ♖e2 30 ♖e3 b6

Black's position is totally lost. Boleslavsky finds the shortest way to win – by combinational means.

31 d6! cxd6

31 ... ♖xe3 is decisively met by 32 d7!.

32 cxd6 ♘xd6 33 ♖d3 ♗a4 34 ♖xd6 ♖xa2 35 ♗h6 ♖e2 36 ♖d4 ♗b5 37 ♖g4+ ♔h8 38 ♗e3 Black resigns

Kotov-Barcza
Moscow v Budapest 1949
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 a3 ♗xc3+ 5 bxc3 c5 6 e3 d5 7 ♘f3

The exchange in the centre – 7 cxd5 exd5 – leads after 8 ♗d3 to the Botvinnik Variation, which favours White, but in this game Kotov wanted to try a different scheme of development.

7 ... 0-0
8 ♗b2!?

This move is the point of the new (at that time) set-up. White makes a useful move and for the moment leaves his bishop at f1 – the famous idea of the 'battle for a tempo', borrowed from the Orthodox Defence to the Queen's Gambit.

8 ... ♕a5?!

The early exchange of queens does not bring Black any gains, but how should he continue?

The passive 8 ... ♘bd7 9 cxd5 exd5 10 ♗d3 ♖e8 11 0-0 c4 12 ♗c2 ♘e4 13 ♘d2! f5 14 f3 ♘xd2 15 ♕xd2 allowed White a clear positional advantage in Szabo-Bokor, Hungary 1967.

Spassky acted purposefully in his Candidates Match against Geller (Riga 1965): 8 ... ♘c6!? 9 ♖c1 ♖e8 10 ♗d3 (the 'battle for a tempo' has been won by Black) 10 ... dxc4 11 ♗xc4 e5 12 dxe5 ♕xd1+ 13 ♖xd1 ♘xe5 14 ♘xe5 ♖xe5, with equality.

9 ♘d2!

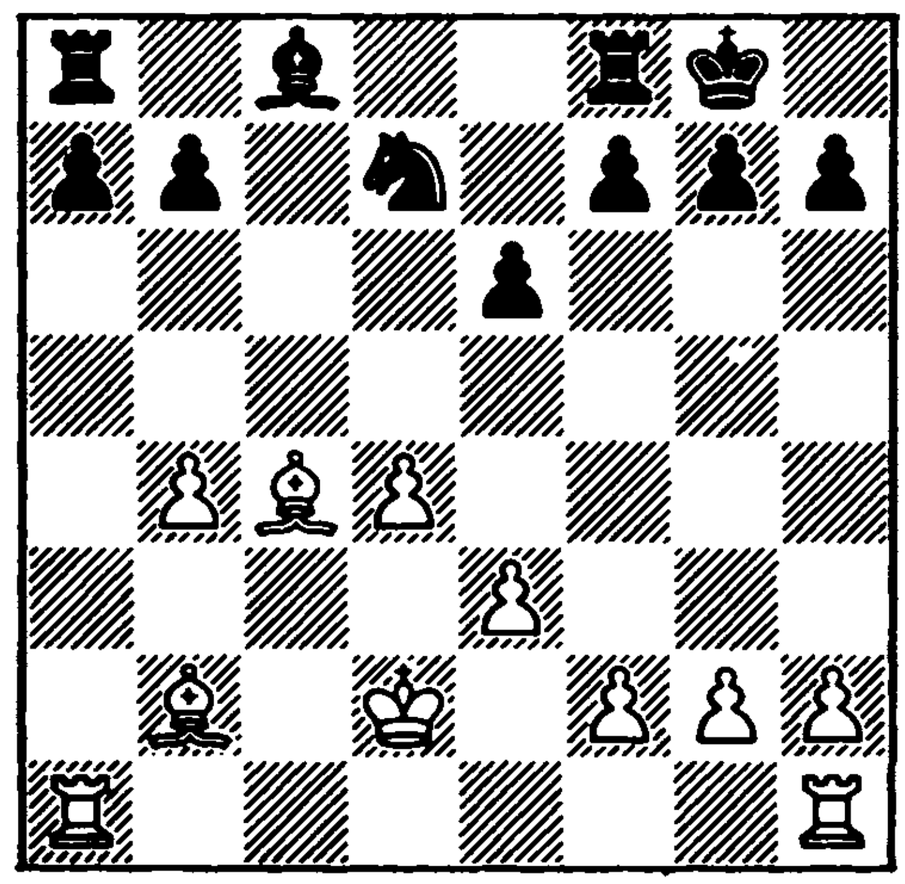
An excellent reply. White takes control of e4 and intends to attack the queen with ♘b3.

9 ... cxd4

'Swallowing his pride' with 9 ... ♕c7 would also not have solved Black's opening problems, e.g. 10 cxd5 cxd4 11 cxd4 exd5 12 ♗d3 ♖e8 13 0-0 ♘c6 14 ♕c2 ♗g4 15 ♖fe1 ♗h5 16 e4! and White launches an attack (F.Olafsson-Sosonko, Wijk aan Zee 1976).

10 cxd4 ♘bd7 11 ♕b3! ♘e4 12 ♕b4! ♕xb4 13 axb4 ♘xd2 14 ♔xd2 dxc4 15 ♗xc4 *(271)*

271



In the ending White has the better pawn structure thanks to his superiority in the centre and the backward black a-pawn. But his main trump is the advantage of the two bishops.

15 ... ♘b6 16 ♗d3 ♗d7 17 b5!

In this way the weakness at a7 is fixed and the activity of the black bishop is restricted.

17 ... ♖fc8 18 ♖hc1 ♖xc1 19 ♗xc1

With the exchange of one pair of rooks, the white king gains a certain amount of freedom.

19 ... ♘d5 20 ♗a3 ♘c7 21 ♖b1 f6 22 ♗d6 ♘e8 23 ♗g3

Kotov consistently restricts the mobility of the opponent's pieces.

23 ... ♔f7 24 ♖a1 ♔e7 25 ♔c3 ♘d6 26 ♔b4 h6

White has markedly cramped the opponent's game, by arranging his pieces in favourable positions. Now the pawns must come to the aid of the pieces.

27 e4 ♘c8 28 ♗c7 ♘d6 29 ♗b6! ♘c8 30 ♗c5+ ♔e8 31 ♔c3

Black's position is completely cramped. White is ready to start a pawn offensive on the kingside.

31 ... b6
32 ♗b4 a5?!

This desperate freeing attempt merely hastens Black's defeat. It would have been more appropriate to transfer the rook to b7.

33 bxa6 ♘a7 34 ♔d2 ♗b5 35 f4 ♗xd3 36 ♔xd3 ♘b5 37 ♔c4 ♘c7 38 a7 ♔d7 39 d5! exd5+ 40 exd5 ♖c8 41 d6 Black resigns

Botvinnik-Furman
Training Game 1961
Nimzo-Indian Defence

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 ♘c3 ♗b4 4 e3 0-0 5 ♗e2 d5

Black intends the exchange ... dxc4, after which the distinction of the move ♗e2 will disappear.

6 ♘f3 b6
7 a3

For the sharp variation 7 0-0 ♗b7 8 cxd5 exd5 9 ♘e5 the bishop at e2 is badly placed.

7 ... ♗d6 8 b4 dxc4 9 ♗xc4 ♗b7 10 0-0 ♘bd7 11 ♗b2 e5

"The primary cause of Black's subsequent difficulties: it is not easy to achieve equal chances by such simple means" (Botvinnik). Indeed, the knight move to b5 in this situation is unpleasant for Black, and so nowadays he plays the more accurate 11 ... a5!?, and only in reply to 12 b5 – 12 ... e5! White does not achieve anything by 12 bxa5 ♖xa5 13 ♘b5 ♗e7 14 a4 c5! (Gulko-Tal, 43rd USSR Championship, Yerevan 1975).

12 ♘b5!

Very strong. Black cannot now maintain his position in the centre, and two bishops in Botvinnik's hands are a terrible force.

12 ... e4 13 ♘xd6 cxd6 14 ♘d2 ♕e7 15 b5

The start of the squeeze.

15 ... ♖ac8 16 ♕a4 ♖c7 17 ♖fc1

For the moment the a7 pawn is immune.

17 ... ♖fc8
18 ♗f1!

The exchange of heavy pieces comes into White's plan.

18 ... ♗d5

The a7 pawn now required defending.

19 ♖xc7 ♖xc7 20 ♖c1! ♘f8 21 ♖xc7 ♕xc7

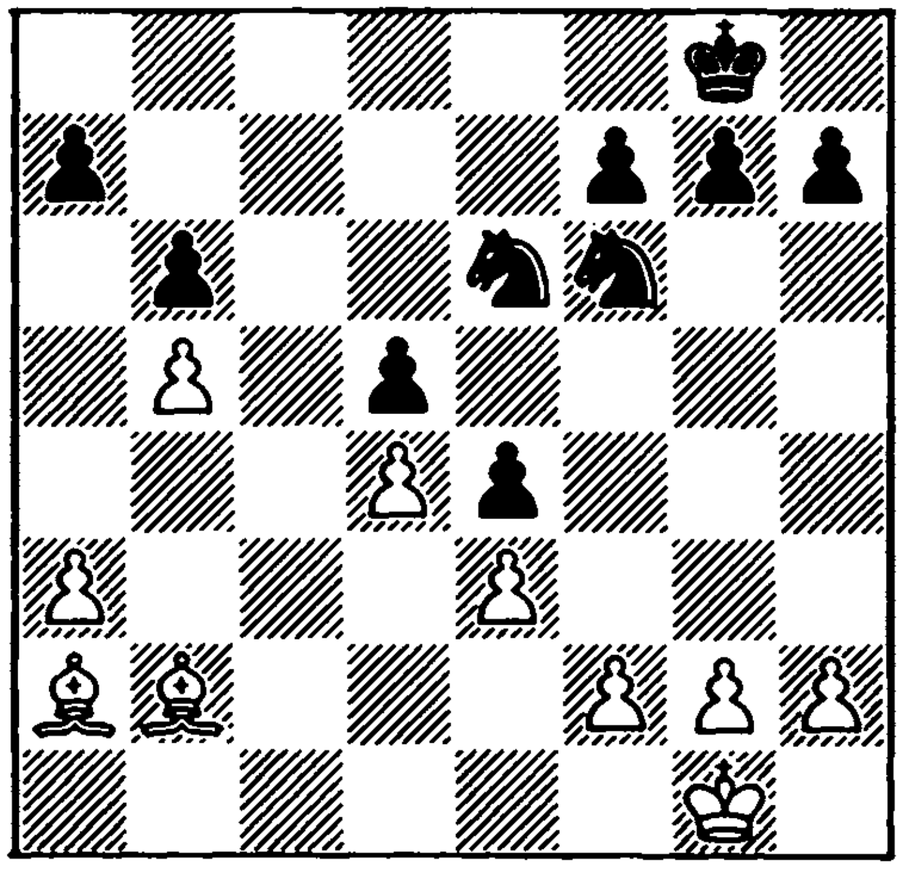
On the agenda now is the exchange of queens.

22 ♘c4 ♘e6
23 ♕b4! ♗xc4

Forced. The pressure on the d6 pawn (*23 ... ♘e8 24 a4!* and *♗a3*) makes this exchange unavoidable.

24 ♕xc4! ♕xc4 25 ♗xc4 d5 26 ♗a2 *(272)*

272



Botvinnik had already been obliged to play a similar ending, although for the weaker side. In 1933 he lost in the 6th game of his match with Flohr, although the situation there was perhaps more favourable for Black (cf. p.134 of Shereshevsky's *Endgame Strategy*). The pawn wedge in the centre was shifted one rank up the board, which made the d6 pawn less vulnerable, and in addition Black did not have such an obvious potential weakness on the queenside – the a7 pawn.

It is not surprising that in the present game Furman was able to hold out for only another twenty moves.

26 ... ♔f8

It is difficult for Black to rid himself of his a7 pawn. 26 ... ♘c7 27 a4 a6 would have been met by the routine 28 a5!.

27 a4 ♔e7 28 ♗a3+ ♔d7 29 f3

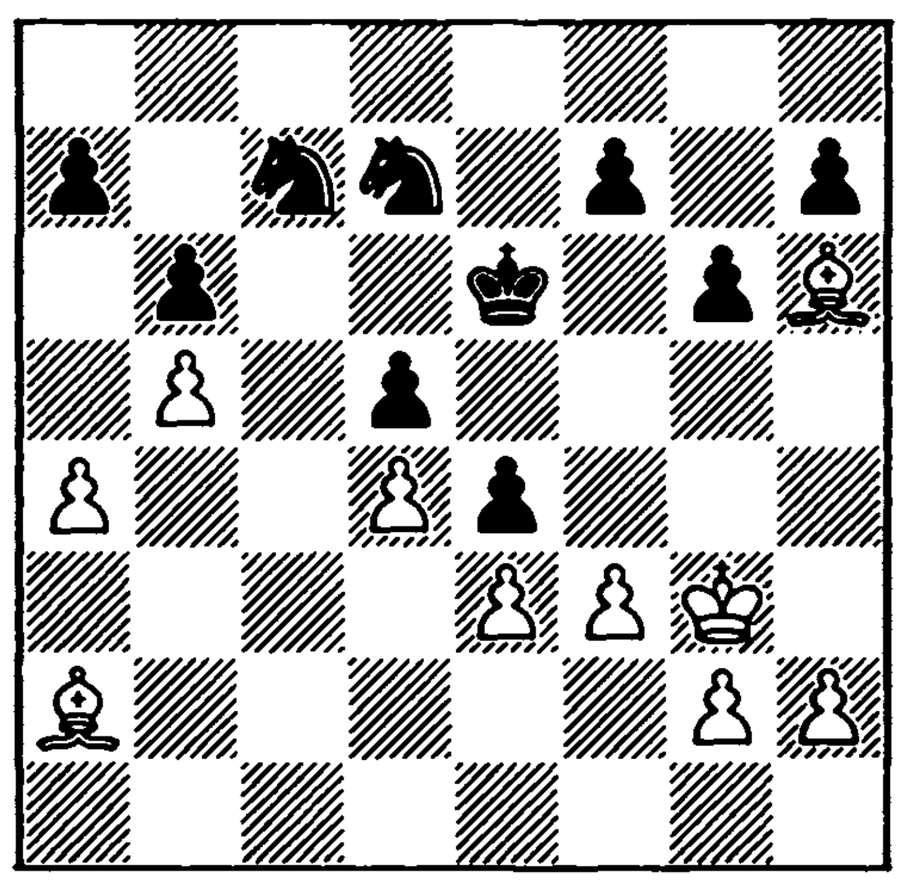
White 'latches' on to the opponent's e4 pawn and can now begin activating his king. White's general plan is to give the opponent weaknesses on the kingside and follow up with combined play on both flanks.

29 ... ♘c7
30 ♗f8! g6?!

The 'trial run', launched by Botvinnik, immediately hits the target. With his last move Black has weakened his kingside and opened a path for the white bishop to the a7 pawn via h6 and f4. 30 ... ♘e6 was more circumspect.

31 ♔f2 ♔e6 32 ♔g3 ♘d7 33 ♗h6 *(273)*

273



"The bishop is transferred for an attack on Black's chief weakness – his a7 pawn. He cannot get rid of it, since on 33 ... a6 there follows 34 ♗f4. For the moment 34

fxe4 is threatened" (Botvinnik).

33 ... f5 34 ♗f4 ♘e8 35 fxe4 fxe4 36 ♔h4

It transpires that Black is powerless against the advance of the enemy king.

36 ... ♘d6
37 ♗xd6!

The dark-square bishop has played its part. Loss of material for Black is inevitable, and Botvinnik simplifies the position.

37 ... ♔xd6 38 ♔g5 ♔e6 39 h3 ♘f6 40 ♔h6 ♘h5 41 ♗b3!

White is attentive. The threat of 41 ... ♘f4 has to be parried.

41 ... ♘g3 42 ♔xh7 ♔f5 43 ♗xd5 g5 44 ♔g7 g4 45 hxg4+ ♔xg4 46 ♗e6+ Black resigns

Alekhine-Fine
Kemeri 1937
Queen's Gambit Accepted

1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♕a4+ ♕d7

"As the white queen will not be particularly dangerous on c4, there is no reason to make such an effort to force her exchange" (Alekhine).

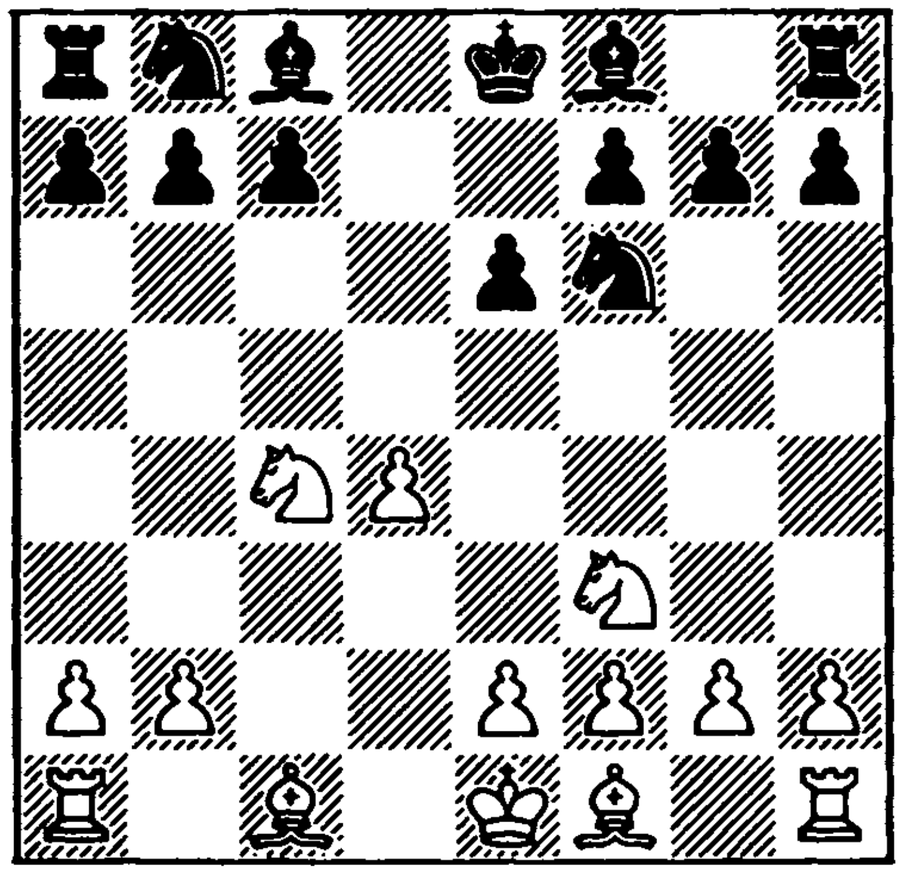
Black obtains a sound position after the quiet 4 ... c6 or Flohr's unusual move 4 ... ♘c6!?, for example:

4 ... c6 5 ♕xc4 ♗g4! (*5 ... ♗f5* is also good, Taimanov-Geller, Leningrad 1963) 6 ♘e5 ♗e6 7 ♕d3 ♘bd7 8 ♘xd7 ♗xd7 (Pytlakowski-Smyslov, Helsinki Olympiad 1952).

4 ... ♘c6 5 e3 e6 6 ♘e5 ♗d7 7 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 8 ♕xc4 e5! (Kotov-Flohr, Moscow 1951).

5 ♕xc4 ♕c6 6 ♘a3 ♕xc4 7 ♘xc4 e6 *(274)*

274



8 a3!

Alekhine was superior to his contemporaries in his ability to find concrete solutions to the latent problems in a position, especially in the opening. For White, who has a spatial advantage, unnecessary exchanges are unfavourable. Therefore it is important not to allow the bishop check at b4.

8 ... c5?

Fine, in contrast to his opponent, does not rise to the occasion. He weakens the d6 square, which soon allows White to gain the advantage of the two bishops. In this position Alekhine recommended an unusual method of development: 8 ... a5!, in order to answer 9 ♗f4 with 9 ... b5 and 10 ... ♗d6.

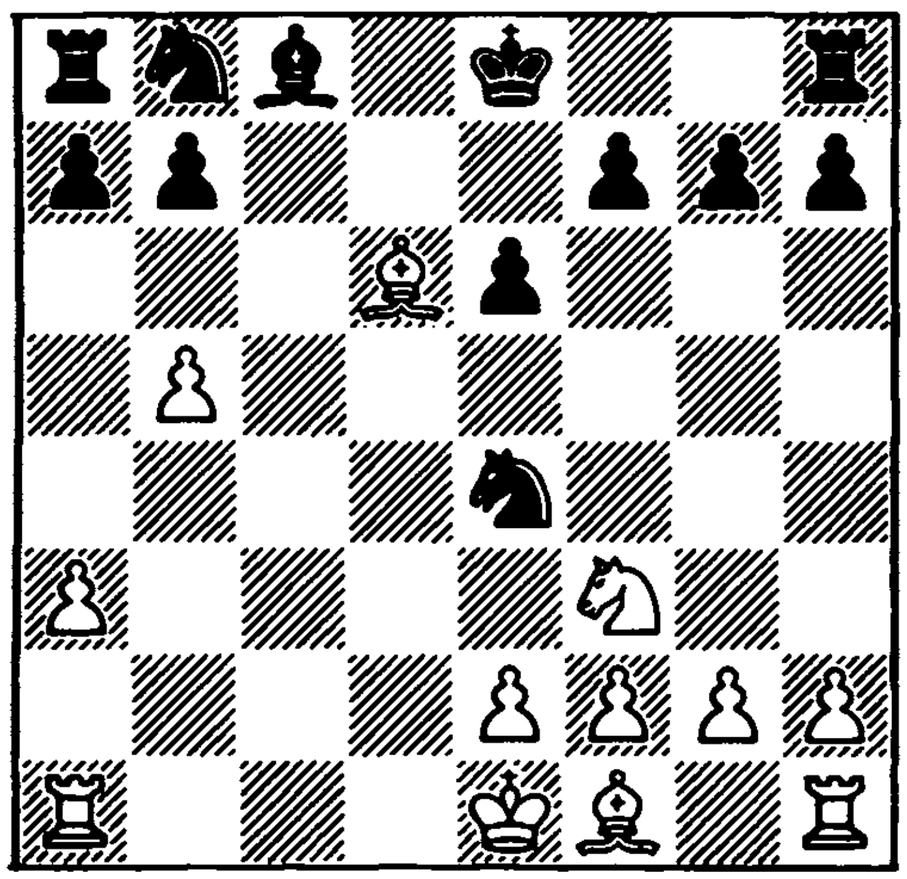
9 ♗f4 ♘c6 10 dxc5! ♗xc5 11 b4 ♗e7 12 b5 ♘b8 13 ♘d6+ ♗xd6 14 ♗xd6 ♘e4

(diagram 275)

15 ♗c7!

Having gained the advantage of the two bishops, Alekhine is careful to preserve them. In this symmetric position they are White's main hope for a win. 15 ♗b4? would have been incautious on account

275



of 15 ... a5, while on 15 ♗f4? there would have followed 15 ... f6, 16 ... e5, 17 ... ♗e6 and 18 ... ♘d7.

15 ... ♘d7
16 ♘d4!

Alekhine's play is inspired! Here most modern players, without much thought, would have played 16 e3 or 16 g3. But Alekhine is not satisfied simply with good moves: in each position he tries to find the very best.

16 ... ♘b6 17 f3 ♘d5 18 ♗a5 ♘ef6

On 18 ... ♘d6 White had prepared 19 e4 ♘e3 20 ♗b4! e5 21 ♗xd6 exd4 22 ♗d3! ♘xg2+ 23 ♔f2 ♘e3 24 ♗e5, with advantage.

19 ♘c2!

This move had to be forseen when White played 16 ♘d4. Now the black knights are driven to opposite flanks, where they will occupy very modest posts.

19 ... ♗d7 20 e4 ♖c8 21 ♔d2! ♘b6 22 ♘e3 0-0 23 a4!

Every move by Alekhine is full of energy. After the routine 23 ♗d3? Black would have played his knight to c5 via a4, and could have hoped for counterplay. But now White's spatial superiority and better placed pieces ensure him a great positional advantage.

23 ... ♖fd8
24 ♗d3

Note that only now does White complete his development.

24 ... e5?!

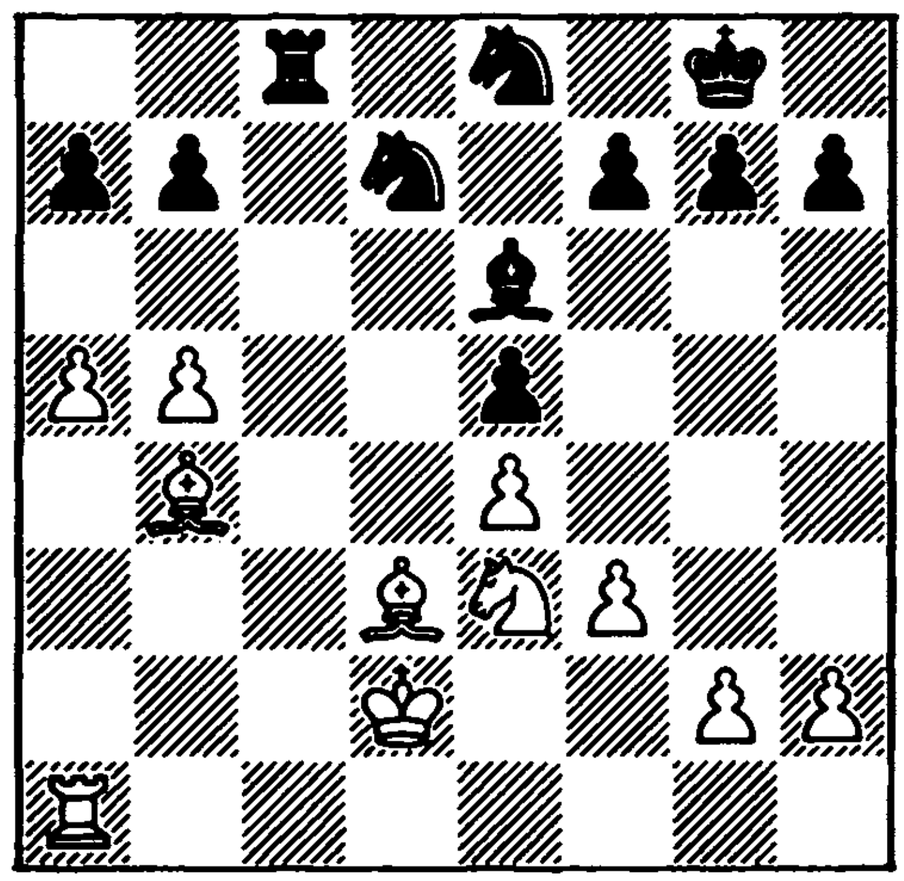
Fine tries to free his game at least a little, but the weakening of the d5 and f5 squares aggravates Black's difficulties. The modest 24 ... ♗e8 was more appropriate.

25 ♖hc1 ♗e6 26 ♖xc8 ♖xc8 27 ♗b4

White takes away the f8 square from the black king and plans to increase his spatial advantage by a4-a5. In some cases ♗d6 is also threatened.

27 ... ♘e8
28 a5 ♘d7 *(276)*

276



By his energetic play White has achieved a great deal. Now it would seem that he could "slacken the reins" a little and play, say, the quiet 29 ♖c1, in order to exploit his two bishops and spatial advantage after the exchange of rooks. There are all the grounds for doing this, but such a

solution is not in Alekhine's style. He launches a new wave of complications, and wins the game within ten moves.

29 ♘d5! ♗xd5
30 exd5 ♘c5

30 ... g6 31 d6 f5 32 ♗b1 ♔g7 33 ♗a2 ♔f6 34 ♗d5 would not have helped Black (indicated by Alekhine).

31 ♗f5! ♖d8

31 ... ♘b3+ 32 ♔d3 ♘c1+ 33 ♔e3 ♖c4 would have lost to 34 d6.

32 ♔c3!

This king move essentially concludes the game.

32 ... b6

32 ... ♘d7 would have failed to 33 ♗e7.

33 axb6 axb6 34 ♗xc5! bxc5 35 b6 ♘d6 36 ♗d7! ♖xd7 37 ♖a8+ Black resigns

"This game is probably my best purely positional achievement of the last few years" (Alekhine).

4.7 THE CATALAN BISHOP

In the 1920s, when the basic theory was being developed of the two 'light-square' openings – the Nimzo-Indian and Queen's Indian Defences, an original opening, the 'Catalan', began occurring in tournaments. After 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 or 1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 White would fianchetto his light-square bishop by playing g2-g3. Comfortably deployed at g2, the bishop takes immediate control of e4, and at the same time hinders the "Queen's Indian" development of the bishop at b7. The new opening immediately became popular – among those who played it were Capablanca, Alekhine, Euwe, Botvinnik, Keres, Flohr and Fine. The Catalan Opening is also frequently employed today.

One of the specific features of this opening is the following: White's strategy in the 'Open Variation' with the exchange ... dxc4 is mainly aimed at the endgame. The point is that, when opening the h1-a8 diagonal, Black must be sure that he too will be able to develop his bishop at, say, b7 or c6. If this is not the case, an unpromising 'Catalan' ending awaits him. By its pressure on the b7 pawn, the white bishop paralyses the opponent's queenside – the rook at a8 and bishop at c8.

But even after the exchange of light-square bishops there may be dangers for Black in the endgame. Usually the exchange of bishops is preceded by the development of Black's queenside with ... a6, ... b5 and ... c5, by which the dark squares are slightly weakened. White's strategy in this type of ending is clearly expressed in the game **Ivkov-Makarychev**. After studying these examples, the reader will be able to evaluate the dangers that Black encounters in the 'Catalan' endgame, and try to avoid them.

Razuvayev-Feller
Muzina 1988
Catalan Opening

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 g3 dxc4 5 ♗g2 a6 6 0-0 c5?!

Usually Black follows up his 5th move with 6 ... b5 or 6 ... ♘c6. His last move can be considered an innovation, which is unlikely to find any followers.

7 dxc5 ♕xd1

Things are no better for Black after 7 ... ♗xc5 8 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 9 ♘e5 ♔e7 10 ♘d2.

8 ♖xd1 ♗xc5 9 ♘e5! ♘bd7 10 ♘xc4

♖a7

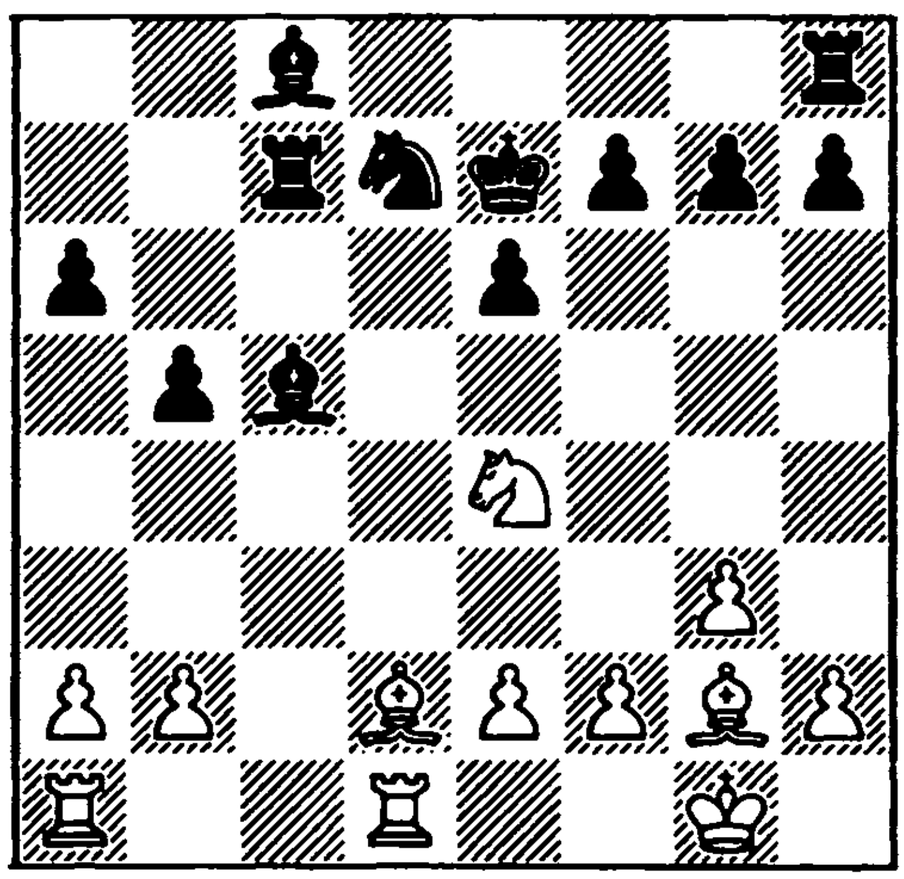
"The bishop at c8 has to be brought into play in this awkward way: its opponent at g2 is burning through Black's position like a laser beam. Castling first would have changed little: 10 ... 0-0 11 ♘c3 ♖a7 12 ♘a4 etc" (Razuvayev).

11 ♘c3 b5
12 ♘d6+ ♔e7?!

A mistake, although after 12 ... ♗xd6 13 ♖xd6 ♔e7 (*13 ... ♗b7 14 ♗e3*) 14 ♖c6 or 14 ♖d1 Black would still have been in serious difficulties.

13 ♘ce4 ♘xe4 14 ♘xe4 ♖c7 15 ♗d2! *(277)*

277



"Here my opponent thought for about an hour, and he evidently realised that the following variations were very depressing for him: 15 ... ♗b7 16 ♗a5 ♖cc8 (*16 ... ♗b6 17 ♖xd7+*) 17 ♖xd7+ ♔xd7 18 ♘xc5+ ♖xc5 19 ♗xb7; 15 ... ♗b6 16 ♗b4+; 15 ... f5 16 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 17 ♗a5 ♖d7 18 ♗b4. And so, without spoiling the picture of complete domination, **Black resigned**" (Razuvayev).

Geller-Milić
Belgrade 1956
Catalan Opening

1 c4 e6 2 g3 d5 3 ♗g2 ♘f6 4 ♘f3 ♗e7 5 0-0 0-0 6 d4 ♘bd7 7 ♕c2 dxc4?!

Black's last move is a significant inaccuracy. Milić was evidently planning the 'extended fianchetto': ... a6, ... b5, ... c5 and ... ♗b7 etc., but he chooses an unfortunate moment to make the exchange. If Black did not want to take on c4 before d2-d4, then after 6 d4 he should have played 6 ... dxc4, and if 7 ♕c2 a6!, or 7 ♘e5 ♘c6!. Of course, 6 ... ♘bd7 is not a bad move, but after 7 ♕c2 he should switch to the Closed Variation: 7 ... c6.

8 ♕xc4 c5

By transposition a favourable line for White of the Open Variation has arisen – 1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 ♗g2 dxc4 5 ♕a4+ ♘bd7 6 ♘f3 ♗e7?! 7 ♕xc4 0-0 8 0-0. By avoiding the immediate ... a6 and ... b5, Black ends up in an unpleasant situation: now the Catalan bishop exerts strong pressure on his queenside.

8 ... a6 was also possible, instead of 8 ... c5, but it would hardly have eased things for Black. White could have replied simply 9 ♕c2!, and if 9 ... c5 – 10 ♘c3, 10 ♖d1, or even 10 ♘bd2, obtaining by transposition a favourable position from the game Eliskases-Golombek (Stockholm Interzonal 1952): 10 ... cxd4 11 ♘xd4 ♗c5 12 ♘2b3 ♗b6 13 ♗d2!.

9 ♖d1!

The strongest continuation. The 'X-ray' pressure of the rook at d1 on the black queen forces Milić to reject the plan of the 'extended fianchetto', and this means that the opening duel has been won by White.

9 ... ♕b6

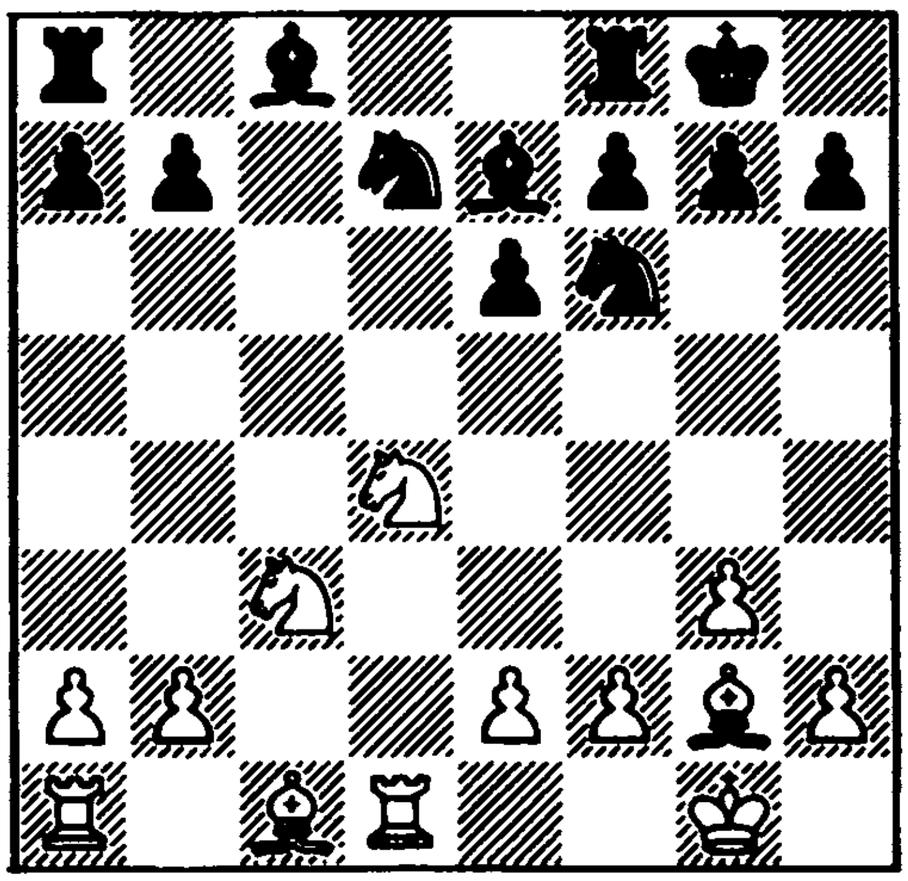
Or 9 ... a6 10 ♕c2! ♖a7 (nothing better is apparent) 11 ♘c3 b5 12 a4 b4 13 ♘e5! with advantage to White (Larsen-Prins, Moscow Olympiad 1956).

10 ♘c3 ♕b4 11 ♕d3 cxd4 12 ♕xd4!

An unpleasant surprise. It would have been easier for Black to defend after 12 ♘xd4?! ♘e5 or 12 ... ♘c5, but now a typical ending arises, where he has no way of opposing the 'terrible' bishop at g2.

12 ... ♕xd4
13 ♘xd4 *(278)*

278



A typical Catalan ending, which is very difficult, perhaps lost for Black.

13 ... ♘c5?

The problem of developing the queenside cannot be solved in this way. Black should have considered 13 ... ♘b6, when at the appropriate moment he could have restricted the opponent's bishop by ... ♘d5 and possibly freed his queen's bishop with ... e5.

14 ♗f4!

Taking control of b8. It is clear that, without losing material, Black is no longer able to complete his queenside development and coordinate his pieces.

14 ... ♘e8
15 ♖ac1

White's initiative increases with every move.

15 ... g5

This kingside demonstration is made largely in desperation. Black has to do something, if he is not to resign on the 15th move with material completely equal (although, as shown by the previous example, this might be a sensible decision).

16 ♗e3 ♘a6 17 ♘db5 ♘c5 18 b4 a6 19 ♘a7!

A clever tactical resource. The capture of the knight is forced, and the white b-pawn moves to c5, cramping Black's position still further.

19 ... ♖xa7 20 bxc5 ♖a8 21 ♖b1 ♖b8 22 ♘e4

The g5 pawn is attacked, and 23 ♘d6 is threatened.

22 ... ♘c7

It is obvious that Black has long been resigned to defeat, and the Yugoslav player merely makes a pretence of resisting, continuing through inertia to make moves.

23 ♗xg5 ♗xg5 24 ♘xg5 f5 25 ♘f3 ♘d5 26 ♖b2 ♗d7 27 ♘e5 ♗a4 28 ♖d4 ♗c6 29 ♗xd5 exd5 30 ♖b6 ♖fe8 31 f4 a5 32 ♔f2 ♖bc8 33 ♖d3 ♖e7 34 ♘xc6 bxc6 35 ♖e3 Black resigns

Sakharov-Borisenko
Leningrad 1971
Catalan Opening

1 c4 e6 2 ♘f3 ♘f6 3 g3 d5 4 ♗g2 c5 5 0-0 ♘c6 6 d4 dxc4 7 ♕a4

By transposition, one of the most popular positions of the Catalan Opening has arisen. Along with the queen move, the sharper 7 ♘e5 is also played.

7 ... ♗d7

The most natural reply. 7 ... ♘d7 or 7 ... ♗e7 is less logical, while 7 ... cxd4 practically forces Black into a positional queen sacrifice: 8 ♘xd4 ♕xd4 9 ♗xc6+ ♗d7 10 ♖d1 ♕xd1+ 11 ♕xd1 ♗xc6. Black can hardly count on more than a draw, but breaching his defences will not be easy.

8 ♕xc4

The alternative is 8 dxc5, to which Black usually replies 8 ... ♘a5 or 8 ... ♘e5.

8 ... cxd4?!

8 ... b5!? sets White more problems. Black handled the opening confidently in the game Yusupov-Sokolov (Candidates Match, Riga 1986): 9 ♕d3 ♖c8 10 dxc5 ♗xc5 11 ♘c3 b4 12 ♘b5 0-0 13 ♗e3 ♗xe3 14 ♕xe3 ♘e7! 15 ♖fd1 ♘ed5 16 ♕d3 ♕b6.

9 ♘xd4 ♖c8
10 ♘c3 ♕a5

According to the 'verdict' of modern theory, none of the continuations here – 10 ... ♘xd4, 10 ... ♕b6, 10 ... ♗e7 – secures Black full equality, for example:

10 ... ♕b6 11 ♘xc6 ♗xc6 12 ♗e3! ♕b4 13 ♕xb4 ♗xb4 14 ♗xa7 ♗xc3 15 bxc3 ♗xg2 16 ♔xg2 ♖xc3 17 ♖fb1 ♖c7 18 ♖b2 (Ribli-Prandstetter, Warsaw 1979).

10 ... ♘xd4 11 ♕xd4 ♗c5 12 ♕h4 ♗c6 13 ♖d1 ♕a5 (the seemingly natural *13 ... ♕b6* is met by a very strong blow, devised by Hungarian players: *14 ♗xc6 ♖xc6 15 ♗h6!!* – this occurred in the games Portisch-Radulov and Ribli-Ljubojević from the 1978 Buenos Aires Olympiad, both ending in crushing defeats for Black) 14 ♗d2 ♗e7 15 ♘d5 ♘xd5 16 ♕xe7+ ♘xe7 17 ♗xa5 ♗xg2 18 ♔xg2 ♘c6 19 ♗c3 (Ftačnik-Peters, Hastings 1980/81).

11 ♗d2 ♕c5

12 ♕xc5 ♗xc5

We again have a typical Catalan ending.

13 ♘b3 ♗d6?!

The more natural retreat of the bishop to e7 would have been better, but it could not have got Black out of his difficulties.

14 ♖fd1 ♔e7 15 ♘b5 ♗b8 16 ♘c5!

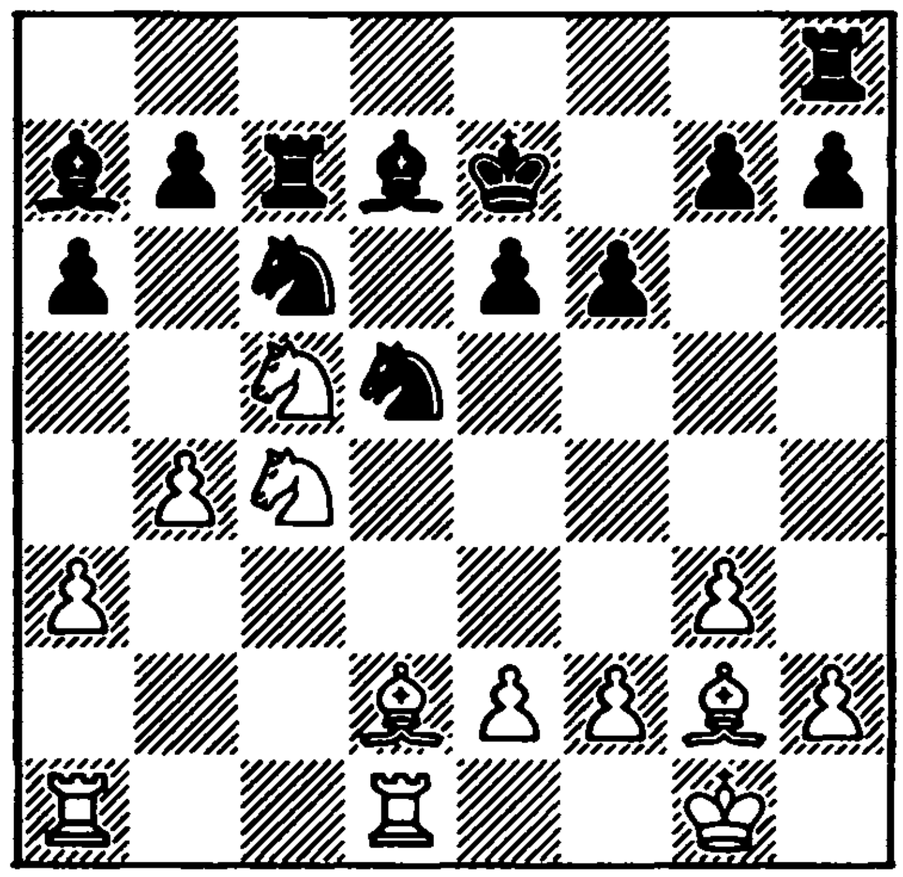
White's initiative increases.

16 ... a6 17 ♘a3 ♖c7 18 ♘c4 ♗a7 19 b4

By tactical means White supports his knight in enemy territory. Now 19 ... ♘xb4 fails to 20 ♘xd7 ♖xc4 21 ♘e5!.

19 ... ♘d5
20 a3 f6 *(279)*

279



The preparations are complete, and now comes an energetic finish.

21 ♗xd5 exd5 22 ♗f4 ♖cc8 23 ♘d6 ♗xc5 24 ♘xc8+ ♗xc8 25 bxc5

White has won the exchange, the realisation of which does not cause any great difficulties. The game concluded:

25 ... ♔e6 26 ♖ab1 g5 27 ♗d6 b5 28 ♖b3 ♘a5 29 ♖e3+ ♔f7 30 ♖e7+ ♔g6 31 ♖xd5 ♗b7 32 ♖d1 Black resigns

Alekhine-Bogoljubow
Match 1943
Catalan Opening

1 d4 d5 2 c4 e6 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 g3 dxc4 5 ♕a4+ ♕d7?!

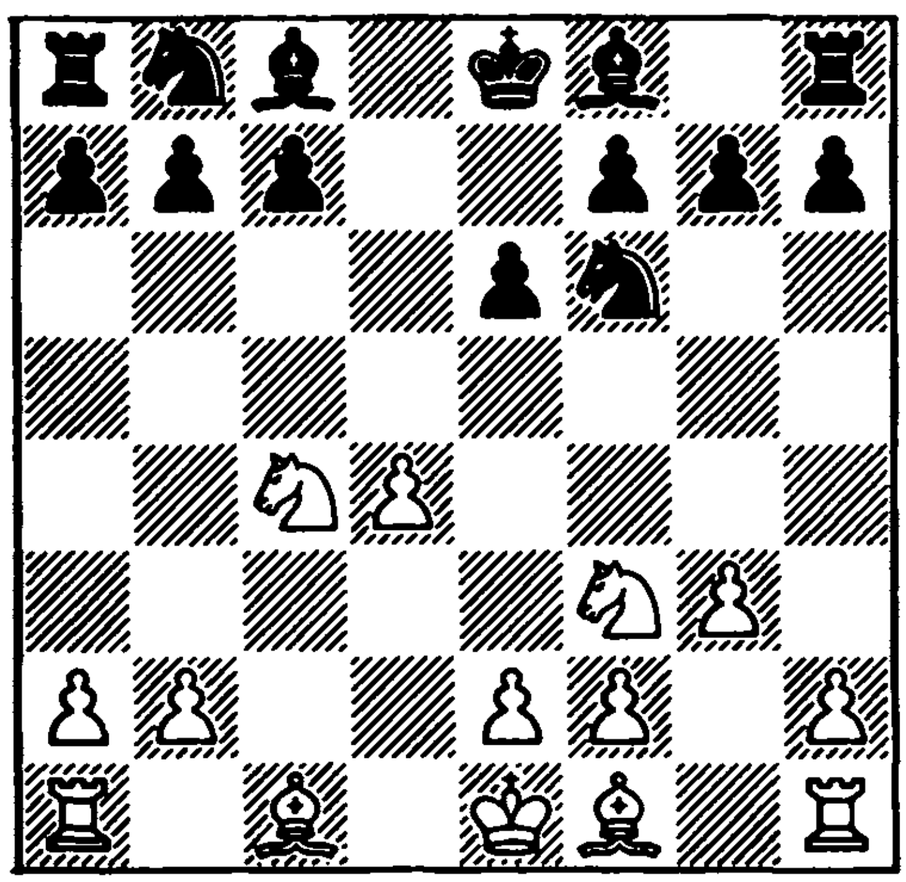
Here, as in the Queen's Gambit Accepted (*1 d4 d5 2 c4 dxc4 3 ♘f3 ♘f6 4 ♕a4+ ♕d7*) the exchange of queens is not in the spirit of the position: White quickly seizes the initiative. Incidentally, Bogoljubow's choice was also unfortunate in the psychological sense, since Alekhine already had to his credit a convincing win over Fine in a game begun with the above variation of the Queen's Gambit Accepted (cf. p.225).

6 ♕xc4 ♕c6
7 ♘bd2!

Development first and foremost.

7 ... ♕xc4
8 ♘xc4 *(280)*

280



White has the initiative. He has the superior pawn formation in the centre, the possibility of play on the semi-open c-file, and a lead in development. If one counts tempi, as they liked to do in Steinitz's time, it will be seen that the white pieces and pawns have made five moves, whereas Black's have made only two.

8 ... ♗b4+

The exchange of bishops slightly eases Black's defence, although it does not solve all his problems. It was later found that 8 ... b6 also fails to equalise. After 9 ♗g2 ♗b7 10 0-0 ♘bd7 11 ♗d2! ♗e7 12 ♖fc1 c5 13 ♗f4 0-0 14 ♗d6 White retains the initiative (Keres-Birbrager, Moscow 1966).

9 ♗d2 ♗xd2+
10 ♘cxd2

10 ♘fxd2! is more energetic, when 10 ... ♗d7 11 ♗g2 ♗c6 can be neutralised by 12 e4, and so in Botvinnik-Vidmar, Groningen 1946, Black was obliged to play 10 ... ♘c6 (cf. Botvinnik's *Half a Century of Chess* p.136).

10 ... ♘c6?!

Black misses a good opportunity: after 10 ... ♗d7! 11 ♗g2 ♗c6 or 11 ♘e5 ♘c6 12 ♘xd7 ♘xd7 it would have been much more difficult for White to demonstrate his advantage.

11 ♗g2 ♗d7
12 0-0 0-0-0

Castling long has some point to it. The king can take part in the defence of the queenside, although it also risks coming under attack by the enemy pieces.

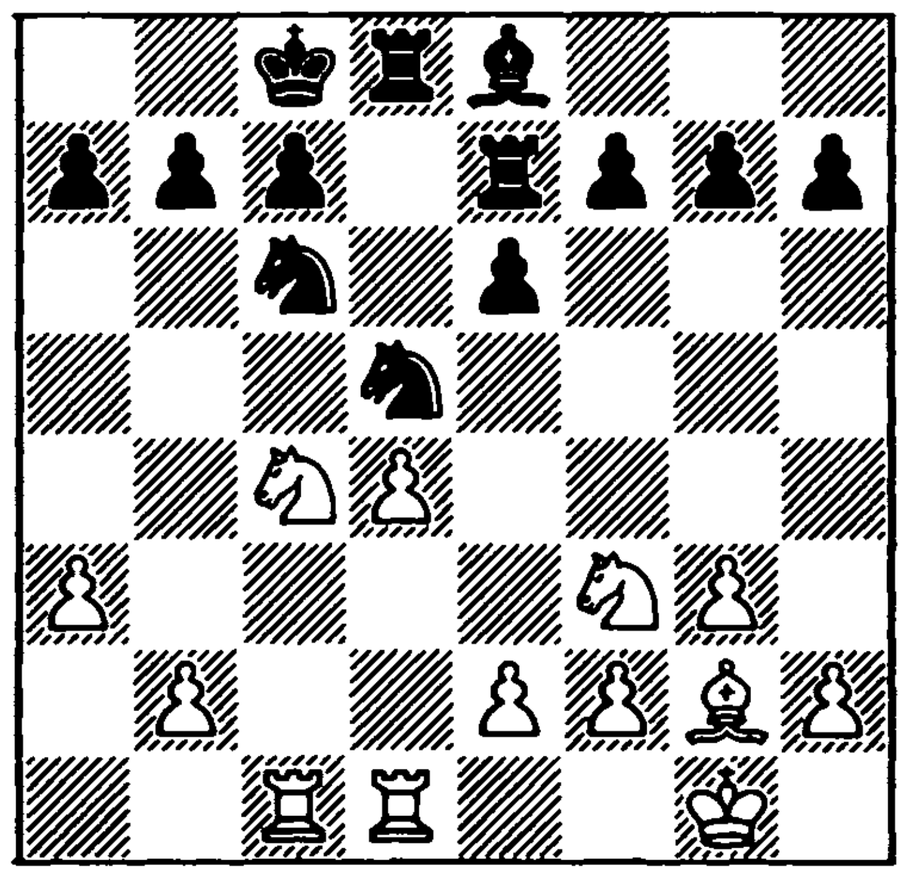
13 ♖ac1 ♖he8

Bogoljubow chooses an unfortunate plan. However, defending such a position against Alekhine was a thankless task. Superficially Black's set-up looks logical, but it is passive and it allows the opponent to develop unhindered an offensive on the queenside. He should have considered playing his knight from f6 via e8 to d6, in order to cover the f7 pawn (if necessary play ... *f6*), and then prepare to withdraw his knight from c6 followed by the acti-

vating of his bishop.

14 ♘c4 ♖e7 15 ♖fd1 ♗e8 16 a3 ♘d5 *(281)*

281



17 b4!

The white pawns advance, pushing back the enemy pieces and gaining more and more space. Black's position is lost.

17 ... ♘b6
18 b5!

An energetic move. The exchange on c4 is not possible, since White interposes the capture on c6.

18 ... ♘b8 19 ♘xb6+ axb6 20 a4 f6 21 ♗h3!

By the threat of d4-d5 Alekhine forces the opponent to block the d-file, and he then transfers his knight from f3 to c4.

21 ... ♗d7 22 ♘d2 ♖f8 23 ♗g2!

And now the threat to the b7 pawn prevents the enemy king leaving the c-file.

23 ... c6 24 ♘c4 ♔c7 25 e4

A breakthrough in the centre concludes the game.

25 ... cxb5 26 axb5 ♗xb5 27 d5! exd5 28 ♘a3+ ♗c6 29 exd5 ♖d7 30 ♘b5+ ♔d8 31 dxc6 bxc6 32 ♘d4 Black resigns

Timoshchenko-Kholmov
Tashkent 1982
Catalan Opening

1 d4 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 ♘f3 dxc4 5 ♗g2 c5 6 0-0 ♘bd7

This move is somehow not in keeping with the energetic attack on the centre by ... c5. The natural development 6 ... ♘c6 is more promising.

7 ♘a3!

The strongest continuation. In two leaps the white knight goes to c4, where it is very well placed, controlling the very important d6 and e5 squares. The sacrifice of the d4 pawn is not a real one: Black is not able to hold on to it.

7 ... cxd4
8 ♘xc4 ♗e7

Black plays the opening timidly, and it is not surprising that the white pieces, encountering no opposition, take up dominating positions. However, to find here a comfortable way to equalise is not at all easy.

9 ♘xd4 0-0
10 ♘b5!

Now the invasion of a knight at d6 is unavoidable.

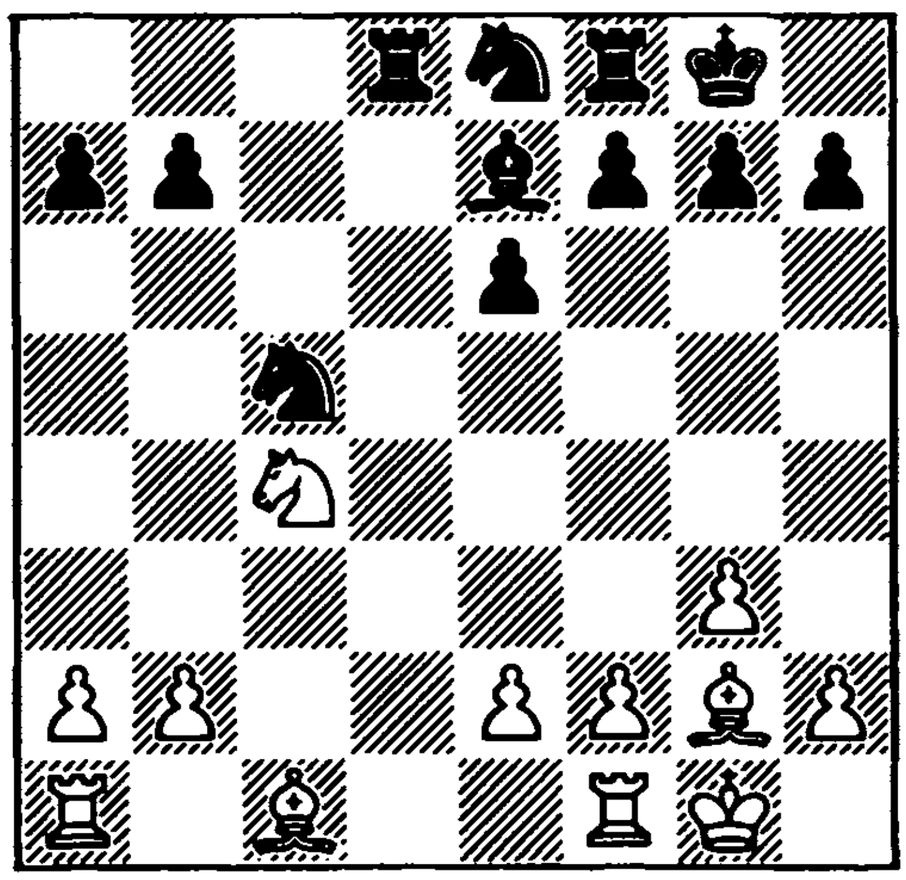
10 ... ♘c5

Practically the only move.

11 ♘bd6 ♘e8 12 ♘xc8 ♖xc8 13 ♕xd8 ♖xd8 *(282)*

Black no longer has to worry about his light-square bishop, but with the two bishops (the one at g2, which has no opponent, is especially strong), significantly better placed pieces, and weaknesses in the opponent's queenside, White has a great positional advantage. It is not

282



surprising that even such a universally recognised master of defence as Kholmov is able to last out for only fifteen moves.

14 ♗e3 b6 15 ♘e5 ♗f6 16 ♘c6 ♖d7 17 ♖ad1! ♗xb2 18 ♖xd7 ♘xd7 19 ♘xa7

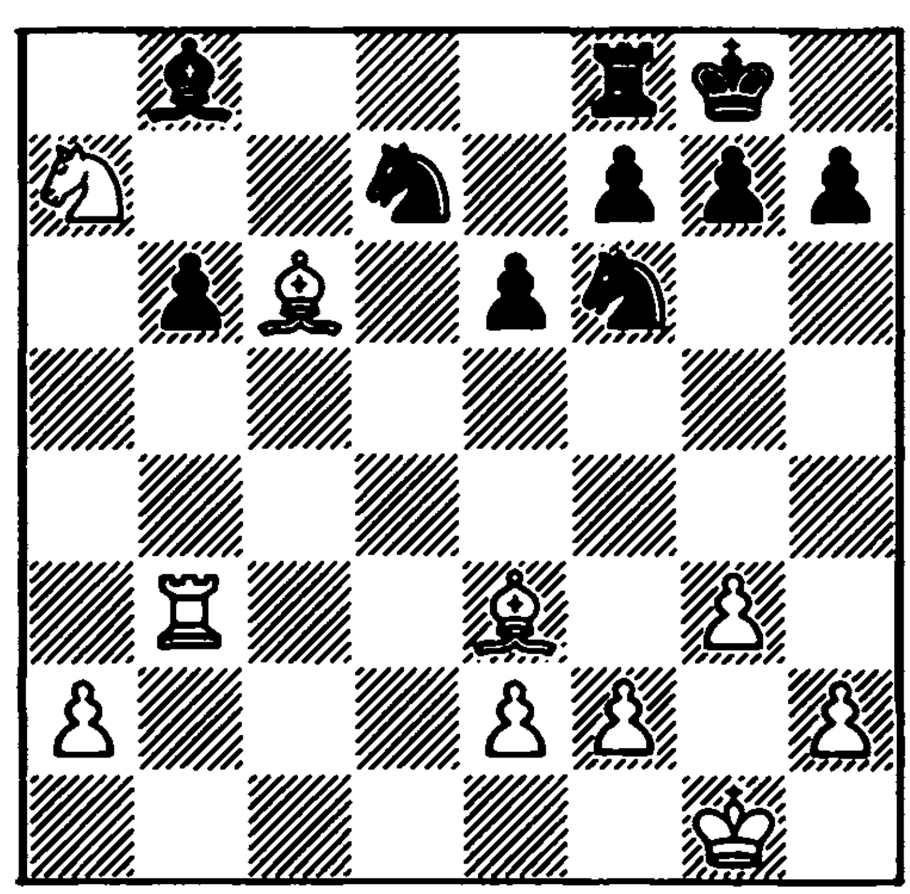
Black's b6 pawn is doomed, and in addition he has still not coordinated his pieces.

19 ... ♘ef6 20 ♖b1 ♗a3 21 ♖b3 ♗d6 22 ♗c6

The immediate capture of the pawn would have been a mistake. Timoshchenko gives the following variation: 22 ♗xb6? ♘xb6 23 ♖xb6 ♗c5 24 ♖b7 ♘g4 25 e3 ♖d8 26 ♗f3 ♘e5 27 ♗e2 ♖d2 28 ♖b8+ ♗f8.

22 ... ♗b8? *(283)*

283



A mistake in a difficult position, but White also has a great advantage after 22 ... ♗c7 23 ♘b5 ♗d8 24 ♘c3!.

23 ♗xd7!

Unexpected and very strong. White gives up his excellent bishop, but takes account of the concrete features of the position. Black has no way of opposing the invasion of the enemy rook on the a-file.

23 ... ♘xd7

23 ... ♗xa7 24 ♗c6 ♖b8 25 ♖a3 is totally bad.

24 ♘c6 ♗c7
25 ♖a3! ♘f6

White wins elegantly after 25 ... ♘c5 26 ♗xc5! bxc5 27 ♖a7 ♗d6 28 ♖d7.

26 ♖a7 ♘d5
27 ♗d4 ♗d8?

An oversight in a lost position. 27 ... f5 was the only possibility, but then 28 ♘e7+ ♘xe7 29 ♖xc7 ♖e8 30 ♖b7 would have left Black with no hopes of saving the game.

28 e4 ♘f6
29 ♖a8 Resigns

Ivkov-Makarychev
Sochi 1983
Catalan Opening

1 ♘f3 ♘f6 2 c4 e6 3 g3 d5 4 ♗g2 dxc4 5 ♕a4+ ♘bd7 6 0-0

The immediate 6 ♕xc4 is more common, when in reply to 6 ... c5 White has a choice between 7 0-0 and 7 ♕b3. The retreat of the queen has the aim of restricting the opponent's queenside, a plan which sometimes proves successful, for example:

6 ... c5 7 ♕b3 ♗e7 8 ♘c3 0-0 9 0-0 a6 10

a4 ♘b8 11 ♘e5 ♕c7 12 ♘c4 ♘c6 13 ♕b6! ♕d7 14 ♗xc6! ♕xc6 15 ♕xc6 bxc6 16 d3 ♘d5 17 ♗d2 (Chernin-van der Sterren, Wijk aan Zee 1986).

It is clear that such passive tactics are bound to fail, and that Black should play more actively. However, even in this case he has some problems: 9 ... ♖b8 10 d3 b5 11 ♗f4 ♖b6 12 a4! b4 13 ♘d1 ♘d5 14 ♗d2 ♗f6 15 ♘e3 ♗a6 16 ♖ab1 ♘c3! 17 bxc3 bxc3 18 ♕c2 cxd2 19 ♘xd2, and Black has still not fully equalised (Vaganian-Arnason, Dubai Olympiad 1986).

6 ... c5
7 ♕xc4 b6!

This move, found comparatively recently, promises Black good counterplay. It looks rather provocative, but tactically it is perfectly justified.

8 d4

In the source game Adamski–Radashkovich (Nice Olympiad 1974) White chose the tempting 8 ♘d4?!, but after 8 ... ♘e5! 9 ♘c6 ♘xc4 10 ♘xd8 ♘d5! 11 ♘c3 ♔xd8 12 ♘xd5 ♗b7 13 ♘e3?! ♘xe3 14 fxe3 ♗xg2 15 ♔xg2 f6 Black gained some advantage in the ending. However, the correct 13 ♘c3 ♗xg2 14 ♔xg2 ♘e5 15 b3 ♘c6 would have led only to equality (Tal-Polugayevsky, 45th USSR Championship, Leningrad 1977).

Apart from the move in the game, which leads to a classical set-up, White can also consider the non-trivial attack on the queenside with 8 b4!?. In Kir.Georgiev-Arnason (Plovdiv 1986) this led to complicated play after 8 ... ♗b7 9 b5 ♗e7 10 ♗b2 0-0 11 a4.

8 ... ♗b7
9 ♘c3 ♖c8

The immediate 9 ... a6 is also quite possible, as played by Ljubojević against Karpov at Tilburg (1983).

10 ♖d1 a6
11 dxc5!?

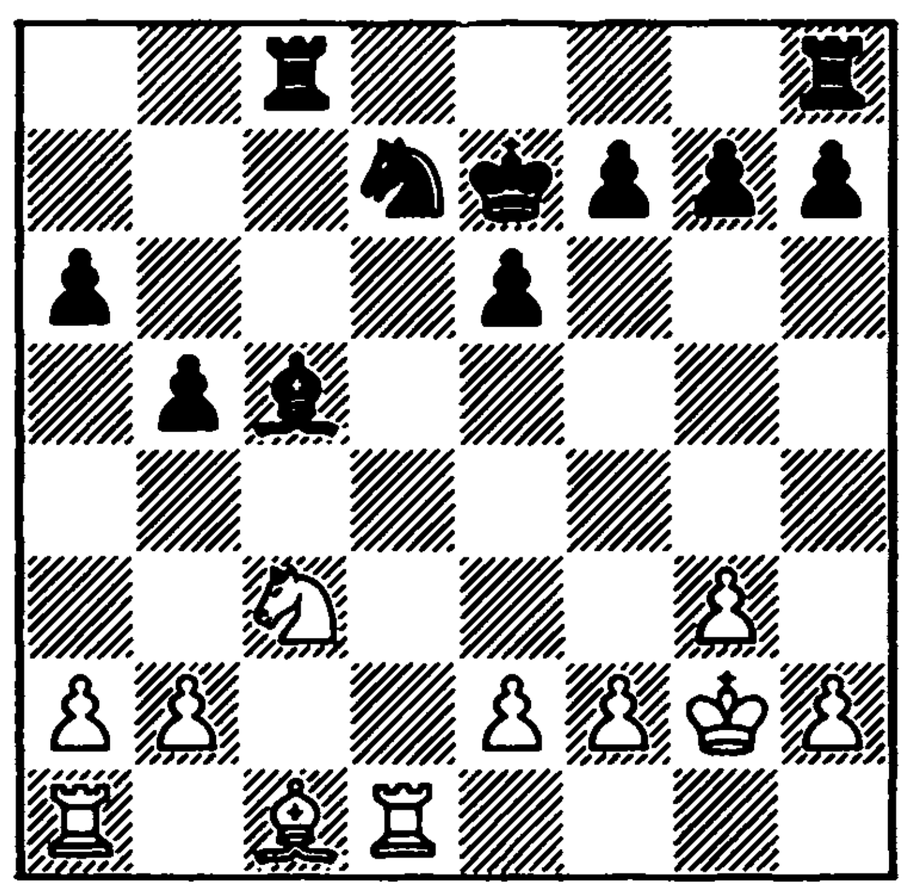
This is stronger than 11 a4?!, which unnecessarily weakens the queenside.

11 ... ♗xc5
12 ♕h4 b5

An active continuation, but perhaps 12 ... ♗e7!? would have been sounder. In reply to 12 ... 0-0 Ivkov was planning 13 ♗g5 ♗e7 14 ♘e5 ♗xg2 15 ♔xg2 h6 16 ♘e4, with sharp play.

13 ♘e5 ♗xg2 14 ♘xd7! ♘xd7 15 ♕xd8+ ♔xd8 16 ♔xg2 ♔e7 *(284)*

284



The position appears level, but after White's next move Black begins to experience some discomfort.

17 ♘e4!

Black has completely solved the problem of the light-square bishop, but he runs into difficulties due to the inevitable exchange of his other bishop and the weakening of his dark squares.

17 ... ♖c6 18 ♗d2 ♖hc8 19 a4 bxa4 20 ♖xa4 f5?

After this move Black's kingside pawns

become very vulnerable, although the play becomes more concrete.

21 ♘xc5 ♘xc5 22 ♗b4 ♔f6 23 ♖a3

Of course, the exchange of minor pieces followed by the capture of the a6 pawn did not satisfy White in view of the reply 24 ... ♖c2.

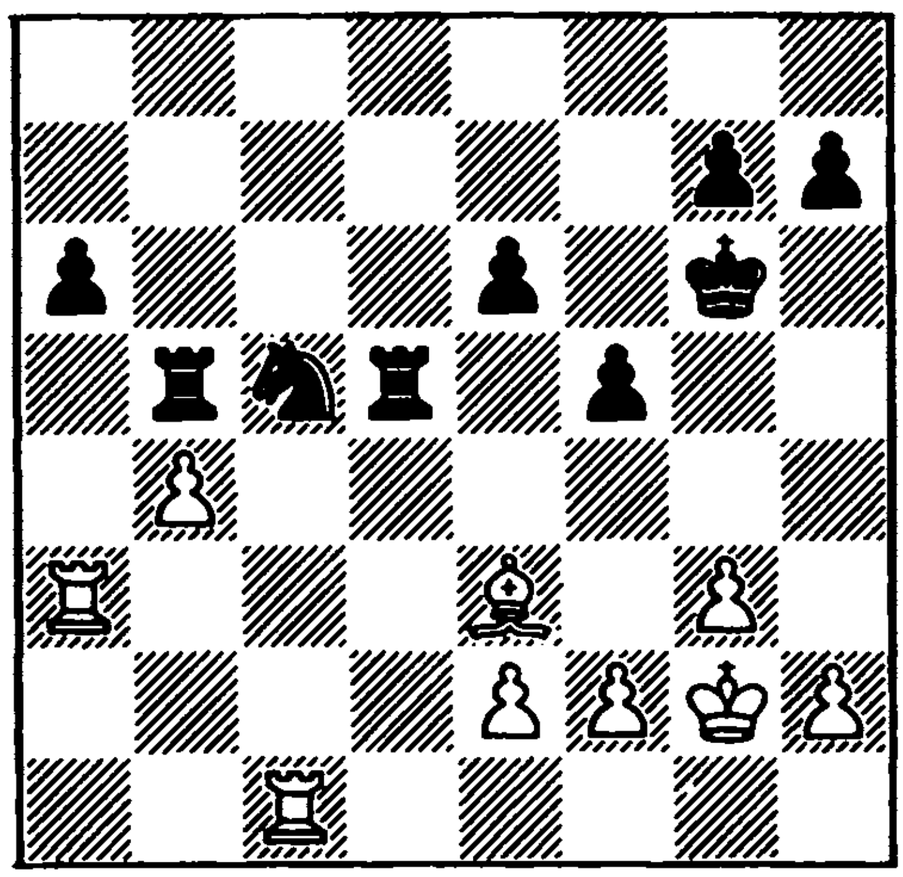
23 ... ♖8c7 24 ♗c3+ ♔g6 25 ♗e5 ♖d7

Black agrees to the pin on the c-file. After 25 ... ♖c8 White could calmly have made the strengthening move 26 f3 with the threat of 27 b4 and 28 ♖d7. With play on both flanks, the advantage of bishop over knight enables White to combine threats against the pawns at a6, e6 and g7.

26 ♖c1 ♖d5 27 ♗f4 ♖b6 28 ♗e3 ♖b5 29 b4 *(285)*

With this move White forces the win of a pawn.

285



29 ... ♘e4?

An imperceptible mistake. To defend against the check along the sixth rank after 30 ♖xa6 ♖xb4 31 ♖xe6+, it would seem to make no difference whether the knight goes to d7 or e4. But the move played allows the Yugoslav grandmaster to seize control of the seventh rank.

30 ♖xa6 ♖xb4
31 ♖c7!

With the threat of 32 ♖aa7.

31 ... ♘f6 32 ♖xe6 ♖e4 33 ♖a6 h6?

Black overlooks the opponent's next threat. He should have gone totally onto the defensive with 33 ... ♖d8 and 34 ... ♖g8.

34 h4! ♖d8

The best practical chance was the exchange sacrifice 34 ... ♖xe3 35 fxe3 h5.

35 h5+

With the loss of the h7 pawn Black's position collapses.

35 ... ♔xh5
36 ♖xg7 ♖xe3

A piquant mate at g5 follows after 36 ... ♘g4 37 ♖xh6+.

37 ♖xf6 ♖e5
38 ♔h3

Threatening 39 ♖xf5+.

38 ... ♖d4
39 f4 Resigns

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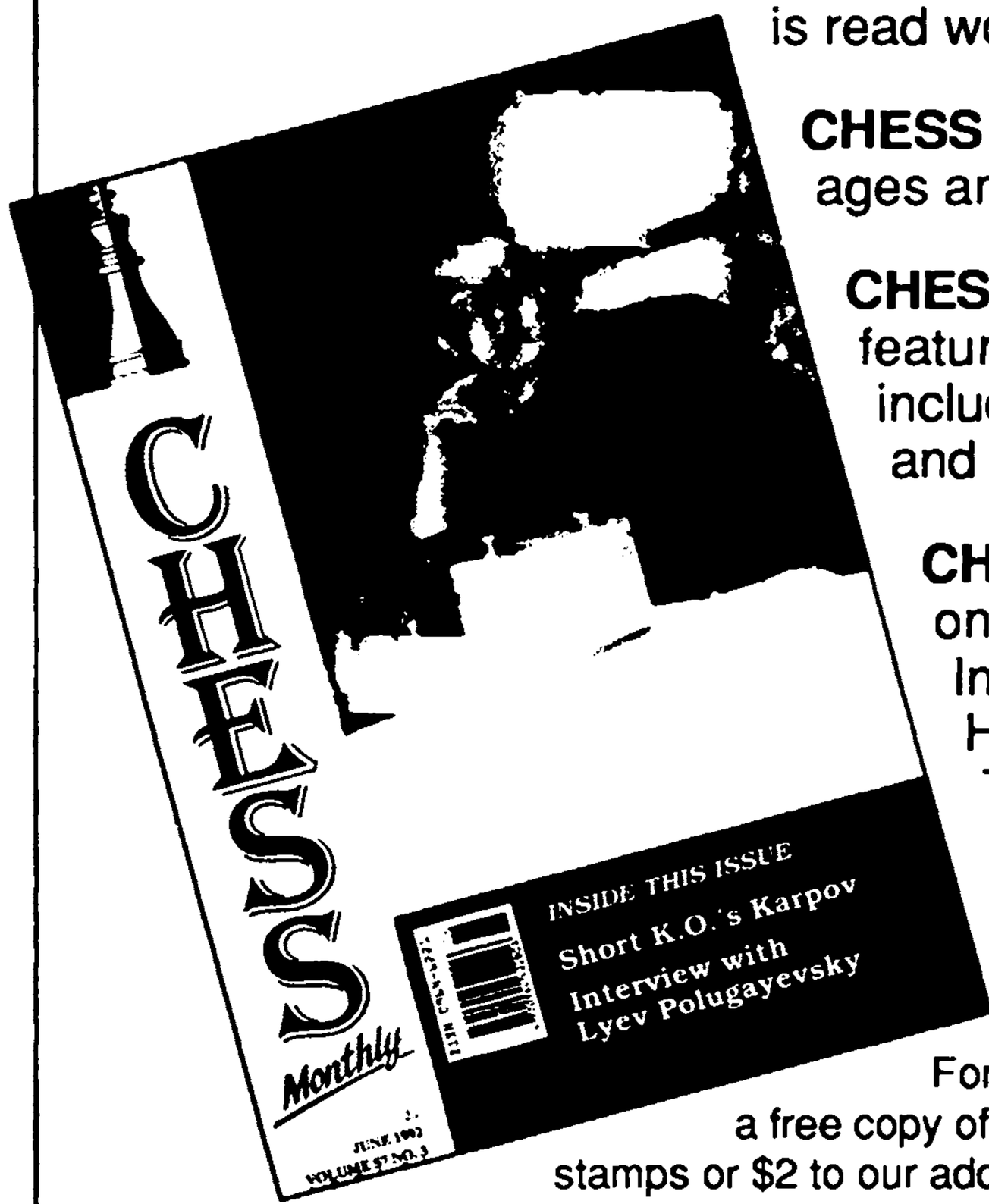

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