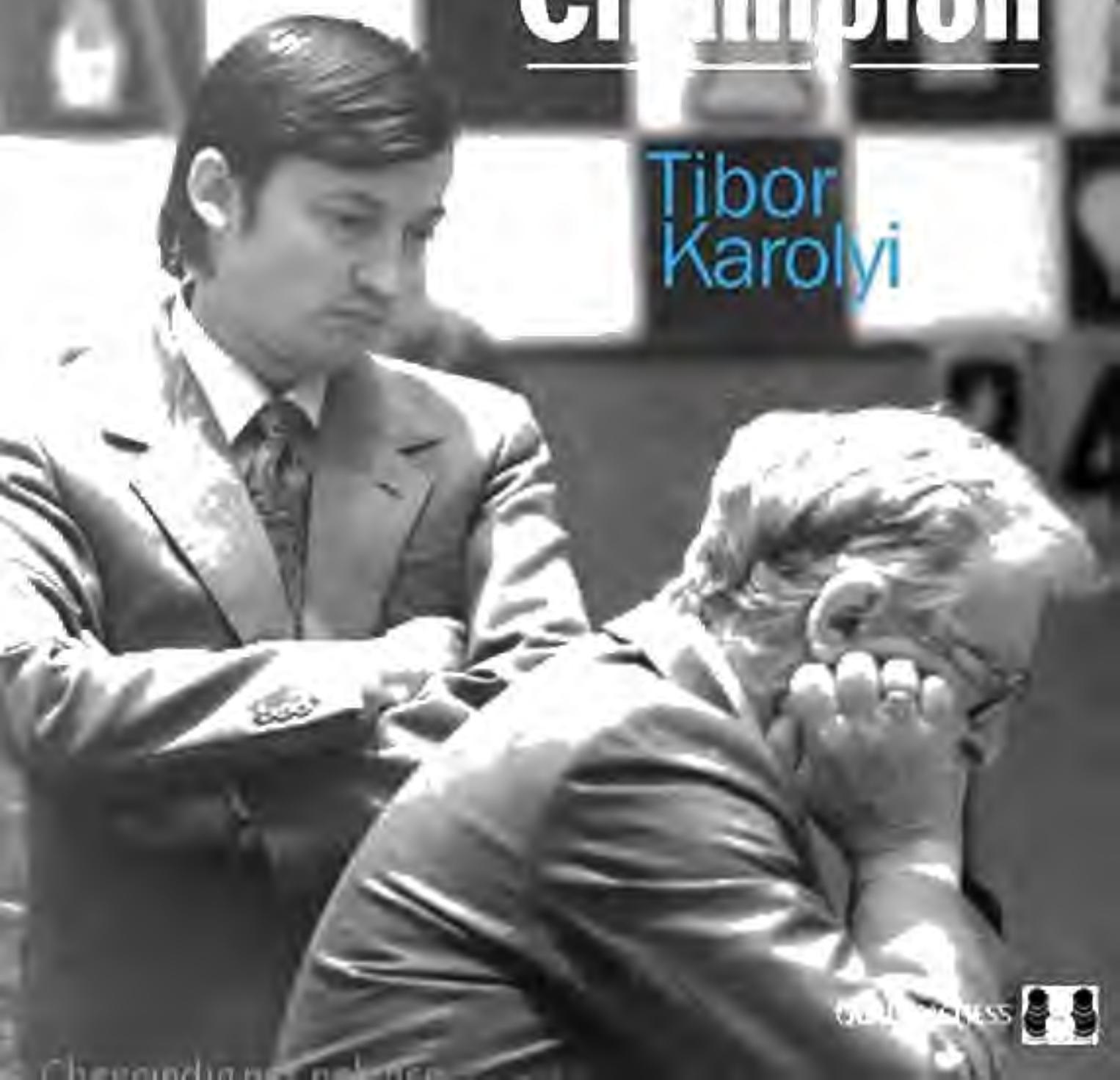


KARPOV'S STRATEGIC WINS 1

1961-1985

The Making of a Champion

Tibor  
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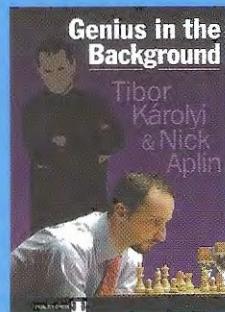
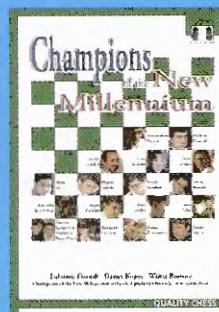
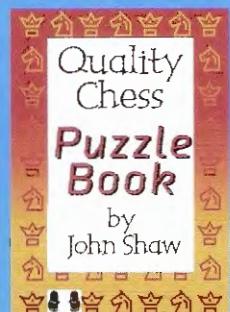
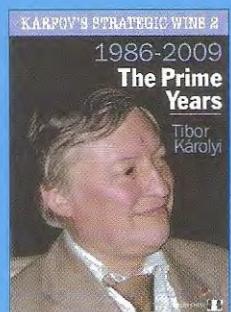
# Karpov's Strategic Wins 1: The Making of a Champion 1961-1985

**Anatoly Karpov** was World Champion from 1975 to 1985 and is universally regarded as one of the greatest players of all time. Award-winning author Tibor Károlyi explains Karpov's genius with a particular focus on Karpov's unrivalled grasp of strategy. Károlyi has selected Karpov's most entertaining and instructive strategic wins from 1961-1985 as the Russian star proved he was a worthy successor to Bobby Fischer.

The book starts with Karpov as a precocious youngster and tells the story of the making of a champion. It concludes with Karpov losing his title to his nemesis, Garry Kasparov.

International Master **Tibor Károlyi** was Hungarian Champion in 1984 and is renowned as an author and trainer. He won The Guardian Book of the Year prize in 2007 and coached Peter Leko when in the space of four years Leko went from a promising youngster to a world class grandmaster.

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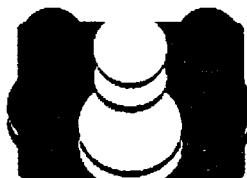
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*Karpov's Strategic Wins 1*

# The Making of a Champion

By

**Tibor Karolyi**



Quality Chess  
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# Karpov's Strategic Wins 1 - The Making of a Champion

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All sales or enquiries should be directed to Quality Chess UK Ltd,  
20 Balvie Road, Milngavie, Glasgow G62 7TA, United Kingdom

Phone +44 141 227 6771

e-mail: [info@qualitychess.co.uk](mailto:info@qualitychess.co.uk)

website: [www.qualitychess.co.uk](http://www.qualitychess.co.uk)

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# Key to symbols used

±	White is slightly better
‡	Black is slightly better
±	White is better
‡	Black is better
+−	White has a decisive advantage
−+	Black has a decisive advantage
=	equality
≡	with compensation
⇄	with counterplay
?	unclear
?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
!?	a move worth considering
?!	a move of doubtful value
#	mate

---

# Preface

---

Anatoly Karpov, the twelfth World Chess Champion, is one of the greatest players of all time and the holder of a number of records. No other player in history has won so many high-level individual tournaments. Karpov also achieved the best ever tournament performance in winning the 1994 Linares tournament with an incredible 11/13, two and a half points ahead of the second and third placed Kasparov and Shirov.

These records are the most impressive but they are not the only ones. Of all the World Champions, Karpov is the one who participated in the largest number of World Championship finals. He is also the only player to have won the title of World Champion in three different ways. The most significant is of course when he reigned between 1975 and 1985. He also won the 1997-98 FIDE World Championship. What is less well known is that he was the winner of the only World Rapid Chess Championship in Mazatlan 1988. Karpov may well be the player who earned the most money through chess, although it is impossible to establish this with any certainty.

Together with Nick Aplin I wrote a book entitled *Endgame Virtuoso: Anatoly Karpov*, published by *New in Chess* in 2007. During the selection of games for that book came the realization that Karpov's games are so rich as to be worthy of deep investigation from just one particular angle. The primary aim of the present two-volume work is to show the reader, in chronological order, how Karpov outplayed his opponents by strategic means. Karpov's strategic genius has been well documented by many chess writers, but according to my best knowledge not a single book has been written on the subject in such depth as can be found in these pages.

The twelfth World Champion is best known as a “python” who could slowly squeeze the life out of his opponent, but over the course of the two volumes we will see plenty of examples of his tactical sharpness as well. Games involving a quick attack on the opponent's king have been omitted, as they do not fit in with the overall theme of the book, but let me quash any misconceptions about Karpov being a one-dimensional player. When the situation on the board demanded it, he could attack with as much ferocity as almost anyone else.

A number of Karpov's games which culminated in interesting endgames have been omitted from this project, as they have already been discussed in the *Endgame Virtuoso* book. My conclusion from the work on both the present project and the aforementioned endgame book is that Karpov's little-known games often contain at least as much instructive and artistic value as his more famous wins. In this book I have tried to give priority to the beauty and educational value of his strategic masterpieces. Over the coming pages I will identify the tools he uses and highlight the features that characterize his play.

Many have called Karpov the greatest strategic player of all time. I invite the readers to become acquainted with his masterpieces and decide for themselves whether this view is justified.

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# 1961

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Anatoly Evgenievich Karpov, the twelfth world chess champion, was born on 23 May 1951 in the city of Zlatoust, located in the Urals region of Russia. He learned to play chess at the age of four with his father Evgeny Stepanovich, a chief engineer. It may or may not be a coincidence that many of the world champions came from single parent families. Karpov was an exception; he grew up in a normal family environment with his parents and one sister.

Karpov's exceptional chess talent shone almost from the start. He became a second and then a first category player at the age of just nine. His first recorded games for the public are from 1961.

We will take the year 1961 as the starting point for our study of Karpov's career, as his first games in the database are from that year. The biggest event in the broader chess world was the Tal – Botvinnik rematch, in which the fifty year old Botvinnik regained the highest title for the last time. Most of Karpov's games from 1961 were played in his home city, although he also competed in several other Russian cities including Borovichi, Magnitogorst and Chelyabinsk. This exposure shows that he and his supporters were already taking chess seriously at that time.

It is not possible to work out from the database whether the Zlatoust games were played in one tournament or whether these are selected games from that particular year. He did not handle openings in a well educated way, although with Black he played one main Ruy Lopez Chigorin variation with ... $\mathbb{E}d8$  and a ...d5 pawn sacrifice. His generally slow handling of the opening caused his games to last longer on average than they did in the later part of his career. He already followed reasonable plans, although of course opponents' blunders played a more significant role than in later years.

Here is our first game. A database search reveals no further games on the part of his opponent.

## Game 1

Anatoly Karpov – Gaimaletdinov

---

Zlatoust 1961

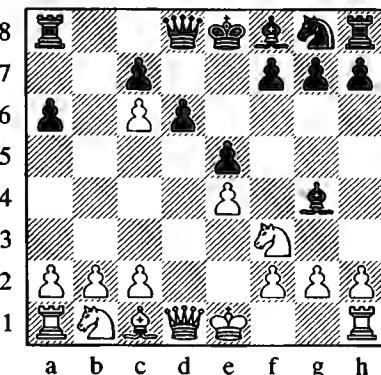
1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  d6 4.d4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  5.d5 a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$ ??!

White could have given up the bishop under better circumstances: 6. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  b5 7.dxc6 bxa4 8.c4 f5 9.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (or 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  10. $\mathbb{W}xf3$  fxe4 11. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  12. $\mathbb{W}c2$  and White is better) 10.exf5 e4 11.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  12. $\mathbb{W}e2$  d5 13. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White got a clear advantage in Dvoretsky – Biriukov, USSR 1973.

It is also promising to keep the bishop: 6.♗e2!?

♗xf3 (6...♝ce7 7.h3 ♜d7 8.c4 is also better for White) 7.gxf3! ♜d4 (7...♝ce7 8.f4) 8.♗f1  
And White will carry out f3-f4 with better prospects.

6...bxc6 7.dxc6



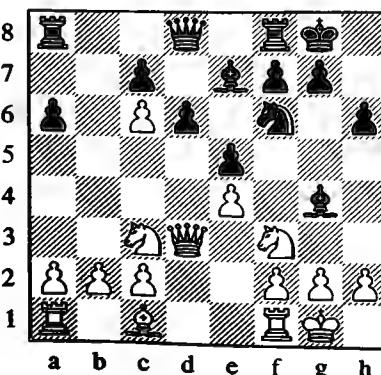
7...h6?

This move is obviously too slow, just like the whole plan with which Black intends to capture the c6-pawn. Instead he should play 7...♝e7, regaining the pawn with a good game.

8.0-0

On 8.♛d3 ♜e7 comes.

8...♝f6 9.♛d3 ♜e7 10.♝c3 0-0



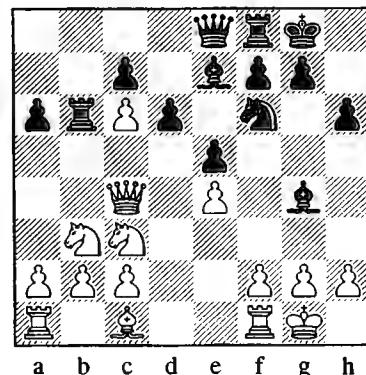
11.♞d2!

A subtle move; the young Anatoly wants to defend the c6-pawn without allowing his opponent to double his pawns on the kingside.

11...♛e8

So Black wants to take the c6-pawn with the queen.

12.♛c4! ♜b8 13.♝b3 ♜b6



14.♞a5!

The position is closed, so White can afford to spend a fourth tempo with the knight to defend it. Besides, the black rook is misplaced on b6.

14...♝h7?!

This is too slow. Black should have preferred 14...♜e6 15.♛d3 ♜h5 16.f3 ♛d8 17.b3 ♜g5 when White only has a small edge.

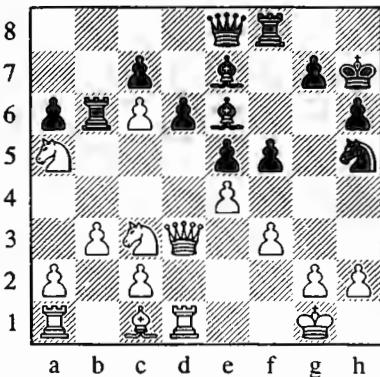
15.b3 ♜e6 16.♛d3 ♜h5 17.♝d1?!

It is difficult to understand why Karpov moved his rook to this square. He may have wanted to vacate the f1-square for the queen in the event of 17...♝f4.

17...♝f5 18.f3?!

It is remarkable that he refrains from winning a tempo with the natural 18.♛e3. He probably

had a different plan in mind to hurt the rook on b6.



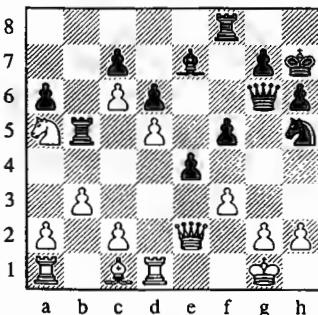
#### 18...f4?

Black closes the kingside, hoping for a pawn storm that will never happen. Both of the following alternatives would have kept the game more interesting:

18... $\mathbb{W}g6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  20. $\mathbb{W}d2$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{exf4}$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{fxe4}$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{exd3}$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  24. $\mathbb{cxg3}$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  Black is very active) 20... $\mathbb{fxe4}$  21. $\mathbb{fxe4}$   $\mathbb{Q}bb8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  It is not easy to for White to make his extra pawn count.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{exd5}$   $e4$  21. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$



#### 22.a4!!

It is a lovely way to showcase the theme of the misplaced rook.

22. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  is not so convincing.

22... $\mathbb{Q}bb8$

22... $\mathbb{Q}xa5?$  is possible, although after 23. $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  26. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $e3!$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  30. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $a5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e7$  White keeps a nice edge.

23. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

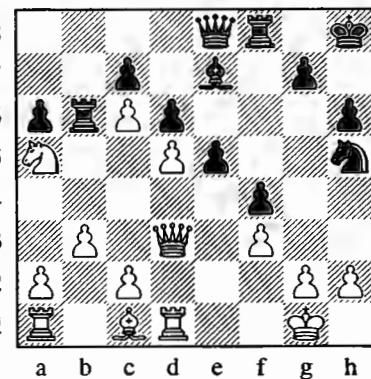
23. $f4?$  also looks promising.

23... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{exf3}$  25. $\mathbb{W}xf3$

Black does not have enough for the pawn.

18... $\mathbb{fxe4}$  Opening the position at once was probably Black's best chance. 19. $\mathbb{W}xe4\uparrow$  (19. $\mathbb{fxe4}$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ) 19... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (After 19... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20. $\mathbb{W}xg6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}bb8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black has little to show for the pawn.) 20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  is also good) 20... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  22.c4 White extra pawn should be worth more than Black's activity.

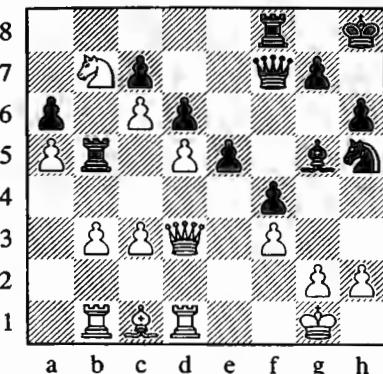
#### 19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 20. $\mathbb{exd5}\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$



#### 21. $\mathbb{Q}b7!$

The knight may not attack anything here, but it serves an important function in trapping the black rook.

21... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  23. $a4!$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  24. $a5!$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  25.c3  $\mathbb{Q}b5$



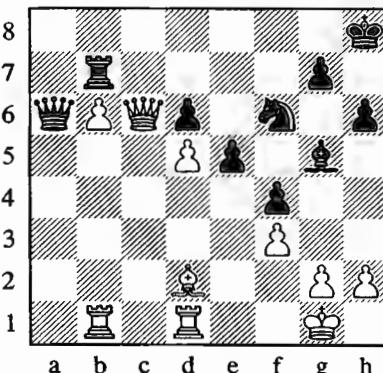
**26.c4!**

Karpov completes his plan and the rook perishes. The rest should be simple.

26... $\mathbb{E}xb7$  27. $\mathbb{C}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  28.b4  $\mathbb{E}xb7$  29.b5  $\mathbb{A}xb5$  30. $\mathbb{C}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  31. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  32. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{W}a7\uparrow$  33.b6  $\mathbb{C}xb6$  34.axb6  $\mathbb{W}a6$  35. $\mathbb{W}d2?$

Missing an opportunity to end the game with 35. $\mathbb{W}e8\uparrow!$ , winning the knight on h5.'

**35... $\mathbb{Q}f6$**



**36. $\mathbb{W}xd6$**

36. $\mathbb{W}e1?$  e4 (36... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ ) 37.h4 wins without giving any counterchances. Karpov has such an overwhelming advantage that he can win in any way he chooses. In the game he

certainly did not finish off his opponent in the most efficient way, but he always maintained a winning advantage.

**36...e4 37. $\mathbb{Q}xf4?!$**

37.fxe4 was simpler, as 37... $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$  loses to 38. $\mathbb{W}f8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  39. $\mathbb{W}f5\uparrow$ .

**37... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  38. $\mathbb{W}xf4$  exf3 39. $\mathbb{W}xf3$**

39.d6? was also possible.

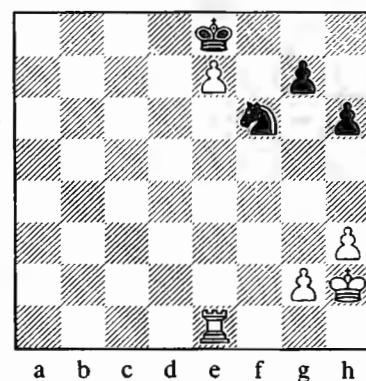
**39... $\mathbb{E}xb6$  40. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6\uparrow$  41. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  42.h3**

42. $\mathbb{W}g3$  was also fine.

**42... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  43. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  44. $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  45. $\mathbb{D}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  46.e7?**

46. $\mathbb{E}d8!$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  47. $\mathbb{E}f8$  wins very simply.

**46... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  47. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  48. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$**



**49. $\mathbb{E}e5$**

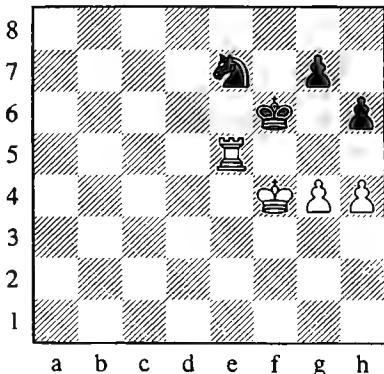
It is worth mentioning the line 49. $\mathbb{E}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (49... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  50. $\mathbb{E}g6$  wins easily) 50. $\mathbb{E}xf6\uparrow?$   $\mathbb{G}xf6$  51. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  52. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  53.h4! White wins here but there was no practical value in playing like this.

**49... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  50. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$**

Winning the e7-pawn enables Black to resist for a while, but he is lost anyway. If Black had

a light-squared bishop instead of the knight, the win would require skilful technique.

51.♗g4 ♖f7 52.h4 ♗g8 53.♗f4 ♖f6 54.g4  
♕e7



55.h5 g5†

55... ♗g8 56.♖a5 ♕e7 57.♖a7 ♖f7 58.♗e5  
♖f8 59.♗e6 wins.

56.♗e4 ♖f7 57.♖a5 ♗g8 58.♗e5 ♖g7  
59.♖a7† ♖h8 60.♗e6

1–0

This was a remarkable performance for a ten year old. He made the win a bit harder than it should have been, but overall he played the whole game impressively.

## **1961 Summary**

The database contains eighteen games from this year, of which Karpov won twelve, drew five and lost only one. It is likely that his overall results were lower and Karpov publicized only his best games from the early period of his life. Even so, his play was undoubtedly at a high level for a ten year old.

# 1962

Interestingly there are only twelve games documented from this year, most of which took place in Zlatoust. His games were of a shorter duration and his opening play had visibly improved. Blunders played a smaller role in his games than in the previous year. Some of the games are already endgame pearls. The database shows that he achieved a draw with Black against Korchnoi, which must have been at a simul.

Karpov's opponent in the next game was not a well-known player. The game is selected because of its crystal clear technique.

## Game 2

Anatoly Karpov – Dmitri Piskunov

Zlatoust 1962

1.e4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  3.c4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  4.d4 d6 5.exd6

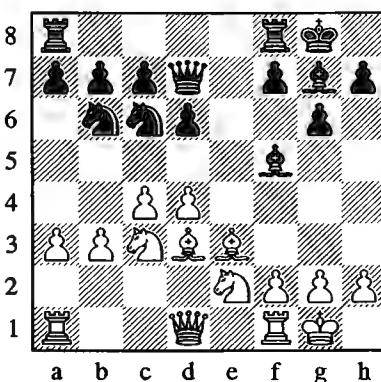
It is interesting that Karpov chose this exchanging line long before it became fashionable.

5... $\text{exd6}$  6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7.a3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  g6

It was worth considering 8...d5!? 9.c5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  11.0–0 0–0 12.b3

By eliminating the possibility of ...d5 and ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , Karpov reduces his opponent's options.

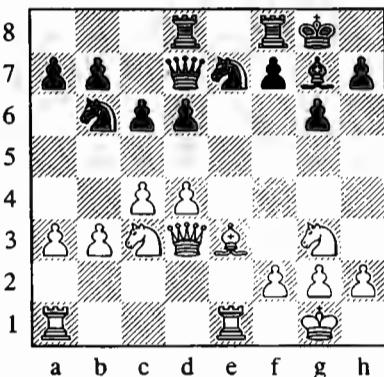


**12...♝ad8 13.♛c2 ♞xd3 14.♛xd3 ♖e7  
15.♞g3!**

Karpov refuses to allow the exchange of the e7-knight, which would have eased the congestion in Black's position.

**15...c6 16.♝f1**

Black is worse as White has more space and most of the pieces are still on the board. In addition Black's knights have hardly any purposeful squares available.



**16...d5?!**

16...♞ec8 looks slightly awkward but may nevertheless have provided better hopes of survival as Black can at least double his rooks on the e-file.

16...h6! was recommended by Ashot Nadanian, who suggests Black now has a pleasant game. His plan involves ...f5, gaining space without giving up important squares. Nevertheless after 17.♝e2 f5 18.♛d2 ♜h7 19.♝ae1 White's position is preferable and he could also exert pressure with 19.a4. Still, Black would have had better chances than in the game.

**17.c5**

Karpov increases his space advantage.

**17...♞bc8**

Sometimes one must visualize the second move of a knight rather than just the first. It would have cost a tempo to put the knight on c7 with 17...♞a8! but it was worth the investment as the position is closed and the knight would have enjoyed much better prospects there.

**18.♝e2 f5?**

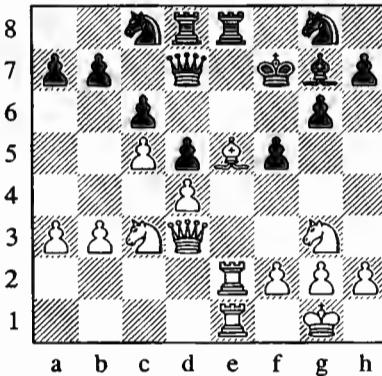
This weakens the e5-square, although skill is needed to exploit the opportunity. A sounder alternative was 18...♝h8, enabling the knight to transfer to f6 via g8.

Another idea was 18...f6?!, giving the option of bringing the king to f7, as in the game, but without relinquishing control of the e5-square.

**19.♞f4 ♜f7 20.♝ae1 ♜fe8**

Black wants to ease the pressure on his position by exchanging the rooks on the e-file.

**21.♝e5 ♞g8**



**22.♞f1!**

White has time to transfer the knight to e5.

**22...♝f6**

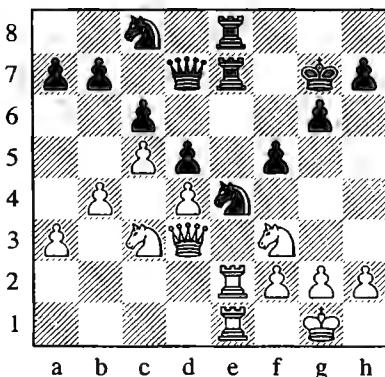
22...♝xe5 can be met strongly by 23.dxe5!. Keeping the rooks on the board is White's most effective strategy. Note that the black

knights are both a long way from e6. 23... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  The white knight has an easy route to d4, and if 24...d4 then 25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  leaves the d-pawn weak.

**23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$**

Karpov believes that manoeuvring the knight to e5 is more important than keeping a pair of pieces on the board.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  26.b4  $\mathbb{E}de8$**



**27. $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

Finally the knight can occupy the soft point in Black's position.

**27... $\mathbb{W}d8$  28.f3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$**

If 28... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  29.b5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30.f4 White has a great advantage as well.

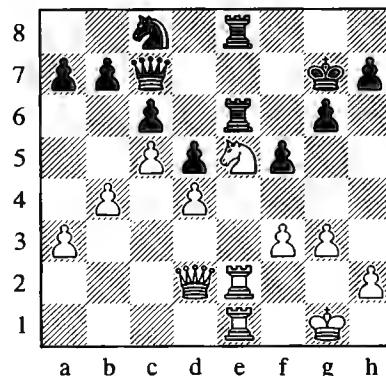
**29. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}e6$**

Black has a joyless position. He would like to improve the c8-knight but there is no easy way of doing it. Instead he must wait passively and react to White's threats.

**30.g3  $\mathbb{W}c7$**

30...f4 offers more resistance, although 31.g4 leaves White clearly on top.

**31. $\mathbb{W}d2$**



**31... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$**

Black has no luck with knight moves in this game.

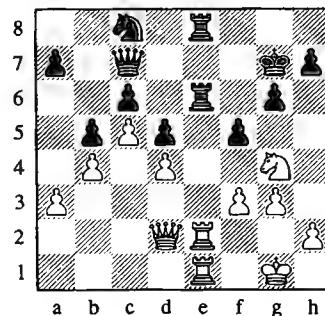
**31...b5!?**

This was a much better attempt to resist, although White keeps a big plus and should have enough resources to grind his opponent down.

**32. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$**

Singaporean IM Chan Peng Kong recommended this witty move. It threatens an invasion.

Alternatives include preparing a pawn break, such as a4 on the queenside or h4 followed by g4 on the kingside.



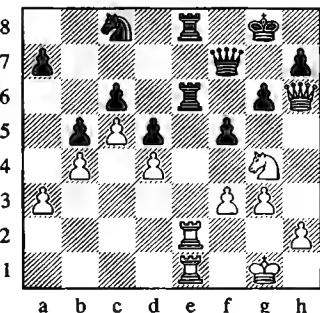
**32... $\mathbb{W}f7!$**

Black can resist the onslaught with this cold-blooded move.

After 32... $\mathbb{E}xe2?$  33. $\mathbb{E}xe2$  White invades:

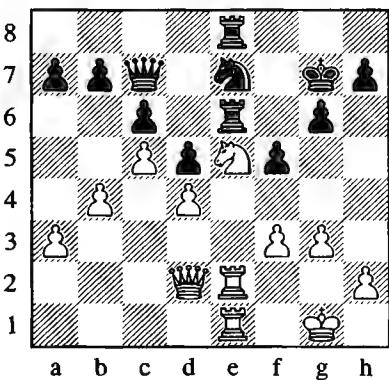
33... $\mathbb{B}d8$  (33... $\mathbb{B}xe2$  34. $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f6\uparrow-$ ) 34. $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  36. $\mathbb{B}e6$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  37. $\mathbb{W}e3$  With a winning advantage.

33. $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$



34. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

White has to return to the positional approach in order to convert his advantage.



32. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

This shows the remarkable alertness of the eleven year old Anatoly. He notices that he can transfix his opponent with a lethal pin on the e-file.

32... $\mathbb{B}xe2$  33. $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $b5?$

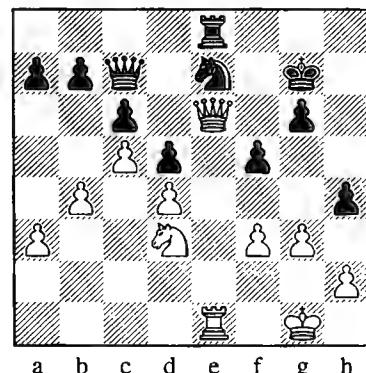
Black goes down without any resistance. 33... $\mathbb{W}d7$  was better, although even then White can win with 34. $\mathbb{W}e5\uparrow$  (34. $\mathbb{W}e3$  is

also good enough) 34... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  (35... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  36. $\mathbb{W}h8\uparrow-$ ) 36. $\mathbb{W}b8$   $\mathbb{B}xe1$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e5\uparrow-$ .

34. $\mathbb{W}e6$

34. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  also wins.

34... $b4$



35. $\mathbb{W}d6!$

1-0

Black resigned as he cannot avoid the loss of a piece. This game is a remarkable example of chess understanding, even at the age of eleven. Karpov identified the soft point, manoeuvred to gain control and retreated at the right time to open the floodgates.

When I wrote the book *Endgame Virtuoso: Anatoly Karpov* with Nick Aplin, I was curious as to the identity of Karpov's junior trainer, but I was unable to find out. In a conversation Vladimir Smirnov told me that Kasparov mentions the name in the Russian edition of the relevant volume of *My Great Predecessors*. I checked the English version but the name was not given, but with Vladimir's help I managed to find out that Karpov's trainer in this extremely formative period was Leonid Gravol. I know in Hungary what a strong and often underestimated effect junior trainers had

on the development of the Polgars and Leko, for instance, and once these players retire or drop their level how heavily Hungarian chess will pay for it and reduce the status of my country in world chess. It took some investigation to reach Mr. Gratvol and send him a few questions. I was told his health was not good, and I was especially happy when his answers arrived. Here is the interview.

*When and where were you born?*

"I was born on the 16th of April 1932 in the city of Chelyabinsk."

*Could you please say a few words about your family?*

"My father, Aaron Gratvol (1900-1943), was Jewish; he died at the front during World War II. My mother, Antonina Gratvol (1912-2004), was Russian. My father worked as an accountant in a factory. My mother was a kindergarten teacher.

*When did you learn to play chess?*

I learned to set up the board at the age of five, and I started to participate in tournaments in 1947 at the Chelyabinsk chess club."

*Who was or were your trainer(s) in your youth?*

"I did not have one; after visiting the chess club I still played chess and I mainly worked on my chess from books and magazines."

*Have you graduated from a university?*

"I obtained a diploma. I left the history faculty of the Chelyabinsk Pedagogical Institute in 1959."

*Have you ever been a professional player?*

"Apart from training juniors in the Pioneers' Palace, I gave lectures on history in an evening school."

*What do you consider your best achievement?*

"I won three times, in 1960, 1962 and 1968, the regional championship. In 1968 I finished second and in 1975 I won the championship of Chelyabinsk.

*When did you start working with Karpov and for how long did you work with him?*

I started to work with him in 1961 when he was nine years old and trained him for three and a half years. Our involvement stopped when the family moved from the Chelyabinsk area to Tula."

*When did you discover his enormous talent?*

"I immediately noticed that he was a very talented boy."

*How did you train him?*

"Because he lived in Zlatoust, which is three and a half hours away on the train from Chelyabinsk, we did not train very often. We mainly worked on middlegame positions and choosing plans. Apart from that he participated in many tournaments when he stayed at my place."

*How did his style evolve, compared with his game in his junior years?*

"Karpov's style never changed sharply, but strengthened tremendously."

*What kind of relationship did you have with his parents?*

"Karpov's father worked in a metallurgic factory as a first engineer. I had virtually no contact with his mother."

*Are there any of Karpov's games of this period which is memorable for you?*

"Nowadays it is very hard for me to select a game from Karpov's early period."

*Do you think there is any Karpov game or games from the time he dominated the world in which the work you did with him can be directly seen?*

*"I do not think there is such a game."*

*Do you still have contact with him? If not, for how long were you in contact with him?*

*"Now there is no contact between us. Last time I met him was in 1975 in Leningrad."*

*Who is your favourite player?*

*"I respect all the great players a lot, but I do not have a single favourite."*

*How did you judge his chances against Fischer?*

*"I thought he had good chances, but I never believed the match would take place."*

*Were you happy when he won the title of World Champion without play?*

*"I was not happy about Karpov obtaining the title of World Champion without playing. I considered that it was a big loss for the whole chess community that the match did not take place."*

*When did you move to Israel? Could you speak a bit about your present family?*

*"I came to Israel with my wife and my mother in 1994. My daughter has raised my grandson on her own since 1996. My mother died in 2004."*

*How much time do you have for chess?*

*"When I arrived in Israel I participated in many tournaments. Nowadays I seldom play because of the deterioration of my health."*

*On behalf of the readers I wish you the best of health and many happy years. Thank you very much for the interview.*

Mr Gratvol also sent me a scanned page of an old Soviet chess magazine, in which Karpov talks about his junior years. The section on Gratvol is translated below:

*"Then I lived in Zlatoust, far away from the chess centres of our country and my initial chess development occurred independently. From time to time I travelled to Chelyabinsk where regional tournaments took place. There I met Leonid Aronovich Gratvol who was the head of chess at the Pioneers' Palace. The now honoured trainer of the Russian Republic – strictly speaking he was my first chess tutor. Leonid Aronovich – a very delicate person and teacher. He did not impose creative views, but he tried to save the originality of each junior chess player in order not to spoil their talents."*

I managed to find out that Gratvol had a total of eight future grandmaster pupils, a few of whom wrote about him in public. Unfortunately I was unable to find out where and when the following comments were published.

### GM Evgeny Sveshnikov

Renowned Grandmaster and theoretician, and inventor of the Sveshnikov variation of the Sicilian.

*"In my development as a chess player the trainer who took care of me for the longest period had the biggest role. He was not only my trainer but also a close person to me: Leonid Aronovich Gratvol. He was a candidate master, but several times he won the championship of the region. Through his hands, apart from me, went a row of grandmasters: Gennady Timoschenko, Alexander Panchenko, Semen Dvoiry, Tatiana Shumiakina and even Anatoly Karpov. All the players from Chelyabinsk who achieved something at chess worked with him. When the Chelyabinsk team won the all Soviet school team championship, Timoschenko played on the first board, Karpov second and myself on the third.*

Gratvol was awarded the “Honoured Trainer” title of the Russian Republic. Without this success he would not have been ranked on the appropriate level – he was such a modest person.”

### GM Alexander Panchenko

*You have become a well-known coach quickly enough despite the lack of pedagogical and life teaching experience. Please tell us in detail how you managed to do it!*

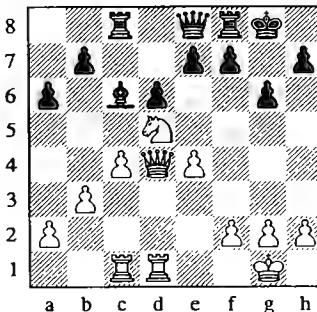
“I’ve been lucky. My coach in Chelyabinsk was the honoured coach of Russia, Leonid Aronovich Gratvol, a natural born teacher. I could have talked about him endlessly. It would be enough to say that he had brought up Gennady Timoschenko, Evgeny Sveshnikov, Semen Dvoiry, Tatiana Shumiakina, many other well-known masters, and worked with the young Tolya Karpov. I just had to recall how he had been working with us, and tried to follow his advice.”

I checked the database for Gratvol, and was only able to find a few games. I noticed he had a very positional style. It is difficult to measure exactly how much a trainer’s influence can be seen in a pupil’s career, although in the previous Karpov – Piskunov game, which I rate very highly, one can sense Gratvol’s direct effect. His games on the database are not from the times when he was at his peak in Chelyabinsk, but only from the period after he passed his sixtieth birthday. Before returning to our main subject of Karpov’s career, as a farewell I present one of Gratvol’s wins. Decide for yourself how much Karpov’s style resembles that of his junior trainer.

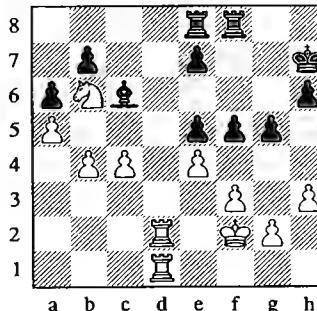
### Leonid Gratvol – Stefan Hatzl

Frohnleiten 1999

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 2. d4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  3. c4 c5 4. e4 cxd4 5.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 8.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  0–0 9. 0–0–0 a6 10.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  13. b3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$



18.  $\mathbb{Q}c3?$ ! f6 19.  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}cd8$  21. f3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}cd1$  h6 24. a4  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}de8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  27. a5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}de2$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}ed1$   $\mathbb{Q}de8$  31. b4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}ee2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  34. h3 g5 35.  $\mathbb{Q}el$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}ed1$   $\mathbb{Q}de8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  dxе5 39.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}de8$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  f5



42.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  43. b5  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  f4† 46.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6†$  exf6 48. bx a6 bx a6 49.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}c2†$  51.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  1–0

## **1962 Summary**

Out of the twelve games Karpov has in the database from 1962, he won nine of them and drew three without a loss.

# 1963

This was the year in which Botvinnik lost his crown for the last time, with Petrosian becoming the new champion. As the number of games by Karpov in the database decreased to three, it is difficult to draw any conclusions about his level of improvement. It seems that he dared to enter more complicated positions than before. He won all three games, each of which lasted more than forty moves.

The following is Karpov's last game in the section devoted to Zlatoust. Interestingly I found only one more game featuring Karpov's present opponent, which took place in 1998!

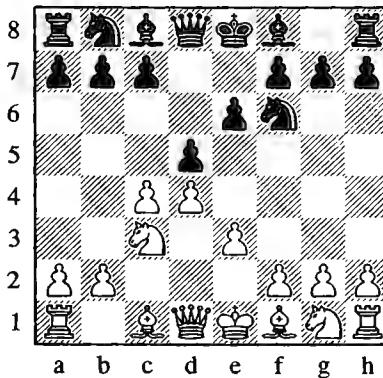
## Game 3

### A. Korotaev – Anatoly Karpov

Zlatoust 1963

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 d5 4.e3**

To close the bishop's diagonal is a harmless plan. White's position is safe, but it is not easy to breathe life into it.



**4...b6**

Intending to undertake the 'hanging pawns' centre.

**5.♗f3 ♜b7 6.cxd5 exd5 7.♗d3 ♜d6 8.0–0 0–0**

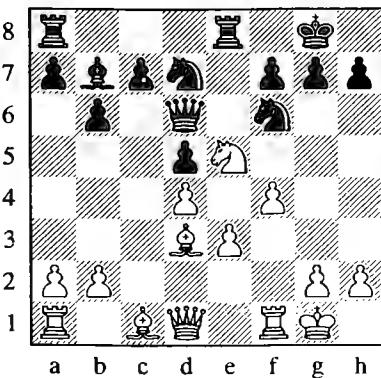
The alternative was 8...a6.

**9.♗b5 ♜e8!?**

Karpov gives up the two bishops for fluent play. 9... $\mathbb{B}e7$  was possible as well.

### 10. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 12. $f4$ !

White intends to attack Black's king, but the plan is a faulty one. Instead he should just catch up with his development.



### 12... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ 13. $\mathbb{R}f3$

13.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  is more natural.

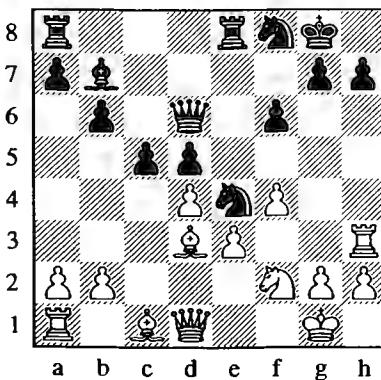
### 13... $\mathbb{f}6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ c5!

Karpov keeps playing fluently.

### 15. $\mathbb{R}h3$ ?

The rook does little here and will find itself sidelined as the game progresses.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}f2$



### 16... $\mathbb{f}5$

This move is well timed, as White's knight is a long way from the e5-square. Nevertheless Black could have played more strongly with 16... $\mathbb{cxd4}!$  17.  $\mathbb{exd4}$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ —+ when he wins a pawn for no compensation.

### 17. $b3$ ??

White should have opened the long diagonal for his dark-squared bishop with 17.  $\mathbb{dxc5}!$ , and after 17...  $\mathbb{Wxc5}$  the position is close to equal.

### 17... $\mathbb{cxd4}$ ! 18. $\mathbb{exd4}$ $\mathbb{Eac8}$

Black is somewhat better because of the strong knight on e4.

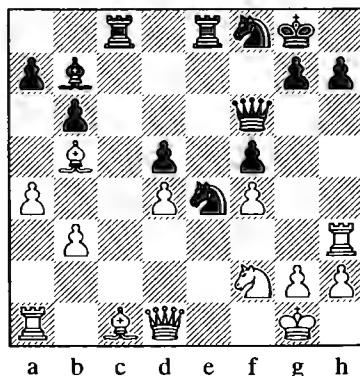
### 19. a4??

This wastes a tempo. 19.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  would at least have improved White's development.

### 19... $\mathbb{Wf6}$

19...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  was also strong.

### 20. $\mathbb{Ab5}$



### 20... $\mathbb{Ee7}$ !

Karpov improves his position. He could have won a pawn with 20...  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ ?? 21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Ee4}$ , but White's pieces would come to life: 22.  $\mathbb{Ab2}$ ! (22.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ) 22...  $\mathbb{Exf4} \dagger$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24.  $\mathbb{Wd2}$  Black is better, but converting his extra pawn will not be easy.

**21.♕b2 ♔ec7**

Taking over the c-file.

**22.♕d3?!**

Exchanging one of the rooks gave more chances to hold: 22.♕c1? ♔e6 (22...♕xc1 23.♕xc1 ♔e6 24.♕e3) 23.♕xc7 ♕xc7 24.♕f3 ♕c6 (24...a5 can be met by 25.♕d3; perhaps Black should just keep his opponent guessing with 24...♗f8?!) 25.♕xc6 (25.♕e2 ♕e8) 25...♕xc6 26.♕d3 White is facing a passive defence, but he is not beaten yet.

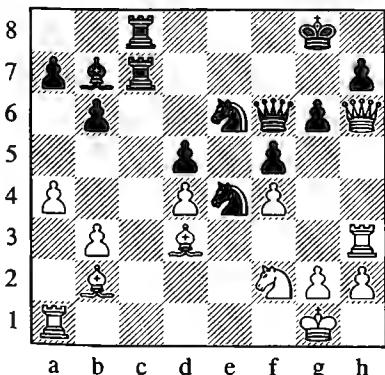
**22...♔e6 23.♕h5?**

This puts the queen out of play as well.

**23...g6**

Karpov simply parries White's threat, although he could safely have gone ahead with 23...♕xf2!, when 24.♕xh7† ♔f7 25.♕h5† ♕g6 26.♕xg6† ♕xg6 27.♕xf2 ♕c2† simplifies to a won endgame.

**24.♕h6**



**24...♕xd4!**

Black has such domination in the centre that he can afford to open the long diagonal.

**25.♕d1**

White keeps his dark-squared bishop, but

Black has so much force in the centre that White cannot even create a threat on the long diagonal. If 25.♕d1 ♔e2† or 25.♕b1 ♔d2 wins.

**25...♔c5 26.♕c2**

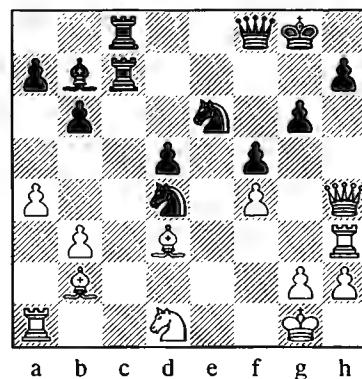
26.♕f1 would have offered more resistance.

**26...♔ce6?!**

Karpov wants to simplify into an endgame. It should be good enough, but Black could have won instantly with 26...♕e8!. At this early age he had not yet acquired the ability to seize upon almost any chance to go after the opponent's king.

**27.♕d3 ♕f8 28.♕h4**

Avoiding the somewhat slower death that would have occurred after exchanging queens.



**28...♔xb3**

Aside from Black's material advantage, he has several good pieces while White has only one.

**29.♕b1 ♔d2 30.♕c1 ♕f7 31.♕a1 ♔e4**

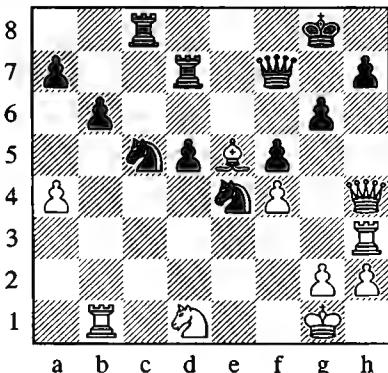
**32.♕b1 ♔c5 33.♕f1 ♔a6**

With two extra pawns, Karpov naturally exchanges pieces.

**34.♕e5 ♕d7 35.♕xa6 ♔xa6 36.♕f2 ♔ac5**

**37.Qd1**

White has failed to develop any counterplay, and now he loses a third pawn.



**37...Qxa4 38.Qa3 Qac5 39.Qe1 d4 40.Qb1**

**Qb3 41.Qa2 Qc1**

Karpov liked to pin his opponents' pieces.

**42.Qb2 Qc3**

**0-1**

White played poorly in this game, but from Karpov's perspective it was an impressive performance. He purposefully improved his position. He positioned his knight on the e4-outpost, isolated the enemy d-pawn and took control over the c-file before winning material. Despite a few missed opportunities to win more quickly, he never let his opponent back into the game.

## 1963 Summary

With only three games from this year on the database, it is hard to make generalizations about Karpov's play. It is clear that the above game was a mature and skilful performance for a twelve year old. Karpov was on his way up, and according to the database he never played another significant game in Zlatoust. The future World Champion has outgrown his home city, but he still has a long way to go.

# 1964

Once again there are minimal games in the database – four this time. Karpov won them all, which suggests that these were specially selected games. They all took place in the city of Vladimir. His opening play did not improve in any discernable way, and all his wins were slow and long games. He preferred the Closed Sicilian to the Open. In 1964 he played in Moscow, drawing in a clock simul against Botvinnik. Karpov dropped a pawn, but then Mikhail Moiseevich blundered his queen. Luckily for the latter he still had enough activity and managed to survive.

Borvinnik later trained Karpov. The Patriarch did not realize what talent Karpov possessed and famously remarked that “he doesn’t have a clue about chess”. (Of course he did not tell it to Karpov!) Karpov wrote that the lessons and homework that he received at Botvinnik’s home were especially useful for him, as they required him to work hard, by reading books and studying independently.

## Game 4

### Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Fedin

Vladimir 1964

**1.e4 c5 2.♘c3**

Karpov played mainly the Closed Sicilian in the sixties, but stopped playing it regularly in 1971. In later years he tried it only three more times. Altogether he played twenty six Closed Sicilian games, winning seventeen, drawing eight and losing only once.

**2...♘c6 3.g3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.♘ge2 d6 6.0–0 e5**

The modern reaction to this setup involves putting the knight on h3, but it is too late for White to do that here.

**7.d3 ♘ge7 8.f4 0–0 9.h3 f5**

9...♗e6 deserves consideration, continuing Black’s development.

**10.♘e3 ♘d4 11.♗d2 ♘c7 12.♘d1**

Karpov follows a well-known regrouping plan.

**12...♗d7 13.c3 ♘e6 14.♘f2 ♞ab8 15.♗ac1 ♘c6 16.b4**

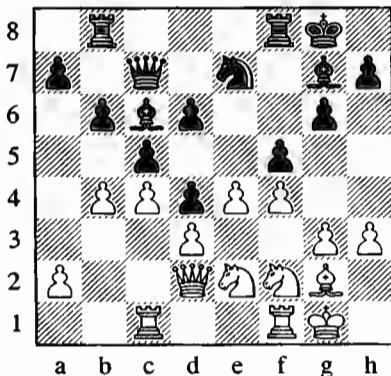
Having found good places for his minor pieces, Karpov starts gaining space.

**16...b6 17.c4 ♘d4**

Black has equalized from the opening.

**18.♕xd4 exd4**

18...cxd4 may have been better.

**19.b5 ♜b7 20.g4 ♜f7**

20...fxe4 21.dxe4 ♜h6 was stronger, as Black's pieces work better than in the game.

**21.a4**

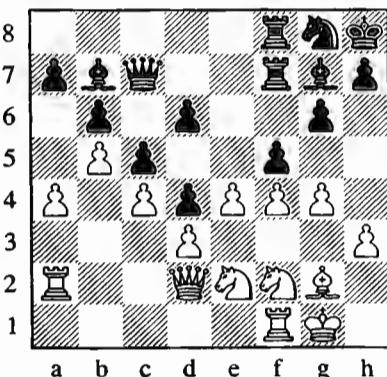
Karpov keeps gaining space.

**21...♜b8 22.♝c2 ♜h8**

After 22...fxe4 23.dxe4 White has a mobile kingside majority.

**23.♝a2 ♜g8**

23...a5! deserved consideration.

**24.g5!**

Karpov blocks the f6-square from the knight and gains more space.

**24...♜e8**

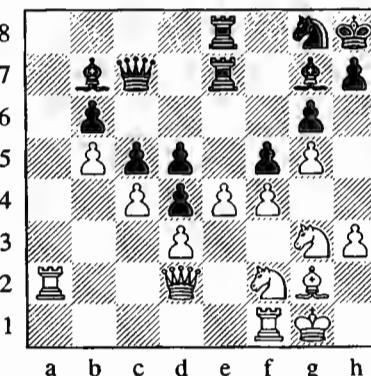
After 24...fxe4 25.dxe4 a5 26.h4 ♜e7 27.h5 the position is double-edged.

**25.a5! ♜fe7**

Black's rooks are strong but the g8-knight is out of play.

**26.♛g3 d5!?**

Black can stir up complications in a different way too: 26...fxe4 27.♝xe4 d5 28.♝xd5 ♜xd5 29.cxd5 ♜e3 30.♛ge4 c4 With a highly complex position.

**27.axb6 axb6****28.exf5**

Karpov elects to open the kingside, where both sides have their trumps. Black has the two rooks on the e-file, while White has three pieces and the strong g5-pawn.

A good alternative was 28.cxd5 fxe4 29.dxe4 ♜d7 30.♛g4 c4, when White's extra pawn should count for something, although the position remains wildly complicated.

**28...♝e3 29.♛fh1 dxc4 30.dxc4**

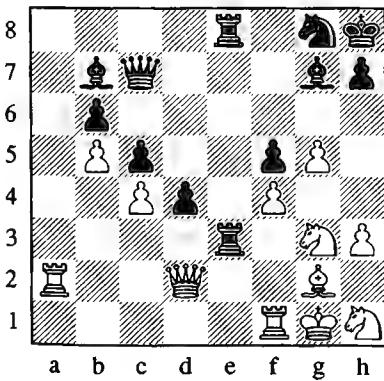
30.f6? ♛xf6 (after 30...♝xf6 31.♚a7 ♜b8 32.gxf6 ♜xd3 33.♗e2 ♜e3 34.♗xc4 ♛xf6 35.♗c6 White should have better chances with his extra piece) 31.gxf6 ♜xf6 32.♚a7 (32.dxc4 ♜c8) 32...♜xd3 33.♗c2 ♜b8 34.♗xc4 ♜e3 35.♗c6 d3 Black has counterplay at the end of this sharp line.

**30...gxfs?**

Black falters at a critical moment. He should have preferred one of the following alternatives:

30...♜xg2 31.♗xg2 (31.♗xg2 d3) 31...d3! 32.f6 ♛xf6 33.gxf6 ♜xf6 White is a piece up but Black is not worse at all as White's knights have few active prospects.

30...♞c8?! also leads to an unclear position.



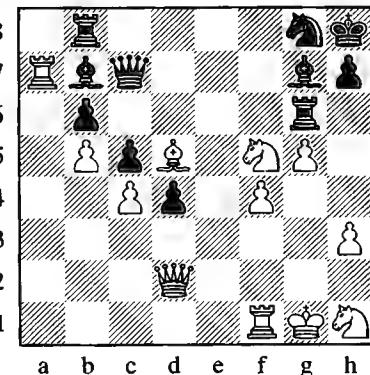
**31.♚a7!**

I have already remarked that Karpov liked to pin his opponents' pieces. The idea works perfectly here.

**31...♜b8 32.♛xf5**

Black is a piece up compared with the variations analysed two moves ago, but on the other hand the white knight works superbly and he still has the g5-pawn.

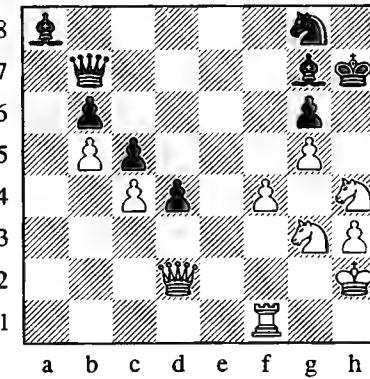
**32...♝e6 33.♗d5! ♜g6**



**34.♛hg3!**

Karpov has radically improved his three minor pieces on the kingside, and is now winning.

**34...♝c8 35.♛f7 ♜a8 36.♝xa8 ♜xa8 37.♛h2 ♜b7 38.♛xg6 hxg6 39.♛h4 ♜h7**



**40.f5!**

White already has a material advantage, and now he rips open Black's kingside with decisive effect. On move 28 Karpov started the confrontation with 28.exf5. He outplayed his opponent, and now he reaps the harvest and wins the game easily on the kingside.

40...gxfs 41.Qe2 Qe7 42.Qh5† Qg8 43.Qe8† Qh7 44.g6† Qh6 45.Qxe7 f4 46.Qg5†  
1-0

## 1964 Summary

Once again the small number of games prevents us from drawing any detailed conclusions, apart from remarking that his play in the above game was at a high level for one so young.

# 1965

Karpov was the youngest player at the All Union Schoolboys event at Kharkov, where he scored a respectable 4½/8. The games do not appear in the database, although the Russian chess magazine *Shakhmatniy Bulletin* published his first game. He also participated in the Spartakiad USSR junior event in Kharkov, where he played nine games, only four of which found their way to the database.

The only other game available from 1965 was a draw against Spassky in a simultaneous event. At the time Spassky was arguably the strongest player in the world, and would go on to challenge Petrosian for the World Championship the following year. It all goes to show that in those days promising juniors such as Karpov had excellent opportunities to sharpen their skills against the very best in the world. Karpov's game against Spassky was rather boring, as he went for safety first. They soon found themselves in a double rook ending. Spassky played on for a while but later agreed a draw.

His opponent in the following encounter has no other games on the database (and also lacks a first name!).

## Game 5

Hampyuk – Anatoly Karpov

Tula 1965

1.e4 e5

Over the course of his career Karpov answered 1.e4 with 1...e5 a total of 233 times. He won sixty two games, drew 145 and lost twenty six.

2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♘e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.h3 ♘a5 10.a4?

This is a clear mistake, as in the long run Black will open the position for his two bishops. Let's see how Karpov carries out this strategy.

10...♗xb3 11.♗xb3 ♘e6 12.♗d1 c5 13.axb5

White could have considered 13.d4!?, as the opening of the queenside does not help him in the present position.

13...axb5 14.♗xa8 ♗xa8 15.d3 c4

Karpov wants to exchange pawns to clear some space for his bishops. Black can also exert pressure with 15... $\mathbb{W}b7$ , intending ...b4 and using his heavy pieces on the queenside.

### 16. $\mathbb{B}g5$

16. $\mathbb{Q}a3?$  would have given Black less freedom to build his position.

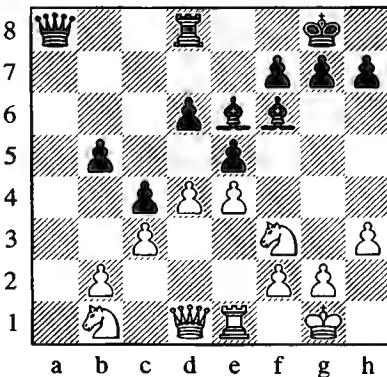
### 16... $\mathbb{E}d8$

Preparing to open the position further.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf6?!$

Giving up the second bishop was a mistake – it was not worth doing it to achieve d3-d4. Better was 17. $\mathbb{Q}a3?$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  when it is not so easy for Black to open the position.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 18.d4



### 18...d5?!

Karpov shows a very important and striking quality, which he will retain throughout his career: once he picks up a plan he sees it through, rather than changing his mind and reverting to another idea.

Nevertheless it was just as promising to play on the queenside with 18... $\mathbb{W}a2$  19. $\mathbb{W}d2$  (or 19. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{E}b8$ ) 19... $\mathbb{E}a8$  when it is not easy to meet Black's ongoing initiative on the flank.

### 19. $\mathbb{W}c2?$

White could have stirred up some fascinating complications with the more resolute reply: 19. $\mathbb{Q}bd2!$

Thanks to various tactical nuances this keeps White in the game. One can only speculate as to how Karpov planned to respond.

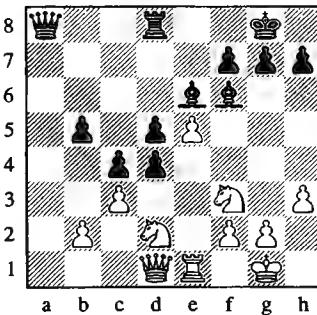
### 19...exd4

19...b4? is interesting, but White should be able to keep a playable game: 20.dxe5 (20. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21.dxe5  $bxc3$  22.bxc3  $dxe4$  23. $\mathbb{W}e2$  is equal) 20... $dxe4$  21. $exf6$   $exf3$  22. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $bxc3$  24.bxc3 And White is not worse.

19...g6? 20.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  21. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  Black has sufficient compensation for the pawn, but no advantage.

Knowing the mature Karpov who likes to have a pawn chain for a piece, maybe he would have opted for the main continuation examined here. However, Black must also take into consideration his opponent's attacking chances.

### 20.e5

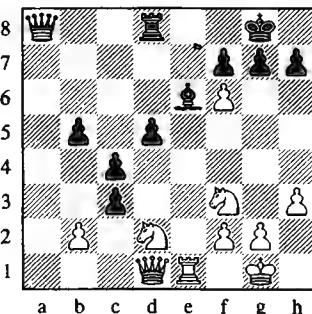


### 20...dxc3?!

This move leads to fascinating complications, in which a single inaccuracy could prove fatal for either side. White has chances to catch Black's king, while of course Black's pawns could decide the game as well.

20... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  is met by 21. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  22.b4 when White is safe.

21.exf6



In this position Black has two interesting moves.

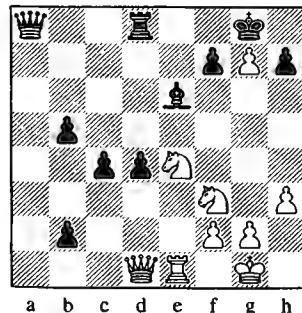
a) 21...d4

After 21...cxd2 22.♗xd2 gxf6 23.♗f4 White has enough at least for a perpetual.

22.♕e4 cxb2

22...♔d5 23.bxc3 ♔xe4 (23...dxc3 24.♗b1 ♔xe4 25.♗xe4 g6 is rather risky for Black.) 24.♗xd4 b4 25.♗g4 ♔g6 26.♗f5 The position is equal.

23.fxg7



23...♗a5!

Others lose, for instance:

23...♗a1? 24.♗d2!+–  
23...♔xg7 24.♗xd4 ♔c8 (24...♗d5  
25.♗xe6+) 25.♗f3+–  
23...c3 24.♗d3! ♗c8 25.♗xd4 c2 26.♗g3  
and once again White wins.

24.♗b1 c3

After 24...♗b4 25.♗f6+ ♔xg7 26.♗h5+ ♔g8 27.♗e4 ♔f8 28.♗xh7 Black is in trouble.

25.♗f6+ ♔xg7 26.♗h5+ ♔g8 27.♗d3!?

After 27.♗e4 b4 28.♗e5 ♗a1 29.♗f6+ ♔g7 White probably has to be content with a draw.

27...b1=♗

27...b4? 28.♗e5 b1=♗ 29.♗xb1 d3 30.♗f6+ ♔g7 31.♗c6 (31.♗h5+ ♔h6!) 31...♗b6 32.♗xd8 ♗xd8 33.♗e8+ ♗xe8 34.♗xb4 c2 35.♗d4+ f6 36.♗xd3 ♗c8 White can press with the extra exchange.

28.♗xb1 b4 29.♗f6+ ♔g7 30.♗e4 ♕f5 31.♗xd4 ♕g6 32.♗e3

Black faces an uphill struggle to survive.

b) 21...cxb2

It looks better not to allow the knight to occupy the e4-square just yet.

22.♗c2

22...♗a2!

This is more accurate than: 22...♗a1 23.fxg7 d4 24.♗e4 ♗a8 (after 24...d3 25.♗d2 Black's king is in trouble) 25.♗h2 ♔xg7 26.♗b1 ♗a4 27.♗d2 And once again White's attack is dangerous.

23.fxg7

23.♗g5? allows 23...b1=♗! 24.♗xb1 ♗xb1 25.♗xb1 ♗a8 when Black's pawns should be the deciding factor in the endgame.

23.♗c3?! is interesting though.

23...d4 24.♗e4

Once again 24.♕g5?! runs into b1=♕.

24...♝d5 25.♛xd4 c3 26.♝2b3 ♕a6

The position remains highly unclear. The whole line seems to be no less dangerous for Black than for White.

The game continuation is nowhere near as challenging, and Karpov takes full advantage of his initiative.

**19...dxe4 20.♗xe4?!**

The lesser evil was 20.♕xe5, although after 20...♝xe5 21.dxe5 ♘d3 Black is still better.

**20...♝d5 21.♗e3**

No better is 21.♗f5 exd4.

**21...♝xf3 22.dxe5 ♘d3! 23.♗f4 ♔e7?!**

Black could have won more easily with 23...♝xg2 24.exf6 ♘xh3 25.f3 ♘xf3.

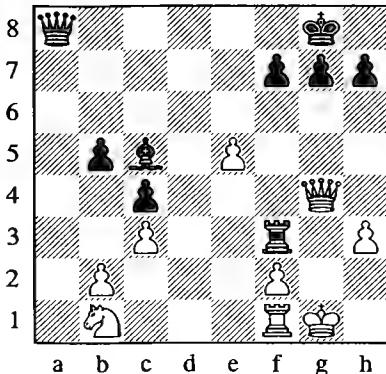
**24.gxf3 ♘xf3 25.♗g4 ♔c5**

25...♝d5?! would have prevented the rook from getting to the e2-square.

**26.♗f1?**

More resilient would have been 26.♗e2 ♘d3 (After 26...h5 27.♗g2 h4 28.♗f1 White survives as this escape square is now available.)

27.♗d2 ♘d5 Black is better here, but White has chances to survive. (Alternatively after 27...h5 28.♗e4 ♘c8 29.e6 fxe6 30.♗f3 White has compensation for the pawn.)



**26...h5!**

The addition of a final attacking unit crushes White's resistance.

**27.♗g2 h4 28.♗h1**

28.♗h2 ♘e4 wins.

**28...♝xh3†**

0–1

With this game we can begin to see the features of the future great champion. His opponent was naive in gifting him the two bishop advantage, and as soon as this happened Karpov based his strategy around opening the position to exploit their potential. His play was not flawless, but the consistency with which he executed his plan is to be admired.

## 1965 Summary

This was the year in which Karpov began to take part in more prestigious Soviet junior events. He held his own and the overall quality of his play was higher than the previous year.

# 1966

Karpov achieved some remarkable results in the year that Petrosian successfully defended his title against Spassky. Playing through his games, it is clear that he had reached a newer, higher level. With a total of forty three games in the database, this is the first year in which his results were truly well documented.

The following game is Karpov's first against a future grandmaster. The location of the event is significant, as the game was played in the Soviet capital. Karpov started the Soviet Under 18 Championship with a loss in twenty moves with White against Dydishko, but he made his way back with some wins. He drew the penultimate round against Shakarov, who would go on to become a trainer of Kasparov and Nadanian (see Chapter 4 of my previous book for Quality Chess, *Genius in the Background*). The following game was played in the last round.

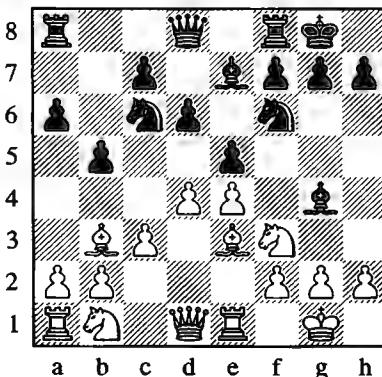
## Game 6

Gennady Timoschenko – Anatoly Karpov

USSR Under 18 Championship, Moscow 1966

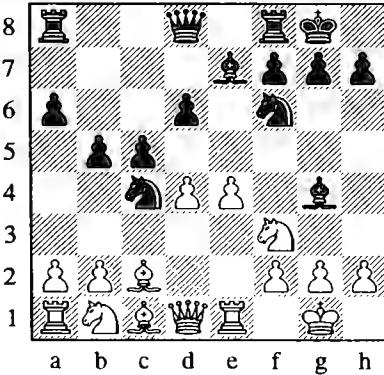
I was surprised to learn that, according to the database at least, these two players only met over the board on one subsequent occasion. That game was decided in the opening when Timoschenko executed a small combination to win a pawn, which he eventually converted in the endgame.

1.e4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. $\mathbb{B}b5$  a6 4. $\mathbb{B}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.0–0  $\mathbb{B}c7$  6. $\mathbb{E}e1$  b5 7. $\mathbb{B}b3$  d6 8.c3 0–0 9.d4  $\mathbb{B}g4$  10. $\mathbb{B}e3$



This is the only time anyone played this move against Karpov. The other main move is 10.d5, against which he scored one win and one draw.

10... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $exd4$  13. $cxd4$   
c5



14. $\mathbb{Q}bd2??$

The usual continuation is 14.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ . It would be interesting to know whether the future grandmaster did not know the theory, or simply made a slip. In any event, the game continuation had not been seen before and has never been repeated.

14... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  15. $\mathbb{W}xd2$

White can sacrifice a pawn with 15. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$ , but it presents no problems for Black: 15... $cxd4$  16.h3 (16. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  is nice for Black) 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  17. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  Though it is not simple to convert the extra pawn, Black certainly has a nice position.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

Even as a young player, Karpov always liked to create weaknesses in the enemy camp.

16.gxf3  $\mathbb{W}b6$  17. $dxc5??$

Opening the d-file is useful for Black. Better was 17.b3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ , when White is okay.

17... $dxc5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h1??$

This is too slow, and White will never get enough play on the g-file.

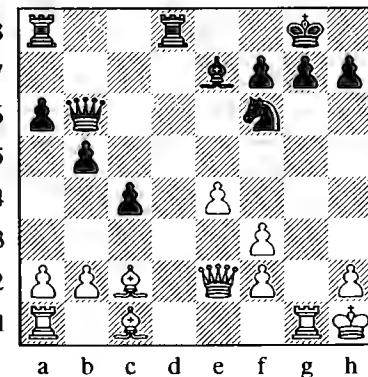
He could still have maintained equality with: 18.e5!  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19. $exf6$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$  20. $fxe7$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$  21.e8= $\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{Q}g6\uparrow$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}d3\uparrow$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g2=$

18... $\mathbb{E}fd8$

White is worse as his pawn structure has been damaged. With his last move Black mobilizes another piece, seizing the open file with gain of tempo.

19. $\mathbb{W}e2$  c4 20. $\mathbb{E}g1??$

White is playing too optimistically. 20.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  was more appropriate, while 20.a4!! also deserved attention.



20... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

Improving the knight.

21. $\mathbb{E}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  23. $\mathbb{E}ag1$  g6 24.f4  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  25.e5  $\mathbb{E}ac8$  26.h4

By now White has burned his bridges, and has no real choice but to keep playing on the g-file.

26... $\mathbb{W}b7!$

Even though this game was played early in Karpov's career, his tools are the same as the ones

he uses later. Here he seizes the opportunity to set up a pin along the diagonal.

27.♗xc5

27.h5 ♜e4†

27...♝xc5 28.♛e3 ♜d5

28...♝cd5! was even stronger.

29.b4?!

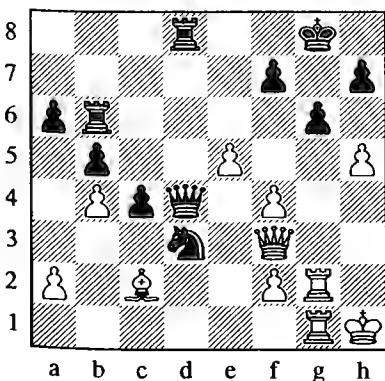
In a difficult position, Timoschenko gambles with a pawn sacrifice. Objectively 29.h5 looks preferable, but after 29...♜d4 Black remains in full control.

29...♝c6

Perhaps Karpov was taken in by his opponent's bluff. In fact it was quite safe to accept the pawn with 29...♝xb4 30.♚e4 ♜d4 31.♛f3 ♖d3 32.h5 ♜f8! when White's attack is going nowhere.

30.h5 ♜d4 31.♛f3 ♜b6

Missing a chance to end the game in style with 31...♜xf4! 32.♝xc6 ♜h4† 33.♝h2 ♜xf2† 34.♝g2 ♜g5† 35.♝f3 (35.♝xf2 ♜f4†! wins [but not 35...♝d2†?? when 36.♝f3 wins for White!]; 35.♝f1 ♜c1† 36.♝g2 ♜xc2→) 35...♜xg1 36.♝xf2 (36.♝g2 ♖d3!→) 36...♜h1† 37.♝g2 ♜xh5†→ Black will soon have four pawns for the piece plus an ongoing attack.



32.f5?

White is attacking relentlessly along the g-file, but he is unable to break through. He would have done better to abandon that plan altogether in favour of 32.♝d1, when his position is not drastically worse.

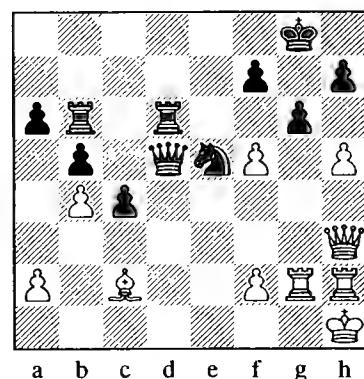
32...♝xe5 33.♝h3 ♜dd6

Black safely defends the g6-pawn.

34.♝h2 ♜d5†

Forcing White back into the pin.

35.♝gg2



35...♝f3!

Threatening mate in three. White must shed an exchange, and his position quickly falls apart.

36.♝g4 ♜xh2† 37.♝xh2 ♜d2

The final invasion occurs on the d-file, which was occupied nineteen moves previously.

38.hxg6 hxg6 39.fxg6 fxg6 40.♝e4 ♜xf2† 41.♝h1 ♜f7 42.♝h4 ♜f6 43.♝g4 ♜h8 44.♝h4 ♜a1† 45.♝g2 ♜d2†

0-1

This game did not contain any single spectacular move, but Karpov's play was skilful, consistent and instructive.

Later in the year Karpov participated in a Masters versus Candidate Masters tournament in Leningrad, where he exceeded the master norm by two points. He became the youngest Master in the Soviet Union – quite an achievement. His short but lively draw with Igor Zaitsev was the first of his games to be published in *Chess Informant*.

This was followed by further success in a USSR junior team event in Vladimir. Karpov shared the board prize with Kudishevich, scoring 6½/8. Only two games from this event are listed in the database. One is the game he won against Kudishevich, while the other is presented here. His opponent went on to become a decent grandmaster and an exceptional rapid and blitz player.

## Game 7

Anatoly Karpov – Valentin Arbakov.

Vladimir 1966

### 1.e4 e5 2.♘f3

Karpov never played any other move in this position. Out of 134 games in the database he won more than half, with seventy wins, fifty eight draws and just six losses.

### 2...♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4

Karpov rarely took on c6 and he was not particularly successful with it.

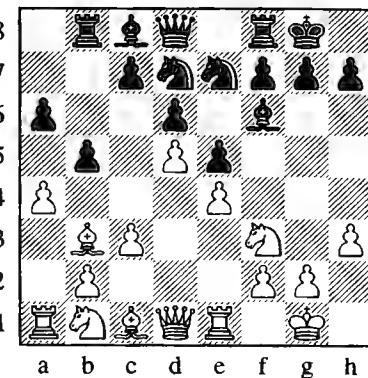
### 4...♗f6 5.0–0 ♗e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.a4

Avoiding the Marshall, although he often played 8.c3 inviting the gambit. Interestingly, only Short took up that particular challenge against him, at Tilburg 1991. That game ended in a draw.

### 8...♗b8 9.c3 d6 10.h3 ♗d7?! 11.d4 ♗f6

Black has bolstered the e5-pawn, so Karpov homes in on another target.

### 12.d5 ♗e7



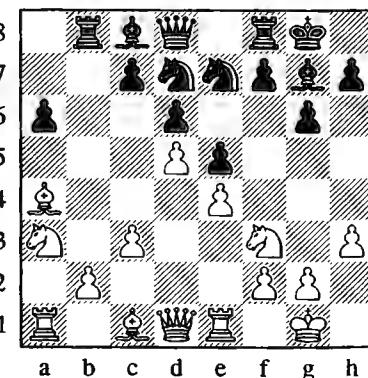
### 13.♗a3! g6?!

Better was 13...♘c5, although after 14.axb5 axb5 15.♗c2 b4 16.cxb4 ♗xb4 17.♗d2 Black will be left with a weak pawn on either c7 or d6.

### 14.♗c2 bxa4

Black hopes to create enough play to offset the weakness of the a6-pawn by preparing ...f5.

### 15.♗xa4 ♗g7



### 16.♗c2!

This is not an easy move to appreciate fully. Karpov believes that the position is so closed

that he can afford to devote a lot of time to laying siege to the weak a6-pawn. It is a risky strategy, as Black will have time to develop kingside counterplay.

### 16...h6

16...f5 is inadvisable due to 17.♗g5.

### 17.♗d2 f5 18.♗ac4 ♗f6 19.♗e3 ♕e8

19...f4 20.♗ec4 is good for White.

### 20.♗d3 ♗h5

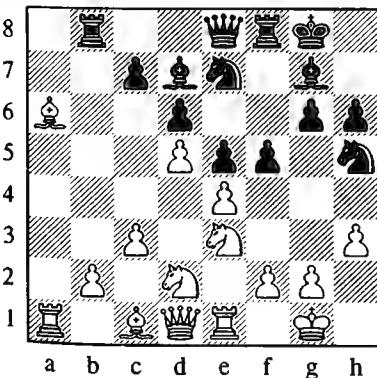
20...♕f7 21.b3 fxe4 22.fxe4 ♗g4 is a nice idea, but it does not stop White from claiming a slight advantage after 23.♕e2.

### 21.♗xa6

Reaping the fruit of the plan that began five moves ago.

### 21...♗d7

Black avoids exchanges, hoping to utilize his bishop for attacking purposes. Black may be a pawn down, but he is not without chances on the kingside.



### 22.♗f1

Karpov brings back the bishop to defend the king.

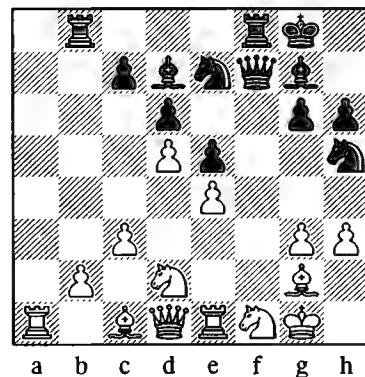
### 22...♗f4 23.g3

23.♗a7?! was also strong.

### 23...♗h5 24.♗g2 f4 25.♗ef1 ♕xg3

Black opens the f-file, although there is not much he can do with it. Alternatives were also unappealing, for instance 25...♗f7 26.g4 ♗f6 27.♗a7 when White's kingside looks firm enough to withstand the pressure.

### 26.♗xg3 ♕f7



### 27.♗e3!

Reinforcing g3 while preparing to switch the rook to the f-file. Karpov correctly evaluates the check on f2 as harmless.

### 27...g5

27...♕f2† 28.♗h2 ♗b5 is safely met by 29.♗e1.

### 28.♗f3 ♕g6 29.♗a7 g4 30.♗xf8† ♕xf8 31.h4

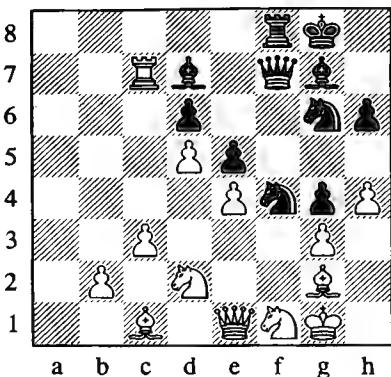
Keeping the kingside closed.

### 31...♕f7 32.♗e1

The queen defends not only g3, but h4 as well.

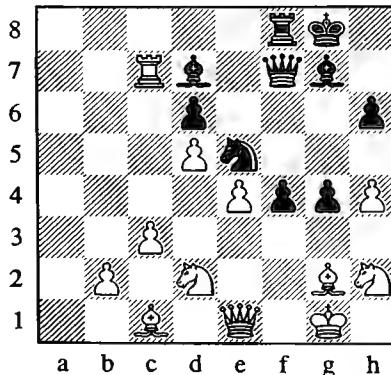
### 32...♗g6 33.♗xc7 ♗hf4!

Black is doing his best to create problems. Now White must make a decision.

**34.gxf4**

Up to this point Karpov played strongly, but by taking the piece he unnecessarily gives Black counterchances.

Amongst other possibilities, the computer's main line is: 34.♕c4! ♔d3 35.♗e3 ♔xc1 36.♔b6! ♔f4 37.gxf4 exf4 38.♗xc1 f3 39.♔xd7 fxg2 40.♔xf8 gxh1=♕† 41.♗xf1 ♕xc7 42.♔e6 And White should win the ending without too many problems.

**34...exf4 35.♔h2 ♔e5****36.♔df3?**

There was no reason to return the piece so soon. After the superior 36.♔f1!? White is clearly better.

**36...gxh3 37.♔xf3 ♕g6 38.♔f1?**

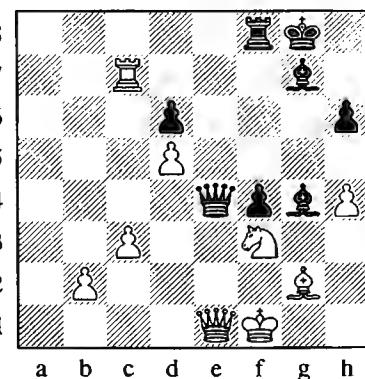
White should have preferred 38.♔h1! when the position is messy.

**38...♗g4**

After 38...♗b5† 39.c4 ♗xc4† 40.♗xc4 ♔xc4 the extra exchange should be enough for Black.

**39.♗f2 ♔d3 40.♗d2 ♔xc1?**

40...♗xe4! would have won for Black. Given the frequency of mistakes on both sides, it seems reasonable to assume that both players were short of time.

**41.♗xc1 ♗xe4 42.♗e1****42...♔xf3?**

The final error. Correct was 42...♗xd5

43.♗e2 when Black is still somewhat better.

**43.♗xe4 ♕xe4**

**1–0**

Presumably the game was adjourned here, after which Black resigned. White's extra pawn should be sufficient to win, and Karpov was already good enough to receive significant help at adjournments. During this game he played very well for a long time, but later lost control in the complications and in the end he was lucky to win.

Karpov's next event was the Scandinavia - USSR match in Stockholm, where he defeated the Norwegian player Hatlebakk by a score of 1½-½. His opponent rarely played tournament chess after his junior years, although he must have been a promising young player as he was selected for this match and later represented his country in the World Under 26 Championships. This game was the first in their mini-match.

## Game 8

## Hatlebakk – Anatoly Karpov

Stockholm (1) 1966

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6

In 1966 Karpov won a game easily with 3...f5, but he never dared to repeat it.

4.王a4 马f6 5.0-0 王e7 6.马e1 b5 7.王b3 d6  
8.c3 0-0 9.h3 马a5

In the sixties Karpov only played the Chigorin Variation of the Closed Spanish. In the early seventies he continued using it but also incorporated the Breyer System into his repertoire. He scored well with both of them. Remarkably, he never lost a game in the Breyer. From 1978 onwards he mainly played the Zaitsev variation.

10.9c2 9b7

In most games he preferred the main line of  
10...c5.

11.d4  $\mathbb{Q}$ c4

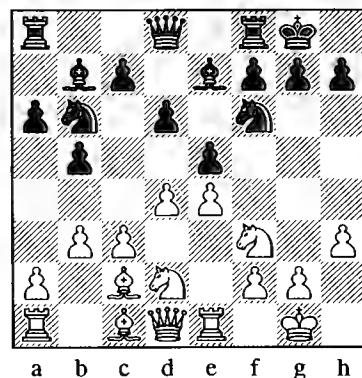
According to the database Gligoric was the first to play this line against Keres in Zurich 1959.

12.b3

This natural move is the main line

12...9b6 13 9b12

White is unable to win a pawn with 13.dxe5?! dx<sub>e</sub>5 14. $\mathbb{W}$ xd8  $\mathbb{E}$ axd8 15. $\mathbb{Q}$ xe5 in view of 15... $\mathbb{Q}$ xe4 when Black is a bit better.



13... ♘fd7!?

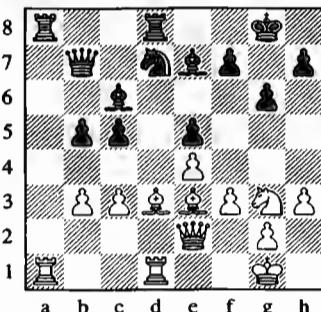
According to the database this is Karpov's move, so it could reasonably be called the Karpov Variation.

14.9 fl. oz 15.9 fl. oz

This is the main line. Karpov won another two games in this variation without a draw or loss, but on both occasions White released the central tension prematurely:

15.d5 f5 16.exf5 ♖xd5 17.a4 ♖c6 18.♗e3 e4 19.♗d2 d5 20.a5 ♗c8 (in the later part of Karpov's career he might have sacrificed a piece with 20...♗f6??) 21.c4 d4 22.♗d5 (22.♗xe4?? dxе3 23.♖xc6 exd2 24.♘xd2) 22...♖xd5 23.cxd5 d3 24.♗b1 ♗e5 25.♗xe4 ♖xd5 Black went on to win this complicated position in Kudishevich – Karpov, Vladimir 1966

In a subsequent game White chose to simplify the centre: 15.dxe5 ♔xe5 16.♔xe5 dxe5 17.♔g3 g6 18.♗e3 ♕c7 19.♕e2 ♘fd8 20.♖ed1 ♔d7 21.a4 ♖c6 22.axb5 axb5 23.♗d3 ♕b7 24.f3



24... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Karpov nicely improves his pieces.  
 25. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{B}xal$  26. $\mathbb{W}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$   
 28. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  29. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{B}g5!$  30. $\mathbb{B}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   
 Black eventually managed to convert his small advantage into a win in Alt – Karpov, Riga 1970.

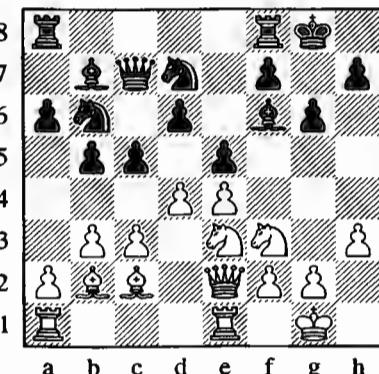
### 15... $\mathbb{B}g6$ 16. $\mathbb{B}b2$

Both 16.a4?? and 16. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ?? look more testing.

### 16... $\mathbb{B}f6$

Karpov improves his bishop and puts pressure on White's centre.

### 17. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{W}c7$



### 18.dxe5?

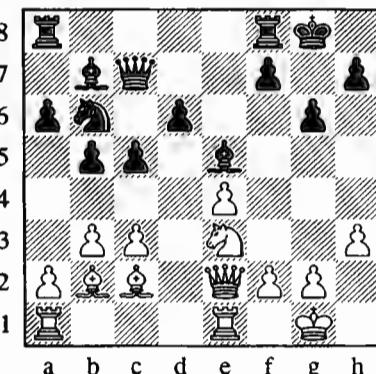
Instead 18.d5 is the principled move, which limits the b7-bishop. If Black plays 18...c4 then 19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  gives White a small edge.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

In this opening Black usually recaptures on e5 with the knight first.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{B}xe5$ !

Karpov is looking for a fight. He avoids a symmetrical pawn structure in order to develop pressure against the e4-pawn, as well as keeping the long diagonal open for his bishop.



### 20. $\mathbb{B}d3$ ??

Perhaps surprised by Karpov's last move, White immediately falters. He should have preferred either 20. $\mathbb{W}d2$  or 20.a4  $\mathbb{B}xa4$  21. $\mathbb{B}xa4$  a5, with approximate equality in both cases.

### 20...c4!

Karpov sacrifices a pawn in return for long term compensation on the queenside. The passivity of the b2-bishop is a particular problem for White.

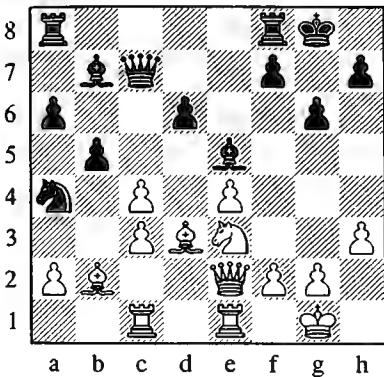
### 21.bxc4

If 21. $\mathbb{B}c2$  b4! 22.bxc4  $\mathbb{B}xc3$  23. $\mathbb{A}a3$  a5 and Black takes the upper hand.

### 21... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ! 22. $\mathbb{B}ac1$ ??

Eliminating all the queenside pawns with 22.cxb5 would have eased White's suffering: 22...axb5 (22... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  23. $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  [23... $\mathbb{B}xc3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ ] 24. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}xb5$ ) transposes

to 22...axb5.) 23.♕xb5 ♖xb2 24.♗xb2 ♕xc3 25.♘e2 ♜b4 26.♗ab1 ♜xe4 27.♗d3 ♜c6 (27...♗f4 28.♗g4) 28.♗ec1 ♜d7 29.♗c4 White manages to eliminate the dark-squared bishop and thus equalizes.



### 22...b4!

A wonderful idea! Karpov paralyses his opponent on the queenside.

### 23.♗d1 a5 24.♗a1 ♜fd8!?

Here is an early example of Karpov's famed prophylactic thinking. He rejects the more natural 24...♝fc8, presumably in anticipation of White shifting his queen to d2, followed by exchanging on b4 and later exerting pressure against the d6-pawn.

### 25.♕c2?!

White's position is not easy to handle. There is no direct threat, and being a pawn up he may not have appreciated the dangers.

If 25.cxb4 axb4 26.♗b1 Black can maintain the pressure with 26...♜b6; but not 26...♜c5?! 27.♗xe5 dxe5 28.a3 when White gets rid of the b-pawn.

Best was 25.♗d2! ♜c5 (Or 25...♝c5 26.♗c2 ♜e7 [26...♜b6 27.♗b1] 27.cxb4 axb4 28.♗xb4 and White is safe.) 26.♗c2 ♜b6 27.♗e3 when

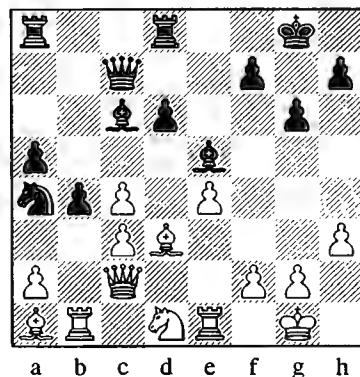
Black has nice compensation for the pawn, but White should be all right.

### 25...♝c6

Obviously Black should maintain the position of his strong knight.

### 26.♗b1

White cannot release the pressure completely with 26.cxb4 axb4 27.♗xe5 dxe5 28.c5, as after 28...♝d4 29.♗f1 ♜a5 he remains rather passive.



### 26...♝c5!

Karpov gives up the pressure on the c3-pawn in order to change his objective.

### 27.♗e3

After 27.cxb4? axb4 White cannot take the b4-pawn and is largely paralysed.

### 27...♝a4! 28.♗d2 b3!

Karpov creates a passed pawn on the queenside, an idea that was not easy to see in advance. The a1-bishop has become even more passive than before.

### 29.♗d5 ♜a7 30.♗f1

White can do little except wait.

### 30...♝db8

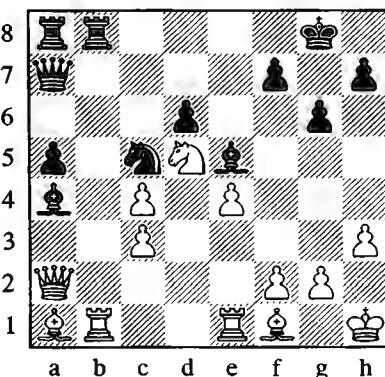
Improving the rook before commencing the next phase of the plan.

### 31.♕h1 bxa2

Karpov can find no more general improving moves, so he launches his queenside play.

### 32.♕xa2

Exchanging a pair of rooks with 32.♖xb8† ♜xb8 33.♕xa2 would also have led to a difficult and passive position after 33...♜b3 34.♗d2 a4.



### 32...♜b3

Black is a pawn down but his compensation is tremendous. The a1-bishop is virtually dead, and its partner on f1 is only slightly better. White's rooks have no open files, and only the d5-knight stands well. Black has a dangerous passed pawn and a wonderful knight on c5.

### 33.♕e2

33.♕a3 was possible, but blocking the a-pawn would be a menial task for the queen.

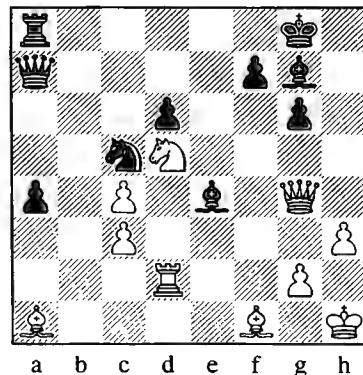
### 33...a4 34.f4?

White's desire for counterplay is understandable, but objectively this move accelerates his demise as it weakens the e4-pawn.

### 34...♝g7 35.f5 ♜e8!

Karpov immediately targets the new weakness and White's position soon collapses.

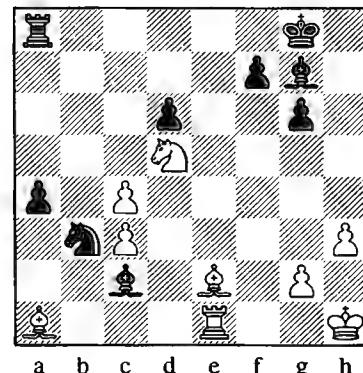
### 36.♗g4 ♜c2 37.♗b2 ♜xe4 38.♗xe4 ♜xe4 39.fxg6 hxg6 40.♗d2



### 41...♝b3!

Karpov demonstrates a forced win by luring his opponent into a fatal pin.

### 41.♗d1 ♜c2 42.♗e1 ♜f2! 43.♗e2 ♜xe2 44.♗xe2



### 44...♜e8!

This pin is simple to find and it wins in short order.

45.♗b2 ♗d3! 46.♘f4 ♘xc4 47.♗g1 g5  
48.♘f2 ♘d2 49.♗d3 ♘b8

0–1

Apart from the fine overall performance, this game was also significant in being Karpov's first ever in western Europe.

His last tournament of the year (which actually ran into January 1967) was also his international tournament debut. Due to an oversight the Soviets sent two juniors to an adult tournament in Trinec, close to the eastern border of what is now the Czech Republic. Karpov won the event by scoring a most impressive 11/13. Kupka and Kupreichik shared second place with 9½, and another strong future grandmaster Smejkal finished fourth with 8½ points.

## 1966 Summary

Over the course of the year Karpov won more than half of his forty seven games and lost just one. It is interesting to note that fourteen of his games ended in less than twenty five moves, and only a small number of those were decisive. It was notable throughout his career that he made some quick draws and did not try to win all his games. When a draw was useful for his tournament result, he was happy enough. His attitude in this regard was in sharp contrast to players such as Fischer and Kasparov, both of whom tried to win almost all of their games.

Compared with the period up to 1965, we can also observe that Karpov played in more prestigious tournaments and faced stronger opposition. Competing in Europe would have been a rare experience for a fifteen year old boy from the Soviet Union. It is possible that 1966 was the year in which it was decided that Karpov should become a chess player by profession.

This was the first year in which Karpov played a sufficient number of games to justify a numerical breakdown of his results:

USSR U18 Championship, Moscow: 6/9 (+4 =4 -1)

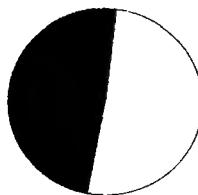
Spartakiad USSR Juniors (Board one in lower age group): 6½/8 (+5 =3 -0)

Master versus Candidates, Leningrad: 10/15 (+5 =10 -0)

USSR – Scandinavia, Stockholm (Board six): 1½/2 (+1 =1 -0)

Trinec 1966-67 (1st place): 11/13 (+9 =4 -0)

Total 74.4% (+24 =22 -1)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1967

Karpov played in four significant events in 1967, beginning at the Spartakiad of the Russian Republic, which was a team event. He played on board two, winning four games, drawing one and losing two. Here is his game from round four. No other game from his opponent is available on the database.

## Game 9

Vladimir Avetisian – Anatoly Karpov

Leningrad 1967

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. d4 e6

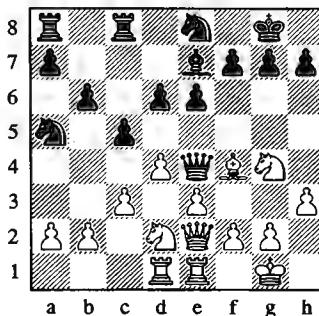
It is remarkable how Karpov almost always played this move here and never once tried 2...g6.

3.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

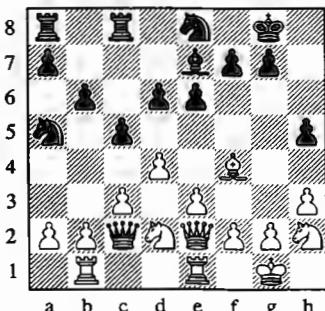
Interestingly Karpov did not do well against 3.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , losing three games out of fourteen, which was a lot by his standards.

3...d5

Almost twenty years later, when he was the reigning World Champion he employed another plan: 3... $\mathbb{A}e7$  4.h3 b6 5.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  c5 6.c3  $\mathbb{A}a6$  7.e3  $\mathbb{A}xf1$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}1d2$  0–0 10.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  11.0–0  $\mathbb{E}c8$  12.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}ce5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  15.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$  d6 16.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ !?



17...  $\mathbb{W}c2$ ! This sets up a wicked threat. 18.  $\mathbb{E}b1$ ? h5! 19.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$

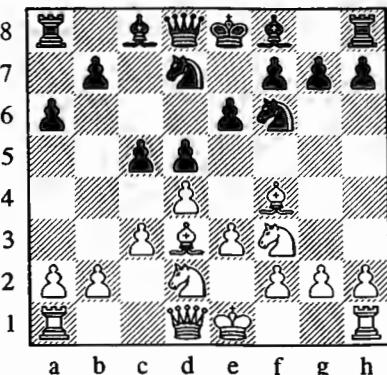


19...g5! Trapping the bishop. 20.♗xg5 ♗xg5  
 21.♗xh5 ♕e7 22.♗df1 ♔g7 23.♗f3 ♕g6  
 24.♗bd1 ♘ab8 25.d5 b5 26.e4 ♖c4 27.b3  
 ♖e5 28.♗e3 c4 29.dxe6 fxe6 30.f4 ♖d3 0-1  
 Glienke – Karpov, Hannover 1983.

#### 4.e3 a6!?

Preparing to steer the game towards a Queen's Gambit Accepted in the event that White plays c4. It is a good decision, as in that opening the white bishop rarely goes to f4.

5.♗bd2 ♗bd7 6.c3 c5 7.♗d3



7...b5!?

Gaining space on the queenside.

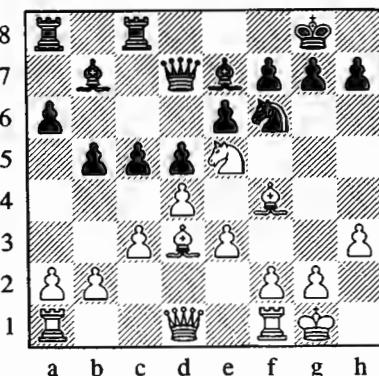
8.0-0 ♖b7 9.h3

White should have played for an attack on the kingside with 9.♗e5 ♕e7 10.♗f3.

9...♕e7 10.♗e5 0-0 11.♗xd7?! ♖xd7  
 12.♗f3

White is not doing much to counter his opponent's space advantage on the queenside. Black already has a pleasant position, but he still needs to find a suitable way to exploit it.

12...♗fc8 13.♗e5



13...♗e8!

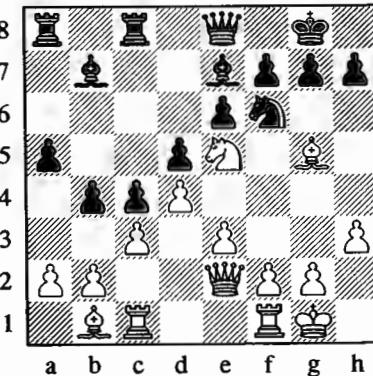
By keeping the b5-pawn defended, Black facilitates a further queenside expansion.

14.♗c1 a5 15.♗g5 b4 16.♗e2 c4!

Karpov continues gaining space.

17.♗b1

17.♗c2?! would have discouraged Black's next move.



**17...Qd7!**

Karpov looks to exchange some kingside pieces in anticipation of a possible attack from his opponent.

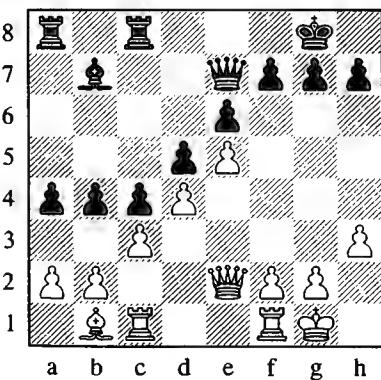
**18.Qxd7**

18.Qf4 looks better, as White keeps another potential attacker for the kingside.

**18...Wxd7 19.Qxe7 Wxe7 20.e4?!**

20.Wd2 would have halted Black's queenside advance, at least for a few more moves.

**20...a4 21.e5**



**21...a3!**

This is a thematic undermining of the enemy queenside. So far Karpov has made eight pawn moves on that flank; rather a lot, but the position is closed enough to justify it.

**22.f4 g6!**

Black mainly focuses on the queenside, but he still pays attention to the other wing.

**23.B3 b3!**

An instructive moment. Karpov abandons the undermining of the enemy pawn chain and instead pushes his queenside pawns as far as possible.

**24.Qf2 Qc6**

Now Black opens the b-file.

**25.g4 Bcb8!**

Karpov has brought tremendous power into his queenside play, and White has no good answer.

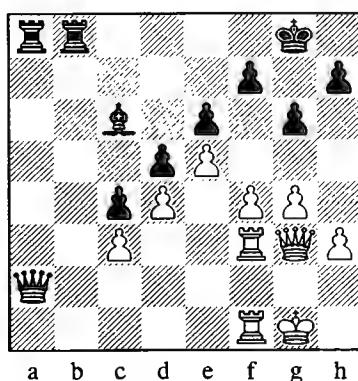
**26.bxa3**

26.axb3 a2 wins.

**26...Wxa3 27.Ef1 bxa2**

Winning the bishop.

**28.Qxa2 Wxa2 29.Qg3**



**29...Bb1!**

Black eliminates one of the attacking rooks, thus ensuring that White will not have enough firepower to hurt him.

**30.f5 Bxf1† 31.Bxf1 Qd7 32.fxg6 hxg6**

**33.Wf3 Qe8 34.Qf2 Bb1†**

Finally Karpov goes after the king; by now his task has become very easy.

**35.Qh2 Ba1 36.Qg2 Bd3 37.Qf6 Bf1**

**0–1**

The manner in which Karpov carried out his queenside expansion was exemplary.

Next Karpov participated in the qualification tournament for the World Junior Championship. He finished in fifth place after winning three, drawing one, losing three and thus scoring  $3\frac{1}{2}/7$ . His next event was the USSR Schools' Spartakiad, where he won five games and drew four.

At the end of 1967 and start of 1968 Karpov participated in the European Junior championship, where he demonstrated his ability to perform under pressure and duly won the event. In the preliminary rounds he won the first two games and drew the remaining five to qualify. In the final he drew the first game, before winning the following encounter.

## Game 10

## Anatoly Karpov – John Moles

European U18 Championship, Groningen 1967-68

Moles hailed from Ireland. He represented his country in several world junior events in the sixties as well as two Olympiads in the early seventies. It looks like he gave up chess after 1972.

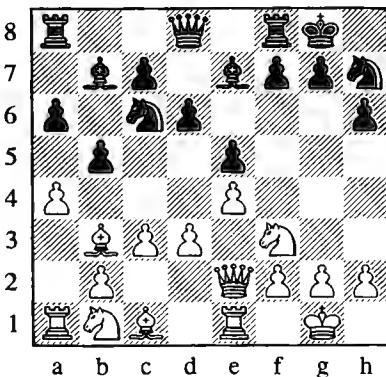
1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♗f6  
5.♗e2

Karpov played this sideline three times in the sixties, winning on each occasion. He may have used it to avoid the Open Variation against certain opponents.

5... $\mathbb{A}e7$  6.c3 b5 7. $\mathbb{A}b3$  d6 8.a4  $\mathbb{A}b7$  9.0-0  
0-0 10.d3

Karpov is not doing anything special in the opening, and settles for a quiet position with the hope of outplaying his opponent later.

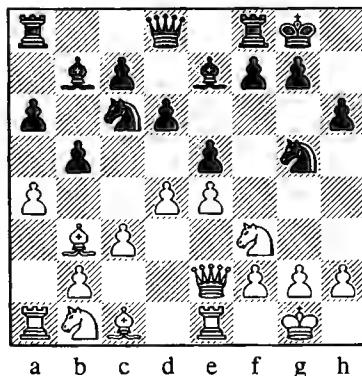
10...h6 11.Qe1 ♘h7



12,d4!?

Karpov shows his flexibility, occupying the centre later than usual in reaction to his opponent's last decentralizing move. In other openings such as the Philidor, the move ... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  is often met by  $h3$  in order to vacate the  $h2$ -square for the knight. In this position the idea is harmless, as after  $12.h3 \mathbb{Q}g5 13.\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{Q}e6$  Black's knights are strong in the centre.

12... $\mathbf{Qg5}$



13. ♔xg5!?

A remarkable decision – White gives up an important bishop in order to gain time to weaken the b5-pawn. Obviously the loss of the bishop pair entails some risk for White, and we can only guess how much Karpov

saw in advance. All world champions, even the positional players, played riskily and ambitiously when they were juniors – it is probably a requirement if one is to excel.

### 13...hxg5 14.d5

Isolating the b5-pawn.

### 14...Qa7??!

A strange choice. I remember seeing one game in which 1...e5 expert Hebden played ...Qa7 against Arakhamia in a Ruy Lopez, but it was under very different conditions. Instead the knight should have moved in the conventional way with:

### 14...Qa5

From here the play might have developed in several ways, with both sides potentially sacrificing material.

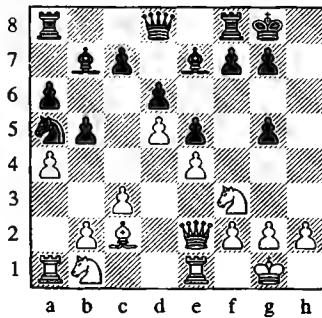
### 15.Qc2

Two other moves are possible:

15.Qfd2 (15.Qbd2?? g4+) 15...Qxb3

16.Qxb3 c6 17.Q1d2 (17.c4?! bxc4 18.dxc6 Qxc6 19.Qxc4 Qb6 Black is somewhat better) 17...cxd5 18.axb5 Qb6 Black is quite active.

15.Qa2 bxa4 (15...c5 16.axb5 axb5 17.Qa3) 16.h3 Qc8 17.Qbd2 Qd7 18.Qb1 Qb7 (18...Qb8 19.b4 Qb3 is unclear) 19.Qc2 Qc5 20.b4 axb3 21.Qxb3 Qxb3 22.Qxb3 a5 23.Qa4 Once again, as in many of these lines, it is hard to judge the extent of Black's compensation in this murky and irregular position.



### 15...c6

This looks natural, although once again there are two worthy alternatives.

15...Qc4 16.b3 Qb6 17.axb5 axb5 18.Qxa8 (18.Qa3!?) 18...Qxa8 19.Qxb5 Black has some play for the pawn, although it is hard to evaluate whether it is truly enough.

15...c5? Maybe this is the simplest way to sacrifice the pawn. 16.axb5 c4 17.bxa6 Qxa6 Black has a good grip on the position; I think it is worth a pawn.

### 16.Qfd2 cxd5 17.exd5

It is hard to tell how Black should sacrifice the pawn from here.

### 17...Qc4

Also after 17...Qb6 18.axb5 axb5 19.Qa3 b4 20.Qe4 f5 21.Qxb4 Qd8 Black has reasonable counterplay.

### 18.Qxc4 bxc4 19.Qxc4

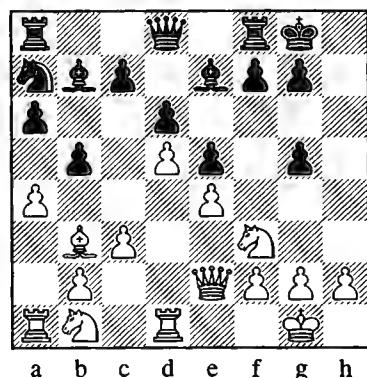
#### 19.Qd1 f5

#### 19...f5 20.Qd2 g4

Black has fair compensation.

### 15.Qd1

Anticipating ...c6.



### 15...g4?!

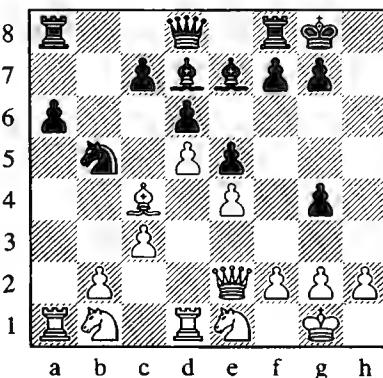
It is tempting to drive back the knight, but it gives White a tempo to organize his queenside attack. Black is also worse after 15...c5 16.dxc6 Qxc6 17.Qd5.

Perhaps the best chance would have been 15... $\mathbb{W}d7$ ?! 16.axb5 axb5 (16...g4 17. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  axb5 18. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  White is in control.) 17. $\mathbb{W}e3$  Black loses a pawn, but is not completely without counterplay.

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 17.axb5 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

17...axb5 was also not ideal, as after a few further preparatory moves White will obtain strong play on the a-file: 18. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (After 18...g6 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  f5 20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  White double his rooks on the a-file with an advantage, for instance 20... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ , or 20... $\mathbb{W}d7$  21.exf5 gxsf5 22. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ .) 19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (or 20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 20...g6 21. $\mathbb{Q}ac2$  f5 22.exf5 gxsf5 23. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Black has problems.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$



### 19. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

Highlighting the drawback of Black's 15th move.

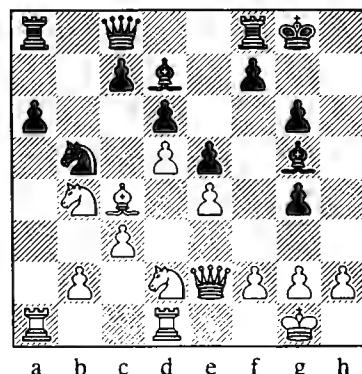
### 19... $\mathbb{W}c8$

After 19...g6 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  White will exert strong pressure on the queenside: 20... $\mathbb{W}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}ac2$  f5 23.exf5 gxsf5 24. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black is strong on the kingside, but White's attack on the other wing comes first.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ g6 21. $\mathbb{Q}b4$

White can afford to mass his pieces on the queenside, as Black's kingside play is rather slow, especially with the queen so far away.

### 21... $\mathbb{Q}g5$



### 22. $\mathbb{Q}a5!$

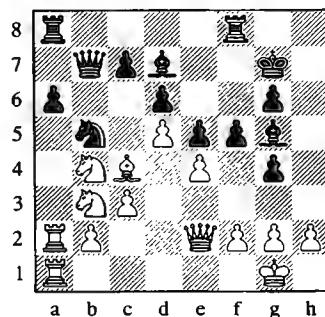
Less accurate would have been:

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}b7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}a2$

In the ensuing critical position, the placement of the rook on a2 instead of a5 makes a real difference.

### 23...f5 24. $\mathbb{Q}da1$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Black is not helped by 24...f4?! 25. $\mathbb{W}d3$  or 24...fxe4 25. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ .



### 25. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$

25. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}ac6$  fxe4 is not so bad for Black.

Also after 25.exf5  $\mathbb{B}xf5$  26. $\mathbb{B}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}xa6$  27. $\mathbb{B}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 29. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black's strong bishops give some compensation for the material deficit.

25... $\mathbb{W}b6$

There is also 25...fxe4 26. $\mathbb{Q}ac5$  dxc5 27. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}xa2$  28. $\mathbb{B}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  29.bxc3  $\mathbb{W}b1\uparrow$  30. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xf1\uparrow$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  32. $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  33. $\mathbb{B}xc7$  e3 and Black is still kicking.

26. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{B}xa2$  27. $\mathbb{B}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 29. $\mathbb{B}a6$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  30.e5 dxe5 31. $\mathbb{W}xe5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

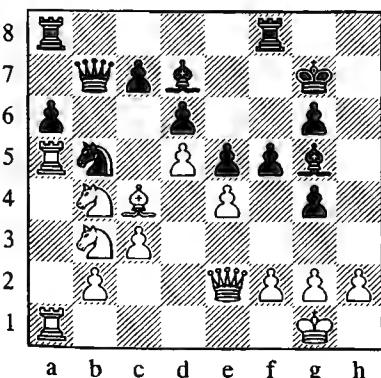
Black is very much in the game.

22... $\mathbb{W}b7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

23...f5 24. $\mathbb{B}da1$  f4 25. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  f3 26. $\mathbb{W}e1$  (26. $\mathbb{W}d3$  fxg2 27. $\mathbb{Q}ac5$  is also strong.) 26... $\mathbb{W}b6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}ac5!$   $\mathbb{B}xa5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  wins.

24. $\mathbb{B}da1$  f5

After 24... $\mathbb{Q}d4?$ ! 25.cxd4  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  26.dxe5 dxe5 27. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  28. $\mathbb{B}xa6$  Black has severe problems.



25. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$

Karpov's fine play on the queenside has resulted in the win of a pawn, but Black is not without chances on the opposite flank.

25... $\mathbb{W}b6!$

Aiming at f2.

26. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

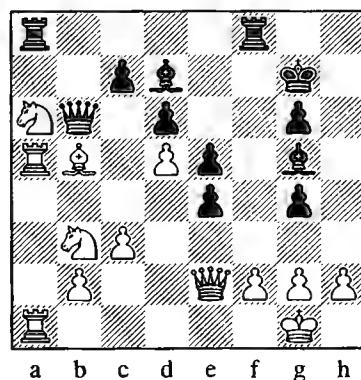
Black's initiative is not easy to tame, as illustrated by the following variations.

26. $\mathbb{Q}h1?!$  fxe4 27. $\mathbb{Q}xb5?$  This backfires badly. (The lesser evil is 27. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xf2$  28. $\mathbb{W}e2$  c6 when Black is somewhat better.) 27... $\mathbb{B}xf1$  28. $\mathbb{W}c4$  g3!! 29. $\mathbb{W}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  And Black wins.

26.exf5  $\mathbb{B}xf5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}bc5$  This time White covers the diagonal before taking on b5. (27. $\mathbb{Q}ac5$   $\mathbb{B}xa5$  28. $\mathbb{B}xa5$  dxc5 29. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  c4!! 30. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xf2$  31. $\mathbb{W}xe5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and Black stays in the game.) 27... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  28.bxc3 dxc5 With a highly unclear position.

26...fxe4!

Black ignores the bishop and instead threatens to take on f2.



27.c4?

At the most critical moment of the game Karpov commits a tactical error. At the time of the present game he already possessed a subtle positional understanding and great skill in endgames, but he had not yet developed the calculating ability of a champion. There were two superior alternatives, both of which lead to fascinating complications.

27. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

With this move White wins an awful lot of material for the queen, but his vulnerable king enables Black to obtain dangerous counterplay.

27... $\mathbb{E}xf2!$  28. $\mathbb{W}xf2$

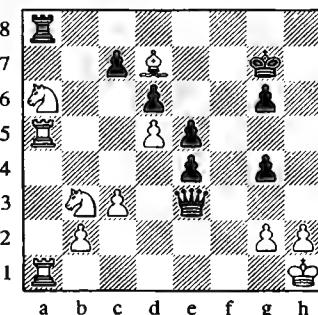
White cannot gain a tempo by offering a queen exchange: 28. $\mathbb{W}b5?? \mathbb{E}f1!!$  This beautiful move leads to a forced mate: 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf1 \mathbb{E}f8\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{W}e3\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d1 \mathbb{E}f2$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xg4 \mathbb{E}d2\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c1 \mathbb{W}e1\#$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d1 \mathbb{W}xd1\#$ .

28... $\mathbb{E}e3$  29. $\mathbb{W}xe3$

29. $\mathbb{Q}ac5 \mathbb{E}xf2\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf2 \mathbb{E}xa5$  31. $\mathbb{E}xa5 dxc5$  32. $\mathbb{E}b5 \mathbb{W}f6\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e2 e3$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe3 \mathbb{W}f4\#$   
Black has a perpetual.

29... $\mathbb{W}xe3\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h1$

White has far too much material for the queen, but once again his vulnerable king is a problem.



30... $\mathbb{E}h8!$

This enables Black to hold the balance, as the white pieces are out of play on the queenside.

31. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$

Or 31. $\mathbb{Q}xc7 \mathbb{E}xh2\#?$  (31... $\mathbb{W}g3$  32. $h3$  leads to the same result) and Black draws.

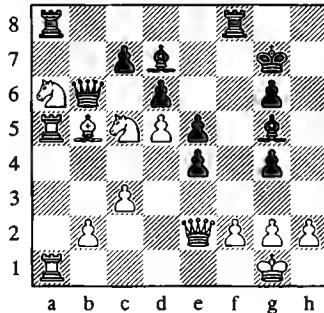
31... $\mathbb{W}f4$  32. $h3 \mathbb{W}xg4$

Black is not worse.

The strongest and most spectacular move was:

27. $\mathbb{Q}bc5!!$

Returning the extra piece in order to block the a7-g1 diagonal.



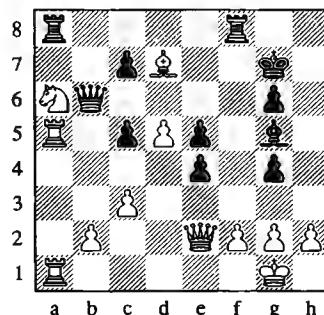
27... $dxc5!$

After this move Black incredibly has three sets of doubled pawns, but they give him a lot of open files! Alternatives are inadequate:

27... $\mathbb{Q}f5?$  28. $\mathbb{Q}a4 \mathbb{W}xa5$  29. $b4$  wins.

27... $\mathbb{E}xa6?$  28. $\mathbb{E}xa6 \mathbb{W}xc5$  (28... $\mathbb{E}xb5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$  30. $\mathbb{E}h6 \mathbb{Q}xe2$  31. $\mathbb{E}b4$  wins)  
29. $\mathbb{Q}xd7 \mathbb{E}xf2$  and now 30. $b4!$  diverts the queen and wins.

28. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$



28... $c4!!$

Black renews his attack by reopening the a7-g1 diagonal.

29. $\mathbb{Q}c5$

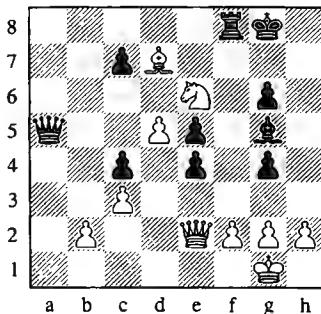
This looks best although it is worth checking the alternatives.

29. $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{E}xf2$  30. $\mathbb{W}e1$  (30. $\mathbb{W}xg4 \mathbb{W}xa5!$

In the closed Ruy Lopez the back rank is seldom a problem for White. Chess is a marvellous game!) 30... $g3$  31. $\mathbb{W}g1 e3$  White is in considerable danger.

29.♕xg4 ♕xf2 30.♗xf2 (30.♗b5 ♕xb5 31.♗xf2 ♕xa6 is equal) 30...♔e3 31.♗xe3 ♕xe3† 32.♔h1 ♕d2 and Black has a nice position because of the e-pawn.

29...♕xa5 30.♗xa5 ♕xa5 31.♗e6† ♔g8!



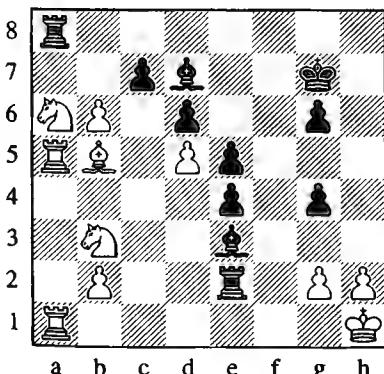
32.♗xf8

If 32.♗xg5 e3! 33.♔e6† (33.♔xg4? ♕a1† 34.♗d1 ♕xb2 wins.) 33...♔g7 34.♔xg4 ♕a1† 35.♗d1 ♕xd1† 36.♔xd1 ♕a8! Black is not worse.

32...♕a1† 33.♗f1 ♕xf1† 34.♗xf1 ♕xf8

Black has good chances to hold this opposite-coloured bishop endgame.

27...♕xf2! 28.c5 ♕xe2 29.cxb6 ♔e3†  
30.♔h1



30...♕xb5

This move was not difficult to anticipate,

although Karpov may have missed or underestimated Black's tactical resources as seen in the following variations.

### 31.b7

After 31.♗xc7 ♕xa5 32.♗xa5 ♕xb6 33.♗xb5 ♕xa5 34.♗xd6 ♔b6 Black can press.

31...♕h8! 32.b8=♕

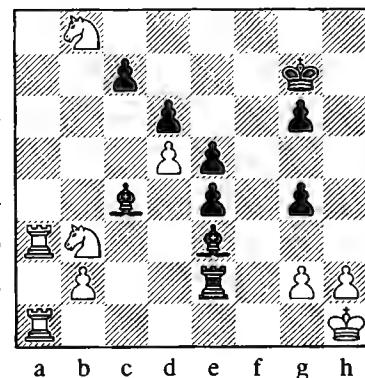
32.♗xb5?? leads to a disaster after 32...g3 33.h3 ♕xh3† 34.gxh3 ♕h2#!

32...♕xb8 33.♗xb8 ♕c4

White is a rook up, but Black has two extra pawns and his two bishops are vastly superior to White's two knights.

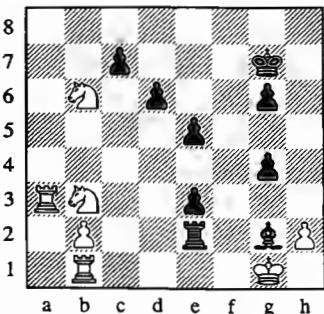
### 34.♗5a3?

After the superior 34.♗a6?? ♕b6 35.♗xc7 ♕xc7 36.♕a7 ♕xb3 37.♗xc7† ♔h6 White probably gets a draw.



34...♕xb2??

Now it is Black's turn to err. After 34...♕xd5! he has excellent winning chances despite the missing rook, for instance: 35.♗b1 (35.♗a5? ♕b6; 35.♗d1 ♕xb2 36.♗c1 ♕xc1 [36...♗d4 also wins] 37.♗xc1 ♕xb8 38.♗xc7† ♔f6 39.♗c1 ♕c4 and Black wins) 35...♕b6! 36.♗d7 e3 37.♗xb6 ♕xg2† 38.♗g1



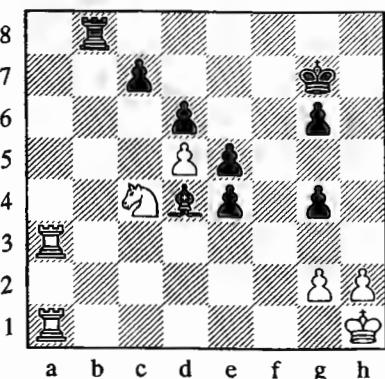
38... $\mathbb{R}f3!$  White is a rook and a piece up, yet he is completely lost due to the mating threats.

**35.  $\mathbb{Q}a5!$   $\mathbb{R}xb8?$**

After 35... $\mathbb{R}xd5?$  36.  $\mathbb{R}xe3$   $\mathbb{R}xb8$  37.  $\mathbb{R}c3$  c5 38.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{R}xc4$  39.  $\mathbb{R}xc4$  White should win with the extra rook.

Correct was 35... $\mathbb{R}d3!$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  (36.  $\mathbb{Q}bc6$   $\mathbb{R}b5$ ) 36... $\mathbb{R}b6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{R}f2$  when Black still has enough counterplay to maintain the balance.

**36.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{R}d4$**



**37.  $\mathbb{R}d1!$**

Karpov makes sure he keeps the d5-pawn and thus wins comfortably.

37... $\mathbb{R}b4$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{R}b5$  39. g3  $\mathbb{R}c5$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{R}b5$  41.  $\mathbb{R}c1$

1-0

This fascinating game shows that Karpov was not averse to taking risks. He played on the queenside with great force. He did not control the fight all the way, but emerged triumphant in the end.

After winning again in round three Karpov next faced Jan Timman, with whom he had already drawn in the preliminary qualifier. Timman went on to become Karpov's most frequent opponent in tournaments; actually they may well be the all-time record holders in that regard (not including encounters in match play). According to my database they met across the board in sixty five games, not including matches. If I wanted to be ironic I could mention that they played each other virtually everywhere except the Soviet and Dutch championships. They played two matches, including one for the FIDE World Championship in 1993. Karpov's all time score against Timman, including matches, was twenty nine wins, with fifty eight draws and eight losses. Timman faced a string of World Champions, from Smyslov all the way through to the present Champion Anand, with the exception of Fischer. The Dutchman scored twenty two victories against the world champions, with 156 draws and seventy eight losses.

## Game 11

Anatoly Karpov – Jan Timman

European U18 Championship, Groningen 1967-68

**1.c4**

According to the database this was the very first time Karpov played this particular move. It was never his primary opening but he went on to employ it regularly throughout his career, using it in approximately ten percent of his games.

1...e6 2.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Timman took part in the European Junior Championship a year earlier, so Karpov was probably familiar with his games. According to the database Timman mainly played the French around that time, so perhaps Karpov's first move was designed to avoid that opening. Note that he avoided the critical 3.e4 here, although he later tested it in two games, both of which ended in draws.

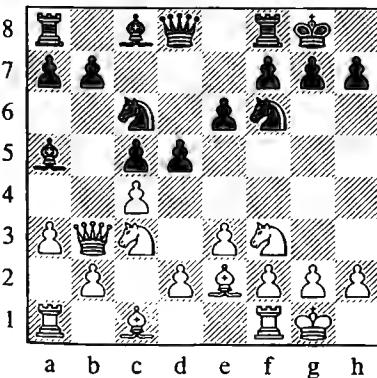
### 3... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 4. $\mathbb{W}b3$ c5 5.a3 $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 6.e3

It looks like Karpov wanted to avoid an open position against Timman. It is more common to fianchetto the light-squared bishop in this line.

### 6...0–0?!

The more closed the position is, the less one should hurry to castle. One gets the feeling that Black was playing too automatically, whereas he would have been better off focusing on the centre with 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ?, intending to meet 7. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  with 7...d5.

### 7. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ d5 8.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}c6$



### 9. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ !

Karpov takes advantage of the unconventional placement of the a5-bishop to play against the c5-pawn. Perhaps his experiences in the Closed Sicilian helped him, as the c5-pawn can sometimes be attacked there too.

### 9... $\mathbb{W}c7$

9...b6? was worth considering. The bishop would be uncomfortable, but it is not easy for White to exploit this concretely.

### 10. $\mathbb{W}c2$ ! $\mathbb{Q}d7$

This is not a nice move to have to make, but Black already faced some tricky problems. There are a lot of unusual tactics here. The best chance may have been:

### 10...d4?

After 10...b6? 11.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  12.b4 Black is in big trouble.

10...dxc4 is the only other move to have been tested in practice, White won both games, but the line is not completely unplayable with Black. Best play looks to be 11. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12.d4 cxd4 13.b4, with some initiative for White.

### 11.exd4

After 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dxe3 12.fxe3  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  13.b4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  14.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  15.d4 White has some play for the pawn, but Black should be okay. Karpov usually refrained from sacrificing pawns speculatively.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ cxd4 13.b4 $\mathbb{Q}c7$

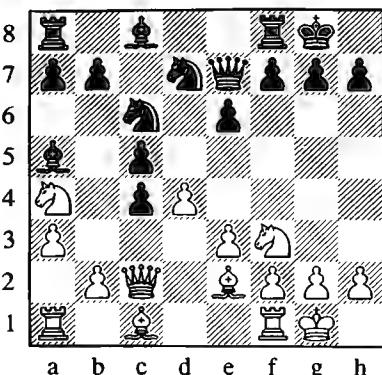
After a natural sequence we reach a double-edged position with chances for both sides.

### 11.d4!

Black is rather awkwardly placed in the centre, and he has problems developing his queenside. He would like to play ...b6, but the x-ray attack along the c-file makes this move difficult to carry out.

### 11...dxc4

With 11...cxd4 Black could have steered the game towards an IQP position: 12.cxd5 (there is also 12.exd4 dxc4 13. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  when White is better developed) 12...exd5 13.b4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  14.b5  $\mathbb{Q}ce5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  White is a bit better.



**12.dxc5!**

This capture virtually wins a pawn.

**12...e5**

12... $\mathbb{Q}xc5?$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xc5 \mathbb{W}xc5$  14.b4 wins.

The best chance may have been: 12...b5! Thanks to some unusual tactics Black stays in the game, but fails to equalize. 13.cxb6  $\mathbb{A}xb6$  14.b4  $\mathbb{A}xb4$  15.axb4 b5 16. $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{E}xa4$  17. $\mathbb{E}xa4$  bxa4 18.b5 White keeps some initiative on the queenside.

**13.e4!**

The young Karpov demonstrates his maturity, refraining from grabbing the pawn at once, in order to prevent his opponent from gaining ground in the centre. After the hasty 13. $\mathbb{W}xc4$  e4 14. $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}f6$  Black has some chances to create play against White's king.

**13... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 15. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

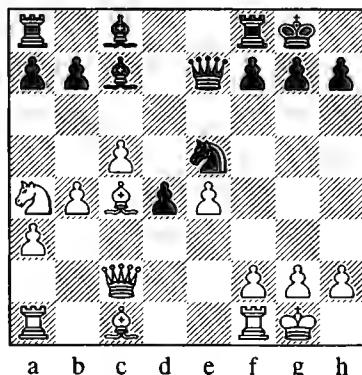
**16.b4**

This is a useful move, although the drawback is that it drives the black bishop into a prime attacking position. The attempt to do without this move would have led to its own problems: 16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  d3! 17. $\mathbb{W}d1!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (17... $\mathbb{Q}g4!?$ ) 18. $\mathbb{E}b1$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}d7$ ; 18.f4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  19. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  20. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  21. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  bxc6 White's king

is rather open, which should provide enough play for Black.) 18...b5! (18... $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19.b4!  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20.f4 and the d3-pawn falls) 19. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{E}xa8$  20.b4 bxa4 21.bxa5  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  The d3-pawn is very strong.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}c7$**

After 16... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  17. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  White remains in control.



**17. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$**

Karpov's strategy is risky, ambitious, and most importantly, correct! With his last move he practically surrounds the d4-pawn, and prepares to advance his f-pawn and possibly his e-pawn as well. Nevertheless, we should not forget that Black has a lot of pieces within striking distance of White's king.

The alternative was 17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ . This move keeps an eye on the kingside, but allows Black to generate counterplay with his d-pawn by means of: 17... $\mathbb{E}d8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  d3! 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  (After 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd3?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  21.g3  $\mathbb{W}xa1$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  23. $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}xd3$  Black has too many pieces for the queen.) 19... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  At this point White has to find only moves to stay in the game. He can do so with 21. $\mathbb{Q}e1!$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  22. $\mathbb{W}c3$ , although Black remains quite active.

17...d3?

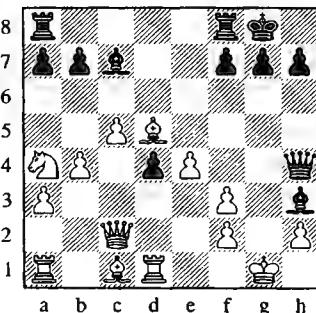
Black's best chance was to go for the king directly with:

17...Qf3†! 18.gxf3 Wh4 19.Qd1!

After 19.e5 Qxe5 20.f4 d3 21.Qa2 Qxa1 22.Qxa1 Qh3 White has trouble getting coordinated.

19...Qh3

19...Wh3 gets nowhere after 20.f4.



20.e5!

20.Wd3 Qae8 is very dangerous for White.

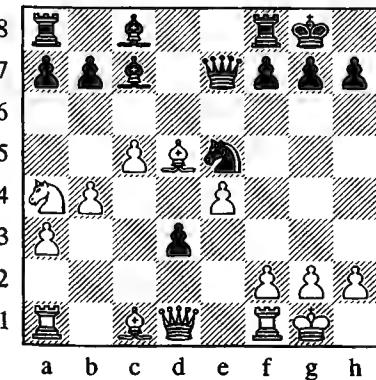
20...Qxe5 21.We4

After 21.Qd3 Qxh2† 22.Qxh2 Qf1† 23.Qg1 Wh3 24.f4 Qxd3 25.Qd1 Qae8 Black has a dangerous attack.

21.Wh5 22.Qf4 Qxf4 23.Wxf4 Wxd5 24.Qc3 Wc6 25.Wxd4

White keeps some advantage with his extra pawn, although his fractured kingside gives Black some counterplay.

18.Wd1



18...Qg4

The way Timman plays quickly leads to a lost position, but Black must act quickly before White finishes his development and wins with his extra material. 18...Qg4 achieves nothing after 19.f4, while 18...Qe6 can be met by 19.Qc3.

The best chance may have been:

18...Wf6

This sets a cunning trap.

19.f4?

White can also opt for the more restrained 19.Qa2 Qg4 (19...Qe6 20.f4 Qg6 21.Wxd3 wins.) 20.h3 Qh2 21.Qe1 Black has little to show for the material.

19...Qg6 20.e5?

This overambitious move backfires badly.

Instead White can maintain a big advantage with 20.Qb2!, intending to meet 20...Wg6 with 21.Qd2! Wxa4 22.Wc3 winning.

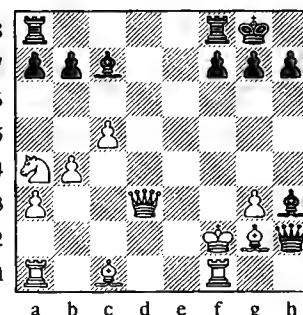
20...Qxe5! 21.fxe5 Wxe5

White's king is forced into the open.

22.Wxd3 Wxh2† 23.Qf2 Wh4† 24.g3

24.Qe2! is a better chance, although after 24...Qe6 Black keeps a strong initiative.

24...Wh2† 25.Qg2 Qh3



By now the attack is unstoppable.

26.Qf3 Qfe8 27.Qh1

Or 27.Qg1 Qad8.

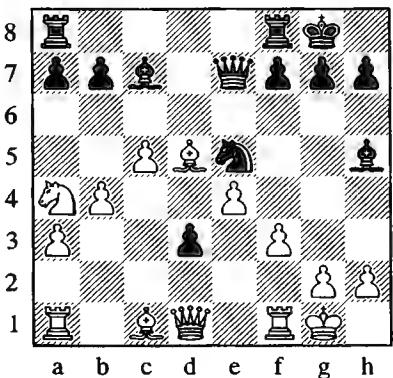
27...Qxg3†! 28.Wxg3 Qe2†

And Black wins.

**19.£3 £h5**

This is objectively wrong, as it virtually sacrifices the bishop. On the other hand, from a practical perspective at least it led to some complications.

The alternative was 19...£e6, hoping to eliminate the bishop on d5 and basing his play on the d3-pawn. However, White should be able to maintain control after: 20.£c3! (20.£b1 f5; 20.f4 £g4 21.£d2 £e2) 20...f5 (20...h5 21.f4! With the knight on c3 this move contains a lot of power.) 21.£b5 (21.£b3!?) 21...£b8 22.£g5 £d7 23.£xe6† £xe6 24.£d4 And White wins.

**20.£a2!**

Such a move is typical for Karpov. He improves another piece while removing the rook from its tactically vulnerable location.

**20...£h8**

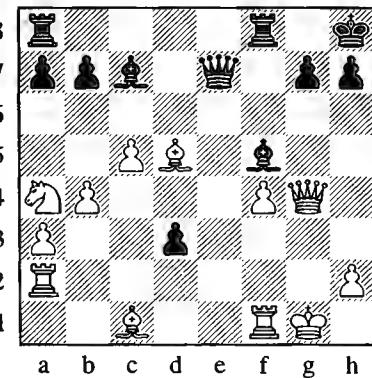
Black hopes to follow up with ...f5. If 20...£h4 21.g3 defends easily.

**21.g4! £g6 22.f4!**

Having sown the seeds, Karpov chooses the right moment to reap the harvest.

**22...£xg4**

The best chance.

**23.£xg4 f5 24.exf5 £xf5****25.£f3**

White is a piece up and completely winning. Had the game taken place ten years later, Timman may even have resigned here.

**25...£ad8 26.£c3 £f6 27.£g2**

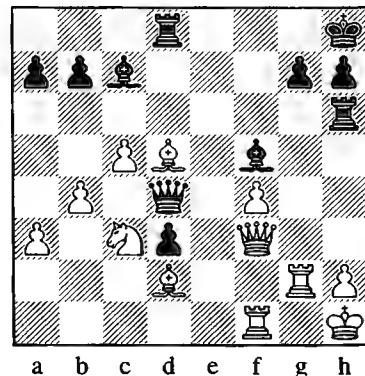
27.£b5 was a slight improvement, but the text move should be fine.

**27...£d4† 28.£h1 £f6 29.£d2**

Here Karpov was already in time trouble.

**29...£h6**

This is a bluff, which works in the game.



**30.♘f2??**

This is a dreadful mistake. This game, along with the previous one, suggests that Karpov was a long way from developing his almost computer-like calculating skills. Almost any sensible move wins, including 30.♗fg1! ♘h3 31.♗xg7, or 30.♗e1! ♘h3 and now either 31.♗g3 or 31.♗b5 win.

**30...♝xd5**

After this simple capture Black is back.

**31.♗e1**

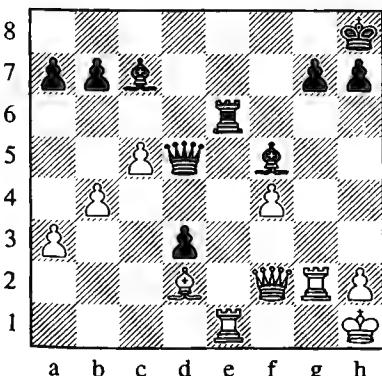
Another possibility was 31.♗xd5 ♘xd5 32.♗c3 ♘g6 33.♗g1 ♗g8 34.♗xg6 (after 34.♗g3? White is still better) 34...hxg6 35.♗d4 ♘xd4† 36.♗xd4 ♘xf4 and Black is alive.

**31...♞e6**

Objectively better was: 31...♗g8! 32.♗xd5 (32.♗xd4 ♘xd4 33.♗e7 ♘xf4) 32...♘xd5 33.♗g1! White should be still somewhat better here, but his king is airy and Karpov was short of time.

**32.♗xd5**

Karpov misses another opportunity to secure victory: 32.♗xe6! ♘xe6 33.♗e1 ♘f7 34.♗b5 ♘f6 35.♗xc7 ♘d7 36.♗c3 And White wins.

**32...♛xd5****33.♗xe6!**

A good move, exchanging a strong attacking piece.

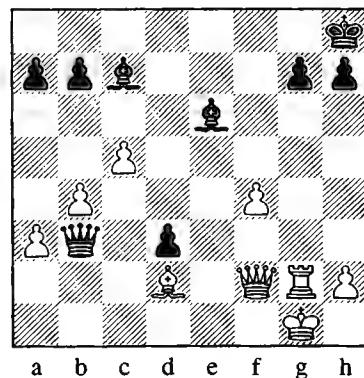
**33...♝xe6 34.♗g1!**

It is sensible to step aside out of the pin.

**34...♛b3??**

Black is searching for counterplay, but the text move leaves his king fatally exposed. 34...♗d7 was better, although White has a good answer in 35.♗g5!..

Black's best continuation was to play 34...♗g8!, improving the king's position, and after 35.♗c3 g6 36.♗e3 ♗f7 it would still require a great deal of skill and effort for White to win.

**35.♔e1!**

This move combines attack and defence perfectly, stopping any checks along the back rank while preparing to attack the g7-pawn. Black has no good defence.

**35...♗g8**

35...g6 was no better as 36.f5 wins.

36.f5! ♘f7 37.♗h6 g6 38.♗a1 ♘e5 39.♗xe5 ♘d1† 40.♗f2 ♘c2† 41.♗g3

1–0

This game was far from flawless; both of these future stars were a long way from reaching their full potential, but they still produced a very interesting game. It was a pity the mistakes crept in, but the strength of Karpov's positional understanding was very much evident throughout. Later in the event Karpov scored two more wins and became the European Junior Champion.

## 1967 Summary

In 1967 (including the 1968 part of the aforementioned competition) Karpov played a total of thirty seven games. Of the games in the database, eight were quick draws, finishing in twenty moves and under. Compared with Fischer and Kasparov, the relatively high number of quick draws may have been due to a busier tournament schedule, although it is hard to talk about this with certainty as not every tournament would have been documented on the database.

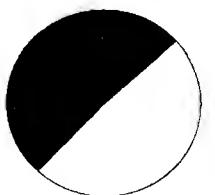
Russian Federation Spartakiad (Board two):  $4\frac{1}{2}/7 (+4 =1 -2)$

World Junior Qualifier (5th place):  $3\frac{1}{2}/7 (+3 =1 -3)$

USSR Schools' Spartakiad (Board two):  $7/9 (+5 =4 -0)$

European U18, Groningen (1st place):  $10/14 (+6 =8 -0)$

Total 67.6% ( $+18 =14 -5$ )



Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1968

In this year Karpov had twenty seven games in the database, slightly fewer than before. His first two events were matches. The Soviet Union used to play a national team match against Yugoslavia every year, including junior boards as well. Karpov played in the latter, winning his own four-game match against Vujakovic by the impressive score of 3½–½. His next event was a USSR – Scandinavia junior match in Tallinn, in which he lost to Bo Jacobsen by the score of 1½–½ on board two.

Later in 1968 Karpov won a tournament, the Moscow University Championship, by winning seven games and drawing six (although three of the draws cannot be found in the database). We will look at one of his wins.

His opponent only has one other game in the database. His name means “the one who is chosen”, although the game itself has been selected for completely unrelated reasons! It provides a nice example of the young Karpov’s skill in handling opposite-coloured bishop middlegames.

## Game 12

Sergey Vybornov – Anatoly Karpov

Moscow 1968

### 1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 a6

Maybe Karpov was hoping for 3.d4, which is well known to be ineffective against Black’s chosen move order.

### 3.♘c3

The main options are 3.c3 and 3.c4.

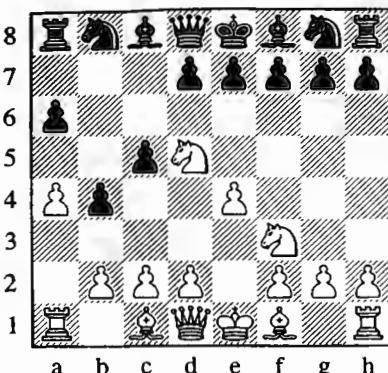
### 3...b5!!

A logical reaction. The same idea is sometimes seen in the Closed Sicilian lines with 2.♘c3 and 3.g3. Maybe Karpov did not like to face ...a6 and ...b5 when he played that way with White.

### 4.a4?!

Black is already toying with the idea of playing ...b4, so why spend a tempo to force it? 4.d4 was more consistent, when it looks interesting for Black to try: 4...e6?! With the knight on c3 Black can consider eschewing the pawn exchange on d4. 5.d5 (5.♗f4 ♗b7) 5...♗b7 With a double-edged and almost uncharted position.

4...b4 5.Qd5

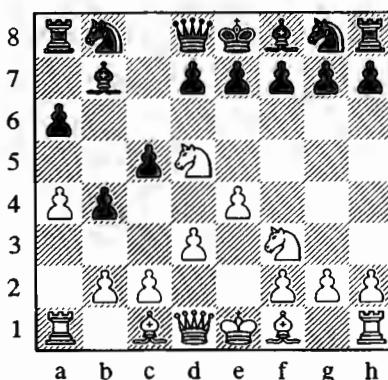


5...Qb7!

This move is trickier than it looks.

6.d3

White defends the e4-pawn, as ...e6 was a threat.



6...Qxd5!!

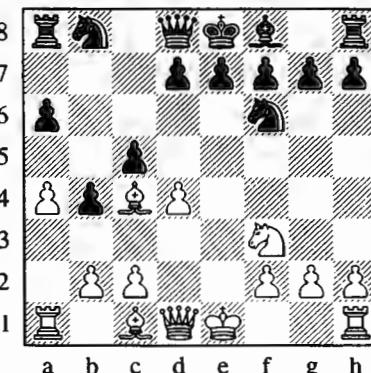
Once again Karpov embarks on a risky and ambitious strategy. He is willing to give up a valuable bishop, which was also his only developed piece, in order to compromise the enemy structure.

7.exd5 Qf6

Hunting down the d5-pawn.

8.d4 Qxd5 9.Qc4 Qf6!

Black is behind in development and must therefore exercise great caution. For example, 9...Qb6? allows a winning raid: 10.Qxf7†! Qxf7 11.Qe5† Qg8 (11...Qe8 12.Qh5† wins.) 12.Qf3 Qe8 13.dxc5 And Black is lost.



10.dxc5?

With this move White regains his pawn, but his light-squared bishop will have no function in the long run.

10.d5! This strong move gains space and restricts the enemy pieces, while preparing to develop pressure along the e-file. It is an instructive exception to the rule that the side with better development should strive to open the position. 10...g6 11.0–0 Qg7 12.Qe1 0–0 13.Qg5 White has lovely compensation for the pawn, and risks nothing.

10...e6 11.Qe3 Qc7 12.Qd4 Qc6 13.Qd3 Qg4!

Black has to get rid of the c5-pawn as it is currently fixing the weakness on d7 as well as restricting his pieces.

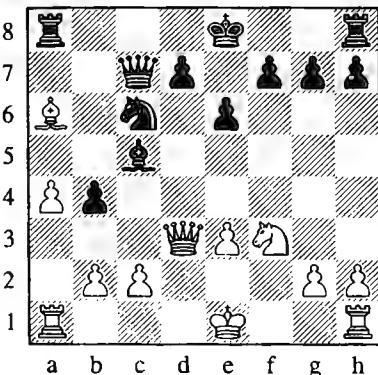
14.Qxa6

White wins back the pawn, and one may even think that he is doing well as he has a

passed a-pawn. However, a closer inspection reveals that it cannot be pushed.

In the event of 14.♕d1 ♜xe3 15.♗xe3 ♛a7 White is unable to safeguard the c-pawn.

14...♜xe3 15.♗xe3 ♛xc5



Opposite-coloured bishop middlegames can be hard to judge – or perhaps it would be more accurate to say *easy to misjudge*. At his peak Karpov created masterpieces from positions of this type.

16.♗b5

If 16.0–0–0 ♜xe3† picks up a pawn.

16...0–0 17.0–0

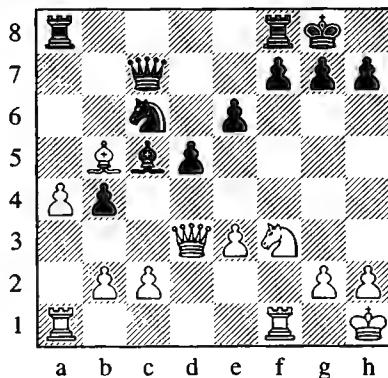
17.♗xc6!? was worth considering.

17...d5

The immediate 17...♝e5!? would have avoided the idea in the following note.

18.♗h1

18.♗xc6!? Exchanging the bishop was the lesser evil, despite the fact that the a-pawn will require careful defence. 18...♝xc6 19.a5 ♛a6 20.♗d4 ♜b7 21.♗b3 ♛d6 Black remains comfortable, but it is not easy to formulate a plan that will really hurt White.



18...♝e5!

This renders White's bishop useless.

19.♗e2 f5!

Fixing the e3-pawn as a permanent target for the black bishop.

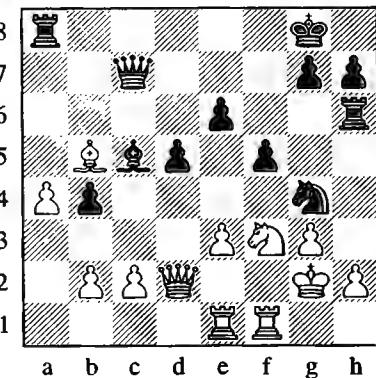
20.♗ae1 ♜g4!

Karpov starts building his attack against the king, as well as the e3-pawn. White can do nothing to counteract his opponent's domination on the dark squares.

21.♗d2 ♜f6!?

Karpov goes after the king rather than playing 21...♜b6, even though this wins material by force after 22.c4 ♜xe3 or 22.♗d4 f4.

22.g3 ♜h6 23.♗g2



23... $\mathbb{Q}b6!$ 

Only now does Karpov decide to win the e3-pawn, after White has put himself in position for a knight fork on e3. The game is practically over.

24.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  f4  
 27.  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30. c3  
 $\mathbb{Q}d8$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
 0-1

Karpov's next event was the junior section of the Soviet Team Championship, where he played on the top board. He scored two wins and one draw. According to the database, his opponent in the following game played one major tournament in the sixties and defeated Romanishin in one game. He went on to become an international master.

### Game 13

#### Boris Nisman – Anatoly Karpov

Soviet Team Championship (juniors), Riga 1968

##### 1.c4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e6 3.d4

The aggressive Mikenas variation with 3.e4 was only played against Karpov three times. After drawing with Miles and Timman in 1977, Karpov suffered a defeat in this line against Korchnoi at the Baguio World Championship final in 1978, after which he almost never allowed it again.

##### 3... $\mathbb{Q}b4$

The Nimzo-Indian was a mainstay of Karpov's repertoire throughout his career.

##### 4.a3

Statistically speaking 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  was the most problematic move for Karpov, but this is explained by the fact that Kasparov employed it against him regularly. He only faced the

text move four times, and triumphed on each occasion.

##### 4... $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$ 5.bxc3 c5 6.e3

Zakharov played 6.f3 here at the 1976 USSR Championship, and Karpov went on to win a remarkable endgame.

##### 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}e2?$

7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  is more common.

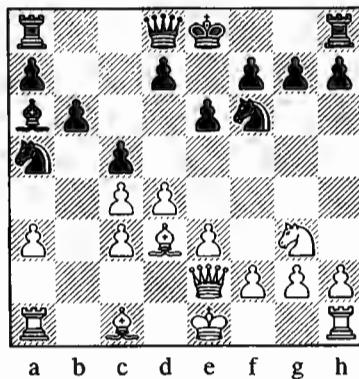
##### 7...b6 8. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$

According to the database this move was only ever played in the present game. The usual course is 8...0-0 9.e4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$ .

##### 9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

9.e4! is the critical test, now that the thematic ... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  is unavailable.

##### 9... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ 10. $\mathbb{W}e2$



##### 10...d6

Karpov gives up the plan of bringing the f6-knight to d6, instead embarking on a somewhat surprising strategy.

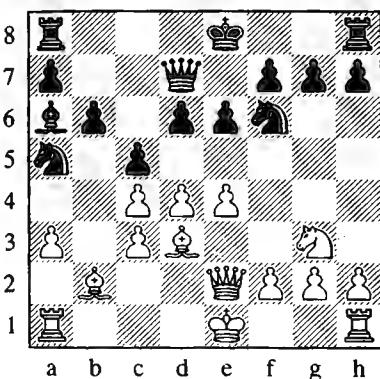
##### 11. $\mathbb{Q}b2?$

The bishop has a bleak future here.

##### 11... $\mathbb{W}d7$

This looks a bit mysterious but is all part of the plan. Karpov leaves the c4-pawn alone, at least for a while.

### 12.e4



### 12...0–0–0!

Karpov solves the problem of his king in an original way.

### 13.a4 h5?

Now he starts pushing White back on the other wing.

### 14.0–0?!

White should have prevented the further advance of the h-pawn.

### 14...h4 15.♘h1 e5!

Gaining space, while facilitating the transfer of the knight to f4.

### 16.f4

Waiting passively with 16.d5 was probably the better choice. Black would still have had a nice position, although at least 16...♘h5 can safely be met by 17.g3.

### 16...♘h5! 17.fxe5

17.f5?! Sacrificing the exchange in a more closed position is more in keeping with chess

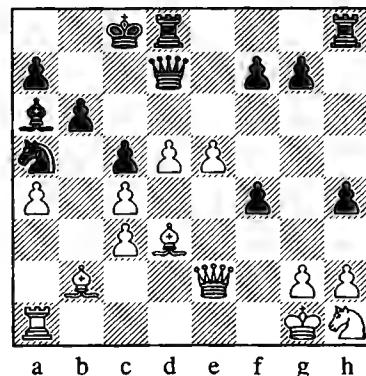
principles as White has better chances to build a fortress. Play might continue 17...♝f4 (17...♝c7!?) 18.♗xf4 exf4 19.♘f2 with reasonable compensation.

### 17...dxe5 18.d5 ♘f4!

Karpov takes some risk by winning the exchange as his pieces are not well centralized. Nevertheless the decision is justified.

### 19.♗xf4 exf4 20.e5

Objectively 20.♘f2 was better, although Black's advantage is clear after 20...f6. The text move looks very natural, and indeed if White can find time to get coordinated then his central pawns could become a mighty force. Fortunately Karpov has assessed the position correctly and prepared a strong counter.



### 20...h3!

Opening up White's kingside.

### 21.g4

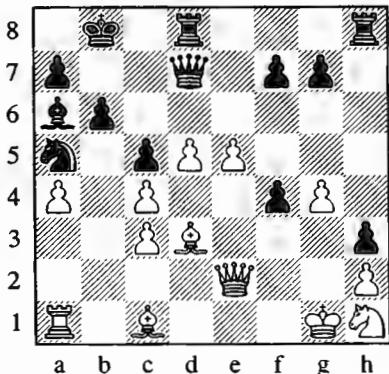
In the event of 21.g3 Black has the nice idea of 21...♗xc4!? (21...g5 should be enough for an advantage, but it is hard to argue with the text move) 22.♗xc4 ♘xc4 23.♗xc4 ♜xd5 24.♗xd5 ♜xd5 25.gxf4 ♜d2 and White is in huge trouble.

### 21...♗b8

21...♗xc4!? looks strong here too.

**22.♕c1?**

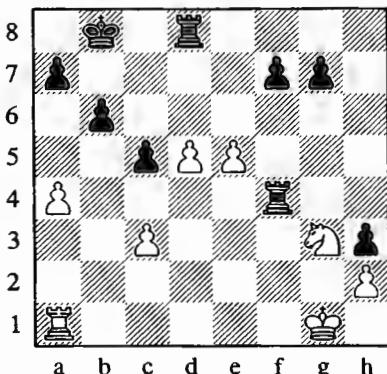
There is no time for this. The best chance was 22.♘f2, although after 22...f3! (22...♝de8 23.♕c1 g5 24.♕e4) 23.♗e4 g5 Black soon attacks the e5-pawn.

**22...♝xc4!**

After this clever tactic White's position falls apart.

23.♕xc4 ♘xc4 24.♗xc4 ♜xg4† 25.♕g3 ♜h4  
26.♗xf4 ♜xf4 27.♕xf4 ♜xf4

Black is winning easily, and Karpov has no trouble converting his advantage.



28.♖d1 g6 29.♖d2 ♜xa4 30.♕f2 ♜c4 31.♖d3  
a5 32.♕e3 ♜e8 33.e6 ♜xe6 34.d6 ♜d8 35.♕e4  
♕c8 36.♕f6 ♜d7 37.♕xd7 ♜xd7 38.♕d2

♕h4 39.♕c2 b5 40.♕g3 ♜xd6 41.♕xg6 ♜f4  
42.♕b3 a4† 43.♕a3 ♜f3 44.♕b2 b4

**0–1**

Karpov's strategy worked to perfection – he sheltered his king on the queenside and outplayed his somewhat naive opponent on the kingside in an impressive and instructive manner.

After this win Karpov continued his fine form, and amassed a superb nine points from his first ten games. His victims included Romanishin and Piesina, and one of his draws was against Vaganian. In the last round Karpov's team (the armed forces) had to play their main rivals Burevestnik, with the latter needing to win by a score of 6–4 to secure overall victory.

Karpov's opponent in this tense situation was a talented junior player named Ilya Mikliaev who, according to the database, had also achieved the remarkable score of nine points from ten games. Amongst others he won impressively against Vaganian with the black pieces, and drew with Romanishin. Prior to this event in a USSR – Scandinavia match Mikliaev also defeated Ulf Andersson 1½–½, after winning a fine attacking game.

According to the database, Mikliaev gave up chess after the following game. This is sad for chess, as he most probably would have become a world class player. I asked several Russian players what happened to Mikliaev. I was surprised to find that hardly anyone even knew his name! Finally Grandmaster Razuvayev provided the answer. Mikliaev went to university and became a very successful cardiologist. He excelled in this field, and at a remarkably early age became a director of a major hospital in Kharkov. Such a demanding job left him with no time for chess. I managed to get in contact with Mikliaev and I hope to devote a chapter to him in one of my future books.

## Game 14

Anatoly Karpov – Ilya Mikliaev

Soviet Team Championship, Riga 1968

**1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qb5 a6 4.Qa4 d6**

Karpov may have anticipated this variation, as Mikliaev had already used it to draw with Romanishin.

**5.c3 Qd7 6.0–0 g6 7.d4 Qg7 8.h3**

Eighteen years later Karpov spared this move and won a nice game against Spassky:

8.Qe1 Qge7 9.Qe3 0–0 10.Qbd2

Around that time the tenth world champion had some success with developing the knight on e7, but Karpov prepared well for it.

10...Qe8 11.Qb3 b6

11...Qh8?! may have been more useful.

12.dxe5 dxe5

12...Qxe5?! was worth considering.

13.Qc4 Qh8 14.Qc1

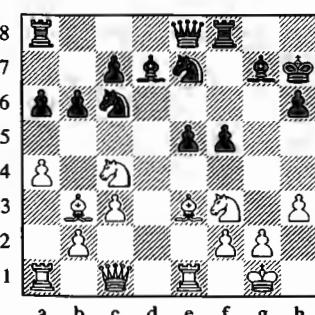
Also after 14.Qxb6?! cxb6 15.Qd6 Qd8

16.Qxf7† Qxf7 17.Qxf7 White is somewhat better.

14...Qg4 15.Qg5 h6 16.h3 Qd7

16...Qh5?! 17.g4 hxg5 18.gxh5 f6 19.hxg6 looks better than the game.

17.Qf3 Qh7 18.a4 f5? 19.exf5 gxh5



20.Qfxe5!

Now Black's king becomes vulnerable.

20...Qxe5 21.Qxe5 Qxe5 22.Qxh6 Qd6  
23.Qg5 Qg6 24.Qxe7† Qxe7 25.Qxe7† Qxh6  
26.Qxd7

The two pawns for the exchange and Black's open king gave White a clear advantage, Karpov – Spassky, Bugojno 1986.

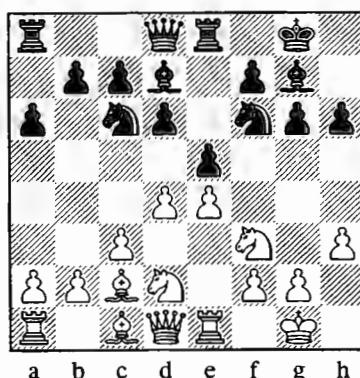
**8...Qf6 9.Qbd2 0–0 10.Qe1 Qe8**

Black more often starts playing on the kingside with 10...Qh5 or 10...Qe8.

**11.Qc2**

Karpov defends the e4-pawn in order to prepare Qf1.

**11...h6**



**12.a3!?**

This subtle move is directed against the following pawn sacrifice: 12.Qf1 exd4?! 13.cxd4 d5! 14.e5 Qe4 15.Qxe4 dxe4 16.Qxe4 Qf5 17.Qe1 (17.Qe2 Qxe5) 17...Qb4 Black has reasonable compensation.

**12...Qh7**

Black plays a useful waiting move, defending the h6-pawn. Later he may think of freeing his position with ...d5.

**13.Qf1**

If 13.b4 then 13...d5! exploits the weakening

of the c3-pawn and the long diagonal in general.

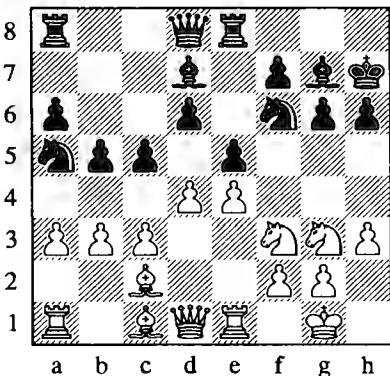
### 13...b5!?

Usually Black searches for counterplay on the kingside in this variation, but Mikliaev instead chooses to play on the queenside.

### 14.Qg3

Also possible was 14.d5!? Qa5 15.Qe3 Qb7 16.b4 and White has a small advantage.

### 14...Qa5 15.b3 c5



Black has obtained a playable position which resembles the Chigorin Variation of the main line.

### 16.d5 c4

Black could have regrouped the knight with 16...Qb7!?, keeping the queenside more fluid.

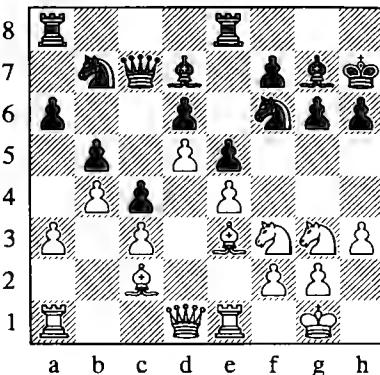
### 17.b4 Qb7

One of Black's main challenges in the ensuing middlegame will be to find a useful role for this knight.

### 18.Qe3 Qc7

The hasty 18...a5 gives White the option of opening the queenside: 19.a4!? Qc7 20.axb5

Qxb5 21.Qa4 Qxa4 22.Qxa4 axb4 23.Qxb4 White has the initiative on the b-file, and the c4-pawn is a target.



### 19.Qh2

Karpov prepares to gain space on the kingside with the thematic f2-f4. It was also possible to focus on the other flank for a while with 19.a4 Rfb8 20.Qe2, with a typical slight plus.

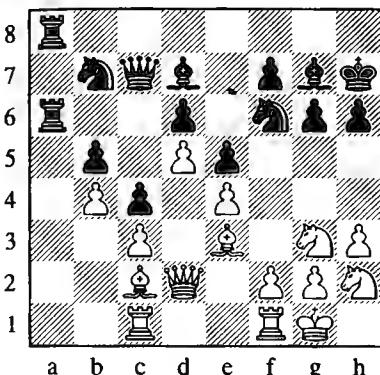
### 19...a5 20.Qd2 Ra6

Mikliaev takes control over the a-file, although in the game he is unable to do much with it. Another idea was 20...Qd8 in order to improve the misplaced knight without delay. A logical continuation would be: 21.f4 exf4 22.Qxf4 Qg8 Black has to choose which knight he improves. Now one of them defends the king. 23.Rf1 f6 24.Qe3 Qf7 25.Qf3 Qe5 26.Qd4 White keeps some advantage.

### 21.Rf1 Rea8 22.Qa1!

Karpov does not mind giving up the a-file, as Black will not be able to hurt him there. The rook moves into a defensive position where it protects the light-squared bishop as well as the c3-pawn.

### 22...axb4 23.axb4



23... $\mathbb{Q}g8$

Black decides to improve the b7-knight by means of ...f6 ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ . The other main plan was to vacate the d7-square for his other knight, in order to occupy the e5-square after White's intended f2-f4. There were three different ways of going about this.

One idea was to begin with the flexible 23... $\mathbb{Q}a2!$ ? and only later decide where to retreat the d7-bishop.

There was also 23... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , for instance: 24.f4 exf4 25. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  h5 27. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black is doing all right here.

Finally, Black could also have freed the d7-square with:

23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  24.f4 exf4

After 24... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25.f5 Black remains passive.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$

25. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}a2!$  (25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$ ) 26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (or 26... $\mathbb{Q}e8a6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}ce1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  and Black is in the game) 27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$   
Black has compensation for the pawn.

25... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

There is also 26... $\mathbb{Q}a2$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}cf1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  when it is not easy to advance White's position.

27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}cf1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

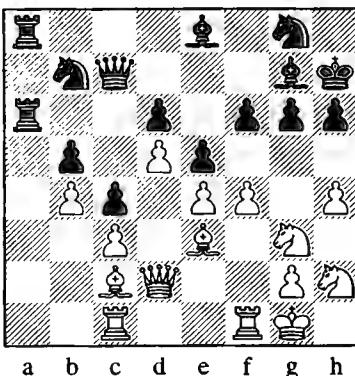
30. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$

White has an extra pawn but his pieces are tied up.

24.f4 f6 25.h4

Karpov wants to weaken Black's kingside. In the event of the immediate 25.f5 g5, White would only be able to attack along a single file, which may not be enough. Play might continue: 26. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (or 26. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$ ) 26... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (27. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ) 27... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  28.h4  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  White is somewhat better, but a tough fight lies ahead.

25... $\mathbb{Q}e8$



26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Karpov provokes ...h5, hoping that it will loosen Black's kingside.

The other main idea was 26.h5. This move gains space, fixes Black's kingside and virtually buries the g8-knight and the g7-bishop. Nevertheless it has one major drawback – it makes the position so closed that White may be left without a convincing way to penetrate. A logical continuation would be: 26...g5 27.fxg5 fxg5 28. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}a2!$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ ? 31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  Black gets some counterplay, but more importantly it is hard to see how White can invade along the f-file.

**26...h5!?**

Black decides to gain some time and aim for counterplay, but in doing so he weakens his kingside. It was also possible to focus on the opposite flank with:

26... $\mathbb{B}a2!$ ? 27.f5

27.h5 g5 28.fxg5 fxg5 transposes to the previous note.

27...h5

After 27...g5? 28.hxg5 hxg5 29. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  White has a decisive attack on the h-file.

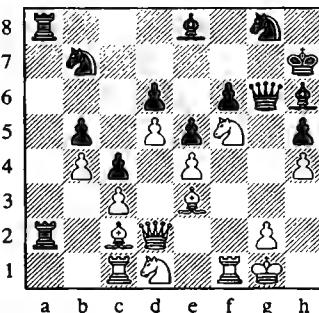
28. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

28. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}8a3$  is okay for Black.

28... $\mathbb{Q}h6$

Another possibility is 28... $\mathbb{W}f7$  29. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  (29... $\mathbb{E}8a3!$ ?) 30. $\mathbb{W}f3$  gxg5 31. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  32. $\mathbb{W}xf5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  when Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.

29. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  30.fxg6 $\uparrow$   $\mathbb{W}xg6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$



31... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$ ?

This is a weird looking move, but it may well be a good one as it prepares to eliminate the strong f5-knight by means of ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

The alternative was: 31... $\mathbb{Q}xe3\uparrow$  32. $\mathbb{Q}dxe3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ) 33. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}h7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  Black is passive, but has reasonable chances to hold.

32. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

The immediate 32... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ? runs into 33. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h6!$

33. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

34. $\mathbb{W}e2$  can also be met by 34... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

34... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

There are no direct threats, so Black could also consider 34... $\mathbb{Q}b2!$  first.

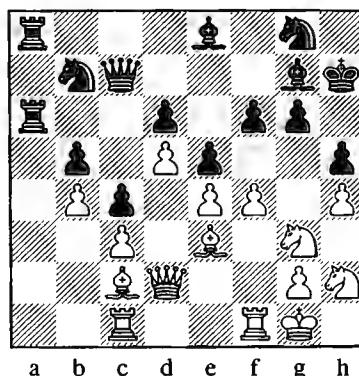
35. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$

35... $\mathbb{W}e8!$  is also possible.

36. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$

Black is not worse, and he may be able to target the h4-pawn.

27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



27...exf4

This is another important and double-edged decision. Black gives up his control over the d4-square in order to create his own knight outpost on e5.

If Black intends to exchange on f4, he should do so immediately. If he tries to prepare it with 27... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$  then White plays 28.f5.

Another idea is 27... $\mathbb{E}a2$ , allowing 28.f5  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  29. $\mathbb{W}e2$ . In the resulting position White has a slight edge thanks to his kingside pressure after 29...gxg5 30.exf5  $\mathbb{W}f7$  or 29... $\mathbb{W}f7$  30.fxg6 $\uparrow$   $\mathbb{W}xg6$ .

Finally, Black can improve his bishop with: 27... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (After 28. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  Black has managed to improve his knight, and remains in the game.)

Now the natural 28... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  allows White to launch a dangerous attack with 29.g4!, but after the safer 28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  it is not easy for White to increase the pressure against Black's kingside.

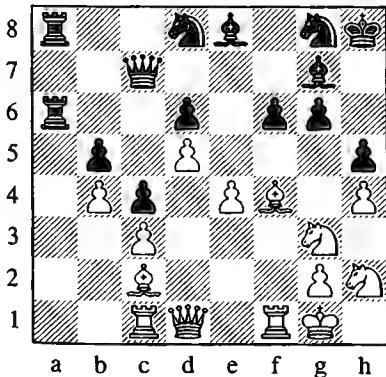
### 28. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$ ?

Objectively this may not hurt Black, but who would enjoy being threatened by a possible e5 and  $\mathbb{W}xh5\#$ ?

Another possibility was 29.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30. e5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  with a balanced position.

### 29... $\mathbb{Q}h8$

Mikliaev wants to keep the h-pawn. It was also possible to improve the knight at once with 29... $\mathbb{Q}f7?$ !, not fearing 30.e5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xh5\#$  (or 31.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ) 31... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  when Black remains quite solid on the kingside.



### 30. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Karpov prepares to open the kingside.

### 30... $\mathbb{Q}f7$

If 30... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}hf7$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  White's position is slightly preferable.

### 31. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5!?$

Finally the knight achieved his goal and reached the desired e5-square. A more straightforward alternative was 31... $\mathbb{W}xg4?$ . White's heavy pieces are far away, therefore Black can withstand the attack on the kingside. 32.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 33.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black has enough pieces around his king to defend himself.

### 32. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ $\mathbb{W}xh5$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}g3$

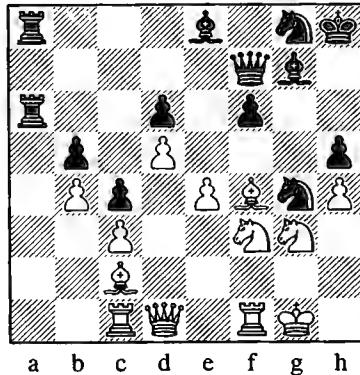
Karpov immediately homes in on the new target on h5.

### 33... $\mathbb{W}f7$

It looks interesting to sacrifice a pawn as White's king is a bit exposed: 33... $\mathbb{Q}h6?$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}h7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black has compensation.

### 34. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Black wishes to preserve his strong knight, but the idea is too slow. He should have preferred the immediate 34... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ ! 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (after 35.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  Black is becoming active) 35... $dxe5$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (or 36.  $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  and Black is all right) 36... $\mathbb{W}g6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  Black has enough of a grip on the position.



### 35. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

From here the knight controls a lot of important squares.

### 35...♝h6?!

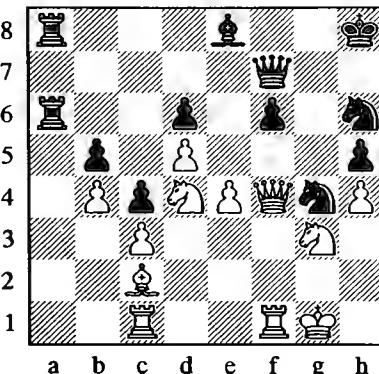
Black exchanges his bad bishop. This is positionally desirable, but the bishop was also an important defender of the black kingside.

A better idea was 35...♝e7, intending to attack the weak h4-pawn. 36.♛e6 ♚g6 37.♞f5 ♜f8 38.♝d2 ♜d7 Despite the menacing appearance of the white knights, Black is holding his position together.

Black can also begin by taking away the e6-square with 35...♝d7 and only then switch his attention to the h4-pawn: 36.♝d2 ♜e7 37.♜d1 ♜g6! 38.♝xg4 (after 38.♝xh5 ♜xf5 39.♝xf4 ♜h6 40.♚h1 ♜g8 41.♝g1 ♜h7 Black has lovely counterplay for the pawn) 38...♝xg4 39.♝xb5 ♜d7 40.♝d4 ♜h3 41.♝f2 ♜g4 Black is very much alive.

### 36.♝d2 ♜xf4 37.♝xf4 ♜8h6?!

37...♝e7! It was more effective to attack the h4-pawn to tie White up for a few moves. 38.♝gf5 (38.♝df5 ♜g6 39.♝d2 ♜e5) 38...♝g6 39.♝g3 ♜e5 40.♝e6 ♜d7 Black's knights succeed in holding the position together.

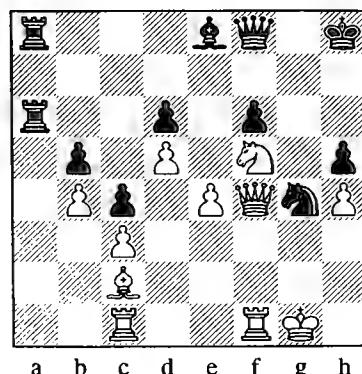


### 38.♝gf5!

The h6-knight is a very important defensive piece, so Karpov wastes no time in exchanging it. Now he will be able to get closer to Black's weak h-pawn.

### 38...♝xf5 39.♝xf5 ♜f8

After 39...♝e5 40.♚h1 ♜f8 41.♝g1 Black's kingside is seriously weak.



### 40.♜d1!

Karpov expels the knight and vacates the c2-square for his rook.

### 40...♝e5 41.♜c2 ♜a2!

Black exchanges the rook before it can join in the attack.

### 42.♜xa2 ♜xa2 43.♝g3

This double attack wins a pawn.

### 43...♜a3?!

Mikliaevel is looking for counterplay on the wrong side. It turns out that Black could have kept himself in the game with:

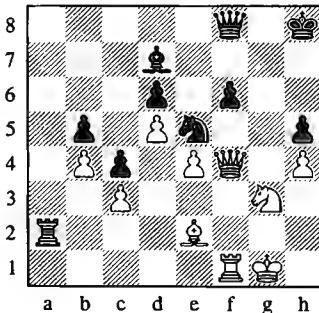
### 43...♝d7?

Aiming for counterplay against White's king.

### 44.♚e2!

The best response. After 44.♝xh5? ♜h3 45.♜f2 ♜d3 Black wins material.

44.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  is met by 44...  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  (or 44...  $\mathbb{W}g8\#$ ) 45.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xg3\#$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  47.  $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}a1$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  with compensation for the pawn) 45.  $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  46.  $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}g2\#$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}b2\#$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}g2\#$  and White has to repeat moves.



44...  $\mathbb{E}c2$

Now Black attacks the pawn under more favourable conditions.

45.  $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  46.  $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{E}b3$

47...  $\mathbb{E}c2?$  is also interesting. After the text move the c-pawn is really dangerous.

48.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$

After 48.  $\mathbb{E}h6\#$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  49.  $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $c3$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}xb4$  Black wins.

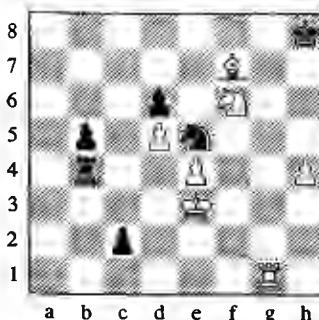
48...  $c3$

48...  $\mathbb{E}b1$  is also met by 49.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ .

49.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}b1$  50.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}xb4$  51.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$

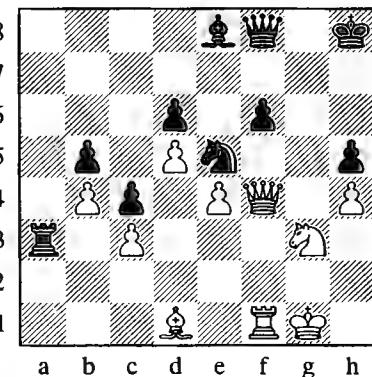
Black is barely able to defend himself against the mating threats, but on the opposite flank his c-pawn is a monster.

53.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $c2$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$



54...  $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$ !! 55.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

The resulting endgame should be a draw.



44.  $\mathbb{W}xf6\#$

Karpov enters an endgame. In practice it turns to be a good decision as he outplays his opponent, although objectively Black should still be all right.

44.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  deserved consideration, for instance: 44...  $\mathbb{W}g7$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}a1$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  47.  $\mathbb{W}b2$  (after 47.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  48.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  Black manages to keep his position together) 47...  $\mathbb{E}a6$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  49.  $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  50.  $\mathbb{E}g1$  And White is a bit better.

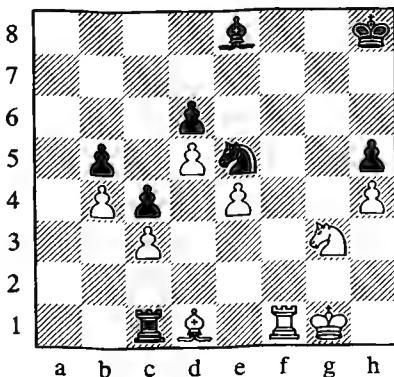
44...  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  45.  $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{E}a1?$

Despite some imperfections, the overall quality of Black's play up to this point has been quite high. The text move is his first really serious mistake. This was the last game of the Armed Forces – Burevestnik match and Mikliaev's team was already leading 7–2, so they achieved their objective. Perhaps this even contributed to a loss of concentration from Mikliaev.

The correct continuation was 45...  $\mathbb{E}xc3$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3\#$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (47...  $\mathbb{Q}xb4?$ ) 48.  $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}f4\#$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h3\#$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4\#$  and White should settle for the perpetual, as the attempt

to play on with 51. ♔h2?! only leads to trouble for White after 51... ♕g6.

46. gfl gcl



47. ♔e2?

Throughout his career Karpov rarely made mistakes in endgames, but here he misses a simple win: 47.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5!$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$   $'\mathbb{Q}e3$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}f8\#$  And White wins a piece.

In those days players were used to adjournments, and it may well be that the last round took place in one session. The present game has been full of challenges for both players, so it would be perfectly understandable if they were fatigued.

47... $\mathbb{E}a1$  48. $\mathfrak{Q}d4$   $\mathfrak{Q}g8$  49. $\mathfrak{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  50. $\mathfrak{Q}f2!$

Karpov starts improving his king, which will decide the outcome of the game.

50... ♕g6 51. ♔e3?

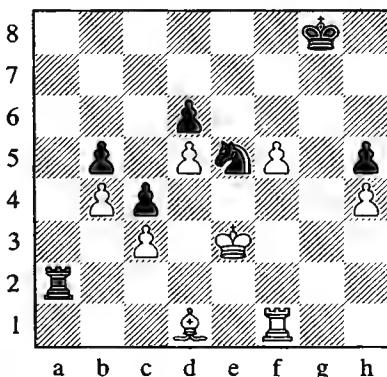
This time the centralization of the king is less important than keeping the knight on the board. The correct route to victory was: 51.  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (51...  $\mathbb{B}b6$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 52.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}b6$  (53...  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ) 54.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  55.  $\mathbb{B}f5$  White restores his one-pawn advantage and wins easily as his king is also much better than Black's.

51... ♔xf5 52.exf5

After 52.  $\mathbb{B}xf5$   $\mathbb{B}a3$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}a2\uparrow$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{B}a3$  55.  $\mathbb{B}f6$  (55.  $\mathbb{B}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$ ) 55...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  56.  $\mathbb{B}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$  57.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  58.  $\mathbb{B}d7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black is rather active.

52...~~g~~a2?

This is too slow. Black should waste no time in playing 52... $\mathbb{E}a3!$  to attack the c3-pawn. Play may then continue 53. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (or 53. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{E}xc3\#$  54. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7!$  and Black's king is safe) 53... $\mathbb{E}a1$  54. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  transposing to the game while avoiding the improvement mentioned in the next note. (It should be mentioned that 54. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is not an improvement due to 54... $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$ .)



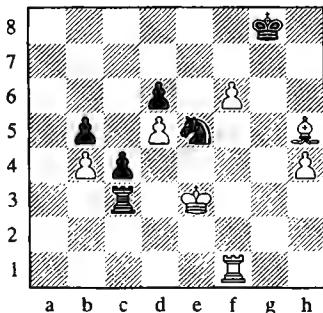
53. ♔d4?

It is hard to guess the motivation for this poor move. I would guess that with the time control approaching (the classical time control in those days was two and a half hours for forty moves and an extra hour for each sixteen moves thereafter) the players were both in time trouble.

53... $\mathbb{E}f2$  This simple move ensures a two pawn advantage as the h5-pawn will drop. Nevertheless Black has some chances to resist thanks to his superior minor piece. 53... $\mathbb{E}a3$  54. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  55. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  At this point the best chance looks to be 55... $\mathbb{E}a8?$ . (Instead after

55... $\mathbb{E}a1$  56. $\mathbb{B}e8$   $\mathbb{E}h1$  57. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  58. $\mathbb{B}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}xh4$  or 58... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  59. $\mathbb{B}c6$  White has excellent winning chances.) In the resulting position White will have a hard time converting his two-pawn advantage.

The strongest move of all was: 53. $\mathbb{B}xh5!$  White not only takes the second pawn, but more importantly he can begin weaving a mating net. 53... $\mathbb{E}c2$  (53... $\mathbb{E}h2$  54. $\mathbb{E}g1\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  55. $\mathbb{B}f4!!$   $\mathbb{B}xh4\uparrow$  56. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}h2$  57. $\mathbb{E}a1$  wins) 54. $f6$   $\mathbb{E}xc3\uparrow$



55. $\mathbb{B}f4!$  (55. $\mathbb{B}e4$  is weaker because of 55... $\mathbb{E}h3$ .) Karpov probably missed the key concept of utilizing the king in a mating attack. In later years Karpov would demonstrate a remarkable, yet not widely recognized ability to organize incredibly effective checkmating attacks against the enemy king, especially in positions with few pieces remaining. It seems that at the tender age of seventeen he had not fully developed that particular skill. 55... $\mathbb{E}h3$  56. $\mathbb{E}g1\uparrow$ !  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  57. $\mathbb{E}a1$  And White catches the enemy king.

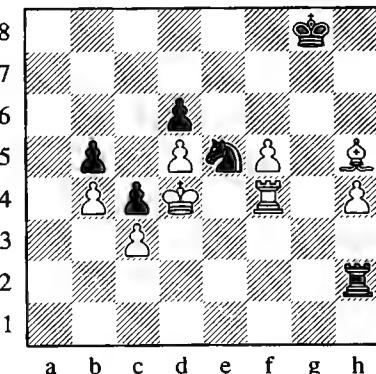
### 53... $\mathbb{E}a1?$

Black could have turned the tables with 53... $\mathbb{E}h2!$  54. $\mathbb{E}g1\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  55. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}xh4$  56. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  when he stands better.

### 54. $\mathbb{B}e2$ $\mathbb{E}a2$ 55. $\mathbb{B}xh5$

This wins a second pawn, but thanks to the strong knight on e5 Black still can resist.

### 55... $\mathbb{E}h2$ 56. $\mathbb{B}f4$

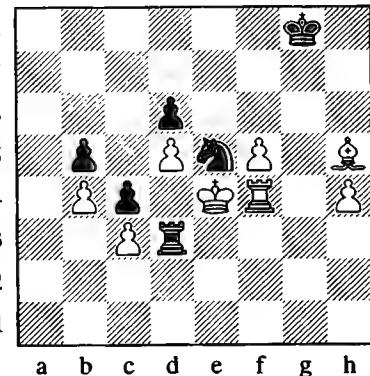


### 56... $\mathbb{E}d2\uparrow$ ?

Black wants to take the c3-pawn, but in doing so he improves White's king.

56... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  would have given good drawing chances, for instance: 57. $f6$   $\mathbb{E}h3$  58. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  59. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (also after 59... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$  60. $h5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  61. $\mathbb{B}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black probably gets away with it) 60. $\mathbb{B}e6$   $\mathbb{B}xh4\uparrow$  61. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  62. $\mathbb{B}f3$  (after 62. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}h3\uparrow$  63. $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  64. $\mathbb{B}xe2$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  65. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{B}b3$  Black holds) 62... $\mathbb{Q}a2$  63. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  64. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  65. $\mathbb{B}xb5$  c3 66. $\mathbb{B}e4$  c2 67. $\mathbb{B}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  68. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5\uparrow$  Black succeeds in reaching a rook and bishop versus rook ending, which should be a draw.

### 57. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{E}d3$



**58.f6!**

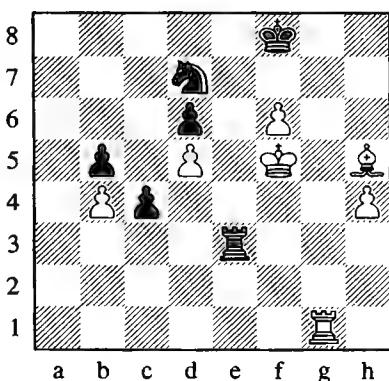
The pawn not only takes a step closer to promotion, but also controls some key squares around the enemy king while opening the door for the white king to invade.

**58...Exc3 59.Qf5 Ee3**

The rook stops the king, but White has other pieces as well.

**60.Ef1! Qd7**

60...c3 61.Eg1† Qf8 62.Ea1 wins.

**61.Eg1† Qf8****62.Ea1!**

Now Black's king is caught.

**62...Ee5† 63.Qg6 Ee8 64.Ea7 Ed8 65.Ec7 Qg8 66.Qg5!**

Karpov prepares to advance his h-pawn, which will be the final straw for the defence. The king has ended up being the star performer – this was its seventh move since castling to g1.

**66...Qh8 67.Qg6 Qg8 68.h5 Qh8 69.h6 c3 70.Exc3 Ef8 71.f7**

**1–0**

This was a hard fought victory. Though it was far from flawless, Karpov's performance showcased a lot of important qualities required by a professional player: the desire to beat a strong rival; being able to withstand great tension; the ability to strive for a win without fear of losing; and most importantly, the ability to dig deep when tired and find a way to win.

## 1968 Summary

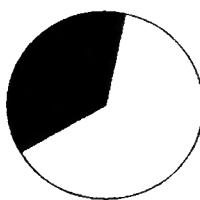
USSR – Yugoslavia (junior match):  $3\frac{1}{2}/4$  (+3 =1 –0)

USSR – Scandinavia (junior match):  $\frac{1}{2}/2$  (+0 =1 –1)

Moscow University Championship (1st place):  $10/13$  (+7 =6 –0)

USSR Team Championship (junior section):  $10/11$  (+9 =2 –0)

Total 80 % (+19 =10 –1)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1969

This was the year in which Spassky succeeded in wresting the World Championship crown from Petrosian at the second attempt. It was also a highly successful year for the young Karpov. He started the year with a three-player qualification tournament for the World Junior Championship. The three contestants played six-game matches against each other. Karpov's rivals were Rafael Vaganian, who went on to become a famous grandmaster, and the less well known Mikhail Steinberg, who features in the following game.

Steinberg's last game on the database was from 1972, but his last year as a fully active player was 1971. It was reported that he became seriously ill. He defeated many strong Soviet players, and had he been able to pursue a chess career he would probably have become a strong grandmaster.

## Game 15

Anatoly Karpov – Mikhail Steinberg

Leningrad (6) 1969

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qb5 a6 4.Qa4 Qf6 5.Qe2

Interestingly this was Karpov's final flirtation with this variation, which brought him a perfect three wins from three games.

5...b5 6.Qb3 Qe7 7.c3 0-0 8.d4

Karpov occupies the centre before castling.

8...d6

With 8...exd4!? Black could try to exploit the presence of White's queen and king on the e-file: 9.e5 (9.cxd4 d5 10.e5 Qe4 is nice for Black) 9...Qe8!? 10.0-0 dxc3 (10...Qf8!?) 11.Qg5 d5 12.exd6 Qd4 With tremendous complications.

9.0-0 exd4 10.cxd4 Qg4

10...d5!? 11.e5 Qe4 is interesting.

11.Qe3!?

It is more usual to defend the d-pawn with the rook in this variation.

11...Qa5

11...d5!? looks natural, but does not appear to have been tested here.

12.♘c2 ♗c4 13.♗c1 c5 14.b3 ♗b6 15.♗b2

♘fd7

15...♗h5 and 15...♗c8 are both possible.

16.a4!!

Despite being a bit behind in development, Karpov decides to spend a tempo softening Black's pawn structure.

16...bxa4

Black has a few alternatives of roughly equal merit:

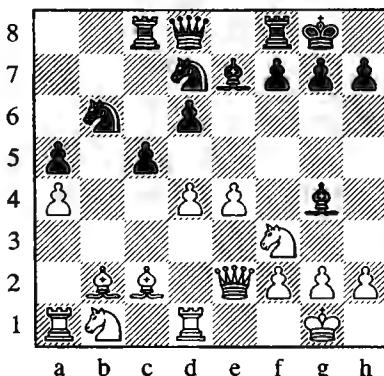
16...♗xf3 17.♗xf3 bxa4 18.bxa4 ♗c4 19.♗c3 cxd4 20.♗xd4 ♗f6 21.♗xf6 ♗xf6 with reasonable play on the dark squares.

16...cxd4 17.axb5 axb5 18.♗xd4 In this case too, Black's pawn weaknesses are balanced by his active piece play.

17.bxa4 a5 18.♗d1

Karpov continues to delay the development of the b1-knight, keeping his opponent guessing for as long as possible.

18...♗c8



19.♘a3!

The knight took a long time to move, but it was worth the wait, as the b5-square is an inviting home for it.

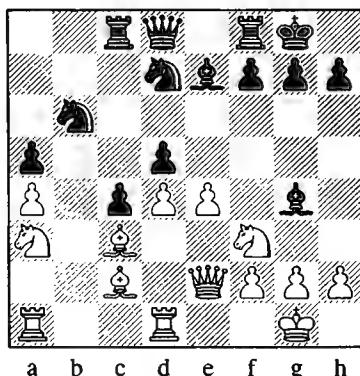
19...c4?

In the resulting position White's dominant central pawns will be of far greater significance than Black's passed c-pawn. After the superior 19...cxd4 20.♗xd4 (20.♘b5 ♗e5) 20...♗f6 21.h3 White only has a small edge.

20.♗c3

Blocking the c-pawn.

20...d5



21.e5!

We have already seen some games in which Karpov allowed his pieces to be drawn away from the centre for the sake of winning a pawn on the flank. On this occasion he was wise to resist the temptation, as after 21.♗xa5?! ♗a8 Black gets decent counterplay on the queenside.

21...♗b4 22.♗b5!

Karpov superbly brings Black's attempted counterplay to a near standstill. Soon he can turn his attention to the kingside where he has the upper hand.

22...♗b8 23.h3 ♗h5 24.♗e3 ♗c6 25.♗d2

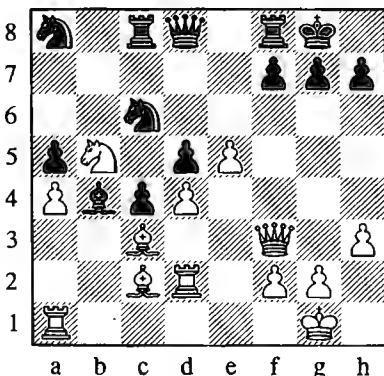
With last two moves Karpov made his b3-knight mobile.

25...♗xf3

Stopping  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  with 25... $h6$  would not have dampeden White's initiative after 26. $g3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ .

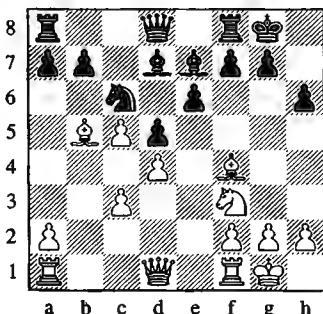
Maybe 25... $\mathbb{W}e7$  was the best chance, as 26. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $h6$  achieves nothing for White, although 26. $\mathbb{W}f4!?$  retains a nice plus for him.

26.  $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$



27.  $\mathbb{R}c1!!$

This looks like utter nonsense – don't rooks belong on open files? Karpov's decision to place the rook on a file blocked by four pieces reminds me of one game of Kasparov against Anand. From the following position the game continued:

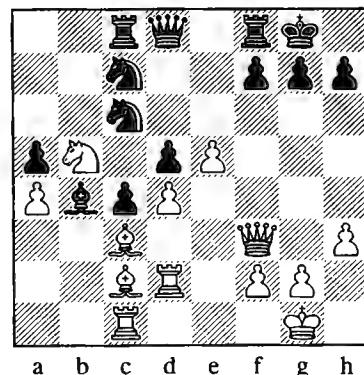


13.  $\mathbb{R}c1!!$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{R}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15.  $\mathbb{R}b1$   $b6$  16.  $\mathbb{R}a6$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  17.  $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18.  $\mathbb{R}a6$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  19.  $\mathbb{R}d3$   $bxc5$

20.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21.  $\mathbb{R}b7$  Kasparov – Anand, Amsterdam 1996. As a reward for his magical play Kasparov obtained good compensation for a pawn and went on to win.

27...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$

It is not often that one encounters a position with seven pieces on the same file.



28.  $\mathbb{R}f5!$

It took some time, but Karpov is finally ready to commence his operations on the kingside. At the same time the idea behind the mysterious rook move becomes apparent, as ... $\mathbb{R}xc3$  will always be met by  $\mathbb{R}xc3$  when the rook joins in the attack, while the knight will remain on the ideal b5-square.

28...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  30.  $f4$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$

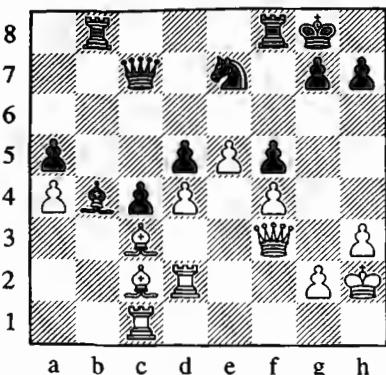
Such prophylactic moves are typical of Karpov.

31...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  33.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

After 33... $g6$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  35.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  37.  $f5$  White has a dangerous attack.

34.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $f5!$

Black has to play this before he is crushed by  $f5-f6$ .



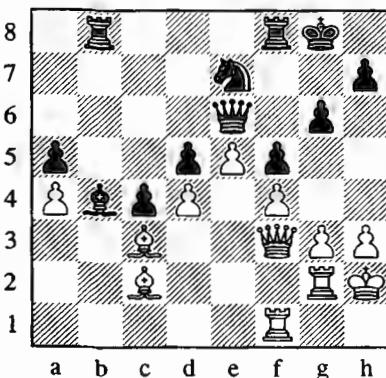
**35.♖f1!**

Once again we see a mysterious rook move. The more natural square would appear to be g1.

**35...♗d7 36.g3! ♗e6 37.♗g2!**

Karpov finds a nice way to improve his rooks before playing g4.

**37...g6**



**38.g4**

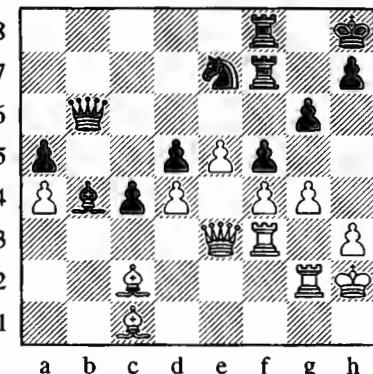
After some remarkable preparatory moves Karpov carries out the desired pawn break.

**38...♔h8 39.♗g3 ♘f7 40.♗e3 ♘bf8 41.♔b2**

The f4-pawn was in danger, so Karpov prepares to lend it proper support.

**41...♕b6 42.♗g2 ♕c6 43.♗f3 ♕e6 44.♔c1**  
Mission accomplished.

**44...♕b6**



**45.♔h1!!**

It is difficult to work out Karpov's precise motivation for playing this move. Of course it is possible that he just wanted to return the ball and see what Black would do next. This would have been especially understandable had one or both of the players been short of time. Whatever the reasoning, the king retreat actually yields a clear improvement in White's position, due to the clearance of the h2-square for a rook. The benefit may be seen after plans such as g4-g5 and h3-h4-h5 with an attack along the h-file.

**45...fxg4?**

Black cannot resist the urge to win the d4-pawn, but now White's kingside pawns start to roll.

**46.hxg4 ♜c6 47.e6 ♘e7**

47...♝c7 is no better, and after 48.f5 ♕xd4 49.f6 and White's e- and f-pawns are tremendous.

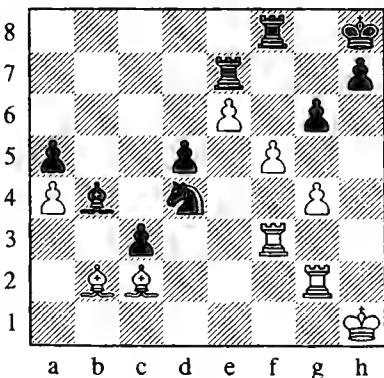
Also after 47...♝g7 48.f5 gx f5 49.gxf5 ♘xg2 50.♔xg2 ♘g8† 51.♔h3 ♜d6 52.♘h6 Black's position is perilous.

**48...fxd4**

Black also goes down quickly after 48... $\mathbb{E}fe8$  49. $\mathbb{E}h2!$  (49. $\mathbb{E}h6!$  should also suffice for victory, but the text move is more instructive as it underlines the usefulness of the earlier 45. $\mathbb{Q}h1.$ ) 49... $\mathbb{W}a7$  50. $\mathbb{E}fh3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  51. $\mathbb{W}g5$  with a crushing attack.

**49. $\mathbb{W}xd4\#$  0x d4 50. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  c3**

50... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  51. $\mathbb{E}d2$  (or 51. $\mathbb{E}f4$ ) 51... $\mathbb{E}xe6$  52. $\mathbb{Q}xd4\#$  wins.

**51. $\mathbb{E}xc3!$** 

This simple move deals Black his deserved punishment on the long diagonal for taking the d4-pawn.

**51... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  52. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  53. $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{E}b8$** 

After opening the b-file 38 moves ago, Black finally uses it to create a threat. Alas, it is too little too late.

**54. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0xc2 55. $\mathbb{E}xc2$  d4 56. $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
57. $\mathbb{E}d5$** **1-0**

In the opening Karpov did not get more than a playable position, but once his opponent erred with 19...c4? he controlled the game superbly, halting Steinberg's play on the queenside and steadily building pressure on the kingside. His pawn majority in the centre was present since

the tenth move, and it eventually decided the game.

Karpov lost to Vaganian in the seventh game, but he recovered and went on to win the 'triple threat match' with a total score of 7½/12. Over the course of the six games against Vaganian he scored 3½ points with two wins, one loss and three draws. Against Steinberg he triumphed by 4–2 with three wins, one loss and two draws.

Karpov's next event was the annual Soviet Union – Yugoslavia match. He won the first two and drew the last two games against Evrosimovsky, thus winning their match by the score of 3–1. Karpov then played a single game in the Red Armies team event in Warsaw, where he defeated Konokowski.

Karpov's next event was the USSR Armed Forces Team Championship. He got off to a flying start, with four straight wins. The following game was the third of the quartet. His opponent has no other games in the database.

**Game 16****Anatoly Karpov – Tserdakh**


---

Armed Forces Team Ch., Leningrad 1969

Karpov never fought in the army, but national service was compulsory for all young Soviet men, and it appears that even rising chess stars were not exempt from it.

**1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}d2$** 

This was Karpov's usual weapon against the French throughout his career. In his childhood he played 3.exd5 a few times, and later he occasionally flirted with 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  as well. Overall he scored extremely well with the Tarrasch Variation, although against Korchnoi in the

1974 candidates final he only managed seven draws with no decisive results. He did, however, use the Tarrasch to defeat Viktor "the Terrible" in a training match in 1971.

### 3...c5

Against other moves Karpov scored an amazing 100%, including 7-0 against 3...d5.

### 4.Qg3

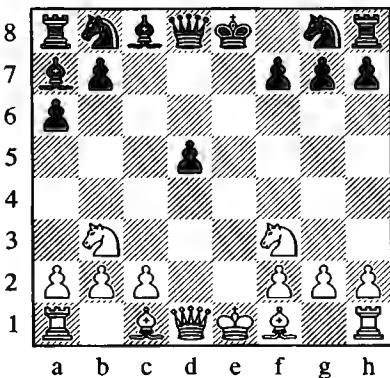
Sometimes he played 4.exd5 exd5 5.Qb5†, but only managed four draws out of four.

### 4...a6 5.exd5 exd5 6.dxc5

Karpov ensures that his opponent will have an isolated pawn.

### 6...Qxc5 7.Qb3 Qa7

In another game Vaganian preferred 7...Qb6, but Karpov beat him soundly with an attack against the Armenian grandmaster's king.



### 8.Qg5

Karpov follows the main theoretical path. After 8.Qd3 the reply 8...Qe7† relieves some of the pressure.

### 8...Qf6 9.Qe2†

Eight years later with the black bishop on b6 instead of a7, Karpov opted for 9.Qd3 against Vaganian.

After 9.Qfd4 0-0 10.Qe2 Qd6 11.0-0 Qe4 12.Qe3 Qc6 13.Qxc6 Qxe3 14.fxe3 bxc6 White obtained no advantage and Black eventually went on to win the game Keres - Botvinnik, World Championship Final (The Hague/Moscow) 1948.

### 9...Qe6

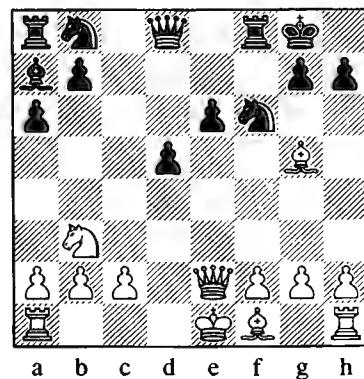
Against 9...Qe7 Karpov would probably have doubled Black's pawns with 10.Qxf6.

### 10.Qfd4 0-0?

Black should have preferred 10...Qe7 with a reasonable position.

### 11.Qxe6 fxe6

Does White have time to grab the e-pawn?



### 12.Qxe6†!

Yes! Apparently Black believed he would obtain sufficient compensation after this move, but Karpov's judgement proves correct. At the same time taking the pawn is not without risks, and White will have to continue carefully.

### 12...Qh8 13.0-0-0 Qc6

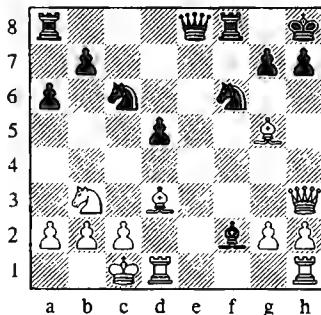
Taking back the pawn with 13...Qxf2 was unpromising due to 14.Qxf6 Qxf6 15.Qxd5! Qf8 16.Qh3.

### 14.Qh3??

It was also possible to hold onto the pawn with: 14.f3  $\mathbb{B}e8$  (14...a5 15. $\mathbb{B}b5$ ) 15. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{B}e3\uparrow$  (after 15...a5 16. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  17. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  White should be better, but not by much) 16. $\mathbb{B}xe3$  17. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  In the resulting position White has good chances to press for a win with his extra pawn, but Black's pieces are active and a tough fight lies ahead.

#### 14... $\mathbb{W}c8?$

Black wants to relieve the kingside pressure, but it leads straight to an endgame a pawn down. A better practical try was 14... $\mathbb{B}xf2$  15. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}e8$ , when White must be precise:



16. $\mathbb{B}f5!$  This powerful move prevents Black from freeing his position with ... $\mathbb{B}e4$ . (Instead after 16. $\mathbb{B}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}e3\uparrow$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}xe3\uparrow$  18. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}xf6$  19. $\mathbb{B}e2$  White is only fractionally better.) 16... $\mathbb{W}h5$  17. $\mathbb{B}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xh3$  18. $\mathbb{B}xh3$   $\mathbb{B}xf6$  19. $\mathbb{B}xd5$  White is a pawn up for nothing.

#### 15. $\mathbb{W}xc8$ $\mathbb{B}axc8$

It is obvious that this position should be winning for White, but the way Karpov achieves it is so instructive and typical of his style.

#### 16.f3

First he safeguards the pawn while also covering the e4-square.

#### 16...h6 17. $\mathbb{B}d2$

He retreats this way in order to prevent the enemy bishop from invading on e3.

#### 17...d4!

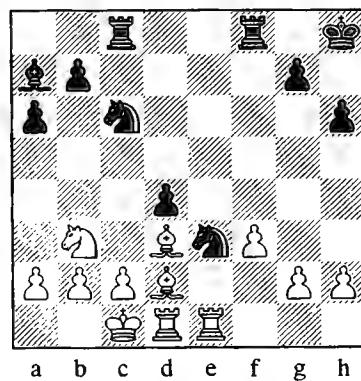
Tserdakh is determined to make White work for his money.

#### 18. $\mathbb{B}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 19. $\mathbb{B}he1$

Bringing the last piece into the game.

#### 19... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

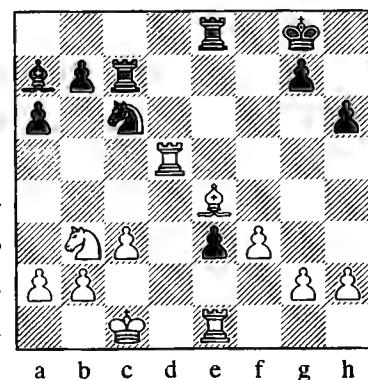
Black hopes that a change in the pawn structure will lead to a change in fortune.



#### 20. $\mathbb{B}xe3$ $\mathbb{d}xe3$ 21. $\mathbb{B}e4$

White starts surrounding the e3-pawn. The way he converts his advantage from here is extremely instructive.

#### 21... $\mathbb{B}c7$ 22.c3 $\mathbb{B}e8$ 23. $\mathbb{B}d5!$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$



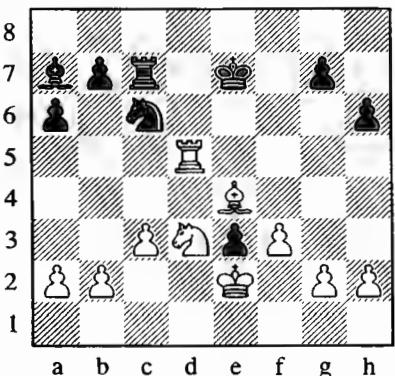
**24.♗d1!**

Karpov's first priority is to improve his king. With the e-pawn securely blockaded, his remaining pieces will be free to do as they wish.

**24...♔f7 25.♕e2 ♔e5 26.♗ed1 ♔e6  
27.♗xe5† ♔xe5 28.♗d5† ♔e6 29.♗c5†**

Now he brings the knight into the game.

**29...♗f6 30.♘d3 ♔e7**

**31.h4!**

Karpov is not in a hurry to win the e3-pawn. Instead he finds another way to improve his position, gaining space and preparing to fix Black's kingside pawns.

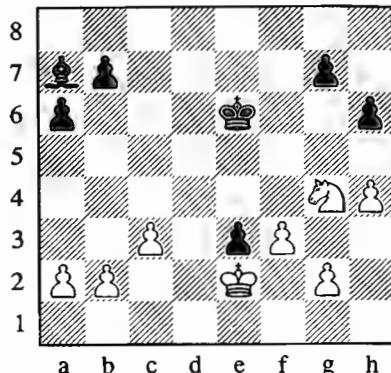
**31...♗d7?!**

This accelerates the end, but Black is lost in any case.

**32.♗xd7†!**

Exchanging some pieces opens the way to win the e3-pawn.

**32...♔xd7 33.♗xc6† ♔xc6 34.♗e5† ♔d5  
35.♗g4 ♔e6**

**36.♗xe3**

It took sixteen moves to collect the pawn.

**36...♔e5**

**1–0**

This game may have seemed like an odd choice to present, as compared with some of the other games featured here, it seemed so easy. Therein lies the point – Karpov was able to make the technical phase of the game appear almost effortless. It was also a lovely example of one of Karpov's outstanding qualities when playing endgames – his purposefulness. He wasted no time in the process of improving his pieces followed by surrounding the e3-pawn.

Overall it was a successful event for Karpov, who won the prize for the best performance on board two with 5½/7. But more importantly, as Karpov himself later wrote, he met Semyon Furman. Karpov started to train with Furman and they worked together during both this event and the next. The partnership would blossom into one of the most productive trainer-pupil relationships in chess history; more about this later.

## World Junior Championship

This was Karpov's last competition of both the year and the decade, and it turned out to be a hugely successful, and quite possibly career-altering event for him. Although the Soviets were dominating the upper echelons of world chess, their juniors tended not to perform as well as one might have expected on the world stage. In fact, the previous occasion when a Soviet player became World Junior Champion was fourteen years earlier in 1955, when Spassky took the title.

Furman was Karpov's second at the 1969 competition. His performance in the preliminary event was far from convincing, and for a time it was not even clear if he would qualify for the finals. In one crucial game against Torre, in which the initiative kept shifting from one side to the other, Karpov wound up two pawns down in an ending. In a titanic fight, after two adjournment sessions, he eventually succeeded in holding on for a draw. In one interview in the late seventies, Karpov called this the most important game of his life. Had he lost he would not have qualified for the finals, and there is no telling how much of a difference this might have made to his career.

After struggling to qualify, Karpov produced a staggering turn of form in the finals, decimating the competition with an eight game winning streak en route to a final score of 10/11. The following game from round three is a true masterpiece, probably Karpov's best game from the sixties. His opponent, Sweden's Ulf Andersson, also went on to become a world class player. Perhaps the following game even contributed to Andersson becoming such a fine positional player. Though he consistently made solid and impressive performances at top class tournaments, the Swede never qualified at the Interzonals.

Andersson's record against world champions is interesting. Out of 121 games, he won five encounters, drew ninety four and lost twenty four. Karpov has an impressive head to head record against almost all his rivals across several generations, but his most dominant record of all is probably against Andersson; he beat the super-solid Swede twelve times, with 29 draws and just a single loss, although it is interesting that not a single one of Karpov's victories came with the black pieces.

### Game 17

Anatoly Karpov – Ulf Andersson

World Junior Championship, Stockholm 1969

1.e4 e5

Andersson did not do especially well with this first move and he stopped playing it about a year later. He went on to become a great expert on the Sicilian.

2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qb5 a6

Karpov played a total of twelve games against Black's other third moves; he dropped only two draws and won the rest.

4.Qa4 Qf6

Other moves resulted in just a single draw against Karpov out of eight games.

5.0–0 Qe7 6.Qe1 b5 7.Qb3 0–0 8.c3 d6  
9.h3

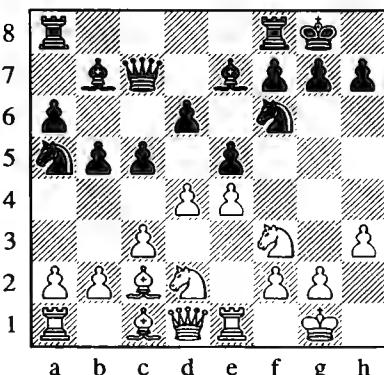
According to my database Karpov reached this starting position of the main line Ruy Lopez forty two times with the white pieces. He performed remarkably, winning twenty two games and drawing the rest.

9...Qa5

Karpov achieved six victories against this move, with the same number of draws.

**10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♜c7 12.♗bd2 ♜b7**

Interestingly Karpov only once faced the main line of 12...cxd4. The text move is ambitious, as Black wants to carry out the central break ...d5, which may or may not be prefaced by ...cxd4. This particular move order is rarely played nowadays, and is only employed regularly by the Hungarian IM Bela Lengyel, who continues to play it, and not without success.

**13.d5!**

Grandmaster Lukacs is a true expert in the Ruy Lopez, and he told me what I am about to pass on to you now: in the Chigorin Variation, White should almost always play d4-d5 in response to Black developing his bishop on b7.

Let me show you one interesting game to illustrate the theme of the strong b7-bishop in this line. This is a memorable game for me, as when I myself played this line, I wanted to emulate my mentor. 1.e4 e5 2.♗f3 ♜c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♜f6 5.0–0 ♜e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.h3 ♜a5 10.♗c2 c5 11.d4 ♜c7 12.♗bd2 cxd4 13.cxd4 ♜b7 14.♗f1 ♜ac8 15.♗e2 d5! 16.dxe5 ♜xe4 17.♗g3 ♜xg3 18.fxg3 d4 19.♗g5 g6 20.♗h2 ♜d8 21.h4 ♜c4 22.e6 f6 23.♗f7 ♜b6 24.♗d3 ♜e5 25.♗xe5 fxe5 26.♗h6 ♜f5 27.♗b3

♗h5 Black got a lovely position and should have won later, Lengyel – Honfi, Kecskemet 1981.

**13...♗c8**

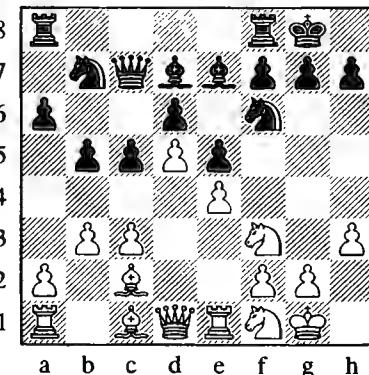
The bishop has to come back to this diagonal, and the sooner the better. The same position can also occur via the move order 12...♜c6 13.d5 ♜a5, which is in fact the more common route.

**14.♗f1**

14.b3 would have prevented the idea mentioned in the following note.

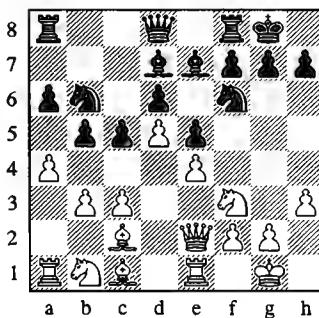
**14...♘d7**

Black scores better when he transfers the knight to b6 with 14...♞c4.

**15.b3 ♜b7****16.c4?**

Karpov decides to prevent a possible queenside strike with ...c4, while also gaining space. It is an interesting plan which attracted other notable followers, as seen in the following example.

Alexander Grischuk used to play the Chigorin Variation and did well with it, at least until he met Kasparov. They reached the following position.



At this point White embarked on a strong plan: 16.c4! b4 17.Qbd2 g6 18.Qf1 Qh5 19.g4 Qf4 20.Qxf4 exf4 21.Qd2 Qf6 22.e5 dxе5 23.Qxe5 White obtained a better position and went on to win in Kasparov – Grischuk, Cannes (Rapid) 2001.

It should be added that Karpov's move is not the only promising path. A year later, from the same position as was reached in the main game, Geller won a fine game against Mecking with 16.Qg3.

#### 16...Bfb8 17.Qe3 Qf8??!

It would have been more prudent to prevent the following knight hop with 17...g6.

#### 18.Qf5

This knight will cause a lot of trouble for Black. Taking it with the bishop would be a mistake, as White would gain additional space plus the use of the e4-square, not to mention the two bishops.

#### 18...Qd8

Black transfers the knight to help the king.

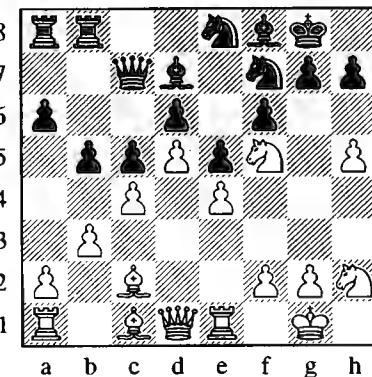
#### 19.Qh2 Qe8 20.h4!

This is a somewhat unusual idea in the Ruy Lopez, but it works very well here.

#### 20...f6 21.h5

If Black exchanges this pawn, he opens a file close to his king, but if he leaves it, it could become like a sharp needle.

#### 21...Qf7



#### 22.Qe3!

With this imaginative rook move Karpov begins an operation which provokes the weakening move ...h7-h6.

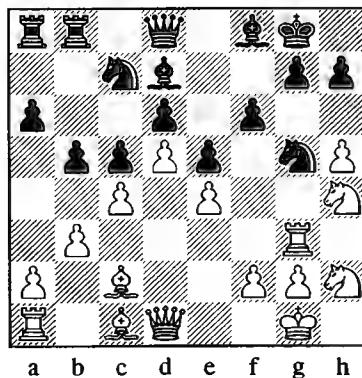
#### 22...Qg5

The queenside knight finally arrives at the kingside.

#### 23.Qh4

Preventing ...g6.

#### 23...Bd8 24.Eg3 Qc7



#### 25.Qf3!

As a general rule, the player with more space will strive to avoid exchanges. In this instance Karpov shows good judgement, realizing that it is more important to remove the knight from the g5-square.

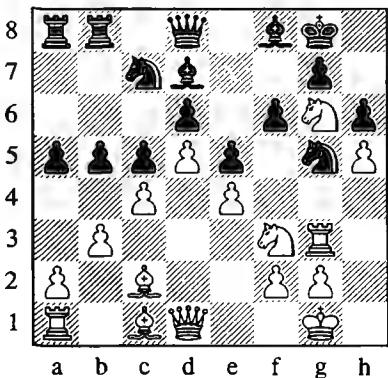
#### 25...h6

Black bolsters the knight, at the cost of permanently weakening his light squares. In the event of 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$  26. $\mathbb{W}xf3$  his king would have became more vulnerable.

#### 26. $\mathbb{Q}g6$

White immediately occupies the newly created outpost, reaping the fruits of his previous play.

#### 26...a5



#### 27.a4!

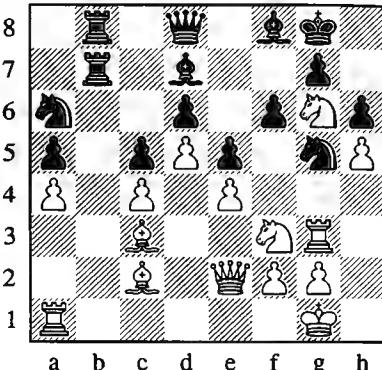
By preventing the opening of the a-file, Karpov limits his opponent's queenside counterplay.

#### 27...bxc4 28.bxc4 $\mathbb{Q}a6$

Andersson's kingside knight prepares to occupy the outpost on the queenside.

#### 29. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{E}a7$ 30. $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{E}ab7$ 31. $\mathbb{A}c3$

It is really instructive to observe how Karpov prevents Black's counterplay on the b-file.



#### 31... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 32. $\mathbb{A}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$

The knight reaches a seemingly impressive outpost, but achieving this objective has consumed several tempos and a lot of effort. Depending on the specific situation, such a knight could either be a dominant force or a wasted resource which shoots the air. Let me offer you, dear reader, one small tool which can be used to determine whether the knight is strong or weak. It is often enough to ask whether or not the knight attacks a weakness in the opponent's camp. If the knight attacks nothing, then its value is questionable. For example, if Black's pawn was on a3 and White's on a2, the b4-knight would be better than in the game, as it attacks a weakness.

#### 34. $\mathbb{R}e3$

The rook has done its job, and now it is time to reorganize the kingside pieces.

#### 34... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

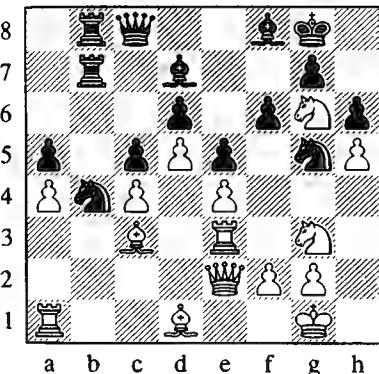
Andersson decides to wait passively, allowing Karpov the pleasure of strengthening his position at his leisure. Of course 34...f5 is risky, but at least Black gets some play: 35.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  (36... $\mathbb{W}f6$  37.f4) 37.hxg6  $\mathbb{W}f6$  38. $\mathbb{W}h5$  The situation does not look great for Black, but White has less freedom than in the game.

35.♕f1 ♜c8 36.♕g3

Karpov improves another piece and stops ...f5.

36...♝d7

White is obviously in control, but how can he improve his position?



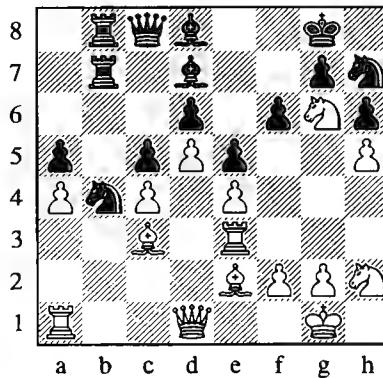
37.♛d2!

What is so clever about this little queen move? Once again it is all part of a positional plan. White has gained as much space as was possible, and improved his pieces while preventing Black's intended queenside counterplay. Now it is time to decide what to do with the position. Karpov hits on the right plan, namely to exchange the light-squared bishops. By exchanging his worst piece for Black's best one, he paves the way for a future invasion on the light squares. The way he does it is highly instructive, and I would advise the reader to pay close attention, as any player might find himself in a similar situation.

37...♝h7 38.♝e2! ♜f7 39.♛d1!

Karpov follows the plan with his characteristic purposefulness.

39...♝e7 40.♛f1! ♜d8 41.♝h2 ♜g8



42.♝g4

Karpov was able to complete his plan while Black merely played waiting moves.

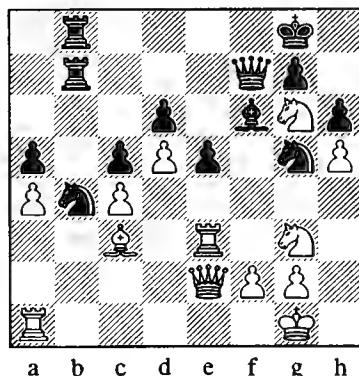
42...♝g5 43.♝xd7 ♜xd7 44.♛f1

The knight immediately aims for the f5-square.

44...f5

Black takes the opportunity to loosen his shackles while he still has the chance.

45.exf5 ♜xf5 46.♝g3 ♜f7 47.♛e2 ♜f6



48.♜f1!

Karpov demonstrates a well known advantage of having more space: the ability to transfer

pieces from one part of the board to another with maximum speed and efficiency.

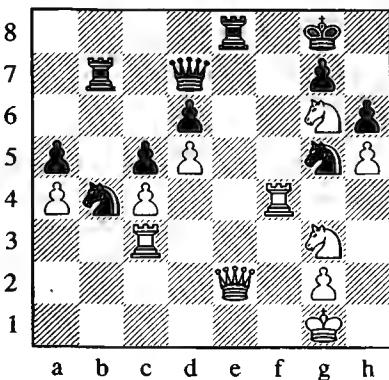
#### 48... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 49.f4!

White wastes no time in opening the kingside. He does not mind exchanging Black's bad bishop, as the opening of the kingside will yield greater benefits.

#### 49...exf4 50. $\mathbb{E}xf4$ $\mathbb{A}xc3$

Black has no choice but to exchange this valuable defensive piece.

#### 51. $\mathbb{E}xc3$ $\mathbb{E}e8$



#### 52. $\mathbb{E}e3!$

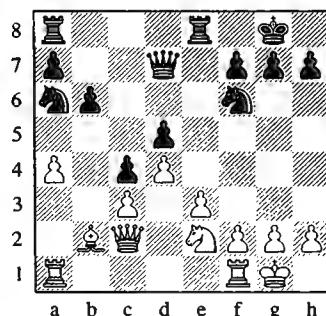
Exchanging pieces will favour White, as his material superiority on the kingside will increase in magnitude. The principle is exactly the same as in Game 45 (Fraguela Gil – Karpov).

#### 52... $\mathbb{E}bb8$ 53. $\mathbb{W}f2!$

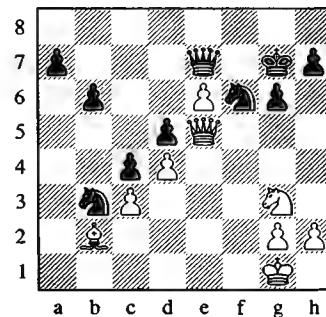
Creating a vicious threat in the form of  $\mathbb{E}e7$ . By the way, one can try to argue that the knight on g6 is not attacking any pawn or weakness, but this is only partially true. Please keep it in mind that one's king also can be a weakness! In the present position the knight plays a key role in supporting the mating threats.

If you have the idea of manoeuvring a knight to such an outpost, remember that the stakes are high – you can do a lot of good to your position, and a lot of damage as well. Let me show you two marvellous examples by Botvinnik, which illustrate both sides of the coin.

Here is the first. It is perhaps the most famous game Botvinnik ever played.



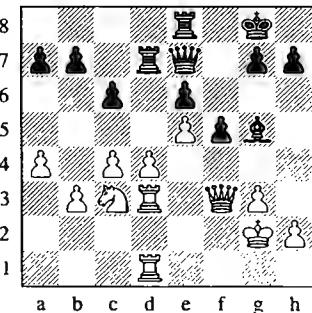
15... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  Black embarks on a long knight manoeuvre. 16. $\mathbb{E}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  18. $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  From this square the knight assists Black in winning the a4-pawn, but this does not justify the time spent. 19.e4  $\mathbb{W}xa4$  20.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{W}f2$  g6 22.f4 f5 23.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  24.f5  $\mathbb{E}xe1$  25. $\mathbb{E}xe1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  26. $\mathbb{E}e6$   $\mathbb{E}x e6$  27.fxe6  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  29. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  Now Botvinnik crowns his energetic play with a memorable finishing sequence:



30.♕a3!! ♜xa3 31.♘h5† gxh5 32.♗g5† ♖f8  
 33.♗xf6† ♖g8 34.e7 ♜c1† 35.♘f2 ♜c2†  
 36.♘g3 ♜d3† 37.♘h4 ♜e4† 38.♘xh5 ♜e2†  
 39.♘h4 ♜e4† 40.g4 ♜e1† 41.♘h5 1–0

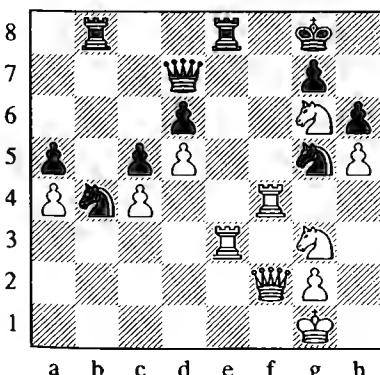
Botvinnik – Capablanca, AVRO 1938. Once the knight arrived on b3 it became a spectator and never moved again.

And here is the second:



33.c5! The knight is headed for d6, where it will dominate the entire board. 33...a5 34.♘b1! ♜f8 35.♘a3 ♜d8 36.♘c4 ♜c7 37.♘d6 White achieved his objective and went on to win in Botvinnik – Flohr, Moscow 1936.

Let us now return to the game.



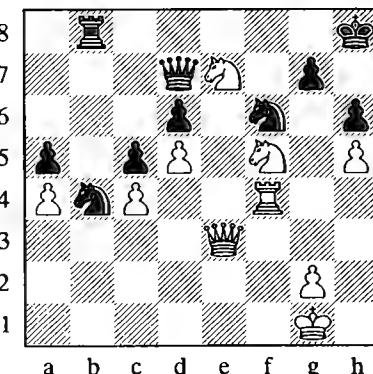
53...♘h7

This looks horribly passive, but Black had to cover the f8-square somehow.

#### 54.♘f5

White's pieces simply outnumber and overpower Black's forces on the kingside. The knight on b4 contributes nothing.

54...♝xe3 55.♛xe3 ♘f6 56.♘ge7† ♖h8



57.♘xh6!

The demolition begins.

57...♜e8 58.♘f7† ♖h7 59.♝e4

This is good enough to win in short order, although 59.♘g5† would have led to a forced checkmate: 59...♝h8 60.♝xf6 gxf6 61.♘f7† ♖g7 62.♛h6† ♖xf7 63.♛h7† ♖f8 64.♘g6#

59...♝xe7 60.♝xe7

1–0

Although Andersson played the game passively, this was undoubtedly a strategic masterpiece, and probably Karpov's best game from the sixties.

Karpov met the Romanian representative in round eight, by which time it was more or less clear that he would win the title. His opponent was a decent international master. This was the only time they met over the board.

## Game 18

Aurel Urzica – Anatoly Karpov

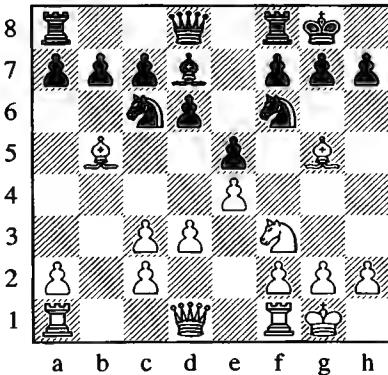
World Junior Championship, Stockholm 1969

**1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qc3**

Karpov did not face this move many times, and he never lost against it. After 1.e4 e5, the only line apart from the Ruy Lopez which caused him problems was the Scotch with 4...Qf6, in which he scored 3/7, although two of the losses came at the hands of Kasparov. He did better with 4...Qc5, scoring two wins and two draws with no defeats, but for some reason he did not play it as frequently.

**3...Qf6 4.Qb5 Qb4 5.0-0-0 6.d3 d6 7.Qg5 Qxc3 8.bxc3 Qd7**

This move is no longer in fashion. Later Karpov would switch to the normal 8...h6 9.Qh4 We7, with which he drew against Speelman at Linares 1992.



**9.d4**

Black was planning to break the pin with the witty ...Qe7.

In a subsequent game White tried 9.Qb1, achieving a slight advantage after 9...a6 10.Qa4 Qb8 11.Qb3 h6 12.Qh4 We7 13.Qe1

Qa5 14.d4 Qbd8 15.h3 in Chandler – Karpov, Reykjavik 1991. The further course of the game was interesting. Karpov outplayed his opponent in the middlegame, but Chandler had the last laugh as he eventually managed to hold a highly unpleasant endgame in which Black had rook and knight versus rook and bishop, with four pawns versus three on the kingside.

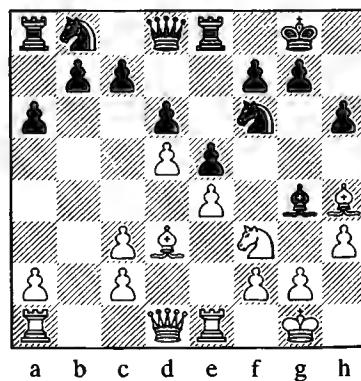
**9...h6**

Forcing White to commit his bishop to one of the available diagonals. Instead after 9...Qe7 10.Qxd7 Qxd7 11.dxe5 dxe5 12.Qb1! b6 13.Qb4 Black is underdeveloped.

**10.Qh4 Qe8 11.Qe1 a6 12.Qd3 Qg4!**

This move clarifies matters in the centre. If 12...g5 then 13.Qxg5!! is dangerous.

**13.d5 Qb8 14.h3**



**14...Qxf3?**

14...Qc8 deserved consideration, but Karpov feels comfortable giving up his second bishop. In closed positions a single knight is often superior to a bishop, but two bishops versus two knights can be a different story. Although one knight may find a stable outpost (c5 in the present case), the second one can often have trouble finding a useful role.

Obviously Karpov understood this, so it is interesting to observe the way in which he justifies his decision with his subsequent play.

### 15.♗xf3 ♗bd7 16.♗g3

The bishop was disturbing White's natural plans like g3 and f4 or transferring the d3-bishop to h3.

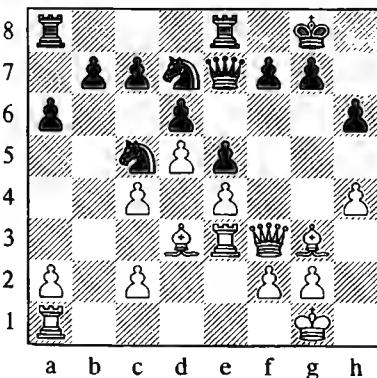
### 16...♝c5 17.c4 ♜e7

This does not look like a special move, but it is a part of a plan.

### 18.♜e3

White is thinking about a kingside attack, and prepares to swing the rook to g3.

### 18...♜fd7?! 19.h4



### 19...♜eb8!

Preparing to open the queenside. Many times in the Ruy Lopez and other closed positions, Black makes the mistake of focusing too heavily on the queenside and leaves his king short of defenders. The way Karpov has arranged his pieces, the queen is on hand to assist the defence while the other pieces are ideally placed to support his queenside play.

### 20.♛e2

Stopping ...b5.

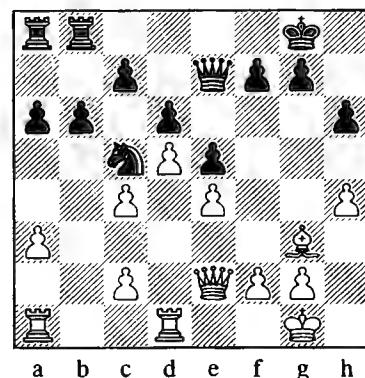
### 20...b6 21.a3

This is a clear sign that Urzica does not know what to do. 21.f3? was more useful, in order to bring the dark-squared bishop back into the game.

### 21...♝xd3 22.♝xd3?!

22.cxd3 was better, improving White's structure. In that case Black would have enjoyed only a modest edge on the queenside after: 22...b5 (22...♝c5 23.♛c2 b5 transposes) 23.♛c2 ♐c5 24.♝e1 (or 24.f3 a5) In the resulting position Black is just a bit better. He has a few different ways of developing his play, including 24...a5, 24...b4 and 24...♜b7 25.♝ab1 ♜ab8. It would have been interesting to see which method Karpov would have chosen.

### 22...♝c5 23.♝dd1



### 23...c6?!

This is a subtle way to maintain the initiative. Karpov is anticipating White's potential plan of f3 and ♜f2 followed by exchanging on c5, and prepares to open the c-file.

### 24.a4

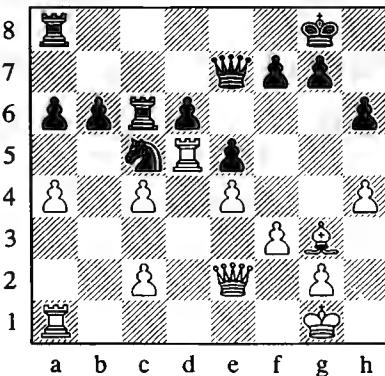
After 24.f3 ♜c7 (24...b5) 25.♝f2 cxd5 26.cxd5 ♐a4 Black is somewhat better.

### 24...cxd5 25.♝xd5

25.cxd5  $\mathbb{W}d7$  26.a5  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  is unpleasant for White.

25... $\mathbb{E}c8$  26.f3  $\mathbb{E}c6$

Karpov combines defence of the d6-pawn with an intended doubling of rooks to increase the pressure against c4.



27.a5?

This move hastens the end. The best chance was 27. $\mathbb{R}f2$   $\mathbb{R}ac8$  27. $\mathbb{W}d2$ , challenging Black to find a way to capitalize on his advantage.

27... $\mathbb{B}xa5$  28. $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  29. $\mathbb{B}e1$

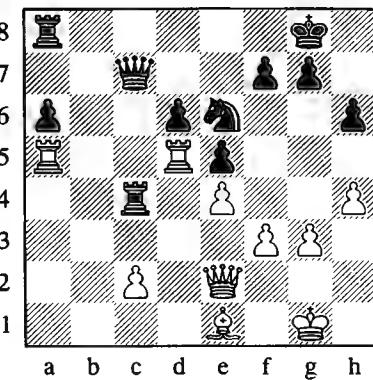
29. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  wins a pawn.

29... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30.g3?

With this move White voluntarily weakens the king even more.

30. $\mathbb{W}f1$  would have forced Black to play more accurately, although he can still win as follows: 30... $\mathbb{Q}f4!$  Forces a weakening of the kingside. (After 30... $\mathbb{E}xc4$  31. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$  32. $\mathbb{E}dxa6$  White has some chances to survive.) 31. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  There is no need for further improvement of the position. 32.g3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  From here a possible finish is: 33. $\mathbb{E}xd6?$  (A better chance is 33.c3, but after 33... $\mathbb{E}c6$  White is unlikely to survive.) 33... $\mathbb{E}xc2$  34. $\mathbb{E}dxa6$   $\mathbb{E}xa6$  35. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}c5\#$  36. $\mathbb{R}f2$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  And Black wins.

30... $\mathbb{E}xc4$



31. $\mathbb{W}d3?$

31.c3 would have lasted longer, although the result should not be in much doubt.

31... $\mathbb{E}xc2$  32. $\mathbb{E}xa6$

If 32. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  33. $\mathbb{R}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xe1$  wins.

32... $\mathbb{E}xa6$  33. $\mathbb{W}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  34. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$

35. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

35. $\mathbb{R}f2$   $\mathbb{W}a2$  wins.

35... $\mathbb{E}c1$

0–1

I have already mentioned that Karpov likes to use pins to reduce the mobility of the enemy pieces. On this occasion the effect is rather more serious, and White simply had to resign.

After winning the world junior title so decisively, Karpov ended the year in a somewhat anticlimactic manner in a Hungary – Russian Republic junior match in Budapest, where he lost by a score of 1½–½ against both Adorjan and Ribli. Despite this small setback, Karpov's tremendous victory at the World Junior Championship cemented his status as a future star, and was most probably the pivotal result that enabled him to become a full time chess professional.

# 1969 Summary

## World Junior Qualification:

Versus Vaganian:  $3\frac{1}{2}/6 (+2 =3 -1)$

Versus Steinberg:  $4/6 (+3 =2 -1)$

USSR – Yugoslavia Junior Match (Board three):  $3/4 (+2 =2 -0)$

Tournament of the Eastern Bloc Armies Reserve:  $1/1 (+1 =0 -0)$

USSR Armed Forces Team Championship (Board two):  $5\frac{1}{2}/7 (+5 =1 -1)$

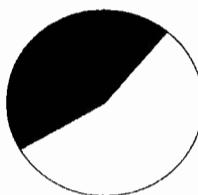
## World Junior Championship, Stockholm:

Preliminary:  $4\frac{1}{2}/6 (+3 =3 -0)$

Final (1st place):  $10/11 (+9 =2 -0)$

Hungary – Russian junior match, Budapest:  $1/4 (+0 =2 -2)$

Total  $72.2\% (+25 =15 -5)$



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses



# 1970

This was the year in which Fischer started his magical three year run, during which time he became arguably the most dominant force in chess history. The chess world had never before, and may never again witness anyone achieve twenty straight wins over world class grandmasters. Karpov and Fischer never met over the board, although it is quite possible that the young Soviet rising star was influenced or even inspired by the American and his brilliant results.

In 1970 Karpov played in three major events, the first being the Championship of the Russian Republic in Kuybyshev. He won it with an impressive eight wins, nine draws and no losses. His next tournament took place in Caracas, Venezuela – his only foreign event of the year. It was also his first grandmaster tournament, and one can imagine his uncertainty as to how he would measure up against this higher class of opposition. He started with a draw, and in round two he faced Gedeon Barcza. The Hungarian grandmaster played a total of thirty four games against a string of world champions, from Alekhine to Karpov. He won three of those games, lost eighteen and drew thirteen.

## Game 19

### Gedeon Barcza – Anatoly Karpov

Caracas 1970

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  c5

Karpov seldom played anything other than 1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  here, but on this occasion he opts for a different set-up. Even when the game began 1.c4 e5, he almost always developed the knight to f6 in the near future. It is interesting to note that on those rare occasions when he did develop the knight on a different square, he was very successful. For instance, he twice met the English Opening with the reverse Closed Sicilian setup with ... $\mathbb{Q}g8-e7$  and scored two victories, including a twenty five move drubbing of the Hungarian grandmaster Ribli, who was generally known as a very strong and safe player.

2. c4 g6 3. g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$

If 4.d4 cxd4 5.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  White is unable to keep his knight on d4.

4...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 6. d3

If White really wishes to strive for an opening advantage then 6.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  7.a3! is a more accurate move order, as in certain positions White can save time by delaying d2-d3, as shown in Chapter 4 of Mihail Marin's third volume on the English Opening in the *Grandmaster Repertoire* series.

Barcza was a strong player but he was not known as a fearsome theoretician. And to be fair to him, the superior move order had not been tested in many games prior to 1970.

### 6... $\mathbb{Q}ge7$ 7.0–0

White could try to transfer the knight at once with 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ ? in order to cover the key d5-square.

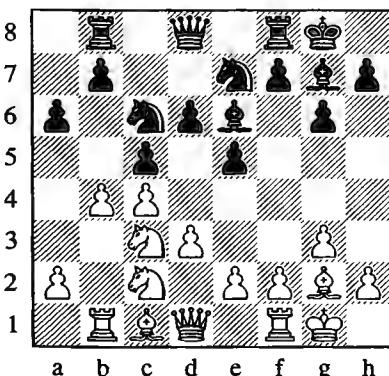
### 7...0–0

Karpov also castles without delay, although he could have started his queenside play without it.

### 8. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ a6

Preparing to develop some queenside activity in the event of White neglecting that flank. One gets the impression that after drawing in round one, Karpov wanted to play for a win in round two, without taking any wild risks of course.

### 10. $\mathbb{E}b1$ d6 11.b4 $\mathbb{Q}e6$

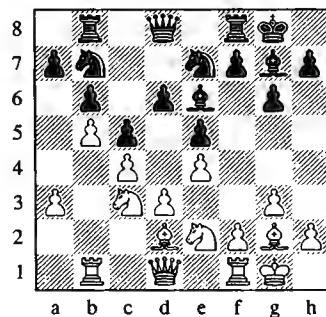


### 12.bxc5

Another idea is 12. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , which should be countered by 12...f6!, preventing the intended minor piece exchange on e7. In order to illustrate this theme, let me show you a positional masterpiece involving Karpov. The

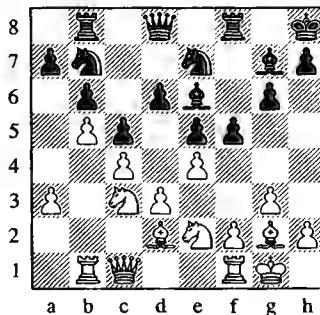
only surprising point is that on this occasion, he was on the receiving end of the masterpiece! His antagonist was his long-time nemesis Kasparov, and the game took place in their 1987 World Championship match in Seville.

1.c4 e5 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 3.g3 c5 4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5.a3 g6 6.b4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  8.e3 0–0 9.d3  $\mathbb{E}b8$  10. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  11.b5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b6 13.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  14.e4



### 14.. $\mathbb{Q}h8?$ !

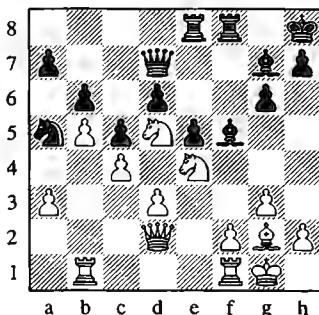
14...h6 intending ...f5 looks better.  
15. $\mathbb{W}c1$  f5



### 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

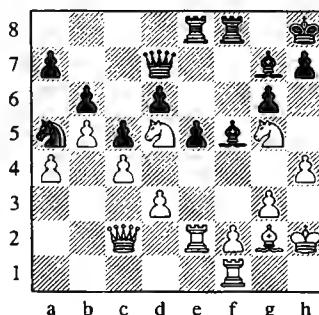
Portisch called this the best move of the entire match.

16... $\mathbb{W}e8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  18.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$   
18...gxsf5 19.f4±  
19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  20. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$ !  
20... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  was preferable.  
21. $\mathbb{Q}ec3$   $\mathbb{E}be8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$



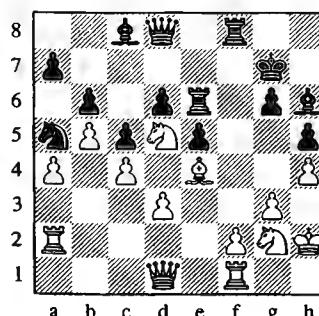
Black is beautifully paralysed. Kasparov continues to manoeuvre with great skill.

22... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  23.a4  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  24.h4  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{R}b8$   
26. $\mathbb{R}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  27. $\mathbb{R}a3$   $\mathbb{R}f7$  28. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{R}d8$  29. $\mathbb{R}a2$   
 $\mathbb{R}h6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{R}ff8$  31. $\mathbb{R}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{R}de8$



33. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$   $\mathbb{R}h6$  34. $\mathbb{R}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35. $\mathbb{W}d1$  h6 36. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
 $\mathbb{W}d8$  37. $\mathbb{R}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$  h5 39. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{R}e6$   
40. $\mathbb{Q}cd5$   $\mathbb{R}h6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7?$ !

After spending a prolonged period with his pieces in a defensive huddle, Karpov stumbles into an unfortunate piece configuration. The punishment is swift and severe.



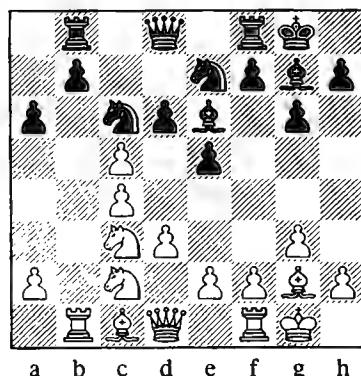
42.f4!

Finally Kasparov chooses the perfect moment to open the position and invade.

42...exf4 43. $\mathbb{Q}gxf4$   $\mathbb{R}e5$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!$   $\mathbb{R}xf1$   
45. $\mathbb{W}xf1$   $\mathbb{R}xe4$  46.dxe4  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  47. $\mathbb{R}f2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$   
48.e5! dx5 49. $\mathbb{R}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  50. $\mathbb{R}d6$  1–0

Kasparov – Karpov, Seville (8) 1987. I rate this game as one of Kasparov's best ever positional wins.

Back to the game.



12...dxc5 13. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  b6

Another idea was 13...b5 14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$ .

14. $\mathbb{Q}ed5$   $\mathbb{R}d7$

When commenting on the game some time after the event, Karpov revealed that he was told beforehand that the Hungarian grandmaster played well with his knights, therefore he wished to swap them.

15. $\mathbb{R}d2$

15. $\mathbb{R}g5$  was more accurate, as after 15...f6  
16. $\mathbb{R}d2$  the inclusion of ...f7-f6 is not helpful to Black.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

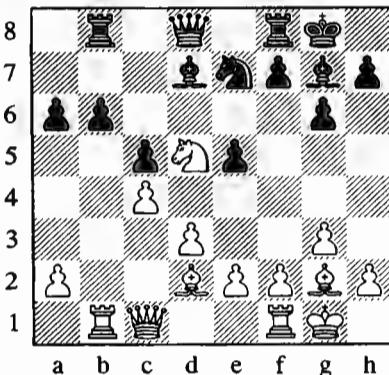
Still following the game plan.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

After 16.cxd5!!  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  17.a4  $\mathbb{W}e7$  18.e3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   
Black is also not worse.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17. $\mathbb{W}c1$ ?

Perhaps Barcza wanted to swap the g7-bishop, but apart from that the queen does almost nothing here. 17.a4! was more purposeful.



### 17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Mission accomplished – the white knights are no more!

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

18.cxd5!? is more interesting.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 19. $\mathbb{R}e1$

Safer would have been: 19. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  I doubt that Karpov would have minded swapping these bishops. 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  21.a4  $\mathbb{W}c6\uparrow$  22.f3  $\mathbb{W}xa4$  23. $\mathbb{R}a1$  And the game is likely to end in a draw.

### 19...b5 20.a3

White could have attempted to justify the position of his queen with 20. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , when best play looks to be: 20...b4! (Barcza might have been concerned about the exchange sacrifice 20... $\mathbb{R}xc4$  21. $\mathbb{R}xb8$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  22.e4  $\mathbb{W}xd3$  23. $\mathbb{R}xf8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ . It looks worrying for White, but he can in fact keep his position together with 24. $\mathbb{W}e3!$ ) 21. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  And Black's

pawn majority gives him a small edge on the queenside.

### 20... $\mathbb{W}d6$ 21. $\mathbb{R}f3$

This signifies the beginning of a faulty plan. Instead the following alternatives all deserved consideration.

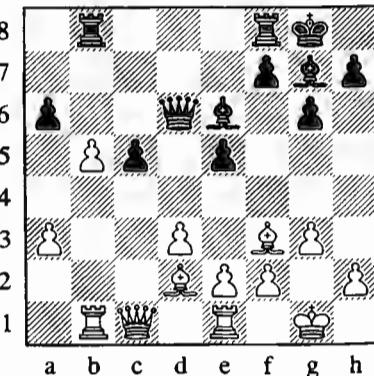
If White just wants to play solidly he can continue 21. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{R}fc8$  22. $\mathbb{W}b3$  when it is not easy to improve Black's position.

White can also base his play around pushing the c-pawn with 21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , for instance 21...b4 22.axb4 cxb4 23. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  a5 24.c5  $\mathbb{W}c7$  25.c6 when the position looks balanced.

Finally, another interesting idea is 21.e4 b4 22.d4! (or 22.axb4 cxb4 23.c5  $\mathbb{W}f6$  24. $\mathbb{W}d1$  with a double-edged game) 22...exd4 (22... $\mathbb{W}f6$  23. $\mathbb{R}b3$ ) 23.axb4 cxb4 24.c5 and White should not be worse.

### 21... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 22. $\mathbb{R}xb5$ ?

Barcza wants to exert pressure against Black's queenside, but the plan turns out to be too optimistic.



### 22... $\mathbb{R}xb5$

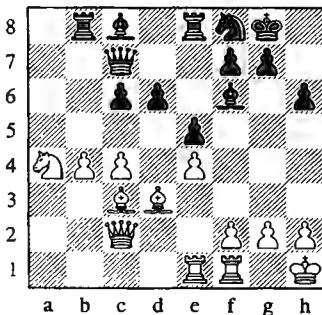
The b5-c5 pawn duo is not only strong enough to withstand White's pressure, it also possesses some aggressive energy of its own.

**23.♕e3?**

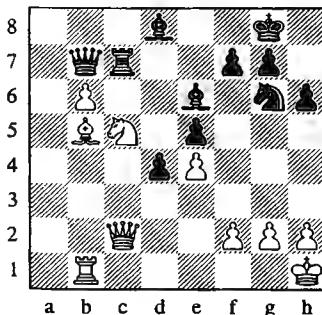
It was better to restrain the b-pawn with 23.♔a5 ♜fc8 24.♗d2, when White is still in the game.

**23...♜fc8 24.♗d2 b4!**

Now the b-pawn becomes a powerful force. I noticed that one year later Karpov executed a similar strategy against the three time Soviet Champion Leonid Stein:



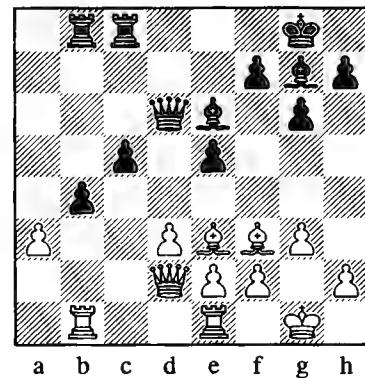
25.b5! cxb5 (25...♔d7?) 26.cxb5 ♔d6 27.♗b1 ♜ec8 28.b6 ♜b7 29.♔b5 ♜a8 30.♗b3 ♔e6 (after 30...♗xb5 31.♗xb5 ♜xa4 32.♗xa4 ♜xc3 33.♔a7 the b-pawn decides the issue) 31.♗b4 ♔e7 32.♗fc1 d5 33.♗b2 d4 34.♔b4 ♜g5 35.♗xc8 ♜xc8 36.♔e2 ♜a8? 37.♔d6 ♜g6 38.♗c2 ♜c8 39.♔c7 ♔d8 40.♗c5 ♜xc7



41.♗xb7! ♜xc2 42.♗xd8 ♔c8 43.g3 ♜xf2 44.♗c1 ♜f6 45.♗xc8 ♜xb6 Black finally eliminated the b-pawn, but it cost him a piece.

46.♗c4 ♜h7 47.♗xf7 1–0 Karpov – Stein, Leningrad 1971.

Back to the game.

**25.axb4 cxb4 26.♔a7?**

White is already in trouble, and this move only makes matters worse by losing valuable time.

Nevertheless after 26.♗ec1 ♜xc1† 27.♗xc1 b3 Black's b-pawn is tremendously powerful and White is unlikely to be able to sacrifice an exchange for it. If 28.♗e4 then 28...♗b4 is very strong.

**26...♜b5 27.♗ec1 ♜xc1† 28.♗xc1 b3**

White has been outplayed, and a final inaccuracy hastens the end.

**29.♗c6?**

The Hungarian grandmaster must have miscalculated something.

**29...♗xc6 30.♗xc6 ♔a5! 31.♔e3 ♔a2 32.♔b5 b2**

The culmination of Black's strategy. The mighty pawn will cost White too much material.

**33.♗g2 e4 34.d4 ♔b3  
0–1**

Karpov's wins over Barcza and Stein did not contain quite the level of mastery of Kasparov's win over Karpov, yet they were still highly instructive. Both games demonstrated a high degree of purposefulness and consistency in his strategy; once he created the passed b-pawn, he wasted no time in forcing the pawn up the board in a forceful yet always controlled manner.

Karpov finished the tournament with a highly respectable  $11\frac{1}{2}/17$ , with eight wins, seven draws and two losses. This was good enough to share fourth place with Ivkov and Benko, and was only half a point behind the joint winners Kavalek, Stein and Panno. Against those top five rivals he only scored three draws and two losses without a win, but against the lower part of the cross table he made a massacre. Overall, the result was sufficient for Karpov to earn the coveted grandmaster norm and title, making him at nineteen years of age the youngest grandmaster in the world at the time.

1970 was a breakthrough year for Karpov in another respect: he was invited to take part in the Soviet Championship for the first time. The line-up included former world champions and many other top class players including Tal, Smyslov, Stein, Polugaevsky and Geller.

Karpov went for safety and started with eight consecutive draws, but in round nine he lost to Korchnoi. After two more draws he met Vladimir Bagirov, an experienced grandmaster who excelled at positional play. He played in the Soviet Championship many times and once finished as high as fourth, which shows his class. I found thirty games in which Bagirov met the world champions, of which he won one, drew twenty three and lost six.

## Game 20

Anatoly Karpov – Vladimir Bagirov

USSR Championship, Riga 1970

### 1.e4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Bagirov is one of the very few grandmasters who employed Alekhine's Defence as his main weapon against 1.e4 for most of his career.

### 2.e5 $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 3.d4 d6 4.Qf3

The main line suits Karpov's style. White aims for a small but steady advantage.

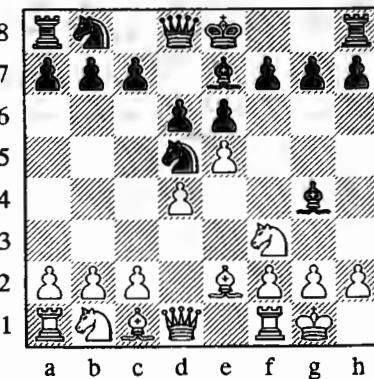
### 4... $\mathbb{Q}g4$

The most popular alternative is 4...g6. In the sixties Karpov reacted with 5. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  here, but in the early seventies he switched to 5. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  and won all three games.

### 5. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ e6

A few rounds later Mikenas played the provocative 5... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  against Karpov, just as Alburt did at the 1980 Olympiad. Neither of them were successful.

### 6.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}e7$

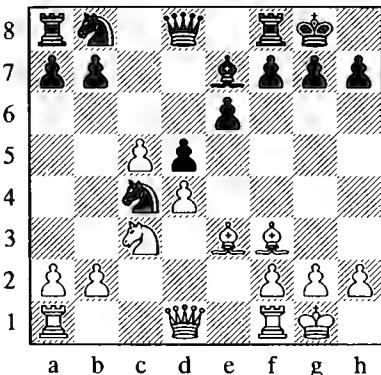


### 7.c4

White can insert the moves h2-h3 and ... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  at more or less any moment, which could

potentially benefit either player depending on how the game develops. On this occasion Karpov decides to do without those moves.

7... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  8.exd6 cxd6 9. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0–0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d5  
11.c5  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$



13. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ !

Bagirov had reached this position the previous year against Radovici, who opted for 13.b3. The text move was presumably a prepared improvement by Karpov, and Bagirov never repeated the line again.

13... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

13...b6 is also possible, although after 14.b3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  15.cxb6 axb6 16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  or 16. $\mathbb{Q}b5?$  White maintains a slight plus.

14.b3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  b6

At some point Black needs to counter the pressure of the choking pawn chain. Another way to do it was seen in the following game: 15... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  b6 17. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  bxc5 (17...b5?) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  Black was okay and went on to draw in Lein – Vukic, Vrsac 1979.

16. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$

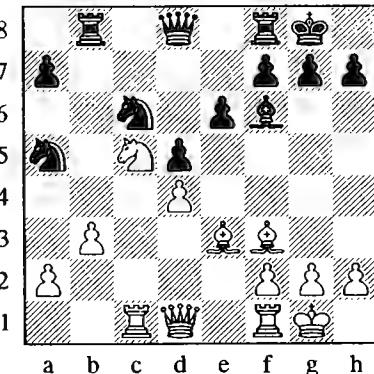
According to Karpov 16... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  deserved consideration, but so far nobody has tested this approach. 16...b5? is also interesting.

A few decades later Black tried a different plan: 16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  18.b4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21.b5  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  Hracek – Jansa, Czech Republic 1994. Usually Jansa is known for playing actively; on this occasion he handled the position rather differently, but nevertheless still managed to hold a draw.

17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  bxc5?!

With this move Black reveals his cards a bit too early. I would prefer a developing move like 17... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  or perhaps instead seek a bishop exchange with 17... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , although White should maintain an edge after the simple 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ .

18. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$



19.a3!

The immediate 19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (as well as other natural moves such as 19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ) allows Black to develop interesting play with 19... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20.g4! is mentioned by Karpov) 20.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  with reasonable compensation. Objectively White should still be better, but compared with the game continuation he does not enjoy the same level of control over the position, and a subsequent advance of Black's central pawns might well prove troublesome.

The text move prevents the exchange sacrifice and prepares a queenside advance while maintaining full control.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$

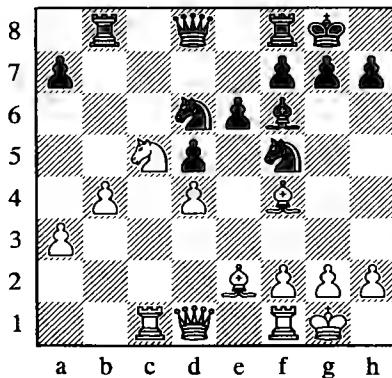
Controlling c4 in preparation for the following pawn advance.

### 20... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 21.b4 $\mathbb{Q}b7$

21... $\mathbb{Q}c4?$  is interesting but not fully satisfactory: 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  dxc4 23. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  24. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  (after 24... $\mathbb{E}bc8$  25. $\mathbb{E}fc1!$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  White keeps his extra pawn) 25. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}bc8$  (25...e5? 26. $\mathbb{E}c5$ ) 26. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  (26... $\mathbb{Q}xd4?$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e5) 27. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  28. $\mathbb{E}xc4$  e5 (after 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e5 30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  exd4 31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White has excellent winning chances) 29. $\mathbb{E}c7$  exd4 30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black managed to win back the pawn, but still fell short of equality.

The other option was to eliminate the dark-squared bishop: 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  22.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  23.bxa5  $\mathbb{Q}xe3\uparrow$  24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  25. $\mathbb{W}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{E}bc8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  wins) 23. $\mathbb{Q}a6$  (23. $\mathbb{Q}a4?$ ) 23... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  24. $\mathbb{E}xc5$ ) 24. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  According to Karpov White is somewhat better here. He has succeeded in preventing ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  and can look to invade along the c-file with his heavy pieces.

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}bd6$



### 23. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

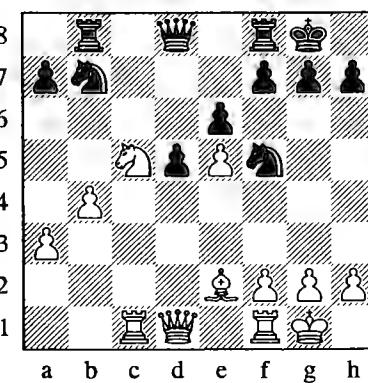
Another possibility was 23... $\mathbb{E}c8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{G}xf6$  (24... $\mathbb{W}xf6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  and whichever way Black recaptures, he is worse.

Black could also have adopted a wait-and-see approach with 23... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  24. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{E}b6$ . In this case White is certainly better, but it will take a lot of effort and skill to obtain something tangible.

### 24.dxe5 $\mathbb{Q}b7?$

Black is destined to have a lot of trouble with this knight. 24... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  was a much better try, when a likely continuation is 25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (25. $\mathbb{W}d3$  should also suffice for a small edge) 25... $\mathbb{W}xc5$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc5$  transposing to 25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  in the next note.

It should be noted that, by contrast to the game, the attempt to avoid exchanges with 25. $\mathbb{Q}b3?$  does not achieve the desired effect after 25... $\mathbb{W}b6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$ , when Black gets fluent play.



### 25. $\mathbb{Q}b3!$

Karpov refuses to allow his opponent to get rid of the misplaced knight. Instead after 25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  27. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  28. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

Karpov also mentioned the possibility of 25... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  to avoid the exchange while also preventing ... $\mathbb{W}b6$ . However, the knight is a long way from the centre and this might encourage Black to counter with: 25...f6!? (Karpov notes that White is better after 25... $\mathbb{W}d7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ; the same is also true after 25... $\mathbb{E}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{E}xc1$  27. $\mathbb{W}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  29. $\mathbb{W}xc5$ ) 26.exf6  $\mathbb{W}xf6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd6$  (or 27... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ) And Black's pieces are not badly placed.

### 25... $\mathbb{W}b6$

With the white knight closer to the centre, 25...f6 can be met by 26. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  27. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xb6$  axb6 29.f4 when Black still has problems with his knight.

### 26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7?$ !

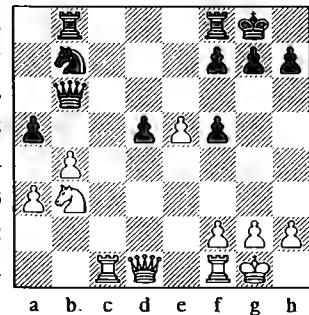
Karpov opines that after this move Black is unlikely to be able to save the game, and instead recommended:

26...a5!?

This is an ugly move, nevertheless it serves one important purpose: it gives Black good chances to eliminate the queenside pawns.

27. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  exf5

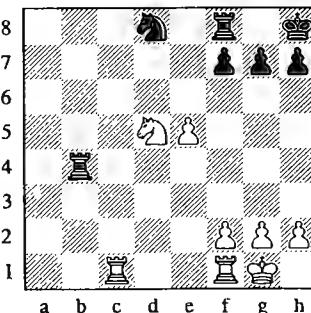
White's advantage is undeniable, but it is by no means clear whether it is enough to force victory.



28. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Another option is 28. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  axb4 30.axb4 (after 30. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{E}be8$  31.axb4

$\mathbb{Q}d8$  Black has reasonable chances to survive) 30... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}xb4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

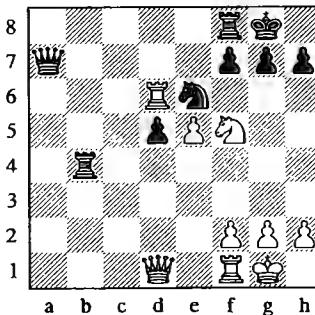


If White's pawn stood on e4 instead of e5, he would have excellent winning chances as the ending with four pawns against three on the same side should normally win with this many pieces remaining on the board. With the pawn on e5, however, Black will have good chances to exchange a pair of pawns with a well timed ...f6. The resulting ending with three pawns versus two should normally be a draw with accurate defence.

28...axb4 29. $\mathbb{E}c6$

29. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xb4$  31. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  does not change much.

29... $\mathbb{W}a7$  30.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  31. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{E}xb4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$



We have reached another position with four pawns versus three (after White takes on d5),

except that this time the queens remain on the board. This might offer White some additional chances, but the win would still be a long way off.

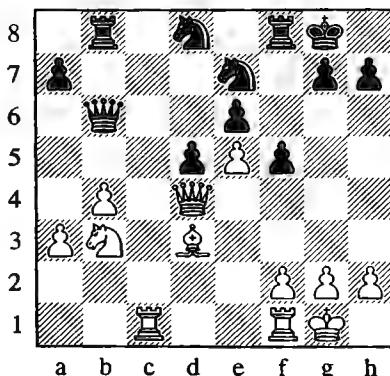
### 27.♕g4 f5

27...f6 28.♕h4 ♔g6 29.♕xg6 hxg6 30.exf6 ♕xf6 31.♕g3 is insufficient for Black according to Karpov.

Karpov does not mention how he intended to meet 27...♕g6!?, which looks like a sensible try to defend the king. The correct reaction looks to be: 28.♕g3! (Going for checkmate with 28.♕xg6 is too optimistic: 28...hxg6 29.♕d4 ♕fc8 30.♕h4 [30.♕f4 ♔d8 31.♕e3!]?) 30...♔d8 31.♕f3 ♕a6 32.♕g5 [or 32.♕e7 ♕c6 33.♕d7 ♕b6 and Black can keep attacking the queen.] 32...♕xc1 33.♕xc1 ♕c8 Black is still alive.) 28...♕fc8 29.h4 White keeps a strong initiative.

### 28.♕d4 ♔d8

Black hastens to improve the misplaced knight, but it will still struggle to find a meaningful role in the game.



### 29.b5!

White's kingside feint was just a temporary distraction from his main plan of advancing on the queenside.

### 29...g5 30.a4 ♕g6 31.♕a1!

Karpov utilizes the full dimensions of the chessboard.

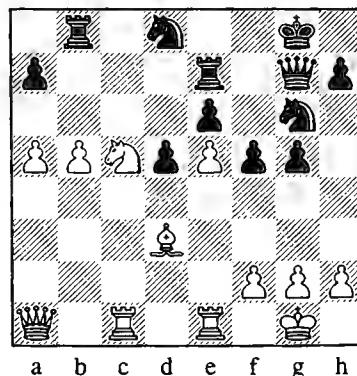
### 31...♕b7

31...♕f7? runs into 32.♕c6.

### 32.♕fe1!

Karpov takes a moment to defend the e5-pawn while vacating the f1-square for the bishop. He is now fully prepared to press ahead with the queenside invasion.

### 32...♕g7 33.♕c5 ♕f7 34.a5 ♕e7



### 35.♕a6! ♕a8 36.♕f1 ♕f7 37.♕c7 ♕d8

37...♕f8 38.♕d4 (38.♕c6 ♕d8) 38...♕fxe5 39.♕xa7 wins.

### 38.♕c6 ♕f8 39.b6!?

There are several ways to win, but this is one of the cleanest.

### 39...axb6 40.a6

The a-pawn will cost Black a rook.

### 40...♕h6 41.♕ec1 ♕g4 42.a7 ♕xe5 43.♕e2

♕c4 44.a8=♕ ♕xa8 45.♕xa8 b5 46.♕a2 ♕b7

1-0

From this point onwards, Karpov started to have more decisive games; perhaps his first victory boosted his confidence. Over the next six rounds he made three wins with two draws and one loss, before meeting Doroshkievich in the penultimate round. Doroshkievich was a decent International Master, but never became a GM. He qualified for the Soviet Championship final a few times, without ever scoring particularly well against the top class field. Over his lifetime he played eight games against world champions, scoring three draws and five losses.

## Game 21

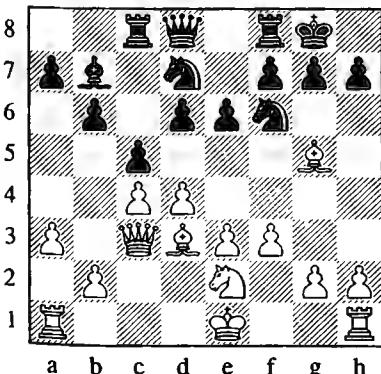
Vladimir Doroshkievich – Anatoly Karpov

USSR Championship, Riga 1970

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0–0  
5.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$  6. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  d6 7. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8.e3 b6  
9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Since the dawn of the new millennium 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  became popular, intending  $\mathbb{W}d3$  and  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

9... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  10.f3 c5 11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$



This whole variation is characterized by the fight between White's two bishops and

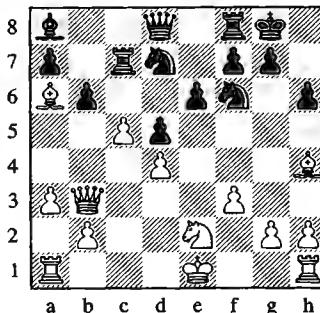
Black's lead in development. Paradoxically, it is Black who will generally be looking to open the position, despite fighting against the bishop pair, in order to exploit his superior coordination.

### 12. $\mathbb{E}c1?$ !

This is now known to be inaccurate, although at the time of the game the theory was not so well mapped out. Here are a few of Karpov's other games in this variation:

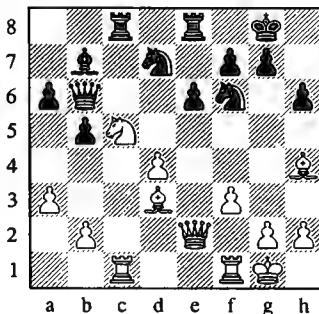
12.0–0 h6 13. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  cxd4 (After 13...d5 14.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  15. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{E}d1$  a6 17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  18.e4 cxd4 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White was a little better and the game Sigurjonsson – Karpov, Munich 1979, was eventually drawn.) 14. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  d5 17.cxd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  Black equalized effortlessly, Bareev – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 2002.

12. $\mathbb{W}b3$  h6 (Also possible is: 12...d5 13.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  14. $\mathbb{W}a4$  cxd4 15.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16. $\mathbb{W}d1$  b5 17.0–0  $\mathbb{W}b6$  18. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black has equalized although he later went wrong and lost in Adianto – Karpov, Jakarta 1997.) 13. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  cxd4 14.exd4 d5 15.c5  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{E}c7$



17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  bxc5 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  19. $\mathbb{W}c3$  e5 20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  exd4 21. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}e8\#$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  Black obtained nice compensation for the sacrificed exchange in the game Lautier – Karpov, Linares 1995.

Karpov was also not afraid to play the white side of the position: 12.♕d2 cxd4 13.exd4 d5 (13...♝a6!?) 14.cxd5 ♘xd5 15.♔a6 ♜c6 16.♗b5 ♜c7 17.♗f4 ♜c8 18.♔a6 ♜a8 19.♔c1 ♜b8 20.♗d3 ♜b7 21.♗g5 ♛bd7 22.0–0 h6 23.♗h4 ♜c8 24.♘c3 a6 25.♗e2 b5 26.♘e4 ♜b6 27.♘c5 ♜fe8

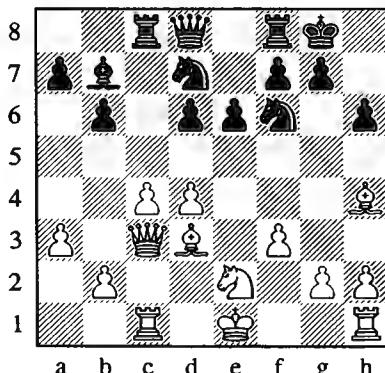


28.b4! White obtained some advantage thanks to his remarkable strategy involving the installation of the knight on c5, Karpov – Cu. Hansen, Wijk aan Zee 1988.

## 12...h6

Black usually inserts this move at some point.

## 13.♗h4 cxd4 14.exd4



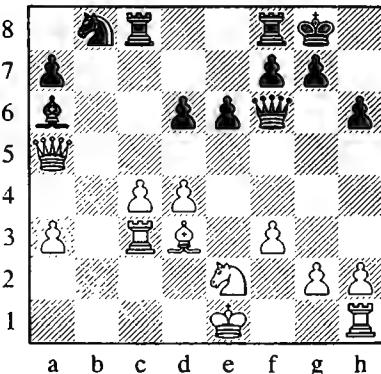
## 14...b5!

This move creates a target, and reveals why White would have been better off evacuating his queen from the c-file.

## 15.b3 bxc4

Taking at once reduces White's options, compared with 15...♝a6 16.♕b4 bxc4 when 17.♘xc4! is possible.

## 16.bxc4 ♘a6! 17.♔xf6 ♜xf6 18.♗a5 ♜b8 19.♔c3



## 19...d5

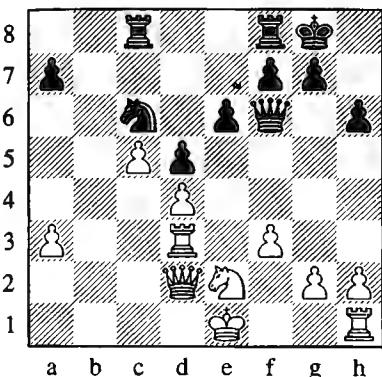
Having already begun exerting pressure on the c4-pawn, Karpov continues to apply the same strategy.

## 20.c5?

This tempting move is in fact an error; the passed pawn will have no impact on the game as Black's knight will blockade it perfectly. White should instead have exchanged to ease his suffering on the queenside: 20.cxd5 ♘xd3 (After 20...♜xc3 21.♗xc3 ♜c8 22.♗d2 ♘xd3 23.♗xd3 exd5 24.0–0 White easily holds.) 21.♗xd3 ♜g5 22.♗f2 ♘c6 23.♗a4 ♜xd5 24.♗c1 White is fairly active, so he can live with the isolated pawn.

## 20...♞xd3 21.♗xd3 ♘c6 22.♗d2

22.♗a4? controls the queenside but drops a pawn to 22...♛g6! with a double attack.



**22...♝b8!**

White is tied to the defence of the d4-pawn, so he is unable to challenge Black's control over the open file.

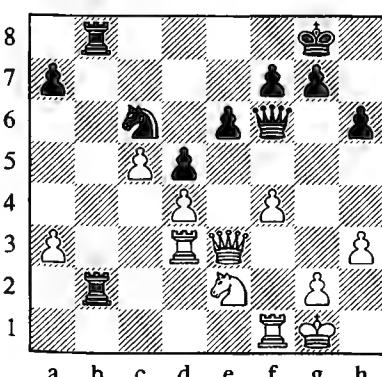
**23.0–0 ♜b7 24.f4**

After 24.♗f4 ♜xf4 25.♕xf4 ♜fb8 White faces a difficult endgame.

**24...♜fb8 25.h3 ♜b2!**

Simple and strong.

**26.♗e3**



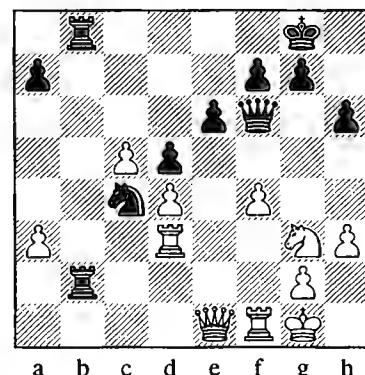
**26...♞a5!**

White's c-pawn is receiving no support from its colleagues, so Black can afford to improve his knight.

**27.♘g3?**

Moving the knight away from the centre does not help White. Instead it was necessary to play on the kingside to keep Black distracted from the queenside: 27.f5! ♜c4 (after 27...exf5 White can target the d5-pawn with 28.♘c3) 28.♗f4 e5 29.dxe5 ♜xe5 30.♗e3 ♜c4 31.♗g3 ♜d2 32.♗d1 ♜e4 33.♗e3 White has to be careful, but he is still in the game.

**27...♜c4 28.♗e1**



**28...♜b8b3!**

Removing White's only defending piece in the centre. The ease with which Karpov outplayed his opponent is remarkable.

**29.♗xb3**

After 29.♗ff3 ♜b1 30.♗d1 ♜xf3 31.♗xb1 ♜xd4† 32.♗h1 ♜e3 Black wins.

**29...♜xd4†**

White's position has fallen apart.

**30.♗h2 ♜xb3 31.f5**

This attempt for counterplay is too little too late, and Karpov crushes his opponent's resistance with ease.

**31...♞e3 32.♗f3 ♜xc5 33.fxe6 fxe6 34.♗h5 ♜d6† 35.♗g1 d4 36.♗g3 ♜b7 37.♗d2 ♜b1†**

**38.♔f2 ♔f1† 39.♔e2 ♔a6† 40.♔d3 ♔e1†**

**0–1**

Karpov drew his final two games and finished in equal fifth place in a formidable field. In total he scored five wins, fourteen draws and only two losses.

Later in the year he played in three minor Soviet team events, playing ten games altogether. His results were respectable, with a combined total of four wins and six draws.

1970 was the year in which Karpov successfully made the transition from junior to adult tournaments – with two years to spare. His impressive results suggest that he was working very hard on his chess, and was almost certainly assisted by Semyon Furman. It is worth noting that the great era of Soviet chess had been dominated by players who were born in the late 1920s and 1930s. The best players of that generation were by now approaching or already into their forties, and Fischer was storming the Soviet barricades. The country needed a new chess star and the superpower spared no resources to create one. No young player at the time showed greater promise than Anatoly Karpov.

## 1970 Summary

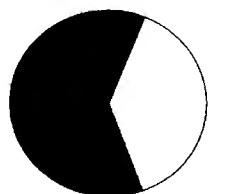
Russian Republic Championship, Kuibyshev (1st place): 12½/17 (+8 =9 –0)

Caracas (4th-6th place): 11½/17 (+8 =7 –2)

USSR Championship, Riga (5th-7th place): 12/21 (+5 =14 –2)

Soviet Team Events: 7/10 (+4 =6 –0)

Total 66.2% (+25 =36 –4)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1971

Rating 2540 (39-46 in the world)

The year in which Karpov turned twenty years old was one of his most active periods, with the second highest number of games of any year of his career. This was the year in which he produced his first world class tournament performance, as well as registering his first ever ELO rating.

His first event was a six-game training match against Korchnoi, which ended in a tie, with two wins from each player and two draws. Next was the semi-final of the USSR Championship, which Karpov won with a most impressive score of nine wins, eight draws and no defeats.

It was not possible to find any games from his next event, which was the 18th Student Olympiad in Puerto Rico, although it is known that Karpov scored a superb 7½/8 on board three. Even without knowing who the opponents were, it is safe to say that achieving such a score is an outstanding achievement.

Karpov followed this by playing in some minor Soviets events, including the USSR Armed Forces Championship. The database lists eleven of his games from this event, with six wins, four draws and one loss. Interestingly, in *Chess is My Life*, Karpov modestly states that he played just seven games, with two wins, four draws and one loss. Perhaps there were preliminary rounds that he did not categorize as part of the event.

In any case, here is one of his wins.

## Game 22

### Sinakov – Anatoly Karpov

USSR Armed Forces Team Championship, Leningrad 1971

**1.e4 c5**

Karpov employed the Sicilian in less than twenty percent of his games when he faced 1.e4. He took it up in 1969, and remained undefeated with it until 1979.

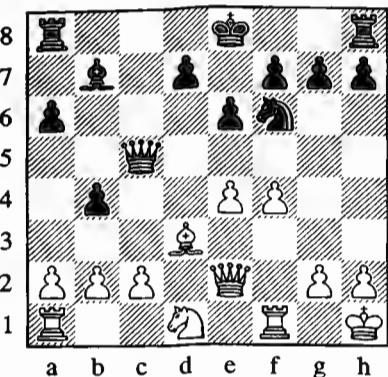
**2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘c6**

This was his usual choice, although he sometimes played 4...a6.

**5.♘c3 ♗c7 6.♗e3 a6 7.♗d3 b5 8.0–0 ♗b7 9.♗e2**

9.♘xc6 is the most common move here, but Black scores fairly well against it.

**9...♘f6 10.f4 ♘xd4 11.♗xd4 ♗c5 12.♗xc5 ♗xc5† 13.♔h1 b4 14.♗d1**



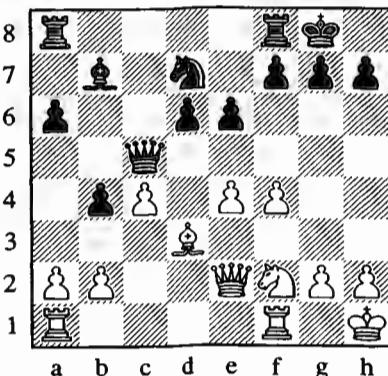
**14...0-0**

Later in the same year Karpov deviated with 14...d6 and soon made a draw: 15.Qf2 e5 16.Qg4 Qxg4 17.Qxg4 0-0 18.a3 Qc6 19.Qf5 bxa3 20.Qxa3 Qb5 21.Qc3 Qb4 22.Qb3 Qc5 23.Qc3 ½-½ R. Byrne – Karpov, Moscow 1971.

**15.c4?!**

The c2-pawn is not weak, so there is no need to waste a tempo on this move. 15.Qf2 was more logical.

**15...d6 16.Qf2 Qd7**

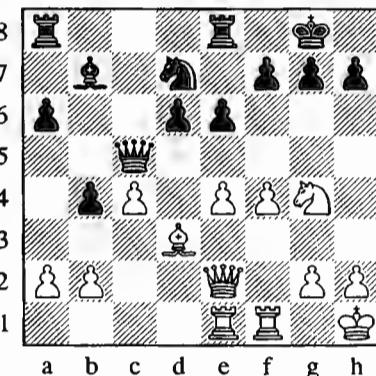


**17.Qg4?!**

White would like to threaten something on the kingside, otherwise Black can count on a

pleasant game thanks to his control over the c5-square. Unfortunately the knight move fails to accomplish anything at the moment. I would prefer 17.Qae1 to develop the last piece, for instance 17...Qfe8 18.e5 and the position is balanced.

**17...Qfe8 18.Qae1**



**18...f5!**

This strong move not only stops White's attacking ideas on the kingside, but also enables Black to fight for the initiative by clearing the long diagonal for his bishop.

**19.exf5?!**

White opens the e-file and the long diagonal, but it is Black's pieces that will benefit.

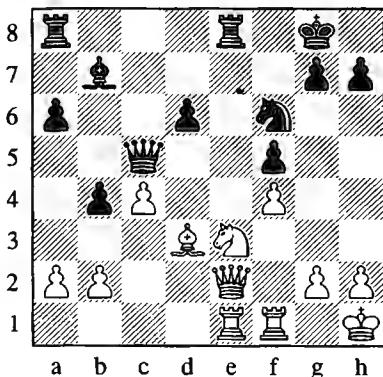
A better idea was 19.Qf2 Qf6 20.Qe3 g6. White's position is rather passive, but overall Black's advantage remains within manageable proportions.

**19...exf5 20.Qe3**

The knight turns out to be surprisingly passive on this square.

**20...Qf6?!**

Having strategically outplayed his opponent, Karpov acts quickly. The calmer 20...g6 was also promising.



21.♗d2

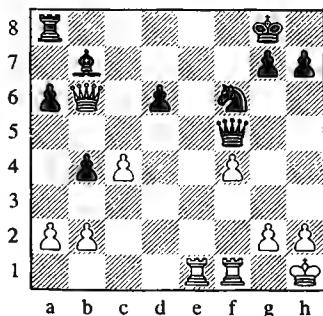
It was worth considering:

21.♘xf5!?

Simplifying leads to a joyless position, but White still obtains reasonable drawing chances.

21...♝xe3 22.♗xe3 ♘xf5 23.♗b6

It would be interesting to know how Karpov would have tried to win from this superior position. He has several options, including:



23...♞e4

23...♗d7 can be met by 24.♗xb4.

24.♗xd6

White does best to reduce the number of pawns as much as he can.

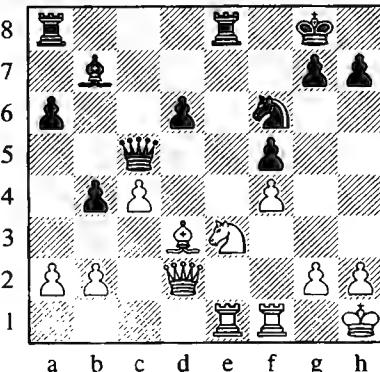
Instead 24.♗xb4 ♗h5! sets up a wicked trick and keeps the d-pawn. 25.♗f2 (25.♗xd6 ♗g3!) 25...♝e8 26.♗d2 ♗f6 Black has reasonable winning chances.

24...♝d3 25.♗f3 ♘xc4 26.♗xb4 ♗xa2

Or 26...♝d5 27.♗fe3.

27.b3 ♗b1 28.♗c4† ♗h8 29.♗fe3 h5

Presumably Karpov was optimistic about grinding down his opponent from a position like this. Still, White has realistic chances to survive if he defends stubbornly.



21...♞e4 22.♗xe4

White cannot realistically expect to live with the knight on e4, for instance: 22.♗c1 ♗e6 23.♗e2 ♗ae8 24.♗fe1 g5! (Black can maintain control with a move like 24...♝c6, but he has every reason to be more ambitious.) 25.♗f1 g4 26.♗fe1 (26.♗d1?) This mistake allows a lovely combination: 26...♝g3! 27.hxg3 ♗xe3 28.♗de1 ♗xg2†! 29.♗xg2 ♗c6† 30.♗h2 ♗8e6 And Black's attack breaks through.) 26...g3 27.♗e4 ♗xe4 28.♗d2 gxh2 29.♗xh2 ♗8e6 White is living dangerously.

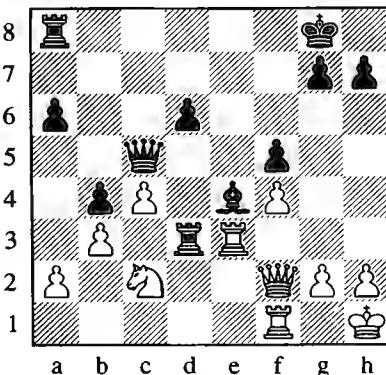
22...♝xe4 23.b3 ♘d4 24.♗f2

A better chance was: 24.♗b2! ♗e4 (24...♝d3? 25.♗xf5!! ♗xf5 26.♗e7) 25.♗f2 ♘d3 (after 25...a5 26.♗d2 ♘xd2 27.♗xd2 a4 it is not easy to improve Black's position further) 26.♗fe2 ♗e8 27.♗d1 d5 White must suffer but he has chances to survive.

24...♝d3 25.♗c2?

White should have retreated the knight to d1 instead, with the idea of transferring it to b2, where it prevents ...a4 and disturbs the d3-rook.

**25...♝e4 26.♝e3**



**26...a5!**

Opening the a-file gives White one more thing to worry about. 26...♝c3?! was worth considering as well, when Black can follow up by transferring the queen's rook to g6, via e8 and e6.

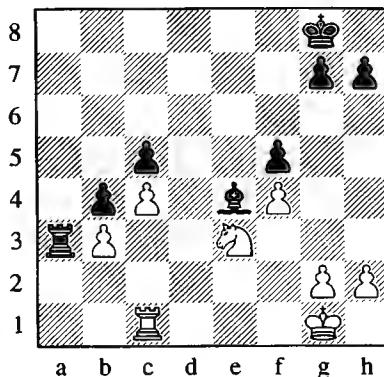
**27.♝xd3 ♜xd3 28.♛xc5?**

This soon leads to a hopeless situation. The last chance was 28.♛f3, when play might continue: 28...♝e4 29.♛f2 a4 30.♝d4 d5 (Black can also insert a pawn exchange on b3 at any moment) 31.cxd5 ♜xd5 32.♝e3 ♜e4 33.♝c1 ♜d5 34.♛d2 h6 White is passive and faces an unpleasant defence, nevertheless Black will have to work to convert his advantage into a win.

**28...dxc5 29.♝c1 a4!**

The subsequent invasion along the a-file will decide the game.

**30.♝e3 ♜e4 31.♛g1 axb3 32.axb3 ♜a3**



The b-pawn is defenceless, and the rest is easy.

**33.♝d1 ♜xb3 34.♝d8† ♜f7 35.♝c8**

According to the database, the game ended after the moves:

**35...♝b1† 36.♚f2 b3**

**0–1**

It is hard to imagine Karpov rejecting 35...♝e3, even though the above continuation is also winning comfortably. Perhaps there was a data error, but in any case it was a fine positional game from the future champion.

Karpov's next event was the USSR Team Championship, where he played on the junior board and excelled with a score of 6½/7. This was followed by the final of the USSR Championship, where Karpov finished fourth – a good achievement in a strong field. His overall score was 13/21, with seven wins, twelve draws and two losses.

Although Karpov's results for 1971 have thus far been highly impressive, they pale in comparison to his accomplishments at his next event, the Alekhine Memorial tournament in Moscow. This must rank as his first indisputably world class tournament result. He began solidly with two draws, before meeting

the Hungarian grandmaster Levente Lengyel in round three. Lengyel played against all the Soviet world champions except Kasparov, winning one, drawing fifteen and losing six against them. Karpov played him once more, a year later, and drew.

### Game 23

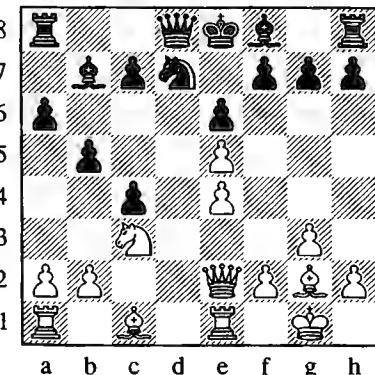
#### Levente Lengyel – Anatoly Karpov

Alekhine Memorial, Moscow 1971

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3.g3 d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  dx $c4$  5. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b5

Karpov opts for a risky continuation, keeping his extra pawn at the expense of the initiative.

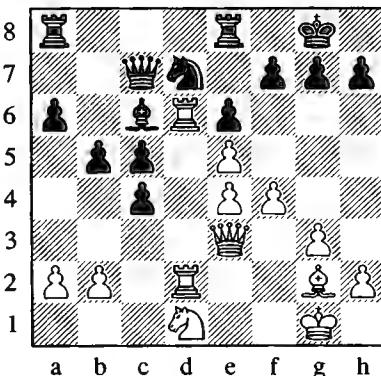
6. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  7.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  8.e4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  9. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  10. $\mathbb{W}e2$  a6 11. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  12.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$



I do not want to comment too heavily on the early phase of the game, as the most interesting and instructive moments occur later. Over the next few moves both players continue to play logically, with White retaining enough of an initiative to balance his one pawn deficit.

13. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  14.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c5\uparrow$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0–0 16. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3\uparrow$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe3$  c5 18. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  19. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  20. $\mathbb{E}1d2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d1$

The position remains dynamically balanced: Black is a pawn up but his pieces do not work well, and White firmly controls the d-file.



21...b4!?

With this move Karpov effectively decides to return his extra pawn in order to relieve the pressure.

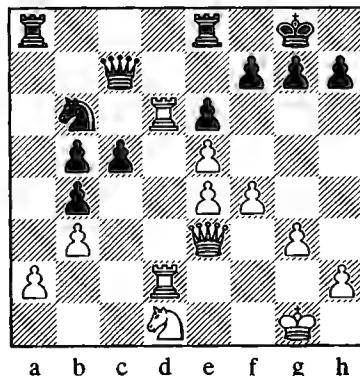
22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

23.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  24.bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  25. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  The position is equal.

23... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

Another possibility is 24. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  (24... $\mathbb{E}ab8$  25. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  26. $\mathbb{W}xe2$  c4 is also playable) 25. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  axb5 26. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  27.f5 c4 when the position is balanced.

24...axb5 25.b3



**25...♞c8!**

The knight moves backwards, but it is all part of Black's intended regrouping.

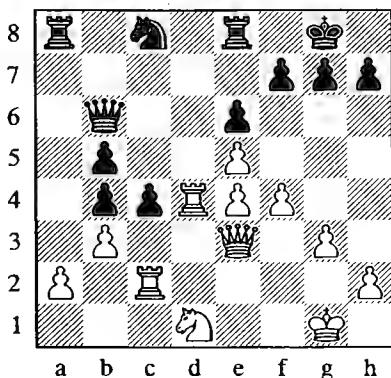
**26.♗d7 ♜b6 27.♗c2**

White could also have prepared for the endgame with 27.♘f2, for instance: 27...c4 (or 27...♝e7 28.♗c2 ♜ec8 29.♗xe7 [29.♗d6 ♜a7] 29...♝d8 30.♗b7 ♜xd1 when White's king is too open to hurt Black) 28.♗xb6 ♜xb6 29.♗b7 c3 30.♗c2 ♜eb8 31.♗c7 ♜c8 32.♗b7 With equality.

**27...c4 28.♗d4!?**

White decides to play ambitiously. The alternative was 28.♗xb6 ♜xb6 29.♗d6 ♜c8 30.♗d4 ♜b6 31.♗d6 when Black cannot do much except settle for a draw.

It should be noted that taking the pawn with 28.bxc4 bxc4 29.♗xc4? would have been a grave error, as 29...♝xe3† 30.♗xe3 ♜b6 wins an exchange.

**28...♝a3!**

This is an unpleasant move to face, although objectively it should not hurt White too much.

**29.♘f2?**

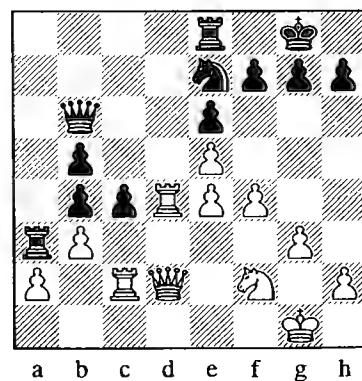
The Hungarian grandmaster thinks that the

knight on d1 is misplaced. He has a point, but in reality d1 is still the best square for it, at least for the time being.

A better continuation would have been 29.♗f1 ♜a5 (29...♝e7 30.♗d7) 30.♗e2 ♜b6 31.♗d6 cxb3 (31...h6 32.f5) 32.axb3 ♜xb3 33.♗c5 when the position remains balanced.

**29...♝e7**

Suddenly Black takes over on the queenside. 29...c3? would be premature because of 30.♕d3!.

**30.♗d2****30...c3!**

Karpov chooses the right moment to force his pawn to c3 without losing the b4-pawn. Now his pawns will choke White.

**31.♗d3 ♜c6 32.♗d6 ♜aa8!**

This subtle move prepares to exchange the strong white rook and invade with ...♜d4.

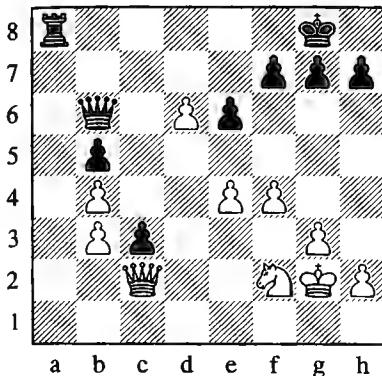
**33.♘g2 ♜ed8**

Karpov's plan prevails, and his knight reaches d4.

**34.a3**

A desperate attempt in a lost position.

34... $\mathbb{B}xd6$  35. $exd6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  36. $axb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   
37. $\mathbb{B}xc2$



37... $\mathbb{B}d4!$

Now White does not even get the c-pawn in return for the exchange.

38. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

38.e5  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  is equally hopeless, as White is unable to support the d6-pawn.

38...e5 39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $exf4$  40. $gxf4$  f6

0-1

After this win Karpov drew seven in a row, the last three of which were against Spassky, Tal and Petrosian. These results probably elevated his confidence, which encouraged him to go for a sharp attacking game against Hort, whom he beat. After one further draw he then faced a legendary player in David Bronstein, who came within a whisker of becoming World Champion in 1951 when he drew his match against Botvinnik. Even though the present game took place two decades after the match, it must still have been a momentous occasion for the young Karpov. According to my database Bronstein played 167 games against world champions, scoring seventeen victories, 119 draws and thirty one losses.

## Game 24

Anatoly Karpov – David Bronstein

Alekhine Memorial, Moscow 1971

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3.d4  $cxd4$  4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5

Throughout his career Karpov scored very well against this variation. Against the Scheveningen setup he did well until the mid 1980s, but then his percentage score dropped heavily. This had a lot to do with Kasparov, who frequently employed it against him.

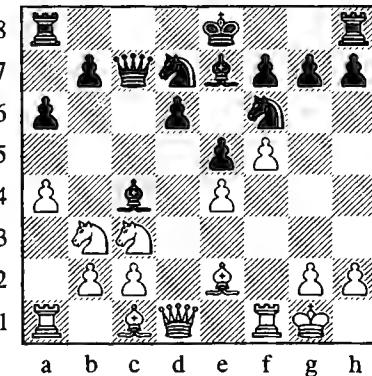
7. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Nowadays 7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  is more common.

8.f4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  9.0-0

The strong 9.g4! first appeared a year later in the game Kaplan – Saidy, San Antonio 1972.

9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  10.f5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  11.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$



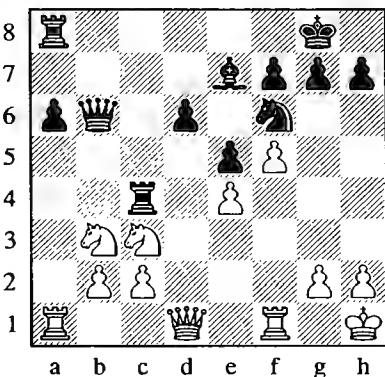
12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

With this move Karpov deviates from 12.a5, which he had played in round three of the same event: 12...0-0 13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}fc8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  h6 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b5 ½-½ Karpov – Gheorghiu, Moscow 1971.

**12...0-0 13.a5 b5**

This is a thematic idea, but it is not the strongest in the present position. It was Portisch who eventually found the strongest answer to White's setup: 13... $\mathbb{E}fc8!$  14. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  15. $\mathbb{W}xe2$  d5 16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  Black obtained a nice position and went on to win the game Sigurjonsson – Portisch, Buenos Aires (ol) 1978.

**14.axb6**  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$   
**17. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$**

**18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}b4$** 

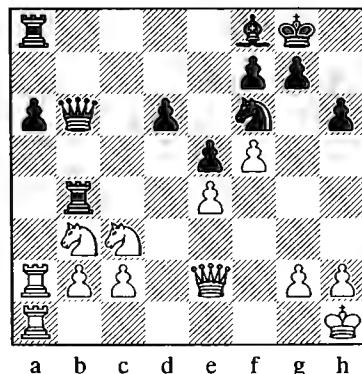
Karpov would go on to repeat the same position in two more games, both of which continued: 18... $\mathbb{E}ac8$  19. $\mathbb{E}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  (19...d5?) 20. $\mathbb{E}fa1$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  21. $\mathbb{E}a4$   $\mathbb{E}xa4$  At this point Karpov agreed a draw with Robert Byrne at the 1973 Leningrad Interzonal, despite having enjoyed success from the same position the previous year. The earlier game continued as follows: 22. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  23. $\mathbb{W}d3$  g6 24.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  25. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  Karpov – Stoica, Graz 1972. Despite his eventual defeat, Black is not doing badly at this stage, which explains Byrne's willingness to repeat the line as well as Karpov's decision to take a draw with him.

**19. $\mathbb{E}a2$** 

Karpov homes in on the weak a-pawn.

**19...h6**

An earlier game between two legends continued 19... $\mathbb{W}b7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22.exd5 with an edge for White although the game was eventually drawn, Geller – Fischer, Curacao 1962.

**20. $\mathbb{E}fa1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$** **21. $\mathbb{E}a4!$** 

By exchanging Black's active rook, Karpov eases the pressure on the e4-pawn. A much later game saw 21. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{E}xa6$  22. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  23. $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  24. $\mathbb{W}a6$ , Kononenko – Pasko, Alushta 2004, and now after 24... $\mathbb{E}xe4!$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  26.h3  $\mathbb{W}xc2$  Black should not be worse.

**21... $\mathbb{E}c8?$** 

The former world title contender plays for an exchange sacrifice. The idea is well known, but not quite sufficient in the present position.

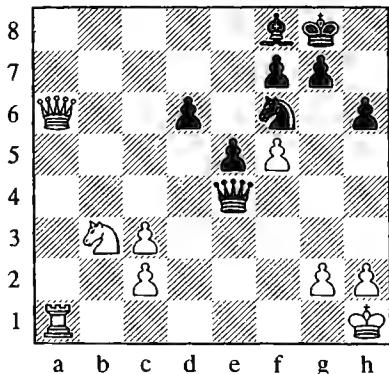
A better choice was 21... $\mathbb{E}xa4$  22. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$ , which has been played in a few games. Black is a bit passive, but he has fared okay in practice.

**22. $\mathbb{E}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xb4$  23. $\mathbb{W}xa6$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$** 

After 23... $\mathbb{W}c4$  24. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  25. $\mathbb{E}e1$  d5 26.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  27. $\mathbb{E}xe5$  Black is too far behind in material.

**24.bxc3 ♜xe4**

If Black could collect just one more pawn then he would be okay, but as it stands he does not quite have enough compensation for the exchange.



**25.♕d3!**

The queen returns to the centre without delay.

**25...♝f4**

After 25...♝c6 26.c4 White would follow with ♜e1 and ♖d2-e4, with good winning chances.

**26.♜f1 ♜h4 27.♝d2!**

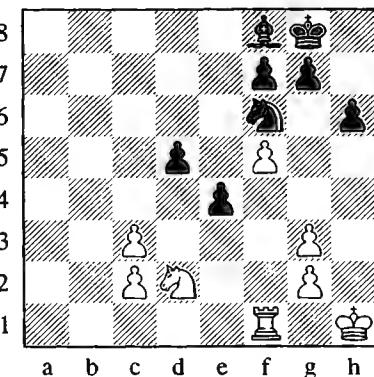
Karpov exchanges queens under his own terms. After the less accurate 27.c4?! ♛g4 28.♛g3 ♜xg3 29.hxg3 ♛e3 the position is equal according to Karpov.

**27...e4**

27...d5? 28.♝f3 wins.

Another line is 27...♝e7 28.♛e2 ♛g4 (28...♝d8 29.♝b1) 29.♝f3 ♜h5 30.h3 ♛f6 31.♝d4 ♜g5 32.♝c6 ♜f8 33.♝f3 when White has stopped Black's play, and can aim to improve his own position by transferring his rook to the eighth rank.

**28.♛g3 ♜xg3 29.hxg3 d5**



**30.♜b1**

30.♜a1! is more precise, as it is useful for White to have the option of a check on the eighth rank.

**30...♝d6 31.♝g1 ♜xg3**

Black regains a pawn, but White still has four remaining.

31...♝g4!? might have given White more chances to go wrong:

a) Karpov likes the response 32.♜b5, despite the fact it gives up a piece. Perhaps he missed something in the following variation: 32...e3 33.♜xd5 e2 34.♝f3 ♜xg3 35.♜d8† (After 35.c4 ♛h2 36.♝e1 ♜xel 37.♜d8† ♛h7 38.♜e8 ♛g4 39.♜xe2 ♜b4 Black is unlikely to lose.) 35...♝h7 36.♜e8 ♛e5!! 37.♜xe5 ♜xe5 And Black is certainly not losing.

b) However, White can improve on the above line with 32.♝f1! ♛e3† 33.♝e2 ♜xf5 34.g4 when Black is in trouble.

**32.♝f1 ♛h5**

Black can choose between several worse endgames, and it is hard to determine which one gives the best practical chance of surviving.

One alternative is 32...e3 33.Qf3 Qe4 34.Bb3 Bf4 (34...Bf2 35.Qe2) and now White can maintain a substantial advantage with 35.g4!.

### 33.Qe2?

It is a pity that after playing the whole game so well, Karpov now makes a bad mistake. Even in his subsequent analysis he did not mention the much stronger 33.Bb5! Qf4 34.Bb8† Qh7 35.Be8 when White wins, as he will break up Black's pawn chain with c4.

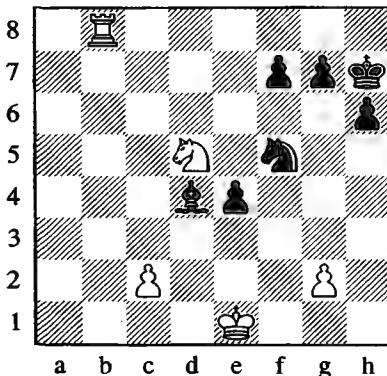
### 33...Qf4?

It looks as though both players were in time trouble. Black could have drawn with: 33...Qf4† 34.Qf1 (34.Qe3 Qxg2† 35.Qe2 Qf4† is a repetition.) 34...e3! (I can imagine Karpov planned for 34...Qh5, when he presumably planned to repeat moves once just to get closer to the time control. The text move is much better though.) 35.Qf3 e2† 36.Qg1 Qf8 It is practically impossible for Black to lose the ending with the pawn on e2.

34.Qf1 Bc5 35.Qe3 Bxc3 36.Bb8†  
36.Qxd5 would have won easily.

36...Qh7 37.Qxd5 Qg3† 38.Qf2?  
Another inaccuracy. After 38.Qe3 Bc5  
39.Bb6 Black cannot resist.

38...Qd4†! 39.Qe1 Qxf5



### 40.Bb4!

Luckily for Karpov, even after the last mistake he is still winning.

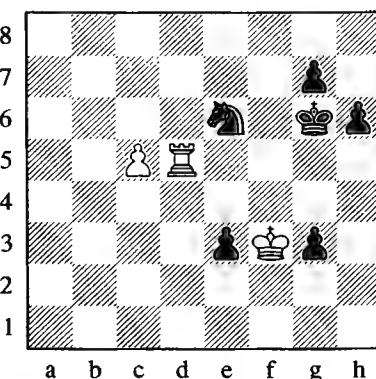
40...Qe3 41.Qe2 Bc5 42.Bb5 Qxd5  
43.Bxc5

Despite the overall material equality, White is winning relatively easily as Black cannot handle the c-pawn.

### 43...Qf4† 44.Qf2

44.Qe3 was also good enough: 44...Qxg2† 45.Qxe4 Qh4 (45...g5 46.c4 Qg7 47.Be5 Qf4 48.c5 Qf6 49.c6 Qe6 50.Bd5 h5 51.Bd6 Qe7 52.Bd7† wins), 46.c4 f5† (46...g5 47.Bd5) 47.Bxf5 Qxf5 48.Qxf5 g6† (after 48...Qg8 49.Qe6 Qf8 50.Qd7 White promotes with check) 49.Qe5 Qg7 50.c5 Qf7 51.Qd6 Qe8 52.Qc7 and White wins.

44...Qg6 45.g3 Qe6 46.Bd5 f5 47.c4 f4  
48.c5 e3† 49.Qf3 fxg3



### 50.Qxg3

Karpov's king will restrain the enemy pawns, while his rook and pawn decide the outcome on the other side.

### 50...h5 51.c6 e2

After 51...h4† 52.Qxh4 e2 53.Be5 Qd4 White wins with 54.c7! (or 54.Bxe2!) 54...Qf3† 55.Qg3 Qxe5 56.Qf2+–.

52.♔f2 ♔f6 53.♕d7

1-0

After this fine victory Karpov finished superbly, beating Korchnoi, drawing with Stein and Smyslov, then winning against Savon in the last round. This enabled him to share first prize with Stein, who had previously been leading by half a point. This was Karpov's first world class result against elite opposition, and many more would follow in the coming years. From this point it became clear that he would sooner or later become a contender for the highest title in chess.

Karpov's next event was the historic Hastings tournament, where his excellent form did not desert him, as evidenced by his score of four points from the first five games. Next he faced the former child prodigy Henrique Mecking of Brazil. Mecking became a strong grandmaster and would go on to win two interzonal tournaments, although he lost both of his candidate matches, first against Korchnoi and later against Polugaevsky. He was subsequently forced to take a long break from chess due to a serious illness. He only played one subsequent game with Karpov, which ended in a quick draw.

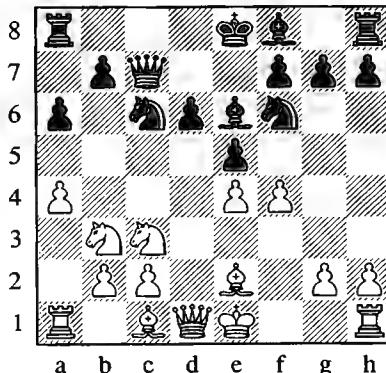
## Game 25

### Anatoly Karpov – Henrique Mecking

Hastings 1971-72

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♔f6  
5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e2 e5 7.♘b3 ♕e6 8.f4 ♖c7  
9.a4 ♘c6?

This was a new move, but unsurprisingly it failed to catch on. Some strong players have developed the knight here in certain 6.♗e2 lines, but they do not give up the bishop for the b3-knight.



10.f5!

Karpov weakens Black's control over the key d5-square.

10...♗xb3 11.cxb3 ♜b6

Played to prevent White from castling.

12.♗g5! ♘e7

After 12...d4 13.♗xf6 gxf6 14.♘d5 Black is in trouble.

13.♗xf6 ♘xf6 14.♘d5

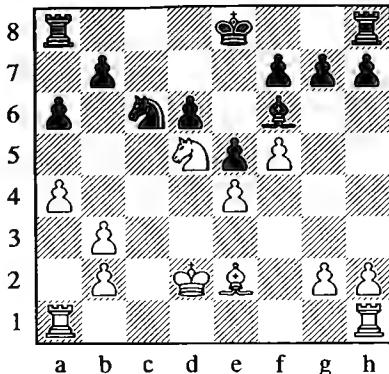
Karpov has already outplayed his opponent, but the win is still a long way off, and it is instructive to see how he converts his advantage.

14...♗a5†

Karpov mentions the line 14...♗d8 15.0-0 ♜c8 16.♗c4 when White has an overwhelming position.

15.♗d2 ♜xd2† 16.♗xd2

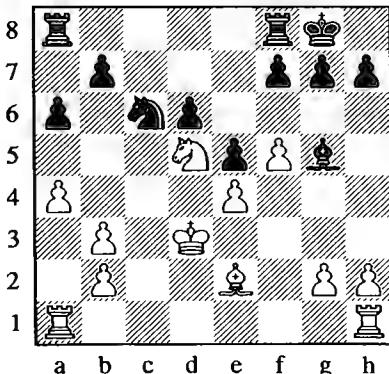
White has a large advantage as the d5-knight is very strong. He has good chances to gain control over the c-file, as well as prospects to gain space on either flank. At the same time Black has no serious weaknesses yet, and the opposite-coloured bishops might offer him drawing chances in certain types of endgame.



16... ♔g5† 17. ♔d3 0-0

One would normally prefer to keep the king closer to the centre for the ending, but this approach also fails to solve Black's problems. For instance, after 17...0-0-0 18.h4 ♖h6 19.g4 ♕f4 20.♖af1 Black loses a pawn.

Another possible continuation is 17... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  18. $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (After 18... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  20. $\mathbb{B}xc7$  b6 21. $\mathbb{B}hc1$  White's domination on the c-file gives him a large advantage.) 19.b4 (19. $\mathbb{Q}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  20. $\mathbb{B}xc7$  b5) 19...b5 (If 19...h5 20.a5 Black is very passive.) 20.a5 h5 (20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  h5 22. $\mathbb{Q}h3\#$ ) 21. $\mathbb{B}c3$  and Black's position is rather sad.



18.b4i

**Knocking back the bishop and obtaining the c1-square for the rooks.**

18... $\hat{Q}$ d8 19. $\hat{B}$ ac1 a5 20. $\hat{Q}$ d2  $\hat{E}$ b8 21.g4

White gains space, and threatens an attack as well.

21... ♜b4 22. ♜c4

22. ♜xb4 axb4 23. ♜c4 also offers excellent winning chances.

22... $\mathbb{Q}$ x $d$ 5 23. $\mathbb{Q}$ x $d$ 5 g5

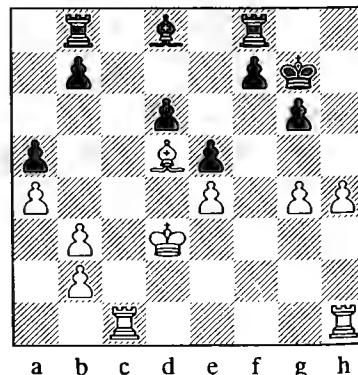
Alternatively 23...b5 24.axb5  $\mathbb{B}xb5$  25.g5 and White is once again clearly better.

24.fwg65

Karpov refuses to allow his opponent to close the kingside. It is harder for a defender to protect two wings at the same time.

24...hxg6 25.♔d3 ♔g7

25...b5 may have been a better attempt, although White remains on top with 26.axb5 (the immediate 26...g6 is also good) 26...gxh5 27.g6 g6 28.g8.



26.15

Karpov creates another potential plan of attack, namely to invade along the h-file.

26...~~9~~b6

Moving the bishop to the queenside leaves the king vulnerable. On the other hand, placing it on the kingside with 26... $\mathbb{B}g5$  allows an invasion on the other flank with 27. $\mathbb{B}c7$ , when Black is in big trouble.

### 27. $\mathbb{B}h3$ $\mathbb{B}c5$

Black seals up the queenside.

### 28. $\mathbb{B}f1$ $f6?$

Black is anxious to remove the weakness on f7, but this move further weakens the light squares.

It should be noted that White was threatening to win immediately. For instance, after a move like 28... $b6?$ , White breaks through with 29. $h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  30. $h7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  31. $h8=\mathbb{W}\uparrow$ , as pointed out by Mihail Marin in *Learn from the Legends*.

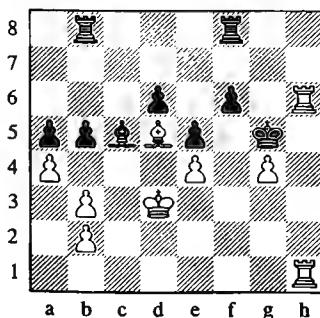
The best chance was 28... $b5$ , hoping for some queenside activity, although Black's position remains highly unpleasant. After the natural 29. $h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}h7$  30. $axb5$   $\mathbb{B}xb5$ , White's strongest continuation looks to be 31. $g5!$ , when he enjoys a powerful grip over the position.

### 29. $hxg6$ $\mathbb{B}xg6$ 30. $\mathbb{B}fh1$

Suddenly Black's king is in mortal danger.

### 30... $\mathbb{B}be8$

After 30... $b5$  31. $\mathbb{B}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}g5$  White can win in fabulous style:

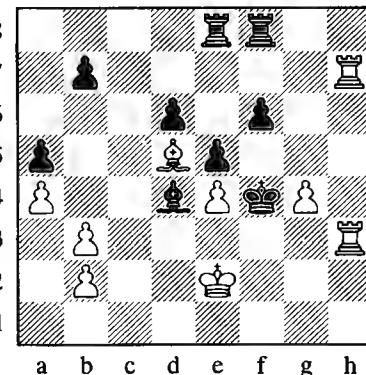


32. $b4!!$  In opposite-coloured bishop endgames, such moves occur more often than one might expect. 32... $axb4$  (32... $\mathbb{B}xb4$  loses immediately to 33. $\mathbb{B}e3$  followed by mate) 33. $a5$   $\mathbb{B}d4$  34. $a6$  (34. $\mathbb{B}h1$   $\mathbb{B}xb2$  35. $\mathbb{B}e6$  wins as well) 34... $\mathbb{B}xg4$  (34... $\mathbb{B}be8$  35. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{B}f4$  36. $\mathbb{B}g6$  wins) 35. $\mathbb{B}g6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}f3$  36. $\mathbb{B}f1\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}f2$  37. $\mathbb{B}b3$  Followed by mate in two.

### 31. $\mathbb{B}h7$

White starts weaving the mating net.

31... $\mathbb{B}g5$  32. $\mathbb{B}e2!$   $\mathbb{B}f4$  33. $\mathbb{B}1h3$   $\mathbb{B}d4$   
33... $\mathbb{B}xg4$  34. $\mathbb{B}f3$  wins.



### 34. $\mathbb{B}g7\uparrow$

1–0

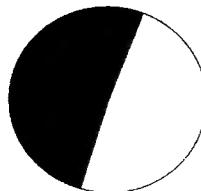
Black resigned, as it is mate next move. This game not only demonstrated Karpov's skill at developing his positional advantage in the endgame, but also showcased his ability to develop lethal checkmating attacks with few pieces.

In the next seven rounds Karpov won three and drew four. He then stumbled against Korchnoi, who avenged his recent loss to Karpov at the Alekhine Memorial, taking a half point lead in the process. Korchnoi proceeded to draw his final game, leaving Karpov needing a win against Markland in order to tie for first prize. He achieved it by virtue of a masterful endgame performance.

# 1971 Summary

Training match versus Korchnoi: 3/6 (+2 =2 -2)  
USSR Championship semi-final, Daugavpils (1st place): 13/17 (+9 =8 -0)  
Student Olympiad, Puerto Rico (Board three): 7½/8 (+7 =1 -0)  
USSR Armed Forces Team Championship (Board one): 7/11 (+6 =4 -1)  
USSR Team Championship, Rostov on Don (junior board) 6½/7 (+6 =1 -0)  
USSR Championship, Leningrad (4th place): 13/21 (+7 =12 -2)  
Alekhine Memorial, Moscow (1st-2nd place): 11/15 (+5 =12 -0)  
Hastings (1st-2nd place): 11/15 (+8 =6 -1)

Total 71.6% (+50 =46 -6)



Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1972

Rating 2630 (7-8 in the World)

Following a hectic twelve month period, Karpov was relatively inactive during the year that Fischer defeated Spassky to become the first non-Soviet world champion since 1946. This reversal in Soviet fortunes probably worked in Karpov's favour, as he would later receive even more support as the new contender. The Soviet Union desperately wanted the chess crown back, and their desire was only magnified by the Cold War. Chess had never before, and may never again play such a role in world politics! Karpov fully deserved all the help he received, due to his immense talent and the exceptional results he had achieved. He did not waste the investment that was made in him.

Karpov began the year by playing in the USSR Olympiad. After seven games he had a fifty percent score, at which point he met the sixth World Champion, Vassily Smyslov. Despite being fifteen years removed from his peak, the former champion was still a fierce competitor. Before this encounter they had only met once over the board, and on that occasion the old lion triumphed over his future successor.

## Game 26

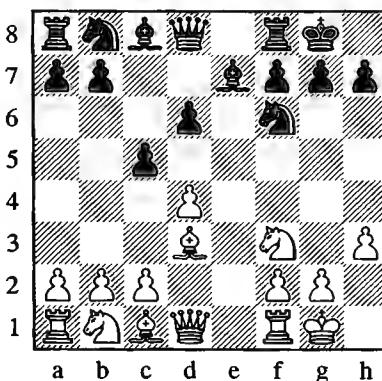
Anatoly Karpov – Vassily Smyslov

USSR Olympiad, Moscow 1972

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qf6 3.Qxe5

Karpov only seldom tried 3.d4, and abandoned it altogether after suffering an unpleasant defeat against Bent Larsen, who played superbly.

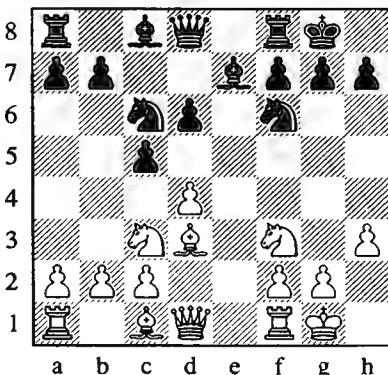
3...d6 4.Qf3 Qxe4 5.d4 Qe7 6.Qd3 Qf6?! 7.h3 0-0 8.0-0 c5?!



This whole variation is unappealing for Black, as he gives up some space without gaining anything in return. 8...c6 looks better, followed by slow development.

### 9.♘c3 ♘c6?!

With 9...b6?! Black can hope to exert pressure against the d5-pawn if White pushes it.



### 10.♗e1!

Aside from being a generally useful move, this also takes the sting out of a future ...♗b4 by freeing the f1-square for the bishop.

### 10...a6 11.d5!

White wins a tempo and gains space at the same time.

### 11...♘a7

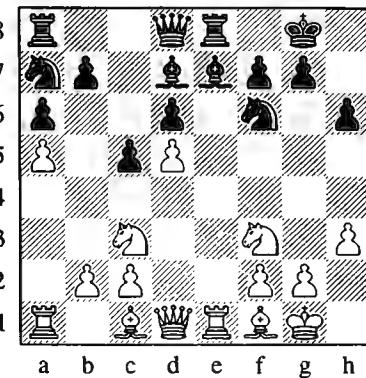
The point of White's rook move can be seen after 11...♗b4 12.♗f1 ♔f5 13.♗e2 when Black is practically forced to play 13...a5, and after 14.a3 White dominates the light squares on the queenside.

### 12.a4 ♘d7 13.a5 ♘e8 14.♗f1

This move is a bit mysterious; perhaps Karpov wanted to overprotect the d5-pawn in anticipation of ...♗b5, as mentioned in the next note.

### 14...h6

14...♗b5 was possible; it would be in Black's interest to exchange pieces as his position is somewhat cramped. For this reason 15.♗e2?! looks like the most logical reply.



15.♗f4 ♔f8 16.♗xe8 ♕xe8 17.♗h2 ♕d8

18.♗d2 ♕c7

18...♗b5 19.♗c4 ♘xc3 20.bxc3 ♕c7 looks better for Black than the game.

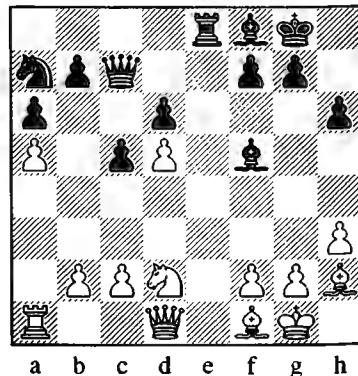
### 19.♗de4

19.♗c4?! would also retain a small edge.

19...♘xe4 20.♗xe4 ♔f5 21.♗d2

21.♗f3?! is interesting as well.

### 21...♗e8



22.c3

Karpov is aiming to maintain a modest edge. One gets the impression that he had two things in his mind during this game. Obviously he was motivated by the desire to defeat his legendary opponent, but at the same time he wanted to make sure he would not lose.

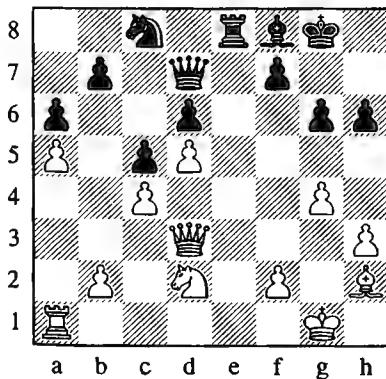
22... $\mathbb{W}d8$  23. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  24.c4!!

Many players would have preferred to keep this square free for White's other pieces, especially the knight, but Karpov has other ideas. It looks like he wanted to restrict the enemy knight.

24... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

After 24...g5 25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  26. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  27. $\mathbb{B}b1$  White keeps a slight edge.

25.g4  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  27. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  g6



28. $\mathbb{B}b1$ !

Karpov plans to open another file to keep Black busy on the queenside.

28... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29.b4  $\mathbb{C}xb4$  30. $\mathbb{B}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  32. $\mathbb{A}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

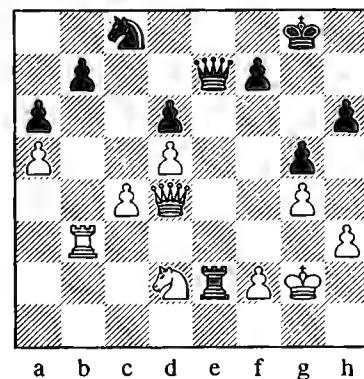
The king stands slightly better on g2. This type of small improving move was characteristic of Karpov's play.

33...g5?

This stabilizes the position of the rook on e5, but the cost in terms of the weakening of Black's kingside is too high. Better was 33...b6! in order to increase the influence of the knight. In the following line of analysis the knight moves more than it eventually will do for the remainder of the game: 34.axb6  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (35. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 35... $\mathbb{W}c5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  37. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black has good drawing chances.

34. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e1$  36. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{E}e2$

Black is trying to generate some activity, but he cannot achieve anything without his knight.



37. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !

Karpov uses his king with style. Interestingly 37. $\mathbb{W}b2$ !! was stronger, even though White steps into a pin. Fortunately there is no means to exploit this and Black drops the b7-pawn.

37... $\mathbb{E}e5$  38. $\mathbb{E}e3$  f6?

In fortifying the e5-square, Black weakens his kingside even further. 38... $\mathbb{E}xe3\#$  39.fxe3 f6 would have been a slight improvement, although Black is still very passive.

The best chance was probably 38... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , intending to wait and see how White intends

to continue. A likely continuation is 39.♕e4 ♜c7 40.♗c3 when White maintains a large plus, although there is still some work required to win the game.

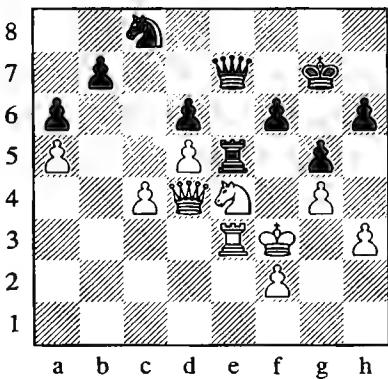
### 39.♕e4!

Karpov spots a new weakness.

### 39...♝g7?!

The alternative 39...f5 is not much better, and after 40.♗g3 fxg4† 41.hxg4 White should win here as well.

39...♛f8 is more resilient, although after 40.♗g2 f5 41.♗d2 ♔xe3 42.♗xe3 ♛f7 43.f4 fxg4 44.fxg5 Black is in trouble.



### 40.♗g2!

The king's work is finished, so he retreats in order to prepare ♗g3, after which the rook will no longer occur with check.

### 40...♛c7?

This loses at once. 40...♝f7 was the only chance, although after 41.♗d3 White maintains a massive advantage.

### 41.♗f3!

This move reveals a second purpose of the king retreat. Black's position collapses, as he has no way to defend f6.

### 41...b5 42.axb6

1-0

This was Karpov's first win over a former world champion. At this point in their respective careers the two great players were separated by just ten rating points; Karpov was rated 2630 and Smyslov 2620. Their personal score eventually ended with Karpov winning three, with eleven draws and one loss – which occurred in their very first encounter. Karpov finished the tournament by beating Taimanov and Stein. Overall he won four games, lost one and drew four.

Next came the Graz Student Olympiad. The previous year Karpov played on the third board, but this time he was number one. He started slowly, drawing against two unrated players, but in the finals he found his form, winning five games and drawing four.

Later in 1972, Karpov represented the Soviet Union at the Skopje Olympiad for the first time. He was on fine form in the preliminaries and won all four games, and won his first game in the finals as well. Then he suffered a reversal against Padevski of Bulgaria, who ground out a win in an isolated pawn endgame. It seems that the rising superstars from the Soviet Union had a tendency to struggle against Bulgarian opponents at Olympiads – eight years later, Kasparov was taken apart by Krum Georgiev in the 1980 Malta event.

After that setback, Karpov really showed his class. He won three games in a row, then made a draw followed by another win. His next opponent was Arthur Bisguier of the United States. This was their second meeting – they had previously drawn in Caracas and had not played each other since. The American played a total of forty three games against the world champions, starting with Euwe and finishing with Fischer. He won one of those games, drew sixteen and lost twenty six.

## Game 27

### Arthur Bisguier – Anatoly Karpov

Skopje Olympiad 1972

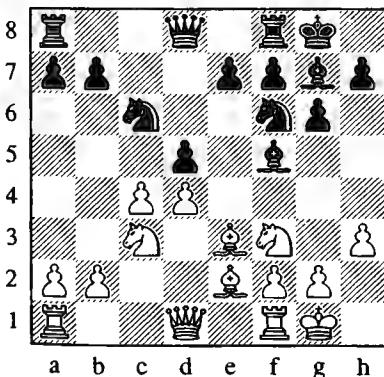
#### 1.c4 c5

Karpov used this move in the early and mid-1970s, but gradually switched to other systems as time went on. One of his main weapons was 1...e5, and he also played 1...d5 in several games, followed by 2.d3 e5, although he sometimes played 2...e6 there as well.

#### 2.Qc3 g6 3.Qf3 Qg7 4.e3?!

This variation has little power, as long as the black knight has not committed itself to c6. If White wishes to fight for an advantage he should prefer either 4.g3 or 4.d4 cxd4 5.Qxd4.

#### 4...Qf6 5.d4 0–0 6.Qe2 cxd4 7.exd4 d5 8.0–0 Qc6 9.h3 Qf5 10.Qe3



The players have transposed to an innocuous line of the Grunfeld. It could also be viewed as a reversed Tarrasch Defence, with an extra tempo for White.

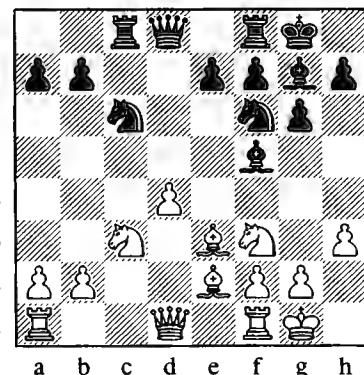
#### 10...dxc4!

Karpov forces an isolated pawn position. He played well and scored highly in positions of

this type. Instead after 10...Qc8 11.c5! Qe4 12.Qc1 White has done well.

#### 11.Qxc4 Qc8 12.Qe2?

This move is too passive. 12.Qc1, 12.a3 and 12.Qa4 were all better alternatives.



#### 12...Qe6!

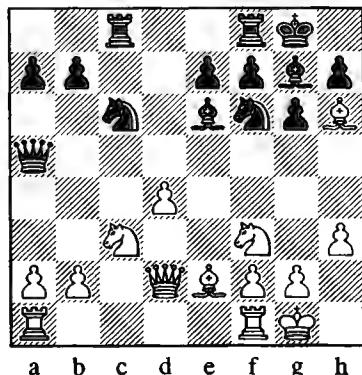
Halting the d-pawn. If it got to d5 it might exert a choking effect on the black position, assuming White could protect it properly.

#### 13.Wd2 Wa5!

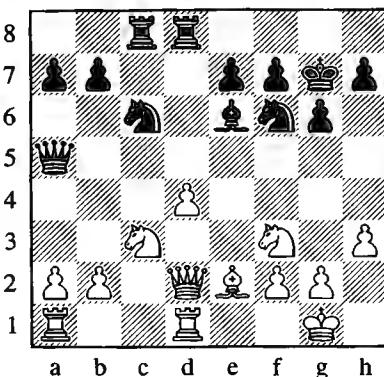
In the next few moves Karpov efficiently directs his forces against the isolated pawn.

#### 14.Qh6?

On principle, minor piece exchanges should help the side playing against the isolated pawn.



14... $\mathbb{E}fd8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$



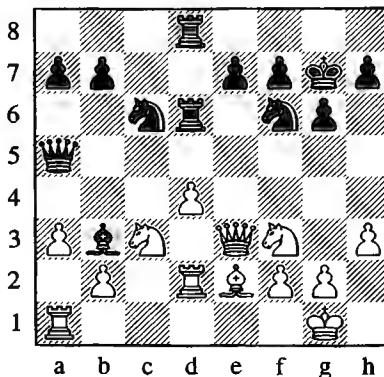
16... $\mathbb{E}d6$ !

Karpov simply increases the pressure against the d4-pawn. As it turns out, this rook is destined to play a starring role in future events.

17. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}cd8$  18.a3?!  $\mathbb{A}b3$ !

Preventing White's intended b2-b4, after which his extra space on the queenside would have given him something to cheer about.

19. $\mathbb{E}d2$



19... $\mathbb{E}e6$ !

After posting all his pieces on good squares, Karpov inserts an unpleasant rook move.

20. $\mathbb{W}f4$ ?

Paradoxically, the queen would have been in less danger on the d-file, and 20. $\mathbb{W}d3$  should have been preferred. Black should respond with 20...a6!, stopping  $\mathbb{W}b5$ . At this point exchanging bishops with 21. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  is in White's interest. Normally it would not be the case, but it is worth it here in order to get the d1-square for a rook. White's situation is still far from pleasant, but he would have reasonable chances to resist.

20... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ !

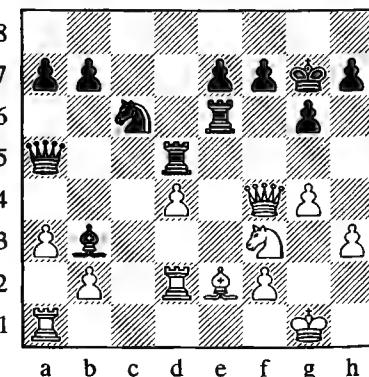
Winning the d5-square for his rook, which will function there superbly.

21. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$

Suddenly White's queen and rook are under pressure, and 22... $\mathbb{E}f5$  followed by ... $\mathbb{E}xf3$  is a serious threat.

22.g4

White has to resort to this move, as after 22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  23. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  Black has won a pawn.



22... $\mathbb{E}g5$ !

Great stuff from Karpov – after some fine positional play, he now exploits his tactical chances.

**23.♕g3**

The queen is out of play here and never gets back into the game.

**23...♝f6!**

Threatening to take on f3.

**24.♗d1 ♜c4**

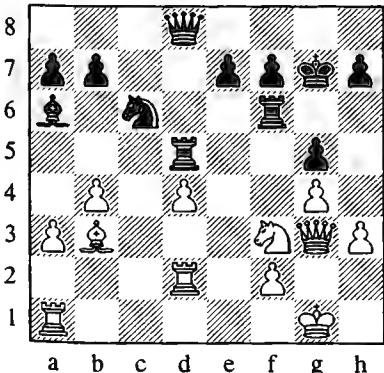
24...♝b5 was also strong, as after 25.♗d3 ♜d5 White is in trouble.

**25.b3 ♜a6 26.b4 ♜d8**

Black is also better after 26...♝xb4 27.♗b3 ♜b5, but the position is more complicated than in the game.

**27.♗b3**

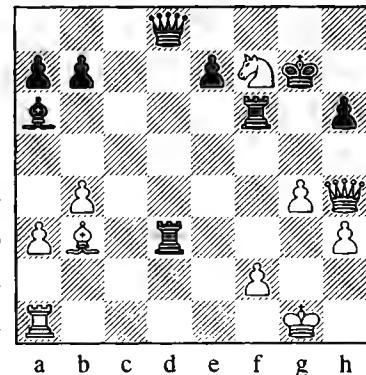
Another line goes 27.♗aa2 ♜c4! (better than 27...♝xd4 28.♝xd4 ♜xd4 29.♛e5) 28.♗ac2 b5 when White is practically paralysed. Play might continue 29.♔e2 ♜xe2 30.♝xe2 ♜xf3! (but not 30...♝xd4? 31.♝xd4 ♜xd4 32.♛e5) 31.♛xf3 ♜xd4 and Black is a pawn up.

**27...♝xd4! 28.♝xd4**

If 28.♝xd5 ♜xf3† 29.♝xf3 ♜xd2 30.♛e5 ♜f4 31.♛xf4 ♜xf4 Black should win comfortably with his extra pawn.

**28...♝xd4 29.♝xg5?**

Bisguier wants to stir things up, but goes down quickly. White can prolong the end with 29.♝xd4 ♜xd4 30.♝e1 e6 31.♛e3 ♜f4, but Black should still win with his extra pawn.

**29...♝d3! 30.♛h4 h6 31.♝xf7****31...♛d4!**

Black is not only ahead in material but his pieces also work better, so White cannot even hope to resist.

**32.♝e1 ♜xh3!**

**0–1**

Karpov followed this victory with two wins and one draw from the final three games. Altogether he scored 13/15 on the fifth board – an outstanding result for his first Olympiad.

Karpov participated in only one individual tournament in 1972, in San Antonio, Texas. The field was packed with strong American players, in addition to a strong contingent of foreign grandmasters including Petrosian, Portisch, Keres, Larsen and Hort. In the first round Karpov faced the American IM Anthony Saidy with the black pieces. It was the only time they met over the board. Saidy faced all the world champions from Tal to Karpov; out of thirteen games he drew three and lost ten. He wrote a book entitled *The Battle of Chess*

*Ideas*, in which he discusses his meetings with those elite players.

## Game 28

Anthony Saidy – Anatoly Karpov

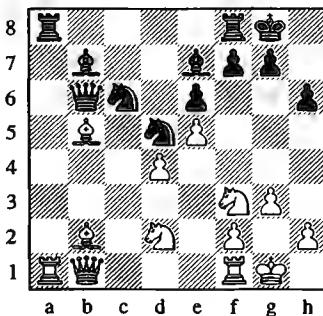
San Antonio 1972

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  2.  $g3 b5$

Karpov played this ambitious move three times and only dropped half a point.

3.  $\mathbb{A}g2$

A year later Korchnoi tried 3.c3!?, playing against the b5-pawn and in the centre: 3...  $\mathbb{A}b7$  4.a4 a6 5.e3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6.d4 e6 7.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  9.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  0–0 10.e4 d6 11.0–0 c5 12.bxc5 dxc5 13.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  14.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  15.axb5 axb5 16.  $\mathbb{W}b1$  cxd4 17.cxd4 h6 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$



Black obtained decent positional compensation for the pawn, and later White blundered and lost, Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow 1973.

3...  $\mathbb{A}b7$  4.0–0 e6 5.d3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

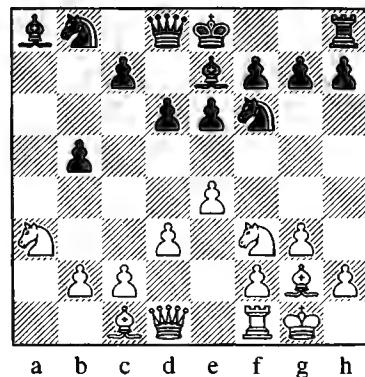
In 1978 Karpov deviated with 5...d6 against Vukic, and the game ended in a draw after a long fight.

6.e4 d6 7.a4

White tends to score better with the standard

King's Indian Attack plan, involving moves like  $\mathbb{E}e1$  and  $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  followed by c3 and d4.

7...a6 8.axb5 axb5 9.  $\mathbb{E}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$



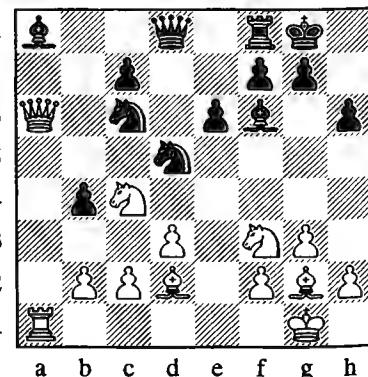
11...b4

The pawn can be attacked on this square, but it can be defended as well.

11.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  0–0 12.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13.  $\mathbb{W}a1$  d5 14. exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$

Karpov chooses to go for a slow position. It was not an easy decision, as the white knight is well placed on c4. The alternative 14...exd5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}ce5$  would have led to an equal position.

15.  $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16.  $\mathbb{E}a1$  h6



**17...♝e1**

In some ways the position is easy to play for White, but in other respects it is hard. White has a stable position and a lot of choices, as Black threatens very little. On the other hand it is not easy to choose between the numerous options of roughly equal value.

**17...♝e7 18.♗ce5 ♜d6 19.♗c4**

White could not resist the temptation of this indirect draw offer. Simpler was 19.♗xc6 ♜xc6 20.d4 ♜a8 21.♗c4 with an equal position.

**19...♝c5**

Karpov wants to play on.

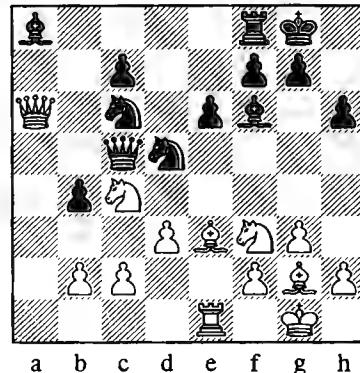
**20.♗e3?!**

Black's eventual victory comes as a result of his subsequent domination of the dark squares, so one might say that the text move is the first step towards White's eventual demise. At the moment there are a lot of pieces on the board, so White does not have to worry too much about the dark squares, but the more pieces are exchanged, the more White's sensitivity on the dark squares will grow.

I would personally prefer 20.♗a1, which would just hold the position, although Saidy thinks there is nothing wrong with the move he played. The position was equal before and remains the same after this move as well, so the American – who is not only a decent chess player but a medical doctor as well – certainly has a point. In chess certain things are a matter of taste; it is one of the things that makes the game so fascinating.

By the way, Portisch later produced a positional masterpiece to defeat Saidy in the same event, helped at one point by the move ♜xb6, exchanging his bishop for Saidy's knight. On the other hand the American also enjoyed success against a legendary player by utilizing the same concept: in 1993 he defeated

Korchnoi after exchanging his bishop for an enemy knight in the early stages of the game.



**20...♝xe3 21.fxe3 ♜e7 22.♗fd2 ♜d5!?**

Karpov does not want to take on g2, as White's remaining knights would be strong enough to counter his bishop. Instead he allows the exchange, but only on his own terms, when the recapture ...exd5 would cost White his treasured outpost on c4.

**23.♗e4?!**

White wants to simplify, but he goes about it in an unfortunate way. More promising was: 23.♗b3 ♜c6 (23...♝xc4 24.♗xc5 ♜xa6 25.♗xa6 ♜xb2 26.♗b1 ♜c3 27.♗b3 White soon regains the pawn with equal chances.) 24.♗xc6 ♜xc6 25.♗a1 ♜xc4 26.♗xc6 ♜xb3 27.cxb3 ♜xb2 28.♗a8 White is a pawn down, but he should be able to draw the opposite-coloured bishop ending.

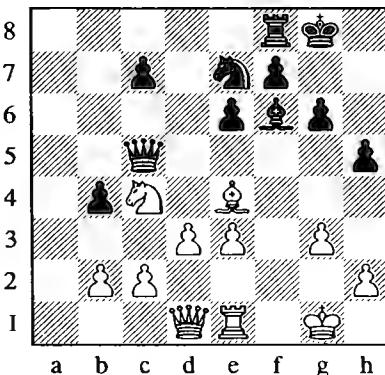
It was also reasonable to play 23.♗a1 intending to exchange queens on a5.

**23...♝xe4 24.♗xe4 h5 25.♗a1?!**

Saidy brings back his queen to defend, but he could have played more actively with: 25.♗a1! White can generate enough play with his rook. 25...♜g5 26.♗b7 h4 (or 26...♝d5 27.♗a8 ♜xe3 28.♗xf8† ♜xf8 29.♗xb4† and

White is not worse) 27.♗a8 ♖d5 28.♗xf8† ♖xf8 29.♕c8† ♖e7 30.♗xd5 exd5 31.♗xc7† And White holds.

25...g6 26.♗d1



27...h4!

Karpov softens his opponent up on the dark squares.

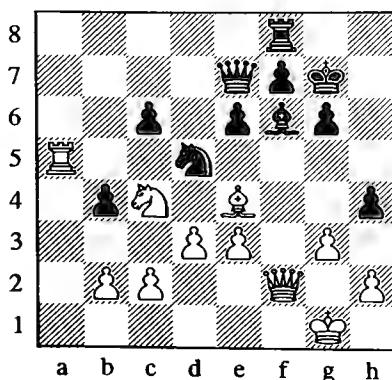
27.♗e2 ♗g5 28.♗f3 ♗g7!

This is typical of Karpov; the king move has no special purpose, other than providing a small but definite improving of his position.

29.♗f4 ♗c5

Black needs his queen to develop an attack on the dark squares.

30.♗a1 ♖d5 31.♗f2 c6! 32.♗a5 ♗e7



33.g4?!

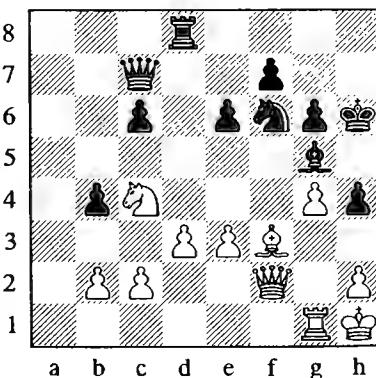
This leads to a further weakening of the dark squares. Though it was not much fun, White should have continued to defend this pawn on the g3-square and only advance it as a last resort.

33...♗c7 34.♗a1 ♗g5 35.♗h1

White can do nothing but wait passively.

35...♗h6 36.♗g1 ♖f6 37.♗f3 ♖d8?!

It is hard to evaluate this move, apart from calling it sly. As Saidy points out, "it has NO value unless I overlook the positional threat - which I did".



38.♗a1?

For reasons that will become obvious, White should have preferred 38.♗e2.

38...b3!

Karpov seizes the opportunity to open the position and fracture his opponent's pawn chain. In the resulting position his bishop will work superbly, while Saidy's bishop is restricted by the enemy pawns and has no target to attack.

39.♗a6 bxc2 40.♗xc2 ♖d5 41.♗d2?

Maybe White was short of time and did not realize he had passed the 40 move mark. When

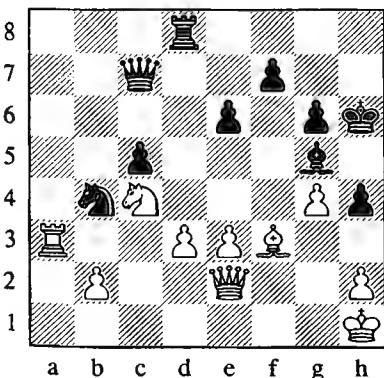
I asked Saidy about the game he said: "Yes, I was always in *zeitnot* in those days." His last move is directed against ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , but the queen is stepping into a different type of hazard. Instead White should have preferred 41. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  42. $\mathbb{E}a3$ .

#### 41...c5?!

Perhaps Karpov was also playing too fast, as he missed a direct refutation of White's last move: 41... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$ ! 42. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  44. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  45. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  And Black is winning.

#### 42. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 43. $\mathbb{E}a3$

Another line runs as follows: 43. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  (43... $\mathbb{W}a7!?$ ) 44. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  (44.d4  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ; 44. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  45. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  Black wins the d3-pawn) 44... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (44... $\mathbb{W}d8$  45.d4) 45. $\mathbb{E}b7$  (45. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ ) 45... $\mathbb{W}d8$  46. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  and White drops the d3-pawn.



#### 43... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 44. $\mathbb{E}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

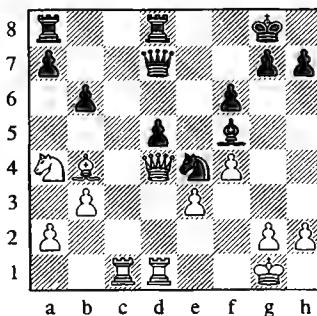
Karpov follows a cunning plan: he wants to exchange knights. Once this has been achieved, there will be nothing to stop his bishop from becoming overwhelmingly powerful.

#### 45. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 46. $\mathbb{W}f2?$

White does nothing to prevent the knight exchange. It is a common mistake – the

defender allows exchanges, hoping that the simplification will bring him closer to a draw when in fact the opposite is true. The temptation is especially great in positions with opposite-coloured bishops.

The same theme has been illustrated in many games involving the great champions of the past. The following is a good example:

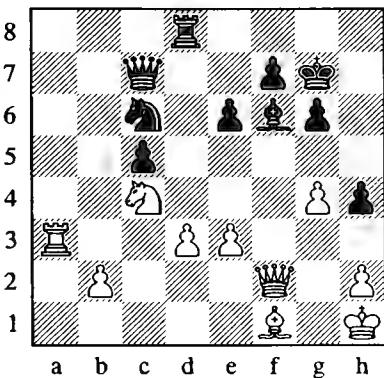


24. $\mathbb{Q}c3?$  White should have manoeuvred his knight to e1 in order to defend g2. 24... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ ! And in Kotov – Botvinnik, Moscow 1955, the first Soviet Champion got a superior position and went on to win a famous endgame. Other shining examples of this theme include Matulovic – Botvinnik, USSR vs. Rest of the World 1970, as well as the more recent game Kasparov – Vallejo Pons, Linares 2002.

Returning to the main game, let us consider how White might have improved. Avoiding the exchange with 46. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  was unsatisfactory, as after 47... $\mathbb{E}b8$  48. $\mathbb{E}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  White is very passive, and Black should be able to break in sooner or later.

A better try was 46.h3!?. This does not fully save White from suffering, but at least it sets up an obstacle: 46... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  47. $\mathbb{W}h2$ ! Now Black cannot get out of the pin without exchanging queens. 47...g5 (after 47... $\mathbb{W}b7\uparrow$  48. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  49. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}e1\uparrow$  50. $\mathbb{W}g1$  White is very much alive) 48. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  49. $\mathbb{E}b3$  (or

49.♗c3 ♗xc4 50.♗xc7 ♘xc7 51.♗xc4 ♖xb2) 49...♗xc4 50.♗xc7 ♘xc7 51.♗xc4 Black has excellent winning chances, but the game is not completely over.



**46...♝e5! 47.♗xe5 ♖xe5**

From the time of the first minor piece exchange, it took Karpov a further twenty seven moves to swap all the minor pieces except for the opposite-coloured bishops.

**48.b3 ♘d7 49.e4**

This gives Black even more dark squares on which to play, but White's position was already beyond saving. After 49.♗a5 ♖c3 50.♗b5 ♘a7 Black invades.

**49...♖g5!**

Black directs his forces against the vulnerable h2-pawn.

**50.♖e2 ♘b7 51.♗f3 ♘e5! 52.♗a5?**

A blunder in a hopeless position. White could have struggled on with 52.♗g2, but is unlikely to last much longer after 52...♖c1.

**52...♖d2**

**0-1**

This was a masterful demonstration of how to handle a middlegame with opposite-coloured bishops. Saidy did not make many obvious

mistakes. I wonder if he was subsequently consoled by the fact that Karpov did something similar to Kasparov in their second world championship match thirteen years later – see Game 75 on page 423.

Karpov followed this first round win by powering ahead to a score of 6/7, courtesy of wins over, amongst others, Browne and Byrne, as well as a draw with Petrosian. In round eight he faced Svetozar Gligoric, who was firmly established as the top Yugoslav player and had formerly been ranked among the very best in the world. He played all the world champions from Euwe to Anand, missing only Kramnik and Topalov. Out of 183 encounters, he won twenty three games, drew 109 and lost fifty one. Karpov and Gligoric had only played once before, and drew. Their lifetime result is 7–3 in favour of Karpov, who achieved four victories and six draws with no defeats.

## Game 29

Anatoly Karpov – Svetozar Gligoric

San Antonio 1972

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♖f6  
5.0–0 ♖e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 d6 8.c3 0–0 9.h3  
♗b8

Karpov's lifetime result against the Breyer is seven wins and nine draws without a loss.

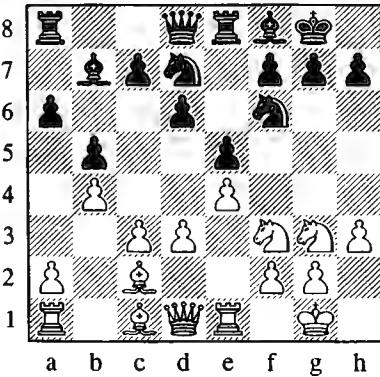
**10.d3**

In the early seventies Karpov played this unassuming move three times, dropping only half a point. Gligoric would go on to repeat the Breyer against Karpov on three subsequent occasions, but with little success. Each time Karpov opted for the main line with 10.d4, and the Yugoslav grandmaster only achieved a single draw.

10... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 

Black can also play in the style of the Chigorin by means of 10... $a5!$ ? 11. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ , although White may be able to benefit from the fact that his light-squared bishop has not been forced to retreat to c2.

11. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  13. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$   
14. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15.b4  $\mathbb{Q}cd7$



## 16.d4 h6

Up to this point both sides have played normal moves, but the text is rare. 16...a5 is the main line, and 16...g6 has also been seen regularly.

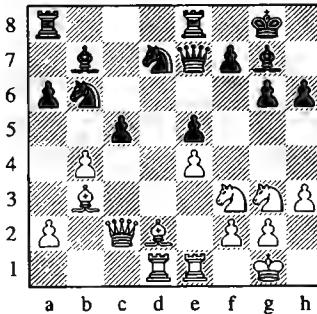
17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ 

This small nudge of the bishop stops two of Black's ideas, namely ... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  and ...a5. As is typical for Karpov, the move is not only preventing but also building, as it prepares an eventual c3-c4.

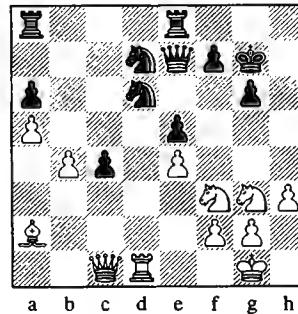
18... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 

The following year Spassky tried to improve with 18...g6. It is worth checking the course of the game, as it was remarkable: 19. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (Kasparov recommends 20...c5) 21.dxe5 dxe5 22.c4! Revealing the building function of White's 18th move. 22... $bxc4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ?! (23... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ! 24. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

$\mathbb{E}e6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  would have been equal according to the winner.) 24. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  c5



25.a4!! Karpov demonstrates a superb handling of the initiative as well. 25...c4 26. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  27.a5  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ? 31. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$



32. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ! f6 33. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  1-0 Karpov – Spassky, Moscow 1973.

19. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ??

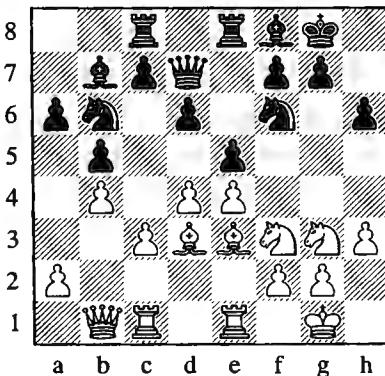
Black should have opted for a complicated middlegame with 19... $exd4$ ! 20. $cxd4$  c5 21. $bxc5$   $dxc5$  22.d5 c4 23. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$ . The resulting position is double-edged.

20. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$   
23. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ 

Karpov wants to keep the queens on the board. Another possibility was 23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ??, aiming to transfer the knight to a5 or play f4.

23...exd4 24.cxd4 (Also after 24.Qxd4 Be6 25.Qb3 We8 the position looks balanced.) 24...Wxc2 25.Qxc2 d5 26.e5 Qfd7 Black has equal chances as his knight will be strong on c4.

23...Wd7



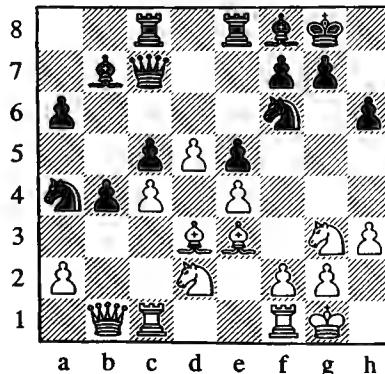
24.Qd2!

Intending to gain space with f4.

24...c5 25.bxc5 dxc5 26.d5 Qa4 27.c4!

Otherwise Black would play ...c4 himself.

27...b4 28.Qf1! Wc7



29.f4

Karpov handles the closed position with great skill, obtaining more and more space.

29...Qd7 30.Wc2 Qc3 31.f5!

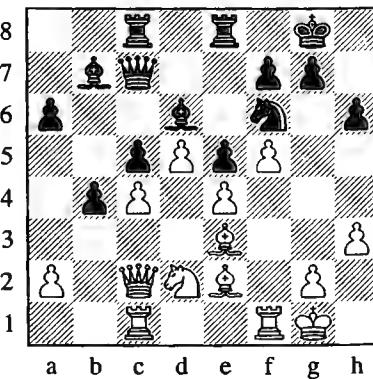
The position is closed and Karpov plays accordingly. He increases his space advantage while avoiding any chance of Black securing an outpost on e5.

31...Qf6 32.Qe2!

The side with a space advantage is not normally supposed to exchange pieces, but the knight on c3 was an unpleasant piece to live with. In fact the text move was another example of Karpov playing with more than one purpose, as he also cleared the path of the g-pawn to launch an attack.

It is worth noting that White could have won a pawn with 32.Qf3 Qe7 33.Qd2, but after 33...Qh7 Black will obtain some compensation thanks to his control over the dark squares.

32...Qxe2† 33.Qxe2 Qd6



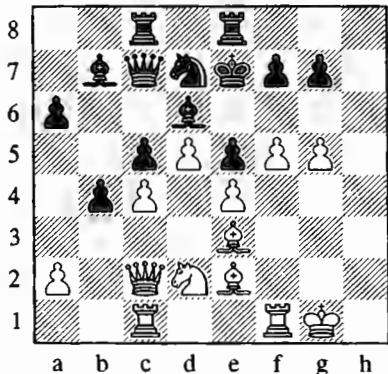
34.g4! Qf8!

Gligoric is a King's Indian expert and fully understands the power of White's impending pawn storm. He knows it would be futile to try and prevent it, so instead he evacuates his king.

**35.h4 ♜e7 36.g5**

Karpov pushes his opponent back by increasing his own space.

**36...hxg5 37.hxg5 ♖d7**



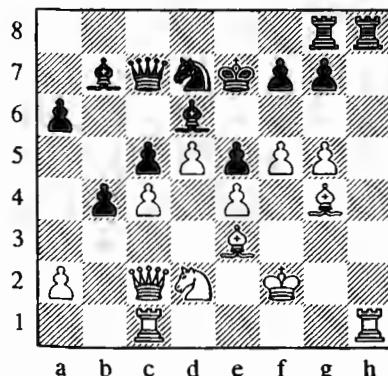
**38.♖g4!**

Even in closed positions one should not become lazy at improving the pieces to the fullest extent possible.

**38...♜g8 39.♗f2!**

Karpov improves his king and starts fighting for the only open file.

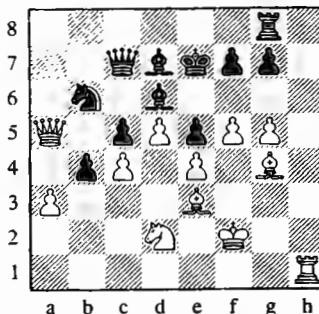
**39...♜h8 40.♕h1 ♜cg8**



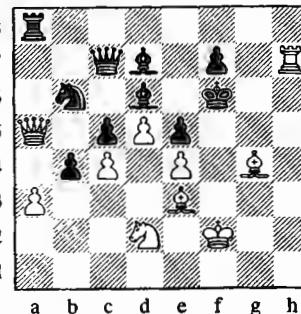
**41.♕d1!**

This is part of a deep and subtle plan, which can be carried out without taking any real risks. From a practical perspective this is an ideal strategy.

Nevertheless it was objectively even stronger to soften Black on the other flank with 41.a3!!<sup>1</sup>, when the game might proceed as follows: 41...a5 42.♕a4 ♜b6 43.♕b5! This wins but requires precise calculation. It would be interesting to know if Karpov spent much time looking at this, and whether he missed a detail in what follows. 43...♝c8 44.♕xa5 ♜xh1 45.♕xh1 ♜d7 The threat of trapping the queen appears frightening, but White has a beautiful retort:

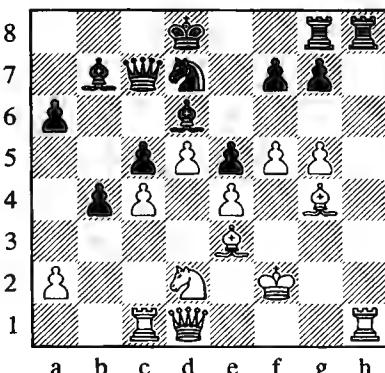


**46.♕h7!! ♜a8 47.f6†! gxh6 48.gxf6† ♜xf6**



**49.♕h5!!** White does not save the queen but instead plays for mate. 49...♝g4 50.♕xb6! and White wins.

**41...Qd8**



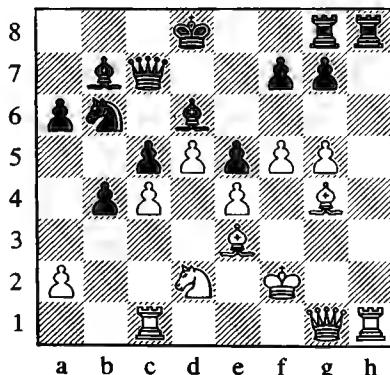
**42.Qg1!!**

With this brilliant move Karpov beautifully finds better places for his pieces. Black has no counterplay so there is no need to hurry.

**42...Nb6?**

Gligoric wants to fight for the h-file, but Black's c5-pawn is weak, so there was not much to be gained from moving the knight away from d7.

A better idea was Kasparov's suggestion of 42...a5, intending ...a4 to take away the b3-square from the white knight.



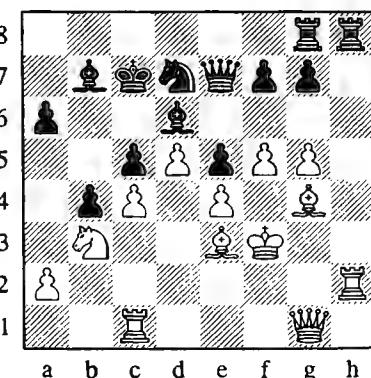
**43.Qh2!**

White begins fighting for the h-file; the first function of the magical queen move.

**43...Qe7 44.Qb3 Qc7 45.Qf3!**

White makes full use of his space advantage. The king is ideally placed not on the second rank but the third, for reasons that will soon become apparent.

**45...Qd7**



**46.a3!!**

Karpov switches to the opposite flank and brings his opponent down in no time. My students have great difficulty in finding this move. The principle is clear though: when one has an advantage in space, one should look for opportunities to switch the focus of the attack between both sides of the board.

**46...bxa3 47.Qa2!**

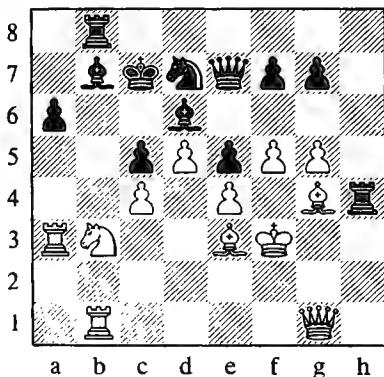
And now we see why Karpov opened the second rank. I cannot say for sure if he envisioned this idea when making his 42nd move, but it would not surprise me if he did.

**47...Qh4 48.Qxa3 Qgh8**

48...Qf6?! is a witty suggestion from Kasparov. It does not solve Black's problems, although it would have been worth trying as a

last ditch attempt. After 49.gxf6 gxf6 50.Qa5 Qxg4 51.Qxg4 Qxg4 52.Qxg4 Qd8 53.Qxc5 Qxc5 54.Qxc5† Qd7 55.Qb1 Qa8 56.Qd2 White's king escapes the checks, as Kasparov himself pointed out.

**49.Qb1 Qb8**



**50.Qe1!**

The introduction of the queen to the attack signifies the end for Black.

**50...Qxg4 51.Qxg4 Qc8 52.Qa5†**

1–0

In round nine Karpov suffered a setback and lost to Portisch. He bounced back with a win over Smith, and then drew the rest of his games, including one against the legendary Estonian Paul Keres. He finished with 10½/15, which was enough for equal first place alongside Petrosian and Portisch. Despite his relatively slow finish, his overall performance was impressive. By the end of 1972, Karpov had firmly established himself as a world class player.

# 1972 Summary

USSR Olympiad, Moscow (Board two):  $5\frac{1}{2}/9$  (+4 =3 -2)

Student Olympiad, Graz (Board one):

Preliminary:  $2\frac{1}{2}/4$  (+1 =3 -0)

Finals:  $4\frac{1}{2}/5$  (+4 =1 -0)

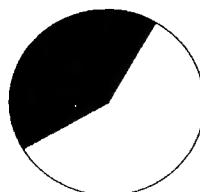
World Olympiad, Skopje (Board five):

Preliminary:  $4/4$  (+4 =0 -0)

Finals:  $9/11$  (+8 =2 -1)

San Antonio (1st-3rd):  $10\frac{1}{2}/15$  (+7 =7 -1)

Total 75% (+28 =16 -4)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1973

Rating 2660 (2-3 in the World)

Before Karpov set out on the road to the world crown, he played in two tournaments. The first was in Budapest, at a time when the Hungarian capital was celebrating the centenary of establishing the combined city by uniting Pest and Buda. In the first round the German endgame specialist Hecht thwarted Karpov's attempts to grind out a full point, and held him to a draw. In the second round Karpov defeated Hort, who committed surprising mistakes in the endgame for a player of such high calibre. Throughout the tournament, Karpov ruthlessly punished his rivals who would later become candidates in the world championship cycle. The win over Hort was followed by a sequence of five draws. In round eight he met another future world championship candidate, Gyula Sax of Hungary. This was their first encounter, and they would go on to meet six more times. Overall Karpov won three of their encounters and drew the other four. The Hungarian grandmaster faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Kramnik. He won four of those encounters, drew thirteen and lost thirty.

## Game 30

Anatoly Karpov – Gyula Sax

Budapest 1973

### 1.d4!

The exclamation mark is in recognition of Karpov's willingness to expand his repertoire. 1973 was the first year in which Karpov regularly utilized the queen's pawn openings. Before that he only sporadically played anything other than 1.e4.

### 1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6

Sax's main opening at this period was the Grünfeld. On this occasion, perhaps fearing Karpov's preparation, he employs his secondary weapon.

### 4.g3

Karpov regularly used this safe line, as well as the Sämisch and the main line with  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ . He won numerous games with each variation.

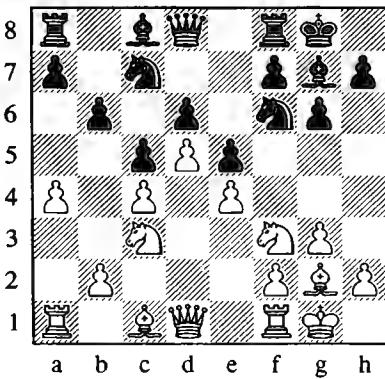
### 4... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 0–0 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ c5 7.d5 e5

Gyula Sax is a superb tactician with a great feel for dynamics, so it is surprising that he opted for such a static structure.

**8.0-0 ♜a6 9.e4 ♜c7 10.a4**

Preventing any sacrifices in the style of the Benko Gambit.

**10...b6**

**11.♘e1!**

Improving the knight and preparing a possible f4.

**11...♝h5 12.♝d3 f5 13.exf5!**

With this move Karpov wins control over the e4-square.

**13...♝xf5 14.♝e4 ♜d7 15.f3 ♜f6 16.♝df2!**

Having more space, Karpov only allows Black to exchange a single piece.

**16...♝xe4?!**

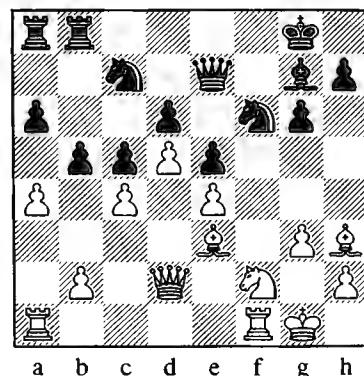
Black had to parry the threat of 17.♝xf6† followed by g4, but giving up his light-squared bishop was not the best way to do it. 16...♜e7? would have enabled Black to keep the bishop pair.

**17.fxe4 a6 18.♝e3 ♜fb8**

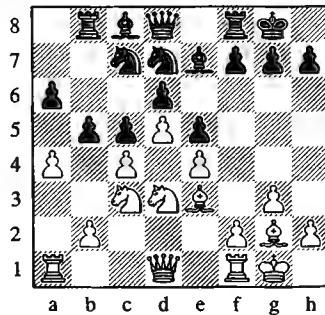
The immediate 18...b5 would have allowed White to open the queenside in his favour: 19.b4! cxb4 20.axb5 (20.c5!?) 20...axb5 21.c5 And White will soon dominate on the queenside.

**19.♗h3 ♜e7 20.♗d2 b5**

Sax may have been aiming for counterplay, or perhaps even a complete closing of the queenside, after which it would be hard for White to prove anything on the other flank.

**21.b4!**

Karpov forcefully opens the queenside. It is a thematic breakthrough for such positions. Let me cite you another beautiful example:



14.cxb5! axb5 15.b4! White went on to win in I. Sokolov – Miles, Sarajevo 1987.

**21...cx b4 22.axb5 axb5 23.c5! ♜a4 24.♝ac1**

This move does not let Black off the hook, although 24.cxd6!? may well be faster, as after 24...♜xd6 25.♝ac1 ♜a6 26.♝c6 ♜d8 27.d6 Black is in big trouble.

**24...Qce8!**

Sax finds the most resilient defence.

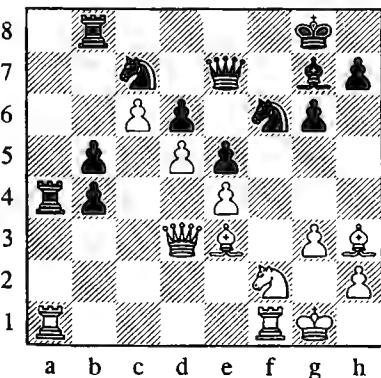
**25.c6**

Karpov relinquishes any ideas of a quick breakthrough, in favour of creating a monstrous passed pawn. In the long run it will be hard for Black to restrain this pawn while also holding his queenside together.

**25...Qc7 26.Qa1!**

This subtle move prepares to pose a dilemma to Black. He will either have to give up the a-file, or allow the exchange of a rook which would have been useful for restraining the c6-pawn.

**26...Ra6 27.Qd3 Qc7 28.Qab1 Qa6 29.Qa1 Qc7**



**30.Qb3!**

Karpov has a clear advantage so of course he avoids a repetition.

**30...Rba8**

Sax opts for the latter of the two evils noted above.

**31.Rxa4 Rxa4 32.Qd2 Qa6 33.Qd3 Ra5 34.Qe2!**

Again it is hard to read what Karpov wants to do. This move makes Qc8 a dangerous

threat, as the response ...Qc5 will no longer win a tempo by attacking the queen.

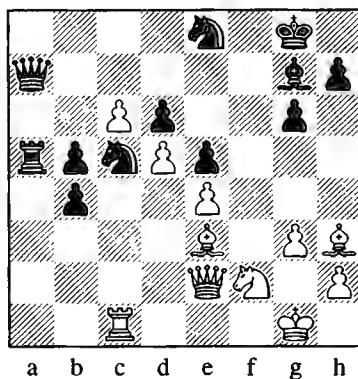
**34...Ra7 35.Qe3**

If 35.Qc8 Ra2 is the answer.

**35...Qc5 36.Qc1!**

With this move Karpov prepares to create a second passed pawn by capturing on c5, which will also secure his control over the e6-square. 36.Qd3! Qfxe4 37.Qg4 was also winning.

**36...Qe8**



**37.Qg4!**

Black has put too many of his pieces on the queenside, and his king will pay the price after the white queen invades. White had another solution in 37.Qd7! Qc7 38.Qxc5 dxc5 39.d6 when the mighty pawns decide the game.

**37...b3**

Black has no time to exchange the rook: 37...Ra1 38.Qxa1 Rxal† 39.Qg2 Ra8 40.Qxc5 dxc5 41.Qe6† Qh8 42.d6 wins.

**38.Qg2**

Karpov often liked to improve his king before moving in for the kill, but here it is an unnecessary precaution. The cleanest route to victory was: 38.Qxc5! b2 (38...dxc5

39.♗e6† ♜f7 40.d6 b2 41.♗d1 wins) 39.♗b1 dxc5 (39...♝a1 40.♗xa7) 40.♗xb2 White stops the queenside counterplay and wins.

### 38...b2

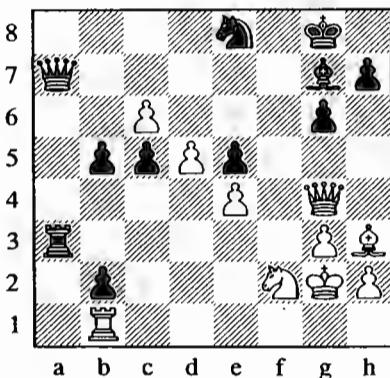
38...♝f6 is too slow: 39.♗xc5 dxc5 40.♗c8 ♜a8 41.♗e6† ♜g7 42.♗xc5 b2 43.♗d7† ♜f8 (43...♝h6 44.♗g4† ♜g5 45.♗xh7 b1=♛ 46.♗h4#) 44.c7 And White wins.

38...♝e7 also fails: 39.♗c8! (better than 39.♗b1 ♜a3 40.♗d1 b4 41.♗xc5 dxc5 42.♗xb3 ♜a5) 39...♝f8 40.♗b1 And Black is in serious trouble.

### 39.♗b1 ♜a3

If 39...♝a2 40.♗xc5 dxc5 41.d6 ♔xd6 42.♗e6† ♜f7 43.c7 wins.

### 40.♗xc5 dxc5



### 41.♗xb2

Without the b2-pawn Black has no counterplay and will quickly be crushed.

### 41...♛b8 42.♗e6†

#### 1–0

Black resigned as White will easily invade. In the last five rounds Karpov drew three and beat two more future world championship candidates in Adorjan and Vaganian. Karpov

finished in second place with 9½/15, having won four games with eleven draws.

There was a rumour within Hungarian chess circles that Geller, who won the tournament a full point ahead of Karpov, went to the Soviet ambassador and told him proudly that he had won the event, only to be scolded. Apparently Karpov "should have won" the tournament. There is no guarantee that the story is true, but if it was so, it would show how badly the Soviet authorities wanted the chess crown back from Fischer. Their obvious choice to achieve this was Karpov, and they would go to almost any lengths to build up their new rising star.

After Budapest, Karpov took part in the 'Three Teams' event in Moscow, where he defeated both Spassky and Taimanov by the score of 1½–½. His next tournament was the Leningrad Interzonal. He began as favourite to qualify, as he already had the highest rating in the competition. Karpov began well, scoring three wins and three draws before facing Gennady Kuzmin, who obtained his grandmaster title at this event. They had drawn once before, but Karpov won all three of their subsequent encounters. Kuzmin played against all the world champions from Smyslov onwards, except for Fischer and Topalov. Out of thirteen games he won two, drew six and lost five against them.

## Game 31

### Anatoly Karpov – Gennady Kuzmin

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

#### 1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2

Karpov scored nineteen wins and eleven draws with the Tarrasch Variation, and never lost a single game with it. It is a fantastic score, although it is interesting that in his 1974 match with Korchnoi, he was unable to score a victory in seven attempts.

**3...c5**

Against other moves Karpov has scored nine out of nine, which is quite incredible.

**4.exd5 exd5 5.Qgf3**

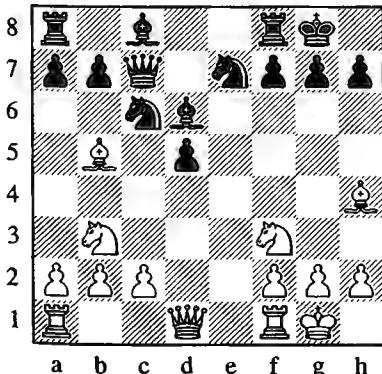
In his 1978 world championship match against Korchnoi, Karpov tried 5.Qb5† Qc6 6.Qe2† and drew twice.

**5...Qc6 6.Qb5 Qd6 7.dxc5 Qxc5 8.0–0 Qge7 9.Qb3 Qd6 10.Qg5**

This was Karpov's most frequent choice in this line. He played it three times in total, although he tried some other moves as well. Overall he won three games and drew four from this variation, although he was never able to hurt Korchnoi.

**10...0–0 11.Qh4 Wc7?!**

This move was criticized by several commentators at the time. Indeed, just a few moves later the queen will lose a tempo by moving to b6. A few months later the French expert Uhlmann deviated with the more common 11...Qg4, but even this did not enable him to solve all his problems: 12.Qe2 Qh5 13.Qe1 Wb6 14.Qfd4 Qg6 15.c3 Qfe8 16.Qf1 Qe4 17.Qg3 Qxg3 18.hxg3 a5 19.a4 Qxd4 20.Qxd4 Qc6 21.Qb5 Qed8 22.g4 Qxd4 23.Wxd4 Wxd4 24.cxd4 White went on to win an instructive endgame, Karpov – Uhlmann, Madrid 1973.



**12.Qg3 Qxg3?!**

There was no reason not to develop with 12...Qg4 or 12...Qd8. Even if Black intends to exchange bishops, why reveal his cards so early?

**13.hxg3 Qg4 14.Qe1 Qad8 15.c3 Wb6 16.Qd3 Qg6**

Black stops 17.Qxh7†, but as the game develops his knight will not stand well on g6.

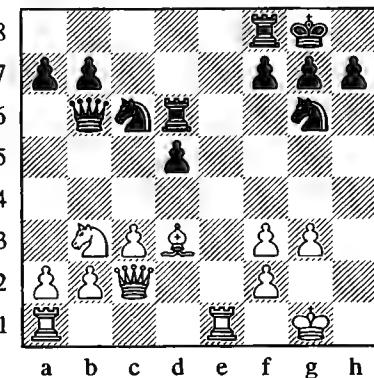
**17.Qc2 Qxf3?!**

Giving up the bishop voluntarily enables White to dominate on the light squares. In addition Black strengthens White's pawn structure. This last factor can be directly attributed to Black's decision to exchange bishops on g3.

17...Qfe8 was better, for instance 18.Qfd4 Qce5 (or 18...a6) 19.Qb5 Qe7 and Black should be able to live with the isolated pawn.

**18.gxf3 Qd6**

18...d4 was worth considering, although after 19.Qe4 White is slightly better thanks to his strong bishop.



**19.f4!**

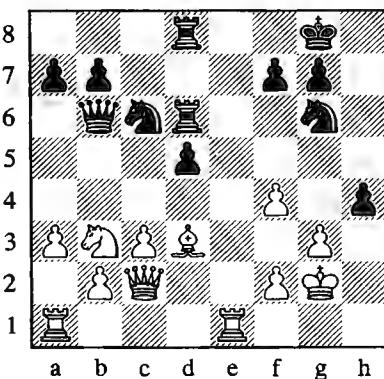
Gaining space and taking away the e5-square from the black knights.

**19...♝fd8 20.a3!**

Karpov is anticipating ...d4, which can now be met by c4 as the reply ...♝b4 is no longer possible.

**20...h5**

Kuzmin wants to get some play on the h-file. It is true that White's king does not have many defenders, but Black's pieces are far away from that area as well.

**21.♗g2 h4****22.♗e2!**

Another small improving move by Karpov, protecting the f2-pawn and preparing to double on the e-file. If 22.♗d2 then 22...h3† is annoying.

**22...♝f8 23.♗d2!**

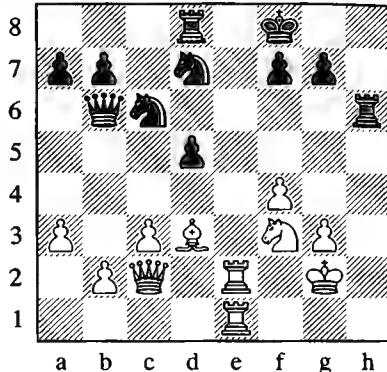
Karpov improves his knight by transferring it to the kingside.

**23...♝h6 24.♗f3 hxg3**

Pushing the pawn to h3 would mean losing it in the long run.

**25.fxg3 ♐d7 26.♗ae1 ♘f8**

Out of the blue, Black has back rank problems. If 26...♝f6 27.g4! is strong.

**27.g4!!**

This is a brilliant move, gaining space and driving the black rook away from its ideal post.

**27...♛c7 28.g5 ♜h8?**

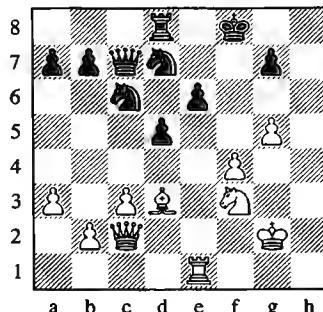
The rook will have no function on the h-file. A better chance was:

**28...♜e6**

This would have eased the pressure along the e-file. White can maintain a big advantage, but he has to be precise:

**29.♗xe6**

After 29.♗g3 ♐c5 30.♗f5 ♜xe2 31.♗e2 ♐e7 32.♗c2 White is somewhat better, but the text move is more ambitious.

**29...fxe6****30.♗g3!!**

White can settle for a positional advantage

with 30... $\mathbb{Q}d2$  or 30... $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ , but the stronger text move enables him to develop an attack along the h-file.

30...e5

Or 30... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  and White is better.

31. $\mathbb{Q}g6$

31. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  e4 32. $\mathbb{Q}h8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}h5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  35.c4 is also dangerous.

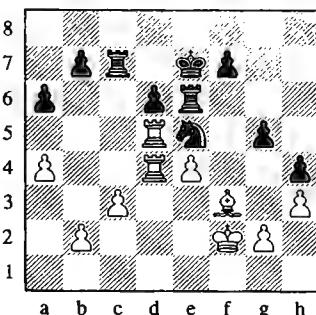
31...exf4†

After 31...e4 32. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  33.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  34.cxd5 White has a huge advantage.

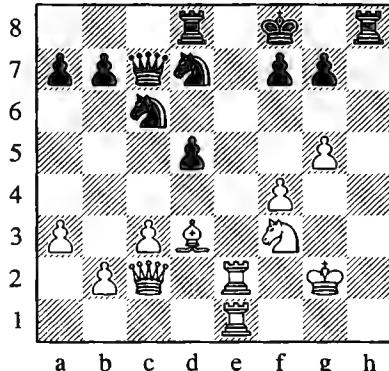
32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Black is in trouble.

Let me cite another Karpov game in which his opponent neglected to ease the pressure being exerted by doubled rooks:



This position was reached in Karpov – Polugaevsky, Moscow (4) 1974. According to Kasparov in his *My Great Predecessors* series, 36... $\mathbb{Q}c5\text{?}$  was the best defence as it forces the exchange of one of the strong rooks. Kasparov's analysis continues 37. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4\uparrow$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d2\uparrow$  42. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4\uparrow$  with a perpetual. Polugaevsky played differently and lost. It was a vital win for Karpov.



29. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$

Karpov uses his king effectively. It is reminiscent of Game 29 (Karpov – Gligoric) in which he also advanced his king to the third rank in order to facilitate the transfer of heavy pieces along the second rank.

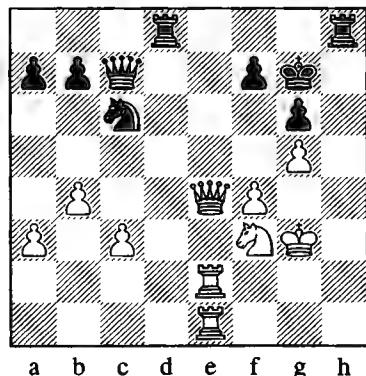
29... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f5$

Threatening  $\mathbb{Q}h2$ .

30...g6 31.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e4\uparrow$

Black must sacrifice a pawn to stop White's attack. If 31... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  wins.

32. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  dx $e4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

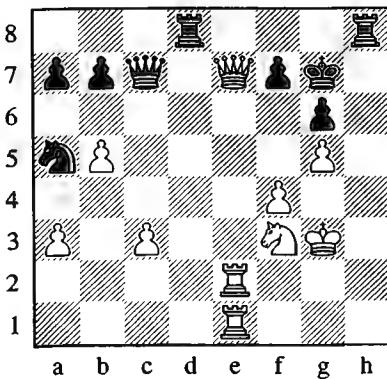


34.b5!

Karpov has already outplayed his opponent strategically, and now he allows no time for Kuzmin to bring his h8-rook into the game.

The alternative was 34.c4, intending to convert White's extra pawn by slow technical means. If 34... $\mathbb{W}c8$  35.c5  $\mathbb{E}h3\#$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  and Black's attack is halted, as 36... $\mathbb{W}g4$  can be met by 37. $\mathbb{E}g1$ .

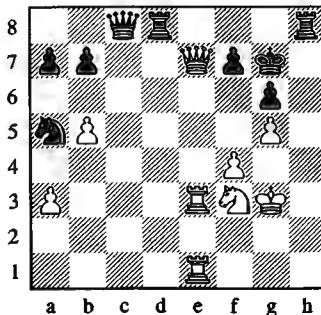
**34... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  35. $\mathbb{W}e7!$**



White takes advantage of a tactical opportunity to conquer the seventh rank.

**35... $\mathbb{W}xe7$**

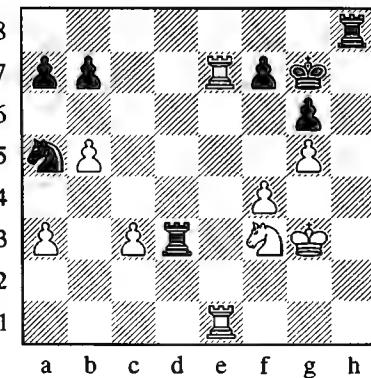
35... $\mathbb{W}xc3$  can be refuted as follows: 36. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  (36... $\mathbb{W}b2$  37. $\mathbb{E}b1$ ! This is not the only win, but it is the fanciest. 37... $\mathbb{W}xb1$  38. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  [38... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  39. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$ ] 39. $\mathbb{W}xd8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  40. $\mathbb{W}xa5$  And White wins.)



37. $\mathbb{E}e6!!$  This lovely attacking move crushes the opponent's defences: 37... $\mathbb{W}g8$  38. $\mathbb{E}xg6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  39. $\mathbb{E}e6$  And Black can resign.

**36. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{B}d3$**

36... $\mathbb{E}c8$  can be met by 37. $\mathbb{E}1e3$ , when  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  is coming with decisive effect.



**37. $\mathbb{E}c7$**

Doubling the rooks on the seventh rank simply dismantles Black's defences.

**37... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g4$**

38. $\mathbb{E}ee7$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  39. $\mathbb{E}xf7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  40. $\mathbb{E}fd7!$  wins as well.

**38... $\mathbb{E}f8$  39. $\mathbb{E}ee7$**

1–0

In the next game Karpov survived a scare as his countryman Tal, who was having a bad tournament, missed an easy win against him. Next he beat Quinteros and drew two more games. He had reached 'plus five' when he met the strongest ever East German player Wolfgang Uhlmann, who had made it as far as the candidates matches in the previous decade. By 1973 Karpov was ahead by 1½–½ in their personal meetings. He added two more victories, including the following game. The grandmaster from Dresden played thirty nine games against the World Champions. He has

drawn 21 times, with sixteen losses and two wins; Fischer and Botvinnik were his victims.

## Game 32

### Wolfgang Uhlmann – Anatoly Karpov

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

1.c4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

5.e3

Back in 1971 the East German grandmaster played 5.g3 against Karpov and the game ended in a draw.

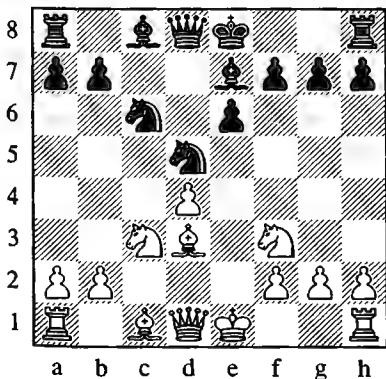
5.d4 is probably the most testing move, when Black has to transpose to another opening. He can choose between the Grünfeld, the Semi-Tarrasch and the Queen's Gambit Accepted. Karpov tried each of them once.

5...e6 6.d4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  cxd4

Many have tried to benefit from delaying this capture, but Karpov does not mind allowing White a few more options.

8.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$

In the nineties when Karpov reached the same position from the Panov variation of the Caro-Kann, he repeated the text move but also tried 8... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  on some occasions. He made a plus score with both moves.



9.0-0 0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Karpov won two and drew four of his six games with 10... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , but on his last attempt he was in trouble against Anand in their 1998 world championship final, although he eventually won that game.

11.a3!

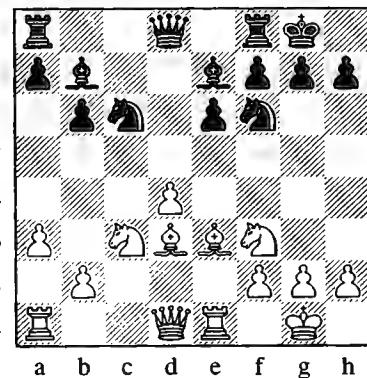
Black eases his position if he can play ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  followed by ...b6.

11...b6 12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Upon facing 12. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  against Smyslov in the 1971 USSR Championship, Karpov responded with 12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  and lost.

Later he improved with 12... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ !, and went on to make an interesting pawn sacrifice: 13. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  g6 16. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  a6 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  24.h3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b5 Black obtained reasonable compensation and went on to draw in Timman – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998.

12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$



13. $\mathbb{R}c1?$

This is a natural-looking way to develop the rook, but it does nothing on c1. The most common move here is 13. $\mathbb{Q}c2!$ , intending to

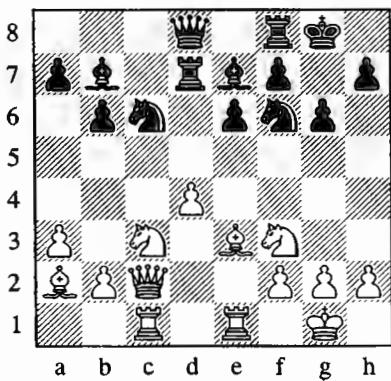
put the queen on d3 and rook on d1, where it supports a future d4-d5 break.

**13...♝c8 14.♗b1 ♜c7?!**

Black is also doing fine after 14...♝a5 15.♕e5 ♜c4.

**15.♗d3 ♜d7 16.♗c2 g6 17.♗a2**

17.h3?! deserved attention.



**17...♝g4!**

Karpov exchanges the dark-squared bishop.

**18.♝cd1 ♜xe3 19.fxe3 ♜f6!**

White controls slightly more space and is strong in the centre, which is why Karpov takes the time to improve his pieces carefully before daring to open the position for his bishops.

**20.♗f2 ♜g7 21.♗d2 ♜e7! 22.e4**

White is not interested in exchanging more minor pieces, so he stops ...♝d5.

**22...h6! 23.♗ed1 ♜b8 24.♗e3 ♜fd8**

Karpov keeps improving his position.

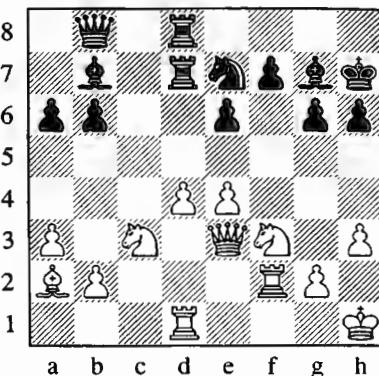
**25.h3 ♜h7**

He cares about his king as well.

**26.♔h1 a6!**

It is remarkable how Black now controls all the squares on the fifth rank with his pawns.

**27.♗f2**



**27...♝g8!**

Improving the last piece.

**28.♗df1 b5 29.h4?**

White hopes to get an attack, but he merely weakens his position. Kotov suggested 29.♗b1 and evaluated the position as equal, but I would say Black has the better chances after active moves such as 29...♝a7 or 29...f5?.

The most principled move looks to be 29.♕e5??, which can lead to interesting complications: 29...♝xd4? (After 29...♝xe5 30.dxe5 ♜g7 31.♗f4 ♜c6 Black has a slight initiative on the queenside, but it will probably not be enough to achieve anything serious.) 30.♗xf7 ♜d3 31.♗e2 (31.♗c1 ♜e8) 31...♝d2 32.♗e1 ♜xf2 33.♗xf2 ♜d3 Black will have compensation even if he drops the e6-pawn, but it is not clear if he really stands better. 34.♗xe6 (34.♗h4 ♜g3 35.♗xg3 ♜xg3) 34...♝f6 35.e5 ♜h5 The position is unclear.

**29...♝f6! 30.♗e5 ♜xd4**

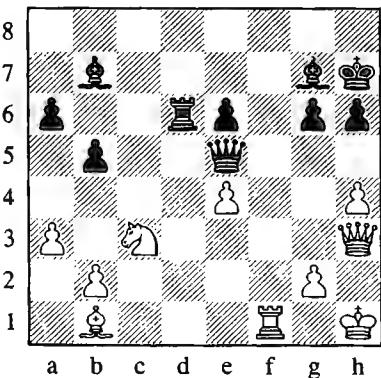
Karpov has correctly evaluated that the opening of the position will work in his favour.

**31.♗xf6 ♜xe5 32.♗xf7 ♜d8d7 33.♗xd7 ♜xd7**

Black has sweet prospects. His pieces are working in harmony, and he has strong control over the dark squares. Uhlmann may have been short of time, as he fails to offer much resistance.

### 34.♘h3? ♘d6 35.♗b1?

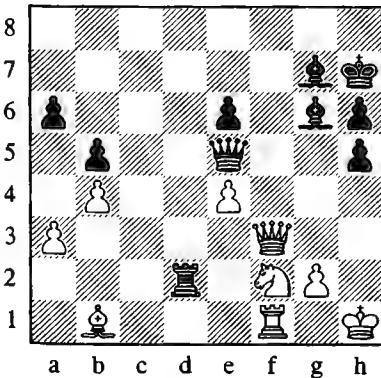
White commits another error, but his position was bad anyway, for instance 35.♗e3 a5 with a clear plus for Black.



### 35...♗d2! 36.h5 gxh5 37.♗d1 ♘c6

Karpov continues to wear down his opponent. 37...♗xe4 should be winning as well.

### 38.♗f3 ♘e8 39.b4 ♘g6 40.♗f2



### 40...♗d4

Black has achieved complete positional domination.

### 41.♘h3 e5

This paralyses the knight as well. White could almost have resigned here.

### 42.♗f2 ♘b2 43.♗h2 ♘c4 44.♗d1 ♘b3 45.♗d3 ♘xe4

0–1

Karpov won the next two games, followed by a draw. In the penultimate round he had a very tense game against Smejkal, who started with two early losses but bounced back strongly and even enjoyed a seven game win streak in the middle of the event. The Czech player was on 'plus-five' when he met Karpov, and he needed to win to keep his qualifying chances alive. Smejkal had his chances, but after a blunder Karpov won a pawn. Smejkal thought he had an easy draw, but Karpov skilfully found a way to cause him problems, and although Smejkal may have had a study like defence, he did not find it and eventually lost. Karpov beat Torre in the last round for a final tally of 13½/17, with ten wins and seven draws. With this fine result Karpov not only qualified for the candidates matches, but finished in equal first place with Korchnoi. The fact that the event took place in his home country may have helped him slightly, but even so, there was no questioning his worthiness as a world title candidate.

Karpov's next event was the European team championship, where he began with three wins and two draws. In the last round he defeated Ribli from Hungary, thus raising his score to a superb 5/6.

His form took a slight dip in the USSR Championship Final, even though his results looked okay on paper. He had difficult positions and was quite possibly lost in both of his first

two wins. He won from a position a pawn down against Korchnoi; he had some compensation but would never have expected to defeat such a formidable rival from such a situation. Later he was a piece up for inadequate compensation against Spassky, but only drew, and then he lost against Petrosian. He recovered to defeat Kuzmin, and ended with six draws and a final round win over Rashkovsky. Spassky won the championship, and Karpov shared the second to fifth places with Petrosian, Polugaevsky and Korchnoi. His performance can be judged in different ways. It is unlikely that the quality of his play would have frightened Fischer, but on the other hand his final result was incredibly good if one takes into account the fact that he was clearly not on form.

Karpov's last tournament of the year was in Madrid. He began by blundering an exchange but still winning against Pomar, and drew in round two. Next he faced Ulf Andersson, in their first encounter since 1969 (see Game 17, page 85). Karpov managed to overcome his dubious run of form to produce another masterpiece against the Swede.

### Game 33

Anatoly Karpov – Ulf Andersson

Madrid 1973

#### 1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e6 3.Qf3

Karpov allowed the Nimzo-Indian in less than 20% of his games after 2...e6. His winning percentage was also lower in that opening.

#### 3...b6 4.g3

Occasionally Karpov tried other moves, but this was his main weapon all the way. He scored well with it, winning thirty nine games out of seventy seven – more than half. He lost five as well, but most of those games occurred towards the end of his career.

#### 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4\ddagger$

Usually the Swedish grandmaster gave this check one move earlier. For some reason he achieved amazingly poor results with the text move, achieving just three draws and six losses from nine games.

#### 5.Qbd2

Later Karpov blocked the check with the bishop.

#### 5... $\mathbb{Q}b7$

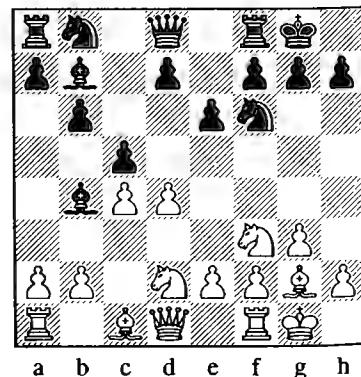
5... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  would have led to a well known position that is usually reached via the 4... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  move order.

#### 6.Qg2 0–0

Black can also opt for a Hedgehog position with 6... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  as the knight is passive on d2. If 7.0–0 then 7...c5 can be played.

The immediate undermining of the centre with 6...c5 should be playable as well: 7.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xd2\ddagger$  8.Qxd2 (after 8.Qxd2 cxd4 9.Qxd4 Qc6 10.Qh4 Qe7 Black's fast development gives him a good game) 8...cxd4 9.Qb4 Qa6 10.Qd6 Qe4 And Black has a free game.

#### 7.0–0 c5



8.a3!

White secures the advantage of the bishop pair.

**8...♝xd2 9.♝xd2 cxd4?**

This inaccuracy will cause Black a lot of suffering. Instead he should have settled for a slightly worse position with 9...d6.

**10.♝b4! ♜e8 11.♝d6!**

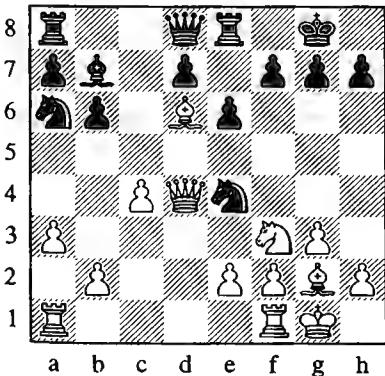
The bishop manoeuvre secures a space advantage and fixes the d7-pawn as a potential target.

**11...♞e4**

Or 11...♝xf3 12.exf3 ♜c6 13.f4 ♜c8 14.♝c1 and Black is rather passive here as well.

**12.♝xd4 ♜a6**

12...f5 is well met by 13.♝e5! (after 13.♝ad1 ♜c6 14.♝e3 ♜f6 Black becomes active) 13...♜c6 14.♝xc6 ♜xc6 15.♝e5 ♜e7 16.♝ad1 and White's strong dark-squared bishop gives him the edge.



**13.b4!**

Isolating the poorly placed knight on a6.

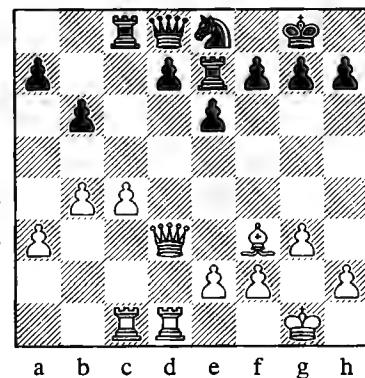
**13...♜c8 14.♝ac1 ♜xd6**

Another line is: 14...f6 15.♝fd1 e5 16.♝e3 ♜xd6 (16...♜e6 17.♝g5 ♜xd6 18.♝xe4 ♜xd1† 19.♝xd1 ♜xe4 20.♝xe4 is no fun for Black)

17.♝xd6 ♜e6 18.♝d2 And White maintains the pressure.

**15.♝xd6 ♜c7 16.♝fd1 ♜e7 17.♝d3 ♜xf3 18.♝xf3 ♜e8**

Black improves his awkwardly placed knight. 18...♝b8?! would prevent the coming invasion, but it is too slow. 19.c5! (19.♝c6 ♜f8; 19.e3 ♜e8 20.♝g2 ♜f6 is better for Black than the game.) 19...bxcc5 20.♝xc5 ♜e8 21.♝dcl White's undisputed control over the c-file gives him a clear advantage.



**19.♝b7!!**

Although Black is obviously somewhat worse, his position is solid and lacks any obvious weaknesses. Karpov maintains and increases his advantage in a subtle and unusual way. The artistry with which he orchestrates his position using a limited number of pieces is simply magical.

**19...♜c7 20.♝a6!!**

Black's queenside is paralysed in a most original way.

**20...♜c6?**

Even such a strong grandmaster as Andersson, with his finely tuned positional sense, did not anticipate what was coming. The text move wastes valuable time. He should have played

more consistently by improving his knight with 20... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ !. Then play may continue 21. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  d5 (21...e5 22.e4) 22.c5 bxc5 23.bxc5 h6 when White keeps an edge, but a much smaller one than in the game.

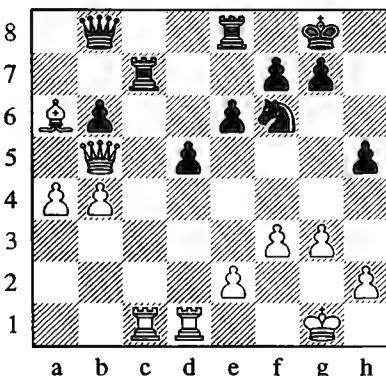
### 21. $\mathbb{W}b3!$ $\mathbb{W}b8$ 22. $\mathbb{W}a4!$ $\mathbb{E}c7$ 23. $\mathbb{W}b5!$

This whole sequence is immensely strong. White's queen and bishop have taken up strong attacking positions from which they cannot easily be dislodged. It is only a matter of time before he increases the pressure with a pawn advance.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 24.f3 d5

24... $\mathbb{W}e8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  is highly unpleasant for Black.

### 25.c5 h5 26.a4 $\mathbb{E}e8$ 27.cxb6 axb6



### 28.a5!

Having built up a commanding position, Karpov wastes no time in breaking through on the queenside.

### 28... $\mathbb{R}xc1$ 29. $\mathbb{R}xc1$ $\mathbb{W}e5$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xb6$ d4

Black's counterplay is too little, too late.

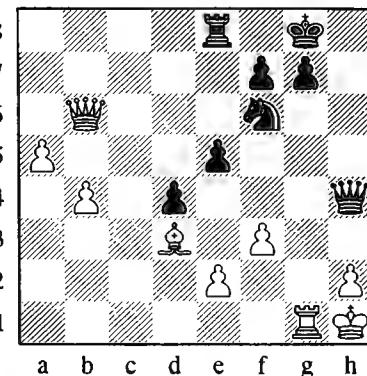
### 31. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}e3$ 32. $\mathbb{R}f1$

White's queenside pawns will be unstoppable, so he can afford to put his rook in a passive

position in order to prevent any kingside threats.

### 32...e5 33. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ h4 34.gxh4 $\mathbb{W}f4$ 35. $\mathbb{R}g1$ $\mathbb{W}xh4$

Black has made some progress, but he has not managed to create any threats, so the time has finally come for White to cash in on his queenside pawns.



### 36.a6 g6 37.a7 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$

1–0

This was a true masterpiece. The manoeuvres  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ -b7 and  $\mathbb{W}b3$ -a4-b5 were stunningly original and effective. And once Karpov achieved a dominating position on the queenside, he wasted no time and broke through with his characteristic directness and efficiency.

Over the next seven games Karpov achieved a win against Silvino Garcia and six draws. Then suddenly he shifted into top gear and scored four wins and one draw from his last five games, for a total of 11/15 with seven wins and eight draws. His final four victims were Kaplan, Uhlmann, Calvo and Planinc. This strong finish enabled him to claim sole first place, half a point ahead of Tukmakov and a further half in front of Furman, his trainer.

In 1973 Karpov was as strong as any other tournament player in the world. His form took a slight dip after the Interzonal, but he nonetheless cemented his reputation as a world class player and future contender for the ultimate crown.

## 1973 Summary

Budapest (2nd place):  $9\frac{1}{2}/15$  (+4 =11 -0)

Three Team event, Moscow (Board one):  $3/4$  (+2 =2 -0)

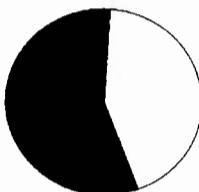
Leningrad Interzonal (1st-2nd place):  $13\frac{1}{2}/17$  (+10 =7 -0)

European Team Championship, Bath (Board four):  $5/6$  (+4 =2 -0)

USSR Championship (2nd-6th place):  $10\frac{1}{2}/17$  (+5 =11 -1)

Madrid (1st place):  $11/15$  (+7 =8 -0)

Total  $70.9\% (+32 =41 -1)$



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1974

Rating 2700 (2 in the World)

This was the year in which Karpov effectively earned the title of World Champion through his efforts over the chessboard. 1975 was more a matter of tying up the loose ends.

The first order of business was a candidates quarter-final match against Polugaevsky. Karpov entered the match as the clear favourite, having qualified in a much more dominant fashion, while also boasting a seventy point rating advantage.

Before the match they had drawn twice. Overall they played each other twenty four times, with Karpov winning five, and the remaining nineteen ending in draws. Polugaevsky played 136 games against world champions, starting with Botvinnik and finishing with Anand (with the exception of Kramnik). He won seventeen games, drew ninety five and lost twenty four. On the basis of these results, Polugaevsky can be considered one of the best of the players who never challenged for the world title.

In the first three games of the match Karpov had no real chances to win. In the fourth, he achieved no advantage and may have even stood slightly worse, but he showed the skill and determination needed to grind out a victory. This game was briefly referenced in the note to Black's 28th move in Game 31 (Karpov – Kuzmin). The way in which he slowly outplayed Polugaevsky was truly a world champion's performance. However, one gets the impression that Karpov would have had more trouble achieving such results against the Fischer of 1972.

In the next game, in a 4.e3 Nimzo-Indian (which occurred in all the match games in which Karpov played Black), Polugaevsky outplayed Karpov and got an extra exchange, but he was unable to break Karpov's resistance; maybe he even realized Karpov's middlegame strength was too much for him. In Game 6 Karpov sacrificed a pawn and later broke through after Polugaevsky failed to find the most accurate defence. Karpov held the seventh game, with the black pieces.

The winner of the match would be the first player to obtain three wins. Here is the eighth game, in which Karpov sealed a convincing match victory.

## Game 34

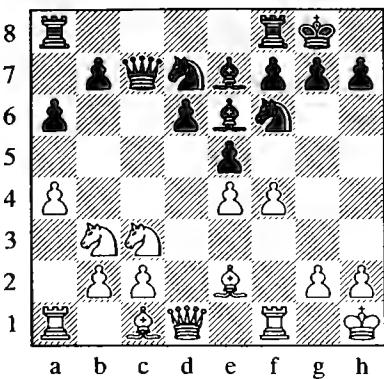
Anatoly Karpov – Lev Polugaevsky

Candidates quarter-final, Moscow (8) 1974

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}$ f3 d6 3.d4  $\mathbb{Q}$ xd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}$ xd4  $\mathbb{Q}$ f6 5. $\mathbb{Q}$ c3 a6 6. $\mathbb{Q}$ e2 e5 7. $\mathbb{Q}$ b3  $\mathbb{Q}$ e7 8.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}$ e6 9.f4  $\mathbb{Q}$ c7 10.a4  $\mathbb{Q}$ bd7 11. $\mathbb{Q}$ h1

According to the Hungarian commentator Florian, it was Efim Geller – one of Karpov's seconds in the present match – who first introduced this move at the 1973 Avro tournament.

**11...0-0**



**12.Qe3**

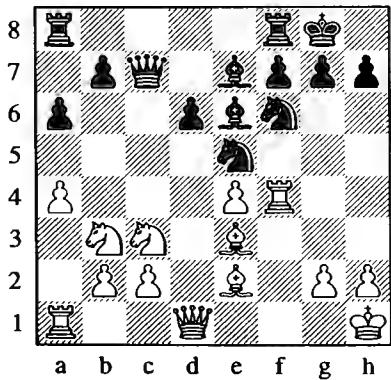
According to my database this move was first played in Game 2 of the present match. Karpov stuck to this move in all four of the games in which he had the white pieces.

**12...exf4**

Polugaevsky also kept repeating his move.

**13.Qxf4 Qe5**

Polugaevsky played 13...Qf6 in the second game. He probably hoped to put exert pressure against the e4-pawn with the rook. The game continued 14.Qd4 Qe5 15.Qf5 Qg6 16.Qf1 Qf8 17.Qd4 Qe5 18.Qg5 Qfd7 19.Qad1 Qc5 20.Qxd6 Qxd6 21.Qxd6 Qxd6 22.Qxd6 Qd7 23.b3 Qc6 24.Qf3 f5 and Black got enough play for the pawn.



**14.a5**

This multifunctional move gains space on the queenside, secures the b6-outpost and also frees the a4-square for the white pieces.

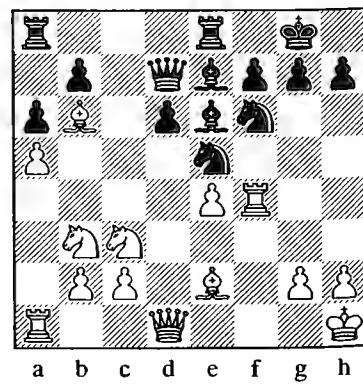
The fourth game continued as follows: 14.Qd4 Qad8! 15.Qg1 Qd7 16.Qd1 Qe8 17.Qf5 Qd8 18.Qd4 Qg6 19.Qff1 Qe5 20.Qf4 Qc5 21.Qxe6 Qxg1† 22.Qxg1 Qxe6 23.Qf3 Qeg4 24.Qg1 Qb6 Karpov had some problems here, but managed to turn things around and eventually won, as noted previously.

**14...Qfe8**

The text move was Polugaevsky's improvement on the sixth game, which continued: 14...Qfd7 15.Qf1 Qf6 16.Qd5 Qxd5 17.Qd5 Qxc2 18.Qd4 Qxb2 19.Qab1 Qc3 20.Qf5 Qc2 21.Qbe1 Qc5 22.Qxd6 Qcd3 23.Qxd3 Qxd3 24.Qd1 Qb4 25.Qxb7 Qab8 26.Qa7 Qc6 27.Qf4 Qa8 28.Qf2 Qad8 29.Qg3 And White went on to win.

In 1976 in Manila, Walter Browne introduced a significant improvement in 14...Qac8!, preventing the idea seen on move 16 of the present game. Karpov was unable to obtain any advantage and the game was agreed drawn on move 28.

**15.Qb6 Qd7**



**16.Bg4!**

Karpov makes full use of his 14th move, by activating his rook in an imaginative way.

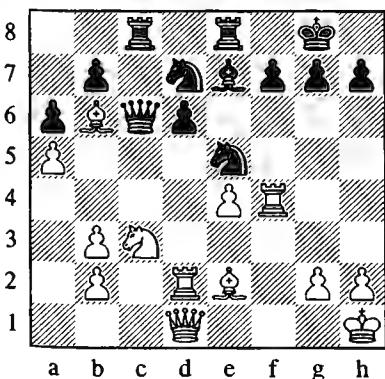
**16...Bac8 17.Bd4! Bc6**

After this game Polugaevsky recommended the exchange sacrifice 17...Bxc3 18.bxc3 Bc6, but I doubt that he would have been eager to test this idea if they played again.

It was worth considering a waiting move such as 17...h6?.

**18.Bd2 Bxb3?**

Polugaevsky misjudges the consequences of the ensuing change in the material balance. After the safer 18...Qg6 19.Qd4 Black should just give up his plan with 19...Bd7, when his position should be playable. Note that 19...Bxc3?! would be misguided, as after 20.bxc3 Qxf4 21.Qf3 Black does not have enough for the queen.

**19.cxb3 Qfd7****20.Qg1!**

Karpov intends to focus his attention on the queenside, so he tucks his bishop away on a safe spot where it also helps to protect his king.

**20...Bg5?**

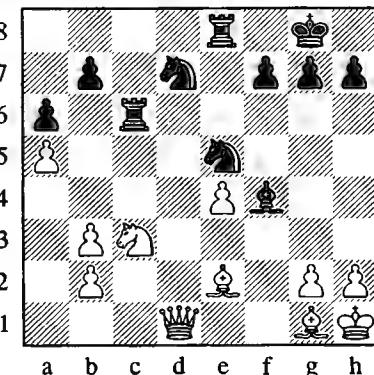
This was probably planned on the previous move. In fact, it is possible that Polugaevsky even analysed this position before the game.

20...Bcd8 was possible, but after 21.Qd5 White's knight is strong and 21...Bg5? achieves nothing after 22.Bc2.

Alternatively, after 20...Qc5 21.b4 Qe6 22.b5 White gains valuable space on the queenside and maintains a solid plus. A slightly deeper analysis reveals a neat tactical motif: 22...Bd7 23.Bf5 Qc4 24.Bxc4 Bxc4 25.bxa6 bxa6 26.Bxf7! White wins a pawn with this lovely shot. 26...Bxc3 (26...Bg5 27.Bf4) 27.Bxe7 Bxe7 28.bxc3 And White is clearly on top.

**21.Bxd6!**

Karpov shows excellent judgement in swapping his two rooks for a queen and a pawn. The idea works to perfection, as Black's queenside is weak while his rooks are unable to achieve anything constructive.

**21...Qxf4 22.Bxc6 Bxc6****23.b4!**

With this move Karpov immediately seizes the initiative on the queenside.

**23...Qf6**

The Russian grandmaster strives for counterplay in the centre. Waiting passively with 23... $\mathbb{E}cc8$  would have led to a difficult position as well: 24.b5 axb5 25.g3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}ed8$  27. $\mathbb{W}d6$  Black is badly tied up.

#### 24.b5 $\mathbb{E}ce6$ 25.bxa6

White has a choice of strong continuations.

25. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  was also tempting, for instance: 25... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (or 25... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26.exd5  $\mathbb{E}f6$  27.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  28.bxa6 bxa6 29. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  [29... $\mathbb{E}b8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ ] 30. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  31.d6 and Black is in trouble) 26. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{gxf6}$  28. $\mathbb{W}d5$  White has a clear advantage.

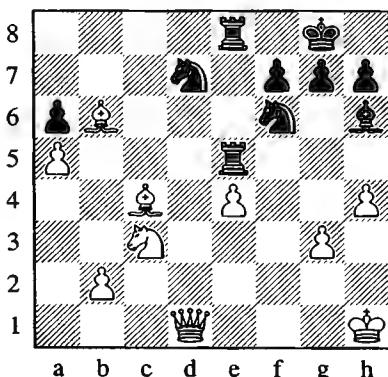
#### 25...bxa6 26.g3!

Karpov gives his king some breathing room and ensures that Black's bishop will be cut off from the queenside.

#### 26... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 27.h4 $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}b6$

It is likely that Karpov appreciated the potential weakness of the a6-pawn in this type of position as early as move 20.

#### 28... $\mathbb{Q}ed7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}e5$



#### 30. $\mathbb{W}b3!$

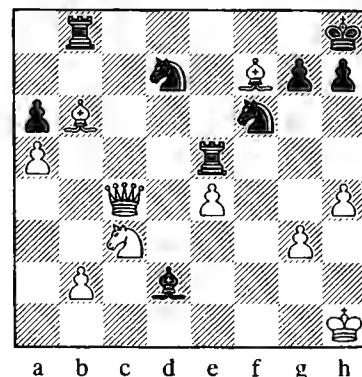
Before taking on a6, Karpov first goes after the f7-pawn.

#### 30... $\mathbb{E}b8$

30... $\mathbb{E}b8$  is met by 31. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ , and if 31... $\mathbb{E}h5$  then 32. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  wins.

#### 31. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 32. $\mathbb{W}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d2$

After 32... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  33.axb6 the b-pawn becomes far too strong: 33... $\mathbb{E}e7$  34.e5  $\mathbb{E}e5$  35.b7 The mighty pawn decides the game.



#### 33. $\mathbb{Q}c7!$

Simplifying to an easily winning endgame.

#### 33... $\mathbb{E}c5$ 34. $\mathbb{W}xc5$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ 36.bxc3 $\mathbb{Q}fxe4$ 37.c4

White is not only a pawn up, but his bishops are also much stronger than Black's knights.

#### 37... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ g6

Black is trying to activate his king, but the plan is too slow.

#### 39. $\mathbb{Q}e6$ $\mathbb{Q}ec5$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

This wins a piece.

#### 40... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}d6$

1–0

Thus Karpov won the match with three wins and five draws – a superb result against one of the most formidable Soviet grandmasters of the time. Nevertheless, there were some moments when Karpov's play was not totally convincing. After the match Polugaevsky told

Tibor Florian "I got excited and fired up, but Karpov was like water – he came at me firmly and evenly, and gradually he put out my fire. It hurt...the heavy defeat really hurt, but later I understood everything: I had lost to the future World Champion!"

### Candidates semi-final match

Karpov's semi-final opponent was Spassky, who two years earlier had lost the crown to Fischer. Karpov had defeated Spassky once before; indeed, the passage of time has demonstrated that Spassky's style suited Karpov very well. Their all time personal score is simply astonishing, as Karpov won fifteen games with just two defeats, draws not included. This is the most lopsided head to head score between any two world champions.

In view of the above, the reader may be surprised to learn that Spassky started the match in the best possible way, winning the very first game with the black pieces. Karpov managed to get two pieces for a rook, but Spassky had two dangerous passed pawns, and eventually Karpov had to give up a piece for them and subsequently lost.

Semyon Furman, Karpov's trainer, later explained that they had noticed that Spassky did not like to solve new opening problems over the board. Therefore in Game Two Karpov unveiled a surprise with 4... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  in the Caro-Kann, and effortlessly held a draw in a mere 17 moves. In the third game Karpov again surprised his opponent with 1.d4. Spassky responded with a King's Indian, which he rarely used. Maybe he wanted to bring Karpov into unknown territory. It turned out to be a bad decision, as he played the opening poorly and got a very passive position, which may even have been losing outright in an absolute sense. The game lasted fifty five moves, yet it was a one-sided affair.

In the next Caro-Kann, Spassky was once

again unable to develop any pressure and the game was drawn. In Game Five Spassky wisely played the Nimzo-Indian, an opening that he knew much better than the King's Indian, and drew fairly comfortably. In the sixth game Spassky tried a different plan against Karpov's 4... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  Caro-Kann. After the normal moves 5. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , he opted for an unfashionable yet challenging set-up without the move h2-h4. This time an interesting battle ensued. Spassky obtained a small edge, but was unable to achieve anything serious and later simplified to a balanced endgame. Unfortunately for him, Karpov played the endgame incredible well and went on to win, taking the lead in the match for the first time.

In the seventh game Spassky played a Stonewall set-up and got a terrible position. However, Karpov went on to open up the position in a less than optimal way, allowing his opponent just enough counterplay to save the game. In the eighth game Spassky played a main line against Karpov's Caro-Kann, which he had seemed reluctant to do until this point. It seems that his strategy at the start of the match had been to play relatively offbeat openings, perhaps because he feared the analytical power of Karpov's team of seconds. However, as the match went on it looks as though he came to the realization that main lines would be required. In this game he was pressing, but Karpov held.

Game Nine was the best of the match.

### Game 35

#### Anatoly Karpov – Boris Spassky

Candidates semi-final, Leningrad (9) 1974

1.e4

Karpov returns to his main weapon.

1...c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3.d4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

## 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d6

Nowadays the Scheveningen is rarely seen at the highest levels with its original move order.

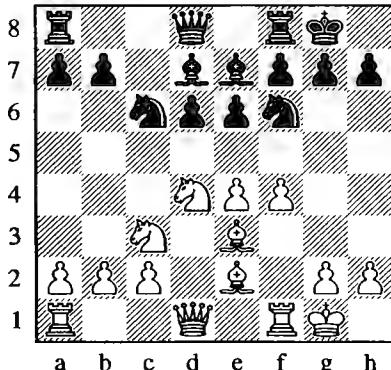
## 6. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Karpov only opted for this move in five games out of twenty two, preferring the Keres Attack with 6.g4 in all the rest.

## 6... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 7.0–0 0–0 8.f4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 9. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Spassky decides to do without the move ...a7-a6. Interestingly he had only played this position once prior to this match.

In the first game of the match Spassky preferred 9...e5. The game continued: 10.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  a5 11.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (Spassky later repeated this variation against Kavalek and Mecking, both of whom preferred 12.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  over Karpov's move.) 12... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  17. axb5 a4 18.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  d5 19. fxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  20. c3  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  22. cxb4  $\mathbb{W}xb2$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  Spassky went on to win this unclear position.



## 10. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ !!

A logical move. Black is looking to save time by omitting or postponing ...a7-a6. In response Karpov stops him from carrying out his plan of ... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ . Other moves turn out fine for Black:

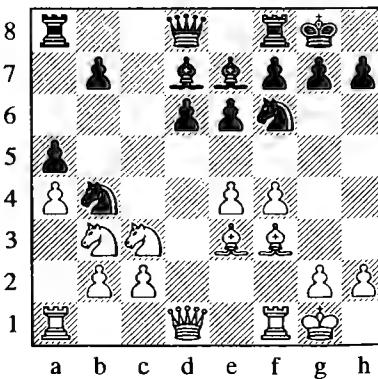
10.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12.  $\mathbb{W}g3$  g6 13.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (13.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  14.  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ ) 13...b5 14.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  b4 with good counterplay.

10.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  a6 (There is also 10... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and Black carries out ...e5.) 11.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  e5 15.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  b5 16.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  17. exd5  $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$  Karpov – Dzindzichashvili, USSR 1971.

## 10...a5!?

This is an ambitious and risky move. If Black does not obtain enough activity, White may be able to exploit the weakness of the b5-square in the long run. Karpov was able to do the same thing in some of his games against the Dragon; see for instance Game 46 (Karpov – Sosonko).

## 11.a4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$



## 12... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ?

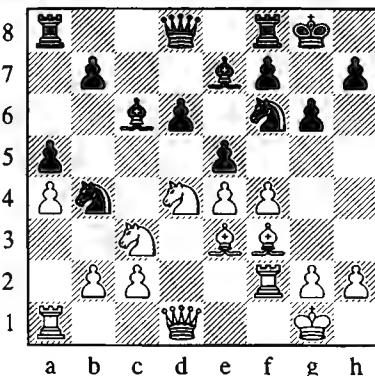
This automatic move does not fully meet the demands of the position. It is now known that 12...e5! is better, for instance 13.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}c8$ ? with interesting play.

## 13. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ g6

13... $\mathbb{W}d7$  was another idea, followed by developing the rooks and intending ...d5 at the right moment.

**14.♗f2 e5?!**

Spassky opens the position, but he will sorely miss the light-squared bishop.



**15.♕xc6! bxc6 16.fxe5 dxe5 17.♗f1!**

Karpov manoeuvres his queen to an ideal spot on c4.

**17...♗c8**

Botvinnik recommended 17...♝d7, but added that 18.♗c4 maintained White's advantage.

**18.b3!**

A useful waiting move. From now on Karpov can use his light-squared bishop more freely as ...♝g4 can no longer be played.

**18.♗c4** was less ambitious but still promising, for instance: 18...♗a6 19.♗xa6 ♜xa6 20.♗e2 ♜g7 Black can probably live with his slightly passive endgame, although it would not be much fun against Karpov.

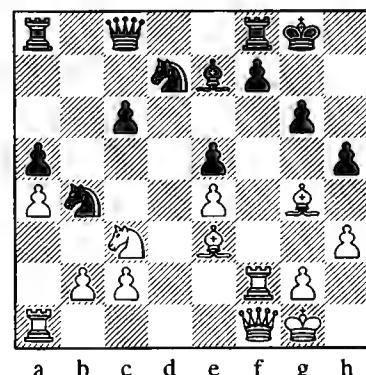
**18...♝d7?!**

This attempt to exchange the dark-squared bishops is too transparent. More resilient was 18...♗b7! 19.♗c4 (19.♗d1 ♘ad8) 19...♗d8 (after 19...♗a6 20.♗xa6 ♜xa6 21.♗e2 White is somewhat better) 20.♗af1 (20.♗h2 ♜b6 21.♗xb6 ♜xb6 22.♗d2 ♘fd8) 20...♗b6

21.♗xb6 ♜xb6 22.♗h2 ♜e8 and Black consolidates his position.

**19.♗g4 h5?!**

Kasparov prefers 19...♗c7, aiming for a similar position but without moving the h-pawn. After 20.♗xd7 ♜xd7 21.♗c4 he evaluates the position as better for White, but Black's kingside is certainly a bit more secure with the pawn on h7.

**20.♗xd7**

It is often said that one of the advantages of the bishop pair is the ability to exchange a bishop for an enemy knight at an opportune moment.

**20...♗xd7 21.♗c4 ♜h4?**

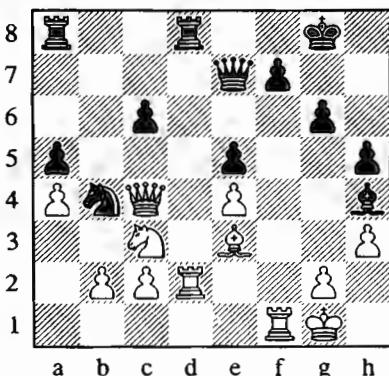
Interestingly Kasparov does not mention the improvement of 21...♗e6?!, which is somewhat passive but perhaps the best chance to make the black position playable. Kasparov almost always preferred to look for complications in worse positions, rather than defend passively. After 22.♗xe6 fxe6 White's advantage may not be decisive, but Black will obviously have to fight to make a draw. Spassky probably wanted to maintain some chances for a third result.

**22.♗d2 ♜e7 23.♗f1**

23.♗c5 can be met by 23...♗g5.

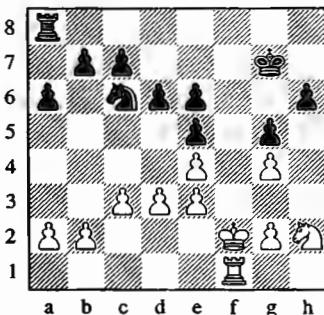
**23...♝fd8**

After 23...♝ad8 24.♗b1 ♜g5 25.♗c5 ♜c7 26.♗xf8 ♜xd2 27.♗xd2 ♜xd2 28.♗xb4 axb4 29.a5 the passed a-pawn is dangerous.

**24.♗b1!!**

This is one of Karpov's deepest moves. The knight has little function on c3, so Karpov improves it with a backward move. Apart from the overall beauty of the idea of improving a piece by retreating it to its original square, there is something else that makes this move so special. We all can see White has the initiative, but when we appreciate the power of the ensuing knight manoeuvre we come to the realization that Black's position is probably already beyond salvation.

This was not Karpov's only amazing knight retreat. Consider the following:

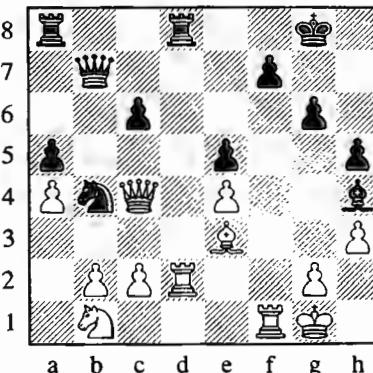


25...♝b8!! 26.♗f3 ♜d7 27.♗g3? ♜c5 28.♗d1 a5 29.♗f2 ♜e6 30.♗e2? ♜a4! Black went on to win in Bouaziz – Karpov, Hamburg TV 1982.

Unlike Karpov's Tunisian opponent in the above example, Spassky was a world class player and was not in the habit of making big mistakes, and yet still he is unable to muster much resistance in the game.

**24...♜b7**

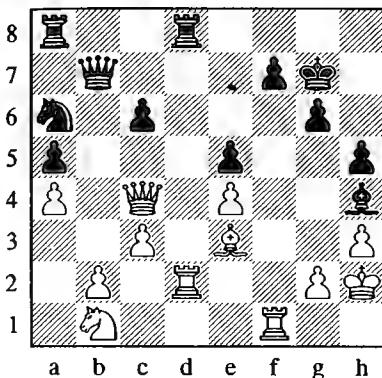
24...♝g3? 25.c3 wins a pawn.

**25.♗h2!!**

This is all part of Karpov's plan. Before he transfers the b1-knight to f3, he uses his king to take away the g3-square from the enemy bishop. If 25.♗e2 ♜g3 26.♗d2 ♜c7 Black is still in the game.

**25...♝g7 26.c3 ♜a6**

The knight finds itself far away from the area where the actions will take place. 26...♜xd2 27.♗xd2 ♜c2 was also unsatisfactory: 28.♗c5 (There is also 28.♗g1 ♜e1 29.♗xe1 ♜xe1 30.♗f3 ♜xb2 31.♗xe1 when White's two pieces are superior to Black's rook.) 28...♜e1 29.♗b3 (or 29.b4 axb4 30.cxb4 with a positional advantage) 29...♜d3 30.♗xd3 ♜xb3 31.♗d6 ♜e6 32.♗xe6 fxe6 33.♗d1 Black is unlikely to survive this difficult endgame.

27... $\mathbb{E}e2!$ 

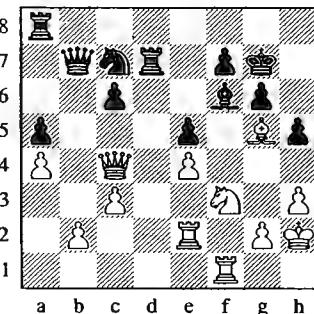
Karpov keeps the rook to defend the b2-pawn. Later it can assist in an attack on the f-file or an invasion along the d-file.

27... $\mathbb{E}f8?$ 27... $\mathbb{E}d7$ 

This would have offered more resistance, but Kasparov shows the way forward for White with the following beautiful line.

28. $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}c7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 

29. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  is adequately met by 29... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

29... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 30... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ 

I decided to check what happens if Black tries to exchange queens: 30... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (32... $\mathbb{Q}xe2?$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ ) 33. $\mathbb{Q}ee1!$  White switches the rook to the d-file to invade. (33. $\mathbb{Q}ef2$  f6 defends) 33...f6

34. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  And White wins.

31. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  f6 32. $\mathbb{Q}ef2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  h4

After 33... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  34.h4! Black is in zugzwang!

34. $\mathbb{Q}h7!$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 

With a clear advantage according to Kasparov.

28. $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}d8$ 

On 28... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  Kasparov's 29. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  is strong.

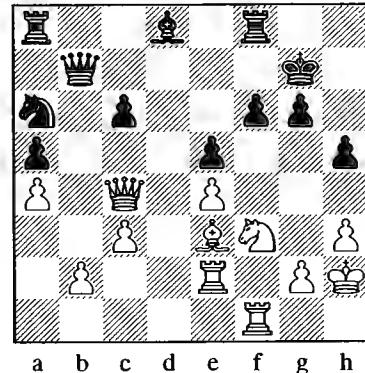
Black has no time to play 28... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  to bring the knight to the centre, as demonstrated by the following short line: 29.g3!? (29. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  is also promising) 29... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}ef2$  f6 31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black's position is about to fall apart.

29. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 

29. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  defends.

29... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 

If 29... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}ef2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}ae8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  wins.) 31. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$  White eliminates the strongest defensive piece and Black's position soon collapses: 31... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$  And White catches the enemy king.

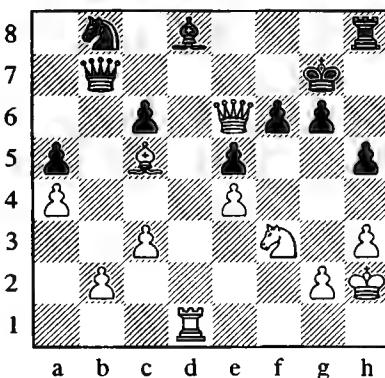
30. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$ 

Spassky has temporarily stabilized his king, but allowed White to achieve total domination on the d-file.

30... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31. $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{B}ad8$  32. $\mathbb{B}xd8$

Karpov exchanges in order to invade.

32... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  33. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{B}h8$



35. $\mathbb{B}xd8!$

1-0

Spassky resigned in view of 35... $\mathbb{B}xd8$   
36. $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

To win the semi-final match required four wins: one more than the quarter-final. This meant that after the above game Karpov required just one more win to seal victory and advance to the candidates final.

In Game Ten Karpov departed from the Caro-Kann in favour of the Breyer variation of the Ruy Lopez. He fared quite well with this system, although he never tried it against Kasparov. Spassky pressed for a long time but Karpov held the draw. In Game Eleven Spassky employed the Orthodox Queen's Gambit, but instead of defending patiently he played much too riskily and soon found himself in a desperately lost position. Karpov made no mistake and the match was over.

With hindsight it is clear that Spassky had a faulty match strategy, especially with regard to his opening choices, nevertheless Karpov proved himself to be the stronger player and deserved to win. His overall result in this

match – four wins, six draws and one loss, against a recent World Champion – must rank as one of his most impressive accomplishments of Karpov's career, and can be compared with Fischer's Reykjavik win. It was arguably even better than the drawn championship match against Kasparov in 1987.

Karpov's next event was the Nice Olympiad, where he played on the top board for the very first time. He won all five games in the qualification stages, one of which was a gem. His Welsh opponent never faced any other world champions. His rating was 2405 at the time of the game, which would equate to at least 2500 nowadays.

## Game 36

Howard Williams – Anatoly Karpov

Nice Olympiad (qualification stage) 1974

1.d4

Williams usually played 1.e4, so he must have prepared his opening especially for this game.

1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

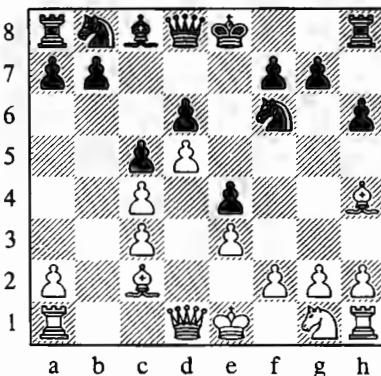
In a way it is not a bad decision to play a sideline against a top player, who may not be used to facing unusual lines in high level events. On the other hand Karpov had just played a match against Spassky, who often played the Leningrad Variation, so Karpov must have been thoroughly prepared for this particular option. Over his career Karpov faced the Leningrad Variation five times, winning three and drawing two.

4...h6 5. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  c5 6.d5 d6 7.e3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3\#$  8.bxc3 e5 9. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

More than two decades later Artur Yusupov tried a different approach: 9. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

g5 11.♗g3 ♖h5 12.♗d3 ♖d7 13.♗d2 ♖df6  
 14.h3 ♖d7 15.♗b1 b6 16.a4 ♖g7 17.f3 ♖fh5  
 18.♗h2 ♖d8 19.a5 ♖c7 20.0–0 f5 21.♗b2 f4  
 22.♗a1 ♖hb8 23.♗ba2 a6 24.♗b2 bxa5 Karpov  
 went on to win this balanced position, Yusupov  
 – Karpov, Baden-Baden 1995.

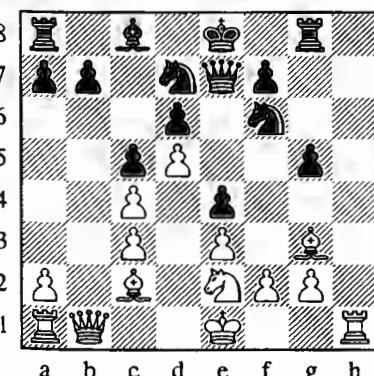
9...e4 10.♗c2



10...g5

Karpov decides early where he will put his king.

11.♗g3 ♖e7 12.h4 ♗g8 13.hxg5 hxg5  
 14.♗e2 ♖bd7 15.♗b1



15...♖d8!

This was a novelty at the time, although it is well known that the king tends to be safe on c7 in such positions.

16.a4?

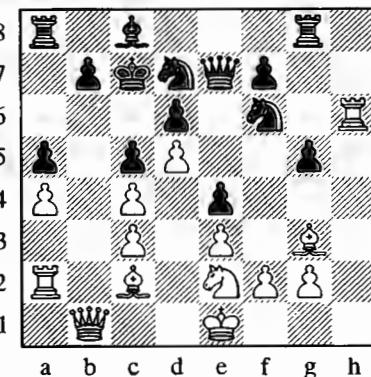
Later games have seen 16.♗b5!! score two wins for White, but Black should be doing alright after 16...♝e5.

16...a5!

The move blocks the queenside and paralyses the c2-bishop.

17.♗a2 ♖c7 18.♗h6?!

White wants to pin the knight, but Black's inconvenience is only temporary.



18...♗a6!

Karpov activates the rook and defends the d6-pawn.

19.♗b5 ♖b8

Karpov is not lazy, and takes the time to bring his king to the safest possible location.

20.♗b2 ♖a7!

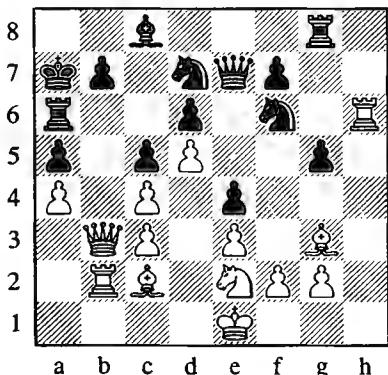
Black should avoid the temptation to win the queen with 20...♗b6, which turns out badly after 21.♗xd7! ♖xd7 22.♗xb6 when the d6-pawn is weak.

It is also worth mentioning the possibility of a stunning ♖d4 sacrifice, which can

sometimes be played to good effect in this variation. Perhaps this was also a factor in Karpov's decision to retreat his king to a safer spot.

### 21.♗b3?

Retreating the queen loses time and allows Black to exchange the rooks. Williams may have been worried about ... ♜b6 and ... ♜d7, but it was not necessary to retreat just yet. 21.♗b1 was better: 21... ♜g4 (21... ♜b6 is adequately met by 22.♗b3 ♜d7 23.♗a2) 22.♗h7 ♜b6 23.♗b3 ♜f5 Black remains somewhat better, but he will have to work hard to achieve a serious advantage.



### 21... ♜g4!

Karpov was able to improve his pieces a lot on the queenside, and now he does the same on the other wing.

### 22.♗h1 ♜ 23.♗d1 ♜b6! 24.♗a2 ♜xb2

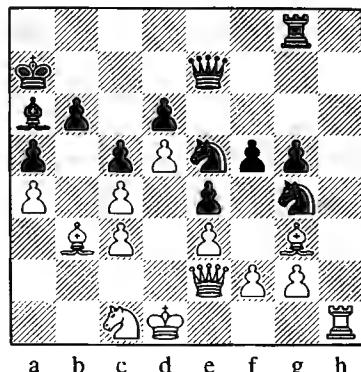
After the rook exchange White has no chance of hurting his opponent on the queenside.

### 25.♗xb2 b6!

Suddenly the c4-pawn comes under fire, and it soon becomes clear that Black is simply winning.

### 26.♗b3 ♜a6 27.♗c1 ♜de5 28.♗e2

Taking the knight would also have failed to solve White's problems: 28.♗xe5 ♜xe5 29.♗h7† ♜g7 30.♗xg7† ♜xg7 31.♗d2 ♜h8 Black should win.



### 28... ♜g6!

Karpov prepares to push his opponent back even further. 28...f4? was also good enough, as after 29.exf4 gxf4 30.♗xf4 ♜xc4 31.♗xc4 ♜xc4 Black is winning.

### 29.♗d2 ♜f6 30.♗d1 f4

0–1

White is almost paralysed, and chose to end his suffering sooner rather than later.

Karpov did not slow down in the finals, where he began with a good win over Hort. Finally, after six consecutive wins, Karpov was briefly slowed down by Hartston who managed to draw with him. Karpov followed up by winning a true positional masterpiece against Wolfgang Unzicker.

Before this encounter, the two protagonists had only played one game, which was drawn. Their lifetime score was four wins to Karpov, with two draws. Although Karpov played very well in several of these games, it must be said that the German grandmaster's best years were behind him.

Unzicker is one of the very few western players to have won a top level tournament in Soviet

Russia, when in 1965 he tied for first prize with Spassky at the Chigorin Memorial in Sochi. He played on the top board for West Germany at ten Olympiads, and played a total of sixty six games against all the world champions from Euwe to Kasparov. He beat them four times, drew forty two and lost twenty. His accomplishments are even more impressive in light of the fact that his primary occupation was as a lawyer rather than a chess professional. At his peak he was regarded as the strongest amateur player in the world.

### Game 37

Anatoly Karpov – Wolfgang Unzicker

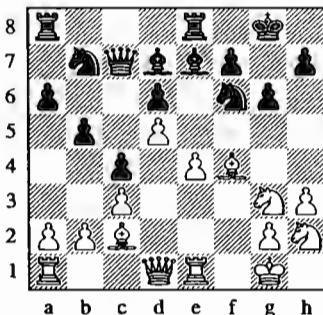
Nice Olympiad 1974

1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qb5 a6 4.Qa4 Qf6  
5.0-0 Qe7 6.Qe1 b5 7.Qb3 d6 8.c3 0-0 9.h3  
Qa5

Unzicker also played the Open and Breyer variations, but today he opts for the Chigorin.

10.Qc2 c5 11.d4 Qc7 12.Qbd2 Qc6

Karpov faced this move five times. Surprisingly he won only the present game and drew the others. A year later Unzicker switched to 12...Qd7 against Karpov, no doubt hoping to avoid the kind of slow torture that happened in the present game. In a way he succeeded, although not in the manner he intended, as the game was over in just ten more moves:  
13.Qf1 Qfe8 14.d5 Qb7 15.Q3h2 g6? 16.Qg3  
c4 17.f4! exf4 18.Qxf4



18...Qf8? 19.Qg5 Qe7 20.Qd2 Qc8? 21.Qf1  
Qd7 22.Qg4 1-0 Karpov – Unzicker, Milan  
1975.



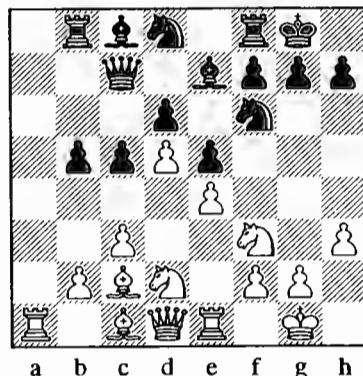
13.d5! Qd8 14.a4!

Karpov fights for the a-file. In a game from 1967 he only played on the kingside, but by now he understood the need to combine play on both flanks.

14...Qb8

If 14...b4 15.a5!? White will utilize the c4-square to his advantage.

15.axb5 axb5



16.b4!

White fights for queenside space and stops Black from improving his knight by means of ...c4, ... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

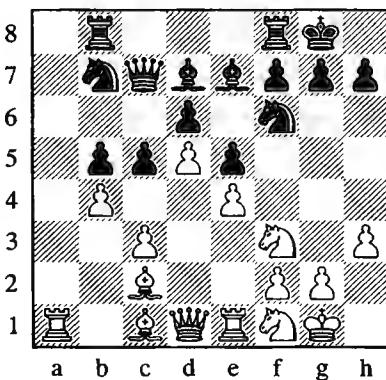
### 16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ?

The German grandmaster follows a Spassky – Korchnoi game and also hopes to improve on one of Karpov’s games from the Soviet Championship. The problem is that the knight has no future on b7.

After 16...c4 17. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}3h2$  f6 19.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 21.f5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22.g4 Karpov subjected his opponent to unpleasant pressure although Black eventually held the draw in Karpov – Spassky, Soviet Union (ch) 1973.

Nowadays 16... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and 16... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  are regarded as better and more flexible moves.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$



### 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !

Spassky developed his knight to the same square but got nowhere: 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{R}a8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{R}fc8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{R}xa1$  21. $\mathbb{W}xa1$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  22. $\mathbb{W}a7$   $\mathbb{R}a8$  23. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{R}b8$  ½–½ Spassky – Korchnoi, Kiev (1) 1968.

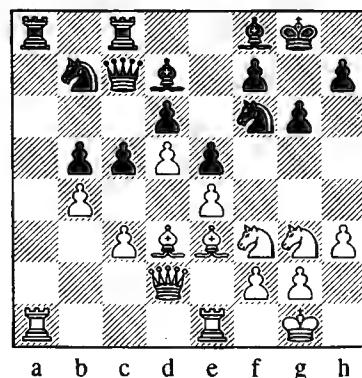
### 18... $\mathbb{R}a8$ 19. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{R}fc8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ g6?!

Later Black chooses to push with ...c4, but it

would have been better to do so immediately, as the white bishop would have had to settle for a slightly worse retreat square.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ $\mathbb{R}f8$

21... $\mathbb{R}a4$  does not help Black: 22. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{R}xa4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{R}b8$  24. $\mathbb{W}a2!$  The knight will come to d2 and White will keep the upper hand on the queenside.



### 22. $\mathbb{R}a2$ !

Karpov fights for the only open file.

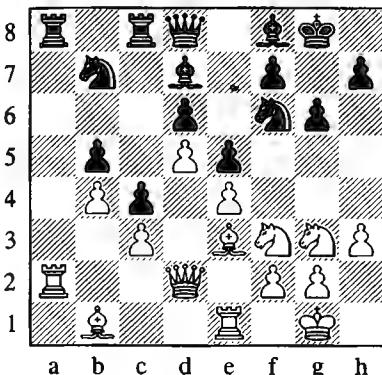
### 22...c4 23. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ !

This deep move is connected with the idea of gaining space with f2-f4. By keeping the bishop on this diagonal, White defends the e4-pawn in advance.

### 23... $\mathbb{W}d8$ ?

Unzicker wants to exchange rooks, but he has overlooked Karpov’s brilliant response. The immediate exchange with 23... $\mathbb{R}xa2$  was somewhat preferable, but White would remain clearly better after 24. $\mathbb{W}xa2$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ .

The best chance was 23... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ !, correcting the error from the sixteenth move. White keeps a nice plus after 24. $\mathbb{R}e2$ , but his advantage is smaller than in the game after either 24... $\mathbb{W}b7$  or 24... $\mathbb{R}xa2$  25. $\mathbb{W}xa2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$ .



**24.♖a7!!**

Karpov covers the a-file in order to double his rooks without allowing exchanges, which would relieve the congestion in Black's cramped position. Interestingly, Karpov mentions that Spassky played the same ♖a7 move against him in the tenth game of their candidates match.

I often show the present game to my pupils but the text move does not come naturally to them, despite my efforts to explain in advance that the player with more space should generally strive to avoid swapping pieces. By the way, there are exceptions to this principle. For example, in the main Ruy Lopez White often plays the move ♖f5, not fearing the reply ...♗xf5, because the change in the pawn structure after exf5 may yield additional benefits to White (extra kingside space, increased scope for the c2-bishop and so on).

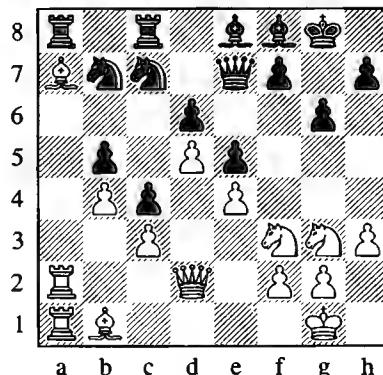
**24...♝e8**

Black can do nothing but wait passively.

**25.♗c2 ♗c7 26.♗e1**

Black will constantly have to reckon with the idea of White retreating his bishop and invading on the a-file.

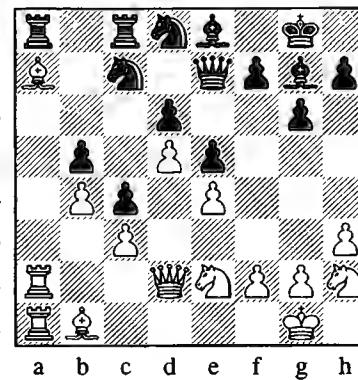
**26...♛e7 27.♗b1 ♛e8**



**28.♘e2!**

The point behind this subtle move is that White is planning to play f4 in the near future, and if Black exchanges pawns, White will quickly occupy the d4-square with his knight.

**28...♝d8 29.♗h2 ♛g7**



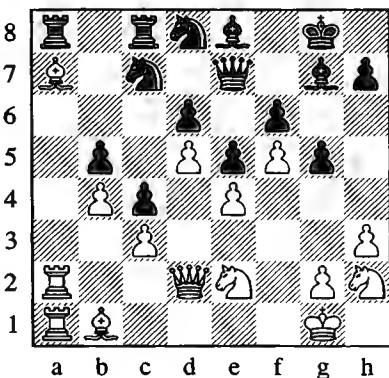
**30.f4!**

Karpov has improved his pieces as much as possible, and the time has come to expand on the kingside.

**30...f6?**

Black was already clearly worse, but he should at least have taken on f4 in order to obtain some breathing room for his pieces. Now his position becomes hopelessly passive.

**31.f5! g5**

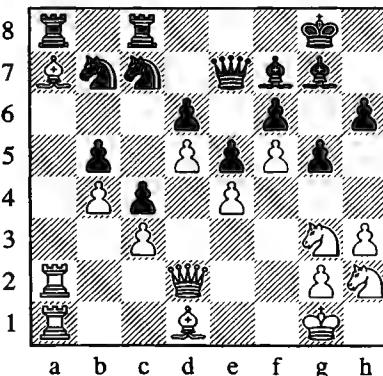


**32.Qc2!**

The bishop fulfilled its earlier duty by guarding the e4-pawn, but this function is no longer needed so Karpov immediately finds a better role for it.

**32...Qf7 33.Qg3 Qb7 34.Qd1! h6?**

Black's position was already depressing, but this move voluntarily weakens another light square near the king.



**35.Qh5!**

Completing the manoeuvre. In this particular case the side with extra space is happy to exchange a pair of pieces, considering that we

are talking about Black's best defensive piece.

The text move illustrates another important principle: in positions with a space advantage, one of the most effective strategies is to attack on both flanks. The defending side may be able to protect one weakness, but the difficulties associated with transferring defensive pieces from one side to the other will often prove insurmountable.

My experience as a junior trainer has been that young players tend to have problems with exchanging pieces and attacking both sides, because they are not aware of these basic principles.

**35...Qe8 36.Qd1 Qd8 37.Qa3**

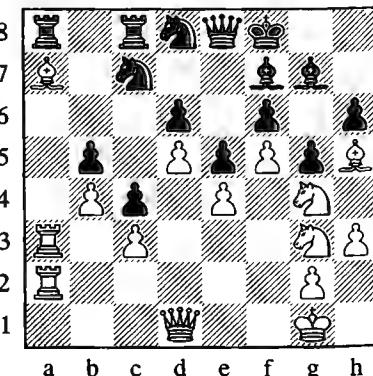
Perhaps Karpov was thinking about tripling on the a-file, with the queen behind the two rooks. On the other hand the whole idea may have been a bluff, designed to tire his opponent and keep him thinking that the invasion would come from the queenside.

**37...Qf8 38.Qa2 Qg8 39.Qg4**

It is fancier to transfer the knight via the g4-square.

**39...Nf8**

Black was unable to take twice on h5 for obvious reasons.

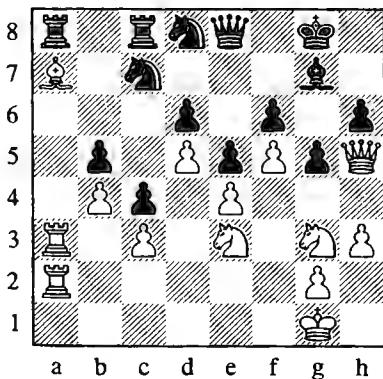


40.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

If 41...  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  White will win by bringing his king to the queenside and playing  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ . 44...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  is no improvement because of 45.  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ .

42.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$

Covering the g6-square by 42...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  would not have helped. Karpov gives the following line, which he finds amusing: 43.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  Karpov calls this total zugzwang, and it is hard to argue with somebody who creates a masterpiece like this.



43.  $\mathbb{Q}g6!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$

1-0

Unzicker could take no more of the torture. He was below par although perhaps he derived some consolation from the fact that he took part (or more precisely, was *taken apart*) in a classic game.

In the next round Karpov drew quickly with black against Andersson. Next he faced Lubomir Kavalek, a strong grandmaster who had recorded a win in their first meeting. Kavalek faced the world champions fifty eight times, winning five games, losing twelve and drawing forty one. The final phase of the following game has attracted many

commentators, and is one of Karpov's most analysed endgames. This is not by accident, as the endgame is the culmination of Karpov's fine strategic play, and contains numerous subtle finesse. In this particular endgame there is so much beauty, not only in the moves that appear on the board, but also in the analysis of the many superb commentators.

### Game 38

Anatoly Karpov – Lubomir Kavalek

Nice Olympiad 1974

1.c4

Karpov probably wanted to hide some of his main openings for his impending match again Korchnoi. He played the English quite a few times in Nice.

1...c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 3. d4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  5. e4

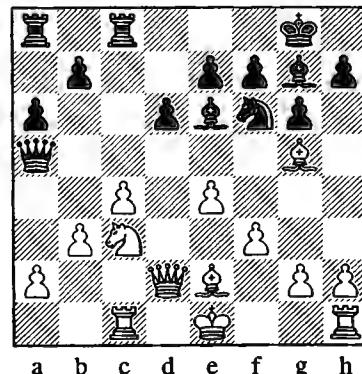
Karpov employed the Maroczy Bind a total of nine times, through several opening move orders. He scored five wins and four draws.

5...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d6 7.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

9.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Fifteen years later Karpov preferred 9.0–0 and defeated Petursson.

9...0–0 10.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  12. b3  $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  a6



**14.♕a4**

This move was first played in 1974, although it is not completely clear whether or not it was technically Karpov's novelty, as there was another game without an exact date. In any case, Karpov writes in *My Best Games* that the move was an original idea for him. The move was also seen in a game between Samuel Reshevsky and Walter Browne in the 1974 US Championship, in which Black eventually prevailed.

**14...♗xd2† 15.♕xd2**

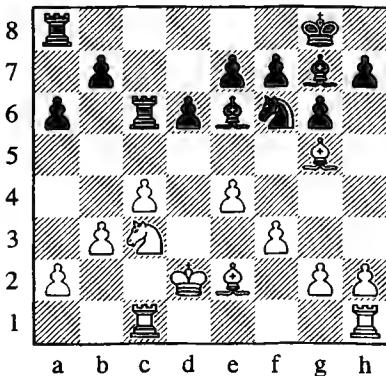
The king is well placed here in the position without queens.

**15...♝c6**

Later 15...♞d7 became more popular, intending to push the f-pawn.

**16.♞c3**

Returning the knight to the centre is more logical than 16.♝e3, as played by Reshevsky in the aforementioned game.

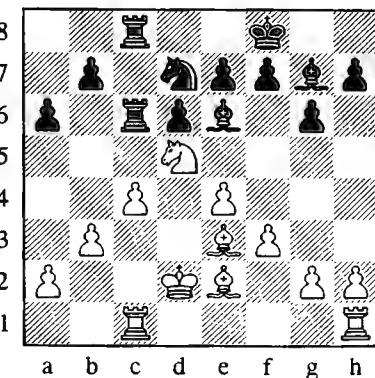
**16...♝ac8**

Some players have preferred 16...♝cc8?!, which looks weird, but is not without logic. Unlike in the current game it allows Black to take on d5 with the knight after 17.♞d5 ♞xd5 18.cxd5 ♜d7 19.♝xc8† ♜xc8 20.♝xe7 ♜h6† when Black has compensation for the pawn.

The world of endgames is deeply fascinating, but openings can be wonderful as well. In this game Karpov plays both simultaneously.

**17.♞d5! ♜f8**

After 17...♜xd5 18.exd5 ♜6c7 19.♝eh1 White is slightly better.

**18.♝e3 ♜d7****19.h4!**

Karpov contrives to gain space on the kingside.

**19...♜xd5?!**

Black's position is already a bit worse and this exchange only helps White to gain additional space. 19...h5 was also not helping, as after 20.♞f4 White exchanges the e6-bishop and will prepare g4 later.

A better alternative was 19...f5?!, as Karpov mentions. In that case White should probably proceed with 20.h5 or 20.g4, maintaining a slight plus.

**20.exd5 ♜6c7 21.h5**

Gaining space on the queenside with 21.b4 would be premature in view of 21...♞e5 when Black obtains counterplay.

**21...♞g8**

Presumably Kavalek wanted to prevent a rook invasion on h7.

### 22.f4!

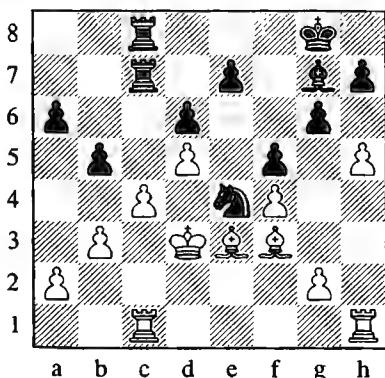
This move controls e5, gains space and most importantly opens the diagonal for the light-squared bishop.

### 22...Qc5 23.Qg4!

White improves the bishop and occupies the important diagonal. If permitted, he may also advance his f-pawn, which may explain Black's next two moves.

### 23...Qe4† 24.Qd3 f5 25.Qf3 b5

Black tries to undermine White's pawn structure, but this is where the active king proves its value. Indeed, Black must be careful not to exchange too many pieces as White's king can then dominate the scene, even if it means giving up a pawn.



### 26.g4!

Karpov undermines Black's pawns.

### 26...bxc4† 27.Qxc4!

Exchanging helps to safeguard White's king, as Black will have a hard time creating threats with only one rook. In playing this way, Karpov avoids committing the same error that Polugaevsky made against him in the

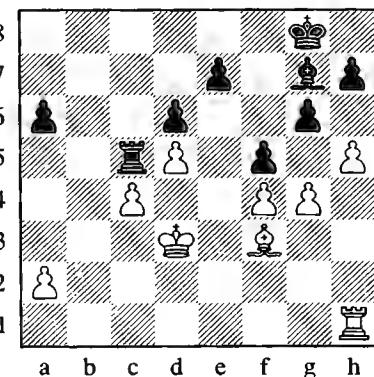
encounter mentioned in the note to White's 28th move in Game 31.

### 27...Bxc4 28.bxc4 Qc5† 29.Qxc5

If 29.Qe2 Bb8 Black obtains counterplay.

### 29...Bxc5

After 29...Bxc5 30.Bb1! Black's position is extremely unattractive.



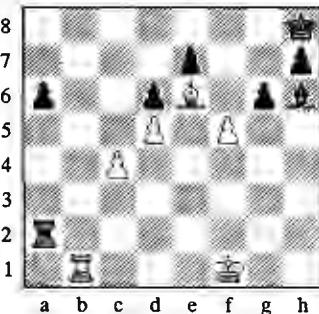
### 30.h6!

This is not the first time that Karpov has pushed a flank pawn all the way to the sixth rank. This time it does more than fix the opponent's pawn as a long term weakness – it also helps to weave a mating net.

### 30...Bf8

This endgame has captured the attention of several players and has been analysed extensively. In particular I would like to mention Dvoretsky, Marin and Karpov himself as three analysts who have made especially important contributions to our understanding of this endgame. I decided to take a detailed look at this endgame, and since I enjoyed the immense benefit of "standing on the shoulders of giants", I was able to discover some important finesse which had not been mentioned previously.

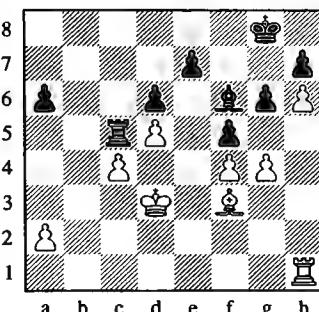
30...fxg4?! is a weaker option than the game move, because of 31.♗xg4 ♕f8 (31...♕f6 32.♗e6† ♖f8 33.♗b1 wins.) 32.♗e6† ♖h8 33.f5 ♘a5 (33...g5 34.♗h5) 34.♗b1 ♘a3† 35.♗e2 ♘xa2† 36.♗f1 ♖xh6



37.f6!! Karpov pointed out this lovely creation of a mating net.

30...♗f6?!

This move was brought to my attention by my editor Andrew Greet, who suggested it in his book on the Accelerated Dragon. Black tries to build a fortress, and compared with the game his active bishop brings certain advantages. Nevertheless White has a subtle way to break through.



31.g5!

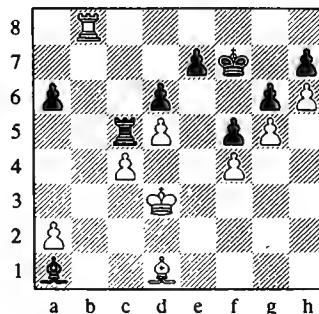
After 31.♗b1 ♘a5 Black obtains counterplay.

Greet mentions the line 31.gxf5?! gxf5 32.♗b1 ♘c8 33.♗b6 a5 (33...♘a8? 34.c5!

dxc5 35.d6 c4† 36.♗e3+—) 34.♗b5 ♘a8 35.c5 dxc5 36.d6 ♘d8 37.♗d5† ♘f8 38.d7! e5! 39.♗e6 exf4 40.♗xf5 when White is better, but it is not clear if he can win.

31...♗h8 32.♗b1 ♘f7 33.♗b8 ♘a1 34.♗d1!

The bishop wants to invade via a4 and e8, so Black's reply is forced.

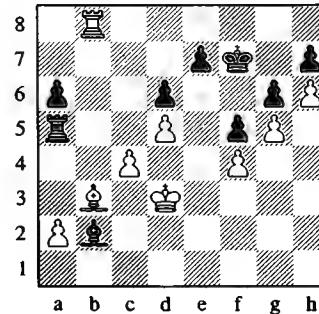


34...♘a5 35.♗b3

This move in itself is not special, as White needs to defend the a-pawn. However, it also contains a deeper point, as Black is actually in zugzwang! It underlines the fact that zugzwang is often the key to breaking a fortress.

35...♗b2

The bishop has to move to a more exposed square. Had it been able to remain on a1, Black would probably have survived. Greet ends his analysis here, concluding that it is not clear if White can break through. It turns out that he can do so in an instructive and spectacular fashion.



36.c5!!

This breakthrough only works thanks to the position of the bishop on b2.

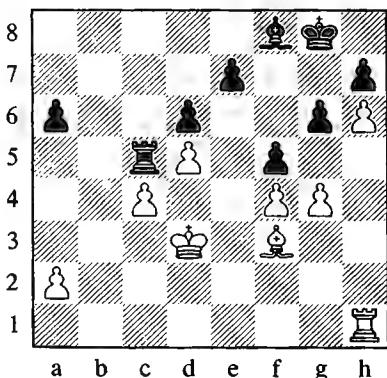
36.♗a4 ♜xa4 37.♗xb2 ♜a3† is unconvincing. White does not have time to escape the checks and penetrate with his rook to h8 to good effect, as his f- and g-pawns are too vulnerable.

36...♝b5

After 36...♜xc5 37.♗a4 ♜xd5† 38.♗c2 White is winning, as the black rook is about to be pinned.

37.♗d8 ♜xc5 38.♗a4

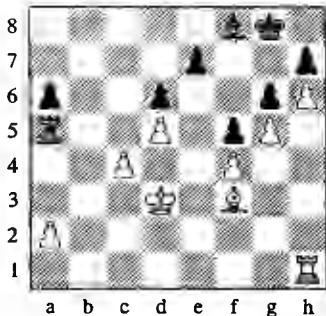
Black is defenceless against the impending bishop invasion.



31.♗c3??!

Karpov adopts the policy of restriction, planning to meet ...♝a5 with ♗b3. However, he should have taken the opportunity to lock in the opponent's kingside pieces with:

31.g5! ♜a5



Black must make the most of his one active piece. He can win the a2-pawn, but White should be able to exploit his positional pluses to break his opponent's defences. The key to success will almost always be the activation of the light-squared bishop. In certain positions this can be achieved by means of a bishop manoeuvre to d1 and a4, while in others White will have to resort to a breakthrough with c5 and possibly d6.

For an endgame with so few pieces, the position contains an incredible range of subtle resources. We will consider two possibilities for White.

a) 32.♗b1

This is the obvious move, and it gives excellent winning chances. We will analyse two responses in detail.

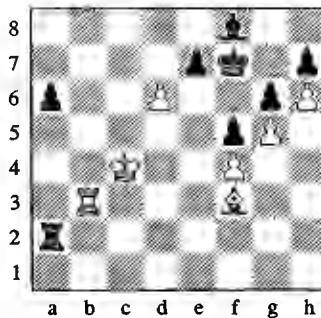
a1) 32...♝f7

It should be mentioned briefly that taking the pawn loses with little resistance: 32...♜xa2 33.c5 ♜a3† 34.♗e2 dx5 Otherwise the pawn marches towards c8. 35.d6 exd6 36.♗d5† ♜h8 37.♗b8 And mate follows shortly.

33.♗d1!!

Activating the bishop is the key to White's success in this and several other variations.

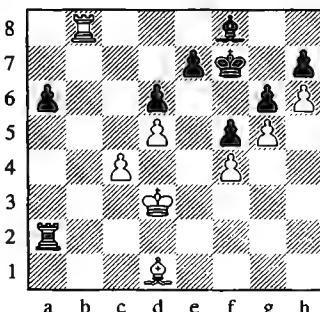
33.♗b2 is less effective: 33...♝a3†! 34.♗b3 (34.♗e2? ♜c3) 34...♜xa2 With the rook on b3 Black can safely take this pawn. 35.c5 dx5 36.d6 c4†! (36...♝e6 37.♗b8!) 37.♗xc4



37... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$  This fine defensive move was found by Dvoretsky. 38. $\mathbb{B}b8$   $\mathbb{E}a4\#$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  40.dxe7  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  41. $\mathbb{B}b7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  42.gxh6  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{B}h4$  44. $\mathbb{B}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black will soon eliminate the h-pawn to reach a drawn ending.

33... $\mathbb{E}xa2$  34. $\mathbb{B}b8$

White threatens to bring his bishop into the attack via b3 or a4.



34... $\mathbb{E}a3\#$

34...a5 35.c5! dxc5 36. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{E}a3$  transposes to the main line below.

34... $\mathbb{E}a5$  is inadequate: 35. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (35... $\mathbb{E}c5$  36. $\mathbb{B}a4$  wins) 36. $\mathbb{B}b4!$  The subsequent  $\mathbb{B}a4$  will overwhelm the defence.

35. $\mathbb{B}b3$  a5



36.c5! dxc5

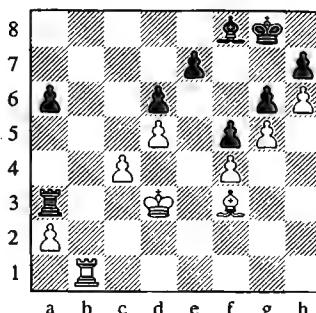
36...a4 37.c6! wins.

37. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  a4 38. $\mathbb{B}c4$

Black has no defence. However, he could have improved earlier as we will now see.

a2) 32... $\mathbb{E}a3\#$

This is Black's best chance, although it is probably still not enough to hold the game.



33. $\mathbb{B}b3$

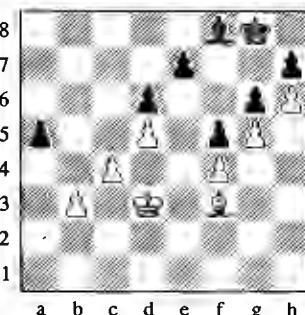
Now we reach a further branching point.

a21) 33... $\mathbb{E}xb3\#?$  34.axb3

Black is unable to hold this opposite-coloured bishop endgame.

34...a5

Black must try to blockade on the dark squares. After 34... $\mathbb{B}f7$  35.b4 e5 36.dxe6+  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38. $\mathbb{B}g8$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  White's king invades.

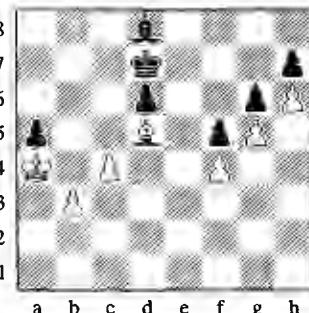


35. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

This lovely move was discovered by Motylev. It is in the spirit of many opposite-coloured bishop endings. White chooses a plan and executes it aggressively.

35. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  is tempting, but not quite good enough: 35... $\mathbb{B}f7$  36. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8!$  (36... $\mathbb{E}e5$

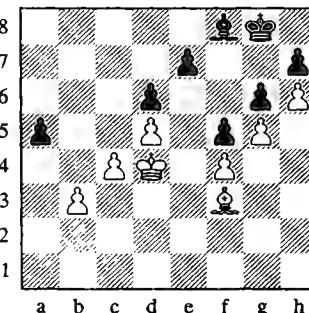
loses in instructive fashion: 37.dxe6† ♜xe6  
38.♖d5† ♜d7 39.♗a3 ♜e7 40.♗a4 ♜d8



41.♗b5! [According to Karpov White can win with 41.♗g8 ♜e8 42.♗b5, but Dvoretsky points out that Black can draw with 42...d5! 43.cxd5 ♜c7, attacking White's kingside pawns.] 41...♜e7 42.♗c6 and White wins, as analysed by Dvoretsky.)

37.♗a3 e5! This is a cunning way to utilize the seemingly dead bishop on f8. 38.dxe6 Alternatives are no better. 38...d5† 39.♗a4 dxc4 40.bxc4 ♜d6 41.♗h5 ♜xf4 42.♗xg6† ♜e7! Black survives.

After Motylev's move, Black's position soon crumbles.



35...♝f7 36.c5! dxc5†

36...♝e8 37.c6 is hopeless for Black.

37.♗e5!

Black is in zugzwang and any move allows the White king to invade.

37...e6 38.d6!  
And White wins.

a22) 33...♝xa2

The delayed capture is the best drawing chance. White will be hindered by the unfortunate placement of the rook on b3.

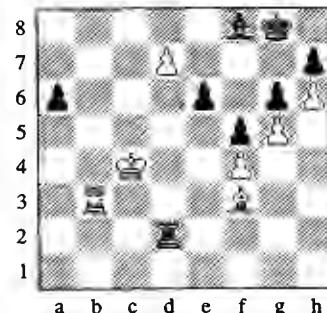
34.c5! dxc5 35.d6 e6! 36.d7 c4†!

This is why Black had to entice the rook to the b3-square.

37.♗xc4

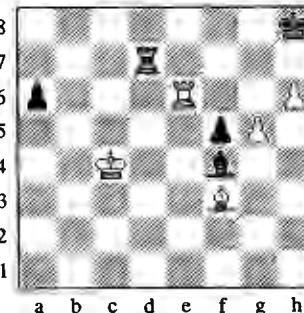
37.♗c3? gets nowhere after 37...♝c2†.

37...♝d2



38.♗c6!

38.♗b7 is weaker: 38...♝e7 39.♗b8† ♜f7 40.♗h8 ♜xd7 41.♗xh7† ♜g8 42.♗g7† ♜h8 43.♗xg6 ♜d6 44.♗xe6 ♜xf4

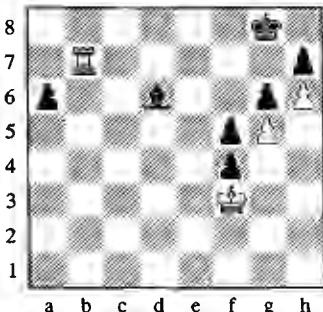


Black should draw.

38...♝c2† 39.♗d3 ♜xc6

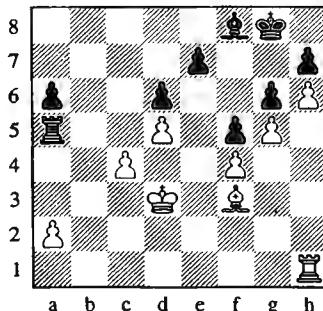
This trick keeps Black alive, but his problems are not yet over.

- 40.d8=♕ ♕d6† 41.♕xd6 ♕xd6 42.♗e3 e5  
 43.♗b7  
 43.fxe5 ♕xe5 44.♗b7 a5 45.♗a7 ♕c3 is not an improvement for White.  
 43...exf4† 44.♗f3



White should be winning this endgame, as his kingside pawns are too strong.

- b) Returning to the position after 31...♝a5, White also has a more subtle route to a probable victory:



32.♗d1!

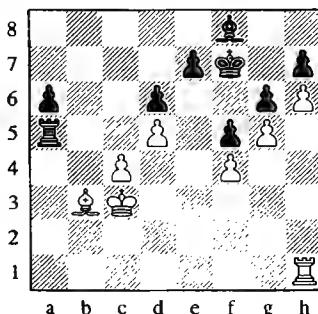
As far as I am aware, the only commentator to have mentioned this move is Dvoretsky, in his remarkable analysis on the [www.e3e5.com](http://www.e3e5.com) website. The choice of punctuation is not easy. Even with the benefit of extensive analysis, it is not clear whether the text move is objectively stronger than 32.♗b1, and it may well be that both

moves lead to eventual victory. But if we were awarding exclamation marks for ingenuity, then the bishop retreat would undoubtedly have received a well deserved “!!”.

32...♝xa2 33.♗b3 ♜a5

After 33...♝f2?! 34.c5 ♜f3† 35.♗c2 ♜f2† 36.♗b1 ♜f3 37.♗b2 White obtains a strong passed pawn and excellent winning chances.

34.♗c3 ♜f7



35.♗b4!

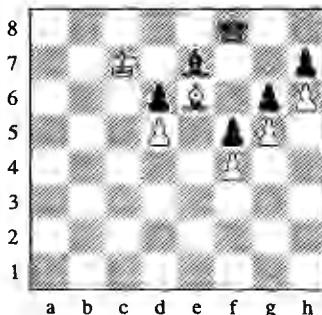
35.♗e1 allows an amazing saving resource: 35...e6!! (Alternatives are insufficient: 35...♝c5 36.♗a4 White has excellent attacking chances; 35...e5? 36.fxe5 dx5 37.d6 ♜c5 38.♗d1 ♜e8 39.♗a4† ♜d8 40.♗b4+) 36.♗b4 ♜c5 37.♗x e6 ♜e7 According to Dvoretsky White's advantage is not enough to win.

35...♝c5 36.♗e1!

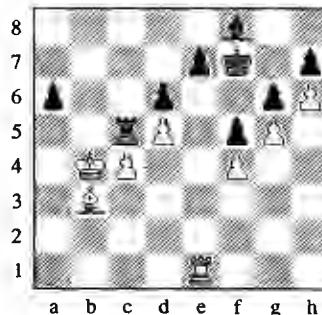
Now this move works well.

36.♗a4 e5! enables Black to obtain some breathing space.

36.♗a1 a5† 37.♗xa5 ♜xa5 38.♗xa5 reaches an interesting opposite-coloured bishop endgame, which should be tenable for Black: 38...e6 39.♗b6 (Or 39.dxe6† ♜xe6 40.c5† ♜d7 41.♗g8 dx5 42.♗xh7 ♜d6 and Black starts taking the pawns in time.) 39...exd5 40.cxd5 ♜e7 41.♗c7 ♜e8 42.♗a4† ♜f7 43.♗d7 ♜f8 44.♗e6

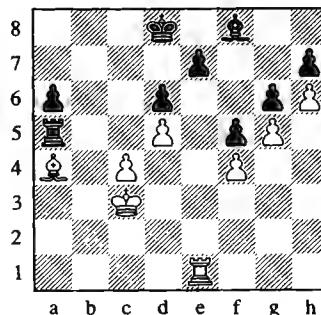


44... $\mathbb{Q}d8\#!$  This stalemate finesse is simpler than Dvoretsky's line – it draws almost effortlessly. (44... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ! 46. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}g8$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  48. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ! [48. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ !] 48... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ ! as Dvoretsky indicated, Black holds the ensuing queen endgame – if White takes the pawn a perpetual check follows.) 45. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  Black can live with being a pawn down, as White's kingside pawns are too vulnerable. 46. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3\#$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  48. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  49.d6  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  Black draws.

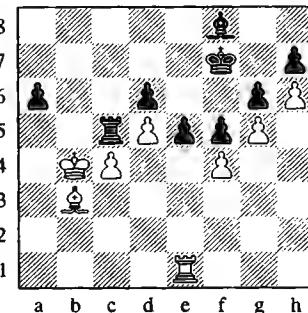


36...e5!

This active try is Black's best chance. If Black tries to wait with 36... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , he can eventually be broken down: 36... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}a4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ! This subtle move opens the b-file for the rook to invade. (38. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  e5! gives Black some chances, despite the fact that White keeps an edge with 39. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .) 38... $\mathbb{Q}a5$



39. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ! (The attempt to invade immediately with 39. $\mathbb{B}b1$  does not quite work: 39... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  40. $\mathbb{B}b8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}a3\#$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{B}f3$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  And Black is safe.) 39... $\mathbb{Q}a3\#$  40. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  (40... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  41. $\mathbb{Q}a1\#$ ) 41. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  42. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e8$  White invades successfully, this time with the bishop.



37.dxe6†  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

38. $\mathbb{Q}a1$  a5† 39. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  41.c5†  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g8$  It is not enough for a win. 42...dxc5 43. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  Black draws easily.

38... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  39.c5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5\#$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Dvoretsky says it is not clear how much better White really is. I decided to analyse further, and have concluded that Black is in serious trouble due to the threat of  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  followed by an invasion along the b-file. Here is a plausible continuation.

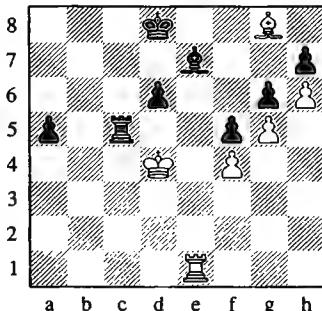
40...a5 41. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

41... $\mathbb{Q}c4!$ ? is also dangerous.

41...a4

41... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  gives White two options:

42.e7†  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g8$  looks tempting, but Black can remain in the game with the help of careful defence.



43... $\mathbb{B}b5!$  Black must go after the base of White's pawn chain. (43... $\mathbb{B}c7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  45.fxg5  $\mathbb{E}xh7$  46. $\mathbb{E}e6$  White wins.)

44. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{B}b4†$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{E}xf4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  In this endgame Black has chances to survive.

Therefore White should prefer 42. $\mathbb{B}b1!$ , improving the rook before attempting to break through. 42... $\mathbb{E}e7$  43. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  44. $\mathbb{B}a6$   $\mathbb{E}d1†$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}c1†$  46. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  47. $\mathbb{B}a8†$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  48. $\mathbb{E}xa5$  Black is very passive, and it is doubtful that he will survive.

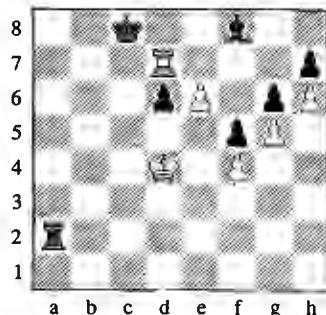
42. $\mathbb{E}a1$

There is a second promising line: 42. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  43. $\mathbb{B}b4$  (After 43.e7†  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}g8$   $d5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{E}c4†$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xf4$  Black is worse but the game goes on.) 43... $\mathbb{E}c1$  (43... $\mathbb{E}a5$  44. $\mathbb{B}b8†$ ) 44. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}d1†$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}c1†$  46. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  It is not over yet, but White's advantage is considerable.

42... $\mathbb{E}a5$  43. $\mathbb{B}b1$  a3

43... $\mathbb{E}a7$  44. $\mathbb{B}b8$  a3 45. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  46. $\mathbb{E}xf8$  a2 47. $\mathbb{Q}d5†$  wins.

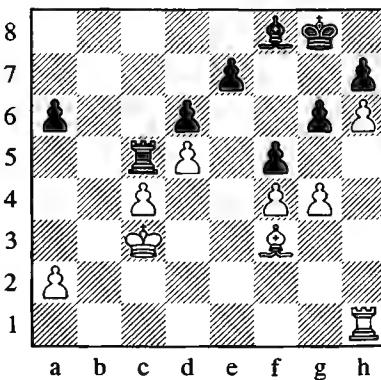
44. $\mathbb{B}b7†$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c6†$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  46. $\mathbb{E}d7†$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  a2 48. $\mathbb{E}xa2$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$



49.e7!

White wins.

The above analysis was extensive and contained a huge number of subtle finesse. It would be interesting to know exactly how much Karpov calculated at the board, and which of Black's defensive possibilities he found most troubling.



31...fxg4 32. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$

Black decides to jettison the h7-pawn in order to improve his king. The alternative was:

32... $\mathbb{E}c7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e6†$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

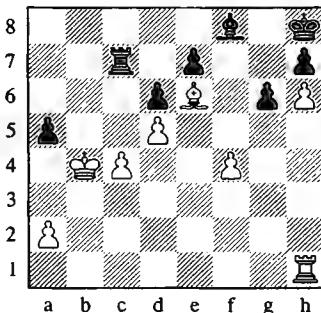
This time Black maintains material equality, but allows his king to be driven to an unpleasant position. There are two responses that we should consider.

a) 34.♗b4!?

An idea of Inarkiev.

34...a5†

34...♝c5 is less resilient: 35.f5 ♜c7 (35...a5† 36.♗c3 ♜c7 37.♗b1 ♜xh6 38.f6 wins with a nice mating net.) 36.♗h2! (The immediate 36.♗a5 allows 36...♝xc4 37.♗b1 ♜xh6 38.f6 ♜d2† when Black survives.) The text move prepares ♜a5 and the rook covers the checking square on d2. It is not easy to suggest a defence for Black.



In this position White must choose the correct route for his king. The immediate capture on a5 would lose the a2-pawn, so the king must go a different way.

a1) 35.♗a4?! ♜xc4† 36.♗xa5 ♜xf4 37.a4

Dvoretsky evaluates this position as winning for White, who is indeed strides ahead in the pawn race. However, a closer inspection reveals that Black is not without resources.



37...g5!

This enables Black to simplify the position.

38.♗b5

38.♗h5 ♜f6 39.♗xg5 ♜g6 40.♗xg6 hxg6 41.♗b6 ♜xh6 Black can sacrifice his bishop and draw by attacking d5 and using the g-pawn to divert the white bishop if necessary.

38...♝h4 39.♗a1

39.♗xh4 gxh4 40.a5 ♜xh6 41.a6 ♜e3 draws. 39.♗g1 is more interesting, but Black can still hold with careful defence. 39...♜xh6 40.a5 g4 (Another drawing line is: 40...♜h2 41.a6 [41.♗b1 ♜g7 42.a6 ♜d4 43.♗c4 ♜c5 44.♗b7 ♜a2=] 41...♝b2† 42.♗c6 ♜c2† 43.♗b7 ♜b2† 44.♗a8 ♜g7 45.a7 ♜g6 46.♗f1 g4 Black should draw.) 41.♗g3 (41.♗xg4 ♜xg4 42.♗xg4 ♜e3=; 41.♗xg4 ♜e3 42.♗g3 [42.♗g2 ♜g7] 42...♝f4 43.♗g2 ♜h2=) 41...♝g7 42.a6 ♜d4 Black should be able to hold, although White would still have some practical chances to play for a win over the board.

39...♜xh6 40.a5 g4 41.a6 ♜e3

The bishop arrives on the key diagonal just in time.

42.a7 ♜xa7 43.♗xa7



43...♝g7! 44.♗xe7† ♜f6 45.♗f7†

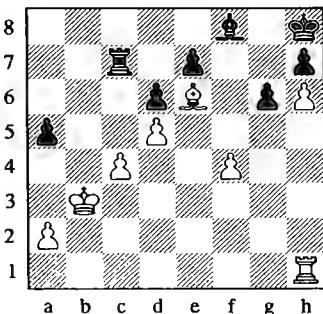
45.♗e8 ♜e5 46.♗c6 g3! is good enough.

45...♝e5 46.♗g7 h5 47.♗c6 ♜h1 48.♗d7 ♜h2

Black has just done enough to draw.

a2) In view of the above, White should not dive head first into a race. Instead he can improve with:

35.♗b3!

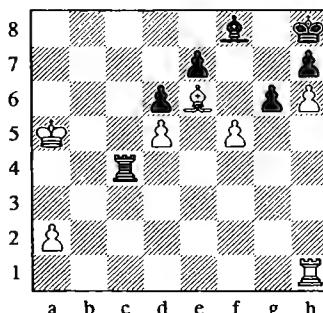


This small finesse effectively gains a tempo.

35...♝c5

35...♝b7† 36.♔a4 ♘b4† 37.♔xa5 ♘xc4 38.f5 transposes to the main line below. White could also consider 38.a4, with a full extra tempo over line a1 above.

36.f5 ♘c7 37.♔a4 ♘xc4† 38.♔xa5



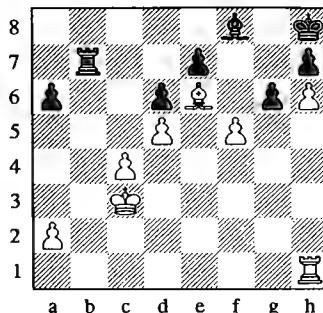
Compared with line a1, White has gained the free move f4-f5. Obviously this difference should work heavily in his favour, so his winning chances are excellent.

b) 34.f5

This active move is perhaps a more natural choice, and it also offers good winning chances.

34...♜b7

Black should take the opportunity to improve his rook.



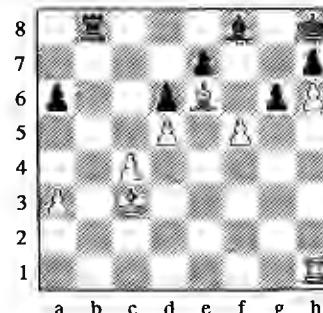
35.a3!!

35.♔f7? would be a mistake because of 35...♜xh6! 36.♔xh6 ♜g7.

The text move is a wonderful idea of Mihail Marin. It takes some time to understand the reason for it. The main purpose is to prevent a future rook check on b4. The following analysis is based on that presented by Marin in *Learn from the Legends*. Black has two main replies.

a) 35...♜b8

This is a consistent follow-up to Black's last move. By positioning his rook on the back rank Black prepares to capture on f5, as the reply ♜g1 will no longer force mate.



36.♔d4

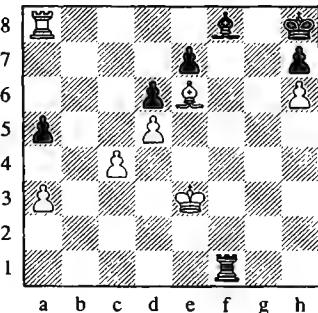
White prepares a timely c4-c5 to activate his king. It is here that the usefulness of the earlier a2-a3 becomes apparent.

36...gxh5 37.Qxf5 Bb2 38.Qe6Bg2

Other moves do not change the result:

38...Bb8 39.c5 dxc5† 40.Qxc5 a5 41.Qc6 a4 42.Qc7 Ba8 43.Bh2! This places Black in zugzwang, and after 43...Be8 44.Qd7 Ba8 45.Qc6 he must lose his rook.

38...Bd2† 39.Qc3 Bg2 40.Bb1 a5 41.Bb8 Bf2 42.Ba8 Bf3† (42...a4 43.c5 dxc5 44.Qc4) 43.Qd4 Bf4† 44.Qe3 Bf1



45.c5! This temporary sacrifice enables White to penetrate with his king. 45...dxc5 46.Qd3 Bf4 47.Qc3 a4 48.Qd3 c4† 49.Qc3 Black is in zugzwang and must allow the king to advance. White will then win in a similar fashion as in the main line below.



39.Bb1 a5 40.Bb8 Bf2 41.c5 dxc5† 42.Qxc5 Bc2† 43.Qd4 Bf2 44.Ba8 a4 45.Qc5 Bc2†

46.Qb6 Bc6† 47.Qb7 Bc7† 48.Qb8 Bb7† 49.Qc8 Bc7† 50.Qd8

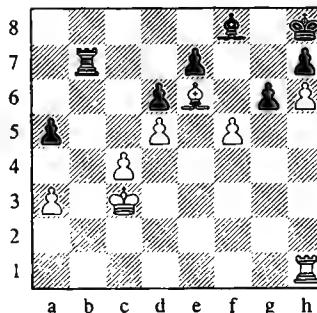
White escape from the stalemate checks.

50...Bc1 51.Qe8 Bf1 52.Qf7 Bh6 53.Qxe7†

White wins as Marin's lovely analysis shows.

b) There is a second move that should be considered:

35...a5



This is a principled response to White's last move. Black is preparing to attack the a3-pawn.

36.Qd4

Now we reach a further dividing point.

b1) 36...a4

This was the only move considered by Marin.

37.c5 dxc5† 38.Qxc5 Bb3 39.Qc6 Bxa3 40.Qd7 Bb3 41.d6!

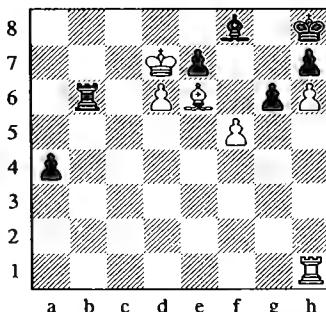


The discovered attack on the rook appears difficult to meet. However, at this point there is an obstacle to Marin's superb analysis in the form of:

41... $\mathbb{E}b6!$

The Romanian grandmaster mentions the line 41... $\mathbb{E}d3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $gxf5$  44. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}d8\#$  45. $\mathbb{Q}f7$  a3 46. $\mathbb{E}g7$  a2 47. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  when White checkmates.

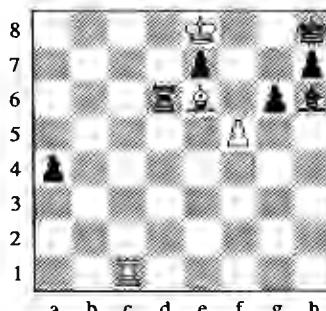
The text move forces White to come up with an extraordinary reply.



42. $\mathbb{E}c1!!$   $\mathbb{E}xd6\#$

42... $\mathbb{E}b8$  43. $\mathbb{Q}c7!$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  44.d7 wins.

43. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$



44. $\mathbb{E}c8!!$

This is a splendid example of the power of a battery.

44... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xe6\#$

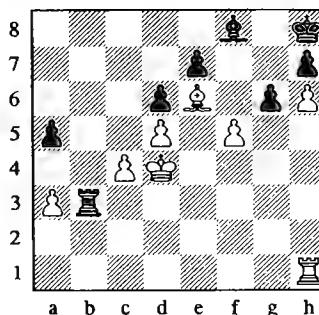
45... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  46.f6# wins.

46.fxe6

And White wins.

a2) The author of the idea does not mention what happens if Black attacks the pawn at once with:

36... $\mathbb{E}b3$



It turns out that White can force a win, but once again it relies on some spectacular finesse.

37.c5!  $dxc5\#$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$  39. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{E}a4$



40.f6!!

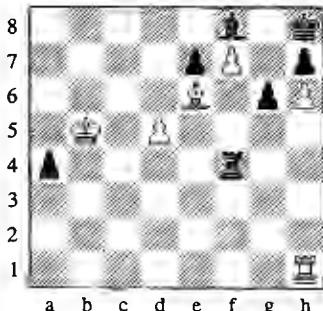
The obvious 40. $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is not quite good enough: 40... $\mathbb{E}b4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{E}d8\#$  42. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $gxf5$  43. $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (43. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  e6! [43... $\mathbb{E}d8$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ] 44.dxe6 [44. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  a4=; 44. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  a4=] 44... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  45.e7  $\mathbb{E}b7$  46. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}xe7\#$  47. $\mathbb{E}x7$   $\mathbb{E}xe7$  Black has simplified to a theoretical draw.) 43... $\mathbb{E}d8$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  45. $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}xd5$  46. $\mathbb{E}a6$   $\mathbb{E}d6$ ! and Black survives. (But note that he must avoid 46...f4?? 47. $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$  when White checkmates in two.)

40... $\mathbb{E}c4\#$

40...exf6 41.d6 wins.

41. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{B}b4\#$

41... $\mathbb{E}f4$  42.f7 a4

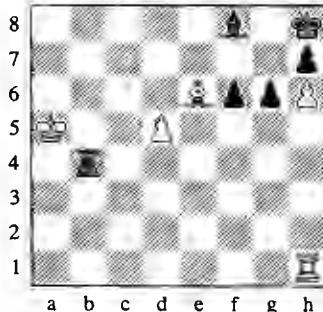


43. $\mathbb{E}h3!$  This forces Black into zugzwang.  
43...g5 (43... $\mathbb{E}d4$  44. $\mathbb{E}c3!$  wins) 44. $\mathbb{E}h5$   $\mathbb{B}f6$   
45. $\mathbb{E}xg5$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  46. $\mathbb{E}f5$   $\mathbb{E}xh6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  White  
should be winning this ending.

42. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  exf6

After 42... $\mathbb{E}f4$  43.f7 g5 44. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}xh6$   
45. $\mathbb{E}c8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  46. $\mathbb{E}g8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  White  
has excellent winning chances.

After the text move White must once again  
find something spectacular.



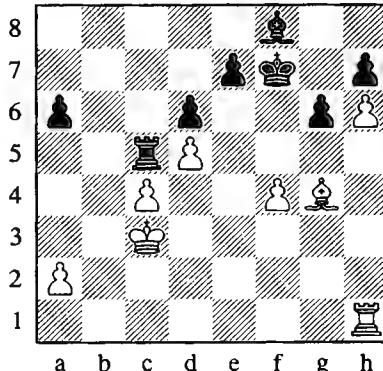
43.d6!!  $\mathbb{E}xd6$  44. $\mathbb{E}d1$

Black must lose his bishop.

44... $\mathbb{E}b8$  45. $\mathbb{E}xd6$  f5 46. $\mathbb{E}d7$

White's king crosses the b-file, and the  
resulting endgame should be winning. If Black  
advances his f- and g-pawns then h7 will fall.

We now return to the game.



33. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g7$   $\mathbb{E}c7$

34... $\mathbb{E}xh6?$  does not work here, as 35. $\mathbb{E}xh6$   
 $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36. $\mathbb{E}xh7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$  37. $\mathbb{E}xe7$  wins for  
White.

Interestingly the various commentators seem  
to have missed the tactical defence offered by:  
34...e6! 35. $\mathbb{E}xe6$  (after 35.dxe6  $\mathbb{E}h5$  36. $\mathbb{E}b1$   
 $\mathbb{E}xh6$  37. $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{E}h2$  Black's position should be  
tenable) 35... $\mathbb{E}c7$  36. $\mathbb{E}d4$  a5 Black is a pawn  
down but he has stabilized his position, and  
White's rook remains tied to the defence of the  
h6-pawn. Black has decent drawing chances.

35. $\mathbb{E}xh7$  e6

If 35... $\mathbb{E}f7$  36.f5 g5 37.f6 exf6 38. $\mathbb{E}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$   
39.h7#  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  40. $\mathbb{E}b1$  White wins.

36. $\mathbb{Q}g8$  exd5 37.h7  $\mathbb{Q}g7?$

This loses without a fight. It seems that the  
long and gruelling defence finally took its toll.  
Kavalek must have missed a finesse somewhere  
in the following line:

37... $\mathbb{E}xc4\#$

This should give good drawing chances.

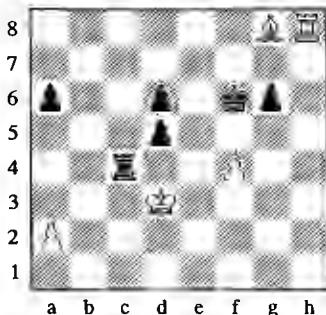
38. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  39.h8=

Objectively White's best winning chance  
is 39. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ? (40. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}h5$ )  
40... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  when he still has chances to press  
for a win, but I suspect that Black should be  
able to hold with correct defence. Essentially

the position has the same character as the game continuation, except that White is without his c4-pawn, which obviously improves Black's chances considerably.

39... $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  40. $\mathbb{B}xh8$

Perhaps it was here that Kavalek overlooked the key defensive move:



40... $\mathbb{B}c8!$

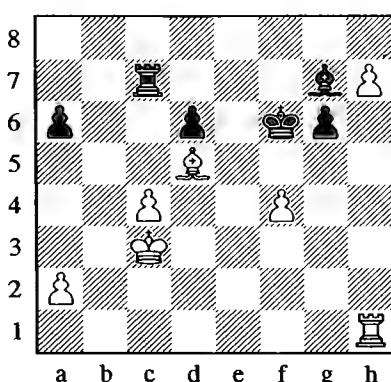
After the obvious 40... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  42. $\mathbb{B}g8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  White saves the bishop and wins.

41.f5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  42. $\mathbb{B}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg8$

Black draws easily.

38. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

The rest is not difficult – White simply piles up his forces on the weak g6-pawn.



38... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$   $\mathbb{B}e7\#$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

$\mathbb{a}5$  42.a4  $\mathbb{B}c7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  44. $\mathbb{B}h6$   $\mathbb{B}g7$

After 44... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45. $\mathbb{B}xg6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  46. $\mathbb{B}g1\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  47. $\mathbb{B}h1\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  48. $\mathbb{B}h7\#$  White wins the rook.

45. $\mathbb{Q}g4$

1-0

Apart from the inaccuracy on move 31, Karpov conducted this masterpiece almost flawlessly.

After this win Karpov slowed down momentarily for a quick draw with the black pieces against Gheorghiu, but he immediately followed up with a victory over Westerinen of Finland. He then repeated the pattern in the final two rounds, drawing quickly against Radulov and beating the Spanish grandmaster Pomar. His overall result from the Nice Olympiad was a staggering ten wins and four draws with no defeats.

### Candidates Final

In this, Karpov's last and most important event of the year, he battled Korchnoi for the right to challenge Fischer. The match took place in Moscow, and had a fixed duration of twenty four games.

After a fighting draw in Game 1, Karpov unleashed a devastating piece of opening preparation against Korchnoi's Dragon and won convincingly. The next three games were drawn, although they were all hard fought and contained interesting moments. Then in Game 6 Korchnoi played the Petroff and tried a risky pawn sacrifice, but was unable to generate enough compensation and lost.

It seems that Korchnoi took a while to realize that he should aim for safety with the black pieces instead of taking risks. It is remarkable that both Spassky and Korchnoi misjudged Karpov and had to adjust their openings during the match.

Games 7-12 were hard fought but all ended in draws. In Game 13 Karpov avoided a perpetual and tried to press for a win with the black pieces, but went wrong and allowed a forced win. But Korchnoi missed his chance, and even though he kept a clear advantage in the endgame he was unable to convert it. The next three games were draws, but then Korchnoi suffered a disaster, blundering in an equal position with the white pieces.

With a 3-0 advantage and just seven games to play, it appeared that Karpov was almost assured of victory. But to his great credit, Korchnoi almost staged a remarkable comeback. First he stayed disciplined and held a French with an isolated queen's pawn. Then in Game 19 he finally scored his first win after Karpov became a bit too relaxed in an endgame with opposite-coloured bishops. In Game 20 Korchnoi played a risky opening with Black and almost paid the price, but Karpov failed to capitalize. Then he played a prepared novelty in the Queen's Indian which suffered from a huge tactical flaw, and Korchnoi destroyed him in a mere nineteen moves (you can find it on page 199, in the note to Black's 7th move in Game 41). Suddenly the match was wide open.

With three games remaining, Karpov managed to compose himself. The fact that he had the white pieces in two of these games must have been a big help. He held the next two games comfortably, which meant that only one more draw was required to seal the match. Here is the game.

### Game 39

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

Candidates final Moscow (24), 1974

#### 1. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

For most of the match Karpov opened with 1.e4. Although he had been successful with the

king's pawn, scoring two wins and eight draws without a loss, he switched to the text move for the last couple of games when he was content to draw.

#### 1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.d4

In Game 22 Karpov preferred 2.c4 and drew solidly: 2...e6 3.g3 d5 4.d4 dx $c$ 4 5. $\mathbb{W}a4\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  6. $\mathbb{W}xc4$  b6 7. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  8.0-0 c5 9. $\mathbb{E}d1$  a6 10.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  11.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  b5 13. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  0-0 15.a3  $\mathbb{E}c2$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}xb7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  19. $\mathbb{E}acl$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20.e4  $\mathbb{E}bc7$  21. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}xc7$  22.f3 Karpov obtained a super-safe position and a draw was agreed a few moves later.

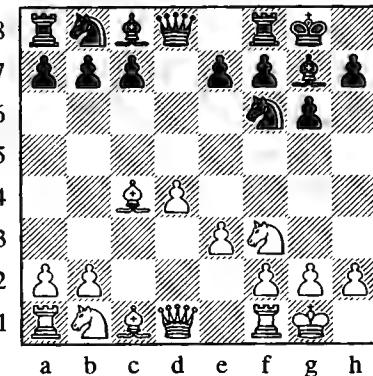
#### 2...d5

It is a bit surprising that Korchnoi opts for a symmetrical set-up.

#### 3.c4 dx $c$ 4 4.e3 g6!?

The combination of the Queen's Gambit and the Grünfeld is not highly regarded by theory, but Korchnoi was in a must-win situation so his choice is understandable.

#### 5. $\mathbb{A}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 6.0-0 0-0



#### 7.b3!?

Given the match situation, this was a clever choice. Black either gives up on ...c5 for a

long time, or plays it but allows considerable simplifications in the centre.

7...c6?

Korchnoi prefers to keep the position more complex, but his choice enables White to claim a long-lasting space advantage.

8.♗b2 ♗g4 9.♘bd2!

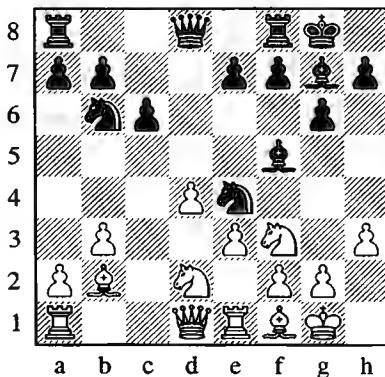
Black's only active plan involved ...e5, so Karpov prefers not to develop his knight on c3.

9...♘bd7 10.h3 ♘f5

After 10...♗xf3 11.♘xf3 White's bishop pair gives him a nice edge, while Black is not any closer to creating counterplay.

11.♗e1 ♘b6 12.♗f1 ♘e4

Korchnoi stops e4, but in doing so he exchanges a pair of minor pieces, which is not against Karpov's interests in this game.



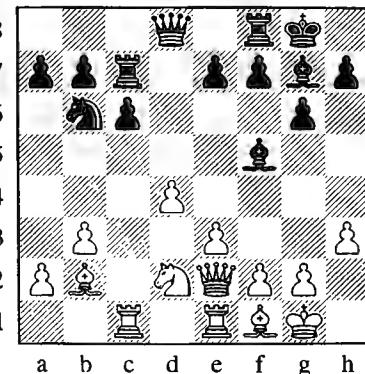
13.♘xe4 ♗xe4 14.♘d2 ♘f5 15.♗c1

Karpov develops his last piece. Under normal circumstances he may well have preferred the more ambitious 15.e4 ♗e6 16.♘f3, when White has gained space and enjoys a pleasant positional advantage.

15...♗c8?

Korchnoi is having trouble finding a plan. A better idea was 15...a5!, hoping for some queenside play, when Black is only a bit worse.

16.♗e2 ♘c7



17.a4!

Karpov gives himself the option of driving the enemy knight away, and in some positions the pawn might advance all the way to a6 in order to undermine the c6-pawn.

17...♗c8

Korchnoi has no idea how to find a target in Karpov's position; his choice of opening turned out to be a disaster for this game.

18.♗a3

Karpov allows no counterplay.

18...♗e6

If 18...♗e8 19.♘e4 is strong.

19.♗d1 ♘e8 20.♘e4

Karpov does not just wait, but improves his knight.

20...f5 21.♘c5 ♘f7 22.♗b2?

The huge pressure of the occasion can be felt in this somewhat passive move. One stronger idea was 22.♗c2!, for instance 22...e5 23.dxe5

$\mathbb{Q}xe5$  24.  $\mathbb{E}cd1$  and Black faces problems as 24...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  is well met by 25.e4.

22...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$

23... e5 is a reasonable move, but after 24.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  27.  $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  we reach a sterile endgame, which Karpov would have drawn easily.

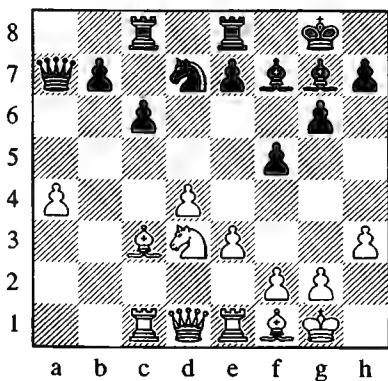
24.b4

Karpov gains space.

24... a5?!

Korchnoi loses patience. He should have improved his queen with 24...  $\mathbb{W}c7$  25.b5  $\mathbb{W}d6$  when the position is balanced.

25.bxa5  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$



27.a5!

Karpov fixes Black's queenside.

27... c5?!

27...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  was better, although after 28.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  White has the initiative on the queenside. Korchnoi cannot resist the urge to instigate a direct confrontation, but Karpov is up to the challenge.

28.  $\mathbb{W}a4!$

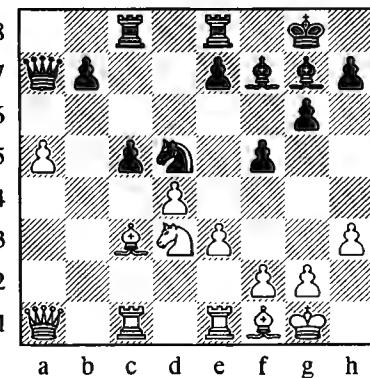
Exploiting the vulnerability of the black knight.

28...  $\mathbb{Q}b6?$

This loses a pawn, but even after the superior 28...  $\mathbb{E}ed8$  29.  $\mathbb{W}b5$ , White's queen dominates on the queenside.

29.  $\mathbb{W}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5?!$

After 29...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30.  $dxc5$  White is a pawn up for nothing, but still it was better than the game continuation.



30.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$

½-½

Karpov took a draw here, which was as good as a win in view of the match situation. Indeed, at this level the final position can be regarded as close to winning for White. Karpov's play in the final game was not only objectively strong, but also perfectly suited to the match situation.

Although the match was close, Karpov played the better chess overall, he held his nerves when needed and deserved his victory. At the same time, it should be acknowledged that the Soviet authorities favoured Karpov, perhaps for political reasons, but mainly because he clearly had the best chance to wrest the coveted crown from Fischer, especially in future championship cycles if not the present one.

Being disfavoured in his home country must have been hard for Korchnoi, and soon after the match he defected from the Soviet Union.

## 1974 Summary

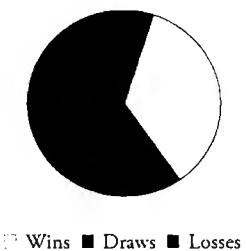
Candidates quarter-final versus Polugaevsky, Moscow: Won 5½–2½ (+3 =5 –0)

Candidates semi-final versus Spassky, Leningrad: Won 7–4 (+4 =6 –1)

Nice Olympiad (Board one): 12/14 (+10 =4 –0)

Candidates final versus Korchnoi, Moscow: Won 12½–11½ (+3 =19 –2)

Total 64.9% (+20 =34 –3)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1975

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Rating 2705 (2 in the World)

This was the year in which Fischer forfeited his World Champion title when he refused to take part in a match against Karpov under the prevailing FIDE regulations. In March the FIDE congress had agreed to Fischer's demand that the match would continue until one player scored ten wins. However, it did not accept Fischer's insistence that the champion would retain his title if the score became tied at nine wins apiece.

It is hard to determine the extent to which Karpov was personally involved with the negotiations. It seems likely that the Soviet authorities would have had at least some involvement. Later Karpov referred to a "gap" in his career, created by the lost experience of playing Fischer for the title. Given the chance to turn back the clock, would Karpov have accepted the conditions laid down by Fischer – or were matters completely out of his hands?

In conversation with my Russian trainer colleagues, many of them have told me they believe Fischer was scared to face Karpov. Perhaps not surprisingly, this is not an opinion I have heard from many westerners. Personally I doubt that this was Fischer's main motivation, although it should be remembered that he had not played a competitive game since winning the title from Spassky in 1972. Karpov's impressive results may have made Fischer understand that he would have to muster all his strength, and perhaps he did not feel capable of achieving this.

Unfortunately we cannot do more than speculate at this stage. If I had to give my own best guess as to the reason for Fischer's behaviour, I would suggest that he had already achieved his main goal in becoming World Champion and lacked the necessary motivation to keep on playing.

The history of chess is full of epic matches that never happened. Tarrasch never got a chance against Steinitz. Rubinstein and Maroczy were never able to test Lasker. Alekhine never gave a return match to Capablanca. And Keres never faced Botvinnik.

There is no way of knowing who would have won had Karpov and Fischer met in 1975. Karpov was certainly strong enough to compete with the American, especially considering Fischer's inactivity over the previous few years. On the other hand Karpov lacked any previous match experience at World Championship level. When Kasparov stepped up to challenge Karpov in 1985, he was almost massacred in the early stages of the match, and needed time to adapt to the playing strength of an opponent who was head and shoulders above anyone he had faced previously. It is possible that a similar fate may have befallen Karpov.

Had Karpov played a match or matches against Fischer, it is likely that he would have beaten him at some point; if not in 1975, then probably by the early 1980s. Perhaps more importantly, there is no doubt that playing Fischer would have deepened Karpov's chess understanding and made him an even more formidable player – especially in match play. We can only wonder how

Karpov's matches with Kasparov would have played out, had the 1975 match gone ahead.

When Karpov went back to Zlatoust, the whole town filled the streets to celebrate the success of their hero. Grandmaster Yuri Razuvayev, who worked so much with Karpov in the 1970s, told me he did not go to the theatre with him as he did not like the Beatles-style adoration with which ordinary people treated Karpov in public. On one occasion, when Karpov was spotted in a car, the mob of fans lifted the vehicle off the ground!

Having won the highest title by default, Karpov had to prove he was a true champion. He was never as charismatic as his predecessor but his results over the board left no doubt that he was the strongest active player in the world.

His first event in 1975 was the Portoroz/Ljubljana tournament. In his first game as the World Champion he defeated Portisch for the first time, after the Hungarian grandmaster made an unfortunate error. In the next round he met the Slovenian player Rudolf Osterman, who never faced any other world champions.

## Game 40

Rudolf Osterman – Anatoly Karpov

Portoroz/Ljubljana 1975

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.e3**

Karpov faced this move ten times. He won four games, drew four and lost two, the last number being more than one would normally expect from him.

**4...♝b7 5.♕c3 d5**

Karpov usually plays this way; only once has he opted to transpose to the Nimzo-Indian with 5...♝b4.

**6.♗d3 ♜e7 7.0–0 0–0 8.♗e2 c5**

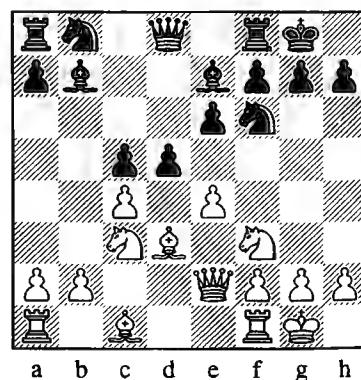
Karpov had played the same way a few years back, so Osterman had probably prepared for that.

**9.♗x5 ♜xc5**

It was necessary to improve on the aforementioned game, which continued: 9...dxc4? 10.♗xc4 ♜xc5 11.e4 ♜bd7 12.e5 ♜xf3?! 13.gxf3 ♜h5 14.♗d1 ♜e7 15.f4 g6 16.f5! exf5 17.e6 ♜df6 18.exf7† ♜g7 19.♗xe7 ♜xe7 20.♗b5 Black got a bad position and went on to lose, Petrosian – Karpov, Moscow 1973.

**10.e4?!**

10.♗d1 is reasonable and leads to a balanced position.



**10...d4 11.♗b1**

In such situations one must always consider the possibility of 11.e5, but here it achieves nothing and after 11...dxc3 12.exf6 ♜ff6 13.bxc3 ♜d7 Black has a pleasant position.

**11...♝bd7 12.e5**

The other main option is:

**12.♗f4**

But it turns out that White cannot stop ...e5.

**12...♝h5! 13.♗d2 e5! 14.♗xd4**

After a quieter continuation such as 14.g3

$\mathbb{W}b6$  Black's space advantage gives him the upper hand.

14... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  15. $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  16. $\mathbb{W}h3$

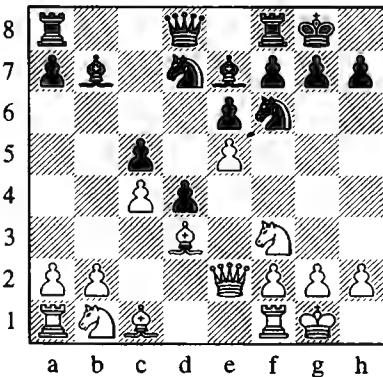
After 16. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $f5$  17. $b3$   $fxe4$  18. $fxe4$   $\mathbb{B}xf1\uparrow$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  Black has far too much activity for a pawn.

16... $\mathbb{W}c8!$

After the less incisive 16... $\mathbb{W}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19. $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  20. $\mathbb{W}b5$  White can live with his position.

17. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  18. $b4$   $\mathbb{A}h4!$  19. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  20. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $f5$

Black has tremendous compensation for the pawn.



12... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$  13. $\mathbb{gxf3}$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

It is hard to tell why Karpov preferred this over 13... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ . Perhaps he expected the continuation 14. $f4$   $g6$  against either knight move, and planned to transfer the knight to  $f5$  via  $g7$ , in which case it makes no difference. I find it doubtful that he intended to put the knight on  $c7$ , where it has very few prospects.

14. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

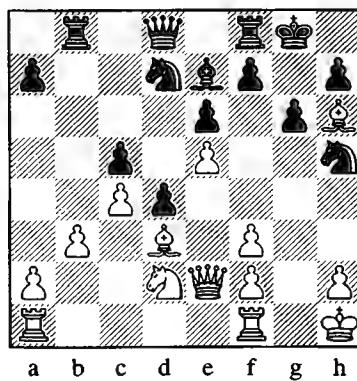
14. $f4$  is the natural alternative, when Karpov would probably have played 14... $g6$ . Another idea is 14... $f5$  15. $exf6$   $\mathbb{B}xf6$ , but after 16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  White's two bishops and active pieces do a reasonable job of making up for his structural deficiencies.

14... $\mathbb{E}b8$  15. $b3$   $g6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}h1?$

This is too slow. 17. $\mathbb{Q}h6?$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  is also bad for White, but he should have preferred 17. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $h3$ . Even here though, Black has a comfortable position and can exert pressure both on the queenside with ... $a5-a4$ , and on the kingside by transferring his bishop to  $h6$ .

17... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h6$

After 18. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  19. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  the  $e5$ -pawn falls.



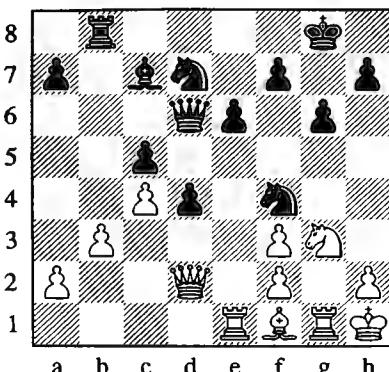
18... $\mathbb{Q}g5!!$

Exchange sacrifices are often not difficult to understand; the problem is that they may not occur to us easily. This one is strong for several reasons. White's rooks have no useful files, the  $e5$ -pawn will soon perish and White's  $f$ -pawns are also weak. Finally, the  $f4$ -square will be a tremendous outpost for the black pieces, especially the knight.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$  20. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  23. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7!$

Black has plenty of time to build his position. With his last move he withdraws his bishop to a safe spot while preventing any future queen invasions on  $a5$ .

24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  25. $\mathbb{E}e1$



25...f5!

Preventing the white pieces from using the e4-square.

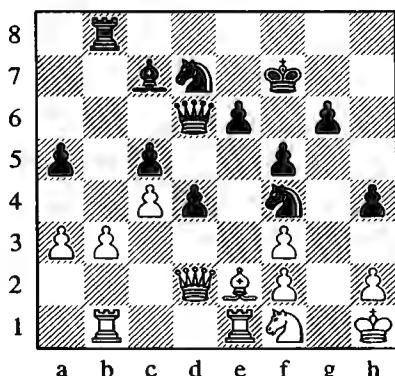
26.Qe2 Qf7 27.Qb1 a5

Karpov makes sure that White will not be able to open a file on the queenside.

28.a3 h5!

Preparing to push White back even further.

29.Qg1?! h4 30.Qf1



30...Qe7!

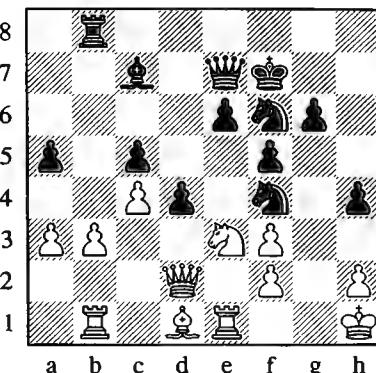
Karpov exploits White's error on the previous move. The rook has vacated the g-file, so he immediately looks to invade there.

31.Qe3? Qf6!?

Karpov does not even bother taking the knight yet. He can afford to leave it as his positional advantage is so great.

32.Qd1

If 32.Qg2 Qxe2 33.Qxe2 h3 34.Qe1 Qd6 35.f4 Qe4 wins.



32...dxe3

Karpov was not obliged to take this piece, but it is the simplest way to exploit Black's advantage. In the resulting position he is ahead on material while also retaining most of his position plusses. It is a bit surprising that Osterman played on for another fourteen moves against the reigning world champion. The remaining moves require no comment.

33.fxe3 Qd8 34.Qc2 Qd3 35.Qf1 e5 36.e4 Qd4 37.exf5 gxf5 38.b4 axb4 39.axb4 cxb4 40.Qg2 e4 41.fxe4 Qxe4 42.Qf3 Qe5 43.Qa1 b3 44.Qa7 b2 45.Qb7 Qxc4 46.Qd1 Qc1

0-1

Karpov went on to win the event convincingly with a score of 11/15, with seven wins and eight draws. Amongst his main rivals he defeated Portisch and Velimirovic and drew with players like Hort, Ljubojevic and Gligoric. His score against the lower ranked players was a massacre.

The recently crowned champion's first event in his home country was the USSR Spartakiad team event. Following a first round draw with Beliavsky, he won three consecutive games against Grigorian, Georgadze and Kupreichik. He then made a quick draw with Petrosian before meeting Spassky in round six. This game later won the award for the best game of the year.

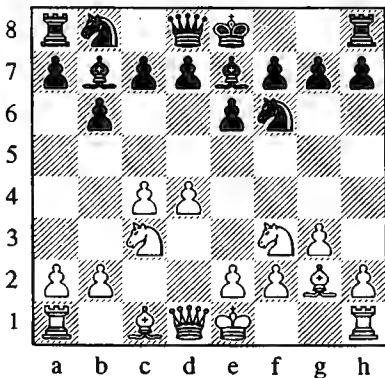
### Game 41

#### Anatoly Karpov – Boris Spassky

USSR Team Championship, Riga 1975

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}B3$  b6 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0??!**

This is inaccurate. The correct 6... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ! reduces White's options.



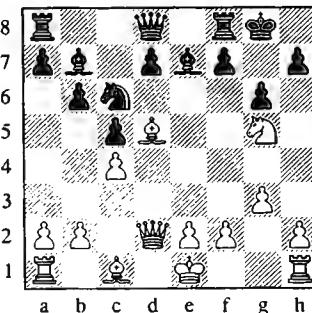
**7. $\mathbb{W}c2?$**

White tries to take advantage of the delayed castling by threatening to occupy the centre with e4. Karpov had suffered an unpleasant defeat on the black side of this variation in his match against Korchnoi, so it looks like the idea made a positive impression on him.

**7...d5**

The aforementioned game was a disaster for

Karpov: 7...c5 8.d5 (Interestingly Aronian did not go for the Benoni type of position and preferred 8.dxc5, but all he got was a quick draw: 8...bcx5 9.0-0 d6 10. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  13.a3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  14.b3 h6 15.h3  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  16.g4  $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$  Aronian – Grischuk, Moscow 2006.) 8...exd5 9. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (In Game 5 of the Korchnoi match Karpov had preferred 9...g6, but he stood worse and obviously felt the need to improve his play.) 10. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  g6 11. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$



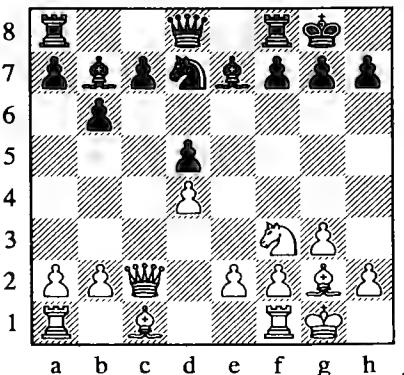
**12... $\mathbb{E}b8??$**  Karpov claims this move was prepared by one of his seconds and he did not check it. 13. $\mathbb{Q}xh7!$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  14. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  19.f4 1-0 Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow (21) 1974. This was one of the worst defeats of Karpov's career. On the other hand it did not affect the overall outcome of the match, and he never again lost such a game as a result of bad home analysis.

**8.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**

Perhaps influenced by the course of this famous game, defenders of Black's side tended to prefer 8...exd5 in later years. The reality is that White has a pleasant advantage in both cases. Two years later Spassky himself tried 8...exd5 against Korchnoi and was alright for a while, although he eventually went down.

**9.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  exd5**

Thirteen years later, the long time number one West German player tried taking with the bishop, but also failed to equalize: 10... $\mathbb{B}xd5$  11.e4  $\mathbb{B}b7$  12. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  15.d5  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{exd}5$  17. $\mathbb{exd}5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  18.a3  $\mathbb{B}fe8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a1$  White maintained an edge and went on to win, Ribli – Unzicker, Germany 1988.



#### 11. $\mathbb{B}d1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ?

It is a bit too early to determine the placement of the knight.

#### 11...c5

Playing this move immediately would have reduced White's options.

#### 12.dxc5 bxc5

12... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  is another idea, when Black should only be slightly worse.

#### 13. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ?

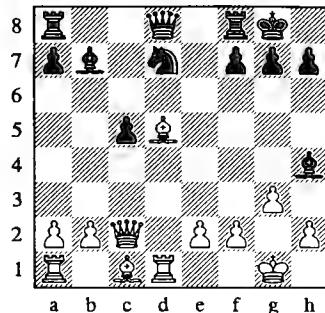
This move has yet to be played, but the quieter 13. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  and  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  do not give White much.

Another energetic and untested continuation that deserves attention is 13.e4!?, d4 14.b4!.

#### 13... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$

After 13... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  White exerts unpleasant pressure against the hanging pawns.

#### 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

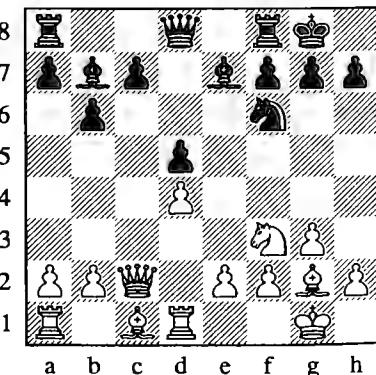


#### 14... $\mathbb{B}b8$ !

After 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{W}d2$  White wins back the piece. Black will obtain some compensation for the pawn, but probably not enough.

#### 15. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{B}xb7$ 16. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{B}b4$ 17. $\mathbb{W}f5$ $\mathbb{B}b7$ 18.gxh4 $\mathbb{W}xh4$

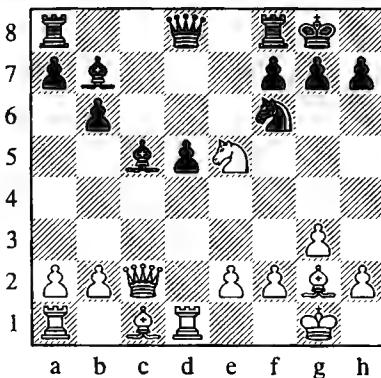
Black seems to be okay in this sharp line. White's king is a bit exposed, and he cannot take on d7 as the reply ...g6 wins material.



#### 12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ! c5 13.dxc5 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

13...bxc5 was also possible. Black's pieces are not ideally placed to coordinate with the hanging pawns, but on the other hand it is not clear if White can exploit this in a convincing manner. A possible continuation is: 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ?) 14... $\mathbb{B}c8$  (14...h6? 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{B}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ) 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  16. $\mathbb{B}d2$

(after 16.♕xf6 ♕xf6 17.♕xd5 ♕xd5 18.e4 ♕d4 19.exd5 ♕xd5 the position is balanced) 16...♝fd8 17.♝ad1 d4 and White only has a small edge.



#### 14.♞d3!

The knight is heading for f4, where it will attack the isolated pawn.

#### 14...♝d6 15.♝f4!

Minor piece exchanges are known to help the side playing against the isolated pawn.

#### 15...♜e8

15...♝e7 loses time, and after 16.♝ac1 White can look to invade on the c-file.

#### 16.e3 ♔e4 17.♕xd6 ♕xd6 18.♞f4 ♜ac8?

Spassky probably miscalculated something in the tactical sequence that follows this move. Karpov recommended 18...♝ad8, although after 19.♝d4 White is in control, and has a simple plan of doubling rooks and playing ♜a4 or ♜b3.

Black can also try 18...♝e5, but once again after 19.♝d4 ♜ac8 20.♝b3 White is pressing.

#### 19.♛a4!

Karpov sets up a double attack as the knight on e4 is also hanging.

#### 19...♝e7?

Spassky aims to put pressure on e3, but the queen is stepping into a pin. A better try was: 19...♝f6 20.♝xa7 ♕a8

Black is hoping to generate some threats on the long diagonal.

#### 21.♝xe4

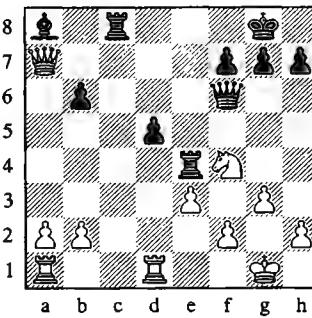
This looks best.

After 21.♛a3 ♜c2 22.♝xe4 dxе4 23.♝ac1 ♜xb2 White is a bit better, but Black should be able live with it.

21.♝d4 should be met by 21...g5! (after 21...♜c2 22.♝xe4 dxе4 23.♝ad1 Black does not have much for the pawn) 22.♝d3 Black has some compensation for the pawn, and can choose between 22...♜c2 and 22...♜e7 followed by ...♜ec7.

#### 21...♝xe4

Black needs to maintain the possibility of opening the long diagonal for his bishop. After 21...dxе4? 22.♝d2 he has no compensation.



#### 22.♝xd5

This is probably not best, but it is an interesting move to analyse.

Instead of grabbing another pawn White should improve his position with 22.♝ac1 or 22.♝e2!, both of which leave Black short of compensation.

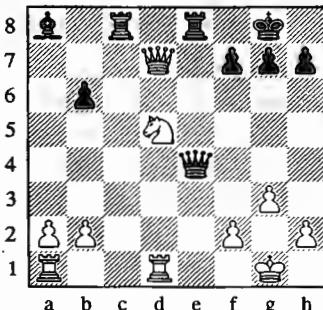
#### 22...♝f3

This sets up a hair-raising position.

#### 23.♛d7!

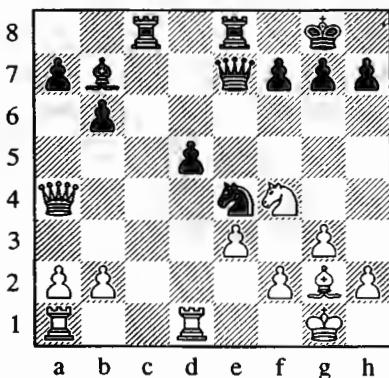
After 23.♕a3 ♜e5 24.e4 ♜xe4 25.♖ac1 ♜ce8 26.f3 ♜e2 27.♘f4 ♜xf3 28.♕xf3 ♜xf3 29.♖d2 the endgame is equal.

23...♜ee8 24.e4 ♜xe4



25.♖d4! ♜e2 26.♖d2 ♜e4 27.♖ad1

White keeps an extra pawn, but converting it will not be easy due to his vulnerable king.



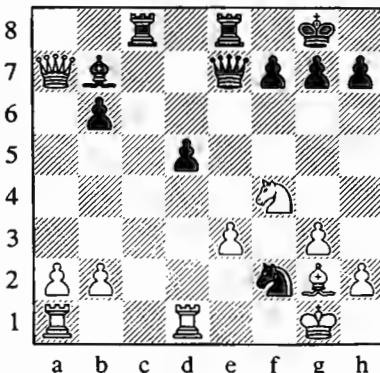
20.♕xa7!

After playing an excellent positional game up to this point, Karpov demonstrates sharp calculation. A word of warning to the readers: if you are thinking about venturing into enemy territory with your queen, then make sure she can come back in time!

The main alternative was 20.♘xe4 ♜xe4 21.♖d4 ♜c2 22.♕xa7 ♜xb2 23.♖ad1 ♜a8

24.♘xd5 ♜xd5 25.♖xd5 g6. In the resulting position Black is likely to be able to exchange the final two queenside pawns to leave an endgame with four versus three on the kingside, which he would have good chances to hold.

20...♘xf2



21.♘xd5!

21.♘xf2?? is of course impossible due to the direct 21...♜xe3† 22.♗f1 ♜c2 followed by mate.

21...♘xd5 22.♕xe7 ♘xd1!?

Spassky gives up his queen, hoping to build a fortress. On balance, the following alternative would have given better chances to fight for a draw:

22...♜xe7 23.♖xd5 ♘g4 24.♖d6

Another idea is 24.♕h3?! ♘xe3 25.♖xc8 ♘xd5 26.♖d1.

24...b5

After 24...♘xe3?! 25.♖e1 ♘f8 26.♖xb6 White should win.

25.♖c6 b4 26.♖ad1 h5 27.♖d8†

Another possibility is 27.e4 ♘h7 28.♗f1, when it is hard to tell if White can win with his extra pawn.

27...♖xd8 28.♖xd8† ♘h7 29.e4

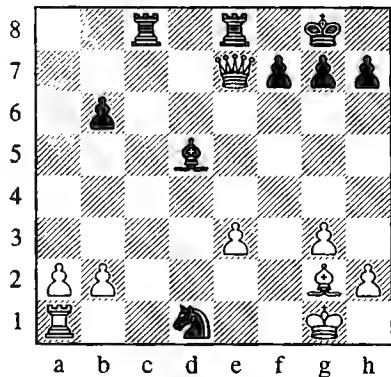


29...b3!!

29... $\mathbb{E}c7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$  maintains good winning chances.

30.axb3  $\mathbb{E}c7$  31. $\mathbb{B}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  32. $\mathbb{B}d5$   $\mathbb{E}c1\uparrow$

Black has decent drawing chances.



23. $\mathbb{E}c1!!$

It is instructive and beautiful, although White should be able to win by less spectacular means as well.

23... $\mathbb{E}b8$  24. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3\uparrow$

26. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  27. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  28. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{E}de8$

29. $\mathbb{W}d7!$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  30. $\mathbb{E}c8!$

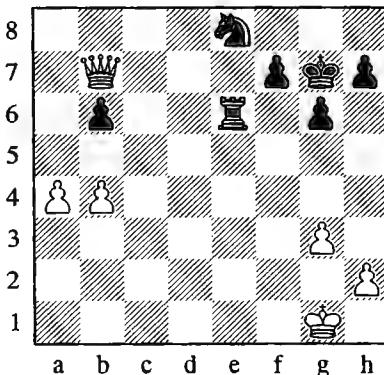
White exchanges rooks in order to ensure that Black will not have enough pieces to hurt his king.

30... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31. $\mathbb{E}xe8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  32. $\mathbb{W}b7$   $\mathbb{E}e6$

33. $\mathbb{W}b8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  34.a4 g6 35.b4

Black's last remaining drawing chance involves sacrificing his knight to eliminate White's last queenside pawn. But Karpov is an endgame maestro, and is unlikely to fall for such tricks. For the moment he improves his position and prepares to create a passed pawn.

35... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36. $\mathbb{W}b7$



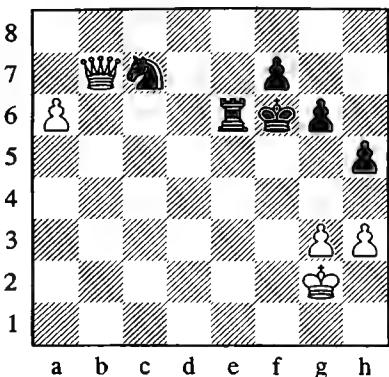
36...h5?

This damages Black's chances of constructing a successful fortress. The point is revealed in the event that Black manages to sacrifice his knight to eliminate White's last queenside pawn. In the resulting endgame with rook and three pawns against queen and two pawns on the kingside, Black can draw with a pawn on h6 but would lose with the pawn on h5, as in the latter case the white king can invade using the g5-square.

For this reason Black should have preferred 36...h6.

37.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}d6$  39.a5  $\mathbb{B}xa5$  40. $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  41.a6  $\mathbb{Q}c7!$

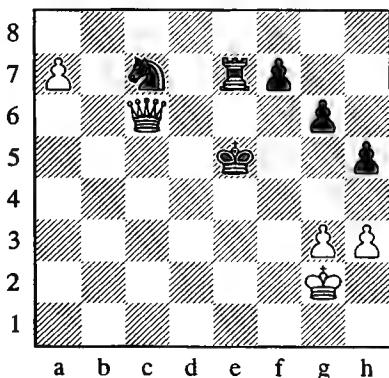
Black's best chance is to try and sacrifice his knight for the a-pawn, even if the resulting fortress is less than watertight.



**42.a7!**

After 42.  $\mathbb{W}xc7$   $\mathbb{B}xa6$  43.  $\mathbb{W}c3\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  44.  $\mathbb{W}g7$  White is winning, and would still be winning even if the black king was on h7, due to the availability of the g5-square as explained previously. Nevertheless Karpov's move is more precise and enables a quicker kill.

**42... $\mathbb{B}e7$  43.  $\mathbb{W}c6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$**



**44.  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$**

**1-0**

Karpov reveals the major problem associated with a fortress – zugzwang. It is one thing to build a fortress, but one must also have a spare move to play. Fortresses and zugzwangs are similar to exchange sacrifices: they are often

easy to understand once you see them, but the hard part can be finding them in the first place.

Karpov finished the team event with a quick draw against Tal, thus scoring a total of four wins and three draws.

Karpov's last event of the year was the Milan super-tournament. Technically speaking he won the competition, although the result was not as superlative as it sounds. The event began with a round robin tournament. This was won by Portisch, who played arguably the best tournament of his life to achieve a score of 7/11, one point ahead of Karpov, Petrosian and Ljubojevic. According to the regulations, the top four players would qualify for a knockout competition to determine the overall champion.

In the semi-final stage, Karpov recorded four dull draws with Petrosian. He qualified for the final, although the database does not make it clear on what basis he overcame Petrosian. Perhaps he won a tie-breaker at a fast time limit which did not make it to the database. Or maybe there was another tie-break system based on their results in the round robin tournament.

In the other semi-final Portisch continued his fine form and defeated Ljubojevic, thus setting up a dream finale between the winner of the round robin and the reigning world champion. In the first game Karpov went for safety with the black pieces and secured a draw. We will look at their second game shortly.

Portisch qualified for the candidates stage of the world championship cycle eight times, and was the top ranked Hungarian player for nearly three decades. He never played Euwe, but played against all the subsequent world champions from Botvinnik to Anand. Over 242 encounters, Portisch won twenty six of these encounters, with 161 draws and fifty five losses.

## Game 42

Anatoly Karpov – Lajos Portisch

Milan Final (2) 1975

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 d6**

Portisch was strong in the openings. He had a wide repertoire, although he tended to pick one main opening for each tournament and stick with it throughout. In Milan he answered 1.e4 with 1...e5 in all but one case, so Karpov must have been expecting it. Over his career Karpov scored a perfect 5/5 against the present variation.

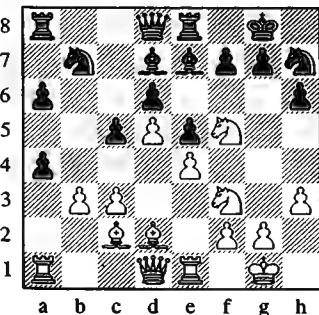
**5.0–0**

Karpov chose this move in two of the five games.

**5...♝e7**

Karpov must have anticipated this move, as Portisch had already used it to defeat Walter Browne in the round robin tournament.

A year earlier Karpov had faced 5...♝d7 and gained the upper hand as follows: 6.d4 ♘f6 7.c3 ♜e7 8.♗bd2 0–0 9.♗e1 ♜e8 10.♗f1 h6 11.♗g3 ♜f8 12.♗d2 b5 13.♗c2! The right square for the bishop. 13...♝a5 14.b3 c5 15.d5 ♜h7 16.h3 ♜e7 17.♗f5 ♜b7 18.a4 bxa4



19.b4! Playing against the knight on b7. 19...a5 20.♗xa4 axb4 21.cxb4 ♜f8 22.♗c6 ♜c7 23.b5 Karpov outplayed his opponent and converted his advantage in Karpov – Westerinen, Nice (ol) 1974.

**6.♗xc6†**

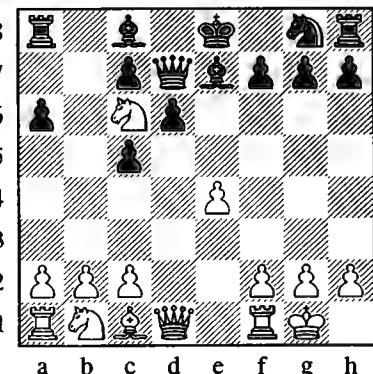
This is a surprising decision from Karpov. He probably just wanted to get a playable position.

Portisch's earlier game had continued: 6.c3 ♜g4 7.d3 ♘f6 8.♗bd2 ♘d7 9.h3 ♜h5 10.♗c2 ♜f8 11.g4 ♜g6 12.d4 h5 13.d5 ♘b8 14.♗c4 ♘bd7 15.♗g2 hxg4 16.hxg4 ♘f6 17.♗e3 ♜d7 18.♗d2 c6 19.c4 ♜d8 20.f3 ♘b6 21.♗f5 ♜xf5 22.exf5 ♜e3 23.♗e4 ♜d4 24.♗xf6† gxsf6 Black went on to win this highly complex position, Browne – Portisch, Milan 1975.

**6...bxс6 7.d4 exd4 8.♗xd4**

Another possibility is 8.♗xd4 ♘f6.

**8...с5 9.♗c6 ♜d7**



**10.♗a5?**

The knight is not badly placed here, and it is useful to prevent ...♝b7. Nevertheless Black has a number of routes to a decent position.

**10...♝f6**

10... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and 10... $\mathbb{W}b5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  were equally valid alternatives.

### 11. $\mathbb{W}d3$

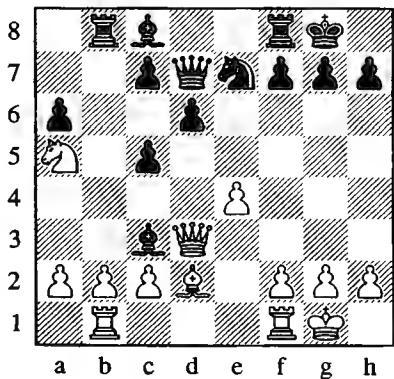
Karpov does not want to have doubled c-pawns.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Also after 11... $\mathbb{W}b5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ba3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black should be fine.

### 12. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{E}b8$ 13. $\mathbb{E}b1$ 0-0 14. $\mathbb{A}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

Portisch decides to simplify the position. It is probably no better or worse than keeping the pieces on the board, for instance 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{A}d8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , or 14... $\mathbb{W}e6$  15. $\mathbb{F}4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $f5$   $\mathbb{W}e5$ , with a balanced position in both cases.



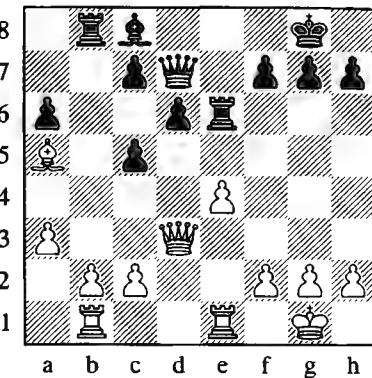
### 15. $\mathbb{A}xc3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$

The active 15... $f5$  16. $\mathbb{E}bel$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  is also possible.

### 16.a3 $\mathbb{Q}xa5$

Another possibility was 16... $\mathbb{W}e8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $f5$  18. $\mathbb{E}bel$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  with a balanced position, but Portisch prefers to exchange the knights, perhaps expecting to simplify to a draw. Indeed, with opposite-coloured bishops it looks as though it will be hard for either side to achieve much, so it is highly instructive to observe the way in which Karpov improves his position.

### 17. $\mathbb{A}xa5$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 18. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ $\mathbb{E}e6$

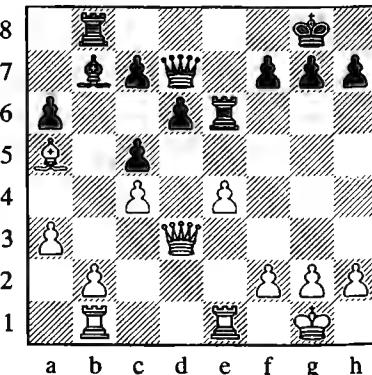


### 19.c4!

Karpov carries out an interesting strategy. He positions his pawns on light squares in order to choke Black's bishop. He used the same idea in a number of his games, including against Ljubojevic earlier in the same event. Obviously White must use this tool with skill, as if it goes wrong then the pawns could fall prey to the enemy bishop in an endgame.

### 19... $\mathbb{A}b7$

It was worth considering 19... $\mathbb{W}c6$ ! 20. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{E}g6$ . Later Black can move his bishop to d7 or e6, followed by ... $\mathbb{E}f8$  and eventually ... $f5$ .



**20.f3!**

Karpov strengthens the e4-pawn and continues his policy of restricting the enemy bishop.

**20...♝be8?!**

This move looks natural, but it lacks any real purpose and indeed Portisch chooses to bring it back to b8 a few moves later. 20...♝f8? deserved consideration in order to prepare ...f5.

**21.♛d2 ♜c6?!**

Once again Black should have tried to undermine White's centre or at least generate some activity on the kingside. For instance:

21...♝g6 22.♝c3

22.♛f4 can be met by 22...♝f6.

22.f5

Black can also play on the h-file with 22...♝h3 23.♝h1 ♜h5 or 23...♝h6.

23.exf5 ♜xe1† 24.♝xe1 ♜xf5 25.♝e8† ♜f7

26.♛e2 ♜g5

Both sides are somewhat tied up with the task of defending their kings.

Black can simplify to an opposite-coloured bishop ending with 26...♝e6 27.♝xe6 ♜xe6 28.♜xe6† ♜xe6 29.♝xg7, but it is not clear if he can hold.

27.♝h8

Or 27.♝e3 ♜c6.

27...♝e6 28.♛d3 ♜g6

Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.

It seems like Portisch failed to appreciate the danger, and thought he could draw the position by keeping his pieces in a defensive formation.

**22.b3**

Karpov places another pawn on a light square.

22...♝e7

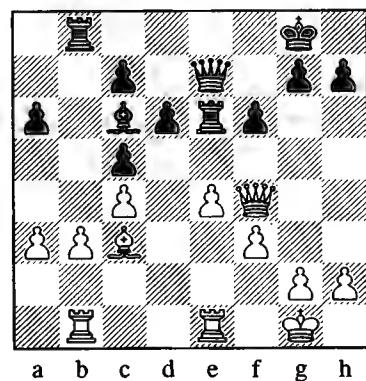
Freeing the position with 22...f5?! would cost a pawn. Nevertheless after 23.exf5 ♜xe1† 24.♝xe1 ♜xe1† 25.♛xe1 ♜xf5 26.♝xc7 Black should be able to hold the ending.

**23.♛f4 ♜b8?!**

Once again Portisch eschews any active ideas, such as 23...♝f6?!, in favour of a passive move. Portisch is used to facing formidable opponents, and there is no doubting his toughness and ability to withstand pressure. However, this was his first time playing a match against a reigning world champion, and perhaps the occasion got the better of him.

**24.♝c3 f6?**

Portisch decides to sit firmly and hold the position, but his last move presents White with an important target. The way in which Karpov increases his advantage from this point is magical.

**25.♝f2!**

Karpov immediately visualizes the attack on the g-file and frees the g1-square for his rook.

25...♝f7 26.h4! ♜ee8 27.g4!

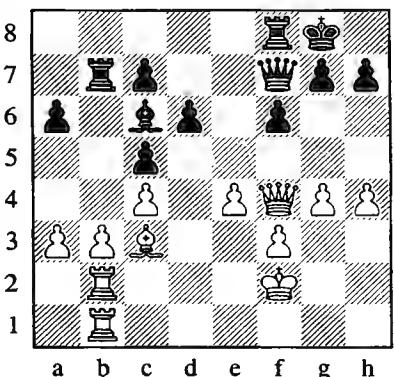
With the last two pawn moves Karpov has gained a lot of space.

27...♝b7

Barczay proposes the interesting sacrifice 27... $\mathbb{E}xb3!$ ? 28. $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  29. $\mathbb{E}eb1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$ , although he mentions that Portisch preferred not to play messy positions of this type. Play continues 30. $\mathbb{E}b8$  (another possibility is 30. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$ ) 30... $\mathbb{W}xc3$  31. $\mathbb{E}xe8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  32. $\mathbb{E}b8$   $\mathbb{W}d4\uparrow$  when Black is worse, yet he has some chances to hold (analysis by Barczay).

### 28. $\mathbb{E}b2$ $\mathbb{E}eb8$ 29. $\mathbb{E}eb1$ $\mathbb{E}f8?$

By moving the rook away from the b-file, Black liberates one of his opponent's rooks from its defence of the b-pawn. He should have preferred a waiting move such as 29... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ .

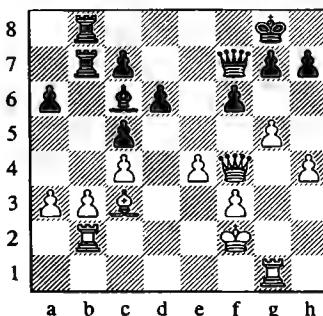


### 30. $\mathbb{E}g1$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Portisch may have been running low on time, which would explain why he resorted to shuffling around with his bishop. The critical alternative was:

30... $\mathbb{E}fb8$  31.g5!

White does not have to defend the b-pawn, but instead presses on with the attack.



31... $\mathbb{E}xb3?!$

This is rather risky, but it is the most interesting move to analyse.

The objectively best continuation is: 31... $\mathbb{E}fxg5$  32. $\mathbb{W}xg5$  g6 33. $\mathbb{E}g4$  (33.h5?  $\mathbb{W}xe4$ ) 33... $\mathbb{E}f8$  (after 33... $\mathbb{E}xb3?$  34. $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}xb3$  35. $\mathbb{E}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  36. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  37.h5  $\mathbb{W}e8$  38. $\mathbb{E}f6$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  39. $\mathbb{W}g5$  h6 40. $\mathbb{W}h4$  White's attack is too strong) 34. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  35. $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  Black survives to the endgame, although White still keeps some pressure after 36.h5.

32. $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}xb3$  33. $\mathbb{E}fxg6$  g6 34. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$

The alternative is 34... $\mathbb{W}xc4$  35.h5  $\mathbb{E}xc3$  (35... $\mathbb{W}f7?$  loses to 36. $\mathbb{W}hxg6$   $\mathbb{W}hxg6$  37. $\mathbb{W}h4!$ ) 36.f7!  $\mathbb{W}xf7$  (36... $\mathbb{E}f8$  37. $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  38. $\mathbb{W}xh7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39. $\mathbb{W}h8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  40. $\mathbb{E}xc3$  wins) 37. $\mathbb{W}xf7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  38. $\mathbb{W}hxg6\uparrow$  in this endgame White's rook should prevail over Black's bishop and pawns.

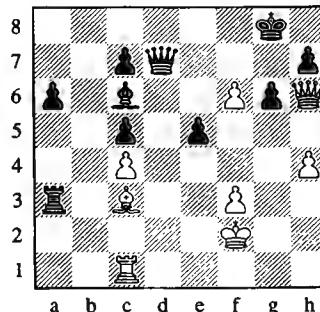
35.e5!

After 35.h5  $\mathbb{E}a2\uparrow$  36. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}xd2\uparrow$  (36...a5 37. $\mathbb{E}b1$ ) 37. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  White's aspirations of winning the game are hampered by the exposed position of his king.

35... $\mathbb{W}d7$

35... $\mathbb{dxe5}$  36. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ .

36. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{dxe5}$

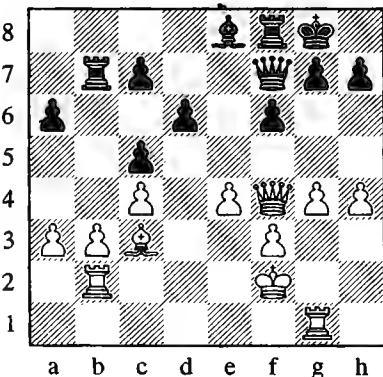


37. $\mathbb{E}d1!$   $\mathbb{E}a2\uparrow$  38. $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{E}g2\uparrow$ !

A beautiful resource, but even this is not enough to solve Black's problems fully.

39. $\mathbb{E}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3\uparrow$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xd1\uparrow$  41. $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{W}g4\uparrow$  42. $\mathbb{E}e3$

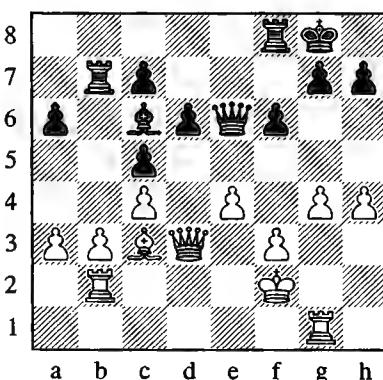
White avoids the perpetual and has good winning chances.



### 31... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

For several moves the queen stood well on f4, where it prevented Black from becoming active and helped to threaten an attack. Now her work is done, so Karpov finds another role for her.

### 31... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 32. $\mathbb{W}d3!$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$



### 33.b4!

This was Karpov's idea – the queen defended the c-pawn in order to facilitate this advance. Now White can exert pressure on the queenside as well.

### 33... $\mathbb{C}xb4$ 34. $\mathbb{A}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 35. $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{B}b6$

35... $\mathbb{A}f7?$  allows White to break through on the kingside with 36.g5.

A better way of improving the bishop was 35... $\mathbb{A}a4$ , although White maintains strong pressure after 36. $\mathbb{W}d4$  (Another idea is 36. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{B}b3$  37. $\mathbb{W}d5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  38.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  39. $\mathbb{E}c2$ , with a pleasant endgame for White.) 36... $\mathbb{B}b3$  37.g5  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  38.gxf6  $\mathbb{W}xd4\uparrow$  39. $\mathbb{E}xd4$  g6 40.h5 when Black faces a difficult defence.

### 36. $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{W}e5?$

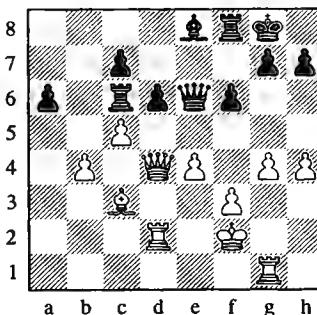
Under pressure, Portisch overlooks an elementary tactic. The best chance was to counterattack with:

### 36... $\mathbb{E}c6$

Waiting passively leads to a tough situation: 36... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  37.g5  $\mathbb{W}h3$  38. $\mathbb{E}g4!$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  39. $\mathbb{W}e3!$   $\mathbb{E}bb8$  40. $\mathbb{E}f4$  And White is dominating on the dark squares.

### 37.c5

Nullifying the threat, while also caging the black rook.



### 37...a5!?

Black had better free the rook.

37... $\mathbb{A}f7$  38.g5 dxc5 39.bxc5  $\mathbb{W}h3$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  41. $\mathbb{E}dg2$  All of White's pieces are participating in the attack, and Black is in trouble.

37... $\mathbb{E}f7$  38. $\mathbb{W}d5!$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (38...dxc5 39. $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  40.bxc5 leads to a tough ending

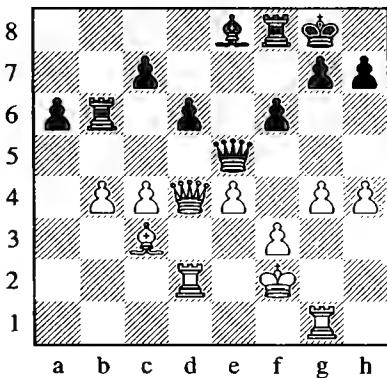
for Black) 39.♗xe6 ♗xe6 40.♕d4 White continues to press, even without queens.

38.bxa5

38.g5 axb4 39.gxf6 bxc3 40.♗xg7† ♔h8 41.f7 looks frightening, but after 41...♔e5 42.♗xe5 dx5 43.fxe5=♗ ♘xe8 44.♗dd7 White has no more than a perpetual on the seventh rank.

38...♝xc5

White keeps some advantage after 39.♗b2 or 39.a6, but Black has chances to defend and the position is no longer one-sided.



37.♗xb6!

As is typical for him, Karpov not only plays a great strategic game, but also seizes upon the tactical opportunity.

37...♗h2† 38.♔e1! ♗xd2† 39.♔xd2 cxb6

40.♗a1

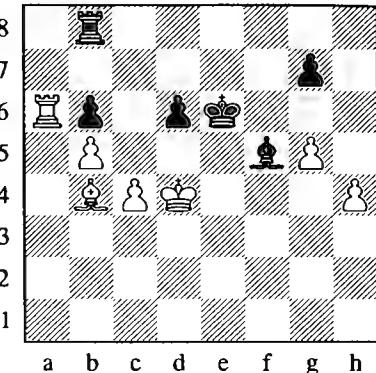
The tactical skirmish ends with White winning a pawn. His pieces are also much more active, so the position should be winning in spite of the opposite-coloured bishops.

40...♗f7 41.♗xa6 ♘b8 42.♗d3 h5?

This is a good attempt to soften White's pawn chain, but it does not solve the problem of the queenside.

43.b5 hxg4 44.fxg4 ♘c8 45.♗a4 ♘e6 46.g5

f5 47.exf5 ♘xf5† 48.♗d4 ♘f7 49.♗b4 ♘e6 50.♗a6 ♘b8



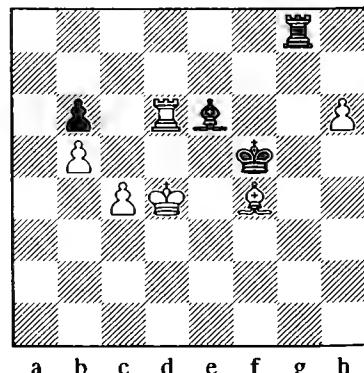
51.h5!

Black has consolidated his queenside, so White creates a passed pawn on the kingside. Black will not be able to cope with the threats on both flanks.

51...♗g4 52.h6 gxh6 53.gxh6 ♘f5 54.♗d2 ♘g8 55.♗f4 ♘b8 56.♗a7 ♘f6 57.♗g7 ♘e6 58.♗c7 ♘h8 59.♗c6

Finally the queenside pawns fall.

59...♗g8 60.♗xd6 ♘f5



61.♗xb6! ♘g4 62.♗xe6! ♘xe6 63.♗e4 ♘g8

**64.b6****1–0**

The next two games ended in draws. In the fifth game Portisch had a forced win, but chose an incorrect move order which allowed Karpov to find a great defensive resource which enabled him to hold an endgame a pawn down. The final game ended in a draw in twenty one moves, which gave Karpov a  $3\frac{1}{2}$ – $2\frac{1}{2}$  victory.

This was Karpov's last event of 1975. Over the year he did not seem to suffer from any additional pressure from his status as World Champion, and produced a series of results that were worthy of the title.

# 1975 Summary

Ljubljana/Portoroz (1st place): 11/15 (+7 =8 -0)

Spartakiad USSR (Board one): 5½/7 (+4 =3 -0)

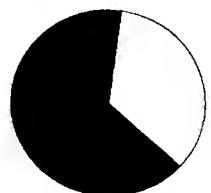
Milan

Preliminary (2nd-4th place): 6½/11 (+3 =7 -1)

Semi-final match versus Petrosian: Drew 2–2 (+0 =4 –0)

Final match versus Portisch: Won 3½–2½ (+1 =5 –0)

Total 66.3% (+15 =27 –1)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1976

Rating 2695 (1 in the World)

Karpov's first event of the year was a tournament in Skopje, Macedonia. He began brightly, scoring three wins and a draw from his first four games, including two well executed attacking victories against Vaganian and Velimirovic. In round five he met the former World Junior Champion, Bojan Kurajica.

The contestants had met just once before, a few years back in Hastings, when Karpov was victorious. After the present game they played three more games, all of which were drawn. Kurajica faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Kramnik, winning two games, drawing nine and losing seven.

In the present game we see how Karpov deals with the problem of how to press for a win against an opponent who is playing for a draw. All chess players face this problem, and it must have become all the more common for Karpov as he moved up the world rankings and especially after he won the world title. Many players have ended up losing such games after making unreasonable attempts to win. It is remarkable how relaxed Karpov remains throughout this game.

## Game 43

Bojan Kurajica – Anatoly Karpov

Skopje 1976

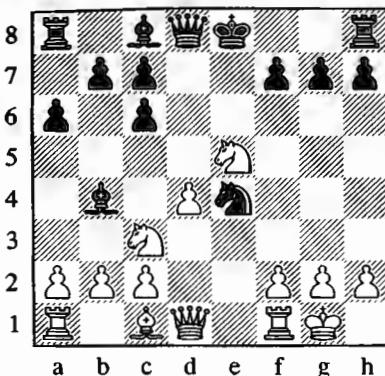
1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qb5 a6 4.Qa4 Qf6 5.Qxc6

Karpov scored exceptionally highly against the early sidelines of the Ruy Lopez, so with hindsight we can say that White already made a bad choice. Out of thirteen games he won ten, drew two and lost just one, and that solitary defeat came against Ribli when Karpov was still a junior. Karpov also performed solidly against the main Exchange Variation with 4.Qxc6, scoring two wins and seven draws with no defeats.

5...dxc6 6.Qc3 Qd6 7.d4 Qb4!

Karpov aims to take the e4-pawn. The tempo loss is of no consequence, which is hardly surprising considering that White already lost a tempo on the fifth move.

8.Qxe5 Qxe4 9.0–0



**9...Qxc3**

Karpov gives up the bishop pair in return for more fluent development. After 9...Qxc3 10.bxc3 Qd6 11.Qe1 0-0 12.Qc4 Qe7 13.Qf4 White will attack the c7-pawn, so Black will probably have to relinquish the bishop pair anyway.

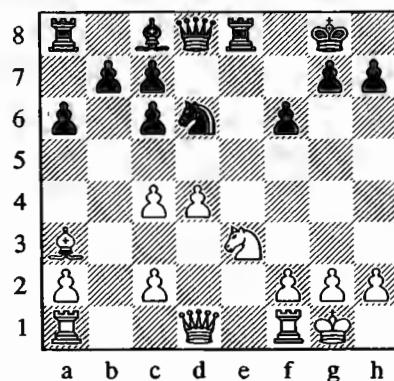
**10.bxc3 0-0 11.Qa3 Qd6 12.c4**

Otherwise Black's knight will have a chance to occupy the c4-square.

**12...f6!**

The knight has to be driven away.

**13.Qg4 Re8 14.Qc3**



**14...Qf5!?**

Karpov has no qualms about playing a position with opposite-coloured bishops, as he has seen that he will be able to exert enough pressure to cause practical problems for his opponent.

**15.Qxf5 Qxf5 16.Qd2 Re6 17.Qc3 Qd7 18.Qfe1 Qf7**

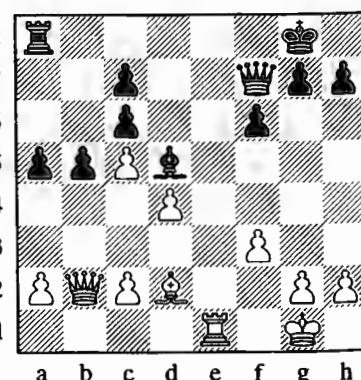
Karpov forces White to give up the d5-square while also blocking the a3-bishop.

**19.Qb2 b6 20.c5 b5 21.Qb4 a5! 22.Qd2 Qd5 23.f3!**

Kurajica sensibly limits the power of the enemy bishop.

23.a3? would have been extremely risky to play over the board. 23...Qg6 24.g3 Qf5 25.Qc3 White might be able to survive, but who would want to play such a position? 25...g5 (Also after 25...Qh3 26.f3 g5 27.Qd3 Qf7 White is living very dangerously.) Black keeps a strong initiative, and the attempt to defend by exchanging rooks backfires on White: 26.Qxe8† Qxe8 27.Qe1 Qxe1† 28.Qxel Qh3 29.f3 Qc4 White is defenceless.

**23...Qxe1† 24.Qxe1**



**24...b4!**

This move virtually guarantees Black a passed a-pawn. Karpov is still a long way from winning the game, but he continues to improve his position, bit by bit.

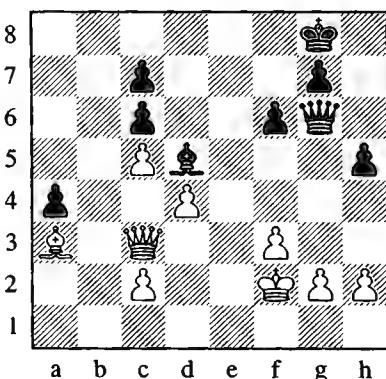
### 25.a4 bxa3 26.♗xa3 a4 27.♗b4

A better idea may have been 27.♗f4?! ♜g6 28.♗e2 ♜c4 29.♗e4 when it is difficult for Black to make progress.

### 27...♜g6 28.♗c3 h5 29.♗a3 ♜e8

Black has to exchange the rooks in order to create some possibilities to invade.

### 30.♗xe8† ♜xe8 31.♗f2 ♜g6



### 32.♗d3?!

32.h4?! was a better option. White cannot resist the temptation to exchange queens, but in fact this gives Black additional chances to squeeze him.

### 32...♜xd3 33.cxd3

Material is level, but Black has a much better pawn structure. His passed a-pawn is an important asset which renders White's bishop very passive. Nevertheless White's position is difficult to penetrate and he should still be able to draw with accurate defence.

### 33...h4!

Karpov begins by securing some additional kingside space.

### 34.g3?!

This does not lose, but it renders White's defensive task more difficult. The correct move was:

### 34.g4!

Gaining some additional kingside space.

### 34...h3!

Karpov comments that if White were allowed to play h3 then the position would be completely drawn.

### 35.♗g3 ♜f7 36.f4 ♜g2

After 36...g6 37.♗xh3 ♜f3 38.♗g3 ♜e2 39.h4 ♜xd3 40.h5 White holds.

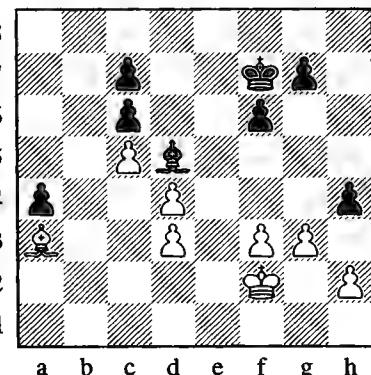
### 37.♗f2

Black has no way to invade, for instance: 37...♜e6 38.♗e3 ♜d5 39.♗b2 ♜f1 40.♗d2 g6 41.♗e3

Black can make no further progress.

### 34...♜f7

For an endgame involving so few pieces, the number of subtle resources and finesse is astonishing. Just as with the ending of Game 38 (Karpov – Kavalek), I decided to explore the endgame in detail in an effort to get closer to the truth of the position.



### 35.♗e3

White decides to wait and see. There is nothing wrong with this, but he could also have drawn with:

35.gxh4!?

It looks risky for White to fracture his kingside; on the other hand, he picks up a pawn and also prevents Black's g-pawn from advancing as it does in the game.

35... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$

According to Karpov, Black will win the d3-pawn and the game. But White has a finesse.

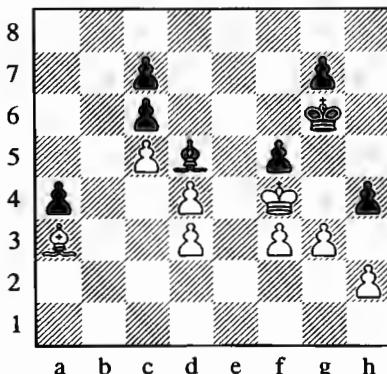
38. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  39.d5!

Without this White would indeed be losing.

39...cxd5 40.d4

White should draw without difficulty. The change in the pawn structure was of vital importance. Had the black pawn remained on c6, Black could have brought his king to d5 and bishop to d1, followed by a decisive king penetration on one flank or the other. Now that the d5-square is blocked, the black king does not have a convincing route into the white position.

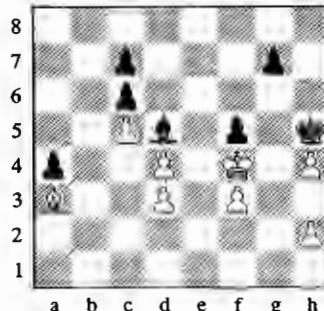
35... $\mathbb{f}5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$



37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Another option was:

37.gxh4  $\mathbb{Q}h5$



From here, White can play the position in two different ways.

a) 38. $\mathbb{Q}xf5!?$

This move was analysed in *Anatoly Karpov's Games as a World Champion 1975-77* by O'Connell and Levy. White simply plans to exchange as many pawns as possible. It leaves the door open for the black king to invade, but in the end White should be able to hold.

38... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

38... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  39.f4! should hold without too many problems.

39. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$

This king must retreat. Other moves are not good enough, for instance: 39. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}c1$



40... $\mathbb{Q}xh4!$  After a liquidation of the remaining kingside pawns Black will invade on the queenside. (Surprisingly Karpov only

mentioned 40... $\mathbb{Q}f7?$  in his 1975-77 book, and even repeated the mistake in his 2007 edition of his best games. 41. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  42.d5 And White draws.) 41. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  47. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  48. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  Black wins easily.

39... $\mathbb{Q}e2$



40. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

But not 40. $\mathbb{Q}e3?$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  when White is in trouble.

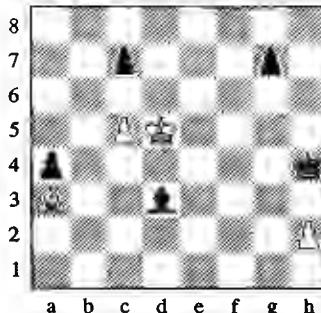
However, there was a second route to a draw in 40. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  when the black king has no way through.

40... $\mathbb{Q}xd3$

After 40... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  Black gets nowhere.

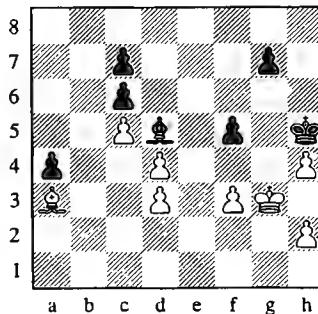
41.d5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$

42... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  leads to the same result: 43.c6  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  44. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  g5 45. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  a3 46. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  g4 47. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  a2 48.c7=



43. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  45.c6 g5 46. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  g4 47.c7  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   
White holds.

b) White can also adopt a strategy to block all invasions with:  
38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$

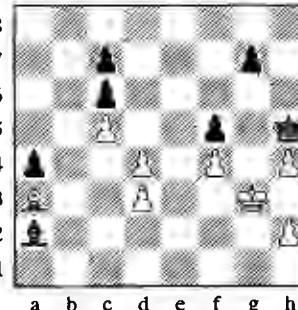


38...g6

Now we will examine a couple of different approaches from White.

b1) 39.f4?

This does not lose, but it leads to a further weakening of the light squares which increases Black's chances to invade. Even though it is not the best move, it is worth analysing as some of the variations are fascinating.

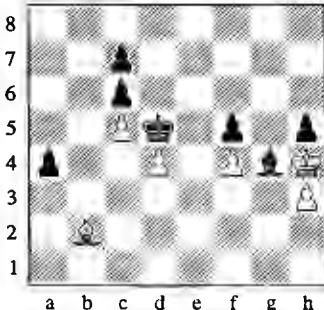


39... $\mathbb{Q}a2$

Interestingly, in his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov evaluates a position with similar characteristics to this as winning for Black.

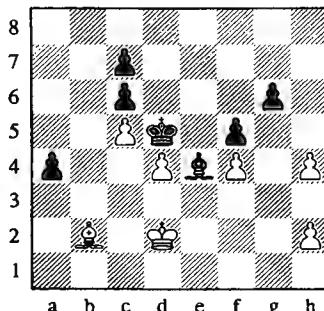
40.♗h3 ♕b1 41.♗g3 ♕xd3 42.♗h3 ♕e4  
43.♗g3 ♕h6 44.♗f2

The attempt to use the king actively on the kingside is doomed to failure: 44.♗b2? ♕d5 45.♔a3 ♕g7 46.h5? gxh5 47.♗h4 ♕g6 48.♔b2 ♕f3 49.♔a3 ♕f6 50.♔b2 ♕e6 51.♔g5 ♕g4 52.♔h4 ♕d5 53.h3



53... ♕c4! And Black wins.

44...♗g7 45.♔b2 ♕f7 46.♗e3 ♕e6 47.♗d2 ♕d5



48.♗c3!

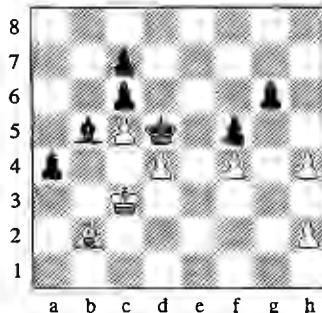
White must walk a narrow path to a draw. His first task is to prevent the black king from assisting the a-pawn.

48.♗e3? is not good enough: 48...♕c4 49.♗d2 ♕b3 50.♔a1 a3 51.♔c3 ♕c2 52.♔a5 (52.♔a1 ♕b1 53.♔c3 ♕e4 54.♔a5 ♕b2 Black wins.) 52...♕b2 (52...♕b1 53.♔c3 ♕e4 also wins thanks to the zugzwang.) 53.d5 cxd5 54.♕xc7 ♕a4 and Black wins.

48...♕b1

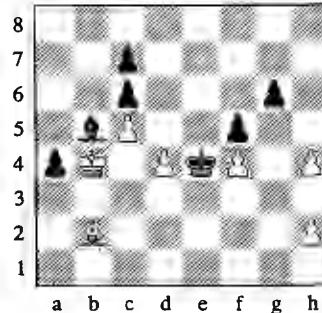
White's situation appears desperate, as he cannot cover both flanks against the invasion of the black king, but we will see that his resources are not yet exhausted.

49.♗b4 ♕c2 50.♗c3 ♕b3 51.♗d3 ♕c4† 52.♗c3 ♕b5



53.♔c1

53.♔b4?! This should also be enough to draw, although it relies on a spectacular follow-up on the next move. 53...♕e4

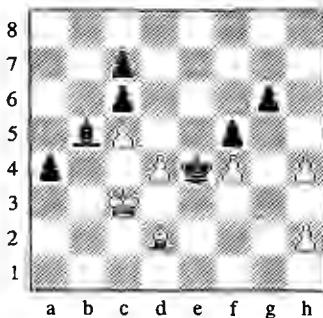


54.d5!! Here we see another illustration of the principle that in opposite-coloured bishop positions one often has to play with extreme purposefulness to achieve one's goal. (54.♔a1? ♕xf4 55.d5 loses to 55...cxd5 56.♔xb5 ♕e4 57.♔c6 f4 58.♔xc7 f3 and Black promotes.) 54...♕xd5 55.♔e5 ♕c4 56.♔xc7 ♕f3 57.♔e5 ♕g4 58.♔d6 ♕h4 59.♔e7† ♕g3 60.♔g5 And White holds.

This is an important drawing position which can be reached in several ways.

53... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  54. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

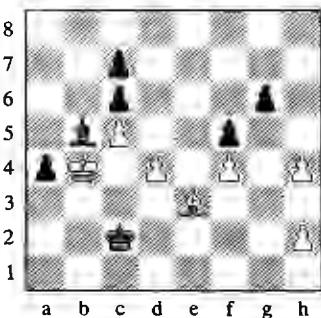
Now Black can cause problems with:



54... $\mathbb{Q}e2!$

This nice manoeuvre was found by Filipino IM Lito Maninang. The point is that the bishop is vulnerable when it defends the a-pawn from b5, so Black relocates it.

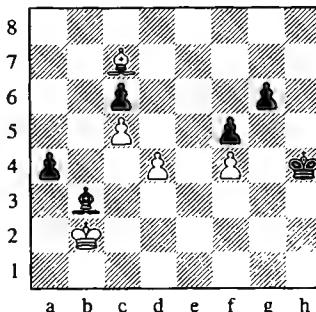
The immediate invasion does not quite work: 54... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  55. $\mathbb{Q}b4!$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  56. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  57. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$  (after 57. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  58.d5 cxd5 59. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  Black wins) 57... $\mathbb{Q}c2$



58. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$  (The tempting 58.d5? loses: 58...cxd5 59. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  a3! (59... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  60. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  61. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  repeats) 60. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  a2 61. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  c6 62.h5 gxh5 63.h4  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  64. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  a1=† 65. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  66. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  d4 67. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  d3 68. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  d2 69.c6 d1=† 70.c7  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  71. $\mathbb{Q}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  72.c8=†  $\mathbb{Q}xc8$ † 73. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  74. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  75. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$ —) 58... $\mathbb{Q}d3$

(After 58... $\mathbb{Q}b2?$  59.d5! Black is suddenly in trouble!) 59. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  White can afford to lose the d-pawn and still draw comfortably.

55. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  56. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  57. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  58. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g2$  59. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  60. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  61. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$



62. $\mathbb{Q}d8$ †!

White has to stop Black from creating a kingside passed pawn.

62. $\mathbb{Q}a3?$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  63.d5 Black will have only one passed pawn but as White's king finds himself out of play it is enough. 63... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  64. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  g5 65.fxg5 f4 66. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  67. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  68. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  69. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  wins.

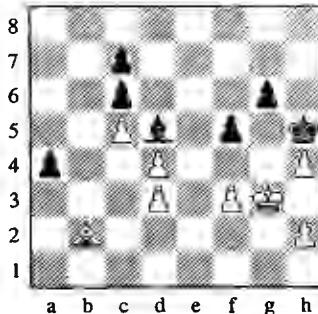
62... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  63. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  64. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  65. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$

65... $\mathbb{Q}d1$  66. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  changes nothing.

66. $\mathbb{Q}b4$

In the end White also holds the position according to Maninang's plan. Not 66. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ? a3 67. $\mathbb{Q}h6$  a2 68. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  69. $\mathbb{Q}f8$  g5 wins.

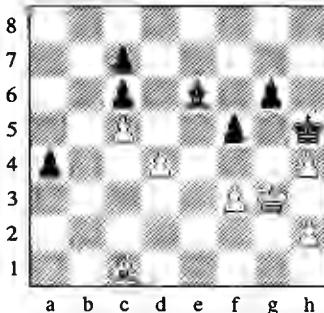
b2) 39. $\mathbb{Q}b2$



Although 39.f4 did not lose, it seems preferable not to weaken additional light squares.

39... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  40. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  41. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

The direct try with 44...f4† is not good enough for a win. 45. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  (45. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  a3 46. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  a2 47. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  50. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  White can probably hold.) 45... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  47.f4 White can hold this endgame, just as in the main line below.



45. $\mathbb{Q}b2$

White continues to wait.

45... $\mathbb{Q}c4$

45... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  reveals the advantage of keeping the pawn on f3. 46... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  48.h5  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  49. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  50.h4 White can block all invasions.

45...f4† 46. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  keeps some chances alive, but White can achieve a draw through active defence: 47. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  48.f4  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  49. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  50. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White seems to be holding, for instance: 50... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  51.d5 cxd5 (51... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  52.dxc6) 52. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  (52... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  53.c6) 53. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  54. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ =

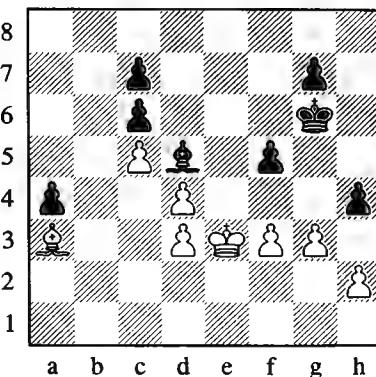
46. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  f4† 47. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  48. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  49.f4

White should draw this type of endgame, as has already been noted in the analysis of 44...f4† above.

49... $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  50. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g2$  51. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  52. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  53. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  a3

53... $\mathbb{Q}e2$  54. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
54. $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  55. $\mathbb{Q}c1†$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  56. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   
White draws.

Thus we can conclude that 37.gxh4 would have drawn if followed up correctly. Nevertheless there was nothing wrong with White's choice in the game. Let us return to it now.



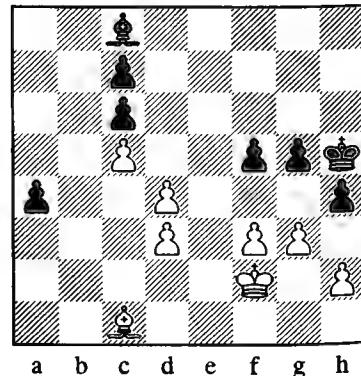
37... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  38. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  g5!

Planning a possible breakthrough with ...f4† and g4.

39. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$

Karpov wants to wear out his opponent before revealing his intentions.

40. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}b1$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$   
43. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$



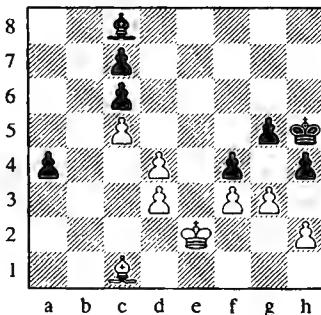
**44.d5?**

Kurajica cannot stand to wait passively any longer, but this impetuous move seals his own fate. It was not at all easy to recognize the many nuances in the position.

The right move was 44.♗e2, after which Black has a couple of ideas:

**a) 44...f4**

This move was recommended by Kasparov, but it allows White to draw without too many problems.

**45.gxf4?!**

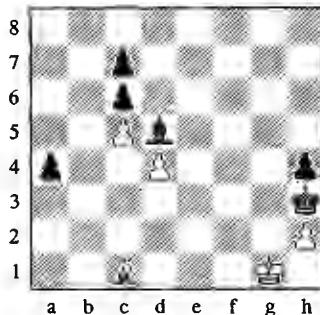
This is not the best move, but I will keep it as the main line, as it leads to an interesting finish where White draws by the skin of his teeth.

Curiously, the best reply does not appear to have been mentioned by any other analysts. 45.g4†! This draws comfortably: 45...♗xg4 (After 45...♝g6 46.h3 Black has no way through.) 46.fxg4† ♐xg4 47.♗f2 ♐f5 (47...♗h3 48.♗g1=) 48.♗f3 g4† 49.♗g2 Black is unable to make any headway.

45...g4 46.♗f2 ♐f5 47.♔a3 ♐xd3 48.♔c1 ♐c4 49.♔b2 ♐d5 50.♗xg4† ♐xg4 51.♔c1 ♐b3 52.♗g2 ♐c4 53.♗f2 ♐d5 54.♗f5!

White has to give up this pawn as he is in zugzwang.

54...♗xg5 55.♗e3 ♐g4 56.♗f2 ♐h3 57.♗g1

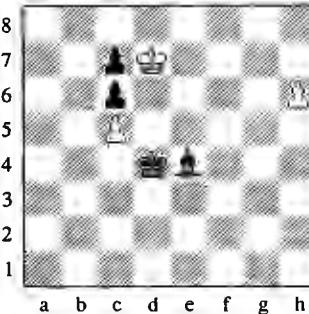


The position is very similar to that which occurs in the game, the only fundamental difference being that the black pawn stands on c7 instead of d5. That one small change is enough to bring about a different evaluation.

57...♗f3 58.♗f2 ♐h5 59.♗g1 ♐d1 60.♗h1 ♐g4 61.♗g2 ♐f5 62.♗h3 ♐e4 63.♗b2 ♐d3 64.♗xh4 ♐c2 65.♔a1 a3 66.♗g5 a2 67.♗f6 ♐b1 68.♗c3 a1=♛ 69.♗xa1 ♐xa1

White is just in time to destroy the last two enemy pawns.

70.♗e7 ♐b2 71.♗d7 ♐f3 72.h4 ♐c3 73.h5 ♐xd4 74.h6 ♐e4

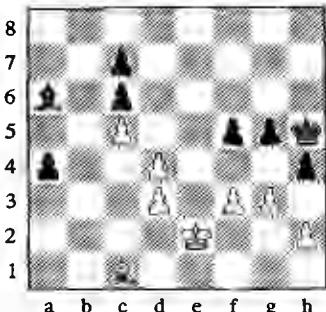


75.h7

And White draws by one tempo.

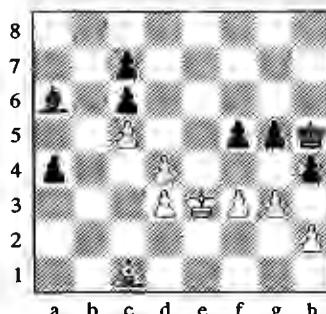
**b) 44...♗a6!**

This is a bit more challenging. Black improves his bishop and waits for the best moment to break with ...f4. Nevertheless White has more than one route to a draw here as well.



45.♗e3!

This is the most comfortable drawing line. 45.♗b2 is also good enough: 45...hxg3 46.hxg3 f4 47.gxf4 (But not 47.g4†? ♗h4 48.♗f2 ♗h3 49.♔a3 ♗xd3 when Black will win with the aid of a bishop sacrifice on g4.) 47...gxf4 48.♔c1 ♗g5 Karpov evaluated this position as 'minus-plus', but a closer inspection reveals no win for Black: 49.♗b2 ♗h4 50.♗f2 (50.d5? cxd5 51.♔e5 ♗g3 52.♔xc7 a3 53.♔e5 ♗b5 54.♔a1 a2 55.♔c3 ♗d7 56.♔e5 ♗g2 57.♔d4 ♗g4 wins) 50...♗xd3 51.♔c1 ♗g5 52.♔b2 ♗c2 (also after 52...♗c4 53.♔c1 ♗d5 54.♔e2 White should hold) 53.♔e2 ♗h4 54.♗f2 ♗d1 55.♔c1 ♗g5 56.♔b2 ♗f5 57.♔c1 ♗e6 58.♔xf4 a3 59.♔c1 a2 60.♔b2 ♗d5 61.♔e1 ♗xg3 62.♗d2 White is safe.



45...f4†! 46.gxf4 g4

Black's hopes for a win rest on this breakthrough, but it is not enough.

47.f5!

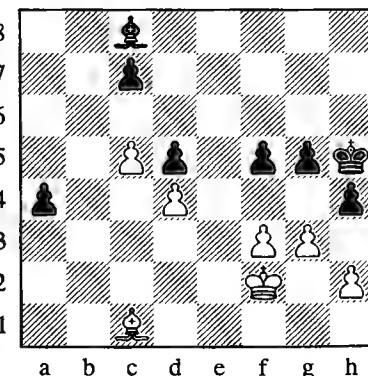
Karpov showed that White can draw by playing actively.

Kasparov points out a second route to safety: 47.fxg4† ♗xg4 48.♔e4 ♗c8 49.♗e5 ♗h3 (or 49...♗f5 50.d5 cxd5 51.c6 ♗xd3 52.♗xd5 ♗h3 53.f5! and White has no problems) 50.f5 ♗xf5 51.♗xf5 ♗xh2 52.d5 cxd5 53.♗f4† ♗g2 54.♗xc7 And the race is even.

47...g3 48.hxg3 hxg3 49.f6 ♗g6 50.f4 ♗xd3 51.♗f3 ♗xf6 52.♗xg3 ♗e6 53.♗g4 ♗d5 54.♗b2 ♗c4 55.f5

White is not slower in the race.

44...cxd5 45.d4



45...f4!

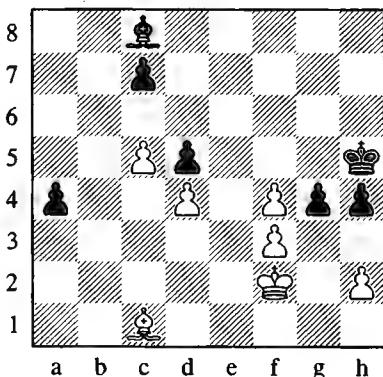
To repeat an earlier statement, one must often play extremely purposefully in opposite-coloured bishop endgames. This opens the way for an invasion.

46.gxf4

After 46.g4† ♗g6! Black just transfers his king to the queenside and wins. If the white king tries to follow, the black bishop will gobble the kingside pawns.

I should say that 46...♗xg4? 47.fxg4† ♗xg4 does not work due to 48.c6! when White obtains enough counterplay to draw.

**46...g4!**



**47.♗g2?!**

This is too passive. It is a strange choice, considering that Kurajica already sacrificed one pawn three moves ago. He should have continued his policy of active counterplay with:

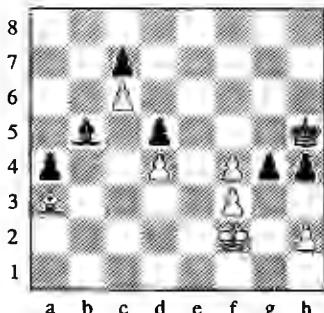
**47.c6!**

This superb idea was recommended by GM Groszpeter. The idea is to use the c-pawn as a decoy, thus allowing White to keep his f4-pawn. Opening the a3-f8 diagonal also helps the white bishop to play a more active role in the game. I believe Black should still be able to win with precise play, but this was undoubtedly White's best chance.

**47...♗a6!**

47...♗f5 is possible, but there is no reason for Black to delay rounding up the c-pawn.

**48.♗a3 ♜b5**



At this point White must decide whether to sit and wait, or advance his f-pawn.

**a) 49.♗e7 ♜xc6 50.♗c5**

White waits passively, using his bishop to restrain both of Black's spare queenside pawns.

**50...♗b5!**

The bishop heads for d1, in order to force the capture fxg4.

**51.♗e7 ♜d3 52.♗c5 ♜c2 53.♗e7 ♜d1**

**54.fxg4† ♜xg4**

Finally the black king reaches its ideal location.

**55.♗e3 ♜c2 56.♗b4 ♜h3 57.♗e7**

The bishop is doing sterling work, preventing ...a3 while menacing the h4-pawn, thus inhibiting ...♗xh2. Unfortunately for White, this key piece is overloaded.



**57...♗f5!**

First Black ensures that the f-pawn will remain immobile.

**58.♗f3 c6!**

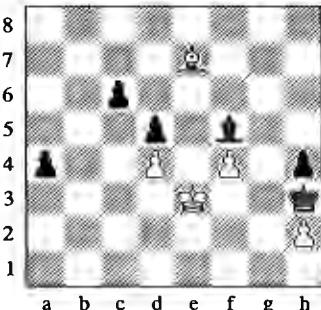
This puts White in zugzwang.

**59.♗e3**

Bishop moves would allow either ...a3 or ...♗xh2.

If 59.♗f2 ♗xh2 60.♗xh4 a3 the white king blocks the bishop from returning to the queenside via the e1-square.

59.♗e2 c5! 60.dxc5 a3 61.♗f6 a2 With ...♗xh2 coming next, Black is winning easily.



59...c5! 60.♗xc5

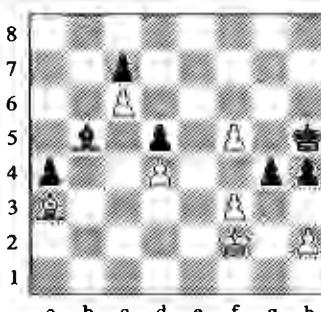
60.dxc5 a3 61.♗f6 ♗xh2 62.♗xh4 d4†!  
63.♗xd4 a2+

60...♗xh2 61.♗f2 ♗h3

Black wins easily.

b) 49.f5

Black will have to keep an eye on this pawn, but he should still be able to win.



49...♗xc6 50.f6 ♗e8 51.♗e7 ♗f7 52.♗c5

Taking on g4 would free the black king, so White tries to postpone it for as long as possible.

52...♗g5 53.♗e7 ♗f5

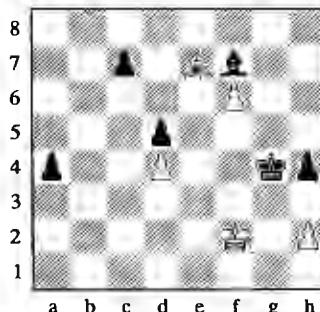
White will be forced to exchange on g4 in another move or two.

54.♗a3

54.fxg4† ♗xg4 is similar to the main line.  
54.♗e3 g3 55.hxg3 hxg3 56.♗e2 ♗h5 is winning for Black.

54...♗h5! 55.fxg4† ♗xg4 56.♗e7 ♗f7

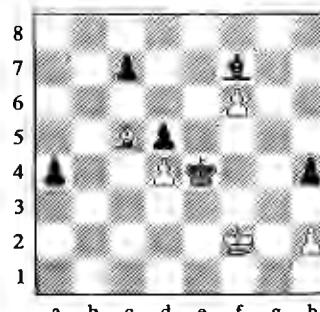
This is not strictly necessary, but Black may as well prevent the f-pawn from advancing altogether.



57.♗a3

White can do little except keep his bishop on the long diagonal. If he centralizes his king then the h-pawn will fall.

57...♗f4 58.♗e7 ♗e4 59.♗c5



59...a3!

The a-pawn looks much more dangerous than the d-pawn, yet Black has to exchange the outrider.

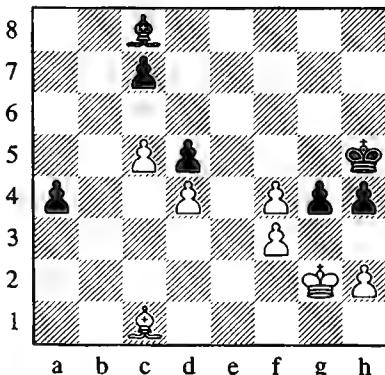
Black can win the enemy bishop, but it will not win him the game: 59...♗d3 60.♗f3 ♗c3 61.♗g4 ♗b3 62.♗xh4 a3 63.♗xa3 ♗xa3 64.♗g5 ♗b4 65.h4 c5 66.dxc5 ♗b5!

(After 66... $\mathbb{B}xc5??$  67.h5 Black is losing, as he will lose his bishop to a check on f8. Incidentally, Black can arrange to enter the same ending with the bishop on e8 instead of f7, but the game ends in a draw there too.) 67.h5 d4 68.h6 d3 69.h7 d2 70.h8=+=d1=+=71. $\mathbb{W}b8\#$   $\mathbb{B}c4$  It is a draw.

60. $\mathbb{B}xa3$   $\mathbb{B}xd4$

Despite White's efforts, it is doubtful that he can hold this endgame, although it is not a trivial position for the human mind to evaluate. It is worth bearing in mind that the endgame with no kingside pawns on the board would be winning for Black (with mate in twenty five according to the tablebases). In the present position I cannot think of any way for White to utilize his kingside pawns in a way that would affect the result. One idea is to try to force Black's h-pawn to h3 and sacrifice his bishop for the c- and d-pawns, which would lead to a draw, but I do not see how White can make it happen.

Thus it seems that the active 47.c6 is not quite enough to hold the draw against perfect play from Black, but from a practical perspective it was clearly the best chance by far.



47... $\mathbb{B}f5$

Compared with the last note, White's bishop is passive and he has no chance to defend himself against the invasion of the black king.

48. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{B}xf3$  49. $\mathbb{B}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}e4\#$  50. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{B}g4$

White is in zugzwang; he could push the c-pawn but that would not change anything.

51. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  52. $\mathbb{B}c1\#$   $\mathbb{B}g4$

When I presented this endgame to the young Peter Leko to solve, he came up with an alternative winning method to the one used by Karpov in the game. Unfortunately I can no longer remember the details of his solution.

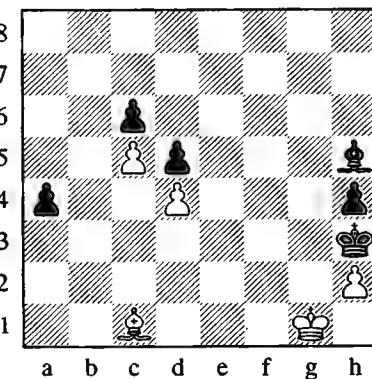
53. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $c6$  54. $\mathbb{B}c1$

Black's last remaining obstacle concerns the transfer of his king to the queenside. Karpov solves the problem beautifully and in a most instructive way.

54... $\mathbb{B}h3$  55. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  56. $\mathbb{B}h1$   $\mathbb{B}h5!$

Black needs to show some finesse to secure the victory. Instead after 56... $\mathbb{B}g4$  57. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  58. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{B}h5\#$  59. $\mathbb{B}e3$  the path is blocked.

57. $\mathbb{B}g1$



57... $\mathbb{B}d1!$

0–1

Drawn into a deadly zugzwang Kurajica resigned. Here are a few sample lines:

58. $\mathbb{B}h1$   $\mathbb{B}g4$  59. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  60. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{B}e4$   
61. $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}h5$  62. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{B}d3$  Black wins.

58.♗b2 ♜g4 59.♗g2 ♜f3† reveals why the bishop had gone to d1. (59...h3†? would spoil the win: 60.♗f2 ♜f4 61.♗e1 ♜h5 62.♗d2 ♜f3 63.♗d3 ♜g2 64.♗e3 ♜xh2 65.♗f2 The black king has buried himself in a cage and cannot get out.) 60.♗f2 ♜f4 And the black king reaches the queenside.

Kurajica told me a few interesting facts about this game. He had analysed the adjourned position with grandmaster Ivanovic for half an hour and they concluded that it was a draw. At the end of the analysis they started to drink wine, and he still had a bad hangover when play was resumed. Kurajica also felt that Karpov in his published analyses was more proud of this endgame than he should have been. The Bosnian grandmaster wisely decided not to drink before any of their subsequent games, and indeed he was able to draw all three of them, as was noted in the introduction to this game.

In the next round Karpov continued his fine form with a neat positional beauty. This was Sofrevski's only encounter with Karpov, and he lost two other games against world champions.

## Game 44

Anatoly Karpov – Jovan Sofrevski

Skopje 1976

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 d6 3.♗c3 ♜bd7 4.e4 e5  
5.♗ge2 c6 6.g3

Interestingly Sofrevski had the same position with black in rounds two and four. He lost both games, and Karpov feels no need to change White's play.

### 6...g6

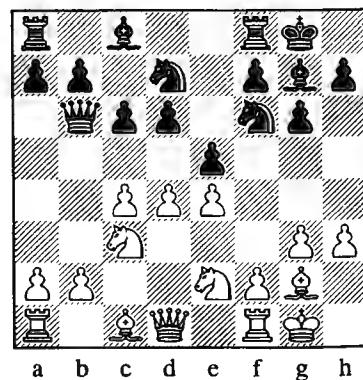
Sofrevski decides to transpose to a King's Indian. In the other two games he tried different approaches.

In the second round he tried to act in the centre: 6...♗b6 7.b3 exd4 8.♗xd4 d5 9.cxd5 cxd5 10.♗g5 ♜e7 11.♗xf6 ♜xf6 12.e5 ♜e7 13.♗g2 ♜e6 14.0–0 0–0 15.♗f4 ♜c8 16.♗cxd5 ♜c5 17.♗d3 ♜xd5 18.♗xd5 ♜xd5 19.♗xd5 ♜e8 20.♗fe1 White was a pawn up in Timman – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976.

Two rounds later he played more modestly but again failed to equalize: 6...exd4 7.♗xd4 ♜b6 8.♗e2 ♜e7 9.♗g2 0–0 10.0–0 ♜e8 11.♗d1 ♜f8 12.♗f1 ♜g4 13.♗e1 ♜d7 14.h3 c5 15.♗c2 ♜a4 16.♗d1 ♜c6 17.b3 ♜b6 18.♗c3 ♜b8 19.♗b2 a6 20.♗ad1 Vaganian – Sofrevski, Skopje 1976.

### 7.♗g2 ♜g7 8.0–0 0–0 9.h3 ♜b6?!

In the more common position with the white knight on f3 instead of e2, this is considered the main line, but in the present position it does not work so well. 9...♜e8 is better.



### 10.d5?!

Karpov goes for safety – a typical reaction for him when he faces a new problem in the opening. Even in the event that the opponent had analysed this move in advance, he could not have prepared anything shocking in the closed position that arises.

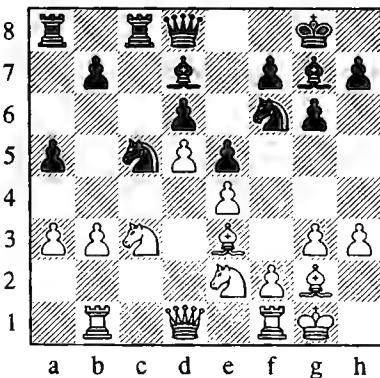
10.♗e3! scores better and is objectively the

stronger move, as 10... $\mathbb{W}xb2?$  11.a3! traps the queen and 10... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  is better for White.

### 10... $cxd5$ 11. $cxd5$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 12. $\mathbb{E}b1!$

White prepares to play on the queenside, as is customary for this pawn structure.

12... $a5$  13.b3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.a3  $\mathbb{E}fc8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$



### 16. $\mathbb{W}d2$

Karpov is true to himself and does not rush his queenside activity. Indeed after 16.b4  $\mathbb{a}xb4$  17.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  18. $\mathbb{W}d3$  (18. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}a3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (If 20. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  f5 Black takes over the initiative.) 20... $\mathbb{W}b6$  Black has nice play.

### 16... $b5?!$

This might look active, but the pawn will soon be fixed and become a target.

Two years later Bielczyk improved on Black's play by keeping the b-pawn on its original square: 16... $\mathbb{Q}e8?!$  17.b4  $\mathbb{a}xb4$  18.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}xa4$  20. $\mathbb{E}a1$  (20. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  21. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  f5 Black is okay here as well.) 20... $\mathbb{E}ca8$  21. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}xa4$  22. $\mathbb{E}b1$  f5 Black has equalized, Grahn – Bielczyk, Slupsk 1978. According to my database the position has not occurred since.

Black can play actively as well: 16... $a4!?$  17. $\mathbb{b}xa4$  (17.b4  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  18. $\mathbb{W}d3$  is possible, although the knight has some nuisance value on b3.) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  18. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  (After 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  White has an edge despite the absence of pawns on the queenside.) 19. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  Black has good compensation for the pawn.

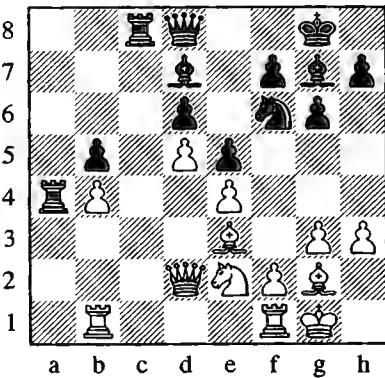
### 17.b4 $\mathbb{a}xb4$ 18.axb4 $\mathbb{Q}a4?$

Exchanging knights help White, as he can solve the problem of the passive e2-knight. With fewer pieces on the board White will find it easier to target the weak b5-pawn.

18... $\mathbb{Q}a6!$  19. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c4!$  was better, when White will, to some extent, be tied up defending the b4-pawn. 20. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  (Black can also try 20... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  intending ...f5.) 21. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  Black is still in the game.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ $\mathbb{E}xa4$

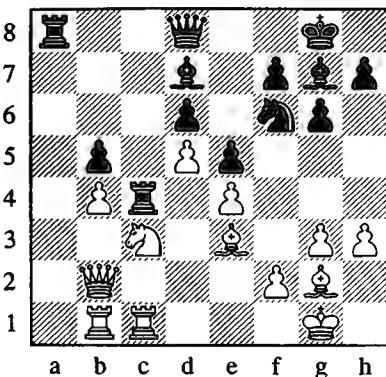
If 19... $\mathbb{b}xa4$  20.b5  $\mathbb{W}a5$  21. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{E}xa5$  22.b6 White's passed pawn is the more dangerous.



### 20. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Karpov is happy to improve his bad knight, while also opening the f1-a6 diagonal for his bishop.

20... $\mathbb{E}a3$  21. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  22. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{E}a8$



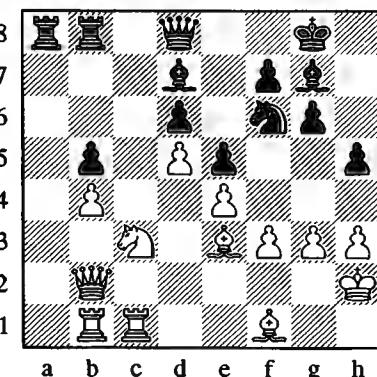
**23.♔h2!**

This type of prophylactic move is so typical of Karpov. He defends the h3-pawn, anticipating Black's counterplay on the kingside.

**23...h5**

Defending the pawn at once with 23...♗b8 does not solve Black's problems. 24.♕f1 ♘xc3!? (After 24...♝c7 25.♖a1 White is clearly better.) 25.♖xc3 ♖xe4 Under different circumstances, this type of exchange sacrifice can work well, but here the position is too open. 26.♖a3 ♗b7 27.♖ba1 White invades.

**24.♕f1 ♘cc8 25.f3 ♘cb8**



**26.♖a1!**

Karpov fights for control of the a-file, which will also help him to get closer to the b5-pawn.

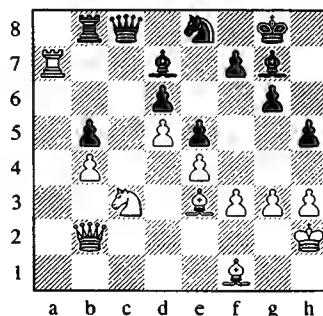
**26...♜xa1 27.♜xa1 ♔e8 28.♜a7**

Karpov wastes no time posting his rook on the seventh rank.

**28...f5**

Black tries to generate counterplay on the kingside, but he does not have the piece power to make anything happen there.

**28...♝c8?!**



Black could try to transfer his passive bishop to b6.

**29.♖a5!?**

White forces the knight to block the diagonal.

Another possibility is 29.♗d2 (29.h4 is also sensible) 29...♝f6 30.h4 ♕d8 31.♕d3 ♕b6 32.♕xb6 ♘xb6 33.♖a5 ♖c7 34.♗c1 ♘b8 35.♖a3 Black has a passive but solid position, with reasonable chances to hold on for a draw.

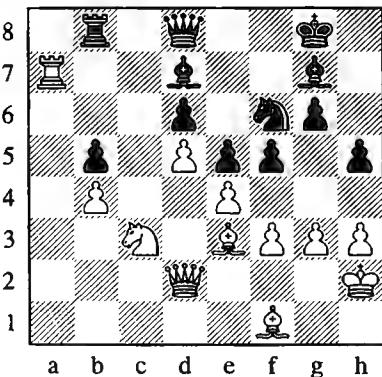
**29...♝c7 30.h4 ♕f8 31.♕d3**

White has a stable advantage, and in the next few moves he can proceed to transfer his king to the centre.

**29.♗d2 ♘f6?**

It was not too late for Black to opt for passive defence with: 29...h4! 30.g4 f4 31.♕f2 ♘f6

32.♗d3 ♖c8 Play is very much one-sided, but with the kingside closed it will not be easy for White to invade.



### 30.exf5!

The world champion switches his attention to the kingside.

### 30...gxf5

30...♗xf5? 31.♗xb5 White's extra pawn should decide the game.

### 31.♗h6!

Black's king is vulnerable, so Karpov exchanges its key defender.

### 31...♝e8 32.♗xg7 ♜xg7 33.♗h6?!

Karpov goes for the knockout punch, but his pieces are somewhat scattered and his king is slightly exposed to checks. The prophylactic 33.♗g2! would have been objectively stronger.

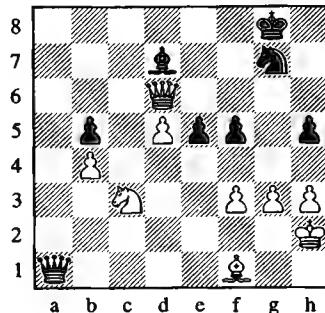
### 33...h4?

Black misses a chance to get right back into the game with:

### 33...♜a8!!

This does not completely solve Black's problems, but it gives him some practical chances. The main line runs as follows:

### 34.♜xa8 ♜xa8 35.♗xd6 ♜a1!!



### 36.♗g2!

Senseless is 36.♗xd7? ♜xf1.

36.♗g2 is also less than ideal: 36...♜xc3 37.♗xd7 ♜xb4 38.d6 (or 38.♗c7 h4!) 38...h4! Black obtains counterplay against White's king.

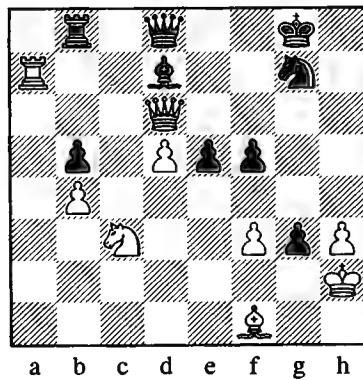
### 36...♜xc3 37.♗xd7 ♜d2† 38.♗h1!

After 38.♗g1 ♜d4† 39.♗h2 f4! Black has enough counterplay.

### 38...♜xb4

White is still much better after 39.♗xb5 or 39.d6, but it is hard to say if his advantage is enough to win the game.

### 34.♗xd6 hxg3†



### 35.♗g2!

Now Black gets no play against the king.

**35...Qe8 36.Qxe5**

White has an extra pawn on d5, as well as the safer king. Karpov makes no further mistake and the game is over in a few short moves.

**36...Qf7 37.Qc7 Qb6 38.Qxb5 Qh6 39.Qd3 Qg5 40.Qe2 Qxh3 41.Qxh3 Qh5† 42.Qxg3 f4† 43.Qxf4**

**1–0**

Karpov followed this win with a quick draw against Reshevsky and then a victory over Ivanovic. He drew his next two, and then won three in a row against Jancev, Georgievski and Tarjan. He then drew a hard fought game with Timman, bringing his total score to 11½/14 with one round to play. In the final round he met the number one East German player, Wolfgang Uhlmann, who was also having an excellent tournament and occupied sole second place, just half a point behind Karpov. Interestingly Karpov turned down a draw, which would have guaranteed him sole first prize, and went on to win. Perhaps he felt he needed to fight on to justify his world title. Whatever Karpov's motivation, his final tally of ten wins and five draws with no defeats was one of the highest percentage scores of his career.

Karpov's next event was a team competition in the Georgian capital Tbilisi. He won two games against Anikaev and Romanishin and drew the other three.

After that he travelled to Amsterdam for a four player, double round robin tournament. There he took first prize, winning two games and drawing the other four.

He then went all the way to Manila to play in another event of the same type. This one did not go so well. He drew the first game quickly, and in round two he met with an inspired Eugenio Torre, who beautifully outplayed and beat the world champion

with the black pieces. Although their lifetime score is in Karpov's favour, the Philippine grandmaster beat him twice when he was the reigning World Champion, which is quite an achievement. Torre went on to win his next two games, and won the short tournament by a remarkable one and a half point margin. Karpov finished on fifty percent after beating Ljubojevic.

Karpov's next tournament was in Montilla, Spain, and was somewhat weaker than those in which he normally participated. He started with 3½/5, and in round six he faced a local player named Fraguela Gil. The Spaniard had no other game against the world champions, and after finishing last in this event, he virtually stopped playing chess altogether.

### Game 45

**Jose Miguel Fraguela Gil – Anatoly Karpov**

Montilla 1976

**1.g3 c5 2.Qg2 g6 3.c4 Qg7 4.Qc3 Qc6**

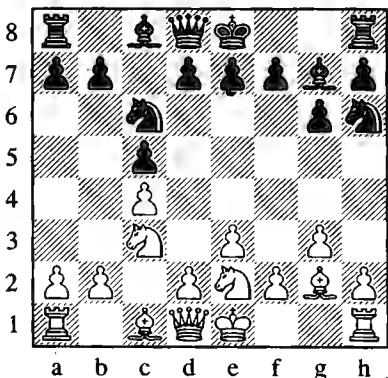
Karpov used the symmetrical set-up with a view to drawing with strong opponents and outplaying lower rated ones.

**5.e3 Qh6**

Karpov had previously won two games with 5...e5 and drawn twice with 5...e6. He only ever tried the text move in the present game.

**6.Qge2**

6.h4! is interesting. Some players like to push the h-pawn at a time when the opponent cannot respond with a move of their own h-pawn. The same idea sometimes occurs with reversed colours as well.

6... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 

Karpov stops d2-d4, which is the primary purpose of his chosen set-up.

7.a3 0–0 8. $\mathbb{B}b1$  a5

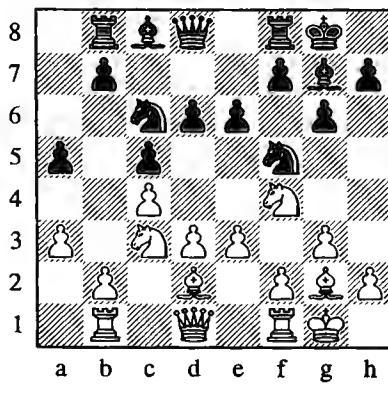
Karpov liked to prevent b2-b4 in this type of symmetrical position.

9.0–0 d6 10.d3

Interestingly Karpov once reached a similar position with reversed colours against Larsen.

10... $\mathbb{B}b8$  11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  e6 12. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ 

White could have carried out his queenside expansion by means of 12. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ , when play may continue 12... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  13. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.b4 axb4 15.axb4 b5 with equal chances.

12... $\mathbb{Q}fe7$ !

Flexible thinking. White moved away the knight and his bishop covers the d-file, so there is no special reason to keep the knight on f5.

13. $\mathbb{W}c2$  b6 14. $\mathbb{B}bd1$ !?

The rook stood better on b1.

14... $\mathbb{B}b7$ 

Karpov neutralizes White's strong bishop.

15. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ !?

Fraguera wants to exchange the dark-squared bishops, but the plan is flawed. Instead White should have played on the queenside:

16.b4

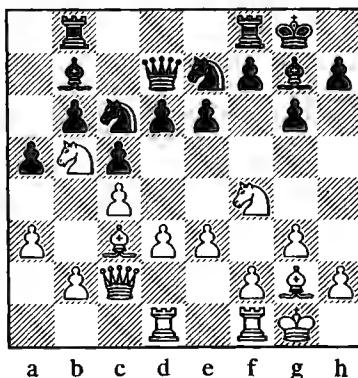
Also after 16. $\mathbb{B}b1$ !?  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  17.b4  $\mathbb{B}xg2$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}c6\uparrow$  19.e4 White is not worse.

16... $\mathbb{E}5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ !

Better than 17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (After 18.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  axb4 20.axb4 cxb4 21. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  23. $\mathbb{W}b3$  Black is better, although White does have some pressure on the b-file.) 18... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ ! This is a sweet tactic. 19.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20.cxd5  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  21.bxa5 bxa5 22. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  Black is a pawn up.

17...axb4 18.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xg2$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  cxb4 21. $\mathbb{W}b3$

White wins back the pawn to reach an equal position.



**16... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$** 

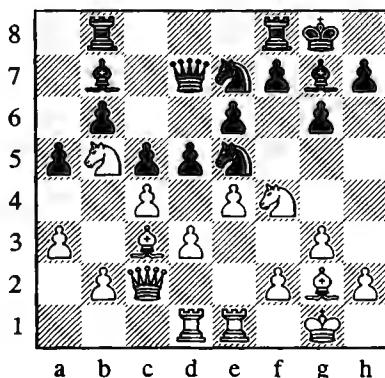
Karpov is ready to exchange a pair of bishops – but it will be the one next to his opponent's king, rather than the defender of his own monarch.

**17.e4**

In view of the way the game develops, with hindsight White might have considered exchanging a few pieces with: 17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7?$ ?  $\mathbb{W}xb7$  (Black can also consider 17... $\mathbb{B}xb7$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$  d5) 18.e4 (After 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd6?!$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  White is in danger on the long diagonal.) 18...d5 Black still has a comfortable position, but the plan of ...d5-d4 is less appealing than in the game.

**17...d5!**

Karpov gains space.

**18. $\mathbb{E}fe1$** **18...d4!**

This move not only secures additional space, but also shuts the b5-knight out of the game for a long time to come. The knight may look as though it is occupying an outpost, but in reality it has no weaknesses to attack and is not much more than a spectator.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6!$** 

Karpov forces a4, thus ensuring that White will never be able to open the queenside with b4. Had White exchanged bishops on b7 earlier, this idea would not have been possible.

**20.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b7!$** 

The bishop has accomplished its aim, and now it vacates the c6-square for the e5-knight in case it is attacked.

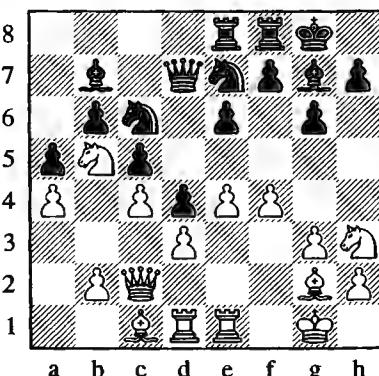
**21. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{E}be8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}h3?$** 

The knight stood well on f4. It may not have been doing anything active, but it was discouraging Black from advancing on the kingside. In the event of ...e5 then the knight would have hopped into d5, while if ...g5 then  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  would be annoying.

A better idea was 22. $\mathbb{W}e2$ , intending to bring the misplaced knight back into play, perhaps via e1. Play might continue 22... $\mathbb{Q}5c6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  24.b3, when White's disadvantage is not too severe.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}5c6$  23.f4?**

White misunderstands the situation and allows the position to be opened up on the side where he is weaker.

**23...e5!**

Karpov opens the kingside and makes White pay heavily for his offside knight on b5.

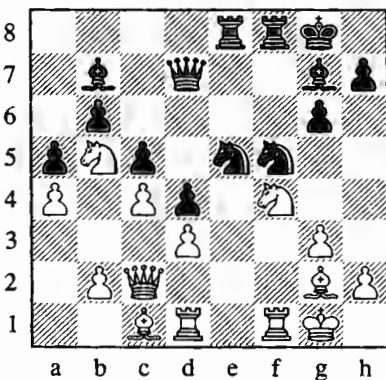
**24.♗f1 f5! 25.♗xe5**

25.♗d2?! may have been better, although White is struggling here as well.

**25...♕xe5 26.exf5?**

26.♗f4! was the best chance. By exchanging voluntarily, White only helps to activate his opponent's pieces.

**26...♕xf5 27.♗f4**



**27...♔h6!**

Karpov wants to exchange pieces. The fewer pieces that remain on the kingside, the greater the influence of his extra piece over that part of the board.

**28.♗d5 ♕xc1 29.♗xc1 ♕xd5!**

Karpov continues his policy of exchanging. The text move wins the e3-square for his knight, and secures a decisive advantage.

**30.♗xd5† ♔g7 31.♗e4 ♗e3**

Karpov completes his strategy and the game is over.

**32.♗xf8 ♕xf8 33.♗e1 ♕h3**

**0-1**

White resigned as he cannot avoid being mated.

In the next game Karpov beat Pfleger with the black pieces after a remarkable grind. He finished the tournament with three quick draws, to win by a comfortable one and a half point margin ahead of Stean, Kavalek and Calvo.

### USSR Championship

In 1976 Karpov was the champion of the world, but he was still not the champion of his country. He entered this year's USSR Championship as the clear favourite, especially as two of his main rivals had left the Soviet Union; Korchnoi defected and Spassky married a French lady and moved to France. Karpov started the 1976 USSR Championship with two draws, but then things went badly wrong when he experimented with the French Defence against Geller. The older grandmaster found his magic touch and made a most imaginative queen sacrifice, which eventually resulted in a rook endgame in which Geller was two pawns up. It required skill to clinch the victory, but he was up to the task.

In the next round Karpov defeated Balashov, who had often worked in his analysis team. The end of the game was rather mysterious, as Balashov made a freakish blunder, placing his queen on a square where it could simply be captured by Karpov's knight. This appeared suspicious, and not only to Fischer.

Over the next six rounds Karpov won two games against Kupreichik and Dorfman, and drew four, although two of these could easily have been losses, as he was in serious trouble against Tal and he had to suffer against Petrosian in a rook endgame against his opponent's extra f- and h-pawns.

After that shaky period he began to play better. First he beat Zakharov in a wonderful endgame, then drew with Sveshnikov, before going on a rampage that saw him drop just half a point out of his final five games. His last

four victims were Gulko, Vaganian, Karen Grigorian and Tseshkovsky. His final score of 12/17 was enough to secure sole first place, a point clear of Petrosian, Polugaevsky and – crucially – Balashov, whose blunder in round four turned out to be very significant indeed.

## 1976 Summary

Skopje (1st place): 12½/15 (+10 =5 –0)

USSR Team Cup (Board 1): 4/6 (+2 =4 –0)

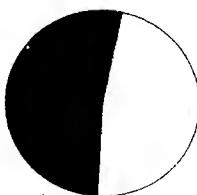
Amsterdam (1st place): 4/6 (+2 =4 –0)

Manila (2nd place): 3/6 (+1 =4 –1)

Montilla (1st place): 7/9 (+5 =4 –0)

USSR Championship, Moscow (1st place): 12/17 (+8 =8 –1)

Total 72% (+28 =29 –2)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1977

Rating 2690 (1 in the World)

Karpov began his schedule in 1977 with a convincing tournament victory in the German holiday resort of Bad Lauterberg. His first opponent was Gennady Sosonko, who he had not faced previously.

Out of his first five games against Sosonko, Karpov only conceded a single draw. Surprisingly, he was unable to beat him in any of their next seven games, most of which were quick draws. Sosonko played all the world champions from Smyslov to Kasparov, with the exception of Fischer. Out of thirty three encounters he won two games, drew twenty and lost eleven.

## Game 46

Anatoly Karpov – Gennady Sosonko

Bad Lauterberg 1977

1.e4 c5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qc3 g6

Sosonko was a Dragon expert, who once remarked that one should either play the Dragon in every game, or not at all.

6.Qe2

Karpov also scored extremely well with the Yugoslav Attack, and indeed he used it to defeat Sosonko two years later. Here are a few of the relevant games he played in the 1970s.

6.Qe3 Qg7 7.Qc4 Qc6 8.f3 0–0 9.Qd2

Karpov scored a highly impressive 14½/16 from this variation, losing only one game to Korchnoi.

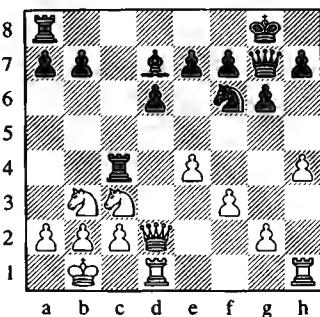
9...Qd7 10.0–0

10.h4 h5 11.0–0–0 Qe5 12.Qb3 Qc8 13.Qg5 Qc5 14.Qhe1 b5 15.f4 Qc4 16.Qxc4 bxc4 17.Qxf6 Qxf6 18.e5 Qg7 19.e6 Qc8 20.exf7† Qxf7 21.Qe6 Qxe6 22.Qxe6 Wa5 23.Qe3 Qxc3 24.bxc3 Qxa2 25.Qxg6† White broke through to his opponent's king in Karpov – Sosonko, Tilburg 1979.

10...Wa5 11.Qb3 Qfc8 12.h4 Qe5 13.Qb1 Qc4

13...b5 14.Qcxb5 Wa6 15.Qc3 Qc4 16.Qd3 Qab8 17.Qc1 Karpov consolidated his extra pawn and eventually prevailed in Karpov – Garcia Martinez, Ljubljana 1975.

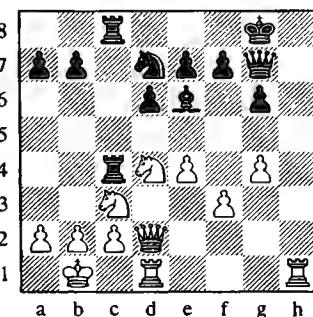
14.Qxc4 Qxc4 15.Qb3 Qd8 16.Qh6 Qf8 17.Qxg7 Qxg7



18...g4!

With the queen on g7 Black is unlikely to carry out a successful queenside attack, so White has time to build up patiently on the kingside.

18... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20.h5  $\mathbb{B}ac8$  21.hxg6 hxg6



22. $\mathbb{Q}ce2$ !

Karpov reinforces the knight on d4 and prevents the thematic exchange sacrifice on c3.

22... $\mathbb{B}4c5$  23.c3  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}dg1$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  g5  
26. $\mathbb{Q}gf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  27.gxf5 f6 28.f4  $\mathbb{W}xe4\uparrow$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30.fxg5 fxg5 31. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{E}e5$  32. $\mathbb{W}h5\uparrow$

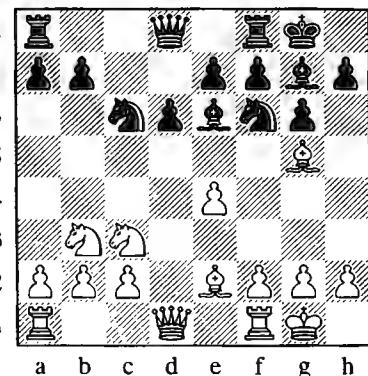
1–0 Karpov – Whiteley, Bath 1973. This was a superb example of how to defuse Black's counterplay and win with a controlled kingside attack.

6... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  7.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  0–0 9. $\mathbb{Q}g5\uparrow?$

The bishop usually goes to e3 in these positions, but the text move is also quite

playable. One advantage it that the potential freeing break ...d5 will be harder for Black to carry out.

9... $\mathbb{Q}e6$



10. $\mathbb{Q}h1\uparrow!$

This was first played in 1962 by Skold, but Karpov probably picked up the idea from a 1976 encounter between Gaprindashvili and Gy. Szilagyi. The hasty 10.f4 allows Black to obtain counterplay with 10...b5!.

Grandmaster Razuvayev, who was a long time helper of Karpov, explained to me that the job of their analysis team was not necessarily to find lines that guaranteed an advantage, but rather to find ideas that suited Karpov's style. If the text move was suggested by Karpov's trainers, then on this occasion they did an excellent job.

10...a5?!

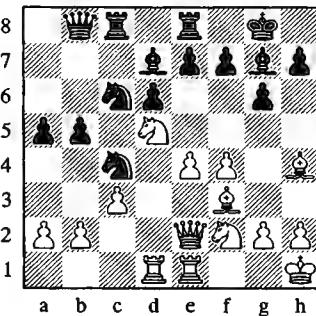
This is a thematic idea in such positions, but on this occasion White seems to be able to stifle Black's counterplay and slowly choke him with the help of the outpost square on b5.

In later years Black tested many different ideas from this position. Two of the better ones are 10...h6?!, 11. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  g5 12. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  d5, and

10... $\mathbb{Q}a5?$ ! 11.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  12.f5  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ , both of which give Black sufficient counterplay in a complex position.

Karpov himself faced a couple of other approaches, including in round ten of the same tournament: 10... $\mathbb{W}c8$  11.f4  $\mathbb{E}d8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  13. $\mathbb{E}f2$  e6 14. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  15. $\mathbb{W}e1$  h6 16. $\mathbb{E}h4$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  17. $\mathbb{E}ad1$  e5 18. $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  exf4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  White went on to convert his extra exchange in Karpov – Miles, Bad Lauterberg 1977.

A few months later Karpov faced another improving attempt: 10...a6 11.f4 b5 12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.c3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  15. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  16. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  17. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  18. $\mathbb{E}h4$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c1?$ ! Karpov embarks on a remarkable transfer of his knight to the kingside, 19... $\mathbb{W}b8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  a5 21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$



22. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  This time Karpov is not playing for a positional advantage, but for a direct attack on the black king. 22... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  a4 24.a3  $\mathbb{W}b7$  25. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  26.f5 f6 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$  And White's attack broke through, Karpov – Martin Gonzalez, Las Palmas 1977.

### 11.a4!

Karpov prevents the further advance of the a-pawn.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Sosonko opens the diagonal of the bishop by transferring his knight to the queenside. Karpov enjoyed success in yet another game later the same year: 11... $\mathbb{E}c8$  12.f4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  14. $\mathbb{Q}db5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}h5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  19. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{E}f8?$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  The outcome was already decided in Karpov – Hernandez, Las Palmas 1977.

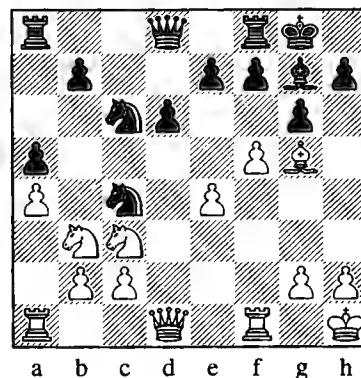
### 12.f4

12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  and 12. $\mathbb{E}b1$  are also possible.

### 12... $\mathbb{Q}b6?$

Black scores better with 12... $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  13.cxb3  $\mathbb{Q}c5.$

### 13.f5 $\mathbb{Q}c4$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $\mathbb{Q}xc4$



### 15. $\mathbb{W}e2!$

With the help of some simple tactics, Karpov pushes back the knight.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}b6$

15... $\mathbb{Q}xb2?$  loses a piece after 16.f6! exf6 17. $\mathbb{Q}c1!.$

15... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$  looks risky, but it is playable. 16.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}6e5$  17.f6 exf6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  Black will be able to chase the dangerous bishop away.

**16.♗b5 ♔d4?!**

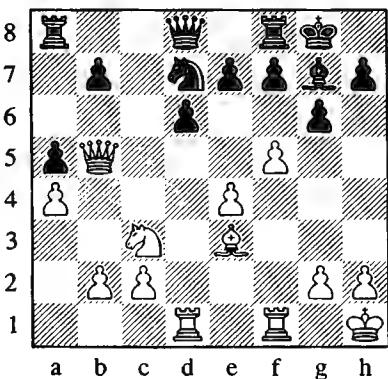
This does not achieve much, apart from swapping White's passive knight.

**17.♕xd4 ♜xd4 18.♗ad1 ♔g7**

After 18...♜xc3 19.bxc3 ♜c8 20.♗d3 Black is under pressure.

**19.♗e3 ♔d7?!**

After the superior 19...♜a6 20.♗d3 ♜e8 21.♗b3 Black is still worse, but his problems are less severe than in the game.

**20.♘d5**

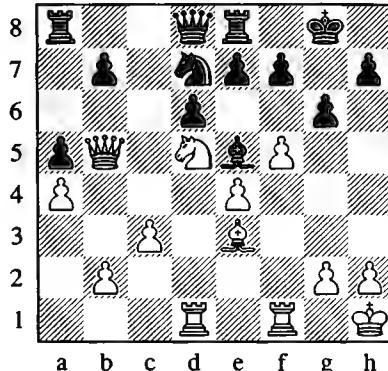
From this square the knight dominates the board.

**20.♗e8**

It was worth considering 20...♘f6?!, trying to exchange the powerful knight, although White remains clearly better after: 21.c3 (Also tempting is 21.♗b6 ♜a6 22.♗d3 ♘xe4 23.♗d7 ♜e8 24.♗xb7 ♜a8 25.♗b5 when Black has problems.) 21...♘xd5 (21...♘xe4 22.♗xb7) 22.♗xd5 Black is passive, but it will not be easy to crack the defence.

**21.c3 ♜e5**

On 21...♝c8 22.♗b6 is not dangerous because of 22...♝c6, but 22.♗g5! is unpleasant for Black.

**22.♗b6!**

This is an excellent positional move. The exchange of minor pieces will only magnify the difference in quality between White's monstrous knight and Black's passive bishop.

**22...♝xb6 23.♗xb6 ♜a6 24.♗c4 ♜b8**

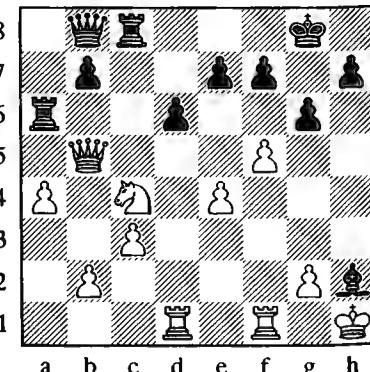
24...♔g7 25.e5 is horrible for Black.

**25.♗xa5**

25.fxg6 hxg6 26.♗xe5 dxе5 27.♗d7 was decisive as well.

**25...♜c8 26.♗c4 ♜xh2?!**

After 26...♜c5 27.♗b3 ♜e8 28.a5 ♜b5 29.♗c2 White is just a pawn up.



**27.♕b6**

Collecting the exchange.

**27...♝xb6 28.♛xb6 ♜e5 29.a5 ♞c6 30.♛e3 ♜c7 31.♝d5 ♜a6 32.♛d3**

Karpov is ready to give back a pawn in order to exchange queens.

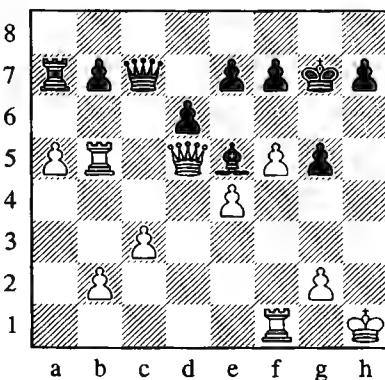
**32...♝g7**

After 32...♝xa5 33.♝xa5 ♛xa5 34.fxg6 hxg6 35.♛d5 White forces a queen exchange, then collects the b-pawn and wins.

**33.♝b5 g5 34.♛d5**

Karpov withdraws the offer of the a5-pawn and improves his pieces.

**34...♝a7**



**35.g4!?**

One of several winning plans available. The loosening of the kingside is insignificant, as Black's heavy pieces are too far away from that area.

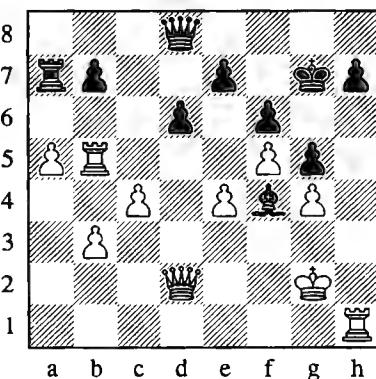
**35...♛c8 36.♝g2 ♛d7 37.c4! ♛e8 38.b3! ♛d8 39.♛d2!**

Karpov attacks the g5-pawn to provoke a weakness.

**39...f6 40.♝h1**

Now he prepares to attack on the h-file.

**40...♞f4**



**41.♛c3!**

Transferring the queen while keeping the a5-pawn defended. Black has no good response and the game is soon over.

**41...♛h8 42.♛h3 h5 43.♛xh5 ♛xh5 44.♝xh5 ♜d2 45.b4**

**1–0**

Karpov played this opening variation only in 1977. This seems surprising, as it served him extremely well, as evidenced by the series of wins mentioned in the notes to the present game.

In round 2 Karpov quickly drew with his trainer Furman, then won four consecutive games against Timman, Wockenfuss, Gerusel and Liberzon. Then he slowed down with three draws, followed by a nice win over Miles, and then another draw. Karpov then won his final three games, albeit somewhat fortuitously. He beat Hermann convincingly, but then got a lost position a piece down against Csom, but the Hungarian blundered. In the final round Karpov avenged his loss to Torre, who also blundered, although this time the position was balanced.

Overall Karpov won nine games and drew six. This dominant performance gave him first place, two points ahead of Timman and three ahead of Furman. This was Furman's last tournament; perhaps he was already ill by that time.

Karpov's next event was the European Team Championship in Moscow. After starting with a fine victory over Smejkal, he then faced Ljubomir Ljubojevic.

The Yugoslav grandmaster was arguably the strongest player in chess history never to become a world championship candidate. When he was on song he was as strong as anybody. Twice in major tournaments he finished equal first with Kasparov when the latter was World Champion.

Up until the present game, Karpov had beaten Ljubojevic twice and drawn three times without a loss. They would go on to contest a total of forty five games, from which Karpov registered seventeen victories and twenty two draws, with six losses. The longstanding Yugoslav number one played 134 games against the World Champions, from Smyslov all the way through to Anand, with the one exception of Fischer. He scored fifteen wins, seventy seven draws and forty two losses.

## Game 47

### Ljubomir Ljubojevic – Anatoly Karpov

European Team Championship, Moscow 1977

#### 1.c4?!

Of course there is nothing objectively wrong with the move, but it was a strange choice against the world champion: Ljubojevic played it very rarely and did not achieve good results with it.

1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 3.g3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  e6 5.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0–0 7. $\mathbb{E}e1$ ?

This variation leads to a complex fight, instead of the well known lines of the Queen's Indian. A decade later Karpov started to have problems against this move.

7.d4 transposes to one of the main lines of the Queen's Indian. Interestingly, Karpov defended Black's side of this position more than forty times without losing a single game, except for a blitz encounter with Korchnoi in 1987. His solidity is to be admired, although he only won four games, so the position proved solid and reliable for his opponents as well!

#### 7...d5 8.cxd5 exd5

Later in Karpov's career he recaptured with the knight, but this time he opts for the hanging pawn centre.

#### 9.d4 c5 10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

At the time of the game, this variation had hardly ever been played, and according to the database the text move was a novelty. Nowadays the whole line has been tested and analysed extensively, and Ljubojevic's move is regarded as the best at White's disposal.

Two years later Portisch tried a different approach, but it did not win many followers:  
 10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  11. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  12.dxc5 bxc5 13. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  d4 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  19. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  Portisch – Karpov, Tilburg 1979. Black had an active position and the game was soon drawn.

#### 10... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ??

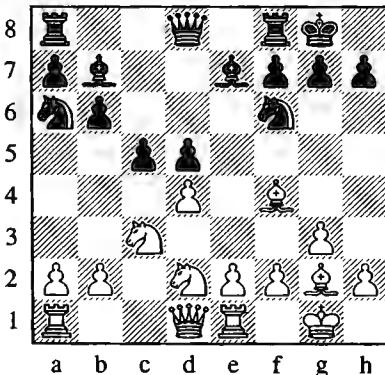
The concept of developing the knight to a6 is a position featuring this pawn structure was first introduced by Robert Hübner in 1976. Karpov utilized the same idea in a few games in 1977. He won against Browne and Garcia Padron, but then drew a game against Kochyev which seemed to put him off the idea.

Compared with the more typical destination of d7, the development of the knight to a6 has several advantages. On a6 the knight does not block the d-file, which means Black has to worry less about the d5-pawn. The c8-h3 diagonal is not blocked, so Black's queen can go to e6 if needed. Sometimes the white queen will go to a4, in which case the reply ... $\mathbb{W}e8$  can be useful. Finally, in the event of  $\mathfrak{Q}B3-e5$ , Black does not have to exchange knights and can instead manoeuvre his knight to e6 via c7.

### 11. $\mathfrak{Q}d2?$

This strange move has never been repeated. The idea must have been to manoeuvre the knight to e3, but White never gets a good chance to do it.

Nearly two decades later, Karpov reached the same position but came unstuck: 11.dxc5?  $\mathfrak{Q}xc5$  12. $\mathfrak{E}c1$  a6 13.a3  $\mathbb{E}e8$  14. $\mathfrak{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6?$ ! 15. $\mathfrak{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  16. $\mathfrak{W}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  17. $\mathfrak{E}ed1$  g6 18. $\mathfrak{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4?$ ! 19.gxf4  $\mathfrak{Q}f8$  20.e3 White had a stable advantage and went on to win a positional masterpiece in Gelfand – Karpov, Vienna 1996.



### 11... $\mathbb{W}d7!$

White's last move was illogical but there is no direct refutation, so Karpov just continues developing.

### 12. $\mathfrak{Q}f1?$

This seems consistent, but it is a mistake as the knight has no real chance to go to e3.

### 12... $\mathfrak{E}fd8$ 13.h3

Another mysterious move. It clears the h2-square for the knight, but surely White was not planning to bring this piece to h2 and then back to f3!

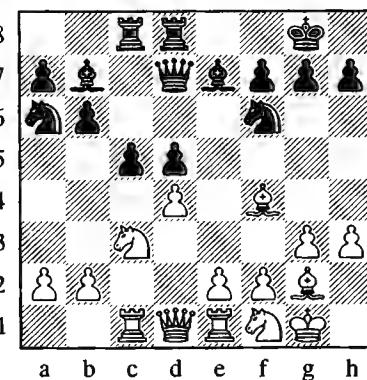
It must be said that the alternatives were also unattractive: 13. $\mathfrak{Q}e3??$   $cxd4$  14. $\mathfrak{W}xd4$   $\mathfrak{Q}c5$  wins a piece, and after 13.dxc5  $\mathfrak{Q}xc5$  14.e3  $\mathfrak{Q}fe4$  White is also struggling.

### 13... $\mathfrak{E}ac8$

Bringing his last dormant piece into play.

### 14. $\mathfrak{E}c1$

If 14. $\mathfrak{Q}h2$   $cxd4$  15. $\mathfrak{W}xd4$   $\mathfrak{E}c4$  16. $\mathfrak{W}d1$  d4 17. $\mathfrak{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  18. $\mathfrak{Q}b1$   $\mathfrak{Q}b4$  19. $\mathfrak{Q}a3$   $\mathfrak{E}cc8$  White is clearly worse.



### 14... $\mathfrak{cxd4}$ !

Having developed all his pieces, the time has come for Black to take action. Karpov goes for the isolated pawn middlegame, having seen that he can force matters with a series of energetic moves.

### 15. $\mathfrak{W}xd4$ $\mathfrak{E}c4!$ 16. $\mathfrak{W}d1$

16.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ?! only entices the enemy knight to the centre: 16...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  d4 18.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  White's pieces are disorganized, and Black's position is slightly better than in the game as his knight is on c5 instead of a6.

### 16...d4!

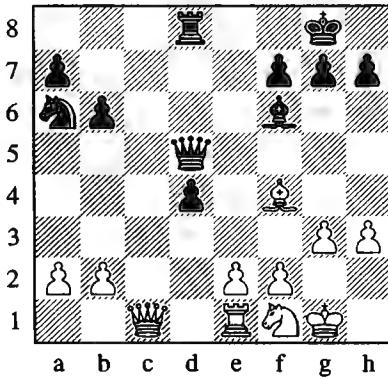
It is often said that when an isolated pawn gets to the fifth rank, it becomes strong. In the present position it exerts a powerful choking effect on White's position.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ $\mathbb{Q}xb7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ !

Having less space, the Yugoslav grandmaster correctly decides to exchange pieces.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Karpov centralizes the queen with gain of tempo.



### 21. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ ?

With this move Ljubojevic wastes a tempo, which costs him a lot.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ ?

White can improve the knight at once; it gives better practical chances than the game continuation.

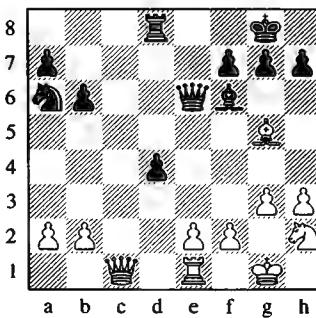
### 21... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ?

Black has several tempting ideas, none of which are totally convincing.

21...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  d3 23.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  h6 (23...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 24.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  White survives. 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $bxa5$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black has an extra pawn, but it is a doubled pawn on the a-file, so White has decent chances to hold.

The text move is a witty idea. If White defends the h3-pawn naturally with the king, then Black will capture the a2-pawn as the check on d5 will make a big difference.

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}g5$



### 22... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

After 22...  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (or 24...  $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ! with counterplay) 25.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  27.  $e3$  White gets away with it.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ f6 24. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xa5$

In the event of 24...  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  25.  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  the active queen gives White enough counterplay.

### 25. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}a5$

If 25...  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  White starts counterattacking the d4-pawn.

### 26. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ $bxa5$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

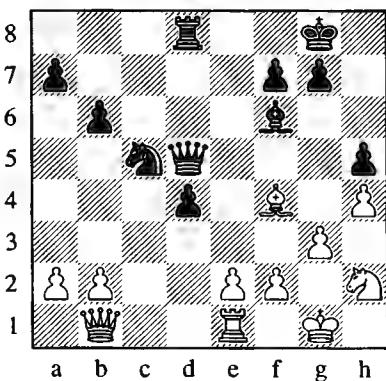
White has reasonable drawing chances.

### 21... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ h5!

Karpov softens White's kingside while incidentally creating an escape square for his king. This is fully in accordance with the principle that the side with more space should try to crack the opponent's position from multiple angles.

**23.h4**

Other continuations were unsatisfactory as well, for instance 23.Qf3 d3 or 23.b4 Qe4 24.Qd3 Qc8.

**23...d3!**

Karpov opens the position before his opponent can regain his coordination. The white kingside is quite vulnerable with the queen so far away.

**24.exd3**

An alternative was 24.Qf1 Qc4!?. This is not the only move that leads to an advantage, but it seems to be the most purposeful in view of the pressure against the e2-pawn. 25.b4 Qc3 26.bxc5 dxе2 27.Qc2 (After 27.Qe3 Qxe1 28.Qxc4 Qd1 29.Qe4 Qb4† Black wins) 27...exf1=Q† 28.Qxf1 Qxc5 Black is a pawn up.

**24...Qxd3 25.Qd1 Qb5?!**

Up to this point Karpov has played brilliantly, but now he makes a slight inaccuracy.

The most precise continuation was: 25...Qd4! Attacking f2 and b2. 26.Qd2 (After 26.Qe3 Qxb2 27.Qxb2 Qxb2 28.Qf3 Qf6 Black is simply a pawn up.) 26...Qe4! 27.Qg5 Qxg5 28.hxg5 Qd4 29.Qc2 (29.Qf1! is possible, although 29...h4 maintains the pressure) 29...Qd5! 30.Qb3 Qxb3 31.axb3 Qf4! Black

wins a pawn and should prevail in the knight ending.

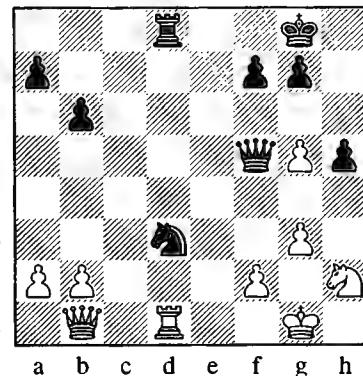
The text move also looks appealing, as Black creates a double threat of gobbling the b2-pawn and exchanging on f4 to shatter White's kingside. Perhaps Karpov did not fully appreciate his opponent's resourceful response.

**26.Qg5!**

Ljubojevic finds the only move to keep himself in the game.

**26...Qxg5 27.hxg5 Qf5**

With his next few moves Karpov opens up the enemy kingside. White must remain alert if he is to stay in the game.

**28.Qd2?!**

White should have preferred:

**28.Qc2!**

The idea is to transfer the queen to e2, where it stands so much better. Black does not seem to have anything decisive, for instance:

**28...Qd4**

28...Qe4 prevents White from placing his queen on e2, but allows him to improve his knight: 29.Qf1! Qd4 30.Qe3 And it is not easy to suggest a way for Black to make progress.

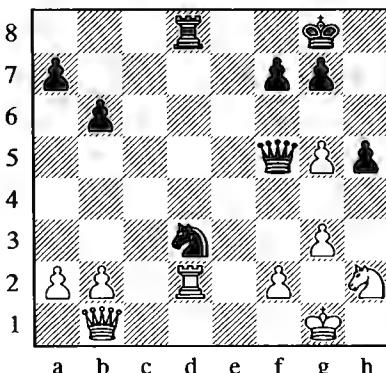
Also after 28... $\mathbb{E}d5$  29. $\mathbb{W}e2$  g6 30. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  31. $\mathbb{E}d2$  White gets himself together.

29. $\mathbb{W}e2$  g6

29... $\mathbb{W}d7$  30. $\mathbb{W}e3$  is okay for White.

30. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  32. $\mathbb{W}e4$

White holds.



28... $\mathbb{E}d4$

Karpov brings the rook closer to the enemy king, while also removing it from the square on which it could be captured with check.

29. $\mathbb{W}c2?$

29. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

This move makes it harder for Black to unpin the knight.

29... $\mathbb{W}e4$

After 29... $\mathbb{W}f3$  30. $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  Black is only fractionally better.

The more aggressive 29...h4 is also not totally convincing: 30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  (30... $\mathbb{W}f3$  31. $\mathbb{W}d1$ ) 31.gxh4  $\mathbb{E}g4\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}d4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g1$

And White is alive.

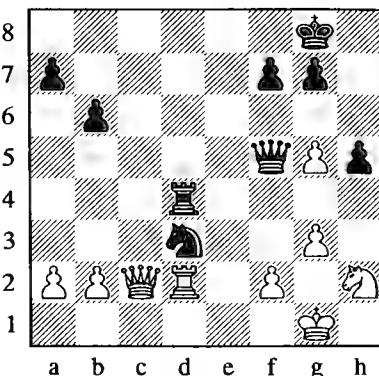
Another line is 29... $\mathbb{W}d7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  31. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  and now White should be able to hold after 33. $\mathbb{W}d1!$ , but not 33.b3?  $\mathbb{W}e4\#$  when Black wins a pawn.

30. $\mathbb{W}c2$

Also after 30. $\mathbb{Q}e3?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  31. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}h3\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  34. $\mathbb{E}d8\#$  White probably holds, despite the pawn deficit.

30... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  31. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  32. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$

White is somewhat worse, but he has good chances to hold.



29...h4!

Karpov softens up his opponent's kingside, exploiting the fact that the white pieces are tied up in the centre.

30.gxh4?

It was better to improve the knight with:

30. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

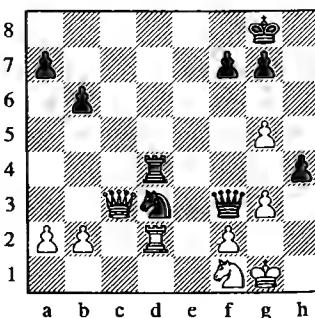
It is useful to have the option of  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ , which defends against the potential mate on g2 and gains a tempo in some lines by attacking the enemy queen.

30... $\mathbb{W}f3$

30...h3?! 31. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  is okay for White.

30...hxg3 31. $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  leads to a position where Black can press for a while, but White should survive as long as he defends carefully.

31. $\mathbb{W}c3$



31... $\mathbb{Q}e1$

31... $\mathbb{B}d6$  can be met by 32. $\mathbb{W}c7$ .

32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}e4$

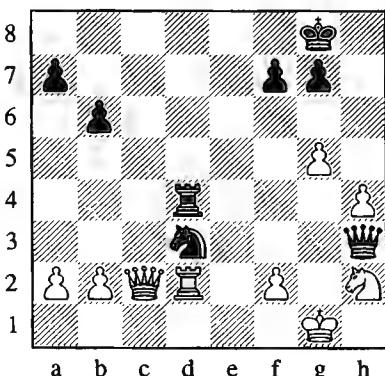
32... $\mathbb{B}xd2$  33. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{B}g2\uparrow$  looks lovely but does not lead to anything special.

33. $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  35. $\mathbb{W}c8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$

36. $\mathbb{W}h3$

White is okay.

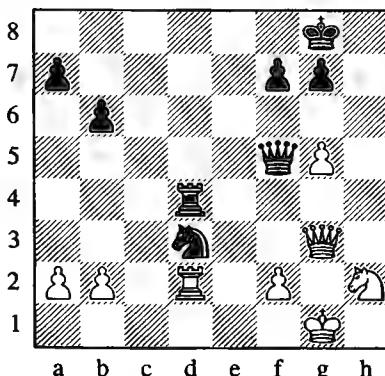
30... $\mathbb{W}h3$



31. $\mathbb{W}c6!$

31.f3 is not good enough: 31... $\mathbb{Q}e1$  32. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{B}d3$ ! This finesse is not only cute, but important as well. 33. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}xf3$  35. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $g6$  White's king is too exposed to survive.

31... $\mathbb{B}xh4$  32. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  33. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{B}d4$



34.g6!

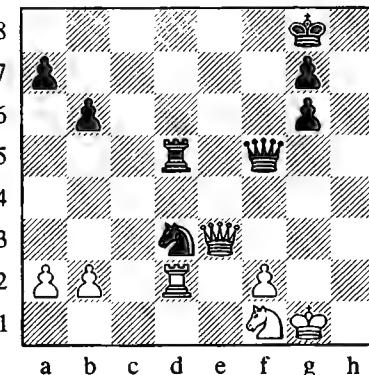
Ljubojevic correctly decides to jettison a pawn. Other continuations would not have helped him, for instance: 34. $\mathbb{Q}h1\uparrow?$   $\mathbb{W}e4\uparrow$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $g6$ ! Black prevents the g5-g6 idea and prepares ... $\mathbb{B}g7$  followed by a rook transfer to h8. 36. $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}c4$  37.a3 (37. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{B}c5$ ) 37... $\mathbb{B}g7$  38. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{B}c1$  White is in deep trouble.

34... $\mathbb{B}xg6$

Black's extra pawn is not the best, but it still adds considerable value to his position, especially in terms of the protection it offers to the king.

35. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{B}d5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

Although some of his earlier play was erratic, Ljubojevic has shown his quality by finding a series of strong moves to stay in the game.



36... $\mathbb{Q}f4?$

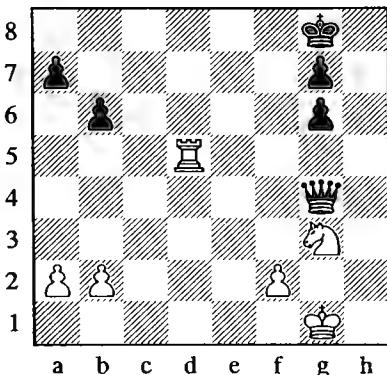
Karpov decides to offer a rook exchange. Simplification should help the side with the extra pawn, even if it is a doubled one.

37. $\mathbb{W}xf4?$

The idea of a fortress in a position with so many pawns is an illusion. 37. $\mathbb{Q}g3\uparrow$  would have kept White in the game for a while longer. After 37... $\mathbb{W}g4$  38. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  39. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$

Black's extra pawn gives him decent winning chances, but a long fight lies ahead.

37... $\mathbb{W}xf4$  38. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}g4\#$  39. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



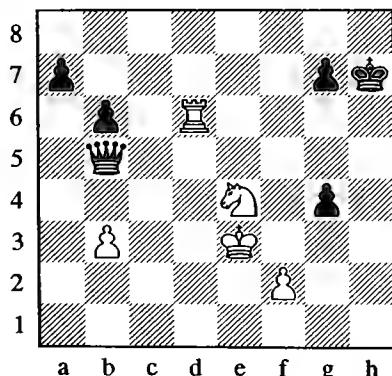
39... $\mathbb{W}c4!$

This is virtually the end for White, as he must lose a queenside pawn.

40. $\mathbb{B}d8\#$   $\mathbb{B}h7$  41.b3  $\mathbb{W}c2$  42. $\mathbb{B}g2$  g5!

Karpov was always a cautious player. In view of his opponent's potential mating attack, he makes room for the king and gives up the e4-square as late as possible.

43. $\mathbb{B}d6$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  45. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f5\#$   
46. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  47. $\mathbb{B}d4$  g4 48. $\mathbb{B}e3$



48... $\mathbb{W}xb3\#$

Karpov has seen that he can neutralize White's mating threats, so he takes another pawn.

49. $\mathbb{B}f4$   $\mathbb{W}f3\#$  50. $\mathbb{B}e5$   $\mathbb{W}f8!$

This is the simplest win.

51. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  52. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  b5 53. $\mathbb{B}e6$  b4  
0–1

After this excellent game Karpov continued his fine form, and went on to win all three of his remaining games against Gheorghiu, Portisch and Keene, thus ending on a perfect score of five wins from five games.

### Semyon Furman

Furman was the captain of the Soviet team at the European Team Championship, and he must surely have contributed towards Karpov's perfect score there. This seems like as good a time as any to reflect on the influence of Karpov's trainer. Furman was undoubtedly a major contributor to Karpov's meteoric rise. Indeed, his great rival Korchnoi once wrote that if Furman had stayed with him and never joined Karpov, chess history would have been different.

I managed to obtain a page of an old Russian chess publication (probably the famous 64 magazine) in which Karpov had written about his trainers. I have already cited his comments about both Gravol and Botvinnik. Here is the translation of his warm words on Furman:

"To my good fortune, at the Army tournament of 1969 I met grandmaster S. Furman. He took me under his wing and took care of my chess education. We never separated and he is still my trainer. Semyon Abramovich is a remarkable person and chess player. He helped me to obtain the

title of World Junior Champion as well as my subsequent successes, for which I feel obliged to give him a lot of credit.

I was often asked the question about the role of a trainer in the period when a pupil overtakes his teacher as a competitive chess player. Firstly, it would be naive to suppose that the win would come easily for me in a hypothetical match against Furman. Even today when he is long past his fiftieth birthday, he remains a successful competitor in international tournaments. But this is not the most important thing. Even if Furman's practical strength has decreased, his understanding of the game remains much higher than that of many well known grandmasters. Regarding his theoretical knowledge, it is not by accident that people call him "Mr Chess Academy". Because of his skill, I always welcome his suggestions and recommendations and pay serious attention to them.

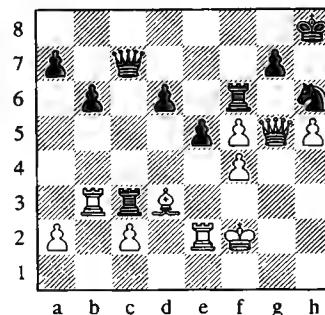
The role of a trainer is not limited to technical functions. It is also vitally important that trainers follow the latest developments of theory and practice. Because I was overloaded with my tournament schedule, often I was unable to play over so many hundreds of games. It is also clear that, when analysing adjourned positions during a tournament, one must listen to people with sufficiently high qualifications. The most important thing is to feel trust in one's own trainer.

Here a lot depends on the elder. To encourage in the times of disappointment and adversity. And to ensure that one still keeps their feet on the ground in times of victory and successes. This can only be done by friends who possess great instructional tact. Semyon Abramovich fully has all these qualities."

Over the course of his career, Furman played a total of forty games against world champions.

He won seven of them, drew eighteen (including three draws with his famous pupil) and lost the remaining fifteen games.

Here is a brief extract from one of his best wins. Tigran Petrosian was renowned for his brilliant exchange sacrifices, but Furman managed to beat the great Armenian with his own weapon!



41... $\mathbb{B}xd3!$  42. $\mathbb{B}xd3$  e4 43. $\mathbb{B}h3$  d5 Black converted his advantage as follows: 44. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{B}xf5$  45. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{W}c5\uparrow$  46. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  47. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  48. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{B}f1\uparrow$  49. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}f7$  50. $\mathbb{B}hg3$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  51. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  52. $\mathbb{W}d8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  53. $\mathbb{B}g5$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  54. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}d2\uparrow$  55. $\mathbb{B}1g2$   $\mathbb{W}f4\uparrow$  56. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e3\uparrow$  57. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}f4\uparrow$  58. $\mathbb{B}2g3$   $\mathbb{W}f2\uparrow$  59. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}f1\uparrow$  60. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}f2\uparrow$  61. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  e3 62.h6 e2 63.h7  $\mathbb{W}f1\uparrow$  64. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{B}f2\uparrow$  65. $\mathbb{B}g2$   $\mathbb{B}xg2\uparrow$  66. $\mathbb{B}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}f4\uparrow$  67. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}f3\uparrow$  68. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}h5\uparrow$  0–1 Petrosian – Furman, Gorky 1950.

After his tremendous success at the European Team Championship, Karpov's next event was an individual tournament at Las Palmas in the Canary Islands. He continued his winning streak with five consecutive victories, and showed his versatility by beating his opponents using different styles of play.

In round 6 he met Tony Miles. Overall Karpov won twelve games, drew the same number and lost just once against the first English grandmaster of the modern era. Altogether Miles played seventy nine games

against all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, except for Fischer and Topalov. He won ten of these games, drew forty two and lost twenty seven.

## Game 48

Anatoly Karpov – Tony Miles

Las Palmas 1977

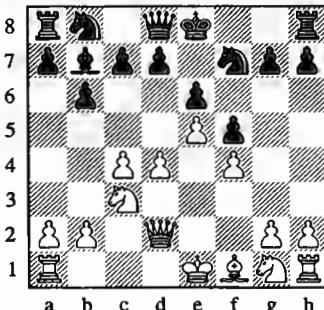
**1.c4 b6**

Fifteen years later Miles tried to play a similar opening when Karpov opened with the queen's pawn. In this game we can also see his magic positional touch:

1.d4 e6 2.c4  $\mathbb{Q}b4\uparrow$  3. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2\uparrow$  4. $\mathbb{W}xd2$  b6  
5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7\text{?!}$  6.e4!

Karpov occupies the centre.

6... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  7.f4 f5 8.e5!  $\mathbb{Q}f7$



9.0–0–0!

The bishop on b7 is powerful, so by castling on the queenside Karpov decreases its significance.

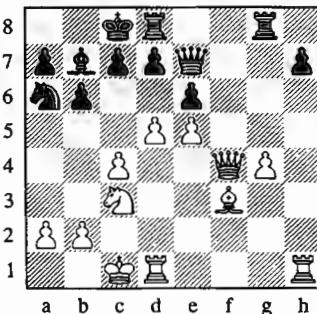
9...g5 10.Qf3 Qg8 11.Qe2 Qa6 12.h3!

Ensuring that the kingside will be opened.

12...gxh4 13.Qxf4 Qe7?

Miles must have judged 13...Qxg2 to be too risky, but after 14.Qd1 Qg6 15.Qxg6 hxg6 16.Qg1 White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

14.g4 fxg4 15.hxg4 Qg5 16.d5 Qxf3 17.Qxf3  
0–0–0



18.Qh6

18.Qe4? was worth considering.

18...Qg7?!

After the superior 18...Qg5 19.Qxg5 Qxg5 20.Qe1 Qf8 21.Qe3 White is somewhat better, but victory is a long way off.

19.Qf6! exd5 20.cxd5 Qe8 21.g5 Qb8 22.Qh5 Qeg8 23.Qf7

Karpov got a clear advantage and went on to win, Karpov – Miles, Biel 1992.

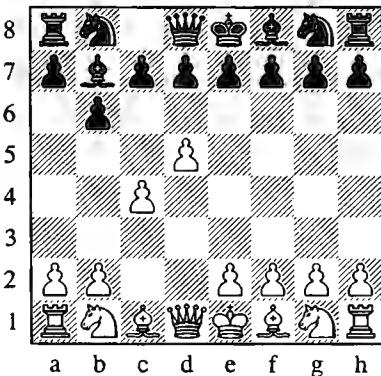
**2.d4 Qb7**

In the following year Miles tried to improve on the same opening by 2...e6. The game continued as follows: 3.d5? Qh4 4.Qc3 Qb4 (Maybe Miles should have taken the pawn with 4...Qxc4?!, even though White will obtain compensation for it.) 5.Qd2 Qf6 6.e3 Qxc3 7.Qxc3 Qe4 8.Qc2 Qxc3 9.Qxc3 0–0 10.g3 Qe4 11.f3 Qg6 12.Qe2 Qb7 13.0–0–0 d6 14.g4 Qd7 15.h4 Qf6 16.Qxf6 Qxf6 17.e4 Qd7 18.Qc3 Qe5 19.Qe2 Qg6 20.Qd2 White went on to win a nice endgame, Karpov – Miles, Bugojno 1978.

**3.d5??**

A very ambitious move, which aims to restrict the b7-bishop and facilitate the acquisition of considerable space in the centre. Interestingly Karpov refrained from playing this move

against Morozevich in 2002. Presumably the decision to refrain from the sharp and ambitious approach was partially influenced by his age, as well as the playing style of his young opponent.



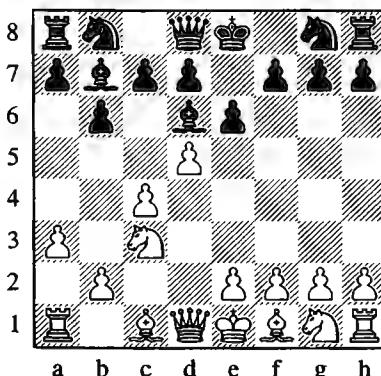
#### 3...e6 4.a3?

By stopping ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  Karpov consolidates the space he gained.

#### 4... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ?

4...g6 and 4... $\mathbb{W}h4$  have also been played, although neither should be sufficient to equalize. 4...f5 seems to be Black's best chance to reach an acceptable position.

#### 5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

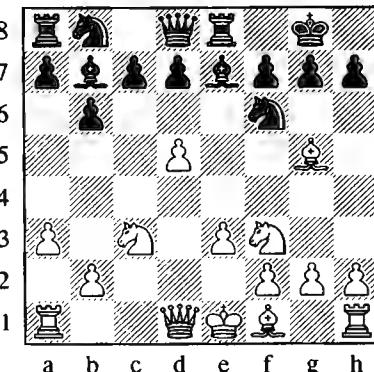


#### 6. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !

Having already prevented ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , Karpov now stops the bishop from harassing the knight from the e5-square.

#### 6...exd5 7.cxd5 0–0 8. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{E}e8$ 9.e3 $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Maybe Black should have tried 9...c6 intending a knight transfer to c7, although White keeps an edge here too.



#### 10. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ !

Karpov strengthens the d5-pawn, securing his space advantage.

#### 10...h6 11. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Karpov refuses to allow the valuable bishop to be exchanged for a knight.

#### 12... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

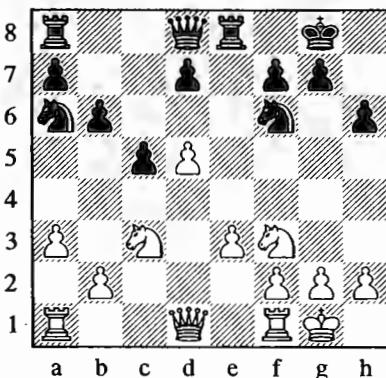
12...d6? wins a tempo, but resigns Black to a pawn weakness on c7 or d6 in the long run.

#### 13. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 15.0–0 c5

Miles removes the weakness from c7 and transforms the position into one resembling a Modern Benoni, at least in terms of the pawn structure. The Benoni has never been very popular at the highest levels, so it is interesting to see how Karpov handles the white position.

#### 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Compared with a normal Benoni, the absence of a bishop on g7 reduces Black's prospects for dynamic counterplay.



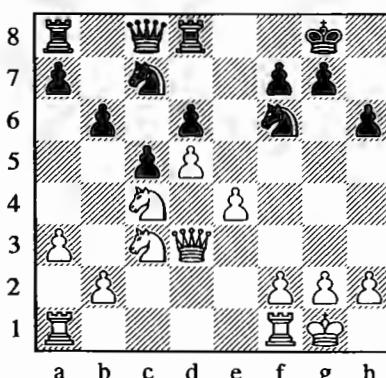
**17.♕d3! ♜c8 18.♘d2!**

After the queen, Karpov improves the knight as well.

**18...d6 19.♘c4 ♜d8 20.e4!**

Karpov secures the d5-pawn. It was too early to go for the d6-pawn with 20.♘b5?! as after 20...♝c7! 21.♞bx d6 ♜b8 22.a4 (22.e4? b5) 22...♞cx d5 Black has eased his position.

**20...♝c7**



**21.b4!**

This is a very strong positional move. White seizes the initiative on the queenside before Black can gain any space there. Black now faces a difficult decision. The prospect of bxc5 is unpleasant for him. If he recaptures with the d-pawn it opens the way for White's central pawns, while if he takes with the b-pawn then the outpost square on c4 will become a long term feature of the position.

**21...♝a6?!**

Miles prepares for the capture on c5, but allows something equally unpleasant. The best chance was:

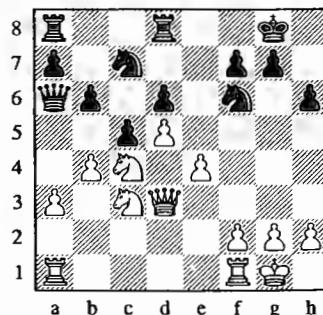
**21...♜a6?!**

Searching for counterplay with the queen is the best chance. Alternatives are worse:

21...b5 22.♗e3 c4 23.♗d4+ Black's queenside play has come to a swift halt, and he will soon be pushed back by means of f4 and e5.

21...cx b4 This gives up the d4-square, and also opens the a-file for the white rook. 22.ax b4 ♜d7 23.f3 White can improve his position by doubling his rooks on the a-file, and/or transferring the c4-knight to d4, probably via e3 and f5.

After the queen move White must choose from a variety of options.



**22.♜fb1?!**

This is arguably the strongest idea at White's disposal.

22.bxc5?! bxc5 23.f4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ! The queen on a6 is irritating for White, who will have trouble improving his position.

22.b5?! The tactical attempt brings no advantage: 22... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{B}xd6$  24.e5 c4! 25. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  26. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}xd5$  And Black has equalized.

22. $\mathbb{B}fd1$ ? This is a sensible way to prepare the pawn advance. 22... $\mathbb{E}ab8$  23.b5!  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{B}xd6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  26.a4 White has the better structure, and Black will have a hard time trying to restrain the advance of the central pawns.

22...b5

Otherwise b4-b5 will lead to a clear positional plus for White, just as in the game.

23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

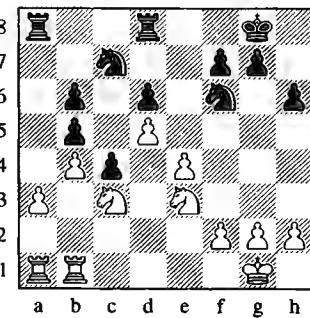
23. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ? is also promising.

23...c4 24. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  25. $\mathbb{W}xb6$

25. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  is also excellent for White.

25...axb6

Both sides have pawn weaknesses, but Black's are more significant.



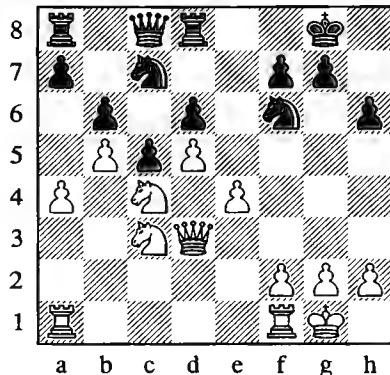
26. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

Also after 26.a4?! bxa4 27.b5 Black is in trouble.

26... $\mathbb{E}a6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}da8$  28.f3  $\mathbb{E}xa3$  29. $\mathbb{E}xa3$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$  30. $\mathbb{E}c1$ !

White is temporarily a pawn down, but he will soon earn it back with interest.

22.b5!  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  23.a4

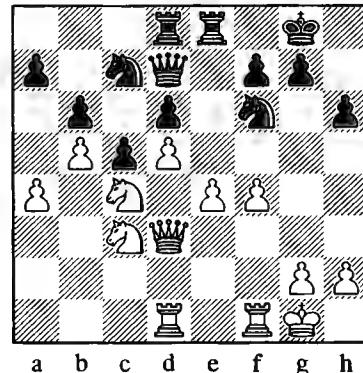


With his last two moves Karpov gained additional space on the queenside and completely nullified any potential counterplay there. Next he will turn his attention to the centre. Note that the protected passed pawn on c5 contributes nothing to Black's position here.

23... $\mathbb{W}d7$  24.f4

Karpov keeps his rook on f1, anticipating the opening of the f-file after a future e4-e5.

24... $\mathbb{E}e8$  25. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$



26.h3!?

After a couple of natural improving moves Karpov switches to prophylaxis. He prevents

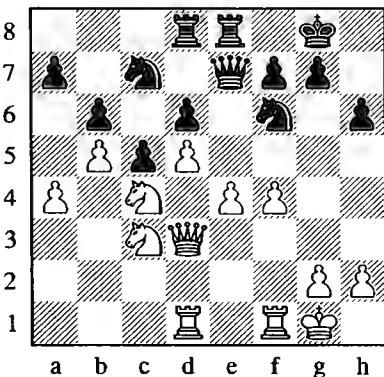
any possibility of ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ , as well as setting up ideas like  $\mathbb{W}f3$  and  $g4$ . The quiet text move also cleverly highlights the fact that Black is in a mild form of zugzwang: his pieces are poised in anticipation of  $e4-e5$ , but apart from that they are accomplishing nothing.

### 26... $\mathbb{W}e7?$

Perhaps Miles wanted to attack the  $e4$ -pawn or maybe it was just an unfortunate choice of waiting move, as the queen is too exposed here.

26... $h5$ ?! was not much good, as after 27. $\mathbb{W}f3$  White remains in control and the weakening of the black kingside will tell eventually.

The best chance was 26... $\mathbb{W}c8$  intending to shelter the queen in the corner, although Black is still in trouble after something like 27. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  28. $g4$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  29. $\mathbb{E}d3$ . White can double his rooks on the d-file and break through when the time is right with  $e5$  or perhaps even  $g5$ .



### 27.e5!

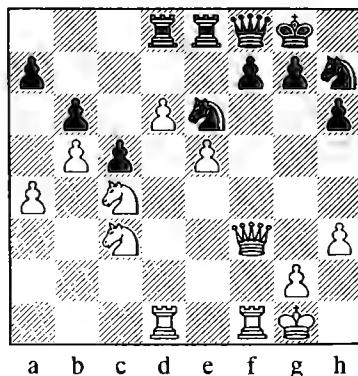
Again we see a familiar story for Karpov. For most of the game he builds his advantage in a patient and strategically powerful way, but as soon as an opportunity arises to finish his opponent by tactical means, he immediately pounces upon it.

White should be able to win more slowly by means of 27. $\mathbb{W}f3$  followed by  $g4$  and so on, but the game continuation move is much more efficient.

### 27... $dxe5$ 28.d6! $\mathbb{W}f8$

After 28... $e4$  29. $\mathbb{W}e2$  Black loses material.

### 29.fxe5 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 30. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$



### 31. $\mathbb{W}b7!$

Having virtually paralysed his opponent, Karpov can afford to go after the  $a7$ -pawn.

### 31... $\mathbb{E}a8$ 32. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ $g6$

Otherwise the knight could have checked on  $e7$  then gone to  $g6$  to win the queen.

### 33. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$ $\mathbb{W}g7$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}c6$

1–0

Miles resigned as White has too many threats, including  $d7$  and  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$ .

More than two decades ago I asked Daniel King, a very fine positional player, why he did not play 1.d4. He told me he did not feel at home in the Benoni positions. I remembered his words: around the time of Leko's thirteenth birthday I started to teach him 1.d4, and the first defence we looked at was the Benoni. We never finished our work on 1.d4. Leko started

playing 1.d4 and 2.c4 for the first time against Kramnik in their 2004 world championship match. With two games remaining, Peter was leading by one point, which meant that Kramnik needed 1½/2 to tie the match and retain his title. In the penultimate game he gambled with the Benoni and Peter played poorly, although he did manage to draw in the end. Nevertheless I suspect that this game gave Kramnik a confidence boost, which helped him to obtain the win he so desperately needed in the final game.

In the above game we saw that the Benoni structure gave Karpov no problems whatsoever, and he simply outclassed Miles.

In round seven Karpov drew with Timman, thus bringing to an end an extraordinary winning streak. With his three wins at the end of Bad Lauterberg, five at the European Team Championship and six at the start of Las Palmas, Karpov achieved a total of fourteen consecutive victories, one of the longest winning streaks in chess history at the top level.

After drawing with Timman he beat Adorjan, then drew against Larsen. Karpov then produced another winning run, posting five consecutive victories against mainly Spanish opponents. In the final round he drew with Tal, to finish with a remarkable total of 13½/15, with twelve wins and three draws. He finished a massive two and a half points ahead of Larsen who was second, three and a half more than Timman who was third, and a further point ahead of Tal, Browne and Hernandez.

Karpov's next event was a tournament in Leningrad, which celebrated the 60th anniversary of the October Revolution. In round one he suffered a setback, falling for a beautiful checkmating combination against Taimanov. He drew in round two, then got back to fifty percent by beating Smejkal. But

in the fifth he lost again, forfeiting on time in an otherwise promising position against Beliavsky.

Over the course of the remaining twelve games, Karpov gradually clawed his way up the ranks with wins over Kuzmin, Mariotti, Garcia Gonzales and Gheorghiu. But he drew a lot of games along the way, and his final score of 10/17 was only good enough to share fourth and fifth place.

1977 was the first year in which the Dutch city of Tilburg organized its prestigious tournament, and Karpov took part in the inaugural event. Out of the first five games he only won in round two, thanks to some strong opening preparation against Miles. In rounds six and seven he moves through the gears, beating Balashov and Hübner. After a short draw with Kavalek, he then defeated both Olafsson and Andersson, before securing his overall victory with a final draw against Hort. Karpov took the first prize convincingly, a point ahead of Miles. His final tally of five wins and six draws was an excellent result against this strong field.

# 1977 Summary

Bad Lauterberg (1st place): 12/15 (+9 =6 -0)

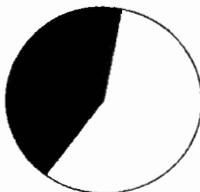
European Team Championship (Board one): 5/5 (+5 =0 -0)

Las Palmas (1st place): 13½/15 (+12 =3 -0)

October Revolution, Leningrad (4th-5th place): 10/17 (+5 =10 -2)

Tilburg (1st place): 8/11 (+5 =6 -0)

Total 77% (+36 =25 -2)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1978

Rating 2725 (1 in the World)

Three years had passed since Fischer was stripped of his crown, and the time had come for Karpov to defend his coveted title. His challenger was a familiar opponent: his old rival, Viktor Korchnoi.

Before we explore that subject fully, it is worth noting briefly that 1978 was the year in which the young Garry Kasparov made his first serious mark on the chess world, when he won the Sokolsky Memorial in Minsk. The year after he won the Banja Luka grandmaster tournament, a massive three points ahead of Smejkal and a further half point ahead of Petrosian and Andersson. From this point on, one can imagine Karpov's attention gradually shifting away from the 'retired' American and towards the young rising star.

For obvious reasons, world champions tend to play fewer tournaments during the year of their title defence, and Karpov was no exception. He only played one tournament in 1978, in Bugojno, located in the former Yugoslavia (now Bosnia and Herzegovina).

Karpov began with a nice win over Larsen, then he had to struggle to draw with Ivkov, who was a pawn up for a long time. After a convincing win over Miles in round three, Karpov drew with Balashov fairly quickly. He then suffered a setback, as Timman outplayed him and collected the full point. It slowed him down – he drew the next four. He then managed to regain his momentum, defeating Ljubojevic in a sharp Sicilian, drawing a hard fought game with Vukic, and then quickly beating Hort.

At the start of the penultimate round he was trailing half a point behind Spassky, when he met the Yugoslav grandmaster Enver Bukic. This was their first and only meeting over the board. Bukic played six games against the champion, drawing twice and losing four times.

## Game 49

Anatoly Karpov – Enver Bukic

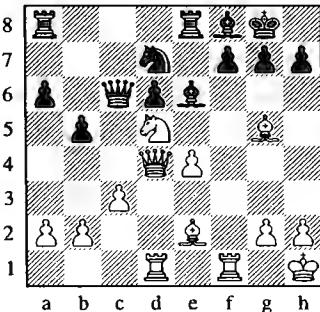
Bugojno 1978

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♗e2 e5 7.♘b3 ♗e7 8.0–0 0–0 9.a4

This is the only time Karpov played the move. His most frequent choice was 9.♗e3, an example of which can be found in Game 65.

He also used 9.♗g5 against two formidable opponents: 9...♗e6 10.f4 exf4 11.♗xf4 ♘c6 12.♗h1 ♘e8 (12...d5 13.e5 ♘e4 14.♗d3 f5 15.exf6 ♘xf6 16.♗xe4 dxe4 17.♗xe4 ♘c4 18.♗d6 ♘xf1

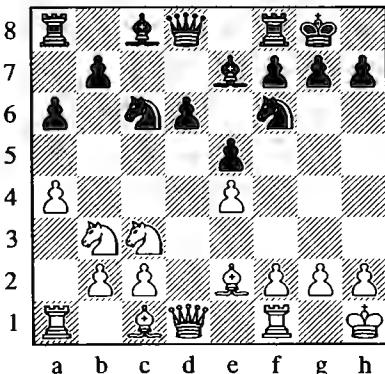
19.♗d5† ♜h8 20.♗h5 g6 21.♗xg6 ♜xg2† 22.♗xg2 ♜d7 Black managed to hold his somewhat worse position in Karpov – Anand, Buenos Aires 1994.) 13.♗e1 ♜d7 14.♗d1 ♜de5 15.♗d5 ♜f8 16.♗f2 ♜d7 17.♗g3 ♜ce5 18.♗h4 ♜c8 19.c3 b5 20.♗g5 ♜b7 21.♗a5 ♜c8 22.♗d4 ♜c6 23.♗xc6 ♜xc6



24.c4! Karpov went on to convert his slight plus into a win in Karpov – Kavalek, Waddinxveen 1979.

#### 9...♝c6 10.♗h1

The king steps aside before the f-pawn moves.



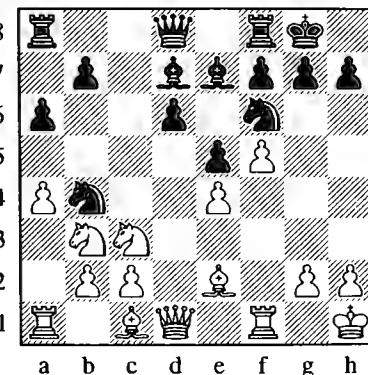
#### 10...♝c6

Later in the same year Kavalek introduced 10...♝b4, when play continues 11.f4 ♜d7 12.♗e3 ♜c6. Several players followed his

example, and overall Black has made an excellent score from this position.

#### 11.f4 ♜b4 12.f5 ♜d7

After 12...♜xb3 13.cxb3 d5 14.exd5 ♜fxd5 15.♗f3 ♜f6 16.♗e3 White is a bit better thanks to his strong light-squared bishop.



#### 13.♗g5!

Karpov does not allow his opponent to free his position. The weaker 13.♗f3?! allows 13...d5! and after the further 14.♗xd5 ♜fxd5 15.c3 ♜b6 16.cxb4 ♜xa4 Black was already better in Parr – Akesson, Gausdal 2001.

#### 13...♝c6 14.♗f3 ♜c8?!

Bukic could have played more actively with 14...b5 15.axb5 (15.♗e2 ♜b6) 15...axb5 16.♗xa8 ♜xa8 17.♗d2 ♜c8 18.♗d1 ♜d7 when Black has a playable position.

#### 15.♗e2

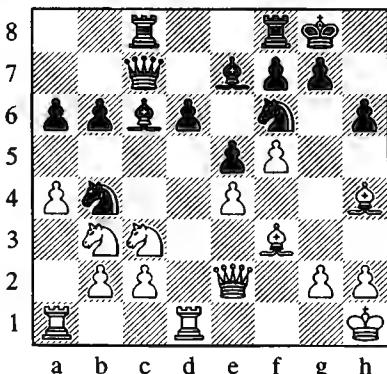
Karpov wastes no time in taking control over the b5-square.

#### 15...h6 16.♗h4 b6

16...b5 was still possible. Objectively the text move is okay, but with hindsight the decision to embark on a slow manoeuvring battle against Karpov was a questionable one. Amazingly, over the entire course of the remaining twenty

six moves of this game, Black not only fails to obtain any counterplay, but does not even make a single pawn move.

17.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$



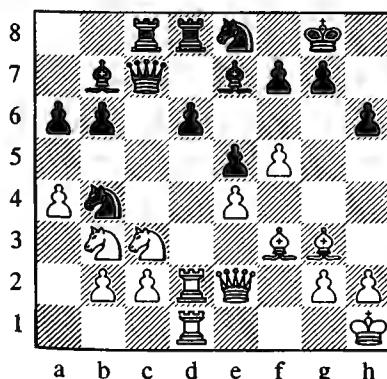
18.  $\mathbb{B}g3$ ?

Why does Karpov retreat his bishop to a blocked diagonal where it seemingly has no future? The answer is prophylaxis: he wants to ensure that Black will not be able to free his position with ...d5.

18...  $\mathbb{B}b7$  19.  $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  20.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$

Karpov directs his full force against the ...d5 push.

20...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$



21.  $h4$ !

Karpov keeps preventing his opponent's ideas, but at the same time he gains space and builds his position.

21...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Black is just waiting.

22.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$

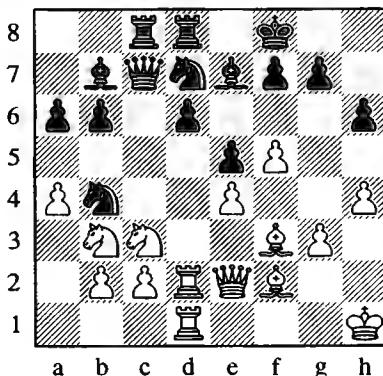
For the first time in a while, Karpov does not play against a particular idea of his opponent, but improves a piece for its own sake.

22...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23.  $g3$

A minor improvement is still an improvement.

23...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Black continues his policy of waiting. A more enterprising approach was 23...  $\mathbb{W}b8$ !?, intending to double rooks on the c-file and perhaps carry out a thematic exchange sacrifice on c3.



24.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ?

The knight does little on b3, so Karpov relocates it to a better square.

24...  $\mathbb{W}c4$  25.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  26.  $\mathbb{W}g1$

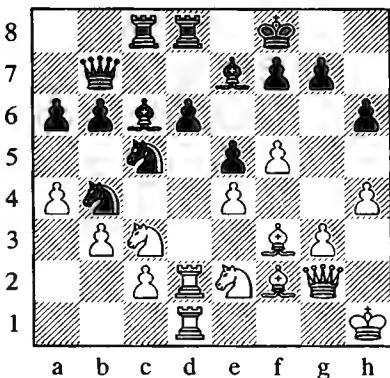
The queen had no future on e1 or e2, so Karpov continues regrouping.

**26...♞c5 27.♝1e2**

From this square the knight helps to support its partner on c3.

**27...♝c6**

The bishop's return to c6 is a clear indication that Black is struggling to find a constructive plan.

**28.b3 ♜b7 29.♗g2****29...♜c7**

Had Black sensed what was to follow, he might have tried:

**29...♞e8?!**

Preparing to evacuate the king to the centre.

**30.g4 f6 31.♚e3 ♜f7 32.♝g1**

The immediate breakthrough fails to deliver:

32.g5 hxg5 33.hxg5 fxg5 34.♝xg5 ♜xg5  
35.♜xg5 ♜e7 Black is not worse.

**32...♞e8 33.♝d5?!**

After 33.g5 hxg5 34.hxg5 ♜d7 Black is very much in the game.

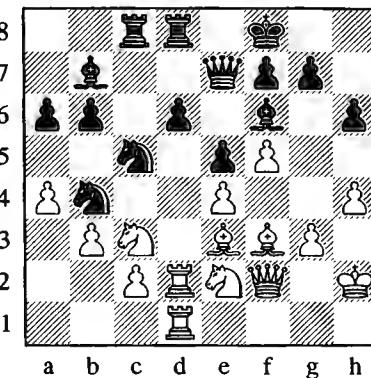
It is possible that Karpov would have continued to play patiently with a move like 33.♚h2, but after 33...♞d7 we see that Black can also improve his king. The position is unclear.

**33...♝xd5 34.exd5 b5 35.axb5 axb5 36.♝g3**

White is a bit better, but a lot of work will be required if he is to achieve anything serious.

**30.♚e3**

Another small improvement.

**30...♜f6 31.♚h2 ♜e7 32.♚f2 ♜b7****33.♝g2?!**

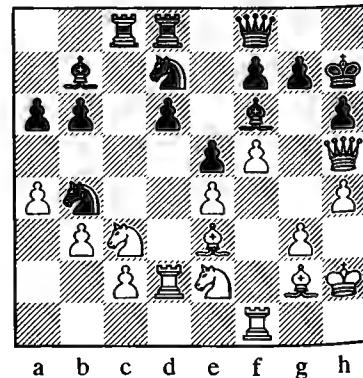
One could be forgiven for thinking that Karpov is merely shuffling his pieces aimlessly.

**33...♝g8?! 34.♚f3**

Here we see his idea: he wanted to vacate the f3-square for the queen.

**34...♚h7 35.♚h5!**

Karpov finds a dangerous plan of attack. Black has enough resources to survive it, but he needs to play accurately and over the board the problems were too much for him.

**35...♛f8 36.♚f1 ♜d7**

**37.Bg1?!**

This turns out to be a tricky move for Black.

**37...Bc6?!**

Bukic fails to sense the danger associated with the queen on h5.

Expelling the queen with 37...g6?! was not an ideal solution: 38.Qf3 h5 (38...Qe7 39.fxg6† fxg6 40.h5 opens up Black's kingside) 39.g4 hxg4 40.Qxg4 Black is under strong pressure on the kingside.

The best defence was: 37...Qe7! Black prepares to drive the queen away without resorting to weakening pawn moves. 38.Qd5?! White would do better to retreat the queen, but this would mean finding a new angle of attack. 38...Qxd5 39.exd5 Qf6 40.Qf3 e4 41.Qf4 Qbx5 42.Qxd5 Qxd5 43.Qxe4 Qf6 White has some play for the exchange, but I doubt that Karpov would have chosen this route.

**38.Qd5!**

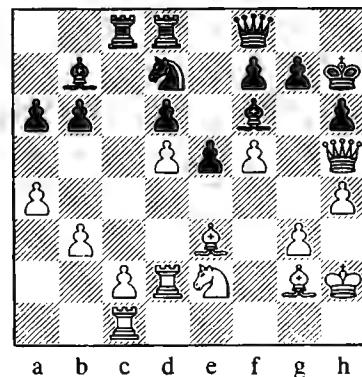
Though I cannot be sure, I suspect that Karpov intentionally sharpened the position before the time control. If that is the case, the text is not only a strong move in its own right, but also a powerful psychological weapon.

**38...Qxd5??**

Bukic cannot resist the temptation to exchange the powerful knight, but the clearing of the e4-square proves fatal for him.

Black could have kept himself in the game with 38...a5. The best response is 39.c4!, consolidating White's space advantage on the queenside. (After the hasty 39.g4? g6 40.Qxh6† Qxh6 41.Qxh6 Qxh6 42.Qxf6 Qxf6 43.g5† Qg7 44.gxf6† Qxf6 Black has a playable position.) 39...Qe7! (39...Qxd5

40.exd5 Qc7 41.Qe4 resembles the game.) 40.Qec3 White's positional advantage extends across the board. He continues to dominate, but Black can survive for a while longer.

**39.exd5 Qcc8****40.Qe4!**

Karpov not only brings a piece into the attack, but also prevents any counterplay. The premature 40.g4? allows 40...e4! 41.g5 Qe8! when Black is still in the game.

**40...Qc5**

40...Qh8 41.g4 Qe7 42.g5 wins.

**41.Qxc5! Qxc5 42.g4**

1–0

My guess is that the game was adjourned here, and Black resigned after failing to find a satisfactory defence against White's pawn onslaught. It is remarkable how, after failing to obtain any advantage from the opening, Karpov was able to shut down his opponent's counterplay and gradually improve his position to the point where he seemed to be winning out of nowhere. He developed his attack in imaginative way, with the queen manoeuvre to h5 and subsequent knight jump to d5 in order to clear the e4-square. Overall it was a highly instructive example of outplaying a

somewhat weaker but still tough opponent from a balanced position.

Karpov also won his last round game against Portisch, leading to a final tally of six wins, eight draws and one loss. This was enough to tie for first prize with Spassky. After this warm-up tournament, it was time for the champion of the world to defend his crown.

### World Championship match versus Korchnoi

The 1978 world championship match took place in Baguio City in the Philippines. The organizer was Florencio Campomanes, the Philippine delegate to FIDE who would later go on to become FIDE President. The rules of the match stipulated that the winner would be the first player to score six wins, draws not counting.

With a rating advantage of 2725 versus 2665, Karpov was the rightful favourite, but at the same time there was every reason to expect the match to be competitive. In March 1978, just three months before the start of the match, Semyon Furman died, which must have come as a hammer blow to Karpov. No-one knew Karpov as well as his long-time trainer, and there is no telling how much he was affected by the loss, not only on a personal level, but also in terms of Furman's chess experience and expertise.

Karpov's official seconds for the match were grandmasters Yuri Balashov and Igor Zaitsev. Mikhail Tal was in Baguio, and it was obvious that he was also there to help Karpov.

Korchnoi's seconds were the English grandmasters Raymond Keene and Michael Stean, and the strong theoretician Jacob Murey, an émigré from the USSR to Israel. The same trio had also helped Korchnoi during his candidate match wins over Polugaevsky and Spassky. The team was later strengthened by the Argentine grandmaster Oscar Panno.

### A Formidable Adversary

Viktor Korchnoi is one of the greatest players in chess history never to win the world championship. There was never a time when Korchnoi could have been regarded as the world's strongest player. On the other hand, it is hard to name another grandmaster who consistently finished at or near the top of so many tournaments and remained among the leading players in the world for such a long period.

Overall Korchnoi played 290 games against world champions; the huge number already speaks for itself! He scored fifty one wins, 160 draws and seventy nine losses. His lifetime score against Karpov stands at fourteen wins, sixty two draws and twenty eight losses.

Interestingly, if we remove Korchnoi's encounters with Karpov and Kasparov, his percentage score against the 'normal' world champions reaches almost 50%. (He had a very poor record against Kasparov, with just one win, fourteen draws and fourteen losses.) This figure also includes several defeats against the modern day champions Anand, Kramnik and Topalov, outstanding players who Korchnoi met when he was past his best. Korchnoi made an equal score with Fischer (+2 =4 -2), and was more than competitive against his other rivals including Spassky (+17 =29 -11) and especially Tal, who he dominated convincingly (+12 =23 -4).

At the start of the match, Karpov and Korchnoi had met in thirty five games, with Karpov enjoying a narrow lead of seven wins to six, with twenty two draws. Since the 1974 match they had not met over the board. Korchnoi had defected from the Soviet Union, and the Soviet authorities reacted by boycotting any tournaments to which Korchnoi was invited.

Since his defeat to Karpov in 1974, Korchnoi had notched up a series of tournament successes.

He was extremely effective at defeating average grandmasters. Since his defection he obviously did not play in any Soviet tournaments, so his level of competition may have been slightly lower than Karpov's. On the other hand, in his 1977 candidate matches he had to overcome such distinguished Soviet grandmasters as Petrosian, Polugaevsky and Spassky in order to earn the right to challenge for the title.

Karpov had played magnificently since becoming World Champion. He won nine tournaments outright and finished equal first in one other. Only twice did he fail to finish in first place. Once he was runner up, and in one event he was equal fourth. In addition he performed extremely well at team events.

Although Korchnoi's tournament record between 1974 and 1977 was impressive, it was not at the level of Karpov's. On the other hand, the title of World Champion would be decided by a match, and Korchnoi had more match experience than almost anyone. He had lost in the final candidate match in two previous world championship cycles, before finally winning one in 1977. He had also played a few dozen other matches over the previous two decades, and won most of them.

### The Match

The first seven games were drawn. Several were solid affairs, but there was plenty of drama as well. For instance, in the fifth game Korchnoi missed a simple win at one point after the adjournment. He continued pressing, but Karpov managed to get into a theoretically drawn endgame that had been analysed by Averbakh back in the fifties. At 124 moves, the game was the longest ever played in a world championship final.

In the eighth game the deadlock was finally broken, in Karpov's favour. Korchnoi played

a rare and risky ...g6 in the Open Spanish, against which Karpov introduced a novelty. Korchnoi snatched a pawn but failed to defend correctly and his position soon collapsed.

A couple of draws ensued, before Korchnoi equalized the match in Game 11. After the opening moves 1.g3 c5 2.Bg2 Qc6 he transposed into a Sicilian with 3.e4?. He was already clearly better when Karpov blundered and lost an exchange.

Korchnoi was unable to build on this success, and the match soon swung heavily in favour of the champion. In the thirteenth game Korchnoi reached an endgame with two pawns for the exchange and decent winning chances, but then blundered in an extraordinary way, almost allowing his queen to be trapped in an open position. He saved the queen but only at the cost of a fatal weakening of his position, which Karpov quickly exploited. In Game 14 Korchnoi found himself in a passive endgame, and eventually succumbed to the pressure. Because the previous game had been adjourned, the score went from being tied at 1–1 at the start of the day to 3–1 in Karpov's favour by the end of it.

In Game 17 Karpov played rather riskily in a Nimzo-Indian. Korchnoi was better, but under time pressure, with only a few pieces on the board, he allowed a beautiful checkmate in three. Of course Karpov did not miss it. He was much more adept at attacking the enemy king than one might think. After this success, only two more wins were needed.

After a couple more draws, the momentum began to shift back towards the challenger. In Game 20 Korchnoi made some mistakes and found himself in serious trouble, but Karpov failed to capitalize. He did not seal the winning move before the adjournment, and later he made another mistake which allowed Korchnoi to escape with a miraculous draw.

In the very next game Korchnoi played superbly to convert his advantage in the endgame.

A series of draws followed, but then in Game 27 Korchnoi made some mistakes in an equal position and lost a pawn followed by the game. Thus the score rose to 5–2, with Karpov just one more win away from a convincing match victory.

What happened next is remarkable. Karpov – the reigning World Champion, who had built a commanding lead in the match – suffered a near collapse, scoring just half a point out of his next four games. In Game 28 Korchnoi equalized with the Open Spanish then gradually took over the initiative and won a nice endgame. In Game 29 Korchnoi obtained no real advantage with the white pieces, but Karpov made some mistakes after the adjournment and eventually lost. Karpov tried to bounce back in the next game but was unable to make anything of his slight pressure, and had to settle for a draw in a rook ending.

In Game 31 Korchnoi executed a minority attack against the Orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined. He reached a better endgame, and Karpov eventually succumbed to the pressure after missing some chances to hold. Karpov is one of the greatest endgame players of all time, so it is amazing that he lost three endings in such a short period. Credit must also go to Korchnoi, who played remarkably well.

From the start of Game 28 to the end of Game 31, Korchnoi amazingly clawed his way back from a 5–2 deficit to tying the match at 5–5. Now both players were just a single victory away from ultimate success, but the momentum was firmly on the side of the challenger. Here is the thirty second and decisive game of the match.

## Game 50

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

World Championship, Baguio City (32) 1978

**1.e4 d6**

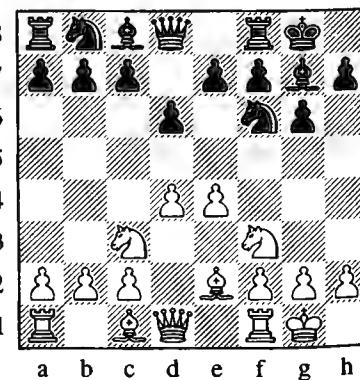
At the start of this game Korchnoi faced a tough dilemma. One approach would have been to play for a safe draw, intending to press for a win in his next game with the white pieces. On the other hand this might have given the wounded Karpov a chance to recover his energy and composure.

Instead Korchnoi decided to gamble with a provocative choice of opening. He obviously wanted to obtain a complicated position in order to capitalize on the momentum he had obtained with his recent winning streak. Who knows what might have happened had he opted for the former approach?

**2.d4 ♜f6 3.♗c3 g6 4.♗f3**

Karpov goes for the line that he had played most often.

**4...♝g7 5.♗e2 0–0 6.0–0**



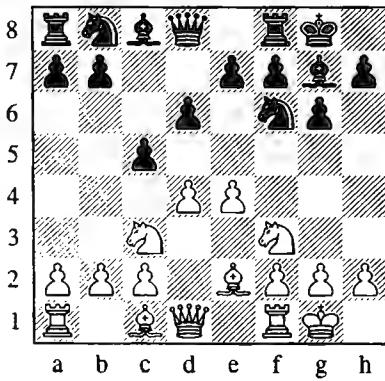
**6...c5?!**

With hindsight this was a risky decision,

despite the fact that Karpov did not have much experience facing it.

Previously Korchnoi had used 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  to draw easily with Karpov at the 1973 Leningrad Interzonal tournament.

Another option is 6... $\mathbb{A}g4$ , although Karpov had faced this move three times in 1977 and won on each occasion.



### 7.d5!

7.dxc5 dxc5 often results in an exchange of queens, with White enjoying slightly better prospects. Normally one would expect such a scenario to appeal to Karpov, but we should not forget that he has just lost three endings out of the previous four games. Under the circumstances, the text move was definitely the right choice.

### 7... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 9.a4 b6

Korchnoi plays the most common move. Browne had drawn with Karpov in Madrid 1973 with 9... $\mathbb{A}g4$ , although White maintained a slight edge for most of that game. 9...a6 is another standard move.

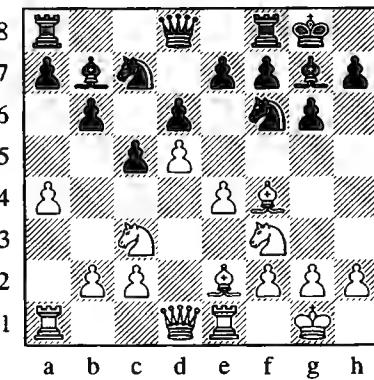
### 10. $\mathbb{E}e1$

Another relevant game continued as follows: 10.h3  $\mathbb{B}b7$  11. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  a6 13. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  14.e5 dxe5 15. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

$\mathbb{W}d7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  18. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19.b3  $\mathbb{W}f5$  20. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  23. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  f5 25.h4 White was better and went on to win in Kluger – Tal, Kislovodsk 1964.

This was probably the best win of Gyula Kluger's career. The Hungarian IM once told me he had a hunch that Tal, who was present in Baguio City, had showed Karpov this game.

### 10... $\mathbb{Q}b7$



### 11. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ !

Just like Kluger, Karpov defends the d5-pawn in order to carry out the advance of the e-pawn. For the moment he saves time by omitting h2-h3.

### 11... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ !!

Korchnoi thinks it is worth a tempo to divert the bishop from f4, but it hard to believe that this can be correct.

After the natural 11... $\mathbb{W}d7$  12. $\mathbb{W}d3$ , Karpov evaluates the position as very tense, with somewhat better chances for White. A logical continuation would be: 12...a6 (After 12... $\mathbb{E}ad8$  Hort recommends 13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , but 13.a5 also looks strong.) Had this position been reached, it would have been interesting to see whether Karpov would have tried to utilize the presence

of the bishop on f4 with the direct 13.e5, or instead build his position more patiently with 13.h3  $\mathbb{B}ad8$ . In the latter case his most promising idea looks to be 14. $\mathbb{B}ab1$  with the idea of gaining space on the queenside.

### 12. $\mathbb{B}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

This loss of a tempo does not make a good impression. It was worth considering: 12...h6 13. $\mathbb{B}e3$  (or 13. $\mathbb{B}h4$  g5 14. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  15. $\mathbb{B}g3$  with a complicated game) 13...e6 From this point one game continued 14. $\mathbb{W}d2$  exd5 15.exd5 g5 16.h3 and the draw was agreed in Komarov – Lemmers, Sremic Krsko 1998. It seems to me that White can improve with 14.dxe6, which should suffice for an edge.

### 13. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

It is quite possible that Karpov knew the Kluger – Tal game, although of course he is more than capable of finding good positional moves on his own.

### 13...a6 14. $\mathbb{B}ad1$ $\mathbb{B}b8$ 15.h3!?

This is unnecessary. Karpov later explained that he felt the pressure of the occasion and did not want to take a risk. He preferred a slight advantage in a stable position, but objectively he had every right to play more ambitiously.

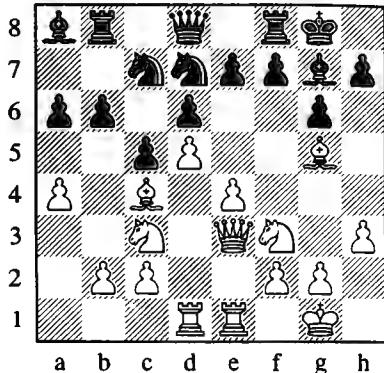
15.e5! was correct: 15...dxe5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  b5 (16... $\mathbb{W}d6$  17. $\mathbb{W}f3!$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  18. $\mathbb{B}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$ ) 17.axb5 axb5 18. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}cxd5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  20. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21.c4 Kasparov says that White's advantage is huge.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 16. $\mathbb{W}e3$

By creating an escape route for his bishop to f1, Karpov stops any counterplay based on ...b5 followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .

Another idea was 16. $\mathbb{B}f4$ ! intending to push the e-pawn.

### 16... $\mathbb{A}a8$

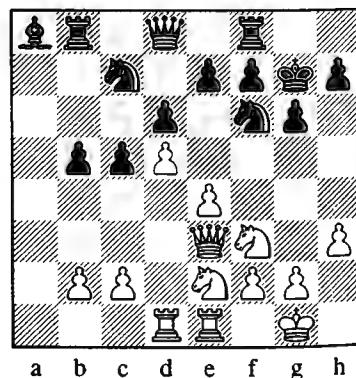


### 17. $\mathbb{B}h6$ !

By exchanging bishops Karpov not only weakens his opponent's kingside, but also robs the black position of much of its dynamic potential and takes the sting out of a future ...b5.

### 17...b5 18. $\mathbb{B}xg7$ $\mathbb{Q}xg7$ 19. $\mathbb{B}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 20.axb5 axb5 21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Karpov plays rather cautiously. It was worth considering 21. $\mathbb{B}a1$ !, occupying the open file.



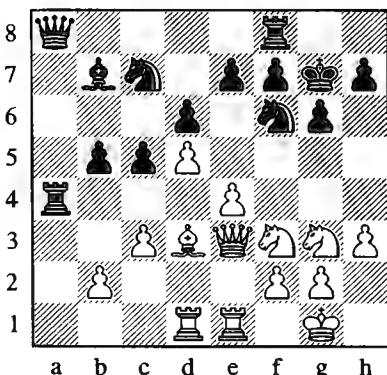
### 21... $\mathbb{B}b7$ !

Korchnoi concentrates on carrying out his queenside play. On balance, a more promising approach would have been 21...e6? to obtain some space in the centre. After the further

22.dxe6 ♜xe6 23.♗g3 ♜c7 Black's position is playable according to Kasparov.

**22.♗g3 ♜a8 23.c3 ♜a4 24.♗d3 ♜a8?!**

Korchnoi continues to focus on the queenside, but this approach leaves little room for mistakes later in the game. He may have underestimated White's attacking resources.



**25.e5!**

The point of such a breakthrough is usually to push back the opponent. This time it has the additional advantages of improving the queen and undermining the c5-pawn.

**25...dxe5**

Korchnoi had no real choice:

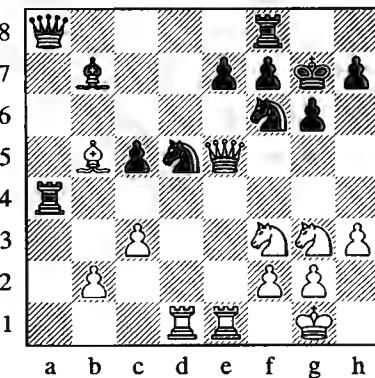
Taking the d-pawn leaves the king unprotected: 25...♝fxd5? 26.♝h5†! (26.♝f5† wins as well) 26...gxh5 27.♛g5† ♜h8 28.♛h6 f5 29.♝g5 And White checkmates.

**25...♝g8?!** Retreating is not only passive, but also costs Black at least a pawn. 26.exd6 ♜xd5 (26...exd6? 27.♝f5†! ♜h8 28.♝xd6 ♜xd5 29.♝e5 wins) 27.♛xc5 ♜c8 (27...exd6 28.♛xd6) 28.♛xb5 exd6 29.♝d4 White is a pawn up.

**26.♛xe5 ♜cxd5**

**26...♛d8** Coming back with the queen was possible, but hardly sufficient for Black to achieve a satisfactory game: 27.♝c2 ♜a6 (27...♜a2? 28.d6) 28.♝e4 ♜xd5 29.♝xc5 White is clearly better.

**27.♝xb5**



**27...♜a7?**

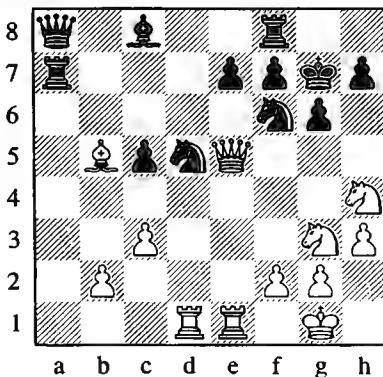
Defending the e7-pawn looks natural, but it is a bit slow. Kasparov suggested the improvement 27...♜a5!, which wins an important tempo by attacking the bishop. Play continues 28.c4 (28.♝d3 ♜g8 is okay for Black) 28...♛b8! 29.♛g5 (29.♝d2 ♜f4? [29...♜a8 30.♝b3 ♜a2 is slightly better for White according to Kasparov] 30.♝b3 ♜b5 31.cxb5 ♜xg2 32.♝xc5 ♜f3 Black has decent counterplay.) 29...e6 30.cxd5 h6 31.♛e3 ♜xb5 32.dxe6 ♜xf3 33.♛xf3 ♜b3 Black can rescue himself by simplifying to an ending with three pawns versus two on one side of the board, as pointed out by Kasparov.

**28.♝h4 ♜c8**

After 28...♜c6? 29.♝xc6 ♜xc6 30.c4 ♜b6 31.♝d6! White wins (Karpov). 31...♛c7 32.♛g5 gives White a crushing attack.

**28...♛b8!** looks to me like the best practical chance, although even here White has a strong

answer: 29.  $\mathbb{W}g5!$  Maintaining the pressure against both the king and the c5-pawn. (29.c4  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  30.  $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}a5!$ ) 29...e6 30.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (30...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  31.  $\mathbb{B}d6$ ) 31.  $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}a2$  (31...h6 32.  $\mathbb{B}d6$ ) 32.  $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  White is a pawn up but the game is far from over, and Black has chances for counterplay based on ...g5.



### 29. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ ?

Despite having just made a threatening move on the kingside, Karpov shows that he has not forgotten about the queenside. With this move he retreats the undefended bishop from b5 and threatens a deadly pin from f3. From a psychological perspective, Karpov may also have liked the idea of confronting Korchnoi with what may well have been an unexpected move.

Kasparov mentions that White could also have targeted the c5-pawn directly by means of 29.  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  and the lonely soldier falls.

### 29... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 30.c4 $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 31. $\mathbb{W}xc5$

White's extra pawn gives him a significant advantage, but the game is still far from over.

### 31... $\mathbb{W}b8$

31...  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  does not achieve much, and after 32.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  33.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (33...  $\mathbb{E}c8$  34.  $\mathbb{W}g5$ )

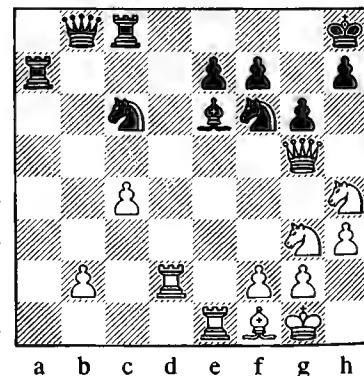
34.  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  35. b3 White consolidates his material advantage.

### 32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{E}c8$

Kasparov recommends 32...h6, but doubts that it would have saved Korchnoi from ultimate defeat. After 33.  $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  34.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  White is a long way from victory, but his extra pawn is secure and he should be able to improve his position gradually.

### 33. $\mathbb{W}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}h8$ 34. $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$

34...  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  is unsatisfactory: 35.  $\mathbb{E}xe7!$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xa7$  37.  $\mathbb{W}e5\#$  f6 38.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  39.  $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xd4$  And White is a healthy pawn up.



### 35. $\mathbb{W}h6$

This is a strong attacking move, and a frightening one to face over the board. The primary threat is  $\mathbb{Q}f3-g5$ .

### 35... $\mathbb{E}g8?$

With just seconds remaining on his clock, Korchnoi defends his king in the most natural way, which turns out to be a mistake as it reduces his influence on the queenside. Two alternatives deserve attention.

35...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  36.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  was a better idea according to Kasparov, who stops his analyses

here. While this may be an improvement over the game continuation, White can still sail home to victory with the help of a few good moves: 37.  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  38.  $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  39.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (39...  $\mathbb{W}b6$  40.  $\mathbb{B}a4$ ) 40.  $\mathbb{B}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  41.  $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}xc5$  42.  $\mathbb{W}xc5+$

35...  $\mathbb{Q}e5?$

To my knowledge, no other commentator has suggested this move, but according to my analysis it is Black's best chance to resist. The main idea is to stop  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ .

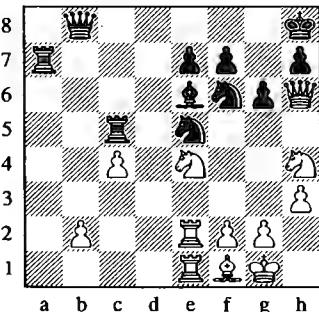
36.  $\mathbb{B}de2$

After 36.  $b3$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  37.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  Black has serious pressure against the queenside pawns.

36...  $\mathbb{B}c5$

In the event of 36...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  38.  $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$   $hxg6$  40.  $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}b4$  41.  $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{B}aa4$  42.  $\mathbb{B}xb4$   $\mathbb{B}xb4$  43.  $\mathbb{B}e2$  White's extra pawn gives him good winning chances.

37.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$



37...  $\mathbb{Q}g8!$

37...  $\mathbb{Q}eg4?$  is a witty idea, but White has a powerful rebuttal: 38.  $hxg4$  (after 38.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$   $fxg6$  39.  $hxg4$   $\mathbb{B}h5$  40.  $gxh5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  42.  $\mathbb{B}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  Black has chances to hold) 38...  $\mathbb{E}h5$  (38...  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$   $fxg6$  40.  $\mathbb{W}h4+\rightarrow$ ) 39.  $\mathbb{W}e3!$  (39.  $gxh5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$   $fxg6$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  42.  $\mathbb{B}xe6$  is possible, but the text move is better.)

39...  $\mathbb{E}xh4$  40.  $g3!$   $\mathbb{E}xg4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $exf6$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   
White traps the rook and wins.

38.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  39.  $\mathbb{B}d2$

Another possibility is 39.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

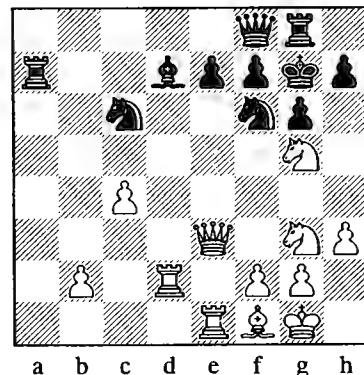
39...  $\mathbb{E}c6$  40.  $b4$

Black is still on the defensive, but he has chances to hold.

36.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  37.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7?$

An inaccuracy, although even after the superior 37...  $\mathbb{E}b7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  39.  $c5!$  White should win as his bishop will become active on  $c4$ .

38.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$



39.  $b4!$

Playing this move must have come as a great pleasure and relief to Karpov. With his pawns advancing in unison, he must have sensed he would win this game and with it the match.

39...  $\mathbb{W}a8$  40.  $b5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  41.  $b6$   $\mathbb{E}b7$

1–0

The game was adjourned here but Korchnoi saw no point in continuing this hopeless position. Thus Karpov retained his crown for another three years and the Soviet Union narrowly avoided seeing their shining star lose to a defector. Karpov showed great fortitude in recovering from his losing streak near the

end of the match. Nevertheless the overall quality of his play was well below par. This is partially attributable to the loss of Furman, but mainly due to the overwhelming tension surrounding the match. Karpov was the golden boy of Soviet chess, and one can only imagine the pressure on his shoulders to beat – and preferably humiliate – the despised defector. Karpov and Korchnoi had to concern themselves not only with the moves occurring on the board, but also with the numerous antics that took place off the board. Both of the players and their support teams became embroiled in a game of psychological warfare, replete with covert agents, parapsychologists, propaganda and the infamous “yogurt pot” protest.

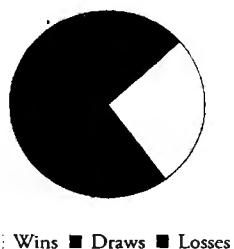
Nevertheless, in defending his title Karpov solidified his status as the strongest player in the world; or strongest *active* player, depending on how one estimates Karpov’s strength relative to Fischer at the time. Another thing that became clear was that Karpov did not radiate the same level of charisma as the American. Had he done so, there is a chance that Fischer may even have been tempted out of retirement.

## 1978 Summary

Bugojno (1st-2nd place): 10/15 (+6 =8 -1)

World Championship Match versus Korchnoi, Baguio City: Won 16½–15½ (+6 =21 -5)

Total 56.4% (+12 =29 -6)



.. Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1979

Rating 2705 (1 in the World)

Karpov's first tournament after retaining his title was in Munich. After beating a local player named Dankert in round one, he met his countryman Balashov, who for a long time had been one of his trainers. The Russian grandmaster qualified for many Interzonal tournaments, but never made it through to the candidate matches. I found sixty one games in which Balashov faced the world champions. He performed solidly against them with seven wins, forty four draws and ten losses. Against Karpov the database shows a record of one win, eight draws and four defeats, although the two players were of a similar age so they probably met in several junior events which never made it to the database.

## Game 51

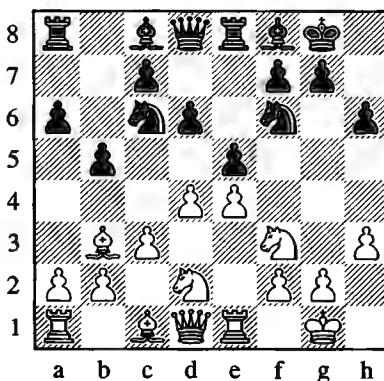
Anatoly Karpov – Yuri Balashov

Munich 1979

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5 a6 4.♗a4 ♘f6 5.0–0 ♔e7 6.♗e1 b5 7.♗b3 0–0 8.c3 d6 9.h3 h6

Balashov chooses the Smyslov variation. I think a more appropriate name would be the Smyslov-Gligoric variation as the Yugoslav grandmaster played it much more often. Black's main idea is to bolster the e5-pawn and then decide whether to put his light-squared bishop on b7 or d7. It is not easy to decide on a set-up to play against Karpov in the main line of the Ruy Lopez, as he scored heavily against all of them and never lost a single game with White!

10.d4 ♕e8 11.♗bd2 ♘f8



**12.♗c2!**

This the most testing move in the position. It sounds strange to say, but it puts Black in a mild form of zugzwang! The point is that Black has played most of his useful regrouping moves and must decide at some point where to develop his light-squared bishop. White will then decide accordingly whether to play on the kingside or the queenside.

12.a4 is not so effective in view of 12...♝d7! when Black has no problems on the queenside.

On the other hand, if White looks towards the kingside with 12.♕f1 then 12...♝b7! is a good answer, as demonstrated by the following encounter between the same players, which took place eight years before the present game: 13.♕g3 ♜a5 14.♗c2 ♜c4 15.b3 ♜b6 16.♕h2 d5 17.dxe5 ♜xe4 18.♗d3 ♜d7 19.f4 ♜h4 20.♕hf1 ♜dc5 Black equalized comfortably and a draw was agreed a few moves later, Karpov – Balashov, Moscow 1971.

**12...♝b7**

The other main line is 12...♝d7, when 13.♕f1 is known to lead to a somewhat better position for White.

The present position can also occur from the Zaitsev variation, although when Karpov played the black side of that line he preferred to play ...g6 or ...♝b8 instead of the less useful ...h6.

**13.d5**

Now that Black has committed his bishop to b7, White blocks the long diagonal. 13.♕f1?! is premature in view of 13...exd4! 14.cxd4 ♜b4 when Black is fine.

The other main line is 13.a4, which also gives White chances to fight for an advantage. Karpov would go on to defend the black side

of this position many times after taking up the Zaitsev system.

**13...♝b8 14.b3**

Karpov gets ready to bolster the d5-pawn.

**14...c6**

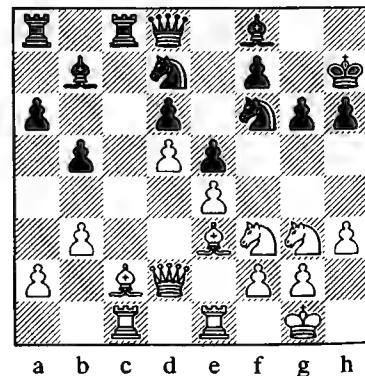
In previous games Black played for ...c5.

**15.c4 ♜bd7 16.♕f1**

Having made some pawn moves, it is time for White to complete his development.

**16...♛c7 17.♗e3 ♜ec8 18.♗c1 ♛d8 19.♕g3 cxd5 20.cxd5 g6**

The disruptive 20...♛a5?! was worth considering, and after 21.a4 bxa4 22.bxa4 g6 Black's position is playable.

**21.♛d2 ♜h7****22.a4!**

Karpov softens the black queenside.

**22...♜c5**

Also after 22...bxa4 23.bxa4 ♜c5 24.♗b1 (24.a5?) 24...♜ab8 25.♗b4 White has some pressure on the queenside.

**23.axb5 axb5 24.b4 ♜a4 25.♗d3!**

Karpov wastes no time in directing his pieces against the weak b5-pawn.

25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  26. $\mathbb{B}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$   
28. $\mathbb{Q}c2!!$

Karpov plays in his usual prophylactic style. White's main plan involves transferring a knight to b3, a5 and perhaps ultimately to c6. The knight on e2 requires fewer tempos to make this journey, but Karpov prefers to leave this knight where it is in order to guard against an invasion on c3. Therefore he makes room for the f3-knight to make the journey instead.

28... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

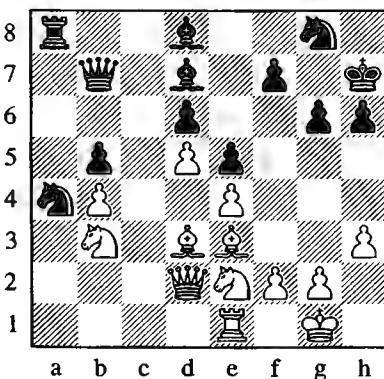
It was reasonable to improve the rook first with 29... $\mathbb{R}c8$ .

30. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

In his last few moves Balashov was focusing on the queenside, but now Karpov switches to the kingside.

31... $\mathbb{Q}g8$

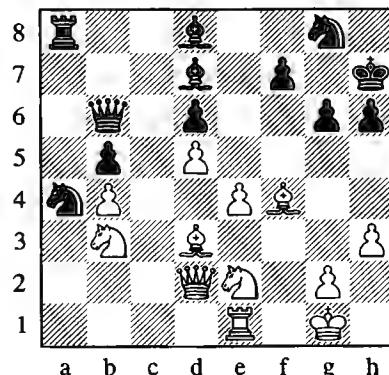
If 31...h5 32.f4 is strong.



32.f4!

Black now faces a dilemma: either he allows White the pleasant choice between fxe5 and f5, or he exchanges on f4 and gives his opponent's pieces the use of the d4-square.

32... $\mathbb{exf}4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}b6†$



34. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$

Karpov wants to keep the dark-squared bishops on the board in order to keep Black's position more congested. If 34... $\mathbb{Q}e3$  then 34... $\mathbb{Q}g5!$  would lead to exchanges favouring the defender.

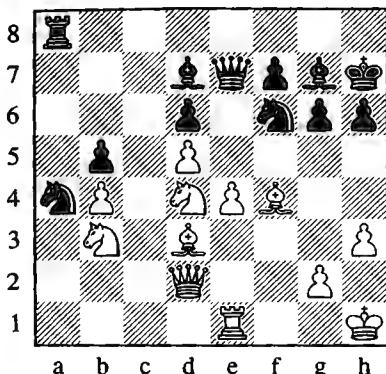
34... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}ed4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  37. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$

Just as in a Benoni position, the d6-pawn is vulnerable. In some cases White can consider a central breakthrough with  $\mathbb{E}el$  and  $e5$  as well.

38... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  39. $\mathbb{E}el$   $\mathbb{W}e7?!$

The Russian grandmaster defends the weak pawn by the queen as he wants to activate his rook, but the queen on e7 will soon be hit by a knight on c6.

39... $\mathbb{E}a6$  was the lesser evil. The rook move is a bit passive, but it is more reliable than the game continuation. 40. $\mathbb{Q}h2!$  (The immediate 40.e5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  41.exd6  $\mathbb{W}b8$  is not so clear, so White starts by moving his bishop out of harm's way.) 40... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  41. $\mathbb{W}c2$  White keeps the upper hand as Black cannot relieve the pressure in a fully satisfactory way. After 41... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $dxe5$  (42... $\mathbb{W}xe5$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ ) 43. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  White remains on top.



**40.♖h2!**

This is another typical prophylactic move from Karpov. Black no longer can win a tempo with a knight hop to h5.

**40...♜c8 41.♘a5!**

Transferring the knight to c6 drives the queen away and blocks the defence of the b5-pawn as well. At the same time Karpov gives no counterchances at all.

**41.♗xb5** also works for White, but only narrowly. **41...♝xb5 42.♗xb5 ♜xe4 43.♗xd6! ♜xd6! 44.♗xe4** After the brief tactical fireworks White is a pawn up, but the task of converting his advantage will be harder than in the game.

**41...♞h5**

**41...♞g4** is also insufficient: **42.♘ac6 ♜xc6 43.♘xc6 ♜h4 (43...♝xc6 44.dxс6 ♜c3 [44...♞xh2 45.e5] 45.♗e2 wins) 44.♗f1! ♜xh2 45.♘xh2 ♜c7 46.g3!** White forces the queen exchange and the b5-pawn falls. **46...♜h5 47.♗e2 ♜g5 48.♗xg5 hxg5 49.♗xb5** White should win the endgame.

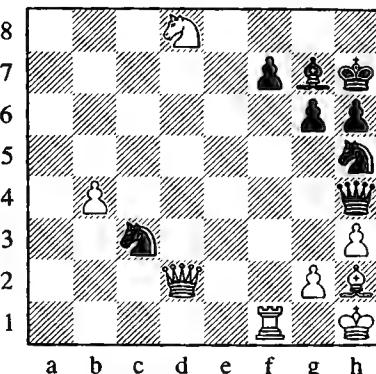
**42.♘ac6 ♜xc6 43.♘xc6 ♜h4 44.♗f1!**

Karpov suddenly threatens to take three different pawns. Black cannot avoid losing material in one way or another.

**44...♛c3 45.e5 ♜xd5**

Balashov sacrifices the exchange, hoping to change the course of the game. After **45...dxe5 46.♗xc3 e4 47.♗xf7 exd3 48.♗xd3** Black is a pawn down with a hopeless position.

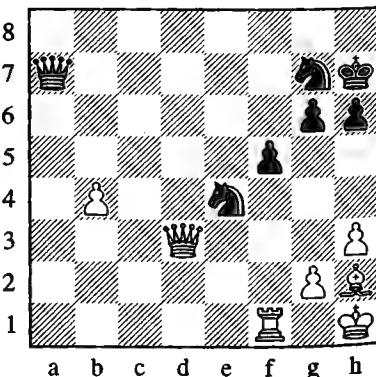
**46.♗xb5 ♜c7 47.exd6 ♜xb5 48.d7 ♜g8 49.d8=♛ ♜xd8 50.♗xd8 ♜c3**



**51.♗d3! ♜e4 52.♗g1!**

Karpov could not prevent the knight from joining Black's kingside forces, but with these two fine defensive moves he neutralizes their activity.

**52...♜f5 53.♘e6 ♜e7 54.♗xg7 ♜a7† 55.♗h1 ♜xg7**



**56.♕e5!**

Once again we see Karpov's sharpness in spotting a chance to hurt the opponent's king in the endgame. Giving back the exchange is the simplest practical solution.

56... ♔f2† 57.♔xf2 ♕xf2 58.♕d6 f4 59.♔xf4  
g5 59... ♔f5 60.♕c7† ♔g8 61.♔h2 wins.

**60.♕e5****1–0**

After this second victory in Munich Karpov made three draws. Then sadly he had to withdraw after hearing the news that his father had passed away. In a way his father was lucky, as most fathers of world champions died before their sons reached the pinnacle of the chess world. It must have been a special joy to witness Anatoly's many great successes.

Karpov's next event was the Tournament of Stars in Montreal. The name of the event was certainly justified by the distinguished list of participants. Karpov started with a quick draw with the black pieces against Hübner, before facing Timman in round two. Since their 1967 junior games these two great players did not cross swords for nine years. Between 1976 and 1979 they played seven games, with one win apiece and five draws.

**Game 52****Anatoly Karpov – Jan Timman**

Montreal 1979

**1.e4**

Interestingly Karpov only made a fifty percent score in twelve games with 1.e4 against Timman. With other first moves he was much more convincing.

**1...d6 2.d4 ♔f6 3.♘c3 g6 4.g3**

Karpov deviates from their previous game in this opening, in which he put his bishop on e2. Despite his success in the present game, Karpov never used the fianchetto line again.

**4...♔g7 5.♔g2 0–0 6.♗ge2**

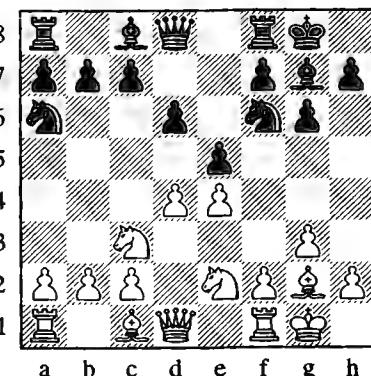
Previously Spassky had developed this knight on f3 against Timman.

**6...e5**

The next time Timman faced this variation, he changed his approach and opted for 7...♗bd7 followed by ...c5.

**7.0–0 ♘a6??**

Usually this move is played in conjunction with ...c5 rather than ...e5. Timman had reached the same position a few years earlier, against Van der Vliet at the 1977 Dutch Championship. On that occasion he preferred 7...♗bd7. Later in the game White advanced his pawn to a4 in order to prevent ...b5. This may have influenced Timman's choice in the present game, as a subsequent a2-a4 will allow the black knight to take up residence on b4.

**8.♗e1**

Karpov anticipates any attacks on the e4-pawn well in advance.

**8...c6 9.h3**

This typical prophylactic move prevents Black from using the g4-square.

**9...♝e8 10.♝g5!!**

Karpov provokes the following pawn move in order to gain a tempo with ♜d2 later.

**10...h6**

After 10...exd4 11.♝xd4 h6 12.♝f4 g5 13.♞c1 White is somewhat better according to Karpov.

10...♝b6!? leads to interesting play: 11.♝b1 exd4 (11...♝e6?) 12.♝xd4 ♜g4!? Black should take action before the weakness of the d6-pawn is felt. (12...♞c5 13.♝b3 is better for White; 12...d5 is more challenging, but after 13.exd5!? ♜xe1† 14.♝xe1 ♜xd4 15.dxc6 White has nice play for the piece.) 13.hxg4 ♜xd4 Black can live with the weak d6-pawn as his pieces are active enough.

**11.♝e3 ♜c7**

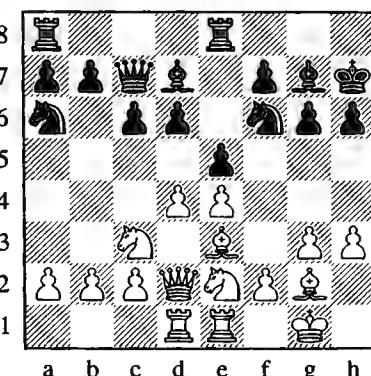
Karpov recommends the flexible 11...♝h7, pointing out that this move will have to be made at some point. 12.♝d2 exd4 13.♝xd4 ♜c5 14.f3 d5 (The more patient 14...♝c7 15.♝ad1 a5 deserves attention.) 15.♝xc6 ♜cxe4 (no better is 15...bxcc6 16.♝xc5 dxe4 17.♝xd8 ♜xd8 18.fxe4) 16.fxe4 (16.♝xd8? ♜xd2 17.♝xf7 ♜xe3!) 16...bxcc6 According to Karpov Black has a good game. However Kasparov points out that White can simply capture the d5-pawn with 17.exd5 cxd5 18.♝xd5, when Black does not have enough compensation.

11...exd4!? is interesting, and could be an improvement for Black compared with the game. 12.♝xd4 (White has to take this way, as 12.♝xd4? ♜c5 13.♝f4 ♜h5 is awkward for him.) 12...♝c7 (12...♝c5 is well met by 13.e5!) 13.♝f4 ♜e6 14.♝e3 White has

some pressure against the d6-pawn, but according to Kasparov Black's position remains playable.

**12.♝d2 ♜h7 13.♝ad1 ♜d7**

It seems more natural to station this bishop on b7. 13...b5!? deserved consideration, and after 14.a3 (14.dxe5 dxe5 15.♝d6 ♜e6 is okay for Black) 14...♝b7 Black is only slightly worse.

**14.g4!**

Having brought the last piece into the game, White must decide on a plan. Karpov subsequently explained that he initially looked for opportunities in the centre, but realized that this strategy would not yield anything at this stage and so he found another way to strengthen his position.

**14...♝ad8 15.♝g3**

Now the e4-pawn is securely defended.

**15...♞c8 16.f4 b5 17.a3**

It is useful to safeguard the position of the knight on c3.

**17...b4?!**

Timman was probably worried about White's build-up on the kingside, and was anxious to develop counterplay on the opposite

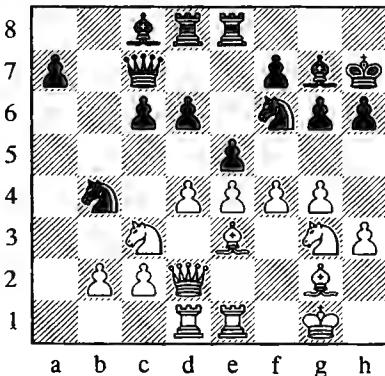
flank. Unfortunately for the Dutchman, he only succeeds in creating weaknesses for himself. Here are a few of the other candidate moves:

17...exd4 Exchanging this pawn is a concession, and Black fails to equalize after 18.Qxd4 Qc5 19.Qf2. Black has obtained the c5-square, but his knight is not particularly stable there.

17...We7 clears the c7-square for the knight, but after 18.Qf2 Qb7 19.dxe5 dxe5 20.f5 White is better.

17...Qd7?! was worth considering, with the idea of transferring the knight to b6.

#### 18.axb4 Qxb4



#### 19.Qce2!

Most commentators have called this a prophylactic move, designed to prevent the plan of ...a5 and ...Qa6. While this may have been a part of Karpov's motivation, I suspect that his main idea was to exert pressure against Black's weakened queenside.

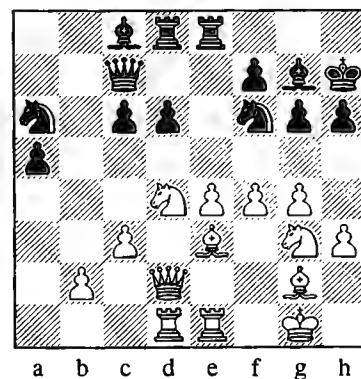
#### 19...exd4?

After this exchange the e2-knight becomes active, while Black fails to obtain any significant pressure along the e-file.

19...c5? would have been a huge positional concession, and after 20.fxe5 dxe5 (20...cxd4 allows 21.exf6) 21.d5 Karpov evaluates Black's position as hopeless.

The best chance was 19...a5! 20.c3 Qa6 21.Qa1 when White will develop pressure against the a5-pawn, but his advantage is smaller than in the game. If White instead plays for a kingside attack with 21.f5, Black can consider 21...exd4!? 22.cxd4 Qb4 when he is not without chances.

#### 20.Qxd4 a5 21.c3 Qa6



#### 22.Wc2?!

Karpov plays a typical prophylactic move, anticipating ...Qc5 which could now be met by the simple b4. The idea is nice, but it was not the strongest continuation available.

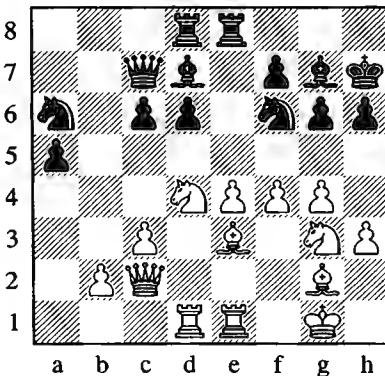
Interestingly no commentator seems to have mentioned the sweet possibility of 22.Qxc6! Wxc6 (22...Qxg4 23.Qxd8) 23.e5 d5 24.exf6 Wxf6 25.Qf2 when White has a considerable positional advantage.

#### 22...Qd7?!

Timman plans to put the bishop to e8, but blocking the d-file is rather clumsy.

The best chance was 22...Qb7. This keeps

the a6-knight defended, and also guards c6-pawn, which may enable Black to play ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  under better circumstances than in the game. 23. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  (after 23.. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24.b4 axb4 25.cxb4  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black is kicking) 23... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  24.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  dxc5 26. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  White is better, but increasing his advantage will not be easy.



### 23. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

This is a lovely dual purpose move. It fulfills the prophylactic function of preventing ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , while also opening the d-file in order to exert pressure against d6.

### 23... $\mathbb{E}e7$

After 23... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  many strong commentators have given their thoughts on how White should improve the position. After the logical 24.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}f2?$ ) 25...dxc5 White has a few tempting ideas.

26. $\mathbb{W}e4?$  is Kasparov's suggestion, which certainly looks good enough to maintain an edge.

I also like Adianto's 26. $\mathbb{Q}h5?$ , as after the natural 26... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (26... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  28.f5±) 27. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$  White has excellent chances on the kingside.

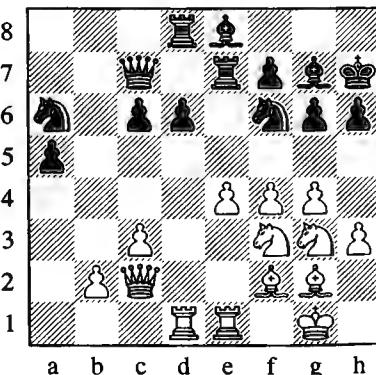
### 24. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$

Played in anticipation of Black's next move. The point of the bishop retreat is that a subsequent ... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  will no longer attack the bishop. See the note to Black's 25th move below.

If White tries to force matters too soon then he risks losing his advantage, for instance: 24. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  (after 24... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  25. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  26. $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}cxe4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  28. $\mathbb{E}dd1$  Black has a difficult ending) 25.g5 hxg5 26. $\mathbb{Q}xg5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  27.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  cxd5 29.e6 f5 30. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White has won a pawn, but his e6-pawn is in jeopardy.

### 24... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$

This unfortunate move leaves the d8-rook and the a6-knight unprotected.



### 25. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

This is so typical of Karpov's play. After a fine strategic performance, he exploits his tactical opportunities with computer-like efficiency.

### 25... $\mathbb{W}b7$

Moving the knight loses due to the pin along the d-file: 25... $\mathbb{Q}b8?$  26.e5!  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  27.exd6  $\mathbb{E}xe1\uparrow$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  29.c4+—

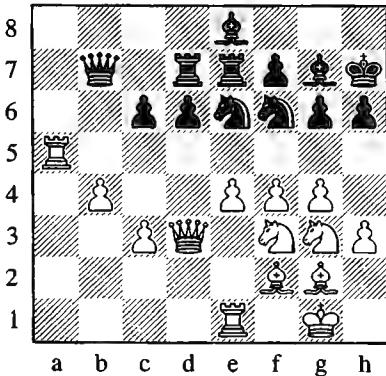
### 26. $\mathbb{E}a1!$

26.g5 also wins a pawn after 26...hxg5 27.fxg5 ♜d7 28.♗xd6 ♕e6 29.♗a3, but Karpov's method is even more effective.

26...♜c7 27.♝xa5

White finally collects the pawn, while retaining a considerable space advantage and total control over the position. Black is simply lost.

27...♝dd7 28.b4 ♜e6



29.♝e3 c5?!

Timman tries to get some counterplay, but he only succeeds in giving White a passed pawn.

30.f5 ♜d8 31.b5

White's position is overwhelming, and the game does not last much longer.

31...♝h8 32.♝f2 ♜c7 33.♝a4 ♜b8 34.c4  
♝a7 35.♝xa7 ♜xa7 36.e5 dx5 37.♝xe5 ♜a2  
38.♝xc5  
1-0

In round 3 Karpov drew with Larsen, before facing Boris Spassky in round 4. Since their match in 1974 they had played three times. On each occasion Spassky had the white pieces and a quick draw ensued. But now it was Karpov's turn to move first.

## Game 53

### Anatoly Karpov – Boris Spassky

Montreal 1979

1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 d5 4.♕c3 ♜e7

Spassky plays an opening that he knows well, although Karpov also played the Orthodox Queen's Gambit Declined several times in his match with Korchnoi.

5.♗f4

This can be attributed to the influence of Korchnoi, who employed the text move against Karpov in Baguio. Karpov used it five times in total, winning two and drawing three. Interestingly he never tried it against Kasparov.

5...o-o 6.e3 c5

In 1983 Spassky elected to transpose to a Queen's Indian with 6...b6 against both Agdestein and Seirawan, but lost both games.

7.dxc5 ♜c6 8.♗c2 ♜a5 9.a3 ♜xc5 10.♗d1  
♝e7

Karpov tried the risky 10...♝e8 in one game in Baguio, but lost and never repeated it.

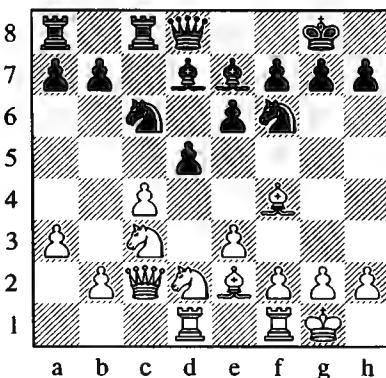
11.♗d2 ♜d7?!

At this stage of his career Spassky had lost some of his motivation to work diligently on his openings. Generally he was happy to develop his pieces and reach a playable middlegame. This approach was enough for the former champion to maintain a decent level, but dangerous against the top players in the world, especially with the black pieces.

The critical continuation is 11...e5 12.♗g5 d4 13.♗b3 when Black must decide where to put his queen. Karpov had reached this position twice with the black pieces in Baguio against

Korchnoi. In the first game he played 13... $\mathbb{W}d8$  and in the second he preferred 13... $\mathbb{W}b6$ . Both games were drawn. Interestingly, in his 1981 match with Korchnoi he reverted back to 13... $\mathbb{W}d8$  and drew once again.

**12.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}fc8$  13.0–0  $\mathbb{W}d8$**



**14.cxd5!**

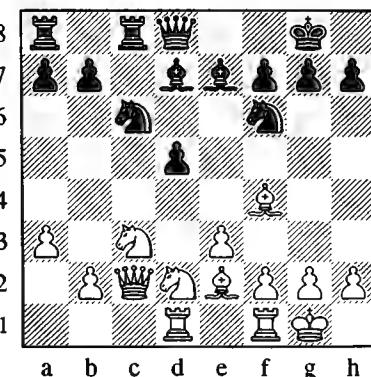
Spassky won some great games with an isolated pawn, but on those occasions he was able to attack. Here he is in no position to do so, and will have to defend a slightly worse position.

**14...exd5**

This line has only occurred in one other game, in which Black preferred 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ . It would be interesting to know how Karpov was planning to respond. There are two tempting continuations:

a) One idea is to aim for active piece play: 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4?$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  This was Taborov – Lerner, Yalta 1981. In this position White has a number of ways to maintain some initiative. One somewhat surprising option is 16. $\mathbb{W}e4?$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (after 16... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  18.b4 White is somewhat better) 17.bxc3  $e5?!$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $g6$  21. $\mathbb{W}f4$  Black will have to tread carefully on the kingside.

b) It is more likely that Karpov would have gone for the isolated pawn position with 15. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (Getting rid of the isolani with 16... $d4$  leads to problems for Black after 17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  or 17.b4) 17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18.e4 It is possible that Black can live with the pin, but it is hardly surprising that Spassky did not wish to venture down this path without having analysed it beforehand.



**15.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !**

Of course Karpov blockades the d5-pawn.

**15...h6**

**15... $\mathbb{Q}e6?!$**

This could have led to some remarkable tactics.

**16.e4?!**

This is the most ambitious move, and probably the one that Spassky feared. White has some reasonable alternatives available. He can also start exchanging the minor pieces with 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  or 16. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , or he can make a small improving move such as 16.h3.

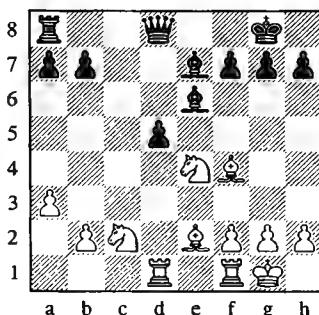
**16...d4!**

This is the soundest reaction.

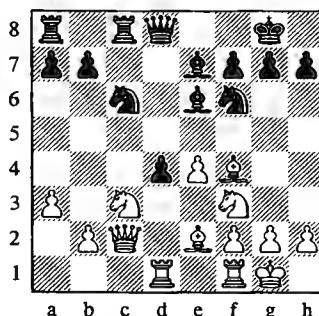
16... $\mathbb{W}a5$  does not solve Black's problems: 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.b4  $\mathbb{W}xa3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  21. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  In material terms Black is okay, but his king

will come under fire from White's queen and minor pieces.

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$  leads to heavy complications:  
 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  (18. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $dxe4$   
 19. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $exf3$  20. $\mathbb{W}xd8t$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $g5$   
 22. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  23. $\mathbb{B}fe1$   $\mathbb{B}xd1$  24. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
 25. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}e8!$  26.b4  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  Black is okay.)  
 18... $\mathbb{B}xc2$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  White has a lot of material for the queen, but the drama is not yet over.



19... $g5!$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$  This precise move keeps the e3-square available for the c2-knight. (After 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $g4$  22. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f6t$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  25.f3 Black is not far from equalizing.)  
 20... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  (21... $g4?$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$ )  
 22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}xc1$  24. $\mathbb{B}xc1$   $dxe4$  25. $\mathbb{B}fd1$  White keeps the upper hand, and can look to occupy the seventh rank with his rooks.



### 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

The alternative is 17.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   
 19. $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  20. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  21.bxc3  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   
 22. $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  and Black gets away with it.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

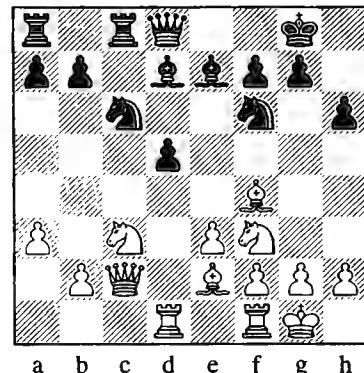
17... $dxe3$  18. $\mathbb{B}xd8t$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  19. $fxe3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$   
 20.h3±

### 18.e5 $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

19. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  is met by 19... $\mathbb{Q}fg4$ .

### 19... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ 21. $\mathbb{B}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xe5$

White is only fractionally better.



### 16. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc6!$

Karpov adheres to the well known principle that the side playing against the isolated pawn should endeavour to exchange the minor pieces. It was well timed, as Black cannot recapture with the b-pawn due to the reply 18. $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , winning an exchange.

Apart from these general considerations, the removal of the f3-knight also makes way for White's bishop to attack the d-pawn from that square.

### 17... $\mathbb{B}xc6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{W}b6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

From this square the bishop not only prevents any future ...d4 ideas, but also threatens at any moment to eliminate the knight on f6, a key defender of the d5-pawn.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Even though exchanges should favour White in principle, Spassky considers it more important to eliminate the knight on c3 in order to relieve the pressure against d5. A couple of other ideas deserved attention:

19... $\mathbb{E}ac8$

In such positions Black can sometimes give up the d-pawn in return for play on the c-file.

20. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c4$

20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{A}d4$   $\mathbb{W}b3$  (21... $\mathbb{W}a5$  22. $e4!$ ) 22. $e4!$  (The most energetic, although White can also keep an edge by means of 22. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  23. $\mathbb{E}fd1$ .) 22... $dxe4$  23. $\mathbb{A}xe4$  The position opens up in White's favour.

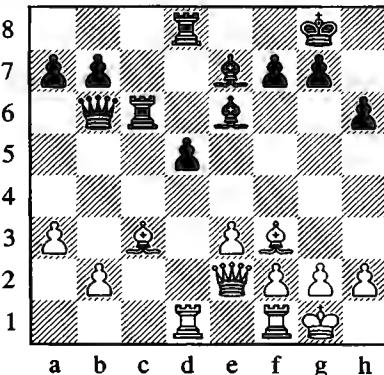
21. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{A}xd5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  23. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{A}f6$   
23... $\mathbb{E}c2?$  does not work due to 24. $\mathbb{W}g4!$ .

24. $\mathbb{A}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  25. $\mathbb{E}d2$

Black has no real compensation for the missing pawn, although White's technical task will not be easy.

19... $\mathbb{E}d8?$  was worth considering. Black is a bit passive, but his position is not easy to crack. 20. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (20. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{E}c4$ ) 20... $\mathbb{W}a5$  21. $\mathbb{E}d2$  (21. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{A}f5$  22. $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{A}e4=$ ) 21... $\mathbb{E}cc8$  22. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{A}e4$  23. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $f6$  24. $\mathbb{A}d4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  Black remains quite solid, and it is not easy for White to make progress.

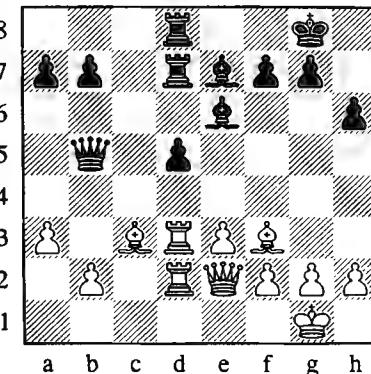
20. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  21. $\mathbb{A}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$



22. $\mathbb{E}d3$

Karpov starts focusing the full power of his heavy pieces against the d5-pawn.

22... $\mathbb{E}cd6$  23. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{E}6d7$  24. $\mathbb{E}1d2$   $\mathbb{W}b5$

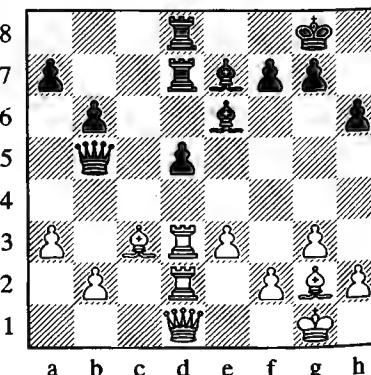


25. $\mathbb{W}d1!$

The rooks go in front and the queen goes behind. If it was the other way round then Black would be able to defend more easily.

25... $\mathbb{b}6$  26. $g3$   $\mathbb{A}f8$  27. $\mathbb{A}g2$   $\mathbb{A}e7$

Spassky decides not to do anything, and challenges Karpov to find a way to make progress.



28. $\mathbb{W}h5!?$

A somewhat unpleasant move to meet. Now Black must worry about e4 ideas as the d-pawn is pinned along the fifth rank.

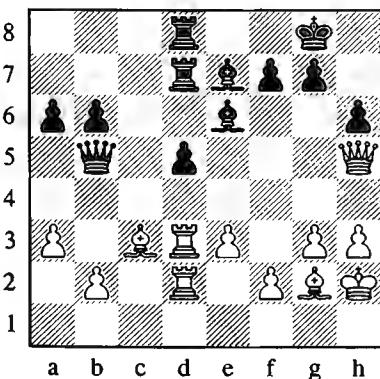
### 28...a6

Spassky defends the queen; he probably did not feel like calculating whether 28... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  was an adequate response.

### 29.b3

Karpov characteristically improves his position in a modest way.

### 29... $\mathbb{W}c6$ 30. $\mathbb{B}h2$ $\mathbb{W}b5$



### 31.f4!

Black's light-squared bishop is a key defender, so Karpov destabilizes it.

### 31...f6

The cheeky attempt to play for a pin on the fifth rank with 31... $\mathbb{B}h7?$  does not work: 32.f5!  $d4$  33. $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $\mathbb{B}xd4$  34. $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $\mathbb{B}xd4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  36. $\mathbb{W}xf5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  And White wins with his extra pawn.

### 32. $\mathbb{W}d1!!?$

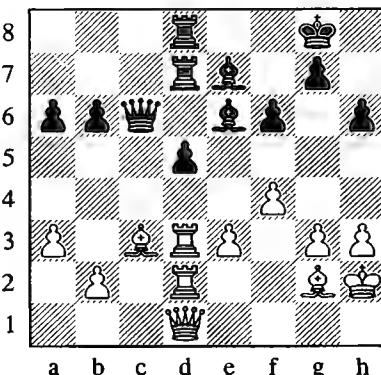
Karpov creates a subtle threat. 32.e4 would have been premature, and after 32...dxe4 33. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $axb5$  34. $\mathbb{B}xd7$   $\mathbb{B}xd7$  35. $\mathbb{B}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  White's advantage is merely symbolic.

### 32... $\mathbb{W}c6?$

Spassky almost certainly saw White's threat and acted against it, but c6 is a dangerous square for the queen.

A quiet move such as 32... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  would have enabled White to reveal the point behind his last move: 33. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  With the awkward threat of  $\mathbb{B}b3$ . 33... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (After 33... $\mathbb{W}c6$  34. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  35. $\mathbb{W}b3$  Black is being pushed back.) 34. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  35. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  36.b4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  37. $\mathbb{B}xd4$  And White gets closer to the d5-pawn.

A better reaction would have been 32...a5!!, preventing b4 and stabilizing the bishop on c5. Play may continue 33. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  34. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  35. $\mathbb{B}c3$  a4 and Black's position looks steady enough.



### 33.g4

Unusually for Karpov, he misses a tactical opportunity after outplaying his opponent strategically. The strongest continuation was 33.f5!  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (33... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xd5\#$  wins an exchange) 34.e4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  35.exd5 It is not easy to invade Black's position, nevertheless White's extra pawn gives him excellent winning chances.

### 33...g5?

This is a strange choice; Spassky may have overlooked something, or perhaps he just cracked under the pressure.

Black could have kept himself in the game with 33...a5! as White still does not have the means to win the d5-pawn: 34.f5 (After 34. $\mathbb{Q}h1 \mathbb{B}d6$  Black moves the rook to a protected square.) 34... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  35.e4  $\mathbb{Q}d6\#!$  The check covers the d-file and Black stays alive after 36. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  dx $e$  37. $\mathbb{B}d4 \mathbb{W}c7$ .

### 34. $\mathbb{Q}h1$

Another good option was 34.f5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  35.e4, as 35... $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$  36. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  dx $e$ ? 37. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  wins for White.

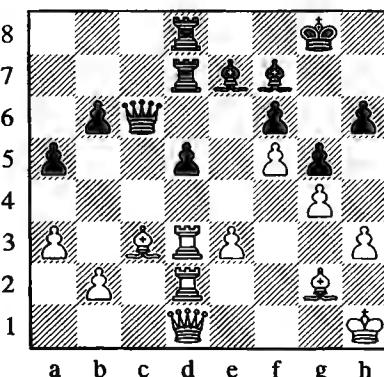
### 34...a5?

This allows White to win a pawn. After 34...gx $f$  35.ex $f$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  36.f5 Black is still clearly worse, but this would have been the lesser evil.

### 35.f5

Completing the idea that began four moves ago. By driving the bishop away from e6, Karpov weakens the defence of the rook on d7, thus enabling him to win the d-pawn at last.

### 35... $\mathbb{Q}f7$



### 36.e4! $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 37.exd5

It has been twenty three moves since Karpov made the decision to isolate the Black's d-pawn. Finally now he wins it, although 37.e5! was also strong.

### 37... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 38. $\mathbb{E}e2$ b5?

Five moves earlier Spassky's defence deteriorated, and now with this blunder it collapses. 38... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ! would have enabled Black to resist for a while longer. Had that move been played, Karpov might have tried to invade on the c-file, although an exchange sacrifice with  $\mathbb{E}e6$  may well be the most effective plan.

### 39. $\mathbb{E}xe7$ ?

This wins a piece.

### 39... $\mathbb{E}xe7$ 40.d6 $\mathbb{W}c4$ 41.b3

1-0

Karpov followed this victory with three draws. Interestingly, against Hort's Classical Sicilian he played a Rauzer set-up with 6. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , but soon reverted to an English Attack formation, well over a decade before that system would start to become fashionable. Karpov had some advantage, but the most precise attacking methods were not fully understood at the time, and Hort was able to obtain some counterplay. The players agreed a draw in a position with mutual chances.

In rounds 8 and 9 Karpov notched up wins over Ljubojevic and Kavalek. The former was unable to hold an inferior ending, and the latter made an overambitious piece sacrifice. In round 10 Karpov drew with White against Hübner, then destroyed Timman using a prepared line against the English Opening that was intended for use in Baguio City against Korchnoi.

In the next round Karpov overpressed and lost against Larsen, but he recovered with a nice endgame win over Spassky. He drew four

of his last five games, his lone win coming after Ljubojevic became overambitious in a slightly better position.

Karpov's final tally of seven wins, ten draws and one loss was good enough to share first place with Tal, whose form in the second half of the tournament was inspired. It seems that working together for the Korchnoi match was beneficial to both of them.

After the gruelling tournament in Montreal, Karpov took part in a much shorter event in the Dutch town of Waddinxveen. In the double round robin competition he won both of his games against Sosonko and one against Kavalek, which provided a huge cushion and virtually guaranteed that he would win the tournament. In the last round he was White against Hort. Many players would have taken a quick draw in such a situation, as he was assured of first prize regardless, but Karpov was motivated to do better. Earlier he had drawn with the black pieces against Hort, and he probably wanted to stamp his authority on the tournament by winning all three of the two game mini-matches against his opponents. He achieved his goal by means of a classic exploitation of a small advantage in the endgame, thus finishing on the superb score of 5/6.

Karpov's next event was the Spartakiad, a Soviet team event. In the first game he suffered a shocking defeat against Igor Ivanov, who was rated not much above 2400. It seems to me that Karpov had lost touch with the level of an ordinary player and underestimated his opponent, who played extremely well. Karpov quickly regained his composure and scored three wins and three draws from his six remaining games.

Karpov's last tournament of the year was in Tilburg. In the first round he took on Sosonko in a main line Dragon and won a nice game,

as shown in the note to White's sixth move in Game 46 (a previous Karpov – Sosonko encounter). He drew his next three before meeting Bent Larsen.

The Danish grandmaster was regarded as one of the strongest western players throughout the 1960s and 1970s. He was one of the few players of any nationality who Karpov had not yet managed to dominate; their previous seven meetings had resulted in one win apiece and five draws. This changed as Karpov got stronger and Larsen got older, and their lifetime score ended up at seven wins to Karpov, with nine draws and just two wins to Larsen.

Larsen is a true legend of the game, so it is a pity that his most famous result was his 6–0 defeat to Fischer in their 1971 candidates semi-final match. Although he remained a great player for the next few decades, there is no telling how much this humiliating defeat may have affected him. Larsen played all the world champions from Euwe to Anand, with the sole exception of Kramnik. From his 168 games against them he scored twenty one wins, seventy six draws and seventy one losses.

## Game 54

Anatoly Karpov – Bent Larsen

Tilburg 1979

### 1.e4 c6

Karpov won a total of twenty games against the Caro-Kann, with twelve draws and not a single defeat. It is a remarkable score, and he also played it from Black's side with considerable success.

### 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2

Karpov employed the Panov in a few games, but they all began with the move order 1.c4 c6 2.e4.

**3...dxe4 4.Qxe4 Qf6 5.Qg3**

Karpov knew that after 5.Qxf6† Larsen would reply with 5...gxsf6, so he settles for a less theoretically challenging continuation in order to avoid his opponent's pet system.

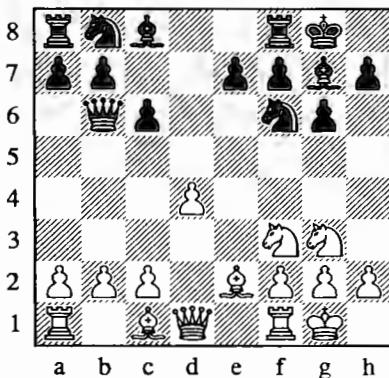
**5...g6!?**

Out of many possible moves, Larsen decides to reduce the scope of the knight on g3.

**6.Qf3Bg7 7.Qe2 0-0 8.0-0 Wb6**

Larsen was always known for playing creatively, and here he opts for a somewhat unconventional deployment of the queen, with the idea of exerting pressure against b2 and d4.

A more classical continuation would have been 8...Qbd7 intending ...b6, ...Bb7 and ...c5, with nice play for Black.



**9.b3Bg4**

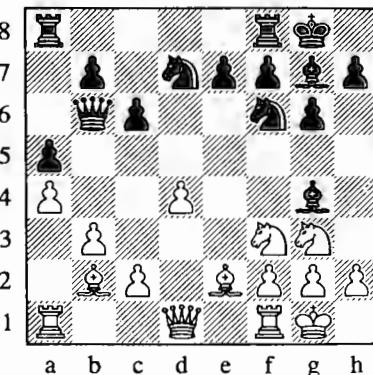
Larsen wants to increase the pressure against d4 by eliminating the defending knight. Two rounds later he deviated: 9...a5? 10.a4 Qa6 11.h3 Qb4 12.Qe1 Wc7 13.Qb2 b6 14.Wd2 Bb7 15.c3 Qbd5 And Black had a reasonable position, Sax – Larsen, Tilburg 1979.

**10.Qb2 a5 11.a4 Qbd7?!**

Larsen fails to enforce the strategy dictated by his eighth and ninth moves. By blocking

the d-file, he loses the chance to exert any meaningful pressure against the d-pawn.

The more consistent continuation would have been: 11...Ed8?! 12.h3 (after 12.Qg5 Wxe2 13.Wxe2 e6 Black has no problems) 12...Qxf3 13.Qxf3 e5 With equal chances, as White's bishop pair is not particularly effective.



**12.h3**

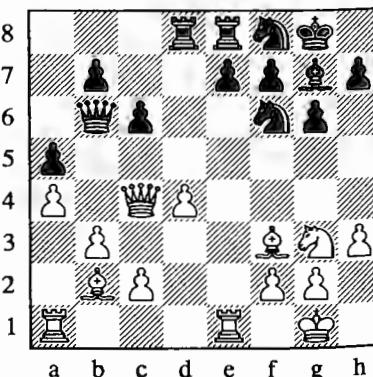
Karpov has time to obtain the advantage of the two bishops and consolidate his centre.

**12...Qxf3 13.Qxf3 Ed8 14.We2 Ef8**  
**15.Ef1 Qf8**

Intending to attack the d4-pawn from e6. 15...Qd5? was worth considering.

**16.Wc4!**

Anticipating Larsen's reply.



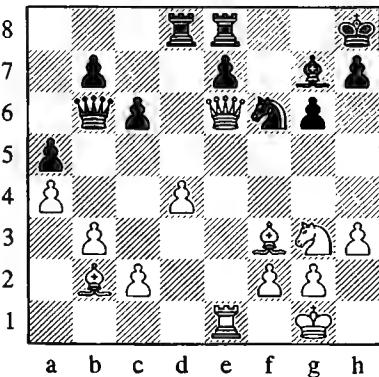
16... ♔e6?!

Objectively this is just about playable, but in practice it was a risky choice. The safer continuation would have been 16...d5 17.Bd1 (17.Qe4 Qe6) 17...Bb4 18.Qe4 Qe6 when Black's pieces stand well.

17.  $\mathbb{B}xe6!$

Larsen must have underestimated this positional sacrifice. In return for his small material investment White increases his domination over the light squares and weakens the enemy kingside. Note that the enemy rooks have limited active prospects, which is often a prerequisite for a successful exchange sacrifice.

17...fxe6 18.囗xe6† 王h8 19.囗el



19... $\mathbb{W}b4$

Larsen brings his queen back into play. The idea is sensible, but the most accurate continuation was:

19...d5!

By attacking the d4-pawn Black hopes to upset his opponent's coordination.

20.  $\mathbb{Q}e4!!$

20.h4? ♕xd4 is too slow for White.

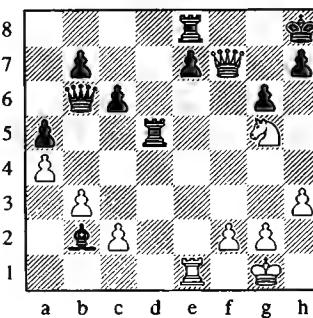
20.Qe2 is possible, but after 20...Bb4 Black has a better version of the game as he gains an important tempo by attacking the rook on e1.

20.  $\text{K}e4$   $\text{W}b4$  21.  $\text{Kh}4$  (21.  $\text{h}4$   $\text{Wd}2!$  Compared with the game, this invasion really hurts.)  
21...  $\text{Qf}6$  and Black is safe.

The text move looks dangerous, but Black can survive by the skin of his teeth.

20...♝xd4! 21.♗g5! ♜xb2 22.♗xd5 ♜xd5  
23.♘f7

It looks as though Black can resign, but he can save the day with the help of a truly magical defence.



23...  $\mathbb{W}xf2\text{!}!!$  24.  $\mathfrak{C}xf2$

After 24.  $\mathbb{W}xf2?$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  25.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{E}xg5$  White faces a difficult ending.

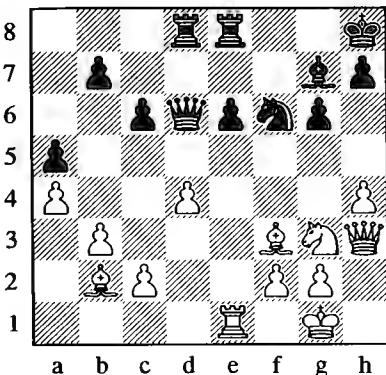
24...gxf5†

The game is likely to end in a draw. Needless to say, this would not have been an easy variation to find over the board.

20.h4  $\mathbb{W}d6$  21. $\mathbb{W}h3$  e6;

From this point on White has the advantage, as it is hard for Black to exchange the active enemy pieces on the kingside. Larsen must have either overestimated his position after the text move, or misevaluated the alternative: 21... $\mathbb{W}d7$  22. $\mathbb{E}e6$  (22. $\mathbb{W}h2?? \mathfrak{Q}g4$ ) 22... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (Also after 22... $\mathfrak{Q}d5!!$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  24.h5  $gxh5$  25. $\mathbb{E}e4$  White has decent compensation but Black should not be worse either.) 23. $\mathfrak{Q}e2$   $\mathfrak{Q}d5$  24.h5  $\mathfrak{Q}c7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $gxh5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  27. $\mathbb{E}f6$  e6 28. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{E}xf8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  30. $\mathbb{W}g3$  Black's pieces are still less than ideally coordinated, but his extra exchange it still a

relevant factor. Overall the position is close to equal.



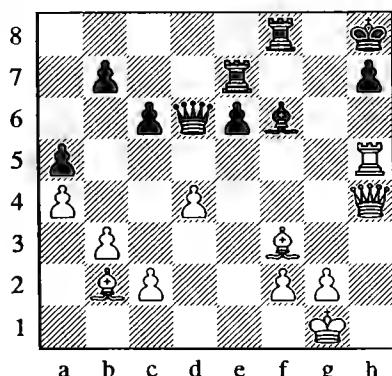
**22.h5!**

Karpov softens up the kingside.

**22...gxh5 23.Qe5 R e7 24.Qh4!**

White has time to defend the d4-pawn before taking on h5.

**24...Rf8 25.Qxh5 Qxh5 26.Rxh5 Rf6**



**27.Qe4 Rd8 28.Rxa5 Qxd4 29.Qc1 Rf7 30.Qh5 Rf6?!**

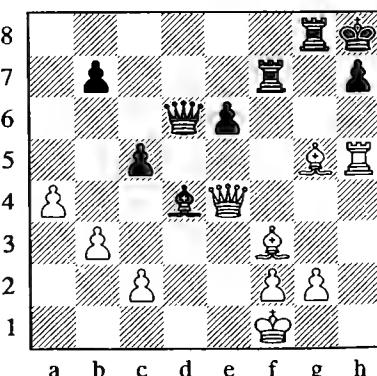
It was worth giving back a pawn in order to exchange the dangerous enemy rook. This could have been achieved with 30...Rf5! (or 31.Rxf5 (or 31.Rh6 Rc5 32.Rxe6 Rxf2+ 33.Qf1 Rd4 34.Qh6 Rd5 and Black keeps his position together) 31...exf5 32.Rxf5 Re5 and Black is not in danger of losing the game.

33.Qf1 Rd4 34.Qh6 Rd5 and Black keeps his position together) 31...exf5 32.Rxf5 Re5 and Black is not in danger of losing the game.

**31.Qe3**

31.Qf4! was slightly more accurate, driving back the enemy queen. Play might continue: 31...Re7 32.Qe3 Rd6 (or 32...Rg7 33.Qh6 Rd5 34.Qc4 with a promising initiative) 33.Qc5 Rd7 34.Qb6 Rg8 35.g3 White has ongoing pressure in return for a small material deficit.

**31...Rd4! 32.Qg5 Rg8 33.Qf1 c5**



**34.Qc1?!**

Karpov misses the opportunity to simplify to a favourable endgame with the witty 34.Qf4! Rg7 35.Qe5† (35.a5! is promising, but the text is more straightforward) 35...Qxe5 36.Rxe5† Rg7 37.Qe4 Rf6 38.Rxc5 and Black faces an uphill struggle to survive.

Judging from Karpov's play over the next few moves, I have a hunch that he may have been trying to play on Larsen's time trouble.

**34...Ra6†?!**

It is dangerous to move towards the queenside while the king is under heavy pressure. Instead Black could have stabilized his position with 34...e5 intending ...Rg6.

**35.♗g1 b5?**

Continuing the faulty plan. 35...♝d6 was safer.

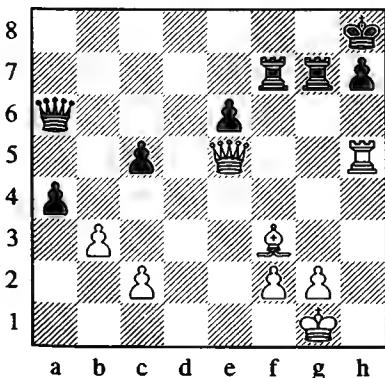
**36.♕f4?**

White could have obtained a serious advantage with the help of a small finesse: 36.c3! ♕f6 (After 36...♜xc3 37.♝xc5 b4 38.♕e3 Black's king is dangerously exposed, and it is doubtful that he can survive.) 37.♝xc5 bxa4 38.bxa4 With two pawns for the exchange plus a strong initiative, White has excellent winning chances.

**36...bxa4 37.♕e5†**

37.♕h6 is tricky but it looks as though Black can survive: 37...♝gg7 38.♝xe6 ♜xf4 (38...♛xe6? 39.♛xe6 ♜xf4 40.c3! ♜xf3 [40...♜xc3 41.♛e8† ♜g8 42.♛e3] 41.cxd4 ♜xb3 42.♛e8† ♜g8 43.♛e5† ♜g7 44.dxc5 White has excellent winning chances as Black's rooks are not well placed to stop the c-pawn.) 39.♝e8† ♜g8 40.♝xg8† ♜xg8 41.♛xf4 a3 42.♕d5† ♜g7 White has no more than a perpetual.

The simple 37.bxa4!? deserved attention. White simply recaptures and returns the ball to his opponent's court. Black's position remains unpleasant and difficult to defend.

**37...♝xe5 38.♛xe5† ♜gg7****39.♝g5??**

Karpov sets up a primitive back rank checkmate. 39.♝h6 should have been the harder move to meet. The best defence is: 39...♛a7! 40.♝xe6 (after 40.♛e4 c4 41.♝xh7† ♜g8 42.♝xg7† ♜xg7 43.♛xe6† ♜f7 Black seems to escape) 40...♜f8 41.♕d5 ♜f7 42.f3 ♜d7 43.bxa4 ♜xa4 Black is living dangerously but I see no win for White.

**39...axb3??**

Larsen overlooks the threat – he must have been very short of time. Black could have kept himself in the game with 39...♛b6 40.bxa4 ♜c7.

**40.♛b8†**

1–0

It is difficult to assess the overall value of this game. In the opening Karpov did not achieve much, but he used the positional exchange sacrifice to strong effect to create problems for the defender. On the other hand, Karpov was noticeably less sharp than usual in noticing tactical finesse. In the end he was slightly lucky as Larsen blundered to allow a simple checkmate.

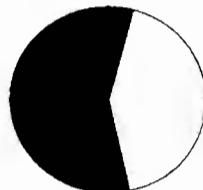
Karpov's style is often compared with that of Petrosian, and not without reason. Interestingly, Karpov did not utilize the positional exchange sacrifice as much as Petrosian, but the present game demonstrates that this weapon was very much a part of his arsenal.

Karpov drew his next three games in Tilburg. Then against Hort his superb endgame play yielded another victory. In the penultimate round he drew with Timman, before finishing with a win over Smyslov. His total of four wins and seven draws was enough to win first prize, half a point ahead of Romanishin.

## 1979 Summary

Munich (withdrew after round five):  $3\frac{1}{2}/5$  (+2 =3 -0)  
Montreal (1st place):  $12/18$  (+7 =10 -1)  
Waddinxveen (1st place):  $5/6$  (+4 =2 -0)  
Spartakiad USSR, Moscow (Board one):  $4\frac{1}{2}/7$  (+3 =3 -1)  
Tilburg (1st place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/11$  (+4 =7 -0)

Total  $69.1\% (+20 =25 -2)$



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1980

Rating 2725 (1 in the World)

Karpov's first event of the new decade was the Soviet Team Championship, where he drew all three of his games. He then took part in a double round robin tournament in Bad Kissingen, Germany, against three strong opponents. He won a fine attacking victory over Hübner and drew the return game with the black pieces. He drew twice against Spassky and beat the other German participant, Unzicker, in a nice endgame. Here is his second game against Unzicker.

## Game 55

Wolfgang Unzicker – Anatoly Karpov

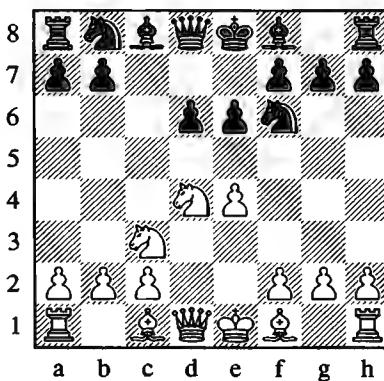
Bad Kissingen 1980

**1.e4 c5**

Karpov's choice of opening indicates that he was playing for a win right from the start.

**2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6**

He had only used the Scheveningen in two previous games, both of which ended in draws.



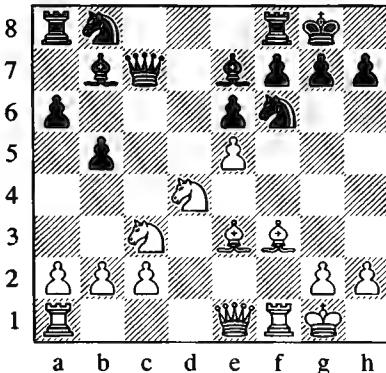
**6.♗e2**

The longstanding German number one only seldom played the Keres Attack.

**6...♗e7 7.0–0 0–0 8.f4 a6 9.♗e3**

In the latter part of the 1980s 9.a4 became established as the main line.

9... $\mathbb{W}c7$  10. $\mathbb{W}e1$  b5! 11. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  12.e5 dx5  
13.fxe5



13... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$

This was a new move at the time, and it has only been repeated a few times subsequently. This knight retreat was more frequently seen without the pawn exchange on e5. Another much more popular approach was 13... $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ . Interestingly Unzicker had already encountered this move twice previously. He was successful in 1956 against Golombek, but lost in 1971 against Korchnoi.

14. $\mathbb{A}xb7$

14... $\mathbb{W}g3$  looks better. This was played in all four of the subsequent games shown on the database, with White winning three and losing one.

14... $\mathbb{W}xb7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}c8!$

Karpov brings his rook to a good square while concealing his intentions with the d7-knight for the moment.

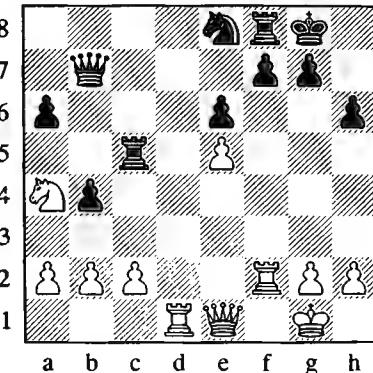
17. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

In the event of 17... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$   
19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  White has a small plus.

18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

The patient 18.a3?! deserved attention.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  h6 20. $\mathbb{Q}ge4$  b4 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   
 $\mathbb{E}xc5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}a4$



22... $\mathbb{E}d5!$

Karpov brilliantly senses his chances in the ensuing semi-endgame position. His strategy is based on the slight weakness of the white king. Such an approach requires imagination and ingenuity, and Karpov has plenty of both.

23. $\mathbb{E}xd5?$

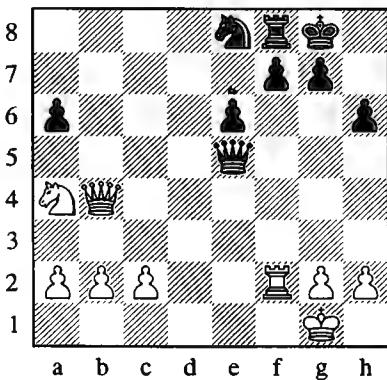
After 23.c4!  $\mathbb{B}xc3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  the position is equal.

23... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  24. $\mathbb{W}xb4?$

Unzicker continues down the tempting but ultimately flawed path.

24... $\mathbb{W}xe5$

White has a two pawn majority on the queenside, which could potentially decide the endgame in his favour. For the time being, however, those pawns are far from promotion, and meanwhile White's king is not completely safe. The game continuation shows that it is White who is in more danger.



25.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$

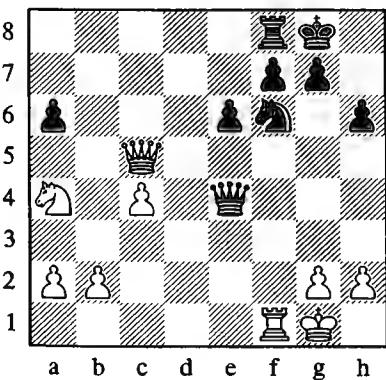
Activating the knight with 25.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  was a better bet.

25...  $\mathbb{Q}e1\#$

Of course Karpov keeps his queen on the board.

26.  $\mathbb{R}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  27.  $c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6!$

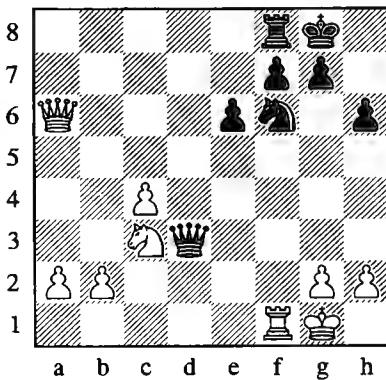
The knight quickly comes closer to White's king.



28.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Better was 28.  $b3!$   $\mathbb{R}d8$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $a5$  when Black is still at least equal, but White is safer than in the game.

28...  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}d3!$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$



30...  $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$

Karpov goes after White's somewhat deserted king.

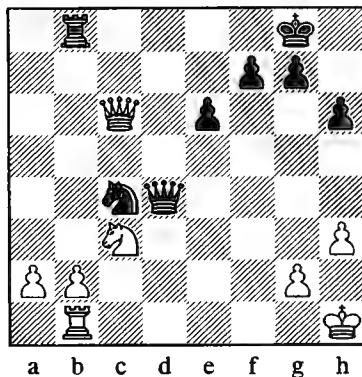
31.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  32.  $h3$

There is no other decent defence against the check on f2.

32...  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  33.  $\mathbb{R}b1$   $\mathbb{R}b8!$

It is time to bring a third piece into play.

34.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$



35.  $\mathbb{R}d1?$

This wins a tempo and drives the enemy queen away from the centre, yet it was not the best.

35.♕c7!

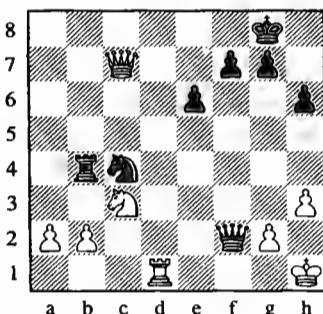
White should attack the f7-pawn.

35...♜b4

Or 35...♜a8 36.♕f1 ♔e5 37.a4 f6 38.♕b7 and it is not easy to improve Black's position.

36.♕d1 ♜f2

36...♛h4 37.♕f1 is annoying for Black.



37.♕e4!

This is a difficult move to find in advance.

37...♝xb2

After 37...♝f5 38.a3! ♔e3 39.axb4 ♕xd1 40.♕d8† ♖h7 41.♕xd1 White is not worse in the queen ending.

38.♕d8† ♖h7 39.♕xf7 ♜b1† 40.♖h2 ♛xe4 41.♕g8† ♖g6 42.♕e8†

Black cannot escape the checks, so the game ends in a draw.

35...♛h4 36.b3 ♔e3

Karpov brings the knight closer to Unzicker's king.

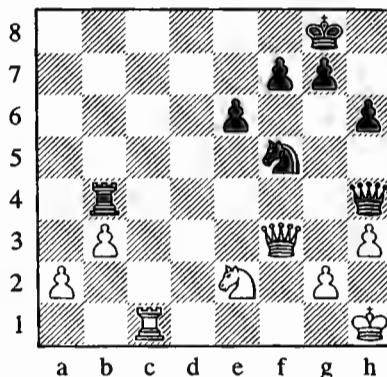
37.♜c1 ♔f5 38.♜f3 ♜b4!

Karpov finds a nice way to bring his rook into the attack. If 38...♜d8 39.♜d1 White would be glad to exchange pieces.

39.♕e2

39.♕d5 is well met by 39...♜e4! stopping the knight from coming to e3. Play may continue 40.♖h2 ♜e5 41.♖c4 ♜d8 (41...♜e1??) 42.♕f4

(42.♕c3 ♜e1) 42...♜e3 43.♕f1 ♜d2 when Black's pieces and attack have grown too strong.



39...♜e4! 40.♕g1?

Unzicker prevents ...♜xe2, but his kingside remains fatally weak. A more resilient continuation would have been:

40.♜c3!

But even this loses after correct play from Black:

40...♜e1† 41.♕g1



41...g5!!

This wonderful attacking move makes the f4-square available for the rook, while also giving the black king some extra breathing room.

42.♜d3

42.a4 ♖g7 43.♜c7 (43.a5 ♖f4 wins or

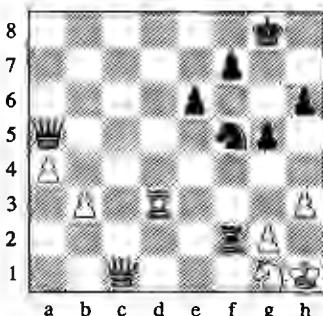
43.  $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  44.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  45.  $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   
wins.) 43...  $\mathbb{B}d4$  44.  $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e5!$  45.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$   
White's king soon will be caught.

42...  $\mathbb{B}f4$  43.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}a5!$

Black wins a vital tempo by attacking the a2 pawn.

44.  $a4$   $\mathbb{B}f2!$  45.  $\mathbb{W}c1$

45.  $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{B}d2$  46.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  wins.



45...  $\mathbb{W}a8!$

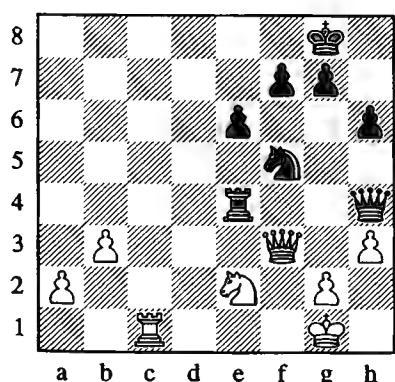
Black utilizes the full dimensions of the board to press home his attack.

46.  $\mathbb{B}f3$

46.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{B}f1\#$

46...  $\mathbb{W}b8$

And Black wins. The queen completed a remarkable journey from h4 to b8.



40...  $\mathbb{B}e3!$  41.  $\mathbb{W}f2$

41.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}d8!$  42.  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d2$  wins.

41...  $\mathbb{W}e4$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$

0–1

Unzicker resigned as there is no defence against ... $g5$ . Karpov based his strategy on White's somewhat weakened king, and punished his opponent's errors with laser beam accuracy. His final score of 4½/6 was enough to win the tournament by an impressive one and a half point margin.

Karpov's next event was the European Team Championship in Skara, Sweden. Interestingly this was the first team competition in which the Soviets fielded both Karpov and Kasparov. It is not something that would happen many more times.

In his first game, against Miles, Karpov suffered what would turn out to be one of his most famous losses after the Englishman answered 1.e4 with the astonishing 1...a6. It was an amazing result, especially considering that Karpov had accumulated a heavy plus score in his previous meetings with Miles. Karpov is a confident player, but this reversal seemed to shake him. He only played four more games in the event, all of which ended in draws.

The effects of the loss against Miles seemed to remain with Karpov at the start of his next tournament in Bugojno, where he began with four draws against players he would normally have expected to beat had he been in good form. In round five he finally ended the slump with a good endgame win over Ivkov. He followed this by drawing with Hort and Polugaevsky, then moved up to top gear by beating Tal and Timman.

His next opponent was Kavalek, who he had met nine times since their 1974 encounter which we examined in Game 38. Seven of those games ended in draws, and Karpov won the other two.

## Game 56

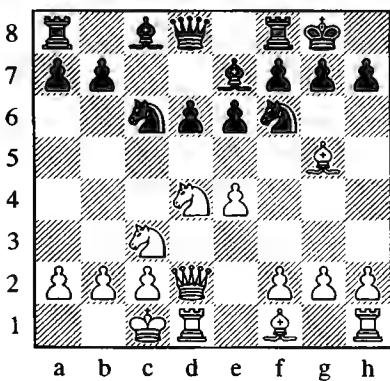
Anatoly Karpov – Lubomir Kavalek

Bugojno 1980

1.e4 c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3.d4 cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Kavalek chooses a surprise weapon; he hardly ever played this particular Sicilian variation.

6. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  e6 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.0–0–0 0–0



9.f4

A year earlier Karpov played a different way:  
9. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  11.f3 a6 12.g4 b5  
13. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.f4  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ec1$  b4 19.g5  $\mathbb{Q}fe8$   
20.h4  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  23.h5  
And White went on to win, Karpov – Sosonko, Waddinxveen 1979. Presumably he deviated in order to avoid Kavalek's preparation.

9... $\mathbb{h}6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ?

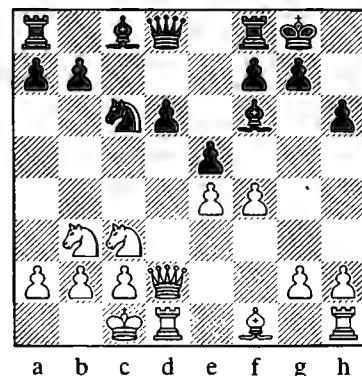
10. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  is more critical. The text move should not be dangerous.

10... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

Black also scores well against other moves.

11... $e5$ ?

Kavalek plays ambitiously, giving up the d5-square in order to generate play on the dark squares. The simple retreat 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ! also deserved attention, as it will not be easy for White to execute a pawn storm without his dark-squared bishop.



12.g3!

Karpov refuses to relinquish control over the dark squares.

12... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

After 13. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}he1$   $\mathbb{Q}fx4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black has no problems.

13...a5!

Kavalek continues to play actively. It is important to do so, otherwise the weak d5-square could become a problem.

14.a4

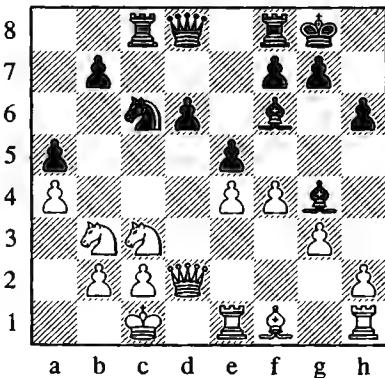
After 14. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  Black is doing fine.

14... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ??

This is inaccurate. In other games Black has preferred 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ !, and after 15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  both 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  and  $\mathbb{Q}fx4$  should be at least equal for the second player.

When a player opts for a new opening variation like Kavalek did in the present game, he takes

on a certain level of risk. The advantage is that the opponent will be surprised and unprepared. On the other hand, the player who chooses the surprise opening will lack the subtle understanding that comes with years of experience of handling a particular line. It looks like Kavalek suffered from this problem, as his play over this and the next few moves lacks the precision that one would normally expect from a grandmaster of his stature.



### 15...♞e6!

Karpov immediately shows why the knight should have gone to b4 on the previous move.

### 15...♝e6

The strong knight must be eliminated. Kavalek plans to exchange his bishop for it, but it would have been better use the knight instead:

15...♝b4! 16.♝xb4 axb4

Black can even consider the cheeky 16...♛b6!?

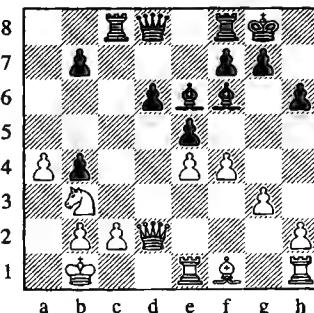
17.♞d5 ♛xb3 18.♞b5 ♛a2 19.c3 ♞e6 when the position is unclear.

### 17.♞b1!

After 17.♞e2 ♞e6 18.♝xb4 (18.♞b1 ♛c7 19.♞d3 ♞c4 Black has a reasonable position) 18...♛c7 19.♞d3 d5 Black has a lot of activity for a mere pawn.

17...♞e6

17...♝f3 can be met by 18.♞h3! (18.♝g1 d5) 18...♝xh1 19.♝xc8 ♛xe4 20.♝xe4 ♛xc8 21.♝xb4 when I prefer White.



### 18.f5

18.♛xb4 is risky, as after 18...♛c7 19.♞d3 d5 Black is very active.

After 18.♞b5 ♛c7 19.f5 ♞c4 White has no time to take his opponent's pawns.

### 18...♞d7

18...♝xb3? is a positional error, and after 19.cxb3 White has a firm grip over the light squares.

### 19.♛xb4

19.a5!? could be considered.

### 19...d5

Black has decent compensation for the pawn.

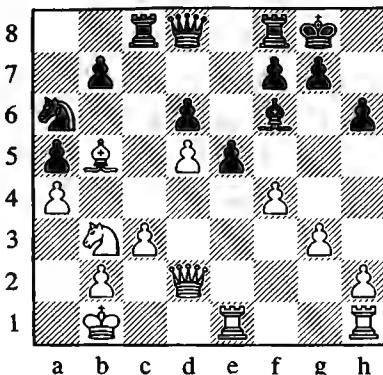
### 16.♞b1 ♞xd5?!

16...♝b4! is still okay for Black: 17.♝c1 (17.♞xa5 ♛xc2 18.♝c1 ♞xd5 19.♛xd5 ♛e3 20.♝xc8 ♛xc8 21.♝b3 exf4 22.gxf4 ♛c5 Black has a free position.) 17...♞xd5 18.exd5 Now both 18...♞f5 and 18...♞d7 should give Black a reasonable game.

### 17.exd5

Now that the centre has been stabilized, Karpov sets about neutralizing Black's queenside play before improving his pieces.

### 17...♝b4 18.c3 ♛a6 19.♞b5



**19...Qc7?!**

Black should have preferred 19...Qc5 20.Qxc5 Bxc5 21.Bhf1, when he is a bit worse but reasonably solid. Perhaps Kavalek's painful defeat to Karpov at Nice 1974 (Game 38 in this book) may have left a scar in his memory, and made him reluctant to enter another opposite-coloured bishop position.

**20.Wd3 exf4**

With this and the next exchange Kavalek transforms the position in a way that enables Karpov to carry out his plan. On the other hand it was hard for him to do anything constructive.

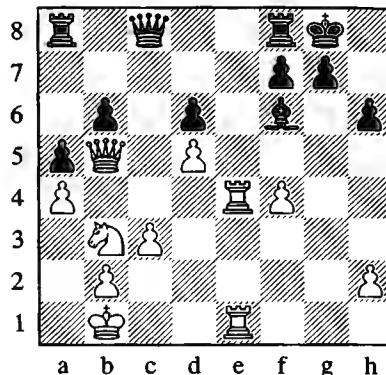
**21.gxf4 Qxb5 22.Wxb5 Ba8 23.Be4!**

Karpov nicely improves his rook and prepares to double on the e-file.

**23...Wc8 24.Bhe1**

Karpov decides not to give Black any counterplay whatsoever. Taking the pawn with 24.Qxa5?! requires precise calculation; but also leads to a large advantage: 24...Wf5 25.Bhe1 Bfe8 26.Wd3 Bxe4 (or 26...Wd7 27.Qc4 Bxe4 28.Bxe4 Wxa4 29.Qxd6 and Black has nothing for the pawn) 27.Bxe4 Be7 28.Qc4 Bxa4 29.Qxd6! Bg6 30.Qc2 White holds onto his extra pawn and keeps his position together.

**24...b6**



**25.Qd2!**

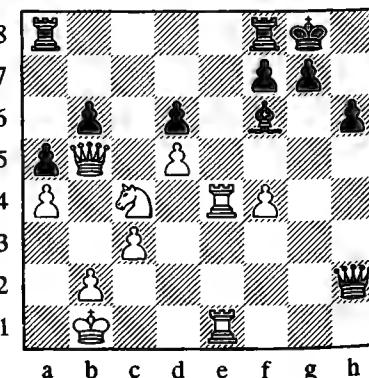
Karpov wastes no time in improving his knight.

**25...Wh3**

If 25...Wc5 26.Wxc5 bxc5 27.Qc4 the knight becomes a powerhouse.

**26.Qc4 Wh2?!**

Black has been outplayed, but this move only deepens his troubles. The best chance was: 26...Bac8! 27.Ba2 (After 27.Qxd6 Bc5 28.Wxb6 Bxd5 29.Qe8 Bd8 30.Wg1 White is a pawn up, but he will have to work for the full point.) 27...Bc5 28.Wxb6 Bxd5 29.Wc6 Bc5 30.Wxd6 Bfc8 Black still has problems, but he has more chances than in the game.



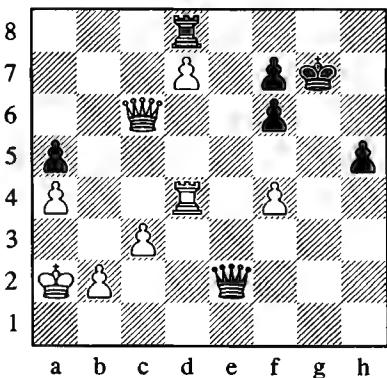
27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$

The game is virtually over, as the d-pawn is a killer.

27...  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  29. d6  $\mathbb{W}h3$  30.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}a2$

Karpov remains true to his style and makes a prophylactic move.

31...  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  32.  $\mathbb{W}c6$  h5 33.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}f3$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$  gxf6 36.  $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{W}e2$  37. d7  $\mathbb{Q}g7$



38. f5

Maybe Kavalek was in time trouble and had no time to resign.

38... h4 39.  $\mathbb{W}c7$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  40.  $\mathbb{B}g4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  41.  $\mathbb{B}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  42.  $\mathbb{W}xd8\#!$

1–0

Karpov went on to beat Gligoric in the last round, thus ending the tournament on a four game winning streak. His final total of 8/11, with five wins and six draws, was enough to take sole first place, half a point ahead of Larsen.

Karpov's next event was the Amsterdam IBM, a double round robin tournament. He began with a long endgame win over Van der Wiel. Then he made three quick draws, two of which

did not even last twenty moves. Karpov was not averse to taking a few quick draws in long tournaments, unlike Fischer and Kasparov, both of whom played to win almost every game. It should be remembered that over his career Karpov played many more tournament games than both his predecessor and his successor, which goes some way towards explaining this tendency to recharge his batteries on some days.

In round five he faced a rising star in Sergei Dolmatov, a young Russian who had won the World Junior Championship in 1978. This was their first encounter. Altogether they met three times over the board, with Karpov scoring two wins and one draw. Dolmatov played twenty games against the world champions from Smyslov to Topalov, missing only Fischer. He scored a respectable four wins with ten draws and six losses.

## Game 57

Anatoly Karpov – Sergei Dolmatov

Amsterdam 1980

1. e4 c5 2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  3. d4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 6.  $\mathbb{Q}db5$  d6

Dolmatov and Yusupov were among the pioneers of the Sveshnikov variation. Interestingly, over his entire tournament career Karpov reached the present position in only five games (a few of them occurred via the 2...e6 move order.) Perhaps the formidable reputation of a World Champion discourages opponents from trying certain openings against him. For example, Kasparov went for a period of eighteen years without a single opponent venturing the Grünfeld against him.

7.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  a6 8.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  b5

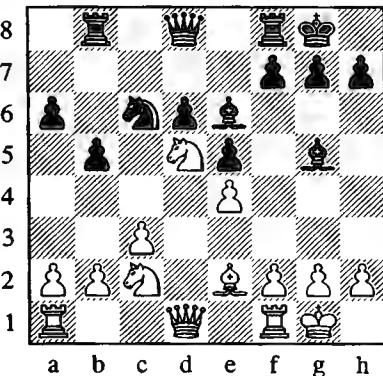
In Game 64 we will see John Nunn trying a different approach against Karpov.

**9.Qd5 ♜e7 10.♗xf6 ♜xf6 11.c3**

Karpov unsurprisingly opts for this positional variation.

**11...0–0 12.♕c2 ♘b8**

Dolmatov deviates from two of Karpov's previous games against Sveshnikov in 1973 and Yurtaev in 1979, both of which continued with 12...♝g5. Karpov was pressing in both games; he eventually drew the former and won the latter.

**13.♗e2 ♘g5 14.0–0 ♘e6****15.♖d3 ♖d7?!**

According to the database this move was a novelty, but it looks dubious. 15...a5 was and still is the main line here.

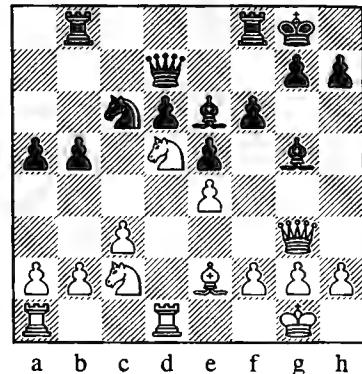
**16.♗g3 f6?!**

This weakens the light squares and blocks the route of the bishop back to d8, which can sometimes be useful for Black. 16...h6 was preferable.

**17.♘fd1 a5**

Dolmatov stops ♘cb4 but gives a new target. It was worth considering playing an improving move on the kingside first. 17...g6?! is one idea, while Black can also consider 17...♝h8?! 18.♘cb4 (or 18.♖d3 ♘fd8)

18...a5 19.♘xc6 ♗xc6 20.♗g4 ♜f7 when Black's position remains playable.

**18.♘a3!**

Returning to the edge of the board is a splendid idea. Karpov does not want to put the knight on the more conventional e3-square, as this would give Black the opportunity to exchange his bad bishop.

**18...♗a7**

On 18...b4 Kasparov recommends 19.♘c4 with an advantage, while 19.♘b5 looks promising as well.

18...♘d8? deserved attention, and could have worked quite well against the plan chosen by Karpov in the game: 19.h3 ♜h8 20.♗g4 (With the knight on d8 White might be tempted to try 20.♖ab1!? intending b4.) 20...♗c6? 21.♗xe6 (21.♖d3 b4) 21...♘xe6 Black's position looks reliable enough as the a3-knight is passive. The second player can look to generate some activity with the plan of ...♝b7, ...♝h6, ...g6 and ...f5.

**19.h3!**

Karpov wants to exchange the light-squared bishops.

**19...♝h8**

Dolmatov wants to use the f8-rook, so the king steps off the g-file.

### 20.♕g4 ♜fc8?!

Transferring the rook to c5 costs time and does not improve Black's chances. Instead after 20...f5 21.exf5 ♜xf5 22.♘c2 ♜xg4 (22...♘c6!?) 23.♗xg4 ♜xg4 24.hxg4 ♘c6 the limited material on the board gives Black reasonable chances to fight for a draw according to Kasparov.

### 21.♕xe6 ♜xe6 22.♗d3 ♜c5?!

This only helps White to open files on the queenside. Kasparov suggested 22...g6, improving Black's position on the kingside. In the event of 23.♘c2 ♜g7 24.b4, the position of Black's rook gives him the option of 24...a4 to keep the queenside closed.

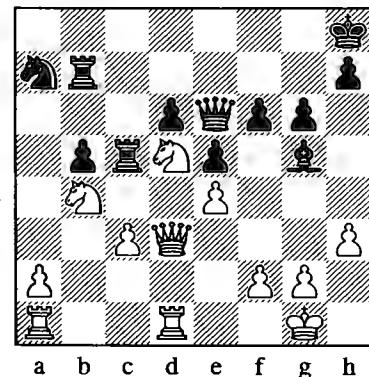
### 23.♘c2!

Again Karpov changes the target by switching back with the knight.

### 23...g6 24.b4!

This strong move enables White to invade on the queenside.

### 24...axb4 25.♘xb4 ♜b7



### 26.a4!

Karpov opens the a-file for the rook.

### 26...bx a4 27.♗xa4 f5 28.♗a6!

This is an awkward move to meet. It prevents ...♘c6 while also menacing the d6-pawn.

### 28...♘c8

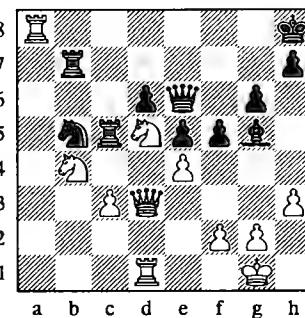
Dolmatov correctly chooses the more passive but safer square for the knight.

### 28...♘b5?!

This attempt to play actively leaves the knight unstable. In the following line Black must work hard to keep his queenside together, which ultimately costs him on the kingside.

### 29.♗a8†!

A good alternative is 29.c4 fxe4 (29...♘d4 30.f4!) 30.♗xe4 ♘c7 31.♗xc7 ♜bxc7 32.♗d5 ♜c8 33.♗b6 ♜8c6 34.♗d1 and White is a bit better. The text move is even stronger though.



### 29...♗g7

After 29...♗c8 30.♗d1 ♜e8 31.♗8a6 White has some pressure.

### 30.♗a6! ♜c6

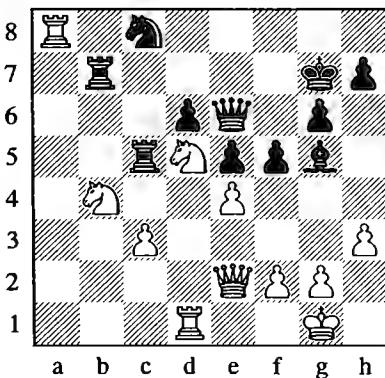
Or 30...♗c8 31.exf5 gx f5 32.♗xc8 ♜xc8 33.♗b1 ♜a7 34.♗xb5 ♜xa6 35.♗b8 and White is better according to Kasparov.

### 31.♗b8 ♜d7 32.♗xb7 ♜xb7 33.♗ab4 fxe4 34.♗g3 ♜f4 35.♗h4 g5 36.♗g4 ♜c5 37.g3

Black must lose a piece. He will get some pawns for it, but not enough.

**29.♕a8 ♔g7 30.♗e2**

According to Karpov's successor 30.♗a6! was even stronger, for instance 30...♗d7 31.exf5 gxf5 32.♗d3 followed by ♘d1 when Black is under pressure.

**30...fxe4?!**

Giving White the use of the e4-square is unattractive, although the alternatives were also less than appealing. Waiting with 30...♗f7 was possible, but Dolmatov may have been put off by 31.exf5 gxf5 32.c4, after which White will swing a rook along the third rank to attack Black's king.

Another idea was 30...♘e7 31.♗xe7 ♘xe7 32.♗d5 ♘g5 when Black's position remains unpleasant, but perhaps with better defensive chances than in the game.

**31.♗xe4 ♖f5 32.♗e2!**

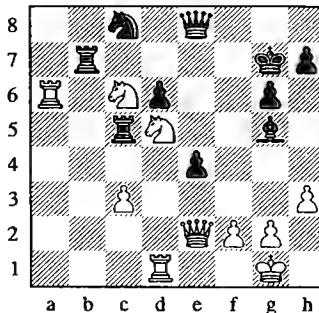
Karpov keeps the queens on the board as Black's king may come under fire.

**32...♗f7****32...e4?!**

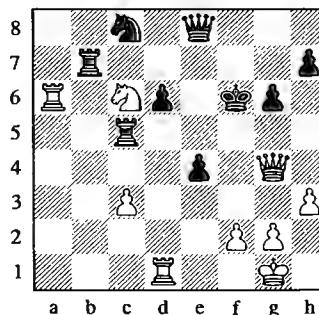
With this active move Black frees the e5-square for the use of his queen. White has to play precisely to keep the advantage.

**33.♗a6!**

33.c4 ♖e5 looks okay for Black.

**33...♖e5 34.♗c6! ♖e8****35.f4!?**

35.♗g4 also leads to some spectacular tactics: 35...♗f6 (35...e3? 36.♗xg5 exf2† 37.♗f1! ♘xc6 38.♗f6† ♘g8 39.♗d4 ♘f7 40.♗f6† ♘xf6 41.♗xc6+) 36.♗xf6 ♘xf6

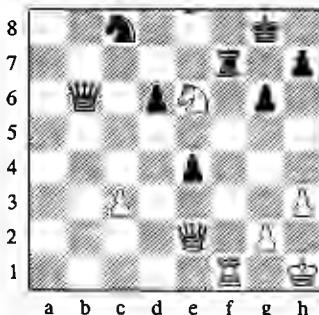


37.♗e1!! White can sacrifice the knight. 37...♗xc6 38.♗xe4 ♘e7 39.♗xc6 ♖xc6 (39...♗xe4 40.♗xc8 ♖xg4 41.♗xe8 ♘c4 42.♗e3 d5 43.♗d3 ♘e5 Black has chances to hold the ending a pawn down, but it will be tough.) 40.♗c4 ♖d7 41.♗xd7 ♘xd7 42.♗xc8 d5 43.♗f1 d4 44.c4 d3 45.♗e1 ♘e5 The ending is not easy to assess, but I suspect Black should be able to hold it.

**35...♗xf4**

After 35...♗xd5?! 36.♗xd5 ♘xf4 37.♗d1 e3 it is not easy for White to convert his extra exchange, but still Black is a long way from a draw.

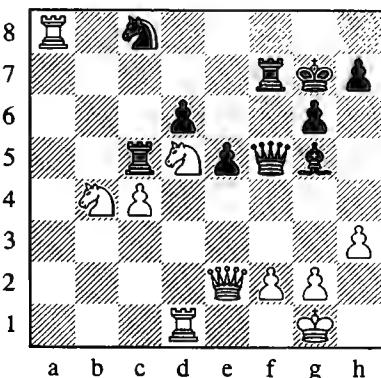
36.♕xf4 ♜xc6 37.♕e6†! ♔g8 38.♕xc6 ♜xc6  
39.♖f1! ♜b6† 40.♔h1 ♜f7



41.♗c4!! ♔e7 42.♖a1! ♜b7 43.♕d8

White wins an exchange.

### 33.c4



33...♗h4 34.♗f1

The rook is temporarily passive here, but it best not to commit to any weakening pawn moves at this stage.

34...♕e7?!

Black's position was already tough, and this move does little to ease the suffering. Dvoretsky calls it a clear positional mistake, pointing out that White's knight on b4 is surplus to requirements. I would add that when one's position contains a weakness, it is often the

case that exchanges will only serve to magnify the problem.

What should Black do instead? One idea is 34...e4, but this is well met by a strong idea of Yakovich: 35.♖a3! with the idea of 35...♗g5 36.f4! and White is much better.

34...♗g5!

This looks like the best chance. White has a number of tries.

a) 35.♗f1

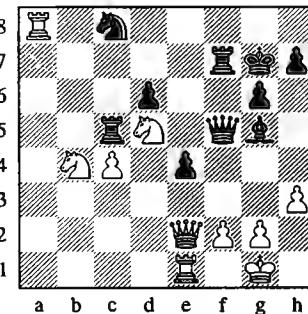
This natural move leads to some remarkable tactics.

34...e4

35...♗h4 36.g3 ♜d8 37.h4 is evaluated as difficult for Black by Kasparov.

36.♗e1

Another line is 36.♕c2 ♜e5 37.♗b1 ♕e7 38.♗e8 ♜a5 39.♗b7 ♜a2 40.g3 e3 41.♕dxe3 ♜xc2 42.♗xc2 ♜xe3 and Black is safe.



36...♜xc4!!

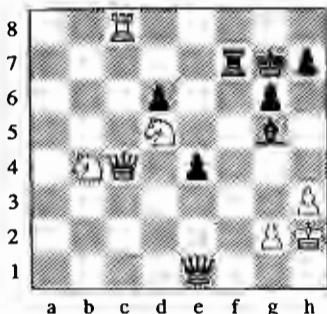
Commentators missed this fantastic tactical shot.

After 36...♜xc4 37.g3 ♜d8 38.♕c2 White is in control.

37.♗xc4 ♜xf2† 38.♗h2 ♜xe1 39.♗xc8  
39.♗d4† ♔h6 40.♕c2 (40.♗xc8?? ♜f1)  
40...♜f1 41.♗xc8 ♜f4† 42.♗xf4 ♜xf4† leads to a perpetual.

After the text move Black's situation

looks desperate, as he is a piece down and threatened with a queen exchange on c3.



39... $\mathbb{E}f3!!$

This provides the justification for Black's 36th move. It resembles the Kramnik – Kasparov draw in the 1999 Linares tournament.

40. $\mathbb{Q}c7\uparrow$

After 40. $\mathbb{W}d4\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}g3\uparrow$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e1\uparrow$  White cannot escape the checks.

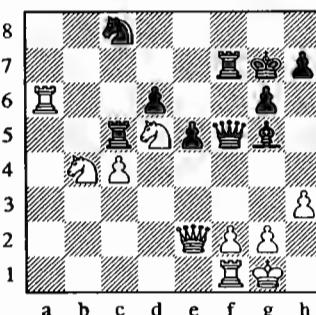
40... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}f2\uparrow$

41... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  draws as well.

42. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  43. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}e1\uparrow$

The game ends in perpetual check.

b) 35. $\mathbb{E}a6$



This time White keeps the f2-pawn securely defended. The critical line runs as follows:

35... $e4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h1$

White should avoid moving his kingside pawns without good reason. For instance,

after 37. $g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  38. $h4$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  White's advantage is minor, if it exists at all.

37. $g4?$  is more purposeful, but still after 37... $\mathbb{W}e6$  38. $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  39. $cxd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White's exposed king makes it hard for him to exploit his extra exchange.

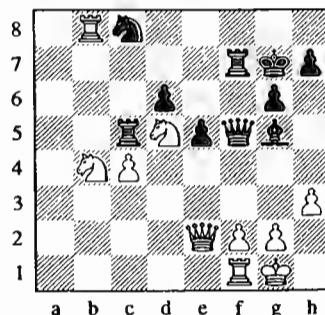
37... $\mathbb{E}f8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}b2\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  39. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}cb4$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  41. $\mathbb{W}e2$

41. $\mathbb{E}a3$  can be met by 41... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

41... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

With his last move White improves the superfluous knight, maintaining some advantage. It also looks interesting to change tack with 42. $\mathbb{E}a3?$  preparing  $f4$ .

c) 35. $\mathbb{E}b8??$



The point of this subtle rook move is to solve the problem of the  $b4$ -knight, by preparing  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  without allowing the reply ... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .

35... $\mathbb{Q}c7$

Alternatives such as 35... $h5$  can be met by 36. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .

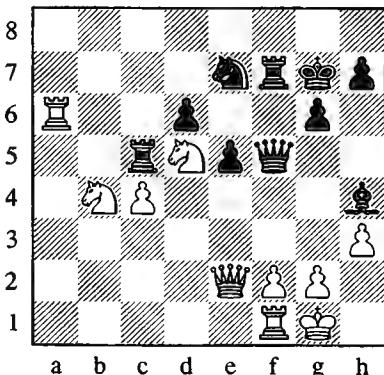
36. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

White can also consider 36. $\mathbb{Q}c3??$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  38. $\mathbb{E}a1$  with some advantage.

36... $\mathbb{E}xe7$  37. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

38. $\mathbb{E}a1?!$  would be weaker on account of 38... $\mathbb{W}f4$ . After the text move White retains a stable advantage, but the game goes on.

35. $\mathbb{E}a6$



35... $\mathbb{W}d7?$

Earlier Dolmatov played more actively than he should have, but now he plays too passively. He could have obtained good drawing chances by means of:

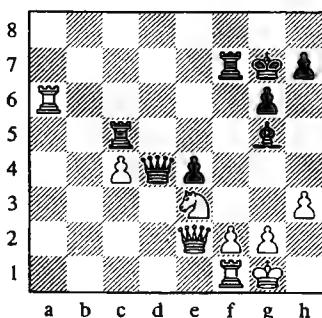
35... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  e4!

This is an excellent idea from Kasparov. Black is aiming to reduce the pawns to just one flank.

37. $\mathbb{B}xd6$

37.g3  $\mathbb{R}f6$  38. $\mathbb{B}xd6$   $\mathbb{A}e5$  39. $\mathbb{B}a6$  (39. $\mathbb{B}d8$   $\mathbb{W}xh3$ ) 39... $\mathbb{W}xh3$  40. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xg3$  Black forces the draw.

37... $\mathbb{W}e5$  38. $\mathbb{B}a6$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{B}g5$



40. $\mathbb{B}d1$

40. $\mathbb{B}a4$   $\mathbb{B}xf2!$  This lovely tactical shot equalizes: 41. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  (41. $\mathbb{B}xf2$   $\mathbb{A}xe3$ ; 41. $\mathbb{B}a7†$   $\mathbb{B}h8$ ) 41... $\mathbb{B}f5†$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}xe3†$  43. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  Black's problems are behind him.

40... $\mathbb{W}c3$  41. $\mathbb{Q}g4$

After 41. $\mathbb{B}a4$   $\mathbb{A}xe3$  42. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  Black should be all right.

41... $\mathbb{B}fc7$

Also after 41...e3! 42. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  (42. $\mathbb{B}xe3$  h5) 42... $\mathbb{A}xe3$  43. $\mathbb{B}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  Black has decent drawing chances.

42. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$

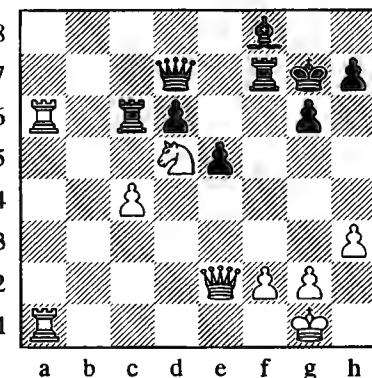
White can play on for a long time with no risk, but objectively Black must be able to hold this ending.

36. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Black could not avoid the exchange with 36... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  due to some lovely tactics: 37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  (37... $\mathbb{B}c8$  38. $\mathbb{B}f1$ ) 38. $\mathbb{Q}f6!$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h5†$   $\mathbb{g}xh5$  40. $\mathbb{W}xc4$  And White's advantage should suffice for victory.

37. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{A}e7$  38. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{A}f8$  39. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}c6$

Dolmatov attempts to simplify. The attempt to attack the c4-pawn allows White to invade on the seventh rank: 39... $\mathbb{W}c8$  40. $\mathbb{B}a7†$   $\mathbb{B}xc4?$  (Better is 40... $\mathbb{W}f5$ , although after 41. $\mathbb{W}b2$  White remains in control.) 41. $\mathbb{B}xf7†$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  42. $\mathbb{B}a7†$   $\mathbb{B}e6$  43. $\mathbb{W}f3$  And White wins.



40. $\mathbb{B}6a3!$

Karpov avoids exchanging a pair of rooks in order to... exchange a pair of rooks! It may sound odd, but it is absolutely true. The point

is that it is more favourable for him to exchange the rook on f7, which defends the black king.

#### 40... $\mathbb{E}c5$

40... $\mathbb{W}e6$  41. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{B}xf3$  42. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}xc4?$  allows the crushing 43. $\mathbb{B}a7\#$ .

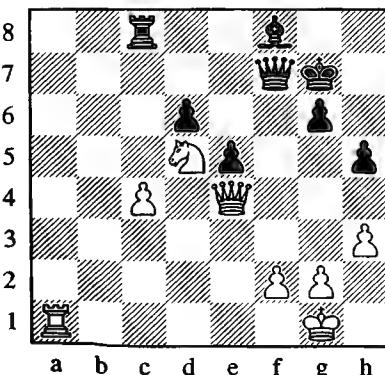
Perhaps the most resilient defence would have been 40... $\mathbb{B}b7?!$ , discouraging 41. $\mathbb{B}f3?!$  for the time being in view of 41... $\mathbb{B}xf3$  42. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  when Black survives with his extra pawn. Obviously White should play more patiently on move 41, in which case his position would remain clearly superior but not yet winning by force.

#### 41. $\mathbb{B}f3!$

Karpov exchanges the key defensive piece in Black's camp.

#### 41... $\mathbb{B}xf3$ 42. $\mathbb{W}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}f7$ 43. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $h5$ 44. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{B}c8$

On 44... $\mathbb{B}h7$  Kasparov superbly demonstrated how the attack should be conducted: 45. $\mathbb{B}a3!$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  46. $\mathbb{g}4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  47. $\mathbb{B}f3$  And White wins.



#### 45. $\mathbb{B}a3!$

Black faces an unpleasant dilemma: will he allow the rook to hurt him on the f-file or on the seventh rank?

#### 45... $\mathbb{W}f5$

Black chooses the latter. If 45... $\mathbb{B}b8$  46. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  (46... $\mathbb{W}e6$  47. $\mathbb{g}4!?$ ) 47. $\mathbb{B}h2!$   $\mathbb{W}b1$  48. $\mathbb{W}h4$  White will invade with decisive effect.

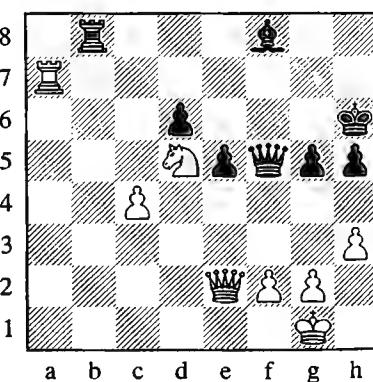
#### 46. $\mathbb{B}a7\#$ $\mathbb{B}h6$ 47. $\mathbb{W}e3\#$

Forcing a further weakening on the kingside.

#### 47... $\mathbb{g}5$ 48. $\mathbb{W}e2$

48. $\mathbb{W}b3$  was also good enough: 48... $\mathbb{g}4$  (48... $\mathbb{B}e8$  49. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  50. $\mathbb{g}4$ ) 49. $\mathbb{h}4$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  50. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  51. $\mathbb{W}b8$  And White wins.

#### 48... $\mathbb{B}b8$



#### 49. $\mathbb{g}4!$

After this further opening of the kingside, Black's defences will be stretched to their breaking point.

#### 49... $\mathbb{h}xg4$ 50. $\mathbb{h}xg4$ $\mathbb{W}b1\#$ 51. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{B}b7$

After 51... $e4$  White has a few routes to victory, of which the most convincing is: 52. $c5!$   $\mathbb{B}b2$  (52... $\mathbb{d}xc5$  53. $\mathbb{W}a6\#$ ; 52... $\mathbb{W}d3$  53. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{exd}3$  54. $c6$   $d2$  55. $\mathbb{B}a1+ -$ ) 53. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  (53... $\mathbb{W}d3$  54. $c6$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  55. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  wins) 54. $\mathbb{B}a8$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  55. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{B}xa8$  56. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$   $\mathbb{B}h7$  57. $\mathbb{W}f7\#$   $\mathbb{B}h6$  58. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black cannot avoid checkmate.

#### 52. $\mathbb{B}xb7$ $\mathbb{W}xb7$ 53. $\mathbb{W}f3!$

The struggle is over, as Black is unable to defend his king.

53... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  54. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  55. $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$

1–0

Kasparov found it staggering how well Karpov used the whole board in this game. This is quite a compliment as the former has a fantastic ability for combining actions on both flanks.

In the next round Karpov was beaten by Ribli, who played very much in Karpov's style. He bounced back by beating Larsen, and then completed a 2–0 score over Van der Wiel in the double round robin event. In the next four rounds he drew with Timman and Sosonko, defeated Hort then took a quick draw with Dolmatov.

In round 13 Karpov met Ribli with the white pieces, and was obviously keen to avenge his earlier loss. Interestingly, at the start of the present game Karpov had a negative score against Ribli, having won one game, drawn four and lost two. He never lost to the Hungarian grandmaster again, and their lifetime score stands at four wins to Karpov, with twelve draws and two losses.

Ribli faced the world champions seventy eight times. He won seven of those encounters, drew fifty eight and lost thirteen.

## Game 58

Anatoly Karpov – Zoltan Ribli

Amsterdam 1980

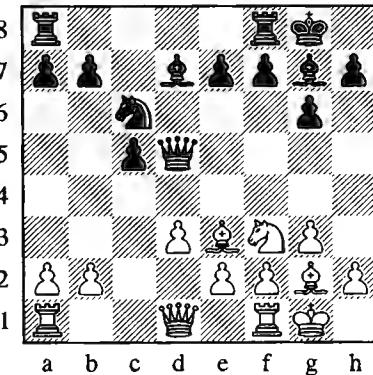
1.c4

Ribli was a renowned Najdorf specialist, and Karpov only entered that territory against him in one out of nine games with the white pieces.

1...c5 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  4.g3 d5 5.cxd5  
 $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g6

This is the only time that Karpov faced this particular response to the English Opening.

7.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  9.d3 0–0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$



11. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Karpov simplifies the position, hoping to make use of his slight advantage in development.

In 1983 he played the black side of the same variation against Geller. The older Russian grandmaster deviated with 11. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  and a draw ensued.

11... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

14. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

After 14... $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  16.d4 White has a small edge.

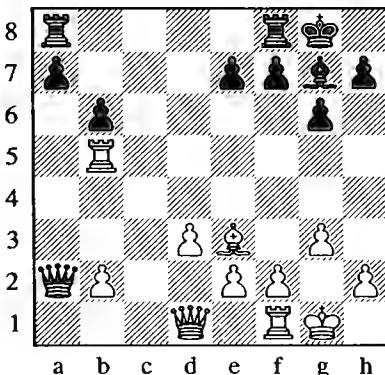
15. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

This was a novelty at the time, which Karpov claims to have found over the board.

16...b6

In his next tournament Ribli gave this variation a try from the opposite side against Timman, who held him to a draw: 16... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

17.  $\mathbb{E}b4$  b6 18.  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}fb8$  19.  $\mathbb{E}a4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  20.  $\mathbb{E}fa1$  a6 21.  $\mathbb{W}a2$  a5 22.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  23.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$  Ribli – Timman, Tilburg 1980. Timman later drew with this variation against Andersson in 1997.



### 17. $\mathbb{W}a1!$ $\mathbb{W}xa1?$

Black should have retreated with 17...  $\mathbb{W}e6$ , when his disadvantage is not too severe. The long time Hungarian number two has a well attuned positional sense, which unfortunately deserted him when making the decision to exchange queens. In the resulting endgame White has a clear plus, and can exert pressure for a long time without taking any risks.

### 18. $\mathbb{E}xa1$ $\mathbb{E}fb8$ 19. $\mathbb{E}a6$ $\mathbb{Q}f8??!$

Ribli underestimates the danger. His best chance may well have been Ostožić's recommendation of 19...  $\mathbb{E}b7$ ? with the idea of giving up a pawn in order to eliminate all the queenside pawns. After 20.  $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}xb6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22.  $\mathbb{E}xa7$  Black has some chances to grovel for a draw, although it will not be much fun for him.

I should add that, at the end of the above line, instead of the immediate capture on a7, Kasparov mentioned the possibility of 22.  $d4$ ! e5 23.  $d5$ , evaluating the position as extremely unpleasant for Black. But perhaps White is being too clever for his own good here, as the subtle 22...  $\mathbb{E}b8$ ! might just rescue

Black: 23.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (23.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}a8$ ) 23...  $\mathbb{E}d8$ ! 24.  $e3$  (or 24.  $\mathbb{E}a4$  e5) 24... e5 Black simplifies to a position with four pawns versus three on the kingside, which should provide good drawing chances.

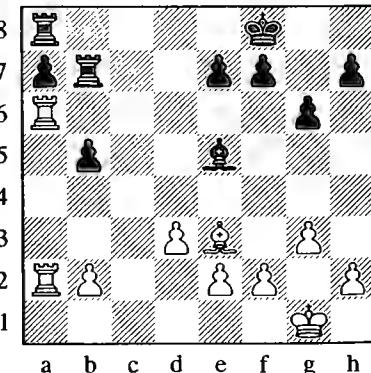
### 20. $\mathbb{E}b4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 21. $\mathbb{E}ba4$ !

21.  $b3$ ?! would give Black time to organize his defences: 21...  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  22.  $\mathbb{E}ba4$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

### 21... $b5$ ?

Black should take the opportunity to destroy the enemy b-pawn: 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  White is a clear pawn up, but plenty of work remains.

### 22. $\mathbb{E}a2$ $\mathbb{E}b7$



### 23. $b3$ !

Keeping the queenside pawn makes Black's life even harder. 23.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  24.  $\mathbb{E}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}xa7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}xb5$  the rook ending with five pawns versus four offers good winning chances, but even that would be too generous to Black at this stage.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 25. $d4$

Karpov starts gaining space.

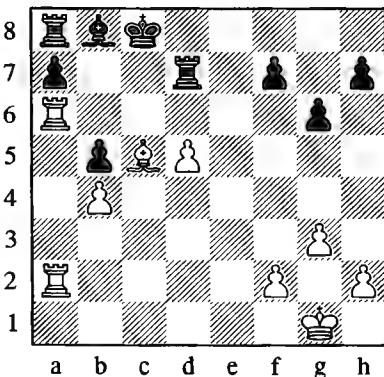
### 25... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 26. $e4$ $e6$ 27. $b4$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$

Ribli played this game uncharacteristically passively. By this stage there was not much else he can do.

### 28.d5

Karpov feels his advantage is so large he does not even need to use his king.

28...exd5 29.exd5  $\mathbb{E}d7$



### 30.d6!

With a single pawn move Karpov paralyses a rook and a bishop.

30... $\mathbb{E}d8$  31. $\mathbb{B}g2$

Having virtually shut down his opponent's entire position, Karpov begins to advance his king.

### 31... $\mathbb{B}d7$

Ostojic mentions the line 31... $\mathbb{B}b7$  32. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  33. $\mathbb{B}f4$  h6 34.h4 when White forces a weakness on the kingside.

Also after 31... $\mathbb{E}e8$  32. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  33. $\mathbb{E}2a5$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  34. $\mathbb{B}f4$  h6 35.h4 White wins according to Kasparov.

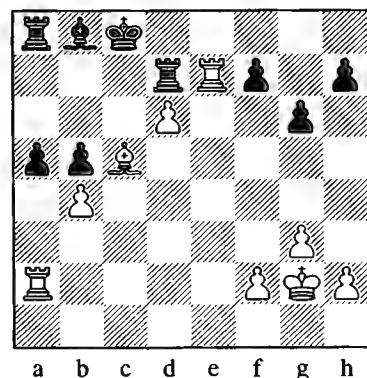
### 32. $\mathbb{E}e2!$ $\mathbb{B}c8$

32... $\mathbb{E}e8$  is met by 33. $\mathbb{E}xe8$   $\mathbb{B}xe8$  34. $\mathbb{B}f3$  f5 35. $\mathbb{B}f4$  and the invasion is decisive.

### 33. $\mathbb{E}e7$ $\mathbb{B}d7$ 34. $\mathbb{E}a2!$

Once again Karpov proves how well he spots his chances against the opponent's king in endgames.

### 34...a5



35. $\mathbb{E}c2!$

1–0

Karpov catches his opponent's king once again. This game was a one-sided affair; Ribli was a shadow of his usual self, nevertheless Karpov's endgame display was flawless. He also beat Larsen in the final round, for a total of 10/14, with seven wins, six draws and one loss. Timman finished in second place, a full point behind.

Karpov's next event was Tilburg, also in the Netherlands. Once again he finished in sole first place ahead of a tough field, with a final score of 7½/11. He lost one game against Larsen, but scored several good wins over Ribli (again!), Timman, Hübner, Andersson and Spassky.

His next tournament in Buenos Aires was not so successful: he only won four out of the thirteen games, and suffered losses to both Timman and Olafsson. His final score of 7½/13 was only good enough to share fourth and fifth places.

Karpov was able to put this bad result behind him at his final event of the year, the Malta Olympiad. Incidentally, Karpov was not present at the 1978 Olympiad as he needed a break after his gruelling match with Korchnoi (although it should be mentioned that Korchnoi himself not only played in the Olympiad, but performed extremely well). His absence proved costly to the Soviets, who lost out to Hungary in the race for the gold medal. In 1980 the competition was once again fierce. After winning in round one, Karpov fell ill and rested for the next two matches. His absence was clearly felt by the Soviet team, who dropped points and fell behind the leaders. By round four Karpov was ready to return to action, and he played the final eleven games without taking a single day off. He drew five in a row, but then started winning and only dropped a single draw in his final six rounds. His final total of 9/12 helped the Soviet team to claw their way back to the top, and they eventually took the gold medal on tie break ahead of Hungary.

## 1980 Summary

Soviet Team Championship: 1½/3 (+0 =3 -0)

Bad Kissingen (1st prize): 4½/6 (+3 =3 -0)

European Team Championship, Skara (Board one): 2/5 (+0 =4 -1)

Bugojno (1st prize): 8/11 (+5 =6 -0)

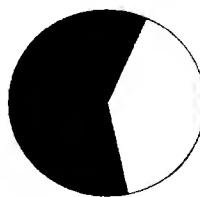
Amsterdam (1st prize): 10/14 (+7 =6 -1)

Tilburg (1st prize): 7½/11 (+5 =5 -1)

Buenos Aires (4th-5th place): 7½/13 (+4 ±7 -2)

Malta Olympiad (Board one): 9/12 (+6 =6 -0)

Total 66.7% (+30 =40 -5)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1981

Rating 2690 (1 in the World)

The world championship candidates cycle had drawn to a close, and 1981 was Karpov's title defence year. Once again his challenger was Korchnoi, although he also found time to play in a few tournaments beforehand.

The first was in Linares, and was the 'very first 'super tournament' to be held in the southern Spanish town, although other grandmaster tournaments had taken place there over the previous few years. Karpov got off to a flying start, winning a nice ending against Quinteros and beating Portisch in a sharp struggle. (The latter game is mentioned in the note to White's seventh move in Game 76, Afifi – Karpov.) He followed with draws against Larsen and Ribli, then beat Ljubojevic in another powerful endgame display. In round six he used the Austrian Attack against the Pirc to defeat Christiansen, which turned out to be a vital result in the battle for overall first place.

In the next round Karpov faced Guillermo Garcia Gonzales. The Cuban grandmaster played the world champions fifteen times, drawing seven games and losing eight. Against Karpov he lost once at the 1977 October Revolution tournament, and this game was their last.

## Game 59

**Guillermo Garcia Gonzales – Anatoly Karpov**

Linares 1981

**1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 c5 3. g3 b6 4.  $\mathbb{Q}g2 \mathbb{Q}b7$  5.0–0 e6**

Karpov seldom played this way, and usually preferred to develop the bishop to g7.

**6. d4 cxd4 7.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  d6 8.  $\mathbb{Q}c3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  9.  $\mathbb{E}d1$**

One of Karpov's previous games continued: 9.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  a6 10.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  11.  $\mathbb{W}d3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  12.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{B}a7$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  0–0 14.  $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  15.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  18. b3  $\mathbb{E}c8$  Black equalized and went on to win in a nice endgame in Grigorian – Karpov, Riga 1975.

**9...a6 10. b3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$**

Karpov encountered this variation a number of times with the white pieces. One such encounter ended in an early draw: 11. e4  $\mathbb{W}b8$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  0–0 13.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  16.  $\mathbb{E}el$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  17.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  18.  $\mathbb{E}ae1$   $\mathbb{E}ed8$  19. h3  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  20.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$  Karpov – Ljubojevic, Manila 1976.

11... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  12. $\mathbb{e}4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

In 1986 Karpov reached a similar though not quite identical position against Ribli, and opted for an interesting plan involving  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ,  $a3$ ,  $b4$  and  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ . See Game 3 of the second volume.

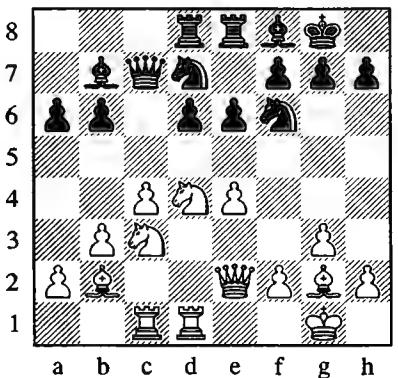
14... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15. $\mathbb{E}ac1$

The Cuban grandmaster plays all the usual moves for this variation.

15... $\mathbb{E}ad8$

In 1977 Karpov won a game with White against Gheorghiu who preferred 15... $\mathbb{E}ac8$ . The text move was used by Ribli to draw with Karpov in the fourth round at Linares.

16. $\mathbb{W}e2$



16... $\mathbb{W}b8$

Now that the queen has vacated the c-file, Black can think about playing ...d5.

17. $\mathbb{E}e1$

White prepares to meet ...d5 with e5.

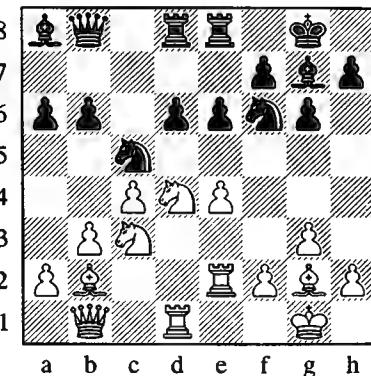
17... $\mathbb{g}6$

Karpov transfers the bishop to g7 and creates another quill of the hedgehog. The d6-pawn has enough protection and is not easy to attack.

18. $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  19. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$

By vacating the b-file, the bishop makes way for the queen to support a future ...b5 break. White will now be reluctant to move either of his knights.

20. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21. $\mathbb{E}e2$



21... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ ?

Karpov wants to provoke a pawn move on the kingside.

22. $\mathbb{h}3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$

Garcia Gonzales just waits.

23... $\mathbb{h}5!$

Karpov wants to soften his opponent on the kingside. Suddenly the alignment of the queen on b8 and king on h2 is uncomfortable for White.

24. $\mathbb{h}4$

It may have been safer not to make any more pawn moves on the kingside, but Karpov has already succeeded in making the position double-edged. After 24. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{h}4$  25. $\mathbb{g}4$   $\mathbb{e}5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  the position is complex with mutual chances.

24... $\mathbb{E}c8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$

Karpov hopes to provoke another pawn move.

**26.f3 ♜e5**

Karpov got what he wanted, and now he decides to return to a different square with the knight. 26...♜f6 was also possible.

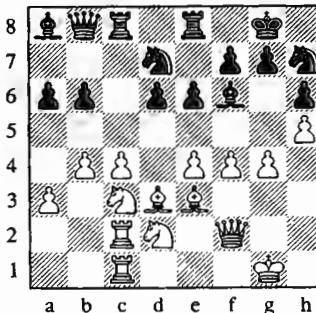
**27.♝dd2 ♛a7**

Karpov continues to prod his opponent from a safe distance.

**28.♛h1 ♛ed8 29.f4?**

Karpov's waiting strategy prevails, as with this move White weakens his position considerably. It was better to wait with a move like 29.♔h2?!, when Black must decide what to do. Perhaps the most natural idea would be to play for ...b5, for instance: 29...♝b8 30.♝d1 ♛d7 31.♝ed2 ♜h6 (after 31...b5? 32.cxb5 axb5 33.♝dxb5 ♛xb5 34.♝xb5 ♛xb5 35.♝xd6 White is better) 32.♝f2 ♛f8? Black can also look to play on the f-file, nevertheless White's position remains sound and the first player should be able to maintain equality.

pawns. (The opening was actually a Sicilian Paulsen rather than a Hedgehog, but the resemblance is obvious.)



**26.e5?** In an equal position White sacrifices material to open up Black's king, but it is unjustified. 26...dxe5 27.g5 exf4 28.♝xf4 ♜e5! (28...♝xg5! was winning as well) 29.g6 fxg6 30.hxg6 ♛xf4 31.gxh7† ♜h8 32.♝f1 ♛f8 33.♛e4 ♜e5 34.♛g2 ♜xc4 0–1 Torre – Karpov, Bad Lauterberg 1977.

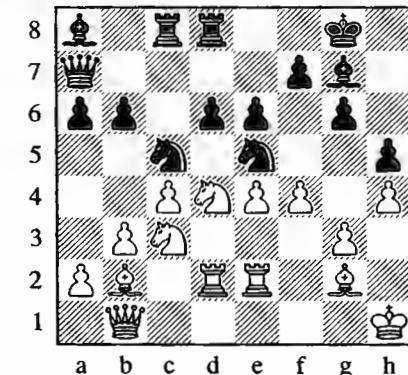
Interestingly this was another tournament in which Karpov got the appetite to play the black side of a hedgehog set-up after having faced it with White.

**30.♝d1?!**

White has occupied too much space with his pawns without proper consolidation. Now he commits a further inaccuracy, but it was already surprisingly hard for him to stay alive. Here are some possibilities:

**30.♝f3** is well met by 30...b5!, for instance 31.cxb5? ♛xc3 32.♝xc3 ♜xe4 and Black wins.

**30.♛d1 e5!** (30...♛c7 31.♝f3 ♜h7 32.♝g2 White has strengthened his defences) 31.fxe5 dxe5 (after 31...♝xe5 32.♛e1 White is worse but he is still in the game) 32.♝c2 (or 32.♝f3 ♛xd2 33.♛xd2 b5 and Black takes over) 32...♝xd2 33.♛xd2 (33.♛xd2?? loses

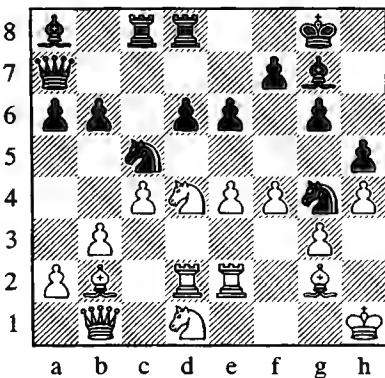
**29...♝g4**

This is a perfect outpost for the knight. White can hardly consider exchanging it with his bishop, as this would weaken his light squares too much.

Here is a previous game in which Karpov's opponent got too carried away advancing his

to 33... $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ ) White has avoided an instant collapse, nevertheless Black has the initiative and can choose between several promising continuations including 33... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ , 33... $b5$  and 33... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

30. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  looks like the best chance: 30... $e5$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ ) 31. $fxe5$   $dxe5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  (32... $f5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}bd5$ ) 33. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $f5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $fxe4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $hxg4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}bd5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  White is living dangerously, but he is still in the game.



30... $e5!$

With this powerful pawn move Karpov breaks up White's pawn chain and gains space in the centre.

31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

White has no adequate defence. 31. $fxe5$ ? is even worse: 31... $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$  The knight on d1 now blocks the queen from defending the g3-pawn. 32. $b4$  This allows the queen to come to the aid of the g-pawn, but loosens White's position on the queenside. 32... $\mathbb{Q}a4!$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $b5!$  35. $cxb5$   $d5!$  36. $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  White's position has fallen apart.

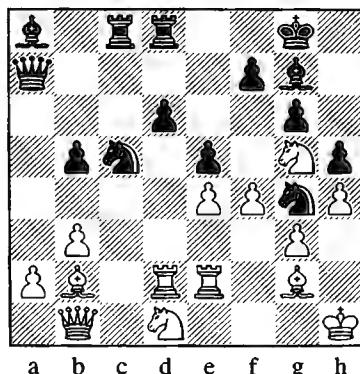
31... $b5!$

Karpov keeps the position complex. 31... $exf4?$  was an alternative route to a large

advantage: 32. $gxf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  34. $f5$  ( $34... \mathbb{Q}f4$ ) 35. $exf5$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  White's position is too open.

32. $cxb5$   $axb5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

If 33. $f5$   $gxf5!$  34. $exf5$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  wins.



33... $b4!$

With this move Karpov secures the position of the knight on c5 while also opening a new angle of attack along the a6-f1 diagonal.

34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$

35. $\mathbb{Q}gh3$  was also unsatisfactory: 35... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}el$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $exf4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  (38. $gxf4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  wins.) 38... $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  39. $gxf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  And White loses the h4-pawn.

35. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  also ends in failure: 35... $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $f5!$  (36... $f6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  is not as convincing) 37. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $fxe4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $exf4$  40. $gxf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  And Black wins.

35... $hxg4$

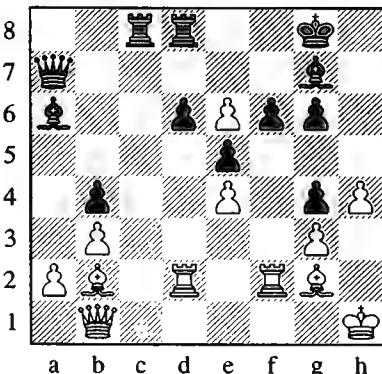
Suddenly White faces a new problem: the knight on g5 is in danger of being trapped.

36. $f5$

Garcia Gonzales closes the position and saves the knight, which allows him to survive for a

little longer. 36.fxe5 was no better: 36...dxe5 37.♗xd8† ♜xd8 38.♗c2 ♖d3 39.♗g1 (39.♗h2 ♗a6) 39...♗xg1† (or 39...♗xa2 40.♗c7 ♘f8 41.♗xb7 ♘xb2 and Black wins) 40.♗xg1 ♖xb2 41.♗xb2 ♘d1† 42.♗f2 ♗a6 43.♗c2 ♘d6 And Black traps the knight.

36...f6! 37.♗e6 ♗xe6 38.fxe6 ♗a6 39.♗f2



39...♗e7

White loses the e6-pawn for no compensation, while his numerous pawn weaknesses remain.

40.♗f1 ♗xf1 41.♗xf1 ♗xe6 42.♗b5 ♘b8  
43.♗c6 ♘f8 44.♗c2 ♘dc8

0-1

White resigned as he is set to lose the a2-pawn as well.

Interestingly in the very next round, against Bellon Lopez, Karpov had to play against the Hedgehog formation, though it arose through a Sicilian this time. He was unable to achieve any advantage and was even a bit worse in the ending, although he managed to draw without any great difficulty. He drew his final three games as well, against Spassky, Kavalek and Gligoric. His final score of 8/11, with five wins and six draws, would usually have been enough to win such a tournament outright.

But at this event the American grandmaster Larry Christiansen, who had lost to Karpov in round six, scored an incredible 8/10 against the rest of the field, and the two combatants tied for first.

Karpov's next event was the Moscow super tournament. He started well, beating Balashov and Geller before drawing with Polugaevsky. His next opponent was another Soviet player, Alexander Beliavsky. The grandmaster from Lvov was also a former World Junior Champion. He played a total of 134 games against the world champions, achieving twenty victories, fifty eight draws and fifty six losses. Beliavsky lost fifteen games to Karpov, beat him thrice and drew nine times. At this point of their career they had only met three times, with one win apiece and one draw.

## Game 60

Anatoly Karpov – Alexander Beliavsky

Moscow 1981

1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 ♗e7 4.♘f3 ♗f6 5.♗f4  
0-0 6.e3 c5 7.dxc5 ♗c6?!

This sideline is less reliable than 7...♗xc5, but Beliavsky had used it a few times previously so he must have felt comfortable with it.

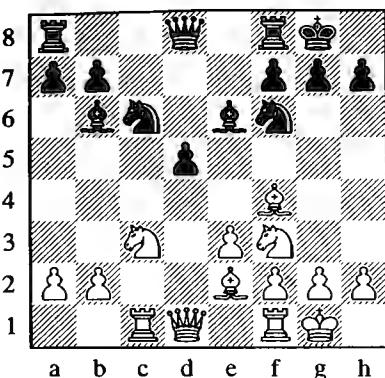
8.cxd5 exd5 9.♗e2 ♗xc5 10.0-0 ♗e6

Black cannot exchange his isolated pawn, as 10...d4? 11.♗a4! wins the pawn.

11.♗c1

Mikhailchishin used 11.♗e5 to beat Beliavsky earlier in the same year, but the latter must have studied the game and felt confident enough to repeat it.

11...♗b6



### 12... $\mathbb{Q}a4$

The queen vacates the d1-square to make way for a rook. A year earlier Beliavsky held a draw with little difficulty after 12... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  14...d4 14...exd4 15... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  16... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  16... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  18... $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  18... $\mathbb{Q}a1$  19... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  19... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  20... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  20... $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  21... $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  21... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  22... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  22... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  23... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  ½–½ Vaganian – Beliavsky, Vienna 1980.

### 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

The grandmaster from Lvov wants to exchange the e2-bishop. Another game from the same year continued: 12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13... $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  13... $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  14... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 15... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  15... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  16... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  Black was under some pressure but he eventually managed to hold a tough endgame, Seirawan – Byrne, South Bend 1981.

### 13... $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ 14... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe2\uparrow$

Up to this point the players had been following an earlier meeting between Vaganian and Beliavsky from 1977. That game continued 14...a5 15... $\mathbb{Q}a3$  15... $\mathbb{Q}xe2\uparrow$  16... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  16... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  18... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  18... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  Black succeeded in holding a draw, although at this stage the queenless position is a bit unpleasant for him.

Later White deviated with 17... $\mathbb{Q}ed4$ , which led to an advantage and an eventual victory for him in Gheorghiu – Soylu, Athens 1981. The position is similar to the main game, although the lunge with the a-pawn could easily end

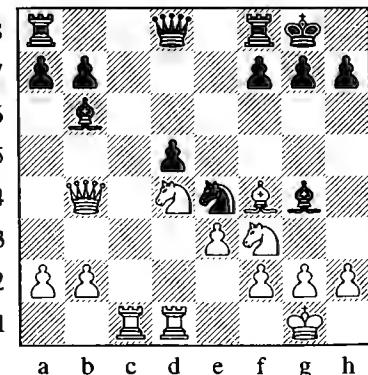
up leading to a serious weakening of Black's queenside.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$ 15... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 16... $\mathbb{Q}ed4$

Even without the bishop, White maintains some pressure in the centre.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Compromising the opponent's kingside structure would not solve Black's problems: 16... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  17... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  18... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  18... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  19... $\mathbb{Q}cd1$  The d5-pawn is vulnerable.



### 17.h3!

This clever move not only creates a potentially useful escape square for the white king, but more importantly forces the enemy bishop to choose between two diagonals.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

It is safer to protect the isolated pawn.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}c2$ !

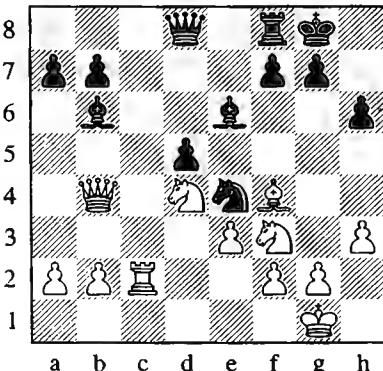
Karpov fights for control over the c-file.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 19... $\mathbb{Q}dc1$ 19... $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ 20... $\mathbb{Q}xc2$ h6?

This innocent looking move has far reaching consequences. This game was the subject of enormous publicity in the USSR, where it was said that weakening one square is enough to cause one's downfall against Karpov.

White is a bit better whatever Black does. For instance, 20...g6 is met by 21.Qe5 and the bishop heads for d4.

Another interesting line is 20...Bc8 21.a4! a5 22.Bb3 Qc5 23.Qxe6 Qxb3 24.Qxd8 Bxd8 25.Qf1 f6 26.Bc3 Qc5 27.Qc7! when White keeps his advantage.



### 21.a4 Bc8 22.Qxe6 Bxe6

After 22...Bxe6? 23.a5 Qxa5 24.Bxb7 Be7 25.Ba6 White is clearly better.

### 23.a5 Qxa5 24.Bxb7 Bb6

24...Be7? was better, for instance 25.Bb5 (25.Bc6 Bb6) 25...Bb6 26.Qe5 (or 26.Qe5 Bd8) 26...Bf8! and it is not easy for White to increase the pressure.

### 25.Qe5 Qd6?

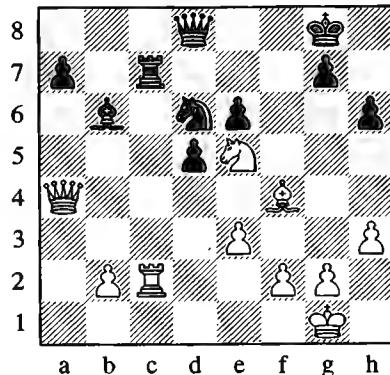
The knight is unstable here. 25...Be7 was once again preferable.

### 26.Bc6 Be7 27.Ba4!

Karpov clears the c6-square.

### 27...Bc7

Other moves are not any better. For instance, 27...Bc8 28.Ba6? is unpleasant, while after 27...Bb7 28.Ba3! Qe4 29.Ba6 leaves Black in trouble.

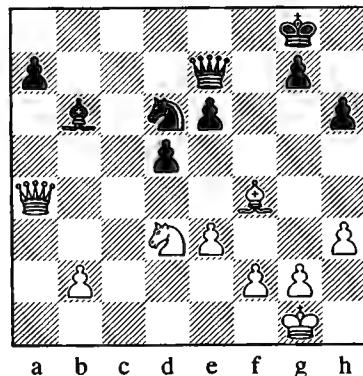


### 28.Qxc7 Bxc7 29.Qd3 Be7

Black understandably wants to get out of the pin, but it does not save the game.

29...Bc4 releases the pin, but still loses after 30.Qd7! Bxd3 31.Qxe6† Qh7 32.Qxd6 d4 33.e4 Bd2 34.Qf5† and Black's king is caught.

29...Qf8!? avoids the fate suffered by Black in the game, but after 30.Qa3 Black is stuck in a double pin. The continuation might be 30...Qe7 31.h4 Bc6 32.b3 (32.h5!) 32...a5 33.Qe5 Bc5 34.Ba4 and Black can hardly move.



### 30.Qxd6!

Karpov once again demonstrates his deadliness at king-hunting in endgames.

**30... $\mathbb{W}xd6$  31. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$**

Interestingly the earlier ...h7-h6 move can be judged in two different ways. Beginning with the positive, it created an escape square for the king.

**32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$**

On the other hand, the chronic weakness of the g6-square puts Black in serious trouble.

**32...e5?**

Beliavsky covers the g6-square, but misses an even more powerful threat.

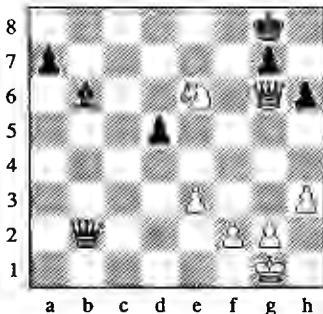
**32...d4!?**

This was the best chance, although it is not enough to save the game.

32... $\mathbb{Q}d4?$  33. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34.b3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  35. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$  wins.

32... $\mathbb{W}e5$  allows White to win in fine style:

33. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$



35.g4!! Black has no good defence against g5 with mating threats.

33. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

35.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  is not so clear.

35... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  36. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

And White wins, as pointed out by Belov.

33. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  34. $\mathbb{W}f7$

**1-0**

Black resigned in view of 34... $\mathbb{W}e7$  35. $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  36. $\mathbb{W}xe5$  when White is about to collect a second pawn and will win easily.

After a flying start with three wins from the first four rounds, Karpov slowed down and drew most of his remaining games, although he did register two more wins, against Timman in round eight and Smyslov in round ten. He finished with five wins and nine draws, for a total of 9½/13, thus winning the tournament decisively, a point and a half clear of Polugaevsky, Kasparov and the sixty year old Smyslov.

Karpov's next tournament, the last before his title defence, took place in Amsterdam. He started with a shocking defeat at the hands of Hort, but then bounced back to defeat Ljubojevic. In the third round he had his one and only clash with Jan Donner. The Dutch grandmaster played forty four games against the world champions. He won three of those games; interestingly all three victories came with the black pieces. He lost to them thirty three times and drew the other eight. Donner had a dismal score against Soviet players and according to the database he only won four games against them, although two of those were against world champions.

## Game 61

**Jan Donner – Anatoly Karpov**

Amsterdam 1981

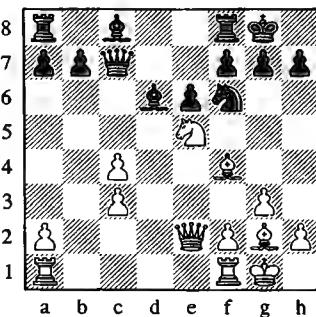
**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4. $\mathbb{W}c2$**

Karpov faced this line numerous times with the black pieces, but he also played it with White from time to time.

**4...c5**

Amazingly, up until 1994 Karpov did not lose a single game in the 4.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  Nimzo-Indian. The text move was an unusual one for him, 4...0–0 being his usual choice. Let me show you two of his games against the German grandmaster Gerald Hertneck. 5.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (5.a3 is the main line and the most critical, and 5.e4!! is also interesting.) 5...c5 6.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Here Hertneck tried two different approaches:

a) 7.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}ce4$  9.0–0 White undertakes a structural weakening, hoping that his active piece play will compensate. 9... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  10.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  11.e4 d6 12.e5 dxe5 13.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  14.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$



15... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ ! This is a fine positional move, Karpov gets rid of the strong e5 knight. 16.  $\mathbb{B}ab1$  f6 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  19.  $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{B}d1$  a5 22.  $\mathbb{B}bd4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ! 23.  $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  24. g4 a4 25. c4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  26. h4  $\mathbb{E}a5$  27. g5  $\mathbb{E}f5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  g6 29.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  fxg5 Black went on to win in Hertneck – Karpov, Baden-Baden 1992.

b) In the second game Hertneck played a bit too passively: 7.e3  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b6 9.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  d6 12.b3 e5! Karpov plays against White's dark-squared bishop. 13.0–0  $\mathbb{E}c8$  14.  $\mathbb{B}fc1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  15. b4  $\mathbb{Q}ce4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$ !!  $\mathbb{E}c7$  17.  $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  18. a4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ! 19. b5  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  20. a5 h6 21.  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}fc8$  22. h3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}ec5$  24. axb6 axb6 25. f3 e4 26. fxe4  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

$\mathbb{Q}xe4$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$  d5 30.  $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  Karpov soon won the b5-pawn and went on to win this game as well, Hertneck – Karpov, Germany 1994.

### 5.dxc5 0–0 6. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

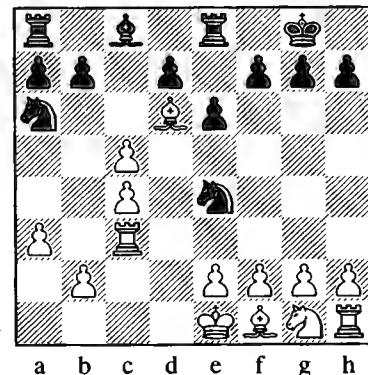
This line was already known to be harmless. 6.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  is critical.

### 6... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}d6$

The bishop comes to a nice square, but the manoeuvre costs valuable time.

7...  $\mathbb{E}e8$  8.a3  $\mathbb{W}a5$  9.  $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3\uparrow$  10.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xc3\uparrow$  11.  $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$

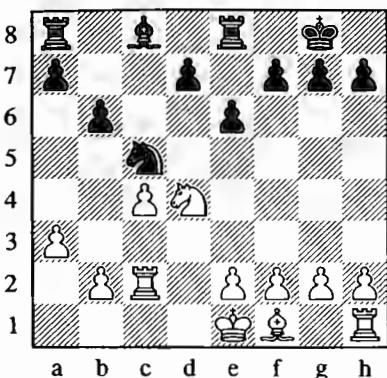
Black easily regains his pawn while maintaining a lead in development. It is already White who has to be more careful.



12.  $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}axc5$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 15.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

The three-time Dutch champion moves the knight again before developing his other pieces. The text move is not the ultimate cause of his demise, but it is the first step towards his decline.

Safer was 15.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (15...  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  16.e3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ) 16.e3 a5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  when the position is so equal that even a magician like Karpov would have had a hard time conjuring something.



**15...a5!**

Black may be glad for the opportunity to fix the queenside later.

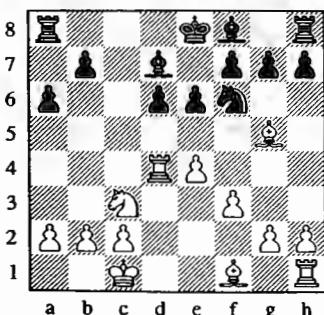
**16.Qb5!! Qd8 17.Qd6**

It would be easy to criticize White for making so many knight moves, but objectively the idea is not bad.

**17...Qb7 18.Qxb7?**

But this is a serious mistake. Having spent so many tempos with this piece, he should not have exchanged it so cheaply. Instead after 18.f3 a4 19.e4 White's position remains quite playable.

When playing through this game I was reminded of a game of Kasparov:

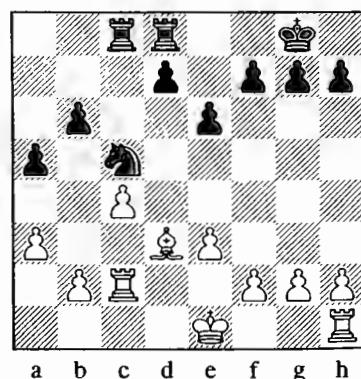


**12.Qa4! Rc6 13.Qb6 Qd8 14.Qc4! Re7**

**15.Qa5! Rc8 16.Qb4 d5 17.Qxc6 bxc6 18.Qb7**  
Kasparov – Mchedlishvili, Bled (ol) 2002.  
Thanks to his extraordinary use of his knight, Kasparov obtained a clear advantage and went on to win. It was a magical idea, even if, as I suspect, it was home preparation all the way.

Donner and Kasparov both invested numerous tempos in order to exchange a knight for an enemy bishop. The difference is in the context: Kasparov was able to create weaknesses and invade with his rook, while Donner has merely lost time without achieving anything special, and he will suffer the consequences.

**18...Qxb7 19.e3 Rac8 20.Qd3 Qc5**



**21.Qe2?**

Donner makes one more unnecessary move, this time with the bishop. He should have preferred:

**21.Qe2! a4**

**21...Qxd3? 22.Qxd3 d5 23.Rh1!** Donner may have overlooked this important resource. White can hold the position with a pawn sacrifice as his king is well placed in the centre. **23...Rxc4 (23...dxc4† 24.Qe2 b5 25.b3 White holds.) 24.b3 Rxc2 25.Rxc2 Rf8 26.Rc6 Rb8 27.Rc7** White has enough activity to draw the position a pawn down.

**22.Rc3**

Also after **22.Qd1 f5 23.Rcc1 Rf7 24.Rc2**

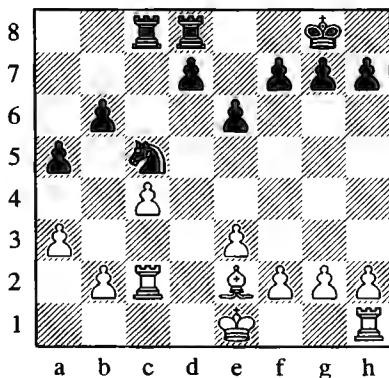
$\mathbb{Q}e7$  25.h4 Black is in control, but his position is not as dominant as the one he obtains in the game.

22... $\mathbb{F}5$  23. $\mathbb{A}c2$

White could also consider 23.h4!?, anticipating the opponent's kingside expansion.

23... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  24. $\mathbb{E}b1$  g5 25.b4? axb3 26. $\mathbb{A}xb3$

Nobody would enjoy playing White's position against Karpov, but it is better than the one he reaches in the game. At least the first player has a target on b6.



21...a4!

This ensures that the knight will have a stable base on c5 for the rest of the game.

22.f3  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  23. $\mathbb{A}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

White has no time to lose – a sloppy move such as 24.h4? would run into 24...d5!.

24... $\mathbb{E}dc8$  25. $\mathbb{E}c3$ !

Donner finds the only move to remain in the game.

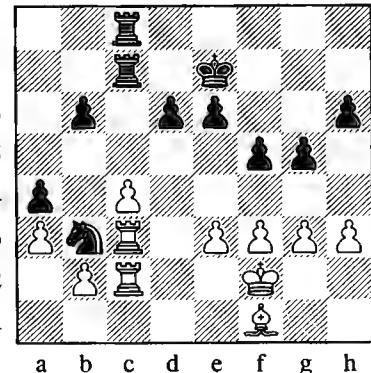
25... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  26. $\mathbb{E}hc1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

White is desperately passive, but he might have considered 27.h4!? in anticipation of Black's kingside advance.

27... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  h6

Karpov is in no hurry, and merely inches his way forwards on the kingside.

29. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{E}h5$  30.h3  $\mathbb{E}hc5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$   
32. $\mathbb{E}1c2$  d6 33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  g5 34.g3  $\mathbb{E}5c7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   
f5 36. $\mathbb{Q}f2$



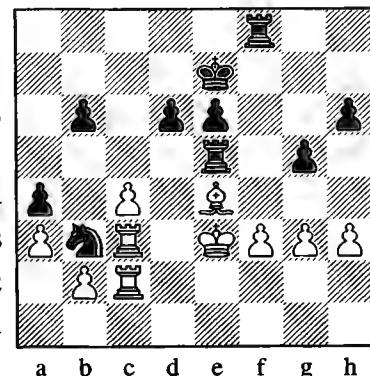
36... $\mathbb{E}f8$ !

Preparing to open a second front. White cannot easily transfer his pieces to the kingside as he is short of space.

37. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  f4 38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

It is hard to recommend anything for White, for instance after 38.exf4 gxf4 39.g4 e5 Black also dominates.

38... $\mathbb{E}c5$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  fxе3† 40. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}e5$ †  
41. $\mathbb{Q}e4$



**41...Qc5!**

Karpov keeps torturing his opponent. In practical terms this was the safest way to ensure victory, although Black could also have won by more direct means:

**41...b5?!**

41...d5? would be too hasty, and after 42.cxd5 exd5 43.Qc7† Qf6 44.Qc6† White survives.

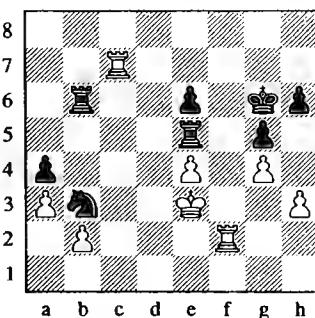
**42.cxb5**

After 42.Qd3 Black can even sacrifice an exchange in the style of Petrosian: 42...Rxe4? (There is also 42...bxc4† 43.Qxc4 d5 44.Qc7† Qf6 45.Qh7 Rg1 46.Qa7 Qe5 and Black should win.) 43.Qxe4 bxc4 44.Qe3 d5 With a decisive advantage.

**42...d5 43.Qc7† Qf6 44.b6**

White seems to have dangerous counterplay, but it is not quite enough.

44...dxe4 45.fxe4 Rb8 46.Rf2† Qg6 47.g4 Rxb6



**48.Rff7**

48.Qcf7? Rf5!! is a nice touch.

48...Rc5 49.Qce7 Ra5 50.Qg7† Qf6 51.Qgf7† Qe5 52.Qf5† Qd6

And Black wins. Still, it was hardly worth playing in such a risky fashion over the board. After the game continuation I doubt that White can hold the position, and even if a narrow path to survival does exist, it would be almost impossible to withstand the pressure over the board.

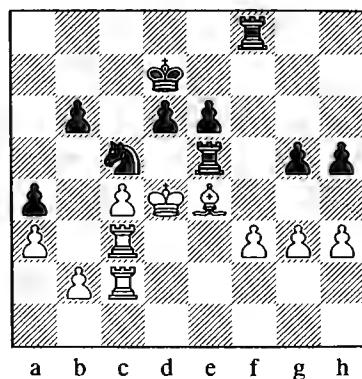
**42.Qd4 Qb3† 43.Qd3 Qd7 44.Qe3 Qc5**

Karpov continues to wear down his opponent.

**45.Qd4 Rc8 46.Rf2 Qb3† 47.Qd3 Rg8**

**48.Qfc2 h5! 49.Qe3 Qc5 50.Qd4**

Finally the time has come for direct action.



**50...g4!**

Removing the defender of the bishop.

**51.Qe3**

If 51.hxg4 hxg4 52.Rh2 gxf3 wins.

**51...gx f3 52.Qxf3 Qb3† 53.Qd3?**

This blunders a piece, although White was lost anyway.

**53...Rxe3†**

**0-1**

Over the remainder of the tournament Karpov achieved two more wins and six draws. His overall score of 7/11 was slightly below par for his high standards, and was only good enough to share second place with Portisch, behind the victorious Timman. After Amsterdam it was time for the main event of Karpov's year: defending his title against Korchnoi.

## Second match with Korchnoi for the World Championship

The match began at the start of October, and took place in the town of Merano in northern Italy. Since his narrow defeat in the 1978 match, Viktor the Terrible had maintained a busy tournament schedule, although he was unable to participate in the very best events in the world due to the ongoing boycott from the Soviets. Some of Korchnoi's tournament triumphs were deeply impressive, while on other occasions he performed disappointingly. Still, in 1980 he defeated his old enemy Petrosian in the candidates quarter-final match, scoring two wins with seven draws and no defeats. He followed that by finishing joint first in the strong Phillips and Drew tournament in London. Then in the semi-final of the candidates matches he narrowly defeated Polugaevsky by a score of 7½–6½, with three wins, two losses and nine draws. In the final he met Hübner and once again won by three wins to two, although this time there were just three draws as the German grandmaster resigned the match with two adjournments left to play.

Even after securing the right to challenge Karpov for the second time, Korchnoi took part in a number of tournaments in 1981. Despite the fact that he had passed the age of fifty, his results were impressive, especially at Lone Pine where he won a very strong open tournament. By the time he met Karpov his rating had risen to an impressive 2695, just five points short of the champion.

Despite Korchnoi's undoubted status as a worthy contender, the match was strikingly one-sided. Karpov won the first two games, drew the third, then won again in Game Four. Already he was halfway to victory. Korchnoi steadied his ship and drew Game Five, before striking back in Game Six and drawing the next two. But in Game Nine he was out of

form, and Karpov punished him instructively. The next three games were drawn. In Game Thirteen Korchnoi beat Karpov nicely in an Orthodox Queen's Gambit, but Karpov struck right back in the next game after Korchnoi misplayed an Open Spanish.

Just as in the first match, the score line stood at 5–2, but this time Karpov had the benefit of experience and did not let his rival back into the match. After three more draws, he killed off the challenger. Here is the decisive game.

### Game 62

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

World Championship, Merano (18) 1981

**1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.♗b5 a6**

Karpov won Game Two, his first white game of the match, in the slightly offbeat line 3...♗f6 4.0–0 ♗xe4 5.d4 ♗e7. In Game Four Korchnoi switched to a Petroff but lost there too. In Game Six he returned to his tried and tested Open Spanish and won. This led Karpov to avoid the Ruy Lopez by switching to the Italian for two games, and 1.c4 in another. He did not return to the Ruy Lopez until Game Fourteen, after he and his team had prepared some new ideas.

**4.♗a4 ♗f6 5.0–0 ♗xe4**

Over the course of the two world championship matches between these two rivals, the Open Spanish featured in twelve games. Karpov won four games to Korchnoi's two, and the other six were drawn. Karpov also won one game in their 1972 training match in this opening.

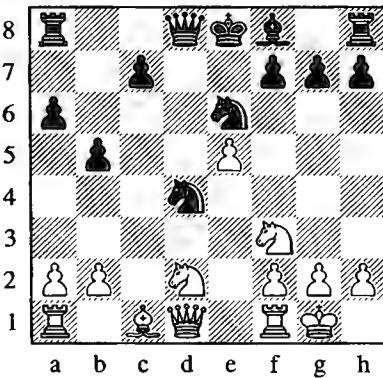
**6.d4 b5 7.♗b3 d5 8.dxe5 ♗e6 9.♗bd2**

With three wins, three draws and no losses, Karpov scored much better with this move than 9.c3.

9... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  10.c3 d4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$

Karpov no longer uses 11. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ !?, the revelation of Baguio.

11... $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  12.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}cxd4$



13.a4!?

Karpov and his team prepared for the match very hard, and this was another new idea. It has stood the test of time, and nearly three decades later it is still regarded as one of White's main tries for an advantage.

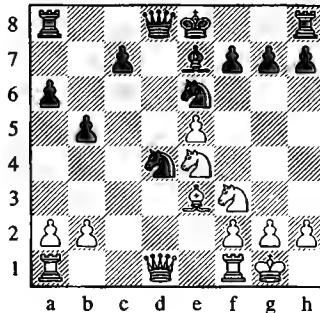
The main idea is, unsurprisingly, to capture on b5 at an opportune moment. If Black takes back with the knight then his queenside pawns will be isolated and vulnerable. If he takes with the pawn the queen will be diverted to a8, away from the centre. Black could move his rook to b8, but then White gets the a-file.

13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Karpov certainly anticipated the Open Spanish, and this was another new idea which he prepared earlier in the match. In Game Fourteen it worked very well, but in the sixteenth Korchnoi neutralized it.

13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Now Black must make the right choice with the knight.



14... $\mathbb{Q}f5!$

14... $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$ ? The challenger's initial reaction to the novelty was not the best. 15. $\mathbb{W}xf3$  0-0 16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  18. $\mathbb{Exf6}$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  19. $\mathbb{Fxg7}$   $\mathbb{Ed8}$  20.h4 c5 21. $\mathbb{Eac1}$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  22.h5  $\mathbb{We5}$  23.h6  $\mathbb{W}xb2$  24. $\mathbb{Ed7}\#$ ! The champion already had a winning position, Karpov – Korchnoi, Merano (14) 1981.

Two games later, Korchnoi was prepared with a better answer.

15. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0-0 16. $\mathbb{Q}eg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  g6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{fxe6}$  19. $\mathbb{Ea1}$   $\mathbb{W}d5$

Black was close to equal. Although he later allowed Karpov to develop a bit of pressure, he was able to hold the draw in Karpov – Korchnoi, Merano (16) 1981.

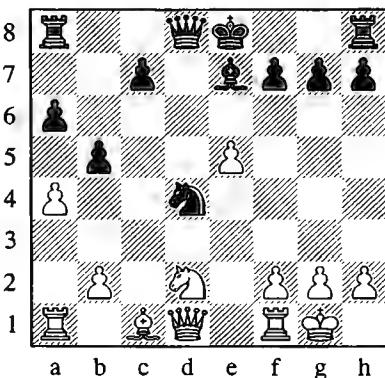
13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

With so much at stake, Korchnoi makes the safest move. 13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is riskier after 14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , for instance: 14...0-0?! (It looks as though Anand simply blundered when he played this move. 14... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  was better.) 15. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$  16. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  17. $\mathbb{axb5}$   $\mathbb{axb5}$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$   $\mathbb{Exa1}$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Exf1}\#$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  Fortunately for Black, his fortress is not easy to penetrate. 21.g3 (21. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22. $\mathbb{W}xb5??$   $\mathbb{Ed1}\#$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$ ) 21... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22. $\mathbb{W}b7$  g6 23. $\mathbb{W}xb5$  c5 24.h4?! h5 25.b4? After exchanging the last queenside pawn Black held easily in Topalov – Anand, Dos Hermanas 1996. It is surprising that such a great player as Topalov was unable to create any serious winning chances with an

extra queen. Despite the final result, Black's opening was not a success.

#### 14... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

14... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  was Korchnoi's choice when he repeated the same line fifteen years later: 15.axb5  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  16.bxa6 0–0 17. $\mathbb{Q}a4?$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{B}fb8$  19. $\mathbb{E}a5$  (According to Kasparov 19.f3  $\mathbb{W}e6$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  fxe6 21.a7 gives a tangible advantage.) 19... $\mathbb{W}d6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  22. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  Black was unable to hold this inferior endgame in Topalov – Korchnoi, Madrid 1996.



#### 15. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Karpov could have inflicted a slight weakening on the black queenside with 15.axb5  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ , but he wants more. The game might continue 16. $\mathbb{W}g4$  (or 16. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0–0 17. $\mathbb{Q}a4?$ ) 16...0–0 17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  when Black is a bit worse, but should be able to live with his disadvantage.

#### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Yusupov played 15...0–0 three times in 1989. 16.axb5  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  18. $\mathbb{W}d5!$  (In the first two games the Russian held the somewhat worse position after 18. $\mathbb{W}c2$  against both Adams and Ivanchuk.) 18... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  19. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  20.f4 h5 21.h3  $\mathbb{E}ab8$  22. $\mathbb{E}fd1$  Once again Black had an inferior position and this time

he was unable to hold in Chandler – Yusupov, Hastings 1989.

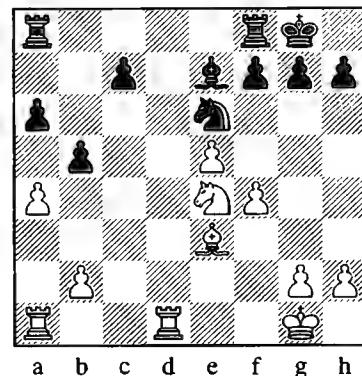
#### 16. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 0–0 17.f4!

Karpov wants to gain space and drive away the well placed knight.

#### 17... $\mathbb{W}xd1$

17... $\mathbb{g}6?$  would be asking for trouble on the kingside: 18. $\mathbb{W}f3$  (18.g4?) is also promising, but hardly necessary 18... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (18... $\mathbb{b}xa4$ ? 19. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  20.f5 White's attack is too strong) 19. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  20. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  Black has too many weak points in his position without achieving anything in return.

#### 18. $\mathbb{E}fxd1$



#### 18... $\mathbb{E}fb8$ ?

Korchnoi is willing to give up material in order to eliminate White's queenside pawns. The idea is sensible enough, except for the fact that there is no time to execute it. In a few subsequent games Black attempted to improve with:

#### 18... $\mathbb{E}ad8$

Two other moves have been suggested by commentators:

18...f5 Black hopes to obtain some breathing space on the kingside. 19.exf6 gxf6 (19... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ?! 20.f5  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  21.fxe6 is tough for

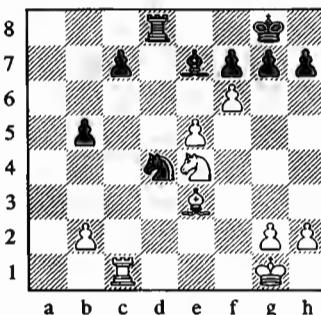
Black) 20.f5 ♜g7 21.g4 Black is cramped and he is certainly worse, although his position still looks preferable to the game.

18...♜fd8? 19.axb5 axb5 20.♜xa8 ♜xa8 21.f5 ♜d8 22.♜xd8† ♜xd8 According to Kasparov Black has chances to survive because of the limited material.

19.axb5 axb5 20.f5!

After 20.♜dc1 g6 21.♜a5 ♜d3 22.♞f2 ♜b3 23.♝c2 ♜d8 24.♛d2 ♜b4 25.g3 c5 Black had solved all his problems in Kaiumov – Safin, Tashkent 1992.

20...♜xd1† 21.♜xd1 ♜d8 22.♜c1 ♜d4 23.f6



23...♜e2†

Also after 23...♜xf6 24.exf6 ♜e2† 25.♞f2 ♜xc1 26.♝xc1 gxsf6 27.♞xf6† Black would face a long and unpleasant defence.

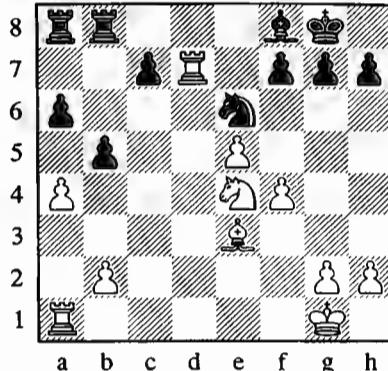
24.♞f2 ♜xc1 25.fxe7 ♜e8 26.♝xc1 ♜xe7 27.♝f4 f6 28.♝e3 fxe5 29.♝g3

Adams – Unzicker, Germany 1996. Despite his slight material deficit, White is in control and the English grandmaster eventually squeezed the full point out of the position. I wonder if the German grandmaster would have managed to hold the ending when he was younger and in his prime.

19.♜d7!

Moving the rook to the seventh rank is both natural and powerful.

19...♚f8



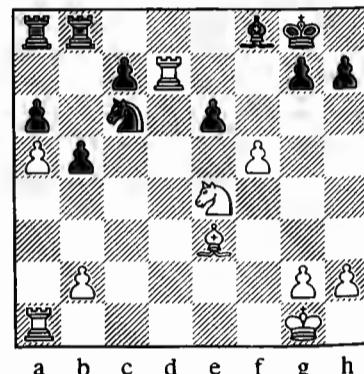
20.f5!

Karpov gains even more space and pushes the enemy knight back. Korchnoi is a great defender, but the position with all five of his pieces on the eighth rank is too much even for him.

20...♛d8 21.a5!

Karpov retains his queenside pawns and prevents the black rooks from becoming active.

21...♝c6 22.e6! fxe6



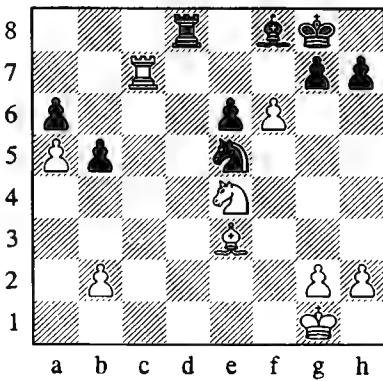
23.f6!

A rook on the seventh rank can often hurt the enemy king, and so it proves here.

23... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

Korchnoi fights to relieve the pressure around his king. Black has no time to defend the c-pawn with 23... $\mathbb{E}c8?$  as after 24. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$  White's pieces simply murder Black's king: 25... $\mathbb{E}d8$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  27. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  28. $f\text{xxg7}$  Black can resign.

24. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  25. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{E}xc7$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}d8$



27.h3?

Karpov commits an inaccuracy in the endgame, which is rare for him. He must have sensed that he was clearly better, and the pressure of winning the match may have affected him.

The correct continuation was 27. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ , driving the knight away and thus preventing Black from contesting the seventh rank. Play may continue 27... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{E}d4$  29. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  30. $\mathbb{E}e7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ ? 31. $f\text{xe7}$  and White wins.

27...h6

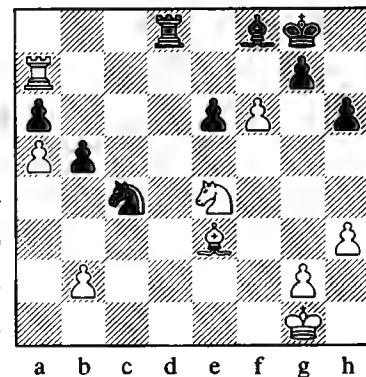
Korchnoi misses his opportunity for 27... $\mathbb{E}d7!$ , taking the seventh rank away from Karpov's rook: 28. $\mathbb{E}c8$   $\mathbb{E}d1\uparrow$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{gxf6}$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}b1$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}xb2\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}b3\uparrow$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  Black is still worse but he has chances to draw.

28. $\mathbb{E}a7$

28... $\mathbb{Q}f2!$  would have prevented the idea in the next note.

28... $\mathbb{Q}c4?$

28... $\mathbb{E}d1\uparrow!$  was Black's last chance to make a fight of the game. 29. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}b1$  Targeting the b2-pawn gives Black reasonable chances to survive. 30. $f\text{xxg7}$  (After 30. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{E}xb2\uparrow$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}b3$  Black is active enough to hold.) 30... $\mathbb{E}xb2\uparrow$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  32. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black has decent counterplay.



29. $\mathbb{Q}b6!$

By forcing the rook to vacate the open file, Karpov prevents any counterplay for a long time. From now on Korchnoi never gets a chance to obtain any active play.

29... $\mathbb{E}b8$

29... $\mathbb{E}d1\uparrow$  leaves the f8-bishop too vulnerable, and 30. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}b1$  31. $f7\uparrow$  wins easily.

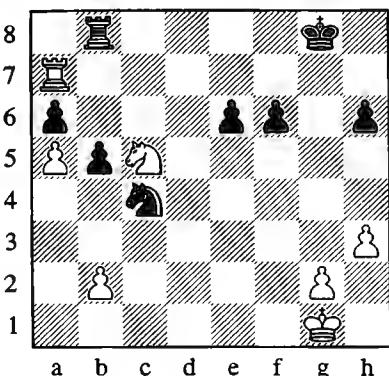
30. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

Karpov exchanges the bishop which holds together the defence of the black king.

30... $\mathbb{Q}xc5\uparrow$

After 30... $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  31. $f7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{E}xf8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  White wins.

**31.♕xc5 gxf6**



**32.b4!**

Other moves also win, but preserving the queenside pawns is the safest path for White.

**32...♝d8 33.♝xa6 ♔f7 34.♝a7† ♔g6  
35.♝d7!**

By taking away the d-file from Black's rook, Karpov eliminates any risk of counterplay.

**35...♝e8 36.a6 ♜a8 37.♝b7 ♔f5 38.♝xb5**

Facing two connected passed pawns, Korchnoi has no chance to survive.

**39...♛e5 39.♝b7 ♛d5 40.♝f7 f5 41.♝f6  
1-0**

Korchnoi sealed his 41st move, but resigned his hopeless position without resuming. Thus Karpov won the match by the emphatic score of six wins to two, with ten draws. At thirty years of age, he had not even reached the height of his powers. It became clear that the fifty year old Korchnoi was unlikely to pose a serious threat to Karpov's crown ever again.

## 1981 Summary

Linares (1st place): 8/11 (+5 =6 -0)

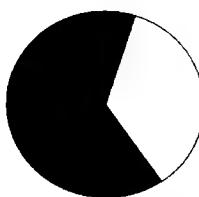
Four Teams, Moscow (Board one): 3½/6 (+1 =5 -0)

Moscow (1st place): 9/13 (+5 =8 -0)

Amsterdam (2nd-3rd place): 7/11 (+4 =6 -1)

World Championship match versus Korchnoi: Won 11–7 (+6 =10 -2)

Total 65.3% (+21 =35 -3)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1982

Rating 2720 (1 in the World)

Karpov's first tournament of the year was in Mar del Plata, on the coast of northern Argentina. Up to this point he had not achieved much success in Latin America, and the present event was also not one of the high points of his career. He started well enough, with a win over Larsen and three draws, but then he suffered a defeat against Timman. He picked up a win and two draws from the next three, but then lost to Garcia Palermo. After two more draws, Karpov faced Franco Ocampos in round twelve. The Spanish grandmaster faced the world champions eight times, losing three games and drawing five. This was his first encounter with Karpov. They met once more in 1995 and drew.

## Game 63

Anatoly Karpov – Zenon Franco Ocampos

Mar del Plata 1982

1.e4 c5 2.Qb3 Qc6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qc3 d6 6.Qg5 e6 7.Qd2 a6 8.0–0–0 h6

The Spaniard had not played this particular move before. Karpov had faced it just once, against Van der Wiel in 1980.

9.Qe3

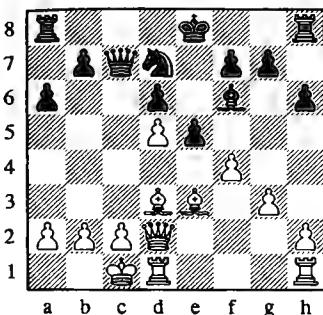
Karpov tried 9.Qf4 in some later games.

9...Qxd4

Karpov faced a couple of other moves here as well:

9...Qd7 10.f3 Qc7 11.g4 Qe5 12.h4 b5 13.Qg1 h5 14.g5 Qg8 15.Qe2 Qb8 16.f4 b4 17.Qb1 Qg4 18.Qxa6 g6 19.Qg1 Qxe3 20.Qxe3 Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1980. Black is in trouble due to his undeveloped kingside, and he went on to lose. This game shows how difficult it can be to understand openings. The Dutch grandmaster is a very fine player, yet in the early days of the variation he was unable to find the right plan.

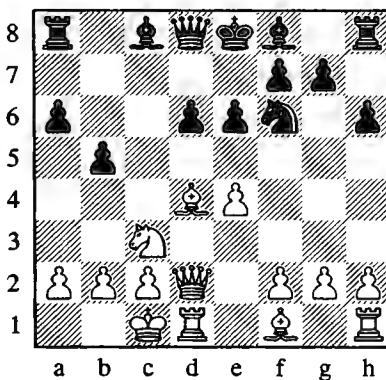
In the next year Timman played the line differently: 9...Qe7 10.f3 Qxd4 11.Qxd4 e5 12.Qe3 Qe6 13.Qd5 Qxd5 14.exd5 Qd7 15.g3? Qg5 16.f4 Qf6 17.Qd3 Qc7



18... $\mathbb{W}b4!$  Karpov finds a novel queen manoeuvre; the lady is heading for the e4-square. 18...b5 19. $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  20.h4 a5 21. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  Karpov – Timman, Linares 1983. The fact that Black felt the need to make such an ugly king move indicates that he has real problems, although to Timman's credit, he managed to survive and draw.

#### 10... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ b5

10...e5 11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  is also possible.



#### 11.f3

During his world championship reign, Karpov had two disappointing losses in the Rauzer when his opponent played ...a6. In both of those games he put his pawn on f4, but he subsequently switched to a set-up with f3, as we saw in his games against Van der Wiel and Timman in the note to Black's

ninth move above. In those days players knew much less about attacking with f3 against the Scheveningen pawn structure. The English Attack only became popular in the second half of the eighties.

#### 11... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

11... $\mathbb{W}a5$  is a reasonable alternative which has been tested by Anand a few times.

#### 12.h4

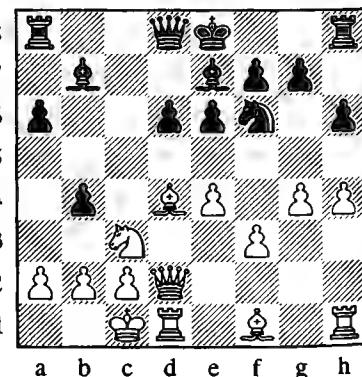
Karpov starts his pawn storm at once. Later 12. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  became the main line.

#### 12... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ??

This is a bit too slow, although it looks natural enough, and the most precise plans had not been worked out at the time. Nowadays the main line is 12... $\mathbb{W}a5!$  13. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  b4 15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e5 16. $\mathbb{Q}a7$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  with complex play.

#### 13.g4 b4

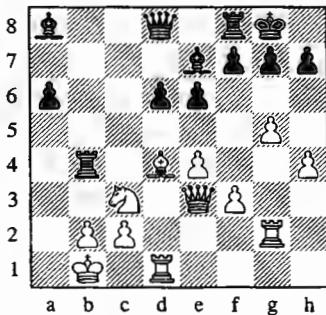
Black continues with his thematic queenside play, but a surprise awaits.



#### 14. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

Karpov switches his attention to the queenside, having picked out the c4-square as an inviting home for his knight.

More than a decade later, even Kasparov, the greatest Scheveningen expert of all time, could also have been threatened by White's strategy of fighting on the queenside. The following position arose in Topalov – Kasparov, Novgorod 1995. At this point White could have obtained an advantage by switching his focus to the d6-pawn and queenside:



21.Qc5! Bb7 (21...dxc5 22.Bxd8 Bxd8  
23.h5 Black does not have enough for the queen; 21...Bc4 22.Qxd6! Qxd6 23.Qgd2  
Bc6 [23...Qc5 24.Qxc5!] 24.e5 White is better.) 22.Qgd2! (22.Qa3 Ba5) 22...Ba5?  
(22...Bb8 23.Qa3±) 23.Qxd6 Qxd6 24.Qxd6  
Bxb2† 25.Qxb2 Bb8† 26.Qb5! (26.Qc1  
Ba3†) 26...Bxb5† 27.Qc1 And White wins.

14...Qc6 15.Qb6 Bb8 16.Qc4

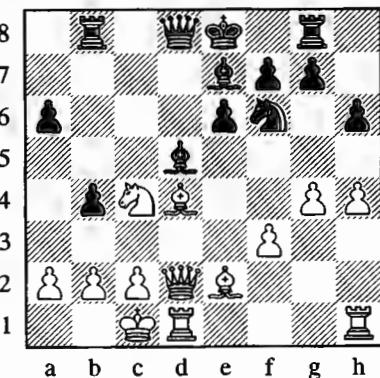
16.Qf2 is also strong.

16...d5

The Spaniard exchanges the vulnerable d6-pawn, although opening the centre might prove risky for his king.

17.exd5 Qxd5 18.Qe2Bg8

Black technically forfeits the right to castle, although realistically this decision was made several moves back.



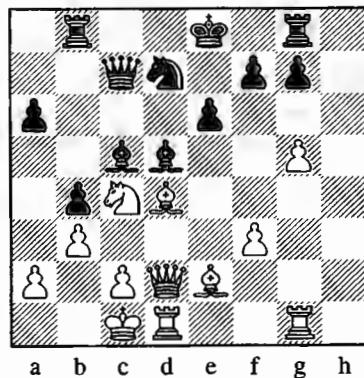
19.g5!

White could have obtained an edge with 19.Qf4 Bc8 (19...Qd7 20.Qd6†) 20.Qe5 Bc6 21.Qe3 intending to eliminate one of Black's valuable bishops, but Karpov is more ambitious.

19...hxg5 20.hxg5 Qd7 21.Qhg1

Karpov makes a semi-waiting move.

21...Wc7 22.b3 Qc5



23.Qg4!

Now if Black wants to exchange bishops, he will have to allow the rook to take up a fine position in the centre.

23...Qe7 24.Qe3 Ra8 25.Qb1 a5 26.Qh4

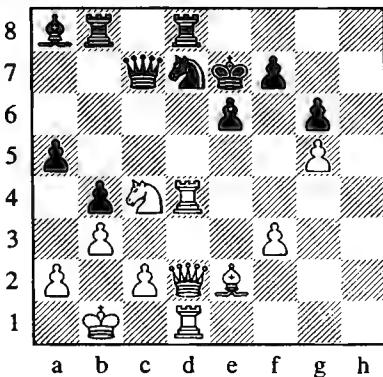
Planning to put the rook on h7.

**26... ♖xd4**

To stop it Black finally exchanges the bishop, but allows the rook to come closer to his king.

**27.♖xd4 ♕gd8 28.♕c4 g6**

If 28... ♕d5 29.♗e3 ♕f8 30.g6 (or 30.♗h1 g6 31.♗f4) 30...fxg6 31.♗g1 Black's king lacks protection.



**29.♕xa5!**

Black had to focus so much on the safety of his king that he was unable to keep his queenside together.

**29...e5 30.♗d6?!**

So far Karpov has outplayed his opponent beautifully, but here in the direct confrontation he commits a slight inaccuracy.

Taking the pawn with 30.♗xb4! would have won comfortably, as the a5-knight is poisoned due to some simple tactics.

There was a second convincing route to victory in 30.♗d3! ♕f8 31.♗c4! ♔e6 32.♗xd8 ♕xd8 33.♗e3 when White wins a second pawn.

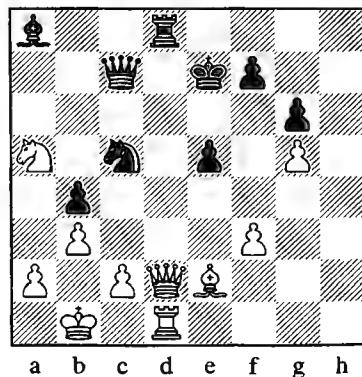
**30... ♔c5?**

After this mistake Black drops the b-pawn. Instead he could have exploited the less than secure placement of the white rook with

30... ♕f8! when he can hang onto the b-pawn: 31.♗xd8 (31.♗c4? ♕xd6) 31...♕xd8 32.♗c4 (another option is 32.a4 ♕xd2 33.♗xd2 ♗h7 34.♗c4 ♗xg5 35.♗xe5 ♔e6 36.♗d7 ♘h8 37.♗c5† ♔e5 with reasonable winning chances) 32...♕xd2 33.♗xd2 ♘b5 34.♗d6 White has good winning chances, but some work remains.

**31.♗xd8 ♕xd8**

If 31...♕xd8 32.♗e3 ♕c7 White wins with the lovely tactical shot 33.♗c6†!!.



**32.♗xb4**

Karpov now has three connected passed pawns on the queenside. The win is virtually guaranteed, even though it may take some time to advance the pawns.

32...♗xd1† 33.♗xd1 ♕d6 34.♗e2 ♕d4 35.♗c4 e4 36.♗xe4 ♕xe4 37.♗d2 ♕e6 38.♗b4† ♕c5 39.♗d2 ♕e6 40.a4

Black has no chance to stop the a-pawn without giving up a piece.

40...♗g1† 41.♗b2 ♕xg5 42.♗d6† ♕f6 43.a5 ♕c5 44.♗xc5 ♕xc5

**1-0**

In the last round he also beat Braga to salvage his tournament with a below-par but still somewhat respectable score of 7½/13, with

four wins, two losses and seven draws. This was enough to share second place with Seirawan and Polugaevsky, a point behind Timman who finished first.

Karpov was not in his best form in Buenos Aires. Timman said that he felt that Karpov had not recovered from the Korchnoi match. The match from the outside looked one sided, but as the Dutch grandmaster remarked, a world championship match is never easy.

Karpov's next event was the Phillips and Drew tournament in London. He started with a string of four draws, before picking up his first win in a Dragon against Mestel. Three more draws followed. His tournament then took on an unexpected shift: after drawing in seven of the first eight rounds, Karpov did not draw a single one of his remaining five games. In round nine he defeated Miles in another Dragon, then met John Nunn in round ten.

This was Karpov's first meeting with the strong English grandmaster. Nunn faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Topalov. He scored six wins, twenty one draws and fourteen losses. His lifetime score against Karpov is one win, four draws and five losses.

## Game 64

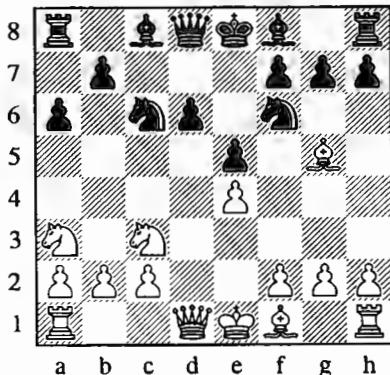
Anatoly Karpov – John Nunn

London 1982

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6  
5.♘c3 ♘c6

The English grandmaster's main opening was the Najdorf, yet he made a quick draw in the present line against Karpov's second Balashov earlier in the same year.

6.♘db5 d6 7.♗f4 e5 8.♗g5 a6 9.♘a3



9...♝e6?!

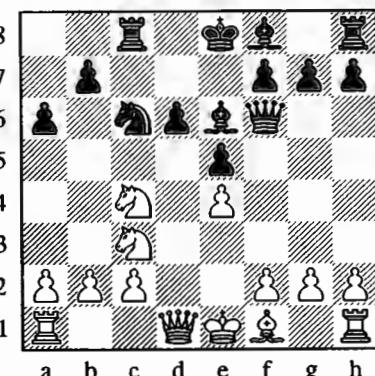
The variation has a reputation for being more passive than the Sveshnikov with 9...b5. The main problem is that White has an easier time improving the offside knight on a3 and solidifying his control over the d5-square.

10.♘c4 ♜c8 11.♗xf6

In the aforementioned Balashov – Nunn game, White played the less critical 11.♘d3 and a draw was agreed a few moves later.

11...♛xf6

11...gxsf6 12.♘e3 ♛b6 has been played more frequently. According to the database the text move was first introduced by Soltis. It has not become as fundamental as his 12...h5 line in the Dragon, but still it has been played in a few hundred games.



**12.♕b6**

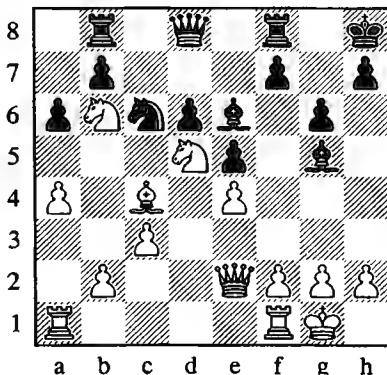
It is not in Karpov's style to grab a hot pawn with 12.♕xd6+ ♜xd6 13.♗xd6. Generally speaking, such pawns should not be taken without the benefit of detailed home preparation.

**12...♝b8 13.♛cd5 ♜d8 14.c3 ♜e7**

Developing the bishop to the other diagonal with 14...g6 is risky in view of 15.♘a4! ♜h6 16.♗xa6 when Black does not have enough compensation for the pawn.

**15.♗c4**

This game was one of the earliest for the variation. It says something for Karpov's fine touch that his moves are still regarded as the main line.

**15...0-0 16.0-0 ♜g5 17.a4 ♜h8 18.♗e2 g6****19.♗h1!**

Karpov is anticipating Black's counterplay with ...f5.

**19...♝h6 20.b4**

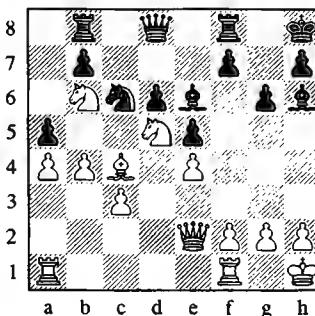
It is interesting that Karpov refrains from placing a rook on the d-file, playing against the d6-pawn. It should be mentioned that after 20.♖ad1? f5 21.♖a2 we have transposed to a position from which Van den Doel scored two victories from White's side in the mid-1990s.

Karpov mentions another interesting possibility in 20.♖ae1??. Play might continue 20...f5 (Perhaps Black should avoid opening the e-file with 20...♝e7!?) 21.exf5 ♜xf5 22.♖d3 ♜e6 23.♖e4 and White is somewhat better.

**20...f5?!**

This thematic move is misguided, as Black's central pawn mass will be more of a weakness than a strength. Karpov has been looking towards both sides of the board, and Nunn should have adopted the same policy by means of:

20...a5!

**21.b5**

Closing the queenside leads to some interesting possibilities, but ultimately it turns out that Black is doing fine.

Allowing the knight to d4 is dangerous: 21.♗b2 axb4 22.cxb4 ♜d4 Black is rather active.

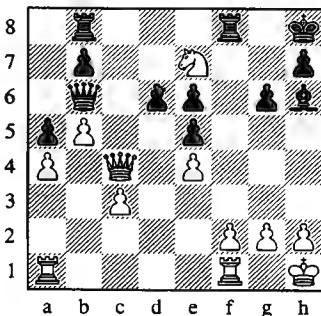
21.bxa5 may be best: 21...♝xa5 22.♖a2 f5 23.exf5 ♜xf5 24.♖ad1 With a complex position, Salai – Kernazhitsky, Olomouc 1999.

21...♝e7 22.♗xe7 ♜xb6 23.♗xe6

23.♘a2 ♜be8 not an improvement for White.

23...fxe6 24.♗c4

The position resembles the game Groszpeter – Cifuentes, Andorra 1995, except that here White has played ♜h1 instead of ♜ad1.



24... $\mathbb{B}f6!$

In the aforementioned game this idea was unplayable due to the reply 25. $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  winning the d6-pawn.

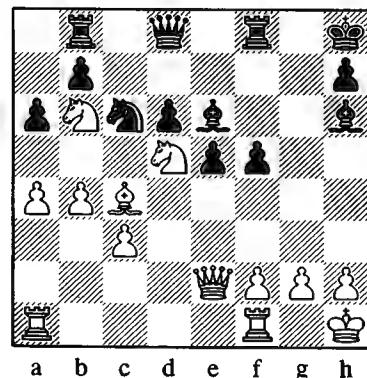
Black can also borrow an idea from Cifuentes with 24... $\mathbb{B}be8?$  25. $\mathbb{W}xe6 \mathbb{W}d8$  26. $\mathbb{W}h3 \mathbb{W}xe7$  27. $\mathbb{W}xh6 \mathbb{F}f4$  28. $\mathbb{F}3 \mathbb{E}c8$  with decent compensation for the pawn.

25. $\mathbb{Q}c8 \mathbb{W}d8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}a7$  d5

Black takes over the initiative.

21.exf5 gxf5

21... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  also fails to equalize: 22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (22.a5!?) 22... $\mathbb{E}e6$  (Closing the queenside does not solve Black's problems: 22...a5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xf5 \mathbb{B}xf5$  24.b5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25. $\mathbb{E}ad1$  Black has no active plan.) 23.a5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  24. $\mathbb{E}e4$  White has consolidated in the centre can start playing against the d6-pawn.



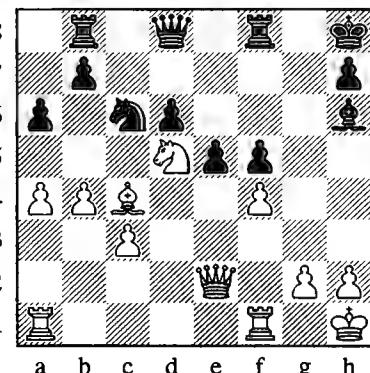
22.f4!

Karpov starts to put pressure on Black's central pawn chain.

22... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Nunn steers the game towards an opposite-coloured bishop position. Had he postponed this exchange, White would have had good chances to exchange his light-squared bishop for its counterpart, for instance: 22... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23.a5! Now that the b6-knight is protected, White will be able to recapture on d5 with the bishop. 23...e4 24. $\mathbb{W}e3 \mathbb{Q}e7$  25. $\mathbb{E}ad1 \mathbb{Q}xd5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd5 \mathbb{Q}xd5$  27. $\mathbb{E}xd5$  White has an obvious positional advantage.

23. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$



23...e4

Nunn keeps the position closed, which makes attacking Black's central pawn chain harder.

23... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$

Black could also have kept his pawns fluid, although he has to walk a narrow path and one can understand Nunn's reluctance to head for a situation in which one mistake could have caused his position to collapse.

24.fxe5

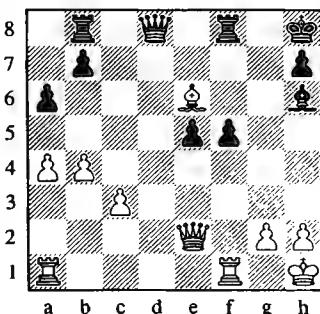
White is not winning a pawn after this, but he can still exert pressure.

24.  $\mathbb{W}h5?!$  is not good due to 24...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  26. g3  $\mathbb{W}g5!$  and Black gets away.

24.  $\mathbb{B}ad1$  was a decent alternative though: 24...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  26. g3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  27.  $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28.  $\mathbb{B}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  29. a5! Black's queenside weaknesses are fixed, which makes the position rather unpleasant for him.

24...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  dx $e$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

The trick is 26.  $\mathbb{W}xe5??$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  when White loses material.



26...  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

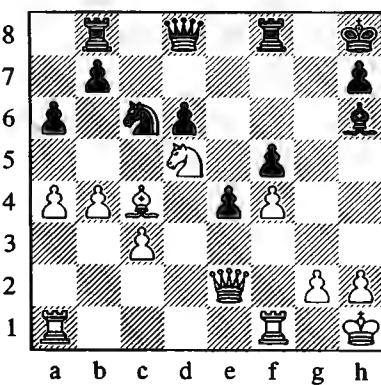
26...  $\mathbb{W}d2$  Karpov mentions this move with no further analysis or evaluation. 27.  $\mathbb{W}c4!$  looks like a good reply, when Black is under pressure.

27. g3  $\mathbb{W}d6$  28.  $\mathbb{G}xf4$

28.  $\mathbb{W}c4$  b5! keeps Black in the game.

28...  $\mathbb{W}c6??$  29.  $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  30.  $fxe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  31. c4

White keeps some advantage, thanks primarily to his safer king.



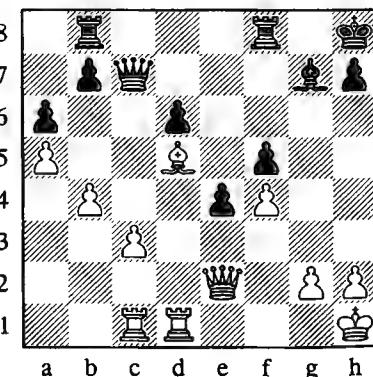
24.a5

Karpov fixes Black's queenside pawns. He could have considered undermining Black's pawn structure immediately with: 24. g4? Karpov probably wanted to strengthen the rest of his position before opting for such a committal move, but the idea is promising nevertheless. 24...  $\mathbb{G}xf4$  (24...  $\mathbb{W}d7$  25.  $\mathbb{G}xf5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  26.  $\mathbb{B}ad1$   $\mathbb{B}bd8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  [27...  $\mathbb{B}g8?$  28.  $\mathbb{B}e3$ ] 28.  $\mathbb{W}h3$  White will take over on the g-file, which gives him a significant advantage.) 25.  $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  (25...  $\mathbb{W}e8$  26.  $\mathbb{B}ae1$ ) 26.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  27.  $\mathbb{B}gl$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  28.  $\mathbb{B}ae1$  Black is living dangerously.

24...  $\mathbb{B}g7$  25.  $\mathbb{B}ac1$

Karpov defends the c3-pawn in advance, before turning his attention to the d-file.

25...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26.  $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$



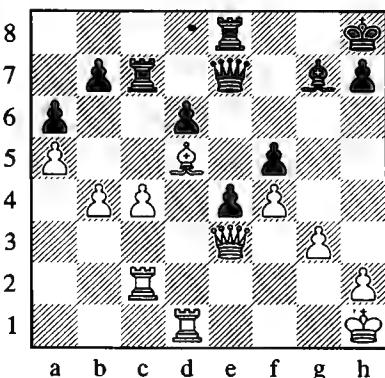
28.  $\mathbb{B}c2!$

Thanks to Karpov's fine prophylactic play, Nunn has virtually no active plan. Over the next few moves Karpov continues to improve his position, step by step, in a manner that is so characteristic of him.

28...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  29.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{B}bc8$  30. c4  $\mathbb{B}c7$  31. g3!

Karpov very subtly starts to undermine Black's pawn chain in the centre.

31... $\mathbb{E}e8$



32. $\mathbb{E}g2!$

After making a few moves on the queenside, Karpov turns his attention to the kingside and prepares g4.

32... $\mathbb{W}f6!$

Nunn anticipates his opponent's plan, and prepares to activate his queen to create some counterplay.

33.g4?!

One of Karpov's remarkable qualities is that once he decides on a plan he almost always follows it through. In the present case he is correct to judge the resulting position as being in his favour, nevertheless there was an even stronger continuation available.

33. $\mathbb{E}b1$  was mentioned by Karpov as an interesting alternative, but after 33... $\mathbb{W}c3$ ? Black's position looks playable, for instance 34. $\mathbb{W}b6$   $\mathbb{E}ce7$  35.b5 e3! and Black becomes very active.

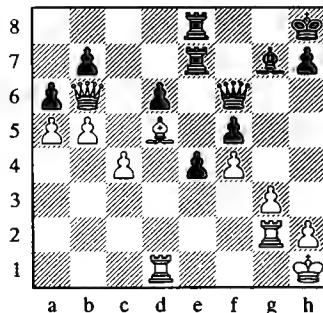
White could have taken advantage of the absence of the enemy queen from e7 by playing:

33. $\mathbb{W}b6!$

Speeding up the queenside breakthrough.

33... $\mathbb{E}ce7$  34.b5

There is also 34. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  (34... $\mathbb{E}c8$  35.b5 axb5 36. $\mathbb{A}xb5$  wins.) 35.b5  $\mathbb{W}g4$  36. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{W}h3$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  and White's play on the queenside is faster.



34...e3

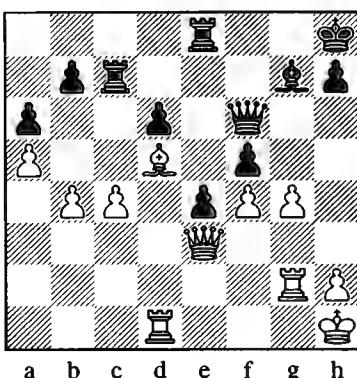
Both 34...axb5 35.cxb5 and 34... $\mathbb{W}c3$  35. $\mathbb{A}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}f3$  36. $\mathbb{E}b1$  lead to positions where White's passed pawns are too strong.

35. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  36.bxa6

Or 36. $\mathbb{A}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  37. $\mathbb{A}f3$  and White has a nice advantage.

36...bxa6 37. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  38. $\mathbb{A}c6$

Black is in trouble.

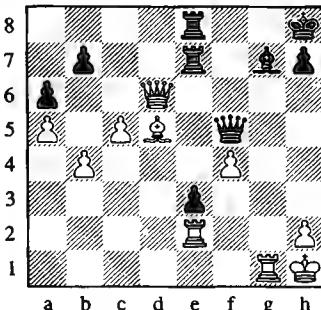


33...fxg4

Taking the pawn is better than trying to exchange queens:

33... $\mathbb{W}c3$ ! 34. $\mathbb{W}b6$ ?

34.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  35.  $gxf5$  e3! (35...  $\mathbb{Q}xb4?$  36. f6 wins according to Karpov.) 36.  $\mathbb{E}e2$  (36.  $\mathbb{A}dg1!$ ?  $\mathbb{B}g7$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ) 36...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  White has some advantage but it is hard to tell whether he will be able to convert his extra pawn.  
 34...  $\mathbb{E}ce7$  35.  $gxf5$  e3 36.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{W}b3$  37.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   
 37.  $\mathbb{E}de1$  can be met by 37...  $\mathbb{W}d3$ .  
 37...  $\mathbb{W}d3$  38.  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  39. c5

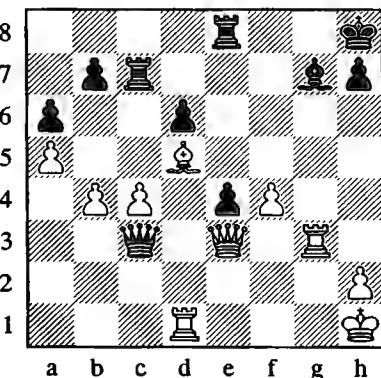


White's chances are somewhat better in this complex position. It is worth pointing out the following cute line:

- 39...  $\mathbb{E}d7??$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xe3!$   $\mathbb{E}x3$   
 40...  $\mathbb{E}xd6$  41.  $\mathbb{E}xe8\#$  leads to mate.  
 41.  $\mathbb{W}b8\#$

And White wins.

### 34. $\mathbb{E}xg4$ $\mathbb{W}c3$ 35. $\mathbb{E}g3$



### 35... $\mathbb{W}xb4!$

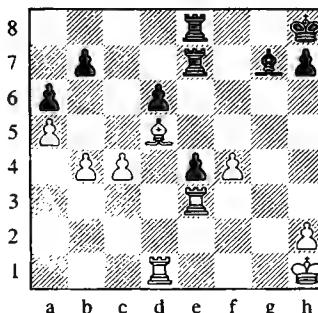
Nunn avoids some pitfalls. He bravely takes a pawn and gets ready to endure Karpov's initiative on the kingside.

- 35...  $\mathbb{E}xc4?$  is refuted by 36.  $\mathbb{W}e2!$  when Black can simply resign.

### 35... $\mathbb{W}xe3!!$

Getting rid of the queens leads to a difficult endgame.

### 36. $\mathbb{E}xe3$ $\mathbb{E}ce7$



### 37. b5!

In opposite-coloured bishop endings one often has to play purposefully.

37.  $\mathbb{E}de1?$  Winning the pawn at once only leads to a draw: 37...  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  38.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  41. b5  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  axb5 43. cxb5 White has distant passed pawns, but still Black can hold.  
 43...  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  44. f5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  d5 47.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  And Black holds, as pointed out by Karpov.

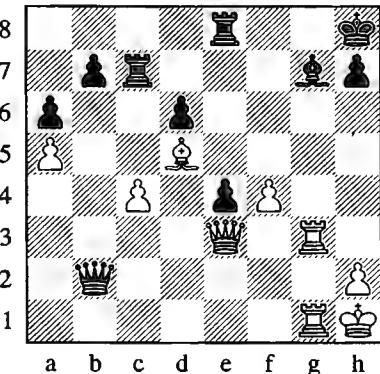
- 37...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  38.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$   
 38...  $\mathbb{E}c8$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  axb5 (41...  $\mathbb{E}xf4$  42.  $\mathbb{E}a1$ ) 42. f5 White wins.  
 39.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}xf4$  41.  $\mathbb{E}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$

This ending is a win, as pointed out by Karpov.

**36.Bg1**

White has huge pressure on the g-file. Most of Black's pieces are tied up with defensive duties; it is especially important that his bishop cannot move due to the mate on g8.

**36...Wb2**

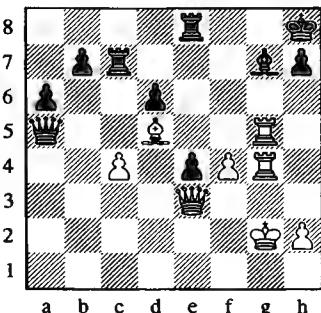


**37.Bg5!**

Karpov prepares to transfer the rook to the h-file.

**37...Wf6 38.Bg4 Wa1† 39.Qg2 Wb2†**

Nunn correctly resists the temptation to grab a pawn with 39...Wxa5?:



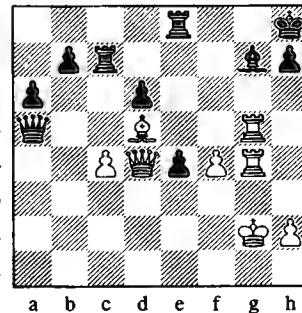
From this position it is worth considering a few different attacking ideas for White, before moving on to the beautiful and instructive refutation.

a) Attacking the bishop with 40.Wg3? is not effective due to 40...Wa2† 41.Qh3 Wa1 when Black defends.

b) 40.Bxg7?! This sacrifice is enough for a draw only: 40...Bxg7 41.Bxg7 Qxg7 42.Wd4† Qg6 43.f5† Qxf5 44.Wf2† Qe5 45.Wb2† White has a perpetual but nothing more.

c) 40.f5 is somewhat more dangerous, but still not quite incisive enough: 40...Wa1 (40...Bf8; 41.f6 Bxf6 42.Bxe4 wins) 41.Bxe4 (41.Bg6 Bd1 [Or 41...Wb2† 42.Qh3 We5 43.Wg5 when Black is living dangerously but I do not see a way to break through.] 42.f6 Bf3† 43.Wfx3 exf3† 44.Qxf3 Bf8 45.Bf4 hxg6 46.Bh4† Qh6 47.Bxh6† Bh7 48.Bxg6 This endgame should be a draw.) 41...Bxe4 42.Wxe4 Ec8 Black should be able to hold this position.

d) 40.Wd4!! This beautiful move provides the answer.

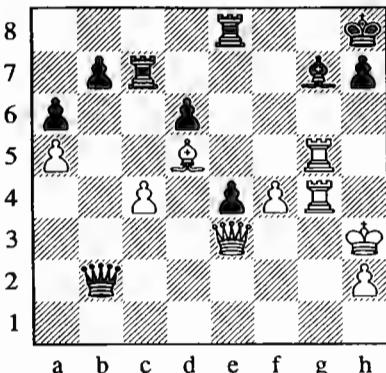


40...Wa2† (40...Bee7 41.Wf6 Wa2† 42.Qh3 Wb3† 43.Bg3 wins.) 41.Qh3! (41.Qh1 Wb1† 42.Bg1?? Qxd4) 41...Wb3† 42.Qh4 Wa2 (42...Wc2 43.h3+) 43.h3 Bg8 44.Bxg7! Bgxg7 (44...Bcxg7 45.Qxg8+) 45.Wf6 White checkmates in a few moves.

**40.Qh3!**

Karpov is not only moving away from the

checks, but also creates the possibility of utilizing his king to support his attack.



**40...♝ce7 41.f5 ♜f6?!**

Nunn decides to bring the queen back to help the defence but probably missed that Karpov can bring a new piece into the attack. The opposite-coloured bishops make the position so hard to play. Nevertheless there were two ways in which Black could have obtained chances to resist.

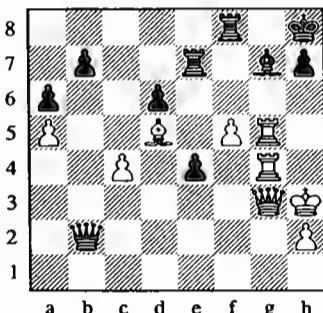
**41...♝f8?!**

This move is playable, although Black will have to follow up correctly.

**42.♛g3!**

42.♝h5 ♜e5 defends.

42.♝xe4 ♜xe4 43.♛xe4 ♜e5 44.♝g2 ♜c3†  
Black gets active.



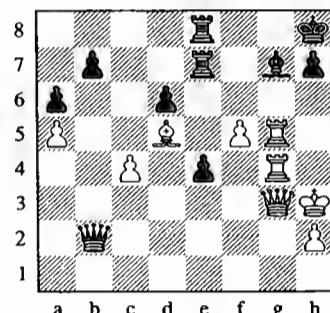
The text move is the most challenging at White's disposal, and forces Black to defend with great precision. We will consider two responses in detail.

a) 42...♝fe8?!

It is worth noting briefly that 42...e3? 43.♝h5 ♜f6 44.♝g6 wins.

Defending the d-pawn with 42...♝d8? also loses after 43.♝g6! ♜f8 44.♝xd6 ♜ee8 45.♝h4 with decisive threats.

The text move is more resilient than either of the above two, but ultimately comes unstuck.



**43.♛xd6!**

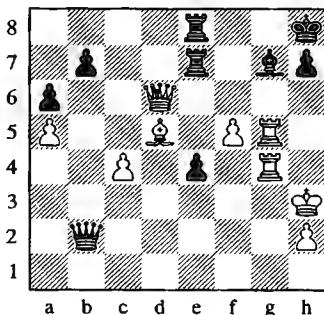
This simple capture is the strongest move. Others fail to crack Black's defences:

43.♝g6 ♜c1 44.f6 hxg6 Black holds.

43.♝h5 ♜c1 44.♝xe4 ♜xe4 45.♝xh7† (45.♝xg7 ♜f1†) 45...♝xh7 46.♝xg7† ♜h8 47.♝h7† White forces a perpetual.

43.♝f4 ♜f8 44.c5 ♜c7! (44...dxc5? 45.f6! wins.) 45.♝h4 ♜c1 46.♝hg4 ♜xc5 47.♝xg7 ♜h6† 48.♝g2 ♜c2† 49.♝h1 ♜c1† This time it is Black who forces a perpetual.

43.♝h4 ♜f6 44.♝gh5 ♜h6!! Black has this beautiful defence based on his passed e-pawn. (44...h6 45.♝g4 wins.) 45.♝xh6 ♜xf5† 46.♝g4 ♜g7! 47.♝f4 ♜xg4† 48.♝xg4 ♜xg4 49.♝xg4 e3 White must settle for a draw.



43... $\mathbb{Q}c3\uparrow$

43... $\mathbb{Q}e2$  44. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$  defends the checks while threatening f6.

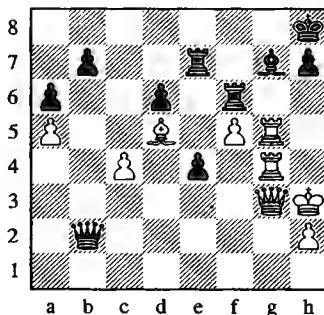
44. $\mathbb{R}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$

44... $\mathbb{Q}a1$  45. $\mathbb{R}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3\uparrow$  46. $\mathbb{R}5g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  47.f6 wins.

45. $\mathbb{R}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3\uparrow$  46. $\mathbb{R}5g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  47. $\mathbb{Q}e6$

White has decent winning chances.

b) 42... $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  This cleverly combines attack and defence. Black should be able to exchange at least one attacking piece, thus easing the danger.

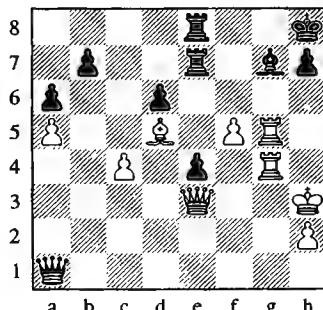


43. $\mathbb{R}h5$   $\mathbb{W}d2!$  44. $\mathbb{R}xe4$  (44. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  should be met by 44... $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ; but not 44... $e3??$  45. $\mathbb{R}xh7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  46. $\mathbb{R}h4\uparrow$   $\mathbb{R}h6$  47. $\mathbb{R}xh6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}g8\#)$  44... $\mathbb{R}xe4$  45. $\mathbb{R}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  Black has eased his position and should be able to survive.

There was a second and perhaps more straightforward defensive idea:

41... $\mathbb{W}a1!$

This reminds White that his own king is not entirely safe. The checking threats provide enough of a distraction to prevent White from carrying out his main attacking plan of doubling his rooks on the h-file.



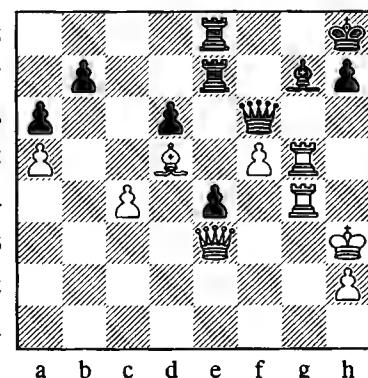
42. $\mathbb{R}g2$

42. $\mathbb{R}g6??$   $\mathbb{W}f1\uparrow$  is embarrassing for White.

42. $\mathbb{R}h5$  is adequately met by 42... $\mathbb{W}f1\uparrow$  43. $\mathbb{R}g2$  and now either 43... $\mathbb{R}f8$  or 43... $\mathbb{W}d3$ .

42... $\mathbb{R}f8$  43. $\mathbb{R}g1$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  44. $\mathbb{R}1g4$   $\mathbb{W}a1$

I do not see a way for White to inject more power into his attack.



42. $\mathbb{R}h5!$

Karpov doubles his rooks in order to entice Black's h-pawn forwards.

**42...♝f8**

42...♛a1? 43.♝xh7† leads to mate.

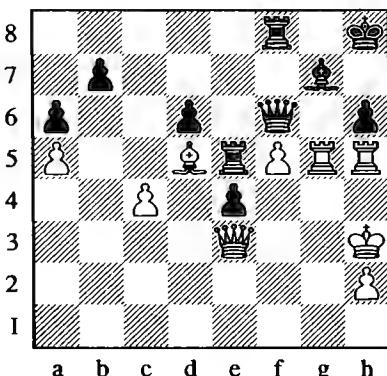
Also insufficient is 42...♝c7 43.♝gh4! (Simplest, although 43.♛g3 should also be good enough: 43...♝d7 [43...♝ce7 44.♝g6 ♜c3 45.♛xc3 ♜xc3 46.f6+–] 44.♝gh4! [44.♝g6 ♜c3] 44...h6 [44...♜h6 45.♝xe4] 45.♝g4 ♜f8 46.♝g6 And White wins.) 43...h6 44.♝g3! Stepping off the h-file is decisive. (44.♝g4 ♜e5!) 44...♝h7 45.♝g4 White is winning as the rook is coming to g6.

**43.♝gh4! h6 44.♝g4 ♜e5**

44...♛a1 is insufficient, as Black's kingside has already been weakened by the forcing of ...h7-h6: 45.♝xe4 (There is also 45.♝g2 ♜b2† 46.♝h1 ♜h7 47.♝g1 ♜f6 [47...♝ee8? 48.♝xe4] 48.♝h4 ♜f8 49.♝xe4 ♜xe4 50.♛xe4 and Black has little chance to survive.) 45...♛f1† (45...♛d1 46.♝hh4 ♜c7 47.♝g2+–) 46.♝g3 ♜g8 47.f6 ♜xe4 48.♝xe4 ♜g1† 49.♝g2 ♜e3† 50.♛f3 ♜xf3† 51.♝xf3 ♜f8 52.f7 And White wins.

**45.♝gg5**

Karpov defends the f5-pawn. Despite optical appearances, the rook is absolutely stable on g5 as Black will never be able to unpin the h-pawn.



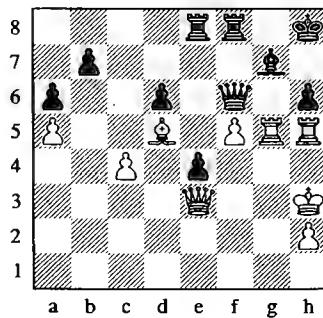
**45...♝c8?**

Nunn wants to take on d5, but the idea meets with a beautiful refutation. Black should have tried opening the long diagonal for his queen. There are two ways of doing so:

**45...♝e7?!** This is an improvement over the game continuation, but it is still not the best.

46.♛g3 (46.♝g4? ♜a1) 46...♝e5 (46...♝e5? 47.♝xh6†!) 47.♝g2 ♜e7 48.♝g6 ♜b2† 49.♝h3 ♜c1 50.♝xh6† ♜xh6† 51.♝xh6† ♜xh6 52.♛xd6 ♜h7 53.♛e6 Black's king is rather exposed, but he still has some chances to survive.

**45...♝ee8!**



This is a better way to open the diagonal for the queen. The difference lies in the fact that the rook on e8 guards against a mate on g8 in certain lines.

**46.♝g2**

White has several ways to try and crack his opponent's position, but I found nothing decisive:

46.♝xb7 ♜e5 47.♝d5 ♜b8 Black has lost a pawn, but gained an open file for his rook.

48.♝g3 ♜xd5 49.cxd5 ♜b2 Black is rather active.

46.♝g5 ♜xg6 47.fxg6 ♜f3† 48.♛xf3 exf3 Black has excellent drawing chances, despite being a pawn down. 49.♝f5 (49.♝xf3 ♜e3 50.♝g2 ♜e5 holds) 49...♝e5 50.♝xf3 ♜h5†

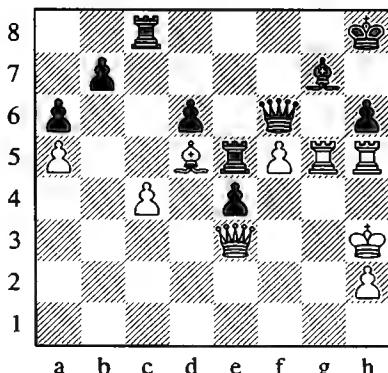
51.♗g2 ♘g5† White's advantage is too small.

46...♛b2† 47.♔h1 ♘f6 48.♗g1 ♛e5

White is better but it is hard to break through.

49.♕xb7 ♛xa5 50.♕c6 ♘e7 51.♕d5

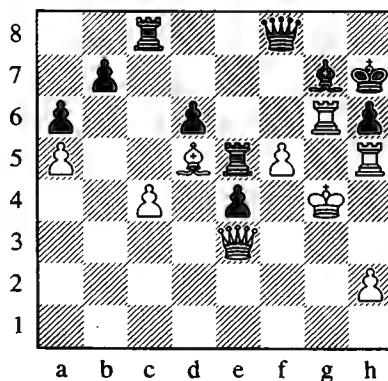
Black is under some pressure, but he has reasonable chances to hold.



46.♗g4!!

Karpov uses every last one of his pieces to carry out his assault. The immediate 46.♗g6? would have been met by 46...♛xg6, so Karpov defends the rook on h5 first.

46...♛h7 47.♗g6 ♛f8

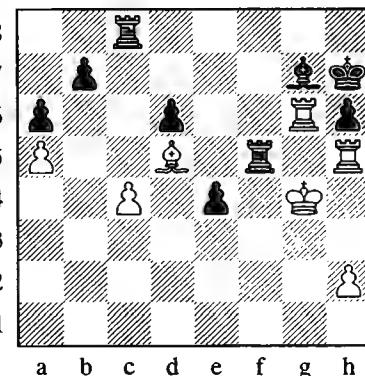


48.♗g5!

The situation on the kingside is absolutely picturesque! The threat of 49.♗gxh6† ♔xh6 50.♗g6† forces Black to shed material. It is a typical story for Karpov: he slowly and patiently brought his pieces closer to the opponent's king, then brutally murdered him.

48...♛xf5†? 49.♗xg5 ♘xf5

Nunn finds a witty saving attempt, but Karpov has everything under control.



50.♗xg7†! ♔xg7 51.♗xf5

1–0

This game once again underlines how difficult opposite-coloured bishop positions can be to handle; even Karpov's play was not flawless. Nevertheless for the great majority of the game he played superbly, showing great precision as well as imagination when it was needed.

In round eleven Karpov suffered a setback, losing to Seirawan. His next opponent was Portisch. Since their 1975 match they had played twelve times, with Karpov winning three games and drawing nine. Interestingly all three of Karpov's wins had come with the black pieces.

## Game 65

Anatoly Karpov – Lajos Portisch

London 1982

**1.e4**

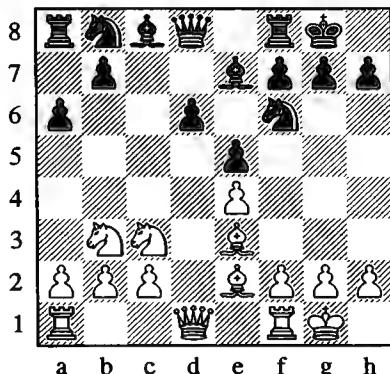
Karpov switches back to his most frequent starting move. Since their Milan match Karpov had always played 1.d4 or 1.c4 against the Hungarian number one, but never achieved much in the opening and all four games were drawn.

**1...c5 2.Qf3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.Qxd4 Qf6 5.Qc3 a6**

Previously we saw Portisch playing 1...e5, but now he reverts to one of his other main openings, the Najdorf.

**6.Qe2 e5 7.Qb3 Qe7 8.0–0 0–0 9.Qe3**

This was the first time Karpov employed the text move. He went on to use it four more times, dropping only half a point in total.



**9...Qe6**

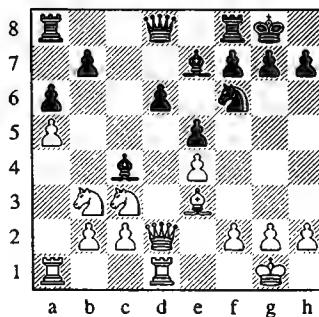
Giorgadze tried 9...Qc7 here, as we will see in the notes to Game 74.

**10.Qd2 Qbd7**

After 10...b5 11.a4 b4 12.Qd5 Qxe4 13.Qxe7† Qxe7 14.Qxb4 f5 White has scored well from this complicated position.

**11.a4 Qc8**

Portisch plays the most natural move, the main line. 11...b6 and 11...Qc7 are also played, but the main alternative is 11...Qb6, which was first introduced by Psakhis against Geller in 1980. Play continues: 12.a5 Qc4 13.Qxc4 Qxc4 14.Qfd1



Karpov reached this position twice:

a) His first opponent, Quinteros, continued 14...h6 15.Qc1 Qc8 16.Qd3 Qe6 17.Qb6 Qe8 18.f3 Qd7 19.Qe3 f5 20.exf5 Qxf5 21.Qb4 Qf6 22.Qbd5 Qxd5 23.Qxd5 Qf8 24.b3 Qf7 25.Qb6 Qc6 26.c4 Qe7 27.Qe2 Qd8 28.Qd5 Qxd5 29.Qxd5 b5 30.axb6 Qxb6 31.Qh1! White had a small advantage and went on to win an endgame masterpiece in Karpov – Quinteros, Lucerne (ol) 1982. I analysed the final phase extensively in my *Endgame Virtuoso* book.

b) The following year Ostermeyer deviated by means of: 14...Qc8 15.Qc1 Qc7 16.Qb6 Qc6 17.f3 h6 18.Qd3 Qxd3 19.Qxd3 Qc4 20.Qe3 Qc6 21.Qxc4 Qxc4 22.Qf1 Karpov had a small edge, but his West German opponent showed great determination and eventually managed to hold the draw after a long endgame in Karpov – Ostermeyer, Hannover 1983.

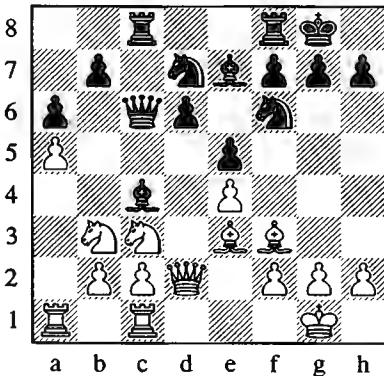
**12.a5  $\mathbb{W}c7$  13. $\mathbb{B}fc1$ !?**

This move is one of Karpov's best novelties. I do know whether the idea came from him or one of his trainers. The rook defends the c2-pawn in order to liberate the knight on c3.

13. $\mathbb{B}fd1$  was the usual continuation and has remained the most popular choice for White. Interestingly Karpov himself switched to this move against Nunn in 1985, as we will see in Game 74.

**13... $\mathbb{W}c6$** 

Portisch embarks on a plan to free his position with ...d5. The Hungarian grandmaster is a positional player, yet he almost always strives to go forward. Since the early games in the 1980s the whole variation has grown in popularity. Nowadays 13... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ?! is regarded as one of the most reliable routes to a safe position for Black. See for instance the game Ivanchuk – Kramnik, Monte Carlo (rapid) 2004.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$** **15. $\mathbb{R}a4$ !**

Karpov utilizes his rook to paralyse Black's queenside in an unusual fashion.

**15... $\mathbb{B}fd8$ ??**

Portisch continues with his plan, but it

turns out that he is unable to force through his intended ...d5, and in the resulting position his rook will be misplaced on d8. It shows just how difficult chess can be, when a world class player is unable to react to a subtle change in the position which renders an otherwise promising plan ineffective.

Once the present game became known, most players preferred 15... $\mathbb{B}fe8$ , and after 16. $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18.exd5 f5 Black has done all right. Unlike in the game, 18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ? is also possible.

**16. $\mathbb{B}b4$ !**

This is an unusual but highly effective post for the rook. It stops ...b5 and defends the b3-knight, which could prove important after  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  is played.

**16... $\mathbb{W}c7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$** 

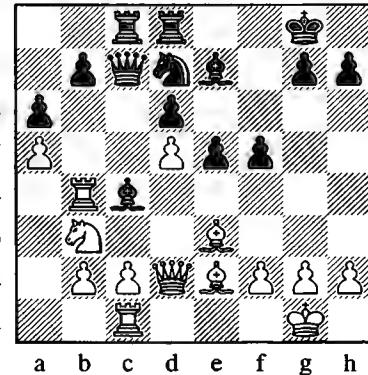
Since the rook came to c1, it took Karpov four more moves before his knight made its intended jump to d5.

**17... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  18.exd5 f5**

18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  is unplayable as 19. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  wins an exchange.

**19. $\mathbb{B}e2$** 

Karpov gets rid of the bishop on c4.



**19...♝xb3?!**

Portisch heads for an inferior position with opposite-coloured bishops. It seems like an odd choice, as the Hungarian grandmaster already suffered a nasty defeat after being outplayed by Karpov in a close to equal opposite-coloured bishop position (see Game 42). Now he chooses to steer the game towards another opposite-coloured bishop position in which he stands clearly worse.

A better choice would have been 19...♝xe2 20.♛xe2 ♜c5 (or 20...♜e8 21.c4 ♜f6) 21.c4 (21.♝c4 ♜d7 22.f3 is possible, but Black should not be in much trouble here either.) 21...♝xb3 (Or 21...♝d7?! 22.f3 ♜c5 23.♝xc5 dxc5 24.♝b6 White has a small edge; he can put his queen on the d-file and play for b4.) 22.♝xb3 ♜e8 23.♝a3 ♜d7 White is only a little better, if at all.

**20.♝xb3 f4?**

I have already mentioned that Portisch liked to move forwards. And since he is a true master with the two bishops, he is wary of giving Karpov time to harness the power of the bishop pair against him. Nevertheless the text move is a significant positional concession, and one of the following alternatives should have been preferred.

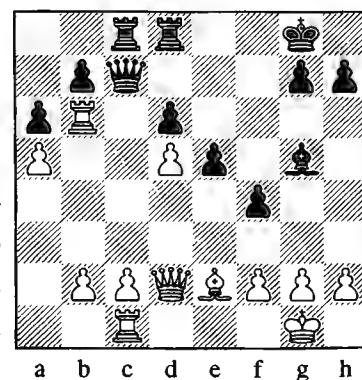
20...♝c5 would have given Black a better version of the game: 21.♝a3! (Black does all right after 21.♝b6 ♜a4 or 21.♝xc5 dxc5 22.♝c4 ♜d6.) 21...f4 (After 21...♜f6 22.b4 ♜d7 23.c4 White is clearly better.) 22.♝xc5 ♜xc5 There is no doubt that White stands better, but it is equally clear that his rook is less active on a3 than b6.

Black's best chance overall would have been to leave his pawns where they were and settle for a slight disadvantage. For instance: 20...♜e8?! 21.g3 ♜f6 22.c4 ♜b8 23.♝b6 (White also

exert pressure on the queenside by 23.♛b4!) 23...♛d7 (23...♛c8 24.c5) 24.♝a3 ♜d8 25.♝e3 ♜c8 26.b4 White has some initiative on the queenside, but a tough fight lies ahead.

**21.♝b6 ♜xb6 22.♝xb6**

White has two significant advantages: his bishop is considerably more active than its counterpart, and his pawn majority is more mobile.

**22...♝g5****23.♝g4!**

The bishop immediately makes its presence felt. Even if Portisch missed the subtle rook manoeuvre starting on White's next move, it seems strange that he viewed this position as his best chance for survival.

**23...♜b8 24.♝e1!**

Before advancing his pawns Karpov prevents his opponent from doing the same. If 24.c4? e4 Black obtains some chances for counterplay.

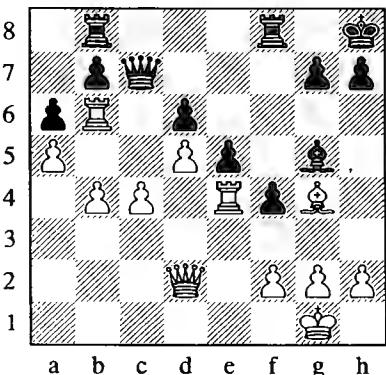
**24...♛c5 25.♝e4!**

Karpov not only prepares c4 but prevents ...♛d4 as well.

**25...♜f8**

Black is obliged to sit and await his fate, reacting to threats as they appear. From hereon it is difficult to suggest anything constructive for him.

**26.b4 ♜c7 27.c4 ♜h8**



**28.c5!**

Karpov has carried out all the necessary preparations, and there is no need to delay the breakthrough.

**28...dxc5**

28...♜fd8 was no more than a temporary blockade, and after 29.♗d3 g6 30.♗c4 Black's position falls apart.

**29.d6 ♜d8 30.bxc5 f3**

Black creates a bit of play on the kingside, but hardly compensates for his queenside troubles.

**31.♗d5 fxg2 32.♗xe5 ♜f6 33.♗f5 ♜al1†**

**34.♗xg2 ♜f6 35.d7**

I suspect that Portisch was in time trouble and had no time to resign.

**35...♜xa5 36.♗xb7 ♜xb7 37.♗xb7 ♜d8**

**38.c6 a5 39.c7 ♜xd7 40.♗f4**

**1-0**

Karpov finished the event strongly with a

fine win over Spassky. His total of five wins, seven draws and one defeat was enough to tie for first prize with Andersson.

Karpov's next tournament was a seven player, double round robin event in Turin. Just as in London, he started slowly and even lost to Ljubojevic in round two, although he got back to an even score with a win over Portisch in round six, and avenged his defeat to Ljubojevic in round nine. His only other 'win' came by default in the final round, as Hübler had withdrawn after the first half of the tournament (he was on a plus one score at the time).

Karpov's total of 7/12 was good enough to share first place with Andersson. It was a decent result by most standards, but it was nothing like as dominant as some of his results from the seventies. It is not clear whether he merely suffered a dip in form, or if there was some other cause. Botvinnik once remarked that a world championship match takes a year off one's life. Perhaps Karpov had not fully recovered his energy, or maybe something happened in his private life.

His next event was an unusual one: a televised tournament in Hamburg, with a semi-rapid time limit of one hour per game. It began with two double round robin qualifying groups. Karpov drew his mini-match with Nunn, and beat Seirawan by 2–0 and Afifi by 1½–½ to win his group with a total of 4½/6. Spassky won the other group, dropping just a single draw.

We will look at Karpov's first game from the final match with Spassky. The overall level of the game betrays the fact that it was conducted under a faster time control. Nevertheless Karpov's play in the middlegame was outstanding. Since their 1979 meeting in Montreal, Karpov had defeated Spassky twice with seven draws.

## Game 66

## Anatoly Karpov – Boris Spassky

Hamburg (1) 1982

1.e4 d6

The Pirc was not one of Spassky's main openings, but in 1981 and 1982 he employed it a few times, so Karpov may have anticipated it.

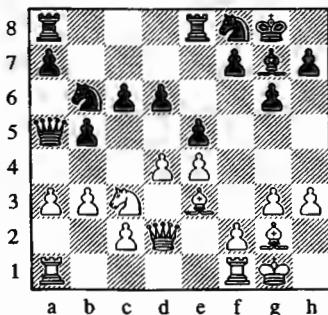
2.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3.Qc3 g6 4.Qf3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5.Qe2 0-0

6.0-0

Karpov stays faithful to his usual set-up.

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At Karpov's next tournament Nunn deviated with 7... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ . Play continued: 8.h3  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  e5 10.g3 c6 11. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  b5 14.a3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (14...exd4? 15. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  Black is only a bit worse) 15.b3  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8?$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$  was better)



17.d5!  $\mathbb{E}ac8$  18. $\mathbb{E}fd1$  c5 19. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  c4 20.a4!  $\mathbb{C}xb3$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  22. $\mathbb{E}xd2$  White had a decisive advantage and went on to win the ending, Karpov – Nunn, Tilburg 1982.

8. 曾d2

This has been Karpov's most frequent choice. Twice he experimented with 8.  $\mathbb{W}d3$ , but only drew both games.

8... $\text{e}8$

Spassky repeats a somewhat offbeat line which he employed against Geller a few months earlier in London. Karpov was also at that tournament, so he may well have prepared for it.

9. Februar 1966

Karpov's last move was directed against 9... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  10. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  e5, which runs into 11.d5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ? 12. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  when the e-pawn is securely defended and the d4-pawn falls.

10 Radl

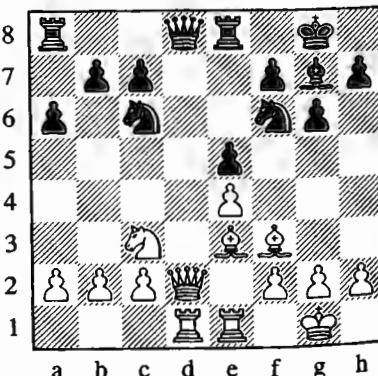
Karpov plays the opening classically, and develops all his pieces.

10...x3

Spassky tries something new. In the Geller game he preferred 10...e5 and drew in 45 moves. He probably feared Karpov's preparation, although in subsequent games Black scored all right with the pawn move.

11.♕xf3 e5 12.dxe5 dxe5??

12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  was preferable. Spassky played this against Mokry at Reggio Emilia 1983 and a draw was agreed immediately, although it is safe to assume that Karpov would have played on.



**13.♘a4!**

In a similar position which can arise after 8...e5 instead of 8...♝e8, White usually plays ♘b5, which is not possible here, so Karpov chooses a different path for the knight.

13.♘d5 is not dangerous for Black after 13...♞xd5 14.exd5 ♘d4.

**13...♝e7**

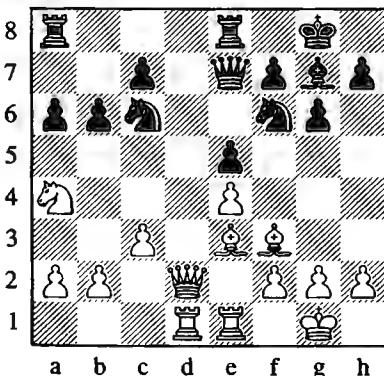
Spassky prefers not to defend a slightly worse endgame after 13...♞xd2 14.♝xd2 ♘f8 15.c3! (after 15.♘c5 ♘d4 16.♗xd4 exd4 Black equalizes). The former champion was considered a universal player, but he was at his best when he had the initiative.

**14.c3**

Karpov takes away the d4-square from the enemy knight.

**14...b6**

After 14...♝ed8 15.♗e2 ♞xd1 16.♗xd1 ♘d8 17.♘c5 ♞xd1† 18.♗xd1 ♘d8 19.b4 White can improve his position with ♘d3 and h3 followed by ♘d1 and ♜b3.

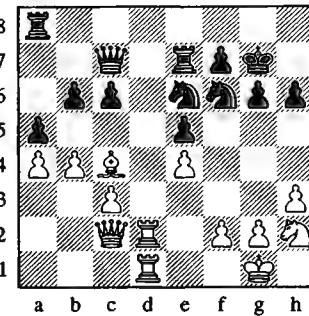
**15.♗e2 ♘d8**

Spassky chooses to improve his knight. The following alternatives also deserved attention.

15...♗f8?! Black intends to exchange the dark-squared bishops. It is a common idea in such positions, and it is slightly surprising that Spassky never tried to do it in the game. 16.h4?! (16.♗c4 ♛e6; 16.g4 h6 17.b3 ♘d8 18.♘b2 ♘e6 Black obtains some counterplay.) 16...♘d8 (after 16...♜h6 17.♗g5 White keeps an edge) 17.b3 ♘e6 18.♘b2 ♜h6 19.♘d3 ♜xe3 20.♗xe3 ♘g7 White only has a small advantage.

15...♗e6?! Black can also improve the queen first. 16.b3 h5 (Another line is 16...♗f8 17.h3 ♜ed8 18.♘b2 ♜xd1 19.♗xd1 h5 20.♗g5 ♘e7 21.♘c4 ♘d8 when Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.) 17.h3 ♜h7 18.♘b2 ♜h6 19.♘c4 ♜xe3 20.♗xe3 ♘e7 21.♗d3 a5 22.♗ed1 ♘g7 White dominates the d-file, but is not easy for him to achieve anything tangible as Black controls all the entry squares.

By contrast, let me show you an example of a previous game in which Karpov was able to make use of the d-file.

**26.♗xe6!**

Karpov exchanges some minor pieces in order to facilitate his invasion.

**26...♜xe6 27.♘g4! ♘xg4?!**

Black should have taken the opportunity to exchange some pawns on the queenside with 27...b5! 28.♘xf6 ♜xf6 29.♗d7 ♜b6 when he can hold the position.

28.hxg4

After 28.♗d7 ♜c8 29.hxg4 ♜e8 Black will follow up with ...♝e7.

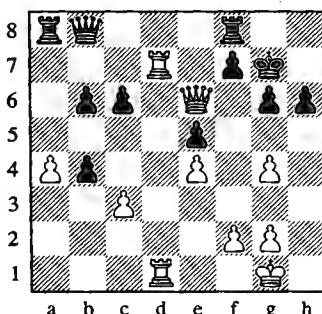
28...♝ee8?

After 28...♝e7! Black is worse but still has chances to survive.

29.♝d7!

The invasion is decisive.

29...♛b8 30.♝b3 ♜f8 31.♛e6 axb4



32.♝1d6!

Karpov catches Black's king.

32...♚g8 33.♛xe5 ♚h7

33...bx<sub>c</sub>3 34.♝xg6† leads to mate.

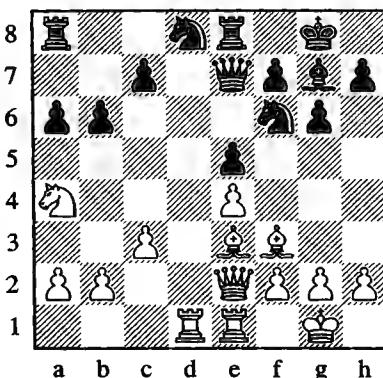
34.♛f6 ♚g8

34...♛e8 35.♝xg6† is the end.

35.cxb4 ♜xa4 36.e5

1–0 Karpov – Kirilov, Daugavpils 1971.

Back to the game.



16.b3

Karpov clears the b2-square for the knight.

16...♞e6?!

The knight will not stay long here thanks to Karpov's strong yet predictable play. Better was 16...♝b7 17.♝b2 ♜d6 (17...♛e6??) although White keeps an edge with 18.♛c4!!, exchanging a pair of knights in order to get closer to Black's queenside.

17.g3

Karpov prevents ...♝f4 and prepares to transfer his bishop to h3.

17...h5 18.♝b2 b5?

Spassky stops ♜c4, but will pay the price for loosening his queenside.

In his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov mentions 18...♝d7 as an improvement. Against this White should probably leave his knight on b2 for the time being in order to guard against ...a5-a4, and instead improve his position on the kingside with 19.h4 or 19.♝g2.

Another idea was 18...♝h7 to prepare the thematic bishop exchange: 19.♝d3 (After 19.♛c4 ♜c5 20.b4 ♜a4 21.♛c2 b5 22.♝b2 ♜xb2 23.♛xb2 ♜h6 24.♜c5 ♜e6 Black is close to equality.) 19...♝d8 20.♝b4 (20.♝g5 ♜h6 21.♝xh6 ♜xh6 22.♝b4 a5 23.♝d5 ♜xd5 and now after 24.exd5 ♜d6 or 24.♝xd5 ♜f6 Black is about to equalize.) 20...a5 21.♝d5 ♜xd5 22.♝xd5 ♜b7 23.♝d2 ♜ed8 24.♝d1 ♜e6 White controls the d-file, but Black is still not much worse.

19.♝d3

Karpov attacks the e5-pawn while aiming at the queenside weaknesses.

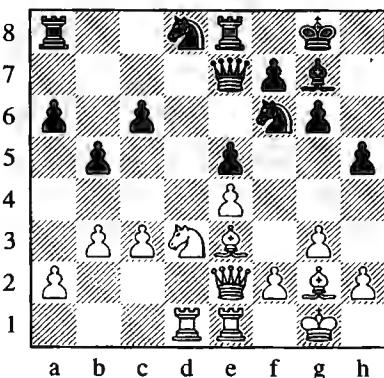
19...♝d8

It is too late to transfer the other knight:

19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  (20...c5? 21. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ )  
21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  White has a huge advantage.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ c6

The tenth World Champion strengthens the pawn structure but weakens the b6-square. The alternative was 20... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  21.f3  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  (after 21... $\mathbb{E}ed8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  23.c4 White opens the queenside) 22. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  23. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  24.c4 and White softens the enemy pawns.



### 21.f3!

Karpov defends the e4-pawn in order to prepare  $\mathbb{Q}h3$ .

### 21... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}h3$

The bishop exerts a great influence from this square.

### 22...a5

Spassky wants to open the a-file and get some active play.

### 23.a4!

Karpov separates his opponent's pawns on the queenside.

### 23... $\mathbb{b}xa4$

After 23... $\mathbb{b}h7$  24.axb5 cxb5 25. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  b4 26. $\mathbb{W}c4$  White also has the advantage.

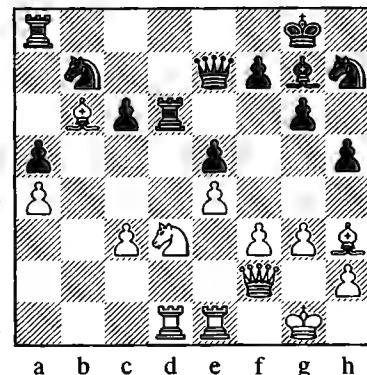
### 24.bxa4 $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 25. $\mathbb{W}f2$

25. $\mathbb{E}b1$  or 25. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  also give White better prospects, but Karpov wants to exchange the b7-knight. This piece does not stand especially well, but it does a good job of covering some important invasion squares.

### 25... $\mathbb{E}ed8$

Had Spassky covered the c5-square with 25... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , Karpov may have turned his attention to the open b-file with 26. $\mathbb{E}b1!$ , threatening to take the e5-pawn. After 26... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  28. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  29. $\mathbb{W}a2$  White keeps a slight plus.

### 26. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{E}d6$



### 27. $\mathbb{Q}c5?$

Up to this point Karpov's play has been exemplary, but the text move is a mistake which risks squandering most of his advantage. He should have preferred one of the alternatives:

27. $\mathbb{W}b2$ !?,  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29. $\mathbb{W}f1$  White is somewhat better.

27.f4!?, forces Black to defend resolutely: 27...c5! (27...f6?! 28. $\mathbb{W}a2\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29. $\mathbb{W}c4$  is very strong; 27...exf4 28.e5 fxg3 29. $\mathbb{W}xg3$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  Black loses the exchange and gets little in return.) 28. $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  29. $\mathbb{W}xc5$

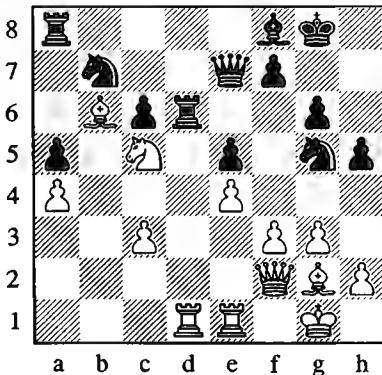
$\mathbb{Q}a7$  (29... $\mathbb{W}d8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  White is just a pawn up) 30. $\mathbb{W}xa7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  32. $fxe5$  33. $\mathbb{B}xd1$  33. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  Black's active pieces give him reasonable chances to hold the endgame a pawn down.

### 27... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}f8?$

This is a serious mistake, which leads to big troubles as Black will not be able to exchange any piece. Spassky could have reduced his troubles in one of two ways:

28... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  30. $\mathbb{B}xd1$  30. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  31. $\mathbb{B}b1$  White still has an edge thanks to his bishop pair, but Black's troubles are much less severe than in the game.

Even better would have been 28... $\mathbb{B}xd1!$  29. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  when the two exchanges have eased Black's position considerably. White's advantage is small, if it exists at all.



### 29. $\mathbb{B}b1!$

Karpov avoids exchanges and ensures that Black's pieces will remain tangled.

### 29... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$

In a difficult position, Spassky commits a further error. The knight blocks a square which was needed by the d6-rook.

29... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  was better, although White has a pleasant choice. 30. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  (There is also 30. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  32. $\mathbb{W}a2$  when White's bishops provide him with a lasting initiative.) 30... $\mathbb{W}xb7$  31. $f4$  (31. $\mathbb{Q}c5?$ !  $\mathbb{W}xb1$  32. $\mathbb{B}xb1$   $\mathbb{B}d1\uparrow$ ) 31... $c5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xb1$  33. $\mathbb{B}xb1$   $\mathbb{B}d1\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  Despite being a pawn down, Black has chances to hold.

### 30. $f4!$

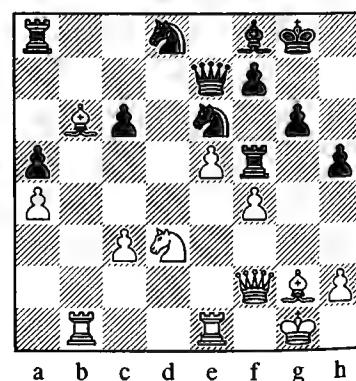
Karpov exploits the fact that the d6-rook has no escape route.

### 30... $\mathbb{B}f6$

30... $\mathbb{Q}ge6?$  31. $fxe5$  wins, and 30... $exf4$  31. $gxsf4$   $\mathbb{Q}ge6?$  32. $e5$  is no better.

30... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  was not losing immediately, but after 31. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  32. $f5$  Black can hardly move.

### 31. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $exf4$ 32. $gxsf4$ $\mathbb{Q}ge6$ 33. $e5$ $\mathbb{B}f5$



### 34. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

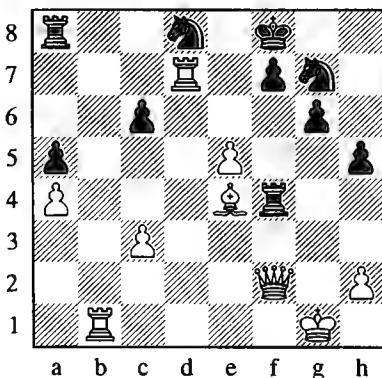
White wins an exchange for no compensation whatsoever.

### 34... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Karpov exchanges the bishops, bringing himself one step closer to a winning endgame.

### 35... $\mathbb{W}e6$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 37. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}c7$

38.  $\mathbb{E}ed1$   $\mathbb{E}xf4$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xd7$



Spassky could have resigned here, and probably only played on because of the faster time control.

40...  $\mathbb{E}xf2$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}ge6$  42.  $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  43.  $\mathbb{E}b6$  c5 44.  $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  45.  $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  46.  $\mathbb{E}da6$  f5 47.  $\mathbb{E}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  48.  $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  49.  $\mathbb{E}a8$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  50.  $\mathbb{E}5a7$   $\mathbb{E}xa7$  51.  $\mathbb{E}xa7$  g5 52.  $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  53.  $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  54. a5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  55.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  56. a6  
1-0

In the second game Karpov suffered a disaster, first blundering a rook away in an easily winning ending, and then failing to hold a drawn position with a queen versus Spassky's queen and knight. The fast time limit must have taken its toll. In the third game Spassky experimented with what is now known as the Hippo formation, but misplayed the position and was crushed. In the final game Karpov managed to hold a draw from the worse side of a Petroff to secure a 2½–1½ victory.

Karpov's next tournament was in Tilburg. He won a sharp game against Hübner and then scored what must have been an especially satisfying victory over Petrosian; it was the first and only time he was able to beat the great Armenian. They only played once more, and

drew. Altogether Petrosian scored one win and one loss against Karpov, with thirteen draws. There were not many players of that era who were able to boast an even score against Karpov. Sadly the former champion passed away in 1984.

Karpov continued his fine form with a nice win over Torre in round three, but then blundered and lost against Portisch. Out of his remaining seven games he drew five and won the other two against Nunn and Larsen. His final score of 7½/11 was enough to take sole first place, half a point ahead of Timman.

Karpov's last event of the year was the Olympiad in Lucerne, Switzerland. Unlike some of his previous Olympiads, he was rested for a number of matches. It seems he took full advantage of his days off, as he dropped only three draws out of the eight games he played. His list of victims included Hort, Porrisch, Quinteros and Gheorghiu.

## 1982 Summary

Mar del Plata (3rd-5th place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/13$  ( $+4 = 7 - 2$ )

London (1st-2nd place):  $8\frac{1}{2}/13$  ( $+5 = 7 - 1$ )

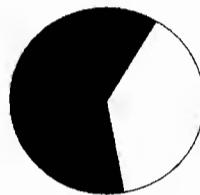
Turin (1st-2nd place):  $7/12$  ( $+3 = 8 - 1$ )

(Hamburg TV games not included)

Tilburg (1st place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/11$  ( $+5 = 5 - 1$ )

Lucerne Olympiad (Board one):  $6\frac{1}{2}/8$  ( $+5 = 3 - 0$ )

Total  $64.9\% (+22 = 30 - 5)$



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1983

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Rating 2710 (1 in the World)

Karpov's first event of the new year was Linares, where he started with a draw against Andersson after missing a probable win in a knight ending. He drew his next three, then beat Larsen and Sax. But then he lost his momentum and drew his next three, which left him trailing Spassky by half a point. As fate would have it, the two rivals met in the last round. Karpov rolled the dice with a Sicilian but Spassky played solidly with the Closed, and after some simplifications they agreed a draw on move eighteen.

Next was the Soviet Championship. Karpov had missed this tournament a few times in recent years, but he was present for this, the jubilee 50th event. He beat Yusupov in round three, but two rounds later a cold shower was waiting for him as, despite having the white pieces, he was outplayed and beaten by Azmaiparashvili. After a few more draws, he was able to pick up some much needed wins over Romanishin and Geller in rounds eight and nine, and later Lerner and Beliavsky in rounds eleven and thirteen. Karpov's final score of  $9\frac{1}{2}/15$  was not the most dominant result of his career, but it was enough to take the gold medal ahead of Tukmakov who finished half a point behind.

Karpov then played for the Soviet Union at the European Team Championship in Plovdiv. He played four games, beating Mortensen and drawing with Timman, Ljubojevic and Miles.

Karpov followed with another team event, the USSR Spartakiad. He was rested for the first game, then faced Mark Taimanov in round two. Taimanov was a strong and experienced grandmaster who had twice qualified for the world championship candidates cycle. He tied for first place at the Soviet Championship on two occasions. In 1952 he lost the tiebreak to Botvinnik, but in 1956 he prevailed over Spassky and Averbakh. Interestingly, in addition to his accomplishments over the chessboard, Taimanov is also an outstanding pianist.

Taimanov played all the world champions from Euwe to Karpov, defeating six of them – an impressive achievement. His overall score against the champions stands at fourteen wins, sixty three draws and forty four losses. The present game was his last against Karpov. Up to this point they had scored one win apiece, with four draws.

## Game 67

Anatoly Karpov – Mark Taimanov

USSR Spartakiad 1983

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♗c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 e6**

Taimanov plays the variation that bears his name. According to the database he employed it for the first time in 1960, and continued to do so for more than forty years afterwards. It is interesting that he only made his most famous contribution to opening theory after passing his peak, which occurred between 1946 and 1956, during which he was ranked among the top ten players in the world.

**5.♘c3**

This was the first time Karpov played the text move. The two protagonists had debated the 5.♘b5 variation three times previously. In their first meeting Karpov won a remarkable ending in which he caught Taimanov's king superbly, but the other two games resulted in draws. Against most opponents Karpov was successful with the 5.c4 variation, so it is testament to the strength of Taimanov that he felt the need to use a different approach in this game.

**5...a6 6.♗e2 ♗ge7 7.0–0**

Karpov chooses a solid line.

**7...♗xd4 8.♗xd4 ♗c6 9.♗d3**

This was not a new move – it was first played by Klovans in 1978 against none other than Taimanov himself – but still, there was not much in the way of established theory on it. Nowadays things are different; it is the main line in the position and has been tested in over a hundred games.

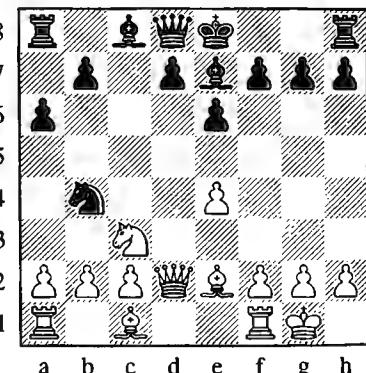
**9...♗b4?!**

Taimanov repeats the continuation of his previous game, but Karpov is ready for it. Nowadays 9...♗c7 10.♗g5 ♘d6 has become firmly established as the main line.

**10.♗d2!**

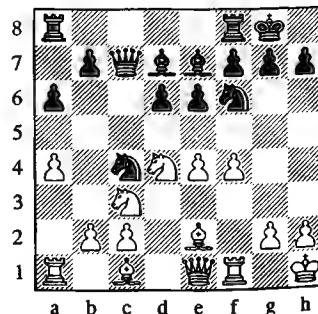
Karpov improves over the play of Klovans, who retreated to d1.

**10...♘e7**



**11.b3!**

The bishop will stand well on the long diagonal, where it menaces the g7-pawn. It is unusual for White to employ a queenside fianchetto in the Open Sicilian, although Karpov had previously used the same idea to defeat Tukmakov in a Scheveningen position:



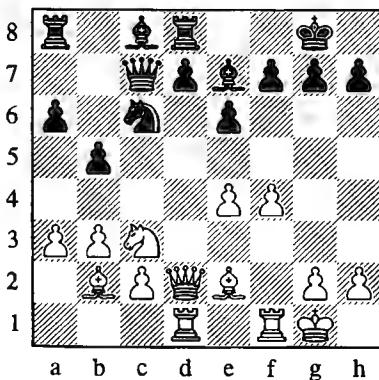
**14.b3 ♘a5 15.♗d3 ♘c6 16.♗xc6**

17... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  e5 18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}ad8$  19.b4 a5 20.b5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   
 21.f5 Karpov – Tukmakov, Leningrad 1971.  
 Tukmakov later sacrificed a pawn to loosen Karpov's grip, but failed to get enough play and eventually succumbed.

### 11...0–0 12. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}c7$ 13. $\mathbb{E}ad1$ $\mathbb{B}d8$

Taimanov was persistent, and he later tried to improve with 13...b5 14.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ . In Plovdiv in 1984, Kiril Georgiev played 15. $\mathbb{W}e3$  and beat him. A year later, Taimanov reached the same position and was able to draw after 15. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ , although his opponent, the Portuguese FM Jorge Guimaraes, was a somewhat less formidable adversary than the previous two. Overall, this sequence of results is not a great advertisement for Black's opening, and it is hardly surprising that 9... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ?! failed to catch on.

### 14.a3 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 15.f4 b5



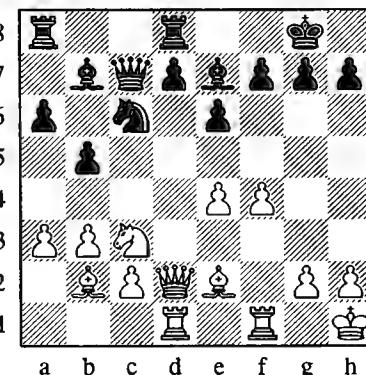
### 16. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ !

With this strong precautionary move White prepares to transfer his queen to g3, thus enhancing the power of his bishop on the long diagonal.

Transferring the rook to g3 is less effective: 16. $\mathbb{R}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ! (16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17. $\mathbb{B}g3$  f6 is also playable) 17. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2\#$  (Also after 17...f6

18. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  Black's pieces are active, and White's attack does not look too dangerous.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  f6 White is unlikely to be able to hurt his opponent, and Black's light-squared bishop is a powerful asset.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}b7$



### 17. $\mathbb{W}e3$ !

Continuing the plan.

### 17...b4

Taimanov is an active player and he remains true to his style. It would be interesting to see how Karpov would have continued his play against the enemy king after 17...d6 18. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ . The most natural continuation looks to be 19. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}b1$

After 18.axb4?!,  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  19. $\mathbb{E}d2$  d5 Karpov evaluates the position as clearly better for Black. This seems rather excessive, although Black has certainly solved his problems. It is important to note that the positionally desirable 20.e5? (White should settle for approximate equality with 20.exd5.) loses material after 20...d4!.

### 18...bxa3

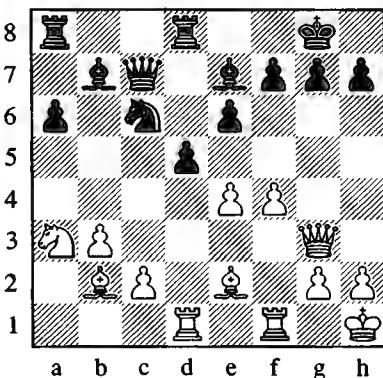
18...d5 and 18...a5 are also reasonable moves.

**19.  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  d5 20.  $\mathbb{W}g3$**

20.e5 d4 is unclear.

Karpov mentions the line 20.f5 d4 21.  $\mathbb{W}h3$  exf5 22.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  with balanced play.

20.exd5?! exd5 21.  $\mathbb{W}h3$  was enough for a small edge. It is possible that Karpov considered the game continuation to be more ambitious; on the other hand he may simply have wanted to keep the position closed against a player with an active style who had beaten him once before by tactical means.



**20...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$**

Playing against the b2-bishop by means of 20...d4? 21.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  was interesting.

**21.e5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}ac8$**

Black could also have tried the same plan as in the game without this rook move.

**23.  $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$**

Karpov mentions the possibility of 23...g6?!, which may well have transposed to the game after 24.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$ .

**24.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$ !**

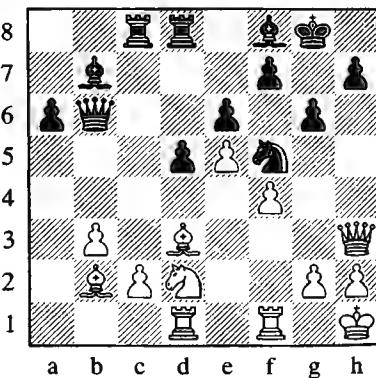
The knight has no future on a3, so Karpov improves it.

It is not simple to build the attack without weakening White's king as well. For instance, 24.g4 can be safely met by 24...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$ , while after 24.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  exf5 25.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}xc2$  Karpov prefers Black's position.

**24...g6**

On 24...a5?! the champion planned 25.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ! intending  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  or  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  when the knight is heading for its ideal home on d4.

**25.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$**



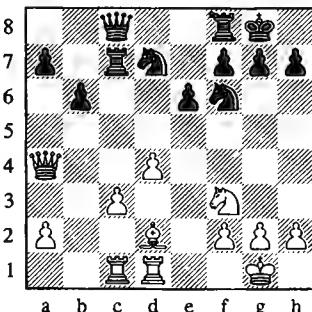
**26.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5!!$**

Bringing the knight at once is weaker: 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ?! d4! (not 26...  $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ?? 27.  $\mathbb{Q}d4+$ –) 27.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xf3$  exf5 Black is not worse, and in fact Karpov evaluated the position as slightly better for him.

By exchanging his strong bishop for the enemy knight, Karpov embarks on a risky but farsighted venture. His motivation is to weaken Black's king. What makes this move so difficult to judge is that it is effectively a double pawn sacrifice: the c2-pawn will not last long, and sooner or later White will have to give up the e5-pawn in order to activate his remaining bishop.

The idea of giving up material for positional gains was far from a new concept for Karpov. In

fact, he had utilized just such a device to good effect in his previous win over Taimanov:



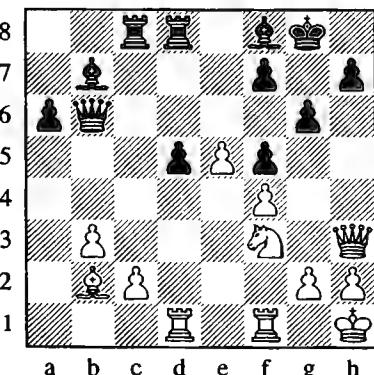
17... $\mathbb{E}c4!$  18. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  Taimanov – Karpov, Moscow 1973. At the cost of a pawn Black has secured a lasting blockade and a perfect knight outpost on d5. Taimanov ran short on time and went on to lose.

### 26...exf5

26...gxsf5? is too dangerous: 27. $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{W}h8$  (27... $\mathbb{E}xc2?$  28. $\mathbb{E}g3\#$   $\mathbb{W}h8$  29. $\mathbb{W}h5$  wins as  $\mathbb{W}g5$  is coming) 28. $\mathbb{W}h5$  Black is in trouble on the kingside.

### 27. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

Karpov does not even bother defending the c2-pawn; the initiative is what counts.



27... $\mathbb{E}xc2$

Taimanov bags a pawn and hopes to obtain active play for his rook on the second rank. He had some other choices as well:

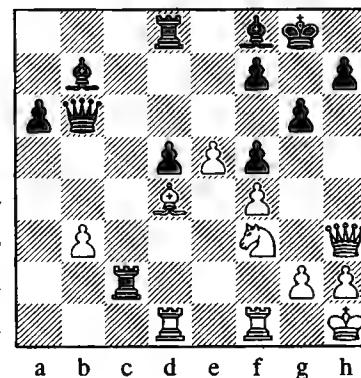
27... $\mathbb{E}c5$  28. $\mathbb{K}d4!$  White's knight will come to d4 and dominate the b7-bishop.

27... $a5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (28. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $a4\#$ ) 28... $\mathbb{W}a6$  29.c3 White has a slight plus.

Black could have considered 27... $d4!?$ , sacrificing a pawn to free his bishop. After 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  it will not be easy for White to exploit his extra pawn.

### 28. $\mathbb{K}d4!$

Karpov ensures that the long diagonal will remain closed.



28... $\mathbb{W}c6$

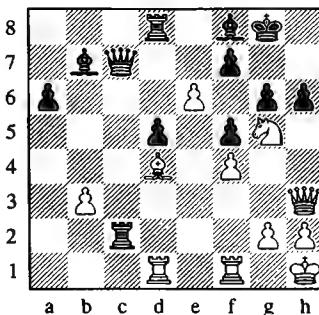
Taimanov decides to control the sixth rank, which looks logical, although it is not clear if it was best.

The greedy 28... $\mathbb{W}xb3?$  neglects the kingside: 29.e6! (29. $\mathbb{W}h4!$  is also strong) 29...f6 (29...fxe6? 30. $\mathbb{W}h4\#$ ) 30. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{K}e7$  31. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  32. $\mathbb{E}xf6$  And White wins.

However, it was worth considering the following alternative:

28... $\mathbb{W}c7$ !?

Karpov stops here, evaluating the position as winning for White. Black's position is certainly precarious, but the fight is far from over.

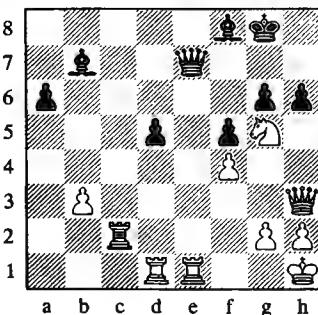


30...f6! 31. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

31. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$  (32. $\mathbb{Q}del$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$ )

32... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  34. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$  (34. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}h7$ ) 34... $\mathbb{W}g7$  Black is alive.

31... $\mathbb{E}e8$  32.e7  $\mathbb{E}xe7!$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$



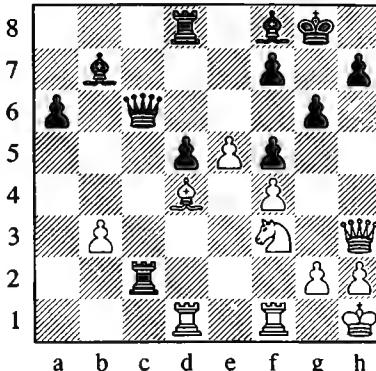
34... $\mathbb{E}e2$

34... $\mathbb{E}d2$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  is clearly better for White.

34... $\mathbb{W}f6?$  is possible: 35. $\mathbb{E}e6$  (35. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  d4) 35... $\mathbb{W}g7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d4 Black has some activity for the exchange.

35. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

White has chances to convert his extra exchange, but Black's position is certainly not hopeless.



29. $\mathbb{W}h4!$

Having obtained some positional compensation for the sacrificed pawn, Karpov switches to tactics. The text move wins an important tempo by attacking the d8-rook.

The tempting 29.e6 is less strong: 29...fxe6 30. $\mathbb{W}h4$  (After 30. $\mathbb{Q}e5?$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  White has nothing on the kingside.) 30... $\mathbb{W}d7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  With two pawns for the exchange Black is doing all right, and White has no open files available for his rooks.

29... $\mathbb{E}e8$

Black has other defensive ideas as well.

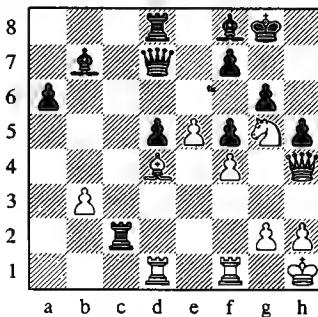
29... $\mathbb{E}d7$  30.e6 fxe6 (30... $\mathbb{W}xe6?$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ ) 31. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  33. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  34. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{E}xc1$  35. $\mathbb{W}xc1$  Black has serious problems, despite having two pawns for the exchange.

The best chance may well have been:

29... $\mathbb{W}d7!$

Interestingly Karpov does not mention this move, which defends both the rook and the seventh rank.

30. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h5



31.♕xf7!

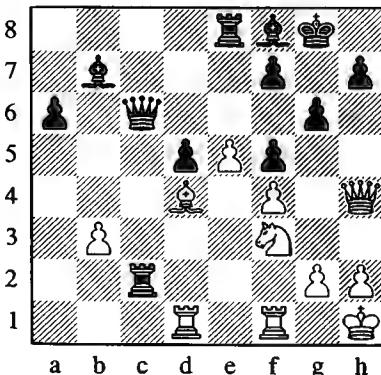
31.g4? is beautiful but not yet decisive:  
31...♝c5 (31...fxg4? 32.f5 is crushing)  
32.gxh5 (32.e6 fxe6 33.gxh5 ♜xd4 34.♜xd4  
♝dc8 Black is likely to escape) 32...♝xd4  
33.♝xd4 ♜dc8 34.♝g1 ♜c1 Black stays in  
the game.

31...♝e8!

31...♝xf7? 32.e6†! wins.  
31...♝e7 32.♛g5 ♜e8 33.g4 ♜b5 34.♜fe1  
Black is in big trouble.

32.♛g5 ♜e7 33.♛g3 ♜h6 34.♝f3 ♜h7

Black is still worse, but he has consolidated  
his position and is not about to lose by force.



30.e6!

This second pawn sacrifice was built into  
Karpov's superb strategic plan which began  
with the minor piece exchange on f5. Karpov  
improves his bishop and vacates the e5-square

for his knight. It would be easy for Black to  
miss such a move, especially in conjunction  
with the follow-up on move 32.

30...fxe6!

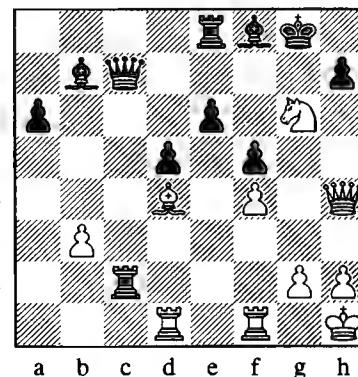
30...♛xe6 is worse: 31.♛g5 h6 32.♛xe6  
♛xe6 33.♝de1 ♜e2 34.♝xe2 (34.♝g1 ♜e4!  
Black blocks the e-file and can continue to  
resist) 34...♛xe2 35.♝g1 Black is forced to  
enter a losing endgame.

31.♝e5!

White must avoid 31.♛f6?? when 31...e5!  
turns the tables.

31...♛c7 32.♛xg6!

White regains a pawn and, more importantly,  
weakens the enemy kingside severely.



32...♝g7?

Taimanov brings the bishop to a natural  
defensive position, but it does not solve his  
problems.

32...♝c5!

The bishop on d4 is White's most potent  
attacking piece, and Black had to exchange  
it. Once the bishop has been removed, he  
may also have chances to obtain counterplay  
with ...d4. The resulting play is extremely  
sharp, but Black seems to be able to survive.

33.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 

Other moves also lead to interesting play:

33.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  d4?? 34.  $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$  (34.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}g7$ )

34...  $\mathbb{W}xe7$  (34...  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ ) 35.  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$

36.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xg2$ ) 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}xg2$  Black will obtain a perpetual check.

33.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  d4 34.  $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$  35.  $\mathbb{W}f6$  (35.  $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  defends) 35...  $\mathbb{W}xe5$ ! 36.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}e7$

37.  $\mathbb{W}g5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  (37...  $\mathbb{E}g7$ ) 38.  $\mathbb{W}d8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  40. h4! [40.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  41.  $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black's activity compensates for his material deficit.] 40...  $\mathbb{E}xg2$  41.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}g4\#$

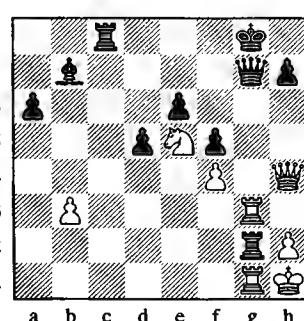
42.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}xg1$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}xg1$  Black is tied up.)

38.  $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}c2$  the position is unclear.

33...  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  34.  $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  35.  $\mathbb{E}g1$

After 35.  $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  36.  $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  Black is safe.

35...  $\mathbb{E}ec8$  36.  $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{E}xg2$  37.  $\mathbb{E}g3$



37...d4!! 38.  $\mathbb{Q}c6!!$

White answers his opponent's brilliant move with one of his own. Alas, it is still not enough to win the game.

38...  $\mathbb{W}xg3$

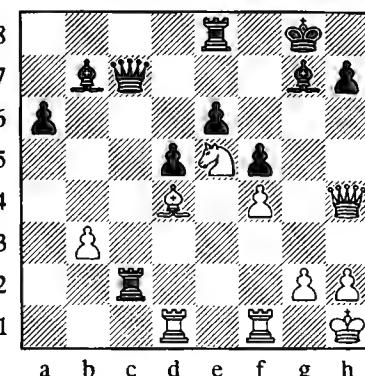
There is also 38...  $\mathbb{E}xg3$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6\#$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  41.  $\mathbb{E}xg7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  42.  $\mathbb{W}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  when White has to take a perpetual because of the strong d-pawn.

39.  $\mathbb{H}xg3$   $\mathbb{E}e2$  40.  $\mathbb{W}g5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  41.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6\#$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$

The position is equal, as both kings are exposed to checks.

33.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ 

Karpov keeps both of his strong minor pieces, as well as his blockade over the central dark squares.

33...  $\mathbb{W}e7!$ 

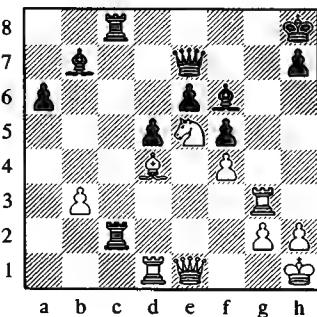
Taimanov defends well. Karpov made a brief mention of 33...a5, which gives some chances to free the bishop. Unfortunately it gives White a valuable tempo with which to build his attack: 34.  $\mathbb{E}f3$ ! (better than 34.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$ , as given by Karpov) 34...  $\mathbb{E}c1$  (34...  $\mathbb{E}xg2?$  35.  $\mathbb{W}h5!!$  wins as the queens attacks e8 and defends d1 at the same time. Also after 34...  $\mathbb{E}a6$  35.  $\mathbb{E}h3!$   $h6$  36.  $\mathbb{E}g3$  Black faces an overwhelming attack.) 35.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}xc1\#$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  37.  $\mathbb{E}g3$  White has a lot of firepower close to Black's king.

34.  $\mathbb{W}g3$ 

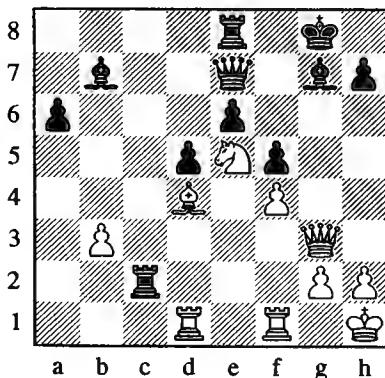
Karpov analysed two alternatives:

34.  $\mathbb{W}h5$  intends a rook lift along the third rank. 34...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$  (Black can also consider 34...  $\mathbb{E}ec8$  35.  $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  with counterplay.) 35.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}f7!$  This is the correct move order. (35...d4?) Karpov attaches an exclamation mark to this move, but it is actually a losing mistake. If 36.  $\mathbb{E}g1?$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  Black is doing well, but 36.  $\mathbb{E}f3!!$  wins for White.) 36.  $\mathbb{W}h3$  d4 Now this move brings Black decent play.

34.  $\mathbb{W}e1!$  Karpov suggested this as the best move, without any further analysis. The idea is indeed very strong and instructive. White prepares  $\mathbb{E}f3-g3$ , meanwhile the queen defends the first rank and prepares to recapture on e5 should Black exchange there. 34...  $\mathbb{E}ec8?!$  This natural move meets with a beautiful refutation. (34...a5 is objectively better, although after 35.  $\mathbb{E}f3 \mathbb{W}b4$  [or 35...  $\mathbb{E}f6$  36.  $\mathbb{E}g3\#$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  37.  $\mathbb{E}f3$ ] 36.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  37.  $\mathbb{E}g3$  White has a strong attack.) 35.  $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  36.  $\mathbb{E}g3\#$   $\mathbb{W}h8$  (36...  $\mathbb{W}f8$  37.  $\mathbb{E}d7\#$  should be winning)



37.  $\mathbb{W}b4!!$  White wins. Interestingly, there was even a second beautiful solution in 37.  $\mathbb{E}g6!!$ .



34...  $\mathbb{E}ec8?!$

Taimanov switches his rook to a defensive post on c7, but this leaves the e-pawn weak. A better try would have been: 34...a5 35.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$

$\mathbb{W}c7$  (35...  $\mathbb{E}a6$  36.  $\mathbb{E}a1$ ) Now after 36.  $\mathbb{E}a1$  or 36.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  White has excellent compensation, nevertheless Black has more chances than in the game.

35.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{E}8c7$

Black has no time to double his rooks on the second rank: 35...  $\mathbb{E}a2$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  (36...  $\mathbb{E}c6$  37.  $\mathbb{E}c1$ ; 36...  $\mathbb{E}cc2$  37.  $\mathbb{E}xe6+/-$ ) 37.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  38.  $\mathbb{E}c3$  Black's problems persist.

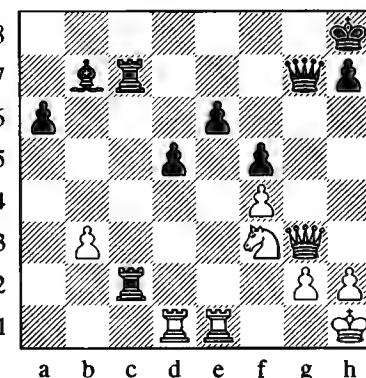
36.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

Weaker is 36...  $\mathbb{E}c8?!$  37.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  (38...  $\mathbb{E}c5$  39.  $\mathbb{E}e3$ ) 39.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  and according to Karpov White is winning.

37.  $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$

In his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov suggests the small refinement 37.  $\mathbb{W}xg7\#?$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  38.  $\mathbb{E}xe6$  which also leads to a considerable endgame advantage: 38...  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  (38...  $\mathbb{E}g8$  39.  $\mathbb{W}xg7$ ) 39.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  40.  $\mathbb{E}ee1$  White's knight is dominating on d4.

37...  $\mathbb{W}xg7$



38.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

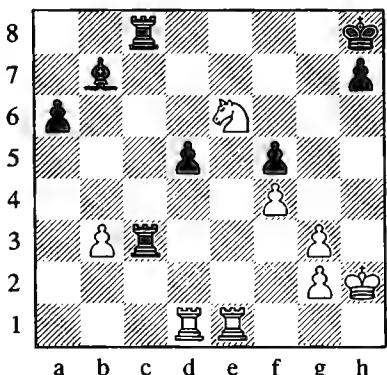
Karpov is happy to steer the position into a favourable endgame. It may or may not be objectively winning, but over the board the chances for success are high.

38.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6?$   $\mathbb{W}xg3$  39.  $hxg3$  d4 40.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  was a promising alternative.

### 38... $\mathbb{W}xg3$ 39. $hxg3$ $\mathbb{B}2c3$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$

Karpov gives his opponent no time to defend the f5-pawn. If 40.  $\mathbb{Q}h2?$   $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}e7!$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  it is not easy for White to achieve anything.

### 40... $\mathbb{E}c8$ 41. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



### 41... $\mathbb{E}xb3$

Taking a pawn looks natural, but Black will not get a chance to promote his passed a-pawn as his king is too vulnerable.

A better practical chance would have been 41...d4!, giving up the pawn in order to activate the dormant bishop. 42.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$  From this square the knight defends b3, attacks f5 and guards against an invasion on c2. (42.  $\mathbb{E}xd4?$  is weaker because of 42...  $\mathbb{E}c2$ ) 42...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  43. g4!  $\mathbb{E}g8$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$  Karpov does not mention taking this pawn. (After 44. g5 h6 45.  $\mathbb{E}h1!$   $\mathbb{E}g6!$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  Black is reasonably active.) 44...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  45.  $gxh5$   $\mathbb{E}xb3$  46.  $\mathbb{E}d2$  White will look to double his rooks on the seventh rank, with excellent winning chances.

### 42. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{E}b6$

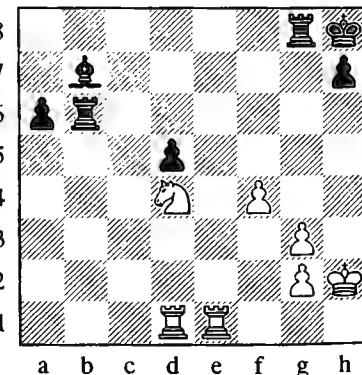
Another line is 42...  $\mathbb{E}b4$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$

44.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (44.  $\mathbb{Q}d4?!$ ) 44...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  45.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}b6$  46.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  when Black's king is vulnerable on the back rank.

### 43. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ $\mathbb{E}f8$ 44. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{E}g8$

If 44...  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  45.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{E}d6$  46.  $\mathbb{E}c1$  White's rooks are dominating.

44...  $\mathbb{E}f7$  runs into 45.  $\mathbb{E}e8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  46.  $\mathbb{E}d1!$  when White constructs a mating net. This was pointed out by Karpov who, as we have seen many times, has a knack for checkmating his opponents in endgames. A possible finish is 46...a5 47.  $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  48. g4! h6 (48...a4 49. g5!) 49.  $\mathbb{E}h8$  and White wins.



### 45. $\mathbb{E}e7!$ $\mathbb{E}g7$

After 45...  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  46.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  47.  $\mathbb{E}e5$  Black remains very passive.

### 46. $\mathbb{E}d1$ $\mathbb{E}h6\#$

Pushing the a-pawn was also not enough to save the game: 46...a5 47. f5 a4 48.  $\mathbb{E}7e6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  49.  $fxe6$   $\mathbb{E}g8!$  (49...  $\mathbb{E}e7$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ) 50. e7  $\mathbb{E}e8$  51.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}e8=\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  White's extra piece should decide the game.

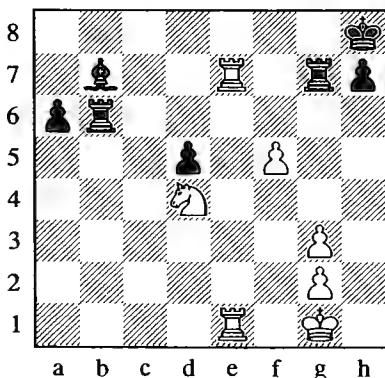
### 47. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{E}hg6$ 48. f5!

Karpov's f-pawn now grows into a powerhouse.

**48...♝b6**

Other moves were no better, for instance 48...♝xg3 49.f6 ♘xg2† 50.♔h1 ♘g8 51.f7 wins.

In the event of 48...♝f6 the clever 49.g4! decides the game. Karpov points out that White must avoid 49.♝xg7? ♘xg7 50.♝e7† ♘f7 51.♛e6† ♘f6 52.♝xf7† ♘xf7 53.♛d8† ♘f6 54.♛xb7 ♘xf5 when it is doubtful that he can win.

**49.♝7e6!**

Karpov simplifies with enviable precision.

**49...♝xe6**

If 49...♝b4 50.f6 wins.

**50.fxe6!**

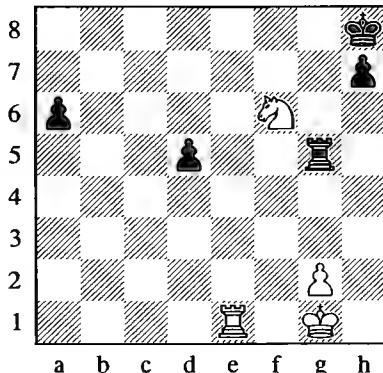
This pawn will cost Black his bishop.

**50...♝g8 51.e7 ♘e8 52.♛f5 ♘c6 53.♛d6 ♘g8**

Giving up only the exchange by 53...♝g7 would have been hopeless as well: 54.♛xe8† ♘xe8 55.♜f1 ♘f7 56.♜f4 a5 57.♞f2 a4 58.♞e3 a3 59.♞d4 a2 60.♜f1 And White wins, as Karpov pointed out.

**54.e8=♛ ♘xe8 55.♛xe8 ♘xg3 56.♛f6 ♘g5**

56...♝g6 would last longer, although of course after 57.♛xd5 White is winning easily.

**57.♝e7!**

In their first meeting Karpov also checkmated Taimanov's king with a knight and the rook; now he does it a second time.

**57...♝g7 58.♝e8†**

**1–0**

Karpov played a total of five games in the present Spartakiad. He scored one more win against Giorgadze, and drew the other three.

Karpov's next tournament was in Hannover. In the first round he suffered an incredible upset as he was comprehensively outplayed by a German player named Hartmann who was rated just 2290. Karpov even had the white pieces. In round two he made a quick draw with Kavalek, but then he moved into top gear and only dropped one draw from his next six games. A draw in round nine was followed by a win and two more draws.

In round thirteen Karpov faced Qi Jingxuan of China, who represented his country a few times. This was their first meeting. They played again in 1985; Karpov won that game too. The Chinese player competed regularly until 1987, but according to my database he only played two more tournaments after that year.

## Game 68

**Qi Jingxuan – Anatoly Karpov**

Hannover 1983

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6  
5.♘c3 a6**

Karpov only played the Najdorf five times during his long career. He scored three wins and two draws with it.

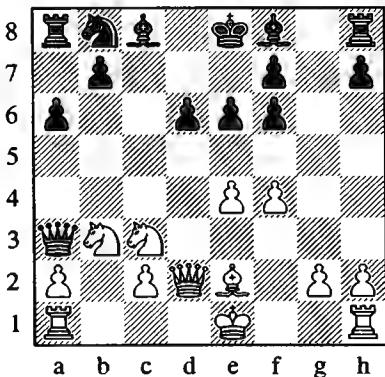
**6.♗g5**

This was the first and only time Karpov faced this move. In the first round of the tournament the Chinese player tried 6.♗e3 against Giorgadze and lost.

**6...e6 7.f4 ♖b6 8.♗d2 ♖xb2 9.♘b3 ♖a3!**

Objectively this may not be stronger than 9...♘c6 or 9...♗bd7, but practically it was the best choice as it is less likely to lead to a forced drawing line.

**10.♗xf6 gxsf6 11.♗e2**



**11...h5?**

It was Korchnoi who first introduced this move against Robatsch in 1972, and a few months later Fischer also used it against

Spassky in their world championship match. Black effectively forgoes the option of castling short, but he no longer has to deal with the irritating possibility of ♘h5.

In the following famous game Black refrained from the pawn move and instead walked his king to the queenside: 11...♘c6 12.0–0 ♘d7 13.f5 (13.♗h5 and 13.♗h1 are the main moves here.) 13...♗e5 14.fxe6 fxe6 15.♗h5† ♘d8 16.♗ab1 ♘c8 17.♗e2 ♘e7 18.♗f4 ♘c7 19.♗e2 ♘b8 20.♗a5 b5 Tal – Portisch, Biel 1976. The great attacking magician from Riga was unable to hurt his opponent's king on this occasion. Black preserved his extra pawn and later won with an attack of his own.

**12.0–0 ♘c6 13.♗h1 ♘d7 14.♗b1**

This move was first unveiled by Spassky against Fischer. Its main purpose is to prepare c4, which will shield the c3-knight and make it harder for Black to gain space with either the b- or d-pawn.

White has scored better with 14.♗d1, the most famous example of which came in the 1993 World Championship final: 14...♖c8 15.♗e3 (15.c4 and 15.♗f3 ♖b4 16.♗e3 are possible improvements) 15...♖b4 16.c3 ♖xe4 (16...♖b6?) 17.♗d3 ♖a4 18.♗c4 ♘c7 19.♗b6 ♖a3 Short – Kasparov, London (4) 1993. At this point Short avoided the repetition but went on to lose.

Interestingly, when the two players met again in 1995, Kasparov decided to develop the knight to d7. That game ended in a draw after a complex fight.

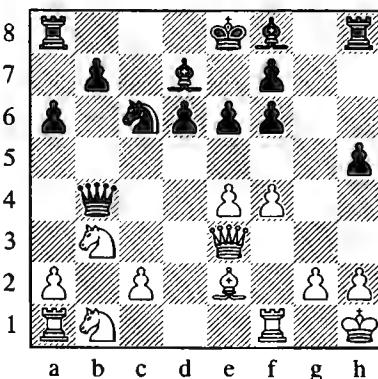
**14...♖b4**

After 14...♖b2 15.♗c3 several games have resulted in quick draws, but Karpov is playing for more. It is worth adding that attempting to trap the black queen does not lead anywhere

for White: 15.a4 (15.a3?  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $e5\#$  Lamarque Rodriguez – Wimmer, e-mail 1999) 15... $d5!$  16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  Black was on top in Converset – Gueth, e-mail 2002.

Interestingly, in the very first game in which 14. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  was played, Fischer also spurned the repetition. It would be interesting to know if the decision was due to his incredible fighting spirit (he was leading the match by the score of 6½–3½ at the time, so in terms of match tactics a draw would have been more than okay), or if he feared getting his queen trapped on b2 (the knight retreat was a new move at the time, and it would not have been easy to calculate and assess all the important lines over the board).

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$



### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$

Karpov improves on Fischer's play. The knight clears a safe path of retreat for the queen, while also blocking the e-file in order to prevent any  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ -d5 ideas.

The stem game soon ended in a disaster for Black: 15... $d5?$  16.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  17.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$   $h4?$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}1d2$   $f5?$  21.a3  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  22.c5  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3+$  Spassky – Fischer, Reykjavik (11) 1972.

### 16.c4

16.f5?! is well met by 16... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

16.a3  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  17.c4 (17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  19.f5  $h4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  0–0–0 Black has found a safe shelter for his king) 17... $f5$  (17... $h4$ ! 18. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ) 18. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  (19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ; 19. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ) 19... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  White does not have much to show for the pawn, and Black's bishops are strong.

### 16... $f5$ !

It may look risky to open the game, but Black's position is resilient enough to withstand it, and the activation of the dark-squared bishop will help him considerably.

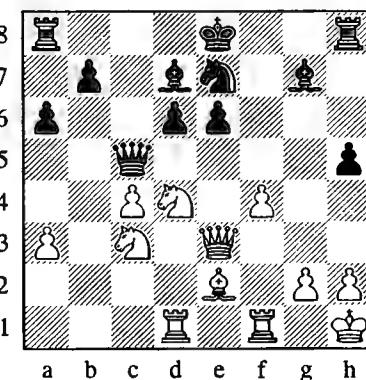
### 17.a3 $\mathbb{Q}a4$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$

White has won a few tempos, nevertheless Black is strong enough in the centre to repel any direct assault.

### 20.exf5 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ !

After 20... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ ? 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black loses material. Instead Karpov concentrates on developing and coordinating his forces.

### 21.fxe6 $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$



### 22... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ !

Simplifying to an endgame.

Karpov is not interested in winning a piece as his exposed king would offer White promising compensation: 22... $\mathbb{Q}c6?$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  24. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}hg8$  27. $\mathbb{W}h4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Black is in some danger.

### 23. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 24. $\mathbb{E}xd4$

In the resulting endgame both sides have some weaknesses, and the position should be about equal.

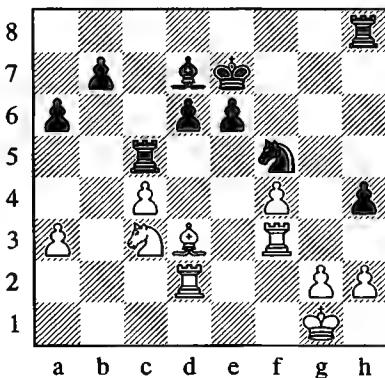
### 24... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 25. $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{E}c8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}f3$

A move like 26.g3? would have allowed 26...b5, so White wisely defends his knight.

It was also worth considering 26. $\mathbb{Q}d3?$   $\mathbb{E}h6$  (26...b5?! 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  exf5 28. $\mathbb{E}xd6$ ) 27. $\mathbb{E}e1$  when the position is balanced.

### 26... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ h4 28. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ $\mathbb{E}c5$

Karpov has made three of his characteristic little improving moves.



### 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf5?!$

It is dangerous to give up this bishop when the g2-pawn may still come under pressure. 29. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  was safer, and after 29... $\mathbb{E}c6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  the position is equal.

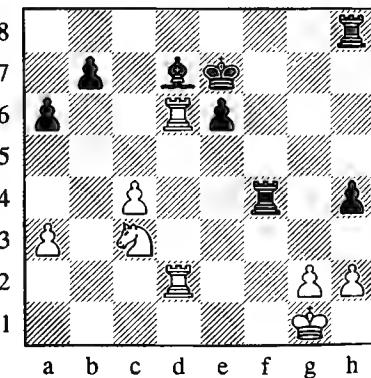
### 29... $\mathbb{E}xf5$ 30. $\mathbb{E}fd3?$

The further opening of the position only helps Black.

A better way to simplify the position was: 30. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  d5 (30... $\mathbb{E}c6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  [or 31... $\mathbb{E}e5$  32. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  33. $\mathbb{E}ed3$ ] 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf5\#$  will result in a draw) 31.cxd5  $\mathbb{E}xd5$  (31... $\mathbb{E}xd5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  is a double-edged endgame) 32. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  With such a limited amount of material remaining, the most likely result is a draw.

### 30... $\mathbb{E}xf4$ 31. $\mathbb{E}xd6$

Also after 31.c5 d5 32. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  Black's bishop dominates.



### 31... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

The bishop stands superbly here.

### 32.c5

It was worth considering 32. $\mathbb{E}6d4$  to exchange a pair of rooks, although Black is still on top after 32... $\mathbb{E}hf8$ .

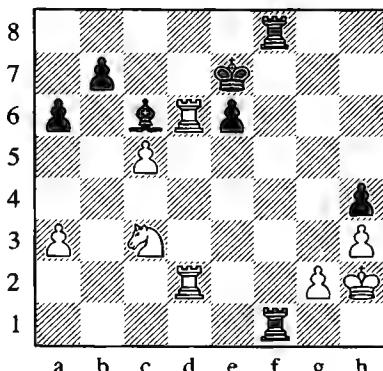
### 32... $\mathbb{E}hf8$

Checkmate in one is not a trivial matter, but that is not the only problem White has to face.

### 33.h3

33. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  34. $\mathbb{E}6d3$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  wins.

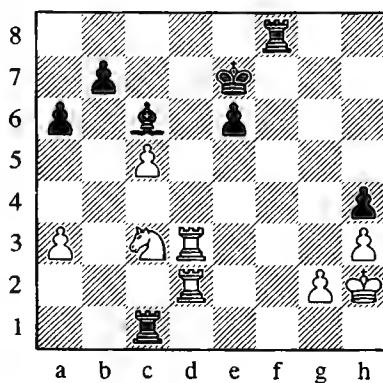
33... $\mathbb{E}f1\#$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



34... $\mathbb{E}c1!$

Six moves ago it was not easy to tell which king was more vulnerable, but by now White is on the verge of being mated.

35. $\mathbb{E}6d3$



36... $\mathbb{E}f1!$

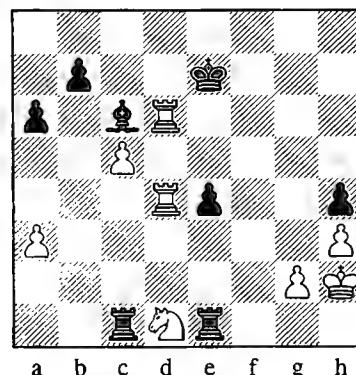
It is not uncommon for a pair of rooks on the first or eighth rank to deliver these kinds of mating threats. As I recall, it was a strong Hungarian IM named Navarovszky who first showed me this motif. Later I saw him win what should have been a lost position with this very idea. I will always remember the slight

smile on his face. His opponent was not so happy with the lesson he received.

36. $\mathbb{Q}d1 e5!$

White is paralysed by the need to defend the knight, so Karpov simply advances his passed pawn.

37. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{E}g1$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d1 \mathbb{E}e1$  39. $\mathbb{E}d6 e4$   
40. $\mathbb{E}2d4$



40...a5

Did Karpov want to push the pawn closer to the promotion square, or was he merely setting up a zugzwang? Either way, he must have enjoyed inflicting such severe paralysis over his opponent's position; even world champions do not manage to achieve this level of domination very often.

41. $\mathbb{Q}f2 e3$  42. $\mathbb{E}xh4$

White did not even have a chance to sacrifice his knight for the e-pawn in view of the mating threats.

42... $\mathbb{E}xf2$  43. $\mathbb{E}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  44. $\mathbb{E}h8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$

0–1

Finally White relieved himself of the torture. Yet again Karpov caught his opponent's king in the endgame.

In the penultimate round Karpov faced the Georgian grandmaster Tamaz Giorgadze, who was half a point ahead of him at the time. Giorgadze played sixteen games against the world champions, starting with Tal and finishing with Kasparov. He won one game, drew seven and lost the other eight. He had met Karpov twice before this game, drawing the first and losing the second (at the Spartakiad, the event before the present one). This was their final encounter.

## Game 69

Anatoly Karpov – Tamaz Giorgadze

Hannover 1983

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  0–0 6.e3 h6 7. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

This was the first time Karpov exchanged in this position. He went on to score highly with both the text move and 7. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ .

7... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Korchnoi introduced this move, which prepares long castling. Later Karpov beat Kasparov twice with 8. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  in their first world championship match, before subsequently turning to 8. $\mathbb{E}c1$ .

8... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

8...dxc4!?

8... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ? 9. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10.0–0 c5 11. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  cxd4 13. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  Black had equalized and a draw was agreed eleven moves later, Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (6) 1985.

9. $\mathbb{E}c1$

9.0–0–0 has been played with some success by Korchnoi amongst others, but this is not Karpov's style. In Hungarian chess circles it is said that when Soviet grandmasters analysed a Karpov game and someone suggested a

sharp and unclear move, he would always follow it by saying, "But Tolya doesn't play like this".

9...a6 10. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

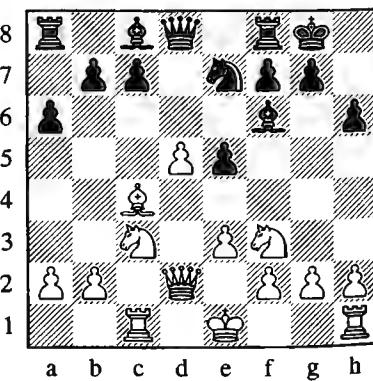
10.h3 may be a little more accurate, as White can save a tempo with his bishop while the pawn move should be of some use. Nevertheless White did not achieve much in the following encounter: 10...dxc4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  e5 12.d5  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  13.0–0 (13. $\mathbb{W}c2$ ?) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  axb5 15. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  e4 16. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  17. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  18.f4  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19. $\mathbb{W}e2$  ½–½ Timman – Olafsson, Reykjavik 1987.

10...dxc4 11. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  e5

Black wants to liberate the c8-bishop, but must pay the price in terms of the slight weakening of the c7-pawn.

12.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

12... $\mathbb{Q}a7$  has been played more frequently, but White has scored well after 13. $\mathbb{W}c2$ .



13. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

Karpov begins to clear the c-file in order to get closer to the c7-pawn.

13... $\mathbb{Q}f5$

After 13... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  the knight is in danger of being sidelined. 14.d6 cxd6 15. $\mathbb{W}xd6$

$\mathbb{W}xd6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  The strong knight makes Black's life unpleasant. 16...e4 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  18. exd4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  19. g3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  20. d5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  Black improved his knight but lost a pawn and was unable to hold the endgame in Groszpeter – Boensch, Sochi 1984.

13... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ ! is interesting; so far nobody has dared to accept the doubled f-pawns. 14.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\uparrow$  gxf6 Black's kingside is ugly, but he might be able to get some play against the d5-pawn.

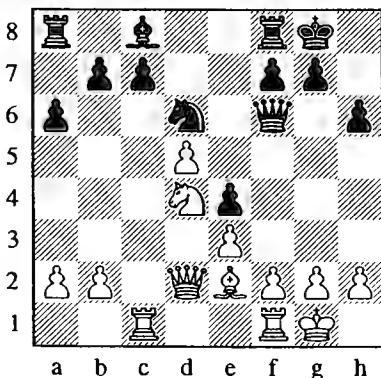
#### 14. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ !

Karpov continues to focus on the c-file. He may already have sensed that he would need to defend his king.

#### 14... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\uparrow$ $\mathbb{W}xf6$ 16. 0–0!

Taking the pawn at once was weaker as Black regains the d5 pawn: 16.  $\mathbb{B}xc7$  e4 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  18. g3  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  White has no significant advantage.

#### 16...e4 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

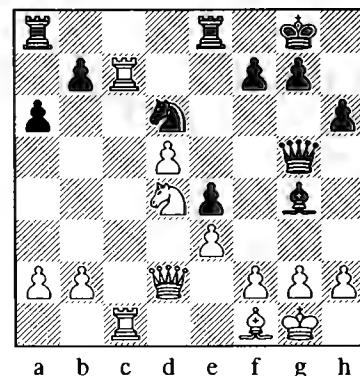


#### 17... $\mathbb{B}e8$ ?

The Georgian grandmaster sacrifices a pawn in the hope of generating an attack against the white king. He gets some chances, but not enough.

Correct was 17... $\mathbb{W}g5$ ! 18.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  (after 18.  $f3$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{B}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  White is just a little better) 18... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  20.  $\mathbb{B}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  and White only has a small plus.

#### 18. $\mathbb{B}xc7$ $\mathbb{W}g5$ 19. $\mathbb{B}fc1$ $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}g4$



#### 21. $\mathbb{W}b4$ !

Karpov correctly judges that he can afford to move his queen away from the kingside, as Black does not have enough firepower to damage him there. One of the keys to the position is the black knight, which is singlehandedly holding the black queenside together while blockading White's extra pawn. Karpov has found a nice way to undermine this important piece.

#### 21... $\mathbb{B}ad8$ 22. $\mathbb{W}b6$ !

From this outpost the queen menaces both the rook on d8 and the knight on d6, thus tying up the black pieces.

#### 22... $\mathbb{h}5$

If 22... $\mathbb{W}xd5??$  23.  $\mathbb{B}7c5$  traps the queen.

#### 23. $a4$ $h4$

23... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  was still inadvisable, even though it no longer loses the queen: 24.  $\mathbb{B}1c5$   $\mathbb{W}a2$  25.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26.  $\mathbb{B}xh5$  White restores his material advantage while remaining in full control of the position.

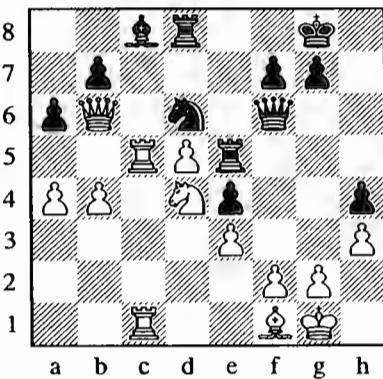
**24...♝f6**

Now Karpov consolidates the pawn advantage. He has assessed the position accurately and judged that Black is too tied up to attack successfully.

**24...♛f6**

24...h3 was worth considering, as such a pawn can often cause trouble, although in the present position the black rooks have no way of getting to the first rank. 25.g3 ♛f6 26.b4 ♜e5 27.b5 White will soon remove the blockading knight, after which he should press home his advantage.

**25.b4 ♜e5 26.h3 ♜c8**

**27.b5!**

Karpov continues his plan of undermining the enemy knight. The way in which he carried out his plan was beautiful to watch.

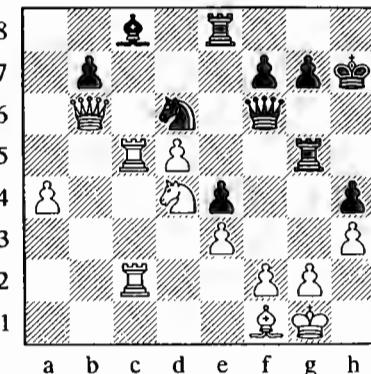
**27...axb5 28.♕xb5 ♜h7 29.♕d4**

This move in conjunction with White's 31st suggests that Karpov was probably in time trouble. He could have crowned his previous fine play in one of two ways:

29.♗1c2! This eliminates all counterplay.  
29...♝g5 30.♗h2 (30.♗h1?) 30...♛e5†  
31.♗h1 Black is in big trouble.

There was also a sharp tactical solution:  
29.♗xd6! ♛xd6 30.♗b1! ♜f5 31.♗xb7 ♜xh3  
32.♗c6 And White is winning.

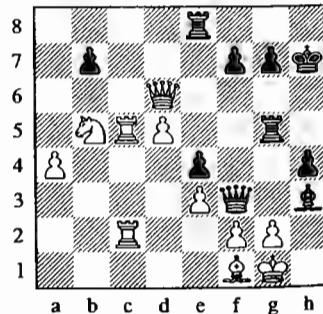
**29...♝de8 30.♗1c2! ♜g5**

**31.♗e6?**

After playing a great game Karpov commits a serious tactical error. Once again, there was more than one route to victory:

31.♗h1 ♜d7 32.a5 ♜ee5 33.♗c7 and White invades. This would have been the sensible choice if White was short of time.

The sharper 31.♗b5?! was also good enough, although accurate calculation was required:  
31...♜xh3 32.♗xd6 ♛f3



33.♗f4! ♜xg2† 34.♗h1! And White wins.

**31...Qxe6 32.dxe6**

32.Qxd6 can be met by 32...Qd8!. Maybe this strong intermediate move is what Karpov missed. 33.Qb6 Qxd5 34.Qxf6 gxf6 Black should be able to live with the doubled pawns.

**32...Qxe6 33.Qxg5**

Once the rooks are exchanged Black has virtually no chance to hurt White's king.

**33...Wxg5 34.Qb4**

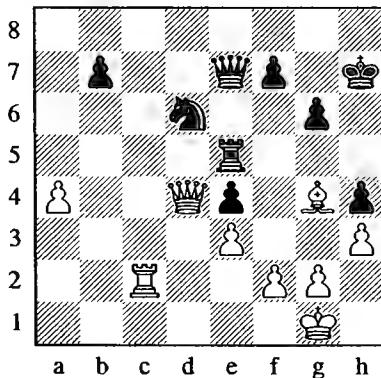
Due to his recent mistakes, Karpov virtually has to win the game all over again. Fortunately for him, he is still somewhat better as the b7- and e4-pawns are vulnerable, while the knight on d6 is unstable and requires constant protection.

Let us not forget the tournament situation: Karpov was trailing Giorgadze by half a point with just one game remaining after this one, so he desperately needed to win.

**34...g6 35.Qe2 Wc7 36.Qg4 Qf5**

After 36...Qe8 37.Qb3 Qa6 38.Qe2 Qa5 39.Qb5 Black's position has worsened.

**37.Qb5 Qd6 38.Qb6 Qf5 39.Qb5 Qd6  
40.Qd5 Qe5 41.Qd4**

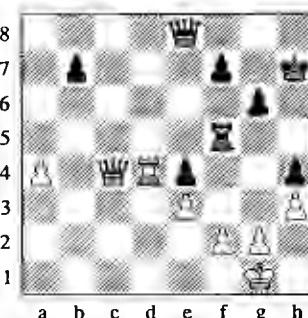


**41...Qe8**

**41...Qa5 42.Qd2 Qf5**

42.Qa6 43.a5 Wc7 44.Qe2 Qc6 45.Wd5  
White keeps up the pressure.  
43.Qc4 We8 44.Qxf5 Qxf5  
44...gxf5? 45.Qc7! Black is in trouble.

**45.Qd4**



**45...b5**

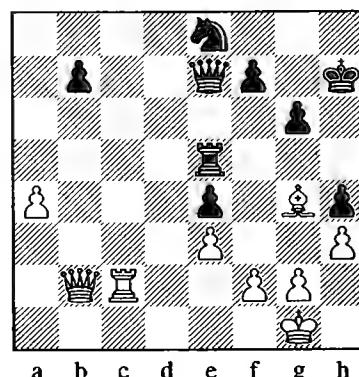
Black can reduce the pawns to one side, but this does not guarantee a draw. If 45...Qe5 46.Qc7 Qe7 47.Qf4 White wins a pawn.

**46.Qc2 bxa4 47.Qxe4 Wd8 48.Qxa4 g5**

We have reached an unusual ending with four versus three on the kingside. Such a scenario would normally offer excellent drawing chances, but in the present position the black king is rather exposed, which will complicate his defensive task.

**42.Qb2**

After its sixth consecutive move, the queen settles on a good square.



**42...f5?!**

This move is not the direct cause of Black's demise, but it was a step in the wrong direction as the seventh rank is weakened.

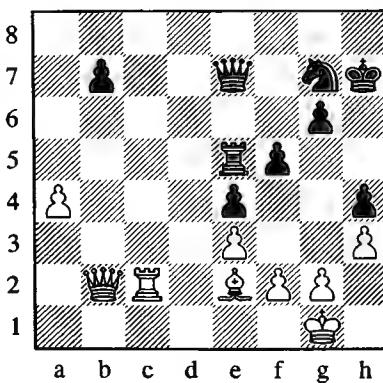
A better option was 42...Qf6, for instance: 43.Qc8?! (White's position has not ripened enough for him to go for a direct win. Karpov would probably have played more patiently with 43.Qe2! with a small but persistent advantage.) 43...Ba5 44.Qc4 Qd8 45.Qb1 Qd5 46.Qc1 b6 47.Qb7 Qd3 Black has improved his position considerably.

Black could also have considered waiting with 42...Qd6?! or 42...Qd5?!. In both cases he maintains reasonable defensive chances.

**43.Qe2 Qg7?**

Black probably wanted to transfer the knight to c5, but he never even gets close to fulfilling this objective.

A better idea was 43...Qd5! to improve the rook. 44.Qc1 (Also after 44.Qc8 Qd7 45.Qa8 [45.Qb8 Qd1†!] 45...Qg7 Black must be careful but his position looks defensible.) 44...Qf6 45.Qb1 Qd7 46.Qc4 White keeps a slight advantage, but Black should be able to hold with careful defence.

**44.Qc8!**

This move paralyses the knight completely. Maybe Giorgadze missed the trouble brewing on h8 as the diagonal is presently being covered by two pieces, yet they are not enough.

**44...Qd7?**

This loses by force. 44...Qc5 was better, although after 45.Qb8 Qc7 46.a5 Black can hardly move.

**45.Qxe5**

45.Qb8? Qe7 46.Qf6 was also convincing.

**45...Qxc8 46.Qe7**

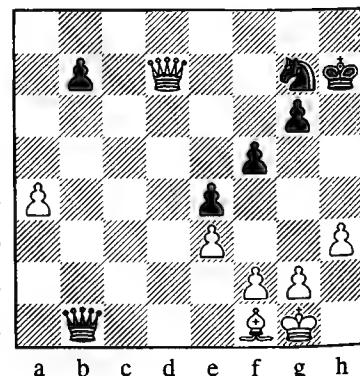
Winning the h-pawn.

46...Qc1† 47.Qf1 Qa1 48.Qxh4† Qg8  
49.Qd8†

Karpov quickly and efficiently improves his pieces, but his task is no longer difficult.

**49...Qh7 50.Qd7**

The pin ensures that the knight will not move.

**50...Qb1****51.g3!**

After releasing the opponent's pin, White will easily free his bishop and catch the enemy king. The rest is easy.

51...b6 52.Qg2 Wb4 53.Qb5 Wc5 54.Qc6 Qh8 55.Wd8† Qh7 56.Qd5

1–0

In the last round Karpov drew against Bouaziz to finish on 11/15, with a total of eight wins, six draws and one loss. This was enough to win the tournament outright, half a point ahead of Giorgadze who also drew his final game. Interestingly, Karpov elected to play the Scheveningen Sicilian with the black pieces in the final round. The likely explanation is that he already viewed Kasparov as the leading challenger to his title, and wanted to take the opportunity to get a better feel for the positions resulting from Kasparov's pet line.

Karpov's next tournament was in Tilburg. The competition was tight, and Karpov drew eight of his eleven games. Fortunately his three wins over Polugaevsky, Van der Wiel and Seirawan were still enough to secure first place, half a point ahead of Ljubojevic and Portisch.

For the second year in a row Karpov took part in a televised event, this time in Bath, England. The database entries do not show the time control, but an online search indicates that it was something close to normal tournament conditions, with two hours for forty moves and then one hour to finish. Karpov performed well in the four-player, double round robin preliminary event, beating both Rogers and Browne by the score of 1½–½ (his excellent win over Browne is shown in the notes to Game 3 in the second volume) and Chandler by 2–0. We will now look at one of his wins over the last of them.

The New Zealand born English grandmaster faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Topalov. From a total of twenty eight games he scored four wins, sixteen draws and eight losses. Aside from the two wins in the present event, Karpov scored one more win and two draws against Chandler.

## Game 70

Murray Chandler – Anatoly Karpov

Bath TV (preliminary) 1983

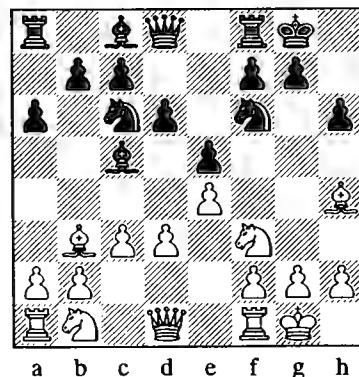
1.e4 e5 2.Qf3 Qc6 3.Qc4 Qc5

Karpov never played 3...Qf6 in a regular game. Altogether he scored only 50% from eight games in the Italian.

4.0–0 Qf6 5.d3 d6 6.c3 0–0 7.Qg5 a6 8.Qb3 h6

A year earlier – coincidentally, at the Hamburg TV event – Karpov preferred 8...Qa7 and equalized against Nunn: 9.Qbd2 Qe7 10.Qc4 Qg6 11.Qh4 Qg4 12.Qxf6 Wxf6 13.Wxg4 Wxh4 14.Wxh4 Qxh4 15.Qad1 Qg6 16.g3 Qh8 17.Qe3 Qe7 18.Qd5 Qxd5 19.Qxd5 c6 Nunn – Karpov, Hamburg TV 1982. The players fought for a long time, but neither of them obtained any winning chances and they eventually split the point.

9.Qh4

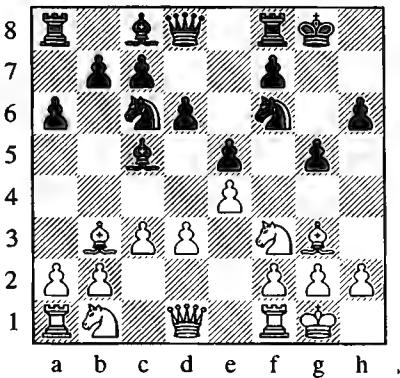


9...g5!

Karpov breaks the pin and hopes to isolate the enemy bishop.

10.Qg3

So far nobody seems to have ventured the knight sacrifice, and indeed after 10.♗xg5?! h×g5 11.♗xg5 ♖e6 White's compensation is in doubt: 12.♗h1 (Or 12.♗d5 ♖g7 13.♗f3 ♖g6 14.h4 [14.♗h4 ♘h8] 14...♗g4 15.♗xf6 ♗d7 and Black is safe.) 12...♗g7 13.♗f3 (13.f4 ♖e3!) 13...♗e7 Black will soon escape the pin.



10...♗a7

The bishop retreats out of harm's way. 10...♗g4 is a valid alternative, which could transpose to the game.

11.♗bd2 ♖g4

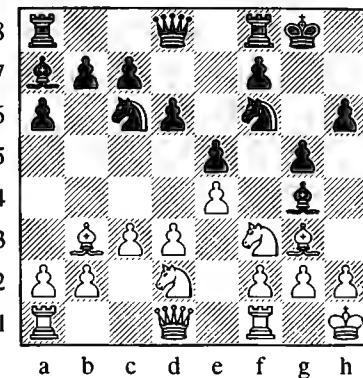
This was a novelty at the time, although it has since been repeated several times. A year earlier Donner preferred 11...♗g7 and drew with Kuijf.

12.♗h1?

Chandler probably expected ...♗h5 soon, and may have wanted to meet ...♗xg3 with fxg3.

12.h3 was more purposeful, when Black has to decide where to put his bishop. 12...♗h5 (12...♗e6 13.♗e2 ♗e7 is also reasonable) 13.♗c4 ♖g6 (there is also 13...♗d7 14.♗e3 ♗c5 15.♗c2 ♗e6 16.♗e2 ♗e7 17.♗h2 ♗f4 with complex play) 14.♗e3 ♖g7 (14...♗h5?!

15.♗h2 ♗f4) 15.♗d2 ♗h5 16.♗h2 ♗f4 17.♗c2 ♗f6 With complex play and mutual chances.



12...♗h5!

Karpov anticipates a knight manoeuvre to e3 and retreats his bishop to a more secure location where it also helps to safeguard his kingside. The g5-pawn will not be a weakness, but rather a healthy pawn which secures space and provides attacking possibilities on the kingside.

13.♗e1??

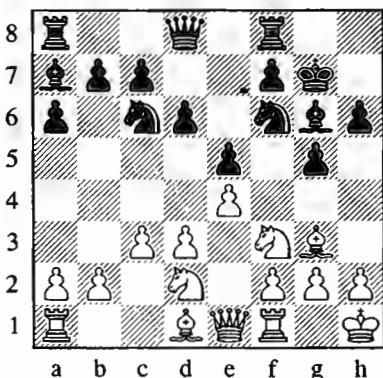
Chandler probably overestimated the pin – there was no need to escape it just yet. A more logical continuation was 13.♗c4 ♖g7 14.♗e3 ♖g6 15.h3 ♗d7 16.♗h2 when Black can choose between 16...♗ae8 and 16...♗d8, with a decent position in both cases.

13...♗g7

Karpov improves his king a bit and hints that he may play on the kingside.

14.♗d1 ♖g6

A bishop exchange would not be in Black's interests. Instead Karpov vacates the h5-square and turns his attention to the centre. If Black can arrange to play ...d5 then the bishop could become powerful.



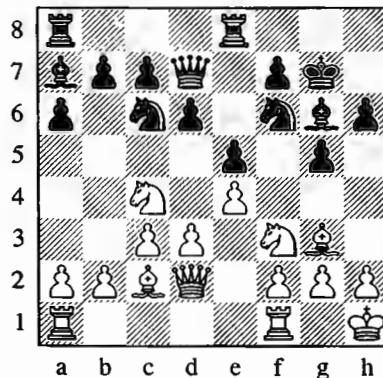
**15.  $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{E}e8$**

Karpov brings another piece into play while continuing to strengthen his centre.

**16.  $\mathbb{Q}c2 \mathbb{W}d7$  17.  $\mathbb{W}d2$**

Attacking the g5-pawn was dangerous for White: 17.h4??  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (17...g4 is also strong; 18. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  d5 19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  dx $e$ 4 20.dx $e$ 4  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  Black's position is preferable.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  ( $18.\mathbb{Q}hxg5?$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$  19.fxg3 hxg5 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  gives Black a pleasant choice between 20...d5 and 20... $\mathbb{E}h8$ ? 21. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}h5$ , with an obvious advantage in both cases.) 18...g4 19. $\mathbb{Q}fd2$  f5 20.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black has some advantage.

White should have preferred 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ! in order to keep an eye on the d5-square. 17... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ?? (Or 17...d5 18. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19. $\mathbb{W}e2$  b5 [19... $\mathbb{W}e7$ ?] 20. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  and the position is balanced.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  Black is just a bit better in this complex position.



**17...  $\mathbb{E}ad8$ !**

Karpov mentions the possibility of 17...b5 intending immediate action in the centre, but why take the risk when it is possible to continue strengthening the position slowly and smoothly? Play continues 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d5 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  20.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  21.a4  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  22.axb5 axb5 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (23. $\mathbb{B}fd1$  f6) 23... $\mathbb{E}xe5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  25.d4  $\mathbb{W}d6$  26.f4 and the position is rather unclear.

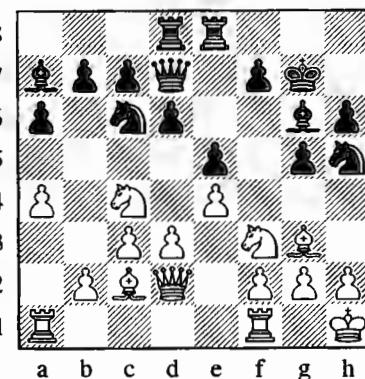
**18.a4**

This move is directed against ...b5. It may not prevent it outright, but it certainly renders the conditions less favourable for Black.

If 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d5 Black is better.

**18...  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ !**

Karpov improves the knight and makes ...f5 a real possibility.

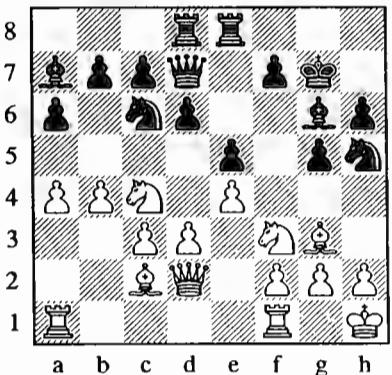


**19.  $b4$ ?**

It is hard to work out why Chandler played this move. Maybe he thought that he had time to push Black back on the queenside, but he must have miscalculated something. It was essential to turn his attention to the centre with one of the following ideas:

19. $\mathbb{R}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$  20.hxg3 d5! 21.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  White's centre is under pressure.

19.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  was the best chance. 19...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  (After 19...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20.  $d4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  21.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$  22.  $hxg3$   $dxe5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  White is not worse.) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $d5!$  (Also after 20...  $f5?$  21.  $exf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  Black has a freer position.) 21.  $\mathbb{Q}fe1$   $f6$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  Black's advantage is beyond doubt, but White still has good chances to resist.



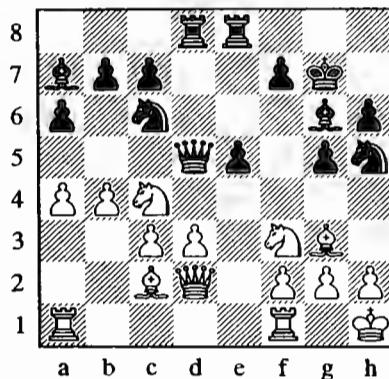
#### 19... $d5!$

Karpov executes the obvious strike in the centre, and White's position quickly collapses.

#### 20. $exd5$

Maybe Chandler had been planning 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#?$ , but only now realized that 20...  $f6$ ! would cost him a piece after 21.  $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ .

#### 20... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$



#### 21. $b5?$

Chandler tries to stir up complications, but this approach is doomed to fail. 21.  $\mathbb{Q}e3?$  was also hopeless due to 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  when Black has a winning advantage after 22...  $f5$  or 22...  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$ .

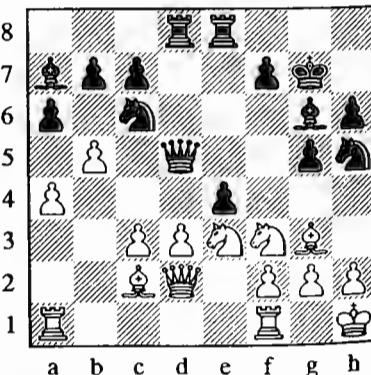
21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#!$  was the best chance. White gives up two pieces for a rook and a pawn, but manages to exchange some pieces and achieve some stability in the centre. 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  24.  $d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  Black still has to work for the full point, nevertheless he should be able to achieve it.

#### 21... $e4!$

Karpov opens up the centre, where he has two extra rooks in play. White's situation is already hopeless.

#### 22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

Alternatives also fall flat: 22.  $dxe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4-$ ; 22.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $exf3$  23.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4-$ ; or 22.  $bxc6$   $exf3$  23.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3\#$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  25.  $hxg3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$  and White is toast.

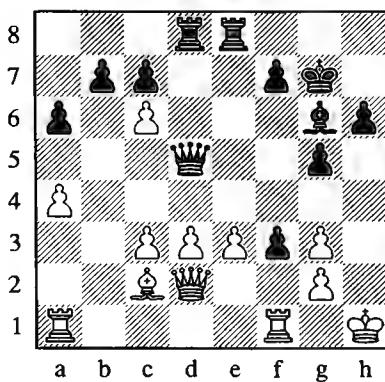


#### 22... $\mathbb{Q}xe3!$

Usually one would be reluctant to exchange such a bishop, but Karpov has seen that he is winning by force.

**23.fxe3 ♜xg3† 24.hxg3 exf3**  
24...exd3 was winning as well.

**25.bxc6**



**25...♜xe3!**

This puts an end to White's resistance.

**26.♛xe3**

If 26.♝f2 fxg2† 27.♜xg2 ♜xg3 Black wins.

**26...fxg2† 27.♝h2 gxh1=♛†**

Chess players rarely get a chance to underpromote, and Karpov does not pass up the opportunity. It looks like he did it for amusement, as the normal promotion to a queen would have led to the same result.

**28.♝xf1 ♜xc6**

Black has emerged from the fireworks with two extra pawns and a completely winning position.

**29.♛e5† ♜g8 30.♝f2 ♛e8**

**0–1**

It was not one of Chandler's better games, but the way Karpov carried out his central strategy was exemplary.

Karpov suffered a setback in the final and lost to Miles. Only one game appears on the

database, a 5...gxf6 Caro Kann in which Black eventually prevailed after a highly complex struggle. It would be surprising if they only played a single game (Karpov and Spassky played four games in the final of the Hamburg TV event) but I was unable to track down any others.

## 1983 Summary

Linares (2nd-3rd place): 6/10 (+2 =8 -0)

USSR Championship, Moscow (1st place): 9½/15 (+5 =9 -1)

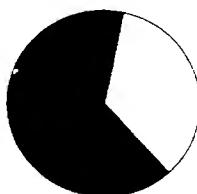
European Team Championship, Plovdiv (Board one): 2½/4 (+1 =3 -0)

Spartakiad USSR, Moscow (Board one) 3½/5 (+2 =3 -0)

Hannover (1st place) 11/15 (+8 =6 -1)

Tilburg (1st place): 7/11 (+3 =8 -0)

(Bath TV games not included)



Total 65.8% (+21 =37 -2)

Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 1984

Rating 2700 (2 in the World)

This was the third year since Karpov's last title defence against Korchnoi, which meant that the time had come for him to battle the next challenger for his crown: Garry Kasparov. The match did not start until September, so there was time for him to fit in a few other events.

In April, Karpov took part in the strong Phillips and Drew tournament in London. He ripped through the field, scoring four wins and two draws from his first six games. After one more draw he met his old rival Korchnoi in round eight. This was their first encounter since the 1981 World Championship final. Korchnoi had already been defeated by Kasparov in the semi-final of the latest candidates cycle, so it was clear that he would not be challenging for the crown again. This may have reduced the tension slightly, but there was still a huge amount of pride at stake.

## Game 71

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

London 1984

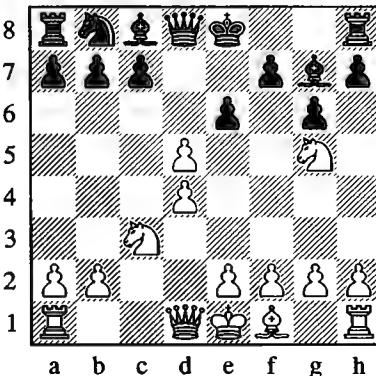
1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 g6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4. d4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Korchnoi regularly played the Grünfeld, and he only lost a few games with it. This was the first and only time he ever played it against Karpov.

5.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$

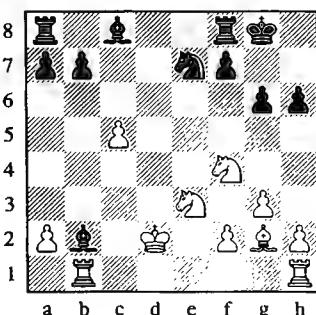
At this stage in his career Karpov had hardly ever faced the Grünfeld, although he once beat Adorjan with this variation.

5...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  6. cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  e6



**8.♗f3**

Karpov deviates from the aforementioned game, which continued as follows: 8.♗d2 h6 9.♗h3 exd5 10.♗f4 0-0 11.g3 ♗c6 12.e3 ♗e7 13.♗g2 c5? Black bases his play on dynamism. (13...c6 was more solid.) 14.dxc5 d4 15.♗d1 (After 15.0-0-0? ♗g4 16.exd4 ♗xd1 17.♗xd1 White has two pawns and decent play for the exchange.) 15...dxe3 16.♗xe3 ♗xd2† 17.♗xd2 ♗xb2 18.♗ab1



18...♗a3? (18...♗d4 would have been equal.) 19.♗d3 ♘d8 20.♗c3 a5 21.♗hd1 Karpov took over on the queenside and went on to win, Karpov – Adorjan, Budapest 1973.

**8...exd5 9.e3**

Karpov handles the position in the natural way. Two years later Seirawan tried the radical 9.b4!? but did not achieve much: 9...♗d6 10.a3 0-0 11.e3 c6 12.♗e2 ♗f5 13.0-0 ♗d7 14.♗a4 a5 15.♗b3 b5 16.♗c5 a4 17.♗c3 ♗b6 18.♗d2 ♘ae8 19.♗fe1 ♘e7 20.♗f3 ♘fe8 Black was in control although he later went wrong and lost in Seirawan – Kasparov, Dubai (ol) 1986.

**9...0-0**

Korchnoi plays the main line. Some players have experimented with moves like 9...♗d6! and 9...a5, both of which aim to restrain White's pawn advance on the queenside.

**10.b4**

Karpov starts the well known minority attack, with the aim of creating a pawn weakness on c6 or d5.

**10...♗e6 11.♗e2!**

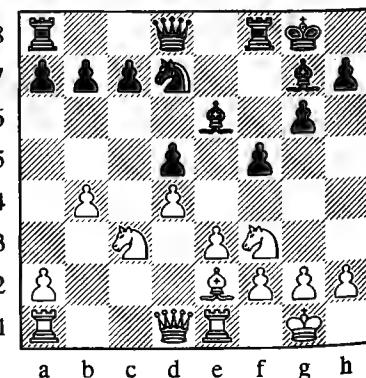
This is the best square for the bishop. Karpov was probably already visualizing a scenario in which b4-b5 could be met by ...c6-c5, in which case White will want to keep the d-file clear for his heavy pieces.

**11...♗d7 12.0-0 f5**

Korchnoi decides to postpone the move ...c7-c6, which would give White a target for his minority attack. It is an interesting idea, which had not been seen before according to the database. By the way, if I had to guess which player in all of chess history introduced the greatest number of new moves in the opening, I would say Korchnoi.

**13.♗e1**

With this move Karpov anticipates the further advance of the black f-pawn.

**13...g5**

Korchnoi has a tendency to get into time trouble, and I wonder how long he spent considering the consequences of advancing the f-pawn.

13...f4?

This could lead to some long and extremely complex variations.

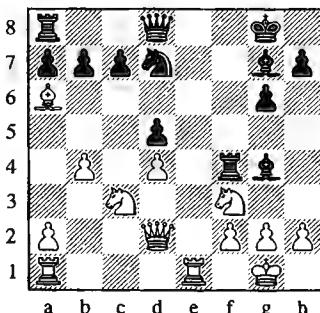
14.exf4?

In his *Chess Informant* notes Karpov only mentioned 14.e4 with a slight plus for White, so this would probably have been his choice had Korchnoi played 13...f4 in the game. The text move is much more fun to analyse though!

14...fxe4 15.Qa6!

It is not difficult to see this far ahead, but the fun is only just beginning.

15...Qg4! 16.Qd2



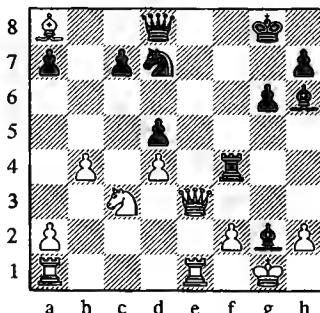
16...Rh6!

16...Rxf3 17.Qxb7 Rf7 (17...Rxc3 18.Qxa8 Ra3 19.Qxd5 Qh8 20.Qb3 White is better.)

18.Qxa8 Rxa8 19.f3 Qf5 20.g4 Black will have some compensation for his material deficit, but still White's chances are higher.

17.Qxb7 Rxf3 18.Qxa8 Qxg2! 19.Qe3!

From this square the queen combines attack and defence. It would have been hard to calculate this far in advance, and there are still many more difficult moves ahead.



19...Qe4!

This nice move closes the e-file and threatens a deadly rook check.

The feeble 19...Rxa8? loses after 20.Qe6+ Rf7 21.Qxg2.

After 19...Rg5 20.Qg3 Rg4 21.Qxg2 White's rooks will be stronger than Black's queen.

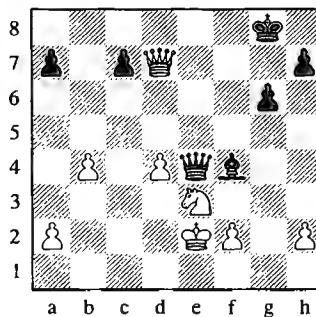
20.Qh3! Rg5† 21.Qf1 Rg4 22.Qxd5†

After 22.Qad1 Qf6 White has problems.

22...Qxd5 23.Qxd5 Rg1† 24.Qe2 Rd2†

25.Qf3 Rxel 26.Qxe1 Rxel 27.Qxd7 Rh1†

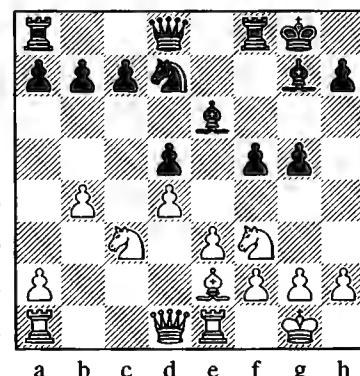
28.Qe2 Re4† 29.Qe3 Qf4



Black has good chances to hold this endgame.

30.Qd5† Rxd5 31.Qxd5 Rxh2 32.Qe7† Qf7 33.Qc6 Qe6 34.a4 Qd5

Black should be able to draw thanks to his active king.



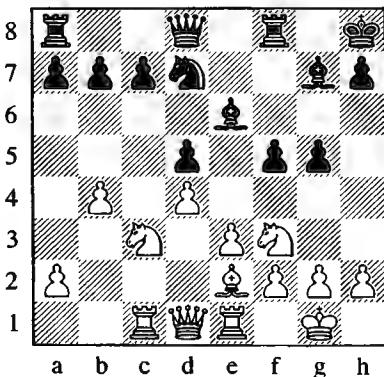
**14...♝c1 ♜h8**

This is partly a waiting move, although it does have the specific purpose of creating a retreat square on g8 for the bishop. Several other moves also deserved consideration.

14...♝e7 15.♗b5 g4 16.♗d2 c6 17.♗c7 ♜ac8 18.♗xe6 ♜xe6 White is just fractionally better.

14...a5 seems a little overambitious: 15.b5 g4 16.♗d2 ♜e8 17.♗c2 ♜f8 (17...f4 18.♗d3) 18.♗d3 ♜g5 (18...♜f6 19.♗e2) 19.♗e2 ♜d6 20.♗b3 White's play on the queenside is more powerful than Black's on the kingside.

In a couple of subsequent games Black opted for queenside prophylaxis with 14...a6. Here is one example: 15.♗a4 c6 16.♗c5 ♜xc5 17.bxc5 ♜e7 18.♗d3 ♜ae8 19.♗b1 ♜c8 20.♗c2 ♜f6 The position is double-edged, but in Meyer – Doncevic, Germany 1986, White self-destructed with 21.g4? and lost in another six moves.

**15.♗d3 c6**

Korchnoi finally plays the move he had been postponing. He was probably right to avoid 15...g4, as after 16.♗d2 ♜f6 White can play 17.♗e2 to take advantage of the outpost on f4.

**15...a6!?**

It would have been interesting to see how Karpov would have responded to this move. Here is a plausible line:

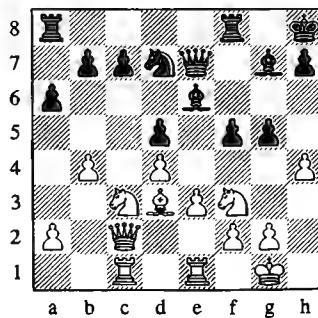
**16.♗c2?**

White could consider improving the c3-knight at once by means of 16.♗a4 or 16.♗e2, but it looks logical to avoid revealing his intentions for a bit longer.

**16...♜e7 17.h4!?**

This interesting pawn sacrifice enables White to fight for the initiative. Black has been quick to seize space on the kingside, but his pieces are not ideally placed to back up the pawns.

17.♗e2 c6 18.♗g3 is a more sedate alternative.

**17...gxh4**

17...g4 18.♗g5 is good for White.

17...h6 18.hxg5 hxg5 19.g3! White will take over the initiative on the kingside after ♜g2 and ♜h1.

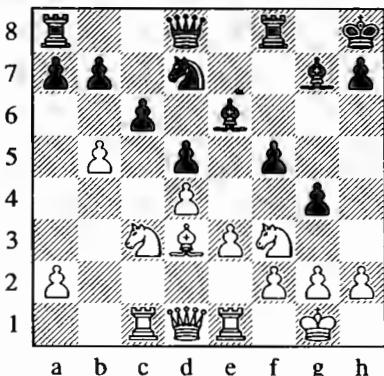
**18.♗e2 c6 19.♗f4**

White has lovely positional compensation for the pawn.

**16.b5**

Karpov wastes no time in chipping away at Black's pawn structure.

**16...g4**

**17.♘d2**

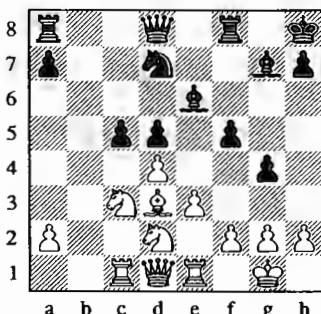
Karpov decides not to insert the exchange on c6, preferring to play the IQP position with the b-pawns on the board.

**17.bxc6**

Objectively this is probably no better or worse than the game continuation.

**17...bxc6**

17...gxsf3?! does not equalize: 18.cxd7 fxd7 19.♗f3! The g2-pawn shields the king, so White should not be in a hurry to take it. Instead he stabilizes his position on the kingside first. 19...♗xd7 20.♘e2 ♗h6 21.♘f4 White has a nice positional advantage thanks to his strong knight and Black's passive light-squared bishop.

**18.♘d2 c5****19.♗b5**

19.dxc5 20.♘b3 21.♘xb3 21.axb3 ♗e5

22.♘e2 ♗b6 Black has good chances to eliminate the b3-pawn, after which it will be tough for White to prove anything.

**19...♝c8**

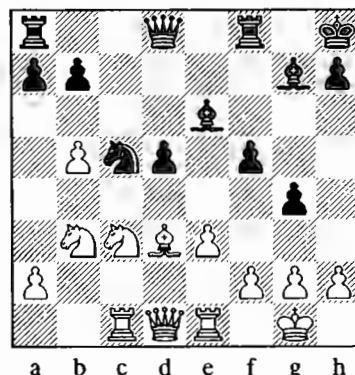
19...♗g8 20.dxc5 21.♘xc5 21.♘b3 ♘c8 is also reasonable.

**20.♘xd7**

20.♗a4 is met by 20...♝c7.

**20...♗xd7 21.♘b3 c4 22.♘c5 ♗c6**

In this somewhat unusual position Black should not be worse.

**17...c5 18.dxc5 20.♘xc5 19.♘b3****19...♞xb3**

It is interesting that Korchnoi decided to exchange minor pieces, which goes against the conventional wisdom when one has an isolated pawn. He did something similar in Baguio when playing the black side of a French Tarrasch.

If 19...♝c8 20.♘xc5 ♘xc5 21.♘e2 White does not have a huge advantage, but his position is easy to play and his knight has a couple of attractive squares available.

**19...♞e4!**

This looks like the most natural move. By avoiding the knight exchange, Black makes his weaknesses harder to attack. (Obviously

White could exchange the knight on e4, but that would improve Black's pawn structure considerably.)

20.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  21.  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

There is also 21...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}ce2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  when Black has a decent grip on the centre.

22.  $\text{exd4}$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$

Black's pieces have achieved a reasonable level of harmony.

23.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$

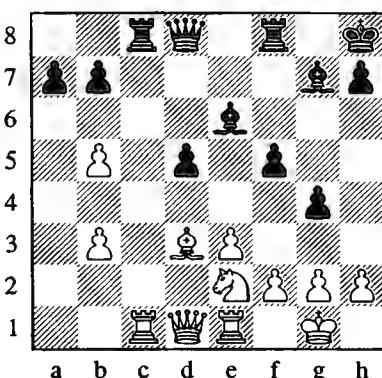
23.g3? loses material after 23...  $\mathbb{Q}d2$ .

After 23.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24.  $\mathbb{E}ec1$  b6 Black's position is solid enough.

23...  $\mathbb{E}xc1$  24.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$  f4

Black has counterplay.

20.  $\text{axb3}$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$



21...  $\mathbb{E}xc1$

Black can also try: 21...  $\mathbb{W}d6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  23. g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (23...  $\mathbb{E}xc1$  24.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  25.  $\mathbb{E}xc8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  With no rooks the f5 pawn is more vulnerable, while the passivity of Black's light-squared bishop is also harder to live with. 26.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  27.  $\text{exd4}$  Black has chances to hold, but it will not be much fun for him.) 24.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  25.  $\text{exf4}$   $\mathbb{E}xc1$  26.  $\mathbb{E}xc1$  White keeps the upper hand.

22.  $\mathbb{W}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

With this natural move Korchnoi prepares to advance and exchange his isolani.

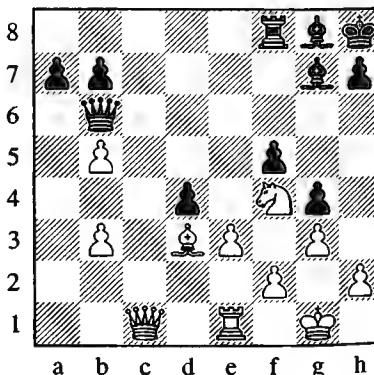
22...  $\mathbb{W}a5$ ! This interesting move aims to disrupt White's coordination. 23.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  (After 23.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  Black has a better version of the game, as after ...d4 the white rook will be passively placed. Another possibility is 23.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  25.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{E}c3$  when Black has counterchances.) 23...  $\mathbb{W}b4$  24.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  25. g3 and Black should be all right, although he still has to be careful.

23.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  24. g3 d4!?

Korchnoi decides to take action before Karpov can start attacking his vulnerable pawns.

24... a6 is a bit slow, and after 25.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  26.  $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  27.  $\text{bxa6}$   $\text{bxa6}$  28.  $\mathbb{E}c1$  Black is in danger.

If 24...  $\mathbb{W}d6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  White begins to target the d5-pawn, and Black faces a long squeeze.



25.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ !

After the light-squared bishops are exchanged, Black's king will become noticeably more vulnerable.

Undermining the g4-pawn with 25. e4! was also attractive: 25...  $\text{fxe4}$  26.  $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  (26...  $\mathbb{W}d6$  27.  $\mathbb{W}d1$ ; 26...  $\mathbb{W}a5$  27.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{A}xe6$

29.  $\mathbb{B}xe6$  White has excellent winning chances in this opposite-coloured bishop position. In Game 75 we will see Karpov beating Kasparov from a not dissimilar situation.) 27.  $\mathbb{B}e7$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  28.  $\mathbb{W}d1!$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  29.  $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  Black's problems persist.

### 25... $\mathbb{B}c8$

It is worth considering a couple of alternatives.

### 25... $dxe3$ 26. $\mathbb{B}xe3$ !

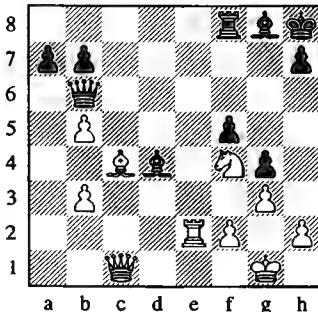
Karpov correctly gave this move in his *Chess Informant* analysis. White should keep the queens on the board as Black's king is vulnerable.

26.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$  sets some problems as well, but Black should be able to hold the ending: 26...  $\mathbb{W}xe3$  27.  $\mathbb{B}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}h6$  (27...  $\mathbb{B}f6$ !?) Passive defence also gives Black good drawing chances.) 28.  $\mathbb{B}e7$   $\mathbb{B}xf4$  29.  $\mathbb{gxf4}$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  30.  $\mathbb{Bxc4}$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  31.  $\mathbb{Bxb7}$   $\mathbb{Bxc4}$  32.  $\mathbb{Bxa7}$   $\mathbb{Bb4}$ ! Black escapes to a drawn rook ending.

### 26... $\mathbb{B}d4$

After 26...  $\mathbb{B}c5$  27.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  28.  $\mathbb{Bxc4}$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  30.  $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black is caught.

### 27. $\mathbb{B}e2$



Karpov ends his analysis here, saying that White will continue with  $\mathbb{W}e1$  with a big advantage. He is correct, but it is worth taking the analysis a bit further:

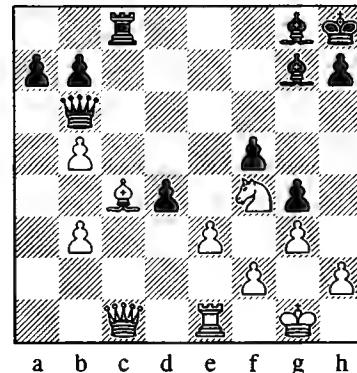
### 27... $\mathbb{W}c5$

After 27...  $\mathbb{B}c8$  28.  $\mathbb{W}e1$  a6 29.  $\mathbb{Bxa6}$   $\mathbb{Bxa6}$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  31.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  Black faces huge problems.

### 28. $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{B}xc4$ 29. $\mathbb{Bxc4}$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$ 30. $\mathbb{B}e7$

The rook is tremendously powerful on the seventh rank, and it is doubtful that Black will survive.

Black's best option was probably 25...  $a6$ !?, as in certain endgames it can be useful to have exchanged a pair of queenside pawns. Nevertheless after 26.  $\mathbb{Bxa6}$   $\mathbb{Bxa6}$  27.  $\mathbb{B}xg8$   $\mathbb{B}xg8$  28.  $\mathbb{exd4}$  (28...  $\mathbb{B}xd4$  29.  $\mathbb{W}c2$ ) 29.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{B}c3$  30.  $\mathbb{B}e7$   $\mathbb{W}a1$  31.  $\mathbb{W}xa1$   $\mathbb{B}xa1$  32.  $\mathbb{B}a7$  White bags a pawn, and has good winning chances.



### 26. $\mathbb{W}b1$ !

Karpov escapes the pin and targets the vulnerable f5-pawn.

### 26... $dxe3$ ??

Korchnoi opens the position voluntarily, which only helps his opponent. He should have tried:

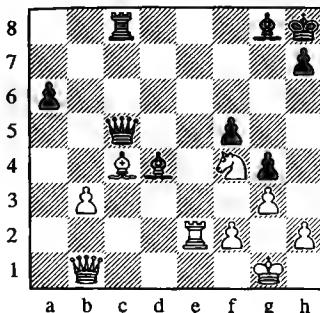
### 26... $\mathbb{W}c5$ 27. $\mathbb{exd4}$

27.  $e4$ ! may be even stronger.

### 27... $\mathbb{B}xd4$ 28. $\mathbb{B}e2$ a6 29. $\mathbb{Bxa6}$

29.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{B}xe6$  30.  $\mathbb{B}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  is not so convincing.

### 29... $\mathbb{Bxa6}$



30.  $\mathbb{Q}e1!$

If 30.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  Black is still alive.

30...  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  31.  $bxc4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  32.  $\mathbb{E}e8\#$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$

33.  $\mathbb{W}xe8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$

33...  $\mathbb{Q}g7??$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  35.  $\mathbb{W}h8\#$  wins.

34.  $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

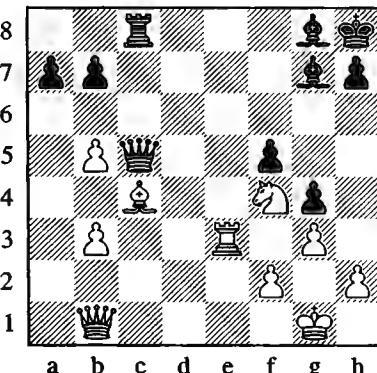
After 35.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  36.  $\mathbb{W}f6\#$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  37.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $h5$  Black is likely to hold.

35...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36.  $\mathbb{W}xf5$

Despite having the theoretically superior minor piece, Black faces a tough defence due to his vulnerable king.

27.  $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}c5$

After 27...  $\mathbb{W}f6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xg8$   $\mathbb{E}xg8$  29.  $\mathbb{W}c2!$  White avoids the queen exchange and his knight will soon dominate the game from e6.



28.  $\mathbb{W}e1!$

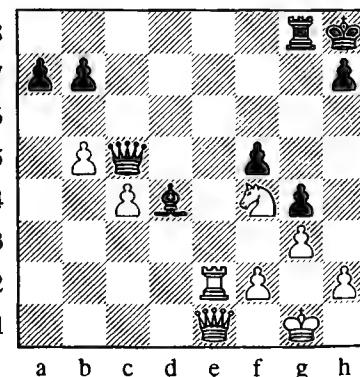
This is a tremendously strong move; it may not seem dazzling, but it ensures that White will be able to invade on the e-file.

28...  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  29.  $\mathbb{E}e2$

Now White is ready to follow with  $\mathbb{W}xg8$  and  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .

29...  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  30.  $bxc4$   $\mathbb{E}g8$

Taking the c-pawn results in a losing endgame: 30...  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  31.  $\mathbb{E}e8\#$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  32.  $\mathbb{W}xe8\#$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  33.  $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35.  $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $h6$  (35...  $\mathbb{W}d8$  36.  $\mathbb{W}xa7\#$ ) 36.  $\mathbb{W}d7!$  White does not take the hanging pawn, but instead goes after the king and wins. (36.  $\mathbb{W}xa7?$  would ruin everything, as after 36...  $\mathbb{W}d5!$  Black's powerful queen saves him.)



31.  $\mathbb{W}c1$

Karpov plays pragmatically. He wants to attack the f5-pawn, but does so in a way that also defends his c-pawn.

31...  $\mathbb{E}c8$  32.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33.  $\mathbb{W}d3!$

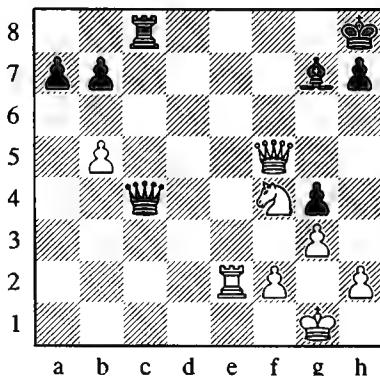
Now the queen aims for the seventh rank.

33...  $\mathbb{W}d4$

Korchnoi prevents the immediate queen invasion, but it costs him the f5-pawn. Other moves were losing as well, for instance 33...  $a5$  34.  $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (34...  $b6$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ )

35.  $\mathbb{W}xb7$  a4 36.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{B}xf8$   
 38.  $\mathbb{B}e7$  and White wins.

### 34. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ $\mathbb{W}xc4$



### 35. $\mathbb{B}e7$

The rook on the seventh rank is simply a killer.

### 35... $\mathbb{E}d8$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}b3$ 37. $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{E}g8$

This allows a cute finish, but 37...  $\mathbb{W}g8$  was also hopeless due to 38.  $\mathbb{B}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  39.  $\mathbb{W}xg7$ † 40.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ † winning a piece.

### 38. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ †!

1–0

This was a subtle game; it is hard to pinpoint exactly where Black's position went from worse to losing. Karpov maintained the pressure with great skill, and showed good judgement in opening the position despite the fact that Korchnoi had the two bishops.

In round nine Karpov drew with Seirawan. His next opponent was Jonathan Mestel. The English grandmaster played twelve games against world champions. He drew four and lost the other eight. Karpov had beaten him once before, and this was the last time they played.

## Game 72

### Anatoly Karpov – Jonathan Mestel

London 1984

#### 1. e4 e6

According to the database this was the first time Mestel ever played the French. In their previous meeting Karpov won a good positional game against Mestel's favourite Dragon, so the Englishman tries something different.

#### 2. d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

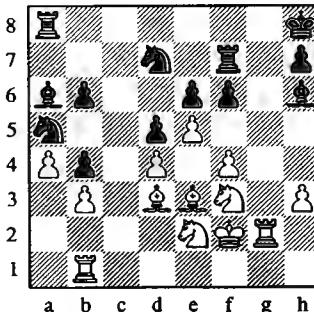
During the eighties Karpov played 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  more often, but since he has no idea which variation his opponent is likely to play, he returns to the line he knows best.

#### 3... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

As has been mentioned previously, Karpov incredibly won all seven of his games against this move.

#### 4. e5 $\mathbb{Q}fd7$ 5. c3 c5 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

In the next and last occasion when Karpov reached this position, he switched to 6. f4 and won in nice style: 6...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}df3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  8. g3 a5 9. a4 cxd4 10. cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ † 11.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  g5 12. h3 f6 Ljubojevic exerts considerable pressure on White's centre, but Karpov manages to hold it together. 13.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  0–0 14.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  15.  $\mathbb{E}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  16.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  17.  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  axb4 18. b3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  19.  $\mathbb{E}b1$  gxsf4 20. gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  b6 22.  $\mathbb{E}g2$ †  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ? A mistake in a difficult position.



24.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}xa6$  25.  $f5!$  White went on to win convincingly, Karpov – Ljubojevic, Brussels 1986.

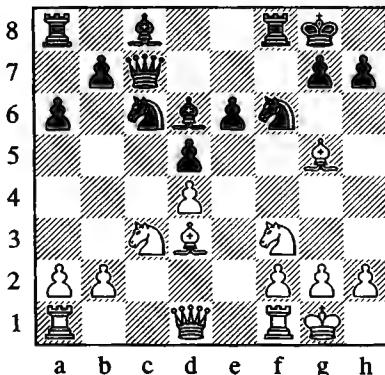
### 6... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Karpov once faced the sideline 6...  $b6$  towards the end of his junior years. 7.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $a5$  8.  $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{A}a6$  9.  $a4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  10.  $f4$   $cxd4$  11.  $cxd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{B}xb5$  13.  $axb5$  It is interesting that he accepted the same kind of doubled pawns as Ljubojevic. One might joke that Karpov wins from whichever side of the board he chooses. As with many jokes, it contains more than a grain of truth. 13...  $\mathbb{B}b4$  14. 0–0  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  15.  $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{B}a7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  0–0 17.  $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  18.  $\mathbb{B}xb4$   $\mathbb{B}xb4$  19.  $f5$   $f6?$  20.  $fxe6$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  White obtained a dominating position and went on to win, Karpov – Shestakov, Kuibyshev 1970.

7.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $cxd4$  8.  $cxd4$   $f6$  9.  $exf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  10. 0–0  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$

Both players are happy to follow the main line. It is slightly surprising that Mestel opted for a defensive set-up which involved a bad light-squared bishop, a backward e-pawn and a potential outpost for White on e5. Although Black's position is objectively sound, Karpov was a master at exploiting those kinds of positional factors.

12.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $a6$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  0–0



### 14. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

Exchanging the dark-squared bishops was a favourite plan of Karpov – he had won two previous games from the same position.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}h5$

Mestel plays the most common move in the position. Karpov's previous victims opted for different paths:

14...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{B}ae8$  16.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (Black scores better with 17...  $\mathbb{E}e7$ ) 18.  $a3$  Karpov postpones the bishop exchange in order to make another slight improvement. 18...  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  19.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  20.  $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Karpov exchanges in order to occupy the e5-square. He follows through his plan with remarkable purposefulness. 21...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  24.  $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{B}ef8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$  28.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  Now Karpov has a classic good knight versus a bad bishop. 29...  $\mathbb{E}xf5$  30.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  31.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}f4$  33.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $h6$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  36.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  37.  $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White achieved his desired positional domination and went on to convert his advantage, Karpov – Ostos, Malta (ol) 1980.

When Karpov encountered this line for the second time his opponent offered less resistance: 14...  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  15.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  19.  $g3$   $\mathbb{E}xf4$  The exchange sacrifice does not work because Black's queenside is underdeveloped. 20.  $gxf4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $dxe4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black did not last much longer, Karpov – Chen De, Hannover 1983.

15.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $g6$  16.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

With a pawn on g6 there is no point in leaving the bishop on the b1-h7 diagonal, so Karpov prepares a new home for it.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$

In view of what follows, it was worth considering 17...h6!? in order to prevent White's plan.

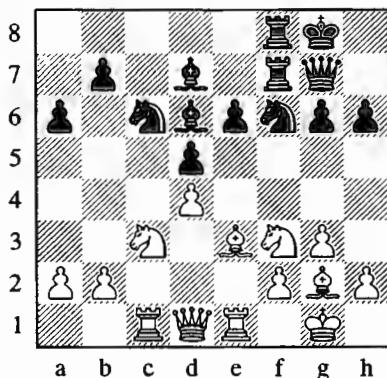
### 18.♗g5!

Karpov's mind is flexible enough for him to re-route his other bishop to the c1-h6 diagonal. Now he can safely play g3 as the bishop will not get trapped.

### 18...h6

After 18...h5?! 19.g3 ♘af8 the pressure on the f-file restricts White's pieces to some extent. Nevertheless after 20.♗g2 ♘f7 21.♗h6 ♘g7 22.♗e3 ♘h5 23.♗xg7 ♘xg7 White keeps a small edge, and may turn his attention to the queenside with 24.♗a4 next.

### 19.♗e3 ♘f7 20.g3 ♘af8 21.♗g2 ♘f6



### 22.h3!

Thanks to some clever prophylactic moves, Karpov has taken most of the good squares away from Mestel's pieces.

### 22...g5

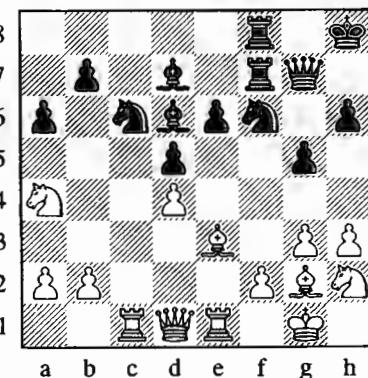
Black's pieces cannot be improved, so Mestel advances a pawn. If Black just waits with a move like 22...♗h7 then White can slowly advance, one possible plan being 23.a3 followed by b4, ♘d3 and b5.

### 23.♗h2 ♘h8?!

This is a waste of a tempo. There was no reason to delay the plan which he carries out in the game: 23...♗e8 24.♗a4 ♘e7 25.♗c5 ♘xc5 26.♗xc5 ♘g6 Black's disadvantage is not too severe.

### 24.♗a4?!

Karpov has stabilized the kingside, so now he turns his attention to the queenside. The text move relies on a tactical justification.



### 24...♗e7

Mestel decides to try to improve the "French bishop". There were two critical alternatives:

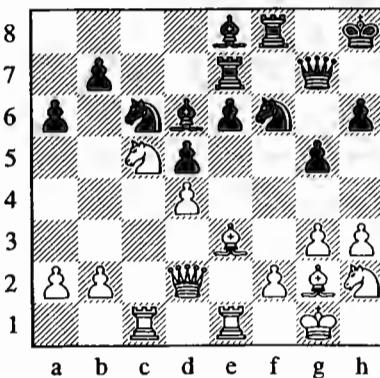
24...♗b4? 25.♗c5 ♘xc5 (If 25...♗xa2 26.♗a1 ♗b4 27.♗xb7 White regains the pawn with advantage.) 26.dxc5 (Also after 26.♗xc5 ♗e4 27.♗xe4 dxe4 28.♗g4 ♗d3 29.♗e5 ♗xe1 30.♗xf7† ♗xf7 31.♗xe1 White has a slight plus.) 26...♗h7 (26...♗xa2 27.♗a1 ♗b4 28.♗b3 White wins back the pawn and keeps the advantage.) 27.♗d4 ♗d3 28.♗g4 ♗xe1 29.♗xe1 White wins back the exchange, and in the resulting position his better pawn structure offers him a slight edge.

The best option may well have been: 24...♗e4? 25.♗xe4 (After 25.♗e2 ♗e7 or 25.♗g4 h5 the

position is complicated.) 25...dxe4 26.Qc3Bg6 27.Qc2 Wh5 28.Qxe4 Qb4 29.Qe2Wxh3 30.Qed1 If White has any advantage, it is very small.

### 25.Qc5 Qe8 26.Wd2

26.Qg4 also offers White a slight plus.



### 26...Qd7

Mestel decides to get rid of the strong knight by exchanging it.

### 26...b6!

This pawn sacrifice was playable, albeit somewhat risky.

### 27.Qxa6!

I would guess that Karpov would have snatched this pawn. His strategic play was always backed up by precise calculation, and he was not afraid of entering complications when the situation at the board demanded it. Retreating the knight would be less ambitious:

27.Qd3 Qe4 28.We2 Qxd4 29.Qxd4 Wxd4

30.Qxe4 dxe4 31.Wxe4 Wh4 32.Qxe4 e5

33.Qg4 Black's active pieces give him an equal game.

27.Qa4!! Qb4 28.Qc3 (28.Qxb6 Qxa2

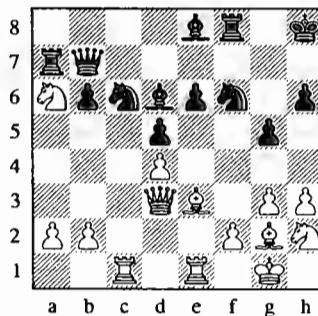
29.Qc5 Wh7 is highly unclear) 28...Qg6

29.h4 (29.Qf1 Wh7 Black has a good grip on the position) 29...Qd3 30.hxg5 hxg5

31.Qxg5 White certainly has compensation for the exchange, but it is hard to tell how dangerous it really is.

### 27...Qa7 28.Qd3 Wh7??

If 28...Qd7 29.a3 Qa8 30.Qb4 Qxb4 31.axb4 Qxb4 32.Qd2 Black has regained his pawn, but the minor piece exchanges have served White's interests.



### 29.b4!

It is a nice way to rescue the knight.

### 29...Wh7

If 29...Qxa6?! 30.b5 Qxa2 31.bxc6 Qxc6 32.Qg6 White's attack is very dangerous.

Another idea is 29...Qg7?! 30.b5 Qb4 31.Qxb4 Qxb4 32.Qe2 Qa3 33.Qb1 when White keeps his extra pawn, but Black has some compensation.

### 30.Wxh7† Qxh7 31.b5 Qb4 32.Qxb4

32.Qf1?! is also possible.

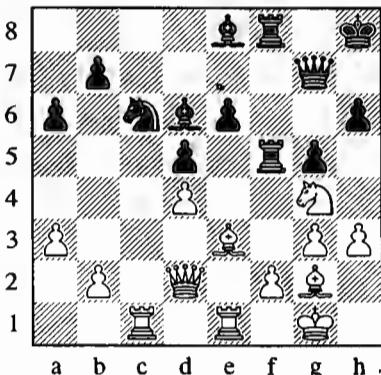
### 32...Qxb4 33.Qe2

Black may be able to live with the pawn deficit, but it would be tough to defend the position against a technical wizard like Karpov.

### 27.Qxd7

The disappearance of a pair of minor pieces means that White is a step closer to conquering the e5-square.

### 27...Qxd7 28.a3 Qdf7 29.Qg4 Qf5



**30.b4!**

Karpov continued to make small improvements on both sides of the board.

**30...♝b8?!**

The English grandmaster probably overlooked Karpov's next move. A couple of other ideas deserved attention.

**30...♝g6 31.♕f1?!**

If 31.♕e5 ♜xe5 32.dxe5 ♜xe5 33.♗c5 ♜c8 White has some compensation, but Black should be all right.

After the text move the critical line is:

**31...h5 32.♕e5! h4**

If 32...♜xe5 33.dxe5 ♜xe5 34.♗c5 ♜e8 35.♜xe5 White wins.

And after 32...♜xe5 33.dxe5 ♜xe5 34.♗e2 the combination of White's bishop pair and Black's airy kingside gives the first player promising compensation for the pawn.

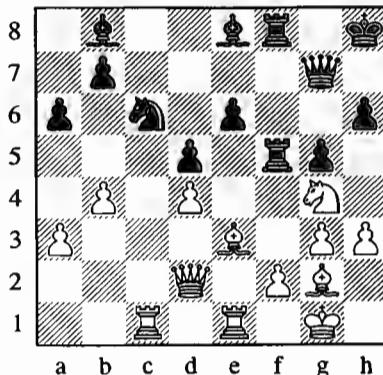
**33.♕xg6†**

33.g4 ♜xe5 34.dxe5 ♜xe5 35.f4 gxf4 36.♗f2 ♜f6 37.♗xa6 ♜e5 The position is double-edged.

**33...♛xg6 34.g4 ♜f3 35.♗g2**

White maintains a small edge.

It was worth considering stepping aside from the diagonal with 30...♝g8?!, and if 31.♕f1 then 31...h5 can be played.



**31.♕e5!**

Karpov exploits some tactical motifs to occupy the main outpost in the enemy position.

**31...♜xe5?!**

Mestel was probably relieved to open the path for his light-squared bishop, and underestimated the strength of the pawn on e5. The most resilient defence was:

**31...♝a7!**

Black wishes to tie his opponent to the defence of the d4-pawn. It also sets up a nasty threat of ...♜xe5! followed by ...d4 winning material.

**32.♕xc6**

32.♗d3 ♜xd4 is a safe pawn grab. If 32.f4 gxf4 33.gxf4 ♜g3 Black has active play.

**32...♜xc6 33.♗c3**

33.♗f1 e5! liberates Black's position.

**33...♝b5 34.♗f1**

Or 34.♗e1 ♜c4.

**34...♝xf1 35.♗xf1 ♜f7**

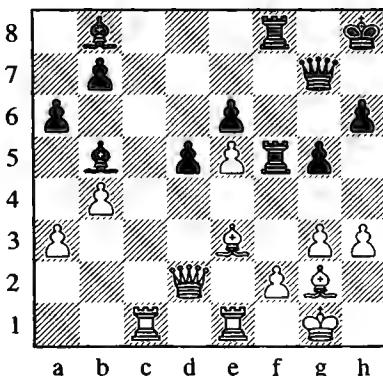
White is a fraction better, but to squeeze a win from his position would have been a great challenge, even for such a positional wizard as the twelfth World Champion.

**32.dxe5 ♜b5**

If 32...♜xe5?! 33.♗c5 ♜f7? 34.♗xe5! White wins.

In the event of 32... $\mathbb{B}g6$  the black queenside would have been short of defenders, and after 33. $\mathbb{B}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (33...h5? 34. $\mathbb{B}xd5!$ ) 34.a4 h5 35.b5 White has the initiative.

32... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  With this move Black decides to wait and see where to put his bishop, but his problems persist here as well: 33. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}8f7$  34.g4  $\mathbb{E}f4$  (34... $\mathbb{B}xe5$  35. $\mathbb{B}d4$ ) 35. $\mathbb{B}e3$  Black has to sacrifice an exchange with 35... $\mathbb{B}c6$  as if 35... $\mathbb{B}xe5$  36. $\mathbb{B}xd5!$  is strong.



### 33. $\mathbb{B}c5!$

The bishop is heading for d4, but Karpov takes the opportunity to win a tempo first.

### 33... $\mathbb{B}8f7$ 34. $\mathbb{B}d4$ $\mathbb{B}f8$ 35. $\mathbb{B}c3$

Karpov intends to improve his light-squared bishop.

There was a decent alternative in the form of 35. $\mathbb{B}xd5!$ ?  $\mathbb{W}d7$  36. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{B}xf2$  37. $\mathbb{W}xf2$  (37. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{B}a2$ ) 37... $\mathbb{B}xf2$  38. $\mathbb{B}xf2$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  White's two rooks should be somewhat better than Black's queen, but this did not satisfy the champion.

### 35... $\mathbb{B}g8$

Mestel sensibly removes his king from the enemy bishop's line of fire. Now the  $\mathbb{B}xd5$  trick is unlikely to happen.

### 36. $\mathbb{W}d1$ $\mathbb{W}f7$

36... $\mathbb{B}xe5??$  37. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  38. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}f5$   
39. $\mathbb{W}a1$  wins.

### 36... $\mathbb{B}c4$

This allows White to transfer his bishop to the b1–h7 diagonal.

### 37. $\mathbb{B}e4!$

37. $\mathbb{B}f3$  Improving the bishop in this way allows Black to take the e5-pawn: 37... $\mathbb{B}xe5$  38. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  39. $\mathbb{B}g4$  (39. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}xe3$ ) 39... $\mathbb{B}c7$  Black is in the game.

### 37... $\mathbb{B}dx4$

37... $\mathbb{B}xe5?!$  is too risky: 38. $\mathbb{B}ee3$  b5 39. $\mathbb{B}c2!$  It is important to keep the first rank open.

39... $\mathbb{B}d6$  40. $\mathbb{W}a1$  Black is in trouble.

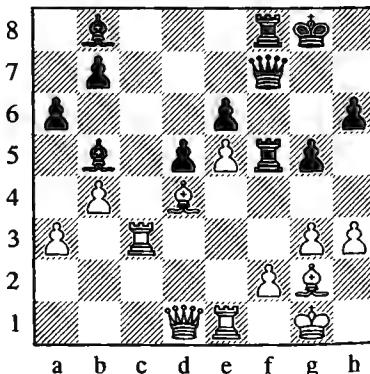
If 37... $\mathbb{B}5f7$  38. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  39. $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  40.a4 Black's position is loose.

### 38. $\mathbb{B}xc4$ $\mathbb{B}xe5$ 39. $\mathbb{B}c5$

Another idea is 39. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  40. $\mathbb{B}cxe4$   $\mathbb{B}xe4$  41. $\mathbb{B}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  42. $\mathbb{W}e2$ .

### 39... $\mathbb{B}c7$ 40. $\mathbb{W}h5$

White will soon take both of Black's e-pawns.



### 37. $\mathbb{B}c2$ $\mathbb{B}c4$

Black's task is not easy. His pieces do not stand badly, but it is hard to improve any of them without leaving a weakness somewhere. His main problem is his slightly weakened kingside.

37... $\mathbb{B}g7$

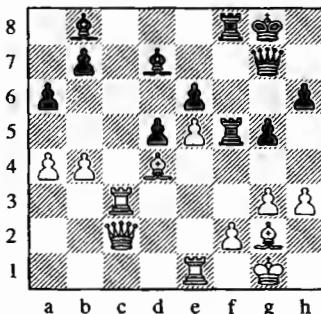
Black can try to direct his forces against the e5-pawn. It ties White up, yet he still has enough available strength to improve his position. I have no doubt that Karpov would have found the right way to do it.

38.a4!

In the event of 38... $\mathbb{B}c8?$ , trying to exchange in order to invade, Black can keep his position together with 38... $\mathbb{A}d7!$ . (Instead 38... $\mathbb{B}c4$  allows the promising sacrifice 39... $\mathbb{B}xc4?$   $dxc4$  40... $\mathbb{W}xc4$  when Black faces an unpleasant defence, although he should still be able to survive.)

38... $\mathbb{A}d7$

After 38... $\mathbb{B}c4$  39... $\mathbb{B}e4!$   $\mathbb{B}5f7$  40... $\mathbb{B}c5$  (40... $\mathbb{B}xc4?$ ) 40... $\mathbb{B}c8$  41... $\mathbb{B}g6$  Black is pushed back.



39... $\mathbb{B}f1!$

White returns the bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal, where it will be at its most effective.

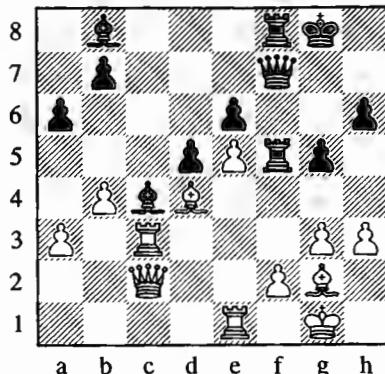
39... $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}f7$  is okay for Black.

39... $\mathbb{B}g4$

39... $\mathbb{B}xe5??$  40... $\mathbb{B}xe5$  wins.

40.h4 h5

Now White can choose between 41.b5 and 41... $\mathbb{B}d3$ . In both cases he has improved his position considerably. Note that Black is still unable to take the e-pawn, as after 41... $\mathbb{B}xe5?$  42... $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  43... $\mathbb{B}g2$  the pin is unbearable.



38... $\mathbb{B}f3??$

Karpov sacrifices the bishop for several passed pawns.

Interestingly, there was also a second strong bishop move: 38... $\mathbb{B}e4!$   $dxe4$  39... $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  40... $\mathbb{B}c5$  (Stronger than 40... $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}xe5$  41... $\mathbb{B}c7$  [41... $\mathbb{B}cx4$   $\mathbb{B}f5$ ] 41... $\mathbb{B}f5$  42... $\mathbb{B}g4$   $\mathbb{B}f4$  43... $\mathbb{B}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}d5$  when Black is worse but he is still alive.) 40... $e3$  41... $\mathbb{B}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}d6$  And White is clearly better. Karpov's move is even more ambitious, although we will see that it may give Black a narrow path to survival.

38... $\mathbb{B}xf3$

If 38... $h5$  39... $\mathbb{B}e4!$  White obtains an improved version of the previous note, as Black's kingside will be weaker.

39... $\mathbb{B}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}xf3$  40... $\mathbb{B}g6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  41... $\mathbb{B}xh6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  42... $\mathbb{B}g6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  43... $\mathbb{B}xe6$   $\mathbb{B}h7!$

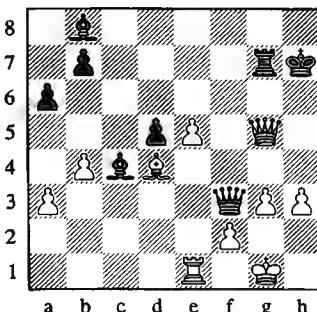
Black has no time for anything else. If White was able to move his queen and unleash his bishop with  $e6\uparrow$ , the game would be over.

44... $\mathbb{B}e7\uparrow$

White will soon pick up the g5-pawn to restore approximate material parity. Black faces a difficult defensive task; not only is his king vulnerable, but many endgames will also be losing thanks to White's four connected passed pawns.

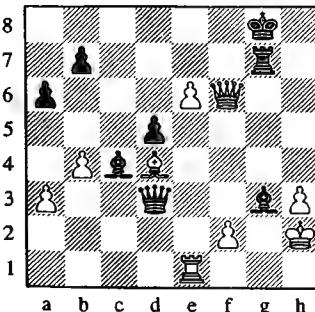
**44...Bg7?!**

44...Bg7! was a stronger defence, although in order to play it Black would have had to find some tricky tactics in advance. 45.Wxg5 Bg7



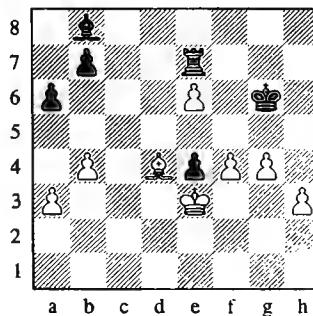
In this position White must decide how best to utilize his advantage.

a) 46.Wh4†Bg8 47.Bh2 Black seems to be facing a deadly attack, but his resources are far from exhausted: 47...Bc7! 48.Wf6 (White can change track and play for an ending with 48.Wh6?; Alternatively 48.e6 looks dangerous, but Black can save himself by means of 48...Bf1! 49.Bxf1 Bxg3† 50.fxg3 Bxf1 followed by a perpetual.) 48...Bd3! This leads to a spectacular drawing sequence: 49.e6 Bxg3†!

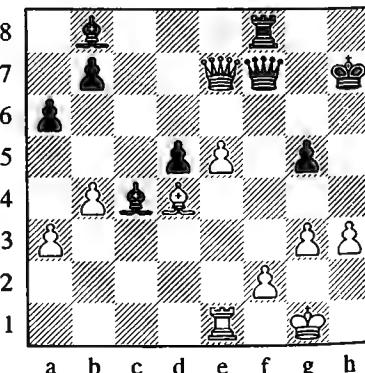


50.Wh1! Be5!! After this brilliant move White has no choice but to take a perpetual with 51.Wd8† Bh7 52.Wh4†.

b) 46.We3 White heads for an endgame, relying on his armada of pawns. 46...Bf7 (46...Bxe3 47.Bxe3 only helps White) 47.e6 (47.Wxf3 Bxf3 48.e6 Bf8 49.Bg2 Bd3!) 47...Bxe3 48.Bxe3 Be7 49.f4 Bg6 50.Bf2 Ba2! The transfer of this bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal is a key resource for Black. 51.Bf3 Bb1! 52.g4 Be4† Now White will have to make another sacrifice: 53.Bxe4! dxе4† 54.Be3



White's pawns appear devastating, but Black can sacrifice his bishop for two of them: 54...Bxf4† 55.Bxf4 Bxe6 Black can probably hold this ending.



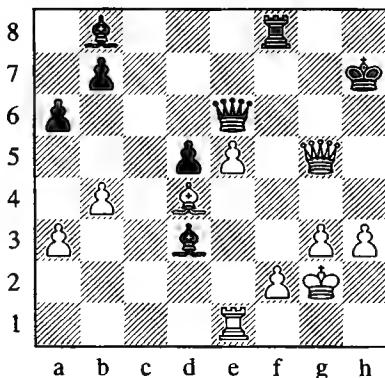
**45.Wxg5 We6 46.Bg2**

This kind of small improving move was typical for Karpov, but on this occasion he could have won more convincingly using the direct approach: 46.g4! Wh6 (46...Bd3 47.f4

$\mathbb{W}h6$  [or 47... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  48. $f5$ ] 48. $\mathbb{W}xh6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  49. $f5$  White's pawns are killers.) 47. $\mathbb{W}xh6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  49. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  50. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  White's passed pawns will soon start rolling like an avalanche.

#### 46... $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

Mestel reroutes his bishop to the b1-h7 diagonal, where it will help to restrain the kingside pawns.



#### 47. $f3!$

Karpov takes away the e4-square from the bishop and slowly starts pushing his kingside pawns.

#### 47... $\mathbb{Q}g6$

If 47... $\mathbb{E}c8$  48. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  49. $\mathbb{W}e3$  White is ready to push the g-pawn.

#### 48. $g4!$ $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 49. $\mathbb{W}h4\uparrow?$

It was better to bring the queen to the centre at once with 49. $\mathbb{W}e3$ !.

#### 49... $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 50. $\mathbb{W}g3$ !?

Once again the queen should have been centralized with 50. $\mathbb{W}f2$ .

#### 50... $\mathbb{W}c6$

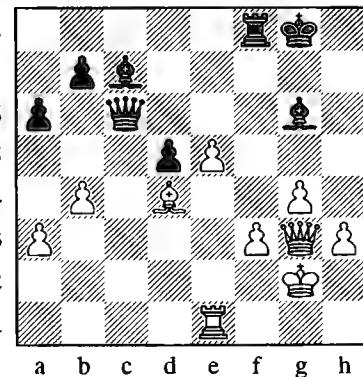
Maybe Black would have done better to open a queenside file: 50... $a5$ !?

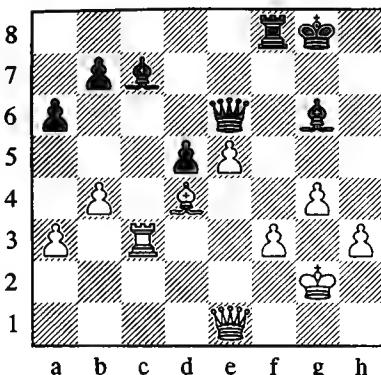
51. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  52. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  53. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b1$  54. $\mathbb{W}e1$  55. $\mathbb{W}xe3$  56. $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  57. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  58. $f4$  the pawns start to move. 59. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  56. $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  57. $\mathbb{E}c3$  57. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  58. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $b6$ ! This pawn sacrifice creates counterplay. 59. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  60. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $d4$  Black is kicking as well.

57... $\mathbb{E}xc3$  58. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  59. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  60. $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4\uparrow$  61. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  62. $h4$   $d4$

White is of course better with his four connected passed pawns, nevertheless it is not at all clear if he can win this endgame.

#### 53. $\mathbb{W}e1$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 54. $\mathbb{E}c3$





**54...Bf4??**

Close to the time control, Mestel commits a fatal error.

**54...Bb8** was one improvement, although after **55.We3 Bh7 56.Wg5** White probably still has enough to win.

**54...Bd8!**

This would have been much more resilient. The bishop helps to fight against the kingside pawns, and it is not clear if White can achieve anything substantial.

**55.Wc1**

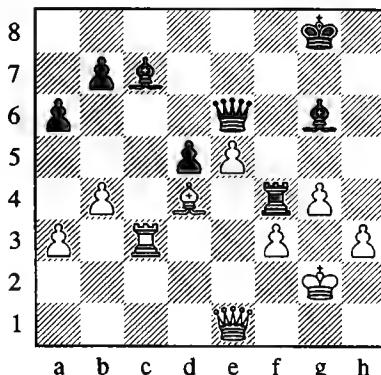
The queen helps the rook to get to the c8-square. If **55.h4 Bh7 56.h5Bg5** Black stabilizes the kingside.

Also after **55.We3 Bf7 56.Bg3** (**56.Bh2 Bf7**) **56...Bg7 57.f4 Be4** Black is very much in the game.

**55...a5!!?**

After **55...Bh7 56.f4 Eg8 57.Bh2 Be4** White can enter an opposite-coloured bishop endgame, should he wish it: **58.f5 Wxf5 59.Bc7† Bxc7 60.Wxc7† Eg7 61.Wxg7† Bxg7 62.gxf5 Bxf5** White has some winning chances connected with a king march to b6. **56.b5 Bh7 57.f4 Be4† 58.Bh2 Eg8 59.We3 Bg6 60.Bc8**

White is pressing but Black still has chances to hold.



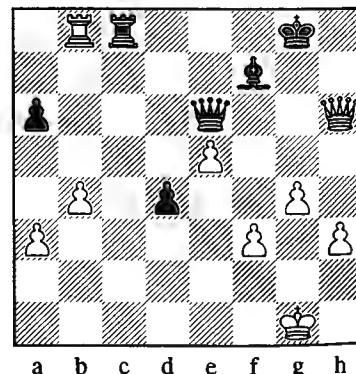
**55...Bxc7**

Once again, Karpov's rook will play a decisive role on the seventh rank.

**55...Bxd4 56.We3!**

The queen joins the attack, which spells big trouble for Black.

**56...Bc4 57.Bxb7 d4 58.Wh6 Bc2† 59.Bg1 Bf7 60.Bb8† Bc8**



**61.Wxe6**

**1-0**

Black resigned, as White has too many pawns for the bishop to cope with. This win took Karpov to a remarkable score of plus six after ten rounds. His play in this tournament,

and the year 1984 in general, took on a sharper character than normal. He probably decided to change his style in order to prepare for the tense and complex situations that were certain to occur in his championship match with Kasparov.

In the next round Karpov's ambitious play with the black pieces backfired, and Torre got the better of him. In the last two rounds he toned down his aggressiveness, and coasted in with two draws to finish in first place with a score of 9/13 ahead of Polugaevsky and Chandler.

Karpov only played in one other tournament in 1984, in Oslo. He drew six of his nine games, but wins over Hort, Miles and the young Agdestein were enough to secure first place ahead of Miles and Makarychev.

Karpov took part in one other event before his world title defence: a USSR – Rest of the World contest in London. Karpov's opponent was the solid Swedish grandmaster Ulf Andersson. Their four-game match was not hugely eventful; Karpov managed to grind out an endgame win in the first game, and the other three were fairly quick draws.

### **World Championship match versus Kasparov**

It goes without saying that this match was the chess highlight of the year. Any world championship match generates great interest amongst chess players and fans around the world. The present match, featuring two outstanding players with contrasting styles and personalities, was one of the most hotly anticipated clashes in chess history. The only way it could have been more exciting is if one of the players had been American!

Kasparov seemed destined for greatness from an early age. When he was just eleven years old,

Botvinnik famously remarked that "The future of chess lies in the hands of this young man." He first won the Soviet Junior Championship in 1976 at the age of thirteen. Two years later he became the youngest player ever to qualify for the Soviet Championship, and also won the prestigious Sokolsky Memorial in Minsk. In 1979 he won his first international tournament by an astonishing three point margin ahead of Smejkal, Andersson and Petrosian. Amazingly, he only participated thanks to an error on the part of the Russian Chess Federation, as it was believed the tournament was for juniors. As it turned out, it was the young Kasparov who made his opponents look like juniors.

In 1980 Kasparov won the World Junior Championship, and in both 1981 and 1982 he tied for first at the Soviet Championship. His first victory at an elite tournament came in 1982 at Bugojno, where he finished a point and a half clear of the field.

Kasparov's journey to the championship final was just as impressive as his previous achievements. After a relatively slow start he won the Moscow Interzonal tournament by one and a half points. In the candidates quarter-final match he defeated Beliavsky by four wins to one, with four draws. He won the 1983 Niksic super-tournament by two points, then defeated Korchnoi in the candidates semi-final by four wins to one, with six draws. In the final Garry faced the sixty three year old Smyslov, and won by an equally impressive margin with four wins, nine draws and no defeats. By the start of the championship match, Kasparov had even overtaken Karpov on the rating list by a few points.

Karpov and Kasparov had played each other three times before the match. All three games were drawn, although in two of them Karpov was in trouble but managed to save himself in the middlegame. Since 1981 they had avoided playing each other; it was as though they

already sensed the bitter rivalry that would ensue.

The match took place in Moscow. Karpov's official seconds were Igor Zaitsev and Yuri Balashov, although Geller, Polugaevsky, Makarychev, Giorgadze, Mikhalchishin, Vaganian, Ubilava and Podgaets also helped the champion. Kasparov's main helpers were Alexander Nikitin, Alexander Shakarov and Gennady Timoschenko, and he was also assisted by Adorjan and Dorfman. This list shows how much the Soviets cared about chess; no western player could ever have dreamed of receiving so much support.

Just as in Karpov's previous two championship matches with Korchnoi, the first player to score six wins would be declared the World Champion. Due to the controversial way in which the present match ended (more on this later), it was the last time this scoring system was ever used in a major chess event.

The first game took place on 10 September 1984. Karpov was White, and the game was drawn without major incident. Game 2 was also drawn, but it was a violent affair in which Karpov missed a win. The deadlock was broken in Game 3; Kasparov played a somewhat dubious novelty and then failed to defend his inferior position. In Game 4 Kasparov got some advantage in an opposite-coloured bishop middlegame, but was unable to do anything with it. One gets the impression that Karpov was the better middlegame player at this point in time. In Game 5 Karpov was unable to achieve anything against his opponent's Scheveningen and a draw ensued.

Here is the sixth game.

## Game 73

Garry Kasparov – Anatoly Karpov

Moscow (6) 1984

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ?**

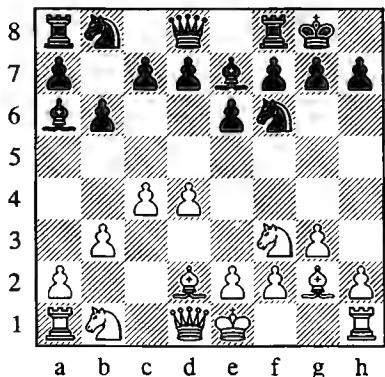
Karpov first started playing this variation of his favourite Queen's Indian in 1980. It gradually became his first choice.

In the second game of the match he played his old favourite 4... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , when play continued: 5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  6.0–0 0–0 7.d5!? True to his style, Kasparov opts for a dynamic pawn sacrifice. The idea was fashionable in the early eighties, but nowadays it is not considered dangerous as the best defensive methods have been worked out. 7...exd5 8. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  c6 9.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 (Karpov was not interested in finding out how Kasparov would play against 11... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ , which he had used against Timman at the previous year's Tilburg tournament.) 12.e4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  13. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ! Kasparov did not consider this move in his home analysis. 14.g4!  $\mathbb{Q}ba6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}cl$  With double-edged play, Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (2) 1984. The game was eventually drawn after huge complications. Interestingly, after this game Karpov never repeated 4... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  against Kasparov.

**5.b3  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ † 6. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0–0**

Karpov deviates from the fourth game of the match, which continued: 7... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 9.cxd5 exd5 (Later the players repeated this line from both sides of the board; Games 14 and 15 both resulted in draws after 9... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ .) 10.0–0 0–0 11. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  c5 13. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ! 17. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  19.a4 White obtained a slight plus but Black held the draw, Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (4) 1984.

Later 7...c6 became the main line and Karpov's number one choice.



#### 8.0–0 d5 9.♘e5

In this game Kasparov decides not to play against hanging pawns.

#### 9...c6 10.♗c3 ♘fd7

Karpov opts for the most solid approach. In Gheorghiu – Karpov, Lucerne (ol) 1982, he preferred 10...♗b7 and eventually squeezed a win out of almost nothing. I analysed the endgame in depth in my *Endgame Virtuoso* book.

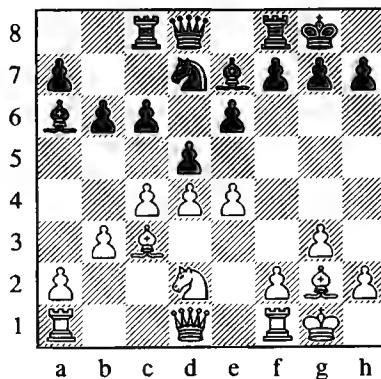
#### 11.♗xd7 ♘xd7 12.♗d2 ♜c8

This was the first time Karpov had reached the present position. He repeated it several times, and occasionally played 12...♗f6 as well.

Black can also change the character of the game with 12...f5, but most of the time Karpov avoided stonewall structures.

#### 13.e4

More ambitious than 13.♗e1 c5 14.cxd5 exd5 15.e4 cxd4 16.♗xd4 dxe4 17.♗xe4 ♘f6 18.h4 ½–½ Vyzhmanavin – Karpov, Tilburg 1993.



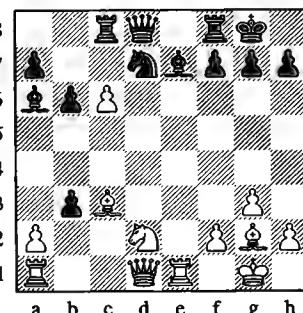
#### 13...b5

This game was played in the early days of the variation; according to the database, the present position had only occurred three times prior to the present encounter. By undermining White's centre, Karpov shows that he is not merely looking to equalize, but is willing to take risks and fight for the win, which he rarely did with the black pieces.

#### 13...c5

This is the other main move. Recently, in Bacrot – Karpov, Ajaccio (blitz) 2007, Black preferred 13...dxe4 but went on to lose.

14.exd5 exd5 15.dxc5 dxc4 16.c6 cxb3  
17.♗e1



Karpov played this position with both colours. Black has two serious options available:

a) 17... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  18. $\mathbb{A}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$   
20. $\mathbb{E}xa7$

White keeps a slight initiative in the simplified position.

20... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

After 21... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  22. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  23. $\mathbb{E}e4$  Black was under pressure and did not manage to hold the position in Kamsky – Karpov, Elista (16) 1996.

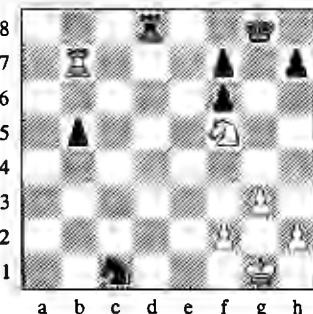
22. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Even this far into the game, Karpov could still be found on either side of the board!

23...gxf6!

Worse is 23... $\mathbb{E}xf6$  24.b4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  26. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\#$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  28. $\mathbb{E}ed1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and White successfully converted his advantage in Karpov – Beliavsky, Linares 1993.

24. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   
27. $\mathbb{E}b7$  b5



28. $\mathbb{Q}g2!$

White avoids the simplifications which would have occurred after 28. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

28...h5 29. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  30. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  31. $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{E}d5$ !

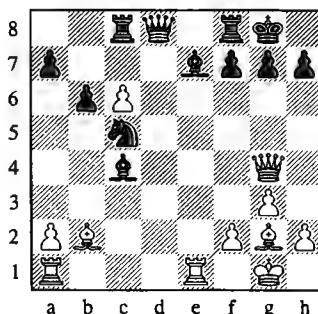
Karpov carried out an ingenious defensive strategy by trapping White's knight. He went on to draw the game Van Wely – Karpov, Cap d'Agde 1996.

b) 17...b2 18. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

The other main moves are 19. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  and 19. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ .

19. $\mathbb{W}g4$  is not dangerous: 19... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4?!$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  23. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  24. $\mathbb{W}xa7??$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  The queen is trapped, and if White saves her he succumbs to a mating attack: 25. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{E}xb7!$  26. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  0–1 Van der Sterren – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee 1998.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  20. $\mathbb{W}g4$

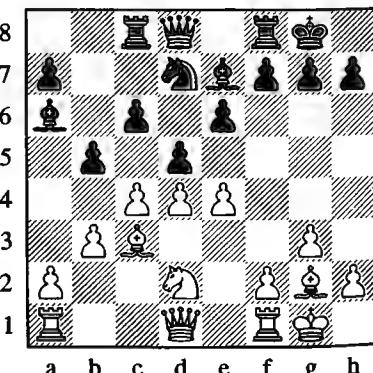


20... $\mathbb{Q}f6?!$

Karpov comes up with a new idea, but the choice is an unfortunate one.

The main line is 20... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  21. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .  
21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  22. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  23. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{E}xd1$   
24. $\mathbb{E}xd1$

Black faced a difficult defence and eventually went down in Leko – Karpov, Miskolc (rapid) (3) 2006.



**14.♗e1**

Karpov reached this position in several subsequent games, but always from the opposite side of the board.

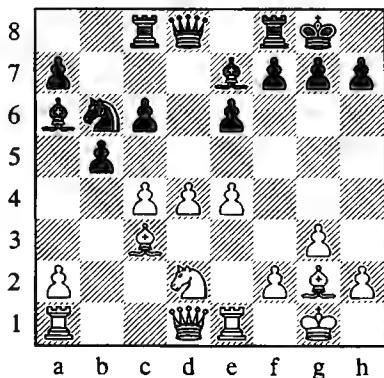
**14...dxc4**

The other two available pawn captures have also been tested extensively.

**15.bxc4 ♘b6!**

Karpov wants to battle. Kasparov wrote that the move came as a surprise for him, and that he was unable to work out what was wrong with it.

The main line is 15...bxc4 16.♘a4 ♘b5 17.♗c2 ♘e8 18.a4 ♘a6 19.♘f1 with complex play. Black has scored all right from here.

**16.cxb5?**

This increases the scope of Black's queenside pieces, but Karpov is seduced by the prospect of a d4-d5 breakthrough. He had utilized the same motif to score some brilliant wins before this game. One can imagine Karpov anticipating that his rival would play like this.

16.c5! was stronger, when the positioning of both the rook on c8 and the bishop on a6 is called into question. 16...♝a4 (After 16...b4 17.♗b2 ♘c4 18.♗xc4 ♘xc4 19.♗c2

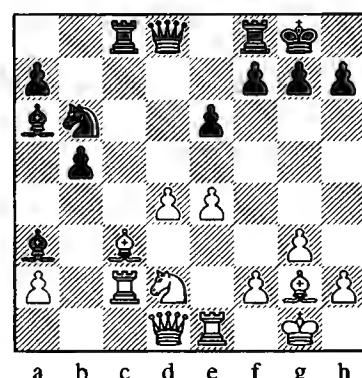
♗b5 20.a3 bxa3 21.♗xa3 Black's position is passive.) 17.♗c2 e5 (17...♗d7 is met by 18.e5! when the knight is heading for d6.) 18.♗b3 (Kasparov's suggestion of 18.♗f3! exd4 19.♗xd4 is more convincing.) 18...b4 19.♗xb4 exd4 20.♗h3 d3 21.♗c1 ♘a8 22.♗d2 White went on to win this complicated position in Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1987.

**16...cx b5**

Now the c8-rook has come alive.

**17.♗c1 ♘a3**

Karpov begins a remarkable build-up on the a-file. A reasonable alternative was 17...b4 18.♗a1 ♘d7 followed by ...♝a4 or ...♗a4 with good play for Black.

**18.♗c2****18...♝a4?**

Karpov continues to line up his pieces on the edge of the board, just as he sometimes did in his childhood (see for instance Game 10, Karpov – Moles). It is an interesting strategy, albeit one that carries a good deal of risk.

A safer continuation would have been 18...♗c7, exploiting the pin on the c-file. Play might continue 19.d5 ♘b4! This subtle move stops the sacrifice on g7. 20.♗xb4 (If 20.♗e3

$\mathbb{Q}a4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xg7?$   $\mathbb{W}xc2$  22.  $\mathbb{W}g4$  f5 23.  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{W}d1!$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  Black wins.) 20...  $\mathbb{W}xc2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  Black has the more comfortable endgame, although Kasparov suggests that after 23.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  White should be able to hold.

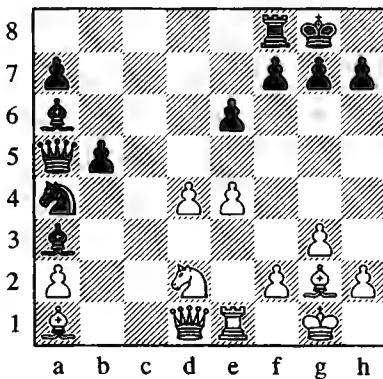
### 19. $\mathbb{Q}a1$ $\mathbb{E}xc2$ 20. $\mathbb{W}xc2$ $\mathbb{W}a5!?$

Karpov puts yet another piece on the a-file in order to accelerate his queenside play. It is risky, though not objectively bad.

20...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  21.  $\mathbb{W}d3$  also results in a roughly balanced position.

### 21. $\mathbb{W}d1!$

With this excellent move Kasparov prepares to transfer his queen to the kingside. In the meantime she also helps to support the d5 break.



### 21... $\mathbb{E}c8!?$

Karpov plays consistently; indeed, his tendency to choose a plan and pursue it relentlessly has been noted several times throughout the book. On this occasion, however, he does not pay enough attention to White's possibilities.

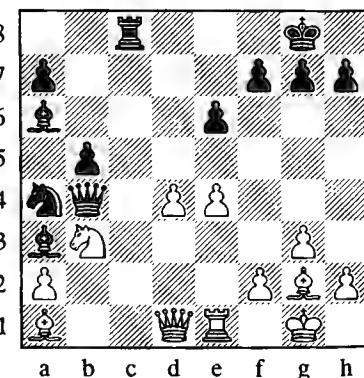
Kasparov pointed out that after 21...  $\mathbb{E}c3$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$

25.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  White has an edge thanks to his strong d-pawn.

The safest continuation looks to be 21...  $\mathbb{Q}b2!$  to neutralize the powerful bishop. After 22.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  23.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  25.  $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  the position is roughly balanced.

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}b4!?$

22...  $\mathbb{W}c7$  would have enabled Black to retain some stability in the centre: 23.  $d5$  e5 24.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  25.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  26.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  And according to Kasparov, Black holds.



### 23. $d5!$

This strong move is a natural choice, especially for a super-dynamic player like Kasparov. Now the bishop on a1 gains a lot of power.

### 23... $\mathbb{E}xd5?$

Karpov does not want to live with a weakness on e6, but after his chosen move White's rook and light-squared bishop suddenly enjoy a far better view of the board than before.

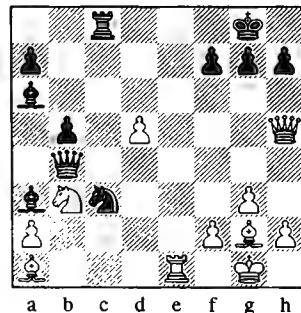
Blocking the long diagonal was objectively better. After 23...  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  (24...  $\mathbb{E}xc3$  25.  $dxe6$   $fxe6$  26.  $\mathbb{E}e2$ ) 25.  $dxe6$   $fxe6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  Black is surviving, although he will be on the defensive for some time to come.

Black could also use the bishop for the same function: 23... $\mathbb{B}b2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  25. $\mathbb{W}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  26.dxe6 fxe6 27. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  Once again Black is under some pressure.

#### 24.exd5 $\mathbb{Q}c3$ 25. $\mathbb{W}d4?$

Unusually for him, Kasparov misses a golden opportunity to decide the game with a kingside attack.

25. $\mathbb{W}h5!$



If followed up correctly, this strong move would have punished Karpov for neglecting his kingside.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$

Taking the a-pawn is critical. Kasparov must have been reluctant to sacrifice it without having a definite follow-up in mind. Other moves fail to halt White's initiative:

25... $\mathbb{Q}xd5?$  26. $\mathbb{E}e4$  wins.

25... $\mathbb{W}f8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  27. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  (27... $b4$  28.d6) 28. $\mathbb{Q}xg7!$   $\mathbb{W}xg7$  29. $\mathbb{E}e8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30.d6

White wins, as Kasparov pointed out.

26. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{W}f8$

26... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h3!$  is crushing.

26... $f6$  27. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  demolishes Black's kingside.

27. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

This is the detail that I suspect both players missed. Suddenly  $\mathbb{W}f5$  becomes a huge threat.

27... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  28. $\mathbb{W}h5!$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  30. $\mathbb{W}g5!$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  31. $\mathbb{W}d2!+$ —

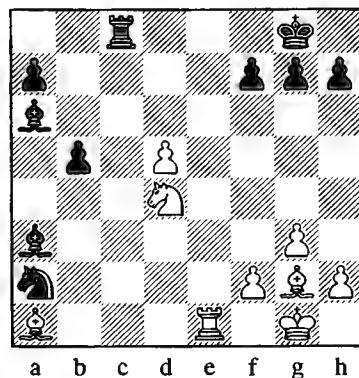
With Black's queen and rook huddled in the

corner, White wins material on the opposite flank.

#### 25... $\mathbb{W}xd4$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}xa2$

Taking a pawn is useful; besides, it is good to relieve the black rook from the burden of defending the knight. Despite White's previous inaccuracy, his pieces are extremely active and his d-pawn is dangerous.

If 26... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  27.d6!  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  29. $\mathbb{E}e8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e6!$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  White wins.



#### 27. $\mathbb{Q}c6?$

Kasparov chooses the wrong square for the knight.

#### 27. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$

This is not only a stronger move, it is also more consistent with Kasparov's style. The main differences are that the knight attacks the g7-pawn and, even more importantly, helps White to play d6.

27... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$

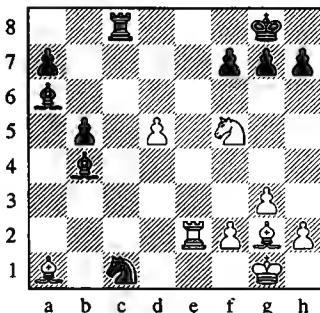
This intermediate move is the one that forces White to play most precisely.

Instead after 27... $\mathbb{E}c1$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  29.d6  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  30.h4  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  32.hxg5 White wins a piece.

28. $\mathbb{E}e2!$

It is vital that White wins a tempo by attacking the knight.

28... $\mathbb{Q}c1$



29. $\mathbb{B}e4!$

This second tempo-gaining move enables White to push his d-pawn with deadly effect.

29... $\mathbb{Q}d3$

29... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b2!$  wins, as the d-pawn is too strong.

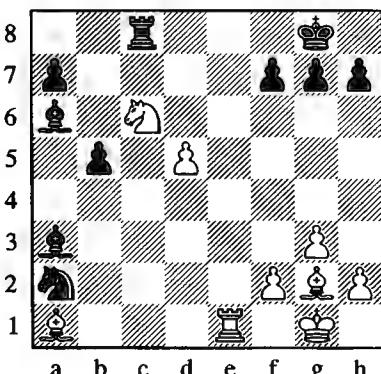
30. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$

Yusupov's 30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  is also good enough.

30... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31.d6  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  32.d7  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

34. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e8$

White wins, as Kasparov pointed out.



27... $\mathbb{B}c5!$

With little time remaining, Karpov finds an important move. The bishop defends the a7-

pawn while maintaining its control over the d6- and e7-squares.

28. $\mathbb{Q}h3?$

Kasparov is playing too optimistically. After 28. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  Black would still have had to work for a draw. He can achieve it by means of 29...b4 30.h4 (30. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  32.d6  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ) 30... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  31.d6  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  f6 34. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$  35. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ .

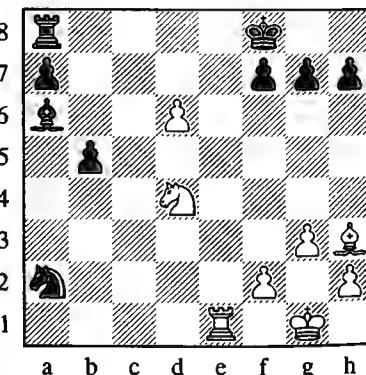
28... $\mathbb{R}a8!$

There was only one other square available to the rook, but Karpov knows he needs f8 for his king.

29. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

The king approaches the strong passed pawn.

31.d6



31... $\mathbb{Q}c3?$

Karpov wants to battle it out. The safe approach was 31... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  32.d7  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  when the disappearance of the queenside pawns ensures that the game will end in a draw.

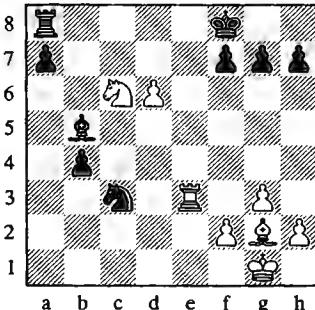
32. $\mathbb{Q}c6?$

Karpov's gamble pays off – the text move loses an important tempo. White should have preferred one of the following alternatives:

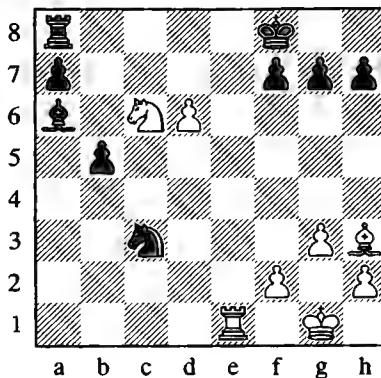
The simplest route to a draw is 32.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$ , which wins the b5-pawn: 32...  $\mathbb{E}d8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ . With equality.

32.d7 wins a piece for two pawns, but Black should not be worse in the resulting position: 32...  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  34.  $\mathbb{E}e8\#$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  35.  $dxe8=\mathbb{W}\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}d6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  Black's king will support the passed pawns, and if anything it is White who will have to be careful.

32.  $\mathbb{E}e3?$  As far as I am aware, other commentators have not mentioned this interesting zwischenzug. 32...  $b4$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  (33...  $\mathbb{Q}d5?$  34.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  [34...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  35.  $d7$ ] 35.  $d7$  Black drops a piece without obtaining sufficient compensation.) 34.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  (After 34.  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  Black is okay.) It looks like Black is in big trouble, but he can rescue himself with a tactical sequence:



34...  $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $b3!$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  and Black is safe. In fact, after 38.  $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $a5$  (39...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  40.  $\mathbb{E}a6=$ ) Black is just one tempo away from reaching a winning ending, but after 40.  $d7$  he has to give up his a-pawn for White's d-pawn, leading to a dead draw.



32...  $\mathbb{Q}b7!$

After remaining stationary for twenty eight moves, the bishop finally vacates its rather uninspiring post on the edge of the board.

32...  $b4$  only leads to a draw after 33.  $d7$   $b3$  34.  $d8=\mathbb{W}\#$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  when Black's b-pawn will enable him to win back the rook.

33.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}e8!$

It is important to challenge White's well placed rook.

Although Black has the advantage, the position was still double-edged. For instance, after 33...  $b4?$  Averbakh found a study-like win for White: 34.  $d7$   $b3$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}b8!!$   $\mathbb{E}xb8$  36.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  and White wins after 36...  $b2$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  or 36...  $\mathbb{E}d8$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ .

34.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$

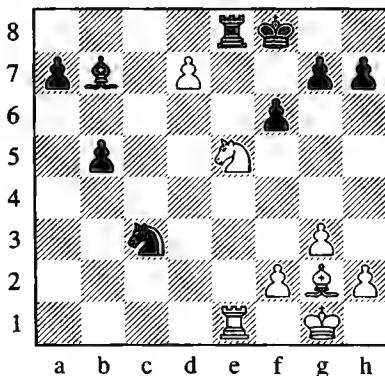
According to Yusupov 34.  $\mathbb{E}a1$  would have given better chance to survive, but after 34...  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xa7$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  Black is a clear pawn up, and his knight dominates the enemy bishop.

34...  $f6!$

This is an only move but it wins.

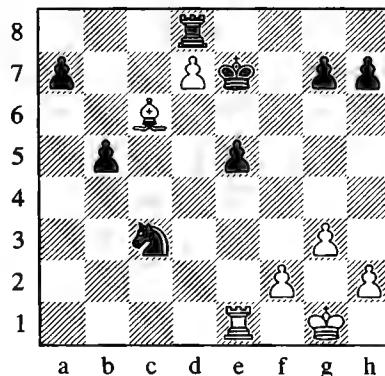
35.  $d7$

Kasparov offered a draw here, but his position is lost. Yusupov mentions the line 35... $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$  36. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  and Black wins, while 35. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  36. $\mathbb{E}a1$  b4 37. $\mathbb{E}xa7$  b3 also leads to the same result.



35... $\mathbb{E}d8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7?$

Karpov blunders in time trouble. After the correct 37...e4! 38. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  39. $\mathbb{E}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  40. $\mathbb{E}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  Black wins by pushing his b-pawn.



38. $\mathbb{Q}xb5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

With little time remaining, Karpov understandably goes for the simplest continuation.

In view of the drawing continuation given in the note to White's 41st move below, it

may well have been objectively better to play 38... $\mathbb{Q}d6!$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}xd7!$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  a5 with a clear advantage, as suggested by Yusupov.

39. $\mathbb{E}xe5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  40. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$

This is the last move before the time control. Black cannot justify giving up both kingside pawns with 40... $\mathbb{E}a8?$ , as after 41. $\mathbb{E}b7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  42. $\mathbb{E}xg7$  a5 43. $\mathbb{E}xh7$  a4 44. $\mathbb{E}e7$  a3 45. $\mathbb{E}e1$  a2 46. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  47.h4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  48. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  49.g4  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  50. $\mathbb{E}e1$  White holds without difficulty.

41. $\mathbb{E}h5?$

This move makes little sense – White simply forces one of the enemy pawns onto a less vulnerable square. Perhaps Kasparov was hoping to capture the h6-pawn with check, but it is hard to find a concrete variation in which this is of any benefit.

41. $\mathbb{E}e5!$

This obvious improvement enables the rook to target Black's kingside pawns in the most efficient way possible. It has been suggested by several commentators, including Timman and Yusupov.

41... $\mathbb{E}a8$  42. $\mathbb{E}e6\#$   
42. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  a5 43. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a4 44. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  a3 45. $\mathbb{E}e1$  a2  
46. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  wins.

42... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  43. $\mathbb{E}e7$  a5 44. $\mathbb{E}xg7$

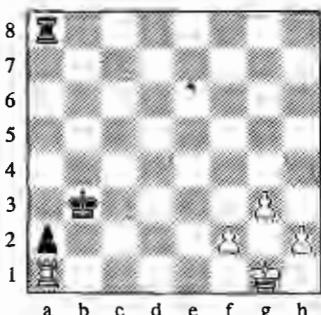
Yusupov ends his analysis here, evaluating the position as slightly better for Black. Since the plans for both sides are clear, we can analyse further.

44...a4 45. $\mathbb{E}xh7$

If 45. $\mathbb{E}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  (46. $\mathbb{E}b7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$ )  
47. $\mathbb{E}xh7$  a3 48. $\mathbb{E}e7$  a2 49. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  wins.  
46...a3 47. $\mathbb{E}c1$  a2 48. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  49.f4  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   
Black wins.

45...a3 46. $\mathbb{E}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  47. $\mathbb{E}b7\#$   
47. $\mathbb{E}c1$  a2 48. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  49. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  transposes to the main line.

47... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  48. $\mathbb{E}b1$  a2 49. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$



50.  $\mathbb{Q}g2!!$

When I analysed this endgame I overlooked this great move. It is a superb example of shouldering with the king.

50.  $h4?$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  51.  $\mathbb{E}e1$  (51.  $\mathbb{E}xa2\#$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$  52.  $h5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  53.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  55.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}a3\#$  56.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$ ) 51...  $a1=\mathbb{W}$  52.  $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{E}xa1\#$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  With the help of modern tools one can prove that the position is winning for Black, by just one tempo.

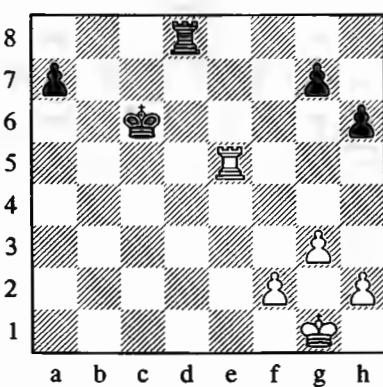
50...  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  51.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $a1=\mathbb{W}$  52.  $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{E}xa1$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}f3!$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

The white king successfully blocks his counterpart from reaching the scene of the action. This instructive drawing line was pointed out by Kasparov.

41...  $h6$

Black must keep his h-pawn.

42.  $\mathbb{E}e5$



42...  $\mathbb{E}a8!$

This was the sealed move.

42...  $\mathbb{E}d5!?$

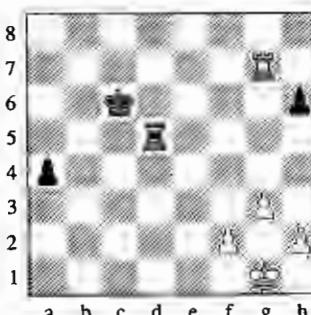
This was mentioned by Yusupov, who offers no further analysis but evaluates the position as winning for Black. According to my analysis this is correct, although the race is incredibly close.

43.  $\mathbb{E}e7$

43.  $\mathbb{E}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  (43...  $\mathbb{E}d6$  44.  $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  45.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $g6$  should also win according to Kasparov.)

44.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $a5$  45.  $\mathbb{E}xg7$   $a4$  46.  $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  White is a tempo down on the main line below.

43...  $a5$  44.  $\mathbb{E}xg7$   $a4$



45.  $\mathbb{E}a7$

45.  $\mathbb{E}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  46.  $\mathbb{E}xh6$   $a3$  47.  $\mathbb{E}h8$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  wins.

45...  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$

46...  $\mathbb{E}d6$  47.  $h4$  is not an improvement for Black.

47.  $h4$   $a3$  48.  $g4$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  49.  $\mathbb{E}b7\#$

Here Black must choose the right path for the king.



49... $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

After this move Black will soon win the rook, after which it looks as though he is just quick enough in the race.

49... $\mathbb{Q}c3?$  is the wrong direction. 50. $\mathbb{E}c7\#!$  ( $50.\mathbb{E}b1?$  is not good enough; the main line runs as follows: 50...a2 51. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  52. $\mathbb{E}e1$  a1= $\mathbb{W}$  53. $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{E}xa1$  [53... $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  should also win] 54. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}a4!$  And Black is winning.) 50... $\mathbb{Q}d3?$  (Black should correct his mistake and head back towards the a4-square, hoping to transpose to the main line below.) 51. $\mathbb{E}c1$  a2 52. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  53.g5!  $hxg5$  54. $hxg5$   $\mathbb{E}xg5\#$  55. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  56. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White holds.

50. $\mathbb{E}b1$  a2 51. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$



52. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

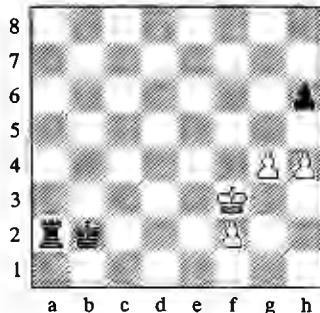
52.g5?!  $hxg5$  53. $hxg5$   $\mathbb{E}xg5\#$  is winning for Black.

52.h5 is a better try, but ultimately this is also insufficient: 52... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  53. $\mathbb{E}e1$  a1= $\mathbb{W}$  54. $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{E}xa1$  55. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (55. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  56.f4  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  57.g5  $hxg5$  58.f6g5  $\mathbb{Q}e5\rightarrow$ ) 55... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  56. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  (56... $\mathbb{E}a4\#$  should also be good enough) 57.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  58.f5 (58.g5  $hxg5\rightarrow$ ) 58... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  59. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}a1$  60. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (60.f6  $\mathbb{E}e1\#$  61. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  62. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  63.f7  $\mathbb{E}f1\#$ ) 60... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  61.f6  $\mathbb{E}e1\#$  62. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  63. $\mathbb{Q}g7$   $\mathbb{E}g1$  64.f7  $\mathbb{E}xg4\#$  And Black wins.

52... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  53. $\mathbb{E}xa2\#$

Or 53. $\mathbb{E}e1$  a1= $\mathbb{W}$  54. $\mathbb{E}xa1$   $\mathbb{E}xa1$  55. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  56.g5  $\mathbb{E}a4\#$  57. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}xh4$  and Black wins.

53... $\mathbb{E}xa2$



54. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

54. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  55.g5 (55.f3  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  56.g5  $hxg5\#$  57. $hxg5$   $\mathbb{E}f2$  wins.) 55... $\mathbb{E}xf2\#$  wins (but note that 55... $hxg5\#$ ? 56. $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$  is a draw).

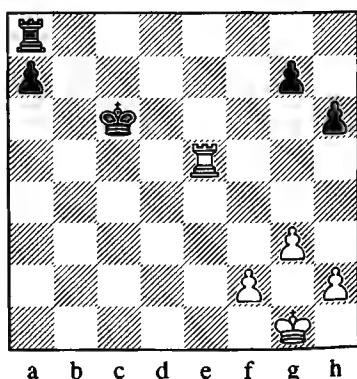
54... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  55.f4  $\mathbb{E}a4\#$

55... $\mathbb{E}a5$  should also work.

56. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  57.g5  $\mathbb{E}a5\#$  58. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  h5 59.g6  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  60.g7  $\mathbb{E}a8$  61.f5  $\mathbb{E}g8$  62. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{E}xg7\#$  63. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

Black wins the pawn ending by one tempo.

Regardless of the final evaluation, it would have been impractical for Karpov to commit to such a narrow path on his sealed move.

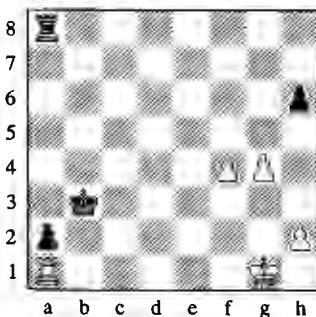


43. $\mathbb{E}a5$

The rook adopts a passive role, but White had no choice. With the black pawn on h6 instead of h7, there was no time for him to collect both of the kingside pawns:

43.♗e6† ♜c5 44.♗g6 a5 45.♗xg7 a4 46.♗c7† ♜b4 47.♗b7† ♜a5 48.g4 a3 49.♗b1 a2 50.♗a1 ♜b4 51.f4 ♜b3

The surviving h6-pawn makes all the difference, but the race is still tight.



52.g5?!

After 52.♗f2 ♜b2 White is losing the race:  
53.♗xa2† (if 53.♗e1 a1-♛ 54.♗xa1 ♜xa1  
55.♗e3 ♜c3 56.h4 ♘h1 57.g5 h5 Black  
wins – Timman) 53...♗xa2 54.♗e3 ♜c3  
55.h4 ♘h2 56.h5 ♘h4 57.g5 ♘xh5 58.g6  
♘h4! 59.h5 (59.♗f3 h5) 59...♗g4 Black wins,  
as pointed out by Yusupov.

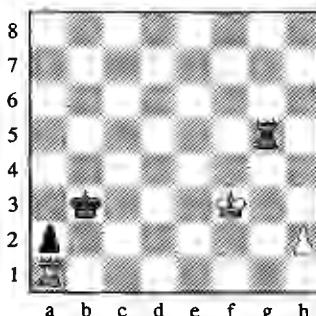
52...hxg5 53.fxg5 ♘a5! 54.♗f2!

This is the best practical chance.

Yusupov only mentions 54.h4 ♘a4 55.♗g2  
♘xh4 when Black wins without difficulty.

54...♗xg5 55.♗f3

55.h4? ♘g4 wins instantly.



55...♘h5!

This is the only move to win.

56.♗g3 ♘b2 57.♗xa2† ♘xa2

The black king will just get to the kingside in time to seal the win.

58.h4 ♘b3 59.♗g4 ♘h8 60.h5 ♘c4 61.♗g5  
♘d5 62.♗g6 ♘e6 63.h6 ♘g8† 64.♗h7

64.♗h5 ♘f5 65.h7 ♘h8 (But not 65...♗g1??

66.♗h6=) 66.♗h6 ♘f6+

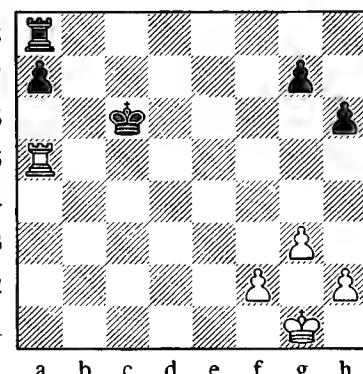
64...♗g5 65.♗h8 ♘f6

Black forces mate in a few more moves.

66.♗h7

66.h7 ♘e5 67.♗g8 ♘e8#

66...♘f7 67.♗h8 ♘e5 68.♗h7 ♘h5 69.♗h8  
♘xh6#



43...♗b6

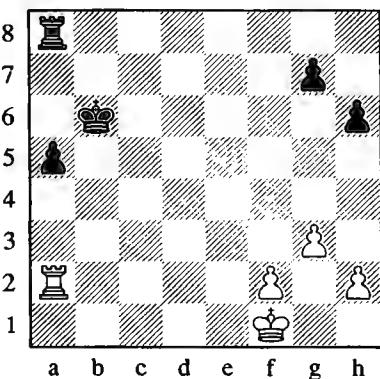
The rook endgame is reminiscent of that which occurred in the very last game of the Capablanca – Alekhine match of 1927 in Buenos Aires. On that occasion Alekhine, playing with the white pieces, had an extra passed a-pawn, with three pawns versus three on the kingside, but the black king was able to blockade it from a6. White was able to utilize the a-pawn as a distraction to force a breakthrough on the kingside, winning the game and the match.

44.♗a2!

The best chance. Kasparov plans to use his king to block the a-pawn so that the rook can defend the kingside.

44.♗a1 offered less resistance: 44...a5 45.♗f1 a4 46.♗e2 a3 47.♗d3 ♗c5 48.♗c3 (48.♗c2 ♗c4!) 48...♗d5! It is essential that the black king heads towards the kingside pawns as quickly as possible. (After 48...a2? 49.♗b2 ♗b4 50.f4! h5 51.♗xa2! ♗xa2† 52.♗xa2 ♗c3 53.f5! ♗d3 54.♗b3 ♗e4 55.♗c4 ♗xf5 56.♗d4 ♗g4 57.♗e5 the White king has arrived in time.) 49.♗b3 a2 50.♗b2 ♗e4 51.♗e1† ♗f3 And Black wins, as shown by Yusupov.

44...a5 45.♗f1



45...a4

45...♗e8!?

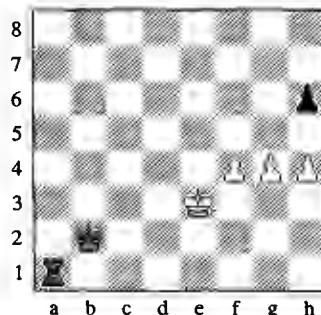
Cutting off the king is a common tactic in rook endings. This move was mentioned by Yusupov, without any further analysis. Having analysed it in detail, I have concluded that it is indeed winning, although the game continuation seems simpler overall.

46.f4

Worse is 46.♗a1?! ♗b5 47.♗b1† ♗c4 48.♗a1 ♗a8 when the mutual rook dances have resulted in White losing time. After 49.♗e2 a4 50.♗d2 a3 51.♗c2 a2 52.♗b2 ♗d3 Black is winning.

46...♗b5 47.♗b2† ♗c4 48.♗b7 ♗a8 49.♗xg7 a4 50.♗c7† ♗b5 51.♗b7† ♗a5 52.g4 a3 53.♗b1 ♗a4 54.♗f2 a2 55.♗a1 ♗b3 56.♗e3 ♗b2 57.♗d1 a1=♕ 58.♗x1 ♗x1 59.h4

From here Black must demonstrate great precision to secure the victory.

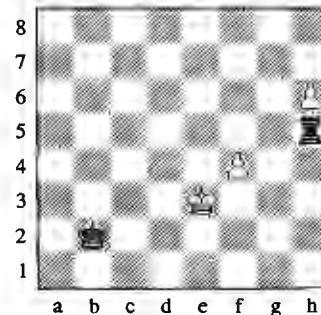


59...♗h1!

59...♗a4? is not good enough: 60.g5 (Simplest, although 60.h5 should also hold.) 60...♗a3† (After 60...h5?? 61.f5! Black even loses!) 61.♗e4 ♗h3 62.gxh6 White is safe.

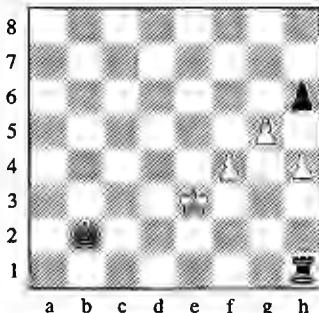
60.g5

60.h5 also leads to an instructive finish: 60...♗h4! (If 60...♗c3 61.♗e4 ♗h4 62.♗f5 ♗d4 63.g5 ♗xh5 64.♗g6 hxg5 65.fxg5 ♗h1 66.♗f6 White holds.) 61.g5 ♗xh5 (61...hxg5 62.fxg5 ♗xh5 63.♗f4 ♗c3 64.g6 draws.) 62.gxh6 (62.g6 ♗h4→)



62...♗c3! Black's top priority must be to improve his king. He should postpone the capture on h6 until the last possible moment. (62...♗xh6 allows White to draw with 63.♗d4! or 63.♗e4!) 63.♗e4 ♗c4! 64.f5 ♗c5! 65.♗e5 ♗c6! 66.♗e6 ♗c7! 67.f6 (After

67.♕f6 ♜xh6† both 68.♕e7 and 68.♕g7 are met by 68...♜h1→) 67...♜d8 68.♕f7 ♜xh6 69.♕g7 ♜h1 White can resign.



60...h5!

Black must keep his h-pawn.

After 60...♜xh4? 61.gxh6 Black only draws. Compared with the previous note, the position of the rook on h4 instead of h5 makes all the difference, as the white king can move to the fifth rank unhindered.

61.f5 ♜h3†!

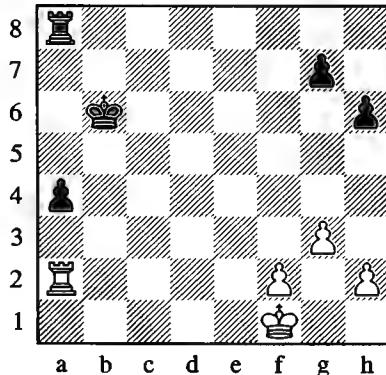
This intermediate check wins a vital tempo.

62.♕e2

Or 62.♕e4 ♜xh4† 63.♕e5 ♜g4 64.g6 h4 65.♕f6 (65.f6 ♜g5†!) 65...h3 66.g7 h2 67.♕f7 h1=♛ winning.

62...♜xh4 63.f6 ♜f4 64.♕e3 ♜f1! 65.♕e4 h4 66.♕e5 h3 67.g6 h2 68.g7 ♜g1

And Black wins.



46.♕e2 ♜c5 47.♕d2 a3 48.♕c1

After 48.♕c3 ♜d5 49.♕b3 ♜e4 Black wins according to Kasparov.

48...♜d4 49.f4

49.♕b1 ♜b8† 50.♕a1 ♜b2 51.♜xa3 ♜xf2 52.♜a6 ♜f1! 53.♜a7 g5 wins.

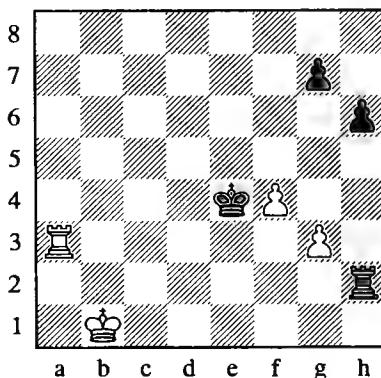
49.h4 ♜e4 50.♕b1 ♜f3 51.♜c2 a2† 52.♕a1 ♜a7 is equally hopeless.

49...♜e4 50.♕b1 ♜b8†! 51.♕a1 ♜b2!

Black's a-pawn has been neutralized, so Karpov finds a way to exchange it for one of White's kingside pawns.

52.♜xa3 ♜xh2 53.♕b1

White's king needs to rejoin the action. The rook cannot achieve anything by itself, as seen after 53.♜a7 g6 54.♜a6 g5 55.♜g6 (55.♕b1 ♜f3 56.fxg5 hxg5 wins.) 55...♜f5 56.♜g8 ♜g2 and wins.



53...♜d2!

With this strong move Black threatens ...♜d3.

After 53...g5 54.♕c1 gxh4 55.gxf4 ♜xf4 56.♕d1 White draws comfortably.

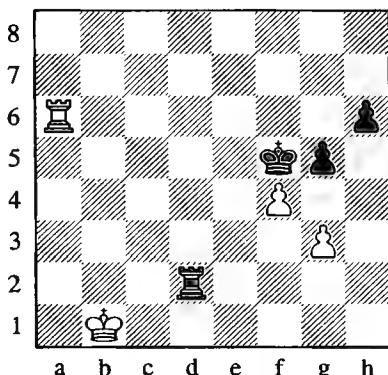
53...♜f5 also fails to achieve anything after

54.£a7 g5 55.£a4 £g2 56.£a3 ♖g4 57.£c1  
when the white king is close enough.

#### 54.£a6

Here is an interesting point: if Kasparov had not forced the move ...h6 earlier, he would still have been able to survive by means of 54.£a7. In the present position this move does not help him, thanks to 54...g5! 55.£h7 (55.fxg5 hxg5→) 55...g4 56.£xh6 £g2 57.£e6† ♖f3 58.f5 ♖xg3 and Black wins.

54...£f5 55.£a7 g5 56.£a6



56...g4!

Karpov plays subtly, even sacrificing a pawn temporarily, in order to advance his g-pawn closer to the promotion square.

Nevertheless the prosaic 56...£h2?! was also good enough: 57.£c1 (57.fxg5 hxg5→) 57...£g4 58.£g6! £h3! 59.£d2 (59.fxg5 hxg5→) 59...£xg3 60.£xh6 ♖xf4! Commentators at the time thought this position was drawn, but tablebases reveal that Black is winning after 61.£e2 £a3 or 61.£f6† ♖g4 62.£e2 ♖h3!.

57.£xh6

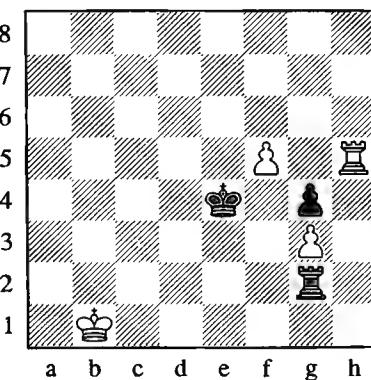
On 57.£a5† Kasparov demonstrates a nice win: 57...£e4 58.£a4† ♖f3 59.£a3† £e2 60.£a2 (60.£a5 £d3 61.£h5 £xg3 62.£xh6

£f3→) 60...h5 61.£5 h4 62.£xd2† ♖xd2 63.£f6 hxg3 64.£7 g2 65.£8=£ g1=£† The queen ending is winning, as the white king is badly placed.

57...£g2 58.£h5†

58.£c1 £xg3 59.£d2 £f3 60.£e2 £xf4! 61.£f6† ♖g3 wins.

58...£e4 59.£f5



59...£f2?!

Black could also have won with the more direct 59...£xg3 60.£f6 £f3 61.£h4 £f4 62.£f7 (62.£c2 £g5) 62...£g3→.

60.£c1 £f3 61.£d1

61.£f6?!

This would have posed more problems, although I have no doubt that Karpov would have handled the position properly. It is not impossible that he was still following his adjournment analysis, as both sides have played logically since that time.

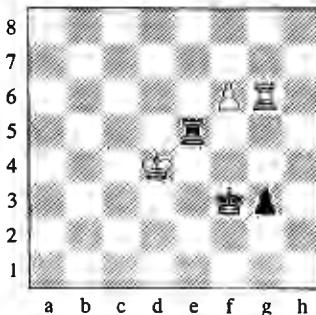
61...£xg3 62.£h6 £g2!

The only move to win.

Yusupov mentions the line 62...£f3? 63.£d2 £f2 64.£h2† £g1 65.£h6 drawing, and his assessment has withstood the scrutiny of modern computers.

63.£d1 g3 64.£g6

64.♕e1 ♔g1 Remarkably, it was Black to move in this position, only ...♔g2 would win. 65.♗g6 g2 This is a mutual zugzwang position. 66.♗h6 ♕f5 67.♗e2 ♗e5† 68.♗f3 ♔f1 69.♗g6 ♗e6! And Black wins.  
 64...♔f5 65.♗e2 ♗e5†! 66.♗d3 ♕f3! 67.♗d4 67.f7 ♘f5 68.♗g7 ♘f4! wins in a similar manner to the main line.



67...♗h5!! 68.f7 ♘f5 69.♗g7 g2

We have reached another mutual zugzwang.

70.♗d3

70.♗c4 ♕f2+–

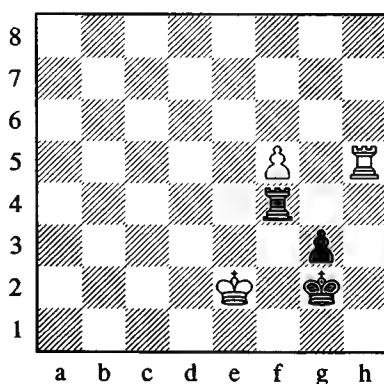
70...♘f4

And Black wins. Yusupov credits this lovely piece of analysis to Sergey Dolmatov.

61...♕xg3 62.♗e1 ♔g2

This is the only winning move, but it is not difficult to find.

63.♗g5 g3 64.♗h5 ♘f4 65.♗e2



65...♗e4†!

Another only move.

66.♗d3 ♕f3 67.♗h1 g2 68.♗h3† ♔g4  
 69.♗h8 ♘f4 70.♗e2 ♘xf5

0–1

Kasparov resigned, as he has ended up on the losing side of the well known Lucena position, which will be recognized as a trivial finish by any player who has picked up a book on rook endings.

One might argue that this game was not especially strategic, but of the five wins achieved by Karpov in the present match, this was the one that best suited the theme of the present book. Had the game taken place at a normal tournament, it would probably not have made the final cut. But a world championship match is such a monumental event, it would have been a greater crime not to include any game from it. In strategic terms, Karpov's decision to place four out of his five remaining pieces on the a-file, followed by the rook on the c-file, was incredibly bold, even if it was not entirely correct. And following the mutual errors before the time control, his endgame technique was once again sublime.

After the above game Kasparov's troubles continued. Karpov switched to 1.d4 and scored another victory after Kasparov misplayed a reasonable position he obtained through a Tarrasch Defence. After a quick draw in Game Eight, Karpov scored another win over Kasparov's Tarrasch. (It became one of the most heavily analysed endgames in chess history.) Thus Karpov assumed a commanding 4–0 lead after only nine games – a remarkable feat considering the unquestionable brilliance of his challenger.

Around that time, the English grandmaster Jonathan Speelman commented that the world

had not yet understood just how strong a player Karpov really was. Even his most optimistic fan could scarcely have dreamed that he would open up such a lead over Kasparov. Although the challenger had dominated his opponents on his way to challenging for the title, Karpov was by far the most formidable adversary he had ever faced, and it seems as though it took some time for him to raise his game to the level of the champion.

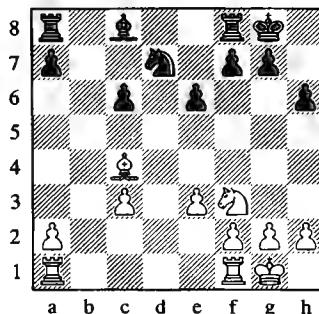
By the end of Game Nine Kasparov was, not surprisingly, visibly shaken. To his great credit, he kept his composure and altered his match strategy. From this point on, for a long time to come, he played safely and solidly in order to draw as many games as possible and thus prolong the match.

A long series of draws ensued. In Game Fifteen Karpov was pressing for a long time, but was unable to convert his advantage. In the very next game it was Kasparov who missed a golden opportunity to score his first win. After his narrow escape Karpov became more cautious, and the next eleven games were all drawn without much drama. Although the majority of those games lasted between twenty and twenty five moves, they still contributed a lot to opening theory.

Game twenty seven looked to be heading for another quick draw, but Karpov had other ideas. We will review the game briefly.

1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 2. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  3. c4 e6 4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 6.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  7. e3 0-0 8.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  c5 9. dx $c$ 5 dx $c$ 4 10.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  11. 0-0  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  13. bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14. c6 bxc6

White's advantage appears insignificant, but over the next ten or so moves Karpov totally outplays Kasparov. It was a remarkable achievement from such an innocent-looking position.



15.  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  c5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}fc1$ !

With this farsighted move Karpov avoids exchanges on the d-file and defends the c-pawn in advance.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ?

17...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ! was better.

18.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ??

18...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ! would have prevented White's next.

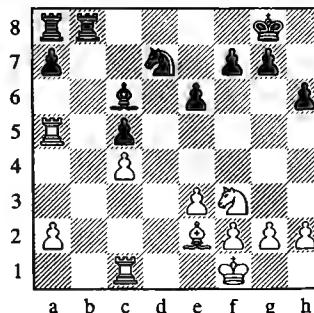
19.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ !

Karpov deploys his rook on a square where it attacks both of Black's weak pawns.

19...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}fb8$ ?

20...  $\mathbb{Q}fc8$ ! was necessary to bolster the c-pawn.

21. c4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$



22.  $\mathbb{Q}el1$ !

Karpov brings the knight closer to the weak c5-pawn.

22...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$ !

Preventing the exchange of his strong rook.

23... $\mathbb{B}b7$  24. $f3!$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $g5$  26. $\mathbb{B}b3!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
27. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  28. $\mathbb{B}xc5$

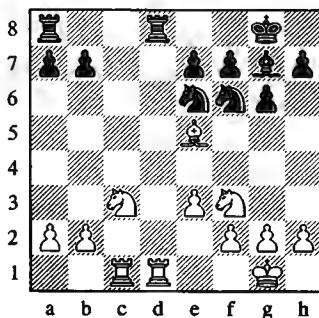
After some truly brilliant play White has won a pawn. At this level it should have been enough to win comfortably, but Karpov became tense and allowed Black to develop counterplay. At one point Kasparov had a very difficult draw, but he was unable to find it and Karpov went on to win.

28... $\mathbb{B}d6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  30. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{B}xd1$  31. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}d6$  32. $\mathbb{B}a5$   $f5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $h5$  34. $e4$   $fxe4$  35. $fxe4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  36. $\mathbb{B}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $h4$  38. $\mathbb{B}d4$   $e5\uparrow$   
39. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b1$  40.a3  $\mathbb{B}e7$  41. $\mathbb{B}g4$   $h3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{B}e8$   
43. $\mathbb{B}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  44. $\mathbb{B}xa7$   $\mathbb{B}f2$  45. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{B}xh2$  46.c5 $\uparrow$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}a4\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  48. $\mathbb{B}d7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  49.c6  $\mathbb{B}b2\uparrow$   
50. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  51.c7  $\mathbb{B}c8$  52. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  53. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   
 $h2$  54.g4  $\mathbb{B}h8$  55. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  56. $\mathbb{B}e1\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
57. $\mathbb{B}e4\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$  58. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  59. $\mathbb{B}e2$

1–0 Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (27)  
1984.

Kasparov seemed to learn an important lesson from this game, and he seldom lost in this fashion for the rest of his career. Interestingly, Karpov managed to inflict a similar defeat on him in a rapid match almost twenty years later:

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
 $dxc4$  6. $\mathbb{B}c1$  0–0 7.e3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  8. $\mathbb{B}xc4$  c5 9. $dxc5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  10.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   
 $\mathbb{W}xd1$  13. $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{B}fd8$  Once again White has no more than a tiny advantage, but Karpov makes it count.



14. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$   
17. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $axb6$  18.a3  $\mathbb{B}xd1\uparrow$  19. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$   
20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{B}c4$  22. $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  23. $\mathbb{B}c7$   
 $b5$  24.f3 e5 25.b4  $\mathbb{Q}a4$  26. $\mathbb{B}xb7$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  27.e4  
 $\mathbb{Q}e6$  28.h4 h5 29. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}c2\uparrow$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  f5 31.g3  
 $fxe4$  32. $fxe4$   $\mathbb{B}g2$  33. $\mathbb{B}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}xg3\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}g2\uparrow$   
35. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  36. $\mathbb{B}b6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}e2\uparrow$   
38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{B}xe4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$   
41. $\mathbb{B}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  42. $axb4$   $\mathbb{B}xb4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
44. $\mathbb{B}c4$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  46. $\mathbb{B}c5$  1–0 Karpov – Kasparov, New York (rapid) (3) 2002.

There is no doubt that, at his peak, Kasparov's overall chess ability was at a higher level than Karpov's ever was. But despite Kasparov's genius, he never reached Karpov's level in endgames and simplified positions such as the above.

Let us return to the subject of the match. With a 5–0 lead, it seemed to be only a matter of time before Karpov would close out the match. The next four games were drawn, but then in Game 32 Kasparov scored his first win after utilizing his middlegame initiative to secure an extra pawn, which decided the game. It was his first ever victory over Karpov. Not surprisingly, Karpov still holds the record amongst world champions for holding the longest undefeated streak against his successor. The next four games were drawn, although in the last of them Karpov was under pressure and did well to survive. That game, the 36th of the match, took place on 28 December and was the last one Karpov played in the year 1984. The match continued on 2 January 1985, and we will rejoin it shortly.

1984 was Karpov's last year as the dominant force in the chess world. He won two tournaments and took a 5–1 lead against a super-strong challenger. He benefitted from the rub of the green in the early part of the match, and the 5–0 lead was not a true

reflection of the relative strength of the combatants. Nevertheless the result left no doubt as to who was the stronger player at the time – especially when it came to endgames and simplified positions. Karpov deservedly won the Chess Oscar, although the margin was surprisingly narrow: he got 1390 votes to Kasparov's 1360. In any event, 1984 was a great year for Karpov: his last as the world champion and the strongest player in the world.

## 1984 Summary

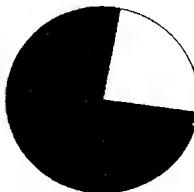
London (1st place): 9/13 (+6 =6 -1)

Oslo (1st place): 6/9 (+3 =6 -0)

USSR – Rest of the World match, London (Board one versus Andersson): 2½/4 (+1 =3 -0)

World Championship match versus Kasparov, Moscow: 20/36 (+5 =30 -1)

Total 60.5% (+15 =45 -2)



□ Wins ■ Draws ▨ Losses

# 1985

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Rating 2705 (2 in the World)

Karpov had little time to celebrate the New Year, as its second day saw the continuation of the marathon match. Although on paper Karpov held what looked like a commanding lead, Kasparov had managed to stabilize his play and had won the last decided game, and in the last few drawn games he was also closer to winning than Karpov.

The first three games of the new year were drawn. Then in Game 40 Kasparov won a pawn and was very close to winning, but Karpov narrowly managed to survive in 70 moves. Game 41 was Karpov's last serious chance to end the match in his favour. Kasparov tried the Petroff and Karpov won a pawn, but he missed a forced win in the endgame and eventually had to settle for a draw.

The next five games were also drawn, although in the last of them Karpov played well below his usual level and Kasparov should have done better.

In Game 47 Karpov's play really went downhill. Playing with the white pieces, he turned down a draw in the early stages of a queenless middlegame, but played poorly and Kasparov punished him in impressive style. In Game 48 Kasparov scored his third win after his energetic attacking play forced the win of a pawn, which he successfully converted in a rook ending. In the space of two games, the score had shifted from 5–1 to 5–3. Karpov was still leading, but he had lost ten kilos in weight, he was mentally and physically exhausted, and the momentum was firmly with the challenger.

At this point the FIDE President, Florencio Campomanes, intervened and announced that the match would be terminated. He proposed that the title be settled by means of a new match later in the year, with a fixed limit of twenty four games. It was a hugely controversial move, and Kasparov was furious, but nevertheless the decision stood.

\* \* \*

After taking a much needed break to regain his strength, Karpov took the opportunity to compete in a double round robin tournament in Amsterdam. It must have come as a relief to sit across the board from someone other than Kasparov. His opponent in the first round was John Nunn. Since their 1982 London game Karpov had scored one win and one draw against the Englishman.

## Game 74

Anatoly Karpov – John Nunn

Amsterdam 1985

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6**

Having lost to Karpov with both the Sveshnikov and the Pirc, Nunn reverts to his main defence to 1.e4.

**3.d4 ♘f6 4.♘c3 cxd4 5.♘xd4 a6 6.♗e2**

Karpov employs his favourite variation. Obviously he had to think carefully about revealing his ideas before the match with Kasparov, who also plays the Najdorf.

**6...e5**

Nunn had also played 6...♗bd7, but on this occasion he sticks to the main line.

**7.♘b3 ♗e7 8.0–0 0–0 9.♗e3 ♗e6**

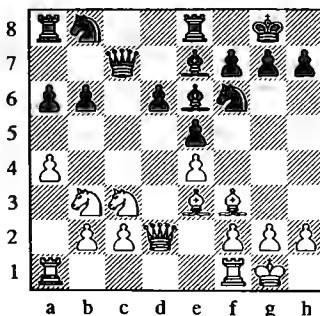
Two years previously, Karpov faced a different set-up. It is worth giving the whole game, as Karpov played brilliantly.

**9...♗c7 10.♗d2 ♗e8 11.a4 b6**

Black guards against the possible fixing of his queenside with a4-a5.

**12.♘f3 ♗e6**

Black has handled the position in a somewhat unorthodox fashion, making no attempt to free himself with ...d5.



**13.♘c1!**

Since ...d5 is not on the agenda, White does not need to play ♘fd1, so Karpov immediately sets about improving his knight.

**13...♗c6**

This prevents the knight from coming to b4, so Karpov alters his plan.

**14.♘d5 ♗xd5 15.exd5 ♘a5 16.b3 ♗ec8**

**17.♘a2!**

The rook defends the c2-pawn securely, and later it will develop along the second rank.

**17...♗b7**

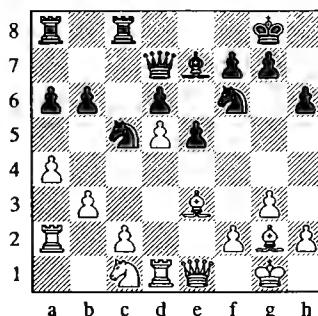
17...♗ab8 18.c4 is good for White.

**18.♗d1 ♘c5 19.♗e1 ♗b7 20.g3 ♗d7**

Black seems content to wait and see what happens. If he tries to embark on an active plan, he may risk opening the position for White's bishop pair.

**21.♗g2 h6?!**

21...♗g4? was a better idea.



**22.a5!**

With this subtle move Karpov plans to install his knight on the c6-square.

**22...b5**

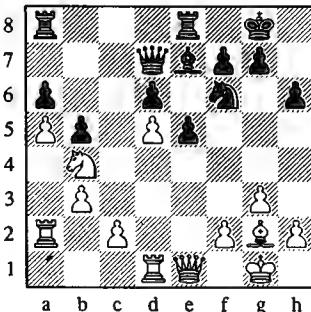
Perhaps Black could have considered 22...♗d8?.

**23.♗xc5!**

Karpov shows great strategic vision. It is worth 'sacrificing' the bishop for a knight in order to help the knight along its journey.

**23...♗xc5 24.♘d3 ♗cc8 25.♘b4 ♗e8**

The alternative was 25... $\mathbb{E}c5$  26. $\mathfrak{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  27.c4!? (It is stronger to open the queenside than to win an exchange: 27.b4  $\mathbb{E}c4$  28.c3 e4 29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  30.dxc6 White is only a bit better.) 27...bxc4 28.b4  $\mathbb{E}b5$  29. $\mathfrak{E}c2$  and White has obtained the initiative on the queenside.



26. $\mathfrak{Q}c6$

The knight is not attacking anything, yet it is highly effective as takes away several important squares from the enemy pieces.

26... $\mathbb{E}f8$

After 26... $\mathbb{E}c7$  27.b4 White will soon open the c-file, thus embarrassing the black queen.

27. $\mathbb{W}e2$  e4 28.c4! bxc4 29. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}f5?$

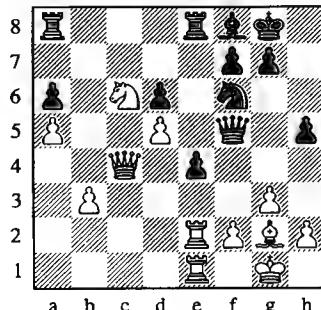
The best chance was 29...e3! 30.fxe3  $\mathbb{E}xe3$  31. $\mathbb{E}e2$  when White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

30. $\mathbb{E}e2$

Thirteen moves after it came to the second rank, the rook makes its long awaited jump to the centre.

30...h5 31. $\mathbb{E}d1$

Black's centre falls apart. The whole scenario is typical of Karpov's games: after building an initiative on one side of the board, the opponent lunges forward in another part of the board in an effort to obtain counterplay, only for Karpov to switch his attention back and hurt the opponent in the area where he is trying to become more active.



31... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  32. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathfrak{Q}xd5$  33. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathfrak{Q}c7$   
34. $\mathfrak{Q}e7†!$

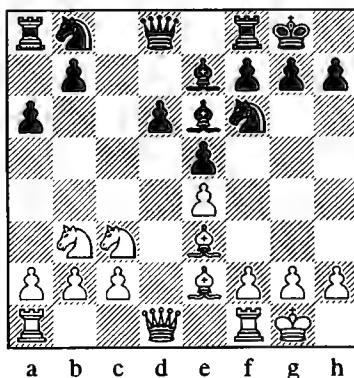
A cute way to seal the victory.

34... $\mathbb{E}xe7$  35. $\mathfrak{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{E}xe2$  36. $\mathbb{E}xe2$   $\mathfrak{Q}xa8$

Black is temporarily up on material, but his knight finds itself rather unfortunately placed.

37. $\mathbb{E}c2$

1–0 Karpov – Giorgadze, Moscow 1983.



10. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathfrak{Q}bd7$  11.a4  $\mathbb{E}c8$

Nunn follows in Portisch's footsteps. He had previously played 11... $\mathfrak{Q}b6$  and drawn in Liang Jinrong – Nunn, Lucerne (ol) 1982. Karpov had also faced that move twice, beating Quinteros in 1982 and drawing with Ostermeyer in 1983.

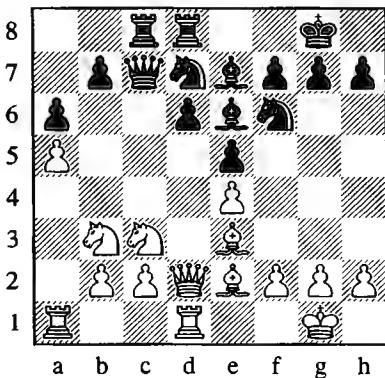
12.a5  $\mathbb{W}c7$  13. $\mathbb{E}fd1$

Karpov deviates from his own novelty of

13... $\mathbb{E}fd8$ , which brought him a fine victory over Portisch as we saw in Game 65. The reason is obvious: Nunn had surely prepared an improvement over that game.

### 13... $\mathbb{E}fd8$

This move later grew to become the established main line, although at the time of the game there was not much theory on the present position.



### 14... $\mathbb{Q}e1!!$

According to Igor Zaitsev this was a novelty. It is possible that Karpov and his team prepared it for use against Kasparov. It is generally helpful for White to remove his queen from the watchful gaze of the black rook, while in certain cases White may wish to double his own rooks on the d-file.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

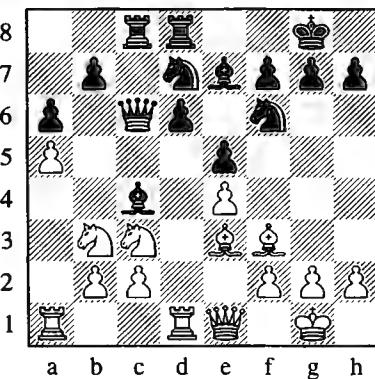
The other main lines are 14... $\mathbb{Q}c5!!$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $dxc5$  and 14... $h6$  15. $\mathbb{E}d2$ .

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c4$

In the light of this and other games, Black came up with new ways to handle the position.

15... $h6$  is the main move, and Black scores highly with it. Apart from being a useful waiting move, Black also prepares ... $\mathbb{Q}h7-g5$ .

There is also 15... $\mathbb{Q}c7!!$ , an interesting idea of Huzman. White cannot easily carry out the knight manoeuvre to b4, as  $\mathbb{Q}c1-a2$  would drop the a5-pawn while  $\mathbb{Q}c1-d3$  allows ... $d5$ .



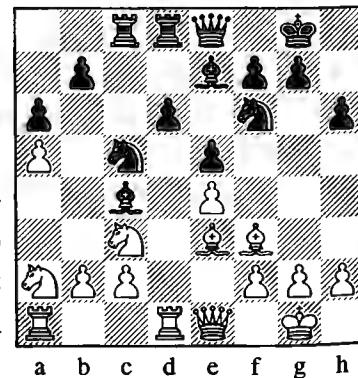
### 16. $\mathbb{Q}c1!!$

Karpov starts improving the knight.

### 16... $h6$

16... $b5$  does not equalize either: 17. $axb6$  (There is also 17. $\mathbb{Q}1a2!!$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  and Black is somewhat passive, Womacka – Goehler, East Berlin 1986.) 17... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  18. $b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  20. $f3$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}f1!!$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  Black's pawn structure on the queenside is a bit vulnerable.

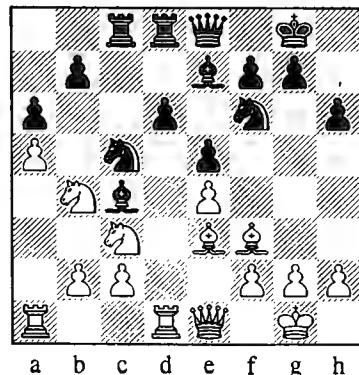
### 17. $\mathbb{Q}1a2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$



**18.♘b4**

Karpov completed his manoeuvre and now enjoys solid control over the d5-square. Black can still cover it, but the fact that he is forced to pay attention to this weak square hampers his ability to generate any active play of his own.

**18...♝e8**

**19.g3!**

Karpov makes room around his king, but more importantly he prepares to deploy his bishop on the more secure g2-square. Later this piece might switch to h3.

**19...♜c7 20.♝g2 ♜dc8 21.b3 ♜e6 22.♞cd5**

Karpov can find no further improving moves, so finally he occupies the key outpost.

**22...♞xd5 23.♞xd5**

This poses a dilemma for Black. The knight on d5 is tough to live with, but if he eliminates it then his light squares will become weaker.

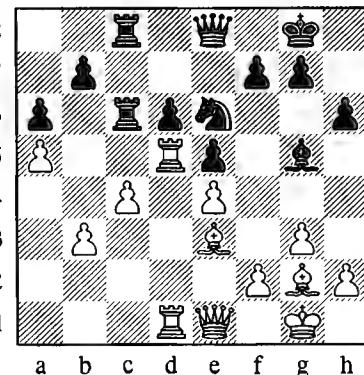
**23...♝xd5**

After 23...♝xd5 White can begin tightening the screw with 24.♞b6 (24.♝b4 is also good) 24...♝b8 25.♝e2 with a comfortable advantage.

**24.♝xd5 ♜c6 25.♝ad1**

Zaitsev recommends 25.h4!? to take away the g5-square from the black bishop. This would have prevented the pawn sacrifice which shortly occurs in the game; on the other hand, that did not ease Black's suffering so it is probably just a matter of taste.

**25...♝e6 26.c4 ♜g5?!**

**27.♞a7?!**

27.♞xd6 would also have given White a nice advantage, but Karpov prefers not to allow the exchange of Black's bad bishop.

**27...♜a8**

Karpov's last move had the effect of drawing the black rook onto a passive square.

**28.♞b6 ♜d8 29.♞e3 ♜c7**

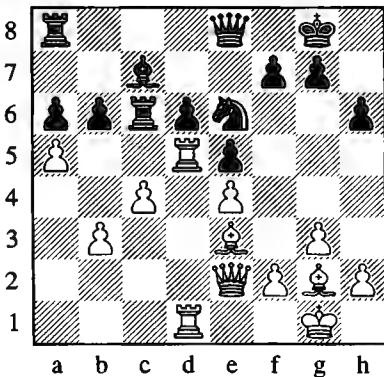
Now if 29...♝g5, Karpov presumably intended to take the pawn with 30.♞xd6. Nunn obviously found this prospect less appealing with his rook on a8 instead of c8, so he elects to defend the pawn instead.

**30.♝e2!**

Karpov makes another small improving move, defending the c4-pawn and thus preparing b4.

**30...b6**

The liberation of Black's queenside is a good idea, but it has arrived too late.



**31.b4! bxa5 32.b5!**

Karpov sacrifices a pawn in order to create a mighty passed pawn.

**32...axb5 33.cxb5 Bc5?**

This exchange sacrifice fails to generate enough counterplay.

**33...Bc3** was necessary. Black is under pressure here as well, but at least he avoids a quick collapse. 34.b6 Bd8 (34...Bb8? 35.b7 wins the rook) 35.Bxd6 (If 35.Bb2 Bxe3 36.fxe3 Bb8 37.Bxd6 Be7 White will have a hard time winning.) 35...Bg5 36.Bh3 Bxe3 37.fxe3 Bg5 38.Bd7 White is clearly better but the game goes on.

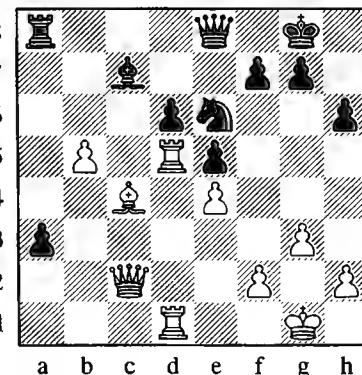
**34.Bxc5 Qxc5 35.Qf1!**

The bishop is heading for c4, where it will restrain the a-pawn as well as targeting the f7-pawn.

**35...a4 36.Wc2 a3 37.Qc4 Qe6?**

With little time remaining, Nunn mistakenly tries to improve his knight. He could have offered sterner resistance by waiting, although White should be able to win eventually.

For instance: 37...We7 38.Qg2 (After the inaccurate 38.Ba1?! Bb6 39.Qg2 Black can only now play 39...Qe6! with some chances.) 38...Bf8 39.B5d2 Ba7 40.f3 Ba8 41.Ba1 After some further prophylactic moves White can eliminate the a3-pawn to reach a winning position.



**38.B5d3!**

Karpov makes full use of a square that had previously been controlled by the enemy knight. Now the a3-pawn's days are numbered.

**38...Qd4 39.Wa2 Bb6**

After 39...Bxb5 40.Bf3! the rook on the third rank demonstrates its attacking prowess.

**40.Bxa3**

**1-0**

In this hopeless position Black overstepped the time limit.

In the next game Karpov outplayed and beat Sunye Neto of Brazil, but round three did not go as smoothly. His opponent, Slobodan Martinovic of Yugoslavia, employed the Scheveningen and obtained a solid position which later became a superior endgame. Karpov eventually managed to draw, but he had to work hard for it. The course of this game may have influenced Kasparov's decision

to continue using the Scheveningen in their return match later in the year.

In round four Karpov got back on track, defeating Miles in a nice endgame which I analysed in the *Endgame Virtuoso* book. Next he drew with Timman in a long and complicated Scotch, then beat Nunn from the black side of an Anti-Marshall Ruy Lopez. In round seven Karpov played for a win but was unable to make any headway against Sunye Neto, and in the final three games he coasted home with three short draws. His final score of 7/10 was enough to secure first place, half a point ahead of Timman, with whom he drew in the final round.

### Second World Championship match versus Kasparov

The second "K – K" match was held in Moscow, just like the first. The rules had been changed in order to prevent the match from dragging on for an inordinate amount of time: this time there was a fixed duration of twenty four games, with Karpov retaining his title in the event of a 12–12 tie. The first game took place on 3 September, so the players had about half a year to prepare. During this time Karpov played just the one tournament, as we have seen, while Kasparov won two short training matches, against Andersson by a score of 4–2 and Hübner by 4½–1½.

Once again both players were assisted by formidable teams of analysts. Karpov's seconds included Sergei Makarychev, Igor Zaitsev, Efim Geller and Evgeni Vasiukov, while Kasparov was supported by Alexander Nikitin, Gennady Timoschenko, Alexander Shakarov, Josif Dorfman, Yuri Razuvayev and Evgeny Vladimirov.

In the first game Kasparov showed that he had been hard at work preparing a new opening variation: 4.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  against the Nimzo-Indian.

After 4...c5 5.g3 Karpov did not manage to equalize, and after a few subsequent inaccuracies he found himself in a lost endgame which Kasparov easily converted. Considering that his three prior losses to Kasparov all came in the later stages of their marathon match, when Karpov was clearly fatigued, one could make the slightly exaggerated argument that this was the first time Kasparov had defeated him under normal conditions. It was the first time Karpov had trailed in a match since losing the first game of his 1974 candidates semi-final match against Spassky.

In Game Two Karpov could have obtained an advantage against Kasparov's Scheveningen, but failed to make the most of his position. Soon afterwards Kasparov took over the initiative and had excellent chances to win, but made an error on the sealed move and Karpov eventually managed to draw. Game Three was drawn quickly, but then in Game Four Karpov produced a masterful display in an opposite-coloured bishop middlegame.

### Game 75

#### Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov

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World Championship, Moscow (4) 1985

##### 1.d4

In his first white game Karpov struggled against his opponent's favourite Scheveningen, so this time he goes for something different. Later in the match he switched back to 1.e4, but without much success.

##### 1...d5 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$

It is interesting that against 1.e4 Kasparov opted for a dynamic counterattacking opening, but against 1.d4 he strived for solidity.

##### 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

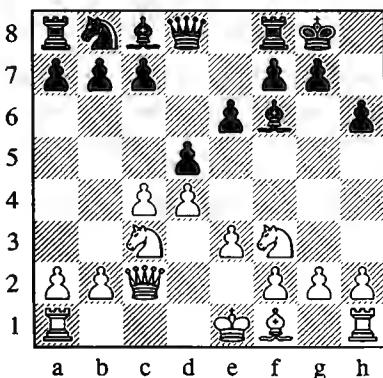
Karpov repeated this line twice more in the match, but only drew. Later he switched to 4.cxd5 exd5 5.Qf4, drawing one game and winning the second.

#### 4...Qf6 5.Qg5 h6 6.Qxf6

Karpov chooses the variation that brought him a win and two draws against Kasparov in their first world championship match.

#### 6...Qxf6 7.e3 0-0 8.Qc2

Karpov repeats the move that brought him his last win in the first match. Prior to that, he had drawn two games with Kasparov after 8.Qd2. Later he switched to 8.Qc1 and defeated both Spassky and Short.



#### 8...Qa6

This was not technically a novelty, but it had hardly ever been tried, and was obviously prepared by Kasparov especially for this match.

8...c5 is the main line, but Kasparov probably still had bad memories after Game 27 of their previous match, which was featured on page 415.

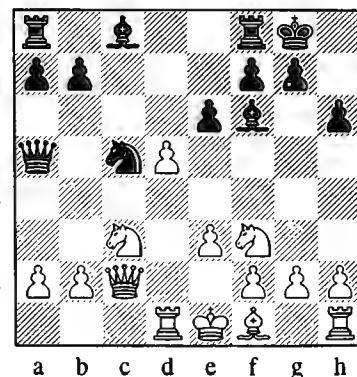
#### 9.Qd1

It unlikely that Karpov had paid much attention to Kasparov's chosen move in his

preparation, and his response is safe and sensible.

Ribli later used 9.a3 to score a win and a draw against Beliavsky, but generally speaking the whole variation does not pose many problems to Black.

#### 9...c5 10.dxc5 Qa5 11.cxd5 Qxc5



#### 12.Qd2

Karpov ensures that he slows down Kasparov's dynamic play.

In a few subsequent games White tried the block Black's play in the centre with 12.Qd4, but this did not turn out to be dangerous either.

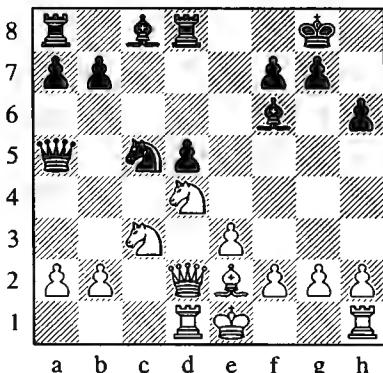
Taking the pawn is possible, although it is doubtful that Karpov considered it for long, as he knew Kasparov would have prepared for it in detail. Nevertheless after 12.dxe6 Qxe6 13.Qd4 Rac8 (13...Qd5 14.Qd2) 14.Qe2 Qd5 15.0-0 Qe4 16.Qd3 Black is not guaranteed a draw according to Kasparov.

#### 12...Rd8 13.Qd4 exd5

Kasparov settles for an IQP position in which his active pieces should give him decent play.

**14.♗e2**

Karpov must finish his development before undertaking anything else. The position is objectively equal, although the playing styles of the players should also be taken into consideration. So far, Kasparov had not enjoyed much success when defending IQP positions against Karpov.

**14...♝b6 15.0–0 ♘e4**

Later Kasparov recommended 15...♝e6 16.♗c2 (16.♘xe6 fxe6 is harmless here) 16...♜ac8 17.♗b1 ♜xd4 18.♗xd4 ♘e4 with equality.

**16.♗c2 ♘xc3 17.♗xc3 ♘e6**

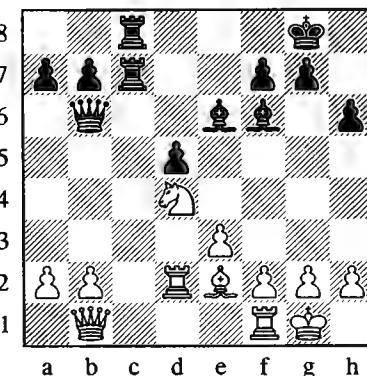
After 17...♞f5?! 18.♗d2 ♘e4 a draw was agreed in Vaganian – Tal, Naestved 1985. The database does not give an exact date for this encounter, but it is safe to assume that it took place after the main game. Kasparov later revealed that he rejected this continuation as he did not like the look of 19.♗g4 a5 20.♗c1 a4 21.♗c3 ♜a5, but upon closer inspection he concluded that Black should be okay.

**18.♗c2 ♜ac8 19.♗b1 ♜c7!**

The d-pawn is not too vulnerable, so Black can afford to deploy his rooks actively on the c-file.

**20.♗d2 ♜dc8?!**

Later Kasparov recommended the apparently anti-positional 20...♝xd4?! 21.♗xd4 ♜dc8 22.♗d3 ♜c5 when Black should be able to defend. It will be hard for White to organize a successful attack on the d-pawn, as he also has to keep the c2-square defended.

**21.♘xe6!**

Karpov realizes that he will not be able to mount a significant attack on the d-pawn without making some other concession such as allowing the black rooks to invade on c2. Therefore he puts his faith in the somewhat advantageous opposite-coloured bishop position.

**21...fxe6**

Kasparov makes the natural decision to support the d5 pawn.

21...♝xe6? was worth considering too. In the resulting position, the worst case scenario for Black would involve sacrificing his d-pawn with ...d4, after which he would still have reasonable chances of blockading on d6.

**22.♗g4**

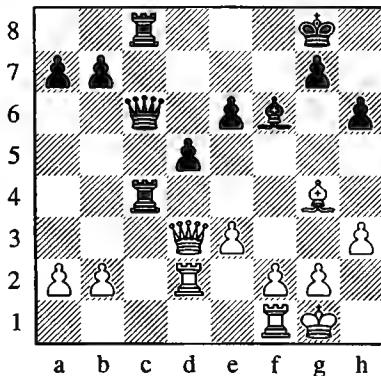
Karpov ensures that the enemy queen will be tied to the defence of the e6-pawn. Here is a bit of advice: whenever you reach an opposite-

coloured bishop middlegame, be sure to give it your full concentration as these types of position are often difficult to assess properly. Typically the player with the initiative will look to dominate the game by focusing their attack on whichever colour of squares their bishop controls. If your opponent's position contains a weakness, then you should play against it with purpose and conviction.

That being said, one must also keep an eye on the opponent's active possibilities. For instance, the premature attempt to set up a queen and bishop battery with 22... $\mathbb{W}g6?$  allows 22... $\mathbb{W}b4!$  23. $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  when Black takes over the initiative on the queenside.

### 22... $\mathbb{E}c4$ 23.h3 $\mathbb{W}c6$ 24. $\mathbb{W}d3$

It is hard to anticipate what Karpov is doing. One can hardly blame Kasparov for the subtle errors which start to creep into his play during the following phase of the game.



### 24... $\mathbb{Q}h8?$

This is unnecessary. Kasparov recommends 24...a5! with the idea of pushing the pawn as far as possible without delay.

### 25. $\mathbb{B}fd1$ a5 26.b3 $\mathbb{E}c3$

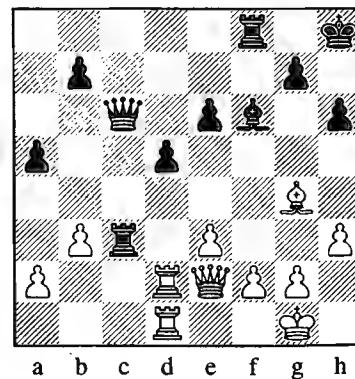
26... $\mathbb{E}b4?$  was worth considering, as the rook can help to support Black's queenside

play. If White plays 27. $\mathbb{W}g6$  than both 27...a4 and 27... $\mathbb{W}e8$  appear satisfactory.

### 27. $\mathbb{W}e2$ $\mathbb{R}f8$

Kasparov decides he does not have much use for a second rook on the c-file, so he transfers it to the f-file instead.

One interesting alternative involved bringing the king to the centre with 27... $\mathbb{W}d6$  28. $\mathbb{A}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ , when play might continue 29. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}3c7$ . Objectively Black should be okay here, although it would still not be easy to defend the position against Karpov.



### 28. $\mathbb{A}h5!$

Over the last six moves Karpov has made some small improvements to his position, but his intention all along has been to build an attack along the b1-h7 diagonal. With this move he prepares to put his bishop on the key diagonal.

### 28... $b5$

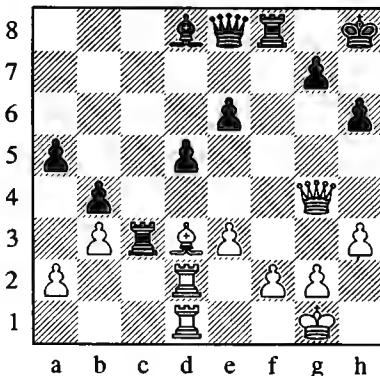
28... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$  was another idea, intending to put the queen on d6 and bishop on c7.

### 29. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ $\mathbb{Q}d8$ 30. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ b4 31. $\mathbb{W}g4!$

White's attacking chances are becoming more and more real.

**31... $\mathbb{W}e8$**

Black cannot allow the queen to come to g6 unhindered.



**32.e4!**

This is a great move. The subsequent pawn exchange will give White more available squares on the long diagonal, which will increase his chances of posting his queen there. Furthermore, one or more of his rooks might make use of the e-file.

**32... $\mathbb{A}g5$**

Another idea was:

**32... $\mathbb{A}b6$**

Black hopes to exploit the absence of a white pawn on e3.

**33.exd5 exd5 34. $\mathbb{A}f5$**

Kasparov mentioned that this was the move which scared him.

Another possibility is 34. $\mathbb{A}h1 \mathbb{A}xf2$  35. $\mathbb{A}g6$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  36. $\mathbb{A}xd5 \mathbb{A}g3$  37. $\mathbb{W}f5 \mathbb{A}c5$  38. $\mathbb{A}f7$  and at the end of this sharp line the position is balanced.

**34... $\mathbb{A}e3!$**

Another line is 34... $\mathbb{A}f6$  35. $\mathbb{A}xd5$  g6 36. $\mathbb{A}d3$   $\mathbb{A}xf2$  37. $\mathbb{A}h1 \mathbb{A}c6$  when Black is okay.

**35.fxe3**

If 35. $\mathbb{A}xd5?$   $\mathbb{A}e1\#$  36. $\mathbb{A}h1 \mathbb{A}xf2$  White's king is in danger.

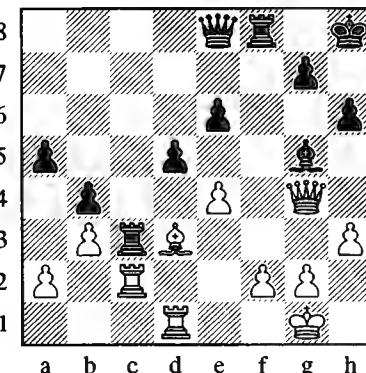
**35... $\mathbb{A}xe3\#$  36. $\mathbb{A}h1 \mathbb{A}xd2$  37. $\mathbb{A}e6 \mathbb{A}g5$**

**38. $\mathbb{A}xd5 \mathbb{A}f4$**

Black is not worse.

**33. $\mathbb{A}c2!$**

Karpov avoids the trap of 33. $\mathbb{A}e2?? \mathbb{A}f4$  when his queen is lost.



**33... $\mathbb{A}xc2?$**

This move is hard to understand. Black gives up his outpost and also relinquishes control over the c2- and d3-squares, thus increasing White's chances of getting his queen to the long diagonal. It seems that even world champions are not immune from the desire to exchange pieces when playing for a draw.

Kasparov later proposed 33...d4 34.e5  $\mathbb{A}f4$  35. $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{W}c6$  with a playable position.

33... $\mathbb{W}f7$  34. $\mathbb{A}e2 \mathbb{A}d8$  would also have been acceptable for Black.

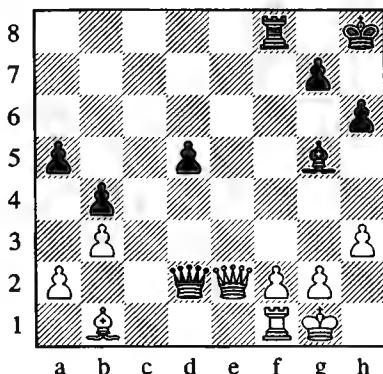
**34. $\mathbb{A}xc2 \mathbb{W}c6$  35. $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{W}c5$  36. $\mathbb{A}f1$**

The rook temporarily takes up a passive position in order to free the queen.

**36... $\mathbb{W}c3$**

Kasparov prevents the enemy queen from occupying the long diagonal, but only temporarily.

37.exd5 exd5 38.♗b1 ♖d2



39.♗e5?

Amazingly, Karpov's last eighteen moves all took place on light squares. Ashot Nadanian told me that Taimanov, who was a world class pianist as well as a top chess player, referred to this game as the "Light Square Symphony".

Karpov should have continued playing his "symphony" for even longer with 39.♗e6! He may have been concerned about the counterattack with 39...♗h4?!, but this turns out to be too slow. (Objectively Black should prefer 39...♗f6, but after 40.♗h1 he faces an unpleasant defensive task.) 40.♗g6 White can safely ignore the attack on the f-pawn. 40...♗xf2† 41.♗h1 ♗g8 42.♗h7† ♗f7 43.♗g6† ♗f6 44.♗h5 White's attack breaks through. It is fitting that all of White's moves in this variation took place on light squares as well.

39...♗d8?

By releasing the pressure on the f-file, Kasparov opens the door for the white rook to join in the attack. 39...♗f6 40.♗f5 ♗g8 was more stubborn, although Black's position is still difficult.

40.♗f5!

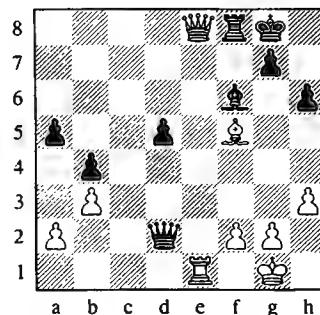
Almost twenty moves after entering the opposite-coloured bishop position, Karpov finally achieves the desired alignment of queen and bishop on the key diagonal.

40...♗g8 41.♗e6† ♗h8 42.♗g6 ♗g8  
43.♗e6† ♗h8 44.♗f5!

The bishop prepares for the next phrase of the attack, by aiming for e6.

44...♗c3

44...♗f6 allows a nice finish: 45.♗e1 ♗f8  
46.♗e8! ♗g8

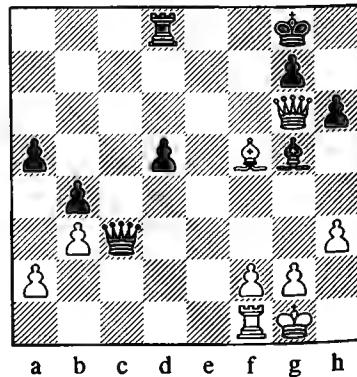


47.♗g6! And White wins.

45.♗g6

White could also have considered freeing his rook first with 45.♗e1 ♗f8 46.♗d1.

45...♗g8 46.♗e6† ♗h8 47.♗f5 ♗g8



**48.g3!**

Finally another move on a dark square, and this time it is a good one. Typically for Karpov, he tidies up his king position and drives the black bishop away.

**48...♝f8 49.♝g2 ♜f6 50.♛h7 ♜f7 51.h4 ♜d2**

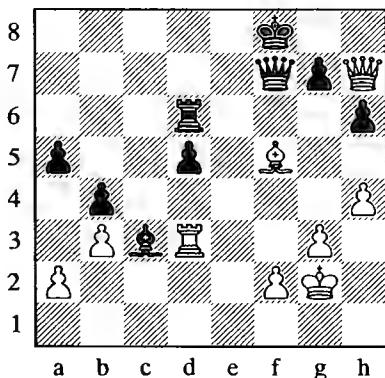
Having obtained the ideal kingside formation, the time has come for White to improve his rook.

**52.♜d1! ♜c3 53.♜d3**

The inclusion of the rook in the attack spells the end for Black.

**53...♜d6**

After 53...♜f6 54.♜e3 ♜g8 55.♛g6 ♜f7 56.♛g4 d4 57.♜f3 White will soon break in.



**54.♜f3!**

Karpov finishes the attack with precision. 54.♜e3?! would have allowed Black to continue fighting: 54...g5! 55.♜xc3 bxc3 56.♛h8† ♜e7 57.♛e5† ♜e6 58.♜xe6 ♜xe6 59.♛xc3 White is a pawn up but the game continues.

**54...♝e7**

54...♜f6 55.♜e3 wins, as the black rook blocks the long diagonal, thus preventing the defence seen in the previous note.

**55.♛h8 d4 56.♛c8**

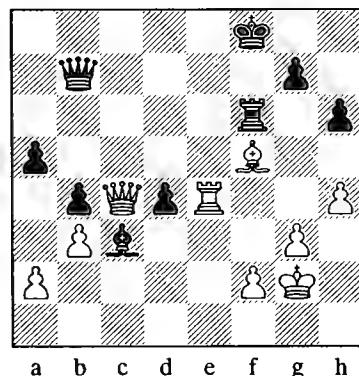
The black king is being attacked from all sides. Note the uselessness of his bishop, which contributes nothing to the defence.

**56...♜f6 57.♛c5† ♜e8 58.♜f4 ♜b7†**

**59.♜e4† ♜f7**

The cheeky 59...♜e6?! allows a neat finish in 60.♛c4! ♜xe4 61.♛g8† winning the queen. Kasparov probably saw this and decided he did not want this game to appear in puzzle books as well.

**60.♛c4† ♜f8**



**61.♛h7! ♜f7 62.♛e6 ♜d7 63.♛e5**

**1–0**

It is slightly ironic that the move which caused Black's resignation occurred on a dark square. The finish might have been 63...♜d8 64.♛c5† ♜e7 65.♜f4† ♜e8 66.♛c6† ♜d7 67.♛a8† with mate to follow. Karpov is one of the best players of all time in positions with opposite-coloured bishops, and this was one of his finest performances.

In Game 5 Karpov's success continued, as he outplayed Kasparov on the black side of a main line Ruy Lopez to take the lead in the match. The next five games were drawn, although they were all fighting encounters and both players

missed chances along the way. Then in Game 11 Karpov made a terrible blunder as early as move 22, and had to resign just three moves later. The score was even.

In Game 12 Kasparov uncorked a surprise pawn sacrifice in the Taimanov Sicilian, known as the Dely Gambit. Karpov opted for safety and a short draw ensued. In the next two games both players came under some pressure with the black pieces, but both managed to defend. In Game 15 Karpov used the Petroff for the first time in the match, and drew quickly.

Game 16 was one of the defining moments of the match. Kasparov risked the Dely Gambit again. Having analysed it with his team, Karpov came up with a more ambitious counter than before, but it was still not the right medicine. Kasparov remained a pawn down but installed a monstrous knight on d3, and went on to win brilliantly. The game was voted the best of all time by the readers of *Chess Informant*.

After two more draws, Kasparov then doubled his lead after Karpov mishandled what should have been a playable position against the Fianchetto Nimzo-Indian. The champion had just five games in which to claw back a two point deficit. In Game 20 Karpov made a good attempt to press for a win from an equal endgame, but eventually had to settle for a draw on move 85. In the next game he was on the defensive, but managed to draw after Kasparov failed to find the most incisive continuation. Just three games remained, but Karpov had White in two of them.

Game 22 was a must-win for Karpov, and he managed to do just that, driving his kingside pawns up the board in a queenless semi-endgame position. Kasparov did not find the best defensive moves, and Karpov kept his hopes alive. In Kasparov's final game with the white pieces he went for the win, but Karpov defended well.

The situation heading into the final game was a spectator's dream: Kasparov was leading

by one point, but Karpov had the white pieces, and needed to win to tie the match 12–12, in which case the rules stipulated that he would retain his title. He opened with 1.e4, and Kasparov responded with his trusty Scheveningen. It was probably the most famous game of all time featuring that particular opening. Karpov introduced a novelty on move 17 and proceeded to mass his pieces on the kingside in the hope of executing a deadly attack, but Kasparov played some excellent prophylactic moves and later began counterattacking. Karpov lost his way in the complications and resigned on move 42 after blundering in time trouble.

\*\*\*

### The End of an Era

It took Kasparov seventy two world championship games to fulfil his dream. He struggled in the early stages of the first match, but succeeded in raising his game and adjusting to Karpov's play. He became more adept at holding slightly worse endgames and simplified middlegame positions.

Karpov's biggest problem was the opening. In the second match he only achieved an even score with the white pieces, winning two games, drawing eight and losing two (although the final loss can partially be attributed to playing riskily when he needed to win at all costs). His score of minus two against the Sicilian was catastrophic. With the black pieces Karpov scored one win, eight draws and three losses. The defeats all occurred in the Nimzo-Indian. On more than one occasion he overestimated Kasparov's novelties and played too passively.

Kasparov is widely regarded as the greatest opening player of all time. His opening prowess can be attributed to a number of factors, including his exceptional chess talent, tireless

work ethic and his methods of organizing and motivating his team.

Karpov was obviously not a slouch in the opening, but he was nowhere near Kasparov's level. His opening difficulties in the second match may be partially attributable to the level of exhaustion he suffered during their first match: he may have taken months to recover, which would have meant less time to prepare for the next match. Nevertheless, I believe that the root cause of his opening difficulties lay much deeper.

When Karpov became World Champion, he was head and shoulders above his nearest rivals. In the great majority of his tournaments, all he needed to do was reach playable positions in each of his games, after which his tremendous middlegame and endgame skill would ensure that he would win enough games to finish at the top. It was a successful formula, as evidenced by his unparalleled record of tournament victories, which exceeds even that of Kasparov. But for nine years, Karpov lacked a serious rival who would push him towards the limits of his potential. Had the Fischer – Karpov match taken place, there is no question that Karpov would have become a stronger player, both in the openings and his overall game.

One can only speculate about how the hypothetical Fischer – Karpov match(es) would have affected the outcome of the various "K – K" matches. Kasparov possessed such phenomenal talent and skill that he would surely have won the title eventually, but I estimate that it would have taken him until approximately 1990 to accomplish it.

\*\*\*

Before the end of the year Karpov took part in one more event, representing the USSR in the first World Team Championship in Lucerne, Switzerland. Kasparov chose not to participate, so Karpov played on the top board. He was

clearly impressed with Kasparov's handling of the g3 Nimzo-Indian, as he played it himself in rounds one and five, but only managed to draw against Suba and Portisch respectively. In between those games he defeated Xi Jingxuan and Spassky, before resting in round four.

In round six Karpov faced Assem Afifi. The Egyptian IM once drew against Spassky, which was his only other encounter with a world champion.

## Game 76

### Assem Afifi – Anatoly Karpov

World Team Championship, Lucerne 1985

#### 1.c4 e5

Out of the 128 games in which he faced 1.c4, Karpov only responded with 1...e5 twenty eight times. It is surprising that he did not play it more often, as he made a huge score with it. From his first twelve games, he only drew two and won the other ten! His victims included Ribli, Olafsson, Portisch and Kasparov (in a subsequent world championship match); only a few of the wins occurred in junior events.

Altogether after 1.c4 e5 Karpov won seventeen games, drew nine and lost only two; a remarkable score, even for a player at Karpov's level. Sometimes he began with 1...d5 and played ...e5 on the second move; he did excellently with that move order as well, defeating Timman and Korchnoi amongst others.

#### 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.g3 d5

Interestingly, Karpov employed the reversed Sicilian only twice. Of course he also faced the Dragon many times with White, and usually did well against it.

#### 4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.♗g2 ♘b6 6.♗f3 ♘c6 7.0-0

Afifi was probably familiar with Karpov's

previous game in the variation and deviates from Portisch's play.

7.d3

The Hungarian grandmaster held back castling in favour of gaining space on the queenside.

7... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.a3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  9.b4 a6 10. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ ??

It is more usual for this bishop to develop on the other diagonal; indeed, in the present game it fails to make much of an impact.

Not long after this game, Portisch deviated with 10.0–0 against Groszpeter at the 1981 Hungarian Championship.

10 wdz!?

In reaction to his opponent's last move, Karpov changes his mind and decides to castle long.

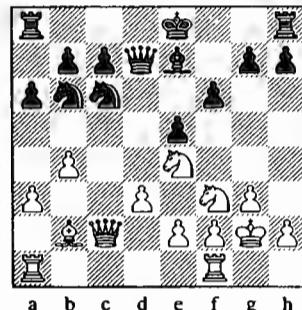
11. ♗e4 f6 12. ♘c2

12.d4?! does not work due to 12...g4!.

12 h3

Karpov weakens the white kingside.

13 0-0 ♘xg2 14 ♘xg2



14...g5!

Karpov does not stop d4, but instead allows it under his own terms.

If 14...0-0-0 15.d4! exd4 16.Qfd1 White wins back the pawn and reaches a decent position.

15.d4

Possibly better was 15.  $\mathbb{Q}fd1!$ ?  $g4$  (15...0-0-0? 16.  $d4$ ) 16.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (After 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ? 17.  $d4$  0-0-0 18.  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  White has the upper

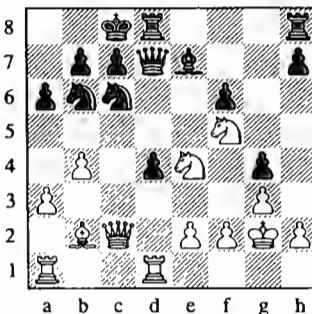
hand.) 17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $exd4$  18.  $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $f5$  with a complicated position.

15...g4 16.Qh4 exd4 17.Qf5??

This tempting but incorrect move will soon allow Black to exchange his weakest piece.

Better was 17.  $\mathbb{Q}fd1$ ! 0-0-0 18.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  20.  $bxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  with unclear play.

17..0-0-0 18.gfd1

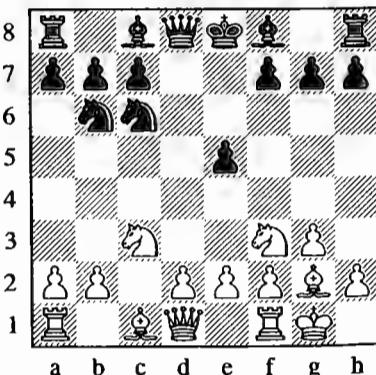


18... $\mathbb{Q}$ c4

Karpov not only gets rid of his problem piece, but also keeps his extra pawn.

19.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7+$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$  h5!

Having outplayed his opponent in the centre, Karpov starts an attack which eventually led to victory in Portisch – Karpov, Linares 1981.



7... ♘e7 8.a3 ♘c6 9.b4 a6

This was not essential, as after 9...0-0 10.b5

$\mathbb{Q}d4$  White cannot take on e5. Generally speaking, in this line Black either plays ...a5 or does not move the a-pawn at all.

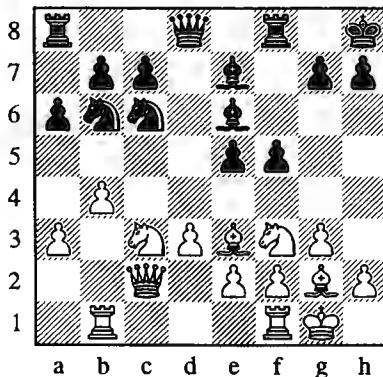
10.d3 0–0 11. $\mathbb{B}b1$  f5

Karpov gains space and stops  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ .

12. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  13. $\mathbb{W}c2?$

This rather invites Black's next move.

13. $\mathbb{W}c1$  was better; Black often plays such a move in the Classical Dragon with reversed colours. 13... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (After 13...h6 14. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  16.e4 the position is unclear.) 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  (White can also consider 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  when the bishop exchange helps to relieve any congestion in his position.) 14... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc6?$  bxc6 16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  The position holds chances for both sides.



13... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

Karpov gains space and gets rid of the slight weakness on e5.

14. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 15. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$

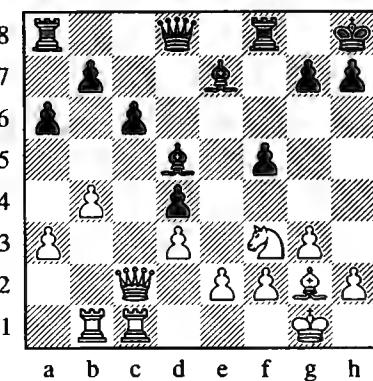
Black does not want the knight to arrive on c5.

16. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$

White is not yet objectively worse, nevertheless Karpov has made some achievements

and has plenty of scope to improve his position further.

17. $\mathbb{E}fc1$  c6 18. $\mathbb{W}c2$



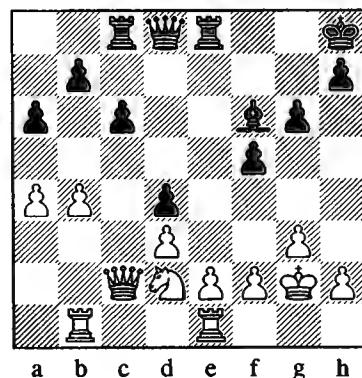
18... $\mathbb{E}e8!$

With this simple and strong move, Karpov prepares to build up on the e-file.

19. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$

In the next phase of the game Karpov improves his position a bit with each move. He also makes it harder for White to play b5.

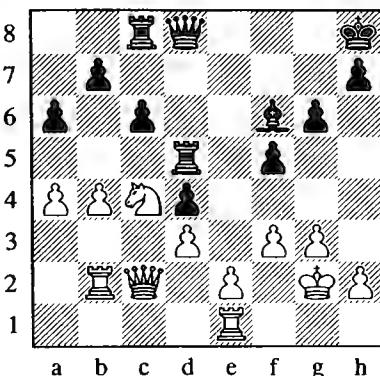
22.a4 g6



23.f3?

This is a completely unnecessary weakening of White's position, which also takes away the f3-square from his knight. The position would have been more or less equal after 23.♘f3 or 23.♗c4.

23...♝e5 24.♕c4 ♘d5 25.♝b2



25...♞e7

Over the last few moves Karpov switches his attention to the queenside. Now White must take into consideration the idea of ...b5, fixing his b-pawn on the same colour square as Black's bishop.

26.♝eb1 ♔g7

Karpov improves his king a bit.

27.b5

White has had enough of waiting, and he elects to do something.

Closing the queenside with 27.a5 would have been rather passive, and after 27...♝b5 28.♕b6 ♘c7 29.♗c4 ♘d6 Black can build his position by means of ...♝d8, ...♝e7 and ...♝c7.

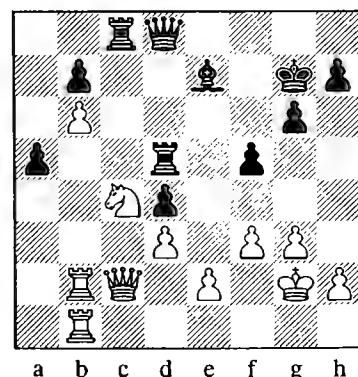
27...cx b5 28.ax b5 a5!

White's b-pawn is a long-term weakness, so Karpov wisely leaves it on the board. By keeping the queenside files closed, he also restricts the enemy rooks.

29.b6

In almost thirty moves Afifi will lose this pawn. Still, leaving it on the b5-square would also have been problematic for White.

After 29.♗b3 ♜cc5 Black can improve his position with ...b6 followed by a bishop transfer to d8 and c7. There is also a second strong plan available in 29...♝dc5 30.♔a2 b6. Now after 31.♝c2 Black can switch his attention to the kingside with 31...f4 or 31...h5. And if White plays 31.f4, Black keeps an edge with 31...♝d5† 32.♔f2 ♜e6.



29...♝b4!

With this move Karpov defends the a5-pawn, cuts off White's heavy pieces from the defence of the b6-pawn, and clears the e-file.

30.♝a2 ♜f6 31.f4 h6 32.h4 ♜e7 33.♗d1 ♘c6 34.♗f1 ♜e6!

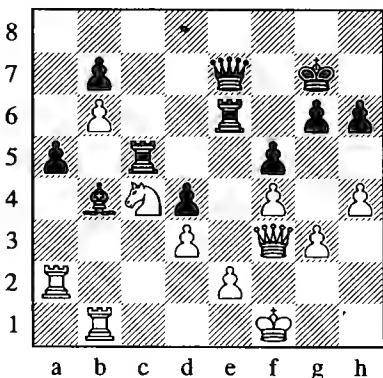
From this ideal square the rook exerts pressure against both of White's weak pawns.

35.♗f3 ♘c5

Karpov was probably already planning an eventual exchange sacrifice, although there is no need to rush into it yet as White is not threatening to do anything.

36.♗f1

36.  $\mathbb{W}f2$  could be met by 36...  $\mathbb{Q}c3$ .



36...  $\mathbb{Q}f6?$

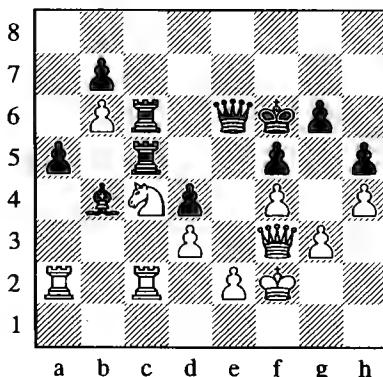
The position is closed, so Black can afford to advance his king like this. Perhaps Karpov was hoping to provoke his opponent into an unsound attacking attempt.

37.  $\mathbb{R}b3$   $\mathbb{E}ec6$  38.  $\mathbb{R}bb2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  39.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $h5$

40.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

I would guess that Karpov was short of time and wanted to get past move 40 before having a proper think about how to improve his position further.

41.  $\mathbb{E}cb2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42.  $\mathbb{E}c2$



42...  $\mathbb{W}d5!$

Karpov cannot improve any of his pieces, so he exchanges one of his opponent's best ones. With no queens on the board Black will be much freer to use his king.

43.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$

White could also have considered waiting for Black to exchange on f3 with a view to recapturing with the e-pawn. This would have enabled his king to utilize the e2-square to get to the queenside. On the other hand his pawn structure would be compromised, and in the event of a future exchange sacrifice on c4, Black will benefit from having a passed d-pawn.

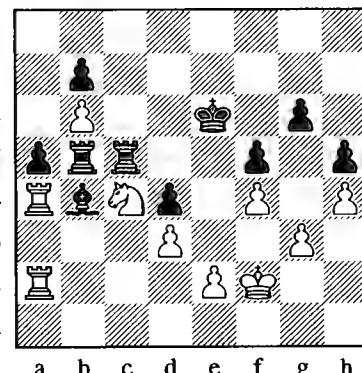
43...  $\mathbb{E}xd5$  44.  $\mathbb{E}a4$

The rook is passive here, but at least it prevents the black a-pawn from advancing. It is hard to suggest anything else for it to do in this position.

44...  $\mathbb{E}b5$  45.  $\mathbb{E}ca2$

If 45.  $\mathbb{E}aa2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}cc5$  47.  $e4$   $\mathbb{E}b1$  the rook invades and Black continues to press.

45...  $\mathbb{E}cc5$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}dc5$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$



49...  $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Karpov centralizes his king, and the exchange sacrifice becomes more and more tempting.

**50.♗c2 ♘c6! 51.♕f3 ♘bc5!**

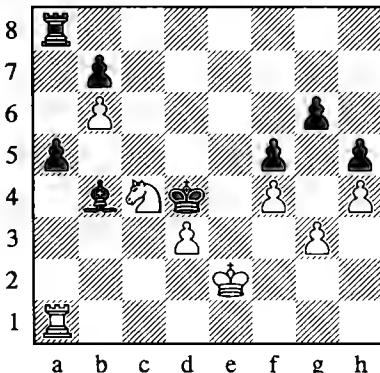
Now Black really is ready to take on c4.

**52.e3?**

White tries to take measures against the coming sacrifice, but in doing so he worsens his position as the black pieces now have additional lines along which to invade.

The best chance was: 52.♖ca2 ♘xc4 53.dxc4† ♘c5! By keeping his remaining rook on the board, Black obtains excellent winning chances. (Instead after 53...♘xc4?! 54.♗c2† ♘b5 55.♗xc6 ♘xc6 56.e4 dxe3 57.♗xe3 ♘xb6 Black is better but White should be able to hold.) 54.♗xa5† ♗xa5 55.♗xa5† ♘xc4 56.♗e5 ♘xb6 57.♗e7 ♘b3† 58.♗f2 ♘b2 White is in trouble.

**52...dxe3 53.♗xe3 ♘e6† 54.♗f3**



**61...a4!**

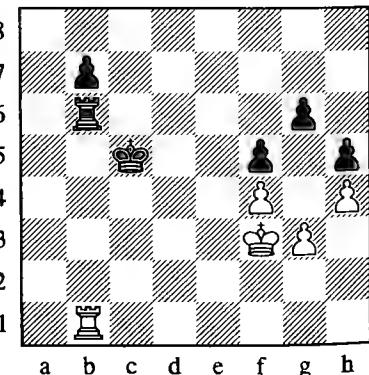
White was able to stop the enemy king from becoming too powerful, but the addition of the advancing a-pawn is too much for the defence to bear.

**62.♗e3 ♘e8**

Karpov simplifies to a winning rook ending. Another route to victory was 62...♖c3 63.♗c2† ♘c5 64.♖a2 ♘xb6 winning.

62...♘c3 was also good enough: 63.♗d1† (63.♖c1† ♘b3) 63...♘c2 64.♖a2† ♘b3 65.♖b2† ♘a3 66.♖c2 (66.d4 ♘c3) 66...♖a6 And Black wins easily.

**63.♗xa4 ♘xe3† 64.♗f2 ♘xd3 65.♗xb4† ♘c5 66.♗b1 ♘d6 67.♗e3 ♘e6† 68.♗f3 ♘xb6**



**54...♗d4!**

The king has become the most dominant piece on the board.

**55.♗e2 ♘xe2 56.♗xe2 ♘c3 57.♗a1 ♘c8 58.♗c1† ♘d4 59.♗a1 ♘e8† 60.♗f3 ♘a8 61.♗e2**

Such rook endings with a spare queenside pawn can sometimes prove difficult to win, but in this one Black's task is simple. All he has to do is put his rook on d6, where it cuts off the white king while also guarding the g6-pawn, and then advance his b-pawn.

**69.♖c1† ♖d6 70.♖d1† ♖c7**

**0–1**

Afifi obviously understood what was coming and saw no reason to prolong his suffering. Karpov drew his final two games to finish on 5/7; a good result, if not a spectacular one.

Despite losing his title, the quality of Karpov's play in 1985 was as high as ever. The only problem was that Kasparov had risen to a whole new level. They played a total of thirty six games in 1985, including the final twelve of their first match. In total Karpov only scored three wins to Kasparov's seven, so it is hard to argue with the fact that the latter had taken over as the strongest player in the world.

## 1985 Summary

First World Championship match versus Kasparov, Moscow (part 2): 5/12 (+0 =10 -2)  
Amsterdam (1st place): 7/10 (+4 =6 -0)  
Second World Championship match versus Kasparov, Moscow: lost 11–13 (+3 =16 –5)  
World Team Championship, Lucerne (Board one): 5/7 (+3 =4 –0)

Total 52.8% (+10 =36 –7)



# Epilogue

Although Karpov had lost his title and was no longer the best player in the world, in a sense his career was only just beginning, as he finally had a rival who would push him beyond his limits. Fortunately for the game of chess, and ultimately for Kasparov himself, Karpov had no intention of letting the new king rest on his throne. Karpov could easily have stopped working on his game, enjoyed the life of a millionaire and still continued to achieve better tournament results than most professionals could ever dream of. Instead he worked harder than ever before and made it his mission to reclaim his title from Kasparov. The battle was over, but the war was just beginning...

# Classification

There are many themes that can influence the course of a chess game. In the following list you can find the game numbers in which each element can be found. A bolded number indicates that the theme was especially relevant in that game.

Attacking the king **12, 14, 15, 17, 29, 45, 50, 57, 64, 67, 71, 75**

Attacking on the a- or h-file 13, 22, 24, 25, **29**

Back rank **11**, 40

Bishop on the long diagonal 15, 22, 33, 67

Bishop pair **5, 15, 30, 32, 34, 66**

Blockade **21**, 36, 37

Breakthrough 30, 51

Checkmating in the endgame **14, 25, 51, 54, 58, 60, 68, 71**

Connected passed pawns **15, 30, 72**

Delaying castling 68

Dominating bishop versus knight **33, 45, 68, 69, 76**

Dominating knight versus bishop 3, 22, **46, 56, 57, 60, 61, 71**

Doubled pawns **6, 13, 18, 23, 36**

Exchanging a key defensive piece 2, **17, 21, 23, 28, 37, 61, 71**

Fixing a weakness 12, 52, 59

Fortress **41**, 43

Good knight 17, **20, 46, 47, 48, 51, 60**

Isolated pawn 16, **27, 31, 32, 41, 47, 53, 60, 71, 75**

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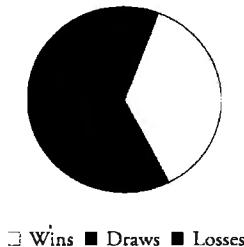
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# Statistics

Karpov's results as World Champion are as follows.

1975: 66.3% (+15 =27 -1)  
1976: 72.0% (+28 =29 -2)  
1977: 77.0% (+36 =25 -2)  
1978: 56.4% (+12 =29 -6)  
1979: 69.1% (+20 =25 -2)  
1980: 66.7% (+30 =40 -5)  
1981: 65.3% (+21 =35 -3)  
1982: 64.9% (+22 =30 -5)  
1983: 65.8% (+21 =37 -2)  
1984: 60.5% (+15 =45 -2)  
1985: 50.0% (+7 =32 -7)

Total 65.4% (+227 =354 -37)



□ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

Total score with White: 71.9% (+156 =144 -17)

Total score with Black: 58.5% (+71 =210 -20)

Karpov's championship matches took place in the years 1975, 1978, 1981, 1984 and 1985. It is natural that these events would have pulled his percentage down, as can be most clearly seen in 1985 when 37 of his 46 games came against Kasparov. Even so, there were only two years in which his score dipped below 60%.

# Scores against Individual Opponents

Karpov's results as World Champion are as follows.

Kasparov (75 games):	50% (+8 =59 -8)
Korchnoi (51 games):	54.9% (+12 =32 -7)
Timman (28 games):	57.1% (+7 =18 -3)
Portisch (26 games):	63.5% (+8 =17 -1)
Andersson (20 games):	57.5% (+4 =15 -1)
Ljubojevic (20 games):	70% (+9 =10 -1)
Hort (18 games):	66.7% (+7 =10 -1)
Kavalek (15 games):	60% (+3 =12 -0)
Larsen (15 games):	63.3% (+6 =7 -2)
Spassky (15 games):	66.7% (+5 =10 -0)
Hübner (14 games):	67.9% (+5 =9 -0)
Miles (14 games):	78.6% (+9 =4 -1)
Petrosian (13 games):	53.8% (+1 =12 -0)
Tal (12 games):	54.2% (+1 =11 -0)
Sosonko (11 games):	68.2% (+4 =7 -0)
Smyslov (10 games):	60% (+2 =8 -0)
Balashov (9 games):	72.2% (+4 =5 -0)
Romanishin (9 games):	72.2% (+4 =5 -0)
Browne (8 games):	62.5% (+2 =6 -0)
Torre (7 games):	50% (+2 =3 -2)
Ribli (7 games):	57.1% (+2 =4 -1)
Vaganian (7 games):	64.3% (+2 =5 -0)
Seirawan (6 games):	50% (+1 =4 -1)
Gligoric (6 games):	66.7% (+2 =4 -0)
Olafsson (6 games):	66.7% (+3 =2 -1)
Quinteros (6 games):	83.3% (+4 =2 -0)
Beliavsky (5 games):	60% (+2 =2 -1)
Geller (5 games):	60% (+2 =2 -1)
Gheorghiu (5 games):	80% (+3 =2 -0)
Nunn (5 games):	90% (+4 =1 -0)

# Tournament Record

While World Champion, Karpov won outright first place in twenty five tournaments:

- 1975 Ljubljana/Portoroz, Milan
- 1976 Škopje, Amsterdam, Montilla, USSR Championship
- 1977 Bad Lauterberg, Las Palmas, Tilburg
- 1979 Waddinxveen, Tilburg
- 1980 Bad Kissingen, Bugojno, Amsterdam, Tilburg, Buenos Aires
- 1981 Linares, Moscow
- 1982 Tilburg
- 1983 USSR Championship, Hannover, Tilburg
- 1984 London, Oslo
- 1985 Amsterdam

In addition, he shared first place with a single rival in four other events:

- 1978 Bugojno
- 1979 Montreal
- 1982 London, Turin

He finished second in Manila 1976, equal second in Amsterdam 1981 and Linares 1983, equal third in Mar del Plata 1982, and equal fourth in Leningrad 1977.

## Tournament Summary

During his reign as World Champion, Karpov won 85.3% of his tournaments (29/34). No other world champion won as many individual tournaments during his title reign, both in terms of the outright number and as a percentage. Kasparov tended to win tournaments by wider margins, but slightly less often.

KARPOV'S STRATEGIC WINS 2

1986-2010

# The Prime Years

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Tibor  
Károlyi



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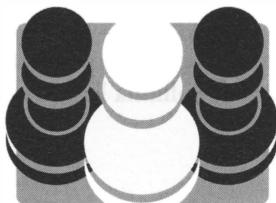


# *Karpov's Strategic Wins 2*

## **The Prime Years**

By

**Tibor Karolyi**



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# Karpov's Strategic Wins 2 - The Prime Years

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All sales or enquiries should be directed to Quality Chess UK Ltd,  
20 Balvie Road, Milngavie, Glasgow G62 7TA, United Kingdom

Phone +44 141 227 6771

e-mail: [info@qualitychess.co.uk](mailto:info@qualitychess.co.uk)

website: [www.qualitychess.co.uk](http://www.qualitychess.co.uk)

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# Key to symbols used

±	White is slightly better
+	Black is slightly better
+	White is better
+	Black is better
+—	White has a decisive advantage
—+	Black has a decisive advantage
=	equality
≡	with compensation
⇄	with counterplay
?	unclear
?	a weak move
??	a blunder
!	a good move
!!	an excellent move
!?	a move worth considering
?!	a move of doubtful value
#	mate

---

# Preface

---

In this, the second volume, we will continue our investigation into Karpov's strategic victories, from the time when he lost his World Championship title at the end of 1985 until the end of the year 2010. In the first volume we saw that during the ten-year period from 1975-1985, Karpov not only held the highest title in chess, but also dominated the tournament circuit more convincingly than any other player in chess history. And yet, despite being one of the greatest world champions of all time, it was only after losing his title that Karpov played his very best chess. During his decade-long reign as World Champion, Karpov worked hard but he already stood head and shoulders above the other leading grandmasters. But when the young Garry Kasparov took over as the dominant force in the chess world, everything changed.

Kasparov was able to do what no other player could. By defeating Karpov in their second championship match (after their first match was aborted, as explained on page 417 of the first volume), he forced Karpov to work harder than he ever had before in an effort to reclaim his title. Steel sharpens steel, and in the present book we will see how both of these titans were able to raise their respective levels in an effort to outdo the other.

Despite his colossal efforts, Karpov was unable to reclaim the coveted crown from his nemesis. Nevertheless, in terms of his overall skill as a chess player, Karpov's prime years occurred only after his reign as World Champion had ended.

By the end of the 1980s Karpov's level had begun to drop slightly, although he remained the number two player in the world until well into the 1990s. Indeed, his greatest tournament success, which is widely considered the most impressive tournament performance of all time, occurred in 1994. As the years went by, Karpov was gradually superseded by the next generation of super-grandmasters, but he continued to achieve excellent results and produced a host of beautiful games along the way.

Without further ado, I invite the reader to continue his voyage of discovery into the prime years of Karpov's career.

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## Periodicals

Skakbladet

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# 1986

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Rating 2700 (2 in the world)

For the first time in more than a decade, Anatoly Karpov began the year without holding the title of World Champion. Having lost his crown, he must have spent some time contemplating his future. Faced with the same situation, many players would probably have accepted that there had been a changing of the guard, and settled down to enjoy life as a millionaire and a national hero. Not so Anatoly Karpov. Luckily for the game of chess, he decided to focus all his efforts on reclaiming his title. He must have known that it would take a phenomenal amount of work, since Kasparov was not only a marvellous player, he was also only twenty two years of age and was only going to get better. Karpov was already thirty four, so if he was being realistic he would have known he had roughly five or six years in which to achieve his goal.

One of the conditions of his last match with Kasparov was that, in the event of Karpov's defeat, he would be guaranteed a rematch. It was scheduled for later in 1986, but before that time Karpov participated in a few other tournaments.

Karpov's first event of the year was the SWIFT tournament in Brussels. He started with a draw against Torre, then defeated Timman after the Dutchman failed to find the best defence in a long endgame. A fairly quick draw with Romanishin followed. In Round 4 Van der Wiel tried the Dely Gambit, but Karpov had done some work since his match with Kasparov and he unveiled a strong novelty which yielded a clear advantage. But Van der Wiel defended stubbornly and eventually salvaged half a point after Karpov missed some chances. How Karpov must have wished he could have found the right antidote to the gambit in time to use it against Kasparov!

In Round 5 Karpov drew quickly with Korchnoi, but then he switched into top gear and amazingly won each and every one of his last six games! His win against Ljubojevic was mentioned in the notes to Game 72 in the first volume. Then after beating the Belgian IM Jadoul on the black side of a Hedgehog, he met another local player, Luc Winants, who scored one point out of six games against world champions.

**Game 1**

**Luc Winants – Anatoly Karpov**

---

Brussels 1986

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e6 3.e3 c5**

Fifteen years earlier Karpov carried out a similar plan via a different move order: 3...b6 4. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  5. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$  c5 6.0–0 cxd4 7.exd4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8.b3 0–0 9. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  12.c4 d5

13.♗c1 ♘fd8 14.♗e2 dxc4 15.bxc4 ♖f4 16.g3 ♖h6 17.♗c2 ♖h5 18.♗f1 ♗c7 19.♗e2 ♖f5 20.♗d3 ♖h5 21.♗e2 ½–½ Platonov – Karpov, Leningrad 1971.

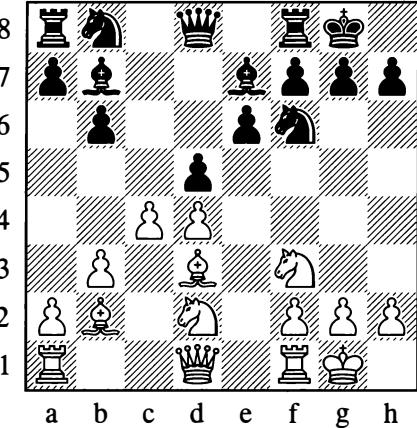
#### 4.♗d3 cxd4

With this early exchange Karpov avoids a symmetrical pawn structure.

#### 5.exd4 b6 6.0–0 ♖b7 7.c4 ♖e7 8.♗bd2 0–0 9.b3 d5

Karpov opts for a position with hanging pawns; he has great experience with this formation.

#### 10.♗b2

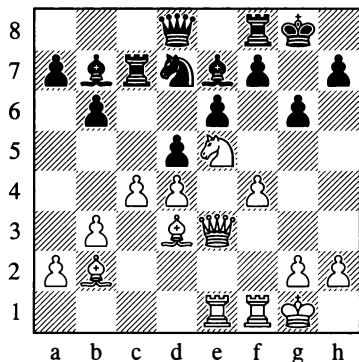


#### 10...♗c6

Karpov chooses the main line. Interestingly, he played the position after 10...♗e4 with both colours during his career:

- a) 11.♗e1 Karpov used this move to defeat Andersson twice, but then he abandoned it after Portisch came up with the following equalizing line: 11...♗xd2 12.♗xd2 ♗d7 13.♗f3 ♗c8 14.♗c1 ♗e8 15.♗e2 ♗d6 16.♗e3 dxc4 17.bxc4 ♗c7 18.g3 ♗f6 19.♗f1 ♗b8 20.♗g2 ♗d7 21.♗d3 ♗cd8 22.♗g5 ♗f6 23.d5 e5 24.♗e4 ♗xe4 25.♗xe4 g6= Karpov – Portisch, Malta (ol) 1980.

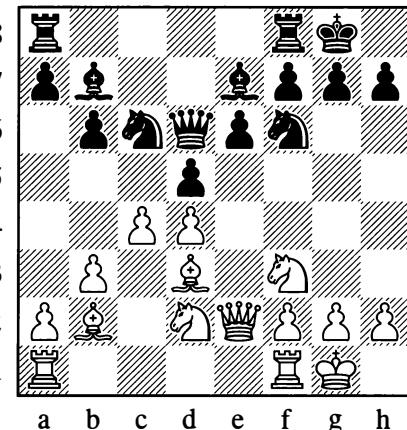
b) Seventeen years later Karpov tested the same line from the opposite side of the board: 11.♗e5 ♗xd2 12.♗xd2 ♗d7 13.f4 ♗c8 14.♗ae1 ♗c7 15.♗e2 g6 16.♗e3



16...♗f6! The knight transfer to e4 equalizes as it will be hard for White to build an attack. 17.f5? White embarks on an unsound attack. 17...exf5 18.♗xf5 gxf5 19.♗g5† ♗h8 20.♗xf5 ♗c8 21.♗f4 ♗g4 Black defended successfully and went on to win with his extra piece, Lobron – Karpov, Frankfurt (rapid) 1997.

#### 11.♗e2 ♗d6

This prepares an interesting plan based on the transfer of the queen to the kingside.



#### 12.♗ad1

A more purposeful continuation was 12.♗ac1! with the idea of a3 and later c5. It

looks like Winants was expecting Karpov to exchange on c4, but the former champion postponed it for a long time.

It is worth noting that White cannot play 12.♕e5? due to 12...♝xd4! when Black wins material.

### 12...♝ac8 13.♝fe1

13.♕e5 was possible, although after 13...dxc4 (13...♝xd4?? does not work here, as after 14.♗xd4 dxc4 15.♗dxc4 the bishop on d4 is poisoned.) 14.♗dxc4 ♜d5 Black is not worse in this IQP middlegame.

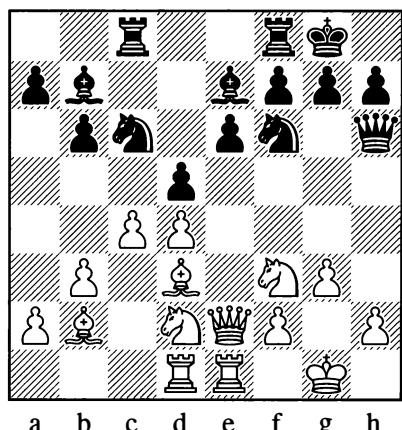
### 13...♛f4!?

The queen vacates the centre. She will help to fortify the black kingside, while making way for the rooks to attack White's hanging pawn centre.

### 14.g3

It was worth considering 14.♗e3?! ♛xe3 15.fxe3 when White's pawn centre has been strengthened, although he has no real advantage.

### 14...♜h6



### 15.♛f1!?

This is too artificial. Winants retreats the

queen in order to prepare h3 and g4, but he never gets enough time to carry out the plan.

Correct was 15.♕e5 ♜fd8 16.♕df3 ♜xe5 (16...♝e4?) 17.♕xe5 (If 17.dxe5?! dxc4 18.♗xc4 ♜d5 Black is a bit better.) 17...♝b4 18.♕f1 reaching a balanced position, rich in chances for both sides.

### 15...♜fd8

Karpov calmly completes his development.

### 16.h3?!

White continues with his faulty plan.

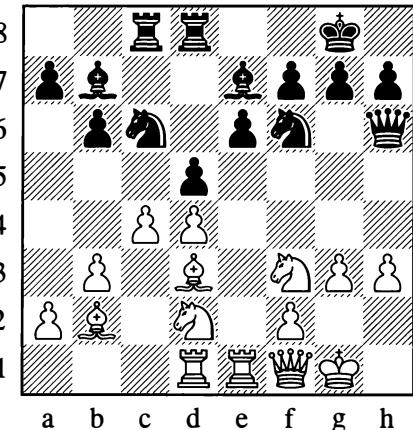
With hindsight, it was worth considering the prophylactic 16.a3. It would have been interesting to see how Karpov would have responded. There are several reasonable options:

a) 16...♝g4?! The threat of ...dxc4 followed by ...♝xd4 provokes a further pawn move on the kingside. 17.cxd5 (another possibility is 17.h3 dxc4 18.bxc4 ♜f6) 17...♜xd5 18.h3 ♜h5 19.h4 ♜d5 Black has a good game, but he has not achieved anything special.

b) 16...g5?! Black wants to drive the knight away from its defence of the d4-pawn. The idea is interesting, but not at all in Karpov's style. After 17.cxd5 ♜xd5 18.♕e5 the position is about equal.

c) 16...g6 17.h3 dxc4 (there is also 17...♞f8?! 18.c5 a5) 18.bxc4 ♜f8 19.♖a1 ♜e8 Black intends to increase the pressure on the d4-pawn with ...♝f6.

d) 16...♝c7 This type of small improving move was typical of Karpov's style. 17.h3 (If 17.♕e5? ♜xe5 18.dxe5 ♜g4 19.h3 ♜xf2! Black takes over.) 17...♝dc8 18.♕e5 The position remains balanced after 18...g6 or 18...♝xe5 19.dxe5 ♜d7 20.cxd5 ♜xd5.



**16...♝b4!**

Positions with hanging pawns are similar to those with an isolated pawn, in the sense that the opposing side should generally try to exchange minor pieces. Normally one would be hesitant to exchange a bishop for an enemy knight, but since White has weakened his kingside with g3, Karpov has devised a powerful strategy based on playing on the light squares.

**17.♗e3 ♜xd2!**

Removing a defensive piece makes the latent power of the b7-bishop become real.

**18.♗xd2?**

Winants either missed Karpov's reply, or he did not fully appreciate its power.

18.♗xd2 was essential, although following 18...dxc4 (18...♝b4 does not achieve much after 19.♗b1) 19.♗xc4 ♜h5 20.a3 (20.♗e2 ♜f5) 20...♜d5 Black has the upper hand.

**18...♝b4!**

Suddenly White's position is on the brink of collapse.

**19.♗e5**

White cannot save the bishop with 19.♗b1? as 19...dxc4 20.bxc4 ♜xf3 wins a piece.

Another idea was 19.♗c1 ♜xd3 20.♗exd3, but after 20...dxc4 21.bxc4 ♜h5 22.g4 ♜a5 Black dominates the light squares and is also well placed to attack the hanging pawns.

**19...♝xd3 20.♗dxd3**

After 20.♗exd3 ♜e4 21.♗c2 f6 22.♗f3 dxc4 (22...♗d7 is also strong) 23.bxc4 b5! Black secures his domination over the light squares. 24.♗b3 (24.c5 ♜c6) 24...♜d5 25.♗xb5 ♜d6 Black takes over.

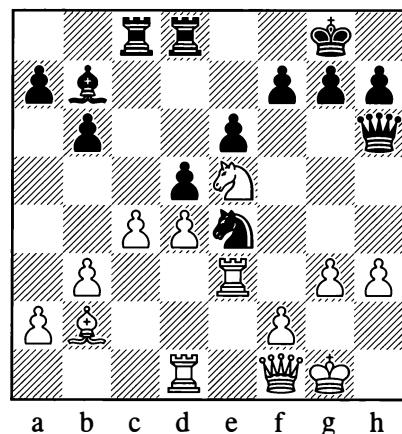
**20...♜e4**

Winants probably did not anticipate the main point of this move.

**21.♗d1?!**

It turns out that the rook is vulnerable on this square.

The best chance for White to keep his position together was 21.♗c1! ♜h5 22.g4 ♜h4 23.♗d1 ♜g5 24.♗ed3 f6 25.♗xg5 ♜xg5 26.♗f3 ♜f4 although White is under pressure here too.



**21...f6!**

The knight was well placed on e5, where it defended several vulnerable light squares. Once it is driven away, White will not be able to defend all his weaknesses.

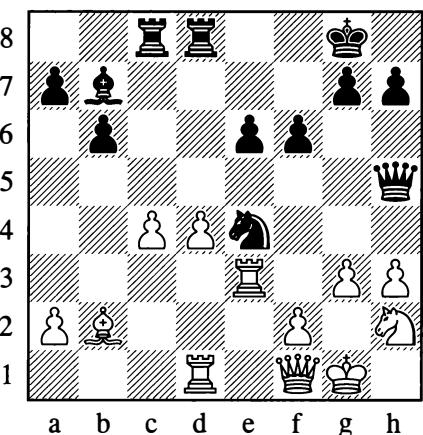
**22.♗g4 ♜h5 23.♗h2?**

This loses quickly, but the game was already beyond saving.

If 23.♕h2 dxc4 24.bxc4 f5 25.♕e5 ♔xf2 26.♔c1 ♔e4 Black wins.

Also after 23.f3 ♔xg3 24.♔g2 ♔h4 25.♔xe6 ♕e8! 26.♔de1 ♔xe6 27.♔xe6 ♔f7! 28.♔e1 ♔h5! Black wins material.

**23...dxc4 24.bxc4**



**24...♗xc4!**

Exploiting the loose rook on d1. White is completely busted.

**25.d5 ♘xd5 26.♕g4 ♕g5**

**0-1**

Winants' level has never been world class, but he is a good player and the way Karpov dismantled him was highly impressive.

In the final three rounds Karpov defeated Seirawan, Zapata and Miles. He finished with an unbeaten 9/11, winning first prize by a two point margin ahead of Korchnoi. In many of his earlier tournaments Karpov had settled for draws in some games, provided they suited his tournament strategy. But by this stage in his career, it looks as though his rivalry with Kasparov may have motivated him to strive for an even higher level.

Karpov's next tournament was in Bugojno, the scene of his 1978 match versus Korchnoi. He started by drawing with Spassky, then won a fine game against Yusupov. He drew comfortably with black against Timman, but then suffered an unpleasant defeat on the black side of a Zaitsev Ruy Lopez against Andrei Sokolov. This turned out to be one of the most beneficial losses of Karpov's career, as it motivated him to learn the Caro-Kann, which became a mainstay of his repertoire and served him well for many years.

Karpov immediately bounced back with a long endgame win over Ljubojevic, draws with Portisch and Miles, then a fine win over Spassky, which is referenced in the notes to Game 14 (Karpov – Mikliaev) of the first volume. Then he drew with Yusupov, won a hard fought game against Timman, and drew his final three games to win the tournament with 8½/14, a point clear of Sokolov.

### Third World Championship match versus Kasparov

As was customary in those days, the defeated champion was granted the right to a rematch. Once again it was contested over twenty four games. The first twelve games took place in London and the remaining twelve in Leningrad. It was the first time that a world championship match between two Soviet contenders did not take place solely within the Soviet Union. It was probably symptomatic of the fact that the superpower was in decline. The overall weakening of the Soviet Union had an impact on chess, as the state was unable to offer the same level of economic support to its most talented players.

On Kasparov's initiative, both players generously agreed to donate the prize fund from the London half of the match to help the victims of the Chernobyl disaster, which occurred in April of 1986.

Kasparov had not taken part in any tournaments since winning the world title. He performed a number of simultaneous exhibitions, and played two training matches as a means of sharpening his mind in preparation for his next clash with Karpov. In December 1985 he won 4–2 against Timman, scoring three wins, two draws and one loss. Six months later he faced Miles, and destroyed the Englishman by the score of 5½–½. Miles never recovered from that experience and was unable to maintain his high world ranking.

The first few games of the match revealed that both Kasparov and Karpov had worked on their weaknesses. In Game 1 Kasparov surprised Karpov with the Grünfeld, and the latter took no risks and simplified to make a safe draw. In the second game Karpov introduced a novelty in the g3 Nimzo-Indian and equalized comfortably. But later, in a queenless symmetrical endgame, Kasparov masterfully outplayed him although he later missed a win and allowed Karpov to escape. The game was a shining example of how both players made remarkable improvements in areas where the other was strong. Kasparov “taught” Karpov to prepare better openings, and Karpov “taught” Kasparov how to play endgames and simplified positions.

In Game 3 Karpov tried a kingside fianchetto against the Grünfeld. He got a symmetrical position with a slight initiative, but Kasparov drew comfortably. In Game 4 Karpov deviated from Game 2 but soon found himself in a worse position, and this time Kasparov successfully converted his advantage.

Here is the next game, in which the opening, middlegame and endgame all merged into one.

## Game 2

Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov

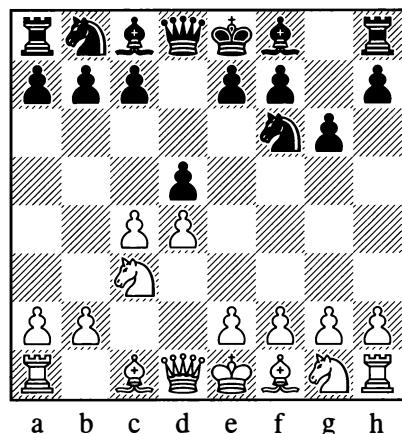
London/Leningrad (5) 1986

**1.d4!**

Having failed to make any headway against Kasparov's Scheveningen, Karpov gave up 1.e4 completely against Kasparov, and only rarely played it against other opponents as well. It meant he was able to channel all his efforts into his closed openings. His opening strategy with the white pieces was a success in the present match, although in their subsequent matches it might not have been a bad idea to throw in an occasional 1.e4 to keep Kasparov guessing.

**1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5**

Kasparov later revealed that if Karpov had opened with 1.d4 in the last game of their previous match, he would have responded with the Grünfeld. Karpov was a 1.e4 player for most of his career, so he still had only limited experience against this opening.



**4. $\mathbb{Q}f4$**

In the first two Grünfeld games Karpov was not able to achieve much, but this time he comes prepared with a different line. Later in the match Kasparov was able to find a reliable

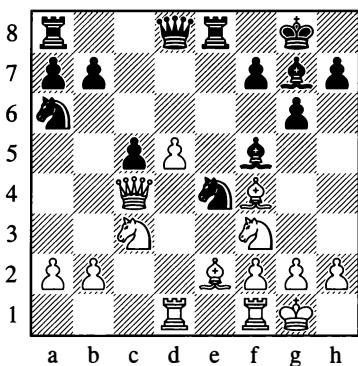
antidote to this system, after which Karpov never repeated it.

Towards the end of the match Karpov switched to the following line:

4.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}g7$  5.  $\mathbb{W}b3$

In the following game we see how well Karpov was able to handle complications.

5...dxc4 6.  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  0–0 7. e4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  c5 9. d5 e6 10. 0–0 exd5 11. exd5  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$



14.  $\mathbb{Q}b5!?$

This was Karpov's novelty.

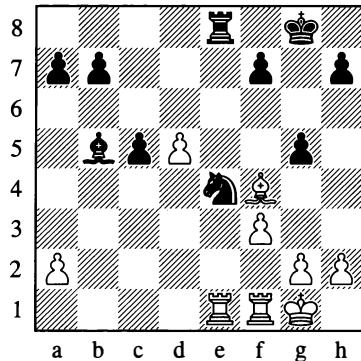
14...  $\mathbb{W}f6$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$

In a subsequent game White deviated: 15. d6  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. g3 g5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  h6 18.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  19. dxcc7  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  22.  $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc7$  Black equalized and a draw was soon agreed, Beliavsky – Kasparov, Moscow 1987.

15...  $\mathbb{Q}b4?$

A year later in a training game Kasparov unveiled an improvement: 15...  $\mathbb{E}ad8!$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}de1$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8\#$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $gxf5$  22. g3  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  23. d6  $\mathbb{E}e1$  Black went on to win in Janjgava – Kasparov, Baku 1987.

16.  $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  18.  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}de1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  21.  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  26. f3 g5



27.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$

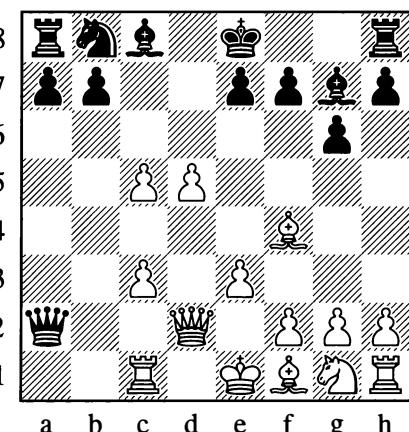
White obtained a winning position thanks to his powerful passed pawn, Karpov – Kasparov, London/Leningrad (19) 1986.

4...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  5. e3 c5 6. dxc5  $\mathbb{W}a5$  7.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$

In the next two Grünfeld games Kasparov switched to the main line of 7...dxc4 and drew solidly.

8. cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  9.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  10. bxc3

The exchange sacrifice 10.  $\mathbb{E}xc3!?$  is possible, but at the time of the present game it had hardly ever been tried. Karpov played plenty of novelties in his career, but not many of them occurred in the early stages of the opening.



10...  $\mathbb{W}xd2\#$

Kasparov deviates from the play of Fischer, who preferred 10...  $\mathbb{W}a5$  in the second game of

his candidates final match against Petrosian in Buenos Aires 1971. This game was especially notable as it culminated in Fischer's first defeat after twenty consecutive wins against top class opponents.

The decision to enter an endgame at such an early stage shows that Kasparov was fully confident in the improvements he had made since the previous two matches.

### **11.♘xd2 ♘d7 12.♗b5!**

Karpov wants to eliminate the knight in order to give back the c5-pawn under his own terms.

### **12...0-0 13.♘xd7**

After the greedy 13.c6?! ♘c5 14.♗e2 bxc6 15.♗xc6 ♘a6† 16.c4 ♘b3 Black is too active.

### **13...♘xd7 14.e4 f5**

Kasparov follows the theoretical recommendation, although it carries a certain risk as if he is not able to undermine his opponent's centre, the powerful pawns could suffocate him.

14...♗ac8 fails to equalize after 15.♗e3 e6 16.♗e2 ♗fd8 17.c4 ♗f8 18.♗f4 ♘xc5 19.♗xc5 ♗xc5 20.♗d3 when White dominates the centre.

### **15.e5!**

Karpov gains space and blocks the g7-bishop. The question is what Kasparov can do with the time Karpov needs to consolidate his centre.

### **15...e6**

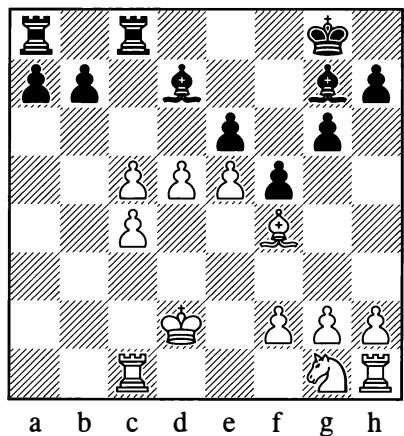
This was Kasparov's novelty, but it fails to impress.

The most common move is 15...♗ac8, when play may continue 16.c4 ♗xc5 17.♗e3 ♗c7 (After 17...♗a5 18.♗f3 f4 19.♗d4 ♗c8 20.♗a1 White's powerful centre gives him a clear advantage, Ostenstad – Elsness, Gausdal

1996.) 18.♗f3 (White scores very well with 18.f4 too.) 18...b6 19.c5 bxc5 20.♗xc5 ♗xc5 21.♗xc5 White got a clear advantage and went on to win in Seirawan – Adorjan, New York (rapid) 1987.

15...♗fc8?! has hardly ever been tried. One interesting reply looks to be 16.♗e3?! ♘xe5 17.♗f3 (17.f4 ♘g7 18.♗f3 e6) 17...♗g7 18.♗b1 ♗c7 19.♗d4 and White is somewhat better.

### **16.c4 ♗fc8**



### **17.c6!**

The pawn was doomed anyway, so Karpov takes the opportunity to alter Black's structure in a way that fractures his queenside pawns and obstructs his rook and bishop.

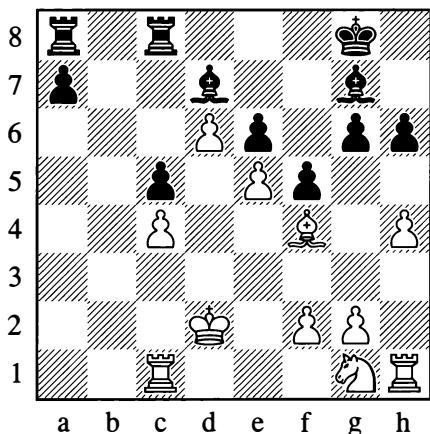
### **17...bxc6 18.d6 c5?**

This natural move is a mistake. In a few subsequent games Black improved on Kasparov's play with 18...g5!, which is much more challenging although it still does not equalize: 19.♗xg5 ♘xe5 20.c5 ♘g7?! (After 20...♗cb8 21.♗f3 ♘g7 22.♗he1 White will be able to block the a1–h8 diagonal with ♘e5.) 21.f4 ♗cb8 22.♗f3 h6 23.♗h4 ♗b2† 24.♗c2 ♗b4 25.♗hc1 ♗xf4 26.♗b1 White obtained excellent compensation for the pawn in Timman – Popovic, Belgrade 1989.

**19.h4!**

Karpov immediately prevents ...g5.

**19...h6**



**20.♘h3!!**

Karpov embarks on a masterful plan to freeze the Grünfeld bishop. Kasparov and his team missed this idea in their home preparation. It is possible that Karpov found the whole plan at home.

**20...a5**

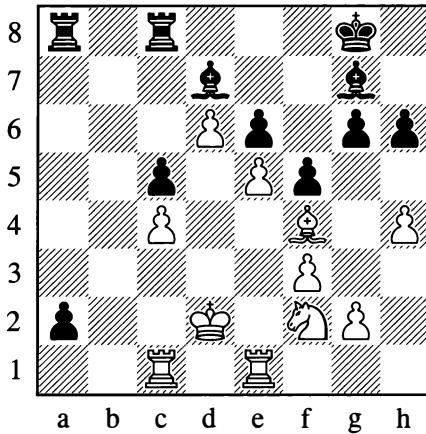
Kasparov won numerous great games by utilizing his pawns on the edge of the board, but this move is a sign of desperation. Black has to take radical action of some sort, otherwise he is helpless against White's plan of transferring his knight to d3, followed by winning the c5-pawn.

The other main candidate move is 20...♝cb8, but after 21.f3 ♜b2† 22.♜c2 ♜xc2† 23.♝xc2 ♜a4† 24.♝d2 ♜b8 25.♝a1 ♜b2† 26.♝e1 White is winning according to Kasparov.

**21.f3 a4 22.♝he1!**

Before continuing his knight manoeuvre, Karpov overprotects the e5-pawn in order to take the sting out of ...g5.

**22...a3 23.♝f2 a2**



**24.♞d3**

Finally the knight reaches its ideal home. From d3 it reinforces the e5-pawn, attacks the c5-pawn, and defends the b2-square.

**24...♝a3 25.♝a1**

Black's last hopes rest with the a2-pawn, so Karpov intends to remove it.

**25...g5?**

This sacrifice achieves very little.

**25...♝b8!**

This active move was the last real chance for Black to create problems. Interestingly Kasparov did not mention it in his first book, which suggests that even he needed the help of a computer to appreciate the potential strength of Black's counterplay.

**26.♞e2!**

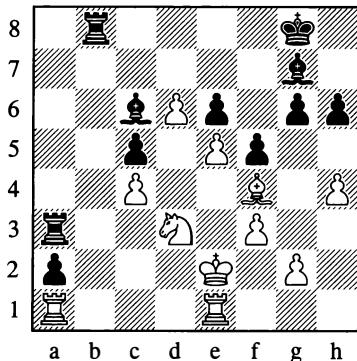
White should find this and the following prophylactic moves to neutralize Black's play.

26.♝e1 g5! 27.hxg5 hxg5 28.♞h2 (28.♞xg5 ♜bb3 29.♝xc5 ♜b2† Black became so active he could sacrifice a piece.) 28...f4 and Black is in the game.

**26...♝c6!**

With this tricky move Black ensures that his bishop will not be in the firing line after ♜xc5.

Kasparov mentions the line 26... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}ba8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ , opining that the outcome is not completely decided, but it seems to me that the chances of surviving the endgame a clear pawn down against Karpov would be minimal.



27. $\mathbb{Q}ec1!$

White has to find this subtle move in order to maintain his advantage.

The alternatives 27. $\mathbb{Q}xc5?!$   $\mathbb{Q}b2\#$  and 27. $\mathbb{Q}ed1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  are worse.

27... $\mathbb{Q}bb3$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$

After 28... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}b2\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a3\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  White wins.

29. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}ba3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b2$

White will soon win a pawn, which should be enough to decide the game.

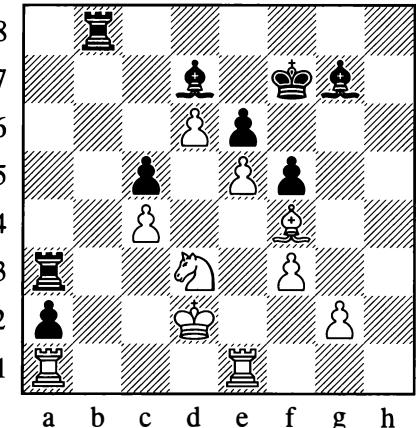
**26.hxg5 hxg5 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7?!$**

This is rather feeble. 27... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  was still the best chance, despite having lost some of its power in the present position. Once again White should respond with 28. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ , for instance: 28... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (or 28... $\mathbb{Q}bb3$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}b2\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  winning) 29. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black's activity is neutralized and he is losing.

**28. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$**

Karpov does not lose sight of his main priority, which is to maintain his solid defence of the e5-pawn, thus ensuring that the g7-bishop remains dead.

**28... $\mathbb{Q}b8$**



**29. $\mathbb{Q}ec1!$**

Karpov gets closer to the a2-pawn and also prepares to defend against a rook check on the second rank, thus making  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  possible.

**29... $\mathbb{Q}c6$**

29... $\mathbb{Q}bb3$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}b2\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  wins.

**30. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}ba8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

**1–0**

With the a2-pawn about to fall, Black's position is hopeless. Karpov's convincing refutation of Kasparov's opening novelty showed how much the former had improved his openings in the year since the previous match. The manner in which he coordinated his pieces while shutting out the g7-bishop was exemplary.

It is amazing how the picture changed since the first two matches. Kasparov now had the ability to torture Karpov from a dry technical position with a tiny advantage, while Karpov was able to destroy Kasparov's formidable opening preparation.

The next two games were drawn, although both contained plenty of action. In Game 8 Karpov grabbed a pawn on the queenside but Kasparov launched a venomous attack

on Karpov's king. The ensuing complications were almost unfathomable, and for a long time the game was balanced on a razor's edge, but eventually Kasparov's incredible tactical ability prevailed and Karpov lost on time in what was by then a hopeless position.

In Game 9 Kasparov showed that he had successfully repaired his Grünfeld, and he drew comfortably. In the next game he once again demonstrated his ability to squeeze Karpov in a technical position, but did not quite make the most of his chances and the game ended in a draw. In Game 11 Karpov came back with an ambitious new exchange sacrifice in the  $\mathbb{Qf}4$  Grünfeld. Wild complications ensued, and both players missed chances before the smoke cleared and a draw ensued. In the final game of London's half of the match, Kasparov obtained a slight plus but Karpov held the draw without ever being in real trouble. Thus at the halfway point Kasparov led by two wins to Karpov's one, with nine draws.

## From London to Leningrad

After the final London game, the players had eight free days before the second half of the match, which took place in Leningrad, Russia's second largest city. Karpov reverted back to the Fianchetto Variation against the Grünfeld, but Kasparov held his own and even had the better chances late in the middlegame, but was unable to achieve more than a draw. In Game 14 Kasparov switched to  $1.e4$  for only the second time in the match, and introduced a novelty against Karpov's Zaitsev Ruy Lopez. Karpov did not react in the best way and could only reach a hopeless endgame which Kasparov duly converted. In Game 15 Karpov tried  $4.\mathbb{Qf}3 \mathbb{Qg}7 5.\mathbb{Wb}3$  against the Grünfeld, but Kasparov equalized with the help of a pawn sacrifice, and a draw was later agreed. In the next game Karpov tried to improve his play in the Zaitsev, but once again Kasparov showed

that he was the master of wild complications. With eight games remaining, Kasparov now held a commanding 4–1 lead.

Karpov desperately needed a win, and he managed to get it in the very next game. He prepared a strong improvement in the line featured in the previous Grünfeld game (maybe Kasparov overdid this opening), and Kasparov went down without much of a fight. Game 18 was a Nimzo-/Queen's Indian hybrid, in which Kasparov seized the initiative with an energetic pawn sacrifice. He built up a decisive attack, but lost his way in the time scramble and allowed Karpov to emerge with the advantage, which he successfully converted in a complex ending. Suddenly the momentum had returned to the challenger. In Game 19 Kasparov tried a different approach in the Grünfeld, but again Karpov was ready and won a nice game, which is shown in the note to White's fourth move in Game 2. With five games remaining, the match was all square!

In Game 20 Kasparov sensibly opted for a quiet Catalan, took no risks and drew comfortably. In the next game he wisely abandoned the Grünfeld, instead opting for a Queen's Indian, and managed to neutralize Karpov's slight pressure. It seems that over these two games Kasparov regained his confidence and his energy, and he won Game 22 in style. The last games were drawn without major incident, and thus Kasparov won the match by the score of  $12\frac{1}{2}$ – $11\frac{1}{2}$ .

It has been noted that, paradoxically, after winning three consecutive games to draw level in the match, Karpov seemed to play less ambitiously. Perhaps fatigue played a role; it had caused him to suffer a near collapse against Korchnoi in 1974, and now at the age of thirty five, he probably lacked the energy reserves of his young successor. Kasparov was renowned for his intensive physical training regime, and

it seems to have benefitted him in the late stages of all three of the K–K matches that we have covered thus far.

The London – Leningrad match highlighted the considerable improvements that both players had made, and in my opinion it produced the highest quality chess of any World Championship match in history. Kasparov had made tremendous strides in the way he handled endgames and simplified positions, but it was primarily his tremendous ability in complicated positions which won him the match. Karpov had improved his openings tremendously since the last match, and no longer received more than he punched in that department. Kasparov has since made it known that he suspected one of his seconds, Evgeny Vladimirov, of leaking his opening and even adjournment analysis to Karpov's team. If this was indeed the case then it would go some way towards explaining Karpov's success in the openings, but the allegations were never substantiated. There are two sides to every story, and since it is not the purpose of this book to delve into such matters, I will say no more about it here.

Overall Karpov scored one win and five losses with the black pieces. His losses mainly occurred in hugely complicated middlegames rather than due to poor opening play, as occurred in the previous match. With the white pieces he showed a marked improvement, scoring three wins and no defeats. Karpov was seeded directly to the final of the next world championship cycle, making another rematch a likely prospect for the following year.

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Karpov has stated in interviews that he likes to forget disappointment, and the best way of doing it is to play another tournament. Just eleven days after the end of the championship

match, he took part in the strong Tilburg tournament. He began with a quick draw with Ljubojevic, then outplayed Portisch with a masterful endgame performance. He drew his next seven games, achieving little in the openings. Interestingly Timman was able to improve strongly on one line of the  $\mathbb{W}b3$  Grünfeld which Karpov had used to defeat Kasparov in Game 17 of their recent match.

In Round 10 Karpov overcame Korchnoi, but then he got into a difficult position against Beliavsky and blundered badly. He drew his final three games, to finish in third place with a somewhat disappointing  $7\frac{1}{2}/14$ . Although Karpov's desire to put the Kasparov match behind him was admirable, with hindsight it is obvious that he needed a longer break to recover his energy. Another problem was evident in his opening play: it looks like he did so much work preparing against Kasparov's repertoire that he had no time or energy to prepare other openings that he would need against lesser, but still world class grandmasters.

A week and a half after Tilburg, Karpov took part in the Dubai Olympiad. For the first time in a long while, he played on the second board behind Kasparov. He drew his first game with the black pieces against Ftacnik, then met Ribli. Since Karpov's win in Amsterdam 1980 (see Game 58 of the first volume), the two players had drawn two relatively short games.

### Game 3

Anatoly Karpov – Zoltan Ribli

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Dubai Olympiad 1986

1.c4

Ribli has a relatively narrow repertoire. He mainly plays the Najdorf, the Queen's Indian and the Hedgehog against the English. Karpov decides to test him in the last of the three.

1...c5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♗c3 e6

Ribli deviates from the Amsterdam game, in which he played 3... ♜c6 4.g3 d5.

**4.g3 b6 5.Qg2 Qb7 6.0-0 d6**

Ribli deviates from the move order he used against Karpov in Linares 1981, although the game soon ends up in a similar position.

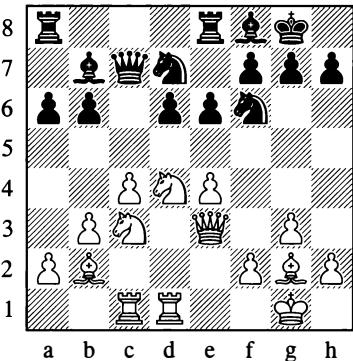
6... $\hat{\text{e}}7$  7.d4 cxd4 8. $\hat{\text{w}}\text{xd4}$  d6

Let us review a few of Karpov's games against the Hedgehog. From time to time he also played the black side of this opening as well. White has two main approaches from the present position.

a) 9.e4

In an earlier game Karpov did without this move and allowed an early queen exchange: 9.b3 0–0 10.♗d1 ♜bd7 11.♕b2 a6 12.♗e3 ♜b8 13.♗d4 ♜xg2 14.♗xg2 ♜b7† 15.♗f3 ♜xf3† 16.♗xf3 The position is equal although White went on to win in Karpov – Gheorghiu, Moscow 1977. Despite Karpov's eventual success, it seems he was not satisfied with the outcome of the opening as he never repeated this plan.

9...0-0 10.b3  $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  a6 12. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$   
 13. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d4$



15...ac8

This was Gheorghiu's choice in a subsequent Hedgehog game against Karpov in 1977.

In between this example and the main game, Ribli chose 15... $\mathbb{E}ad8$ . On that occasion Karpov did not really try to hunt the hedgehog, and after a bit of manoeuvring he settled for a draw: 16. $\mathbb{E}e1$  (Later in the same tournament Karpov reached the same position with the black pieces and won a fine game after 16. $\mathbb{W}e2$  in Garcia Gonzales – Karpov, Linares 1981; see Game 59 in the first volume.) 16... $\mathbb{W}b8$  17. $\mathbb{W}e2$  g6 18. $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  19. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  21.f3  $\mathbb{W}b8$  22. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\frac{1}{2}$ – $\frac{1}{2}$  Karpov – Ribli, Linares 1981.

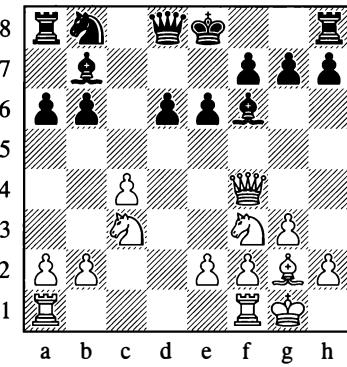
16.h3  $\mathbb{W}b8$  17. $\mathbb{E}e1$  g6 18. $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  19.f3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
 20. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}cd7$  21.f4 e5 22. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  exf4 23. $\mathbb{W}xf4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  h5 25. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}e6$   
 27. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ce8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}cd5$

Karpov obtained a small edge and went on to win in Karpov – Gheorghiu, Leningrad 1977.

b) Karpov also tested a radically different, though still well-known plan in two games:  
 9.♗g5 a6 10.♗xf6

By making this exchange before the reply ... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  is available, White hopes to disrupt his opponent's coordination.

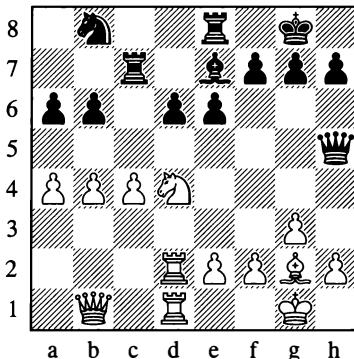
10... ♕xf6 11. ♔f4



11... ♕xf3

This was the choice of Walter Browne, two years after another Karpov game, which proceeded as follows: 11...0-0 12. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  14. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}c8!$

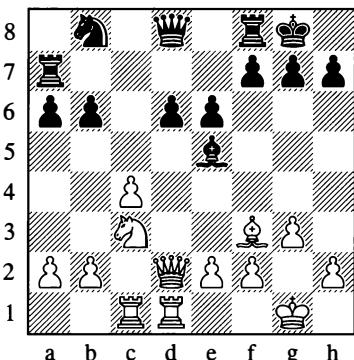
16.b3  $\mathbb{W}e8$  17.a4!?  $\mathbb{W}c5$  18. $\mathbb{B}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{B}ad2$   
 $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20. $\mathbb{W}b1!$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  21.b4 (21. $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b4!$ )  
21... $\mathbb{W}h5$



This was Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow 1981. At this point White could have obtained some advantage with 22.b5! (The game continued 22. $\mathbb{B}c2?$ !  $\mathbb{B}ec8$  23.b5?  $\mathbb{axb}5$  24. $\mathbb{axb}5$   $\mathbb{Bxc}4!$  when the tactics favoured Black, and Karpov had to struggle for a draw a pawn down.) 22... $\mathbb{Bxc}4$  (22...a5 23. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  is better for White) 23.bxa6  $\mathbb{W}a5$  (23... $\mathbb{Bxa}4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ ; 23... $\mathbb{Bxa}6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ) 24. $\mathbb{W}b5$   $\mathbb{Wxa}4$  25.a7  $\mathbb{Bxd}4$  26. $\mathbb{Wxe}8\#$   $\mathbb{Wxe}8$  27.a8=math> White can press.

12. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{B}a7$  13. $\mathbb{B}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  14. $\mathbb{W}d2$  0–0

15. $\mathbb{B}ac1$



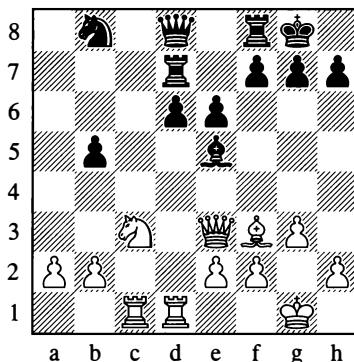
15...b5?!

This thematic freeing move is premature. Better is 15... $\mathbb{B}c7$  16.b3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  when White's advantage is small.

16. $\mathbb{W}e3!$   $\mathbb{B}d7$

If 16... $\mathbb{W}e7$  17.cxb5 axb5 18.a3 White has a nice positional advantage as the b5-pawn is vulnerable.

17.cxb5 axb5



18.b4!

Karpov fixes the weak b5-pawn.

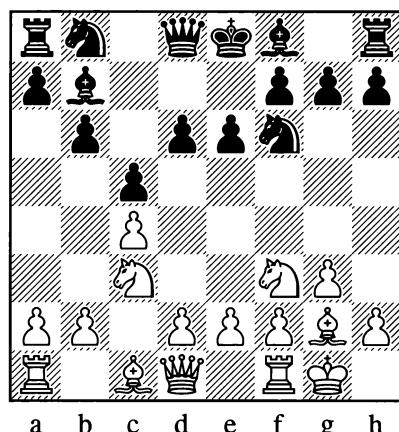
18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. $\mathbb{B}xc3$  d5 20. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  21. $\mathbb{B}dc1$  d4?

In a worse position Browne tries to complicate the game with a pawn sacrifice, but this only accelerates the end.

21... $\mathbb{B}b7$  was better, although after 22. $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  23. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  24. $\mathbb{B}c8$   $\mathbb{B}f8$  25.e4 d4 26.e5 Black faces a difficult defence.

22. $\mathbb{B}d3$  e5 23. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  24. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  25. $\mathbb{B}d5$

Karpov obtained a winning position and soon collected the full point in Karpov – Browne, Bath 1983.

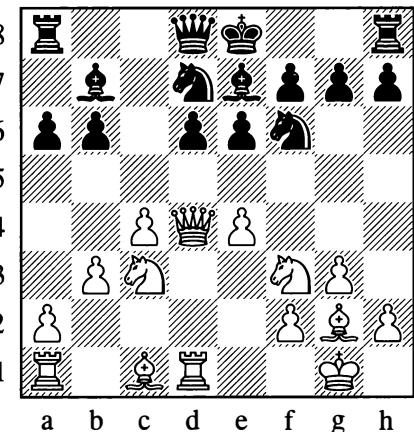


**7.d4**

Nowadays 7.♗e1 is the main line, intending e4 followed by d4, when White will be able to recapture with the knight without allowing a bishop exchange on g2.

**7...cxd4 8.♗xd4 a6 9.♗d1 ♜e7 10.b3 ♛bd7 11.e4**

By moving the e-pawn forwards at this stage, Karpov retains the options of both ♜a3 and ♜b2.



**11...♛c8!**

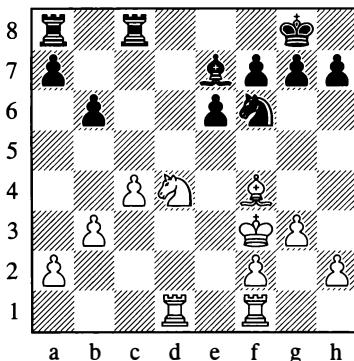
Ribli introduces a strong novelty which has since become established as the main line in this position. Later Karpov played it with Black, and overall the second player has a plus score with it. The main idea is to avoid the unpleasant endgames that can occur after White's plan of ♜a3 and e5 followed by a queen exchange. For instance:

11...0–0 12.♗a3! ♜c5 13.e5 dxe5 14.♗xd8 ♜fxd8 15.♗xe5 ♜xg2 16.♗xg2 White has made a heavy plus score from this position. I can recall Peter Szekely beating Ribli from a similar endgame in a ten minute blitz tournament in Hungary.

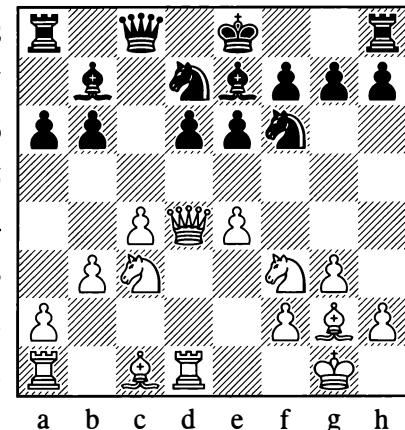
11...♛c7 12.♗a3! ♜c5 13.e5 dxe5 14.♗xe5 ♜c8 (14...♛xe5 15.♗xe5 ♜xg2 16.♗xg2 is a

difficult endgame for Black; 14...♛c8!!? may be the best chance.) 15.♗xc7 ♜xc7 16.♗c1!! White is on top.

Before we return to the main game, let me show you a beautiful example of winning technique in a similar ending, courtesy of a true chess legend.



20.g4! a6 21.g5 ♜e8 22.a4 ♜a7 23.h4 ♜b7?? (23...♜f8) 24.♗d3 ♜c5 25.♗e1 ♜d7 26.♗ed1 g6 27.♗e2 ♜xd3† 28.♗xd3 b5 29.cxb5 axb5 30.♗d7 ♜f8 31.a5 ♜c6 32.♗b7 b4 33.♗b8! ♜c5 34.♗g3 1–0 Bronstein – Rantanen, Tallinn 1975.



**12.♗b2**

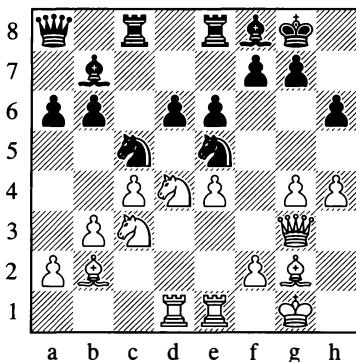
With the queen on c7 instead of c5, 12.♗a3 does not achieve much: 12...♜c5 13.e5 ♜xf3 14.♗xf3 dxe5 15.♗xe5 ♜cd7 16.♗xd7 ♜xd7

17.  $\mathbb{W}xg7 \mathbb{Q}f6$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{W}xg7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d6\uparrow \mathbb{Q}d8$   
 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7\uparrow \mathbb{Q}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}d6\uparrow \mathbb{Q}d8$  The game ends  
 in an unusual perpetual.

## 12...0-0 13. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Karpov decides to deviate from the plan involving  $\mathbb{W}e3$  and  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , which he had used previously against both Gheorghiu and Ribli. With his chosen move he defends the c4-pawn and prepares b4, and will decide later whether to reposition his knight on the kingside or the queenside.

More than a decade and a half later, Karpov showed that he is equally adept on the black side of the position: 13.  $\mathbb{E}ac1 \mathbb{E}e8$  14. h3  $\mathbb{W}c7$  15.  $\mathbb{W}e3 \mathbb{Q}f8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{E}ac8$  17. g4 h6 18.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  19. h4  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  20.  $\mathbb{E}e1 \mathbb{W}a8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3 \mathbb{Q}fd7$  22.  $\mathbb{E}cd1 \mathbb{Q}e5$  23.  $\mathbb{W}g3$



23...g5! 24.  $\mathbb{W}xg5 \mathbb{W}xg5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow! \mathbb{Q}ed3!$  26.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  27.  $\mathbb{E}xb2 \mathbb{Q}e7$  Black's control over the dark squares gave him somewhat better chances in Van Wely – Karpov, Dubai (rapid) 2002.

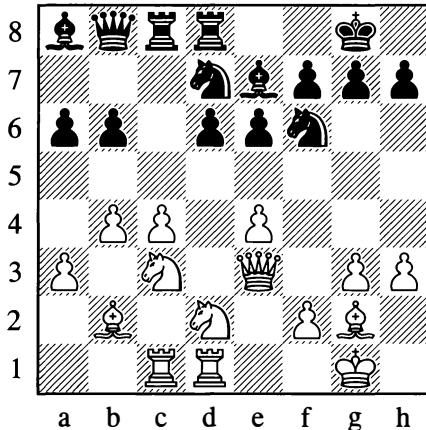
## 13... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14. $\mathbb{E}ac1 \mathbb{E}ac8$ 15. h3

With this and his next few moves, Karpov creeps forwards and gains a little more space.

## 15... $\mathbb{E}fe8$ 16. a3 $\mathbb{W}b8$ 17. b4 $\mathbb{E}ed8$ 18. $\mathbb{W}e3$

Karpov does not want his queen opposite the enemy rook.

## 18... $\mathbb{Q}a8$

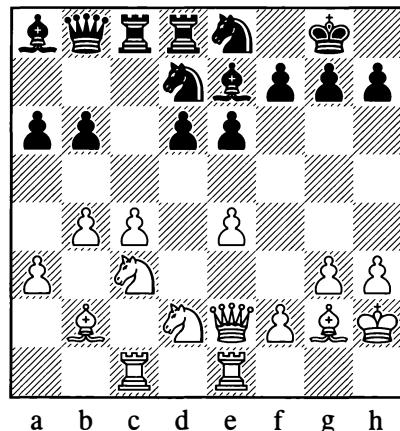


Ribli decides to wait patiently.

## 19. $\mathbb{W}e2$

Karpov defends the c4-pawn, thus freeing the knight on d2.

## 19... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}f1 \mathbb{Q}b7$ 21. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{Q}ef6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 23. $\mathbb{E}e1 \mathbb{Q}a8$



## 24. $\mathbb{Q}b3!$

After a few waiting moves Karpov brings the knight to the queenside. Later the pawn advance a4-a5 could prove unpleasant for Black.

## 24... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ 25. $\mathbb{E}c2 \mathbb{E}c7$ 26. f4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 27. $\mathbb{E}ec1$ $\mathbb{Q}dc8$

Ribli ties Karpov's pieces to the defence of the c4-pawn.

### 28.♗d1!

Karpov is happy to exchange bishops, as the d6-pawn will become slightly more vulnerable.

### 28...♝b7

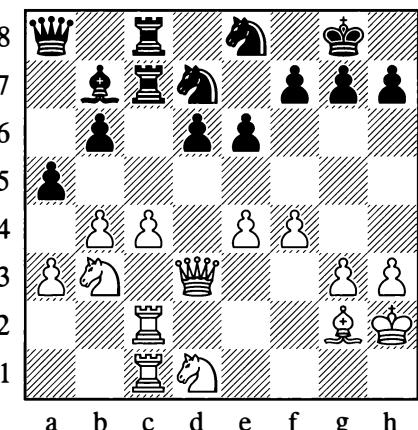
28...♝e7?! was worth considering.

### 29.♗d3 ♜xb2?

Exchanging the bishop helps White. Ribli mentions 29...♝a8 as a good alternative.

### 30.♗xb2 ♜a8 31.♗d1 a5?

This is a most uncharacteristic mistake for Ribli, who was not only a fine positional player, but also an expert on Hedgehog positions.



### 32.♘d4!

Naturally Karpov wastes no time in transferring his knight to the newly created outpost. Ribli had apparently forgotten that this knight could find its way to the b5-square as well.

### 32.♘d8 33.♘b5 ♜cc8 34.♘dc3 ♜b8

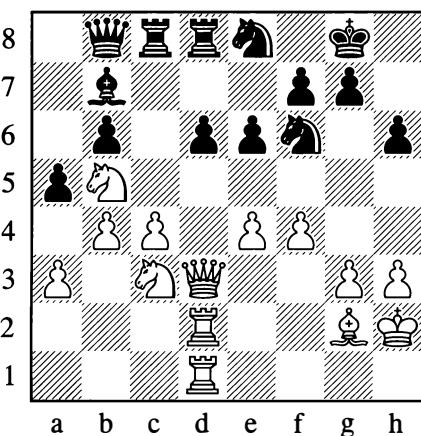
It was worth considering 34...♘b8?! to transfer the knight to c6, which would at least force White to pay attention to the b4-pawn.

### 35.♗d1!

Karpov focuses his heavy pieces against the d6-pawn.

### 35...♝df6 36.♗cd2 h6

Ribli decides to wait. Another idea was 36...♝c6 intending to play for ...e5. Nevertheless after 37.♗e2 e5 38.♗f3 h6 (38...♝d7 39.g4) 39.♗g2 ♜d7 40.f5 White is clearly better, just like in the game.



### 37.♗e2!

Karpov continues to squeeze his opponent. Now e5 becomes a threat.

### 37.e5?!

The immediate advance of the e-pawn is tempting, but premature.

### 37...dxe5?

This is the only option mentioned by Ribli in his *Chess Informant* analysis, but it is not the strongest.

Correct is 37...♝xg2! 38.exf6 ♜c6 39.fxg7 axb4 40.axb4 d5 41.cxd5 ♜xb5 42.♗xb5 ♜xd5 43.♗e2 ♜xd2 44.♗xd2 ♜b7 when White will have a hard time making progress due to his exposed king.

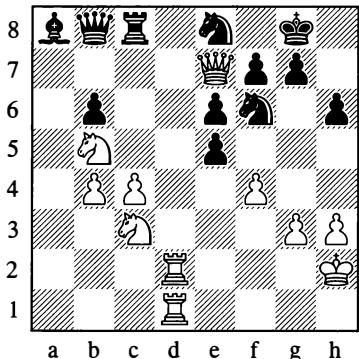
### 38.♗xd8 ♜xg2

Ribli ends his analysis here, evaluating the position as unclear. It turns out White has a wonderful resource lurking.

### 39.♗e7 axb4

Objectively Black should prefer 39... $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ! in order to divert the rook away from the d-file, although after 40. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  41.fxe5  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d8$  White remains clearly better thanks to his extra exchange.

40.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}a8$



41.f5!!

With the help of this beautiful pawn sacrifice White keeps his king safe.

41...exf5 42. $\mathbb{Q}d8$  f4 43.gxf4 exf4

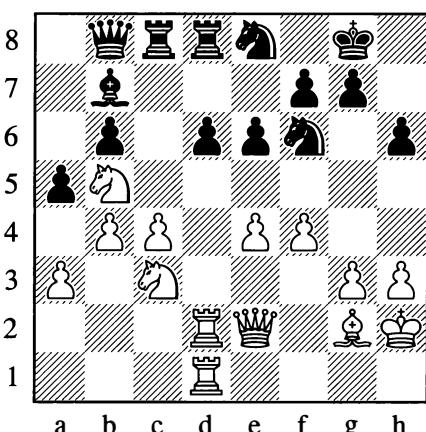
43...e4 44. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  is safe enough.

44. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{W}c6$

Black is not helped by 45... $\mathbb{W}a6$  46. $\mathbb{W}a7$ .

46. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

White is winning.



37... $\mathbb{Q}a8$ ?

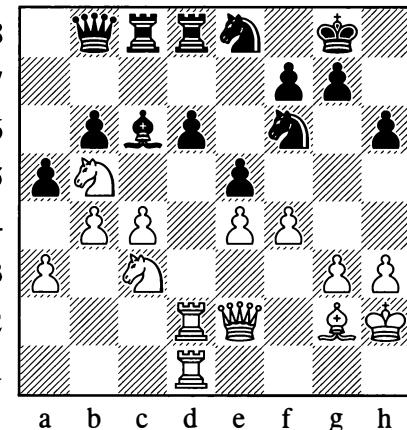
If 37... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  38.e5  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  39.exf6  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  40.fxg7 the d6-pawn is a big problem for Black.

Black should have preferred 37...e5! to gain space, and after 38. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  39.f5 we reach something close to the game continuation.

38. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ ?

Karpov wants to put the time control behind him before taking direct action. It is understandable, although objectively he should have preferred 38.bxa5! bxa5 39. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  when Black is in serious trouble as  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  is a huge threat. Play might continue 39... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  40.e5 dxе5 41.fxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (42... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  wins.) 43. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  and White wins.

38... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  e5



40.f5!

Karpov gains more space and prepares a kingside pawn storm.

40... $\mathbb{W}a8$  41.g4!

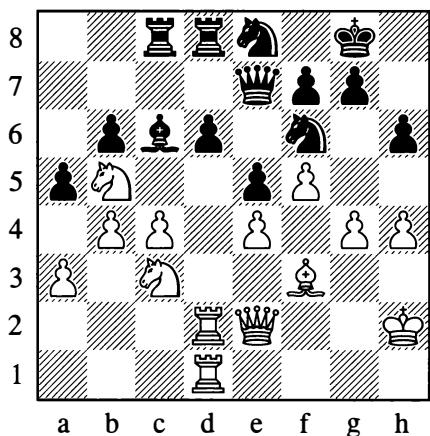
There is no sense in pawn-grabbing with 41. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ , due to 43...axb4 44.axb4  $\mathbb{W}a3$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  46.exd5  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  when Black is not worse.

41... $\mathbb{W}b8$  42.h4  $\mathbb{W}b7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Karpov continues to strengthen his position without giving his opponent any counterchances. 43.g5 would have been

premature due to  $43\dots \text{hxg5}$   $44.\text{hxg5} \mathbb{Q}\text{h7}$   $45.g6 \mathbb{Q}\text{hf6}$  when White can win the d6-pawn but his position is somewhat loose.

**43... $\mathbb{W}\text{e7}$**



**44. $\mathbb{Q}\text{g3}$**

Karpov purposefully builds his attack. He is already thinking about a potential mating attack on the h-file, so he opens the second rank in order to facilitate the transfer of heavy pieces.

**44. $\mathbb{Q}\text{g2}?$**  Ribli assesses this move as winning for White, although he does not give any further analysis. He probably had in mind the variation  $44\dots \text{axb4} 45.\text{AXB4} \text{d5!} 46.\text{cxd5} \mathbb{Q}\text{xb5} 47.\mathbb{Q}\text{xb5} \mathbb{W}\text{xb4?} 48.\mathbb{Q}\text{a7!}$  when White wins an exchange. However, Black can improve with  $47\dots \mathbb{Q}\text{d6!} 48.\mathbb{Q}\text{xd6} \mathbb{W}\text{xd6}$  when he has some chances to hold, just like in the note to move 47 below.

**44... $\text{AXB4} 45.\text{AXB4} \text{d5} 46.\text{cxd5} \mathbb{Q}\text{xb5} 47.\mathbb{Q}\text{xb5} \mathbb{W}\text{xb4?}$**

This move restores the material balance, but leaves his kingside unprotected.

Ribli later recommended playing for a blockade with  $47\dots \mathbb{Q}\text{d6!}$ , when Black has fair chances to keep his position together.

**48.g5**

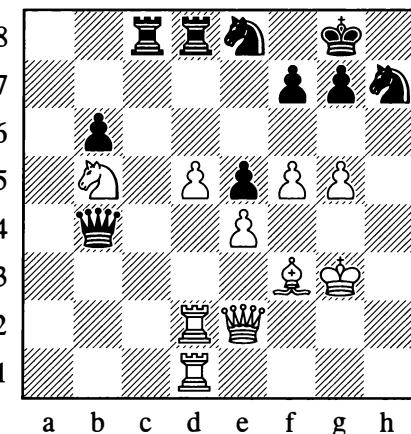
$48.\mathbb{Q}\text{a7}?!?$  does not work with the king on g3, due to  $48\dots \mathbb{Q}\text{d6!} 49.\mathbb{Q}\text{xc8} \mathbb{Q}\text{dxe4\#} 50.\mathbb{Q}\text{xe4} \mathbb{Q}\text{xe4\#} 51.\mathbb{Q}\text{f3} \mathbb{Q}\text{xd2\#}$  and Black gets back into the game.

**48... $\text{hxg5?}$**

Ribli is a player with excellent defensive skills, which your author has experienced firsthand. However, on this occasion his sense of danger lets him down.  $48\dots \mathbb{Q}\text{h7}$  was somewhat better, though ultimately still insufficient:  $49.\text{gxh6} (49.\mathbb{Q}\text{a7} \text{is less convincing due to } 49\dots \text{hxg5}) 49\dots \mathbb{Q}\text{d6} (49\dots \text{gxh6} 50.\mathbb{Q}\text{a7} \text{ wins}) 50.\mathbb{E}\text{b2}$  The blockade does not work and White is winning.

Black's most resilient defence was  $48\dots \mathbb{E}\text{c4!}$ . This does not solve all the problems, but it keeps him in the game:  $49.\text{gxf6} (49.\mathbb{E}\text{b2} \mathbb{Q}\text{xe4\#} 50.\mathbb{Q}\text{xe4} [50.\mathbb{Q}\text{g2} \mathbb{W}\text{a4}] 50\dots \mathbb{E}\text{xe4} 51.\mathbb{E}\text{xb4} \mathbb{E}\text{xe2} 52.\text{d6} \text{White has good compensation for the pawn, but Black has decent chances to hold.}) 49\dots \mathbb{W}\text{xb5} 50.\text{fxg7} \mathbb{W}\text{c5} (50\dots \mathbb{E}\text{b4} 51.\mathbb{W}\text{g2}) 51.\mathbb{Q}\text{h2} \mathbb{Q}\text{yg7} 52.\mathbb{W}\text{g2\#} \mathbb{Q}\text{f8} \text{Black's position remains difficult, but it is far from hopeless as White's bishop is rather passive.}$

**49. $\text{hxg5} \mathbb{Q}\text{h7}$**



**50.d6!**

Karpov threatens to win a piece, while also taking away the e7-square from the black king.

### 50... $\mathbb{E}c5$

After 50... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  51.d7  $\mathbb{E}c6$  52.dxe8=+  $\mathbb{W}xe8$  53. $\mathbb{Q}g4?$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  54. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  55. $\mathbb{W}b5$  White keeps the extra piece.

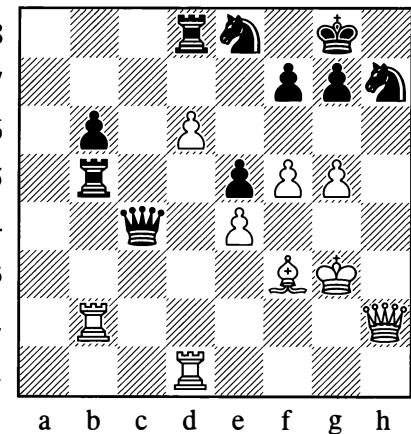
### 51. $\mathbb{E}b2!$ ?

Karpov plays pragmatically. 51. $\mathbb{W}h2$   $\mathbb{E}xb5$  52. $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  53. $\mathbb{W}xh7$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  54.f6! gxf6 55.g6! fxg6 56. $\mathbb{W}xg6$  is mating, but why sacrifice a rook to checkmate when one can achieve the same result without it?

### 51... $\mathbb{W}c4$ 52. $\mathbb{W}h2!$

Since move 40 Karpov has been playing for mate on the kingside, and his strategy is about to prevail.

### 52... $\mathbb{E}xb5$



### 53. $\mathbb{W}xh7\#$ !

Karpov finishes the game in style, sacrificing his queen to break through on the h-file.

53... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  54. $\mathbb{E}h2\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  55. $\mathbb{E}dh1$  f6  
56. $\mathbb{E}h8\#$

1-0

Ribli decided not to allow Karpov to checkmate with a pawn in the next move. Karpov played excellently and utilized the

whole board: he activated his knights on the queenside, piled up his rooks on the d-file, and eventually finished his opponent on the kingside.

After this fine win Karpov suffered a setback and lost to Ljubojevic. He drew his next game with Black against Hjartarson, then faced Haik of France. Apart from the present game, Haik only faced one other world champion in Spassky, with whom he drew on two occasions.

## Game 4

Aldo Haik – Anatoly Karpov

Dubai Olympiad 1986

### 1.e4 c5

The two time French champion was not usually a 1.e4 player, so Karpov had at least two good reasons to play a Sicilian: he wanted to play for a win, while also avoiding his opponent's preparation.

### 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ e6

Karpov employed the Kan variation a few times during his championship reign, but he only seldom used it in the eighties.

### 3.d3

This is a somewhat questionable choice against one of the great masters of closed positions. Furthermore, the King's Indian Attack was sometimes used by Fischer, and it is possible that Karpov prepared for it in anticipation of the 1975 world title match.

### 3... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 4.g3 d5 5. $\mathbb{W}e2$

Haik probably played this move in order to avoid theory. He may well have been aware of the following game:

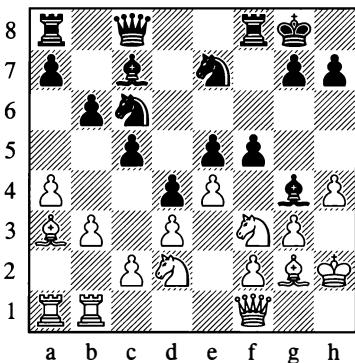
### 5. $\mathbb{Q}bd2$

Karpov faced this move twice.

5... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}ge7$  7.0-0 0-0 8. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$

A year earlier Karpov used 8... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  to defeat Sznajpik, but his play in the opening was not convincing.

9.b3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  d4 11. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  e5 12.a4 b6  
 13. $\mathbb{W}d2$  f6 14.h4  $\mathbb{W}b8$  15. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  16. $\mathbb{E}eb1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  18. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  19. $\mathbb{W}f1$  f5!  
 20. $\mathbb{Q}cd2$



20...f4!

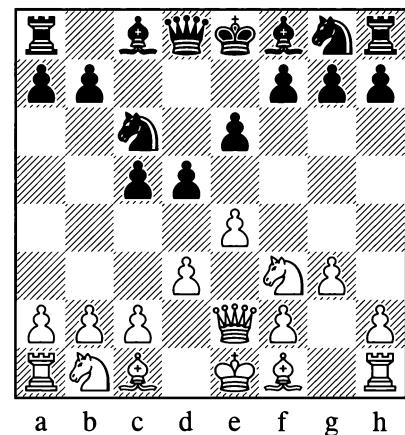
Karpov wins additional space.

21. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  h5 22. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}gf3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}af1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}af8$   
 28. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  a6!

Karpov gets ready to open a second front on the queenside. He never gets to carry out his plan, as White makes a serious mistake and collapses on the kingside.

30. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xg4??$  hxg4 32. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  f3  
 33. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$

0–1 Calvo Minguez – Karpov, Madrid 1973.



5... $\mathbb{Q}ge7$

The other main line is 5... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  intending ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ , but Karpov opts for a more dynamic set-up involving a kingside fianchetto.

6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g6 7.h4 h6!

Karpov remains flexible and defuses the further advance of the h-pawn. Naturally he avoids 7...h5?, which would weaken his dark squares and leave him static on the kingside.

8.e5

This move was first played by Torre, who used it to beat Tukmakov. Despite this success, the move is a bit premature and it is no longer played by experts.

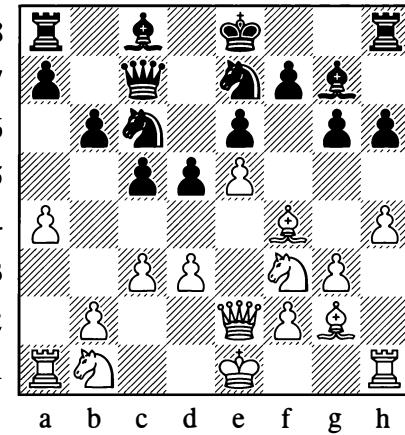
8... $\mathbb{Q}g7$

This is more natural and stronger than Tukmakov's 8... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

9.c3  $\mathbb{W}c7$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  b6 11.a4

White can save his e5-pawn with 11.d4, but this is unlikely to worry Black: 11...cx d4 12. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (12.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}b4!$  is good for Black)  
 12... $\mathbb{W}d7?$  13.cxd4 (13. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ) 13...a5  
 14. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  15.a4 0–0 Black has a good grip on the queenside.

11. $\mathbb{Q}a3??$  was also possible, although both 11... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  and 11...a6 give Black a full share of the chances.



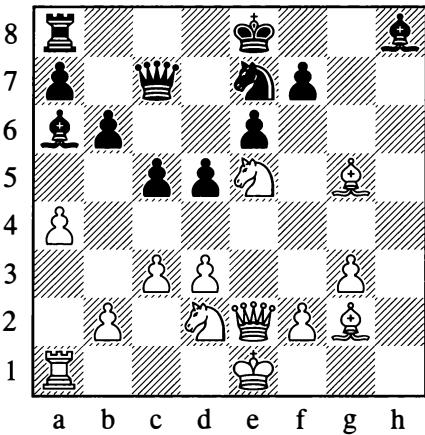
11...g5!

Karpov exchanges his g-pawn for White's e-pawn. This gives him the advantage of a central majority, as well as one less pawn island.

12.hxg5 hxg5 13.♗xh8† ♗xh8 14.♗xg5 ♖xe5 15.♗bd2

15.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  should be met by 15...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ! (but not 15...  $a6$ ? 16.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  when Black has problems as the natural 17...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  wins a pawn).

15... $\hat{\square}$ a6 16. $\hat{\square}$ xe5



16... ♔xe5

Karpov has to exchange queens, but that was not usually against his will. 16... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  18.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  20. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  21.0–0–0 reaches an equal position in which Black has little to play for.

17.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{A}xe5$

Black's central pawn majority enables him to approach the endgame with optimism.

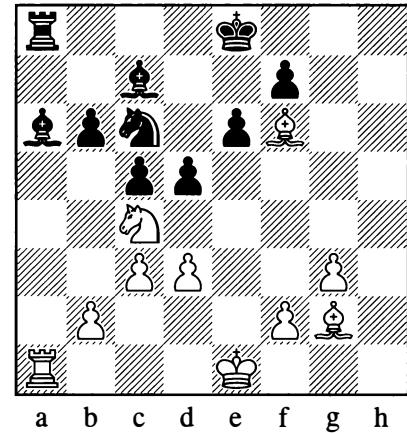
18.a5!

Haik takes the opportunity to activate his rook.

18... ♗c6 19.axb6 axb6 20.♗c4! ♖c7  
21.♖f6

White probably wanted to simplify with f4 and ♘e5, but he does not have enough time to do it.

The most logical continuation looks to be 21.♘d2 ♘d7 (21...♝a7 22.♞e3) 22.♞e3 ♘a5 (22...♞e5?! 23.c4) 23.♝h1 when White should be safe.



21...♝a7!

The rook steps onto a defended square while vacating the long diagonal.

22.0-0-0

White could have considered sacrificing a pawn with 22.♗d2!! ♕xc4 23.♕xa7 ♖xa7 24.dxc4 dxc4 25.♗b7 when his drawing chances are quite good, thanks to his two bishops and Black's doubled c-pawns.

22... $\mathbb{Q}$ d7 23. $\mathbb{Q}$ e3  $\mathbb{Q}$ e5!

Karpov offers a bishop exchange in order to get closer to the d3-pawn.

24. ♕xe5?!

When playing for a draw, it can be hard to resist the temptation to exchange pieces. Nevertheless the text move allows Black's remaining pieces to become more active.

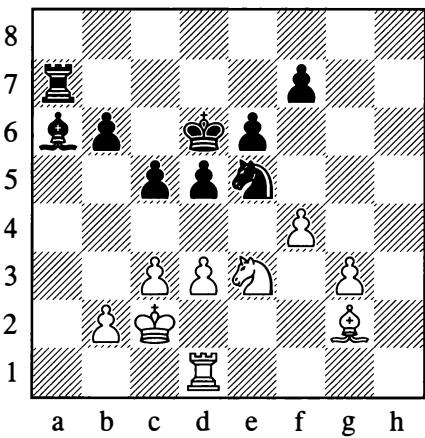
Better was 24.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  f5 26.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  when it is hard for Black to make progress.

**24...Qxe5 25.Qc2 Qd6!**

Karpov improves his king a bit.

**26.f4**

26.d4 may have been a better bet: 26...Qc6 (After 26...cx d4 27.Qxd4 f6 Black is a fraction better, but White should be safe.) 27.dxc5†? White can even think about playing for a draw by sacrificing a piece for three pawns. 27...bxc5 28.Qxd5 exd5 29.Qxd5† White should hold this ending.



**26...Qc6 27.Qh1!**

White frees the rook.

**27...Qb5 28.Qh6**

Threatening to take on d5. Alternatively after 28.Qh7 Qa1 29.Qxf7 Qa4† 30.Qd2 Qb1 31.Qf6 Qxb2† 32.Qe1 Qe7 33.Qh6 Black is better.

**28...Qe7 29.Qh8**

This is not a bad move in itself, but it signifies the beginning of a faulty plan.

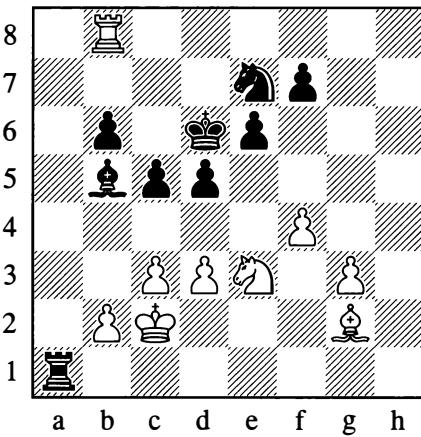
If 29.Qh1 d4 Black keeps a slight plus.

29.f5!? Pawn exchanges will bring White closer to a draw. 29...d4 30.Qxe6! fx e6 (30...f6 31.cxd4 cxd4 32.Qc4† Qxc4 33.dxc4 Qf5 [33...Qxe6 34.Qh4!] 34.e7 Qxe7 35.Qxf6†

Qe5 36.Qxb6 Qe3† 37.Qd3 Qxg2 38.Qb5† Black drops his last pawn so his extra knight will not be enough to win the game.) 31.Qh3 dx e3 32.Qxe6† Qd5 33.c4† Qxc4 34.dxc4† Qxc4 The position is drawish.

**29...Ra1 30.Qb8?**

Haik wants to be active, but his position does not justify it. A better idea was 30.Qh1 Qa4† 31.Qd2 Ra2 32.Qc1 Qb3 when Black still keeps some pressure, but is a long way from winning the game.



**30...Qc7**

Another idea is 30...Qd7?! 31.Qf8 (if 31.Qxb6?? Qc7 traps the rook.) 31...Qa4† 32.Qd2 Rb1 33.Qxf7 Qxb2† 34.Qe1 b5 and Black is better thanks to his strong b-pawn.

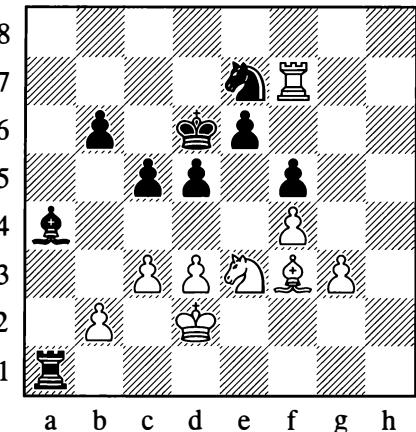
**31.Qf8 f5 32.Qf7**

32.Qf3 defends against the threat of ...Qa4 and ...Rb1, but after 32...Rg1 Black picks up g3-pawn. But note that 32...Qa4† 33.Qd2 Rb1 does not work due to 34.Qd1! when White saves himself.

**32...Qd6 33.Qf3 Qa4†**

Karpov nicely improves his pieces and increases his control over the queenside.

**34.Qd2**

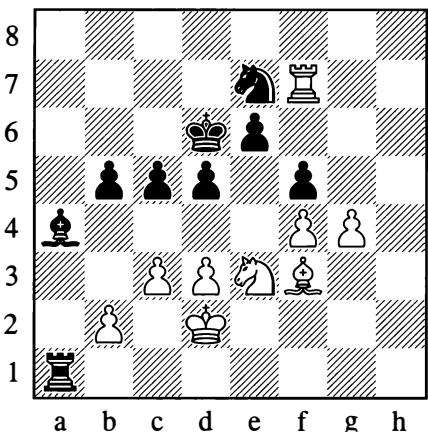


**34...b5!**

By defending his bishop Karpov makes ... $\mathbb{E}b1$  into a real threat, as the defence based on  $\mathbb{Q}d1$  will no longer work.

**35.g4**

35. $\mathbb{Q}d1?$  d4 wins.



**35...d4!**

After a patient positional build-up, Karpov takes full advantage of the tactical opportunity. White is unable to keep his position together.

**36.cxd4 cxd4 37.Qc2**

White cannot save the b-pawn with 37. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  on account of 37... $\mathbb{E}b1$  38.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  winning.

**37...Qxc2 38.Qxc2 Efl 39.Qa8**

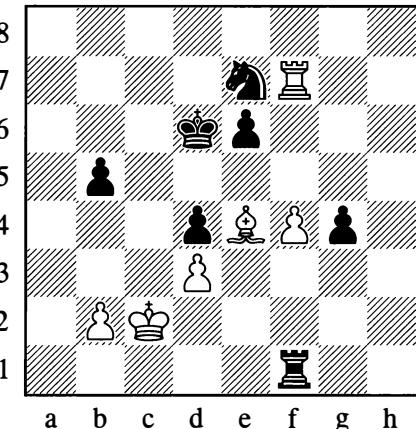
If 39. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}f2$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black wins.

**39...fxg4**

Karpov wins a pawn, and his newly created passed pawn is a runner.

**40.Qe4**

If 40. $\mathbb{E}g7$   $\mathbb{Q}f5!$  wins.



**40...Qf5!**

Karpov still plays it.

**41.Eb7**

If 41. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}xf4$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xf7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  g3 Black's pawn promotes.

**41...Exf4 42.Exb5**

This loses quickly, but with two extra pawns and a powerful passed g-pawn, Black's victory was already assured.

**42...g3 43.Eb8 Eg4**

**0–1**

Not a sparkling win, nevertheless Karpov played strongly and kept up the pressure, and when the opponent faltered Karpov punished him ruthlessly.

Karpov drew his next two games against Gheorghiu and Kiril Georgiev. Then in the penultimate round he beat Braga of Brazil. Heading into the final round, the USA were leading by half a point (the competition was decided by game points rather than match points) ahead of the USSR, with England just half a point further behind in third place.

In the final round Karpov returned to 1.e4 and crushed Sznajik in a Dragon, which helped the USSR to secure a 4–0 victory over Poland. This enabled them to claim the gold medal as the USA could only draw their final match with Bulgaria, although England also recorded a 4–0 victory so the final result could hardly have been any closer.

Karpov's final score of 6/9 was good but not spectacular. One gets the impression that he had still not fully regained his energy, and indeed he was rested for five of the fourteen games, which is more than one would normally expect for a player of his immense strength. Kasparov on the other hand had rested for the full duration between the championship match and the Olympiad, and this was reflected in his superb score of 8½/11, which brought him an individual gold medal on board one.

Although the Olympiad finished on the first of December, Karpov incredibly played in yet another tournament, the Vienna Open. It is unfortunate that nowadays the old-fashioned Elo rating system virtually forces elite players to stay away from open tournaments. I would like to see Anand at the Aeroflot Open and I wonder how Kasparov would have performed at the New York Open.

Karpov began by outplaying the Austrian IM Hoelzl from an equal rook ending with the black pieces. For the rest of the tournament he took on a rather controversial strategy and agreed quick draws in all four of his remaining black games, each lasting thirteen moves or less. Such a strategy might work at elite events, but it is not the way to win an open tournament. Fischer and Kasparov never did anything like it. He tried to win his white games, and was successful twice, but drew the other two. Karpov's final score of 6/9 was enough to share second place with Ftacnik, behind Beliavsky, who finished ahead of Karpov for the second time in 1986.

In 1986 Karpov played great chess until the end of the Kasparov match. At times the two rivals produced some of the most ferocious chess ever seen at this level, and Kasparov had to be at his best to retain his title.

After the match, Karpov rather recklessly entered too many tournaments and his tiredness caused his results to dip below their normal level. There is no question that Karpov's playing strength was lower than that of Kasparov, but the gap between them was smaller than a comparison of their respective results towards the end of the year would suggest.

## 1986 Summary

Brussels (1st place): 9/11 (+7 =4 -0)

Bugojno (1st place): 8½/14 (+4 =9 -1)

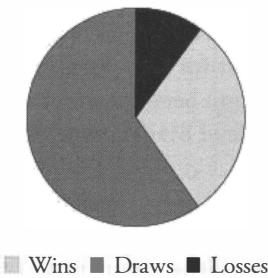
World Championship match versus Kasparov, London/Leningrad: Lost 11½–12½ (+4 =15 –5)

Tilburg (3rd place): 7½/14 (+2 =11 –1)

Dubai Olympiad (Board two): 6/9 (+4 =4 –1)

Vienna (2nd-3rd place): 6/9 (+3 =6 –0)

Total 59.9% (+24 =49 –8)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1987

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Rating 2710 (2 in the world)

Karpov's first event of 1987 was an important one: he faced his fellow Soviet Andrei Sokolov for the right to challenge Kasparov again. Karpov had been seeded directly into the candidates final, thus ensuring that any new champion would have to defeat both Karpov and Kasparov. Hitherto the contestants had met twice before, and surprisingly it was Sokolov who had got the better of their previous encounters, scoring a win and a draw.

Sokolov performed impressively in 1986. In his candidates quarter-final match he beat Vaganian convincingly. In the semi-final against Yusupov, he looked to be heading for defeat but then won three games in a row to take the match by the score of 7½–6½.

The Karpov – Sokolov match took place in Linares in February and March, so Karpov was finally able to take a proper rest after his hectic schedule in 1986. Sokolov had a narrow opening repertoire, which must have simplified Karpov's preparation considerably.

Sokolov played a total of thirty seven games against the world champions. He faced Smyslov, Tal, Spassky, Karpov and Kasparov, but never Anand, Kramnik or Topalov. He scored a total of three wins, twenty four draws and ten losses against them.

In the first game Karpov unveiled the Caro-Kann, which would in time become one of his most successful openings. In this game he got a losing position against Sokolov's IQP set-up, but eventually escaped with a draw. In Game 2, a Queen's Indian, Karpov was pressing and eventually won after Sokolov erred. The next three games were drawn without major incident.

The sixth game was another Queens Indian. Sokolov showed his tactical awareness with a spectacular double piece sacrifice, and the chief arbiter Medina even had to step in to calm the live audience. Karpov kept his cool and transitioned to an endgame with two minor pieces versus a rook, which he eventually converted. Three more draws ensued, then in Game 10 Karpov won a fine game to take an almost unassailable lead of 3–0 with four games remaining. We will look at the eleventh and final game of the match.

## Game 5

**Andrei Sokolov – Anatoly Karpov**

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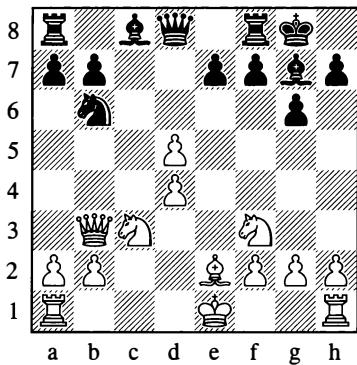
Linares (11) 1987

**1.e4**

As has been mentioned previously, Sokolov had a very narrow repertoire for a top grandmaster. In my opinion a player who is looking to challenge for the world title should be able to open the game with more than just one move.

**1...c6 2.c4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.cxd5 ♕f6 5.♕c3**

Here is another Karpov game from the end of the previous decade: 5.♕a4† ♔bd7 6.♕c3 g6 7.d4 ♕g7 8.♕b3 0–0 9.♕g5 ♔b6 10.♕xf6 ♕xf6 11.♕f3 ♕g7?! (This is unnecessary; it was more accurate to play 11...e6! at once.) 12.♕e2



12...e6! Karpov sacrifices a pawn to obtain active piece play. 13.dxe6 ♕xe6 14.♕b5 a6 15.♕b4 ♔d5 Black's active pieces give him enough compensation to maintain the balance. 16.♕xb7 ♕b8 17.♕xa6 ♕xb2 18.♕xd5 ♕xd5 19.0–0 ♕a8 20.♕d3 ♕xa2 Black held the position fairly easily, Larsen – Karpov, Montreal 1979.

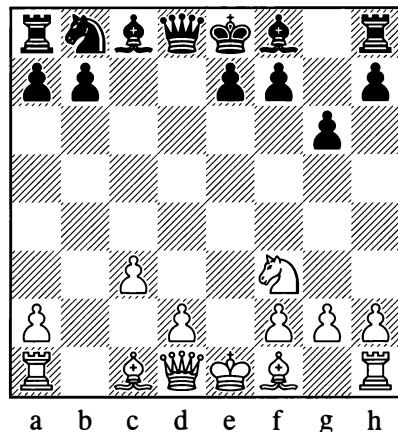
**5...♕xd5 6.♕f3 ♕xc3?!**

In the first game Karpov preferred 6...e6 and later got into trouble. Now he tries a different approach.

**7.bxc3 g6**

The more conventional set-up with ...e6 often leads to positions in which White has chances to develop a kingside attack, so Karpov decides to bolster his kingside with a fianchetto. Hitherto it had only rarely been played, and Black had scored poorly, but Karpov's home analysis must have convinced him that it was playable. Maybe he should have searched for more of these relatively unknown possibilities

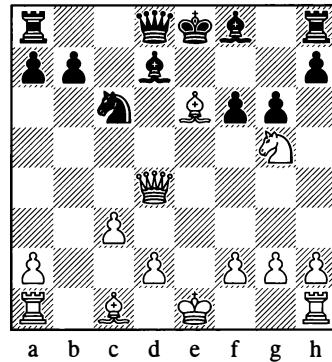
in an effort to avoid Kasparov's fearsome preparation.



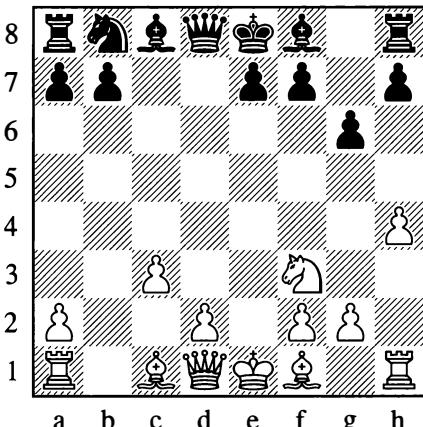
**8.h4!?**

This is a highly ambitious and risky move. It is still played occasionally, although 8.d4 is unsurprisingly the main line.

Let me show you the first game in which 7...g6 was played. It is rather amusing (and will not take long!): 8.♕a4† ♔d7 9.♕d4 f6 10.♕c4 ♔c6 11.♕g5 e6 12.♕xe6



Here the inventor of the line resigned in Merkulov – Trapezonian, Moscow 1956, but it turns out that Black could have won! The simple refutation is 12...♕xe6 13.♕xe6 (Black must have overlooked that after 13.♕xd8† he can play 13...♕xd8! when he keeps an extra piece.) 13...♕xd4 14.♕xd8 ♔c2† 15.♔d1 ♕xal with a decisive material advantage.



**8...Bg7!**

Karpov does not panic, but calmly continues developing. Karpov may have prepared this move at home, as the position before the text move had occurred in a previous high level game, which continued: 8...h6 9.d4Bg7 10.Qe2 (10.Qf4!?) 10...Qc6 11.0–0 0–0 12.Qf4 Qg4 13.Bb1 Qd7 14.Wd2 Qh7 15.d5Qxf3 16.Qxf3 Qe5 17.Qe2 Qfc8 18.h5 White had a small advantage and went on to win, Beliavsky – Tal, Moscow 1982.

**9.h5 Qc6!**

In view of the situation on the kingside, there is no point in castling too early.

**10.Bb1!?**

The rook begins a journey which turns out to be ill-fated. 10.d4 is more natural.

**10...Wc7**

By defending the b7-pawn, Karpov prepares to develop his light-squared bishop.

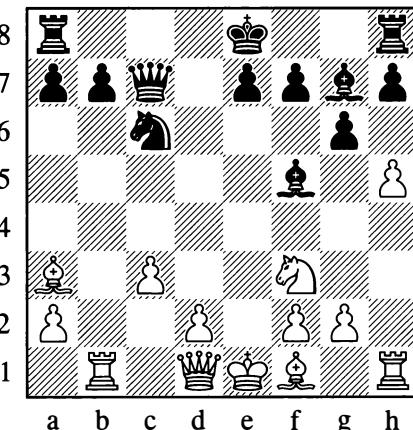
**11.Qa3!?**

Developing the bishop to this diagonal does not fit well with the early advance of the h-pawn.

**11...Bf5**

Karpov develops the bishop with gain of

tempo. The position was evaluated as clearly better for Black by IM Podgaets, who was a long time helper of Karpov. This verdict seems excessive, although there is no question that the second player has a comfortable game.



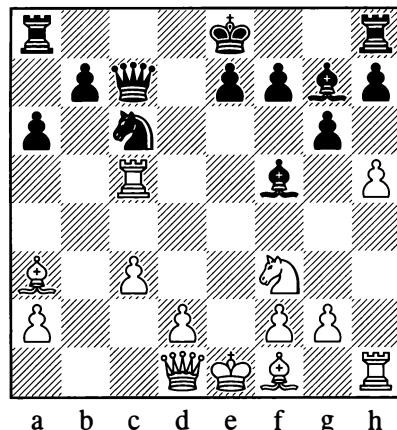
**12.Qb5**

The young Russian grandmaster wants to keep the rook active, but it ends up resembling the prey rather than the predator. 12.Qb2 was safer, but Sokolov obviously wanted to play as aggressively as possible in this game.

**12...a6!**

Karpov forces the rook to choose between the b-file and the fifth rank.

**13.Qc5**



### 13... $\mathbb{W}d7!$

This must have been an unpleasant move to meet, especially taking into consideration the match situation, whereby White was effectively forced to play for a win. The queen move sets up two important defensive ideas, namely a potentially awkward check on e6 and the blocking move ... $\mathbb{Q}d3$ .

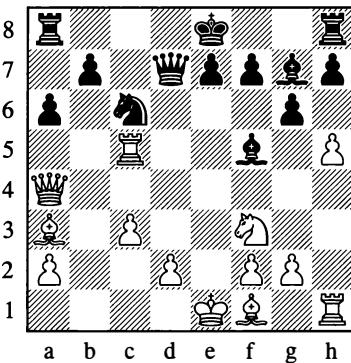
### 14. $\mathbb{W}b3$

Sokolov allows a queen exchange. With this move he admits that his opening strategy has not been a success, but he keeps his position playable. What else could he do?

If 14. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  Black can obtain a good position with 14... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  or 14... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ .

14.d4 b6! forces the white rook onto the awkward c4-square. Alternatively Black can play 14... $\mathbb{W}e6\uparrow$  15. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xe2\uparrow$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  when the queenless position is fine for him.

### 14. $\mathbb{W}a4?!$



This prevents the exchange of the light-squared bishops thanks to a nice tactical shot.

### 14... $\mathbb{W}e6\uparrow?!$

The trap is revealed after 14... $\mathbb{Q}d3?$  15.h6!  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  17. $\mathbb{B}xc6!$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe7\uparrow$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  and White wins.

14... $\mathbb{B}c8$  is possible though.

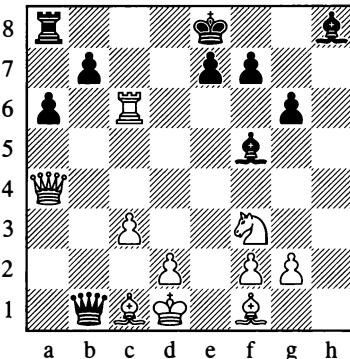
### 15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ $\mathbb{W}xa2$

Black is also fine after 15... $\mathbb{W}d7$ , as it is worth sacrificing two tempos to stop White from castling.

### 16.hxg6 hxg6?!

A simpler route to a draw is 16... $\mathbb{fxg6}$  17. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}b1\uparrow$  (17... $\mathbb{Q}d2??$  18. $\mathbb{W}b4!$ ) 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d3\uparrow$  with a perpetual.

### 17. $\mathbb{B}xh8\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}xh8$ 18. $\mathbb{B}xc6$ $\mathbb{W}b1\uparrow$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}c1$



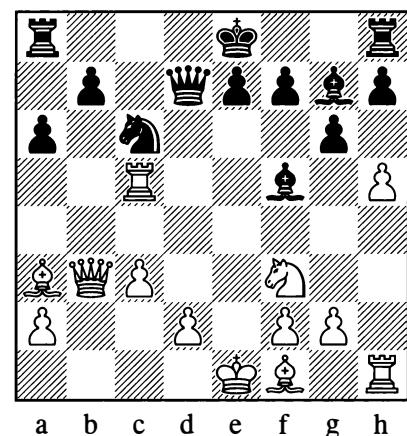
### 19... $\mathbb{B}5!$ 20. $\mathbb{W}h4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7!!$

Black can play to trap the rook in a most unusual way.

### 21. $\mathbb{B}b6$

21. $\mathbb{B}c5?$   $\mathbb{Q}c2\uparrow$  is winning for Black.  
21... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  22. $\mathbb{W}xe7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  23. $\mathbb{W}d6\uparrow$

The game ends with a perpetual check.

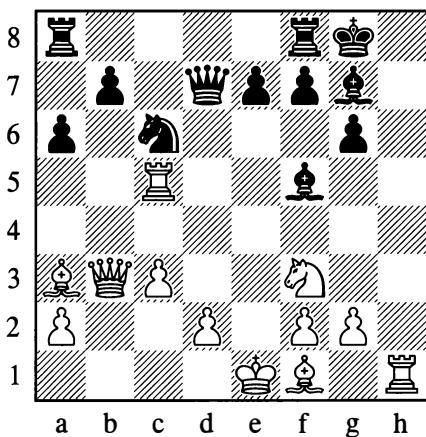


### 14...0-0!

White has too many pieces on the queenside,

so Black can safely castle. Given the match situation, many players would have opted for safety with 14... $\mathbb{W}e6\uparrow$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xb3$  16.axb3 when the position is about equal. But Karpov is not desperate to exchange queens, especially when it means improving his opponent's pawn structure, and instead he plays the objectively strongest continuation.

### 15.hxg6 hxg6



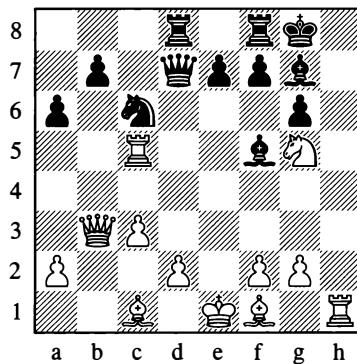
### 16. $\mathbb{Q}c4\text{?}$

Sokolov is looking for active play, but the bishop takes away the escape route from the rook. White had several other choices, although none of them were particularly promising.

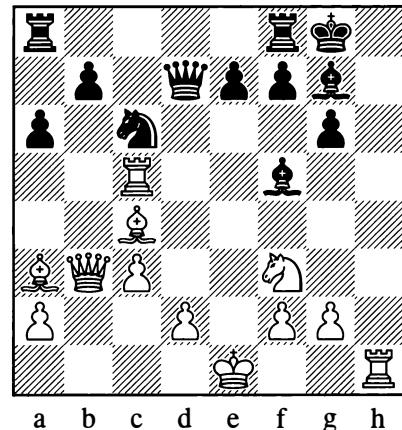
It is too late aim for a 'natural' set-up with 16.d4, due to 16...b6! 17. $\mathbb{W}xb6$  (or 17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}e6\uparrow$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  and White is in trouble) 17... $\mathbb{W}e6\uparrow$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}ab8$ ! [18... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  is cute, but much less effective] 19. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}b1\uparrow$ –+) 18... $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  19. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}b1\uparrow$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xa2\uparrow$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  and White has a difficult position because of his shaky king.

White's objectively best continuation was probably 16. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}fd8$  17.0–0, but this is inconsistent with his earlier play, and in the resulting position Black stands better as he will exert pressure against the hanging pawns.

16. $\mathbb{Q}g5\text{?}$  would have been the best attacking attempt, but Black should be more than okay here too, as long as he remains calm: 16... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ ! (16...b6? 17. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$  e6 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  is better for White; 16...b5 is possible, and after 17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  it is doubtful that White has anything better than 18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  offering to repeat; Black can also try 16... $\mathbb{Q}f6\text{?}$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h7$  when the position is unclear.) 17. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (17.d4?  $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$  wins.)



17... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ! (If 17...e5 18. $\mathbb{W}c4!$  the queen transfer to h4 is dangerous.) 18. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d3\uparrow$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  20. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  White is struggling, and it is hard for him to develop his attack.



### 16... $\mathbb{Q}f6\text{!}$

With this great move Karpov thwarts White's attacking chances by taking away the g5- and h4-squares from the knight and queen.

16...b5!!

Black can also play against the rook at once.

17.Qd5 Qa5 18.Wb4 Qb7 19.Qg5??

In an over the board situation, this appears to lead to a terrifying attack, but objectively it is a mistake.

Correct is 19.Qxb7 Wxb7 20.0–0, but White is only playing to equalize here.

19...Qxc5 20.Qh8†?!

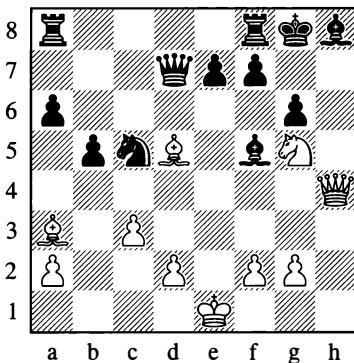
The best chance.

If 20.Wh4 Qfd8 21.Qxf7† Qf8 22.0–0 Qe4!

Black keeps his huge material advantage.

20...Qxh8 21.Wh4

In his *Chess Informant* analysis Podgaets evaluates the position winning for White, but it turns out that Black can escape.



21...Qg7! 22.Qxa8

After 22.Wh7† Qf6 23.Wh4 Wxd5 White has no strong discovered checks, so he loses.

22...Qd3† 23.Qf1 Wxa8 24.f4 e5

And Black wins. Despite the viability of this line, from a practical perspective Karpov's move was clearly the best choice.

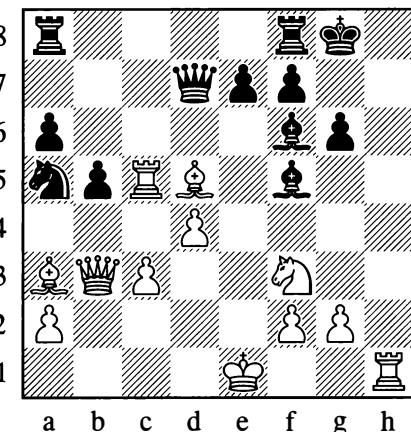
**17.d4 b5!!**

Karpov plays to win the present game, rather than 'only' the match. His plan is to trap the opponent's adventurous rook.

He could have simplified to an endgame with 17...b6 18.Wxb6 Rfb8 19.Wxc6 Rb1† 20.Qe2 Wxc6 21.Rxc6 Rxh1 22.Rxa6 Rxh1

23.Qxa6 when White is worse but has drawing chances.

**18.Qd5 Qa5**



**19.Wd1?**

This is an unfortunate square for the queen.

**19.Wb4!**

Bringing the queen to the fourth rank was stronger, and in some lines she might even find her way to h4.

19...Qb7 20.Qe5!

White's pieces are oddly arranged in the centre, but they offer him just enough dynamic chances to maintain the balance.

**20...Qxe5?!**

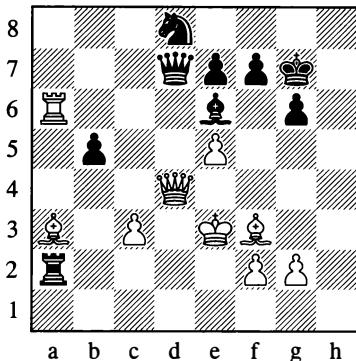
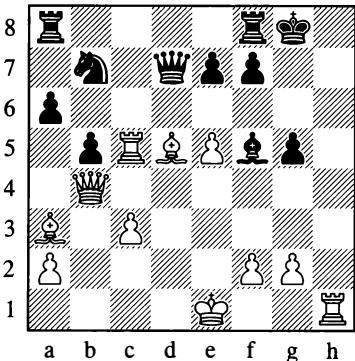
I have given this as the main line because it is the most interesting move to analyse, but objectively it is risky for Black.

Had this variation occurred at the board, Karpov would almost certainly have opted for the following simplifying line: 20...Qxc5! 21.Qxd7 Qd3† 22.Qf1 Wxb4 23.Qxf6† Qg7 (23...exf6 24.Qxa8 Rxa8 25.Qxb4 is also drawish.) 24.Qxb4 Qxf6 25.Qxa8 The position is absolutely equal.

**21.dxe5 Qg7!**

21...Qxc5?? 22.Wh4 wins.

21...g5? takes away the h4-square from the queen, but White has a great resource.



22.  $\mathbb{W}d4!! \mathbb{Q}xc5$  23.  $\mathbb{B}h8\#!$  and White wins the queen.

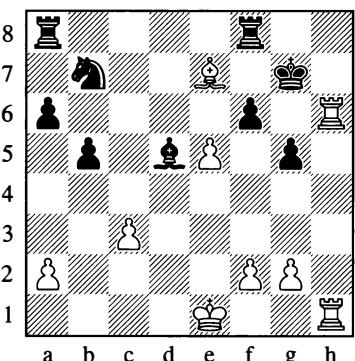
22.  $\mathbb{W}d4 \mathbb{Q}e6$  23.  $\mathbb{B}c6!$

After 23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  24.  $cxd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  Black is safe.

23...  $\mathbb{B}h8!$

Black's best chance to maintain the balance.

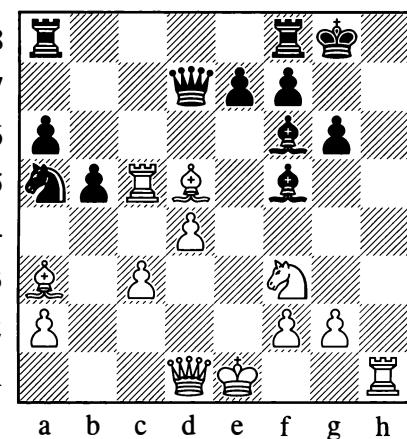
23...  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$   $g5$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26.  $\mathbb{B}ch6$  (If 26.  $\mathbb{B}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  28.  $\mathbb{B}xg5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  29.  $g4$  White only achieves a perpetual.) 26...  $f6$  (26...  $\mathbb{B}g8?$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  28.  $\mathbb{B}h8$  wins.)



27.  $f3!!$  Intending  $g4$  to cage the black king. (27.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8\#?$   $\mathbb{B}xf8$  leaves White facing a difficult ending) 27...  $\mathbb{B}g8$  (27...  $\mathbb{Q}a5?$  loses to 28.  $\mathbb{B}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  [28...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  29.  $exf6$  wins] 29.  $g4$  followed by mate in two.) 28.  $exf6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  29.  $\mathbb{B}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30.  $f7$  White has decent winning chances.

24.  $\mathbb{B}xh8$   $\mathbb{B}xh8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{B}h1\#$  26.  $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}a1$  27.  $\mathbb{B}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}xa2\#$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$

White's chances are slightly higher, but it will be hard for him to exploit his bishop pair.



19...  $\mathbb{Q}b7!$

This forces White to make an unpleasant choice: he must either lose his 'active' rook, or exchange his strong bishop, thus handing his opponent full control over the light squares.

20.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!!$

Objectively this is wrong, although Sokolov was in a desperate match situation so it is understandable that he chose to gamble with the exchange sacrifice.

After 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  21.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  White's position is no doubt depressing, but he still has chances to survive. Black has a few tempting options in 21...  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  and even 21...  $\mathbb{Q}g7?!$ , intending to take over the h-file.

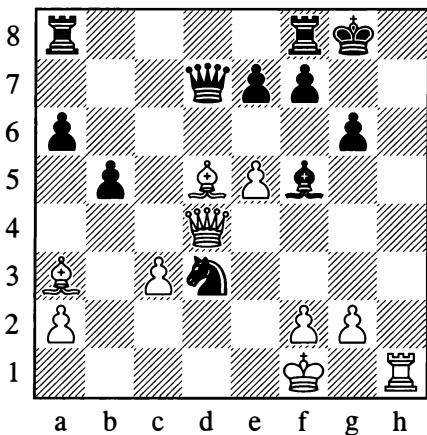
20... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  22. $\mathbb{W}d4$

22... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}fd8$  wins.

22... $\mathbb{Q}d3\ddagger$ !

Karpov finds the clinical refutation. After the imprecise 22... $\mathbb{B}ad8?$  23. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  24. $\mathbb{B}xh3$   $\mathbb{W}xh3$  25.gxh3  $\mathbb{B}xd5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}xc5$  27. $\mathbb{W}xe7$  White probably holds.

23. $\mathbb{Q}f1$



23... $\mathbb{W}a7\ddagger$

This completely refutes White's attack.

24. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

24. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{W}xf2\ddagger$  leads to a winning ending for Black.

24... $\mathbb{W}xd4$  25.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$

0-1

White is a rook down so he resigned. Karpov's opening and middlegame play were based on well-known principles, but he also controlled the tactics superbly, despite Sokolov's best efforts to throw the game into turmoil.

The final score of 7½–3½ was a great triumph for Karpov, and it brought the previously high flying Sokolov crashing back down to earth. I know Andrei from junior tournaments, and he was the most confident player I ever met.

Maybe there were other factors, but it seems to me that the outcome of this match broke his confidence and he did not maintain his world class status for much longer. Karpov's dominant victory must also have come as a bold message to Kasparov.

\*\*\*

Not long after the Sokolov match, Karpov participated in a top level tournament in Brussels. He started with two hard fought draws against Larsen and Tal, then defeated Meulders in a nice endgame. In rounds 4 and 5 Karpov pressed for roughly sixty moves, but had to settle for draws against Van der Wiel and Winants. It looked like his game against Nigel Short would end in a draw as well, but after a period of accurate defence, the Englishman blundered badly and lost the game in one move. In the next two rounds Karpov drew with Torre and Timman, then benefitted from a huge slice of good fortune after Korchnoi touched the wrong piece and left a knight en prise in what should have been a dead drawn position.

In the penultimate round Karpov and Kasparov faced each other for the hundredth time. Playing with the white pieces, it looked like Karpov would obtain the kind of slight endgame advantage that suited him so well, but Kasparov reacted with a dynamic pawn sacrifice in order to install a rook on the second rank. The position should have been equal, but Karpov misplayed it and in the end he had to fight hard to draw. In the final round he had a quick draw with Ljubojevic, who had one of the tournaments of his life, sharing first prize with Kasparov on 8½/11.

Karpov finished in third place with 7/11. It was a decent result, but not a spectacular one, especially considering that a couple of his wins could easily have ended in draws had his opponents not blundered. My impression is

that he had played in too many events in the previous six months. He prepared his openings mainly for his matches against Kasparov and Sokolov, which left him with insufficient time to prepare for other top grandmasters.

Karpov's next tournament was the Euwe memorial in Amsterdam, a four-player, double-round-robin event. His opponent in the first round was Korchnoi. Since their encounter in London 1984 (Game 71 of the first volume), Karpov had defeated him twice (including the recent touch-move accident) and they had drawn three times.

## Game 6

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Korchnoi

Amsterdam 1987

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♜b4† 4.♗d2**

This was Karpov's usual choice, although he sometimes played 4.♗bd2 as well. He scored well with both of them.

**4...c5!?**

According to the database this move was first played by P. Wolf (not to be confused with the grandmaster Patrick Wolff) against Martz at the 1963 Illinois Open. However, it was the Latvian genius of creative opening play, Alvis Vitolins, who first started to play it regularly.

Remarkably, over the course of his long career Karpov only ever faced this variation in the present game. It probably did not come as a surprise to him, as a year earlier Korchnoi has outplayed Kasparov from the black side of it, only to squander his advantage in time trouble and concede a draw.

**5.♗xb4**

Kasparov did not take on b4, but played 5.g3.

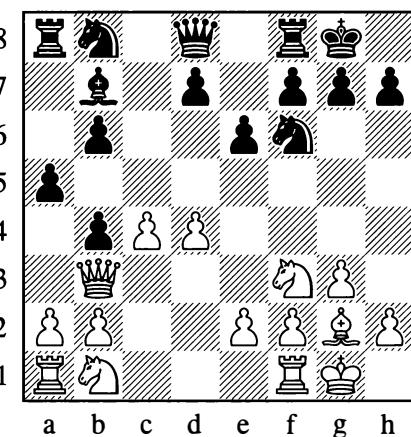
**5...cx b4 6.g3 b6**

After this game Korchnoi switched to 6...0–0 and achieved decent results.

**7.♗g2 ♜b7 8.0–0 0–0 9.♗b3**

Karpov provokes the following pawn move. Later the queen might want to go to d3, once the reply ...♝e4 has been prevented.

**9...a5**



**10.a3!**

Karpov wastes no time in undermining Black's queenside and drawing his knight to a passive position.

**10...♞a6**

Taking on a3 would give White easy play on the b-file.

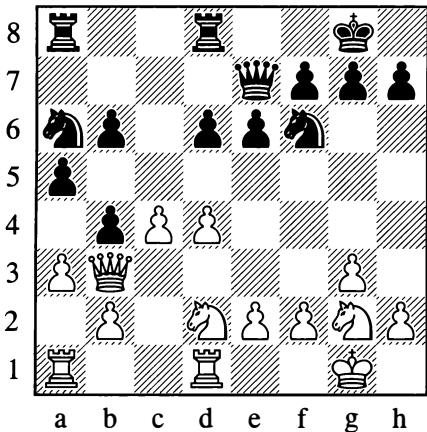
**11.♗bd2 d6 12.♗fd1 ♜e7 13.♗e1!**

Karpov anticipates that Korchnoi will want to play ...e5 some point, and sees that with no bishops on the board he will have better chances to utilize the d5- and e4-squares.

**13...♗xg2 14.♗xg2 ♜fd8?!**

Korchnoi probably underestimated Karpov's plan. The main line is 14...♜b7, a flexible move which enables Black to liberate himself with ...b5 in some positions. 15.♗e3 ♜fc8 (The

immediate 15...b5?! is premature due to 16.a4! bxc4 17.♘xc4 ♜c7 18.♗dc1 ♜cd5 19.♗xd5 exd5 20.♗d3 with some advantage for White, Nikolic – Renet, Debrecen 1992.) 16.♗c2 bxa3 17.bxa3 d5 18.♗ab1 ♜ab8 19.♗e3 White kept some pressure on the queenside but Black remained solid enough, Zueger – Gostisa, Graz 1993.



### 15.♗e3!

Karpov not only centralizes his knight, but also creates the subtle positional threat of ♜c2, which would force Black to capture on a3 and open the b-file.

### 15...♝e8

Korchnoi gets ready for ♜c2, which can now be met by ...a4.

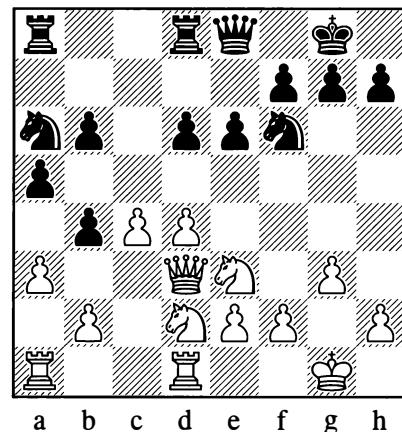
15...d5 is possible, although in this case Black is agreeing to take on a somewhat worse position on account of the doubled b-pawns. 16.cxd5 ♜xd5 (16...exd5 17.♗f3) 17.♗dc4 ♜g5 18.♗xd5 ♜xd5 19.♗ac1 ♜ac8 In this position White keeps some advantage with either 20.a4, or 20.e4!? ♜b7 (20...♜xe4? 21.♗d6!) 21.♜e3.

### 16.♗d3!

Another fine multipurpose move. Since the move ...a4 no longer comes with gain of

tempo, Karpov has renewed the threat of ♜c2. By centralizing his queen, he also anticipates Black's potential activity in that area of the board.

16.♗c2?! would have been premature due to 16...a4 17.♗f3 (or 17.♗d3 b3 18.♗e3 ♜d7 19.♗ac1 ♜c7 and Black is doing fine) 17...b3 18.♗e3 b5 when Black has a pleasant game. Interestingly Black's a-pawn is less vulnerable on a4 than on a5, as White's knights are currently a long way from being able to attack the former.



### 16...e5?

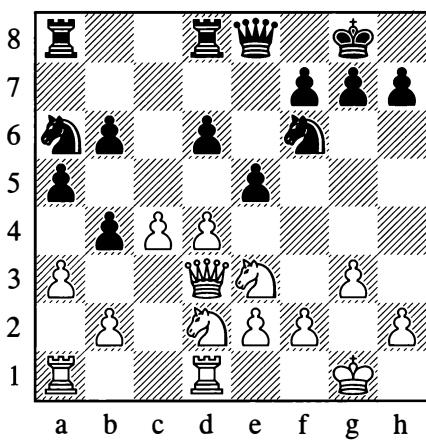
Presumably Korchnoi was concerned about the impending ♜c2, and decided to take action in the centre. However, it soon transpires that the cure is worse than the disease, as Black's pawn structure is weakened considerably, along with some key central squares. Instead Black should have played some kind of waiting move.

16...♜ac8? allows 17.c5! when Black is in trouble.

16...♜a7 is mentioned by Karpov and Zaitsev, who evaluate the position as slightly better for White without giving any further analysis. White should carry out his plan with 17.♗c2

bxa3 18.bxa3 followed by attacking on the b-file.

Karpov also mention 16... $\mathbb{W}c6$ , giving it the same evaluation, although it seems to me that this is probably Black's best try. A likely continuation is 17. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  bxa3 18.bxa3  $\mathbb{E}ac8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  20. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  when Black's position with the weak b6-pawn is worse, but not unbearable.



### 17. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

With this move Karpov opens the d-file and exchanges Black's better knight, thus facilitating the occupation of the d5-square. The disappearance of a pair of knights will also accentuate the misplacement of Black's remaining knight on a6.

Korchnoi played the opening and early middlegame well below his normal level, as at move 17 he is already close to being lost. When one starts playing a new opening system it gives motivation and some inspiration, but it takes time to develop the deep understanding which is necessary to succeed at a high level. Credit to Karpov though – he prepared well and did everything correctly.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Black has to take the knight, otherwise he loses a pawn: 17... $\mathbb{W}e7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

### 18. $\mathbb{W}xe4$ exd4!?

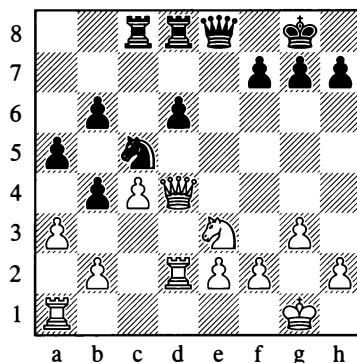
Korchnoi simplifies, perhaps hoping to steer the game towards a rook ending in which drawing chances may occur. But he never gets close to achieving it, and the backward d-pawn becomes a serious weakness. Black would have had a hard time after other moves as well.

### 18... $\mathbb{E}ac8$ 19. $\mathbb{E}d2$

This simple move works well.

A good alternative is 19.  $\mathbb{W}b7?!$  exd4 20.  $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  22.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  when Black is in trouble.

### 19... exd4 20. $\mathbb{W}xd4$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$



### 21. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$

From here the knight attacks three key squares.

### 21... $\mathbb{W}f8$ 22. $\mathbb{W}e3!$

22.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{E}e8!$  (but not 22...  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$  23.  $\mathbb{E}d5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1?$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$  with a cute mating attack) 23.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$  bxa3 24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  a2 is not fully convincing.

### 22... $\mathbb{E}e8$

White was threatening a fork on e7.

### 23. $\mathbb{W}f3$

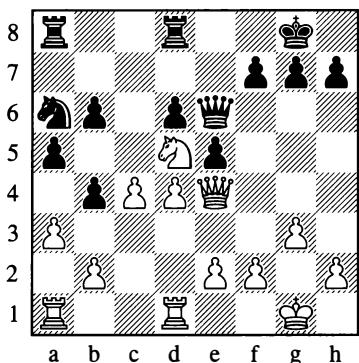
Black will suffer due to his isolated pawn.

The best chance may have been:

### 18... $\mathbb{W}e6?!$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

19.  $\mathbb{W}b7?!$  is less promising: 19... exd4 20.  $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}g2$  (21.  $\mathbb{W}f3?$  does not work, as 21...  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  22.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  wins for

Black.) 21... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  White is a bit tied up.

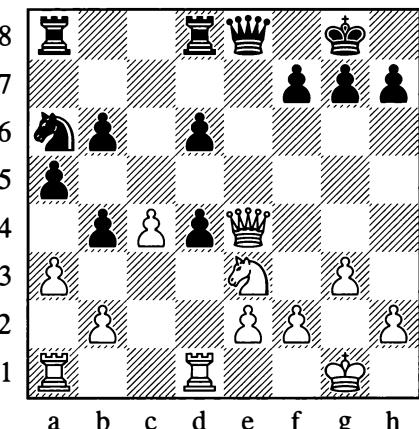


19... $\mathbb{E}ab8!$

Karpov and Zaitsev only mention the line 19...exd4 20. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  21.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  axb4 23.e3, after which they opine that White is already winning.

20.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  axb4 22.dxe5 dxe5 23. $\mathbb{E}d5$

Black's position is passive and unpleasant, but he still has chances to survive.



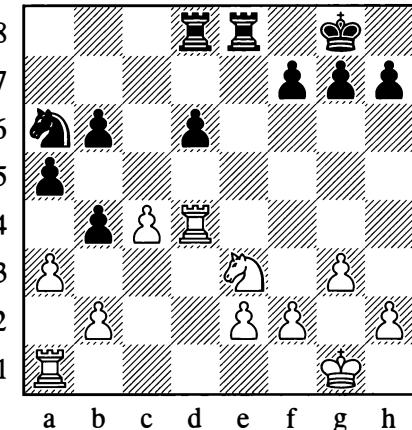
19. $\mathbb{W}xe8\#!$

Karpov correctly judges that he can bring down his opponent in the endgame, as Black has too many weak pawns.

Nevertheless his chances would also have remained excellent with queens on the board:

19. $\mathbb{W}xd4\?!$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xe2$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f3$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  Black faces serious problems here as well.

19... $\mathbb{E}xe8$  20. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$



21. $\mathbb{E}ad1$

Karpov's style in endgames involves improving his pieces first, followed by his king. He follows the same formula in this game as well.

21... $\mathbb{E}e6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  b3

Korchnoi hopes that by fixing the b2-pawn he can get play against it, but his pieces are too far away from that pawn. His situation would have been gloomy after other moves as well.

22...g6 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  bxa3 24.bxa3  $\mathbb{E}b8$  25. $\mathbb{E}b1$  White wins a pawn.

22...bxa3 23.bxa3 Black would like to eliminate all the queenside pawns as he would have some chances to draw with three versus four on the kingside, but he cannot even accomplish this, for instance: 23... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  26. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{E}e5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  28. $\mathbb{E}xd6$  White is winning.

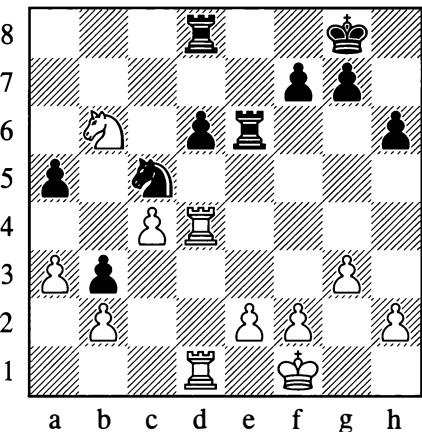
23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$

This wins a pawn without allowing any compensation.

**23...Qc5**

There is no point in trying to hang onto the pawn with 23...Bb8, as 24.Qc3 Qd8 25.Qa4 wins.

**24.Qxb6 h6**



**25.f3!**

Karpov takes away the e4-square to stop any potential counterplay. His main idea is to win the d6-pawn, but it will not run away.

**25...g5 26.Q1d2!**

Karpov combines attack and defence, using the rook to guard both the b2- and e2-pawns, while also menacing d6. The idea is not hard to find, but it is instructive nonetheless.

**26...Qg7**

Bringing the king to the centre would not have helped: 26...Qf8 27.Qd5 Qg6 28.Qe3 Qf6 29.Qd5 Black's position falls apart.

**27.Qd5 Qa4 28.Qc7 Qf6 29.Qb5**

Karpov wins a second pawn, and with it the game.

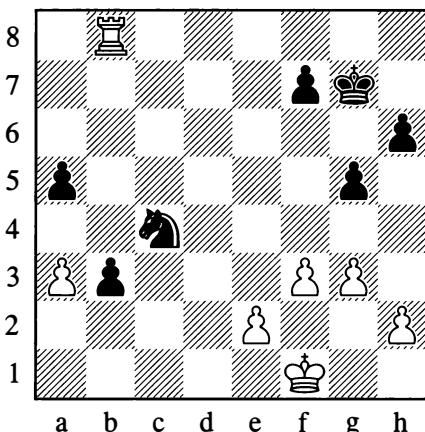
**29...Qf8 30.Qxd6 Qfxd6!?**

A desperate exchange sacrifice. 30...Qxb2 was no good due to 31.c5 when the knight is trapped.

**31.Qxd6 Qxd6 32.Qxd6 Qxb2**

Korchnoi gets the b-pawn in the end, but he has sacrificed too much material in the process.

**33.Qb6 Qxc4 34.Qb8† Kg7**



**35.a4!**

Karpov separates Black's queenside pawns, resulting in a trivial win.

**35...Qf6 36.e4 Qe5 37.Qe2**

**1–0**

The b-pawn will disappear, along with all Black's hopes. Karpov completely outplayed Korchnoi in the opening, and converted his advantage ruthlessly. It is hard to say for sure, but this game may be an example of how the Kasparov matches stimulated Karpov to raise the level of his opening preparation.

In the next round Karpov drew with Timman, then defeated Van der Wiel to cap an excellent first half of the tournament. In the next three rounds he slowed down and drew all three games. He was pressing against both Korchnoi and Timman, then after a sharp opening against Van der Wiel he settled for

an equal endgame. This slower second half enabled Timman to draw level and share first place with 4/6.

Karpov's next tournament was in Bilbao, where world class grandmasters mixed with locals and two top female players. In the first round Karpov had the white pieces against Izeta Txabarri. The endgame was close to drawn, but Karpov kept pressing and eventually the local player succumbed. He followed this with a solid draw against Andersson, then faced Zsuzsa Polgar, the eldest of the famous sisters and a future women's world champion.

It is not easy to determine precisely how many full length games Polgar played against the world champions, as there are numerous rapid, blind, and other exhibition games in the mix. As far as I can see, she has played a total of twenty two 'normal' games against the world champions, from Smyslov all the way to Topalov, with the exceptions of Fischer, Kasparov and Kramnik. Against these giants she scored one win, eleven draws and ten losses. She lost her only subsequent encounter with Karpov.

## Game 7

Anatoly Karpov – Zsuzsa Polgar

Bilbao 1987

### 1.c4

With his fourth match against Kasparov approaching, Karpov does not want to reveal too much information in his main openings. He may also have been influenced by the fact that Zsuzsa often played a sharp version of the Queen's Gambit Accepted. Around that time, your author worked with her and together we developed some new ideas in this opening. With one of them she beat Van der Sterren and drew against Timman, and I managed

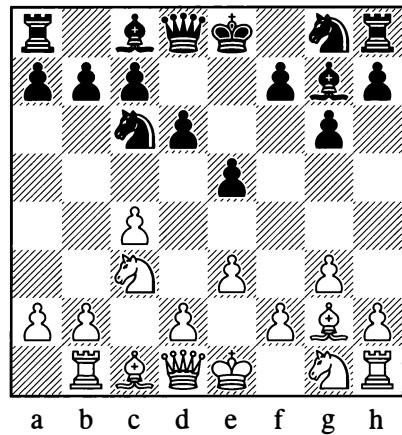
to obtain an excellent position against Tal although I later lost my way and was punished by the maestro.

### 1...e5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.g3 g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.e3

It looks like Karpov wanted to avoid any opening lines involving an early confrontation.

### 5...d6 6.♗b1

In closed positions, gaining space with pawns often constitutes an effective strategy.



### 6...♗ge7

In such positions the inclusion of the moves 6...a5 and 7.a3 brings certain advantages for both sides. Black will exchange a pair of pawns on the queenside, meaning one less target for White, and he will temporarily obtain the a-file for his rook. On the other hand, since White naturally has the initiative on the queenside, the open file is likely to fall into his hands during the middlegame. Overall the choice is a matter of taste.

### 7.b4 a6 8.d3 ♕e6 9.♘d5

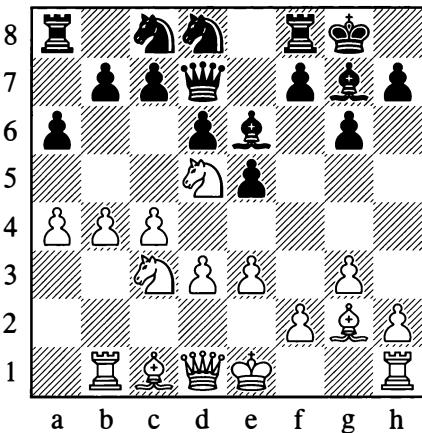
Elite chess players cannot expect to succeed at the highest level if they conduct the opening in this manner in every game with the white pieces, but every now and again it can be done. With his last move Karpov prevents ...d5.

**9...0–0**

The position is a Closed Sicilian with reversed colours. In that line White sometimes pushes the h-pawn without castling, but it would be rather risky to try it a tempo down.

**10.♘e2 ♖d7 11.♘ec3 ♘d8 12.a4 ♘c8**

Polgar carries out a well-known plan, preparing ...c6 to oust the strong knight, without allowing an exchange on e7.

**13.♘e4**

Of course Karpov was not entertaining any thoughts of winning the black queen with a fork on f6. Instead he vacates the c3-square for the other knight, and meanwhile creates the positional threat of ♘g5 which would eliminate an important bishop.

**13...f6**

Zsuzsa decides to keep the bishop. The pawn move appears ugly, but it will advance to f5 after suitable preparation.

It was also possible to ‘sacrifice’ the bishop with 13...f5?! in order to obtain more fluent piece play: 14.♗g5 c6 15.♘c3 ♗f6 (15...♗e7?!) 16.♗xe6 ♗xe6 Black’s pieces stand well, and it is not easy for White to open the position for his bishops.

**14.0–0 c6 15.♘dc3 ♘f7**

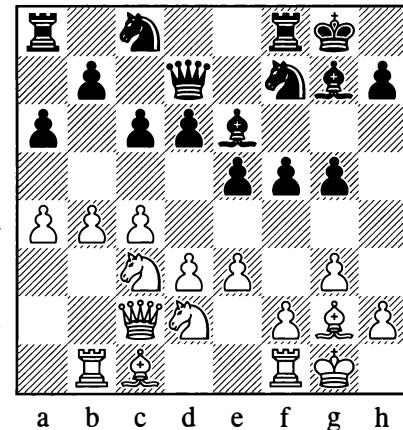
Black improves the knight and prepares ...f5. Exchanging the bishop with 15...♗h3 was a reasonable alternative. Later Black can develop her knight to e6, where it stands well.

**16.♗c2 f5 17.♗d2 g5?!**

Zsuzsa hopes to build an attack, but Karpov’s queenside play turns out to be more effective.

17...d5 gains space but creates a hole on c5. 18.cxd5 cxd5 19.♗b3! b6 20.a5 e4 21.axb6 ♗xb6 22.♘c5 ♗e7 Now after 23.♗e2 or 23.♗b2 White remains somewhat better, as Black’s position is a bit loose.

My preference is 17...a5! to disrupt White’s queenside play: 18.b5 ♗e7 19.♗a3 (19.bxc6 bxc6 20.♗e2 ♗ab8) 19...f4 (Black can also consider both 19...g5?! and 19...c5?! 20.♗d5 ♗d8.) 20.♗de4 ♗f5 Black’s position is fully playable.

**18.a5!**

Karpov does not panic in the face of the impending pawn storm. White has time to gain space and fix the weakness on b6.

**18...h5**

Continuing the pawn storm in a different way with 18...g4 19.♗a4 h5 20.f4 h4 transposes to the following note. Instead 20...gxh3?! 21.♗xf3

is weaker as Black is slightly vulnerable on the kingside.

### 19.f4 $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Pushing the kingside pawns first with 19...g4! looks preferable, for instance 20. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  h4 21. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  h3 22. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$ . In the game Black's pawns do not get this far. Black is still a bit worse, but compared with the game White has to pay more attention to the safety of his king. And in the long term, the advanced pawns could easily make a difference in some endgames.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ $\mathbb{W}ae8$

The main alternative was 20... $\mathbb{E}ad8$  21.fxe5 (Also after 21.fxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  White is a bit better.) 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22.d4  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  24.d5 cxd5 (24... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25.h3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  27.cxd5 and White keeps some advantage, as Black's pieces are not well coordinated.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}b6!$

It takes some time to appreciate the strength of the knight on this outpost. It may not attack anything (apart from a one move threat to the queen, which is easily avoided) but it takes away a number of squares from the black pieces.

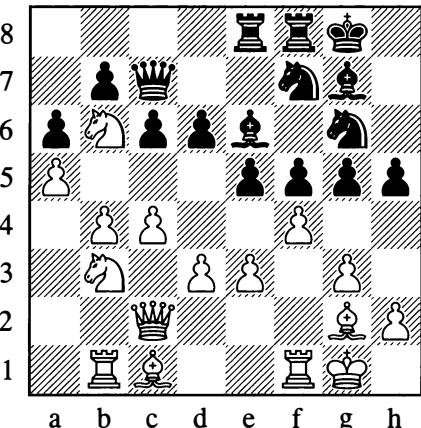
I could not help noticing that Gratvol, Karpov's junior trainer, had a strong knight on b6, in a game that we covered briefly on page 19 of the first volume. It is probably a complete coincidence, but still it is possible that they considered this type of idea when studying together. Such ideas can remain in a player's mind for a long time; for instance, Leko had positions against world champions Kramnik and Khalifman, which I taught him when he was just over ten years old.

### 21... $\mathbb{W}c7$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}b3?$

Karpov embarks on a deep and powerful plan, which will be revealed over the next few moves.

A decent alternative was 22.fxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25. $\mathbb{E}be1$  and White is a bit better.

### 22... $\mathbb{Q}g6$



### 23. $\mathbb{W}d1?$

Karpov continues with his plan, but it turns out that there was an even stronger continuation available.

### 23.fxg5! $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

If 23...h4 24.gxh4  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  25. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  26. $\mathbb{W}xg2$  Black has problems, as White will push his h-pawn shortly.

### 24. $\mathbb{W}d1!$

Black's kingside pieces turn out to be surprisingly vulnerable.

### 24...h4 25. $\mathbb{W}h5!$ h3 26. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{W}e7?$

This clever defence keeps Black in the game, but she is not out of the woods yet.

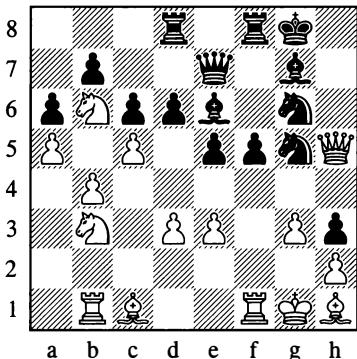
### 27.c5!

27. $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{E}xf1+$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  is a repetition.

27.b5?! axb5 28.cxb5 e4 29. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  White's chances are somewhat higher in this complicated position.

27... $\mathbb{E}d8$

27...d5? loses to 28. $\mathbb{W}xg6$ , as the queen now has the d6-square available.



28.b5!!

This beautiful breakthrough decides the game.

28. $\mathbb{A}a3$  can be met by 28...d5!.

28...f4 29. $\mathbb{A}a3!$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  30.bxc6 f3 31. $\mathbb{E}f2$

White is winning.

**23...g4 24.d4!**

Karpov executes his plan to gain space in the centre.

**24...exf4**

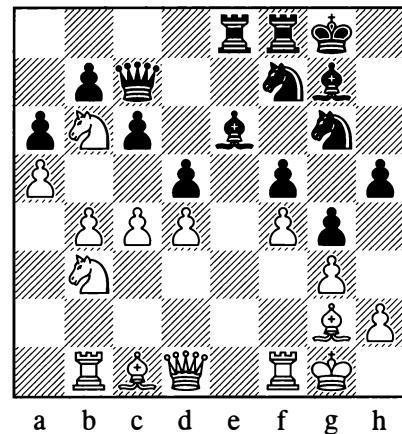
Polgar opens the e-file, hoping to get some activity there. Black cannot keep the position closed, as 24...e4 is well met by 25.d5! cxd5 26.cxd5  $\mathbb{A}d7$  and now after 27. $\mathbb{A}b2$  or 27. $\mathbb{A}d4$  White will dominate on the c-file, while Black's pieces are achieving nothing on the kingside.

**25.exf4 d5?**

Zsuzsa tries to fight for space in the centre, and is even ready to sacrifice a pawn for it. However, the lesser evil would have been to avoid any further weakening of that area.

The best chance looks to be: 25...h4 26.d5 (There is also 26. $\mathbb{A}b2$  d5 27. $\mathbb{A}c5$  h3 28. $\mathbb{A}e1$   $\mathbb{A}c8$  29. $\mathbb{A}f1$  when White's knights are superior to Black's.) 26...cxd5 (26... $\mathbb{A}d7$  27. $\mathbb{W}d3$  is strong) 27. $\mathbb{A}xd5$   $\mathbb{A}xd5$  28. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{A}e2$  29. $\mathbb{A}d2$

White will neutralize Black's play on the e-file, then look to exploit her weaknesses.



**26.cxd5  $\mathbb{A}xd5$**

26...cxd5?! 27. $\mathbb{A}c5$  is hopeless for Black.

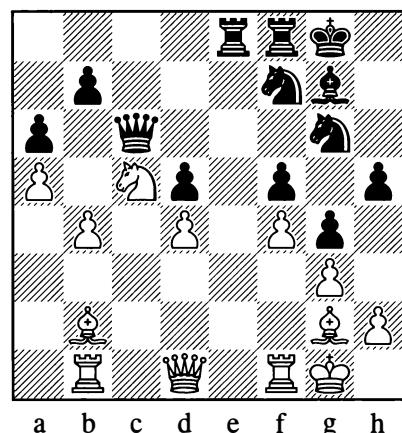
**27. $\mathbb{A}xd5$  cxd5 28. $\mathbb{A}c5$ !?**

Karpov decides to postpone taking the d5-pawn. In doing so he controls the e2-square for longer, thus reducing the chance of a black rook occupying the second rank.

Nevertheless 28. $\mathbb{A}xd5$  was perfectly valid, and after 28... $\mathbb{E}d8$  29. $\mathbb{A}e6$   $\mathbb{A}fe8$  30. $\mathbb{A}e1$  Black has no compensation.

**28... $\mathbb{W}c6$  29. $\mathbb{A}b2$**

Karpov defends the d4-pawn securely.



**29...h4?**

Zsuzsa probably saw no good ideas, and just played this move in the hope that an opportunity would arise on the kingside.

Karpov had finely judged that Black had no time to improve her knight:

29... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30. $\mathbb{W}b3$

White can even go for a reversal of the material balance with 30. $\mathbb{E}c1!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  31. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  with tremendous compensation for the pawn.

30... $\mathbb{Q}c4$

If 30... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ?! 31. $\mathbb{E}bc1$  or 30... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ?! 31. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  32. $\mathbb{E}e6$  Black is hopelessly tied up.

31. $\mathbb{W}xc4$

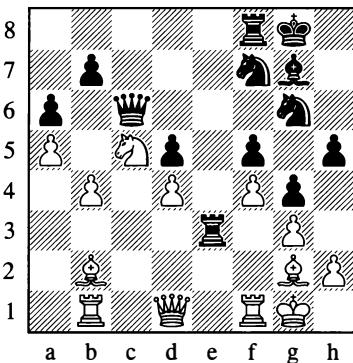
There is also 31. $\mathbb{E}fe1$  when Black is unable to keep her position together.

31... $dxc4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $bxcc6$  33. $\mathbb{E}bc1$

White wins a pawn, and should have little trouble in the endgame.

However, Black could have offered sterner resistance with:

29... $\mathbb{E}e3$ !



Preventing the white queen from coming to b3. They say it is easy to miss a threat along a rank, but maybe it is true regarding defence as well. Kasparov also missed a strong defensive move on the third rank in Game 22 of his second match with Karpov.

30. $\mathbb{E}e1$

After 30. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{W}xa4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  h4 Black continues to resist.

30... $\mathbb{E}xe1\uparrow$

Black should exchange in order to draw the white queen away from the b3-square.

If 30... $\mathbb{E}e8$ ? 31. $\mathbb{E}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  33. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  34. $\mathbb{E}e1$  White is winning.

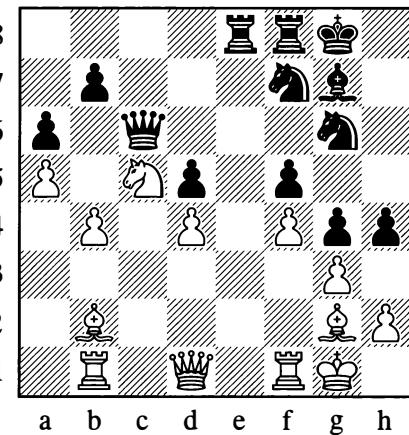
31. $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  32. $\mathbb{W}d1$  h4! 33. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

34. $\mathbb{E}c1$

Or 34. $\mathbb{E}e1$  h3 35. $\mathbb{E}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  and Black is still alive.

34...h3 35. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4\uparrow$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $bxcc6$

White is still clearly better, but the game is not over yet.



30. $\mathbb{W}b3$

The time has come for White to eliminate the weak d5-pawn.

30... $\mathbb{E}e2$

A desperate attempt. I cannot be certain, but I suspect that Zsuzsa, with her fine calculating ability, had already seen the way she would lose, but hoped that her opponent might have missed something.

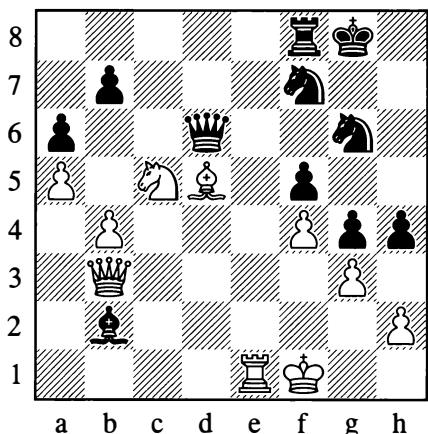
It is hard to suggest anything else, for instance if 30... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  31. $\mathbb{E}fe1$  h3 32. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  33. $\mathbb{E}bc1$  Black is in a hopeless situation.

31.♕xd5 ♖d6 32.♖fe1

32.♖c4 was winning as well.

32...♖xb2 33.♖xb2 ♕xd4† 34.♔f1 ♖xb2

If 34...♕xf4 35.gxf4 ♖xf4† 36.♔g2 Black soon runs out of checks.



35.♖e6!

This intermediate move pours water on the flames and extinguishes Black's last hopes.

35...♖c7 36.♖xg6† ♔h7 37.♖b6

Karpov can choose to win in any way he pleases. Another nice line was 37.♖xb2!! ♕xg6 38.♕e6 ♖d6 39.♖g7† ♔h5 40.♖h7† ♔h6 41.♕g7 mate!

37...♖g7 38.♖xb7

Maybe Karpov was short of time, otherwise it is hard to explain why Zsuzsa did not resign.

38...♖d6 39.♕e6!

Karpov could also take the free piece, but his chosen move is even more accurate.

39...♖c8 40.♖xf7 ♔h8 41.♖xf5

1–0

In the fourth round Karpov made a quick draw with the black pieces against Ljubojevic, then he defeated the local players Fernandez Garcia,

Illescas and Ochoa de Echaguen. Interestingly, he outplayed the last of the three on the black side of a Berlin Defence. Considering Kramnik's success with this opening against Kasparov in 2000, we can only imagine what might have happened had Karpov decided to prepare it for use at world championship level. He might even have forced Kasparov to abandon 1.e4 altogether, returning the 'favour' given by Kasparov's Scheveningen.

In the last two rounds Karpov drew quickly, to finish with 7/9, half a point clear of Andersson and a point ahead of Chiburdanidze and Ljubojevic. It was an impressive performance, especially considering that he was holding back his main openings in order not to reveal too much to Kasparov.

#### Fourth World Championship match versus Kasparov

In 1987 the Spanish town of Seville won the right to host the latest clash between the two titans. The match started in October and finished in December. Kasparov had achieved some sparkling results since their last match and widened the rating gap to forty points. However, the closeness of the last match indicated that Karpov still stood a chance. Kasparov's delegation consisted of Nikitin, Dorfman, Azmaiparashvili and Dolmatov, while Karpov's included Zaitsev, Ubilava, Lerner and Podgaets. It is hard to spot when the weakening Soviet state stopped paying for the trainers of their chess superstars, but I would estimate that from around the time of the present match players probably had to dip into their own pockets.

The first game saw both sides playing for safety in a g3 Grünfeld, and a draw was agreed in thirty moves. The next game was more combative, and resulted in the challenger drawing first blood.

## Game 8

Garry Kasparov – Anatoly Karpov

Seville (2) 1987

### 1.c4

Kasparov unveils a surprise on the very first move. Before this game he had only used the English Opening sporadically. It looks like he wanted to avoid Karpov's reliable Nimzo/Queen's Indian repertoire.

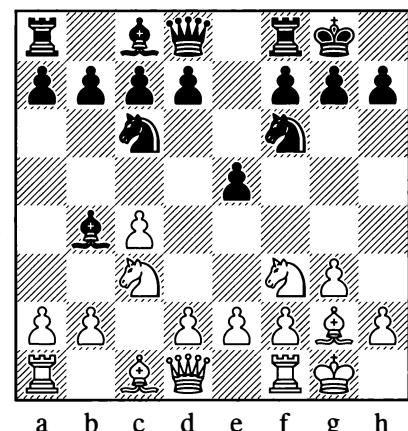
### 1...e5

Maybe Karpov wanted to surprise Kasparov. He abandoned 1.e4 and thus the Scheveningen, but is ready to play the position a tempo down. During an interview with Kouatly, Karpov once said he believed he could always make a draw with the white pieces if he wanted to, but it was not the case with Black.

### 2.♘c3 ♘f6

In the eighth game Karpov opted for another set-up with 2...d6 followed by ...c5. Kasparov showed his class and won a strategic masterpiece, which is given in the notes to Game 19 in the first volume.

**3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.g3 ♘b4 5.♗g2 0–0 6.0–0**



**6...e4**

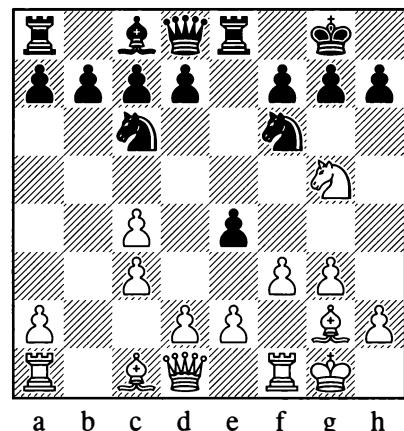
Karpov chooses the same variation he used to draw with Korchnoi in their 1974 title match.

Interestingly, in the last game of the match in which Karpov employed 1...e5, he deviated with 6...♝e8 and scored another valuable win: 7.d3 ♘xc3 8.bxc3 e4 9.♗d4 h6 10.dxe4 ♘xe4 11.♗c2 d5 12.cxd5 ♘xd5 13.e3 ♘a5 14.f3 ♘d6 15.e4 ♘c5 16.♗e3 ♘dc4 17.♗f2 ♘e7 18.♗ad1 ♘d7 19.f4 ♘ad8 20.e5 ♘g4 21.♗f5 ♘e6 22.♗xd8 ♘xd8 23.♗d4 ♘c8 24.f5?! c5 25.♗e4 cxd4 26.♗xg4 ♘xe5 Kasparov was not able to generate enough play for the sacrificed pawn and went on to lose, Kasparov – Karpov, Seville (16) 1987. Amazingly, despite achieving a plus score with the ...♗f6/...♗c6/...♝b4 system against the strongest player in the world, Karpov never played it again after this match.

### 7.♗g5

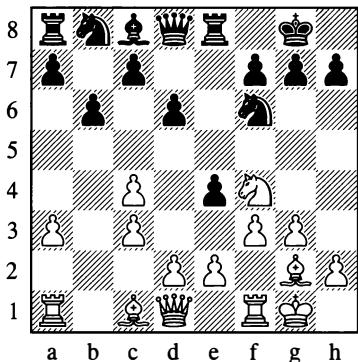
Korchnoi opted for the other main line: 7.♗e1 ♘xc3 8.dxc3 h6 9.♗c2 b6 10.♗e3 ♘b7 11.♗d5 ♘e5 12.b3 ♘e8 13.a4 d6 14.♗a2 ♘ed7 15.h3 a5 16.♗e3 ♘xd5 17.cxd5 ♘f6 18.c4 ♘g6 19.♗b1 ♘c8 20.♗d4 ♘c5 21.♗h2 ♘d7 22.♗g1 h5 23.♗b2 ♘e7 White was unable to make anything of his bishop pair and the game was eventually drawn, Korchnoi – Karpov, Moscow (9) 1974.

**7...♘xc3 8.bxc3 ♘e8 9.f3**

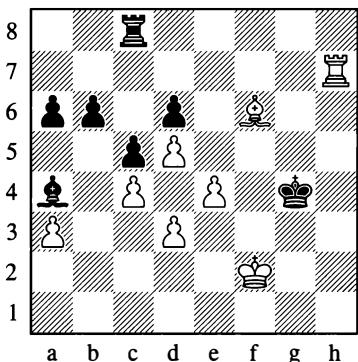


**9...e3?!**

Karpov surprises his opponent with a pawn sacrifice to create an unusual pawn formation in White's camp. In his next black game Karpov chose not to repeat the idea and deviated with 9...exf3, but failed to equalize and eventually lost. The move was a novelty at the time, although Smyslov had utilized the same idea in a similar position:

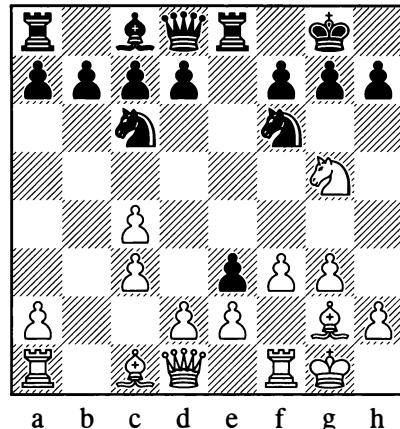


10...e3 11.d3  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  12. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  13.g4 h6  
 14.h4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  15. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  17.h5  
 $\mathbb{Q}h4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  f5 19. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  20.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xh1$   
 21.g5 hxg5 22.fxg5  $\mathbb{W}e5$  23. $\mathbb{W}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  g6  
 25.hxg6  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   
 28. $\mathbb{Q}af1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{W}xh6$  30.gxh6 White has  
 won a pawn, and soon converts his advantage  
 using a beautiful mating net: 30... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   
 $\mathbb{Q}h7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}h5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f7$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
 38. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  40.cxd4  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  41.d5  
 $\mathbb{Q}a4$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  a6 43.e4 c5 44. $\mathbb{Q}f6$



1–0 Botvinnik – Smyslov, Moscow 1964.

Although Black's idea was unsuccessful in this game, it is possible that Zaitsev, one of the most creative opening players of that era, would have seen the game and conceived the idea of using the ...e3 advance in a different scenario.



### 10.d3

Kasparov chooses to live with the unpleasant e3-pawn, hoping to surround it and win it later. If White can carry out his ambitious strategy successfully then the game will virtually be over, on the other hand if he does not manage to remove the pawn, then it might serve to cut his position in two.

### 10.dxe3

Taking the pawn is also playable, and has since acquired quite a large body of theory. Kasparov later tried this move in one simul and one regular game.

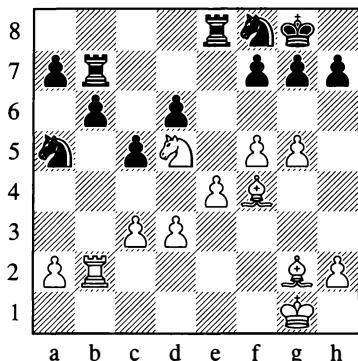
### 10... $\mathbb{W}e7$

10...d6 11.e4 h6 12. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  13.g4  $\mathbb{W}d7$   
 14.c5 dxc5 15. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  16. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}g6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  19.h4 White went on to  
 win this irregular position, Kasparov – Rao,  
 Harvard (simul) 1989.

10...b6 is the main line.

11. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  13.e4 d6 14. $\mathbb{W}d3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  16.g4  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  b6  
 18.g5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  20.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

$\mathbb{Q}a5$  22.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23. $\mathbb{B}b1$  c5 24. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$   
25. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  26. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  27.exd3



This was Kasparov–Sadvakasov, Astana 2001. White has lovely positional compensation for the exchange, nevertheless Black remains quite solid and Sadvakasov eventually managed to hold a draw.

It is hard to draw definite conclusions from the above two games, especially since neither of Kasparov's opponents employed the main line of 10...b6. It should be noted that overall White has scored less than fifty percent after 10.dxe3.

#### 10...d5

Karpov steers the play along a fundamentally different course from the Botvinnik – Smyslov game, and opens the position. Despite White's two bishops, Karpov's choice is the most logical and principled continuation, as White is behind in development and his uncoordinated pieces are not ideally placed for a direct confrontation.

#### 11. $\mathbb{B}b3$

Kasparov defends the c4-pawn and exerts pressure on the d5-pawn. His move has grown into the main line of the variation.

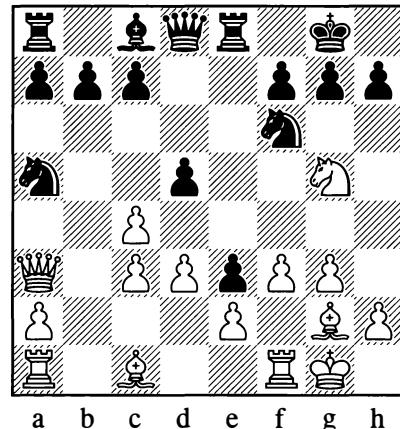
After 11.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  one thing is clear: hardly any game ends in a draw from this position.

#### 11... $\mathbb{Q}a5!$

Karpov diverts the queen from the nice b3-square.

#### 12. $\mathbb{W}a3$

12. $\mathbb{W}a4$  is also possible, but it has been less popular than Kasparov's move.



#### 12...c6!

Karpov defends his knight while preparing to recapture on d5 with the c-pawn, which could offer him play on the c-file while also taking the e4-square away from White's knight.

#### 13.cxd5

If 13.c5 h6 14. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  b6 Black has a healthy position.

#### 13...cxd5 14.f4

Kasparov wants to avoid retreating to the h3-square with his knight. In the event of other moves, Karpov would probably have developed his light-squared bishop and played ... $\mathbb{B}c8$  soon after.

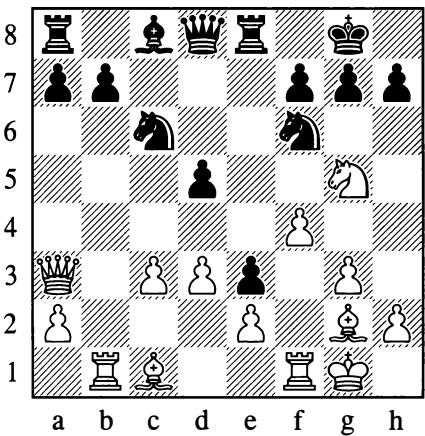
With the white pawn on f4, the position is oddly reminiscent of a reversed Leningrad Dutch, as in that opening White sometimes ends up with a pawn on e6 following a minor piece exchange on that square.

#### 14... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Nowadays 14... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  is the main move.

**15.♗b1**

15.♗f3 has also been tried, most notably by Mamedyarov, who used it to defeat Papa in Lausanne, 2004.

**15...♝c7**

This has been by far the most popular choice in the position. Another plan would be to prepare the move ...♝h3 to exchange the light-squared bishops. If Black can carry out this plan successfully, it will reduce White's dynamic potential considerably.

**16.♗b2**

Hunting the e3-pawn with 16.♗f3?! is too artificial: 16...h6 17.♗h3 (White could try the piece sacrifice 17.♗xe3 ♜xe3 18.♗xe3 hxg5 19.fxg5, but he can hardly hope for more than equality here.) 17...♝f5 18.♗xe3 ♜xe3 19.♗xe3 ♜e8 20.♗c1 ♜e7 Black has a healthy position.

**16...♝g4**

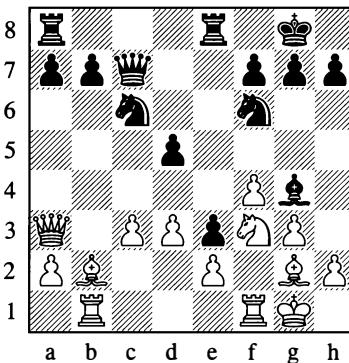
Karpov develops quickly.

**17.c4?!**

Kasparov is somewhat impatient, and this premature attempt to open the game brings him no advantage.

In their *Chess Informant* notes, Karpov and

Zaitsev recommend 17.♗fe1 which they evaluate as slightly better for White. Such conclusions should always be taken with a pinch of salt, as it is unlikely that a world class player will reveal all his ideas in a sharp variation so soon after the event. In any case, 17...♝ad8 seems like the right response, and Black has done well from this position in practice.

**17.♗f3**

This looks like the critical move. The knight will need to come back into play at some point, so White may as well combine it with the defence of the e2-pawn.

**17...♝d7?!**

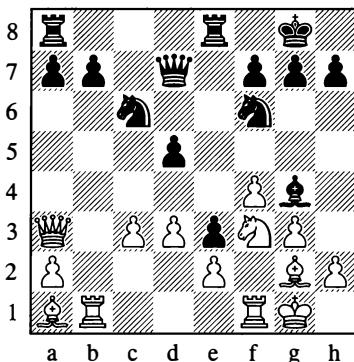
My preference is for Black to meet the impending c4 with ...dxc4, rather than blocking the centre with ...d4. With this in mind, the queen vacates the c-file.

The alternative is 17...♝ad8 18.♗fc1 h6 19.c4 (Or 19.♗a1 ♜d7 20.c4 d4 21.♗c5 with a small initiative on the queenside.) 19...d4 20.♗a1 and White's queenside initiative seems more relevant than Black's kingside play.

**18.♗a1**

18.c4 dxc4 looks reasonable for Black. 18.♗fc1 ♜xf3 19.♗xf3 ♜h3 20.♗g2 ♜h5 21.c4 d4! On this occasion Black blocks the centre, and his kingside attacking chances are quite real.

This looks critical. It would be interesting to know how Karpov would have reacted had it occurred over the board.



18... $\mathbb{Q}ac8?$

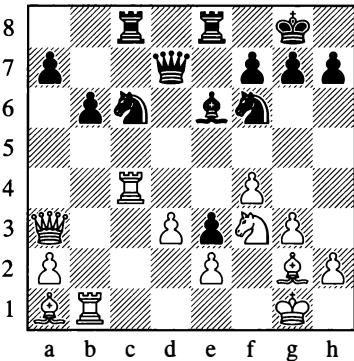
This would be my preference, although several other moves can be considered.

18... $\mathbb{Q}h3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{W}xh3$  20. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$   
21. $\mathbb{W}c5!$  is clearly better for White, as pointed out by Karpov and Zaitsev.

18... $b6$  19. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  20. $c4!$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{W}xh3$  21. $c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  22. $cxd5$  [22. $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7!]$  22... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  24. $\mathbb{W}c3$  f6 Black has good chances on the kingside.) 20... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $d4$  22. $c5$  White's queenside initiative is stronger than Black's kingside play.

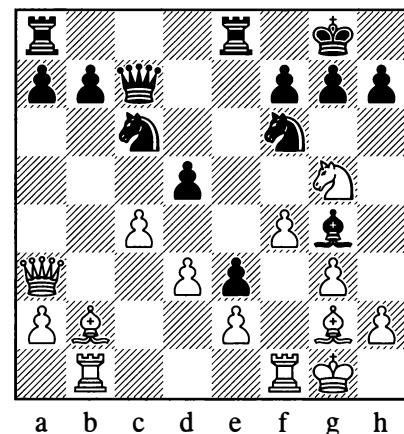
18... $\mathbb{E}e7$  19. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  is given as unclear by Karpov and Zaitsev, who mention the continuation 20. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  when ideas of ... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  are in the air. However, White can improve with 20. $c4!$  when his chances are higher as Black's kingside play is less strong.

19. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $b6$  20. $c4$   $dxc4$  21. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$



22. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$

The position is roughly balanced.

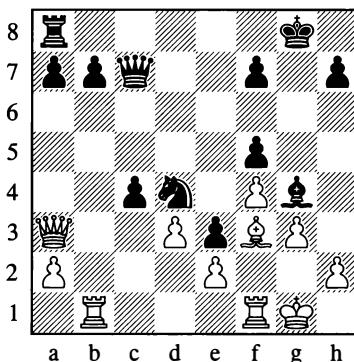


17... $\mathbb{d}xc4!$

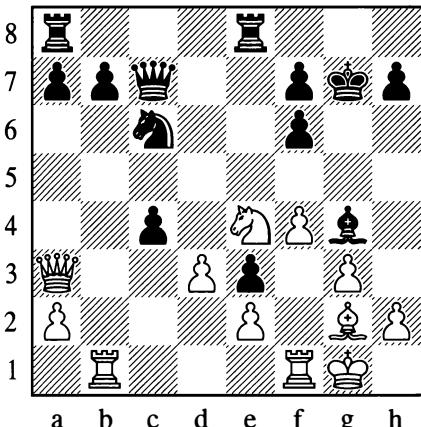
Karpov correctly judges that he can allow his kingside pawns to become doubled.

18. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $gxf6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$

19... $\mathbb{E}xe4?$  is not only risky, but also ultimately incorrect: 20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  f5! (20... $\mathbb{Q}xe2?$  21. $\mathbb{E}fe1$ ) 21. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (Even worse is 21... $\mathbb{Q}xf3?$  22. $\mathbb{E}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  23. $\mathbb{E}xe3$  c3 [23... $\mathbb{Q}c2?$  24. $\mathbb{W}e7]$  24. $\mathbb{E}e5$  c2 25. $\mathbb{E}c1$  b6 26. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  when Black is in trouble as his knight will be sent back.)



22. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$  (Karpov and Zaitsev only mention 22. $dxc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  23. $exf3$  e2 24. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  when Black is fine.) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xe2\#$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  Black has problems as his pieces lack coordination.

**20.dxc4?!**

This inaccurate move leads to trouble for White. It was also necessary to avoid 20.h3?  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  22. $\mathbb{W}c3$  as Black takes over with the lovely move 22... $\mathbb{E}e5!$ . Three other moves deserved attention though.

20. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d8!$  (20... $\mathbb{W}e7?$  runs into 21. $\mathbb{E}xb7$ ) was pointed out by Andersson in the press centre. Play continues 21. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  22. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2\uparrow$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  25. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  and the position is unclear.

20. $\mathbb{W}b2?!$  According to Kasparov this is one of the most interesting options in the position. 20... $\mathbb{W}e7$  21.dxc4 (The overaggressive 21. $\mathbb{E}fc1?!$  cxd3 22. $\mathbb{E}c5?$  backfires after 22...h6! 23.exd3  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  24.h3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  when Black is much better.) 21... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb1$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  24.c5  $\mathbb{W}e6$  The position is equal according to Kasparov.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}d6$** 

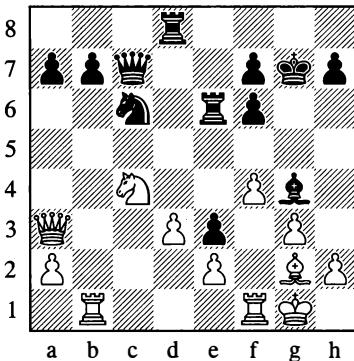
This leads to heavy complications, but the position remains approximately balanced.

**20... $\mathbb{E}ed8!$** 

This is the best square for the rook, as it is important to attack the d3-pawn.

Karpov and Zaitsev focus on another move, which could lead to perpetual check. Their analysis is nice, but it contains a hole.

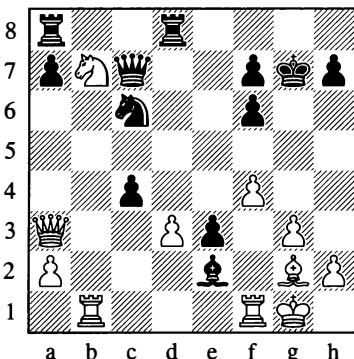
20... $\mathbb{E}e6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}d8$



22.f5 (Instead the calmer 22. $\mathbb{E}fe1!$  looks good for White.) 22... $\mathbb{E}ee8$  23. $\mathbb{E}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  24. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2\uparrow$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3\uparrow$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$  (26.hxg3?  $\mathbb{W}xg3$  Black is winning) 26... $\mathbb{Q}e2\uparrow$  (26... $\mathbb{Q}xf1?$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc7$  e2 28. $\mathbb{W}xa7$  e1= $\mathbb{W}$  29. $\mathbb{E}xf7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  30. $\mathbb{E}xf6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  31. $\mathbb{W}g7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  32. $\mathbb{W}h6$  is mate.) 27. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3\uparrow$  White cannot escape the checks, and Black also has the option of continuing the fight with 27... $\mathbb{W}f5?!$ . It all looks good, except for the improvement noted at move 22.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$** 

21. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  does not help White.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$** **22. $\mathbb{E}fe1$** 

After 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e6\uparrow$  fxe6 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  the position is unclear.

**22... $\mathbb{E}xd3$  23. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{E}c8!$** 

Black can get away with this temporary piece sacrifice thanks to the unfavourable position of the knight on b7.

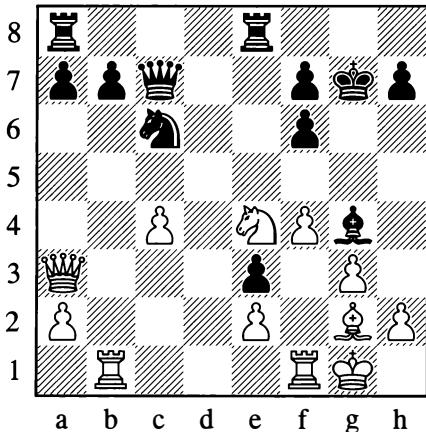
24.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

24.  $\mathbb{Q}xe2?$  is refuted by 24...  $\mathbb{Q}d4!$ .

24...  $\mathbb{W}xc6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$

27.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $axb6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Black traps the knight and will emerge with an extra pawn in the rook ending, although White should be able to hold it.



20...  $\mathbb{Q}ad8!$

Karpov bases his strategy on his fluent piece play. With the last move he develops his last dormant piece and prevents 21.  $\mathbb{Q}d6$ .

21.  $\mathbb{Q}b3?$

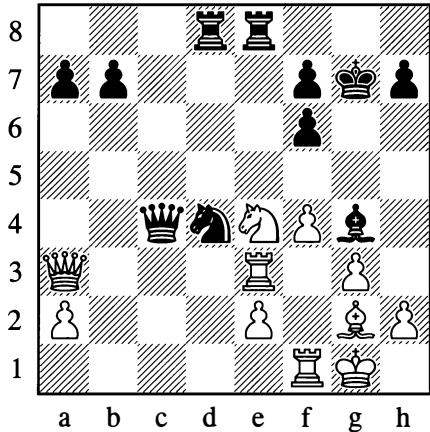
21.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  should have been preferred, although after 21...  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black's active pieces give him the advantage.

21...  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

Finally White removes the troublesome pawn, but it has cost him too much time.

22...  $\mathbb{W}xc4!$

22...  $\mathbb{Q}c2?$  would have let White off the hook: 23.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xf6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25.  $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  26.  $\mathbb{W}g5\uparrow$ ! White must control the c5-square. (Interestingly Karpov and Zaitsev missed this move in their annotations, giving only 26.  $\mathbb{W}f6\uparrow$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  when the king escapes and Black wins.) 26...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xb7\uparrow$  White escapes with a draw.



23.  $\mathbb{Q}h1?$

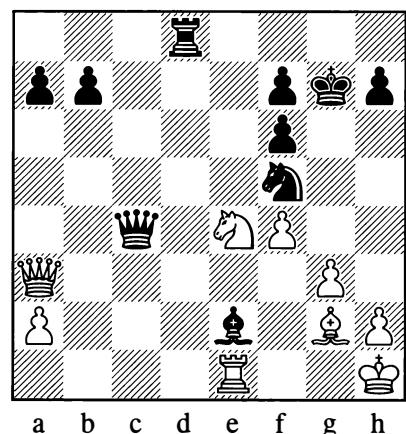
Hopeless is 23.  $\mathbb{W}xa7?!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  (24.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  and Black wins.) 24...  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}c2$  and Black wins.

The best chance was 23.  $\mathbb{Q}f2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  24.  $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2\uparrow$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  when Black has a solid extra pawn, but the win is a long way off.

23...  $\mathbb{Q}f5$

This move does not spoil the win, but it was not the most efficient route to victory. Stronger was 23...  $\mathbb{Q}c2!$  24.  $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xf6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}g5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  28.  $\mathbb{W}g5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  when Black wins as his king can escape to the queenside.

24.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$



After making this move Kasparov famously forgot to press his clock, a mistake which cost him two precious minutes. By the time he noticed his mistake and finally pressed the button, he had less than one minute to reach the time control.

### 26... $\mathbb{E}e8!$

With this excellent move Karpov sets up various mating motifs based on White's vulnerable first rank.

### 27. $\mathbb{W}a5$

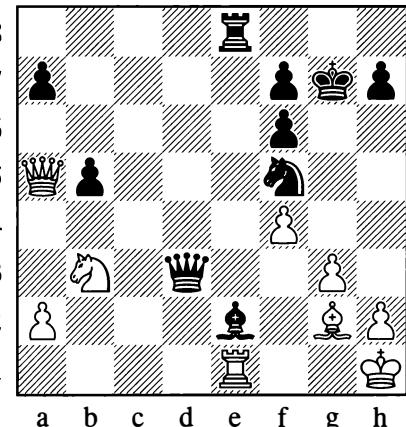
One of the nice points behind Black's last move is revealed after 27. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}f3!$  when White is defenceless.

27. $\mathbb{E}c1$  is not much better, and after 27... $\mathbb{W}d4$  28. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  Black wins easily.

### 27... $b5$

A more straightforward route to victory was 27... $\mathbb{E}xe4$  28. $\mathbb{W}xf5$ , when 28... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  and 28... $\mathbb{W}c3$  both win.

### 28. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{W}d3$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}b3$



### 29... $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

Once the defensive bishop has been eliminated, White's kingside will collapse.

30. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}xe1\#$  32. $\mathbb{W}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
0-1

White can only avoid checkmate by giving away his queen.

The next game was another g3 Grünfeld, which resulted in a peaceful draw. In Game 4 Karpov avoided repeating his ...e3 pawn sacrifice in the English, but was unable to equalize and Kasparov converted his advantage to level the match. But Karpov immediately struck back. First he introduced a new idea in one of the main lines of the Grünfeld, and accepted a gambit pawn in a position where Black's compensation has previously been assumed to be adequate. It became known as the Seville Variation, as it featured prominently in the match. Kasparov reacted well, but fell into time trouble and blundered at the end.

The next two games were drawn, without either player being in serious danger. Then in Game 8 Kasparov drew level after producing one of his greatest ever positional masterpieces, on the white side of a semi-blocked English position. It can be found in the notes to Game 19 in the first volume.

The Grünfeld debate continued in the next game. Karpov played another Zaitsev idea and got some advantage, but Kasparov managed to hold it. In Game 10 Kasparov switched to 1.e4 for the first time in the match, but got nowhere against the Caro-Kann. In Game 11 Karpov once again got some advantage in a Seville Grünfeld, but he returned Kasparov's favour of Game 5 and also blundered and lost. Game 12 was a Queen's Gambit Declined, via an English move order. The position was poised for a tense struggle, but it seemed neither player wanted to risk anything and a draw was agreed on move 21. Thus Kasparov led by three wins to two at the halfway point.

In Game 13 Karpov switched to the  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  Exchange Variation against the Grünfeld, but got no advantage and in the end it was Kasparov who had chances to be better before

the draw became inevitable. In the next game Kasparov once again got nowhere against the Caro, and a quick draw ensued. Game 15 was more interesting, and Karpov has some chances to be better in a Grünfeld, but eventually it ended in another draw.

In Game 16 Kasparov returned to the English, as shown in the note to Black's sixth move in the main game above. He sacrificed a pawn but did not get enough play for it, and resigned the game at the adjournment stage. The scores were equal. The next six games were all drawn. Both players had to defend moderately unpleasant rook endings with the black pieces, but on each occasion the defender was able to hold firm.

All this meant that the match was tied at 11–11 with two games to play. In his final white game, Karpov played a rare line against the Grünfeld and kept a lot of pieces on the board. Black was somewhat worse, but he defended well and the position remained complicated until Kasparov blundered on move 50 when he overlooked a clever tactical finesse.

Kasparov now had to win the final game of the match to retain his title. When Karpov was faced with the same situation two years before, he opted for a policy of outright attack. Kasparov on the other hand went for a quiet opening. Karpov equalized, but perhaps the tension got to him as he fell behind on time and drifted into an uncomfortable, though still defensible position. On move 33 Kasparov blundered by missing a clearly winning continuation, but Karpov returned the favour and missed an equalizing line. Once the dust had settled and the time control had been reached, Kasparov had queen, bishop and four pawns on the kingside, versus Karpov's queen, knight and three pawns. Crucially, Karpov's pawns were split into two islands, and he was unable to hold it. Thus the match ended in a draw, and Kasparov retained his title.

Compared with the London/Leningrad match of the previous year, both players seemed to attach more importance to safety. They both enjoyed a degree of success with their opening preparation. Curiously, there were many more blunders than before, with both players winning two games as a result of a blunder by the opponent. The only true masterpiece came in Game 8, which was won by Kasparov. The final result demonstrates that the margin between success and failure can be razor-thin at this level, and it was the closest Karpov ever came to dethroning his successor.

## 1987 Summary

Candidates final match versus A. Sokolov, Linares: Won  $7\frac{1}{2}$ – $3\frac{1}{2}$  (+4 =7 –0)

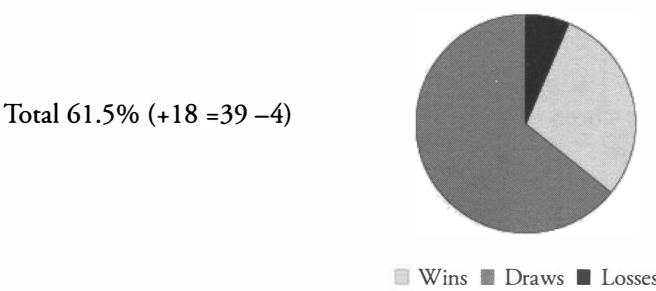
Brussels (3rd place): 7/11 (+3 =8 –0)

Amsterdam (1st–2nd place): 4/6 (+2 =4 –0)

Bilbao (1st place): 7/9 (+5 =4 –0)

World Championship match versus Kasparov, Seville: Drew 12–12 (+4 = 16 –4)

Total 61.5% (+18 =39 –4)



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# 1988

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Rating 2715 (2 in the world)

For the first time since 1983, Karpov went a whole year without playing a world title match against Kasparov. He made the most of this respite and played more tournaments than ever before, making 1988 the busiest year of his career in terms of the number of regular games played.

First was Wijk aan Zee, where Karpov started by beating Curt Hansen (an extract from the game is shown in the notes to Game 21 in the first volume) before suffering a temporary setback against Nikolic. His remaining eleven games followed a nice pattern whereby he drew – sometimes very quickly – with the black pieces, and won with white. We will look at his win from Round 5 against the former World Junior Champion, Kiril Georgiev.

The Bulgarian grandmaster faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Petrosian. Out of thirty five games, he scored three wins, twenty two draws and ten losses. Before the present encounter he had drawn one game with Karpov. Their lifetime score stands at four wins to Karpov with four draws and one win to Georgiev. The last of these results is rather tragic. Karpov had a queen and two pawns versus a queen, and was easily winning, but was under the mistaken impression that more time would be added to his clock, and lost on time on move 96.

## Game 9

Anatoly Karpov – Kiril Georgiev

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Wijk aan Zee 1988

**1.c4**

At the 1986 Dubai Olympiad Karpov tested the Bulgarian grandmaster in the Dragon but could only draw, so this time he switches to a calmer opening.

**1...g6 2.♘f3 ♗g7 3.d4 ♘f6 4.g3 0–0 5.♗g2 c6**

According to the database Georgiev mainly played the Nimzo-Indian and had never tested the present system prior to this game.

**6.♘c3 d5 7.♗b3**

Karpov chooses a line which he never used before and never repeated in the future. He obviously wanted to avoid Georgiev's preparation based on the numerous encounters with Kasparov. The fact that the Bulgarian was straying from his normal repertoire may also have contributed to

Karpov's decision to depart from the main theoretical paths.

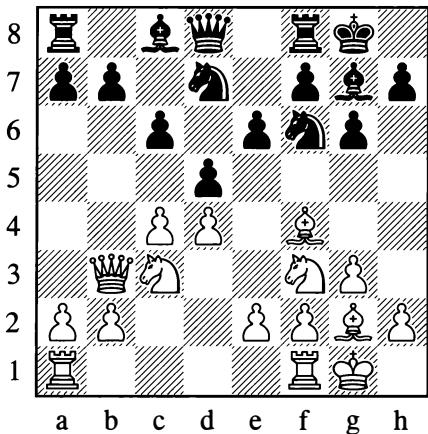
### 7...e6

Georgiev keeps the position closed. The other main possibilities are 7...dxc4 and 7... $\mathbb{W}b6$ .

### 8.0-0 $\mathfrak{Q}bd7$

Black can also play 8...b6 9. $\mathfrak{Q}f4$   $\mathfrak{Q}a6$ .

### 9. $\mathfrak{Q}f4$



### 9... $\mathfrak{Q}b6$ !?

Georgiev wants to clarify the situation on the queenside, but he loses time and concedes space.

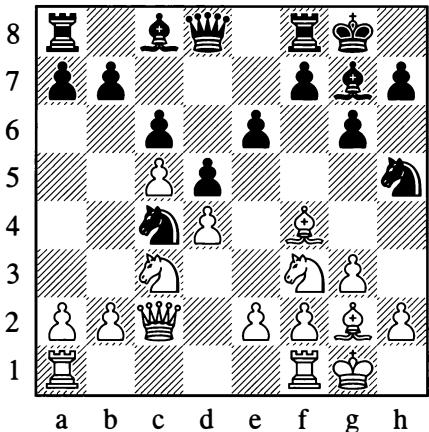
Better options include 9...b6 and 9...dxc4 10. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathfrak{Q}b6$  11. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathfrak{Q}fd5$ .

### 10.c5 $\mathfrak{Q}c4$ 11. $\mathbb{W}c2$

Karpov clears the way for his b-pawn, anticipating the undermining move ...b6.

### 11... $\mathfrak{Q}h5$

After 11...b6 12.b3  $\mathfrak{Q}a5$  13.b4 (13. $\mathfrak{Q}fe1$ !) 13... $\mathfrak{Q}c4$  14. $\mathfrak{Q}e5$   $\mathfrak{Q}xe5$  15. $\mathbb{W}xe5$  bxc5 16.bxc5 White obtained a small advantage and went on to win in Korchnoi – Zhukhovitsky, Vilnius 1953.



### 12.b3!?

Karpov decides to give up his nice bishop. In return he gains space and obtains a clamp in the centre. His pawns restrict the g7-bishop, and later he can look to develop play along the g-file.

In the only other game that reached this position White kept his bishop with 12. $\mathfrak{Q}g5$ , which led to an interesting fight: 12...f6 13. $\mathfrak{Q}c1$  e5 14.b3  $\mathfrak{Q}a5$  15.dxe5 fxe5 16. $\mathfrak{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  17.e4 d4 18. $\mathfrak{Q}a4$  b5 19. $\mathfrak{Q}b2$   $\mathfrak{Q}e6$  20. $\mathfrak{Q}d2$  h6! 21. $\mathfrak{Q}d3$  White was a bit better in Lobron – Keitlinghaus, Bad Woerishofen 1989.

### 12... $\mathfrak{Q}xf4$ 13.gxf4 $\mathfrak{Q}a3$ 14. $\mathbb{W}d2$ b5

Georgiev's strategy is to close the position as much as possible. He manages to do it to a large extent, but Karpov will still have ways to improve his position.

Black could also have considered preserving some tension on the queenside with:

### 14...b6? 15. $\mathfrak{Q}b2$

After 15. $\mathfrak{Q}a4$  Black can obtain the game position a tempo up with 15...b5, while 15... $\mathfrak{Q}a6$  is also alright.

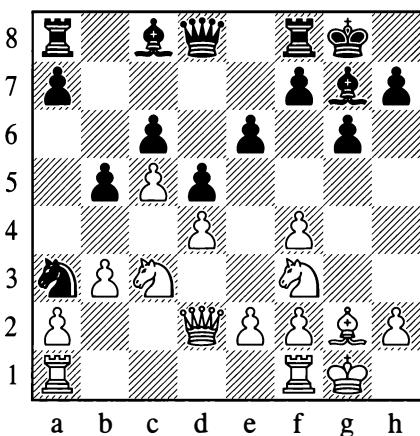
### 15... $\mathfrak{Q}b5$

Karpov also mentions the piece sacrifice 15...bxc5? in his *Chess Informant* analysis. 16. $\mathbb{W}xa3$  cxd4 17. $\mathfrak{Q}a4$   $\mathfrak{Q}a6$  (17...d3 18.exd3!

Surprisingly Karpov misses this exchange sacrifice in his analysis. 18... $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  White's pieces are dominating and Black is in big trouble.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  d3 19. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$  dxе2 20. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  Black's two pawns are no match for White's extra piece.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  cxb5 17. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$

Black's position is solid with no serious weaknesses, but his pieces are passive.



15. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$

Karpov probably did not expect Georgiev to handle the position in the way he did, and was instead anticipating ...f6 and ...e5 to open the centre.

15... $\mathbb{Q}b8?$ !

This rook move proves to be of little use in the game. Maybe Georgiev played it because of the following variation: 15... $\mathbb{W}c7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (White can also play 16.e3) 16...f6 17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  e5? (17... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ !) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ! White wins material.

Perhaps the best move was 15...f6? when it is not easy for White to play for an advantage, as if he plays e4 then the f4-pawn will become a target.

16. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  a5?!

Like Black's previous move, this proves to be largely superfluous.

17.e3

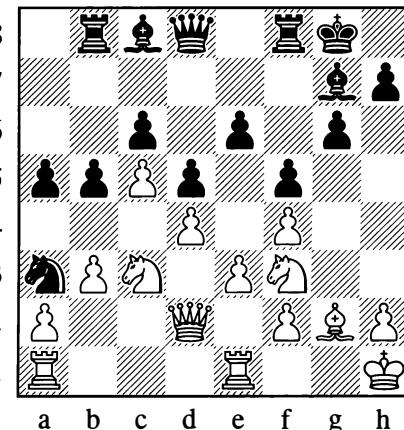
Karpov opens the path to transfer the bishop to d3, which will also help to clear the g-file for his rooks.

17... $\mathbb{B}f5$ ?

Georgiev continues to block the position. Indeed he prevents some of White's active ideas, but in doing so he renders his pawn structure too rigid. From now on Karpov has to pay virtually no attention to Black's play, and can focus all his energy on cracking Black's defence.

If 17...b4 18. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  White is somewhat better according to Karpov, who suggests the subtle plan of  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  and later a3.

Karpov also mentions 17... $\mathbb{W}c7$ ! when Black still has the possibility of playing actively in the centre with ...f6 and ...e5.



18. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ !

Karpov transfers the bishop and clears the g-file for his rook.

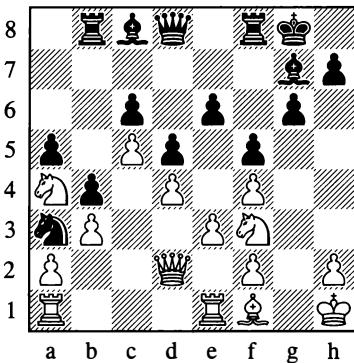
18... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ??

Georgiev is overconfident regarding the strength of his fortress, and thinks he can hold it with natural moves.

18...b4?

Black's best chance is to exchange his passive bishop using the a6-square. However, he must be careful to do it in a way that does not allow White to crack open the queenside.

19.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$



19...  $\mathbb{B}a8!$

Karpov mentions the line 19...  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  (20...  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  21. a3!) 21. a3! when Black's queenside pawns are vulnerable.

20.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{B}a7$

Black's disadvantage is smaller than in the game, as his bishop gets to a6. Nevertheless after securing the g-file White can exchange the a3-knight from c2, and later open the queenside with a3.

19.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20.  $\mathbb{B}g1$

Karpov starts his attacking operation using the only file open to his rooks.

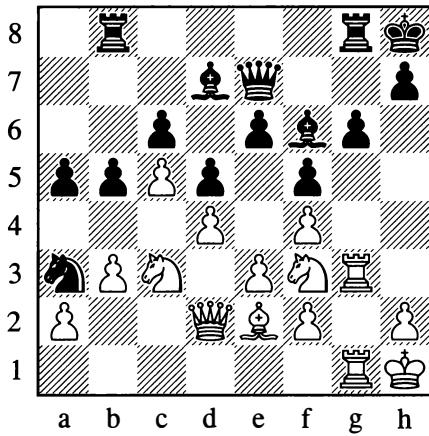
20...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$

In the long run the king will not be particularly safe here. It was worth considering a king transfer to f7 or e7, followed by bolstering the pawn on g6.

21.  $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{B}ag1$

Karpov not only builds his attack, but also ensures that Black will not be able to free his position with ...g5.

22...  $\mathbb{B}g8$



23.  $\mathbb{W}c1!$

Karpov finds a clever way to improve his knight.

23...  $\mathbb{B}b4$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

The knight is heading for b6. On this square it does not hurt Black directly, but it will constantly threaten to infiltrate to the truly fearsome d6-square via c8. For the moment Black has several pieces guarding against this invasion, but later those pieces will be needed to defend Black's kingside, and could easily become overloaded.

24...  $\mathbb{B}g7$  25.  $\mathbb{W}f1!$

Karpov switches between flanks again.

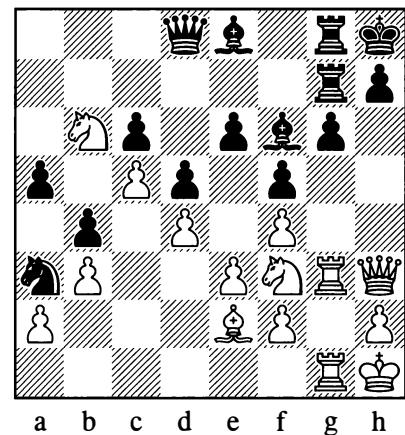
25...  $\mathbb{B}bg8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Georgiev decides to defend the c8-square with the queen. It is rather a pitiful role for the strongest piece, but the position is closed, so Black has chances to survive with his passive pieces.

The other option was to leave the bishop on d7 and use it to guard the c8-square, but this was also not easy: 26...  $\mathbb{W}f8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  30. h4 (30.  $\mathbb{B}1g2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ ) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (if 30...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  32. h5  $\mathbb{W}e7$  33.  $\mathbb{B}xg6$  White breaks in) 31.  $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  32. h5 ( $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ?) 32...  $\mathbb{B}c7$  33.  $\mathbb{W}xf8$   $\mathbb{B}xf8$

34.hxg6 ♖xg6 35.♗h3 ♖g8 36.♗d6 Black's position is extremely passive.

27.♗b6 ♜d8



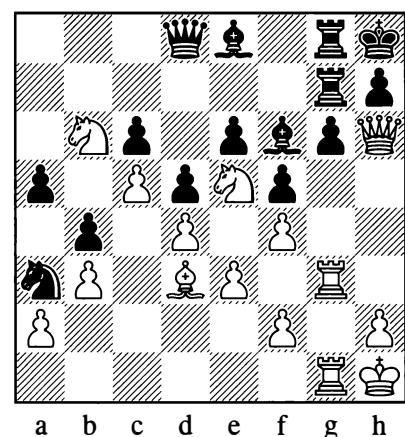
28.♖h6!

Karpov tightens the screw. The way he has combined his play on both flanks is exemplary.

28...♜c7 29.♘e5 ♜cg7

Karpov soon creates nasty threats with his knights, so perhaps Black could have considered 29...♖xe5?! 30.fxe5 ♜cg7 although his position would remain desperately passive. Karpov might have transferred a rook to d1 and prepared e4, while pushing the h-pawn is another option.

30.♕d3



30...♘b5?!

Georgiev probably wanted to exchange to b6-knight from c8, but he allows Karpov to obtain a powerful passed pawn.

30...♖e7?

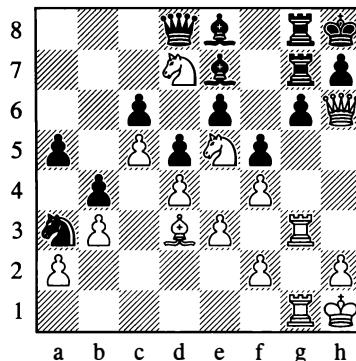
Blocking the seventh rank allows White to tighten the noose.

31.♗bd7!

This witty move was mentioned by Karpov in his annotations, although he did not give any additional analysis. The point is that if White can exchange Black's dark-squared bishop without giving up the knight outpost on e5, he will be able to break through on the kingside.

Karpov also gives 31.♗a6 as an alternative winning plan, the idea being to transfer the bishop to c8. This idea looks frightening, but it turns out that after 31...♗f6! 32.♗c8 ♜e7 Black keeps his position together.

Although the main line is strong, the simplest solution is probably 31.♗h3! when White will win the g6-pawn: 31...♗f6 (31...♗f8 32.♗xg6) 32.♗xg6† ♖xg6 33.♗xg6 White is a pawn up and he has the better pieces as well.



31...♗h4

Alternatives are no better.

31...♗xd7 32.♗xg6 wins, as 32...♗f8 33.♗f7† ♗xf7 34.♗xg8 is mate.

31...♗f6 32.♗xf6 ♜xf6 33.♗g5 ♜e7 34.h4 ♜f6 35.h5 White breaks in.

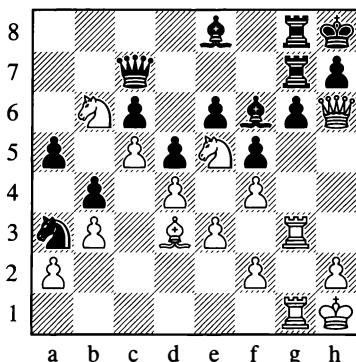
32.♕f3 ♕xd7

32...♛e7 allows 33.♕b8! ♔f6 34.♕bxc6 ♜c7 35.♕fg3 ♜c8 36.♕g2 ♜c7 37.h4 and White wins.

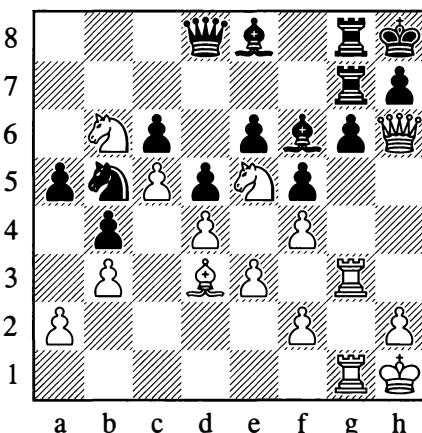
33.♕h3 ♛e8 34.♕xh4 ♜b7 35.♕h3 ♜f6 36.♕hg3 ♜b5 37.♕xb5 ♜xb5 38.h4

White will break through on the kingside.

Black could have offered sterner resistance with 30...♜c7!, guarding the c8-square and using the queen to defend along the seventh rank.



31.h4 (31.♕h3 ♜d8 defends) 31...♜d8 32.♕h3 (or 32.♕f3) 32...♜c7 33.♕f3 White can squeeze for a long time to come, although it is not clear if he can win by force. Even supposing that Black can draw with perfect defence, it would be next to impossible to survive such a position over the board against Karpov.



31.♕xb5!

Karpov does not pass up the opportunity to create a passed pawn. It may not hurt Black immediately, but it could play a key role in the subsequent course of the game.

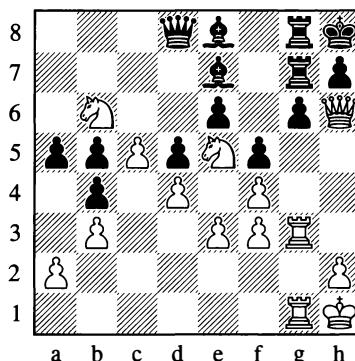
31...cx<sub>b</sub>5 32.f3?

Karpov sets a trap with this waiting move.

A good alternative was 32.h4 ♔xe5 (32...♔xh4? 33.♕h3 ♔f6 [33...♜xf2 34.♕f1] 34.♕xg6† wins.) 33.fxe5 ♜c6 34.♕h2 ♛e7 35.♕g5 and with h5 coming soon, Black's position is depressing.

32...♔h4

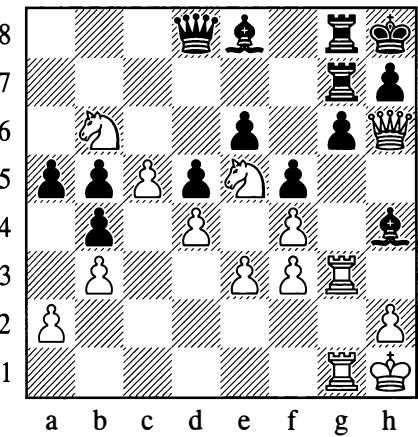
The trap occurs after 32...♔e7?:



33.♕bd7! when 33...♔xd7? is refuted by 34.♕xg6 ♔f6 35.♕xg7 ♔xg7 36.♕xg7 ♔xg7 37.♕f7† ♔g8 38.♕xg7† wins. Black can survive for slightly longer with 33...♔h4, but after 33.♕h3! White wins as Black cannot defend the g6-pawn.

Black's best chance to survive would have been: 32...♜c7! Karpov mentions this move in his annotations, adding the reply 33.h4 without further comment. Play might continue 33...♜d8 34.♕h3 (it is too early for 34.h5?! gxh5) 34...♜c7 and here White should probably make some preparations such as transferring his king to the centre before

playing h5. It is hard to say if he is winning outright, but over the board his chances would certainly have been high.

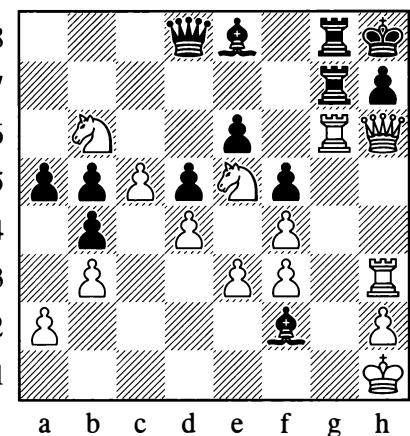


### 33.♕h3

This move looks obvious and it works well in the game, nevertheless 33.♕g2! would have been objectively stronger, for instance 33...♝f6 34.h4 with excellent chances for White.

### 33...♝f2 34.♕xg6

It looks as though Black is on the verge of collapse, but his resources are not yet exhausted.

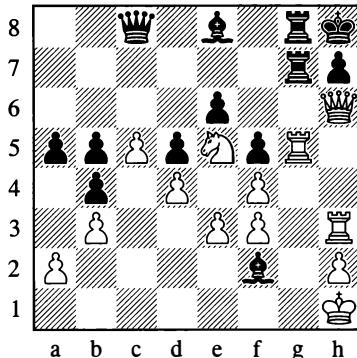


### 34...♝xe3??

This loses a piece.

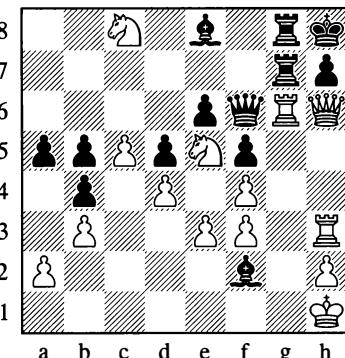
Black could have kept himself in the game with 34...♝e7! 35.♛c8! when there are two possibilities.

a) 35...♝c7 is refuted beautifully: 36.♕g5! ♛xc8 (36...♝xe3 37.♕hg3 is winning, as 37...♝xf4 38.♕xh7†! leads to mate.)



37.♕f6! ♛c7 38.♕g6!! Black is defenceless against the sacrifice on h7 followed by mate.

b) However Black has a stunning tactical defence: 35...♝f6!!

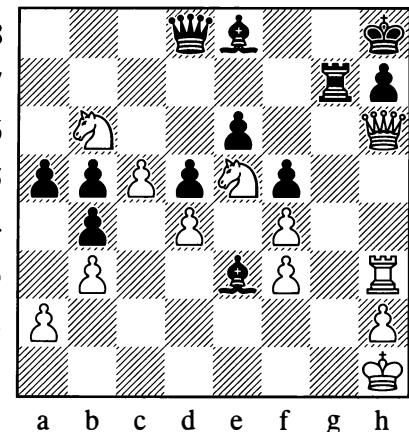


Exploiting the possibility of mate on g1. 36.♕xg7 ♛xg7 37.♕xg7† ♛xg7 38.♕g3! In a way White is lucky to have this resource. 38...♝xg3 39.hxg3 ♔g8! (39...♝xg3 40.♛d6 ♕g8 41.c6 wins) 40.g4 ♔f8 Despite being the exchange down White is in full control of the position, nevertheless it is not clear if he can win.

**35.♗xg7!**

Karpov now simplifies and win a piece.

**35...♝xg7**



**36.♝g3**

The kingside threats, combined with the passed c-pawn, are too much for Black to handle.

**36...♛e7 37.♝xg7 ♛xg7 38.♝xg7† ♔xg7  
39.c6 ♕xc6 40.♝xc6 ♕xf4 41.♝d7**

**1–0**

After a quick draw with against Tal, Karpov continued his winning run with the white pieces against John van der Wiel, the only Dutch player to have won the European Junior Championship. Van der Wiel became a decent grandmaster and on one rating list he was even the Dutch number one, although I imagine that the Dutch chess fans were hoping for even more from him.

Van der Wiel faced the world champions forty seven times. He won four of those games, drew eighteen and lost twenty five. He found Karpov a difficult opponent, as he scored just seven draws against him, with eleven defeats and no wins.

## Game 10

Anatoly Karpov – John Van der Wiel

Wijk aan Zee 1988

**1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 ♜b4**

The Dutch grandmaster played this line six years earlier against Tal and drew. He employed it later as well. Despite its resemblance to the Nimzo-Indian, Karpov never got the appetite to play it with Black.

**3.g3**

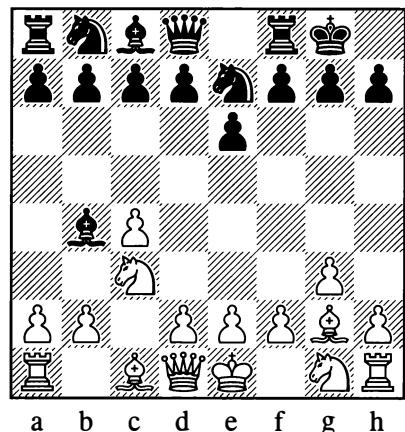
This is one of the most popular moves, although there is no clear main line for White.

**3...♞e7**

Van der Wiel develops the knight in a slightly unconventional way.

**4.♝g2 0–0**

So far nobody seems to have tried the provocative 4...d5!?, which appears risky but playable, for instance 5.cxd5 (or 5.♛b3 ♜bc6) 5...exd5 6.♛b3 ♜bc6 7.♝xd5 ♜e6 8.e4 ♜d6 and Black is in the game.



**5.♛b3**

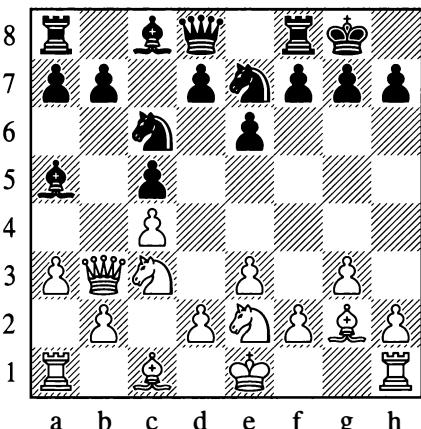
Karpov decides not to play with doubled pawns on the c-file.

5...c5 6.a3 ♘a5 7.e3

Karpov is not tempted to snatch a pawn with 7.♘xb7 ♘xb7 8.♗xb7 ♗bc6 9.♗b3 ♗b8 10.♗d1 ♖d4 when Black has decent compensation thanks to his play on the b-file.

7...♗bc6 8.♗ge2

Karpov avoids ♘f3 in order to inhibit ...d5.



8...♗b6?!

This is too slow.

8...♗e5 also falls short of equality: 9.0–0 (9.♗e4? d5!) 9...♗b6 (After 9...♗d3 10.♗c2 ♗xc1 11.♗axc1 d6 12.d4 Black has the bishop pair, but White has more space in the centre and is better developed.) 10.♗c2 ♗xc4 11.♗a4 ♗b5 12.d4 Black will not be able to keep his extra pawn, and his pieces lack harmony.

The most principled continuation is:

8...d5!

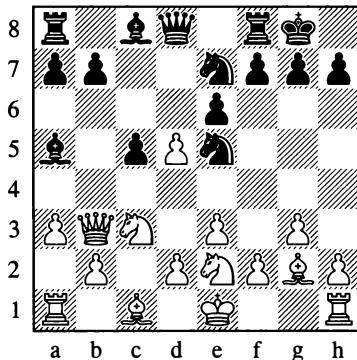
This pawn sacrifice offers promising compensation.

9.cxd5

If 9.0–0 ♘e5 10.d3 dxc4 11.dxc4 ♗d3 Black will take the c4-pawn and equalize.

9...♘e5!

Black's play is based on the weakness of the d3-square.



10.dxe6

After 10.♗f4 c4 11.♗c2 exd5 12.♗cxd5 ♗xd5 13.♗xd5 ♘h3! White has problems. There is also 10.0–0 c4 11.♗c2 exd5 12.♗f4 ♘f5 13.♗d1 ♘xc3 14.dxc3 ♘e4 when Black has a free position and White's dark-squared bishop is unimpressive.

10...♗d3†

10...c4 is also promising.

11.♗f1 ♘xe6

Also after 11...fxe6!? 12.♗f4 ♘g6 13.♗e4 ♘ge5 Black has compensation.

12.♗xb7 ♘b8 13.♗xa7 ♘c4

White has three extra pawns, but he is dangerously tied up.

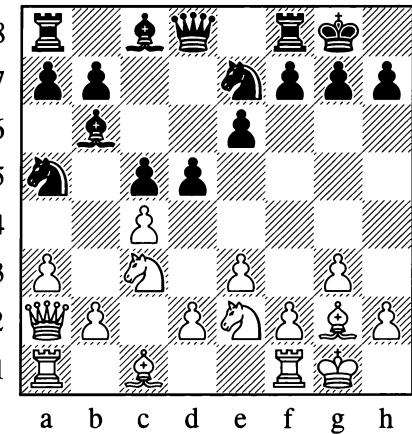
**9.0–0 ♘a5 10.♗a2**

White chooses this square instead of a4 as the queen will be less exposed, and she also helps to keep the d5-square under control.

10...d5!?

The Dutch grandmaster plays actively. His cards are similar compared with 8...d5! as analysed above, but since then White has been dealt an ace.

10...♗ac6 stops d4 but allows 11.b4! (There is also 11.♗d1!? when Black should play 11...e5.) 11...cxb4 12.axb4 ♘xb4 13.♗b3 ♘bc6 and now after 14.d4 or 14.♗a3 White has beautiful compensation in a position somewhat reminiscent of the Benko Gambit.

**11.d3!**

Black's idea was to meet 11.cxd5 with 11...c4! 12.dxe6 ♜xe6 when his grip on the light squares offers him decent compensation.

Instead Karpov opts for a simple and strong continuation, which highlights the fact that although Black was able to gain some space, he lacks the ability to support his pawn centre.

**11...dxc4**

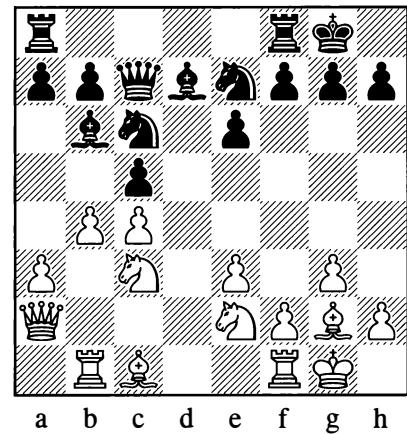
Having covered the c4-square, White was threatening to take on d5. Van der Wiel opts for a symmetrical pawn structure, but in the resulting position White's pieces are more favourably placed, especially his "Catalan" bishop on g2.

Black can no longer sacrifice under favourable conditions: 11...♜ac6?! 12.cxd5 (White could even try the gambit 12.b4?! cxb4 13.axb4 ♜xb4 14.♗b1 ♜bc6 15.♕a3 with lovely play for the pawn.) 12...exd5 13.♕xd5 ♜xd5 (13...♝e6?! 14.♕ef4) 14.♗xd5 ♜xd5 15.♗xd5 ♘d8 16.♗c3 Black's compensation is insufficient.

11...d4 is possible, but it allows White to obtain a turbocharged reversed Benoni position: 12.exd4 cxd4 13.♕a4 (13.♕e4 ♜ac6 14.b4 is also good) 13...♝c7 14.b4 ♜ac6 15.♗c5 White has mobilized his queenside pawns and keeps some advantage.

**12.dxc4 ♜d7**

Black does not mind White's queenside expansion. With 12...♜ac6 he could try to stop it. 13.♗b1 (Another interesting idea is 13.♗d1 ♜c7 14.b4? cxb4 15.♗b5 ♜b8 16.axb4 ♜xb4 17.♗b3 ♜a6 18.♗a3 with promising compensation for the pawn.) 13...a5 14.♗d1 ♜c7 15.♗b5 ♜b8 16.b3 White's bishops will be well placed on the long diagonals, and he remains in control of the game.

**13.b4! ♜ac6 14.♗b1 ♜c7****15.♗b3?!**

The idea behind this somewhat mysterious move is to develop the bishop on b2, but if White wanted to play this way then he should have done so on the previous move, instead of wasting time with ♘b1. Objectively he should have preferred one of the alternatives:

15.b5 could lead to something resembling the game continuation after 15...♝e5, although Black also has the option of 15...♞a5?.

15.♕e4 ♜d8 (15...f5? 16.♗xc5 ♜xc5 17.♗xc5 ♜xc5 18.♗d2 ♜c7 19.♗d4 Black has a sounder pawn structure, but White has the better placed pieces and keeps the overall advantage.

15.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  16.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  17.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  and White keeps the upper hand.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

Van der Wiel attacks White's only weakness, forcing a closing of the queenside.

### 16.b5

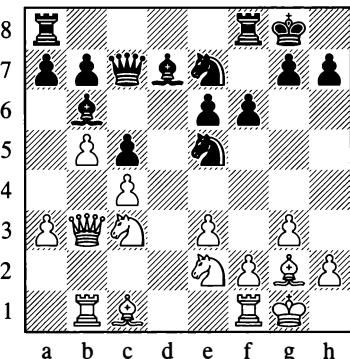
Apart from safeguarding the c4-pawn, it is also useful to take away the c6-square from Black's pieces. His light-squared bishop will have a particularly hard time getting into the game.

### 16... $\mathbb{E}ad8?$

Van der Wiel occupies the only open file. He was probably hoping to exchange at least one pair of rooks, in order to create some extra breathing room for his minor pieces. Nevertheless the text move is not purposeful enough. Instead Black should have taken immediate steps to improve the prospects of his minor pieces.

16...f5?! looks provocative, but is not easy to refute: 17.f4?! (17.  $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  Black improves his bishop.) 17...  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (another idea is 17...  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  18.e4  $\mathbb{E}ad8$ ) 18.  $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  Black's position looks playable.

### 16...f6!



This would be my preference. Black gives his pieces some additional options, without weakening his dark squares.

Curiously, this move reminded me of a game from the 1978 World Junior Championship in Graz, when I lost to none other than Van der Wiel himself! In that game, a French Advance, the Dutchman played a fairly early ...f6 and later activated his bishop via e8 and g6, to good effect. I think he should have employed a similar idea in the present game.

### 17. $\mathbb{B}b2$

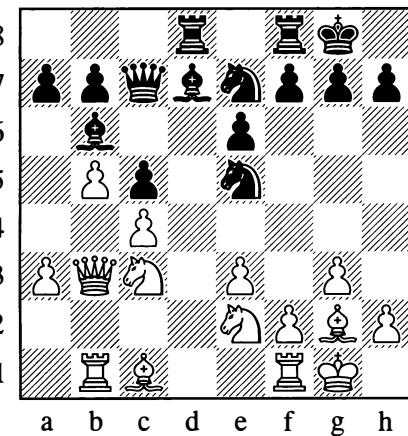
If 17.  $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  the knight stands much better than the way it ends up in the game. After the natural 18.  $e4$  Black can try 18...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$ , as well as 18...  $\mathbb{E}ad8$  followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ , ... $b6$ , ... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ .

### 17... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

18.  $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  looks alright for Black.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}f7$

Black should be able to live with his spatial disadvantage.



### 17. $f4!$

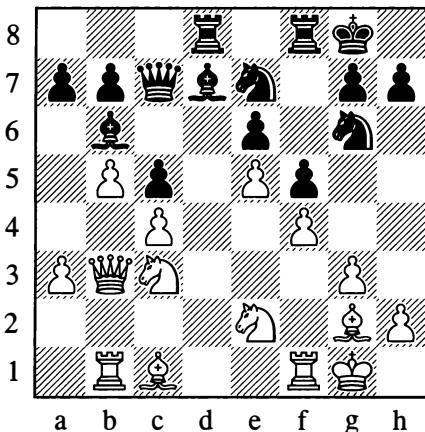
Over the next three moves Karpov gains considerable space in the centre.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}5g6?$

When deciding where to place a knight, one should not only think of the first move, but also take into account the second and sometimes further steps which the knight might take. From its present post on g6, the knight only

has the miserable h8-square available. With this in mind, it becomes clear that 17... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$  was correct, and after 18.h3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  19.e4 f6 Black has better defensive chances than in the game.

### 18.e4! f5 19.e5

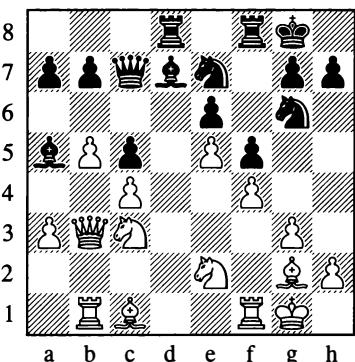


### 19... $\mathbb{Q}e8?$

In a way Van der Wiel is playing in a similar manner to Karpov, in the sense that, having chosen a plan, he follows it through. However, he would have done better to readjust and abandon his plan of playing on the d-file.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}a5!$

This was the best chance. Black's idea is to bolster the c5-pawn with ...b6 and then exchange his light-squared bishop on b7.



### 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

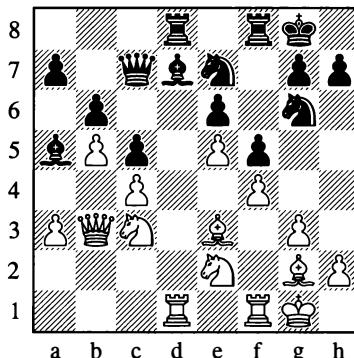
White should play against the c5-pawn. Instead after 20. $\mathbb{Q}b2?$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}fd1$  b6 Black is close to equalizing.

### 20...b6!

The immediate 20... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  allows White to increase his initiative in a surprising way: 21.b6!! axb6 (Other captures are worse as they do not enable Black to keep the extra pawn: 21... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}a4! \pm$ ; 21... $\mathbb{W}xb6$  22. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xc5 \pm$ ) 22. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}cb5$  White maintains strong pressure on the queenside.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}bd1$

Black must tread carefully, as shown by some of the following variations.



### 21... $\mathbb{Q}fe8?!$

This waiting move may well be the best chance.

21... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}a2!$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  23. $\mathbb{W}a4!?$  [23. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  is also good] 23... $\mathbb{Q}b7?$  [23...a6 24. $\mathbb{Q}ac3$ ] 24. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  White wins a pawn.) 23. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  25.bxc6 The strong c6-pawn may hurt Black.

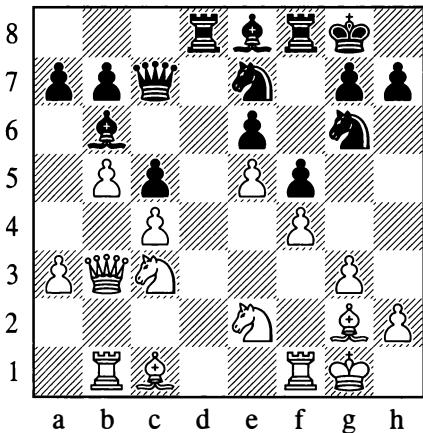
21... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$  exd5 (22... $\mathbb{W}b8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xe7 \dagger$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  24. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$  The bishop on a5 is vulnerable.) 23.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  Black has to give back the piece. 24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5 \dagger$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{W}c4$  White is clearly better.

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}c2$

After 23. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  Black seems to be okay.

23... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$  a6 25. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

White keeps the advantage, but Black has chances to resist.



20. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

Karpov spots that the c5-pawn is weak, despite the fact that Black is defending it twice. In the next few moves he goes after it purposefully until it falls.

20... $\mathbb{Q}h8?$

Van der Wiel hopes to counter White's assault on the c5-pawn by becoming active on the d-file, so he makes way for the light-squared bishop to come to h5. Nevertheless the knight is pitiful in the corner, and Van der Wiel never gets around to moving it again.

The attempt to disrupt the opponent with 20... $\mathbb{E}d3$  was not much of an improvement, and after 21. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  22. $\mathbb{W}c2$  the rook has to retreat.

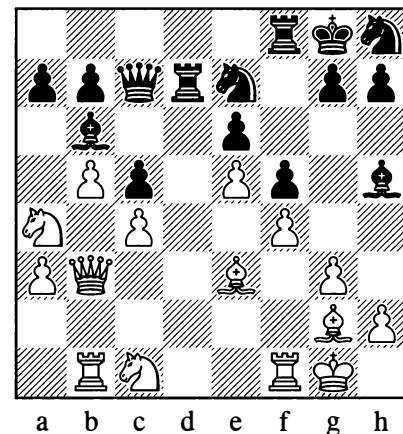
Black's best chance was to defend passively: 20... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black has avoided a direct collapse, although the chances of surviving such a dismal position against Karpov would be slim.

21. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

Karpov continues his plan.

21... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{E}d7$

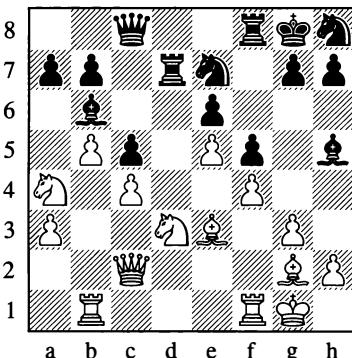
If 22... $\mathbb{E}c8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}dxc5$  wins.



23. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

Having won the strategic battle, Karpov shows that he is equally adept at controlling the complications.

23. $\mathbb{W}c2$  was also good enough: 23... $\mathbb{W}c8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d3$



24... $\mathbb{E}fd8$  (24... $\mathbb{E}c7$  25. $\mathbb{W}f2$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}dxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

26. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}xb7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$   
29.c5 And White wins.

23... $\mathbb{Q}e2$

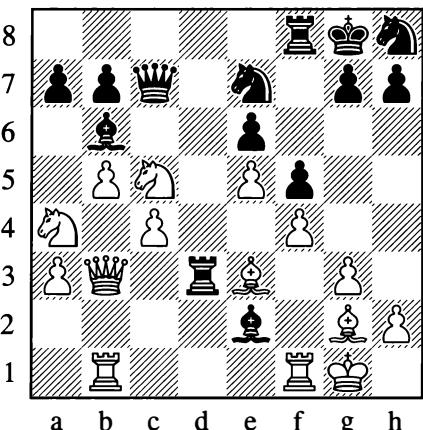
This is the critical move, but Karpov has everything under control.

24. $\mathbb{Q}dxc5$

Finally the c5-pawn succumbs.

**24...♝d3!!**

Black tries to stir things up, but it is not enough. If 24...♝xf1 25.♝xf1 White wins as the e6-pawn falls.



**25.♝xd3! ♜xe3† 26.♝h1 ♜d8 27.♝b4 ♜xf1  
28.♝xf1**

White is not only a pawn up, he is also playing with virtually an extra piece, as the h8-knight exists but does nothing.

**28...♝c5 29.♝d3**

29.♝c6 is also convincing.

**29...b6 30.♝axc5 bxc5 31.a4 ♜d4 32.a5  
♛xa5 33.♝xc5 ♛f7 34.♝b7 ♛d2 35.b6**

**1–0**

Black resigned, as the e6-pawn will soon fall as well.

For the rest of the tournament Karpov continued his pattern of drawing, often quickly, with Black and winning with White. Over the next four rounds his draws came against Sosonko and Hübner, and he defeated Ljubojevic and Farago. His final draw came against Andersson, who was trailing Karpov by half a point, but made no serious attempt to win. Thus Karpov finished in outright first place with a score of 9/13.

Karpov remained in the Netherlands for his next event, the Euwe Memorial in Amsterdam, a four player double-round-robin tournament. Karpov drew with Timman and beat Short but then lost to Ljubojevic. He then won an interesting endgame with rook and three connected pawns versus rook and bishop against Timman. In the next round Karpov narrowly failed to beat Ljubojevic, then in the final game he took a quick draw against Short, and finished in second place half a point behind the Englishman.

Karpov's next tournament took place in Brussels, and was the first in a series of events known collectively as the World Cup, which took place over the course of 1988 and 1989. Karpov began by drawing with Salov, then he beat Nogueiras. Two more draws with Tal and Portisch followed. Karpov then lost to Beliavsky and dropped back to fifty percent, but not for long as he beat Timman in an imaginative game. He followed it with a quick draw with Nunn, then powered ahead with three fine victories over Andrei Sokolov, Ljubojevic and Speelman. In the last six games Karpov scored two more wins over Korchnoi and Winants, and four draws. His total of 11/16, with seven wins, eight draws and one loss, was enough to secure first place a point ahead of Salov.

Karpov's next event, in Amsterdam, was an extended version of the traditional round-robin format, as each contestant played four games against each of his three opponents. The event was especially notable as it 'reunited' Karpov with his nemesis Kasparov. The other two invitees were Timman and Van der Wiel. Karpov crushed the latter by the score of 3½–½, but he only managed four draws against Timman. Karpov's result against Kasparov was more disappointing: he lost both of his black games, and could only draw the white ones. One of the losses could easily have gone

the other way, as Kasparov embarked on an unsound sacrificial attack and Karpov missed several wins; nevertheless in the end he was unable to cope with the problems and lost on time in what was by then a losing position. Karpov finished in second place with 6½/12, a massive 2½ points behind Kasparov. There were times in the tournament when Karpov played extremely good chess, nevertheless the result made it clear that Kasparov was on another level.

For his next tournament Karpov travelled to Belfort, in eastern France, for the next stage of the World Cup series. He started badly with a loss to Andrei Sokolov, but bounced back immediately with a win over Hjartarson. Over the next eleven games Karpov performed solidly, winning four games against Nogueiras, Beliavsky, Ehlvest and Timman, and drawing the other nine. Then in the penultimate round he faced Kasparov, who had already won the tournament.

### Game 11

Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov

Belfort 1988

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3**

Karpov was never able to put much pressure on Kasparov with the 3.g3 Grünfeld, so he plays something more combative.

**3...d5 4.cxd5 ♜xd5 5.e4 ♜xc3 6.bxc3 ♜g7  
7.♗c4 c5 8.♗e2 ♜c6 9.♗e3 0–0 10.0–0 ♜g4  
11.f3 ♜a5 12.♗xf7†!!**

The players continue the opening debate which began in Seville the previous year. Igor Zaitsev's idea has grown into a major line, and nowadays approximately 500 games can be found on the database.

**12...♝xf7 13.♗xg4 ♜xf1† 14.♔xf1 ♜d6**

### 15.e5

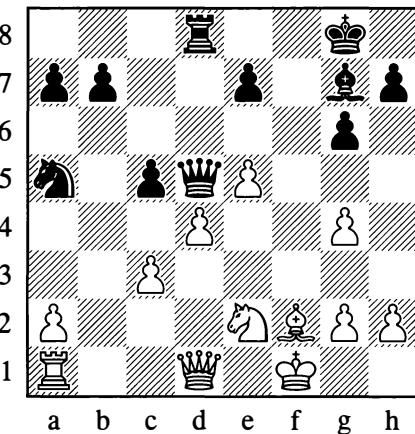
The move safeguards the e-pawn and freezes the g7-bishop, but gives up some squares in the centre. In the eleventh game of the Seville match Karpov played 15.♗g1 and obtained some advantage before he blundered and lost.

**15...♝d5 16.♗f2**

Four years later Kasparov faced 16.g5 and demonstrated a reliable antidote: 16...♝e4 17.♗f2 ♜f8 18.♗g1 ♜c4 19.♗f3 ♜e3† 20.♗xe3 ♜xe3 21.♗b3† ♜h8 22.♗e1 Black soon gave a perpetual, Beliavsky – Kasparov, Linares 1992.

**16...♝d8**

In the very first game featuring the Seville Variation, Kasparov chose 16...♝f8 and was doing all right until he blundered shortly before the time control. Afterwards he switched to the text move and seemed to be content with the positions he got.



**17.♗a4??**

Karpov unveils an important novelty. White's idea is to provoke ...b6 in order to weaken the c6-square.

The two players had already debated this position twice before. The first game continued: 17.♗e1 ♜e4 18.g5 ♜f5 19.h4 ♜c4 20.♗g1

$\mathbb{W}g4$  21.a4 h6 22. $\mathbb{B}a2$   $\mathbb{h}xg5$  23. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{g}xh4$  24. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{W}xg6$  27. $\mathbb{W}xc4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$ , Black was okay and the game was later drawn, Karpov – Kasparov, Seville (7) 1987.

At the more recent Amsterdam tournament Karpov deviated with: 17. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  18. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  19.h4  $\mathbb{W}f7$  (Interestingly, despite his success in the main game below, Karpov came back to the present line the following year against Timman. The game continued: 19... $\mathbb{E}f8$  20.g5  $\mathbb{W}d3$  21. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e3$  22. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  cxd4 27. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  White had a clear advantage and went on to win, Karpov – Timman, Rotterdam 1989.) 20. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  22. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$  23. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  24. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  25.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  Black was fine and in the end it was White who had to work for the draw, Karpov – Kasparov, Amsterdam 1988.

### 17...b6

On 17... $\mathbb{E}f8$  White must avoid 18. $\mathbb{W}xa5??$   $\mathbb{W}f7$ , but should instead step aside with 18. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$ .

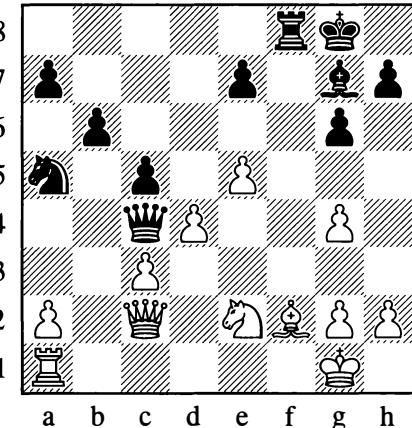
### 18. $\mathbb{W}c2!$ $\mathbb{E}f8?$

Kasparov is widely considered the greatest opening player of all time, but even he can have trouble when confronted with a novelty.

It is understandable that he chose not to repeat his play from the recent game when he had the same position with the pawn on b7 instead of b6, as Karpov would obviously have analysed that continuation in depth. In the event of 18... $\mathbb{W}c4$  Karpov would probably have replied 19. $\mathbb{W}e4!$  when the black knight does not have the use of the c6-square.

Subsequent analysis revealed that 18... $\mathbb{E}c8!$  is the right move, and Black has scored reasonably well with it in practice.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{W}c4$



### 20. $\mathbb{W}d2!$

Karpov is flexible in his thinking. 20. $\mathbb{W}e4$  is no longer as attractive in view of 20... $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ , taking advantage of the vulnerable knight on e2, and meanwhile Black threatens ... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ .

### 20... $\mathbb{W}e6?!$

Kasparov tries to play safe. White's extra pawn may be doubled, yet its influence can still be felt.

20... $\mathbb{W}f7$  was also not ideal, as after 21. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$  intending  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  and  $\mathbb{W}e2$ , White improves his pieces considerably.

Exchanging or improving the bishop looks like the best idea:

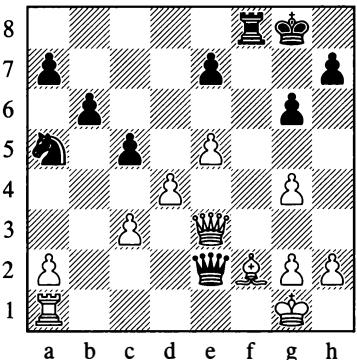
### 20... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$ 21. $\mathbb{W}xh6$

After 21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3\#$  22. $\mathbb{W}xe3$  cxd4 23.cxd4  $\mathbb{W}c2$  Black's kingside is a bit open, but he should be able to live with it.

However 21. $\mathbb{W}e1!?$  is a promising alternative, and after 21... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22.h4 e6 23.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24. $\mathbb{W}d2$  White has somewhat better chances.

### 21... $\mathbb{W}xe2$ 22. $\mathbb{W}e3$

Karpov ends his analysis here, evaluating the position as slightly better for White.



22... $\mathbb{W}b2!$

This must be the critical continuation.

23. $\mathbb{E}d1$

23. $\mathbb{E}f1$  is also possible.

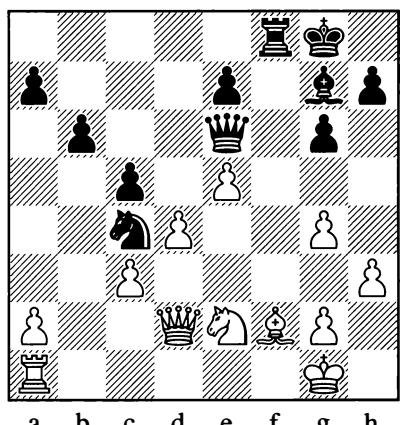
23... $cxd4$  24. $cxd4$   $\mathbb{W}xa2$  25. $d5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Here White can choose between 26. $\mathbb{W}e1$  and 26. $\mathbb{W}d4$ , to which Black would probably reply 26... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ . In both cases Black's position is dangerous as his king is exposed and White has a potential passed pawn in the centre, but objectively his position may be playable.

21.h3

Karpov consolidates his extra pawn and also gives his king an escape square, which can make a big difference in some lines.

21... $\mathbb{Q}c4$



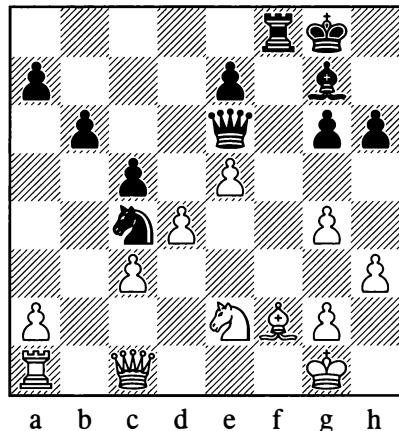
22. $\mathbb{W}g5!$

Karpov prepares to bring his rook into play and also ensures that Black's bishop remains passive. In addition Black has to start calculating whether 23. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  or 23. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  are threatened.

22... $h6!!$

Kasparov voluntarily weakens his kingside and restricts his bishop in order to disrupt White's smooth development. Alternatives were uninspiring, for instance 22... $\mathbb{W}f7$  23. $\mathbb{E}f1$  (23. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  comes into consideration as well) 23... $e6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  and Black has no compensation for the missing pawn.

23. $\mathbb{W}c1$



23... $\mathbb{W}f7!$

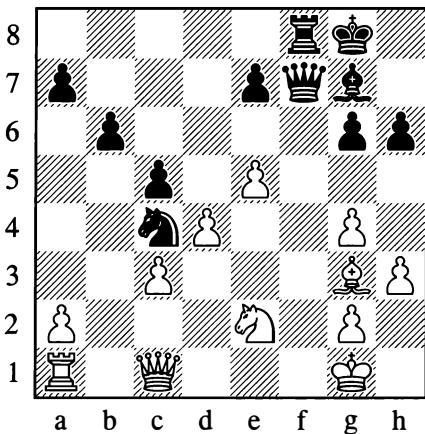
The attack on the bishop prevents White from getting organized.

If 23... $\mathbb{W}d5$  24. $\mathbb{W}c2!$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  26. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  27. $\mathbb{W}e2$  White is firmly in control. Soon he will develop his rook and then put his knight on the dominating e4-square.

Karpov mentions 23... $h5$  to open the kingside, but exchanging the opponent's doubled pawns is a big concession for Black, and after 24. $gxh5$   $gxh5$  25. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  26. $\mathbb{W}g3$  White is a pawn up for nothing.

**24...♝g3**

The bishop has to block the route of the knight from g3 to e4, on the other hand the possibility of ♟f4 now becomes attractive.

**24...g5?**

Kasparov stops ♟f4, but he weakens his kingside too much.

**24...♛d5!**

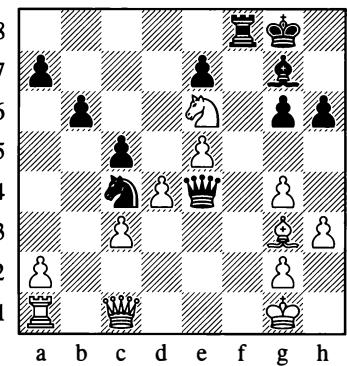
Activating the queen was Black's best chance.

**25.♘f4**

And not 25.♛c2?? ♜e3.

**25...♜e4 26.♘e6**

26.♗b1!? ♜xf4 27.♗b3 is tricky, but does not lead to a clear-cut win: 27...♛e3†! (27...♛d5? 28.♗xf4 cxd4 29.♗d1 d3 30.♗b1+–) 28.♘h2 ♜h7 29.♗xc4 cxd4 30.♗e1 ♛d2 31.♗xf4 ♜xf4† 32.♗g1 ♛d2 33.♛e2 ♛xc3 White certainly has winning chances, but it is hard to say if it will be enough for a full point.

**26...♜c8!**

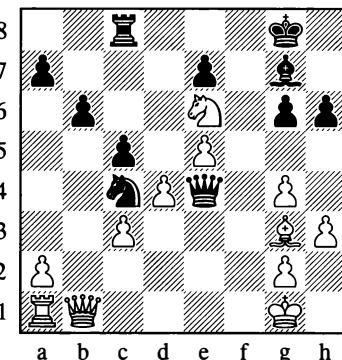
The exchange sacrifice is not sufficient: 26...cxd4? 27.♗xf8! (After 27.cxd4 ♜e3! 28.♗d2 [28.♗b2 ♜c8] 28...♞c4 29.♗e1 ♜e3 30.♗e2 ♜c8 Black is very much alive.)

27...♛e3 28.♗d2 dx3 29.♗f2! (This move is even stronger than Karpov's 29.♗e2, which is good but not immediately decisive.) 29...♗xf8 30.♗e1 c2 31.♗f4 White wins.

26...♞e3? looks active but Black just steps into a lethal pin. 27.♗d2 ♜c4 (27...cxd4 28.♗e1+–) 28.♗e1 ♜e3 29.♗e2 cxd4 30.♗xf8 (30.cxd4? ♜c8!) 30...♗xf8 (30...d3 31.♗f2) 31.cxd4 ♛xd4 32.♗e1 White is winning, as all the discovered checks are harmless.

**27.♗b1!**

This looks best, although 27.♗f4 is also good: 27...♗xf4 (It is risky for Black to keep the queens on the board: 27...♛d5?! 28.♗xg7 ♛xg7 29.e6! ♜f8 [29...♛xe6 30.♗e1] 30.♗c7 Black has problems.) 28.♗xf4 g5 29.♗d3 White is better, but his advantage is smaller than in the main line below.

**27...♛xb1†**

27...♛e3†? 28.♗f2 ♛xc3 29.♗xg6 leads to a checkmate.

**28.♗xb1 ♜f7 29.♗c7!**

This cute finesse is a useful resource.

**29...e6 30.♗f1† ♜e7 31.♗b5**

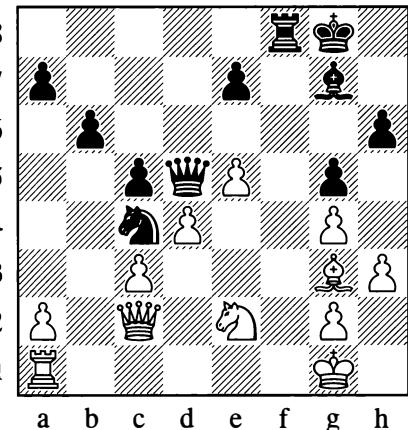
White has decent winning chances, but the game is far from over.

**25... $\mathbb{W}c2!$** 

Karpov prepares to activate his rook, meanwhile the queen stands excellently on the b1-h7 diagonal.

**25... $\mathbb{W}d5$** 

In the event of a waiting move, Karpov could have improved his position with  $\mathbb{E}e1$  and  $e6$ .

**26. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$** 

Karpov defends the d4-pawn and vacates the g3-square for the knight. The game has reached a critical phase. Both players must have been conscious of the fact that if White were able to bring his rook into play and activate his knight, then the game would be almost over. But Kasparov is one of the most tenacious players of all time, and possesses an unparalleled ability to stir up complications from difficult positions.

**26... $b5!$** 

Attempting to undermine White's pawn structure is the best chance, although ultimately it is insufficient.

**27. $\mathbb{Q}g3$** 

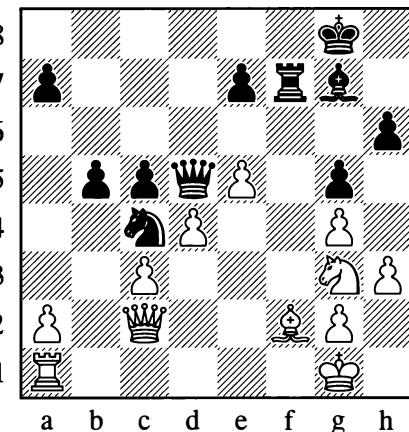
True to his style, Karpov gives as little counterplay as necessary.

White's advantage is so great that he could also afford to open the position: 27.dxc5!?

$\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (27... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  28. $\mathbb{W}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f5+$ ) 28. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $e6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h5$  Black is lost.

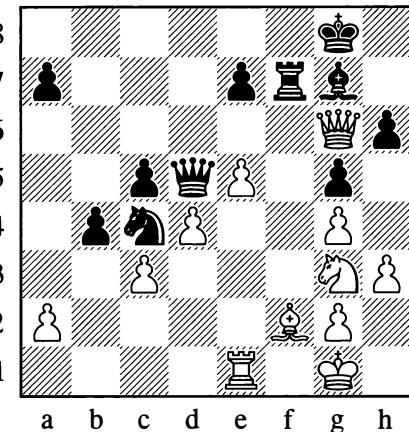
**27... $\mathbb{E}f7$** 

Kasparov must make a defensive move, as 27... $b4$  is refuted by 28. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  29. $e6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  30. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  31.cxb4 as pointed out by Zaitsev.

**28. $\mathbb{E}e1$** 

Karpov brings his last piece in play, although the more aggressive 28. $\mathbb{Q}f5?$  cxd4 29. $\mathbb{E}d1$  was also good enough.

Another route to victory was 28. $\mathbb{W}g6?$  cxd4 29. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  32.gxf5  $\mathbb{W}xc3$  33. $\mathbb{E}d1$  with a winning position.

**28... $b4$  29. $\mathbb{W}g6$** 

**29...♝f8**

A desperate attempt to confuse White. 29...bxc3 was no better: 30.♗h5 (30.♗f5 ♝f8 31.e6 ♜xf5 32.gxf5 ♖d6 33.dxc5 also wins) 30...cxd4 (30...e6 31.♗f6†) 31.e6 White wins.

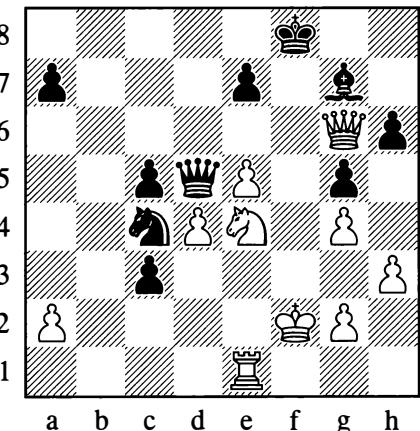
**30.♝e4**

Karpov keeps improving his pieces. This does not spoil anything, but it was possible to win by more direct means: 30.♗h5! e6 (30...bxc3 31.e6) 31.♗f6 ♜xf6 32.exf6 Black is hopelessly lost.

**30...♜xf2?!**

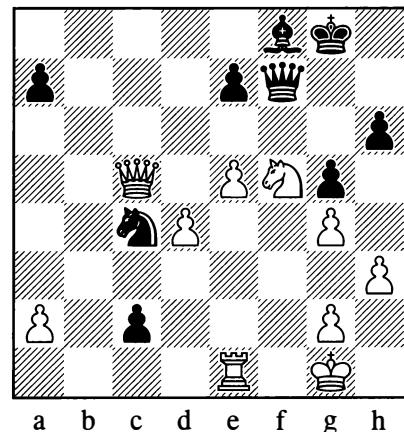
Objectively this desperate exchange sacrifice hastens the end, but practically it was probably the best chance.

The calmer 30...cxd4 31.cxd4 gives Black little chance of saving the game, for instance 31...a5 (Or 31...♝g8 32.♝e2 a5 33.♗g3 and Black will not be able to live with the knight on h5.) 32.♗c5 ♜g8 33.♗e6 a4 34.♗f1 b3 35.axb3 axb3 36.♗g3 with a mating attack.

**31.♝xf2 bxc3****32.♛f5†!**

With this and the following check White wins the c5-pawn and the game.

32...♝g8 33.♛c8†! ♜h7 34.♛xc5 ♜f7† 35.♛g1 c2 36.♝g3 ♜f8 37.♝f5 ♜g8

**38.♜c1**

**1–0**

The c-pawn was Black's last hope, and it will perish on the next move. Amazingly this was Karpov's only tournament win over Kasparov; the other nineteen wins all occurred in their world championship matches.

Karpov also won his final round after Spassky blundered a piece. Karpov finished in second place with 10½/15, a point behind Kasparov and a point and a half ahead of Ehlvest who was third.

Soon after came the USSR Championship, in which the two Ks would cross swords once again. Karpov started well with a win over Kharitonov, a draw with Beliavsky, and a win against Smirin. He followed with five solid draws against Yudasin, Salov, Khalifman, Kasparov, and Eingorn. Interestingly Kasparov avoided the Grünfeld this time, in favour of a Nimzo-Indian.

Karpov then resumed the pattern of winning with white and drawing with black, scoring wins over Yusupov, Mikhail Gurevich and Gavrikov, and drawing with Ivanchuk, Andrei Sokolov and Smyslov. He drew his next white game with Vaganian, then met Vladimir

Malaniuk. The Ukrainian grandmaster played fourteen games against the world champions from Smyslov all the way to Topalov, with the exception of Fischer. He did not win any of these games, but he performed solidly, with twelve draws and only two losses. He drew his one previous game with Karpov, and the two players never met again in regular tournaments.

## Game 12

Anatoly Karpov – Vladimir Malaniuk

Moscow 1988

**1.d4 f5 2.g3 ♜f6 3.♗g2 g6**

Malaniuk is one of the world's greatest experts on the Leningrad Dutch. For much of his career he played virtually nothing else. He scored well with it, and even used it to draw with Kasparov.

**4.c4 ♜g7 5.♘f3 d6 6.0–0 0–0 7.♘c3**

Karpov almost always opted for the main line against the Leningrad Dutch, and he won most of his games with it.

**7...♛e8**

The following year Yusupov tried a different system, but Karpov exhibited an impressive combination of strategic and tactical ideas:

**7...c6 8.b3 ♜c7 9.♘a3**

Preventing ...e5.

**9...a5 10.♗c1 ♜a6 11.♗d2 ♜d7 12.♗fe1**

White prepares e4, gaining space and opening the e-file.

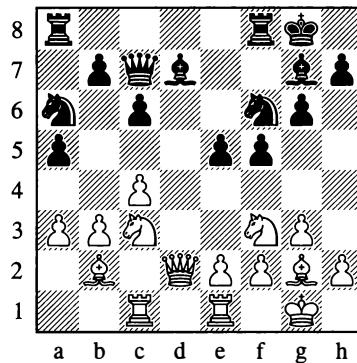
**12...♝b4 13.♗b2 e5?!**

Finally Black plays his desired pawn break, but it contains a tactical flaw.

**14.a3 ♜a6**

14...exd4!? would have left Black positionally worse, but he would have avoided the unpleasant game continuation.

**15.dxe5! dxe5**



**16.♗b5!!**

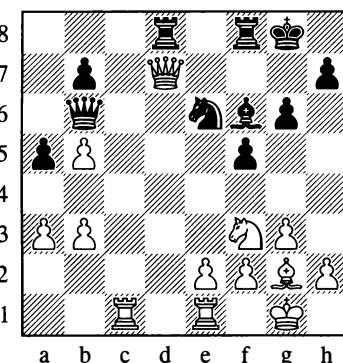
This combination requires an exceptional level of calculation.

**16...cxb5**

16...♛b6 17.♗xe5 wins material.

**17.cxb5 ♜c5 18.♗xe5 ♜b6 19.♗xf6 ♜xf6 20.♗d5† ♜e6 21.♗xd7 ♜ad8**

It looks as though White's queen is trapped.



**22.♗c6!!**

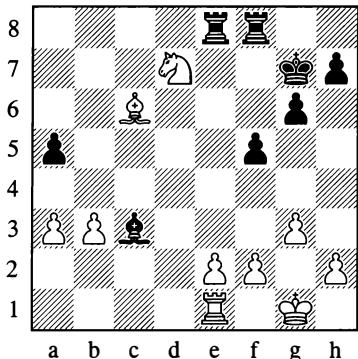
Karpov had to foresee this move all the way back when he exchanged on e5 on move 15. In fact he would have needed to calculate even further and judge the endgame in certain variations.

**22...♜xd7**

22...bxc6 23.♗xe6† ♜g7 24.♗e5 (24.♗xc6 ♜xc6 25.bxc6 ♜d6 26.♗h4 is also good)

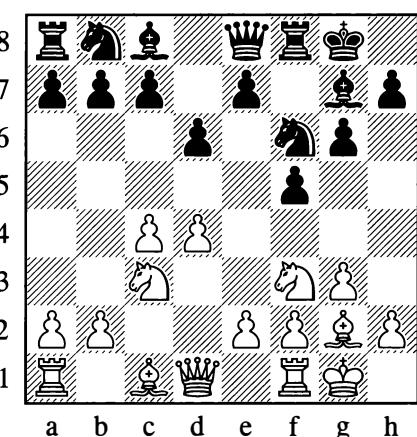
24...♗xb5 25.♗d7 ♜de8 26.♗xc6 ♜xc6 (If 26...♗xb3 27.♗xf8 ♜xf8 28.a4 White's extra pawn gives him decent winning chances.)

27.♗xc6 ♜c3



28.♕c1! (28.♕xf8 ♕xe1 29.♕xe8 ♕xf8 30.♕b5 Black has decent drawing chances, despite the two pawn deficit.) 28...♕b2 29.♕c2 ♕xa3 30.♕xf8 ♕xf8 The game is not over yet, but White's extra pawn should provide excellent winning chances, especially since Black's kingside has been compromised.

23.♖xb6 ♖c5 24.b4 axb4 25.axb4 ♖e4 26.e3  
White converted his advantage in Karpov – Yusupov, Linares 1989.



### 8.b3

This was the first time Karpov encountered the present variation, and at the time of the game the text move was considered critical.

Karpov went on to try 8.♘b3 c6 9.d5 ♘a6 10.♗e3 ♘g4 in two games against Mikhail Gurevich:

a) The first continued: 11.♗d4 e5 12.dxe6 ♘e5 13.♗ad1 ♘xe6 14.♗a4 ♘xc4 15.♗xc4† ♘xc4 16.♗xg7 ♘xg7 17.b3 ♘b6 18.♗xd6 ♘xa4 19.bxa4 ♘c5 Black equalized and after a long fight the game ended in a draw, Karpov – M. Gurevich, Reggio Emilia 1989.

b) Two years later Karpov deviated: 11.♗f4 ♘c5 12.♗c2 h6 13.h3 e5 14.dxe6 ♘e5 15.♗ad1 ♘xe6 16.♗xd6 ♘xc4 17.♗d3 ♘xf4 18.gxf4 ♘e6 19.♗fd1 ♘e7 Black had equalized again, but this time Karpov was able to grind out a win, Karpov – M. Gurevich, Amsterdam 1991.

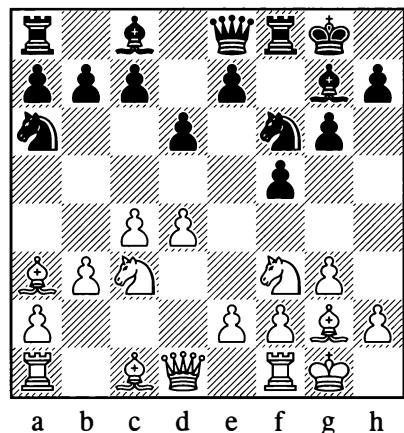
After the turn of the millennium Karpov preferred 8.d5 and won a complex struggle in Karpov – Zhang Zhong, Cap d'Agde (4) 2000.

### 8...♘a6

Malaniuk had played this move previously, and later he also tried 8...e5.

### 9.♗a3

Preventing ...e5. Malaniuk had already faced this move twice, and was successful both times.



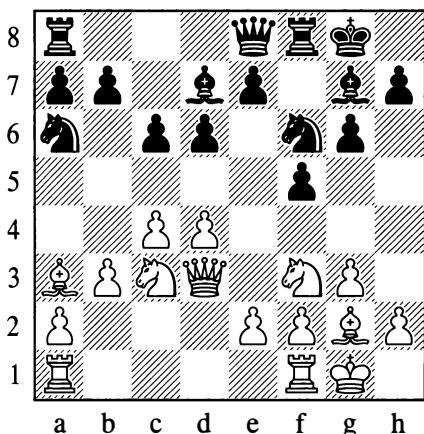
### 9...c6 10.♗d3

Karpov follows Dautov's play. Two rounds

earlier Malaniuk defeated Gavrikov, who preferred 10.♗c1.

### 10...♝d7?!

For some reason Malaniuk deviates from his successful Dautov game, in which he preferred the main line of 10...♝b8 preparing ...b5. White's main replies are 11.♗d2 and 11.e4, but Black scores all right against both of them.



### 11.♗fe1!

Karpov prepares the thematic advance e4.

### 11...♞d8?!

It is hard to work out the motivation for this move. Perhaps Malaniuk was anticipating the witty idea of ♘ad1 followed by ♔e5, although if that happened Black could always just retreat his bishop. As it turns out, the rook stays on this square for the rest of the game while contributing very little to Black's position.

The plan involving 11...b5?! is ineffective here as the knight on a6 is unprotected, and after 12.cxb5 cxb5 13.e4 White is better.

Perhaps Black should have regrouped with 11...♝c7 12.♗ad1 b5?!, although White keeps a modest edge after 13.e4 or 13.♔e5?!!.

### 12.♗ad1 ♜h8?!

Malaniuk can do little but wait. If Black's play grinds to a halt like this in the Leningrad Dutch, it is almost always bad news for him.

Nevertheless 12...♝c7 was a more useful way of waiting; the knight has to come to c7 at some point, and it would have been better to do it immediately. On the other hand the king move to the corner may not be essential. Play might continue: 13.e4 (13.h3?!) 13...fxe4 14.♗xe4 ♜f5 15.♗xf6† ♜xf6 16.♗e3 (16.♗d2 ♜g4) 16...♝e6 17.♗d2 ♜xe1† 18.♗xe1 ♜d7 Black is still worse but the exchange of a pair of rooks has eased his position somewhat.

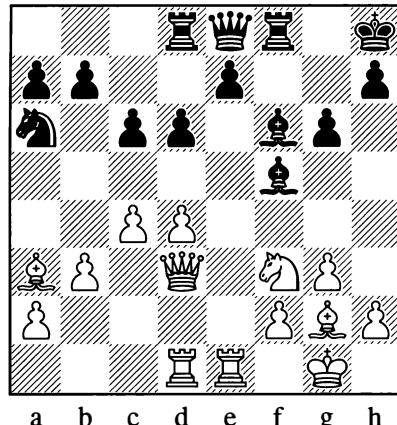
### 13.e4!

Having performed all the necessary preparations, Karpov opens the centre.

### 13...fxe4 14.♗xe4 ♜f5 15.♗xf6

Karpov exchanges and gets another step closer to the e7-pawn. 15.♗h4?!! 16.♗xe4 ♜xe4 17.♗xe4 would also have brought White some advantage.

### 15...♝xf6



### 16.♗e3!

This move is more subtle than it looks. Normally it is said that one should attack along a file with the rook(s) positioned in front

of the queen, yet Karpov is happy to put his queen in front. The clever idea behind the text move is to make it harder for Black to find a good square for his queen. In some variations the attack on the a7-pawn might also prove significant.

### 16... $\mathbb{W}f7$

Had the white queen retreated to d2 instead of e3, the reply 16... $\mathbb{W}d7$  would have been possible. In the present position this move would be met by 17.h3!  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  when the advantage of having the queen on the e3-square becomes apparent, and after 18... $\mathbb{W}f5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$   $\mathbb{W}xg6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  White dominates the light squares.

Another possibility was 16... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  17.h3!  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  18.g4 (18. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  and 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  are also possible) 18... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  and now White keeps a stable advantage after 19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  or 19. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ .

### 17.h3!

Karpov takes away the g4-square from the bishop and sets up the possibility of g3-g4. As usual he makes all the small improvements before taking direct action.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}c7$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$

Defending the f2-pawn in advance.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$ !

It is not Malaniuk's day; this passive move does nothing to alleviate his problems.

### 18...b5!

With this move Black could at least have created a distraction on the queenside.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

19. $\mathbb{B}c1$  bxc4 20.bxc4 (If 20. $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  the knight stands well in the centre.) 20... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black's problems are smaller than in the game as White must keep an eye on the c4-pawn.

19.g4  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  20.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe7$  bxc4 22. $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}xf7$  23.bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}g8?$  24. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black has chances to hold the position a pawn down.) 24. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $\mathbb{B}xf3$  25. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}f7$  White is only a little better.

### 19... $\mathbb{W}g8$

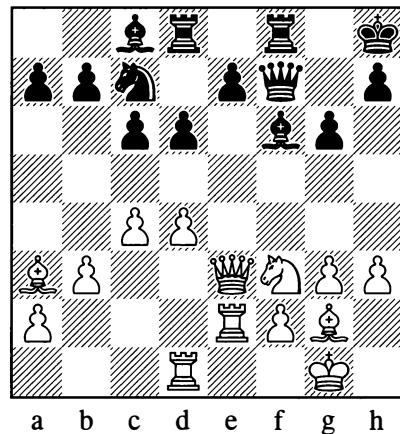
After 19... $\mathbb{W}e8$  20.d5! c5 21. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  Black has a hard time keeping his position together.

### 20.cxb5 $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

After 20...cxb5 21.d5! White takes over on the queenside.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

White is still better, but the position is more complex and less one-sided than the game continuation.



### 19... $\mathbb{W}g5!$

Karpov pushes his opponent back even more.

### 19... $\mathbb{W}g8$

If 19... $\mathbb{W}g7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  is strong.

### 20. $\mathbb{W}d2$

The queen has done her duty, and now she vacates the e-file to make way for the rooks.

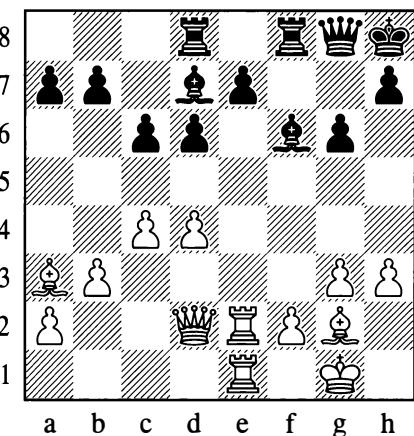
### 20... $\mathbb{Q}e6?$

Malaniuk does not wish to suffer slowly, and tries to alter the course of the game. In a way he succeeds, as the text move loses by force.

20... $\mathbb{B}de8$  is uninspiring, but Black is not yet losing outright: 21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (21. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  defends) 21... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22. $\mathbb{B}de1$  White is in full control and has several ways to improve his position, including softening the black kingside with h4-h5, and/or playing in the centre with  $\mathbb{B}b2$  followed by  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and d5.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 22. $\mathbb{B}de1$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  avoids the game continuation, but Black is still in big trouble: 23.d5  $\mathbb{W}g7$  (23... $\mathbb{E}f7$  24.dxc6 bxc6 25. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  wins) 24. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  White wins a pawn, while his pieces also stand better than their black counterparts.



### 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe7!$

Karpov's strategic plan prevails. The exchange sacrifice looks nice, although it is not difficult to appreciate its power.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$

White has a pawn for the exchange, and more importantly, his dark-squared bishop is poised to commit bloody murder on the long diagonal.

### 24... $\mathbb{B}f6$

24...d5 25. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  wins.

### 25.d5 $\mathbb{W}f8$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 27. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 28. $\mathbb{W}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$

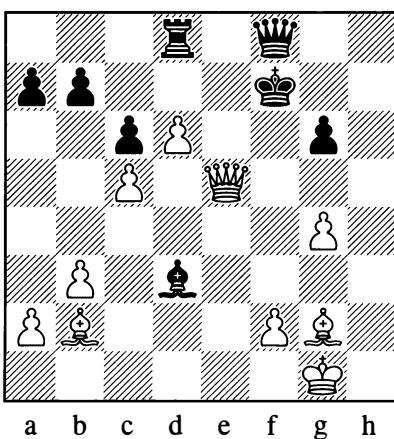
Black tries to survive by exchanging a pair of rooks, but it costs him another pawn and barely slows down the attack.

### 29. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ 30. $\mathbb{W}xe5$ $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 31.d6 $\mathbb{Q}f5$

31... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  32. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$  leads to a checkmate.

### 32.c5 h5 33.g4 hxg4 34.hxg4 $\mathbb{Q}d3$

If 34... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  35. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  36. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$  wins the bishop.



### 35. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#!$

1–0

Black resigned, as it is mate in four more moves. It was not one of Malaniuk's better days, nevertheless Karpov's play was exemplary.

In the last round Karpov and Kasparov both drew, with Ehlvest and Eingorn respectively. Thus the two Ks shared first place, with 11½/17.

Karpov's hectic schedule continued with an eight player, double-round-robin tournament in Tilburg. He drew his first game against Hjartarson, defeated Van der Wiel then won a nice game with black against Timman. Karpov drew his next four games, then won three in a row against Hjartarson, Van der Wiel and Timman. After a quick draw with Hübner he faced Portisch. Since their 1982 London

encounter (Game 65 in the first volume) Karpov had beaten the Hungarian number one twice, and drawn with him seven times.

### Game 13

Anatoly Karpov – Lajos Portisch

Tilburg 1988

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 b6 4.g3 ♜b7 5.♗g2 ♜e7 6.♗c3 ♜e4 7.♗d2**

Portisch had faced this variation only once before, drawing with Petrosian in 1974. Before that he had used it from the other side, drawing with Smyslov in 1971. He never encountered it again after the present game.

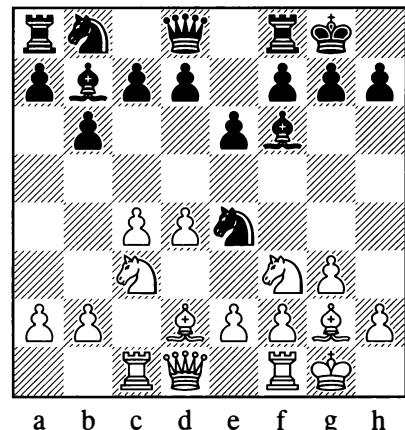
**7...♜f6**

In the aforementioned Petrosian game the Hungarian grandmaster preferred 7...c5.

**8.0–0**

A year later Karpov entered the complicated 8.♗c1 ♜xd4!? variation and eventually lost a tough battle against Salov.

**8...0–0 9.♗c1**



**9...c5**

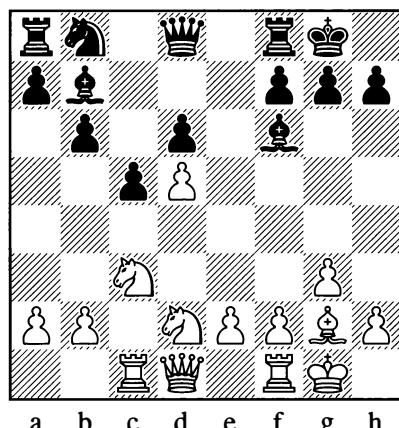
Portisch goes for the main line; the Hungarian

grandmaster had considerable experience with the Benoni structure. A year earlier, when Karpov reached the same position from the opposite side of the board, he preferred 9...♝xd2 and drew with Torre.

Not long before the present game, Karpov faced 9...d5. The game continued: 10.cxd5 exd5 11.♗e3 ♜a6 12.♗a4 c5 13.♗fd1 ♜e8 14.♗a3 ♜xc3 15.♗xc3 ♜e7 16.♗d2 ♜fe8 17.b3 ♜ad8 18.♗e1 cxd4 19.♗xd4 ♜c5 20.♗b2 ♜xd4 21.♗xd4 ♜f6 22.♗ed1 ♜e6 23.♗c2 ♜c8 24.♗cd2 White obtained a stable advantage and went on to win after his opponent blundered, Karpov – Van der Wiel, Amsterdam 1988.

A few years later Karpov faced another main line in 9...d6, and was able to exact some revenge over Salov: 10.d5 ♜xd2 11.♗xd2 ♜e7 12.e4 ♜d7 13.♗d4 ♜xd4 14.♗xd4 e5 15.♗d2 a5 16.f4 ♜c5 17.f5 f6 18.♗f3 g5 19.b3 ♜c8 20.♗d1 ♜d7 21.a3 ♜a7 22.b4 ♜b7 23.♗f2 ♜d8 24.♗e3 axb4 25.axb4 ♜f7 26.h4 ♜h8 27.♗f1 White is somewhat better, and went on to win a tense and difficult game in Karpov – Salov, Reykjavik 1991.

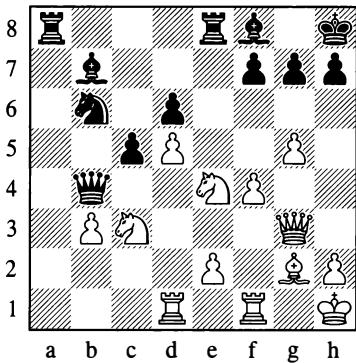
**10.d5 exd5 11.cxd5 ♜xd2 12.♗xd2 d6**



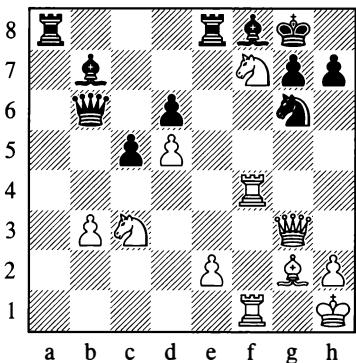
**13.♗c4**

At the time of the game, this whole variation

was not new, but nor had it been analysed extensively. The text move is a decent one – a white knight rarely stands badly on c4 in Benoni positions – but the main focus gradually shifted in the direction of 13.♘de4!, a move which was first played by Kasparov back in 1980. Five years after the present game, Karpov used this move to good effect to score a fine win over Salov: 13...♝e7 14.f4 ♘d7 15.g4 a6 16.a4 ♜e8 17.g5 ♜f8 18.♗h1 b5 19.axb5 axb5 20.♗xb5 ♜b6 21.♗bc3 ♜b4 22.♗d3 ♘b6 23.♗g3 ♜h8 24.♗cd1 ♘c4 25.b3 ♘b6



26.g6!! fxg6 27.f5! gxg5 28.♗xf5 ♘d7 29.♗df1 ♘e5 30.♗f4 ♜b6 31.♗g5 ♘g6 32.♗f7† ♜g8

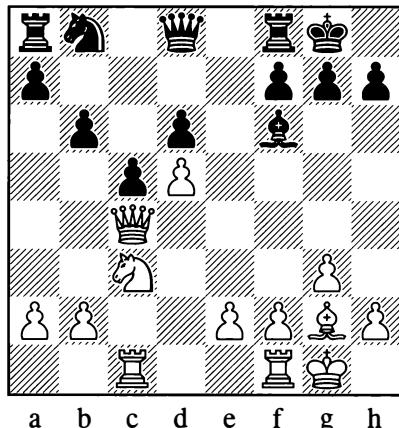


33.♗xg6! 1–0 Karpov – Salov, Linares 1993. This fantastic game serves as a sharp reminder of Karpov's vicious attacking capabilities.

### 13...♝a6 14.♗b3

After 14.b3?! b5 Black has counterplay on the queenside.

### 14...♞xc4 15.♗xc4



### 15...a6

This move has been criticized, but it is hard to see how Black can do without it in the long run. For example 15...♜c8 16.♘e4 ♜e7 17.f4 and White is better, as after 17...♝a6 18.f5?! looks dangerous.

### 16.a4 ♘d7 17.e3 ♘e5?!

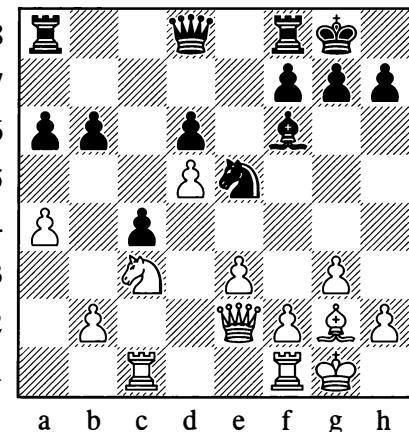
Portisch was a world class player, who remained the Hungarian number one for thirty years. However, when I investigated his games I noticed a subtle weakness: he always wanted to move forwards. (See also Game 65 in the first volume.) In the present position, the knight move is too committal and it turns out that the rest of the black position is not strong enough to support the advanced steed.

A subsequent game demonstrated the correct way for Black to handle the position: 17...♜e7 18.♗e2 ♜fb8 19.♗a1 (Or 19.b3 b5 20.axb5 ♜xc3 21.♗xc3 axb5 and Black has no problems.) 19...♜c8 20.♗fc1 c4 21.♘a2 (If 21.♗h3 ♜a7 22.f3 ♜e5 Black has a good grip on the position.) 21...b5 Black was fine in Vyzhmanavin – Khalifman, Lvov 1990.

### 18.♗e2 c4?!

Continuing the faulty strategy. The problem with this move is that it gives White an easy lever with which to open the queenside.

The lesser evil was: 18...g6!? 19.Qe4 (Another line is: 19.Qe4 We7 20.Qc2 Qg7 21.f4 Qd7 22.Qd3 Qfe8 23.Qfe1 Wd8 24.Qg2 Wc8 Black is passive, but it is not easy to tighten the screw on his position.) 19...Qe7 (19...Qg7?! 20.f4 Qg4 21.Wxg4 f5 22.We2 fxe4 23.Qc4! Qe8 [or 23...Wf6 24.Qxe4] 24.Qxe4 Qxe4 25.Qxe4 b5 26.b3 Black has little for the pawn.) 20.b3 White is definitely more comfortable, but a long fight lies ahead.



### 19.Qe4

This move prevents Qd3, but it is also part of a more subtle plan.

Another interesting idea was 19.Qb1!? intending b3.

### 19...We8

Portisch was probably expecting f4, but after the game continuation the rook move turns out to be of limited usefulness.

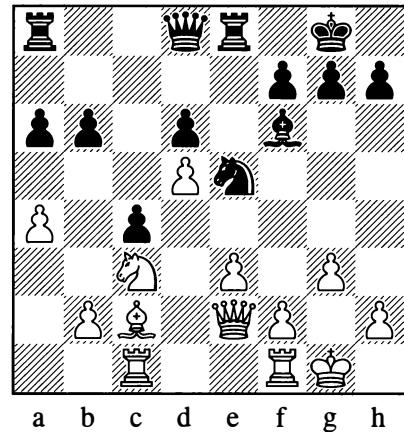
19...g6!? deserved attention, in order to secure the future of the bishop on the long diagonal, for instance: 20.Qc2 (After 20.f4 Qd7 21.Wxc4 We8 White has an extra pawn,

but his coordination is less than ideal and it is not easy to improve his position.) 20...Wd7 21.b3 (21.f4 Qg4 22.h3 Qxc3 23.bxc3 Qf6 24.Qh2 b5 is unclear) 21...cxb3 22.Qxb3 Wfc8 23.Qe4 Qe7 Black may be slightly worse, but his position looks preferable to the game continuation.

### 20.Qc2!

Karpov prepares to open the queenside with b3.

20.f4? would be asking for trouble: 20...Qd7! (20...Qg4? 21.Wxg4 Qxc3 22.Qxh7† Qxh7 23.Qxc3 b5 White has an extra pawn, although even here it will not be easy to convert his advantage.) 21.Wxc4 In this position 21...Qc5! is better for Black, while 21...Qc8! is also interesting, and after 22.Qd3 Qc5 23.Qxh7† Qh8 24.Qc2 g6 25.Qxg6 fxg6 26.Wxg6 Qxe3 the position is unclear (analysis by Karpov).



### 20...Qc8!?

Portisch tries to prepare for the impending b3, but his rook does not achieve much on the open file. Black would have been better off looking for a way to sacrifice a pawn.

20...b5! 21.axb5 axb5 22.Qxb5 (22.f4 Qg6 23.Qxb5 Wb6) 22...Wb6 23.Qd4 Karpov evaluates this position as clearly better for

White, but matters are not so clear: 23... $\mathbb{E}a2$  (23...g6!?) 24. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (24.b3  $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ; 24. $\mathbb{E}b1$  g6) 24... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  25.dxc6 d5 (25... $\mathbb{W}xc6$  26.b3  $\mathbb{E}b2$  27. $\mathbb{W}xc4$ ) 26. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  27. $\mathbb{W}xh7+$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black has good drawing chances.

20...g6!? 21.b3 (21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  is possible, although after 21... $\mathbb{E}g7$  22.b3 f5 Black is active enough.) 21... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4!$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  cxb3 Black has fine play for the exchange and should not be worse.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{E}e7?!$

Portisch saves the bishop, but thanks to Karpov's skilful play this piece will play no significant role in the game, apart from being the subject of the eventual coup de grace.

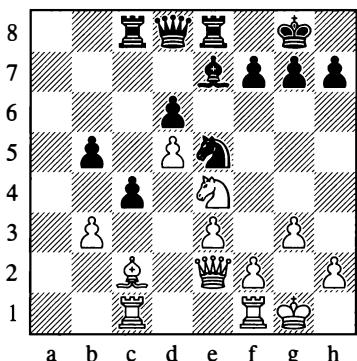
A year later two strong players repeated the game all the way up to the present point, when Black deviated with:

21...b5 22.axb5

White can also play without inserting taking on b5: 22.b3!? cxb3 (After 22...bx $a4$  23.bxc4 a3 24. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  25.f4 White is better.) 23. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  24. $\mathbb{E}b1$  Black is not much worse, although the b5-pawn is a target.

22...axb5 23.b3  $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Black could consider 23...cxb3 24. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{W}b6?$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xf6+$  gxf6, although White's chances are higher here too.



24.bxc4?!

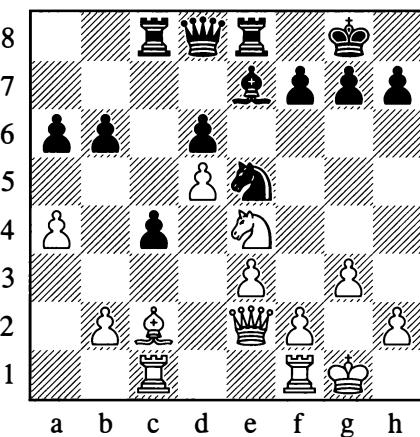
White could have improved with 24.f4!  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  25.bxc4  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}c5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  with some advantage.

24...bxc4

If 24... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  26. $\mathbb{E}fd1$  White has a small edge.

25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  f5 27. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Black obtained an active position and went on to win in Kuzmin – Timoshenko, Moscow 1989.

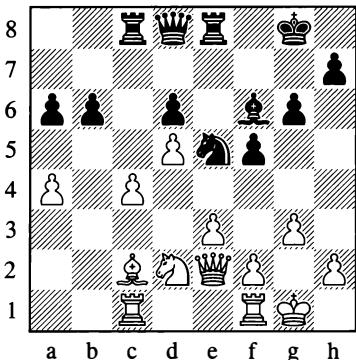


22.b3!

Karpov's previous three moves have all served to prepare this pawn break. The exchange of White's b-pawn for Black's c-pawn helps the first player in three main ways: it liberates his bishop, opens the lines of fire towards Black's two remaining queenside pawns, and also removes the b2-pawn, which could have become a long term weakness had it become fixed on a dark square.

22...cxb3

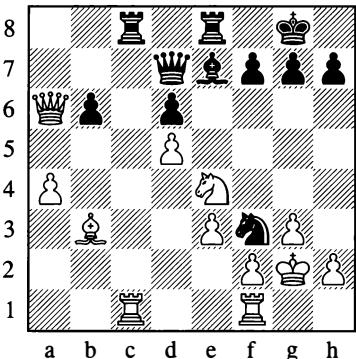
It was worth considering the pawn sacrifice: 22...g6!? 23.bxc4 f5 (23... $\mathbb{Q}xc4?$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$  is not what Black wants) 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black does not have full compensation, but his position will be tough to break down. The following continuation may not represent best play, but it is interesting to analyse all the same:



25.e4!!  $\mathbb{Q}g7!$  26.exf5!! (26. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  is safer, although after 26... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  White's advantage is not huge.) 26... $\mathbb{Q}h6!$  27.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  28. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  It looks as though White has fabulous compensation for the exchange, but Black can keep the position unclear with 30...g5! when any result is possible.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$

It was too early for pawn-grabbing: 24. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  with two options for Black:



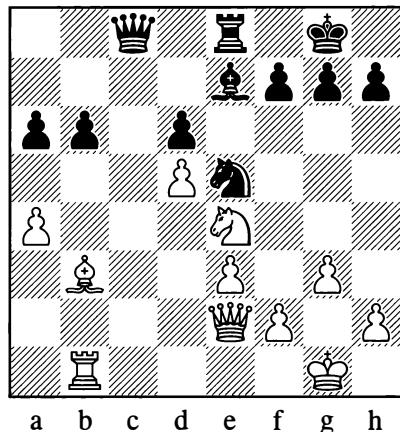
a) The fancy 25... $\mathbb{W}g4$ ? does not quite work: 26. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}h4\uparrow$  27. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}h3$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g5\uparrow$ — This is not the only win, but it is certainly the most attractive one!) 29. $\mathbb{Q}xe8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  31. $\mathbb{W}a8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32. $\mathbb{W}b7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33. $\mathbb{W}b8\uparrow$  White is winning.

b) 25... $\mathbb{Q}xc1$ ! 26. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  Karpov stops here, concluding that Black has compensation. In

view of White's shaky king, I would agree with that assessment.

### 24... $\mathbb{W}xc8$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ !

Karpov gets closer to Portisch's queenside pawns.



### 25... $\mathbb{W}f5$ ??

I have already mentioned that Portisch has a tendency to move forwards, and here we see another example where a more restrained approach would have served him better.

A better idea was:

### 25...g6

This is also a 'forward' move, but it also has the advantage of giving the black king a flight square.

### 26. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

26. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ !! Karpov likes to make small king moves like this. 26... $\mathbb{W}b7$  (Also after 26... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  27.h3 f5 28. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  29. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  White is somewhat better.) 27. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  White can try to crack Black's position in several ways, but the defender remains quite solid.

### 26... $\mathbb{W}c3$ !

The queen is annoying here.

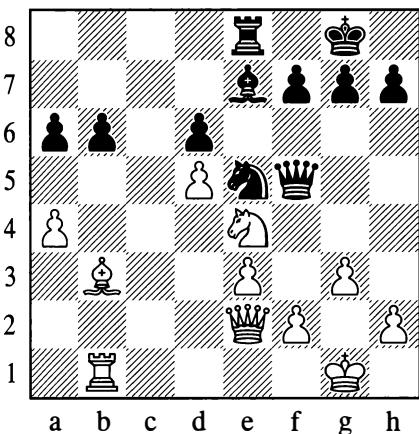
### 27. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

After 27... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  28. $\mathbb{W}xc4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  b5 it is possible that Black can hold the opposite-

coloured bishop position a pawn down, but he will have to suffer for a long time.

28.♗a2 ♜b8 29.♗g2 ♜f8

Black is not much worse.



26.♘d2!

Karpov refuses to give Black any counterplay. This is not only an objectively strong move, it also avoids the need to calculate any tricky and time-consuming variations. Apart from removing itself from danger and guarding the f3-square, the knight also moves one step closer to its ideal home on d4.

26.♗c2

Objectively this move might still be good for White, but it is unnecessarily complicated.

26...♝c8! 27.♘d3

27.♜xb6?! leaves White vulnerable on the first rank: 27...♛f3! 28.♝xa6 ♜xc2 29.♜b8† ♜f8 30.♜xf8† ♜xf8 31.♛xd6† ♜e8 32.♛xe5† ♜d7 White has no more than a perpetual. 27.f4 ♜g4 28.♘d3 ♛h5 (There is also 28...♛xd5? 29.♛xg4 f5 30.♘f6† ♜xf6 31.♛xf5 [31.♛xf5 ♜e8] 31...♛xf5 32.♛xf5 ♜b8 when Black has decent drawing chances thanks to the opposite-coloured bishops.) 29.♝xa6 ♜c7 30.♝g5 ♜c3 31.h3 ♛g6 It will not be easy for White to play for a win, as his kingside is dangerously loose.

27...♝xd3!

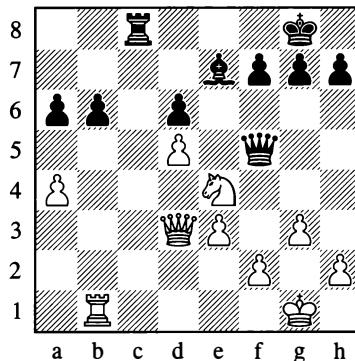
If followed up correctly, this enables Black to make a real fight of the game.

After 27...♝f3†? 28.♝g2 ♛xd5 29.♝xf3 f5 30.♝g2 fxe4 31.♝xa6 Black is in trouble.

Passive defence with 27...♜b8?! 28.♜b4 a5 29.♜b1 g6 leads to a depressing defence for Black.

27...♝c7?! is playable though: 28.♜xb6 ♜c1† 29.♝g2 ♜f3 30.♛xf3 ♜g1† 31.♝xg1 ♛xf3 32.♝xa6 ♛d1† 33.♝f1 ♛xd5 White is certainly not risking anything with this queen sacrifice, but it will be hard for him to win.

28.♛xd3



28...g5!! 29.♝xa6

The point behind the previous move is revealed after 29.♜xb6?? ♜c1† 30.♝g2 g4! when Black wins.

29...♝c5!

It is not easy for White to maintain control over the position.

26...♜b8

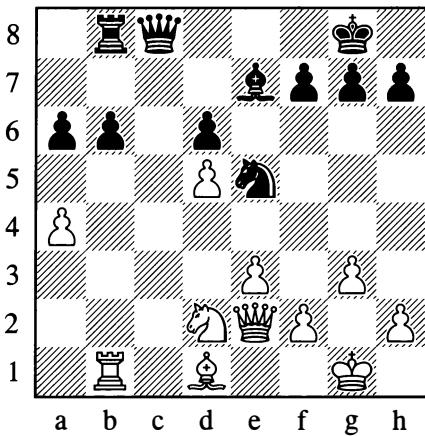
Portisch quite rightly prefers to maintain the flexibility of his queenside pawns. Instead 26...a5? 27.♘d1 ♜d8 would give White a free hand to exploit his 'half a pawn' advantage.

27.♘d1

Now Karpov threatens to take the a6-pawn.

27...♛c8

Exchanging queens would not have solved Black's problems: 27... $\mathbb{W}d3?$ ! 28. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  (but not 28.f4?  $\mathfrak{Q}f3\#!$ ) 28... $\mathfrak{Q}xd3$  29. $\mathfrak{Q}c4$  b5 30. $\mathfrak{Q}a5$   
Black is struggling.



**28.  $\mathfrak{Q}b3!$**

The knight is heading for d4.

**28...  $\mathfrak{Q}f6$**

Objectively Black's position may not be drastically worse, nevertheless it is not much fun when one has to keep choosing which inferior position to defend.

One other option was 28... $\mathbb{W}b7$  29. $\mathfrak{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  (29... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  30. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ ) 30. $\mathbb{W}f1$  g6 31. $\mathfrak{E}e2$  and White continues to press.

**29.  $\mathfrak{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  30.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  g6**

30... $\mathbb{W}xd5?$  loses material after 31. $\mathbb{E}xb6!$ , as 31... $\mathbb{W}a8$  runs into the beautiful 32. $\mathbb{W}e4!$ , exploiting the weak back rank.

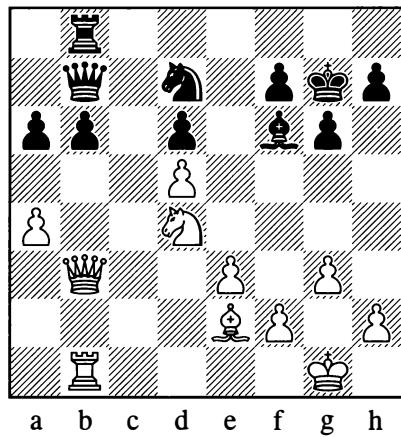
**31.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathfrak{Q}g7$**

If 31... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  32. $\mathfrak{Q}xa6$   $\mathfrak{Q}f3\#$  (or 32... $\mathbb{W}c5$  33. $\mathbb{W}d1$  with a lasting advantage) 33. $\mathfrak{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  34. $\mathbb{W}c7$  Black loses a pawn.

**32.  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathfrak{Q}d7$**

Rather than giving up the c6-square voluntarily, it may have been better to wait for

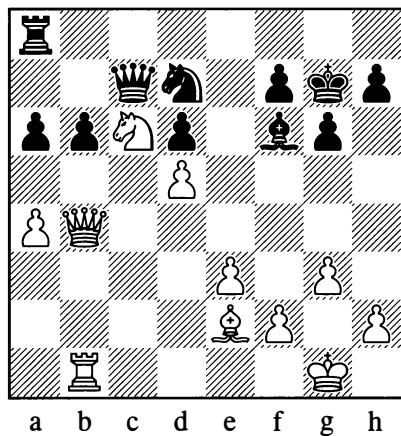
White to force it with the slightly weakening move f2-f4.



**33.  $\mathfrak{Q}c6!$**

The knight completes its mission and arrives at a square from which it can choke Black's entire position. It is so well placed here, it does not even feel the need to move again for the rest of the game.

**33...  $\mathbb{E}a8$  34.  $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$**



**35.  $\mathfrak{Q}g2!$**

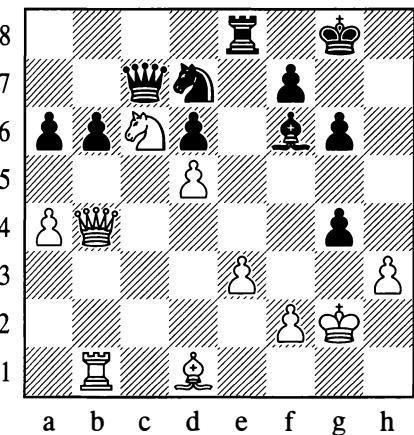
Such small improvements of the king's position are so typical of Karpov. He achieved what he wanted on the queenside and now prepares to advance on the other flank.

There was nothing to be gained by forcing matters on the queenside: 35. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  36. $\mathbb{W}xb6?$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  37. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  White has squandered his advantage.

**35...h5 36.h3!**

Karpov continues his play on the kingside.

**36... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  38.g4 hxg4**



**39. $\mathbb{Q}xg4?$**

Karpov probably timed this changing of the position to arrive just before the time control in order to present his opponent with fresh problems. His plan is to exchange the enemy knight, after which the b6-pawn will be a sitting duck.

The alternative was also good: 39.hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White keeps some pressure.

**39... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$**

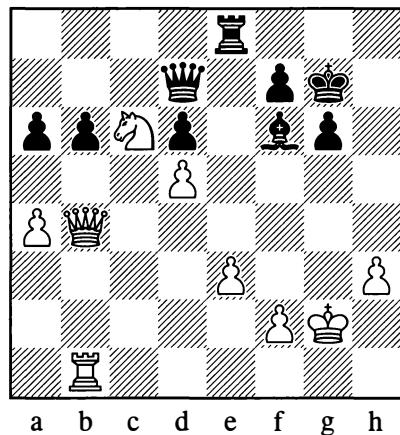
Portisch reacts well and immediately looks for counterplay on the h-file.

39... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  is feeble, and after 40. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  41. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  42. $\mathbb{E}xa6$  White has excellent winning chances thanks to his extra pawn and the weakness of the d6-pawn.

**40. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$**

Karpov continues with his plan.

**40... $\mathbb{W}xd7$**



**41. $\mathbb{W}f4!$**

White must avoid 41. $\mathbb{W}xb6??$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  42. $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  when he even loses.

It would be premature to exchange queens: 41. $\mathbb{W}g4?!$   $\mathbb{W}xg4\#$  42. $\mathbb{H}xg4$   $\mathbb{E}e4!$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (If 43. $\mathbb{E}b4$   $\mathbb{E}xb4$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  b5 Black is not worse in the endgame.) 43... $\mathbb{E}xa4$  44. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  and Black gets counterplay.

**41... $\mathbb{E}h8$  42. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$**

Portisch elects to exchange a pair of pawns. He could also have considered 42... $\mathbb{W}c7$ , defending the b6-pawn. 43.e4 (Karpov's suggestion of 43.f4 is by no means clear after 43...b5! 44.axb5  $\mathbb{W}b6$  when Black suddenly becomes very active.) 43... $\mathbb{E}h4$  44. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  45. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  46. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  Both sides must be very careful, although Black probably has a narrower margin for error.

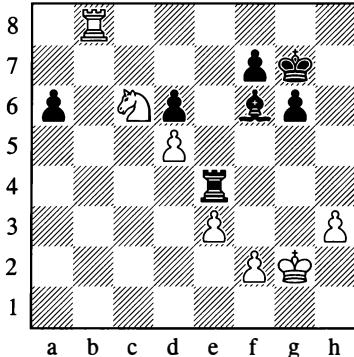
**43. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}h4$  44. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}xa4$  45. $\mathbb{E}b8$   $\mathbb{W}d7$**

In his analysis Karpov prefers exchanging queens.

45... $\mathbb{W}e4$

This reduces White's activity against the black king; on the other hand the d6-pawn becomes more vulnerable.

46.  $\mathbb{W}xe4 \mathbb{B}xe4$



47.  $\mathbb{B}b7!!$

It seems to me that this is White's best chance.

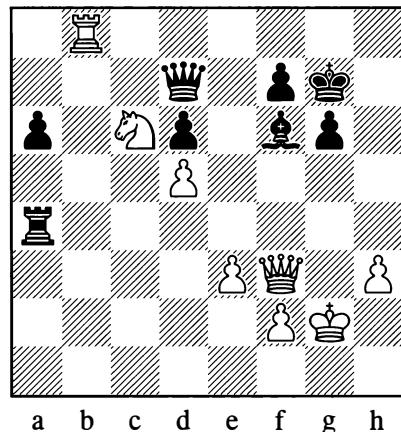
Karpov gives 47.  $\mathbb{B}a8$   $\mathbb{B}a4$  followed by the awkward 48.  $\mathbb{Q}b8?!$  (48.  $\mathbb{B}a7$  is better, although after 48...  $\mathbb{B}a2$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{B}a4$  White is unlikely to be able to squeeze a full point.) but fails to consider the active 48...  $\mathbb{B}a2$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{B}b2$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  when White has no winning chances at all.

47...  $\mathbb{B}a4$  48.  $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{B}a2$

There is no saving the d6-pawn, so Black should concentrate on making his a-pawn into a nuisance.

49.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  a5 50.  $\mathbb{B}xd6$  a4 51.  $\mathbb{B}d7$  a3 52.  $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{B}d2$  53.  $\mathbb{B}xa3$   $\mathbb{B}xd5$

It is hard to tell whether White can win this endgame. I would estimate that Black's drawing chances are higher than White's winning chances.



46.  $\mathbb{B}a8 \mathbb{Q}h4$

Portisch wisely refrains from the overoptimistic idea of trying to improve his queen.

46...  $\mathbb{B}a2$  47. e4

47.  $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  is okay for Black.

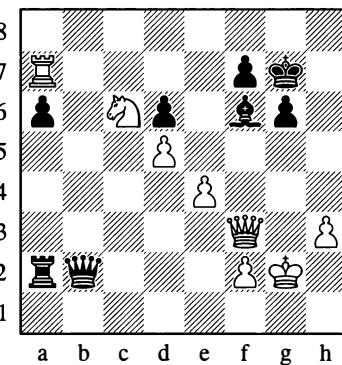
47...  $\mathbb{W}b7?$

Instead Black should revert to the waiting plan seen in the game: 47...  $\mathbb{B}a4$  48.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  49.  $\mathbb{B}b8$  (49.  $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{W}b5$ ) 49...  $\mathbb{W}c7$  Black continues to resist.

48.  $\mathbb{B}a7$   $\mathbb{W}b2$

If Black is looking to activate his queen, then this seems like the most principled way of doing it.

48...  $\mathbb{W}b6$  loses material after 49.  $\mathbb{B}d7$  (but not 49. e5?  $dxe5$  when White has nothing).



49. e5!  $dxe5$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}d8!!$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  51.  $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  52.  $\mathbb{W}f8\#$

This precise check leads to mate in a maximum of eight moves. The main line runs as follows:

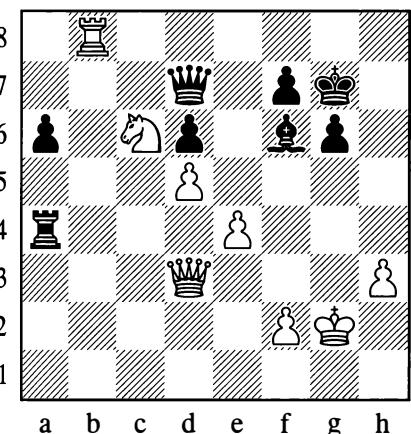
52...  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  53.  $h4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  54.  $\mathbb{W}h6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  55.  $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  56.  $\mathbb{W}e4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  57.  $\mathbb{B}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  58.  $\mathbb{W}f5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  59.  $\mathbb{B}xh6\#$

47. e4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Black could have considered sacrificing the a6-pawn: 47...  $\mathbb{B}a2?!$  48.  $\mathbb{W}c3\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  49.  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{B}b2$  50.  $\mathbb{W}a3$  (50.  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ) 50...  $\mathbb{B}e2$  51.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{B}e1$  52.  $\mathbb{B}xa6$  (52.  $f4$   $\mathbb{B}c1$ ) 52...  $\mathbb{W}b7$  It will be

hard for White to make his extra pawn count, as Black's pieces are active and the c6-knight is out of play.

48.  $\mathbb{W}d3 \mathbb{W}b7$  49.  $\mathbb{E}b8 \mathbb{W}d7$

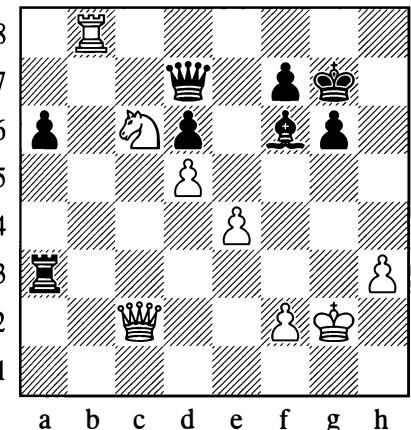


50.  $\mathbb{W}c2!$

Karpov notices that the black rook is short of squares, and sets out to exchange it.

50...  $\mathbb{E}a3$

If 50...  $\mathbb{E}a1$  51.  $\mathbb{E}b1$  White can still exchange the rooks.

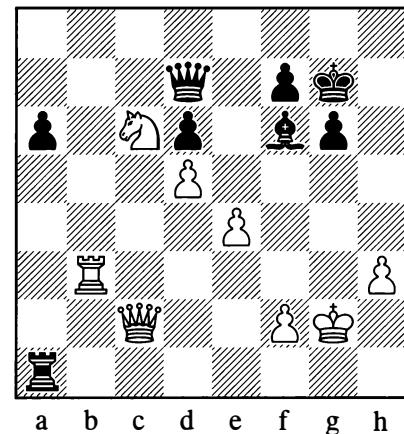


51.  $\mathbb{E}b3!$   $\mathbb{E}a1??$

Portisch commits a fatal error.

Black had no choice but to exchange rooks.

After 51...  $\mathbb{E}xb3$  52.  $\mathbb{W}xb3$  Karpov evaluates the position as clearly better for White, due to the impending  $\mathbb{W}a3$  when the a-pawn comes under fire. However, Black can create problems with 52...  $\mathbb{W}e8!$  53.  $\mathbb{W}c4 \mathbb{Q}g8$  54.  $f3$  (or 54.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{W}d7$ ) 54...  $\mathbb{W}f8!$  55.  $\mathbb{W}xa6 \mathbb{W}h6$  when he should be active enough to hold the balance.



52.  $\mathbb{E}f3!$

Suddenly it transpires that the rook on a1 is trapped, and Black has no defence against  $\mathbb{E}xf6$ .

52...  $\mathbb{W}b7$

Portisch tries a desperate counterattack.

53.  $\mathbb{E}xf6 \mathbb{W}b5$  54.  $\mathbb{W}c3!$

Karpov has seen that he can easily evade the checks.

54...  $\mathbb{W}f1\#$  55.  $\mathbb{Q}g3 \mathbb{W}g1\#$  56.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$

1-0

The way Karpov applied pressure in the middlegame was highly instructive and powerful, notwithstanding the fact that Black could still have held the position after the knight transfer to c6.

In the penultimate round Karpov defeated Predrag Nikolic, then finished with a quick draw against Short. His final tally of 10½/14, with seven wins and seven draws, was enough

to win the tournament by a remarkable two point margin ahead of Short.

Karpov's final event of the year was the Thessaloniki Olympiad, where he represented the Soviet Union on the second board. He started with a somewhat surprising draw with the white pieces against Mascarinas of the Philippines, who played well. But then he found his form and dispatched Panno, Speelman and Andersson in succession. Karpov followed with a long draw against Nikolic, a win over Gulko, draws with Ribli and Van der Wiel, and two final wins over Lars Bo Hansen and Ftacnik.

Karpov's final tally was a superb 8/10, with six wins and four draws. He won the individual gold medal for the best performance on board two, and also helped the USSR to claim the gold medal in the main competition.

According to the database Karpov played two games in Riga in 1988, but I was not able to locate the full details of the tournament or the time of year when it took place. He won one of these games and drew the other. Karpov also took part in the first World Rapid Chess Championship in Mazatlan, Mexico. He tied with Gavrikov, then they drew the playoff but Karpov took the title on a tie break. Sadly, no rapidplay world championship has taken place since then.

In 1988 Karpov's results were highly impressive, and left no doubt that he was still head and shoulders above every chess player on the planet not called Garry Kasparov. Nevertheless Kasparov's results were even more superlative, which suggested that the gap between them was still widening.

## 1988 Summary

Wijk aan Zee (1st place): 9/13 (+6 =6 –1)

Euwe Memorial, Amsterdam (2nd-3rd place): 3½/6 (+2 =3 –1)

World Cup, Brussels (1st place): 11/16 (+7 =8 –1)

Amsterdam (2nd place): 6½/12 (+3 =7 –2)

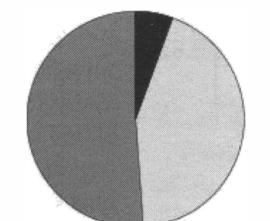
World Cup, Belfort (2nd place): 10½/15 (+7 =7 –1)

USSR Championship (1st-2nd place): 11½/17 (+6 =11 –0)

Tilburg (1st place): 10½/14 (+7 =7 –0)

Thessaloniki Olympiad (Board two gold medal): 8/10 (+6 =4 –0)

Total 68.6% (+45 =54 –6)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1989

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Rating 2750 (2 in the world)

The next world championship cycle was underway, and this time Karpov was seeded directly into the quarter-finals. The match took place in Seattle, and Karpov's opponent was Johann Hjartarson. The Icelandic grandmaster played all the world champions from Smyslov to Topalov, with the exceptions of Petrosian and Anand. He won two of those encounters, drew nineteen and lost eighteen. He found Karpov a difficult opponent, and scored a mere six draws and seven losses against the former champion, without a victory.

Karpov drew the first game of the match with the black pieces, then won the second in style.

## Game 14

Anatoly Karpov – Johann Hjartarson

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Seattle (2) 1989

**1.c4**

Hjartarson knew the black side of the Queen's Gambit as well as the Nimzo- and Queen's Indian Defences, so Karpov probably wanted to reduce his options.

**1...e5**

Hjartarson immediately prevents a transposition to a 1.d4 opening.

**2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.g3**

Karpov played this move only three times in his career, and the first two occasions were way back in 1972.

**3...d5**

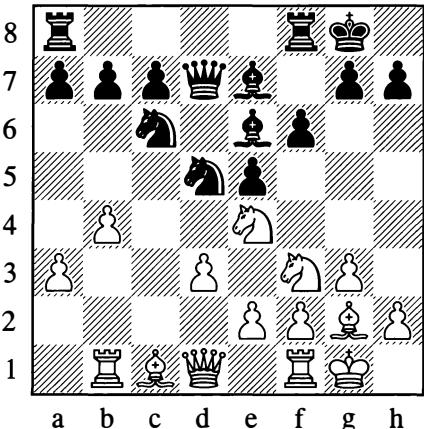
Hjartarson is a 1.e4 player so he is familiar with Sicilian positions, yet he had never before played this particular continuation, so overall his decision was rather risky.

**4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.♗g2 ♘b6 6.♘f3 ♘c6 7.0–0 ♕e7 8.a3 ♕e6 9.b4 0–0 10.♗b1 f6 11.d3 ♖d7**

This is something of a sideline, and that was especially true in 1989 when the move had hardly ever been seen. The main lines are 11...♘d4 and 11...a5.

**12.♘e4 ♘d5**

12...a5? 13.♘c5 is strong.



### 13...Wc2

Karpov indirectly prevents the exchange of the g2-bishop.

Karpov's play must have made an impression on Hjartarson, as he went on to play this line with the white pieces, and two years later he reached the same position. At this point he deviated from Karpov's play: 13...b6 14.ad8 15.Wc2 Wh3 15.Qc5 Wxc5 16.Wxc5 Wxg2 17.Qxg2 Wh8 18.h3 We8?! 19.b5 Qce7 20.Wxa7 Wxb5? (20...b6) 21.Qa1 Wd7 22.Wxb7 White was a pawn up and went on to win in Hjartarson – Oll, Budapest 1991.

### 13...b6!?

Weakening the c6-square is not a good idea.

13...Wh3?? is refuted by 14.Qxh3 Wxh3 15.Wc4 We6 16.Qc3 Wfd8 17.e4 and White wins a piece.

### 13...a5!?

This untested move leads to a complex fight.

The more conservative 13...a6! has become the main line, although it does not really challenge the white position and the first player should maintain a slight plus.

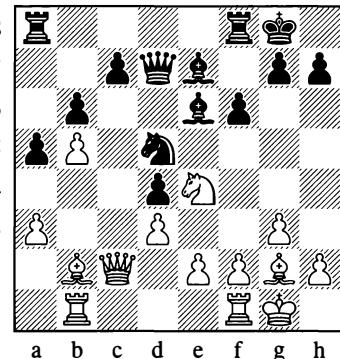
14.b5 Qd4

14...Qd8 15.d4 is strong.

14...Qa7 15.d4 Qxb5 16.dxe5 f5 17.Qfg5 c6 18.Qxe6 Wxe6 19.a4 leads to complex play, although White's position remains slightly preferable.

15.Qxd4 exd4 16.Qb2 b6

16...Ead8 17.Qxd4 is good for White. The game Gacso – Kerekes, corr. 1990, reached this position via a different move order.



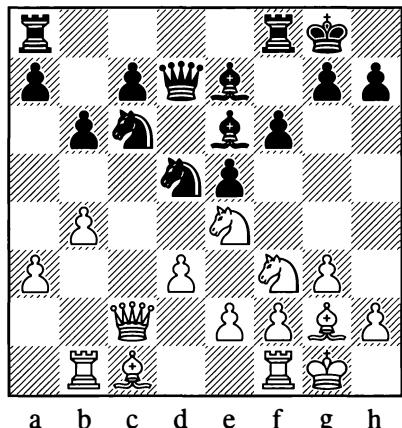
17.Qd2!?

The game continuation of 17.a4 Qb4 18.Wd1 Qd5 was okay for Black.

17.Wa4!? f5! 18.Wxd4 Ef7 19.Qc3 Qf6 20.Wa4 Qxc3 21.Qxd5 Qxd5 22.Qxc3 f4 is unclear.

17...Wxb5 18.Qxd4 Wd7 19.Qb2

The position is rather complicated, but White should have slightly better chances thanks to his central pawn majority.



**14.♕b2 ♜ac8?**

Black cannot spare the time for this move, and he should have acted at once.

**14...a5!**

This was the only way for Black to make sense of his position.

**15.bxa5**

If 15.♕fc1 axb4! 16.♗xc6 bxa3 17.♗xd7 ♜xd7 18.♕c3 c6 Black has decent compensation for the piece.

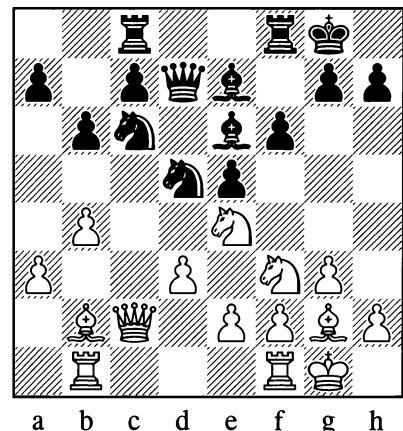
15.b5 ♜a7 16.d4 ♜xb5 17.dxe5 ♜xa3 (17...♜xa3 18.♗fd1) 18.♕xa3 ♜xa3 19.♗fd1 Most human players would prefer White's position, but it is rather double-edged.

**15...♜xa5 16.♗fc1 ♜a7**

16...♜d8 17.d4 favours White.

**17.d4 ♜b5 18.dxe5 ♜xa3 19.♕xa3 ♜xa3 20.♗d1**

White's superiority in the centre should count for more than Black's queenside pawns.

**15.♕bc1!**

Karpov correctly chooses to move his queen's rook for the second time, as the other rook will find a good home on the d-file.

**15...♝d4?!**

This virtually amounts to a pawn sacrifice, but Black will not obtain any compensation for it. Overall Hjartarson has played the

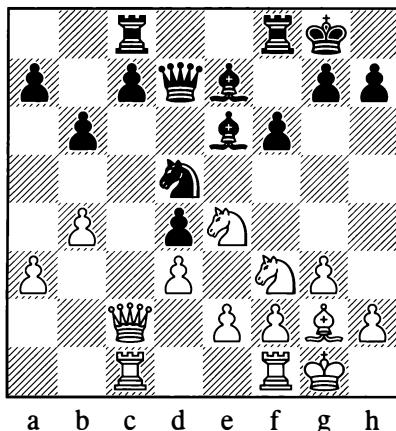
opening well below his usual level; according to the database he had never played it before this game, and he may also have been nervous at the start of his first candidates match.

15...♜d8 would have given a few more chances, but after 16.d4! exd4 (or 16...♝f7 17.dxe5 fxe5 18.♗fd1) 17.♗xd4 ♜f7 18.♗fd1 Black is in trouble.

**16.♗xd4!**

Karpov starts by taking with the bishop, in order to make the second capture with his knight.

Nevertheless 16.♗xd4 was also strong: 16...exd4 17.♗c6! ♜cd8 (17...♜fd8 18.♝d2) 18.♝d2! White goes after the d4-pawn. 18...♝c3 19.♕xc3 ♜xc6 20.♕xc6 dxc3 21.♗xc3 Black has nothing for the pawn.

**16...exd4****17.♗c6!**

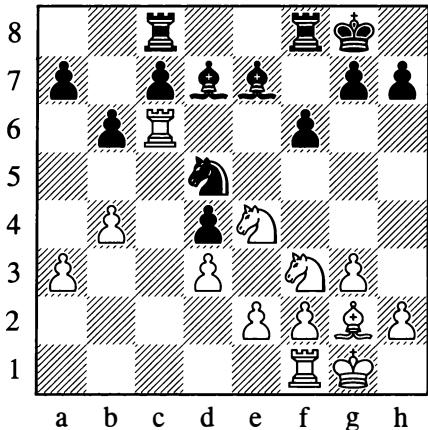
Karpov fixes the c7-pawn and exchanges the queens, thus sealing the fate of the d4-pawn.

After the hasty 17.♗xd4? ♜xb4 18.axb4 (18.♗b2 ♜d5) 18...♜xd4 19.b5 White is only slightly better according to Karpov.

**17...♜xc6!**

If 17... $\mathbb{Q}c3?$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  wins, while after 17... $\mathbb{E}fd8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  White wins a pawn while maintaining a better position.

**18.  $\mathbb{E}xc6 \mathbb{Q}d7$**



**19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$**

This exchange sacrifice seals the outcome of the game. White will obtain two pawns and the black pieces will remain painfully passive.

**19...  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{E}ce8$**

Black has to defend the bishop.

**21.  $\mathbb{E}c1!$**

Karpov sees that the second pawn will not run away, so he develops calmly.

**21...  $f5$**

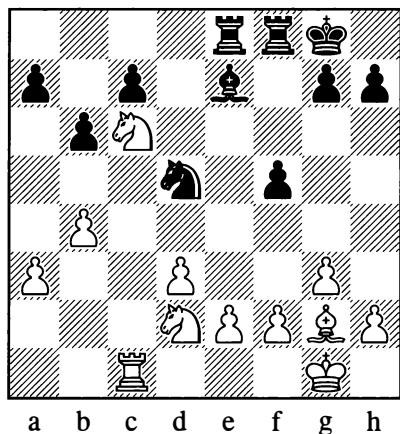
Black vacates a square for his knight. Instead 21... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}e7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  is winning for White.

Sacrificing a piece with 21... $a5?!$  does not break White's grip: 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2 \mathbb{Q}xb4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e4 f5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g5 \mathbb{E}xe2$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb4 axb4$  28. $\mathbb{E}xc7$  White wins.

**22.  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$**

The flashy 22. $\mathbb{Q}c5?!$  is not so effective, and after 22... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a6 \mathbb{Q}d6$  White's advantage

is smaller than in the game. The knight has better prospects on d2 than a6.



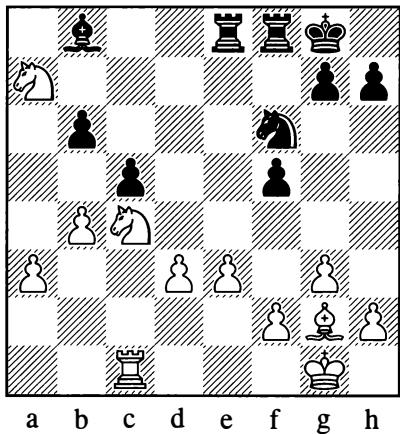
**22...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xa7 \mathbb{Q}d6$**

If 23... $c5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c6 g6$  25. $e3 \mathbb{Q}g7$  26. $b5 \mathbb{Q}d7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}d8$  28. $a4 \mathbb{Q}c7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a1$  White is in full control and will soon break through on the queenside.

**24.  $e3 c5$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

This is not the only way to convert the advantage. A good alternative was 25. $\mathbb{Q}b5 \mathbb{Q}d8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{Q}b8$  27. $d4 cxd4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd4 \mathbb{E}c8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  and White wins another pawn.

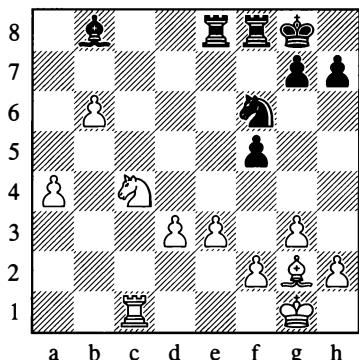
**25...  $\mathbb{Q}b8$**



**26.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$**

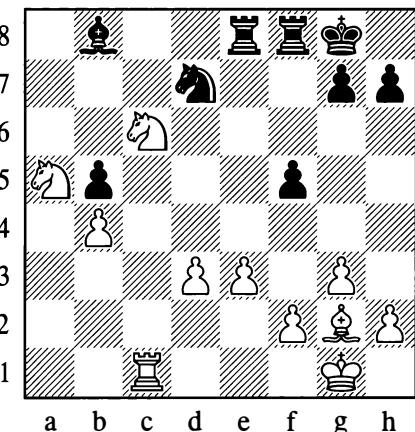
Material is roughly equal, but the position is completely winning for White as his pieces are so dominant. Black's rooks can only dream of finding an open file.

The extravagant 26.bxc5!? was also good enough, as after 26... $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  27.cxb6  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  28.a4



White's four pawns are stronger than Black's rook. Of course there was no need for Karpov to play like this in such an important game, when simple play will suffice.

26...b5 27. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  cxb4 28.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$



29.d4!

White was already dominating, and now he takes away the e5-square from the black pieces.

29...g5 30. $\mathbb{Q}xb8$

Karpov gives up his great knight in order to invade with his other pieces. Other options were equally effective, for instance 30. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$ ? f4 31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  or 30. $\mathbb{Q}f3?$  f4 31.gxf4 gxf4 32.e4.

30... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$

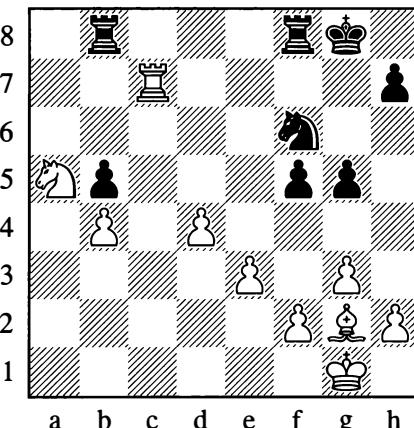
30... $\mathbb{Q}xb8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$   
33. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  wins.

31. $\mathbb{Q}c7$

The rook takes up a dominating position on the seventh rank.

31... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

31... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}be8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$   
34. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  picks up another pawn.



32. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$

White not only picks up a third pawn, but also opens the floodgates for the advance of his central pawns.

34... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

Finally one of the black rooks gets to an open file, but it is too little too late.

35. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

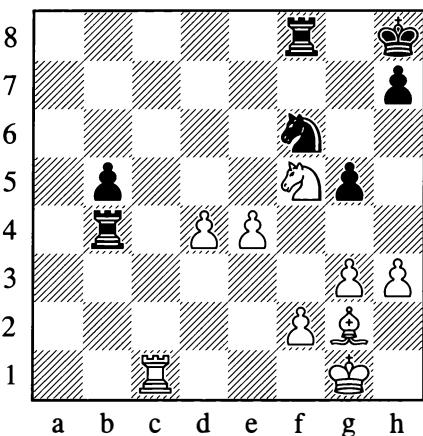
Karpov gives no counterplay at all.

35... $\mathbb{Q}a2$

If 35... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  the simplest route to victory is:  
36. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  37.e4 White simply pushes his

pawns. 37... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (37... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  38. $\mathbb{B}b3$ ) 38.f3  
White wins.

### 36.h3 $\mathbb{B}b2$ 37.e4 $\mathbb{B}xb4$



### 38.g4!

Karpov stabilizes the knight, and is now ready to push the e-pawn.

### 38...h5 39.e5 hxg4

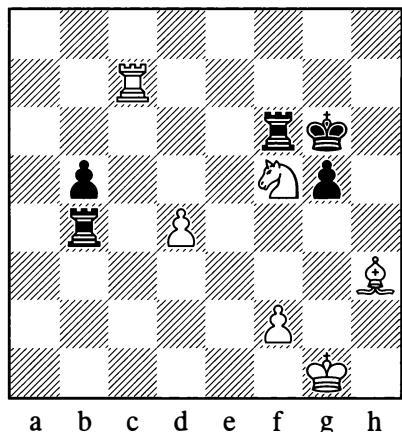
39... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  40.e6 wins.

### 40.exf6 gxh3 41. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$

If 41. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{B}xf6$  42. $\mathbb{B}c8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e3\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
44. $\mathbb{B}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  wins.

### 41... $\mathbb{B}xf6$ 42. $\mathbb{B}c8\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 43. $\mathbb{B}c7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$

43... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  was also hopeless: 44. $\mathbb{B}b7$   $\mathbb{B}b3$   
45. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{B}b2$  46. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  b4 47.d5  $\mathbb{B}d2$  48.d6+–



### 44. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 45.f3!

1–0

Karpov finished the game in characteristic style, weaving a mating net with a few pieces in the endgame.

In Game 3 Karpov won again, after Hjartarson erred in a Zaitsev Ruy Lopez. After taking a two point lead at the halfway point of the six-game match, Karpov took no further chances and played solidly in the next two games, drawing both with ease and thus securing victory with a game to spare.

After his convincing match win, Karpov took part in the prestigious Linares tournament. He suffered a setback in the first round against Short, but after drawing with Gulko, he bounced back with wins over Beliavsky, who blundered in an equal endgame, and Yusupov, in a fine game that can be found in the notes to Game 12 (Karpov – Malaniuk). Next Karpov drew with Andrei Sokolov, and in Round 6 he encountered Ljubomir Ljubojevic.

Since their meeting in 1977 (Game 47 of the previous volume), Karpov and Ljubojevic had met twenty eight times over the board. Karpov had won ten of those encounters, drew fifteen and lost three.

## Game 15

Anatoly Karpov – Ljubomir Ljubojevic

Linares 1989

### 1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ d5

This was the first time Ljubojevic played this opening against Karpov. Curiously, in the games where Karpov had white, they hardly ever repeated the same opening as one of them would almost always deviate.

### 4.cxd5 exd5 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ c6 6.e3 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$

Vaganian survived Karpov's squeezing in the 6... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  7. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  8. $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  9. $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{G}xf6$

variation at the 1988 USSR championship, but no-one else was brave enough to play this position against Karpov.

### 7.♗d3 ♜e7

Sometimes Ljubojevic preferred a set-up with the bishop to d6, with mixed results. On this occasion he opts for the main line. Overall his opening selection does not seem ideal, as Karpov has obtained a position that suits his style, with a stable pawn structure and clear strategic contours.

### 8.♘c2 0–0 9.♗f3 ♜e8 10.0–0 ♜f8 11.♗ab1

Karpov deviates from his usual 11.h3 line, and instead starts the minority attack at once. He probably anticipated that Ljubojevic had prepared something. The long-time Yugoslav number one was a world class player, but openings were never his strong point, so it is logical that Karpov would try to set him unexpected problems.

### 11...♗e4

Black elects to simplify; it is one of the main lines. Many players like to insert the moves 11...a5 12.a3 before deciding what to do next. Perhaps the most testing line is 11...♗d6!? 12.b4 ♜g6 13.b5 h6.

### 12.♗xe7 ♜xe7 13.b4

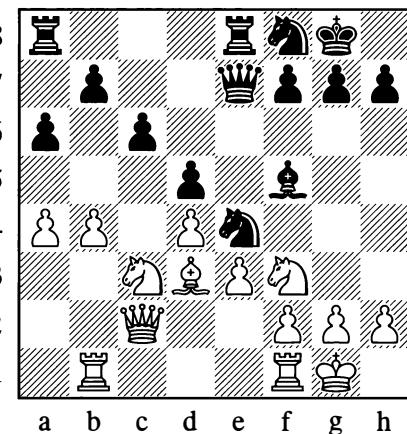
Karpov follows the well-known plan of staging a minority attack, to create a weakness in Black's queenside structure.

### 13...a6

Exchanging the a-pawn has a good and a bad side. Black exchanges off a potential weakness, on the other hand White has another open file with which to organize his queenside play. Less obviously, Black can also encounter problems on the seventh rank and even the back rank.

### 14.a4 ♜f5

The main line continues 14...♗g6 15.b5 axb5 16.axb5 ♜g4 17.♗xe4 dxe4 18.♗d2 when White is somewhat better and risks very little.



### 15.♗e5!?

Karpov introduces a novelty rather than play the usual 15.♗fc1.

It is worth mentioning that the immediate implementation of the minority attack with 15.b5 offers White very little, as Black gets counterplay on the a-file: 15...axb5 16.axb5 ♜xc3 17.♗xc3 ♜a3 18.♗b3 ♜xb3 19.♗xb3 ♜xd3 20.♗xd3 c5 21.dxc5 ♜xc5 22.♗d1 ♜d8 White's advantage is symbolic, as Black can easily live with his solitary weakness on d5.

### 15...♗ad8

Ljubojevic faces an unpleasant choice between several continuations which all lead to slightly worse positions. In addition he is more than aware of Karpov's exceptional ability in squeezing small advantages. His last move contains a couple of ideas. In certain positions Black may be able to meet b5 with ...axb5 followed by ...c5 when the rook will be useful on the d-file. Another idea would be to leave the pawn on c6 and swing the rook to g6 or h6, where it partakes in both attack and defence.

15... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  does not equalize: 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  (There is also 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  when White maintains some pressure.) 16... $hxg6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  19. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$  Intending b5, with pressure in the endgame.

15... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $dxe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  18. $b5$   $cxb5$  19. $axb5$   $a5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}h3$  22. $f4$   $exf3$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  The pin is unpleasant for Black.

15... $f6$ ?

This has been tried in a couple of subsequent games, and looks like Black's best chance to equalize.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Simplifying with 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  gives little for White: 16... $fxe5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $exd4$  19. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black equalizes.

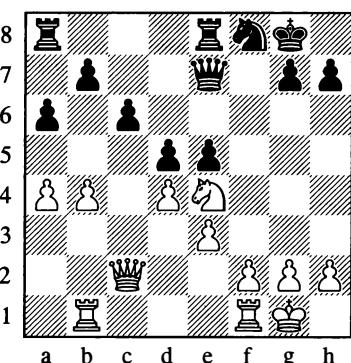
16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ? soon led to a draw in Rendboe – Bank Friis, Bellinge 1991. It is doubtful that it is worth investing two tempos just to provoke the slight weakening of ... $f7-f6$ .

16... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

16... $dxe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  is good for White.

17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $fxe5$ !

17... $dxe4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  maintains the pressure.



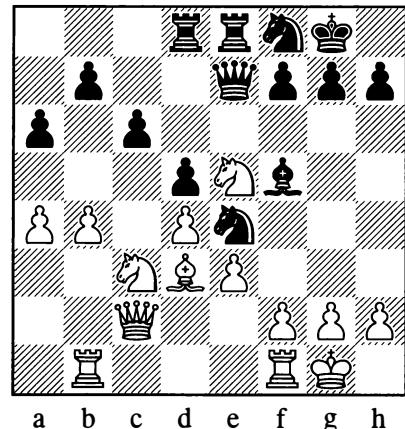
18. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ ?

After 18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $exd4$  19. $exd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  the target on d4 gave Black enough play in De Lagontrie – Ackerley, corr. 1992.

18... $exd4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f5$

Karpov evaluates this position as clearly better for White, but this seems much too optimistic.

19... $\mathbb{W}e4$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$   
Black is safe.



16. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$ !

Karpov plays a smart move and develops his final piece before playing b5.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $dxe4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$ ! (After the premature 18. $b5$ ?!  $axb5$  19. $axb5$   $c5$ ! Black solves his problems.) It looks as though White has a similar advantage as in the game, but there is a difference. 18... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ! We can see another point behind Ljubojevic's 15th move. 19. $b5$   $axb5$  20. $axb5$   $c5$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  22. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $cxsd4$  23. $exd4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  Black's pressure against the d4-pawn gives him equal chances.

16... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ?

Black exchanges all the minor pieces, but underestimates the power of White's queenside initiative in the major piece ending.

Chasing back the knight with 16... $f6$  was stronger: 17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $fxe5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $exd4$  20. $exd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  The weakness of the d4-pawn gives Black enough play.) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

18.  $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  It will not be easy for White to make progress, as a future b5 will be met by ...axb5 and ...c5, when Black will have excellent chances to hold.

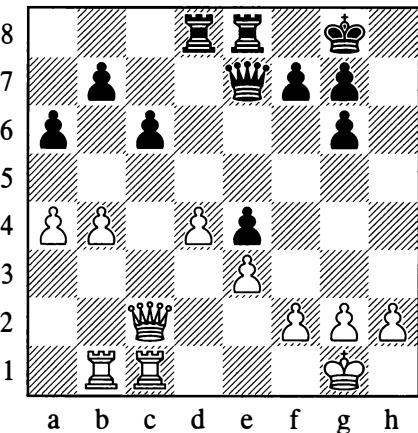
### 17. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ dxe4?!

Black continues the faulty plan of simplifying. Karpov mentioned the line 18...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (or 19...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  20. b5 with strong pressure.) 20.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ! White makes sure ...  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  ideas will not work, and will soon carry out the b5 advance. Black is worse, yet still he has more chances for counterplay than in the game.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$

With the knights removed, Black's chances of launching a successful kingside attack are almost nonexistent.

### 19... hxg6



### 20. b5!

Karpov carries out the thematic minority attack, and ensures that at least one pawn weakness will appear in Black's camp.

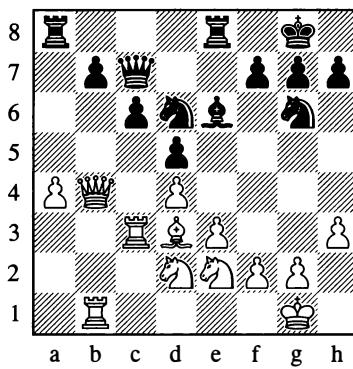
### 20... cxb5

Black has to take on b5 one way or another, as Black would find it impossible to hold a position with weaknesses on a6 and c6. After the alternative 20... axb5 21. axb5 Black has two options:

a) 21... cxb5?! This is the least attractive path. Not only is b7 the hardest weakness to defend, but Black must also reckon with the white rook switching to e5 to win the e4-pawn. 22.  $\mathbb{R}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  (22...  $\mathbb{R}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{R}e5$ ; 22...  $\mathbb{R}b8$  23.  $\mathbb{R}cb1$ ) 23.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  24.  $\mathbb{R}d1$   $\mathbb{R}c7$  25. d5  $\mathbb{R}e5$  26. h3 Black is struggling.

b) Keeping the weakness on c6 with 21...  $\mathbb{R}d6$  would have led to a passive defence as well: 22.  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  23. h3  $\mathbb{W}d7$  24.  $\mathbb{R}c5$  Black faces an unpleasant defence.

Before we go any further, let me show you another wonderful example in which Karpov wears down his opponent using a minority attack.



### 26. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ !

Karpov improves the knight. Later it may move to c5, but it has another purpose as well.

### 26... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ ?

Black follows the principle stating that pawns on their starting squares are not easy to attack.

He should have preferred 26... b6! 27.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{R}eb8$  28.  $\mathbb{R}bc1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  with a playable position.

### 27. a5!

Karpov fixes the b7-pawn.

### 27... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 28. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ ?

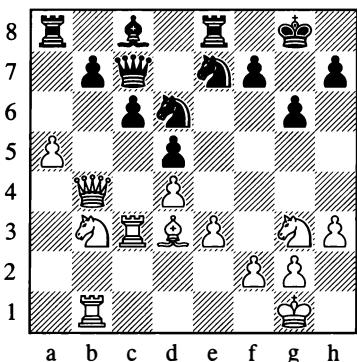
In the minority attack White must pay attention to the c4-square. With his last move

Karpov prevents ... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ , as the exchange of light-squared bishops would have enabled a black knight to occupy the outpost on c4.

28...g6

Black decides to chase the knight. Like in so many of Karpov's games, when his opponents try to create counterplay on the kingside, Karpov gradually shifts his attention to that side of the board and eventually exploits the weaknesses created there.

Maybe Black should have preferred 28... $\mathbb{Q}ef5$ , continuing to play for a bishop exchange. After 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  32. $\mathbb{W}b6$   $\mathbb{E}ec8$  Black has reasonable chances to hold the position.



29. $\mathbb{E}cc1!$

It is not easy to spot the point of this rook move. Karpov wants to put his knight on c5, but to do it he needs a rook on a1 to defend the a5-pawn. With the text move he ensures that the rook will be defended, thus preventing ...b6.

29...h5

Black continues his plan. 29... $\mathbb{Q}ef5$  was still reasonable.

30. $\mathbb{E}al$  h4 31. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

Karpov keeps the e2-square vacant.

31... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e2!$

Karpov keeps the bishop in order to control the c4-square.

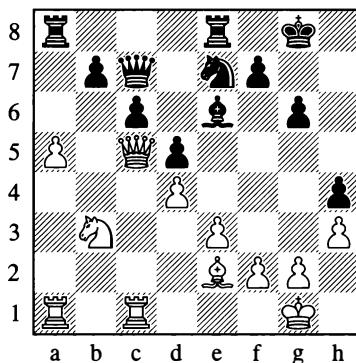
32... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  34. $\mathbb{W}xc5$

Karpov's strong knight has been exchanged,

but still the minor piece exchanges allow him to get closer to Black's queenside weaknesses.

34... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Kharitonov wants to manoeuvre his knight to d6, which is usually a good square for it in this pawn structure. The immediate 34... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$  loses to 35. $\mathbb{W}xd5$ , so he defends the d-pawn first.



35. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

Karpov spots that the h4-pawn can be attacked.

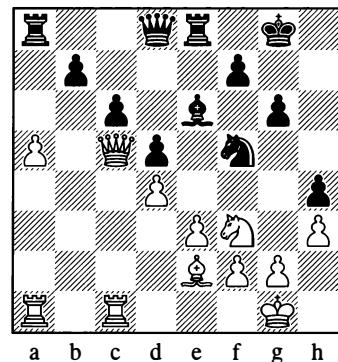
35... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f3!$

Karpov plays carefully.

36. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  would allow Black to stir up complications: 36... $\mathbb{Q}xe3?$  37.fxe3  $\mathbb{Q}xh3?$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  40. $\mathbb{W}c2!$  Black does not have quite enough compensation, but White still has to be careful.

36... $\mathbb{W}d8$

36... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  is a safe extra pawn for White.



**37.a6!**

Once again Karpov's strategy reigns supreme, and Black's pawn structure collapses.

**37...bxa6 38.♗xa6 ♜xa6 39.♗xa6 ♜a8**

After 39...♝d7 40.♛e5 ♛e7 White can choose between 41.♗b1, invading to the seventh rank, and 41.♗b7 winning the c6-pawn. In both cases Black is helpless.

**40.♕xc6**

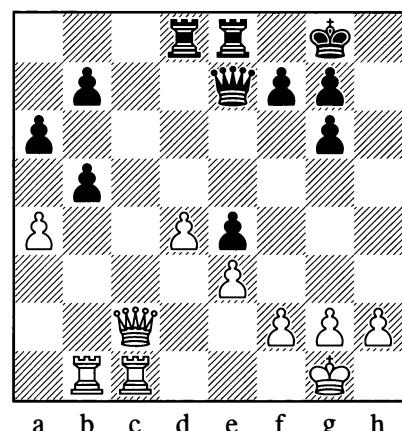
A one-pawn advantage is usually enough to decide the game by itself, and here Black also suffers from weaknesses on d5 and h4.

**40...♕xc6 41.♗xc6 ♜a8 42.♗d3**

1–0 Karpov – Kharitonov, Moscow 1988.

Black resigned in view of 42...♜a1† 43.♚h2 ♜a2 44.♗c2 when the h4-pawn falls as well. It was another great strategic performance from Karpov.

Back to the game.



**21.axb5 ♜d6**

Ljubojevic decides to have his soft point on a6. Perhaps his reasoning was that it would be harder for the white queen to attack the a6- and e4-squares at the same time.

21...a5? would have been a mistake, as after 22.b6! Black must worry about three vulnerable pawns instead of two.

**22.bxa6 bxa6 23.♗a4!**

This excellent move creates the threat of ♜c7, while also setting up the idea of ♜c5 after which the rook can go to a5 or e5 according to circumstances.

**23...♕d7?**

Ljubojevic commits a common mistake, thinking that a queen exchange in the endgame will help him to get closer to a draw. The idea has a major drawback here, as it allows the white king to play an active role in the game.

**23...♜a8?!**

This move was also unsatisfactory.

**24.♗c5! ♜h4**

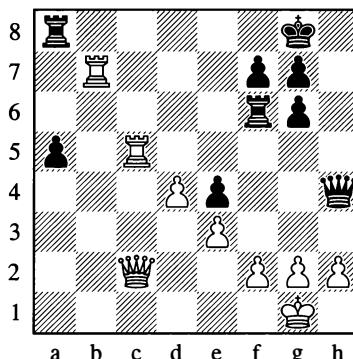
Karpov stops here saying that Black has counterplay, but further analysis reveals that it is insufficient.

**25.♗b7?!**

White has a subtle way to go after Black's king.

25.♗e5 ♜f6 26.♗c2 probably wins as well.

**25...♜f6 26.♗c2 a5**



**27.♗e5!**

The immediate 27.♗c8†?! is premature, as after 27...♜xc8 28.♗xc8† ♜h7 29.g3 ♜h5! White's king is exposed to checks.

27...a4 28.♗c7 a3 29.♗c8†! ♜xc8 30.♗xc8† ♜h7 31.g3! a2

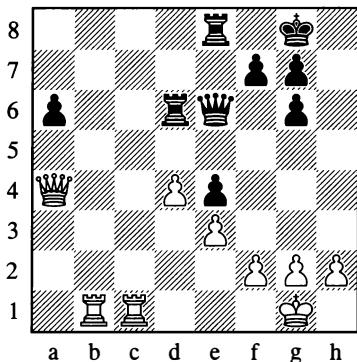
31...h6? 32.♗e8 wins immediately.

**32.♗a5**

White wins the a-pawn, and should not have too much trouble converting his advantage.

23... $\mathbb{W}e6!$

This was Black's chance. The queen move prepares ... $\mathbb{E}c8$ , and enables Black to offer serious resistance.



24. $\mathbb{E}c5$

If 24. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  25. $\mathbb{E}a7$   $\mathbb{E}cc6$  Black remains fairly solid.

24.h3  $\mathbb{E}c8$  25. $\mathbb{E}xc8\#$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  26. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  27. $\mathbb{W}b8\#$   $\mathbb{W}xb8$  28. $\mathbb{E}xb8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  Black has reasonable chances to hold the rook ending. White can insist on a queen trade with 24. $\mathbb{W}c4$ , but after 24... $\mathbb{E}a8$  25. $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  26. $\mathbb{E}c4$  the black rook is much better on e6 than on a7 where it ends up in the game.

24... $\mathbb{E}c8$  25. $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{E}dc6!$

Black is living dangerously, but he may have just enough counterplay to stay in the game.

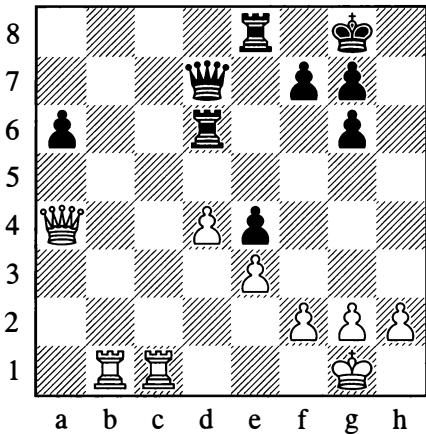
26.h3

After 26. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}c1\#$  27. $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{E}xd1\#$  28. $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  29. $\mathbb{E}a1$  a5 Black has good drawing chances as White's rook is passive.

There is also 26. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  27. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xa4$  28. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  when Black is a pawn down, but his doubled rooks on the second rank will tie White up considerably.

26... $\mathbb{W}d6$  27. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  28. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}c1$

Black is still alive.



24. $\mathbb{W}xd7$

Swapping queens will enable Karpov to activate his king.

24... $\mathbb{E}xd7$  25. $\mathbb{E}c5!$

White blocks the a-pawn as early as possible. On the fifth rank the rook can also threaten to snatch the e4-pawn.

25... $\mathbb{E}a7$

Black would prefer to defend his a-pawn from the sixth rank, but after 25... $\mathbb{E}e6?$  26. $\mathbb{E}b8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  27.h4! he has to give up material to avoid being mated on the back rank.

Another possible line is 25... $\mathbb{E}d6$  26. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  27. $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  28.h4  $\mathbb{E}f6$  29. $\mathbb{E}a2$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  30. $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  (30...a5 31. $\mathbb{E}xe4$ ) 31. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  32. $\mathbb{E}a5$  when White wins as he has blocked the a-pawn early.

26. $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

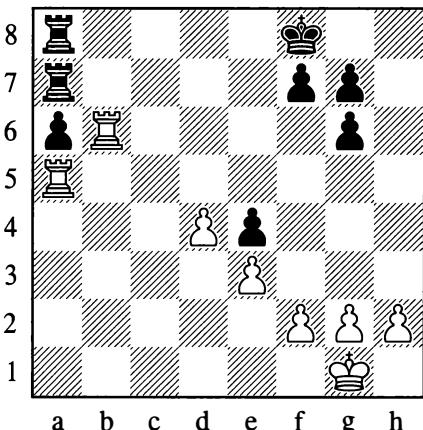
Once again 26... $\mathbb{E}e6$  27. $\mathbb{E}b8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  28.h4! wins.

27. $\mathbb{E}b6$

Black cannot contemplate giving up the a6-pawn and trying to draw a rook ending with four pawns versus five, as White's passed d-pawn is protected and the e4-pawn is vulnerable.

**27... $\mathbb{E}a8$** 

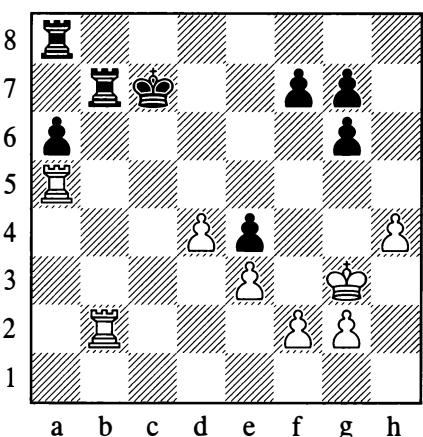
27... $\mathbb{E}e6$  leads to a race which White is just fast enough to win: 28. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $fxe6$  29.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  a5 34. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  a4 35. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  36.d5 Black can resign.

**28.h4!**

Having paralysed Black's rooks, Karpov opens the way for his king.

**28... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h2!$** 

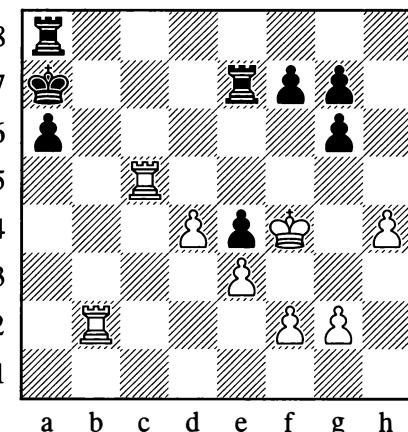
Karpov continues his plan, rather than getting distracted by a loose pawn. If 29. $\mathbb{E}e5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30. $\mathbb{E}b4$  (Or 30. $\mathbb{E}xe4$  a5 when Black gets counterplay as Karpov pointed out.) 30...a5 31. $\mathbb{E}a4$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  32. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}h5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  Black keeps some chances.

**29... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  31. $\mathbb{E}b2$   $\mathbb{E}b7$** **32. $\mathbb{E}c5\uparrow!$** 

Once again Karpov prefers to send his opponent's king back rather than going after the e4-pawn.

**32... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  33. $\mathbb{E}a2!$** 

Karpov makes sure Black cannot push his a-pawn.

**33... $\mathbb{E}e7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  35. $\mathbb{E}b2\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$** **36. $\mathbb{E}c6!$** 

Another strong move; the threat is  $\mathbb{E}bb6$ .

**36... $\mathbb{E}h8$** 

Black resigns himself to the loss of the a-pawn. If 36... $\mathbb{E}b7$  37. $\mathbb{E}xa6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  38. $\mathbb{E}a2\uparrow$  wins.

**37. $\mathbb{E}a2!$** 

If 37.g3  $\mathbb{E}h5!$  Black remains in the game.

**37...a5**

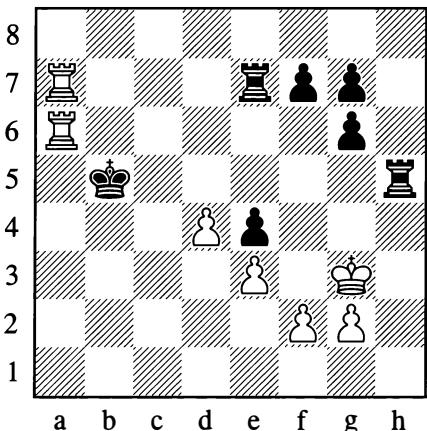
Black cannot take the h4-pawn: 37... $\mathbb{E}xh4\uparrow$ ? 38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}h5$  39. $\mathbb{E}cxa6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  40. $\mathbb{E}a8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  41. $\mathbb{E}2a7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  42. $\mathbb{E}d8\uparrow$  White wins, as 42... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{E}a6\uparrow$  leads to mate.

**38. $\mathbb{E}xa5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  39. $\mathbb{E}ca6$   $\mathbb{E}xh4\uparrow$** 

Just for a moment Black restores the material balance, but he remains defenceless against White's threats.

**40.♔g3 ♘h5 41.♕a7† ♔c6 42.♕5a6† ♔b5**

Black did well not to lose a rook, but now he can do nothing to save his pawns from falling.



**43.♖xe7 ♘g5† 44.♔h2 ♕xa6 45.♖xf7**

**1–0**

Ljubojevic resigned as the endgame is trivial.

In Round 7 Hjartarson made a mistake on the white side of a complex Zaitsev position, and Karpov punished him expertly. After a bye in Round 8, Karpov scored a good win against Portisch in a rook ending. In the next game he held Ivanchuk on the black side of a Zaitsev variation, and in the final round he tried to press for a win against Timman but had to settle for a draw. Karpov's final score of 7/10 was decent, but it was only good enough for second place, half a point behind Ivanchuk.

Karpov's next event was a four-game match against Ulf Andersson in Marostica in northern Italy. In the first game he lost a pawn for nothing but managed to hold a draw. In the second it was Karpov who won a pawn, but was unable to convert it. The third game was a quick draw, and in the fourth Andersson blundered in an equal position

before the time control. Thus Karpov won the match 2½–1½, but the quality of play was well below par for both of these super-grandmasters. The database entries do not specify the time control, but I would assume it was faster than normal.

The next event in the calendar was Karpov's third World Cup tournament; this one took place in Rotterdam. Karpov started with a quick draw against Vaganian, then he beat Nogueiras, although for a while he was in trouble on the white side of a French middlegame. In Round 3 Karpov won against Seirawan after the American blundered in an equal position, and then he defeated Timman in a game that can be found in the notes to Game 11 (Karpov – Kasparov, Belfort 1988). Karpov's fine form continued; he held Andrei Sokolov then defeated Portisch, although he did not quite manage to capitalize on a big advantage against Short. In the next five rounds he drew with Ehlvest, defeated Yusupov, drew with Van der Wiel, scored yet another win against Hjartarson, and then defeated Sax.

At this stage in the tournament Karpov had a superb score of 9½/12, and looked to have good chances to catch Kasparov in the overall World Cup. But then, seemingly out of nowhere, he suffered an incredible collapse and lost his final three games. First he overpressed against Sax, then he failed to make the most of an excellent position against Ljubojevic and went down. In the final round he was doing fine against Nunn but got outplayed there too.

Karpov's final score of 9½/15 was still good enough for second place behind Timman, but it could have been so much better. It looks as though he simply ran out of energy after playing too many tournaments. This had occurred in a couple of his matches, most notably against Korchnoi in 1974 and the

unfinished Kasparov match in 1984/85, but he had never suffered such a dramatic collapse in a tournament.

Karpov's next tournament was the last in the World Cup series. He drew his first five games, including in Round 2 against Kasparov, who was pressing for a win on the black side of a King's Indian. The other four draws, against Sax, Salov, Portisch and Nunn, were all peaceful affairs.

In Round 6 Karpov met Jaan Ehlvest. The Estonian grandmaster faced the world champions fifty times. He won two of those games, drew thirty one and lost seventeen. Up to this point he had scored two draws and one loss against Karpov. Their lifetime score stands at four wins for Karpov, with eight draws and no defeats.

## Game 16

Anatoly Karpov – Jaan Ehlvest

Skelleftea 1989

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♜a6 5.♗a4**

Karpov surprises his opponent by playing a line he had never used before in a regular game, although he often employed it in rapid games. Karpov faced it from Black's side a few times as well. At the time of writing, this variation has returned to grandmaster tournaments, showing that it is not without venom.

**5...♝b7 6.♝g2 c5 7.dxc5 ♜xc5**

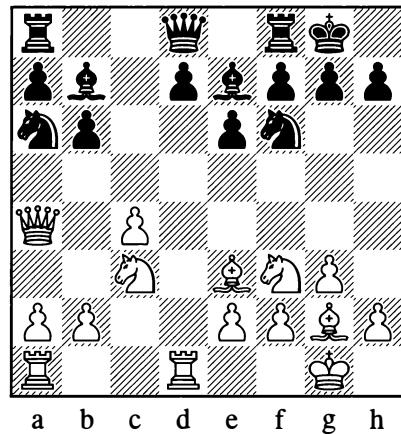
Later both Polugaevsky and Judit Polgar took back with the pawn; Karpov beat them as well.

**8.0–0 0–0 9.♘c3 ♜e7 10.♗d1 ♜a6**

According to the database this natural developing move was a novelty at the time this game was played.

**11.♗e3**

The main line is 11.♗f4. Karpov faced this move from Black's side on four occasions, scoring two wins and two draws. He also used it with White and drew against Leko in the third game of their 2006 rapid match in Miskolc.



**11...♛c8 12.♗ac1 ♜c5 13.♗c2 ♜ce4**

Black exchanges in order to create more room for his pieces. Karpov mentions 13...d5 and attaches "!", but hardly anyone has tried this suspicious-looking move. Perhaps there was a typing error and he intended to suggest 13...d6.

**14.♗d4 ♜d8**

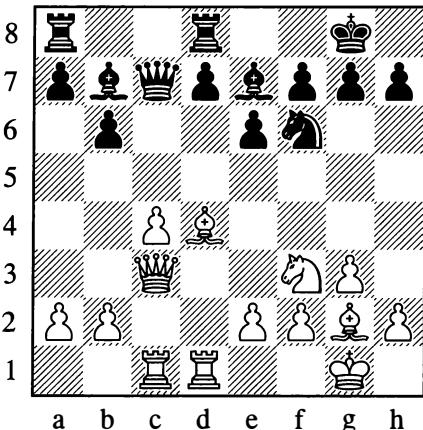
If 14...♛xc4?? 15.♗xe4 wins.

**15.♗d3 ♜xc3**

There is nothing wrong with this, although it is not necessary to exchange yet and 15...d6! is fine as well.

**16.♗xc3 ♛c7**

Black is behind in development, so it is not logical for Black to open the position: 16...d5 17.♗e5 dxc4 18.♗xc4 ♜xg2 19.♗xg2 ♛xc4 (19...♝b7†?! 20.♗c6) 20.♗xc4 ♜c5 21.♗f3 h6 22.♗d3 White keeps a small but nagging edge.



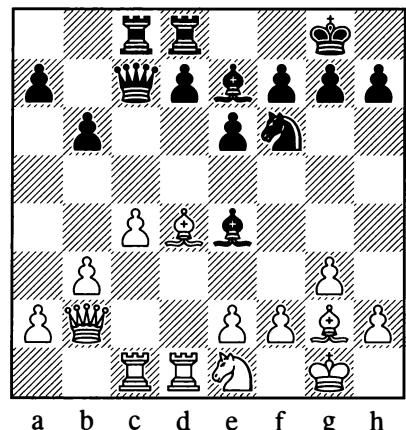
**17.b3**

Karpov effectively admits that he has not obtained any advantage, so he settles for a small improving move.

**17...♝ac8**

17...♝e4 18.♗b2 ♜f6 is also fine for Black.

**18.♗b2 ♜e4 19.♝e1**



Karpov exchanges the bishop in order to create some possibilities in the centre.

**19...♞xg2 20.♞xg2 ♜b7 21.♝e3 h5**

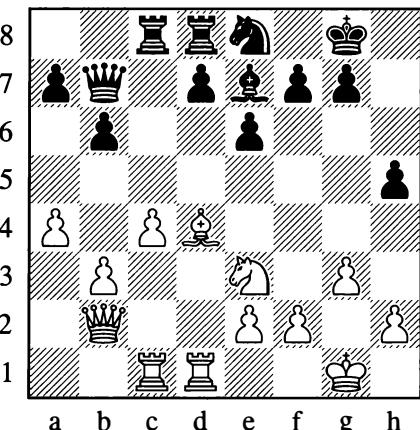
This is not a bad move, although Karpov prefers 21...a6 intending ...b5.

**22.a4**

Karpov prevents ...b5, and in some positions a4-a5 might be useful.

**22...♝e8**

22...h4 would have been more consistent.

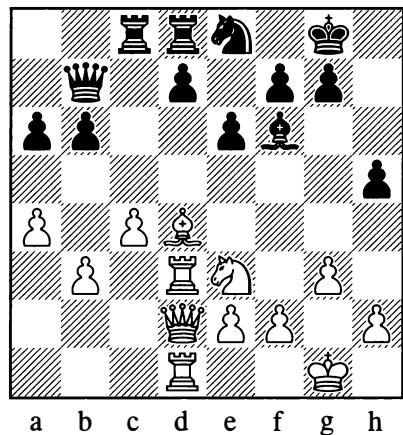


**23.♝d3!**

Karpov did not achieve anything significant in the opening, nevertheless he continues to find ways to strengthen his position.

**23...♜f6 24.♝cd1 a6 25.♗d2**

Karpov piles up his heavy pieces on the d-file, yet the queen move has another more subtle purpose.



**25...♝e7?**

The Estonian grandmaster decides to keep the bishops on the board, but he has overlooked a crafty threat.

25... $\mathbb{W}c7$  was possible, although after 26.a5 bxa5 27. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  29. $\mathbb{W}xa5$  White has some initiative on the queenside.

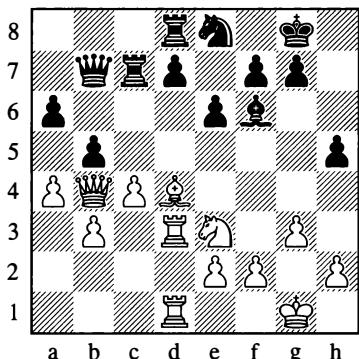
Black's best chance was to look for counterplay:

25...b5! 26. $\mathbb{W}b4!!$

26.cxb5 axb5 27.a5  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  (27...d5?! 28. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ !  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29. $\mathbb{E}c1$  is awkward) 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  d5 29.b4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black is in the game. (But note that Black should avoid 29... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ? because of 30. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ !.)

Karpov mentions 26.a5?!, so it is possible that he wanted to play like this, but after 26... $\mathbb{B}xc4$  27. $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29.f3  $\mathbb{E}c5$  30. $\mathbb{E}d6$  Black should be all right.

26... $\mathbb{E}c7$



27.cxb5

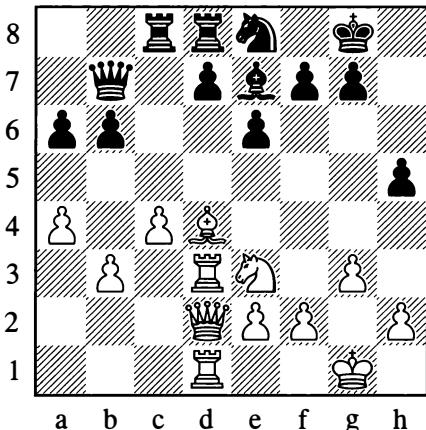
27.c5  $\mathbb{W}c6$  28.axb5 axb5 29. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  31. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  Black has solved all his problems.

27...axb5 28.a5

28.axb5?!  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  29. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  is fine for Black.

28... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  29. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  d5

The passed a-pawn makes White's position somewhat preferable, but Black has decent chances to resist.



**26.a5!**

Amazingly, this witty move wins material by force.

**26...bxa5**

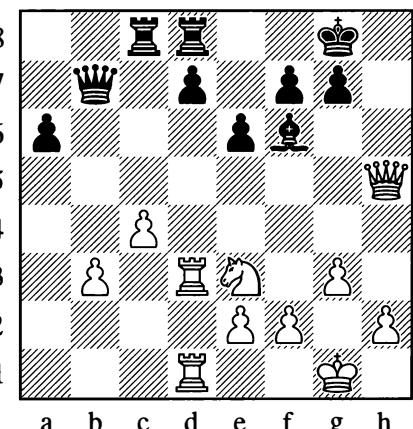
Black also loses material after 26...b5 27. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  or 26... $\mathbb{E}c5$  27.axb6.

**27. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

The threat was 28. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .

**28. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  29. $\mathbb{W}xh5$**

White picks up a pawn for no compensation. At this level Black has little chance of surviving such a loss. Nevertheless it is instructive to observe how Karpov sets about converting his advantage.



**29... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  30. $\mathbb{W}a5$  d6 31.b4**

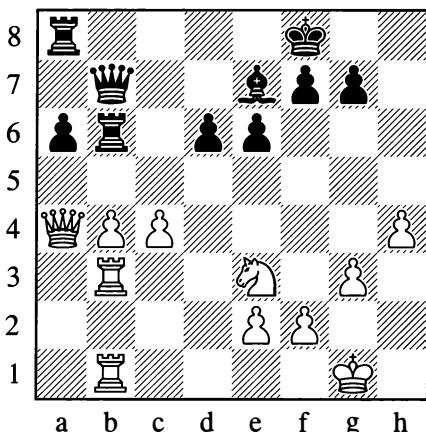
Karpov gains space.

**31... $\mathbb{E}e8$  32. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33.h4**

Stopping ... $\mathbb{Q}g5$ .

**33... $\mathbb{E}c6$  34. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{E}b6$  35. $\mathbb{E}db3$   $\mathbb{E}a8$**

35... $\mathbb{E}b8$  would probably have met with the same response.



**36. $\mathbb{W}a2!$**

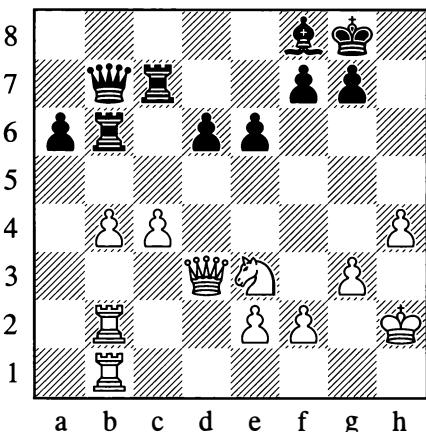
Karpov transfers his queen to the centre.

**36... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  38. $\mathbb{W}d3$**

Now the queen is nicely centralized.

**38... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  40. $\mathbb{E}3b2$**

It looks like Karpov just made a move to pass the time control.



**40... $\mathbb{E}bc6?$ !**

Ehlvest's last move before the time control is an unfortunate one which eases Karpov's task.

40... $\mathbb{g}6$  would have offered more resistance, although after 41. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  (41... $\mathbb{W}b8$  42.b5) 42.b5 axb5 43. $\mathbb{E}xb5$  White should eventually win with the extra pawn.

**41.b5!**

Karpov opens the queenside, not to create a passed pawn, but to invade with his rooks.

**41... $\mathbb{E}c5$**

If 41...axb5 42. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  43. $\mathbb{E}b8$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  44. $\mathbb{E}8b7$  Black is in trouble.

**42.bxa6  $\mathbb{W}xa6$  43. $\mathbb{E}b8$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  44. $\mathbb{E}1b6$   $\mathbb{W}a4$**

**45. $\mathbb{E}xc8$**

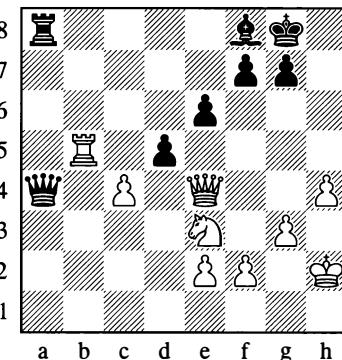
Exchanging one rook enables White to invade with the second one.

**45... $\mathbb{E}xc8$  46. $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  47. $\mathbb{W}e4$**

47. $\mathbb{W}b1$  intending  $\mathbb{E}b7$  looks strong as well.

**47... $\mathbb{W}a2?$**

Ehlvest misses a chance to reduce the number of the pawns: 47...d5! It looks rather risky, but White has no direct win on the seventh rank.



**48. $\mathbb{W}f3$**  Planning  $\mathbb{E}b7$ . (Alternatively after 48. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  [48...dxc4 49. $\mathbb{E}b7$ ] 49. $\mathbb{E}b3$  dxc4 50. $\mathbb{E}xc4$  Black faces a tough defence,

but it is not hopeless.) 48... $\mathbb{W}a6$  49. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $dxc4$  (49... $d4$  50. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ ) 50. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  White has to settle for an endgame with four pawns versus three on the kingside. His winning chances are quite high, as the knight will be stronger than the bishop with the pawns all on one side.

#### 48. $\mathbb{W}f3$

Karpov goes after the f7-pawn. White has another strong continuation as well: 48. $\mathbb{Q}g4!?$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  (48... $\mathbb{E}e8$  49. $\mathbb{B}g5!$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  50. $\mathbb{B}h5$   $g6$  51. $\mathbb{B}b5!$  wins) 49. $\mathbb{B}h5$   $g6$  50. $\mathbb{B}b5$  White will soon open Black's kingside.

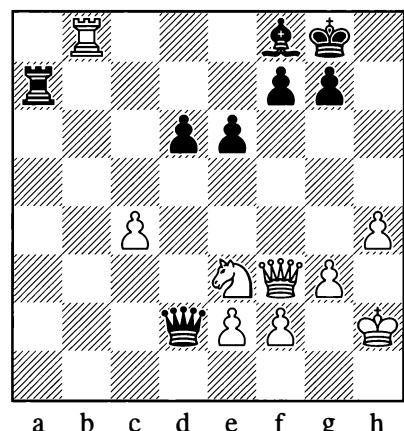
#### 48... $\mathbb{B}a7$

48... $\mathbb{W}a6$  49. $\mathbb{B}b7$  is winning.

#### 49. $\mathbb{B}b8$

Black stopped the invasion on the seventh rank, but the pin along the eighth is equally powerful.

#### 49... $\mathbb{W}d2$



#### 50. $\mathbb{Q}g2!$

Karpov covers his king while also setting up ideas of  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  and  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  or  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ .

After the less incisive 50.  $\mathbb{W}c6?!$   $\mathbb{W}xe2$  51.  $\mathbb{W}e8$   $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$  52.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  53.  $\mathbb{W}xf8$   $\mathbb{W}f3$  Black is still alive.

#### 50... $\mathbb{W}d4$ 51. $\mathbb{W}c6$ d5?

Ehlvest blunders the bishop in a lost position.

51... $\mathbb{W}c5$  would have lasted longer, without offering Black any real hope: 52.  $\mathbb{W}e8$  d5 53.  $\mathbb{B}c8$  (53.  $cxd5$   $exd5$  54.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d4 55.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  56.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  wins as well) 53...  $\mathbb{B}c7$  (53...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  54.  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{B}xe7$  55.  $c5$  wins, as Karpov pointed out) 54.  $\mathbb{B}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  55.  $cxd5$   $exd5$  56.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  57.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  d4 58. h5 White wins.

#### 52. $\mathbb{W}d6$

1–0

In Round 7 Karpov made a quick draw with Vaganian, then defeated Seirawan in an endgame masterpiece. A quick draw with Ribli was followed by a good win over Nikolic. Karpov then made four draws in a row, including two quick draws, but then he managed to beat Andersson in the last round. This enabled Karpov to draw level with Kasparov and share first place with a score of 9½/15. Kasparov took first prize in the World Cup overall, and Karpov was the only player close to him.

### World Championship Semi-Final

Karpov's next event was a crucial one, as he faced Artur Yusupov in the candidates semi-final on the road to a future showdown with Kasparov. The match took place in London, and was scheduled for eight games. Although Karpov was the heavy favourite, the match turned out to be a lot more competitive than most people anticipated.

Karpov had the black pieces in Game 1, and held a 4.  $g3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Queen's Indian without too much trouble. In the second game he got into trouble on the white side of a 4.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian, but managed to salvage a draw. Game 3

was a 4.a3 Nimzo-Indian in which Yusupov sacrificed an exchange for an attack. Karpov defended well and reached a winning position, but in the time scramble he blundered and allowed Yusupov the chance to win, but the latter missed his opportunity and Karpov won the ending. In the next game Yusupov equalized with the Lasker Variation against the Queen's Gambit, and outplayed Karpov in a simplified position, but was unable to capitalize on his advantage. Thus at the halfway stage Karpov was leading, but he had been in varying degrees of trouble in three of the four games.

In Game 5 Yusupov played a Torre Attack and obtained an advantage as early as move 5, as Karpov played an inaccurate move order. Yusupov built his position skilfully and eventually broke through just before the time control to level the match. In the sixth game Yusupov repeated the Lasker Defence. Once again he outplayed Karpov, but missed a win in the endgame and had to settle for a draw. In Game 7 Karpov more or less equalized against the Torre, and later sacrificed a pawn to reach a drawn position with opposite-coloured bishops, which he held comfortably.

In the eighth and final game, Yusupov repeated the Lasker Variation which had served him so well. This time, however, Karpov was ready for it and played a much more challenging counter. Yusupov was unable to solve his problems and Karpov punished him to win the game and the match.

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After his successful though somewhat shaky match performance, Karpov joined the Soviet team at the second World Team Championship, where he played on board one. His first game of the event took place in Round 3, when he held Ljubojevic with the black pieces. In Round 5 Karpov won a nice game against Short, and in Round 8 he met Andras Adorjan of Hungary.

Adorjan faced all the world champions from Smyslov to Kramnik, with the exception of Fischer. He scored one win, twenty four draws and six losses. Up to this point he had scored one win, seven wins and two losses against Karpov. This was the last time they met over the board.

## Game 17

Anatoly Karpov – Andras Adorjan

Lucerne 1989

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6 4.g3 ♜a6**

This is one of Adorjan's favourite lines. Karpov also played it many times with both colours.

**5.b3 ♜b4† 6.♗d2 ♜e7 7.♗g2 c6 8.0–0 d5  
9.♗c3 0–0 10.♗e5 ♜fd7 11.♗xd7 ♜xd7  
12.♗d2 ♜c8 13.e4 b5**

Adorjan deviates from his previous games. In 1985 he played 13...c5 and drew with Chernin, and in 1986 he preferred 13...dxe4 but lost to Ftacnik.

**14.♗e1 dxe4**

According to the database this move had only been seen in one previous game, when Timman used it to draw against Chernin in 1987. Nowadays well over a hundred games have been played with it.

**15.♗xe4**

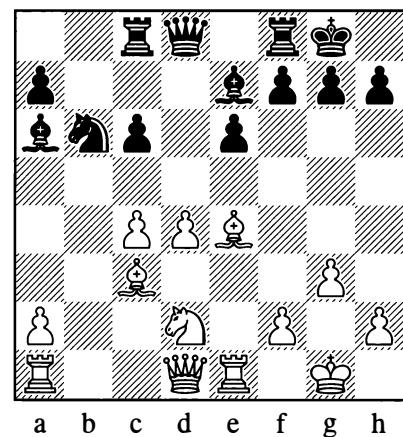
Four years later Karpov attempted to improve with 15.c5?, but his novelty was refuted and has never been repeated: 15...f5 16.f3 b4! 17.♗xb4 ♜e5! 18.♗c3 ♜d3 19.fxe4 ♜xe1 20.♗xe1 e5 Black successfully converted his advantage in Karpov – Timman, Netherlands (2) 1993.

**15...bxc4 16.bxc4 ♜b6**

Adorjan is a rather dynamic player, so it is

a bit surprising that he opted for a solid but somewhat passive line such as this.

16...c5 is a common alternative.



### 17.c5!

Karpov does not mind giving away the d5-square as he will gain numerous things in return. The c6-pawn becomes a fixed weakness and Black's pieces – with the exception of his knight – lack good prospects. After this game this position did not occur again until 2005; presumably Queen's Indian players were put off by the course of the present encounter.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 18. $\mathbb{W}c2$ g6?

Modern tournament practice has demonstrated that 18...h6! is stronger, as after 19. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black can take the bishop without having to worry about his dark squares.

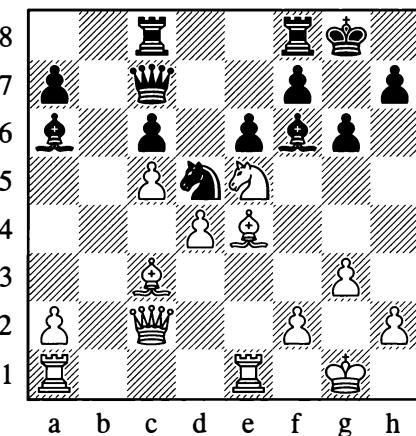
### 19. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

I found one other game from this position: 19... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  22. $\mathbb{W}xd5$  cxd5 23. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  24. $\mathbb{E}b3$  f6 25. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  26. $\mathbb{E}eb1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  27. $\mathbb{E}a3$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  28. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  29. $\mathbb{E}f3$  White obtained a clear advantage and went on to win in P. H. Nielsen – Palac, Turin (ol) 2006.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Karpov improves his knight, as exchanging it would result in a truly miserable position for Black.

### 20... $\mathbb{W}c7$



### 21.h4!

Having built up a strong central position, Karpov prepares to soften Black's kingside.

### 21... $\mathbb{E}fd8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$

Black is unable to get away with the cheeky 22... $\mathbb{Q}b4??$  23. $\mathbb{E}xb4$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  due to 24. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$ , but with his last move Adorjan prepares to launch the knight.

### 23. $\mathbb{E}ad1!$

By defending the d-pawn White prevents the ... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  idea.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Adorjan fortifies his kingside in anticipation of h5.

### 24. $\mathbb{W}c3$

Now Black must worry about  $\mathbb{W}a3$ .

### 24... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

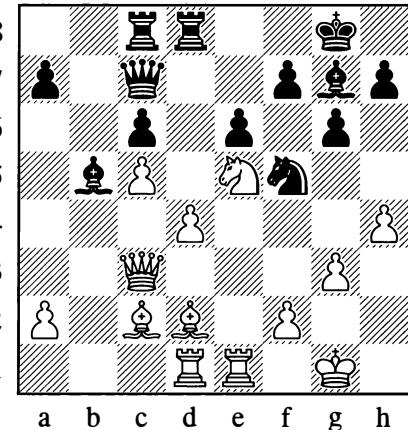
Karpov attaches an exclamation mark to this move, which stops any counterplay based on ... $\mathbb{Q}a4$ .

**25...♝f5?**

Adorjan allows the bishop to come to f4 with strong effect. He should have preferred one of the following alternatives:

25...♝d5 26.♛f3 f6 (26...a5 27.a3 ♜b8 28.h5 White remains in control) 27.♝g4 ♜f7 28.♜b3 ♜e8 29.♝h6† Black's position is a bit unpleasant, but for the time being he is surviving.

25...f6 26.♝c4 (26.♝g4 ♜d7 27.h5 is also promising) 26...♝d5 27.♛b3 ♜xc4 28.♛xc4 ♜f7 29.♝g2 f5 30.♜b3 White certainly stands better, but it will not be easy to crack Black's position.

**26.♝f4!**

Karpov activates his bishop. His play from here on is reminiscent of a boxer's final combination of punches which knocks out his weary opponent.

**26...♛b7**

If 26...♛e7 27.a4 ♜a6 28.♛a5 ♜b7 29.♝xf5 gxf5 30.♛xa7 Black has nothing for the pawn, and 30...♜a8 31.♝b6 ♜xa4 is refuted by 32.♝g5 f6 33.♝xc6 winning.

**27.a4!**

Karpov knocks his opponent back with a sharp left hook.

**27...♜a6 28.♝e4 ♜a8**

Other moves were gloomy as well. For instance, if 28...h6 29.♝g2 Black can hardly move, while after 28...h5 29.♜b1 ♜a8 (29...♛e7 30.♝g5) 30.♛a5 ♜b7 31.♜xb7 ♜xb7 32.♝xc6 White wins.

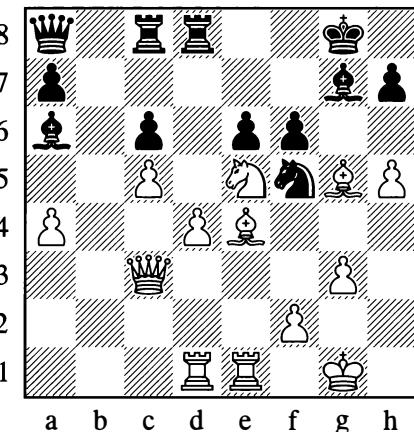
**29.h5!**

Karpov prepares to land another heavy blow, this time from the right side.

**29...g5**

Adorjan tries to fight back with a punch of his own, but only succeeds in leaving himself open for a haymaker.

Other moves were also dismal, for instance 29...gxh5 30.♛f3 or 29...♜f8 30.♛a5 and White is winning.

**30.♝xg5! f6****31.h6!**

Karpov exchanges pieces around Black's king, so that soon there will be nothing left to defend it.

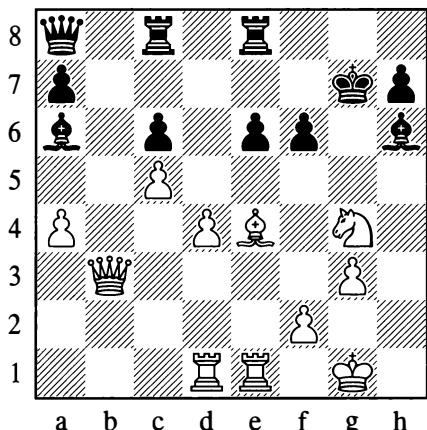
**31...♝xh6**

Both 31...♜h8 32.♛b3 and 31...fxg5 32.hxg7 were equally hopeless.

**32.♜xh6 ♜xh6 33.♛b3!**

Threatening to invade from the centre. In this game Karpov has skilfully created threats all over the board.

33... $\mathbb{E}e8$  34. $\mathfrak{Q}g4$   $\mathfrak{Q}g7$



35. $\mathfrak{Q}g2!$

Even the king contributes to the massacre, by opening the first rank for the rook to get to the h-file.

35...f5 36. $\mathfrak{Q}xh6$   $\mathfrak{Q}xh6$  37. $\mathfrak{Q}xf5!$

A small sacrifice to end the game.

37...exf5 38. $\mathbb{W}f7$

1–0

Black resigned before he was checkmated.

In the final round Karpov drew from the black side of a Catalan in a long but always balanced game against Nogueiras. Thus he finished with a personal score of two wins and two draws, and the Soviet team took the gold medal.

Karpov's final tournament of the year and the decade was in Reggio Emilia. His first three games against Andersson, Kiril Georgiev and Mikhail Gurevich, were all drawn, although each game was hard-fought. In Round 4 he scored his first win after Beliavsky blundered in an equal endgame. There followed quick draws with Ehlvest and Portisch, a fighting draw against Ribli and a Zaitsev  $\mathfrak{Q}g5$  repetition draw with De Firmian. In the penultimate round Karpov was able to grind down Petursson, and in the final one he drew with Ivanchuk. His final score of 6/10 was enough for third place behind Ehlvest and Ivanchuk.

It seems that by this stage Karpov's age may have started to become a factor. At thirty eight he was far from ancient, but he would not have had the energy reserves of a young man, which may explain why he took more quick draws than he had done previously. During some parts of 1989 Karpov was still the same almost invincible tournament player from previous years, but during some other periods he dropped to the level of a 'mere' top grandmaster.

## 1989 Summary

Candidates quarter-final match versus Hjartarson, Seattle: Won  $3\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$  (+2 =3 –0)

Linares (2nd place): 7/11 (+4 =6 –1)

Match versus Andersson: Won  $2\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$  (+1 =3 –0)

World Cup, Rotterdam (2nd place):  $9\frac{1}{2}$ /15 (+7 =5 –3)

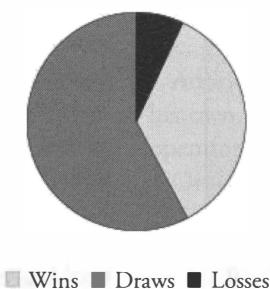
World Cup, Skellefteå (1st-2nd place):  $9\frac{1}{2}$ /15 (+4 =11 –0)

Candidates semi-final versus Yusupov, London: Won  $4\frac{1}{2}$ – $3\frac{1}{2}$  (+2 =5 –1)

World Team Championship, Lucerne (Board one): 3/4 (+2 =2 –0)

Reggio Emilia (3rd place): 6/10 (+2 =8 –0)

Total 63.2% (+24 =43 –5)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1990

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Rating 2730 (2 in the world)

Karpov began the year with the candidates final match against Jan Timman, a clash which would determine the next challenger for Kasparov's crown. The match took place in the Malaysian capital of Kuala Lumpur, and was scheduled for twelve games. The Dutch grandmaster was rated 2680 at the time – not quite at Karpov's level, but close enough to be competitive. Timman was already an experienced match player and had proved himself capable of winning super-tournaments. Karpov was certainly the stronger player when at his best, but his recent form had dipped below his usual high standards, and he had looked especially vulnerable in the Yusupov match of 1989.

In the first game Timman introduced a bad novelty early in the Zaitsev, and immediately had to struggle to stay in the game. Was it poor home analysis or an unfortunate piece of over-the-board improvisation? Either way the outcome was unfortunate for him, and a further inaccuracy allowed Karpov to press home his advantage and make a dream start to the match. Game 2 was a quiet draw in a symmetrical Fianchetto Grünfeld. In Game 3 Timman switched to 1.d4 and opted for 4.f3 against the Nimzo-Indian. Karpov outplayed him, but Timman managed to survive the endgame a pawn down. Game 4 was another Fianchetto Grünfeld, culminating in a remarkable endgame in which both sides had connected passed pawns on opposite flanks. In the end it went Karpov's way, and the former champion took a commanding two-point lead.

In Game 5 Karpov almost increased his lead after outplaying Timman in another Zaitsev, but the latter escaped with a perpetual. In the next game Timman tried a Modern Benoni in an effort to shake things up, but he lost a pawn and only managed to hold the ending by the skin of his teeth after Karpov uncharacteristically missed a win. (An extract from the game can be found in the notes to Game 19 below.) In Game 7 Karpov drew almost effortlessly with the Zaitsev. In Game 8 Timman went for a complex variation in the Queen's Indian. For a while he was fine, but he erred in the middlegame and Karpov punished him. Game 9 was a tense and complex Zaitsev. For a long time it was dynamically balanced, but eventually Timman slipped up in the endgame and Karpov scored another fine win.

With the score at 6½–2½ in Karpov's favour, the match was over after just nine of the scheduled twelve games. It was a resounding victory over a top contender, although Karpov was still probably not completely satisfied as he failed to convert a couple of winning positions. Nevertheless he proved beyond any doubt that he was once again the most worthy challenger to Kasparov's crown.

Just as in previous years involving a world title match, Karpov did not take part in many tournaments. His next event was in Haninge, Sweden. He started with a draw with white against Polugaevsky, then lost to Seirawan after some risky opening play against the English. In Round 3 Karpov was unable to make any headway against Ehlvest, but in Round 4 he managed to grind out a win against Wojtkiewicz. Ironically he did it from the black side of a symmetrical Fianchetto Grünfeld.

Karpov's opponent in Round 5 was a familiar foe, Ulf Andersson.

## Game 18

Anatoly Karpov – Ulf Andersson

Haninge 1990

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♜b4 4.♗c2**

Karpov played the white side of this variation sixteen times, scoring four victories, eleven draws and one loss.

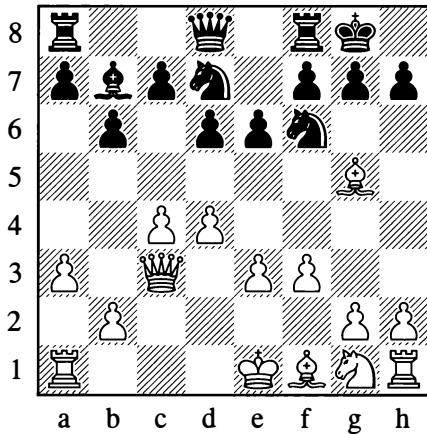
**4...0–0 5.a3 ♜xc3† 6.♗xc3 b6 7.♗g5 ♜b7  
8.f3 d6**

When Karpov played this line from the opposite side he usually inserted 8...h6 here, and followed up with ...d5 rather than ...d6.

**9.e3**

Karpov deviates from the last game he played against Andersson, which continued: 9.e4 c5 10.dxc5 bxc5 11.♗d1 ♜c6 12.♗h3 ♜d4 13.♗f2 h6 14.♗e3 e5 15.♗d3 a5 16.b3 ♜c6 17.0–0 ♜b6 Black equalized and the game was later drawn, Karpov – Andersson, Reggio Emilia 1989. It looks like this was enough to persuade Karpov that he would do better not to give up the d4-square at this stage of the opening.

**9...♝bd7**



**10.♗h3!?**

Karpov introduces a novelty. 10.♗d3 is the main line, but Karpov wants to keep the d-file clear. At this stage in his career Karpov was devoting more time to his opening preparation than when he was the World Champion.

**10...c5**

Black can also play 10...♜c8 with the idea of using the rook to recapture on c5.

**11.dxc5 bxc5 12.♗e2**

Karpov aims to catch up on development, with a view to exploiting his bishop pair in the middlegame.

**12...a5!?**

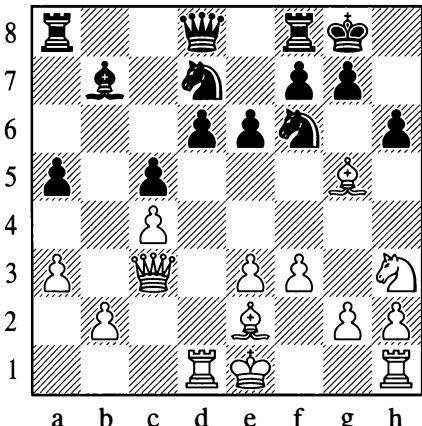
Karpov would later choose a different path when he encountered this position from Black's side: 12...♜b6 13.0–0 d5 14.♗ad1 ♜c6!? Black utilizes his bishop in an interesting way. 15.♗f2 h6 16.♗h4 ♜a4 17.♗d2 ♜b3 18.♗g4 ♜xg4 19.fxg4 ♜ab8 Kasparov – Karpov, Las Palmas 1996. At this stage Black had a decent position, but he eventually lost after a time-trouble error.

**13.♗d1**

Karpov plays his second novelty in the same game! It sounds like a contradiction, but the position before this move had previously been reached via a different move order.

**13...h6**

13... $\mathbb{W}b6$  and 13... $\mathbb{B}a6$  were reasonable alternatives, which would have given Black the option of keeping his pawn on d6, but Andersson was obviously happy to advance it.

**14. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$ ?**

Karpov provokes his opponent into changing the pawn structure in the centre.

14. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  allows a thematic simplification:  
14... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ! 15. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  (15. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{B}fe8$  Black wins material.)  
15... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  16.bxc3  $\mathbb{B}fxd8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black stands well as he will surely win back his pawn, Zaitsev – Kimelfeld, USSR 1989.

**14...d5**

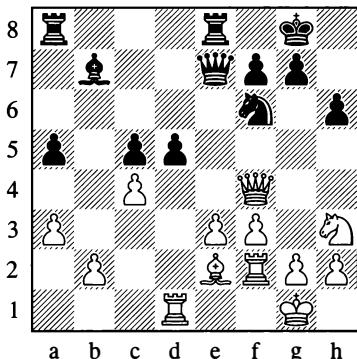
14...e5!? looks playable as well. After 15. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  both 15... $\mathbb{B}a6$  and 15... $\mathbb{W}b6$  are possible, and Black will be able to play on the b-file more freely than in the game.

**15.0-0  $\mathbb{W}b6$** 

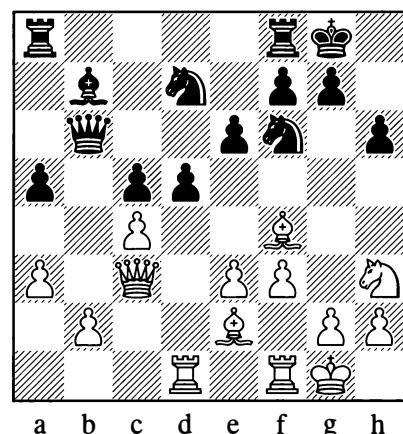
By controlling the d6-square, Black sets up the idea of ... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  to eliminate the dark-squared bishop.

15...e5!? This interesting pawn sacrifice was analysed by Igor Zaitsev, Karpov's long-time second. 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  18. $\mathbb{W}f4$

(After 18. $\mathbb{W}c3$ ?! d4 19. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{B}b8$ ! Black takes over the initiative.) 18... $\mathbb{W}e7$ ! (18...g5? 19. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ !) 19. $\mathbb{B}f2$ !



19... $\mathbb{B}ad8$ ! (19...g5 is well met by 20. $\mathbb{W}f5$ !; 19... $\mathbb{W}xe3$  20. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}xe3$  21.cxd5 White has a small edge as Black's queenside pawns are weak.) 20. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}h5$ !? Black has other plans as well. He should refrain from taking his pawn back for the moment, as the queen exchange would help White. 21. $\mathbb{W}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Black keeps a playable position.

**16. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ !**

Karpov preserves his important bishop. For the moment Black cannot organize any plan on the b-file, as the b8-square is covered.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}a6$** 

It was worth considering 16... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ ! in order

to put a rook on the b-file: 17.  $\mathbb{B}h4$   $\mathbb{B}ab8$  18.  $g4$   $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $e5$  20.  $cxd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  Black's activity should be enough to counter White's bishop pair and the slight weakness of the  $c5$ -pawn.

### 17. $\mathbb{B}f2$ $\mathbb{B}a7??$

This method of repositioning the rook is artificial and takes too much time. Black should have preferred one of the following alternatives.

17...  $a4$  18.  $cxd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  19.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  20.  $\mathbb{B}xe2$   
White is somewhat better as the  $c5$ -pawn will soon become a target.

### 17... $\mathbb{B}fc8!$

It looks logical to bring the last piece into play.

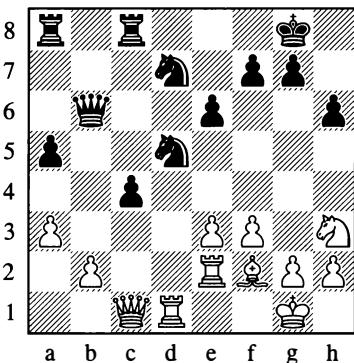
### 18. $cxd5$

18.  $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  19.  $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  Black's hanging pawns are safely supported.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ 19. $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$

Also after 19...  $c4!!?$  20.  $e4$   $\mathbb{Q}5f6$  Black's activity should compensate for his slightly worse pawn structure.

### 20. $\mathbb{B}xe2$ $c4$ 21. $\mathbb{B}f2$



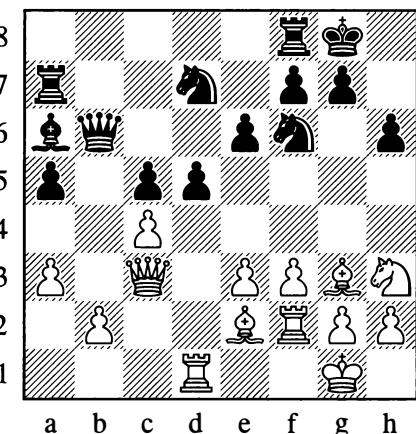
### 21... $\mathbb{Q}e5??$

There was a second tactical solution available in 21...  $c3!!?$  22.  $e4$   $\mathbb{W}b3!!$  23.  $exd5$   $cxb2$  24.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{W}xd1\#$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xd1$   $\mathbb{B}c1$  26.  $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}xd1$  27.  $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  28.  $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}c3$  with an unclear endgame.

### 22. $e4$

22.  $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b3!!$  works out well for Black.  
22...  $\mathbb{Q}d3!!$  23.  $\mathbb{B}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  24.  $\mathbb{B}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  25.  $\mathbb{B}ec2$

White is fractionally better, but Black should be able to hold the position without any special effort.



### 18. $cxd5$ !

Karpov chooses a good moment to clarify the situation in the centre.

The immediate 18.  $\mathbb{Q}f4??$  would have allowed 18...  $d4!!$  19.  $exd4$   $cxd4$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  21.  $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $e5$  when White must give up an exchange.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

The alternative was to go for a position with hanging pawns, in which Black is also a bit worse: 18...  $exd5$  19.  $\mathbb{B}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}xa6$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  White is unable to hurt his opponent immediately, nevertheless after something like 21.  $b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  22.  $\mathbb{B}c2$  Black's position is a bit unpleasant.

### 19. $\mathbb{W}c1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe2$

Exchanging pieces make it easier to approach the  $c$ -pawn. On the other hand after 19...  $c4$  Black's bishop is restricted, and White maintains an edge: 20.  $e4$   $\mathbb{Q}5f6$  21.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  22.  $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (22...  $\mathbb{E}c6$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24.  $\mathbb{B}fd2$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!!$ ) Black has got his queenside

together, but White begins to develop some initiative on the kingside.) 23. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  24. $\mathbb{E}c2$  Black is not much worse, nevertheless his position would not be much fun to play.

### 20. $\mathbb{E}xe2$ $\mathbb{W}b5$ 21. $\mathbb{E}c2$ $\mathbb{E}b7$

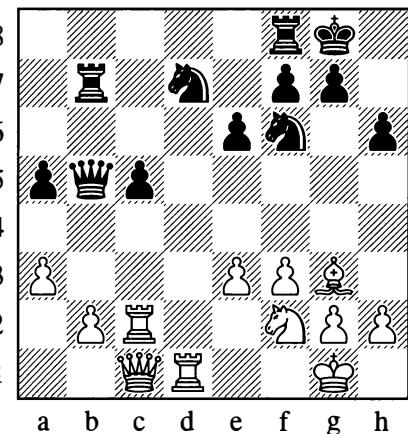
The rook finally makes it to the b-file, but by now White is ready to meet it.

### 22. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

Karpov wants to bring the knight to e4.

### 22... $\mathbb{Q}5f6$

After 22...c4 23. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}b6$  24. $\mathbb{E}d4$  Black drops the c4-pawn.



### 23.e4!

Karpov restricts the enemy pieces. Black faces the difficult problem of choosing between several somewhat worse continuations, and it is not easy to judge which one offers the best chances.

### 23... $\mathbb{E}c8$

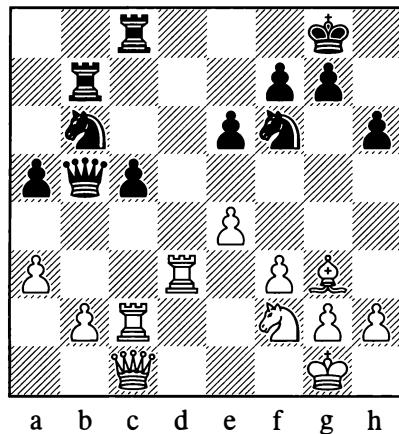
If 23...c4 24. $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  26. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  all of White's pieces work well.

### 24. $\mathbb{E}d3$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$ ?

This leads to a worsening of Black's position. He should have considered one of the following alternatives:

24...e5 25. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  (25...c4 26. $\mathbb{W}e3$ ) 26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  27.hxg3 c4 28. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  Black is not drastically worse, but he is passive and can do little except sit and wait.

Fixing the b2-pawn with 24...a4! was possible, although Black remains worse here too, for instance: 25. $\mathbb{E}dc3$  c4 26. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  28. $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}xb2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  Black faces a difficult ending, as the a4-pawn is vulnerable.



### 25.b3!

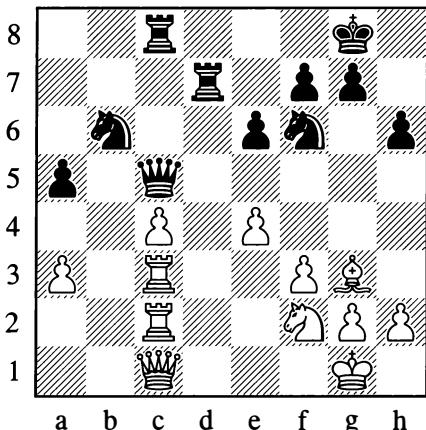
Karpov restricts the black knight and lures Black into a tempting but incorrect continuation.

### 25... $\mathbb{E}d7$ 26. $\mathbb{E}dc3$ c4?

Andersson takes the bait. It is understandable that he wanted to rid himself of the weak c-pawn and the suffering that goes with it.

The best chance was: 26...a4! 27.b4 c4 28. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ ! Transferring the knight to b2 increases the pressure against both of Black's queenside pawns. 28... $\mathbb{E}e8$ ! (28... $\mathbb{E}cd8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  threatens  $\mathbb{Q}f2$ , and after 29... $\mathbb{E}e8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ! f6 31. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  Black's position is difficult.) 29. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  Black does not have much freedom for his pieces, but it is not easy for White to make serious progress.

**27.bxc4 ♜c5**



**28.♗f4!**

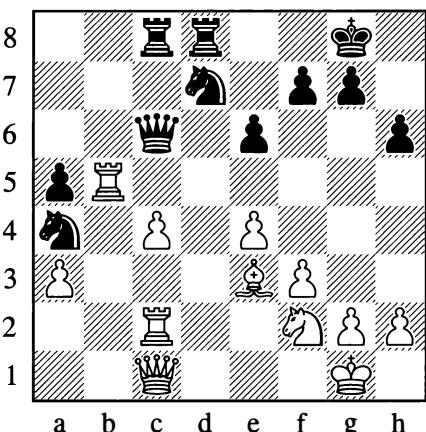
The bishop switches to a better diagonal, where it neutralizes Black's queenside play and leaves White a pawn up for nothing. The Swedish grandmaster may well have overlooked this idea when making his 26th move.

**28...♝a4 29.♝b3 ♜c6 30.♝e3 ♜dd8  
31.♝b5!**

Karpov is not only a pawn up but also has the more active pieces.

**31...♝d7**

31...♝a8 32.♝xh6! gxh6 33.♛xh6 wins.



**32.♝xa5**

White picks up a second pawn, and the game is as good as over.

**32...♝dc5 33.♛b1 ♚b7 34.♝b5 ♚d6  
35.♝b4 ♚c5**

**1–0**

In this hopeless position Andersson overstepped the time limit.

In Round 6 Karpov outplayed Hellers on the black side of a Vienna Game, then he won convincingly against Hector who ventured the dubious Hennig-Schara Gambit. A quick draw with Ftacnik was followed by a win over Van der Wiel and draws against Karlsson and Sax. Karpov's final score of 7½/11 was enough to share second place with Ehlvest, behind Seirawan who won the tournament by a full point.

Karpov's second and last tournament of the year before his championship match was an eight-player, double-round-robin event in Biel. For the first half of the tournament Karpov followed a pattern of winning with the white pieces and drawing as Black. His victims in rounds 1, 3 and 5 were Miles, Lautier and Polugaevsky respectively, and the opponents in the drawn games were Hort, Andersson and Wahls.

In Round 7 Karpov faced Nick De Firmian of the USA, who won his national championship in 1987, 1995 and 1998. De Firmian played ten games against the world champions, scoring two wins, three draws and five losses. Prior to this event he had drawn twice with Karpov, and after the final round of the present event the two players never clashed again.

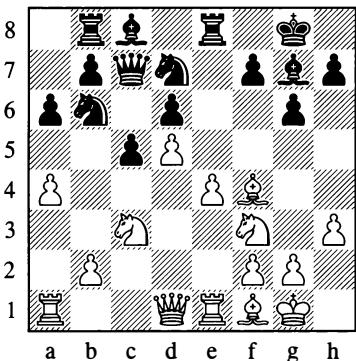
## Game 19

Anatoly Karpov – Nick De Firmian

Biel 1990

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6**

Earlier the same year Karpov played a fine game against the Benoni, until the endgame where he uncharacteristically allowed his opponent to escape from a losing position. 2...c5 3.d5 e6 4.♘c3 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 Timman was already behind in the match and he desperately needed to win, hence his somewhat risky choice of opening. 6.e4 g6 7.♘f3 ♜g7 8.♗d3 0–0 9.h3 a6 10.a4 ♜bd7 11.0–0 ♜c7 12.♗f1 ♜e8 13.♗e1 ♜b8 14.♗c4 ♜b6 15.♗f1 ♜fd7



16.a5 After developing in a healthy way Karpov pushes back the knight on the queenside. 16...♝a8 17.♘d2 b5 In order to release the grip Black must accept a weakening on the queenside. 18.axb6 ♜xb6 19.♗xa6 Karpov grabs the pawn at once. 19...♝xa6 20.♗xa6 ♜e5 21.♗e2 c4 22.♗xe5 ♜xe5 23.♗e3 ♜b7 24.♘a4 ♜xa4 25.♗xa4 c3 26.bxc3 ♜xc3 27.♘f3 Thanks to his strong play White obtained a winning advantage in Karpov – Timman, Kuala Lumpur (6) 1990.

**3.♘f3 c5**

The Benoni was a favourite opening of De Firmian.

**4.d5 exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.♘c3 g6 7.h3**

Karpov opts for a different line from the one he used against Timman.

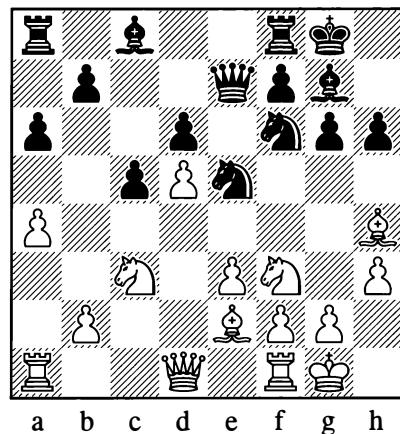
**7...a6 8.a4 ♜e7**

Preventing e4.

**9.♗g5**

According to the database this move was first played by Chernin in 1990. It shows that Karpov paid attention to the new moves his contemporaries played.

**9...♜bd7 10.e3 ♜g7 11.♗e2 0–0 12.0–0 h6 13.♗h4 ♜e5**



**14.♘d2**

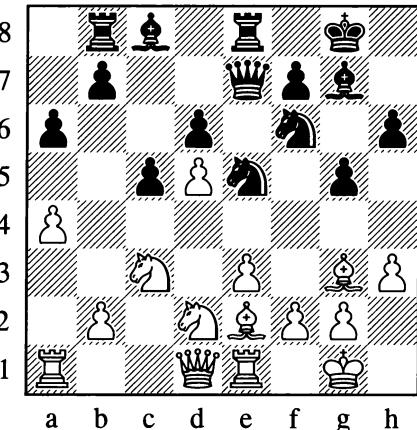
White often retreats the knight to this square voluntarily, but Karpov waited until his opponent threatened to exchange it.

**14...g5 15.♗g3 ♜e8**

Normally in this line Black either puts the other rook on e8, or refrains from putting either rook there. A common continuation is: 15...♝f5 16.a5 (16.e4 is also possible) 16...♜ae8 White has tried several moves here, but overall Black seems to be all right.

**16.♖e1 ♕b8?!**

The rook will have no function on the b-file, and Black soon feels the need to move it again. 16...♗f5 was better.

**17.a5 ♕f5 18.e4**

Karpov wins a tempo, and is unafraid of the e-pawn becoming a target.

**18...♗g6**

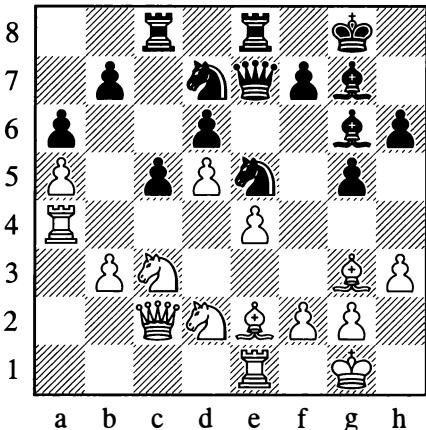
Keeping the bishop on the other diagonal with 18...♗d7 was insufficient to equalize: 19.♕c4 ♗xc4 (19...♗h7 20.♗b6) 20.♕xc4 The prospects of a breakthrough with e5 is very real.

**19.♗a4!**

With the black bishop far away on g6, the rook can use the a4-square without fear of harassment. From this square it reinforces the e4-pawn and inhibits the thematic ...c4. Note that defending the e4-pawn with 19.♕f1?! would be less desirable due to 19...♗h5!.

**19...♗fd7 20.♗c2 ♜bc8 21.b3**

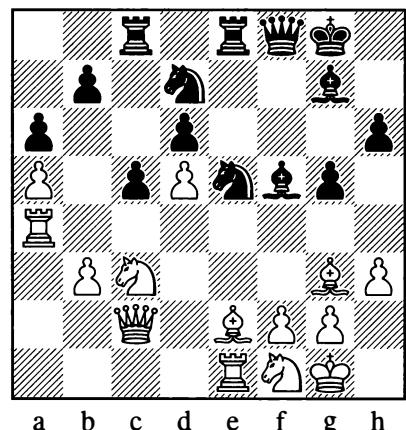
Karpov stops ...c4. In some positions White can consider ♔c4, intending to meet ...♗xc4 with bxc4, strengthening the centre and opening the b-file.

**21...♗f8**

It may have been worthwhile for Black to swallow his pride and admit his earlier error with 21...♗f8?!, for instance: 22.♗f1 f5 23.exf5 ♜xf5 24.♗d2 ♜ce8 25.f4 (25.♗e3 ♜g6 26.h4) 25...gxsf4 26.♗xf4 The position is unclear; Black stands better than in the game, as his major pieces have taken up good positions on the open files.

**22.♗f1 f5**

After 22...♗f6 23.♗e3 ♗h5 24.♗xh5 ♜xh5 25.♗f5 ♜g6 26.♗d2 White will play f4 and maintain an edge.

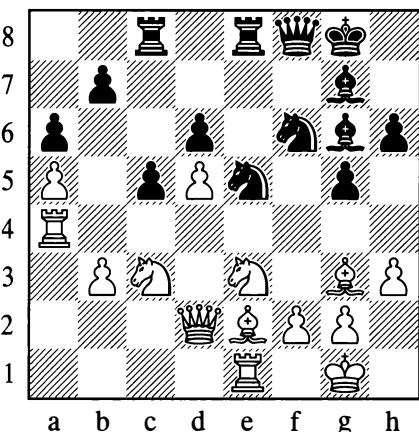
**23.exf5 ♜xf5**

**24.♗d2**

Karpov prepares to play on the kingside, where Black has one less pawn to protect his king.

**24...♝f6**

With 24...c4!? Black can sacrifice a pawn to improve the d7-knight: 25.bxc4 ♜c5 26.♗a3 (26.♗b4 ♜g6) 26...♝ed3 27.♗xd3 ♜xd3 28.♗e3 White keeps the advantage, but he does not enjoy the same attacking prospects as in the game.

**25.♗e3 ♜g6****26.f4!**

Karpov softens his opponent on the kingside.

**26...♝f7**

If 26...gxsf4 27.♗xf4 ♜c7 28.♗ef1 White has pressure on the f-file.

**27.♗f2**

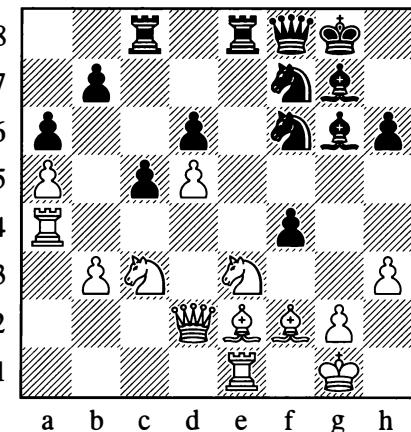
Defending the e3-knight is a useful precaution. More importantly, White sets up the idea of choking the g6-bishop with f5 followed by g4.

**27...gxsf4?**

De Firmian must have been worried about having his bishop locked away on h7, but

the present move does not combine well with Black's previous one – if Black is going to exchange on f4, then he should keep his strong knight on e5.

27...♜c7! looks best, as the rook can play both an active and a defensive role. 28.f5 (If White opts for piece play, the active Black rook proves useful: 28.♗d3 ♜xd3 29.♗xd3 ♜h5 30.fxg5 ♜xg5 31.♗f5 [31.♗e2 ♜ce7 32.♗g4 ♜f7 is playable for Black] 31...♝xe1† 32.♗xe1 ♜f7 Black's active pieces enable him to count on a reasonable game.) 28...♝h7 29.g4 (29.♗d1 ♜ce7) 29...♜ce7 30.♗g2 ♜d7 Black has some pressure on the e-file and three of his minor pieces are well-placed. These factors should more or less compensate for the dismal position of the h7-bishop.

**28.♗xf4**

Nine moves after its unusual development on the fourth rank, the rook swings to the kingside to spearhead White's attack.

**28...♜e7**

Breaking the pin looks natural, but Black will be left without enough pieces around his king.

A better chance was 28...♜c7! 29.♗f1 ♜e5 30.♗f5 ♜f7 31.♗e3 when White keeps some

advantage, but Black has better defensive chances than in the game.

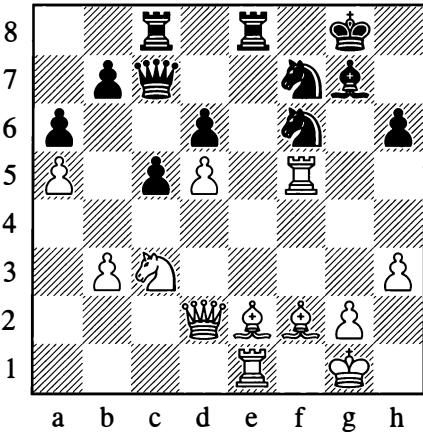
### 29.♕f5!

Karpov exchanges an important defensive piece.

### 29...♗xf5 30.♗xf5 ♕c7

The point of this move is not so much to take the a5-pawn, but rather to sidestep the potential pin from a bishop on h4.

30...♗f8 31.♗h4 (31.♗d3 ♔e5 32.♗c2 is also strong) 31...♔e4 32.♗xe4 ♕xh4 (32...♕xe4 33.♗g4) 33.♗f4 ♕d8 34.♗g4 ♕c7 35.♗e6  
White's attack is dangerous.



### 31.♗f4!

De Firmian's queen just deserted the kingside, which makes the arrival of Karpov's heavy artillery all the more effective.

### 31...♗h7

If 31...♕d8 32.♗h4 ♗g5 33.♗xg5 hxg5 34.♗xg5 Black loses a pawn while his kingside troubles remain.

### 32.♗e4!

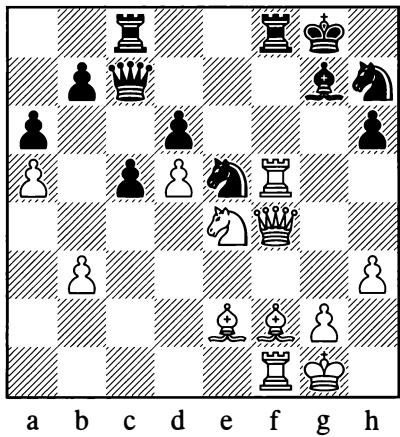
Karpov brings another piece into the attack.

### 32...♗e5

After 32...♗f8 33.♗g3 ♔e5 34.♗g4 Black is unlikely to last long.

### 33.♗f1 ♗f8

Black needs to watch the f6-square, for instance after 33...♕d7 34.♗h4! ♔h8 35.♗f6 White's attack should decide the game.



### 34.♗e1?!

Karpov has time to defend the a-pawn before proceeding with his attack. In some lines he may consider putting the bishop on c3, especially in conjunction with a ♗xd6 trick.

### 34...b5

Black is losing in all variations, for example:

34...♗xf5?! 35.♗xf5 ♗e8 36.♗h5 ♗e7 37.♗h4 wins.

34...♗cd8 35.♗c3 Black has no good defence against ♗xd6, for instance 35...♗h8 36.♗xd6 (36.♗g3 ♗de8) 36...♗xd6 37.♗xe5! ♗xe5 38.♗xe5† and White wins.

### 35.axb6

Although Karpov is winning on the kingside, he still takes the opportunity to draw the black queen further away, while also weakening Black's pawn structure.

**35... $\mathbb{W}xb6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}h1$**

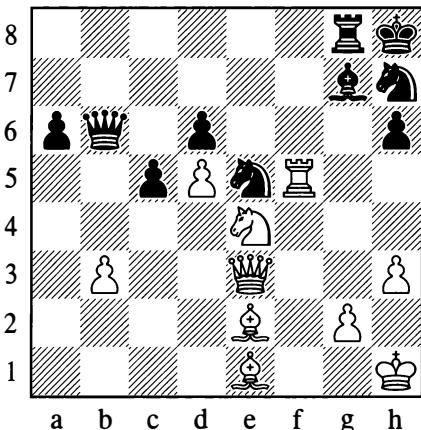
White has time to safeguard his king before commencing the final assault.

**36... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  37. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{E}xf5$**

If 37... $\mathbb{E}ce8$  38. $\mathbb{W}e3$  (38. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  is also strong)

38... $\mathbb{E}e7$  39. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$  White wins.

**38. $\mathbb{E}xf5$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  39. $\mathbb{W}e3$**



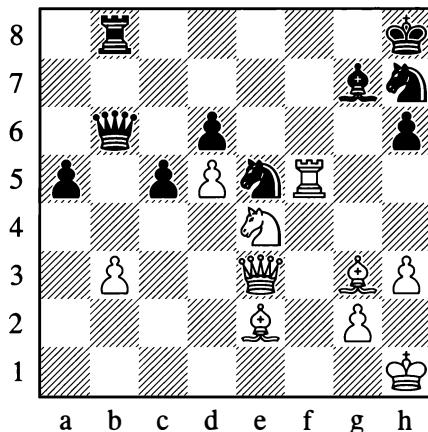
**39...a5**

The American grandmaster is short of time and defends against b4.

A slightly more resilient defence would have been 39... $\mathbb{E}f8$ , although White still wins with 40. $\mathbb{Q}h5!$  (Instead after 40. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  41.b4  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  Black is still breathing.) 40... $\mathbb{E}b8$  (40...a5 41. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $dxe5$  43.d6+–; 40... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xg7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f5+–$ ) 41. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c4 (41... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xd6+–$ ) 42. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}xb6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  Black's position collapses.

**40. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}b8?$**

Black blunders a pawn but his position was hopeless anyway, for instance 40... $\mathbb{E}e8$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  a4 42.bxa4  $\mathbb{W}b1\#$  43. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  45. $\mathbb{W}f3$  with a decisive advantage.



**41. $\mathbb{Q}xd6!$**

The d6-pawn has been a target for a long time. Finally it drops, and Black's whole position collapses.

**41... $\mathbb{W}xd6$  42. $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  43. $\mathbb{E}e6$**

**1–0**

Black decided not to prolong his suffering.

In the second half of the tournament Karpov slowed down and drew six consecutive games. Three of them ended in under twenty moves, and the other three were played out to the endgame. In the final round he scored a second win over De Firmian to finish with a score of 9½/14, a point and a half clear of Andersson who was second.

### World Championship Match versus Kasparov

The fifth and, as it turns out, last Karpov – Kasparov match was scheduled for the customary twenty four games, the first half of which took place in New York and the second in Lyon. Kasparov's team consisted of Zurab Azmaiparashvili, Sergey Dolmatov, Mikhail Gurevich, Giorgi Georgadze and Alexander Shakarov. Karpov was assisted by Ron Henley, Lajos Portisch, Andrei Kharitonov, Alexei Kuzmin, Mikhail Podgaets and Igor Zaitsev.

Kasparov performed exceptionally well in 1989, and by the time of the match his rating had reached the magical 2800 level, seventy points above Karpov. At twenty eight years of age he was coming into his prime, whereas Karpov was approaching forty. Many people expected Kasparov to demolish Karpov or at least beat him convincingly. Since their previous match the two titans had contested five games, from which Kasparov had scored two victories to Karpov's one, with two draws.

In the first game Kasparov played the Kings Indian; it seems to me that choosing such a combative opening showed a high level of confidence. Karpov chose the ambitious Sämisch variation, but did not achieve anything special and Kasparov drew without much difficulty. In Game 2 Karpov repeated the Zaitsev Variation which had brought him so much success against Hjartarson and Timman, but Kasparov was ready with an excellent novelty, and after some powerful follow-up play Karpov was demolished.

In Game 3 Kasparov went for another King's Indian, and it soon became clear that he was looking for a complicated fight as opposed to merely equalizing with the black pieces. As early as move 10 he sacrificed an exchange, and a few moves later he transitioned to a position with rook, bishop and pawn versus Karpov's queen. The idea was fully sound and in the end it was Karpov who had to fight for the eventual draw. In Game 4 Karpov tried a different method of handling the Zaitsev, and a wildly complicated middlegame ensued. Kasparov failed to make the most of his attacking chances, and Karpov obtained a winning position with four connected passed pawns on the queenside, but just before the time control he erred and allowed an instant perpetual.

In Game 5 Karpov once again failed to make any headway against the King's Indian, and

after an early queen exchange the game soon simplified to a level ending. In Game 6 Karpov temporarily abandoned the Zaitsev in favour of the 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  system, and obtained a fine position. But later he took a pawn in a way that allowed White to become very active, and in the end Karpov was fortunate to draw. Game 7 was another King's Indian. This time Karpov got a nice advantage and Kasparov blundered badly, allowing Karpov to win a pawn which he converted efficiently. The match was all-square.

In Game 8 Karpov stuck with the 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  line against the Ruy Lopez. Kasparov obtained a strong initiative, but misplayed the position and after some strong play Karpov emerged with the advantage. He was close to winning the endgame, but eventually Kasparov was able to cling on for a draw. Game 9 was the first Grünfeld of the match. The queens were exchanged early and Karpov kept a slight plus for most of the game. Towards the end he had a chance to obtain a significant advantage, but he faltered and dead drawn position ensued. In the next game Karpov surprised Kasparov by switching to the Petroff, and drew in just eighteen moves. In Game 11 Kasparov returned to the King's Indian, and played a nice exchange sacrifice which led to full compensation and a subsequent draw by perpetual. In Game 12 Karpov reverted back to the 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Ruy Lopez. Kasparov was ready with a new idea and obtained an edge, which subsequently disappeared as the position simplified. Thus at the halfway point the match was tied at 6–6, with one win apiece and eight draws.

## Lyon

The players received a long rest period of sixteen free days between games 12 and 13. Karpov was unable to achieve much in the next Grünfeld, and despite some minor inaccuracies on both

sides, neither player had any real winning chances and a draw was the natural outcome. In his first white game of the Lyon part of the match, Kasparov showed that he had been hard at work during the break as he unveiled a surprise opening, the Scotch. Karpov did not shy away from complications, and a sharp position with opposite-sided castling ensued. Neither player could gain the upper hand, and the game was eventually drawn.

Game 15 was another Grünfeld with an early queen exchange. Karpov was able to gain control but failed to make the most of his chances and the players agreed a draw for the eighth consecutive time. In Game 16 Karpov tried a different line against the Scotch, but his new idea was not particularly impressive and he soon had to sacrifice a pawn for insufficient compensation. Kasparov did not convert his advantage in the most efficient way – perhaps he was affected by the tension of the match. However, he eventually succeeded in breaking Karpov's fortress on the 102nd move.

Trailing by one point, with eight games remaining, Karpov needed to strike back. He was able to do it in the very next game.

## Game 20

Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov

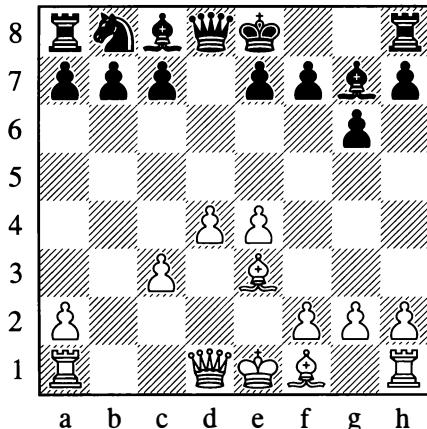
New York/Lyon (17) 1990

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5**

Kasparov sticks with the opening that has so far brought him three draws out of three in the present match.

**4.cxd5 ♜xd5 5.e4 ♜xc3 6.bxc3 ♜g7 7.♗e3**

Karpov prepared this variation specially for the match – he had never used it previously. He continued to use it until 1993, scoring a total of five wins, three draws and one loss.



7...c5 8.♗d2 0–0

The first time the players reached this position, Kasparov exchanged in the centre without delay: 8...cxd4 9.cxd4 ♜c6 10.♗d1 ♜a5 11.♗xa5 ♜xa5 12.♗f3 0–0 13.♗e2 ♜d7 14.♗d2 b6 15.0–0 ♜fd8 16.♗c1 ♜g4 17.d5 White was slightly better but in the end Black was able to hold, Karpov – Kasparov, New York/Lyon (9) 1990.

Karpov subsequently faced 8...♜a5 three times; he beat Timman twice but lost to Kamsky.

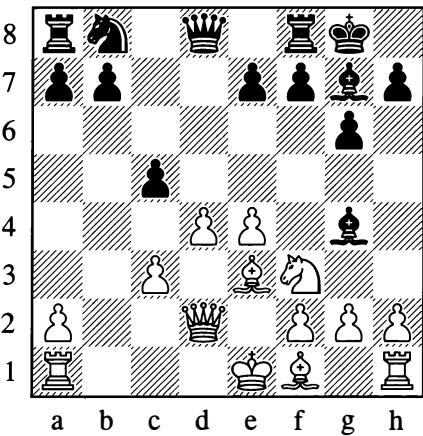
**9.♗f3 ♜g4**

Kasparov tries to undermine the d4-square. The position after 9...♜a5 10.♗c1 e6 occurred in two previous games in the match:

11.d5?! This ambitious move is somewhat premature. 11...exd5 12.exd5 ♜e8 13.♗e2 ♜f5 14.0–0 ♜d7 15.h3 ♜b6 (15...♝f6! was stronger.) 16.g4 ♜d7 17.c4 ♜xd2 18.♝xd2 ♜a4 The position is roughly equal and the game eventually ended in a draw, Karpov – Kasparov, New York/Lyon (13) 1990.

Two games later Karpov showed a much better way to handle the position: 11.♗h6 ♜c6 12.h4 cxd4 13.♗xg7 ♜xg7 14.cxd4 ♜xd2† 15.♗xd2 ♜d8 16.♗e3 The king is ideally placed here. 16...♝d7 17.♗b1 ♜ab8 18.♗d3 ♜e7?! 19.h5

f6 20.hxg6 hxg6 21. $\mathbb{E}h2$  White obtained a promising attack but failed to make the most of his chances and eventually drew, Karpov – Kasparov, New York/Lyon (15) 1990.



### 10... $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

Karpov finds a nice way to safeguard the knight from being exchanged. It was a new idea at the time, and has since been repeated in several dozen games.

### 10...cxd4

10...h6 11.h3 is not helping Black.

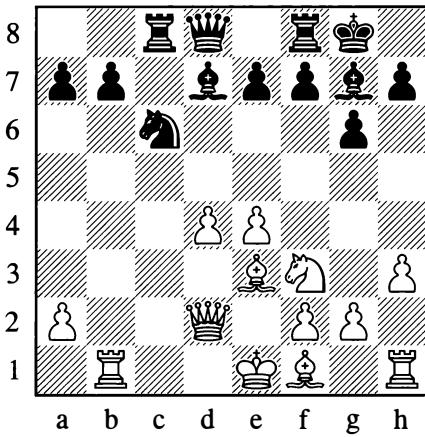
### 11.cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 12.h3 $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Black cannot really take the pawn: 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ?! 13. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  14. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  15.hxg6  $\mathbb{Q}c2\uparrow$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa1$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  Black faces a depressing endgame.

The other capture is even worse: 12... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ?! 13.hxg6  $\mathbb{E}c8$  14. $\mathbb{E}d1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}c2\uparrow$  (14... $\mathbb{E}c1$  15. $\mathbb{W}b4$ ) 15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White has a large advantage, as pointed out by Mikhail Gurevich.

### 13. $\mathbb{E}b1$ $\mathbb{E}c8$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Taking the pawn would have been a dreadful mistake: 14. $\mathbb{E}xb7$ ?!  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}c1\uparrow$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}d1\uparrow$ ! 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4\uparrow$  Black wins the queen.



### 14... $\mathbb{Q}a5$

Since Karpov's novelty on move 10, both sides have played naturally, and most subsequent games have proceeded in the same fashion.

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  is another option, leading to some subtle differences.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Black had scored fairly well with 15... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ , eliminating one of the enemy bishops. 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  17.0–0 b5 From this position 18. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  is fine for Black, but 18. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ ? deserves attention.

### 16.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}c4$

If 16... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ?! 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  18. $\mathbb{E}fc1$  White is a bit better.

### 17. $\mathbb{E}fd1$

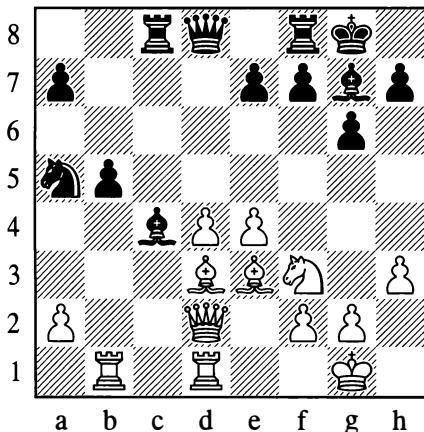
Karpov supports his d-pawn, with a view to advancing it later.

### 17...b5

This move was condemned by some commentators, but in my opinion the real mistakes occurred later.

If 17...e6 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ! is somewhat unpleasant.

17... $b6$  has been played a few times, and is probably the safest continuation. Play may continue 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (other options include 18.d5 and 18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19. $\mathbb{E}bc1$ ) 18... $\mathbb{W}d7$  19. $\mathbb{E}bc1$  with approximate equality.



18. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$

Karpov forces Kasparov to keep an eye on the e7-pawn.

18... $a6$  19. $\mathbb{E}bc1$

Taking the pawn would squander White's small advantage: 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe7?$ !  $\mathbb{W}xe7$  20. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{E}xd3$  21. $\mathbb{E}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  Black regains the pawn and the endgame is equal.

19... $\mathbb{E}xd3$

In the event of the natural 19... $\mathbb{E}e8$ , Karpov may have been tempted to keep his light-squared bishop with 20. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ . It keeps the game more complex, which Kasparov may not have wanted due to the standing of the match.

20. $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  21. $\mathbb{E}xd3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$ ?

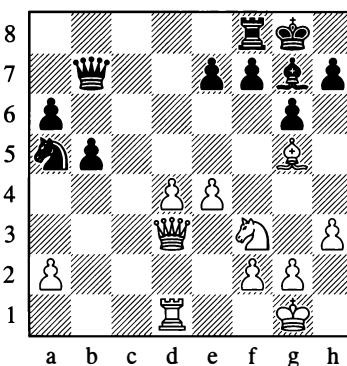
The rook is misplaced here. A sounder alternative was:

21... $\mathbb{W}b7$

From this square the queen can defend both the a6- and the e7-pawns.

Instead 21... $\mathbb{W}d7$ ?! 22. $\mathbb{W}a3$  is strong as Zaitsev pointed out.

However, the active 21... $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ! was worth considering, for instance: 22. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  (22. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ ) 22... $\mathbb{E}e8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  24. $\mathbb{W}xa3$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  25.d5  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black is not worse.



22. $\mathbb{E}b1$

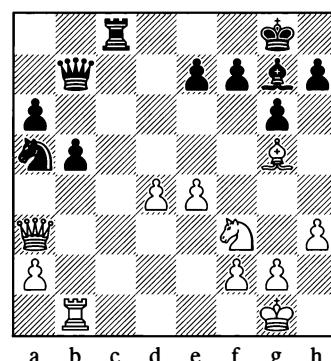
22.a4  $\mathbb{W}xa4$  is nothing special for White.

22. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  23.a4 e6 Black should be safe. Finally, if 22. $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  23. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  Black wins back the pawn with a good position.

22... $\mathbb{E}c8$ !

It is too early to insert 22...h6?! as 23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ! is strong.

23. $\mathbb{W}a3$



23...h6!

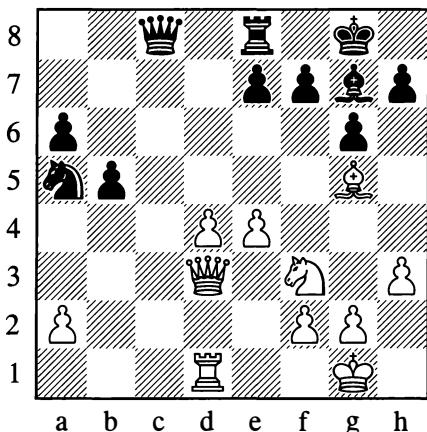
After 23... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  24. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  27.a4! Black loses a pawn.

24. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

24. $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{H}xg5$  25.e5  $\mathbb{E}c4$  26.a4 b4 The position is a bit irregular, but Black should be all right.

24... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  25. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
 $\mathbb{E}xe4$  28.a4 bxa4

Black can hold this ending.



22. $\mathbb{E}c1!$

Naturally Karpov occupies the open file.

22... $\mathbb{W}b7$

Kasparov chooses to keep both of his vulnerable pawns defended. 22... $\mathbb{W}d7$  was possible, although after 23. $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  24. $\mathbb{W}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  26. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  27. $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black faces a difficult endgame.

23.d5

Karpov gains space, fixes the e7-pawn and secures control over the c6-square.

23... $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Kasparov hopes to cover the c-file, but it seems he overlooked a nice little tactic.

23...h6

This was worth considering, but it also fails to solve Black's problems.

24. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  g5

Compared with the game continuation, taking on d2 would cost Black a tempo due to the attack on the h6-pawn.

25...e5 gives White a choice: 26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  (After 26.dxe6?!  $\mathbb{E}xe6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xe4!$  Black is

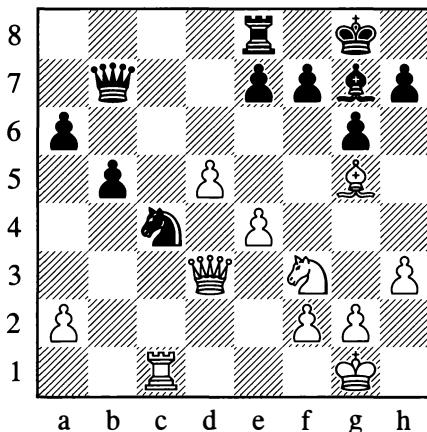
okay; 26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !?,  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  27. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  White is better as the knight will be strong on c6.) 26... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  27. $\mathbb{W}xd2$  b4 (if 27... $\mathbb{E}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xc8\#$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  29.d6 Black is close to losing) 28. $\mathbb{E}c6$  a5 29. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Black is in trouble.

26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$

26... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  is difficult for Black.

27. $\mathbb{E}c7!$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xd2$

White keeps some advantage thanks to the powerful rook on the seventh rank.



24. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

Karpov wants to exchange Black's best piece and opens the c-file to invade.

24... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$

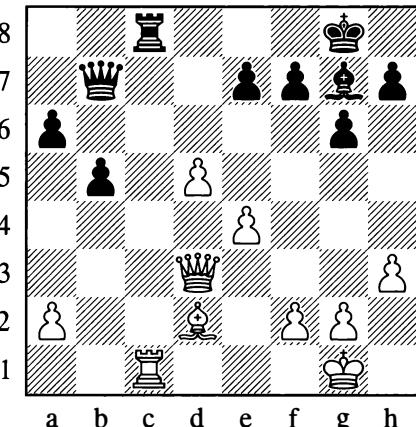
24...h6 25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  transposes to the note to Black's previous move.

If 24... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  25. $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  26. $\mathbb{W}c2$  White can keep up the pressure.

Mikhail Gurevich mentions the reasonable 24... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ !, although here too White can take advantage of his control over the c-file. 25. $\mathbb{W}d7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  f5 27.f4  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  30.dxc6  $\mathbb{E}c8$  31.c7 White keeps a clear advantage.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$

25...b4 26.♗c6 a5 27.♔a6 is strong.



### 26.♗c6!

Kasparov apparently missed this tactical finesse.

### 26...♗e5

If 26...♗xc6 27.dxc6 ♘c7 (27...♘xc6? 28.♗d8† wins) 28.♗d7 ♗e5 29.♗h6! ♘xd7 30.cxd7 ♗c7 31.e5! White cages in Black's king and wins by walking his king to the queenside.

### 27.♗c3!

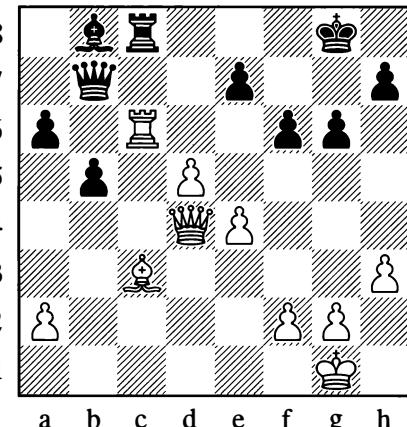
Karpov increases his domination of the c-file.

### 27...♗b8

If 27...♗xc6? 28.dxc6 ♘c7 29.♗xe5 ♘xe5 30.♗d8† ♗g7 31.c7 ♘a1† 32.♗h2 ♘e5† 33.g3 ♘b2 34.♗g2 Black has no perpetual.

Perhaps Black should have considered 27...♗xc3 28.♗xc3 ♘xc6 29.dxc6 (If 29.♗xc6 ♘a7 30.e5 ♘d4 Black becomes active.) 29...♘c7 30.e5 when he faces a dismal and passive endgame, but nevertheless keeps some chances to survive. When Kasparov gets a bad position he generally avoids such scenarios in favour of keeping more pieces on the board, in the hope of drumming up counterplay.

### 28.♗d4! f6



### 29.♗a5!

With this subtle positional move, White increases his possibilities on the c-file.

### 29...♗d6 30.♗c3

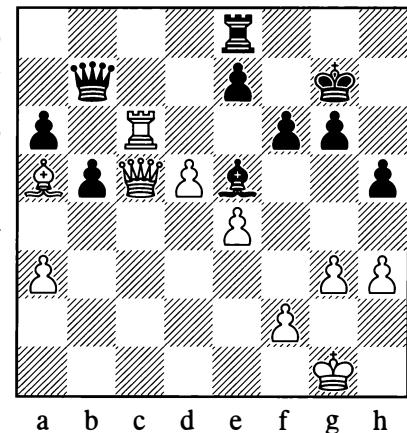
Karpov could have won a pawn with 30.♗b6, but after 30...♗a8 (30...♗b8 31.♗xb7 ♘xb7 32.♗xa6) 31.♗xc8† ♘xc8 32.♗c6 ♘f8 33.♗xa6 ♘h6 Black gets some play.

### 30...♗e8 31.a3!

Karpov fixes the queenside without fearing the bishop on d6.

### 31...♗g7 32.g3 ♗e5 33.♗c5 h5?

Repelling the queen with 33...♗d6 was better, although after 34.♗c1 White still has excellent winning chances.



**34.♕c7!**

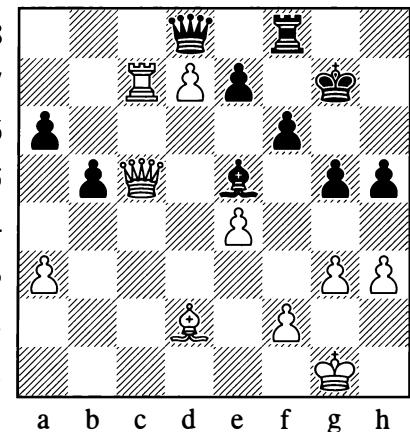
Karpov wins control over the c7-square and prepares the final invasion.

**34...♚a1 35.♕f4 ♜d7 36.♕c7**

Black could have resigned here, but he struggles on for a few more moves.

**36...♜d8 37.d6 g5 38.d7 ♜f8 39.♕d2**

This is not the only solution, but it is one of the cleanest. Karpov prevents ...♜a5 to avoid giving Black the tiniest hint of counterplay.

**39...♝e5****40.♝b7**

**1-0**

The finish might have been 40...h4 (40...♝g6 41.♛a7+) 41.♝a5! ♜xa5 42.♝xe7† ♜g6 (42...♝f7 43.♝xf7†+) 43.♝h7†! Karpov must have enjoyed demonstrating his analysis; he played so well in the earlier part of the game so he earned it. 43...♝xh7 44.d8=♛† The reincarnated queen seals Black's fate.

With this win Karpov equalized the score, but Kasparov struck back in the very next game, a Ruy Lopez. Karpov played the 9...♝d7 system in one game too many, and Kasparov obtained a large advantage straight from the opening. Karpov resisted for a long time,

but eventually found himself in a hopeless endgame which Kasparov duly converted. In Game 19 Kasparov switched back to the King's Indian and gradually outplayed Karpov in a semi-blocked position. Then on move 39, in a clearly better position, he mysteriously offered a draw which Karpov gladly accepted.

In Game 20 Karpov returned to the Zaitsev, and a wildly complicated middlegame ensued. Unfortunately for him the gamble did not pay off, and Kasparov won with a violent kingside attack. With this victory he took an 11–9 lead with four games remaining. Karpov desperately needed to win the next game, and he almost managed it on the white side of a Sämisch King's Indian, but Kasparov narrowly escaped with a draw after surviving a difficult endgame. In Game 22 Kasparov deviated from the previous game in the Zaitsev, but his idea was unsuccessful and he had to struggle to draw. Nevertheless he did it and thus reached the magic score of twelve points, which meant that he would retain his title. However, there was still the matter of the prize fund: the winner of the match would receive 5/8 of the \$3,000,000 prize fund, whereas a draw would result in a 50/50 split. Money aside, there was also a tremendous amount of pride at stake, and in the next game Karpov showed that even without the possibility of winning the title he would still fight until the bitter end.

**Game 21**

Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov

New York/Lyon (23) 1990

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6**

After losing with the Grünfeld in Game 17, Kasparov returned to the King's Indian and stuck with it until the end of the match.

**5.f3**

The Sämisch was Karpov's most frequent choice against the King's Indian. He lost only one game with it (courtesy of a magical performance by Kasparov at Linares 1993) but won fourteen and drew seven.

### 5...0–0 6.♗e3 e5

Kasparov always played this move against Karpov. The latter did well against the 6...♝c6 variation, dropping just half a point from four games.

### 7.d5

In 1993 Karpov used 7.♗ge2 to beat Kamsky and Dolmatov, but came unstuck against Kasparov.

### 7...♝h5

In their next Sämisch battle in Reggio Emilia 1991/92, Kasparov opted for 7...c6. That double-edged encounter ended in a draw, but for most of the game Karpov was fighting to survive.

### 8.♗d2 ♜h4†

Kasparov deviates from Game 21, which continued: 8...f5 9.0–0–0 a6 10.♗d3 c5 11.dxc6 ♜xc6 12.♗d5 ♜e6 13.♗b6 ♜d7 14.♗e2 ♜ac8 15.♗b1 ♜f7 16.♗he1 In this complex position White's chances are somewhat higher, Karpov – Kasparov, New York/Lyon (21) 1990.

### 9.g3 ♜e7?!

Kasparov plays a very rare move, which may have been inspired by Akopian who tried it earlier the same year. The idea is rather risky, but having already defended his title, Kasparov may have wanted to make a statement by demolishing Karpov by a heavy score line.

Karpov was among the trailblazers in the 9...♝xg3 variation which leads to an unusual material balance. Here is one of his early games with it: 10.♗f2 ♜xf1 11.♗xh4 ♜xe3 12.♗e2

♝xc4 13.♗c1 ♜a6 14.♗d1 ♜b6 15.♗h3 ♜d7 16.♗e3 f6 17.♗hg1 ♜ad8?! 18.b3 c6 19.dxc6 bxc6? 20.♗f5! gxf5 21.♗xg7† ♜xg7 22.♗g1† White obtained an excellent position and went on to win, Karpov – Velimirovic, Skopje 1976.

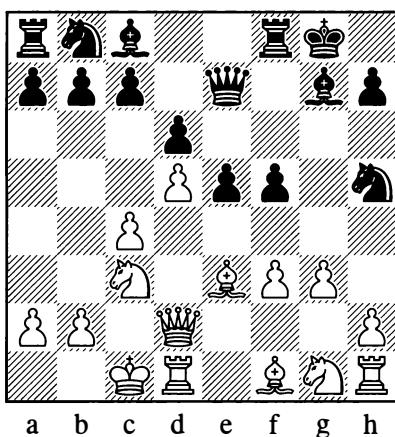
### 10.0–0–0

Naturally Karpov has no interest in the dubious pawn grab 10.g4?! ♜f4 11.♗xf4? (11.♗ge2 is better) 11...exf4 12.♗xf4, especially when facing such a formidable attacking player.

### 10...f5 11.exf5!

Karpov's strategy is to gain control over the e4-square, and this is the first step on the way.

### 11...gx5



### 12.♗h3?!

Karpov unveils a good novelty. The knight is useful in a number of ways: it discourages Black from playing ...f4, supports a possible advance of the f3-pawn to f4, and also prepares the plan of ♜f2 and g4 as seen in the game.

A previous game continued 12.♗d3 a5 13.♗ge2 ♜a6 14.f4 ♜d7 15.fxe5 dxe5 16.♗hf1 with some advantage for White, Vyzhmanavin – Akopian, Lvov 1990. Kasparov had surely prepared an improvement over that game.

**12...Qa6**

If 12...f4? 13.gxf4 Qxh3 14.Qxh3 Qxf4 (14...exf4 15.Qd4) 15.Qxf4 (15.Qg4 is also strong) 15...Qxf4 16.Qdg1 White gets strong play on the g-file.

**13.Qg1!**

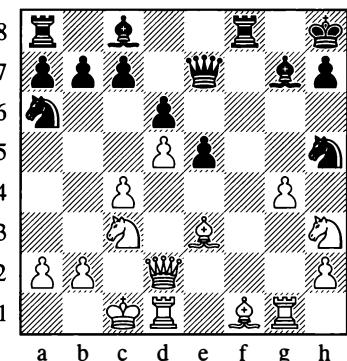
Karpov prepares to play g4, in order to fight for the crucial e4-square. If he can achieve that goal he will have a good chance of condemning Black's prized "King's Indian bishop" to a grim defensive role.

**13...Qf6!**

Kasparov brings the knight back from the edge of the board to inhibit the g4-push. Allowing it was rather unappealing for Black.

13...Qc5 14.g4 fxe4 15.fxe4 Qf4 16.Qxf4 exf4 17.Qxf4 Qxc3 18.bxc3 Qd7 (18...Qe4 19.Qe3) 19.Qe1 Wh4 20.Qg5 Wf2 21.Qe3  
Black runs out of play for the sacrificed pawn.

13...Qh8 14.g4! fxe4 (14...Qf6 15.gxf5 Qxf5 16.Qg5 White achieved his objective and controls the e4-square; Black's best chance is probably to keep the position closed with 14...f4, but after 15.Qf2 Qf6 16.Qd3 White controls the e4-square and the game.) 15.fxe4



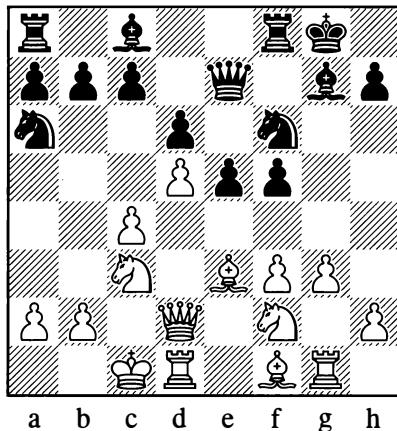
15...Qf6 (After 15...Qf4 16.Qxf4 exf4 17.Qxf4 Black has no play for the pawn.) 16.Qf2  
Black has serious positional difficulties. White

controls the e4-square and will soon launch a kingside attack.

**14.Qf2**

Karpov brings the knight into position to support the advance of the g-pawn.

14.Qd3?! Karpov mistakenly gave this move a double question mark in his analysis. It is true that Black can win a piece, but White gets massive compensation for it: 14...f4 15.gxf4 Qxh3 16.fxe5! dx5 (16...Wxe5 17.Qh6 Qf7 18.Qg5 White regains the piece with a winning position.) 17.Qg3 Qd7 18.Qh6 Qf7 19.Qdg1 Qe8 20.Qxg7 Qxg7 21.Qh6 Black is dead lost.

**14...Qh8?!**

This king move is not especially helpful to Black.

**14...Qd7**

This was a more purposeful move, intending to centralize the queen's rook.

**15.Qe2**

The ambitious 15.Qd3?! is also interesting, for instance: 15...Qae8 16.Qde1 Wf7 17.g4! f4 (17...e4 18.g5! exd3 19.gxf6 Wxf6 20.Qxd3 Qh8 21.Qf4 Black is in trouble) 18.Qxa7 Ra8 19.g5 Qh5 20.Qxh7+ Qh8 21.Qb5 Even if Black manages to win the

misplaced bishop on a7, White will still have excellent play.

15... $\mathbb{B}ae8$  16. $\mathbb{B}g5$

16.g4! f4 17. $\mathbb{B}xa7$  b6 traps the bishop. However, White could consider switching plans with 16. $\mathbb{B}de1!$ ?  $\mathbb{W}f7$  17.f4 when his central pressure gives him at least a slight plus.

16... $\mathbb{W}f7$  17. $\mathbb{B}df1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  18.g4 fxe4 19.fxg4  $\mathbb{W}g6$  20.h3

White's position is preferable, but Black's problems are less severe than in the game.

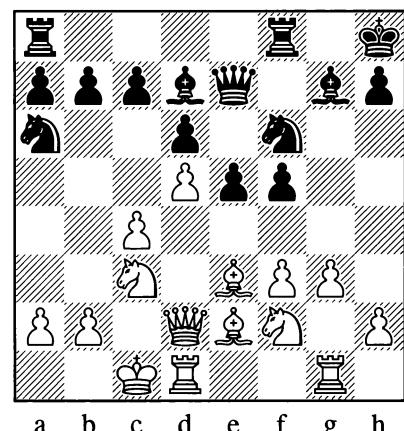
**15. $\mathbb{B}e2$**

With this seemingly modest move Karpov prepares to play g4.

15. $\mathbb{B}d3$  was a good alternative, for instance: 15... $\mathbb{B}d7$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  16. $\mathbb{B}c2$  a5 17.g4 f4 18. $\mathbb{B}xc5$  dxc5 19. $\mathbb{W}d3\pm$ ) 16. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}ae8$  17. $\mathbb{B}b1$  White's advantage is similar to the one Karpov obtains in the game.

**15... $\mathbb{B}d7$**

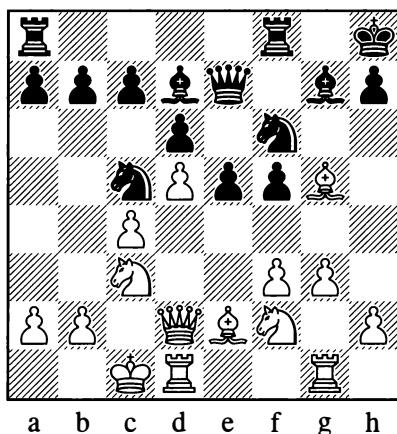
Centralizing the knight at once would encourage the advance of White's g-pawn: 15... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ?! 16.g4! f4 17. $\mathbb{B}xc5$  dxc5 18. $\mathbb{B}d3$  White has a big advantage, as pointed out by Karpov.



**16. $\mathbb{B}g5!$**

Karpov makes one more preparatory move before playing g4. He could have done it immediately, but in view of Kasparov's tremendous abilities in dynamic positions, it was a sensible idea to minimize any possible chances for his opponent to sparkle.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}c5$**



**17.g4!**

Karpov carries out his plan to gain control over the e4-square. His advantage is clear.

**17...e4**

Kasparov tries to complicate the game by opening the long diagonal for his prized bishop. It fails to achieve the desired effect, but the alternatives would also have led to a bleak situation for Black.

17...fxg4 18.fxg4 a6 19. $\mathbb{B}e3$  White will soon launch an attack with h4 and g5, and his knights will obtain the use of the e4-square.

17...a5 18.h4 (18.gxf5  $\mathbb{B}xf5$  19. $\mathbb{B}d3$  [19. $\mathbb{B}fe4$ ?!] 19... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  20. $\mathbb{W}e3$  is also good) 18...f4 19. $\mathbb{B}fe4$  White dominates the game.

17...f4 may have offered the most resistance, but after 18. $\mathbb{W}c2$  a5 19. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  20. $\mathbb{B}h4$  Black has a depressing position with no

counterplay – a nightmare scenario, especially for a dynamic player like Kasparov.

### **18.♗xe4 ♗xe4 19.♕e3!**

Karpov blocks the e-pawn and more importantly frees the path of his g-pawn.

### **19...♝a4 20.g5!**

Karpov does not mind incurring a doubling of his queenside pawns, as White is streets ahead in the attacking race, and the enemy pieces are a long way from his king.

### **20.♘xa4**

This simple move also leads to a large advantage for White.

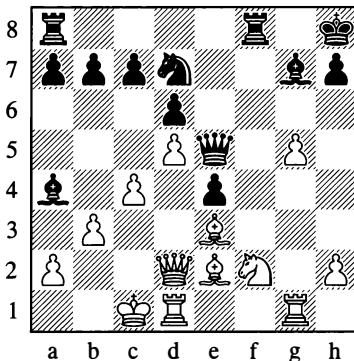
### **20...♞xa4 21.g5!**

After 21.♗d1 ♛d7 Black is not in immediate danger.

### **21...♝d7**

21...♝g8 22.♗df1±

### **22.b3 ♕e5**



### **23.♗d4!**

Karpov misses this strong move in his *Chess Informant* analysis.

23.♗c2? ♘xf2 24.♗xf2 ♘f4†! (24...e3? loses to 25.♕e1! – but not 25.♗g3? ♘a1† 26.♗b1 ♘c3† leading to a perpetual, which was the only line mentioned by Karpov.) 25.♗b1 ♘xf2 Black even takes over the initiative.

### **23...♝e8**

23...♝xd4 24.♗xd4! wins for White.

### **24.♗xe4**

White picks up a pawn and keeps good prospects on the kingside.

### **24...♝c5**

If 24...♝xf2 25.♗xe8† ♘xe8 26.♗xf2 ♘xe2 27.♗d2 White should win the endgame.

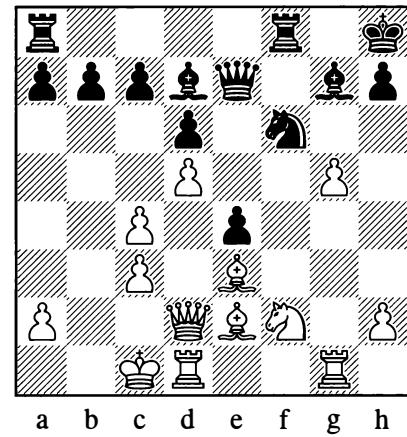
### **25.♗xc5??**

White can also play the simple 25.♗xe8 ♘axe8 26.♗d2 with a clear extra pawn in the endgame.

### **25...dxc5 26.♗d3 ♘h5 27.♗g2**

White's knight will go to e4 next. He keeps a clear advantage, although Black's strong dark-squared bishop gives him some chances to resist.

### **20...♝xc3 21.bxc3**



### **21...♝g8?!**

Kasparov probably wanted to have a chance to use the f8-rook in the attack, but it never happens. The problem with the text move is that Black's king is trapped in the corner.

### **21...♝e8**

This was a better chance. Black keeps an escape square for his king and defends the d6-pawn, which might be useful if the queenside opens up. Nevertheless Black is in huge trouble here as well.

### **22.h4!**

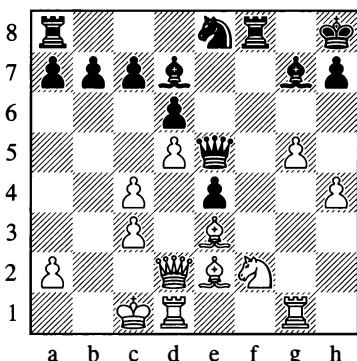
This direct attacking move is the strongest. After 22... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  c5 23.h4 White's advantage is clear, but not necessarily decisive yet.

22... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  c5 23. $\mathbb{W}c2$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  Black is still breathing thanks to his queenside counterplay.) 23... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  b5 26. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White should be winning here too, but the main line seems clearest.

22... $\mathbb{W}e5$

22...b5 23.cxb5  $\mathbb{B}b8$  24.a4 a6 25.bxa6  $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  wins.

22...c5 23.h5  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  24.h6  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  b5 26. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  also gives Black little chance to survive.



23. $\mathbb{Q}df1!$

White does not have to defend the c3-pawn, and should instead concentrate on blasting through the enemy kingside.

Karpov only analyses 23. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  e3 (23... $\mathbb{W}f4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ ) 24. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3\uparrow$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  when White keeps the advantage, but Black is still alive.

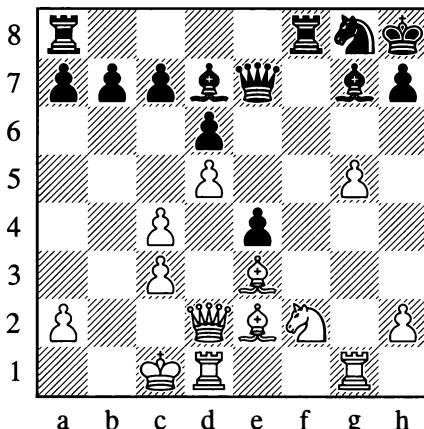
23...c5

23... $\mathbb{W}xc3\uparrow$  24. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  26.h5 Black has no good defence against h6.

23... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  24.h5  $\mathbb{W}xc3\uparrow$  25. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  also wins.

24.h5  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  25.h6  $\mathbb{W}xc3\uparrow$  26. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f6$

White is winning.



22. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Preventing ... $\mathbb{W}e5$ . When reading Karpov's annotations to this game, one gets the impression he wanted to suggest that he had found the one correct path through a labyrinth. The twelfth World Champion is justifiably revered for the quality of play, rather than that of his published analysis.

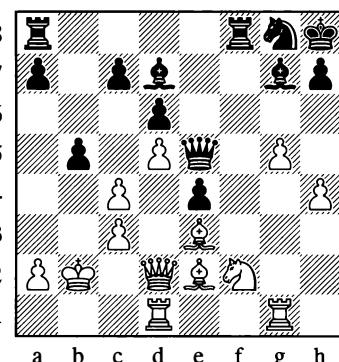
22.h4!

This direct attacking move was also good enough to secure White's victory.

22... $\mathbb{W}e5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}b2$

23. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ? is less accurate, although it can lead to some interesting variations: 23...e3?! (This was the only move mentioned by Karpov, but 23... $\mathbb{W}f4$  is safer.) 24. $\mathbb{W}d3$ ! Karpov failed to mention this move. (After 24. $\mathbb{W}xe3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3\uparrow$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}ae8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3\uparrow$  Black is better, as Karpov pointed out.) 24... $\mathbb{W}e7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{B}ae8$  White is somewhat better.

23...b5



Karpov ends his analysis here, concluding that Black has some initiative. However, a closer inspection reveals that White has a huge advantage.

**24.cxb5**

24.♕g4 ♜xg4 25.♗xg4 bxc4 26.♗d4 is also powerful.

**24...♝ab8 25.♕g4 ♛e8 26.a4 a6 27.♗d4**

Black is busted.

**22...c5?!**

This leads to a further deterioration of Black's position; it was clearly not Kasparov's day. He probably lost faith in his position and could not summon the motivation to find the most accurate way to lose.

**22...♝ac8** puts more force behind Black's queenside play, despite being a bit slow. 23.h4 c6 (23...♜e8 24.♗f2 c6 25.♗g4 ♜c7 26.♗e6 White's advantage is clear.) 24.h5 cxd5 25.h6 ♜e5 26.♗xe5 dxe5 27.♝xd5 ♜a4 28.♝d2 Black does not have enough play against White's king.

**23.dxc6 ♜xc6**

23...bxc6 24.♝xd6 wins.

**24.h4!**

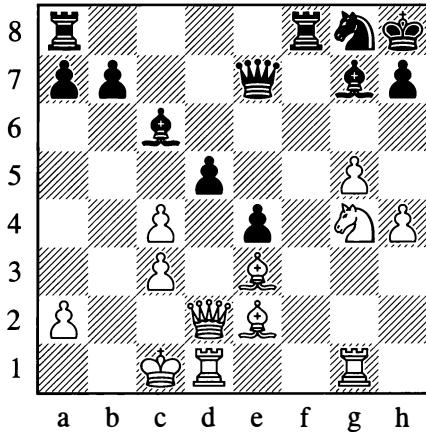
Now Karpov threatens to destroy Black's kingside with h5 followed by h6 or g6.

**24...d5?!**

This desperate pawn sacrifice hastens the end, but Black's fate was already close to being sealed.

**24...♝ad8 25.h5 b6 (25...d5 26.h6 wins the bishop.) 26.g6! hxg6 27.hxg6** Black will soon be mated on the h-file.

**24...♞c7?!** Improving the knight looks like the best chance. Nevertheless after 25.h5 ♜e7 26.h6 ♜e5 27.♗xe5 dxe5 28.♗c5 ♜f7 29.♗d6 White has a huge advantage.



**25.cxd5!**

Karpov has correctly judged that Black has insufficient firepower to hurt his king.

**25.h5!?** ♛a3† 26.♔b1 ♛xc3 (26...♜xc3 27.♗d4†) 27.♛xc3 ♜xc3 28.cxd5 ♜d7 29.♝c1 wins as well.

**25...♝xd5**

The sacrifice is unsound but other continuations were equally hopeless, for instance 25...♝ad8 26.d6 or 25...♛a3† 26.♛b2.

**26.♛xd5 ♜ac8**

No better is 26...♛a3† 27.♔b1 ♛xc3 28.♗d4+–.

**27.♛d6 ♜xc3† 28.♔b1 ♛f7 29.♗d4**

**1–0**

The g7-bishop will shortly be exchanged, and Kasparov saw no point in fighting on. The World Champion was not at his best, nevertheless Karpov's play was strong and instructive.

With this win Karpov maintained his hopes to tie the match and obtain an equal share of the prize fund, but defeating Kasparov with the black pieces was an almost impossible task if the champion adopted a risk-free approach to the game. Sure enough, Kasparov opened

with  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  and obtained a slight plus in a quiet opening. Karpov tried to complicate the game but made some mistakes. Kasparov obtained a winning position but offered a draw to secure the match, and Karpov accepted.

The final result once again showed that Kasparov was the worthy champion, although the match was always competitive and Karpov left no doubt that he was still an enormously strong player. Kasparov once again dominated the opening battles. He took a risk by preparing only 1.e4, but it turned out to be a good decision as he won four games with it without suffering a loss. Karpov scored one win against the Grünfeld with three draws, which was not a bad ratio. In his remaining white games he scored two wins against the King's Indian, but this was nothing special considering that one of them was the result of a blunder (admittedly in a clearly worse position) from Kasparov, and the other occurred after Kasparov had retained his title.

\*\*\*

1990 turned out to be the final year in which Karpov and Kasparov would clash for the world title. Over the course of their epic rivalry, these two titans faced each other a total of 144 times in five matches over a seven-year period (not including tournaments). There had never been a rivalry like it in the chess world, and maybe there never will be again. Botvinnik and Smyslov played three world championship matches, but even this was not really comparable.

Over the course of the five matches Kasparov scored twenty one wins to Karpov's nineteen, with 104 draws. Kasparov has a plus score in the games lasting more than forty moves, having won fifteen times versus Karpov's thirteen. This apparently surprising fact can be explained by the fact that when Karpov had a lost position he would often wait until the adjournment before resigning. Out of the games lasting more than forty five moves, each player scored six wins.

The match results leave no doubt as to who was the stronger player. Nevertheless every match was competitive, and ironically their first 'marathon match', which lasted a gruelling forty eight games before being aborted, was the only match which did not last for the full scheduled duration. Both players experienced triumphs and frustrations. Karpov never won a match against Kasparov; he was leading 5–0 in their first match but was unable to secure the elusive final win, and he was leading 12–11 in Seville but lost the final game. On the other hand Kasparov, despite being the stronger player, was never able to defeat Karpov by a truly resounding margin. The 1990 match was the only one in which he retained the title with at least a game to spare, but even then it took until Game 24 for him to reach the magic score of 12½ points, which was needed to secure outright victory. Nevertheless my impression is that the gap in playing strength was larger than the close match results would suggest.

## 1990 Summary

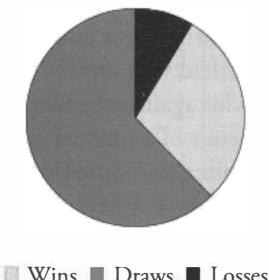
Candidates final match versus Timman, Kuala Lumpur: Won  $6\frac{1}{2}-2\frac{1}{2}$  (+4 =5 -0)

Haninge (2nd-3rd place)  $7\frac{1}{2}/11$  (+5 =5 -1)

Biel (1st place):  $9\frac{1}{2}/14$  (+5 =9 -0)

World Championship match versus Kasparov: Lost  $11\frac{1}{2}-12\frac{1}{2}$  (+3 =17 -4)

Total 60.3% (+17 =36 -5)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1991

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Rating 2725 (2 in the world)

Karpov started the year in which he would turn forty at the Reggio Emilia tournament in northern Italy, a seven-player, double-round-robin event. Karpov started with a quiet draw against Andersson and had a bye in Round 2. In the next two games he drew with Ehlvest and Ribli. Curiously his first three games were all Queen's Indians. In Round 5 Polugaevsky employed the Tarrasch Defence, and Karpov was unable to make any headway. In the next game he made a solid draw against Mikhail Gurevich.

After five consecutive draws Karpov finally scored his first win, on the white side of a Queen's Indian against Kamsky. The young rising star sacrificed a pawn for insufficient compensation and struggled hard, but eventually went down.

In the first game of the second half of the event, Karpov faced Andersson. Since Karpov's victory in Haninge (see Game 18 in the previous chapter) the two players had drawn twice: in Biel 1990, and the first round of the present event.

## Game 22

Anatoly Karpov – Ulf Andersson

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Reggio Emilia 1991

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗f3 ♜b4†**

Andersson played this opening a total of seven times against Karpov, but only achieved the dismal total of two draws and five losses.

**4.♗bd2**

This move brought Karpov a total of two wins and one draw against the Swede. Karpov also played 4.♗d2 throughout his career, scoring a total of seven wins and four draws, including three wins and one draw against Andersson.

**4...b6 5.g3**

Karpov deviates from two of their previous encounters, which continued as follows: 5.a3 ♜xd2† 6.♗xd2 ♜b7 7.♗g5 d6 8.e3 ♜bd7 9.♗h4 c5 10.♗d3 0–0 11.0–0 cxd4 12.exd4 d5 From this position Karpov chose 13.♗e1 in the Skellefteå World Cup event of 1989 and went on to win an endgame with a microscopic advantage. Later in Biel 1990 he varied with 13.cxd5 but only managed to draw.

**5...♝a6 6.♝c2**

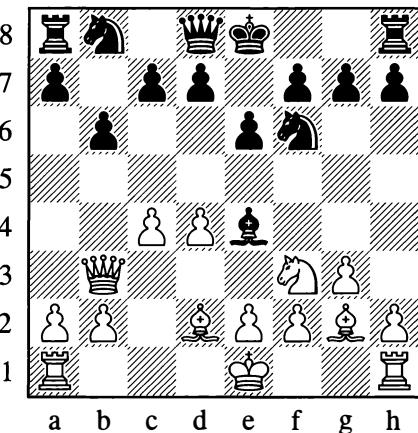
This position is often reached via the Queen's Indian move order of 3...b6 4.g3 ♜a6 5.♝bd2 (or 5.♝c2 ♜b4† 6.♝bd2) 5...♜b4 6.♝c2.

**6...♝b7 7.♝g2 ♜e4**

This is one of the soundest approaches for Black, although Andersson subsequently switched to 7...c5.

**8.♝b3 ♜xd2† 9.♝xd2**

Karpov secures the advantage of the two bishops, although it will be tough to put them to good effect in the immediate future. My junior trainer and lifelong friend Karoly Honfi told me that many players overestimate the importance of the two bishops. I like to teach my pupils that a pair of bishops is a bit like chili or soy sauce. When the correct ingredients are in place they can turn a decent recipe into a fabulous one, but without those other elements the effect is nothing special. Let us see how Karpov sets about adding the right ingredients to his recipe.

**9...0-0 10.0-0 d6 11.♝fd1**

Now if Black ever plays ...c5, White will have the option of gaining space with d5.

**11...♛e7 12.♛e3**

Karpov brings the queen to the centre and holds back ...e5 for the moment.

**12...♝bd7**

12...e5? would be ill-advised due to 13.dxe5 dxe5 14.♝c3 ♜c6 15.♝xe5! when White wins a pawn.

**13.♝c3 ♜fe8 14.♝ac1 h6**

The move is not a mistake in itself, but it is indicative of the timidity with which the Swedish grandmaster subsequently conducts his position. A few other ideas deserved attention.

14...a5 seems generally useful for Black although it does not change the position much.

14...e5!? 15.dxe5 (After 15.♝h3 exd4 16.♝xd4 White's advantage is microscopic.) 15...♝xe5 16.b3 a5 17.♝xe5 ♜xg2 18.♝xg2 dxe5 White only has a small advantage.

**15.b3 ♜ac8 16.♝h3!**

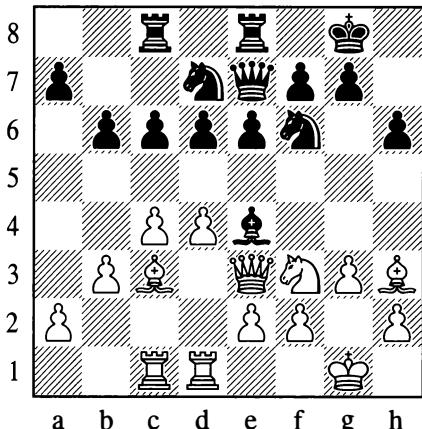
Karpov wants to play ♜d2 and later e4, and since White controls more space, the avoidance of a bishop exchange is definitely in his interest.

**16...c6**

Karpov mentions 16...♝b7, with the possible plan of ...♝e4 and ...f5. Play may continue: 17.d5 ♜cd8! Karpov does not mention this subtle move, which threatens both the d5- and e2-pawns. (17...exd5? 18.♛xe7 ♜xe7 19.♝xf6 Black is in serious trouble; 17...e5 18.♝h4 White has the initiative.) 18.dxe6 fxe6 19.♝d4 e5 Black has an acceptable position after 20.♝f3 ♜f7 or 20.♝b5 ♜c5.

Another playable alternative is 16...c5 when Black looks to be all right.

Finally there is 16...♝f5!? 17.♝xf5 (17.♝f1 a5) 17...exf5 18.♛xe7 ♜xe7 19.e3 ♜e4 when Black's position is perfectly healthy.



**17...♝b2!**

At first glance it is hard to see the point behind this subtle move. Karpov's idea is to vacate the c3-square for the knight, while in some positions a bishop transfer to a3 could be a useful option.

**17...♝c7**

Andersson's plan seems to be to avoid pushing any of his pawns beyond his third rank. 17...d5, 17...♝f5 and 17...a5 were all playable.

**18.♞d2 ♘g6 19.♞b1**

The position is closed so Karpov has time to improve his pieces. By this time he had probably picked up on the fact that his opponent was not aiming for a sharp conflict, thus he takes full advantage of the opportunity to improve every piece.

**19...a6**

Gaining space with 19...d5 is less favourable here than it was before: 20.♘f4! (20.♞c3?! dx4 21.bxc4 ♘b4 Black wins a pawn.) 20...♝ec8 (Also after 20...♝cc8 21.♞a3 White is better.) 21.♞a3 c5 22.♞c3 Black's hanging pawns are under pressure.

**20.♝g2**

Karpov recentralizes his bishop and takes away the e4-square from the black pieces.

**20...♝ec8 21.♞a3!**

Trying to provoke ...c5.

**21...♝e8**

By now it would have been difficult for Black to advance a pawn even if he had wanted to do so.

For instance, after 21...c5?! 22.♞c3 ♘d8 23.♞b2 ♘f8 24.♗d2 ♘cd7 25.e4 White has a clear advantage.

Alternatively there is 21...b5?! 22.♗f4 ♘e8 23.♞c3 when Black cannot shake his opponent's grip on the centre.

**22.♞c3 ♘d8**

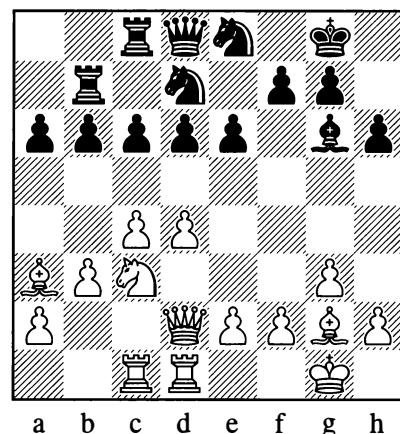
22...c5? loses to 23.♞d5.

**23.♗d2**

Intending to advance in the centre.

**23...♝b7**

The immediate 23...b5 would have reduced White's options, although after 24.♞b4 ♘b7 the first player can maintain some advantage with 25.cxb5 or 25.♞e4.



**24.e4!**

When Black employs a queenside fianchetto against a queen's pawn opening, the execution

of the e2-e4 advance usually represents a significant achievement for White, especially if he has avoided exchanging the light-squared bishops, as is the case here.

24...b5

Finally Black pushes one of his pawns beyond his third rank.

25.  $\text{De}2$

Aside from gaining space, Karpov's previous move also had the merit of vacating this retreat square for his knight.

25...♝b8

In the event of 25... $\text{bxc4}$  26. $\text{bxc4}$  Black gets the b-file but can do nothing with it: 26... $\mathbb{W}c7$  (26... $c5?$  Opening the position only helps the bishops. 27. $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}h7$  28. $e5!$  White is dominating.) 27. $\mathbb{Q}f4 \mathbb{Q}h7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White is in full control.

26.♘f4 ♜h7 27.c5!

Seizing space. A good alternative was 27.f3! to restrict the enemy bishop.

27...d5 28.e5

Karpov goes for more even space. A different, but equally promising approach was to open the game: 28.exd5?! exd5 (Or 28...cxd5 29.c6 ♘df6 30.♗b4 and Black is desperately passive.) 29.♗b4 Black is in trouble as White has good chances to invade along the e-file.

28...a5!

Andersson stops  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ , thus enabling him to keep the queenside closed.

29. El

Karpov ensures that Black will not be able to loosen the grip by means of ...f6.

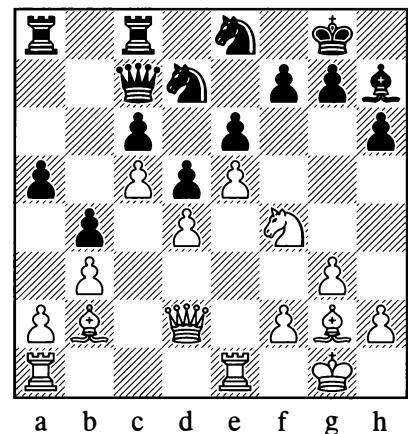
29... $\mathbb{Q}$ a8 30. $\mathbb{Q}$ b2 b4

Black hopes to obtain some active play on the queenside, but the plan soon backfires.

Had Black left the queenside alone with moves like 30... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  or 30... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , Karpov would have played for a slow but powerful kingside attack.

31.♗a1 ♜c7

31... $\mathbb{E}cb8$ ?! would have given White one less option, as 32.a3? allows 32...a4! 33.axb4 axb3 when Black gets some counterplay. Instead White can simply reply with 32.a4 as in the game.



32.a4

Karpov elects to close the queenside in order to develop his kingside attack without distraction.

He could also have gone for active play on the queenside: 32.a3!?  $\mathbb{W}b7$  (32...a4? is ineffective here due to 33.axb4 axb3 34.b5! when White creates a strong passed pawn.) 33.axb4 axb4 34. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  White keeps a clear advantage here too, but Karpov probably wanted to avoid giving his opponent the opportunity to exchange the rooks on the a-file.

32...bxa3?

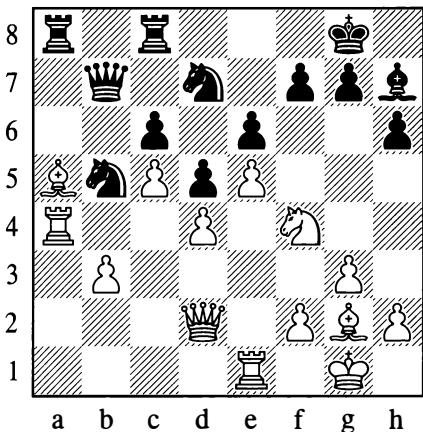
Though it was a depressing prospect, Black should have kept the position closed and attempted to survive the inevitable kingside assault. In a way it is a pity that we did not

get to see how Karpov would have built his attack.

### 33.♗xa3

Now Black simply loses the a-pawn by force.

33...♛b7 34.♕c3 ♜c7 35.♕xa5 ♜b5  
36.♗a4



1–0

It is a bit early to resign, but Andersson must have been disappointed with his play, and he knew that the chances of surviving such a position against Karpov were almost nonexistent. White has a clear positional advantage in addition to his extra pawn, and Black does not have a hint of counterplay.

After a second bye in Round 9 Karpov drew with Ehlvest, Ribli and Polugaevsky, in games lasting twenty six, twelve and sixteen moves respectively. Then in Round 13 he used the Sämisch against the King's Indian to gain a slight plus against Gurevich, which he eventually converted to a win in a long endgame. In the final round Karpov was under some pressure against Kamsky, but eventually managed to survive an endgame with rook versus rook and bishop, after eliminating his opponent's last pawn. Karpov's final score of

7½/12 was enough for sole first place, half a point ahead of Polugaevsky.

Karpov's next tournament was in Linares. With hindsight, the 1991 event is notable for the participation of four young players who would go on to become some of the greatest in the world: Anand, Gelfand, Ivanchuk and Kamsky (in alphabetical order). Karpov started with a black win over Ehlvest, although at one point he made a serious mistake on which the Estonian grandmaster failed to capitalize. Also in Round 1 a twenty one year old Ivanchuk scored a convincing win over Kasparov, which must have made Karpov feel like he had a real chance to win the event. However, in Round 2 he suffered a setback and lost to Anand after making a couple of uncharacteristic positional errors.

Karpov's tournament would soon go from bad to worse. In Round 3 he outplayed Ljubojevic on the black side of a Zaitsev, but then spoiled a highly favourable position and lost after some subsequent mistakes. In the next game he got a significant advantage against Yusupov, but failed to make the most of it and only drew. Then in Round 5 Karpov was put under uncomfortable pressure by the in-form Ivanchuk, and eventually overstepped the time limit after missing a chance to equalize. The game reminded me of Botvinnik's win over Alekhine at the famous AVRO 1938 tournament, an event in which the Patriarch defeated both Alekhine and Capablanca in two fabulous and instructive games. Five rounds into the Linares tournament, Ivanchuk had repeated Botvinnik's trick of defeating the top two players in the world at that time. Though I cannot be certain, this may be the only time that someone has defeated both Kasparov and Karpov at the same tournament.

After this disappointment Karpov met another brilliant rising star in Boris Gelfand. At the

time of writing the grandmaster from Minsk has played 150 games against the world champions, scoring seventeen wins, ninety seven draws and thirty six losses. This was the first time he played Karpov. Their lifetime score stands at seven wins to five in Karpov's favour, with seventeen draws.

Before looking at the game, I would like to say something about these numbers. Although Gelfand is a world-class player with extensive experience at the top level, comparing his statistics (in particular the 150 games against the champions) with those of the older generation of super-GMs is a bit misleading. Nowadays most top-class tournaments involve roughly the same group of players competing against one another, which was not the case in the seventies and eighties. Players such as Geller, Portisch, Gligoric and Timman were not less great – they merely did not get to play as many of those types of tournaments. To take another example of how times have changed, John Nunn won two individual gold medals at Olympiads, and these magical performances deservedly earned him several invitations to tournaments where he was able to face world champions. In recent years Gabriel Sargissian has performed incredibly well at Olympiads, but at the time of writing the Armenian grandmaster has not played a single regular game against Anand, Kramnik or Topalov, due to the exclusivity of the elite tournament circuit.

### Game 23

Anatoly Karpov – Boris Gelfand

Linares 1991

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♗f3 ♛g7 4.g3**

Karpov does not want to play a sharp King's Indian where his opponent may be able to create a strong attack.

**4...0–0 5.♗g2 c6**

Gelfand had used most of the other main lines as well, but this time he follows the example of Kasparov.

**6.♘c3 d5 7.cxd5 cxd5 8.♗e5 ♖f5**

Against the main line of 8...e6 Karpov scored four wins and seven draws without a loss. He never defeated Kasparov in that line, but his score against lesser players was impressive. Gelfand subsequently switched to this move in 1995.

Karpov had never faced the text move before. It occurred in a game between Botvinnik and Smyslov, but is still regarded as a sideline.

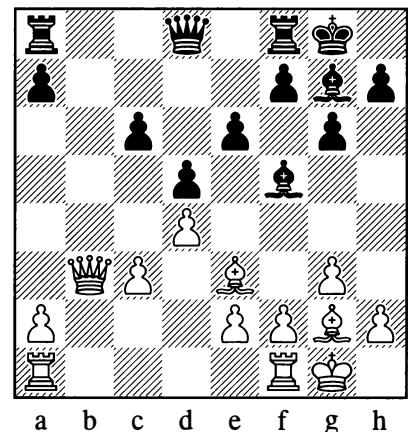
**9.0–0 ♘e4 10.♗e3**

Botvinnik exchanged on e4 here and the game soon ended in a draw. Instead Karpov develops and maintains the tension.

**10...♘xc3 11.bxc3 ♘c6 12.♗b3**

Karpov deviates from the play of Larsen, who preferred 12.♘xc6 bxc6 13.♗a4 and went on to win a long game against Benko in 1963.

**12...e6 13.♘xc6 bxc6**



**14.♗a3**

Karpov takes away the a5-square from the enemy queen, while also restraining the ...c5

advance. Despite Karpov's great strategic vision, I suspect that even he did not anticipate how important the latter point would eventually become.

#### 14... $\mathbb{B}e8$

Black could have tried 14... $\mathbb{W}b6$ !? intending to play on the b-file with ... $\mathbb{E}fb8$  followed by ... $\mathbb{W}b2$  or ... $\mathbb{W}b5$ .

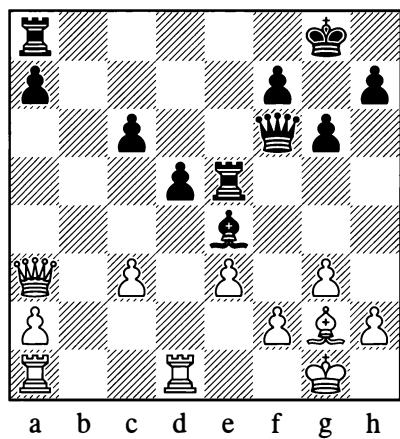
#### 15. $\mathbb{Q}f4 e5$

This frees Black's position to some extent; nevertheless the potential power of the g2-bishop increases, as the d5-pawn is less solidly supported.

#### 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe5 \mathbb{Q}xe5$ 17. $dxe5 \mathbb{Q}xe5$ 18. $e3 \mathbb{Q}e4$

Gelfand exchanges the g2-bishop. It was also possible to build his position without simplifications, for instance: 18... $\mathbb{W}b6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  20.c4 dxc4 (20...d4!?) 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc4 c5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black is very active.

#### 19. $\mathbb{Q}fd1 \mathbb{W}f6$



#### 20. $\mathbb{Q}d4!$

Karpov puts a bit of pressure on the e4-bishop, but his main idea is to prepare c4 in order to leave Black with a pawn weakness.

#### 20... $h5$

From this point on, the future supergrandmaster does not push any of his pawns for another thirty one moves.

#### 21. $h3!$

Naturally Karpov has no intention of allowing the pawn to advance to h3, where it will create all sorts of threats.

#### 21... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 22. $\mathbb{R}ad1$

Taking the pawn was out of question as the black rook would take up a dominating position on the second rank. Therefore Karpov prepares to respond to ... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  by putting a rook on d2.

#### 22... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

Gelfand decides to simplify. A simple improving move such as 22... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  would have been risky, as White can gobble the a-pawn: 23. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  25. $\mathbb{W}d4$  White consolidates his extra pawn) 24. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black has some compensation, but he will have to fight for a draw.

Defending the a7-pawn with 22... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ! looks like the most straightforward way for Black to hold the position: 23.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (24.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  dxc4 26.e4  $\mathbb{Q}fb5$  Black is very active, and White's kingside is too open for him to have any real winning chances.) 24... $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  (25...dxc4 26.e4  $\mathbb{Q}fb5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{W}e5$  Black is not worse.) 26.cxd5  $\mathbb{W}e4\uparrow$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  Black will have an isolani, but the chances of White winning it are slim.

#### 23. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$

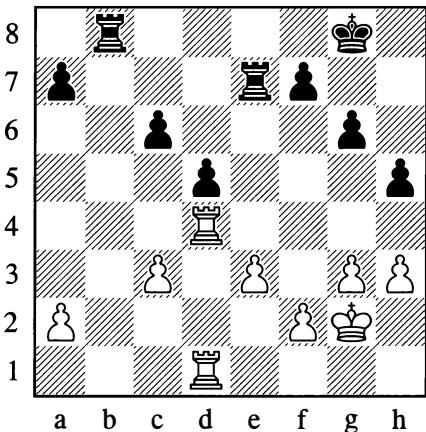
Karpov recaptures the bishop, while conveniently making the kind of small improving move which he liked to make anyway.

#### 23... $\mathbb{W}e7?$

Gelfand keeps on exchanging but this is not the best way of doing it. The problem with exchanging queens in such positions is that the opponent gets the opportunity to use his king freely.

Swapping the rook by 23... $\mathbb{E}e4$ ! would have enabled Black to get more active prospects for his remaining pieces: 24.c4 (24. $\mathbb{E}1d2 \mathbb{E}b1$  25. $\mathbb{W}xa7 h4$  26. $\mathbb{W}d7$  [26.g4  $\mathbb{E}xe3$ ] 26... $\mathbb{E}xe3$ ! 27. $\mathbb{E}f4 \mathbb{W}e6$  28. $\mathbb{W}d8\uparrow \mathbb{W}e8$  Black holds easily.) 24... $\mathbb{E}xd4$  25. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xc4$  26. $\mathbb{W}c3$  (26. $\mathbb{E}xc2 \mathbb{E}b2$  27. $\mathbb{E}f4 \mathbb{W}e5$  Black is very active.) 26...c5 27. $\mathbb{E}xc4 \mathbb{W}xc3$  (Or 27... $\mathbb{W}c6\uparrow 28.e4 \mathbb{E}c8$  and Black is safe.) 28. $\mathbb{E}xc3 \mathbb{E}b2$  29. $\mathbb{E}a3$  c4 Black can exchange all the queenside pawns and reach a theoretically drawn ending.

**24. $\mathbb{W}xe7 \mathbb{E}xe7$**



**25. $\mathbb{E}1d2$**

Karpov covers the second rank and defends the a2-pawn, which he needs to keep in order to preserve realistic winning chances.

**25... $\mathbb{E}b6$**

Benko recommended 25... $\mathbb{E}eb7?$  in order to go after the a2-pawn as quickly as possible. Black's most effective drawing plan is to get rid of the queenside pawns. 26.c4 (Also after

26. $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{E}b2$  27. $\mathbb{E}xb2 \mathbb{E}xb2$  28. $\mathbb{E}a4 \mathbb{E}c2$  Black holds.) 26... $\mathbb{E}dc4$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc4 \mathbb{E}b2$  28. $\mathbb{E}xb2$  (28. $\mathbb{E}dc2 \mathbb{E}xc2$  29. $\mathbb{E}xc2 \mathbb{E}b6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}f8$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}e7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}d4 \mathbb{Q}d6$  Black is not even slightly worse.) 28... $\mathbb{E}xb2$  29. $\mathbb{E}a4$  c5 Black will simplify to a drawn ending with four pawns versus three on the kingside.

**26.c4!  $\mathbb{E}xc4$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc4 \mathbb{Q}g7$**

27... $\mathbb{E}e6$ ? Defending the rook from the side might seem like a good idea, but it gives up the seventh rank. 28. $\mathbb{E}d7!$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  29. $\mathbb{E}f4 \mathbb{E}xa2$  30. $\mathbb{E}fxf7 \mathbb{E}xe3$  31. $\mathbb{E}g7\uparrow \mathbb{Q}f8$  32. $\mathbb{E}df7\uparrow \mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{E}b7$  It is possible that Black can survive this position with perfect defence, but the situation would have to be really desperate to try it.

**27... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ?**

Activating the king using this alternative route deserved attention. It is not easy for White to make progress.

**28.e4?**

After 28.g4 hxg4 29.hxg4  $\mathbb{E}e5$  30. $\mathbb{E}d7 \mathbb{E}e7$  Black holds.

If 28. $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{E}e5$  29. $\mathbb{E}a4$  (29. $\mathbb{E}d7 \mathbb{E}f5\uparrow$ ) 29...a5 Black should be able to hold this position, as his rooks are much more active than in the game.

**28... $\mathbb{E}e6$  29.f4**

29. $\mathbb{E}d7 \mathbb{E}b2!$  is good enough.

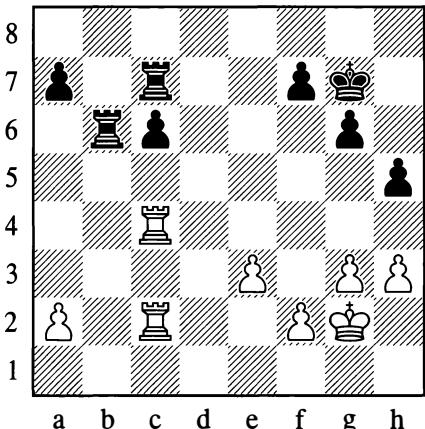
**29... $\mathbb{E}e7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{E}d6$**

Black is still worse, but his drawing chances are higher than in the game.

**28. $\mathbb{E}dc2 \mathbb{E}c7$**

From this square the rook defends all of Black's weaknesses, but it becomes uncomfortably passive.

28... $\mathbb{E}e6$ ! was a better choice, for instance 29. $\mathbb{E}a4 \mathbb{E}e7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}f6$  and Black should be able to draw, although his position remains a bit unpleasant.



**29.g4!**

Karpov starts gaining space and his pawns will eventually suffocate his opponent. With the text move he gently puts a finger on his opponent's throat, in a manner than can hardly be felt. Later when the rest of the fingers follow, Karpov's iron hand will crush him to death.

**29...hxg4 30.hxg4 ♕f6**

Black should have preferred 30...g5! to hold back his opponent's space-gaining operation. His position is not much fun, but this was the lesser evil. 31.♕c5 (31.♗g3 ♔f6 32.♕c5 ♕a6) 31...f6 32.e4 (32.♗f3 ♕a6 33.♗e4 ♔e7† 34.♗f5 ♕a4) 32...♔e7 33.f3 ♔e6 Black has good drawing chances.

There was another way to fight: Gelfand suggests 30...c5! to sacrifice a pawn in return for activity. 31.♕xc5 ♕xc5 32.♕xc5 ♕a6 33.♕c2 ♕a5 Black has decent drawing chances.

**31.♗g3 ♔e6 32.a4**

Threatening a5, when the reply ...♖a6 can be met by ♜c5 when the black rook is in a cage.

**32...♗d7?!**

This passive move gives Karpov time to improve his position. Much more resilient was:

32...♗d6!

Black threatens to mobilize the c-pawn.

33.♗d4†

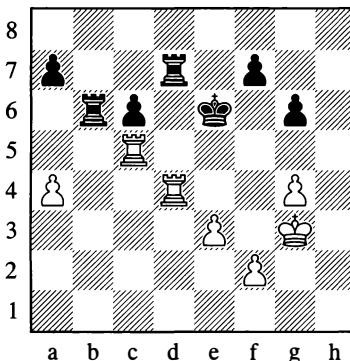
33.g5? c5 Black is fine.

33...♗e6 34.♗c5

Once again 34.g5? c5! frees Black's position.

34...♗d7

Black should exchange one of his opponent's active rooks.



35.♗e5†!

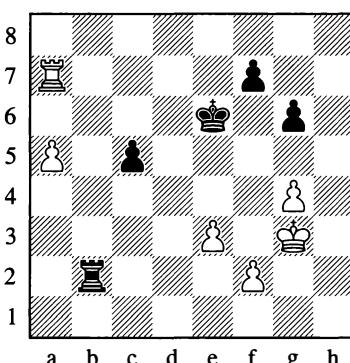
If 35.♗xd7 ♕xd7 36.♗a5 a6 37.♗f4 ♕d6 Black's king becomes active.

35...♗xe5 36.♗xd7 ♕e6

There is also 36...c5!? 37.♗xf7 c4 (37...♗c6 38.f4†) 38.♗c7 ♕d5 when Black has good drawing chances thanks to his strong passed pawn.

37.♗xa7 c5 38.a5 ♗b2!

From the second rank the rook prevents the white king from approaching the c-pawn.

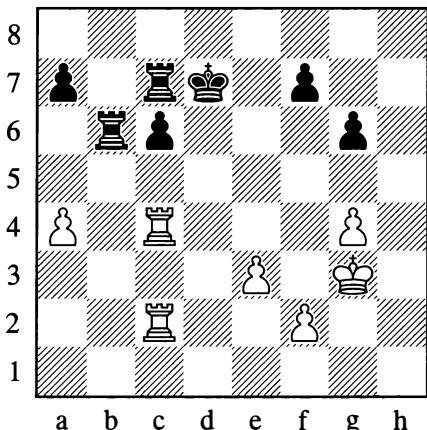


39.♗c7 ♗c2 40.a6

40.♔f3 c4 41.a6 ♜a2 42.a7 c3 leads to the same outcome.

40...♜a2 41.a7 c4

The queenside pawns will soon be eliminated, and Black can hold the resulting rook endgame with two pawns versus three.



**33.g5!**

Karpov gains more space and fixes the f7-pawn. More abstractly, endgames can often turn into pawn races, so advancing a pawn closer to the promotion square is useful in itself. Nevertheless 33.♔f4! was also strong.

**33...♜a6?**

Gelfand wants to become more active by means of ...c5, but he probably overlooked the way in which Karpov counters his idea.

Black should have taken advantage of the fact that the c6-pawn is no longer hanging in order to free his rook: 33...♜b1! 34.♔f4 ♜d1 Black still has decent drawing chances.

**34.♜d4†!**

With this check and the next move Karpov keeps the c-pawn fixed, which is a vital part of his success.

**34...♚e8**

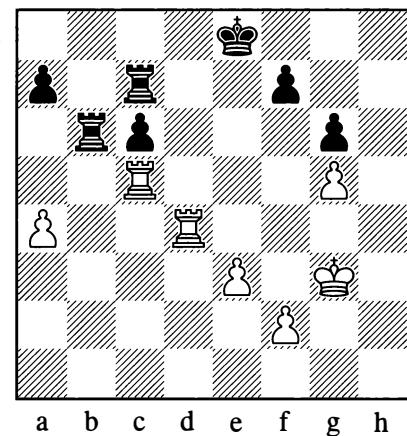
According to Gelfand, Karpov mentioned 34...♚e6!? which sets a small trap. If White

tries to cage the rook with 35.♜c5 ♜d7 36.a5? ♜d5! Then Black breaks the grip and solves his problems.

However, White can improve with 36.♜dc4! ♜d6 37.♔f4 when he maintains his advantage.

**35.♜c5! ♜b6**

This costs time, but the rook was in danger of being paralysed. For instance, 35...♜d7? is refuted by 36.a5! ♜xd4 37.exd4 For the moment Black is defending all his weaknesses, but the white king can infiltrate easily: 37...♚e7 38.♔f4 f6 (If 38...♚e6 39.♜e5† ♜d6 40.♚e4 White pushes his pawn to f6 and wins.) 39.gxf6† ♜xf6 40.♚g4 ♜f7 41.♚g5 ♜g7 42.f4 ♜f7 43.♚h6 ♜f6 44.♚g5 White is winning.



**36.♔f4!**

Karpov improves his king; soon its domination will become unbearable for Black. Instead 36.♜e5† was weaker because of 36...♚e7.

**36...♜d7?**

This final mistake proves fatal, as the rook exchange allows White's king to take up a dominating position. Generally four-rook endgames give the weaker side better drawing chances than two-rook endgames, as the

stronger side will have fewer opportunities to use the king. Black could still have resisted, although by now he did not have much margin for error.

36... $\mathbb{Q}e7?$  allows a quick finish: 37. $\mathbb{R}e5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
38. $\mathbb{Q}d8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  39. $\mathbb{R}ee8+-$

Activating the rook does not generate enough play: 36... $\mathbb{R}b2$  37.f3  $\mathbb{R}b3$  38. $\mathbb{R}e5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  39. $\mathbb{R}de4!$   $\mathbb{R}xe5$  40. $\mathbb{R}xe5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  41. $\mathbb{R}a5$   $\mathbb{R}b7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  The position can be compared to that reached in the game. White's dominant king should be enough to decide the game.

36... $\mathbb{Q}f8?!$

The waiting approach looks like Black's best chance. It is not easy for White to make progress.

37.e4?

White improves his pawn structure a bit. Alternatives are not fully convincing:

37. $\mathbb{R}d6$   $\mathbb{R}b4\#$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{R}e7\#$  39. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{R}e8$

40. $\mathbb{R}cxc6$   $\mathbb{R}be4$  Black is alive.

37. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{R}e7\#$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{R}b2$  39. $\mathbb{R}xc6$  (39. $\mathbb{R}f4$

$\mathbb{R}bb7$ ) 39... $\mathbb{R}xf2$  40. $\mathbb{R}c8\#$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  41. $\mathbb{R}xe8\#$

$\mathbb{Q}xe8$  42. $\mathbb{R}d5$  f6 (another idea is 42... $\mathbb{R}b2$

43. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{R}d2\#$  44. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  and the game goes on) 43. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  fxg5 44. $\mathbb{R}xg5$   $\mathbb{R}c2$  Black

has reasonable drawing chances.

37... $\mathbb{R}b2$  38.f3  $\mathbb{R}b3$  39. $\mathbb{R}e5$

39. $\mathbb{R}d8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  does not help White.

39... $\mathbb{R}b8$

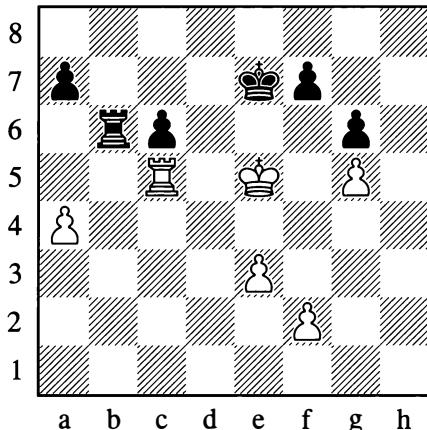
White will press and Black will suffer for a long time to come, but the second player has realistic chances to survive.

37. $\mathbb{R}xd7!$

Naturally Karpov does not pass up an opportunity to invade with his king.

37... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Black can only temporarily stop the further invasion.



39.f4!

Having put his rook and king in dominating positions, Karpov gains more space and gets his pawns closer to the eighth rank.

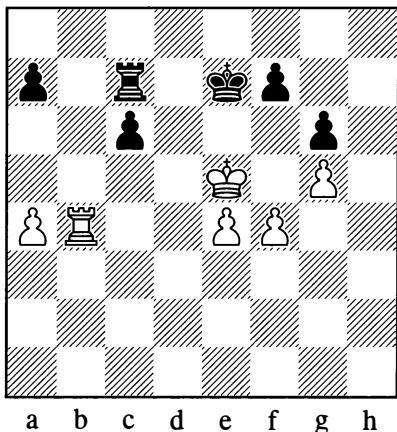
39... $\mathbb{R}b4$  40. $\mathbb{R}a5$   $\mathbb{R}b7$  41.e4  $\mathbb{R}c7$

In his excellent book *My Most Memorable Games*, Gelfand mentions the following variation, which he attributes to Karpov: 41... $\mathbb{R}d7$  42. $\mathbb{R}c5$   $\mathbb{R}d6$  43.f5 gxf5 44.exf5 f6# 45.gxf6#  $\mathbb{R}xf6$  46. $\mathbb{R}a5$  White wins.

42. $\mathbb{R}c5$

Karpov brings the rook back in order to invade along the b-file.

42... $\mathbb{R}c8$  43. $\mathbb{R}c3$   $\mathbb{R}e8$  44. $\mathbb{R}c4$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  45. $\mathbb{R}b4$   $\mathbb{R}c7$



**46.a5!**

Karpov advances another pawn, creating the possibility of a6 followed by  $\mathbb{E}b7$ , as well as getting closer to the promotion square.

**46... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  47. $\mathbb{E}b3$** 

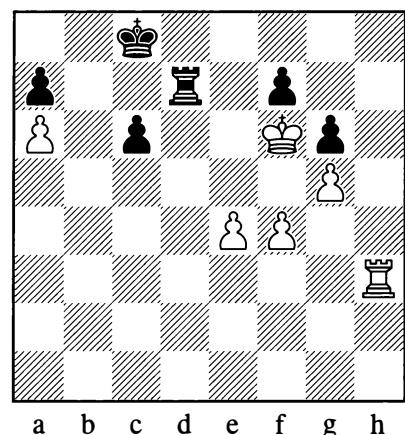
Karpov decides to play for zugzwang. 47. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  would have won as well.

**47... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  48.a6!**

Karpov makes every possible improving move before eventually launching his winning plan.

**48... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}f6$** 

The king gets even stronger.

**49... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  50. $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{E}d7$** **51.f5!**

Finally it is time to win the game by creating an unstoppable passed pawn.

**51... $gxf5$  52. $exf5$  c5**

After thirty one moves Gelfand finally pushes a pawn, but in the meantime Karpov earned a massive head-start in the race.

**53. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  54.g6  $\mathbb{E}xg6$  55. $\mathbb{E}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  56.g7**

**$\mathbb{E}c8$  57. $\mathbb{E}g3!$**

**1-0**

Taking on c5 was also good enough, but Black's rook could have resisted against the queen for a while, whereas the text move wins instantly. Gelfand was not at his best, nevertheless it was a fantastic endgame display by Karpov.

In Round 7 Timman played the 4.f3 line against the Nimzo-Indian, and Karpov had to work hard to draw. In the next round Karpov met Kasparov, who equalized with a Semi-Slav and drew comfortably. Then in Round 9 Speelman executed a strong pawn sacrifice in the middlegame after a 4.e3 Nimzo-Indian, and Karpov found himself with an exposed king and the problems proved too much for him.

After that loss Karpov got a nice positional edge against Salov in a Slav, but uncharacteristically allowed a piece sacrifice which led to perpetual check. But then in Round 11 he managed to get the better of Kamsky in a long manoeuvring game on the black side of the Hübner Variation of the Nimzo-Indian. In the next game he held the black side of a 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian against Mikhail Gurevich in a game that was always roughly balanced. In the final round Karpov clawed his way back to fifty percent against Beliavsky on the white side of a Queen's Gambit Declined.

Despite his late resurgence, Karpov's final score of 6½/13 must have been disappointing, and losing four games in a single tournament was something that had never happened to him during his entire professional career. Karpov was approaching forty years of age, so energy levels may have been a factor; furthermore his openings did not carry enough bite against the new wave of top grandmasters.

By the way Ivanchuk finished in first place half a point ahead of Kasparov, who for the first time in almost a decade had to be content with less than first place or at least equal first in a tournament.

Karpov's next tournament was the Euwe Memorial in Amsterdam, where he started with three draws against Hjartarson, Korchnoi and Ljubojevic. In Round 4 Karpov achieved no advantage against Mikhail Gurevich's Leningrad Dutch, but Gurevich made a serious mistake in the middlegame and was unable to recover. In the next round Karpov drew solidly on the black side of an English against Salov.

In Round 6 Karpov met Kasparov, and the two players followed Game 20 of their New York/Lyon match, a Zaitsev which resulted in a crushing victory for White. This time Karpov was ready with a novelty and got the better of a hugely complicated position. But later the endgame maestro made some shocking errors which enabled Kasparov to draw the endgame a piece down.

After this terrible disappointment, Karpov had to face Jan Timman. Since their 1979 meeting in Montreal (Game 52 of the first volume), Karpov established a heavy plus score against the Dutchman by winning sixteen games, drawing thirty one and losing just two.

## Game 24

Anatoly Karpov – Jan Timman

Amsterdam 1991

### 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4

Timman seldom played this move, but he did it twice against Karpov. Considering the number of times these two players faced one another in tournaments (sixty five times, not including matches), it is natural that such an adventurous player as the Dutch grandmaster would have tried a variety of different openings against Karpov.

### 3.e3

3.e4 was Karpov's usual choice, but the text move leaves little room for surprises. Karpov's overall score against the Queen's Gambit Accepted is ten wins, thirteen draws and no defeats.

### 3...e5 4.Qxc4 exd4 5.exd4 Qf6 6.Qf3 Qe7

Timman was probably not expecting Karpov to employ this variation, and thus found himself in relatively unfamiliar territory, which is why he plays it safe. 6...Qd6 is more active.

### 7.0–0 0–0 8.h3

Karpov makes sure Black will not be able to pin the knight.

### 8...Qbd7 9.Qc3 Qb6 10.Qb3 c6

It is hard for Black to play without this move.

### 11.Qe1 Qfd5

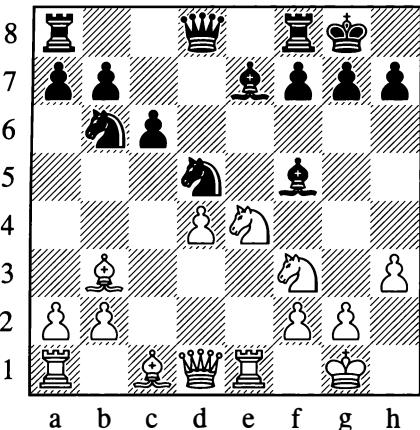
11...Qbd5 is more common. One example continued: 12.Qg5 Qe6 13.Qe5 Qe8 14.Qc1 Qd7 15.Qxe7 Qxe7 16.Qe4 f6 17.Qd3 Qf8 18.Qf3 Qc7 19.Qg3 Qd8 20.Qc5 White is somewhat better, I. Sokolov – Hübner, Wijk aan Zee 1996.

### 12.Qe4!?

Karpov avoids the exchange of knights, which would relieve the congestion in Black's camp.

### 12...Qf5

Timman introduces a novelty. It is especially interesting since he had reached this position previously from the opposite side of the board. That game continued: 12...Qe8 13.Qd2 Qf5 14.Qg3 (14.Qe5!?) 14...Qe6 15.Qc2 Qd7 16.a3 Qf8 17.Qd3 g6 Black has equalized although White later went on to win in Timman – Panno, Mar del Plata 1982.



### 13. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

If Black could safely bring his a8-rook into play while preserving his light-squared bishop, then he would be fine. Therefore Karpov acts quickly to prevent this from happening.

13.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  could be met by 13...  $\mathbb{W}c7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{B}ae8!$  (but not 14...  $\mathbb{B}ad8?!$  15.  $\mathbb{W}f3!)$  when Black has a good position as he threatens to take on c5.

### 13... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Timman wants to exchange pieces in the centre, but it costs him valuable time.

13...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  Giving up the bishop would ease the congestion in Black's position, but White will dominate the light squares. 14.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (White is also better after 15.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}fd5$  16.  $\mathbb{W}f3$ ) 15...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (15...  $\mathbb{Q}fd5$  16.  $\mathbb{W}d3$ ) 16.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Black will have a hard time breaking White's grip.

### 14. $\mathbb{W}f3!$

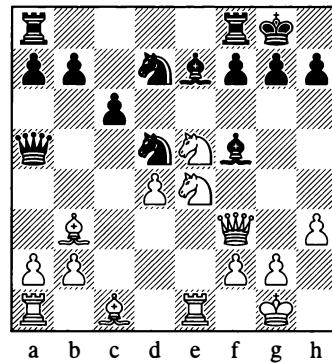
Karpov's previous strong move enables his queen to develop with gain of tempo.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Timman exchanges the unpleasant knight.

14...  $\mathbb{W}a5??$  was mentioned in Karpov's annotations without any evaluation. Karpov

once said in an interview that the mistakes that could sometimes be found in Kasparov's analysis betray the fact that he had not really done the analysis. But then who is responsible for this piece-losing blunder?



15.  $\mathbb{Q}d2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  White wins a piece at least.

14...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  can be compared with the note to Black's previous move. Black gets a reasonably stable position, but he is passive and may suffer on the light squares later in the game.

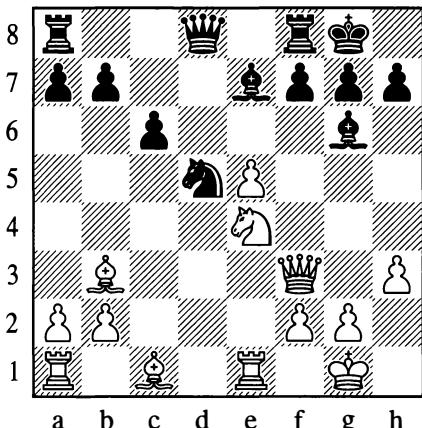
14...  $\mathbb{Q}e6?!$  may have been the best chance, although Black does not equalize here either: 15.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  (15...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  16.  $dxe5$  a5 17.  $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  a4 [17...  $\mathbb{W}b6$  18.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d6]$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  White has good attacking prospects, for instance 19...  $\mathbb{Q}b4?$  loses to 20.  $\mathbb{Q}f6! \mathbb{Q}xf6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xh7! \mathbb{Q}xh7$  22.  $exf6+ - .$ ) 16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  (White can also play on the kingside by means of 16.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18.  $\mathbb{E}ac1$ , with some pressure.) 16...  $\mathbb{W}xd7$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  18.  $dxc5$  White maintains an edge thanks to his two bishops.

### 15. $dxe5$

White reduces the number of pawn islands and obtains a potential knight outpost on d6, while in some lines the e5-pawn might play a role in a kingside attack.

**15...♞g6**

Timman opts to fortify his kingside. The alternative was 15...♝e6 16.♞c2 (or 16.♞d2) 16...♝b6 17.♝g3 ♜h8 18.♝g5 when White has a promising kingside initiative.

**16.♞f4!**

Karpov develops fluently. 16.♞d1 would allow Black to sacrifice a pawn for reasonable compensation: 16...♝c7 17.♞xd5 cxd5 18.♞xd5 ♜c6 (18...♝fd8 19.♝d6) 19.♞e3 Black may not have full compensation, but compared with the game continuation his position would be somewhat easier to handle.

**16...♝a5?**

Timman faces a difficult choice regarding which pieces to exchange and how to go about exchanging them. The text move turns out to be a poor solution.

**16...♝xf4!**

This exchange would have given Black better equalizing chances.

**17.♝xf4 ♜c7**

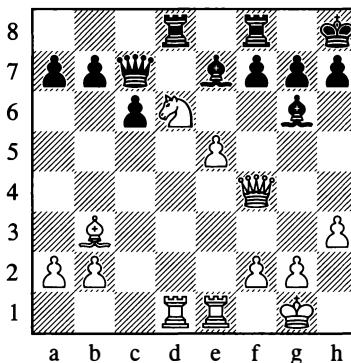
Black should resist the temptation to enter an opposite-coloured bishop position with 17...♝xe4?! 18.♝xe4 when f7 is weak and the b3-bishop is tremendously powerful.

**18.♝d6**

The knight is powerful here, but compared with the game Black has more chances to live with it.

**18...♝ad8 19.♝ad1 ♜h8!**

Black prepares to free himself with ...f6.

**20.♝g3?!**

This is the most interesting move to analyse, although it is hard to say if it is objectively best.

20.♝d2 f6 21.♝ed1 fxe5 22.♝xe5 ♜d7 Black is okay.

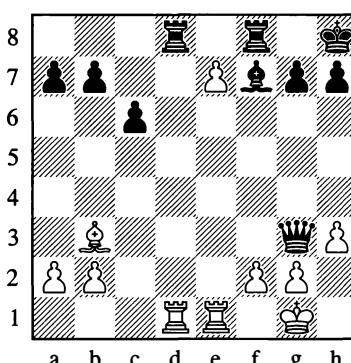
20.♝f5?! ♜c5 White can maintain some pressure with 21.g3 or 21.♝h4, but Black has decent chances to hold.

**20...f6! 21.♝f7†!**

It almost feels wrong that this incredible tactical blow does not win by force.

**21...♝xf7**

21...♝xf7 22.e6! is difficult for Black.

**22.exf6 ♜xg3 23.fxe7**

23... $\mathbb{W}xf2\#!$

By returning the queen Black simplifies to an endgame with an extra pawn.

After 23... $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  24. $\mathbb{B}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xf2\#$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  26. $\mathbb{E}xg8\#$  (if 26.e8= $\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{W}f6!$  Black is okay) 26... $\mathbb{E}xg8$  27.e8= $\mathbb{W}$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  28. $\mathbb{W}b8!$  White has good winning chances.

24. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3\#$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  26. $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{E}de8$  27.exf8= $\mathbb{W}\#$   $\mathbb{E}xf8$  28. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}b8$

Despite the extra pawn Black is passive and his position remains worse. Nevertheless he should be able to hold the endgame.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}d6!$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$

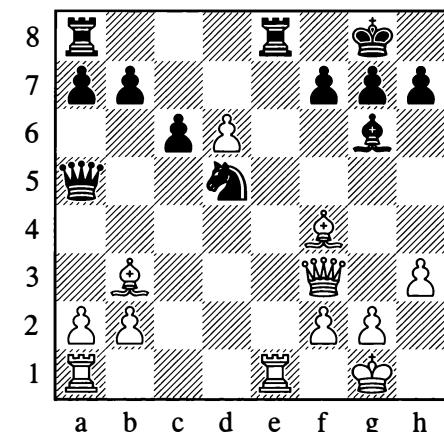
The knight was tremendously strong on d6, and Black would have had to exchange it sooner or later. If 17... $\mathbb{W}b4$  then 18. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  maintains a clear advantage, while after 17... $\mathbb{E}ab8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  h6 19. $\mathbb{E}ad1$  Black is also in trouble.

### 18.exd6

The strong passed pawn is too much for Black to handle.

### 18... $\mathbb{E}fe8?$

Timman commits a tactical error in a strategically lost position. 18... $\mathbb{E}ad8$  was better, but after 19. $\mathbb{E}ad1$  or 19. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  White is in full control and should win.



19. $\mathbb{E}xe8\#!$

Karpov finds a forced win which requires strong calculating ability.

### 19... $\mathbb{E}xe8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$

Timman once wrote that one of the advantages of having two bishops is that the player who possesses them can often exchange one of them for an enemy knight at a time that suits him. Karpov's last move illustrates that point perfectly. After removing the knight White gets the use of the c7-square and his d-pawn grows decisively strong.

### 20...cx d5

20... $\mathbb{W}xd5?$  loses trivially: 21. $\mathbb{W}xd5$  cxd5 22.d7  $\mathbb{E}d8$  23. $\mathbb{E}e1$  f6 24. $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}d6+-$

### 21.d7!

By utilizing the powerful d-pawn and the weakness of Black's back rank, Karpov demonstrates a forced win.

### 21... $\mathbb{E}e7$

### 21... $\mathbb{E}d8$

This loses as well.

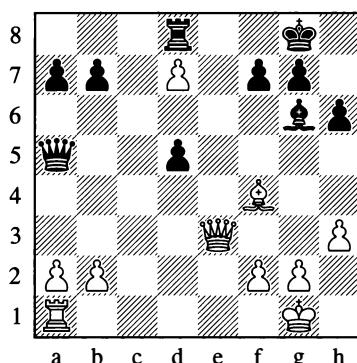
### 22. $\mathbb{W}e3!$

The most clinical route to victory.

### 22...h6

22... $\mathbb{W}b5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  25. $\mathbb{E}d1$  wins.

22...f6 23. $\mathbb{W}e7$  is also hopeless for Black.



23. $\mathbb{W}e8\#!$

This is the simplest win.

23... $\mathbb{E}c1$  is also good enough: 23... $\mathbb{W}a4$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  24. $\mathbb{W}e8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25. $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  wins; 23... $\mathbb{W}b5$  24. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  25. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  26. $\mathbb{W}e7$  Black loses his bishop.) 24. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  (24... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  25. $\mathbb{W}e7$ ) 25. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $\mathbb{g}xh6$  26. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  27. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  28.b3!  $\mathbb{W}b5$  29.a4 White diverts the queen and wins.

23... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  24.b4

24. $\mathbb{E}c1$  is also good enough.

24... $\mathbb{W}b6$  25. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$

25...f6 26. $\mathbb{W}e7+$

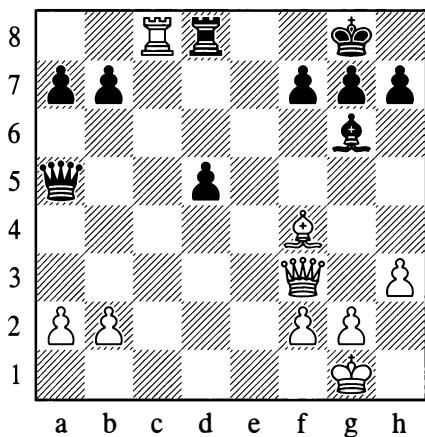
26. $\mathbb{Q}c7$

White wins.

**22. $\mathbb{E}c1$ !**

Exploiting the weakness of Black's back rank.

22... $\mathbb{E}xd7$  23. $\mathbb{E}c8\#$   $\mathbb{E}d8$



**24.b4!**

This cute move is the only way to divert the queen successfully. If 24. $\mathbb{W}c3?$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (or 25. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  26. $\mathbb{E}xd8\#$   $\mathbb{W}f8$ ) 25... $\mathbb{W}d6$  26. $\mathbb{W}e5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black stays alive.

**24... $\mathbb{W}b6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{axb6}$**

Despite being close to material equality, Black has no real drawing chances as he will soon be a pawn down on the queenside.

27. $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{h}6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}c1\#$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{E}c2$   
30. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$  31. $\mathbb{W}d4!$

**1–0**

In the final two rounds Karpov drew with Van der Wiel and Short, in two hard-fought but always roughly equal games. His final score of 5½/9 enabled him to share third place with Kasparov, half a point behind Salov and Short.

Karpov's next event was a short four-game match against Simen Agdestein, which took place in the Norwegian town of Gjovik. In the first game Karpov got the upper hand in a 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  French, but Agdestein managed to reach a pawn-down queen ending with good drawing chances. He defended well and reached a drawn position, when Karpov blundered badly and lost. In the second game he bounced back with a good win in the 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Queen's Indian. In the third game Agdestein repeated the same line of the French and was able to draw a long game. In the final game the Norwegian grandmaster employed an unusual line against the 1.c4 e5 English. Karpov got into trouble but then fought back to reach a winning endgame with an extra pawn, but he squandered his advantage and drew both the game and the match. Karpov was not at his best, and in particular his endgame play was well below his normal level.

\*\*\*

The early nineties was a period in which many of the next generation of super-grandmasters were breaking through to the top echelons of world chess. It was therefore fitting that in the quarter-finals of the next candidates cycle, the former champion Karpov would do battle with the future champion Viswanathan Anand in an eight-game match, which took place in Brussels.

The Indian had the white pieces in the first game, and chose 2.d3 against the Caro-Kann.

The queens were exchanged early and Karpov equalized, then he took over the initiative after Anand made a bad decision. Karpov continued to play well, but then he erred and allowed Anand to salvage a draw. Game 2 was a mirror image of the first; Anand equalized in a Semi-Slav and later took over, but failed to make the most of his advantage and allowed Karpov to escape with a draw. In Game 3 Anand tried a different sideline against the Caro-Kann. Karpov equalized but then misplayed his position and got into serious trouble. Anand won two pawns and was clearly winning, but then went wrong and Karpov narrowly managed to draw.

It is rare that one can afford to waste two golden opportunities against a player of Karpov's quality, and sure enough in the next game the former champion rediscovered his form.

## Game 25

Anatoly Karpov – Viswanathan Anand

Brussels (4) 1991

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.Qf3 Qf6 4.Qc3 e6 5.e3 Qbd7 6.Wc2**

This has been Karpov's most common choice against the Semi-Slav. He has used it to score an impressive thirteen wins, sixteen draws and one loss.

**6...Qd6 7.Qe2**

This variation became popular in the late eighties.

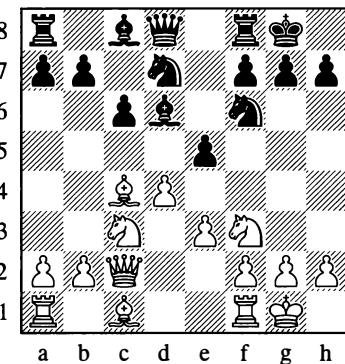
**7...0–0 8.0–0 dxc4 9.Qxc4 We7**

Anand deviates from 9...a6 which worked well for him in the second game of the match. In the late nineties Anand returned to this move against Karpov and made two draws. 10.Qd1 We7 (10...b5 11.Qe2 Wc7 12.e4 e5

13.g3 Qe8 14.a3 Qb7 15.dxe5 Qxe5 16.Qg5 Qxf3† 17.Qxf3 Qe5 18.Qxf6 gxf6 19.Qg4 White got an edge and went on to win, Karpov – Kramnik, Monte Carlo [rapid] 1998.) 11.h3 b5 12.Qd3 c5 13.Qe4 c4 14.Qxd6 Wxd6 15.Qe2 Qb7 16.Qd2 Wfc8 17.Qdc1 Qe4 18.Qa5 f5 Black had an easy game, Karpov – Anand, Brussels (2) 1991.

Another important option is:

9...e5



The most popular move has been 9...b5, but that is another story.

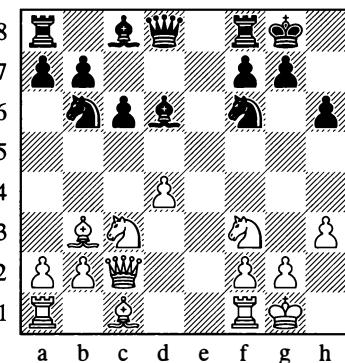
Let me show you a fantastic and revolutionary game which played a key role in the popularity of this whole variation.

**10.h3 exd4**

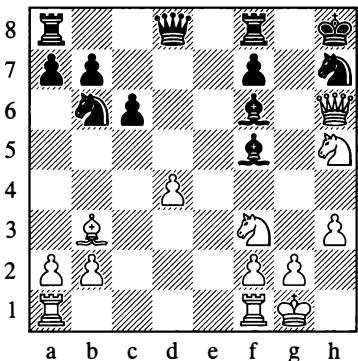
10...We7 has been the most popular move, although 10...h6!? has scored highly.

**11.exd4 Qb6 12.Qb3 h6?**

After the superior 12...Qbd5 Black is only slightly worse.

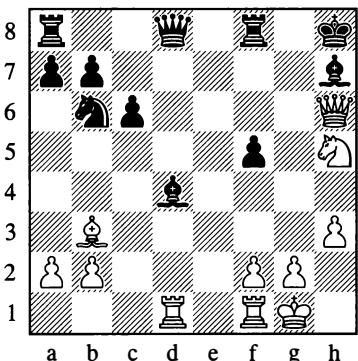


13.♕xh6!! gxh6 14.♗g6† ♔h8 15.♕xh6† ♔h7  
 16.♕e4 ♔e7  
 16...f6 17.♕xd6 ♕xd6 18.♕c2 ♕f7 19.♕g5 wins.  
 17.♕f6! ♕f5  
 17...♕xf6 18.♕c2 is the end.  
 18.♕h5 ♕f6  
 18...♕g8 loses to 19.♕e5.



19.♕g5! ♕xd4 20.♕xh7 ♕xh7 21.♔ad1 f5?  
 21...c5 22.♕xd4 ♕xd4 23.♕d1 ♕e5 24.f4  
 ♕xb2 25.♕f6 wins.

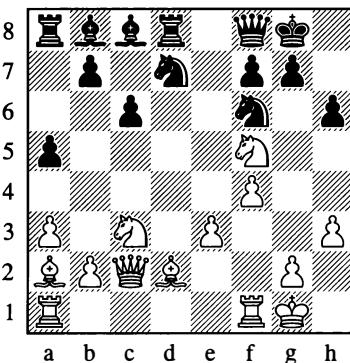
The last chance was 21...g8!. 22.♕c2 (22.♕xf7 ♕f8!) 22...g6 23.♕xg6 fxg6  
 24.♕f4 ♕f6 25.♕xd4! ♕xd4 26.♕e1! ♕g7  
 27.♕g5 White has excellent compensation for the pawn, but the fight continues.



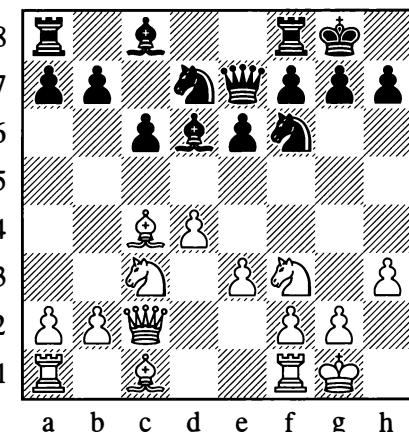
22.♕fe1!+– Smagin – Monin, Pinsk 1986. Black has no good defence against ♕xd4 followed by ♕e7. In the game he gave up his queen but soon had to resign.

### 10.h3

In the decisive final game of the match Karpov switched to a different move: 10.a3?! e5 11.h3 ♕c7 12.♕a2 h6 13.♕h4 ♕e8 14.♕f5 ♕f8 15.♕b5 ♕b8 16.♕d2 a5 17.dxe5 ♕xe5 18.f4 ♕b8 19.♕c3 ♕d8



20.♕e1! Karpov finds a nice way to improve the bishop. 20...♕h7?! 21.♕h4 ♕df6 22.♕ad1 ♕xd1 23.♕xd1 ♕e6? A blunder in a difficult position. 24.♕xe6 fxe6 25.♕b3! ♕e8 26.♕xg7! ♕f7 27.♕xe6 Black soon had to resign in Karpov – Anand, Brussels (8) 1991.



### 10...a6

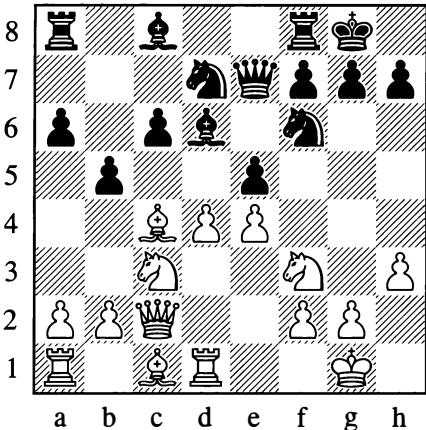
In the next Meran game Anand switched to 10...c5 with a much better result: 11.dxc5 ♕xc5 12.e4 ♕d6 13.♕d4 ♕e5 14.♕b3 ♕d7 15.♕e3 ♕g6 16.♕ad1 ♕fd8 17.♕f3 ♕c6 Black obtained a lovely position and went on to win

a long game, Karpov – Anand, Brussels (6) 1991.

Since that time 10...e5 has become the main line.

### 11.e4 e5 12.♗d1 b5

This move diverts the bishop from the f7-pawn, but gives White a target on which to bite.



### 13.♗f1!

With this long retreat Karpov moves his bishop out of the way of Black's potential counterplay on the e-file. In certain positions the knight may use the e2-square as well.

### 13...c5?!

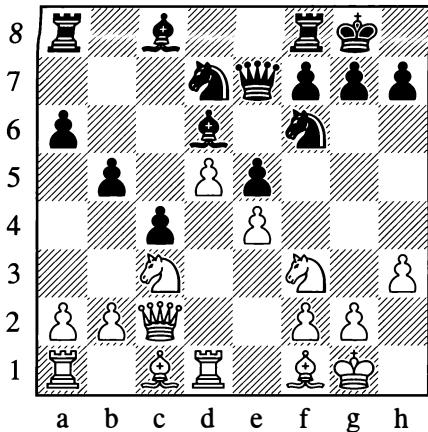
The resulting change in the central configuration favours White.

13...♗b7 14.dxe5 ♗xe5 15.♗d4! is somewhat unpleasant for Black.

It was worth considering improving the rook with 13...♖e8?! or 13...♗d8?!

### 14.d5 c4

Anand follows up his previous move in a consistent manner, hoping to develop queenside play. 14...♗h5 was possible, although White's plan involving a4 would be strong here too.



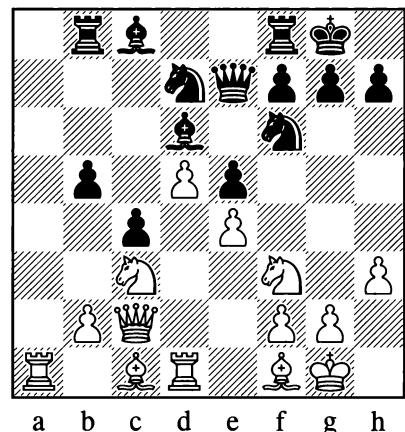
### 15.a4!

Karpov wastes no time in undermining Black's queenside structure. It will take some time, but he never loses sight of this goal.

### 15...♗b8

15...b4 16.♗e2 highlights one of the advantages of the earlier bishop retreat to f1 instead of e2. Black's best looks to be 16...♘c5 17.♗g3 c3!? 18.bxc3 b3 19.♗b1, but it is doubtful that his compensation for the sacrificed pawn can be sufficient.

### 16.axb5 axb5



### 17.♗a5!

Karpov forces Black's queenside pawns to

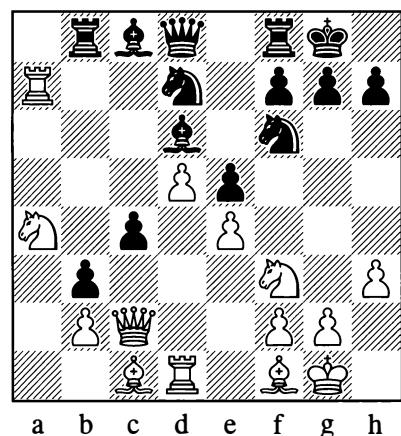
advance prematurely, before the second player can consolidate with ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

### 17... $\mathbb{B}b4$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}a4$

Karpov mentions the alternative 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , which entails an exchange sacrifice. The idea is interesting, but after 18... $\mathbb{W}d8!$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  20. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  22. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}a2$  the position is roughly balanced.

### 18... $\mathbb{W}d8$ 19. $\mathbb{B}a7$ b3!

19... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  (Another option is 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  21. $\mathbb{B}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{B}a7$  c3 23.bxc3 bxc3 24. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  and White is better here as well.) 20... $\mathbb{W}xb6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  23. $\mathbb{B}a1$ ! White can exploit his lead in development, as after 23...c3 24. $\mathbb{B}a5$  b3 25. $\mathbb{W}d3$  Black is in trouble.



### 20. $\mathbb{W}e2!!$

With this great move Karpov intends to play  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  followed by  $\mathbb{W}xc4$ , without allowing the reply ... $\mathbb{B}b4$ .

Anand may have been expecting the immediate 20. $\mathbb{W}xc4?$   $\mathbb{B}b4!$  when Black gets good counterplay as ... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  is coming next.

### 20... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

Anand makes the best of his situation and wittily creates play on the queenside.

If 20... $\mathbb{h}6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  White carries out his plan unhindered.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 22. $\mathbb{B}a1$ !

22. $\mathbb{B}a4$  runs into 22... $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  when the exchange sacrifice does not bring any advantage: 23. $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  26. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  The position is roughly equal.

### 22...c3!

Anand keeps playing with great imagination.

### 22... $\mathbb{W}d6$

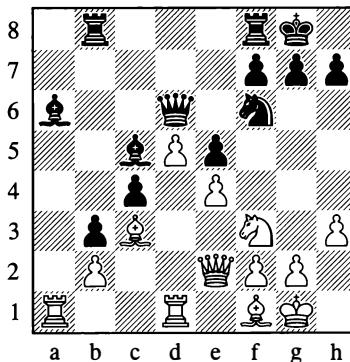
With this move Black defends his queenside, but risks becoming too passive.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

After 23. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (23...c3?! 24.bxc3 b2 25. $\mathbb{B}ab1$  is not helping Black) 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  White exerts pressure on the c4-pawn, but it is hard to say if it is enough for a serious advantage.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

Karpov stops here, evaluating the position as clearly better for White. The verdict is more or less correct, but we can look a bit further.

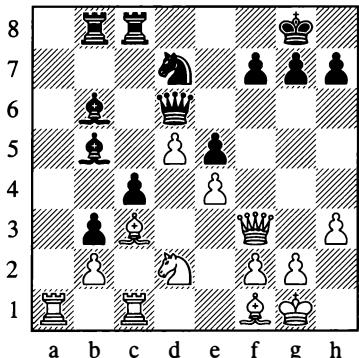


### 24... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

25. $\mathbb{B}a5$   $\mathbb{B}fc8$  defends.

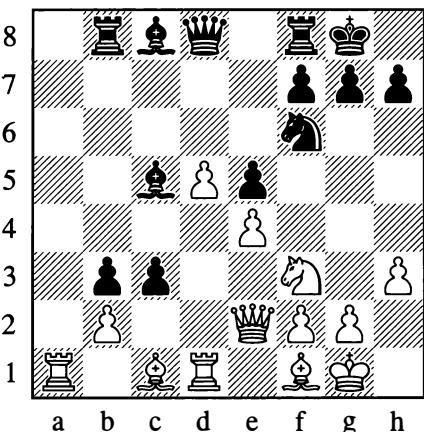
### 25... $\mathbb{B}fc8$ 26. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}b5$ 27. $\mathbb{B}dc1$ $\mathbb{Q}b6$

White certainly has the advantage, but how should he increase it?



28.  $\mathbb{W}g3!$

28.  $\mathbb{Q}xb3 \mathbb{Q}xf2\#$  is not entirely convincing. After the text move  $\mathbb{Q}e2-g4$  is a promising plan, and White may also consider preparing f4. Black faces a difficult defence.

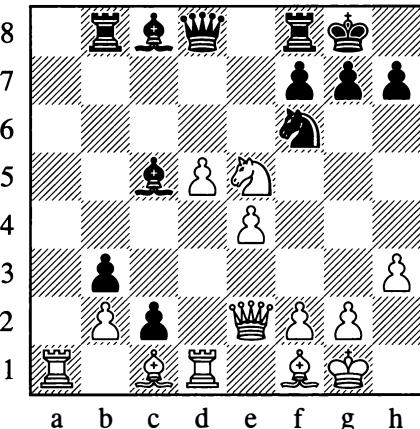


23.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$

Karpov not only plays well strategically, but also controls the tactical battle with expert precision.

Less convincing is: 23.  $bxc3$  b2! 24.  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2!$  (After 24...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  25.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  White keeps his extra pawn.) 25.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  27.  $\mathbb{W}xd2$  e4 28.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (If 28.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  e3! Black becomes active.) 28...  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29. c4  $\mathbb{W}d6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black has decent compensation for the pawn.

23... c2



24.  $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

Karpov brings the rook to the third rank in order to eliminate the b3-pawn as soon as possible. As long as Black's b3- and c2-pawns remain on the board White can never relax.

The alternative was: 24.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  (24...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{W}xb8$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e3+-$ ) 25.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  29.  $dxc6$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  White is better here too. He has an extra pawn and his c6-pawn is also strong, but Black has kept hold of his annoying queenside pawns.

24...  $\mathbb{W}e8?$

Anand avoids the knight fork and keeps both his bishops, but he has no time for it as his queenside pawns are too vulnerable.

Sacrificing the exchange was not an option: 24...  $\mathbb{Q}e8?$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  (26...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e3+-$ ) 27.  $\mathbb{Q}f3+-$

24...  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

Developing the bishop would have led to an exciting fight, with a lot of tactical possibilities on both sides. It would have been hard even for these great players to handle the ensuing positions correctly.

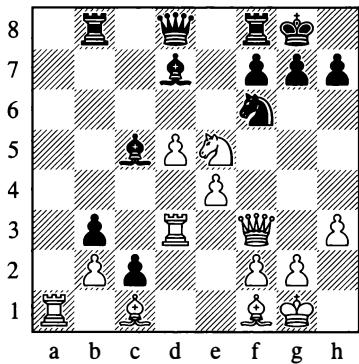
25.  $\mathbb{W}f3!$

This looks like the best chance to preserve

White's advantage.

25.♕xd7 ♜xd7 26.♗g5 ♜b6 (26...♝fc8!?)  
27.e5 ♜f5 28.♗e3 ♜e4 The position is complicated.

25.♗c3 ♔d4 (25...♔b5 26.♗f3 ♜e7  
27.♗xb3 ♜xe5 28.♗f4 ♜d4 29.♗e3 ♜xe4  
30.♗xe4 ♜xe4 31.♗xb5 ♔xe3 32.fxe3 ♜d2  
33.♗c1 ♜xf1 Black should be able to hold.)  
26.♕xd7 ♜xd7 27.♗d3 ♜f6 The position is double-edged.



25...♔b5

25...♝e8 26.♕d7! (26.♗f4 can be met by 26...♝xe4! [but not 26...♝b4 27.♗xb3 ♜xe4 28.♕xd7 ♜xd7 29.♗c3 ♜xf4 30.♗xf4 ♜xd5 31.♗d3 when White keeps the material])  
27.♗xe4 f6 28.d6 fxe5 when Black is by no means worse.) 26...♝xd7 27.♗xb3 ♜xb3 28.♗xb3 ♜xe4 29.♔e3 ♜xe3 30.♗xe3 (30.fxe3 g6) 30...♜xd5 31.♗e2 ♜c8 32.♗c1 White picks up the c2-pawn and has decent winning chances.

26.♗xb3 ♜xf1 27.♗c3

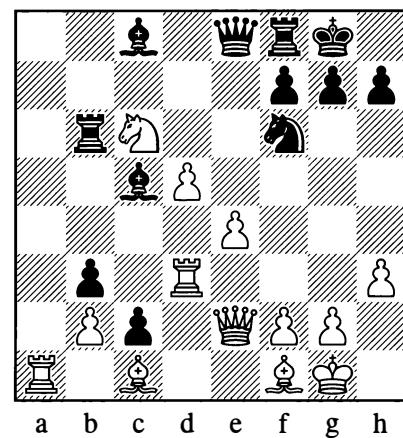
27.♗xf1 ♜xb3 28.♗xb3 ♜xe4 29.♗d3 ♔b6 If White has any advantage here, it is small.  
27.♗c6!? ♜xb3 28.♗xb3 ♜d6 29.♗xc2 reaches a complicated position in which White's chances are slightly better.

27...♔b5 28.♗xc5 ♜e7 29.♗xc2 ♜xe5 30.♗f4 ♜xe4 31.♗xe4 ♜xe4 32.♗xb8 ♜xb8

White will press with his rook and two pawns against Black's two minor pieces, but the second player has reasonable drawing chances.

25.♗c6 ♜b6

25...♝b7!? may have offered more stubborn resistance than the game continuation, although Black is still struggling: 26.e5 (26.♗e3 ♜d6 27.♗d4 is also promising) 26...♝xd5 27.♗a5 ♜d7 28.♗xb3 ♜b6 29.♗d2 White will soon pick up the c2-pawn, but winning the game will still require some effort.



26.♗e3!

Neutralizing Black's strong bishop. Note that 26.e5? would be useless due to 26...♝xd5.

26...♝xe4 27.♗xc5 ♜xc5 28.♗e3!

With this move White wins a huge tempo, which gives him time to attack the b3-pawn.

28...♜d7 29.♗c4!

After this move Black's position is on the verge of collapse.

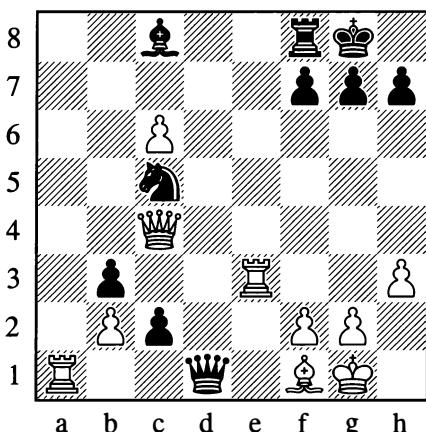
29...♜xc6!?

Anand finds the best practical try, but ultimately it is insufficient.

29...♜d6 loses without much of a fight:  
30.♗e7† (In his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov gave 30.♗c3 ♜d7 31.♗xb3, which is presumably what he calculated during the game. White is winning comfortably here, but the main line is even more convincing.)

30... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  31. $\mathbb{R}a8$  White wins a piece and the game.

### 30.dxc6 $\mathbb{W}d1$



### 31. $\mathbb{R}e1!$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 32. $\mathbb{W}c3!$

With these two cool-headed moves Karpov decides the outcome of the game. By taking away the d2-square and defending the e1-rook, he enables the other rook to move along the a-file.

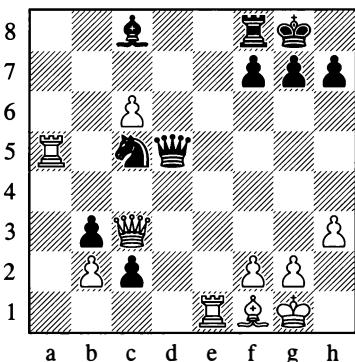
### 32... $\mathbb{W}d5$

If 32... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  33. $\mathbb{W}e5!$  wins.

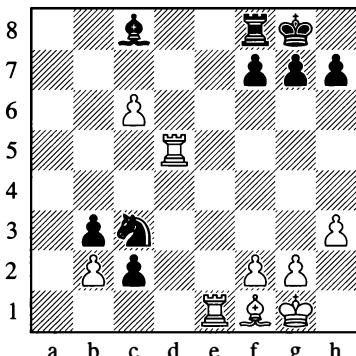
### 33.c7

Keeping a passed pawn on the seventh rank is a useful insurance policy.

With 33. $\mathbb{R}a5$  White can also win the pawns, but he must carry out the operation with care:

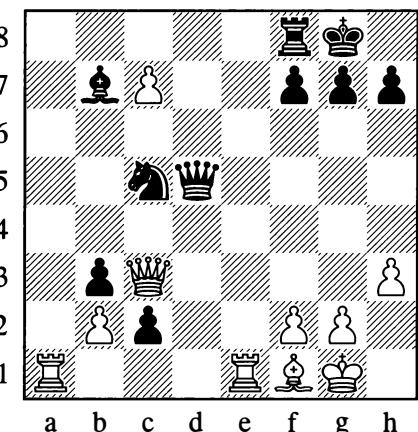


33... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ! 34. $\mathbb{R}xd5$  (34. $\mathbb{W}b4?$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  is not so easy. The simplest win is 34. $\mathbb{W}xc2!$ , although Karpov does not mention it.) 34... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$



35. $\mathbb{R}d3$ ! (35. $\mathbb{R}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$ ! 36. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$ ! 37. $\mathbb{R}c1$  [37. $\mathbb{R}xb3??$   $\mathbb{Q}d1!$  even wins for Black!] 37... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black is still alive.) 35... $\mathbb{Q}a2$  36. $\mathbb{R}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (36... $c1=\mathbb{W}$  37. $\mathbb{R}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  38. $\mathbb{R}b8$  is winning for White.) 37. $\mathbb{R}b6$   $c1=\mathbb{W}$  38. $\mathbb{R}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  39.c7 White should be winning the ending, but the game continuation is a lot more straightforward.

### 33... $\mathbb{R}b7$



### 34. $\mathbb{R}a5$

Now this move decides the game without leaving any doubts.

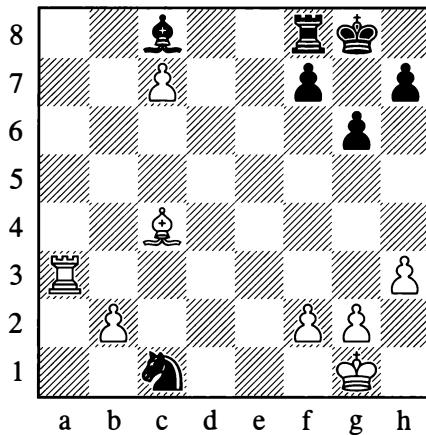
34... $\mathbb{Q}e4$  35. $\mathbb{R}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  36. $\mathbb{R}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$   
37. $\mathbb{R}xb3$

Compared with the variation examined in the note to move 33, the attack on the b7-bishop makes the win so much easier.

**37...♝c8 38.♝c4!**

Preparing to trap the knight.

**38...g6 39.♝a3 c1=♛ 40.♝xc1 ♞xc1**



**41.♝c3**

Karpov could have won by pushing the b-pawn, but the simplest way is to collect the trapped knight.

**41...♝e8 42.♝xc1 ♜e7 43.♝f1**

1–0

In Game 5 Anand played Short's set-up in the Advance Caro-Kann. In an equal middlegame Karpov played passively, and the Indian grandmaster outmanoeuvred him skilfully. But later Anand missed several wins and the game was eventually drawn. Then in Game 6 Anand equalized easily in the Semi-Slav and gradually outplayed Karpov. This time he made no mistake and successfully converted his advantage in the endgame.

In Game 7 Karpov once again got into trouble in the Advance Caro-Kann, but he managed to hold a tough endgame. This meant that everything would rest on the eighth and final game. Perhaps affected by the tension, Anand misplayed the early middlegame in a Semi-Slav, and a subsequent blunder sealed his fate. Thus Karpov advanced to the semi-final stage, but the match was close and in several games he was struggling to draw.

Next in Karpov's calendar was the World Cup event in Reykjavik. He started with a fine win over Speelman, involving a tactical combination followed by skilful conversion of his endgame advantage in a position with queen and several pawns versus the Englishman's rook and two bishops. In Round 2 he made a quick draw against Portisch. This was followed by a win over Salov on the white side of a complicated Queen's Indian. In Round 4 Karpov was a pawn down

against Beliavsky, but managed to hold the endgame thanks to his strong bishop pair.

Karpov won the next three games in succession. He defeated Hjartarson and Khalifman (see page 462) with the white pieces, then Gulko with black. But then the magic ended in Round 8 when he tried too hard to win an equal ending against Ljubojevic and ended up losing.

Karpov recovered and held Ivanchuk from a slightly worse position in the Caro-Kann, then won convincingly against Andersson on the white side of a Bogo-Indian. His next three games, against Seirawan, Nikolic and Timman, were all drawn relatively quickly. In the penultimate round Karpov outplayed Ehlvest on the white side of a Grünfeld and won in good style. In the fifteenth and final round Karpov outplayed Chandler but the Englishman stubbornly defended a pawn-down endgame and eventually, after missing a few wins, Karpov had to take a draw after 119 moves.

Karpov's final score of  $10\frac{1}{2}/15$  was enough to share first place with Ivanchuk. The second World Cup was aborted after this tournament, which was the first of the new series. It was a success for Karpov, who showed that he could still play great chess.

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Karpov's next tournament was a double-round-robin event in Tilburg. He started with a double white, but could only draw with Bareev and Short. He drew the next game in seventeen moves against Timman. In Round 4 Karpov built up a winning position against Korchnoi, but allowed the crafty veteran to escape with an ingenious piece sacrifice in the ending. In Round 5 Karpov made his fifth consecutive draw after neutralizing Kamsky with the Caro-Kann.

In Round 6 Karpov faced Anand, who once again played the Short System against the Caro-Kann. A complicated game ensued. At one point Karpov had the edge, but then the game turned against him and the Indian grandmaster was able to take a measure of revenge for his defeat in their candidates match. In Round 7 Karpov faced Kasparov, who ventured a hair-raisingly complicated piece sacrifice in a Classical King's Indian. Karpov responded well and missed a win in the middlegame, though he kept the advantage. The game eventually settled in an intriguing endgame where Karpov had a bishop and two knights versus Kasparov's rook. Despite being tricky for the defender, it was a theoretical draw and Kasparov successfully held it. Thus Karpov ended the first half of the tournament on "minus one" and without a win.

Amazingly, after six draws out of his first seven rounds, Karpov only drew one more game in the rest of the tournament! In Round 8 he received a gift from Bareev, who blundered a piece in the early middlegame and soon resigned. In the next game he held Short. In Round 10 Karpov defeated Timman, and in Round 11 he got the better of Korchnoi in a complicated English. Then he suffered a setback on the white side of a Grünfeld against Kamsky, blundering in a difficult endgame. He almost suffered a second white defeat after being outplayed by Anand in a Queen's Indian, but the Indian squandered his advantage and collapsed. In the fourteenth and final round, Karpov was blown away by Kasparov's lethal preparation in the Scotch and although he lasted until move 44, he was never in the game.

Karpov's final score of  $7\frac{1}{2}/14$  was good enough for fourth place behind Kasparov, Short and Anand. It was not a disastrous result, but it was not a great one either.

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Karpov's final event of the year was the 1991/92 Reggio Emilia tournament, which started in December and finished in January. He started with a good win over Beliavsky, then he held Salov who surprised him with a Scotch. In Round 3 he used his trusted Sämisch Variation against Kasparov's King's Indian, but got into serious trouble and was on the brink of defeat, but eventually managed to hold the endgame. In Round 4 he played the Zaitsev against Khalifman, but eventually lost after an extremely sharp struggle.

Karpov bounced back with a win over Mikhail Gurevich, then drew his final four games against Anand, Polugaevsky, Ivanchuk and Gelfand. His final score of 5/9 was good enough for fourth place. Interestingly the winner of the tournament was Anand, who scored a superb win with the black pieces against Kasparov.

In 1991 Karpov achieved some successes; he won two tournaments, and was victorious in his candidates match against Anand. Nevertheless his overall results did not match the tremendous level he had achieved during the eighties. It looks like he may have once again played in too many tournaments and lacked the energy to perform at his best in all of them. 1991 was the year in which he turned forty, so his age may have been a factor, especially with so many talented young super-GMs moving through the ranks.

## 1991 Summary

Reggio Emilia (1st place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/12$  (+3 =9 -0)

Linares (7th-8th place):  $6\frac{1}{2}/13$  (+4 =5 -4)

Euwe Memorial, Amsterdam (4th place):  $5\frac{1}{2}/9$  (+2 =7 -0)

Match versus Agdestein, Gjovik: Drew 2–2 (+1 =2 –1)

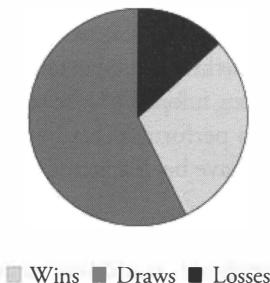
Candidates quarter-final match versus Anand (Brussels): Won  $4\frac{1}{2}–3\frac{1}{2}$  (+2 =5 –1)

World Cup, Reykjavik (1st-2nd place):  $10\frac{1}{2}/15$  (+7 =7 –1)

Tilburg (4th place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/14$  (+4 =7 –3)

Reggio Emilia (4th place):  $5/9$  (+2 =6 –1)

Total 58.3% (+25 =48 –11)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1992

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Rating 2725 (2 in the world)

Karpov's first tournament in 1992 (apart from Reggio Emilia which began in December 1991 and ran into 1992) was the prestigious Linares super-GM event. Karpov started well, grinding out a win against Ljubojevic on the black side of a 2.d3 Caro-Kann. In Round 2 he had the black pieces again, but this time Kasparov took the initiative in a 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann and never let Karpov off the hook. In Round 3 he got no advantage against Anand's QGA and the game ended in a draw.

In the next two rounds Karpov faced two Englishmen. Speelman opted for the Four Knights opening and sacrificed a piece for a promising initiative, but Karpov managed to hold. Then in Round 5 Short experimented with the Ilyin-Zhenevsky variation of the Dutch Defence, but failed to equalize and Karpov won convincingly. In Round 6 Karpov moved to "plus two" with a hard-fought win on the black side of a Scotch against Illescas.

In Round 7 Karpov faced Valery Salov. The Russian grandmaster contested fifty six games against the world champions, winning eight, drawing twenty four, and losing thirteen. Hitherto Karpov had played him eight times, with one win apiece and six draws. Their lifetime score is six wins to four in favour of Karpov, with ten draws.

## Game 26

Anatoly Karpov – Valery Salov

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Linares 1992

### 1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ b6 4.g3

Karpov played the white side of this position seven times against Salov. He did well with it, scoring five wins, one draw and one loss.

### 4... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

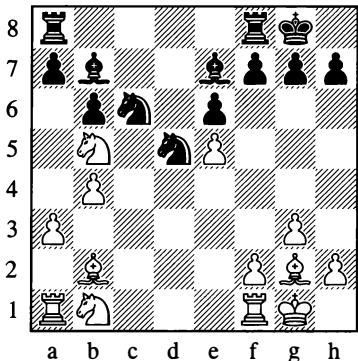
Previously Salov had favoured 4... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , scoring a win, a draw and a loss against Karpov. The text move was also a mainstay of his repertoire.

### 5.b3 $\mathbb{Q}b7$

Karpov faced this move seven times, and won them all. It is a wonderful record, although in one of the games he was losing and only won after Anand misplayed his position.

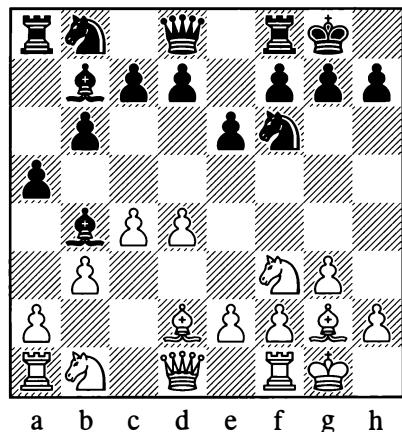
### 6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}b4\#$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ a5

Karpov faced 7...c5 just once. The game proceeded as follows: 8.0–0 0–0 9.♕c3 d5 10.cxd5 ♜xd5 11.♗b2 cxd4 12.♗xd4 ♜f6?! (12...f6??) 13.a3 ♜xd4 (13...♗e7 14.♗d2 ♜f6 15.♗c3 ♜h5 16.♗e5 ♜d8 17.♗fd1 White is somewhat better here as well.) 14.♗xd4 ♜c5 15.♗b5! ♜c6?! (Better was 15...♝c8 16.♗c3 a6 17.♗xd5 ♜xd5 18.♗xd5 exd5 19.♗c3 ♜e8 and Black is not much worse.) 16.b4! ♜e7 17.e4! ♜f6 18.e5 ♜d5



19.♗c3! After gaining space with his pawns, Karpov exchanges some pieces in order to invade. 19...♜xc3 20.♕xc3 ♜d8 21.♗xb7 ♜xb7 22.♗fd1 ♜fd8 23.♗xd8† ♜xd8 24.♗d1 a6 25.♗d7 axb5 26.♗xb7 White obtained a clear advantage and went on to win, Karpov – Korchnoi, Biel 1992.

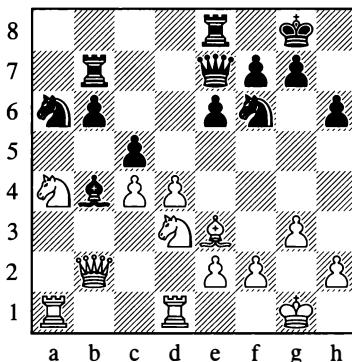
## 8.0–0 0–0



## 9.♗c3

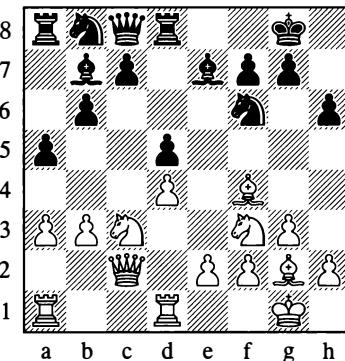
In each of the other games in which he reached this position, Karpov favoured 9.♗c2. He faced several replies:

a) 9...c5 10.♗d1 ♜a6 11.♗e3 a4 12.♗c3 axb3 13.axb3 d5 (13...d6??) 14.♗a4 h6 15.♗b2 ♜e8 (15...♝g4??) 16.♗e5 ♜b8?! 17.♗d3! Karpov creates additional pressure against Black's hanging pawns. 17...dxc4? 18.♗xb7 ♜xb7 19.bxc4 ♜e7



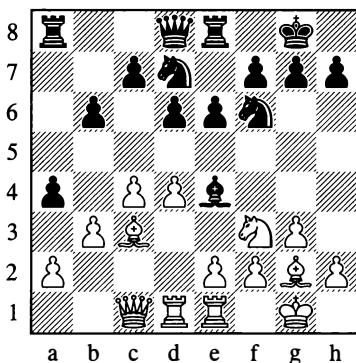
20.♗axc5! bxc5 21.♗xa6 White won a pawn and later the game, Karpov – Nikolic, Tilburg 1988.

b) 9...h6 10.a3 (At Tilburg the previous year Karpov chose 10.♗c3 against Anand, but he was outplayed in the middlegame and was fortunate to win in the end.) 10...♝e7 11.♗c3 d5 12.♗fd1 ♜c8 13.cxd5 exd5 14.♗f4 ♜d8

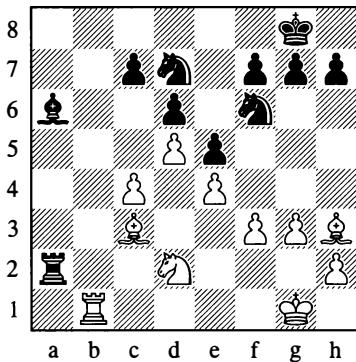


15.♘h4! ♜f8 16.♘f5 ♜d7? A mistake in an already difficult position. 17.♘e3 ♜d8 18.♗e5 c6 19.♗h3 ♜e7 20.♗xf6 gxsf6 21.♘f5 Karpov has already outplayed his opponent strategically and he converted his advantage convincingly, Karpov – Lobron, Baden-Baden 1992.

c) 9...d6 10.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11.  $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{E}e8?$ ! 12.  $\mathbb{E}fe1$   
 White threatens to assume full control over  
 the centre with e4. 12...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
 14.  $\mathbb{W}c1$  a4



15.♗h3! Karpov wants to gain space in the centre without exchanging the light-squared bishops. 15...axb3 16.axb3 ♜a2 17.♗d2 ♜a8 18.♗xa2 ♜xa2 19.♗d2 b5 20.f3 ♜c6 21.e4 bxc4 22.bxc4 e5 23.♗a1 ♜a8 24.♗xa2 ♜xa2 25.d5 ♜b7 26.♗b1 ♜a6



27.c5! dxc5 28.f4! With the last two powerful moves White obtained a clear advantage which he converted smoothly in Karpov – Romanishin, Tilburg 1993.

9...d5

The main line is 9...d6, but Salov prefers a different approach.

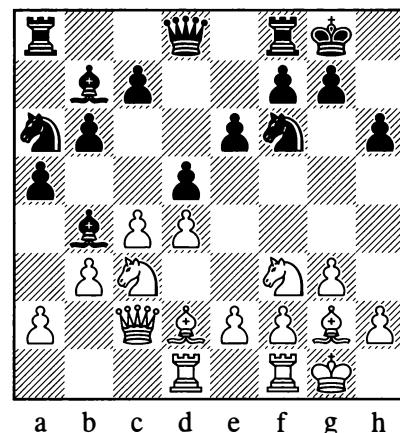
10.  $\mathbb{W}c_2$

Later in the same year Karpov drew quickly from the other side of the board: 10.cxd5 ♖xc3 11.♖xc3 ♖xd5 12.♕e1 ♔a6 13.f3 c5 14.dxc5 ♖xc5 15.♗d3 ♖b7 16.♗xc5 bxc5 17.♘xd8 ½-½ Chernin – Karpov, Tilburg 1992.

10...♞a6 11.♝ad1

Karpov decides to postpone any ideas of taking on d5 or kicking the enemy bishop with a3, but he does not forget about these possibilities.

11...h6



12. ♕e5!

Karpov exerts pressure on Black's centre.

12... ♕c8

Defending the b7-bishop is a useful precaution for Black.

13.♔h3 ♕e8

Salov wants to have the option to recapture on d5 with the e-pawn.

## 14.cxd5 exd5

This is not a bad move, although there is always a risk that Black's central pawns will come under unpleasant pressure, as occurs later in the game.

14... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$

By giving away one half of his bishop pair, Black avoids creating a structural target. The note to White's tenth move reveals that Karpov employed the same idea when Chernin took on d5 against him. It is even possible that he got the idea when analysing the present game.

15. $\mathbb{W}xc3$

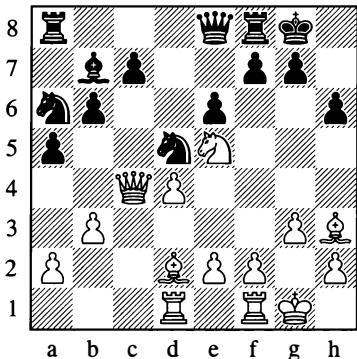
After 15. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}ab4$  Black pieces are active enough.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

15... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ? is well met by 16.f3!

16. $\mathbb{W}c4$

16. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  is solid enough.



16...c5!

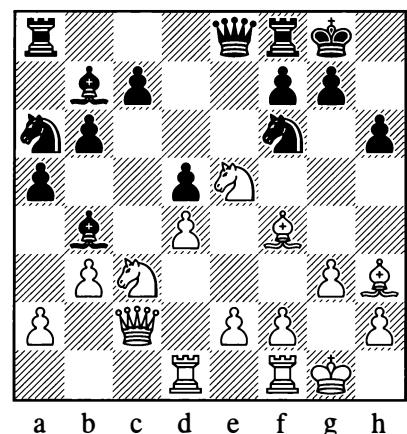
Piece play is not enough to solve Black's problems: 16... $\mathbb{Q}ab4$  17.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (17... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  18. $\mathbb{W}c1$  f6 19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  White gets the upper hand in the centre.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  19. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  20. $\mathbb{E}c1$  White has a long-lasting initiative on the c-file.

17.e4  $\mathbb{Q}db4$  18.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  21. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$

Black pieces are active, so he can live with White's bishops.

15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

It was possible to play on the kingside with 15.f4, but ceding an outpost in the centre is hardly Karpov's style.



15... $\mathbb{Q}d8$

It was worth considering 15... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ , playing against the knight immediately and preparing ... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ . 16. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (16. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  and 16. $\mathbb{Q}fel$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  are both okay for Black.) 16... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  17. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  19. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  White is a little better, but Black should be able to live with his slight pawn weaknesses.

16. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$

Black decides to lose a tempo in order to drive the enemy bishop back. There were several other ideas available.

16... $\mathbb{W}e7$ ?! 17. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  18.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  White is clearly better.

16... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ? (The superior 17... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  gives Black a playable position.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $\mathbb{W}xh6$  (18... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xg7+$ –) 19. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21.g4 White's attack is very strong.

16... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ? seems simplest: 17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (There is also 17...c5?! 18.dxc5 bxc5 when Black is okay.) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  Black should be able to withstand White's pressure in the centre.

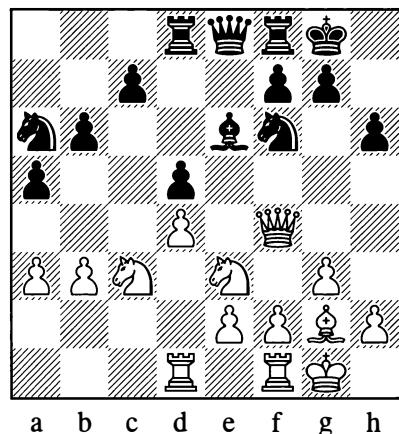
**17.♗g2 ♗b7 18.a3 ♗d6 19.♘c4!**

Karpov exploits the pin on the long diagonal to transfer the knight to e3. It is a strong albeit well-known motif in this opening.

**19...♗xf4 20.♗xf4 ♗c8?!**

Salov transfers the bishop to e6, which often happens in the related Tartakower-Bondarevsky-Makogonov variation. The idea is playable, but there was something better.

20...a4! This clever move allows Black to maintain a dynamically equal game: 21.♘e3 (21.bxa4?? ♗c6 wins a piece; 21.♗xa4 b5 22.♘a5 bxa4 23.♗xb7 ♗b8 Black becomes very active.) 21...axb3 22.♗b1 (22.♗f5 c5; 22.♗f5 c6) 22...♗e4 23.♗xd5 (23.♗fc1 f5) 23...♗xd5 24.♗xd5 ♗xd5 25.♗xe4 ♗xd4 26.♗h7† ♗xh7 27.♗xd4 ♗c5 Black is an exchange down, but he is very much in the game thanks to the mighty protected passed pawn on b3.

**21.♘e3 ♗e6****22.♗f5!**

This virtually forces Black to exchange his light-squared bishop.

**22...♗xf5****22...♗h7?!**

This cheeky move is not really effective.

**23.e4?!**

Attempting to refute Black's play.

The point behind Black's previous move is that 23.♗xh6?! can be met by 23...♗g6! with unclear play.

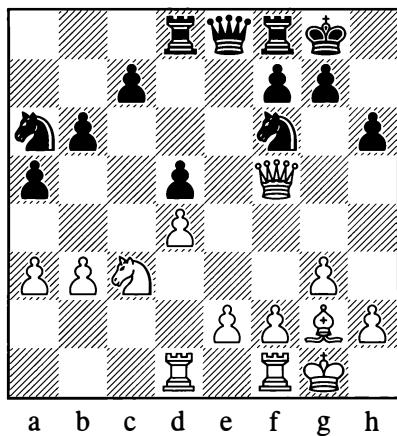
However, White can always just improve his position with moves like 23.h3 or 23.♗c1, when he keeps a nice advantage.

**23...dxe4 24.♗xh6 ♗h5**

Now 24...♗g6? is not working as 25.♗xe4 ♗xe4 26.♗xe4† f5 27.♗xf5! ♗xf5 28.♗g4† wins.

**25.♗g5 gxh6 26.♗xh5 f5 27.♗e2 ♗xb3 28.♗xa6 ♗c6 29.♗c1 ♗c4 30.♗a7 ♗a8 31.d5**

White saves his queen and keeps a clear advantage.

**23.♗xf5****23...♗e6?**

By defending the d5-pawn in this unfortunate way, Salov allows his a6-knight to be driven into a bad position.

Abandoning the d-pawn was not really an option: 23...♗e7? 24.♗xd5 ♗xd5 25.♗xd5 ♗xa3 26.♗c4 White's bishop is clearly superior to Black's knight.

The best chance was:

23...c6!

This move has the advantage of using a less powerful unit to defend a weakness, but its real value lies in the fact that it vacates the c7-square in order to facilitate the transfer of the a6-knight to the centre.

24.e4!?

Opening the centre is a principled reaction, which brings White some activity. Black must take care not to be blown away.

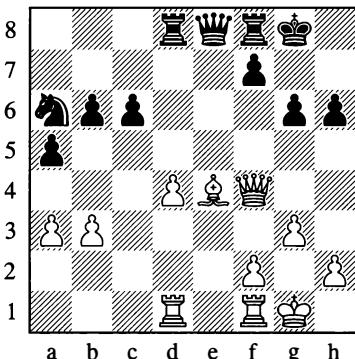
Quieter alternatives do not lead anywhere special, for instance: 24. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  25. $\mathbb{E}c1$  (25.b4  $\mathbb{E}a8$ ) 25... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ !? This implies a pawn sacrifice. (Black has a safer alternative in 25... $\mathbb{W}d7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  27. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  [27... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ] 28. $\mathbb{W}b2$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  when all his pieces stand well.) 26. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  27.e3 (27. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ ) 27... $\mathbb{W}d7$  28. $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  c5 Black gets promising play for the pawn.

24...dxe4

24... $\mathbb{W}e6$  does not solve all Black's problems: 25. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  fxe6 26.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  27.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  28. $\mathbb{E}c1$  White is somewhat better.

25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  g6 27. $\mathbb{W}f4$

After 27. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}d6$  28. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  29. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  Black has enough compensation to maintain the balance.



27... $\mathbb{W}f7$

Two other moves are playable:

27... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  28. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  29.d5 cxd5 30. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.

27... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  28. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (28... $\mathbb{W}d7$ ? 29. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  30.d5 c5 31.d6+!) 29. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}d6$  30.d5  $\mathbb{W}d8$  31.b4 axb4 32.axb4 cxd5 Black should be able to hold.

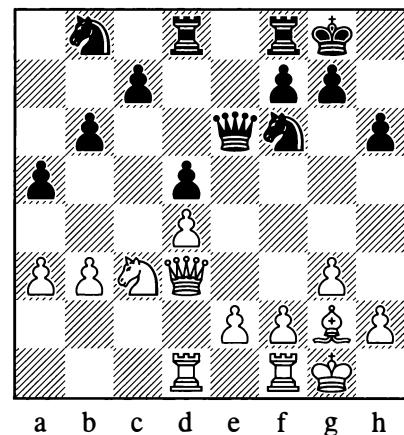
28. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  29. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{W}xb3$  30. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  31.d5  $\mathbb{W}f6$  32. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Black survives.

**24. $\mathbb{W}d3$ !**

Karpov wants more than an endgame with a small advantage. After 24. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  fxe6 25.e4 dxe4 (if 25...c6 26.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  White can press for long time to come) 26. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  28.d5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  Black should be able to survive with a knight against a bishop.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}b8$**



**25.b4!**

Karpov gains space on the queenside and prepares to fix Black's c-pawn.

**25...axb4 26.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  27.b5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$**

Salov closes the a-file and makes Karpov pay attention to the c4-square.

The alternative was:

27... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

The knight has better prospects in the centre, on the other hand it fails to block the a-file from here.

28.♕a1 ♜c8

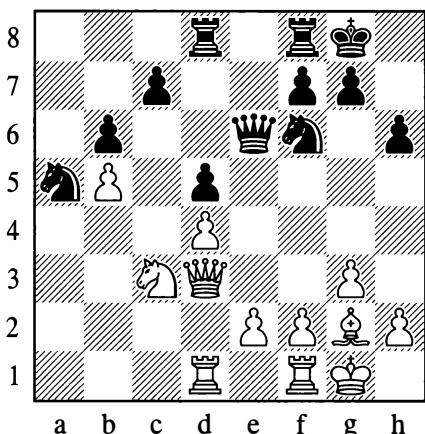
28...♝d7 29.♝fc1 and 28...♝a8 29.♝a6 are both difficult for Black.

28...c5?! is not a good idea, as the weakness on b6 is easier to attack than the one on c7.

29.bxc6 ♜c8 30.e3 ♜xc6 31.♝fb1 White has excellent chances to squeeze the full point.

29.♝fc1 ♜d6 30.e3 ♜a8 31.♝a6

White takes over the a-file and remains in full control.



28.♝fe1?!

It looks like Karpov just wanted to tire his opponent by making him calculate the consequences of e2-e4.

28...♝fe8 29.♝c1

Karpov starts directing his heavy artillery against the c7-pawn. 29.e4? would squander a large part of White's advantage, and after 29...dxe4 30.♝xe4 ♜xe4 31.♝xe4 ♜c4 Black should be all right.

29...♛d6

Salov places his queen on a nice square and reinforces the c7-pawn.

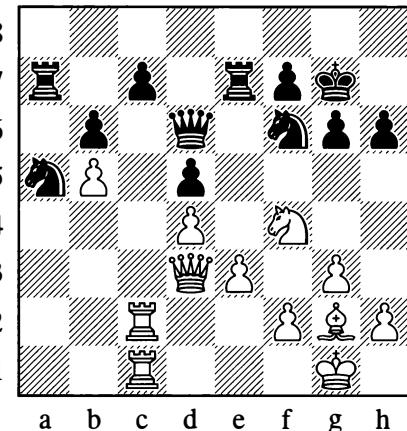
It was worth considering a more active defence involving the acquisition of extra kingside space: 29...♝e4 30.e3 f5?! 31.♝c2 (It is harder for White to arrange his rooks

on the c-file now: 31.♝c2 ♜a8 32.♝ec1 ♜b3 33.♝b1 ♜a5 White has made no progress.) 31...♝e7 32.♝f1 ♜d6 33.♝a2 (33.♝d3 ♜b4) 33...g6 34.♝d3 ♜g7 35.♝e2 ♜h7 (35...g5 36.♝c2) 36.♝g2 ♜g7 37.♝f4 ♜f6 White keeps the advantage, but he is a long way from winning. It would have been interesting to see how Karpov would have tried to break through.

30.♝c2! ♜e7 31.e3 g6 32.♝ec1 ♜g7 33.♝e2

After improving his rooks Karpov unblocks the c-file and sends his knight towards a better home.

33...♝a8 34.♝f4 ♜a7



35.♝a2!?

At first it looks like Karpov is trying to play on the a-file, but in fact he has something more subtle in mind. The real idea is to exchange Black's best defensive piece.

35...♝d7?!

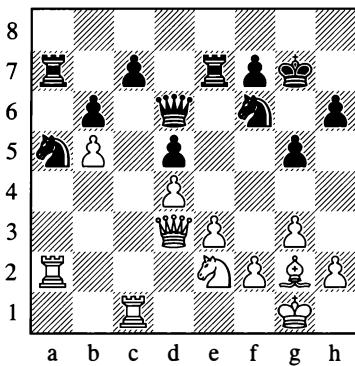
Salov may have either overlooked or underestimated Karpov's plan. It must be said that Black's alternatives were also unappealing.

It is worth pointing out that 35...♝h7? is refuted by 36.♝xa5! ♜xa5 37.♝c6.

35... $\mathbb{E}a8$  avoids the queen exchange, on the other hand White can still swap a pair of rooks which will also soften Black's position. 36. $\mathbb{E}c6$  (36. $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  is also unpleasant for Black.) 36... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  37. $\mathbb{E}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  38.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  39. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Black's position is difficult as ideas of  $\mathbb{W}a2$  or even  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  are in the air.

35... $\mathbb{W}d8$  36. $\mathbb{W}a3$ ! White clears the d3-square for his knight. (36. $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  is also promising.) 36... $\mathbb{E}e8$  37. $\mathbb{E}ac2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (37... $\mathbb{E}e7$ ? 38. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  wins.) 38. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White remains in control, and his knight will stand superbly on the e5-square.

35... $\mathbb{g}5$ !? Maybe Black should have pushed his defensive line forward and chased the knight away. 36. $\mathbb{Q}e2$



36... $\mathbb{W}e6$ ! (36... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ? allows White to exploit the weakness of the f5-square with 37.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  38.e4 or 38.g4 with  $\mathbb{Q}g3-f5$  to follow.) 37. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  38. $\mathbb{W}b1$  (38. $\mathbb{E}a3$  f5 39. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  Black is in the game) 38...f5 39. $\mathbb{E}ac2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  40. $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black remains worse, but he continues to resist.

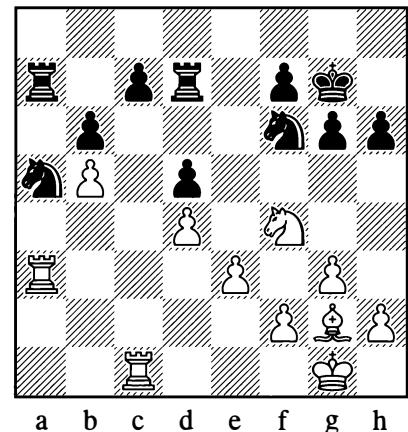
### 36. $\mathbb{W}a3$ !

Black's queen is his best defensive piece. Once it disappears, Black will have serious problems defending his weaknesses.

### 36... $\mathbb{W}xa3$

Black can no longer keep his queen on the board.

### 37. $\mathbb{E}xa3$



### 37... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Salov brings the king to the centre. This causes a subsequent traffic jam in his position, but there was no choice as his pieces are unable to hold the position together by themselves. Here is an illustrative line: 37... $\mathbb{E}d8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White nicely improves his knight. 39... $\mathbb{E}d6$  (39... $\mathbb{E}e7$  40. $\mathbb{E}xa5$ !!+) 40. $\mathbb{E}ac3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  41.h4 h5 42. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  f6 (42... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  43. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 43. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White's simple play has resulted in the creation of a third weakness on g6, which is too much for the defence to bear.

### 38. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ !

Karpov finds an even more effective square for the knight.

### 38... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Black keeps the e7-square for his rook. 38... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ? runs into 39. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}d6$  (39... $\mathbb{E}d8$  40. $\mathbb{E}xa5$ !  $\mathbb{E}xa5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c6$ †+) 40. $\mathbb{E}ac3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  41.h4  $\mathbb{E}d8$  42.h5 g5 43.f4 gxf4 44.exf4 and White has a huge advantage.

### 39. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ! h5

Salov knows that at some point Karpov

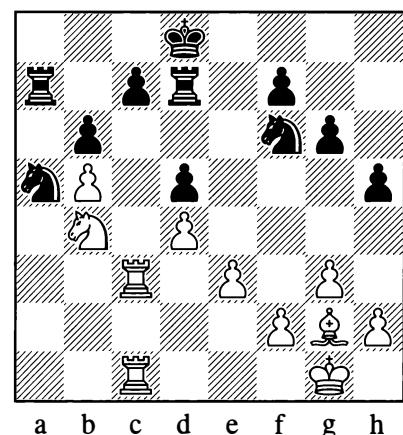
will look to push him back with his kingside pawns, so he prepares for it.

#### 40.♖ac3 ♖d8?

On the last move before the time control, Salov blunders in a difficult position. He had to try one of the following continuations.

Sitting and waiting would have been a depressing prospect: 40...♗f8 41.♕a6 ♗e8 42.♗f3 ♗g7?! By vacating the centre the black king avoids certain tactical motifs. Nevertheless he is so paralysed that one would expect Karpov to find a way to win. (42...♗b7? 43.♗b4 ♗f6 44.♗c6 White soon invades; 42...♗e7 43.♗b4 ♗f6 44.♗c6 ♗b3 45.♗c2 ♗a5 46.♗g2 Black can hardly move.) 43.h3 Advancing on the kingside is a logical way to improve White's position and squeeze the defence even more. 43...♗h6 44.♗g2 ♗g7 45.g4 hxg4 46.hxg4 ♗h6 47.♗g3 Black is in trouble.

The best chance looks to be: 40...♗e4!? 41.♗c2 (White could also consider: 41.♗xe4!? dxe4 42.♗g2 ♗d8 43.f3 exf3† 44.♗xf3 f6 45.♗f4 Karpov won a rook ending with a somewhat similar pawn structure against Portisch in Linares 1989.) 41...f5?! 42.♗d3 (There is also 42.f3 ♗f6 43.♗f2 ♗f7 44.♗d3 and Black is living dangerously.) 42...♗b3 43.♗d1 ♗a5 44.♗e5 ♗g7 45.♗f1 White maintains a great positional advantage.



#### 41.♗c6!

This sweet move finally breaks Black's resistance.

#### 41...♗e4

After 41...♗e7 the rook still cannot be taken, and 42.♗h3! wins easily.

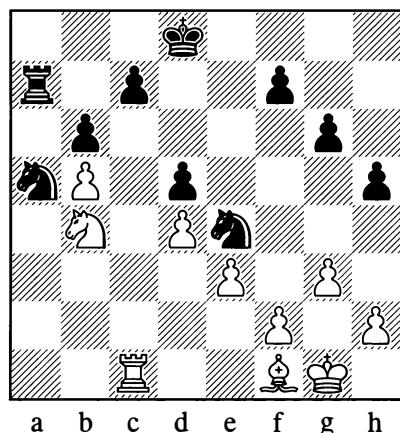
#### 42.♗h3! ♗d6

Black saves the exchange, but loses his d5-pawn. 42...♗e7 would have been refuted by the pretty 43.♗xb6!.

#### 43.♗xd6† ♗xd6 44.♗f1!

Karpov defends his own pawn before he takes his opponent's one.

#### 44...♗e4



#### 45.♗xd5

Finally the d-pawn falls, along with any realistic hopes for Black to save the game. Salov struggles on for a while longer, but he is fighting a lost cause and the rest of the game is not particularly interesting.

#### 45...♗b3 46.♗c2 g5 47.♗e2 ♗a1†

47...g4 48.f3 wins further material.

#### 48.♗g2 ♗c1 49.f3 ♗d6 50.♗f1 g4 51.fxg4 hxg4 52.♗f6 ♗a2 53.♗f2 ♗xf2† 54.♗xf2

$\mathbb{Q}a2$  55.e4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  56. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}cxb5$  57.d5 c5  
 58.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  59.e5  $\mathbb{Q}dc8$  60.c7†  $\mathbb{Q}xc7$

61. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  62. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$

1–0

This win raised Karpov's score to an impressive 5/7, but he was unable to maintain his hot run of form. In Round 8 he lost to Timman after mutual blunders just before the time control. In the next two rounds Karpov drew solidly with Ivanchuk and Gelfand. Then in Round 11 Bareev surprised him with the 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5!? variation of the Slav. Karpov got no advantage, and later he played an unsound pawn sacrifice which led to an eventual defeat. He managed to recover with a good win against Beliavsky, then drew in the last round against Yusupov.

Karpov finished fourth with a score of 7½/13, half a point behind Ivanchuk and Timman. Kasparov won the tournament by a massive two-point margin ahead of those two players. Interestingly Nigel Short finished in equal last place, but Karpov would soon find out that the English grandmaster was not a player who should be underestimated.

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Karpov's opponent in the candidates semi-final match was Nigel Short, who had defeated Gelfand and Speelman to make it this far. Although these were impressive achievements, he entered the match as the heavy underdog against Karpov.

The first game underlined Karpov's superiority. Short unveiled a surprise opening in the Budapest Gambit, but Karpov was unfazed and effortlessly obtained an opening advantage. Later he won a pawn, and converted his advantage without any problems. In Game 2 Short used his own patented system against the Caro-Kann, but Karpov equalized and drew without difficulty. In Game 3 Short wisely abandoned the Budapest and switched

to a QGA. He equalized and went on to outplay the former champion, but made some mistakes and allowed Karpov to escape with a draw from what had seemed like a hopeless situation.

Game 4 was a turning point in the match, as Short brushed aside his disappointment from the previous game and levelled the score. Karpov sacrificed an exchange to reach a drawish endgame with three pawns versus Short's two on the kingside, but the Englishman persevered and eventually won a long endgame. In Game 5 Karpov tried a different line in the QGA, but Short was ready with a new idea. Karpov got into serious trouble in the endgame and was probably lost, but he managed to salvage a draw.

In Game 6 Karpov switched to 1...e5 but Short was ready with another surprise, the Worrall System in the Ruy Lopez. Karpov got a good position but then lost his way and blundered horribly after the position had already turned against him. In Game 7 Short changed openings again and went for an Orthodox Queen's Gambit, but failed to react correctly when Karpov unleashed a novelty. Karpov won a pawn and converted it smoothly to draw level in the match.

In Game 8 Short repeated the Worrall. Karpov was ready with a different defensive set-up, but he did not manage to equalize and Short won a fine game. With just two games remaining, Karpov's situation was becoming desperate.

In Game 9 Short reverted back to the QGA. Karpov got a slight advantage but was unable to do anything with it, and Short gradually took over the initiative. He won a pawn, but Karpov managed to defend and keep his hopes alive.

In the tenth and final game, Karpov was faced with the almighty challenge of having to win with the black pieces. He abandoned his solid openings in favour of a Classical

Sicilian. Short was not interested in playing timidly for a draw, and instead opted for a Rauzer set-up with opposite-sided castling. Karpov achieved his goal of reaching a double-edged game, but unfortunately he was not at home in the ensuing middlegame and Short soon built up a winning advantage. At one point Karpov could have equalized, but he missed his chance and had to resign just after the time control as the endgame was hopeless for him.

This was the first time Karpov had lost a match to anyone other than Kasparov. He was not at his best, although credit must go to Short who played well and chose his openings cleverly. Karpov's disappointing result may have served as a wake-up call, as he played great chess in his next few tournaments and looked motivated to rediscover his form from the seventies and eighties.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was in Madrid. The event featured some top grandmasters, some local players and two of the Polgar sisters. Karpov got off to a flying start, scoring five straight wins against San Segundo, Salov, Magem Badals, Zsuzsa Polgar and Granda Zuniga. Although his opponents made a few mistakes, Karpov played convincingly.

In Round 6 he took a quick draw with Epishin – it looks like neither of them were in a mood for a fight. In the next round Karpov took a similar route with Judit Polgar, drawing on the black side of a Fort Knox French in eighteen moves. In the next game Romero Holmes cheekily played the Centre Game, and later played an interesting piece sacrifice to obtain an attack. At one point he could have created some dangerous threats, but he faltered and Karpov never let him off the hook. In the final round Karpov got a

slight advantage against Yudasin and pressed for a long time in a rook ending, but the Russian grandmaster eventually succeeded in holding a draw.

Despite the calibre of the tournament being slightly below Karpov's usual level, his final score of 7½/9 was highly impressive, and gave him first prize by a two-point margin ahead of Judit Polgar and Epishin.

Karpov's next tournament was a double-round-robin event in Biel. His opponent in Round 1 was Joel Lautier. The French grandmaster played all the world champions from Karpov to Anand, scoring fourteen wins, thirty seven draws and twenty six losses. Prior to this game he had scored one draw and one loss against Karpov. Their lifetime score is nine wins to four in Karpov's favour, with eleven draws.

## Game 27

Anatoly Karpov – Joel Lautier

Biel 1992

**1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6 4.e3 e6 5.♘f3 ♘bd7 6.♗c2**

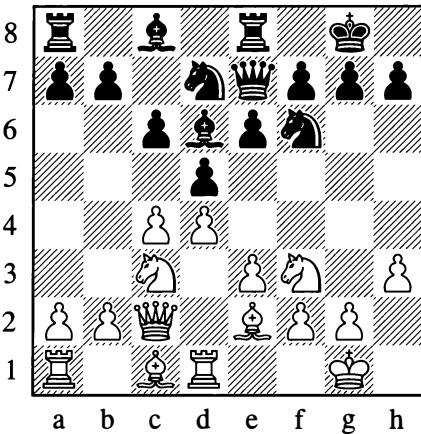
This was Karpov's usual choice against the Semi-Slav. Lautier had hardly ever played this defence before the present game, so he probably judged it to be one of the softer points of Karpov's repertoire.

**6...♗d6 7.♗e2 0–0 8.0–0 ♜e8**

Hitherto Karpov had not faced this move. He encountered it on four subsequent occasions, and scored a total of three wins and two draws.

**9.♗d1 ♜e7 10.h3**

In 1996 Karpov chose 10.a3 and drew against Kamsky.



### 10...b6

Lautier goes for one of the main lines. Developing the bishop to b7 is certainly a natural idea.

Karpov also encountered 10...h6 11.a3 in two games:

a) 11...a6 12.b3 dxc4 13.bxc4 e5 14.Qh4 Qf8 15.Qf5 Qxf5 16.Wxf5 exd4 17.exd4 c5 18.Qe3 cxd4 19.Qxd4 Qe5 20.Qxe5 Wxe5 21.Wxe5 Qxe5 22.Qab1 Karpov soon won a pawn and later the game, Karpov – Illescas Cordoba, Wijk aan Zee 1993.

b) Three years later Lautier tried his luck in the Semi-Slav again, and opted for a different approach: 11...dxc4 12.Qxc4 e5 13.Qh4 Qf8 14.dxe5 Qxe5 15.Qd2 Qc7 16.Qf5 We5 17.Qg3 Qe6 18.Qd3 Qad8 19.Qce2 Qb6 20.b4 Qg6 At this stage Black's position was all right although White eventually managed to win, Karpov – Lautier, Dortmund 1995.

### 11.e4

If White first develops his bishop to the b2-square, it will allow Black to swap the dark-squared bishops from a3.

**11...Qxe4 12.Qxe4 dxe4 13.Wxe4 Qb7  
14.Qf4**

Karpov feels he needs to exchange bishops in order to make inroads.

Avoiding exchanges with 14.Qe5 was not really dangerous: 14...f5 (14...Qf6 15.Wh4 c5 16.Qg5 h6 17.Qxf6 Wxf6 18.Wxf6 gxf6 19.Qd7 Qg7 20.dxc5 Qxc5 21.Qxc5 bxc5 Black should be able to live with his small disadvantage.) 15.We3 Qf6 (15...Qxe5 16.dxe5 Qc7 17.Qf3 White is just a fraction better.) 16.Qd2 c5 17.Qc3 Qad8 Black has a playable position.

### 14...Qad8

Black can choose from many moves, but none of them equalize. Lautier's choice did not become popular, but it is probably no worse than the alternatives.

14...c5 15.Qxd6 (15.Wxb7 Qxf4 16.dxc5 Qxc5 17.Wxe7 Qxe7 Black is okay) 15...Qxe4 16.Qxe7 Qxe7 17.dxc5 Qxc5 18.b4 Qa4 19.Qac1 White controls the d-file, which gives him an edge.

14...Qf6 15.We3 Qxf4 16.Wxf4 c5 17.Qe5 White has a typical slight plus.

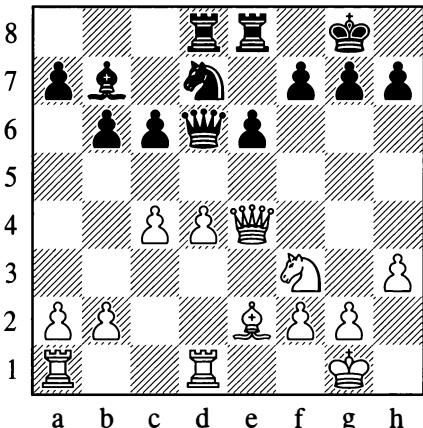
14...Qxf4 15.Wxf4 c5 16.Qc7 Qab8 17.dxc5 Qxc5 Black is slightly worse, but he should be able to hold the position.

### 15.Qxd6

Karpov proceeds with his plan of exchanging bishops.

If he avoids it, then Black will play ...c5 with good effect, for instance: 15.Qe5 Qf6 16.Qc2 (16.We3 c5! 17.dxc5 Qxc5 18.Qb3 Qe4 Black has good chances to take over the initiative.) 16...c5 Black has done well from this position.

### 15...Wxd6



**16.♘e5**

Karpov offers to exchange knights, after which he will endeavour to gain control over the d-file.

**16...♞xe5**

Lautier is unafraid.

The ugly 16...f6 does not equalize: 17.♘xd7 ♜xd7 18.c5 (18.♗e3!?) 18...♝d5 19.♗e3 Black will struggle to find a role for his passive bishop.

Maybe Black's best is 16...♞f6!? when play might continue: 17.♗e3 c5 (17...♝c7 18.♗f3 c5 19.dxc5 bxc5 20.♗xb7 ♜xb7 21.b3 ♜c7 22.♗d3 Black should be able to hold this position, but it will be not easy as the c5-pawn is weak and White will control the d-file.) 18.dxc5 ♜xc5 19.♗xc5 bxc5 20.f3 Karpov evaluates the position as slightly better for White.

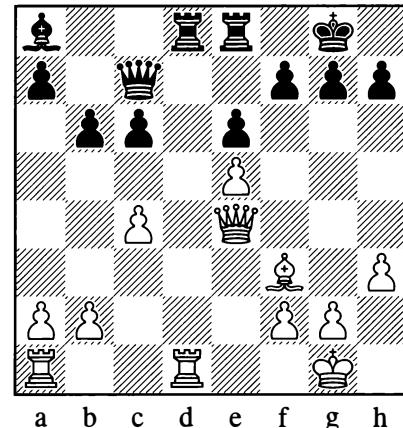
**17.dxe5 ♜c7**

White has obtained a small space advantage and he has the more active bishop, but it is not easy to hurt his opponent as he has no structural weakness.

**18.♗f3!**

Karpov prevents Black from freeing his bishop with ...c5.

**18...♝a8**



**19.♗xd8!**

Karpov finds a nice idea. Many players would only think of trying to put a rook on d6 and winning control over the d-file, but Karpov actually gives it up. The point is that without a rook Black cannot defend his light-squared bishop.

**19.♗h4!!**

Karpov mentioned this interesting alternative, which controls the d8-square and thus prevents Black from exchanging both rooks. Black has to play carefully.

**19...h6**

19...♝e7? 20.♗xd8† ♜xd8 21.♗d1 ♜c7 22.♗d4 White dominates the d-file.

19...♝xd1† 20.♗xd1 ♜xe5 21.♗d8 (21.♗d7 h6 defends) 21...♝f8 22.♗xe8† ♜xe8 23.♗xh7 ♜e7 24.♗h8 ♜b7 25.g3 White keeps some advantage in the endgame as Black's bishop is a problem.

**20.♗g3**

Planning ♜d6.

**20...♜xd1†!**

Black must exchange a pair of rooks while he has the chance.

20...c5 21.♗xa8 ♜xa8? (It is not too late for Black to correct his mistake with 21...♜xd1†!) 22.♗d6 ♜ad8 23.♗ad1 With the rooks on

the board, a passed pawn on d6 should be enough to decide the game.

21.♗xd1 c5 22.♕xa8 ♜xa8 23.♗d6 ♜d8 24.♗d3  
♗xd6 25.exd6 ♜d7

Black is passive, but it is hard to suggest a winning plan for White.

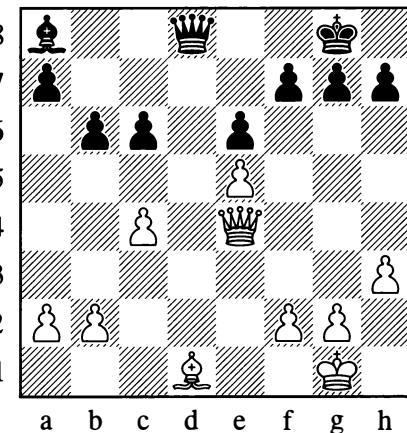
**19...♗xd8 20.♗d1!**

Karpov follows his plan and exchanges the other rook as well.

**20...♗xd1†**

Obviously Black could move the rook somewhere along the back rank in order to play ...c5, but giving up the d-file would be a serious concession.

**21.♗xd1 ♜d8**



**22.♗f3!**

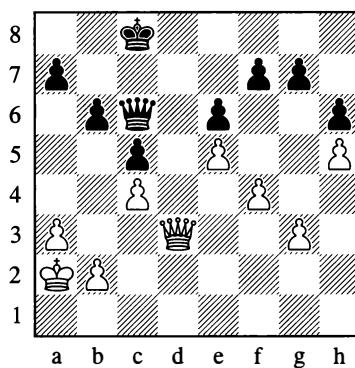
This was the idea Karpov had in mind when deciding on his 19th move – the bishop on a8 will not be able to play a role in the game any time soon. The whole plan required remarkable vision and imagination; In fact I cannot recall seeing it in any other game involving this pawn structure.

**22...♛d2**

This queen invasion is obviously critical, and Karpov must have planned his response on move 19.

The main alternative was to wait with 22...a5, when White has a couple of ideas.

a) He can go for a slightly better queen ending, although it seems a pity to release the black bishop from its cage: 23.♗e3 c5 24.♗xa8 ♜xa8 25.♗d3 The ending is a bit unpleasant for Black, but he should be able to hold it. It is worth comparing the present position with a typical endgame resulting from a 4...♝f5 Caro-Kann. Consider the following:



This position occurred after White's 28th move in the game Adorjan – Orso, Budapest 1977. The game was eventually drawn, but White missed a win along the way. Compared with the present situation, the pawn on h5 is a big help to White.

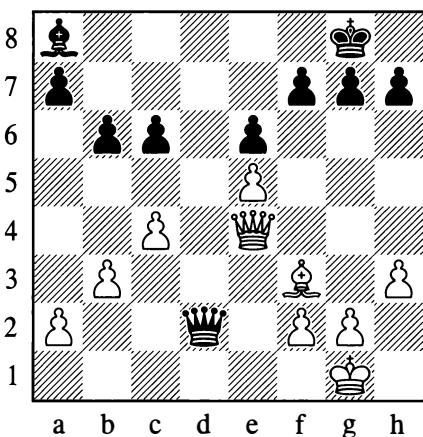
b) The alternative is: 23.g3 ♜d2 (Worse is 23...♝b7?! 24.♗e3 [24.b3?] 24...g6 [24...♝c7 25.c5!] 25.c5 b5 Black is really passive.) 24.♗g2 h6 25.♗e2! ♜xe2 26.♗xe2 c5† [26...♝f8 27.♗f3] 27.♗f3 ♜xf3† 28.♗xf3 ♜f8 29.♗e4 White has some winning chances as the queenside is open for an invasion.

**23.b3?!**

Karpov prefers to give up the a-pawn instead of its next-door-neighbour.

After the feeble 23.♗e2? ♜xe2 24.♗xe2 c5 White has virtually no advantage.

In the event of 23.g3 Black should probably follow suit: 23...g6! The queen is well-placed on d2, where it controls several important squares and stops b4, so Black should not move it yet. (23... $\mathbb{W}xb2?$  is too risky: 24. $\mathbb{W}d3!$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  25. $\mathbb{W}d7$  g6 26. $\mathbb{W}xa7$  [26. $\mathbb{W}c7!?$ ] 26... $\mathbb{W}a5$  27. $\mathbb{W}xa5$  bxa5 28. $\mathbb{B}f1$  The bishop endgame is probably lost for Black.) 24. $\mathbb{W}h4!?$  White intends to invade to e7. 24... $\mathbb{W}d7$  25.b4  $\mathbb{B}b7$  26. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Black has better chances to draw than White has to win.

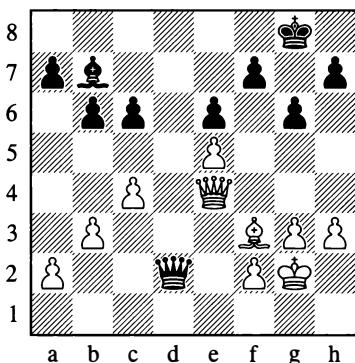


### 23... $\mathbb{W}xa2!?$

Lautier takes the pawn and gives up the d-file. It is a risky policy, but Black still possesses enough defensive resources.

A waiting policy would have given good chances to defend:

23... $\mathbb{B}b7$  24.g3 g6 25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$



25...h5

25... $\mathbb{W}xa2?$  26. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  27. $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  28.b4 b5 29.c5 Black is desperately passive for the sake of a mere pawn.

25... $\mathbb{Q}g7!?$  26.a3 (26. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black defends.) 26... $\mathbb{W}c3$  27.b4  $\mathbb{W}xa3$  28.b5  $\mathbb{W}c5$  29.bxc6  $\mathbb{Q}a8!$  Black survives, as White will have to give up the c-pawn for Black's a-pawn.

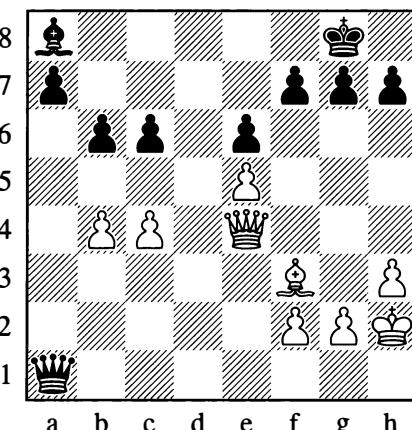
26.a3  $\mathbb{W}c3$  27.b4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  28. $\mathbb{W}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  29. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Black is passive but I think he should be able to hold by using his bishop to prevent White's king from penetrating.

### 24.b4

Karpov follows through his surprising plan to exploit the pin on the diagonal. If White occupies the d-file with 24. $\mathbb{W}d4$ , Black's queen can return to the defence in time: 24... $\mathbb{W}a3!$  25. $\mathbb{W}d7$  (25. $\mathbb{W}d8\#$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  26. $\mathbb{W}c7$  c5 Black manages to free his bishop.) 25... $\mathbb{W}a1\#$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  (26. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  h6 27.c5  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  Black escapes.) 26... $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$  27.g3  $\mathbb{W}b8!$  Black returns the pawn and holds the position.

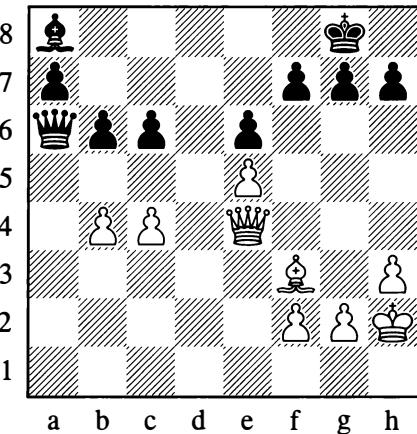
### 24... $\mathbb{W}a1\#$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



25... $\mathbb{W}a6$

25... $\mathbb{W}b2!?$  Going for the f2-pawn leads to a frightening position, but Black can get away

with it. 26.b5  $\mathbb{W}xf2$  27. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  29.bxc6 g6 (29... $\mathbb{W}xe5??$  30. $\mathbb{W}g3+$ ) 30. $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  31.c7  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  White cannot force his pawn through as Black will get a perpetual. It is understandable that Lautier did not wish to take such a narrow path to a draw, when the tiniest mistake or oversight would have led to an instant defeat.



### 26. $\mathbb{W}d4!$

Karpov keeps up the pressure. After 26.b5  $\mathbb{W}c8$  27.bxc6 h6 28.g3 a5 Black is safe as he will soon divert the queen and get rid of the annoying passed pawn.

### 26... $\mathbb{W}c8$ 27.c5!

Ensuring that the bishop on a8 will remain passive for a while longer.

### 27...bxc5 28. $\mathbb{W}xc5$ a6

Lautier stops the threat of b5. Black has an extra pawn and no serious weaknesses, yet he still faces problems due to his passive pieces, especially his bishop.

Karpov mentions 28... $\mathbb{W}b8?$  without any further analysis. It is playable, but fails to cut the Gordian Knot after 29. $\mathbb{W}d6!$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  (29... $\mathbb{W}xd6?!$  30.exd6  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31.b5 cxb5 32. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  Black faces an uphill struggle to draw this ending; 29... $\mathbb{W}c8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  [30. $\mathbb{W}e7$   $\mathbb{W}b8]$

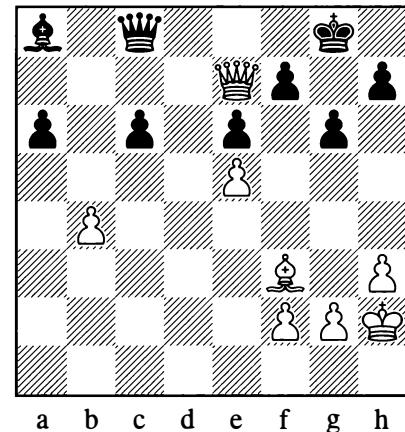
30...g6 31.h4 White continues to press.) 30. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  g6 (30...a6?? loses to 31. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$ ). Black still has fair chances to survive, but he faces an unpleasant squeezing.

### 29. $\mathbb{W}e7$

Karpov improves his queen a bit and returns the ball to Lautier's side.

### 29...g6

Sooner or later Black had to make an escape square for his king. If 29... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  then White replies 30.h4, improving his position on the kingside.



### 30.h4!

Karpov creates a nasty threat of pushing the pawn to h6. In fact 30. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$  would have been even more accurate as after 30... $\mathbb{W}b8$  White can play 31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ .

### 30...h5

By committing himself to a rigid structure with all his pawns on the same colour squares as White's bishop, Black runs an obvious risk. On the other hand he had to do something about the advancing h-pawn.

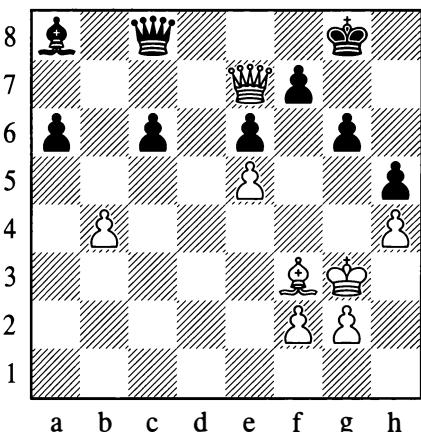
30... $\mathbb{W}b8?$  deserved attention. The attack on the e5-pawn at least temporarily distracts White from the kingside, although the first

player can maintain his grip with 31.♗c5! followed by advancing his king.

It is worth mentioning that other moves do not work for White, for instance: 31.g3 (31.♗d6?? ♗xd6 32.exd6 ♘f8 simply loses for White.) 31...c5! This energetic strike liberates Black's position. 32.♗xa8 ♗xa8 33.bxc5 ♗f3 34.♗g1 ♗d1† 35.♗g2 ♗d5† 36.♗h2 ♗f3 37.♗d8† ♗g7 38.♗g1 ♗c3 39.♗d6 a5 Black is fast enough.

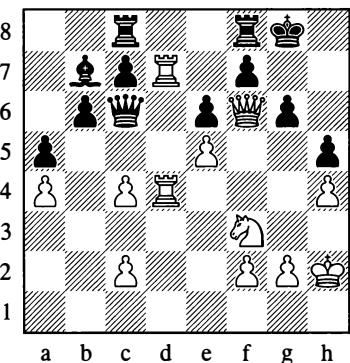
### 31.♗g3!

Karpov activates his king.



### 31...♗b7??

Lautier makes a losing blunder, which may have been influenced by a famous game that took place the previous year:



32.♗g3!! ♗ce8 33.♗f4! ♗c8 34.♗g5! 1–0 Short – Timman, Tilburg 1991. Timman resigned as there is nothing he can do to prevent the white king from walking in and helping the queen to deliver mate. This brilliancy was shown throughout the world's chess media. It is possible that the level of attention received by Short's masterpiece may have caused Lautier to overestimate the strength of the king march in the present game. Perhaps he was already dreading being on the losing side of another game that would receive worldwide attention, and was desperate to steer the game away from the potentially headline-grabbing finale. Instead he should have played:

31...♗b8!

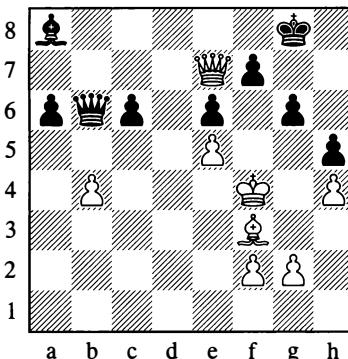
Intending to activate the queen.

32.♗f4

Karpov evaluates the position as clearly better for White, but it is not so simple.

32.♗d6 ♗b6 leaves White struggling to make progress.

32...♗b6!



33.♗g5

Taking the bishop leaves the white king vulnerable to checks: 33.♗e8† ♘g7 34.♗xa8 ♗d4† 35.♗g3 ♗xe5† 36.♗h3 ♗f5† Black can give a perpetual.

33...♗xf2

White has no time to catch Black's king, as the nimble queen can get back in time.

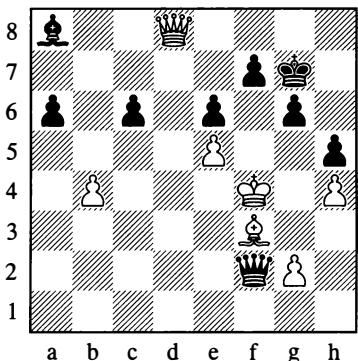
34.♗d8† ♘g7

Black can even try to win with 34... $\mathbb{Q}h7!$ ? but after 35. $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f4!$  White escapes from the danger zone in time. 36... $\mathbb{W}xh4\uparrow$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xb4$  The endgame should be a draw.

After the text move White should take a draw. Let us see what happens if he tries to be too ambitious.

35. $\mathbb{Q}f4??$

Correct was 35. $\mathbb{W}f6\uparrow$ , intending to take a perpetual.

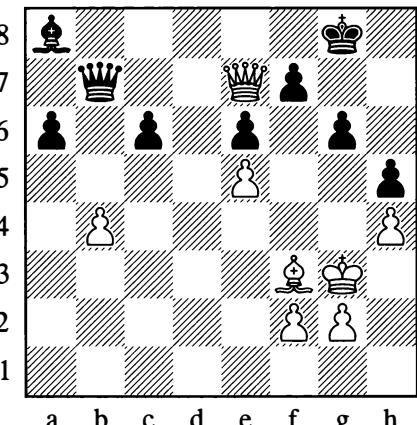


35...c5!! 36. $\mathbb{W}xa8$

36. $\mathbb{W}f6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  37. $\mathbb{W}d8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{W}f6$   $\mathbb{W}d4\uparrow$   
39. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $cxb4$  wins.

36... $\mathbb{W}xh4\uparrow$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}d4\uparrow$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xe5\uparrow$

Black wins as he has too many pawns for the bishop.



32. $\mathbb{W}xb7!$

Karpov simplifies to a winning bishop ending. Same-coloured bishop endings often prove difficult for the defending side to hold. In the present position the prospect of White being left with an h-pawn and the wrong bishop makes little difference, as there are plenty of other pawns that have the potential to promote.

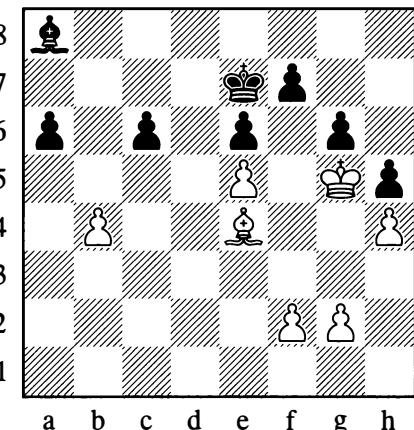
32... $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

White's superior pieces count for much more than Black's extra pawn, which has no real prospect of advancing.

33... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

After 33... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  White has the luxury of choosing between 34. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  and 34. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ , both of which win comfortably.

34. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$



36.f3!

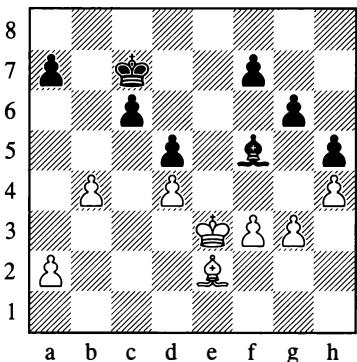
Karpov prepares to create a passed pawn.

36... $\mathbb{Q}b7$

The plan of f3 and g4 was not difficult to find, so it is hard to guess what caused Lautier to misevaluate the endgame. Perhaps he thought he could sacrifice the bishop with 36...c5 37. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $cxb4$ , but this soon turns out to be hopeless after 38. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$  b3 39. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  b2 40. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  with a simple win.

**37.g4!**

Karpov continues his plan. It reminded me of one of Portisch's wins from more than two decades before.



**39.g4!** White gets either a passed pawn or wins the pawn on h5. He went on to win in Portisch – Reshevsky, Palma de Mallorca 1970.

**37...♝a8**

If 37...hxg4 38.fxg4 White advances the h-pawn and penetrates with his king to f6, winning easily.

**38.gxh5 gxh5 39.f4 ♜b7 40.♜f3 ♜a8  
41.♚xh5**

**1–0**

In the second round Karpov held a solid draw against Miles in a Spanish Exchange Variation. Karpov's next two games were Queen's Indians: he won with White against Korchnoi, then drew with Curt Hansen. In Round 5 Karpov outplayed Beliavsky in a Ruy Lopez Breyer, then scored a victory with the black pieces over a young Alexei Shirov in a Nimzo-Indian (see page 280). Karpov's next game ended tragically; he lost on time in a completely winning queen ending against Kiril Georgiev, as he did not pay attention to the tournament regulations and mistakenly believed he would receive more time on the clock.

In the first game of the second half of the

tournament, Lautier tried the Scotch Four Knights but Karpov drew solidly. Then in Round 9 he returned to his winning ways against Miles; the game is referenced in the note to Black's first move in Game 58 of the first volume. In the next round Karpov received a slice of good fortune to make up for the Georgiev game. Korchnoi played well and built up a winning position, but allowed Karpov to obtain some counterplay before blundering and losing.

In Round 11 Karpov met Curt Hansen who tried the Pirc. The Danish grandmaster managed to equalize, but Karpov persevered and eventually managed to decide the game by sacrificing a piece for three pawns in the endgame. He made a quick draw with Beliavsky, then won a nice game on the white side of a Semi-Slav against Shirov. In the final round he drew quickly with Georgiev, to finish on 10½/14, a point and a half clear of Georgiev who was second.

After a couple of rapidplay events, Karpov took part in the Tilburg Knockout, where he suffered a shock defeat in the first round against Alexander Chernin. In their first game Karpov got some advantage on the white side of a Semi-Slav, but Chernin was able to hold an inferior ending. The second game was a quick draw, which meant that the contest would be decided by a rapid tie-break. In the first rapid game Karpov was winning but blundered and lost. In the second he blundered an exchange, and Chernin later forced a perpetual in a winning position to ensure his passage to the next round.

Karpov's next tournament was the Alekhine Memorial in Moscow. He started with a good win over Timman, but then suffered defeats against Gelfand and Anand in succession. Karpov managed to steady his ship and drew with Yusupov and Shirov, before facing Gata

Kamsky in Round 6. At the time of writing Kamsky has played 106 games against world champions, scoring eighteen wins, fifty three draws and thirty five losses. Before this game Karpov was leading their head-to-head score by two wins to one, with two draws. Their lifetime score is eleven wins to Karpov, five wins to Kamsky and sixteen draws.

## Game 28

Anatoly Karpov – Gata Kamsky

Moscow 1992

### 1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 g6

In their first meeting Kamsky played the Queen's Indian and Karpov nicely beat him.

### 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 4.g3

The second time Karpov had the white pieces against Kamsky, he played the main exchange variation but lost.

4...c6 5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  d5 6.cxd5 cxd5 7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0-0  
8. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  e6 9.0-0  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  10.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b6$

Kasparov used this move to score two draws in the 1987 Seville match. Karpov also faced 11... $\mathbb{Q}dxe5$  and 11...f6 in other games, scoring two wins and two draws.

### 12. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Kamsky follows the first game of the Seville match. In the third game Kasparov switched to 12... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

### 13.e4

This move either gains space or opens the position. Without it, it will be hard for White to play for a win.

### 13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

Taking on e4 would only help White.

13... $\mathbb{Q}e8!?$  is an interesting alternative though. It has been played much less frequently, but based on the games appearing in the database it appears quite reliable.

### 14. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

Karpov gets the advantage of the two bishops and gains space. Exchanging the opponent's bad bishop could have certain drawbacks, on the other hand if the position eventually opens up then White's light-squared bishop will have great potential.

### 14... $\mathbb{W}xd7$ 15.e5 $\mathbb{E}ac8$

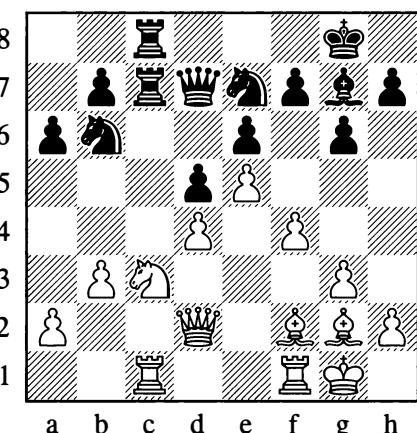
The Seville game continued: 15... $\mathbb{E}fc8$  16. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  18.b3  $\mathbb{E}ac8$  19. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  20. $\mathbb{W}b2$  a6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  Black has equalized and the game was soon drawn, Karpov – Kasparov, Seville (1) 1987.

Kamsky moves the other rook to the c-file, but it makes little difference as Black will soon double his rooks in any case.

### 16. $\mathbb{E}cl$ a6

Black can also delay this move as Kasparov did, but the pawn move is useful and will generally be played at some point.

### 17.b3 $\mathbb{E}c7$ 18. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{E}fc8$



### 19.g4!

Karpov starts playing on the kingside. Against Kasparov he tried to play on the queenside but got nowhere. It would be interesting to know if Karpov considered the more ambitious plan in the Kasparov game. He may have preferred not to risk it against a rival who played so well in complicated situations, especially in the first game of the match when a loss with the white pieces would have made for a dreadful start. In any case, by the time of the present game Karpov must have analysed the idea carefully at home.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 20. $\mathbb{W}e3$

White can also exchange rooks with 20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ , for instance 20... $\mathbb{B}xc1$  21. $\mathbb{B}xc1$   $\mathbb{B}xc1\uparrow$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  when he maintains a slight edge thanks to his space advantage and bishop pair. Karpov's approach is more ambitious.

### 20... $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Kamsky transfers his pieces to the queenside in order to exert pressure there; on the other hand he leaves his king a bit vulnerable.

20... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ?! vacates the g8-square and allows Black to keep his knight close to the king, while still enabling the bishop to go to the queenside. 21. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}xc1$  Black is close to equalizing and eventually drew after a long fight, Nalbandian – Khachiyan, Yerevan 1999.

### 21. $f5$

Although the pawn assault looks menacing, Black's fortress is not easy to breach, and White will have to show a good deal of skill and finesse to achieve anything.

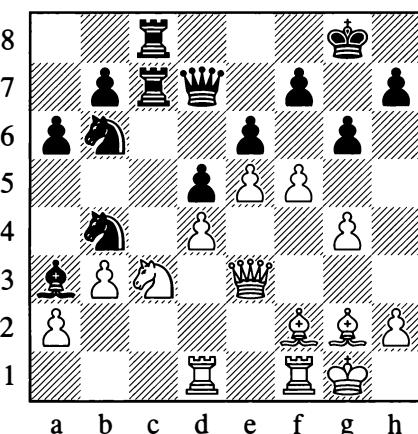
### 21... $\mathbb{Q}a3$

21... $exf5$  is playable but risky, and after 22. $gx f5$   $\mathbb{W}xf5$  White can play 23. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  or 23. $\mathbb{W}g3$  with promising compensation for the sacrificed pawn.

However, it should be noted that 23. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ?! is less effective, and after 23... $\mathbb{W}h5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  25. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  26. $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $gxh5$  Black is not worse.

### 22. $\mathbb{B}cd1$ $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Kamsky raises the stakes by bringing yet another piece to the queenside, while provocatively leaving his king with almost no defenders.



### 23. $\mathbb{W}h6$

Karpov brings the queen into the attack, while exploiting the fact that his knight cannot be taken due to mate in two.

If 23. $\mathbb{Q}b1$  then 23... $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ! is strong.

### 23... $\mathbb{W}e8$

This move turns out to be a loss of time. Please do not forget that Karpov and Kamsky were the trailblazers for this position, so it is no surprise that subsequent analysis highlighted a few subtle refinements. Three other moves deserve consideration, and two of them have been tested in subsequent games.

23... $\mathbb{W}e7$ ?! has not been played but deserves attention. If the players follow the same path as in the game, then Black will end up saving a tempo. 24. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}b2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  (25.a3

$\mathbb{Q}c2$  26.  $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  27.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  28.  $\mathbb{B}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g7$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  30.  $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  Black is defending himself.) 25...  $\mathbb{W}f8$  26.  $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e3$  White's pieces look menacing, yet it is not clear whether he can hurt Black.

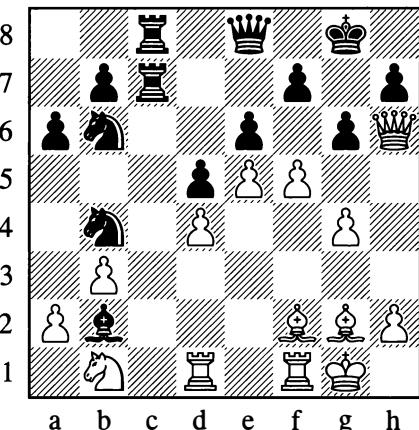
23...  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  25.  $\mathbb{B}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}g5$   $h6$ ?! (26...  $\mathbb{B}c2$ ! looks like an improvement, and leads to a complicated position where Black has some compensation.) 27.  $fxe6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  29.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  30.  $a4$   $\mathbb{B}b4$  31.  $\mathbb{W}f3$  White is a safe pawn up, Maherramzade – Vydeslaver, Halle 1995.

23...  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (Perhaps White should deviate with 24.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  26.  $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  27.  $a4$  when he keeps a slight plus.) Karpov evaluates the position as clearly better for White, but this seems too optimistic, and in the following game Black did okay: 24...  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  26.  $a4$   $a5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  This unclear position eventually resulted in a draw, Onoda – Soegaard, e-mail 1998.

#### 24. $\mathbb{Q}b1$

Karpov drags the bishop to b2. If 24.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  then 24...  $\mathbb{B}c2$  25.  $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ! is an interesting way to slow White's play.

#### 24... $\mathbb{Q}b2$



#### 25. $\mathbb{B}d2$ !

Karpov wittily retreats the queen. The idea is to draw the knight to the c2-square, where it blocks Black's rook invasion on the queenside.

#### 25... $\mathbb{Q}c2$

Kamsky accepts the invitation. Thanks to some unusual tactics Black had other options as well.

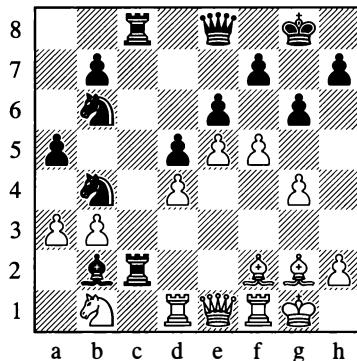
#### 25... $a5$ !! 26. $a3$

26.  $\mathbb{W}xb2$ ?  $\mathbb{B}c2$  27.  $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{B}xa2$  wins the queen.

#### 26... $\mathbb{B}c2$

If 26...  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  27.  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  White takes a pawn for insufficient compensation.

#### 27. $\mathbb{W}e1$



#### 27... $\mathbb{W}b5$ ??

If 27...  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  28.  $\mathbb{W}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  29.  $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}e2$  30.  $\mathbb{B}d2$  Black has some play for the pawn, but overall White's position is preferable.

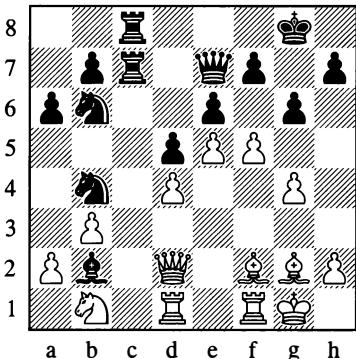
27...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  28.  $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}c1$  29.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}xf1\#$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  31.  $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{B}g5$  32.  $\mathbb{W}b5$ ! Suddenly Black's queenside is a bit loose; it is remarkable that White can obtain the initiative on the side where Black had so many pieces.

28.  $axb4$   $\mathbb{B}e2$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{W}xe2$  30.  $bxa5$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  30...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ?? 31.  $\mathbb{B}d2$  wins as Karpov pointed out.

31.  $fxe6$   $fxe6$  32.  $axb6$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  33.  $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}xd2$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$

White is better, as he has a lot of material for the queen.

There is a second way for Black to leave the bishop en prise:  
25... $\mathbb{W}e7?$ !



26. $\mathbb{W}xb2$

This should lead to a draw.

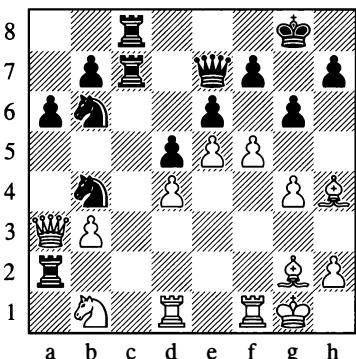
26. $\mathbb{Q}h1?$   $\mathbb{E}c2$  Black gets good play.

26.f6  $\mathbb{W}f8$  defends conveniently, and White has lost the option of opening the f-file.

26. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  amusingly gives Black more than one way to repeat moves, with 27... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  or 27... $\mathbb{W}b4$  28. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ .

If White wants to continue the fight then he may have to try 26.a3?!, although after 26... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  27.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (27... $\mathbb{W}b4?$ ) 28.a5  $\mathbb{E}c2$  29. $\mathbb{W}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black is very much in the game.

26... $\mathbb{E}c2$  27. $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$



28...g5?!

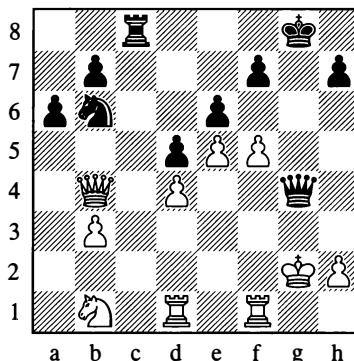
Black can force a draw immediately with 28... $\mathbb{W}xh4$  29. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{E}xg2\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}xg4\#$

when both 31. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  and 31. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  force Black to take a perpetual. The main line should not affect the outcome, although it does set a small trap.

29. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  30. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{E}xg2\#$

The attempt to win with 30... $\mathbb{E}cc2?$  might backfire: 31. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$  32. $\mathbb{E}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}xd2$  (32... $\mathbb{E}xd2$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ) 33. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$  34.fxe6 fxe6 35. $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White has slightly better chances.

31. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}xg4\#$

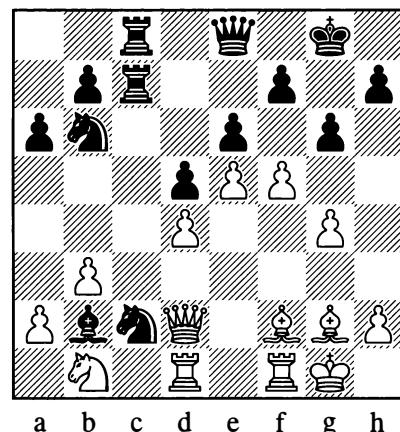


32. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$

As a result of Black sacrificing his g-pawn on move 28, White cannot play 32. $\mathbb{Q}h1?$  due to 32... $\mathbb{W}e4\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8!$  with a strong attack. The text move easily secures a draw though.

32... $\mathbb{W}f4\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}e4\#$

White is unable to hide from the checks.



**26.♘h1!**

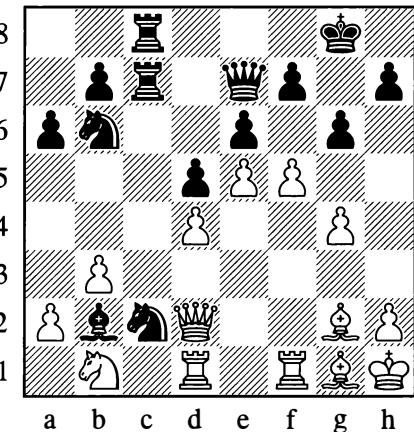
Karpov hits upon a clever prophylactic plan which enables him to tidy up his kingside, safeguard his monarch and open the f-file for his rooks.

**26...♛e7**

Now Black's queen and knight will have the option of using the b4-square.

**27.♕g1!**

Karpov completes his regrouping.

**27...♞d7**

Neither side has a direct threat, so Kamsky decides to improve his worst-placed piece. It is a sensible decision, although some other ideas were playable as well.

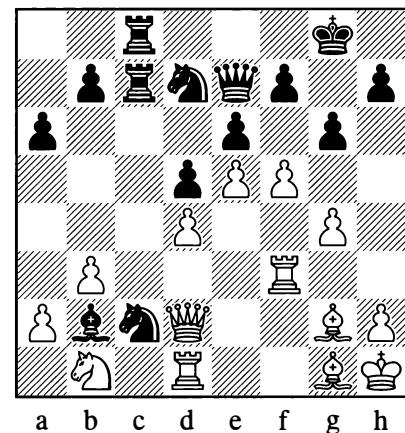
27...♞b4!? is witty, but perhaps Black is being too clever for his own good. 28.a3 (If 28.♛xb2? ♜c2 the queen will be caught.) 28...♞c2 29.♝f3 ♜xa3 (29...♞d7! is another idea) 30.♝h2 ♜f8 31.♝xa3 ♜xa3 32.♝f1 Black was able to snatch a pawn but he is in real danger on the kingside.

27...♛b4!? 28.♛h6 ♜f8 Black challenges his opponent to find something better than a repetition of moves, as a queen exchange would not be in White's interest. 29.♛g5 can be met by 29...♛e7, so if White is feeling

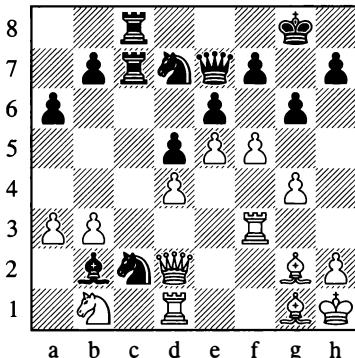
ambitious he should play 29.♛f4, leading to a tense situation where Black's position should be playable.

**28.♝f3**

Improving the rook is the logical follow-up to White's previous two moves.

**28...♛b4**

The position remains in an odd state of dynamic equilibrium; both sides have serious advantages in one area or another, but ultimately they should cancel each other out. Apart from Kamsky's move there were a few alternatives worth considering.

**28...♞b4?! 29.a3 ♜c2**

In this position, the decision to invest two tempos to provoke a pawn move on the queenside looks too optimistic.

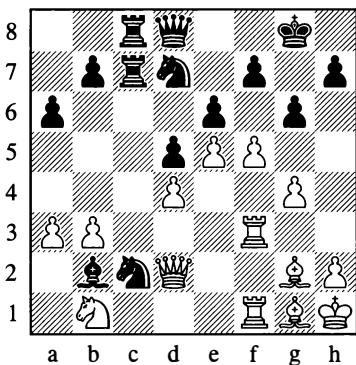
30.♗df1!

After the less accurate 30.♗h3?! ♜f8 31.♗f1 ♜g7 32.a4 b5 the position is balanced.

30...♛d8

Preparing to meet the attacking plan of ♘h3 and ♜h6 with ...♝h8 and ...♜g8.

If 30...♝h8 31.fxg6 fxg6 32.♗f7 the rook on the seventh rank is unpleasant for Black.



31.a4!?

With no direct attacking win, White takes a moment to safeguard his a-pawn.

31.fxg6 fxg6 32.♗f7 ♜b8 defends.

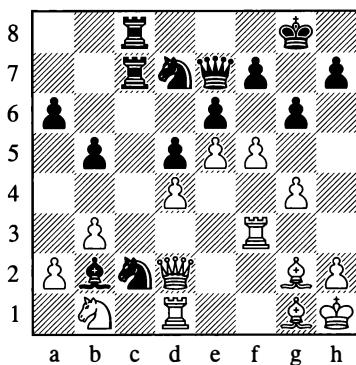
31...a5

This is not forced, but it looks logical for Black to secure the b4-square for his pieces. And though it is not a serious threat in the present position, a future b4 and ♘b3 has the potential to be unpleasant.

32.♗h3 ♜h8 33.♗f3 ♜g8 34.♘c3!

White surprisingly gets the upper hand on the queenside.

28...b5!?



This is another interesting idea. Just as in the game, it is not easy for White to break through on the kingside.

29.♗df1

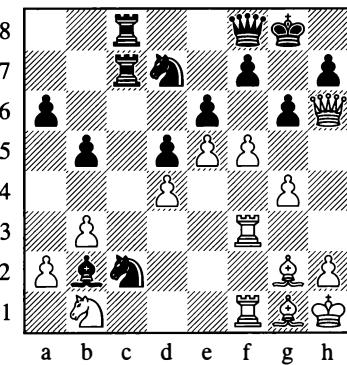
This looks like the most logical attacking move.

Black manages to defend himself after 29.♗h6 ♜f8 30.♗d2 ♜e7 or 29.♗h3 ♜f8 30.♗f1 ♜g7.

29...♜b4

29...♝a1? 30.♗h3 is too dangerous.

30.♗h6 ♜f8



31.♗g5!?

Inviting an interesting tactical skirmish, but it turns out that Black has enough resources.

The alternative is 31.♗f4 ♜g7 32.h4 to continue the attack. However after 31...♜e7! it is not easy to increase the pressure, for instance 32.♗h3 ♜f8 defends.

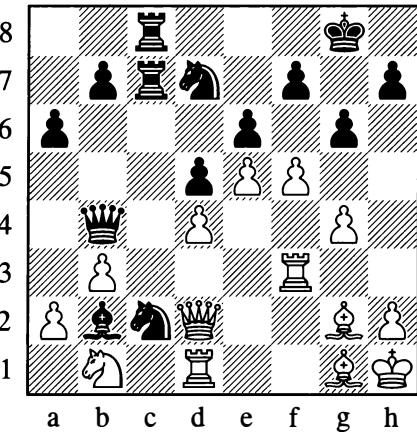
31...♝xd4!

Despite the shaky appearance it turns out that Black is holding his own in the complications.

After 31...♜d8 32.♗f4 ♜f8 33.h4 White keeps his play on the kingside alive, nevertheless Black's position is quite solid.

32.♗xd4 ♜xd4 33.fxe6 ♜xe5 34.exf7† ♜xf7 35.♗xf7 ♜xf7 36.♗xd5 ♜cc7 37.♗f4 ♜b6 38.♘c3 ♜cd7

Black maintains the balance.



**29.♘h6**

Karpov naturally avoids a queen exchange and takes the opportunity to shift his heavy artillery to the vicinity of Black's king.

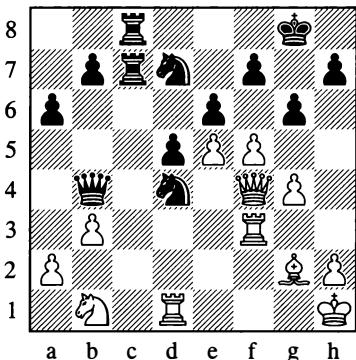
**29.♗f4!?**

This move was also possible, as the following tactical reply favours White.

**29...♕xd4?**

Black should prefer 29...♗f8! with similar play to the game, although White has saved a bit of time with his queen.

**30.♕xd4 ♗xd4**



**31.♕xd4!**

The finesse 31.a3?! results in a smaller advantage for White: 31...♗c5 32.♕xd4 ♘c1† 33.♕f1 ♗xf4 34.♕dxf4 White is better but Black has some drawing chances.

**31...♗e1†**

31...♗c1† is refuted by 32.♕f1!. Interestingly Karpov misses this winning move in his *Chess Informant* analysis.

**32.♕f1 ♗xe5 33.fxg6**

Black has little for the piece.

**29...♗f8 30.♗g5 ♗g7**

30...♗d8 would not have achieved much after 31.♗f4. Kamsky's move is sensible, although it should be noted that his queen is now cut off from the queenside, as retreating to f8 would expose her to a lethal pin after fxe6.

**31.♗d2**

Karpov takes away the b4-square from the knight.

**31...b6**

Kamsky prepares to regain control over the b4-square.

**32.♗d1**

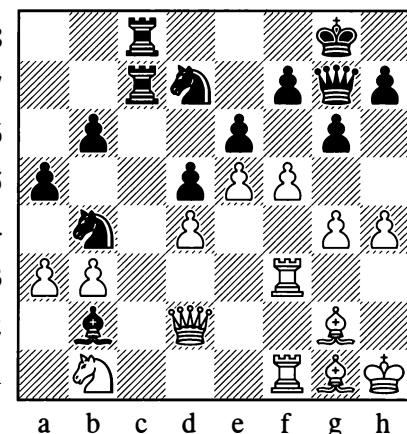
The rook no longer needs to defend the d4-pawn, so Karpov recruits it for more active duties.

**32...a5 33.h4 ♖b4**

The knight vacates its outpost for the rook.

**34.a3**

Capturing the bishop would have cost White his queen.



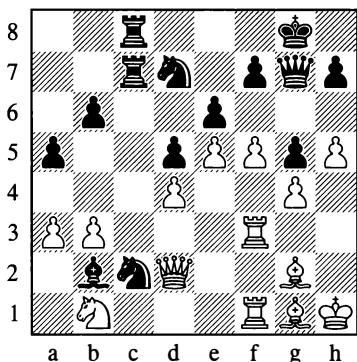
34... $\mathbb{E}c2$ 34... $\mathbb{Q}c2?$ 

Having provoked the a-pawn into moving, the knight can cheekily return to its previous square. It leads to an interesting fight, although White can keep the upper hand with the help of some accurate moves.

35.h5! g5

35...gxh5?! is risky: 36.gxh5 (There is also 36.fxe6?! fxe6 37.gxh5 when Black's king is more exposed, for instance 37... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ? 38. $\mathbb{E}f7$  wins.) 36... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ? 37. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ! White gets enough material for the queen this way. 37... $\mathbb{E}c2$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}g5$  (39... $\mathbb{E}c2$ ? 40. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ ) 40.fxe6 fxe6 41. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  Black is living dangerously.

35... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}c2$  37.fxe6 fxe6 38. $\mathbb{W}e3$  gxh5 39. $\mathbb{E}f7$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  Now it is Black's turn to give up his queen for several pieces, but it is not so favourable here. 40. $\mathbb{E}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black does not have full compensation as his king is uncomfortable.

36. $\mathbb{W}d3!$ 

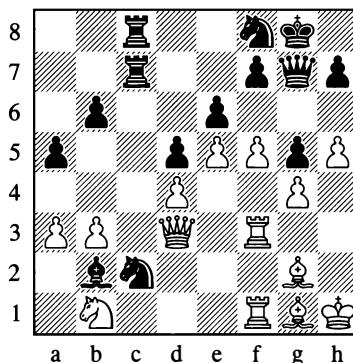
The queen stands superbly on d3, defending the d4-pawn and setting up the threat of fxe6 followed by  $\mathbb{E}f7$ , as well as keeping an eye on the c2-knight.

Less convincing is 36.h6  $\mathbb{W}xh6\#$  37. $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g7$ , when White has some compensation for the pawn but nothing conclusive. Besides, it is by no means clear than an attack on the h-file will be more effective than one on the f-file.

Premature is 36.fxe6 fxe6 37.a4 (37. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}f8$ ) 37...h6 38. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ! when Black chases the queen from her ideal home.

36... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 36...h6? 37.fxe6 fxe6 38. $\mathbb{E}f7$  wins.

36... $\mathbb{Q}h8$ ?! does not lose outright, but after 37.fxe6 fxe6 38. $\mathbb{E}f7$   $\mathbb{W}g8$  Black can hardly feel happy.

37. $\mathbb{E}3f2!!$ 

Suddenly White switches to his attention to the c2-knight and the queenside.

37... $\mathbb{Q}a1$ 

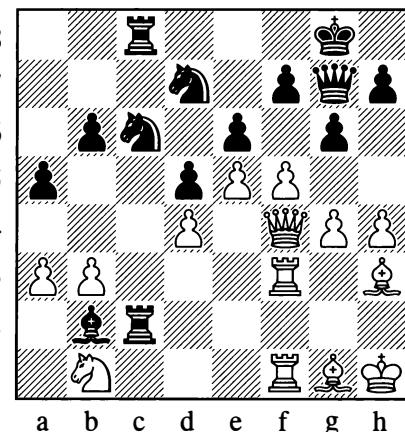
After 37...b5 38. $\mathbb{E}d2$  b4 39.a4  $\mathbb{E}c6$  40. $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}a1$  41. $\mathbb{W}b5$  White invades on the queenside.

38. $\mathbb{E}d2$  a4 39. $\mathbb{W}b5$  axb3 40. $\mathbb{W}xb3$   $\mathbb{E}c4$  41. $\mathbb{W}xb6$

White has won a pawn for very little.

35. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ 

Karpov keeps building his position and sends a message that he may go after the e6-pawn.



36... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$ 

Kamsky defends the e6-pawn in advance, but the problem is that he relinquishes the pressure on the d4-pawn. The way Karpov exploits it is majestic.

After 36... $\mathbb{Q}dxe5?!$  37.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  38. $\mathbb{W}e3$  Black does not really have enough for the piece.

Correct was:

36...b5!

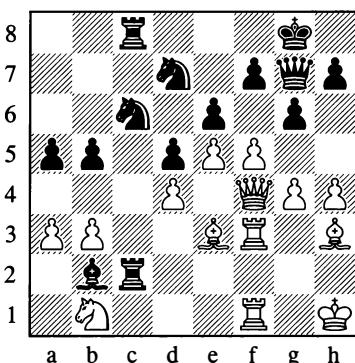
The idea behind this move is to free the c4-square for a rook to put more pressure on the d4-pawn. The immediate 36...a4? might also be considered.

37.fxe6!

White should keep his opponent busy with defending.

37.h5 g5? 38. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  Black wins.

If White plays like in the game a horrible surprise is waiting for him: 37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ?

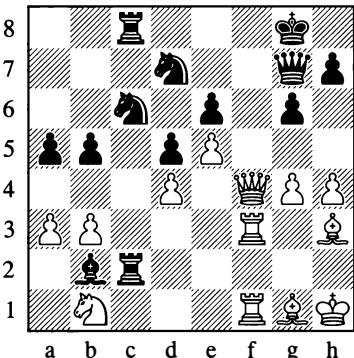


37...g5!! 38.hxg5 (38. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  39.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ -+) 38... $\mathbb{Q}dxe5$ ? 39. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  40. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  White is in big trouble.

37. $\mathbb{B}e1$  a4 (37...b4 38.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  is also okay for Black) 38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}dxe5$ ? 39.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  40.f6 (40. $\mathbb{W}e3$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}d4$ !) 40... $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  41.fxg7  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  Black has good play for the piece.

37. $\mathbb{B}d1$  is possible, although White would ideally prefer not to resort to such purely defensive moves. 37...a4 38.bxa4 bxa4 39. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  The position is complicated.

37...fxe6



38.g5

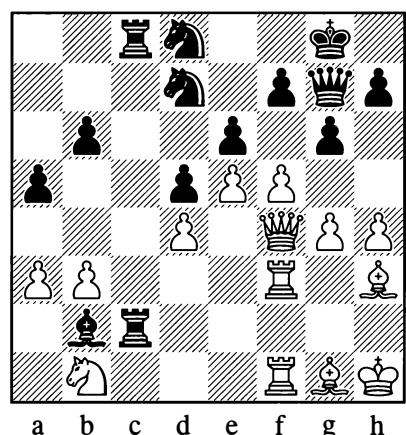
38. $\mathbb{W}f7\#$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  39. $\mathbb{B}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  41. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  42. $\mathbb{B}g7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  Black seems to be able to keep his position together.

38... $\mathbb{B}e8$  39. $\mathbb{W}g4$

39. $\mathbb{W}f7\#?$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  40. $\mathbb{B}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  does not achieve much for White.

39... $\mathbb{W}e7$  40.h5 a4

The position remains double-edged.



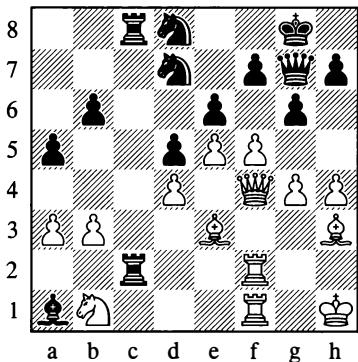
37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !

This is an especially sly move, which plays for a remarkable idea which will be revealed shortly. The point of the move is to take away the c1-square from the b2-bishop. 37. $\mathbb{B}f2$  is less good due to 37... $\mathbb{B}xf2$  38. $\mathbb{B}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  when Black is in the game.

37...b5

Kamsky probably spotted Karpov's wicked plan and tries to help the b2-bishop.

37... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  38. $\mathbb{E}3f2!$  (After 38. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}8xc3$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  White is somewhat better thanks to his two bishops and extra space, but he can play for more.) 38... $\mathbb{Q}a1$



39.a4! Vacating the a3-square for the knight. (39. $\mathbb{E}xc2$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$  40. $\mathbb{E}f2$  is advantageous for White, but not yet decisive.) 39... $\mathbb{E}xf2$  (39... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$  41. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  42. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  44. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c7+$ ) 40. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}h6$ !  $\mathbb{W}xh6$  44.fxe6 fxe6 45. $\mathbb{W}f7+$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  46. $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  White is winning.

queenside with the plan of exchanging rooks and targeting the misplaced bishop on b2.

Knights and pawns can easily get into trouble if they stray too far from their camp, but this rarely happens to a bishop due to its great mobility. The present position is an exception, and the closed centre makes it impossible for the bishop to escape in a satisfactory way. Kamsky was hoping that the bishop would be able to target the d4- and e5-pawns, but he misjudged the fine line and it turns out that these pawns will continue to stand firm and prevent the bishop from escaping.

### 38...b4

38... $\mathbb{Q}a1$

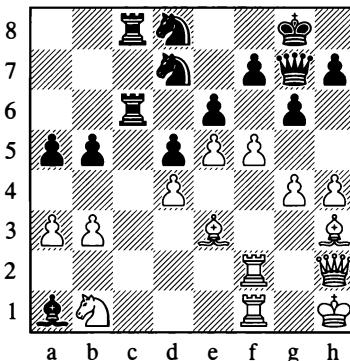
This move also fails to solve the problem of the lonely bishop.

39. $\mathbb{W}h2!$

39. $\mathbb{E}xc2$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$  40. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$  41. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (41... $\mathbb{h}5?$  42.f6  $\mathbb{W}h8$  43.g5+– What a position! So many black pieces are at the edge of the board and his queen looks especially sad.) 42. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  gx5 43. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}db8$  44.g5 White keeps the advantage, but Black is still in the game.

39... $\mathbb{E}2c6$

39... $\mathbb{E}xf2$  40. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  41.h5 g5 42. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  b4 44. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  45. $\mathbb{W}a2$  Having made the right preparations, White is ready to harvest the crop.



### 38. $\mathbb{E}3f2!$

Just as he seems to be poised for a kingside breakthrough, Karpov switches to the

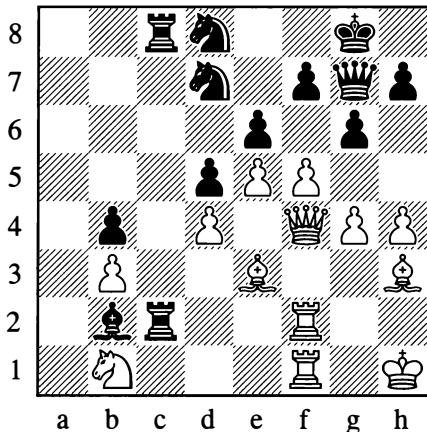
40. $\mathbb{E}a2$

40.h5!? can also be played, for instance: 40... $\mathbb{A}c3$  41.h5 g5 42.f6  $\mathbb{W}h6$  42... $\mathbb{W}f8$  43. $\mathbb{A}xg5$   $\mathbb{A}xd4$  44. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  45. $\mathbb{A}h6$  wins.

43. $\mathbb{W}e2$  b4 44. $\mathbb{A}xc3$   $\mathbb{A}xc3$  45. $\mathbb{A}g2$

Black's situation is becoming desperate, as the g5-pawn will soon fall.

### 39.axb4 axb4



40. $\mathbb{A}xc2!$

40. $\mathbb{W}g5$  was not a bad alternative, but the game continuation gives Black fewer chances to resist. 40...gx5 41. $\mathbb{A}xc2$   $\mathbb{W}xg5$  42. $\mathbb{A}xg5$   $\mathbb{A}xc2$  43.gxf5  $\mathbb{A}xd4$  44. $\mathbb{A}xd8$   $\mathbb{A}c5$  White only has a few pawns remaining, which gives Black some drawing chances.

40... $\mathbb{A}xc2$  41. $\mathbb{A}f2$

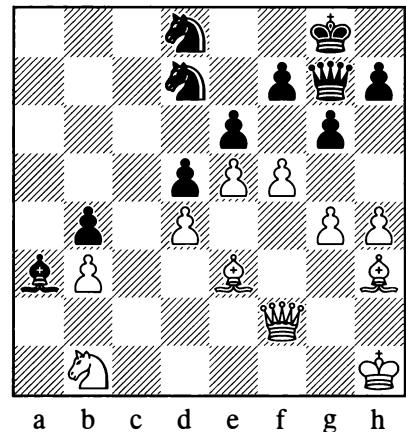
Karpov removes the second rook from around the bishop.

41... $\mathbb{A}xf2$  42. $\mathbb{W}xf2$   $\mathbb{A}a3$

The bishop is saved but it is out of play on a3 while the c-file becomes available for the white queen.

42... $\mathbb{A}c3$  would be more desirable on general

principles, but the downside is that the bishop is more exposed to being taken: 43.f6  $\mathbb{W}f8$  44. $\mathbb{A}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ !? (44... $\mathbb{A}e1$  45. $\mathbb{W}c7+$ ; 44... $\mathbb{A}b8$  45. $\mathbb{A}xc3$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  46. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  Black has no chance to survive with the pawn deficit.) 45.dxe5  $\mathbb{A}xe5$  46.g5  $\mathbb{W}d6$  47. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  48. $\mathbb{A}xc5$   $\mathbb{A}g3$  49. $\mathbb{A}d2$   $\mathbb{A}xh4$  50. $\mathbb{A}f3$  The ending is easily winning for White.



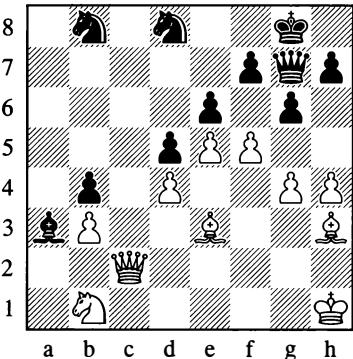
43. $\mathbb{W}c2!$

It is remarkable how many times Karpov switches between flanks in this game. Now Black has no good defence against the invasion on the c-file.

43... $\mathbb{A}xe5$ ?

Sacrificing the knight is a reasonable practical try, but Black's pieces are too badly coordinated for it to have much chance of succeeding.

43... $\mathbb{A}b8$



44.♕h2!!

This lovely prophylactic move is directed against the plan of ...gxf5 and ...♛g3. White intends h5 combined with ♜f1-d3, which seems to me to be the most convincing winning plan.

44.♛c8 ♜bc6 45.♕g5 ♛f8 46.♕xd8 (46.♕d2 exf5 47.gxf5 ♜c1 Black is still alive.)

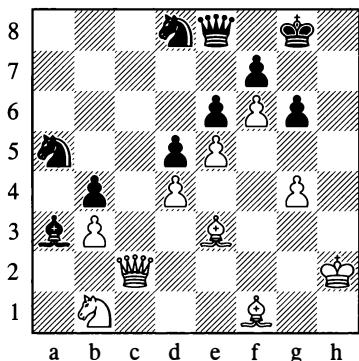
46...♜xd8 47.♕d2 ♜b2 48.♕f3 According to Karpov White is winning, but I do not see a definitive winning plan at this stage, although Black is certainly on the ropes.

Ftacnik suggests 44.f6 ♛f8 45.♕d2 which should be good enough to win eventually, but the main line looks clearer to me.

44...♛f8

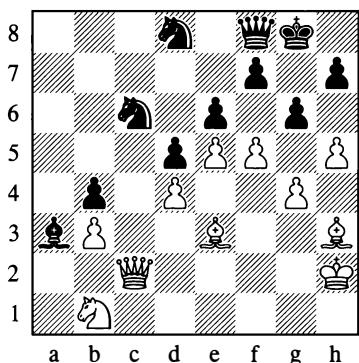
44...♜dc6 45.♕d2 ♜d8 46.h5 is winning.

44...♜bc6 45.f6 ♛f8 46.♕f1 ♛e8 (46...♜b8 47.h5 ♜dc6 48.♕d3+–) 47.h5 ♜a5 48.hxg6 hxg6



49.♕g3! White's queen will switch to the h-file, with mate to follow shortly.

45.h5 ♜bc6



46.f6

Exchanging is also good enough: 46.hxg6 hxg6 47.fxe6 fxe6 48.♕d2 ♜e7 49.♕f1 ♛e8 50.♕g5 Black's resistance will soon be broken.

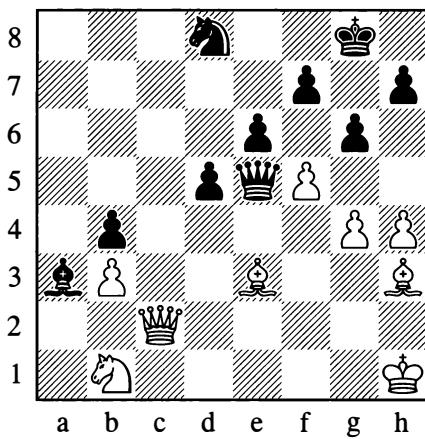
46...g5

46...♜a5 47.♕f1 ♜db7 48.♕d3+–

47.♕f1 h6 48.♕b5 ♛e8 49.♕xa3 bxa3 50.♛c1 a2 51.♕xg5 a1=♛ 52.♛xa1 hxg5 53.♛c1

Black can resign.

44.dxe5 ♛xe5



45.♛c8!

After switching between the kingside and the queenside several times, Karpov commences his final assault using another part of the board, the eighth rank.

45...♛e4†

Black has no defence, for instance 45...♚g7?! (45...♛xe3? 46.♛xd8† ♚g7 47.f6† ♚h6 48.♛f8#) 46.f6†! ♛xf6 47.♕h6†! ♚g8 48.♛d7 ♛f3† 49.♕g2 with mate to follow.

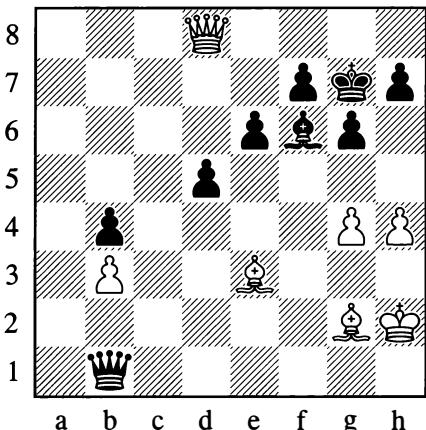
46.♕g2 ♛xb1† 47.♕h2 ♜b2

The bishop defends the diagonal, but it is not enough to save the king.

48.♛xd8† ♚g7 49.f6†!

Karpov finds the most accurate solution.

**49... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$**



**50. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#!$**

The black king is drawn to the edge where it is fatally trapped.

**50... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  51. $\mathbb{W}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}c2$  52.g5†**

52. $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  53. $\mathbb{W}f8\#$  was even faster.

**52... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  53. $\mathbb{Q}g3$**

53. $\mathbb{Q}h3??$   $\mathbb{W}f5\#$  was no good, but 53. $\mathbb{W}f3\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  54. $\mathbb{W}f4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  55. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  would also have led to mate.

**53... $\mathbb{W}c7\#$  54. $\mathbb{Q}h3$**

**1-0**

Finally Kamsky resigned. It was a grand game, rich in original ideas.

In the last round Karpov agreed a quick draw with Salov to finish on 3½/7, which was enough to share 4th-6th place. Anand and Gelfand won the tournament, showing that the new breed of super-grandmasters were good enough to outshine former world champions in some tournaments, although it would take a long time for them to take over on the rating list.

For his final tournament of 1992 Karpov travelled to Baden-Baden, for a tournament

featuring several prominent German players and some other top grandmasters. Karpov started by beating Bönsch with the white pieces, then he scored an excellent win with Black against Hübner, outplaying his rival in an equal endgame. In Round 3 Kindermann became Karpov's third victim from the host nation – part of this game can be found on page 325 in the notes to Game 41.

In the next game Karpov drew quickly with Psakhis, then in rounds 5 and 6 he continued his harsh treatment of the local players, winning two games that are referenced elsewhere in the present work: his Round 5 victory over Lobron was mentioned in the notes to Game 26 in the present chapter, and his Round 6 win over Hertneck can be found in the notes to Game 61 of the first volume.

In Round 7 Karpov faced Yusupov, who by that time was living in Germany. Karpov was pressing for a long time but eventually had to settle for a draw. Then in Round 8 he defeated Lautier after a long fight. In Round 9 Karpov dropped his first draw of the tournament against a native German, Christopher Lutz, who got a slight advantage after a 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian, but was content to take a draw. In the next round Karpov returned to his winning ways against the five-time East German Champion Knaak, eventually grinding out a win from a rook ending with an extra a-pawn.

Karpov's final opponent of the tournament and the year was Matthias Wahls, a German grandmaster with whom he had drawn twice previously. This was the last time the two players met over the board. Wahls played a total of five games against the world champions, drawing three and losing two.

## Game 29

### Matthias Wahls – Anatoly Karpov

Baden-Baden 1992

#### 1.e4 c6

On the one previous occasion when he faced the German grandmaster with the black pieces, Karpov opted for 1...e5 but had to settle for a draw after twenty four colourless moves. Wahls always favoured the sharp Panov variation against the Caro-Kann, so it is safe to assume that Karpov was playing for a win from the outset here. It was a brave decision, as despite his superb performance thus far, he had not yet won the tournament outright, as Lutz had a chance to tie for first in the event that he could win and Karpov lost. Karpov's decision to play for a win may have partially been caused by the fact that Wahls had not been having a good tournament. Karpov may also have felt some pressure to elevate his rating; he was rated almost 200 points higher than Wahls, and by the end of 1992 Ivanchuk was closing in on the number two spot in the world rankings.

#### 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘f3 ♜b4

Prior to this game Karpov had only played this move once back in 1980 when he drew with Timman in just seventeen moves. Over the course of his career he played both this and the alternative 6...♝e7 in roughly equal measure.

#### 7.cxd5 ♜xd5 8.♗d2

According to the database Wahls had played 8.♗c2 previously.

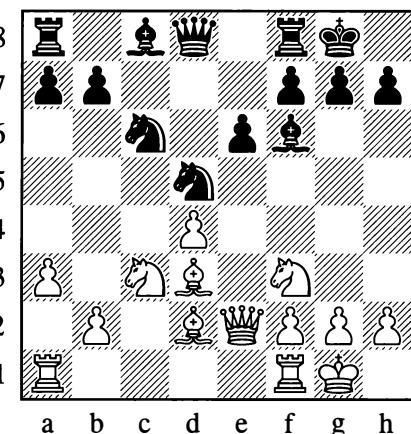
#### 8...♜c6 9.♗d3 0–0 10.0–0 ♜e7 11.a3

Preventing ...♝b4 is a typical idea, and one of the main lines in the position. Kamsky prepared 11.♗e2 to use against Karpov in

their 1996 World Championship match. The players contested this variation twice, scoring one win each. Karpov's victory is examined in Game 43 of the present book.

#### 11...♝f6 12.♗e2

The main line is 12.♗c2 which according to the database was first played by Kavalek. 12.♗e3 is also frequently played.



#### 12...♞xc3??

Karpov introduces a novelty, which leads to a complex situation involving hanging pawns. Black has two safe routes to equality, but Karpov was clearly looking to battle it out in this game.

After the forcing sequence 12...♞xd4 13.♞xd4 ♜xd4 14.♗xh7† ♜xh7 15.♗e4† ♜g8 16.♗xd4 Black scores fine with all the knight moves 16...♞xc3, 16...♞b6 and 16...♞e7. Almost all games have resulted in draws from here.

In 1984 Korchnoi introduced another idea in the form of 12...♞xd4?! 13.♞xd4 ♜xd5. He eventually lost to Pia Cramling, but Black's position at this stage is quite reliable.

#### 13.bxc3 g6 14.♗e4

White inhibits the development of the c8-bishop to b7, while planning ♜e5 and f4.

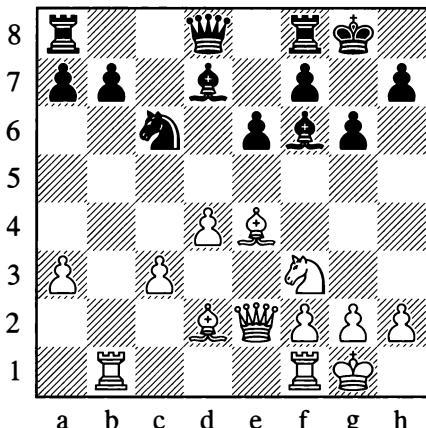
14.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  has been seen more frequently. Here is an example involving a world-class player (the game actually reached this position via a slightly different move order): 14...  $\mathbb{E}e8$  15.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  17.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  Black has a safe position, Collinson – Speelman, Birmingham 1999.

White can also try: 14.  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$  b6 15.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (After 15.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  Karpov prefers Black.) 15...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  16. dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  (16...  $\mathbb{Q}g7?$ ) 17.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  (17.  $\mathbb{W}e4?$ ) 17...  $\mathbb{W}xd3$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  f6 19.  $\mathbb{W}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  20.  $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  Black is safe despite his somewhat exposed king.

14... $\hat{\square}d7$  15. $\hat{g}ab1$

Though this move takes place on the queenside, White's focus remains firmly on the other wing – he only wants to provoke ...b6 or drag the queen to c7, while setting up a possible rook transfer from b5 to the kingside.

Playing in the centre is not dangerous: 15.筈fd1 筈c8 16.筈h6 筈e8 17.c4 At this point Black can break up White's centre with 17...e5 18.dxe5 筈xe5, or win some squares around the hanging pawns with 17...筈a5 18.c5 筈c6, with good chances in both cases.



15...b6!

Karpov chooses the right way to safeguard the b-pawn. Even though his bishop cannot get to b7 in the immediate future, the availability of this square might become important later in the game.

The inaccurate 15... $\mathbb{W}c7$ ?! walks into a big tempo-gainer: 16.g3! (if 16.c4  $\mathbb{E}ac8$  Black is fine) 16... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  18.c4! White's pieces and pawns control a lot of important squares in the centre.

16.2e5

White proudly positions his knight on a strong central outpost. Some other moves were also possible.

16.c4  $\mathbb{E}c8$  (16... $\mathbb{E}e8!?$ ) 17.d5 exd5 18.cxd5  $\mathfrak{Q}d4$  The d-pawn is securely blockaded and according to Karpov the position is equal.

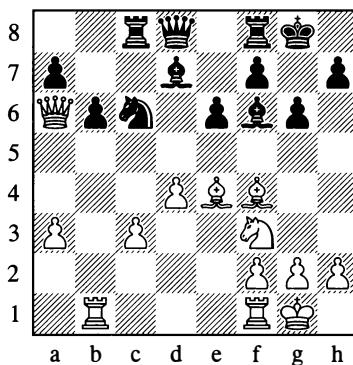
16. ♕f4

The bishop stands well on the h2-b8 diagonal.

16... $\mathbb{H}c8$  17. $\mathbb{W}a6!?$

The queen's lunge is an interesting way to cause problems.

If 17.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  18.  $\mathbb{E}bc1$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  Black generates enough play against the hanging pawns.



17...♞a5!?

This positional sacrifice seems fairly promising, although it is by no means forced.

The solid 17... $\mathbb{W}e7$  is also fine: 18. $\mathbb{E}fe1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  Black plans to finish his development by dropping his bishop back to e8. 19.d5 (19. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  is solid enough) 19...exd5 20. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  Black has no problems.

18. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}c6!$

18... $\mathbb{E}xc3?$ ! is worse: 19. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  20. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  (20... $\mathbb{E}fc8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 21. $\mathbb{E}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  Black can probably hold this position, but it is still unattractive for him.

19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$

Black has good compensation. Karpov once sacrificed a pawn under similar conditions against Taimanov – see page 357 of the first volume.

### 16... $\mathbb{E}c8$ 17.f4

In his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov calls this move dubious, without suggesting an alternative. I doubt that it is any weaker than other moves, although Karpov was probably happy to see it at the board, as it keeps the position complex in a way that would enable his tremendous playing strength to shine through.

Eight years later White deviated but got nowhere: 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  18.g3 (18. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  19.h4 e5 20.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black obtained a slight plus, Zlatic – Bodiroga, Vrsac 2000.

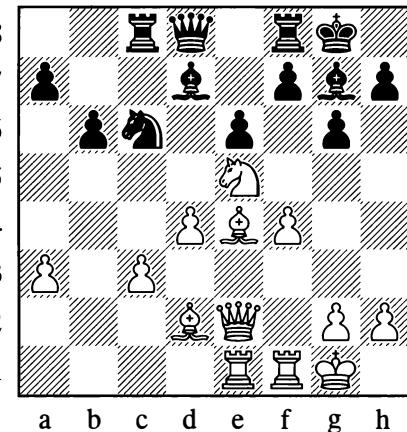
White can also try 17. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 18... $\mathbb{W}e7$  when the position is roughly equal.

### 17... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 18. $\mathbb{E}be1$

Wahls concentrates on the kingside.

He could have changed tack with 18. $\mathbb{W}a6$ , but after 18... $\mathbb{W}c7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xc6$  21. $\mathbb{W}xa7$  b5 22. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  Black has fine compensation. 23. $\mathbb{W}b4$  (Otherwise Black

might improve his position with ... $\mathbb{E}b6$  and ... $\mathbb{E}a8$ .) 23... $\mathbb{W}a8$  24. $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  Black has a lovely position.



### 18... $\mathbb{E}c7!$

This subtle move may not be dazzling, but it is strong and absolutely typical for Karpov. Black's ideas include a possible re-routing of the bishop from d7 to b7 via c8, as well as potentially using the rook to defend the kingside along the seventh rank.

### 19. $\mathbb{E}f3$

Wahls is not hiding anything, and shows a clear desire to attack on the kingside.

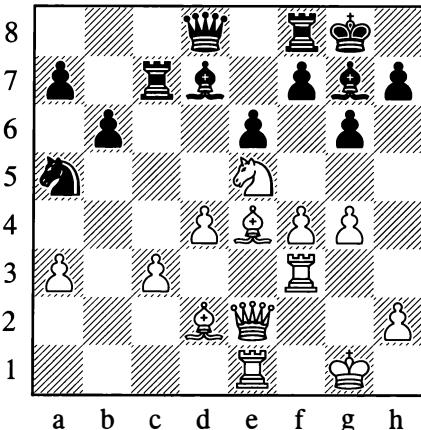
### 19... $\mathbb{Q}a5$

Karpov does not panic, but merely continues to improve his pieces.

### 20.g4?

Wahls continues to play aggressively. His last move might help to prepare f5, while in certain positions he may prefer to advance with g5 in order to fix the h7-pawn.

White cannot make use of the fact that the black knight no longer attacks the d4-pawn with 20.c4?, on account of 20... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ ! 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (21. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$ ) 21... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{W}xd4\ddagger$  and Black wins material.



**20...♜e8?**

By putting his rook on the same file as the enemy queen, Karpov discourages his opponent from playing f5. Nevertheless there was an even stronger continuation:

**20...♝b3!**

Hanging pawns are like isolated pawns; when playing against them, it is useful to exchange minor pieces in order to attack them more effectively while also reducing the opponent's attacking chances.

**21.♝h3**

21.♝xd7 ♜xd7 22.♝g2 ♜fc8 23.f5 e5 24.d5  
♝c5 Black has strong play in the centre.

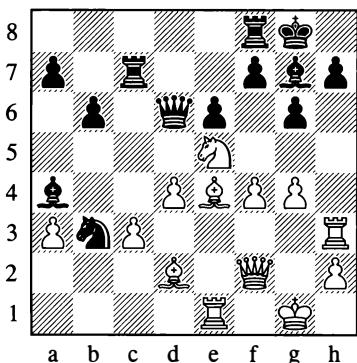
21.♝e3 ♜xc3 22.♝b2 (or 22.♝f2 ♜xf3

23.♝xf3 ♜c7 24.♝e3 ♜a5 25.♝c1 ♜d6 and White does not have much for the pawn)  
22...♜c7 23.♝f2 ♜xf3 Black has safely won a pawn.

**21...♞a4 22.♝f2**

22.♝g2 should also be met by 22...♜d6.

**22...♜d6**



**23.g5**

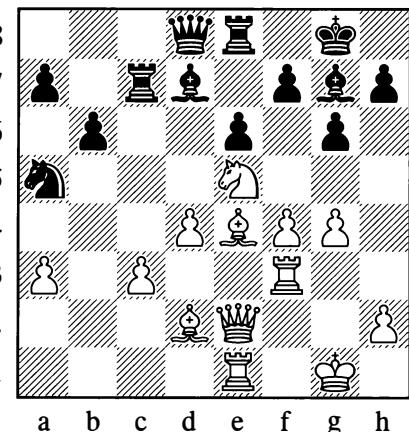
23.♛h4 h6 defends.

23...♝xd2 24.♝xd2 ♜xa3 25.♝f1

White is not helped by 25.♝c1 ♜fc8.

25...♜fc8 26.♝ff3 a5

Black has good chances to convert his extra pawn.



**21.♝b1?**

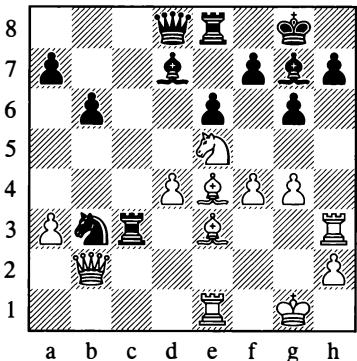
This unfortunate move is not only slow, but also leads to unfortunate consequences in a few moves' time. In this complicated position White had several other ideas available.

**21.g5** White plans to attack the h7-pawn, but in the meantime Black can create counter-threats. 21...♝c6!? (This was Karpov's suggestion, although 21...♝b3 and 21...♜e7 also deserve attention. 22.♝xc6 ♜xc6 Black is not worse.

**21.♝h3 ♜b3!?**

This sharp continuation is perfectly valid, although Black has several other possibilities including 21...♜e7, 21...♝c8, 21...♞a4 and 21...f5!? 22.gxf5 exf5 23.♝d5† ♜e6 24.♝d7! ♜xd7 25.♝xe6† ♜f8 with a roughly equal position.

**22.♝e3 ♜xc3!?** 23.♝b2



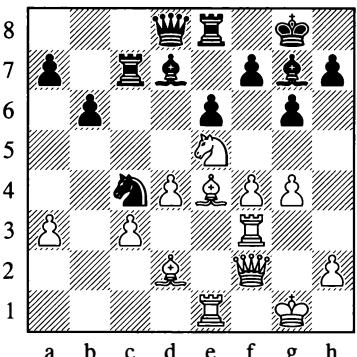
23... $\mathbb{W}c7!$

Giving up the exchange would not offer Black enough compensation.

24. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  26. $fxe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$

Black's three pawns give him enough compensation for the sacrificed piece.

21. $\mathbb{W}f2$  The queen sensibly vacates the e-file. Now Black has several roughly equivalent ways to start exchanging pieces. 21... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (Also fine is 21... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  22. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}a4$  23. $g5$  [23. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $b5$ ] 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  24. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}ec8$  and Black has nothing to worry about.)



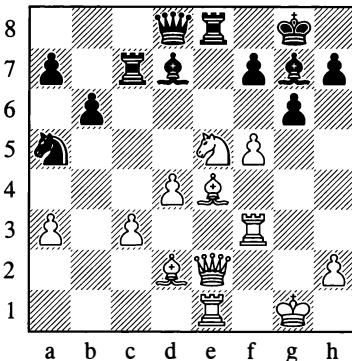
22. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  (22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $f5$  23. $gxf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  24. $fxe5$   $gxf5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  Black has a repetition at his disposal with 27... $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$ .) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  23. $f5$   $exf5$  24. $gxf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  27. $\mathbb{W}xf3$  Black might be able to claim a marginal edge, but nothing more.

Finally, the most aggressive and interesting move at White's disposal was:

21. $f5$ !  $exf5$

This was surely Karpov's intention, although Black can also consider 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ! 22. $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  when the position is complicated.

22. $gxf5$



22... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ !

Black gives up his important bishop to take advantage of White's dubious coordination.

22... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  23. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  24. $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  Black will not get quite enough compensation for the exchange.

There was a safe alternative in 22... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $gxf5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  when the endgame is equal.

23. $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

White must avoid 24. $e6?$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6!$

24... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

It seems like White is in trouble, but he can keep himself in the game with the help of some accurate moves:

25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$

25... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  26. $f4$   $gxf6$   $hxg6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xe8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  29. $\mathbb{W}xe8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  Black is somewhat better, but White has decent drawing chances in view of the limited material on the board.

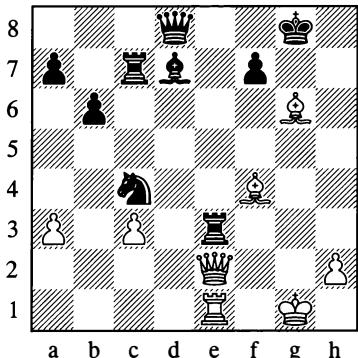
26. $fxg6$

26. $\mathbb{Q}g3?$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  is no good for White.

26... $hxg6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ !

27. $\mathbb{Q}xc7?$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  wins.

27... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$



28... $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#!!$

This lovely tactical shot keeps White in the game.

28... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$

28... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  leads to a draw: 29. $\mathbb{W}h5\# \mathbb{Q}e6$   
30. $\mathbb{Q}xe3\# \mathbb{Q}xe3$  31. $\mathbb{W}e5\# \mathbb{Q}f7$  32. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e6$  33. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$

29. $\mathbb{Q}xe3!$

The showy 29. $\mathbb{Q}h6\#?!$  does not have the desired effect: 29... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  30. $\mathbb{W}h5\# \mathbb{Q}e6!$   
31. $\mathbb{W}g4\# \mathbb{Q}d5!$  32. $\mathbb{W}d4\# \mathbb{Q}c6$  33. $\mathbb{W}xc4\#$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$  34. $\mathbb{W}d5\# \mathbb{Q}c6$  35. $\mathbb{W}xd8\# \mathbb{Q}xe1\#$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f2\#$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e4$  Black keeps some winning chances, as White's king is exposed.

29... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  30. $\mathbb{W}xe3$

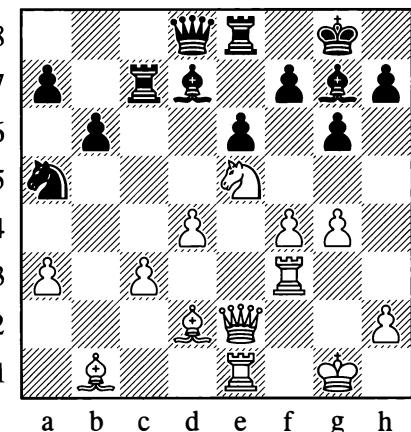
Both sides have open kings, but neither is able to get the upper hand.

30... $\mathbb{Q}c5$

After 30... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f1\# \mathbb{Q}g8$  32. $\mathbb{W}g3\# \mathbb{Q}g4$   
33.h3 the game will end in a draw.

31. $\mathbb{Q}h5 \mathbb{Q}xh5$  32. $\mathbb{W}e7\#$

The endgame should be drawn.



21... $\mathbb{Q}c8!$

Karpov gets ready to reposition his bishop on the diagonal which its opposite number just vacated. White's king will soon become uncomfortable, as he can no longer block the diagonal with his pawns.

The plan of exchanging pieces with 21... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  was also promising: 22. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}e3?$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ )  
22... $\mathbb{W}e7$  (22... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  23. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  24.f5  
exf5 25.gxf5  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  reaches a balanced position)  
23. $\mathbb{W}d1$  (23.f5? exf5 24.gxf5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   
25.dxe5  $\mathbb{W}c5\#$ –) 23... $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  (23... $\mathbb{W}xa3$  24.c4)  
24. $\mathbb{W}xd2$  Here Black can keep some advantage with either 24... $\mathbb{W}xa3$  or 24... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ .

22.g5

White fixes the h7-pawn, but he is unlikely to do any damage there. His position would have remained difficult after other moves as well.

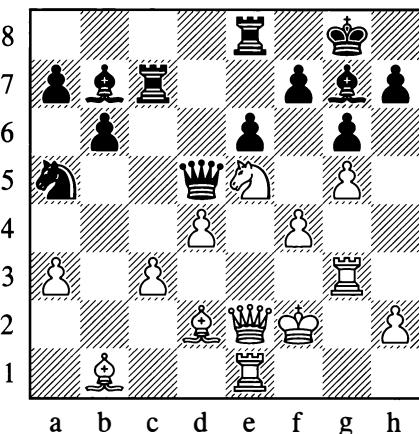
22.f5 exf5 23.gxf5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}b7?!$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}xe4$  26. $\mathbb{W}xe4$  g5? (There is also  
26... $\mathbb{Q}ce7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  f6 when White is awkwardly tied up.) 27. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  f6 28. $\mathbb{Q}ff1$  (28. $\mathbb{Q}h4 \mathbb{Q}d2$ –)  
28...fxg5 29.f6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   
White is clearly worse although he retains some chances to hold.

It was worth considering 22. $\mathbb{Q}a2?!$ , taking the d5-square away from the black queen while also preventing the knight from hopping to b3 to force exchanges. Nevertheless Black keeps the advantage here too: 22... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  25.f5 If White does nothing then his hanging pawns will soon come under fire. 25... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  26.c4  
 $\mathbb{W}xd4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  29.fxg6  
hxg6 30. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  White's position is rather unpleasant as his kingside is somewhat open.

22... $\mathbb{Q}b7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}d5$

The queen takes up a dominating post in the centre. Black's pieces are all working in harmony, and White's king is under heavy pressure on the diagonal.

**24.♔f2**



**24...♝ec8**

Karpov no longer needs to pay attention to f4-f5, so he uses the rook to increase the pressure on the backward c-pawn.

**25.h4**

Wahls must have known he had no chance of hurting Karpov on the h-file, but he probably went for it anyway as there were not many other moves available.

**25.a4?**

It is hard to say, but perhaps this would have been a bit more stubborn.

**25...♞c4**

After 25...♝b3 26.♗d1 ♜a3 27.♕c2 ♞c4 28.♘xc4 ♜xc4 29.♖b3 ♜c7 White is struggling but it seems he can avoid a direct loss for the time being.

**26.♕c2**

If 26.♘xc4 ♜xc4 27.♗d1 ♜c6 28.♕c2 ♜d5 White can hardly move.

**26...♝xd2 27.♗xd2 ♜a2 28.♗h3  
28.♗b1? ♜e4+?**

28.♗ge3 ♜a3 is also winning for Black.

**28...♜a3 29.♗ee3 f6!**

Black attacks from a new angle.

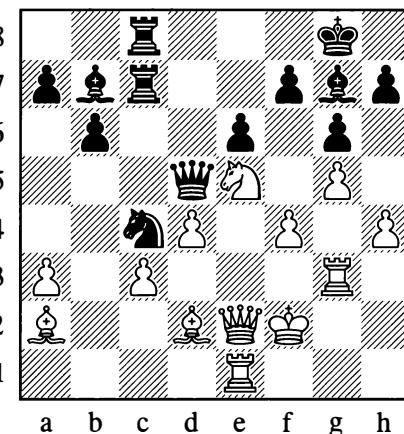
**30.gxf6 ♜xf6**

White's position is about to collapse.

**25...♝c4 26.♗a2**

The endgame resulting from 26.♘xc4 ♜xc4 27.♗xc4 ♜xc4 is virtually hopeless for White, for instance 28.♗ge3 ♜a4 29.♖c1 ♜f8 30.♖c2 ♜a5 31.a4 ♜d6 32.♗g3 ♜c6 and Black wins a pawn.

26.h5 is even worse: 26...♝xd2 (There is also 26...♝xa3 27.♕d3 b5 when Black is a pawn up for nothing.) 27.♗xd2 ♜xe5! This wins by force. 28.hxg6 (28.fxe5 ♜xc3) 28...♜xd4† 29.cxd4 hxg6 White is completely lost.



**26...♞a6**

Karpov plays pragmatically and maintains control, but he could have won more or less by force: 26...♜xe5! 27.fxe5 ♜a5 28.♗xc4 (28.♖c1 ♜xa3) 28...♜xc4 29.♗a1 ♜a4 Black wins a pawn, and White has no real attacking chances.

**27.♘xc4?**

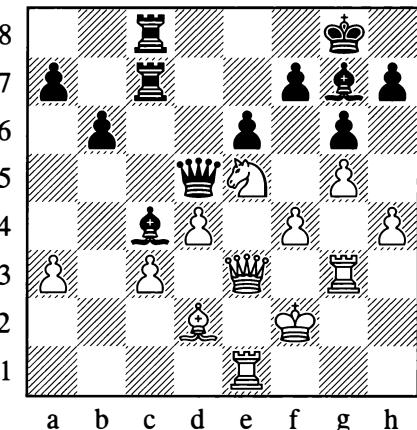
Exchanging accelerates the end as it becomes easier for Black to invade on the light squares.

27.h5! would have given Black a chance to go wrong:

a) 27... $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$  This simplification wastes a great part of Black's advantage. 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd5 \mathbb{Q}xe2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe2!!$  White king gets close to the pawns, with its help White suddenly has realistic chances to hold. 29... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$  31.hxg6 hxg6 32. $\mathbb{Q}d3 \mathbb{Q}a4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  White is worse, but he can continue to resist for quite some time. It is hard for Black to bring his bishop to bear on the weak queenside pawns in view of the open h-file.

b) 27... $\mathbb{W}a5!$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{Q}xc4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{W}d5!$  (30... $\mathbb{W}xa3$  31.hxg6) 31. $\mathbb{W}f3$  White avoids collapsing in the short term, but Black remains in full control and is likely to find a way through eventually.

**27... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  28. $\mathbb{W}e3$**



**28... $\mathbb{Q}a6!$**

Karpov clears the c-file and opens the way for his queen to invade the opponent's territory.

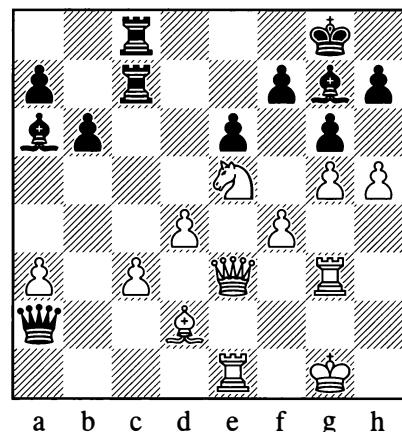
**29.h5  $\mathbb{W}a2!$**

Threatening ... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ .

**30. $\mathbb{Q}g1$**

If 30. $\mathbb{Q}c1 \mathbb{Q}b7$  31.h6  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  32. $\mathbb{W}e1 \mathbb{Q}d6$  and Black will invade one way or another.

30.hxg6 should be met by 30...fxg6! 31. $\mathbb{Q}gl$  (31. $\mathbb{Q}d1 \mathbb{Q}xc3$ ) 31... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  32.fxe5  $\mathbb{Q}f7$  White is under pressure on both flanks, and has little chance to survive.



**30...gxh5!**

Karpov wins a pawn and reduces White's chances of achieving something on the h-file.

**31. $\mathbb{Q}h3 \mathbb{Q}b7!$**

This bishop has been the star piece of the game. With its latest seemingly modest retreat, it cleverly nullifies the threat of 32. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$ , which can now be met by 32... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$ !.

**32. $\mathbb{W}e2 \mathbb{W}d5$**

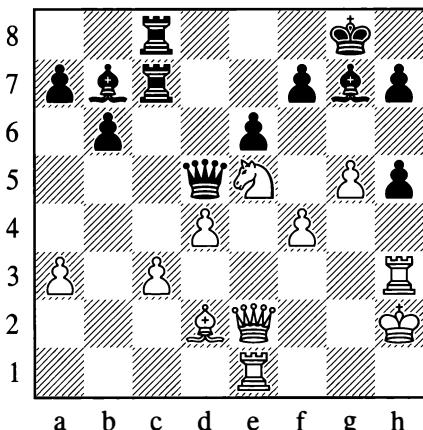
The queen has done her duty on the queenside, so now she returns to the centre and resumes the mating threats.

32...f5! was also strong, although it would have led to a position with some practical chances for Black to go wrong: 33. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  (33.gxf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{Q}g7$ -+) 33... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  (33...h4?! 34. $\mathbb{W}h5 \mathbb{Q}d5$  35. $\mathbb{W}xh4 \mathbb{Q}xe5$  36.fxe5  $\mathbb{W}xa3$  37.g6!  $\mathbb{W}e7$  [37... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$  White is alive] 38. $\mathbb{Q}g5 \mathbb{W}g7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{W}xg6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  Black is two pawns up but White has a dangerous initiative.) 34. $\mathbb{W}xh5 \mathbb{Q}xe5$  35.fxe5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  Black succeeds in defending his kingside, meanwhile White has serious problems on the light squares.

**33.♔h2**

Wahls hopes to get rid of the mating threat on the g2-square.

If instead 33.♕xh5 ♕xc3! 34.♕xc3 ♕xc3 35.♗f2 ♔xe5 36.dxe5 ♘f3 the end is near for White.

**33...b5!**

By threatening ...a5 and ...b4, Karpov increases the pressure even more.

**34.♗g1?**

The German grandmaster commits a serious mistake in time trouble. Perhaps he was worried about ...f6 earlier and therefore decided to prevent it.

The best chance was:

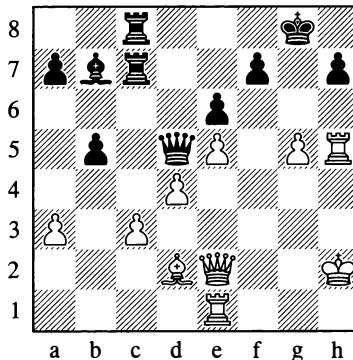
**34.♕xh5!**

White should take the opportunity to restore material equality. His position remains difficult, but Black still faces a challenge regarding how best to convert his advantage.

**34...♗xe5!**

The opposite-coloured bishop position is the most unpleasant one for White to face.

34...a5? would be a mistake as after 35.♗g4! White suddenly becomes active, and 35...♗f3 can be adequately met by 36.♗h3!

**35.fxe5****35...a5!**

Black gets ready to sacrifice a pawn in order to open the way for his rooks to penetrate to c2.

The exchange sacrifice 35...♗xc3?! is playable, but not decisive: 36.♗xc3 ♗xc3 37.♗h3! ♗xd4 (37...♗c4 38.♗d3) 38.♗xc3 ♗xc3 39.♗e3 White should be able to keep his position together.

**36.♗h4**

36.♗h3 b4 37.cxb4 axb4 38.♗f2 b3! 39.♗b1 b2 40.♗xb2 ♗h1† 41.♔g3 ♗c3† Black wins.

36.♗f2 b4 (36...♗a2 37.♗e3) 37.cxb4 axb4 38.axb4 ♗a8! 39.♗f1 ♗a2 White is under pressure.

**36...b4!**

This seems best, although 36...♗xc3?! is more tempting here than on the previous move, as Black's queenside pawns are more mobile: 37.♗xc3 ♗xc3 38.♗h3 ♗c4 39.♗d3 ♗xd4 40.♗xd4 ♗xd4 41.♔g3 b4 White faces an unpleasant defence.

**37.axb4 axb4 38.cxb4 ♗c2 39.g6**

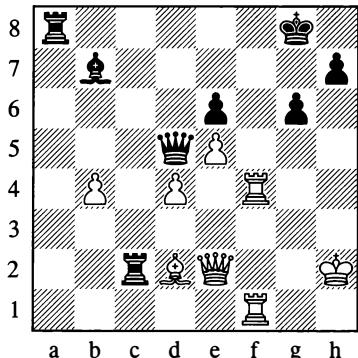
39.♗f2 ♗a8 wins.

**39...fxg6 40.♗f4 ♗a8!**

Technically speaking this is the most accurate move.

40...♗d8 is also good: 41.b5 (41.♗ef1 ♗g5) 41...♗b2 42.♗e3 ♗cc2 43.♗d1 It is possible that White can hold this position with perfect defence, but in an over-the-board game the odds would be in favour of a black win.

41.  $\mathbb{E}ef1$



41...  $g5!!$

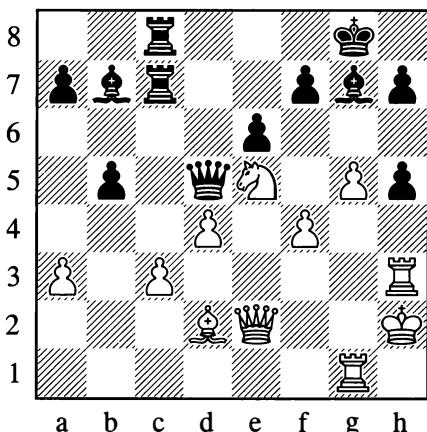
The surprising pawn move forces the rook to give up either the f-file or the fourth rank. After 41...  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  42.  $\mathbb{E}f8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{E}xf8$  43.  $\mathbb{E}xf8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  45.  $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  46.  $\mathbb{W}c6$  Black is certainly better, but White has decent drawing chances.

42.  $\mathbb{E}f2$

42.  $\mathbb{E}g4$   $h6-$

42...  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  43.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}h4\uparrow$  44.  $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}xh3\uparrow$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}xh3$   $h6$

Black is winning.



34...  $\mathbb{W}a2!$

Karpov prevents White's intended  $\mathbb{W}xh5$ , and also prepares to exploit the fact that the white rook gave up its control over the e4-square.

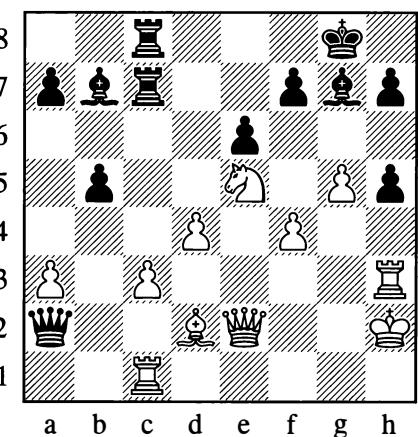
35.  $\mathbb{E}cl?!$

In a difficult situation and with no time on the clock, Wahls blunders.

35.  $\mathbb{E}e1!$  was the best chance, when Black still has to choose the right path. There are two ideas:

a) 35...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  is possible, but does not work quite so well here: 36.  $fxe5$  (36.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{E}d7$ ) 36...  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  (36...  $\mathbb{W}c2$  37.  $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  38.  $\mathbb{E}xc3$   $\mathbb{W}xe2\uparrow$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xh7!$  White is worse but continues to resist) 37.  $\mathbb{W}g2!$  (37.  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$ ) 37...  $\mathbb{W}xa3$  38.  $\mathbb{W}e4$  (38.  $\mathbb{E}xh5?$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  39.  $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}b2$  [39...  $\mathbb{E}xc3?$  40.  $\mathbb{E}xh7!$ ] 40.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $a5-$ ) 38...  $b4$  (38...  $\mathbb{W}b2$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}xd2\uparrow$  40.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d1$  41.  $\mathbb{E}xh7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  42.  $\mathbb{E}f2$  White is still alive) 39.  $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  40.  $\mathbb{W}xh7$   $\mathbb{W}a2$  41.  $\mathbb{W}h8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  42.  $\mathbb{W}f6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black will walk to the queenside with his king and maintain the better chances, but his position is not winning.

b) The right way is: 35...  $a5!$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $b4!$  (36...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5?!$  37.  $fxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  38.  $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xd2\uparrow$  39.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  40.  $\mathbb{W}xf7\uparrow!$  White is still breathing) 37.  $axb4$  (37.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $bxcc3-$ ) 37...  $axb4$  38.  $cxb4$   $\mathbb{E}c2$  Black is winning.



35...  $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

This final flourish from the brilliant bishop seals White's fate.

**36. Kg e3 ♜f5**

Black's kingside is now completely secure, while his position on the opposite flank is overwhelming.

**37. ♜e1 ♜xa3**

0–1

Wahls lost on time but his position by this stage is absolutely hopeless.

This final victory gave Karpov a superb final total of 9½/11, two points ahead of Lutz who finished in second. Interestingly Karpov drew with the three players who finished in 2nd-4th and defeated the remaining eight. Like the Madrid tournament earlier in the year, the Baden-Baden event was slightly below Karpov's usual level of competition, nevertheless he won them both with remarkable authority. Compared with the previous year, Karpov slightly reduced his number of losses from eleven to ten, and increased his number of wins from twenty five to thirty one.

## 1992 Summary

Linares (4th place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/13$  (+5 =5 -3)

Candidates semi-final match versus Short: Lost 4–6 (+2 =4 –4)

Madrid (1st place):  $7\frac{1}{2}/9$  (+6 =3 –0)

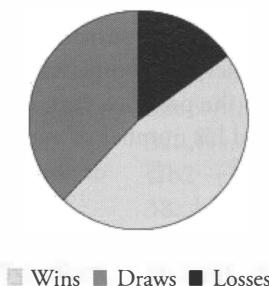
Biel (1st place):  $10\frac{1}{2}/14$  (+8 =5 –1)

Tilburg Knockout, Round 1 versus Chernin: 1/2 (0 =2 –0) (lost rapid tie-break)

Alekhine Memorial, Moscow (4th-6th place):  $3\frac{1}{2}/7$  (+2 =3 –2)

Baden-Baden (1st place):  $9\frac{1}{2}/11$  (+8 =3 –0)

Total 65.9% (+31 =25 –10)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1993

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Rating 2725 (2 in the world)

Karpov's first event of the new year was Wijk aan Zee, which followed the knockout format at that time, with two-game matches followed by a rapid tie-breaker if needed. Karpov began in the worst possible way, blundering a piece after just twelve moves against Larry Christiansen. (You can see what happened in the notes to Game 31 later in the chapter.)

I was in Wijk aan Zee on that day to visit Peter Leko, who was my pupil at the time. During the evening I saw Karpov having supper with Lembit Oll. Later I asked the Estonian grandmaster whether Karpov had said anything about the game. He told me that Karpov did not mention it at all.

The one good thing for Karpov was that his blunder occurred when he had the black pieces, so he still had a fair chance to win with White the next day to tie the mini-match. He managed to do it, and then eventually overcame Christiansen in a series of hard-fought rapid games.

In the second round Karpov faced John Nunn, who employed a Modern Benoni set-up via a Sämisch King's Indian move order. For a while the position was sharp and dynamically balanced, but shortly before the time control the English grandmaster blundered a piece and resigned soon after. In the second game Karpov surprised his opponent with a Fort Knox French. For a while his position looked uncomfortable, but he gradually managed to ease the pressure and make a draw.

Karpov's next opponent was Valery Salov. The opening phase of their first game was very unusual indeed – we will look at it briefly.

1.d4 d5 2.c4 c6 3.♘c3 dxc4

Karpov never before and never again encountered this move.

4.e4 e5 5.dxe5

This move is rare, and may have been the product of Karpov's over-the-board improvisation.

5.♗f3 is more common, and was once used by Portisch who defeated Saidy in an endgame masterpiece.

5...♝xd1† 6.♔xd1

The mutual double-pawn majorities promise a rich and sharp queenless middlegame. Despite Karpov's success in the present game, this line did not attract many followers.

6...b5?!

Later Stefanova improved with 6...♝e6, which looks more solid.

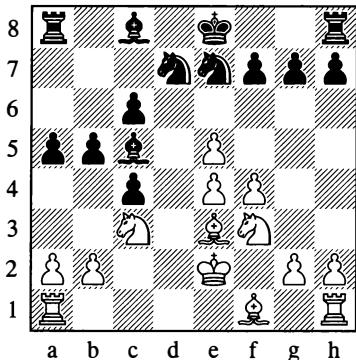
7.♗e3 ♘d7 8.f4

Karpov bases his play on his strong central pawns.

8...♞c5 9.♗e2 a5

9...g5 should be met by 10.g3.

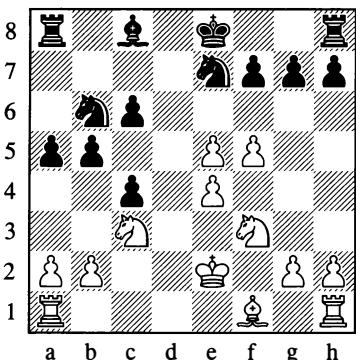
10.  $\mathbb{Q}f3 \mathbb{Q}e7$



11.  $f5!$

Karpov uses his pawns to choke Black's position.

11...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6 \mathbb{Q}xb6$



13.  $\mathbb{Q}e3!$

Karpov puts his king to remarkable use. It is strong in the centre, and may help to defend the e5-pawn.

13...  $f6$

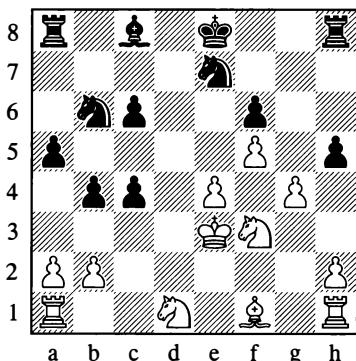
Perhaps Black should have focused on the queenside with 13...  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ .

14.  $exf6 gxf6$  15.  $g4 b4$

Around here Black might have considered 15...  $h6$ ! with the idea to exchange as many kingside pawns as possible, and maybe even sacrificing a piece for White's two remaining kingside pawn, followed by swapping off White's last few queenside pawns to make a draw.

16.  $\mathbb{Q}d1 h5?!$

16...  $h6$  was better.



17.  $\mathbb{Q}g1?$

It is hard to guess why Karpov rejected the natural and strong 17.  $g5!$  (even 17.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  is stronger than the game continuation). Perhaps he was concerned about 17...  $fxg5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xg5 \mathbb{Q}xf5?!$ , but after 19.  $exf5 \mathbb{Q}xf5\#$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}f2 0-0$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$  White has excellent winning chances.

17...  $hxg4$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$

The position is unclear, Karpov – Salov, Wijk aan Zee 1993.

Later in the game Salov sacrificed a pawn in order to obtain a protected passed pawn and decent counterchances, but then he gave up his strong pawn unnecessarily and Karpov punished him. In the return game Karpov was under pressure in a semi-closed double rook endgame, but he managed to draw it and thus secure his ticket to the final.

In the final Karpov faced Illescas in a four-game match. In the first game he equalized on the black side of an English Opening, and the game remained balanced until just after the time control when a draw was agreed. In the second game Karpov got an edge in a  $\mathbb{W}c2$  Semi-Slav (see the notes to Game 27), and subsequently won material. He made a few shaky moves before the time control, but nevertheless was able to win eventually. In the

third game Karpov again drew solidly against the English.

The final game was a dramatic one. Requiring only a draw with the white pieces, Karpov played too timidly against the Semi-Slav and the Spaniard skilfully outplayed him. At one point he was a pawn up with a clearly winning position, but allowed Karpov to escape to a still difficult endgame. Illescas was able to win a second pawn but Karpov narrowly managed to hold the draw and thus secure the winner's trophy.

The next big tournament was Linares, where Karpov started with a beautiful attacking win over Salov, which can be found on page 87, in the note to White's 13th move in Game 13. In Round 2 Karpov repeated the defensive set-up he used against Illescas in the English Opening, but this time he failed to equalize, and later forfeited on time in a losing position.

Karpov bounced back with a win over Beliavsky, referenced on page 400 of the first volume. In Round 4 he held Anand using a Fort Knox French, then drew with White against Ivanchuk. In Round 6 Karpov had the white pieces for the second consecutive time, and was able to defeat Gelfand with the help of a beautiful positional exchange sacrifice. He followed it with a solid draw against Shirov.

In Round 8 Karpov faced Kamsky, who played a most imaginative piece sacrifice on the black side of a Sämisch King's Indian. Karpov was under some pressure, but survived and eventually won the game after Kamsky erred. In the next game he outplayed Ljubojevic on the black side of an English Opening.

In Round 10 Karpov's aspirations of winning the tournament took a hammer-blow as he lost in spectacular style against Kasparov, who played brilliantly. Karpov chose the Sämisch Variation against the King's Indian and made an overoptimistic pawn grab. He then tried to

drive his opponent's knight from the centre with the move f3-f4, to which Kasparov replied with the powerful *zwischenzug* ...b5-b4!, leaving his own knight temporarily en prise and targeting Karpov's c3-knight. According to Anand, it was rumoured that Karpov had overlooked this key resource. When this was put to Kasparov, the then World Champion retorted in his own inimitable style, "Did he expect me to resign?"!

From there on, Kasparov's initiative snowballed and by move 22 all seven of Karpov's remaining pieces had been driven back to the first rank. The game contained one more twist: a couple of moves later Kasparov used his c-pawn to capture a white rook on d1, but he did not have a spare queen to hand. The arbiter mistakenly brought a white queen, after which Kasparov lost patience and pressed his clock with the pawn still on d1, expecting it to be captured on the next move. Upon seeing this, Karpov cheekily left the pawn where it stood and captured a different piece, claiming that Kasparov could have promoted to a knight or a bishop! Unfortunately for him this gambit was declined, and three moves later he lost on time in a hopeless position.

Karpov managed to put this disappointing result behind him and won a nice game from the black side of a Sämisch Nimzo-Indian against Yusupov. In the final two rounds he found himself on the brink of defeat against Kramnik and clearly worse against Bareev, but thanks to some inaccuracies from his opponents, combined with his own fine defensive technique, he was able to draw both games. His final score of 8½/13 was enough to tie for second place with Anand, a point and a half behind Kasparov.

\*\*\*

After the break-up of the Soviet Union, Karpov began to play in some team events in

different European countries. According to the database Karpov played two games in the Austrian Team Championship, drawing with Blatny and beating Duer in a nice game which is referenced in the notes to Game 32 later in this chapter. In the European Cup final Karpov drew against Mikhail Gurevich and defeated Ekstroem.

Karpov was especially active in the French Team Championship. His results included a black draw against Pinter, a white draw against Lautier, and three white wins against Belotti, Chevallier and Kallai. We will examine the last on the list. The Hungarian grandmaster played three games against the world champions – in the other two he drew with Spassky and Kramnik.

### Game 30

Anatoly Karpov – Gabor Kallai

French Team Championship 1993

#### 1.e4 c5

Kallai also plays the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  variation of the Caro-Kann. I worked on that line a lot with Gabor, before the Karpov – A. Sokolov match which brought it into fashion. In a way it was bad luck for us, as from then on many other players started investigating that variation.

It is understandable that Gabor did not want to find out how Karpov, the most prominent expert on the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  line, was planning to meet his pet variation.

#### 2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 3. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Karpov played the Rossolimo three times back in 1969 in Soviet team events, and never repeated it after this game. Was it a coincidence, or was there some reason why he felt inclined to play it at team events?

#### 3...g6

Kallai had a game against Benjamin where he undertook doubled isolated pawns on the c-file, so Karpov may have been hoping for the same.

#### 4.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

The first deep investigation of the capture on c6 was carried out by the great junior trainer and opening theoretician Chebanenko. Interestingly Fischer and Kasparov took the knight one move earlier, but perhaps on principle Karpov preferred not to follow their play exactly.

#### 5...bxcc6

5...dxc6 has a more solid reputation nowadays.

#### 6.d3

6.c3 is more popular than the text move, but 6. $\mathbb{E}e1!$  is the main line, maintaining the flexibility of White's pawns and in particular keeping the option of playing c3 and d4 without losing a tempo.

Karpov's move is hardly critical, although it should not be forgotten that he enjoyed great success on the black side of the English Opening with 1.c4 e5, so he must have felt happy in the reversed position with an extra tempo.

#### 6...f6?!

Black intends to put his knight on h6. There is nothing wrong with this plan, although it would have been more flexible to play 6... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  immediately, as in some lines Black may be able to do without ...f6.

The main moves are 6...d6 and 6...e5.

#### 7.c3

Preparing d4 is the most promising plan in the position, even though it involves a tempo loss.

#### 7... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ 8.d4 cxd4 9.cxd4 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e5?!

Black establishes some space in the centre, but his pawn structure becomes a bit rigid.

10...d6 leads to a standard type of position, in which White has lost some time by playing d4 in two moves rather than one. Normally his rook would be on e1 here; see for example the thirteenth game of the 1992 Fischer – Spassky match, which was eventually drawn.

### 11.dxe5

Karpov decides to fix Black's pawn centre without delay.

### 11...fxe5 12.Qe3 0–0 13.Wd2

Karpov gets ready to exert pressure on the d-file. 13.Wa4?! was also interesting.

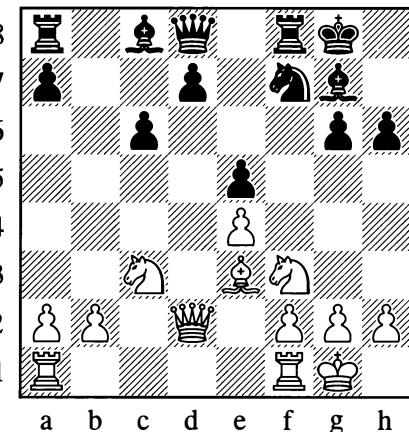
### 13...h6

Kallai probably wanted to prevent Karpov from exchanging the f7-knight, and in the longer term he may have wanted to push his kingside pawns. It is worth checking some other plans, as Black had a few different ways to handle his central pawns.

13...Qb7?! intends a pawn sacrifice, but it fails to solve Black's problems: 14.Qad1! Thanks to this accurate move Black will not be able to take the b2-pawn with a tempo. (After 14.Qfd1 d5 15.exd5 cxd5 16.Qxd5 e4 17.Qe1 Wxd5 18.Wxd5 Qxd5 19.Qxd5 Qxb2 20.Qad1 White is a bit better, but Black has good chances to survive.) 14...d5 15.exd5 cxd5 16.Qxd5 e4 17.Qg5 Black has insufficient compensation for the pawn.

Black could have considered the modest 13...d6?! intending to develop normally. 14.b4? (14.h3 Qe6 15.Qfd1 We7 looks okay for Black.) 14...Qe6 (After 14...Qg4 15.Qg5 Qxg5 16.Qxg5 White will soon start playing against Black's central pawns.) 15.Qg5 (15.Qfd1 and 15.b5 can also be tried.) 15...Qxg5 16.Qxg5

Qf6 17.Qh6 White is a bit better, but Black should be able to live with it.

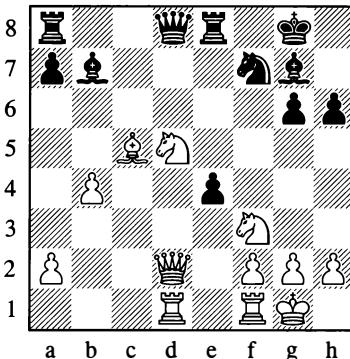


### 14.b4??

Karpov hopes to soften Black's pawns in the centre and gain control over the d5-square.

### 14...Qb7 15.Qfd1

This seems natural, although 15.Qad1 was also possible, and would have had the advantage of removing the rook from the long diagonal: 15...d5 (15...a5 16.Qa4! [16.b5 cxb5 is nothing special] 16...d5 17.Qb6 Wf6 18.Qc5 White's pieces stand well.) 16.Qc5 Qe8 17.exd5 cxd5 18.Qxd5 e4



19.Qe7! (19.Qe1 Qe5 20.Qe7 Qh7 Black has enough activity.) 19...Qxe7 20.Wxd8† Qxd8 21.Qxd8† Qxd8 22.Qxe7 Qc6 23.Qc5 exf3 24.Qd1 We have reached a rich endgame

in which White's chances should be somewhat higher.

### 15...d5

Black decides to play actively and advances in the centre.

The attempt to exchange pawns on the queenside loses a pawn: 15...a5? 16.bxa5  $\mathbb{W}xa5$  17. $\mathbb{W}xd7$  White has a serious advantage. This line reveals one advantage of bringing the f-rook to d1 as ... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  will not win a tempo.

The modest 15...d6 does not fit well with the previously played ...h6. 16. $\mathbb{W}d3$ ! The queen defends e4 and prepares b5 and might attack g6 in some lines. 16...a6 17.a4 White is doing well. His plans may include b5, or the knight transfer  $\mathbb{Q}d2-b3-a5$ .

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{B}e8$ 17. $\mathbb{W}c2$

Karpov provokes the d-pawn into advancing.

### 17...d4

And Kallai is happy to accept the invitation.

The provocative 17...a5!? was also playable: 18.b5 (White can win a pawn, but in doing so he opens the position for the black pieces: 18.exd5 cxd5 19. $\mathbb{W}xg6$  axb4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  Now both 20...e4 and 20...d4 offer Black reasonable compensation.) 18...d4 19.b6  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$  The position is rather unorthodox, but White's strong passed pawn and queenside squares should give him the upper hand.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$

#### 18...a5!?

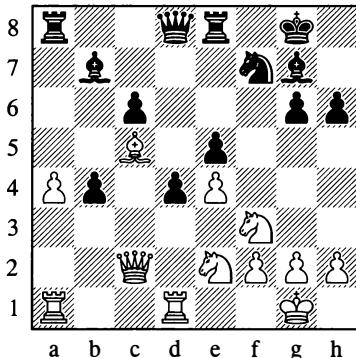
Once again this was an interesting possibility.

#### 19.a4!?

White hopes that the a-pawn will become a powerful force.

If 19. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$  axb4 20. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Black's light-squared bishop becomes active.

#### 19...axb4



#### 20. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$ !?

20. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  gives Black the opportunity to play a promising pawn sacrifice: 20...c5! (20... $\mathbb{W}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  [it is not too late to consider 21...c5? 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{B}ec8$ ?] 22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  23. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black is close to equalizing, as he can double his rooks on the a-file which should restrain the a-pawn.) 21. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ ! Black threatens ... $\mathbb{B}ec8$  and ... $\mathbb{W}c6$ . He has excellent compensation, and it is White who has to be more careful.

#### 20... $\mathbb{W}a5$

Black can also look towards the kingside with 20... $\mathbb{W}f6$ .

#### 21. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{B}eb8$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{W}c7$

Black is holding his own in this complex positional battle.

#### 19. $\mathbb{Q}ab1$

Karpov discourages his opponent from playing ...a5.

#### 19... $\mathbb{Q}c8$

Kallai has decided to stake his hopes on a kingside attack.

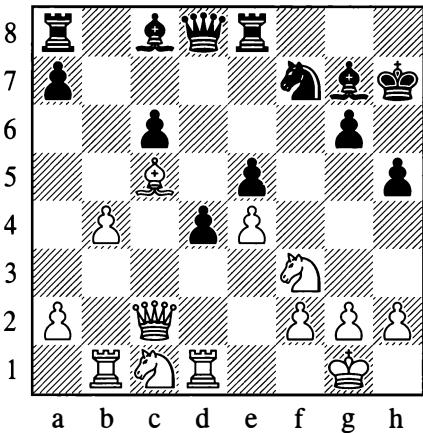
It was not too late to fight back on the queenside with 19... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ !, for instance: 20. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (20.a4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  Heading for the c3-

square. 21.  $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  It is not easy for White to proceed, as both 22.a4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  and 22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  give Black reasonable play.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$

Karpov brings the knight towards its ideal home on d3.

### 20...h5



### 21. $\mathbb{E}d3!$

Before putting his knight on this square, Karpov uses it to activate his rook in a most original way, while conveniently avoiding a future pin with ... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ . It has been suggested that, out of all the other world champions, it was Petrosian whose playing style most closely resembled that of Karpov. Indeed, the ninth World Champion made quite a few remarkable rook manoeuvres over the course of his career.

### 21...g5 22. $\mathbb{E}a3!$ a6

22...a5? was no longer a viable option, as after 23.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  a4 24.  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  the pawn will soon perish.

### 22... $\mathbb{W}c7?$

Kallai probably wanted to keep his queen free for attacking duties; nevertheless this move was playable.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

White could also have played for a knight transfer to f5: 23.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$ ! g4 (23...h4 24.h3 Black's kingside play comes to a dead end.) 24.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  White's position is preferable.

### 23...g4 24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ?

24... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  h4 26.  $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  (Also after 26...g3 27.  $\mathbb{Q}xg3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  28.  $\mathbb{E}b3$  White's chances are higher.) 27.  $\mathbb{E}b3$ ! White can utilize his rooks in a most instructive way. 27... $\mathbb{E}eb8$  28.  $\mathbb{E}ba3$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  29.  $\mathbb{E}a6$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  31.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  White's queenside attack is more effective than Black's kingside counterplay.

### 25. $\mathbb{E}a6$ $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 26. $\mathbb{E}a5$ h4 27. $\mathbb{E}b3$ a6 28. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}b8$

It is not easy for White to make progress on the queenside.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

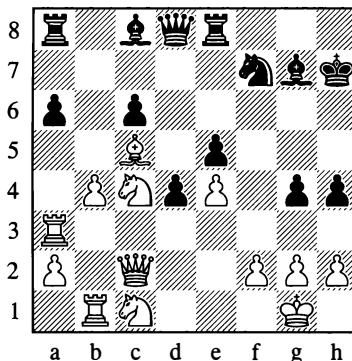
Karpov anticipates the advance of Black's g-pawn, and brings his knight to the queenside.

### 23...g4 24. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{E}b8$

Black decides to keep the bishop, but this may not have been necessary.

### 24...h4!?

This looks more challenging. Black accelerates his attack and intends to weaken the f3-square in order to put his knight there.



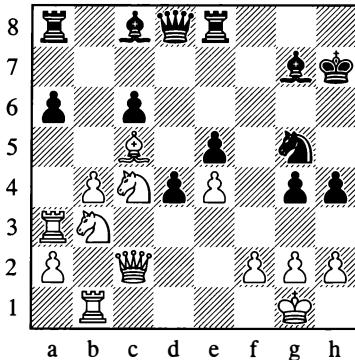
### 25. $\mathbb{Q}b3!$

White continues to improve his pieces. Exchanging Black's light-squared bishop does not take the sting out of his kingside initiative: 25.♗b6 ♘b8 26.♗xc8 ♗xc8 27.♗e2 (27.f4 exf4 28.♗e2 d3! 29.♗xd3 ♗e5 is also promising for Black.) 27...♗g5 28.♗xa6 h3 29.♗a7 hxg2 Black has a dangerous attack.

White can try to fight back on the kingside with 25.f3?!, but this is also not fully convincing: 25...♗g5 (or 25...♗g5 26.♗b6 ♘b8 27.♗xc8 ♘bcx8 28.♗bb3 ♘a8 with mutual chances) 26.fxg4 (After 26.♗d6 gxg3 27.♗xe8 ♗xe8 28.gxf3 ♗f7 29.♗e2 ♗e6 Black has decent compensation for the exchange.) 26...♗xg4 27.♗d3 ♗h5 Black has a full share of the chances.

25...♗g5

25...♗b8 26.♗e2 is also a bit better for White.



26.♗d6!

The knight heads for the outpost on f5.

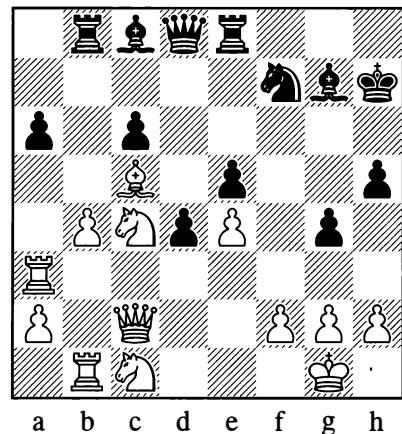
26.♗ba5 leads to complex play: 26...♗f6 27.♗b6 ♘b8 28.♗xc8 (28.♗ac4 ♗e6) 28...♗bcx8 29.♗c4 ♘cd8 30.♗e2 (30.♗d2 ♗h6) 30...♗f4 31.♗d2 ♘a8 The position is roughly balanced.

26...♗e6 27.♗f5 h3 28.♗e2! ♗g6

28...hxg2 29.♗xg4 ♗h6 30.h4 ♗f7 31.♗a5 ♗g6 32.♗h5 White succeeds in gaining the upper hand in the complications.

29.♗xg4 ♗h6 30.g3 ♗f6 31.♗e1

White is better, although making his extra pawn count will not be easy.



25.♗d3 ♘e6

25...h4

With the knight already on d3, White is in a much better position to react to the direct attack.

26.♗f1!

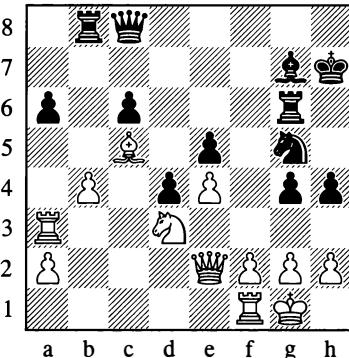
It turns out that White can not just defend, but even fight for the initiative on the kingside.

26...♗g5

26...h3?! is too slow, and after 27.f4! gxh3 28.♗xf3 Black's pieces are not working in harmony.

26...♗g5 should be met by 27.f4! gxh3 28.♗e1! ♗h5 29.♗xf3 when White keeps a slight plus.

27.♗d6 ♘e6 28.♗xc8 ♗xc8 29.♗e2 ♗g6



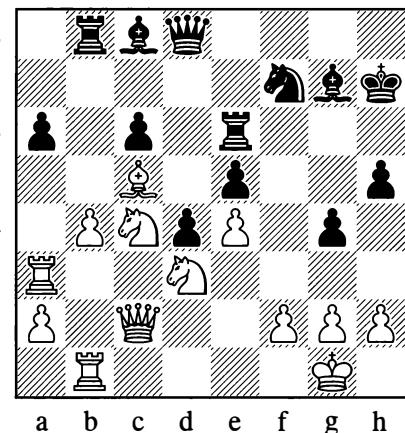
30.h3!  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

30...gxh3? can be refuted by a few accurate moves: 31. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8!$ ? (31... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xe5+$ ; 31... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  32. $\mathbb{W}xg5$  hgx2 33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ ! White should be winning) 32. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ! (but not 32. $\mathbb{W}xg6?$   $\mathbb{W}g4+$ ) 32... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  33. $\mathbb{W}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{W}xh4$  hgx2 35. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  White is winning easily.

30... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ?! 31.hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  White obtains a clear advantage with 32.f4 (or first 32.f3!?  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  followed by 33.f4)

31.hxg4  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  32.bxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  33. $\mathbb{W}f3$

Both kings are somewhat vulnerable, but White has the advantage as his knight is clearly stronger than Black's bishop.



26. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ !

Karpov produces a curious echo of his famous  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  against Unzicker from 1974 (see Game 37 of the first volume). On that occasion the motive was purely positional, but here it is connected with more immediately forcing variations.

26. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ! was an interesting alternative, which can be compared with the previous note.

26... $\mathbb{Q}a8$ !

Kallai stays true to his plan and wins a tempo that can be used to advance his kingside play, but it turns out that the attack is not strong enough.

26... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ? was even worse, and after 27. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  Black loses a pawn for nothing.

26... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ !

This was the correct option, after which the position would have remained complex.

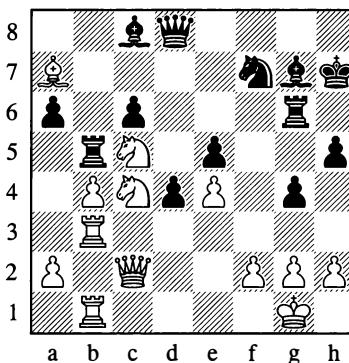
27. $\mathbb{Q}ab3$

27. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ! h4 28.f4 gxf3 29. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  reaches an unclear position with mutual chances.

27. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ! leads to interesting play: 27... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (There is also 27...h4 28.a4  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  [or 29. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  h3 31. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and Black's counterplay arrives in time] 29... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and Black is active enough on the kingside.) 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  29.a4  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  30.bxa5 h4 31. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (31. $\mathbb{Q}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ) 31... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  White has the better structure but Black's position looks playable enough.

27... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c5$

28. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  h4 gives Black reasonable counterplay.



28...a5!

Black has to allow his opponent to create a passed a-pawn in order to free his rook.

29.a4

29. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  traps the bishop, and after 30.a4  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  31.bxa5  $\mathbb{W}xa7$  Black is clearly better.

29.bxa5  $\mathbb{W}e7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  cxb5 31. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}xa7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White's knights are strong, but Black's protected passed d-pawn is also an important asset.

29... $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$

30. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  leads to the same thing.

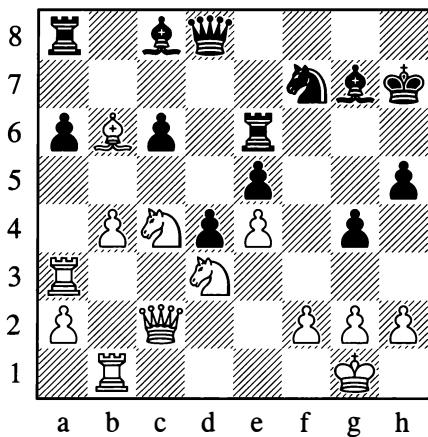
30...axb4 31. $\mathbb{Q}b6$

Or 31. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ .

31... $\mathbb{W}e7$  32.a5  $\mathbb{Q}g5$

The position is dynamically balanced. The a-pawn is undoubtedly strong, but Black's kingside counterplay should not be underestimated.

27. $\mathbb{Q}b6$



27... $\mathbb{W}h4$ ?

Kallai continues his policy of aggression. The queen had several other options.

27... $\mathbb{W}f6$ ?! From this square the queen blocks the bishop from the defence of the e5-pawn. 28. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ! h4 29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  34.f3 gxf3 35. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  White wins a pawn, which should give him good winning chances.

27... $\mathbb{W}e7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ! h4 (if 28... $\mathbb{Q}h6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ !) White opens the kingside) 29. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ?) 29... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  White maintains some pressure, but Black has reasonable chances to defend.

27... $\mathbb{W}e8$

From this square the queen defends the weaknesses on c6 and e5, and later she might also join in the attack from g6.

28. $\mathbb{Q}a5$

White has a few other ideas:

28. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$

31. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  Black is alive.

28. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}b6$  (29. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  h4 It is hard to judge the position as the a8-knight is trapped but hard to collect.)

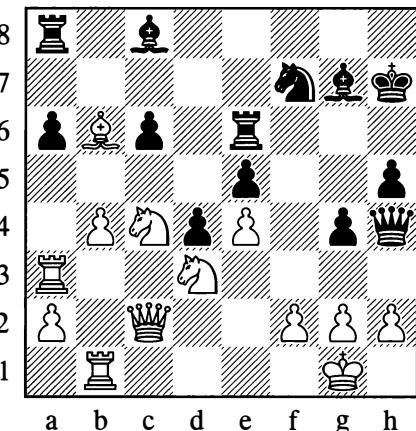
29... $\mathbb{Q}b8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  White keeps some pressure after 31. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  or 31. $\mathbb{W}e2$ , but Black's position should be tenable.

28...h4 29. $\mathbb{W}e2$  h3

29... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  is met by 30. $\mathbb{Q}c7$ .

30.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}b6$

White keeps some initiative on the queenside, but it is hard to say how serious his advantage is.



28... $\mathbb{Q}a5$ !

Even in a hot situation Karpov is able to find a cool-headed move. To send the rook on a journey from f1 to a5 on a crowded board takes great vision and creativity.

28... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ ?

A witty reply. Black would like to continue the attack with ... $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , but at the moment this

would drop the e5-pawn. Therefore Kallai attacks the bishop in order to prevent the c4-knight from taking on e5.

It is possible that Gabor had previously been planning 28...g3?, but then wisely thought better of it. 29.hxg3  $\mathbb{W}xe4$  If Black had time to organize his position properly then the removal of the e4-pawn would be a great help to him, but in the present position it merely opens additional lines of attack for the opponent's pieces. 30. $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  31. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  32.a4! White stops ... $\mathbb{E}b5$  before going after the e5-pawn. (White can consider both 32. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  34. $\mathbb{E}xa6$ , and 32. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{E}b5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$ , but both are less convincing than the main line.) 32... $\mathbb{W}g4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  White is winning; he has an extra pawn, and Black's king is far too exposed.

### 29. $\mathbb{W}e2?$

Karpov tries to strengthen his kingside, but paradoxically the position of the queen on e2 adds strength to Black's attack, as a future ... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  sacrifice might come with the gain of an additional tempo after both sides capture on f3 with their g-pawns.

White could have shut down his opponent's counterplay with: 29. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $\mathbb{E}g6$  30. $\mathbb{E}b3!$  White now has two rooks performing great work laterally across the board. (30... $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ ? is much too greedy: 30... $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  31. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  32. $\mathbb{E}a5$  [32. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}f8\rightarrow$ ] 32... $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$  Black's attack breaks through.) 30... $\mathbb{E}a8$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  31. $\mathbb{E}g3!$ ; 30... $\mathbb{W}f6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ ) 31. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White keeps the advantage while keeping his opponent's attack at bay.

There was a second strong continuation in 29.a4!, improving White's position on the queenside and challenging Black to come up with a good plan. The key point is that 29...g5

can be met by the calm 30. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$  when Black lacks a decent follow-up.

### 29... $\mathbb{W}e7?$

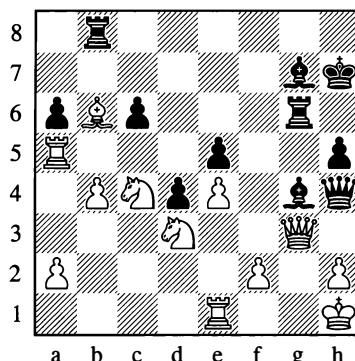
Gabor commits a sin that many of us do from time to time: having embarked on a plan, he changes his mind and reverts back to a plan he rejected earlier in the game. As I have mentioned several times throughout the two volumes, Karpov almost never did this.

29... $\mathbb{E}g6?$  was no good as the e-pawn falls: 30. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{E}b5$  (30... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$  wins.) 31. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $cxb5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}cxe5$  Black is unable to generate any meaningful threats on the kingside.

The best move was 29... $\mathbb{Q}g5!$ . This leads to serious complications and some magical tactics. Despite his almost unparalleled feeling for chess, it is possible that even Karpov would have lost his way in the jungle. White has several plausible moves, but only one route to an advantage.

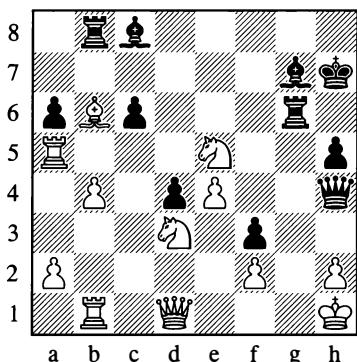
a) 30. $\mathbb{Q}c7?$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$ ! 31.gxf3 gxf3 32. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{E}g6\uparrow$  wins for Black.

b) 30. $\mathbb{E}e1?$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$ ! 31.gxf3 gxf3 32. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{E}g6\uparrow$  33. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  34. $\mathbb{W}g3$



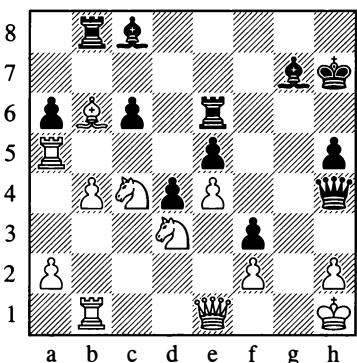
34... $\mathbb{E}e2!!$  Black wins.

c) 30.♕d1? ♜f3†! 31.gxf3 gxf3 32.♔h1 ♜g6 33.♕cxe5



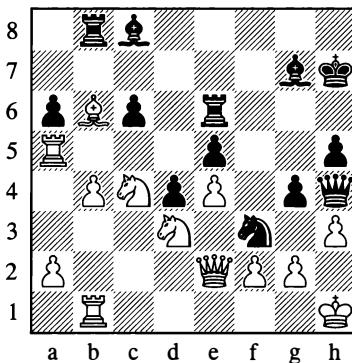
33...♜xe5! (33...♚h3 leads to a draw after 34.♛xg6 ♜g4 35.♝xh5† ♚h6 with a perpetual to follow.) 34.♛xe5 ♚h3 35.♝b3 (35.♝xa6 ♜b7+) 35...♜g7! (35...♜b7? 36.♛xg6 ♜xf2 37.♝xh5† ♜xg6 38.♝g8† White escapes with a perpetual.) 36.♝f7 ♜bg8 37.♝c7 ♜g2† 38.♝g1 ♜f1† Black wins.

d) 30.♗e1!? Unlike the retreat to d1, this has the advantage of defending the f2-pawn. Even so, White has no more than equality here. 30...♜f3† 31.gxf3 gxf3 32.♔h1



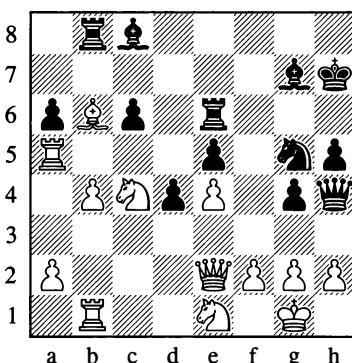
32...♝xb6?? (Black can also force a draw with 32...♝g6 33.♝dxe5 ♚h3 34.♝xg6 ♜g4 35.♝f4 ♜g2† 36.♝g1 ♚h3† with a perpetual.) 33.♝xb6 ♜g6 34.♝xc8 ♜h3 35.♝g1 ♜xg1† 36.♝xg1 ♜xc8 The position is approximately balanced.

e) 30.♔h1 ♜f3 31.h3 (31.gxf3?! looks risky but just seems to be playable: 31...gxg3 32.♗f1 ♜f6 33.♝xe5 [33.♝dxe5? ♚h3 wins.] 33...♚h3 34.♗c1 ♜g2† 35.♝g1 ♜g6 36.♗f4 Black does not seem to have more than a draw.)

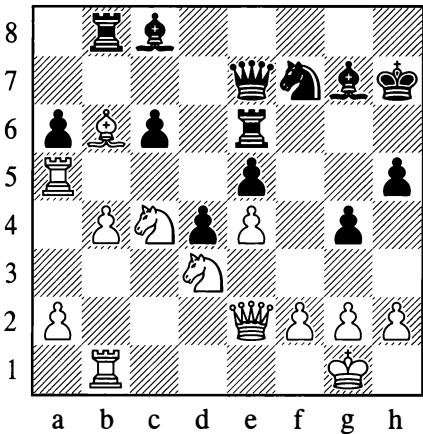


31...♞g5! The knight returns, having succeeded in provoking a weakness. 32.♝e1 gxh3 33.g3 ♜g4 34.f4 ♜f7 The position is roughly equal.

f) 30.♞e1!



This prophylactic move is the only way for White to keep the advantage. 30...♝b7 (30...g3 31.hxg3 ♜xe4 might be playable, but Black is definitely worse.) 31.♝b3! The rook does a great job of defending laterally along the third rank. 32...♝g6 32.♝g3 Black's attack is going nowhere, while White keeps a promising initiative on the queenside.

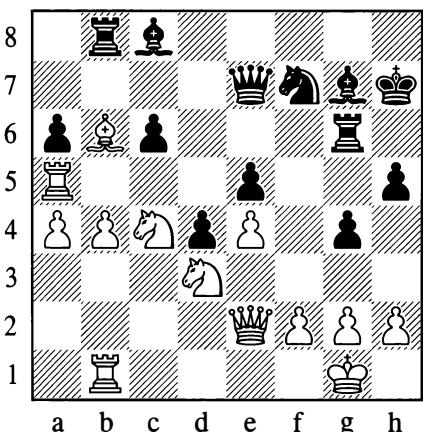


**30.a4!?**

In a complex situation Karpov allows his opponent back into the game. The queen's retreat to e7 took a lot of the power out of the attack, so this would have been a good time to cash in on the queenside with 30.Qc5! Rg6 31.Qxa6 Qxa6 32.Qxa6 when Black does not have much compensation for the pawn.

**30...Rg6!**

Black correctly switches his attention back to the kingside.



**31.Qh1!**

With little time remaining, Karpov finds a good prophylactic move.

**31...h4 32.Qc5 Re6**

Also after 32...Rc7 the position is roughly balanced.

**33.Qa7 Ra8 34.Qc5 Re8**

This is not a serious mistake, but I prefer 34...Re7! in order to take away the c7- and d6-squares from the white bishop, and after 35.Qb6 h3 36.g3 Qd6 the position is about equal.

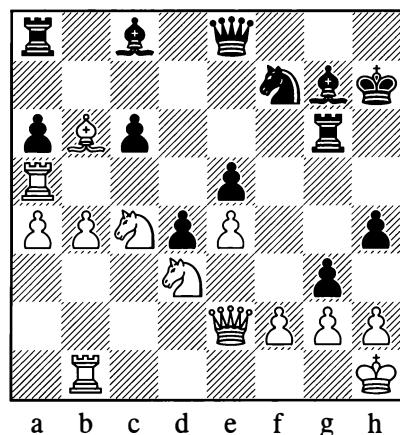
**35.Qb6 g3**

35...Re7 36.b5!? maintains some pressure.

It was worth considering 35...h3 36.g3 Qg5 37.Qd3 Qf3 with roughly equal chances in a complex position.

**36.Qd3**

After 36.h3 gxsf2 37.Qf1 Rg3! Black has good counterplay.



**36...gxh2?**

The huge strategic fight combined with a lot of calculation finally took its toll, and Kallai makes a fatal error. In a funny way Karpov's time trouble may even have worked against Gabor, by adding even more pressure to the already tense situation. There were several interesting alternatives.

36...Rg5 defends the e5-pawn. 37.Qc7

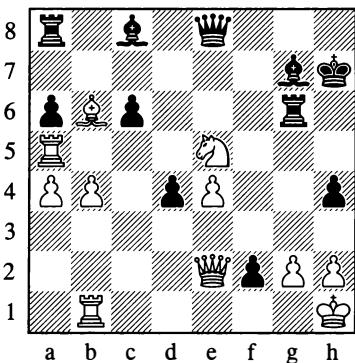
(37.fxg3 hxg3 38.h3 ♖xh3 39.gxh3 ♜e6 White's advantage has evaporated.)

37...gxh2 (37...♜a7!?) 38.♕b6 ♜g4 39.f3 ♜a7 with huge complications.

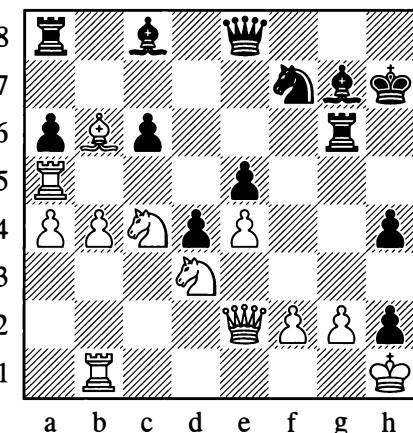
36...♝g8!? 37.♕c7 Black can defend his e-pawn indirectly, by pawn by putting his king on a safer square: 37...gxg2 38.♗xf2 h3 39.♗g1 c5 40.♗xc5 ♜c6 The position is messy.

36...gxf2!? Taking the other pawn also drops the e5-pawn, but the conditions are much more favourable for Black than in the game.

37.♗dxe5 ♜xe5 38.♗xe5



38...h3! Thanks to this lovely move Black can stay in the game. (38...♜xe5 39.♗h5† ♜g7 40.♗xe5 h3 41.♗g5+) 39.♗h5† ♜h6! 40.♗xe8 f1=♗† 41.♗xf1 hxg2† 42.♗xg2 ♜h3† 43.♗g3 ♜xe8 44.♗f7 ♜e6 Black is not worse.



### 37.♗dxe5!

After conducting the strategic aspect of the game with great skill and imagination, Karpov seizes his opportunity to win the game tactically.

### 37...♜h6

37...♗xe5 38.♗h5† ♜g8 39.♗xe5 wins.

### 38.♗xd4

White wins a second pawn and the rest is simple.

38...♗g5 39.f4 ♗e6 40.♗e3 h3 41.g4 c5 42.bxc5 ♜d8 43.♗d2

### 1–0

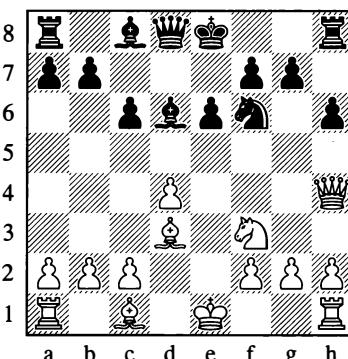
The whole game was rich in both strategic and tactical ideas. Kallai held his own for a long time, but after a terrific struggle Karpov eventually caught him.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was Dortmund. In the first round he unleashed a fantastic novelty against Kamsky in the 4...♗d7 Caro-Kann. We will look at it briefly:

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♗d2 dxe4 4.♗xe4 ♗d7 5.♗g5 ♗gf6 6.♗d3 e6 7.♗f3 ♗d6 8.♗e2 h6 9.♗e4 ♗xe4 10.♗xe4 ♗f6 11.♗h4

Nowadays most experts prefer 11.♗e2.



11... $\mathbb{Q}e7!!$

The point behind this astonishing move is that Black's queen is now defending his rook, thus making ...g5 into a serious threat. Karpov's idea has stood the test of time; it is still regarded as the strongest move in the position, and has been repeated in over a hundred games to date.

12. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Kamsky chooses the most principled answer and sacrifices a pawn.

12... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  13.dxe5  $\mathbb{W}a5\uparrow$  14.c3  $\mathbb{W}xe5\uparrow$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

b6 16.0–0–0 g5 17. $\mathbb{W}a4$

17. $\mathbb{W}h3$  scores better.

17...c5

An interesting middlegame ensued in Kamsky – Karpov, Dortmund 1993. For a long time Black was better, but later he went wrong and allowed his opponent to get back into the game. But Kamsky failed to find the right path, and after a tough battle Karpov eventually secured the full point.

In Round 2 Karpov had the black pieces for the second time. His opponent was Christopher Lutz. The German grandmaster played sixteen games against world champions, scoring one victory, five draws and ten defeats. He made two draws and two losses against Karpov, including a draw in their one previous meeting before the present game.

### Game 31

Christopher Lutz – Anatoly Karpov

Dortmund 1993

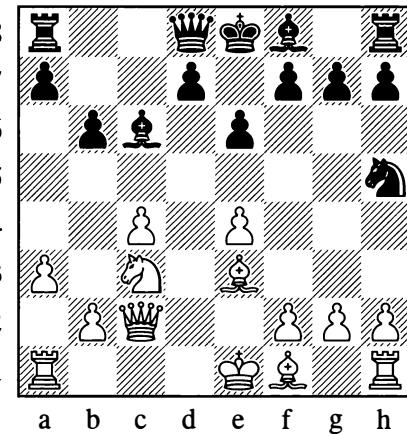
1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 4.a3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$

Karpov's usual preference was 4... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ . He played the text move only four times in his career, the present game being the last of them.

5. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$

Black's idea is to lose a tempo with the bishop in order to divert the white queen from the d-file, thus preparing ...c5 without allowing the reply d5.

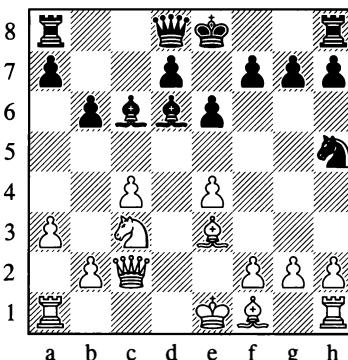
6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  c5 7.e4  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  8. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$



11... $\mathbb{W}b8$

11... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is a popular alternative, but Karpov's choice is the main line. Black stops f4 and fights for control over the dark squares.

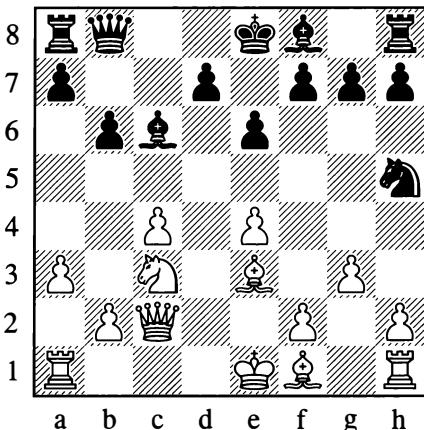
Earlier in the year Karpov opted for an alternative with similar motives, but which led to disastrous consequences: 11... $\mathbb{Q}d6??$



12. $\mathbb{W}d1!$  1–0 Christiansen – Karpov, Wijk aan Zee (1) 1993.

**12.g3**

A few rounds later Lutz played the same variation from the opposite side of the board against Kramnik, who deviated at this point. The game continued 12.0–0–0 ♕d6 13.g3 ♘e5 and was eventually drawn.

**12...f5!?**

This was Karpov's novelty, which has since become the main move in the position. Black wants to fight for the initiative instead of merely settling for a solid Hedgehog-type position.

**13.0–0–0**

13.♗g1 has since become more popular, although Black scores well there too.

**13...♝f6 14.♕d3 ♖b7!**

By forcing White's next move, Karpov increases his influence over the central dark squares.

**15.f3**

Karpov mentions the extravagant 15.♗d5?, but fails to point out the refutation of 15...exd5! 16.exd5 ♕xd5 17.cxd5 ♜c8+–.

**15...fxe4**

Karpov makes sure he will get control over the e5-square.

**16.♗xe4 ♗xe4**

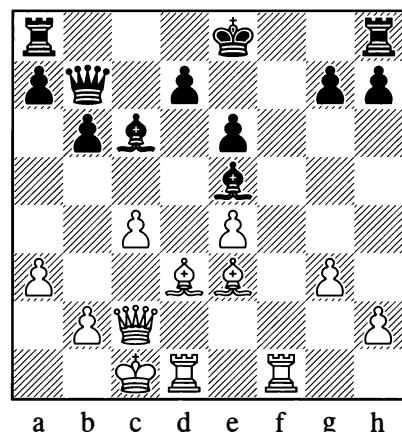
In view of the improvement mentioned in the note to White's 19th move below, it seems likely that 16...♝xe4! is an objectively sounder move. After 17.fxe4 ♕d6 18.♗hf1 (18.♗f4?!) 18...♝c7 Black has good control over the dark squares and will be able to castle without difficulty.

**17.fxe4**

17.♗xe4?! would have stopped Black from putting his bishop on d6, but on the other hand the c4-pawn might become vulnerable. 17...♝xe4 18.fxe4 (18.♗xe4? ♖xe4 19.fxe4 ♜c8 The c-pawn falls.) 18...♝c8 19.♗b1 ♘e7 (19...b5? 20.c5 ♘e7) 20.♗hf1 ♜f8 Since the white pieces are tied up with defending the c-pawn, Black will probably be able to castle by hand, thus keeping a good position.

**17...♕d6 18.♗hf1 ♘e5!**

Karpov blocks the e4-pawn and renders his opponent's light-squared bishop very passive. The c6-bishop is also restricted, but it enjoys better prospects than its opposite number. Positionally Black is doing extremely well – the only drawback to his position is his difficulty castling.

**19.♗f4?!**

Lutz's plan is to entice Black into short castling with the intention of starting an attack there, but it never materializes.

White can try to prevent long castling with 19.♗g5, but after 19...h6! 20.♗f4 ♕b8 (20...♕c7?! 21.♗c3!) 21.♗e2 (21.♗e3 ♔f6) 21...0–0 Black has a pleasant game, and the slight weakening of his kingside caused by ...h7-h6 is of little consequence.

19.♗e2! was the best way to cause problems: 19...0–0–0 (If Black stubbornly tries to arrange short castling then he could easily fall into serious trouble: 19...♗f6?? 20.e5 wins, and 19...♕c7?! 20.♗g5! is strong.) 20.c5 ♔b8 21.cxb6 axb6 22.♗b1 White is slightly better. Note that Black cannot take the e-pawn under favourable conditions as 22...♗xe4? (Black should instead prefer 22...d6 23.♗f4±) 23.♗g5! is strong.

### 19...♕b8!

Karpov keeps his control over the e5-square with the more precise move.

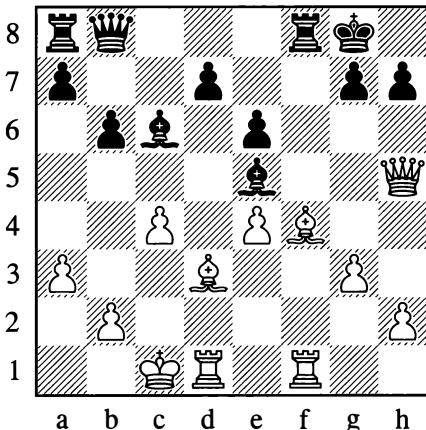
Lutz was probably hoping for 19...♕c7 20.♗c3! ♗xc3 (20...d6 21.♗xe5 dxe5 is possible, but Black is obviously worse due to his pawn structure.) 21.♗xc7 ♜c8 22.♗d6 ♔f6 23.e5 ♔e7 24.♗d2 when White has a small advantage.

### 20.♗e2

White is somewhat ahead in development and tries to make something of it.

Another idea was 20.♗g5 to prevent Black from castling, but after 20...h6 21.♗e3 ♜c7 22.♗b1 (22.♗e2 ♜f8) 22...♜f8 23.♗e2 ♔e7 Black's king stands safely in the centre.

### 20...0–0 21.♗h5



### 21...♝xf4!

Karpov finds an excellent way to extinguish his opponent's initiative. In return for the exchange, Black gets a pawn and fortifies his control over the central dark squares.

21...♝xf4†? 22.gxf4 ♜f7 (22...♝xf4 23.e5) 23.e5 g6 24.♗g1 White has a powerful attack on the g-file.

### 22.gxf4 ♜xf4† 23.♗b1 ♜e5!

Black must keep a piece on this square in order to prevent White from liberating his bishop with e4-e5. Despite his slight material disadvantage, Black runs virtually no risk of losing this position as long as he is careful to maintain control over the dark squares.

### 24.♗xe5?!

Exchanging queens leads to a passive position for White, who will have a hard time improving his pieces.

### 24.♗e2?

With queens on the board Black will not be able to activate his king like he does in the game. This move allows Black to take a second pawn; on the other hand, fewer white pawns mean more open files for his rooks!

### 24...♝xh2

Black is not forced to take the second pawn, and can also consider 24... $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$ .

25. $\mathbb{W}f3$  h6

After 25... $\mathbb{W}b8!?$  26. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  27. $\mathbb{E}h1$  White's attack is dangerous.

26. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g3$

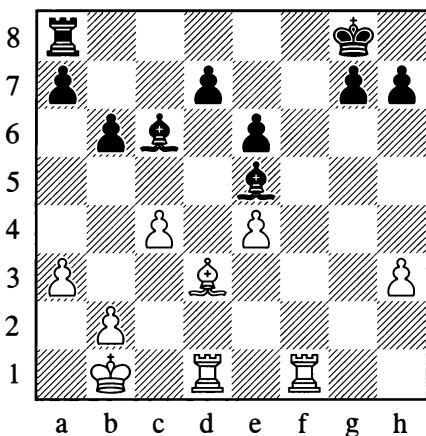
26... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  27. $\mathbb{E}g2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  28. $\mathbb{E}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  29. $\mathbb{W}f6\#$  leads to a perpetual.

27. $\mathbb{E}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  28. $\mathbb{W}f7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29. $\mathbb{W}g6$

Black has enough resources to defend his king, but he is in no position to advance his passed pawns on the kingside, therefore the position is balanced.

**24... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  25.h3**

It is hard for White to justify the sacrifice 25.b4  $\mathbb{Q}xh2$  26.b5  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  d6 when Black's passed g- and h-pawns give him decent winning chances.



**25...a5**

Karpov stops his opponent from gaining space on the queenside – a sensible idea, although in view of improvement mentioned in the following note, 25...d6 was worth considering.

**26.b3?!**

Lutz does not want to allow his queenside pawns to be fixed, but this should not have been his top priority. Instead 26. $\mathbb{E}f3!$  followed by  $\mathbb{E}df1$  would have prevented the following

bishop manoeuvre, after which Black will have a hard time improving his position.

**26...d6!**

Preparing to improve the light-squared bishop. Now Black gets everything he could have hoped for.

**27. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}c2$**

28. $\mathbb{E}df2$  is met by 28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  when Black covers all the entry squares on the f-file.

**28... $\mathbb{Q}g6$**

The bishop arrives on its perfect square, from which it menaces the e4-pawn while conveniently guarding the entry square on f7.

**29. $\mathbb{E}df2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d1!?$**

White's defensive task is not easy – he cannot anticipate exactly how his opponent will try to exert pressure. It is never easy to choose between numerous defensive plans, when all of them result in a slightly worse position.

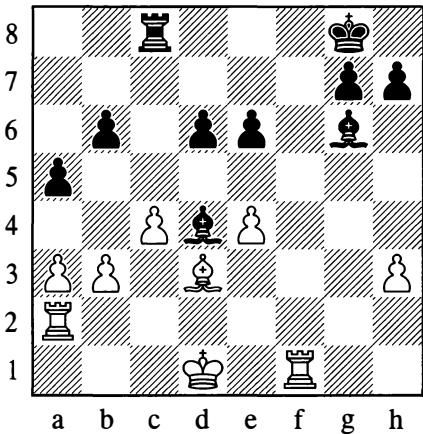
With the benefit of hindsight, it is apparent that queenside play does not achieve much for White. Therefore it looks better for him to wait patiently with 30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ , keeping his rooks on the f-file in order to keep the enemy rook tied to the eighth rank. Play might continue: 30... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  31. $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  32.e5!? Sacrificing the e-pawn to open files for the rooks. (Alternatively 32.a4! is passive but Black will have a hard time breaking through.) 32... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  33. $\mathbb{E}f4$  (33. $\mathbb{E}g3!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  34.exd6 is also possible.) 33...dxe5 34. $\mathbb{E}h4$  g6 35. $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  36. $\mathbb{E}c2$  White should be able to hold this ending.

**30... $\mathbb{Q}d4!$**

Karpov forces the rook away from the f-file and opens the fifth rank for the rook.

**31. $\mathbb{E}a2$**

31. $\mathbb{E}f4?$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  costs White his extra exchange.



**31...Rc5!**

Karpov transfers the rook to the kingside where it helps to keep up the initiative.

**32.Rg2**

The German grandmaster changes his mind, and decides not to take any action on the queenside. More challenging looks:

**32.b4? Rh5!**

I believe this to be the strongest answer.

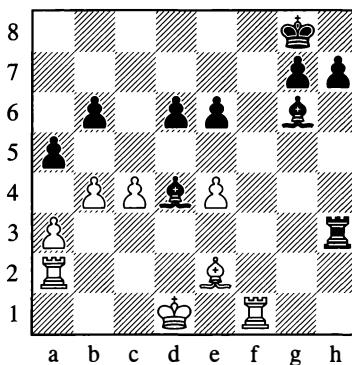
Karpov only mentions 32...Rg5, and Lutz's move in the game suggests that he was also concerned about the rook occupying the g-file. However, White has a surprising way to activate his pieces: 33.Qe2! Rxe4 (33...h5 34.Qf3 Rg3 35.Qg2! Black's rook will be eliminated, along with all his winning chances.) 34.Rd2 Re5 (If 34...e5 35.c5! White becomes active.) 35.Qg4 Qf5 36.Qxf5 exf5 37.Qd5 Qf7 38.Qb5 White has succeeded in activating his rooks, and the position is unclear.

**33.Qe2!**

White's counterplay is based on the eighth rank.

33.Qh2 looks passive, but is not a bad move. 33...axb4 (33...Rh4 34.Qc2) 34.axb4 Qc3?! This ambitious approach gets nowhere. 35.Qc2 Qxb4?! (Black should probably admit his mistake with 35...Qf6, although after 36.Qb3 White should not be in too

much danger.) 36.Qb3 Ra5 (36...Qc5?? 37.Qa2!+) 37.Qhf2 h6 38.Qf8+ Qh7 39.Qf3 Qe5 40.Qd8 White has nothing to worry about as his pieces are active enough. 33...Qxh3 33...Rh4 34.Qd2 Qxe4 35.Qg4 should be fine for White.



**34.Qd2!**

White plays to exchange the rooks rather than the bishops. If 34.Qg4 Qh5 35.Qxh5 Qxh5 36.Qd2 e5 Black keeps some advantage.

**34...Qf6**

34...Qe5?? 35.Qg4 Qh5 36.Qxh5 Qxh5 37.c5! wins for White.

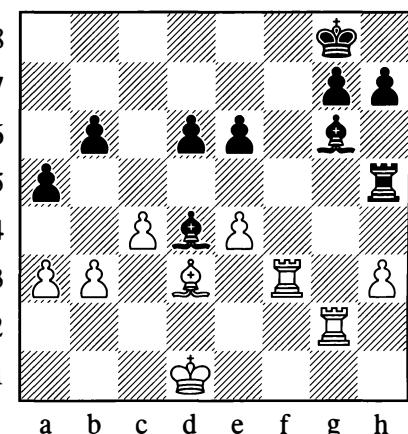
**35.Qf3 Qxf3**

35...Qe7 is met by 36.e5!.

**36.Qxf3 Qh5 37.Qe2**

White should be safe as Black has no rook.

**32...Rh5 33.Qf3**



**33...♝e8!**

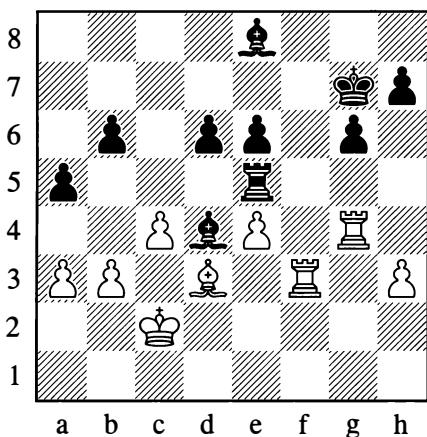
The bishop has done its duty on g6. With this subtle retreat, Karpov clears the path of the g-pawn in order to improve his king.

**34.♛c2**

34.b4?! deserved consideration.

**34...g6 35.♝e2 ♜e5!**

36.♝d3 was a serious threat, so the rook had to leave the h-file. Karpov chooses a good square, where the rook defends e6 and attacks e4.

**36.♝d3 ♕g7 37.♝g4****37...g5!**

Having improved his king slightly, Karpov starts pushing his kingside pawns, which he has to do at some point if he is to generate serious winning chances. It is quite possible that Karpov deliberately timed it to occur shortly before the time control, when his opponent would have the most difficulty reacting to the change in the position.

**38.♝f1**

This is playable, but rather passive. It is possible that Lutz was short of time and simply wanted to get closer to move 40.

38.h4? is a mistake due to 38...♚h5 39.♜fg3 ♜xg4 40.♜xg4 ♜e3 (40...h5 41.♜xg5† should be a draw) 41.hxg5 ♜xg5 Black has excellent winning chances as his extra pawn is both distant and passed.

White could have obtained excellent drawing chances with the resolute move: 38.♜fg3! h6 (The alternative is 38...♚f6 39.h4 h6 [39...gxh4 40.♜f3†!] 40.hxg5† hxg5 41.♜f3† when White's activity should enable him to hold.) 39.h4 ♚h5 (39...♚g6 40.hxg5 hxg5 41.b4 White is safe as he can play ♜h3 on the next move, and 41...♚h5? achieves nothing after 42.♜e2.) 40.hxg5! White solves his problems by returning the exchange. 40...♜xg4 41.gxh6† ♜xh6 42.♜xg4 Black has a slight positional advantage, but virtually no winning chances.

**38...♚c5 39.♝b2**

39.a4?! completely immobilizes White's queenside, and might allow a king invasion to b4 later in the endgame.

**39...♜g6**

39...♜h5 40.♜g2 ♜g6 41.♜e2 defends.

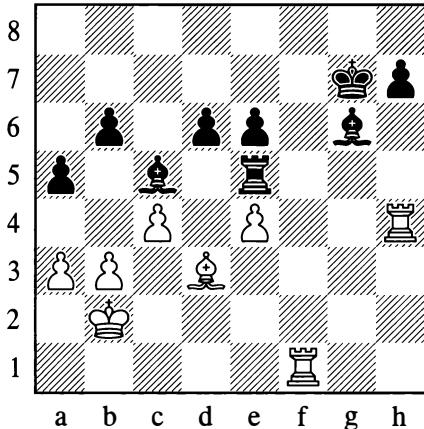
**40.h4??**

Finally Lutz decides to change the pawn structure of the position. It clears some space for the rooks, but the black rook turns out to be the one which is best placed to utilize the g-file.

Waiting passively would have led to a joyless, but still tenable position for White, for instance: 40.♝c2 d5?! (After 40...h5 41.♜g2 I do not see how Black can effectively improve his position. If his king goes to h6 then ♜f6 will be annoying, and if he puts his bishop on f4 then white will play ♜d1.) 41.♝c3 (41.cxd5 exd5 42.exd5 [42.b4 ♜d4†] 42...♜e2 43.♝c4

$\mathbb{Q}d3$  44.  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  45.  $bxc4$  Black is just a fraction better.) 41...  $dxe4$  (41...  $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  42.  $exd5$ ) 42.  $b4$   $axb4\#$  43.  $axb4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  44.  $\mathbb{B}e1$  White holds.

40...  $gxh4$  41.  $\mathbb{B}xh4$



41...  $\mathbb{B}g5!$

Karpov occupies the file that was just opened. His rook gets stronger and stronger.

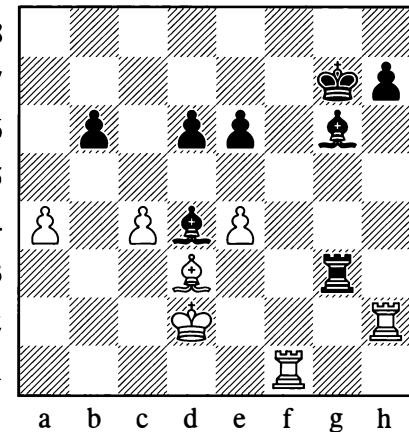
Black had another strong continuation in 41...  $d5!$ . Karpov evaluates this move as winning for Black, but this seems too optimistic. Black indeed wins a pawn, but White can try to sacrifice an exchange for one of the pawns and hope to survive in the opposite-coloured bishop endgame a pawn down. 42.  $\mathbb{B}d1$  (42.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $dxe4$  43.  $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}f5$  44.  $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}f4$  45.  $\mathbb{B}he2$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  46.  $\mathbb{B}xe4$  White is struggling but has chances to hold.) 42...  $dxe4$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $h5$  44.  $\mathbb{B}d2$  (44.  $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  45.  $\mathbb{B}hxе4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  46.  $\mathbb{B}xe4$   $\mathbb{B}xe4$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  also gives some drawing chances.) 44...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White is clearly worse but he certainly has chances to survive.

42.  $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}g3$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $a4!$

Karpov creates a weakness in White's queenside.

45.  $bxa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}g3$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$

It is understandable that White does not wish to calculate the consequences of a bishop check on c3.



47...  $\mathbb{B}g5$  48.  $\mathbb{B}fh1$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  49.  $\mathbb{B}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Going after the a-pawn with 49...  $\mathbb{B}g2\#$  50.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}a2$  does not win a pawn due to 51.  $\mathbb{B}b1!$ .

50.  $\mathbb{B}3h2$   $\mathbb{B}g3$

Karpov improves his rook a bit.

51.  $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

51...  $d5$  can be met by 52.  $\mathbb{B}e2$ , so Karpov continues to manoeuvre in an effort to wear down his opponent.

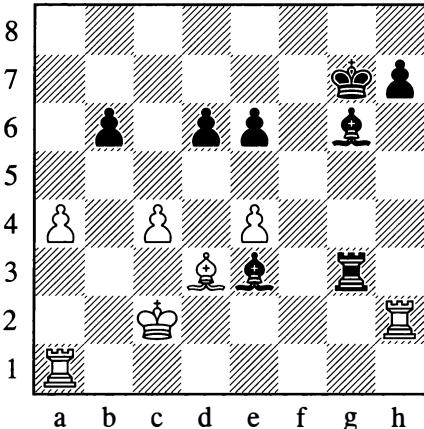
52.  $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$  53.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  54.  $\mathbb{B}a1$

Knowing that he may have to suffer for a long time to come, Lutz sensibly decides to exchange his weak a-pawn.

Stopping the king from marching to the centre with 54.  $\mathbb{B}f1?$  costs White a pawn after 54...  $d5$ .

More resilient was: 54.  $\mathbb{B}bh1!$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Obviously Black could shuffle around for a few moves in order to tire his opponent, but at some point he will have to take action. (It is worth pointing out that 54...  $d5?$  does not work, and

after 55.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd3\#$  56. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}g1\#$  57. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  White may even start pressing.) 55. $\mathbb{Q}xh7!$ ? Perhaps White can hold by waiting passively, but attempting to break free is much more natural. (Another idea is 55.e5!  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  56. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $hxg6$  when it is hard to say how great Black's winning chances are with two pawns for the exchange.) 55... $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  56. $\mathbb{Q}xh7$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  57. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$  58. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g2\#$  59. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b2\#$  60. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  White is extremely passive, but in view of the limited number of pawns remaining, he has reasonable chances to hold.



#### 54... $\mathbb{Q}g1!$

Karpov shows fine judgment in rejecting the tempting 54...d5, which wins a pawn but allows White to reduce the number of remaining pawns significantly: 55.cxd5 exd5 56.a5! The following line looks frightening for White, but he seems to get away with it: 56...dxe4 57. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  58. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  59. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$   $\mathbb{Q}c3\#$  60. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  e3 61. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  bxa5 62. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  63. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  64. $\mathbb{Q}c6$  After walking a narrow path White manages to survive.

#### 55. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Karpov centralizes his king, but there was an even stronger continuation in 55...e5! 56.a5 bxa5 57. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  h5 when Black has excellent winning chances.

#### 56.a5

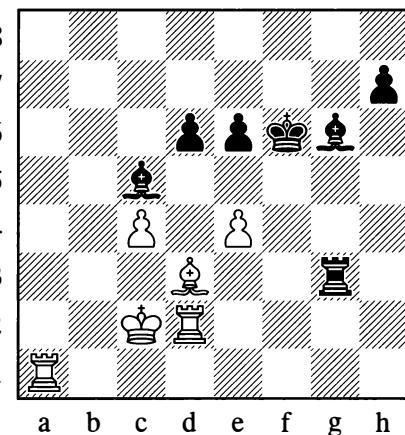
Lutz gets rid of a weakness, yet his suffering is hardly eased.

Thanks to Karpov's last move, White had an opportunity to swap off his bad bishop with 56.e5#! dx5 57. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  58.a5 when he has decent drawing chances.

#### 56...bxa5 57. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$

Sacrificing the e-pawn was still possible: 57.e5#! dx5 (57... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  58. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $hxg6$  59. $\mathbb{Q}e1\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  60. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ) 58. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  59. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  60. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White should be able to hold this endgame.

#### 57... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 58. $\mathbb{Q}a1$



#### 58... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

Karpov centralizes his king and finally prevents his opponent from exchanging his passive bishop by sacrificing his e-pawn.

#### 59. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ $\mathbb{Q}g1$

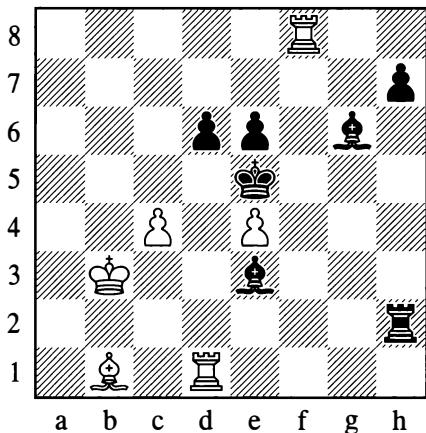
Karpov hints at the plan of pushing the h-pawn to h2.

#### 60. $\mathbb{Q}dd1$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$ 61. $\mathbb{Q}f8$ $\mathbb{Q}g2\#$ 62. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{Q}h2\#$

Taking away the h-file from the opponent.

#### 63. $\mathbb{Q}b1?$

63.♗c2 should have been preferred, as the d1-square is important in some variations, for instance: 63...♗h5 64.♗d3 ♗c5 (64...♗d4 can be met by 65.♗g3! as with the bishop on c2, Black does not have a check on the d1-square.) 65.♔c3 Black can continue to press, but White has reasonable chances to survive.



### 63...♗h5!

Karpov finds a more effective role for the bishop than attacking the e4-pawn.

### 64.♗e1

The main alternative was 64.♗d3 ♗d4 65.♔c2 (65.♔b4 ♗b2†! 66.♗b3 ♗c5†! 67.♔c3 ♗h2 Black has nicely cut the b3-rook out of play and is now ready to push his h-pawn.) 65...♗e2 66.♗g3 ♗xc4† 67.♔xc4 ♗xc2† 68.♔b3 ♗b2† 69.♔a3 ♗h2 70.♗g4 (70.♗ff3 ♗xe4 71.♗h3 ♗d2) 70...h5 71.♗g6 and it is hard to say whether Black can win.

### 64...♗f2

64...♗c5 was a good alternative, but perhaps Karpov was looking to provoke White's next move.

### 65.♗f1?

Lutz attacks the f2-bishop, but helps the more dangerous bishop to join the attack with a huge tempo.

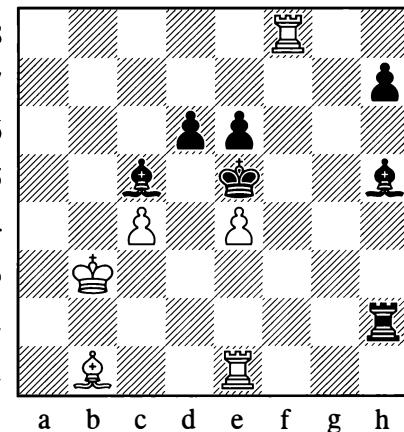
White should have preferred 65.♗c1, defending the c-pawn and keeping the rook closer to the king. 65...♗g4 (65...♗c5 66.♗ff1) 66.♗g8 (or 66.♔a4 h5 67.♗g8) 66...h5 67.♔a4 White's position remains unpleasant, but at least he has avoided a quick collapse.

### 65...♗c5 66.♗e1?

Lutz wants to defend the c4-pawn with his very passive bishop, but his king ends up becoming vulnerable. White's position was highly unpleasant, but it was still possible to offer tough resistance.

66.♗g8 ♗e2 67.♗g5† ♔d4 68.♗c1 (68.♗ff1 ♗xc4†) 68...h5 69.♗c3 h4 70.♔c2 White is dangerously tied up.

66.♗c1! was the best chance, and after 66...♗e2 67.♗h8 (67.♗g8 h5) 67...h5 68.♔a4 ♗f3 69.♗f1 White still has chances to survive.



### 66...♗e2!

Throughout these two volumes, I have often commented on Karpov's remarkable ability to catch the opposing king in endgames. The end of the present game provides yet another compelling example.

### 67.♗a2

67.♗c1 would now be too late, as after

67... $\mathbb{Q}e3$  68. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d2$  White drops the exchange and loses.

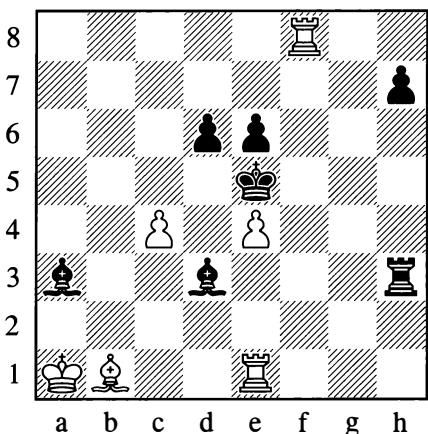
**67... $\mathbb{Q}h3\#$  68. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}a3\#$  69. $\mathbb{Q}a1$**

The king is forced into the corner. The a2-bishop is contributing nothing to the defence, and even gets in the way by blocking a possible escape square from the king.

69. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  loses to 69... $\mathbb{Q}d3\#$  70. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

**69... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  70. $\mathbb{Q}b1$**

70. $\mathbb{B}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  71. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$  wins.



**70... $\mathbb{Q}b4!$**

Now White must lose too much material to avoid checkmate.

**71. $\mathbb{Q}c1$**

After 71. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  the rook and opposite-coloured bishop endgame offers White little chance of survival, as his king is weak and his bishop is too passive.

**71... $\mathbb{Q}d2$  72. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c3\#$  73. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4\#$**

**74. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}e2$**

**0-1**

Karpov did not slow down, and in the next round he won a surprisingly one-sided game against Dolmatov on the white side of a

Sämisch King's Indian. In the next game he suffered a setback against Lautier, who played an enterprising pawn sacrifice leading to a dangerous attack which decided the game.

Karpov recovered well to register good wins against Serper and Lobron, before agreeing a quick draw with Kramnik in the last round. Karpov won the tournament with the superb score of 5½/7, a point and a half clear of Kramnik and Lutz.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was in Dos Hermanas. In the first round he played the English Opening against Epishin, but achieved no advantage and an early draw ensued. In Round 2 he equalized against Izeta Txabarri with the Caro-Kann, then outplayed his Spanish opponent and won. Karpov's next game against Adams featured an unusual opening which looked like a hybrid between a Sicilian, Hedgehog and Queen's Indian. Karpov castled long and developed a promising initiative, which allowed him to simplify to an advantageous four-rook endgame, which he converted smoothly.

In Round 4 Fernandez Garcia played the Grünfeld, but posted three of his pieces on the a-file and Karpov punished him on the kingside. In the next round Magem Badals refused the famous  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  repetition in the Zaitsev, but went wrong in the Breyer-type middlegame and Karpov punished him. Karpov then scored his fifth consecutive win – his victim this time was Yudasin, who played a Queen's Indian with hanging pawns, but failed to equalize and despite stiff resistance he eventually went down.

In Round 7 Karpov had to defend a dangerous attack against Khalifman, but found a good solution, giving up his queen for a rook and knight under relatively favourable conditions. The game was subsequently drawn. In the next round Judit Polgar played the King's Indian and

Karpov reacted with the Fianchetto Variation. After some pawn exchanges Karpov emerged with the better structure, and he was able to press home his advantage. In the ninth and final round Karpov made a solid draw with Rivas Pastor to finish on the excellent score of 7½/9, a point clear of Polgar who was second.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was in Leon in Spain, where his first opponent was the thirteen-year-old Peter Leko. Your author was Peter's trainer at that time, having started to work with him three years before. Competing in such a tournament was a big achievement for Peter, nevertheless after playing a quiet line against the Caro-Kann, he reached an equal ending and was able to survive despite Karpov's best efforts to squeeze a win from the position.

In Round 2 Karpov was close to grinding out a win against Morovic Fernandez, but the Chilean grandmaster defended extremely well and narrowly managed to survive for a draw. In Round 3 against Garcia Illundai Karpov played a Queen's Indian with hanging pawns, but failed to equalize. For a long while he looked to be in trouble, but his opponent did not make the most of his advantage and a draw ensued.

In Round 4 Karpov broke his run of draws and overcame Sion Castro with the help of a strong positional exchange sacrifice. But then he only managed to draw a back-and-forth game with White against Romero Holmes. There followed a quick draw against Vyzmanavin, a longer one against Topalov, and a short draw with Black against Yudasin.

In the ninth round Karpov faced Miguel Illescas, who played sixty nine games against the world champions. He won two of those games, drew thirty five and lost the other thirty two. Karpov played him fourteen times, winning seven, drawing six and losing one.

## Game 32

Anatoly Karpov – Miguel Illescas Cordoba

Leon 1993

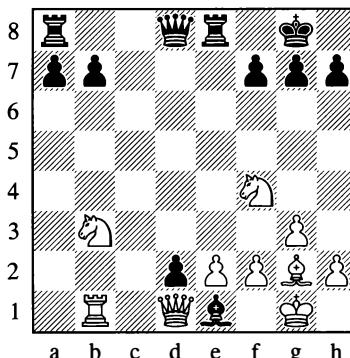
1.c4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.♗c3 e6 4.g3 ♗c6 5.♗g2 d5 6.cxd5 exd5

Through a slightly unusual move order we have arrived at a Tarrasch Defence. It is a somewhat risky choice against Karpov, who proved throughout his career that he was tremendously adept at playing against a fixed weakness, such as the isolated pawn which often arises in this opening.

7.d4 ♖e7 8.0–0 0–0 9.♗g5

Karpov plays the main line, with which he twice defeated Kasparov.

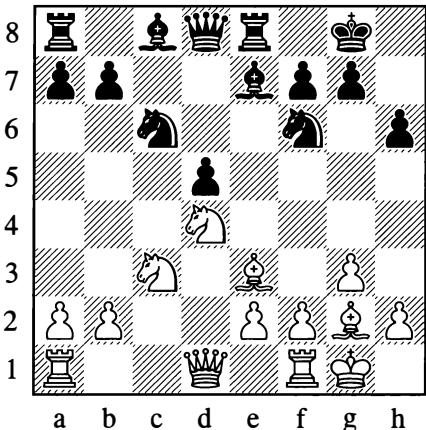
Nine years before, Karpov won another interesting game using the second most popular move: 9.dxc5 ♖xc5 10.♗g5 d4 11.♗xf6 ♖xf6 12.♗d5 ♖d8 13.♗d2 ♖e8 14.♗c1 ♖b6 15.♗e1 ♖e6 16.♗f4 ♖xa2 17.b3 ♖a5 18.♗c2 ♖xb3 19.♗xb3 d3 20.♗xc6 ♖xe1 21.♗c1 d2 22.♗b1 A highly irregular position has been reached. Karpov skilfully manages to turn the seemingly powerful d2-pawn against its owner, by exploiting the fact that the unusually placed bishop on e1 is immobile.



22...a5 23.♗d3 ♖g5 24.♗bc5 ♖ad8 25.♗xb7

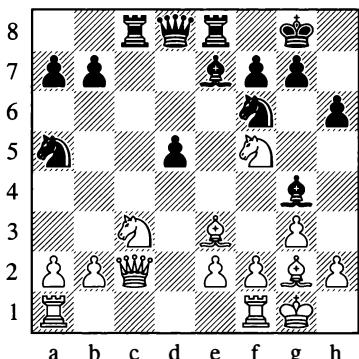
h5 26.♗f3 ♜f5 27.♗g2 h4 28.g4 ♜g5 29.h3 ♜d4 30.♗b3 g6 31.e3 ♜dd8 32.♗e4 a4 33.♗xa4 ♜e7 34.g5 ♜xd3 35.♗f6† ♜f8 36.♗xh4 ♜d8 37.♗b7 1–0 Karpov – Chandler, London 1984. The d2-pawn and e1-bishop never again moved, and Karpov was able to catch his opponent's king.

9...cx d4 10.♗xd4 h6 11.♗e3 ♜e8



12.♗c1

Karpov chooses the most common move. Against Kasparov he twice played: 12.♗b3 ♜a5 13.♗c2 ♗g4 14.♗f5 ♜c8 (In 1990 Illescas deviated with 14...♗b4 against no less than Kasparov himself, but was unsuccessful.)

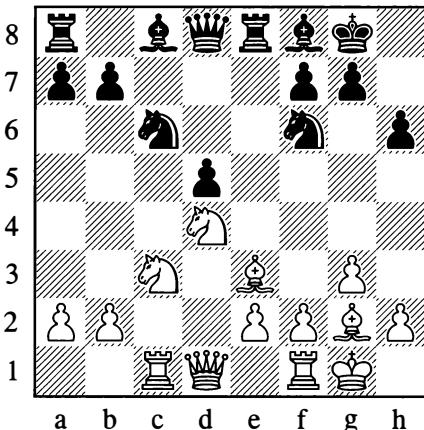


From this position Karpov was successful with two different moves:

a) In their first encounter Karpov elected to exchange the enemy bishop: 15.♗xe7† ♜xe7 16.♗ad1 ♜e8 17.h3 ♜h5 18.♗xd5 ♜g6 19.♗c1 ♜xd5 20.♗xd5 ♜c4 21.♗d4 ♜ec7 Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (7) 1984. Black has some activity and was able to regain his pawn, but in return White took over the initiative and was able to convert his advantage.

b) Two games later Karpov deviated with 15.♗d4 ♜c5 16.♗xc5 ♜xc5 17.♗e3 ♜e6 18.♗ad1 ♜c8 19.♗a4 ♜d8 20.♗d3 Karpov – Kasparov, Moscow (9) 1984. Karpov got a small but persistent edge and went on to win a famous knight versus bishop endgame involving the brilliant pawn sacrifice 47.♗g2!!.

12...♗f8



13.a3!?

According to the database this move had not been played before 1993. Illescas was an experienced Tarrasch player, so Karpov was probably keen to steer the game away from the most heavily analysed variations.

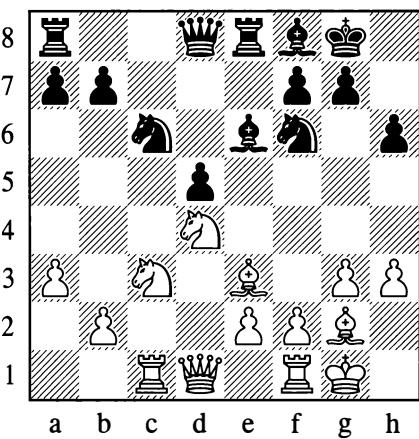
Usually White exchanges on c6 without delay. Illescas faced this move a few times, including a couple of particularly noteworthy encounters against world-class opposition: 13.♗xc6

$\text{bx}c6$  14.  $\text{Qa}4$   $\text{Qd}7$  15.  $\text{Qc}5$   $\text{Qx}c5$  16.  $\text{Qx}c5$   $\text{Qg}4$  18.  $\text{h3}$   $\text{Qf}5$  From this position Kramnik tried 19.  $\text{Wd}4$  in Pamplona 1992 and Illescas held a draw, but in Linares 1994 Kasparov improved with 19.  $\text{Wd}4!$  and defeated the Spanish GM.

### 13... $\text{Qg}4$ 14. $\text{h}3$

Karpov elects to ease the pressure on the e2-pawn, even though the h3-pawn might become a target later.

### 14... $\text{Qe}6$



### 15. $\text{Qx}c6$ $\text{bx}c6$ 16. $\text{Qd}4$

Karpov avoids playing  $\text{Qa}4$  for a while, as the black knight might then gain access to the e4-square.

### 16... $\text{Qd}7?$

Too passive.

16...  $c5$  has been played a few times, but Black just falls short of equality: 17.  $\text{Qxf}6$   $\text{Wxf}6$  18.  $\text{Qxd}5$   $\text{Wxb}2$  19.  $\text{Wd}4$   $\text{Qad}8$  20.  $\text{Qf}4$   $c4$  21.  $\text{Qxe}6$   $\text{Qxe}6$  22.  $\text{Qc}2$   $\text{Wxa}3$  23.  $\text{Wxc}4$  Despite the level material and opposite-coloured bishops, White has some advantage as his bishop is stronger. Out of two games in the database, White has scored one win and one draw.

Black's best option may well be 16...  $\text{Qh}7!!$  which scores well, and passed a high-level test when Grischuk used it to draw with Gelfand at Biel in 2001.

### 17. $\text{Wd}3$ $\text{Qh}7$

Playing on the b-file deserved consideration: 17...  $\text{Bb}8$  18.  $\text{Bc}2$   $a5$  (18...  $\text{Qd}6$  19.  $\text{Bd}1$   $\text{We}7$  20.  $\text{Qxf}6$   $\text{Wxf}6$  21.  $e4$  Black is under pressure in the centre.) 19.  $\text{Bd}1$   $\text{Qe}6$  20.  $e3$  (20.  $\text{Qa}4$   $\text{Qe}4$ ) 20...  $\text{Bb}3$  It is not easy for White to make progress here.

### 18. $\text{Qe}3$

After 18.  $\text{Qa}4$   $\text{Qg}5$  19.  $\text{Qh}2$   $\text{Qe}4$  Black has counterplay according to Karpov.

### 18... $\text{Qd}6?!$

Another bishop move, and again it is on the slow side. There were several alternatives available.

18...  $\text{Qg}5$  19.  $h4!$  (Karpov's suggestion of 19.  $\text{Qxg}5$  is not convincing as Black has a sweet tactical finesse: 19...  $hxg5$  20.  $e4$  [20.  $\text{Qa}4$   $\text{Wa}5$ ] 20...  $dxe4$  21.  $\text{Qxe}4$   $\text{Qxh}3!$  This cute move enables Black to equalize.) 19...  $\text{Qe}6$  20.  $b4$   $a5$  (20...  $\text{Bc}8$  21.  $\text{Qa}4$ ) 21.  $b5$   $\text{Qxa}3$  22.  $\text{Bc}2$   $\text{Bc}8$  23.  $\text{bxc}6$   $\text{Qxc}6$  24.  $\text{Qxd}5$  White has a small but long-lasting advantage.

18...  $\text{Qf}6$  looks odd, but seems playable: 19.  $\text{Bfd}1$   $\text{Bb}8$  20.  $\text{Qd}4$   $a5$  21.  $\text{Bc}2$  (21.  $\text{Qa}4$   $\text{Qe}4$ ) 21...  $\text{Qe}6$  Black should be okay.

Just as on the previous move, Black could have gone for counterplay on the b-file: 18...  $a5?!$  19.  $\text{Qa}4$   $\text{Bb}8$  20.  $\text{Bc}2$   $\text{Qg}5$  The position is roughly balanced.

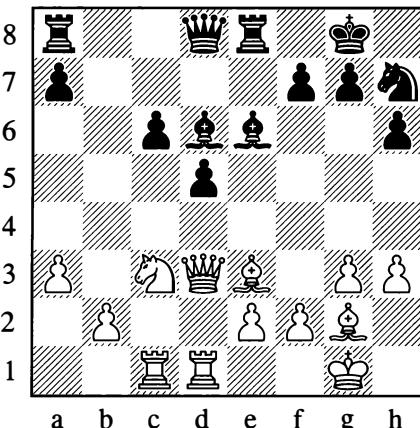
### 19. $\text{Bfd}1$

Karpov brings his last piece into action, and White's pressure against the hanging pawns increases.

**19...♞e6**

Black could try to improve the knight with 19...♝f8?!, with the point that after 20.♝xd5 cxd5 21.♝xd5 ♜e5 22.♝xa8 ♜xa8 23.♝xa8 ♜xa8 White loses one of his extra pawns, so Black is very much in the game.

However White has a significant improvement in 20.b4!, after which he maintains a clear advantage.

**20.b4!**

This move not only solidifies White's control over the c5-square, but also introduces the possibility of b5 to undermine the d5-pawn.

**20...♝f8?!**

Black improves his knight, but it takes too much time.

**20...♝d7**

By attacking h3, Black tries to gain time to organize his position.

**21.b5!**

21.♝h2 ♜f6 22.♝a4 ♜f5 23.♝c3 ♜ac8

Black manages to get himself together.

21.g4 takes away the f5-square from the bishop, but gives an obvious target. 21...h5! 22.b5 ♜ac8 23.bxc6 ♜xc6 24.♝xd5 ♜xd5

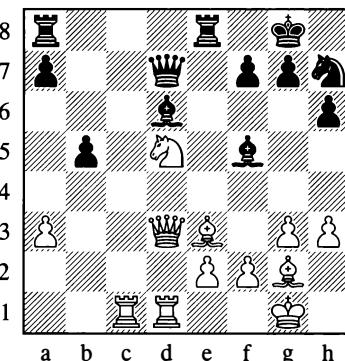
25.♝xd5 hxg4 26.♝xc6 ♜xc6 27.hxg4 ♜a4

Black should be okay.

21...cxb5 22.♝xd5

If 22.♝xb5 ♜e5 Black survives for the time being.

22.♝xb5?! is quite promising, and after 22...♜xa3 23.♝xd7 ♜xd7 24.♝b1 White should be able to pick up both the a- and d-pawns to reach a position with four pawns versus three on the kingside, which offers decent winning chances.

**22...♝f5****23.♝b6**

23.♝e7†? ♜xe7 24.♝xd6 ♜xd6 25.♝xd6 ♜e4 26.♝a6 ♜f6 In this endgame White is not a pawn up, but he arguably has better winning chances as he managed to save his a-pawn.

23...axb6 24.♝xd6 ♜xd6 25.♝xd6 ♜xa3 26.♝xb6 ♜d7

White is likely to win the b-pawn and will reach an endgame with four pawns versus three on the kingside, which should offer him decent winning chances with this many pieces remaining on the board.

**20...a5!**

Aggressively reducing the queenside pawns is Black's best drawing attempt.

21.b5! ♜xa3 22.bxc6?!

After 22.♝b1 cxb5 23.♝xb5 a4 24.♝xd5 ♜f8 White's advantage is rather small.

22...♝xc1 23.♝xc1

Karpov evaluates this exchange sacrifice as clearly better for White. His compensation

is certainly impressive, but Black has chances to survive.

23... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}a4$

After 24. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{E}ec8$  Black seems to hold the position.

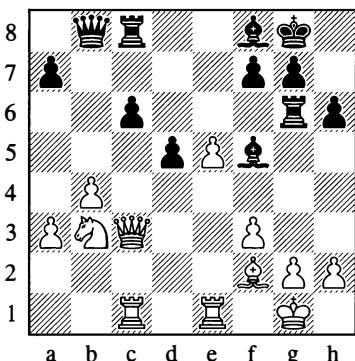
24... $\mathbb{W}c7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}a7$

Black's position remains unpleasant, nevertheless if I had to choose between White's winning chances and Black's drawing chances, I would put my money on the latter.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$ ?**

21.b5!? was also promising: 21... $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  (After 21... $cxb5$ ? 22. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  White destroys his opponent in the centre.) 22. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $cxb5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  b4 24. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{W}xd3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  White wins the a7-pawn and gets an unusual type of semi-endgame, with four pawns against three on the kingside, and a lot of pieces on the board. Theoretically it may or may not be winning, but in practice White would have good chances to convert his advantage.

In the game Karpov decides to occupy the c5-square. I noticed another game from the same year in which he won by using the same motif.



33. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

Earlier in the game Karpov left his knight on c5, inviting an opposite-coloured bishop middlegame. Black was not tempted, so now Karpov goes for a different minor piece exchange.

33... $\mathbb{Q}xc5\#$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  a5?!

Black hopes to get some play on the b-file, but his position is not strong enough to justify such an ambitious approach.

The best chance was 34... $\mathbb{E}e8$ , tying White's hands by forcing him to keep an eye on the e5-pawn. 35. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  The knight is headed for d4. 35... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  36.f4 (36. $\mathbb{E}e3$ ?) 36... $\mathbb{E}g4$  37.g3 h5 38. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  h4 39. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  Black faces a tough defence with little hope of counterplay.

35.bxa5!

With Black's c- and d-pawns firmly blockaded, there is no reason for White not to accept the gift. His a-pawn soon becomes extremely strong.

35... $\mathbb{W}a7$  36. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$

36... $\mathbb{E}d8$  37.a6 (Also after 37. $\mathbb{E}e2$  d4 38. $\mathbb{W}b4$  d3 39. $\mathbb{E}b2$  the a-pawn is too strong.) 37...d4 38. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  (38... $\mathbb{W}e7$  39. $\mathbb{E}e2$  d3 40. $\mathbb{E}d2$  Black's passed pawn is securely blocked, but White's is a different story...) 39. $\mathbb{E}b3$  d3 40. $\mathbb{E}b7$  d2 41. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xc5\#$  42. $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  43. $\mathbb{E}xd2$  White wins as his a-pawn will promote.

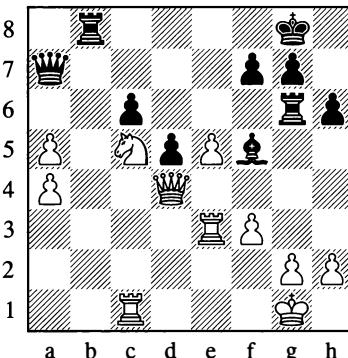
37.a4  $\mathbb{E}d8$  38. $\mathbb{W}d4$

38.a6 is also good enough.

38... $\mathbb{E}b8$

After 38... $\mathbb{E}a8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  40. $\mathbb{E}ec3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  41.f4 Black's position is cut in two.

Black can eliminate the front a-pawn with 38... $\mathbb{W}xa5$ , but after 39. $\mathbb{Q}b7$  c5 40. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  (but not 40. $\mathbb{E}xc5$ ?  $\mathbb{W}b6$ ) Black is a pawn down for no compensation.



39.♕b3

39.♕b3 was also convincing.

39...♛e7 40.f4 ♛a3

40...♝b4 is met by 41.♛c5.

41.♝a1 ♛e7 42.a6

Black has little chance of surviving against a pawn so close to the promotion square, provided the pawn is securely defended, which will be the case as soon as the knight returns to c5.

42...h5 43.♕c5 ♛a7 44.h3 ♜e4 45.♝a2 ♜b1†

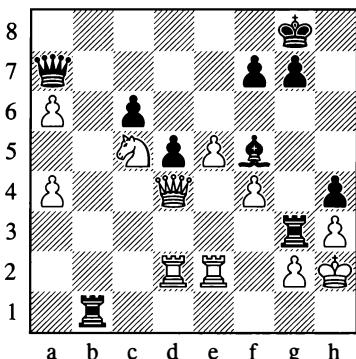
46.♗h2 h4 47.♗d2

47.♝xe4 dxe4 48.f5 ♜h6 49.♝d2 ♜b8 50.♛c3  
also wins.

47...♝f5 48.♝ee2

White is spoilt for choice on every turn. Here 48.e6 fxe6 49.♝xe6 ♛xa6 50.♝g5 was good enough.

48...♝g3



49.e6!

After focusing on the queenside for most of the game, Karpov seals the victory by exploiting Black's vulnerable king.

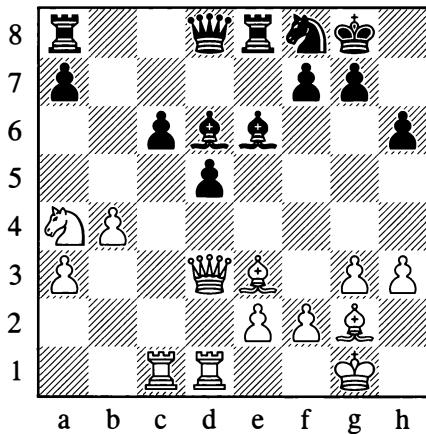
49...fxe6 50.♝xe6 ♛xa6

The a-pawn perishes, but it served its purpose and Karpov has no further use for it.

51.♝g5! ♛c8 52.♝e7 ♛f8 53.♝de2 ♜b8 54.♝f7 ♛xf7 55.♝xf7

1–0 Karpov – Duer, Austrian Team Championship 1993.

Back to the game.

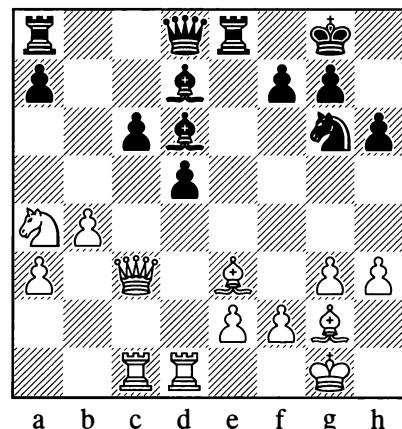


21...♞g6?

Illescas probably wanted to put the knight on e5, but he never gets a good chance to do it.

21...♞d7 was a better try. From here the knight can also head for e5, but also helps to defend the c5-square in the meantime. 22.♛a6 (Also after 22.♝d4 ♜c8 Black is worse, but for the time being he is surviving.) 22...♞e5 23.♞c5 ♛c8 24.♝xc8 ♜exc8 25.f4 ♜xc5 26.♝xc5 ♞c4 Black has chances to hold.

22.♛c3 ♜d7



23.♞c5!

Karpov threatens to eliminate a key defensive piece.

**23...♝xc5**

Black does not have many moves that avoid losing a pawn.

23...♝e5 was playable but still unpleasant for Black: 24.♗d4 ♛xd4 25.♗xd4 ♜e7 (25...♝xe2 26.♗xd7 ♛xd7 27.♗xc6 is almost hopeless for Black.) 26.e4 (26.b5 ♜c8) 26...♛c7 27.♗cd1 Black is under huge pressure in the centre.

**24.♝xc5**

White dominates the dark squares, and can increase the pressure with moves like ♜d4 and perhaps e4 after suitable preparations.

**24...♜xe2?!**

Black knows he has been outplayed positionally so he sacrifices an exchange, but instead of changing the course of the game he only accelerates his demise.

**25.♝e3 ♛e7**

25...♛f6!? saves the rook but leads to a lost endgame for Black: 26.♛xf6 (Also after 26.♗d3 ♜a2 27.♗d4 ♛f5 28.♛xf5 ♛xf5 29.b5 ♜xa3 30.bxc6 White has an overwhelming advantage.) 26...gxf6 27.b5! ♜e5 28.bxc6 ♜xc6 29.♗xh6 With two bishops, a better structure and several weakness to aim for, White should win this endgame without too much trouble.

**26.♝f1**

White wins an exchange, and the outcome is decided.

**26...♜xe3 27.♛xe3 ♛xe3 28.fxe3**

Apart from his material advantage, White retains his pressure against Black's weak queenside pawns. The rest is easy.

**28...♝e8 29.♔f2 ♜e5 30.♗c5 ♜e7 31.e4!**

Karpov breaks up Black's pawns in the centre.

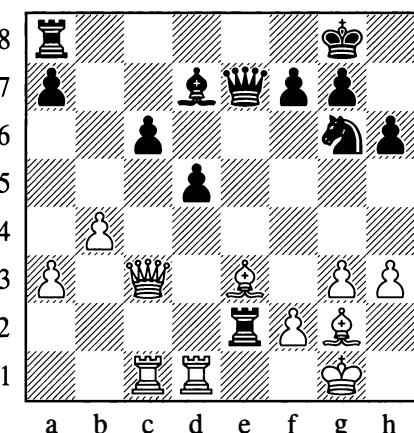
**31...♝e6 32.b5 cxb5 33.exd5 ♜d7 34.d6 ♜e6 35.♗xb5 ♜f6† 36.♔g2****1–0**

This was a good win, yet it was only Karpov's second of the tournament, and his final score of 5½/9 was only good enough to share third place with Topalov and Leko, behind the winner Yudasin and the runner-up Vyzmanavin. Perhaps Karpov's busy tournament schedule had taken its toll on his energy levels.

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### FIDE World Championship match versus Timman

In 1993, after various disputes and failed negotiations, Kasparov and Short broke away from FIDE to contest their world championship match under the auspices of the newly-formed PCA. Ever since that time, there has never been a FIDE World Championship in which every top contender has participated. Kasparov never took part in the various FIDE knockout events. When Kramnik and Leko contested their title match, neither Kasparov nor Anand took part. Kramnik was not present in San Luis, nor was Topalov in Mexico City. And even in the present day, as the book is about to go to print, Magnus Carlsen has recently withdrawn from the next championship cycle.



Perhaps in an effort to re-establish its authority, FIDE hastily organized a world title match between the two players who went the furthest in this and the previous championship cycle. Karpov was the obvious favourite, but Timman had raised his level over the previous few years. The first twelve games were to take place in three Dutch cities, and the second twelve were initially slated for the Arab country of Oman in southwest Asia, although as we will soon see, the second part did not go according to plan.

Karpov had the black pieces in the first game. Timman chose a sharp line against the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann and later sacrificed a piece, but it was not fully sound, and despite some minor inaccuracies Karpov eventually converted his advantage in the endgame. Despite his disappointing start, Timman showed his class in Game 2. Karpov surprised him with a novelty in one of the main lines of the 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Queen's Indian, but it contained a flaw which Timman exploited with expert precision. He skilfully converted his advantage in the endgame to level the match.

In Game 3 Timman improved on his previous play against the Caro-Kann and obtained some advantage, but he was not quite able to convert it and Karpov gradually equalized. In Game 4 the Dutchman switched to the Vienna Variation. Karpov reacted timidly and after twenty moves he stood marginally worse, but Timman was content to take a draw. In Game 5 Timman switched to the English Opening and unveiled a novelty. Karpov reacted badly and got into serious trouble, but Timman misplayed his winning position and in the end had to fight for the draw. Up to this point Timman had demonstrated superior preparation, but in Game 6 Karpov showed that he had been hard at work on the Vienna Variation as he unleashed a much more ambitious counter than before. Timman soon got into trouble and Karpov finished him with

a crushing kingside attack.

By this time it had transpired that the Dutch organizers had pledged a much smaller sum than had previously been announced. Worse still, the Oman organizers completely withdrew their offer to host and sponsor the second half of the match. Nevertheless the players continued, while FIDE officials frantically set about making alternative arrangements for the final twelve games...

In Game 7 Timman came up with another new idea against the Caro-Kann, but this one was toothless and a draw was soon agreed. Before Game 8 Timman and his team carried out some repair work on the Vienna, and this time he drew comfortably.

In Game 9 Timman switched to 1.d4 for the first time, and after 1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 he surprised Karpov with 3. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ . There followed 3...h6 4. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  5.e4 d6 after which Karpov castled long and Timman short. Part of the game can be found on page 286 in the notes to Game 37. For a while Karpov had the better of the complex middlegame, but he played a couple of bad moves and got into a terrible position. But then it was Timman's turn to err, and the game finally ended in a draw.

Life got worse for Timman in Game 10. He equalized in an exchange Grünfeld, then won a pawn although Karpov had a strong passed pawn which gave him sufficient compensation. Perhaps overestimating his position, Timman went wrong and Karpov punished him.

Game 11 was agreed drawn in eleven moves. It was rumoured to be in protest at the way the match had been organized, although if this was the case, it would seem a little unfair on Timman to 'sacrifice' one of his white games. Game 12 was a Fianchetto Grünfeld. Timman came close to equalizing, but after an inaccuracy he had to work hard for the draw, nevertheless he eventually achieved it. Thus Karpov led 7–5 at the halfway point.

Following Game 12, no-one knew if the match would even be finished. But a week and a half later, it was announced that the remaining twelve games would take place in the Indonesian capital Jakarta. In Game 13 Timman tried a Reti but did not achieve much and after some simplifications a draw was agreed. In the next game Karpov tried a different approach against the Vienna, but soon got a worse position. But later Timman made some mistakes and when the dust had settled Karpov had a superior endgame, which he eventually converted.

With the match situation becoming desperate, Timman tried an ambitious treatment of the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian, but played too riskily. His king was caught in the centre and he suffered a crushing defeat. In the next game things went from bad to worse: Timman tried the King's Indian, but Karpov quickly got a big advantage and later won, despite a few minor inaccuracies later in the game.

In Game 17 Timman switched to the 3.e5  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  Caro-Kann and the game naturally became sharp. Karpov was somewhat worse, but managed to hold it. Game 18 was another Sämisch King's Indian. Karpov went for safety and the game was always roughly equal until a draw was agreed before the time control. In Game 19 Timman tried the Petrosian variation against the Queen's Indian. He got a slight plus, but Karpov defended well and held the draw.

Karpov seemed to be coasting to victory, but in Game 20 after an English Opening he played for a draw too overtly and exchanged the wrong pieces. Timman took over the initiative and punished him. In Game 21 Timman had the white pieces but played half-heartedly in the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian, and a draw was agreed on move 19.

Thus Karpov secured a match victory by the score of 12½–8½. It was a convincing win on paper, although in all honesty the score-

line was rather flattering. Timman seemed better prepared in the openings and missed a number of wins. Karpov's immensely strong endgame play is what made the difference in the end. Overall Karpov's play was not on the level of a world champion. He may have won the FIDE title, but everyone knew Kasparov was the stronger player. FIDE probably would have done better to organize a round-robin tournament along the lines of San Luis 2005.

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Karpov's next event was the Tilburg knockout tournament. He was seeded directly to the second round, where he faced his former compatriot Oleg Romanishin. In the first game Karpov scored a fine victory which is referenced on page 177 in the notes to Game 26. In the return game Karpov was under serious pressure and eventually found himself a pawn down in a queen and knight endgame. Romanishin has beaten all the great players he ever faced, with the exception of Karpov. Perhaps this affected him psychologically, and Karpov was able to save the game thanks to his stubborn defence. When I interviewed Romanishin he told me that nowadays people do not understand just how great a player Karpov really is/was.

In the next round Karpov faced Vyzmanavin and started with the white pieces. He got no advantage in the 1.c4 e5 English, and Vyzmanavin's fluent play resulted in a draw right after the time control. The second game was a quick draw. Vyzmanavin was considered one of the best blitz players in the world at the time, but Karpov managed to beat him in both rapid games to advance to the next round.

Karpov's next opponent was Gregory Kaidanov, who played solidly and drew both of the main games, but Karpov eliminated him in the rapid tie-breaker.

In the next round Karpov faced Artur Yusupov, who played the main line of the

4.e3 Nimzo-Indian in the first game but was unable to achieve anything and Karpov drew comfortably. In the second game Karpov was at his best.

Yusupov played all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exception of Fischer. He scored nine victories, fifty five draws and thirty four losses against them. He found Karpov an especially difficult opponent: up to this point, Karpov was ahead by eight wins to one in their personal rivalry, with twelve draws. Over the years Karpov managed to increase his dominant record to twelve wins, fifteen draws and one loss against Yusupov – one of his most one-sided records against a world-class opponent.

### Game 33

Anatoly Karpov – Artur Yusupov

Tilburg 1993

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6**

Yusupov preferred the Queen's Gambit Declined against Karpov, although he had used the Queen's Indian against him once before and made a draw.

**4.g3 ♜b7 5.♗g2 ♜e7 6.♘c3 ♜e4 7.♗d2 ♜f6  
8.♗c2**

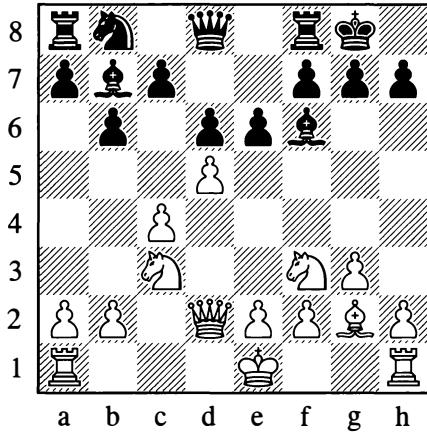
Despite having won four out of four games with 8.0–0 and drawn two out of two with the queen move, he still opts for the latter.

**8...♜xd2 9.♗xd2 d6 10.d5!?**

Ironically Karpov plays a move which Yusupov introduced back in 1980. According to the database it had been repeated only once before the present game. In 1988 Karpov chose 10.0–0 and drew against Salov.

**10...0–0**

10...e5 is possible, and would have prevented White's next move.



**11.♘d4!?**

Karpov starts his play in the centre before he castles. This policy is not only more energetic, but it also maintains the useful possibility of castling on either side.

**11...e5**

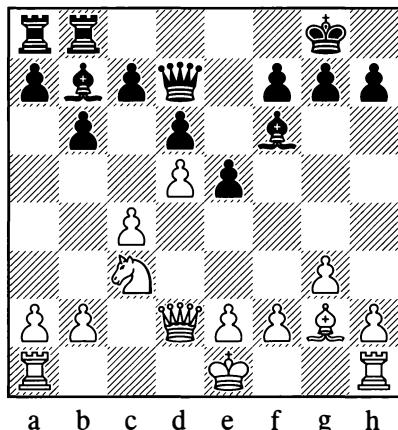
Yusupov decides to keep his dark-squared bishop. This piece certainly possesses great potential, on the other hand it is restricted behind Black's dark-squared pawn chain.

11...♝xd4!? 12.♗xd4 e5 looks safer, although White maintains a slight plus after 13.♗d2 f5 14.f4! as pointed out by Karpov.

**12.♘c6 ♜d7**

Taking on c6 would open the d5-square for White's pieces.

**13.♘xb8 ♜fxb8**



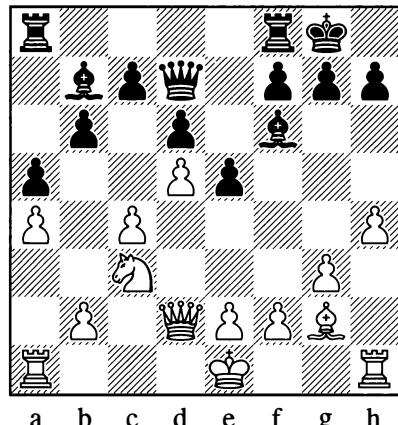
**14.h4!**

Karpov gains space and prepares to put his bishop on the h3-c8 diagonal.

**14...a5?**

Yusupov acts in the same spirit as Kiril Georgiev (see Game 9) – he tries to hold back Karpov by keeping the position closed, but only succeeds in obtaining a miserably passive position.

Unusually for such a pawn structure, Black actually had an opportunity to play actively on the queenside: 14...a6! This is the most logical way for Black to justify the position of his pieces. 15.♗h3 (15.a4 b5! Black exploits the undefended rook on a1 and gets a good game.) 15...♝e8 16.♕e4 ♜e7 17.0–0 b5 (17...g6 18.b3 f5 19.♗g5 is good for White) 18.♗fc1 c5 19.b3 a5 Black has a decent position.

**15.a4 ♜f8****16.e4!?**

Karpov prefers to gain space instead of leaving the e4-square free for his knight.

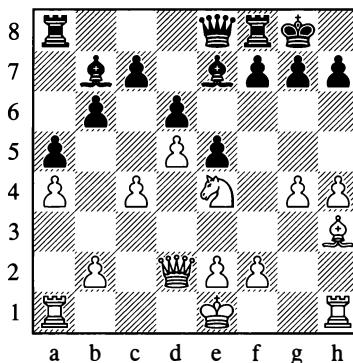
**16.♗h3**

The strategy of playing with pieces is also interesting, although Black should be able to obtain a reasonable position if he plays carefully.

**16...♝e7!?**

This looks critical. Black's idea is to play ...f5.

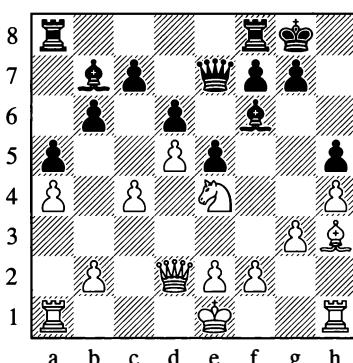
Another interesting line is: 16...♝e8 17.♕e4 ♜e7 18.g4!?



18...♜xh4!? (Safer is 18...♜c8, intending a gradual kingside advance, when Black is only slightly worse.) 19.g5 f5 20.gxf6! ♛g6! (20...♜xf6? 21.♕e6† ♜h8 22.♕f5 Black is in trouble.) 21.♕e6† ♜h8 22.♕d3 ♜xf6 White has promising compensation for the pawn.

**17.♕e4 h5!**

17...g6 18.h5 ♜g7 19.hxg6 hxg6 20.g4 f6  
White has a small advantage.

**18.g4**

This seems like a principled move, but it may not be the strongest one.

18.0–0–0 g6 19.♗d7!? Maybe White should play less adventurously, but Black should be okay in any case. 19...♜a6! (After 19...♜g7

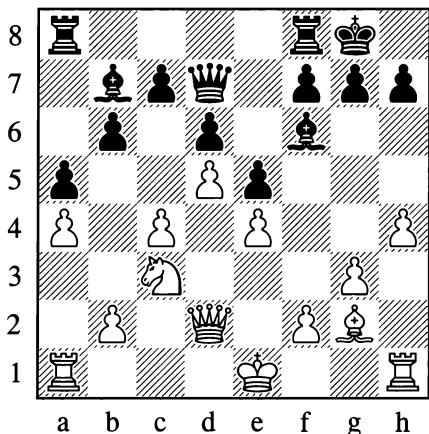
20.♗c6! White achieves a favourable minor piece exchange.) 20.b3 ♘ad8 21.♗c6 ♗c8 Black is in the game, and the bishop on c6 might turn out to be sidelined.

18...hxg4 19.♗xg4 ♗a6!

19...♗xh4 20.♗f5 ♗c8 21.♗xc8 ♘axc8 22.♗a3! f5 23.♗ah3 fxe4 24.♗xh4 is a bit unpleasant for Black.

20.b3 ♘xh4

White maintains some compensation, but with the third rank closed he is unable to generate such a dangerous attack.



16...h5

If 16...g6 17.h5 ♘e7 18.0–0–0 ♗c8 19.♗h3

White has a small edge as he will exert pressure on the h-file.

**17.0–0–0 g6 18.♗h3 ♘e7 19.♗c2**

Karpov was probably contemplating opening the queenside with b4 at some point, otherwise he would have put his king on b1 immediately.

**19...♗g7**

19...♗g7 is strongly met by 20.g4! hxg4 21.♗xg4 f5 22.♗h3 intending h5, when White gets lovely play on the kingside.

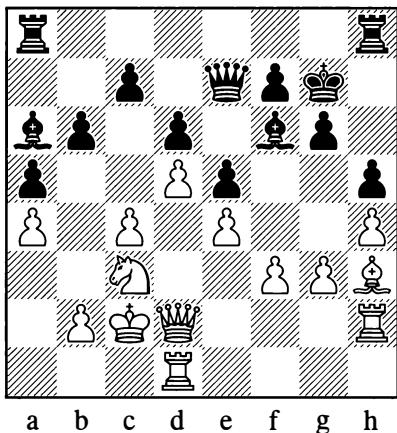
**20.f3!**

Karpov opens the second rank in order to

facilitate the smooth transfer of heavy pieces between different parts of the board.

**20...♗h8 21.♗h2 ♗a6!**

This move forces White to keep an eye on the queenside, and may have contributed to Karpov's decision to stop playing for b4.



**22.♗b5!**

Karpov avoids playing b3, as there could be certain scenarios later in the game in which one or more of his pieces might wish to use that square to invade on the queenside.

**22...♗af8**

The opposite-coloured bishop position will lead to a period of unpleasant passive defence for Black: 22...♗xb5 23.cxb5 ♘g8 24.♗bl ♘g7 25.♗e1 ♘h6 26.♗c2 White can create strong pressure by tripling on the c-file.

**23.♗b1!**

Karpov gets ready for the capture on b5. If Black is able to organize a defensive formation with the bishop on d8 and his rooks on the kingside, it will be hard for White to make progress.

**23...♗d8**

Yusupov gives up on the plan of exchanging on b5, and instead prepares to exchange White's

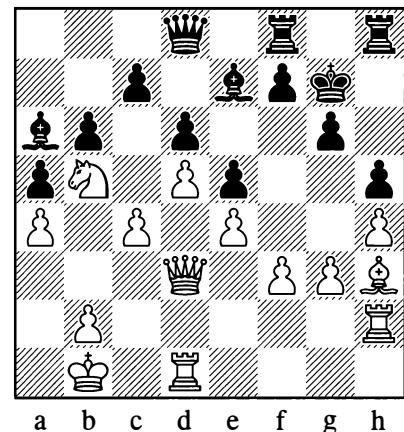
other strong minor piece, although this brings other problems as we will soon see.

23... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  runs into problems: 24.cxb5  $\mathbb{W}e8$  25. $\mathbb{W}c3!$  (White has to hurry; instead 25. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  enables Black to defend conveniently.) 25... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  26.f4! White maintains his initiative and will soon double his rooks on the f-file.

#### 24. $\mathbb{W}d3$

Karpov opens the second rank, so that after an exchange on b5 his rook will get to c2 quickly.

#### 24... $\mathbb{Q}e7$



#### 25. $\mathbb{E}e2!$

With this subtle move, Karpov gets ready to play f4 and sacrifice the h4-pawn. The rook takes up a position in the centre where it supports the e4-e5 push.

#### 25... $\mathbb{Q}c8?$ !

In principle the side with less space should try to exchange pieces, but now White's knight becomes the dominant minor piece.

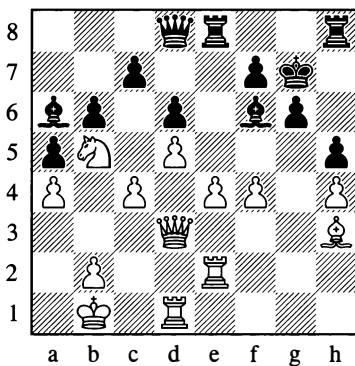
#### 25... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

This would have been the lesser evil, although Black's position remains unpleasant here too.

#### 26. $\mathbb{E}g1$

Preparing to advance the f-pawn.

The immediate 26.f4!? may be even stronger: 26...exf4 27.gxf4  $\mathbb{E}e8$  (27... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  28.e5 is strong.)

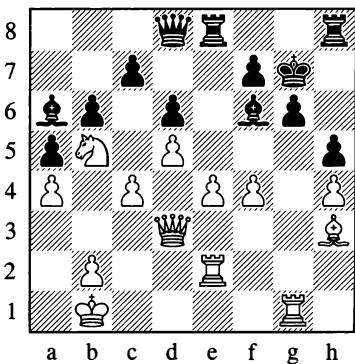


28.f5 (28. $\mathbb{E}g1$  transposes to the main line below – see 26. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  27.f4 exf4 28.gxf4; 28. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ! is also possible, and after 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  29. $\mathbb{W}xd4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  White obtains fine compensation after both 30.e5  $\mathbb{W}xh4$  31. $\mathbb{W}e3$  and 30.b3  $\mathbb{W}xh4$  31. $\mathbb{W}e3$ .) 28... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  29.cxb5  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  30.fxg6 fxg6 31. $\mathbb{E}g1$   $\mathbb{E}h6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  White has lovely play on the g-file.

#### 26... $\mathbb{E}e8$ 27.f4 exf4

Black may as well open the diagonal for his bishop, as 27... $\mathbb{W}e7$  28.f5 is depressing for him.

#### 28.gxf4



#### 28... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

28... $\mathbb{E}h6$ ? 29. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  Black is in trouble.

28... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e6!$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  (29...fxe6 30.e5+) 30.e5! White has a decisive attack, for instance 30... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  31.exd6 cxd6 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  and it is all over for Black.

29.axb5

This time White keeps his c-pawn in place, in order to provide full support to his central play.

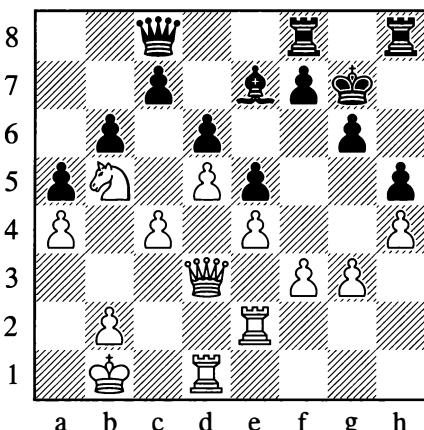
29... $\mathbb{W}e7$

29... $\mathbb{W}e7$  30.f5 is strong.

30. $\mathbb{Q}e6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  31.e5

White has a powerful initiative to compensate for the missing pawn, but Black is still alive.

**26. $\mathbb{Q}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$**



27. $\mathbb{E}g1!$ ?

Karpov decides to prepare more pieces before advancing his pawns. He may even have intentionally delayed this action until shortly before the time control in order to maximize his opponent's discomfort.

Nevertheless, the immediate pawn advance was objectively not weaker at all: 27.f4!? exf4 (27... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28.f5) 28.gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  29. $\mathbb{E}g1$  White has excellent compensation for the pawn.

**27... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}a7!$**

Karpov transfers the knight to c6. Unlike b5 it will not attack anything from that square,

on the other hand it controls some important squares and exerts pressure against the a5- and e5-pawns.

**28... $\mathbb{W}h3$  29. $\mathbb{W}c2$**

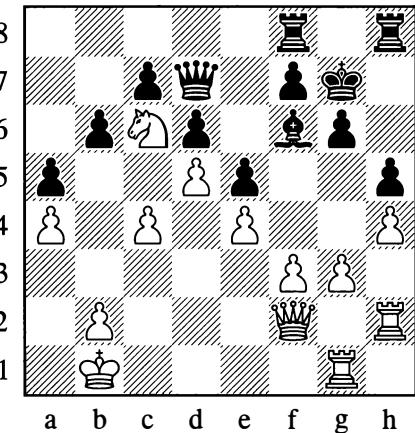
Karpov wants to be able to expel the queen with  $\mathbb{E}h2$  at any moment.

**29... $\mathbb{E}e8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  31. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  32. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{E}hf8$  33. $\mathbb{E}h2$**

Before pushing his f-pawn, Karpov makes sure the enemy queen will not be able to invade.

The immediate 33.f4 was also possible: 33...exf4 (33... $\mathbb{W}h3$ !?) could be considered) 34.gxf4 (34. $\mathbb{E}xf4$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ) 34... $\mathbb{W}h3$  (34... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ !) 35. $\mathbb{E}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  36. $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  37. $\mathbb{E}xh8$   $\mathbb{E}xh8$  38.e5 [38. $\mathbb{Q}a2$ !?] 38... $\mathbb{W}f5$ † 39. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  White has a clear advantage.) 35. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  36.e5  $\mathbb{W}f5$  There is no question that White has some advantage, but it is not clear how serious it is.

**33... $\mathbb{E}h8$  34. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{E}ef8$**



**35. $\mathbb{E}f1$ !**

After 35.g4  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  36.g5 f5 37.gxf6†  $\mathbb{E}xf6$  38. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  39. $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  Black can resist stubbornly.

**35... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  36.f4!**

Finally Karpov executes the long-awaited pawn break. As in many of his games, he takes this troublesome action shortly before the time control. The fact that he kept his king on b1 shows that he anticipated a queen exchange, otherwise he would have surely have moved the monarch to a2 first.

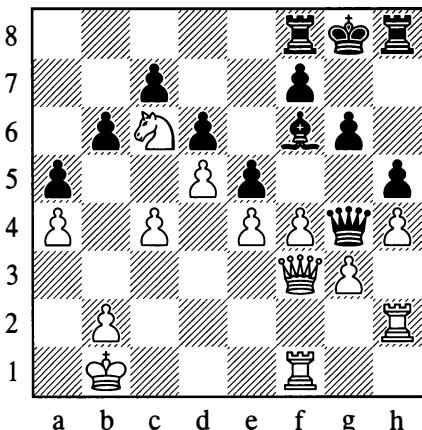
### 36... $\mathbb{W}g4$

Waiting passively was virtually hopeless: 36... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  37.f5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  39. $\mathbb{B}hf2$   $\mathbb{B}hg8$  40. $\mathbb{W}d3!$  Preparing to triple the heavy pieces. 40... $\mathbb{W}e8$  41. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  42. $\mathbb{B}1f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  43. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  44. $\mathbb{Q}a7!$  The knight comes to b5, after which Black will have a hard time defending all his weaknesses.

### 37. $\mathbb{W}f3!$

Karpov exchanges queens in order to make progress.

37.fxe5?  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$  solves all Black's problems thanks to the trick 38. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe4\#!$



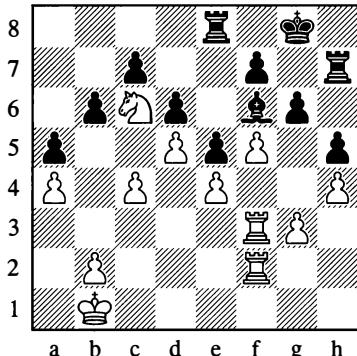
### 37... $\mathbb{W}e8?$

Yusupov plays for a fortress, but it can be cracked. Black could have obtained better drawing chances by keeping some active possibilities alive for his pieces. Two alternatives deserved attention.

### 37... $\mathbb{W}xf3$ 38. $\mathbb{B}xf3$ $\mathbb{W}e8$

Compared with the game continuation, Black does not have a weak pawn on g4 and White is unable to focus all his power on the queenside. Nevertheless his winning chances are excellent.

39. $\mathbb{B}hf2$   $\mathbb{B}h7$  40.f5



40...g5

40... $\mathbb{Q}h8?$  41.f6 White traps two pieces and will easily overpower Black on the queenside.

40... $\mathbb{g}xf5$  41. $\mathbb{B}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  42. $\mathbb{B}g5\#$  (42. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  f6 is ugly, but Black is surviving for the moment at least.) 42... $\mathbb{B}g7$  43. $\mathbb{B}ff5$   $\mathbb{B}g6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}a7!$  White will invade one way or another.

41.hxg5  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  42.f6!

42. $\mathbb{B}h2$  f6 43. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  44. $\mathbb{B}fh1$   $\mathbb{B}eh8$  Black resists.

42...h4 43. $\mathbb{B}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  44. $\mathbb{B}h2!$  h3

44...hxg3? 45. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$  wins.

45. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  46. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{B}h6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

47... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  48. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  does not change much.

48. $\mathbb{B}fh1$

White has a large advantage thanks to his vastly superior minor piece.

However, Black had an alternative which offered more stubborn resistance:

37...exf4!

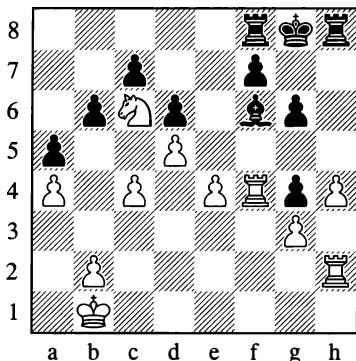
Opening the diagonal for the bishop and setting up some additional chances for White to go wrong.

38. $\mathbb{W}xg4$

This is probably what Yusupov feared. White targets the g4-pawn, but he will have to be careful as his rook might end up in an awkward position.

It is entirely possible that White's most promising course of action involved a simple central advance rather than trying to win a pawn. The following continuation offers him decent winning chances: 38.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  39.  $gxf4$  (39.  $\mathbb{E}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  40.  $\mathbb{E}hf2$  f6 is also better for White, but the position will not be easy to win.) 39...  $\mathbb{E}e8$  40.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  41. e5  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ! The king will soon defend the rook, and Black will find it hard to live with his opponent's central pawn wedge.

38...  $h \times g4$  39.  $\mathbb{E}xf4$



39...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ !

This subtle move practically forces White to take the g4-pawn, after which the rook will be out of play.

39...  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  allows White to switch to a different plan: 40.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ ! (40.  $\mathbb{E}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}h6$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  f6 43.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  Black is living dangerously, but I do not see how White can free the g4-rook or win the game without it.) 40...  $dxe5$  41.  $\mathbb{E}f6$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  42.  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  43. c5 The endgame is unpleasant and possibly losing for Black, for instance: 43...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  44.  $cxb6$   $cxb6$  45.  $\mathbb{E}f2$  (45.  $\mathbb{E}xb6$  f5! The outcome is not clear but Black certainly has drawing chances.) 45...  $\mathbb{E}f8$  46. h5!  $gxh5$

47.  $\mathbb{E}f5$  White is in full control, and has good chances to win the game.

40.  $\mathbb{E}hf2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  41.  $\mathbb{E}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$

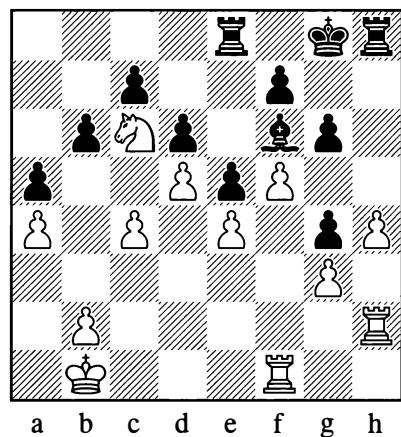
Also after 41...  $\mathbb{E}h6$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  f6 White has problems freeing his rook.

42.  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  43.  $\mathbb{E}g5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$

I do not see an effective way for White to free his rook. Therefore it looks better for him to deviate with 38.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$  as analysed above.

38.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$   $h \times g4$  39.  $\mathbb{E}f5$

If 39.  $\mathbb{E}hf2$   $\mathbb{E}h7$  Black can resist.



39...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ?

Yusupov plays for the fortress too directly.

39...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ?

This would have given White more chances to go wrong.

40.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$ !

In order to win the game White must look towards the queenside.

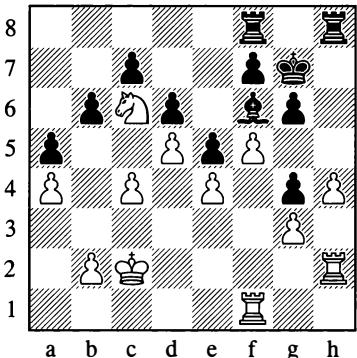
40.  $\mathbb{E}hf2$ ? Karpov gives this move and evaluates the position as clearly better for White, but in fact it is a serious mistake in view of 40...  $g5$ ! 41.  $h \times g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  42.  $f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ . when Black solves his problems.

40...  $\mathbb{E}ef8$

40...  $\mathbb{E}h5$  41.  $f \times g6$   $fg6$  42.  $\mathbb{E}hf2$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  43. c5!

(Best, although 43.  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  is also good enough.)

43...  $dxc5$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White's king will walk to b7 with decisive effect.



41.c5! dx5

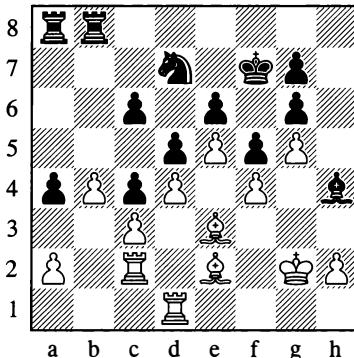
41...bxc5 42.♕hf2! This move works with the black rook on f8 instead of e8, as 42...g5 loses to 43.hxg5 ♕xg5 44.f6† with a mating attack.

42.♕hf2 ♔h6

42...g5 43.hxg5 ♕xg5 44.f6†! wins again.

43.fxg6 ♕xg6 44.♕f5 ♕e8 45.♔d3 ♕h6 46.♔c4 ♕g6 47.♔b5

The king invasion decides the game.



27.♕b1

It is not easy to find a way into Black's position as there are no open files. Karpov threatens to open the b-file in the future.

27...♕b5 28.♕cc1

Karpov transfers this rook to the kingside.

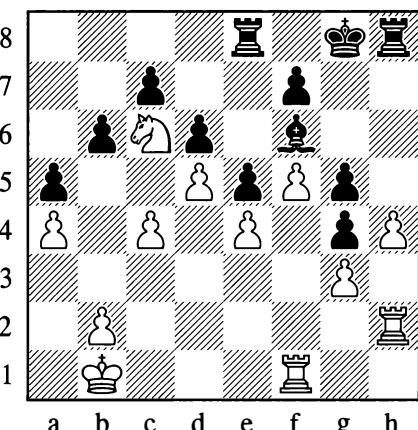
28...♕h8 29.♕f1 ♕h7 30.♕f3 ♕b6 31.♕h3

The rook comes to the semi-open file and threatens to win an exchange.

31...♔g8

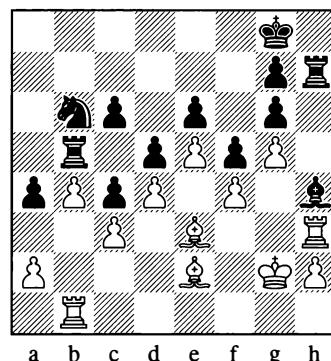
Speelman defends the rook.

With 31...a3? Black prepares to sacrifice an exchange. The problem is that White can target the daring a-pawn: 32.♔d1! (Instead after 32.♔f2 ♕xf2 33.♕xh7 ♕e3 34.♕f1 ♕a4 35.♕h3 ♕d2 36.♕ff3 ♕b2 it will be hard for White to win the position, and he will probably have to give up a pawn or two just to create chances.) 32...♔g8 33.♔c1 ♕f7 34.♔xa3 White's extra pawn should be enough to decide the game.



40.h5!

Now White is clearly winning as he can open the queenside and crack his opponent's fortress. Let me show you another interesting game in which Karpov managed to break a stronger fortress than the one Yusupov has constructed in the present game. His opponent was Jon Speelman, who closed the position almost hermetically.



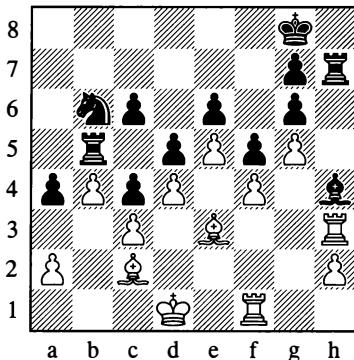
32.♗d1!

With this move Karpov paralyses both the knight and the rook.

32...♝h8 33.♔f1

The king threatens to march to a3 to win the a-pawn.

33...♝h7 34.♔e2 ♘h8 35.♕c2 ♘h7 36.♕f1 ♘h8 37.♔d1 ♘h7



38.♗c1?

Karpov continues approaching the a4-pawn and sacrifices a pawn in the process.

38.♗f3 was by no means clear: 38...♝h5 39.♗c1 a3 (39...♝e1? 40.♗xh5 gxh5 41.♗g1

Black's bishop will soon perish; 39...♝h7 40.♗b2 ♘g8 41.♗d2 ♘h7 42.♗a3 ♘g8 43.♗xa4 ♘xa4 44.♗xa4 ♘b7 45.♗a3 ♘a7† 46.♗b2 ♘f7 Black is still resisting despite the pawn deficit.) 40.♗d1 ♘a8 41.♗c1 ♘b6 42.♗b1 ♘a6 Black has managed to organize his defences.

38...♝f2!

Speelman wins the pawn by the help of a small tactic.

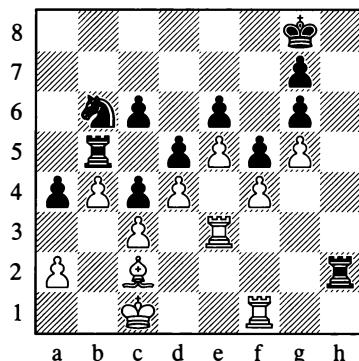
39.♗f3 ♘xe3† 40.♗xe3 ♘xh2

Taking the pawn should be enough to draw the game, but it was not the only way.

40...a3!? Closing the queenside was also good enough: 41.♗f2 (41.♗ff3 ♘xh2 42.♗h3 ♘xh3 43.♗xh3 ♘a8 Black holds.)

41...♘a8 42.♗d2 ♘c7 43.♗a4 ♘b6 (43...♝h5?! 44.♗xb5 ♘xb5 is a reliable fortress.) 44.♗e2 Now both 44...♘b5 and

44...♝a6 are good enough for Black to hold the position.



41.a3!

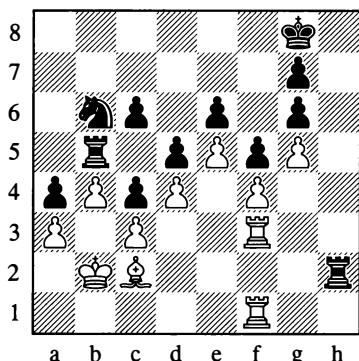
Karpov fixes the a4-pawn.

41...♝h4?!

With this and his next move Speelman just waits, but it soon becomes clear that his fortress is not watertight at this stage.

Grandmaster Groszpeter found the most effective defensive formation for Black: 41...♝f7! 42.♗ff3 ♘h8 43.♗h3 ♘a8 44.♗h7 ♘d7 45.♗eh3 ♘bb8 White cannot invade.

42.♗b2 ♘h2 43.♗ef3



43...♝xc2†!

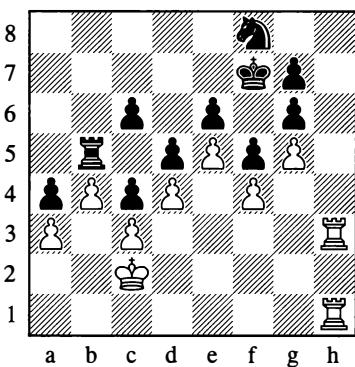
The English grandmaster sacrifices an exchange in order to eliminate the pressure on his a4-pawn, thus liberating his two queenside pieces. White only has one open file, so it was not unrealistic to put his faith in this plan.

Passive defence was not good enough, as Black must either allow a rook invasion or lose his a-pawn: 43... $\mathbb{E}h4$  44. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}h1$  45. $\mathbb{E}g3$   $\mathbb{E}h4$  46. $\mathbb{E}gg2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (46... $\mathbb{E}h5$  47. $\mathbb{E}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  48. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  Black has to take the rook.) 47. $\mathbb{E}h2$   $\mathbb{E}xh2$  48. $\mathbb{E}xh2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  49. $\mathbb{E}h4$  Black is in zugzwang and must give up the a4-pawn. Please remember that zugzwang is often the key to unlocking a fortress.

44. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

Speelman plans to block White's rooks on the eighth rank.

45. $\mathbb{E}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  46. $\mathbb{E}fh1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$



47. $\mathbb{E}h8$

Now the knight must remain on f8 to prevent a rook invasion.

47... $\mathbb{E}b8$  48. $\mathbb{E}b1$

48. $\mathbb{E}1h7$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  gets nowhere for White.

48... $\mathbb{E}b5$  49. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}b8?$

Black should have left his rook in place and preferred 49... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$ , when the play resembles the note to Black's 51st move below.

50. $\mathbb{Q}c2?$

Karpov misses a clear win with 50.b5!  $\mathbb{C}xb5$  51. $\mathbb{E}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  52. $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  53. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  54. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  55. $\mathbb{E}hb1$   $\mathbb{E}h8$  56. $\mathbb{Q}g3$ , as pointed out by Groszpeter. This was a rapid game, so it is likely that both players were short of time by this point.

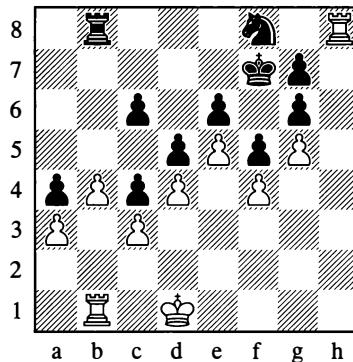
50... $\mathbb{E}b5$  51. $\mathbb{Q}d1!$

Karpov opens the second rank.

51... $\mathbb{E}b8?$

Black repeats his previous mistake, and this time Karpov punishes him.

51... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  With this superior move Black challenges his opponent to come up with a convincing winning plan. 52. $\mathbb{Q}d2?!$  The subtle plan involving the king on c2 was suggested by Ashot Nadanian. (52. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  53. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  This looks like the natural square for the king, but matters are not so simple. 53... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  54. $\mathbb{E}bh1$   $\mathbb{E}b8!$  [54... $\mathbb{Q}f7?$  55. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  56. $\mathbb{E}h8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  57. $\mathbb{E}g8$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  58. $\mathbb{E}c8+-]$  55. $\mathbb{E}g8$  [55.b5  $\mathbb{E}xb5!$ ] 55... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  56. $\mathbb{E}hh8$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  I do not see how White can crack Black's fortress.) 52... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  53. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  54. $\mathbb{E}bh1$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  55.b5  $\mathbb{E}xb5$  56. $\mathbb{E}xf8!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  57. $\mathbb{E}h8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  58. $\mathbb{E}a8$  c5 59. $\mathbb{D}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xc5$  60. $\mathbb{E}xa4$  According to Nadanian White has reasonable winning chances. His ideas include placing his rook on a6 to tie Black's king to the defence of the e6-pawn, followed by walking his own king to d4.



52.b5!

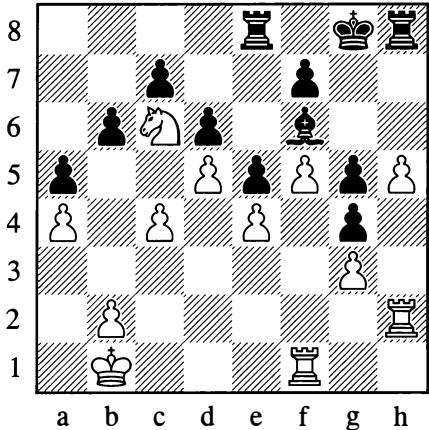
White opens the b-file and his rooks invade.

52... $\mathbb{C}xb5$  53. $\mathbb{E}h2!$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  54. $\mathbb{E}hb2$

The rest is simple.

54... $\mathbb{E}h8$  55. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}h1\#$  56. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}h2\#$  57. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}h3$  58. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  59. $\mathbb{E}1b4$   $\mathbb{E}xc3$  60. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}b3$  61. $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{C}xb3$  62. $\mathbb{E}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  63. $\mathbb{E}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  64.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  65. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  66. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  67. $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  68.a5  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  69. $\mathbb{E}c5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  70. $\mathbb{E}xc4$   $\mathbb{D}xc4\#$  71. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  1–0 Karpov – Speelman, Roquebrune (rapid) 1992.

# Back to the game.



**40...♝a8!**

Forced, otherwise White manoeuvres his knight via a7 all the way back to the kingside and gobbles the g4-pawn. Unfortunately for the defender, White has other ways to improve his position.

41.♔c2 ♔g7 42.♔c3 ♕a6 43.♕a1 ♕ha8  
44.b4 ♔f8

If 44...axb4† 45.♔b3 ♔h7 46.♕xb4 ♕a5  
 47.♕c6 ♕c5 48.a5 bxa5 49.♕ha2 White  
 invades and wins.

45.b5!?

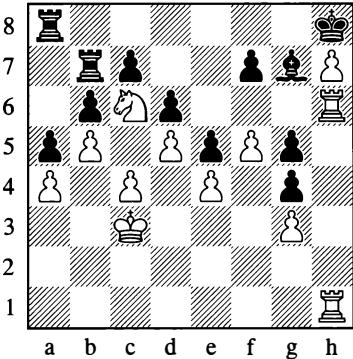
Karpov must have been feeling particularly sadistic. Opening the b-file would have won more quickly: 45.bxa5 bxa5 46.♗b1 ♜c8 (46...♝e8 47.h6) 47.♗b5 Black can resign.

45... $\mathbb{Q}6a7$  46.h6!

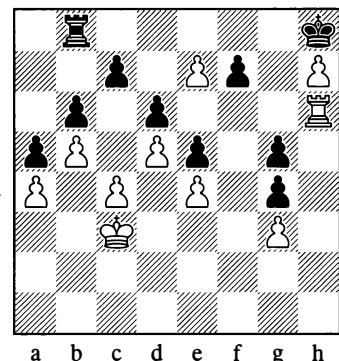
Black will not be given time to seal the kingside completely.

46... ♕ h8

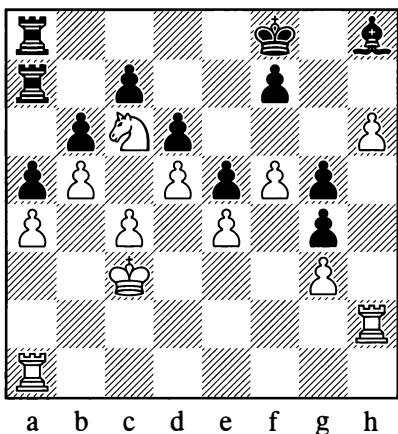
46... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  does not help: 47.h7†  $\mathbb{Q}h8$   
 48. $\mathbb{E}ah1$   $\mathbb{E}b7$  (48... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  49.f6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  50. $\mathbb{E}f1$   
 wins.) 49. $\mathbb{E}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$



50.f6 (Even the flamboyant 50. $\mathbb{Q}g6$ ?? works:  
 50...fxg6 [50...f6 51. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$ !] 51. $\mathbb{Q}e7+$ –)  
 50... $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  51. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  52. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  (If  
 52... $\mathbb{Q}bb8$  53. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  White collects the g4-pawn  
 with  $\mathbb{Q}e3xg4$ , then invades with his king.)  
 53.fxe7  $\mathbb{Q}b8$



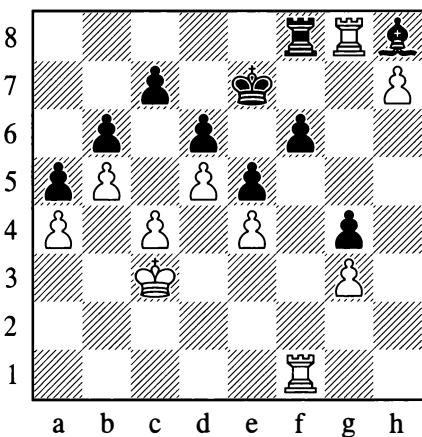
54.c5! This lovely breakthrough seals White's victory.



**47.f6!**

Karpov makes sure he will be able to invade on the f-file.

47... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  48. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  49. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{B}xa7$  50. $\mathbb{B}h5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}e7$  51. $\mathbb{B}xg5$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  52.h7 f6 53. $\mathbb{B}g8$   $\mathbb{B}f8$

**54.c5!**

This cute sacrifice opens the path for a decisive king invasion.

54...dxc5 55. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  56.d6 cxd6 57. $\mathbb{B}xf8\#$   
 1–0

With this fine win Karpov ensured his passage to the next round, where he met Beliavsky. In the first game he equalized with the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann and proceeded to outplay his opponent. He eventually won a sublime endgame which can be found on page 297 in the notes to Game 38. In the second game Karpov played solidly in the Orthodox Queen's Gambit, and Beliavsky was unable to stir up complications. A draw was agreed on move 33.

In the final Karpov faced Ivanchuk. In the first game he equalized with the Caro-Kann and drew a long game. In the next game Ivanchuk played a Stonewall set-up. Karpov played f4 himself, but never got a serious advantage and Ivanchuk held a draw without much difficulty. Karpov managed to win the first rapid tie-break game with black, and he safely drew the second one to secure first prize in the tournament.

Karpov eliminated six opponents in Tilburg. He played twelve regular games, winning three and drawing nine. He also had six rapid games, winning four and drawing two.

1993 was a successful year for Karpov. He captured the FIDE World Championship and won four tournaments, playing some great chess along the way.

## 1993 Summary

Wijk aan Zee KO (1st place): 5/8 (+3 =4 –1) (regular games)

Linares (2nd-3rd place): 8½/13 (+6 =5 –2)

Austrian Team Championship: 1½/2 (+1 =1 –0)

French Team Championship: 4/5 (+3 =2 –0)

European Cup final: 1½/2 (+1 =1 –0)

Dortmund (1st place): 5½/7 (+5 =1 –1)

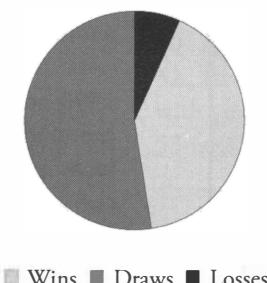
Dos Hermanas (1st place): 7½/9 (+6 =3 –0)

Leon (3rd-5th place): 5½/9 (+2 =7 –0)

FIDE World Championship match versus Timman: Won 12½–8½ (+6 =13 –2)

Tilburg (1st place): 7½/12 (+3 =9 –0)

Total 67.0% (+36 =46 –6)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1994

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Rating 2740 (2 in the world)

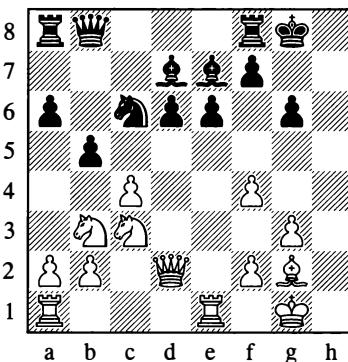
Karpov started the new year with a six-game match against the number one Chilean player, Ivan Morovic Fernandez. In the first game he played an unambitious set-up and got no advantage against the Queen's Gambit Declined, but exploited his opponent's subsequent errors to win with a lovely rook sacrifice. In the second game Karpov firmly held a 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann. In Game 3 Karpov repeated his harmless opening but managed to outplay his opponent, who resigned before the time control.

In Game 4 Karpov once again equalized with the Caro-Kann, but this time he played ambitiously and outplayed his opponent to secure the match victory with two games to play. In the next game Karpov switched to the Catalan and won after Morovic Fernandez made a serious mistake in the early middlegame. The final game was a quick draw, so Karpov won the one-sided match by the score of 5–1.

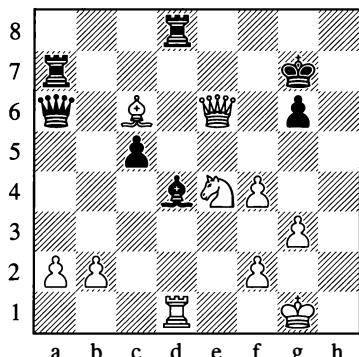
Karpov's next event was Linares, which would prove to be a historic one. Karpov's first opponent at the "Wimbledon of chess" was Lautier, whom he outplayed on the black side of a 1.c4 e5 English. Karpov had a slice of good fortune in Round 2, as Bareev equalized in a French Tarrasch and exchanged off his isolani, only to commit an inexplicable blunder, allowing Karpov to capture a free rook and deliver an instant checkmate at the same time. In Round 3 Karpov equalized in a Queen's Indian against Illescas, who proceeded to make some mistakes which Karpov punished.

In Round 4 Karpov extended his perfect start, defeating Topalov in spectacular style. The game offers a convincing reminder that Karpov was much more than a strategic maestro, and could easily morph into a tactical wizard when the situation on the board demanded it:

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 c5 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  cxd4 4. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  e6 5.g3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  7. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  0–0 9.0–0 d6 10. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  11.e3  $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  12.exf4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}fe1$  g6 15.h4 a6 16.h5 b5 17.hxg6 hxg6



18.  $\mathbb{Q}c5!$   $dxc5?$  19.  $\mathbb{W}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20.  $\mathbb{E}xe6!!$   $\mathbb{E}a7$   
 21.  $\mathbb{E}xg6†$   $fxg6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}e6†$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}d8$   
 24.  $cxb5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  26.  $bxa6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$   
 27.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xa6$



28.  $\mathbb{E}xd4!$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  29.  $\mathbb{W}f6†$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30.  $\mathbb{W}xg6†$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$   
 31.  $\mathbb{W}e8†$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32.  $\mathbb{W}e5†$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}f6†$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
 34.  $\mathbb{Q}e8†$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  35.  $\mathbb{W}xc5†$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  36.  $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$   
 37.  $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  38.  $b3$   $\mathbb{E}b2$  39.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  1–0 Karpov –  
 Topalov, Linares 1994.

In Round 5 Karpov faced Ivanchuk. He equalized with a Queen's Indian which quickly turned into a Hedgehog-type position. His position remained comfortable and perhaps marginally better, when suddenly Ivanchuk overlooked a simple tactic and blundered a pawn. Then he gave Karpov a gift by resigning instantly, even though a great deal of work was required to convert Black's advantage. The last victim of Karpov's incredible winning streak was Judit Polgar. Karpov surprised her with 2.c3 against the Sicilian, and soon got a pleasant edge in the French-type position which arose after 2...e6 3.d4 d5 4.exd5 exd5. Judit played the opening rather poorly for a highly ranked grandmaster, and Karpov won convincingly.

In Round 7 Karpov faced the ultimate test, having the black pieces against Kasparov, but here too things went his way. Unusually for him, Kasparov did not play the opening especially well; Karpov equalized easily and

soon obtained a slight plus in the middlegame. Kasparov gave up a pawn in order to eliminate the queenside pawns, and held the resulting endgame comfortably thanks to his bishop pair.

In Round 8 Karpov once again had the black pieces, this time against Gelfand. For a while he was worse and Gelfand had some attacking chances, but he failed to make the most of his position and Karpov punished him to score another excellent win. In the next two games Karpov was pressing against both Shirov and Kamsky, both of whom were able to draw.

In Round 11 Karpov faced Vladimir Kramnik, who by that time had already broken the 2700-barrier. They had drawn twice previously. Their lifetime score is two wins apiece, with nine draws.

## Game 34

Anatoly Karpov – Vladimir Kramnik

Linares 1994

1.  $d4$   $d5$  2.  $c4$   $c6$  3.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $e6$  5.  $e3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  6.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $dxc4$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $b5$  8.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $a6$

Karpov scored better against this variation than he did against the other main line 8... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ . A year later Kramnik switched to that move against Karpov and drew in eighteen moves.

9.  $e4$   $c5$  10.  $d5$   $c4$

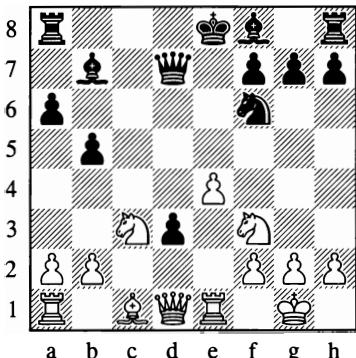
Nowadays many players prefer 10... $\mathbb{W}c7$  here.

11.  $dxe6$

Karpov also played 11.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  at once.

11...  $fxe6$

Karpov encountered the 11... $cxd3$  gambit variation three times. 12.  $exd7†$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  13. 0–0  $\mathbb{Q}b7$  14.  $\mathbb{E}e1$  Karpov faced two different moves here:

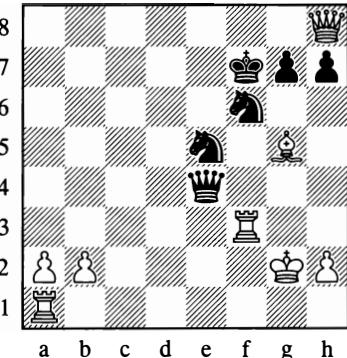


a) 14... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  18.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  19. $\mathbb{W}xd7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}he8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}ed1\#$  White has a strong initiative and Karpov later managed to catch his opponent's king, Karpov – Tal, Bugojno 1980. It was his only win against the magician from Riga.

b) Lutz tried 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  twice against Karpov. 15.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}e4!$  (Improving over their first encounter: 16. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  17. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  0–0 18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$  19. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{E}c2$  21.b3  $\mathbb{W}g4$  22. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xg3$  23.hxg3 h6 24. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  Black managed to become very active and he drew the endgame without much difficulty, Karpov – Lutz, Bundesliga 1994.) 16...0–0 17. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{W}g4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}fg5$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  19.a3 f5 20.exf6 gxf6 21. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}xh3$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  Black has insufficient compensation and White went on to win, Karpov – Lutz, Dortmund 1994.

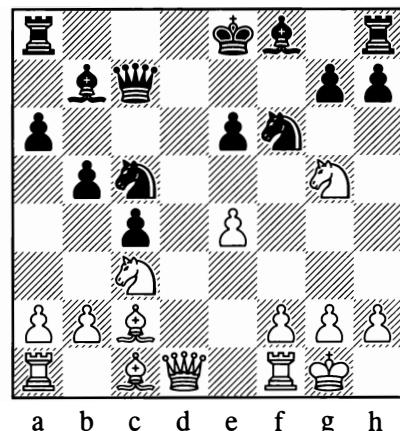
### 12. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ $\mathbb{Q}b7$ 13.0–0 $\mathbb{W}c7$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Four years later Karpov used 14. $\mathbb{W}e2$  to good effect against Anand: 14... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  16.f4 e5 17. $\mathbb{Q}dxb5?$  This was an important novelty at the time. 17...axb5 18. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xd6\#$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  20.fxe5  $\mathbb{W}xe5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  22. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  23. $\mathbb{W}b5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}cd7$  24. $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$  25. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}a5?$ ) 25... $\mathbb{W}d6$  26. $\mathbb{W}a8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7\#$  27. $\mathbb{W}xh8$   $\mathbb{W}d4\#$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}xg2$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$



31. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$ ! With this beautiful tactical shot White simplifies to a winning endgame which he eventually converted, Karpov – Anand, Lausanne (1) 1998.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}c5$



### 15.e5

Karpov sacrifices a pawn to open the e-file towards Black's king. It has been White's most popular choice in the position.

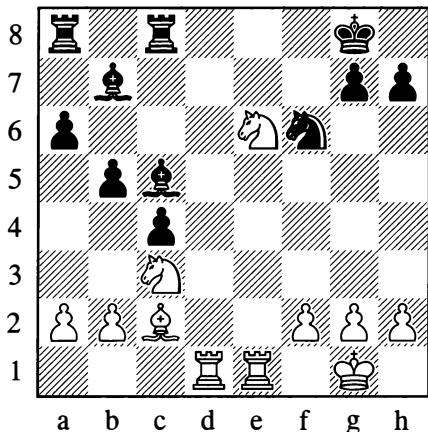
### 15... $\mathbb{W}xe5$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 17. $\mathbb{W}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

White develops instead of taking back the pawn at once. According to the database Kramnik played this move in the 1993-94 Bundesliga season, but the exact dates are not given so it is hard to work out which game took place first. I would guess that Kramnik adopted it after his defeat in the present game.

**18...0–0**

This is Black's most popular move. Kuczynski played 18... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  against Kramnik and drew after a long battle.

**19. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$**

**22.h3!!**

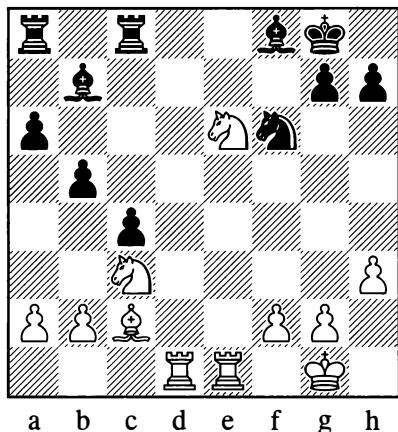
This is a great idea – White prepares g4 followed by a general expansion on the kingside. This move was played in several other games in 1994; the database does not give the precise dates, but it is likely that Karpov played it first and other players followed his example. Despite the ingenuity of White's concept, Black should be okay and over the years he has scored more than fifty percent from this position. But of course it is much harder to deal with an idea when it comes as a surprise, even for such a gifted player as Kramnik.

**22... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ?**

Nowadays Black has virtually stopped playing this slow move.

22... $\mathbb{E}ab8$ ! has become the main line. It has been championed by Shirov, who used it a few times in 1994, including one game against Kramnik himself. The main line continues: 23.g4 (23. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  24. $\mathbb{E}e6$  b4 25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ! 26.g3  $\mathbb{E}h5$  27.h4  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  28. $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30.f4

Black is slightly better but he was content to take a draw here in Kramnik – Shirov, Novgorod 1994.) 23... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  24. $\mathbb{E}d2$  b4 25. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  Black has done well from here; see for instance the game Nikolic – Shirov, Horgen 1994.

**23.g4!**

Karpov continues his plan. The advancing pawns, combined with the powerful knight on e6 and White's control over the d-file, could easily cause problems for the defender.

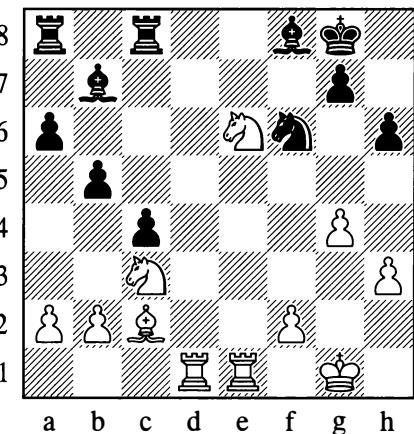
**23...h6?!**

This weakens the black kingside. Kramnik has a strong bishop on b7, and perhaps he thought White's king would become vulnerable. Black would do better to avoid moving his h-pawn.

23... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  24. $\mathbb{E}d4$ ! (24. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  25.g5 [25. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ] 25... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  26. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  It is not easy for White to increase his pressure.) 24... $\mathbb{E}e8$  25.g5  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  26. $\mathbb{E}e3$  (26.g6 h6 27. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  28. $\mathbb{E}dxd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black must pay attention to the strong e6 knight, nevertheless his position should be playable.) 26... $\mathbb{E}ab8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  g6 29. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}gh5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White dominates the centre.

23... $\mathbb{E}e8$ ! Black's most straightforward plan is to get rid of the unpleasant knight on e6. 24.g5 (24.a3 can be met by 24... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ ! or

24... $\mathbb{Q}c8.$ ) 24... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  25. $\mathbb{E}e3$  g6 26. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  (26.a3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ) 26... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  27. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  28.a4 (28. $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 28...bxa4 29. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  Black should be able to survive.



#### 24.f4!

Karpov intends to plough forwards with g5, which will weaken the enemy kingside and drive away the defending knight.

#### 24... $\mathbb{Q}f3$

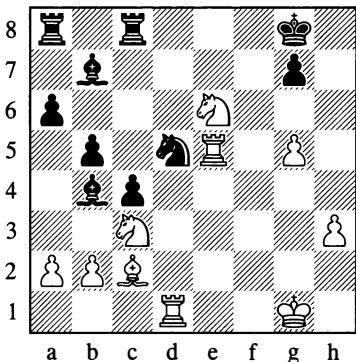
Another possibility was:

#### 24... $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Active play on the queenside is no longer enough to neutralize White's initiative on the kingside.

#### 25.g5 hxg5 26.fxg5 $\mathbb{Q}e8$

26... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$ ! 27. $\mathbb{E}e5!$  (27. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  28. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe1$  29. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  White will have no more than a perpetual check.)



27... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  (27... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  28. $\mathbb{E}d7$ ; 27... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f5!$ ) 28.bxc3  $\mathbb{E}e8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30. $\mathbb{E}de1$  g6 (30... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}h7!$  catches Black's king.) 31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  32. $\mathbb{E}f1\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  34. $\mathbb{E}ef5$  White's attack decides the game.

#### 27. $\mathbb{Q}f5$

There is also 27.a3  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  29. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  31. $\mathbb{E}e5$  when Black is under some pressure.

#### 27... $\mathbb{Q}c5\uparrow$

If 27... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  28. $\mathbb{E}d4!$  the rook joins the attack.

#### 28. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

After 28. $\mathbb{Q}f1?$ !  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}f8!$  Black obtains good counterplay.

#### 28... $\mathbb{E}xc5$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}e6\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 30.h4

Despite the reduced material, White maintains strong pressure.

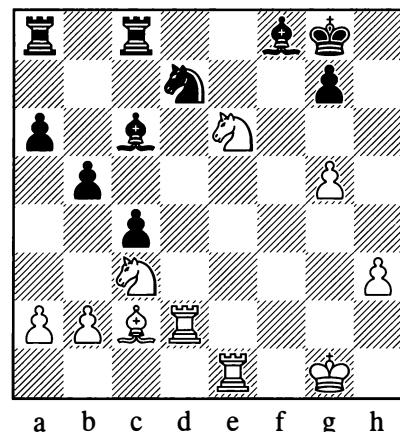
#### 25. $\mathbb{E}d2$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$

Black gave up a tempo to lure the rook to d2, perhaps hoping to gain a tempo with ...b4 and ...c3 later.

#### 26.g5

The pawn drives the knight away and exerts a choking effect on Black's kingside.

#### 26...hxg5 27.fxg5 $\mathbb{Q}d7$



#### 28. $\mathbb{Q}xf8!$

Karpov makes a difficult but correct decision, exchanging his powerful knight in order to invade on the seventh rank.

28... $\mathbb{Q}f2$  looks tempting, intending  $\mathbb{Q}g6-f7\#$  and  $\mathbb{Q}f4$ , but Black can defend: 28... $\mathbb{E}e8$  (28... $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  loses to 29. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$ ; 28... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is possible though, and after 29. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  30. $\mathbb{E}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  31. $\mathbb{E}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  Black can neutralize his opponent's initiative.) 29. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe8$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  31. $\mathbb{E}ee2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2\#$  Black has solved all his problems.

### 28... $\mathbb{Q}xf8$ 29. $\mathbb{E}d6$ !

Karpov makes a characteristic prophylactic move, taking away the g6-square from the knight and tying the c8-rook to the defence of the bishop.

### 29... $b4$

Kramnik has said that in his childhood he investigated Karpov's play a lot by using a book from his local library. Therefore it is a bit ironic that he now goes on to lose in a similar manner to several of Karpov's previous victims: he strives for counterplay but loosens his position, and Karpov goes on to punish him on the flank where he was supposed to be stronger.

Having said that, it is important to clarify that the text move is not a mistake in itself – Black really does have to do something on the queenside. Other moves were possible and it must have been hard for Kramnik to choose between them, as he is somewhat worse in all variations and has to try to find the one that gives the best drawing chances. Here is one such example:

### 29... $\mathbb{E}ab8$

Black begins his queenside play in a slightly different way.

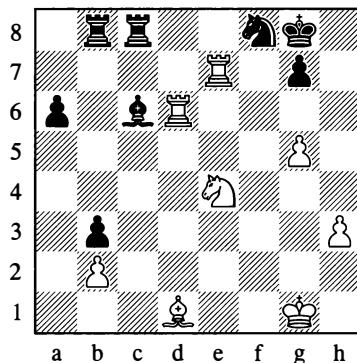
### 30. $\mathbb{E}e7$ $b4$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Alternatively after 31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  32. $\mathbb{E}xe8$   $\mathbb{Q}xe8$  33. $h4$   $a5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  White is somewhat better in the ending.

### 31... $b3!?$

31... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  32. $h4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  (the evaluation is similar after 32... $\mathbb{E}c6$  33. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ ) 33. $\mathbb{E}xe8$   $\mathbb{E}xe8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black is somewhat worse, but he should be able to hold the endgame.

### 32. $axb3$ $cxb3$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}d1$



### 33... $\mathbb{Q}a8$

Alternatives include 33... $\mathbb{E}e8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c2\#$ !, 35. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   $bxcc2$  36. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$ , and 33... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  34. $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ?, with counterplay in both cases.

### 34. $\mathbb{Q}g3!$

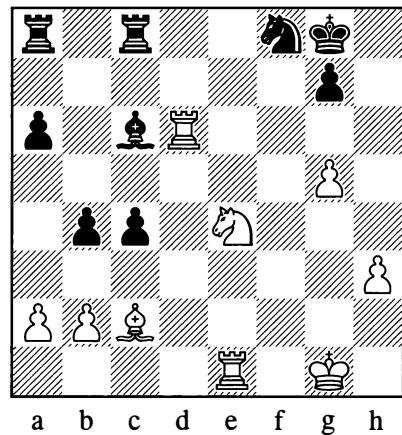
Threatening to go to f5 or h5.

34. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  35. $\mathbb{E}e1$  (or 35. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{E}b1$ ) 35... $\mathbb{E}c6$  36. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{E}cb6$  37. $\mathbb{E}ee3$   $\mathbb{E}b5$  38. $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  Black obtains reasonable counterplay.

### 34... $\mathbb{E}d8$ 35. $\mathbb{E}xd8$ $\mathbb{E}xd8$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}xb3\#$ $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Black is a pawn down, but he has decent drawing chances due to the limited number of pawns remaining.

### 30. $\mathbb{Q}e4$



**30...♝e8**

Black had other moves as well.

30...a5 31.♗d2 ♜b5 32.♗e5 ♜d8 33.♗e4 ♜e8  
 34.♗xd8 ♜xd8 35.♗xa5 ♜e6 Black has some compensation for the pawn, and the limited number of pawns also helps his drawing chances.

30...♜b5 31.a4!? (31.h4 ♜d7 32.♗f2 ♜e5 33.♗g3 ♜f8 Black remains alive.) 31...bx a3 32.bxa3 ♜e8 33.♗f2 ♜d7 34.h4 ♜ab8 35.♗d4 ♜b2 Black obtains some counterplay.

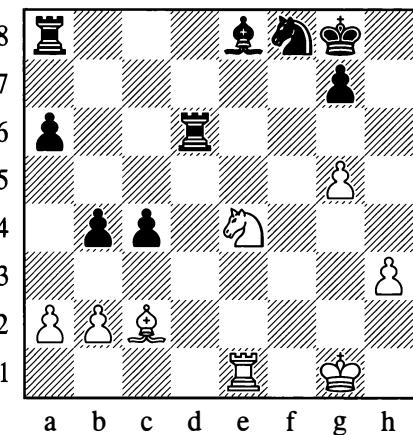
**31.♗g3 ♜d8**

Kramnik exchanges the strong rook in the centre.

Reducing the number of pawns would not have guaranteed a draw: 31...c3 32.♗f5 ♜h8!  
 33.bxc3 (33.♗d4 b3; 33.♗e7 ♜c5) 33...♜xc3 34.♗e4 ♜b8 35.h4 a5 (35...b3 36.axb3 ♜xb3 37.♗xa6 ♜d7 Black may be able to draw this position, but he will have to suffer for quite some time.) 36.♗d5 ♜c7 Ultimately Black should be able to hold this position, nevertheless White can continue to set him problems with 37.♗e7 or 37.♗a6 a4 38.♗b6.

**32.♗f5 ♜xd6**

If 32...g6 33.♗h6† ♜g7 (33...♜h8? 34.♗xd8 ♜xd8 35.♗a4 White wins.) 34.♗e7† ♜h8 35.♗xd8 ♜xd8 36.h4 White has good winning chances.

**33.♗xd6**

Thanks to Karpov's effective use of the knight, it replaces the rook on a fine square and conveniently attacks the c4-pawn.

**33...♝g6?**

Kramnik was probably short of time by now, and he hastily sacrifices a pawn in order to exchange White's strong bishop. He probably planned something different here, but then changed his mind after spotting something that was not to his liking. Black's defensive task is certainly not easy, but his position should still be tenable. There were two alternatives which deserved attention.

**33...♝f7 34.♗xf7**

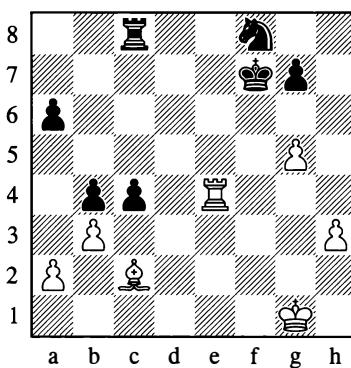
34.♗e7 ♜e6 (34...♜d5? 35.♗f5) 35.♗f5 c3!  
 36.♗xe6† ♜xe6 37.♗xe6 c2 38.♗e1 ♜d8 39.♗c1 ♜xd6 40.♗xc2 ♜f7 White is a pawn up in the rook ending, but he has virtually no winning chances.

**34...♝xf7**

White has the superior minor piece, but Black has chances to become active and there are fewer pawns on the board than White would ideally like.

**35.♗e4 ♜c8 36.b3**

36.♗xc4 ♜xc4 37.♗b3 a5 38.♗xc4† ♜g6 is equal.

**36...♝e6**

36...a5 37.♗xc4 ♜xc4 38.bxc4 ♜e6 39.h4 ♜c5 40.♗f2 White has decent winning

chances, as his king will dominate in the centre.

36...cxb3 37. $\mathbb{B}f4\text{!}$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xb3$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  39.h4 a5 40.g6 Black is struggling.

37.h4 c3 38. $\mathbb{B}xb4$  a5 39. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  40. $\mathbb{B}c4$   $\mathbb{B}d2$   
Black can also consider 40... $\mathbb{B}d4$  41. $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{B}xh4$  when he has reasonable drawing chances.

41. $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  42. $\mathbb{B}c7\text{!}$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{B}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Despite being two pawns down, Black has good chances to survive as his pieces are so active.

33... $\mathbb{B}d7$  34. $\mathbb{B}h2\text{?}$

White patiently improves his king.

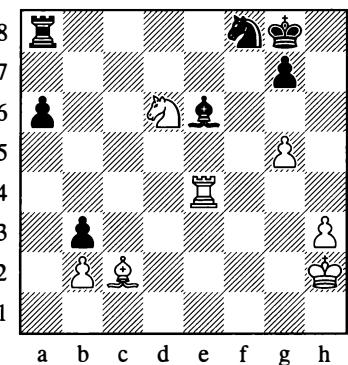
If 34. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}xh3$  35. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  36. $\mathbb{Q}b6\text{!}$   $\mathbb{B}h7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black is active enough to hold.

Alternatively, after 34.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  35. $\mathbb{B}e4$  b3 36.axb3 cxb3 37. $\mathbb{B}d3$  a5 38. $\mathbb{B}f2$  a4 39. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  40. $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black is not completely home and dry, but he is not far from it.

34... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

The bishop stands well here.

35. $\mathbb{B}e4$  b3 36.axb3 cxb3



37. $\mathbb{B}d1$

After 37. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  38. $\mathbb{B}d4$  a5 Black holds.

37...a5 38. $\mathbb{B}e2$  a4 39. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

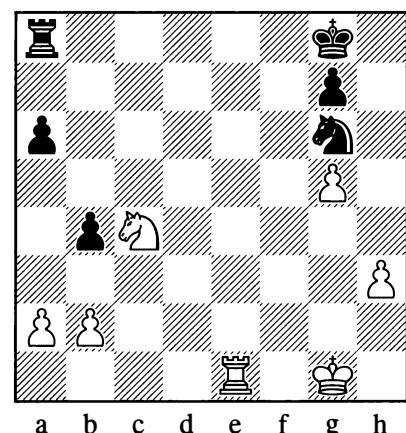
39... $\mathbb{B}d8$  40. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  should also be good enough.

40. $\mathbb{Q}xc4\text{!}$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  41. $\mathbb{B}f4$  g6

Black has nothing to worry about.

34. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

Karpov collects the pawn which was weakened by Black's own pawn advance from just six moves ago. In addition to his material advantage, his pieces remain more active.



35... $\mathbb{B}d8\text{?}$

Kramnik improves the rook, but that could and should have been done later.

35... $\mathbb{Q}h4\text{!}$

Improving the knight was stronger, as White does not have an ideal way to deal with the check on f3. Black's situation remains precarious, but he could certainly have offered stubborn resistance.

36. $\mathbb{B}e6$

36. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  37. $\mathbb{B}f4$  (37.b3?  $\mathbb{Q}c5\text{!}$ ) 37... $\mathbb{Q}f3\text{!}$

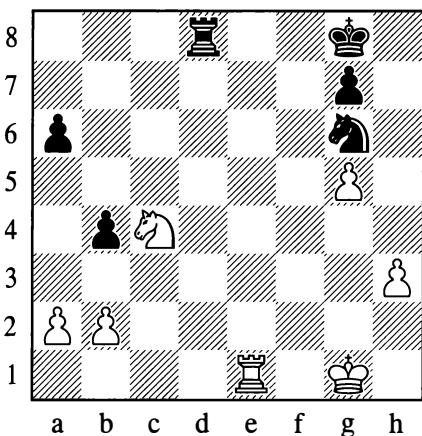
Exchanging the knights serves Black's interests, and the rook ending is likely to end in a draw.

36. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{B}f8\text{!}$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  38. $\mathbb{B}f1$  (After

38. $\mathbb{B}e3\text{!?$ }  $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  39.h4 White keeps some initiative, but it will be hard to turn it into a win with so little material remaining.) 38... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  39. $\mathbb{B}xf8\text{!}$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black will lose a pawn, but will do it by playing ...b3 to ensure that White's pawns will be doubled. White has chances to win, but it will not be easy.

36... $\mathbb{Q}f3\text{!}$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  38. $\mathbb{B}b6$  a5 39. $\mathbb{B}b5$

White wins a pawn, but winning the game will require skilful technique as there are so few pawns left on the board.



### 36.♘e4!

This superb move restricts the enemy knight, prepares h4 and defends the c4-knight.

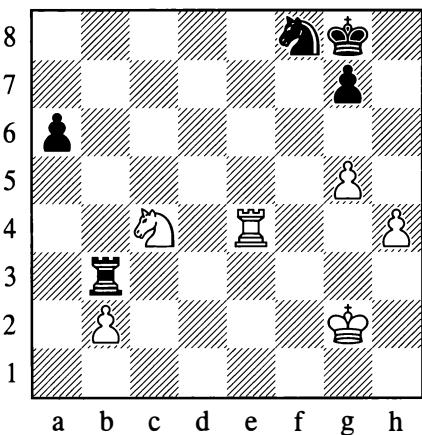
### 36...b3 37.axb3

Karpov allows Black to exchange a pair of pawns, as in return he gains time.

Nevertheless 37.a4!? intending ♘g2 and h4 also wins, and may even have been stronger than the game continuation.

### 37...♗d3 38.♔g2 ♗xb3 39.h4! ♔f8

39...a5 40.h5 ♔f8 41.g6! paralyses Black's kingside, and after 41...a4 42.♗e5 ♕b4 43.♕c5 ♕b3 44.♔f2 White is winning.



### 40.♗e8!

1–0

Kramnik overstepped the time limit. It was a happy ending for Karpov, although in a way it is a pity that we did not get to see these two great endgame maestros play to the end.

### 40...♔f7!

After this move Black's position remains difficult, but he certainly has chances to resist.

### 41.♗d8

41.♗d6† ♔g8 42.h5 looks scary for Black, but he should be able to snatch the b-pawn without losing his knight. (If 42.g6 ♘b6! Black defends.) 42...♗xb2† 43.♗g3 ♘b3† Black's position is ugly, but it looks like he can survive.

Alternatively, after 41.♗e3 ♘b4 42.b3 White is a pawn up but the win is still a long way off.

### 41...♘e6

41...♗g6 42.♗d4 maintains control.

### 42.♗d6 ♘f4† 43.♔f1

White has reasonable chances to convert his extra pawn, but Black's pieces are fairly active so the win is certainly not a foregone conclusion.

In the penultimate round Anand tried the main line against the Caro-Kann, but Karpov neutralized his play and it was not long before a draw was agreed. Karpov's opponent in the final round was Beliavsky, who was absolutely out of form and had one of the worst tournaments of his life, scoring only four draws out of twelve games. He played disastrously against Karpov as well, as he allowed one of his knights to become trapped and he had to resign after just twenty moves.

Thus Karpov won the tournament with an incredible score of 11/13, two and a half points clear of Kasparov and Shirov who

were equal second. The average rating of the participants was 2685, the highest ever at the time. Karpov's Tournament Performance Rating of 2985 was the highest of all time, although in 2009 Magnus Carlsen surpassed it by winning the Pearl Spring tournament with 8/10 and a TPR of 3002. Nevertheless taking into account rating inflation I would still rate Karpov's achievement as the more impressive.

Kasparov suggested that luck played a role, pointing out that thanks to a somewhat favourable drawing of lots, almost all of Karpov's opponents met him immediately after facing Kasparov in the previous round. The world number one was also keen to emphasize that a number of Karpov's wins came as the result of blunders by his opponents. It would seem fair to say that Karpov benefitted from the rub of the green, but equally, one cannot achieve such a result by luck alone! Karpov won two truly great games against the future world champions Kramnik and Topalov, and played excellent chess throughout most of the tournament.

Karpov reached his highest ever rating of 2780 on the July list of 1994, and the supersonic Linares result had a lot to do with it.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was Dos Hermanas. Following his other-worldly display in Linares, there must have been a great deal of pressure on him to perform. In the first round he failed to equalize on the black side of a 1.c4 e5 English against Rivas Pastor. He managed to turn the tables and gained the upper hand in the middlegame, but the Spanish grandmaster found a way to give a perpetual check. In Round 2 Karpov got no opening advantage against Gelfand's King's Indian. Later he managed to get his rook to the seventh rank and won a pawn, but Gelfand was able to hold the ending.

Karpov's next opponent was Morovic Fernandez, who played seventeen games against the world champions, scoring one win, nine draws and seven defeats. His lifetime score against Karpov is five draws and five losses.

## Game 35

Ivan Morovic Fernandez – Anatoly Karpov

Dos Hermanas 1994

### 1.c4

Morovic rarely opens with his c-pawn, but he had no joy against Karpov's Caro-Kann in their match earlier the same year.

### 1... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ e5 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 4.a3

Karpov likes to develop his bishop to b4 in this variation, so the Chilean grandmaster prevents it.

### 4...g6

Previously Karpov had played 4...d5 once and 4...d6 twice in this position.

### 5.g3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ 0–0 7.0–0 d6 8.d3 $\mathbb{Q}d4$

This move had rarely been played before the present game, although the Hungarian grandmaster Ivan Farago had obtained a couple of draws with it.

### 9. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

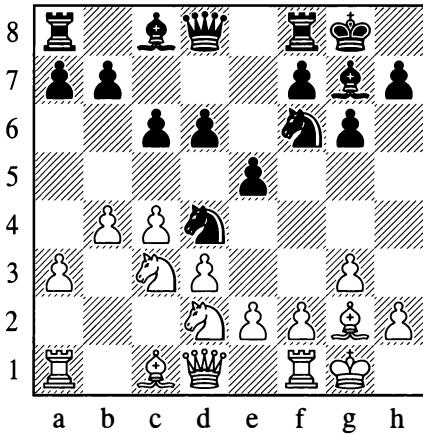
Avoiding the exchange is White's most challenging approach, and has been the usual choice.

### 9...c6 10.b4

Morovic decides not to send the knight back just yet.

Here is an interesting game featuring active play from Black: 10.e3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  (The way Karpov plays in this game suggests that he may well

have chosen this retreat square, although 10... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  has scored better.) 11. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  12.e4  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 14. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  d5 15.exd5 cxd5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  dx $c4$  18.dxc4  $\mathbb{W}b6$  19. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  Black had nice compensation for the pawn and a draw was soon agreed, Ruck – Groszpeter, Austria 2004.



#### 10... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ !?

This was a novelty at the time; previously Farago played 10...d5 here. Karpov wants to complete development before taking action in the centre.

#### 11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{W}d7$ 12.e3 $\mathbb{Q}f5$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}de4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

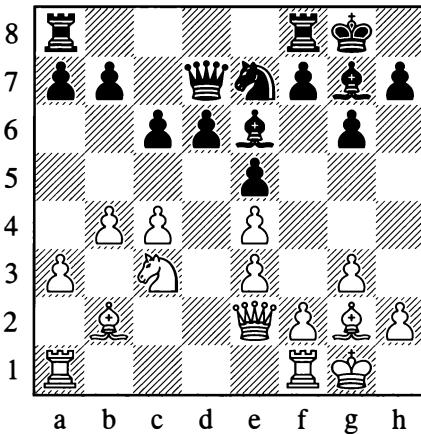
There was a positional threat of 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  eliminating an important bishop. Karpov prevents it by exchanging the knight, although 13...h6 was a valid alternative.

#### 14.dxe4?

White hopes to develop pressure on the d-file, and underestimates the dangers associated with his slightly weak c4-pawn.

After 14. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  Black can choose from several plans, including 14...h6 followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  and ..f5.

#### 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 15. $\mathbb{W}e2$



#### 15... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ !

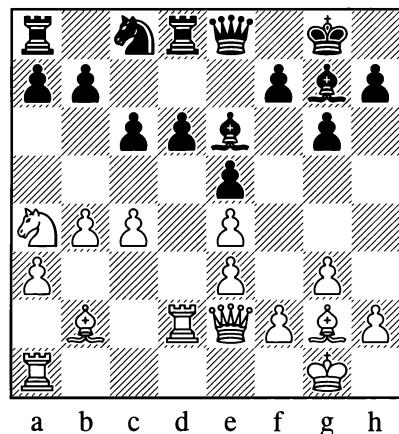
Black defends d6 but more importantly goes after the c4-pawn. Karpov evaluated the position as clearly better for Black, which seems a trifle optimistic, although I would certainly agree that his position is to be preferred.

#### 16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$ $\mathbb{E}d8$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}a4$

After 17. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  18.c5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  19. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  Black has the advantage.

#### 17... $\mathbb{W}e8$ 18. $\mathbb{E}d2$ ?

18. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ! was necessary, and after 18...a6 19. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  b5 20.a4 White is not worse.



#### 18...a6!

Karpov exploits the slowness of his opponent's last move.

The immediate 18...b5 only leads to equality after 19.cxb5 cxb5 20.Qc3, so Karpov prepares to recapture with the a-pawn.

### 19.Qc3

The Chilean grandmaster prepares to retreat his knight to b2, in order to provide some defence of the weak c4-square.

### 19.c5!?

This was worth considering, although it does not solve White's problems entirely.

### 19...Qb3! 20.Qc3

After 20.Qb6 Qxb6 21.cxb6 a5 Black gets the upper hand.

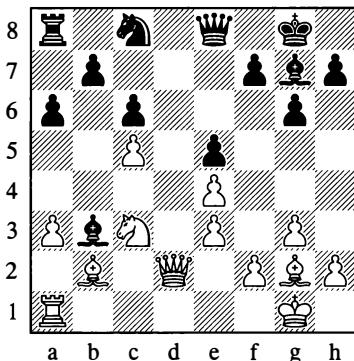
### 20...dxc5

Black can consider a different way of changing the pawn structure: 20...b5!? 21.a4 dxc5 22.bxc5 b4 23.Qa2 a5 The protected passed pawn gives Black some advantage, despite the fact that it is securely blockaded for the time being.

### 21.bxc5 Qxd2

21...b6 22.Qxd8 Wxd8 23.cxb6 Qxb6 is similar.

### 22.Wxd2



### 22...b6!

After 22...W7 23.a4! White is out of the woods.

### 23.cxb6 Qxb6

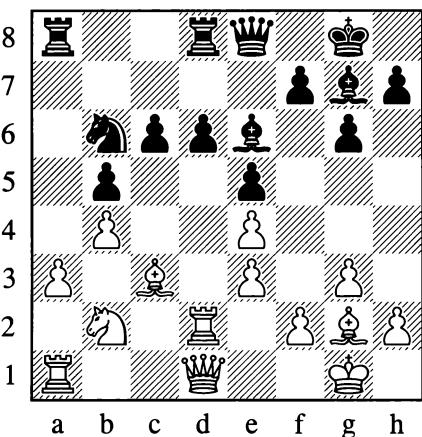
Black's superior pawn structure gives him some advantage. His plans may include

...Qd8 followed by ...Qc4-d3 and/or ...Qc4. Alternatively he might just push the c-pawn.

### 19...b5 20.Qb2 Qb6 21.cxb5

If 21.c5 dxc5 22.bxc5 Qc4 23.Qxc4 Qxc4 24.Qxd8 Qxd8 25.Qc2 We6 Black will press with his pawn majority on the queenside.

### 21...axb5 22.Qd1



### 22...d5!

Karpov continues strongly and acts in the centre at once.

22...W7 is less effective: 23.a4 bxa4 24.Qxa4 Qc4 25.Qc2! (After the more obvious 25.Qda2 Qa7 26.Qf1 Qda8 the pin on the a-file is a problem for White.) 25...Wb7 (Now 25...Qa7 is met by 26.Qcc1 Qda8 27.Qb2 and White eases Black's grip on the queenside.) 26.Qcc1 Wb5 27.Qf1 Qd7 28.Qb6 (28.Qe1 also looks alright) 28...Qxa1 29.Qxa1 White seems to be okay.

### 23.a4

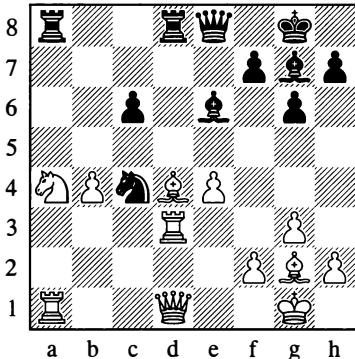
White must have pinned his hopes on this move which aims to neutralize Karpov's structural advantage, but it arrives a bit too late.

Worse is 23.exd5?  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$  24. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  25. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  e4 26. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  27. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  and White is lost.

### 23... $\mathbb{Q}c4?$

Karpov plays strategically and obtains a strong passed pawn for himself. He keeps an advantage this way, but there was an even stronger continuation.

23...bxa4! The tactics in the centre yield a clear advantage for Black: 24. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  25. $\mathbb{E}d3$  d4! (Karpov mentions 25...dxe4 26. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  f5 with a slight plus, but Black can do better than this.) 26.exd4 exd4 27. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  (If 27. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Black doubles on the a-file.)



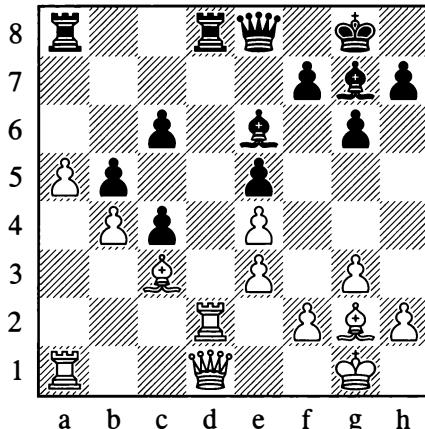
27... $\mathbb{Q}g4!!$  This lovely tactical shot highlights the fact that White's pieces are overloaded. 28.f3 (28. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ –+) 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ! 29. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  30. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  31. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  Black obtains a decisive material advantage.

### 24. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ dxc4

Black's protected passed pawn is a major asset, despite being securely blockaded for the time being. Black has reasonable chances to win or exchange the b4-pawn, in order to obtain connected passed pawns.

### 25.a5

After 25.axb5  $\mathbb{B}xa1$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xa1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  27. $\mathbb{W}xd2$  cx b5 White faces a difficult endgame.



### 25... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$

Karpov wastes no time in preparing ...c5.

### 26.a6?

Morovic must have hoped that the a-pawn would provide him with counterplay, but it becomes a target which Karpov will collect.

Exchanging queens would have led to a passive ending, but it was the lesser evil.

26. $\mathbb{E}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  27. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$

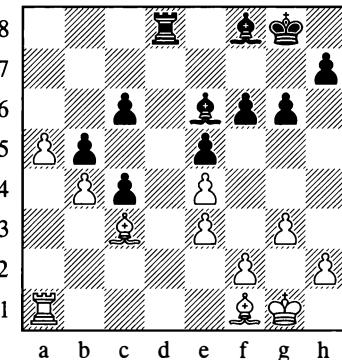
Let's see how White can try to hold.

### 28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

28. $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  29.a6  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  30.a7  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  (31. $\mathbb{E}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 31... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  32.exd4 b4 Black's passed pawns are irresistible.

28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  f6 29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (Or 29.a6  $\mathbb{Q}a8$  30.f4  $\mathbb{Q}a7$  and the a-pawn falls.) 29...c5 30.bxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  31. $\mathbb{E}b1$  b4! 32. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  33. $\mathbb{E}xb4$  c3 34. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4\#$  35.f3  $\mathbb{Q}d2\#$  Black wins.

### 28...f6



29... $\mathbb{B}b1$ 

Holding up the advance of the c-pawn.

29.a6  $\mathbb{B}f7$  30.f4  $\mathbb{B}a8$  31.fxe5 fxe5 32.a7  $\mathbb{B}e8$  and Black's king will collect the a-pawn.

29... $\mathbb{B}f7$  30.f4  $\mathbb{B}d6$ 

Black has time to stabilize his centre before slowly preparing ...c5.

There is no sense in playing 30...exf4? 31.gxf4 f5 32.e5 when White may be able to keep his position together.

31. $\mathbb{B}e2$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  32. $\mathbb{B}f2$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  33. $\mathbb{B}f3$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  34. $\mathbb{B}e2$  c5 35.bxc5  $\mathbb{B}xc5$ 

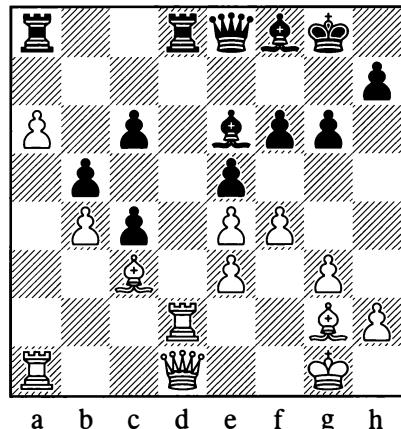
Black has good winning chances.

## 26...f6

Karpov defends the pawn and restricts the c3-bishop.

## 27.f4

With the pawn on a6 the endgame is even less favourable for White: 27. $\mathbb{B}xd8$   $\mathbb{W}xd8$  28. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  29. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  30.a7  $\mathbb{B}f7$  31. $\mathbb{B}a6$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  (31... $\mathbb{B}d7$  32.f4) 32. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xa7$  33. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{B}a3$  And Black is winning.

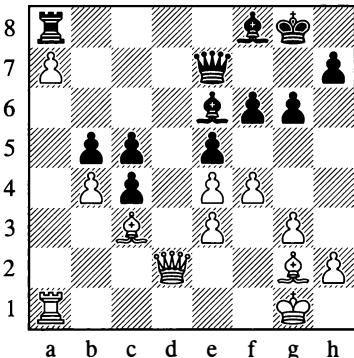


## 27...c5!

This move not only ensures Black connected passed pawns, but also usefully opens the sixth rank to attack the a6-pawn.

28. $\mathbb{B}xd8$ 

Instead of this move the tricky 28.a7! would have given Black a chance to go wrong: 28... $\mathbb{B}xd2?$  29. $\mathbb{W}xd2$   $\mathbb{B}e7$

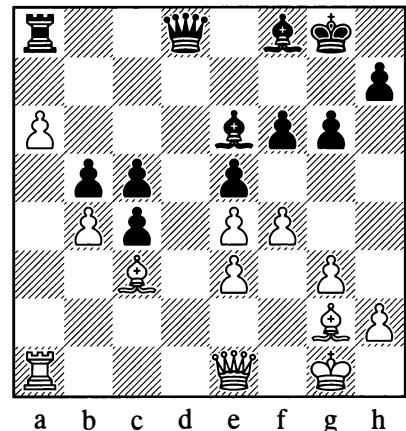


30. $\mathbb{B}h3!!$  White can improve his passive bishop with this sweet tactical stroke. 30... $\mathbb{B}f7$  31. $\mathbb{B}d7!$  Attacking the b5-pawn. 31...exf4 32.bxc5  $\mathbb{W}xe4$  (32... $\mathbb{W}xc5$  33. $\mathbb{B}d4$ ) 33. $\mathbb{W}d4$  Thanks to his energetic play White manages to stay in the game.

However, after 28.a7! Black has a stronger reply: 28... $\mathbb{B}dc8!$  29. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  30. $\mathbb{B}da2$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  Now Black's pressure against the b4- and a7-pawns is too much to bear.

28... $\mathbb{W}xd8$  29. $\mathbb{B}e1$ 

After 29. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$  30.bxc5  $\mathbb{B}xc5$  Black is winning.

29... $\mathbb{W}b6$

Now the a-pawn falls, and White's position quickly becomes hopeless.

**30.fxe5 fxe5 31.Qxe5 Qxa6 32.Qd1**

32.Qxa6 Qxa6 33.Qf2 Qe7 34.bxc5 b4+–

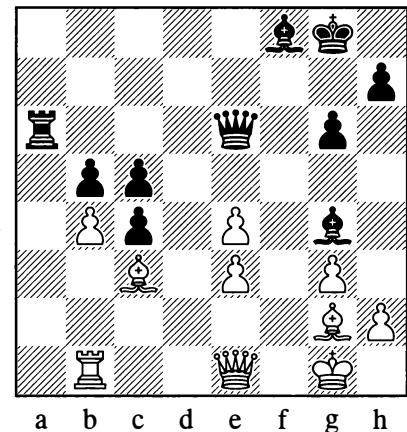
**32...Qg4**

By this stage Karpov was in time trouble, but his position is comfortably winning and he had no problem finding the right moves. 32...cxb4 33.Qf2 Qe7 was also good enough.

**33.Qb1 Qe6**

33...cxb4 wins as well.

**34.Qc3**



**34...Ra2!**

Invading on the second rank comes naturally to Karpov, even with little time on the clock. White is unable to defend his king.

**35.bxc5 Qxc5 36.Qd4**

Now Karpov finishes the game with a flourish. In the event of 36.Qxb5 White would have suffered the same fate.

**36...Rg2†! 37.Qxg2 Qxe4† 38.Qg1**

0–1

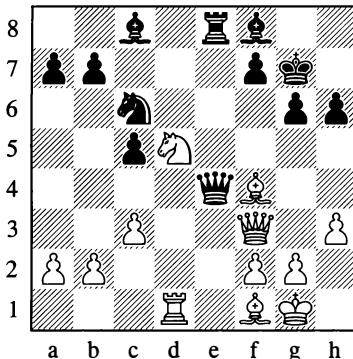
As he played this move Morovic Fernandez overstepped the time limit, but his position is

hopelessly lost after 38...Qh3. (The alternative 38.Qf2 could have been refuted in the same way.)

In Round 4 Karpov used the English Opening against Illescas, and soon got the advantage of the two bishops. He neutralized his opponent's activity and won a nice endgame. Then he made a quick draw with Lautier on the black side of a Nimzo-Indian. In Round 6 Karpov repeated the 2.c3 Sicilian against Judit Polgar, who once again failed to equalize and later gave away a free pawn. Karpov had no trouble converting his advantage.

In Round 7 Karpov's forty four game unbeaten streak came to an end against Boris Gulko. In a 3.e5 Caro-Kann Karpov went for artificial castling and tried an unorthodox rook manoeuvre on the kingside, but it turned out badly. He struggled on past the time control but was unable to save the game. In Round 8 he had the black pieces again, and was able to take a convenient rest by means of a very quick draw with Epishin.

In the ninth and final round Karpov faced Topalov. The Bulgarian grandmaster was able to equalize, but later he made a mistake which allowed Karpov to showcase his tactical alertness. Here is the key moment of the game:



30.Qf6!! Qxf6 31.Qe5†!! Qxe5 32.Qxe4† Qxe4 33.Qe1† Qf5 34.Qxe8 Black soon had

to resign, Karpov – Topalov, Dos Hermanas 1994.

Karpov's final score of 6/9 was enough for second place, half a point behind Gelfand and half a point ahead of Epishin who was third.

Karpov's next tournament was Las Palmas in the Canary Islands, where he started with White against Topalov. Having suffered two recent spectacular losses in tactical combat against the former champion, Topalov opted for solidity in the Queen's Gambit Accepted, and managed to draw without too many problems.

In the second round Karpov faced Alexei Shirov. The Latvian-born grandmaster has, at the time of writing, contested 163 games against world champions, scoring twenty two wins, eighty nine draws and fifty two losses. Before this meeting Karpov had beaten him twice and drawn three times. Their lifetime score is a lopsided seven wins to Karpov, with twelve draws and no defeats – a truly dominant record against a world-class opponent.

## Game 36

Alexei Shirov – Anatoly Karpov

Las Palmas 1994

### 1.e4 c6

On the one previous occasion when Shirov opened with 1.e4, Karpov replied with 1...e5. Nevertheless the switch to the Caro-Kann could not have come as a surprise.

### 2.d4 d5 3.e5 ♜f5 4.♗f3

One would expect the 4.♗c3 variation from Shirov.

### 4...e6 5.♗e2 c5

Karpov and Shirov contested several games in this variation, but the following was the only one which occurred at a regular time

control. Karpov used a different move order, and Shirov a different plan: 5...♝e7 6.0–0 c5 7.c4 ♜bc6 8.♗c3 dxc4 9.dxc5 ♜d5 10.♗d4 ♜xc3 11.bxc3 ♜xc5 12.♗xf5 exf5 13.♗xc4! ♜xf2† 14.♔h1 ♜xd1 15.♗xd1 ♜xe5 White had insufficient compensation for the pawn and Black went on to win this game as well, Shirov – Karpov, Vienna 1996.

### 6.0–0

Nowadays the more dynamic 6.♗e3 is considered critical, and over the course of his career it was this move that gave Karpov the most problems.

### 6...♝c6 7.c3 cxd4

Karpov also delayed this capture with 7...♝g4 a couple of times.

### 8.cxd4 ♜ge7 9.a3

9.♗c3 is the main line, although the text move has also been popular. Please remember that the Short Variation had only been recognized as a serious line for a few years, and at the time players were still experimenting to find the best move orders and piece placements.

### 9...♝c8

In Game 4 of the Short match Karpov played 9...♝g4 followed by ...♝f5, but failed to equalize and eventually lost. The plan of deploying the knight on the queenside was first seen in 1993, and has since become the main line.

### 10.♗bd2

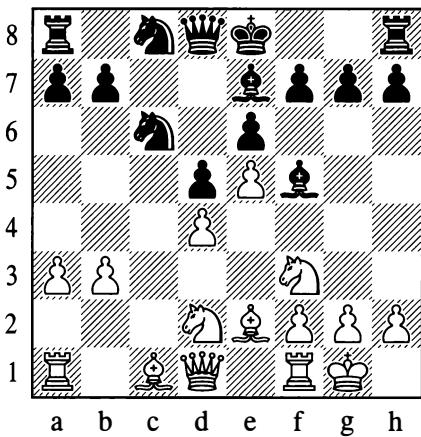
10.♗c3 is also quite playable.

### 10...♝e7!

Karpov remains flexible and puts his bishop on its only decent square, in order to hide his intentions with the c8-knight.

### 11.b3

White takes away the c4-square from the knight, but he is playing rather timidly. The more ambitious 11.b4 would have transposed to a more popular position.



**11...a5!**

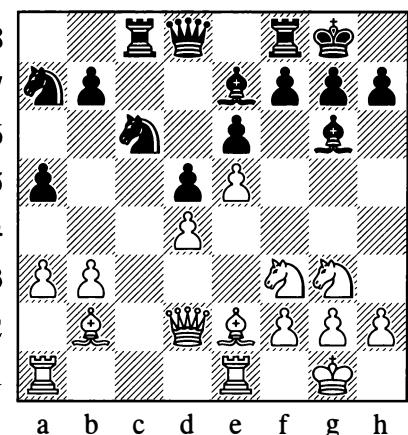
Karpov clears the a7-square for the c8-knight. Later his queen can go to b6, from where she can support the further activation of the knight via b5.

**12.♗b2 ♗8a7 13.♗e1 0–0**

It is interesting that Karpov waited to find good squares for his minor pieces before castling.

**14.♗f1 ♜c8 15.♗g3 ♜g6 16.♗d2?!**

White should have preferred 16.♗d3 although Black has no problems here either.



**16...♝b6! 17.♗d1**

It must have been unpleasant for White to put the bishop on such a passive square, while also breaking the connection between the rooks.

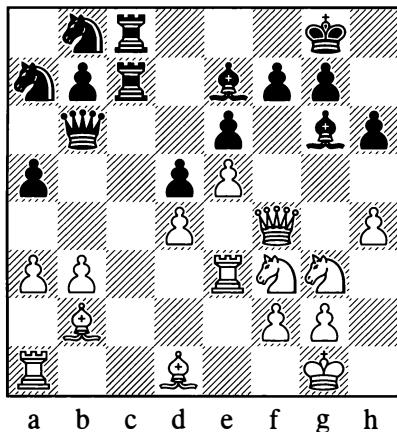
**17...♝c7! 18.h4 h6 19.♗e2 ♜fc8**

After making room for his bishop, Karpov increases his control over the only open file.

**20.♗f4 ♛b8!**

The knight vacates the c-file and prepares two important piece manoeuvres.

**21.♗e3**



**21...♞b5!**

Karpov makes great use of his knights; the position is closed, which is why such long manoeuvres are possible. In some variations the knight may even end up in the centre on e4. It is not unusual for Black's g8-knight to arrive on the e4-square, but it seldom makes the journey via such a long route.

**22.♗e2**

Shirov stops ...♞c3.

**22...♞d7?!**

A prophylactic move for the sake of safety. Karpov probably just wanted to bring a

piece closer to his kingside to reduce White's attacking chances.

Acting on the queenside with 22... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  was possible, despite the fact that Black has almost no pieces around his king, as White still cannot hurt it. 23.a4  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  Black has the initiative on the queenside, but he is far from breaking in.

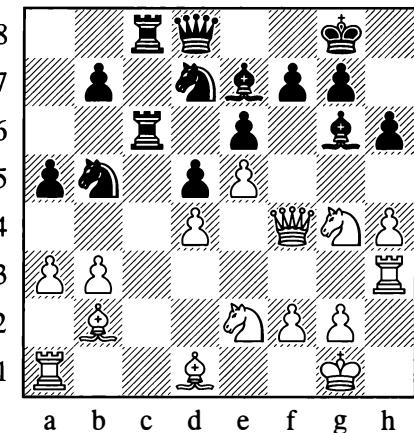
### 23. $\mathbb{Q}h2$

Shirov gets ready to launch an attack on the kingside.

### 23... $\mathbb{B}c6!$

Karpov pays attention to what his opponent is doing, and clears a path for the queen to get to the kingside.

### 24. $\mathbb{Q}g4$ $\mathbb{W}d8$ 25. $\mathbb{B}h3$



### 25... $\mathbb{W}f8!$

From this square Karpov's queen defends the kingside while at the same time exerting pressure on White's queenside. The queen already did an excellent job by driving the bishop to d1 and supporting ... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ , but once those tasks had been accomplished Karpov was able to find a better square for his strongest piece.

### 26.a4 $\mathbb{Q}a3!$

Karpov advances with the knight in order to increase his advantage on the queenside.

### 27. $\mathbb{Q}xa3?$

Shirov has to give up one of his bishops for the enemy knight, but he chooses an unfortunate way to do it.

### 27.h5 $\mathbb{Q}h7!$

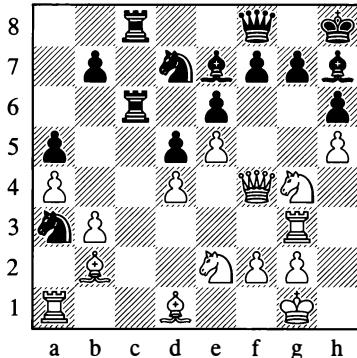
Better than 27... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  28. $\mathbb{B}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  30. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  32. $\mathbb{B}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  when White manages to keep his queenside together.

Instead Black should play for ... $\mathbb{Q}c2$  in order to exchange his knight for the enemy bishop.

### 28. $\mathbb{B}g3!$

The rook sends the king to the corner, tying Black's queen to the defence of the f7-pawn. If 28. $\mathbb{Q}c3?$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  29. $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  Black is able to invade on the queenside as f7 is protected. White can also try 28. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c2$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  30. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  when he is surviving, although Black remains somewhat better.

### 28... $\mathbb{Q}h8$



### 29. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$

29. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  enables Black to penetrate in a most unusual way: 29... $\mathbb{Q}b1!$  30. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$ . Stopping any  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  tricks. 31. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  White is under pressure, and the knight may cause further problems from e4. It is

extraordinary for the g8-knight to make a journey from e7-c8-a7-b5-a3-b1-c3 to get to the e4-square.

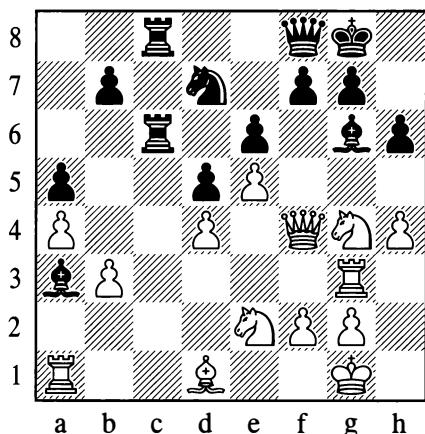
29... $\mathbb{Q}c2$

If 29... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  White keeps his queenside together.

30. $\mathbb{Q}xc2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc2$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

White continues to resist on the queenside.

27... $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



28...h5!

Karpov drives back the knight in order to ease the pressure on his kingside, having correctly judged that his opponent is in no position to exploit the weaknesses created by this pawn advance.

29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ !

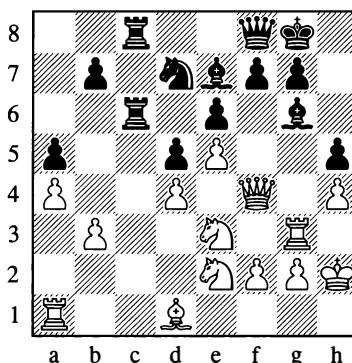
Shirov chooses the best retreat square. It was important to block the c1-h6 diagonal, as shown by the line 29. $\mathbb{Q}h2?$   $\mathbb{Q}b2!$  30. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1!$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  32. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c5!$  and Black wins.

29... $\mathbb{Q}b2$ ??

Karpov tries to invade on the queenside. His plan prevails, but only after some help from his opponent.

29... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ! Returning to the kingside was even

stronger, as it is here that Black's unopposed dark-squared bishop can make the biggest difference. 30. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  (30. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  wins the h4-pawn.)

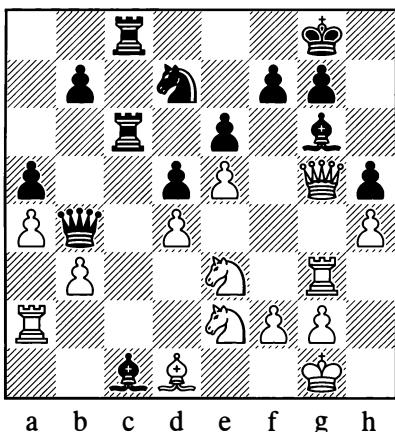


30... $\mathbb{W}d8$  (There is also 30... $\mathbb{W}e8$ ! to defend the g6-bishop and prepare ...f6. 31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$  f6 White is in trouble here as well.) 31. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  With ... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  coming next, White is in trouble.

30. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  31. $\mathbb{W}g5$

After 31. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  32. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8c3$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  34. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black's pieces stand menacingly.

31... $\mathbb{W}b4$



32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ ??

Shirov is a great attacker, but here he ignites the fire naively and blunders badly.

32.♕h2!

By removing his king from the vulnerable first rank, White could have kept the game interesting. Black may still be better here, but he would have had to play accurately to prove anything.

32...♝f8

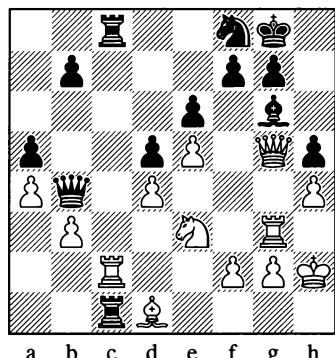
After 32...♝xe3 33.♛xe3 ♜b1 34.♝b2 ♜f5 35.♛d2 Black will have to work hard to achieve anything real.

33.♛xc1

After 33.♛f4 ♜d2 34.♝g5 ♜h7 35.♝g3 White survives for the moment, but Black has several ways to try and increase his advantage.

33...♜xc1 34.♝c2!

White exploits the pin on the g6-bishop to force the exchange of one of the opponent's strong rooks.



34...♝h7

After 34...♛xd4 35.♝xc8 ♜xc8 36.♝xh5 ♜h7 37.♝g4 ♛xe5 38.♝xg6 fxg6 39.♛xg6 ♜f8 40.♛d3 White is in the game.

35.♝xc8† ♜xc8 36.♛f4 ♛e1 37.♝f3 ♜f8?!

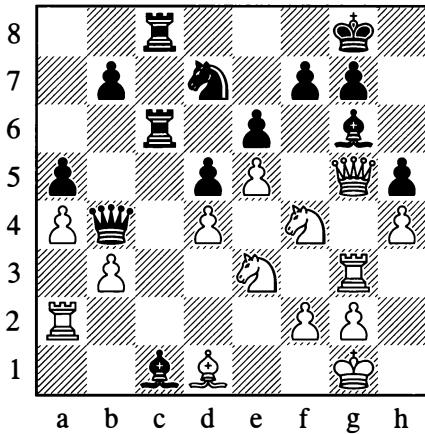
The most ambitious move. Black's kingside pieces are passive, but his troublesome queen can still cause plenty of problems.

37...♜c1 38.♝c2! White is out of danger.

37...♜c7 38.♝c2! White should be able to hold the position.

38.♝c2 ♛d2

Black maintains some pressure.



32...♝xe3! 33.fxe3 ♜c1

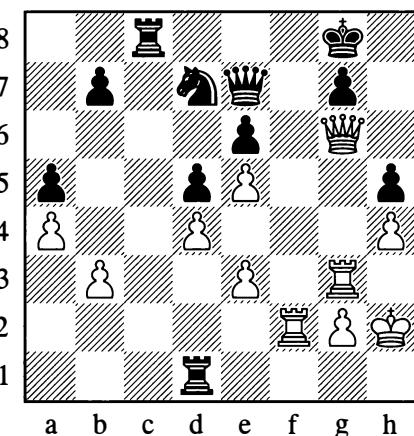
Karpov does not pass up the chance to win the bishop. It is a pity that a game so rich in strategic ideas was decided by a horrible blunder, although I'm sure Karpov did not mind.

34.♝xg6 ♜xd1† 35.♝h2 fxg6 36.♛xg6 ♛e7

The queen defends the g7-pawn, and White has nothing for the piece.

37.♝f2?

In a hopeless situation White blunders a rook as well.



37...♛xh4† 38.♝h3 ♛xf2

0-1

In the next round Karpov had the white pieces against Morovic Fernandez, who was turning into a frequent opponent for Karpov in 1994. This turned out to be one of the rare occasions when Karpov failed to defeat the Chilean grandmaster, who played a solid Semi-Slav and was never in real trouble. In Round 4 Lautier played the 4.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  line against Karpov's Nimzo-Indian. In a tense middlegame Karpov weakened his kingside with ...g5, in return for some active play. But then he made a serious mistake and allowed his king to be driven to the centre, and the game was soon over.

In Round 5 Karpov faced Epishin, who used the solid ...c6/...d5 line in the Fianchetto Grünfeld. For a while the position was absolutely equal, but Karpov persevered and was able to capitalize on some mistakes from his opponent. In the next round Karpov had the white pieces again, but was unable to make any headway against Kamsky, who handled the Semi-Slav similarly to Morovic, with the same end result.

In Round 7 Karpov equalized easily against Illescas in a Caro-Kann, and the game never looked like being anything other than a draw. Karpov's next opponent was Judit Polgar, who he had defeated twice with the 2.c3 Sicilian in recent tournaments. This time he switched to 1.d4 followed by the Fianchetto System against the King's Indian. Once again he got some advantage from the opening, and Judit never recovered.

Karpov's opponent in the ninth and final round was Michael Adams. The English grandmaster has so far played 150 games against the world champions. He won eighteen of them, drew ninety two and lost forty times. This was their second meeting; Karpov had won the first. Their lifetime score is two wins to Karpov, one win to Adams and six draws.

## Game 37

Michael Adams – Anatoly Karpov

Las Palmas 1994

### 1.d4 $\mathfrak{Q}f6$ 2. $\mathfrak{B}g5$

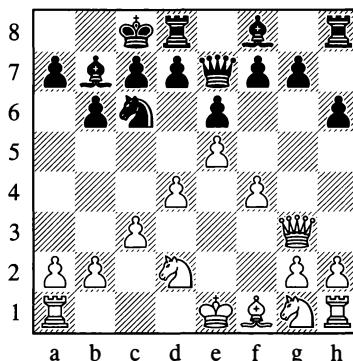
Adams picked up the Trompowsky from Julian Hodgson. By 1994 it had lost some of its surprise value.

### 2...e6

Karpov always played this variation, which offers White the chance to occupy the centre at the expense of the bishop pair. He achieved several nice wins, but also some losses in this line, which reflects its double-edged nature.

### 3.e4

Adams occupies the centre at once. Karpov scored an excellent win after his opponent postponed it for a move: 3.c3 b6 4.e4 h6 5. $\mathfrak{Q}xf6$   $\mathfrak{W}xf6$  6.e5  $\mathfrak{W}e7$  7. $\mathfrak{W}f3$   $\mathfrak{Q}c6$  8. $\mathfrak{W}g3$   $\mathfrak{Q}b7$  9. $\mathfrak{Q}d2$  0–0–0 10.f4



10...g5! Karpov opens the position as much as he can for his bishops. 11.fxg5?! (11.0–0–0 was better) 11... $\mathfrak{W}xg5$  12. $\mathfrak{W}f2$   $\mathfrak{Q}e7$  13. $\mathfrak{Q}h3$ ?! (13. $\mathfrak{Q}gf3$ ) 13... $\mathfrak{W}g7$  14. $\mathfrak{Q}e2$  f6! Having picked a plan, Karpov follows it through with his usual consistency. His strategy is to open the game for his dark-squared bishop. 15.exf6  $\mathfrak{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathfrak{Q}f3$   $\mathfrak{Q}hf8$  Having eliminated his opponent's pawn

wedge Black stood better and went on to win,  
Qi Jingxuan – Karpov, Lucerne 1985.

3...h6 4.♔xf6 ♕xf6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♕d2

This move started to become the main line in the early nineties. White often follows it by playing f4.

Karpov faced 6.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  on two occasions. 6...g5!? (In Game 19 of the 1974 match against Korchnoi, Karpov played 6...g6 and eventually lost a long game. Later he pushed his pawn further, hoping his strong bishop would help to keep his slightly weakened kingside together.) 7.e5  $\mathbb{W}e7$  8.  $\mathbb{B}b5\#$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  9.0–0 d5 10.  $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  0–0–0 12.c3 h5 13.a4  $\mathbb{Q}b8$  14.b4  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}df8$  16.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  g4 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  f6 18. exf6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  19. b5  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  20. f4  $\mathbb{W}g7$  At this stage Black stands better, but later he was completely lost, and in the end the game was drawn, Timman – Karpov, Holland/Indonesia (9) 1993.

6...g5!?

Perhaps the successful opening from the Timman game inspired Karpov to adopt this ambitious approach again.

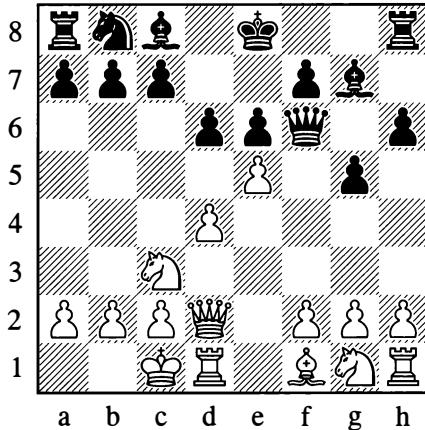
7.0-0-0

If 7.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ ?! g4! is strong.

In 1998 Anand introduced a new scheme of development involving  $7.\mathbb{A}c4$  followed by short castling and a quick f4. Karpov got an unclear position out of the opening, but later he went wrong and the Indian grandmaster punished him.

7... $\hat{\text{g}}$ 7 8.e5!?

Adams opts for a risky and ambitious approach. In 1996 he switched to 8.g3 against Topalov but lost that game too. Funnily enough, Topalov switched sides and played the same move against Karpov in a rapid game in 1997, but Black won that encounter as well.



8...dxe5!

Karpov can afford to open the position, and it is worth it to create a weakness on e5.

9.dxe5  $\mathbb{W}e7$  10.f4  $\mathfrak{Q}c6$  11.Qf3

White can also consider 11.g3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0–0–0 with equal chances.

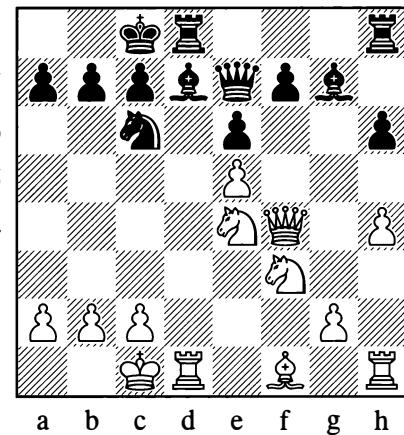
11... $\ddot{\text{a}}\text{d}7$  12.h4

Adams decides to force the issue on the kingside. It may have been worth directing his attention towards the other flank with 12.♕e4!? 0–0–0 13.a3 – but not 13.♗c3?! because of 13...♗b4!.

12...gxf4

Naturally Karpov chooses to eliminate the more central pawn, and in doing so he gets closer to the weakness on e5.

13.  $\mathbb{W}xf4$  0-0-0 14.  $\mathfrak{Q}e4$



**14...Qb8!!**

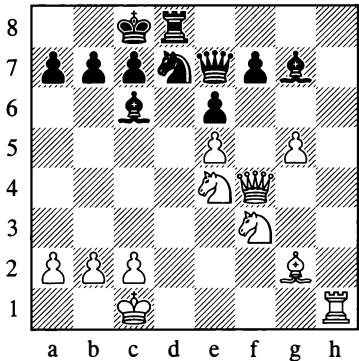
The point of this great move is to improve the d7-bishop, and to a lesser extent the knight as well. The position is closed enough that Black has just enough time to carry out the intended manoeuvre.

**15.Qf6**

This is not a bad move, but it is a step in the wrong direction. Adams probably misjudged the ensuing position.

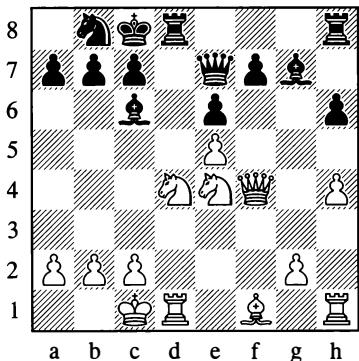
The present position was reached in two subsequent games:

15.g4 Qc6 16.Qg2 Qd7 17.g5 hxg5 18.hxg5 Exh1 19.Exh1



Now 19...Qb4?? 20.Qd6† 1–0 was the unfortunate end to Ionescu – Leskur, Bucharest 1998, but Black could have obtained a slight plus with 19...Qf8.

15.Qd4 Qc6?!? (More enterprising than 15...Qc6 16.Qf3 Qb8 17.Qd4 Qc6 18.Qf3 ½–½ Gorevlov – V. Ivanov, Moscow 1996.)



16.Qc4! White has enough pieces to stop Black setting up pressure on the e5-pawn. (16.Qf6? h5! [Karpov evaluates 16...Qc5 as slightly better for Black.] 17.Qb1 Qxf6 18.exf6 Qd6 Black's advantage is bigger here.) 16...Qxe4 (16...h5 17.Qg5) 17.Qxe4 White is not worse as he has a good reply to all Black tries: If 17...c6 18.Qf3, if 17...Qc5? 18.Qxe6 or 17...Qd7 18.Qc6.

**15...Qc6 16.Qe2 Qd7!**

Karpov naturally wants to exchange the pieces around the weakness on e5, and he attached an exclamation mark to this move. The reason is that as well as being tactically justified the move requires fine judgment of the position in a few moves time.

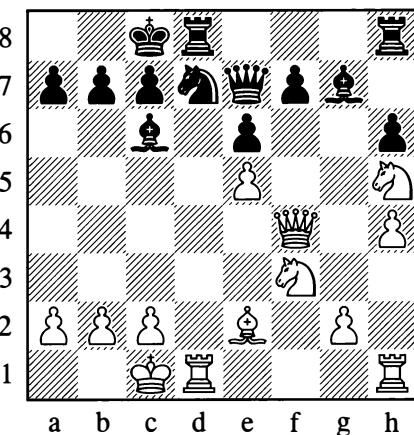
From d7 the knight not only attacks the e5-pawn but also covers the f6-square.

**17.Qh5?**

Adams must have missed a detail in the forced tactical sequence that follows this move.

Going after the other bishop would also have led to trouble for White: 17.Qd4? Qxg2 18.Qhg1 (18.Qxd7 Qxh1+) 18...Qxe5! 19.Qh5 Qg6+–

White should have opted for a policy of damage limitation with 17.Qxd7 when he should be able to live with his small disadvantage.



**17...♝xf3!**

Karpov seizes the tactical opportunity to take over the initiative.

**18.♝xf3 ♜xe5!**

This allows White to obtain two pieces for a rook, but Karpov has correctly evaluated the resulting position as being in his favour.

**19.♛e4 c6 20.♝xd7**

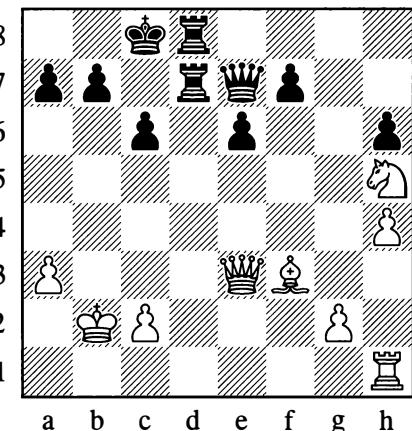
White has to take the knight, otherwise he will be a pawn down for nothing.

**20...♜xb2†! 21.♝xb2 ♜xd7**

The dust has settled. Black has not only picked up a second extra pawn, but he has also exposed White's king in the process.

**22.♛e3 ♜hd8**

Karpov sensibly brings the other rook into play. It was too early to go after the king with 22...♛b4† 23.♛b3 ♜d4† 24.♛c3 when White easily parries the direct threats.

**23.a3****23...♝d4!**

Karpov brings his pieces closer to the king.

**24.g3 ♜c5 25.♝e1 ♜c4!**

Forcing a favourable endgame.

In his analysis Karpov showed that 25...♛b5† 26.♛b3 ♜a5 is ineffective due 27.♝c3! – but not 27.♝e3? when 27...♝d5! wins.

**26.♛xc5 ♜xc5 27.♝e2**

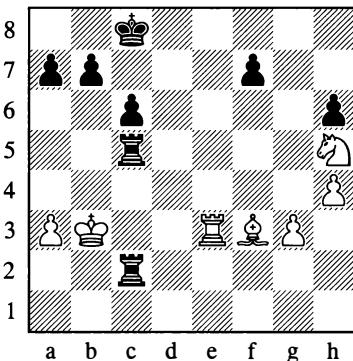
The English grandmaster stops Black's rook from invading on the second rank, but perhaps he could have resisted more stubbornly with 27.♝f4!? ♜d2 28.♝d1 (28.♝e4) 28...♝d4, although of course Black has decent winning chances here too.

**27...♜d1!**

Curiously in this position the black rooks can do more damage on the first rank than the second. Karpov has such a fine sense of when to go after the opponent's king in endgames.

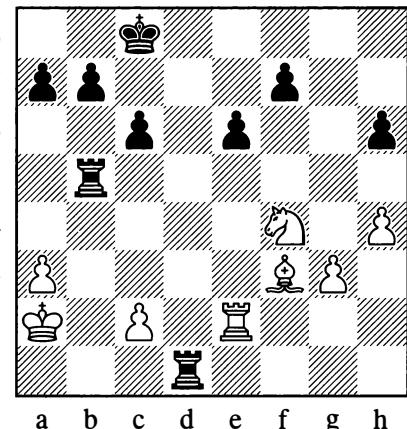
**28.♝f4**

Swapping the c-pawn for the e-pawn weakens White's king too much: 28.♝xe6 ♜d2 29.♝e3 ♜dxc2† 30.♝b3 (30.♝b1 ♜c2c3–+)



30...a5!! Out of the blue, Black can create decisive threats against White's king. 31.♝f6 (31.♝g7 a4† 32.♝xa4 ♜b2 catches the king) 31...a4†! 32.♝xa4 ♜b2! 33.♝g4† (33.♝e8† ♜c7 34.♝e7† ♜d6 35.♝e4† ♜xe7 36.♝xc5 ♜d6 37.♝d3 b5† 38.♝a5 ♜b3–+) 33...♝c7 34.♝e7† ♜d6 35.♝e4 ♜c3! (But not 35...♝b6? 36.♝e8† when White can draw via perpetual check.) 36.h5 b6 37.♝e8† ♜c5 Black wins.

28... $\mathbb{E}b5\#$  29. $\mathbb{Q}a2$



29... $\mathbb{E}bb1!$

When it comes to endgames, Karpov is second to none in the history of chess. In this position he spots a weakness on a3 and goes after it immediately.

30. $\mathbb{Q}h5?$

Adams goes after his opponent's pawns, but the queenside is what really matters.

30. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  was also inadequate, as after 30... $\mathbb{E}a1\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}db1\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{E}g1$  33. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}ae1$  Black will win another pawn.

White could have offered sterner resistance with: 30. $\mathbb{E}e3!$   $\mathbb{E}e1$  31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (31. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a5! 32.c3 a4 33. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}h1$  34. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}a1\#$  35. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{E}hb1\#$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}f1$  37. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  Black has decent winning chances.) 31... $\mathbb{E}a1\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}eb1\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  White is clearly worse, but not necessarily losing.

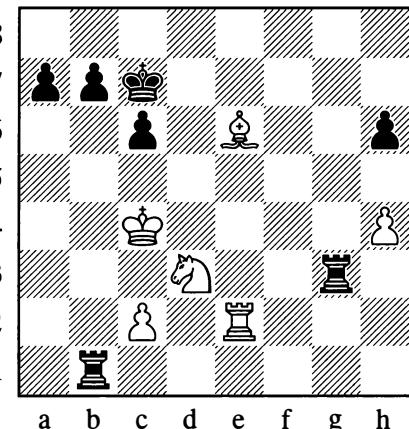
30... $\mathbb{E}a1\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}db1\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$

Mission accomplished.

33. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{E}xg3$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\#$

After 34. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  a5 35. $\mathbb{E}d2$  and Black can match easily White's threats with 35... $\mathbb{E}b4\#$  or 35... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ .

34... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d3$



35...a5!

The a-pawn is a powerful force when all the white pieces are far from it.

36. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}e3!$

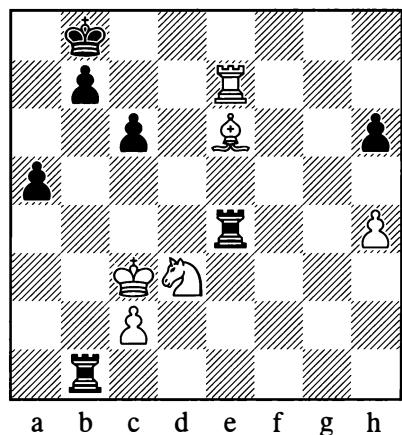
Karpov throws the centralized bishop off balance.

37. $\mathbb{E}f7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}b8!$

After 37... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  White would get some counterplay with 38. $\mathbb{Q}c8$ .

38. $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{E}e4\#$  39. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

If 39. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}b5\#$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{E}d4\#$  the king is caught.



**39...♝b5!**

**0–1**

Karpov does not even bother to take the h-pawn but instead restricts the enemy knight and prepares to push the a-pawn. It impressed Adams so much that he resigned.

This win gave Karpov a final score of 6/9, which was enough to finish in second place, half a point behind Kamsky and half a point ahead of Topalov and Lautier.

Karpov's next tournament was Dortmund, where coincidentally his first opponent was Adams, who this time opted for 1.e4. Karpov obtained a solid position with the Caro-Kann but failed to equalize fully, and the Englishman gradually increased his advantage and took his revenge for the previously analysed game.

In Round 2 Karpov played very dryly against Leko, but managed to outplay his young opponent. Karpov drew solidly against Epishin with the Queen's Indian, then he defeated Lutz. Part of the game can be found in the note to Black's eleventh move in Game 34.

In Round 5 Karpov chose the Hübner Variation against Yusupov's Rubinstein Nimzo-Indian. A long manoeuvring game ensued, but neither player was able to obtain the upper hand and a draw was eventually agreed. In the next game Karpov had the black pieces again, and was able to take a quick draw with Timman.

Karpov's next game against Korchnoi was a remarkable one. He chose the Petrosian Variation against the Queen's Indian, and a complex middlegame ensued, with the position mostly blocked. Gradually Korchnoi took over, and later he sacrificed a pawn for the initiative. Karpov looked to be in trouble, but found some hidden resources and the position became wildly complicated. After some inaccuracies on both sides, it was Korchnoi who finally showed his class and won brilliantly, after allowing Karpov to promote to

a second queen. (Ironically it was the losing mistake – had Karpov promoted to a knight he would have been able to draw!) The win must have meant a lot to Korchnoi.

Unlike the previous tournament, Karpov was unable to finish strongly in the late rounds, and his final two games resulted in quick draws with Dreev and Piket. Perhaps the titanic struggle against Korchnoi took most of his energy away. And more generally, it looks as though Karpov simply played in too many tournaments; Dortmund was his ninth event of the year (including rapid tournaments), which is a lot for any professional player, especially one in his forties. Comparing the quality of his play at the Linares and Dortmund tournaments, the difference is enormous.

\*\*\*

The next event of Karpov's calendar was the Tilburg elimination tournament. His first opponent was Kurajica. Karpov was unable to get a serious advantage in either of the slow-play games, so they went to a rapid and blitz playoff. This too was competitive, but Karpov finally prevailed after winning two games, drawing two and losing one.

In the next round Karpov started with the black pieces against Antunes of Portugal, who played a Catalan. Karpov undertook tripled pawns on the c-file and managed to keep one of them as a passed pawn. Despite a few inaccuracies he was able to convert his advantage. The return game was a Semi-Slav. Karpov was a bit better for the whole game, but at one moment he erred and allowed an out-of-the-blue tactical shot. Fortunately Antunes missed his chance and Karpov converted his advantage smoothly.

In the next round Karpov faced Shabalov. An unusual line of the Semi-Slav soon resulted in an IQP position. Karpov sacrificed his d-pawn and got into trouble, but managed to get the

better of the complications and later won. The return game was a sharp Caro-Kann with castling on opposite sides. Shabalov threw all his forces into the attack, but Karpov kept his cool and refuted his opponent's play to secure a 2-0 victory.

Karpov's next opponent was Kiril Georgiev, who played a 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian creatively and sacrificed a piece for two pawns and attacking chances. Nevertheless it was not fully sound, and Karpov defended skilfully and won. In the second game Georgiev somewhat surprisingly played for a win with the Tartakower System against the Queen's Gambit. A tense middlegame ensued, but Karpov got the upper hand and later capitalized with a wonderful double piece sacrifice, which led to a crushing victory.

Karpov's opponent in the final was Evgeny Bareev, who in the first game chose 4.e3 against the Nimzo-Indian, and got some advantage in the position with two bishops and hanging pawns. Karpov kept himself in the game, but later he made an uncharacteristic endgame mistake which led to his defeat. In the second game Karpov opened with 1.e4 and played his favourite Tarrasch Variation against the French. For a while it looked like Black was under pressure in the IQP position, but Bareev eventually managed to hold an inferior rook endgame, thus securing overall victory.

Despite the disappointing finish, Karpov's overall performance in Tilburg was a good one. In the slow-play games he scored a total of six wins, three draws and one loss.

\*\*\*

Karpov played in a few more events to round off an extremely busy year. He took part in a Sicilian-themed tournament in Buenos Aires, but in view of the unusual terms of play I will not discuss it in detail. Karpov scored three wins, nine draws and two losses to finish on

6½/14, which was enough for fifth place out of a field of eight.

Karpov also played a short two-game match against the Argentine grandmaster Campora. In the first game he made a solid draw with the Caro-Kann, and in the second he got some advantage with a minority attack in the Carlsbad structure, and won without too many problems.

Karpov's final event of 1994 was a six-game match against Lautier in Ubeda, Spain. In the first game Karpov equalized against the Catalan, and the game never looked like being anything other than a draw. In Game 2 the Frenchman ventured the Schliemann Variation against the Ruy Lopez. He got a reasonable position but made a mistake in the endgame, and Karpov was able to simplify to a favourable rook endgame which he converted to a win. In the third game Lautier got some advantage with the Catalan, but failed to capitalize and Karpov managed to secure a draw.

In Game 4 Karpov played a timid opening, but Lautier reacted strangely and soon got a worse position. Karpov later won a pawn but was unable to convert it. Game 5 was another Catalan. Karpov tried a fresh approach and was able to generate some pressure on the queenside. Lautier had chances to hold the endgame, but eventually he succumbed. In the final game Karpov switched to 1.e4 and got a slight plus against the Sveshnikov, but was unable to generate serious winning chances in the middlegame with opposite-coloured bishops, and the game ended in a draw. Thus Karpov won the match 4-2.

## 1994 Summary

Bundesliga 1993-94: 3/4 (+2 =2 -0)

Match versus Morovic Fernandez, Las Palmas: Won 5–1 (+4 =2 –0)

Linares (1st place): 11/13 (+9 =4 –0)

Dos Hermanas (2nd place): 6/9 (+4 =4 –1)

Las Palmas (2nd place): 6/9 (+4 =4 –1)

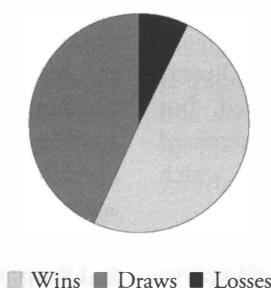
Dortmund (5th-7th place): 4½/9 (+2 =5 –2)

Tilburg knockout (losing finalist): 7½/10 (+6 =3 –1) (regular games)

Match versus Campora, San Nicolas: Won 1½–½ (+1 =1 –0)

Match versus Lautier, Ubeda: Won 4–2 (+2 =4 –0)

Total 71.3% (+34 =29 –5)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1995

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Rating 2765 (2 in the world)

In 1995 Karpov played in numerous rapid tournaments but fewer team events. In the Spanish league he drew three games against Speelman, Franco Ocampos and Cramling. According to the database he played one game in the final of the EU Cup against Boris Alterman. The Israeli grandmaster only played a few games against the world champions, but has an unusually good record with two wins, four draws and just a single loss. The following is his only game against Karpov.

## Game 38

Boris Alterman – Anatoly Karpov

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EU Cup final, Tyniste 1995

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.∜f3 b6 4.g3 ♜a6 5.b3 b5**

This line, which was invented by the Polish international master Dobosz, was an occasional surprise weapon for Karpov. He only played it three times, scoring one win and two draws. Many other Queen's Indian experts use it as a secondary system.

**6.cxb5 ♜xb5 7.∜g2**

Three years later Oll played differently but got no advantage: 7.∜c3 ♜b4 8.∜d2 ♜c6 9.∜g2 ♜c8 10.0–0 ♜xc3 11.∜xc3 ♜b7 12.∜c1 0–0 13.∜e1 ♜c8 14.∜c2 h6 15.∜b2 ♜d5 16.∜h4 ♜xg2 17.∜xg2 d6 18.f3 ♜bd7 19.e4 c5 20.∜e3 cxd4 21.∜xd4 ♜xc1 22.∜xc1 e5 23.∜c3 d5 Black has equalized and the players soon agreed a draw, Oll – Karpov, Polanica Zdroj 1998.

**7...∜c6**

Karpov deviates from a previous encounter with Epishin in which he played 7...a5. In that game both players were too ambitious.

Karpov encountered 7...∜b4† twice against Christiansen. He won both games, although on both occasions the American grandmaster was able to equalize in the opening.

By the way 7...d5 is the most common move in the position.

**8.0–0 ♜e7**

8...∜c8 and 8...a5 are also played. Karpov prefers to castle first and only then decide how to play on the queenside.

**9.♗g5 0-0 10.♗xf6**

Alterman decides to exchange his bishop in order to facilitate a central advance.

In the event of 10.♕c3 Karpov might have responded with 10...a5 11.♘c2 ♗a6!? 12.e4 h6 13.♗xf6 ♗xf6.

**10...♗xf6 11.♕c3 d5**

Karpov does not want his opponent to get an ideal pawn centre.

**12.♘c2**

The immediate pawn advance would not be too threatening: 12.e4 dxe4 13.♗e5 ♗xe5 14.dxe5 e3! Black has good chances, as pointed out by Karpov.

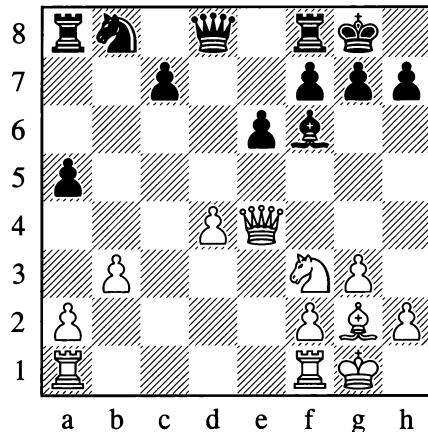
**12...a5 13.e4**

13.♗fc1 was possible, although the e4-advance will now be harder to carry out as the d4-pawn may hang. 13...♗a6!? (13...♗d7 14.e4) 14.a3 ♘b7 (14...♗b8 15.e3 ♘d6 16.♗f1 ♘b6 17.♗a4 White has the initiative.) 15.♗a4 ♘c8 16.b4 axb4 17.axb4 c6 White is just fractionally better.

**13...dxe4**

Karpov had a choice between improving his rook or his knight. He goes for the more powerful piece, by means of a creative manoeuvre that will be revealed shortly.

The alternative was: 13...♗a6 14.♗fd1! (14.a3 dxe4 15.♗xe4 ♘xe4 16.♗xe4 ♘b8 Black has counterplay according to Karpov; 14.♗xd5 exd5 15.♗xc6 ♘b4 16.♗c3 [16.♗c5 dxe4 17.♗e5 ♘d6=] 16...dxe4 17.♗e5 c5! 18.♗xc5 ♘e8 19.♗fd1 ♘c8 Black has no problems thanks to his fluent piece play.) 14...♗b4 15.♗e2 dxe4 16.♗e5 ♘d5 17.♗xe4 Black is a bit worse due to his backward c-pawn.

**14.♗xe4 ♘xe4 15.♗xe4****15...♗a6!**

The rook vacates the long diagonal and swings to the centre to attack the d4-pawn in the most streamlined way.

**16.♖ac1 ♘d6 17.♗c4**

Alterman probably visualized the ensuing endgame and evaluated it as completely drawn. Instead he could still have played for an advantage. My advice in such situations is to play the position and not the opponent. Here this strategy would have yielded at least a draw for the Israeli grandmaster.

**17.♗fd1**

With this simple move White holds the position in the centre and forces Black to play accurately to avoid an unpleasant squeezing.

**17...♗a6**

Alternatives do not equalize:

17...c6 18.♗e5! (stopping ...♗b6) 18...♗xe5 (18...♗b6?? 19.♗c4) 19.♗xe5 ♘c7 20.♗c4 ♘fd8 21.♗dc1 (21.♗a4 c5) 21...♗a7 22.♗a4 ♘xd4 23.♗xa5 White's bishop is stronger than Black's knight.

17...♗d7 18.♗f1 g6 19.♗b5 The c7-pawn is a headache for Black. The pain is not sharp, but it may last a long time.

**18.♗f1!**

After 18.♗e5 c5! 19.♗c6 ♘b6 20.dxc5

$\mathbb{E}xd1\uparrow$  21.  $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  22.  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  23.  $bxc4$

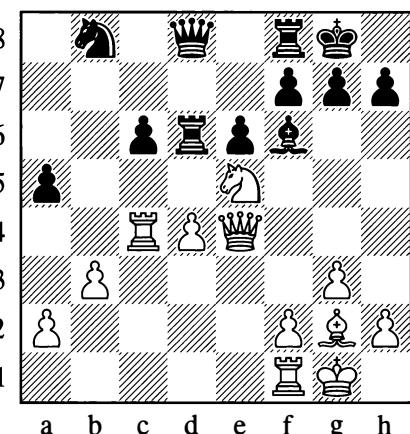
$\mathbb{Q}b4$  Black frees his position.

18...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  19.  $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  20.  $\mathbb{E}c5$

Black has still not equalized fully.

17...  $c6$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$

18.  $\mathbb{W}f4$  prevents Black from deploying his queen on b6, but there is another good plan available: 18...  $\mathbb{Q}a6!$  Black has time to improve his knight. 19.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (19.  $\mathbb{E}fc1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ; 19.  $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  Black is comfortable.) 19...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  20.  $a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  Black has a pleasant position.



18...  $\mathbb{W}b6!$

Karpov improves his queen and prepares to bring the other rook into play.

19.  $\mathbb{E}fc1$

If 19.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  20.  $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Black is comfortable.

Switching to the a5-pawn with 19.  $\mathbb{E}a4?$  may have been best: 19...  $\mathbb{W}a7$  (19...  $\mathbb{E}d5$  20.  $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}b5$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  22.  $\mathbb{E}c4$  White is fractionally better) 20.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}e1$  (21.  $\mathbb{E}c5$   $\mathbb{E}d5$ ) 21...  $\mathbb{E}xd4$  22.  $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  It is unlikely that White can do much with his extra pawn, but he is certainly not in any danger.

19...  $\mathbb{E}fd8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  21.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$

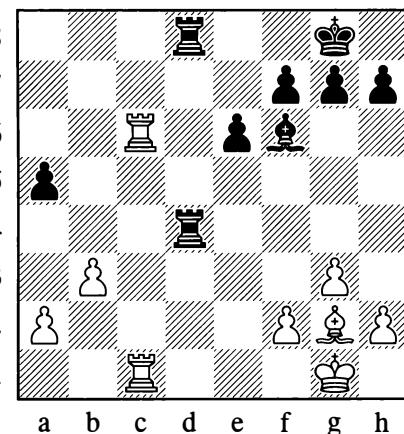
Karpov tries to keep as much material on the board as possible. Another option was 21...  $\mathbb{E}xc6$  22.  $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}xd4$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$  24.  $\mathbb{E}c8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d8!$  when Black also succeeds in keeping a pair of rooks on the board.

22.  $\mathbb{W}xd4$

22.  $\mathbb{E}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  is evaluated by Karpov as clearly better for Black, but this seems too optimistic: 23.  $\mathbb{E}c6$  Exchanging the rooks should lead to a draw even if Black wins the a2-pawn. (23.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ ) 23...  $\mathbb{W}d1\uparrow$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $g6$  25.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  White should be able to hold.

22...  $\mathbb{E}xd4$

This endgame should of course be drawn, but Black has a couple of advantages as his king is safer and his pawn majority is more mobile. It is remarkable that Karpov was able to make these subtle factors count against a strong grandmaster.



23.  $\mathbb{E}1c2$

The solid approach should be enough to hold the position, although active play would have been more principled:

23.  $\mathbb{Q}a6!$

Eliminating Black's last queenside pawn is a useful insurance policy. Even if White were to lose both his queenside pawns, the resulting endgame with four pawns versus

three on the kingside will usually be drawn – not that White has to resort to that.

23... $\mathbb{E}d2$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Karpov stops here, mentioning that Black has compensation. He is right, but White should certainly still be able to hold the position.

25. $\mathbb{E}f1$

Also after 25. $\mathbb{E}a8$ !?

27. $\mathbb{Q}xa8$  h5 28.a4 White should not be worse.

25... $\mathbb{E}c8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}b7$ !

The bishop stops Black from doubling his rooks on the second rank.

26... $\mathbb{E}b8$  27. $\mathbb{Q}a6$

White is safe.

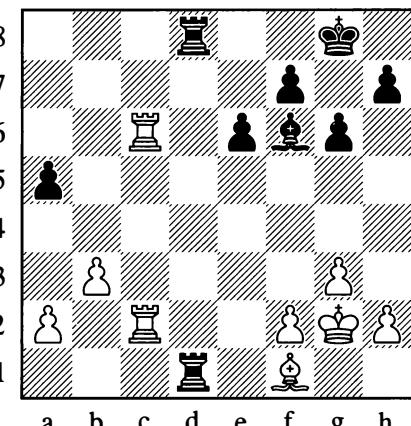
It was also worth considering 23.h4!? in order to exchange a pair of pawns in the event that Black decides to expand on the kingside.

23... $\mathbb{E}d1\#$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  g6

Black could have considered 24...g5, but I think it is a little premature here as in some lines White may be able to transfer his bishop to h5 and attack the f7-pawn.

25. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

25.h4 can be played here as well.



25... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !

Karpov transfers the bishop to a spot from which it will securely defend Black's a-pawn.

26. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$

The bishop also covers the d2-square. It can become important.

27. $\mathbb{E}c8$

There is nothing wrong with this move, but once again Alterman shows that he is only looking for a draw.

27. $\mathbb{E}b7$ !?

Doubling the rooks on the seventh rank often accomplishes a lot. In the present position it would have led to an interesting fight.

27... $\mathbb{E}8d5$  (27... $\mathbb{E}1d5$  28. $\mathbb{E}cc7$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  29.f4 [There is also 29. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  30. $\mathbb{E}xd7$  when compared with the game White's rook is more favourably placed.] 29...g5 30. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  gxf4 31.g4  $\mathbb{E}f6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  White has nice compensation for the pawn.) 28. $\mathbb{E}cc7$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  29.f4  $\mathbb{E}d2\#$  (29...g5 30. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  gxf4 31. $\mathbb{E}xf7$ ) 30. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (31... $\mathbb{E}xh2$ ?? 32. $\mathbb{Q}e8$  White invades decisively.) 32. $\mathbb{E}c8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33. $\mathbb{E}cc7$  White has enough play on the seventh rank.

27... $\mathbb{E}xc8$  28. $\mathbb{E}xc8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  29. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Karpov improves his king before he starts pushing his kingside pawns.

29...f5!?

would have been premature: 30. $\mathbb{E}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (30... $\mathbb{E}h6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{E}cl$  [31...e5!] 32.f4  $\mathbb{E}c2\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  It is hard for Black to make further progress.) 31. $\mathbb{E}xh7$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  32. $\mathbb{E}c7\#$  White prevents ... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and no longer has any problems.

29... $\mathbb{E}d7$  stops the white rook from invading the seventh rank, but after 30. $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ! the rook must either relinquish its defensive duty or vacate the open d-file.

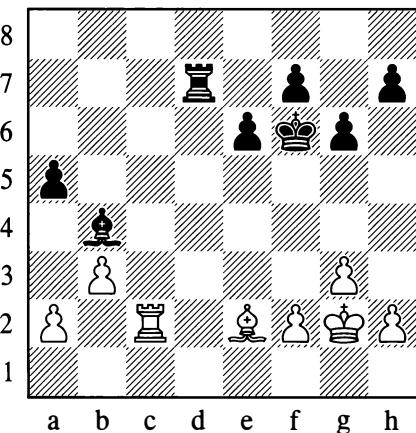
In his excellent *Learn from the Legends* book, Mihail Marin recommends 29...g5!? intending

... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  and ...h5. The Romanian grandmaster even evaluates this plan as an improvement over Karpov's play. He mentions that the attempt to block the kingside with g4 would give Black's bishop excellent prospects on the dark squares.

### 30. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

Alterman forces Karpov to decide whether to keep his rook on the d-file or on the first rank.

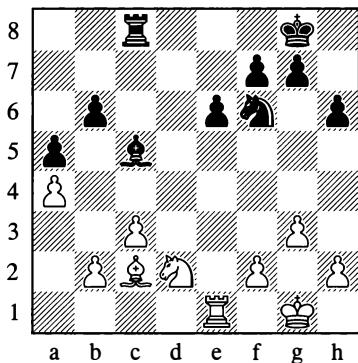
### 30... $\mathbb{R}d7$



### 31.h4

Another idea was 31.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ! when the black rook has to decide whether to vacate the seventh rank or the d-file.

Alterman's move is also sensible. The Israeli grandmaster knows that the h-pawn might eventually become a target on its starting square, so he prepares to exchange it for an advancing enemy pawn. Alterman is a strong and gifted player who even went on to work for Kasparov towards the end of the nineties, so I can imagine that he had a good chess education and may well have been familiar with the following Karpov masterpiece from 1993 against Beliavsky.



### 29. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ ??

When one's position has a minor defect, one should think carefully about exchanging pieces as the significance of that defect may grow. In the present position White has an inferior bishop and a less mobile pawn majority.

Another example of this theme can be found in Karpov's win over Browne in San Antonio 1972. In that game Browne had doubled pawns, and Karpov kept exchanging pieces until he was left with a winning knight endgame.

29...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ! 30.  $\mathbb{R}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  32.  $\mathbb{E}e1$

According to Jacob Aagaard, the more active placement of the rook on c4 was stronger, but White must take care to time it correctly.

The immediate 32.  $\mathbb{E}c4$ ?! runs into 32...  $\mathbb{R}d8$  when White has nothing better than returning with his rook to e4, as after 33.  $b4$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ ! Black wins a pawn.

Instead White can improve the rook more patiently: 32.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  f5 (32...  $\mathbb{R}d8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ) 33.  $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{R}d8$  According to Aagaard and Marin White can hold the position with 34. f3 or 34. f4 g5 35. b4.

Finally, White can also think of solving the problem of the h-pawn with 32. h4!? and after 32...  $\mathbb{R}d8$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  White should be okay.

32...  $\mathbb{R}d6$

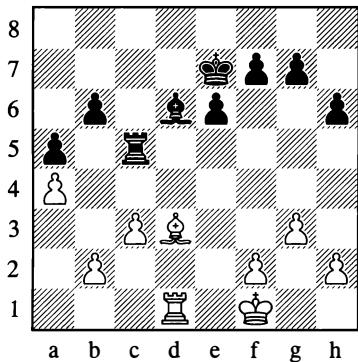
Karpov's style in the endgame is to begin by improving his pieces, and then focus on his king and pawns.

32...g5!? was an interesting alternative.

33.♗d1

33.h4! Beliavsky should have pushed his h-pawn to the fourth rank now or on the next move, to prevent it from becoming a target.

33...♗c5! 34.♗d3?!

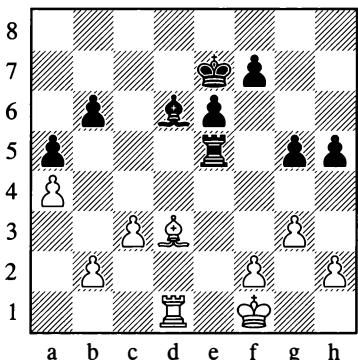


34...g5!

Karpov gains space and fixes the h2-pawn as a potential weakness.

35.♗b5 h5 36.♗g2 ♘f5 37.♗d3 ♘e5 38.♗f1

Marin's 38.h3?! was worth considering.



38...g4!

Fixing White's kingside pawns.

39.♗e1 ♘d5 40.♗c4 ♘g5 41.♗g2 h4! 42.gxh4

Beliavsky decides not to allow the pawn to get all the way to h3. It is hard to say if White would have been able to hold that endgame, but it certainly would have been unpleasant.

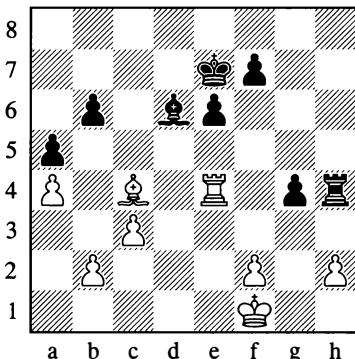
42...♗h5 43.♗e4?

A losing blunder. Beliavsky must have overlooked Black's clever reply.

According to Marin White could still have saved the game with the accurate 43.♗h1! ♘xh4 44.♗b5! f5 (44...♗h3 45.♗e2 f5 46.f3) 45.h3!, exchanging his weakness.

43...♗xh4 44.♗f1

44.f4 gxh3† 45.♗xf3 ♘h3† wins.



44...e5!

Thanks to this clever move Black can defend his g4-pawn before taking on h2.

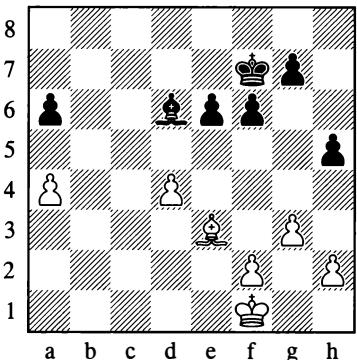
45.♗d5 f5 46.♗c4 ♘xh2

Black has won a pawn for no compensation, and he converted his advantage without too many problems:

47.b4 e4 48.♗c6 g3 49.fxg3 e3 50.♗c4 ♘f2†  
51.♗e1 axb4 52.cxb4 ♘xb4† 53.♗d1 ♘d2†  
54.♗c1 ♘d7 55.♗xb6 ♘a3† 56.♗b1 e2  
57.♗xe2 ♘xe2 58.a5 ♘d6 59.a6 ♘e5 60.♗c2  
♘a5 61.♗b7† ♘e6

0–1 Beliavsky – Karpov, Tilburg (1) 1993.

Before we return to the main game, I would like to show another instructive example to highlight the significance of a weak rook's pawn. Ironically the winner was none other than Beliavsky himself! Having won a game in this fashion, it is rather surprising that he allowed his h2-pawn to become fixed in the above game with Karpov. The following game took place in 1990.



34.♗e2?!

White should have preferred 34.h3 intending g4.

34...g5 35.♗d3?!

Once again 35.h3 was safer.

35...g4!

Beliavsky fixes White's kingside pawns on the same-coloured squares as his bishop – a serious accomplishment.

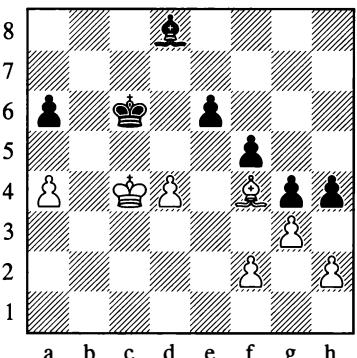
36.♗c4 ♕e7 37.♗d2

Either here or on the following move White should have played 37.d5!. It may or may not be good enough for a draw, but he simply had to try it.

37...♗d7 38.♗c1 ♕c6

From here I have not been able find a defence for White; zugzwang will be his downfall.

39.♗e3 ♕c7 40.♗d2 ♗d8 41.♗b4 f5 42.♗d2 h4 43.♗f4

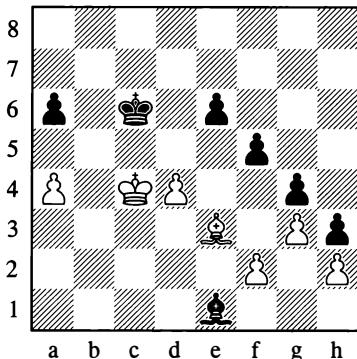


43...h3!

In endgames it is tremendously useful to

have a securely defended pawn so close to its promotion square.

44.♗d2 ♕c7 45.♗e3 ♕a5 46.♗f4 ♕e1 47.♗e3



47...♗d6! 48.♗f4† ♕d7! 49.♗e3 ♕c6!

Thanks to the triangulation White is in zugzwang and must give way with his king.

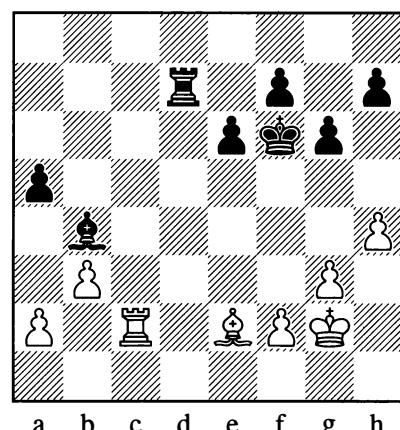
50.♗d3 ♕d5 51.♗e2 ♕c3 52.♗d3 ♕b2

White finds himself in another zugzwang and must shed material. The rest is easy.

53.f4 gxsf3 54.♗f2 ♕c1 55.♗c2 ♕g5 56.♗d3 ♕f6 57.♗e3 ♕d8 58.♗d2 f2 59.♗e2 ♕xd4 60.♗e3† ♕e4 61.♗xf2 ♕c7

0–1 Pritchett – Beliavsky, Novi Sad (ol) 1990.

Back to the game.



31...e5

Karpov sets his kingside pawns in motion.

**32.h5!?**

When one is aiming to draw a slightly worse ending, exchanging pawns is usually a good strategy. Nevertheless the text move is a mistake, as White misses a chance to improve his position, while also giving up control over the g5-square.

It is possible that Alterman had seen the Beliavsky – Karpov game and was content in the knowledge that he had played h4. However, he may not have appreciated the fact that his queenside is weaker than Beliavsky's was.

Marin shows the correct path for White, which involves active defence: 32... $\mathbb{E}c6$ !  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  33... $g4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  34... $\mathbb{E}c4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  35... $\mathbb{F}3$ !  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  36... $\mathbb{E}c6$ !  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37... $g5$ ! White equalizes as the f7-pawn has become a fixed target.

Apart from the above line, 32... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ! was also an improvement over the game continuation.

**32... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  33... $hxg6$   $hxg6$  34... $\mathbb{Q}f1$** 

Alterman decides to sit and wait.

**34... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ !?**

Forcing the decision is not a bad idea here either. In some lines the bishop might also be used for attacking Black's kingside pawns.

**34... $\mathbb{E}a7$** 

34... $\mathbb{E}d6$  35... $\mathbb{E}e8$  f6 (35...f5 36... $\mathbb{E}c6$  White exchanges rooks and draws immediately.)

36... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  (36.f3  $\mathbb{E}d8$  37... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  is also fine.)

36... $e4$ ! 37... $\mathbb{Q}e2$  Black has little chance of making progress.

**35... $\mathbb{E}e2$** 

White can also wait with 35... $\mathbb{Q}f3$ , for instance

35...f5 36... $\mathbb{E}c6$  e4! 37... $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}h7$  38... $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{E}h1$

39...f4!  $exf3$ ! 40... $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  and White holds the position easily.

**35...f6 36... $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{E}c7$** 

36... $\mathbb{E}e7$  37...f4! draws easily.

**37...f4!  $exf4$  38... $gxsf4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  39... $\mathbb{E}c4$** 

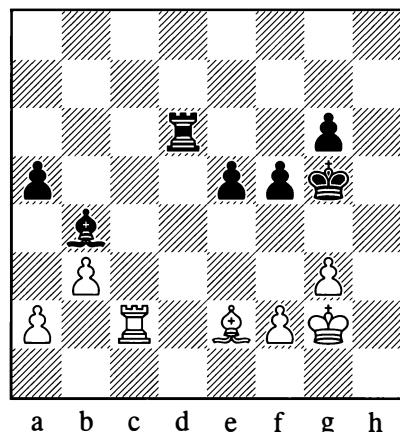
White has freed his position and has no problems.

**34... $\mathbb{E}d6$** 

Karpov defends the g6-pawn in advance.

**35... $\mathbb{Q}g2$** 

Once again, activating the bishop with 35... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ! would have made it harder for Black to progress: 35...f5 36... $\mathbb{E}e8$  (With his bishop away from the passive e2-square, White should also be able to draw with 36.f3!? e4 37... $\mathbb{Q}e2$ .) 36... $\mathbb{E}e6$  Black must avoid a rook exchange. 37... $\mathbb{E}c8$  (37... $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{E}e7$ ) 37...e4 38... $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (38... $\mathbb{E}d6$  39... $\mathbb{E}c6$ ) 39... $\mathbb{E}d8$  I do not see how Black can improve his position.

**35...f5****36... $\mathbb{Q}f1$ !?**

Alterman continues to wait passively, but it was time to take countermeasures against Black's advancing pawns.

**36...f3!**

This improvement was suggested by Marin.

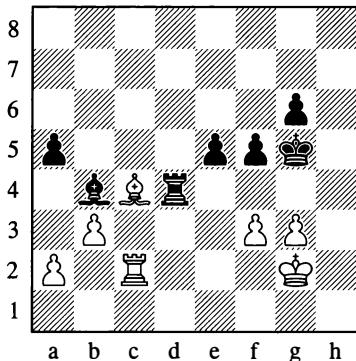
**36... $\mathbb{E}d5$** 

This is Marin's idea, intending to shuffle the rook to d4 before advancing with ...e4.

The immediate 36...e4 seems threatening, but in fact it only relieves the pressure:

37... $fxe4$   $fxe4$  38... $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  39... $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ! 40... $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  (40...e3 41... $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  42... $\mathbb{Q}f3$  Black cannot invade.) 41... $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{E}f2$ ! 42... $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  43... $\mathbb{E}xe4$  White can easily hold.

37.♕c4 ♜d4



38.♕f7!?

Marin does not consider this move, but it seems to me that targeting the g6-pawn is White's most convincing drawing plan.

38.♕e2 e4 39.fxe4 ♜xe4 (39...fxe4 40.♕c4)

40.♕f3 According to Marin the weakness on g3 gives a stable advantage for Black; nevertheless I think White should be able to live with it.

38.♕f2 e4 39.♕e3 ♜c5 Marin stops here, evaluating the position as unpleasant for White. He is right, but the position is still tenable: 40.f4?? (40.♕e2 exf3† 41.♕xf3 is also possible) 40... ♜f6 41.♕e2 g5 (41... ♜d6 42.♕d2) 42.♕a6 ♜d6 43.♕c6 gxf4 44.gxf4 ♜e7 45.♕e3 ♜d1 46.♕c8 White can hold the position.

38...e4

38... ♜f6 39.♕e8 e4 40.fxe4 fxe4 41.♕f2

White is out of danger.

38... ♜d6 39.♕f2 e4 40.fxe4 ♜xe4 41.♕c6 ♜d4 42.♕e3 ♜d1 43.♕e2 White forces a repetition.

39.fxe4 fxe4 40.♕e8 ♜d3 41.♕c6 ♜f5 42.♕e2 ♜d4 43.♕b7

Black is tied to the defence of the e4-pawn, so White should have little trouble drawing.

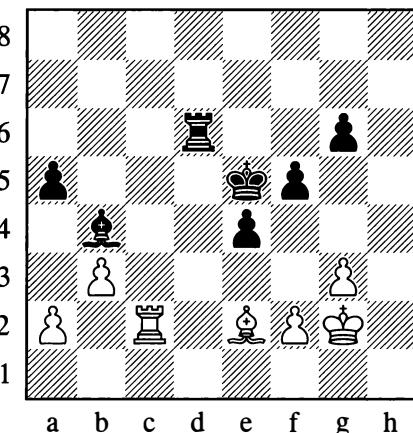
36... ♜f6 37.♕g2?

This was White's last chance to play 37.f3! under good conditions.

37...e4 38.♕f1 ♜e5

Karpov instructively centralizes his king.

39.♕g2



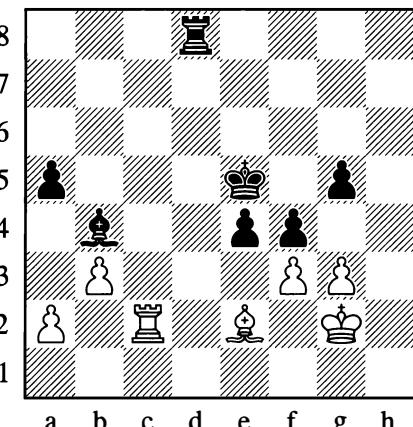
39...g5!

Karpov prepares a further pawn advance.

40.♕f1 ♜h6 41.♕g2 ♜d6 42.♕f1 ♜d8  
43.♕g2 f4

After tiring his opponent with a few shuffling rook moves, Karpov continues with his main plan. At the same time he creates a threat which forces Alterman to abandon his policy of waiting.

44.f3



**44...e3!**

Karpov creates a mighty protected passed pawn. It is an obvious idea of course, but the win is not trivial as White is covering all the entry squares. It is likely that Karpov had already seen the winning method he uses in the game.

**45.g4**

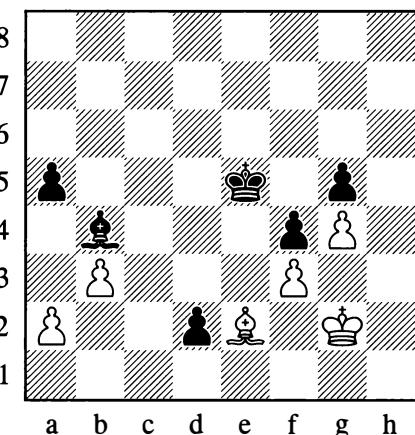
Exchanging pawns and winning a tempo with 45.gxf4† makes no real difference: 45...gxf4 46.♗f1 ♕d2 47.♕c8 (After 47.♕xd2 exd2 Black wins just as in the game.) 47...♕xa2 48.♕e8† ♕d4 49.♕e4† ♕c3 50.♕xf4 ♕a1† 51.♕g2 ♕d2! The e-pawn is unstoppable, as pointed out by Marin.

**45...♕d2!**

The rook exchange will lead to Black having a securely-defended pawn just one square away from promotion. Pure opposite-coloured bishop endgames are notoriously drawish, and are frequently drawn even when one side has one or more extra pawns. In the present case Black does not even have an extra pawn, yet he is winning as his positional advantage is so great.

**46.♕xd2 exd2**

It is possible that Alterman overlooked the fact that the e-pawn would turn into a d-pawn, or at least underestimated its consequences.

**47.♔d1**

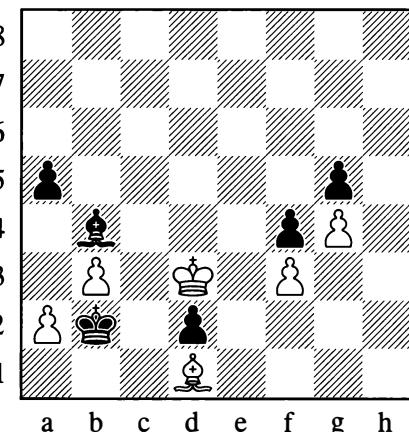
The bishops has very few squares available, a fact which enables Black to win by zugzwang.

**47...♗d4 48.♗f2 ♕c3 49.♗e2 ♕b2!**

As Marin pointed out, the black bishop has to remain on the b4-square. If 49...♔a3? 50.b4! White liberates his bishop and obtains a draw.

**50.♗d3**

50.a4 ♕c1 is an immediate zugzwang, and 50.a3 also loses quickly after 50...♕xa3 (or 50...♗c1 51.a4 ♔c5 52.b4 axb4+) 51.♗d3 ♕b2 and Black wins.

**50...♗b1!**

Karpov sets up a zugzwang, which brings his opponent down almost instantly. 50...♕xa2? 51.♗c2 and 50...♗c1?! 51.♗e2 ♔e7? 52.b4! both allow White to escape with a draw.

**51.a3**

After 51.a4 ♗b2 White's right to move once again becomes a desperately painful obligation.

**51...♗c1**

Karpov takes the pragmatic option. If, dear reader, you happen to reach the same position against somebody whom you strongly dislike and wish to obtain your victory in the most

humiliating way possible, you might prefer the flashy 51... $\mathbb{Q}b2!$ ? 52.axb4 (52. $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}xa3-$ ) 52... $\mathbb{Q}c1!$  53. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  axb4 when the zugzwang is fatal for White, despite his extra piece.

### 52. $\mathbb{Q}e2 \mathbb{Q}xa3$ 53.b4

Alterman keeps hoping for a miracle.

### 53...axb4!

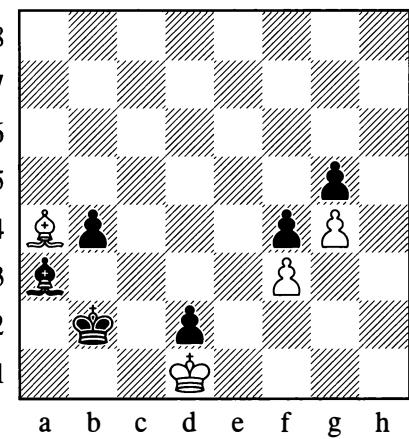
Black does best to give himself a b-pawn, as his king will be able to walk around it and support it from the a-file. I noticed a similar theme in Game 4 of Karpov's rapid match against Macieja from Warsaw 2003, in which the Polish grandmaster missed a drawing opportunity based on giving Karpov an a-pawn instead of a b-pawn.

### 54. $\mathbb{Q}a4$

It is useless for the bishop to stay on the other diagonal, as the d2-pawn becomes too strong: 54. $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{Q}b2$  55. $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{Q}c2-$

### 54... $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 55. $\mathbb{Q}d1$

If 55. $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  b3! wins.



### 55...b3!

Karpov gives his opponent no chance, and simply wins the bishop. There was no sense in 55... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  56. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  b3? 57. $\mathbb{Q}e4 \mathbb{Q}b2$  (57...b2 58. $\mathbb{Q}c2 \mathbb{Q}b4$  59. $\mathbb{Q}d5 \mathbb{Q}b4$

59. $\mathbb{Q}e6 \mathbb{Q}a3$  60. $\mathbb{Q}f5 \mathbb{Q}a2$  61. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  and White continues to resist.

### 56. $\mathbb{Q}c6$

56. $\mathbb{Q}xd2 \mathbb{Q}a2$  is equally hopeless for White.

### 56... $\mathbb{Q}a1$

0–1

In 1995 Karpov took part in an elimination tournament in Baden-Baden. In the first round he equalized and drew on the black side of a Reti against Hickl. In the return game Karpov got the advantage of the two bishops against the Wade Defence, then increased his advantage and won smoothly.

In the next round Karpov started with the white pieces against Vaisser, who played a Dutch Stonewall. Karpov got a slight plus, but Vaisser equalized and later took over the initiative. At one point he missed a win, then he over-pressed and Karpov finally took control and won. In the return game Karpov played the variation of the Nimzo-Indian which is named after him. He equalized and later got an edge, but was content to play for safety and the game was later drawn.

Karpov's next opponent was Yusupov, who got an edge in the Leningrad. Karpov managed to ease the pressure and later took over and won thanks to some mistakes from his opponent. In the second game Yusupov employed the Lasker Defence against the Queen's Gambit – a strange choice for a must-win game. Karpov obtained a slight plus in a quiet position, and later managed to get an extra pawn in a rook ending. Ironically, the way he converted his advantage was reminiscent of an early Yusupov win over Tal.

Karpov's opponent in the final was Gavrikov, who played the 4. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  system against the Nimzo-Indian. White had a small edge with his bishop pair, but after castling long he allowed Karpov to build up a menacing attack on the

b-file. The end of the game was dramatic: Karpov blundered a rook in a winning position, but Gavrikov captured it with the wrong piece and lost the game because of it. The second game was a Chebanenko Slav. Karpov went for safety, and Gavrikov sacrificed a pawn to stir up complications. But Karpov was equal to the challenge, and when the fireworks had died down he had reached a winning endgame with a queen versus rook and knight. He made no mistake and wrapped up the win convincingly. Apart from winning the overall tournament, Karpov's score of 7/8 was most impressive, even if he did have a slice of good fortune in two of the games.

### FIDE candidates match versus Gelfand

Karpov was seeded straight to the semi-final where he met Boris Gelfand. In Game 1 the Israeli grandmaster opened with 1.e4 and played the Short System in the 3.e5 Caro-Kann. The opening resulted in a double-edged position and Gelfand sacrificed a piece. Both players played well and the game soon resulted in a perpetual check. The second game was a symmetrical Fianchetto Grünfeld. Gelfand got close to equality although later he had to find some accurate moves to avoid suffering. He was up to the task and a draw was agreed shortly after the time control.

In Game 3 Gelfand came up with a new idea in the Short System. Karpov played carelessly after the opening and his position deteriorated. He did a reasonable job of getting back into the game, but then became too ambitious and soon found himself in a lost ending, which Gelfand converted. In Game 4 Karpov immediately struck back. The players repeated the Fianchetto Grünfeld, but a different type of middlegame ensued, with White having an IQP. Gelfand was a bit worse, and subsequent inaccuracies allowed Karpov to build up a powerful attack, which was enough to decide the game.

In Game 5 Karpov switched to 1...e5 and drew comfortably with the 9... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  variation in the main line of the Ruy Lopez. The sixth game was his best of the match.

### Game 39

Anatoly Karpov – Boris Gelfand

Sanghi Nagar (6) 1995

#### 1.d4 $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5

Gelfand takes a serious risk – according to the database he had never played the Benko Gambit before. On the other hand it is hard to imagine that Karpov and his team would have prepared for it. Karpov himself had only faced the gambit three times previously. Over his career he played eight games against the Benko Gambit, winning half of them and drawing the others.

#### 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6!

Karpov plays a new line for the first time at the age of forty four – it shows he was still making the effort to learn and improve. In 1993 he won two games with 5.b6, so Gelfand would surely have prepared thoroughly for this.

#### 5...g6 6. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $\mathbb{Q}xa6$ 7.e4 $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$ d6 9.g3 $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 10. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ 0–0 12.h3

Karpov prevents the knight from coming to g4. In 1996 he played 12. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  twice, but only managed to draw against Georgiev and Salov.

#### 12... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

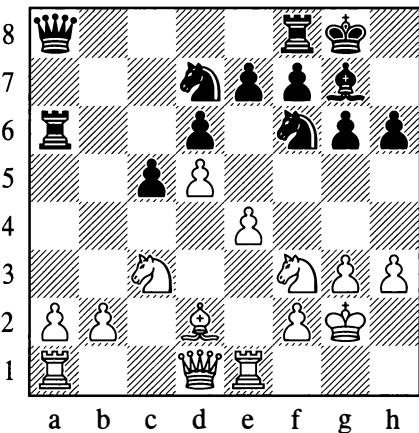
This move was played first in by Sievers in 1984, although the plan involving ... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  only really became popular when Fedorowicz used it to beat Rajkovic in 1987 (although the American grandmaster preferred 12... $\mathbb{Q}a7$ ). In the future Karpov faced 12... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  twice: he defeated Matamoros Franco in 2001, and drew a rapid game against Adianto in 2002.

**13.♕g5!?**

Karpov aims to provoke ...h6. The idea was new at the time, and has seldom been repeated. 13.♕e1 is the most popular move by far.

**13...h6 14.♗d2 ♕a8 15.♗e1**

The current position has been reached in over sixty games, most of them featuring an earlier ♘e1 from White.

**15...♗b8**

In the majority of games Black has preferred to crack the centre with 15...e6, with mixed results.

**16.b3**

Karpov secures his b-pawn, having ascertained that Black is unable to exploit the weakening of the long diagonal. From here White has two main plans. One idea is to play for a queenside blockade with a4 and ♘b5, which can work well as long as the b3-pawn does not become weak. The other plan involves gaining space in the centre with e5. This will usually require careful preparation in order to prevent Black from exploiting the opening of the centre to develop counterplay.

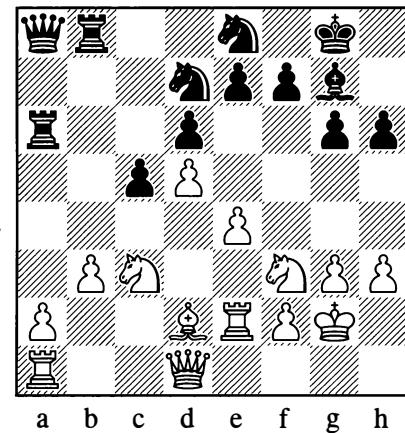
**16...♘e8**

16...♗a3!? was worth considering. (In the 12...♕a5 line Black often does something

similar with his queen.) Play might continue 17.♗c1 ♘h7 18.♗a4 ♘xa4 19.bxa4 ♘xa4 and Black has some compensation for the exchange.

**17.♗e2**

17.a4 was also possible, although after 17...♗ab6 18.♗b1 ♘c7 White does not get a chance to put his knight on b5.

**17...♘c7**

17...♗a3!? is reasonable here as well: 18.♗b1 (18.♗c1? ♘bxh3! or 18.♗c1 ♘xc3!) 18...♗xc3 19.♗xc3 ♘xa2 20.♗xa2 ♘xa2 21.♗d2 ♘a6 Black is in the game.

**18.♗c1**

The rook wisely vacates the long diagonal.

**18...♗a7**

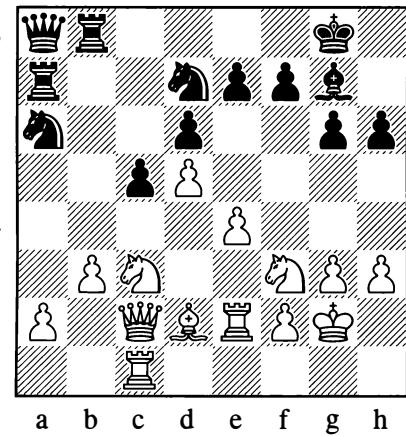
Gelfand prepares a knight manoeuvre to b4. Black has some other ideas as well.

18...♘xc3?! looks questionable, as Black remains a pawn down: 19.♗xc3 ♘xa2 20.♗xh6 ♘a1 It is hard to say just how big White's advantage is, but the black kingside certainly looks vulnerable.

18...♗a3!? Once again this move was worth considering. 19.♗c2 ♘b5 20.♗a4 (20.♗xb5

$\mathbb{B}xb5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{B}a6$  White has a small edge, but Black retains his typical Benko-style compensation.) 20... $\mathbb{W}a6$  (Also interesting is 20... $g5!?$  21. $\mathbb{W}c1$  e6 with counterplay.) 21. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{B}xa4$  22.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  23. $\mathbb{B}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{B}b4$  Black's compensation is enough for a roughly balanced game.

19. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$



20. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

Karpov blocks the queenside. It slows his own play, but it is more important to shut down Black's counterplay first.

In the event of the more obvious 20.a4 Black has a few reasonable plans, the choice between them being large a matter of taste:

a) 20... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  21. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}a6$  (Or 21... $\mathbb{B}ab7$  22. $\mathbb{B}ee1$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  e6 24.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  and White is just a bit better.) 22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{B}b6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}a2$  f5 25.f3 fxe4 26.fxe4 Both players must play carefully, but I would take the extra pawn if given the choice.

b) 20...c4!? Sacrificing a second pawn is a reasonable option. 21.bxc4  $\mathbb{Q}ac5$  22. $\mathbb{B}b1$  (22.e5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  Black should be okay.) 22... $\mathbb{B}xb1$  23. $\mathbb{W}xb1$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  24. $\mathbb{W}a2$  White keeps his two-pawn advantage, but after 24... $\mathbb{B}b3$  or 24... $\mathbb{B}b4$  he remains rather tied up.

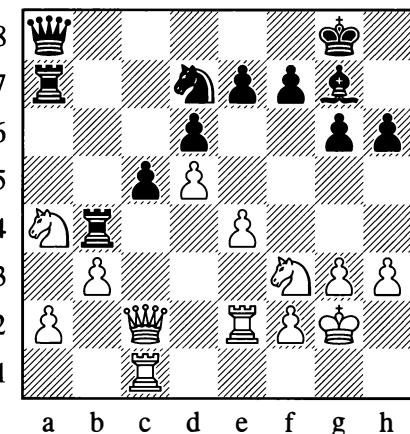
20... $\mathbb{Q}b4$

Otherwise Karpov would have played  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  next, exchanging Black's strong bishop and preparing e5 followed by a kingside attack.

21. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$

21. $\mathbb{W}b1?$  was not a serious option in view of 21... $\mathbb{B}xa4!$  22.bxa4  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  when Black gets lovely play for the exchange.

21... $\mathbb{B}xb4$



22. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

Karpov clears the way for his rook to get to c4.

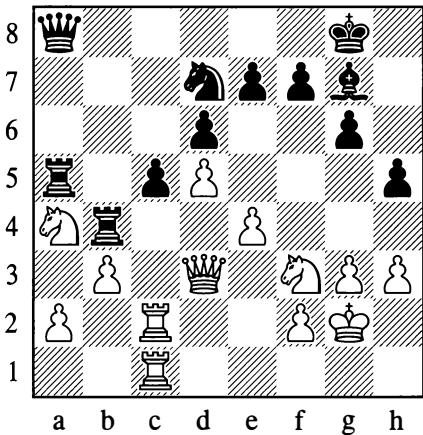
22... $\mathbb{B}a5$  23. $\mathbb{B}ec2$  h5?!

This move has pros and cons, but unfortunately for Gelfand the latter outweigh the former. Black wants to open the h6-c1 diagonal for his bishop, but the additional weakening of Black's kingside proves more important as the game goes on. Gelfand's main defences at the time were the King's Indian and the Sicilian Najdorf, both of which require Black to play actively and energetically instead of merely waiting and defending. Perhaps this contributed to his decision-making on the present turn.

23... $\mathbb{B}b7$  was possible, although White has

a nice way to improve his position: 24.♘d2! ♘b8 25.♘c4 ♜a8 26.f4 White is better; his knight is ideally placed on c4, and he has good prospects in the centre.

23...♞e5! Black's best chance was to exchange the knight and then wait and see. 24.♘xe5 ♜xe5 25.♘c4 ♜b8 Since the knight is unable to return from a4, it will not be easy for White to make anything of his small edge. On the other hand he could play on for a long time with practically no risk of losing.



#### 24.♘c4!

Karpov kills Black's aspirations to seize the initiative on the queenside. He does it in a highly economical way, as his rook and knight are able to keep three of the opponent's heavy pieces at bay.

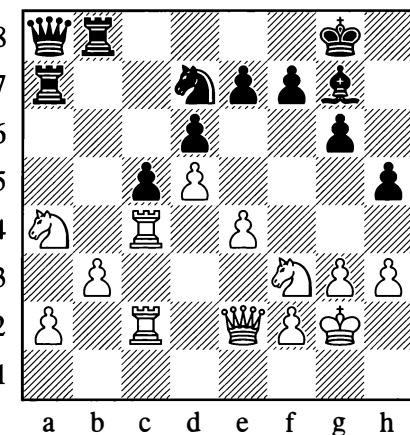
#### 24...♝b8 25.♗d2 ♜ab5

Gelfand decides to wait for a while. It would be interesting to know how Karpov would have proceeded after a knight exchange: 25...♞e5 26.♘xe5 ♜xe5 A possible continuation is: 27.f4 (There is also 27.g4? hxg4 28.hxg4 when White keeps an edge and can look to play on the h-file.) 27...♝f6 28.♗f1! White can play for an attack. (If 28.♗e1 then 28...♝d8!? restrains the e5-push.) 28...♝g7 (28...♝h7 29.♗f3 ♜d8 30.♗e2 ♜b8 31.e5 White gains useful space.)

29.♗e3 ♜d4 30.♗f3 Black will have to worry about a kingside attack based on f5.

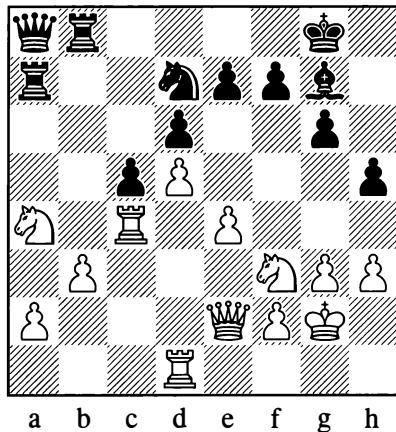
#### 26.♗c2 ♜5b7 27.♗e2 ♜a7

In the next phase of the game Karpov plays several fairly nondescript moves, which was probably a deliberate ploy to tire his opponent. He is in control of the position so he can afford to do it.



28.♗d2 ♜a5 29.♗d1 ♜a6 30.♗d2 ♜h6  
31.♗dc2 ♜g7 32.♗e3 ♜a8 33.♗d2 ♜a7  
34.♗d1 ♜b5 35.♗e2 ♜b8

Over the last eight moves White has moved his rook from c2 to d1, while Black's pieces are in identical positions.



**36.♘d2!**

After a period of manoeuvring Karpov embarks on a small but significant plan, namely to retreat his rook and park his knight on the c4-square. Just as in many of his other games, he times his direct action to take place a few moves before the time control, when it will create maximal problems for the opponent.

**36...♝b6**

Gelfand is not interested in finding out how strong the knight could become on the c4-square.

**37.♞xb6 ♜xb6 38.a4 ♜h6?!**

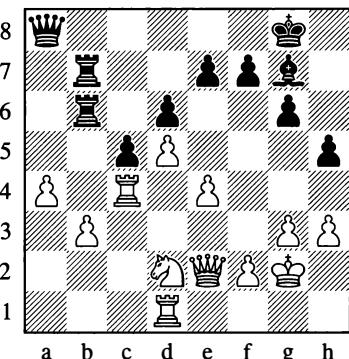
Gelfand embarks on a faulty plan to force matters on the side where he is weaker.

Piling up the heavy pieces on the b-file was also not the right plan: 38...♜b7 39.f4 ♜a8 40.♗d3 ♜b8 41.♗b1 ♜f8 42.a5! ♜b5 43.♗a4 White pushes his opponent back on the queenside.

Black's best bet was to continue waiting:

38...♜ab7

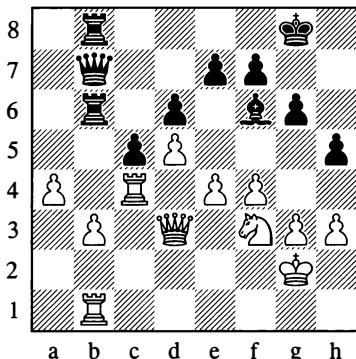
At some point White will have to decide whether to take action on the queenside, on the kingside, or in the centre.



39.f4

The queenside plan is also quite promising: 39.♗d3 ♜a6! The queen keeps an eye on the a-pawn and pins the c4-rook. (If Black

merely waits he could soon find himself in trouble, for instance: 39...♜b8 40.♗b1 ♜h7 [40...♜h6 41.f4 h4 42.a5! ♜b5 43.♗a4 hxg3 44.♗xg3 ♜a7 45.♗c4±] 41.a5! ♜a6 42.♗a4 ♜b5 43.♗c4 White has made significant achievements on the queenside.) 40.♗b1 ♜b8 41.f4 ♜f6 42.♗f3 ♜b7 (42...♜g7 43.e5±)

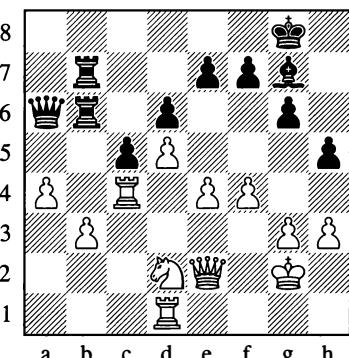


43.♗c2! (43.e5 ♜g7 is less clear) 43...♜b4 (43...♜xb3 44.♗xb3 ♜xb3 45.♗xb3 ♜xb3 46.♗a2 The endgame is excellent for White as the a-pawn has become strong.) 44.♗d2 ♜d4 45.♗e3 White keeps some advantage.

39...♜a6

39...♜e8 40.e5 ♜a8 41.exd6 exd6 42.♗e4 (42.f5) 42...♜h7 43.f5 Black's kingside is weak.

39...♜b8?! 40.♗f3 ♜b7 41.♗b1 (41.♗f1 White can also consider playing for f5.) 41...♜a8 42.♗c2 ♜b4 it is hard to progress with White.



**40.e5!**

White should not shy away from direct action.

Further preparation with 40.Qe1 allows 40...Bxb3! 41.Qxb3 Bxb3 when Black has good compensation for the exchange.

Manoeuvring does not lead anywhere special: 40.Qd3 Qf6 41.Qb1 Bb8 42.Qf3 Bb7 43.Qc2 Bb4 44.Qd2 Bd4 45.Qe2 Bb4 It is not easy for White to make progress.

**40...dxe5**

If the pawn is allowed to advance to e6, Black's whole position will be split in two.

**41.fxe5 ♕h6!**

Black's position is not entirely safe, but he is still fighting.

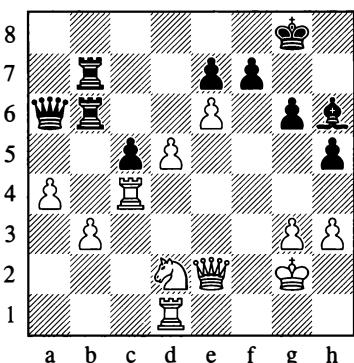
**42.e6**

42.Qe4 Bxb3 43.Qc2 Wxe2† 44.Qxe2 c4

Black has counterplay.

42.Qe4 Wxe2† 43.Qxe2 Qxd2 44.Qxd2

Bxb3 45.d6 Bd7 46.a5 White is somewhat better in this double-rook endgame, but the win is far from certain.



**42...f6?!**

This looks ugly, but Black has chances to get away with it.

**43.Qe4!?**

43.Qe4 Bxb3 44.Qc2 Wa8 45.Qxc5 Be3

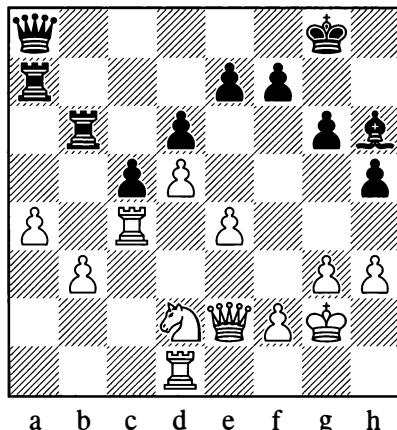
46.Wc4 Bc7 Black is living dangerously, but he is alive.

**43...Wa8**

Black cannot afford to enter an endgame, as the threat of a breakthrough with d6 would paralyse him.

**44.Wf2**

The strong e6-pawn gives Black considerable problems.



**39.f4 h4?**

Black decides to force matters, but the opening of the kingside is in White's interest, as he can quickly bring considerable firepower to bear on that part of the board. Perhaps Karpov was short of time and Gelfand wanted to force him to make a decision, but if that was the case then the gamble proved wholly unjustified.

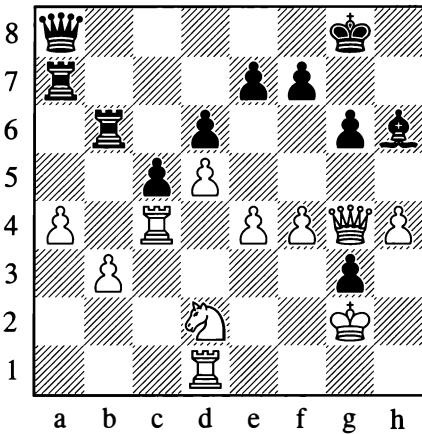
**40.Wg4**

Karpov brings the queen to the attack and forces his opponent to open the h-file.

There was a second strong continuation: 40.Qf1!? hxg3 41.Qc3! Bb4 42.Qxg3 With the makings of a powerful attack.

**40...hxg3 41.h4**

41.Qc3!? is also promising. In the coming variations, we will see that the successful transfer of this rook to the kingside is often integral to White's success.



**41... ♘h7?**

Gelfand bases his defence on transferring his queen to the kingside. An unfortunate side-effect of this plan is that it involves placing his king on a more dangerous file.

More resilient was:

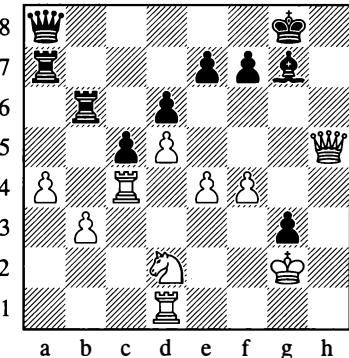
**41... ♘g7!**

The point of this move is to prevent the c4-rook from joining the attack.

**42.h5**

After 42.♕xg3 ♔e8 43.♕g4 e6 44.dxe6 fxe6 Black is struggling, but it will not be easy to break his resistance.

**42... gxh5 43.♕xh5**



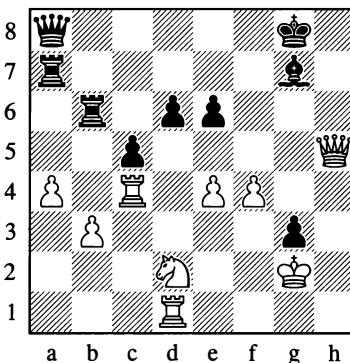
**43...e6!**

Black opens the seventh rank, allowing his rooks to join the defence.

The queenside counterattack is too slow:

**43... ♜ab7 44.♕xg3 ♔a6 (44... ♔a5 45.♕g4 ♜c7 46.♕h2+—) 45.♕g4 ♜xb3† (45...e6 46.♕g1+—) 46.♕h4! e6 47.♕g1 f5 48.exf5 exf5 49.♕xf5** White's attack is about to break through.

**44.dxe6 fxe6**



**45.♕g6!**

The queen gets closer to the enemy king and attacks the e6-pawn, but more importantly, enables the rook to use the c3-square.

**45... ♜e7 46.♖c3 ♜b4 47.♕h1!**

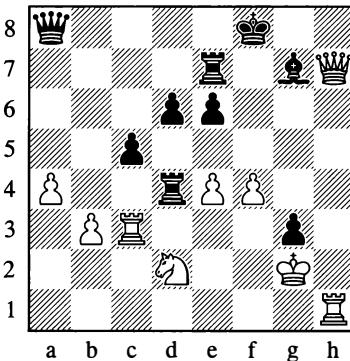
47.♕xg3?! ♜d4! sets up an awkward pin.

**47... ♜d4**

47... ♜b7 is too slow: 48.♕e3! White defends the e4-pawn in order to transfer his knight to g5. 48... ♜a6 49.♘f3 d5 50.♘g5 With decisive threats.

**48.♕h7† ♘f8**

48... ♘f7? 49.♘f3 is crushing.



**49.♕h8†! ♜xh8 50.♕xh8† ♘f7 51.♖xa8 ♜xd2†**

52.♔xg3

Black has survived the attack, but White's extra pawn gives him decent winning chances in the ending.

42.h5

Now is not the right time to transfer the rook with 42.♖c3? due to 42...f5!.

42...♕g8?

This allows a convincing refutation.

42...♕h8!

This surprising queen move would have posed more problems. The point is to stop the c4-rook joining the attack. White can still win, but considerable accuracy is needed.

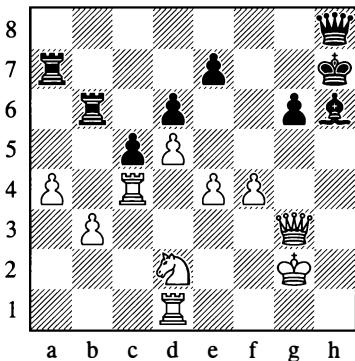
43.hxg6†

After 43.♔xg3 ♕b2! White is better, but he is tied up to a certain extent.

43...fxg6 44.♕xg3

44.♕e6 ♕b2 45.♕f7† ♕g7 46.♕xg7† ♔xg7

47.♔xg3 White's extra pawn gives him excellent winning chances but the game is far from over.



44...♕b2!

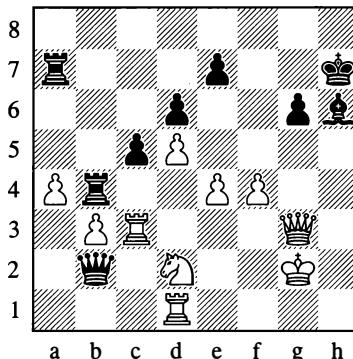
The queen attempts to create maximum disruption in White's camp.

45.♖c3

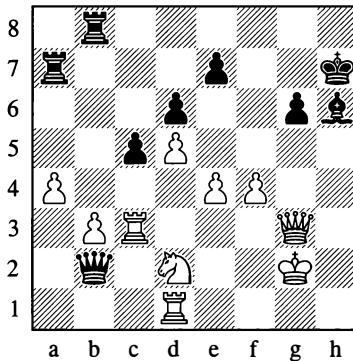
If 45.♕e3 ♕b8 46.e5 (46.♔g3 ♕ab7) 46...♕f8 47.♕e4 dx5 Black once again manages to stay in the game.

45...♕b8

45...♕b4 meets with a spectacular refutation:



46.♕g1!! White goes after the g6-pawn. (After 46.f5? g5 Black is still alive.) 46...♕xd2† (46...♕xf4 47.♕xf4 ♕xc3 48.♕f7†+) 47.♔h1 g5 48.♕e3! White cuts off the queen with this lovely move. 48...♕xb3 49.♕xb3 ♕xf4 50.♕xf4 gx5 51.♕a3 White wins the endgame easily.



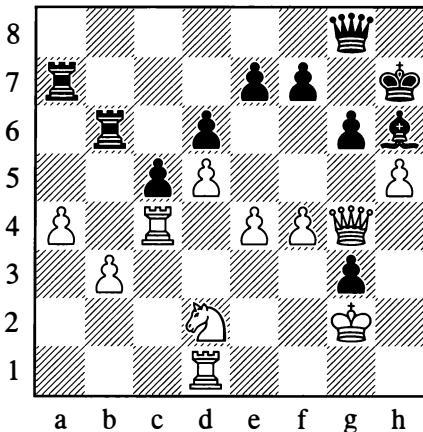
46.♔h1!

46.♕d3 c4! Black creates counterchances.

46.♕f3 ♕c2! (46...c4 47.♕f2! wins as White breaks the pin on the second rank while attacking the a7-rook.) 47.♕ff1 ♕f8 Black's queen is annoying.

46...♕g8 47.♕c4 ♕e2 48.♕e1 ♕h5† 49.♕g2

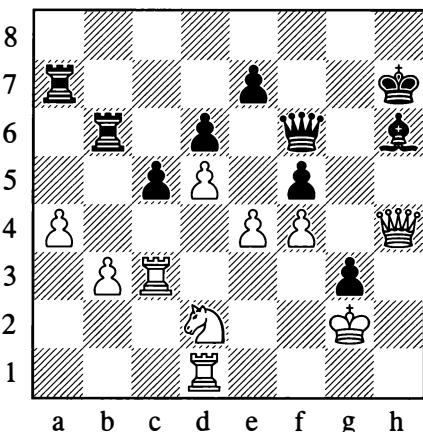
Finally White is ready to begin the decisive assault on the h-file, and there is not much Black can do about it...



**43.♖c3!**

Karpov brings the rook into the attack. Black has nowhere near enough pieces on the kingside to deal with White's overwhelming firepower.

**43...f5 44.hxg6† ♜xg6 45.♗h4 ♜f6**



**46.♕h1! ♜xe4**

Black is simply defenceless. Taking the rook would not have helped him: 46...♜xc3 47.♗xh6† ♔g8 48.♗h7† ♔f8 49.♗xf5† ♔g8 50.♗c8† ♔f7 51.♗h7† Black loses his queen at least.

**47.♗xg3 ♜b4 48.♗g4 ♜a8 49.♗gh3**

**1–0**

Black resigned as his kingside is about to disintegrate.

In Game 7 Gelfand returned to his normal 1.d4, but chose a sideline in the form of 4.e3 against the Queen's Indian. Karpov equalized, and for a long time the game was roughly balanced. Gradually the pieces came off the board and an equal minor piece endgame ensued. Gelfand tried to play for a win, but it was Karpov who gradually obtained the upper hand, and he eventually secured the win after a magnificent performance in a same-coloured bishop endgame.

Game 8 was a Slav. Karpov went for safety, Gelfand was unable to stir up any complications, and the game never looked like it would end in anything other than a draw. The ninth and final game was a 1...e5 English, in which Karpov played the defensive system involving ...♝f6 and ...♝c5 which bears his name. Later he exchanged his light-squared bishop in order to gain space in the centre, and was able to develop threats against Gelfand's king. The Israeli grandmaster made a mistake and Karpov punished him to win the game and the match. Karpov's final score of 6–3, with four wins, four draws and one loss, was highly impressive.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next classical tournament was Linares, although before that he played in the famous Amber tournament. He made a respectable 6/11 in the blind part of the event, but in the rapid part he scored a spectacular 10/11, which must have given him a great deal of confidence.

Karpov's first opponent in Linares was Shirov, who played a Pirc. Karpov got a slight plus with his usual Classical set-up, but Shirov played well and held the draw. In Round 2 Karpov played the Bogo-Indian against Dreev,

and after a brief tactical skirmish the players agreed a draw in a level ending. In the next round Karpov faced Tiviakov. An unusual Queen's Indian line resulted in a blocked position, and Karpov sacrificed a piece for three pawns in order to fight for the advantage. But Tiviakov defended well and after some simplifications a draw was agreed in an equal rook ending. In Round 4 Karpov faced Akopian, who played the Reti. Karpov played uncharacteristically with an early ...h5 and left his king in the centre. His position was shaky and at one point Akopian could have obtained serious pressure, but instead he simplified to an opposite-coloured bishop endgame with an extra pawn, which Karpov held easily.

After drawing his first four games, Karpov faced Nigel Short. The English grandmaster has so far played 159 classical games against all the world champions from Smyslov onwards, with the exceptions of Fischer and Petrosian. He won nineteen of those games, drew eighty six and lost the other fifty four. Before this game Karpov had a narrow lead in their head-to-head meetings, with seven wins to the Englishman's six, and fourteen draws. Their lifetime score is nine wins to seven in Karpov's favour, with seventeen draws.

### Game 40

Anatoly Karpov – Nigel Short

Linares 1995

#### 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4

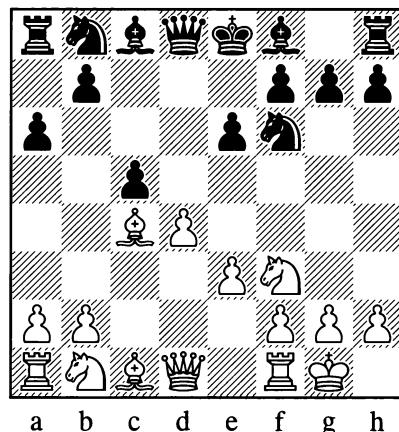
Short rarely plays this opening, although he had used it a few times in 1994, as well as in his 1992 match against Karpov.

#### 3.Qf3

In the 1992 match Karpov played 3.e4 three times but drew each game, so this time he goes for something different. Part of his reasoning

may also have been that none of Short's opponents had chosen this line.

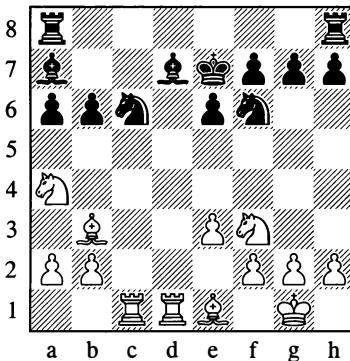
3...a6 4.e3 Qf6 5.Qxc4 e6 6.0–0 c5



7.Qd3

Karpov chooses a slightly unusual line, which had been tested by a few strong players such as Eingorn. He never repeated it.

A year later he won a nice game with a different line, which remains theoretically critical to this day: 7.Qb3 Qc6 8.Qc3 Qe7 9.dxc5 Wxd1 10.Qxd1 Qxc5 11.Qd2 Qd7 12.Qa1 Qa7 13.Qe1 Qe7 14.Qa4 b6

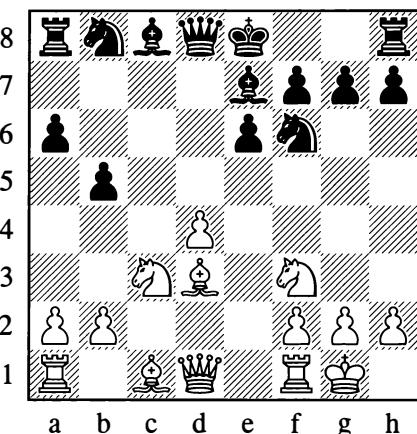


15.Qxd7†! I wonder whether Black missed this move completely, or misjudged its consequences. 15...Qxd7 16.Qxb6†!! Qxb6 17.Qa4 Qc8 18.Qe5 White has excellent compensation for the exchange and Black was

unable to deal with his problems, Karpov – Gulko, Oropesa del Mar 1996.

**7...cxd4 8.exd4 ♜e7 9.♘c3 b5**

Short chooses an ambitious approach, intending to put his bishop on b7. I find it slightly surprising that no-one has tried 9...b6!? here.



**10.a4!**

Playing for a kingside attack is hard when ...b4 could appear at any moment, so instead Karpov decides to soften Black's queenside.

**10...b4**

Several years later Kasparov demonstrated a good alternative: 10...bx a4?! 11.♗xa4† ♜d7 12.♗c2 ♜c6 13.♗xa6 ♜b4 14.♗xa8 ♗xa8 15.♗e2 ♜xd3 Black has enough compensation to maintain the balance, Kramnik – Kasparov, Moscow (blitz) 2001.

**11.♘e4 ♜b7 12.♗e2**

12.♘c5?! is an interesting alternative which has scored well for White.

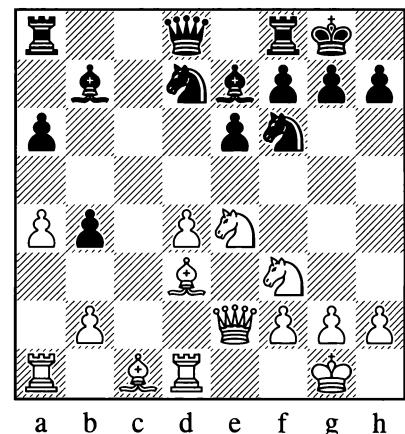
**12...0-0 13.♗d1**

Karpov avoids the immediate knight retreat, as 13.♘ed2 ♜c6?! is reasonable for Black. Another idea was 13.♗f4?!

**13...♗bd7**

Short elects to cover the c5-square while keeping the diagonal open for his bishop. After 13...♗c6 14.♗g5 g6 15.h4?! it is not easy to ease White's grip.

It was worth considering simplifying the position with 13...♗xe4? 14.♗xe4 ♜xe4 15.♗xe4 ♜d7! (If 15...♗d5 16.♗xd5 exd5 17.♗e5 White is better according to Karpov.) 16.♗f4 ♜f6 17.♗d3 ♜d5 and Black has a comfortable position.



**14.♗ed2!**

Karpov avoids exchanging and transfers his knight to the queenside.

**14...a5**

Black has the d5-square firmly under control, and can choose between posting his queen, bishop or either knight there. Short opts for the second option; he could not do it at once as the a-pawn would fall. There were several alternatives available:

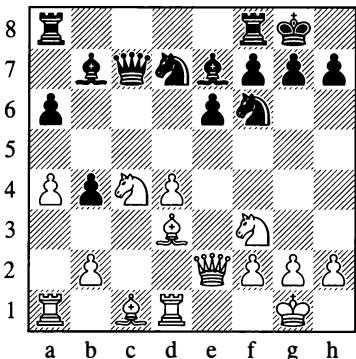
After 14...♗d5 White can play 15.♗b3 or 15.♗c4 with a small edge.

14...♗b6?! Putting this knight on d5 is less than ideal as it gives up the e5- and c5-squares. 15.a5 ♜bd5 16.♗b3 ♜d6 17.♗e5 ♗e7 18.♗d2

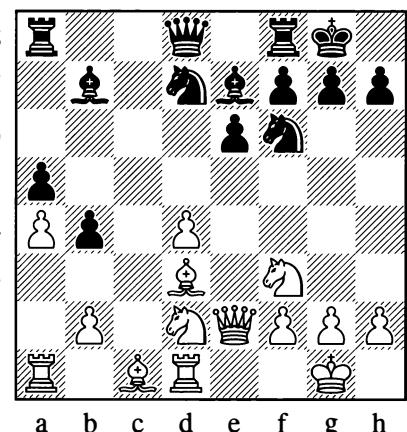
White controls more of the important squares in the centre.

With 14... $\mathbb{W}c8!$ ? Black intends to post his bishop on b5, without relinquishing control over the b5-square. 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}fe5$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  17.f3 The position is complex.

Black can even try to do without occupying the d5-square at all: 14... $\mathbb{W}c7!$ ? 15. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  (15. $\mathbb{Q}b3?$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  is comfortable for Black; 15.a5! could be considered though.)



15... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$ ? Like in the Semi-Slav, it is useful for Black to swap the light-squared bishops. (15... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  16.g3  $\mathbb{Q}ac8$  looks playable as well.) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17.d5 exd5 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  (or 18. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}ac8$ ) 18... $\mathbb{Q}df6$  Black has no problems.

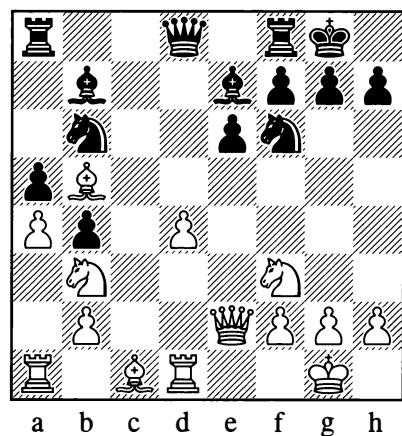


### 15. $\mathbb{Q}b5!$

Karpov immediately places his bishop on the newly-created outpost, from which it will exert a strong influence over the queenside.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}b6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

From this square the knight eyes the a5-pawn and prepares to hop to c5 later.



### 16... $\mathbb{Q}d5$

Short sticks to his plan and puts his bishop on the central outpost.

Putting either of the knights on d5 would give up squares for a white knight. For example, on 16... $\mathbb{Q}fd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is unpleasant, or if 16... $\mathbb{Q}bd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (17. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ ?) 17... $\mathbb{W}b6$  White's pieces are better placed after either 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  or 18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

On the other hand 16... $\mathbb{W}d5!$ ? deserved consideration; the queen and bishop generate a lot of force on the diagonal and restrict the f3-knight. 17. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (17... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ ? 18.dxc5  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 18. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  (18. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  Black is not worse.) 18... $\mathbb{W}xc6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  Black has a safe position. White is unable to exert pressure on the queenside with 21. $\mathbb{W}b5?$  because of the cute 21... $\mathbb{Q}xa4!$ .

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{Q}bd7$

Short probably wanted to stop the other knight from arriving on the fifth rank as well.

If 17... $\mathbb{W}d6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White's pieces on the fifth rank give him a firm grip on the position, and the coming  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  will create further problems for the defence.

The regrouping plan of 17... $\mathbb{E}a7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  can sometimes work well in positions of this type, but in this case 19.f3 maintains a solid plus for White.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{E}a7?$

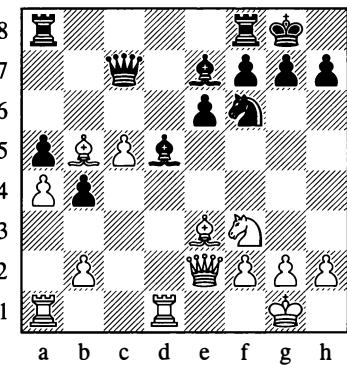
This unfortunate move is too slow. Black should have preferred:

18... $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$

Exchanging the strong knight would have relieved most of Black's troubles.

19.dxc5  $\mathbb{W}c7$

The position is deceptive. It looks as though the passed c-pawn should give White some advantage, but Black can block it securely. Similar situations can occur in the Hungarian Variation of the 5. $\mathbb{W}b3$  Grünfeld.



20. $\mathbb{E}ac1$

In the event of 20.h3 Black can obtain counterplay with 20... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  or 20... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

Another possibility is 20. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  21.c6  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  with a double-edged position.

Karpov mentions the text move in his

*Chess Informant* annotations, evaluating the position as clearly better for White, but I find this assessment to be overoptimistic.

20... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

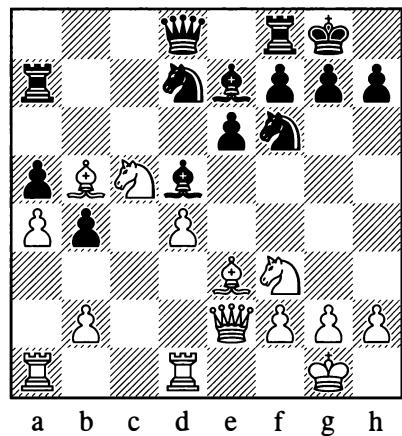
It is important to get the dark-squared bishop.

21.c6

21.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  Black will have enough play on the dark squares.

21... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22.g3  $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

Black's domination on the dark squares gives him a good game.



19. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$

Karpov offers his opponent a choice of exchanges, each of which comes with a serious drawback.

19... $\mathbb{Q}b8!$

This move looks ugly, but it seems to be Black's best chance. Exchanging either knight is problematic due to the unfortunate placement of the a7-rook, which gives White a huge tempo in some lines.

19... $\mathbb{Q}xc5?$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  21.dxc5  $\mathbb{E}c7$  22.c6 wins.

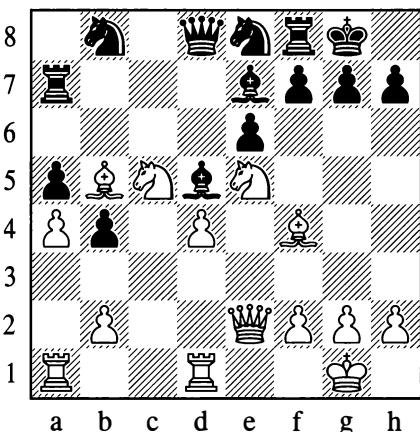
19... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  20.dxc5  $\mathbb{W}c7$  21.c6  $\mathbb{E}aa8$  (21... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  22.f4) 22. $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (22. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  is also strong) 22... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  23.cxd7 The chances of Black

surviving against such a mighty passed pawn are almost nonexistent.

## 20.♕f4 ♔e8?!

Playing an unfamiliar opening creates problems even for great players. Short's move prepares a bishop exchange as well as a possible knight manoeuvre, but it was not the best.

20...♗d6 would have offered stiffer resistance: 21.♗ac1 ♘e7 White is somewhat restricted by the pressure on the c5-knight, so his advantage is smaller than in the game.



## 21.♖d3?!

Karpov swings his rook into position to attack Black's king. It was also possible to play on the queenside: 21.♗ac1 ♔d6 22.♖d3 ♘c7 23.♗c4 ♔c6 24.♗b6 White keeps some advantage thanks to his strong knights.

## 21...♗g5?!

Exchanging minor pieces is normally helpful to the side playing against an IQP, but in this position it accelerates White's attack.

A better idea was 21...♔d6, transferring the knight to f5 where it is useful for both active and defensive duties. 22.♗e1 (22.♗e3 ♗f5) 22...♔f5 23.g4!? (Black comes close to equalizing after 23.♗g4 g6 or 23.♗c1 h6

24.♗g4 ♗g5) 23...♔g5 (23...♔h4 24.♗d1) 24.♗xg5 ♘xg5 25.♗d3 White is better but Black has fair chances to survive.

## 22.♗xg5 ♘xg5 23.♗g3 ♘e7 24.♗h5!?

Karpov wastes no time bringing his heavy artillery into the attack. After the inferior 24.♗d3? (with the transparent threat of taking on h7) 24...g6 25.♗h5 ♔c6 Black takes the sting out of the attack.

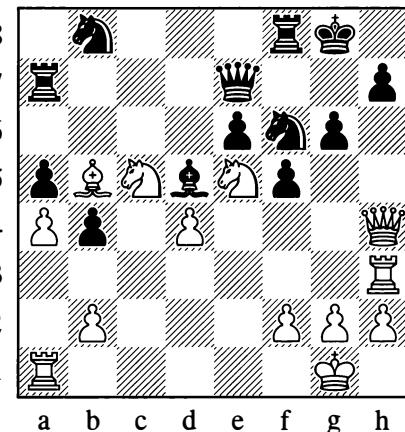
## 24...f5

24...g6 25.♗h6 ♘f6 26.♗ed7 wins an exchange. Alternatively after 24...♔f6 25.♗h6 g6 26.♗h3 Black is in trouble.

## 25.♗h3

25.f3 is also promising, for instance 25...♔f6 26.♗h4 ♘c7 27.♗e1 and White's pieces are dominating.

## 25...♔f6 26.♗h4 g6



## 27.♗e3?!

This inaccurate move gives Black the opportunity to ease his suffering by exchanging pieces.

## 27.♗e1?!

This would have been a mistake for the same reason.

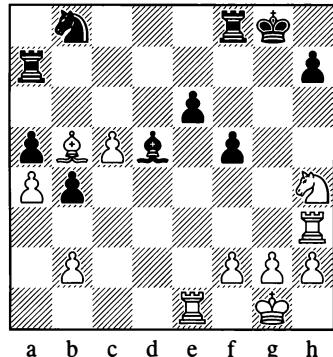
27... $\mathbb{Q}e4!$

This move does not equalize fully, but it gets close.

28. $\mathbb{Q}xg6!?$

28... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  29. $\mathbb{B}xh4$  30. $\mathbb{B}xe4$  31. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{B}d8$   
31.f3  $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black has good chances to hold this slightly worse endgame, as the rook on h4 is out of play.

28... $\mathbb{W}xh4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  30.dxc5



30... $\mathbb{B}c8$

Another possibility is: 30... $\mathbb{B}c7!?$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{B}xc5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  (32. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  e5 33. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}c1\uparrow$  34. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}b1$  Black will have a very dangerous passed pawn.) 32... $\mathbb{B}fc8$  33. $\mathbb{B}he3$   $\mathbb{B}c2$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{B}xb2$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  f4 36. $\mathbb{B}e7$  White has good attacking chances, but the position is sharp and thanks to the passed b-pawn any result is possible.

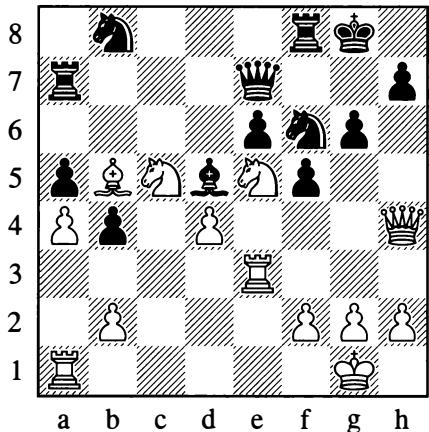
31. $\mathbb{B}d3$  f4

31... $\mathbb{B}xc5?$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf5!$  exf5 33. $\mathbb{B}xd5$   $\mathbb{B}xd5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  wins.

32. $\mathbb{B}xd5$  exd5 33. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{B}xc5$  34. $\mathbb{B}e8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  36. $\mathbb{B}xb8$   $\mathbb{B}c1\uparrow$  37. $\mathbb{B}f1$   $\mathbb{B}e7$

Black has strong counterplay.

The correct way for White to maintain his advantage was: 27.f3! Preventing the knight exchange. 27... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  Black's position is cramped, so exchanging queens should help him. 28. $\mathbb{B}e1$  Despite the queen exchange and the slightly misplaced rook on the h-file, White keeps a big advantage.



27... $\mathbb{B}d8?$

It looks like Short changed his mind; I would have thought that the purpose of his previous move was to defend the h7-pawn along the second rank in preparation for ... $\mathbb{Q}e4$ . He could have obtained better drawing chances by means of a small modification of this idea:

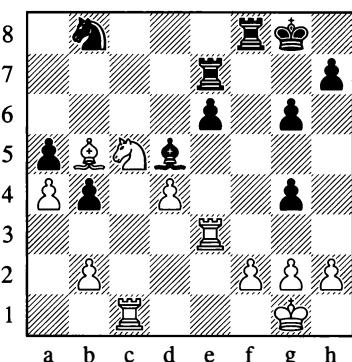
27... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

It is never nice to have a worse endgame against Karpov, nevertheless this was his best chance. Exchanges will ease his cramped position, and the elimination of the e5-knight will give the one on b8 some freedom.

27... $\mathbb{Q}e4!?$  28. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{B}xe7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  was also possible, although in that case the knight on b8 will remain paralysed for the foreseeable future.

28. $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{B}xe7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{fxg4}$  30. $\mathbb{B}c1$

30. $\mathbb{B}ae1$   $\mathbb{B}c8$  (30... $\mathbb{B}f6$  31. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{B}c7$ ) 31. $\mathbb{B}g3$  h5 32.f3 gxf3 33.gxf3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  The change in the pawn structure favours Black, who has excellent drawing chances by this point.



30... $\mathbb{E}c8$

30... $\mathbb{E}f4?$  is a mistake due to 31. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$ .

30... $\mathbb{E}c7!?$  is reasonable though.

31. $\mathbb{E}g3 \mathbb{Q}c6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{Q}xc6$

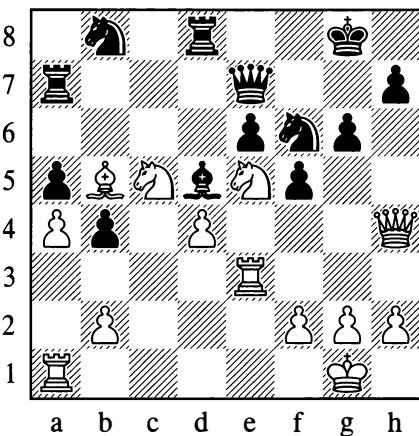
Black cannot afford to relax yet, but he has reason to be cautiously optimistic about holding this somewhat worse endgame.

33. $\mathbb{E}xg4$

33. $\mathbb{E}e1 h5$  defends.

33... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  34. $\mathbb{E}a1 \mathbb{Q}c2$  35. $\mathbb{E}xa5 \mathbb{Q}f5$

Black is worse, but very much alive.



28.f3!

Now White gets everything he could have wished for: he prevents Black from easing his position through a knight exchange, and his rook is ideally placed in the centre.

28... $\mathbb{E}c7$  29. $\mathbb{E}ae1!?$

With this move Karpov virtually forces a queen exchange, as otherwise the pressure on the e6-pawn will be too much for Black to bear.

Karpov mentions the alternative 29. $\mathbb{E}c1!?$ , which is also strong, for instance: 29... $\mathbb{E}e8$  (or 29... $\mathbb{E}d6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 30. $\mathbb{W}xe7 \mathbb{E}xe7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black is in trouble.

29... $\mathbb{Q}h5$  30. $\mathbb{W}xe7$

The alternative was 30. $\mathbb{W}f2 \mathbb{Q}f4$  when White

is also clearly better, but Karpov was always happy to obtain an advantageous endgame. He won a great many of them with a much smaller advantage than the one he possesses in this game...

30... $\mathbb{E}xe7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f2!?$

Karpov decides to make a small improvement on the kingside before doing anything else. It was also possible to take direct action:

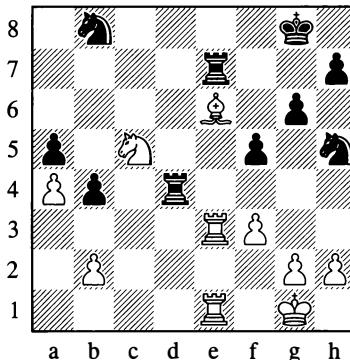
31. $\mathbb{Q}c4!?$

Karpov mentioned this alternative, which also gives excellent chances.

31... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$

31... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  (32. $\mathbb{Q}xc6 \mathbb{Q}xc4$  33.b3  $\mathbb{E}xd4!$  Black gets counterplay.) 32... $\mathbb{E}xe6$  33. $\mathbb{E}xe6 \mathbb{Q}xe6$  34. $\mathbb{E}xe6 \mathbb{Q}xd4$  35. $\mathbb{E}a6 \mathbb{Q}b3$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xa5 \mathbb{E}d1\uparrow$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{Q}xa5$  38. $\mathbb{E}xa5 \mathbb{E}d2\uparrow$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e3 \mathbb{E}xb2$  40. $\mathbb{E}a7$  White is winning thanks to his superior bishop and his stronger passed pawn.

32. $\mathbb{Q}xc4 \mathbb{E}xd4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe6\uparrow$



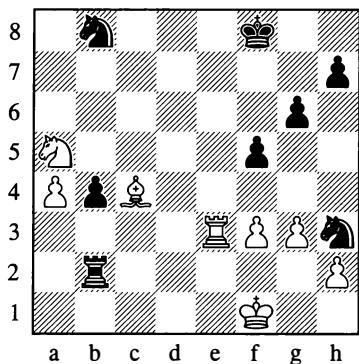
33... $\mathbb{Q}g7$

33... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}b3 \mathbb{E}d6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}c4!$  This subtle move, which takes control over the a6-square, is the most convincing path to victory. (Karpov analyses 35. $\mathbb{Q}xa5 \mathbb{Q}f4?$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c4 \mathbb{E}xe3$  37. $\mathbb{E}xe3 \mathbb{E}d2$  38.g3 when White should be winning, but Black can regain his pawn and stay in the game with 35... $\mathbb{E}a6!.$ ) 35... $\mathbb{E}xe3$  36. $\mathbb{E}xe3 \mathbb{E}d1\uparrow$  (36... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  37. $\mathbb{E}d3 \mathbb{E}xd3$  38. $\mathbb{E}xd3$  The a5-pawn falls.) 37. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{E}b1$  38. $\mathbb{E}e7\uparrow \mathbb{Q}h6$  39. $\mathbb{E}e2$  White is winning.

34.♕b3 ♕d6 35.♕xa5

If 35.♗c4 ♕xe3 36.♗xe3 ♗c6 Black avoids losing material.

35...♗f4 36.♗c4! ♕xe3 37.♗xe3 ♕d2 38.g3 ♗h3† 39.♔f1 ♕xb2



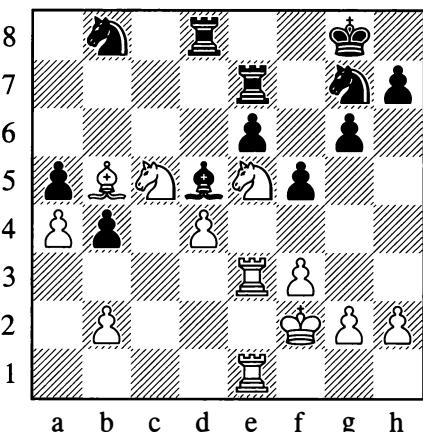
40.♖b5!

White nicely traps the b8-knight.

40...♗f7 41.♖e8 ♔a6 42.♗c8! ♕xh2 43.♔xa6 ♕f2† 44.♔e1 ♕xf3

Black continues to fight, but White's extra piece should be sufficient to win the ending.

31...♗g7



32.g4!

Karpov exerts pressure from both flanks. The situation on the kingside is reminiscent of certain variations of the Closed Ruy Lopez, where a black knight on b7 is dominated

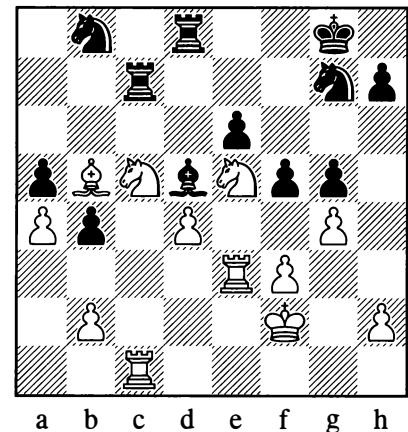
by a pawn on b4. See for instance Karpov's classic win over Unzicker, Game 37 of the first volume.

32...♗c7 33.♗c1! g5?!

Short tries to do something active, but the pawn on g5 will be a target.

If 33...fxg4 34.fxg4 ♕e8 35.b3 ♕d6 36.♗c4 Black is in huge trouble on the queenside.

Black should have waited patiently with 33...♗f8 or 33...♗dc8, although his position would remain depressing. White does not have to hurry, and should probably play a move like 34.h3 before deciding on a definite plan.



34.♗ee1!

With his last two moves Karpov forces his opponent to worry about one more thing: the invasion on the c-file.

34...h5?

Perhaps in time trouble, Short commits a fatal error. Other moves were also gloomy for him, for instance 34...♗dc8 35.h3 h6 36.♗h1 ♗f8 (36...♗f8 37.h4) 37.♗cd3 ♗fc8 38.♗c5 and White invades on the queenside.

35.h3

This preserves White's overwhelming

positional advantage, but there was an even stronger continuation leading to an immediate win: 35.♕e4! ♕xc1 (35...♕dc8 36.♕f6† ♔f8 37.♕xc7 ♕xc7 38.gxh5 White traps the g7-knight.) 36.♕f6† ♔f8 37.♕xc1 White will deliver checkmate in a few moves.

It is possible that Karpov was short of time and took a pragmatic decision not to change the position. Nevertheless I doubt that the Karpov of the seventies and eighties would have missed this opportunity.

### 35...fxg4

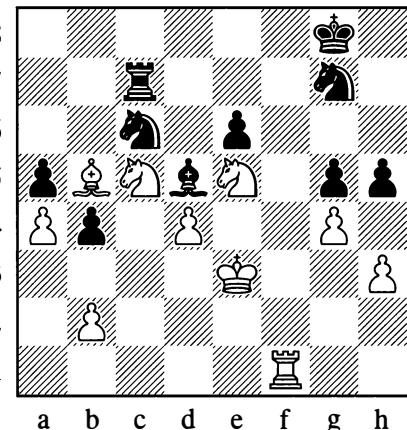
White's position is so dominant, virtually any continuation would have helped him to invade in one way or another.

### 36.fxg4 ♕f8† 37.♕e3 ♕f4 38.♕f1

Karpov chooses to infiltrate on the kingside. He could also have played 38.♕cd3 and invaded on the queenside.

### 38...♕xf1 39.♕xf1 ♕c6

39...♕g2 is refuted by 40.♕f6 ♕xh3 41.♕xe6! ♕xe6 42.♕xe6 as pointed out by Karpov.



### 40.♕xc6

Karpov decides to cash in and win a pawn. Unusually for Karpov, he missed a chance to go after his opponent's king, which would have ended the game more quickly: 40.♕cd7!

41.♕f8† ♔h7 42.♕xe5 Black's king is defenceless.

Perhaps Karpov was short of time and needed to get past move 40. The game continuation certainly does not throw away White's advantage, so there was nothing wrong with it as a practical decision.

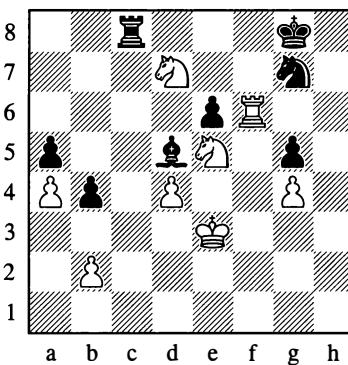
### 40...♕xc6 41.♕f6 ♕xg4 42.♕xg4 ♕d5 43.♕g6

Karpov continues his plan and rounds up the g-pawn.

### 43.♕cd7??

White can also resume the king-hunting plan. The attack is dangerous, but not necessarily winning by force. On this occasion Karpov was right to avoid it in favour of the simpler winning plan.

### 43...♕c8



### 44.♕f2

After 44.♕f7 ♔h7 45.♕f6† ♔h6 White is winning but there is no checkmate.

44.♕g6 ♕e8! (44...♕e8 45.♕f2! ♔h7 46.♕ge5 The other knight will arrive on f6, with lethal consequences.) 45.♕e7† (45.♕f8† ♔g7) 45...♔g7 There is no mate, so White will have to settle for a slow win.

### 44...♕e8!

44...♗b3 45.♕f6† ♔f8 46.♕e4† ♔g8 47.♕g6 ♕c2 48.♕e7† ♔h7 49.♕f6 wins.

### 45.♕f7

45.  $\mathbb{E}f8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  46.  $\mathbb{E}f7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  47.  $\mathbb{E}e7$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$

Black stays in the game.

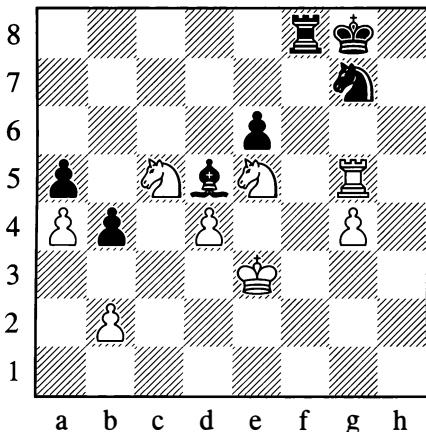
45...  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  46.  $\mathbb{E}e7$

Here Black should play 46...  $\mathbb{E}a8$  or 46...  $\mathbb{E}d8$ . In both cases White remains with a winning position, but the plan to catch the enemy king has failed.

**43...  $\mathbb{E}c8$  44.  $\mathbb{E}xg5$**

Eleven moves after Short pushed the g-pawn, Karpov collects it.

**44...  $\mathbb{E}f8$**



**45.  $\mathbb{Q}cd3!$**

Karpov brings the knight to f4, where it will block the enemy rook while creating powerful threats on the kingside.

**45...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$**

Black has no time to activate the rook:  
45...  $\mathbb{E}f1$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}f4!$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$   
48.  $\mathbb{Q}c6+-$

**46.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}d7!$**

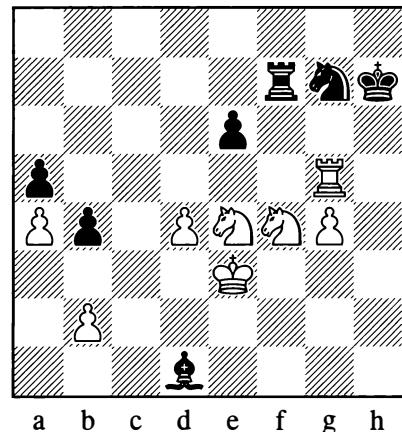
This move is easy to find, but cute nonetheless.

**47...  $\mathbb{E}f7$**

If 47...  $\mathbb{E}c8?$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$  leads to an immediate checkmate after 48...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  49.  $\mathbb{E}g6$  or 48...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ .

**48.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}d1$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$**

Karpov's use of the knights is exemplary.



**49...  $\mathbb{E}f8$**

49...  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  50.  $\mathbb{E}xa5$  wins.

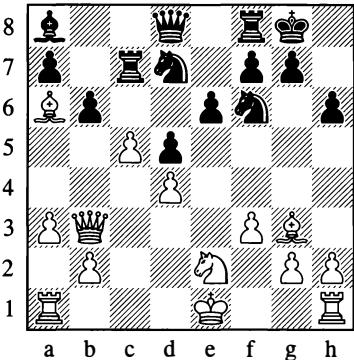
**50.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  51.  $\mathbb{E}xa5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  52.  $\mathbb{E}a7$**

**1-0**

Pinning the knight is the simplest win, and it was enough to force Short's resignation.

In Round 6 Karpov faced Ivan Sokolov, who opted for an unusual handling of the Torre Attack involving long castling. He then became even more adventurous and sacrificed a piece, but it was not fully sound and Karpov gradually neutralized his initiative and won a nice game. In the next round Karpov got a small edge in an English Opening against Khalifman, and soon reached a position with opposite-coloured bishops in which Black had no serious weaknesses and appeared to be safe. Nevertheless Karpov was able to maintain a lingering plus, and the problems eventually proved too great for his compatriot, who made some mistakes before the time control and allowed his king to be caught.

Here is a brief extract from Karpov's Round 8 game, which began with a 4.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian:



17... $\text{bxc}5!$  Karpov takes over the initiative with this excellent exchange sacrifice. (White was probably hoping for 17... $\text{Ec}6$  18. $\text{Bb}5$   $\text{Ec}8$  19. $\text{Ba}6$  and an early handshake.) 18. $\text{Bxc}7$   $\text{Wxc}7$  19. $\text{Wc}3$  e5 20. $\text{Bd}3$  exd4 21. $\text{Bxd}4$   $\text{Ee}8\uparrow$  22. $\text{Bf}1$   $\text{Wb}6$  Lautier – Karpov, Linares 1995. White was never able to solve the problems associated with his vulnerable king, and Karpov went on to win a fine game, his fourth in succession in the tournament.

In Round 9 Karpov faced Ivanchuk, who was also playing superbly with a ‘plus four’ score. The game featured a most unusual version of the Dutch Defence, involving the opening moves 1.d4 f5 2.g3  $\text{Bf}6$  3. $\text{Bg}2$  d6 4. $\text{Bc}3?$  d5!?. For a long while the game was roughly balanced, but then Ivanchuk took over and got some advantage. But Karpov managed to stay in the game and found a way to sacrifice an exchange for two pawns, after which the Ukrainian grandmaster felt compelled to force a perpetual.

In the next game Karpov played the Caro-Kann against Topalov, who responded with the Panov Variation. For a while Karpov seemed to be under pressure, but he managed to stabilize his position with the help of a pawn sacrifice. Topalov seemed to have trouble adapting to the new situation at the board, and his position soon deteriorated, allowing Karpov to score another valuable win.

In Round 11 Karpov transposed to the Panov from the opposite side of the board, via a 1.c4 c6 move order against Beliavsky. The resulting IQP position was balanced, and remained so until the players agreed a draw deep into the endgame. In the next game Karpov played the Caro-Kann against Ljubojevic, and made an easy draw against the 2. $\text{Bf}3$  d5 3. $\text{Bc}3$  variation, which was incidentally a favourite line of the young Bobby Fischer.

In the final round Karpov had to try and beat Illescas for a chance of winning the tournament. In a sharp Semi-Slav Karpov sacrificed an exchange for two pawns, but it was not fully sound and he soon found himself in trouble. Fortunately for Karpov, the Spanish grandmaster later misplayed the endgame and allowed him to escape with a draw. Karpov finished Linares with an impressive score of 9/13, with five wins and eight draws. It was a good result, but sadly only enough for second place, as Ivanchuk was in outstanding form and finished a full point ahead.

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Karpov’s next tournament was Dos Hermanas. His first opponent was Adams, who used the Bogo-Indian. Karpov soon got the two-bishop advantage and later won a pawn in the endgame, but Adams fought hard and was able to draw thanks to the reduced material. In the second round Karpov got a tiny edge on the black side of a Queen’s Indian against Piket, but was unable to do much with it and the Dutchman held the draw without any problems.

Karpov’s next opponent was Salov, who played a Queen’s Indian. Karpov got a slight plus, and a sharp tactical sequence resulted in a rook and opposite-coloured bishop endgame in which Karpov had a securely defended pawn on g7. It took some time to win it, but Karpov’s excellent technique made the process

look easy. In Round 4 Karpov had the black pieces against Lautier, who played the Catalan. A sharp tactical sequence resulted in a position where Karpov had some initiative thanks to a strong passed d-pawn, and he eventually converted his advantage by catching the white king.

In the next round Karpov played the English Opening against Illescas, who responded with 1...e5 followed by Karpov's own system. White never got more than a tiny edge and the game eventually ended in a draw. In Round 6 Shirov unleashed a surprise in the form of the Centre Game, but Karpov reacted solidly and exploited some inaccuracies from his opponent. Shirov soon found himself in a horrible position and resigned on move 23. In Round 7 Karpov played a safe line against Gelfand's Semi-Slav, and the game was soon drawn.

In the penultimate round Karpov faced Kamsky, who was trailing him by a point and a half. Kamsky employed the Short System in the Advance Caro-Kann, and launched a ferocious attack involving a piece sacrifice, which Karpov declined. White's initiative persisted, so Karpov sacrificed an exchange in order to stabilize his position and bring his king to safety, although his position remained worse. He lost on time on move 38, in a position that would have offered good drawing chances.

In the final round Karpov had the white pieces against Judit Polgar. He got a slight edge in a Fianchetto King's Indian, but Judit played well and took over the initiative in the middlegame. At one point she had a winning position, but she overestimated Karpov's counterplay and simplified to a drawn rook and opposite-coloured bishop endgame. Karpov's final score of 5½/9 was enough to tie for first place with Kamsky and Adams; not a bad result overall, although it must have been disappointing for Karpov to finish the tournament so weakly.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was in Dortmund. In the first round he faced Bareev, who played the English Opening and got a nice position with two bishops. For a while Karpov's position was difficult, but he eventually equalized. Bareev proceeded to make some mistakes, and Karpov punished him. In the next two games Karpov made quick draws with Kramnik and Ivanchuk, lasting a combined total of thirty five moves. The former game contained some interesting moments but the latter looked prearranged.

In Round 4 Karpov had the black pieces for second consecutive game. His opponent was Jeroen Piket, who got some advantage in the Catalan. Karpov defended well and sacrificed a pawn in order to reach a drawn endgame with queen and opposite-coloured bishops, which he held comfortably. In the next round Karpov faced Beliavsky and got a slight plus in an Orthodox Queen's Gambit. Later he gained space and obtained a strong passed pawn on d6. Following a long manoeuvring phase, Karpov pushed the pawn to d7 and forced Black's resignation. In Round 6 he scored another fine victory, outplaying Lobron on the black side of a Petrosian Queen's Indian.

In Round 7 Short chose the Chebanenko Slav. Karpov was unable to achieve a significant advantage in the roughly symmetrical position, and a draw was agreed in the endgame. In Round 8 Lautier equalized with the Semi-Slav, but Karpov kept playing and eventually got some advantage with the help of a minority attack. Lautier made a serious mistake shortly before the time control, and soon had to resign. In the final round Karpov had the black pieces against Peter Leko. He equalized in one of the sharpest main lines of the 4...d7 Caro-Kann, and soon had the more comfortable side of a somewhat simplified position. But Leko held firm and eventually Karpov had to settle for a draw.

Karpov finished with a good score of 6½/9,

with four wins and five draws. Alas, it was only good enough for second place behind Kramnik, who won by half a point.

\*\*\*

Karpov's last tournament of the year was in Groningen. In the first round he got into trouble on the black side of a Nimzo/Queen's Indian hybrid against Ivan Sokolov, but managed to simplify to a pawn-down endgame with knight against bishop, which he duly drew. In Round 2 Karpov played the English Opening against Adams, but achieved no real advantage and the game remained balanced until the ending when a move repetition occurred. In the next round Lautier tried the Petrosian Variation against Karpov's Queen's Indian. The Frenchman played energetically but Karpov was equal to the challenge and a draw was agreed just before the time control in a level endgame.

In Round 4 Karpov got his first win of the event against Piket, who opted for the sharp 3.e4 Nc6 variation in the Queen's Gambit Accepted. He sacrificed a pawn but failed to obtain any real compensation, and Karpov pressed home his advantage in the queenless middlegame in a most convincing fashion. Part of the game can be found in the notes to Game 48.

In the next round Karpov made a very quick draw with the black pieces against Tiviakov; it must have suited him well, as he knew he would need all his energy in the next round, where he was due to have the black pieces for the second time for a row against Kamsky. Karpov tried a different approach against the Short System, and equalized comfortably. He gradually took over the initiative, and later won a pawn. But Kamsky defended stubbornly, and after missing some opportunities Karpov eventually had to settle for a draw after more than a hundred moves.

Karpov's next opponent was Curt Hansen. The Danish grandmaster has played a total of twenty games against seven different world champions, scoring nine draws and eleven losses. Prior to this game Karpov had beaten him twice and drawn once. This was their last meeting over the board.

## Game 41

### Anatoly Karpov – Curt Hansen

Groningen 1995

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

Karpov faced this variation four times in regular games, scoring three wins and a draw. Hansen rarely played the King's Indian, but he must have prepared this line.

**7.♗ge2 a6 8.♗d2 ♜b8 9.♘c1**

Karpov had played one previous game from this position, which continued: 9.h4 h5 10.♘c1 e5 11.d5 ♜d4 12.♘1e2 c5 13.dxc6 bxc6 14.♘xd4 exd4 15.♘xd4 ♜e8 16.♘e2 d5 17.cxd5 cxd5 18.e5 ♜d7 19.f4 ♜h6 20.♗e3 White obtained a small edge and went on to win, Karpov – Kindermann, Baden-Baden 1992.

**9...e5 10.d5 ♜d4 11.♘1e2**

Later Karpov switched to another main line: 11.♘b3 ♜xb3 12.axb3 c5 13.g4 h5 14.h3 ♜h7 15.gxh5 ♜h4† 16.♗f2 ♜xf2† 17.♗xf2 gxh5 18.♗d3 h4 19.♗e2 ♜h8 20.b4 cxb4 21.♘a4 ♜g8 22.♗b6 ♜d7 23.♘c7 White obtained a nice positional advantage, Karpov – Xie Jun, Guanzhou 2000.

**11...♗xe2**

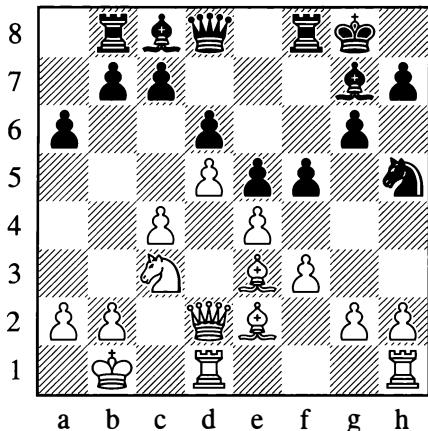
11...c5 is the other main line.

**12.♗xe2 ♜h5 13.0–0–0**

Castling long is normal in the Sämisch variation.

### 13...f5 14.♗b1

Karpov does not hurry with c5, but moves the king to a safer place.



### 14...♘f4

This move had hardly ever been played before, and has never been repeated. It is not so bad, but does not achieve much as the knight will soon be driven away.

The main line of 14...♗d7 has scored well for Black.

### 15.♗f1

Naturally Karpov keeps his light-squared bishop.

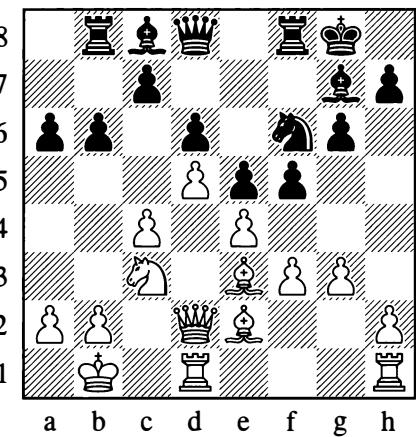
### 15...b6?!

This defensive move betrays the fact that Hansen was inexperienced in the King's Indian. The more flexible 15...♗d7 was better.

### 16.g3 ♘h5 17.♗e2 ♘f6

17...fxe4 would have led to similar positions as the game: 18.♗xe4 ♘f6 19.♗g5 ♘f5 (19...♗e8 20.♗xf6!) 20.♗d3 ♗e8 21.♗xf6 ♘xf6 22.h4 According to Karpov White stands clearly better, and indeed Black is rather passive.

A waiting move like 17...♗e7 was worth considering, for instance: 18.exf5 ♘xf5† (18...gxsf5 19.f4!) 19.♗a1 ♘d7 White's advantage is small.



### 18.♗g5!

With this subtle move Karpov enables himself to control the e4-square with his pieces in the event that Black exchanges with ...fxe4.

### 18...♗e8

Black does not have enough time to prepare ...h6, for instance 18...♗f7 19.exf5 ♘xf5† 20.♗a1 ♗f8 21.h4 and White has the initiative on the kingside.

### 19.♗d3

Karpov puts pressure on the f5-pawn. Playing for g4 with 19.h3?! allows Black to obtain counterplay with 19...♗h5!.

19.♗df1!? was a decent alternative. Karpov mentioned this move, along with some lines to show that it is tactically viable: 19...fxe4 (Black could also consider 19...b5!? instead of the simplification.) 20.♗xf6 ♘xf6! (The zwischenzug 20...exf3?? loses to 21.♗xg7 fxе2 22.♗xf8†) 21.♗xe4 ♘h3 22.♗fg1 ♘f5 23.h4 White is a bit better, regardless of whether or not Black decides to go for a position with opposite-coloured bishops.

19...fxe4

Hansen decides to simplify. In doing so he reduces Karpov's active play, but also limits his own prospects for counterplay.

19...b5!

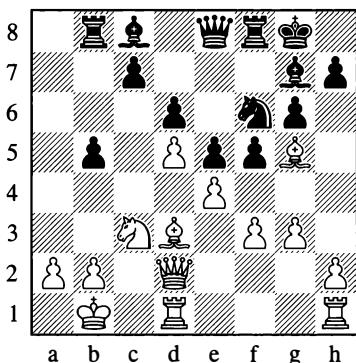
This move is much more in the spirit of the King's Indian. Black should be willing to accept a few pawn weaknesses in order to generate dynamic counterplay.

20.cxb5

20.h3 ♜h5 21.♗e2 bxc4 22.♕xc4 fxe4  
23.fxe4 ♕f3 and Black gets counterplay.

20...axb5

The c7- and b5-pawns have the potential to become weak, but Black has enough activity to keep his opponent from attacking them effectively.



21. ♔c2

21.a3 fxe4 22.fxe4 b4 gives Black counterplay.

21.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $fxe4$  22.  $fxe4$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  23.  $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{Wf7}$  This time Black gets active on the kingside, and his chances are not worse.

21...b4 22.Qe2 fxe4

22... $\mathbb{W}d7!$ ? looks odd but may not be bad.

23.  $\text{fxe4}$   $\text{h3}!?$  24.  $\text{axh3}$   $\text{g}^{\text{h3}}$

Black has promising compensation for the pawn.

20.  $\check{Q}xe4!$

Karpov chooses the strongest way to

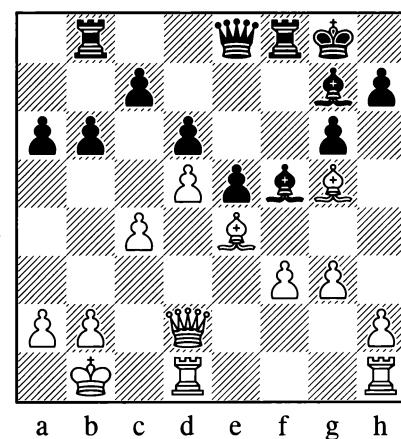
recapture. Black will be able to exchange the blockading piece on e4, but in the resulting simplified position he will still have some problems, as we will see.

20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6?$  was not an option as 20...exd3! is strong.

If 20.fxe4 b5! is reasonable, as with the knight on c3 it is not easy for White to exert pressure against the c7-pawn.

20... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$

After 21...b5 22.♗c1 b4 23.g4! both black bishops remain passive.



22. We2!

With this prophylactic move Karpov takes away the f3-square from the rook, preventing his opponent from gaining control over the f-file.

22.g4?!  $\mathbb{Q}xe4\uparrow$  23.fxe4  $\mathbb{E}f3$  (23... $\mathbb{E}f4$ ? The exchange sacrifice on f4 is often strong in the King's Indian, but here after 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  exf4 25. $\mathbb{W}xf4$  the position is too simplified for Black to make anything happen.) 24. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  25. $\mathbb{E}hf1$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  Black is not worse as he controls the only open file.

22... ♘xe4†?!

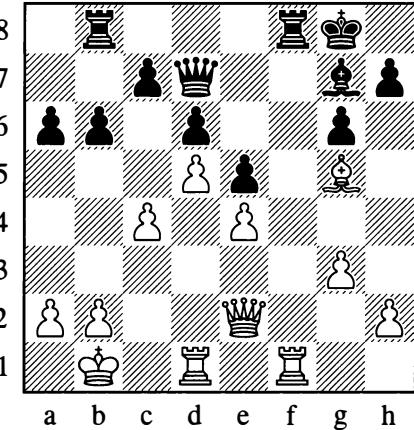
Black releases the tension on the kingside. It allows him to force simplifications on the f-file, on the other hand it virtually eliminates any remaining chances he had to obtain active play.

22... $b5!$ ? would have kept the possibility of creating some play on the b-file.

### 23. $\mathbb{f}xe4 \mathbb{W}f7$

Hansen drags a rook to the f-file in order to exchange it.

### 24. $\mathbb{R}hf1 \mathbb{W}d7$



### 25. $g4!$

Highlighting another advantage of White's 22nd move. Now the black queen will not be able to go to h3.

### 25... $\mathbb{R}xf1$ 26. $\mathbb{R}xf1 \mathbb{R}f8$ 27. $h3$

Karpov has no qualms about exchanging rooks, so he calmly defends the g4-pawn.

### 27... $h6$

27... $\mathbb{R}xf1\#$  28. $\mathbb{W}xf1$  is similar to the game.

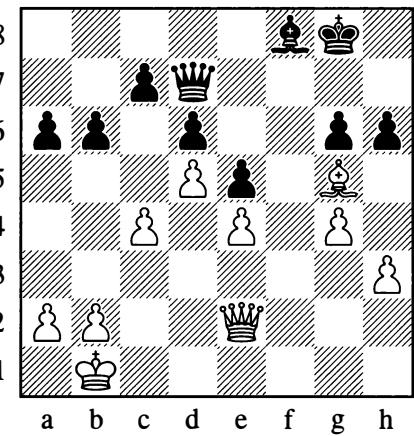
### 28. $\mathbb{R}xf8\#$

Karpov pointed out that after 28. $\mathbb{R}h4$   $\mathbb{R}f4$  29. $\mathbb{R}g3$   $\mathbb{R}xf1\#$  30. $\mathbb{W}xf1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  31. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $a5$  Black will solve most of his problems by activating

his bishop with ... $\mathbb{B}f6$ . Karpov takes the rook voluntarily as he wants to keep his bishop on the c1-h6 diagonal.

### 28... $\mathbb{R}xf8$

28... $\mathbb{R}xf8$  29. $\mathbb{W}f3\#$  30. $\mathbb{B}e8$  30. $\mathbb{R}h4!$  is troublesome for Black, as pointed out by Karpov.



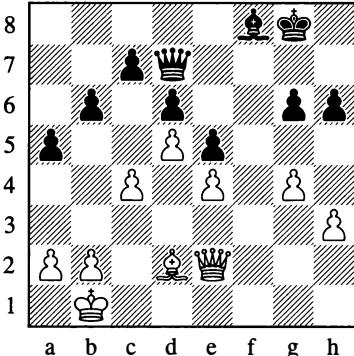
### 29. $\mathbb{R}d2$

Karpov feels that the bishop should help to carry out the b4-advance.

### 29... $\mathbb{B}g7$

Hansen wants to improve his bishop.

With 29... $a5!$ ? Black anticipates his opponent's queenside pawn advance.



The idea should be sound, although it

carries certain risks, for instance in the event of a queen exchange the white king may be able to penetrate using the light squares on the queenside. It is hard to judge the merits of such a move under the pressure of a ticking clock, even for a fine grandmaster like the Dane. White has three main ideas:

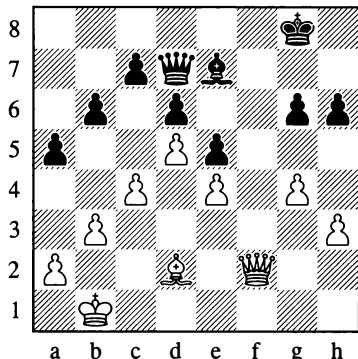
a) 30.h4 ♜e7 31.h5 ♜g7 (31...♜g5 32.♕xg5 hxg5 33.hxg6 ♜e8 is a difficult queen ending, although Black may be able to hold it.) 32.♗f3 ♜g5 (32...♜e8 33.hxg6 ♜xg6 34.♗f5 is somewhat inconvenient for Black.) 33.♕xg5 hxg5 Black should be able to hold this queen ending.

b) 30.b3

Karpov evaluates this move as clearly better for White, without any further analysis.

30...♜e7! 31.♗f2  
31.♗f1 ♜g7 32.♗c1 h5 Black gets counterplay.

31.♕xh6 g5 Black traps the bishop in an original way. 32.♗f3 ♜h7 (32...♜e8 33.♗f7) 33.♗f8 ♜d8 White has no winning chances with the buried bishop.



31...♜g5?

The simplification favours White.

31...♜g7! gives good drawing chances.

32.♕xg5 hxg5 33.♗f6 ♜f7

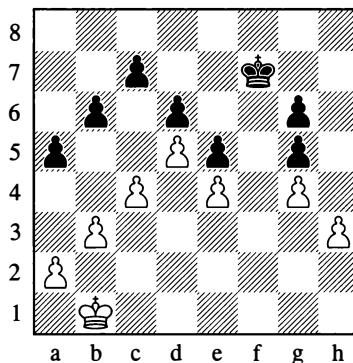
33...♜h7 34.♗b2! White will soon be able to take the g5-pawn.

34.♗xf7†!

If 34.♗xg5? ♜f1† 35.♗b2 ♜f2† Black either gets a perpetual or takes the e4-pawn.

34...♜xf7

It is instructive to see how White can win this endgame.



35.♗b2

Going for the kingside achieves nothing:  
35.♗c2 ♜f6 36.♗d2 ♜f7 37.♗e3 ♜f6  
38.♗f3 ♜g7 39.♗g3 ♜h7 40.h4 gxh4†  
41.♗xh4 ♜h6 Black draws easily.

It would be a mistake to advance the pawns before the king: 35.a3? ♜e7 36.♗b2 ♜d7  
37.b4 axb4 38.axb4 c5! 39.♗b3 (39.bxc5  
bxc5) 39...♜c7 40.♗a4 cxb4 41.♗b4 ♜b8  
Black blocks the invasion.

35...♜e7 36.♗a3 ♜d7 37.♗a4 c6

The best chance, but it is still not good enough.

37...♜c8 38.♗b5 ♜b7 39.a3 Black is in zugzwang.

38.a3 ♜c7 39.dxc6 ♜xc6 40.b4 axb4 41.axb4  
b5† 42.cxb5† ♜b6 43.♗b3

White's outside passed pawn decides the game.

c) 30.♗f3

White tries to stop ...♜e7 and control the f-file.

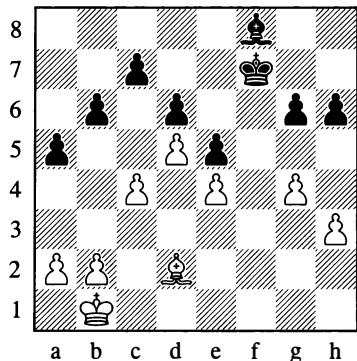
30...♜f7

30...♜e7 31.♕xh6 g5 32.h4 gxh4 33.g5 h3  
34.g6 ♜e8 35.♗h5 ♜f6 36.♗e3 is unpleasant for Black.

30... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  32. $\mathbb{W}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$   
 33. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  Black faces a difficult queen endgame a pawn down, but his active king gives him some drawing chances.

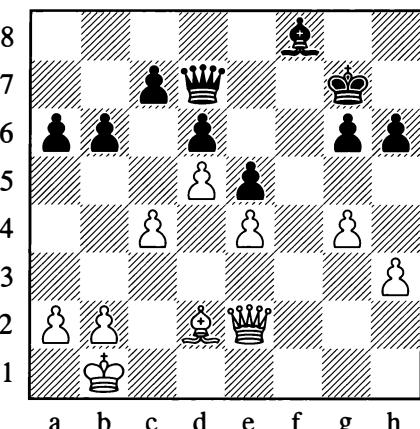
30... $\mathbb{W}e7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32.b3  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  33.a3  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   
 34.b4 axb4 35.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Black holds.  
 31. $\mathbb{W}xf7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$

The bishop endgame is not much fun for Black, but he should be able to hold it.



32. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}a4$  c6! 35. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  36.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$

I do not see a way for White to crack his opponent's fortress.



**30.c5!**

Karpov opens the position in order to increase his chances to invade.

**30...dxc5**

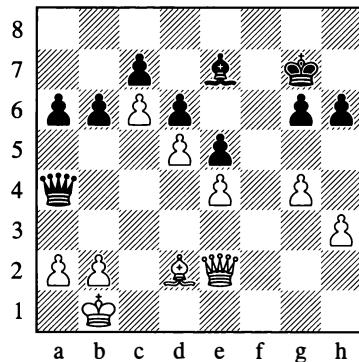
30...b5? is feeble: 31.c6  $\mathbb{W}e8$  (31... $\mathbb{W}f7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 32. $\mathbb{W}e3$  (or 32. $\mathbb{Q}a5$ ) 32... $\mathbb{W}f7$  (32... $\mathbb{g}5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ) 33. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  There is not much Black can do to prevent the coming invasion.

30... $\mathbb{W}a4$ ?! Activating the queen is insufficient, although White will have to play accurately to prove it. There are two main options.

a) 31.c6?

White fixes the c7-pawn and pushed his pawn closer to the promotion square. On the other hand White risks allowing the position to become so closed as to enable Black to build a fortress. Even though this plan is ultimately incorrect, it is nonetheless interesting to analyse.

31... $\mathbb{Q}e7$



From this position White has two interesting options.

a1) 32.b3

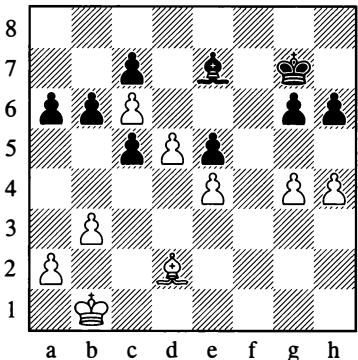
Forcing the queen to declare her intentions.

32... $\mathbb{W}d4$ !

This looks like the most convincing route to a draw.

32... $\mathbb{W}a3$  might just be sufficient as well:

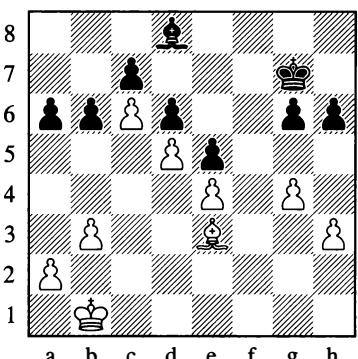
33. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ! (33...b5? 34. $\mathbb{W}c1$   $\mathbb{W}xc1\#$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  wins as the king walks to b4.)  
 34. $\mathbb{W}xc5$  (After 34. $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Black's active queen enables him to hold the balance.)  
 34...dxc5 35.h4



35...h5! (35... $\mathbb{Q}xh4?$  36.g5!+–; 35...g5 36.hxg5 hxg5 37. $\mathbb{Q}e3!$  a5 This stops b4, but opens the way for the white king. [37... $\mathbb{Q}f7?$  38.b4! White breaks through; 37...b5 38.b4! cxb4 39. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  White wins.] 38. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  [40... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  41. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  42.d6+–] 41. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  47.a4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  White wins the g5 pawn and the game.) 36.gxh5 (36.g5 b5 37. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black's fortress withstands the pressure.) 36...gxh5 37. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  I see no way for White to penetrate.

33. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$

The fortress seems to hold, for instance:

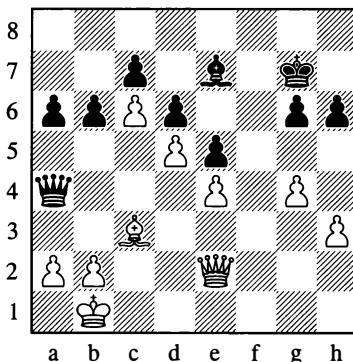


35. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  g5 36. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38.b4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  39.b5 a5

White can sacrifice on a5 but that is not enough for a win, as the black king gets to b8 in time.

a2) 32. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$

This move was given by Karpov in his annotations. White takes the d4-square away from the queen.



32... $\mathbb{Q}g5?!$

This natural move is an inaccuracy, but not a fatal one.

There is a more convincing route to a draw: 32...a5! 33.a3  $\mathbb{W}b3$  34. $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{W}d1\#$  35. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{W}c2!$  36. $\mathbb{W}c8$  a4! Black secures a perpetual check.

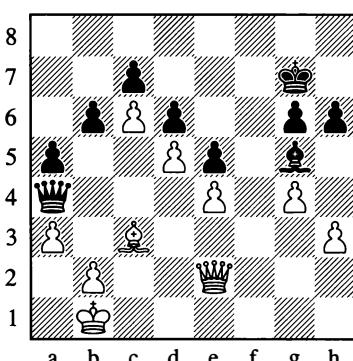
33.a3!

With the idea of  $\mathbb{Q}a2$  and b3.

33... $\mathbb{Q}f4$

33... $\mathbb{W}b3?$  allows 34. $\mathbb{W}xa6$ .

33...a5? is refuted beautifully:



34.h4!! (34. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1!$  35.h4 g5 Black narrowly holds.) 34... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  (34... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  35. $\mathbb{Q}a2!+–$ )

35. $\mathbb{Q}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  36.g5! h5 37. $\mathbb{W}f1+–$

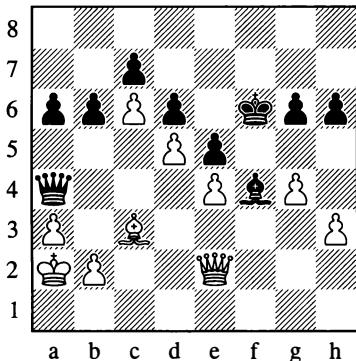
34. $\mathbb{Q}a2!$

White sets up a wicked trap.

34... $\mathbb{Q}f6?$

34... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  35. $\mathbb{Q}b4 \mathbb{Q}e7$  36.b3  $\mathbb{W}b5$  37. $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $axb5$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  is a winning ending.

Correct is 34... $\mathbb{Q}f7!$  35.g5 (35.b3  $\mathbb{W}b5$ ) 35...h5 36.h4  $\mathbb{W}b5$  and it looks like Black escapes.



35.g5!!

With this lovely move White opens the path for his queen to invade.

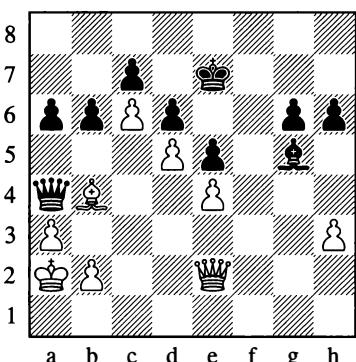
35... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$

35... $hxg5$  36.b3  $\mathbb{W}b5$  37. $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{W}f1$  38. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  39. $\mathbb{W}d7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  40. $\mathbb{W}c8 \mathbb{W}f2\#$  41. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  g4 42. $\mathbb{W}h8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  43.h4# wins.

36. $\mathbb{Q}b4!$

Blocking the queen's path to the c4-square, and hinting at a possible sacrifice on d6.

36... $\mathbb{Q}e7$



37.h4!!

37. $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{W}b5!$  Black gets enough counterplay for a perpetual.

37... $\mathbb{Q}f4$

37... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  38. $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{W}b5$  39. $\mathbb{W}xh4\#$  wins.

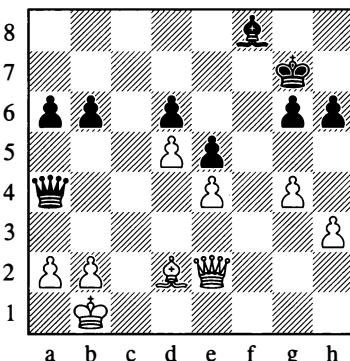
38. $\mathbb{W}g4 \mathbb{W}b5$  39. $\mathbb{W}e6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  40. $\mathbb{W}c8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  41. $\mathbb{W}xc7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{W}xd6\#$

White wins. However, I must re-emphasize that this beautiful win only arose after some inaccuracies on Black's side. Therefore if White is to find a winning continuation he must deviate at an earlier stage.

b) 31.cxb6!

White requires a bit more open space if he is to win the game. The winning method was shown by Karpov in his annotations.

31...cxb6



32.b3!  $\mathbb{W}d4$  33. $\mathbb{W}e3$ !

White traps the queen in order to exchange it. The resulting same-coloured bishop ending is winning for White, as Black will be forced to weaken his queenside pawns.

33... $\mathbb{W}xe3$

33... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  34. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  exd4 35. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  wins.

34. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  b5

Had Black been able to put his bishop on d8, he would have been able to draw, but now the queenside weakening proves fatal.

35. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$

After 36... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  38.a4 bxa4 39. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  White invades.

37. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$

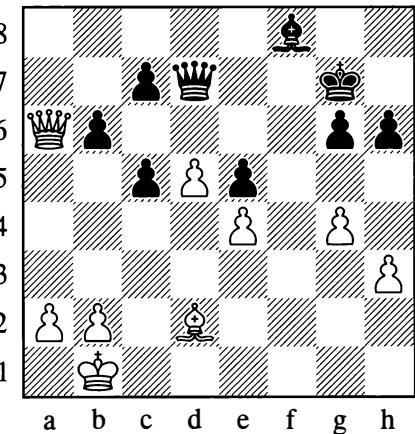
Preventing the check on e1.

37... $\mathbb{Q}f2$

37... $\mathbb{Q}d8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  h5 39.a4+–  
38. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  39.a4 bxa4 40. $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ !

This winning line was pointed out by Karpov himself, although interestingly he only evaluated it as “±” whereas in reality the final position is just winning for White.

### 31. $\mathbb{W}xa6$



### 31...h5

Hansen decides to embark on kingside counterplay.

### 31...c6!?

This move should also suffice for a draw, although Black will have to find a few difficult moves along the way.

### 32. $\mathbb{Q}c3$

If 32. $\mathbb{W}d3$  cxd5 33.exd5  $\mathbb{W}a4$  Black holds.

### 32...cxd5 33. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ † $\mathbb{Q}f7$ !

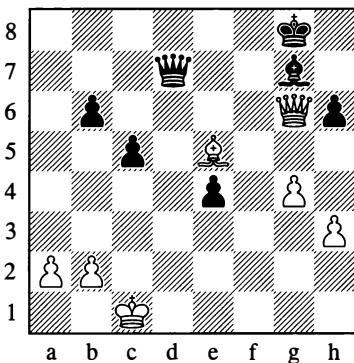
33... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  34. $\mathbb{W}xb6$  dxe4 35. $\mathbb{W}c7$  White's passed a-pawn decides the game.

### 34. $\mathbb{W}f1$ †

Here is another nice line: 34. $\mathbb{W}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$ !! In his analysis Karpov misses this nice defensive move. (If 34...dxe4 35. $\mathbb{W}f6$ †  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  36. $\mathbb{W}xg6$ †  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  37. $\mathbb{W}b6$ †  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  38. $\mathbb{W}b8$ † White exchanges queens and wins.) 35. $\mathbb{W}c7$  (Or 35. $\mathbb{W}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{W}xe4$ † and Black is safe.) 35... $\mathbb{W}xc7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  dxe4 It is unlikely that White's advantage will be enough to win the game.

34... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{W}f6$  dxe4 36. $\mathbb{W}xg6$ †  $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
37. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

Black's situation looks desperate, but he has a narrow path to survival.



### 37...e3!

37... $\mathbb{W}f7$ ? 38. $\mathbb{W}xf7$ †  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   
40. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  41.h4!  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  wins.

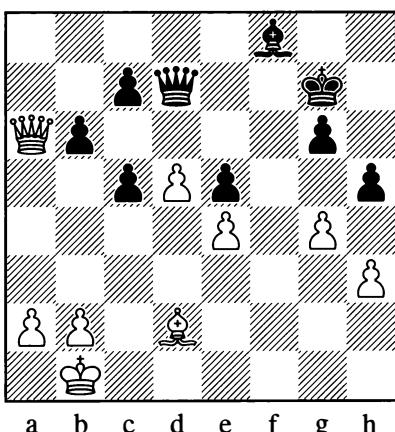
### 38. $\mathbb{W}xg7$ †

38. $\mathbb{W}d6$  e2  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  draws.

38... $\mathbb{W}xg7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  41.h4  
41. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh3$  is a simple draw.

41... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  43.g5 hxg5 44.hxg5  
 $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$

Black's king gets back to the queenside in time.



### 32. $\mathbb{W}e2$ hxg4 33. $\mathbb{W}xg4$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$ !?

The Danish grandmaster makes a poor

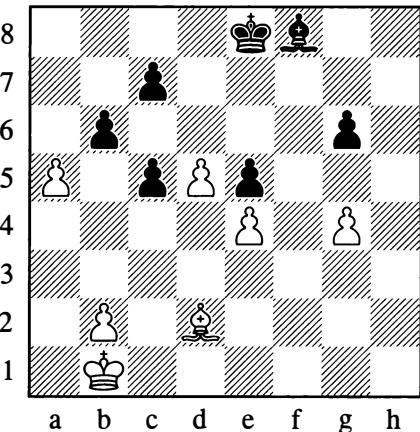
practical decision, notwithstanding the fact that the position remains a draw with perfect play. Inferior same-coloured bishop endgames are extremely difficult to hold over the board.

33... $\mathbb{W}b5!$  would have maintained a more comfortable drawing margin. By keeping the queens on the board, Black prevents his opponent's king from moving freely. 34. $\mathbb{W}f3$  c6 35.h4 (35. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$ ) 35...cxd5 36.exd5  $\mathbb{W}a4$  White king is too open to win, for instance 37.h5 gxh5 38. $\mathbb{W}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}e4\#$  39. $\mathbb{Q}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  and the draw is in sight.

### 34.hxg4 $\mathbb{Q}f7$ 35.a4!

Karpov wants to exchange his a-pawn for the opposing b-pawn before he plays b4. In his subsequent annotations he showed why this was necessary: 35. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  36.b4 cxb4 37. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  c6! White cannot invade.

### 35... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 36.a5



### 36... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

#### 36...bxa5?!

Despite its ugly appearance, this was also a valid defence.

### 37. $\mathbb{Q}xa5$

37. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  does not change much.

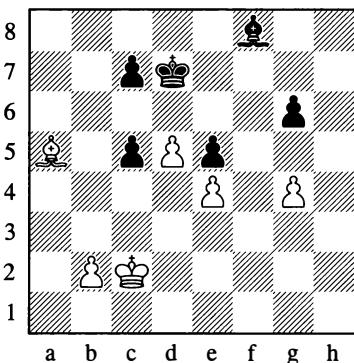
37. $\mathbb{Q}c2$ ! is interesting, but ultimately

insufficient: 37... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  c6! 39. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  a4 40. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  cxd5† 41. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  c4 42. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  Black holds.

### 37... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

It looks unpleasant to have the c5- and e5-pawns on dark squares, but White is unable to attack them both at the same time.

### 38. $\mathbb{Q}c2$



From here Black must select the correct drawing plan.

#### a) 38...c6?

This tempting move is in fact a decisive mistake.

### 39. $\mathbb{Q}d3!$

39.dxc6†  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (40... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  42.g5  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}b8$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  45.b3  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  46. $\mathbb{Q}a7+$ ) 41. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c1$  42.b3  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  Black should be able to draw.

### 39... $\mathbb{Q}h6$

39...cxd5 40.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  42.b3  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  43. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  44. $\mathbb{Q}a7$  wins.

39... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  40. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  cxd5† 41.exd5 Black has no good defence against  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ .

### 40. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ $\mathbb{Q}e3$

40... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  41. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  42.b4+–

### 41. $\mathbb{Q}b6$ $\mathbb{Q}d4$ 42.b3 $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 43. $\mathbb{Q}a7$ !

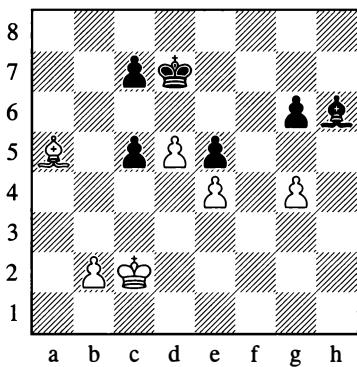
Black is in zugzwang, for instance:

43...cxd5† 44.exd5 e4 45.c5+–

#### b) 38... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ !

By leaving his pawns in place, Black prevents

the enemy bishop from utilizing the b6-square, which should enable him to draw.

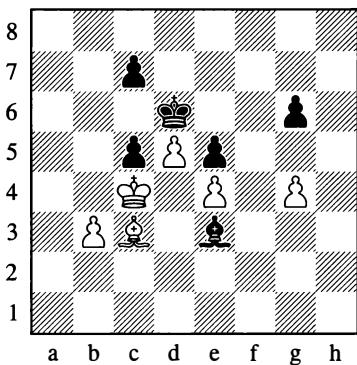


39.♔d3 ♕c1 40.♕c3 ♔d6 41.♔c4 ♕e3

From this position I have not been able to find a winning plan for White, although he can set a devious trap.

42.b3!

42.♗b5 ♕d4! draws without too many problems.



42...c6!

Black must act promptly as after 42...♔f2?

43.♗b5! White has a strong plan of invading with his bishop on the kingside with the aim of getting to the f8-square.

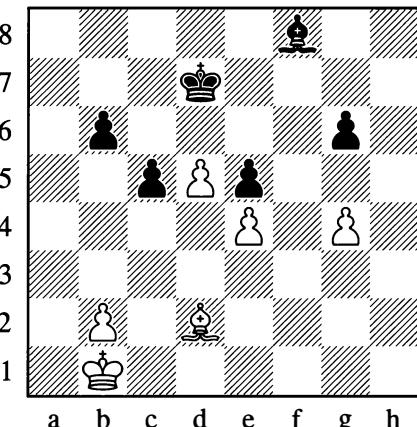
43.♔a5

Trying to set up the same winning plan as in line a) above, but here Black has enough time to arrange a better defence.

43...♕c1! 44.♗b6 ♕a3

White has no way through. (44...cxsd5† 45.exd5 ♕a3 is also fine.)

37.axb6 cxb6



38.♕c3

The immediate 38.b4? is premature: 38...c4 39.b5 ♕c5 40.♗b2 ♕d4† 41.♔a3 c3! The position is equal as pointed out by Karpov. If White takes the c3-pawn then the pawn ending is an easy draw.

38...♕d6

It is not easy for Black to decide how to defend the e5-pawn. There were two other possibilities.

38...♔d6?!

This move is playable in itself, but it does not make much sense as in order for Black to draw, he will need to use a defensive method shown in the notes to the main game. Attempts to use the king actively only lead to disaster.

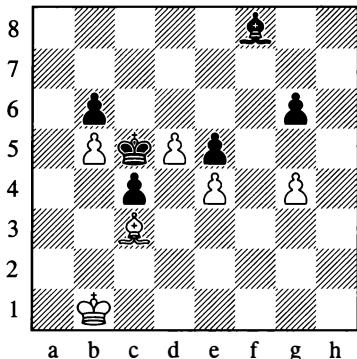
39.b4! c4

39...♗g7 transposes to 38...♗g7 as analysed below.

40.b5 ♕c5?

Black is in no position to challenge his opponent to a pawn-race.

Instead he should prefer 40...♗e7! 41.♔a2 ♗f6 42.♗b4† ♗d7 when his fortress should hold firm. Compare 39...c4? in the notes to the main game.



41.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$   
 42...  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  44.  $e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   
 $b5$  46.  $d6\#$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  48.  $g5!+-$   
 43.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$   
 43...  $b5$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}d4\#!$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}b4+-$   
 44.  $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}b4\#!$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  46.  $e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  47.  $d6$

White's pawns are too strong.

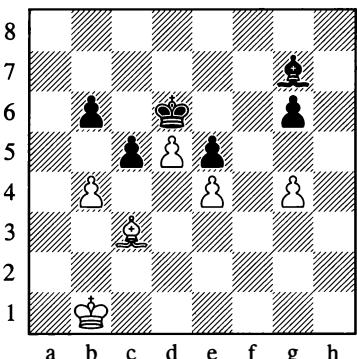
38...  $\mathbb{Q}g7?$

Like the game continuation, this leads to a difficult endgame for Black, but one which can be drawn with correct defence.

39.  $b4!$

If 39.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $b5!$  Black draws more comfortably as he is ready to block the queenside.

39...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$



White has a few possibilities from this position.

a) 40.  $\mathbb{Q}c2?$  sets a small trap: 40...  $c4?!$  41.  $b5!$   $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  (41...  $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  should still draw – see the note

to Black's 39th move in the main game.) 42.  $g5$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}b2!$  White wins by dominating the enemy bishop.

Instead Black should prefer 40...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  followed by giving up a pawn on the queenside. This should enable him to draw using the method shown in the note to Black's 52nd move in the game.

b) 40.  $g5$

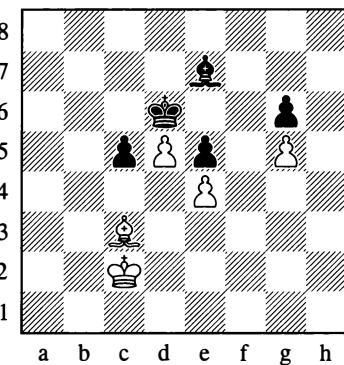
I would evaluate this move as slightly less precise than the immediate capture on  $c5$ , although it does set one particularly devious trap.

40...  $\mathbb{Q}f8!$

40...  $b5$  41.  $bxc5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  reaches line b) below.

Here is the banana skin which Black must avoid: 40...  $c4?$  41.  $b5!$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (41...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}b4+-$ ) 42.  $d6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (42...  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}b4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  Black will soon succumb to zugzwang.) 43.  $\mathbb{Q}b2!$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  White prevails, as  $d7$  will win the black bishop.

41.  $bxc5\#$   $bxc5$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$



The attack on the  $g5$ -pawn ties up White's bishop. The first player can still press, but it is doubtful that he can win.

43.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

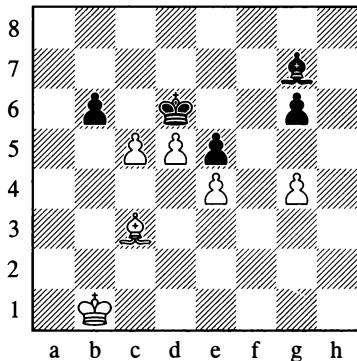
44...  $\mathbb{Q}b6$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5?!$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  White wins.

45.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  46.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  47.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  48.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$

White wins the c-pawn, but the ending should still be a draw. A similar situation arises in the main game, but with the white pawn on g4 instead of the more exposed g5-square. Black is drawing there too, so the exposed pawn on g5 can only help him.

b) 40.bxc5†!

This looks like a better winning attempt. Now Black must make a decision.



40... $\mathbb{Q}xc5?$

This allows White to win in a most instructive fashion.

40...bxc5! should draw, as long as Black is willing to sacrifice his c-pawn. If he tries to preserve material equality for too long then he loses, for instance 41. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$  43. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f2$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g1$  45. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c6+$ . Instead he should play ...c4 at some point, reaching the same type of endgame as in the note to Black's 52nd move in the main game.

41.g5!

After 41. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  b5 White cannot win as his bishop has to guard the d4-square.

41...b5 42. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  b4 43. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$

43... $\mathbb{Q}b6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  also loses, albeit by a single tempo: 45.d6!  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  (45... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  [or 47. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ ] 47... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a3+$ ) 46. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ † 48. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  49. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  50. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$

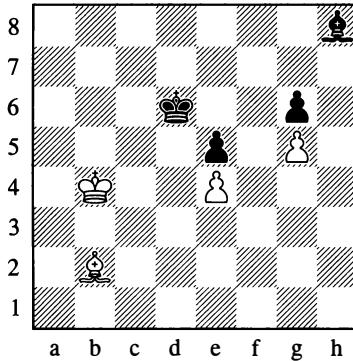
51. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  52.e5  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  53. $\mathbb{Q}d5$  White wins.

44. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

44... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}a4+$ –

45.d6  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$

46... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ +–



47. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

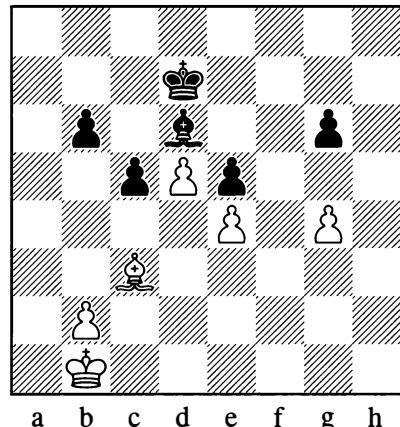
White wins thanks to the extreme passivity of the enemy bishop.

47... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  48. $\mathbb{Q}a3$ +–  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$

49... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  50. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  51. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ +–

50. $\mathbb{Q}f8$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  51. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  52. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  53. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  54. $\mathbb{Q}f8$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  55. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  56. $\mathbb{Q}e6$

White invades and wins.



39.b4!

White has to act quickly before Black gets a chance to play ...b5. Now the defender must make a difficult decision.

**39...cxb4**

If Black is to draw the game then he must build a fortress. The question is whether he should try to do it with or without b-pawns on the board. If he keeps them on the board, then it will be harder for White to invade on the queenside as the position is closed. On the other hand it will mean having another potentially vulnerable pawn on a dark square.

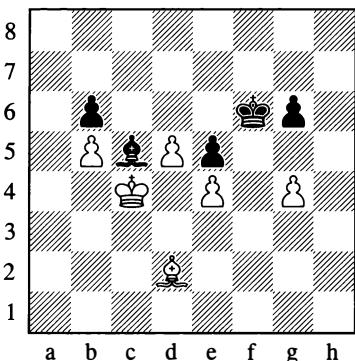
Having analysed the position I believe Black can draw with either approach, but taking on b4 seems to be the slightly more straightforward way.

**39...c4? 40.b5**

The c4-pawn is doomed, but the blocked nature of the position makes it hard for the white king to penetrate.

**40... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  42. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  43. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$**

Crucially the pawn ending will be drawn as long as the black king can reach the d6-square in time.

**45. $\mathbb{Q}c3$** 

**45. $\mathbb{Q}b4?$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**  is a draw.

**45.d6?!** Sacrificing the pawn is a nice idea, but it seems Black can defend here too.

**45... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  46.d7** (**46. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$** ) **46... $\mathbb{Q}e7!$**  Black simply refuses to take the pawn. **47. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  48. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$**  (**48... $\mathbb{Q}c7??$**  loses to **49. $\mathbb{Q}g5$** ; **48... $\mathbb{Q}g5!?$**  **49. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**  looks playable though.) Black holds the endgame.

**45... $\mathbb{Q}d6$** 

**45... $\mathbb{Q}g5?$  46.d6  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  wins.**

Quite incredibly Black seems to be drawing this endgame; at least I have not found any way to set up a zugzwang or invade.

**46. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  47. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  48. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  48. $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  50. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  defends. The attempt to invade on the king-side leads nowhere: 51. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  52. $\mathbb{Q}f3!?$   $\mathbb{Q}d6!$  (but not 52... $\mathbb{Q}xb5??$  53. $\mathbb{Q}e7!+-$ ) By now it is White who must work for a draw.**

**48... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  49. $\mathbb{Q}d3$**

**49.d6**  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  50. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

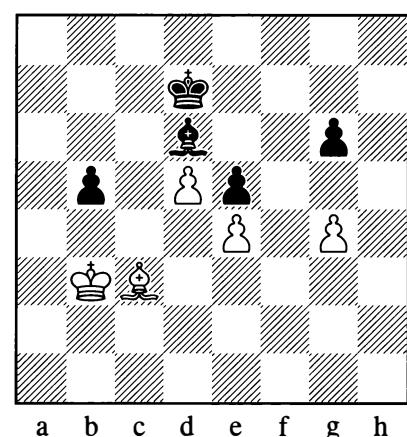
**49... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  50. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  51. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  52. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

White has not made any progress.

**40. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  b5 42. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$**

**43. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$**

Karpov collects the pawn. It is likely that Hansen overlooked the zugzwang that follows, nevertheless the result still hangs in the balance.

**43... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$** **45. $\mathbb{Q}b2!!$** 

After this superb move Black is in zugzwang.

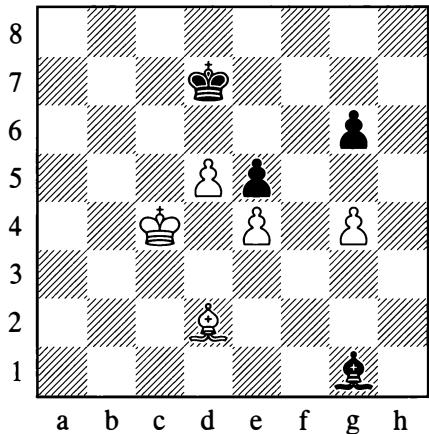
**45...b4!**

Hansen does not panic, but finds the best defence and gives up the b-pawn in order to play for a fortress, which happens relatively often in same-coloured bishop endings.

45... $\mathbb{B}c8$  was not helping, and after 46. $\mathbb{B}a3$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  47. $\mathbb{B}f8!$  White wins the b5-pawn.

Unfortunately the pawn endings are hopeless for Black. For instance: 45... $\mathbb{B}c7$  46. $\mathbb{B}a3$   $\mathbb{B}xa3$  47. $\mathbb{B}xa3$  g5 48. $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{B}b6$  49.d6  $\mathbb{B}c6$  50.d7  $\mathbb{B}xd7$  51. $\mathbb{B}xb5$  White wins trivially.

**46. $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{B}c5$  47. $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}g1$  48. $\mathbb{B}xb4$   $\mathbb{B}f2$  49. $\mathbb{B}c4$   $\mathbb{B}g1$**



**50. $\mathbb{B}d3!$**

White is clearly unable to drive his opponent's king back, so he must work to restrict the enemy bishop. Karpov starts by taking away the a7-g1 diagonal.

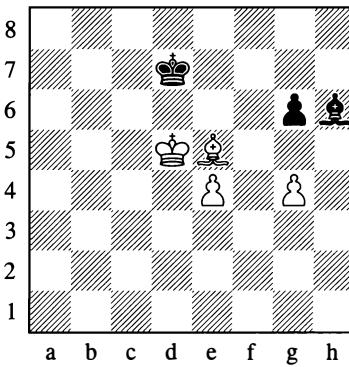
**50... $\mathbb{B}c5$  51. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}e7$  52. $\mathbb{B}c4$**

52.g5 With the bishop on e7, this method of restriction is ineffective: 52... $\mathbb{B}c7$  53. $\mathbb{B}c4$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  54. $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  55. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{B}d6$  56. $\mathbb{B}e3$  (or 56. $\mathbb{B}b4$ !  $\mathbb{B}d7$  57. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{B}d6$ ) 56... $\mathbb{B}d7$  57. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}e7$ ! Black succeeds in blocking the invasion attempts.

**52... $\mathbb{B}a3?$**

Hansen commits a decisive error. Incredibly it turns out that the black bishop does not have enough squares available on the queenside.

52... $\mathbb{B}h4!$  was necessary, as the bishop has enough space on the kingside to avoid a zugzwang scenario. When Hansen wrote about this game in *Skakbladet*, a Danish chess magazine, he mentioned that Karpov showed him this move immediately after the game. 53. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}g5$  54.d6  $\mathbb{B}c6$  55.d7  $\mathbb{B}d8$  56. $\mathbb{B}a7!$  White must force his opponent to take the d7-pawn. (56. $\mathbb{B}b4$   $\mathbb{B}c7$ ! holds) 56... $\mathbb{B}xd7$  57. $\mathbb{B}d5$   $\mathbb{B}f6$  58. $\mathbb{B}b8$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  59. $\mathbb{B}xe5$   $\mathbb{B}h6$



Karpov evaluates this ending as slightly better for White in his annotations. Indeed, there does not seem to be any way for White to win the g6-pawn.

**53. $\mathbb{B}d2!$**

Karpov fixes the black bishop to the queenside, and soon manages to trap it.

**53... $\mathbb{B}e7$  54. $\mathbb{B}c3$   $\mathbb{B}d6$**

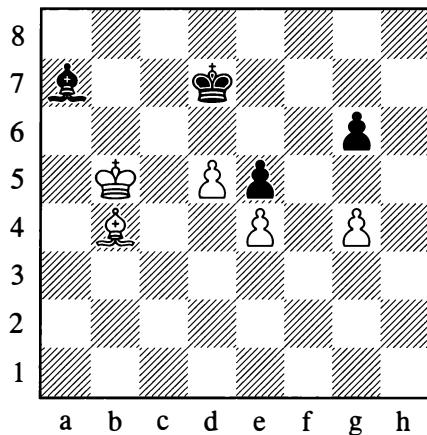
If 54... $\mathbb{B}f6$  55.g5!  $\mathbb{B}g7$  56. $\mathbb{B}b4!$  White traps the bishop and wins easily: 56... $\mathbb{B}c7$  57. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  58. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{B}h8$  59. $\mathbb{B}f8$   $\mathbb{B}e8$  60. $\mathbb{B}c7$   $\mathbb{B}xf8$  61.d6+–

**55. $\mathbb{B}b4!$   $\mathbb{B}b8$**

Alternatively 55... $\mathbb{B}c7$  56. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  57. $\mathbb{B}c5$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  58.d6  $\mathbb{B}d8$  59. $\mathbb{B}a3$   $\mathbb{B}h4$  60. $\mathbb{B}c5$  wins.

**56.♗b5 ♜a7**

Allowing a pretty finish. Instead if 56...♜c7 57.♝f8 ♜d8 58.d6 ♜g5 59.♝c5 wins.

**57.♛c5 ♛b8 58.d6!**

**1–0**

Karpov beautifully traps Black's bishop. This was a highly instructive game, from which one can learn a lot about same-coloured bishop endgames. Here is a good piece of advice: if you have a worse position and are faced with a choice of whether to go for a same-coloured bishop endgame, then try to avoid it! Very often the inferior ending will turn out to be losing, and even if a sophisticated drawing method does exist, it is always hard to withstand the constant pressure over the board with a ticking clock.

In Round 8 equalized with the 4...♝d7 Caro-Kann against Almasi. Gradually he gained the upper hand, and Almasi unnecessarily sacrificed a pawn. The Hungarian grandmaster defended stubbornly, but Karpov eventually won the endgame. In the next game Karpov played supersolidly against Svidler's Grünfeld and the game never looked like being anything other than a draw.

In Round 10 Karpov played the Queen's Indian against Van Wely, who responded with the Petrosian System. Following an early queen exchange White had a slight edge thanks to his extra space, but Karpov gradually organized his position and equalized. White sacrificed a pawn and got decent compensation, but Karpov gradually neutralized his initiative and won with his extra material. In the final round Karpov only needed a draw to secure outright first place, so with the white pieces against Peter Leko, he played 1.d4 and offered a draw which was accepted. He finished with 7½/11, half a point clear of Sokolov and Kamsky.

## 1995 Summary

Spanish Team Championship: 1½/3 (+0 =3 –0)

EU Cup: 1/1 (+1 =0 –0)

Baden-Baden knockout (1st place): 7/8 (+6 =2 –0)

FIDE candidates semi-final match versus Gelfand, Sanghi Nagar: Won 6–3 (+4 =4 –1)

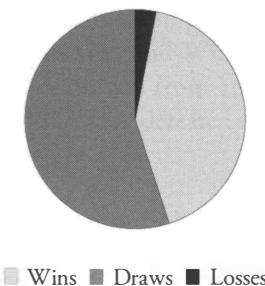
Linares (2nd place): 9/13 (+5 =8 –0)

Dos Hermanas (2nd-3rd place): 5½/9 (+3 =5 –1)

Dortmund (2nd place): 6½/9 (+4 =5 –0)

Groningen (1st place): 7½/11 (+4 =7 –0)

Total 69.8% (+27 =34 –2)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1996

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Rating 2770 (3 in the world)

Karpov began the year ranked third in the world, as he was narrowly overtaken by Kramnik. His first event of the year was the Spanish Team Championship. He started with two solid draws, with Black against Campora in a Caro-Kann, and White against Rogers in a Bogo-Indian. In the third round he managed to grind out a win from an almost dead-looking position against Cramling. In the fourth and final round Karpov defeated Gulko with the help of a nice exchange sacrifice, as shown in the notes to Game 40.

Karpov played a short, four-game match against the Yugoslavian (now Montenegrin) grandmaster Bozidar Ivanovic. The match took place in Podgorica, the capital of Montenegro. In the first game Ivanovic played the Panov against the Caro-Kann. At one point he declined a move repetition, and a complex position occurred with hanging pawns. Ivanovic sacrificed a pawn but then immediately made a tactical oversight, which allowed Karpov to win a piece and the game. Karpov won the second game. The third game was a quick draw in the Panov, and the fourth game was also drawn. Games 2 and 4 are not shown in the database. The final score of 3–1 was a decent result for Karpov.

According to the database, in 1996 Karpov played three games in the Yugoslav Team Championship, two of which were against Beliavsky. In the first game Karpov was a bit worse on the black side of a Catalan, but managed to hold the draw. In the second Beliavsky played the Tartakower System in the QGD. He got close to equality and later sacrificed a pawn for some activity. For a while he had sufficient compensation to maintain the balance, but he made a mistake in the endgame and Karpov punished him. Karpov's other game was against Kiril Georgiev, who played a Benko Gambit. Karpov held onto the extra pawn but was unable to make any headway in the major piece endgame, and had to settle for a draw.

Karpov also took part in a tournament in the same region, in Belgrade. His first opponent was Salov, who also tried the Benko Gambit. Once again Karpov held onto the extra pawn, but eventually he had to return it in order to neutralize his opponent's queenside pressure. The resulting position was equal and the players agreed a draw. In the second round Karpov had the white pieces again. His opponent was the Serbian grandmaster Zlatko Ilincic, who only played this one game against a world champion.

## Game 42

Anatoly Karpov – Zlatko Ilincic

Belgrade 1996

### 1. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Karpov probably chose this move order because his opponent sometimes played the Grünfeld.

**1...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 g6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4. e4 d6 5. d4 0–0**  
**6.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$**

Karpov plays the traditional main line for the first time since his 1991 match against Kasparov. In 1996 he played this variation four times, scoring two wins and two draws.

### 6... e5 7. 0–0 $\mathbb{Q}a6$

Ilincic had played this line before, so Karpov probably anticipated it.

Later in the year Kamsky chose the main line: 7...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  8. d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. b4  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  10.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  h6 11.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  12.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  a5 13. bxa5  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  15. c5 f5 16. cxd6 cxd6 17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  g5 18.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  g4 19.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  fxe4 20.  $\mathbb{Q}dxe4$  The strong knight gives White a positional advantage and he won convincingly, Karpov – Kamsky, Elista (7) 1996.

**8.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  c6 9.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  10. d5  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  a5**

### 12. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

Karpov provokes the following pawn move, which weakens Black's kingside slightly.

### 12... h6 13. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}c7?$

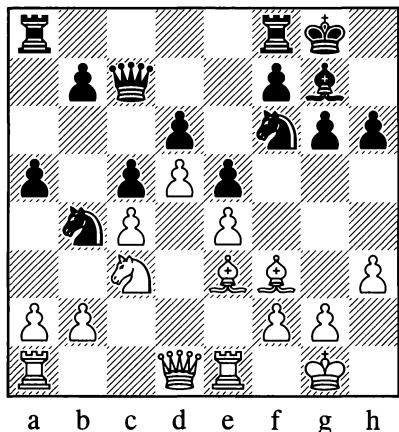
This move was a novelty at the time and has not been repeated. 13...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and 13... c5 are the normal moves.

### 14. h3 $\mathbb{Q}xf3?$

Giving up the bishop results in a passive position. More logical was 14...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$

$\mathbb{Q}h7$  although Black remains somewhat worse here too. White can choose between the calm 16. a3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}ab1$  and the more ambitious 16. c5?! cxd5 17. exd5, taking advantage of the fact that 17... dxcc5?! 18. d6 is strong.

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ c5



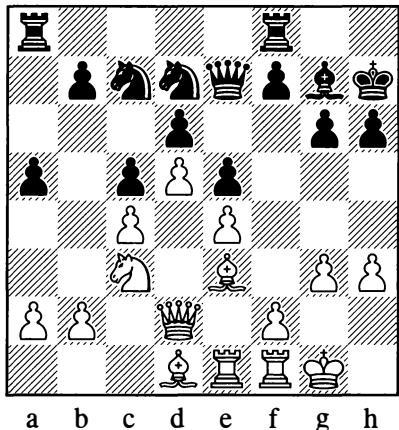
### 16. $\mathbb{Q}f1!$

Karpov gets ready to gain space on the kingside.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Having provoked the weakening ...h6 earlier, Karpov wins a tempo.

**17...  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  20. g3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$**



**21.♗c2**

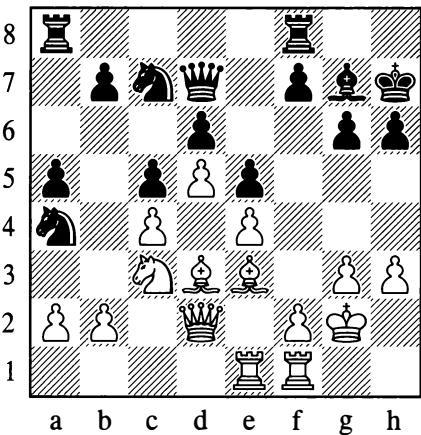
Karpov improves his bishop, which now stands on the same diagonal as the enemy king. Now he is ready or almost ready (he could still improve his king slightly by placing it on g2 or h2) to advance his f-pawn.

**21...♝b6**

Ilincic wants to keep Karpov busy on the queenside.

**22.♕d3 ♜d7 23.♗g2 ♜a4**

Ilincic continues to play sensibly. Having less space, it makes sense for him to exchange a pair of pieces. By exchanging White's last remaining knight, he also increases the potential value of his own knight.



**24.♗b1!**

Karpov reacts to the new situation and prepares to fight for the b-file. It is instructive to observe how quickly and effectively Karpov changes his focus from one flank to the other.

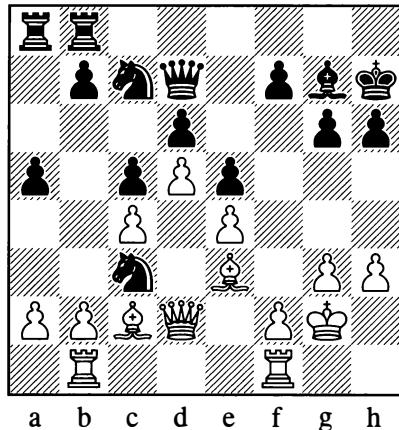
Avoiding exchanges with 24.♗d1 would have allowed Black to obtain some counterplay with 24...b5!.

**24...♝fb8 25.♗c2**

Karpov forces his opponent to make a decision regarding the a4-knight.

**25...♞xc3**

25...♝b6 can be met by 26.♗d3 intending f4.



**26.bxc3!**

Karpov accepts a structural weakening, having correctly judged that the benefits associated with the open b-file are far more significant. Besides, after 26.♗xc3 b5! Black liberates his position and obtains some counterplay.

**26...a4**

Black had to make a difficult decision between several somewhat difficult defensive options. With the text move Black prepares ...b5, but Karpov never gives him a chance to play it.

The immediate 26...b5? is impossible due to 27.cxb5 ♜xb5 28.♗a4 with a lethal pin.

**26...b6!**

This would have been the best chance. Black prevents the rook invasion and prepares ...b5 more slowly.

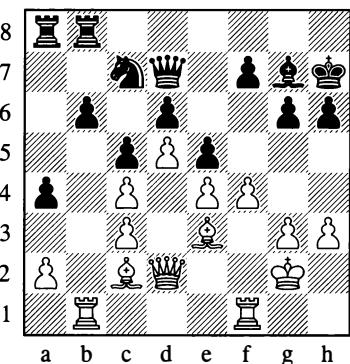
**27.f4**

27.a4 is quite a radical measure. White prevents his opponent's queenside counterplay, but also limits his own active prospects on that flank. White still has the advantage, as he will develop a lasting

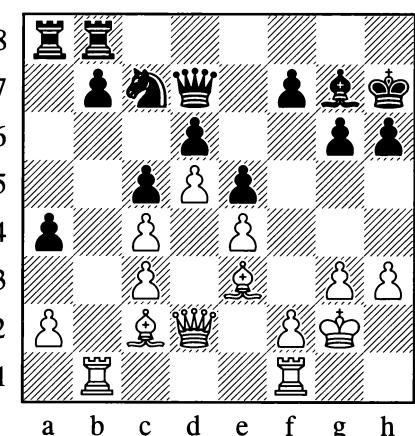
initiative on the kingside. Nevertheless Black's defensive task is simpler than in the game; his b-pawn demands only minimal attention, and most of his pieces will be able to partake in the defence of the kingside.

27... $\mathbb{a}4$

27... $\mathbb{e}xf4$  28. $\mathbb{g}xf4$  b5 29. $\mathbb{c}xb5$   $\mathbb{d}xb5$  30. $\mathbb{a}4$   $\mathbb{a}xc3$  31. $\mathbb{w}d3$   $\mathbb{b}b4$  Black is surviving for the moment, but the pin is most awkward for him.



From the present position Black certainly stands worse, but at least he will be able to generate some activity with ...b5. It would have been interesting to see whether Karpov would have chosen to gain space with 28.f5 or look for play on the f-file after 28.fxe5 dxe5.



27. $\mathbb{a}b6!$

Karpov prevents ...b5 and fixes the b-pawn

on its starting square, where it may become vulnerable. The rook move also makes f4 more dangerous, as ...exf4 might be met by  $\mathbb{a}xf4$  hitting the d6-pawn.

The immediate 27.f4? is a mistake due to 27... $\mathbb{e}xf4$  28. $\mathbb{g}xf4$  b5! When Black has decent counterplay.

27... $\mathbb{a}a7$

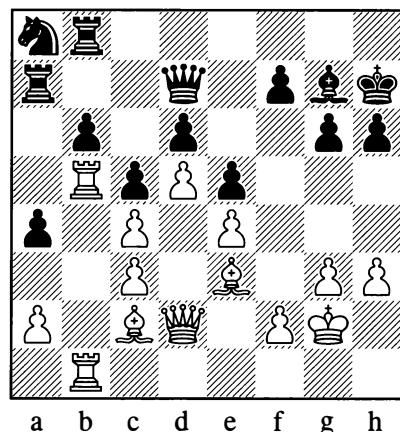
Ilinic prepares to push the rook away; perhaps he still hoped to carry out ...b5.

27... $\mathbb{a}a6$  deserved attention. 28. $\mathbb{a}xa6$  (After 28. $\mathbb{a}fb1$   $\mathbb{a}xb6$  29. $\mathbb{a}xb6$  White is still better, but there is no doubt that the exchange of a pair of rooks eases Black's defensive task.) 28... $\mathbb{b}xa6$  (28... $\mathbb{d}xa6$  29. $\mathbb{w}d1$  a3 30. $\mathbb{w}c1$  White wins a pawn.) 29. $\mathbb{w}d1$  a3 (29... $\mathbb{a}b2?$  30. $\mathbb{a}xa4$   $\mathbb{w}e7$  31. $\mathbb{a}b3$  White traps the rook.) 30. $\mathbb{a}4$   $\mathbb{w}d8$  31. $\mathbb{a}c1$   $\mathbb{a}a8$  32. $\mathbb{a}xa3$   $\mathbb{a}b6$  33. $\mathbb{a}b3$  White has an extra pawn but it is doubled. It is hard to say whether this or the game continuation gave better drawing chances.

28. $\mathbb{a}fb1$

White's pressure on the b-file will not win the game by itself, but it is useful to tie up the enemy pieces for a few moves.

28... $\mathbb{d}a8$  29. $\mathbb{a}6b5$  b6



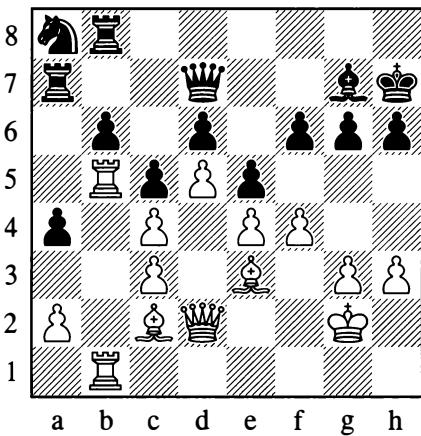
**30.f4!**

Karpov gains space and switches side once again. White now threatens to win a pawn by taking on e5.

**30...f6!?**

The Serbian grandmaster sets up a wall of pawns, but weakens his light squares severely.

30... $\mathbb{E}e8$  was a better defensive move. Black's position remains difficult, but at least the f7-pawn helps to guard a few light squares. I suspect that Karpov would have pushed with 31.f5 all the same.

**31.f5!**

Karpov gains more space and opens up the light squares on the kingside.

**31...g5**

Other moves would have been equally depressing for Black. After the text move, the situation on the kingside strongly resembles that from Karpov's classic win over Unzicker from 1974 – see Game 37 of the first volume.

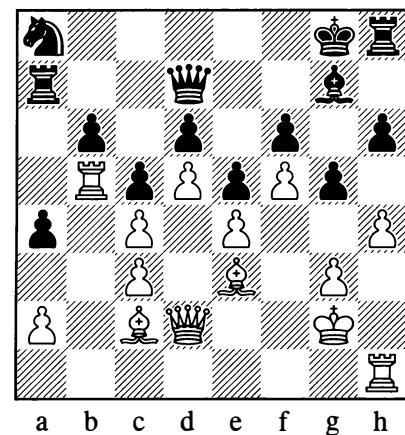
**32.h4**

Karpov prepares to open a file in order to invade.

**32... $\mathbb{E}h8$** 

By limiting his opponent to an open rook's file, Black tries to maximize his defensive chances.

Another idea was 32...g4 33.h5  $\mathbb{E}g8$ , intending to give up the g-pawn and build a fortress, although the chances of this plan succeeding appear remote to say the least.

**33. $\mathbb{E}h1$   $\mathbb{E}g8$** **34. $\mathbb{E}bb1!$** 

Karpov exploits his extra space by preparing to switch his attention to the kingside.

**34... $\mathbb{E}a6?!$** 

Ilincic probably wanted to defend the b6-pawn in order to free the a8-knight and transfer it to the kingside, but now the rook is severely misplaced. Other moves would also have failed to save the game, for instance:

34... $\mathbb{E}e8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d1$

White improves his light-squared bishop.

35... $\mathbb{E}b7$  36. $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c8$

37... $\mathbb{W}f7$  38. $\mathbb{W}e2$  The bishop goes to h5 next.

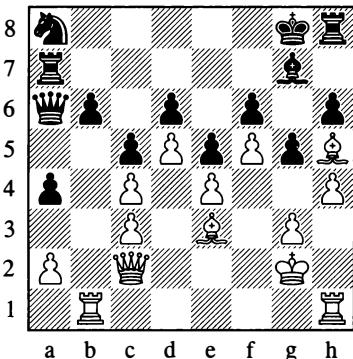
38. $\mathbb{Q}h5$   $\mathbb{W}a6$

38... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  40. $\mathbb{W}d3$  White will soon execute a sacrificial breakthrough:

40... $\mathbb{E}b7$  (40... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  41.hxg5 hxg5 42. $\mathbb{Q}xc5!!$

White cracks the enemy position from

an unexpected angle. 42...dxc5 43.d6+–) 41.hxg5 hxg5 42.♗xh8† ♜xh8 43.♗h1 ♜g7 44.♗xg5! fxg5 45.f6+–



39.♗e8!

It is remarkable how White can use the whole board including the back rank.

39...♝c7

39...♝xc4? 40.♗b5 White traps the queen in a highly unusual way.

40.♗c6 ♜f8 41.♗e2 ♜a5 42.hxg5

There is a remarkable alternative: 42.♗b2 ♜a6 43.♗b4!! White invades after this spectacular queen exchange.

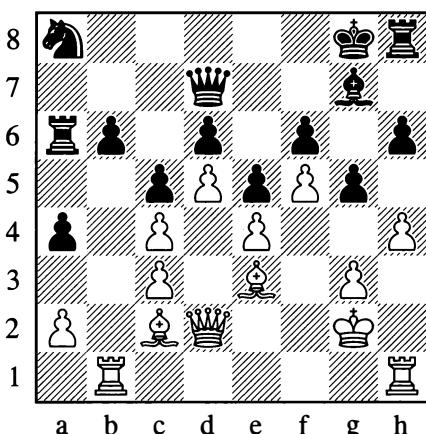
42...hxg5

42...fxg5 43.f6 ♜xf6 44.♗f3+–

43.♗xh8† ♜xh8 44.♗h5 ♜g7 45.♗xg5! fxg5

46.f6

Black can resign.



### 35.♗bf1

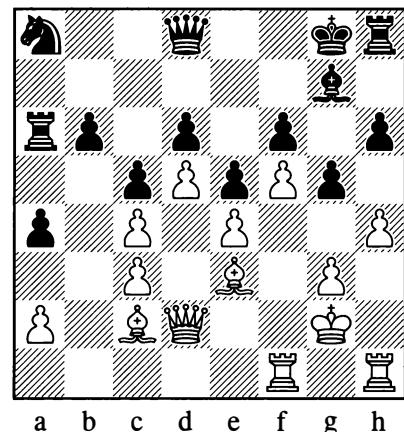
Karpov keeps playing strategically and prepares to sacrifice on g5.

His chosen continuation is good enough to win the game, but he could have broken through more quickly with: 35.hxg5! hxg5 36.♗xg5!! The immediate bishop sacrifice opens up Black's kingside with decisive effect. 36...fxg5 37.♗xg5 ♜c7 (37...♝f7 38.♗xh8† ♜xh8 39.♗h1† ♜g8 40.♗h6 ♜f8 41.♗xd6+–) 38.♗xh8† ♜xh8 39.♗h1† ♜g8 40.f6 ♜e8 41.fxg7 ♜xg7 (41...♜xg7 42.♗g6+–) 42.♗f5 ♜a7 43.♗xa4 White wins.

### 35...♝d8

It was essential to prevent the sacrifice on g5, as shown by the line 35...♜c7 36.hxg5 hxg5 37.♗xh8† ♜xh8 38.♗xg5 and White wins.

35...♝a7 would not have changed much: 36.hxg5 hxg5 37.♗xg5! fxg5 38.♗xg5 ♜xh1 39.♗xh1 ♜e7 40.♗g6 ♜f6 41.♗h6 White gets too many pawns for the piece.

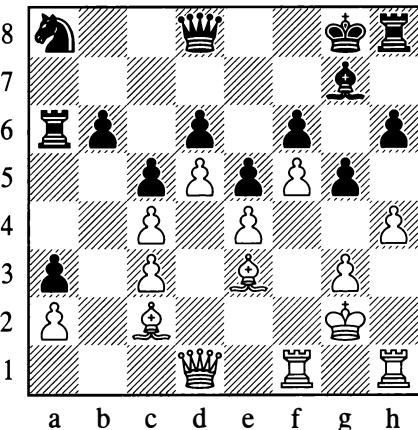


### 36.♛d1!

Karpov prepares to use his queen on the light squares, while incidentally attacking the a4-pawn.

### 36...a3

Defending the pawn with the queen would have left the kingside too exposed: 36... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  37.hxg5! hxg5 38. $\mathbb{B}xh8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$  White demolishes his opponent's defences. 39...fxg5 40.f6!  $\mathbb{B}a7$  41. $\mathbb{W}g4$  The attack is devastating.



### 37. $\mathbb{Q}a4!$

Karpov uses the whole board to convert his advantage. The less instructive 37.hxg5 hxg5 38. $\mathbb{B}xh8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  39. $\mathbb{W}h5$  was also winning, but improving the bishop first will make the inevitable kingside breakthrough even more devastating.

### 37... $\mathbb{B}c7$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}c6$

From here the bishop more or less traps the rook on a6 for the rest of the game.

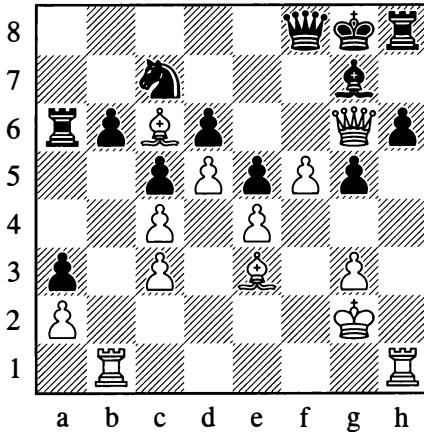
### 38... $\mathbb{B}f7$ 39. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$ $\mathbb{Q}g8$ 40. $\mathbb{B}b1$

Karpov sets up another threat of winning the b6-pawn with  $\mathbb{B}b7$ . It was not the only way to win, nevertheless it is instructive to observe the way Karpov stretches the defence.

### 40... $\mathbb{W}b8$ 41. $\mathbb{W}g6$

Having distracted the enemy queen, Karpov invades with maximum force.

### 41... $\mathbb{W}f8$ 42.hxg5 fxg5



### 43. $\mathbb{Q}xg5!$

A cute finish, although it was not hard to find as two of Black's pieces are completely out of play on the queenside.

Unsurprisingly there were other routes to victory, including the equally attractive 43. $\mathbb{Q}xc5!$  when 43...dxc5 44.d6 and 43...bxc5 44. $\mathbb{B}b7$  are both crushing.

43...hxg5 44. $\mathbb{B}xh8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh8$  45. $\mathbb{B}h1\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$   
46. $\mathbb{W}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  47.f6  $\mathbb{W}h8$  48. $\mathbb{W}f5$

1–0

In the next round Karpov faced Bareev, who used the Petrosian Variation against the Queen's Indian. Karpov's king settled on e7 in the middlegame, but his position remained playable. But later Karpov made a mistake and got into trouble. Bareev won a pawn and converted his advantage efficiently in the queen endgame. In Round 4 Karpov faced Popovic, who played a Grünfeld. Black equalized and at one point had two extra pawns on the queenside, but Karpov had enough activity to maintain the balance and a draw ensued. In the final round Leko went for safety against the Caro-Kann, and a draw was soon agreed. Karpov's final score of 2½/5 was enough to share third place behind Leko. Bareev took sole first place, a point and a half in front.

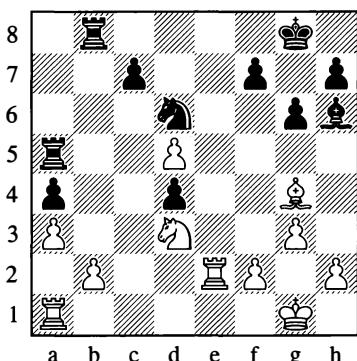
## FIDE World Championship match versus Kamsky

It had been three years since Karpov won the 'official' version of the World Championship, following the decision of Kasparov and Short to break away from FIDE, and now it was time to defend his title against Gata Kamsky. It was an important and prestigious event, notwithstanding the fact that Kasparov was undeniably the strongest player in the world.

Karpov was the favourite as he had a +5 =4 –2 record against the Russian-born American grandmaster, but Kamsky had been improving steadily, and had developed into a formidable grandmaster, an especially stubborn fighter with excellent nerves. Since their 1992 encounter (Game 28 in the present book), Karpov had scored two victories to Kamsky's one, with three draws.

Any world title match is a historic event in the chess world, but the present match was especially notable for being the last such match to feature adjournments. The match was held in Elista, the capital of Kalmykia. Both players enlisted American grandmasters as their chief seconds; Karpov was assisted by Ron Henley and Kamsky by John Fedorowicz.

In Game 1 Karpov surprised his opponent with the 5.  $\mathbb{W}b3$  variation against the Grünfeld. Kamsky came close to equalizing, but then went wrong. It is worth looking at the part of the game where Karpov increased his advantage.



27.  $\mathbb{B}c2!$   $\mathbb{B}xd5??$

The exchange of the d5-pawn for the one on c7 favours White. Black should have preferred one of the alternatives: 27...  $\mathbb{B}a7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{B}b6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ; 27...  $f5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{B}a7$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ; or 27...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ . In each case White keeps a slight plus, but his advantage is smaller than in the game.

28.  $\mathbb{B}xc7$   $\mathbb{B}a5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g5??$

Kamsky decides to wait, but it soon transpires that White can improve his position. I prefer 29...  $\mathbb{Q}f8??$  or 29...  $\mathbb{B}b3??$  30.  $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ .

30.  $\mathbb{B}d1$

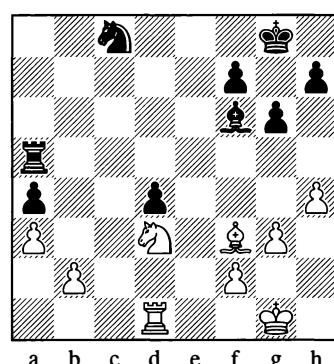
Karpov and Henley mention that 30.  $\mathbb{B}el$  (intending  $\mathbb{B}d1$ ) would be less effective in view of 30...  $\mathbb{B}b3!!$

30...  $\mathbb{B}c8??$

Black's position was already unpleasant, but now after the rook exchange Karpov will be able to activate his king.

31.  $\mathbb{B}xc8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  32.  $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

32...  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  34.  $\mathbb{B}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   
Black will have serious problems once the king arrives in the centre.



33.  $\mathbb{B}c1!$

Karpov characteristically improves all his pieces.

33...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f1!$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  36.  $\mathbb{B}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $h5??$

With this move Kamsky fixes his pawns on the same-coloured squares as White's bishop, making them vulnerable later in the game.

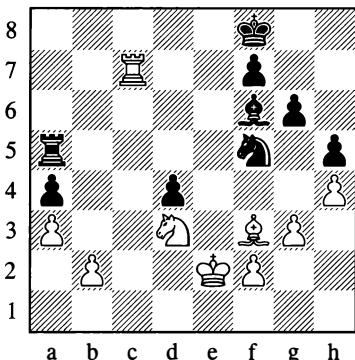
The same comment does not really apply to Karpov's pawns, as the black bishop is restricted by the d4-pawn and his pieces are generally rather passive.

38.♗e2

Both players were in time trouble, so Karpov just wants to pass the time control.

38...♝f5?!

Kamsky makes a mistake in a bad position. On 38...♝d8 Karpov shows a nice win: 39.♝c5! (Since both players were short of time, it is possible that Karpov would have simply maintained his advantage with 39.♝d7.) 39...♝xc5 40.♝xc5 ♜c4 41.♝xa4 ♜f6 42.♝d5! (42.♝d3 ♜e5† 43.♝e4 d3) 42...d3† 43.♝xd3 ♜xb2† 44.♝xb2 ♜xb2 45.a4 ♜e5 46.a5 ♜c7 47.a6 ♜b6 48.f4 White is winning, as his king threatens to invade and if Black stops it then he loses his kingside pawns. Now it is easy to see why Kamsky's 37...h5 was a mistake.



39.♝c4!

Even with little time on the clock, Karpov immediately takes the opportunity to go after the weak a4-pawn.

39...♝d6 40.♝b4 ♜a6

40...♝e7 41.♝c6 wins the a4-pawn.

41.♝c5!

Having remained in place for a long time, the knight finally moves, and in doing so seals the fate of the a4-pawn.

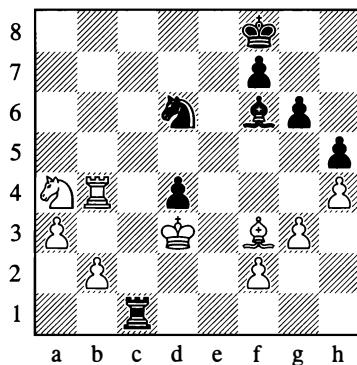
41...♜a7 42.♝d3?

The immediate 42.♝xa4 was recommended

by Karpov as a simpler route to victory.

42...♝c7 43.♝xa4 ♜c1

Kamsky has succeeded in activating his rook, but this is not enough to compensate for the missing pawn, and Karpov converts his advantage smoothly.



44.♝b6 ♜g7 45.a4 ♜a1 46.♝d7† ♜e8 47.♝c5 ♜e7 48.♝c2 ♜f1 49.♝d3 ♜a1 50.♝b3 f5 51.♝b6 ♜h6 52.♝d5 g5 53.♝a6 gxh4 54.gxh4 ♜d1 55.♝c4 ♜h1 56.a5 ♜xh4

1–0

Karpov – Kamsky, Elista (1) 1996. The game ends after Black's 56th move, which suggests that Kamsky resigned after the adjournment without resuming.

In Game 2 Kamsky chose the Panov variation against the Caro-Kann. In the resulting IQP position Karpov made a serious mistake and allowed a thematic and powerful d4-d5 break. Karpov sacrificed his queen for a rook and knight, but Kamsky eventually broke through and won. Interestingly it was the third time he got into serious trouble against a d4-d5 pawn sacrifice. Previously he had lost to Smyslov and miraculously survived against Portisch from what seemed like a hopeless situation.

In Game 3 Karpov got no advantage in a 4.g3 ♜a6 Queen's Indian, and although the game lasted until the endgame it was always roughly equal until the draw was agreed. Here is the fourth game.

## Game 43

**Gata Kamsky – Anatoly Karpov**

Elista (4) 1996

**1.e4 c6**

Karpov repeats the Caro-Kann despite suffering a loss in the previous game.

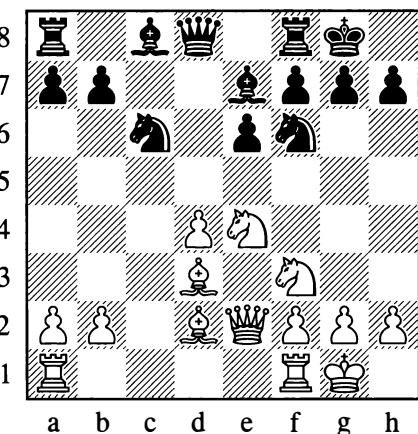
**2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 ♜f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘f3 ♜b4 7.cxd5 ♜xd5 8.♗d2 ♜c6 9.♗d3 ♜e7 10.0–0 0–0 11.♗e2 ♜f6**

Karpov repeats not only the variation but the exact line as well. He must have analysed it thoroughly before taking that decision. Against Kasparov he usually abandoned a variation after suffering a loss, even if theoretically his position had been okay.

Black could have won a pawn with 11...♜db4 12.♗e4 ♜xd4 13.♗xd4 ♜xd4 but White has promising compensation. Kamsky would have been ready for this, and it was obviously not to Karpov's liking.

Two years later Van Wely introduced a novelty in 11...♝b6!? which was probably influenced by Karpov's play in the present game.

**12.♗e4**



**12...♝b6!**

This was Karpov's improvement, and a novelty at the time. In the previous game he preferred 12...♞d7. That move had already occurred in Mortensen – Danielsen, Ringsted 1995. In that game Black placed his queen on b6 on the following move, so Karpov may have got the idea from there. The queen move not only attacks the b2-pawn but also vacates the d8-square for a rook. Karpov's idea has stood the test of time and has been used frequently in the new millennium.

**13.a3 ♜d7**

Sometimes 13...♜d8 is played first, but Karpov prefers to put the other rook on the d-file.

**14.♗fd1**

If White made the mistake of putting the other rook on d1, Black would be able to take the b2-pawn.

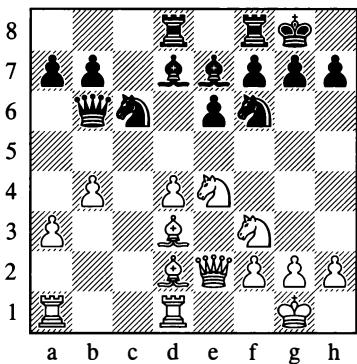
**14...♝ad8**

14...♝fd8 is playable, but Karpov's choice has been more popular. 15.♘xf6† (15.b4 is the main move.) 15...♝xf6 16.♗e4 g6 17.♗f4 In his annotations Karpov stops here, indicating that White has pressure against the f7-square. Nevertheless after 17...♝g7 18.♗e3 ♜e7 19.♗g5 f6 20.♗e4 ♜d5 Black achieved a lovely position in Kunte – Sasikiran, Muzaffapur 1998.

**15.♘xf6†?**

This move is a mistake, and has never been repeated. Perhaps Kamsky did not expect Karpov to repeat the same line and reacted badly to the surprise. It is well known that minor piece exchanges tend to favour the side playing against the isolani. Kamsky probably thought he would get attacking chances against the black king, but if that was the case he was being far too optimistic.

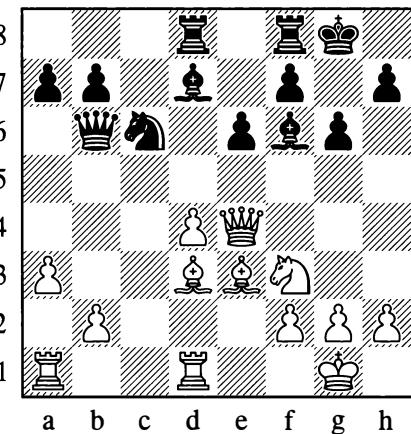
In almost all subsequent games White has preferred 15.b4, safeguarding the b-pawn and preparing to install the knight on c5. Let's have a short look at how Karpov's novelty has fared in subsequent years:



a) 15...a6?! seems risky: 16. $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  (16... $\mathbb{Q}a7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xh7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xg5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  21. $\mathbb{W}g4$  f5 22. $\mathbb{W}g3$  f4?!) 23. $\mathbb{W}g4$  White got a strong attack: Arizmendi Martinez – K. Rasmussen, Linares 2002.) 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$ ! (17. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  ½–½ Tsurtsimia – Edzgveradze, Tbilisi 1999) 17... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  Black is under unpleasant pressure, Baron Rodriguez – Svetushkin, La Roda 2005.

b) Black has a simpler and stronger way to continue: 15... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ! 16. $\mathbb{W}xe4$  f5 17. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  Black has scored very well from this position.

**15... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{W}e4$  g6 17. $\mathbb{Q}e3$**



**17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ !**

Presumably Kamsky had been expecting Karpov to move his queen, but this strong move effectively refutes his entire concept. The d5-advance is not a real threat, so Karpov takes the opportunity to deploy both his knight and light-squared bishop on more active squares.

**18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$**

After 18.d5?  $\mathbb{W}xb2$  Black is simply a pawn up.

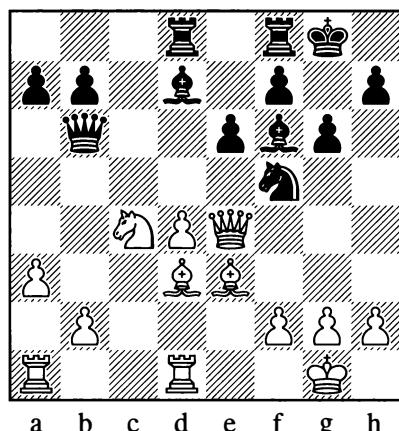
If 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$ ! Black has to play carefully as 18... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ ? 19.d5! is strong. Instead Black can keep the advantage with 18... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ! 19. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  intending ... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ .

**18... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ !**

They say one should blockade an isolated pawn, but sometimes attacking it directly is stronger. White is unable to advance the d-pawn under favourable conditions, so the direct approach works well here.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

19.d5? is tactically unsound, and after 19... $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  21.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  22.exd7  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  Black wins.



**19... $\mathbb{W}a6$ !**

The queen steps out of the firing line of one bishop, and into the sights of another.

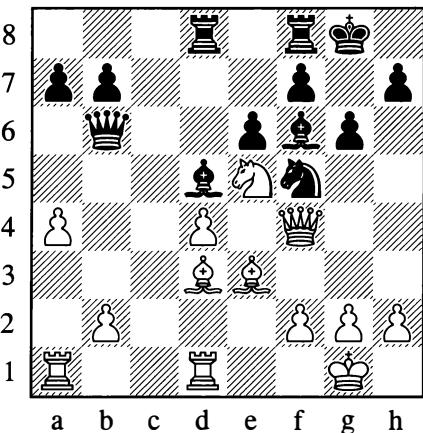
**20.a4!?**

This move weakens the queenside a bit.

20. $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  would have minimized White's disadvantage: 20... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  22. $\mathbb{W}f4$  (There is also 22. $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  when White's queenside is less vulnerable than in the game.) 22... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  (23... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  (24. $\mathbb{Q}xb3?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ) 24... $\mathbb{exf5}$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  Compared with the game continuation, White's queenside is more stable and his queen will not be sidelined on the kingside.

**20... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  21. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$** 

Having placed the bishop on its best square, Karpov improves his queen and puts pressure on the enemy queenside.

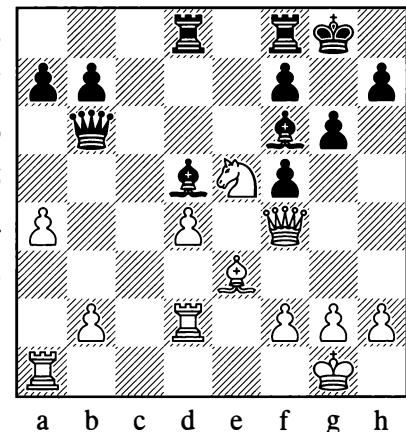
**23. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$** 

Kamsky gives up his light-squared bishop in order to ease the pressure on the d4-pawn. White cannot win a piece with 23.g4?? as 23...g5! wins for Black.

23.a5 is also unsatisfactory: 23... $\mathbb{W}xb2$  (23... $\mathbb{W}b3!?$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}db1$   $\mathbb{W}c3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  White's bishop pair does not compensate for his two-pawn deficit.

**23... $\mathbb{exf5}$** 

Karpov already a few moves earlier decided to undertake the double pawn, but it is beneficial for him as he gains control over the light squares and his kingside gets strengthened.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}d2$** **24... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$** 

This is a much more subtle move than it looks. Karpov removes the bishop from the slightly exposed f6-square and prepares a kingside advance with ...h6 and ...g5 at some point in the future.

**25.h4**

Perhaps Kamsky anticipated that ...h6 would come.

**25... $\mathbb{Q}fe8$  26. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$** 

Karpov mentions the possibility of 26...h6 followed by ... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ , but he finds it more important to occupy the c-file.

**27. $\mathbb{Q}d7$** 

This is not particularly attractive, but it is hard to suggest a constructive alternative.

**27... $\mathbb{W}c6$** 

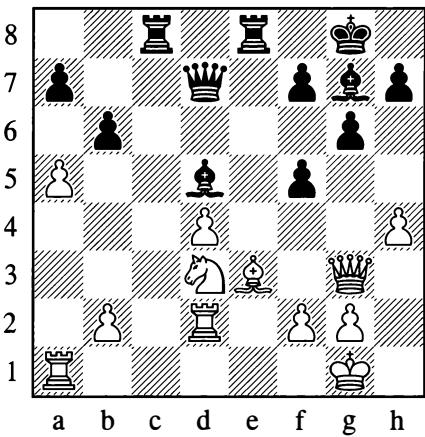
Karpov mentions 27... $\mathbb{W}d8!?$  which indeed looks slightly stronger than the game continuation as Black attacks both the d4- and

h4-pawns. 28.♕c5 b6 29.♕d3 ♕e4 30.♕f4 ♕b7 Black will play ...♕c4 next, and White will lose material without any compensation.

### 28.♕c5 b6 29.♕d3 ♕d7

From this square the queen keeps an eye on two weak pawns.

### 30.a5



### 30...♕e4!

Karpov creates the powerful threat of ...♕g4, and virtually forces the following knight move.

### 31.♘f4

Defending against the threat, but now all three of White's kingside pieces are virtually paralysed.

### 31...b5

The knight is only two moves away from the c5-square, yet it is already too far.

### 32.♗dd1

White had virtually no other piece to move.

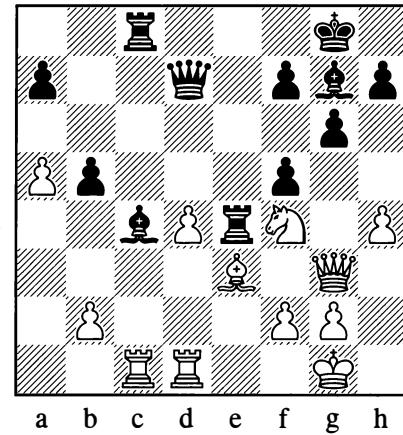
### 32...♗c4!

Karpov shows flexibility in his thinking. His bishop was superb on the long diagonal, but it has done its duty there, and now he moves it away. The reason is that he wants to take the

d4-pawn, and seeks to prevent the knight from defending it via e2.

### 33.♗ac1

The knight is unable to reach the c5-square: 33.♕d3 ♕xd4 34.♕f4 ♕d8 35.♕f3 (35.♕d2 ♕xe3!) 35...♕d6 36.g3 ♕e5 Black is winning.



### 33...h6!!

This is partially a waiting move, although it also makes White pay attention to the possibility of ...g5. White's position is so difficult that he has problems making a move at all.

### 34.♗c3 b4 35.♗c2 ♕c6?!

Karpov gets ready to exchange a pair of rooks, which improves his chances to obtain something on the queenside. However, this plan gives White time to improve his position. Perhaps this slight inaccuracy crept in as a result of time pressure.

35...♗b5? was one improvement, for instance 36.♗xc8† ♕xc8 37.♗c1 ♕d8 38.♗c5 (38.b3 ♕xa5) and here 38...♗e8! is the most effective way for Black to maintain his advantage.

Even more convincing is: 35...♗a6! 36.♗xc8† ♕xc8 37.♗c1 ♕d8! Black manages to attack the d4- and a5-pawns at the same time.

**36.♖d1!**

After 36.d5 ♜c8 37.♖dc1 b3 38.♖d2 ♜e5 White is dangerously tied up.

**36...♜b5 37.♔h2?**

Kamsky decides to wait and see how Karpov intends to crack his position. He will find out soon enough...

Much better was:

37.♖c5!

This strong move does not equalize, but it reduces White's disadvantage considerably. The idea of this rook move is to prepare the d5-push.

37...♜xc5

37...♜xd4? 38.♖xc6 ♜xc6 39.♕xg6! White gets counterplay.

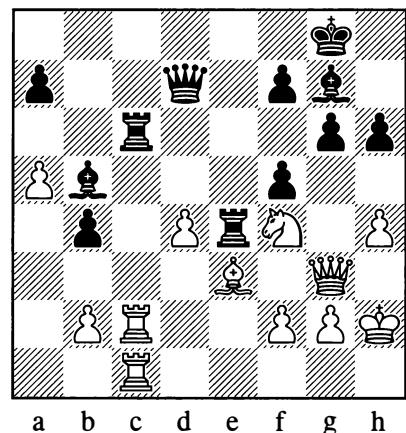
Black cannot just improve his position patiently with a move like 37...♔h7 in view of the strong 38.♕d3!.

38.♖xc5 ♜c6 39.d5 ♜a8 40.♕h5 ♜xb2

40...♜h8 is unconvincing due to 41.♕c7.

41.♗b8† ♜e8 42.♗xb4 ♜e5 43.♗f4

White is only somewhat worse.

**37...♔h7!**

Karpov finds a strong prophylactic move which is typical of his style. The king move anticipates White's potential counterplay on the eighth rank and prevents any ♕xg6

sacrifices. Perhaps Karpov's time shortage even helped him by making him look for a noncommittal move.

**38.♖xc6**

38.♖c5 does not help now because of 38...♜xd4!.

**38...♜xc6 39.♕c4**

39.d5 ♜a8! 40.♖c5 ♜e5 is also hopeless.

**39...♜f8 40.♗d3 ♜e6**

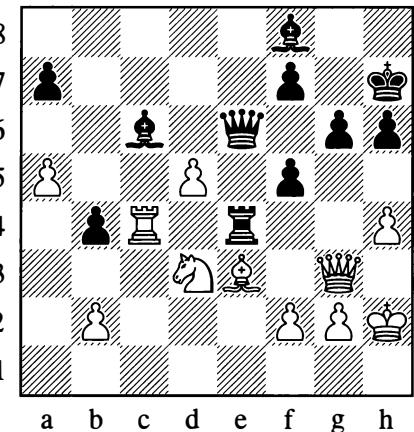
Karpov gets past the time control and preserves his decisive advantage.

40...♛d5! was an even more effective route to victory, as 41.♕e5 ♜xe5! 42.♖xc6 ♜xe3 is the end for White.

However, 40...♝g4? would have been a serious mistake due to 41.♕e5!.

**41.d5**

Kamsky postpones the inevitable by exchanging rooks, but it fails to put up serious resistance. If 41.♖c1 ♜d6 wins.

**41...♜xd5**

Black has more than one route to victory, although he is not yet at the stage where he can do whatever he wants.

The attempt to be clever with 41... $\mathbb{Q}d6??$  ends in disaster after 42.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xg3\#$  43.fxg3  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  44.exf7  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xh6\#$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$  when White wins, as pointed out by Karpov.

41... $\mathbb{W}xd5$  should be good enough: 42. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  fxe4 43. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  (It is not too late for Black to throw the win away: 43... $\mathbb{Q}d6?!$  44. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5?$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  46. $\mathbb{W}f4!$  f5 The only move! 47. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  Despite the two-pawn deficit, White is in no danger of losing. However, 43... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  is good enough to win, for instance: 44. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  f5 46. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}e5\rightarrow$ ) 44. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  45. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  White will not last much longer.

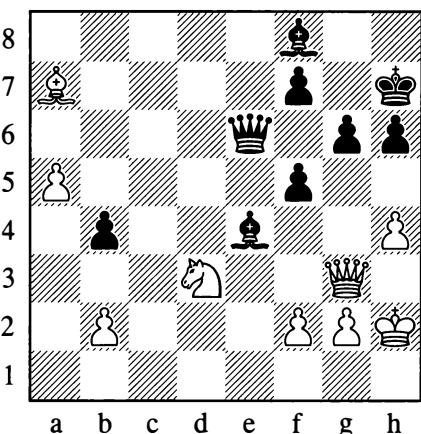
#### 42. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

42...fxe4 was also good enough, but Karpov prefers not to block the view of his light-squared bishop. Black is winning comfortably; aside from his extra pawn, the b2-pawn is weak, and White's kingside is also vulnerable.

#### 43. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$

This is losing, but it is probably no worse than any other move, for instance 43. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  and 43. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  a6! 44. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{W}d5!$  both win comfortably for Black.

43. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  is slightly more resilient, but still leads to the same result: 43... $\mathbb{W}d5$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  fxe4 45. $\mathbb{W}h3$  (45. $\mathbb{Q}xa7?$   $\mathbb{Q}d6\rightarrow$ ) 45... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  47.a6  $\mathbb{W}d6\#$  48.g3  $\mathbb{W}xa6$  49. $\mathbb{W}d7$   $\mathbb{W}e6$  Black wins easily.



#### 43... $\mathbb{Q}d6!$

Karpov drags the knight into a three-piece pin, allowing no resistance. Kamsky was probably hoping for 43... $\mathbb{W}a6?$  or 43... $\mathbb{W}d7?$ , both of which allow White to continue the fight with 44. $\mathbb{Q}c5!$ .

#### 44. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

44. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}d7!$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  46. $\mathbb{W}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4\#$  47. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  wins, as Karpov pointed out.

#### 44... $\mathbb{W}e5$ 45. $\mathbb{Q}h3$

45. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xb2$  46.a6 b3 47.a7  $\mathbb{W}c3$  wins, as the b-pawn is unstoppable.

#### 45... $\mathbb{W}e7$

#### 0–1

White is losing at least a piece, so Kamsky resigned.

In the fifth game Karpov again played the 5. $\mathbb{W}b3$  variation against the Grünfeld. He came up with a novelty but Kamsky responded well with an exchange sacrifice. The game became extremely sharp, but soon ended in a draw in a repetition on move 23, as neither player wanted to risk losing.

In Game 6 Karpov switched to the Petroff, and by the end of the opening he had placed his king on d8 in response to a rook check on e1. His position looked dangerous, but he kept it under control and gradually arranged a kind of artificial castling by means of ... $\mathbb{E}e8-e7$  followed by a king transfer to f8. Kamsky committed a few inaccuracies followed by a losing blunder, and Karpov doubled his lead. In the next game Kamsky tried the King's Indian, but Karpov obtained the upper hand after securing over control of the e4-square, and he eventually converted his advantage to take a 5–2 lead. An extract from the game can be found in the notes to Game 42.

In Game 8 Karpov returned to the Caro-Kann, and Kamsky switched to the main line.

Simplifications resulted in a position in which Karpov had an IQP. He had to be careful, but was never in any real danger and held the draw without any problems. In the next game Kamsky returned to the Grünfeld and the players repeated the same sharp variation. Karpov deviated and Kamsky decided to sacrifice his queen for a rook and a bishop. His compensation proved to be insufficient, and Karpov's accurate technique brought home the win.

Trailing by four whole points, Kamsky desperately needed a win, and he managed to get it in Game 10. He switched to 1.d4 and chose the Petrosian Variation against the Queen's Indian. Both players held back castling and Kamsky stirred up complications by advancing his h-pawn. Karpov's king remained in the centre. He made some mistakes and Kamsky was able to obtain a strong attack, which resulted in the win of a piece and victory in the endgame.

In Game 11 Karpov played safely against the Semi-Slav. He always had a symbolic edge, but Kamsky was never in serious danger and the players agreed a draw in the endgame. In the next game Kamsky tried once again to crack the Caro-Kann. After castling on opposite sides he sacrificed a pawn to obtain play on the g-file. He was able to regain his pawn, but did not get any advantage and it was Karpov who had a modest advantage before a draw was agreed in the endgame. In the next game Kamsky switched to the Queen's Indian, and a complex endgame ensued. Karpov sacrificed a pawn to create a passed pawn, but the idea proved too optimistic. He then lost a second pawn, but his strong bishop pair just enabled him to hold a draw.

In Game 14 Kamsky decided to take on the Nimzo-Indian, employing the Rubinstein System with ♘d3 and ♗e2. In the ensuing IQP position Karpov took control. He exchanged

queens, built his position in the endgame, and won a pawn which he converted smoothly. In the next game Kamsky tried the Modern Benoni in attempt to win with the black pieces, but Karpov played solidly and the game remained roughly equal until a draw was agreed in a queen endgame.

In Game 16 the players followed a long theoretical line in the 4.g3 ♘a6 Queen's Indian. On this occasion Karpov did not manage to equalize, and a subsequent blunder of a pawn led to a winning position for White, which Kamsky converted smoothly. An extract from the game can be found on page 400 of the first volume. Karpov still kept a commanding lead in the match, and in the next game he opted for safety with the English Opening. Kamsky tried hard and indeed managed to obtain some advantage in the endgame, but eventually he had to settle for a draw. In Game 18 Karpov repeated the same line of the Queen's Indian. Kamsky deviated and obtained a microscopic advantage, but never got anything serious and Karpov successfully held the draw in the endgame.

With two games of the scheduled twenty remaining, the match was halted as Karpov had an unassailable lead of 10½–7½. This convincing victory over a tough challenger enables Karpov to retain his title of FIDE World Champion. It also elevated his rating to one of its highest points of 2775, although this was partially due to rating inflation; Karpov was still a great player, but he was not the same force that he had been during the late seventies and throughout the eighties.

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Karpov's next event was the Biel tournament. He started with a quick draw with Black against Lautier, then outplayed and beat Zoltan Almasi on the white side of a Queen's Indian.

In Round 3 Karpov took a very quick draw with Andersson, followed by a slightly longer draw after failing to get any advantage against Glek's King's Indian.

In Round 5 Karpov got a nice position on the black side of a Nimzo-Indian against Onischuk, but then blundered badly. The American grandmaster missed his opportunity and blundered in return. Karpov was not so generous and punished his opponent to score his second win of the competition. In the next round Karpov got no advantage against Tukmakov's Semi-Slav, but kept playing and almost got serious winning chances. Eventually he had to settle for a draw after accurate defence from his opponent.

In Round 7 Karpov took a day off by means of a quick draw with Ehlvest. His next game also ended quickly, but with a different result. Facing Lajos Portisch, Karpov equalized against Petrosian Variation of the Queen's Indian, when the Hungarian grandmaster sent his queen on a risky pawn-grabbing expedition. He quickly got into trouble, and a subsequent blunder meant he had to resign on move 20.

In Round 9 Karpov had the white pieces against Milov, who played the King's Indian with 7... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ . Karpov obtained a small edge, but the Russian-born Israeli-Swiss grandmaster defended stubbornly and held on for a draw. In the next game Karpov drew quickly against Miles.

Karpov's opponent in the tenth and final round was Oleg Romanishin. The grandmaster from Lvov played all the world champions from Smyslov to Anand, with the exceptions of Fischer and Topalov. Out of sixty eight games he scored twelve wins, thirty six draws and twenty losses. Karpov was one of his most troublesome opponents; previously he had defeated Romanishin six times, with seven draws and not a single defeat. This was the last time they met over the board.

## Game 44

### Anatoly Karpov – Oleg Romanishin

Biel 1996

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  b6 4.a3**

Karpov rarely employed the Petrosian Variation, but he obviously prepared it for this game.

**4... $\mathbb{Q}b7$**

Romanishin scored well with 4... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ , but on this occasion he decides to use his other pet line.

**5. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  g6**

According to the database this move was first used by Smyslov in 1966. It was a favourite of Romanishin, so Karpov must have been ready for it.

**6. $\mathbb{W}d3$**

This move was introduced by Cvitan. White prepares to seize the centre with e4, while also preventing Black from inflicting a pawn weakness by exchanging on f3.

**6... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ??**

Black does better to prevent the central occupation by means of 6...d5, against which White has so far been unable to demonstrate any advantage.

**7.e4**

Karpov is glad to occupy the centre while also restricting the b7-bishop.

**7...d6**

Earlier that same year Romanishin played 7...d5 and drew against Cebalo. This time he deviates, perhaps fearing Karpov's preparation.

**8. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  0–0 9.0–0**

Long castling would be dangerous as Black can still play ...d5.

### 9... $\mathbb{Q}bd7$

A year later Romanishin deviated with 9...d5?! 10.cxd5 exd5 11.e5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$ , and after the further 12. $\mathbb{W}c2$  c5 he had good counterplay and eventually won the game Kalinitchew – Romanishin, Muenster 1997.

Karpov may have played differently, for instance with 12. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  or 12. $\mathbb{Q}d1$ .

### 10. $\mathbb{W}c2$

Karpov probably played this move in anticipation of the moves ...e5 and d5, after which the knight jump to c5 will no longer attack the queen. The present position has been reached numerous times via the 6. $\mathbb{W}c2$  move order, with White having an extra tempo. This does not mean that Karpov's move order was incorrect, as it had the benefit of discouraging the bishop from exchanging on f3, and White's position remains slightly better notwithstanding the loss of time.

### 10...c5

A decade later Romanishin played 10... $\mathbb{W}e7$ , and after 11. $\mathbb{E}e1$  e5 12.d5 a5 the players agreed a draw in Arsovic – Romanishin, Belgrade 2006, although I prefer White's position and it is safe to assume that Karpov would have played on.

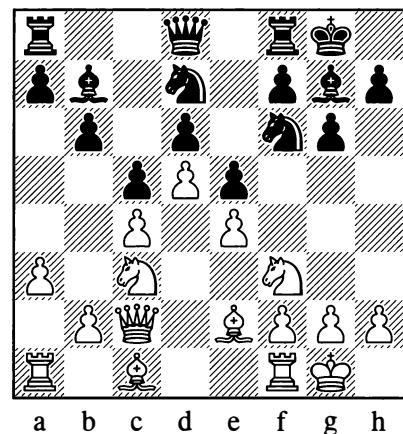
### 11.d5 e5?

After this move Black's position remains solid but both of his bishops are almost buried. From a practical perspective, blocking the centre was an especially bad decision against Karpov who is a master of closed positions.

Later the same year Romanishin improved his play, although he still fell short of equality:

11... $\mathbb{W}e7$  12. $\mathbb{E}e1$  a6 13. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ !  $\mathbb{Q}exf6$  16. $\mathbb{W}d2$  e5 17.g3  $\mathbb{Q}ac8$

18. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  19. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  By now Black had a reasonable position in Oll – Romanishin, Yerevan (ol) 1996, but White could have retained a small edge if he had kept his dark-squared bishop on the board.



### 12.g3!

With this great prophylactic move Karpov prevents the black knight from occupying the f4-square while also preparing to take countermeasures against ...f5.

### 12... $\mathbb{Q}h5$

Romanishin rearranges his knights in order to make room for his light-squared bishop to come to the c8-h3 diagonal. If his bishop remains on b7 then the attempt to obtain counterplay with ...f5 would weaken his position too much.

12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  13. $\mathbb{E}b1$  h6 (13...f5? 14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ ) 14.b4 f5? 15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ !  $\mathbb{W}f6$  16.exf5 gxf5 17. $\mathbb{Q}b2$  Black cannot keep his kingside together.

12...h6 13. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  14. $\mathbb{E}e3$  f5 15.exf5 gxf5 16. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ ! e4 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ !  $\mathbb{E}xf5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  White has tremendous play for the sacrificed piece.

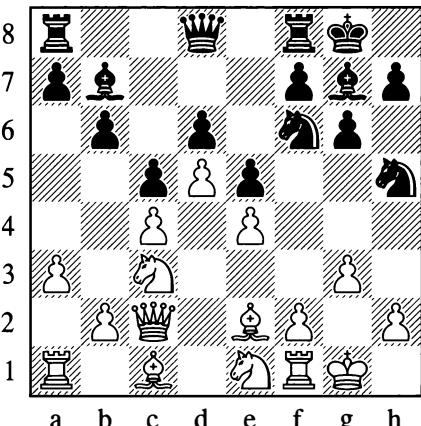
### 13. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ !

This move has numerous functions: White hints at the possibility of taking the knight

on h5, while re-routing his knight to a better position and also preparing f3 to defend the king, or perhaps f4 to seize the initiative on the kingside.

### 13... $\mathbb{Q}df6$

Romanishin prefers not to allow the weakening of his kingside pawns, but now his f-pawn will be blocked.



### 14. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

Trying to gain space with 14.f4 was tempting, but not altogether convincing: 14...exf4! Black should sacrifice a piece rather than allow White to increase his space advantage. 15.g4 (15.gxf4  $\mathbb{E}e8$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  Black exerts strong pressure on White's centre.) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xg4!$  Black gets two pawns and a strong pawn chain for the piece. 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  g5 18. $\mathbb{W}g2$  h6 19.h4  $\mathbb{Q}h7$  Objectively White may have a slight edge, but the position is complex and Black will certainly have more fun here than in the game.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 15.b4

Karpov starts his play on the queenside.

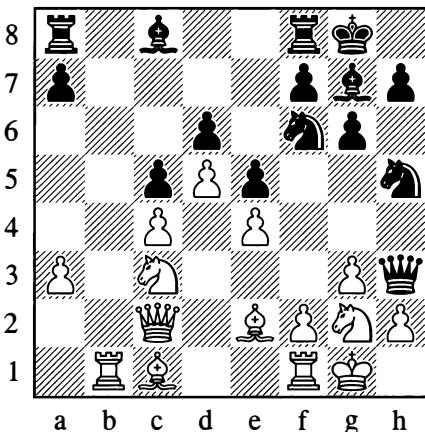
### 15... $\mathbb{W}d7$

After 15... $\mathbb{Q}h3$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  17.f3  $\mathbb{Q}ab8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  Black's kingside counterplay is lagging well behind White's queenside initiative.

### 16.bxc5 bxc5

After 16...dxc5 17.a4 Black is in serious trouble on the queenside.

### 17. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ $\mathbb{W}h3$



### 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Karpov creates a direct threat on the queenside, although the text move also keeps one eye on the opposite flank.

### 18.f3!?

Bolstering the kingside was also a reasonable idea.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

18... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ ? is too passive: 19. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  20.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  exf4 22. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  h5 23.h3  $\mathbb{W}e7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Black has nothing for the pawn.

### 19.g4!?

Winning a pawn, although Black gets some counterplay. 19. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  is better for White, but Black is still in the game.

### 19... $\mathbb{Q}f4$

19... $\mathbb{Q}hf6$ ? 20. $\mathbb{Q}d1$  traps the queen.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ exf4 21. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$ $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Also after 22.fgx4?  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  23. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\uparrow$  24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  White has some advantage.

### 22... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 23. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$ $\mathbb{Q}d4\uparrow$ 24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}b7$ $\mathbb{Q}h5$ 26. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}ac8$

Objectively White stands better, although the position remains complicated.

**18... $\mathbb{W}d7$** 

18... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  runs into a strong reply: 19. $\mathbb{E}b3!$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  (19... $\mathbb{W}d7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $gxh5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f5\pm$ ) 20.f3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $exf4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  Black loses a pawn for no compensation.

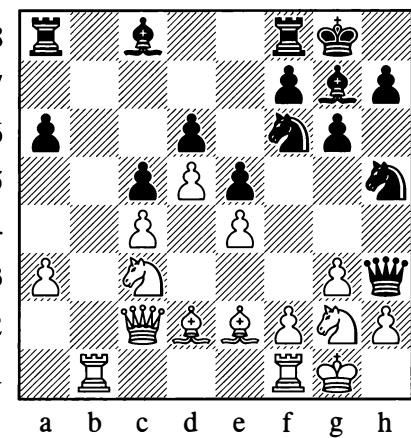
**19. $\mathbb{Q}d2?$** 

Karpov wants to avoid weakening his king, so he resists the temptation to win material. Instead he connects his rooks and threatens  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  and  $\mathbb{Q}c7$ .

The critical alternative was 19.g4  $\mathbb{Q}xg4!$  (19...a6 20.gxh5 axb5 21.h6  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  22.cxb5 White remains a pawn up.) 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Though Black is objectively worse, he has some compensation for the exchange and remains in the game.

**19...a6**

Romanishin does not wait for  $\mathbb{Q}a5$  but instead sends back the knight. The problem is that now the b6-square is weak.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}h3$** **21. $\mathbb{Q}a4?$** 

Karpov proceeds with his plan and does not mind giving up his light-squared bishop. 21. $\mathbb{E}b6$  also deserved consideration.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}g4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  23.f3  $\mathbb{Q}f6?$** 

This fancy move does more harm than good, as it helps White to invade on the queenside.

**23... $\mathbb{Q}d7$** 

Retreating with the bishop would pose an interesting question.

**24. $\mathbb{E}b7$** 

24. $\mathbb{E}b6?!$  f5! offers Black good counterplay: 25. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  (25. $\mathbb{E}xd6?$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  26. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $fxe4$ ) 25...f4 26.g4  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  The position is unclear. 24. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  (25.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  26.a5 f5) 25... $\mathbb{W}xd7$  26. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  27. $\mathbb{E}fb1$   $\mathbb{E}xb3$  28. $\mathbb{W}xb3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  Black is only a bit worse.

**24... $\mathbb{E}ab8$** 

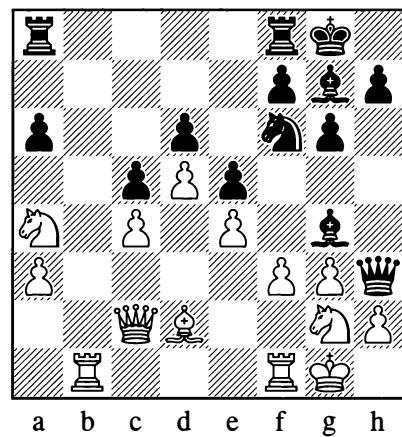
24... $\mathbb{E}ad8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}b8!$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xb7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  28. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  White's advantage is very small.) 25... $\mathbb{E}b8$  26. $\mathbb{E}fb1$   $\mathbb{E}xb7$  27. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  28. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  29. $\mathbb{W}c2$  White has a clear advantage.

**25. $\mathbb{E}a7$** 

If 25. $\mathbb{E}fb1$   $\mathbb{E}xb7$  26. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  27. $\mathbb{E}b8$  f5! 28. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $fxe4!$  Black gets back into the game.

**25... $\mathbb{E}a8$  26. $\mathbb{E}xa8$   $\mathbb{E}xa8$  27. $\mathbb{E}b1$** 

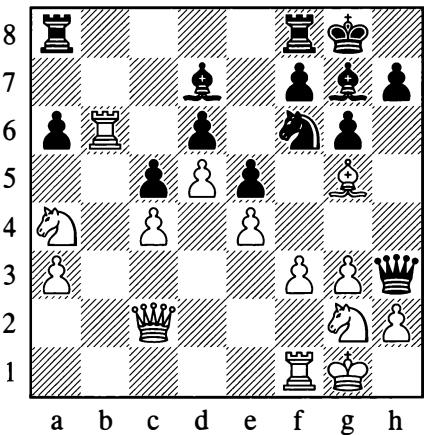
White maintains an edge, but Black has good chances to defend.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}g5!$** 

Karpov expels the bishop.

24... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  25. $\mathbb{E}b6$

25. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  26. $\mathbb{E}b3$  also gives White a nice advantage.



25... $\mathbb{E}ab8$

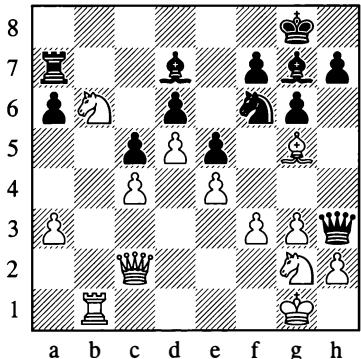
25... $\mathbb{E}fb8$ !?

Moving the other rook changes the position somewhat.

26. $\mathbb{E}fb1$   $\mathbb{E}xb6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$

27. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black is only slightly worse.

27... $\mathbb{E}a7$



28. $\mathbb{Q}h4$ !

Surprisingly White can play to trap the queen. This is the strongest continuation, although White can also obtain a superior endgame with 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  f6 (29... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  30. $\mathbb{W}g2$ ) 30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  31. $\mathbb{W}g2$ .

28... $\mathbb{E}b7$

28... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d1+$

28... $h5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d1+$

29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  30. $\mathbb{E}b2$ !

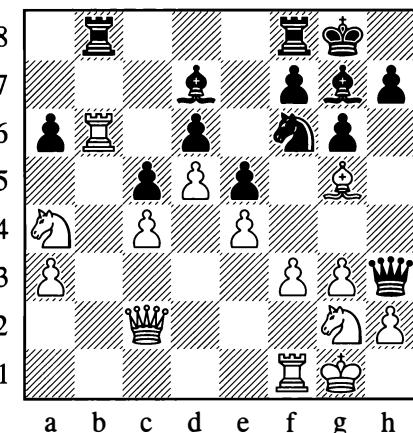
Now after a rook exchange, the queen will be able to recapture without abandoning her defensive duties along the second rank.

30... $f6$

30... $\mathbb{Q}f4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  does not help Black.

31. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  33. $\mathbb{E}b8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  34. $\mathbb{E}a8$

White wins the a-pawn.



26. $\mathbb{E}fb1$

Of course Karpov is not tempted by 26. $\mathbb{E}xd6$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  27. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}b2$  28. $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{E}fb8$  when Black obtains promising counterplay.

26... $\mathbb{E}xb6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$

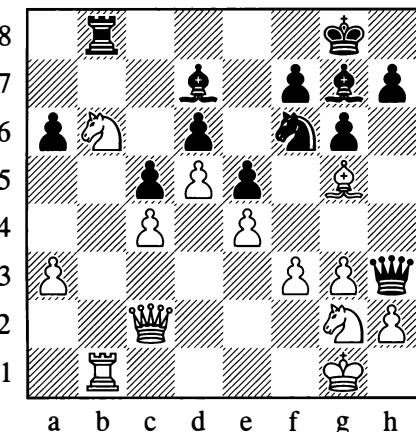
This move preserves White's advantage, and in some lines the powerful knight can hurt Black.

Nevertheless the alternative deserved serious attention: 27. $\mathbb{E}xb6$ !  $\mathbb{W}h5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  29. $\mathbb{W}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  30. $\mathbb{W}b3$ !  $\mathbb{E}d8$  31. $\mathbb{E}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}h6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  Black has no compensation for the missing pawn.

27... $\mathbb{E}b8$

27... $h6$  was a reasonable alternative: 28. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  (28. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}h5$ )

31.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  f5 Black has sufficient counterplay on the kingside.) 28...  $\mathbb{W}xd7$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  30.  $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  31.  $\mathbb{W}b3$  White clearly has the upper hand, but Black is not without chances.



### 28. $\mathbb{B}b3!$

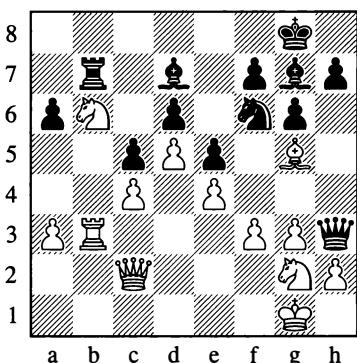
With this move Karpov sets up various tactical motifs. From now on if Black takes the rook it will not happen with a check. Defending the f3-pawn is also useful.

### 28... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

Saving the bishop at once loses to a simple tactical shot: 28...  $\mathbb{Q}e8??$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6!$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}d7+-$

### 28... $\mathbb{R}b7?$

Black has time to play this rook move to save the bishop.

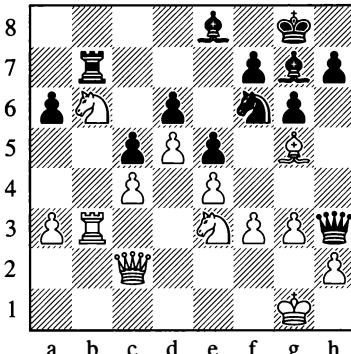


### 29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

29.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  The bishop move appears risky, but Black can get away with it. 30.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  (30.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}h5$ ; 30.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$ ) 30...  $\mathbb{Q}h5!$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  White can forget about trapping the queen.

### 29... $\mathbb{Q}e8$

29...  $\mathbb{Q}h5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  maintains some pressure.



### 30. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

White tries to trap the queen, but Black has enough resources.

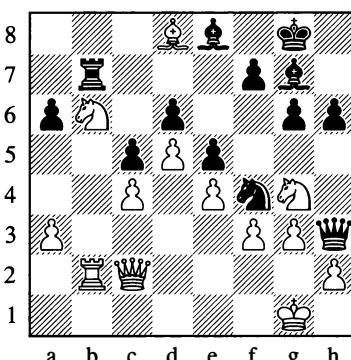
### 30... $\mathbb{Q}h5!$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}g4$

31.  $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  defends.

### 31... $\mathbb{Q}f4!$

Black is holding his own in the complications, for instance:

### 32. $\mathbb{B}b2$ h6 33. $\mathbb{Q}d8$



### 33... f5! 34. exf5 e4! 35. f6 exf3 36. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $\mathbb{W}xg4$

Black is not worse.

**29.♘e1!**

This is a tricky move to face, especially with time trouble approaching. The knight is heading for d3, from where it can influence events in all areas of the board.

**29...♝b7?**

After this move Black's troubles soon worsen. His position was already undesirable though.

**29...♝b5?!**

Romanishin is a gifted tactician. I doubt that he missed this witty tactical shot, but rather suspect that he rejected it after spotting the refutation.

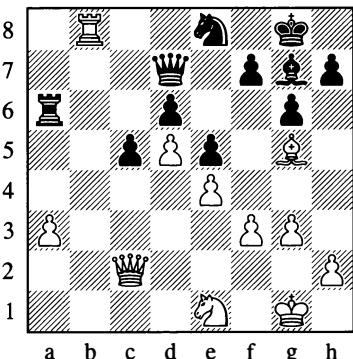
**30.cxb5 ♜xb6 31.bxa6!**

White wins thanks to a surprising feature of the position, which was hard to anticipate just a few moves earlier.

After 31.a4 ♜c8 32.♗c4 ♜b8 White's advantage is not so large.

**31...♝xa6 32.♝b7 ♜d7**

32...f6 33.♗c4 ♜a7 34.♗xe8† ♜f7 35.♗d8 fxg5 36.♗b5 wins.



**33.♗d8! ♜b5 34.♗c4!!**

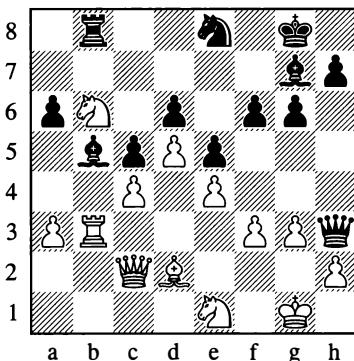
White wins thanks to the weak back rank.

**29...f6!**

This ugly-looking move was the best chance. Black makes room for his queen and sends the troublesome bishop away.

**30.♗d2 ♜b5!**

**30...♜b7 31.♘d3 ♜f7 32.♘f2 ♜h5 33.♘xd7 ♜xd7 34.g4! ♜h4 35.f4! exf4 36.♗xf4** White threatens to trap the queen, and Black has to sacrifice a pawn to save her.



**31.cxb5**

31.a4? is also promising: 31...♜xb6 32.axb5 axb5 33.♗xb5 ♜a6 34.♗b8 White continues to press, but Black is still alive.

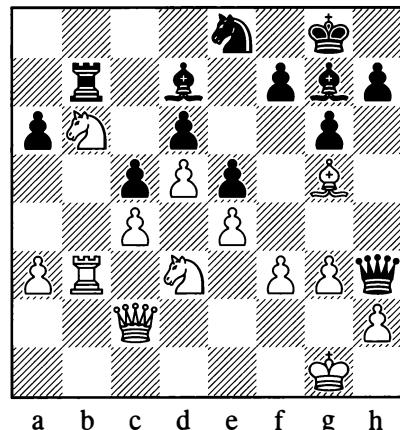
**31...♜xb6 32.a4!**

32.bxa6 ♜xa6 33.♗b8 ♜d7 demonstrates the value of Black's 29th move, as ♜d8 is no longer possible.

**32...♜c8 33.♗c4**

White keeps a clear advantage, but Black has better drawing chances than in the game.

**30.♘d3**



**30...♜h5**

30...f6? 31.♗h4 g5 32.♗b2 (32.♗f2 ♜a4

33.♕xa4 also wins) 32...♝xb6 33.♕f2 White wins the queen.

30...♚h6?! 31.♕f2 ♚h5 32.♕xh6 ♜xh6 33.♕xd7 ♜xd7 34.♕b8 ♜f8 35.♕a4 White wins a pawn and gets a decisive advantage.

### 31.♕xd7?

Karpov finds a strong, probably winning method of simplification.

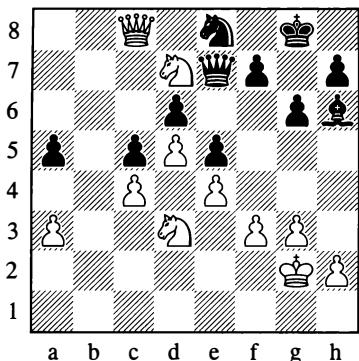
### 31...♜xd7?

Overlooking White's deadly reply.

### 31...♜xb3!

Only this move would have enabled Black to fight on.

32.♛xb3 ♜xg5 33.♛b8 ♜e7 34.♛c8! a5  
35.♗g2 ♚h6



### 36.a4

After 36.♕3xe5 dxe5 37.d6 ♜xd6 38.♛xe8† ♜f8 39.h4 f6 40.♕xf8 ♜xf8 41.♛e6† the queen ending is miserable for Black, yet he still has chances to survive.

### 36...♝g7

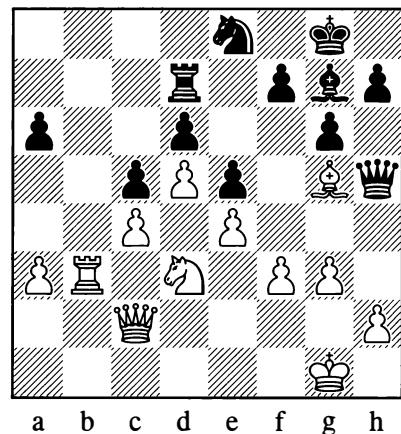
36...♝d2? 37.♕3xe5 dxe5 38.d6+–  
36...♝g5 37.♕b8 ♜d8 38.♛xd8 ♜xd8  
39.♕c6 ♜b6 40.♕c1 White wins a pawn and surely the game.

### 37.♕b8 ♜f8

37...♝f6 38.♕c6+–; 37...♜g5 38.♛xe8  
♜d2† 39.♝h3 ♜xd3 40.♝d7+–

38.♕c6 ♜g5 39.f4 exf4 40.♕xf4 ♜f6 41.e5!  
dx5 42.♕d3 ♜e3 43.♕cx5

White is close to winning.



### 32.h4!

Karpov once again proves that he is not only a great strategic player, but that he also spots tactical chances exceptionally well. Here he traps Romanishin's queen.

### 32...♜xf3 33.♕f2

#### 1–0

This win gave Karpov a total of 7½/11, which was enough to share first place with Milov.

In 2010 my good fortune enabled me to conduct an interview with Romanishin. I did not ask him about Karpov, but at one point he mentioned that people nowadays do not fully understand just how strong a player the twelfth World Champion really was.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next tournament was in Vienna. In the first round he faced Ehlvest, who played the QGD. Karpov pressed forward with a minority attack but the Estonian grandmaster defended well and the game was drawn. In the next round Karpov once again had the white pieces. Playing against Kramnik, he played a novelty in the Semi-Slav and obtained a nice

plus in a simplified middlegame. Kramnik was unable to cope with his problems and Karpov won a nice endgame.

In Round 3 Karpov suffered a setback against Gelfand, who produced a strategic masterpiece of which Karpov himself would have been most proud. The game is referenced briefly in the note to White's 11th move in Game 47 of the first volume (page 241). In Round 4 Karpov faced his old rival Korchnoi, and chose the Petrosian Variation against the Queen's Indian. Karpov got some advantage by playing against Black's hanging pawns, and won a nice game.

In Round 5 Judit Polgar played the Panov against the Caro-Kann. The position quickly simplified and a draw was agreed on move 19. In the next game Karpov opened with 1.e4 against Yusupov, who played a Classical Sicilian. Karpov agreed a draw two moves earlier than in the previous game, although this time the position was rich and full of pieces. In Round 7 Karpov equalized on the black side of an English Opening against Topalov, and the players agreed a draw in an equal endgame. In Round 8 Leko was able to equalize in the Hungarian Variation of the  $\mathbb{W}b3$  Grünfeld. The game soon became a dead draw and the players accepted the inevitable.

Karpov's ninth and final game was much more exciting. Shirov chose the Short System in the Advance Caro-Kann, and sacrificed two pawns to get some initiative in a queenless middlegame. For a while he stood better, but he made some mistakes and allowed Karpov to take over. Karpov won a nice endgame to finish on a score of 5½/9, which was enough to share first place with Gelfand and Topalov.

\*\*\*

Karpov's next event was Tilburg. In the first round against Zoltan Almasi he played a questionable variation in the main line of

the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann. Almasi reacted strongly and Karpov sacrificed an exchange for insufficient compensation. He fought hard but eventually had to resign. However, he immediately recovered in the next round, outplaying Lautier on the white side of a Vienna which soon transposed to a Semi-Slav. Karpov won a pawn and converted his advantage smoothly.

In Round 3 Karpov equalized easily with the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann against Sutovsky, and the players agreed a quick draw. In the next game he had the black pieces again, and used the same opening to get a pleasant position against Svidler. The players agreed a draw in the middlegame, but perhaps Karpov should have played on as his position was more comfortable. In Round 5 Karpov got some advantage against Shirov's Chebanenko Slav. He collected a pawn but Black had some compensation and Shirov was able to hold the draw.

In Round 6 Karpov played the 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Queen's Indian against Van Wely. The Dutchman had the two bishops and obtained a space advantage with a well-timed d5. He increased his advantage and won a fine game. In the next round Karpov used the Fianchetto System against Gelfand's King's Indian. The position remained balanced throughout the game until a draw was agreed in the ending. In Round 8 Judit Polgar used the Panov Variation and sacrificed a pawn for the two bishops and some activity. Then on move 19 the players agreed a draw in a roughly level position.

In Round 9 Karpov tried to repeat the Fianchetto King's Indian, but Piket opted for a Grünfeld with ...d5, without a preliminary ...c6. Karpov was unable to obtain any advantage, and following some simplifications the players agreed a draw. In the next game Adams tried an early h4 in the Advance Caro-Kann. He sacrificed his c4-pawn and got decent compensation in the complications.

Following some simplifications White had a small advantage in the endgame, but Karpov was able to hold it. In the eleventh and final round Karpov faced Leko. The Hungarian grandmaster played a novelty in the  $\mathbb{W}b3$  Grünfeld, but Karpov reacted strongly. He castled on the queenside, launched a powerful attack, and sealed the victory with some precise moves.

Despite the excellent last round Karpov only finished on fifty percent, with  $5\frac{1}{2}/11$ , which was enough to share sixth place with Adams. It was a clear indication that his days as number two in the world ranking list were finally at an end.

\*\*\*

Before Karpov's next classical event, he took part in the European Rapidplay Championship. It is not possible to work out from the database the format in which the tournament was played, but Loek van Wely was kind enough to inform me that the tournament began with preliminary qualifying groups, after which the top eight players advanced to the knockout stage.

One of Karpov's best wins from the event came against Ilya Smirin. The Israeli grandmaster played fifteen classical games against the world champions, scoring three wins, six draws and six losses.

## Game 45

Anatoly Karpov – Ilya Smirin

European Rapid Championship, Cap d'Agde 1996

**1.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.  $c4$   $g6$  3.  $g3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0–0  
5.  $0–0$   $d6$  6.  $d4$**

Just like Boris Gelfand, Ilya Smirin is originally from Belarus and is a pupil of Albert Kapengut. He is also an expert on the King's Indian Defence.

**6...  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $a6$**

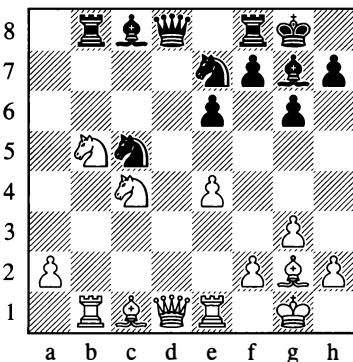
According to the database Smirin has a varied repertoire and plays several variations against the Fianchetto System.

**8.  $\mathbb{E}e1$**

This move is not one of the most heavily-analysed main lines, although it was still quite well-known. A few weeks earlier Karpov played 8.b3 against Gelfand but obtained no advantage at all. He would go on to score three wins and one draw with the text move.

**8...  $\mathbb{E}b8$  9.  $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$**

Karpov's next game in this variation took place the following year and continued as follows: 9...  $b5$  10.  $cxb5$   $AXB5$  11.  $b4$   $e6$  12.  $e4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  13.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $c5$  14.  $bxc5$   $dx5$  15.  $dx5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$

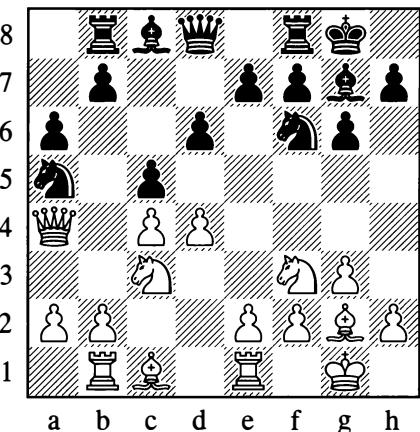


17...  $\mathbb{Q}d3?$  (Better was: 17...  $\mathbb{Q}a6!$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}cd6$  [18.  $a4?$   $\mathbb{W}xd1$  19.  $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  Black is fine.] 18...  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$  20.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xc1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  22.  $\mathbb{W}c5$  This position occurred in Borges Mateos – Leyva, Cuba 2000, and here Black should have tried 22...  $\mathbb{E}fc8!$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  with decent drawing chances, as the pawn deficit should not have a great role.) 18.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  19.  $a4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  20.  $\mathbb{W}xc1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  21.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  22.  $axb5$   $\mathbb{W}d4$  23.  $b6$  White was already winning and Black soon had to resign, Karpov – Shirov, Dos Hermanas 1997.

**10.  $\mathbb{W}a4$   $c5?$**

It is early for Black to embark on a direct confrontation.

A year after his crushing defeat, Shirov came up with a different plan: 10...b6 11.c5 ♕d7 12.♔a3 ♔c4!? 13.♔xa6 b5 This time Black had reasonable compensation and went on to draw in Karpov – Shirov, Wijk aan Zee 1998.



### 11.dxc5!

By opening the position Karpov gives himself the opportunity to win valuable time and obtain a considerable advantage in development.

11...♔d7 12.♔c2 dxc5 13.♔f4! ♔c8 14.♔e5 ♔e6?

Black fights for equality but only encounters bigger problems. Instead he should have settled for a somewhat worse position with chances to defend.

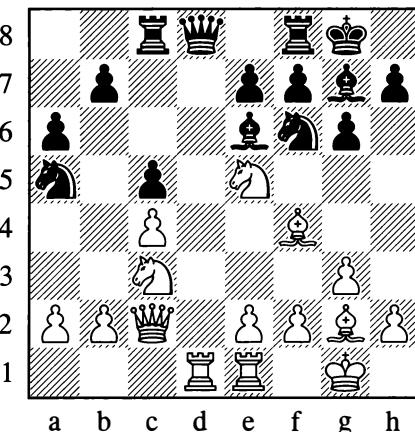
There was one subsequent deviation from this game, but it failed to get close to equalizing: 14...♔f5 15.e4 ♔e6 16.♔bd1 ♔d7 17.♔xd7 ♔xd7 18.e5 ♔e8 19.♔d5 White has a large advantage, Stohl – Vrana, Martin 2003.

14...♔h5! With this move Black acknowledges that he has lost the opening battle and fights to minimize his disadvantage. 15.♔xd7 (There

is no reason to risk the speculative gambit 15.♔bd1?! ♔xe5 16.♔xe5 ♔xc4, even if White does have some compensation.) 15...♔xd7 16.♔bd1 ♔e6 17.♔d5 ♔h3 18.♔e3 ♔f6 19.♔g2 White keeps the bishop pair and a long-lasting initiative on the light squares, but Black has reasonable chances to defend.

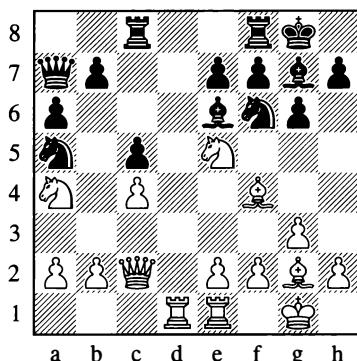
### 15.♔bd1

Just as in many positions with a ‘Catalan’ bishop on g2, the black queen has problems finding a good square.



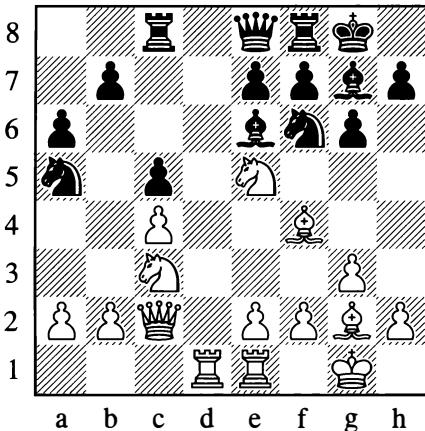
### 15...♔e8

The queen would have failed to find a safe refuge on the queenside: 15...♔b6 16.♔a4! ♔a7



17.♔d2! White can profit from the misplaced knight. 17...♔xc4? (17...♔c6 18.♔xc6 bxc6

19.♕e3 ♕d7 20.♕xc5! White wins a pawn.)  
 18.♕xc4 ♕xc4 (18...b5 19.♕cb6 does not change much) 19.♕xc4 b5 20.♕h4 bxa4  
 21.♕xa4 Black maintains the material balance (for the time being), but his weak queenside pawns will give him serious problems.



### 16.♘d5!

Karpov tempts his opponent into exchanging the knight, which will enable him to increase his space advantage.

### 16...♗xd5?!

Changing the pawn structure rather helps White.

### 16...♘h5?!

This looks like Black's best chance. It turns out that he can tolerate the strong knight, and can ease the pressure in the centre without altering the pawn structure.

### 17.♕d2 ♕xe5 18.♕xa5 ♘f6

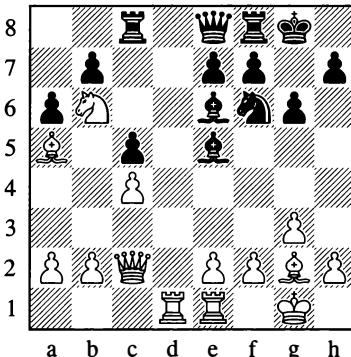
White keeps some advantage, but it is not easy to do something with it.

### 19.♘b6?!

This seems to be the most ambitious approach.

19.♘c3 ♕xc3 20.♕xc3 ♘xd5 21.cxd5 ♕d7  
 22.d6 (22.e4 e5) 22...♘c6 23.d7 ♕xd7  
 24.♕xb7 ♕b8 25.♕xa6 ♕e6 Black has some compensation for the pawn.

White could also consider making a slight improvement with 19.♘d2?! when he keeps some advantage.



### 19...♗b8

19...♗d8 20.♕b3 ♕xd1 21.♕xd1 ♕b8  
 22.♕a3! ♕d6 23.f4! ♕e8 24.e4 Black faces problems in the centre.

### 20.♘c3

Another line is: 20.f4 ♕c7 21.♕c3 ♕d8  
 22.♘d5 ♕xa5 23.♕xa5 ♕xd5 24.cxd5 ♕b5  
 Black is worse but still alive.

### 20...♗x3

20...♗c7 21.♘d5 is strong.

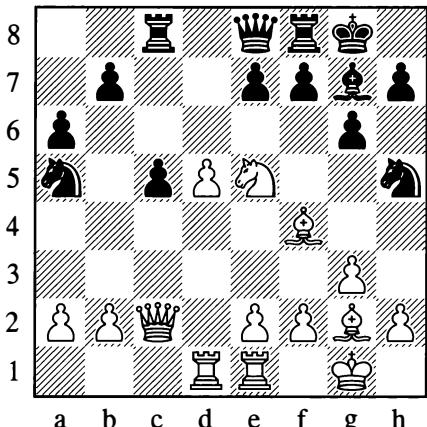
### 21.♕xc3 ♘d7 22.♘xd5 ♕xd7 23.♕e5 b6

Black is living dangerously, but it is not clear if White can invade.

### 17.cxd5 ♘h5?!

It is too early for Black to simplify the position. White's pieces are already more actively placed, and Karpov soon exploits this latest inaccuracy to achieve an even greater level of domination.

17...♗b5! Black's top priority should have been to find a way to bring his queen and rook into play. 18.♕f3 (The evaluation is similar after 18.♕g5 ♕fd8 19.e4 c4) 18...♗fd8 19.e4 c4 White is clearly better thanks to his strong centre and bishop pair, but Black is still in the game.



**18.♘h3!**

Karpov forces a weakness in Black's position.

**18...♞xf4 19.gxf4 e6**

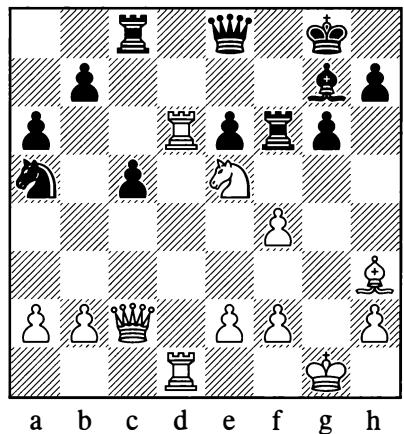
A sad necessity, but other moves would have lost material, for instance: 19...♝c7? 20.b4+–

**20.dxe6 fxe6 21.♗d6**

Karpov wastes no time in attacking the weakness.

**21...♝f6 22.♗ed1**

White is already winning. Smirin was clearly having an off day, as a grandmaster at his level rarely has problems of this scale so early. Of course we should not forget that it was a rapid game.



**22...♔h8**

When calculating this position in advance, Smirin may have missed that he would not be able to expel the rook with 22...♜f8 because of 23.♕d7!.

**23.♗e4 ♜c6**

A desperate attempt, but Black has no reasonable option as after 23...♜f8 24.♕d7 b6 25.♖a7 White has a winning advantage.

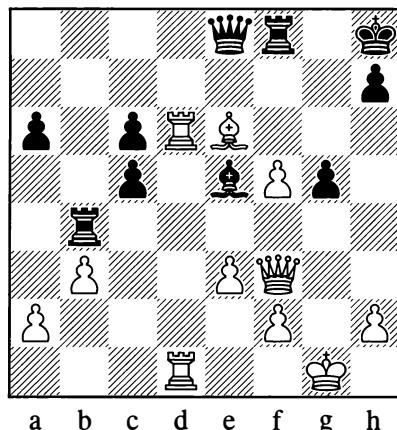
**24.♘xc6 bxc6 25.♗xe6**

Karpov's accurate play pays dividends and he collects a key pawn in the centre.

**25...♝f8 26.b3 ♜b8 27.e3 g5 28.f5!?**

Naturally Karpov could have taken the second pawn, but he prefers to avoid giving his opponent even the slightest random chance.

**28...♝b4 29.♗f3 ♜e5**



**30.♗d8**

Simplifying to an easily winning endgame.

**30...♛xd8 31.♗xd8 ♜xd8 32.f6! ♜f8 33.f7**

White has a solidly-defended pawn one square away from promotion, while Black has numerous weak pawns. The remaining moves can pass without comment.

33.. $\mathbb{E}h4$  34.h3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35. $\mathbb{W}xc6$  h5 36. $\mathbb{W}xc5$   
 $\mathbb{Q}f6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  g4 38.hxg4 hxg4 39.b4  $\mathbb{Q}fh8$

40. $\mathbb{W}c7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  41.a4 g3 42. $\mathbb{W}d6\ddagger$

## 1-0

According to the database Karpov achieved plus scores against Glek, Hracek, Magem Badals, Smagin and Smirin. He faced Van Wely in the final and beat him in a play-off.

\*\*\*

Karpov's final tournament of the year was Las Palmas, a double-round-robin event involving all the top players of that time, with the exception of Kamsky. In the first round Karpov faced Ivanchuk and played an unusual line in the Fianchetto King's Indian. Ivanchuk not only equalized but obtained some advantage and Karpov had to fight hard to draw. In the next game he had the white pieces again, but obtained no more than a symbolic edge against Anand in a 4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  Queen's Indian, and had to settle for a draw.

In Round 3 Karpov surprised Topalov with the Queen's Gambit Accepted and drew fairly easily. In the next game he equalized with the 1.c4 e5 English against Kramnik, and another draw ensued. In Round 5 he faced Kasparov, who used the Vienna System against the Queen's Gambit. Karpov reacted timidly and soon reached a slightly uncomfortable queenless middlegame. Later Kasparov missed a win in the pawn endgame and Karpov managed to survive. In the next game Karpov easily equalized and scored his sixth successive draw, after surprising Ivanchuk with the Rubinstein Variation of the French Defence.

In Round 7 Karpov's drawing streak came to an end. With the black pieces against Anand, he repeated the QGA but soon found himself in a difficult position. At one point Anand could have captured a pawn for no compensation, but instead he sacrificed a bishop and won in fine style. In the next round he tried to get

back on track against Topalov, who equalized in the Modern Benoni but later made a few inaccuracies. Karpov got some advantage but the Bulgarian grandmaster defended well and Karpov had to settle for a draw.

In Round 9 Kasparov played the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian. Karpov got a pleasant position but later committed a serious inaccuracy and Kasparov found a great tactical idea. Karpov survived but had to enter a hopeless endgame which the world number one converted easily. In the final round Kramnik played an unreasonably risky novelty in the Semi-Slav. Karpov in his heyday would probably have punished him for it, but he allowed Black to obtain counterplay. Later he missed a win in a sharp position and Kramnik escaped with a perpetual check.

Karpov finished on a disappointing 4/10, sharing last place with Ivanchuk without winning a game.

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In the early part of 1996 Karpov played excellently, but towards the end of the year his play deteriorated. Perhaps he played in too many tournaments again, especially with a World Championship match taking place in the middle of the year.

From 1973 until 1995 Karpov had been rated either the number one or number two player in the world. The Las Palmas tournament marked the passing of the torch, by which time the new breed of super-grandmasters had begun to surpass him. There are precious few players in the whole of chess history who stayed within the top two places in the world rankings for as long as Karpov. And even though his level was gradually dropping, the twelfth World Champion of course remained a world-class player who would go on to produce many more wonderful games in the coming years...

## 1996 Summary

Spanish Team Championship: 3/4 (+2 =2 -0)

Yugoslav Team Championship 2/3 (+1 =2 -0)

Belgrade (3rd-4th place): 2½/5 (+1 =3 -1)

FIDE World Championship match versus Kamsky, Elista: Won 10½–7½ (+6 =9 –3)

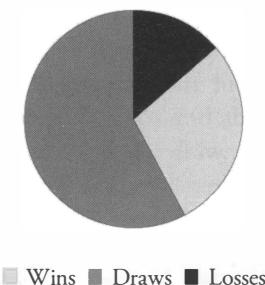
Biel (1st-2nd place): 7½/11 (+4 =7 –0)

Vienna (1st-3rd place): 5½/9 (+3 =5 –1)

Tilburg (6th-7th place): 5½/11 (+2 =7 –2)

Las Palmas (5th-6th place): 4/10 (+0 =3 –2)

Total 57.6% (+19 =38 –9)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1997

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Rating 2760 (3 in the world)

Karpov began the new year with various rapid events and simultaneous exhibitions. His first classical tournament was Dos Hermanas, where he started with the black pieces against Illescas. He equalized with the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann and the players agreed a draw in a level endgame. In the second round Karpov played the Catalan against Judit Polgar, who equalized. Karpov got some advantage in the middlegame, then he erred and allowed Judit to take over the initiative, but it was not too serious and the game ended in a draw.

In Round 3 Karpov had the black pieces against Kramnik, and obtained a reasonable position in a line of the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian, which occurred via an English move order. But later he fell into trouble and Kramnik was able to make his bishop pair count. In the next round Karpov bounced back with a convincing victory over Shirov, which is referenced in the notes to Game 45 at the end of the previous chapter.

In Round 5 Karpov successfully defended the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann and drew without too many problems against Topalov. In the next game Anand played the Queen's Gambit Accepted. Karpov played a novelty and a complex middlegame occurred. Karpov could have won had he found the right path through the complications, but in the end he had to settle for a draw. In Round 7 Karpov entered a sharp queenless middlegame on the black side of an English Opening against Salov. The tense position soon petered out to a level endgame and the players agreed a draw.

In the next round Karpov produced a great game against Nigel Short. Since their Linares 1995 encounter (Game 40 in the present book) the players met just once and drew.

## Game 46

Nigel Short – Anatoly Karpov

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Dos Hermanas 1997

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.e5  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

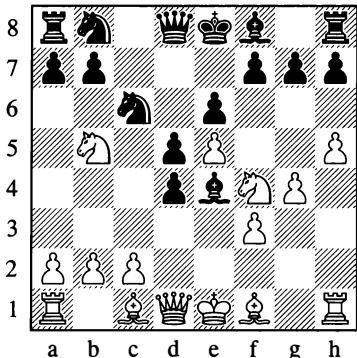
4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e6 5.g4  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  6. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$

Earlier in the year Karpov won a rapid match against Kotronias by the score of 2½–1½, in which this ultra-sharp line occurred twice.

6... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  7. $\mathbb{Q}f4$  c5 8.h4 cxd4!

This is Karpov's novelty, which he first introduced against Ljubojevic in the rapid section of the 1994 Amber tournament.

9. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}ec6$  10.h5  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  11.f3



11... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$ ?

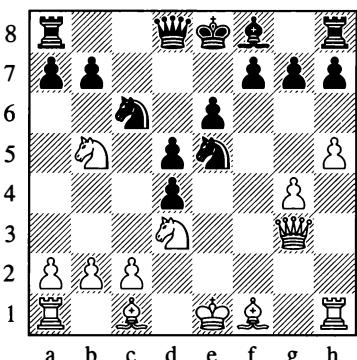
Karpov sacrifices a piece for three connected passed pawns.

Black scores even better with 11...a6!, which occurred in several games in 1999. The database does not give the precise dates of all the games, but based on the ordering of the games, it looks like this important move was introduced by a player named Papa with a rating of just 1870!

12. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  13. $\mathbb{W}g3$

Ljubojevic preferred 13. $\mathbb{W}e2$  and eventually won, but Black's play could have been improved and at this stage he is doing well.

13... $\mathbb{Q}bc6$  14. $\mathbb{Q}d3$



14... $\mathbb{Q}xd3\ddagger$

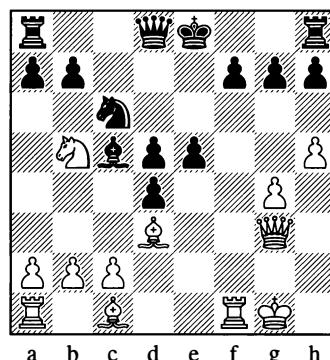
Karpov played this move in the first Kotronias game, and returned to it later in the same year against Lautier.

14... $\mathbb{W}a5\ddagger$  15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  e5 17. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

f6 18. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  19.a4 a6 20.a5  $\mathbb{W}d8$  21.g5? axb5 22. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  23.g6† hxg6 24.hxg6†  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black had a clear advantage and went on to win, Kotronias – Karpov, Athens (rapid – 3) 1997.

A few years later Karpov deviated with 14...f6 but was unsuccessful. Interestingly Kotronias also encountered this move in a couple of subsequent games. 15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  led to an eventual draw in Kotronias – Bouaziz, Las Vegas 1999.) 16.g5 (White was successful with 16.c3 in Kotronias – Adianto, Buenos Aires 1997.) 16...f5 17.c3 dxc3 18.bxc3  $\mathbb{W}a5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ? (20...a6 or 20... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  should have been tried.) 21. $\mathbb{Q}h4!$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  23. $\mathbb{W}c7\ddagger$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  24. $\mathbb{W}xb7$  1–0 Anand – Karpov, Monte Carlo (blindfold) 2001.

15. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  e5 16.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}c5$



17. $\mathbb{Q}f5$

17.h6 g6 18. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}h1$  a6 20. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$  22.b3  $\mathbb{W}xg4$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{W}h5\ddagger$  24. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}g5\ddagger$  25. $\mathbb{W}g2$   $\mathbb{W}xg2\ddagger$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  e4 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  f5 Black obtained four pawns for the rook and went on to convert his advantage to a win, Lautier – Karpov, Monte Carlo (rapid) 1997.

17...0–0 18.h6 g6 19. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  a6 20. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}ae8$  24.g5  $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Black has a playable position and but lost after subsequent errors, Kotronias – Karpov, Athens (rapid – 1) 1997.

**4...e6 5.a3**

Karpov probably expected this move as Short had used it to beat Leko in 1996.

**5...Qe7**

Karpov allows his opponent to exchange his light-squared bishop; he never did it again. In his 2005 rapid match with Hamdouchi, Karpov lost one game with 5...h6 and scored a win and a loss with 5...Qd7.

**6.Qbd2 Qd7 7.Qh4!**

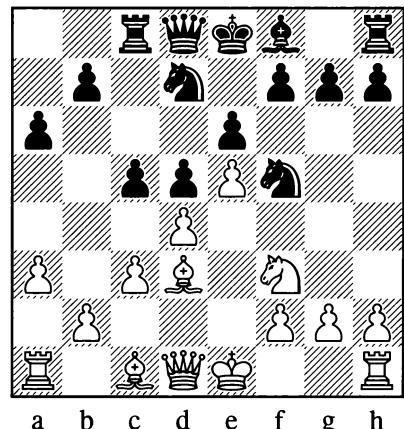
Eliminating the bishop is critical. Black must search for fluent piece play otherwise he will simply be worse.

**7...c5 8.c3 a6**

Karpov makes a useful move while waiting for his opponent to exchange on f5, which will help his development. Perhaps 8...Bc8 would have been a slightly better way of achieving the same goal.

**9.Qxf5**

Sooner or later White has to take. Short wants his bishop on d3 so he does not delay it.

**9...Qxf5 10.Qf3 Bc8 11.Qd3**

11...cxd4!?

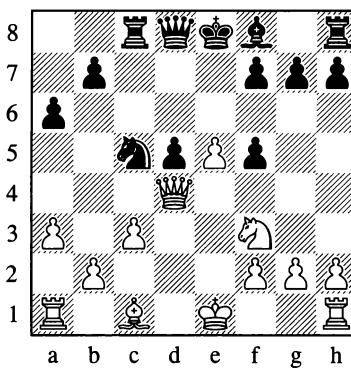
Karpov wants to clarify the situation in the centre. He is willing to undertake doubled pawns and an isolated one, hoping that the availability of the e6-square and the slight weakness of the e5-pawn will make up for his structural defect.

11...Qe7 and 11...g6!? are both reasonable alternatives.

**12.Qxf5 exf5 13.Qxd4**

Short wins a tempo as Black has to defend the f5-pawn; on the other hand he subsequently moves the knight back in order to clear the d-file.

When the same position occurred again White took back with the queen:

**13.Wxd4 Qc5****14.Qg5**

14.0-0 Wd7 15.Qb1 Qe7 (15...Qe4!?)

16.Qd1 Qd8 The position is equal.

14.Qe3 Qe6 (14...Qe7 15.Qd1) 15.Wa4†

(15.Wd3 f4 16.Qd4 Qe7 Black is not worse.)

15...Wd7 16.Qxd7† Qxd7 17.Qd1 f4

18.Qc1 Qc6 White's advantage is tiny, if it exists at all.

The text move was played in Kuta – Trs, e-mail 2004, and here the soundest response would have been:

14...Qe7 15.Qxe7 Wxe7 16.Qd1 0-0 17.0-0

17.Wxd5? Qfd8 leads to trouble.

17...Qfd8

Black should have no problem coping with his pawn weaknesses.

### 13...g6 14.0-0

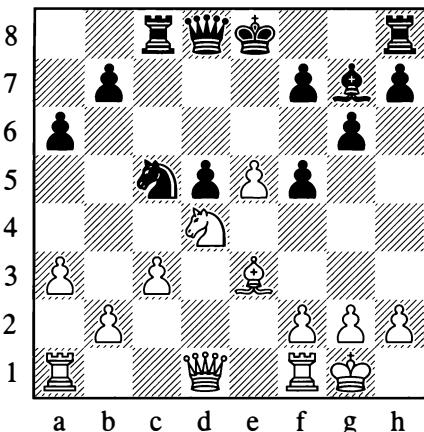
14.e6 eliminates the e-pawn as a future target, but leads to no advantage as Black is well-developed: 14...Qc5 15.0-0 Qg7 16.Qe1 (16.exf7† Qxf7 Black's active pieces give him comfortable play.) 16...Wd6 17.e7 Qe6 Black is in the game.

### 14...Qc5 15.Qe3

15.Qb3 can be met by 15...Qe6.

### 15...Qg7

The fianchetto-bishop forces White to pay attention to his vulnerable e-pawn. Defending it with f4 would be undesirable due to the weakening of the e4-square and the worsening of White's bishop.



### 16.Qf3

Short defends the pawn and clears the d-file.

### 16...0-0 17.Qe1 Qe8 18.Qe2 Qe4

Karpov installs his knight on a fine square while somewhat isolating the e5-pawn from its camp.

### 19.Wb3 b5 20.Qd1

A more dynamic and challenging approach would have been: 20.a4! Opening the a-file and creating a weak pawn in Black's position. 20...f4 (20...Wd7 21.axb5 axb5 22.Qa7 White is active enough.) 21.Qxf4!? (21.Qd4 is simpler, and keeps White's position together in the centre.) 21...Qc4 22.Qe3 Wa5 23.Qd4 Qxa4 24.Qxa4 bxa4 25.Wa2 Qd6 The position is roughly equal.

### 20...Qc4!

Karpov defends the d5-pawn by blocking the queen, and prevents a4 in the process.

### 21.Qd4

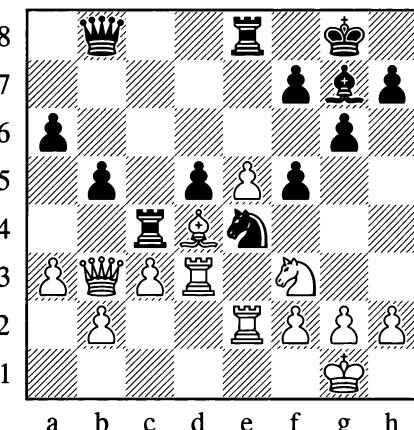
It was possible to sacrifice the e5-pawn as well: 21.Wc2!? Qxe5 22.Qxe5 Qxe5 23.Qd4 Qe6 24.f3 White's strong bishop and better pawn structure offer him sufficient compensation.

### 21...Wb8!

Karpov attacks the e5-pawn with another piece, while also preparing a possible minority attack with ...a5 and ...b4.

### 22.Qd3

Another sensible continuation was 22.g3 f4!? 23.Qee1 Wc8 24.Qc2 Wf5 25.Qd3 Qh6 26.Qb6 g5 with a double-edged position.

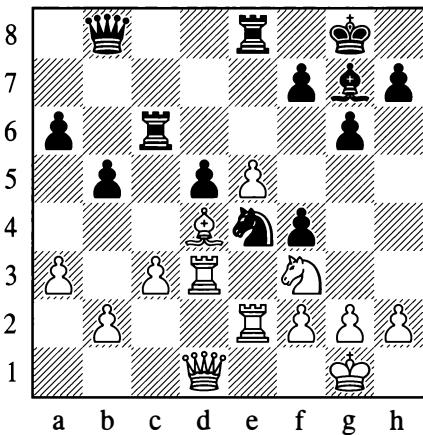


**22...f4!**

Karpov takes away the e3-square from the bishop. Later he can advance his other kingside pawns, perhaps to attack, or simply to gain space and choke his opponent.

**23.♖d1 ♜c6!**

The rook has done its duty on c4, and in the present position it will stand better on the e-file.



**24.♘e1?!**

Even though Black seems to have done more to improve his position over the last ten moves, White was still not objectively worse. But starting with this rather passive move, things start to go awry for him.

The black rook may have left the fourth rank, but 24.a4?! was still not a good idea due to the simple 24...b4.

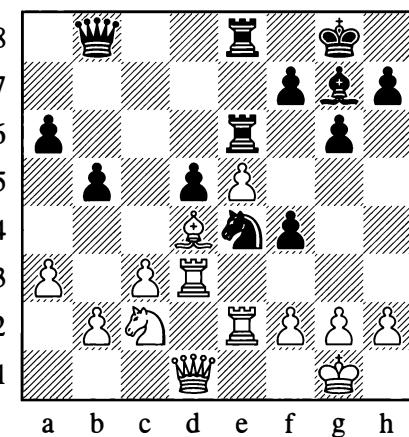
White would have done better to challenge the knight with 24.♘d2! after which 24...♘g5 can be met by the calm 25.♗e1. In that case the position would have remained equal in view of the mutual pawn weaknesses.

**24...♝ce6 25.♘c2?**

Short wants to kick away the strong knight with f3, and hopes to use his own knight to go

after the d5-pawn. But it soon transpires that the knight stands worse on c2 than on f3.

It was not too late to correct the error with 25.♘f3?! g5 26.h3. Black can try to push his kingside pawns or transfer his queen to c4, but White should have enough resources to hold the position as the d5-pawn will remain weak.



**25...♛b7!**

This is a typical Karpov move: not the most dazzling, but extremely strong nonetheless. The point is to anticipate White's counterplay by defending the d5-pawn in advance. Since the white knight is no longer defending the e5-pawn, the black queen can afford to find a new occupation.

**26.f3?!**

Short probably failed to appreciate how strong Karpov's knight would become.

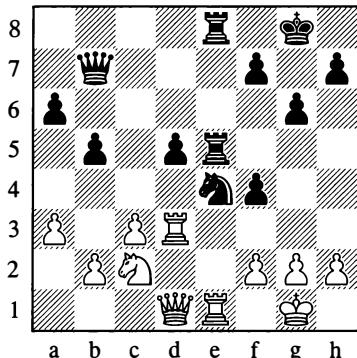
A better chance to survive would have been:

**26.♝e1?!**

Black's pawn structure is imperfect to say the least, so giving up the e5-pawn would have given White some drawing chances.

**26...♞xe5 27.♞xe5 ♛xe5**

Here White can choose between solid defence and attempting a counterattack.



28.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

28.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}a7!$  With this precise move Black ensures that a capture on d5 will not come with gain of tempo. (28...  $\mathbb{W}b6$  29.  $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2??$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xe5+-$ ; 28...  $a5$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $f3$  31.  $g3$  White is living dangerously but he seems to be okay.) 29.  $\mathbb{E}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2!$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  31.  $\mathbb{E}xe8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32.  $\mathbb{E}e2$  (Unlike the analogous position with the queen on b6, 32.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  does not work here and after 32...  $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  White is in trouble.) 32...  $\mathbb{Q}e3$  White is struggling.

28...  $a5!!$

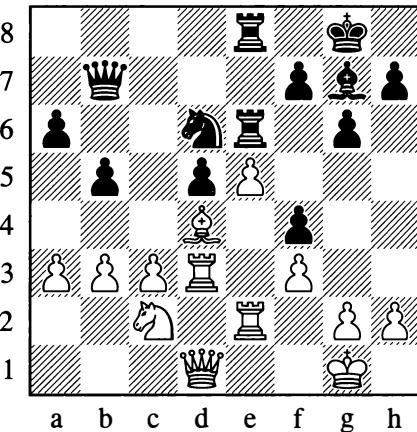
28...  $f6$  gives back the pawn in order to draw the enemy rook to an unfavourable square. 29.  $\mathbb{E}f1$   $a5$  30.  $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  31.  $\mathbb{E}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  32.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  The rook is misplaced on f4, but White should be able to live with it.

29.  $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  31.  $\mathbb{E}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  32.  $\mathbb{E}g4$   $h5$  33.  $\mathbb{E}h4$   $\mathbb{W}b6\#$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   
34.  $\mathbb{Q}h1?$   $\mathbb{W}f2$  wins.  
34...  $b4!$  35.  $axb4$   $g5!$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xh5$   $\mathbb{W}a6\#$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$

White loses an exchange.

26...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  27.  $b3$

Another possibility was: 27.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  28.  $b3$   $a5$  (28...  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  29.  $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  30.  $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  31.  $\mathbb{E}c1$  [but not 31.  $\mathbb{Q}xb6?$   $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$ ] White is worse, but he can continue to resist.) 29.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  30.  $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  31.  $bxcc$   $\mathbb{W}xc4$  32.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  33.  $\mathbb{E}xf4$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  34.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  White's position is difficult but not hopeless.



27...  $\mathbb{E}f5!$

The e-pawn is not going anywhere, so Karpov postpones taking it and improves his position first.

27...  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  28.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  (28.  $\mathbb{E}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  29.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}e1\#$  31.  $\mathbb{E}xe1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  White's king is dangerously open.) 28...  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  29.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$  30.  $\mathbb{W}d2$  White fails to regain his pawn, nevertheless he obtains some counterchances: 30...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  (31...  $\mathbb{W}g5$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ) 32.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (32.  $\mathbb{W}xf4?$   $\mathbb{E}e2$ ) 32...  $\mathbb{E}xd5$  33.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}h4$  34.  $c4$  White has realistic hopes to survive thanks to his passed pawn on the queenside.

28.  $\mathbb{W}d2$   $h5!$

Karpov defends the f4-pawn in an original way. This move also has a prophylactic element as it opens the back rank, just in case.

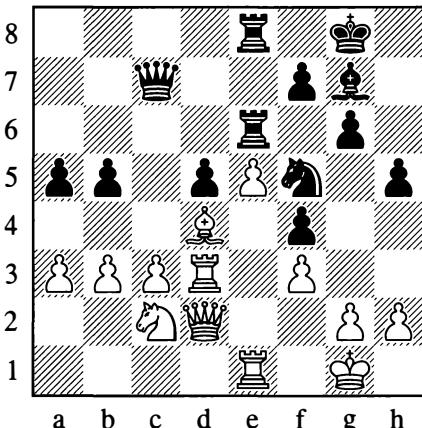
29.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $a5!$

Another strong move with a rook's pawn! This time Karpov defends the d5-pawn indirectly by taking away the b4-square from the enemy knight.

30.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$

Short may well have been short of time, but anyway there is little he can do but sit and wait.

30... $\mathbb{W}c7$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$



31... $\mathbb{Q}h7$ ?

Karpov makes his trademark prophylactic king move, making every possible improvement before collecting the doomed pawn.

Nevertheless 31... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}b6\#$  was winning as well.

### 32.b4

Short weakens the c4-square, which hastens the end slightly. An alternative finish might have been 32. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (35. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$ ) 35... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b2\#$  and Black wins.

32...a4 33. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ?

33. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ !

Stopping the queen invasion would have resisted harder:

33... $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

35. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  36. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

38.g3 fxg3# 39.hxg3 h4 40.gxh4 (40.g4 h3)

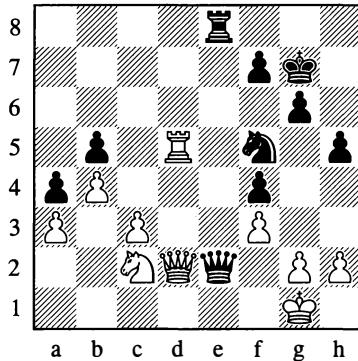
40... $\mathbb{Q}xh4\#$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3\#$  wins.

35... $\mathbb{W}e2$

After 35... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (37. $\mathbb{Q}xb5?$   $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ ) 37... $\mathbb{Q}h4$  38. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

$\mathbb{W}f5$  39. $\mathbb{W}d1$  Black is better but the game continues.

36. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$



37... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ !

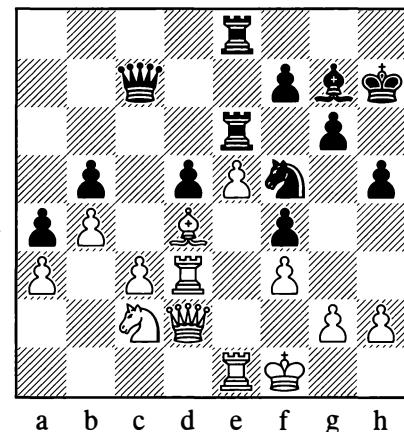
37... $\mathbb{W}c4$  allows 38. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  40. $\mathbb{W}xf4$  when White is very much alive.

38. $\mathbb{W}xe2$

38. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}c4$ ! With the rook on e7 the sacrifice is harmless: 40. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$

38... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}e3$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$

Despite the inferior pawn structure, Black has excellent winning chances.



33... $\mathbb{W}c4$ !

Before taking the pawn Karpov improves his queen with decisive effect.

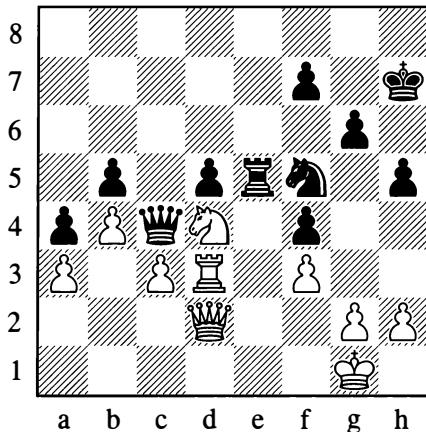
34. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

Finally Karpov devours the e5-pawn, under conditions which leave no chances for his opponent to survive.

35.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5 \mathbb{E}xe5$  36.  $\mathbb{E}xe5 \mathbb{E}xe5$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$

After 37.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$  h4 38.  $\mathbb{W}d1$  (38. h3  $\mathbb{Q}g3$ )

38... h3 39. gxh3  $\mathbb{W}a2$  Black wins.



37...  $\mathbb{E}e3!$

By exchanging the rooks Karpov wins a second pawn.

38.  $\mathbb{E}xe3$  fxe3 39.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$

0-1

In the final round Karpov faced Gelfand, who equalized with the Semi-Slav. The queenside pawns disappeared in the endgame and the game looked to be heading for a certain draw, but the players kept fighting and Karpov incredibly got a dead lost position, but somehow Gelfand spoiled it and the game ended in a draw after all. Karpov's final score of 5/9 was enough to share third place with Salov and Topalov, a point behind Anand and Kramnik who tied for first.

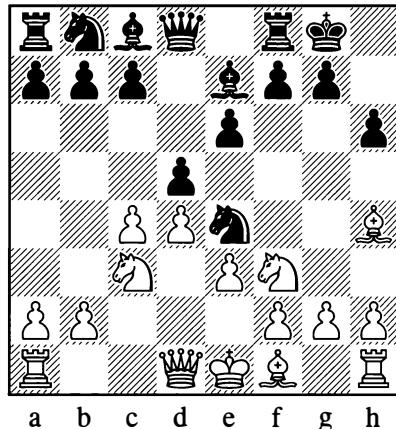
Karpov's next slow-play event was Dortmund, where he started with the black pieces against Kramnik. Karpov was unable to equalize in a mixture of the English and Queen's Indian, and Kramnik beat him convincingly. Karpov's opponent in the second round was Artur Yusupov.

## Game 47

Anatoly Karpov – Artur Yusupov

Dortmund 1997

1. d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. c4 e6 3.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d5 4.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$   
5.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 6.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  0-0 7. e3  $\mathbb{Q}e4$

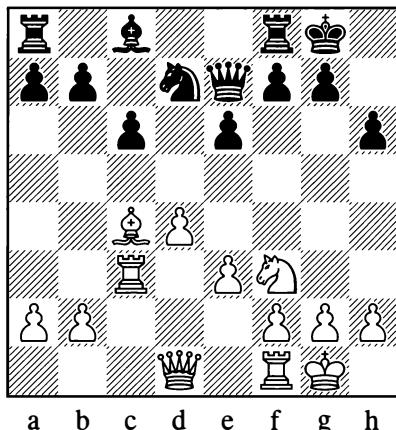


The Lasker Defence had been a mainstay of Yusupov's repertoire since the late eighties, and used in his matches with Karpov.

8.  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$   $\mathbb{W}xe7$  9.  $\mathbb{E}c1$  c6 10.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   
11.  $\mathbb{E}xc3$  dxc4

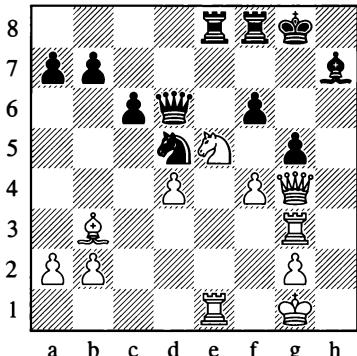
The usual choice, although three years prior to this game Yusupov tried 11...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  and drew against Nikolic.

12.  $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13. 0-0



**13...b6**

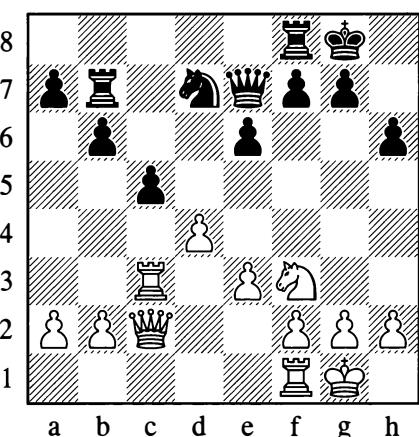
Here is one of the crucial games from the 1989 candidates semi-final: 13...e5 14.♗b3 exd4 15.exd4 ♗f6 16.♗e1 ♕d6 17.♗e5 ♗d5 18.♗g3 ♗f5 19.♗h5 ♗h7 20.♗g4 g5 21.h4 f6 22.hxg5 hxg5 23.f4 ♗ae8



24.fxg5 fxe5 25.g6 ♗xg6 26.dxe5 ♕e6 27.♗xd5 cxd5 28.♗xg6† ♕xg6 29.♗xg6† ♗h7 30.♗d6 White's energetic attacking play led to a winning endgame which he converted with ease, Karpov – Yusupov, London (7) 1989.

**14.♗d3 c5 15.♗e4 ♗b8 16.♗a4**

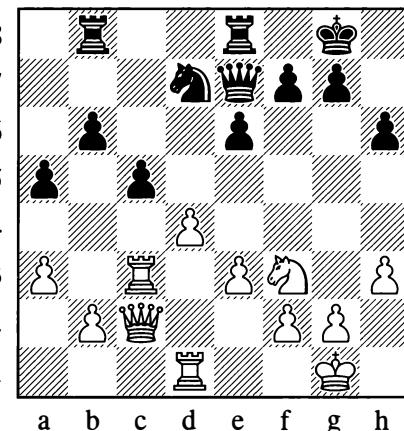
Karpov had used the alternative 16.♗c2!? to defeat Yusupov twice in 1995, but now he feels it is time for a change.

**16...♗b7 17.♗xb7 ♗xb7 18.♗c2****18...a5!?**

Yusupov commits his queenside pawns to a rigid formation in order to restrain the enemy b-pawn. After 18...♗c8 19.♗c1 ♗bc7 20.b4! Black was under pressure in Kramnik – Kasparov, Las Palmas 1996, although he managed to hold a draw.

**19.a3!?**

Karpov returns the ball to Black's court and discourages him from placing a rook on the c-file.

**19...♗e8 20.♗d1 ♗bb8 21.h3****21....♗bd8**

It was worth considering the immediate 21...e5!?, for instance: 22.dxe5 ♗xe5 23.♗xe5 ♕xe5 24.♗cd3 ♗e4 Black certainly stands worse here, but with no knights on the board he should be able to exchange his three queenside pawns for White's two, leading to a probable draw in the rook endgame.

**22.♗cd3 ♗c8**

Yusupov decide not to force matters. The following direct approach would not have solved his problems: 22...cxsd4 23.♗xd4 (Also after 23.♗xd4 ♗e5 24.♗c3 ♗d5 White is a bit better.) 23...♗c5 24.b4 axb4 25.axb4 ♗a6 26.♗c4! Karpov evaluates this position as

clearly better for White; indeed, the a6-knight will have a hard time finding a decent and stable square.

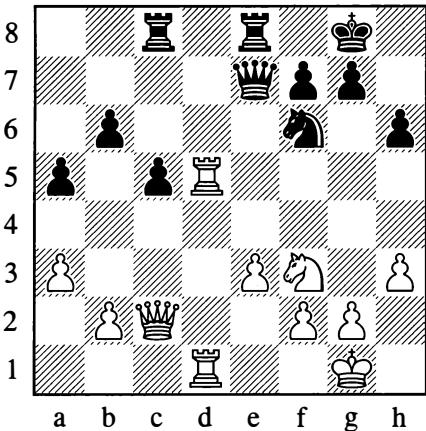
### 23.d5!

Karpov poses a dilemma for his opponent: should he try to live with a mighty passed pawn or should he allow White to dominate the d-file?

### 23...exd5

Yusupov chooses the lesser of the two evils. Indeed, 23...e5?! 24.d6 is depressing for Black.

### 24.♗xd5 ♖f6



### 25.♕e5!

Karpov exchanges, as with fewer pieces on the board he has better chances to invade. Keep the rook on the d-file is not very effective: 25.♖d6 ♕b8 26.a4 ♔e4 27.♖d5 ♕e6 Black defends firmly.

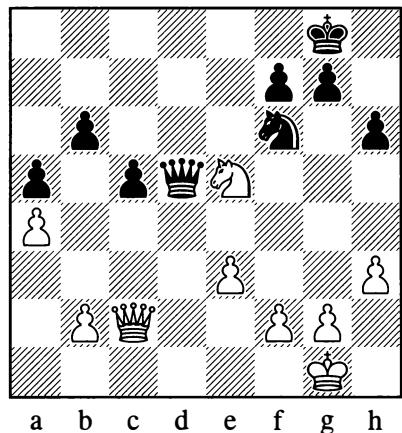
### 25...♗c7 26.♗xe8† ♗xe8 27.a4 ♘d8?!

This is not a losing mistake, but it is a step in the wrong direction for Black, as his pieces will become tied to the defence of the b6-pawn.

If 27...♔d7 28.♘d4! is strong.

However after 27...♔e4! Black's pieces have a reasonable grip in the centre, and he should be able to hold the position. 28.♘d4 ♕e5 29.♘b5 ♕f6 it is not easy for White to make progress.

### 28.♗xd8† ♕xd8 29.♘e5 ♕d5



### 30.♘c4

Karpov fixes at least one enemy piece to the defence of the b6-pawn. Both sides have a pawn majority, but Yusupov's is static whereas Karpov's is mobile and flexible.

### 30...♗d7 31.b3 f5?!

Yusupov recommends 31...h5 instead. Another idea was 31...f6 intending to advance the king.

### 32.♔f1!

Karpov brings his king towards the centre. It would be premature to gain space with 32.g4? due to: 32...fxg4 (32...g6 is also possible, and after 33.gxf5 gxf5 it will be harder for either side to activate their king.) 33.hxg4 ♕f3 (Black can also ease the pressure with 33...♔e5) 34.♕f5 Karpov evaluated this position as clearly better for White, perhaps overlooking that Black can safely pick up the b-pawn with 34...♗d1† 35.♔g2 ♕xb3, when White has no more than a draw.

**32...♝f7 33.f3**

Karpov enables his king to advance and gets ready to create a passed pawn.

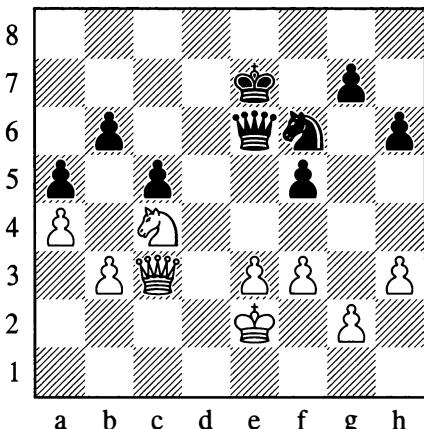
**33...♝e7**

33...h5 would have prevented g4 but committed Black's kingside pawns to a rigid formation, and after 34.h4! ♜e6 35.e4 fxe4 36.♗xe4 Black is struggling.

**34.♔e2 ♜e6 35.♘c3 ♛f6!**

Yusupov blocks the diagonal with the knight and tries to get his king to the queenside. This is a good idea, which might enable him to exchange queens in certain variations.

The immediate 35...♛f6? was inadvisable: 36.♗xf6† ♜xf6 37.g4 ♜e6 38.♔f2 White improves his king and has excellent winning chances. The attempt to obtain counterplay with 38...fxg4 39.hxg4 ♜d5 fails after 40.f4 b5 41.axb5 a4 42.♔e2 and White wins.

**36.♔f2**

White should not rush to exchange queens with 36.♛e5?! as this involves a loss of time. 36...♜xe5 37.♕xe5 ♜d6 38.♕c4† ♜c6 The black king reaches the queenside quickly, allowing him to start exchanging pawns. 39.g4 fxg4 40.hxg4 ♜d7 41.e4 b5 Black is probably drawing this position.

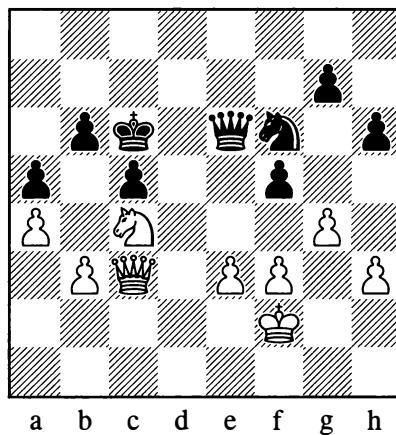
However, the immediate 36.g4!? was a good alternative.

**36...♝d7 37.g4!**

Karpov finally executes the intended pawn break, and forces his opponent to make a difficult decision just a few moves before the time control. The timing was surely not by accident...

**37...♝c6?**

The fact that Yusupov made a mistake like this suggests that he was indeed short of time. The king should have approached the queenside more carefully: 37...♝c7! 38.♘c2 fxg4 (38...g6 is arguably a better defensive try, although White has a few unpleasant ideas such as 39.♗g3 and 39.♗b2.) 39.hxg4 ♜d5 40.♗h7 ♜f6 41.♕e4 ♜e7 42.♗g3 Black's position is loose, but he has chances to keep it together after 42...♝c8.

**38.♕e5!**

Karpov ruthlessly exploits the mistake and wins a pawn.

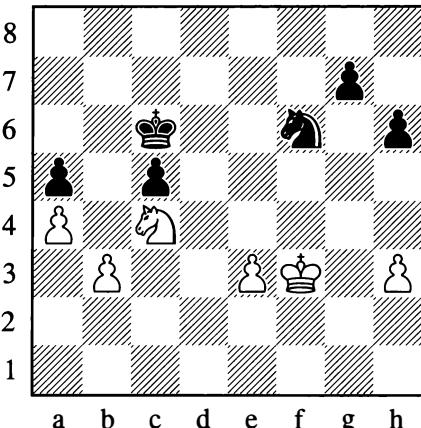
**38...♜xe5 39.♕xe5†**

Now it is clear why c6 was such an unfortunate square for the black king.

**39...♝d5 40.♕c4 fxg4 41.♕xb6† ♜c6**

**42.♘c4 gx f3 43.♗xf3**

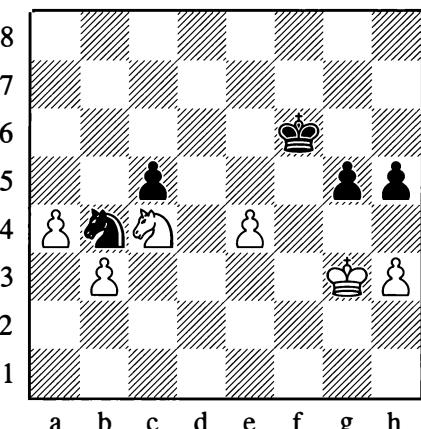
The extra pawn gives White a comfortably winning endgame. Care is still required, but for a technician of Karpov's ability the task is not too difficult.



**43...♗d5 44.♘xa5 g5 45.♘c4 h5 46.♘d2 ♘e5 47.e4 ♘e8**

Trying to go after the b3-pawn was also insufficient: 47...♗d4 48.a5 ♘d7 49.a6 ♘e5† 50.♗g3 ♘c6 51.♘f3† ♘c3 (51...♗xe4 52.♗xg5† ♘d4 53.♗h4 c4 54.bxc4 ♘xc4 55.♗xh5 White wins.) 52.e5 ♘xb3 53.e6 White promotes a pawn.

**48.♗e3 ♘c7 49.♘c4† ♘f6 50.♗f2 ♘a6 51.♗g3 ♘b4**

**52.h4!**

Karpov beautifully opens the way for his king to invade.

**52...♕c6 53.a5 ♕b4 54.♘d2!**

The knight helps to open the path of penetration.

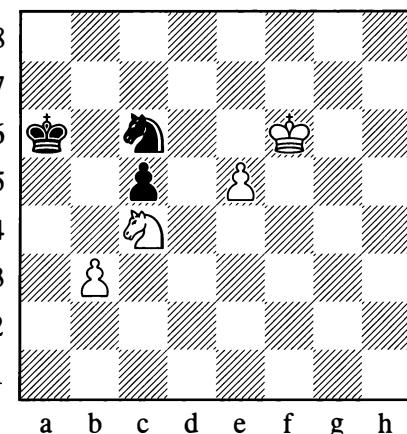
**54...♕c6 55.a6 gxh4†**

55...♔a7 56.hxg5† ♘xg5 57.♘f3† is winning.

**56.♗xh4 ♘e6 57.♗xh5 ♘d7**

The king makes a beeline for the a-pawn, but Karpov's two remaining pawns are enough to seal the victory.

**58.♗g6 ♘c7 59.♘c4 ♘b8 60.♗f6 ♘a7 61.e5 ♘xa6**



**62.e6 ♘b5 63.e7**

**1–0**

In the third round Karpov was somewhat worse against Hübner in the Short Variation of the Caro-Kann, but the German grandmaster let his advantage slip away and the game ended in a draw. In the next two rounds Karpov drew very quickly with Judit Polgar and Gelfand. In Round 6 Karpov faced Topalov in a Fianchetto Grünfeld with a symmetrical pawn structure.

Simplifications ensued, and the players agreed a draw in a level endgame.

In the next round Karpov faced Short, who surprised him with 1.d4 followed by the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0–0 5.e4!? variation against the Nimzo-Indian. Karpov reacted with a suspicious line and Short built up a promising attack. Karpov missed a few opportunities to keep himself in the game and paid the price. In Round 8 Karpov had the black pieces again, and held a slightly worse endgame against Ivanchuk after a Caro-Kann main line. In the final round Karpov faced Anand, who defended with the Queen's Gambit Accepted, just as he had done in Dos Hermanas earlier in the year. Karpov played a novelty but Anand reacted well, and a complex middlegame petered out to an equal endgame and the players agreed a draw. Karpov finished in equal sixth place with a score of 4/9.

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Karpov's next event was a double-round-robin tournament in Biel. In the first round he faced Pelletier, who tried the Petrosian Variation against the Queen's Indian. Karpov equalized and later got a slight edge after some skilful play. Pelletier became too optimistic and snatched a pawn, but Karpov was able to catch his king. In the next round Karpov had the black pieces again, and was able to draw with Gelfand in less than twenty moves. In Round 3 Lautier played the sharp Vienna Variation against the Queen's Gambit. Karpov gave up a pawn but later regained it while keeping his initiative. Lautier had chances to equalize but was unable to cope with the problems and Karpov beat him nicely.

In Round 4 Karpov got no advantage against Anand's Semi-Slav, and the game was agreed drawn in an equal endgame. In the next game Karpov played the Nimzo-Indian against Milov. The IQP middlegame was always roughly level, and although Karpov kept

playing he eventually had to settle for a draw in the endgame.

Karpov started the second half of the tournament with the white pieces against Pelletier. He got a comfortable edge against the Semi-Slav, and soon won a couple of pawns and converted his advantage smoothly. He drew the next game quickly with Gelfand, but then suffered a setback in the Caro-Kann against Lautier, who caught his king in the centre.

In the ninth round Karpov faced Vadim Milov. The Russian-born Israeli-Swiss grandmaster played six games against the world champions, scoring one win, three draws and two losses, both of which came against Karpov. He drew two other games with the twelfth champion.

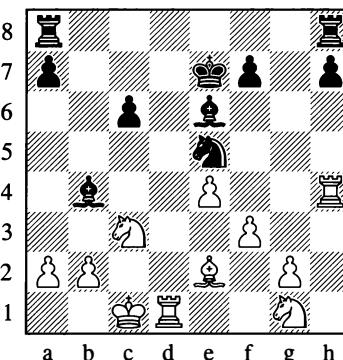
## Game 48

Anatoly Karpov – Vadim Milov

Biel 1997

### 1.d4 d5 2.c4 dxc4 3.e4 $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Karpov deviates from the following game which he won two years earlier: 4. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.f3 e5 6.d5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  7. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  exd4 8. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  c6 9. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  10. $\mathbb{W}e5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  11. $\mathbb{W}xe7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  12.dxc6 bxc6 13. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.0–0–0  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  g5 16.h4 gxh4 17. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$



18.  $\mathbb{E}h5!$  Karpov mobilizes his central pawns in a most unusual way, by using his rook on the edge of the board. 18...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  19.  $g3!$  Karpov returns his extra pawn in order to put his central pawns in motion. 19...  $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  20.  $bxc3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  21.  $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22.  $f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $a5$  24.  $f5$  White obtained excellent play in the centre and pressed home his advantage convincingly, Karpov – Piket, Groningen 1995.

#### 4... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 5. $d5$

This ambitious space-gaining move is the main line.

#### 5... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ $\mathbb{Q}g6$ 7. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

7.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  is occasionally seen, but after 7...  $e5$  the bishop is less than ideally placed.

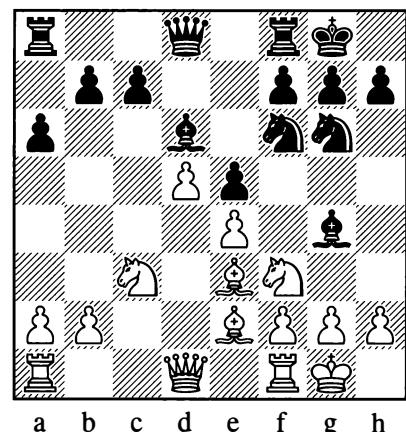
#### 7... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 8. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ $e5$

8...  $e6$  is playable, although 9.  $\mathbb{W}a4+!$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  10.  $\mathbb{W}xd7+$   $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}g5$  is a critical test.

#### 9. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$ $a6$ 10.0–0

More players have carried out the forthcoming minor piece manoeuvre before castling, but it is unlikely to come to any more than a move order difference.

#### 10... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ 0–0



#### 12. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Technically this position was new at the time, although Azmaiparashvili had already carried out the same plan before castling. The whole variation was relatively fresh at the time. The knight manoeuvre is useful in supporting White's queenside play.

#### 12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

Milov keeps his bishop in order to have better chances for a successful kingside attack.

Karpov's long-time helper Mikhail Podgaets reached the same position later the same year; they may well have worked on this variation together. 12...  $\mathbb{Q}xe2?!$  13.  $\mathbb{W}xe2$  Over the next few moves Podgaets purposefully and skilfully develops pressure on the queenside. 13...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  14.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}fc8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $a5$  18.  $g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}hf6$  20.  $f3$   $a4$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  23.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White is close to breaking through on the queenside, and he went on to win a nice game, Podgaets – Raetsky, Biel 1997. Podgaets showed that he also possessed a fine positional touch. Sadly he passed away in 2009.

#### 13. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}e7$ 14. $a3$

In his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov mentions 14.  $g3?!$ , but in the game he probably felt that it was better to press ahead on the queenside without delay.

#### 14... $b5?!$

Before launching his attack, Milov extends the life-expectancy of his important dark-squared bishop.

Black is unable to exchange the  $d5$ -pawn under favourable conditions with 14...  $c6?!$  in view of 15.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ .

If 14.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  White will eliminate the bishop and keep some advantage.

**15.♗b3 ♗f4**

Exchanging the backward pawn remains inadvisable for Black: 15...c6?! 16.dxc6 ♘xc6 17.♗a5! White gets the advantage of the two bishops, as after 17...♗xe4 (17...♗d7? 18.♗b7+) 18.♗xe4 ♗xe4 19.♗f3 Black loses material.

**16.♗f3**

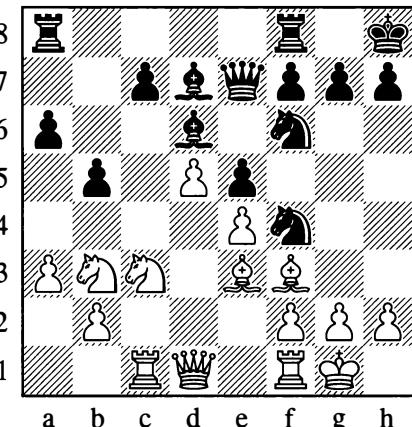
Keeping the bishop is a good idea, especially as it could prove useful as a defender of the kingside.

**16...♗h8?!**

Milov prepares the kingside onslaught, but his move is a little slow.

16...g5?! is more to the point: 17.♗a5 (17.g3?) 17...g4 18.♗e2 ♗xe2† (18...b4 19.axb4 ♘xb4 20.♗b3) 19.♗xe2 ♗h5 20.♗c6 White eventually lost although at this stage he still has a slight edge, Lugovoi – Kharlov, Rethymnon 2003.

Another interesting idea is 16...a5?! with the idea of preventing ♗a5 as well as ♗a2-b4.

**17.♗a2**

Karpov decides not to move a pawn on the kingside.

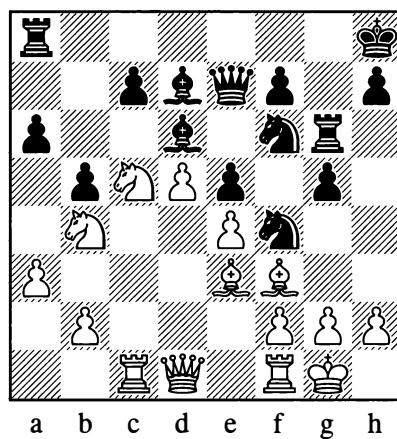
17.g3 was also a decent move though: 17...g5?! Black sacrifices a piece for the attack, but the first player remains on top. (17...♗h3† 18.♗g2 h6 is sounder, although White stands better here too.) 18.gxf4 (18.♗a5?) 18...gxg4 19.♗d2 ♗g4 (19...♗g8† 20.♗h1 ♗h3 21.♗e2 White holds the attack.) 20.♗xg4 ♗xg4 21.f3?! ♗h3 22.♗h1 ♗g8 23.♗g1 ♗xg1† 24.♗xg1 ♗g8 25.♗f2 White is better, as pointed out by Karpov. Black can win the queen but White will have more than enough pieces in return.

**17...g5**

Black can cut off the a2-knight with 17...a5 but after 18.♗c5 ♗c8 19.♗e1 White remains slightly better.

**18.♗c5**

Karpov brings his knights closer to Black's camp. The fact that Black has to pay attention to them takes some of the power away from his attack.

**18...♗g8 19.♗b4 ♗g6****20.♗c2!**

Karpov follows his plan and focuses on the centre, without being distracted by the a6-pawn. In his annotations he mentions an interesting alternative in 20.g3?! g4 21.♗e2, but the game continuation seems stronger.

### 20...g4 21.♗e2 ♕ag8

It was too late to attempt to neutralize White's queenside play: 21...a5?! 22.♕c6 ♔xe2† 23.♔xe2 ♗xc6 24.dxc6 ♗xc5 25.♗xc5 ♕e6 26.♗fd1 Black is in trouble.

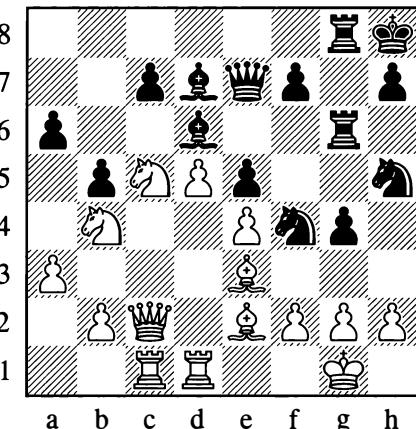
### 22.♗fd1!

Karpov creates an escape square for his bishop, and more importantly his king, which may need to run to the west if Black's attack gathers speed.

22.♗xa6? would have been a mistake due to 22...♗xe4!.

### 22...♗6h5

Black has a lot of pieces on the kingside, but he must pick the right time to strike. The hasty 22...♗xg2? is no good: 23.♗xg2 ♔h5 24.♗xd7?! g3 (24...♕xd7 25.♗f1 wins.) 25.♗xh5 gxh2† 26.♗xg6 ♕h4 27.♗f3 ♕xg6 28.♗e2 And White wins.



### 23.g3!

Karpov defends with special skill, and appreciates the need to prevent the advance of the enemy g-pawn, which would have brought Black an extremely dangerous attack.

### 23.♗xd7?

Karpov gives an exclamation mark to this move but he is not right.

### 23...g3!!

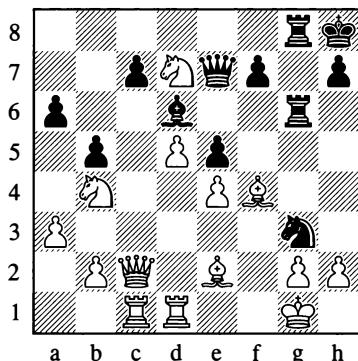
Black has time to blast through on the kingside. 23...♕xd7? is wrong because of 24.g3 or 24.♗f1.

### 24.fxg3

24.♗xh5 gxh2† 25.♗f1 ♔xh5 White is in trouble.

### 24...♗xg3 25.♗xf4!

White has to eliminate this important piece. Karpov stops here evaluating the position as clearly better for White, but the attack is not yet over. 25.♗f3 ♔h3†! 26.ghx3 ♔f5† 27.♗g5 ♕xg5† 28.♗h1 ♔e3 gives Black excellent attacking chances.



### 25...♗xe2†! 26.♗xe2 exf4

26...♕xg2† 27.♗xg2 ♕xg2† 28.♗xg2 exf4 is also interesting; White has a lot of material for the queen, but his king lacks shelter.

### 27.e5 ♕xb4 28.axb4 ♕xd7

Black will take on g2, and he is at least not worse as White's king is rather exposed.

### 23.♗f1?

White tries to bolster his kingside, but the same idea works well again:

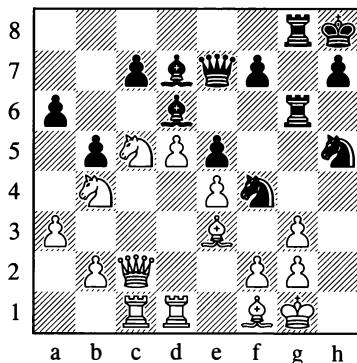
### 23...g3! 24.hxg3?

This natural move is refuted beautifully. The correct defence is 24.fxg3! ♗xg3 25.hxg3 with two options for Black:

- 25...♔h3† 26.♗h1 (26.ghx3? ♕xg3† 27.♗f2 ♕f6† 28.♗e2 ♕xh3→) 26...♕xg3 27.♗g1 ♕xg1 28.♗xg1 ♕g4 29.♗d3 ♕f3

30.♕xf3 The position is balanced.

b) 25...♝xg2 26.♝xg2 (26.♝c6 ♜xc6 27.♝xg2 ♜xg3 28.dxc6 ♜h4 White must be careful to avoid troubles.) 26...♝xg3 27.♝xd7 ♜xd7 28.♝f1 (28.♝d2 ♜xe3 Black has decent attacking chances for the two pawn deficit.) 28...♝xg2 (28...♝xe3? 29.♝d3!) 29.♝xg2 ♜xg2 30.♝xg2 ♜g4† 31.♝f2 ♜e7 The position is roughly equal as White's king is exposed.



24...♝h3†!

This brilliant sacrifice opens up White's king decisively.

24...♝xg3?! 25.fxg3 transposes to 24.fxg3! above.

25.gxh3

25.♝h2 ♜xg3 26.fxg3 ♜xg3 27.♝f2 ♜h4+–

25...♜h4! 26.♝g2

26.♝h1 ♜xg3 27.fxg3 ♜xg3† 28.♝h2

♝xf1†–

26.♝xd7 ♜xg3 27.fxg3 ♜xg3† 28.♝g2

♝xe3† 29.♝f1 ♜xg2 30.♝xg2 ♜xg2 31.♝xg2 ♜xe4†–

26...♝xg3 27.fxg3 ♜xg3 28.♝d3

28.♝xd7 ♜xe3†–

28...♜xh3 29.♝f2 ♜g4 30.♝f1 ♜xg2† 31.♝e1 ♜xe4

White has no satisfactory defence.

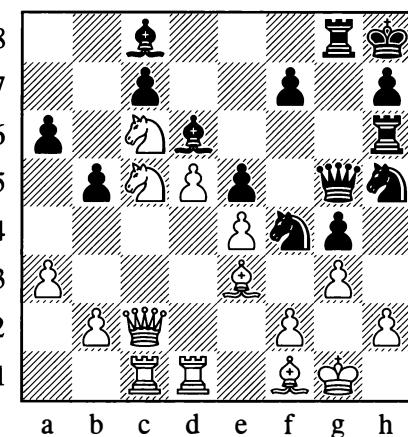
23...♜c8 24.♝c6!

Karpov is not interested in taking the a-pawn, as he has spotted a much juicier target on e5.

24...♛g5 25.♝f1!

25.♝d3?! was also strong.

25...♜h6



26.♛c3?

Up to this point Karpov has played a great strategic game, but his last move is an error.

Correct was: 26.♝d3! f6 (26...♝f6 27.♝dxe5 ♜h5 28.h4! [Strongest, although 28.f3 is also good.] 28...♝h3† 29.♝xh3 gxh3 30.♝xh6+) 27.♝g2 a5 (27...♜g7 28.♝d2) 28.♝d2 Black's attack grinds to a halt, and he is almost in zugzwang. 28...a4 29.♝c3 ♜g7 30.♝dc1 ♜b7 31.♝a7 White wins on the queenside.

26...♝f6!

Milov finds the only move which keeps his attack alive by freeing the h-file for the queen.

27.♝d3!

Karpov defends skilfully. Taking the piece would have been a big mistake: 27.gxf4? ♜h5 28.♝g2 ♜xh2† 29.♝f1 exf4 30.♝d4 ♜gg6 31.♝e5 ♜g8 Black's attack is dangerous, and possibly winning.

27...♜h5

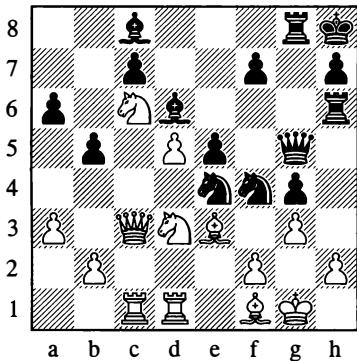
Milov keeps attacking.

27... $\mathbb{E}xh2?$  is premature: 28. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  (Simplest, although 28. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  should also win.) 28... $exf4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xh2$   $fxg3\#$  30. $fxg3$   $\mathbb{W}h4\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$  32. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  Black's attack is insufficient.

Black has another playable move.

27... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$ ?

This leads to a very sharp tactical fight, although White keeps an edge provided he finds a series of accurate moves.



28. $\mathbb{Q}xf4!$

28. $\mathbb{Q}dx5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$   $\mathbb{Q}ce2\#$  31. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

$\mathbb{Q}c5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  The position is roughly equal.

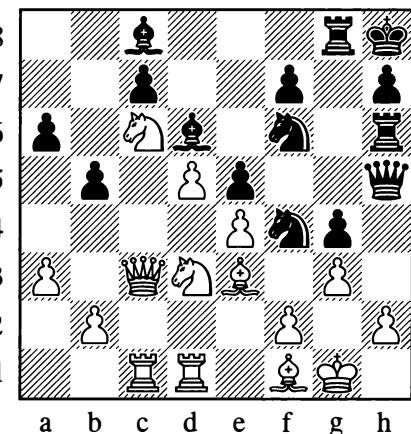
28... $\mathbb{W}h5$  29. $\mathbb{Q}xe5\#$   $f6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  31. $\mathbb{Q}g2$

$\mathbb{W}xh2\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

32... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  33. $\mathbb{W}d4$  defends.

33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

White keeps the advantage, as Black's king is the more exposed.



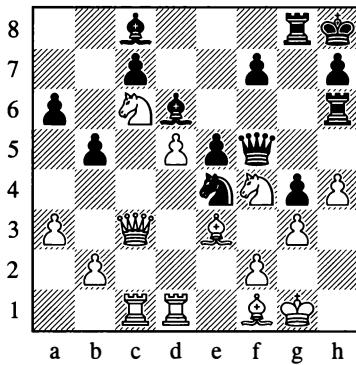
28.h4  $\mathbb{Q}xh3??$

Milov makes a fatal blunder; he may have been short of time.

28... $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$

This move does not equalize fully, but it would have kept Black very much in the game.

29. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{W}f5$



30. $\mathbb{W}c2$

30. $\mathbb{W}xe5\#$ !?

31. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  32. $\mathbb{Q}fd3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  White has decent compensation for the queen, but the game goes on.

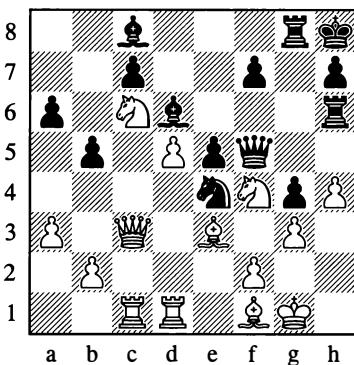
30. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$ !?

31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  32. $\mathbb{W}b3$  White has a slight edge as he will be able to attack on the queenside with a4 at some point.

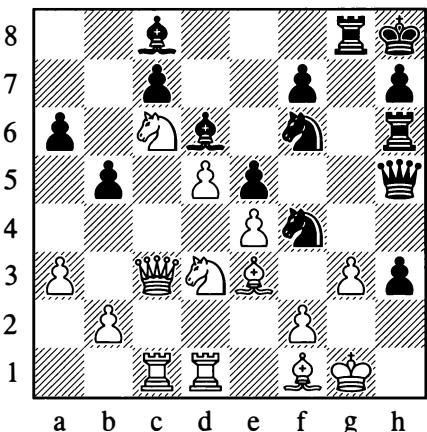
30... $exf4$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  32. $\mathbb{W}c3$

The evaluation is similar after 32. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$ .

32... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e1$



White is somewhat better, although the position remains complicated.



**29.♕dxe5!**

Karpov takes the weak pawn which he identified several moves ago. In one fell swoop White undermines the f4-knight, covers the f3-square and opens the diagonal leading towards the black king.

**29...♝g7 30.♛xf4**

Black has absolutely no compensation for the piece.

**30...♛xe4 31.♚e3 ♜f5**

Milov sacrifices more material, so Karpov just takes it and wins. At least one of the players must have been very short of time.

**32.♛xh6 h2† 33.♛xh2 ♔xf2 34.♛xg7†**

**♛xg7 35.♝d4**

**1–0**

Karpov finished the tournament with a ten-move draw against Anand. His score of 6½/10 was enough to take second place behind the Indian grandmaster.

Karpov's final event of 1997 was a mixed-format match against Utut Adianto, the Indonesian number one. First there were two blind games

played at a rapid time limit. Your author does not consider blind chess worth organizing, nor the results worth mentioning. Next were two classical games. The first was a 4.♘c2 Nimzo-Indian, which had all the ingredients of a classic Karpov win. White got an edge with the two bishops, manoeuvred skilfully, found a tactical breakthrough at the right moment, and then skilfully converted his advantage in a rook endgame. I had started to annotate the game for this book when I noticed that the winner of the game was in fact Adianto rather than Karpov...

In the return game Adianto played a Modern Benoni and sacrificed a piece in return for some pawns and an initiative. The position simplified to a level endgame and a draw was agreed. The final two games were played at a rapid time limit. In the first Karpov equalized against the Exchange Ruy Lopez and a draw was agreed in a blocked middlegame position. We will look at the second rapid game, which was also the last of the match.

Adianto played nine classical games against the world champions, scoring one win, four draws and four losses.

## Game 49

Anatoly Karpov – Utut Adianto

Jakarta (rapid) 1997

**1.e4**

In 1997 Karpov did not use this opening move in a single rated game, so it must have come as a surprise to Adianto.

**1...c5**

The Indonesian grandmaster's main opening against 1.e4 is the Caro-Kann, but he prefers not to see what Karpov has prepared against his own favourite defence.

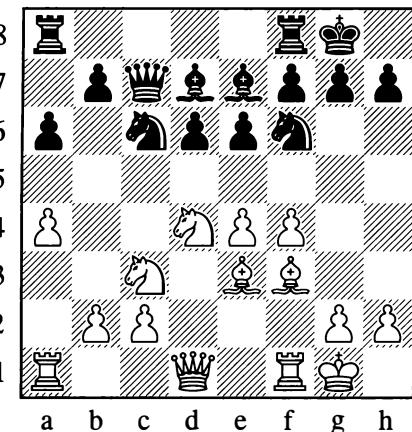
**2.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$  d6 3. d4 cxd4 4.  $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  5.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6**

A risky decision. It is true that Karpov stopped playing 1.e4 because he was unable to find a convincing answer to Kasparov's Najdorf/Scheveningen. On the other hand, when he was not facing the best player of all time, Karpov scored well from White's side. He must also have done a huge amount of work on this opening during the Kasparov matches.

**6.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$  e6 7. f4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  8. a4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  9. 0-0 0-0  
10.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  11.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$ !**

Adianto was not a Scheveningen specialist, so Karpov deviates from the main line of 11.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$  in order to avoid his preparation.

**11...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ??**



**12.  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ !**

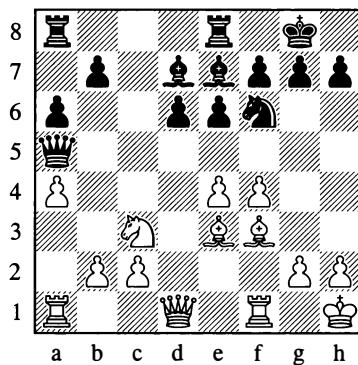
Korchnoi was the player who introduced the early ...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  in this type of position. Black's idea is to take on d4 and put the bishop on c6, so Karpov prevents it.

**12...  $\mathbb{Q}a5$**

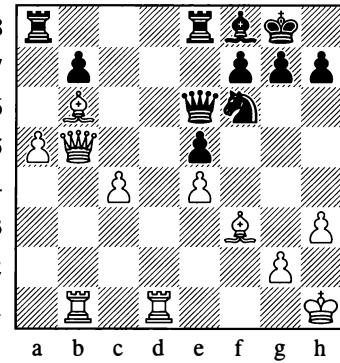
Exchanging the knight makes it hard for White to carry out a pawn storm with g4, on the other hand it encourages White to go for a positional handling, which is hardly a problem for Karpov. The other main line is 12...b6.

**13.  $\mathbb{Q}xa5$   $\mathbb{W}xa5$  14.  $\mathbb{W}d2$**

Karpov sets up the threat of  $\mathbb{Q}d5$ . In the Kasparov – Anand world championship match of 1995, the Indian grandmaster chose the d3-square for his queen, but in that game the moves  $\mathbb{Q}g1-h1$  and ...  $\mathbb{F}f8-e8$  moves had been inserted. It is worth taking a quick look to admire Anand's masterful handling of the position.



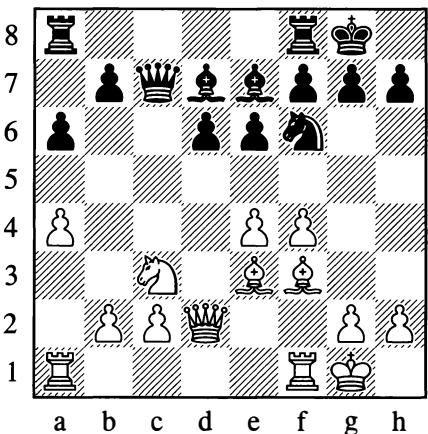
**15.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  16.  $\mathbb{E}fd1$ !  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  17. b4  $\mathbb{W}c7$  18. b5  
 $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19.  $\mathbb{E}ab1$ ! axb5 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  21.  $\mathbb{W}xb5$   
 $\mathbb{E}a8$  22. c4 e5 23.  $\mathbb{Q}b6$ !  $\mathbb{W}c8$  24. fxe5 dxe5 25. a5  
 $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26. h3  $\mathbb{W}e6$**



**27.  $\mathbb{E}d5$ !  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ? 28. exd5** White obtained a winning position and converted his advantage, Anand – Kasparov, New York (9) 1995.

**14...  $\mathbb{W}c7$**

If 14...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  then 15.  $\mathbb{W}f2$  is a good answer.

**15.a5!**

Karpov gains space and fixes the b7-pawn. Giving up space is nothing new in many Sicilians, especially the Scheveningen. However, in the present position it is not so easy for Black to counterattack as none of his potential pawn breaks are particularly attractive: ...d5 would lose a pawn, ...e5 would weaken the d5-square, and with the white g-pawn remaining on g2 there is little chance of ...f5 working well. If Black wishes to obtain counterplay then the one remaining option is to prepare ...b5.

**15... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  17. $\mathbb{B}fd1$** 

Improves the rook and prevents ... $\mathbb{Q}d8$ .

**17... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}f2$  b5**

Black can also force the exchange of the b-pawn: 18...b6 19.axb6 (there is also 19.b4 b5 20. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  21. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e2\pm$ ) 19... $\mathbb{Q}xb6$  20. $\mathbb{W}e2$  (or 20. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  21. $\mathbb{B}a2\pm$ ) 20... $\mathbb{W}b7$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  22. $\mathbb{B}a2$  White is a bit better.

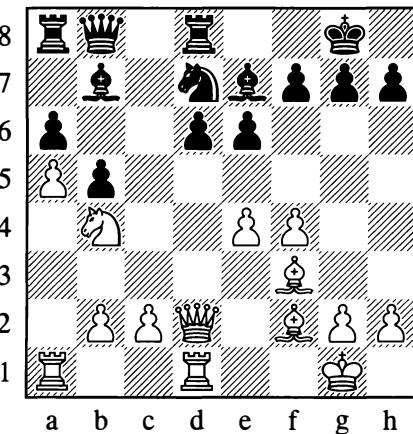
In the event of 18... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  White has several promising ideas, including 19.b4, 19. $\mathbb{W}d3$  and 19. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ , each of which maintain some advantage.

**19. $\mathbb{Q}a2?$** 

Karpov improves his knight. 19.axb6 would have transposed to 18...b6 in the previous note.

**19... $\mathbb{B}d8??$** 

This witty move works well in the game, but objectively Black should have preferred: 19... $\mathbb{W}b7!$  20. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  21. $\mathbb{B}e1$  b4! 22.c3 f5 Black is not at all worse, as he has enough play against the e4-pawn.

**20. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{W}b7$** **21. $\mathbb{Q}d4?$** 

It looks like Karpov overlooked his opponent's next move. Instead after the superior 21.c3! White stabilizes his well-placed knight and keeps a slight plus.

**21... $\mathbb{Q}e5!$  22. $\mathbb{B}e2?$** 

If one plays over this game quickly, one might get the impression that it was almost exclusively a strategic battle, but the reality is that tactics played a significant role; or at least they might have done, had Black seized the tactical opportunity that was available to him on the next move.

Objectively Karpov should have allowed his bishop to be exchanged, after which he has no advantage but should not be in trouble either.

**22...Qc6?**

Sadly for Adianto and the local fans, he misses a chance to take over the initiative. Of course we should remember that the game was played under a rapid time limit.

22...Qc4 was one improvement over the game continuation, and after 23.We1 d5 24.b3 Qd6 25.exd5 Qf5 26.Qb6 Wxf4 the position is rather complicated.

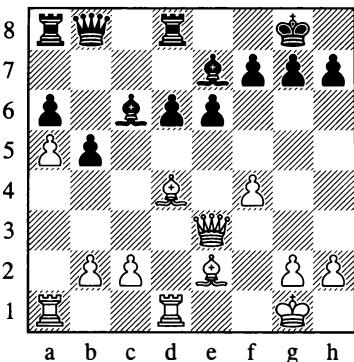
**22...Qxe4!**

This capture would have brought Black the advantage, as White is unable to exploit the apparent instability of Black's minor pieces.

23.We3 Qc6! 24.Qxc6

24.Wxe4? Qxb4 25.f5 (25.Qb6 d5+) 25...d5 26.Wg4 e5 The attack gets nowhere and Black's material advantage decides the game.

24...Qxc6



25.Qd3!?

If White tries to do something tactical instantly, then Black's position withstands the pressure.

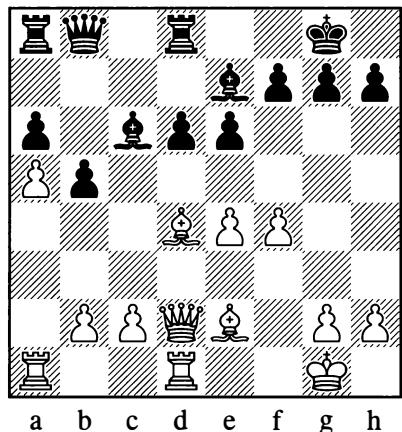
25.f5 e5 26.Qb6 Qc8 Black is fine.

25.Qxg7 Qxg7 26.Wc3† Qf6 27.Wxc6 and now 27...Qc8, 27...d5 and 27...Qxb2 all leave White struggling.

25.Wc3 Qc8 26.Qxg7 e5! 27.Wg3 Wa7† 28.Qh1 exf4 Black is winning.

25...Wb7 26.Wg3 Qf8 27.Qe1

It is not easy for Black to exploit his extra pawn, but with precise play he should be able to take over eventually.

**23.Qxc6 Qxc6**

24.Qd3

Defends the e4-pawn while pointing the bishop ominously towards the black kingside.

24...Wb7 25.We3

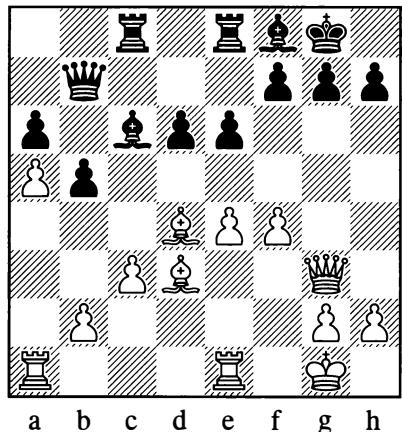
The queen prepares to switch to g3.

25...Qac8 26.c3 We8

It is hard to suggest a constructive plan for Black; there is little he can do except wait.

27.Wg3 Qf8 28.Qe1

Karpov makes room for the other rook to come to d1.

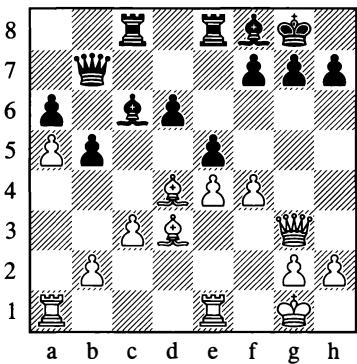


**28...b4**

Adianto decides to change the pawn structure on the queenside. In doing so he creates an outpost on c3 for his bishop, but runs the risk of the b-pawn becoming weak later.

Sitting and waiting was not ideal: 28... $\mathbb{E}cd8$  29.f5 (White can also consider 29. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  30.e5 [or 30.f5 e5 31. $\mathbb{B}b6$ ] 30... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  White has the better prospects, and can choose between the immediate 32.f5 and further preparation with 32. $\mathbb{E}e2$ .) 29...e5 30. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{E}d7$  31. $\mathbb{E}e3$  (31.f6! g6 32. $\mathbb{E}e2$  The advanced f-pawn makes Black's life unpleasant.) 31... $\mathbb{E}e7$  32.b3 h6 33.c4 Black's position remains passive and unpleasant.

28...e5!? Perhaps this was the best practical chance; Black tries to sacrifice a pawn to free his position.



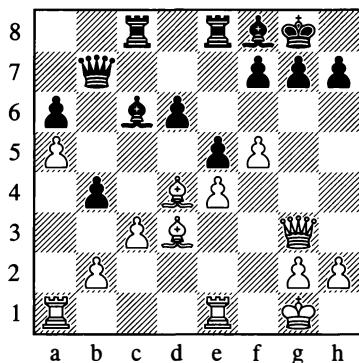
29. $\mathbb{B}b6$ ! White can decline the offer and go for a positional edge. (After 29.fxe5 dx5 30. $\mathbb{E}xe5$  [There is also 30... $\mathbb{E}e6$  when Black's pressure against the e4-pawn gives him chances to hold.] 30... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  31. $\mathbb{B}h1$  g6 Black has some compensation.) 29... $\mathbb{E}e7$  (29...exf4 30. $\mathbb{W}xf4$  Black is worse here too.) 30.f5  $\mathbb{B}f6$  White keeps a slight plus although Black is solid.

**29.c4**

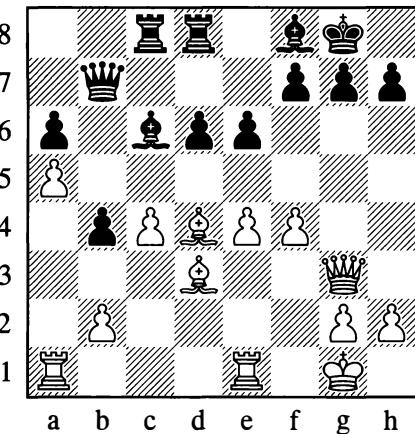
Karpov gains space and leaves the b-pawn on the board, thus giving himself an additional target for later in the game.

White could also have considered direct action:

29.f5? e5



30. $\mathbb{B}b6$  bxc3 31.bxc3 d5 (31... $\mathbb{E}e7$  32. $\mathbb{E}ab1$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  33.c4 Black's pieces are passive, and with  $\mathbb{W}g4$  coming soon White's attack looks nice.) 32.exd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  33. $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}xe5$  34. $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{W}xa6$  36. $\mathbb{B}xg2$  White's extra pawn gives him excellent winning chances despite his exposed king.

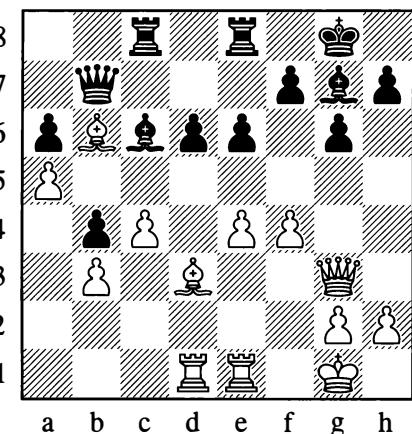
**29... $\mathbb{E}ed8$** **30. $\mathbb{B}b6$** 

Karpov decides to improve his pieces rather than start an immediate attack.

30.f5 was also promising: 30...e5 31. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  From here White has several good moves including 32. $\mathbb{E}e3$ , 32.f6 and 32. $\mathbb{W}g4$ , all of which give him some advantage.

**30...♝e8 31.b3 g6 32.♝ad1!**

In hedgehog positions Black rarely succumbs to a direct attack on the d6-pawn, nevertheless White can sometimes use the weakness to distract the defending pieces from other duties.

**32...♝g7****33.♝e2!**

Karpov makes another small improvement; now Black must worry about a doubling of rooks on the d-file.

**33...♛e7 34.♚b1**

Karpov continues to manoeuvre, but direct action was also strong: 34.e5!? dx5 35.fxe5 f5 (35...♝b7 36.♝e4 White will invade on the d-file.) 36.exf6 (36.♛f4!?; 36.c5 ♚d5 37.♛e3 ♜a8 38.♛f4 ♜xb3 39.♚b1 ♚d5 40.♜xb4 White has the upper hand on the queenside.) 36...♜xf6 37.♛g4 Black has problems with the e6-pawn.

**34...♝c3**

Adianto tries to stop White from lining up his forces against the d6-pawn. The alternative was:

**34...♝b7**

Black could play this move with a view to defending the d6-pawn, or sacrificing it.

**35.♝ed2**

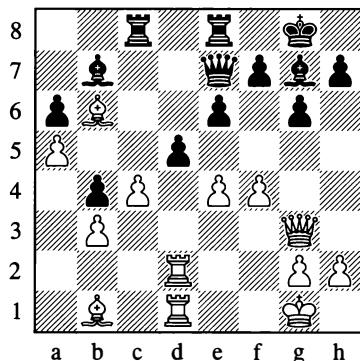
35.e5!? Forcing matters in the centre gives White an advantage, but not necessarily a decisive one. 35...d5 (35...dxe5 36.fxe5 f6 37.♝ed2 ♜c6 38.♚d3 fxe5 39.♚c5±) 36.♚d3 f6 37.exf6 ♜xf6 38.cxd5 (38.♝de1 There are a few targets in Black's position, which gives nice play for White.) 38...exd5 39.♚e1 ♜xe2 40.♛xe2 Black has some problems, as his weaknesses are more serious than White's.

**35...d5!**

This looks to be Black's best chance.

35...♝c6 36.e5 d5 37.cxd5 exd5 38.♝xd5 ♜xb6 39.axb6 White's initiative may become strong if he manages to transfer his bishop to c4.

35...♝f8 36.e5!? (The simple 36.♝xd6 is also strong: 36...♜xd6 37.♝xd6 ♜xd6 38.e5 ♜e7 Black's rooks are passive and after 39.h4 or 39.♚d3 his position is not much fun.) 36...d5 37.♝d4 (37.♝e4 dxc4 38.♝xg6 fxg6 39.♝d7 c3! Black has counterchances thanks to the strong c3-pawn; 37.h4? is promising though.) 37...f6 38.f5! (38.c5 ♜g7 39.♝xb4 ♜xc5! keeps Black in the game; instead after 39...fxe5? 40.fxe5 ♜xc5 41.♝g4 his king is caught.) 38...exf5 39.♝xf5 fxe5 40.♝xd5 White has a tremendous attack.

**36.♛f2!?**

After 36.♛e3 ♜c3 37.♚d3 ♜h4! 38.cxd5 exd5 39.e5 f6 the play becomes double-edged.

36.e5 f6 37.Qd3 is interesting, although it is doubtful that White has much advantage, if any.

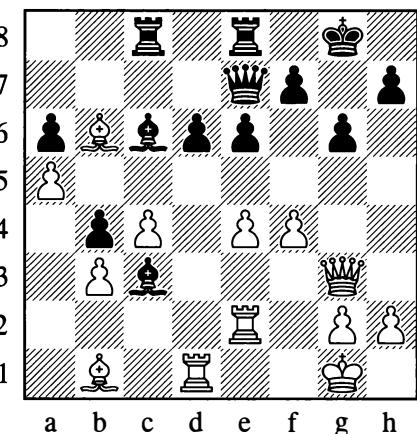
Taking the pawn is more challenging: 36.cxd5 exd5 37.exd5 Qc3 (37...Qd6 38.Qd3) 38.d6! Qd7 39.Qh4 Qxb3 40.f5! Black is living dangerously.

36...Qc3 37.Qd3 f5 38.exf5 exf5 39.Qxd5!

This exchange sacrifice gives White excellent chances.

39...Qxd5 40.cxd5 Qe1† 41.Qxe1 Qxe1† 42.Qxe1 Qxe1 43.Qd3 Qa8 44.d6

White is in the driver's seat, despite his slight material disadvantage.



**35.Qd3 Qed8?!**

Adianto probably hoped to set up a fortress, but there is little hope of it succeeding.

35...Qb7 36.Qe3 (36.Qd4) 36...d5 37.cxd5 exd5 38.e5 White is clearly better.

35...Qh4?! 36.Qxd6 Qg4 37.Qe3 e5 38.f5 Qd4 39.Qxd4 exd4 40.Qxd4 White has two pawns for the exchange and a positional advantage.

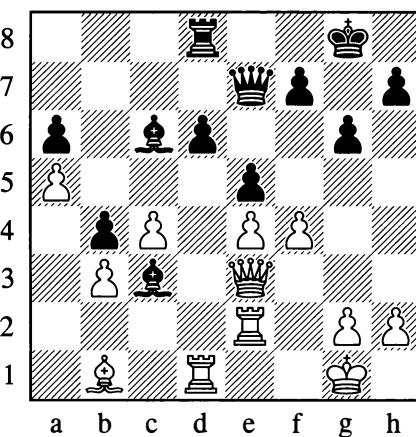
35...e5 36.f5 gxf5 37.exf5 (Also promising is: 37.Qg3† Qh8 38.exf5 Qf6 39.Qe3 Qg8 40.Qe4 White is clearly on top and can continue to improve his position.) 37...Qh4 (37...e4 38.Qg3† Qh8 39.Qxd6 White wins

a pawn.) 38.Qe3 e4 39.Qg3† (39.Qxd6 Qe5) 39...Qh8 40.Qd4† Qe5 41.Qe3 White will soon develop play against the central pawns.

**36.Qxd8**

Taking the rook will certainly be sufficient to win in the long run.

**36...Qxd8 37.Qe3 e5**



**38.Qb6!**

From this square the queen ties up Black's pieces.

**38...Qb7 39.f5**

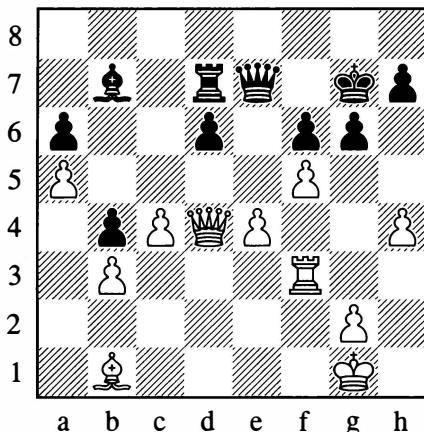
Karpov gains space and over the next few moves he improves his position on the kingside.

**39...Qd7 40.Qe3 Qg7 41.Qf3 f6 42.h4 Qd4†**

Adianto decides to reclaim some material before the kingside threats become too serious.

**43.Qxd4 exd4 44.Qxd4**

The rest of the game was probably played under time shortage, and is not especially important. Black has no compensation for his pawn deficit and Karpov converts his advantage without any problems.



44... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  47. $f\times g6$   $h\times g6$  48. $\mathbb{Q}\times f6$   $\mathbb{Q}b1\uparrow$  49. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}a1$  50. $\mathbb{Q}e6$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$   
 51. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  52. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  53. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  54. $\mathbb{Q}e7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  55.c5  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  56. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  a5 57.c6  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   
 58. $\mathbb{Q}f4\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  59.c7  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  60. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e5\uparrow$  61. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5\uparrow$  62. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e5\uparrow$  63. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}b2\uparrow$  64. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   
 $\mathbb{Q}a1\uparrow$  65. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e5\uparrow$  66.g3  $\mathbb{Q}b2\uparrow$  67. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}b1$  68.c8=  $\mathbb{Q}h1\uparrow$  69. $\mathbb{Q}g4$   $\mathbb{Q}d1\uparrow$  70. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}h5\uparrow$   
 71. $\mathbb{Q}f6$   $\mathbb{Q}f3\uparrow$  72. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3\uparrow$  73. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $b\times c3$  74. $\mathbb{Q}c7\uparrow$

1-0

In 1997 Karpov only took part in a few classical tournaments, instead preferring to concentrate on rapidplay tournaments and other exhibition events. His results were certainly not on the same level as they had been earlier in the nineties.

## 1997 Summary

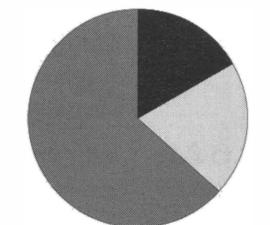
Dos Hermanas (3rd-5th place): 5/9 (+2 =6 -1)

Dortmund (6th-8th place): 4/9 (+1 =6 -2)

Biel (2nd place): 6½/10 (+4 =5 -1)

Match versus Adianto, Jakarta: Lost 1½–½ (+0 =1 -1)

Total 53.3% (+7 =18 -5)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1998

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Rating 2735 (6 in the world)

Karpov started the year by defending his FIDE World Championship title, which was contested under the new knockout format. He was helped considerably by FIDE, as he was seeded directly into the final. After a three-week series of elimination rounds, which finished on 30 December, it was Anand who emerged as the second finalist after defeating Adams. All of Anand's qualification matches took place in Groningen, but the final was in Lausanne.

By that time Anand outrated Karpov by forty five points, so he was definitely the stronger player overall. The Indian grandmaster had a few other advantages: his mind was sharp after contesting so many games over the previous few weeks, and had become accustomed to the time control which involved an increment, which Karpov had not encountered in many previous events.

Nevertheless Karpov's advantages were more significant: Anand must have been tired after contesting no less than seven elimination rounds, and he even had to travel between Groningen and Lausanne. He must also have revealed a lot of his preparation during the knockout phase.

Karpov had the white pieces in the first game, and he surprised his opponent with a piece sacrifice in the Meran. Anand did well to stay in the game, nevertheless Karpov obtained a winning position which he eventually converted. The game is referenced in the notes to Game 34 on page 267. In Game 2 Karpov unveiled another opening surprise and used the Arkhangelsk Variation against the Ruy Lopez. He got a decent position and sacrificed an exchange for two pawns. Later in the complications he missed a win in time trouble, and Anand punished him with a series of accurate moves to level the match.

In Game 3 Karpov took no chances and went for safety against the Semi-Slav. We will look at the fourth game.

## Game 50

Viswanathan Anand – Anatoly Karpov

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Lausanne (4) 1998

**1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4**

Hitherto Anand had never played the Panov against Karpov. In their early meetings he used sidelines such as 2.d3 and 2.♘c3 d5 3.♘f3, and later switched to 3.e5. Overall he had cracked Karpov's Caro-Kann just once, and drew the other six games.

**4... ♘f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘f3 ♜e7**

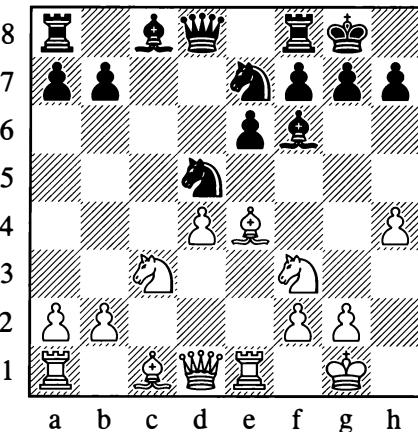
Karpov used this move in approximately half of his games from this position, favouring 6... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  in the others.

**7.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  9.0-0 0-0 10. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$**

The alternative is 10... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ , which Karpov used as far back as 1973 against Uhlmann.

**11. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}ce7$  12.h4!?**

This rare but dangerous move was first played by Maya Chiburdanidze in 1988. It does not carry a direct threat, but is nevertheless a clear statement of White's aggressive intentions.



**12... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ !?**

Karpov wastes no time bringing the knight over to help organize the defence against Anand's aggressive idea.

12... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  is the most common move, and is probably the better choice as well. 13. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $h6$  (13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ !? 14. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  15. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  [15... $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xa2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  Black's position is somewhat inconvenient] 16. $\mathbb{W}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  White is slightly better according to Timman.) 14.g4!? This aggressive move has not yet been tested. (14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  is okay for Black.) 14... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $fxg6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  17.g5 (17. $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  Black regains the pawn with a good position.)

17... $hxg5$  18. $hxg5$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  White's king is too exposed for him to claim any advantage.

**13. $\mathbb{W}d3$ !**

Anand prepared well for the game and plays a strong novelty. The threat of  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  cannot be ignored, and highlights the fact that Black is somewhat behind in development.

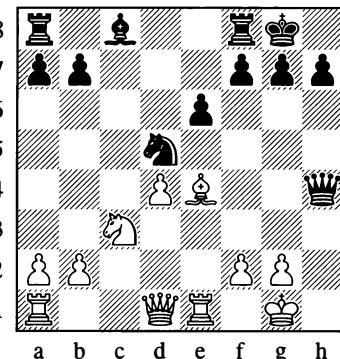
**13. $\mathbb{Q}g5$**

This had been seen in one previous game. It is not a bad move, but Black should be able to equalize with accurate play.

**13... $\mathbb{Q}xh4$**

13... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  14.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ !? (15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ !?) White's strong bishops give him reasonable compensation; 15. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  White had compensation in Hoogterp – Van Rijn, Netherlands 1995.) 15... $\mathbb{W}xf6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ † 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  18. $\mathbb{W}a4$  White's better development gives him a promising initiative for the pawn.

14. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{Q}xh4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xh4$   $\mathbb{W}xh4$



**16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$**

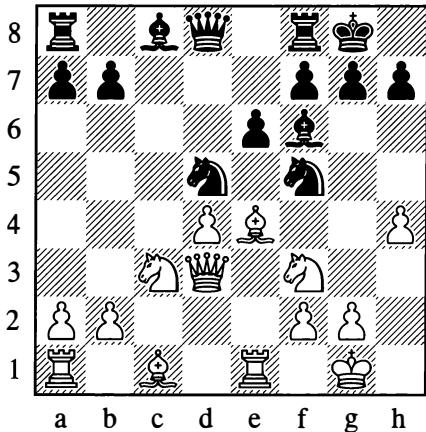
16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $exd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $fxe6$  20.f3 White is fractionally better, but Black should not have much trouble holding this ending.

16... $exd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18.g3  $\mathbb{W}d8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}b6$

Black also equalizes with 19... $\mathbb{W}d6$ .

20.d5  $\mathbb{Q}ad8$

Black has equalized.



13... $\mathbb{Q}xc3$

Karpov decides to meet the threat by exchanging knights, but now White strengthens his centre and his bishop obtains the use of the a3-square.

13...g6?

Black has no time to strengthen his f5-knight.

14. $\mathbb{Q}xf5!$  exf5

14...gx $f5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  16. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  White may hurt Black's inadequately covered king.) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black's kingside is too weak.

15. $\mathbb{Q}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

Alternatively after 17. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  White's pieces dominate.

17... $\mathbb{Q}f6$

After 17... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  Black is in a dangerous situation, for instance 18...h6? 19.h5 is strong.

18. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$

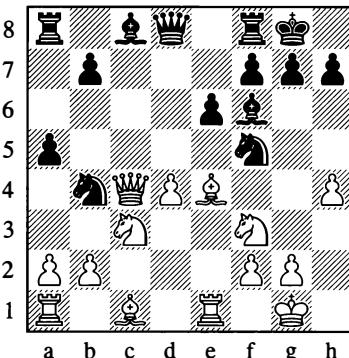
Black will have a hard time completing his development. 18.d5 gives White some advantage as well.

A few months later Portisch attempted to improve on Karpov's play with:

13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$ ?

He failed to equalize, although this may have due to a subsequent error.

14. $\mathbb{W}c4$  a5

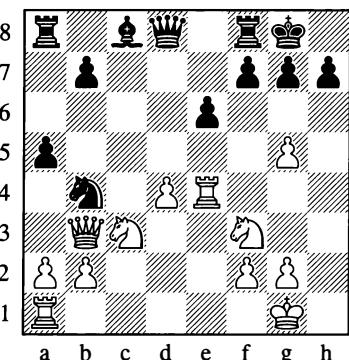


15. $\mathbb{Q}g5$

15.a3  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  16. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  17. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  (17... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  is unpleasant) 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  (19...g6 20.d5) 20. $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  White's advantage is small.

15. $\mathbb{Q}f4$ !  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  (15... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  16. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ † 17. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  19. $\mathbb{W}c7$  White has excellent compensation.) 16. $\mathbb{Q}xd6$   $\mathbb{W}xd6$  17.a3  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}ad1$  Black's bishop pair is a serious force, but it cannot match the fact that all of White's pieces are in play. 18...g6 19.d5 (Also promising is 19. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{W}f4$  [19... $\mathbb{W}b8$  20.d5] 20.g3  $\mathbb{W}g4$  21. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  and Black is getting pushed back.) 19... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  21.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  22. $\mathbb{W}b5$  Black is struggling.

15... $\mathbb{Q}xg5$  16.hx $g5$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  17. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$



18... $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ?

Portisch finds an imaginative way of developing the rook. Nevertheless there was an easier way to solve his opening problems: 18...b6! 19.a3 (19.Qe5 Qb7) 19...Qb7! This finesse is the key. 20.axb4 axb4 21.Qxa8 Wxa8 Black is fine.

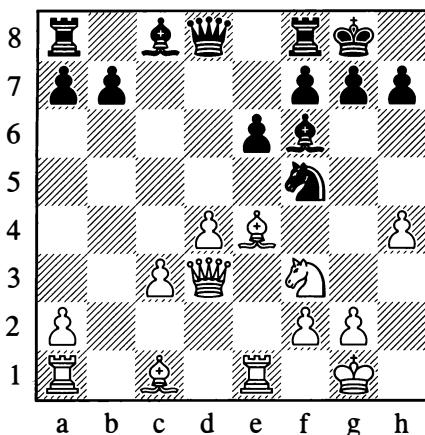
19.a3 Qd5 20.Qxd5 Wxd5 21.Wxd5 exd5  
22.Qe5 Qe6 23.Qc1 Qb6 24.Qe2 Qg4?!

24...Qb3! would have given Black excellent chances to hold the ending.

25.Qc5

White won a pawn and later the game, Timman – Portisch, Frankfurt 1998.

#### 14.bxc3



#### 14...h6

Karpov's play is driven by the need to respond to threats. This time he saves the h-pawn.

#### 14...g6?

Normally this move would strengthen the kingside, but here it allows White to get closer to it:

#### 15.Qxf5!

White removes an important defensive piece and changes the ratio of developed pieces even more in his favour.

#### 15...exf5

15...gxf5 16.Qg5 b6 17.Qe3 Qb7 18.Qe5  
Black's king comes under heavy fire.

#### 16.Qh6 We8 17.d5

The d-pawn will be hard for Black to live with. 17.Qg5 Qe6 18.c4 also gives White some advantage.

#### 17...Wd7

Or 17...Qd7 18.Qg5.

#### 18.Qxe8† We8 19.Qe1

White has an excellent position.

#### 15.h5

The move itself is not a mistake, but in conjunction with the following one it squanders White's advantage.

#### 15.Qa3 Qd6

After 15...We8 White has more than one route to an advantage:

a) 16.Qxf5 exf5 17.Qxe8† We8 18.Qe1 Wd8 19.c4 White's d-pawn has the potential to become strong. (After 19.Wb5?! Qe6 20.Wxb7 Qd5 Black has nice play for the pawn, as pointed out by Karpov.) 19...b5? Karpov mentioned this interesting pawn sacrifice. 20.cxb5 Qe6 21.Qc5 Black has some compensation but objectively White must be better.

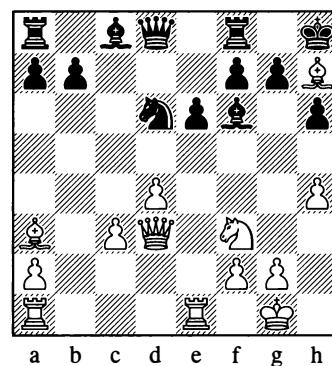
b) 16.h5 Eb8 17.Qxf5 (17.Qe5 Qxe5 should be okay for Black.) 17...exf5 18.Qxe8† We8 19.Qd6 Qa8 20.Qe1 Black has to be careful as his queenside is undeveloped.

#### 16.Qh7†

White saves the important bishop.

16.h5 reaches the note to White's 16th move in the main game.

#### 16...Qh8



17.♗ad1!?

White wants to open the position before the enemy pieces come into play.

17.h5 is also promising, for instance:

17...b5?! 18.♗e2! (18.♕e4 ♜b8 19.♕c5 ♜c7 20.a4 Black will have problems coping with his opponent's powerful bishops.)

18...♗xh7?! Otherwise White will retreat his bishop to c2 and create awkward mating threats. 19.♕xd6 ♜xd6 20.♗e4† ♔g8 21.♗xa8 ♜b6 22.♗e4 ♔b7 23.♗d3 ♔d5 Black's strong bishops give him chances to resist, but ultimately White must be winning this position.

17...♗c7!

This was suggested by Karpov, and looks like the best chance to equalize.

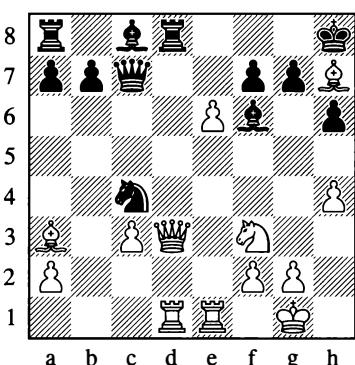
17...g6 is risky: 18.♗xg6 fxg6 19.d5! (19.♗xg6? ♔g7) 19...♗f5 (19...e5? 20.♗xg6 ♗f5 21.♗xh6†+) 20.♗xf8 ♜xf8 21.dxe6

White has the upper hand.

18.d5 ♜d8

18...exd5? 19.♗xd5 wins.

19.dxe6 ♜c4



20.♗xd8†!

The temporary queen sacrifice wins a pawn.

20...♗xd8 21.♗xd8† ♜xd8 22.exf7 ♔g4

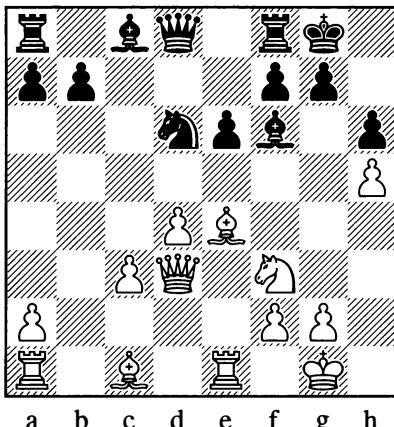
23.f8=♕† ♜xf8 24.♗xf8 ♗xh7 25.♗h2

White keeps an extra pawn, but his split queenside pawns combined with the reduced material offer Black good drawing chances. Karpov was able to hold a similar type of

endgame against Portisch in the 1975 Milan play-off.

15...♗d6

Karpov tries to ease his suffering by exchanging the e4-bishop.



16.♗e5?

This allows Black to exchange too many pieces. Anand must have overestimated his chances in the ensuing position.

16.♗a3

This move would have posed an awkward dilemma: Black must either attempt to neutralize his opponent's initiative, or sacrifice an exchange for slightly less than full compensation.

After the game the players took questions from spectators for a few minutes. When asked why he rejected the development of the bishop to a3, Anand's response was short and to-the-point: "I thought my move was stronger."

16...♗xe4!?

The exchange sacrifice is arguably the best chance to save the game.

After 16...♗e8 17.♗h7† ♔h8 18.♗e5 ♜xe5 19.♗xe5 Black is rather passive.

16...♗e7 17.♗h7† ♔h8 18.♗e5 is also unpleasant for him.

17.  $\mathbb{Q}xf8!$

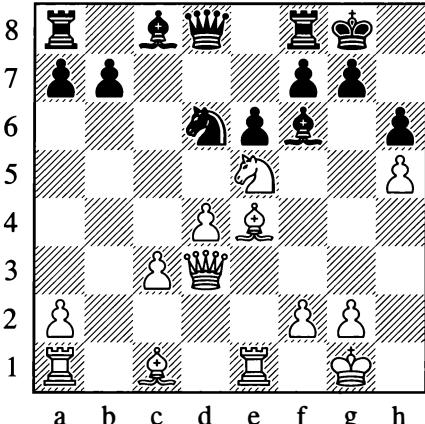
White should take the opportunity to win material.

If 17.  $\mathbb{W}xe4 \mathbb{E}e8$  Black can gradually equalize by developing his queenside pieces. 18.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (18. c4  $\mathbb{W}c7$ ) 18...  $\mathbb{W}c7$  19.  $\mathbb{E}ab1$  (19.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$ ) 19...  $\mathbb{E}b8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}g4 \mathbb{Q}g5$  Black is close to solving his problems.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}xf8$

Black does not have full compensation for the exchange, although he certainly has some practical chances to save the game.

White also had a second promising path: 16.  $\mathbb{Q}h7\#?$  Avoiding exchanges. 16...  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  From here White has several ways to maintain the initiative: 17.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$  transposes to the line 15.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}h7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  17. h5 in the note to White's 15th move above; 17.  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  and 17. a4 are both promising; finally 17.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  is arguably the most appealing move of all.



16...  $\mathbb{Q}xe4!$

Of course Karpov takes the opportunity to remove the dangerous bishop.

17.  $\mathbb{W}xe4$

The alternative is: 17.  $\mathbb{E}xe4 \mathbb{Q}xe5$  18.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  (This is stronger than Karpov's suggestion of 18... b6, after which 19.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$

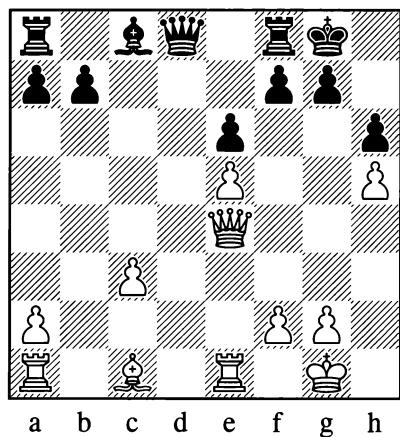
$\mathbb{E}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3$  gives White an edge in view 21... f6 22.  $\mathbb{W}xa8$   $\mathbb{F}xe5$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xa7$ .) 19.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{W}f3$  Now this move does not produce a double attack, so Black can safely reply 21... f6 with no problems.

17...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5!$

This decision required fine judgment, as it was important to determine that Black can cope with the threats on the kingside.

18.  $dxe5$

18.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}d5$  leads nowhere for White: 19.  $\mathbb{W}g3$  (19.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  b6=; 19.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  exd5 20.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  21.  $\mathbb{E}e7$  b6 22. f3  $\mathbb{Q}e6$ =) 19...  $\mathbb{W}xh5$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  Black is fine, as 21.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  can be met safely by 21...  $\mathbb{W}g6$  or 21... f5.



18...  $f5!$

Karpov makes room for his pieces to defend his king.

19.  $\mathbb{W}e2$

Anand played this move instantly, although it is far from obvious if it is White's best.

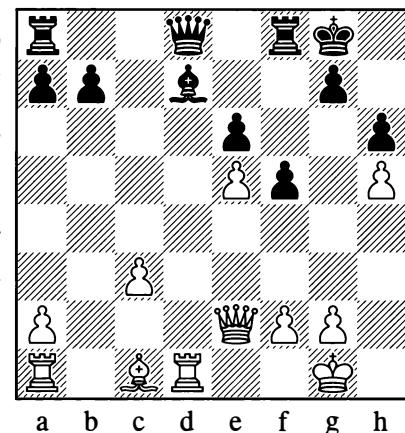
19.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7!$  (After 19...  $\mathbb{W}d5$  20.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}g8$  22.  $\mathbb{E}ed1$  White can annoy the queen a bit.) 20.  $\mathbb{W}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  22.  $\mathbb{W}a6$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  Black has good compensation for the pawn.

19.exf6 looks like the most logical move. I was in Lausanne at the time, providing commentary with Mikhail Gurevich. My former pupil Peter Leko was assisting Anand, and the next day he told me they had analysed the exchange on f6 and concluded that it was winning for White. My co-commentator and I did not share that assessment, and modern chess engines have confirmed our opinion: 19... $\mathbb{W}xf6$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  21. $\mathbb{W}h4$  e5 Black is safe as White is unable to direct his forces against the g7-pawn.

#### 19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$

From now on Karpov will be in his element, with opposite-coloured bishops and a slightly better pawn structure.

#### 20. $\mathbb{Q}d1$



#### 20... $\mathbb{Q}b5!$

Karpov uses a simple tactical finesse to improve his bishop.

#### 21. $\mathbb{W}f3$ $\mathbb{W}e8$ 22. $\mathbb{Q}f4$

#### 22. $\mathbb{W}xb7?$ !

This greedy move is enough for equality at best.

#### 22... $\mathbb{Q}c6$ 23. $\mathbb{W}c7$

23. $\mathbb{W}a6!$ ?  $\mathbb{W}xh5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xh6!$   $\mathbb{B}ac8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}g4$

26. $\mathbb{W}f1$  is roughly level.

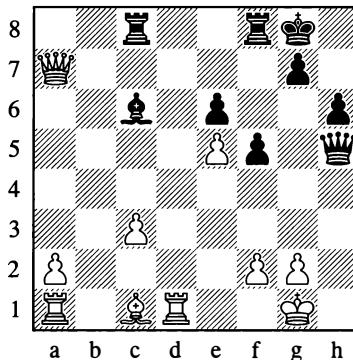
#### 23... $\mathbb{B}c8$

23... $\mathbb{B}f7$  24. $\mathbb{W}a5$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  25. $\mathbb{B}d6$   $\mathbb{W}xh5$  26. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}d1\uparrow$  leads to a perpetual check.

#### 24. $\mathbb{W}xa7?$

After 24. $\mathbb{W}d6$   $\mathbb{B}f7$  25. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  Black has a pleasant game but White should not be worse.

#### 24... $\mathbb{W}xh5$



#### 25.f3?

25. $\mathbb{B}d3$  is necessary, although after 25...f4 26.f3  $\mathbb{W}f5$  27. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black is in control.

#### 25... $\mathbb{Q}xf3!$

Karpov gives this winning sacrifice in his analysis.

#### 26.gxf3 $\mathbb{W}xf3$

26... $\mathbb{B}xc3$ ! may be even simpler, for instance 27. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  28. $\mathbb{B}d7$   $\mathbb{W}g4\uparrow$  29. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  and the white king is defenceless.

#### 27. $\mathbb{Q}b2!$ ?

This move resists a bit. Karpov mentioned 27. $\mathbb{W}d4$   $\mathbb{W}g3\uparrow$  28. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{B}xc3$  when Black wins easily.

#### 27... $\mathbb{B}c4!$ 28. $\mathbb{B}d4$ $\mathbb{W}e3\uparrow$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ f4!

The advance of the f-pawn is too much for the defence to bear.

#### 22... $\mathbb{B}c8$ 23. $\mathbb{B}d4$ $\mathbb{B}c4$

Karpov prepares to exchange rooks in order to reduce White's attacking chances. He was already short of time, although the increment gave him a certain amount of safety.

23... $\mathbb{B}f7$  was quite playable, and after 24. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  25. $\mathbb{B}d6$   $\mathbb{B}fc7$  26. $\mathbb{W}g6$  the position is equal.

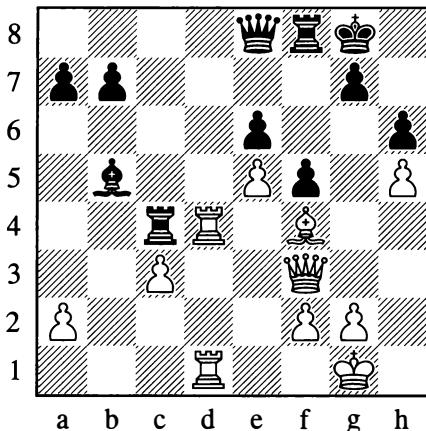
In his *Chess Informant* analysis, Karpov suggests 23... $\mathbb{B}c6$ ?! intending to transfer the bishop to d5. During the game he was probably worried about an exchange sacrifice on d5, but on closer inspection Black has nothing to fear, for instance: 24. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  25. $\mathbb{B}xd5?$  exd5 26.e6  $\mathbb{B}c4$  27.e7 At this point Karpov gives 27... $\mathbb{B}f7$  with a long win, but 27... $\mathbb{B}f6$  wins instantly.

#### 24. $\mathbb{B}ad1$ !?

It looks like Anand became too ambitious.

White can grab a pawn with 24. $\mathbb{B}xc4$   $\mathbb{B}xc4$  25. $\mathbb{W}xb7$ , but after 25... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  26. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xh5$  27. $\mathbb{W}e3$  g5 Black has good compensation as Karpov pointed out.

24. $\mathbb{W}xb7$  would have brought the draw closer: 24... $\mathbb{B}xc3$  (Sacrificing with 24... $\mathbb{B}c6$ ?! 25. $\mathbb{W}xa7$  is unnecessarily risky for Black.) 25. $\mathbb{W}xa7$   $\mathbb{W}xh5$  The position is roughly equal.



#### 24... $\mathbb{W}f7$

Karpov threatens to increase the pressure against both of White's weak pawns.

24... $\mathbb{B}c6$  was also reasonable, and after 25. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  26. $\mathbb{B}1d3$  Black keeps a small advantage with 26... $\mathbb{W}b5$  or 26... $b6$ .

#### 25. $\mathbb{B}xc4$

Anand decides to reduce the pressure on the c3-pawn by exchanging rooks rather than retreating his bishop to a passive position.

#### 25... $\mathbb{R}xc4$ 26.a3 $\mathbb{B}c8$ 27. $\mathbb{B}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$

Karpov makes his habitual improvement of his king's position, but there was a more incisive continuation available: 27... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ! 28. $\mathbb{W}d3$  (28. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  29. $\mathbb{W}d3$  [29. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c4$ ] 29... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  Stopping White from taking on d5. 30. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}xc3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}xh6$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  Black's extra pawn should be enough to win the game.) 28... $\mathbb{W}c7$  29.a4  $\mathbb{Q}h8$  30. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  Black's chances are higher than in the game.

#### 28. $\mathbb{B}d2$

28.g4?! weakens the kingside, and after 28...b6 29. $\mathbb{B}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  30. $\mathbb{W}f4$  b5 Black has excellent chances, as ... $\mathbb{B}f8$  is coming.

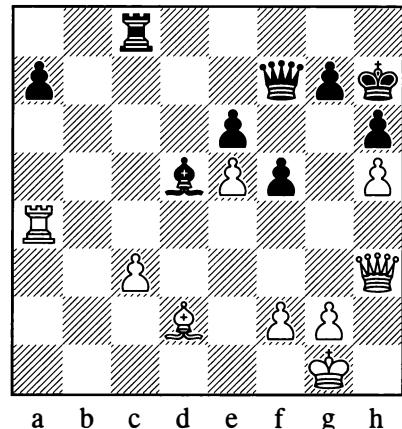
#### 28... $\mathbb{Q}d5$ 29. $\mathbb{W}h3$ b5!?

29...b6 was also reasonable, but perhaps Karpov wanted to provoke his opponent's next move.

#### 30.a4 bxa4

30...a6 31.axb5 axb5 32. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{B}a8$  would have kept some advantage, but Karpov prefers to create an outside passed pawn.

#### 31. $\mathbb{B}xa4$



**31...♝c4**

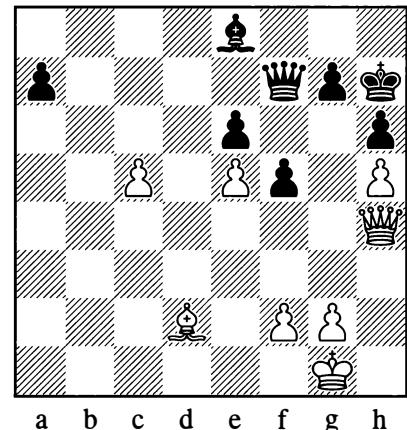
Karpov is happy to exchange pieces. Without the rooks White has virtually no swindling chances, and the passed a-pawn gains in strength.

**32.♝xc4 ♕xc4 33.♗h4 ♕b5**

Black can win a pawn with 33...♛c7, but he will pay the price as he must either lose his a-pawn or expose his king to a perpetual check: 34.♕e3 ♔e2 (34...a6!?) 35.♗a4 ♕xh5 (If 35...♛xe5 36.♗e8! White threatens a perpetual as well as taking the a7-pawn.) 36.♗xa7 ♛xe5 37.♗d4 ♔e1† 38.♗h2 e5 39.♗e7! White has equalized.

**34.c4 ♔e8 35.c5?**

Anand pushes his pawn, but it was more important to go after the dangerous a7-pawn: 35.♗d8! ♛xh5 36.f3 (Also after 36.♔e3 a6 37.♗d6 White is safe.) 36...♛f7 37.♔e3 a6 38.♗b6 Black loses his a-pawn and can kiss his winning chances goodbye.

**35...♗d7!**

Karpov improves his queen rather than taking the h5-pawn immediately.

**36.♗c3**

White can try keeping the queens on, but Black will probably be able to force an exchange

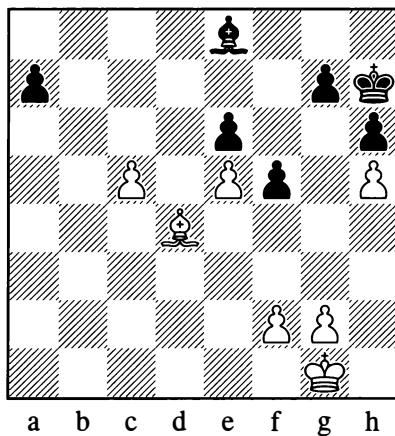
at some point, for instance: 36.♗b4 ♕xh5 37.♗c3 ♛d5 38.♗b5 f4 39.f3 ♛d1† 40.♗f1 (40.♗h2 ♕xf3!–+) 40...♛xf1† 41.♗xf1 The endgame is similar to that which occurs in the game.

**36...♛d3**

36...♛d1† was also promising: 37.♗h2 ♕c6 38.♗b4 ♛e2 39.♗c3 a6 40.♗b4 ♛b5 Black has excellent winning chances.

**37.♗d4**

Anand decides to swap queens. Keeping them would also have been unpleasant for him. At this point I got the impression he just wanted to put this game behind him.

**37...♛xd4 38.♕xd4****38...a5!**

The closer the pawn gets to promotion, the more dangerous it becomes.

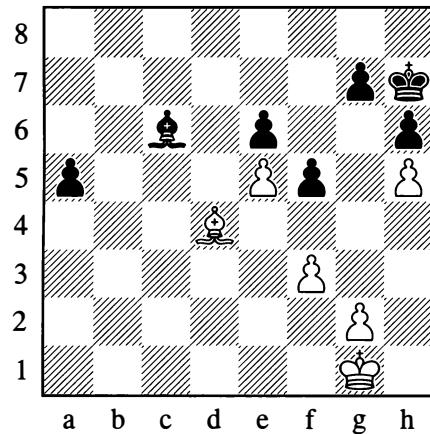
**39.c6?**

It looks like Anand lost his nerves and was unable to think clearly. He probably wanted to draw the black bishop away from the h5-pawn, but the c-pawn is an important asset which should not have been sacrificed so cheaply.

39.f3 would have given some chances to save

the game: 39... $\mathbb{Q}a4$  (39... $\mathbb{Q}b5$  40. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  41. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  43. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  44. $c6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  45. $\mathbb{Q}f8$  a4 46. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  47.f4 White holds.) 40. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  41.c6  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  42.c7  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Karpov gives these moves without evaluating the position. The ending certainly looks difficult for White, but perhaps he can still draw it. I suspect that had Karpov managed to find a clear win for Black, he would have shown how...

**39... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  40.f3**



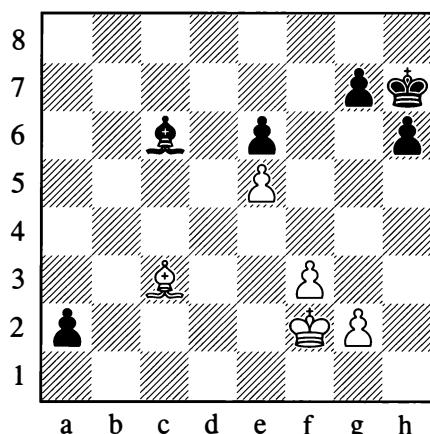
**40...f4!**

Karpov isolates the h5-pawn. After taking it he will be able to create another passed pawn or invade.

**41. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  a4!**

Taking the f4-pawn will incur a heavy price, as it allows the a-pawn to get to the second rank.

**43. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  a3 44. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  46. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a2**



**48.g3**

Waiting passively would not have helped. Had White left his pawns on g2 and f3, Black could have won by putting his pawns on g5 and h4, fixing the white pawns on light squares, then walking his king to the queenside.

**48...h5 49.g4 h4**

**0–1**

Having renewed a one-point lead, Karpov played solidly and got a slight edge against the Semi-Slav. In the queenless position he spurned a repetition more than once, but never got a serious advantage and Anand held the draw without too many problems. In the sixth and final game Anand had to win with the white pieces. He tried the Trompowsky and a complex middlegame ensued. The pressure of the final game may have played a role, as Karpov blundered badly and had to give up a piece. He got some pawns for it but was clearly lost and Anand converted his advantage to force a tie-break.

The title was decided by two rapid games. In the first of them Anand wonderfully outplayed Karpov with the black pieces and won a pawn. Then in a lost position Karpov used up most of his time. Peter Leko actually thought he did it intentionally in order to make Anand more tense. If it really was a deliberate ploy, it proved to be a psychological masterstroke as Anand proceeded to misplay the endgame and squander the win. Perhaps frustrated, he then made some further mistakes and ended up losing, which would have been unthinkable from the position he had at the start of the endgame.

In the second rapid game Anand tried a variation on the Trompowsky with 1.d4 d5 2.♗g5, but got no advantage. Later in the opening he inexplicably blundered two pawns, then sacrificed a piece as his position became desperate. Karpov calmly took the material and won easily, thus retaining his FIDE title. It seems that Anand's nerves were part of his undoing, although tiredness must also have played a role.

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Karpov's first tournament of the year was Wijk aan Zee. He drew his first six games against Nijboer, Adams, Gelfand, Shirov, Timman and Van Wely. None of them were short draws, but all were roughly balanced throughout, apart from the Shirov game, in which Karpov got into trouble on the white side of a Fianchetto King's Indian and only survived after some inaccuracies from his opponent.

In Round 7 Karpov suffered a setback against Salov, who played the 4.g3 ♘a6 5.♗bd2 line against the Queen's Indian and soon got an advantage, which he converted with the help of some powerful middlegame play. In the next round Karpov's troubles almost doubled as he was outplayed by Anand, but the Indian grandmaster missed a couple of wins and Karpov narrowly managed to draw. Karpov was not so lucky in Round 9 against Topalov, and the Bulgarian defeated him with a powerful attacking display.

Just as it seemed his tournament might turn into a disaster, Karpov showed his fighting spirit and bounced back with wins over Judit Polgar and Van der Sterren, although it must be said that both of them played somewhat below their usual level. The latter game is referenced on page 400 of the first volume.

Karpov finished with quick draws against Piket and Kramnik. His final score of  $6\frac{1}{2}/13$  was not bad, considering that he had been on ‘minus two’ and it took him until Round 10 to win a game. Still, the two-point margin between Karpov and the joint winners Anand and Kramnik showed that times had changed.

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Karpov took part in various blitz and rapidplay events, but his next classical tournament was the Rubinstein Memorial in the Polish city of Polanica Zdroj. In the first round he suffered a setback against Michal Krasenkow, who played well and eventually won a pawn-up endgame with rook and opposite-coloured bishops. He followed with a quick draw with Gelfand, then he got an advantage against Shirov but missed a win and drew.

In Round 4 Karpov got back to fifty percent after outplaying Macieja on the black side of a  $4... \mathbb{A}f5$  Caro-Kann. He followed with three relatively uneventful draws against Markowski, Oll and Leko. In Round 8 Karpov switched to the  $4... \mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann against Rublevsky, but suffered a painful defeat after some powerful play from his opponent. In the last round Karpov faced Ivanchuk, and after some simplifications the players agreed a draw in a balanced endgame. Karpov finished with a disappointing score of  $4/9$ , which left him in equal seventh place.

1998 was a year of mixed fortunes for Karpov. He started the year by defeating Anand for the highest title in chess, although he did have a huge advantage in being seeded directly to the final. His tournament results were not great, and like the previous year he took part in more rapid and simultaneous events than classical tournaments. However, it is worth mentioning his victory in the very strong Cap d’Agde rapid tournament, where he defeated Boris Gelfand in the final. Karpov’s best years may have been behind him, but he remained a formidable player.

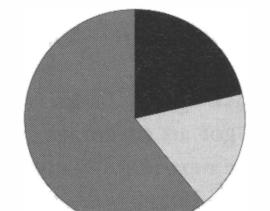
## 1998 Summary

FIDE World Championship match versus Anand, Lausanne: Drew  $3-3$  ( $+2 =2 -2$ ) (Won rapid tie-break  $2-0$ )

Wijk aan Zee (6th-10th place):  $6\frac{1}{2}/13$  ( $+2 =9 -2$ )

Polanica Zdroj (7th-8th place):  $4/9$  ( $+1 =6 -2$ )

Total  $48.2\%$  ( $+5 =17 -6$ )



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 1999

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Rating 2710 (10 in the world)

Karpov started the year with an eight-game match against Jeroen Piket in Monte Carlo. In the first game Karpov played the Queen's Indian and held a marginally worse position for a draw. In the second Piket tried the Vienna Variation against the Queen's Gambit. Karpov sacrificed a pawn for promising compensation and later missed a win and allowed the Dutchman to escape with a draw. In Game 3 Piket switched to the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian and got some advantage, but Karpov managed to hold. Game 4 was a Catalan; Karpov got no real advantage and the game naturally ended in a draw.

In Game 5 Karpov equalized in the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian and the game remained balanced until the end. In the next game the players repeated the same opening with reversed colours. Karpov got a slightly better endgame but Piket defended well and drew. In Game 7 Piket opted for the Petrosian Variation against the Queen's Indian and sharpened the position by castling long. The players must have become desperately short of time, as at one point Piket left his rook en prise but Karpov overlooked it. Shortly after, Piket missed a win and the game finally ended peacefully. In the eighth and final game Karpov played solidly with 4.e3 and 5. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$  against the Nimzo-Indian. Piket equalized easily but then played too optimistically and lost a pawn. But Karpov was short of time and he took a move repetition. Overall the 4–4 result was a fair reflection of the play, although it was disappointing that none of the eight games ended in a decisive result.

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Karpov took part in the Amber rapid/blind event, but his first classical tournament was Dos Hermanas, where he started well, drawing with both Kramnik and Topalov with the black pieces and then outplaying Svidler from a slightly better endgame. In the fourth round he drew comfortably against Anand with the Caro-Kann, then drew with Korchnoi in a game that was always roughly level.

In Round 6 Karpov suffered a setback against Illescas. He failed to equalize in the Caro-Kann and sacrificed a piece for three pawns, but did not quite get enough play and the Spanish grandmaster converted his advantage. In the final three rounds Karpov drew against Gelfand, Judit Polgar and Adams. All three were fighting games which remained roughly balanced until the end. Karpov's final score of 4½/9 was not a bad result against a strong field, and enabled him to share fifth place.

Karpov's next classical tournament was Dortmund, where he faced Ivan Sokolov in the first round. The Yugoslav-Dutch grandmaster has played forty seven games against the world champions, scoring nine wins, nineteen draws and nineteen losses. Previously he had lost one game and

drawn another against Karpov. The players met in two subsequent games, both of which ended in draws.

## Game 51

Anatoly Karpov – Ivan Sokolov

Dortmund 1999

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3 ♜g7 4.♗g2 0–0**

Sokolov is a Grünfeld expert, but he seldom puts his pawn on d5 against the Fianchetto set-up.

**5.♘c3 ♘c6 6.♘f3 d6 7.0–0 ♜b8**

7...a6 is more popular. Some experts believe the rook move to be more accurate, although in most cases the two moves will transpose.

**8.b3 a6 9.♘d5**

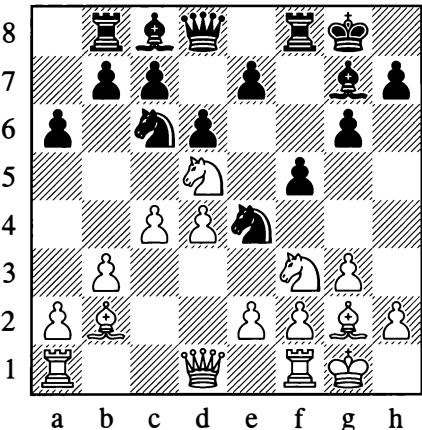
According to the database this move was introduced by Horowitz in 1972, but was subsequently ignored until Romanishin took it up in the mid-eighties. By the time of the present game it had become more established, and nowadays it remains one of the hot battlegrounds of the Fianchetto King's Indian, with several hundred games on the database.

**9...♘e4**

Sokolov plays a slightly unusual move. The main line is 9...♘h5, which decentralizes the knight but allows the black e-pawn to advance to e4. Karpov faced this move at the Amber rapid tournament earlier in the year, and managed to overcome Shirov.

**10.♗b2 f5**

Sokolov opts for the Dutch pawn structure, which usually means that Black will postpone the development of his queenside until after he has gained space in the centre.



**11.e3**

Karpov bolsters the d4-pawn and prevents ...f4.

**11...e6**

So far no other move has been tried here. 11...e5 is possible, although after 12.♗c2 ♜e8 13.♘ad1 White has a slight initiative in the centre.

**12.♘c3 ♘xc3**

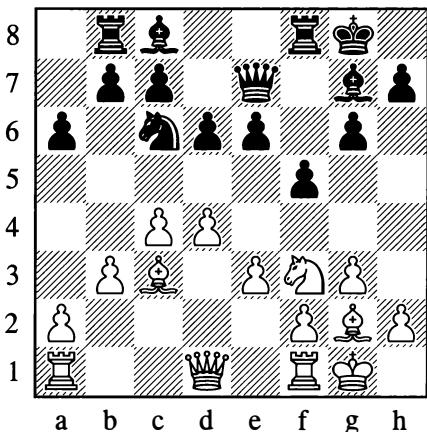
12...b5! is interesting.

**13.♘xc3 ♜e7**

Sokolov clears the d8-square for his knight. Black could have gained space in a few different ways, but any pawn advance would have created some kind of target.

13...b5 14.♗c1 bxc4 15.bxc4 ♜e7 White maintains a slight plus after 16.♘b1 or 16.d5.

13...e5 14.dxe5 (14.d5!? Humans rarely like to make this pawn advance against the Leningrad Dutch, but computer programs seem to like doing it, and usually evaluate it as slightly better for White.) 14...dxe5 15.♗d5† ♜h8 16.♗c5! White has a small initiative in the centre thanks to his well-placed queen.



**14.b4!**

Karpov starts to gain space.

**14...♞d8**

If 14...b5 15.♗b3 ♜b7 16.a4 ♜d8 17.♕fc1 Black comes under pressure on the c-file.

**15.b5!?** ♜f7

After 15...axb5 16.cxb5 c6 17.a4 ♜d7 18.♗b3 ♜f7 19.♕fc1 ♜fc8 20.♗d2 the position is close to equal, but White's side is more comfortable.

**16.♗b3 b6 17.♗d2 ♜h8**

Sokolov prepares to advance his e-pawn. The immediate 17...e5 was playable, although after 18.dxe5 Black is forced to play 18...♜xe5. (Instead 18...dxe5? 19.♗b4 wins material as 19...♝d6? loses to 20.c5†.) Nevertheless his position after the knight recapture is quite reasonable.

Other ideas include 17...axb5 18.cxb5 ♜b7, and 17...♜b7 18.a4 ♜xg2 19.♗xg2 a5 20.♕ac1 e5 21.c5, both of which are just fractionally better for White.

**18.f4!?**

Karpov gains space and though he does not stop ...e5 altogether, he makes it less attractive to carry out.

**18...♝b7**

**18...e5!?**

This move is playable but risky, as it gives White a target to attack.

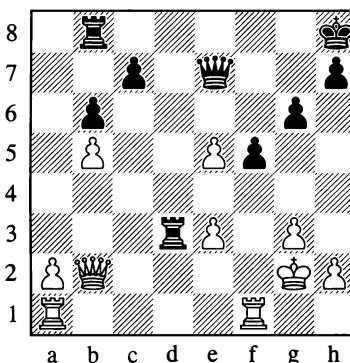
**19.dxe5 dxe5 20.♗b2 ♜d8**

After 20...♜e8 21.a4 a5 22.♕ae1 White has a small edge.

**21.♗f3 axb5 22.cxb5 ♜b7 23.♗xe5 ♜xe5**

**24.♗xe5 ♜xe5 25.fxe5 ♜xg2 26.♗xg2 ♜d3**

The disappearance of the minor pieces eases the defence, but Black's problems are not yet over.



**27.♕fd1!**

This is the most testing.

27.e4 is playable, but after 27...♜bd8 28.e6† ♜g8 29.♗e5 ♜d2† 30.♗g1 ♜a3! White must bale out with a draw: 31.♗f2! ♜xf2 32.e7! ♜e8 33.♗d5†=

**27...♜xe3**

After 27...♜bd8 28.♗xd3 ♜xd3 29.e6† ♜g8 30.♗e5 White keeps some advantage.

**28.e6† ♜g7 29.♗xg7† ♜xg7 30.♕ac1**

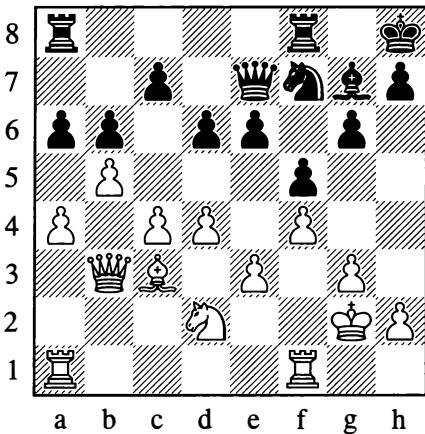
White keeps some initiative although Black should be able to draw.

**19.a4**

With this pawn advance Karpov prepares to exchange on b7 followed by a quick bxa6 and a5 to open the queenside.

**19...♝xg2 20.♗xg2 ♜a8**

Sokolov reacts to the threat.



### 21.♘ae1!

Karpov switches to the centre; now the e4-push is constantly in the air. Instead after 21.bxa6 ♜xa6 22.a5 bxa5 23.♗xa5 ♜fa8 Black is in time to contest the a-file.

### 21...♝d7

Sokolov removes his queen from the e-file, presumably after deciding that lines such as 21...e5 22.dxe5 dxe5 23.e4 were not to his liking.

### 22.♘f3!!

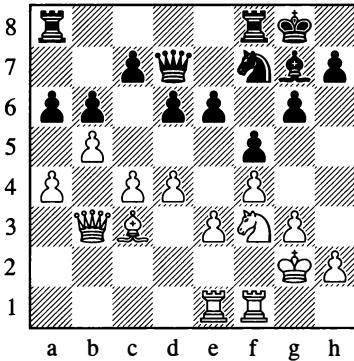
Karpov decides to prevent ...e5 and postpone any direct action in the centre.

The natural 22.e4! may well have been stronger: 22...♝h6 (22...♞fe8 23.d5 axb5 24.axb5 exd5 25.exd5 White has some advantage as his knight has better prospects than its counterpart, for instance it can aim for the e6-square.) 23.♗e2 (23.d5!!?) 23...fxe4 24.♗xe4 ♘f5 Black's knight emerges on a decent square, but White keeps some advantage after 25.♗g5 or 25.d5.

### 22...axb5

Sokolov is a typical player who likes to go forwards, and here he decides to play on the a-file.

### 22...♝g8?!



Black could also have considered this waiting move. The idea is that in certain positions the king will not find itself in check after a bishop exchange on c3.

### 23.♗e2

23.c5? would be a mistake due to 23...axb5 24.axb5 dxc5 25.dxc5 ♜xc3 and since there is no check, White loses the b5-pawn. 23.e4 fxe4 24.♗xe4 d5 25.♗e2 dxc4 26.♗xc4 axb5 27.axb5 ♛d6 28.♗c6 ♜xc6 29.bxc6 ♜fe8 30.♗fe1 ♛b5 31.♗b2 ♜a2 Black has good counterplay.

### 23...♝a7??

23...d5?! is premature due to 24.cxd5 ♜xd5 25.♗xd5 exd5 26.♗b4! and White is a bit better.

Black can also consider 23...♝fc8 intending ...c6 or ...c5. White's best reaction looks to be 24.♗c1.

### 24.♗c1

Most other moves would be met in the same way.

### 24...♝fa8

The potential counterplay on the a-file will keep White busy, so Black is only slightly worse.

### 23.axb5 ♜a7

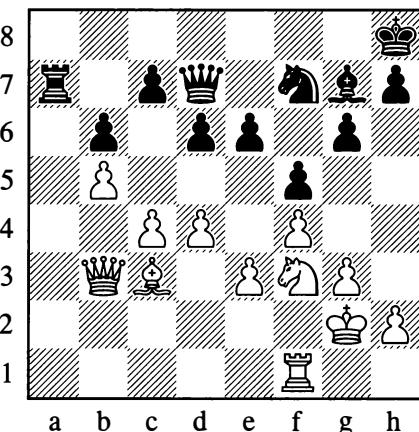
After 23...d5 Karpov mentions 24.c5 without any further comment, presumably implying that the position is good for White. Nevertheless after 24...♝fb8 25.c6 ♜e8 it will not be easy for White to achieve anything.

Perhaps a better reply would be 24.  $\mathbb{Q}e5!$ , for instance: 24...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  25.  $dxe5$   $dxc4$  26.  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  White will exert pressure against the c7-pawn, and if Black exchanges it with ...c6 then the b6-pawn will be weak.

#### 24. $\mathbb{R}a1$

Karpov does not intend to contest the a-file, but he exchanges one pair of rooks in order to prevent Black from having doubled rooks on the open file.

24...  $\mathbb{R}fa8$  25.  $\mathbb{R}xa7$   $\mathbb{R}xa7$



#### 26. $\mathbb{R}f2$

Karpov guards against checks on the second rank, in preparation for opening the queenside with c5.

#### 26... $\mathbb{W}e8$

Sokolov prepares to double his heavy pieces on the a-file. The text move is not a mistake in itself, but the overall plan is faulty.

Black can try to be active in other ways as well, for instance: 26...d5! 27.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (27.  $c5 \mathbb{Q}g8!$  [27...  $bxc5?$  28.  $dxc5$  Black has no time to win the b-pawn as the capture on c3 will come with check.] 28.  $\mathbb{R}c2 \mathbb{Q}f8$  White has a slight edge, but it is not easy to do something with it as the position is rather

closed.) 27...  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  28.  $dxe5$   $dxc4$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xc4 \mathbb{Q}f8$  30.  $\mathbb{R}d2$  White keeps the advantage, but it is hard to say if it is truly dangerous or mostly symbolic.

Maybe Black's most promising idea would have been to improve his pieces without committing himself to the ...d5 push. For example:

26...  $\mathbb{Q}g8!?$

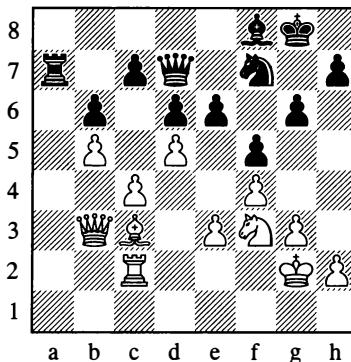
The king sidesteps any potential checks on the long diagonal.

27.  $\mathbb{R}c2 \mathbb{Q}f8!?$

Black prepares ...d5 followed by a possible rook invasion on a3.

28.  $d5!?$

White prevents his opponent's idea and hopes to secure the e6-square for his knight. A quiet move like 28.  $\mathbb{Q}f2!?$  would allow Black to take over the initiative: 28...d5! (28...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  29.  $d5!$ ) 29.  $cxd5$  (29.  $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  30.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{R}a3-$ ) 29...  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  Black is somewhat better.



28...  $e5!$

28...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  stops the knight from coming to d4, but still does not equalize: 29.  $\mathbb{R}e2!$  (29.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $e5$ ) 29...  $e5$  30.  $\mathbb{W}c2!$  Black has problems after 30...  $e4$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  or 30...  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  31.  $e4$ .

29.  $fxe5$

After 29.  $\mathbb{R}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30.  $e4$  (30.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $\mathbb{R}a3$ ) 30...  $fxe4$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}f5$  32.  $\mathbb{W}b1$   $\mathbb{R}a2!$  Black obtains unpleasant counterplay.

29...  $dxe5$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$   $\mathbb{W}e8!$  31.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{R}a3!?$

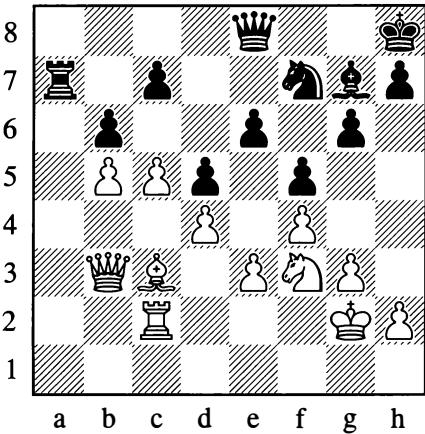
The simple 31... $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  is also fine. In both cases Black has enough counterplay to maintain the balance.

### 27.c5 d5

Once again 27... $\mathbb{Q}g8!?$  was worth considering.

### 28. $\mathbb{R}c2$

Karpov places the rook on the file along which he hopes to invade.



### 28... $\mathbb{W}a8?$

Sokolov makes a careless move and relinquishes the pressure on the b5-pawn.

Black would have been much better off playing 28... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  or 28... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ , both of which improve his bishop slightly while eliminating the problem of his weak back rank.

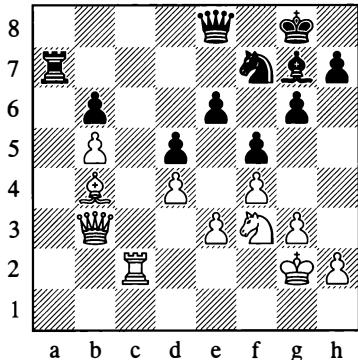
### 28... $\mathbb{Q}g8!?$

This move appears tactically dubious, but is in fact playable.

### 29.cxb6

Obviously this and the next move are not forced, but they clearly represent the critical test of Black's last move.

### 29...cxb6 30. $\mathbb{Q}b4$



### 30... $\mathbb{W}xb5!!$

This move appears suicidal, but Black can get away with it.

30... $\mathbb{Q}d8?$  31. $\mathbb{Q}d6 \mathbb{R}a5$  (31... $\mathbb{W}d7$  32. $\mathbb{Q}b8!$   $\mathbb{R}a5$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e5+ -$ ) 32. $\mathbb{W}c3$  White has excellent winning chances in view of the imminent invasion on c7.

### 31. $\mathbb{B}c8\# \mathbb{Q}f8$

Black can afford to give up this bishop as he has counterplay against the white king.

### 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf8!$

By offering a queen sacrifice, White causes maximal problems for the defence.

After 32. $\mathbb{Q}xf8\# \mathbb{Q}g7$  33. $\mathbb{Q}x7\# \mathbb{Q}xf7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e5\# \mathbb{Q}g8!$  35. $\mathbb{W}b2$  (35. $\mathbb{Q}d3 \mathbb{W}c4$ ) 35... $\mathbb{W}a4$  Black will obtain counterplay on the first rank.

White can also postpone capturing the bishop:

32. $\mathbb{W}b2 \mathbb{R}a4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xf8\# \mathbb{Q}g7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}x7\# \mathbb{Q}xf7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e5\# \mathbb{Q}e8$  36. $\mathbb{W}c2 \mathbb{R}xb4$  37. $\mathbb{W}c8\#$  The game ends with perpetual check.

32. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{R}a4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xf8 \mathbb{W}xb3$  34. $\mathbb{Q}h6\# \mathbb{Q}d8$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xd8\# \mathbb{Q}f7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e5\# \mathbb{Q}f6$  Once again White must give a perpetual, with either 37. $\mathbb{Q}g5\# \mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d7\#$  or 37. $\mathbb{Q}d7\# \mathbb{Q}e7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g5\#$ .

### 32... $\mathbb{W}e2\#$

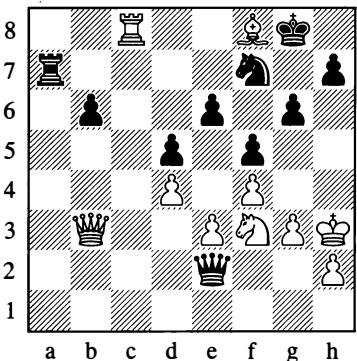
Black had better refuse the offer.

32... $\mathbb{W}xb3?$  33. $\mathbb{Q}h6\# \mathbb{Q}d8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xd8\# \mathbb{Q}f7$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e5\# \mathbb{Q}f6$  36. $\mathbb{Q}f8\# \mathbb{Q}e7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f7\# \mathbb{Q}d8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}xa7$  Black avoids an immediate checkmate, nevertheless he is in trouble; there is no perpetual, and White retains

serious attacking chances and more than enough material for the queen.

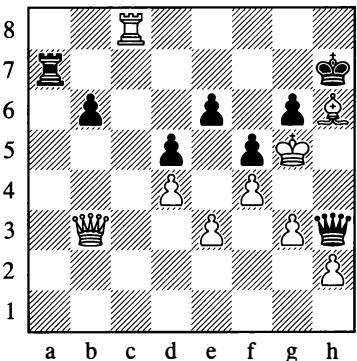
33.♔h3

In this position Black has a few interesting ways to secure a draw.



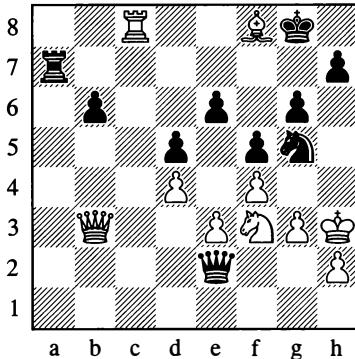
33...h6!

The tempting 33...♗f1†? 34.♕h4 h6 meets with a beautiful refutation: 35.♖xh6† (35.e4?! is spectacular but does not quite work: 35...fxe4 [35...dxe4? 36.♗xe6+=] 36.♖xh6† ♔h7 37.♗g5† ♗xg5 38.♗xg5 ♗e2 39.g4 e3! 40.♗c2 ♗e1† 41.♔h3 ♗f1† 42.♗g3 ♗g7! After a series of only moves, Black holds.) 35...♔h7 36.♗g5† ♗xg5 (36...♔xh6 37.♗b4!+=) 37.♗xg5 ♗h3



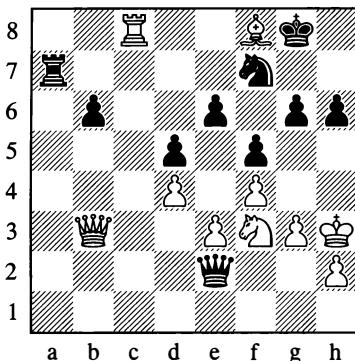
38.♗h8†!! ♕xh8 39.♗xb6 Black can resist for a bit longer, but the position is losing for him.

However, there was an alternative drawing line in which the black king survives a near-death experience: 33...♗g5†!



34.fxg5 (34.♗xg5 ♗g4† is a trivial draw.)

34...♗f1†! 35.♔h4 ♗xf3 36.♗h6† ♔f7 37.♗f8† ♔e7 Amazingly White does not have more than a perpetual, for instance: 38.♗b4† ♔d7 39.♗b5† ♔e7! 40.♗e8† (40.♗e8† ♔f7=) 40...♔d6 41.♗b8† ♔c6 42.♗c8† ♔b5 43.♗c5† ♔a6=



34.e4?

This attempt to avoid a perpetual leads to disaster for White.

Instead White should settle for a draw with something like: 34.♖xh6† (34.♗e1 ♗g4+=) 34...♔h7 35.♗g5† ♗xg5† (or 35...♔xh6 36.♗xf7† ♗xf7=) 36.♗xg5 ♗g4†=

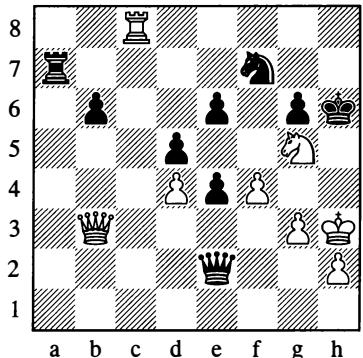
34...fxe4

After 34...dxe4?? 35.♗xe6 Black's position collapses.

35.♔xh6†

35.♗e1 ♔h7 36.♗b4 ♗f1† 37.♗g2 h5 38.♗c2 ♗g5† wins.

35...♔h7 36.♗g5† ♕xh6



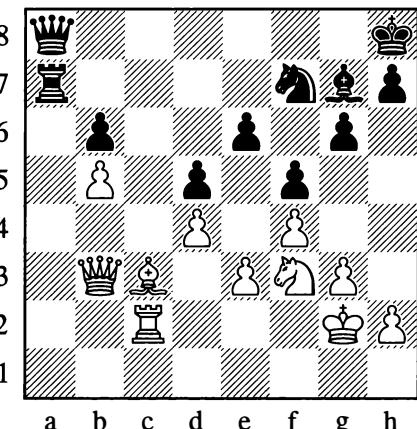
37.  $\mathbb{Q}xf7\ddagger$

Had the analogous position been reached with the moves ... $\mathbb{W}f1\ddagger$  and  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  already inserted, White could have won with 37. $\mathbb{W}b4$ , but in the present position this move is easily refuted by 37... $\mathbb{W}h5\ddagger$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{E}a2\ddagger$ . Such nuances make the game of chess endlessly fascinating.

37... $\mathbb{E}xf7$

Black is winning.

**29.  $cxb6!$   $cxb6$**



**30.  $\mathbb{Q}b4!$**

Karpov exploits the fact that the b5-pawn is no longer attacked, by taking the opportunity to improve his bishop while also opening the c-file.

**30...  $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

Sokolov takes away the c6-square from the rook.

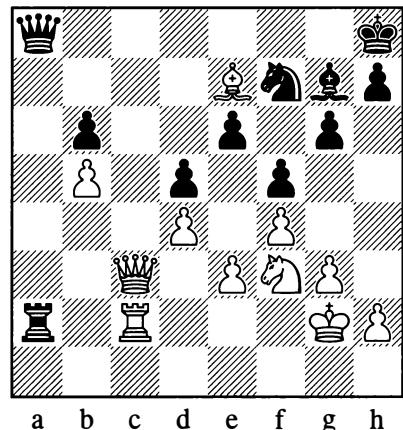
**31.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{E}a2$**

After 31... $\mathbb{Q}g8$  32. $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e5$  Black's position falls apart.

**32.  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**

32. $\mathbb{W}c7!$  would have won even more quickly: 32... $\mathbb{E}xc2\ddagger$  33. $\mathbb{W}xc2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  35. $\mathbb{W}c7$  And the b6-pawn falls.

**32...  $\mathbb{Q}f7$**



**33.  $\mathbb{E}xa2\ddagger$**

Karpov finely judges that his opponent's active queen will not be able to do any damage by herself.

**33...  $\mathbb{W}xa2\ddagger$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}b1\ddagger$**

34... $\mathbb{W}c4\ddagger?$  35. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $dxc4$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  is an easy endgame for White.

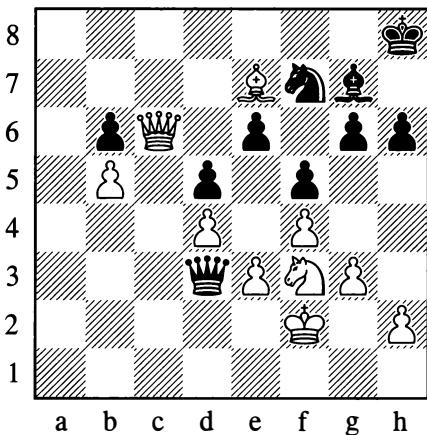
34... $h5$  was more challenging, although Black is still in trouble: 35. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (35... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  36. $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  38. $\mathbb{W}xb6$  White wins a pawn and the game.) 36. $h3$   $\mathbb{W}b3$  37. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d8$   $\mathbb{W}b2\ddagger$  39. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  40. $\mathbb{W}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  41. $\mathbb{W}d7\ddagger$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}c7$  Black is unlikely to survive.

**35.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $h6$**

35... $\mathbb{W}a2\uparrow$  also fails to save the game: 36. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  h6 37. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  39. $\mathbb{W}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}d8$  White wins as the b6-pawn falls, as pointed out by Karpov in his *Chess Informant* analysis.

### 36. $\mathbb{W}c6$ $\mathbb{W}d3$

After 36... $\mathbb{W}b2\uparrow$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  (37. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  e5 39. $\mathbb{W}xd5$  exd4 40.exd4 also wins) 37... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$   $\mathbb{W}xh2$  39. $\mathbb{W}xe6$  White wins.



### 37. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$

Karpov elegantly stops Black's counterplay to seal his victory.

Taking the knight was also winning, albeit in a slightly less straightforward way: 37. $\mathbb{W}e8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{W}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}c2\uparrow$  39. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}c1\uparrow$  40. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c4\uparrow$  41. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}a2\uparrow$  (41... $\mathbb{W}f1$  42. $\mathbb{Q}f8$   $\mathbb{W}f2\uparrow$  43. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}xe3\uparrow$  44. $\mathbb{Q}b4\uparrow$ ) 42. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}b1\uparrow$  43. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}xb5\uparrow$  44. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{W}b2\uparrow$  45. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}c1\uparrow$  46. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  White escapes the checks and wins.

### 37... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$

A desperate try, but there was nothing else.

### 38. $\mathbb{W}e8\uparrow$

White wins a piece and the game.

### 38... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 39. $\mathbb{W}f8\uparrow$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$ 1-0

Sokolov resigned without waiting for the knight to fall.

Karpov continued with three sharply-contested draws against Kramnik, Topalov and Adams. He finished the tournament with three less exciting draws against Anand, Leko and Timman. His final score of 4/7 was enough to share third place with Anand and Adams.

Karpov's last tournament of the decade, and indeed the millennium, was a four-player, double-round-robin event in the Dutch town of Hoogeveen. In the first round he met an opponent whom he had never faced before. Darmen Sadvakasov has played eight games against the "three Ks" amongst world champions: Karpov, Kasparov and Kramnik. He has scored two wins, three draws and three losses. In his three subsequent encounters with Karpov he scored two wins and a draw.

## Game 52

Darmen Sadvakasov – Anatoly Karpov

Hoogeveen 1999

### 1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

According to the database the Kazakh grandmaster had previously played the Panov Variation.

### 3... $\mathbb{dx}e4$ 4. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ $\mathbb{Q}d7$ 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$ $\mathbb{Q}gf6$ 6. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ e6 7. $\mathbb{Q}1f3$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 8. $\mathbb{W}e2$ h6 9. $\mathbb{Q}e4$ $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ 10. $\mathbb{W}xe4$ $\mathbb{W}c7$

Karpov also played 10... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  and 10...c5, but the queen move is the one he employed most frequently.

### 11. $\mathbb{W}g4$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

Almost all of Karpov's classical games in this variation ended in draws. Karpov scored poorly with it in blind and rapid games, but

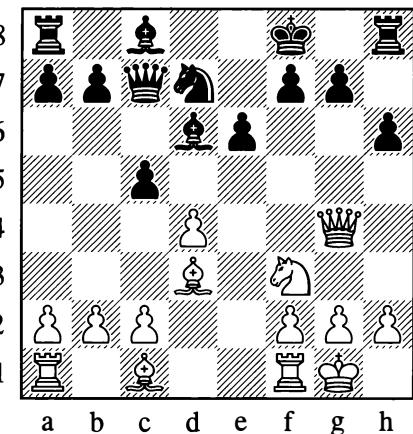
subsequent analysis must have restored his confidence in Black's position.

### 12.0–0

This is the usual move. In her rapid match against Karpov in Budapest 1998, Judit Polgar scored a win and two draws with 12... $\mathbb{Q}e3$ .

### 12...c5

Sometimes Black plays 12...b6 first, but he invariably challenges the opponent's centre at some point



### 13. $\mathbb{Q}h4$

It is natural to move the queen off the diagonal of the enemy bishop. 13.c3 is the most popular move, and 13... $\mathbb{Q}e1$  is another sensible alternative.

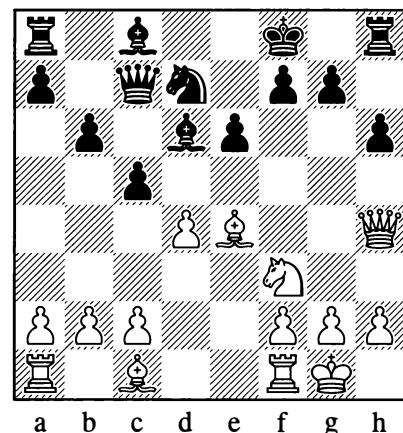
In 2002 Karpov twice faced 13.b3 against Topalov: 13...e5 14.dxc5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  15. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  h5 16. $\mathbb{W}h3$  e4! (This was Karpov's improvement over the first game, which continued 16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  18. $\mathbb{W}g3$  when Black failed to equalize and went on to lose, Topalov – Karpov, Cannes 2002.) 17. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}e5$  19. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  g6 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  Karpov refuses to take the exchange and simply finishes developing. 21. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  22. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  23. $\mathbb{W}e3?$  (23. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6=)$  23... $\mathbb{Q}xh2\#$  24. $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}f4$  25. $\mathbb{W}c3\#$  f6 26. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}hd8$  28. $\mathbb{W}a5$  b6

29. $\mathbb{Q}xd8$   $\mathbb{Q}xa5$  0–1 Topalov – Karpov, Dubai (rapid) 2002.

### 13...b6

13...c4?! is risky: 14. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  (The immediate 14. $\mathbb{Q}xc4??$  loses to 14... $\mathbb{Q}e7!)$  14...b5 15.a4 b4 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black got some compensation for the pawn and eventually won in Kummerow – Speelman, Bundesliga 1999, but not many players have followed in the creative Englishman's footsteps, probably because of the strong 16. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  which questions Black's play.

### 14. $\mathbb{Q}e4$



### 14... $\mathbb{Q}b8?$ !

Karpov postpones the bishop exchange and deviates from 14... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ , with which he lost a blindfold game against Lautier in 1998.

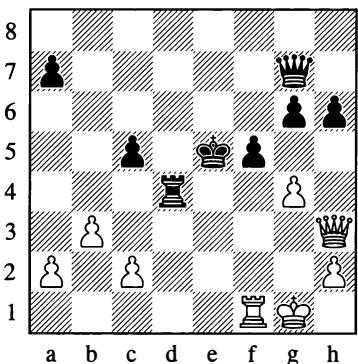
### 15. $\mathbb{Q}d1$

This was a new move at the time.

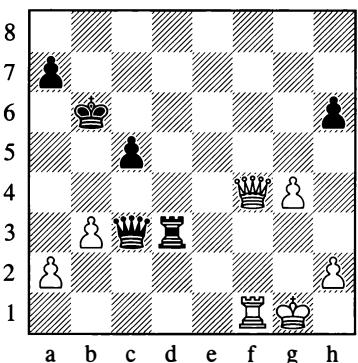
15.b3 leads to an interesting position in which Black has a few different options:

a) 15... $\mathbb{Q}f6?$  is asking for trouble: 16.dxc5 bxc5 17. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  18. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  19. $\mathbb{W}g4$  f5 20. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  21. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  22. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$  g6 23. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  24. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$  e5 27. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}he8$  28.f4  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  29.g4!  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  30. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g7$

31.fxe5† ♜xe5 32.♗xe5 ♜xe5 The position deserves a diagram, especially considering that Karpov actually managed to survive with such an 'active' king...



33.♗g3† f4 34.♗e1† ♜d6 35.c3 ♜d3 36.♗e4 ♜xc3 37.♗xg6† ♜c7 38.♗f7† ♜b6 39.♗xf4

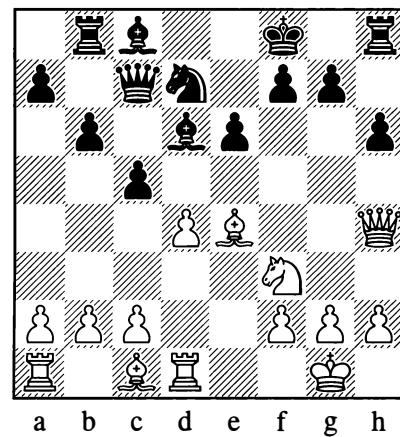


39...♜a5! The way Karpov uses his king is remarkable. Objectively his position is probably still losing but he manages to create enough obstacles for his opponent. 40.♗c7† (40.♗h1??) 40...♝b4 41.♗b7† ♜a3 42.♗xa7† (42.♗a6† ♜b2 43.♗xh6 ♜xa2 Black gets counterplay on the queenside.) 42...♝b2 Black's position is still difficult but he eventually managed to hold it, Timman – Karpov, Bali 2000. By the end of the game his king had returned to a5 again!

b) The next time he reached this position Karpov improved with a much safer continuation: 15...♜e7! 16.♗f4 ♜d6 17.♗h4

♜e7 18.♗f4 ♜d6 19.♗h4 ½–½ Leitao – Karpov, Buenos Aires 2000.

c) Apart from the above drawing line Black has another reasonable move: 15...c4!? 16.bxc4 ♜a6 17.♗d2 ♜f6 18.♗d3 ♜f4 (18...g5!? 19.♗h3 ♜g7 is also interesting) 19.♗f3 ♜xc1 20.♗axc1 ♜xc4 21.♗xc4 ♜xc4 Black appears to be dangerously behind in development, but he held the draw with ease: 22.♗e5 ♜c3 23.♗f4 ♜c8 24.♗fd1 ♜g8 25.h4 b5 26.d5 exd5 27.♗xd5 ♜xd5 28.♗xf7† ½–½ Milos – Vescovi, Sao Paulo 2000.



**15...c4!?**

Karpov prevents his opponent from opening the d-file.

**16.♗e5!?**

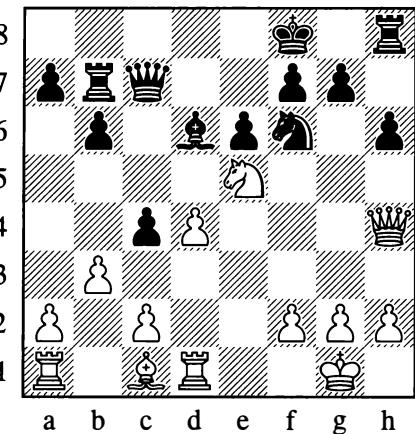
White should aim to open the position as quickly as possible, as Black enjoys good long-term prospects thanks to his control over the d5-square.

The alternative is 16.d5 e5, which has so far resulted in three draws without a win on either side.

**16...♝f6 17.♗f3 ♜b7 18.♗xb7 ♜xb7 19.b3**

Sadvakasov continues trying to open the position in the hope of exploiting his better development.

After 19.♕f4 ♖d5 20.♗g3 ♕xe5 21.♗xe5 ♘d7 22.♗e1 f6 23.♗g3 ♔f7 24.♗e2 b5 Black obtained a pleasant position in Odeev – Sargissian, Istanbul (ol) 2000.



### 19...cxb3

Black opens a file, but in return he wins time to catch up on development. If he can organize his position successfully then he will have excellent prospects against the isolated pawn.

So far nobody has tried 19...c3 with the idea of keeping the position closed. Indeed, it looks risky to allow the white rook to appear on the third rank, and in the long run the c3-pawn might become weak.

### 20.cxb3 ♖d5

Karpov puts his knight on its dream square, while preparing to win a crucial tempo by threatening to exchange queens.

The greedy 20...♗xe5? leads swiftly to disaster: 21.dxe5 ♘xe5 22.♗f4 ♘b2 23.♗ac1 ♘g8 24.♗c8† ♔h7 25.♗xh6!+–

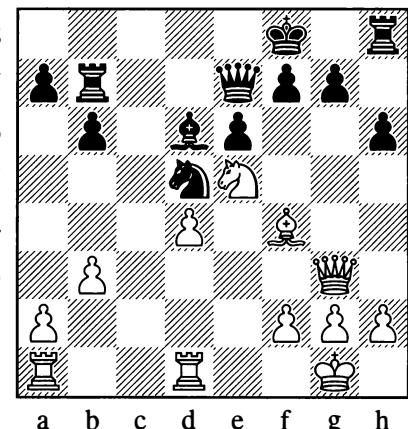
20...♗g8?! Trying to improve the king first has never been tried, but it is interesting. 21.♗f4 (21.♗c4 ♖d5 22.♗d2 ♗f4 Black is safe; 21.♗g3 is well met by 21...♘c2! and Black

is doing well after 22.♗f3 ♘e4 or 22.♗e3 ♔h7.) 21...♘c2! 22.♗ac1 ♘f5 Black should be fine.

### 21.♗f4 ♘e7

This tempo-gaining move is an important part of Karpov's plan.

### 22.♗g3



### 22...♗xe5?!

Karpov takes an ambitious and somewhat risky decision to play for the win. With the superior minor piece and the d4-pawn as a target, his long-term chances are excellent. The problem is that his pieces are temporarily uncoordinated, which means that before he can reach his dream endgame, he will have to suffer and tread carefully to avoid the immediate threats.

Despite Karpov's eventual success in the present game, no-one else has been brave enough to follow in his footsteps. In all three of the subsequent games that reached this position, Black preferred 22...♗xf4 which leads to a slightly worse but tenable position, and indeed all three of those games were drawn. The first and most high-profile of them continued: 23.♗xf4 ♘g8 (23...g5?! 24.♗e4 ♘g7 is interesting but has not yet been tested.) 24.♗e4 f5 25.♗e3

$\mathbb{Q}h7$  26.  $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  27.  $\mathbb{W}xe5$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  28.  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  29.  $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{E}bd7$  Black regained the pawn and easily held the draw, Timman – Seirawan, Bali 2000.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$ $\mathbb{W}g5$

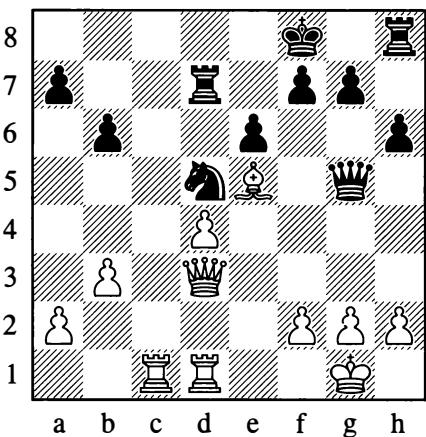
Nothing else is really playable.

### 24. $\mathbb{W}d3$

Obviously White should keep the queens on the board.

### 24... $\mathbb{E}d7$ 25. $\mathbb{E}ac1$

Trying to invade with the queen on the c-file is not dangerous: 25.  $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  26.  $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  Black covers his weaknesses and is ready to finish unravelling his kingside.



### 25... $\mathbb{W}d8?$ !

Karpov retreats his queen in order to keep his queenside together. It is just about playable, but it was not the most straightforward solution.

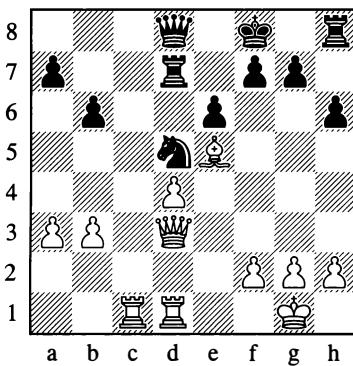
25...  $\mathbb{Q}e7!$  was simplest. Black can solve his problems by leaving his queen on the kingside and quickly bringing the second rook into play. 26.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}hd8$  (26...  $\mathbb{E}e8!?$ ) 27.  $h4$  (27.  $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ; 27.  $\mathbb{W}h7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ) 27...  $\mathbb{W}g4$  28.  $\mathbb{E}e4$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  Black achieves full coordination and it is White who will have to start thinking about defending.

### 26. $\mathbb{W}a6$

In a sense, the pressure is on White, as he must try to achieve something before Black can finish developing, otherwise he will face a difficult defence with his isolated pawn. Sadvakasov's move is a good one, but there were other possibilities.

Doubling the rooks on the c-file does not achieve much: 26.  $\mathbb{E}c4$   $f6$  27.  $\mathbb{E}dc1$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  (28.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$ ) 28...  $\mathbb{W}a8$  29.  $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  Black is somewhat better.

### 26.a3?!



This is a subtle move. The point is that Black is likely to play ... $f6$  sooner or later, so White wants to be able to attack the  $e6$ -pawn with  $\mathbb{E}c6$  without fearing the reply ...  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ .

### 26... $\mathbb{Q}e7$

26...  $f6$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (27...  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  should be met by 28.  $\mathbb{W}e2!$ , defending the  $d1$ -rook, when White is fine.) 28.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  29.  $\mathbb{E}c6$  White is not worse as the  $e6$ -pawn is vulnerable.

If Black tries to play as he does in the game with 26...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$ , then White replies 27.  $\mathbb{W}e4$ . If Black wants to organize his position then he will have to play ... $f6$  at some point, which falls in with White's plan.

### 27. $\mathbb{W}e4$ $f6$

After 27...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28.  $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$  White obtains good counterplay on the queenside as the black knight is far away.

28.♗f4 e5

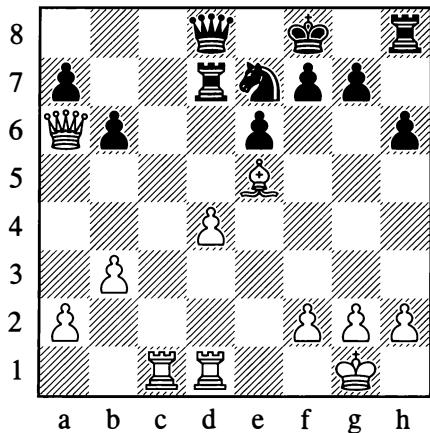
28...♔f7 is met by 29.♕e1.

29.♕e3 ♔f7 30.♗c2 exd4 31.♗c4† ♕d5  
32.♗xd4

The position is equal.

26...♕e7

Black's position looks passive, but for the moment he is doing enough to cover all the important squares.



27.♗c4

With a lead in development and a bishop versus a knight, White should have taken the opportunity to open the position: 27.d5! f6 28.♗b2 exd5 29.♗e2 White has excellent compensation, for instance: 29...♔f7 30.♕e1 ♕e8 31.♗e6† ♔f8 32.♗xf6 ♕d6 33.♗xe7† ♕xe7 34.♗f5† Black should be able to hold this inferior endgame, but he will have to be careful.

27...♔g8

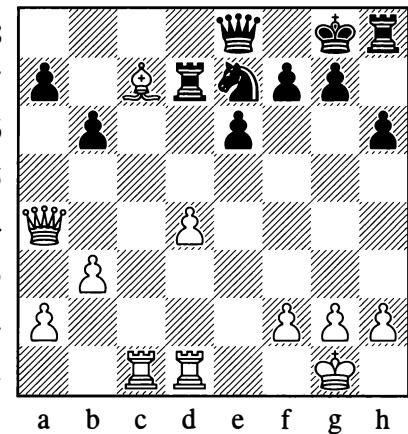
Karpov prepares to shuffle his king and rook.

28.♕c7 ♘a8

Karpov decides to keep the queens on the board for the time being. It is not without risk, but exchanging them would have improved White's pawn structure: 28...♗c8 29.f3 ♕d5

30.♗g3 ♘xc4 31.bxc4 ♕e3 32.♗d3 ♕f5  
33.♗f2 The position is equal.

29.♘a4 ♘e8



30.♗b8?

This is a serious mistake which gifts Black two free tempos with which to finish his development.

30.♗xa7 This is the most straightforward continuation, although just about any other reasonable move would have given White a playable position as well. 30...♗d5 31.♗a4! ♘e7 32.♗e5 (Another idea is 32.♗g3 ♘a7 33.♗b5 ♘xa2 34.♗e1 ♘f6 35.♗d3! when the generally desirable ...g6 will weaken the dark squares, which should give White adequate play.) 32...♗a7 33.♗c6 (or 33.♗c4 ♘xa2 34.♗d3) 33...♗xa2 34.♗a1 ♘xa1 35.♗x a1 ♘h7 36.♗c2† f5 According to Karpov the position is equal.

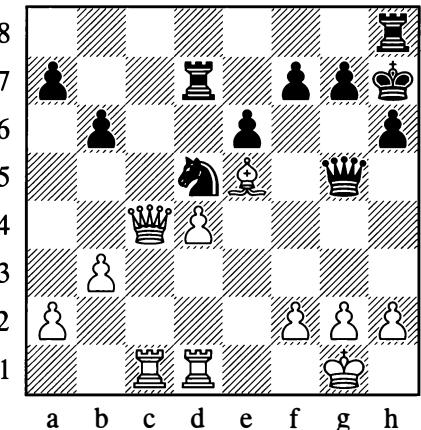
30...♔h7 31.♗c7

Sadvakasov must only now have realized that 31.♗xa7? was unplayable due to 31...♗b7! 32.♗a6 ♘a8 33.♗d3† g6 when Black wins a piece.

31...♗d5 32.♗e5 ♘e7

Karpov prepares to develop his h8-rook.

33.♕c4 ♕g5



34.♕d3†

This queen check does not harm White, but nor does it improve his position in any way. More constructive would have been:

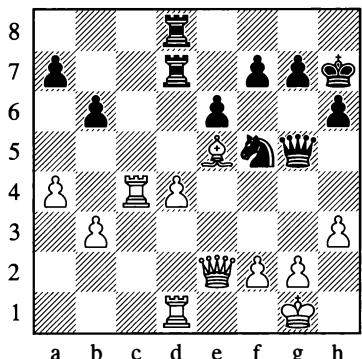
34.a4!

With this move white enables his rook to utilize the c4-square. Furthermore he may be glad for the opportunity to exchange the queenside pawns in order to escape to a tenable endgame with three pawns against four on the kingside.

34...♚hd8

After 34...a5?! 35.♕e2 ♚hd8 36.♕c6 White obtains counterplay.

35.♕e2 ♜e7 36.♕c4 ♜f5 37.h3



37...♚d5!

Black should crack the defence slowly.

The direct 37...f6 is critical, but does not quite work: 38.♕c7! ♜xd4 39.♕xd4! (39.♕xd8?? ♜h4! 40.g3 ♜d5+) 39...♜xd4 40.♕xe6 The position is equal.

38.g4?

White should try to disrupt his opponent's pieces.

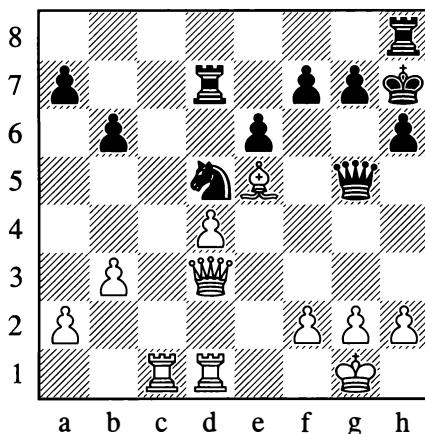
After 38.♕h2 f6 39.♕c7 ♜8d7 40.♕e4 ♜g6 41.♕b8 e5 Black wins the d-pawn.

38...f6 39.♕c7 ♜8d7 40.♕e4 ♜g6 41.♕h2 ♜d6 42.♕xg6† ♜xg6 43.♕xd6 ♜5xd6

43...♜7xd6 is also possible, although after 44.♕g3 Black must avoid 44...e5? in view of 45.dxe5, when the attack on the d6-rook enables White to ignore the pin. Instead Black can keep some winning chances with 44...a6! intending ...b5, when White must either lose the d-pawn or risk his rook becoming locked in a cage on b4.

44.g3 e5

The d-pawn falls, and Black has excellent winning chances.



34...♜g6 35.♕e2

35.♕xg6†?!

Going for the endgame is not necessarily losing as Capablanca also held Flohr in a similar and famous endgame from Moscow 1935. Here the situation is slightly different as all four rooks are still on the board. Nevertheless it is not easy for Black to break

his opponent's defence. At the same time, it is understandable that one would be reluctant to play such a position against an endgame wizard like Karpov.

35... $\mathbb{Q}xg6$  36.f3  $\mathbb{E}hd8$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

Another possibility is: 37. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  (37...f6 38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  39. $\mathbb{E}c4$  h5 40.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  41. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  White seems to be okay.) 38. $\mathbb{E}c4$  b5 (38... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  39.g4) 39. $\mathbb{E}c7$  f6 40. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}xd7$  The endgame looks dangerous for White. In the aforementioned classic game, the Cuban genius defended by advancing his a-pawn two squares, but here a4 would be risky as Black has already played ...b5.

37...f6

After 37... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  38.g4 f6 39. $\mathbb{Q}c7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  40. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  White seems to hold.

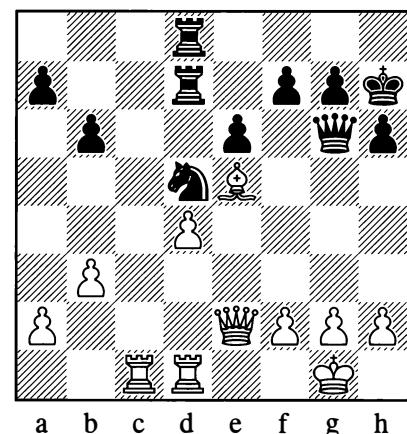
38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  h5 39. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$

If 39... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  40. $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  then 41. $\mathbb{Q}c7$  once again looks like a good move.

40. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  41. $\mathbb{E}ce1$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  42. $\mathbb{E}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  43. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

Black is clearly better, but not necessarily winning.

35... $\mathbb{E}hd8$



36.h4?

White tries to do something active on the kingside, but he gets nowhere and the h-pawn will become weak. 36. $\mathbb{E}c4$  f6 37. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  e5! is also

difficult for White. The most resilient defence would have been 36.f3 intending to sit and wait, although this would obviously have been unpleasant as well.

36...h5!

Karpov stops the h-pawn from advancing and fixes it as a weakness.

37. $\mathbb{E}d3$   $\mathbb{W}g4!$ ?

With little time on the clock, Karpov goes for safety.

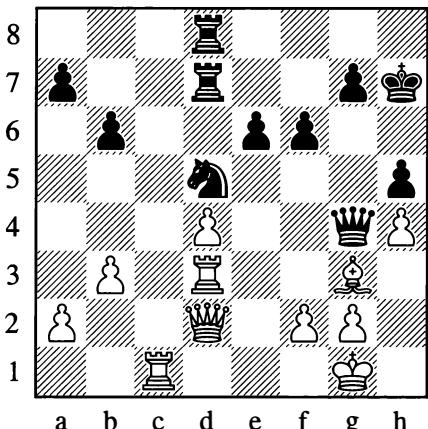
The more direct approach was 37...f6!?, intending to act in the centre at once. 38. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ! (Karpov mentions the line 38...e5? 39.dxe5!  $\mathbb{Q}f4$  40. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{E}xd3$  41.exf6 gxf6 42. $\mathbb{E}c6$  when despite his extra exchange, Black has no advantage.) 39. $\mathbb{E}dd1$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  40. $\mathbb{W}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  41. $\mathbb{W}e3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  42. $\mathbb{E}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}xe3$  43. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}e4$  44. $\mathbb{E}xa7$  f5 Black has good winning chances.

38. $\mathbb{W}d2$ ?

Sadvakasov gambles by keeping the queens on the board. The decision is understandable, but ultimately incorrect as his position goes from clearly worse to losing outright.

White should have exchanged queens: 38. $\mathbb{W}xg4$  hxg4 Karpov only evaluated the endgame as better for Black, which suggests that he believed White could still hold it. 39. $\mathbb{E}c4$  (39. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  f6 40. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  41. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  42. $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  43. $\mathbb{E}cxe6$   $\mathbb{E}xd4$  Black is a healthy pawn up.) 39... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (39... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  40.d5 [40. $\mathbb{E}g3$  f6] 40... $\mathbb{E}xd5$  41. $\mathbb{E}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  [41... $\mathbb{E}xd5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}b8$ ] 42. $\mathbb{E}xg4$  f6 43. $\mathbb{Q}g3$  Black is a bit better.) 40. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}h5$  41.f3 f5 42.fxg4†  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  Black is certainly better, but it is hard to tell if his position is technically winning.

38...f6 39. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



**39... ♜e7**

Finally Karpov gets the chance to attack the d4-pawn. It is his reward for enduring the unpleasant period that went before.

**40.♘e3?**

This move loses quickly, but White lacked a decent alternative, for instance: 40.♗c4 e5 (40...b5 is less convincing: 41.♗c5 ♘xd4 42.♗xd4 ♘xd4 43.♗c2† ♗f5 44.♗xb5 ♘d1† 45.♗h2 ♘d4 46.♗xf5 exf5 47.♗xf5† g6 48.♗e6) 41.d5 ♘g6 42.d6 ♗f5 43.♗c6 ♘f7 White soon loses the d-pawn.

**40... ♘xd4!?**

Karpov wins the pawn, but not under the best possible conditions. Instead 40...e5! is simply winning. With more time on the clock Karpov would not have missed such a possibility.

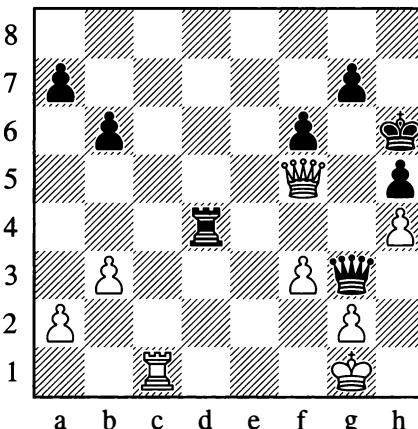
**41.♗xd4 ♘xd4 42.f3 ♗f5!**

Simplifying to a won endgame.

**43.♗xe6**

Sadvakasov finds the only way to prolong the game. Less resolute would have been: 43.fxg4 ♗xe3 44.♗f2 (44.gxh5 ♘d2) 44...♗d1† 45.♗xd1 ♘xd1 46.gxh5 ♗xf2 47.♗xf2 ♘h6 48.g4 f5 49.♗f3 fxg4† 50.♗xg4 e5 Black wins.

**43... ♘xg3 44.♗xf5† ♘h6**



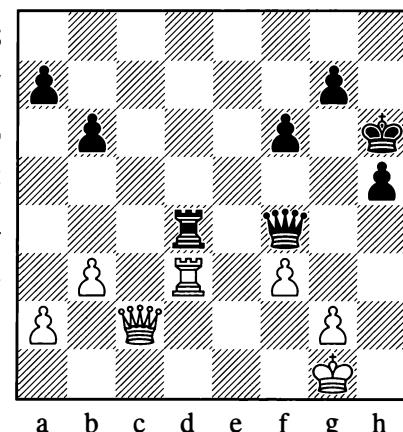
**45.♗c2?**

White commits an inaccuracy. 45.♗c8 would have given better practical chances, although the end result should be the same: 45...♗xh4 (45...♗e5 46.♗c3 ♘d1† 47.♗f2 ♘xc3 48.♗xc3 ♘d2† is possible, but White still has some drawing chances here.) 46.♗h8† ♘g6 47.♗e8† ♘h7 48.♗e3 ♘d7 Black wins in a similar way as in the game.

**45... ♘xh4**

Karpov collects a pawn and his pieces remain better placed. Winning the position still requires some technique, but fortunately this is not something Karpov lacks.

**46.♗d1 ♘f4 47.♗d3**

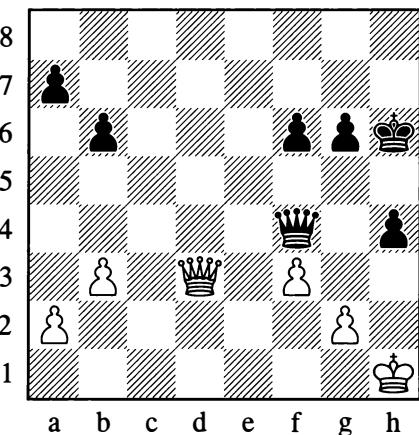


**47...h4!**

Preparing to use the extra pawn aggressively.

**48.♔h1 g6!**

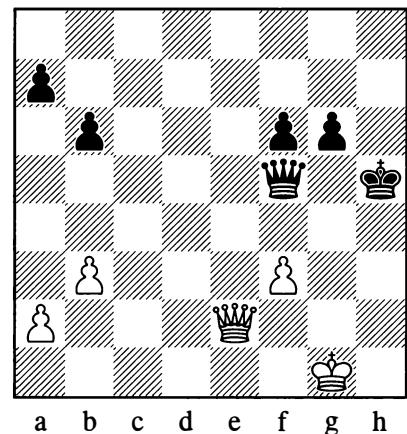
Karpov makes more room for his king.

**49.♕c3 ♜xd3 50.♕xd3****50...h3!**

This temporary pawn sacrifice opens White's kingside.

**51.gxh3 ♜g3 52.♕d2† ♔h5 53.♕e3 ♜xh3†****54.♗g1 ♜f5!**

Defending the f-pawn and threatening to win a second pawn by checking on b1.

**55.♕e2****55...♕e5!**

Karpov centralizes his queen while reducing White's checking options – it is textbook stuff.

**56.♔d1 ♔h4!**

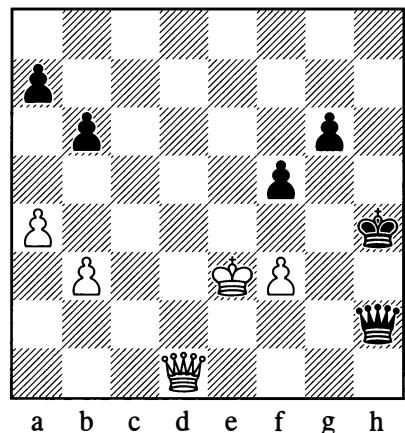
Karpov uses his king actively while avoiding the threat.

**57.♔f2 ♜h2† 58.♔e3 ♜e5†?!**

Taking the second pawn was a simpler path to victory: 58...♜xa2! 59.♕d4† ♔g3 60.♕g4† ♔h2 Black wins.

**59.♔f2 f5 60.a4?**

Sadvakasov could have offered sterner resistance by driving the active king backwards: 60.♕h1† ♔g5 61.♕c1† ♜f4 62.♔d1 ♜h2† 63.♔e3 ♔h6 64.♕a1 ♜d6 65.♔f2 Black still has to work for the point.

**60...♜g3† 61.♔e3 ♜e5† 62.♔f2 ♜h2†****63.♔e3****63...g5!**

Karpov advances his extra pawn and blocks one of the potential checking diagonals.

**64.♕d5**

After 64.♕e1† ♔h3 65.♕f1† ♜g2 66.♕a1 f4† 67.♔e4 ♜c2† 68.♔e5 ♔g3 Black soon wins the f-pawn and the game.

64... $\mathbb{W}g1\uparrow$  65. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}g3!$

0–1

Black wins the f3-pawn and indirectly defends the f5-pawn, as taking it would allow an immediate queen exchange.

In the next round against Judit Polgar, Karpov chose the 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  line against the Nimzo-Indian. Judit sacrificed two pieces and a thrilling game ended in a perpetual check. In Round 3 Karpov faced Timman, and found himself on the black side of the same opening, via a slightly unusual move order. The Dutchman exploited his two-bishop advantage masterfully, and won a fine game of which Karpov himself would have been proud.

In the first round of the second half, Karpov played an innocent opening with an early queen exchange against Sadvakasov. He managed to obtain real winning chances, but the young Kazakh grandmaster showed his resiliency and held a draw. Karpov's return games against Polgar and Timman were both drawn quickly. Karpov's fifty percent score left him in third place behind the co-winners Timman and Polgar.

## 1999 Summary

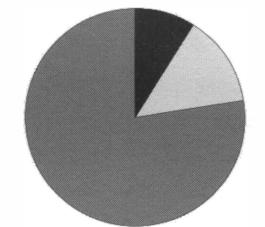
Match versus Piket, Monaco: Drew 4–4 (+0 =8 –0)

Dos Hermanas (5th-6th place): 4½/9 (+1 =7 –1)

Dortmund (3rd-5th place): 4/7 (+1 =6 –0)

Hoogeveen (3rd place) 3/6 (+1 =4 –1)

Total 51.7% (+3 =25 –2)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2000

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Rating 2696 (11 in the world)

Karpov started the new millennium with a match against Bacrot in Cannes. The two-game classical part of the match ended in a 1–1 tie after two hard-fought draws in which neither side was able to get the upper hand. The young French talent won the rapid section 2–0, but Karpov took revenge by the same score in the blitz.

After taking part in the Amber rapid/blind tournament, Karpov took part in a match against the reigning Women's World Champion Xie Jun, comprising four classical games and two rapid ones. In the first game Karpov got a small edge in a Sämisch King's Indian, but the Chinese grandmaster defended well. In the second Karpov got a winning advantage, but let it slip away and the game ended in a draw. In Game 3 Karpov obtained a clear positional advantage. At one point he allowed his opponent a chance to get back into the game, but Xie Jun missed her opportunity and went down without much resistance. The last game was a quick draw, so Karpov won the match by the score of 2½–1½. He also won the rapid part of the match, winning the first game and drawing the second.

Karpov remained in China for another match, this time against the top-rated Chinese male player, Ye Jiangchuan. This time there were only two classical games. The first was a peaceful draw in the Caro-Kann. In the second Ye Jiangchuan equalized in a Fianchetto Grünfeld. Karpov obtained a slight edge in the middlegame but it was not enough to win. Karpov won both rapid games.

\*\*\*

Karpov's first classical tournament of the new millennium was the Japfa Classic, on the Indonesian island of Bali. He started with a nice win over Gunawan, then drew quickly with Seirawan. In the next two rounds he was pressing against Milos and Judit Polgar, but had to be content with two draws. Then he scored a good win over Adianto.

In Round 6 Karpov had to suffer against Timman but eventually achieved a draw after some remarkable defensive play in the endgame, as shown in the note to White's 15th move in Game 52 at the end of the previous chapter. In Round 7 Karpov sacrificed a pawn against Ehlvest, and punished the Estonian grandmaster who was unable to find the right solution to his problems. In the next game he fought hard to bring down Win Lay Zaw of Myanmar, but eventually had to settle for a draw. In the ninth and final round Karpov got into trouble against Khalifman, but eventually managed to hold the draw. His final score of 6/9 was enough to share second place with Khalifman, half a point behind Polgar.

Karpov's next classical event was the Najdorf Memorial in Buenos Aires. In the first round he got into trouble against the much lower rated Diego Flores, but managed to win after his opponent spoiled his position. In the second round Karpov got just a marginal edge against Milos, but managed to turn it into something significant and won a nice middlegame with opposite-coloured bishops. He maintained his perfect start against the local player Pierrot. Perhaps Karpov wanted to pay tribute to Miguel Najdorf, as he used the legendary Polish-born Argentine grandmaster's patented Sicilian to win a nice game.

In Round 4 Karpov dropped his first half point against Judit Polgar, who sacrificed a lot of material before the wild game ended peacefully. After a quick draw with Leitao, Karpov seemed to have good chances against Milov but the Russian-born Israeli-Swiss grandmaster held a draw. Karpov's next two games against Short and Bologan were drawn, although both were hard-fought. Unfortunately Karpov suffered a disappointing end to the tournament after losing on time in a winning position against Ricardi. He finished in fourth place with a score of 5½/9.

\*\*\*

Karpov's final event of the year was the Cap d'Agde rapid tournament. I have mostly avoided discussing rapid events in detail, but this was a high-calibre tournament in which Karpov performed well and scored some impressive victories.

One of his opponents in the qualifying group was Viktor Bologan. The Moldovan grandmaster has contested twelve games against world champions, scoring one win, eight draws and three losses. He only ever played one classical game against Karpov, which was drawn.

## Game 53

Anatoly Karpov – Viktor Bologan

Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2000

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  g6 3.g3  $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  0–0 5.c4 d6 6.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  a6 8. $\mathbb{Q}e1$

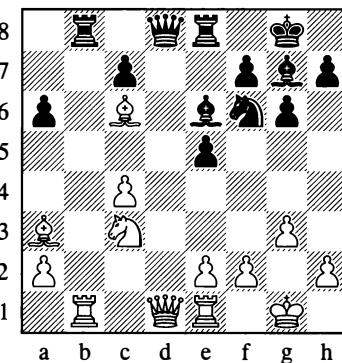
Bologan is an expert on the King's Indian, and he has reached the position after Black's seventh move in dozens of games. The text move is one of Karpov's pet lines; see Game 45 and the accompanying references.

8... $\mathbb{E}b8$  9. $\mathbb{E}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7??$

This move is a bit slow. Black's best bet may be 9... $\mathbb{Q}a5$  10. $\mathbb{W}a4$  b6 as used by Shirov; see page 369.

10.e4

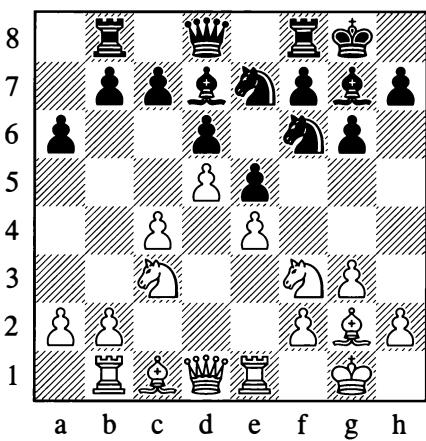
Karpov reached this position in one subsequent game. His choice of response may well have been influenced by the situation of the tournament in which he was participating. The game continued: 10.b4 e5 11.dxe5  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  12. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  dxe5 13.b5  $\mathbb{Q}e6??$  14. $\mathbb{Q}a3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  15.bxa6 bxa6 16. $\mathbb{Q}c6$



16... $\mathbb{Q}d7??$  (16... $\mathbb{W}xd1$  17. $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{E}ec8$  was better, but Shirov evidently wanted to keep more complexity in the position.) 17. $\mathbb{E}xb8$   $\mathbb{W}xb8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  19. $\mathbb{W}a4$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xf8$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  21. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  (22. $\mathbb{W}a5!!$  was

even stronger.) 22... $\mathbb{W}xc7$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{E}e7$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xe6?$ ! Karpov only needed to draw this game to qualify for the final. Under normal circumstances I have no doubt that he would have preferred the stronger and more ambitious 24. $\mathbb{Q}c6!$ ) 24... $\mathbb{E}xe6$  25. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  26. $\mathbb{E}c1$  White went on to win, Karpov – Shirov, Prague (blitz – 4.4) 2002.

**10...e5 11.d5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$**



**12.c5!**

Karpov takes the opportunity to gain space on the queenside, as occurs in many variations of the King's Indian.

**12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  13.b4 h6**

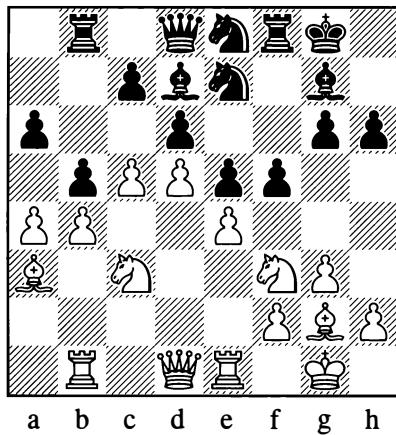
Bologan attempts to improve over a game from a few years before, which continued: 13... $\mathbb{Q}h8$  14. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (14.a4!?) 14...f5 15.b5 axb5 16. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  fxe4 17. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  This complicated position eventually resulted in a draw, Soppe – Zapata, Paulinia 1997. The Moldovan grandmaster prefers to prepare ...f5 without allowing the enemy knight to go to g5.

**14.a4**

Karpov intends to carry out a full-scale queenside assault.

**14...f5 15. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  b5**

After 15... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  b6 17.cxd6 cxd6 18.b5 White's queenside play is too fast.



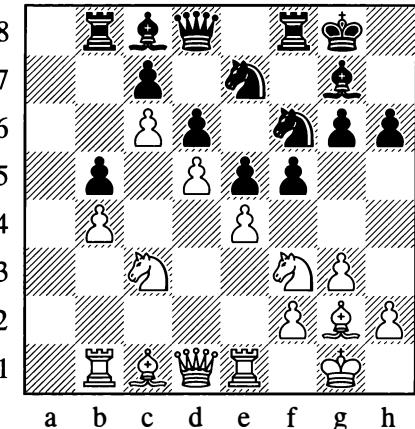
**16.c6!**

By closing the queenside Karpov slows down his attack, but on the other hand he creates two long-term targets on b5 and c7.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  17.axb5 axb5 18. $\mathbb{Q}c1!$**

The bishop had no future on a3, so it returns to its original square in order to impede the ...f4 advance.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$**



**19.exf5!**

With this exchange Karpov takes most of the poison out of Black's kingside attack.

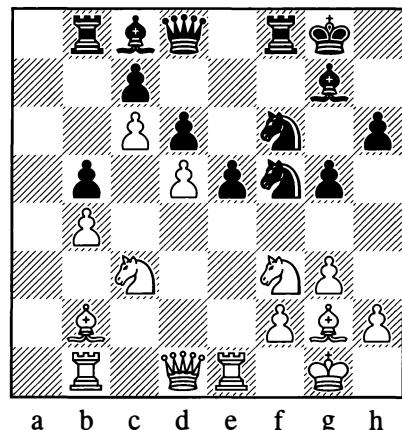
**19...Qxf5!**

Bologan correctly decides that giving up the e4-square is the lesser evil. He will get some compensation in the form of the d4-square.

19...gxf5 gives Black more control over the central squares, but his pawns are rather cumbersome. 20.Qh4! e4 (After 20...We8 21.Qa1 Wf7 22.Qa7 White has strong pressure on the queenside.) 21.Qe3 (Also after 21.h3 We8 22.Qb3 Qh7 23.Qe2 White controls several important squares.) 21...Qg4 22.Qd4 Qe5 23.f3 White breaks up his opponent's pawns and maintains a clear advantage.

**20.Qb2!**

Karpov refuses to give up the d4-square cheaply. Less strong is 20.Qd2 Qd4 21.Qb2 Qf5 when Black gets some counterplay.

**20...g5****21.Qd2!**

It is not easy to read Karpov's intentions. It may appear that he wants to put a knight on e4 quickly, but for the moment he is more concerned with reducing his opponent's active possibilities.

Going after the b5-pawn was not fully clear: 21.Qa1 We8 (21...We7 22.Qa5) 22.Qa5 g4

23.Qxe5 (After 23.Qd2 Qd4! Black becomes active.) 23...dxe5 24.Qxb5 We7 (not 24...Wf7? 25.Qxe5) Black is very much in the game.

**21...g4?!**

Bologan gains space on the kingside and hopes to improve the g7-bishop. The idea is logical but it was not the best choice.

21...Qd4 was possible, although after 22.Qe2 Qxe2† 23.Wxe2 Qf5 24.Qa1 White has a small but pleasant positional advantage.

Black's most promising idea was:

**21...We7!**

Intending to transfer the queen to f7, from where it will eye the vulnerable pawns on d5 and f2.

**22.Qa1**

22.Qb3 Wf7 23.Qd2 (23.Qa1 Qd4) 23...Wh5 Black will follow up with ...Qe7 and ...Qh3, with active play.

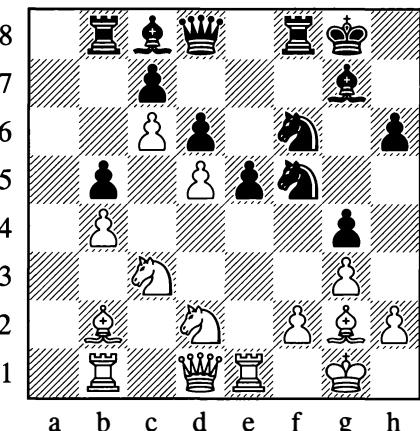
22.Qf1 Wf7 23.Qe3 Qd4 24.Qa1 (24.Qf1 Qa8) 24...Qg4 25.Qxg4 Qxg4 26.Qf1 Wf5 27.Qe4 White is just a little better.

**22...Wf7**

22...Qd4 23.Qce4 Qxe4 24.Qxe4 Qf5 25.Qa7 is good for White.

23.Qa7 Qd4 24.Qde4 Qxe4 25.Qxe4 g4 26.Qd2

White keeps the advantage, but to a lesser extent than in the game.



**22.♗b3!**

Taking the d4-square from the enemy knight.

**22...h5 23.♕c1!**

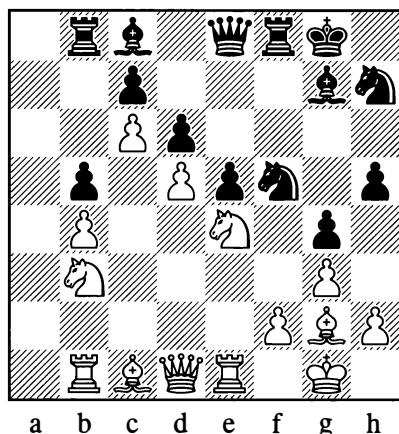
Karpov prevents the enemy bishop from becoming active on the c1-h6 diagonal.

**23...♗h7 24.♗e4**

Preventing ...♗g5 is logical, but it was not the only strong idea. White could also have gone after the c7-pawn immediately with 24.♘a1?!, for instance 24...♗g5 25.♗a7 ♘f7 26.♗xg5 ♘xg5 27.♗e2 and White has a convincing advantage.

**24...♔e8?!**

Bologan is only thinking about the kingside, but he would have done better to invest a tempo improving his situation on the opposite flank. After 24...♗a8! White's advantage would have been smaller than in the game: 25.♗e2 ♗d4 26.♗xd4 exd4 27.♗f4 Black is somewhat worse, but he is very much in the game.

**25.♗a1!**

The main object of attack is the c7-pawn.

**25...♗g6 26.♗a7 ♘f7 27.♗b2?!**

Karpov probably played this move to prepare ♘a1 and ♘a8. It was also possible to go after the b5-pawn:

**27.♗c3**

27.♗d3?! is less promising: 27...♗d4 28.♗e3 (After 28.♗xd4 exd4 29.♗b2 ♘f5 Black is active.) 28...♗f3† 29.♗xf3 gxf3 30.♗bd2 ♘f5 Black's kingside play is dangerous.

**27...♔f6**

27...♗d4 28.♗xd4 exd4 29.♗e8† ♘f8 30.♗xf8† ♘xf8 31.♗e2 White wins material.

27...♗g5 28.♗xg5 ♘xg5 29.♗d3 ♘f6 30.♗e2 Black is in trouble.

**28.♗e2 ♘h6**

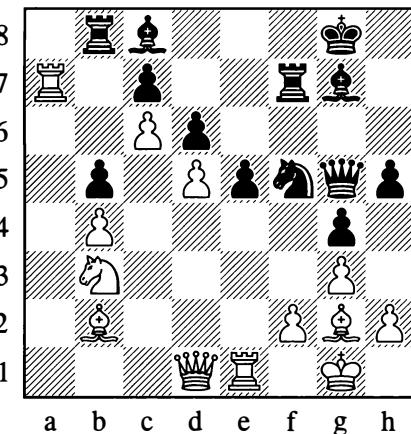
28...h4 can be met by 29.♗d3.

29.♗xh6 ♘xh6 30.♗d3 ♘f5 31.♗e3 ♘g5 32.♗b7

White wins the b5-pawn. Black's kingside counterplay should not be underestimated, but White should be able to handle it.

**27...♗g5 28.♗xg5**

Obviously White should exchange the knight before it causes trouble on f3 or h3.

**28...♗xg5****29.♗a1**

Karpov's play is reminiscent of some of his games from the sixties, when he was willing to send his queen to the far reaches of the board in order to accomplish his objectives.

He could have also have deployed his strongest piece in the centre by means of 29.♕e2 h4 30.♗e4, keeping a slight plus.

### 29...♛f6

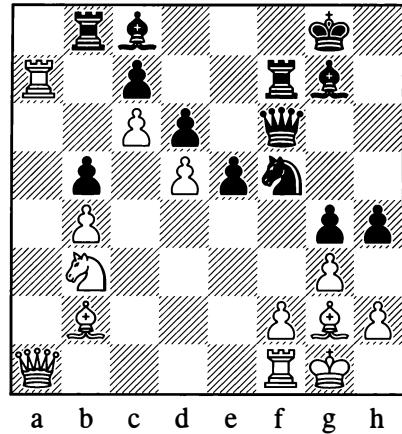
After 29...h4 30.♕a5 ♜d8 31.♗c1 ♜h6 32.♗xh6 ♜xh6 33.♗e4 ♜g7 34.♗e2 White is a bit better.

### 30.♗f1?!

This is not the best place for the rook. 30.♗a8? would have been disastrous in view of 30...♜xg3!.

The strongest continuation was: 30.♗e2! h4 31.♕a5! It is important to draw the black queen away from the f-file. (White has no time to exchange rooks: 31.♗a8? ♜xa8 32.♗xa8 ♜f8 33.♕a5 [or 33.♗b8 ♜e3!] 33...♜e3! 34.fxe3 h3 Black has a dangerous attack.) 31...hxg3 32.hxg3 ♜d8 33.♗a8 ♜xa8 34.♗xa8 ♜f8 35.♕a5 The b5-pawn will soon fall.

### 30...h4



### 31.♗e4?

Karpov forgets about his king for a moment. He could still have kept an edge by transferring his queen to the centre. 31.♗e1! ♜d4 (31...♜h6 32.♗e2) 32.♗xd4 exd4 33.♗e8† ♜f8 34.♗h5 Black has numerous weaknesses.

### 31...♜f8?

Bologan prepares to put his heavy pieces on the h-file, but misses a golden opportunity to seize the advantage:

### 31...♜h6!

Out of nowhere the a7-rook has become tactically vulnerable.

### 32.♗e1

Defending the e3-square.

32.♗a2 ♜e3 Black wins an exchange and keeps his attack.

32.♗c5 Black can ignore this cheeky sacrifice:

32...hxg3 33.hxg3 ♜xg3!—

### 32...hxg3

After 32...♜e3 33.♗xc7! White remains in the game.

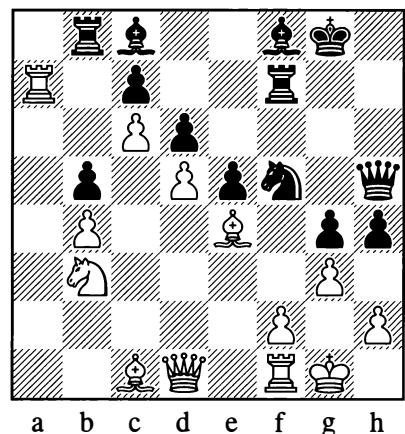
### 33.hxg3 ♜xg3

Black is winning.

### 32.♗d1!

Karpov probably noticed the danger after his previous move and immediately brings his queen back into the defence.

### 32...♛g5 33.♗c1 ♜h5



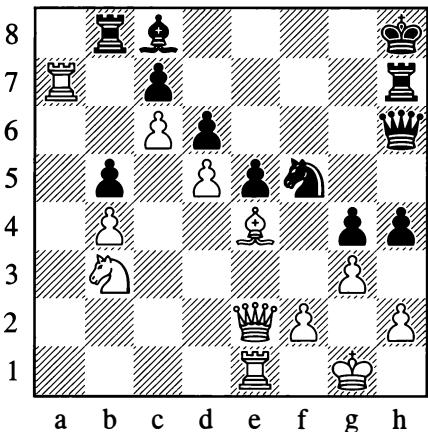
### 34.♗e2!

The queen defends along the second rank, thus neutralizing Black's play on the h-file.

### 34...♝h7 35.♗e1

This move does not spoil anything, but White could have carried out the same plan more efficiently with 35.♗d2!?.

35...♝h8 36.♕d2 ♚h6 37.♕xh6 ♜xh6

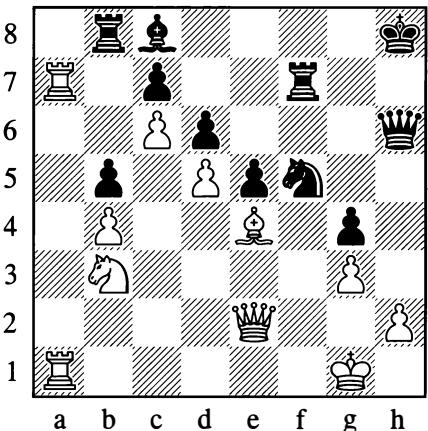


38.♚e1!

Threatening to create serious problems on the back rank.

38...hxg3 39.fxg3 ♜f7

The rook escapes the pin and moves to the open file.



40.♚f1!

Karpov plays across the whole board and switches to the kingside, setting up another pin in the process. Attempting to attack on

the back rank was less convincing: 40.♚a8 ♜xa8 41.♚xa8 ♜e7 Black keeps his position together.

40...♜g5 41.♚d2 ♜h5 42.♚a2

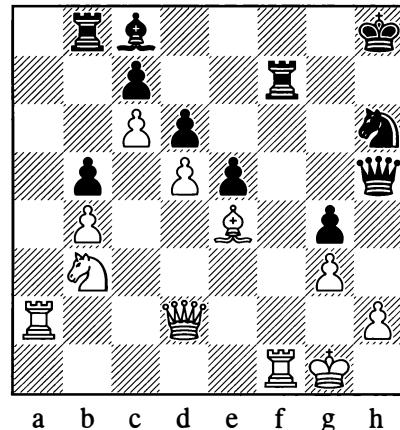
42.♚c5?! was interesting but hardly necessary: 42...dxc5 43.bxc5 ♜h6 44.♚xf7 ♜xf7 45.d6 White's central pawns give him the upper hand.

A promising alternative was: 42.♚a1!? White has time to go after the b5-pawn. 42...♜g6 43.♚c2 ♜g7 44.♚a3 White is winning as Black has no defence against ♜d3 followed by taking the b5-pawn.

42...♜h6?

Now a comedy of errors starts. Bologan's position is so bad he can hardly move, so it was understandable that he wanted to relieve the pressure on the f-file, nevertheless his chosen move can be refuted immediately.

42...♜g7 was better, but after 43.♚f2 ♜g8 44.♚a1 ♜g7 45.♚af1 ♜a8 46.♚d3 Black will lose the b5-pawn sooner or later.



43.♚d3??

It is a pity after playing such a great strategic game Karpov misses the simple finish: 43.♚xf7! ♜xf7 44.♚f2! ♜g7 45.♚a7 White wins the

c7-pawn and invades decisively. We should remember that this was a rapid game, so the players were probably short of time by now.

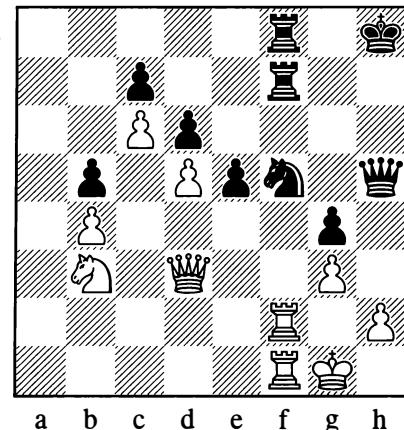
#### 43... $\mathbb{Q}f5!$

Having suffered for so long, Black is suddenly right back in the game.

#### 44. $\mathbb{Q}xf5?$

This move only helps the black knight to come back into play. White should have settled for 44. $\mathbb{B}af2$   $\mathbb{B}bf8$  45. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  46. $\mathbb{W}e2$  when the position is equal.

**44... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  45. $\mathbb{B}af2$   $\mathbb{B}bf8$**



#### 46. $\mathbb{W}xb5!?$

Objectively this move is a mistake which leads to a losing position, but practically it turned out to be the right choice as it forced Black to make an immediate decision.

46. $\mathbb{Q}d2?$  was unsatisfactory due to 46... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ .

Objectively White could have offered sterner resistance by waiting passively, but this would have given Black the opportunity to organize his position and strike at a moment of his choosing. For example: 46. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{B}f6$ ! 47. $\mathbb{W}d3$  White plans to shuffle his queen back and forth, and take the b5-pawn only when Black moves his knight. 47... $\mathbb{Q}g7!$  48. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}g5$

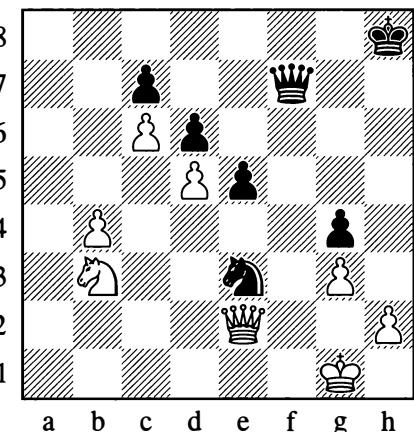
Black continues to improve his pieces. 49. $\mathbb{W}e4$  (49. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}e3$ -+) 49... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  White is in trouble as the d5-pawn is weak.

#### 46... $\mathbb{Q}e3?$

Black gets rid of the pin but completely squanders his advantage.

46... $\mathbb{W}h3!$  would have led to decisive threats against the white king: 47. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  (47. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xg3$ -+; 47. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}h4$ -+) 47... $\mathbb{Q}e3$  48. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  49. $\mathbb{B}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}xf7$  50. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{B}f3$  51.b5  $\mathbb{W}h7$  Black is winning.

**47. $\mathbb{B}xf7$   $\mathbb{B}xf7$  48. $\mathbb{B}xf7$   $\mathbb{W}xf7$  49. $\mathbb{W}e2$**



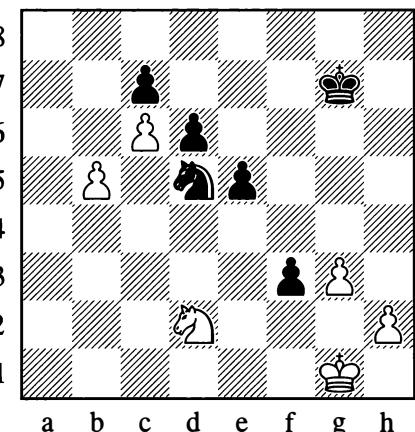
#### 49... $\mathbb{W}f3?$

This leads to a hopeless endgame. Black should have kept the queens on: 49... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  50. $\mathbb{W}xg4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  51. $\mathbb{W}h4\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  52. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  Black has good drawing chances as White's king is exposed.

**50. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  51. $\mathbb{Q}d2$**

Karpov takes no risks, although the flashy 51. $\mathbb{Q}c5!?$  was winning as well: 51... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  52. $\mathbb{Q}a6$  e4 53. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  54.b5  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (54... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  55. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  56. $\mathbb{Q}e8$  d5 57. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ -+) 55. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  56.h4 d5 57.h5 d4 58. $\mathbb{Q}e8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  (58... $\mathbb{Q}g5$  59. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ ) 59.h6 d3 60.h7 d2 61.h8= $\mathbb{W}$  d1= $\mathbb{W}$  62. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$  White wins.

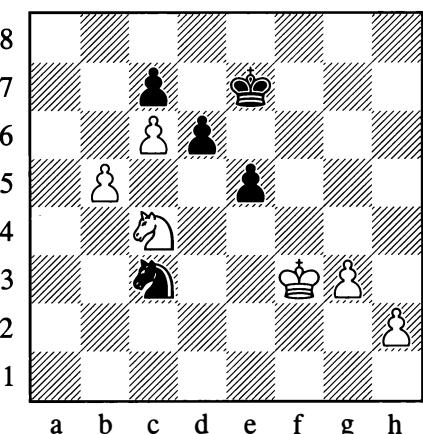
51... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  52.b5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$



53. $\mathbb{Q}f2!$

Naturally Karpov uses his king to capture the f-pawn, thus optimizing both of his remaining pieces.

53... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  54. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  55. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$



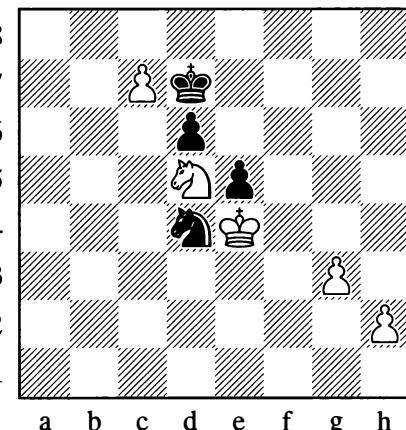
56.b6

Exchanging pawns is not a problem for White. His passed c- and h-pawns are a long way apart, and Black is unable to deal with both of them.

56... $cxb6$  57. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  58. $\mathbb{Q}d5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$   
59. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

Karpov centralizes his king before pushing his kingside pawns.

59... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  60.c7#  $\mathbb{Q}d7$



61.g4

Finally the kingside pawns begin to march, and the end is nigh.

61... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  62.h4  $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$  63. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  e4 64.h5 e3  
65. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  66.h6

1–0

The h-pawn cannot be stopped.

Karpov remained undefeated in the qualifying group and tied for first place with Hamdouchi on 5/7. In the first elimination round he started with two draws against Zhang Zhong, then beat him in the third and fourth games.

His opponent in the semi-final was Alexey Dreev, whom he had never played before. The former World Junior Champion has played twenty classical games against the world champions, scoring two wins, eleven draws and seven losses. He drew four classical games against Karpov, with no wins on either side.

## Game 54

Anatoly Karpov – Alexey Dreev

Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2000

**1.c4 c6 2.e4**

When Karpov wants to play this line against the Caro-Kann, he usually opens with 1.c4. Dreev has a narrow repertoire for a top-level player, which would have made him easy to prepare for. Had he been stronger in this area, he might even have become a contender for the World Championship.

**2...d5 3.cxd5 cxd5 4.exd5 ♜f6 5.♘c3 ♜xd5  
6.♗f3 ♜c6 7.♗b5?!**

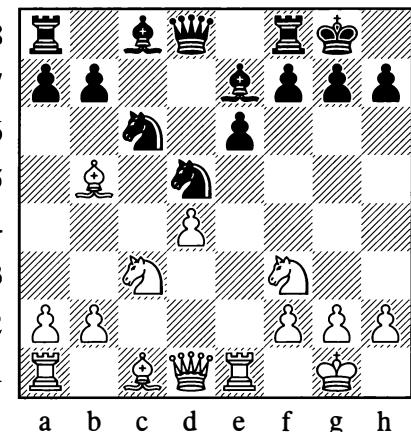
According to the database this move was first used by Keres in 1967. Statistically it has been the most popular choice in the position, which seems strange as it is not particularly dangerous, and Karpov never used it again.

7.d4 is likely to transpose to a well-known variation of the Panov after 7...♝g4 or 7...e6.

**7...e6**

7...g6 is rarely played, nevertheless Black scores well with it.

**8.0–0 ♜e7 9.d4 0–0 10.♗e1**



**10...a6?!**

Provoking the exchange justifies White's play. Dreev subsequently switched to 10...♝d6, losing one game but winning two others. 10...♝d7 and 10...♝f6 are also more reliable than the game continuation.

**11.♗xc6 bxc6 12.♗e5**

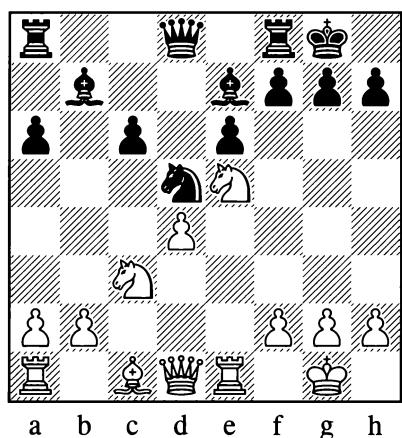
It was worth considering 12.♗a4!? in order to avoid the second of the possibilities mentioned in the following note.

**12...♝b7?!**

It seems that Dreev underestimated the difficulties associated with his backward c-pawn.

12...♝c7 has been played in a few games, but after 13.♗xd5 cxd5 14.♗f4 Black must be careful as he is behind in development.

Black's best bet may well be 12...♝xc3?!, which has the advantage of blocking the c-file: 13.bxc3 ♜c7 14.♗f4 ♜d6 Black should be able to obtain a reasonable game after freeing his position with ...c5, Bojkov – M. Berg, Germany 2003.



**13.♗a4!**

Karpov ensures that the c6-pawn will remain a weakness.

**13...♝c8**

After 13...♝d6 14.♗d2 ♜h4!? (14...♝c7 15.♗g4 ♖f6 16.♗h4 ♖d7 17.♗f4 White keeps an edge.) 15.♗a5 White's grip on the queenside is unpleasant.

**14.♗d3!**

Karpov solidifies his grip over the c5-square.

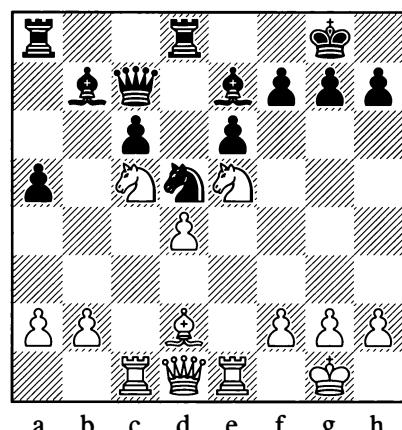
**14...a5**

Dreev was probably hoping to move his bishop to a6 or even a8 at some point in the future. Nevertheless the move also has a downside as the a-pawn becomes more vulnerable.

**15.♗ac5 ♜c7 16.♗d2 ♜a8 17.♗c1 ♜fd8**

**18.♗e5**

Karpov continues to target the c-pawn.

**18...♝xc5**

Black faces a difficult dilemma. Should he defend passively, or should he sacrifice the c-pawn in a bid for counterplay?

The main alternative was 18...♝f6, after which White must decide whether to snatch the c-pawn or continue to improve his position.

a) 19.♗xb7 ♜xb7 20.♗xc6 is possible, but one gets the impression that White has not made

the most of his advantage. 20...♜dc8 (Also after 20...♜d7 it will not be easy for White to convert his extra pawn.) 21.♗b3 ♜a6 22.♗a4 ♜b6 Black's positional compensation gives him realistic chances to hold the position a pawn down.

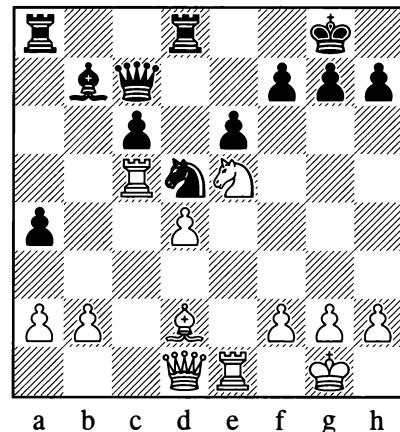
b) I prefer 19.♗g4! with the idea of building White's position on the kingside. This idea is stronger, and also more in keeping with Karpov's style. 19...♝xe5 (19...♝c8 20.h4) 20.dxe5 ♖h8 21.h4 White keeps a clear positional advantage and his kingside play is not easy to neutralize.

**19.♝xc5**

Of course Karpov maintains the pressure on the backward c-pawn. 19.dxc5? ♜a6! would stop the knight from coming to d6, and Black should be fine.

**19...a4**

By this point it looks like Dreev had already decided to sacrifice the c6-pawn.

**20.♛f3!**

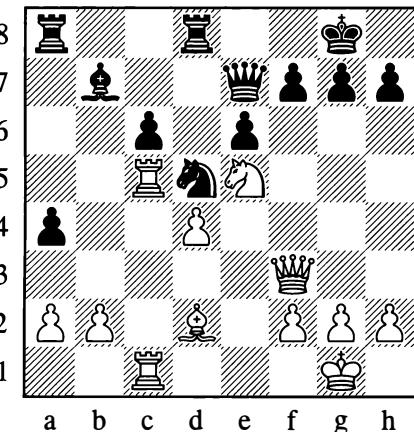
20.♗g4 was also attractive, but Karpov's move is more versatile. The queen eyes the f7-pawn, clears the path for the rook to slide across to c1, and in some positions the queen may even swing to a3.

**20... $\mathbb{W}e7$** 

The last of the above points is nicely illustrated in the following line: 20...f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  (After 21... $\mathbb{E}e8$  22. $\mathbb{W}a3!$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}a5$  Black's queenside is under heavy pressure.) 22. $\mathbb{W}a3!$  Surprisingly White can use the queen to collect the a4-pawn. 22... $\mathbb{E}a6$  23. $\mathbb{E}a5$  The a4-pawn perishes, and the weakness on c6 remains.

**21. $\mathbb{E}ec1$** 

21. $\mathbb{W}a3$  is not quite as convincing here: 21... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (After 21... $\mathbb{E}c7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  23. $\mathbb{W}b4$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  White is somewhat better.) 22. $\mathbb{W}b4$  h6 (22... $\mathbb{Q}d5?$  23. $\mathbb{E}xd5+$ ) 23. $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{W}xb4$  24. $\mathbb{E}xb4$  White's advantage is smaller than in the game.

**21... $\mathbb{E}db8?!$** 

Dreev decides to abandon the c6-pawn in order to search for counterplay on the b-file, but on this occasion passive defence would have been more stubborn:

21... $\mathbb{E}a6$

Black's position will remain unpleasant, but it is not easy for White to find a way through. Here is a possible continuation:

22. $\mathbb{E}1c2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$

Also after 23... $\mathbb{E}d8?!$  24. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$  25. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  27. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{E}xc6$  28. $\mathbb{E}xc6$  h6 it will not be easy for White to convert his extra pawn.

**24. $\mathbb{W}a3$** 

24. $\mathbb{Q}a5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  25. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  26. $\mathbb{E}2c4$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  27. $\mathbb{E}c1$  (27. $\mathbb{E}b4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$ ) 27... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  White has decent chances, but Black still resists.

24... $\mathbb{W}f6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  26. $\mathbb{E}2c4$  f6 27. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  29. $\mathbb{E}xb4$

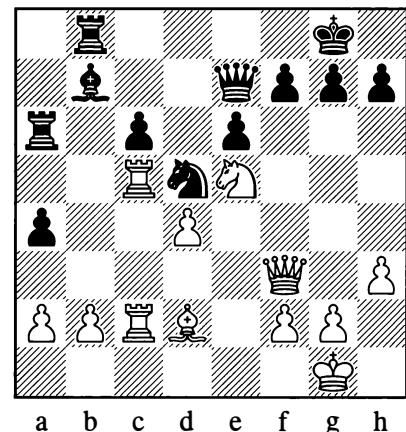
Black probably loses the a4-pawn, but the opposite-coloured bishops offer him some drawing chances.

**22. $\mathbb{E}1c2$** 

Karpov postpones capturing the pawn and improves his position first. Nevertheless after 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  23. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  24. $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{E}a7$  White has decent winning chances.

**22... $\mathbb{E}a6$  23.h3?!**

Karpov continues to postpone the capture on c6.

**23...f6?!**

Dreev loses patience and forces Karpov to take the pawn, but in doing so he weakens the e-pawn.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  25. $\mathbb{E}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}d7??$** 

It is difficult to tell what happened to Dreev; forgetting to take the rook is just one of those freakish blunders which usually only occur a few times in a player's career.

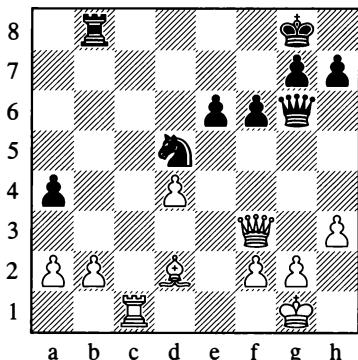
Let's see what might have happened if Black had played correctly.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  26. $\mathbb{B}xc6$   $\mathbb{W}e8$

Black cannot regain his pawn, as 26... $\mathbb{B}xb2$ ?

27. $\mathbb{B}c8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  28. $\mathbb{W}h5\#$  leads to mate.

27. $\mathbb{B}c2$   $\mathbb{W}g6$  28. $\mathbb{B}c1$



28... $\mathbb{B}xb2$ ??

Black should prefer a quiet move like 28...h6, when it is hard to determine whether White can convert his advantage into a win.

29. $\mathbb{W}a3$ !

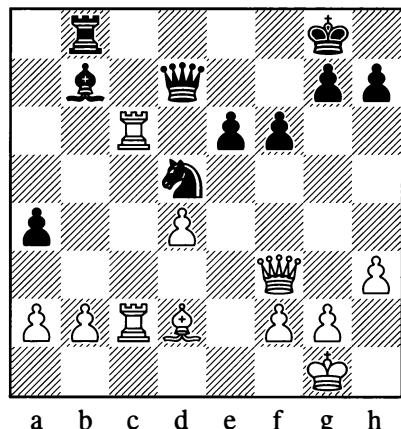
After 29. $\mathbb{B}c8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  30. $\mathbb{W}a3$   $\mathbb{W}b1\#$  Black gets some counterplay.

29... $\mathbb{B}c2$

29... $\mathbb{B}b8$  30. $\mathbb{W}xa4$  is a similar story.

30. $\mathbb{W}xa4$

White restores his material advantage and has good winning chances.



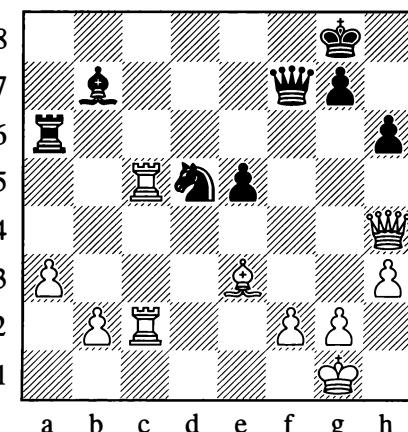
26. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{E}5$  27. $\mathbb{B}6c5$   $\mathbb{E}e8$

Had this position occurred under a classical time limit, Dreev would probably have resigned by now.

28. $\mathbb{d}xe5$   $\mathbb{f}xe5$  29. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  30. $\mathbb{W}xa4$

Winning a second pawn.

30... $\mathbb{E}f8$  31. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{h}6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  33. $\mathbb{a}3$   $\mathbb{E}a6$



34. $\mathbb{B}c8\#$ ??

Karpov gives back the exchange, knowing that his two-pawn advantage is more than enough to ensure victory. The remaining moves can pass without comment.

34... $\mathbb{Q}xc8$  35. $\mathbb{B}xc8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  36. $\mathbb{W}e4\#$   $\mathbb{E}g6$   
 37.b4  $\mathbb{W}e6$  38. $\mathbb{B}d8$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  39. $\mathbb{W}a8$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  40. $\mathbb{E}e8$   
 $\mathbb{W}d6$  41. $\mathbb{B}h8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  42. $\mathbb{B}d8$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  43. $\mathbb{W}c8$   
 $\mathbb{W}xc8$  44. $\mathbb{B}xc8$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  45.b5  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  46.a4  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   
 47.a5  $\mathbb{Q}e7$  48. $\mathbb{B}c7$

1-0

In the second game Karpov equalized in a Petrosian Queen's Indian. Dreev launched an attack which was objectively unsound, but Karpov made some mistakes and lost. In the third game Karpov had the black pieces again, and equalized following an early queen exchange. He then proceeded to outplay his opponent and won a nice endgame. In the fourth game Karpov played too overtly for a

draw with the white pieces, and found himself in serious trouble. But Dreev let him off the hook and he managed to escape into a drawn rook ending which he went on to hold.

Karpov faced Mikhail Gurevich in the final. In the first game the Ukrainian-born Belgian (now Turkish) grandmaster played a dubious line of the Semi-Slav and Karpov destroyed him with a brutal attack in the centre and kingside. In the second game Gurevich built a dangerous attack; in response Karpov sacrificed an exchange but was unable to hold the position. In the third game Karpov had a slight edge in a stonewall structure, but he sacrificed a pawn unnecessarily and paid the price as Gurevich took the lead. In the final game Karpov tried to generate winning chances on the black side of an English, but Gurevich played well and the long game ended in a draw. Thus Karpov finished the tournament as the losing finalist.

## 2000 Summary

Match versus Bacrot, Cannes: Drew 1–1 (classical games) (+0 =2 –0)

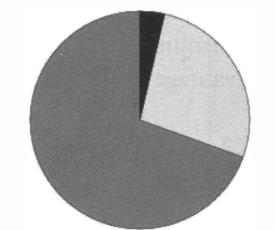
Match versus Xie Jun, Guanzhou: Won 2½–1½ (classical games) (+1 =3 –0)

Match versus Ye Jiangchuan, Shenyang: Drew 1–1 (classical games) (+0 =2 –0)

Japfa Classic, Bali (2nd-3rd place): 6/9 (+3 =6 –0)

Najdorf Memorial, Buenos Aires (4th place): 5½/9 (+3 =5 –1)

Total 61.5% (+7 =18 –1)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2001

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Rating 2679 (20 in the world)

Karpov's first tournament of the new year was Linares, where he started with the black pieces against Shirov. He played a new move in the 4... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Caro-Kann and got a better position with excellent winning chances, but Shirov eventually escaped to a drawn ending with rook against rook and knight. Karpov followed with two fairly short and uneventful draws with Grischuk and Judit Polgar, then had to settle for a draw with Leko after failing to make progress in a slightly better double-rook-endgame. In the fifth round Karpov faced Kasparov, who prepared the sharp 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  line in the Advance Caro-Kann. Karpov was always in trouble and lost badly.

In the return game against Shirov, Karpov got nothing against the Queen's Gambit Accepted and the game was always balanced until the draw was agreed. In the next game Grischuk followed Kasparov's example and chose the 4. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  variation against the Caro-Kann. Karpov chose a quieter response and came close to equalizing, but eventually blundered in time pressure and lost. In Round 8 Judit Polgar sacrificed a pawn for promising compensation, but then went astray. Both players committed a few more inaccuracies, but eventually Karpov prevailed. In the next game Karpov drew solidly against Kasparov; the game is referenced in the note to White's twelfth move in Game 56. In the last round Karpov was under a bit of pressure against Leko but was able to hold the draw.

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After taking part in several rapid and simultaneous exhibition events, Karpov took part in a Europe versus Tatarstan match in Kaluga, where he made two fairly quick and uneventful draws against Dreev.

His next tournament was the Najdorf Memorial in Buenos Aires. In the first round he equalized with the Petroff against Milos. The Brazilian grandmaster tried launching an attack, but Karpov got the better of the complications and won a piece followed by the game. In the next two games Karpov drew fairly peacefully against Short and Felgaer. In Round 4 he got no advantage against Mecking, but the former world championship candidate made a serious mistake and soon went down.

In Round 5 Karpov equalized easily against Korchnoi and a quick draw ensued. In the next round he played the Petroff against Xie Jun and sacrificed a pawn. He always had enough compensation and a draw ensued. In the seventh round he faced Judit Polgar and got a slight edge in a queenless middlegame, which he eventually converted to a win. In Round 8 Karpov faced the young prodigy Radjabov, with whom he was presently sharing the lead in the tournament. Karpov was pressing for a win with the black pieces in a major piece endgame, but Radjabov was able to hold the draw.

Karpov's opponent in the ninth and final round was Pablo Ricardi. The Argentine grandmaster played four games against world champions, scoring one win, one draw and two losses. This was his last encounter with Karpov. They met once before, in the final round of the previous year's Najdorf Memorial, when Karpov lost on time in a winning position.

## Game 55

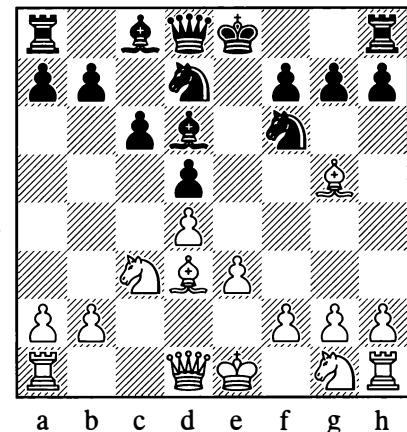
Anatoly Karpov – Pablo Ricardi

Buenos Aires 2001

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 d5**

It looks like Ricardi wanted to surprise Karpov. His usual defences are the Nimzo-Indian and the Grünfeld, and a year earlier against Karpov he preferred the Benko Gambit.

**4.cxd5 exd5 5.♕g5 ♜bd7 6.e3 c6 7.♕d3 ♜d6**



Karpov has enjoyed great success against the main lines with the bishop on e7. This was the only time he encountered the development of the bishop to d6.

**8.♘f3**

Karpov always developed his knight to f3 in the exchange variation.

**8...♝f8**

Black wants to play ...♝g6 followed by ...h6 to exchange the g5-bishop.

**9.♗e5**

According to the database this aggressive move was first played by Portisch in 1978.

**9...♝g6**

In the stem game Ljubojevic preferred ...♝e7 and eventually drew.

The Yugoslav grandmaster later switched to ...♝b6 with unfortunate results. 10.0–0 Ljubojevic tried two moves here:

a) The first game continued 10...♝xb2 11.♗c1 ♜g6?! (11...♝xe5?! 12.dxe5 ♜d6d7 deserved attention; but not 12...♝g4? 13.♗a4! transposing to Hjartarson – Ljubojevic below.) 12.f4 (12.♗xf6 gxf6 13.♝g4) 12...0–0 13.♗c2 ♜b6 14.♗xf6 gxf6 15.♝g4 ♛xg4 16.♗xg4 ♛h8?!! (16...♝ae8?!) 17.♗b1 ♜c7 18.♗xd5 ♜d8 19.♗c3 ♛xf4 20.♗e2 ♜e8 21.♗e4 ♛xe3+ 22.♗xe3 ♜xd4 23.♗be1 ♜e5 24.♗f5 1–0 Timman – Ljubojevic, Hilversum 1987.

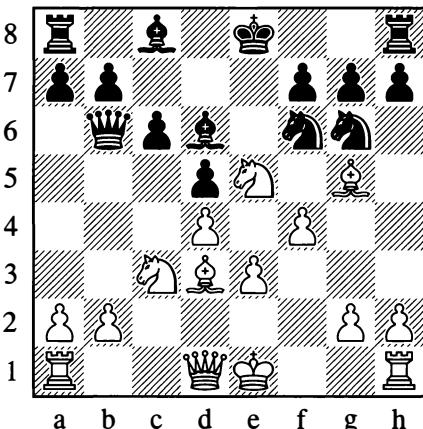
b) Two years later Ljubojevic tried to improve with 10...♝xe5 but suffered an even more brutal defeat: 11.dxe5 ♜g4?!! (11...♝d6?) 12.♗a4! ♜xb2 This whole plan is much too risky. 13.♗ac1 a5? 14.♗b5! ♜e6 15.♗d6† ♜f8 16.♗xg4 ♜xe5 17.♗xc8 h5 18.♗b6 hxg4 19.♗d7† ♜e8 20.♗xe5 ♜xg5 21.♗b1 Black is a piece down and soon had to resign, Hjartarson – Ljubojevic, Tilburg 1989.

**10.f4**

Karpov strengthens his knight on e5.

**10...♝b6?!**

Ricardi plays a novelty, which was never repeated. The idea of letting his opponent double the pawns leads to a passive position. 10...0–0 and 10... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  are played here.



### 11. $\mathbb{Q}c2$

Unlike Timman and Hjartarson, Karpov does not feel the need to sacrifice the b2-pawn. The queen is well-placed on c2 where she exerts an influence over both sides of the board.

### 11...0–0 12. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Karpov is happy to create a structural weakness in his opponent's camp.

### 12.0–0!?

White can also continue developing and concentrate on bringing more pieces into the attack.

### 12... $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}ae1$ $\mathbb{W}c7$

13... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  14.  $f5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  15.  $dxe5$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  16.  $f6$

White's kingside initiative is dangerous.

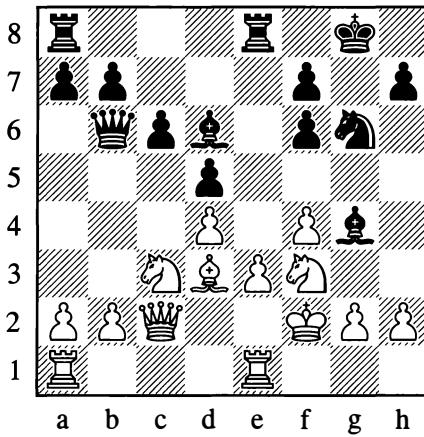
### 14. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ $gxf6$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$ $fxg6$ 16. $\mathbb{Q}xg6$

White wins a pawn.

### 12... $gxf6$ 13. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 14. $\mathbb{Q}f2$

Karpov defends his backward pawn and moves his king off the e-file.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}g4$ 15. $\mathbb{Q}he1$



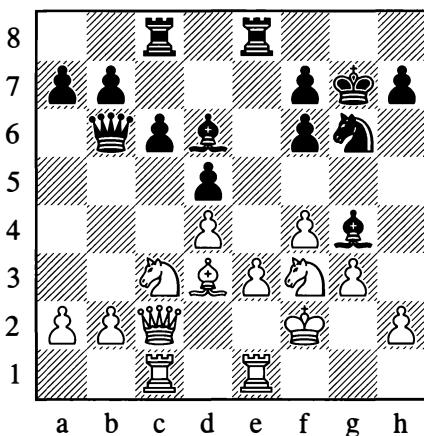
### 15... $\mathbb{Q}ac8$

A knight transfer to d6 is often a good plan in this pawn structure, but here it is not easy to accomplish: 15... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  16.  $a3$   $h6$  17.  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}h4$  White is somewhat better.

### 16. $g3$

Maybe Karpov was considering playing e4 at some point.

### 16... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 17. $\mathbb{Q}acl$



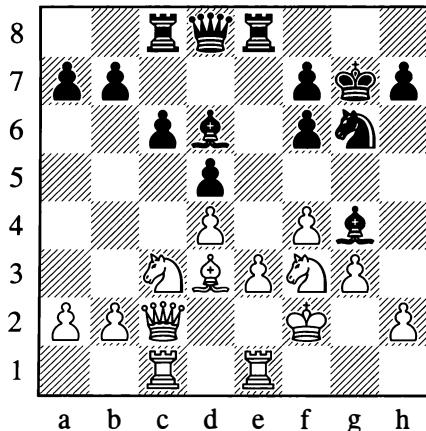
### 17... $\mathbb{W}d8$

It is hard to suggest an active plan for Black.

17... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ ? allows White to play 18.  $f5!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5!$ , winning.

17... $\mathbb{Q}c7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}ce7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3\uparrow$  20. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e2$  White has the better pawn structure and more active pieces.

17... $\mathbb{E}g8$  18. $\mathfrak{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}ce8$  19. $\mathfrak{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  (19... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  20. $h3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  21. $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  22. $\mathbb{W}h5$  White remains in control.) 20. $h3$   $\mathbb{Q}c8$  21. $\mathfrak{Q}f3$  White undoubtedly has the advantage, although it is hard to say how serious it is.



18. ♕f5 ♕xf3?!

Ricardi chooses the less desirable exchange. In the resulting position White's bishop will be a powerful force.

The lesser evil was 18... $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  19. $\mathbb{W}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  20.e4 when White's position is clearly favourable, but Black has more chances than in the game.

## 19. $\text{xf}3$

Naturally Karpov is not tempted by 19.  $\mathbb{Q}xc8?$   $\mathbb{W}xc8$  20.  $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}h3$  when Black has enough counterplay to maintain the balance.

After the text move the king is safe enough on f3, as it has enough protection and Black is in no position to carry out an attack.

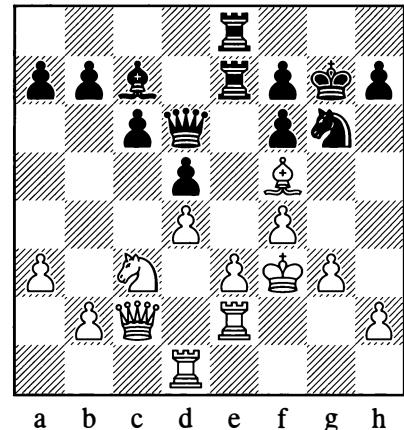
19...♝c7 20.a3!

Karpov takes away any hopes Black may have had to swap his somewhat paralysed bishop for the strong white knight.

20...♝ce7 21.♝cd1

Karpov makes sure Black will not be able to become active in the centre with ...c5.

21... $\hat{\square}c7$  22. $\hat{H}e2$   $\hat{W}d6$



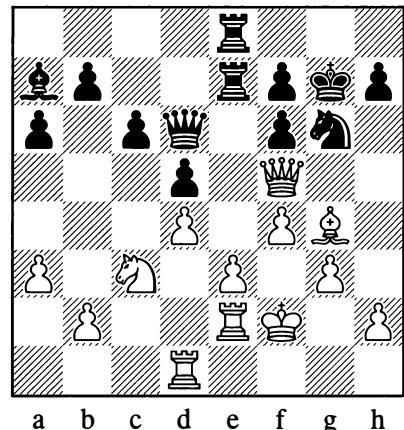
23. ♔f2!

With this prophylactic king move Karpov prevents the possibility of 23...  $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$  intending 24.gxh4  $\mathbb{E}xe3\#$ .

23...a6 24.♔g4 ♔b6 25.♕f5

Karpov brings the queen closer to the enemy king.

25... ♕a7



26. ♔f3!

Superb play with the king. The main point of this move is to enable the d1-rook to move to a different file, as the trick based on ... $\mathbb{E}xe3$  and ... $\mathbb{E}xd4$  will not work.

### 26...b5?!

Ricardi does not want to wait passively, but by going for counterplay he weakens his position.

Better was 26... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  27. $\mathbb{E}de1$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  28.h4  $\mathbb{Q}e6$  29. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  30. $\mathbb{W}h5$  when Black's position is unpleasant, but still less problematic than in the game.

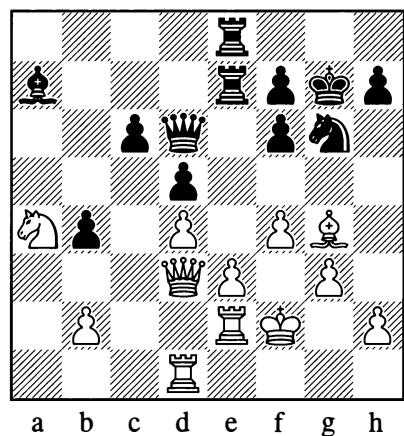
### 27. $\mathbb{W}d3$

Karpov brings his strongest piece back to guard the queenside, anticipating his opponent's play.

### 27...a5

Ricardi keeps going forward.

### 28. $\mathbb{Q}f2$ b4 29.axb4 axb4 30. $\mathbb{Q}a4$



### 30... $\mathbb{E}e4?$

This turns out to be a waste of time.

In the event of 30...h5 31. $\mathbb{Q}f5$  h4 Black reduces his number of pawn islands, but after 32. $\mathbb{E}g1$  the open g-file is more important.

30... $\mathbb{E}a8$  was more resilient, but after 31. $\mathbb{E}a1$  (31. $\mathbb{E}c1!?$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4!$ ) 31... $\mathbb{E}ee8$  32.b3  $\mathbb{E}h8$  33. $\mathbb{Q}h5$

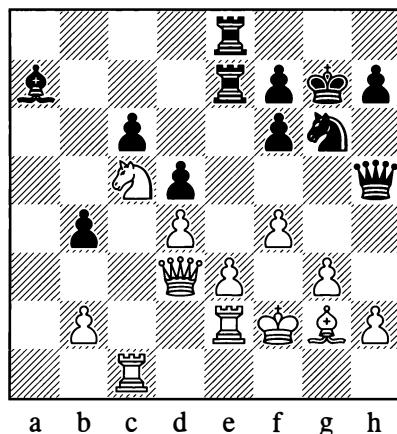
White remains in control and will soon start exerting pressure on the c-pawn.

### 31. $\mathbb{Q}f3$ $\mathbb{E}4e7$ 32. $\mathbb{E}c1!$

Karpov homes in on the weak c6-pawn like a shark that smells blood.

### 32... $\mathbb{W}d7$ 33. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}h3$ 34. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ $\mathbb{W}h5?!$

The queen achieves nothing on the kingside and will soon find herself cut off from the action. 34... $\mathbb{W}c8$  was better, although 35. $\mathbb{W}d2$  wins the b4-pawn for no compensation.



### 35.h3!

Karpov prevents the black queen from returning to the queenside.

### 35... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ 36. $\mathbb{Q}b3$ $\mathbb{E}e6$ 37.f5!

Forcing the enemy rook off the e-file.

### 37... $\mathbb{E}d6$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Small tactics also work for White – taking the h-pawn would cost Black his queen.

### 38... $\mathbb{W}h6$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}a5!$

Karpov plays across the whole board. The attack on the c6-pawn is too much to bear.

### 39... $\mathbb{Q}b8$ 40.h4!

Karpov not only safeguards the h-pawn, but also paralyses the enemy queen in the process.

**40...♝c8 41.♛a6!**

Having caged the enemy queen on the opposite flank, Karpov goes after the weak c6-pawn.

**41...♝c7 42.♝xc6**

Finally the doomed pawn perishes, and its colleagues on b4 and d5 will soon follow.

**42...♝a7 43.♛b6 ♜d7 44.♛xb4****1–0**

In this hopeless position Black resigned.

Korchnoi and Radjabov both drew, so Karpov's final score of 6½/9 was enough to claim first place outright. This was Karpov's last ever tournament victory at a classical time control. According to my calculations, starting with his 1966 Trinec victory he has won sixty five individual classical tournaments, including thirteen in which he shared first prize. No other player in chess history has won so many high-level tournaments.

Karpov's next event was the Spanish team championship, where he defeated Matamoros Franco and drew against Giorgadze and Cifuentes Parada.

Karpov's final event of the year was the FIDE World Championship, which once again took the form of a knockout tournament. For much of chess history, the World Champion enjoyed many more privileges than in most other games and sports. Take the 1998 version of the same event, where Karpov was seeded directly into the final, whereas his challenger Anand had to undergo a gruelling series of elimination matches. In 2001 Karpov received no such privilege, and he had to start in the first round just like everyone else. He drew both of his classical games against Zhang Pengxiang of China, then lost both rapid tie-break games. Thus the reigning champion was eliminated in a shocking upset. The title was eventually won by Ruslan Ponomariov, who defeated Ivanchuk in the final.

## 2001 Summary

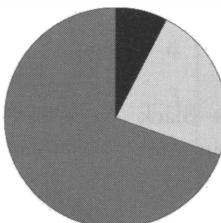
Linares (2nd-6th place): 4½/10 (+1 =7 –2)

Europe – Tatarstan match, Kaluga (versus Dreev): Drew 1–1 (+0 =2 –0)

Najdorf Memorial, Buenos Aires (1st place): 6½/9 (+4 =5 –0)

Spanish Team Championship: 2/3 (+1 =2 –0)

FIDE KO World Championship (versus Zhang Pengxiang): Drew 1–1 (+0 =2 –0) (Eliminated in rapid tie-break.)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2002

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Rating 2693 (16 in the world)

Karpov played one game in the Belgian Team Championship, where he defeated Kim Le Quang, a FIDE Master.

His first major tournament was the Nao Masters in Cannes. He started with a draw against Fressinet, followed with a win over Nataf and draws against Bareev and Gelfand.

His opponent in Round 5 was Peter Leko. The Hungarian grandmaster has so far contested 168 games against all the world champions from Karpov to Anand. He has won fifteen of those games, drawn 120 and lost thirty three. This was his last regular game against Karpov. Previously the two players had met eleven times, with the score standing at two wins to Karpov, with nine draws and no defeats.

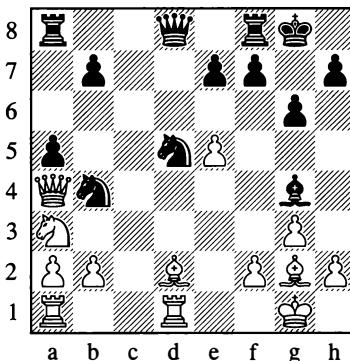
## Game 56

Anatoly Karpov – Peter Leko

Cannes 2002

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.♗f3 g6 3.g3 ♜g7 4.♗g2 d5 5.c4 dxc4 6.♘a3**

The next time Karpov faced this variation he deviated surprisingly early: 6.♘a4† ♜fd7 7.♗xc4 ♜b6 8.♗c3 ♘a6 9.0–0 c5 10.e3 0–0 11.♘a3 ♜f5 12.♗d1 cxd4 13.exd4 ♘d5 14.♗b3 ♘ab4 15.♗d2 a5 16.♗e5 ♜e6 17.♗a4 ♜xe5 18.dxe5 ♜g4



19.♗h6!? ♜xd1 20.♗xd1 ♜e8 21.♗b5 ♜d7 22.a3 e6 23.h4 ♜c6? Maybe Karpov's original play took too much energy from the Dutch grandmaster and here he makes a serious mistake. (23...♘c6 24.♗e4 ♜e7 25.♗d6 ♜ed8 is unclear, as Ftacnik pointed out.) 24.axb4! axb4 25.♗xd5 exd5 26.♗xb4 White easily converted his material advantage, Karpov – Van Wely, Wijk aan Zee 2003.

**6...c3**

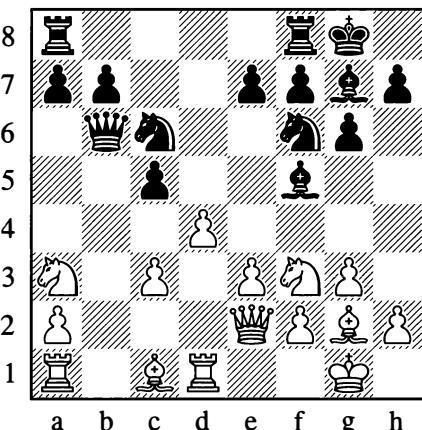
Compared with 6...0–0 and other alternatives, the text move leads to a change in the pawn structure which tends to result in more complex play.

**7.bxc3 0–0 8.0–0 c5**

I think that one of the reasons why Leko was able to break into the world's elite at such a young age was that his opening repertoire was modern. Your author taught this line to him when he was eleven years old. The repertoire I taught him was partly based on the preparation of Karoly Honfi. Leko tends not to say much about his early years, but the fact that he was able to use his childhood repertoire against great champions speaks for itself.

**9.e3**

According to the database this move was first played by Panno in 1987.

**9...Qc6 10.We2 Bf5 11.Bd1 Wb6****12.Qh4?!**

Leko had reached the same position the previous year, so this rare continuation may well have been prepared by Karpov in advance. Despite his eventual success in this game, the idea is unimpressive and it never caught on.

Leko's previous game continued: 12.Qc4 Wa6 13.Qf1 Qa5 14.Qce5 Wxe2 15.Qxe2 Qe4 16.Qb2 Qfd8 17.Qd3 Qd6 18.Qxf5 gxf5 19.Qa3 b6 Black had equalized and the game was later drawn, Nikolic – Leko, Bastia 2001.

Against Kasparov the previous year, Karpov tried 12.Qb2 but achieved very little: 12...Qfd8 13.Qc4 Wa6 14.a4 Qa5 15.Qf1 Qe4 16.Qfd2 Qxd2 17.Qxa5 Qxa5 18.Qxd2 cxd4 19.cxd4 Qac8 The position was equal and a draw ensued, Karpov – Kasparov, Linares 2001.

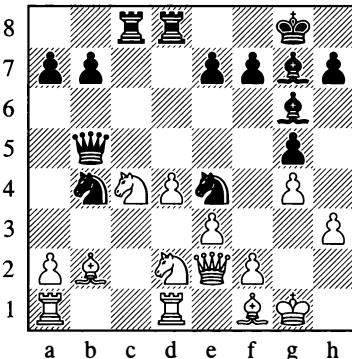
In two subsequent games Karpov opted for: 12.Qd2

On both occasions he obtained a large advantage, but this can mostly be attributed to his opponents' overoptimistic moves.

**12...cxd4 13.cxd4 Qac8 14.h3**

The following year Karpov deviated with: 14.Qb3 Qfd8 15.Qd2 h5 16.Qe1 g5?! 17.Qc4 Qb5 18.Qacl e5? 19.dxe5! Qxe5 20.Qxd8† Qxd8 21.Qd4 White obtained a winning position, Karpov – Illescas Cordoba, Lanzarote 2003.

14...Qfd8 15.Qb3 Qe4 16.Qb2 g5 17.g4 Qg6 18.Qc4 Qb5 19.Qf1 Qb4 20.Qbd2

**20...Qd6??**

Judit commits a fatal blunder.

After 20...Qc7 or 20...Qxd2 Black would have been at least equal.

**21.Qxd6 Wxe2 22.Qxc8!**

The youngest Polgar sister probably overlooked that White does not have to take back the queen immediately.

22... $\mathbb{W}xf1\#$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$

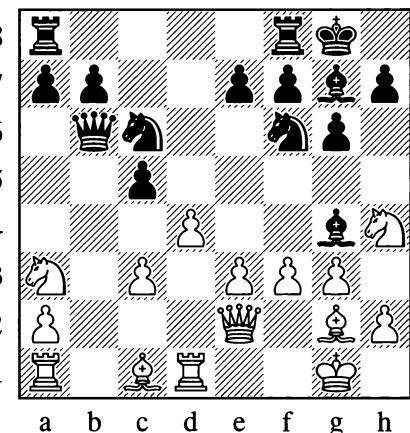
White went on to convert his extra exchange, Karpov – J. Polgar, Moscow (rapid) 2002.

12... $\mathbb{Q}g4!$

Leko reacts in the most principled way.

13. $\mathbb{Q}f3?$

13. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  was safer, but this would hardly have been a serious try for an advantage.



13... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

Leko makes full use of his advantage in development.

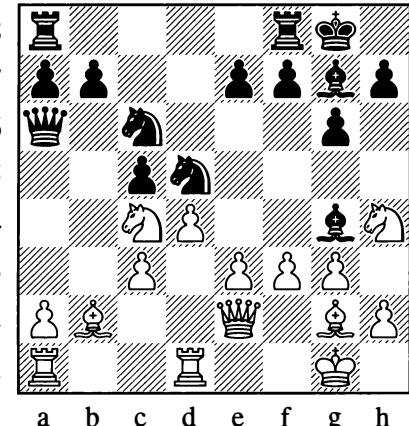
14. $\mathbb{Q}c4$

14. $\mathbb{Q}b2?$  is inadvisable due to: 14... $\mathbb{Q}xe3!$   
 15.d5 (Other moves are worse, for instance 15.fxg4?!  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  cxd4 or 15.dxc5?!  $\mathbb{W}xc5$  16. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c2$  g5, with a clear advantage to Black in both cases.) 15... $\mathbb{Q}xd1$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  17. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{W}a6$  18.dxc6  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   
 White is in trouble.

14... $\mathbb{W}a6!$

After 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc3?$  15. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  16. $\mathbb{W}xc3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  White has an edge.

15. $\mathbb{Q}b2$



15... $\mathbb{Q}b6$

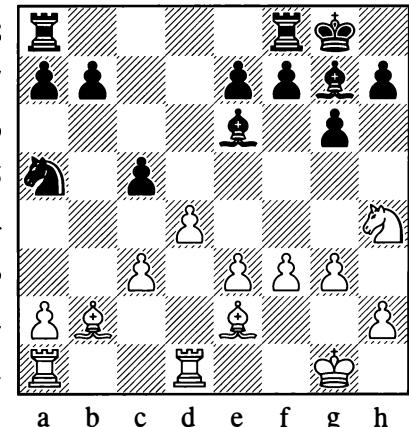
This is not a bad move, but more precise would have been 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6!$  16. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}fd8$ . Black stands better here, although the magnitude of his advantage is a matter for debate.

16. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

Karpov is happy to exchange queens. 16.fxg4  $\mathbb{W}xc4$  gives Black no problems.

16... $\mathbb{W}xc4$  17. $\mathbb{W}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$   
 19. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Black also has a comfortable game after 19...cxd4 20.cxd4 (20.fxg4? dxg3) 20... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ .



**20.d5**

Karpov certainly obtained no advantage from the opening, and had to play carefully to avoid becoming significantly worse. With this move he keeps the c-file closed in order to limit Black's active prospects.

**20...♝d7 21.e4 e6**

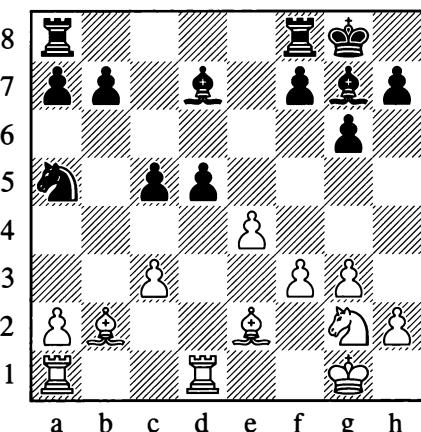
Leko decides to undermine the centre. Other reasonable possibilities included 21...b5?! 22.f4 ♜c4 and 21...f5?! 22.exf5 g5 23.♗g2 ♜xf5.

**22.♗g2**

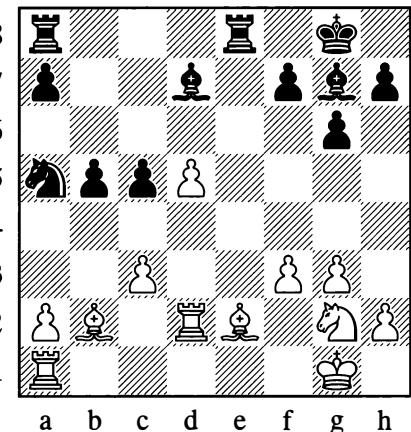
Having escaped from a dubious opening with a roughly equal position, Karpov sets about improving his pieces. First there is the knight, which has been sidelined ever since the questionable novelty on move twelve.

**22...exd5**

22...f5?!, opening the centre and making it harder for White to use his king, was worth considering. 23.♗f4 fxe4 is fine for Black.

**23.exd5**

23.♗xd5? only helps Black: 23...♝c6 24.♗xc5 b6 25.♗g5 ♜fd8! White has problems. Incidentally, Ftacnik suggested 25...♜ad8 but I prefer to use the other rook so that ♜a3 will not win a tempo. Besides, the other rook will be happy enough on c8.

**23...b5 24.♗d2 ♜fe8****25.♔f2**

Karpov brings the king closer to the centre.

**25...♝b7**

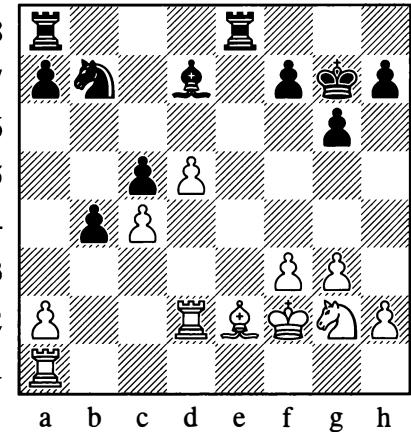
Ftacnik's 25...c4!? 26.♗c1 ♘b7 is a sensible suggestion.

**26.c4**

It makes sense for White to exchange his passive bishop.

**26...b4**

26...♝h6 should be met by 27.♗f4, rather than 27.f4? ♘d6.

**27.♗xg7 ♘xg7**

**28...♝b2**

After 28.d6? ♜ad8 the d-pawn is much more of a weakness than a strength.

**28...♞d6**

The knight stands well here, but Black could also have gone for an immediate queenside advance: 28...a5!? 29.a3 ♜eb8 Black has a decent position, and he retains the option of meeting axb4 with ...cxb4 when his knight will find an ideal home on c5.

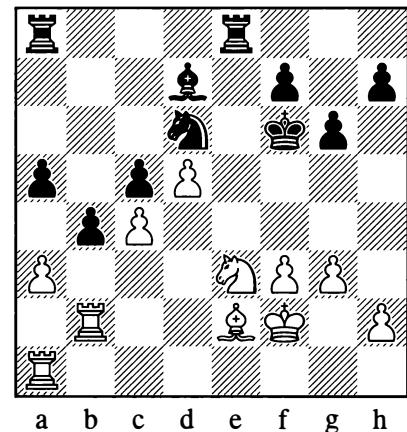
**29.a3 a5**

Black could also have considered 29...bxa3?! 30.♜xa3 a5, hoping that his piece activity would compensate for the structural weakening: 31.♛e3 (31.♜b6? ♜xe2† 32.♜xe2 ♛xc4 wins.) 31...♜a6! (31...♜ed8 32.♜b6!) 32.♛d1 a4 33.♛c3 The position is balanced.

**30.♛e3 ♜f6?!**

Activating the king looks natural, but it was not the most accurate. 30...bxa3? would also have been a mistake in view of 31.♜b6!.

However, Karpov's suggestion of 30...♜eb8! would have given Black a comfortable game: 31.axb4 (Otherwise Black advances his a-pawn, for instance 31.♛f1?! a4! And White has problems.) 31...axb4 32.♜ba2 ♜xa2 33.♜xa2 ♜b6 Black is doing fine.

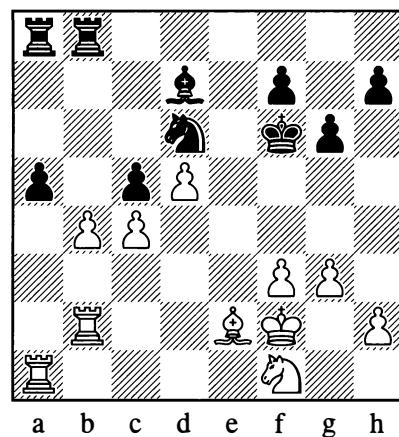
**31.♛f1!**

When it comes to identifying a weakness in the enemy position, there are few players who can rival the twelfth World Champion. With this move he homes in on the vulnerable c5-pawn.

**31...♜eb8**

Ftačník recommends 31...♛b7?! 32.♛d2 ♜e5, but it turns out that White can embarrass the adventurous king: 33.♛e4! ♜ab8 (33...f5? is refuted by 34.f4†! ♜xe4 35.♜d1 followed by 36.♜f3 mate!) 34.♜b3 a4 35.♜e3 Black's king is in trouble.

However, the immediate king improvement is not such a bad idea: 31...♜e5 32.♛d2 ♜ec8 Black should be all right here.

**32.axb4****32...axb4**

After 32...cxb4?! 33.c5 ♜f5 34.c6 ♜c8 35.♛d1 ♜b5 (35...♛d6 36.♛a4) 36.♛b3 ♜c5 37.♛d2 White's pawns are more dangerous than Black's.

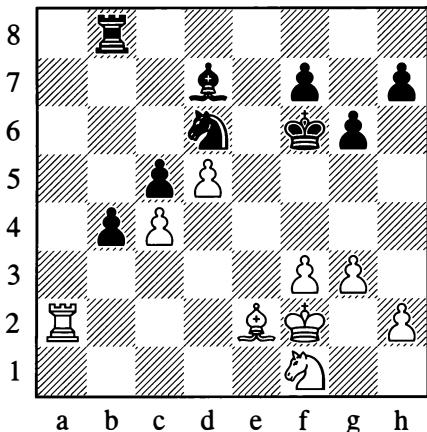
On the other hand 32...♜xb4?! 33.♜xb4 cxb4 is not so bad: 34.c5 ♜f5 35.c6 ♜c8 With only one pair of rooks on the board Black is not worse, as he can centralize his king without

White having as much firepower with which to attack it.

### 33.♗ba2

Karpov gains control over the a-file.

33...♝xa2 34.♝xa2



34...♞f5

This is not a mistake in itself, but it seems to have been based on a miscalculation.

34...♝b6 35.♘d2 ♞c8! Black must take action against the knight transfer to b3. 36.♝a5! (The hasty 36.♘b3?! can be met by 36...♝a6! 37.♝b2 ♘b7 when Black gets himself organized.) 36.♘b7 37.♝a8 ♞f5 38.♘d1 White keeps a small initiative.

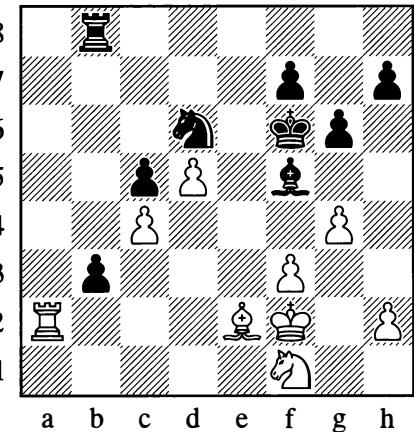
34...b3 35.♝b2 ♞f5 (35...♝a4 36.♘e3 ♜e8† 37.♘d3 ♘f5 [37...h5 38.♘d2 ♜e7 39.♝b1 ♞d7 40.g4 ♞g5 41.h3 White wins the b3-pawn and Black's kingside play is not quite sufficient.] 38.g4 ♘d4 39.♘g3 The c5-pawn is weak.) 36.g4 ♘d7 (36...♝c2 37.♘e3 White wins a pawn, though winning will not be easy due to Black's blockade on the dark squares.) 37.♘d2 ♘a4 38.♘e3 White is somewhat better, although Black has a surprising way to create counterplay with 38...♞g5! 39.f4† ♞h4.

### 35.g4!

Thanks to some precise calculation, Karpov has seen that he has time to drive the bishop away.

35...b3?

Black had to play 35...♝d7, after which 36.♘d2 b3 37.♝b2 transposes to 34...b3 as analysed above.



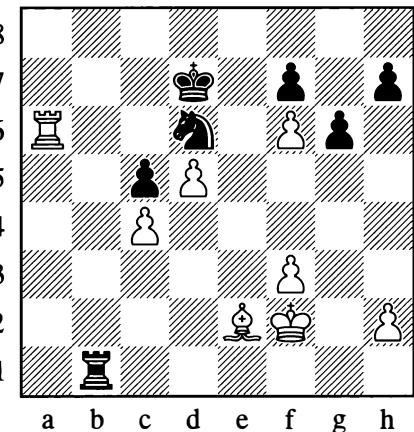
36.♝a6!

Leko probably overlooked this clever move and only calculated 36.♝b2.

36...b2 37.♘d2 ♜e7 38.gxf5 b1=♛ 39.♘xb1 ♜xb1 40.f6†!

It is useful to have a pawn so close to the promotion square.

40...♞d7



**41.♖c6!**

It was not easy to foresee that Karpov would eventually pick up the c5-pawn with his rook rather than his knight.

**41...♗b2!**

Leko goes for active counterplay based on pinning the bishop. If Black tries the feeble 41...♕b7? then 42.♔f1! wins easily.

**42.♖xc5 ♕f5?**

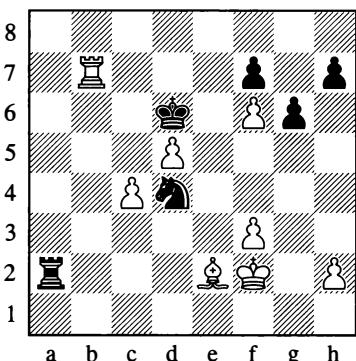
Leko plays too impatiently. He could have obtained excellent drawing chances with the subtle move:

**42...♗a2!**

Black's defence is based on the fact that it is far from easy for White to free his rook and break the pin.

**43.♖c6**

After 43.♔e3 ♕f5† 44.♔d3 ♗a3† 45.♔d2 ♗a2† White makes no progress.

**43...♕f5 44.♗b6 ♕d4 45.♗b7† ♔d6****46.♔e3??**

Giving up the bishop is arguably the best winning chance. 46.♗e7 is also not bad: 46...♗c5 47.♗e5 (After 47.♔e1 ♕xe2 48.♗xe2 ♗a1† 49.♔f2 ♕xc4 50.d6 ♗d1 Black wins the d-pawn and has good chances to hold.) 47...♕xe2 48.♗xe2 ♗a6 It is difficult to tell whether White's extra pawn is enough to win the position.

**46...♕xe2 47.♗xf7 ♕e5 48.♗f8 g5! 49.f7 ♕f6****50.h4**

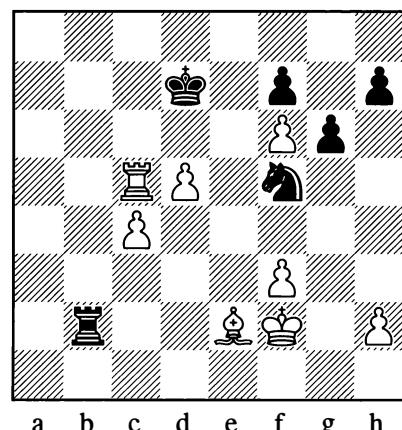
50.♗g8 ♕xf7 51.♗xg5 ♕c1 gives good drawing chances.

**50...gxh4**

Another line is 50...h6 51.hxg5† hxg5 52.♗g8 ♕xf7 53.♗xg5 ♕c1 when it is hard to say if Black can hold.

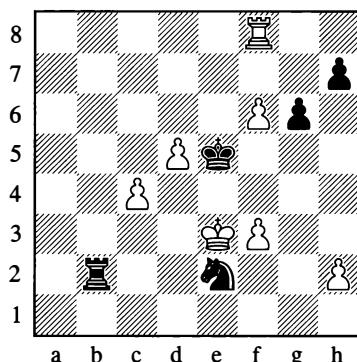
**51.d6 ♕c1!**

With a check on e2 coming soon, Black has decent drawing chances.

**43.♗b5!**

Karpov forces a rook exchange. In the resulting endgame his pawns will be splintered, but the sheer number of them will be too much for the defence to bear.

In his *Chess Informant* analysis Karpov mentions a second supposedly winning line, but in fact its consequences are less than clear: 43.♗a5!! ♕d4 44.♗a7† ♔d6 45.♔e3! ♕xe2 46.♗xf7 ♕e5 47.♗f8



47... $\mathbb{Q}c1!$ ? 48.f4†  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  49.f7  $\mathbb{B}b7$  (After 49... $\mathbb{E}e2$ † 50. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  51.c5 White's pawns are irresistible.) 50.c5  $\mathbb{E}e7$ † 51. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  52.c6 White's pawns are too strong.

However, Black can improve with 47...g5! which leads to a virtually identical situation to the analysis of 42... $\mathbb{E}a2$ ! in the note to Black's 42nd move. In that case it is far from clear if White can win.

### 43... $\mathbb{E}xb5$

Black has no choice but to enter the losing endgame. Instead after 43... $\mathbb{E}a2$  44. $\mathbb{B}b7$ †  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  45.c5  $\mathbb{Q}d4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  47.c6 White wins easily.

### 44.cxb5 $\mathbb{Q}c7$

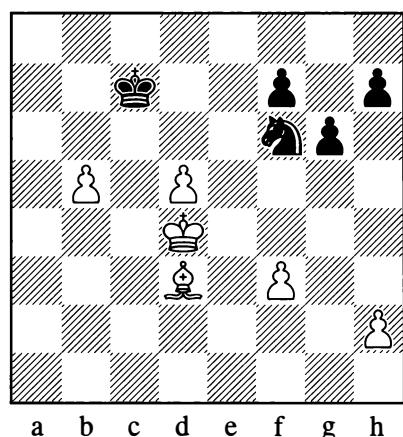
Alternatively after 44... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  45.b6  $\mathbb{Q}h6$  (45... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ) 46. $\mathbb{Q}a6$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  (46... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  47. $\mathbb{Q}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  48. $\mathbb{Q}e6$  wins.) 47.b7  $\mathbb{Q}c7$  48.d6† White promotes a pawn.

### 45. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

Karpov clears a path for his king.

### 45... $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 46. $\mathbb{Q}e3$ $\mathbb{Q}e8$ 47. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}xf6$

Black reclaims one pawn, but it is not enough to affect the final result.



48. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  49.d6†  $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  50. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   
1-0

Leko saw no reason to continue this hopeless position. This game showcased a few of Karpov's great qualities. He showed great strategic vision, especially when planning the knight transfer to b3 to attack the weak c5-pawn. Later he demonstrated his sharp calculating ability with 36. $\mathbb{Q}a6$ ! in the endgame.

In Round 6 Karpov was pressing against Lautier, but the Frenchman skilfully defended an isolated-pawn middlegame to hold the draw. Then he suffered his first defeat against Topalov, in a game referenced briefly on page 422, in the notes to Game 52. Karpov drew his next game quickly with Morozevich. In the final round he got into trouble against Bacrot. The young French talent allowed him to escape to a somewhat worse endgame, but Karpov erred and finally lost. He finished in equal fifth place with a score of 4½/9.

\*\*\*

For the rest of the year Karpov only took part in rapid and exhibition events. At the Dubai World Cup he reached the quarter-final where he lost to Kiril Georgiev.

Karpov's last ever world-class result at an individual event came at the Eurotel tournament in Prague. In the first round he defeated Nigel Short on the white side of a sharp Nimzo-Indian in a mere twenty moves, then safely held a draw with the Petroff in the return game.

In the second round Karpov faced his successor Kramnik. In the first game he held the black side of a Nimzo-Indian with relative ease. We will look at the second game.

**Game 57****Anatoly Karpov – Vladimir Kramnik**

Prague (rapid – 2.2) 2002

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6**

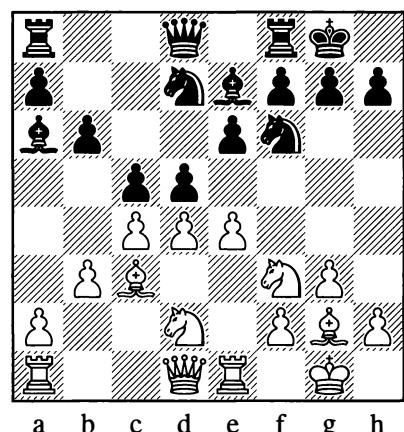
When playing against Kasparov, Kramnik was absolutely correct to choose openings which demanded a subtle positional understanding. Against Karpov, the same approach was not so effective. The Queen's Indian seems like an especially ill-advised choice, as Karpov played this opening hundreds of times on both sides, and understands its subtleties like no other player.

**4.g3 ♜a6 5.b3 ♜b4† 6.♗d2 ♜e7 7.♗g2 c6  
8.♘c3 d5 9.♘bd2**

Karpov normally prefers the main line of 9.♘e5.

**9...♘bd7 10.0–0 0–0 11.♗e1 c5**

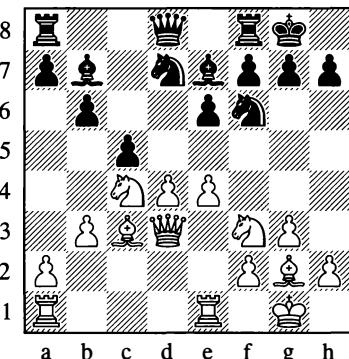
Later the same year Tkachiev deviated and obtained an easy draw: 11...♗b7 12.e4 dxе4 13.♘xe4 c5 14.♗xf6† ♜xf6 15.♗e3 ♜c7 16.dxc5 ½–½ Karpov – Tkachiev, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2002.

**12.e4****12...dxе4**

Kramnik plays the main line, which has the safest reputation.

**12...dxc4 13.♗xc4 ♜b7**

This is a playable, though slightly riskier alternative.

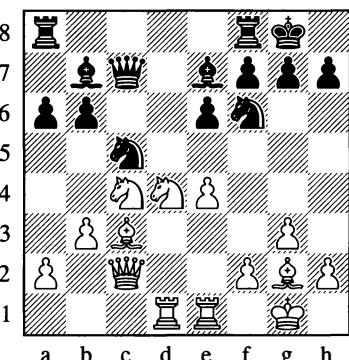
**14.♗d3?**

This was Karpov's novelty, which brought him a nice victory.

14.e5 is more common.

**14...cxd4**

The next year Polugaevsky prepared an improvement and held a draw relatively easily: 14...♗c8! 15.♗ad1 b5 16.♗a5 ♜e8 17.♗cd2 cxd4 18.e5 ♘c5 19.♗xd4 ♘d5 20.b4 ♘a6 21.a3 ♜d7 22.♗xa7 ♜c5 23.♗e4 ♘xe4 ½–½ Karpov – Polugaevsky, Reggio Emilia 1992.

**15.♗xd4 ♘c5 16.♗c2 a6 17.♗ad1 ♜c7****18.♗d2!**

Karpov obtains an advantage with powerful piece-play.

18... $\mathbb{Q}cd7$

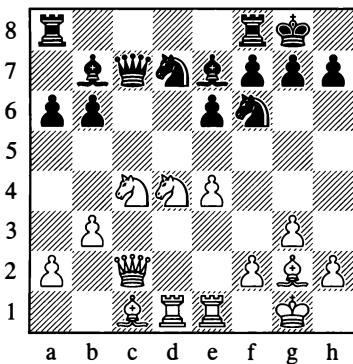
18... $\mathbb{Q}h5$ ? deserved consideration.

19. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  20. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ !

After 20. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  21.e5  $\mathbb{Q}g4$  22. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{W}xb6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}xe3$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xe3$

White keeps some advantage, but Karpov's move looks even stronger.

20... $\mathbb{W}c7$



21.e5!

Karpov cleverly draws his opponent into a pin and wins a pawn.

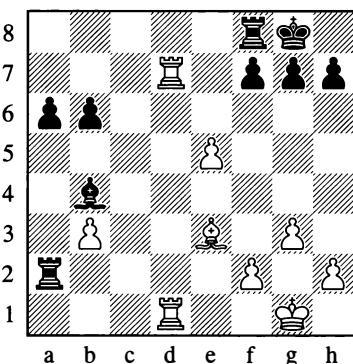
21... $\mathbb{Q}d5$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}xc2$  23. $\mathbb{Q}dxc2$   $\mathbb{E}ac8$

24. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ !  $exd5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{E}xc2$

27. $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  28. $\mathbb{E}ed1$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$

Black has won back the pawn but White's initiative persists.

29. $\mathbb{Q}e3$



29... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ?

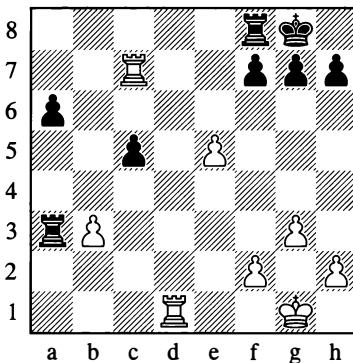
Black's position was already difficult, and the double-rook-endgame was not the way to alleviate his problems.

29... $\mathbb{E}a5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}d4$  keeps the advantage.

29... $\mathbb{B}5$ ? may be the best chance: 30. $\mathbb{E}b7$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  31. $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  32. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  33.f4 Black's position is difficult, but his drawing chances are better than in the game.

30. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $bcx5$  31. $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{E}a3$ ?

Black had to keep his rook on the second rank with 31... $\mathbb{E}b2$  or 31... $\mathbb{E}e2$ .



32.e6!  $fxe6$  33. $\mathbb{E}dd7$

1–0 Karpov – Khalifman, Reykjavik 1991.

Despite temporarily having an extra pawn, Black's position is hopeless and Khalifman saw no point in playing on.

13. $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$

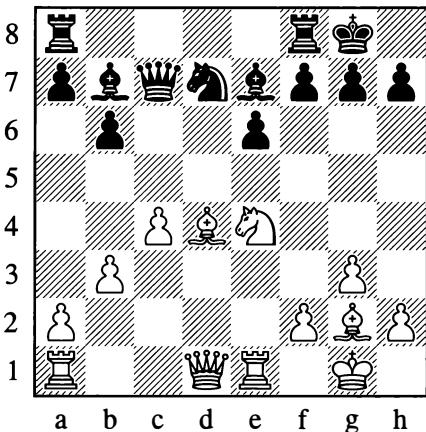
Karpov faced the other main line of 13... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  in a prior rapid game: 14. $\mathbb{E}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  15. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $dxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  17. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  Black required just eight more moves to secure the draw, Karpov – Anand, Frankfurt (rapid) 1999.

14. $\mathbb{Q}fg5$   $cxd4$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$

Kramnik opts for immediate simplifications. The main move is 15... $\mathbb{W}c7$ , which Karpov had already used eighteen years prior to the present game: 16. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ †  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xb7$   $\mathbb{W}xb7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  19. $\mathbb{W}xd4$   $\mathbb{E}ad8$  20. $\mathbb{E}ad1$   $\mathbb{W}a8$  21. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}f6$ †  $\frac{1}{2}-\frac{1}{2}$  Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (18) 1984. Maybe Karpov would have

deviated with 22.  $\mathbb{W}f3!$ ?, although according to the database this has only led to a long list of draws and one defeat for White.

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}xe4 \mathbb{W}c7$



### 17. $\mathbb{Q}c3!$

Karpov introduces a novelty. Objectively it should not be especially strong, but over the board it proved venomous enough to trouble a great player. In the one previous game that reached this position, Panno had used 17.  $\mathbb{W}h5$  to defeat Zarnicki in 1992.

### 17... $\mathbb{E}ad8?$

It looks like Kramnik overlooked Karpov's next move. Instead 17...  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}xg2$   $\mathbb{W}c6\ddagger$  brings Black close to equality, as demonstrated in a few subsequent games.

### 18. $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

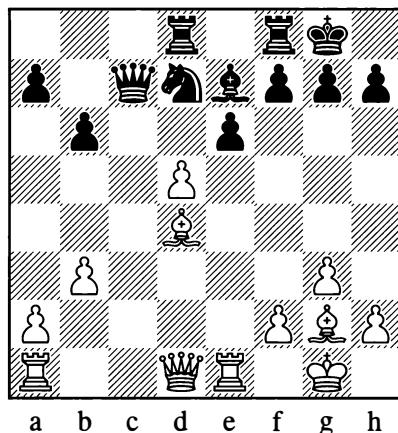
With this small tactical stroke Karpov secures the advantage of the bishop pair and changes the pawn structure in his favour.

### 18... $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

18...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ ? is worse: 19.  $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $dxc4$  (Or 19...  $\mathbb{W}d6$  20.  $\mathbb{W}e2$  intending  $\mathbb{E}d1$  with a large advantage.) 20.  $\mathbb{W}g4$   $g6$  21.  $\mathbb{W}h4$   $h5$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}d5!$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  23.  $\mathbb{E}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  24.  $\mathbb{W}f6$  White will deliver checkmate, as pointed out by Ftacnik.

### 19. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Now Black must make a difficult decision between a few unpleasant continuations.



### 19... $e5$

Closing the centre is natural.

19...  $\mathbb{Q}c5?$  was worse: 20.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  (Also after 20.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  21.  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  22.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}h5$  Black has serious difficulties.) 20...  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  21.  $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  22.  $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b8$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  White is close to winning.

The best chance looks to be: 19...  $\mathbb{Q}f6!$  Interestingly this move was missed by most commentators. It leads to a position which is certainly worse for Black, but probably still tenable. 20.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (After 21.  $\mathbb{Q}c6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  22.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$   $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  23.  $\mathbb{W}c2$   $exd5$  24.  $\mathbb{E}c7$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  Black should not lose.) 21...  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  22.  $dxe6$   $fxe6$  23.  $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  24.  $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  25.  $\mathbb{Q}xe6\ddagger$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}ed1$   $\mathbb{E}xa2$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  Black will probably have to suffer for a good while, yet he has decent drawing chances.

### 20. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ $\mathbb{W}b8$

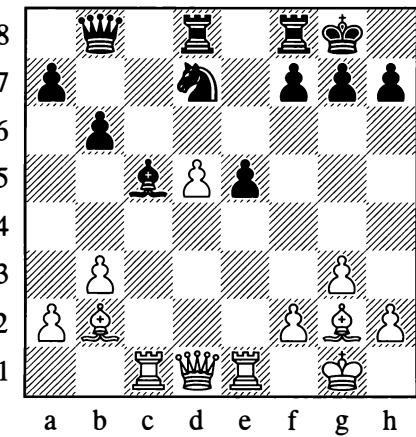
After 20...  $\mathbb{Q}c5?!$  21.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $bxcc5$  22.  $d6$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  23.  $\mathbb{W}d5$  The d-pawn is strong and Black is passive.

20...  $\mathbb{W}d6?!$  also fails to solve Black's problems: 21.  $\mathbb{Q}c6?!$  (21.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$  is also promising: 21...  $\mathbb{W}b8$

leaves White a tempo up on the game, and 21... $\mathbb{W}f6$ ? 22. $\mathbb{E}c7$ ! is even worse.) 21... $\mathbb{W}b8$  22. $\mathbb{W}d2$  f5 23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$ ! The point of this move will soon be revealed. 23... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  24. $\mathbb{W}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  (24...a5 25. $\mathbb{Q}f1$ ) 25.f4 White is in a commanding position, and since his bishop retreated to c3 instead of b2, he does not have to worry about the enemy knight landing on d3.

### 21. $\mathbb{Q}b2$ $\mathbb{Q}c5$ !

Kramnik takes away the c6-square from the rook. 21... $\mathbb{E}c8$  gives White a pleasant choice between 22. $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{E}xc8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  which is strong, and 22. $\mathbb{E}c6$ !? which may be even more effective.



### 22.a3

Karpov wants to open the c-file. He succeeds, although not without some help from his opponent.

### 22. $\mathbb{W}e2$ !?

Perhaps transferring the queen to the queenside was even stronger.

### 22... $\mathbb{E}fe8$ 23. $\mathbb{W}b5$ $\mathbb{W}d6$ 24. $\mathbb{W}a4$ !

This subtle queen manoeuvre supports the plan of a3 and b4.

24. $\mathbb{E}c4$  a5 25. $\mathbb{W}c6$ !? is also promising.

24. $\mathbb{W}c6$  f5 25. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{Q}xd6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  (26...g6 27.g4!) 27. $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  28. $\mathbb{E}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$

29.f3 White's bishop pair gives him an ongoing advantage.

### 24...a5 25.a3 f5 26. $\mathbb{E}c4$ $\mathbb{W}e7$

26... $\mathbb{Q}xf2$ ?? loses, as after 27. $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  28. $\mathbb{W}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}d3$ ! 29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xb2$  30. $\mathbb{W}xd6$   $\mathbb{E}xd6$  31. $\mathbb{E}c2$  Black's knight is trapped.

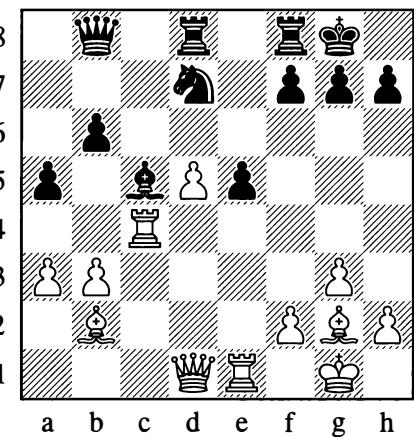
### 27.b4 axb4 28.axb4

White executes his plan of opening the c-file, and keeps some advantage.

### 22...a5 23. $\mathbb{E}c4$ !

Continuing with the plan.

23. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  24.b4!? was interesting though hardly necessary: 24...axb4 25.axb4  $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  26. $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  27. $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  29. $\mathbb{E}e1$  White has compensation for the pawn.



### 23...f5?

Kramnik fails to prevent his opponent's plan, and in the process his queen remains stuck in a passive position.

23...b5 was possible, but driving away the rook does not solve all of Black's problems: 24. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  25. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  (25... $\mathbb{E}b8$ ? 26. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ !) 26. $\mathbb{Q}xa3$   $\mathbb{W}xa3$  27. $\mathbb{W}xb5$  White has the upper hand on the queenside.

However, after the correct 23... $\mathbb{W}d6$ ! Black's position would have been perfectly playable:

24.  $\mathbb{W}a1$  (After 24.  $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  25.  $b4!$ ? [25.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $h6$ ] 25...  $axb4$  26.  $axb4$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  27.  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  White has fair compensation for the pawn, but Black can certainly live with it.) 24...  $\mathbb{E}fe8$  25.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  Now after 25...  $\mathbb{W}e7$  or 25...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  I do not see a convincing way for White to improve his position.

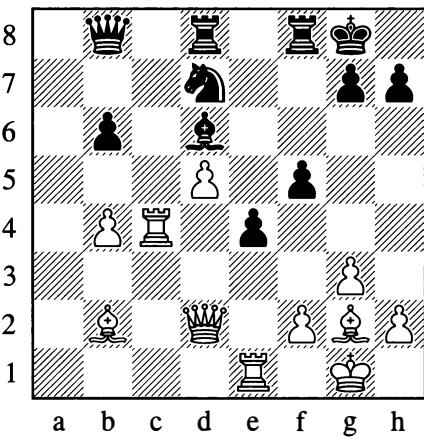
#### 24. $b4$ $axb4$ 25. $axb4$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$ 26. $\mathbb{W}d2!$

Karpov relieves the rook of the burden of defending the b4-pawn.

#### 26... $e4$

After 26...  $b5$  27.  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}b6$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$  the b5-pawn is vulnerable.

If Black sits and waits then White can steadily improve his position: 26...  $\mathbb{E}f7$  27.  $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{E}ff8$  28.  $\mathbb{E}a1$   $\mathbb{E}f7$  29.  $\mathbb{E}a6$  Next White will activate his bishop with  $\mathbb{B}h3$  or  $\mathbb{B}f1$ .



#### 27. $\mathbb{E}c6!$

Karpov tightens the screw by finding a more active square for the rook. He also restricts the movements of the black queen.

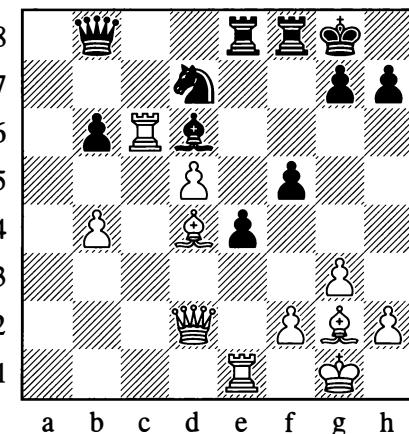
#### 27... $\mathbb{E}de8$

The natural 27...  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  is strongly met by 28.  $d6!$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  29.  $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{E}f6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}c1$   $h6$  31.  $\mathbb{W}a1$  when Black has problems keeping his position together.

27...  $b5$  28.  $\mathbb{E}d1$  (28.  $\mathbb{E}a1$ ? is also promising; 28...  $\mathbb{E}e5$  29.  $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  [29...  $\mathbb{E}d7$  30.  $\mathbb{E}xd6$ ; 29...  $\mathbb{E}fe8$  30.  $\mathbb{E}aa6!$ ] 30.  $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  31.  $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  32.  $\mathbb{E}xc8$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  33.  $\mathbb{E}f1$  White's b-pawn is dangerous.) 28...  $\mathbb{E}f7$  (28...  $\mathbb{E}e5$ ? 29.  $\mathbb{E}xe5$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  30.  $d6+$ ) 29.  $\mathbb{E}d4$  White keeps some advantage, as pointed out by Ftacnik. 29.  $\mathbb{E}f1$  is also promising.

#### 28. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

Karpov wants to tie the knight to the defence of the b6-pawn.



#### 28... $\mathbb{Q}e5?$

Kramnik plays impatiently and sacrifices a pawn without justification.

White remains in control after both 28...  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  29.  $\mathbb{E}e3$  and 28...  $b5$  29.  $\mathbb{E}a1$ .

28...  $\mathbb{E}f7$ ? Black can also consider waiting. 29.  $\mathbb{E}ec1$  (Also interesting is 29.  $\mathbb{E}a1$ ?  $f4$  30.  $\mathbb{E}f1$ ! with the point that after 30...  $e3$  31.  $fxe3$   $fxg3$  32.  $hxg3$  White is better.) 29...  $\mathbb{E}d8$  (29...  $f4$ ? 30.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$ ! wins as Black cannot take the bishop.) 30.  $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  31.  $\mathbb{E}a1$  White has the initiative on the queenside.

#### 29. $\mathbb{E}xb6$

Karpov does not refuse the gift.

#### 29... $\mathbb{W}d8$

On 29... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Ftacnik points out that 30. $\mathbb{B}xb8$   $\mathbb{Q}xd2$  31. $\mathbb{B}b6$   $\mathbb{B}d8$  32. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  33. $\mathbb{B}c6$  wins for White. He is right, although 30. $\mathbb{W}g5!$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  31. $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  32. $\mathbb{B}c6$  is even more convincing.

### 30. $\mathbb{B}xd6!$

Perhaps Karpov was getting short of time and wanted to simplify. He keeps a clear advantage, but he could have won more convincingly with 30. $\mathbb{B}a6!$   $\mathbb{B}f7$  31.b5, when Black is unable to blockade the b-pawn.

### 30... $\mathbb{W}xd6$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ $\mathbb{W}d7$

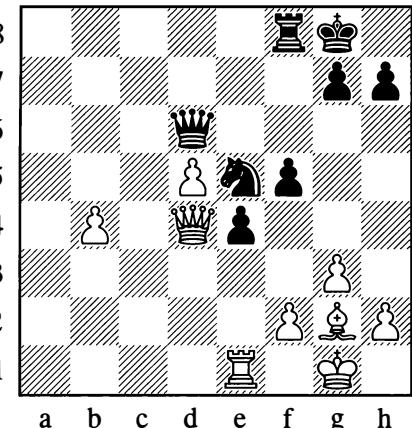
After 31... $\mathbb{W}f6$  32. $\mathbb{B}xf8$   $\mathbb{B}xf8$  33.b5  $\mathbb{W}b6$  34. $\mathbb{B}b1$  White keeps his extra pawn.

### 32. $\mathbb{B}xf8$ $\mathbb{B}xf8$ 33. $\mathbb{W}d4$

Karpov improves the queen.

### 33... $\mathbb{W}d6$

33... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  does not achieve much, and after 34. $\mathbb{B}b1$  White is ready to advance his pawns.



### 34.b5!

The b-pawn is a force which cannot be ignored, so Black will have to deploy his pieces in defensive positions just to cope with it.

### 34... $\mathbb{B}b8$

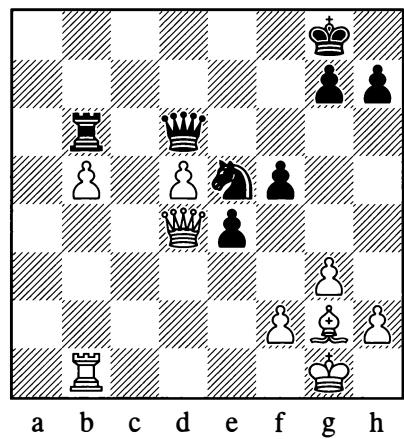
34... $\mathbb{Q}d7?$  35. $\mathbb{B}c1!$  is virtually hopeless for Black.

34... $\mathbb{B}c8?!$  is also insufficient: 35.b6  $\mathbb{B}b8$  36. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}b7$  (36... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  37.b7  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  38. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  39. $\mathbb{W}a7+-$ ) 37. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  38. $\mathbb{W}c8$  White wins more material.

### 35. $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{B}b6$

Kramnik bases his defence on blocking both passed pawns.

The cheeky 35... $\mathbb{Q}c6?!$  looks pretty but fails to achieve much: 36. $\mathbb{W}a1?$  White abandons the d-pawn in order to lend stronger support to the b-pawn. (36. $\mathbb{W}c4$  is also possible: 36... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  37. $\mathbb{W}a2$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  38. $\mathbb{B}h3$  g6 39. $\mathbb{B}f1$  Black's king is too exposed.) 36... $\mathbb{Q}e5$  (36... $\mathbb{Q}e7$  37. $\mathbb{B}f1$ ) 37.b6  $\mathbb{W}xd5$  38.b7  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  39. $\mathbb{B}f1$  White is winning.



### 36.h3!

Having drawn both of Black's heavy pieces into passive blockading roles, Karpov prepares to take action on the kingside.

### 36...h6?!

Kramnik creates an escape square for his king, but weakens the light squares.

36...h5?! was worth considering: 37. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  (37... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  38. $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  39. $\mathbb{W}e8$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  40. $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  41.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  42.f3+-) 38. $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  39. $\mathbb{W}a8$  White keeps his extra pawn and

keeps good winning chances, with  $\mathbb{E}a1$  coming soon.

36... $\mathbb{g}6$

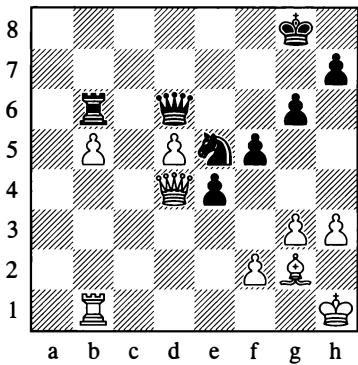
This would also have been more resilient than the game continuation.

37. $\mathbb{Q}h1!$

Ftacnik mentions 37. $\mathbb{E}b4$  without giving any further indication as to how White should win the position. I do not see how White exactly proceeds after 37... $\mathbb{Q}f7$ .

37.h4  $\mathbb{E}b7$  38.h5 gxh5! (38... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  39.h6  $\mathbb{W}f6$  40. $\mathbb{W}c5$   $\mathbb{W}b6$  41. $\mathbb{W}c8$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  42. $\mathbb{W}c3$  Black's king is too open.) 39.b6 h4 40.gxh4  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  41. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{E}xb6$  42. $\mathbb{E}g3\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  43. $\mathbb{E}g7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  44. $\mathbb{E}g5$   $\mathbb{W}f6$  Black has chances to hold.

37.g4  $\mathbb{E}b7$  38.gxf5 gxf5 39. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  40.b6  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  41. $\mathbb{W}h8$  is unpleasant for Black, but the limited material gives him some chances to draw.



37... $\mathbb{E}b8$

After 37... $\mathbb{Q}g7?$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  39. $\mathbb{E}a1$  followed by  $\mathbb{E}a6$  White wins.

On the other hand 37... $\mathbb{Q}d3?$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  39. $\mathbb{W}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  gives Black reasonable drawing chances.

38.b6

Another possibility is 38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}f3$  39. $\mathbb{W}c3$ . Now 39...f4? is wrong because of 40. $\mathbb{Q}g2!$ , but after the superior 39... $\mathbb{W}e5$  I do not see a clear way for White to convert his advantage.

38... $\mathbb{E}b7$  39. $\mathbb{W}c3$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$  40. $\mathbb{E}b5$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  41. $\mathbb{W}c8\uparrow$

$\mathbb{Q}f7$  42. $\mathbb{W}xb7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  43. $\mathbb{W}c8\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  44.b7  
White has excellent winning chances.

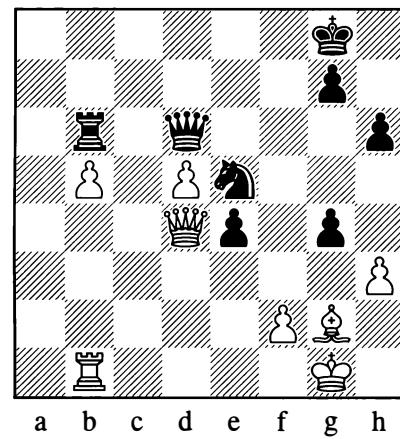
37.g4!

Karpov proceeds with his kingside action before Black can get fully prepared to meet it.

37... $\mathbb{fxg}4?$

With this unfortunate move Kramnik opens the position for the enemy bishop.

37... $\mathbb{g}6$  would have weakened Black's kingside to some extent, but it was the lesser evil. 38. $\mathbb{E}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  Black remains clearly worse and will have to tread carefully to survive, yet there is still no clear win in sight.



38. $\mathbb{W}xe4?$

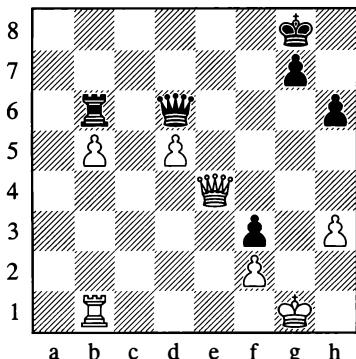
Karpov presents his opponent with a tactical opportunity. To be fair, it would not have been easy to anticipate the improvement noted at move 39, especially in a rapid game.

The correct continuation was 38.hxg4!  $\mathbb{Q}xg4$  39. $\mathbb{W}xe4$  when White wins easily.

38... $\mathbb{gxh}3!$

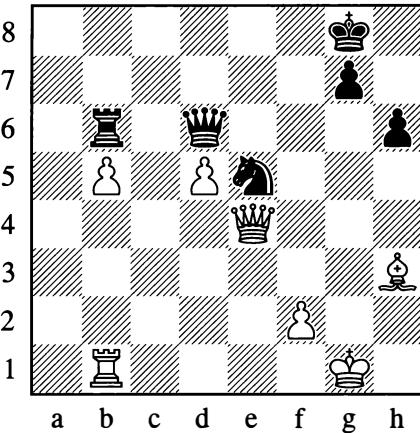
It looks like this move helps White by bringing the bishop into the attack, but sometimes general principles must be cast aside to specific tactics.

38... $\mathbb{Q}f3\text{!?}$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $\mathbb{g}xf3$  would also have given Black some practical chances, for instance:



40.h4 (Other continuations include 40. $\mathbb{B}b3$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  41. $\mathbb{E}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}xb5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}d7$ , and 40. $\mathbb{W}e6\text{!}$   $\mathbb{W}xe6$  41.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  42. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  44. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$ ; in both cases White has good winning chances but the game is not yet over.) 40... $\mathbb{W}c5$  41.h5  $\mathbb{W}f8$  42. $\mathbb{W}e5$  White should be winning, but plenty of work remains.

### 39. $\mathbb{Q}xh3$



### 39... $\mathbb{E}b8\text{?}$

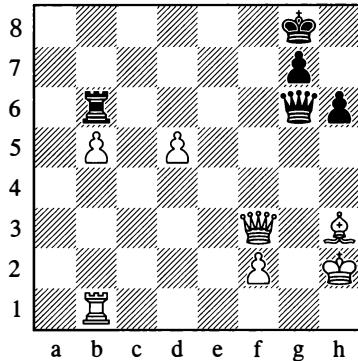
This is a losing mistake. Kramnik was probably short of time (after all, this was a rapid game!), otherwise he would most likely have found the following beautiful saving move:

### 39... $\mathbb{Q}f3\text{!?!}$

White has two ways to react, but neither is enough to win the game against accurate defence.

a) White can take the knight.

40. $\mathbb{W}xf3$   $\mathbb{W}g6\text{!}$  41. $\mathbb{Q}h2$



41... $\mathbb{E}f6\text{!}$

Black must avoid 41... $\mathbb{W}xb1\text{?}$  42. $\mathbb{Q}e6\text{!}$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  43.dxe6  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  44. $\mathbb{W}f7\text{!}$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  45.e7 when he loses.

42. $\mathbb{Q}e6\text{!}$

After 42. $\mathbb{W}h1$   $\mathbb{E}xf2\text{!}$  43. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}d6\text{!}$  44. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  45. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}d6\text{!}$  46. $\mathbb{Q}h3$   $\mathbb{W}a3\text{!}$  White must settle for a draw.

42... $\mathbb{Q}h7\text{!}$

42... $\mathbb{Q}h8\text{?}$  loses to the sweet 43. $\mathbb{E}c1\text{!}$ , but after the correct move Black has no problems.

b) White can also decline the knight:

40. $\mathbb{Q}g2$   $\mathbb{W}h2\text{!}$  41. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$

41. $\mathbb{Q}f1\text{??}$   $\mathbb{Q}d2\text{!}$  wins for Black.

41... $\mathbb{W}xh3\text{!}$

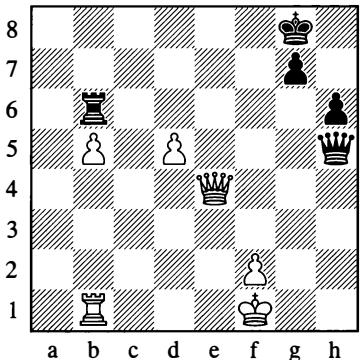
41... $\mathbb{E}f6\text{?}$  42. $\mathbb{Q}g4$  g5 43. $\mathbb{W}e3$  wins.

42. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h5\text{!}$

Black can also consider 42... $\mathbb{W}c3$  when he has reasonable drawing chances.

43. $\mathbb{Q}f1$

White's king will be too exposed if it walks to the queenside: 43. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  44. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  45. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c8\text{!}$  46. $\mathbb{Q}b4$  (46. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}c5$ ) 46... $\mathbb{W}h4\text{!}$  47. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{E}a8$  Black has enough counterplay for a perpetual.



43... $\mathbb{R}b8!$

Black has to use the rook to harass the king.

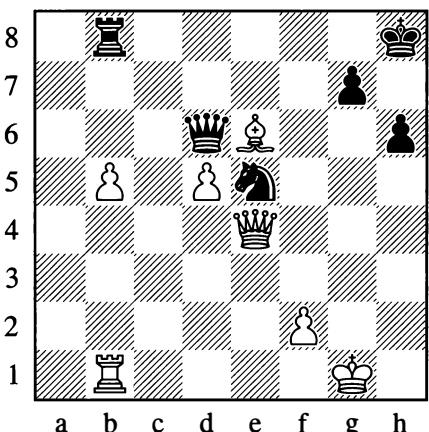
44.b6  $\mathbb{R}e8!$  45. $\mathbb{W}g2 \mathbb{R}f5!$

This is the most accurate, although 45... $\mathbb{W}e2+$  46. $\mathbb{Q}g1 \mathbb{W}c2$  47. $\mathbb{R}f1 \mathbb{W}b3$  48.d6  $\mathbb{W}xb6$  should also be drawing for Black.

46. $\mathbb{R}d1 \mathbb{W}h5$  47.f3  $\mathbb{R}e3$  48. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{R}b3$

Black has enough counterplay.

40. $\mathbb{Q}e6\# \mathbb{Q}h8$



41.b6!

Karpov exploits the instability of Black's knight to push his pawn a step closer to its promotion square.

41... $\mathbb{Q}d7$  42. $\mathbb{Q}xd7$

42.b7!  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  43. $\mathbb{W}g6$  looks even simpler.

42... $\mathbb{W}xd7$  43. $\mathbb{W}e6 \mathbb{W}b7$

The rook ending is hopeless: 43... $\mathbb{W}xe6$  44.dxe6  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  45.b7  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  46.f4 g6 47. $\mathbb{Q}f2 \mathbb{Q}e7$  48. $\mathbb{R}b6 \mathbb{Q}d8$  49.e7#  $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  50. $\mathbb{R}xg6+$

44. $\mathbb{R}c1!$

The rook is best on the c-file where it helps to attack the king.

44... $\mathbb{W}a6$

Of course Kramnik avoids 44... $\mathbb{W}xb6$  45. $\mathbb{R}c8\# \mathbb{Q}h7$  46. $\mathbb{W}g8\#$  when White wins the rook.

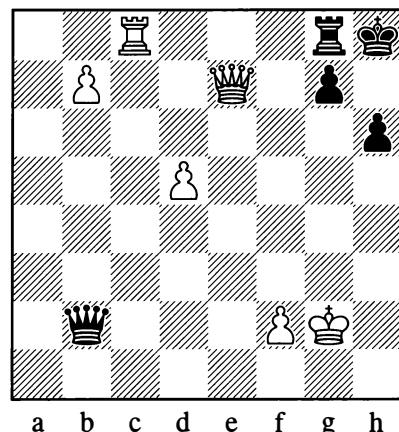
45. $\mathbb{R}c6!$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$

45... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  46. $\mathbb{W}f5\# \mathbb{Q}h8$  47. $\mathbb{R}xh6\# \mathbb{Q}xh6$  48. $\mathbb{W}e5\#$  wins.

46. $\mathbb{W}e7 \mathbb{Q}g8$  47.b7  $\mathbb{W}b5$

47... $\mathbb{W}a4$  does not help, as after 48. $\mathbb{W}e6$   $\mathbb{W}d1\#$  49. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}h5\#$  50. $\mathbb{Q}g2 \mathbb{W}g5\#$  51. $\mathbb{Q}f1$  Black runs out of checks.

48. $\mathbb{R}c8 \mathbb{W}b1\#$  49. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}b2$  50. $\mathbb{Q}g2$



50... $\mathbb{W}b4$

Did Kramnik blunder, or did he play this on the one-in-a-million chance that Karpov might overlook that his queen was en prise?

51. $\mathbb{W}xb4$

1–0

In the next round Karpov faced Morozevich. In the first game he tried the Petroff, but failed to equalize and had to defend a depressing major piece endgame. But the young Russian grandmaster faltered, and Karpov emerged with an extra pawn in a queen endgame, which he duly converted. In the second game he outplayed the young Russian grandmaster and agreed to a draw.

In the semi-final Karpov faced Shirov. In the first game Shirov played the Queen's Gambit Accepted and ventured an interesting exchange sacrifice. He got some initiative but Karpov defended well and held the endgame. In the second game Karpov used the Petroff again. He came close to equalizing, then got into some trouble but managed to draw the endgame, thus forcing a blitz play-off. In the first game Shirov built a dangerous-looking attack against the Petroff, but Karpov was able to neutralize it. Shirov then blundered with an unsound piece sacrifice, and Karpov converted his advantage easily. In the second blitz game Karpov won convincingly, as shown in the note to White's tenth move in Game 53, page 434.

In the final Karpov faced Anand, who by that time had surpassed even Kasparov when it came to rapidplay. In the first game Karpov improved on his first game against Shirov and came close to equalizing, but Anand retained some nagging pressure. Karpov tried too hastily to free himself, and Anand was able to win a pawn, which he eventually converted in the endgame. In the return game Anand equalized with the Semi-Slav, and went on to obtain a clear advantage before agreeing a draw to guarantee first prize.

Despite his eventual defeat in the final, the Eurotel result was a great achievement for Karpov. It was a huge event where virtually all the top players in the world were participating. As mentioned previously, this was Karpov's

last world-class result at an individual event. It came more than thirty years after his first such result, at the Alekhine Memorial in Moscow 1971.

\*\*\*

Karpov played in several more rapid events later in the year, most notably Cap d'Adge and Corsica, both of which saw him finish as the losing finalist, against Gelfand and Anand respectively.

Karpov's final event of the year was a four-game rapid match against Kasparov in New York. In the first game Kasparov played the Grünfeld dynamically, sacrificing a pawn for active play. Karpov could have settled for an equal position but instead he ambitiously sacrificed an exchange for two pawns. The game remained complex and both players made mistakes, but eventually Kasparov prevailed. In the second game Kasparov introduced a strong novelty against the Petroff and later obtained two extra pawns. Karpov defended stubbornly and obtained some counterplay, while Kasparov ran short of time and then suffered a shocking collapse, sacrificing his queen without good reason, then blundering a piece when he still had good chances to defend with a fortress.

The third game was mentioned briefly on page 415 of the first volume. Now we will look at it in more detail.

## Game 58

**Anatoly Karpov – Garry Kasparov**

New York, rapid (3) 2002

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  d5 4. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$   
5. $\mathbb{Q}f4$**

Prior to this match Karpov had only played this line once before, in Game 1 of his third

championship match against Kasparov. Evidently Karpov had worked on it and prepared it for the present match.

### 5...dxc4

In the aforementioned game Kasparov played 5...c5 and drew comfortably. In the first game of the present match he castled, but the same position was soon reached.

### 6.♗c1

This had never been played before, but Karpov probably just wanted to confuse his opponent slightly before returning to mainstream theory.

### 6...0–0 7.e3

7.e4 is the other main move, but leads to a more dynamic battle which would have played into Kasparov's strengths.

### 7...♝bd7

In the first game Kasparov went for a different approach: 7...♝e6 8.♝g5 ♜g4 9.f3 ♜c8 10.♝xc4 c6 11.♗b3 e6 12.♝ge4 ♜d5 13.♝xd5 cxd5 14.♝d6 ♜c6 15.♝xb7 (15.0–0!?) 15...♝h4† 16.♝g3 ♜h6 17.♝e2 ♜xb7 18.♝xb7 ♜a5 19.♝b4 ♜c4 20.♝xc4!?. Karpov avoided equality with this exchange sacrifice. 20...dxc4 21.♝f2 ♜fc8 22.♝c1 ♜f8 23.♝a4 ♜g5 24.♝xc4 The position is dynamically balanced, although Black eventually triumphed after mistakes on both sides, Karpov – Kasparov, New York (rapid – 1) 2002.

### 8.♝xc4 c5 9.dxc5 ♜xc5 10.0–0 ♜e6

As usual, Kasparov plays the opening purposefully.

### 11.♝xe6 ♜xe6 12.♝e5 ♜xd1

The queenless position should be fine for Black, although he could also have avoided it with 12...♜a5 (or 12...♜b6!?) 13.♗b3 ♜c5 14.♗c4 ♜cd7 with equality.

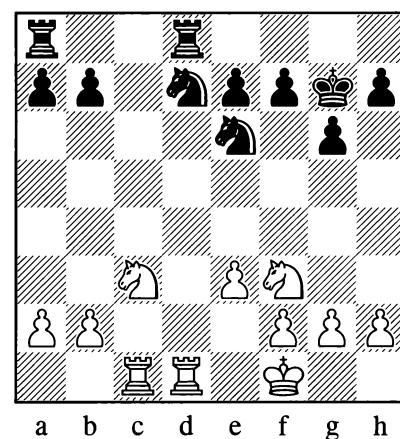
### 13.♝fd1 ♜fd8 14.♔f1

Karpov sensibly centralizes his king in anticipation of the endgame.

### 14...♝d7?

Kasparov makes his first step on the way to his eventual demise. Black's simplest solution was 14...♝ac8, bringing his last undeveloped piece into play. Play might continue 15.♝e2 and now after 15...♝e8 or 15...♝d7 it is unlikely that even Karpov would have been able to squeeze anything out of White's tiny advantage.

### 15.♝xg7 ♜xg7



### 16.♝d5!

Karpov poses a difficult problem to the defence.

### 16...♝b6!

Kasparov makes the right decision and undertakes doubled pawns in order to relieve the pressure.

After 16...♝f8? 17.♝c7 White gets a big advantage and will soon win material.

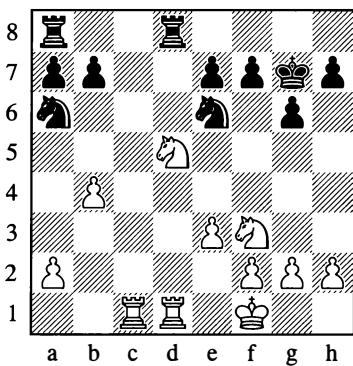
### 16...♝dc5!?

This is riskier than the game continuation, but not entirely bad.

**17.b4**

17... $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  is less convincing: 17... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  18. $\mathbb{E}c2!$   $\mathbb{Q}b4!$  (On 18... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  the beautiful 19. $\mathbb{Q}c8!$  causes problems.) 19. $\mathbb{E}cd2$   $\mathbb{E}xd2$  20. $\mathbb{E}xd2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa2$  21. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}b8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{E}d8$  Black should be okay in this endgame. Had this position occurred in the game, Karpov may well have opted for the simple 17. $\mathbb{Q}e2?!$ , improving the king and preventing the knight invasion on d3. In this case White retains a pleasant and risk-free advantage.

17... $\mathbb{Q}a6$

**18.b5?!**

This appears critical, but it does not quite achieve the desired result.

18.a3 maintains a slight plus for White.

18... $\mathbb{Q}ac7$

18... $\mathbb{Q}ac5?$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xe7$  is a safe extra pawn for White.

19. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{E}xd1\uparrow$  20. $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xc7$  21. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}c8$

22.b6

After 22. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  Black has compensation for the pawn.

22... $\mathbb{A}xb6$  23. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  24. $\mathbb{E}xb7$   $\mathbb{E}c1\uparrow$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e2$

$\mathbb{Q}c5$  26. $\mathbb{E}xb6$   $\mathbb{E}c2\uparrow$

Despite his two-pawn deficit, Black is active enough to hold a draw.

**17. $\mathbb{Q}xb6$   $\mathbb{A}xb6$** 

Karpov must have been happy to obtain a position with a slight but permanent advantage thanks to Black's doubled pawns.

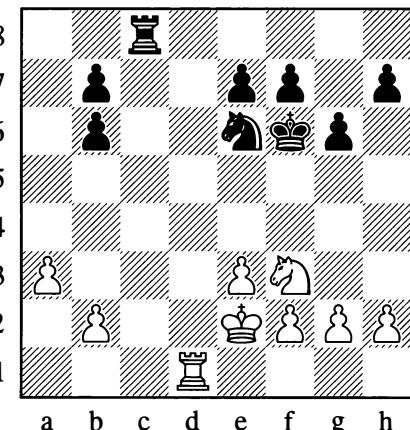
**18.a3  $\mathbb{E}xd1\uparrow$** 

18... $b5$  also fails to solve Black's problems: 19. $\mathbb{E}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  (20... $b4$  21. $\mathbb{axb4}$  White's extra pawn may be doubled, but it still gives him decent winning chances.) 21. $\mathbb{Q}d2!$  White plans to play  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  and  $\mathbb{Q}c5$  to exchange the defensive knight. 21... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}d5$  23. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  White will gain control of the d-file soon.

**19. $\mathbb{E}xd1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6!$** 

Kasparov makes the right decision in activating his king.

20... $\mathbb{E}c2\uparrow$  was riskier, although it may still have been playable: 21. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  22. $b4!$  Restricting the enemy knight. (After 22. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  23. $b4$   $\mathbb{Q}e4$  24. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  25. $\mathbb{E}xe7$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  26. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{E}c2\uparrow$  27. $\mathbb{Q}d1$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  Black is active enough.) 22... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  23. $\mathbb{E}d7$   $\mathbb{E}c2\uparrow$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{E}c7$  25. $\mathbb{E}xc7$  It is hard to tell whether White can exploit his opponent's doubled pawns.

**21. $\mathbb{Q}e1!$** 

Preventing a rook invasion on c2.

**21... $\mathbb{E}c4$** 

Kasparov decides to avoid a rook exchange. It was worth considering 21... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , although White can keep some advantage with 22. $\mathbb{E}d4!$ .

21...b5!!

With this active move Black hopes to exchange one of his weak pawns, but achieving it is easier said than done.

22.♕d3

22.♕d7 ♔c5 (22...♝c7 23.♕xc7 ♔xc7 24.♔d3 ♔e6 25.♔f3 is similar.) 23.♕d4 ♔e6 24.♕d5 (24.♕d7 ♔c5) 24...♝c5 25.♕d7 ♘c7 26.♕xc7 ♔xc7 The knight endgame is somewhat unpleasant for Black, but he has decent chances to hold it.

22...♝c4

22...♝c2† 23.♕d2 ♘xd2† 24.♔xd2 ♔d8 25.♔c3 ♔c6 26.♔c5 wins a pawn.

23.♕d2 ♔c5 24.♔xc5 ♘xc5 25.b4 ♘g5

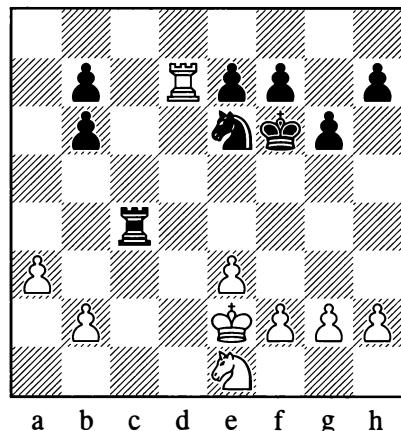
25...♝c3 26.♕d7 wins a pawn.

25...♝h5 26.g4! is strong.

26.g3 ♔e6 27.e4

White continues to press.

22.♕d7



22...♔c5?

True to his style, Kasparov opts for active defence, but the position does not justify it. Instead he should have gone for one of the following alternatives:

22...♝c7 23.♕xc7 ♔xc7 24.♔f3 ♔f5 25.♔d3

White's advantage is unquestionable, although it is hard to say if he can win. Kasparov

was evidently not satisfied by this type of endgame.

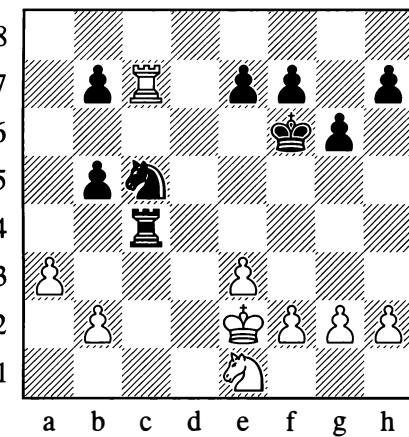
Another idea is to block the seventh rank with 22...♝c7 and then chase the rook away:

23.♔d3 ♔e6 24.♕d8! ♔d5 25.♕h8 (25.♔d2 f5 26.♔c1 ♔f6 27.♔e2 ♔e4† 28.♔d3 also gives White some advantage.) 25...h5 26.♔d2 White remains on top, but his advantage is smaller than in the game.

23.♕c7!

Karpov creates an unpleasant pin and threatens to win material with b4. Black cannot avoid losing a pawn.

23...b5



24.f3!

Before winning a pawn Karpov takes away the e4-square from the black knight.

24...e5

24...♔a4 does not help: 25.♕xb7 ♘c5 (25...♔xb2 26.♗b6† e6 27.♕xb5 ♔a4 28.♗b4 After exchanging rooks White wins comfortably.) 26.b4 ♘c6 27.e4 g5 28.♔e3 ♘c3† 29.♔d2 White keeps the extra pawn and a winning position.

25.b4

Karpov sees no further improving moves, so he collects the b7-pawn.

**25...Qa4 26.Qxb7**

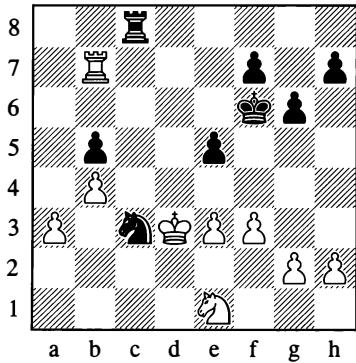
Karpov eats the first b-pawn, and the second one could soon be on the menu.

**26...Rc6**

**26...Qc3†!?**

This move contains more poison than one might expect.

**27.Qd3 Rc8**



**28.e4!**

28.Qc2 Qb1! gives Black counterplay.

28.Qb6†?! is reasonable: 28...Qg7 29.e4 Rc7

30.g3! This subtle move prepares f4 to vacate the f3-square for the knight. (30.Qc2 Qb1!)

30...h5 (30...g5? weakens the f5-square:

31.Qc2! Qb1 32.Qe3+–) 31.f4 White has decent winning chances. (But not 31.Qg2? due to 31...Qb1!.)

**28...Rc6 29.f4!?**

29.g3 is also good enough: 29...Qf6 (29...h5?! 30.Qb6† Qe7 31.f4+–) 30.Qc2

Qb1 31.Qe3 White succeeds in improving his knight, which should enable him to win the game.

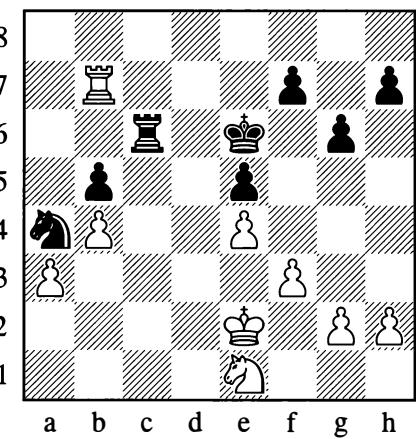
**29...Qb1**

29...exf4 30.Qf3 gives White excellent winning chances.

30.Rxb5 Rc3† 31.Qe2 exf4 32.Qd3 Rc2† 33.Qf3 Qxa3 34.Qxf4†

White is a healthy pawn up, and should win without too many problems.

**27.e4 Re6**



**28.h4!?**

Karpov anticipates the arrival of the enemy rook on the second rank, and removes a potentially vulnerable pawn. Nevertheless he should have taken the opportunity to improve his knight first with 28.Qd3!.

**28...h5?**

Kasparov fails to take the opportunity with which he was presented.

**28...Qc3†! 29.Qe3 Ra6**

29...Qd1† is tricky, but not quite sufficient against accurate play: 30.Qd3 Rd6† 31.Qc2! Qe3† 32.Qc3! Qd1† 33.Qb3 White has utilized an unusual triangulation to avoid the checks. 33...Qe3 34.Rxb5 Rd1 35.Qc2+– 30.Qd3 Rxa3 31.Rb6† Qe7 32.Qd2 Qb1† 32...f6 33.Rb7† wins. 33.Qc2 Rc3† 34.Qxb1 Rxd3 35.Rxb5 Qe6 36.Qc2 Re3

White keeps some winning chances with his extra pawn, but in a rook ending this is far from a guarantee of victory.

**29.Qd3!**

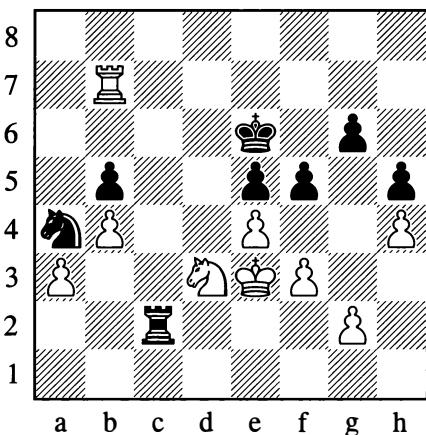
Karpov corrects the previous error and activates his knight.

**29... $\mathbb{E}c2\#$**

After 29...f6 30. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}c3$  31. $\mathbb{E}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}xa3$  32. $\mathbb{E}a5$ ! the pin decides the game.

**30. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathfrak{f}$**

Taking the g2-pawn is too slow: 30... $\mathbb{E}xg2$  31. $\mathbb{E}xb5$  f6 (31... $\mathbb{E}e2\#$  32. $\mathbb{Q}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}c3\#$  33. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  34.a4+–) 32. $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}c3$  33. $\mathbb{Q}c5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  34. $\mathbb{E}a7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  35.a4 White wins easily thanks to his two connected passed pawns.



**31.g3!**

Karpov finds the simplest way to neutralize Black's activity.

**31...fxe4 32.fxe4  $\mathbb{E}g2$  33. $\mathbb{E}xb5$**

Karpov's plan prevails, and he obtains two connected passed pawn. 33. $\mathbb{Q}f3\text{?}$  fails to make any progress after 33... $\mathbb{E}d2$ .

**33... $\mathbb{E}xg3\#$  34. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{E}g2\#$  35. $\mathbb{Q}e1\!$**

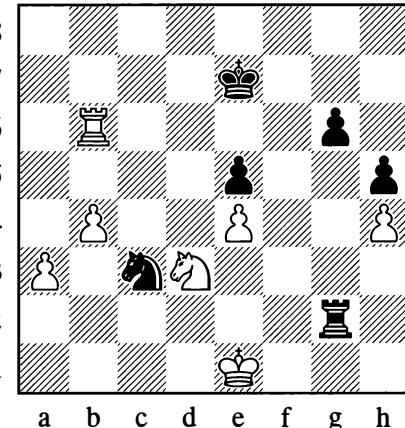
Karpov finds the right way to escape the checks.

**35... $\mathbb{Q}c3$**

At long last the black knight gets a say in the proceedings, but it is too late to save the game.

35... $\mathbb{E}g4$  36. $\mathbb{E}xe5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  37. $\mathbb{E}d5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{E}xh4$  39. $\mathbb{E}a5$  is winning for White.

**36. $\mathbb{E}b6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$**



**37. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$**

Karpov wins a second pawn, and the outcome of the game is decided.

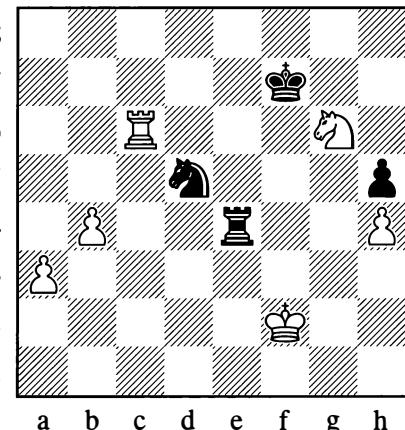
**37... $\mathbb{E}e2\#$**

37...g5 also fails to save the game: 38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}g3$  39. $\mathbb{Q}g6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  40.e5 gxh4 41. $\mathbb{Q}xh4\text{--}$

**38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}xe4$  39. $\mathbb{Q}xg6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}f7$  40. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$**

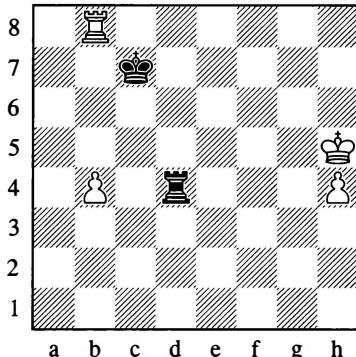
After 40... $\mathbb{Q}b1$  the finish might have been 41.a4  $\mathbb{Q}d2$  42.a5  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  43. $\mathbb{E}c6$   $\mathbb{Q}a3$  44.a6  $\mathbb{E}xb4$  45.a7  $\mathbb{E}a4$  46. $\mathbb{Q}e5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  47. $\mathbb{E}c7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  48. $\mathbb{E}b7$  and White wins.

**41. $\mathbb{E}c6$**



**41...Qxb4?!**

Sacrificing the knight is a desperate try. 41...Qe7! was the best chance, as White must play accurately to win the rook ending: 42.Qxe7 (There is also 42.Qc4?! Bxc4 43.Qe5† Qe6 44.Qxc4 Qf5 45.a4 when White should be winning.) 42...Bxe7 43.Qg3 Be3† 44.Qf4 Bxa3 45.Qg5 Bd3 46.Qc5 (46.Qxh5? Bd5†! enables Black to escape.) 46...Bd4 47.Bb5 Qd6 48.Qxh5 Qc6 49.Qc5† Qd6 50.Bb5 Qc6 51.Bb8 Qc7



52.Bh8!! The only way to win. 52...Bxb4 53.Qg6+–

**42.axb4 Bxb4 43.Qe5†!**

Karpov ensures that his last pawn remains on the board.

**43...Bg7 44.Qc4 Bb5 45.Qd3 Qf6 46.Qc5**

**1–0**

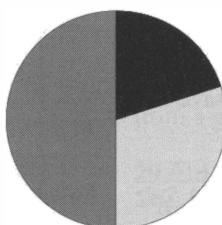
In the final game Karpov made a mistake in the Petroff, but Kasparov missed a relatively easy win. Karpov then got an edge but agreed a draw to win the match. Karpov had a slice of good fortune, but deserved his success, and did well to survive the games where Kasparov dominated the opening. The world number one was clearly not at his best; perhaps he had not fully regained his confidence after his defeat to Kramnik two years earlier.

## 2002 Summary

Belgian Team Championship: 1/1 (+1 =0 –0)

Nao Masters, Cannes (3rd-7th place): 4½/9 (+2 =5 –2)

Total 55.0% (+3 =5 –2)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2003

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Rating 2688 (29 in the world)

Karpov's first event of the year was Wijk aan Zee. In the first round he equalized against Krasenkow, then sacrificed an exchange in the middlegame. The Russian-born Polish grandmaster went wrong and soon had to resign. In the next two games he drew with Shirov and Grischuk; in both games White had slight pressure but never any serious advantage.

In Round 4 Karpov made some mistakes against Judit Polgar and allowed his king to become stuck in the centre. He never recovered, and despite stubborn defence he eventually succumbed. In the next game Karpov sacrificed a piece for three pawns on the black side of a Caro-Kann against Anand, but his activity slowly disappeared and he eventually went down. He was also in trouble in the next round against Radjabov, but managed to simplify to an endgame with rook versus rook and bishop, which he managed to hold, thus avoiding a third successive defeat.

In Round 7 Karpov held a draw against Topalov; he was always a bit worse but never in real trouble. Then he defeated Van Wely, in a game referenced in the note to White's sixth move in Game 56. He drew his next three games fairly solidly against Timman, Bareev and Ivanchuk. In Round 12 he made a mistake in a worse position against Ponomariov, which allowed the recently-crowned FIDE World Champion to win a pawn and later the game. In the final round Karpov took a quick draw with Kramnik to finish on 6/13, which left him in equal eleventh place.

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Karpov's next event was a rapid match against the future European Champion Bartłomiej Macieja. He defeated the Polish grandmaster by a convincing score of 6–2, with five wins, two draws and one loss.

Karpov's next significant event was the Spanish Team Championship, where he played six games. He started with a good win over Kornev, then took a quick draw with Campos Moreno.

In his third game Karpov faced Mihail Marin. This was the Romanian grandmaster's only encounter with Karpov, but he drew his other three games against world champions.

## Game 59

Mihail Marin – Anatoly Karpov

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Lanzarote 2003

1.c4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2. $\mathbb{Q}c3$  e5 3. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  4.g3  $\mathbb{Q}c5$

In the first volume of his *Grandmaster Repertoire* series on the English Opening, Marin refers to Black's set-up as the Karpov Variation. The twelfth World Champion has certainly been one of the most prominent exponents of this system, although he has chosen 4... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  more frequently.

**5. $\mathbb{Q}g2$  d6 6.0–0 0–0 7.d3 h6 8.a3 a5**

In his two previous games Karpov pushed the a-pawn only one square.

**9.e3  $\mathbb{Q}e8$**

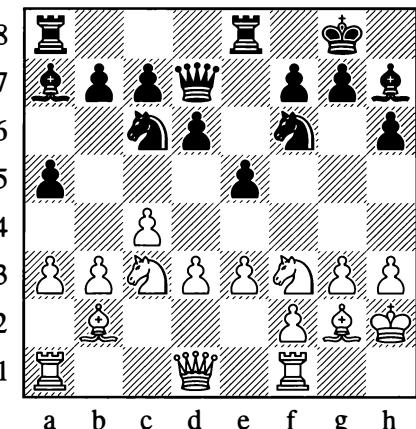
Karpov remains flexible and delays committing his light-squared bishop for another move.

**10.b3  $\mathbb{Q}f5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}a7$**

Now that White's bishop has gone to b2, Karpov no longer needs his bishop on c5 to prevent b4. Therefore he retreats it so that d3-d4 will not come with gain of tempo.

**12.h3  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  13. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$**

Karpov makes a precautionary retreat of the other bishop as well.



**14. $\mathbb{Q}g1!$**

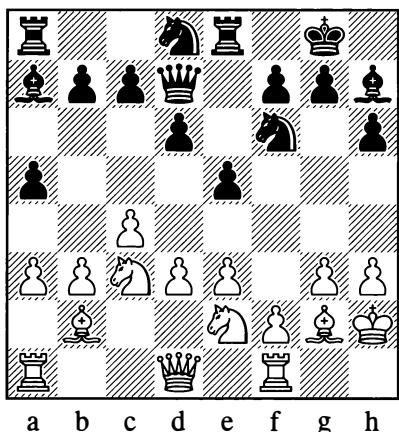
Marin brings his knight to a more flexible location and prepares to push his e- and f-pawns. In a previous game Ehlvest preferred 14. $\mathbb{Q}h4$  and drew against Renet.

Another possibility is 14.d4, after which Black should play 14... $\mathbb{Q}ad8$ .

**14... $\mathbb{Q}d8$**

Karpov improves the knight and clears the way for the c7-pawn.

**15. $\mathbb{Q}ge2$**



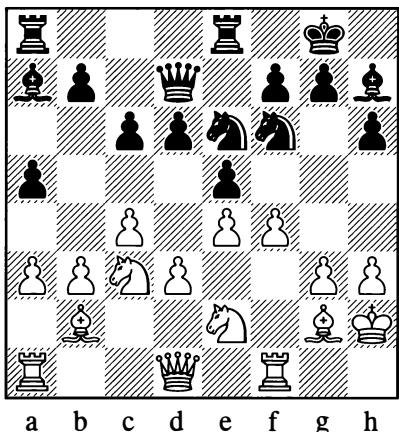
**15...c6!**

Karpov blocks the long diagonal, thus enabling his knight to move, while also preparing to gain space in the centre with ...d5.

**16.e4**

Preventing the central expansion.

**16... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  17.f4**



**17...b5!?**

Since ...d5 has been prevented, Karpov chooses another way of gaining space, which is often important in positions where all or most of the pawns remain on the board.

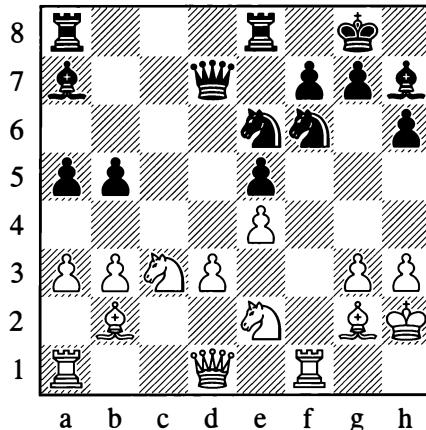
The decision to play the text move required considerable bravery, as Black is inviting his opponent to make a dangerous exchange sacrifice for very real compensation. In order to judge it correctly, Karpov had to evaluate several complex variations far in advance.

Black had a couple of reasonable alternatives in 17... $\mathbb{Q}d4$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  and 17...exf4 18. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}xf4$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xf4$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$ , both of which aim to make use of the recently-weakened d4-square.

**18.cxb5 cxb5 19.fxe5**

19. $\mathbb{W}d2$  b4 20. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}b5$  is unpleasant for White.

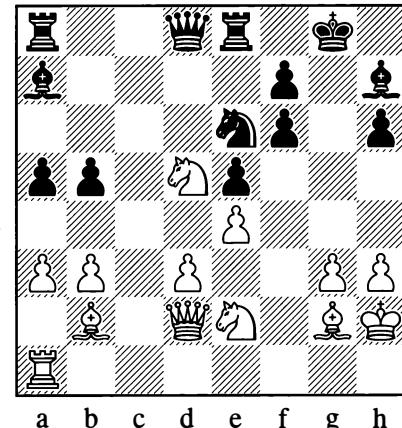
In Chapter 4 of the aforementioned book, Marin recommends 19.b4! as the right way for White to proceed. The Romanian grandmaster gives some nice analysis, which is summarized here: 19... $\mathbb{Q}d4$ ?! This allows White to showcase his idea. Black should probably look for an improvement here, although he must constantly be on the lookout for the  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  sacrifice. 20.fxe5!  $dxe5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$ ! This is an improved version of the sacrifice seen in the game. 21... $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  (21...gxf6 22. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ ) 22. $\mathbb{W}xe2$  gxf6 23. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  (23... $\mathbb{E}e6$  24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  25. $\mathbb{W}h5$ ) 24. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  25. $\mathbb{W}g4\uparrow$  (25.h4!?) 25... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  (25... $\mathbb{Q}f8$ ? 26. $\mathbb{Q}xe5!+$ –) 26. $\mathbb{W}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  27. $\mathbb{Q}c1$  h5 28.g4 hxg4 29. $\mathbb{Q}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  30.hxg4+ Black has serious problems in all these lines, as pointed out in Marin's book. It would have been interesting to see how Karpov would have reacted had 19.b4 appeared on the board.

**19...dxe5****20. $\mathbb{Q}xf6$** 

Marin cannot resist the sacrifice. In return for the material investment he fractures Black's pawn structure, while obtaining the d5-square for his knight and attacking chances on the kingside. Furthermore, he has chances to bury the h7-bishop, just as in the classic game Winter – Capablanca, Hastings 1919.

**20...gxf6 21. $\mathbb{Q}d5$   $\mathbb{W}d8$** 

Black must defend the f6-pawn.

**22. $\mathbb{W}d2$** **22... $\mathbb{Q}c7$** 

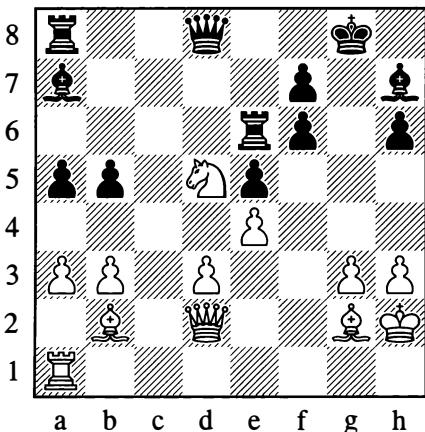
Karpov exchanges the opponent's strong knight and makes room for his rook to defend the f6-pawn from the adjacent square.

22... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  might have led to a repetition after 23. $\mathbb{W}xh6$   $\mathbb{E}e6$  24. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $f5$  25. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  26. $\mathbb{W}h6$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$ . Black cannot play for a win with 26... $\mathbb{Q}xb3?$  on account of 27. $\mathbb{Q}ef4$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  28. $\mathbb{W}h4$  when White's attack is too strong.

### 23. $\mathbb{Q}ef4$

23. $\mathbb{Q}xc7$   $\mathbb{W}xc7$  24. $\mathbb{W}xh6?$  allows 24... $\mathbb{W}c2$  winning a piece.

### 23... $\mathbb{A}xd5$ 24. $\mathbb{A}xd5$ $\mathbb{E}e6$



### 25.g4

Marin buries the bishop à la Capablanca, but the cage is less secure than it was in the aforementioned game.

25. $\mathbb{E}f1!$ ? sets a small trap, as 25... $\mathbb{Q}g7??$  loses to 26. $\mathbb{E}xf6!$ . However, the position would remain balanced after 25... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ , 25... $\mathbb{Q}g6$  or 25... $\mathbb{E}c8$ .

### 25. $\mathbb{W}xh6!$

Taking the pawn was the most challenging continuation.

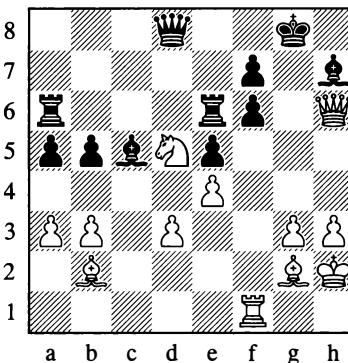
### 25... $\mathbb{Q}c5!$

For the moment Black should organize his defence. Attempts to wrest the initiative could easily backfire.

25... $f5?$ ! 26. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  27. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{Q}b8$  28. $\mathbb{E}xf5$   $\mathbb{Q}xf5$  29. $exf5$   $\mathbb{E}ec6$  30. $f6$   $\mathbb{E}xf6$  31. $\mathbb{W}g5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{E}g6$  32. $\mathbb{Q}e7\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  33. $\mathbb{W}xe5\uparrow$  White is somewhat better.

25... $\mathbb{E}c8$  26. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}c2?$  (26... $\mathbb{E}cc6$  is better, when 27. $\mathbb{W}d2$  reaches an unclear but roughly balanced position.) 27. $\mathbb{E}xf6$   $\mathbb{W}c8$  (27... $\mathbb{E}xb2$  28. $\mathbb{E}xe6\rightarrow$ ) 28. $\mathbb{W}g5\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  29. $h4$   $\mathbb{E}xb2$  30. $\mathbb{W}h6\uparrow$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  31. $\mathbb{W}xh7$  White is winning.

### 26. $\mathbb{E}f1$ $\mathbb{E}aa6$



### 27.h4

27. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{W}f8$  and 27. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  28. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  are both okay for Black.

### 27...b4

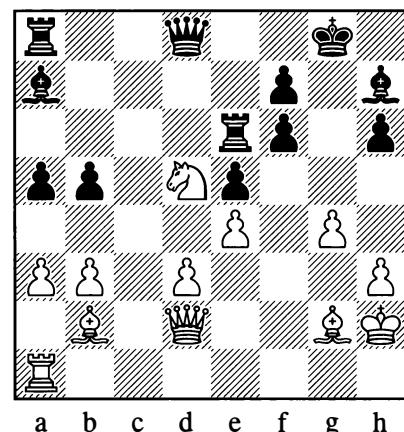
27... $f5?$ ! Paradoxically, by exchanging one of his doubled pawns, Black weakens his pawn structure. 28. $\mathbb{W}h5$   $\mathbb{E}h6$  29. $\mathbb{W}f3$  White has nice play after 29... $f4$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  or 29... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  30. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ .

### 28.a4 $\mathbb{E}ac6$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}h3$ $\mathbb{Q}f8$

29... $\mathbb{E}ed6$  is also playable.

### 30. $\mathbb{W}d2$ $\mathbb{E}ed6$

The position is balanced.



**25...♜c8**

There are no immediate threats, so Karpov sensibly improves his rook.

**26.♝f1**

26.♛c3 can be met by 26...a4.

**26...♜c5 27.♝c3!**

Marin finds a good way to combine play on both flanks.

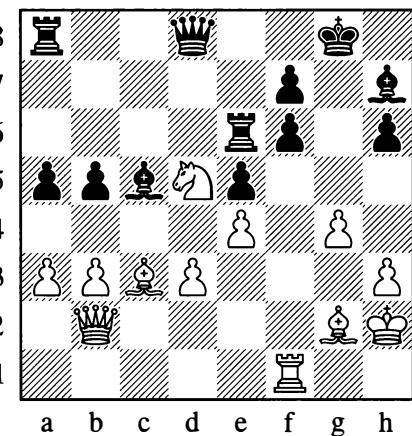
**27...♜a8!**

Karpov finds the right reply, even if it means losing time. 27...a4 was possible, although after 28.bxa4 bxa4 29.♜a5 Black must give up the f6-pawn.

27...♝xa3? would have been a serious mistake, and after 28.♜xa5 ♜d6 29.b4 the bishop is in danger. 29...♝c6 30.♝xh6 ♜g6 31.♝xf6 In a few short moves White has obtained two pawns and good attacking chances.

**28.♝b2?!**

It was not too late to play 28.♝xh6 when the position would have remained balanced.

**28...♜aa6!**

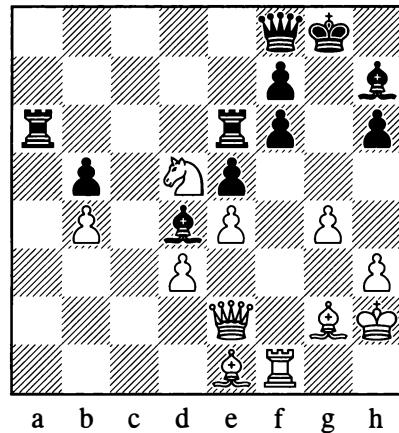
Karpov overprotects the f6-pawn, freeing his queen for other duties.

**29.♚e1 ♜f8!**

After defending for a while Karpov makes an attacking move and forces the opening of another queenside file for his rooks.

**30.b4?**

Marin chooses the wrong pawn to advance. 30.a4! bxa4 31.bxa4 would have minimised White's disadvantage. The pawn on a4 has less protection than the b4-pawn in the game, but more important is the fact that Black will have a harder time utilizing the open b-file, as the b6-square is not available. Furthermore, in this line Black must keep an eye on the vulnerable a5-pawn.

**30...axb4 31.axb4 ♜d4 32.♝e2****32...♜ed6!**

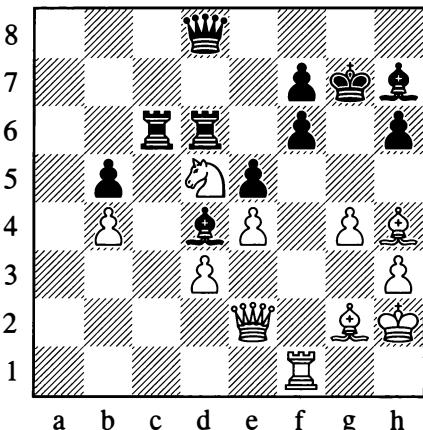
Karpov's strategy is to threaten to sacrifice back the exchange on d5 under favourable circumstances.

It was also possible to begin with 32...♝d8!, which is likely to lead to the same position as the game continuation in slightly fewer moves.

**33.♝c7 ♜ab6 34.♝d5 ♜bc6 35.♝h4 ♜d8  
36.♝a2 ♜g7**

Karpov uses the king to defend the f6-pawn, in order to give his heavy pieces more freedom.

37.  $\mathbb{W}e2$



37...  $\mathbb{R}a6!$

Karpov improves the prospects of his rooks. In certain lines he may wish to force an exchange on the a1-square, while in others he may be able to invade with one or even both rooks on the second rank.

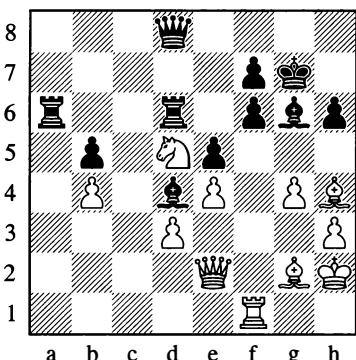
38.  $\mathbb{W}f3?$

This turns out to be an unfortunate choice.

38.  $\mathbb{W}d2!$

White's best chance is to wait and challenge his opponent to make progress.

38...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$  39.  $\mathbb{W}e2$

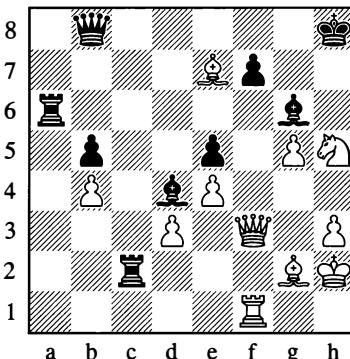


39...  $\mathbb{W}b8!$

This seems to be the most precise continuation. Black wants to play ...  $\mathbb{W}a7$  and invade on the second rank.

39...  $\mathbb{W}c8$  40.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}c2?$  squanders Black's advantage: 41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}e7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  43.  $g5$  White is in the game.

39...  $\mathbb{R}dc6$  is also strong, but allows White more options: 40.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}b8!$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  42.  $g5!$  (42.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{R}a2$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{R}cc2$  transposes to the main line below, beginning with 39...  $\mathbb{W}b8!$ ) 42...  $h5$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}e7$   $\mathbb{R}c2$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  45.  $\mathbb{Q}xh5$

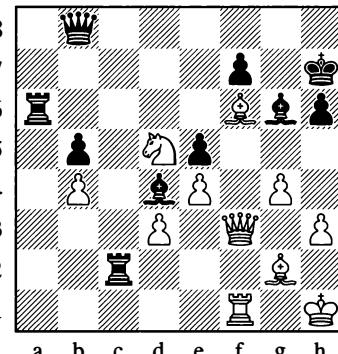


45...  $\mathbb{W}c7!!$  This subtle move wins convincingly. (45...  $\mathbb{R}aa2??$  allows mate in two.) 46.  $\mathbb{Q}f6\#$  White saves his bishop, but by blocking the f6-square he also saves Black's king. (46.  $\mathbb{Q}c5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  47.  $bxc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xh5$  48.  $\mathbb{W}xh5\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g8-$ +) 46...  $\mathbb{Q}g8$  Black will soon play ...  $\mathbb{R}aa2$  with decisive effect.

40.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$

40.  $\mathbb{W}f3?$   $\mathbb{R}xd5$  wins, as does 40.  $\mathbb{W}d2?!$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  41.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{R}a2$ .

40...  $\mathbb{R}dc6$  41.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{R}c2$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$



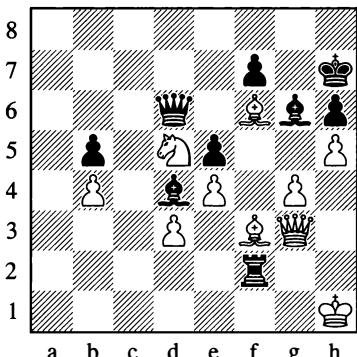
43.  $\mathbb{W}g3$

This seems to be the only way to prolong the game.

43...  $\mathbb{E}aa2$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{W}d6$  45. h4!

Instead of waiting for the axe to fall, White plays to trap the g6-bishop.

45...  $\mathbb{E}f2!$  46.  $\mathbb{E}xf2$   $\mathbb{E}xf2$  47. h5



47...  $\mathbb{W}a6!$

Threatening a deadly check on a1.

48.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$

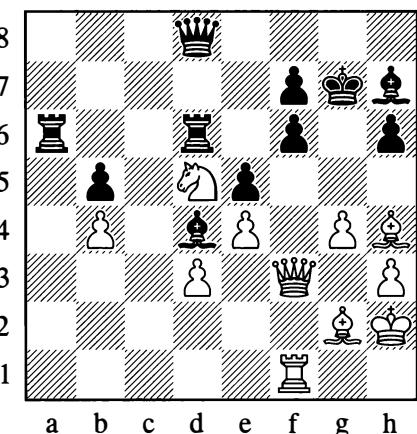
The immediate 48.  $h \times g6 \dagger$   $f \times g6$  changes nothing.

48...  $\mathbb{E}xf6$  49.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6 \dagger$   $\mathbb{W}xf6$  50.  $h \times g6 \dagger$

White can delay this move, but it is unlikely to make much difference.

50...  $f \times g6$

Despite the opposite-coloured bishops and (temporary) material equality, Black's positional advantages add up to serious winning chances.



38...  $\mathbb{E}xd5!$

Eighteen moves after Marin sacrificed the exchange, Karpov returns the material with decisive effect. The knight was a powerful piece which not only attacked f6, but also defended the b4-pawn.

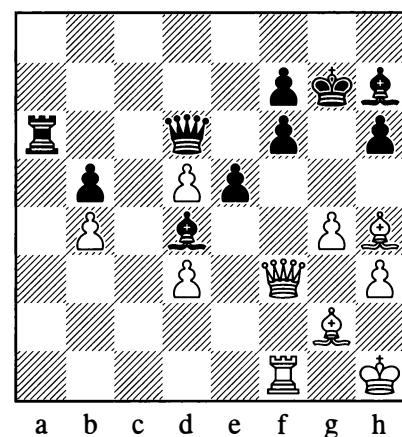
Although Karpov's move is the most effective route to victory, it is worth mentioning that 38...  $\mathbb{E}dc6$  was playable, with the eventual idea of penetrating to the second rank, for instance: 39.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g6$  40.  $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  (41.  $\mathbb{Q}xf6 \dagger?$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  42.  $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}c8 - +$ ) 41...  $\mathbb{W}b8$  42.  $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{E}a2$  43.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{E}cc2$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{E}d2$  Black has decent winning chances.

39.  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{W}d6!$

This is part of the plan which culminates in Black's next beautiful move.

40.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$

40.  $\mathbb{W}g3$  was no better: 40...  $\mathbb{W}xb4$  41.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  42.  $d \times e4$   $\mathbb{W}d2 \dagger$  43.  $\mathbb{W}g2$  (43.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{W}e2$  44.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{Q}a1 - +$ ) 43...  $\mathbb{W}d3$  44.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{W}xf3$  45.  $\mathbb{E}xf3$  b4 Black is winning.



40...  $\mathbb{Q}g6!!$

With this move Karpov not only defends f7 and creates an escape square for his king on h7 just in case, but also, quite incredibly, puts his opponent in zugzwang! It is a remarkable

achievement with so many pieces on the board.

#### 41.♗c1

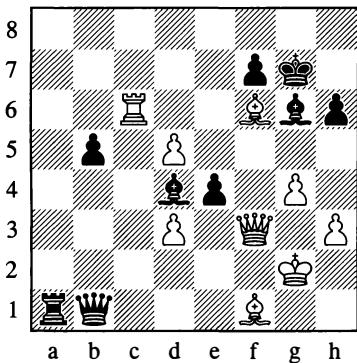
Any other reasonable move releases the pressure on the f6-pawn, allowing Black to take on b4. If White plays 41.♗b1 then 41...♝a3 wins the d3-pawn.

#### 41...♛xb4 42.♝c6

Marin sensibly tries to stir up problems.

#### 42...♝xc6

Karpov plays in his usual pragmatic style and simplifies to a winning endgame. He could also have won with an attack on the enemy king: 42...♝a1† 43.♚f1 (43.♚h2 ♛g1† 44.♚h1 ♜f2†+) 43...♛b1 44.♚g2 (44.♝xf6 e4 45.♛f4 ♛xd3+) 44...e4 45.♚xf6†



45...♚h7! This calm move seals Black's victory. (45...♝xf6?? 46.♛xf6† ♚h7 47.♝c8 even loses for Black.) 46.♛f4 ♜a2† 47.♚h1 ♜f2 White can resign.

#### 43.dxc6 e4!

Karpov buries his own bishop, but the benefits make it worthwhile. Now his dark-squared bishop will find a great home on e5, and the g2-bishop will be confined to a purely defensive role.

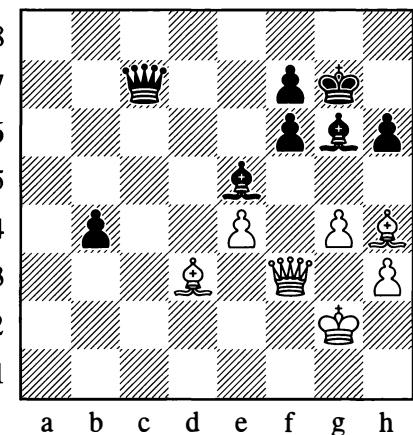
#### 44.dxe4 ♜e5 45.c7

45.♛d3 ♛c5 wins.

#### 45...♛c5 46.♚f1 b4 47.♚d3

Marin places his bishop on a square where it controls the promotion square of the b-pawn, while also defending the e4-pawn, which helps to keep the g6-bishop in its cage.

#### 47...♛xc7 48.♚g2



#### 48...b3?!

Pushing the pawn is natural, but it allows White an opportunity to organize his pieces in a more resilient defensive formation.

#### 48...♛c1!

Marin demonstrated that the immediate queen invasion was more accurate.

#### 49.♚f1

49.♚f1 ♛e3! (49...♛d2† also looks good enough: 50.♚f3 [50.♚f2 ♛f4+] 50...h5 51.♚g3 b3 52.♚b1 b2 53.♚d3 ♛c1-) 50.♚f3 ♛d2† Black wins, as pointed out by Marin.

#### 49...b3 50.♛xb3 ♜xe4†

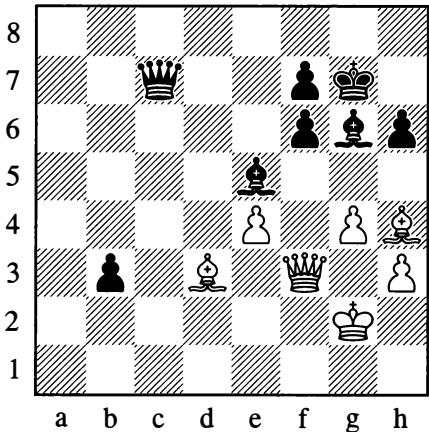
The attack is irresistible.

#### 51.♚g1

51.♚f2 ♛d2† 52.♚e2 ♜d4† 53.♚f1 ♜g2†! leads to mate.

#### 51...♛c5† 52.♚f2 ♜h2†!

Black checkmates, as Marin pointed out in his book.



49.♕f2?

White misses his opportunity. 49.♕d1? is also feeble: 49...b2 50.♗b1 ♕c1 51.♗d3 h5 52.♗f2 hxg4 53.hxg4 ♕f4+–

When I asked Mihail about this game, he mentioned that he could have obtained reasonable drawing chances with the help of a wonderful fortress idea. He told me he saw the concept during the game but for some reason decided not to try it. He was kind enough to send me his analysis, which I have reproduced below, with some additions of my own:

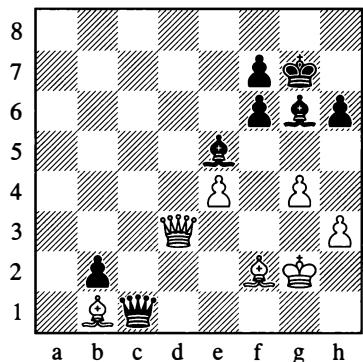
49.♗b1!

This is the reason why the black queen should have gone to c1 on the previous move.

49...b2

49...♕c2† is beautiful and imaginative, but not sufficient: 50.♗xc2 bxc2 51.♗a3 ♗xe4† (51...♗f4? 52.♗xf6†! wins.) 52.♗f2 ♗f4 53.♗e7 c1=♕ 54.♗xe4 White holds the draw.

50.♗d3 ♕c1 51.♗f2



The point of White's idea is that the bishop and queen provide a firm blockade of the b-pawn, while also securely defending the e4-pawn. Ultimately I suspect that Black is still winning, but even so, it is a pity that Marin did not choose this path, which would have tested his opponent's legendary endgame technique. Black has two main options:

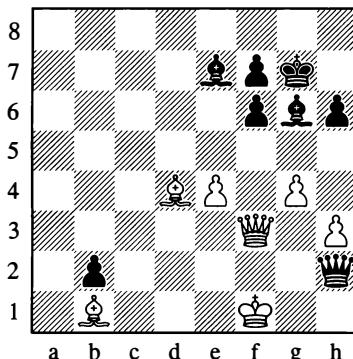
a) 51...♗f4

Marin did not consider this move, but it looks reasonable. Black is playing with his pieces before executing a pawn break.

52.♗f3 ♘h2† 53.♗f1 ♘d6 54.♗d4

White could consider 54.h4?!, although his position is difficult here too.

54...♗e7



55.♗c3

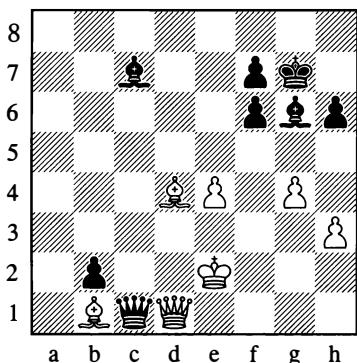
Another line is: 55.♗e1 ♘g8 56.♗f1 (56.♗c3 ♘g1† 57.♗f1 ♘e3†–; 56.♗d1 ♘b4 57.♗f2 ♘c7 58.♗e3 ♘c4 59.♗d3 ♘c1† 60.♗e2 h5 Black should be winning.) 56...♗d2 57.♗d3 ♘c1† 58.♗e2 h5 It is hard to give an absolute verdict, but I doubt that White can hold this position.

55...♗d8 56.♗d4

56.♗d3?! ♘g8 57.♗b1 ♘e7 58.♗d4 (58.♗d3 ♘c5) 58...♗d2 59.♗d3 ♘c1† 60.♗g2 ♘c5 61.♗xc5 ♘xc5 White's position remains critical, but he may be able to survive.

56...♗d2 57.♗d3 ♘c1† 58.♗e2 ♘c7 59.♗d1 59.♗f2 h5! creates fresh problems for the defence.

59.♗e3 ♖h1 60.♗d4 ♗e5 61.♗f2 h5! should also be winning for Black.



59...h5!

Black has manoeuvred for long enough, and now it is time to break down the enemy position.

60.♗e3 ♗f4!

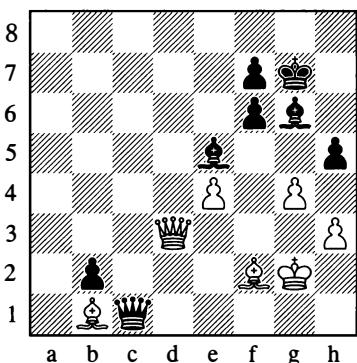
It is hard for White to keep his position together, for instance:

61.♗d4 ♗g5 62.♗d3 hxg4 63.hxg4 ♖f4  
64.♔e1 ♖xg4 65.♔xb2 ♖g1†

Black is winning.

b) 51...h5

This is the most natural move, and indeed it is the only one that Marin analyses. Once again White can resist for a while, but Black keeps excellent winning chances as we will see.

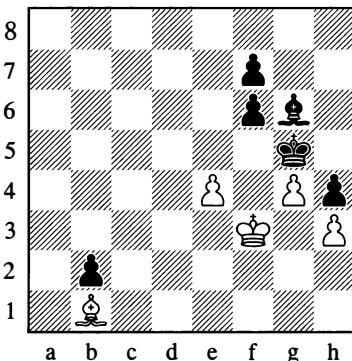


52.♔e3!

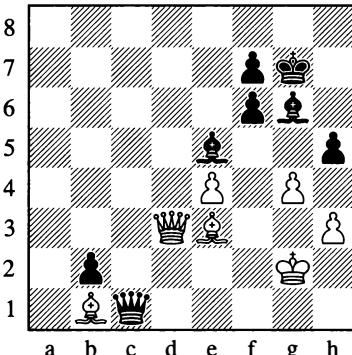
This is White's strongest defence.

52.♔g1 hxg4 53.hxg4 ♖f4 54.♗f3 ♖d2†  
55.♗f2 ♗d4 56.♗g3 ♗xf2† 57.♗xf2 ♖c1  
58.♗c2 ♗h7 (58...♗h6 59.♗h2† sends the king back.) 59.♗d3 ♗h6 60.♗d4 ♗g5  
61.♗d5† ♗g6 62.♗d3 ♗g7 63.♗c2 ♗g6  
64.♗d3 ♗h6 Black should be winning this endgame.

52.♔c2 ♖f4 53.♗f3 ♖h2† 54.♗f1 h4! Black can target the h3-pawn. 55.♔b1 ♗g3 56.♗g2 (56.♗xg3 hxg3! 57.♗g2 ♗h6! 58.♗xh2 gxh2 59.♗g2 ♗g5 60.♗xh2 ♗f4→) 56...♖xg2† 57.♗xg2 ♗xf2 58.♗xf2 ♗h6 59.♗e3 ♗g5 60.♗f3



60...♗h7! It turns out that Black's bishop is not completely buried. 61.♗e3 ♗g8 62.♗f3 f5! 63.gxf5 (After 63.exf5 f6 64.♗e3 ♗d5 White is in zugzwang.) 63...f6 64.♗e3 ♗f7! (64...♗c4 65.♗d4 ♗f1 66.e5 ♗xh3 67.e6 ♗xf5 68.♗xf5 ♗xf5 69.e7 b1=♖ also wins.) 65.♗f3 ♗c4 Black is winning.



52...hxg4

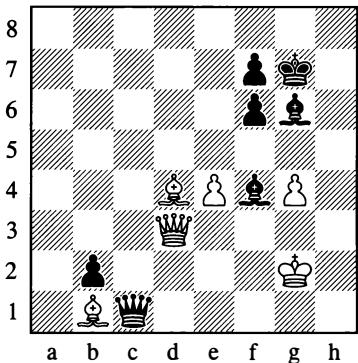
This time it is better to create a weakness on g4 than on h3.

52...h4? 53.♔f2! (53.♕c2 ♔b8! 54.♔b1 ♕c7 is unpleasant.) 53...♕f4 54.♔xh4 ♕h2† 55.♔f1 ♕xe4 56.♕xe4 ♕xh3† 57.♔e2 ♕xh4 Black's winning chances are minimal.

53.hxg4 ♔f4!

53...♔b8 54.♕c2 defends.

54.♔d4



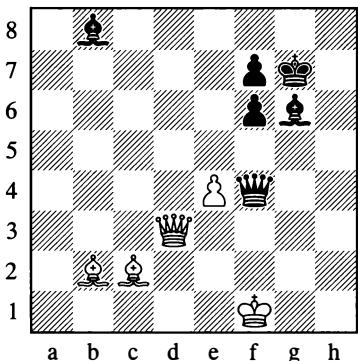
54...♔b8!!

The point of this move is to prepare a queen and bishop battery.

55.♕c3

55.♕e3 ♕c7! 56.♔g1 ♕f4 is winning.

55.♕c2 ♕f4! Black can afford to give up his advanced passed pawn to go after the enemy king. 56.♔xb2 ♕xg4† 57.♔f1 ♕f4†



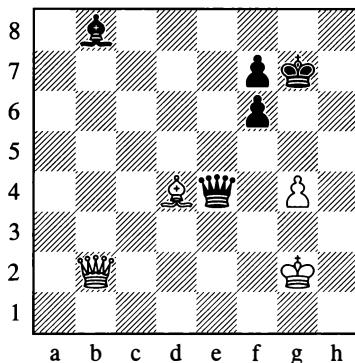
58.♔e1 (58.♔g2 ♕h2† 59.♔f1 ♔h5 White's king is in serious trouble.) 58...♕h2 59.♕e2

♕g1† 60.♔d2 ♕g5† 61.♔c3 ♔e5† 62.♔b3 ♔xb2 63.♔xb2 ♕e5† 64.♔c1 f5 Black is winning.

55...♕f4

After 55...♕xb1?? 56.♔xf6† Black is mated.

56.♕xb2 ♕xe4† 57.♔xe4 ♕xe4†



58.♔f1

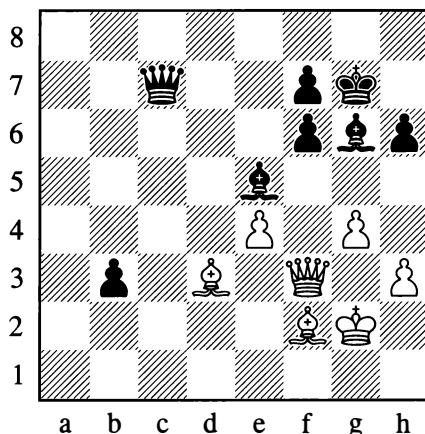
58.♔f2 ♕f4† does not help White.

58...♔e5

58...♕f4† should also be good enough.

59.♔xe5 fxe5

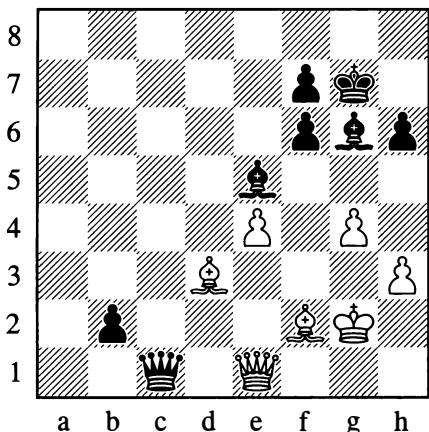
The queen ending looks to be winning.



49...♕c1!

It would be interesting to know if Karpov noticed the aforementioned defensive idea and deliberately prevented it, or if he merely chose this move based on general principles. Either way, it is good enough to win the game.

50.  $\mathbb{W}e3$  b2 51.  $\mathbb{W}e1$



51... h5!

Karpov starts his campaign to free the bishop.

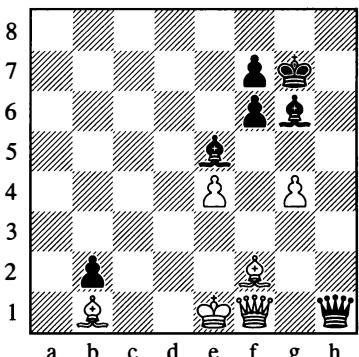
52.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$  hxg4 53. hxg4

The cage is still standing, but its foundations have been weakened.

53...  $\mathbb{W}f4$  54.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}h2\uparrow$  55.  $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}h3\uparrow$

56.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$

56.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$  allows a cute finish: 56...  $\mathbb{W}h1\uparrow$  57.  $\mathbb{W}f1$



57...  $\mathbb{W}xe4\uparrow$ ! 58.  $\mathbb{Q}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4+$

56...  $\mathbb{Q}h2\uparrow$

Karpov begins a forcing sequence which culminates in winning a second pawn.

57.  $\mathbb{Q}h1$   $\mathbb{Q}g3\uparrow$  58.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf2\uparrow$  59.  $\mathbb{Q}xf2$   $\mathbb{W}h2\uparrow$   
60.  $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{W}g1\uparrow$  61.  $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{W}xg4$

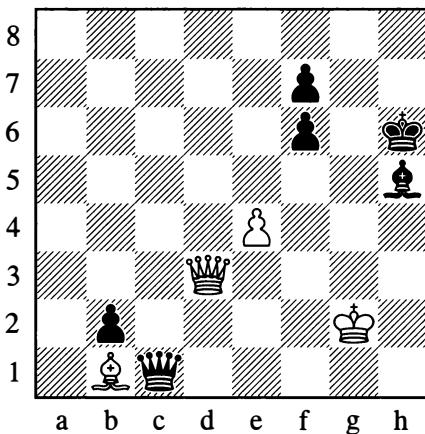
Simplest, although 61...  $\mathbb{W}e3\uparrow$  62.  $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{W}c1\uparrow$  63.  $\mathbb{W}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}h6$  wins as well.

62.  $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{W}g1\uparrow$  63.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{W}c1\uparrow$  64.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}h5\uparrow$   
65.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}h6!$

Karpov improves his king before he exchanges queens.

66.  $\mathbb{Q}g2$

With a two-pawn deficit against arguably the greatest endgame player of all time, White has virtually no chance of escaping. In his excellent *Learn from the Legends* book, the Romanian grandmaster devotes a chapter to Karpov. He fully understands how great a player Karpov is, and perhaps he was simply enjoying the experience of playing him and wanted to prolong the game as long as possible.



66...  $\mathbb{W}e1$

Karpov tightens the screw on the enemy king.

67.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  68.  $\mathbb{Q}b1$   $\mathbb{W}e2\uparrow$

With two extra pawns the bishop ending is an easy win.

69.  $\mathbb{W}xe2$   $\mathbb{Q}xe2$  70.  $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  71.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$   
0–1

It has been fifty one moves since Black incurred a structural weakening in the form of doubled f-pawns. Having lived with this handicap for so long, it is rather fitting that when Karpov finally rids himself of the weakness by exchanging it, his opponent immediately resigns.

In the remaining three games Karpov defeated Illescas, then drew with Kolev and Khalifman, for a decent final score of 4½/6.

Karpov's one remaining classical tournament of the year was the Essent Crown, a double-round-robin event in Hoogeveen. In the first round he suffered an unpleasant defeat at the hands of Judit Polgar, who won a fine attacking game against the Petroff. In the second round Karpov had the black pieces again, and managed to draw against Ivan Sokolov after being under some pressure. In the next two games he was pressing against Aronian and Polgar, but had to settle for draws in both games. In Round 5 he was beaten comprehensively by Aronian, and in the last round against Sokolov he took a quick draw. Karpov's disappointing final score of 2/6 left him in last place. It would be more than three years before he next took part in an individual tournament with a classical time control.

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For the rest of the year Karpov played in a number of rapid and exhibition events. At the prestigious Cap d'Agde tournament he failed to qualify for the elimination stage and actually finished in last place in his preliminary group. However, he did manage to win a six-player round-robin tournament in Lindsborg, after defeating Shulman and Charbonneau, and drawing with Donaldson, Onischuk and Morovic Fernandez.

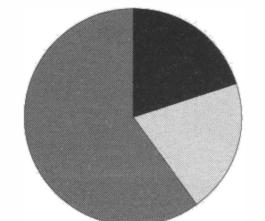
## 2003 Summary

Wijk aan Zee (11th-12th place): 6/13 (+2 =8 –3)

Spanish Team Championship: 4½/6 (+3 =3 –0)

Essent Crown, Hilversum (4th place): 2/6 (+0 =4 –2)

Total 50.0% (+5 =15 –5)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2004

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Rating 2684 (21 in the world)

Karpov started the year with several rapid events. Then he played a mixed format match in Lindsborg, USA against Zsuzsa Polgar. There were no regular time-control games, just rapid and blitz. The first rapid game was a draw, but we shall look at the second game.

## Game 60

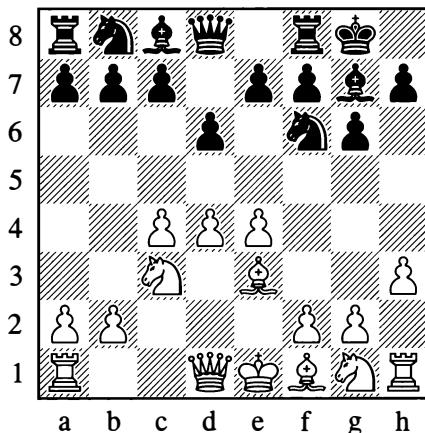
Anatoly Karpov – Zsuzsa Polgar

Lindsborg (rapid – 2) 2004

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♜g7 4.e4 d6 5.h3**

Karpov had never played this move before against a decent opponent, but later he played it regularly. Probably he did not feel like allowing his opponents to attack his king, and in this line White rarely faces a kingside attack.

**5...0–0 6.♗e3**



**6...c5**

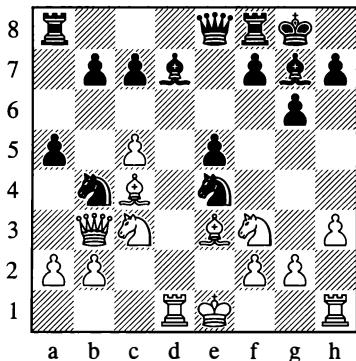
Zsuzsa would like to play a Benoni-type position, but there were also a few King's Indian style options which Karpov faced in later years:

6... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  7. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  e5

In 2006 Judit Polgar tried 7... $\mathbb{W}e8$  in a blitz game against Karpov, but he won that game as well.

8.dxe5 dxe5 9.c5  $\mathbb{Q}b4$  10. $\mathbb{W}a4$  a5 11. $\mathbb{B}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$   
12. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{W}e8$  13. $\mathbb{Q}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4?$

Golubev, playing Black, is a very imaginative player who has introduced at least a couple of great novelties; however this move is simply bad.



14. $\mathbb{B}xd7!$   $\mathbb{Q}xc3$  15. $\mathbb{B}xf7$

15... $\mathbb{B}xc7?!$

15... $\mathbb{Q}d3\ddagger?$

This is another mistake.

16. $\mathbb{Q}xd3$   $\mathbb{B}xf7$  17.bxc3 a4 18. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{Q}h8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$  c6 20.h4

White was winning in Karpov – Golubev, Odessa 2008.

For 6...e5, see Karpov – Miroshnichenko in the next chapter (page 505).

### 7.dxc5

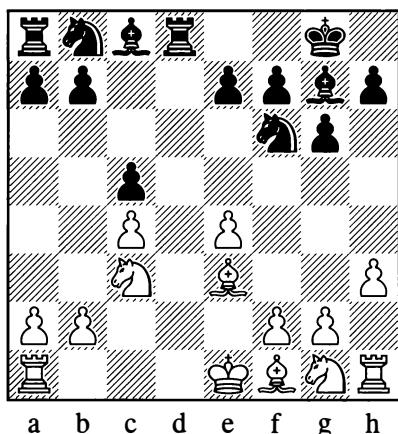
7.d5, with the idea of taking back with the e-pawn, is slightly more popular than Karpov's move.

### 7...dxc5?!

Polgar plays a rarely-employed move; probably she wanted to copy a similar pawn sacrifice in the Sämisch variation. The usual move is:

7... $\mathbb{W}a5$  Black does not have to sacrifice a pawn. A fairly recent game between strong players continued: 8. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  dxc5 9.e5  $\mathbb{Q}fd7$  10.f4  $\mathbb{B}d8$  11. $\mathbb{W}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  12. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}d4$  13. $\mathbb{Q}xd4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  14.fxe5 cxd4 15. $\mathbb{Q}d2$  dxc3 A draw was agreed in Miroshnichenko – Markos, Plovdiv 2008.

8. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{B}xd8$



9. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

Karpov grabs the pawn. How does this compare with the Sämisch variation? His e4-pawn is weaker but on the other hand the f3-square is available for his knight, therefore Black has less control over d4. By the way, Karpov faced the similar Sämisch pawn sacrifice twice and scored 1½ points.

9... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  10. $\mathbb{Q}f3$

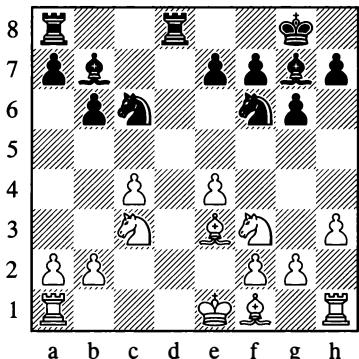
Karpov of course develops his knight to the most natural square.

10...b6 11. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{Q}d7?$

Zsuzsa directs her forces against the c4-pawn and bases her hopes on the speed of her play, but also allows Karpov to accelerate his development.

11... $\mathbb{Q}b7?!$

Just developing looks more attractive, as it may also put pressure on the e4-pawn.



12.Qc1

After 12.c5? Qb4! White's position falls apart.

12...Qb4

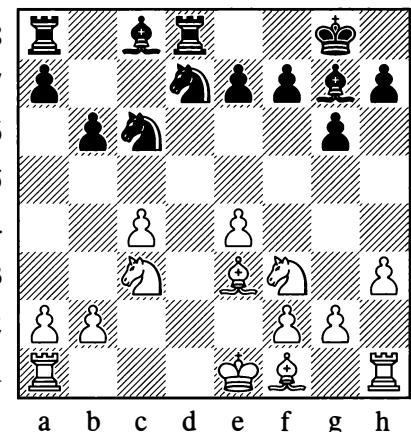
If 12...Qd7 13.Qe2 Qac8 14.0-0 Qc5 then Black has compensation for the pawn.

13.Qd2 e6

13...Qe8 could be met by 14.f3.

14.a3 Qd3† 15.Qxd3 Qxd3 16.Qe2 Qad8

Black's better-placed pieces give sufficient play for the pawn.



**12.0-0-0!**

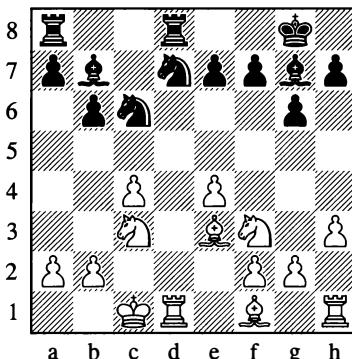
Karpov takes advantage of the fact that Zsuzsa allowed him to castle long. Now he can develop more easily and the king will be great on the queenside in the ensuing endgame.

12...Qxc3?!

Zsuzsa is looking for counterplay rather too impatiently. It was not too late to change plans and look for compensation with:

12...Qb7?!

This makes it trickier for White to keep an advantage. Let's see:



13.Qe2!

13.Qd4 Qxd4 14.Qxd4 Qf6 15.e5 (15.f3? Qxe4!) 15...Qh5 16.Qg1 Qf4 Black is too active; sooner or later White must give back the pawn.

13.Qd5 Qc5 14.Qxc5 (or 14.e5 Qf8 15.Qe1 [15.Qg5 Qe6] 15...Qac8 when the position is balanced) 14...bxc5 15.Qd3 Qab8 Black's domination on the dark squares gives enough play.

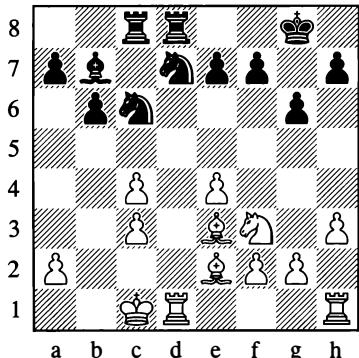
13...Qxc3

13...Qac8?! is too slow as White can consolidate his advantage. 14.Qd4! Qxd4 15.Qxd4 Qf6 16.f3 Black has very little for the pawn.

13...Qc5 14.Qxd8† Qxd8 15.Qxc5 bxc5 16.Qd1 Qd4 17.Qxd4 Qxd4 18.Qc2 It is hard to tell whether Black can hold the position despite the pawn deficit.

14.bxc3 Qac8

14...Qa5 15.Qd4 Qc5 (15...Qc6!?) 16.Qxd8† Qxd8 17.Qxc5 bxc5 18.Qd2 White should be better with the extra pawn, even if it is a doubled pawn.



15.  $\mathbb{E}d2!$

White can keep the initiative on the d-file.

After 15.c5  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  16. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $bxc5$  17. $\mathbb{E}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  Black is safe as there are a lot of pieces on the board, so White cannot get at the weak c5-pawn.

15... $\mathbb{Q}f8$

15... $\mathbb{Q}a5??$  loses to 16. $\mathbb{E}hd1$ .

15... $\mathbb{Q}f6$  16. $\mathbb{E}xd8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  17.e5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  18. $\mathbb{E}d1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  19.gxf3  $\mathbb{Q}xe5$  20.c5  $bxc5$  21. $\mathbb{E}a6$

White's bishops are unpleasant to live with.

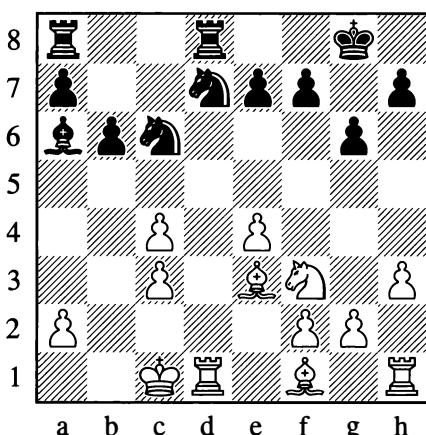
16.  $\mathbb{E}hd1$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$  17.c5!  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $bxc5$

19.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Though Black may hold, White still has an edge.

### 13. $bxc3$ $\mathbb{Q}a6$

The eldest Polgar sister immediately targets the weak pawn.



### 14. $c5!$

Karpov returns the pawn and in addition gives up the two bishops, but he also manages to exchange a lot of pieces; by doing so, he makes sure his king will be superior to his opponent's. He also creates a weakness in Black's camp and, thanks to the limited number of pieces on the board, he can put pressure on it more easily.

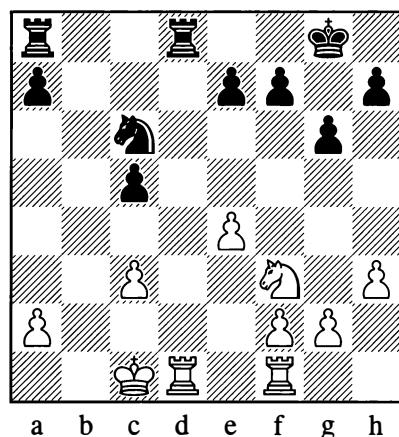
### 14... $\mathbb{Q}xf1$

After 14... $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  15.  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{E}xd1\#$  16.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  17.  $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $bxc5$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  White's advantage is similar to the game.

### 15. $\mathbb{E}hxfl$ $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

If 15... $bxc5$  16.  $\mathbb{E}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  17.  $\mathbb{E}xd8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xd8$  18.  $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  19.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  White has several plans to increase his advantage, including f2-f3 and  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  or  $\mathbb{Q}b3$  with  $\mathbb{E}d1$ . White could also consider g2-g4, or even f2-f4 and f5.

### 16. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$ $bxc5$



### 17. $\mathbb{Q}c2!$

After creating the weakness on c5, Karpov approaches it with his king.

### 17... $e6?$

Zsuzsa probably thought that  $\mathbb{E}d5$  was White's main threat, and perhaps this idea led

to this clear mistake. We shall look at her other options:

17... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  18. $\mathbb{R}xd8\#$

If 18. $\mathbb{R}d5$   $\mathbb{R}xd5$  19. $exd5$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  20. $\mathbb{R}b1$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black is clearly worse but has some chances to escape.

18... $\mathbb{Q}xd8$

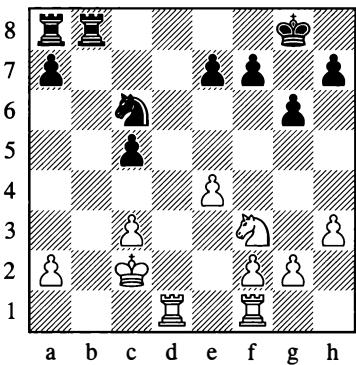
18... $\mathbb{R}xd8$  19. $\mathbb{R}b1$   $a6$  Black cannot exchange rooks, but she can still put up resistance. 20. $\mathbb{R}b7$  (if 20. $\mathbb{R}b6$   $\mathbb{R}d6$  21. $\mathbb{R}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  then Black is worse but still alive) 20... $\mathbb{R}d6$  21. $\mathbb{R}c7$  White has excellent chances to squeeze a win.

19. $\mathbb{R}b1$   $\mathbb{R}c8$

White has many promising tries, such as 20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $f6$ , 20. $\mathbb{Q}d3$ , or 20. $\mathbb{R}b5$  but Black's chances here are much better than in the game.

17... $\mathbb{R}db8!$

Black's best chance is to try to keep both rooks on the board, so that the white king will find it more difficult to get near Black's weak point.



18. $\mathbb{R}d5?$

The strategy of exchanging a pair of rooks, which works superbly in the game, is not so effective here: 18. $\mathbb{R}b1$ !  $\mathbb{R}b6$ ! 19. $\mathbb{R}fd1$   $\mathbb{R}a6$  20. $\mathbb{R}b2$   $\mathbb{R}a4$  Black gains reasonable counterplay.

18.a4  $\mathbb{R}b6$  19. $\mathbb{R}d5$   $\mathbb{Q}d8$  20. $\mathbb{R}xc5$  (20. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

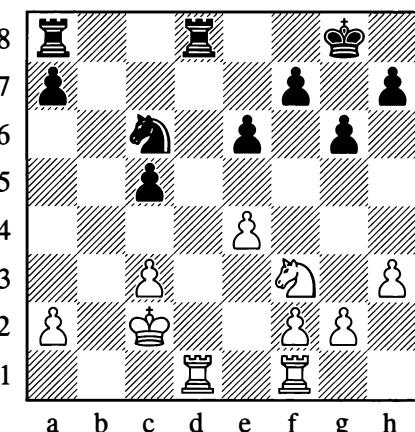
$\mathbb{Q}e6$ ) 20... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  21. $\mathbb{R}c4$  (21. $\mathbb{R}b5$   $\mathbb{R}c6$ ) 21... $\mathbb{R}ab8$  Black finds some counterplay, or at least White has difficulty in winning.

18... $\mathbb{R}b5$

After 18... $\mathbb{R}b6$  19. $\mathbb{R}xc5$   $\mathbb{R}ab8$  20.a4  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d4$   $\mathbb{R}b2\#$  22. $\mathbb{Q}d3$  White has excellent winning chances.

19.a4  $\mathbb{R}a5$  20. $\mathbb{R}a1$   $\mathbb{R}c8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}d2$

Black is facing a long tough defence.



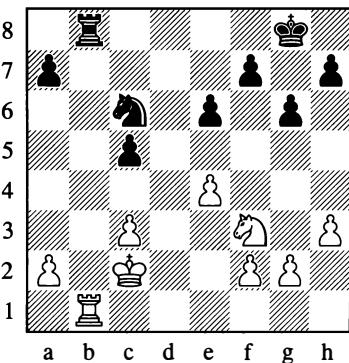
18. $\mathbb{R}xd8\#$ !

With this exchange Karpov opens a path to invade; this strategy works so well because his king is superior to Black's.

18... $\mathbb{R}xd8$  19. $\mathbb{R}b1$   $c4$

Zsuzsa uses the c-pawn as a sacrificial lamb. Instead, trying to stop the invasion by exchanging rooks is hopeless:

19... $\mathbb{R}b8$



**20.♗xb8† ♗xb8 21.♕e5**

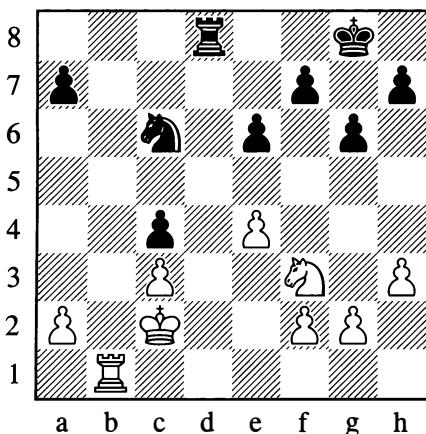
White also wins after 21.♔d3 ♔g7 22.♔c4 ♔d7 23.♔b5 ♔f6 24.a4.

**21...f6**

Or 21...♔f8 22.♔b3 ♔e7 23.♔c4 f6 24.♔d3 and the c5-pawn falls.

**22.♔d3 ♔d7 23.♔b3**

White wins.



**20.♗b7!**

Karpov goes after the correct target; he wants to destabilize the knight with ♘c7. Instead after 20.♔d2?! ♕e5 Black would gain some counterplay.

**20...♗c8 21.g3**

Zsuzsa managed to stop ♘c7, but now her pieces are almost unable to move.

**21...a5 22.a4**

Karpov fixes the pawn; now Black has one less soldier...

**22...h6 23.♗b5!**

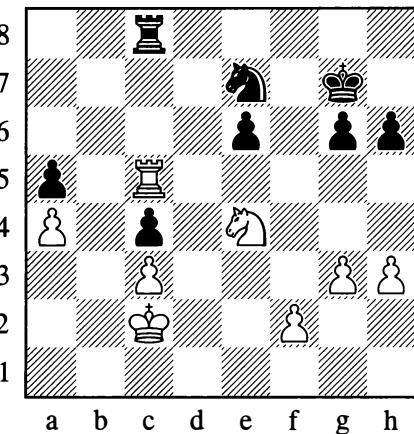
With her last move Zsuzsa enabled her king to improve with ...♔g7; that is why Karpov starts harvesting pawns.

**23...f5 24.♔d2 fxe4 25.♔xe4**

25.♔c5 also wins.

**25...♔g7 26.♔c5 ♕e7**

Zsuzsa gives up a pawn hoping to postpone the inevitable. If 26...e5 then 27.♔d6 wins a piece.



**27.♔xa5 ♔d5**

Black's position is hopeless. Probably Karpov was short of time, as otherwise such a strong player as the former Women's World Champion would have resigned.

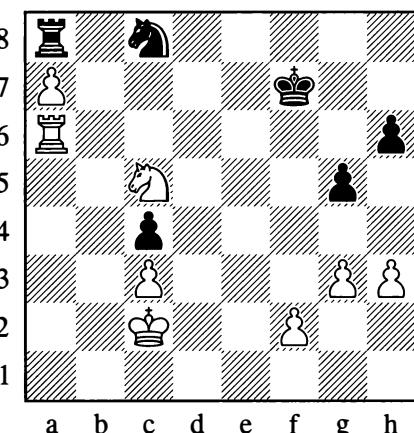
**28.♔a7† ♔g8 29.♔a6 ♘e8 30.a5 g5 31.♔c6**

Karpov prepares to push the pawn.

**31...♔a8 32.a6 ♘f7 33.♔c5 ♕e7 34.♔xe6**

Black loses a second pawn.

**34...♔c8 35.a7 ♘a8 36.♔a6 ♕c8**



**37.♘c6!**

Of course everything wins here but Karpov finds the most purposeful move.

**37...♝xa7**

Zsuzsa steps into a lethal pin, but approaching with the king loses a piece by force. For example, 37...♝e7 38.♗xc8! ♜xc8 39.♕a4 or 37...♝e8 38.♗xc8† ♜xc8 39.♕a6 and White wins after either 39...♜a8 40.♕c7† or 39...♜d8 40.♕b8.

**38.♗a6 ♜e7 39.♕a4 ♜f8 40.♕b2 ♜e7?!**

This hastens the end but Black was desperately lost anyway.

**41.♘xc4**

**1–0**

Karpov played a match against Sadvakasov in Astana, the capital of Kazakhstan. The first four games were at a regular time control and the last four were rapids. Karpov started as White and drew. In the second game, close to the time control, he blundered a pawn and lost. The third game was drawn and in the last one Karpov was in trouble, but managed to draw. Thus he lost the match 2½–1½. The rapid part ended 2–2.

Karpov also played a few more rapid events. In the Aix-en-Provence knockout tournament he started against Glenn Flear. The first game ended in a draw, so we shall look at the second. The English grandmaster has faced three world champions at regular time controls, and drew all four games against them.

## Game 61

Glenn Flear – Anatoly Karpov

Aix-en-Provence (rapid – 1.2) 2004

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♜b4 4.♗c2 0–0**

Karpov rarely plays the 4...c5 line.

**5.e4**

Flear, a strong theoretician, opts for a sharp line; Karpov has played this variation with both colours.

**5...d6**

Karpov sticks to the move he had already played twice as Black.

**6.a3 ♜xc3†**

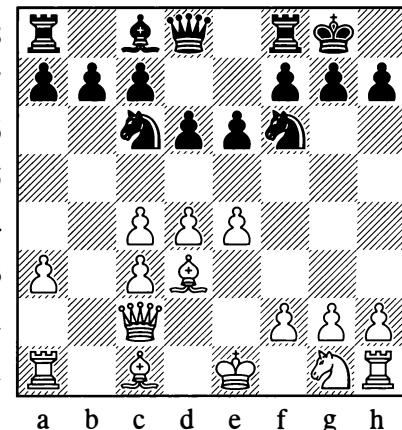
Flear chooses the main line. When I played a tournament with grandmaster Balashov, who worked with Karpov for a long time, he told me that he had played hundreds of blitz games with Karpov in the Sämisch variation of the Nimzo-Indian. So Karpov had plenty of experience in the resulting structure.

**7.bxc3 ♘c6**

This knight move had been played only once before. Earlier Karpov had twice played 7...e5, losing one and drawing the other.

**8.♘d3**

8.♘g5?! was worth considering.



8...h6!?

A novelty, preventing the bishop pinning his knight. Of course it is more unpleasant to face a novelty in a rapid than in a regular game, as there is less time to find the answer.

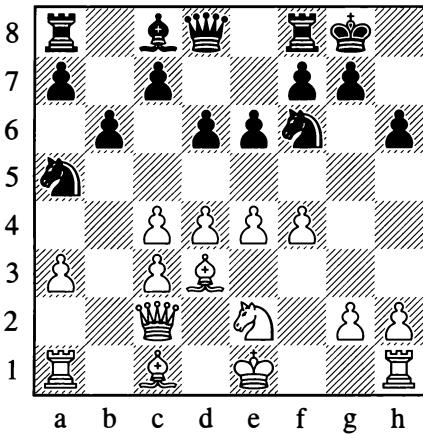
9.  $\text{N}e2?!$

Since this game White has usually played 9.f4 and developed the knight to f3; White has scored well with this plan.

9...b6!

The e2-knight is no help in defending the c4-pawn, so Karpov prepares to attack it.

10.f4 ♟a5



11.e5

If 11... $\mathbb{Q}g3$  then Black has a pleasant choice: 11... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  (or 11... $\mathbb{Q}g4?$ , planning ... $\mathbb{W}h4$ , is also rather annoying for White) 12. $\mathbb{W}e2$  Black can choose between playing against c4 with 12...c5, or exchanging the dark-squared bishop with 12... $\mathbb{Q}b3$ ; both would give a playable position.

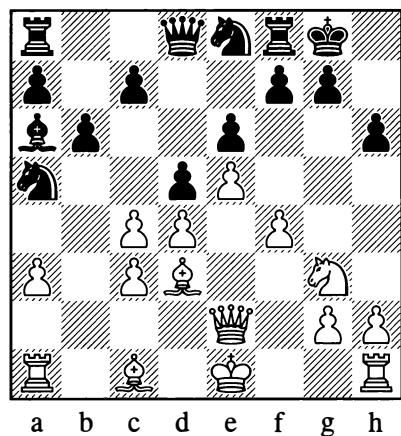
11... ♔e8 12. ♔g3 ♕a6 13. ♜e2

It would be too risky to sacrifice the c4-pawn.

13...d5?!

Karpov puts more pressure on the c4-pawn, but this is rather slow. Black could instead hold back the attack first, and only then turn his attention to the queenside:

13...f5!? 14.exf6 ♜xf6 15.♗xe6† (after 15.0–0 ♜d7 Black is not worse) 15...♝h8 16.0–0 ♜e8 Black wins back the pawn.

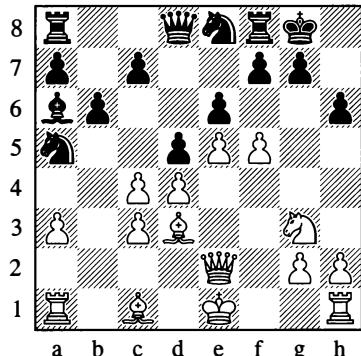


14.cxd5?

Flear saves the pawn, but brings Black's queen into play.

14.f5!

White should sacrifice the c4-pawn and go after Black's king at once.



14... ♘xc4

14...dxc4? 15.0–0 c5 (15...h4 loses to 16.f3) 16.f6 White is winning.

14...dxc4 15.Qe4 Qb7 16.Qxb7 Qxb7  
17.0–0 White has an extremely dangerous initiative on the kingside.

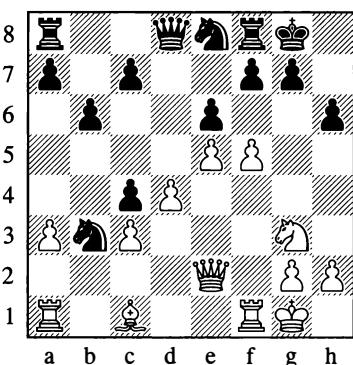
14...Qb3 15.Qb1 Qxc1 16.Qxc1 Qxc4  
17.Qxc4 dxc4 18.Qxc4 Qd5 19.Qxd5 exd5  
White's space advantage gives him good chances.

15.Qxc4 dxc4

After 15...Qxc4 16.0–0 f6 17.fxe6 fxe5  
18.Qxf8† Qxf8 19.dxe5 c6 20.Qf3† Qg8  
21.Qf7† Qh7 22.Qf4 White is almost winning.

16.0–0 Qb3

16...c5 loses to 17.f6 cxd4 18.fxg7.



Now White must resist the temptation to move the a1-rook, and choose between two vicious attacking moves:

17.Qg4!!

Also strong is 17.Qxc4!. For example:  
17...Qxa1 18.fxe6 Qe7 19.Qf5 Qxe6  
20.Qxe6 fxe6 21.Qe7† Qh7 22.Qxf8 Qb3  
23.Qe3 Black is in deep trouble.

After the text move Black has a few tries, but no way to stop the attack. For example:

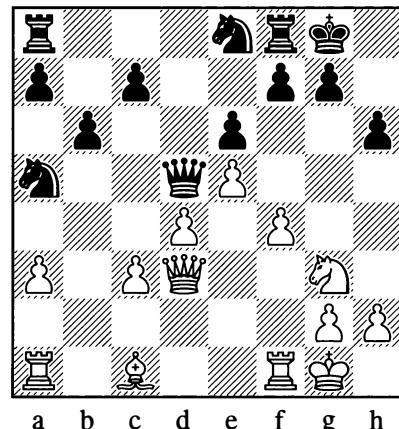
17...Qxa1

17...exf5 18.Qxf5 Qh7 19.Qxh6! gxh6  
20.Qf5† Qg7 21.Qxh6† Qxh6 22.Qf3+–  
Also 17...Qh8 18.f6 is devastating.

18.Qxh6 Qc2 19.fxe6 Qe7 20.Qf5 Qxe6  
21.Qg5!

The threat of Qe7† is deadly, especially as 21...f6 loses the queen to 22.Qh6†.

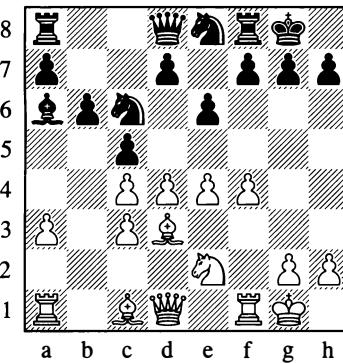
14...Qxd3 15.Qxd3 Qxd5 16.0–0



16...f5??

Karpov stops White's kingside attack. Karpov twice beat Yusupov with a similar ...f5 move. It is worth having a look at both of these games:

1.d4 Qf6 2.c4 e6 3.Qc3 Qb4 4.e3 c5 5.Qd3 Qc6 6.a3 Qxc3† 7.bxc3 0–0 8.Qe2 b6 9.e4 Qe8 10.0–0 Qa6 11.f4



11...f5

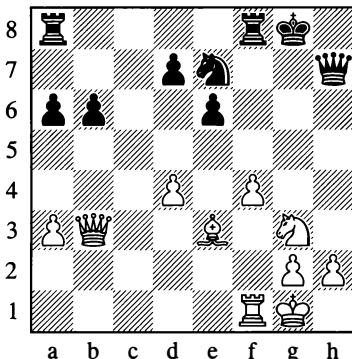
As mentioned above, Karpov played this variation twice against Yusupov, beating him on both occasions. The first game was a vital one as it was towards the end of their World Championship Candidates match.

12.Qg3 g6 13.Qe3

Now Karpov deviated from their first game in this variation and played:

13...cxd4

When Karpov reached this position against Yusupov for the first time, he played:  
 13... $\mathbb{Q}d6$  14.exf5  $\mathbb{Q}xc4!$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   $\mathbb{Q}xc4$   
 16.fxg6  $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  17. $\mathbb{W}h5!$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  hxg6  
 19. $\mathbb{W}xg6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  20. $\mathbb{W}d3$  (or 20. $\mathbb{W}xg7\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xg7$   
 21.dxc5 bxc5 22. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  and the position is unclear) 20...cxd4 21.cxd4  $\mathbb{W}h7$  22. $\mathbb{W}b5$  a6!  
 23. $\mathbb{W}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$



Karpov obtained an edge and went on to win, Yusupov – Karpov, London (6) 1988.

It would be interesting to know what Yusupov had prepared if Karpov repeated the first game, as it looks alright for Black.

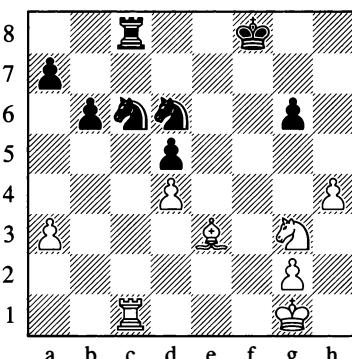
14.cxd4 d5 15.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  16. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  fxe4

17. $\mathbb{W}xe4$   $\mathbb{W}xd5$

Karpov takes the sting out of White's attack.

18. $\mathbb{W}xd5$  exd5 19. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  20.f5  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  21.fxg6 hxg6 22. $\mathbb{E}xf8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xf8$  23.h4?

After 23... $\mathbb{Q}e2!$ ?  $\mathbb{Q}c4$  24. $\mathbb{E}c3$  White is slightly better.



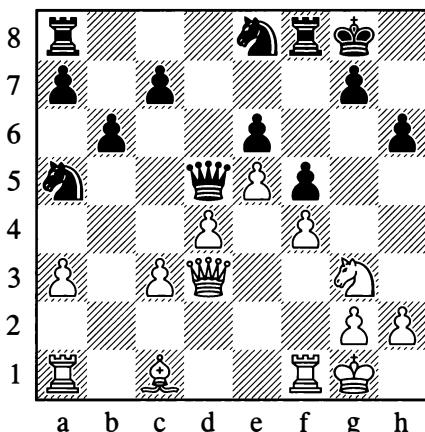
23... $\mathbb{Q}c4!$

Karpov again manages to create dominating knights.

24. $\mathbb{E}g5$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  25.h5 gxh5 26. $\mathbb{E}f1\#$   $\mathbb{Q}e8$   
 27. $\mathbb{Q}xh5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$

In Yusupov – Karpov, Linares 1993, Karpov had a large advantage and went on to win convincingly.

Back to the game.



17.exf6

A reasonable decision; White at least keeps Black busy with the e6-pawn. Black has the upper hand on the queenside because of his control of the c4-square.

17... $\mathbb{Q}xf6$  18. $\mathbb{Q}d2?$

Flear wants to put pressure on the e6-pawn, but this plan is too slow.

18. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$

After 18... $\mathbb{W}c6$  19. $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  20. $\mathbb{E}a2$  the position is equal.

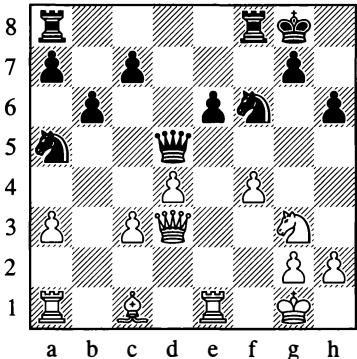
19. $\mathbb{E}a2$

Not 19.f5?! as 19... $\mathbb{W}e8!$  exchanges queens.

19... $\mathbb{Q}b3$  20. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}xc1$  21. $\mathbb{E}xc1$   $\mathbb{E}ae8$  22. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{W}a4$  23. $\mathbb{E}ce1$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  24.g3

White should not be worse.

18. $\mathbb{E}e1$



18... $\mathbb{Q}ae8!$

18... $\mathbb{Q}c4?!$  allows the rapid transfer of the rook to the e-file. 19. $\mathbb{R}a2!$   $c5$  20. $\mathbb{R}ae2$   $\mathbb{R}fe8$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  22. $\mathbb{R}xe4$  White has enough pressure on the e-file to compensate for the strong  $c4$ -knight.

18... $\mathbb{R}fe8$  19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  20. $\mathbb{R}xe4$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$

21. $\mathbb{R}a2$  White can set up pressure against the  $e6$ -pawn.

19. $\mathbb{R}b1!$

19. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $c5$

19... $\mathbb{Q}c4$

After 19... $c5$  20. $\mathbb{R}b2!$   $cx d4$  21. $cx d4$   $\mathbb{R}d8$  22. $\mathbb{R}be2$   $\mathbb{Q}b3$  23. $\mathbb{R}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}xd4$  24. $\mathbb{R}e5$   $\mathbb{W}d7$  25. $\mathbb{W}c4$  White has compensation for the pawn.

20. $\mathbb{R}b4$   $b5$  21. $a4$   $c6$  22. $\mathbb{W}c2$

Black's advantage is rather small.

**18... $\mathbb{Q}c4$**

Karpov naturally puts his knight on a great square.

**19. $\mathbb{R}ael$   $c5!$**

Karpov starts attacking the centre.

**20. $\mathbb{R}c1$   $cx d4$  21. $cx d4$**

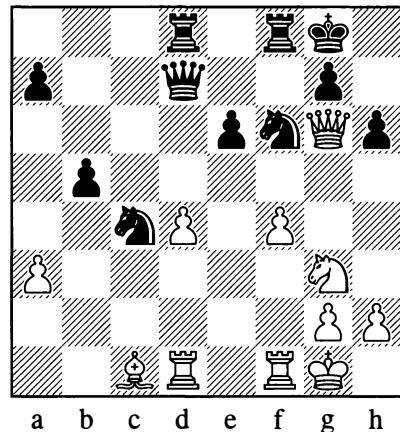
21. $\mathbb{W}xd4$  would not avoid all the trouble as, for example, 21... $\mathbb{W}c6?!$  is quite strong.

**21... $\mathbb{R}ad8!$**

Karpov gives his opponent no time to exert pressure on the e-file.

**22. $\mathbb{R}d1$   $b5$  23. $\mathbb{W}g6$   $\mathbb{W}d7$**

Karpov retreats the queen to neutralize White's kingside attack.



**24. $f5?$**

Allowing a queen exchange prevents White from creating counter-chances. White already had problems, but he could have tried:

24. $\mathbb{R}fe1$

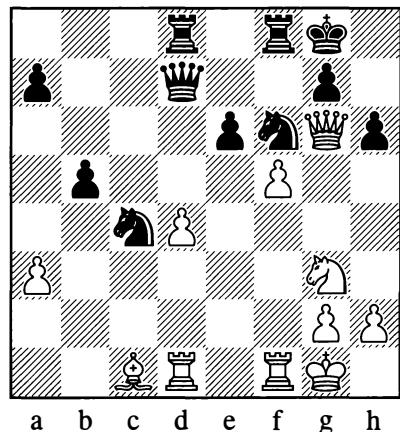
Exerting pressure on the  $e6$ -pawn would tie Black's hands at least a little.

24... $a5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

If 25. $\mathbb{W}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  26. $\mathbb{R}f1$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  Black has nice prospects on the queenside.

25... $\mathbb{Q}xe4$  26. $\mathbb{R}xe4$   $\mathbb{R}f6$  27. $\mathbb{W}g4$   $\mathbb{W}d5$

White will have big problems when the b-pawn advances.



**24... $\mathbb{W}e8!$** 

Exchanging queens leads to a superior, quite possibly winning, endgame.

**25. $\mathbb{W}xe8$** 

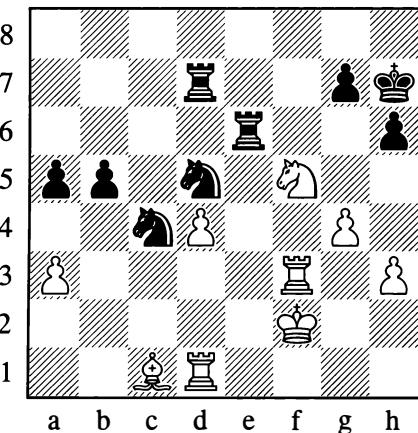
25. $\mathbb{W}fe1$  is also tough for White: 25... $\mathbb{W}xg6$  26. $f\mathbf{x}g6$   $\mathbb{E}d6$  27. $\mathbb{E}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  28. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{E}c6$  29. $h4$   $a5$  Perhaps White's problems are smaller than in the game.

**25... $\mathbb{E}fxe8$  26. $f\mathbf{x}e6$   $\mathbb{E}xe6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$** 

Karpov blocks the d-pawn and the knight will help the b-pawn. Black's superb knight will dominate the rest of the game.

**28. $\mathbb{E}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}h7$** 

Karpov takes the time to improve his pieces before he pushes his b-pawn.

**29. $h3$   $\mathbb{E}d7!$  30. $g4$   $a5$  31. $\mathbb{Q}f2$** **31... $b4!$** 

The b-pawn becomes threatening and soon it will be irresistible. Karpov's move not only pushes the pawn one square closer to promotion, it also opens the a-file for his rook.

**32. $a\mathbf{x}b4$   $a\mathbf{x}b4$  33. $\mathbb{Q}d2$** 

If White concentrates on the third rank, then Black can use the a-file effectively. If 33. $\mathbb{E}b3$

then 33... $\mathbb{E}a7$  is very strong or if 33. $\mathbb{E}dd3$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  34. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  (34. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}a1$ ) 34... $\mathbb{E}a1$  and White is lost.

**33... $\mathbb{E}f7!$** 

Karpov ties up the f5-knight.

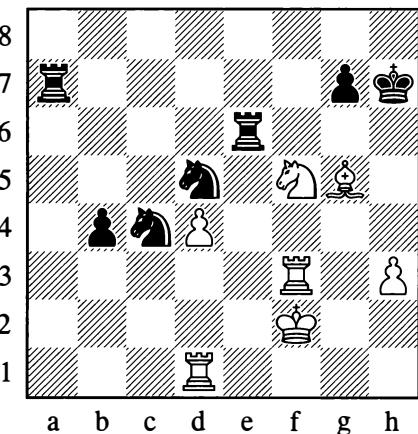
**34. $\mathbb{Q}c1$** 

After 34. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{E}xf3\#$  35. $\mathbb{Q}xf3$   $b3$  Black wins as the b-pawn is so strong.

**34... $\mathbb{E}a7$** 

It is impressive and instructive how Karpov uses the whole board to crack his opponent's resistance; now he occupies the a-file, a few moves earlier he placed his king on h7.

Incidentally, 34... $\mathbb{Q}c3$  was also winning: 35. $\mathbb{E}e1$  (35. $\mathbb{E}f1$   $\mathbb{E}e2\#$ ) 35... $\mathbb{E}xe1$  36. $\mathbb{Q}xe1$   $g6$  37. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{E}e7\#$  38. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}a7$

**35. $g5$   $h\mathbf{x}g5$  36. $\mathbb{E}xg5$** **36... $\mathbb{Q}c3!$** 

After outplaying his opponent strategically, Karpov uses a few little tactics to finish him off.

**37. $\mathbb{E}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}e4\#$  38. $\mathbb{Q}g1$   $\mathbb{Q}xg5$** 

Karpov wins the bishop; the game is over.

**39.♗g3 ♖d2**

The knights are working their magic for Karpov in this game.

**40.d5 ♜e5 41.♘e3 ♔gf3† 42.♔h1**

If 42.♔f2 then 42...b3 wins.

**42...♗xe3**

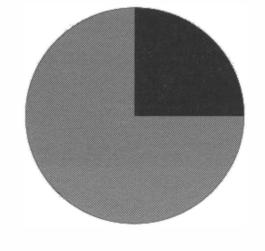
**0–1**

In the semi-final Karpov eliminated Kazhgaleyev and then beat Istratescu in the final. Both matches ended 1½–½.

## 2004 Summary

Match versus Sadvakasov, Astana: Lost 2½–1½ (+0 =3 –1)

Total 37.5% (+0 =3 –1)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2005

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Rating 2674 (29 in the world)

In 2005 Karpov played another mixed-format match – he played four regular and four rapid games against Andrei Istratescu in Bucharest. The first game ended a draw, then Karpov won a fine ending in the second. However Istratescu managed to strike back with a win; the Romanian grandmaster attacked, sacrificed a pawn, and after a mistake by Karpov he gained a winning position. In the last regular game Karpov had a small edge due to his bishop pair; he won a pawn and reached a winning position. A slip allowed his opponent to escape to a queen versus rook and pawn theoretical draw, but Istratescu was unable to hold it. Thus Karpov won the regular part of the match  $2\frac{1}{2}-1\frac{1}{2}$ . The rapid match also ended in favour of the ex-World Champion, this time by  $3\frac{1}{2}-1\frac{1}{2}$ .

Karpov also played two games in the Russian team championship. We will look at his game against the Ukrainian GM Miroshnichenko.

## Game 62

Anatoly Karpov – Evgeny Miroshnichenko

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Sochi 2005

**1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 g6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  4.e4 0–0 5. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  d6 6.h3 e5**

White players often develop the bishop to g5 instead of e3; one major difference is that after 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  d6 6.h3 if Black plays 6...e5 it costs him material after 7.dxe5 dxe5 8. $\mathbb{W}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}axd8$  9. $\mathbb{Q}d5$ .

### 7.d5

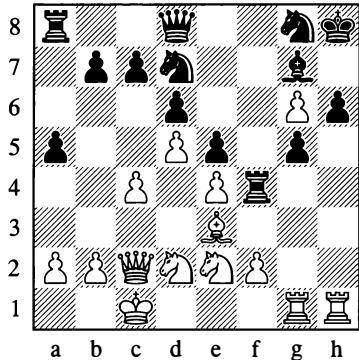
In this variation White is virtually forced to push the d-pawn in reply to ...e7-e5, as otherwise Black would take on d4 when h2-h3 would become a significant weakness. For example, after f2-f3 to defend the e4-pawn, a hole would appear on g3.

### 7...a5 8.c5!!

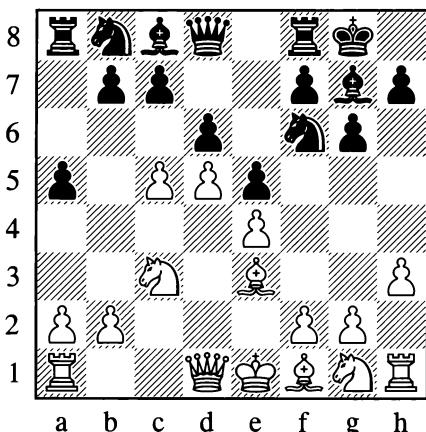
Karpov plays a novelty, but probably he just wanted to get out of theory. It is, of course, hard to tell how much time he invested analysing the variation.

Another difference between 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  and 5. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  is that with 5. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 6. $\mathbb{Q}e3$  inserted, Black rarely sacrifices a pawn with the sequence ... $\mathbb{Q}d7-c5$ , a2-a3 ...a5-a4,  $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  ...dxc5 and  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ , because Black no longer has the option of ... $\mathbb{Q}h6$ .

Karpov played differently against Kasimdzhanov at the 2007 blitz world championship:  
 8.g4 ♜a6 9.♕e2 ♜c5 10.♗c2 ♜d7 11.0–0–0  
 ♜h8? 12.g5 ♜g8 13.h4 f6 14.♘f3 ♜g4 15.♘d2  
 ♜xe2 16.♘xe2 ♜d7 17.h5 fxg5 18.hxg6 h6  
 19.♗dg1 ♜f4



Here Karpov missed a clear win with 20.♕xf4 exf4 21.♘f3 ♜f6 22.♘ed4. Even so he had a very promising position, but he did not manage to win in Karpov – Kasimdzhanov, Moscow (blitz) 2007.



### 8...♞a6

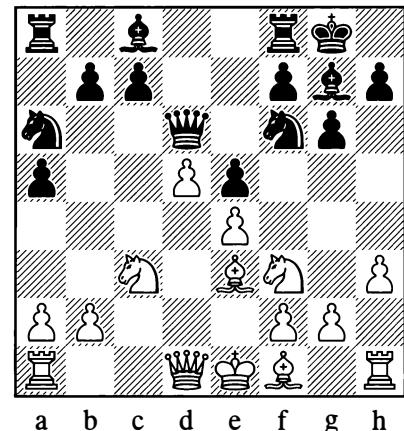
8...♞e8, planning an early ...f7-f5, is interesting and absolutely in the spirit of the King's Indian.

### 9.cxd6 ♜xd6?

This is an unusual way of recapturing on d6.

Black accepts a backward pawn on c7, but on the other hand he develops quickly. Instead 9...cx d6 10.♘f3 b6?! is interesting, with the idea of continuing with ...♞c5.

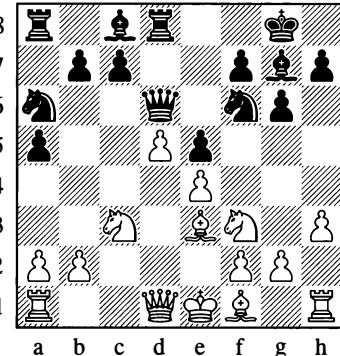
### 10.♘f3



### 10...c6?

At some point Black has to push the c-pawn as he no longer has the option of defending the b5-square with ...a7-a6 and playing instead on the kingside would not be fast enough. However, the text move, trying to solve the problem of the backward c-pawn with no preparation, is obviously premature, so we should consider the alternatives:

### 10...♝d8



### 11.♕e2!

White must be a little careful. For example: 11.♕c4?! ♜c5 12.♗c2? This natural move leads to trouble (instead after 12.♗d2 c6 13.dxc6 ♜xc6 Black is doing fine). 12...♝fxe4! 13.♗xe4 ♜xe4 14.♗xe4 ♔f5 15.♗h4 ♜b4† 16.♗d2 ♜xb2 17.♗d1 (after 17.0–0 b5 Black is taking over) 17...b5 18.♗b3 a4 19.♗c1 ♜c3† 20.♗d2 ♜d3 Black can avoid the repetition and win.

11...c6 12.dxc6 ♜c7 13.♗b3 ♜b4 14.0–0 ♔e6 15.♗a4 ♜xc6

After 15...♜xc6 16.♗b5 ♜c7 17.♗ac1 Black is lagging well behind in development.

16.♗fd1 ♜ac8 17.♗b5

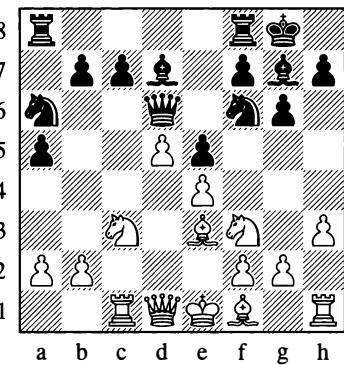
White has the initiative on the queenside.

10...♗d7!?

This is probably Black's best choice; apart from preparing the natural ...c7-c6 this move also gives the option of playing ...b7-b5. Now White has to play accurately to gain a small advantage.

11.♗c1

After 11.♗d2 ♜b4 12.♗c2 c6 13.a3 ♜e7 Black is very much in the game.



11...b5

The text move is the boldest try, but we should also consider other options:

11...♗fd8 12.♗d2 c6 (if 12...♗c5 then 13.♗f3!? defends e4 well, and White will soon exert pressure on the c-file) 13.♗c4 ♜f8 14.♗b6 White is somewhat better.

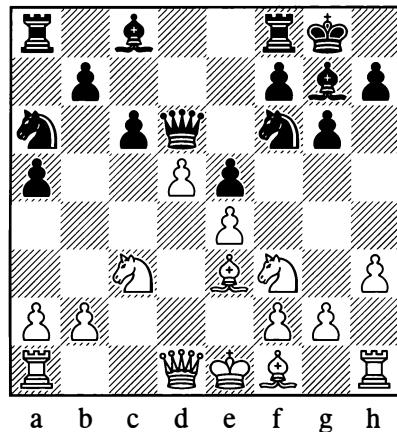
11...c6 12.dxc6 ♜xd1† 13.♗xd1 ♜xc6 14.♗d3 (14.♗xe5 ♜xe4!) 14...♜fe8 15.0–0 (after 15.♗c4, trying to exploit the newly-weakened f7-pawn, 15...♜ac8 16.0–0 h6 it is hard to do anything with White's small advantage) 15...♜f8 16.♗c4 h6 17.♗h2 White is just fractionally better.

12.♗d3 c6

Black is just a fraction worse after 12...♜c5 13.0–0 ♜xd3 14.♗xd3 c6 (14...♜fb8 15.♗e2) 15.♗fd1 ♜fc8 16.dxc6 ♜xd3 17.♗xd3 ♜xc6 18.♗xe5 ♜xe4 19.♗xe4 ♜xc1† 20.♗xc1 ♜xe4.

13.dxc6 ♜xc6 14.0–0 ♜fd8 15.♗xb5 ♜xd1 16.♗fxd1 ♜xb5 17.♗xb5 ♜xe4

If White has an edge then it is very small.



11.dxc6! ♜e7??

Black plays boldly, but this is not best. After 11...♜xc6 12.♗xe5 ♜c7 13.♗c4 ♜e6 14.♗d6 ♜xd6 15.♗xd6 ♜b4 16.♗c1 ♜xa2 17.♗xa2 ♜xa2 18.♗b5 a4 19.0–0 Black still has problems; he can probably exchange the b2-pawn and try to hold a draw even if he loses the b7-pawn.

12.♗c4!

Karpov develops the bishop to a fine diagonal rather than taking a pawn. Black sooner or later will have to take on c6, which will give Karpov a lovely target to build pressure against.

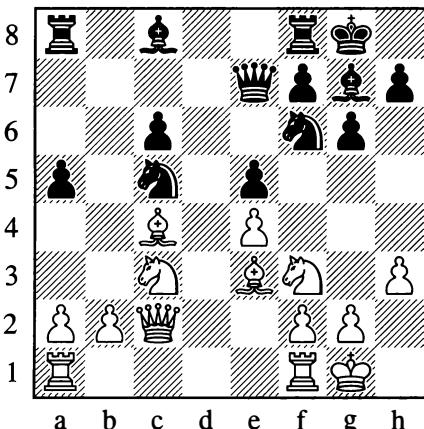
12.cxb7?  $\mathbb{Q}xb7$  was Black's intention, which would give him fluent piece-play and he would also be likely to win the e4-pawn.

### 12...bxc6

Winning a tempo with 12... $\mathbb{B}d8$  would not change much. 13. $\mathbb{W}a4$  (also good for White is 13. $\mathbb{W}b3$ , making sure that Black will have an isolated pawn on c6 after 13...bxc6 14.0–0) 13... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  14.0–0  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$  Black has managed to avoid structural weaknesses, but his position is still worse as White is much more active.

### 13.0–0 $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 14. $\mathbb{W}c2$

This is natural and strong; Karpov defends the e4-pawn and starts lining up his heavy pieces against the c6-pawn.



### 14... $\mathbb{Q}fd7?$

Black wants to have as many pieces as possible around c6, but Karpov will soon reveal that Black has more than one weakness. Black's move also has the drawback of making the c8-bishop very passive. The following alternatives are stronger, but cannot solve all Black's problems:

After 14... $\mathbb{Q}a6$  15. $\mathbb{Q}xa6$   $\mathbb{Q}xa6$  16. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}b4$  17. $\mathbb{Q}b6$   $\mathbb{E}ab8$  18. $\mathbb{Q}c4$  Black has a difficult position.

### 14... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ !?

This passive-looking move offers the toughest resistance.

#### 15. $\mathbb{E}ac1$ h6

15... $\mathbb{E}fd8$  loses to 16. $\mathbb{Q}g5$   $\mathbb{E}f8$  17. $\mathbb{Q}xf7\#$  as 17... $\mathbb{E}xf7$  18. $\mathbb{Q}xf7$   $\mathbb{Q}xf7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{W}xc5$  20. $\mathbb{W}b3\#$  wins back the piece.

#### 16. $\mathbb{E}fd1$ $\mathbb{E}ab8$

Black just holds his position together. It would have been interesting to see how Karpov would have increased his advantage.

#### 17. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$

17. $\mathbb{E}d2$  is also very strong, as Black is struggling after 17... $\mathbb{Q}a8$  18. $\mathbb{E}cd1$   $\mathbb{E}fe8$  19. $\mathbb{E}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}cd7$  20. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ .

#### 17... $\mathbb{W}xc5$ 18. $\mathbb{Q}b5$

Or 18. $\mathbb{Q}a4$   $\mathbb{W}e7$  19. $\mathbb{Q}c5$  when Black is very passive.

#### 18... $\mathbb{W}e7$ 19. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}a8$ 20. $\mathbb{Q}b3$

Black can hardly move.

### 15. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ !

A great strategic decision; Karpov tries to exchange *around* the weakness in order to be able to get closer to it.

### 15... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ !?

Exchanging would have given Black more air:

#### 15... $\mathbb{Q}xa4$ 16. $\mathbb{W}xa4$ $\mathbb{Q}f6$ 17. $\mathbb{W}c2$

The text move creates the nasty threat of 18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

After 17. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  18. $\mathbb{E}ac1$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  19. $\mathbb{E}fd1$  Black's position is hard to defend as White has many squares for his pieces on the queenside and the c6-pawn to attack, yet here Black's prospects are less gloomy than in the game.

#### 17... $\mathbb{Q}e6$

Of course 17... $\mathbb{Q}b7$ ? would allow 18. $\mathbb{Q}c5$ .

#### 18. $\mathbb{E}fc1$

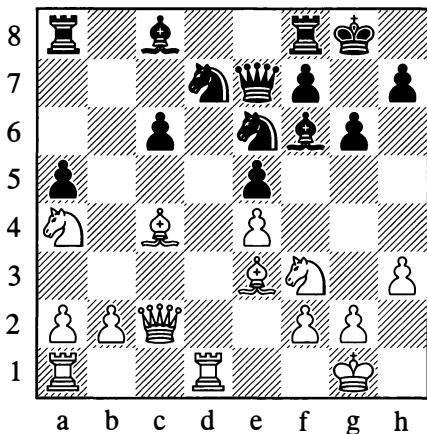
I think White's chances of winning are better than Black's of drawing.

**16.♖fd1**

One might think Karpov was simply stopping Black playing ...♝d4, but there is more to it...

**16...♚f6**

Black stops ♜xe6 and ♜g5 which indeed would lead to a very difficult position. For example, after 16...♜e8 17.♜xe6 ♜xe6 18.♜g5 ♜f6 19.♜ac1 h6 20.♜f3 ♜a6 21.♜d3 Black is almost lost.

**17.♖d2!**

Karpov prepares to double rooks on the d-file, which would create more pressure than Black could withstand.

**17...♜e8**

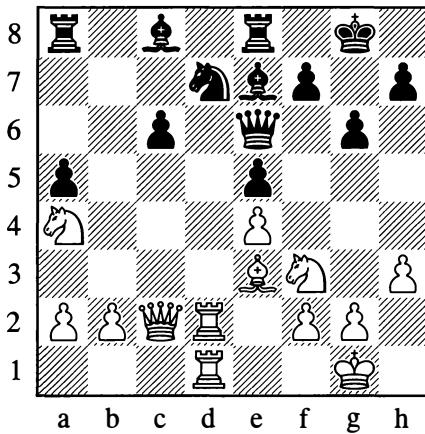
Or 17...♝g5 18.♜e2 ♜xf3† 19.♜xf3 ♜b7 20.♜g4 and Black's position falls apart.

**18.♜xe6!**

Karpov simplifies to a position that is winning due to his total control of the d-file. Occupying the d-file at once with 18.♜ad1! is also close to winning. 18...♝df8 (if 18...♝d4 then 19.♝xd4 exd4 20.♝xd4 ♜xe4 21.♝b3 and Black's position is desperate) 19.♝b6 ♜b8 20.♜xe6 (or 20.♝b3 ♜c7 21.♝c4 ♜a6 22.♝b3 when Black is in big trouble) 20...♜xe6 21.♝xc6 ♜xa2 22.b4 White is winning.

**18...♛xe6 19.♜ad1**

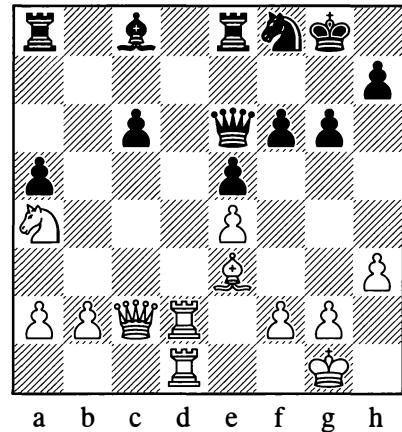
The rook threatens to invade on d6.

**19...♝e7****20.♝g5!**

Karpov forces Miroshnichenko to give up his dark-squared bishop, which covers the d6-square.

**20...♝xg5**

After 20...♛xa2 21.♝xc6 ♜b8 22.♝c3 ♜b3 23.♝xd7 White wins material.

**21.♝xg5 f6 22.♜e3 ♜f8****23.♜d6!**

Karpov's strategy prevails! On the 17th move he played  $\mathbb{E}d2$  to gain control of the d-file; now on the 23rd he invades on the file.

### 23... $\mathbb{W}xa2$

The queen takes a pawn but abandons the defence of the king.

### 24. $\mathbb{E}xf6$

Karpov takes a pawn and creates yet another black pawn island, while also weakening Black's king. White had an alternate win with 24. $\mathbb{W}xc6 \mathbb{E}e6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b6 \mathbb{E}ab8$  26. $\mathbb{Q}h6 \mathbb{E}f7$  27. $\mathbb{E}xf6$ .

### 24... $\mathbb{E}e6$ 25. $\mathbb{Q}c5 \mathbb{E}eb8$

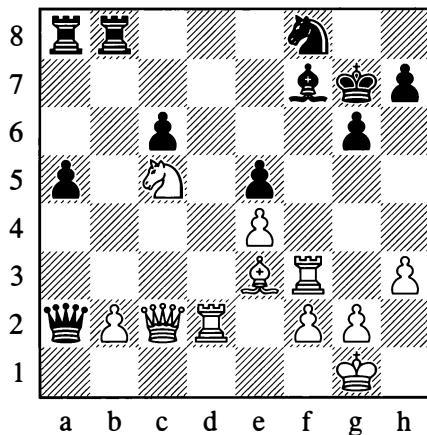
After 25... $\mathbb{E}f7$  26. $\mathbb{E}xc6 \mathbb{E}eb8$  27. $\mathbb{E}d2$  White is winning, as Black is a pawn down with badly placed pieces.

### 26. $\mathbb{E}d2$

Karpov defends the pawn before he attacks the rather deserted black king.

### 26... $\mathbb{Q}g7$ 27. $\mathbb{E}f3 \mathbb{Q}f7$

Or 27... $\mathbb{W}c4$  28. $\mathbb{W}d1 \mathbb{Q}f7$  29. $\mathbb{Q}d7 \mathbb{E}b5$  30. $\mathbb{Q}xf8 \mathbb{E}xf8$  31. $\mathbb{E}d7$  and White invades and wins.



### 28. $\mathbb{Q}d7!$

The knight is on its way to the kingside.

### 28... $\mathbb{E}d8$

If 28... $\mathbb{Q}xd7$  then 29. $\mathbb{E}xd7 \mathbb{E}f8$  30. $\mathbb{W}xc6$  wins instantly.

### 29. $\mathbb{Q}f6$

**1–0**

Karpov's knight has completed its journey; Miroshnichenko was not interested in watching Karpov kill his king, so he resigned.

In the second game Karpov lost to Shomoev because of a fatal blunder before the time control.

Later Karpov played in the Bordeaux Grand Prix knockout rapid event. In the quarterfinal he beat Marie Sebag, then in the semi-final he eliminated Chabanon. In the final against Hamdouchi he won 3–2, with all the games being decisive.

Karpov also played a two-game match against David Navara, the Czech number one. Both games were hard fought, but both ended in draws.

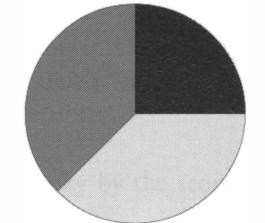
## 2005 Summary

Match versus Istratescu, Bucharest: Won 2½–1½ (+2 =1 –1)

Russian Team Championship: 1/2 (+1 =0 –1)

Match versus Navara, Prague: Drew 1–1 (+0 =2 –0)

Total 56.2% (+3 =3 –2)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2006

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Rating 2672 (29 in the world)

Karpov started the year well, finishing first equal with Ivanchuk and Kasimdzhanov in the strong Tallinn rapid tournament with a score of 7/9. Karpov continued with a rapid match against Portisch, which was organized to celebrate Gligoric's birthday. Karpov won the first game and drew the last three to win 2½–1½.

Karpov played only one regular time control event in 2006 – the Russian team championship. He played only three games, drawing quickly with Gelfand and Zvjaginsev, but was nicely beaten by Akopian.

Karpov lost a rapid match against Spassky by the score of 1½–½, but won a four-player blitz tournament which included Kasparov.

Karpov then played a rapid match against Leko in Miskolc, Hungary. In the first two games Karpov was pressing but failed to win. In the third he equalized after having a few problems in the opening, but blundered in the end. The fourth was a fair draw, but from then on Karpov's level dropped, even though he still managed to draw the last four games.

In the Cap D'Agde rapid tournament he made 50% in the prelims and failed to qualify for the four-player play-off.

Karpov finished the year with a rapid match against Giovanni Vescovi in Guarulhos, Brazil. The Brazilian grandmaster won the first game with a powerful kingside attack, but we shall look at the second game. Incidentally Vescovi has played three regular games against two world champions, Kramnik and Topalov; he drew one and lost two.

## Game 63

Anatoly Karpov – Giovanni Vescovi

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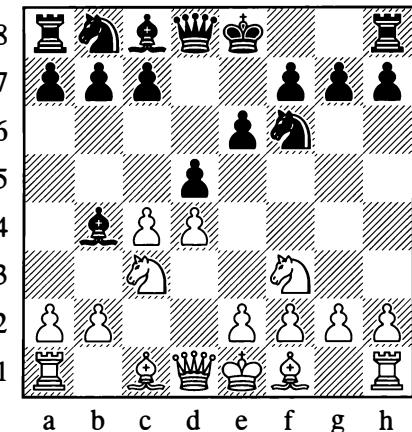
Guarulhos (rapid – 2) 2006

**1.c4 ♕f6 2.♕f3 e6 3.d4**

One benefit of the move order Karpov chose is that it avoids both the Nimzo-Indian Defence and the Benko Gambit – two of his opponent's favourite lines.

### 3...d5 4.Qc3 Bb4

Vescovi had played the Ragozin against Leitao not so long before this game, so Karpov must have considered it during his preparation. Vescovi told me that he had played many blitz games with Karpov and in such cases both players know each other's strong and weak points.



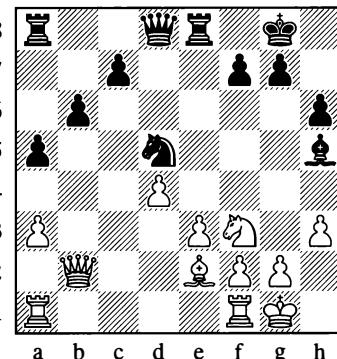
### 5.Wa4†

Karpov had played this check once before, intriguingly at the Poikovsky *Karpov* tournament. The Poikovsky event was founded to celebrate the 25th anniversary of Karpov becoming the 12th World Champion, and has grown into a strong grandmaster tournament. It is a rare honour for a player to have a tournament named after him while he is still alive.

After the obligatory 5...Qc6 the knight blocks the c-pawn so Black cannot undermine the centre with ...c7-c5. Since Vescovi won the first game of the match with an attack, possibly Karpov wanted to create a calmer situation in this game.

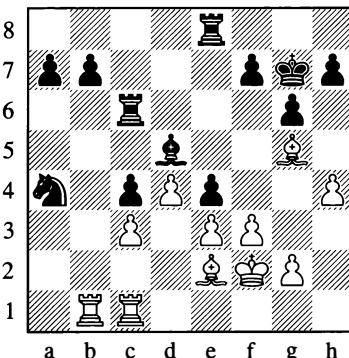
It is worth looking at another game of Karpov's in the Ragozin: 5.Qg5 h6 6.Qxf6 Wxf6 7.Wb3 Qxc3† 8.bxc3 Wd8 9.e3 0-0 10.Qe2 Qc6 11.cxd5 exd5 12.Wa3 b6 13.c4! dxc4 14.Qxc4

Qg4 15.Qe2 a5 16.0-0 Qb4 17.Wb2 Qe8 18.h3 Qh5 19.a3 Qd5



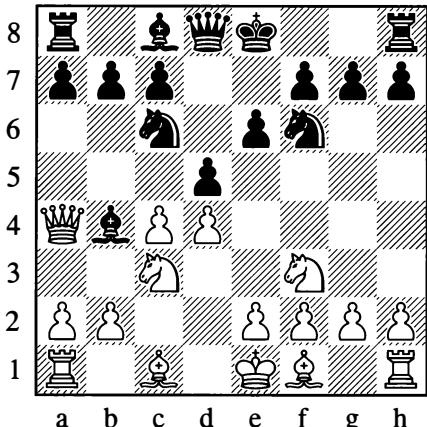
20.Qfc1 Karpov had cleverly prepared his pieces to put pressure on the Cuban grandmaster's queenside and went on to win, Karpov – Vera Gonzalez, Benidorm (rapid) 2002.

He also had an example in the Manhattan Variation: 5.cxd5 exd5 6.Qg5 Qbd7 7.Wc2 0-0 8.e3 c5 9.Qd3 Wa5 10.0-0 c4 11.Qf5 Qe8 12.Qd2 g6 13.Qh3 Qxc3 14.Wxc3 Wxc3 15.bxc3 Qe4 16.Qxe4 dxe4 17.Qg4 Qb6 18.Qe2 Qe6 19.Qab1 Qac8 20.Qfc1 Qc7 21.f3 Qd5 22.Qf2 Qc6 23.h4 Qg7 24.a4 Qxa4



25.Qxb7 Karpov obtained a clear advantage and went on to win, Karpov – Milov, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2002.

### 5...Qc6

**6.e3**

Karpov chooses a line which keeps two of the bishops passive – his own on c1 and Black's on c8 – rather than make both bishops active with cxd5. In my opinion it is risky to pay attention only to the c1-bishop as if 6.♗g5 then ...dxc4 is possible. This is not considered dangerous, but more importantly such a move is not in Karpov's style.

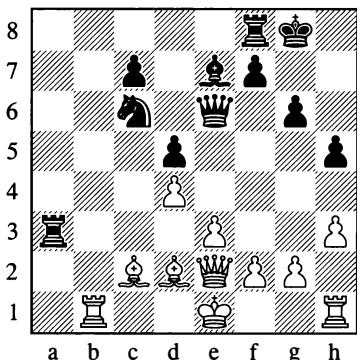
Karpov's only regular game with this line resulted in a tremendously interesting battle:

6.♕e5 ♕d7 7.♕xd7 ♘xd7 8.e3 ♔e4 9.♗c2 ♘xc3 10.bxc3 ♘e7 11.cxd5 exd5 12.♗d3 h6 13.♗a4 a6 14.♗b1 ♘a7 15.c4?

15.e4! looks even stronger.

15...b5! 16.cxb5 axb5 17.♗xb5 0–0 18.♗c2?! ♘xa2 19.♗d3 g6 20.♗d2 ♘a3 21.♗e2 ♘e6 22.h3 h5!

After 22...♘e8 Black's position is preferable.



23.g4!

Karpov decides to keep his king in the centre: a very interesting decision.

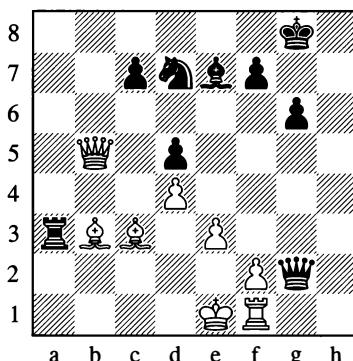
23...♗a2 24.♗c3 ♘b8 25.♗xb8† ♘xb8 26.♗d3 hxg4

26...♗a3!

27.♗b3 ♘a3 28.♗b2 ♘a5 29.hxg4 ♘xg4?!

29...♘a6!

30.♗c3 ♘g2 31.♗f1 ♘a3 32.♗b5 ♘d7



33.♗xd5!

The position is still very exciting and Karpov managed to win it, Karpov – Lautier, Baden-Baden 1992.

**6...0–0 7.♗d2 a6 8.a3 ♘e7**

It is a matter of taste whether in such a position one prefers to simplify with 8...♘xc3?! 9.♗xc3 ♘e4 or choose the game continuation. On the other hand 8...♗d6?! is less reliable as White scores well after 9.c5.

**9.♗c2 dxc4**

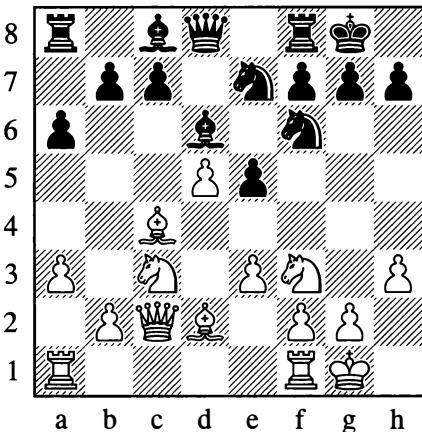
Vescovi plays a move which was played before only once; he is aiming to free his pieces with ...e6–e5.

**10.♗xc4 ♘d6 11.0–0 e5 12.d5!!**

Taking on e5 would be inappropriate as it would give Black freedom to develop, but 12.h3 comes into consideration. However Karpov preferred to make the c7-pawn backward rather than accept an isolated pawn on d4.

**12...♝e7 13.h3**

Karpov stops ...♝g4 or perhaps Black might also have been considering ...♝g4.

**13...♝f5**

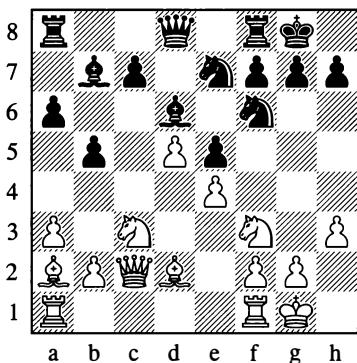
This was an exhibition match, so perhaps Vescovi wanted to make the game more interesting than if it was a play-off game in the world championship. His move provokes e3-e4, which loses control of the f4-square and offers Black a chance to hit back at White's e-pawn with ...f7-f5. However, giving up a tempo to achieve this is too high a price.

**13...b5!?**

Developing the bishop to b7 gives hopes of equalizing.

**14.♗a2 ♜b7 15.e4**

White defends the d5-pawn; now it is not easy for Black to choose between several somewhat worse, but close to equalizing continuations.

**15...h6**

Black stops ♜g5.

After 15...c5 16.♗d1 c4 17.♗e3 ♜c8 the position is complex, but perhaps White's chances are somewhat favourable.

15...c6 16.♗g5! (16.dxc6 ♜xc6 17.♗e3 ♜c8 is alright for Black) 16...cxd5 (if 16...♝g6 17.dxc6 ♜xc6 18.♗fd1 then White's initiative on the c- and d-files is unpleasant) 17.♗xf6 gxf6 18.♗xd5 ♜xd5 19.♗xd5 ♜c8 20.♗d3 It would not be not fun for Black to play with doubled pawns.

15...♝g6!? Black quickly prepares room for the queen. For example, 16.♗e3 ♜c8 17.♗fd1 ♜e7 18.♗ac1 (18.g3 c6) 18...♗fd8 looks okay for Black.

**16.♗fd1 ♜g6**

16...c6?! looks premature because of 17.dxc6 ♜xc6 18.♗e3.

**17.♗e3 ♜c8**

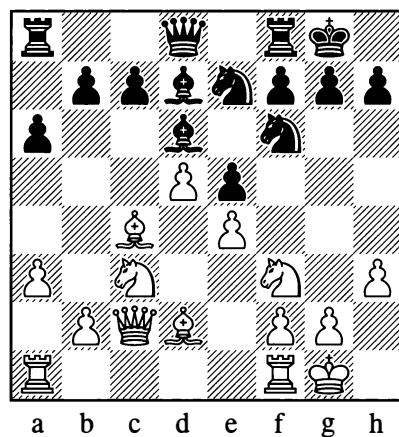
17...♝h5!?

**18.♗ac1 ♜e7 19.g3 ♜fd8**

Black has caught up in development and is ready to carry out ...c7-c6.

**14.e4**

Karpov was probably happy to play this move, which strengthens his centre.

**14...♝d7**

**15.♗fd1**

Karpov makes room for his bishop and takes into consideration that Black is playing for ...c7-c6.

**15...♝g6 16.♝f1!**

The bishop defends its king and clears the c-file to prepare the attack on the backward pawn.

**16...♝h5**

Vescovi is confident of his kingside play and rather burns his bridges; after this move Black virtually says goodbye to any chance of getting rid of the backward c-pawn by pushing it.

**17.♚g5**

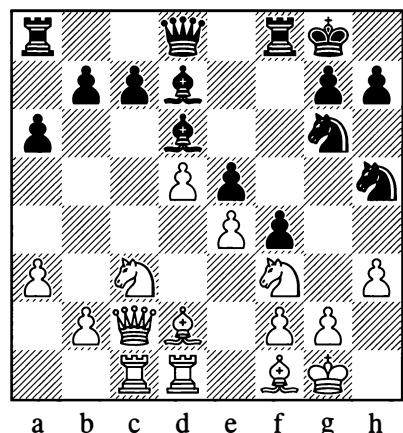
Karpov spreads a little confusion among Black's pieces.

**17...♛c8**

17...f6!? 18.♕e3 f5 looks playable for Black, as he would have a tempo more compared with the game.

**18.♕e3 f5**

Black had another option: 18...♝hf4!? 19.♝ac1 ♛d8 20.♝a4 b6 Black's play on the kingside seems enough to keep the position balanced with ...♛f6 or ...f7-f5.

**19.♝ac1 f4 20.♝d2 ♛d8****21.♚e2**

Karpov quickly adjusts to the current situation; after Black's last move White no longer needs to worry about a sacrifice on h3. Karpov is not threatening to take on e5 immediately, but at some point the loose knight on h5 may be significant.

**21...♝h4 22.♝a2**

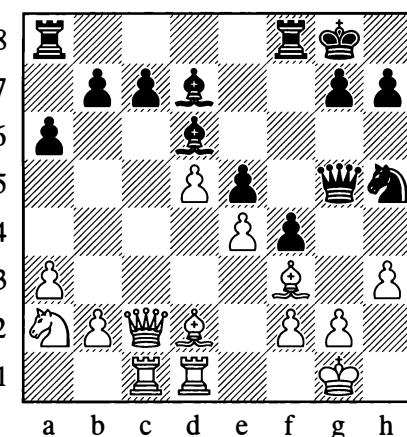
Karpov's last move defended the f3-knight, so now he can start targeting the c7-pawn. Karpov wants to exchange the bishop on b4 without doubling his pawns. He could also have played 22.♝a4 b6 23.♝b4 ♛xf3† 24.♝xf3 ♛e8 25.♝c3 when White is a bit better.

**22...♝xf3†**

At some point Black has to exchange on f3.

**23.♝xf3 ♛g5?!**

Vescovi now thinks that 23...♝f6 was stronger and if 24.♝b4 ♜f7 the Brazilian grandmaster evaluates the position as unclear.

**24.♝f1!**

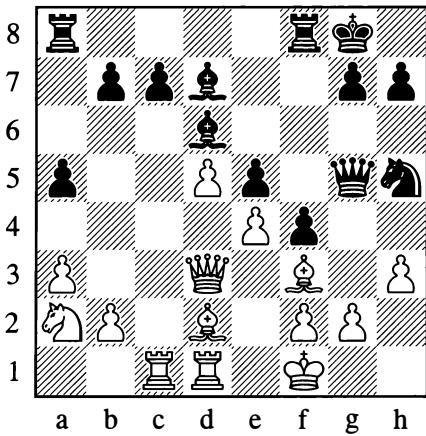
Karpov keeps open the option of running away to the centre to escape the attack. Black's King's Indian style pawn storm will be far less effective if the white king is not in the firing line.

**24...a5**

Black stops  $\mathbb{Q}b4$ . If instead 24... $\mathbb{Q}b5\#$  then 25. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  when any check would kill the king, but all Black's pieces are far away.

### 25. $\mathbb{W}d3!$

Karpov again reacts instantly to his opponent's last move. Now he takes advantage of the fact that the a-pawn no longer controls the b5-square and he wants to play  $\mathbb{Q}c3-b5$ .



### 25... $b5?$

Vescovi stops  $\mathbb{Q}b5$  by pushing his b-pawn, which is certainly stronger than 25... $\mathbb{E}f6$ ? losing a piece to 26.g4.

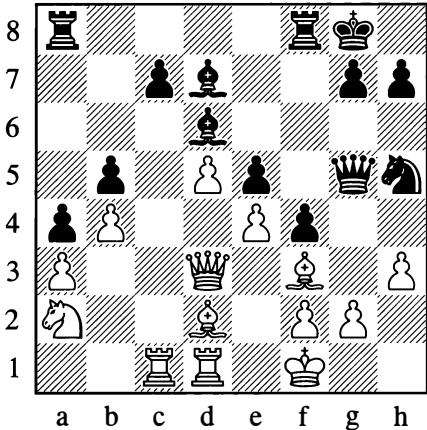
However, best of all was covering the b5-square with the help of his rook by 25... $\mathbb{R}a6$ !. Next the rook can be employed in an original way: 26. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{B}b6$  27. $\mathbb{E}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28. $\mathbb{W}c4$  a4 29. $\mathbb{Q}e1$   $\mathbb{E}b3$  The position is unclear.

### 26.b4!

Karpov fixes the b5-pawn.

### 26...a4?!

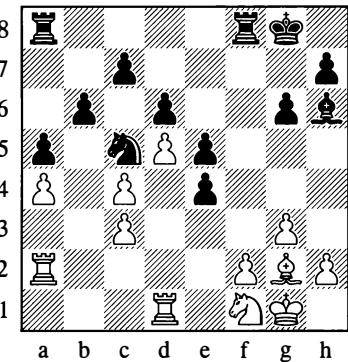
Correct was 26...axb4!. Even though exchanging on b4 does not solve all Black's problems, it should have been played because it creates play for the black rooks. 27. $\mathbb{Q}xb4$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  28. $\mathbb{E}c3$   $\mathbb{E}fc8$  29. $\mathbb{Q}c1$ ! White has time to improve the knight. 29... $\mathbb{E}a4$  30. $\mathbb{W}c2$  White retains an edge.



### 27. $\mathbb{E}c6!!$

Karpov brilliantly sacrifices an exchange; in return he wins the b5-pawn and the d5-pawn transfers to c6. Such positional sacrifices work when the opponent's rooks do not have open files. The Brazilian grandmaster told me he completely missed this move and I think it damaged him psychologically.

Let me show you an example from my own praxis, which illustrates that such sacrifices can work even in positions without queens.



### 23. $\mathbb{E}e1$

White hopes to win back the e4-pawn when the position would be so closed that Black might be unable to invade. White would probably take with the bishop, but sacrificing the exchange might also work.

### 23... $\mathbb{E}f3!$

My strong opponent was utterly surprised when I played this exchange sacrifice. The new f3-pawn secures plenty of space and creates excellent winning chances.

24.♕xf3 exf3 25.♗e3

25.h4! was worth a try.

25...e4

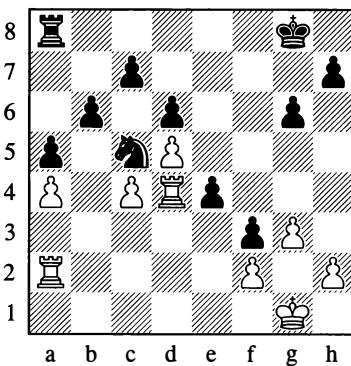
Black threatens ...♗d3 and ...♕xe3.

26.♗c2?!

After 26.♗g4 ♕g7 Black's advantage is smaller than in the game.

26...♗d2 27.♗d1 ♕xc3 28.♗d4 ♕xd4

29.♗xd4



29...g5!

Fixing the h2-pawn.

30.h3 ♔f7

Centralizing the king is important and White has no remedy against it.

31.♔f1 ♔f6 32.♗a3 ♔e5 33.♗d1 ♕f8 34.♗e1 ♕f6 35.♗d2 ♕h6 36.♗e3

A witty idea from Skembris who was already short of time, but it can be tactically refuted.

36...♗xh3 37.♗aa1 ♗d7 38.♗h1 ♗xh1 39.♗xh1 ♗f6

The knight arrives in time.

40.♗d2 ♗g4 41.♗xh7 ♗xf2

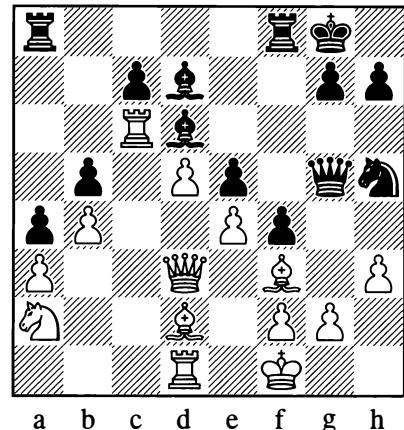
The connected passed pawns give Black an easy win.

42.♗c3 ♗d1† 43.♗d2 ♗b2 44.♗e3 ♗xc4†

45.♗f2 g4 46.♗xc7 e3† 47.♗e1 ♗b2

0–1 Skembris – Karolyi, Geneva 1989.

Back to the main game.

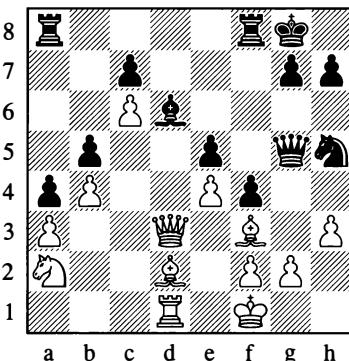


27...♗ab8?

The local grandmaster prepares to sacrifice an exchange on b5. This reminds me of other sports, where players take an idea from the opponent – his sacrifice generates the idea that I can do it. However, in this case Black achieves nothing and ruins his position.

Regardless of how hard it would be to defend Black's passive position, Black should take the exchange this move or the next:

27...♕xc6 28.dxc6



Now there are two moves to consider:  
28...♗fd8 and 28...♗g6!?.

28...♗fd8 29.♗xb5 ♗f6 30.♗c4† ♗h8 31.♗c3 ♗f8 32.♗e1!

Inaccurate is: 32.  $\mathbb{W}f7$   $\mathbb{W}g6!$  (32...  $\mathbb{Q}d6$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$ )  
 33.  $\mathbb{W}xg6$   $hxg6$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$  (34.  $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{E}a6!$ )  
 34...  $\mathbb{E}xd1\uparrow$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{E}a6$  36.  $b5$   $\mathbb{E}a5$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}b2$   
 $g5!$  Black has managed to tie White up.

32...  $\mathbb{E}xd1$  33.  $\mathbb{Q}xd1$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}b5$   
 34.  $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   $f3!$

34...  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$

White has lovely compensation for the pawn as the e5-pawn is vulnerable.

28...  $\mathbb{W}g6!$ ?

This may be the best chance.

29.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}f7$  30.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{E}fd8$  31.  $\mathbb{W}c3$

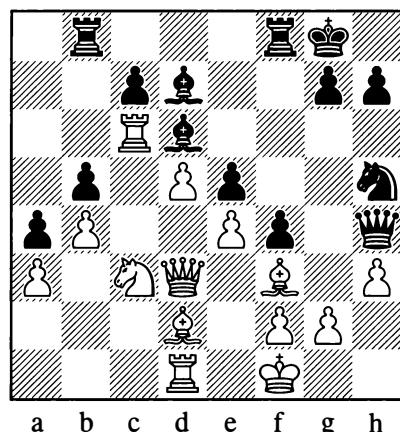
After 31.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  32.  $\mathbb{W}c2$  Black is struggling to avoid losing more material.

31...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  32.  $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  33.  $\mathbb{E}xd8$   $\mathbb{E}xd8$  34.  $\mathbb{Q}g1$

White will soon win a second pawn for the exchange. Having collected enough material he will start pushing his pawns, with reasonable winning chances. Nevertheless Black still has chances to hold the position.

28.  $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{W}h4?$

Black's attack contains little poison as he has only a few pieces against a well-protected king. Taking on c6 was weaker than before 27...  $\mathbb{E}ab8$ , but Black should still have tried to take the exchange.



29.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$

Black's queenside falls apart.

29...  $\mathbb{E}xb5$

The exchange sacrifice hardly even slows down Karpov.

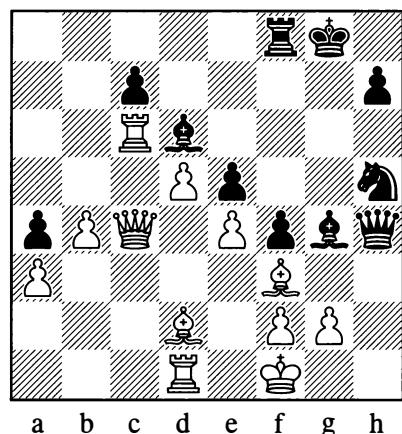
30.  $\mathbb{W}xb5$   $g5$  31.  $\mathbb{W}c4!$

Karpov wants to take on c7.

31...  $g4$

To illustrate the comment above, if 31...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  then 32.  $\mathbb{E}xc7$  wins.

32.  $h4$   $\mathbb{Q}xg4$



33.  $\mathbb{Q}e2!$

Karpov simply walks away with his king; he has enough pawns to use as a shield.

33...  $\mathbb{Q}g3\uparrow$

A desperate attempt to create chances; Black had no other move that causes any problems.

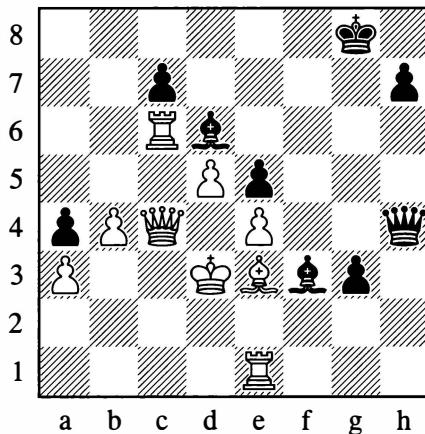
34.  $fxg3$

It is safe to take more material.

34...  $fxg3$  35.  $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{E}xf3$

Vescovi sacrifices the second exchange. It can be unpleasant to receive such a "gift" if one is short of time, but in this case it is far from creating enough play.

36.  $gxf3$   $\mathbb{W}h2\uparrow$  37.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}xf3$  38.  $\mathbb{E}e1$   $\mathbb{W}h4$



**39.♗xd6!**

The simplest way to win is to go after the king. Time and again Karpov's games exhibit the following pattern – he starts playing on one wing, his opponent starts on the other, and yet Karpov finally wins by switching to the side where his opponent had the initiative.

**39...cxd6 40.♕c8†**

Transferring the queen to the kingside will end all resistance.

**40...♔g7 41.♕d7† ♔h8 42.♕f5**

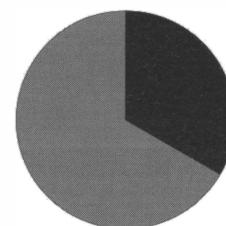
1–0

Karpov won the match 2½–1½.

## 2006 Summary

Russian team championship: 1/3 (+0 =2 –1)

Total 33.3% (+0 =2 –1)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 2007

Rating 2668 (37 in the world)

Karpov played three games in the Russian team championship. In the first he agreed a draw after nine moves against Grischuk; the second was drawn in fifteen moves against Miton. In the third he tried somewhat longer, nevertheless that game also ended in a draw against Timofeev.

After what had been a long break, Karpov entered a proper, regular tournament in Gorenje Valjevo. In the first round Karpov drew a long game against Predrag Nikolic; strangely they played an additional thirty moves after exchanging all the queenside pawns to reach a symmetrical ending with four pawns versus four and two minor pieces each. In the next two rounds he drew two largely uneventful games against Ivanisevic and Atalik, before facing Kiril Georgiev.

## Game 64

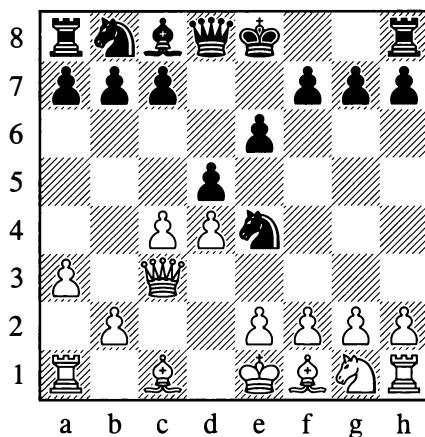
Anatoly Karpov – Kiril Georgiev

Valjevo 2007

**1.d4 ♜f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♜b4 4.♘c2 d5 5.a3**

Karpov obtains the advantage of two bishops. This was only the third time he had faced the 4...d5 line; in the other two games Karpov took on d5 and eventually drew.

**5...♝xc3† 6.♝xc3 ♛e4**



Georgiev bases his plan on fast piece-play; he had already played this line once and that was against none other than Kasparov.

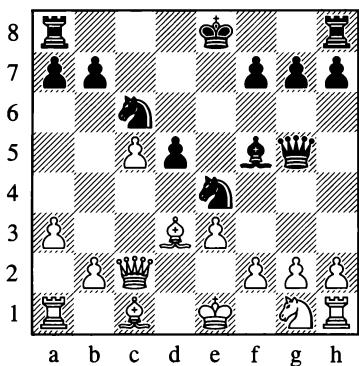
**7.♗c2 c5 8.dxc5 ♗c6 9.cxd5 exd5 10.♗f3**

Karpov plays the main line. A year later, against the young Chinese star Hou Yifan, Karpov deviated with:

**10.e3**

He followed up with a very interesting and exciting exchange sacrifice.

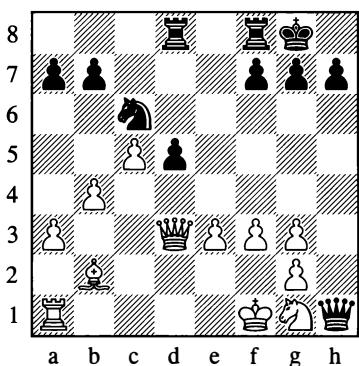
**10...♝f5 11.♗d3 ♜g5**



**12.f3!?**

Karpov sacrifices an exchange for a pawn and a strong bishop on the long diagonal.

**12...♝h4† 13.♔f1 ♗g3† 14.hxg3 ♘xd3† 15.♘xd3 ♜xh1 16.b4 0-0 17.♗b2 ♘ad8**



**18.♗f2 ♜h6 19.♗e2 ♘fe8**

**19...a6?!**

**20.♗f4 ♜g5**

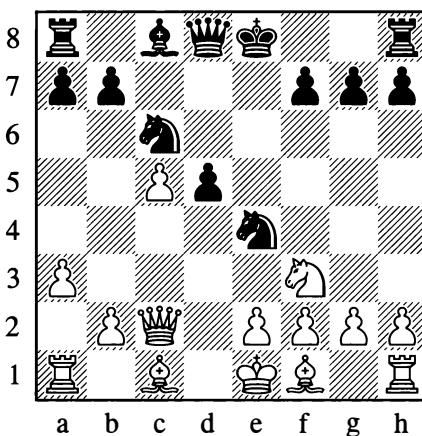
**20...♝e5?! 21.♗d4 ♗c6**

**21.♗h1 g6 22.♗d1 ♜e7?**

If 22...a6 then 23.♗c3!, but Black could have tried 22...d4?!

**23.b5 ♗e5 24.♗d4 f6 25.♗xd5 ♜f7 26.e4**

Karpov obtained a winning position and made no mistake in Karpov – Hou Yifan, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2008.



**10...♝f6**

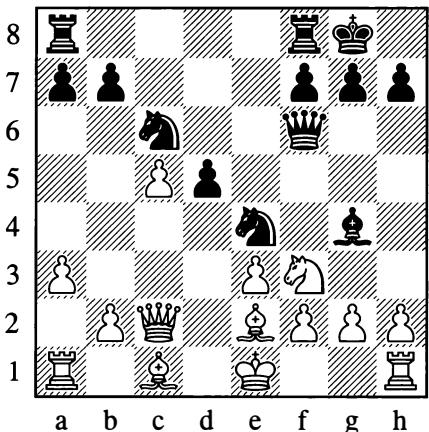
Georgiev avoids the most common move, which is 10...♝f5.

Against Kasparov the Bulgarian grandmaster played 10...♜a5†. The game continued: 11.♗d2 ♜xc5 12.♗xc5 ♗xc5 13.♗e3 ♗e4 14.♗d4 0-0 15.♗d1 ♗e6 16.f3 ♗d6 17.♗xe6 fxe6 18.♗c5 ♗ad8 19.e4 ♗fe8 20.exd5 exd5† 21.♗f2 Kasparov had a slight edge and went on to win, Kasparov – Ki. Georgiev, Thessaloniki (ol) 1988.

**11.e3 ♗g4 12.♗e2**

On 12.♗d4 Black plays the exciting 12...♗d1! of which there are four examples in the database; Black scored fifty percent.

**12...0-0**



**13.♖d2**

Karpov plays a novelty, which will generally lead to a queenless middlegame.

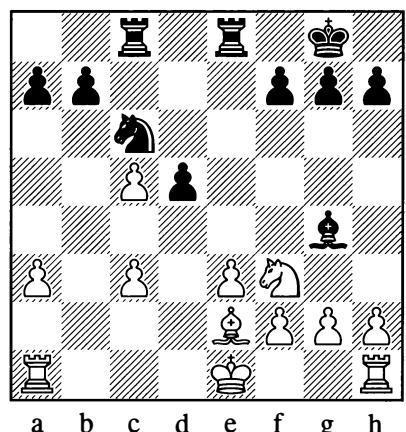
**13...♜fe8**

This is the most common move, but I would prefer to go after the c-pawn at once with 13...♜fc8 or 13...♜ac8.

**14.♘c3**

Karpov will temporarily have an extra pawn. Instead after 14.0–0 ♜e5 15.♘d4 ♜xe2 16.♘xe2 ♜g6 17.f3 ♘xd2 18.♗xd2 ♘c4 19.♗d4 ♜xe3 20.♗f4 the position is equal.

**14...♘xc3 15.♗xc3 ♜xc3† 16.bxc3 ♜ac8**



**17.♗b1!**

Karpov attacks the b-pawn at once. It would seem logical to play 17.♘d2 then bring the other rook to b1, but this would give Black time to consolidate the position with 17...♞a5 18.♗hb1 ♜xc5.

**17...♝d8**

If 17...♞a5 then 18.♗b5 wins.

**18.♘d2!**

The king clears the first rank for the rook and defends the c3-pawn just in case. If some pieces are exchanged it may prove important that the white king is already in the centre. The alternatives were less convincing:

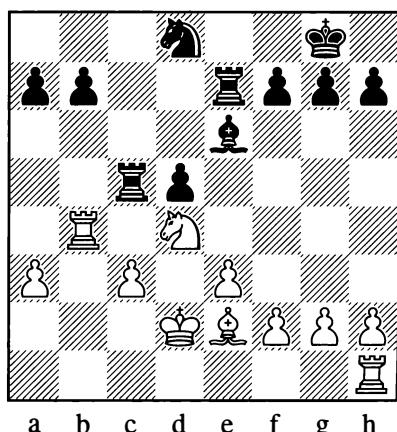
After 18.c6 ♜xc6 19.♘d4 ♜g6 20.♗xg4 White is just a fraction better.

And certainly not 18.♗b5? a6 19.♘a5 ♜xf3 20.♘xf3 ♘e6 21.♗xd5 ♘xc5 when Black traps the rook on a5.

**18...♜e7 19.♗b4 ♜e6?!**

If after 19...♝d7?! the play continued as in the game, then Black would be a tempo up. Black could take advantage of this after 20.♘d4 ♜xc5 21.a4 ♜a5 when the position is equal.

**20.♘d4 ♜xc5**



**21.a4!**

This endgame is objectively balanced, but Karpov can still exert pressure. The more pieces are exchanged, the more one should be careful about placing pawns on the same colour as the opponent's bishop. However, principles can clash with reality, and with 21.a4 Karpov gains space and starts to push back his opponent on the queenside.

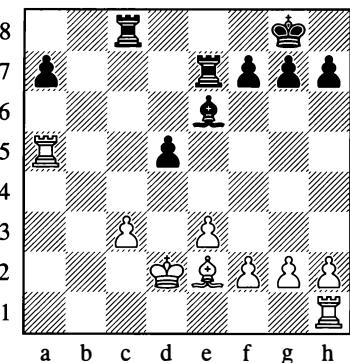
**21...♝d7?!**

At present, it is hard to spot the drawback of this move, but as we shall see, blocking the seventh rank is significant. Black had numerous alternatives:

21...a5? Black tries to fix the a4-pawn as a target, but in fact the a5-pawn is the real weakness. 22.♝b6 ♜d7 23.♝d6! ♜f8 24.♝b1 ♜e8 25.♝b3 Black loses a pawn.

21...♜ec7 Going after the c-pawn at once also fails to solve Black's problems. 22.♝b5 a5 23.♝xc7 axb4 24.♝b5 White keeps some advantage.

21...b6 22.♝b3 ♜c8 23.a5 ♜c6 24.♝b5 bxa5 25.♝xa5 ♜xa5 26.♝xa5



26...♝b7

Black might be tempted to demolish the c-pawn with 26...♜ec7 and hope to hold the position, but he has no time to take

the pawn. 27.♝b1! ♜f8 (27...♜xc3 loses to 28.♝a6) 28.♝a6 ♜c5 29.♝a3 The endgame is very difficult for Black.

27.♝d3 ♜b2† 28.♝c2 ♜f5 29.♝c1

Black loses a pawn; he is active but a pawn is a pawn.

Best of all was: 21...g6! 22.♝a1 ♜g7 23.a5 ♜c6 24.♝xc6 (if 24.♝b5 ♜xb5 25.♝xb5 ♜xd4 26.cxd4 ♜c7 Black has nothing to worry about) 24...♜xc6 25.♝ab1 ♜cc7 I do not see how White can make any progress.

**22.♝a1!**

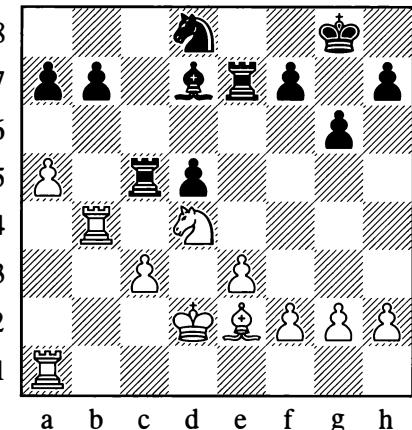
Karpov of course knows that rooks belong on open files, and yet he puts the rook behind his pawn. Of course, the reason is that he wants to push it further.

**22...g6**

Georgiev puts his pawn on the same colour as White's bishop, but also takes away the important f5-square from White. There are still many pieces on the board and White is far from being able to fix the pawn. If more pieces are swapped then Black still has time to reshape his pawn structure by placing his pawns on dark squares.

**23.a5!**

Karpov not only gains space but creates a threat.



**23...a6**

Georgiev faced a difficult decision between several unpleasant defensive plans. He chose to stop any further advance of the a5-pawn and he also covered the b5-square, but there is a price – his queenside pawns are fixed on the same colour as Karpov's bishop and White now controls b6.

After 23... $\mathbb{B}g7?$  24.a6 Black cannot play 24...b6 as 25. $\mathbb{B}xb6$  wins.

**23... $\mathbb{B}c8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}b5!$ ?**

White can start forcing matters like this or first improve his position with either 24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{B}ab1$  or 24.g4  $\mathbb{Q}f8$  25.f4.

**24...a6!**

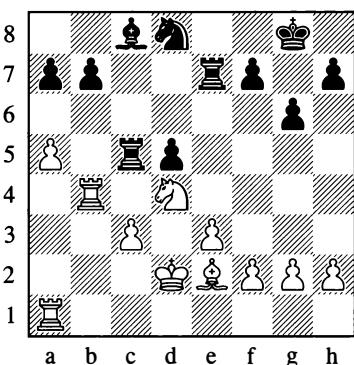
If 24... $\mathbb{Q}xb5$  25. $\mathbb{B}xb5$  White wins the d5-pawn just like in the game.

After the text move Black is a tempo up compared with the game, but it is still no fun for him after:

25. $\mathbb{Q}d4$

**23... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ !?**

This may be Black's best try.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$** 

24.a6 would be met by 24...b6.

24. $\mathbb{B}b5$   $\mathbb{Q}e6$  25. $\mathbb{B}ab1$  (after 25.f3  $\mathbb{B}ec7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b5$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  Black seems to hold his position together) 25... $\mathbb{B}ec7$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{B}c6$  Black should be able to hold.

Or 24.f4  $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}xb4$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  27. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  and Black gets organized with ... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ .

**24... $\mathbb{Q}e6$** 

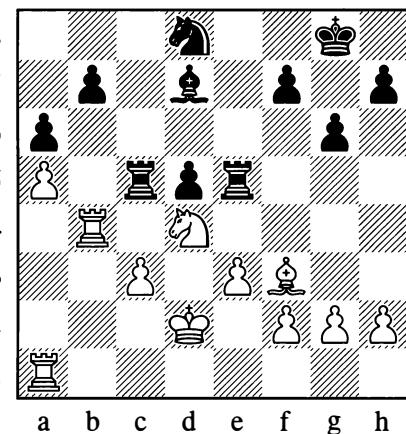
The other options are weaker: 24... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}xc6$  26.a6 and White will invade on the b-file. And after 24... $\mathbb{B}e5$  25. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{B}c7$  26. $\mathbb{B}b5$  Black is in trouble.

**25. $\mathbb{Q}b5$  a6 26. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}g5$  27. $\mathbb{B}b6$** 

White can squeeze for a while.

**24. $\mathbb{Q}f3$** 

Karpov threatens to win the d5-pawn with  $\mathbb{Q}b3$ .

**24... $\mathbb{B}e5$** **25. $\mathbb{B}b6$ !**

Now  $\mathbb{B}d6$  is another threat.

**25... $\mathbb{Q}f8$  26.g4**

Karpov gains space.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}e8$  27.h4**

Or 27.h3  $\mathbb{Q}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}g2$ , followed by f2-f4, was also attractive.

**27... $\mathbb{B}c7$ ?**

Georgiev decides to wait for a while and does not even try to break the bind, but his plan leads to the loss of the d5-pawn.

After 27... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  28. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  29. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c7$  Black has to suffer, but he will lose no material in the near future.

### 28. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 29. $\mathbb{Q}d6$ $\mathbb{Q}e5$ ?

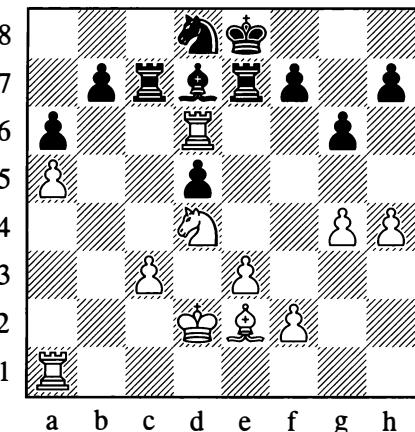
We shall return to this position!

### 30. $\mathbb{Q}b6$

Karpov wants to gain time so he repeats moves. 30.f4! wins a pawn.

### 30... $\mathbb{Q}e7$ 31. $\mathbb{Q}d6$

Karpov's imaginative use of the rook wins the d5-pawn.



### 31... $\mathbb{Q}e6$ ?

This move leads to long tactical lines, but they end in White's favour; in fact, Georgiev had a few ways to sacrifice the pawn.

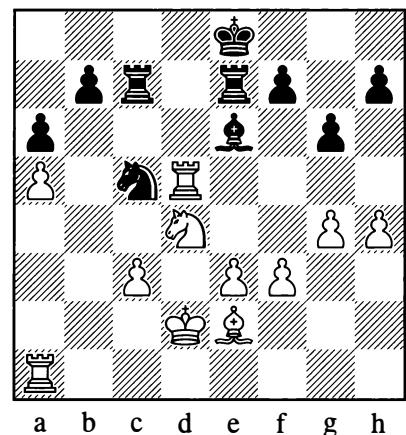
As we saw above, if 31... $\mathbb{Q}e5$ , as Georgiev played the first time, then 32.f4 and the d5-pawn drops for nothing.

31... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ ? 32. $\mathbb{Q}a3$  (if 32. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{Q}xc6$  34.g5  $\mathbb{Q}d8$  then Black can live with this endgame) 32... $\mathbb{Q}e6$  33. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  (33.g5  $\mathbb{Q}g7$ ) 33... $\mathbb{Q}c8$  34. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  35. $\mathbb{Q}d6$   $\mathbb{Q}ec7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e1$  Black has lost a pawn, but he has better chances here than in the game.

### 32. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$

Karpov grabs the pawn; he had to calculate deeply to be sure that his rook is not getting trapped. However he still has to work for the full point.

### 32... $\mathbb{Q}c5$ 33.f3 $\mathbb{Q}e6$



### 34. $\mathbb{Q}e5$ !

If 34. $\mathbb{Q}d6$  then 34... $\mathbb{Q}xg4$ ! wins back the pawn.

### 34...f6?

The tactics do not work in Black's favour. Black could try move the rook to another square:

### 34... $\mathbb{Q}c8$ 35. $\mathbb{Q}d1$

After 35.g5  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  36. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  37. $\mathbb{Q}f4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  White still has to bring his f4-rook into play.

### 35...f6

35... $\mathbb{Q}ec7$  is well met by 36. $\mathbb{Q}b1$ .

### 36. $\mathbb{Q}a4\#$ $\mathbb{Q}xa4$

Or 36... $\mathbb{Q}f7$  37. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$   $\mathbb{Q}xe6$  38. $\mathbb{Q}b3$  and White wins.

### 37. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ 38. $\mathbb{Q}xe6$ $\mathbb{Q}b2$ 39. $\mathbb{Q}d4$ $\mathbb{Q}c4\#$ 40. $\mathbb{Q}e2$ $\mathbb{Q}d6$

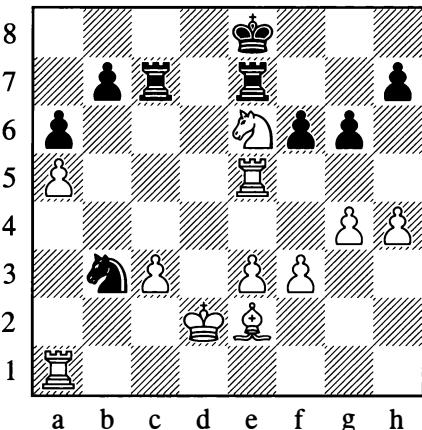
No better is 40... $\mathbb{Q}c5$  41. $\mathbb{Q}b3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  42. $\mathbb{Q}a4$ .

### 41. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

White's extra pawn should be enough to win.

**35.♕xe6! ♜b3†**

After 35...♜cd7† 36.♗c2 ♜xe6 37.♗e4 f5 38.gxf5 gxf5 39.♗c4 White is a safe pawn up.

**36.♔e1!**

This is the only square, but Karpov needed to calculate even further than this when he took the d5-pawn on the 32nd move.

**36...fxe5**

By now Georgiev realized he had miscalculated. Here he had another choice:

36...♜cd7 37.♗g7†!

A lovely move to send the king to a worse square.

37...♚f8 38.♗xe7 ♜xe7 39.♗a2!

This tactic allows White to keep his rook on an active square.

39.♗a3 ♜c5 is less convincing.

39...♗xg7

If 39...♜xe3 then White wins a piece with 40.♗f2! ♜e5 41.♗e6†! ♜xe6 42.♗c4.

40.♗d1 ♜c5 41.♗e2

White wins.

**37.♗xc7† ♜xc7 38.♗a3**

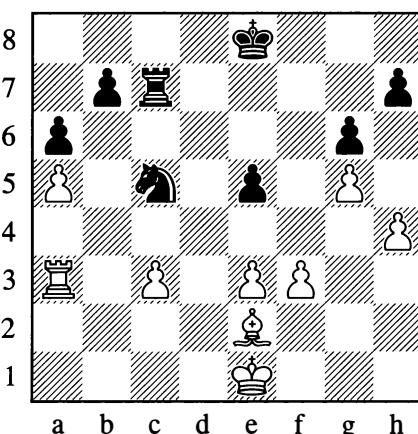
Karpov wins a pawn but his rook drifts a little out of play.

**38...♝c5**

If 38...♜xc3? then 39.♗f2! and the pin on the knight is deadly.

**39.g5!**

In endings, Karpov likes first to improve his pieces and only then bring his king into the action. Now he fixes Black's pawns as targets for his bishop.

**39...h6?**

A better chance was improving the king first with:

39...♜e7 40.♗d2

40.♗f2 ♜d6 41.♗g3 ♜e6 42.♗d3 (42.♗g4 e4) 42...♜c5 43.♗f1 ♜e6 44.♗b3 White has winning chances, but it is not over.

40...h6

Or 40...♜e6 41.♗c4† ♜d6 42.♗c2 h6 43.♗a1 hxg5 44.hxg5 ♜h7 45.♗d1† ♜c6 46.♗d2 when White should have enough to win.

41.gxh6 ♜f6 42.c4 ♜h7 43.♗c3 ♜xh6 44.♗b4 ♜e6 45.♗d3 g5 46.hxg5† ♜xg5 47.f4 exf4 48.exf4

The limited number of pawns helps Black, but not enough to save the game.

**40.gxh6!**

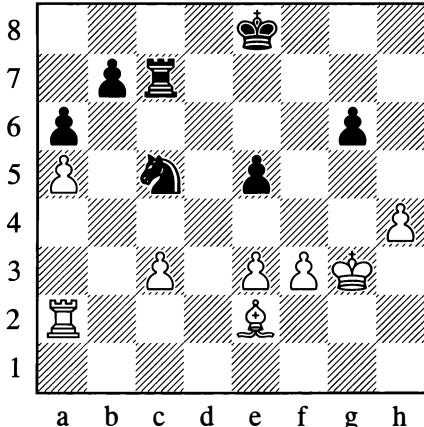
Karpov has the bishop so he is happy to open the position.

**40...♜h7 41.♗f2 ♜xh6 42.♗g3**

Karpov not only defends the h4-pawn, but now he can more easily attack the g6-pawn with his king.

**42...♝h7 43.♝a1!**

Karpov is under no pressure so he uses the time he has to bring his rook back into the game.

**43...♜b3 44.♝a3 ♜c5 45.♝a2 ♜c7****46.♔g4!**

Once again Karpov improves his king.

**46...♝e7 47.c4**

White puts this pawn on a defended square before he starts using his rook for attacking purposes. The simple 47.♝g5 ♜c6 48.♝b2 also wins.

**47...♜f6 48.♝d2!**

The rook has defended the queenside for long enough; now it takes on an active role.

**48...♝d7 49.♝xd7**

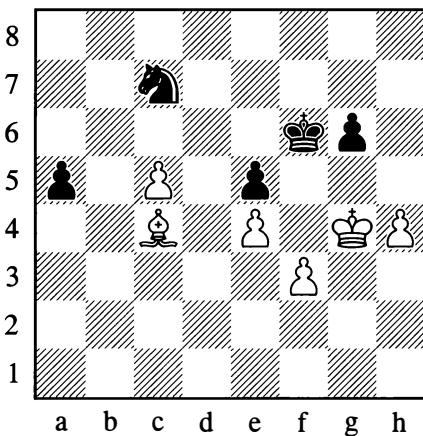
The bishop versus knight ending is winning easily; also, on principle, when a pawn up, one should swap pieces.

**49...♛xd7 50.♝d3 b6**

Allowing White a passed pawn is a sad necessity. Instead White wins simply after 50...♛c5 51.♝e4 ♛g7 52.♝d5 ♛f6 53.f4 exf4 54.exf4.

**51.axb6 ♛xb6 52.c5 ♛d5 53.e4 ♛c7****54.♝c4**

The bishop limits the knight's movement.

**54...a5****55.f4!**

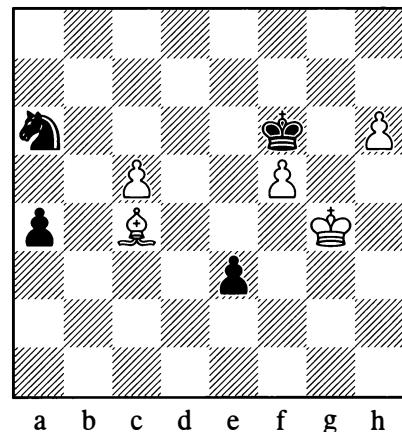
Karpov creates another passed pawn, which is too much for Black to handle.

**55...a4 56.f5!**

Karpov allows Black to have two passed pawns, but he will have three and in addition his bishop is superior.

**56...gx5† 57.exf5 e4 58.h5 e3 59.h6**

White wins the race.

**59...♛a6**

**60.c6**

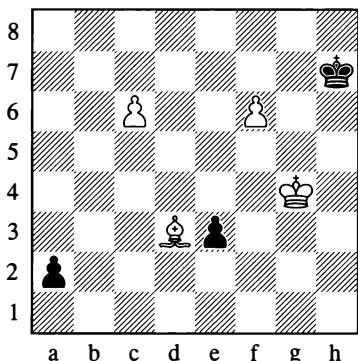
Karpov makes the correct practical decision; next move his king will step back to win the e3-pawn.

The following flashy option also worked, albeit with needless drama. The lines are fun and demonstrate how well a queen and bishop can work together. I will share a few of the more instructive variations:

60.♗xa6 a3 61.c6

61.♕d3 a2 62.h7 ♗g7 63.f6† also wins.

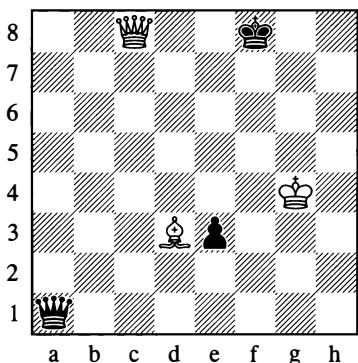
61...a2 62.h7 ♗g7 63.f6† ♗xh7 64.♕d3†



64...♗h6

This leads to a line that is tricky for humans and easy for a computer.

The alternative is simpler: 64...♗g8 65.c7 a1=♕ 66.c8=♕† ♗f7 67.♕c4† ♗g6 (if 67...♗xf6 then White can either win the queen with a skewer or elegantly mate in two with 68.♗f8†) 68.♗f5† ♗h6 69.♗h5# 65.f7 ♗g7 66.c7 a1=♕ 67.f8=♕† ♗xf8 68.c8=♕†



White wins even though he has no pawns!

The trick is that both Black's king and queen are in danger. For example:

66...♗e7 67.♗c7 ♗f6 68.♗d6† ♗f7 69.♗c4† ♗e8 70.♗b5† ♗f7 71.♗d7† ♗f6 72.♗d8†!

Now to avoid a quick mate the king must go to e5, dropping the queen to a skewer.

**60...a3 61.♗f3**

Karpov simply collects Black's pawns. For what it's worth, 61.♗xa6 wins in the same style as 60.♗xa6.

61...♗c7 62.♗xe3

1–0

Karpov beat Iordachescu in the fifth round, but after a draw he was beaten by Roiz. He took revenge on Stojanovic and then finished with a quick draw. Karpov ended the tournament in third place with 5½/9.

In the Corsica rapid event Karpov eliminated Hamdouchi and Guliev but lost to Kasimdzhanov in the semi-final.

Karpov played in a tournament called “The Champions’ League” in Vitoria-Gasteiz in Spain. It was a failure as he scored only three points out of ten games and finished last.

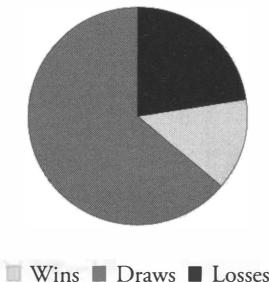
## 2007 Summary

Russian team championship:  $1\frac{1}{2}/3$  (+0 =3 -0)

Valjevo (3rd place):  $5\frac{1}{2}/9$  (+3 =5 -1)

Champions' League, Vitoria-Gasteiz (6th place):  $3/10$  (+0 =6 -4)

Total 45.5% (+3 =14 -5)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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# 2008

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Rating 2655 (60 in the world)

Karpov started the year with the Rapid World Cup, where he was eliminated by Grischuk by the score of 2½–1½. Karpov then played three games for the Chelyabinsk Southern Ural team, the area where he grew up, in the Russian team championship. He lost to Morozevich and drew with Andreikin and Timofeev. Next was the Odessa rapid tournament where Karpov scored 8½/14, finishing fifth.

In the preliminary stage of the Cap d'Agde rapid tournament Karpov drew three games before facing a then little-known young French player called Sebastien Feller.

## Game 65

Sebastien Feller – Anatoly Karpov

Cap d'Agde (rapid – preliminary) 2008

### 1.d4 d5 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♘e7

It is rather surprising that Karpov, who needed to win, chose to play the Orthodox Queen's Gambit; perhaps he was worried about something in the Queen's Indian. When Karpov played the Orthodox he usually preferred the 3...♞e7 move order to the traditional 3...♝f6. However after the 1986 match, Karpov played this position only once in a regular game, in 1998.

### 4.♘f3

The 4.cxd5 line caused much more problems for Karpov; out of six games he drew only two and lost four. No other line caused him such difficulty.

### 4...♝f6 5.♗g5 h6 6.♗xf6 ♘xf6

Black gains the two bishops; his task is to avoid confrontation for a while and later, probably much later, open the position.

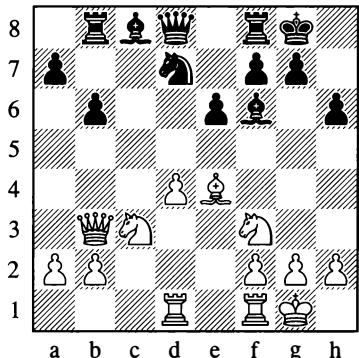
### 7.e3 0–0 8.♗b3 c6 9.♗d3

When Karpov faced Kasparov, his great rival chose another path:

### 9.♗d1

This is not just a different move order, it implies a different plan.

9...♝d7 10.♗d3 b6 11.cxd5 cxd5 12.e4 dxe4 13.♗xe4 ♜b8 14.0–0



14...b5!

Kasparov had missed this strong strategic move. Karpov keeps his two bishops, which will be a key issue if White plays d4-d5. In addition Black may later use the option of attacking the c3-knight.

15.♗fe1 ♕b6 16.♗b1 ♗b7 17.♕c2 g6 18.d5!

Otherwise Black would start to target the isolated pawn.

18...exd5

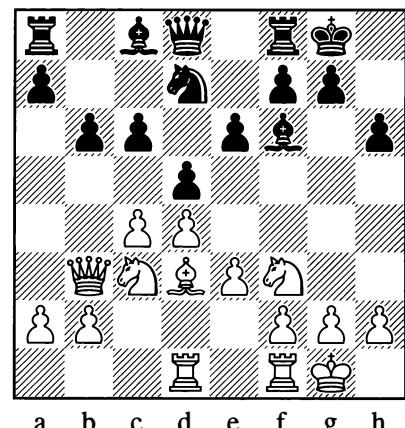
18...♗fe8!?

19.♘xd5 ♘xd5 20.♗xd5 ♘fd8

½–½ Kasparov – Karpov, Moscow (3)

1985.

9...♝d7 10.0–0 b6 11.♗ad1



11...♕c7

Karpov plays a novelty and a new plan, by keeping his bishop on c8. One gets the

impression that later in his career Karpov wanted to sidestep theory as early as possible. Previously, 11...♗b7 had always been played.

**12.e4**

Feller plays a bit too automatically, instead more testing was:

12.cxd5!? cxd5 (Black also faces problems after 12...exd5 13.♗c1 [or 13.♗c2 ♘d8 14.e4] 13...♗d6 14.e4) 13.♗c1 ♘d8 14.♗b5 ♗e7 15.♗c3 White has the initiative on the queenside.

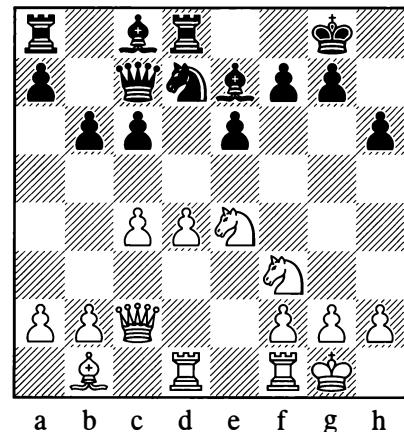
**12...dxe4 13.♗xe4 ♗e7**

Keeping the bishop pair gives Black more long-term chances of seizing the advantage.

**14.♗b1 ♘d8!**

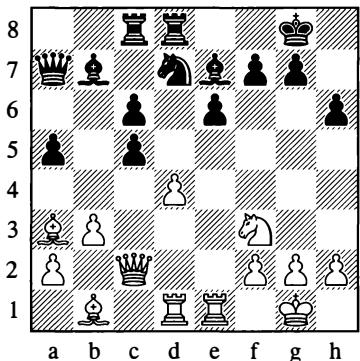
Karpov makes room for his knight to go to f8 to defend the h7-square.

**15.♕c2**



**15...♘f8!**

The knight defends its king well. Of course if the knight had gone instead to f6 then it would have been instantly removed, but in general it is more dangerous to defend h7 from f6, even if the knight is not immediately under attack. For example, consider this game by Kasparov:

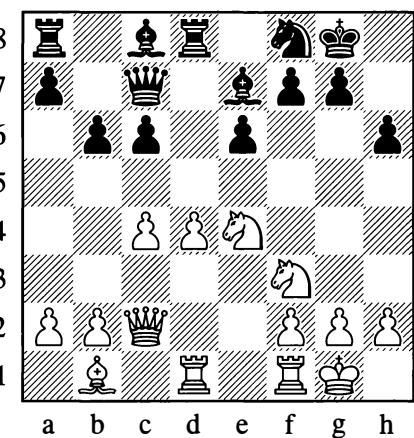


24... $\mathbb{Q}f6$ ??

Vallejo defends h7 in too risky a way. He should have defended his king with 24... $\mathbb{Q}f8!$  when his position would have been playable.

25. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{Q}d5?$  26. $\mathbb{Q}g4!$   $\mathbb{Q}f5$  27. $\mathbb{Q}xf6\#$

White had a decisive attack and went on to win, Kasparov – Vallejo Pons, Linares 2004.



**16.c5**

The young French player decides to play on the queenside. He has no attacking chances against the king and if he just waited then Karpov would eventually carry out ...c6-c5 when the bishops might take over.

**16... $\mathbb{R}b8$ !**

The rook will have a role on the b-file.

**17. $\mathbb{R}d2$   $\mathbb{R}d5$**

We have seen a few examples where Karpov superbly exploited a backward pawn; now he wants to force White to recapture on c5 with his d4-pawn, so that the c6-pawn will not be exposed.

**18.b4 bxc5 19.bxc5  $\mathbb{Q}a6$**

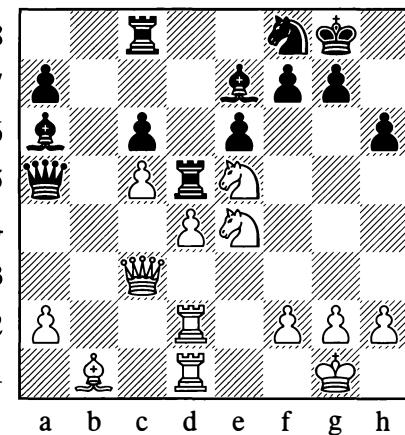
Karpov solves the problem of his inactive bishop and he does so with tempo.

**20. $\mathbb{E}fd1$   $\mathbb{W}a5$  21. $\mathbb{Q}e5$   $\mathbb{E}c8??$**

It is more natural to defend the pawn with 21... $\mathbb{Q}b5$ ; using the weakest available piece to perform a menial task.

**22. $\mathbb{W}c3$ !**

Feller asks a really unpleasant question – should Karpov go for an ending with a passive bishop or allow White's queen to become strong on the queenside.



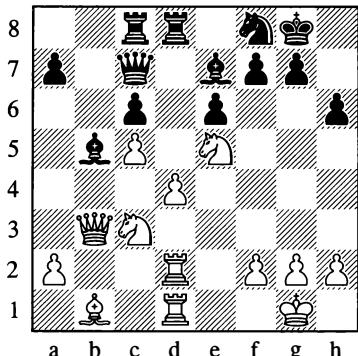
**22... $\mathbb{W}c7??$**

Better was 22... $\mathbb{W}xc3$  23. $\mathbb{Q}xc3$   $\mathbb{E}dd8$  24. $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}b7$  25. $\mathbb{E}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}a8$ . It is quite possible that, despite the dreadful bishop on a8, Black has a playable endgame as he may loosen White's grip with ... $\mathbb{Q}d7$ .

**23. $\mathbb{W}a3!$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  24. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{E}dd8$  25. $\mathbb{Q}xb5$**

Improving the queen before taking on b5 is stronger:

25.  $\mathbb{W}b3!$ ?



25...  $\mathbb{B}b8$

After 25...  $\mathbb{B}xd4$  26.  $\mathbb{B}xd4$   $\mathbb{W}xe5$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  Black does not have enough compensation for the exchange.

Or 25...  $\mathbb{Q}d7$  26.  $\mathbb{Q}xd7$   $\mathbb{W}xd7$  27.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $cxb5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$  and White will push his c-pawn, choking his opponent rather unpleasantly.

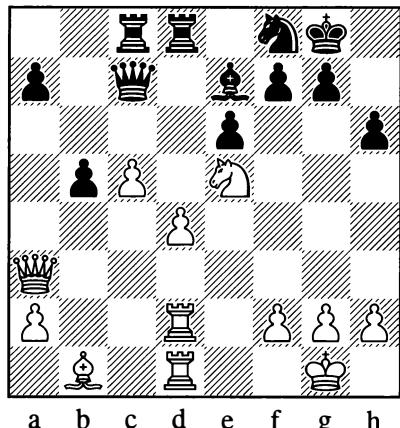
26.  $\mathbb{Q}xb5$   $\mathbb{B}xb5$

If 26...  $cxb5$  then 27.  $f4$  and White's attack is at least dangerous.

27.  $\mathbb{W}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}xc5$  28.  $\mathbb{Q}xc6$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}e4$   $\mathbb{Q}d6$   
30.  $g3$

The knight on  $c6$  is unpleasant for Black to tolerate.

25...  $cxb5$



26.  $\mathbb{Q}f3$

Securing the knight gives White some advantage, but there were also other promising lines:

26.  $f4$   $f6$  (26...  $a5$  27.  $\mathbb{W}e3$ ) 27.  $\mathbb{Q}g6$   $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   
28.  $\mathbb{Q}xg6$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  29.  $\mathbb{W}b3$  White's bishop is stronger.

White can aim for the same idea more slowly:  
26.  $g3$   $a5$  27.  $f4$   $b4$  White has an edge after either 28.  $\mathbb{W}a4$  or 28.  $\mathbb{W}e3$ .

26...  $a5$ !

Pushing the queenside pawns creates some counterplay, so White's hands are less free to build an attack.

27.  $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{B}b8$  28.  $\mathbb{W}b3$   $b4$  29.  $\mathbb{Q}c4$ ??

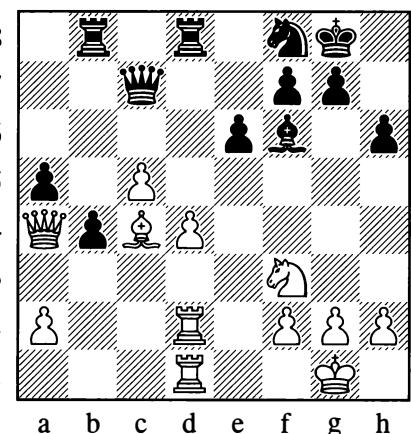
The bishop does little on this diagonal. After 29.  $\mathbb{Q}c2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  30.  $\mathbb{W}e3$  White is a bit better.

29...  $\mathbb{Q}f6$ !

Karpov directs his bishop against the  $d4$ -pawn, which might become a target.

30.  $\mathbb{W}a4$

Feller could not find a constructive plan.

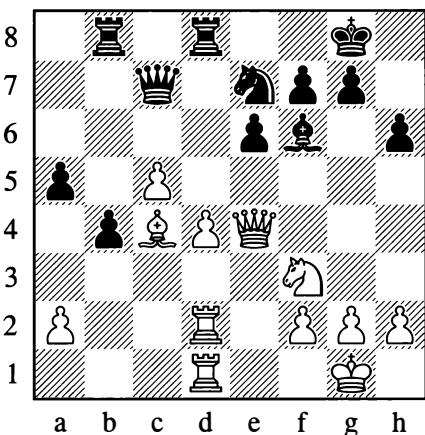


30...  $\mathbb{Q}g6$ !

Karpov improves his knight, exploiting the white bishop's departure from the  $b1-h7$  diagonal.

**31.♕c2 ♔e7 32.♕e4?**

Feller decides to attack, but while he wasted time, Karpov improved his position and now his defence is fully prepared.

**32...a4!**

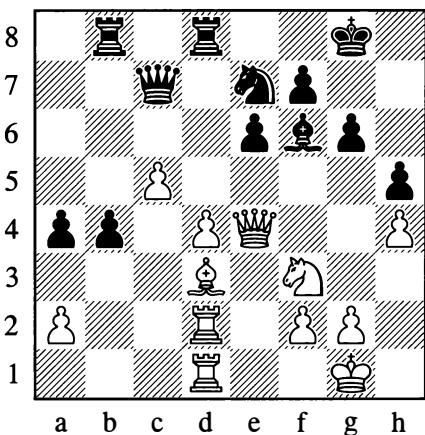
Karpov's queenside pawns are becoming dangerous; he is unafraid of White's kingside ambitions.

**33.♖d3 g6**

Karpov blocks the key diagonal while his pieces are well placed to defend his king.

**34.h4 h5**

If Karpov had wanted to take all the sting out of the game, then 34...♘d5 leads to an exchange of queens. After 35.♕c1 ♘f4 36.♕xf4 ♘xf4 37.♔a6 the ending is roughly equal.

**35.g4?**

Feller loses patience; this move weakens his position without gaining any attack in return. Instead after 35.♕c4 White would still be in the game.

**35...hxg4 36.♕xg4 ♕d5!**

Karpov defends the fifth rank and moves closer to both the d4- and h4-pawns. 36...♔f8! was also strong.

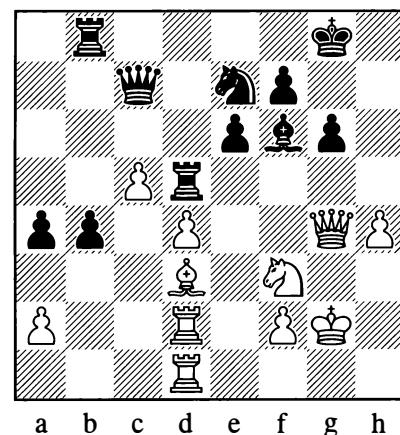
**37.♔g2?**

White's play has come to a halt and it is hard to find moves; the one Feller chose is unfortunate.

Offering to exchange queens with 37.♕g3? is not a bad idea in general, but right now it loses as d4 falls with check: 37...♕xg3† 38.fxg3 ♕xd4†

37.♗b1 ♘h5 38.♕g3 ♘a7 White is worse but he still can fight.

37.♕c2 ♘a7 (if 37...b3 38.axb3 axb3 39.♕e4 ♘h5 40.♕g3 ♘a7 41.c6 then White still has hopes of getting away with it) 38.♕g3 b3 39.♕e4 ♘h5 40.axb3 axb3 41.♗b1 Black is not that much better.

**37...♗h5!?**

This was a rapid game, so perhaps Karpov was already short of time. He played a good move but missed an even better one: 37... $\mathbb{Q}f5$  38.h5 (38. $\mathbb{B}f1$  loses to 38... $\mathbb{Q}xd4$ ) 38... $\mathbb{Q}h4\#$ ! Black wins a pawn.

### 38. $\mathbb{Q}e4$

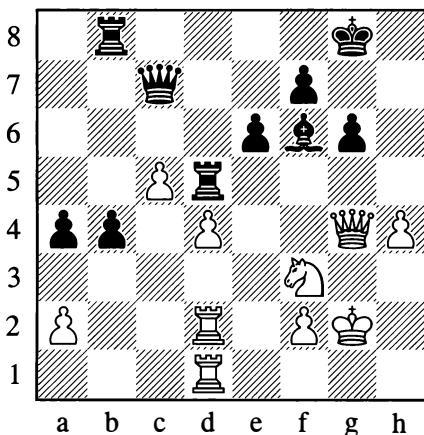
If 38. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}d8$  39. $\mathbb{B}b2$   $\mathbb{Q}d5$  40. $\mathbb{B}h1$  b3 and Black is dominating.

### 38... $\mathbb{Q}d5!$

Karpov threatens to put his knight on c3. White is also in trouble after 38... $\mathbb{Q}f5$ . For example, 39. $\mathbb{B}xf5$   $\mathbb{B}xf5$  40. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$ .

### 39. $\mathbb{Q}xd5$ $\mathbb{B}xd5$

Karpov has reduced White's attacking chances to close to zero by exchanging the light-squared bishop; now he can concentrate on making progress on the queenside.



### 40. $\mathbb{B}e2?$

White possibly had the illusion he could still be active. Instead he should have immediately rerouted his forces to stop Black's queenside pawns:

40. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  (or 40...b3 41. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}a7$  and Black has decent winning chances) 41. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{B}g7$  42. $\mathbb{B}db2$   $\mathbb{W}b7$  Black has more chances to win than White to hold.

### 40...b3!

White has no pieces on the queenside, so Karpov can effectively push his pawns.

### 41. $\mathbb{axb3}$ $\mathbb{axb3}$

Or 41... $\mathbb{B}xb3$  42. $\mathbb{W}e4$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  and Black has a dominating position here as well.

### 42. $\mathbb{W}g3$ $\mathbb{W}c8!$

Karpov keeps the queen; later the lady will be handy in attacking White's king.

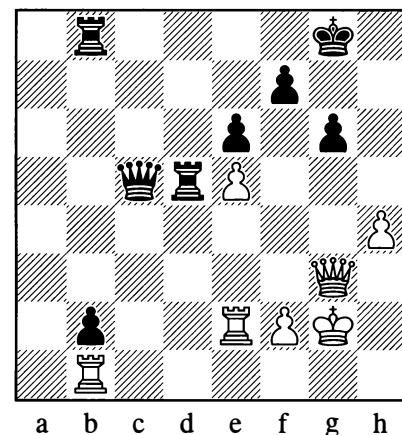
### 43. $\mathbb{Q}e5$

If 43. $\mathbb{B}b2$  then 43...e5 is strong.

### 43...b2 44. $\mathbb{B}b1$ $\mathbb{Q}xe5$

44... $\mathbb{B}xd4!$  is more convincing; probably Karpov had little time to finish this rapid game.

### 45.dxe5 $\mathbb{W}xc5$



### 46. $\mathbb{B}xb2$

Maybe getting rid of the weak h-pawn would give more chances over the board than taking on b2.

### 46.h5?

Nevertheless, careful analysis shows Black has a clear win here as well:

### 46... $\mathbb{W}c4!$

After 46... $\mathbb{B}d4$  47.hxg6  $\mathbb{W}c6\#$  48.f3  $\mathbb{W}c1$  49. $\mathbb{W}h3$   $\mathbb{W}g5\#$  50. $\mathbb{W}g3$  White is still fighting.

46... $\mathbb{W}c6$  47. $\mathbb{Q}h2$  (47. $\mathbb{Q}h3$  loses to 47... $\mathbb{E}c5$  48. $\mathbb{H}xg6$   $\mathbb{E}c1$ ) 47... $\mathbb{Q}g7$  48. $h6\#$   $\mathbb{Q}xh6$  49. $\mathbb{E}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}xb2$  50. $\mathbb{E}xb2$   $\mathbb{W}c7$  White's position is difficult, but maybe it can be held.

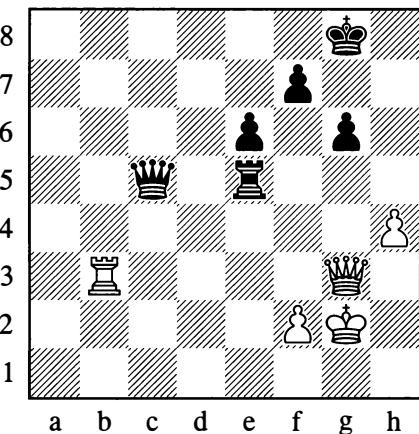
47. $\mathbb{E}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}xb2$  48. $\mathbb{E}xb2$   $\mathbb{E}d4$  49. $f3$   $\mathbb{W}c1$  50. $\mathbb{W}f2$   $\mathbb{W}g5\#$  51. $\mathbb{W}g3$   $\mathbb{W}xh5$   
Black wins.

#### 46... $\mathbb{E}xb2$ 47. $\mathbb{E}xb2$ $\mathbb{E}xe5$

All the play is on one side of the board and White is *only* one pawn down, but his king and pawns are vulnerable.

#### 48. $\mathbb{E}b3$

If 48. $\mathbb{W}f3$  then 48... $\mathbb{W}d4$  wins, or 48. $\mathbb{E}d2$   $\mathbb{E}f5$  49. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c6\#$  50. $f3$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  and Black's advantage is very likely to be enough to win.



#### 48... $\mathbb{E}f5!$

This very strong move takes away the f3-square from White's queen.

#### 49. $\mathbb{E}d3$ $\mathbb{W}c6\#$

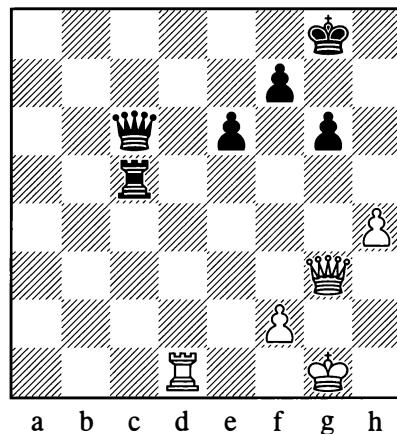
Karpov finds a new angle to hurt White.

#### 50. $\mathbb{Q}g1$ $\mathbb{E}c5$

The move emphasizes that White's back rank is weak.

#### 51. $\mathbb{E}d1$

Or 51. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{W}e4$  52. $\mathbb{E}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c4$  and Black wins.



#### 51... $\mathbb{W}e4!$

Karpov centralizes his queen and takes away a lot of squares from White's pieces while also exerting pressure on the h4-pawn.

#### 52. $\mathbb{E}a1$ $\mathbb{Q}h7$

A prophylactic move, but the position was winning without it as well.

#### 53. $\mathbb{Q}h2$ $\mathbb{E}h5$ 54. $\mathbb{E}a4?$

It is hard to tell whether this was a blunder or an attempted trick.

#### 54... $\mathbb{W}xa4$

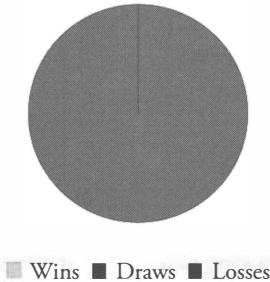
0–1

In the preliminary section Karpov finished level with Hou Yifan, and then eliminated her in the play-off. In the knockout stage Karpov beat Caruana but lost to Nakamura in the final.

## 2008 Summary

Russian team championship: 1½/3 (+0 =3 –0)

Total 50% (+0 =3 –0)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# 2009

Rating 2644 (90 in the world)

Karpov's first event of 2009 was a match against Ghaem Maghami in Tehran, the format being four regular and four rapid games. Karpov started with a good win on the white side of a 4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  Nimzo-Indian, but in the second game the Iranian struck back and levelled the match. The third and fourth games both ended in draws, with neither player able to create winning chances. Thus the classical part of the match finished 2–2. In the rapid games they each scored two wins, and so that part also ended in a 2–2 draw.

Karpov then participated in San Sebastian, but it was a disaster for him. He only managed three draws out of nine games, and he finished in last place with 1½ points.

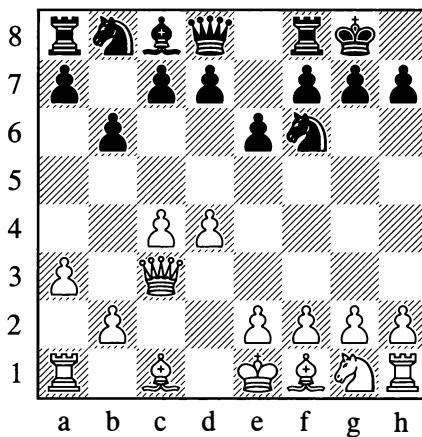
Karpov's next event was a rapid tournament in Zurich. He started with two losses against Ponomariov and Anand, followed by a draw with Topalov. In Round 4 he faced Judit Polgar, for many years the top-ranked female player in the world. She has played 120 games against the world champions, winning twenty two, drawing fifty four and losing forty four. Their lifetime score is ten wins to Karpov, three wins to Judit and fifteen draws.

## Game 66

Anatoly Karpov – Judit Polgar

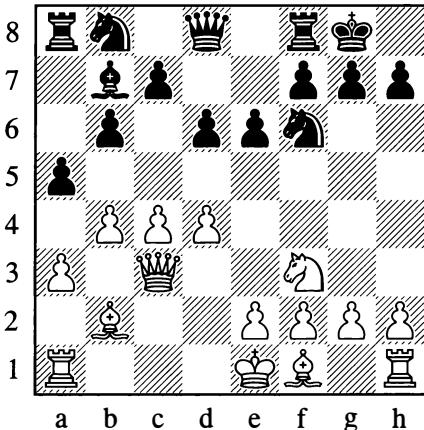
Zurich (rapid) 2009

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4. $\mathbb{W}c2$  0–0 5.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3\ddagger$  6. $\mathbb{W}xc3$  b6



**7.♘f3**

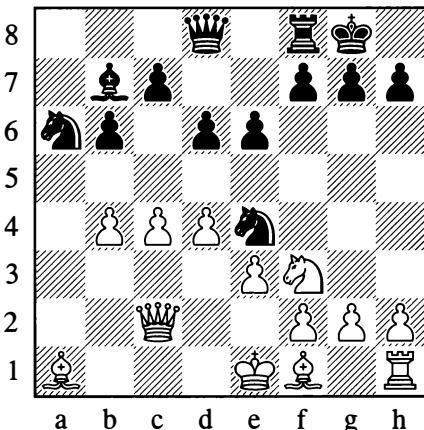
Karpov generally played 7.♗g5 here, only employing the text move twice previously.

**7...d6 8.b4 ♜b7 9.♕b2 a5**

With this somewhat rare move, Black is hoping to obtain play on the a-file.

**10.e3 ♘e4 11.♗c2 axb4 12.axb4 ♜xa1†  
13.♕xa1 ♘a6?**

It is more usual to develop this knight to d7. Judit's plan of immediately attacking on the queenside is double-edged. Unless she achieves something concrete, the knight may find itself out of play on the edge of the board.

**14.♗b3**

Karpov plays a new move. The one previous game from this position did not last long: 14.♗b2 ♜a8 15.d5 ♘f6 (15...f6?? looks stronger) 16.♗b1 e5 ½–½ Plachetka – Adamski, Warsaw 1983.

**14...♜a8 15.♗b2 c5 16.b5 ♘c7?**

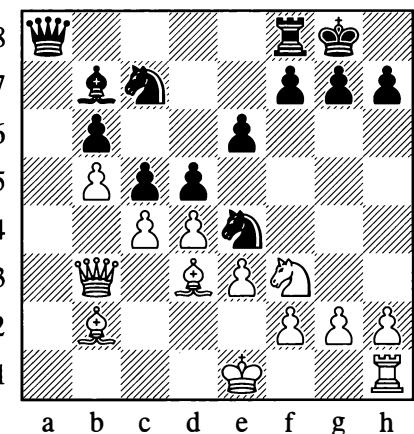
This is an unfortunate square for the knight, as it has nowhere useful to go from here. Judit should have continued to play energetically with: 16...♗b4! 17.♗e2 ♜a2 18.♗xa2 ♘xa2 19.0–0 ♘ac3 20.♗d3 ♜a8 Black's active pieces are enough to balance White's bishop pair.

**17.♗d3 d5?**

After this move Judit's bishop also becomes passive. The alternatives are:

17...cx d4 18.exd4 d5 (after 18...f5 19.0–0 ♜e8 20.♗a4 White's chances are favourable) 19.0–0 dxc4 20.♗xc4 ♜c8 21.♗a1 ♜b8 22.d5 ♘xd5 23.♗d4 ♘f6 24.♗e5 White has good compensation for the pawn.

17...♘f6?? 18.♗e2 cxd4 19.exd4 ♜xf3 20.♗xf3 d5 21.0–0 dxc4 22.♗xc4 ♘cd5 23.♗a1 White is just a little better.

**18.♗xe4!**

Karpov buries the black bishop and obtains an advantage.

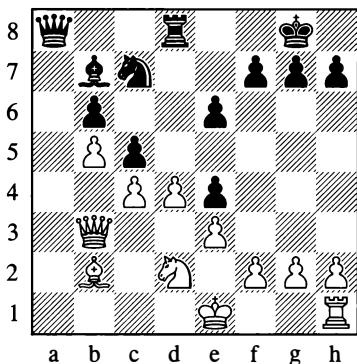
**18...dxe4 19.Qd2**

The knight heads towards Black's queenside weaknesses.

**19...Qe8?!**

Judit wants to improve her problem knight, but as a result her rook is blocked in. Developing the rook is stronger, although still not enough to equalize:

19...Rd8

**20.Qc2**

The natural 20.Qc3?! is not so good: 20...Qe8 21.dxc5 bxc5 Black may get some play with ...Rd3.

White can also try: 20.dxc5 bxc5 21.Qa3 Qxa3 22.Qxa3 Ra8 23.Qc1 Qe8 24.Qb3 Qd6 Black is just a little worse.

20...cxd4

Both 20...Ra2? 21.0–0 and 20...Qe8 21.dxc5 bxc5 22.0–0 Rd3 23.Qa1 give White a huge advantage.

21.Qxd4 Rd6 22.0–0

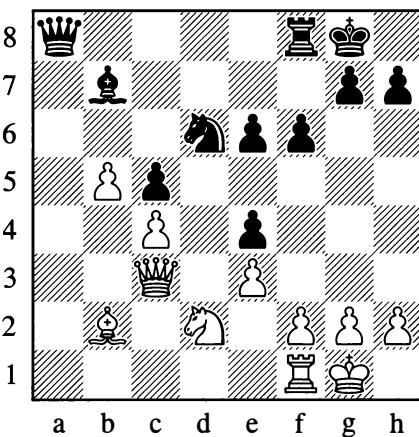
White is clearly better, mainly because of his stronger bishop.

**20.dxc5 bxc5 21.0–0**

White could target the c5-pawn straight away: 21.Qa3 Rc8 22.Qa7 Qd6 23.Qa3 and the pawn falls. But castling first is strong too, as the c-pawn will not run away.

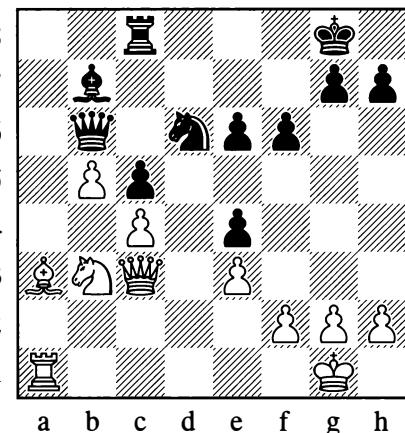
21...Qd6 22.Qc3

Karpov clears the b3-square for his knight to attack the c5-pawn.

**22...f6****23.Qa3!**

Karpov now begins to direct all his forces against the black weakness.

23...Rc8 24.Qa1 Ra7 25.Qb3 Rb6

**26.Qxc5!**

After attacking the c5-pawn purposefully, Karpov now employs some tactics to win it.

26...Rxc5 27.Qd4

The pin enables White to win back the material with interest.

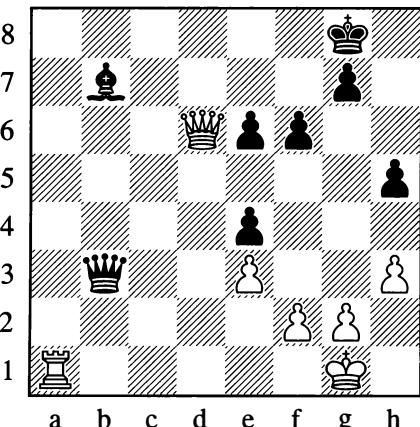
**27... $\mathbb{E}xb5$  28.cxb5  $\mathbb{W}xb5$  29. $\mathbb{W}xd6$**

The weakness of Judit's king prevents her putting up any resistance.

**29... $\mathbb{W}xb3$  30.h3**

Giving the king a bolthole will allow the rook to join the attack.

**30...h5**



**31. $\mathbb{E}a7$**

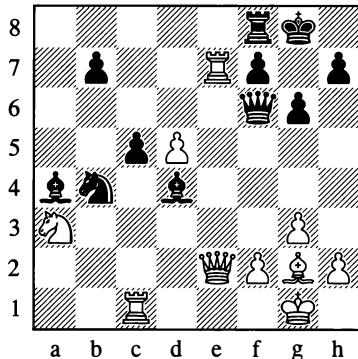
The invasion on the seventh rank decides the game instantly.

**31... $\mathbb{Q}h7$  32. $\mathbb{W}c7$**

**1–0**

This was Karpov's only win in the tournament, which he finished in shared last place with Polgar and the Swiss IM Werner Hug.

Karpov and Kasparov then played a match in Valencia to mark the 25th anniversary of their first world championship match, the format of the match being four rapid games followed by eight blitz games. Karpov started with two losses, even losing the first game on time as early as the 24th move. Here is the critical phase of the third game:



**26. $\mathbb{E}xb7$**

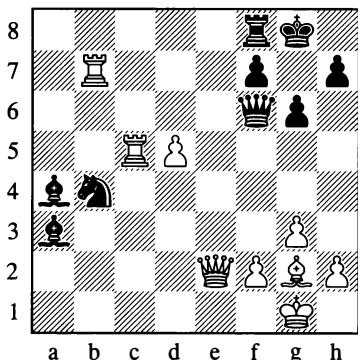
After this Black does not even have a pawn for the exchange, but his pieces are well placed.

**26... $\mathbb{Q}b2?$**

This gives up the key c5-pawn, while the win of the knight should only be temporary. Kasparov ought to have preferred 26... $\mathbb{E}e8$  27. $\mathbb{W}f1$   $\mathbb{E}e5$ , when Black wins the d5-pawn and has enough compensation to hold the position.

**27. $\mathbb{E}xc5$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$**

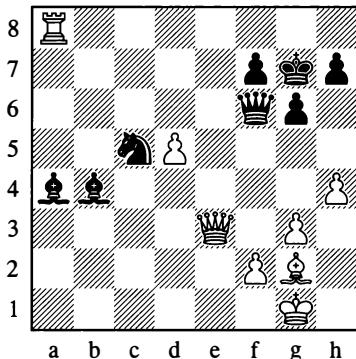
27... $\mathbb{E}e8$  no longer helps Black, as 28. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  29. $\mathbb{E}a5$  wins for White.



**28.h4?**

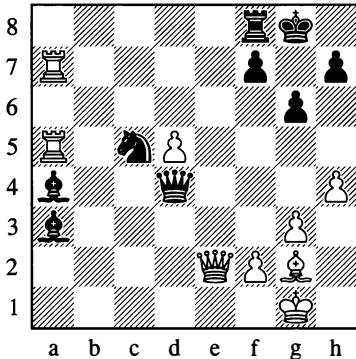
Karpov plays a reasonable move, but misses a clear win: 28. $\mathbb{E}a5!$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  29. $\mathbb{W}c4$   $\mathbb{E}e1\#$  30. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{E}c1$  31. $\mathbb{W}f4$   $\mathbb{W}xf4$  32.gxf4  $\mathbb{Q}c2$  33. $\mathbb{E}xa3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  (or 33... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  34. $\mathbb{E}xd3$   $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  35. $\mathbb{E}b8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  36.d6 and White wins) 34. $\mathbb{E}b8\#$   $\mathbb{Q}g7$  35. $\mathbb{E}c8$  Black will drop a piece to the pin.

28... $\mathbb{Q}d3$  29. $\mathbb{E}a5$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  30. $\mathbb{E}ba7$   $\mathbb{W}d4$   
 30... $\mathbb{E}b8$  looks active but it loses: 31. $\mathbb{W}e3$   
 $\mathbb{Q}b4$  32. $\mathbb{E}a8!!$   $\mathbb{E}xa8$  33. $\mathbb{E}xa8\#$   $\mathbb{g}7$



34. $h5!!$  (not 34. $\mathbb{E}b8?$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  35. $\mathbb{E}b6$   $\mathbb{W}a1\#$   
 36. $\mathbb{Q}h2$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and Black wins) 34... $gxh5$   
 35. $\mathbb{E}b8!$   $\mathbb{Q}a6$  36. $\mathbb{E}b6$  White wins.

Black could return some material with  
 30... $\mathbb{Q}b4?!$  31. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  32. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  and  
 I think Black can hold the position despite  
 the pawn deficit.



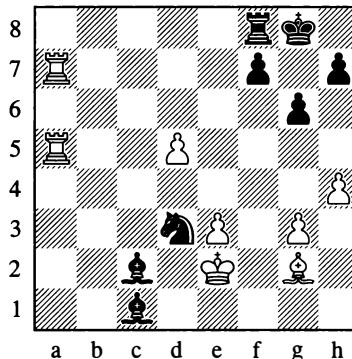
31. $\mathbb{W}e3!$   
 Karpov swaps the active black queen.

31... $\mathbb{W}xe3$  32. $fxe3$   $\mathbb{Q}c1?!$   
 32... $\mathbb{Q}b4$  33. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$  34. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}c5$  would  
 allow Black to hold the position fairly easily.

33. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}d3\#$   
 33.. $\mathbb{E}e8$  34. $e4$   $\mathbb{E}c8$  35. $d6!?$  is tricky, but  
 Black may be able to defend.

34. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}c2?$   
 This is Kasparov's final mistake. He could

fight on with: 34... $\mathbb{Q}b2$  35. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{Q}xa4$   
 36. $\mathbb{E}xa4$   $\mathbb{E}e8$  I think Black's chances of  
 holding this endgame are not bad.



35. $d6!$   
 The strong d-pawn seals Kasparov's fate.  
 35... $\mathbb{E}e8$  36. $\mathbb{E}a8!$   
 1–0 Karpov – Kasparov, Valencia (rapid – 3)  
 2009; Black cannot stop the d-pawn.

Kasparov won the next game to take the rapid match 3–1. Kasparov also won the blitz match, by the score of 6–2. The play in the match, although excellent at times, was rather uneven. I think that the age difference was a big advantage for Kasparov. Originally there were plans for Karpov and Kasparov to play another match in the end of the year, but unfortunately it was cancelled.

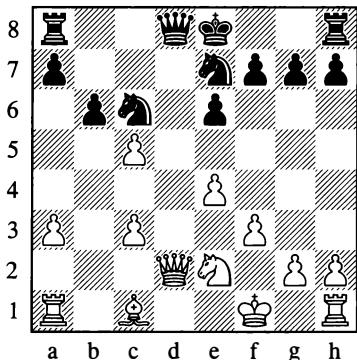
Karpov was invited to the World Blitz Championship in Moscow. Although overall it was a very strong tournament, I think it is a pity that players such as Nakamura, who really is a wizard at blitz, did not play, while some relatively weaker players were invited. Karpov started very impressively, ending the first day in third place, although he could not maintain his form and finished just below half way.

We shall take a look at one of Karpov's games against the eventual winner Carlsen, who by the end of the year would be world number one. Comparing Carlsen with the young

Karpov, the Norwegian star is undoubtedly stronger than Karpov was, but he has had the benefit of much greater experience, and even at a very young age has already played many world champions. Carlsen has not played a regular game against Karpov or Kasparov, but has played thirty one games against their successors, his score being eight wins, fourteen draws and nine losses.

1.d4  $\mathbb{Q}f6$  2.c4 e6 3. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}b4$  4.f3 c5

Nowadays Karpov likes to deviate from the variations he played when he was at his peak; this is another example of that. Karpov had a fine victory against the young Shirov with the main line: 4...d5 5.a3  $\mathbb{Q}xc3\uparrow$  6.bxc3 c5 7.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  8. $\mathbb{W}d3$  b6 9.e4  $\mathbb{Q}a6$  10. $\mathbb{W}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}xf1$  11. $\mathbb{Q}xf1$   $\mathbb{Q}e7$  12. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}bc6$  13.dxc5

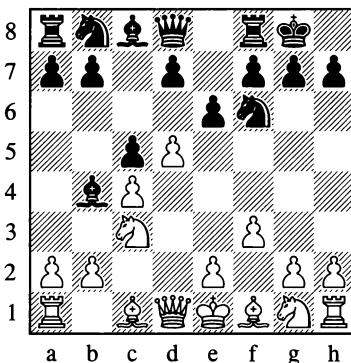


13... $\mathbb{W}c7\text{?}$ ? Karpov sacrifices a pawn. 14. $\mathbb{W}f4$  (14. $\mathbb{Q}b1\text{?}$  is worth considering) 14...e5 15. $\mathbb{W}g4$  0–0 16. $\mathbb{Q}f2$   $\mathbb{Q}a5$  17.cxb6  $\mathbb{W}xb6\uparrow$  (after 17...axb6 Black has positional compensation) 18. $\mathbb{Q}e3$   $\mathbb{W}c6$  19. $\mathbb{Q}hd1$  (19. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{Q}c4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}he1$  is equal) 19... $\mathbb{Q}c4$  20. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  f6 21. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{W}b6\uparrow$  22. $\mathbb{Q}g3\text{?}$  (after 22. $\mathbb{Q}f1$   $\mathbb{W}fd8$  23. $\mathbb{Q}d7$   $\mathbb{Q}f8$  Black is better, but not winning) 22...f5! Black was now winning in Shirov – Karpov, Biel 1992.

5.d5 0–0

A relatively rare line. Karpov had played differently in another blitz game the previous year: 5... $\mathbb{Q}xc3\uparrow$  6.bxc3 d6 7.e4  $\mathbb{W}e7$  8. $\mathbb{Q}d3$

$\mathbb{Q}bd7$  9.a4 exd5 10.cxd5  $\mathbb{Q}xd5$  11. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}f6$  12.0–0 0–0 13.c4  $\mathbb{Q}e5$  14. $\mathbb{Q}g5$  h6 15. $\mathbb{Q}h4$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  16. $\mathbb{Q}c3$   $\mathbb{Q}c6$  17.f4  $\mathbb{Q}xd3$  18. $\mathbb{W}xd3$  The position is unclear at this stage, although Black later lost in Mamedyarov – Karpov, Moscow (blitz) 2008.



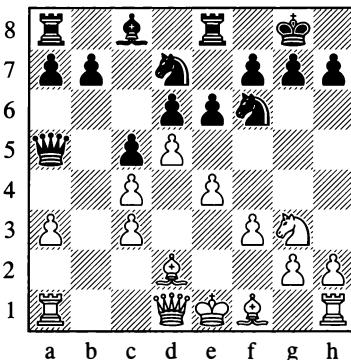
6.a3?

According to the database this is a novelty. Did Carlsen forget his theory, or had he prepared it?

6... $\mathbb{Q}xc3\uparrow$  7.bxc3  $\mathbb{Q}e8$  8.e4 d6 9. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{W}a5\text{!}$

Karpov temporarily ties the knight to the defence of the c3-pawn, delaying the development of White's kingside.

10. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}bd7$  11. $\mathbb{Q}g3$



11... $\mathbb{Q}b6\text{!}$

Karpov makes it clear that he will play on the queenside.

12. $\mathbb{Q}e2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7\text{?}$

12... $\mathbb{Q}a4\text{!?}$  is also possible.



22...a4 23.h3 a3

Karpov is willing to give back a pawn in order to simplify the position. He could consider 23... $\mathbb{W}c7?$  aiming to prevent e4-e5. White would then reply 24. $\mathbb{B}a2!$  intending to transfer the rook to e2, with some play for the pawn.

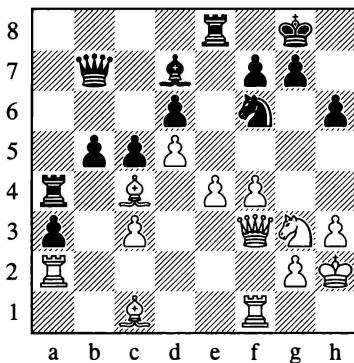
24. $\mathbb{B}a2?$

Although 24. $\mathbb{B}xc4!$  exchanges White's strong bishop, it should have been tried: 24... $bxc4$  25. $\mathbb{B}xa3$  (25. $\mathbb{Q}xa3 \mathbb{B}a5$ ) 25... $\mathbb{B}xa3$  26. $\mathbb{Q}xa3$  The position is close to equal.

24... $\mathbb{B}a4!$  25. $\mathbb{Q}h2 \mathbb{W}b7$

Karpov stops e4-e5 by aiming his queen at the d5-pawn.

26. $\mathbb{Q}xc4$



Carlsen – Karpov, Moscow (blitz) 2009. Karpov has strategically outplayed his opponent, and here 26... $\mathbb{Q}xc4$  is winning very easily, as White is losing one of his centre pawns. However Karpov went wrong by recapturing the bishop with the pawn. From this point the game fluctuated wildly and Karpov was even losing at some stages, but he triumphed in the end.

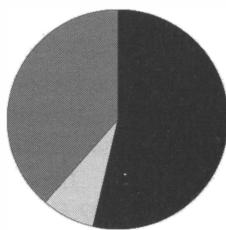
Although this was only a blitz game, it not only underlines Karpov's great strategic understanding, but it is in a way symbolic: Karpov's first win against a giant of chess was against David Bronstein, who was born in 1924, and here he is beating a modern-day star in Carlsen, who was born in 1990.

## 2009 Summary

Match versus Ghaem Maghami, Tehran: Drew 2–2 (+1 =2 –1)

San Sebastian (10th place): 1½/9 (+0 =3 –6)

Total 26.9% (+1 =5 –7)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

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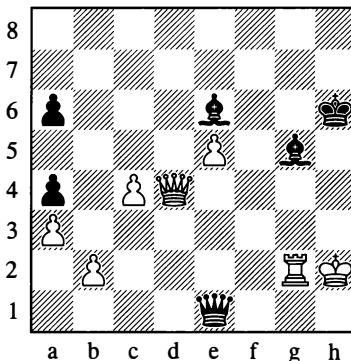
# 2010

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Rating 2619 (outside top 100)

For much of 2010 Karpov concentrated on chess politics, running for the presidency of FIDE. But after a bitter fight he lost the election to the incumbent Kirsan Ilyumzhinov.

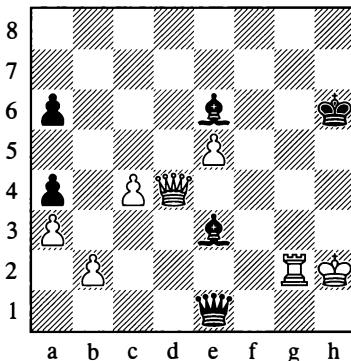
Towards the end of the year he returned to the chessboard at the Cap d'Agde rapid tournament, but he failed to qualify from the preliminary group. His score of 2½/7 included victories over Nadezhda Kosintseva and Judit Polgar. Here is the end of his game against Judit:



62... $\mathbb{W}f1??$  64. $\mathbb{Q}g3$   $\mathbb{W}e1\#$  64. $\mathbb{Q}h2??$

The correct 64. $\mathbb{Q}f3$  would result in equality. Instead Judit repeats the position, but Karpov does not miss his second chance...

64... $\mathbb{Q}e3!$



0–1 J. Polgar – Karpov, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2010. If 65. $\mathbb{W}e4$ , then 65... $\mathbb{Q}g1\#$  winning.

Karpov next played a rapid match against the young Chinese player Hou Yifan, who at the age of sixteen was soon to become the youngest ever Women's World Champion. We shall look at the first game.

## Game 67

Hou Yifan – Anatoly Karpov

Sanya City (rapid – 1) 2010

### 1.e4 e5

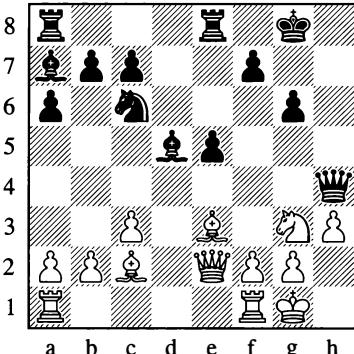
Karpov returns to the move that he played most often throughout his career.

### 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♗b5

Hou Yifan's usual choice, although she sometimes plays the Giuoco Piano. Karpov had previously beaten her in a nice game in that opening:

3.♗c4 ♘c5 4.c3 ♘f6 5.d3 a6 6.♗b3 d6 7.h3 ♘a7 8.♗bd2 0–0 9.♗f1 d5 10.♗e2 h6 11.♗g3 ♘e6 12.♗c2 dxe4 13.dxe4 ♘e8 14.0–0 ♘h7 15.♗h2 ♘e7 16.♗g4 ♘f6 17.♗e3 g6 18.♗d5 ♘xd5 19.exd5 ♘xd5 20.♗xh6 ♘h4 21.♗e3?

After 21.♗d2 the position is still equal.



21...♝c4?

Karpov misses the lovely: 21...♝d4! 22.cxd4 exd4 23.♗d3 dxe3 24.♗xd5 exf2† 25.♔h2 ♘e3 Black's position is close to winning.

22.♗d3 ♘xd3 23.♗xd3 ♘ad8?

Surprisingly, this natural move is a mistake.

### 24.♗e2

White should play: 24.♗e4! ♘xe4 25.♗xe4 ♘g7 (25...♝e6 26.♗xa7 ♘xa7 27.♗ad1 is very unpleasant for Black) 26.♗g5 f5 27.♗xd8 ♘xd8 Black has some compensation for the exchange, but not quite enough.

24...♗xe3 25.♗xe3 ♘f4 26.♗c5? ♘d2 27.♗ab1?! e4 28.♗fe1?

28.♗c4! would still put up some resistance. 28...e3!

Black went on to win in Hou Yifan – Karpov, Cap d'Agde (rapid) 2008.

### 3...♝f6 4.♗c3

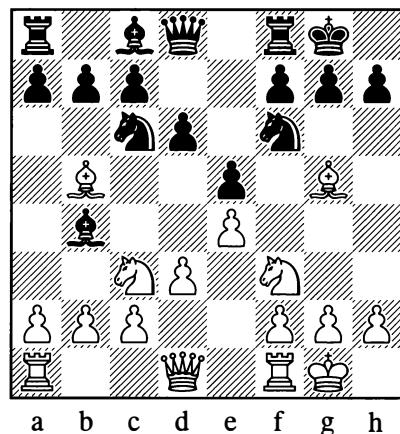
In a later game in the match Hou Yifan varied with 4.0–0, but Karpov drew quite comfortably.

### 4...♞b4

Karpov doesn't go for the 4...♝d4 line, which can become very sharp.

### 5.0–0 0–0 6.d3 d6 7.♗g5

White can also transfer the knight to g3 with 7.♗e2.



7...♝xc3 8.bxc3 ♘e7

Karpov plays the main line.

### 9.♗e1

White prepares to play d3-d4.

**9...a6!?**

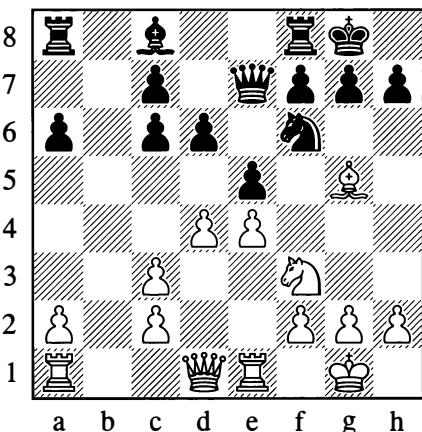
Karpov plays a rare move, which clears up the situation on the queenside. Black usually concentrates on getting rid of the pin on the h4-d8 diagonal.

**10.♕xc6**

After 10.♕a4 b5 11.♕b3 ♔a5 Black seems to be doing all right.

**10...bxc6 11.d4**

If White wants to fight for the initiative she has to make this move.

**11...a5!?**

Karpov's move is a novelty, looking to develop his bishop on the queenside.

**12.♗b1 ♕e6**

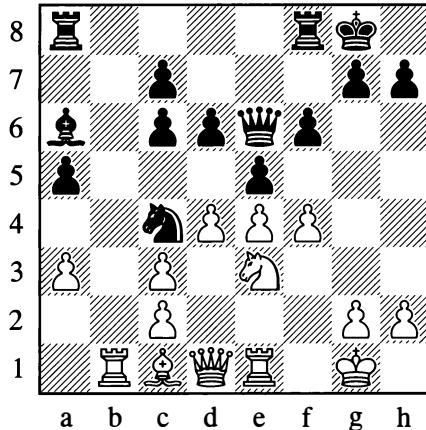
By threatening to take the a2-pawn, Black unpins his knight with tempo.

**13.a3 ♔d7**

Karpov improves the knight by heading towards the c4-square.

**14.♘h4 f6 15.♗c1 ♔b6 16.♗f5 ♔c4 17.♗e3 ♔a6 18.f4?**

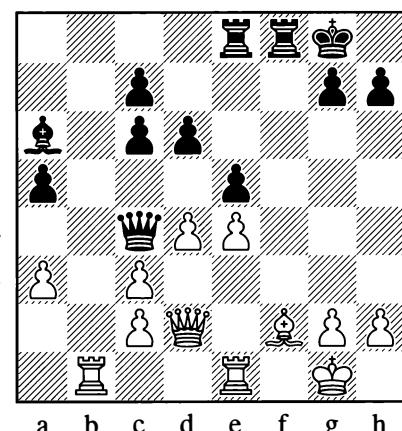
Hou Yifan sacrifices a pawn, but it looks too risky.

**18...♔xe3**

Karpov plays it safe, but he could take the pawn: 18...exf4!? 19.♗xc4 (or 19.♗f5 ♕h8 20.♗xf4 ♔xa3 21.♗a1 ♔c4 and White has little for the pawn) 19...♕xc4 20.♗xf4 ♕xc3 Black has an extra pawn and White's e4-pawn can be targeted.

**19.♗xe3 ♕c4 20.♗d2 ♕ae8**

It would also be promising to clear the e-file in order to attack the e4-pawn: 20...exf4!? 21.♗xf4 ♕ae8 22.♗g3 ♕e7 White faces problems.

**21.fxe5 fxe5 22.♗f2****22...h6**

Black has solved his opening problems and stands a little better, but it is not easy to make progress. For example 22... $\mathbb{W}a2$  can be met by 23. $\mathbb{B}a1$ .

**23.h3  $\mathbb{B}f7$  24. $\mathbb{B}g3!$**

Tying Black to the defence of the e5-pawn.

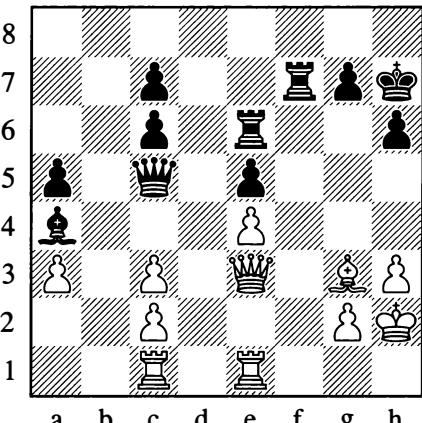
**24... $\mathbb{B}h7$  25. $\mathbb{B}h2$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  26. $\mathbb{B}bd1$   $\mathbb{B}e6$  27. $\mathbb{B}a1$   $\mathbb{B}a4$**

Karpov keeps making small improvement to his pieces.

**28.dxe5**

White loses her patience and exchanges on e5. It would have been interesting to see what Karpov would have done if she had just sat tight, with 28. $\mathbb{W}d3$  for example.

**28...dxe5 29. $\mathbb{B}ac1$   $\mathbb{W}c5$  30. $\mathbb{W}e3$**



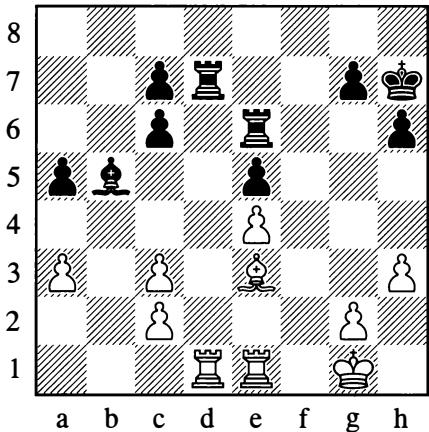
**30... $\mathbb{W}xe3$**

Karpov still likes to play endgames. Of course not 30... $\mathbb{W}xa3??$  31. $\mathbb{B}a1$  and Black loses his bishop.

**31. $\mathbb{B}xe3$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  32. $\mathbb{B}d3$   $\mathbb{B}dd6$  33. $\mathbb{B}g1$   $\mathbb{B}b5$  34. $\mathbb{B}dd1$   $\mathbb{B}e2$  35. $\mathbb{B}e1$   $\mathbb{B}d2$  36. $\mathbb{B}f2$**

White naturally prepares to force back the black rook.

**36... $\mathbb{B}b5$  37. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}d7$  38. $\mathbb{B}cd1$**



**38... $\mathbb{B}ed6!$**

Maintains the tension.

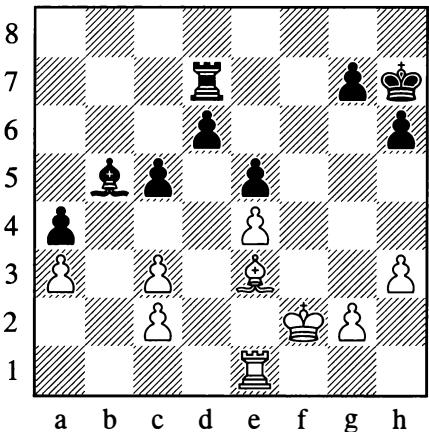
**39. $\mathbb{B}xd6?!$**

This exchange is careless, as now the e5-pawn will be protected.

**39... $\mathbb{C}xd6$  40. $\mathbb{B}b6$  a4 41. $\mathbb{B}e3?!$**

Perhaps Hou Yifan worried that ...c5 would prevent her bishop from returning to its camp. She should have centralized her king: 41. $\mathbb{B}f2$  c5 42. $\mathbb{B}e3$   $\mathbb{B}g8$  43. $\mathbb{B}b1$   $\mathbb{B}c4$  44. $\mathbb{B}a5$   $\mathbb{B}f7$  45. $\mathbb{B}b8$  White can hold the position.

**41...c5 42. $\mathbb{B}f2$**



**42... $\mathbb{B}f7\#$**

The white king is cut off from the centre.

**43.♔g3 ♜f6 44.♕d2?**

After 44.♕c1 ♜f1 45.♔h2 ♜a6 46.♔g3 Black cannot invade directly.

**44...♔g8?!**

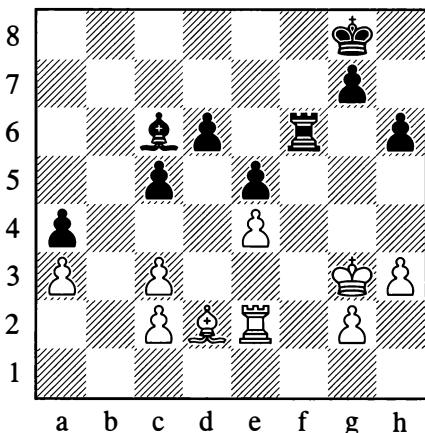
Karpov starts improving his king, but he misses an immediate win: 44...♚f1! Black targets the g2-pawn. 45.h4 (45.♔h2 ♜f2— shows why White's 44th move was a mistake) 45...♜g6† 46.♕f2 ♜xg2† Black wins.

**45.♚e3 ♜c6?!**

As on the previous move, 45...♚f1! is winning.

**46.♚e2**

This allows the black rook to invade, but after 46.♚e1 ♜f7 Black would invade with his king: 47.♔c1 ♜e6 48.♔d2 ♜d7 49.♔c1 ♜c7 50.♔d2 ♜b6 The black king will get to the c4-square.



**46...♚f1!**

Aiming to attack the queenside pawns.

**47.♚e1**

White stops the invasion for now, but she can hardly move.

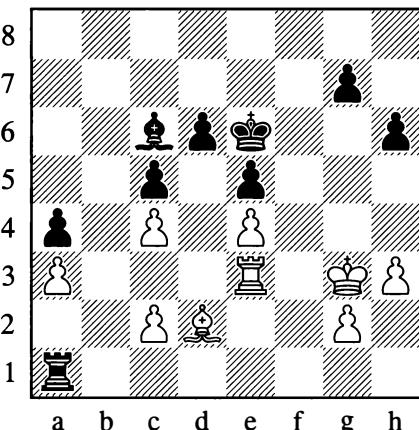
**47...♚f7 48.c4**

White is in zugzwang, for example 48.♔h2 loses to 48...♚f4.

**48...♜e6 49.♕d2**

White has to allow the black rook to penetrate.

**49...♜a1 50.♚e3**



**50...♜a2!**

Black now wins material.

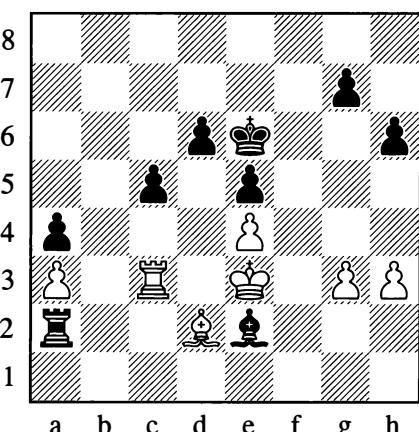
**51.♔f3 ♜xc2 52.♕c3**

White cannot hang onto the c4-pawn for long.

**52...♚b7 53.g3 ♜a6 54.♚e1 ♜xc4 55.♚c3 ♜e2†**

Karpov naturally wants to keep the rooks on the board.

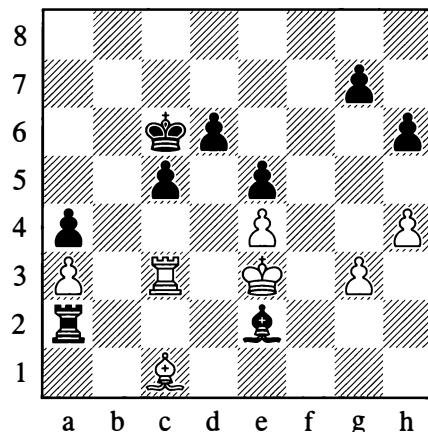
**56.♔e3 ♜a2 57.♕d2**



57... $\mathbb{Q}f1$  58.h4  $\mathbb{Q}h3$  59. $\mathbb{Q}c1$   $\mathbb{Q}f1$  60. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}d7$  61. $\mathbb{Q}c1$

White can do nothing but wait.

61... $\mathbb{Q}c6$  62. $\mathbb{Q}f3$   $\mathbb{Q}e2\#$  63. $\mathbb{Q}e3$



63... $\mathbb{Q}h5$

Karpov is setting up a mating net. Throughout his career he was alert to the possibility of mating his opponent in the endgame.

64. $\mathbb{Q}d2$   $\mathbb{Q}g4$  65. $\mathbb{Q}d3$   $\mathbb{Q}b5$  66. $\mathbb{Q}e3$

**0–1**

Hou Yifan played this move and then resigned, as after 66...c4 she would be in zugzwang again.

The remaining five games were all drawn, and so Karpov won the match  $3\frac{1}{2}$ – $2\frac{1}{2}$ .

Karpov finished the year with another rapid match, beating Serbian IM Miljkovic  $3\frac{1}{2}$ – $1\frac{1}{2}$ .

## 2010 Summary

Karpov did not play any games with a regular time limit this year.

# Epilogue

Every good thing must come to an end, including our investigation into Karpov's glittering career and his marvellous strategic wins. Chess players will always have differing opinions regarding their favourite games, but I hope not to have omitted any true masterpiece from this collection.

When I began to study Karpov's games I already knew a lot about his chess, nevertheless the deeper investigation uncovered many more fine details about his play and the tools that he used to become one of the greatest and most successful players of all time.

What is it that made, and sometime still makes, Karpov's play so effective? Broadly speaking, we can identify his unparalleled strategic vision as perhaps his greatest asset, although throughout these two volumes we have seen that his calculating ability is also formidable. Karpov's tactical prowess is often overlooked, but he would never have achieved anywhere near as much success without being a well-rounded player. In recent years computer programs have helped us to understand, better than ever before, the immense importance of tactics in chess.

Perhaps more than any other player, Karpov is remarkably effective at identifying existing weaknesses in his opponents' positions, and creating new ones. His prophylactic moves, especially with his king, became one of his trademarks. Indeed, the adjective "Karpovian" has become an accepted part of the chess lexicon, and is frequently used by chess players of all levels to describe an especially subtle prophylactic move. Throughout chess history, only a select few players have ever had their names immortalized in this way.

Karpov is arguably the greatest endgame player of all time. I explored this facet of his game even more thoroughly in the *Endgame Virtuoso* book, but the present work has also showcased a great number of stunning endgames. Especially striking is his incredible knack for checkmating his opponents' kings in positions with just a few pieces remaining.

During my deep investigation of Karpov's games, I noticed a number of more subtle recurring themes in Karpov's play. In several games his opponents would try to obtain counterplay in an effort to offset Karpov's play, only for Karpov to switch his attention and win on the side of the board where his opponent had been trying to take over. Apart from his technical accuracy, Karpov is also a devastatingly effective practical player, who uses every tool at his disposal to break his opponents. Time and time again we have seen him wear down his opponents by manoeuvring patiently, before unleashing a strong idea just a few moves before the time control, precisely when its impact would be felt most acutely.

Karpov's games have immense didactic value, and I believe that even the strongest grandmaster could learn something by studying them. I sincerely hope that the games presented over these two volumes will enrich the reader's understanding and enthusiasm for the wonderful game of chess.

\*\*\*

During the two-and-a-half year period in which I produced this work, I was helped by many people in many ways, and I would like to express my gratitude to them.

The idea to write a book on Karpov's strategic wins came from Natalia Edzgveradze.

My friends Ashot Nadanian and Attila Groszpeter assisted with the analysis of some variations, and gave me advice on game selection when it was needed.

I am grateful to Karpov's junior trainer, Leonid Gratvol, who granted me an interview.

Nick Aplin, my co-author from the *Endgame Virtuoso* project, agreed to let me use a small segment which was omitted from the final version of that book. I do appreciate this kind gesture.

Peter Szilagyi provided me with a lot of information about Karpov and other helpful advice.

I tried to contact some of Karpov's opponents, many of whom were helpful. The list includes Ilya Mikliaev, Anthony Saidy, Lubomir Kavalek, Bojan Kurajica, Eugenio Torre, Gabor Kallai, Artur Yusupov, Zlatko Ilincic, Utut Adianto, Mihail Marin and Giovanni Vescovi. If I missed anybody then I am truly sorry!

\*\*\*

All that remains is for me to thank you for reading. Karpov's games and achievements are forever part of chess history, and I hope that this work will help chess players and fans to gain a better understanding and appreciation of them.

# Classification

There are many themes that can influence the course of a chess game. In the following list you can find the game numbers in which each element can be found. A bolded number indicates that the theme was especially relevant in that game.

Attacking the king **1, 3, 8, 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 21, 28, 29, 39, 42, 61**

Attacking on the a- or h-file **17, 25, 39, 53**

Back rank **8, 16, 24, 28, 34, 36, 51**

Bishop on the long diagonal **1, 7, 10, 12, 14, 29, 31, 43, 46, 59**

Bishop pair **18, 19, 22, 31, 36, 37, 42, 43, 57, 64, 65, 66**

Blockade 9, 29, **30, 32, 33, 35, 39, 42, 44**

Breakthrough **9, 27, 33, 35, 41, 42**

Checkmating in the endgame **14, 28, 31, 37, 59, 67**

Connected passed pawns **35, 58**

Delaying castling **5, 33**

Dominating bishop versus knight 18, **26, 64**

Dominating knight versus bishop **13, 33, 39, 52, 61**

Doubled pawns 8, 42, **55, 59, 61, 67**

Exchanging a key defensive piece **1, 17, 34, 38**

Fixing a weakness **14, 17, 26, 47, 50, 53, 63**

Fortress 9, **33, 38, 41, 59**

Good knight 7, 30, **34, 40**

Isolated pawn 6, 18, **32, 38, 40, 43, 46, 50, 52, 54**

King activation 4, **15, 23, 27, 31, 55, 58, 60, 64**

Kingside play **1, 3, 9, 11, 12, 17, 19, 21, 28, 39, 42, 55**

Manoeuvre (king) **41, 52, 63**

Manoeuvre (knight) **2, 3, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14, 19, 22, 30, 33, 35, 36, 40, 48, 49, 56, 58, 62, 65**

Manoeuvre (rook) 15, **19, 30, 31, 40, 46, 57, 59, 64, 67**

Material advantage 5, 6, 10, **11, 16, 18, 32, 34, 39, 49, 54, 57, 58, 60**

Material imbalance 14, 31, **37, 59**

Minority attack **15, 26**

Open file **9, 12, 16, 20, 36, 37, 40, 42, 44, 47, 53, 62**

Opposite-coloured bishops 1, 13, **38, 45, 50, 55, 62, 66, 67**

Paralyzing one of the opponent's pieces 43, 55

Passed pawn (central) **2, 3, 12, 15, 20, 24, 25, 38, 41, 47, 56, 57**

Passed pawn (distant) 4, 9, 31, **37, 39, 47, 50, 53, 57, 59, 61, 64, 65**

Pawns versus pieces

Playing on both flanks **3, 9, 17, 28, 33, 40, 42, 47, 49, 51, 55, 57**

Pin **37, 40, 43, 53, 60**

Positional sacrifice (pawn) **27, 50, 60**

Positional sacrifice (exchange) **12, 14, 31, 59, 63**

Queenside play **6, 7, 10, 13, 30, 35, 36, 44, 48, 49, 51, 53, 57, 64**

Rook(s) on seventh or second rank **14, 35, 58, 59, 60**

Space gaining **3, 4, 10, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 28, 33, 34, 38, 42, 45, 49, 51, 64, 66**

Space advantage **2, 3, 9, 39, 41, 44, 53**

Symmetrical pawn structure **7, 10, 23, 45, 58**

Trapping a piece **5, 13, 25, 28, 32, 41, 44, 51, 55**

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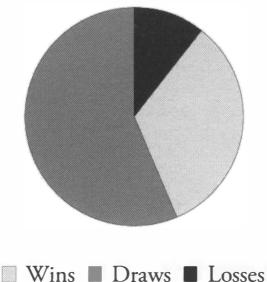
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# Statistics

Karpov's results over the period covered by this volume are as follows.

1986: 59.9% (+24 =49 -8)  
1987: 61.5% (+18 =39 -4)  
1988: 68.6% (+45 =54 -6)  
1989: 63.2% (+24 =43 -5)  
1990: 60.3% (+17 =36 -5)  
1991: 58.3% (+25 =48 -11)  
1992: 65.9% (+31 =25 -10)  
1993: 67.0% (+36 =46 -6)  
1994: 71.3% (+34 =29 -5)  
1995: 69.8% (+27 =34 -2)  
1996: 57.6% (+19 =38 -9)  
1997: 53.3% (+7 =18 -5)  
1998: 48.2% (+5 =17 -6)  
1999: 51.7% (+3 =25 -2)  
2000: 61.5% (+7 =18 -1)  
2001: 57.7% (+5 =16 -4)  
2002: 55.0% (+3 =5 -2)  
2003: 50.0% (+5 =15 -5)  
2004: 37.5% (+0 =3 -1)  
2005: 56.2% (+3 =3 -2)  
2006: 33.3% (+0 =2 -1)  
2007: 45.5% (+3 =14 -5)  
2008: 50.0% (+0 =3 -0)  
2009: 26.9% (+1 =5 -7)

Total 61.1% (+342 =585 -112)



■ Wins ■ Draws ■ Losses

# Tournament Record

Between 1986 and 2001 Karpov won outright first place in nineteen tournaments:

- 1986 Brussels, Bugojno
- 1987 Bilbao
- 1988 Wijk aan Zee, Brussels World Cup, Tilburg
- 1990 Biel
- 1991 Reggio Emilia
- 1992 Madrid, Biel, Baden-Baden
- 1993 Wijk aan Zee KO, Dortmund, Dos Hermanas, Tilburg
- 1994 Linares
- 1995 Baden-Baden KO, Groningen
- 2001 Buenos Aires

In addition, he shared first place in six other events:

- 1987 Amsterdam
- 1988 USSR Championship
- 1989 Skelleftea World Cup
- 1991 Reykjavik World Cup
- 1996 Biel, Vienna

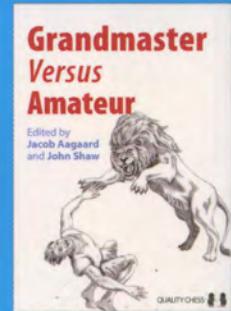
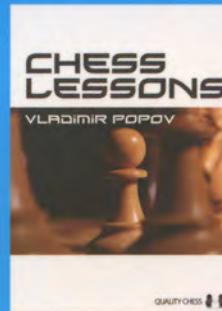
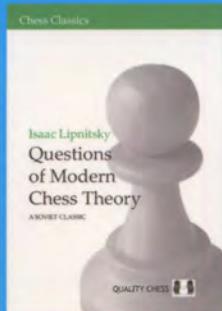
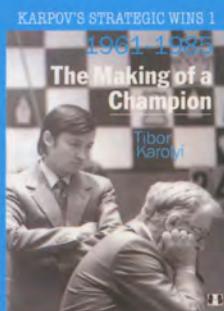
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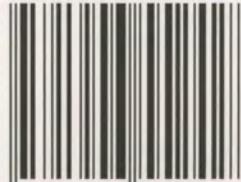
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