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colourful players
of the 20th century.'
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Bent Larsen's Best Games

Fighting Chess with the Great Dane

by **BENT LARSEN**

NEW Institute IN CHESS

Bent Larsen's Best Games

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Bent Larsen

Bent Larsen's Best Games

Fighting Chess with the Great Dane

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The Will to Win

by Peter Heine Nielsen, Dan H. Andersen and Thorbjørn Rosenlund

Bent Larsen was born on March 4th, 1935 near Thisted, a small town in northern Jutland. By a strange coincidence, Aron Nimzowitsch died 12 days later. The Latvian grandmaster had lived in Denmark since 1922, and his death at only 46 meant that there was no one of comparable strength in Denmark during Larsen's rise to the world elite.

Bent Larsen learned to play chess in 1942, when he was confined to bed with a series of children's diseases. He joined a chess club in 1947, and in swift succession he became club champion, city champion, and provincial champion, usually with a 100 per cent score.

At 16 he had his international debut at the 1951 Junior World Championship in Birmingham, where he finished fourth (Ivkov won). He won his first Danish championship in 1954, and at the age of 19 he was the strongest player in Denmark, a position he kept for at least 35 years.

In the USSR a boy could go to the local pioneer palace and play chess against very strong players. The very best would continue to special programs and schools, and there would be strong tournaments and training sessions with grandmasters. In Denmark there was nothing of the sort. Larsen himself has dismissed the notion that it would have been better for his chess development to have been born in Moscow. He worked alone and felt comfortable with it.

One thing Denmark did have was world-class chess writing, represented by Aron Nimzowitsch and international master Jens Enevoldsen. Their highly individual kind of writing, with its emphasis on the intensity of the fight, was undoubtedly an inspiration for Larsen. He began very early to write for newspapers and *Skakbladet* (the chess magazine of the Danish Chess Federation), and together with simulms and lectures this made it possible for him to carve out a professional career.

In Larsen's opinion, the biggest boost to his chess understanding came from annotating the games of the 1953 Candidates' Tournament in Zürich for *Skakbladet*. By the end of the year he felt confident that his understanding of the game was at grandmaster level, but he lacked practical playing strength.

At the Amsterdam Olympiad in 1954 he scored 71% and was rewarded with the title of International Master. The year after he defeated the Icelandic chess hero and future FIDE president Fridrik Olafsson in a match for the Nordic Championship. Then came the first great breakthrough, when he scored the highest percentage on Board 1 at the Moscow Olympiad in 1956. This gave him the Grandmaster title, a much more select title then, when there was only a handful of active grandmasters in the world. In the finals he defeated Gligoric in a classic game, and even the great Botvinnik had to fight with his back to the wall before his tenacious defence secured the draw.

Larsen studied engineering at the technical college in Copenhagen, and most people, including the officials of the Danish Chess Federation, wanted him to take his exam and get a steady job. Their reasons were probably a mixture of disdain for professional sports and a genuine feeling that a career as a professional chess player was not a good choice in the long run. Chess did not reward its professionals well. Carl Schlechter starved to death in 1918. Janowsky died poor and lonely in a rented room. Tartakower died a bitter man. Fifty years later Larsen smiles and says about his decision to become a professional that he did, indeed, spend most of the nights studying chess instead of engineering, but there never was a conscious decision. It just kind of happened.

The years after the triumph in Moscow were difficult ones for him. His results were modest and his games were very uneven. Strategic masterpieces were followed by weak moves and strange defeats. He experimented and played sharp set-ups.

With hindsight you can see that this period was the difficult learning process which was a prerequisite for later greatness, something that many young masters give up in advance, perhaps afraid of losing their newly won prestige and high rating. Indeed, the historical ratings show that Bent Larsen slipped down the list, from no. 9 in the world in 1956 to no. 50 in 1963.

Then came the second breakthrough: the 1964 Interzonal Tournament in Amsterdam. Twenty-four players, five of them from the USSR. 1-4 Smyslov, Spassky, Tal and Larsen 17; 5. Stein 16½; 6. Bronstein 16. Larsen had a positive score against the Soviet stars and won famous games against Spassky and Bronstein.

In the Candidates' matches Bent Larsen first defeated Ivkov, 5½-2½. In the semi-finals he was defeated by the narrowest of margins by Tal: 5½-4½.

It was a great match between two uncompromising fighters, and the first game was probably a shock for the Russian side.

KI 2.2 - E99

Bent Larsen

Mikhail Tal

Bled Candidates' Match sf 1965 (1)

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♙g7
4.e4 0-0 5.♘f3 d6 6.♙e2 e5
7.0-0 ♘c6 8.d5 ♘e7**



9.♘e1

Larsen's favourite move, despite diversifying in many ways later, most notably with 9.♙h1!?, one point being that Black's natural 9...♘h5 can be met by 10.♘g1 ♘f4 11.♙f3, followed by a later g2-g3, forcing Black's knight back, as for example in the second game of Larsen's match against Curt Hansen in 1988.

9...♘d7 10.f3 f5 11.g4!?

A line which has recently regained popularity, but which in 1965 was only in its very early stages. White tries to nip Black's attack in the bud by blocking the structure on the kingside.

11...h5 12.g5

**12...h4?!**

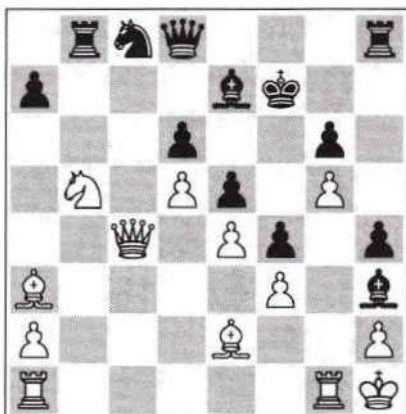
After this game generally condemned, but a principled try to refute White's strategy. The pawn on g5 is now isolated and difficult to defend.

13.♘d3 f4 14.♙h1 ♖f7 15.c5!

A novelty. Black cannot comfortably take the pawn, as 16.♞b3 threatens 17.d6+.

**15...♞h8 16.♞b3 b6 17.cxd6
cxd6 18.♞a3 ♘c5 19.♘xc5 bxc5
20.b4 cxb4 21.♞xb4 ♙h3
22.♞g1 ♞b8 23.♘b5 ♘c8
24.♙a3 ♙f8**

Play has proceeded logically, almost in a symmetrical fashion. White defends his weakness on the kingside, while at the same time opening up targets on the queenside. Black has defended well on the queenside, and is now ready to fulfil his strategic objective by pocketing the g5-pawn.

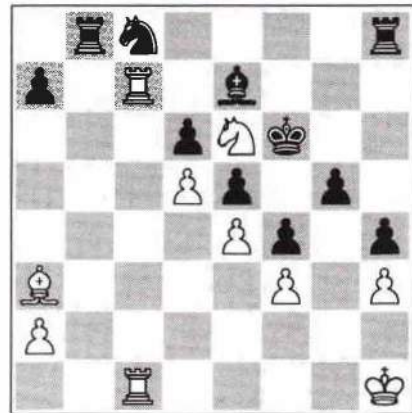
25.♞c4 ♙e7**26.♞c7!**

White's strategy is deeper. Unlike Black, he does not try to defend his weakness, but instead exchanges the queens, removing Black's best defender. Then slowly but securely he will break through along the c-file.

**26...♞xc7 27.♘xc7 ♞h5 28.♙f1
♙xf1?!**

Keeping the bishop with 28...♙d7 would give some hope of controlling vital squares on the c-file, and thus would have been a better defensive try. White, however, has excellent compensation.

**29.♞gxf1 ♞xg5 30.♘e6 ♞h5
31.♞ac1 ♙f6 32.♞c7 ♞h8
33.♞fc1 g5 34.h3**



The position has crystallized. Black is a pawn up, but he is strategically lost. He has no active possibilities, and can only wait for White's breakthrough. Larsen has patience. First he must prevent all counterplay before the game is adjourned.

**34...♞g8 35.♞7c6 ♙f7 36.♙g2
♙f6 37.♙f1 ♞h8 38.♙e2 ♞g8
39.♙d3 ♞h8 40.♞c7 ♘b6
41.♞1c6 ♞hg8**

The sealed move, but Tal resigned without further play. White wins in numerous ways, from the prosaic 42.♙xd6 to the flashy 42.♘f8!?. Black was held in an iron grip, and if you did not know the names of the players, you might think Petrosian was White.

In 1966 Bent Larsen defeated Efim Geller 5-4 in the match for third place in the Candidates' Tournament. This was the first time ever that a Soviet grandmaster had been defeated in a match by a player from outside the USSR.

Later in 1966 there was the famous Piatigorsky Cup in Santa Monica: 1. Spassky 11½; 2. Fischer 11; 3. Larsen 10; 4-5. Unzicker and Portisch 9½; 6-7. Petrosian and Reshevsky 9; 8. Najdorf 8; 9. Ivkov 6½; 10. Donner 6. The World Champion's modest result was partly due to his losing both games to Bent Larsen. In the first Larsen won with white, with a famous attack which included a queen sacrifice. Even more impressive was the second game.

KI 76.6 - E61

Tigran Petrosian

Bent Larsen

Santa Monica 1966

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6!?

Quite out of character for Larsen. The King's Indian is not an opening he has any belief in, and, as seen in the above game against Tal, he much prefers to be on the white side. In the USSR the King's Indian had been analysed thoroughly, and Petrosian had a very good score against it. But how do you beat Petrosian with black without taking risks?

3.g3 ♖g7 4.♖g2 0-0 5.d4 d6 6.e3

A modest and solid line, but used three times by Botvinnik in his 1954 match against Smyslov, and Petrosian himself had played it against Spassky in his successful title defence.

6...c6 7.♘ge2 a5 8.b3 ♘a6

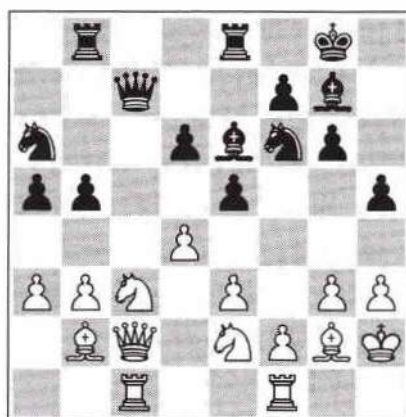


Smyslov and Spassky both played their knight to d7. Larsen stays flexible, keeping his option of playing on either side of the board open.

9.0-0 e5 10.♗b2 ♜e8 11.a3 ♞b8 12.h3 h5 13.♚c2 ♖e6 14.♙h2

Defending against a possible ...♚c8, but too prophylactic, even for the master. Now Black puts his queen on a better square.

14...♚c7! 15.♞ac1 b5 16.cxb5 cxb5



White has more control of the centre, but Larsen has more space on the flanks! The b3-pawn is fragile, and Petrosian takes further prophylactic measures to prevent Black attacking it via ...b5-b4, opening the b-file.

17.♚d1 ♜e7 18.♘b1 ♖d7 19.♘d2 e4!

Grabbing space in the centre. Larsen now thinks White should have tried and change the trend of the game by



Analysing with Bobby Fischer while Gregor and Jacqueline Platigorsky look on in Santa Monica, 1966.

fighting for the initiative with 20.d5 ♖c5 21.♞xc5!? dxc5 22.♜xe4, with decent compensation for the exchange.

20.♜f4 d5 21.♞e2

Again preferring solidity. 21.f3!? was the last chance for active counterplay.

**21...♞d6 22.♞c2 ♞ec8 23.♞fc1
♞xc2 24.♞xc2 h4!**



The strategic battle has been won, yet breaking White's fortress still requires a lot of effort. As with Tal, Larsen has patience and prepares himself for a long battle. First he creates a weakness on g3, then he fixes the one on b3.

**25.♜f1 hxc3+ 26.fxc3 b4 27.a4
♞c8**

Exchanging White's only well-placed piece.

28.♞xc8+ ♙xc8 29.h4

Not a pleasant choice, but in a bad position there are few good choices. Petrosian hopes that the exchange of bishops will compensate for the weakness of the g4-square and delay a black ...g6-g5.

**29...♜c7 30.♙h3 ♙xh3 31.♜xh3
♙f8 32.♙g2 ♞c6 33.♞d1 ♙d6
34.♜f2 ♜e6 35.♙c1 ♜g7**



36. ♖d2

36.g4!? was probably White's last chance, but it is understandable that Petrosian did not want to open the position. Larsen now proves that White's fortress is by no means impregnable.

36... ♜f5 37. ♖h3 ♜c8 38. ♖g2 ♖g7 39. ♜h1 ♜h6 40. ♖e1 ♜a6 41. ♜f2 ♜f5

Threatening 42... ♜xf1+.

42. ♜d2 ♖b8 43. ♜d1 ♜g4 44. ♖g1 f6 45. ♖g2 g5 46. ♜f2



46... ♜gh6!

Not allowing any exchanges. White's lack of space forces him to deploy some of his minor pieces to uncomfortable squares.

47. hxc5 fxc5 48. ♜d1 ♖g6 49. ♜h2 g4 50. ♜c2 ♖d6 51. ♜f1 ♜g8 52. ♜h2 ♜f6 53. ♜f1 ♖h5 54. ♜h2 ♖g5 55. ♜f1 ♜h5 56. ♖f2 ♜f6 57. ♖e1 ♜h5 58. ♖f2 ♜a8!

Finally the decisive breakthrough. The black queen penetrates via h3, White is defenceless.

59. ♖e1 ♜h8 60. ♜c6 ♖xg3 61. ♖xg3 ♜hxg3



Petrosian resigned, as 62. ♜xg3 ♜h3+ wins instantly. Larsen's attacking win in the first round is better known, but it's quite telling that Larsen himself is prouder of this strategic win.

Bent Larsen's style was now universal. He had a deep theoretical knowledge, on which he based his new ideas and re-launching of old openings and variations. It is obvious from his comments and annotations that he was fascinated with chess history and the old masters. He was willing to risk more than most other top players in order to win, and once said about masters who tried to equalize with black: 'Equalizing can be fine, but also boring.' Forcing his opponents to think for themselves from the beginning is an often used comment from his game annotations. His endgame technique was extremely good. In 1966 he outplayed world stars like Polugaevsky and Geller in endgames with a minute advantage.

In 1967 Bent Larsen went on his great world tour. In August he left Denmark, and when he returned it was December and Bent Larsen had won four strong international tournaments on three continents, ahead of the strongest Soviet players. In Havana ahead of Taimanov and Smyslov. In Winnipeg, Canada, with Darga ahead of Spassky and Keres. In the Interzonal in Sousse ahead of Geller, Kortchnoi and Gligoric. In Palma de Mallorca ahead of Botvinnik and Smyslov. When chess journalists voted on the first chess Oscar in 1967, Bent Larsen was the obvious choice.

The triumphs continued in 1968. First in Monaco, ahead of Botvinnik and Smyslov. In the quarterfinals of the Candidates' matches, Portisch was defeated 5½-4½.

This was something totally new in chess. Not since the war had the Soviet players been shoved out of first places like this. The World title had been Soviet property since 1948, and all matches had been internal affairs. But between matches there are tournaments where you can demonstrate your superiority. Between 1967 and 1970 the great tournament winner was Bent Larsen, and during the next decade he continued to win tournaments, ahead of the leading Soviet players. Fischer was in semi-retirement, and Larsen was the only westerner facing and defeating the Soviet players on a regular basis.

Bent Larsen never hid his ambition to become World Champion, and his results made it seem realistic at the time. The semi-final against Spassky in Malmö, Sweden, showed that Larsen's optimism, self-confidence and willingness to risk in order to win, which was so successful in tournaments, did not serve him well in a match against a great player like Spassky, who was in admirable mental balance and able to resist the Dane's attacks. In the first game of the match Spassky played the Exchange Variation of the Slav, and Larsen overreached in his attempt to win. He continued to press too hard, and Spassky won 5½-2½.

Larsen was soon back on track as a tournament winner. He won opens in the U.S. and Canada. Palma de Mallorca was that year's strongest tournament and a triumph for Larsen: he won ahead of Petrosian, Kortchnoi, Hort and the new World Champion Spassky.

In the 'Match of the Century' in Belgrade in 1970 (USSR against the Rest of the World) Bent Larsen demanded to play on first board, with reference to his recent tournament victories, and to everybody's surprise Bobby Fischer consented to play second board.

The USSR won a narrow 20½-19½ victory, but lost on the first boards. Fischer beat Petrosian 3-1, and Larsen held the World Champion to 1½-1½ and defeated Leonid Stein in the last round: 2½-1½ on Board 1.

The best known game from the match is Spassky's Round 2 victory. A careless move from Larsen was immediately punished, and Spassky's brilliant win in 17 moves was rewarded with applause from the audience. Many years later Larsen called it his worst defeat.

In the next game he was Black. The Russian chess school would prescribe consolidating with a draw to recover from the shock. As we shall see, Bent Larsen's recipe was totally different.

QI 2.12 - E12

Boris Spassky**Bent Larsen**

Belgrade World vs USSR 1970 (3)

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 b6
4.♘c3 ♙b7 5.♙g5 ♙e7 6.e3 0-0
7.♙d3 c5 8.0-0 ♘c6!?

Larsen challenges Spassky with a move which he himself called 'hardly playable' in his commentary in *Skakbladet*. Hardly is the key word. Larsen says he never played lines he knew were bad, but always tried to look for ideas which put the maximum amount of pressure on his opponent, without caring that they also put a lot of pressure on himself.

**9.d5!**

The principled move, trying to refute Black's play.

9...♘b4 10.d6! ♙xd6 11.♙xh7+

11.♙xf6!? almost refutes Black's play, as **11...♙xf6 12.♙e4!** wins a piece. But Black has lots of resources after **11...gxf6! 12.♙xh7+ ♘xh7 13.♙xd6 ♙xf3 14.gxf3 ♙g8+ 15.♙h1 f5**, when his counterplay with **...♙h4** comes in time.

11...♙xh7 12.♙xd6 ♙xf3 13.gxf3 ♘e8!

This move was planned when Larsen played **8...♘c6**. Spassky now has to choose between three tempting options, always a difficult choice.

**14.♙xf8**

14.♙xf8! comes close to refuting Black's concept: **14...♙xg5+ 15.♙h1 ♙h5 16.♙g1 ♙xf3+ 17.♙g2 ♘d3**. Both players must have calculated at least till here, and concluded the obvious: that Black has excellent counterplay. However, there is the counter-intuitive **18.♙g1!** (**18.♙f1 ♘e5** threatens **19...♙g6**, already leaving Black with the better chances). As Black cannot move his knight from e8 due to the threat on g7, he is unable to exploit White's almost trapped queen on f8: **18...♘e5 19.♙g3!**, the point of the previous unpinning move. White is better, although in a complex position.

14.♙xd8?!, taking the exchange, is the worst option, as Black has excellent compensation after **14...♘xd6 15.♙e7 ♘xc4 16.♙xf8 ♙xf8**, with a pawn for the exchange and possibilities for playing for a win due to the strong pawn centre and his excellent knights.

14...♙xe7 15.♙xe7

15...♖g8

Subtle. Too subtle, Larsen said later. The idea, that a later ...♗f6 ♕xf6 ...gxf6 is check, is logical, but never materializes.

15...♖h8! is natural and good.

16.♖fd1 ♗c6 17.♖xd7 ♗e5

18.♖b7 ♗xc4 19.♗e4 ♗a5

20.♖d7 ♗c6 21.f4 ♖c8

**22.♖c1!**

Spasky also plays for a win. This move prevents liquidations, as 22...♗xe7 23.♖xe7 ♖c7 24.♖xc7 ♗xc7 25.b4! or 22...♖c7 23.♖xc7 ♗xc7 24.♕xc5! wins a pawn for White.

22...a5 23.a3 ♖g6

**24.♖g2?!**

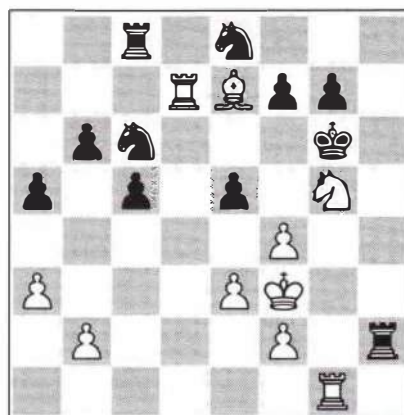
Not a bad move, but Larsen writes he actually had no idea how to react after 24.♖h1!, when the security of the black king instantly becomes an issue: 24...♗xe7 25.♖xe7 ♖c7 26.f5+!? with the idea of 26...♖xf5? 27.♖xe8 keeps a

white edge, although Black fights on with 26...♖h6!.

24...♖h8 25.♖f3 ♖xh2

Grabbing his chances as well as a pawn. Black now threatens to escape back to safety with his king via h7.

26.♗g5 e5 27.♖g1

**27...exf4!**

Fearless. The black king might be trapped without any place to hide, but where exactly is the mate? The computer upholds Larsen's point. There is no mate.

28.♕d6 ♗xd6 29.♖xd6+ f6

30.♗e6+ ♖f5!?

30...♖h7 was indeed a safer alternative, but Larsen is playing to win.

31.♗xf4

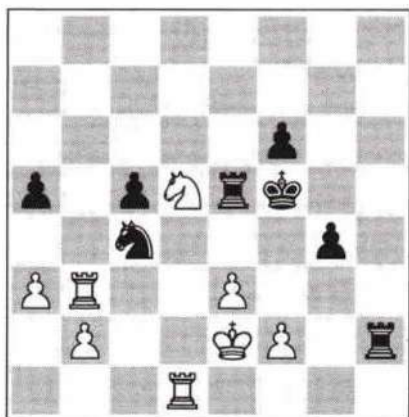
31.♗xg7+ looks tempting, but there is no mate: 31...♖e5 32.♖e6+ (after 32.♖gd1?, 32...♗d4+! is necessary and strong – Black wins an exchange) 32...♖d5 33.♖d1+ ♖c4 34.♖e4+ ♖b3, and White runs out of checks, while Black's king is not just safe but can begin to gorge on White's queen-side pawns.

31...♗e5+ 32.♖e2 ♖e8 33.♖xb6

♗c4 34.♖b3 g5 35.♗d5 ♖e5

36.♖d1 g4

Larsen has been down to his last minutes since move 30 and now has less than one minute left. Spasky has five minutes.



37.♔f1??

A fatal blunder. The balance of the game had shifted, and White was under pressure, but his position was defensible.

Larsen gives 37.♔g1! as best, the point being 37...a4 38.♔b8!, which saves White due to the tactical trick 38...♖xd5 39.e4+! ♔xe4 40.♔xg4+, winning back the piece.

37...♖h1+ 38.♔e2 ♖xd1

White resigned.

This was Spassky's first defeat as World Champion. Rather than risk a defeat for the World Champion in the match, the Russian officials decided to let Leonid Stein play the last game.

After this 'Match of the Century' Larsen won his traditional opens in the U.S. and Canada. Then came another triumph: first place in the extremely strong tournament in Vinkovci, ahead of Bronstein, Hort, Gligoric and Petrosian.

Everything was shaping up to the battle for the World Championship. Bobby Fischer triumphed in the Interzonal Tournament in Palma de Mallorca 1970, winning ahead of Larsen, Geller and Hübner.

In the following year Bent Larsen introduced the Modern Meran and defeated Wolfgang Uhlmann 5½-3½. The semi-final against Bobby Fischer in Denver 1971 showed the same problems as against Spassky in Malmö three years earlier: Larsen overreached playing for a win and disastrously lost all six games.

After the match in 1968 Larsen had been criticized for refusing to have a second. It should have been obvious that Larsen always worked alone and would have had little use for a second to help him with preparation and analysis. But he could have used someone to negotiate the location and other conditions for the match with Fischer.

It was a bitter defeat, and it was probably small consolation to Bent Larsen that he wrote an excellent book about the match on Iceland. But he rose from his defeat and began to win a string of strong tournaments again: Teesside 1972, ahead of Ljubojevic and Portisch, Hastings 1972/73, ahead of Uhlmann and Hartston, Manila 1973, ahead of Ljubojevic and Kavalek, New York 1974, ahead of Browne, Orense 1975, ahead of Ljubojevic and the new Scandinavian star Ulf Andersson.

The Interzonal in Biel in 1976 was a triumph. Larsen won, ahead of Petrosian, Portisch, Tal and a host of other stars. Bent Larsen is still the only player to have won three Interzonals. In the Candidates' matches he was stopped by Portisch, who won 6½-3½.

At one point Bent Larsen must have realized that the dream of playing for the World Championship was over. He was still intensely ambitious to win games and tournaments, but it is very likely that the new World Champion Anatoly Karpov gave Larsen's career and desire to work on chess a new lease of life. Karpov was the most active and convincing champion since Alekhine and won a series of tourna-

ments to match Larsen's results from the 1960s. Larsen wanted to measure himself against the best of the new generation, to win games against Karpov and win a tournament ahead of him.

Bent Larsen did win two remarkable games against Karpov: Montreal 1979 and Tilburg 1980, both times with black. In Montreal it was with the Scandinavian, which was very rarely seen in top level chess.

SD 11.5 - B01

Anatoly Karpov

Bent Larsen

Montreal 1979

1.e4 d5!?

A provocation, but if us Scandinavians did not play it, who would?

**2.exd5 ♖xd5 3.♘c3 ♚a5 4.d4
♞f6 5.♙d2**



Larsen calls this move unusual, yet later it became the preferred move of both Kramnik and Kasparov!

5...♙g4!?

Interesting from a psychological point of view. Larsen says 5...c6 is most likely best, but that he thought Karpov at the time had a tendency to give himself a bad bishop!

A modern way of responding to Black's provocation would be 6.f3!?, trying to attack Black before he manages to set up a solid structure. But Karpov stays true to his style.

**6.♙e2 ♙xe2 7.♘cxe2 ♚b6
8.♞f3 ♞bd7 9.0-0 e6 10.c4 ♙e7
11.b4 0-0 12.a4 c6**



As often, Larsen is not afraid of giving his opponents what they like. White has considerably more space and a harmonic position. But Black is solid and dreams of claiming that the pawns on b4 and d4 will appear as weaknesses as the game progresses.

**13.♚c2 ♚c7 14.♞fe1 b6 15.a5
♞fb8!?**

Trying to tempt Karpov.



16.a6!?

And succeeding. Black's last move now looks to be just misplacing the rook, but the structure has radically changed.

**16...b5! 17.c5 ♘d5 18.♗c1 ♖e8
19.♘d3 ♜ad8 20.g3**



A very complex position. White has much more space, and good places for all his pieces except the bishop. Black's position is solid, and should he survive White's attempt to squash him with his space, it has potential due to the white weaknesses and the bad bishop. Both players were certainly happy with their position at this point!

**20...♙f6 21.♞e4 ♘f8 22.h4 ♜d7
23.♙g2 ♞ed8**

Hinting at ideas like 24...♗e7, attacking d4. Karpov claims more space and creates further weaknesses.

24.g4 ♜e8! 25.g5 ♙d8 26.♗fe5



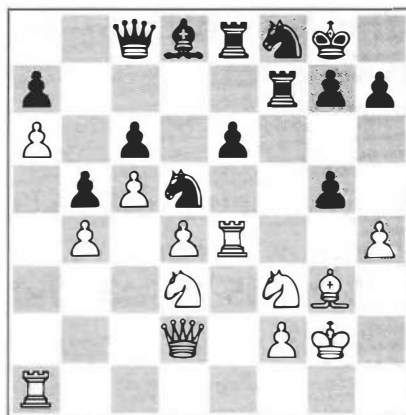
26...♞de7

Looks clumsy, but Black's position has potential, and as White has no way of striking immediately, Black will be in time to regroup.

**27.♙f4 ♚c8 28.♙g3 f6 29.♗f3
♞f7 30.♞d2**

Larsen writes that it's obvious that Karpov thinks that he is better, and that the next move surprises him. Can Black really weaken the e5-square like that?

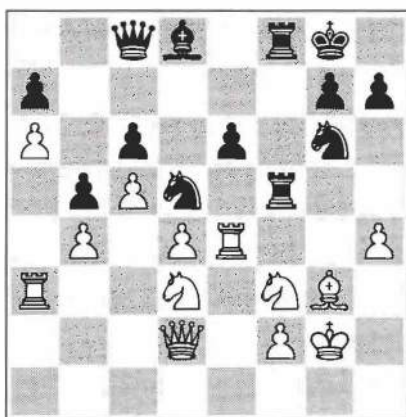
30...fxg5!?



31.♗xg5?

Karpov errs immediately. 31.hxg5! ♗g6, and an equal yet complex battle is ahead, since White cannot really exploit the e5-square, as after 32.♗fe5 ♘xe5 33.♗xe5 ♜f5! Black threatens the g5-pawn and is ready for ...♙c7.

**31...♞f5 32.♞a3 ♗g6 33.♗f3
♞ef8**



White's position has deteriorated considerably. The weaknesses are still there, but Black's pieces have all been transferred to excellent squares, attacking White's position. White is simply overstretched.

**34.♘fe5 ♖xe5 35.♙xe5 ♜f3!
36.♙a1?**

Missing a combination, but it was already too late.



**36...♙xh4! 37.♙e2 ♙xg3
38.fxg3 ♜d7 39.♙xf3 ♜xf3
40.♙xf3 ♘xb4!**

A decisive last point.

**41.♙d1 ♜xd4 42.♙e4 ♜d5
43.♘f2 ♜h5+ 44.♙g2 ♘d5
45.♙xe6 h6!**

Black creates a safe haven for his king at h7, before breaking White's resistance.

**46.♙d3 ♜h7 47.♙f3 b4 48.g4
♜g5 49.♙g3 ♜c1 50.♘h3 ♜c4
51.g5 h5 52.♙e8 h4+ 53.♙g2
b3 54.♙b8 ♜e2+ 55.♘f2 ♘e3+**

White resigned.

In 1979, at the age of 44, Bent Larsen won his most remarkable tournament victory. In the second Clarin tournament in Buenos Aires he finished first with 11 points. 2-5. Spassky, Najdorf, Miles, Andersson 8! Nine wins and four draws is astonishing for such a strong tournament, and Bent Larsen defeated both his old rivals Spassky and Petrosian. The year after, both the World Champion and young Western star Jan Timman also came to Buenos Aires. Bent Larsen won Clarin 1980 with 9½ points. 2-3. Timman and Ljubojevic 9... 5. Anatoly Karpov 7½!

Buenos Aires was obviously a good place to be. Bent Larsen had met Laura Beatriz Benedini in the Argentinean capital, and in 1982 he moved to Buenos Aires (with Laura!), where he has stayed since.

There were still some good tournaments left for Bent Larsen. In Niksic he took second prize, behind Kasparov but ahead of Spassky and Portisch. At the Nimzowitsch Memorial in Naestved in 1985 he shared first place with Vaganian and Browne, and a match in 1988 against rising star Curt Hansen was won 3½-2½.

Nobody wins forever, and at the Danish championship in 1991 it was obvious that Larsen was not well. He had been diagnosed with diabetes, and his health and results improved after treatment. In 1993 chess players in Copenhagen had a very enjoyable time when Bent Larsen defeated the chess computer Deep Blue 2½-1½. As he said at the time: 'You should not play computers in tournaments, but in laboratories and circuses. I suppose this is a mixture of both.'

Bent Larsen has always worked alone, but from the very beginning he has been willing to share. For many years he gave lectures and played innumerable simulms at the chess camps of Danish School Chess. His charisma and his energy are such that he has been able to fascinate and captivate all audiences, from school children to radio listeners or to high level managers. Garry Kasparov tried to persuade him to run for FIDE president. Two political parties have offered him safe constituencies to run for the Danish Parliament.

But Bent Larsen wanted to play chess, and write. His chess writing is among the best, combining analysis with humour and psychological understanding of the

fight, most notably in his classic game collection *50 Selected Games*, from 1968. But there is much more. He is one of the great teachers of chess, with numerous works directed at the general club player as well as inspiring the very best. The first chess book that Magnus Carlsen read was Bent Larsen's *Findplanen* ('Find the plan').

Now he is more frail. The seemingly limitless energy that has astounded people for five decades has ebbed. He speaks more slowly, but his words are precise and backed by a memory of astonishing clarity and breadth. And every day he is at the chessboard, as he has been for almost every day since those days in the winter of 1942 when he learned the rules of the royal game.

This article first appeared in *New In Chess* issue 4, 2010.

Author's Preface

Playing over a game of chess is something quite different from following it while it is being played in the tournament room. The masters are missing, as are the spectators and the air of excitement in the room. Reading a games collection doesn't give you that marvellous feeling of being present when something important happens; but be consoled by the thought that, during a tournament, most of the spectators don't really understand what's happening. Personally I'm inclined to think that the most important is not the playing hall but the analysis room, where the public has the chance to discuss the games with a grandmaster. It is a pity that tournaments don't always have such a facility.

In a book it is as if we are in the analysis room, but without questions and answers. The author therefore has to guess some of the questions.

A master knows his own games better than others – but can he judge them objectively? To reach a correct judgement of a position, you must be objective even though you have been involved in it and are the person responsible for reaching it. In such cases, your objectivity will depend upon your experience. Taking this into account, I have set myself to write with the maximum objectivity possible, which doesn't mean to say that the comments would have been the same if these games had been played by a different master. On some occasions the reader will come across a long annotation about a move I'm particularly proud of and which another annotator might have passed over in silence.

The reader might also ask if the differences in masters' style (exaggerated by journalists) are more clearly discerned in their notes than in their games. In this case you should bear in mind that the judgement of a move can be influenced, for example, by the fact that the master understood how long it took to reach a decision: if he used an hour on the clock to make the move, that is sufficient reason to comment on it.

For some games I have naturally consulted the annotations of other masters, but occasionally you will find comments that relate to errors that crept into their notes. If I identify the author of these comments, I am not expressing a judgement on them. We all make mistakes. On the other hand, I make a point of identifying those whose analysis I have studied with great interest. Weak comments annoy me a little, particularly in reference to my own games, but this would hardly interest my readers so I have ignored it for the most part in this book.

Sometimes people pose an ingenuous question: 'is chess an art?' Well, it probably is, up to a point, but the word 'art' is so often misused. The reader can compare the author of a book such as this to an artist who is pleased to show some of his best paintings to a guest; but, for the comparison to be complete, you would have to add that in commentaries – that is to say, analytical variations – one's basic attitude has to be impartial and scientific.

Bent Larsen

Editor's Foreword

For many years no representative collection of Bent Larsen's most famous games was available in English. A sad state of affairs given the Danish grandmaster's great contribution to chess. With the present book, this gap has finally been filled.

Larsen's first best games collection written by himself appeared in 1969 in Denmark and was entitled *50 Udvalgte Partier, 1948-69* (Samlerens Forlag). The English edition was published in 1970 by Batsford as *Bent Larsen: Master of Counter-Attack*. One year later a German edition followed, *Ich spiele auf Sieg* (Kühnle-Woods+Co), for which Larsen had analysed ten further games. In 2006 Spanish grandmaster Alfonso Romero Holmes published his first volume of a new Spanish edition, *Bent Larsen: Todas Las Piezas Atacan* ('all the pieces attack', an expression greatly favoured by Larsen himself). This collection contained 74 games analysed by Larsen, the last one being his victory against Miguel Quinteros in Manila 1973. In 2009, a German version of this book was published by SchachDepot as *Bent Larsen: Alle Figuren greifen an*.

In the meantime Romero Holmes had obtained an extensive number of articles that Larsen had written for various newspapers and magazines from Larsen's second wife Laura. This material appeared in 2012 as the second volume of *Bent Larsen: Todas Las Piezas Atacan*.

The present English edition is based on these Spanish editions. Both of them also contain a number of articles on other players. Although these are definitely not without interest, we have decided to confine this book to Larsen's own games. For that reason we have also included only those pages of his famous article 'A Genius Called Bobby Fischer' that describe games between Fischer and Larsen, and stories about their relationship. We have added many pictures and tournament tables.

In Chapter 9 you will read that Larsen was loath to name his games collection 'best games', as no two chess players would ever agree on which games were really the best. A respectable view, which we have nevertheless ignored. The fact that he himself has selected these games and analysed them with so much care, makes the 124 games in this book his best in our eyes.

I would like to thank a number of people without whom this book would not have been possible. Alfonso Romero Holmes, for the material from the Spanish editions; Peter Heine Nielsen, Dan H. Andersen and Thorbjørn Rosenlund for their introduction; Jan Løfberg for the photos he provided, Freddie Poggio and John Saunders for the translation, and Stuart Conquest for his kind assistance along the way.

We hope you will enjoy reading this book as much as we did working on it. In fact, we are quite sure you will.

Peter Boel, Alkmaar, June 2014

Chapter 1

Beginnings

I was born on the 4th of March 1935, according to my birth certificate, in Tilsted, near the little town of Thisted, in north-west Jutland. In the following paragraphs I shall stick to events of which I have a more or less clear memory.

In January 1942, just after we moved to the city of Holstebro, I suffered some childhood illnesses and learnt how to play chess. I recovered from chickenpox and mumps and there were no after-effects, but with chess things were a little different. Another boy, Jorgen, taught me. I vaguely remember one of our first games. He captured all my pieces while he was left with two rooks; he greatly enjoyed forcing my king to the edge of the board before checkmating me.

My father knew how to play and we occasionally played a game but, at 12 years of age, I beat him almost every time. At that age I joined a club and started to read the chess books I borrowed from the public library. Also, at home I came across a chess book. Nobody knew how it had come into the house; its owner had probably forgotten it. This book exerted a certain influence over the development of my play. As regards the King's Gambit, it said that this opening was strong like a storm and that nobody could beat it. In the opinion of the author, modern players were cowards because they didn't have the guts to play this gambit. Naturally I didn't want to be a 'chicken' and, until 1952, the favourite opening of romantic chess masters was also my own.



Members of the Holstebro Chess Club on their way to a match against the neighbouring club Sarpsborg. Bent Larsen (14) is standing in front, wearing shorts.

In the autumn of 1947, Holstebro Chess Club started a junior section, which I joined, but I beat the other boys and by Christmas they decided to let me play with the adults. Actually, when I say in interviews that I never had a coach, it is only 99% true: H.P. Hansen ran this junior club and I vaguely remember that he showed us some opening variations on a demo board. A year and a half later I was club champion and I was not disposed to admit that all the credit should go to H.P. However, he was the only coach I've ever had.

Every year Holstebro plays a match against the neighbouring town of Herning, and on the 15th of February 1948, I was in the team; not on the 30th (bottom) board, where I had hoped to be, but on the 25th. We lost the match but I won, and the game was published in one of the local newspapers with friendly comments written by the best player in the Herning team, Bjorn Nielsen, four times Danish champion. The name of my opponent was Lauridsen and the famous Three Pawns Gambit (Cunningham Variation) of the King's Gambit was evidently the best choice against him: 1.e4 e5 2.f4 exf4 3.♘f3 ♙e7 4.♙c4 ♙h4+ 5.g3?! fxg3 6.0-0 gxxh2+ 7.♔h1 ♘h6? 8.d4 0-0 9.♙xh6 gxxh6 10.♘e5 ♚e7 11.♘c3 c6 12.♙xf7+ ♔g7 13.♙h5 ♚xf1+ 14.♚xf1 d6 15.♘f3 ♙g5 16.♚f2 ♙e6 17.d5 cxd5? 18.exd5 ♙f7 19.♘xg5 hxg5 20.♚e1 ♚f6? 21.♚xf6+ ♔xf6 22.♚f1+ ♔g7 23.♙xf7 ♘d7 24.♙e6 and White won easily.

The game says something of my style in those days but little about my strength. Amongst the correspondence games I was playing at that time there are two which show that I was beginning to understand positional play. There is no doubt that I was getting stronger very rapidly but I wasn't a chess prodigy. When I was 14, my strength was far from the level attained by the likes of Morphy, Capablanca, Reshevsky, Pomar, Fischer or Mecking at the same age. But when we moved from Holstebro in 1950, I was the strongest player in a city of 14,000 inhabitants by quite some way. Two years later I had overcome all the opposition in Aalborg (population 100,000) and there was little left for me to learn in that city. It was lucky for me that I finished high school and transferred to Copenhagen, where I was planning to study for a career as a civil engineer.

At that time I qualified to play in the Danish Championship, but I had already represented my country in the World Junior Championship which took place in Birmingham in 1951. Given my lack of experience, equal fourth place was an amazing result. Game 1 was taken from this tournament.

In the New Year tournaments played in Trondheim in 1951/52 and 1952/53, I finished first ahead of some of the best junior players from Norway, Sweden and Finland. I was gaining experience; however, in the World Junior Championship in 1953, in Copenhagen, I only managed equal fifth place. There were some good players in it (Panno and Darga tied ahead of Olafsson and Ivkov, and then Penrose, Sherwin and Keller equal with me), perhaps the strongest field of all the World Junior Championships until now.

In the Scandinavian Championship, played immediately afterwards and won by Olafsson, I made too many silly mistakes. However, for a long time I considered Game 2 of the book to be one of my finest achievements, particularly as I was try-

World Junior Championship, Birmingham 1951 (11 rnd)		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	
1	Ivkov, Borislav	*	1	½	1	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	9.5
2	Barker, Malcolm	0	*	½	1	1	1	½	½	*	1	1	½	*	*	*	*	1	*	8
3	Cruz, Raul	½	½	*	1	½	1	½	0	*	*	*	1	1	½	*	½	*	*	7
4	Harris, P.	0	0	0	*	*	0	*	1	*	1	½	1	*	1	*	*	1	1	6.5
5	Larsen, Bent	0	0	½	*	*	0	*	*	*	1	*	0	1	1	1	*	1	1	6.5
6	Nyren, Bo	½	0	0	1	1	*	*	½	½	*	½	*	*	1	½	1	*	*	6.5
7	Bhend, Edwin	0	½	½	*	*	*	*	0	0	½	1	*	1	*	1	½	*	1	6
8	Burstein, Sylvain	½	½	1	0	*	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	*	*	½	*	*	*	6
9	Rosen, Willy	0	*	*	*	*	½	1	½	*	*	0	½	½	*	1	1	0	1	6
10	Selzer, E.	0	0	*	0	0	*	½	½	*	*	*	1	*	1	*	1	1	1	6
11	Berriman, G.	0	0	*	½	*	½	0	½	1	*	*	*	½	*	1	*	½	1	5.5
12	Olafsson, Fridrik	0	½	0	0	1	*	*	½	½	0	*	*	1	1	*	1	*	*	5.5
13	Joyner, Lionel	*	*	0	*	0	*	0	*	½	*	½	0	*	½	½	1	1	1	5
14	Eikrem, Arnold	*	*	½	0	0	0	*	*	*	0	*	0	½	*	½	½	1	½	3.5
15	Walsh, James	*	*	*	*	0	½	0	½	0	*	0	*	½	½	*	0	1	½	3.5
16	Jackson, J.	*	*	½	*	*	0	½	*	0	0	*	0	0	½	1	*	½	0	3
17	Asker, Sven	*	0	*	0	0	*	*	*	1	0	½	*	0	0	0	½	*	½	2.5

ing to change my style and opening repertoire. So I felt very pleased to have won in the purest positional style. Of course, I had not forgotten how to attack and inflicted severe punishment on those whose faulty opening play deserved it; this can be observed in Game 3, played in a club match in the autumn of 1953.

In 1954 I won all nine games in a weak Copenhagen Championship and, full of optimism, set out for Aarhus intent on annexing the Danish title. In the first round I chalked up a zero; in the second, a draw; in the third – another zero! However, I won the next six games in succession; after that, a draw and another victory in the last round and I was Danish Champion. Since then I have won the title in 1955, 1956, 1959 and 1963 – in other words, every time I have entered.

In the 1954 Championship my play wasn't good in every game, but the one I played against Eigil Pedersen, who had won the previous year, stands up to a closer examination. I have included it, with my comments from the Danish chess magazine Skakbladet, to provide an example of my positional play and tournament pragmatism. I was almost mature enough to start playing in tournaments in which International Masters took part.

King's Gambit

Bent Larsen

Lionel Joyner

World Junior Championship,
Birmingham 1951

1.e4 e5 2.f4 ♗c5

This move cannot be a refutation of the gambit. If Black doesn't want to play ...exf4, I think he should play the

Game 1

Falkbeer Counter Gambit with 2...d5. After 2...d5 3.exd5 e4 Réti's observation is very much to the point: 'in this position it is almost impossible to know why White played 2.f4'.

3.♘f3 d6 4.c3 ♕g4

A logical move to prevent d2-d4. However, White gets a good game with the following queen manoeuvre, well-known for many a long year. The

consequences of 4...f5 5.fxe5 dxe5 6.d4 are still amongst the most obscure corners of opening theory, while 4...♘f6 5.d4 leads to a position in which White possesses an impressive pawn centre, although Black has counterplay.

5.fxe5 dxe5 6.♖a4+! ♕d7

Necessary as 6...♖d7 7.♕b5 c6 8.♘xe5! loses a pawn. I knew all this very well as the King's Gambit was my favourite opening.

7.♖c2 ♘c6 8.b4 ♕d6

To avoid the loss of the e-pawn, Black must remove the bishop from a good diagonal. Books cite a Spielmann game with 9.♕c4, but I had found another continuation which I might still choose today and which I had already tried out at my club in Aalborg.

9.♕e2 ♖e7 10.♘a3

The knight, and not the bishop, is the piece headed for c4. Perhaps it would have been more accurate to play ♘a3 the move before (see the next note).

10...a5 11.b5 ♘d8

The reason for playing ♘a3 on the ninth move can be seen in the variation 11...♕xa3 12.♕xa3 ♖xa3 13.bxc6 ♕xc6 14.♘xe5 ♖a4 where Black forces an exchange of queens but White still has the better game after 15.♖xa4 ♕xa4 16.♕c4 ♘h6 17.0-0.

12.♘c4 f6 13.0-0 ♘h6 14.d4

♘hf7 15.a4 0-0 16.♘xd6 ♘xd6?

Black's position is difficult but 16...cxd6 would have been better. White would then have continued with 17.♕a3 and 18.♖ad1.

17.♕a3 ♘8f7??

It was necessary to play 17...b6 although White has a clear advantage. For example, 18.dxe5 fxe5 19.c4 or 19.♕c4+ ♘8f7 20.♕d5 ♖ac8 21.c4.



18.c4!

Completely decisive.

18...exd4 19.c5 ♖xe4 20.♕d3

♖e3+ 21.♔h1 ♘xb5

Desperation. The point of White's combination is that the knight can only retreat to c8 or e8, in both cases disconnecting the two rooks. Then 22.c6 would have threatened ♕xh7+ followed by ♕xf8. For example, after 21...♘c8 22.c6 ♖d8 23.cxd7 the black position is no less desperate than in the game.

22.axb5 c6 23.♕xh7+ ♔h8

24.♘h4 ♘e5 25.♖ae1 ♖h6

26.♘g6+ ♘xg6 27.♕xg6 ♕e8

28.♕f5 cxb5 29.c6 b4 30.♕c1

g5 31.c7 ♕c6 32.♖e7 1-0

An accurately played game, but not very difficult. It was awarded one of the two prizes for the best games of the tournament, which came as a surprise to me. Ivkov, the winner, played a brilliant game against the West German player Rosen, but it was not put forward for the special prizes. Perhaps on account of modesty, perhaps laziness; I don't know.

Game 2

English Opening

Bent Larsen

Alex Nielsen

Scandinavian Championship, Esbjerg 1953

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d4 cxd4

4.♘xd4 ♘c6 5.♘c3 d6

It is interesting that I didn't accept the offer of transposing into the Maroczy Bind variation of the Sicilian Defence which would have occurred after 6.e4. According to 'what I learned as a child', this would have been favourable to White; however, it appears I had my doubts about it even then. I have often played this line as Black, but rarely as White, the game against Petrosian at Santa Monica 1966 being a glorious exception.

**6.g3 g6 7.♘g2 ♘d7 8.♗c2 ♘g7
9.b3 0-0 10.♘b2 a6 11.0-0 ♖b8**

If I can be permitted to quote my comment in *Skakbladet*: 'Black wants to play ...b7-b5, an excellent plan, but after White's next move he has to remember the wise words of Nimzowitsch: "cramped positions should be freed slowly".' At that time I was studying Nimzowitsch and modern opening theory.

12.♖c1 b5? 13.♗d5! ♗xd5?

After 13...bxc4 14.♗xf6+ ♘xf6 15.♘xf6 exf6 16.♗e3 Black could try 16...cxb3 but 16.♗a3 gives White a clear advantage. Better was 13...♗e8!.

14.♘g7 ♗xg7 15.cxd5 ♗e5 16.h3

White threatens f2-f4, which faces Black with a difficult choice. Perhaps 16...♘c8 is best although it doesn't look satisfactory; in any event, the open file and the possibility of posting a knight or rook on c6 give White the advantage.

16...♖b6



17.♖d4!

The exchange of queens greatly increases White's advantage as the rook can go to c7.

**17...f6 18.♖xb6 ♖xb6 19.♗d4 g5
20.♖c7 ♖d8 21.♗h2**

A surprising move which prepares ♘e4. Black ought to have replied with the desperate 21...g4, which makes it more difficult to mount a direct attack on his knight.

21...h6 22.♘e4 ♗f8

White was ready to play ♘f5, or f2-f4 followed by ♘f5. For this reason Black avoids the knight check on f5 and also protects his e-pawn; however, White now has the chance to chase away the enemy knight, which decides the game much more quickly than 23.♘f5, though this would also have been very strong.

23.f4 ♗f7 24.♘f3!

But not 24.♗e6+? ♘xe6 25.dxe6 d5! with drawing chances. Now Black has no defence; for example, if 24...♗e8 there follows 25.♘h5.

24...♖bb8 25.♗e6+ ♘xe6

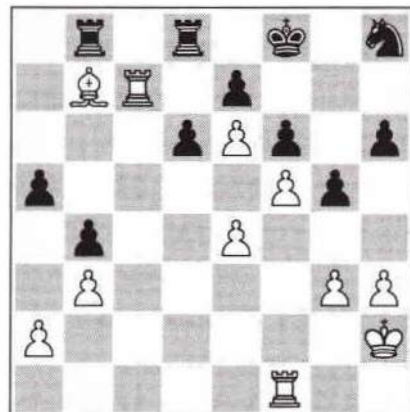
After 25...♗e8 White, rather than grabbing the exchange, would have preferred the energetic move 26.♘h5.

26.dxe6 ♗h8 27.f5

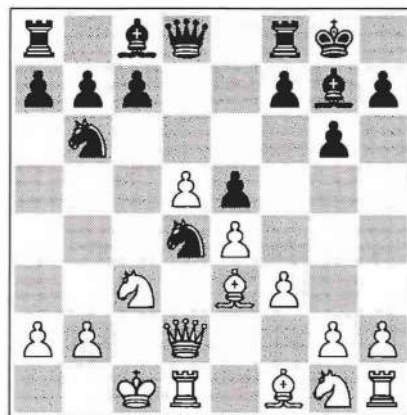
An unusual way of entombing a knight. Of course, the struggle is now as good as over.

27...b4 28.♘b7 a5 29.e4

1-0



Axel Nielsen didn't play this game very well but he finished second in the tournament and in three Danish Championships. I felt very proud of the way I beat him and for a long time considered this game to be one of my best positional battles. Most young talents find it more difficult to play positionally than to launch a sharp or complicated attack against their opponent's king.



Game 3

Grünfeld Indian Defence

Harald Enevoldsen

Bent Larsen

Club Match, Copenhagen 1953

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 g6 3.f3

Alekhine first played this in 1929 during his match with Bogoljubow; however, 3.f3 has never become very popular.

If Black develops quietly, this usually turns into the Sämisch Variation of the King's Indian Defence via a transposition of moves: 3...♗g7 4.e4 0-0 5.♖c3 d6. However, White can defer developing his b1-knight with 5.♗d3 d6 6.♖e2, which has some advantages.

Grünfeld's method, ...d7-d5, is very logical here. Because of this counterplay, masters have shied away from playing 3.f3. White makes a strong point of e4, while Black starts an attack against the d-pawn.

3...d5! 4.cxd5 ♖xd5 5.e4 ♖b6

6.♖c3 ♗g7 7.♗e3 0-0 8.♔d2

This variation was played quite often by the Enevoldsen brothers, Jens and Harald. They probably liked the sharp positions that resulted after 0-0-0. Theoreticians prefer 8.f4 ♖c6 9.d5 ♖b8 10.a4 although White still can't claim any advantage.

8...♖c6 9.0-0-0 e5 10.d5 ♖d4

11.f4

The sharpest line: White wants to undermine the position of the enemy knight. A more prudent choice is 11.♖b5 as was played in the game Pachman-Padevsky, Moscow 1956, which continued 11...♖xb5 12.♗xb5 ♗d7 13.♗d3 c6 14.dxc6 ♔c7.

11...c5 12.fxe5

After 12.dxc6 ♖xc6 Black has a good game. An interesting alternative is 12.♖f3; the game H.Enevoldsen-Hartvig Nielsen, Copenhagen 1950, continued 12...♗g4 13.♗e2 (the most consistent line for White is 13.♖xe5!? although the sacrifice is not entirely sound) 13...♖xe2+ 14.♔xe2 exf4 15.♗xc5 ♗e8 with good chances for Black. Nielsen got a winning attack after 16.h3 ♗xf3 17.♔xf3 ♖c4 18.♔d3 b5 19.♗hf1 ♖xb2.

12...♗g4! 13.♗e1 ♗xe5 14.♗g5?

This is an innovation, though not one that improves White's game. Of course, my knowledge of the variation was not profound, but so far Black's moves were logical. I vaguely remembered the game J. Enevoldsen-Heinicke, Oldenburg 1949: 14.h3 ♗h4 15.♗b1 f6 16.♗c1 a6 17.♗f2 ♗h5 18.♖ce2 ♗f5!? and Black won brilliantly.

It is possible that White's play could be improved, but after 14.h3 the second player has a quiet line at his disposal:

14...♔d7 15.♘f3 ♘xf3 16.gxf3 ♖e7 with good play (H. Enevoldsen-Bolbochan, Dubrovnik 1950). The white centre is rather weak and Black has the better chances of organising an attack against the enemy king.

14...f6 15.♔f4?

A completely mistaken plan. White has to play 15.♔h6.

15...♖d6 16.♔xe5? fxe5

White has lost a tempo and besides has opened up a file for his opponent.

17.h3 ♔d7 18.♔e2 ♖f2 19.♖g5



A most ingenious move in an already precarious position; the g-pawn is protected and he is preparing to play ♘f3 in order to attack the black e-pawn. However, Enevoldsen's position was unsound, as demonstrated by Black's following two moves, beginning a decisive attack before the opponent can connect his two rooks.

19...♘a4!

A natural move, trying to exchange off the white king's best defender and thus eliminate one of the bishop's protectors; therefore White is obliged to postpone the development of his g1-knight.

20.♘d1?

White's reply is an error but 20.♖g3 ♖af8 21.♘f3 doesn't offer much hope, either. Black has the choice of a number of attacking continuations; the simplest

is probably 21...♘xc3 22.♖xf2 ♘xa2+ 23.♔b1 ♘b4.

20...c4!!

The rook cannot be captured.

21.♖g3

21.♘xf2 ♖b4 22.♖d2 c3 23.bxc3 ♖a3+, winning. This line shows the part the rook plays in the attack and that White is unable to develop on the kingside. The game is effectively over.

21...c3! 22.bxc3

After 22.♖xf2 cxb2+ 23.♘xb2 Black can win in various ways; for example, 23...♖b4. 23.♔b1 ♖c8 is also decisive.

22...♖a3+ 23.♔d2 ♖f4 24.♔c4 ♖c8 25.♖d3 ♘b2 26.♘xb2 ♖xb2+ 0-1

Game 4

King's Indian Defence

Eigil Pedersen

Bent Larsen

Danish Championship, Aarhus 1954

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 ♔g7 4.e4 d6 5.g3 0-0 6.♔g2 e5 7.d5 ♘h5 8.♘ge2 f5 9.exf5

Castling is probably better.

9...gxf5 10.0-0 ♘d7 11.♖b1

Once the pawns were exchanged, the natural continuation was 11.f4 but after 11...exf4 (11...e4 12.g4) 12.♘xf4 ♘xf4 13.♔xf4 ♘e5 Black has the better game.

With the text move White prepares for action on the queenside.

11...a5 12.a3?

This is premature and leads to a weakening of the white pawns.

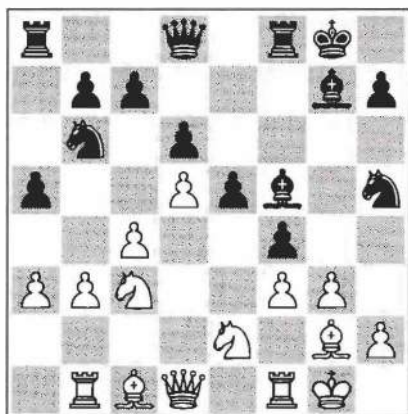
12...♘b6 13.b3 f4

Playing 13...a4 14.♘xa4 doesn't achieve anything. Black prefers to keep ...a5-a4 in reserve as a threat.

14.f3

Perhaps 14.♔d3 would have been better but 14...a4 15.b4 ♖xc4 looks promising for Black.

14...♙f5



15.♘e4

Now Black gets a clear advantage but putting the rook on the long diagonal was also inadequate. After 15.♖b2 fxg3 16.hxg3 ♙g6 the threat is 17...e4, in addition to ...a5-a4.

15...a4! 16.gxf4

It is difficult to find anything better. After 16.g4 ♙xe4! 17.fxe4 ♘f6 Black's position is obviously to be preferred, with a protected passed pawn on one side and weakened enemy pawns on the other.

16...♔h4 17.♙b2

If now 17.fxe5 ♙xe4! 18.fxe4 ♙xe5 19.h3 ♘g3 and Black has a substantial advantage.

17...♘xf4 18.♘xf4 ♔xf4 19.♙c1 ♔h4 20.♙e3 ♙h6

Now the bishop joins in the attack against the white king.

21.♙f2

After 21.♙xb6 cxb6 the threat of 22...♙f4 would be stronger.

21...♔h5 22.♘g3 ♔g6 23.♘xf5 ♔xf5 24.♔d3

The only way to stop Black's attack.

24...♙f4

Threatening 25...♙xh2+.

25.♙g3 axb3 26.♖xb3 ♙xg3 27.hxg3 ♖g5 28.f4 exf4 29.♖xf4 ♔xd3 30.♖xd3 ♘d7 31.♙h3 ♘e5 32.♖b3 b6



Black has achieved a very advantageous ending, with a good knight against a weak bishop, with White also saddled by two weak pawns. For the next eight

Nordic Championship, Esbjerg 1953

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	
1	Olafsson,Fridrik	*	1	0	1	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	9.0
2	Skold,Kristian	0	*	0	½	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	7.5
3	Nielsen,Axel	1	1	*	0	0	1	0	½	½	1	1	1	7.0
4	Sterner,Bjorn-Olof	0	½	1	*	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	7.0
5	Larsen,Bent	0	0	1	½	*	1	1	½	0	1	1	½	6.5
6	Vestol,Aage	½	1	0	½	0	*	1	½	1	0	1	1	6.5
7	Poulsen,Christian	0	0	1	1	0	0	*	0	1	1	1	1	6.0
8	Karlin,Ored	0	0	½	0	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	1	5.0
9	Blomberg,Keijo	0	0	½	½	1	0	0	½	*	½	½	½	4.0
10	Solin,Hugo	½	0	0	0	0	1	0	½	½	*	1	½	4.0
11	Storm Herseth,Laege	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	*	1	2.0
12	Hildebrand,Alexander	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	*	1.5

moves my opponent was in time trouble and of course I hoped to take advantage, though I also wanted to reach an adjournment so that I could find the winning method at my leisure during 'home analysis'.

**33.♔f2 ♖g7 34.♙f1 ♘g4+
35.♔e1 ♜e8+ 36.♔d2 ♘e5
37.♙e2 ♖h8 38.♞f6 ♔g7 39.♞f1
♞g8 40.g4? ♖h8**

Time trouble is over but White's last move was an error that costs him a pawn.

41.♞e3?

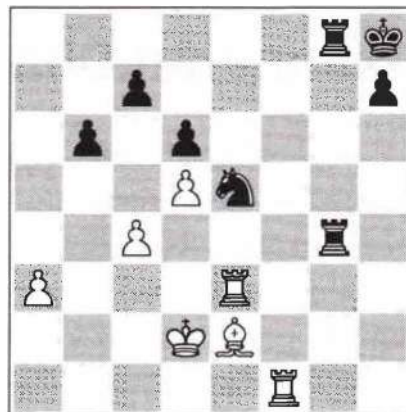
Another mistake, which saves me a lot of work.

A plausible continuation is 41.♞g3 ♘xg4 42.♞fg1 ♘f6 43.♞xg5 ♞xg5 44.♞xg5 ♘e4+ 45.♔e3 ♘xg5 46.♔f4 h6 47.♔f5 ♖g7 and, despite the enemy

king being well placed, Black has the better of it.

41...♞xg4!

0-1



White would have analysed 41...♘xg4 42.♙xg4 ♞xg4 43.♞e7 with excellent drawing chances; but after 41...♞xg4! both 42.♞xe5 ♞d4+ and 42.♙xg4 ♘xc4+ are hopeless for White. He is losing a pawn in a very bad position.

Chapter 2

Scandinavian Champion

The year 1955 started with a partial failure; I only managed to share first place in the Copenhagen Championship. It is true that I let three half-points slip through my fingers but Palle Ravn made the same score. After that I took part in the Danish Championship and scored 10 out of a possible 11.

In August I played in the Scandinavian Championship, which took place in Oslo, and although I didn't play very well in all the games, I shared first place with Fridrik Olafsson whom I beat in the last round.

In November I took part in the young masters' tournament in Zagreb (the age limit being 21) and, in spite of some serious mistakes, managed to finish first equal, this time with Bhend of Switzerland. Bilek of Hungary was third, and amongst those finishing further down the table were masters as strong as the Yugoslavs Matulovic, Bogdanovic and Djurasevic. It was a very important tournament. If this collection of games stretched to 200, I would have included several of my Zagreb games in it.

In a little tournament held over the New Year in Stockholm, I 'only' managed second place. Martin Johansson won it, while Stahlberg came seventh. Immediately after I flew to Reykjavik where the tie for the Scandinavian had to be decided by an eight-game match. In those days Olafsson was a national hero. He had beaten Pilnik in a match and at Hastings shared first with Kortchnoi. The enthusiasm on the island was fantastic: everyone followed our match with great interest. But what was wrong with Olafsson? I took the lead 3½-1½. But in the sixth game I blundered in a position that was clearly drawn and I played very badly in the seventh. The situation was now 3½ points all with one game left and both of us were very nervous.

Danish Championship, Aalborg 1955													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
1	Larsen,Bent	*	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10.0
2	Nielsen,Axel	0	*	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	8.5
3	Enevoldsen,Jens	½	½	*	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	7.5
4	Petersen,Svend	½	½	½	*	1	0	1	0	½	1	1	7.0
5	Andersen,Borge	0	0	½	0	*	0	1	½	½	1	1	5.5
6	Nielsen,Vervner	0	0	1	1	1	*	½	½	½	0	0	5.0
7	Gemzoe,Jacob	0	0	0	0	0	½	*	1	½	1	0	4.0
8	Hansen,Victor	0	0	½	1	½	½	0	*	½	0	½	4.0
9	Lauridsen,Evald	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	4.0
10	Nielsen,Harvig	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	1	½	*	1	4.0
11	Haahr,Thorkild	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	½	0	0	*	3.5
12	Kupferstich,Moises	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	1	1	0	3.0

Just when it might have been supposed that I was beaten psychologically, it turned out to be me who kept better control of himself in the decisive game.

Game 5

Grünfeld Indian Defence

Fridrik Olafsson

Bent Larsen

8th Match Game, Reykjavik 1956

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 a6 6.♙g5 e6
7.♚f3**

Nowadays 7.f4 is played almost automatically but at that time the queen move was more fashionable, or at least it had been until the Gothenburg Interzonal, held a few months before, in which several famous games were played; outstanding amongst them was a Keres victory over Fuderer with the pawn sacrifice 7.f4 ♚b6 8.♚d2.

One of the better known games with 7.♚f3 is Bronstein-Najdorf, in 1954, in which White sacrificed a piece for three pawns to get the initiative and, later, victory: 7...♗bd7 8.0-0-0 ♚c7 9.♚g3 b5 10.♙xb5, etc. The same year I won two games with black using a defence which I had invented myself. I was very happy to have the chance to play it again in this important game.

7...♙e7 8.0-0-0 ♚c7 9.♖g1

The move which was then in vogue. The plan of 9.♖g1 and 10.g4 was popularised by the game Nezhmetdinov-Paoli, Bucharest 1953.

**9...♗c6 10.g4 ♗e5 11.♚e2 b5
12.f4 b4!**

This was my little invention.

13.♗b1

After 13.fxe5 dxe5 Black gets the piece back, and my games against Kølvig and Paoli didn't indicate that White had any advantage.

**13...♗ed7 14.♙h4 ♙b7 15.♙g2
♗c5 16.♗d2 ♖c8**

In positions like the present one it is important that Black doesn't castle too soon. First he must create threats against the white king's position, so that White can't concentrate all his pieces against the enemy king.

17.♙b1 ♗a4 18.♗2b3 h6

Winning a pawn with 18...e5 19.fxe5 dxe5 20.♗f5 ♚c3 21.bxc3 ♗xc3+ 22.♙b2 ♗xe2 23.♖gf1 would be very favourable for White.

**19.♙e1 ♗c5 20.♗d2 ♗fd7 21.h4
g6 22.g5??**

A serious positional mistake. White probably chose not to play 22.f5 because of 22...e5, for example 23.♗4b3 ♗xb3 24.♗xb3 a5 and Black's position is completely OK, although after the text it is much more so.

22...e5 23.fxe5 dxe5 24.♗4f3

Here 24.♙g3 was better; however, Black can win the g-pawn with impunity.

24...♗e6 25.♖c1 ♗f4

A very strong knight.

26.♚f1 ♙c6!



Decisive. The threat of ...♙b5 is very strong and wins at least the exchange.

27.c4

White decides on a drastic solution to ...♙b5, but he would have done better to play 27.♚xa6, after which Black can win the exchange with 27...♙c5 besides gaining attacking chances down the a-file. The attempt at a combination with 27.♜xe5 is easily refuted: 27...♚xe5 28.♙g3 hxg5 29.hxg5 ♙xg5 30.♜f3 ♚e7 31.♜xg5 ♜xg2.

27...bxc3 28.♞xc3

After 28.bxc3 ♙a3 29.♞c2 ♚b7+ White is lost.

28...♙b5!

It was sad for the islanders to see their hero lose, but at least it happened in a pretty way. Everyone likes a queen sacrifice.

29.♞xc7

Well, it is not really a sacrifice as Black gets his queen back immediately. It is an offer White can't refuse as 29.♚f2 ♙c5 is rather disagreeable.

29...♞xc7 30.♙g3

Naturally, the rest is not difficult.

30...♙xf1 31.♙xf1 hxg5 32.hxg5 ♙c5 33.♜xe5 ♙xg1 34.♙xf4 ♙h2 35.♙xh2 ♞xh2 36.♜ef3 ♞h1 37.a3 ♜c5 38.♚a2 ♞xf1 39.♜xf1 ♜xe4 40.♜e3 ♞c5 0-1

Chapter 3

International Master

The Chess Olympiad of 1954 should have been held in Buenos Aires, and I was in the process of preparing for the trip, but at the last minute it was cancelled. It is probable that this decision had something to do with a change of government in Argentina and a sports ministry budget which mysteriously evaporated.

However, the Netherlands stepped in to take charge of organising the Olympiad at very short notice, and in the space of five weeks achieved what usually take a year or more of preparation. A fantastic feat of organisation! I was on top board for the Danish team and, with the exception of junior tournaments, this was my baptism of fire in the international arena. Although I played 19 rounds – rather too many – I managed the decent score of 71%, which is to say $13\frac{1}{2}$ points. We were in the 'B' section of the finals but even so there were some very good players amongst my adversaries. In recognition of my score the World Chess Federation (FIDE) awarded me the international master title at their congress the following year.

I wouldn't claim that Game 5 was my best game of the competition but it has a special place in my memory.

Game 6

Sicilian Defence

Ossip Bernstein

Bent Larsen

Amsterdam Olympiad 1954

During the Olympiad I played Dr. Bernstein twice. In the preliminary section we drew. Before the game I recall someone saying to me: 'Young man, it will be interesting for you to play against Bernstein who in 1907 had already announced his intention of retiring from chess!'

In the finals I had to play him again, on the 20th September, the day on which he celebrated his 72nd birthday. But he wouldn't be receiving a birthday present from me.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.c4 ♕g4

Another good reply to White's unusual third move is 3...e5.

4.d4 cxd4 5.♚xd4 ♘f6 6.♗c3 g6 7.b3

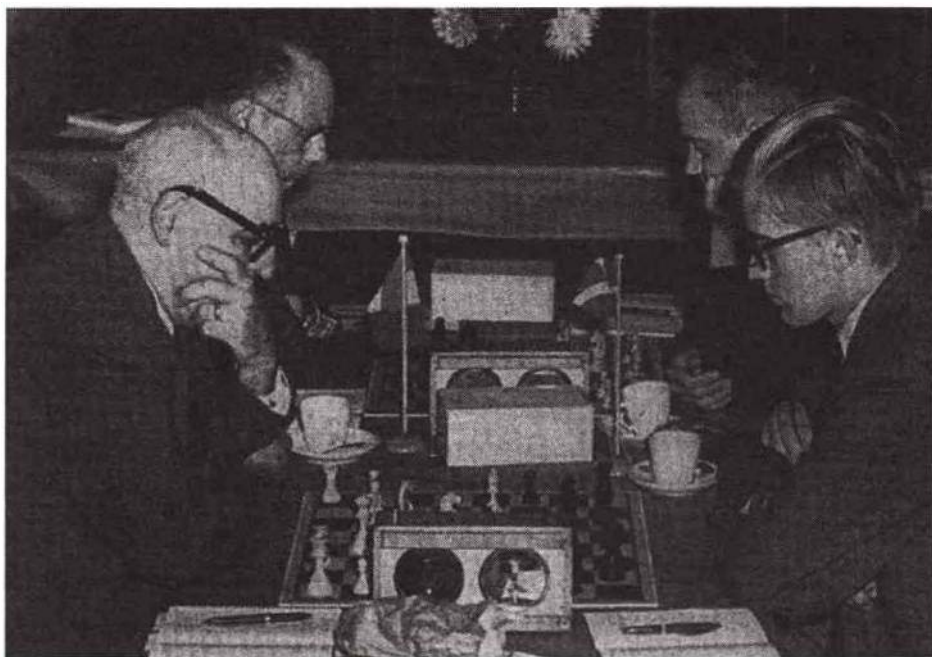
Somewhat risky but not an error.

7...♙g7 8.♙b2 ♚a5 9.♗d2 ♘c6 10.♚e3??



After this Black has a very nice combination. Correct would have been 10.♚d3 and there is nothing special in the position.

10...♗b4!



The game with Ossip Bernstein at the Amsterdam Olympiad, 1954.

A very strong 'beginner's move'. There is nothing subtle about the threat. The annotator who wrote after the next move 'now 11.♕d3 was better' cannot have foreseen the extremely strong reply 11...♕h6!.

11.♖c1 ♘xa2!

If you thought, two or three moves ago, that the bishop on g4 was hitting at thin air, you must now admit that the thin air around the king is a bit special. Bernstein thought for a long time. I wandered around the playing hall, watching the USSR-Yugoslavia match, which featured Fuderer's sensational victory over Geller. Just as I returned to my own game, Bernstein suddenly raised his large head and said 'Sehr schön gespielt!' ('Very well played!') before continuing with his deliberations.

12.♘a2

The elegant reply to 12.♖a1 is 12...♘b4!.

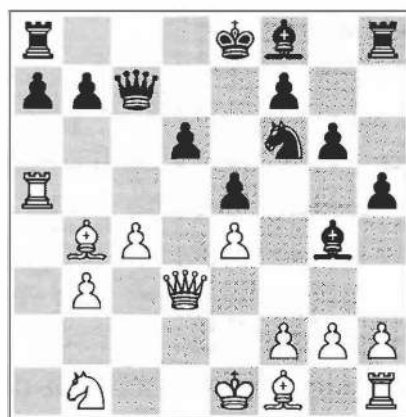
12...♙xa2 13.♕d4

Black has won a pawn but it is not easy to get the queen back to safety without giving it back.

13...e5 14.♕c3 h5! 15.♙d3

Now 15.♕d3 is not possible because of 15...♕h6!; if 15.♖a1 White's problems are still not resolved because of 15...♙c2; against 15.b4 the simplest is 15...♙a4 and if 16.♖a1 ♙c2!. But also good is 15...♕h6 16.♙d3 0-0.

**15...♙a3 16.♖a1 ♙c5 17.♖a5
♙c7 18.♕b4 ♕f8 19.♘b1?**



The previous move of the bishop was almost forced but contains a dose of poison. Black has a second opportunity to play a neat combination.

19...♘xe4!

Pawn number two! There was another good possibility (19...d5!) but the text is less complicated.

20. ♖xe4 d5!

White was perhaps hoping for 20... ♗f5? and 21... ♗xb1 in which case he would have played 21. ♖d5 or 21. ♖f3 with some attacking chances such as 22. c5.

21. ♖xd5 ♗xb4+ 22. ♘d2 0-0

So Black has to be satisfied with one extra pawn, but White's pinned knight and inability to castle make his position hopeless.

23. ♗d3 ♖ad8 24. ♖b5? ♗xd2+ 25. ♔xd2 ♗f5

Of course, the rest of the game is not very exciting.

26. ♖xb7 ♖xd3+ 27. ♔c1 ♖d6 28. ♖xa7 ♖c3+ 29. ♔b2 ♖d2+ 30. ♔a3 ♖c2 31. ♖a1 ♗e4 32. ♖b6 ♖a8 33. ♖b8+ ♖xb8 34. ♖xb8+ ♔h7 35. ♖xe5 ♗xg2 0-1

White lost on time.

This was my first victory over a grandmaster. Of course Bernstein in 1954 wasn't as strong as he had been, but he was still by no means senile. Two months later, in the Montevideo tournament, he shared second place with Najdorf whom he beat in a brilliant game with a beautiful knight sacrifice.

Chapter 4

Grandmaster!

The victory over Olafsson, seen as sensational by most pundits, was the prelude to my consecration. If they had asked me then if I had expected to become a grandmaster, it would have been difficult to give a negative reply; however, I thought it would come some years into the future.

Now, looking back, I think the Danish Championship held in Copenhagen in 1956 was the first time I demonstrated grandmaster strength. At that tournament, amongst the strongest of Danish Championships, I made few errors and won the first seven games; after that followed three quiet draws and then another victory.

Copenhagen 1956												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Larsen,Bent	*	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	8.0
2	Fuchs,Reinhart	½	*	0	½	1	1	1	0	½	½	5.0
3	Pedersen,Eigil	0	1	*	½	0	½	½	1	1	½	5.0
4	Bertholdt,Dieter	0	½	½	*	1	½	0	½	1	½	4.5
5	Roessel,Frits	0	0	1	0	*	0	1	1	½	1	4.5
6	Enevoldsen,Jens	0	0	½	½	1	*	0	½	1	½	4.0
7	Nielsen,Axel	0	0	½	1	0	1	*	1	0	½	4.0
8	Thorbergsson,Freysteinn	½	1	0	½	0	½	0	*	½	½	3.5
9	Johannsson,Ingi	0	½	0	0	½	0	1	½	*	1	3.5
10	Bouwmeester,Hans	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	*	3.0

After finishing my second course at the technical University I went to Hanko, Finland, to play in a little competition, but I didn't play well and had to share first place with Rantanen. I was only back in Copenhagen for a few days before travelling to Spain, specifically Gijón, where I won convincingly, ahead of Darga, O'Kelly, Donner and some of the best Spanish players. I hurried back to Copenhagen to take part in a training tournament organised by the *Ekstrabladet* newspaper in which I conceded two draws and won with 8 out of a possible 9 points. Fuchs, from East Germany, and Eigil Pedersen shared second place with 5 points.

After that I headed to Moscow to take part in the Chess Olympiad. This time Denmark qualified for the Final 'A' section; but, even so, things went very well for me in my battle with the leading masters. I drew with the grandmasters and beat the rest. Only once, in the preliminary phase, did I stumble, losing to Fairhurst of Scotland. To compensate for that I beat Gligoric in the final section.

'Are you aware that you have a better score than Botvinnik?' asked the Hungarian grandmaster Barcza one day. 'No, no, I didn't know,' I replied, surprised. My game against Botvinnik ended in a draw after I had had some winning chances.



Playing Botvinnik at the Olympiad, Moscow 1956.

With 14 out of 18, 77.8%, I made the best score on the top board, and at the end of the tournament I was elevated to the category of grandmaster. People applauded and I was astonished that it had all happened so quickly. This is the only tournament in which I have taken part in which I played better than I had previously expected, or thought possible beforehand.

In Denmark there was great enthusiasm and I travelled up and down the country giving exhibitions. In the intervals I was also busy at the university, as a result of which, when I went to play in the New Year tournament held annually in Hastings, I was very tired. In order to stimulate myself to overcome this fatigue, I played very risky chess for most of the competition and, with the exception of the game I lost to Olafsson in the second round, my results were excellent. I shared first place with Gligoric, ahead of Olafsson and O'Kelly.

Less than a year before my victory in the match held in Reykjavik had been considered a surprise; now, my Hastings success confirmed that the grandmaster title had not been a matter of luck. It may be justly said that 1956 was the year of my consecration.

Game 7

8...♖e8 9.♘c3 c6 10.e4

King's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Francisco José Perez Perez

Gijón 1956

**1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 g6 3.♙g2 ♙g7
4.c4 0-0 5.d4 d6 6.0-0 ♘bd7
7.♚c2 e5 8.♖d1**

Between 1954 and 1956 I played this line against the King's Indian almost all the time.

The consequences of 10.b3 e4 have still not been fully explored, although some Hungarian masters often played this line, even after it went out of fashion. In 1956 the model game for this line was Donner-Szabo, Buenos Aires 1955: 11.♘g5 e3 12.fxe3 ♘f8 13.e4 ♚e7 14.e3 ♙h6 15.♘f3 ♘xe4 16.♘xe4 ♚xe4 17.♚xe4 ♚xe4 18.♘g5 ♖e7 19.♘e4 ♙h3 20.♘xd6 ♙xg2 21.♙xg2

♙xe3 22.♖e1 ♜e6 with equality. I was more familiar with these complications than than I am now.

10...a5

10...♙e7 is probably best although 10...♙c7 with the idea of 11.h3 b5!? is also interesting.

11.h3 a4

A well-known trick: White cannot capture the a-pawn because he would lose his e-pawn.

12.♙e3 ♙a5 13.♖ab1!

This position was gradually gaining a favourable reputation for White. That I had played it to defeat Andersen in the Danish Championship three months earlier wasn't known in the chess world, naturally, but the fact that Kortchnoi had beaten Ivkov with it at Hastings prior to that game had impressed everyone...

13...♟f8

13...exd4 14.♟xd4 ♟c5 15.b4 axb3 16.axb3 ♙b4 17.♙f4! ♙f8? 18.♙d2 ♙b6 19.♙e3 ♙b4? 20.♙d2! ♙b6 21.b4 ♟cxe4 22.♟xe4 ♟xe4 23.♙d3 with a decisive advantage.

I suppose Perez' next move was a reaction to that game and is an attempt to improve the position without playing ...exd4.



14.dxe5!?

It is not possible to claim this is stronger than 14.b4. Both moves are very

good. My choice was to some degree influenced by psychological considerations: Perez is a typical attacking player and could have been planning the following sacrifice, which is not altogether sound but definitely dangerous: 14.b4 axb3 15.axb3 exd4 16.♟xd4 ♙h5 17.g4 ♙xg4!?

The text move 14.dxe5 is noteworthy because in similar positions in the King's Indian it is often weak. Here it is difficult for Black to exploit the hole on d4, while White gains several positional advantages: more space, the d-file and the b6- and d6-squares. Besides which, the black pieces get in each other's way; for instance, which piece is going to e6? The bishop or the knight?

14...dxe5 15.c5 ♟6d7

This blocks in the bishop but protects the e5-pawn; also it defends b6 and puts pressure on the c5-pawn.

It is difficult to find a better move. For example, 15...♙e6 is weak because of 16.♟xe5 ♟xe4 (here the loss of a pawn can be avoided by 16...♙xa2 but after 17.♟xa2 ♜xe5 White is clearly better) 17.♟xc6!. Nor is the following variation satisfactory for Black: 15...♙b4 16.b3 axb3 17.axb3 ♟8d7 18.♖a1! ♖a3 19.♖xa3 ♙xa3 20.♟a4.

16.b4 axb3 17.axb3 ♟e6



18.♖b2!!

The two exclamation marks are by Kmoch in *Chess Review*, while Euwe in *Chess Archives* considered that the move was somewhat dubious. Long, careful study has led me to the same conclusion as Kmoch. I am proud of this move and judge it to be much better than 18.b4 as recommended by the Dutch grandmaster. Besides, I also consider 18.♘a4 to be much better than 18.b4.

According to *Chess Archives*, after 18.♞b2 Black has the possibility of a draw with 18...♙d4, which is not the case. White doesn't play 19.♙xd4 exd4 20.♙xd4 (not 20.♞a2 ♞xc5 21.♞xa8 dxe3) 20...♙xd4 21.♞xd4 ♞xc5, nor 19.♙xd4 exd4 20.♞a2 ♞xc3 21.♞xc3 dxc3 22.♞xa8 ♙xc5 but 19.♙xd4 exd4 20.b4 dxc3 21.bxa5 cxb2. At this point, *Chess Archives* suggest that White's position is not easy, for example 22.♙d4 ♙xd4 23.♞xd4 ♞xa5 24.♞xb2 ♙xc5. However, White has a better move: 22.♙d2!, and the win should not be too difficult.

Once the objections to the text move have been dealt with, the advantages of 18.♞b2 can be summarised as follows:

1) it leads to a direct threat, with a gain of tempo;

2) it prepares for a doubling of rooks on the d-file; for example, 18...♞c7 19.♘a4, with the idea of 20.♞c4 and 21.♞bd2;

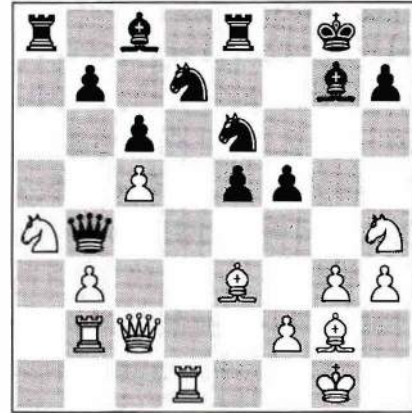
3) it is important to retain the c-pawn to support the knight on a4. That is to say, with the c-pawn solidly protected and the a-file blocked, White can concentrate his forces on exploiting the open d-file. Then White will be able to strengthen his position with ♙d2 and ♙c4, ♙f1 and ♙c4, or h3-h4 and ♙h3. I think the double exclamation marks are fully justified. Black's position is very difficult.

18...♞b4? 19.♘a4 f5?

A desperate move. Patient defence of poor positions is not Perez's style.

The threat was 20.♙d2 ♞b5 21.♙f1. Black had nothing better than 19...♞a5 20.♞a2 ♞c7 to which I could have replied 21.b4, or 21.♞c3 ♙f8 22.♞ad2 as the exchange sacrifice 22...♞xa4 is insufficient.

20.exf5 gxf5 21.♙h4!



Simple enough. As well as the threat to the f5-pawn, there is 22.♙d2, as 22...♞e4 is no longer possible with White's last move controlling the square. White wins a pawn, retains the better position and lines up attacking chances against the enemy king.

21...♙d4 22.♙xd4 exd4 23.♙xf5 ♙f6

Of course, Black could try 23...d3 but the continuation 24.♞d2 ♞xa4 25.♞g5 ♞c3 26.♞xg7+ would leave him with a lost ending.

24.♞c1 ♞xa4 25.bxa4 ♞xc5 26.♞f4 d3 27.♙d6 ♞f8 28.♙e4 ♙xb2

Time trouble added to Black's desperate plight. Given his advantage of the exchange and a pawn, White has a number of different ways to win.

29.♞g4+ ♙h8? 30.♙xc5 ♙xc5 31.♞b4 1-0

Black's c8-bishop hasn't made a single move!

(Perez is a very common Spanish name but my opponent in this game is the same as in Game 23. Perez lived in Spain for many years, where he was born; afterwards he became a Cuban national and in the Interzonal of 1964 he was the representative of the Central American zone.)

Game 8

Sicilian Defence

Nikola Padevsky

Bent Larsen

Moscow Olympiad 1956

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 d6 6.♙c4 e6
7.0-0 ♙e7 8.♙b3 0-0 9.♙e3 ♙d7
10.♚e2**

Played with the intention of making the ...b7-b5 advance more difficult. After 10.f4 ♗xd4 11.♙xd4 ♙c6 12.♚e2 and against ♚e1, Black replies with ...b7-b5 (a typical variation is 12.♚e1 b5 13.♙d1 b4? 14.e5 bxc3? 15.exf6 ♙xf6 16.♚xc3 ♙xd4+ 17.♚xd4 and White has the better game).

10...a6!?

As far as I know there is nothing wrong with this move. However, theoreticians haven't paid much attention to it.

The known line is 10...♗xd4 11.♙xd4 ♙c6 12.♙ad1 ♚a5 13.f4 e5 14.fxe5 which probably gives White some advantage.

11.f4 b5 12.e5?



My comment in *Skakbladet*, November 1956: 'This advance doesn't lead anywhere, but Padevsky is the type of player who attacks from the start of the game. In the preliminary section he scored 5 out of 6, with draws against Botvinnik and Stahlberg, which had shocked me slightly; however, my fear of him was gradually fading.'

**12...dxe5 13.♗xc6 ♙xc6 14.fxe5
♘e4!**



White hadn't expected this. Black already has an excellent position. White's bishop on b3 is biting on granite, while his pawn on e5 will be weak.

15.♚f3?? ♚c7!

Perhaps White was hoping for 15...♗xc3? 16.♚xc6 ♗e2+ 17.♙h1 ♗d4 18.♙xd4 ♚xd4 19.♙xe6!?. Anyway, Padevsky omitted something as, after Black's elegant reply, he loses a pawn without compensation.

**16.♗xe4 ♚xe5 17.♚g3 ♚xe4
18.♙ae1?**

A mistake or a desperate attempt to confuse the issue? I studied the position carefully; my nervousness had passed and I decided to take the exchange.

**18...♙h4 19.♚h3 ♙xe1 20.♙xe1
♙ad8 21.c3 ♙d3**

In the event of 22.♙c2 ♙xe3, Black gets two rooks and a bishop for the queen.

22.♚g3 ♙fd8

Game 9

Repeating the offer. 23.♔c2 ♖xe3 24.♔xe4 ♖xg3 25.hxg3 ♔xe4 26.♖xe4 ♖d1+ and the rook ending is an easy win. But I was sure that Padevsky would prefer a losing middlegame to a losing endgame.

23.♖f2 ♖f5 24.♖e2 ♔d5

Giving back the exchange but I remain two pawns up, with a strong position. Black has an easy task. The opposite-coloured bishops don't make the win more difficult – quite the reverse.

Once again White cannot play 25.♔c2 because of 25...♖xe3.

**25.♔b6 ♔xb3 26.♔xd8 ♔c4
27.♔b6 ♖xc3 28.♖d2 ♖d3
29.♖a5 h6**

An escape square for the king and then the attack against g2 can begin. Precisely because the bishops are of opposite colours, White cannot do much to defend the threats on the light squares.

30.♖xa6 ♖d2 31.♖a7



Allows a nice finish but of course the position was hopeless anyway.

**31...♖xg2+! 32.♔xg2 ♔d5+
33.♖e4**

Otherwise it is mate in three.

**33...♔xe4+ 34.♔g1 ♖g5+
35.♔f2 ♖d2+ 36.♔g3 g5
37.♖b8+ ♔h7 38.♔f2 ♖d3+ 0-1**

This game must have shocked Padevsky. He lost his next two games and was then rested by his match captain.

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Svetozar Gligoric

Moscow Olympiad 1956

1.♘f3 c5 2.e4!?

An unusual move. I normally played my beloved Catalan, with 2.g3. But it is not a good idea to be too set in your ways. For example, O'Kelly had given me some problems in Gijón with a move that I had considered totally harmless.

**2...d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6
5.♘c3 a6**

This is what I had expected. If Gligoric had won the game, commentators would have written that the Yugoslav had been psychologically astute to have used one of my favourite lines against me.

6.♔e2 e5 7.♘b3 ♔e7 8.0-0 0-0

White plays a quiet line. Now comes the harmless move mentioned above.

9.♔g5!? ♘bd7

Two years later Petrosian won with 9...♔e6 against Averbakh, calmly allowing 10.♔xf6 ♔xf6 11.♘d5, and the move 9...♔e6 then became popular. I prefer 9...♘bd7 as I don't like ceding central squares to my opponent. If 9...♔e6 is correct, the only explanation is that b3 is rather a bad square for the white knight, which has a long way to travel to get to d5.

10.a4 b6?



Am I being too critical? I consider this move to be an error. Black ought to have played 10...h6 at once. Then 11.♔xf6 ♖xf6 12.♔c4 ♔e6 would be excellent for Black. So White should play 11.♔h4, but compared with the actual move played, this would have been much better for Gligoric.

After the game, everyone was wise to this little trick. In 1961 White got a bad position in the following two games.

Bisguier-Donner, Budapest: 11...b6 12.♔c4 ♔b7 13.♖e2 ♖c7 14.♗fd1 ♗fc8 15.♘d2 g5!? 16.♔g3 ♘c5 (16...♘f8 17.♔b3 ♘e6 18.♘f1 ♘d4 19.♖d3 d5! Bisguier-Ivkov, Bled) 17.f3 ♘e6 18.♔f2 ♘f4 19.♖f1 d5!.

The variation is probably not as clear as it appears, but people stopped playing it for White. Sleeping Beauty? Or dead?

11.♔c4 ♔b7 12.♖e2 ♖c7

The combination 12...♘xe4 favours White after the simple 13.♘xe4 ♔xg5 14.♘xd6 and 12...h6 13.♔xf6 ♖xf6 14.♗fd1 gives White control of the important d5-square.

13.♗fd1 ♗fc8 14.♘d2 h6

White's manoeuvring to occupy d5 is quite slow, but what can Black do about it? White wants to play ♔b3 and ♘c4, or ♘f1 followed by f2-f3 and ♘e3, and the opponent cannot remain passive.

One manoeuvre which is common in such positions doesn't work here: 14...♔c6 15.♔b3 ♖b7? 16.♘f3 with a clear advantage. 14...♘c5 is doubtful because of 15.♔xf6, conquering the d5-square.

So the text move is quite natural and we have already seen that Black gets good counterplay after 15.♔h4? g5. However, White's plan can proceed with the exchange of the bishop for the knight,

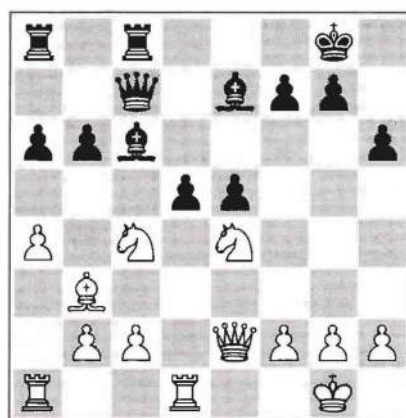
thus getting rid of a defender of the d5-square.

15.♔xf6 ♖xf6 16.♔b3 ♔c6 17.♘c4!

The kingside knight begins to play. The twin threats are 18.♘e3 and 18.a5. Since, in the latter case, Black would lose the exchange after 18...b7-b5 19.♘b6, Black would be left with a weak a-pawn. Against 17...b5 White can play 18.♘e3, or 18.axb5 axb5 19.♗xa8 ♗xa8 20.♘e3 and the e-pawn is indirectly defended: 20...♘xe4? 21.♘cd5 ♖b7 22.♘f5, or 21...♖d7 22.♘xf6+ ♖xf6 23.♘d5 ♖h4 24.g3.

Gligoric tries to cut the Gordian knot. It is undoubtedly the best solution.

17...♘xe4! 18.♘xe4 d5



It might appear that Black has equalised. Certainly, after 19.♘cd2 dxe4 20.♘xe4 ♖b7, his position is excellent, and if 19.♘xb6? ♖xb6 20.♔xd5 ♔xd5 21.♗xd5 ♖xb2.

19.a5!

A double gain of tempo. White sets up a threat to open the a-file and at the same time forces his opponent to take the knight on c4, which allows him to recapture with a threat against f7. We should notice that both 19...b5? 20.♘b6 and 19...bxa5 20.♘xa5 lose the exchange.

19...dxc4 20.♖xc4 ♗f8

20...♙e8 21.♖xc7 ♜xc7 22.axb6 and 20...♙f8 21.axb6 show that the a-pawn is very active.

But why can't Black play 20...♙xe4 21.♖xe4 b5 instead? Because the reply would be 22.♖f5!. For example: 22...♙f6? 23.♞d7 or 22...♙d6 23.♞d3 with great difficulties. The presence of opposite-coloured bishops only serves to increase the pressure against f7.

21.axb6 ♖xb6 22.♞d6 ♙b5

The only defence, and very nice. Black rids himself of his weak a-pawn.

23.♞xb5 axb5 24.♖d5 ♜xa1 25.♞xa1 ♙c5?

Gligoric has defended very well for a long time but now he stumbles. He should have played 24...♖c5.

Black has got rid of the weak d-pawn and the problem of the a-pawn has also been resolved. But the *transformation of advantages* is a well-known phenomenon in chess. Now White has pressure against f7 and possesses the following advantages: open a-file, pawn majority on the queenside and the slight weakness of Black's e- and g-pawns.

In one of his books, Euwe analysed this position very deeply. He didn't manage to find a clear winning line for White against 25...♖c5, but nor did he establish a solid drawing line for Black.

I believe Black can hold in the following variation: 25...♖c5 26.♖xc5 ♙xc5 27.♞a5 ♜b8 28.♙f1 ♙e7 29.♙d5 b4 30.♙e2 ♙f8 31.g4 g6 32.♙d3 ♜c8 33.c4 bxc3 34.bxc3 f5 35.gxf5 gxf5 36.♞a7 e4+ 37.♙c2. White still has some chances but it is difficult to advance the c-pawn and Black is in a position to defend everything.

I would probably have played 26.♖f3 or 26.♖b7. Against the latter Euwe thought the best defence was 26...♙d8!

27.♞a8 ♖d4 28.c3 ♖d2 29.g3 ♖xb2 30.♙xf7+ ♙h8 31.♖d5 ♙e7 32.♞xf8+ ♙xf8 33.♖xe5. White has won a pawn and his opponent must be on the look-out for a sudden mating attack on the light squares. White still has at least a few chances of pulling off a win.



26.♞a8! ♙xf2+??

The best defence was 26...♞xa8 27.♖xa8+ ♙f8 28.♖d5 ♖a7! 29.h4 b4 30.♖xe5 ♖e7 31.♖f5 ♖f6 32.♖d5 though White could still win, with a pawn advantage on the queenside combined with threats against the king. However, it is difficult to demonstrate a convincing line leading to victory.

Another possibility is 26...♖c7, but after 27.♞xf8+ Black cannot recapture with the bishop because he would lose his b-pawn. So his king has to go for a walk – always a dangerous thing to do.

One of Euwe's variations goes as follows: 27...♙xf8 28.♖a8+ ♙e7 29.♖g8 ♙f6 30.♖e8 b4 31.♙xf7 ♙xf2+ 32.♙f1! ♙d4 33.♖e6+ ♙g5 34.♖g6+ ♙f4 35.g3+ and Black cannot avoid mate. However, there is a strong alternative in this line, 31...♖e7!, which forces an exchange of queens and, as a result, the game is drawn.

After 28...♔e7, I consider the correct continuation to be 29.♚e4!. It is true that this move allows the black king to return to f8 but the white queen eyeing the h7 square, this does not guarantee safety. One of White's ideas is to play c2-c3 in anticipation of ...b5-b4. If the b-pawn becomes fixed on b5, it would become a serious weakness. After 29...b4 there might follow 30.♚f5 ♔f8 31.♙xf7! ♚xf7 32.♚c8+, while if 29...♔f8 White cannot play 30.h4 because of 30...g6 31.h5 ♚d7!! and Black can force a draw. For example, 32.c3 ♚f5 or 32.hxg6 ♚d1+ 33.♔h2 ♚h5+. The best move against 29...♔f8 is 30.♚f5! ♔g8 31.h4 b4 32.♙d5. The idea is h4-h5 followed by ♙e4, obliging the black king to take a walk.

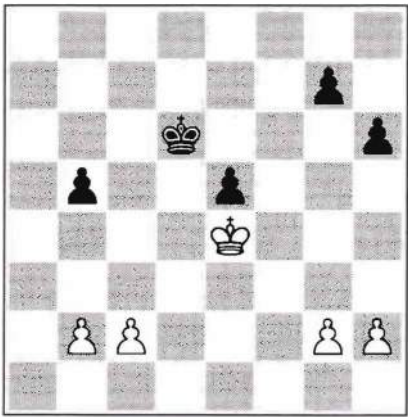
One amusing variation after 29.♚e4 ♔f8 30.♚f5 is 30...g6 31.♚f6 h5 32.♚h8+ ♔e7 33.♚g8 (33.c3 is also strong) 33...♔f6 34.♚e8 b4 35.♙xf7!, which is the attacking plan indicated by Euwe, but with the difference that 35...♚e7 doesn't save Black because White has 36.♙xg6! winning.

These variations give an impression of White's possibilities but I cannot claim to have found a definitive winning line. We return to the game; after 26...♙xf2+?? Black is lost.

27.♔f1 ♚f6

27...♙xa8 28.♚xa8+ ♔h7 29.♙xf7 and Black has a hopeless position. There now follows a simplification.

28.♚xf7+! ♚xf7 29.♙xf7+ ♔xf7
30.♙xf8+ ♔xf8 31.♔xf2 ♔e7
32.♔e3 ♔d6 33.♔e4



This ending is won for White because he can create a distant passed pawn. If everything proceeds normally, the white c-pawn will advance and Black will be obliged to capture it. This entails the surrender of the e-pawn, after which White will have his king on e5 while Black's will be on the c-file. The white monarch will bear down on his opponent's kingside pawns and secure victory. This is the normal course of events which can be illustrated as follows: 33...♔e6 34.c3 ♔d6 35.b3 ♔e6 36.h4 h5 37.c4 bxc4 38.bxc4 ♔d6

Hastings 1956/57											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
1	Gligoric,Svetozar	*	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	½
2	Larsen,Bent	½	*	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	1
3	Olafsson,Fridrik	0	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1
4	O'Kelly de Galway,Alberic	0	½	½	*	1	½	1	1	½	1
5	Clarke,Peter	½	½	½	0	*	½	1	½	½	½
6	Szabo,Laszlo	½	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1
7	Toran Albero,Roman	½	0	½	0	0	½	*	1	½	½
8	Horseman,Derek	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	*	1	1
9	Penrose,Jonathan	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	½
10	Alexander,Conel Hugh O'Donel	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	*

39.g3 g6 (39...♙e6 40.c5) 40.c5+ ♙xc5 41.♙xe5 and 42.♙f6.

However, Gligoric does his best to muddy the waters.

33...b4 34.c3 b3 35.c4 g6 36.g4

Of course, 36.h3 was also very good, planning to answer ...g6-g5 with g2-g4, and ...h6-h5 with h3-h4.

36...h5 37.gxh5 gxh5 38.h4

Black is in zugzwang. After 38...♙c5 39.♙xe5 ♙xc4 40.♙e4 White wins because he has the horizontal opposition. He will capture the b-pawn and then head off to take the black h-pawn. This is one reason White didn't allow his opponent to advance the h-pawn.

By the same token, if the black king counterattacks on the kingside, it is better for the white h-pawn not to have advanced too far forward. With the pawn on h3 and the black pawn on h4, Black would draw.

**38...♙c6!? 39.♙xe5 ♙c5
40.♙f5! ♙d4 41.♙f4 ♙c5
42.♙e5 ♙xc4 43.♙e4**

White has manoeuvred in order to lose a tempo and reach this position with his opponent to play. Indeed, if on move 40 he had chosen to play 40.♙e4?? (instead of 40.♙f5!), then after 40...♙xc4 41.♙e3 ♙d5 42.♙d3 ♙e5, the position would have been a draw. Now Black has to lose a move with his king.

**43...♙c5 44.♙d3 ♙d5 45.♙c3
♙e4**

Or 45...♙c5 46.♙xb3 ♙b5 47.♙c3 ♙c5 48.♙d3 ♙b4 49.♙e4.

46.♙xb3 ♙f5 47.♙c3 1-0

The black pawn can only reach h3.

I still consider this one of my most beautiful games. By the way, it was my only win against a grandmaster at that Olympiad; with the others I drew.

(It is true that I beat Robatsch – in only 20 moves! – but he wasn't awarded the grandmaster title for another four years. Padevsky also got the title later.)

Game 10

Sicilian Defence

Hugh Alexander

Bent Larsen

Hastings 1956/57

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 a6**

At that time I was in the process of giving up the Najdorf Variation, which I had played a lot over many years. So much theory on it had been published that practically every master knew a good line for White and could flash out a series of moves without using much time on the clock. I had also found some improvements for White and I was afraid that others would find them and use them against me.

I had become a devotee of the Najdorf during the World Junior Championship held in Birmingham in 1951. Afterwards I began to go in for openings such as 1.c4 e5 2.d3 ♗f6 3.a3!?, hoping for 3...d5 4.cxd5 ♗xd5 5.♗f3 ♗c6 6.e4 and thus transposing into my beloved variation but with an extra tempo. Of course, this didn't work: no masters ever played 3...d5.

6.♙g5 e6 7.f4 ♙d7

A popular line at that time, but later it disappeared. As in similar cases, it is hard to explain why.

8.e5 gives White nothing because of 8...dxe5 9.fxe5 ♙a5.

**8.♙f3 ♗c6 9.0-0-0 ♗xd4
10.♖xd4 ♙c6 11.f5**

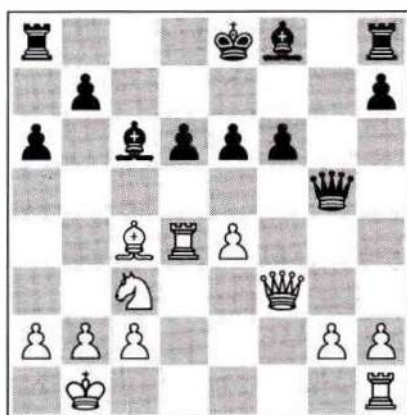
At the students' tournament held six months later, Tal played 11.♙e2 ♙e7

12.♖hd1 ♔a5 13.♕e3 h6 14.♙h4 e5
15.fxe5 dxe5 16.♞4d3 against me and
won the game, which probably led to
the waning popularity of 7...♙d7.
However, there is nothing wrong with
Black's position.

11...♖a5 12.♙xf6 gxf6 13.fxe6

Later 13.♙e2 was recommended, to
which Black should reply 13...0-0-0.

13...♖g5+ 14.♙b1 fxe6 15.♙c4



15...♕e5!

It is not easy to drive the queen away
from its dominant position, and it plays
the principal role in what follows.

16.♖hd1 0-0-0 17.♘e2 f5!?

Looks risky but Black wants a diagonal
for his dark-squared bishop, and subse-
quent analysis has not uncovered any
refutation of this move.

18.♕b3 ♞e8!

18...fxe4 19.♙xe6+ and White secures
control of the d5-square and a large po-
sitional advantage.

19.♘c3?

Now White ought to play 19.exf5 or
19.♙xa6, though Black has an adequate
defence: 19...bxa6 20.♞c4 ♔d7
21.♞xc6 ♔xc6 22.♖a4+ ♔c7
23.♖xe8 ♖xb2+! 24.♙xb2 ♙g7+
with a level endgame. All this had been
played some months before in a game
at the Bognor Regis tournament be-
tween Barden and Andersen.

Alexander is planning a sacrifice but
there is no time to pull it off.

19...fxe4 20.♙xa6 d5!

A nice defence. Of course 20...bxa6? is
bad because of 21.♞c4. Now Black
dominates the centre and the white at-
tack is starting to ebb away.

21.♙b5

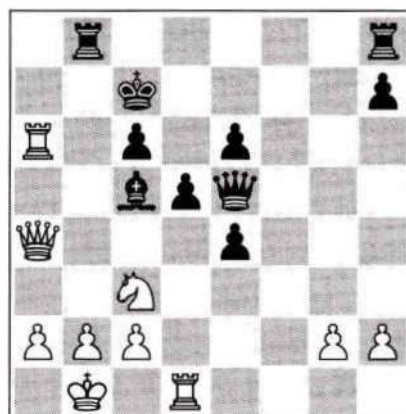
A good reply to 21.♙b5 is 21...♙b8!.

**21...♙c5 22.♞a4 ♙c7 23.♙xc6
bxc6 24.♞a6**

The strong black centre makes it impos-
sible for the rook to retreat, so it made
sense for him to try to attack instead.
White has to find a square for his
queen.

Black is ready to start a counterattack
since, although he hasn't finished de-
veloping, his queen and bishop are very
strong.

24...♞b8 25.♖a4



25...♞xb2+!

Not 25...♖xc3?? 26.♖xc6+ ♔d8
27.♞xd5+! when White draws by per-
petual check.

26.♙xb2 ♞b8+ 27.♙c1

After 27.♖b3 ♙d4! 28.♖xb8+ ♙xb8
29.♞a3 c5 White cannot relieve the pin.

**27...♙e3+ 28.♞d2 ♖xc3
29.♞a7+**

Forces the exchange of queens to pre-
vent mate; however, the endgame is be-
yond salvation.

29...♙xa7 30.♖xa7+ ♜b7 31.♖d4

The only move to stop mate with 31...♖a1+.

31...♖xd4 32.♜xd4 ♔d6 33.♜d2 c5 34.g4 e3

The centre pawns win automatically.

35.♜g2 d4 36.g5 ♜f7 37.♔d1 e5 38.h4 e4 39.♔e2 ♜f3 40.h5 c4

0-1

The centre pawns give mate!

The finish might have come about as follows: 41.g6 d3+ 42.cxd3 cxd3+ 43.♔e1 e2 44.♜g1 e3 45.g7 ♜f2 46.g8♖ d2 mate.

This would have been a most appropriate conclusion to a game in which Black ran certain risks in order to occupy the centre.



Leaving for Dallas, 1957.

Chapter 5

Ups and Downs

What happens next with the young grandmaster? He goes on to win one tournament after another? No, that didn't happen, which shouldn't be too surprising. First of all he is tired and needs rest. Secondly he has the feeling that he still hasn't met the really tough guys yet; he wants to learn to beat them and is not content with making draws. So to a certain degree he treats international tournaments as training, consequently his results suffer.

Apart from the student tournament in Reykjavik in July – in which I performed very badly – my next tournament was the Zonal tournament held in Wageningen in the Netherlands in October/November. It was strong and I just managed to share third place with Donner, whom I beat in the tie-break and thus I qualified for the Interzonal. Szabo played an excellent tournament and won convincingly. Olafsson was runner-up. Amongst the other competitors were big names such as Uhlmann, Trifunovic, Stahlberg and Ivkov, so my result wasn't bad. But my games weren't brilliant; I often got into trouble, although I managed to squeak through a number of times thanks to my reserves of energy and resourcefulness. However, I played one or two really good games; I recall with some satisfaction my rook sacrifice against Troianescu (Game 11).



At Kastrup Airport (Copenhagen) before the Students' World Championship in Reykjavik. Left to right: Mikhail Tal, Bent Larsen, Miroslav Filip and Boris Spassky.

Immediately after I travelled to Dallas, Texas, to take part in an eight-player double-cycle all-play-all. Reshevsky and Gligoric were the joint winners. Szabo and I shared third place and were content to do so as we were both tired after Wageningen. The others were, in order, Yanofsky, Olafsson, Najdorf and Evans. I wasn't happy with my play as I drew two games I thought I ought to have won.

In March 1958 I finished first in the traditional annual tournament held in Mar del Plata, Argentina. The young American Lombardy came second. Panno, Sanguinetti and Eliskases shared third place; Rossetto and Pilnik were next.

Many people had warned me that European masters could get a nasty surprise when coming up against little-known Argentinian players but my result was convincing. My only loss, to Panno, was down to a risky opening experiment. I'm not sure that Game 12 was the best I played in the tournament but it has a special place in my memory. I was also very satisfied with my win against Stahlberg in a Denmark-Sweden 'derby' match (Game 13).

I was once again in good form and in the Interzonal held in Portoroz, Yugoslavia, felt confident of qualifying for the Candidates' Tournament. But it was the worst failure of my career: I only managed 16th place. I can't explain it.

Game 11

English Opening

Octavio Troianescu

Bent Larsen

Wageningen Zonal 1957

1.c4 f5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.g3 d6 4.♙g2

This gives a different flavour to the opening. As everyone knows, omitting 4.d4 eases Black's development, but the Romanian doctor wanted to avoid theoretical lines.

		Wageningen Zonal 1957																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Szabo, Laszlo	*	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	13.5
2	Olafsson, Fridrik	½	*	½	0	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	13.0
3	Donner, Jan Hein	0	½	*	1	0	½	0	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	12.5
4	Larsen, Bent	½	1	0	*	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	0	1	1	12.5
5	Uhlmann, Wolfgang	0	½	1	½	*	½	1	1	½	1	½	½	1	0	1	1	1	12.0
6	Trifunovic, Petar	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	11.0
7	Stahlberg, Gideon	½	½	1	0	0	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	11.0
8	Teschner, Rudolf	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	9.0
9	Ivkov, Borislav	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	1	8.0
10	Troianescu, Octavio	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	*	1	1	1	1	0	1	½	7.5
11	Niephaus, Walter	½	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	½	1	1	1	7.5
12	Kolarov, Atanas	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	1	0	½	*	½	0	½	½	½	7.0
13	Alster, Ladislav	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	1	½	*	½	1	0	1	7.0
14	Dückstein, Andreas	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	0	½	0	½	1	½	*	0	1	½	6.5
15	Clarke, Peter	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	½	½	1	0	½	0	1	*	½	½	5.5
16	Hanninen, Veikko	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	½	*	½	½	3.5
17	Orbaan, Constant	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	*	1	3.5
18	Lindblom, Per	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	2.5

After 4.♔g2 we have an English Opening, although it can have different names. For example, in the tournament book they called it the Dutch, which is also correct. Dutch people consider it an act of courtesy towards the tournament organisers every time someone pushes his f-pawn two squares forward. By the way, it is an especially fine tournament book, though not too well known. The book met with bad luck on two counts: firstly, its publication was considerably delayed as its editors were busy publishing the memoirs of Queen Wilhelmina; and secondly, part of the edition was destroyed in a fire. Naturally such incidents only serve to make those of us fortunate enough to possess a copy all the happier to do so.

4...e5 5.d3 ♔e7

Again, something out of the ordinary. Most modern masters would have plumped for 5...g6. If I had done that and followed up with ...♘c6, I would probably have called the opening a Reversed Sicilian, as the position is typical of the Closed Sicilian.

6.0-0 0-0 7.b3 c5!?

If White had played 7.♘c3, I would certainly not have weakened the d5-square. In fact, I dislike such holes. But after White's tame move, I felt ...c7-c5 to be playable.

8.♘c3 ♘c6 9.♔g5 ♔e6 10.♘e1

Black now opts to preserve his f6-knight so as to be able to fight for control of the d5-square.

A very interesting alternative is 10.♔xf6 ♔xf6 11.♘e1 since the reply 11...e4 looks rather suspect.

10...♘g4 11.♔xe7 ♚xe7 12.♘d5 ♚d7

It is hard to say if 12...♚f7 is better but psychologically the text move has cer-

tain advantages. Playing the queen to f7 would force White to choose the most accurate plan. After 13.f4 or 13.f3 ♘f6 14.♘xf6+ ♚xf6 15.f4, White would be at least equal.

After seeing the game, you might overlook that Black has attacking ambitions on the queenside. One of the reasons for choosing 12...♚d7 was to keep the c6-knight defended and prepare ♖ab8 and ...b7-b5.



13.♘c2?

White makes a weak move which allows Black to mount a direct kingside attack.

13...f4

Denying the e3-square to the knights. A Petrosian would perhaps have played 14.♘e1!, but it is hard owning up to errors.

14.♚d2 ♚f7

Protecting the f4-pawn and preventing 15.f3, although that would have left the white bishop with a sad role after that anyway: 15.f3?? ♘xh2! 16.♔xh2 ♚h5+ 17.♔g1 fxg3 18.♖fd1 ♚h2+ 19.♔f1 ♔h3.

15.h3 ♘f6 16.♘xf6+

After White's prudent play 16.gxf4 would have come as a surprise. Of course, it is not a strong move: 16...♔xd5 17.cxd5 ♘xd5 18.fxe5 (18.♔xd5 ♚xd5 19.♘e3 ♚e6 20.f5

♖h6 21.♔h2 ♜xf5) 18...♟f4 with a powerful attack.

16...♜xf6 17.♔h2 ♖h6 18.♗d1?

The threat was ...fxg3+ but there were better defences such as 18.♞ad1, or 18.♗e1, in order to be able to reply to 18...♞f6 with 19.♞h1. White's position is dismal anyway. The text move prepares e2-e3 but this can easily be prevented.

18...♙g4! 19.♗e1

Against 19.♟e1 my plan was to play 19...fxg3+ 20.fxg3 ♜xf1 21.♙xf1 ♞f8 22.♟f3 ♙xf3 23.exf3 ♟d4 with a positionally won game. 19.f3 fxg3+ 20.♔xg3 ♙e6 is no better. Finally, 19.♞h1 is refuted by 19...fxg3+ 20.fxg3 ♞f2.

19...♞f5 20.h4

After 20.♞h1 ♞h5 (but not 20...♞af8? 21.♔g1 ♙xe2 22.♙d5+ ♔h8 23.♗xe2 fxg3 24.f3, nor 20...fxg3+ 21.fxg3 ♞af8 22.♔g1 ♙xe2 23.♗xe2 ♞f2 24.♞f1! ♞xe2 25.♙d5+ ♞f7 26.♙xf7+ ♔h8 27.♙h5) 21.h4 g5 Black gets a very promising attack.

20...♞h5 21.♙d5+

Against 21.♞h1 Black has 21...g5 or 21...♞f8.

21...♙e6 22.♙f3?!



Provoking a devastating reply, but White's position was untenable anyway after 22.♞h1 ♙xd5 23.cxd5 ♟d4

24.♟xd4 exd4, and if 22.♔g2 ♙xd5+ 23.cxd5 ♟e7 24.e4 fxe3 25.♟xe3 ♗g6 Black wins a pawn. Nor could White hold out much longer after 22.♙xe6+ ♗xe6 23.♔g2 ♞f8 threatening ...♞xh4.

22...♞xh4+! 23.gxh4 ♖xh4+ 24.♔g1 ♙h3

The defensive move 25.♙g2 is prevented, and Black means to finish things off by transferring the rook to the kingside. White's position is so tied up that his pieces cannot come to the rescue in time.

25.e3?

Best, though insufficient, is 25.♟e3 fxe3 26.fxe3 ♗g5+.

Other moves also lose quickly, for example 25.♙h1 ♞f8 26.f3 ♗g5+ 27.♔h2 ♞f6 28.♞g1 ♖h4; 25.♗d2 ♞f8 26.♟e1 ♞f6 (26...♟d4 27.♙g2 f3! is also possible and is what I had planned. This wins as well, albeit a bit slower) 27.♟g2 ♞g6.

25...♞f8 26.♗e2

Or 26.exf4 ♞xf4 27.♙d5+ ♔f8 28.♟e3 ♗g5+ 29.♙g2 ♟d4 30.f3 ♟c2.

26...♞f6 27.♙d5+ ♔f8

0-1

Game 12

Dutch Defence

Erich Eliskases

Bent Larsen

Mar del Plata 1958

My comments from *Skakbladet*, February 1959, under the headline:

'Violent Attack... of Cold'

'Chess masters don't speak as much of sore behinds as cyclists would on the last lap of a six-day race but, almost without exception, there are certain similarities when it comes to their eloquence on the theme of an unexpect-

edly bad start to a tournament. One of the commonest excuses is a “cold” – an indeterminate pretext which could mean anything, but often means nothing.

‘It is good to have such an explanation ready, which is why I hesitated before putting my game against Eliskases before the public. However, it is a good fight which is worth showing off and one with which I am well satisfied.

‘It was an exciting game in which both players came under attack: Eliskases from my moves on the chessboard, and me from a violent assault conducted by a tremendous army of microbes.

‘In March (which is Autumn in Argentina) the weather in Mar del Plata is like the warmest summer day in Denmark. But one day it was unexpectedly cold and rainy and I wasn’t dressed for it. When I faced Eliskases the next day, I coughed incessantly and needed a large supply of handkerchiefs in my pocket.’

1.d4 f5

Are you familiar with Eliskases? Until 1939 he was Austria’s candidate for the

World Championship; now he is a strong and solid grandmaster, but somewhat passive in style and without the ambition and attacking drive of his youth. Against such players I like to start with the Dutch Defence because the cautious way they tend to play makes it possible to whip up a kingside attack.

2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.g3 e6 4.♙g2 ♙e7
5.c4 0-0 6.0-0 d6 7.b3 ♚e8
8.♙b2 a5 9.a3 ♘bd7 10.♘bd2

As expected, White opts for a solid, but not very aggressive, set-up. Eliskases told me later that he had played it many times and after the usual 9...♚h5 replied with 10.e3 and then ♘fd2. The purpose of all this is to stop Black’s attack before it starts. White plays in the centre and on the queenside.

In Eliskases’ opinion the move played is very subtle, though it didn’t appear that clear to me when I played it. The fact that I took half an hour over it only showed how distressed I was feeling.

10...♚h5 11.♖e1

		Mar del Plata 1958																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Larsen, Bent	*	½	0	1	1	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	12.0
2	Lombardy, William	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	11.0
3	Panno, Oscar	1	½	*	½	½	0	1	0	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	½	9.5
4	Sanguineti, Raul	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	0	½	1	9.5
5	Eliskases, Erich	0	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	0	1	½	1	9.5
6	Pilnik, Herman	0	½	1	½	0	*	½	½	½	1	0	½	1	1	1	1	9.0
7	Emma, Jaime	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	8.0
8	Rossetto, Hector	0	0	1	½	½	½	½	*	½	0	½	½	1	1	1	0	7.5
9	Foguelman, Alberto	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	1	0	1	1	7.0
10	Reinhardt, Enrique	½	0	½	0	0	0	0	1	0	*	1	0	1	1	1	1	7.0
11	Letelier Martner, René	0	0	0	½	0	1	½	½	½	0	*	1	0	1	½	1	6.5
12	Casas, Fernando	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	1	0	*	1	½	½	1	6.5
13	Sumar, Julio	½	0	½	0	1	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	*	½	½	½	5.0
14	Olivera, Alfredo	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	0	1	0	0	½	½	*	½	½	4.5
15	Behrensén, Jorge	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	4.0
16	Pelikan, Jorge	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	*	3.5

Eliskases didn't like 11.e3 because of the reply 11...g5 and he wasn't sure where to put his f3-knight.

Now the reply to 11...g5 is 12.♘f1. I was incapable of appreciating these cautious – overly cautious – manoeuvres. I blew my nose and played quickly.

11...♘e4 12.e3 ♘df6 13.♗xe4 fxe4
Here I took half an hour over one move. Pilnik told me later that he was sure I would capture with the pawn because I would have to follow my aggressive temperament. Against 13...♗xe4 White would have been able to simplify with 14.♗d2.

14.♗d2 ♖g6 15.f3

The earlier speculations turn out to have been unnecessary. It hadn't even occurred to Eliskases to play to win the pawn as 15.♖c2 d5 16.cxd5 exd5 17.♖xc7 ♖f7 would have given me excellent attacking prospects.

15...exf3 16.♗xf3 ♗g4 17.e4 e5!



Now it was Eliskases' turn to think for a long time. Meanwhile I walked and coughed, but with the encouraging feeling of having a good game.

The surprising move which follows is aimed at protecting f2 and h2 with ♖a2.

18.♖c3

Of course, White cannot win a pawn with 18.dxe5? dxe5 19.♖xe5?

(19.♗xe5? ♖b6+ 20.♖d4 ♖c5) 19...♖xf3, nor is 18.d5 pleasant as closing the centre lends weight to Black's kingside attack; a good reply would be 18...♖g5.

18...♖g5 19.♗xg5 ♖xg5 20.♖a2 ♖h6 21.♖f3?

This continuation is in line with the chosen plan.

White didn't want to weaken his pawns. However, 21.h3 was better. For example, 21...exd4 22.♖xd4 ♗e5 23.♖xe5 dxe5 24.♖d5+ and White seems to be able to defend.

21...exd4 22.♖xd4 ♗e5 23.♖xe5 dxe5 24.♖d3 ♖e6 25.a4 ♖ad8

Black's advantage is obvious. His bishop is better, his rooks are on open files and the d4-square is a permanent weakness for White. Eliskases hopes to save himself in the endgame, and his hopes are increased by my time trouble. In what follows I do make several imprecise moves but I manage to maintain enough of an advantage until the time control.

On the other hand, I was coughing less now and my nose was running more slowly. I had to play quickly, and I didn't have the time to be ill.

26.♖e3 ♖xe3+ 27.♖xe3 ♖h3!

Threatening 28...♖d1+.

28.♖a1 ♖d2 29.♖b1 h5?

A much better move was 29...♖f6 preparing ...♗f8, ...♗e7 (perhaps on its way to b5!) and creating the possibility of ...♖b6.

30.♖xh5! ♖g2+ 31.♗h1 ♖ff2 32.♖f3 ♖xh2+ 33.♗g1 g5?

33...♗f8! was stronger.

34.♖be1 ♖b2 35.♖1e2 ♖hxe2 36.♖xe2 ♖e6 37.♗f1 ♗f8 38.♗e1 ♗e7 39.♗d1 ♗d6

**40.♔c1 ♖a2 41.♔b1 ♖d2 42.♔c1
♖d4**



The adjourned position.

During the analysis, both players came to the conclusion that Black was winning, which was no surprise. The black pieces are much more active than White's.

**43.♔c2 ♔c5 44.♔c3 c6 45.♙f3
♖d8 46.♙e2 ♖h8 47.♙f3 ♖h3
48.♙g2 ♖h2 49.♙f3 ♙f7!**

It is curious that the exchange of bishops (Black's is much stronger than White's) forms part of the winning process. If White prevents this exchange with g3-g4, the black bishop returns to e6 and White cannot defend the g4-pawn. Also after 50.♙e2 ♙h5 51.♙d3 ♖f2, followed by ...♙f3 and ...g5-g4, the pawn falls.

50.♙g4 ♙h5 51.♙c8

The rook ending cannot be held. For example, 51.♙xh5 ♖xh5 52.♖f3 ♖h3 53.♖d3 g4 54.♖e3 ♖h2 55.♖e1 ♖g2 56.♖e3 b6 57.♖d3 ♖e2.

51...♙e2

Now 51...b6 is weak owing to 52.g4.

52.♙xb7 ♙g4

Locking in the white bishop. However, just as easy was 52...g4 53.♙c8 ♖g2 54.♙d7 ♙d1, continuing with 55...♖c2+ 56.♔d

53.♖d3 ♖g2! 54.♙xc6

Desperation. After 54.♖e3 the quickest is 54...♙d1, with the same idea as in the preceding commentary. The rest of the game doesn't pose too many difficulties.

**54...♙xc6 55.b4 axb4+ 56.♙xb4
♖b2+ 57.♔c3 ♖e2 58.a5 ♖xe4
59.a6 ♙e6 60.♔b2 ♖xc4 61.♖a3
♖b4+ 62.♔c3 ♖b8 63.a7 ♖a8
64.♖a6+ ♔d5 65.♔b4 ♙d7
66.♖a1 e4 67.♔c3 ♙b5 68.♔d2
♔d4 69.♖a3 g4 70.♖b3 ♙a6
71.♖b4+ ♙c4 72.♖a4 e3+
73.♔c2 e2 74.♔d2 ♔c5 75.♖a1
♔b6 0-1**

So, after this, I was unable to use the cold as an excuse. But there are other possibilities. For example, "I was overloaded with work because of my studies", or "sore behind"!

Game 13

Grünfeld Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Gideon Stahlberg

Sweden-Denmark Match 1958

**1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 g6 3.♙g2 ♙g7
4.0-0 0-0 5.c4 c6**

A solid variation, which makes it difficult for White to exploit his extra tempo. Smyslov used this defence in his world title challenge against Botvinnik in 1957 when he led in the match and a draw was enough for him.

Here is the explanation for my next move. The point is that, after 6.d4 d5 7.b3, Stahlberg had played 7...b6 on several occasions. By transposing moves I forced him to play the variation 7...♘e4 which he wouldn't have opted for after 6.b3 d5 7.♙b2, where White omits d2-d4 and gets a more flexible pawn structure. The move 7...b6 is in no way stronger than 7...♘e4 but it was

all about getting my opponent to play something with which he was less familiar.

6.b3 ♖e4 7.d4 d5 8.♙b2 ♘d7

Not an error in this position, but it often is in similar ones. After the opening of the c-file, the right square for this knight is c6, but here this is not very important.

**9.cxd5 cxd5 10.♘c3 ♘xc3
11.♙xc3 b6 12.♖c1 ♙b7**



Here I thought for quite some time, mainly to convince myself that the position was worth playing. After rejecting 13.♙d2 ♘f6 and 13.♙d3 a5, I saw nothing better than what I played – except for 13.♘e5 and peace negotiations!

It is difficult to avoid such a loss of time, though of course it would have been preferable to have played it after two minutes' thought rather than twenty.

13.♖c2 ♖c8

Perhaps 13...a5 would have been more accurate. White would probably reply with 14.♙d2 ♘f6 15.♙b2.

14.♙d3 ♖e8

Black cannot exchange both pairs of rooks. After 14...♖c7 15.♖fc1 ♙b8 16.♙b4 is annoying.

**15.♖fc1 ♙f8 16.♙d2 ♖xc2
17.♖xc2 e6 18.♙f4 ♘f6**

Here I again used a lot of time, but this time to discover that I had a small advantage. The next move is very logical; however, it wouldn't be very attractive if the knight could be driven back, so 19.♘e5 ♘h5 20.♙d2 f6 21.♘c6 ♙a8 22.♘b4?? a5 or 22.♙b5 ♖c8 23.♘b4 is no good. The one hope of keeping the initiative here is based on manoeuvring the knight to h6.

19.♘e5 ♘h5

19...♙d6? 20.♙g5! ♙e7 21.♙f3 is most unsatisfactory for Black.

**20.♙d2 f6 21.♘g4 ♙e7
22.♘h6+ ♙xh6**

A difficult decision to make but Stahlberg made his mind up quickly. 'This move alone could get me into time trouble,' said the wise old Swedish GM later. Of course, he didn't want to surrender this important bishop, but if 22...♙h8, White has 23.h4! when he is ready to advance his g-pawn and win the vital central square e5. 23.g4 ♘g7 24.g5! might appear stronger but Black would reply 23...g5!.

Now both players only had half an hour for 18 moves.

**23.♙xh6 ♖c8 24.♖xc8+ ♙xc8
25.e4**

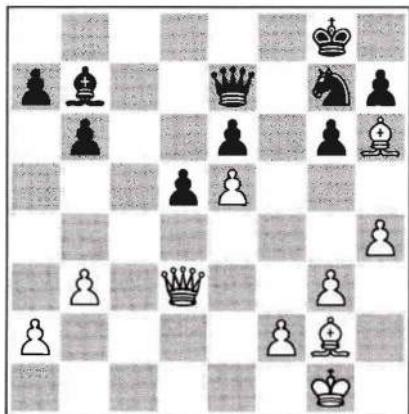
Opening up the position for the two bishops. After 25...dxe4 26.♙xe4 f5 27.♙f3 ♘f6 28.♙g5, the threat of the d4-d5 break saddles Black with serious problems. Black has to make sure his position opens no further, not only because of the strength of the two bishops, but in particular because of the vulnerability of his king.

25...♙b7 26.e5

After 26.exd5 ♙xd5 27.♙xd5 exd5, White still has some chances against the enemy king, but I couldn't find anything conclusive.

26...fxe5

If 26...f5? 27.♔c3 Black would be condemned to passivity and his knight would be very bad. White can continue with h2-h4 and, after some preparatory moves, ♕g5 would force the opposing queen to let mine occupy c7 or b4 (the knight would have to re-route to e8, but it wouldn't provide an adequate defence of the c7-square as it could be attacked with ♕b5).

27.dxe5 ♖g7 28.h4

Probably the best move. The king gets a flight square and, against 28...♖f5, the reply 29.♕g5 is very strong. Later, the h-pawn will serve as a battering ram on the kingside.

I was on the point of playing 28.g4 with a view to depriving the knight of its only good square, but the reply 28...♔h4 is very strong.

28...♔c7?

The move I had expected when I played 28.h4 and for which I had prepared a good reply. Black should have tried 28...♖f5 when his position is still defensible although the weak dark squares around his king would still be a big problem.

29.♔b5! d4

After thinking for more than 15 minutes, Black came up with a desperate throw. Now both sides were left with seven minutes for 11 moves. There are

two good alternatives, with a small but important difference: 29...♔c6 30.♔b4 ♔c5 31.♔a4; 29...a6 30.♔b4 ♔c5 31.♔xc5 bxc5 32.♕e3! winning a pawn as a6 falls after 32...d4 33.♕xb7. If the white queen cannot be driven away from the a3-f8 and a4-e8 diagonals, Black will be completely paralysed whilst his opponent prepares decisive operations.

30.♕xb7 ♔xb7 31.♔b4 ♔e4

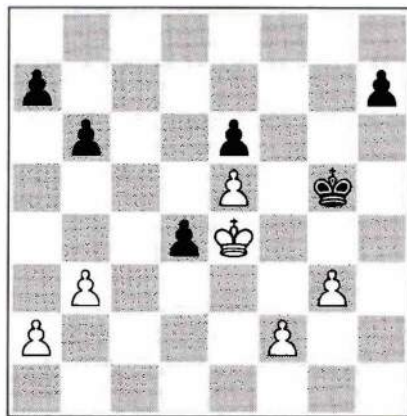
Here Stahlberg used up a great part of his remaining time in finding out what he had missed two moves previously: 31...♔d7 is answered by 32.♔d6!.

The queen ending after 31...♔c8 32.♕xg7 is very difficult to win for White, but 32.g4! is decisive, for example 32...♔c5 33.♔xc5 bxc5 34.♕c1, capturing the c-pawn.

32.♔d6 ♔e1+ 33.♔g2 ♔e4+ 34.♔h2

Not 34.f3? ♔c2+!

34...♔f5 35.♔d8+ ♔f8
36.♔xf8+ ♔xf8 37.♔g2 ♔f7
38.♕xg7 ♔xg7 39.♔f3 g5
40.hxg5 ♔g6 41.♔e4 ♔xg5 1-0



The game was adjourned but Stahlberg lowered his king before I sealed my move. Everything wins. I was thinking about the line 42.f3 h5 43.♔xd4 h4 44.gxh4+ ♔xh4 45.♔e3! ♔g5 46.f4+ ♔g4 47.♔e4.

Chapter 6

Experiments

After the catastrophe I suffered in the Interzonal, I was more ready than ever to experiment in order to learn more. I went to the 1959 Beverwijk tournament determined to play as sharply as possible and not worry about results. Naturally, they were not very good: I scored 4/9. However, I believed that the two games I won against Toran and Van den Berg were amongst the best I had ever played, and I still have this opinion about one of them (Game 14).

A few months later, at the Zürich tournament, I played in less experimental fashion but made some serious mistakes, or else I would have finished in the top three. Final scores were as follows: 1. Tal 11½, 2 Gligoric 11; 3-4 Fischer, Keres 10½, 5-6 Unzicker, Larsen 9½, 7 Barcza 8½, 8 Olafsson 8, etc. Even so, the opening I played in Game 15 has to be considered a very successful experiment.

In the autumn I was Fischer's second during the Candidates' tournament. A strange experience: I have never wanted a second myself and I think it must be annoying to have one.

After a long break without playing any competitive chess, in January 1960 I travelled to Beverwijk. In the first round I lost to Matanovic and in the last – held at the crack of dawn in the morning – versus Petrosian, but in between these two defeats I amassed 6½ points from 7 games and shared first place in the competition with Petrosian (see the crosstable on page 69). I played some very good games, and although nothing sensational happened in any of them, I've included two in the book (Games 16 and 17).

At the Nimzowitsch Memorial Tournament, which took place in Copenhagen, I finished fourth behind Petrosian, Geller and Stahlberg; a good result, in fact, considering the circumstances. I spent the days in Dyrehaven (a park located north of Copenhagen), where I completed a surveying course in a final, despairing effort

Hoogovens Beverwijk 1959												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Olafsson,Fridrik	*	1	1	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	7.5
2	Eliskases,Erich	0	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	5.5
3	Donner,Jan Hein	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	5.0
4	Barendregt,Johan	0	½	0	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	4.5
5	Toran Albero,Roman	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	½	1	4.5
6	Van Scheltinga,Theo	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	4.5
7	O'Kelly de Galway,Alberic	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	4.5
8	Larsen,Bent	0	0	½	0	1	½	½	*	1	½	4.0
9	Van den Berg,Carel	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	3.0
10	Langeweg,Kick	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	*	2.0

before giving up my engineering studies. Up early, work all day outdoors, play a tournament game in the evening, stay up late and sleep too little. No wonder I made a few blunders! All the more remarkable that I managed to win a game that I still regard as one of my best efforts – Game 18.

Game 14

Sicilian Defence

Carel van den Berg

Bent Larsen

Beverwijk 1959

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 g6 6.♙e2**

In that era there was a preference for the variation with 0-0-0 (6.♙e3 ♙g7 7.f3 followed by ♖d2). However, there is nothing wrong with the text move; it might even be said that, by playing it, White sets a problem for Black to create problems.

**6...♙g7 7.0-0 0-0 8.♗b3 ♗c6
9.♖h1**

An unusual move in this position but not bad.

Against 9.f4 many experts recommend 9...b5!?, which might be an argument for justifying the move 9.♖h1.

9...a5

The most popular line is 9...♙e6 10.f4 ♖c8!.

10.a4 ♙e6 11.f4 ♖b6 12.f5

Energetic, but 12.♗d5 was also possible. Later I discovered that, in the game Steiner-Podgorny, Karlovy Vary 1948, the players had reached the same position by transposition; Black got a good game after 12.♗d5 ♙xd5 13.exd5 ♗b4 14.♙f3 ♖a6 15.♖f2 ♖c4. It is all very interesting, of course, but if White is happy with a draw and plays 15.♙e2, what then?

12...♙xb3 13.cxb3

I had seen this position before. At the Munich Olympiad, three months before, Jens Enevoldsen played 13...♖d4

against Minev of Bulgaria. It may be OK for Black, although White got some active play in compensation for the devaluation of his pawns. His e2-bishop may become strong on c4.

But could this knowledge be of use to me? I needed to play as incisively as possible and I didn't find this queen exchange very attractive. I must have seen deeply into this position as, after my next move, my queen seems to be in trouble.

13...♖b4!! 14.♙e3 ♗d7

If 14...♗xe4? 15.♗d5!.

15.♙c4 ♗b6

Black continues with his plan of giving up the queen; otherwise, there was still an emergency exit: 15...♙xc3 16.bxc3 ♖xc3 17.♙h6 ♗de5, with an extra pawn and a solid position in return for the exchange (though White would have a slight advantage).

My opponent must accept the sacrifice; after, say, 16.♗d5 ♗xd5 17.exd5 ♗e5, Black is clearly better.

**16.♗a2 ♗xc4 17.♗xb4 ♗xe3
18.♖e2?**

Probably 18.♗xc6 was better. The ending after 18...♗xd1 19.♗xe7+ ♖h8 20.♖axd1 ♖fe8 21.f6 ♙xf6 22.♖xf6 ♖xe7 23.♖fxd6 ♖xe4 24.♖b6 is better for White. For which reason I would have played 18...bxc6 19.♖e2 ♗xf1 20.♖xf1 c5, with a good game.

18...♗xf1 19.♗xc6

Perhaps White's best plan was 19.♗d5, to which I would probably have replied 19...♗xh2 20.♖xh2 (if 20.f6 ♙xf6 21.♗xf6+ exf6 22.♖xh2 ♖fe8, win-

ning two pawns, together with the rook and knight, is worth more than the queen. Besides, the black king's position is remarkably solid) 20...♔e5+ 21.♖h1 gxf5 22.exf5 ♖h8 and Black has the better prospects, with attacking chances against the white king.

Now Black has a subtle move available to him which allows him to improve on the variation 19...bxc6 20.♖xf1 c5, which, as already mentioned, can also be played.

19...♘g3+! 20.hxg3 bxc6



Black has rook and bishop against queen, which doesn't normally amount to sufficient compensation. However, the position is not normal. Notice how little scope White has for active play. There are hardly any weak points in the black camp and White's very passive position will become progressively more difficult to maintain once the rooks have doubled on the b-file. White can mount a defence of the b-file pawns, but then an enemy rook will park itself on b4, attacking the e-pawn, and perhaps transfer to d4, with the idea of freeing b4 for the other rook. A break with ...c6-c5 and ...c5-c4 is also possible.

Black's 19th move has completely ruined the kingside pawn structure. On the other hand, it allowed White one

free move to organise a counterattack via the sacrifice of a pawn to secure a passed pawn.

21.b4! axb4 22.a5 c5 23.♖a2

White wants to play b2-b3 to rid himself of the obligation of defending the pawn.

But why isn't 23.♖a4 better? In the first instance, 23.♖a2 loses the g3-pawn. But let's analyse and see if the pawn could be saved: 23.♖a4 ♔e5 24.g4 c4! 25.♙xc4 ♖fc8 26.♙f1 ♔xb2 27.♖h2 b3 and the advance of the passed pawn, with threats against the white king, will soon decide the struggle.

If in the above line White plays 25.♖xb4 then 25...♖xa5 26.g3 c3 27.bxc3 ♖a1+ 28.♖g2 ♔xc3, followed by ♖fa8 with a deadly attack as White cannot defend his first, second and third ranks at the same time. A remarkable position.

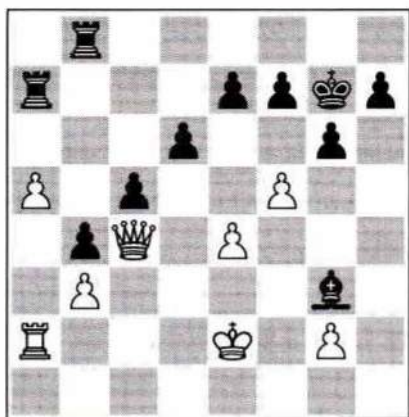
The primitive logic – a queen moves like a rook and bishop, so is equivalent to rook and bishop – is, in this case, more than justified. For example, the bishop and rook can attack the g3-pawn. What can be done to protect it with the queen? Let's give up on the 24.g4 advance and try 24.♖h2: then 24...♖g7 25.♖h3 h5 26.g4 (26.b3 g5 27.g4 h4 and the white king is in a mating net, such that any opening of a line would be fatal to it) 26...hxg4+ 27.♖xg4 gxf5+ 28.exf5 ♖f6 with major threats against the white king.

Now we begin to understand the logic behind Van den Berg's move.

23...♔e5 24.♙c4

If 24.g4? c4 Black will secure the decisive advantage of a passed pawn. For example, 25.♙xc4 ♖fc8 26.♙f1 ♖c2.

24...♔xg3 25.b3 ♖fb8 26.♖g1 ♖g7 27.♖f1 ♖a7 28.♖e2

**28...♙e5**

The alternative was 28...h5, with the idea of exploiting the extra pawn on the kingside. If White answers with 29.fxf6 fxf6 30.♖e6, Black plays his bishop to f6 and follows it up by doubling rooks on the a-file, which would force the retreat of the queen.

The plan which I chose was also excellent.

**29.♘f3 ♙d4 30.g4 g5 31.a6 ♙e5
32.♖a4 ♘f6 33.♙g2 ♖h8!**

Now White ought to continue with 34.♖e2, but shortage of time caused him to underestimate the strength of his opponent's action on the kingside and opt for a counterattack. After 34.♖e2, Black ought to prepare ...e7-e6, for example, with ...h7-h6 and ...♙g7. The immediate 34...e6? is wrong because of 35.fxe6 fxe6 36.♖xb4!

34.♖b5? h5! 35.gxh5

Against 35.♖b6 Black simply plays 35...♖aa8.

35...g4!

Gaining a tempo. 35...♖xh5? is refuted by 36.♖b8.

36.h6

This loses without a fight. There could have been some pretty variations after 36.♖b6 ♖aa8 (not 36...♖xh5?? 37.♖xa7 ♖h2+ 38.♘f1 g3 39.♖xb4! ♙f4 40.e5+!) 37.♖b7 c4! 38.♖xb4

cx b3 39.♖xb3 (39.a7 ♖ac8 40.♖b8 ♖c2+ 41.♘g1 ♖xh5 42.a8 ♖ ♖c1+ 43.♘f2 ♖h2+ 44.♘e3 ♖c3#) 39...♖ac8 40.♖b2 ♖c1 41.a7 ♖xh5.

**36...♖xh6! 37.♖b8 ♖h2+ 38.♘f1
g3 39.♖xa7 g2+ 40.♘g1 ♙d4+
41.♘h2 g1 ♖+ 42.♘h3 ♙e5 0-1**

The board appears to be divided by a wall, with White's king finding himself stranded on the wrong side.

Game 15

Reversed Alekhine's Defence

Bent Larsen

Jan Hein Donner

Zürich 1959

1.g3 e5 2.♙g2 d5 3.♘f3!?

This was the first time I had played this opening. During the next two years I played it quite often, usually with good results.

What should we call this new-born baby? Once upon a time, everything that started with 1.g3 was named 'King's Fianchetto' but that won't do any more. This move often leads to well-known positions with the colours reversed: after 3...e5, Alekhine's Defence; after 3...♘c6 4.d3, the Pirc Defence; and after 3...♘c6 4.0-0!? ♘f6 5.f4 d5 6.d3 (as in game 18), the Benoni. Therefore it is logical enough to use these names, adding 'reversed' or 'with white'. In a category all on its own is 3...♘c6 4.0-0 e5 5.♘e1, although it resembles certain positions in the Pirc Defence. However, I've never faced 5...e5.

Réti played something similar in the famous game Réti-Alekhine, Baden Baden 1925. But the f3-knight was developed a move earlier: 1.g3 e5 2.♘f3 e4 3.♘d4 d5 4.d3. You might have expected Alekhine to have felt great sympathy for

this attempt at playing his own defence (which he had introduced the year before) with gain of tempo. However, he shows antipathy towards this 'experiment' in his commentary. He said that Black ought to have followed up with 3...c5 4.♘b3 c4 5.♘d4 ♙c5, reducing White's 'development' *ad absurdum*. I am not in total agreement with the great master.

3...e4 4.♘d4 c5 5.♘b3 c4 6.♘d4 ♙c5 7.c3 ♘c6

Against 7...♙b6 White would have replied 8.d3!. Of course, Donner would have liked to have obliged me to play e2-e3, seriously weakening d3 and f3, but that is not possible.

8.♘xc6 bxc6 9.0-0



9...♘f6!

Doubtless 9...♘f6 needed thinking about, but the move played by Donner has various advantages. The knight doesn't obstruct the f-pawn, the c6-pawn is defended and an eventual ♙g5 is rendered harmless. One concrete argument against 9...♘f6 could be 10.♙a4, although after 10...♙b6! 11.b3 ♙a6!, Black stands well. It is better to defer ♙a4: 9...♘f6 10.b3 ♙a6 11.bxc4 ♙xc4 12.♘a3 ♙a6 13.♙a4! ♙c8 14.c4 and Black's position is difficult; for example, 14...0-0 15.♙b2 d5 16.d3. The ease with which the white

pieces are developed is amazing, in spite of the opponent's big centre.

After 9...♘f6 10.b3 cxb3 11.axb3, White has the better pawn structure and the black a-pawn is weak. So, contrary to many other commentators, I consider Donner's move to be better.

10.b3!

The right way to attack the centre. 10.d3 cxd3 11.exd3 ♙a6! would have been weak. In general, I like wing pawns to take part in the fight for central control. The move b2-b3 could be considered a justification for 8.♘xc6, which allowed the b-pawn to capture towards the centre.

10...♙a6 11.♙a3!

The key lies in the fact that one or two central pawns will be fixed on light squares, so it is very logical to exchange the bishops that 'circulate' on the dark squares.

11...♙b6

If 11...♙d6? 12.b4 ♙b6 13.b5 loses a piece. After 11...♙xa3 12.♘xa3 ♙a5 13.♘c2 White can do without bxc4. It is possible to play 14.b4, followed by 15.♘d4 and 16.f3, or by 14.♘e3, forcing Black to play ...cxb3.

12.bxc4

The correct move order. After 12.♙xc5? ♙xc5 13.bxc4 Black recaptures with the queen.

12...♙xc4 13.♙xc5 ♙xc5 14.d3 exd3 15.exd3 ♙a6 16.♙e1 0-0 17.d4 ♙d6 18.♘d2

White has obtained a few small positional advantages. With the centre pawns fixed as they are, White has the theoretical advantage of the 'good' bishop, which is important in the endgame. In addition, White has occupied the e-file first and he can transfer his knight to c5. Not really much, but I prefer White.



18...c5?

Dangerous. True, it is tempting to rid yourself of one of the pawns placed on the same colour complex as the bishop, and the knight will be able to attack White's d-pawn from c6. However, my bishop will become much stronger. Currently it is 'biting on granite' and hardly capable of anything more than defending the king, but now it threatens Black's d-pawn. What is more, the control of the e-file, which appears only to be a temporary advantage, is going to become an important factor.

19. ♖a4! cxd4

Black cannot play 19... ♖c8? 20. ♖a3; nor 19... ♖b7 20. dxc5 ♖xc5 21. ♖d7.

20.cxd4

20. ♖xe7 ♖xe7 21. ♖xa6 dxc3 22. ♘b3 ♖e5 offers Black reasonable prospects of a draw, although his passed pawns can be effectively blockaded by 23. ♖d3.

20... ♖c8

Now ♖xe7 was a real threat and 20... ♖fe8? was weak because of the pin after 21. ♖e3 (or perhaps stronger still, 21. ♖e5); nor is 20... ♖b7 21. ♖ab1 ♖fb8 (21... ♖c6 22. ♖a6) 22. ♘c4! satisfactory for Black.

21. ♖ac1

Also 21. ♘c4 was worth considering, even though after 21... ♖f6 22. ♘e3 ♖d6! it leads to nothing special. However, 22... ♖e6? is bad because the black queen is misplaced and White starts operations on the b- and c-files.

21... ♖d7

Euwe, in his comments on the game in the tournament book, considered 21... ♖e6 to be better, but I am not so sure. After 21... ♖e6 22. ♖c5 there is the possibility of ♖a5 and 22... ♖fc8 is impossible because of 23. ♖xc8+ ♘xc8

		Zürich 1959																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Tal, Mikhail	*	0	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.5
2	Gligoric, Svetozar	1	*	1	0	1	½	0	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	11.0
3	Fischer, Robert	½	0	*	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	0	½	1	½	1	10.5
4	Keres, Paul	½	1	0	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	½	10.5
5	Larsen, Bent	0	0	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	9.5
6	Unzicker, Wolfgang	0	½	0	0	½	*	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	9.5
7	Barcza, Gedeon	½	1	½	½	1	½	*	0	0	0	½	1	1	0	1	1	8.5
8	Olafsson, Fridrik	0	0	0	½	0	½	1	*	0	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	8.0
9	Kupper, Josef	0	½	0	0	½	0	1	1	*	½	0	½	1	½	½	1	7.0
10	Bhend, Edwin	1	0	0	½	½	0	1	0	½	*	1	1	0	0	½	½	6.5
11	Donner, Jan Hein	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	½	1	0	*	0	1	1	1	1	6.5
12	Keller, Dieter	0	0	1	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	1	*	1	1	1	0	6.0
13	Walther, Edgar	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	1	0	0	*	1	½	1	5.0
14	Dückstein, Andreas	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	0	½	1	0	0	0	*	1	1	5.0
15	Blau, Max	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	*	½	2.5
16	Nievergelt, Erwin	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	1	0	0	½	*	2.5

24.♘c4 (also to White's advantage is 24.♙e8+ ♚f8 25.♞xe6) 24...♙f8 25.♙xd5!.

22.♙a5 ♙e6 23.♘b3 ♞fb8

Against 23...♙b6 I would probably have played 24.♙a3 ♘f5 25.♞c5, although the immediate 24.♞c5 ♙xa5 25.♞xa5 is also excellent, for example 25...♞fc8 26.♘c5 ♘c6? 27.♞a4 ♘xd4 28.♘xe6 and the position (with or without queens on the board) is very unpleasant for Black because his rook has to stay on a8 on the same diagonal as the white bishop, defending the pawn.

The alternative 23...♞fc8? costs Black a pawn: 24.♞xc8+ ♘xc8 25.♙xd5!.

24.♙c7

A curious intermezzo. The spectator expects the exchange of queens at any moment but it doesn't happen. 24...♙xc7? 25.♞xc7 is bad for Black. For example, 25...♘f5 (25...♙f8 26.♘c5! (26.♞xe7? ♙xe7 27.♙xd5 ♙d6 and Black has a good chance of a draw)) 26.♞e5 ♞b5 27.♙h3 g6 28.♙xf5 ♙xf5 29.♞ee7.

Instead of the text, it was also possible to play 24.♘c5, but after 24...♘c6 or 24...♘f5 the advantage of the move 21...♙d7 is seen: the threat to the d4-pawn wins a tempo and Black could free himself.

24...♞d8 25.h4

A useful move. See, for instance, the variation 25...♙xc7 26.♞xc7 ♘f5 27.♙h3 ♘xd4 28.♘xd4 ♙xh3 29.♞ee7. The important thing here is that the white king can go to h2, otherwise 29...♞e8 might well lead to a draw. With the aforementioned square available, White has very good winning chances after 29...♞f8 30.♞xa7 (30.♙h2 ♙c8 31.♞xa7).

25...♙f8 26.♙c3

Suddenly White wants to avoid the queen exchange. Instead he wants to play ♘c5, with the threat of ♘b7, and to try for something against the exposed king on f8.

26...♙f5 27.♘c5 ♞db8

Against 27...♞dc8 the same move played in the game is equally strong. 27...♞ab8 was possible, for then 28.♙a3 ♘c6 is playable. White would either play 28.♙f3 or 28.♞e5 f6 29.♞e3 and Donner's position remains difficult.

28.♙f3!



Black's problems are clearly seen in the following variations:

A) 28...♙d7 29.♙h5 h6 30.♙e5! ♞b6 31.♘xd7+ ♙xd7 32.♞c7;

B) 28...♙c8 29.♙h5 ♙g8 (29...h6 30.♞xe7 ♙xe7 31.♙xd5) 30.♙e5;

C) 28...♙g6 29.h5 (or 29.♘e6+ ♙g8 30.♘c7).

The best defence, or at least the one which conserves material equilibrium for some time, is 28...g6, but after 29.g4 ♙c8 30.♞e5 the threat of doubling rooks on the e-file is very strong, for example 30...a5 31.♞ce1 ♞a7 32.♙e3 ♙xg4 33.♙h6+ ♙g8 34.♙xd5 with a winning attack. Less clear is 28...g6 29.♙e3? ♘c6! – but not 29...♞e8 30.♙h6+ ♙g8 31.♞e5, as

given in the tournament book, as White could win easily with 31...f6 32.♖e3 ♘c6 33.♙f4!.

**28...♖b4?? 29.♖xe7 ♙xe7
30.♙xf5 ♘g8 31.♘b3 1-0**

Game 16

Reversed Pirc Defence

Bent Larsen

Jan Hein Donner

Beverwijk 1960

**1.g3 e5 2.♘g2 d5 3.♘f3 ♘d6
4.0-0 ♘e7 5.c4?**

Not very effective in this position. Better is 5.d4, followed by ♘bd2 and e2-e4.

**5...c6 6.d3 0-0 7.♘bd2 ♘d7 8.e4
dxe4**

The advance 8...d4 was worthy of consideration, for example: 9.♘h4 ♘c5 10.♙e2 g5, but White ought to play 9.♙e2.

9.♘xe4 ♘c7 10.b3

The line 10.d4 exd4 11.♙xd4 ♘e5 is good for Black.

10...♖e8 11.♘b2 ♘f5 12.♖e1

I had caught a bad cold and my thinking engine wasn't turning over too well. Over the previous not very special moves I had spent no less than an hour and a half!

12...♘f8 13.♙d2 f6 14.♖ad1

Fearing time trouble, I started to play quickly. If I had wanted to play for the win of the exchange (with 14.d4), then 14.b4 would have been better.

14...♘e6 15.b4 a5 16.b5 ♘b6

Exchanging with 16...cxb5 deserved consideration.

**17.bxc6 bxc6 18.♙c1 a4 19.c5
♘a5 20.♘c3 ♖e7 21.♘xa5 ♖xa5
22.♘fd2 ♘ed4 23.♘c4 ♖aa7
24.f4**



Of course, Black is right to feel proud of his knight on d4, but devoting exaggerated attention to it could lead him astray as regards selecting a suitable plan. Black's position must not be overestimated and the white knights also offer good chances.

Black has to play 24...exf4, but Donner thought his central knight needed the solid protection of a pawn. During the rest of the game, this knight was to achieve very little.

What follows has remained one of my most cherished memories. It is the reason why the game has been included in this collection, even though, taken as a whole, it can hardly be called one of my better games.

24...♘e6? 25.fxe5 fxe5 26.♙h1

The back knight has to be paid the respect it deserves. Now it can never give a check.

**26...♘d5 27.♖f1 ♖e6 28.♖f2 ♖f7
29.♖df1**

White is making progress. He is taking over control of the f-file, while his opponent has problems with his weak e-pawn. Something must now be done about ♘g5.

**29...♖xc4 30.dxc4 ♘h6 31.♖xf7
♘xf7 32.♙d1!**

A very strong move. Black has to defend his a-pawn, which allows White to commence action on the kingside.

32...♔a5 33.♔h5 ♔c7 34.♙h3
♚h6??

The rook is very badly placed here. It wasn't possible to play 34...♚e8 because of 35.♘g5, but he could certainly have tried 34...♚e7. Black's position was difficult, but not entirely hopeless.

35.♔g4 ♚g6 36.♔d1 ♔a7
37.♔b1! ♘g5 38.♔b6! ♔a8

Obviously, 38...♔xb6 would have given me an irresistible passed pawn.

39.♘xg5 ♚xg5 40.♔c7 h6
41.♚b1 1-0



The game was adjourned and Black sealed 41...♔h7, after which 42.♙g2 wins easily. 41...♔a6 was no better because of 32.♙f1!. But what pleased me about this game was the part played by the black knight on d4. None whatsoever!

Game 17

Reversed Alekhine's Defence
Bent Larsen
Theo van Scheltinga
Beverwijk 1960

1.g3 d5 2.♙g2 e5 3.♘f3 e4
4.♘d4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♙e7 6.d3 c5
7.♘b3 exd3 8.cxd3 0-0

This position, with colours reversed, is known from Alekhine's Defence; however, White's extra tempo constitutes an important difference.

9.♙g5 ♘bd7 10.♘c3 h6

After 10...d4 11.♙xf6 ♘xf6 (11...gxf6 12.♘d5 is of course less convincing) 12.♘a4 ♘d7 13.♚c1, White wins a pawn.

11.♙f4 ♘b6

Now 11...d4 is answered by 12.♘b5 and White has a good game. The move chosen by my opponent doesn't solve Black's problems. I think the better continuation is 11...g5 12.♙d2 d4, although of course it is not very pleasant to weaken the king's position.

12.d4! c4

After 12...cxd4 Black is left with an isolated d-pawn in a position in which he cannot fight for control of the d4-square. The choice between the latter move and the text is a matter of taste.

13.♘c5 ♙d6 14.♙xd6 ♔xd6
15.b3 cxb3 16.♔xb3!

Hoogovens Beverwijk 1960												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Petrosian, Tigran	*	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	6.5
2	Larsen, Bent	0	*	0	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	6.5
3	Matanovic, Aleksandar	½	1	*	½	0	½	½	½	1	1	5.5
4	Flohr, Salo	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	1	½	5.0
5	Donner, Jan Hein	½	0	1	0	*	½	1	½	½	1	5.0
6	Van Scheltinga, Theo	½	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	4.5
7	Bouwmeester, Hans	0	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	1	4.0
8	Toran Albero, Roman	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	0	0	3.0
9	Tan Hiong Liong	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	1	*	0	2.5
10	Barendregt, Johan	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	1	1	*	2.5

I thought for almost half an hour over this move. The cautious 16.axb3, depriving the black knight of the c4-square, also leads to a good position, but the queen capture is stronger still. White is in position to launch a powerful queenside attack with ♖fc1, a2-a4 and ♖ab1. The key to the next move by White is the control of the c4-square.

16...♗c4?



17.♙b4!!

The natural move to fend off the rook fork was 17.♖fc1, but Black would reach a reasonable position with 17...♗a5 and ...b7-b6.

The queen move is much more effective. It threatens 18.♗xd5, which would also be the reply to 17...b6. Playing 17...a5 is not an improvement because the queen advances one square with 18.♙b5. Given that Black is unwilling to admit his error by playing 17...♗b6, to which the answer would be 18.a4 or 18.♖fc1, he comes up with the idea of 17...♗d2 18.♖fd1 ♗de4 and overlooks White's reply.

17...♗d2? 18.♗b5 ♙b6

Or 18...♙c6 19.♗xa7, winning a pawn.

19.♗a4 ♙c6 20.♖fc1 ♗c4 21.♗a3

This wins a pawn. 21...♙d6 wasn't possible because of 22.♖xc4. Black now had only 15 minutes left. I had also used a lot of time but still had half an hour. The rest of the game is not very

interesting; White has a clearly winning endgame and, thanks to Black's last two moves before the time control, I took the chance to cut it short.

21...a5 22.♙xc4 dxc4 23.♗xc6 bxc6 24.♗b6 ♖a6 25.♗xc8 ♖xc8 26.♗xc4 c5 27.♗e5 ♖e6 28.f4 ♗e4 29.♖c4 f6 30.d5 ♖d6 31.♗c6 ♖e8 32.♖d1 f5 33.a4 ♗f6 34.♖d2 ♖xd5 35.♖xd5 ♗xd5 36.♖xc5 ♗b4 37.♗e5 ♖a8 38.♙f2 ♖a7 39.h4 ♙h7? 40.h5 ♙g8? 41.♖c8+ 1-0

Game 18

Reversed Benoni

Efim Geller

Bent Larsen

Copenhagen 1960

1.g3 d5 2.♗g2 e5 3.♗f3 ♗c6

Examples in which 3...e4 is played can be found in my games against Donner (Zürich, 1959) and Van Scheltinga (Beverwijk, 1960).

4.0-0 ♗f6 5.c4 d4

After 5...♗e7 6.cxd5 ♗xd5 7.♗c3 we reach a line of the Reversed Sicilian which is satisfactory for White, and 5...dxc4 is answered by 6.♙a4. For Black, the line 5...e4? 6.♗g5 h6 7.cxd5 ♙xd5 8.♗xe4 ♗xe4 9.d3 is clearly disadvantageous, for example 9...♗xf2 10.♗xd5 ♗xd1 11.♗xf7+ ♙e7 12.♗b3.

6.d3 ♗d6

We've reached a typical Benoni position, as often played by Lothar Schmid. It hasn't proved too popular among masters, but with an extra tempo it can't be bad.

Against the Benoni, White normally develops his bishop to e2, but here 6...♗e7 is weak because of 7.b4!

(7...♖xb4 8.♗xe5 ♗xe5 9.♔a4+). If Black wants to install his bishop on e7, he must play 6...a5 first. In this case I would be able to make use of the b5-square, for example 7.♗a3 ♖e7 8.♗b5 0-0 9.e3. I suppose this is the reason why Simagin, in our game in Moscow in 1962, played the manoeuvre 6...a5 7.♗a3 ♖xa3.

7.♗a3 0-0
Here also 7...♖xa3!? is quite possible; indeed I consider it better than what Simagin played. With the pawn still on a7, Black can deprive White of the b5-square; with the pawn on a5, the ♖b1-b5 manoeuvre could be useful.

Only a few masters prefer knights to bishops in such positions, but I believe in this case that it would be correct. The fact that I won against Simagin has nothing to do with the opening.

8.♖b1 ♖e8 9.♗c2 a5 10.b3 h6
Geller allows the b-pawn to advance. 9...♗b4 10.a3 ♗xc2 11.♔xc2 c5 was a wiser way to continue.

11.a3 ♖f5 12.b4 axb4 13.axb4 ♔d7 14.b5 ♗d8

The reply to 14...♗a5 would have been the same and the knight would have

been misplaced. Of course, it is not exactly well placed on d8, but it will be able to jump to e6 and from there to c5. On the other hand, the knight retreat, the one advantage accruing from the b4-b5 advance, is only a fleeting success which must be exploited immediately, otherwise Black would grab the open file for the rook and a good square on c5.

15.e3! dxe3
Necessary. The most convincing refutation of 15...♖c5 is 16.exd4 exd4 17.♖b2 ♗e6 18.♗h4 ♖g4 19.f3 ♖h5 20.g4 ♖g6 21.f4.

16.♗xe3 ♖h7
It is understandable that Black should want to retain his bishop. It is pointing at d3 and b1, besides which it prevents d3-d4. It also defends the f5-square, where a white knight would be a big nuisance working in tandem with a bishop on b2. After 16...♖h3 17.d4 White has a slight pull.

Geller was now using up a lot of time: he probably didn't like his position.

17.♖b2 c6
Once again 17...♗e6 wasn't possible. Also, 17...e4 was inadvisable because of

Nimzowitsch Memorial, Copenhagen 1960																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4		
1	Petrosian, Tigran	*	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	11.5	
2	Geller, Efim	½	*	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	10.5	
3	Stahlberg, Gideon	0	½	*	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	½	½	1	9.5	
4	Larsen, Bent	0	1	0	*	½	0	1	0	1	1	½	1	1	1	8.0	
5	Golz, Werner	0	0	½	½	*	1	½	0	0	1	1	1	1	½	7.0	
6	Enevoldsen, Jens	½	½	0	1	0	*	0	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	6.5	
7	Hamann, Svend	0	0	½	0	½	1	*	1	0	0	½	1	1	1	6.5	
8	Holm, Sejer	0	0	0	1	1	½	0	*	½	0	1	½	0	1	5.5	
9	Andersen, Borge	0	0	0	0	1	½	1	½	*	1	0	½	1	0	5.5	
10	Orbaan, Constant	½	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	0	*	0	1	½	1	5.0	
11	Pietzsch, Wolfgang	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	1	1	*	½	½	0	4.5	
12	Barendregt, Johan	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	4.0	
13	Nielsen, Palle	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	1	0	½	½	0	*	1	4.0	
14	Kølvig, Bent	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	1	½	0	*	3.0	

18.♘h4, for example 18...exd3 19.♙xf6 gxf6 20.♚h5 with a strong attack.



The text move is undoubtedly Black's best: it blocks the diagonal of White's light-squared bishop and makes c7 available for the queen. If Black has time to get in ...♚c7 and ...♘e6, he will have the better position. 18.b6 would be answered by 18...c5 and ...♘c6.

18.♚a1!

Very strong. If Black moves his rook, 19.d4! is coming, with great force. I believe this was the moment when I commented to some friends that I expected to win the game. I still consider this verdict on the game to be correct, though of course there were still plenty of problems yet to overcome.

For Black to be worse, he must have made at least one mistake. The text move might make the thoughtful reader look back at Black's 12th move. Might it have been better not to exchange off the a-pawns? There is much to be said for this, but it wasn't an easy decision to make at the time. Why shouldn't he have opened up a file for the rook?

If Black had played 12...♚d7 and White had proceeded in the same way – which we can't take for granted, of

course, but other continuations are less aggressive and make things easy for the opponent – a position would have arisen after 16...c6 in which 17.a4 was not possible because of 17...♙c7, with strong counterplay. White's only chance for the initiative would have been a promising pawn sacrifice: 17.♚c1! cxb5 18.d4!.

18...♚xa1 19.♚xa1 cxb5

There are two alternatives:

A) 19...♙xd3 is very dangerous in view of 20.♚d1, for example: 20...♙e2 21.♘xe5 ♚xe5 (21...♚e7 22.♚d2 ♙xe5 23.♙xe5 ♚xe5 24.♚xe5 ♚xe5 25.♚xd8+ winning a pawn) 22.♚xd6 ♚xd6 23.♙xe5 with a considerable advantage;

B) 19...♚c7 comes up against a sharp line: 20.d4 e4 21.♘h4 cxb5 22.c5 ♙e7 23.d5! ♚xc5 24.♚c1, which appears to be correct. After 24...♚d6 25.♘hf5 ♙xf5 26.♘xf5, not possible is 26...♚d7 27.♙h3, nor is 26...♚xd5 27.♘xe7+ ♚xe7 28.♚d1, and the endgame which transpires after 26...♚a6 27.d6! ♚xa1 28.♙xa1 ♙f8 29.♙xf6 gxf6 30.♚c8 also leads to a black defeat. Therefore he would be obliged to play 24...♚e7, although after 25.♘hf5 his position is difficult. White has threats against the king, a powerful passed pawn and the possibility of ♚c8.

20.♘xe5 ♚c7

Or 20...♚e7 21.♚e1! ♙xe5 22.♘d5 with advantage.

After 20...♚c7, 21.d4 gives a slight plus, but it is much better to keep the long dark-squared diagonal open.

21.♘f3! ♙e7

If 21...♙xd3 22.♙xf6 ♙xf1 23.♘d5! brings about a very dangerous position

for Black; for example 23...♔xc4 24.♘d2!.



22.♔c1

For me this was the most difficult move of the game. 22...♔xd3 is refuted by 23.♘d5 ♔d6 24.♔e5 (also good is 24.♘xe7+ ♔xe7 25.♔e1 ♘e6 26.cxb5, with the idea of 26...♔xb5 27.♘d4 ♔d3 28.♔h3) 24...♔a6 25.♔d4. This variation was stronger still.

One interesting possibility is to exchange knights on d5, after which the white pawn on d5 imprisons the enemy knight on d8 and White can play ♔c8!. This pattern occurs in several variations. Against 22...♔b6 White can play 23.♘d5 ♘xd5 24.cxd5 ♔f8 25.♘e5 ♔a6 26.♔xa6 bxa6 27.♔h3! (27.♔c8? is weak owing to 27...♔f5!, followed by ...f7-f6) 27...♘b7 28.♔c7 ♘d6 28.♔a7 with a big advantage.

22...bxc4 23.dxc4 ♔b6 24.♘d5 ♘xd5

Against 24...♔a6, the simplest is to win a pawn: 25.♔xa6 bxa6 26.♘c7.

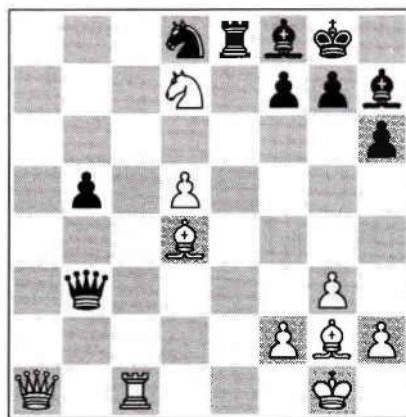
25.cxd5 ♔f8 26.♔d4 ♔b3

Very bad is 26...♔a6 27.♔xa6 bxa6 28.♔c8 – a dream position! It is doubtful whether 26...♔b5 is any better; the idea is to protect d7, but after 27.♘e5 f6 28.♔f1! ♔b4 29.♘d7 ♔e7 30.♔c4! ♔d6 31.♔a4! ♔g6 32.♔c8 Black would have been in trouble.

27.♘e5 b5

Geller was in serious time trouble now. Ought he to have prevented 28.♘d7? The reply 27...♔f5 would have been refuted by 28.g4.

28.♘d7



Now there is no good defence. If 28...f6 29.♔xf6!, or 28...♔a3 29.♔xg7!. Nor was there any hope after 28...♔a4 29.♘xf8 ♔xa1 30.♔xa1 ♘xf8 31.♔c5+ ♔g8 32.♔b4, because the passed pawn, combined with the back rank threats, wins, e.g. 32...♘b7 (or 32...♔f5 33.♔a8 ♔d7 34.♔a7 ♔f5 35.d6, etc) 33.d6, etc.

28...♔a3

A desperate try. After 29.♔f1? ♔e7 or 29.♔c3? ♔b2! 30.♔xb3 ♔xa1 31.♔xa1 ♔e1+ Black is still in the game, but the following combination is simple and decisive.

29.♔xg7! ♔xc1! 30.♘f6+ ♔xg7 31.♘xe8+ ♔f8 32.♔h8+

Using the full length of the long diagonal! 32...♔g8 is answered by 33.♘f6.

32...♔e7 33.d6+ ♔d7

Or 33...♔e6 34.♔f6+ and mate in two moves.

34.♘f6+ ♔c8

Or 34...♔xd6 35.♔xd8+ winning a piece.

**35.♙h3+ ♔b7 36.♚xd8 ♚d1+
37.♔g2 ♙d3 38.♙c8+ ♔a8
39.♚a5+ 1-0**

Geller's flag fell as he went to play his next move. Anyway, he couldn't escape mate in two.

I consider this game one of the best I have played. I like its logical progress and the queenside action designed to destroy the enemy pawn centre. Once this was achieved, the direct attack on the king became possible.



A break from chess...

Chapter 7

Involuntary Pause

It might seem strange that in this book there are no games from 1961 or 1962, a break in the chronological succession. My results at Beverwijk in 1961, where I shared first place with Ivkov, are worth mentioning, but the games do not warrant inclusion. At the Zürich and Dortmund tournaments my results were mediocre. I had differences with the president of the Danish Chess Federation, who was unwilling to send me to the Zonal tournament, an unfortunate affair that demonstrated the powerlessness of FIDE.

Between the autumn of 1961 and 1963 I did my military service, an experience about which I have few good things to say. During that time I was twice granted leave (which I had to make up for later by serving more time) to take part in a tournament. At Moscow 1962 I didn't play well and finished in mid-table. At the Halle Zonal tournament in 1962 I managed second place behind Portisch and in front of Ivkov, Robatsch, Uhlmann, etc. I didn't feel in form despite playing sensibly and in many cases taking advantage of my opponents' time trouble. Of course, these tactics didn't produce too many games which were worthy of appearing in a book; however, on one occasion, I threw caution to the winds (Game 19): it was totally different from the other games I played in the tournament.



Playing Carel van den Berg at the Hoogovens tournament, Beverwijk 1961.

Hoogovens Beverwijk 1961											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
1	Larsen,Bent	*	1	1	1	½	1	0	1	1	7.5
2	Ivkv,Borislav	0	*	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	7.5
3	Uhlmann,Wolfgang	0	0	*	½	½	1	1	1	½	5.5
4	Olafsson,Fridrik	0	½	½	*	½	0	½	1	1	5.0
5	Van den Berg,Carel	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	½	½	4.5
6	Gereben,Ernö	0	0	0	1	0	*	1	½	1	4.0
7	Van Scheltinga,Theo	1	0	0	½	½	0	*	½	½	3.5
8	Grünfeld,Ernst	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	*	1	3.0
9	Donner,Jan Hein	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	*	2.5
10	Barendregt,Johan	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	2.0

Halle Zonal 1963																						
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Portisch,Lajos	*	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	14.0	
2	Larsen,Bent	0	*	1	1	½	1	½	1	0	1	0	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	13.0	
3	Ivkov,Borislav	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	12.0	
4	Robatsch,Karl	½	0	½	*	0	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	12.0	
5	Uhlmann,Wolfgang	½	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	0	11.0	
6	Malich,Burkhard	½	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	½	1	1	1	11.0	
7	Trifunovic,Petar	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	10.5	
8	Johannsson,Ingi	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	½	1	10.5	
9	Minev,Nikolay	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	1	0	½	1	½	1	0	½	½	½	10.0	
10	Kavalek,Lubomir	½	0	½	½	1	½	½	½	0	*	½	1	1	0	0	½	0	1	1	10.0	
11	Donner,Jan Hein	0	1	0	0	0	½	½	½	1	½	*	½	1	0	½	1	1	½	0	9.5	
12	Johannsson,Martin	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	9.5	
13	Hamann,Svend	0	1	½	0	0	0	½	1	0	0	0	0	*	1	1	1	½	1	1	9.0	
14	Pavlov,Mircea	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	1	1	½	0	*	½	0	0	½	1	8.5	
15	Doda,Zbigniew	0	½	0	0	½	1	½	½	0	1	½	½	0	½	*	0	½	1	½	8.0	
16	Westerinen,Heikki	½	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	0	½	0	1	1	*	0	1	½	8.0	
17	Johannessen,Svein	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	½	1	0	0	½	1	½	1	*	½	0	7.5	
18	Kinnmark,Ove	½	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	*	½	6.0	
19	Ofstad,Per	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	1	½	*	5.0	
20	Kanko,Ilkka	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	1	½	½	0	½	0	0	0	1	*	5.0

After leaving the army, my first tournament was Beverwijk 1964. This time the 'blast furnace tournament' had been expanded to 16 players, instead of ten. I wasn't happy with my result, as I shared fifth place behind Nei, Keres, Portisch and Ivkov. However, the game against Ivkov was one of the best I have played (Game 20). The same could not be said of my game with Van Scheltinga, but the 'swindle attack' I launched in a critical position is one of my sweetest memories.

Game 22 comes from the Danish Championship of that year, held in my childhood town, Holstebro. After a shaky start (a draw and a loss), I won eight games in a row but lost in the last round, by which time I had already won the competition. This tournament played a certain role in my preparations for the Interzonal; I tried many strange 'museum openings' and the results were encouraging.

However, not many pundits expected me to qualify for the Candidates' tournament...

Game 19

Sicilian Defence

Karl Robatsch

Bent Larsen

Halle 1963

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e5!?**

This line is often called 'Lasker's Jagd-Variante' ('Jagd' means 'hunt'), because the great Emanuel played it in one of the games of his match with Schlechter in 1910. However, the move 5...e5 had been played before and wasn't considered good. Schlechter, who responded with the tame 6.♘b3, was quoted in the *Wiener Schachzeitung* as suggesting that one good way to reply to it was 6.♘db5 d6 7.a4 (to prevent ...a7-a6 followed by ...b7-b5).

In the December 1963 issue of *Skakbladet*, I wrote an article on this variation, mentioning in passing that it was one of my weapons of mass destruction in simuls! In connection with this article, Ole Jakobsen (1969 Danish and Scandinavian Champion) noted, with some justification, that the fact that I wrote about the variation probably meant that it was no longer part of my opening repertoire. However, it

must be admitted that I had not played it very often – just once before against a GM, Olafsson, in Zürich in 1959. The variation was intended as a surprise weapon and it didn't matter too much to me if it wasn't 100% sound.

Robatsch had a good long think.

6.♘db5 d6 7.♙g5

The normal move. Other Sicilian systems with ...e7-e5, which were believed to be bad in 1910, have been rehabilitated, though few modern masters follow Schlechter and play 7.a4.

The text move is logical from the point of view of the struggle for control of the d5-square. After 7...♙e6 there follows 8.♙xf6 gxf6 9.♘d5 and the knight on b5 no longer has to retreat to a3.

7...a6 8.♘a3

Earlier theorists used to recommend 8.♙xf6, but these days the text move is more common. There are two reasons for rejecting 8.♙xf6 gxf6 9.♘a3:

A) 9...f5!? is now considered dubious, even though the sacrificial line 10.♙h5 b5 11.♘axb5 axb5 12.♙xb5 – which Tarrasch used to win a famous game against Janowski in Vienna 1898 – is probably unsound. Janowski liked to attack, not defend;

B) 9...d5! was the idea of the Czech-born Argentinian master Pelikan. This move led to a blossoming of this variation during the 1950s, but most of its aficionados abandoned it when 8.d3 became fashionable.

8...e6

Against Olafsson I played 8...b5 in this position. The game proceeded as follows: 1.e4 c5 2.d3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.dxd4 dxc6 5.dxc3 dxf6 6.ddb5 d6 7.f4 e5 8.g5 a6 9.d3 and after 9...b5 10.d5 e6 11.c3 e7 12.fxf6 fxf6 13.dxf6+ gxf6 14.d2 0-0 15.d3 h8 16.0-0 g8 17.d3 b4! I had achieved an even game. However, I consider 10...e7 more accurate than 10...e6. White probably has to play 10.fxf6 first.

9.d3



9...c8!

This is the move I wanted to try. It had been played before, but theorists had mainly concentrated on 9...d4, for example the well-known game Bronstein-Pilnik, Moscow 1956: 9...d4 10.fxf6 gxf6 11.d3 h5 12.d3 e3 c8 13.0-0 h4 14.dcd5 g7 15.c3 d6 16.f3 h6 17.f5 fxf5, with a positionally won game. I didn't understand why Black played ...d4, particularly if it then had to retreat without achieving anything.

In Halle, the same variation was played again three rounds later. Westerinen-I.Johannsson went 9...c8 10.d3 e7 11.fxf6 fxf6 12.dcd5 g5 13.f5? fxf5 14.exf5 d4 15.c3 a5! with a better position for Black.

In an article in *Skakbladet* I gave as the best line for White 9...c8 10.fxf6 gxf6 11.d3 and I now recommended 11...e7 12.d3 b6 13.0-0 b2. A month later, Brinck-Claussen played this against Bely at Hastings and won, but later he confessed that if he had foreseen all White's possibilities after 14.dcd5 fxd5 15.dxd5 dxd5 16.exd5, he wouldn't have had the courage to capture the pawn.

Röbatsch thought for almost an hour...

10.d5 fxd5 11.fxf6 gxf6 12.exd5?

After this capture I prefer Black.

He should have played 12.fxd5 and if 12...d4? (better 12...b4 13.f2 d5 14.exd5 fxd5 with approximate equality; perhaps also 14...xc2+!? 15.fxc2 b4+ and 16...b5) 13.0-0-0 e7 14.fxd4! and White has sufficient compensation for the exchange.

12...e7 13.d3



The game Gligoric-Brinck-Claussen, Hastings 1963/64, continued imaginatively with 13.b4!? c7? 14.a4 b5 15.axb5 axb5 16.dxd6+! with good

chances for White. Black ought to have played 13...f5.

Robatsch had spent more than an hour and a half without finding a very favourable position. My surprise opening had been a success.

13...f5 14.0-0 ♖g7 15.♙h5

This is only superficially aggressive, but it is difficult to recommend a good plan for White. He has to keep an eye open for a possible attack on the king and pay attention to his d-pawn, which can be attacked by the annoying ...♞c5.

15...e4 16.♙e2 0-0 17.c3 f4!

Launching an attack to which White hardly has a good defence. At first glance the two black pawns seem to have been thrown too far forward and the rest of the army is not yet ready for the assault. However, the text move is based on a correct assessment of the position; the vanguard will receive timely support from the main body.

It should be noted that White would have got a good position if he had had time to get in f2-f4 and ♖e3.

Editor's Note: In fact, if 17.f4, Black plays 17...♞c5 and the d-pawn falls: 18.♖e3 ♖xd5 19.♖xd5 ♞xd5 defends the f-pawn, while if 18.♞ad1 ♖xd5 19.♙xf5 ♖e3!.

18.♙g5 b5 19.♖d2 f5 20.a4



Now 20.♙xf4 ♖xd5 is dangerous for White; on the other hand, given the threat to his d-pawn, he doesn't have much choice.

20...♖h8!

The queenside attack comes too late to bother Black. My opponent was hoping for 20...♖xd5 21.♙xd8 ♞fxd8 22.axb5 with equality, but the text move shows how critical his position is.

21.♖b3

The answer to 21.axb5 was 21...f3! 22.gxf3 ♞g8 23.♖h1 ♙xc3 24.♙f4 ♖xd5 25.♙xf5 ♞g5. Here 24.♙xg8+ would be better, but also loses. After 22.♙c4 ♞g8, Black's threats are too strong: 23.♙e3 ♙e5 24.g3 ♙e8, or 23.♙h5 ♙f6 with the double threat of ...♞xg2+ and ...♙g5. Finally, if 23.♙h4 ♙f8 threatens both ...♙f6 and ...♙h6.

In several of these variations the attack on the knight plays an important role, and consequently White needs a move to save it. Black can exploit this time to open the g-file and launch an irresistible attack.

Another defensive idea was 21.f3, but then there arises a new danger: ...♙b6+ and ...♙e3, attacking bishop and knight at the same time. To save his own knight, Black had decided on playing 21...♙f6! and, in order to neutralise the aforementioned threat, White has to play 22.♙xf4 ♖xd5 23.♙g3, which is hopeless because the queen is trapped after 23...♙h4 24.♙h3 ♖f4!.

The position of the white pieces is really very unfortunate.

21...f3 22.gxf3 ♙xc3

To the reader who had almost expected a mating attack, this pawn capture may come as a disappointment. However, it is really an attacking move; the rook on

c8 joins the battle and I can make one of my favourite comments: 'All the pieces are attacking.'

**23.♔h1 ♖xb2 24.♖a2 ♙e5
25.axb5**

It makes no difference what White does. Against 25.fxe4 the simplest is to recapture, creating a new threat: ...♖c3, followed by ...♖h3.

25...♖g8 26.♙h5
If 26.♙h4 the reply 26...♙f8 is very strong, with the threat ...♙g7 and ...♘g6.

**26...♘xd5 27.fxe4 ♘f4 28.♙xf5
♙h4 29.♙d1 ♘e2**

In such positions elegance is easy.
30.♙xe5+ dxe5 31.♖xe2 0-1
White resigned before I could play 31...♙h3.



There is something very appealing about the fianchetto of the g7-bishop in the Sicilian Defence. After ...e7-e6 and ...♙e7, it has to remain passive for a long time; on g7 it gets a superb long diagonal. I would play the Dragon Variation more often had it not been so thoroughly analysed in recent years. Of course, there are still chances of finding something new, even in this variation.

With the move order followed in the game, I allow the Maroczy Bind with 5.c4, which doesn't scare me even though all the experts of my childhood considered it favourable for White (see my Games 39 and 43 against Geller in Monaco and Lothar Schmid in Havana,

Game 20

Sicilian Defence
Borislav Ivkov
Bent Larsen
Beverwijk 1964

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 g6**

		Hoogovens Beverwijk 1964																
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Keres,Paul	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	½	1	11.5
2	Nei,Iivo	½	*	1	½	½	1	0	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	11.5
3	Portisch,Lajos	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	11.0
4	Ivkov,Borislav	0	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	10.0
5	Parma,Bruno	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	9.5
6	Larsen,Bent	½	0	½	1	½	*	½	½	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	1	9.5
7	Lengyel,Levente	½	1	½	0	0	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	9.5
8	Filip,Miroslav	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
9	Darga,Klaus	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	7.5
10	Donner,Jan Hein	0	0	0	½	½	1	½	½	0	*	0	1	0	1	1	½	6.5
11	Zuidema,Coen	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	½	1	*	½	½	½	1	1	6.5
12	Bobotsov,Milko	0	0	0	0	½	1	½	0	0	0	½	*	1	1	1	1	6.5
13	Van Scheltinga,Theo	½	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	*	½	½	1	5.0
14	Van den Berg,Carel	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	*	½	1	3.5
15	Dunkelblum,Arthur	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	*	½	2.0
16	De Rooi,Paul	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	*	1.5

respectively). I expected Ivkov to omit c2-c4 and prefer the modern system, castling queenside; in this case I wanted to be sure he would play ♖c4 (to prevent d5). After 2...d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 g6 6.♕e3 ♕g7 7.f3 0-0 8.♞d2 ♗c6, I doubted (and still doubt) that the modern line 9.♕c4 was superior to 9.0-0-0, since the soundness of the 9...d5!? sacrifice has not been clearly proved.

5.♗c3 ♕g7 6.♕e3 ♗f6 7.♕c4

Ivkov plays the modern line. Previously he often used to play 7.♗xc6 bxc6 8.e5, but this time he prefers to castle long and attack on the kingside. Perhaps he was expecting 7...♗a5, against which he had won several games with the strong continuation 8.♕xf7+ ♖xf7 9.e5, which theorists of the time had begun to consider better for White.

7...d6 8.f3 ♗d7!?

Unusual in this position. However, after 8...0-0 9.♞d2, the 9...♗d7 retreat had been played quite often. Playing it immediately offers two advantages: black action on the queenside begins straightaway, and if White starts his attack on the kingside with h2-h4, Black can answer ...h7-h5, which could be risky if he had already castled.

But... what about the disadvantages? In my opinion there is only one. What will Black play against 9.♕b5!? ? I hadn't previously studied this variation and had the idea of continuing with the strange move 9...♗db8. However, after 10.♞d2 a6 11.♕e2 b5, I think White has a slight advantage no matter which side he castles.

9.♕b3?

After 9.♕b5 I saw some possibilities that I didn't like: 9...♞c7 10.♗d5 ♞a5+ 11.♕d2, 9...0-0 10.♕xc6 bxc6

11.♗xc6, 9...♗a5 10.b4 or 9 ... ♗de5 10.f4 were all favourable to White.

If 9...a6 10.♗xc6 bxc6 11.♕xc6 ♜b8 12.♕d4 Black lacks compensation for the sacrificed black pawn. If you try to castle without sacrificing a pawn, with 9...0-0 10.♕xc6 ♕xd4 11.♞xd4 bxc6 12.♕h6 e5 13.♞d2, White is much better.

There is also the possibility 9.♕b5!? ♞a5!?. Now 10.♞d2 0-0 11.♗xc6 bxc6 12.♕xc6 ♗e5! 13.♕xa8 ♗c4 leads to major complications, but a quiet plan leads to better play for White, e.g. 10.0-0 ♗de5 11.♗b3, but not 11.f4 ♗g4 12.♗xc6 bxc6 13.♕xc6+ ♖f8.

So 9.♕b5 would probably have been very strong, which suggests that I should have played 8...♗a5!? instead of 8...♗d7; however, in this case White does not develop his queen to d2 and gets an advantage after 8...♗a5 9.♕b3 ♗d7 10.♞e2! and the queen defends c4.

9...♗b6 10.♞d2 ♗a5 11.♞d3 0-0



White's loss of time allowed me to castle in peace. Even so, for a couple of years, this position had been seen as better for White. It derived from a different order of moves: 8...0-0 and 9...♗d7, although some specialists considered 10.h4 better than 10.0-0-0.

Ivkov had not been swindled; he was only following theory as it then stood.

12.0-0-0 ♖xb3+

Both here and in similar positions with the white queen on e2, the normal move was 12...♙d7, although practical tests had shown that, after 13.h4 ♖c8 14.h5 ♖bc4 15.hxg6, White had the advantage. My knowledge of these variations and games was very sketchy, but it seemed to me that the text move allowed me to get the attack started much quicker.

13.axb3

Against 13.♖xb3 I intended 13...♙e6, and if 13.cxb3 then 13...d5! 14.exd5 ♖xd5 15.♖db5 ♖xc3! (16.♙xd8? ♖xa2+ 17.♖b1 ♙f5+).

13...a5 14.♖a4

A very interesting idea. White wants to block the queenside before beginning his attack on the other flank. He succeeds in doing this, but at the cost of getting a rather 'airy' king position. Besides which, Black's position is preferable because White's attack is delayed.

I see no reason to criticise this move, and after 13.axb3 it is probably the correct continuation. For example, bad would be 14.♖db5 a4 15.♙xb6 ♙xb6 16.♖xa4 (16.bxa4 ♙d7) 16...♙a5 and Black's attacking prospects are worth appreciably more than a pawn.

14...♖xa4 15.bxa4 ♙d7 16.♖b5 ♖c8

It was also possible to play 16...♙xb5 followed by ...♙c7 and ...♖fc8 but in similar cases it can be useful to leave the f8-rook where it is, with a view to an eventual ...f7-f5, perhaps until the queens have been exchanged.

White now makes his first dubious move – very dubious, actually. At last he is ready to launch an attack! However,

he should have played the defensive move 17.♖b1 first.

17.h4? ♙xb5 18.♙xb5

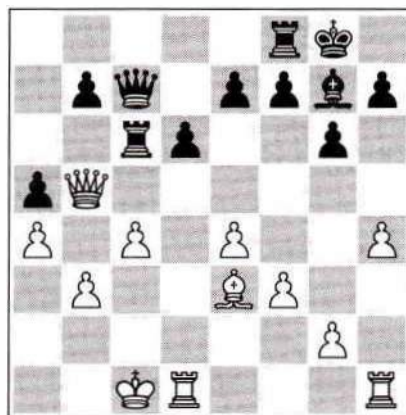
If 18.axb5, the pawn advance 18...a4 gives Black superb attacking prospects. Black could now play 18...♙c7 19.♖d2 ♙c4, to exchange queens and get an even game. But... why not play for a win?

18...♖c6!

Threatening to triple rooks and queen on this file; this virtually forces White's next two moves, which, taken together with the plan started with 14.♖a4, are totally logical.

Capturing the pawn is too risky. The two open files give Black a powerful attack: 19.♙xb7? ♖c7 20.♙b3 (20.♙b6 ♙c8; 20.♙a6 ♙b8 21.♙d4 ♖fc8) 20...♙d7.

19.c4 ♙c7 20.b3



The queenside is blocked and White wants to start the attack with h4-h5. It's not that 20...h5, to stop this, isn't strong, but why allow White to take the initiative? Isn't the white king's position rather exposed?

20...♖c5!

A beautiful exchange sacrifice which creates extraordinary problems for White. If the king had been on b1 (17.♖b1! instead of 17.h4), this sacrifice would not have been sound be-

cause the white king would be relatively safe on a2. For the same reason I rejected the preparatory move 20...e6 when 21.♖b1 f5 22.h5 produces a fairly equal position.

21.♙xc5 dxc5 22.♖d5!

The only good defence. 22...♙e5 is prevented and after 22...b6 23.e5! ♙xe5 24.♙d7 Black has no lines of attack. So I have to play more sharply.

22...e6! 23.♙xc5!

Again the right defence, But it cost Ivkov a lot of time finding these moves. The move played might appear to be a mistake, but after 23...♙f4+ 24.♖d2 ♙c3 25.♙f2 ♖d8 26.♖d1 Black has nothing better than to take back the sacrificed material, leading to a level queen ending.

23.♖xc5? ♙g3! offers White little hope. After the game I gave the line 24.♖g5 ♙f2 25.e5 ♙d4 26.♖d1 ♙c3+ 27.♖b1 h6!. Of course, there are other possibilities: 24.♖d1 ♙xg2 25.e5 ♙h6+ 26.♖b1 ♙xf3 27.♖d7 ♙e3 28.♖cc7 ♙e4+ with a decisive advantage. Whichever piece captures on c5, Black's lines of communication with the rear are very bad.

23...♙g3! 24.♖g5

Necessary as 24.♖d2 is answered by 24...♙h6. Also 24.♖dd1 ♙xg2 25.e5 ♙xf3 gives Black the advantage.

24...♙f4+!

Now 24...♙h6? 25.♖b1 ♙xg5 26.♙xg5 would be weak.

25.♖c2 f5!

Just as the queen had been almost a prisoner on b5 earlier, now the rook is on g5. This is really rather an unusual game. Black has very good chances despite being an exchange and a pawn down.

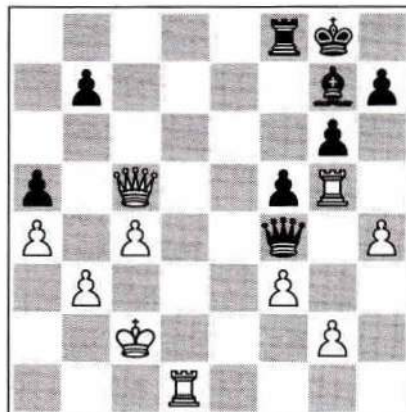
26.exf5 exf5

The attractive 26...b6? is actually an error because of 27.♖g4!.

Now White can exchange queens, the dream of all defenders.

27.♖d1

After 27.g3? there follows 27...♙xf3 28.♙d5+ ♙xd5 29.cxd5 ♖f7!, threatening ...h7-h6 (30.h5 doesn't save the rook owing to 30...♖f6).



27...b6!

A good move for two reasons:

Firstly, it is the strongest in the position, which can be proved convincingly by analysis.

Secondly, it forces Ivkov, now in severe time trouble, to make a difficult choice, which costs him almost all the time left on his clock.

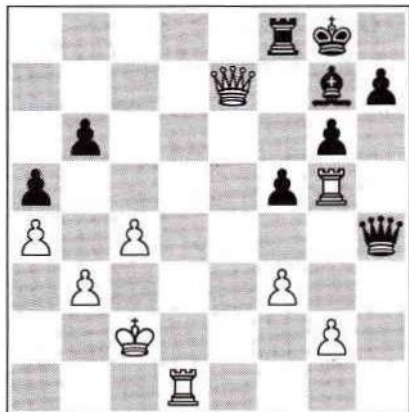
Should he take the pawn and thus take his queen away from the control of e5? He didn't like to do that. On the other hand, he must be ready to meet ...♙xh4 with ♙e3. Meanwhile, the clock was ticking...

28.♙e7

After 28.♙xb6 ♙e5 29.♖d8 ♙f6 30.♖xf8+ ♖xf8 31.♖d1 ♖g7!? White's position is very difficult. He has to guard against mating attacks by the queen and bishop tandem, and at the same time avert the imminent danger of Black capturing the rook, which, as far as I can see, is too much for White.

This means that in his move 28, Ivkov again found the right defence.

28...♖xh4



29.♖d7??

Finally, and under terrible time pressure, the Yugoslav grandmaster comes unstuck. 29.♖e3 was essential, even if the rook endgame after 29...♙f6 (29...f4!) 30.f4 ♙xg5 31.fxg5 ♖e4+ 32.♖xe4 fxe4 is not easy for White: against 33.♖d6 Black has to play 33...♖f5!.

In this simplification it should be noted that the key to 27...b6! is that the a-pawn is defended, otherwise ♖d5 would be a very strong move after the exchange of queens. White could probably defend the rook ending, though not easily given the time pressure.

After 29.♖e3, Black can also find other ways to win, e.g. 29...f4!? and here the 27th move shows its usefulness in preventing ♖c5. In short, Black retains good lines of attack, although White should be able to defend the position.

29...♙f6 30.♖e6+ ♔h8 31.♖d6

Or 31.♖c7 ♖f2+ 32.♙d3 ♖d8+, etc.

31...♖f2+ 32.♙d1

Or 32.♙d3 ♖f1+. The d2-square is taboo because of ...♙xg5+.

32...♖f1+ 33.♙c2 ♖e2+ 34.♙c1 ♖b2+

Of course, ♙xg5+ was also good.

35.♙d1 ♖b1+ 36.♙e2

After 36.♙d2, I would have swallowed my pride and taken the rook.

36...♖e8+ 37.♙f2 ♖e1 Mate

Game 21

Bird's Opening

Bent Larsen

Theo van Scheltinga

Beverwijk 1964

1.f4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d5 3.e3 g6 4.♙e2

Instead of my special variation 4.b4, I chose a normal Dutch Defence with colours reversed, and with an extra tempo.

4...♙g7 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3 b6 7.a4

♙b7 8.♖e1 c5 9.♘bd2?

This doesn't combine well with 7.a4. The move 9.♘a3 was worthy of consideration, followed by ♙d1 and e3-e4.

9...♘c6 10.♖h4 e6 11.♖f2 ♘b4

12.♘e1 ♘e8 13.♖h3 ♘d6 14.g4 f5

The Dutch master builds a position that makes it virtually impossible for White to attack the king. In order to create new problems, White sets up a Stonewall formation.

15.gxf5 exf5 16.♘df3 ♘f7 17.c3

♘c6 18.d4 ♘a5

It would have been better to have the pawn on a2.

19.♙d1 c4 20.♘e5 ♘xe5 21.fxe5

♘b3 22.♙xb3 cxb3

It is not pleasant for White to be without his light-squared bishop, and the other bishop does not exactly play a great role either. But you have to look on the bright side: Black's last move moved one of his pawns away from the centre. White wants to put his knight on f4 and advance the h-pawn. Black oughtn't to allow it.

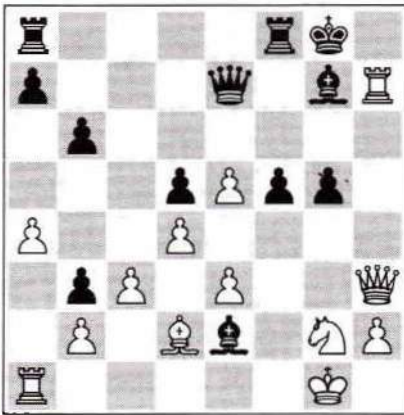
23. ♖g2 ♔g5! 24. ♜f4 ♔e7

Perhaps my opponent was ready to take a draw with 25. ♜f2 ♔g5, or perhaps not. I decided not to investigate and played to win.

25. ♙d2 ♚a6 26. ♜h4!?

Very risky, but, in the first place, I am willing to take risks, and besides Black is getting ready to improve his position significantly by moving his bishop to e4. So, forward!

26... ♗g5! 27. ♜xh7 ♙e2!



At this moment the Dutch master Spanjaard entered the game room. He

asked Donner if anything interesting was happening, and the grandmaster said, 'Yes. Larsen has a lost game!'

I'm sure it was an accurate assessment of my position. Up to now Black has played better, but the situation is still difficult for both opponents. It may be appropriate to recall the words of a famous French general: 'My centre is broken, my flanks are retreating, therefore I attack!'

Spanjaard sat down next to our table – he is very short-sighted – to watch the drama unfold.

Against 28. ♜h6, Black has several good continuations. The simplest is 28... ♜f7 29. e6 ♙xh6, with a favourable ending; 29... ♜f6 is even better. When considering variations such as these, you realise that you must do something special. 27... ♙g4 is threatened. Perhaps you should sacrifice the exchange and keep playing. You get a pawn for it, but it's not very pretty.



With his wife Lizzie at home, 1964.

However, in this position hides a fantastic combination. Amongst the pain there is hope. For now, White has an extra pawn and a strong pawn centre, and the black king is not well protected by pawns.

Slowly I began to see possibilities for counterplay and continued with...

28.c4! ♖xc4?

Black goes wrong. He missed the reply.

There are other options:

A) After 28...dxc4 29.♗c3, followed by the exchange sacrifice, White would have good practical chances. Suddenly his bishop is strong, and united passed pawns always command respect;

B) Black must play the sharp 28...♖ac8. And now:

B1) 29.cxd5 ♖c2 is good for him, now that the b3-pawn is potentially passed: 30.♗c3 ♖xc3!. Of course, there are many variations and White has an impressive pawn centre;

B2) White can complicate things further with 29.e4!?. One consequence of this move is to free the e3-square for the knight; however, Black gets strong threats on the f-file after 29...fxe4!.

The analysis seems to show that Black has better opportunities than his oppo-

nent in any case. But the position would be very complicated and at least White can't lose without getting all his pieces into the game. However, Van Scheltinga wanted to avoid complications. He thinks he has a big advantage and judges 28.c4 to be an act of despair. He now comes in for a tremendous shock.



29.♗f4!!

A fantastic change of scenery! If Black does not capture the knight, I will get a very powerful attack while the c4-bishop will become inactive.

29...gxf4 30.♗f2!

The key: 30.♖g1 is threatened with dire consequences.

30...fxe3+ 31.♗xe3 f4

31...♗d3 would be answered by 32.♗f4!.

Danish Championship, Holstebro 1964													
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2
1	Larsen,Bent	*	1	1	½	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	1
2	Blom,Kaj	0	*	½	1	1	0	½	1	½	1	½	½
3	Pedersen,Eigil	0	½	*	1	0	½	1	½	½	1	½	1
4	Kølvig,Bent	½	0	0	*	1	0	0	1	½	1	1	1
5	Brinck Claussen,Bjorn	0	0	1	0	*	½	½	1	½	½	1	1
6	Jakobsen,Ole	0	1	½	1	½	*	0	½	½	1	½	0
7	Andersen,Borge	0	½	0	1	½	1	*	0	1	0	½	1
8	From,Sigfred	1	0	½	0	0	½	1	*	1	0	0	1
9	Hamann,Svend	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	0	*	1	1	½
10	Holm,Sejer	0	0	0	0	½	0	1	1	0	*	1	1
11	Norby,Peter	1	½	½	0	0	½	½	1	0	0	*	0
12	Petersen,Finn	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	0	1	*

32.♔d2!

After 31...f4 it was possible to play 32.♖g1, although Black can put up some resistance with 32...♔d3.

32...♖f7?

The only defence was 32...♖g5 33.♖g1 ♖xg1+, which in any case would not last long. Sometimes, tenacious defence saves half a point, but Van Scheltinga was pressed for time.

33.♖h5+ ♔e6 34.♖g4+ 1-0

Marvellous entertainment for Spanjaard!

Game 22

Czech Benoni Defence

Svend Hamann

Bent Larsen

Danish Championship, Holstebro 1964

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5 4.♘c3 d6 5.e4 g6 6.g3 ♕g7 7.♕g2

Taimanov, amongst others, has played the interesting idea 7.♕h3!?. In principle it seems White can take advantage of the bishop exchange, but it is possible that energetic kingside play by Black can demonstrate the disadvantage of not having the fianchettoed bishop defending the king.

In my opinion, the plan chosen by Hamann doesn't cause the opponent any serious problems.

7...0-0 8.♘ge2 ♘h5 9.0-0 ♘d7

There is no reason not to play 9...f5 immediately, but 9...♘d7 is also very good. After 10.g4 ♘f4 11.♘xf4 exf4 12.♕xf4 ♘e5 13.♕xe5 ♕xe5, Black has ample compensation for the pawn. Of course, this position may also arise from a King's Indian Defence: 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.g3, etc. Many players prefer to keep the central tension after ...e7-e5, but if White had responded 8.d5, Black would not necessarily play the ...c7-c5

advance but keep the square free for a knight. Therefore, this position does not usually occur in the King's Indian Defence.

White must now choose between a passive situation on the kingside (e.g. 10.♕e3 f5 11.f3), or a more active line.

10.f4 exf4 11.gxf4 a6

The immediate 11...f5 leads to similar positions.

12.♖c2 f5 13.exf5 gxf5 14.♕e3?

White overlooks a tactical point. He should have played 14.a4.

14...♘df6 15.h3 b5!

Gaining space. The point is 16.cxb5 axb5 17.♘xb5 ♖e8 18.♖d3 c4! winning a piece.

16.♖ae1 b4

With my two knights on the kingside, I thought the time was right to commence operations. However, 16...bxc4 was not bad either; White's best answer is probably ♕f3. Black opens the b-file and, in some cases, has threats against the enemy d-pawn, while White's only try for counterplay is to occupy the c4-square with a knight.

17.♘d1 ♘e4 18.♖h2 ♖e8 19.♖g1



19...♘ef6!

Surprising! Why this hasty retreat? Firstly, there are some chances to sacrifice with ...♘g4+ in order to take advantage of White's otherwise excellent

♖h2 and ♜g1 moves. Secondly, ♕f3 and ♖f2 are prevented.

Black is ready to improve his position, while his opponent's manoeuvres are rather difficult. If White plays 20.♕f2, with a view to ♖e3 and menacing Black's f-pawn, Black's a8-rook would enter the fray with 20...♜a7! 21.♖e3 ♜ae7 and stop the capture on f5.

This rook manoeuvre is very important. Another viable plan for Black is ...♖h8 and ...♕h6 since the ♜g1 move has removed a defender from White's f-pawn.

It is difficult to prove that 17...♖e4 was the best move: one of the reasons that led me to play as I did was to avoid an unpleasant situation with my knights locked together on f6 and h5 with a white bishop on f3. But I'm absolutely sure that 19...♖ef6 was best. It is the opposite of a routine move!

20.♕f3?? ♖g4+!

Hamann had not overlooked this possibility but there was a flaw in his calculations. See the next note.

21.hxg4 fxg4!

The precise move order. My opponent had expected the unclear variation 21...♜h4+ 22.♖g2 fxg4 23.♕e4 ♕f5 (23...♜xe4 24.♜h1! but not 24.♜xe4? ♕f5! 25.♜xf5 ♜h3+ 26.♖f2 ♜f3 mate) 24.♜h1 ♕xe4+ 25.♜xe4 ♜xh1+ 26.♜xh1 ♜xe4 27.♜xh5.

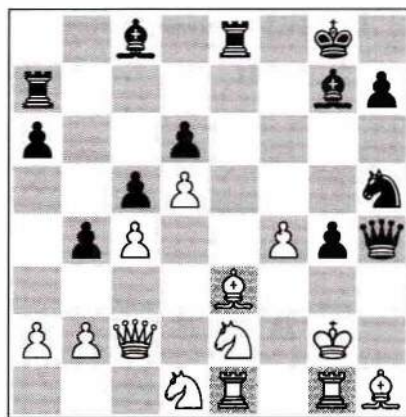
But now 22.♕e4? is refuted by 22...♜xe4! 23.♜xe4 ♜h4+ 24.♖g2 ♕f5. You can see how little room the white king has.

Also, 22.♜xg4 was impossible because the other rook is unprotected: 22...♕xg4 23.♕xg4 ♜h4+. So White has only one move.

22.♕h1 ♜h4+ 23.♖g2 ♜a7!

The position of the white pieces is so awkward that I have time to mobilise

my reserves. 23...♕f6 was also interesting, although after 24.♖f1 ♜xe3 25.♖xe3 ♜h3+ 26.♕g2 ♜xe3 (♕d4 is threatened), White still has the defence 27.♜b3, when Black gets an ending with two pawns for the exchange.



24.♜b3

Let's look at the other lines:

A) Playing 24.♖f1 first would not lead to a transposition as, after 24...♜ae7? 25.♜d2! (25.♕f2 loses quickly after 25...g3!), Black has nothing decisive: the enemy queen protects e1 and f4.

The right reply to 24.♖f1 is 24...♜f7!. For example:

A1) 25.♕g2 ♜xe3 26.♖xe3 ♖xf4;

A2) 25.♕f2 g3! 26.♖xg3 ♕h3+ 27.♕g2 ♖xg3+ 28.♕xg3 ♜xf4+! 29.♖f2 (or 29.♕f2 ♕xg2+ 30.♜xg2 ♜h1+! 31.♜g1 ♜h3+ 32.♜g2 ♜xe1+ 33.♖xe1 ♜xg2) 29...♜xe1+ 30.♖xe1 ♜xg3;

A3) 25.♜d2 ♕h6! 26.♕g2 ♖xf4 27.♖xf4 ♕xf4 28.♕xf4 ♜xf4+ 29.♖f2 ♜ef8 30.♜e2 g3.

B) Consequently, the correct reply to 24.♜d2 is also 24...♜f7!;

C) Against 24.♜d3 there are two good moves, namely 24...♜ae7 and 24...♜f7, for example, 25.♕f2 ♜xe2!!;

D) Finally, we can see that 24.♜gf1 is refuted by 24...g3!.

The point of 24.♚b3 is that 24...♖f7 runs into 25.♙f2!.

24...♖ae7 25.♙f1 ♙d4!

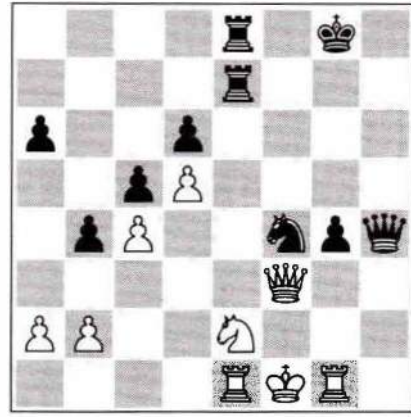
As the rook on e1 is only protected by the king, the white pieces on the e-file are pinned. After 26.♙xd4 exd4 there is no defence against the threat of ...♙xf4.

26.♙f2 ♙xf2 27.♙xf2 ♙xf4 28.♙xg4

Desperation. Neither 28.♙xf4 ♖xe1+ 29.♙g2 g3 nor 28.♙f3 h5 29.♖h1 ♚g5 30.♙e4 ♚e5 offer any hope. In every line Black gains material.

28...♙xg4 29.♙f3 h5 30.♙xg4 hxg4 31.♚f3

White's desperate counter is completely harmless. For example, Black can play 31...♖g7. But a little combination leads to a quick decision.



31...♚xe1+! 32.♙xe1 ♖xe2+ 33.♙d1

Or 33.♙f1 ♖e1+ 34.♙f2 ♖8e2+.

33...♖e1+ 34.♙c2 ♖8e2+ 35.♙b3 ♖e3+ 36.♚xe3 ♖xe3+ 37.♙a4 g3 38.♙a5 g2 39.♙xa6 ♖f3 0-1

For the last few moves, Hamann was extremely short of time, otherwise I expect he would have resigned some moves earlier.

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964																											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4			
1	Smyslov, Vassily	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	17.0		
2	Larsen, Bent	½	*	1	½	0	1	0	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	17.0		
3	Spassky, Boris	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	0	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	17.0		
4	Tal, Mikhail	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	17.0		
5	Stein, Leonid	½	1	½	½	*	0	1	½	0	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	16.5		
6	Bronstein, David	½	0	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	16.0		
7	Ivkov, Borislav	½	1	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	½	0	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	15.0		
8	Reshevsky, Samuel	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	14.5		
9	Portisch, Lajos	0	0	0	½	1	½	½	½	*	½	0	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	14.5		
10	Gligoric, Svetozar	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	0	1	1	14.0		
11	Darga, Klaus	0	0	1	½	½	0	1	½	1	½	*	0	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	13.5		
12	Lengyel, Levente	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	0	1	*	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	13.0		
13	Pachman, Ludek	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	½	12.5		
14	Evans, Larry Melvyn	0	½	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	0	1	1	1	½	½	1	10.0		
15	Tringov, Georgi	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	0	0	0	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	9.5		
16	Benko, Pal	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	0	1	0	1	½	½	9.0		
17	Rossetto, Hector	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	1	0	½	*	½	½	0	1	0	1	8.0		
18	Fogelman, Alberto	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	1	½	*	0	0	1	1	0	1	8.0	
19	Bilek, Istvan	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	1	*	½	1	1	½	½	8.0	
20	Quinones, Oscar	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	7.0		
21	Porat, Yosef	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	½	0	0	½	½	0	1	0	0	½	*	0	½	½	5.5	
22	Perez Perez, Francisco	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	0	1	*	1	1	5.0	
23	Berger, Bela	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	1	1	½	½	½	0	*	0	4.5	
24	Vranesic, Zvonko	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	1	*	4.0

Chapter 8

Great Leap Forward

Previously, none of my best results had been achieved in competitions involving the top Soviet masters. In Moscow 1956, I had made a better score than Botvinnik, but it was a team tournament. Then in Beverwijk in 1960 I had shared first place with Petrosian, but on that occasion it had been said that he was not used to such short tournaments (nine rounds).

With this as a backdrop, my score in the Amsterdam Interzonal of 1964 caused a sensation: it was my great leap forward. Were it not for the special rule which limited the number of Candidates' tournament qualifiers from one country to five, the qualifiers in 1965 would have been seven Soviet players – and me!

After 23 rounds, the final scores were: 1-4. Smyslov, Spassky, Tal and Larsen, 17 points, etc... I totalled three points from five against the Soviet GMs. In the last round I came close to a win against Smyslov, which would have given me the top spot on my own, but the former world champion defended well and the game was drawn.

In other games which I drew I tried hard to achieve victory, and only once, against Bilek, did I have to escape defeat from a lost position. So my results cannot be considered fortuitous or lucky. I played very good games: seven of my thirteen wins have been included in this collection. In fact, I would have liked to include them all, and add two or three of those which ended in draws for good measure. In this tournament I was full of energy, and ideas came to me in abundance. Naturally, my games differed considerably: highly positional games, risky attacks, cool defences, subtle endgames. I played with great will to win and only overestimated my position two or three times.

Game 23 shows energetic attacking play. In Game 24, Berger underrated my outmoded opening. After the tournament, I considered Game 25 my best effort, which I cannot endorse today: perhaps it appealed to me at the time because I was tired after so many exciting games. In game 26 I met little resistance, but the finish is nice. In Game 27, one of my most outlandish opening variations brought me an incredible success against Portisch, when he overestimated his position in the early part of the game.

Games 28 and 29 are wonderful fights. Bronstein was soon in time trouble, but my game against Spassky looked for a long time as if it would end in a draw. Of all the discoveries that I have made whilst working on this book, one of the most striking is the one seen in the comment to move 55.

When the draw was made at the start of the tournament, I was considered most unfortunate in having to face the five Soviets in the last five rounds. Afterwards it was said that the draw favoured me. This argument was based on the special rule (alluded to above), and there was some truth in it. During the last three rounds I

could play without nerves because I was already sure to qualify for the Candidates' tournament, while my opponents were not.

However, it can equally be argued that in the third from last round I was too relaxed, played badly and lost against Stein. No one knows what might have happened if... and if... and if...

In any case, it is absurd to organise the Interzonal with such regulations. Of course, there should be no limit to the number of Soviet players who can qualify for the Candidates' tournament.

Game 23

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Francisco José Perez Perez

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

1.e4 c5 2.f4

As playable as any other more usual system. In the Danish Championship I had had great success with this move.

2...e6 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.♙b5 g6

A move I would never have dreamt of playing. Why not 4...♘ge7?

5.♙xc6 dxc6 6.d3 ♙g7 7.0-0

♘e7 8.♘c3 0-0 9.♚e1 b6 10.a4

♙a6 11.♚h4?!

Very aggressive. Surely the best move is 11.b3 followed by ♙b2 or ♙d2. If White can prevent ...c5-c4, Black has very little chance of getting an active position.

One of the ideas behind the text move is 11...c4 12.dxc4 ♙xc4 13.♚d1 ♚c7 14.f5! with a strong attack. Pérez initiates a fine counter-manoeuvre.

11...♚d7 12.♙e3 c4!? 13.dxc4 c5!



Not 13...♙xc4? 14.♘e5! ♙xe5 15.fxe5 ♙xf1 16.♚f6 ♘f5 17.exf5 ♚d8 18.♙xf1 with a considerable advantage.

14.♘e5

The extra pawn can be held with 14.♘d2 but after 14...♙d4 15.♚f2 ♙xc3 16.bxc3 f5 it wouldn't be worth it.

14...♚b7 15.♚f3!?

If 15.b3? ♘c6!. Apart from the sharp text move, the only other move worth considering was 15.♚ad1.

15...f6



16.♚h3! fxe5

Not absolutely forced. There were other options:

A) 16...h5? 17.♘xg6 is no good because White would have a very powerful attack;

B) 16...h6! was most likely the solution to the defensive problem: 17.♘g4 h5 18.♘f2 f5! (not 18...♙xc4? 19.f5!).

17.♚xh7+ ♙f7 18.f5!

But not 18.fxe5?? ♚h8 19.♚f1+ ♘f5!.

18...exf5

18...♖h8 is no good because of 19.fxe6+ ♔f6 20.♖f3+ ♜f5 21.♞d5+ ♜xd5 22.♖xf5+.

**19.♙h6 ♖g8 20.exf5 ♜xf5
21.♖f1 ♙xc4 22.♖g3**

After 22.♖xf5+ gxf5 23.♜xf5+ ♔e8 Black dodges the attack.

22...♙xf1 23.♜xf5+ ♔e7??

Pérez is a naturally attacking player and certainly didn't feel comfortable defending against this violent attack.

Here he fails to find the right defence: 23...♔f8! 24.♜xf5+ ♜f7 25.♜e4 ♖d8 26.♖f3 ♙xg2! 27.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 28.♔xg2 ♙xh6+ 29.♔f3, which definitely promises White good chances. The enemy bishop is not very active and the knight can cooperate very well with the queen, but Black's position is still a long way from hopeless.

24.♙g5+! ♔f8

Or 24...♔d7 25.♜xf5+ ♔c7 26.♜f7+ ♔c6 27.♜e6+ ♔c7 28.♞d5+.

25.♜xf5+ ♜f7 26.♜e4 ♖c8

The endgame after 26...♙xg2 27.♜xg2 ♖c8 28.♖f3 ♙f6 29.♖xf6 will be easily won.

27.♖f3 ♙c4

If 27...♙a6 28.♖xf7+ ♔xf7 29.♜f5+ winning.

28.♜xc4 ♜xf3 29.gxf3 1-0**Game 24**

Bishop's Opening

Bent Larsen

Bela Berger

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

1.e4 e5 2.♙c4

'In preparing for this tournament, the other participants have studied Boleslavsky's latest innovations, but Larsen has studied Greco and Philidor,' said the Spanish player F.J. Perez Perez.

2...♞f6 3.d3 d5?

The inexperienced Australian master underrates my 'modest' opening. After this move it is difficult for Black to defend his e-pawn.

**4.exd5 ♞xd5 5.♞f3 ♞c6 6.0-0
♙g4?**

Somewhat better, if not very pleasant, is 6...♙e7 7.♖e1 f6.

7.♖e1 ♙e7

Naturally 7...f6? is refuted by 8.♞xe5.

8.h3 ♙xf3 9.♜xf3 ♞d4!

A spirited attempt in a near-critical position. Against 9...♞f6 10.♙g5 was strong.

10.♜g4!

10.♜xd5 ♜xd5 11.♙xd5 ♞xc2 is not bad for Black and 10.♜d1 would have given him time to breathe.

10...0-0

Resignation. Other moves were no better:

A) 10...♞xc2 11.♖xe5 ♞f6 (11...c6 12.♜xg7 ♖f8 13.♖xd5! loses quickly) 12.♜xg7 ♔d7 13.♙g5 ♖g8 14.♜xf7 ♖xg5 15.♖xg5 ♞xa1 is no good because White has two good continuations: the simple 16.♞c3 and 16.♜e6+, e.g. 16...♔e8 17.♖g8+ ♞xg8 18.♜xg8+ ♔d7 19.♜e6+ ♔e8 20.♜f7+ ♔d7 21.♜f5+ ♔e8 22.♙f7+ ♔f8 23.♜xh7 ♙f6 24.♙c4, etc.

B) 10...♜d6 and now:

B1) the line 11.♔xd5? ♚xd5 12.♚xg7 0-0-0 offers some possibilities, but...

B2) 11.♘a3! is stronger. Black doesn't have a reasonable reply. For example, 11...0-0 12.c3 ♘e6 13.♘b5 etc...

**11.♚xe5 ♘f6 12.♚d1 ♔d6
13.♚e1 ♚e8 14.♔e3**

White has an extra pawn and a satisfactory position. Now he completed his development.

**14...c5 15.♘d2 ♔c7 16.♘f3 ♚d6
17.♔xd4 cxd4 18.♚xe8+ ♚xe8
19.c3 dxc3 20.bxc3 ♘h5**

A nervous attempt to attack after which White can combine defence of his position with plundering.

Black should play 20...♚e7, though of course my advantage is considerable. For example, a good reply would be 21.♚b3.

**21.♚a4! ♚e7 22.♚xa7 ♘f4
23.♚xb7 h5 24.♚c8+ ♔h7
25.h4 1-0**

Game 25

Vienna Game

Bent Larsen

Levente Lengyel

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

**1.e4 e5 2.♔c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 ♘c6
4.d3 ♔b4**

The advantage of using an antique opening is that your opponent probably won't have analysed it in great detail. If he has any view about what he should play, it will generally be based on a rather superficial knowledge of theory rather than his own studies.

In this case, the Hungarian grandmaster follows Gligoric's recipe. In the third round, Gligoric reached a more or less equal game in our game, which ended in a draw. Six rounds later, Lengyel uses



At the 1964 Amsterdam Interzonal.

the same line, and would probably have been satisfied with the same result. But did Gligoric really get a completely equal game? I didn't think so, and I was happy to give this line another spin.

The most frequent-seen moves here had been 5.♘e2 and 5.♔g5, though I preferred 5.♘f3 after which the position can be considered a Ruy Lopez with the colours reversed. In certain lines White's extra tempo allows him to play very incisively, e.g. 5.♘f3 d5 6.exd5 ♘xd5 7.0-0!, which is a promising pawn sacrifice.



**5.♘f3 d6 6.0-0 ♔xc3 7.bxc3
♘a5 8.♔b3 ♘xb3 9.axb3 0-0
10.c4 ♚e7**

The game against Gligoric continued 10...b6 11.♔e2 ♘d7 12.♙g5 f6 13.♙e3 ♜e8 14.♘d2 ♜f8 15.f4, and White held a slight initiative. Lengyel had probably studied this game and here decided to diverge.

Is it equal? I wouldn't take Black here. The opposite-coloured bishops don't guarantee a draw as long as there are other pieces on the board. What I liked was that White had a good pawn centre. The two exchanges had brought two flank pawns closer to the centre. It may not have been much, but I was satisfied with this small advantage. It upset me when Gligoric got away with a draw, but now I had another chance.

11.♘d2 ♘d7 12.♔h5 ♘c5 13.f4

This important advance must be made before the black knight reaches e6. But now Lengyel can exchange queens. OK, let him, it doesn't change the basic structure of the position.

13...exf4 14.♜xf4 ♔e5 15.♔xe5 dxe5 16.♜f2 ♘e6 17.♘f3 f6 18.♙e3 a6



White still has the better pawn centre. We mustn't lose sight of the fact that Black has few ways to get active play. Almost everything he tries will only weaken his position. However, what can White do? In the long term, he must advance in the centre (c2-c3 and d3-d4). But there is plenty of time, and

it is best to try to accrue some positional advantages.

19.♘h4 ♙d7 20.♘f5 ♜ae8 21.h3 ♜f7 22.♔h2 ♘f8 23.g4 ♘g6 24.♘g3 ♘e7 25.♜af1 ♙e6 26.♘e2

Was the reader expecting 26.g5? It does little and leads to exchanges. Before pressing on the kingside, White must first ensure that Black cannot reply with ...f6-f5.

26...♘c6 27.♔g3 ♘b8 28.♘c3 c6

An important moment. Black, wisely, does not allow ♘d5. But it creates a new hole in his position.

29.c5 ♘d7 30.♘a4 ♜d8 31.h4 ♜df8 32.♘b2 ♜c8 33.♜a1

I spent a lot of time on 33.♘c4, but after ...♙xc4 I would have had a position with few chances of making a breakthrough.

The a4-b4 rook manoeuvre may seem rather odd, but sooner or later White will play d3-d4 and the rook will protect his b-pawn whilst also attacking the enemy b-pawn. This is very unpleasant for Black, who has very little space and whose pieces are getting in each other's way.

33...♔f8 34.♜a4 ♔e8 35.♜b4 ♜c7 36.c3 g6?

White is preparing to advance in the centre and Lengyel is keen to get some counterplay. This nervous reaction was a great help to me.

He had better moves, such as 36...♔d8, or 36...♜e7. For example:

A) 36...♜e7 37.d4? is a mistake because of 37...♙f7, but White can play 37.g5;

B) After 36...♔d8, 37.d4 can be played, but it is not clear what the answer to 37...♜e7 is. One of the merits of 36...♔d8 is that the king can defend the b-pawn. With the king on e8, the white knight can in some lines go to d6 with check.

Against 36...♔d8 I would probably have played quiet moves with a view to reach the time control, and only then initiate decisive action. But after 36...g6 I felt I should strike at once.

37.d4! h5?

It is hard for Black to remain passive (especially after 37.d4!). His f-pawn is weak and 38.g5 is more of a threat. If 37...f5, the white knight would head for d6 as I mentioned in the comment above: 38.gxf5 gxf5 39.exf5 ♕xf5 40.♖c4!. But the text move only worsened my opponent's predicament.

38.g5 fxg5

If 38...f5 39.exf5 ♕xf5 40.♖xf5 and now both 40...♕xf5 41.♖c4 and 40...gxf5 41.dxe5 are far from satisfactory.

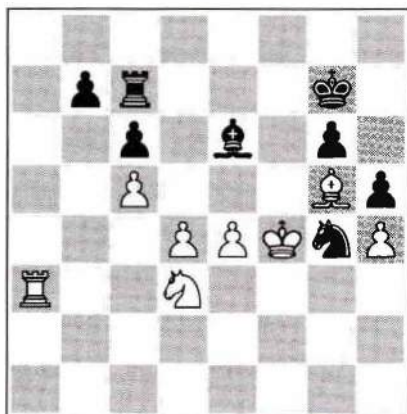
39.♕xg5 exd4 40.♖xf7 ♔xf7 41.cxd4

At this point the game was adjourned. White has a big advantage. His pawn centre is very strong and also Lengyel's g-pawn is a liability.

41...♖f6 42.♔f4

I could also have played 42.♕xf6 ♔xf6 43.♔f4, but there is no reason to resolve the opposite-coloured bishop situation. White is ready to exchange knights, for example 42...♖d7 43.♖d3 ♖g4 44.♖e5+ ♖xe5 45.♔xe5 ♖c7 46.d5! winning easily.

42...a5 43.♖a4 ♕xb3 44.♖xa5 ♖g4 45.♖a3 ♕e6 46.♖d3 ♔g7



47.♖e5! ♖c8

If 47...♖xe5 48.♔xe5, White has a dominating position. Even with the rooks off the board, the endgame would be won in many cases. However, I should not initiate the exchange of knights on g4 as it would give my opponent a passed pawn.

48.♕e7 ♖e8 49.♕d6 ♖xe5

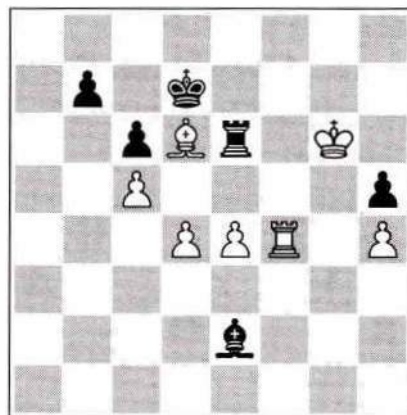
Black's choice of moves is very limited.

50.♕xe5+ ♔f7 51.♔g5 ♕g4 52.♖a1 ♖e6 53.♖b1 ♖e7 54.♖f1+ ♔e8 55.♔xg6

Finally winning material. In truth, the capture of the g-pawn is not as important as the resulting weakness of the h-pawn.

55...♔d7 56.♖f4 ♕e2 57.♕d6 ♖e6+

This was the sealed move when the game was adjourned a second time.



Among other things, I analysed the following variation: 58.♔g5 b5 59.♖f7+ ♔e8 60.♖f8+ ♔d7 61.♔f5! (White has to wait for the right time as 61.d5? cxd5 62.exd5 ♖xd6! offers some chances) 61...♕g4+ 62.♔f4 followed by d4-d5.

58.♔g5 ♕d3 59.♕e5 ♕e2 60.♖f2 ♕d3 61.♔f4! ♖g6 62.♔e3 ♕c4 63.♖f5 ♖g1 64.♖xh5 ♖e1+ 65.♔f4 ♕d3 66.♖h7+ ♔e6

After 66...♖e8 67.♟xb7 it is easy enough to win: two extra pawns and Black's pieces are badly placed.

**67.d5+! cxd5 68.exd5+ ♔xd5
69.♟d7+ 1-0**

He resigned as there follows 69...♖c4 70.♟d4+ ♔c3 71.♟e4+ ♔d2 72.♟c3+.

Game 26

Old Indian Defence

Zvonko Vranesic

Bent Larsen

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 d6 3.♘c3 ♙f5

Probably not very good, but good enough to pose an inexperienced opponent some obscure problems.

**4.g3 e5 5.♘f3 ♘bd7 6.♙g2 c6
7.0-0 h6 8.dxe5**

Now Black has a comfortable position. 8.d5 was better.

8...dxe5 9.b3 ♙b4

Rather less aggressive, but also strong, is 9...♙e7, played in the game Toran-Gheorghiu, Palma de Mallorca 1968. With 9...♙b4 I hoped White would weaken his position with a2-a3.

10.♙b2 0-0 11.♟e1?

Perhaps he ought to have continued with 11.a3 ♙e7 12.b4 anyway. With his 11th move, White embarked on a faulty plan.

11...♟b6

Very clever! This threatens ♙xc3 and ♘e4, but the queen also has pressure on the b-file.

12.♘h4 ♙h7 13.e4?

White wants to entomb the bishop on h7, but weakening the d4-square is very dangerous. I agree with Flohr when he wrote: 'Capablanca would not have thought of a move like 13.e4 at all.'

**13...♘c5 14.♟c2 ♘e6 15.♘f3
♟fe8 16.♘a4?**

After this, Black's advantage increases markedly. Of course, 16.♘xe5 wasn't possible because of 16...♘d4. He should have played 16.a3!.

16...♟a5 17.♟e2 b5

The knife at White's throat! He can't play 18.♘c3 ♘d4, nor 18.cxb5 cxb5 19.♘c3 ♟ac8.

**18.a3 ♙d6 19.♙c3 ♟a6 20.♘b2
b4 21.♙e1 bxa3 22.♘a4 ♟ab8!
23.♙c3**



Without a single spectacular stroke, Black has won a pawn. The significance of this advantage is not yet evident and a weak move by Black could still let his opponent back into the game. But White won't be able to regain his material because my last move prepared a combination that sets the position on fire. One of the effects of the combination is that the a3-pawn becomes a dangerous passer, just two steps away from the queening square.

To this point there had been nothing special about the game; I simply exploited my opponent's mistakes. However, the energetic way in which my advantage is now transformed into a win gives the game a certain charm.

**23...♘xe4! 24.♟xe4 ♙xe4
25.♟xe4 ♟xb3 26.c5 ♘xc5
27.♘xc5 ♙xc5**

Rook and four pawns are worth more than two minor pieces, so White tries to capture one or two pawns.

28.♙xe5 ♖d3!

Setting up a nice finish, and White walks right into it.

28...f6? would have been a mistake because of 29.♙f1!, but the following line was playable: 28...♖xf3 29.♙xf3 ♙d6, as both 30.♖xc6 and 30.♙e2 ♖xe5 lead to an easily won endgame.

However, the text move leaves White without a defence. After 29.♖xd3 ♖xd3 the threat is ...♖xf3 and White also has to keep his eye on the a3-pawn: 30.♙f4 ♖e2! 31.♙f1 ♖xf2 is also decisive.

29.♖xc6



29...♖xe5! 30.♙xe5 ♙xf2+!
31.♙xf2

Or 31.♙h1 ♖b1+.

31...♖d4+! 32.♙e2 ♖b2+ 0-1

Game 27

French Defence

Bent Larsen

Lajos Portisch

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 ♙b4
4.exd5 exd5 5.♖f3!?

This set Portisch thinking. The exchange variation has long had a reputa-

tion for dull, drawish play. For example, 5.♙d3 ♘c6 6.♙e2 ♘ge7 followed by ♙f5 and Black has no problems.

The text move, which I had played in some blitz games against my friend Palle Ravn (Danish champion in 1957) is directed against the manoeuvre ...♘ge7 and ...♙f5. After 5...♙e7 6.♙d3 ♘bc6 7.♙ge2, White's position is very attractive.

Thanks to the present game, 5.♖f3 had a brief vogue, but it again disappeared from practice because of the reply 5...♖e7+!. For example, 6.♙e2 ♘c6 7.♖xd5 ♙f6, with compensation for the pawn.

Here are the variations:

A) During the game I pondered 5...♖e7+ and toyed with the idea 6.♙e3 ♙xc3+ 7.bxc3 ♖a3 8.♙d2, which may look strange but is very favourable for White. However, the game Mestrovic-Maric, Kraljevo (Yugoslavia) 1967, appears to cast doubt on 6.♙e3 because of 6...♙f6 7.♙d3 c5!. After this I tend to think that 5...♖e7+ is Black's strongest move;

B) Immediately after the game, O'Kelly said the simplest solution for Black was 5...♙e6, but I disagree as after 6.♙d3 ♖f6 7.♙f4! White is fine;

C) 5...c5 has also been recommended but 6.dxc5 d4 7.a3 ♖a5 8.♖b1 looks very promising for White.

Portisch had enough to think about.

5...♙c6 6.♙b5 ♙e7 7.♙f4 0-0

Konstantinopolsky, acting as second for Bronstein in this tournament, later recommended 7...♙f5. The idea is 8.0-0-0 ♖d7 and ...0-0-0. It is probably a satisfactory development for Black but can 7...0-0 be considered a mistake on Black's part? As Portisch's next move clearly shows, he was keen to make a

fight of it and didn't mind the kings heading for opposite sides of the board.

8.0-0-0 ♖a5?

A premature attack, as far as I can see. But after the game we are all so wise. 8...♙f5 has been recommended, but I don't understand why Black should let White gain a tempo by threatening the bishop and thus facilitating the kingside attack. I think the right move is 8...♙e6.

9.♗ge2 c6 10.♙d3 b5



11.h4!

The correct prelude to the attack, because it creates an immediate threat which wins an important tempo.

11...♗c4 12.h5 f6

Here's the question: why doesn't Black play 12...♙a5 or 12...a5? Because of the threat 12...a5 13.h6 g6 14.♙xg6 ♗xg6 15.♙c7! ♙xc7 16.♙f6.

It's easy to understand why Black disliked 12...h6: the g4-g5 advance would create powerful threats.

13.g4 ♙a5?

Portisch probably underestimated White's defensive possibilities. After the game 13...a5 was suggested, but 14.♙g3 a4 15.g5 f5 16.♙xc4 dxc4 17.a3 and Black finds himself facing the same problems as in the game.

14.♙xc4 dxc4

After 14...bxc4 it would be difficult to exploit the b-file, besides which the

chances of mounting a pawn storm would have been lost.

15.a3! ♙xc3

The defensive resource 15.a3 was actually a trap to win the queen: 15...♙xa3 16.bxa3 ♙xa3+ 17.♗d2 b4 18.♙a1 bxc3+ 19.♗xc3 ♙b4 20.♙hb1!.

After the exchange, White's advantage is clear. Black has seriously weakened his dark squares, and White has first use of the e-file.

16.♗xc3 ♙d8

A sensible decision. After 16...b4 17.axb4 ♙xb4 18.♙he1 Black has few prospects. Now I could have continued with 17.♗xb5, but my opponent would have had good chances after 17...♙d5!.

17.♙he1 a5?

It is easy for commentators to say that Portisch should have continued with 17...♗d5. The endgame after 18.♗xd5 ♙xd5 19.♙xd5+ cxd5 20.f3 is very poor for Black, despite the presence of opposite-coloured bishops. The black bishop is very passive and White controls the only open file. In some variations my king goes to c3, threatening to invade the enemy camp, which must be prevented with ...a7-a5, although this weakens the pawn.

18.♙g3 ♙a7

If 18...b4 19.♙d6! was a most disagreeable reply.

19.h6!

There is no need to open any more lines on this side because the e-file can be used. However, a further weakening of the opponent's dark squares will prove useful.

19...g6 20.♙d6 ♙e8

Weakens the f-pawn. However, after 20...♙f7 21.♙e2 Black would be lost.

21.♙f4!



White has a winning position. Would I have got there so fast playing a theoretical line? (I've only played 5.♙f3 once in tournament games – otherwise it wouldn't be a surprise weapon.)

21...♙f7

Or 21...♘d5 22.♘xd5 cxd5 23.♙xf6! ♙xf6 (23...♙f7 24.♙h4!) 24.♙xe8+ ♙f7 25.♙f8+ ♙e6 26.♙e1+!

22.♙e5 f5

Now it's blowing a gale through the dark squares! However, neither 22...♘g8 23.♘e4, nor 22...♘d5 23.♘xd5 cxd5 24.♙xf6! were any better.

23.♙b8 ♖b7



24.♙e5!

The most elegant solution. Naturally 24.♘e4 ♘d5 25.♘d6+ ♙f8 26.♘xb7 was also good enough.

24...♙g8 25.g5 b4

After 25...♘d5 26.♘xd5 cxd5 27.f4 Black is completely paralysed, and I

would win by doubling rooks on the e-file. That was my plan, and to my way of thinking it is very pretty; however, 27.♙d6! was a quicker way.

26.♙f6+ ♙e8 27.♙xc6+ ♙f7

Alternatives were:

A) 27...♙d7 28.♙xe7+ ♙xe7 29.♙f6+ ♙e8 30.♙e1+;

B) 27...♙d7 28.♘d5;

C) 27...♙f8 28.♙d6 bxc3 29.♙xe7 ♙xe7 30.♙e1.

28.♙f6+

White has several ways to win. For example, 28.♙xc4+ ♙f8 29.♙xe7 ♙xe7 30.axb4. However, I found something that looks more energetic.

28...♙e8 29.d5

Another idea was 29.♘d5 ♙xd5 30.♙d6 ♙f7 31.♙xe7 ♙xe7 (Black could prolong resistance with 31...♙xf6) 32.♙c6+ ♙d8 33.♙xe7 ♙xe7 (33...♙xe7 34.♙d5+) 34.♙c7+ ♙d7 35.♙e1+.

29...♙f8 30.♙c6+ ♙d7

If 30...♙f7 31.♙xc4.

31.♙d6 ♙f7

Or 31...♙xc6 32.dxc6 ♙a7 33.♘d5 ♙f7 34.c7.

32.♙xe7 bxc3

If 32...♙xc6 33.♙c5+; and if 32...♙xe7 33.♙xe7+.

33.♙b4+

1-0

Game 28

King's Indian Defence

David Bronstein

Bent Larsen

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

This was probably the most closely analysed game of the tournament, which was essentially down to the number of interesting combinations it featured, but also to the great influence it had on the final standings.

It was played in Round 19, when the situation at the top was: Spassky and Larsen 14 points; Bronstein, Smyslov and Tal 13½; Stein 12½; Ivkov 12; Portisch, Reshevsky and Darga 11. It seemed likely I would qualify, but I was anxiously hoping to retain the top spot despite still having to face the five Soviet players. Of course, Soviet masters used to win almost every tournament. So my 'obstacle course' began with this victory against Bronstein. Sensation! Bronstein wrote two interesting articles about the game. One was in *Shakhmatnaya Moskva* (1 August 1964), entitled 'Why I lost to Larsen' (because many people had asked Bronstein that question!), and another in *Shakhmatny Bulletin*, in July 1968. The latter article gives you an insight into masters' methods of play by studying the time spent on each move.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 g6

A move that reflects my fighting spirit and self-confidence. As a matter of fact, I think Bronstein knows more about the King's Indian than I do but... let's fight!

3.♘c3 ♗g7 4.e4 d6 5.♗e2 0-0 6.♗g5

I remember a sensible comment O'Kelly made about this move. He wrote that he had the impression that it was probably not a smart choice because this variation was very popular during the years when I was making my international breakthrough and therefore I should be expected to know it well. It became popular after 1954, when Averbakh won a brilliant victory against Panno in the USSR-Argentina match.

However, it must be added that I haven't played the King's Indian Defence very often and I've only played this particular line once, against Szabo in the Dallas tournament of 1957.

6...c5 7.d5 e6 8.♘f3

8.♗d2 is preferable.

8...h6



Then considered the most accurate. Most masters and theorists are still of this opinion. Where does the bishop go?

The aforementioned game against Szabo continued 9.♗d2 exd5 10.exd5 ♗f5 11.♘h4 ♗d7 12.0-0 ♘a6 13.♘f3 ♗e8 14.♗d3 ♗g4 15.h3 ♗xf3 16.♗xf3 ♘d7 17.a3 ♗b6 18.♗d1 ♗xb2 19.♗b1 ♗xa3 20.♗a1 ♗b2 – draw!

For some time 9.♗h4 was the move, but now 9...g5 10.♗g3 exd5 11.cxd5 ♘h5 is considered very satisfactory for Black.

Bronstein chooses a third possibility.

9.♗f4?! exd5 10.exd5

Against 10.cxd5 Black can continue with the complex line 10...b5!? 11.♗xb5 ♘xe4. The same line is also possible with the bishop on e3, and with this line Portisch won a fine game (with black) against Donner in Lugano in 1968.

But my problem at that moment was to find out why ♗d2 was played instead of ♗f4. What is best against ♗f4? I soon found the answer. Bronstein's record of the used time for each move shows I spent six minutes on my 9th move –

probably thinking about 9...e5 – and only a minute on my 10th. So my plan was already made when I exchanged pawns.

10...♖e8!

I don't know if 9.♙f4 was the result of 'homework' or an idea conceived at the board, but Bronstein consumed 19 minutes on it and now invested 13 minutes on move 11, and 17 on move 12. Did he miss something? Did he overlook 10...♖e8?

If White castles, Black plays 11...♘e4. The important difference between ♙d2 and ♙f4 is that Black wins a tempo after 12.♘xe4 ♖xe4. Anyway, White probably ought to castle.

11.♘d2? ♘h5 12.♙g3

Almost all the commentators agree that 12.♙e3 was very risky because of 12...♖xe3 13.fxe3 ♔h4+. Only Flohr suggests that the position after 14.♙f1 ♘g3+ 15.hxg3 ♔xh1+ 16.♙f2 ♔xd1 is approximately equal; a view with which I do not concur as Black has a significant advantage.

Both Bronstein and I spent some minutes on 12.♙e3, but because of the continuation 14.g3 ♘xg3 15.♘f3 ♔h3 16.♖g1. White's position is highly unsatisfactory; Black has more than enough compensation for the exchange.



12...♙g4?!

It is quite evident that Black has no difficulties. An excellent continuation was, for example, 12...♘xg3 13.hxg3 ♘d7, with a slight advantage. Another was 12...♙xc3 13.bxc3 ♙g4 14.f3 ♙f5, which was more aggressive and also very good, but I did not want to give up the strong g7-bishop.

If White plays 13.f3 now, he will have serious problems on the dark squares after 13...♘xg3 14.hxg3 ♙f5. Of course, Bronstein castles.

13.0-0 ♘xg3 14.hxg3 ♙xe2

I spent a quarter of an hour looking at quiet lines such as 14...♙xc3 15.♙xg4 ♙g7 and 15...♙xd2 16.♔xd2 ♔g5. In both cases I would have had a microscopic advantage, but the danger of a draw was imminent. The text move shows that I was playing all-out for victory.

15.♘xe2 ♙xb2!?

This capture was widely criticised as too daring. But no one has proved it wrong. Of course, 15...♘d7 was the way to go if Black wanted a quiet life, but then it would have been better to go for 14...♙xc3, because White would be left with a bad bishop.

16.♖b1 ♙g7

I quote Bronstein: 'The choice of a retreat square for the bishop cost Larsen four minutes – due in part to my asking him after 16.♖b1 if he was playing for a win, to which he replied, "Yes!"'

17.♖xb7 ♘d7

Black plans to encircle the white rook. Should Bronstein play conservatively for a draw, or go on the attack? No wonder that his next move cost him 24 minutes.

After the game Bronstein said that he was at least happy that he had been able to choose an aggressive continuation,

despite the nervous tension. I understand this comment, but I would add that, in my opinion, Black would have a slight edge if the rook went back.

Against 18.♖b3 I intended 18...♔a5! and White's position is awkward, with his weak pawns on a2 and c4. If the rook retreats, I think 18.♜b5 is best, when Black's reply might be 18...♘e5, with slight pressure.

18.♘f4!? ♘b6!?

The rook is trapped. Yes, but the knight has strayed a long way from the king-side. I used only four minutes for this move, which may seem reckless but the decision was really made because I took a long time over my 14th move. Playing 18...♘e5 or 18...♜e7 would have felt like making a concession.

White has to defend the rook from the threat of ...♜c8, but he can't play 19.♜g4 because of 19...♜g5. Therefore, only one option remains.

19.♜e1! ♘c3

The line 19...♜xe1+? 20.♜xe1 ♘c3? would have been refuted by 21.♘g6! ♘xd2 22.♘e7+, but what to do now? Black threatens to win the c-pawn.



20.♘e4! ♘xe1!?

Bronstein said he had spent a long time analysing 20...♘g7. The best response to it is 21.♘d2, so the game might have ended here with a draw by repetition.

The text move he considered too bold, especially since I played it after only six minutes' reflection. On the other hand, as he rightly said, at this stage my problems were easier to solve than his, because my best line appeared to offer me a safe draw.

There is also a third option: 20...♘e5. But after 21.♘xg6 fxg6 22.♜g4 ♜e7 23.♜xg6+ ♜g7 24.♜xg7+ ♘xg7 25.♘xd6, White has three pawns for a piece and can hardly lose.

21.♘e6! ♘xf2+!

After twenty minutes' study of the secondary variations, I stuck with the main line. The alternatives were:

A) 21...♜c8? 22.♘f6+ ♖h8 23.♜xf7;

B) 21...♘c3? 22.♜f3.

C) 21...fxe6? 22.♜g4 ♜e7 23.♜xg6+ ♖f8 24.♘f6!;

D) 21...♘b4? 22.♘xd8 ♜xe4, but before you analyse 23.♜f3, look at 22.♜f3!, which makes the entire line out of the question.

These lines can be quickly discarded. A more attractive idea is:

E) 21...♜xe6 22.dxe6, over which I spent a lot of time; however, Black has no defence after 22...f5 23.e7.

With the text move, Black offers a piece sacrifice to gain a tempo, which is quite normal at such critical junctures like this. Besides, Black has the material to give up.



22.♔xf2

Bronstein thought for eight minutes and now only had half an hour left to reach the time control. Why did he not capture immediately, having planned this in advance? 'The appetite grows while you play,' he explained. He began to dream of victory.

Other options were:

A) 22.♘xf2 is unworthy of consideration as, after 22...fxe6, his attack has evaporated.

But there are three king moves to analyse:

B) Bronstein has cited the line 22.♔h1 ♕d4 several times, but 22.♔h1?? is a major mistake because of 22...♕xg3!!, e.g. 23.♘xd8 ♖xe4 winning;

C) If White wanted to capture the enemy queen at all costs, one of the most logical continuations would have been 22.♔h2 ♕d4 23.♘xd8 (23.♖f3 f5) 23...♖axd8 although Black has good compensation for the queen. His bishop is strong, White's c-pawn is weak and before long I would have been the one attacking on the kingside. For example, 24.♘d2 ♘d7! 25.♖b3 ♘e5 26.g4 ♔g7 with excellent play for Black;

D) Black also had good prospects after 22.♔f1 ♕d4! Here 22...♘xc4? looks tempting, but it is weak because of 23.♖f3!.

22...fxe6 23.♖g4 ♖f8+

Somewhat inexplicably, I spent 14 minutes over this natural move. Now I also had less than half an hour to reach the time control. But while Bronstein was waiting for me to play this move, he suddenly noticed that he had missed something, which made him nervous.

After 24.♔g1 ♖f6 25.dxe6 his calculation had been:

A) 25...h5 26.e7 ♖xe7 27.♖xe7 hxc4 28.♘xf6+ ♔f8 29.♖b7 ♘xc4 30.♖d7! with perpetual check from the knight;

B) However, he had not previously spotted 25...♖f8 26.e7 ♖f1+ 27.♔h2 ♖f5.

He began to study this whilst wondering at the same time whether I had moves other than the rook check. After 23...g5, he gives the continuation 24.♖h5 ♖f8+ 25.♔g1 ♖f6 26.dxe6 ♖f8 27.e7 ♖f1+ 28.♔h2 ♖e8 29.♖xe8+, but there is a clear winning line after 29.♖xh6.

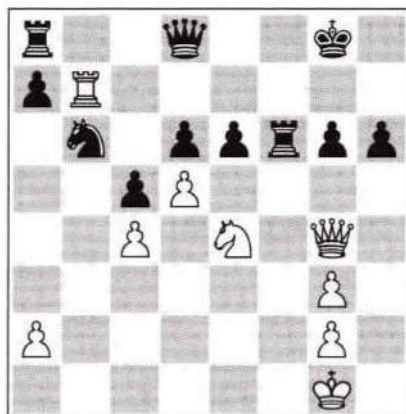
When I finally gave the check, Bronstein needed 11 minutes for his reply. He was losing confidence.

24.♔g1

It is rarely good policy for a king to walk out into the open board but of course this possibility has to be studied, especially by a player who is losing confidence in his calculations. 24.♔e2 and now:

A) 24...♖e8 25.♘xd6 exd5+ 26.♘xe8 ♖axe8+ 27.♔d1! leaves Black with the choice of a perpetual check with the rook (f1 and f2) and a winning attempt with 27...♖f6!?

B) However, Black has something rather better: 24...♖f6 25.dxe6 ♖f8 26.e7 ♖g7! 27.e8♖+ ♖xe8 28.♖xg7+ ♔xg7 with a considerable advantage. This variation is the refutation of 24.♔e2 or ♔e1.

24...♖f6

25. ♖h3??

Panic! Bronstein was left with 18 minutes to reach the time control and spent only two on this move, abandoning his previous calculations.

To say that Bronstein only needed two minutes to make this decision is not entirely accurate, since the idea of playing 25. ♖h3 matured while I spent 14 minutes on playing 23... ♜f8+, and the 11 minutes which Bronstein used to calculate 24. ♔g1. Now he was expecting 25...h5 or 25...g5.

A) 25...g5?? is completely unplayable: 26.dxe6 ♜f8 27.e7 ♜f1+ 28.♔h2 ♜f5 29.♜xh6 and White wins!;

B) While I was thinking about 25...h5, Bronstein was analysing in great detail the position after the queen exchange: 25...h5 26.dxe6 ♜f8 27.e7 ♜f1+ 28.♔h2 ♜f5 29.♜xf5 ♜xf5. Fear of time trouble played a major role in this 'practical' reasoning, but his time pressure was not yet that bad.

Nerves, nerves, nerves. Suddenly Bronstein saw where he had gone wrong. Bronstein couldn't sleep after such an exciting game. Past midnight, he woke up his second, Konstantinopolsky: 'rook takes pawn!' Excitedly, he showed his sleepy friend the following variation: 25.dxe6 ♜f8 26.e7 ♜f1+ 27.♔h2 ♜f5 28.♜xf5 ♜xf5 29.♜xa7!!.



The point is 29... ♜e5? 30. ♔f6+ with advantage to White, e.g. 30... ♔g7 31.e8 ♜+ ♜xa7 32. ♜b8.

What can Black do?

The best continuation is 29... ♜b8 30. ♜b7 ♜a8 31. ♜a7 or 31. ♜xb6 ♜e5 32. ♔f6+ ♔f7 33.e8 ♜+ ♜axe8 34. ♔xe8 ♜xe8 35. ♜xd6 ♜e4 with a draw.

A very nice variation. Bronstein explained that, after this discovery, he was able to sleep peacefully. The move 18. ♔f4 had been correct. His judgment of the position was not at fault!

The next day, Bronstein demonstrated this variation in the press room. There was great enthusiasm. Donner had already published the game in his newspaper with a question mark against 22. ♔xf2. Now he would have to publish it again in the same paper, but this time with an exclamation mark instead. I hadn't seen 29. ♜xa7! during the game. It is easy enough to miss: the rook attacks a black rook which has not played any part in the game to this point. Who sees such an idea? And who can see that there is no safe square on the eighth rank?

The reason I didn't subject this 'end-game with an extra rook' to exhaustive analysis was because I wasn't sure we would reach it. After 25.dxe6 I had another possibility, and this other move has to be considered the strongest. Bronstein doesn't mention it in his articles, but I remember that we discussed it. Did it slip his mind? Actually, I like this psychological theory, as this move might have been part of his motivation in playing his 25. ♖h3? move. The move is:

25.dxe6 ♔xc4!!.

Let's look at the variations:



A) After 26.e7 ♖f1+ and now:

A1) 27.♔xf1 ♜e3+ 28.♔e2 ♜xg4 29.exd8♖+ ♜xd8 and Black wins the endgame thanks to his connected passed pawns. With the black knight defending f6, there is no perpetual check;

A2) After 27.♔h2 ♜e8 28.♜e2! ♜f5! 29.g4 ♜f7! (29...♜e5? 30.♜xc4+ d5 31.♜xc5 and White wins) 30.gxf5 ♜e8 material balance is restored, but Black has the advantage, e.g. 31.f6 d5 or 31.fxg6 ♜e6 and suddenly the white king is as exposed as Black's. In many variations the black knight goes to g4 and Black has those two connected passed pawns as his trump-card. The position is still very complicated: however, according to my analysis, the winning chances are on Black's side.

B) I remember agreeing that White would draw in the queen ending which follows 26.♜h4 g5 27.♜xf6+ ♜xf6 28.♜xc4 ♜e8 29.e7+, or 29.♜e4 ♜e7. Now I'm not so sure, but immediately after winning a game such as this, you're filled with bonhomie and affability, happily agreeing with everything suggested by your opponent and others.

However, is it not possible that this variation, with the important knight check on e3, might have induced Bronstein to 'save' his queen before playing 25.dxe6? I like this theory, but Bronstein doesn't mention it. Despite everything he has

written about this game, we still don't know the full story. Perhaps part of it goes back to 1951, maybe to 1958. So Bronstein writes. In 1951, in his world title match against Botvinnik, he was winning until game number 23. In 1958, the Portoroz Interzonal, he lost to Cardoso from the Philippines in the last round and did not qualify for the Candidates' tournament. Somewhere in his nervous system, there are still little scars left by these defeats.

How would I have replied to 25.dxe6? I don't know. I had the drawing line 25...h5 as an emergency exit, and I still had 27 minutes left to reach the time control. So, if I had seen 29.♜xa7!, I would have replied 25...h5 or 25...♜xc4.

After 25.♜h3 I quickly found a clear winning line, and during that short time my opponent saw his impending doom coming.

25...♜f8! 26.♜g5

After 26.♜xf6+ ♜xf6 27.♜xh6 White cannot draw by perpetual check because of 27...♜d4+ 28.♔h2 ♜h8! It is said that backward moves on the long diagonal are easily missed. But it is also said that this doesn't apply to the long central diagonals.

Against 26.dxe6 Black has 26...♜f1+ 27.♔h2 ♜e8. However, after 26.♜g5 the fight is practically over. Black chose the simplest line.

26...♜f1+! 27.♔h2 ♜f5 28.♜xe6 ♜h5 29.♜xh5 gxh5 30.♜xf8 ♜xf8 0-1

This game effectively eliminated Bronstein from the Candidates' Tournament. He still had a mathematical chance of going through, but in the last four rounds he played very nervously and without self-confidence.

And in the tournament in Belgrade, a few months later, he again lost to me. Some games are worth more than a point!

Game 29

Bird's Opening

Bent Larsen

Boris Spassky

Amsterdam Interzonal 1964

1.f4

In Round 20 I drew an interesting game with Tal, which ensured my place in the Candidates' Tournament. In Round 21, a reaction set in as I played very badly against Stein and lost. Now, at the start of Round 22, Smyslov and Spassky had 16 points, Tal, Stein and I had 15½; Bronstein 15. Since only three Soviet players could qualify, my five rivals probably suffered more from nervous tension than me. On the other hand, there is a tendency to relax when you are safe, and that probably cost me the game against Stein.

To avoid another setback, I decided to do something special. It began with the first move. Throughout the tournament I had played 1.e4 (Bishop's Opening, Vienna Game, Caro-Kann Exchange Variation, and lesser-known lines against the Sicilian). The results were brilliant, but those lines no longer held a surprise factor. In my last game with white I played Bird's Opening. Most masters don't think much of it, but I chose it for the important reason that they neither play it nor know much about it. I know it very well, and I had thought up many original ideas in it. Now I used it as a challenge to Spassky, to see what ideas he could come up with.

1...d5 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.e3 g6 4.b4!?



Nothing special, according to the experts. Some grandmasters criticised the move because they believe that White should concentrate play on the kingside in this opening. Nonsense! The Bird doesn't confine itself to just the one flank.

After 1.f4 I think that the fianchetto of the c1-bishop is the most logical. However, 4.b3 allows Black to play ...c7-c5 and ...♘c6. Many years ago I came up with the idea of b2-b4. The drawback is the weakening of the queenside. However, I have had a good degree of success with it and it doesn't worry me.

4...♙g7 5.♙b2 0-0 6.♙e2 ♙g4

The right idea. Black is ready to give up the bishop pair to play ...e7-e5. One possibility for White is to defer castling, for example, continuing with 7.a4, but it is likely that, with correct play, this line would transpose to the game.

Spassky later suggested 6...a5 7.b5 a4, considering it an interesting possibility, which I cannot understand. But then commentators are inclined to criticise almost all the loser's moves.

7.0-0 c6 8.a4 ♘bd7 9.♘a3 ♙xf3

Against 9...♞e8 White would have replied 10.♘e5.

10.♙xf3 ♞e8 11.d4

The ...e7-e5 advance was a dangerous threat. The text move is necessary, but weakens the e4-square; in my opinion,

Black should try to take advantage of it with 11...♖b6. After 12.c3 ♘c8 13.c4 ♘d6, chances are about equal. Black puts a knight on e4 and White puts his faith in his queenside prospects.

After his move 11, Black has no compensation for my queenside space advantage. Contrary to annotations I've read, I consider his next move a mistake.

11...♖e4? 12.♙xe4 dxe4 13.♘c4

In the tournament bulletin, Polugaevsky recommended 13.c4, but I don't agree; the knight would be left without a good move. Also 13...c5!? was an interesting reply.

13...♖b6 14.♘a5 ♘d5 15.♙e1

Why not 15.♙d2 to avoid having to worry about 15...♙d6 16.c4 (16.♙a3 b5) 16...♙xb4?. By way of contrast, after 15.♙e1 ♙d6 16.c4 ♙xb4, White has tremendous play on the queenside after 17.cxd5 ♙xb2 18.♖f2 ♙b6 19.dxc6 bxc6 20.♖b1 ♙a6 21.♖c2. So the point of ♙e1 is to protect the queen. If 15.♙d2 ♙d6 is possible, of course, followed by 16.♙a3, but then Black gets the d5-square for his knight, thanks to 16...b5.

15...♙d7 16.c4 ♘f6 17.b5

Energetic. An alternative was 17.♘b3, but the text move stops Black getting in ...b7-b5 to fight for the d5-square.

17...♙c7 18.♖b1!



In the tournament bulletin, Polugaevsky remarked that 18.h3 was probably better, which was echoed by other annotators; however, it is not correct. See the annotation that follows.

18...♘g4

In *Chess Review*, Kmoch recommended 18...cxb5 19.axb5 b6 20.♘c6 a6 followed by ...axb5 and ...♘d5. The idea is good, but it is not feasible here in view of 21.d5! axb5 22.♙e5, with a great advantage for White. But Kmoch's manoeuvre is exactly how Black would have conquered the d5-square if White had previously played 18.h3?!

19.bxc6 b6

After 19...bxc6 20.♙c3 White is somewhat better.

20.♙e2 f5!?

Not an error, but gives White the chance to make a promising pawn sacrifice. After 20...♘f6 I could have played an interesting piece sacrifice: 21.d5!? bxa5 22.♙e5 ♙d8 23.♖b7.

If Black wants to avoid these alternatives, he has to continue 20...♘h6 or 20...h5, to which I was thinking of replying 21.♘b3 ♙xc6 22.a5 with the idea of isolating a black pawn and, if 22...♙a4, to avoid that happening, then could follow 23.♘d2 ♙xa5 24.♘xe4 with a very strong pawn centre.

21.♘b3 ♙xc6 22.d5!?

This offers very good prospects, but it is probably no better than 22.♖a1 e6 23.a5.

**22...♙xa4 23.♙xg7 ♙xg7
24.♘d4 ♖ec8 25.h3 ♘f6
26.♖fc1 ♙d7 27.g4!**

White has a strong initiative for the pawn. Spassky has to prepare for a difficult defence, which doesn't mean his position is losing, and indeed my opponent manoeuvres very well.

27...♔f7

If 27...fxg4 there follows 28.♘e6+.

28.g5 ♘e8 29.♖a2

Speculative play, but it is difficult to decide if it is also the best.

An interesting alternative was 29.h4 to be able to reply to 29...♘g7 with 30.♖a2, against which 30...e6 is ineffective because of 31.h5 exd5 32.hxg6+ hxg6 33.cxd5, followed by ♖c6 or ♘c6, with a magnificent position. If Black doesn't play ...e7-e6, his knight is passive and I could quietly prepare threats against the queenside pawns.

Also possible is 29...♘d6 30.h5 with very good prospects. Perhaps the most dubious variation is 29...h5!? 30.gxh6 ♘f6 31.♔h1 ♘g4 32.♖g1 even though White has reasonable possibilities, such as 32...♖h8 33.♘c6 or 32...♘xh6 33.♖g5.

After Spassky's next move I no longer needed to worry about the ...e7-e6 advance; however, I had to be wary of his threats to my c-pawn. In the game I underestimated Black's 32nd move.

29...♘d6 30.h4 ♖e8 31.♘e6 ♖h8 32.h5 h6!

Excellent defence. If Black waits, White would prepare to penetrate via the h-file. 32...gxh5 33.♖e2 ♔g6 34.♔f2! clears the way for the white rooks to enter the game.

33.♖b2!

Here I used a lot of time in abandoning my original plan, which was to play 33.hxg6+ ♔xg6 34.♔f2, as it fails against 34...hxg5 35.♖h1 ♖c3. Also unplayable was 34.♖b2? ♘xc4! 35.♖h2 ♘xe3! 36.♖xc8 ♖xc8 37.♖xh6+ ♖xh6 38.gxh6 ♖c1+ 39.♔f2 ♖c2+.

Another option was 33.c5 bxc5 34.♖b2, with some promising possibilities, but Black can probably sacrifice the exchange with 33...♖xc5!.

So only one move remains.

33...gxh5

With the king on f7 Black cannot play 33...♘xc4? 34.♖xc4 ♖xc4 35.♖xc4 ♖xb2 36.d6!! with decisive threats.

34.♖h2 hxg5 35.♘xg5+ ♔e8 36.c5!

Naturally 36.♖a4+ was bad because of 36...b5. Therefore, everyone appended an exclamation mark to the text move, as I did myself. However, studying the position in more detail, I found that it is impossible to prove its superiority to 36.♔g2!, followed later by c4-c5. Both of us were a little short of time, especially Spassky. I think it was the only time he got into time trouble during the tournament.

36...♖xc5 37.♖xc5 bxc5 38.♖a4+ ♔f8 39.♖g2 ♖e8?

There are several better moves, e.g. 39...a5!?

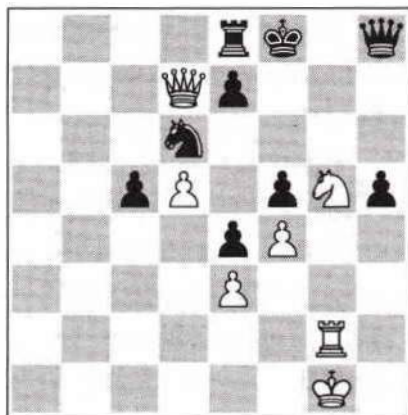
40.♖d7 ♖h6

Unquestionably Spassky cannot allow ♖e6. It was later said that 40...♖b8 forces an immediate draw, but after 41.♖xa7 I think there are still some difficulties to overcome. We'll soon have the chance to test this in a similar position.

41.♖xa7 ♖h8

He must stop ♖a1, but it would have been better for Spassky to have waited one or two minutes in order for this to be the sealed move.

42. ♖d7



End of the first session; Spassky's next move went into the envelope. He spent a lot of time on it. I was convinced that he would seal 42... ♖h6, one reason being that he had made it two moves earlier. Of course, to do anything else would have meant that 40... ♖h6 had been wrong.

Immediately after the game, Polugaevsky – Smyslov's second in Amsterdam – remarked that 42... ♖b8 would have led to a draw. His analysis comprise the following variations:

A) 43. ♖e6+ ♖f7 44. ♖g7+ ♖xg7+ 45. ♖xg7 ♖g8! and Black can perhaps dream of winning;

B) 43. ♖e6 ♖e8! 44. ♖xe4 ♖b1+ 45. ♖h2 fxe4 46. ♖g8+ ♖xg8 47. ♖xg8+ ♖d7 48. ♖e6+ ♖d8 and White cannot hope to win; the reply to 49. f5 is 49... ♖f1;

C) My suggestion is 43. ♖h2 ♖b2 44. ♖d8+ ♖e8. In this variation, I believe White has some chances after 45. d6 ♖xg2+ 46. ♖xg2 exd6 47. ♖d7 ♖g7 48. ♖xf5+. Not without reason, queen and knight attacks often feature in endgame studies: there are many tac-

tical possibilities. In this case, I won't try to prove that White can win, I will only say that Black's defence is distinctly problematic.

When the game was adjourned, I was of the opinion that if Spassky played 42... ♖h6, I wouldn't be able to win. And that's what he played.

42... ♖h6 43. ♖e6+ ♖f7 44. ♖g5+

If 44. ♖d8+ ♖xd8!, but not 44... ♖f8? 45. ♖b7! ♖xb7 46. ♖xf5+ ♖f6 47. ♖h7!. Against 44. ♖xc5 the reply is 44... ♖f6.

44... ♖f8 45. ♖h2 h4?

A surprise! According to my analysis, this pawn had to stay on h5. What had Spassky and Bondarevsky seen against 45... c4? I don't know. After 46. ♖h3 c3 47. ♖e6+ ♖f7 48. ♖d4 there is the reply 48... ♖g8! but not 48... ♖f6? 49. ♖c6!. However, after 46. ♖e6+ ♖f7 47. ♖d4 the reply 47... ♖f6 is strong thanks to the check on h4.

Is this move a mistake? It certainly makes Black's defence more difficult, but if the game can be held, there's no reason to judge it to be wrong. Too bad, because I held it up as an example of the futility of having a second. However, I cannot really cite it as an example because of the annotation at move 55 (55... ♖e4), which demonstrates a drawing line.

46. ♖e6+ ♖f7 47. ♖g5+ ♖f8

48. ♖h3 c4 49. ♖e6+ ♖f7 50. ♖g5+

Also here the reply to 50. ♖d4 is 50... ♖g8, but not 50... ♖f6 because of 51. ♖c6.

There is probably no good reason to give these knight checks. I was surprised by 45... h4 and wanted to take the game back 'to the workshop'. I was tired, but Spassky, who had defended for hours, was possibly more tired still. The way the game proceeds shows this.

50...♙f8 51.♖g1!

A waiting move aimed at luring the black pawn to the sixth rank. Whether it wins or not, I do not know, but it's a very subtle idea. Besides, drastic measures lead to nothing.

Black's reply is forced, as 51...♖c8 is weak owing to 52.♘e6+ ♙f7 53.♖g7+ ♗xg7 54.♘g7 ♙xg7 55.♗xe7+ ♘f7 56.♗d7 ♖c5 57.♗xf5 c3 58.♗xe4 c2? 59.♗d4+.

51...c3 52.♗e6!

As far as I know, Spassky and Bondarevsky hadn't looked at this during their analysis. With the advantage of two pawns, the exchange of queens is not normally to be feared. Black must exchange.

If 52...♗h8? it's mate in two with 53.♗f7+, and if 52...♗g7? 53.♗e5! ♗xe5 54.fxe5 Black cannot save the knight because of the mating threats.

52...♗xe6 53.dxe6 ♙g7

Of course, this is obligatory to avoid mate.

54.♘e4+ ♙h6

The alternative 54...♙f8? is suicide because of 55.♘c3 ♘c4 56.♘d5 ♖d8 57.♘e7 ♘xe3, which is lost with the king on h6 because of 58.♘g8. However, with the king on h7, White still has winning chances, e.g. 58.♘e7 ♖e8 59.♘g6 ♙g7 60.♘e5+ ♘g4?? 61.♙g5! or 60...♙f8 61.♖g6.

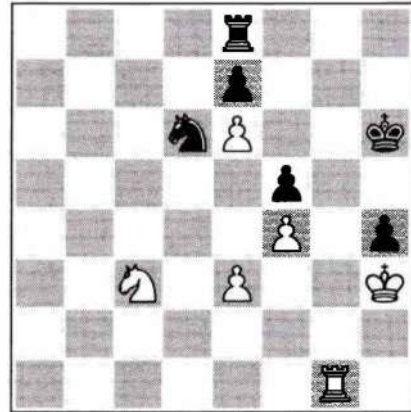
Analysis by many grandmasters after the game led to the conclusion that 54...♙h7 was better, but this does not seem true.

The reason given was the variation 54...♙h7 55.♘xc3 ♘c4 56.♘d5 ♖d8 57.♘e7 ♘xe3, which is lost with the king on h6 because of 58.♘g8. However, with the king on h7, White still has winning chances, e.g. 58.♘e7 ♖e8 59.♘g6 ♙g7 60.♘e5+ ♘g4?? 61.♙g5! or 60...♙f8 61.♖g6.

In fact, I was pondering another continuation: 57.e4!?. After 57...fxe4? 58.♘e7 White would probably win, but 57...♖d6! draws.

55.♘xc3

The game has taken an unexpected turn: material is level and Spassky is once again in time trouble.

**55...♘e4??**

Even so, this is a startling misjudgement. After six hours of tough defence, Spassky loses his nerve. However, the position contains many surprising combinations, and subsequent analysis consistently showed White to be the winner.

A) As previously mentioned, 55...♘c4? is bad because of 56.♘d5 ♖d8 57.♘e7 ♘xe3 58.♘g8+;

B) O'Kelly gave this pretty line: 55...♖b8 56.♘d5 ♖b3 57.♙xh4 ♖d3 58.♘e7 ♖xe3 59.♘g8+ ♙h7 60.♘f6+ ♙h6 61.e7! ♖e6 62.♖d1, winning;

C) For years I have believed that this position was winning. But recently I looked at it again and asked myself why Black could not play 55...♖d8!!, with a view to replying to 56.♘d5 with 56...♘c8 and to 56.♖d1 ♙g7 57.♖d5 with 57...♖c8!.

So 55...♖d8!! is a draw! That is how close Spassky came to winning first place on his own.

56.♘e4 fxe4 57.♙xh4 ♖a8

Or 57...♖f8 58.♖g5 ♖f6 59.f5 followed by ♙g4.

58.f5 ♖a2 59.♖g8 ♖f2 60.♖f8 1-0

Zagreb 1965																						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0		
1	Ivkov,Borislav	*	½	½	0	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	½	1	1	13.5	
2	Uhlmann,Wolfgang	½	*	½	0	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	13.5	
3	Petrosian,Tigran	½	½	*	0	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	12.5	
4	Portisch,Lajos	1	1	1	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	12.0	
5	Parma,Bruno	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	12.0	
6	Bronstein,David	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	11.5	
7	Larsen,Bent	0	0	0	0	0	½	*	1	1	½	½	½	1	0	1	1	1	½	1	10.5	
8	Filip,Miroslav	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	½	9.5	
9	Matanovic,Aleksandar	½	0	½	0	½	½	0	0	*	1	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	9.5	
10	Padevsky,Nikola	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	*	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	½	9.5	
11	Marovic,Drazen	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	0	9.0	
12	Minic,Dragoljub	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	9.0	
13	Antoshin,Vladimir	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	½	*	½	1	½	0	½	½	9.0	
14	Gligoric,Svetozar	0	½	0	1	½	½	0	1	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	8.5	
15	Bisguier,Arthur	0	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	0	0	1	1	½	8.5	
16	Gipslis,Aivars	½	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	*	1	0	1	½	8.5	
17	Damjanovic,Mato	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	1	½	1	0	*	1	1	8.5	
18	Udovcic,Mijo	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	0	1	0	*	½	6.0	
19	Golombek,Harry	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	0	1	½	½	½	0	0	0	½	*	5.0	
20	Bertok,Mario	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	4.0	

Chapter 9

Difficult Choice

As I have mentioned several times, selecting these games has proved difficult. It is not by chance that the title of the book (Larsen refers to *50 Udvalgte Partier, 1948-69*, ed.) doesn't refer to them as 'best games' – where would you find two chess players whose opinions agreed on which games were the best? Which do you rate highest, courage or depth of calculation? Imagination or accuracy? Music or mathematics?

This book (i.e. *50 Udvalgte Partier*, ed.) covers twenty years, and some readers may find it surprising that more than half of the games belong to the four years between 1964 and 1967. I do not know if the greater proportion of my 'best' games were played during this period, but I do claim I played many of my best tournaments. I've been strongly tempted to include games from my worst tournaments; however, with a few exceptions, I have resisted that temptation. When you've played a tournament you were unhappy with, you might feel particularly happy about one game so that later it is difficult to be objective about it.

I thought about choosing many items from the years before 1956. It would have been easy to justify their inclusion as there will always be readers interested in the evolution of my playing style, but I think this would be misleading. I think it would hide the fact that playing strength is less a matter of the quality of the best games than their frequency. A talented young master plays 'like a grandmaster' once or twice a year, a strong grandmaster may do so thirty or more times.

When I look at the best games from my early days, I am usually very impressed. From where did this inexperienced young guy derive his strength? The answer, of course, is that he did not have it at all. In most of his games, his play was uncertain and he made many serious errors, but now and then succeeded in playing a good game. Games 1-4 are excellent, and I would not be ashamed if I played them today. But only a few of the games from that time were of that standard and I must admit that the standard of the opposition was not world-class.

When I started thinking about this book, I first compiled a list of more than a hundred games, without recourse to books, tournament bulletins, or anything else to jog my memory. Later, I added 20 more and discarded two or three that weren't up to the standard that I had envisaged when I thought of them.

So I was left with 120 games of which I had to dispense with more than half, and this was not easy. Previously I had decided to exclude losses because a complete work of art is more beautiful than a flawed one. Every master has occasionally played a magnificent game which has been lost because of an absurd mistake, perhaps in time trouble, and it may seem unfair that the only reward for all their beautiful ideas can be a zero on the crosstable. It is human to annotate such a game and explain how ingenious your play was, but when it comes down to it, the defeat was self-inflicted.

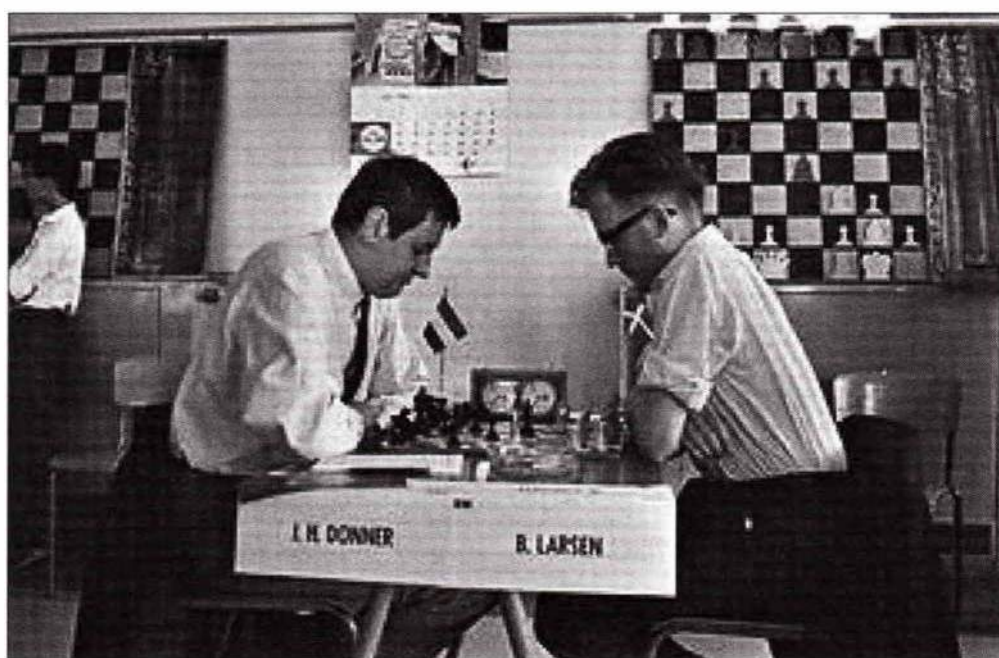
Drawn games are somewhat different. A draw may be the logical conclusion to a wonderful attack that has been stopped in the most accurate way. The public ought to appreciate such games, in contrast to the cautious, lazy sort of draw which is agreed barely out of the opening. For example, my game against Spassky in Moscow 1959 didn't go much beyond move 20, but it was a fierce fight and very logical. But I had many attractive victories on my list, so I crossed out the draws.

This book is not intended as a manual, therefore no game has been selected for its instructive or educational value. Nevertheless, I hope that readers will find my annotations helpful. I have taken into consideration whether a game develops simply and logically, because much of the beauty of chess resides in this simplicity and logic. My comments don't hide the fact that chess is a difficult game and are only designed to evaluate this logic, if it is present.

I have included the odd game that is obviously not among my best, at least when judged against the others. An example of this is game 21, which was included only because of its final phase.

With one exception and a half – the full exception is game 6 and the half, game 44 – I have steered clear of the 'decisive, nerve-breaking, last-round game'. The quality of this kind of struggle is generally low, and the same can be said of matches, at least short ones. This is one of the reasons I have not included a few games from Candidates' competitions.

Of course, there is another reason: such confrontations have been published in magazines around the world and are therefore well-known. My dissatisfaction with FIDE's organisation of Candidates' competitions has not influenced that decision at all. Indeed, I was about to choose a game from my match with Geller, but ultimately I didn't include it because I had already chosen other games I had played with this Soviet master .



Playing Dutch grandmaster Jan Hein Donner at the IBM tournament.

We continue chronologically. A month after the Interzonal, I took part in the IBM tournament, also held in Amsterdam. I was a little tired and ran the risk of losing most of my games. This did not happen, and I won the competition.

I really needed a break but had promised to take part in the Copenhagen Open Championship. In a Swiss system competition, strange things can happen but sixth place exactly reflected my poor standard of play. Hvenekilde, who is not known internationally, finished first, while Olafsson came third.

In October I played rather badly at the Belgrade tournament, in part due to a throat infection. In the circumstances, a tie for fifth place was not a disaster. Things went worse for me in my next visit to Yugoslavia, to participate in the Zagreb tournament in April 1965: 1-2. Ivkov and Uhlmann 13½, 3. Petrosian 12½, 4-5. Portisch and Parma 12, 6. Bronstein 11½, 7. Larsen 10½, etc. I lost against the top five, and also to Bisguier in 19 moves. I considered this event to be part of my training for the Candidates' competition, but you should not lose sight of one of the primary objectives of all training: the art of not losing your head...

However, my game with Matanovic is included because of the final combination (Game 30).

After this tournament, Ivkov was tipped to defeat me in the match that we had to play (although he himself wasn't so sure), but in Bled, two months later, I managed to beat him by 5½-2½, though I didn't play very well.

Then came my exciting match with Tal, which, much to the surprise of the pundits, was a very close fight. But in the decisive final game, the former world champion won with a promising knight sacrifice. Three years later, Soviet chess magazines were still analysing it...

In March 1966, I won 5-4 against Geller in a match to decide third place in the Candidates' series. Held in Copenhagen, this was the first time a Soviet grandmaster had lost a match to a foreigner. The result meant I could proceed directly to the next Interzonal without having to qualify via a Zonal tournament the following year.

In October 1965, my club, the Copenhagen Chess Club, the oldest in Scandinavia, celebrated its centenary by organising a tournament. The entry was impressive but my own play was uneven. After a terrible start I tried to sprint and catch up with the leading group, but I ended up half a point behind: 1-3. Taimanov, Suetin and Gligoric 11 points from 15 games, 4. Larsen 10½, 5. Hort 10, etc. Although I had to be content with fourth place, I played several good games, for example Games 31, 32 and 33.

Game 30

Catalan Opening

Bent Larsen

Aleksandar Matanovic

Zagreb 1965

**1.c4 ♘f6 2.g3 e6 3.♙g2 d5
4.♘f3 ♙e7 5.0-0 0-0 6.d4 ♘bd7
7.♘bd2 c6**

Black applies a very solid defensive system. If White plays e2-e4 soon (e.g. 8.♙c2 b6 9.e4), then Black doesn't continue with ...dxe4 but with 9...♙b7, followed by ...♞c8, preparing ...c7-c5. Why doesn't Black save a tempo with 7...b6? He probably doesn't want to be disturbed by 8.♙a4 ♙b7 9.♘e5. There

is no advantage to White in this line, but it is beyond doubt that my opponent wanted to avoid it.

8.b3 b6 9.♙b2 ♙b7 10.♖c1 ♜c8

Now both players have the same problem: where to put the queen. For example, White can continue with ♜c2 followed by ♙c1 and ♜d1, or by ♙a1 and ♜fc1. He can also play 11.♙c2 and, later, after ...c7-c5 by Black, withdraw to b1 once the a1 rook has moved. Finally, there is the possibility of using the e2-square for Her Majesty, as I did in the game. It's almost impossible to say which is best. But, initially, at least, White can hardly expect to organise an attack against such a solid enemy king position, so it doesn't seem logical to put the queen on a1 or b1.



11.e3 dxc4

11...c5 is also playable, but after 12.cxd5 Black must think hard about which piece to recapture with – the bishop or the knight. The text move seems the simplest solution, as 12.bxc4 c5 is completely satisfactory for Black. White's centre pawns are not powerful enough to launch a breakthrough.

**12.♟xc4 c5 13.♙e2 cxd4
14.♟xd4 ♙xg2 15.♙xg2 ♟c5
16.♜fd1 ♙d5+ 17.f3 ♜fd8 18.e4**

Black's play is very precise. White cannot play 18.♟b5 because of 18...♟d3!.

18...♙b7 19.♟e5 ♙f8 20.♜c2 ♜e8

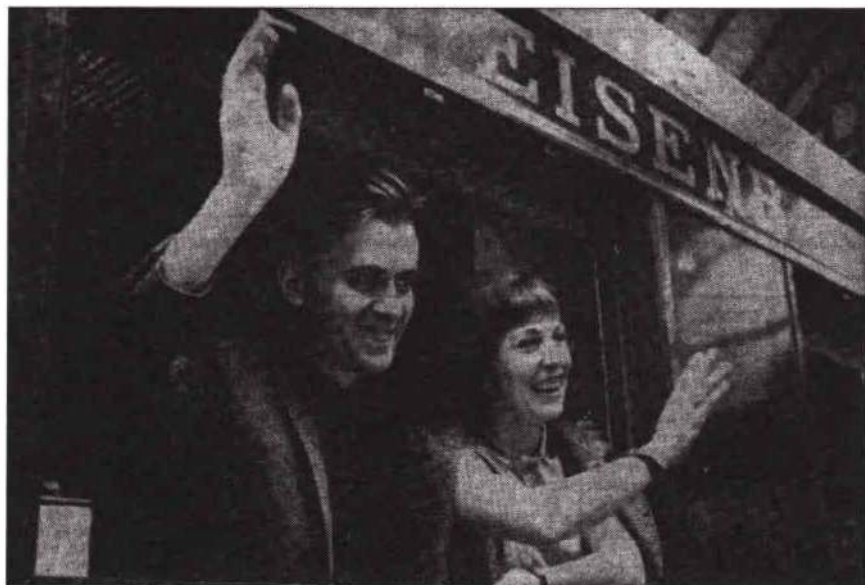
20...♟fd7? would have been an error because of 21.♟dc6! ♜e8 22.b4! ♟xe5 23.♟xe5 and penetration on d7.

21.♜dc1

Now 21.♟dc6 lacks an objective; a good response would be 21...♟cd7.

21...♟fd7 22.♟g4

An attempt to combine play on the c-file with threats against the black king, although it is very solidly defended. The knight is unusually posted on g4, but it can soon return to the centre and the queenside (via e3-c4). And as White cannot expect to win with his minor queenside threats, the move is



With Lizzie, boarding the train for the Candidates' Match with Mikhail Tal in Bled, 1965.

justified. After 22.♖xd7 it would not have been out of place to offer a draw.

22...♖a6 23.a3

23.♖c4 was also worthy of attention, and in a note in the tournament book, I characterised it as 'perhaps the strongest'. I probably wasn't happy with the position I got with the text move. However, 23.♖c4 is not stronger: Black simply replies 23...♖xc4 24.♗xc4 ♕ac5! with the idea of 25.b4 h5! 26.bxc5 bxc5, or 26.♕e3? ♕xe4! 27.fxe4 ♗xe4+ 28.♖f2 ♕e5!, or 26.♕f2 ♕e5 27.♗b5 ♕cd7. Black is OK but 24...h5 25.♕e3 ♕e5? would be an error because of 26.♗b5!.

**23...♖ab8 24.♖c4 a6 25.♗c2
♖xc4 26.♗xc4 b5**

White has taken control of the c-file in praiseworthy fashion. The logical continuation of the strategy would have been to break through to the seventh rank, but after 27.♗c7 ♗xc7 28.♖xc7 ♕d6, Black is defending. Consequently, I started to wonder: must the g4-knight be alone in its aggressive stance towards the black king?

27.♗c3 b4 28.axb4 ♕xb4

29.♗e3 ♕e7

Very well played, making ♗g5 an improbable prospect.

30.♖c4 ♖c8??

A serious mistake, and also a very typical one: a player defends very well for a long time and suddenly relaxes. After more than four hours of hard work, Matanovic's concentration wanders for a moment. He is tired and short of time. White's last move caused him some concern because, after ♗c3, I would keep the queen on the c-file and also on the long diagonal, with mating threats. So – let's swap off the rooks while we have the chance!

It's an understandable reaction, but one must be careful. Maybe the Yugoslav grandmaster had seen my next move – but not the one after that!

The strongest defence was 30...♕f6, but he also could play 30...h5 as it wouldn't be too dangerous a weakening of his structure.

White has not obtained a positional advantage, but his opponent has had a very difficult task.

		Copenhagen 1965																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6		
1	Gligoric, Svetozar	*	½	1	0	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	11.0	
2	Suetin, Alexey	½	*	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.0	
3	Taimanov, Mark	0	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.0	
4	Larsen, Bent	1	1	½	*	0	0	½	1	1	1	½	1	0	1	1	1	10.5	
5	Hort, Vlastimil	½	½	½	1	*	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	10.0	
6	Dückstein, Andreas	0	½	½	1	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	9.0	
7	Barcza, Gedeon	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	8.5	
8	Hamann, Svend	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	8.0	
9	Honfi, Karoly	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	*	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	7.5	
10	Enevoldsen, Jens	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	1	1	0	1	1	1	7.0	
11	Sloth, Jorn	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	0	*	1	1	0	½	½	6.0	
12	Jakobsen, Ole	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	1	0	0	*	½	0	½	1	5.5	
13	Janosevic, Dragoljub	½	0	0	1	0	½	0	0	0	1	0	½	*	½	0	1	5.0	
14	Ujtelly, Maximilian	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	½	*	1	1	5.0	
15	Andersen, Borge	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	1	0	*	1	4.0	
16	Nielsen, Jonny	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	*	1.0	



31. ♖xe6 ♜xc4?

He ought to have played 31...f6 and resigned himself to having a miserable position; of course, the reply to 31...fxe6 would have been 32. ♔c3.

32. ♖h6+! 1-0

Game 31

King's Indian Defence

Jorgen Nielsen

Bent Larsen

Copenhagen 1965

1.c4 g6 2. ♖c3 ♙g7 3.d4 d6 4.e4
♜d7 5. ♙e3 ♜gf6

By transposition of moves we arrive at a King's Indian, and after White's next move we enter the Sämisch Variation, in which ...♜bd7 and ...c7-c5 have never been very popular, although there is nothing wrong with them.

6.f3 0-0 7. ♔d2 c5 8. ♜ge2 ♔a5

A famous game, Bobotsov-Tal, Varna 1958, proceeded with 8...a6 9.0-0-0 ♔a5 10.♙b1 b5 11.♜d5 ♜xd5!?. This queen sacrifice was a sensation at the time. To start with, Black only gets two minor pieces and a pawn for compensation, but White's position is not very comfortable. This is probably one of the reasons why many masters employed a quieter line, castling kingside. An example is Petrosian-Uhlmann, Lugano 1968: 7. ♙d3 c5 8. ♜ge2 a6 9.0-0, where Black a little later played ...c5xd4 and ...♜e5.

After this, the position resembles a Sicilian, but in a good variation for White.

9. ♜d5



9... ♜xd5!?

A similar sacrifice to Tal's in the game mentioned above. It was by no means necessary. The exchange of queens and knights followed by ...b7-b6 would give Black an excellent position. So 9. ♜d5 cannot be considered an energetic move on White's part.

Nielsen accepts the sacrifice. He could also recapture the knight with one of the pawns, leaving me with three choices, all of them satisfactory: swap queens, retreat, or else the interesting 10...b6.

I was asked if I would have played the same sacrifice against a stronger player. Nielsen finished last in this tournament. He had had little experience against strong masters, and his participation was as the result of his winning the Copenhagen Chess Club Championship. My answer must be yes. Such moves are not made because you are up against a particular opponent but because you have confidence in them. Besides which, against weak opponents, the safest method, although not the fastest, is to avoid complications and unclear positions.

I'm not convinced that the sacrifice is correct. But it shows courage and imagination and for this reason I have included it in this book.

**10.♔xa5 ♖xe3 11.♔d2 cxd4
12.♖f4! ♖b6 13.♖d5 ♖bxd5
14.cxd5**

During the game I thought this was a mistake, but now I'm not so sure. 14.exd5 e6 looks good for Black.

Of course, the knight is a real nuisance because it makes it difficult to develop the white rooks and get the king to safety. But on the other hand, Black can't easily whip up any dangerous threats, and unless he does so quickly, White is almost certain to prevail.

14...f5 15.♖d3 fxe4 16.♖xe4 e6

The game is cited in the monograph on the King's Indian written by the Russian master Yudovich, and at this point he claims that Black has the better prospects. Frankly, I don't believe it. Only after White's next move is the comment justified!

Nielsen should continue with 17.♖f2 and if then 17...exd5, 18.♖b1 or 18.♖d3 ♖h6 19.♔g4. Black has a lot of tactical threats and can try several things; in some of these variations there could be a 'changing of the guard' on e3, with the bishop replacing the knight. But I fail to see how Black can organise a successful winning attack.

17.♖c1?? exd5 18.♖c7

Now the reply to 18...dxe4? would be 19.♖xg7+!.

18...♖h6!



A curious position. White cannot save his bishop. After 19.♖xd5+ ♖xd5 20.♔xh6 ♖xc7 Black would have a material advantage, and after 19.♖d3 there is 19...♖e8. How would he then save the queen? The answer is quite sad: by playing 20.♖e4.

White's next move may seem a bit strange, but a deeper examination of the position shows that it is almost impossible to find anything better. Black already has a winning position. It is another example of how quickly prospects can change in a position where the tension is strained to breaking point.

**19.g4 dxe4 20.♔xd4 ♖xf3
21.♔xe4 ♖xg4 22.♖g1 ♖af8!**

Suddenly all Black's pieces are active, and the white king cannot find shelter. The rest is easy.

**23.♖xg4 ♖xg4 24.♔e6+ ♖h8
25.♔xg4 ♖e8+ 26.♖e7**

Sardonic humour. The rook is lost anyway after 26.♖d1 ♖f1+ 27.♖c2 ♖c1+.

**26...♖xe7+ 27.♖d1 ♖f1+ 28.♖c2
♖f2+ 29.♖d1 ♖d2+ 0-1**

Game 32

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Alexey Suetin

Copenhagen 1965

1.e4 c5 2.♖c3 e6 3.♖ge2

With his second and third moves, White keeps his options open between an 'open' continuation (with d2-d4) and a 'closed' system (with d2-d3).

3...♖c6 4.g3 ♖f6

After 4...d5!? 5.exd5 exd5 6.d4? g4 ♖g4, Black's pieces are very active. However, White could continue with 6.♖g2 d4 7.♖d5 and Black, still unable to castle, must play very carefully.

5.♖g2 ♖e7 6.0-0 0-0 7.d3

Of course, 7.d4 could also be played, but why not confront my opponent with some issues that have been neglected by theory?

If Black now plays 7...d6, we reach a relatively closed position of the Sicilian Defence: Black's dark-squared bishop usually develops via g7 (1.e4 c5 2.♟c3 ♟c6 3.g3 g6). After 7...d6 White would probably start with an advance on the kingside; against quiet developing moves my next few moves might be h2-h3, ♖e3, f2-f4 and g2-g4.

7...d5 8.exd5 exd5 9.♖g5

Although the position is relatively open, White is quite prepared to give up the bishop pair: the light-squared bishop become very strong after Black's ...d5-d4, the white knights will have good squares in the centre and White gains some time to occupy the e-file.

I think the text is the only good move in the position. After 9.♟f4 d4 10.♟cd5 ♟xd5 11.♟xd5 ♖d6, Black has no particular problems, and after 9.d4!?, though my opponent's d-pawn is weak, he can easily activate his pieces with 9...♖g4!.

9...d4 10.♖xf6 ♖xf6 11.♟e4 ♖e7 12.♟f4 ♖f5 13.♖e1 ♖c8

A fairly natural move. The rook moves away from the long diagonal and in

some cases defends the c-pawn, which may be in danger after such moves as ♟d5 and ♖h5. It also makes extra protection of the c5-pawn with ...b7-b6.

But it is risky for Black not to challenge White's control of the e-file. The most natural move is 13...♖e8, but after 14.♟d5! ♖xe4 (note that 14...♖f8?? is refuted by 15.♟ef6+! gxf6 16.♖xe8)

A) Black achieves complete equality after 15.♟xe7+? ♖xe7 16.♖xe4 ♖b6! (not 16...♖d6? 17.♖h5 g6 18.♖d5 with a slightly favourable ending for White);

B) However, White has a better move: 15.♖xe4 ♖d6 16.♖e2! ♖xe4 17.dxe4. Here White's position is better than Black's: he can achieve a strong position on the kingside, whereas it is difficult to see how Black can exploit his pawn majority on the other side of the board as it is likely to be blockaded. White doesn't just have things he can do on the kingside, but also manoeuvres such as b2-b3, a2-a4 and re-routing the bishop to c4, for example. The presence of opposite-coloured bishops doesn't help Black – quite the opposite. His bishop cannot control the light squares. My opponent's position is not at all comfortable. One of Black's most ingenious defences is 13...♖h8!?, avoiding White's next move.

14.♟d5 ♖e6

Forces the immediate exchange of the annoying knight, but it costs a tempo.

Once again ...♖e8 can be considered, of course, although after 14...♖e8 15.♖h5 ♖d7? 16.♟xe7+ ♟xe7 17.♟g5 ♖g6 18.♖f3 Black has problems which cannot be fully resolved by 15...♖g6 because of 16.♖h3: White can strengthen his position with ♖e2 and ♖ae1.

**15.♖xe7+ ♜xe7 16.♔h5 ♕f5
17.♞e2 ♔d7**

Black's worries would not go away after 17...♕xe4 18.♕xe4 g6 19.♔e5.

The text move defends the b-pawn, connects the rooks and threatens ♕g4; however, this threat doesn't gain time as it can be stopped 'automatically'.

18.♞ae1! ♜d5

Not 18...♕g4? 19.♜f6+! with a clearly won endgame.

Against 18...♞fe8 White has several continuations:

A) 19.♜d6 ♔xd6 20.♔xf5;

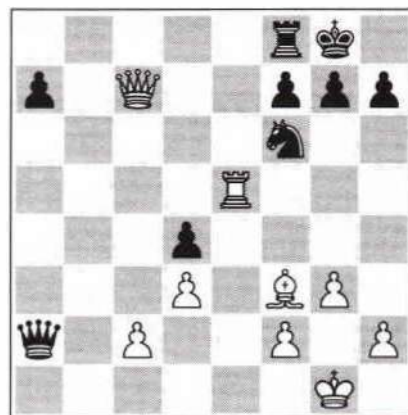
B) Either 19.♜g5 ♕g6 20.♔f3 or 19.♕h3! ♕xh3 20.♜g5 and Black's position is hopeless.



19.♜d6!

Very simple and very strong. In my opinion, it is both beautiful and logical at the same time. White's most important trump cards are the open e-file and the long diagonal, and the knight on e4 gets in the way of both of them. But I don't want to move it without creating threats, for instance giving Black time to fight for the open file with ...♜f6 and ...♞fe8.

**19...♔xd6 20.♔xf5 ♜f6
21.♕xb7 ♞b8 22.♞e7 ♔b6
23.♕f3 ♔xb2 24.♔xc5 ♞bc8
25.♞c7 ♞xc7 26.♔xc7 ♔xa2
27.♞e5!**



Black has done his utmost not to lose a pawn, but his efforts have been in vain: for example, consider the line 27...♔b1+ 28.♜g2 ♔b6 29.♔xb6 axb6 30.♞b5 ♞b8 31.♞b4. This is not surprising. Compare the bishop with the almost immobilised knight, the active white rook with the passive black one, and observe as well the isolated queenside pawns.

27...♔a6 28.♞a5 ♞c8

There's not much point discussing whether 28...♔b6 29.♞xa7 is a better option for Black. In any case, White wins a pawn and maintains a strong position; the rest is not too difficult.

29.♔xf7+ ♜xf7 30.♞xa6 ♞c7

After 30...♞xc2 31.♞xa7+ ♜g6 32.♞a4 the d-pawn falls. Perhaps Black could have tried a counter-attack, i.e. played more actively: 31...♕e6!? 32.♞xg7 ♞d2, but White has an easy win with 33.♕g4+! ♜xg4 34.♞xg4 ♞xd3 35.♜f1! ♜d5 36.♞h4.

31.♜f1 ♜d7 32.♞a2

I could have forced an exchange of rooks with 32.♞c6 and it would probably have won also, but why exchange a passive rook which is tied to the defence of the weak pawns?

**32...♜b6 33.♕e4 g6 34.♜e1 ♜f6
35.♜d2 g5**

This facilitates the creation of threats against the kingside pawns. However,

there is no reason to criticise: the black position is lost.

**36.♖a5 h6 37.f3 ♖e6 38.♖f5 ♖f7
39.♖c5 ♖f6**

A time trouble error which costs a pawn. But after 39...♖d7 40.h4 the game wouldn't last much longer.

**40.♖c6+ ♖g7 41.♖g6+ ♖f8
42.♖xh6 ♖g7 43.♖d6 ♖d7
44.♖f6+ ♖f7 45.♖c6 ♖g7 46.h3
♖e7 47.c4 dxc3+ 48.♖xc3 ♖d7
49.d4 ♖g8 50.♖h6 ♖c8 51.♖c4
♖c7 52.♖c5 ♖g7 53.d5 ♖b6
54.d6+ 1-0**

Game 33

Benoni Defence

Bent Larsen

Svend Hamann

Copenhagen 1965

**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.g3 c5 4.d5
exd5 5.cxd5 d6 6.♖c3 ♖e7!?**

In this position 6...g6 is by far the most popular move. On g7, the bishop is more active than on e7. However, 6...♖e7 is not weak. Black saves a tempo on ...g7-g6, the dark-squared bishop does a useful job defending the d6-pawn, and he always transfer the bishop to the long diagonal later.

If White had played 3.♖c3 and 6.e4, then 7.f4 is very strong against the bishop's development on e7. However, I had started with the less aggressive 3.g3. If I had played 3.♖c3, Hamann would probably have played 3...♖b4, the Nimzo-Indian, which I hardly ever allow. I prefer to play it with black!

**7.♖g2 0-0 8.♖f3 ♖a6 9.0-0 ♖b8
10.♖e1**

If White plays e2-e4 anyway, why not do it immediately? There are two reasons: 10.e4 can be answered by 10...♖g4, after which it would be difficult to play

the e4-e5 advance, while if he plays 10...♖g4 now, I can reply 11.♖d2.

10...b5 11.a4!

An energetic way to restrain Black's progress on the queenside. After 11...b4 12.♖b5 ♖b7 13.e4, Black does not have the time to trap the enemy knight, and e4-e5 would be very forceful. Having said which, I think he should have tried this line anyway because, once the a-file opens, I am going to have a clear advantage and Black's queenside pawn majority will become worthless.

**11...bxa4 12.♖xa4 ♖d7 13.e4
♖f6 14.♖f1**

To avoid losing the a-pawn, Black now has to make some awkward moves.

**14...♖b6 15.♖d2 ♖db8 16.♖c4
♖b7 17.♖f4!**



White allows the following combination, which doesn't solve Black's problems. That said, Black had nothing better; 17...♖e7 would have been a very weak retreat, to which White could reply 18.e5, but a move like 18.♖a1 would also be very strong. So Black undoubtedly does the right thing to dive into tactical complications and hope for a miracle.

17...♖xb2 18.♖xb2 ♖xc3 19.♖c4

The knight returns to this strong square and Black cannot defend his d-pawn. Of

course, it would have been pointless to play 19.♖e2 ♘g4.

19...♙d7 20.♖a3 ♙xe1 21.♚xe1 ♙b5

Black's position cannot be improved because two weak queenside pawns are no match for two strong central pawns.

22.♘xd6 ♙xf1 23.♚xf1



23...g5

Given that this doesn't win material, it can be argued that it only weakens the king's position and cedes the f5-square to the enemy knight. But what else can he do? At least this way he manages to achieve the exchange of White's good bishop for one of Black's unhappy knights.

It is also possible that Black was hoping for White to make an unsound sacrifice. For example, 24.♘f5 looks very attractive, but it is not quite good enough. And, on the face of it, 24.♖xa6 ♘xa6 25.♚xa6 gxf4 26.♘f5 looks promising too, but there is no clear win to be found. Such are one's thoughts when playing for primitive traps but they are only justified when the position is hopeless.

**24.♙e5 f6 25.♘b7! ♚b6
26.♙xb8 ♘xb8 27.♘a5 ♚b4
28.♘c4 ♖e8**

The move 28...a6 is no better, for example 29.♖a1 followed by ♖b1.

29.♖xa7! ♖xe4 30.♚h3



This is the reason I gave up the strong central pawn in exchange for the weak a-pawn: White gets direct threats against the king.

It should also be noted that the black knight is very poorly placed and indeed plays no further part in the game.

**30...♚e1+ 31.♙g2 ♖e7
32.♚c8+ ♖e8**

Against 32...♘g7 I couldn't play 33.♚xb8? ♚e4+ drawing, but I could play 33.♖xe7+ ♚xe7 34.♘e3, leading to a rapid victory. The difference between the knights is massive: the white one is well placed, while the black one has to be defended by the queen. Against 34...♚e4+ the best move is 35.♙h3, though 35.♙g1 ♚b1+ 36.♘f1 would also win.

**33.♚f5 ♚e4+ 34.♚xe4 ♖xe4
35.♘d6 ♖b4**

After 35...♖e1 36.g4 Black has no good moves.

**36.♘e8 ♖b6 37.d6 ♙f8 38.♘xf6
♖xd6 39.♘xh7+ ♙e8 40.♘xg5
♖c6 41.♖a8 ♖c8 42.♘e4 1-0**

He cannot prevent the loss of the c-pawn.

The white knight deserves some sort of award for productivity, having made 15 moves.

Chapter 10

The Public Wants Sharp Play

In a tournament, masters try to get a good result. If spectators are disappointed when a player secures first place with a lifeless draw instead of choosing to play for an all-out attack, it's because they don't understand what playing in a tournament is all about.

However, at other times it can be said that players have certain obligations to the public to play sharply and take risks. Such games, we can conclude, provide good publicity for our noble game. In such cases it doesn't matter whether you feel at ease or afraid – you just have to fight.

I've played several games for Radio Denmark. Most of them have been highly dramatic. Of course, if two masters set out to play a game on the radio, the game shouldn't be insipid. Therefore, both sides fight for incisive positions. Of course, it would be great to play ten games and only broadcast the most interesting one, but that would probably work out too expensive.

So you sit down at the board with the intention of making it a no-holds-barred fight. You would almost prefer to lose an exciting game than win a boring one...

The game against Flohr (Game 34) was played in March 1966 after my match with Geller, whose second he had been. The radio station organised a small tournament which Geller won thanks to a victory over me; in my opinion, however, the game against Flohr was the most beautiful.

It was played under normal tournament conditions and time controls. However, the game against Nyman (Game 35) was played by correspondence in late 1966 and was published in the Stockholm newspaper *Dagens Nyheter*, at the beginning of the following year, one move per day.

Several Swedish newspapers followed this fashion, at almost the same time, and when one game ended, another began.

Game 34

Czech Benoni Defence

Salo Flohr

Bent Larsen

Copenhagen 1966

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 e5

This solid system often leads to very complex and sharp games. Perhaps the greatest danger for the black player is psychological in nature. You can become so wrapped up in building a 'fire-

proof shelter' that you forget to play actively, and end up being slowly strangled. White can't start attacking immediately, but if the game develops quietly, he can usually take the initiative with a small demonstration on the queenside, starting with b2-b4. Later White can afford to advance with f2-f4, which is usually weak in the initial phase of the game as it cedes the strong e5-square.

As I see it, playing this defence forced me to play aggressively.

4.♖c3 d6 5.e4 g6

Another variation which has been very popular in recent years is 5...♗e7. The plan is ...0-0, ...♘e8, ...g7-g6 and ...f7-f5. Sometimes White tries to prevent the latter freeing move with g2-g4 and ♗h6, but Black can then put his king in the corner (h8) and eventually transfer the b8-knight to the square vacated by the g8-knight, and thus attack the h6-bishop. Such manoeuvres require some time, but in a closed position this is not such a serious matter, and when Black finally achieves the ...f7-f5 push, the result is an unclear position with chances for both sides.

I usually preferred 5...g6. Now you may well ask: isn't Black playing a King's Indian Defence with the disadvantage of having committed his pawn structure, thus allowing White to adapt the development of his pieces to his heart's content and without loss of time? In a way, the answer has to be yes, but in Black's defence it can be said that his pawn centre is not all bad. Also, and this is very important in my opinion, if in a King's



Indian, you don't want to make an early decision in the centre, then you must castle early. Here, however, this can wait.

6.♗d3 ♗g7 7.♘ge2 ♘bd7

I don't know if this is the best move. Also to be considered is 7...♘h5!?, which appears to guarantee ...f7-f5 under satisfactory circumstances.

In positions of this sort, people enjoy preparing ...b7-b5 via manoeuvres such as ...♘a6, ...♘c7, ...♞b8, ...a7-a6, but in many cases this is a bad plan, simply because White gets in a2-a3 and b2-b4 in far fewer moves. It is very difficult for Black to take the initiative on the queenside. In addition, the knight is badly placed on c7, leaving it a long way away from e5, and thus justifying White's brutal behaviour in the centre with f4.

8.h3 a6!



But now I'm sure that this is the only proper move. Black will manoeuvre with ...♘h5, preparing ...f7-f5. If White answers g2-g4, the pawn sacrifice with ...♘f4 is forced. However, as shown in the game, playing 8...♘h5 immediately loses a tempo due to 9.g4 and then the white dark-squared bishop goes to f4 in one move.

Why doesn't Black castle? Because he doesn't like the reply 9.g4!.

If 8...a6 proves useful, it will be as a preliminary to ...b7-b5. This can be prevented by 9.a4, but that would probably mean White has to give up on the idea of castling queenside. Therefore, if White wants to play g2-g4 to oppose Black's plans on the other flank, his position will be full of holes and without a 'sanctuary' for the king. Therefore, in my opinion, the right move is 8...a6. If Flohr continues with 9.g4!?, there is the magnificent reply 9...h5!.

9.♙e3 ♘h5! 10.♚d2

An interesting continuation aimed against ...f7-f5 and ...b7-b5, and not as risky as g2-g4, would have been 10.a4 0-0 11.♚c2 ♘f4 12.♘xf4 exf4 13.♙xf4 ♘e5 14.♙e2 f5 with certain practical possibilities.

10...0-0



Black is ready to play ...f7-f5, but if White castles queenside, the answer may be ...b7-b5. It seems as if Black's opening problems have been resolved in a satisfactory manner, but there still remains a question: is the pawn sacrifice ...♘f4 sound? Flohr decides to ask this question.

11.g4!? ♘f4 12.♘xf4 exf4 13.♙xf4 ♘e5

White can hardly consider capturing this knight – his dark squares would have been too weakened – but is this

well-placed knight enough compensation for the pawn? No! And it must be added that it probably will not stay here for long: it will be driven away by the f-pawn.

However, Black's other pieces are ready to attack White.

14.♙e2 b5!

The only reasonable continuation. Totally wrong would be 14...f5? 15.gxf5 gxf5 16.♚g1!.

Let's go back in our minds to the eighth move and try to picture this same position, but without the important preparatory move ...a7-a6!.

15.cxb5 axb5 16.♘xb5 ♖a4!



This rook is destined to play a prominent role. It bursts fearlessly into the enemy camp, hoping that the other pieces will eventually join it in the attack.

17.♘c3 ♖d4 18.♚e3 ♖e8

The 18...f5 advance was still doubtful due to the counterattack on the g-file, but it will be strong if White now castles.

19.g5 is worthy of consideration, though both 19...f5 and 19...♘f4 offer Black good prospects.

Flohr chooses a very plausible move. The queen gives up the e-file with the idea of mounting a counterattack on the g-file, making ...f7-f5 too risky an adventure. However, my response proved to be a nasty surprise for him.

19. ♖g3? g5! 20. ♕e3 ♘g6!

Very annoying for White, who does well not to accept the exchange sacrifice. For example, 21. ♕xd4 cxd4 22. ♘b5 ♖xe4 23. ♘xd6 ♖xe2+ 24. ♖xe2 ♘f4+ and ... ♗xd6. And 21. 0-0 ♕e5 22. ♗f3 ♘h4 23. ♗h1 leaves the queen at a terrible disadvantage: after 23 ... ♖b4, Black dominates the board.

Considering the threats to the e-pawn, 21. f3 suggests itself as the strongest defence, but after 21... ♖b4! 22. ♕c1 ♘f4! Flohr's position would be rather poor: ... ♗b6 and ... ♖xb2 are threatened. 22... ♗b6? immediately is inaccurate because of 23. 0-0! and 23... ♖xb2 would not be possible due to 24. ♘a4!.

Black's light-squared bishop has not yet taken part in the attack, but the other pieces are very active. Note that Flohr's position is difficult to defend in spite of the fact that there are no open files for my rooks.

Flohr's next move seems to me to be best.

**21. ♕b5 ♖xe4 22. ♘xe4 ♖xe4 23. 0-0?**

Easily understandable from a psychological standpoint. In such positions you want to get the king away from danger, and even an experienced defender like Flohr can make a mistake.

23. ♕d3 was better, with the possible continuation 23... ♗a5+ 24. ♖f1 ♘f4! 25. ♕xe4 ♕a6+ 26. ♖g1 ♘e2+ 27. ♖g2 ♘xg3 28. ♖xg3 ♕xb2. Here White could go on fighting even though his king is not completely safe and he has to keep an eye on my very strong c-pawn. However, if in this variation White wants to take advantage of his material superiority, he will not get very far. After 25. ♕xf4 ♖xf4 there are so many threats that the material advantage is just an illusion.

True, he now has an extra exchange and a pawn, but Black's pieces are very strong and it will be difficult to keep the pawns on a2, b2, d5 and even f2.

23... ♖b4 24. ♕d3 ♕e5 25. ♗f3 ♘h4 26. ♗d1 ♗f6

Castling did not get the king out of danger. There are threats, not only of a sacrifice on g4, but also moves such as ... ♗h6, ... h7-h5 and even ♖f4. Against 27. f3 the reply 27... ♖xb2 is decisive, e.g. 28. ♕f2 ♗f4, or 28. ♕e2 ♖xe2.

No wonder, then, that White wants to drive the rook away from the fourth rank, but achieving it is not easy. How nice it would be for the white king if the bishop could go to e4!

27.a3**27... ♘f3+ 28. ♖g2**

Or 28. ♖h1 ♕xg4 (28... ♖xg4 also wins, but not as quickly) 29. hxg4 ♗h6+.

**28...♙xg4! 29.axb4 ♘h4+
30.♔g1 ♙xd1 31.♚fxd1**

White stops the direct mating attack: 31...♚f3 32.♙f1. However, I now secure a material advantage – an unfamiliar feeling for me. With a strong passed pawn and threats against the king, victory is not far away.

31...cxb4 32.♙e4 ♙xb2 33.♚a8+

The beginning of a desperate try. White captures my passed pawn, but in return Black is able to mount a direct attack on the king. But all continuations lose anyway. With the pawn on b4 and bishop on c3, Black stops the enemy rook taking an active part in the game. I can quietly improve my kingside position and also advance the passed pawn to b2.

**33...♔g7 34.♚b8 ♙c3 35.♚xb4!?
♘f3+**

The 35...♙xb4 capture was bad because of 38.♙d4 pinning the queen, but now that the d4-square is controlled by the knight, it forces White to take on f3.

**36.♙xf3 ♚xf3 37.♚d3 ♙e5
38.♚g4 h6 39.♚d2**

To prevent ...♚e2, which would win immediately after a move such as 39.♚g2?.

39...♚xh3 40.♚g2 f6 0-1

Black would put his queen on f3 and then advance his h-pawn. White has no defence, since his rooks cannot work together.

Game 35

From's Gambit

Sture Nyman

Bent Larsen

Correspondence Game 1966

1.f4 e5!?

Played 'on request'. Mr. Bohmgren, editor of *Dagens Nyheter*, expressed his desire for a game with this gambit, with me taking White. I sometimes play

Bird's Opening and, of course, the newspaper wanted a dramatic struggle: I had already played two games for this newspaper, against Hörberg and Stahlberg, and had won, but only after long endgames which were probably not highly appreciated by the public.

However, the draw gave Nyman the white pieces and it began with 1.f4, which is not one of his usual openings. Naturally, I played the gambit.

From's Gambit was invented by the Danish master Severin From. He was also 'father' of the Danish Gambit (1.e4 e5 2.d4 exd4 3.c3 dxc3 4.♙c4) and the first player from Denmark to take part in an international tournament, in Paris in 1867.

2.fxe5 d6 3.exd6 ♙xd6 4.♘f3



4...♘f6

The move 4...g5 is not to my taste. I think White can reply 5.g3. Of course, he can also play 5.d4 g4 6.♘e5, but after 6...♙xe5 and 7...♚xd1+ the outlook for the endgame is equality. Of all my Bird's Opening tournament games, I had only once had to face From's Gambit, against Zuidema, in Beverwijk 1964. 4...g5 5.g3 led to a wild struggle which I won.

5.d4 0-0

Theory wavers between 5.d4 and 5.g3. Against the latter I would have adopted a position based on queenside castling.

Against 5.d4, the book gives as the best answer 5...♘e4, but I don't like it. Shouldn't the rest of the pieces be developed? A German correspondence chess master wrote an article about a themed postal tournament held in Germany (1961-1962) with From's Gambit stipulated as the mandatory opening. Black scored badly with 5...♘e4. According to this article and Rolf Schwarz's book on Bird's Opening, White's next move is a mistake. They consider 6.g3 to be better. However, it is likely that Nyman had the same experience as me and had discovered that not everything that is written in books is the 'gospel truth'. I've done a lot of work on the problems of this opening, for, as a matter of principle, I don't like giving up a central pawn.

6.♙g5 ♖e8

I have little confidence in these opening books. They quote a correspondence game, Pedersen-Firmenich, 1951, in which Black had the better of it after 6...h6 7.♙xf6 ♜xf6 8.e4 (8.♘c3) 8...c5 9.e5 ♜e7 10.♙e2 ♙c7 11.c3 ♘c6 12.♘bd2 ♙g4. I think this line can be easily improved on: perhaps 8.e4 is premature, and in its place, 8.♘c3 seems good.

The text move appears natural. Against 7.♘c3 I had intended 7...♙f5, keeping control of e4.

7.♜d3 ♘c6



A difficult decision: Black gives up the idea of ...c7-c5, but gains an important tempo as Nyman must prevent ...♘b4 with either c2-c3 or a2-a3.

This choice is also difficult: 8.c3 defends the d-pawn, but deprives the b1-knight of a good square. Later, Nyman thought it was here that he went wrong, but during the game considered 8.a3 was better. Against 8.c3 one line that I analysed was 8...h6, and now White has two options:

A) 9.♙xf6 ♜xf6 10.♘bd2 ♙f5 11.e4 ♜g6 12.0-0-0 ♜xe4! with a strong attack. In this variation 8.c3 makes it difficult for the king to find safety. A better move for White was ♙e2, but then Black gets his pawn back with good play.

B) Another variation I looked at was the following: 9.♙h4 g5 10.♙f2 ♘e4 11.h3 ♙f5 12.♜d1 ♜e7 13.g4 ♘xf2 14.♙xf2 ♜e3+ 15.♙g2 ♜f4 16.♜e1 ♙xg4 with a winning position.

8.a3 h6 9.♙h4?

This is the mistake! And, for a strong correspondence player like Nyman, a serious error, in my opinion. His letter surprised me!

White must continue with 9.♙xf6 ♜xf6 10.e4. After 10...♙f5 11.♘c3 Black easily regains the pawn, but the game is pretty even. If Black wants more, he has to try 10...♙g4, in order to exploit the disadvantages of 8.a3 compared with 8.c3: the d-pawn is not strongly defended. However, after 10...♙g4 11.♘bd2 is not easy to see how Black can break into the opponent's position.

After the text move, I thought I would win the game. In correspondence chess it is possible to calculate in detail and to a great depth and my optimism was based on solid variations.

9...g5 10.♙f2

If 10.♙g3 ♙xg3+ 11.hxg3 ♚d6 White is worse.

10...♘e4 11.h3

An ugly move: the hole on g3 is very unpleasant. But 11...♘xf2 was threatened, followed by ...g5-g4.

11...♙f5

Forces the queen retreat, since 12.♚b5 ♙g3! loses the d-pawn and White's position is a ruin.

12.♚d1 ♙f4

Also very good was 12...♚e7, with the same idea as in the earlier note.

The text move prepares a beautiful combination.

13.g4 ♘xf2 14.♙xf2 ♙e3+ 15.♙g2



15...♘xd4! 16.gxf5

16.♘xd4 wasn't possible because of ...♙e4+.

16...♘xf3 17.♚xd8 ♘h4+ 18.♙g3 ♖axd8

Only ruins are left of the white position.

19.♘c3 ♘xf5+ 20.♙g2

If 20.♙g4 ♖d4+ leads to mate.

20...♖d2



Nyman wanted to resign here, but for the benefit of the readers the game continued:

21.♖c1 h5 22.♘d1 ♙b6 23.♙h2 ♖xe2+ 24.♙xe2 ♖xe2+ 25.♘f2 ♖xf2+ 26.♙g1 ♖e2+ 27.♙f1 ♘g3#

Mr Bohmgren was right. It was exactly the right opening to make an exciting game for the readers.

Chapter 11

Satisfactory Results

After my victory in the Geller match, I travelled to Le Havre where, after a shaky start, I won six games in a row and finished the tournament two points ahead of the runner-up: 1. Larsen 9 points (from 11 rounds); 2-3. Polugaevsky and Krogius 7, etc. This was definitely one of my best tournaments, but I didn't play any very remarkable games.

Le Havre 1966														
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	
1	Larsen,Bent	*	1	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	9.0
2	Krogius,Nikolay	0	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	7.0
3	Polugaevsky,Lev	0	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	7.0
4	Matanovic,Aleksandar	½	0	½	*	½	0	½	1	1	1	1	½	6.5
5	Forintos,Gyözö	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	6.5
6	Rolland,Pierre	0	½	½	1	½	*	1	1	0	0	½	1	6.0
7	Bobotsov,Milko	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	1	1	1	6.0
8	Düickstein,Andreas	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	*	1	½	0	1	4.5
9	Mazzoni,Guy	0	0	0	0	½	1	1	0	*	½	½	1	4.5
10	Boutteville,Cesar	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	½	½	*	1	1	4.5
11	Roos,Michel	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	1	½	0	*	1	4.0
12	Zinser,Sylvain	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	*	0.5

In July I flew to California to take part in the great Piatigorsky Cup in Santa Monica. My final position was not bad, third after Spassky and Fischer, and in front of Portisch, Unzicker, Petrosian, Reshevsky, Najdorf, Ivkov and Donner. But it would have been even better but for an inexplicable mid-tournament slump that was perhaps due to the effects of the weather. Later I had a similar experience in Havana, during the Chess Olympiad. Games 36-38 are from Santa Monica: game 37 is the best known, but I think game 38 is of higher quality.

Game 36

Ruy Lopez
Bobby Fischer
Bent Larsen
Santa Monica 1966

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 a6
4.♙a4 ♘f6 5.0-0 ♘xe4

I had just written an article analysing this Open Variation of the Ruy Lopez from the point of view of Black. I

thought that ordinary chess players ought to play such openings rather than following the latest fad in the Closed Variation (5...♙e7), for instance, with its slow positional manoeuvres. But even masters read articles and no doubt this is one reason why the Open Variation has become more and more popular in international tournaments. However, it has never been too popular and,

in some of the special lines I found, improvements have been found for White. On this occasion, the variation proved a happy choice against Fischer. Later in the same tournament, Unzicker also played it against him, and the American champion was lucky to get away with half a point against him.

I played this opening in two of my match games against Geller, but otherwise hadn't played it for many years.

6.d4 b5 7.♘b3 d5 8.dxe5 ♙e6 9.c3

For a long time 9.♗e2 was very popular until the World Championship Tournament held in 1948, in which Smyslov and Keres both beat Euwe with this line. Against Geller I introduced the recommendation of the Swedish correspondence chess master Ekström: 9.♗e2 ♙e7 10.♞d1 0-0 11.c4 bxc4 12.♙xc4 ♗d7! and Fischer was obviously not prepared to take it on. But in 1968, in the tournament in Netanya, Fischer played this line with white against Dutch master Ree and won easily; however this cannot be regarded as sufficient proof that the line is dubious for Black.

9...♙c5

The solid alternative is 9...♙e7, as played in Fischer-Unzicker some rounds later. But I wanted to try a rare line that I recommended in the article that had not appeared yet.

10.♘bd2 0-0 11.♙c2 ♙f5!?

This move has been much less studied than the main alternatives 11...f7-f5, 11...♘xf2 and 11...♘xd2.

12.♘b3 ♙g4 13.♘xc5 ♘xc5 14.♞e1

Several years before, Unzicker had tried the idea 14.♙e3 in a game of which Fischer and I were unaware. As will be seen, Fischer had a similar idea.

If Black is satisfied with a roughly equal ending, he can continue with 14.♙e3 ♘d7 15.♗d3 g6 16.♗xd5 ♘dxe5, etc. White has the bishop pair, but the enemy pieces are very active.

14...♞e8

The retreat 14...♙h5? is refuted by 15.♙g5! ♙xf3 (or 15...♗d7 16.♙e3 ♘e6 17.♙xh7+!) 16.♗xf3 ♗xg5 17.♗xd5, all in accordance with long-established theory.

After 14...♞e8, the only 'book' move recommended is 15.♙f4, against which one of the sharpest replies is 15...d4!?

15.♙e3 ♘e6

15...♘d7 16.♗xd5 ♘dxe5 would lead to a draw. If White wants to weaken the dark squares with 16.♗d3, there is no need for ...g7-g6, since 16...♘f8 is good. This is why I preferred 14.♙e3.

16.♗d3



16...g6!?

As already mentioned, 16...♘f8 was good and solid, but I wanted to play more aggressively. In the previous round I had beaten Najdorf and in the next I would sacrifice the queen against Petrosian!

The text move is probably absolutely playable. However it is rare for me to weaken the dark squares on my king-side, as I have just done, if I don't have the bishop of that colour.

17.♙h6 ♘e7

After 17...♙f5 18.♖d2 ♙xc2 19.♖xc2 ♘e7 20.♘d4 White has a slight advantage. 17...d4? would have been disastrous because of 18.♖e4!.

18.♘d4 ♙f5 19.♘xf5

Against 19.♖d2 it would be difficult for Black to find anything better than to transpose to the line already mentioned in my previous comment: 19...♘xd4 20.cxd4 ♙xc2 21.♖xc2 ♘f5 22.♙e3 ♖e6.

Fischer, however, felt tempted with the possibility of a battle between two bishops versus two knights.

19...♘xf5 20.♙d2 ♖h4

Black has a very active position and I doubt if White has any advantage. I cast my mind back to the Zürich tournament of 1959 when I had to fight with my two knights against Fischer's two

bishops. Fischer in those days was sixteen years old. The game was drawn but for a long time afterwards he tried to demonstrate that the two bishops could win (see page 334).

There is no doubt that, as a teenager, Fischer overrated the value of the two bishops. Now, his judgment is much finer.

White cannot play 21.♖xd5? as he loses a piece: 21...♖ad8 22.♖c6 ♘e7. However, 21.♖f3 merits some attention. My plan was 21...♘g5!?. The pawn sacrifice offers good possibilities after 22.♖xd5 ♖ad8 23.♙xg5 ♖xg5 24.♖c6 ♖e6 25.♖xc7 ♖d2, although 22.♖f4 is better; nevertheless I'm not too sure whether the two bishops give White any advantage after 22...♖xf4 23.♙xf4 ♘e6 24.♙d2 c5.

Fischer's move has obtained a mixed reaction from annotators. Some declare that it is poor whilst others give it an exclamation mark. This latter I consider to be exaggerated but it is certainly a most interesting move which indicates that Fischer is considering that after the exchange of queens, Black has a satisfactory ending. He is therefore going for an attack whilst the queens are still on the board.

21.♖f1 ♘c5 22.g3**2nd Piatigorsky Cup, Santa Monica 1966**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Spassky,Boris	**	1½	½1	1½	½½	½½	½½	½½	1½	½1	11.5
2	Fischer,Robert	0½	**	01	½½	½1	½1	½½	01	11	½1	11.0
3	Larsen,Bent	½0	10	**	½0	1½	½1	11	1½	01	½0	10.0
4	Unzicker,Wolfgang	0½	½½	½1	**	½½	½½	½½	½½	1½	½½	9.5
5	Portisch,Lajos	½½	½0	0½	½½	**	½½	1½	½½	½1	½1	9.5
6	Reshevsky,Samuel	½½	½0	½0	½½	½½	**	½½	½1	½½	1½	9.0
7	Petrosian,Tigran	½½	½½	00	½½	0½	½½	**	11	½½	½1	9.0
8	Najdorf,Miguel	½½	10	0½	½½	½½	½0	00	**	1½	½1	8.0
9	Ivkov,Borislav	0½	00	10	0½	½0	½½	½½	0½	**	½1	6.5
10	Donner,Jan Hein	½0	½0	½1	½½	½0	0½	½0	½0	½0	**	6.0

The exchange 22.♙xf5 would be incorrect since it would weaken the light squares and Black's king could easily be defended whilst at the same time the open g-file can be used to launch an attack.

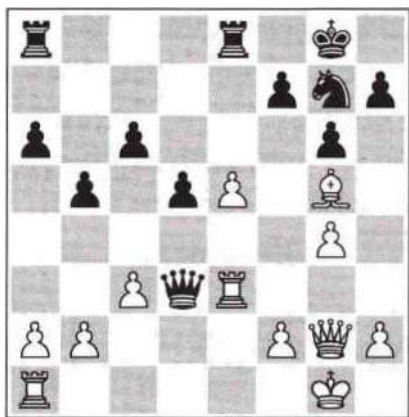
22...♙c4 23.♙g2

After 23.♙h3 ♘e4 the knights are becoming 'lively'. If 23.♙xc4 dxc4, Black has good possibilities thanks to the d3-square. Perhaps 23.b3 is better, but the position is balanced.

These endings are not clearly in White's favour because of the pawn structure on the kingside, where the majority of white pawns is weaker than one might think due to the e-pawn which 'has gone too far'. But after 23.♙g2 White has to give up his pair of bishops.

23...♘d3 24.♙xd3 ♙xd3 25.♙g5 c6 26.g4 ♘g7 27.♙e3

I am not too sure if this is a mistake but the move suggested by many annotators, 27.♙ad1?, is not very good because of 27...♙xe5!.



27...♙d2 28.b3

I had fifteen minutes left and I was very nervous. Can I defend against a mating attack? The text move, therefore, came as a welcome surprise. Must White defend the queenside pawns?

Undoubtedly this is the correct move since a direct attack would be futile.

This variation illustrates the problem: 28.♙f6 ♙xb2 29.♙d1 (29.♙f1 d4!) 29...♙xa2 30.♙h3 ♙c2 31.♙f1 g5! (the threat is 32.♙h6 ♘e6 33.♙xh7+!). There is now little danger in the attack and Black's a-pawn will start to advance.

White could play 28.f3, but after the exchange of queens and ...♘e6, Black's position is satisfactory. I don't think that Black has any advantage; however, Black can play on the queenside whilst it would be difficult for White to take advantage of his pawn majority in the opposite flank. One of the difficulties is that if the f-pawn were to advance too far, the e-pawn would be weakened and the black knight could be placed permanently at e4.

28...b4!?



I cannot demonstrate that this may be better than, for example, 28...a5 or 28...c5, but psychologically it has to be seen as the most appropriate.

A grain of sand has made it into the attacking machine and this is distressing for White. On the other hand, Fischer has not yet decided to abandon the attack and exchange queens. As a result, his next move was a surprising mistake. It was difficult for me to decide if I should play 28...a5. After 29.f3 it would be an advantage that Black has

not opened up the position and consequently after 29.♖h3 the move could be justified: 28...a5 29.♖h3 a4 30.b4 d4 31.cxd4 ♖xd4 32.♞ae1 ♖xb4 33.♙f6 ♖f4 and the position can be defended. However it was difficult to put this into place on account of time trouble, and the reasonable choice was a plan that involved an exchange of queens.

The move sequence 28...b4!? 29.f3 bxc3 30.♖xd2 cxd2 31.♞d1 leads to equality. Possibly 29...♖xg2+ 30.♙xg2 a5, with the idea of maintaining the pawn structure, is better for Black.

I don't know what Fischer overlooked, but it must have been something quite simple.

29.♖h3?? bxc3 30.♖h6 ♘e6 0-1

Didn't Fischer see that the black queen could interpose after, for instance, 31.♙f6 d4 32.♖xh7+ ♔xh7 33.♞h3+?

This seems to be the only plausible explanation. In the final position the passed pawns will soon win a piece.

Apparently this defeat took its toll on Fischer. In the following two days he lost against Najdorf and Spassky and he did not take advantage of his more favourable endgame position in his adjourned game against Unzicker.

In the second part of the tournament he woke up and played admirably.

Game 37

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Tigran Petrosian

Santa Monica 1966

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 g6

I would have loved to be playing Black in this position!

With the following move order I avoid the variation 5.c4 ♘f6 6.♘c3 ♘xd4 7.♖xd4 d6, which I had never studied in detail.

5.♙e3 ♙g7 6.c4 ♘f6 7.♘c3 ♘g4 8.♖xg4 ♘xd4 9.♖d1 ♘e6



It seemed I was still playing against myself! Now the problem is whether to defend the knight with ♖d2 or ♞c1. I decided on the queen move which, as the game progressed, turned out to be the best choice. Nevertheless, after 10.♖d2 ♖a5!? White must be prepared to sacrifice a pawn: 11.♞c1 ♙xc3 12.♞xc3!? ♖xa2, which opens up new lines although it is unclear. Or exchange queens with 12.♖xc3, which seems to give Black a defensible ending (in spite of White having the two bishops) thanks to his strong pawn structure.

10.♖d2 d6 11.♙e2 ♙d7 12.0-0 0-0 13.♞ad1!

In a famous game, Keres-Petrosian, Candidates' Tournament 1959, White placed his rooks at c1 and d1, but I chose a more aggressive set-up.

13...♙c6 14.♘d5 ♞e8?

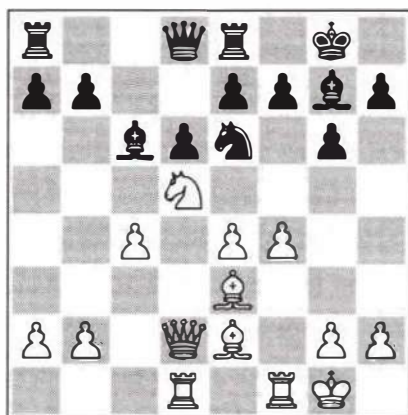
Correct was 14...♘c5 15.f3 a5, as in the game Porath-Larsen, Amsterdam Interzonal, 1964. After 16.♙d4? ♙xd4+ 17.♖xd4 e5 18.♖d2 ♘e6, Black had an excellent position. Strangely enough I couldn't recall the

exact order of play in that game, neither was I sure that I had arrived at the same position. I could remember my own moves as Black, but where had Porath placed his queen's rook?

Petrosian rejected 14...♖c5 because of 15.♚c2; however I don't understand this. Black can play 15...a5, since taking the queen with 16.♙xc5 and 17.♘f6+ would not be favourable for White.

Following this dubious text move I thought I was justified in launching an attack.

15.f4



15...♘c7

Petrosian commented that he had planned 15...♘c5 16.e5 ♘d7, but he rejected it now since 17.♘b4! would give Black certain problems. Nevertheless I don't believe that after 17...♚c7 the position is any worse than after the move that was actually played.

16.f5 ♘a6

After 16...♘xd5 17.exd5, Black has little chance of counterplay whilst White can organise an attack on the kingside. Now I should have continued with 17.b4!. If the a6-knight goes to b8 with the intention of getting to e5, then 18.b5 would be strong as 18...♙xd5 19.♚xd5 gives a double threat at b7 and f7. If 18...♙d7 the bishop obstructs the knight, and either 19.♙g5 or 19.♚f3 are strong.

My next move points directly at the king, but the black knight is also in play.

17.♙g4?! ♘c5 18.fxg6 hxg6

After 18...fxg6 19.♙xc5 dxc5 20.♙e6+ ♖h8 21.♚f7 or 21.♚g5 White has some chance of an attack, although nothing decisive.

Neither does 19.e5!? ♙xe5 20.♙xc5 dxc5 21.♙e6+ ♖h8 22.♚f7 ♚f8 23.♚df1 ♚xf7 24.♚xf7 ♙g7 seem clear: the exchange sacrifice only leads to a draw.

19.♚f2 ♚f8



I have occasionally used this position to illustrate how you can arrive at the best move via a process of elimination:

A) For example, 20.♙xc5 dxc5 is bad:

A1) 21.♘f6+ ♙xf6 22.♚xd8 ♚axd8, and Black ends up with more than enough compensation for the queen;

A2) Another line leads to a draw: 21.♚xc5 ♙xd5 22.♚xd5 ♚b6 23.b4 ♚xc5+ 24.bxc5. But I don't want a draw.

B) 20.♚h4 is answered with 20...♙xd5, and then 21.♚xd5 is bad because of 21...e6. But this line offers an idea, and since the other variations do not seem satisfactory this is the move that must be played.

My king's pawn is isolated and with quiet play White will be left with a weak pawn structure.

20.e5!!

The finest move in the whole game!

20...♙xe5 21.♚h4 ♙xd5
22.♖xd5

**22...♘e6?**

The World Champion has not foreseen my next move. Other options were:

A) 22...♘e4. Straight after the game Petrosian said that this was the move he should have played, but after 23.♙f3 ♘f6 24.♖b5 White recovers the pawn with a clear positional advantage;

B) The only possible defence was 22...e6. I'm not sure what continuation I would have chosen:

B1) Possibly 23.♙g5 ♖b6 24.♖xe5 dxe5 25.♙e3, although intensive analysis indicates that Black does have a defence;

B2) I didn't fancy the line 23.♚xd8 ♖xd8 24.♖xe5 dxe5 25.♙xc5, even though this had been my original plan when I played 20.e5!. I thought that White's small material advantage was not sufficient since my opponent could have counterplay on the queen's file and he also had strong kingside pawns. In subsequent analysis I was able to find very good winning chances after 25...f5 26.♙d1 ♖d2 27.♙b3! ♖xb2 (or, for example, 27...♖ad8 28.♖e1! ♖xb2 (28...e4 29.♙e7! and 30.♙f6) 29.♙a3 ♖bd2 30.♙c1 ♖2d3 31.♙g5

♖8d7 32.♖xe5) 28.♖d1. A variation with many subtleties which are difficult to see over the board when one is limited by the time control.

23.♖f3! ♙f6?

He saw it once he touched the bishop! It's an old story. He should have seen this a move earlier.

The only chance that Black had was 23...f5. After 24.♖h3 he can choose between 24...♙f7 or 24...♘g7, but not 24...♙g7? 25.♚h7+ ♙f7 26.♖xf5+!. In the tournament book I gave the variation I had first thought of:

A) 24...♙f7 25.♙xf5 (I have analysed other attacking options but without success: 25.♚h7+? ♘g7 26.♖h6 fxg4 27.♚xg6+ ♙g8 can only lead to a draw since 28.♖h7? is refuted by 28...♖e8! 29.♚h6 ♘f5) 25...gxf5 26.♚h5+ ♙f6 27.g4 (there's a nice try with 27.♖g3 ♖g8 28.♖f3 f4 29.♙xf4 ♘xf4 30.♖xf4+ ♙xf4 31.♚f5+ ♙g7 32.♚g4+ but 32...♙h7! refutes this) with these beautiful continuations:

A1) 27...♖h8 28.♚xf5+ ♙g7 29.♖xe5! ♖xh3 (or 29...dxe5 30.♚xe5+ ♙f7 31.♖f3+) 30.♖xe6;

A2) 27...fxg4? 28.♚xg4! ♖g8 29.♖f3+ ♘f4 30.♖xf4+ ♙xf4 31.♖f5+ ♙e6 32.♖g5+ ♙f7 33.♚f5+ ♙e8 34.♖xg8#;

A3) Nonetheless Black has a better defence: 27...♘g7! and White has to be satisfied with the extra pawn: 28.♙g5+ ♙e6 29.♚g6+ ♙f6 30.gxf5+ ♙d7 31.♙xf6 ♖xf6 32.♚xg7 and now, for instance, 32...♚g8 (bad is 32...♚b6+ 33.c5 ♚xb2? because of 34.♖xd6+!). This extra pawn should be enough to win, though not easily.

B) Another option is 24...♘g7, and now:

B1) 25. ♖h7+ leads to a drawn game as I showed above;

B2) Best is the quiet move 25. ♕f3!!. The difference between ... ♖f7 and ... ♘g7 is that the knight move does not threaten ... ♖h8, thus White has time to save his bishop. Now the main threat is 26. ♖h7+ and 27. ♖h6:

B21) If 25... ♖f7 the reply 26. ♖b5! is very strong; for example: 26... ♖h8 27. ♕d5+ ♘e6 28. ♖g5;

B22) Not much better is 25... e6 26. ♖h7+ ♖f7 27. ♖b5. The defence that offers most possibilities is 27... b6, but after 28. ♕xa8 ♖xa8 29. ♕d4 White should win.

I don't recall having studied 24... ♘g7 during the game. There was no reason to do so since it was obvious that the reply to 23... f5 had to be 24. ♖h3, and this offered very good possibilities.

But I don't know if I would have played 25. ♖h7+ or 25. ♕f3!. However one of the lines I saw in the game could have provided the clue: 22... ♘e4 23. ♕f3 ♘f6 24. ♖b5. In this manner I will have presented some threats against the black king as well as an attack on the b-pawn.

24. ♖h6 ♕g7



25. ♖xg6!

This, of course, was a great treat for the spectators! Many of them told me afterwards that they had been surprised.

What did they expect, perhaps a retreat to h4? With that move Black would end up in a winning position by playing 25... f5. The decision, then, was not difficult. I took three minutes though I could have moved immediately. Without this possibility I would have found another move instead of 23. ♖f3.

25... ♘f4

There's a small difference between this and 25... fxg6. The move 25... ♘c7 looks good but there would be a mate in three after another queen sacrifice: 26. ♖xg7+!

26. ♖xf4 fxg6 27. ♕e6+ ♖f7

If 27... ♖h7 28. ♖h4+ ♕h6 29. ♕xh6 ♖f5 30. ♖xf5 gxf5 31. ♕f7 e5 32. ♖h3, and there is no defence against ♕f8 mate. There is also an amusing variation where the c-pawn plays an important role: 29... g5 30. ♖xg5 ♖b6+ 31. c5!.

After the text move the game is even in terms of material. However Black's queen and rook are mere spectators whilst all White's pieces are attacking the king.

It is not surprising that Petrosian has no effective defence.

28. ♖xf7 ♖h8

It seems that the danger of a mating attack would diminish with 28... ♕e5, but after 29. ♖f5+ and 30. ♖fxe5, Black is completely lost.

29. ♖g5

Irrefutable. Now there's a battle between two rooks and two bishops on the one hand and a king and a bishop on the other. There can only be one outcome.

29... b5

Grim humour! The queen has done nothing in the game and now pretends to occupy the a5-square!

30. ♖g3

1-0

In the tournament book I wrote, 'My sense of self-criticism may not be sufficiently developed but I certainly don't regret the mistake I made on move 17'.

Game 38

King's Indian Defence

Tigran Petrosian

Bent Larsen

Santa Monica 1966

1.c4 ♖f6 2.♗c3 g6

I have always been convinced that the King's Indian is not a correct opening. This may also be due to the fact that Soviet masters know much more about it than I do. Therefore I get the impression that I'm going into dangerous ground if I play it against them. On the other hand this forces me to concentrate fully.

I had only managed to score half a point in the last five rounds. I had been indisposed and I played without much energy or concentration. Therefore I am now playing an opening in which routine play will lead to disaster.

3.g3 ♕g7 4.♕g2 0-0 5.d4 d6 6.e3

A solid variation also used at times by Botvinnik. Although Petrosian had played it in his last game against Spassky, I wasn't expecting it. When White plays in the centre with such restraint, Black has a variety of plans at his disposal.

My next three moves were the result of an inspiration over the board. Developing the queen's knight via a6 may have its advantages but also its drawbacks. One thing in its favour is that it doesn't block the development of the other pieces. I don't know if this line was played before but from this game on it would form part of 'theory'.

6...c6 7.♗ge2 a5!? 8.b3 ♖a6 9.0-0 e5 10.♗b2 ♞e8



11.a3

Later Petrosian pointed out that he was not happy with this move. It seems natural to prevent the knight from accessing b4, but this weakens the b-pawn.

The problem that White faces is how to prevent his opponent from attaining a good position with ...e5-e4. 11.d5 e4 is also excellent for Black. With this line my queen's knight easily enters the playing field. This would also have been the case after 11.dxe5, where White could end up with a weak d3-square.

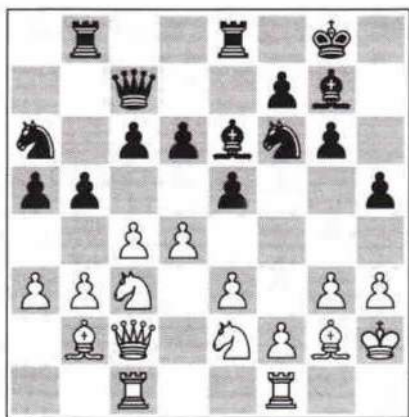
After 11.a3, 11...e4 was also possible, but I preferred to stop the b3-b4 advance.

11...♞b8 12.h3 h5 13.♞c2 ♕e6 14.♗h2

This was almost a waiting move since it is not clear that Black will continue with ...♞c8. It is of minimal importance, but I decided to play 14...♞c7. Perhaps it was for psychological reasons – as if to show that 14.♗h2 wasn't the best move.

Against 14.♞ad1, or 14.♞fd1, I would have played 14...♞c8 15.♗h2 b5. The same, or perhaps 14...b5 immediately, would have been the reply to 14.e4.

14...♞c7 15.♞ac1 b5!



Black has at least an even game. The sharpest line is 16.c5, but after 16...dxc5 17.dxe5 ♘d7 18.f4 b4! Black is better. The weakness of the b-pawn is obvious.

Petrosian deliberated for half an hour, which shows that he was not happy with the position. His notes in the tournament book reflect this. By move 13 he is commenting on the difficulties that White is facing.

After 16.d5 cxd5 17.♘xd5 ♘xd5 18.cxd5 ♖xc2 19.♞xc2 ♔d7, White cannot make use of the open file for anything special, and the black knight will be moving to c5. After ...b5-b4 the white knight will be rather out of place. Even so, it is unclear that White has anything more tangible.

16.cxb5 cxb5 17.♞d1

This passive move came as a surprise. I was expecting 17.♘e4 ♖xc2 18.♘xf6+ ♔xf6 19.♞xc2 ♞b6 and thought that the game was balanced. Now I think that Black is better. For example: 20.dxe5 dxe5 21.♘c1 ♞d6 or 20.d5 ♔d7 followed by ...b5-b4 and ...♘c5.

17...♞e7 18.♘b1

Once again he is playing passively, although now it is understandable. He is preventing Black from opening the b-file with ...b5-b4, and the b-pawn is well defended.

After 18.d5 ♔d7 he will have possibilities on both flanks; with ...b5-b4 on the queenside, replying to a3-a4 with ...♘c5; and on the kingside with ...♘h7 followed by ...h5-h4 or ...f7-f5.

18...♔d7 19.♘d2 e4

This is an important step. My only concern was the sacrifice 20.d5 ♘c5 21.♞xc5 dxc5 22.♔xf6, with a centralised pawn for the exchange. However, Black still maintains the better position.

20.♘f4 d5

Black now has a clear advantage in space. The opponent's knight at f4 is the only piece that is well-placed.

It is hardly important to mention that the text move weakens the c5-square since White cannot take advantage of this: Petrosian's knights cannot get to it.

21.♞e2 ♞d6 22.♞c2

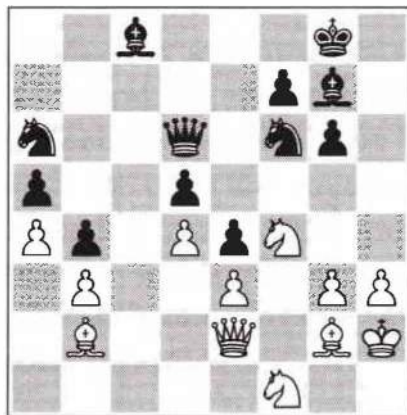
22.♞h1 merited some attention although the threat of ...h5-h4 would be renewed later with ...♔f6.

22...♞ec8 23.♞fc1 ♞xc2 24.♞xc2 h4 25.♘f1 hxg3+ 26.fxg3 b4!

An important move. The a6-f1 diagonal will be crucial for Black's plans. If the bishop moves to a6 it will threaten the white knight and will attack the weak g3-square.

This, for me, was a winning position. I commented to Donner that if I didn't win I should have my head examined...

27.a4 ♞c8 28.♞xc8+ ♔xc8



Black's superior position may be described in different ways: more space, a better pawn structure, more active pieces. It is very important to note that White's queen's bishop is weak and will not be able to contribute much; in fact it was to remain passive until the end. Black's queen's bishop does not have much scope either because of the static centre pawns, but there could be some possibilities along the a6-f1 diagonal.

In fact, the World Champion considered this bishop to be so strong that he decided to exchange it. It is not an attractive step to take but, as I mentioned, it is difficult for White to defend the g-pawn after ...g6-g5, even more so when the bishop at a6 can be exchanged for the knight.

Very weak would be 29. ♖b5? g5 30. ♘e2 ♜c7. The white queen cannot capture anything as it is all well defended.

29.h4 ♘c7 30.♙h3 ♙xh3

When one of the adversary's bishops is very weak the best recourse is to exchange the other one. After 30...♙a6, White plays g3-g4 and will have some possibilities on the kingside.

**31.♘xh3 ♙f8 32.♙g2 ♜c6
33.♜d1 ♙d6 34.♘f2**



If this knight were to end up on f4, it is very probable that sooner or later it will be exchanged for the bishop. This

would take us nearer an endgame with a knight against a bad bishop. At the same time White will have an isolated queen's pawn or rook's pawn, depending on how he captures the bishop.

34...♘e6 35.♙c1 ♘g7

Black's queen cannot attack in isolation. 35...♜c3 36.♙d2 ♜b2 is a dead end.

36.♙d2 ♘f5 37.♙h3 ♜c8 38.♙g2

White is trying for g3-g4, the only move that may free his game. However, after 38.g4 ♘h6 39.♙e1 ♘h7 Black would launch a direct attack with ...f7-f5 or ...g6-g5.

38...♙g7 39.♘h1 ♘h6 40.♙e1 ♜a6

During the tournament there were occasions when I was pressed for time. In this game however I could take things calmly and methodically. I still had a few minutes left for my last move (before the adjournment) and the timing was excellent.

41.♘f2 ♘f5

The sealed move. I analysed the position until 7am. I only slept for a couple of hours but I was confident of a win.

The threat is ...♜xf1+. White has to defend with 42.♙d2 or 42.♜d2. Petrosian logically chooses the queen move. Now that the bishop has moved to the kingside it would not be prudent to remove it. After 42.♙d2 we could have a continuation that is similar to the one actually played, though I would have tried a more direct attack: 42...♘h5! 43.g4 ♘xh4+ 44.♙h3 ♘f3 45.gxh5 ♜c8+ 46.♙g2 ♜f5 with a decisive attack and if 43.♘h1 ♙b8 44.♜e1 Black wins with another knight sacrifice: 44...♘hxg3 45.♘hxg3 ♘xh4+ 46.♙h1 ♙xg3 47.♘xg3 ♘f3 48.♜f2 ♜d3 or 48.♜d1 ♜d3 49.♘f1 ♘xd2 50.♘xd2 ♜xe3 51.♘f1 ♜f2 and wins easily.



**42. ♖d2 ♜b8 43. ♘d1 ♞g4
44. ♙g1 f6!**

The clearest line to emerge victorious, and one which I concentrated on once I had discarded other lines, was to place a knight on either f5 or g4 followed by ... ♖d3. It gives some chances but a win is not guaranteed.

The g-pawn advance is logical. Black occupies even more space and it is possible to open the f- or the h-file.

**45. ♙g2 g5 46. ♘f2 ♞gh6
47. hxg5**

If White accepts the exchange at h4 he would be left with a vulnerable king-side and an h-pawn which cannot be defended. To 47. h5, the reply would



In Santa Monica, 1966.

have been 47... g4. White cannot yet play 48. ♖d1? because of 48... ♖xf1+, and Black can calmly follow up with ... ♘e7 and ... f6-f5. If he wants to he can capture the h-pawn before playing the decisive ... ♘f3.

**47... fxg5 48. ♘d1 ♙g6 49. ♘h2
g4 50. ♖c2 ♜d6 51. ♘f1 ♞g8**



There are two different ways to win: move the knight to f3 or the queen to h3. The former is more difficult to realise since the g-pawn needs protection. However, against the queen manoeuvre there is no defence. I had decided on the queen move but as greater security I wanted to pass the time control and thus I did not play anything irrevocable until move 56. I was very tired, and this may explain moves 53 to 56.

**52. ♘h2 ♘f6 53. ♘f1 ♙h5
54. ♘h2 ♙g5 55. ♘f1 ♘h5
56. ♜f2 ♘f6 57. ♜e1 ♘h5 58. ♜f2
♖a8! 59. ♜e1 ♖h8**

White is lost.

60. ♖c6 ♜xg3 61. ♜xg3 ♘h3 0-1

This time I did not have the opportunity of giving up my queen. This could have arisen after 62. ♘xg3 ♖h3+ 63. ♙f2 ♖xg3+ 64. ♙e2 ♖xe3+!. However I am more proud of this positional play than in the previous game where I sacrificed the queen at g6.

And.. I did not have my head examined!

Chapter 12

1967: A Crazy Year

The year started badly. In a small New Year tournament in Stockholm I lost my first three games. I ended up sharing third place in relatively weak company. Keres was ranked first and was well ahead of the field. Immediately after, in Beverwijk, I got off to a similar start but fought vigorously and caught up with the leaders. In the penultimate round I had to beat Spassky in order to have the possibility, at least, of sharing first place. However I lost and, discouraged, I was also defeated in the final round, finishing fourth.

At the tournament in Monaco, in April, I tied third place with Geller, behind Fischer and Smyslov. My play was irregular, perhaps because of stomach trouble. This organ is an essential part of a master; it has to adapt to different diets, and until then mine had behaved well. Monaco was an exception. Nevertheless I believe that one of the best games I have played is No. 39.

In a small tournament in Dundee, during the month of July, I lost to Gligoric, who had been one of my best ‘clients’ for some time – I had beaten him on five consecutive occasions! So, he won the tournament, and I, for my part, was extremely fortunate to share second place with Olafsson.

And so, during the first half of the year my results were ‘erratic’ – until mid-August when I flew to Cuba. After returning home just before Christmas, I had won first prize in four strong tournaments. Such a series of wins had never been seen in the history of chess and, of course, it was crazy to participate in so many competitions in such a short period of time.

The tournament in Havana was extremely strong, with twelve grandmasters out of a total of twenty participants. It was very hot and I perspired heavily. But I felt in good physical shape, unlike at the Olympiad the previous year, and I played very good games. The end result was a total of 15 points made up of 11 wins and 8 draws.

		Monaco 1967										
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Fischer,Robert	*	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	7.0
2	Smyslov,Vassily	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	6.5
3	Geller,Efim	1	½	*	0	½	½	1	½	1	1	6.0
4	Larsen,Bent	0	½	1	*	0	1	1	½	1	1	6.0
5	Matanovic,Aleksandar	½	0	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	5.0
6	Gligoric,Svetozar	0	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	1	1	4.5
7	Lombardy,William	0	½	0	0	½	½	*	1	1	1	4.5
8	Forintos,Gyöző	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	1	1	4.0
9	Mazzoni,Guy	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	*	½	1.0
10	Bergraser,Volf	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	*	0.5

In two of the games I was somewhat lucky to save a lost position; however, overall I played very well and deserved my victory: Larsen, 15; Taimanov, 13½; Smyslov, 13; Polugaevsky, 12, etc. (see table on page 148).

Of the four games I have chosen, I believe that the one played against Gligoric demonstrates one of my most beautiful attacks. The one against Taimanov was hard fought, and the games against Schmid and Bednarski contain many beautiful tactical elements. The fact that they share the same a4-a5 move is a curious coincidence. It has been said that I use my rook pawns more than other masters.

My next stop was Canada, where a tournament was held in Winnipeg. There were nine grandmasters out of a total of ten participants. Unfortunately, the play that unfolded was uninteresting; partly because Keres and Spassky were not in top form. I was tired after Havana and didn't play well either, except in the last two rounds. However, I managed to share first prize with Darga (6 points); then came the two Soviets (with 5½ points). Game 44 is the one that was played in the last round.

Immediately after this I flew to Sousse (Tunisia), where the Interzonal was played. I was the winner also here. After Fischer's withdrawal, nobody really tried seriously to win the first prize; the important thing was to qualify for the Candidates' Tournament. I ended up with 15½ points; Geller, Kortchnoi and Gligoric got 14; Portisch 13½; Reshevsky, Stein and Hort 13; Matulovic 12½, etc. (see table on page 162).

I did not play as imaginatively as in Havana, but I managed to win several exciting endgames. As in this book I am presenting complete games, I have chosen the one I played against Gipslis (number 45). It may not cause much of an impression to the reader, but I played with precision and confidence in myself.

I then went to Mallorca. I started with five wins (against Damjanovic, Lehmann, O'Kelly, Bednarski and Gligoric). I don't know where the energy had come from until then, but now it ebbed away. I still managed to play two good games (46 and 47); however, in the last rounds I played so badly that my two closest rivals almost caught up with me. It ended well: Larsen 13 points (from 17 rounds); Smyslov and Botvinnik 12½, etc. (see table on page 166).

I had played a total of sixty-six tournament games in four months. I must admit that this was crazy and something that I would never repeat, but it had fantastic results.

Game 39

Sicilian Defence

Efim Geller

Bent Larsen

Monaco 1967

1.♘f3 c5 2.c4 g6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♕g7

Gives White a chance to play the Maroczy Bind. Some masters prefer

4...♗c6 5.e4 ♗f6 6.♗c3 ♗xd4 7.♔xd4 d6, which is known as the Gurgendize Variation. But then one must be very familiar with the complications that arise after 8.c5!? ♕g7 9.♕b5+ ♕d7 10.cxd6 0-0! and, as a matter of fact, I wasn't. In general, it is believed that grandmasters know everything, but this is not so. However, in many cases we know

enough to avoid sharp theoretical lines that we do not know well. Knowing means having more information than that which appears in some article in a specialised magazine; it means, therefore, having studied the problems oneself.

5.e4 ♖c6 6.♙e3 d6

Black refrains from playing the so-called Breyer manoeuvre, 6...♘f6 7.♘c3 ♘g4 8.♙xg4 ♘xd4, which I have played occasionally. Playing it I feel at home but here I wanted to try something different.

7.♙e2 ♘h6!?



Recommended some time back by Simagin. The move is logical: the knight does not get in the way of either the king's bishop or the f-pawn. A rather different question is whether 6...♘h6 is better, but 6...♘h6 7.♙e2 f5 8.exf5 ♘xf5 9.♘xf5 ♙a5+ 10.♘c3 ♙xf5 11.c5! is probably favourable for White. And if 9...♙xb2 10.♘d2 gxf5 11.♙h5+ ♕f8 12.♙c2! (Unzicker-Filip, 1957). This would be the end for Black.

We can see that White cannot play 8.g4 because of 8...♙xg4 or 8...♘xg4.

8.0-0-0 9.♙d2

This was recommended by many theoreticians, having been played by Petrosian against Heinicke in 1957. I don't think it is any better than 9.♘c3

f5 10.exf5 gxf5 11.f4. Kavalek used it against me in Sousse; many experts believe that the position is favourable to White. This was not so in our game, since after 11...♙d7 12.h3 ♙b6 13.♘xf5 ♙xb2 we reached a very complex and unclear position. However I suspect that 11...♙d7 and 12.h3 may not be the most precise. Also, 10...gxf5 is not the only option for Black. This was Simagin's brainchild. However, when I played it it was referred to as 'original', 'remarkable' and 'doubtful'!

9...♘g4 10.♙xg4 ♙xg4 11.♘c3 ♙a5!

The game Petrosian-Heinicke, Vienna 1957, continued 12.f4!? ♘xd4 13.♙xd4 e5 14.fxe5 dxe5 15.♙e3 ♖ad8 16.♙f2 and White had the better game. Move 15 for Black is a grave error, and the others are dubious. I do not think we will learn much from this game and soon we will see that Geller doesn't think so either. He would probably have had more confidence in this variation if Heinicke had beaten Petrosian with it.

Of course, it is also possible that Geller preferred to avoid the improvement that, most probably, I had prepared.

After the game mentioned, people started to play 11...♖c8, which I consider weak. In the game Bhend-Keres, Zürich 1959, White gained superiority with 12.b3 a6 13.♖ac1 ♙a5 14.h3 ♙d7 15.♘xc6 bxc6? 16.c5!. Keres was extremely lucky to save half a point.

12.♖ac1 ♖fc8 13.b3 a6

Placing the king's rook at c8 rather than the queen's rook has certain advantages. It avoids such tricks like 14.♘d5 ♙xd2 15.♘xe7+, as the king can move to f8. Sometimes ...b7-b5 is feasible since, if the b-pawn is captured, the white

a-pawn is lost. In other instances Black prepares ...b7-b5 with ...♖ab8.

In the *Chess Informant*, Matanovic suggested 14.f4!?, nevertheless, Geller preferred a more direct opposition to ...b7-b5.

14.♞c2 b5!

In any case the advance did take place and Geller spent forty-five minutes pondering over it. I don't know why he rejected 15.cxb5. Maybe he did not like 15...axb5 16.♘dxb5 (after 16.♘cxb5 ♘xd4 17.♘xd4 ♞xc2 the a-pawn is lost) 16...♘b4 17.♞b2 ♙d7 18.♘d4 ♚a6 which gives Black some initiative in exchange for the pawn – although I would have continued 15...♙xd4, with a fairly matched game. Once Black advances on the queenside the absence of the king's bishop is not a grave handicap as White does not have time to focus on a mating attack.

Moreover, Geller's selected line seems promising.

15.♘d5 ♚xd2 16.♞xd2 ♙xd4
17.♙xd4 ♞ab8!



Black refuses to compromise. Since White is threatening to attack the rook at c8 with either ♘b6 or ♘e7, the most logical idea is to move this piece, though if that is done Geller would take control of the c-file. After 17...♞d8 both 18.♙b6 or simply 18.cxb5 axb5 19.♞c1 are very good for White.

The text move, which Geller probably underestimated when he played 15.♘d5, is quite subtle. 18.c5 dxc5? 19.♙xc5 gives a slight edge to White, but Black continues 18...♙e6! 19.cxd6 ♙xd5 20.exd5 ♘xd4 21.♞xd4 exd6. Surely White can follow this line, but he does have some problems. His d-pawn is more difficult to protect than his opponent's and Black controls the c-file, which is more important than the e-file since it is further from the king.

18.♞c1 ♚f8

Black has already solved his problems. The position must be considered absolutely level, but as I have sometimes mentioned, I like to have a central pawn majority. I also had another thing in my favour: Geller had used up more time.

19.♘b6 is weak because of 19...♘xd4; 19.♙e3 was a possibility worthy of attention. Maybe Black would have continued 19...bxc4 20.♘b6 ♞d8 21.♞xc4 ♘e5 22.♞c7 ♘d7, which, most likely, would have led to a quick draw.

19.♙b2 bxc4 20.♞xc4 ♚e8
21.♞dc2

Geller only had half an hour to make twenty moves and possibly his last move is a slight error. However, the position is already difficult for him; it is very easy for Black to play actively; for example, ...a6-a5-a4. Opposite-coloured bishops do not guarantee a draw while there are other pieces on the board.

On the other hand 21.e5? is not possible due to 21...♘xe5.

21...♚d7 22.f3

On each of his next moves, White should take account of the threat ...♙xd5, so 22.♘e3 deserved consideration; if 22...♙e6 then 23.♞a4, but not 23.♞4c3 ♘b4! and Black wins a pawn.

Now Geller only had sixteen minutes left.

22...♙e6 23.♞d2 a5 24.h4

This move confused me, but perhaps it wasn't so strange that White should want the h2-square for his king. Furthermore, such a move may also have a certain effect against the advance of black pawns on the kingside. However, it is also easy to imagine continuations where h4 is a weakness. In some lines ...f7-f5 may be possible and following ...fxe4, White plays fxe4, thus weakening the g4-square.

24...♞b5 25.♞a4 f6!



A good move and also very clever. In his haste, Geller missed the point. Would it have been smarter to change the move order? 24...f6!? 25.♞a4 ♞b5 leads to the same position but... what if White played 25.♙h2 ? However, the selected order of play is probably preferable, since the reply could be 25.♞c1. In the game this is impossible. 25.♞c1? ♙xd5 26.♞xd5 ♞xd5 27.exd5 ♙b4 28.♞xc8 ♙xc8 29.♙c3 ♙xa2 30.♙xa5 ♙c1 31.b4 ♙e2+ and ...♙c3.

Now play should continue 26.♙a3 (threatening 27.♙xf6+!) 26...♙f7 and White can capture three pawns in exchange for the knight. This is not yet enough because after 27.♙xf6+ exf6 28.♞xd6+ ♙e8 29.♞xf6 the pawns pose little danger. After 26...♙f7, Black's plan could be ...f6-f5 in order to

isolate the opponent's e-pawn. As I mentioned, my knight will later occupy the g4-square.

26.♙h2? ♙xd5! 27.♞xd5 ♞xd5 28.exd5 ♙b4 29.♞xa5

After 29.♙a3 ♞c2? 30.♙xb4 axb4 31.♞xb4 ♞xa2 32.♞d4 ♞b2 33.b4 A rook endgame would have been much more favourable for Geller than what was played in the game, and almost certainly defensible. However Black plays 29...♙d3! 30.♞d4 ♙e1. For example:

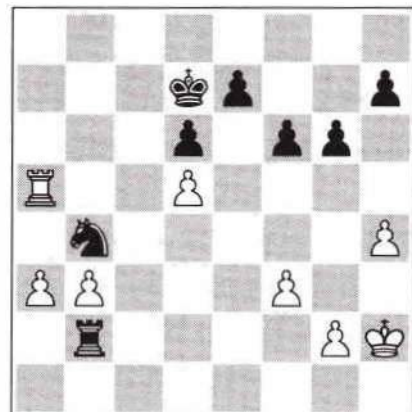
A) 31.♞e4 ♙c2 32.♙b2 ♙b4;

B) Or 31.♞d2 ♞c2 32.♞xc2 ♙xc2 33.♙c1 ♙b4 34.♙d2 ♙xa2 35.♙xa5 ♙c1 36.b4 ♙e2 37.b5 ♙f4 38.b6 ♙c8 and wins.

29...♞c2

We now see the importance of 25...f6: The black king has f7 as a flight square. Otherwise, Geller could save himself in some variations with rook checks at a7 and a8. For instance, after 30.♙a3 (there is no joy in 30.♙d4 ♞xa2: after the exchange of rooks the d-pawn will fall and after 31.♞b5 there's the beautiful continuation 31...♙xd5!! 32.♞xd5 ♙c6) 30...♙d3. Now the bishop will unfortunately be placed on a3. For example: 31.b4 ♙f4 32.b5 ♙xd5 or 32.♙g3 g5 33.hxg5 fxg5 34.♙g4 ♞xg2+ 35.♙f5 ♙xd5!.

30.a3 ♞xb2



Capablanca Memorial, Havana 1967																					
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Larsen,Bent	*	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1/2	1	1	1	1	1	1/2	15.0
2	Taimanov,Mark	0	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	13.5
3	Smyslov,Vassily	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	0	1/2	1	1	1	1	1	13.0
4	Polugaevsky,Lev	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	0	1/2	1	12.0
5	Filip,Miroslav	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	11.5
6	Gligoric,Svetozar	0	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1	1	11.5
7	Donner,Jan Hein	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1	1/2	0	1	0	0	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	10.0
8	Bednarski,Jacek	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	*	1/2	1	1/2	0	1	1/2	1	0	1/2	1/2	1	1	10.0
9	Pachman,Ludek	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	9.5
10	Barcza,Gedeon	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1	0	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	9.5
11	Schmid,Lothar	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1	1	9.0
12	Cobo Arteaga,Eldis	0	0	0	0	1/2	0	1	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1	1	9.0
13	Hennings,Artur	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	0	0	8.5
14	Jimenez Zerquera,Eleazar	1/2	0	1	1/2	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	8.0
15	Rossetto,Hector	0	0	1/2	0	0	0	0	0	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	1/2	1/2	1	1	8.0
16	Rodriguez Gonzalez,Jesus	0	1/2	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	*	0	1/2	1/2	7.5
17	O'Kelly de Galway,Alberic	0	1/2	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	1	*	0	1	7.5
18	Westerinen,Heikki	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1/2	1/2	1/2	0	0	1/2	1	0	1/2	1	*	1/2	7.0
19	Garcia Martinez,Silvino	0	0	0	1/2	0	0	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	0	0	1	1/2	0	1/2	0	1/2	*	5.5
20	Letelier Martner,Rene	1/2	0	0	0	1/2	1/2	0	0	0	1/2	0	0	1	1/2	0	1/2	1/2	0	*	4.5

I was almost sure I had a choice between two winning lines. Selecting the best option was difficult. You could say that I opted for the cautious line; a rook ending in which White is doomed to passivity. The only question that remains then is to find a way to win.

In the other variation, 30...♖d3, White's two passed pawns are connected and this offers him some chance of counterplay. Black wins at least a pawn on the kingside, and probably also the queen's pawn. Without doubt Black will win, with correct play. However some critical positions could crop up – as a result of a little '*faux pas*' – which would give White a draw or even more. Let us have a look at this variation: 31.♙a1 ♘f4 32.♙g3 g5 33.hxg5 fxg5 34.♙a7+ ♙e8 35.♙g4 ♙xg2+ 36.♙f5 ♘xd5. 36.♙f5 ♘xd5. We have seen something similar before in the comment regarding 30.♙a3. But there the a-pawn was in danger and the bishop was nearly lost. Here White would make a move like 37.♙e4, still waiting for an opportunity to advance his two passed pawns.

31.axb4 ♙xb3 32.♙a7+

Other options were:

A) 32.♙b5 ♙c7!. The rook is completely immobilized. Black would then anchor his kingside pawns and, in most cases, the winning procedure would be to place the rook on e5 and threaten ...e7-e6. If, during these manoeuvres, White tries to break through with ♙a5, the reply would be ...♙b6. The weak queen's pawn is an important factor. Let us illustrate with the following variation:

32.♙b5? ♙c7! 33.f4 h6 34.g3 ♙b2+ 35.♙g1 (35.♙h3 h5! zugzwang) 35...g5 36.fxg5 fxg5 37.hxg5 hxg5

38.♙f1 g4 39.♙g1 ♙e2 40.♙f1 ♙e5 41.♙f2 ♙f5+ 42.♙g1 e6 43.♙g2 ♙xd5 (43...exd5 also wins) 44.♙xd5 exd5 45.♙f2 ♙b6 46.♙e3 ♙b5 47.♙d4 ♙xb4 48.♙xd5 ♙c3 49.♙xd6 ♙d4.

B) 32.b5 would also place the rook in an unfortunate position. Black would take his king to f7 with the idea of playing ...♙d1 (for instance: b5-b6, ♙b3; ♙h6 ♙b5, capturing one of the pawns).

32...♙e8 33.♙a8+

This is inaccurate as, in any case, Black must go to f7. Even without losing a tempo, White would lose. However it is fair to say that this line would also lead to a draw if the f7-square were not available for the king.

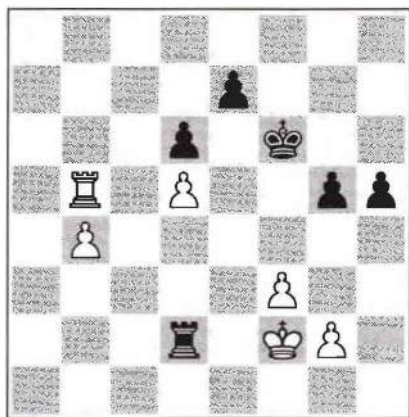
33...♙f7 34.♙b8 ♙d3 35.♙b5 ♙d4 36.♙g3 g5!

White's rook is immobilised and Black wants more space to manoeuvre. Black's king will also move to f6.

If White were to think of sacrificing a pawn with 37.h5, the reply could be either 37...♙h4 or 37...f5 followed by ♙f6. But the line 37...♙h4 38.♙b8 ♙xh5 39.b5 ♙h4 40.b6 ♙b4 41.b7 h5 is also sufficiently good; for instance: 42.♙f2 h4 43.g4 (if not, ...♙g7, ...f6-f5 and ...g5-g4) 43...♙b2+ 44.♙g1 ♙g7 45.♙h1 h3 46.♙g1 h2+ 47.♙h1 ♙f7, zugzwang; Black wins easily once the passed pawns have disappeared from the board.

37.hxg5 fxg5 38.♙f2 ♙d2+ 39.♙g3 h5 40.♙h3 ♙d3 41.♙g3 ♙f6 42.♙f2 ♙d2+

The sealed move. It's very good, but it would have been more 'practical' to play 42...♙e5, and therefore analyse the position resulting after 43.♙b8 ♙f6 44.♙b5 at the hotel!



I was analysing it until three thirty in the morning, and Geller told me that after being awake until five he had reached the verdict: defeat. He found that the simplest winning line was ...h5-h4 followed by a rook manoeuvre that would place it at e5. I had seen this too; however, I chose a line that would give my rook more freedom.

**43.♖g3 ♜d4 44.♖h3 g4+
45.fxg4 ♜xg4 46.♞b8 ♜d4
47.♞b5 ♞e4 48.♞b8 ♞e5 49.♞b5**

Geller wants to deprive the black king of the e6-square. After 49.b5 ♞xd5 50.b6 ♞b5 Black wins easily with ...♖e6 and ...♖d7.

49...e6 50.♞b8 ♞xd5 51.b5

Or 51.♖h4 ♜d2.

51...♜d4 52.♞h8

If 52.b6 ♞b4 53.b7 ♖e5 followed by ♖d5 and ...e6-e5.

**52...♞b4 53.♞h6+ ♖f7 54.♞xh5
♖g6 55.g4 d5 56.♞e5 ♖f7**

This is more exact than 56...♖f6, which would force the rook to abandon a bad square and would allow an eventual g4-g5 with check.

57.♖h4 ♜xb5 58.♞e1

If 58.g5 ♞b4+ 59.♖h5? ♞e4! 60.♞xe4 dxe4 61.♖g4 e5! wins immediately, and if 59.♖g3 there are various methods. The simplest is 59...♞b6 60.♖f4 ♖g6 61.♞e1 ♞b4+ 62.♖e5 ♞g4! when ♖xe6 is impossible because of ...♞e4+.

58...d4

The plan is as follows: after 59.g5 Black plays 59...d3; the black rook will be posted behind the pawn on d5; when the white king moves towards the d-pawn, a won position will be reached with king versus pawn and king. It is a very simple method, although it is not in accordance with the old rule that passed pawns have to advance together. However, after White's next move, I changed my plan; the king will support the d-pawn.

**59.♞a1 ♖f6 60.♞a8 ♞d5 61.♖g3
d3 62.♞a1 ♖e5 63.♖f2 ♖d4
64.♞a7 e5 65.g5 e4 66.♞a4+
♖e5 0-1**

This game was played in the penultimate round, during the second session in the morning and just before the last round. Half an hour after resigning, Geller had to face Fischer. Surely he was sleepy and it's probable that his mind was not on the game, but he won! Bravo!

Game 40

Nimzo-Indian Defence

Svetozar Gligoric

Bent Larsen

Havana 1967

**1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♖b4
4.e3 b6**

I had not played this move for a very long time. Actually I'm rather wary of the variation 5.♗e2 ♖a6 6.♗g3. I don't know if 4...b6 was a surprise for Gligoric; however perhaps he was afraid of a theoretical novelty. At least he did not choose the line that theory considers to be the most critical.

5.♗d3 ♖b7 6.♗f3 ♗e4

Other possibilities are 6...c5 and 6...0-0 7.0-0 d5. In those days the text move was not held in high esteem.

7.0-0 f5



This pawn advance has not been studied in depth as much as the actual acceptance of the pawn. Let us see:

A) It was quickly agreed that 7...♗xc3 8.bxc3 ♕xc3 9.♖b1 ♕a5 10.♕a3 d6 11.c5! 0-0 12.cxd6 cxd6 13.e4 fully compensates the loss of a pawn. This variation was played in the game Denker-Fine, New York, 1944. The only real issue is to find out if 10.e4 is still stronger;

B) 7...♕xc3 8.bxc3 ♗xc3 9.♖c2 ♕xf3 10.gxf3 ♖g5+ 11.♔h1 ♖h5 was considered to lead to a drawn position for some time; however, in one of the games in the Keres-Spassky match, 1965, it was found that 12.♖g1 ♖xf3+ 13.♖g2 f5 14.♕a3 gives White a strong attack.

8.♕xe4?!

This exchange is considered to be satisfactory. I do not think so.

8...fxe4 9.♗d2 ♕xc3 10.bxc3 0-0!

The game Gligoric-Andersen, Copenhagen 1965, continued: 10...♖g5 11.♕a3 ♗a6 12.c5 h5? 13.♖e2 ♖g4 14.f3 exf3 15.♗xf3 0-0-0 16.h3 ♖g3 17.♗e5 and White quickly won. The text move is one of the recommendations on openings which I gave to the Danish team before the Chess Olympiad

in Havana in 1966, but the opportunity to play it never arose.

11.♖g4 ♖f5!



The idea is very simple: 12.♗xe4? h5! In fact Gligoric had seen this when he was analysing his game with Andersen but he had forgotten it. Now he was annoyed with himself.

How can White activate his bishop? Will the c4-pawn become a weak target? White now has a few problems. The next move is probably the best.

12.d5!? ♖g5 13.♖f4 exd5 14.cxd5 ♕xd5 15.c4 ♕c6!

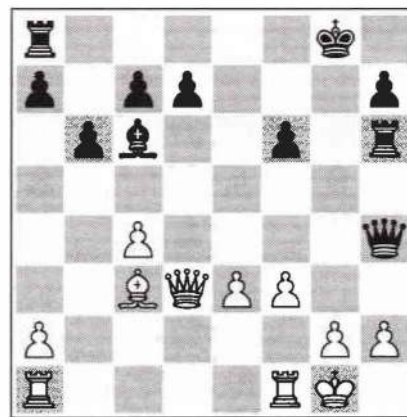
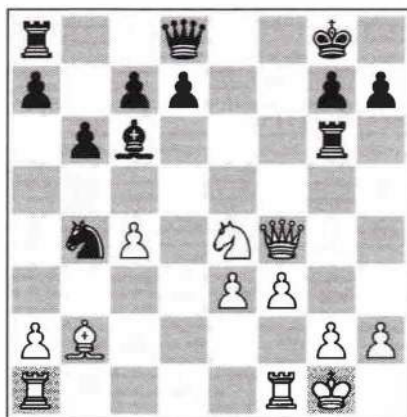
This is much better than 15...♕b7 as the pawn and the bishop will protect each other. The knight does not need the c6-square.

Nevertheless I spent a long time thinking this out. I felt tempted to play 15...♕e6!? in order to create threats against the c-pawn as quickly as possible. But the reply 16.♖xe4 followed by an eventual c4-c5 would give Gligoric attacking possibilities.

16.♗xe4 ♖g6 17.♕b2 ♗a6

Black has a tiny advantage thanks to White's weak queenside pawns. Now White must play 18.♗g3, preparing e3-e4, to which my reply would have been 18...♖g5. Following an exchange of queens I would exploit the weaknesses in the opponent's pawn structure.

18.f3? ♗b4!



Black initiates his attack. At first light the threat 19...♔d3 does not seem too dangerous, but a deeper analysis shows that White is faced with some difficulties.

After 19.♚ad1 and 19.♘f2 the threats against the f-pawn are obvious. Both 19...♚e7 or 19...♚f8 are strong replies.

19.♚c3 ♘d3

Gligoric was afraid of 19...♚e7, but there is no reason for this since he can play 20.♘g3 ♚f8 21.♚xb4 ♚xb4 22.♚xc7, or else 20.♚xb4 ♚xb4 21.♚xc7 ♚xe4 22.fxe4 ♚d2 23.g3.

20.♚f5 ♚h4!!

If I had not foreseen my 25th move, I would have been satisfied with 20...♚e7 21.♘f6+ ♚xf6 22.♚xd3 and the game would be almost equalized, although Black may still feel that White's queenside pawns are weak.

Of course, this does not mean that I had calculated five moves ahead in all variations, but the placing of the queen was actually 'indicated' by the game as it progressed. I would allow a weakening of the pawn structure only if I could initiate a strong attack.

21.♘f6+

There is no better move. 21.♚ad1 ♘c5! 22.♘xc5 ♚f8! would give Black a decisive attack.

21...gxf6 22.♚xd3 ♚h6!

This has to be played immediately, otherwise White may consolidate his king's position with ♚e1 and ♚g3.

23.h3 ♘f7!

Leaving g8 for the other rook. White lacks any satisfactory defence; this is not surprising since Black is utilising all his pieces in the attack.

In fact a direct attack could have been avoided by 24.♚d4 ♚g5 25.♚f4, but after 25...♚xf4 26.exf4 ♚h5 the end-game would be lost. The white pawn majority on the kingside does not come to much as Black would have two connected passed pawns on the other wing. White's problems would not be resolved with 24.♚e1 ♚h5. For example: 25.♘h1 ♚g8 (threatens 26...♚xh3+) 26.♚e2 ♚f5. Or else 25.e4 ♚g8 26.h4 ♚hg6.

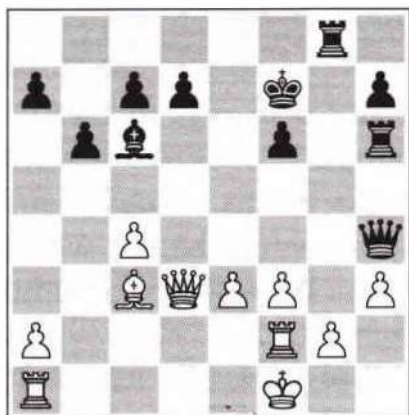
As long as White cannot play e3-e4, Black's bishop has many options at its disposal. It is hard to find the time to make this move: 25.e4 ♚g8 26.♘h1? ♚xh3+.

24.♚e2 ♚g8 25.♘h1 ♚g3 26.e4 is also useless, not only because of 26...♚xh3+, gaining a queen and two pawns for the two rooks, but also because of 26...♚xe4!. The idea being 27.fxe4 ♚xh3+ 28.gxh3 ♚xh3+ 29.♘g1 ♚g6+ 30.♘f2 ♚g3#.

When I decided on 20 ... ♚h4 I had not analysed these variations in great detail.

Whilst the white king is in the h- or g-file Black has a formidable attack. Is there any escape for the white king? I carefully studied this possibility. White will equalize only if he can secure the king. Gligoric tries to do just that.

24.♖f2? ♜g8 25.♔f1



25...♜xg2!

I was proud of this sacrifice, and more so as I had foreseen it much earlier. The actual combination is quite simple, but without it White would be 'comfortable'; for instance: 25...♜hg6 26.♚d4!.

26.♜xg2 ♚xh3

Black has three threats in the pipeline: ...♚xf3+, ...♙xf3 and ... ♜g6. Gligoric can fend off two, but not all three. The variations are actually very simple.

Gligoric had considered the rook sacrifice, at least, when he played 24.♖f2. He later explained that he had not taken into account that Black's queen was defending the queen's pawn! This is important in the variation 27.♔g1 ♙xf3.

Those who have studied the psychology of moves will know that a long backward move along a diagonal is commonly missed when one is short of time. As from move 11...♔f5, this game had taken such a turn that Gligoric had always felt cornered. In the position where the oversight was made, he was faced with no satisfactory solution.

27.e4 ♜g6

0-1

If 28.♚e2 then 28...♚h1+.

Game 41

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Jacek Bednarski

Havana 1967

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.♙b5+ ♙d7 4.a4?!

A month earlier I had played this move against Olafsson, in Dundee. At the time I did not know that the great Georgian master Gurgenedze had experimented with it on a number of occasions. I intended to present unknown problems to my opponents.

I don't really believe that this advance is particularly strong. I find it here less promising than in the Bogo-Indian, for example: 1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘f3 ♙b4+ 4.♙d2 a5!?. If in the game we move White's e-pawn one square back and we advance Black's e-pawn to the fourth row, we will transpose to this position but with colours reversed. However, the d-pawn on the third row prevents ♘e5. Moreover, after 4...♘c6, Black can reply to ♙xc6 with ...bxc6, because the c5-pawn is defended by the d-pawn; in this case, the doubled pawns are not a weakness.

Does all this seem somewhat confusing? That's understandable since these ideas are unclear. 4.a4 is, of course, correct!

4...♘f6

In the cited game Olafsson played 4...♘c6 5.0-0 ♘f6 6.d3 g6 7.♘bd2 ♙g7 8.♘c4 0-0 9.♚e1 a6!? 10.♙xc6 ♙xc6 11.a5 ♘d7 with an even game although Black's 9th move weakened his position slightly.

5.d3



The advance 5.e5? dxe5 6.♖xe5 ♙xb5 7.axb5 ♜d5! is bad. I knew this well enough but I forgot it in the game against Geller in the Swiss Interzonal. This game was played the day that Fischer announced his withdrawal from the tournament. He only returned so as to play Reshevsky. That day most masters were more attentive to Fischer's antics than to their own games! Geller accepted a quick draw in a position where he thought he had better chances.

5...e6

Embarking on a rather passive plan. 5...♖c6 looks better and could transpose into the game Larsen-Olafsson already mentioned.

6.0-0 ♙e7 7.e5! dxe5 8.♖xe5 a6?

Unnecessary weakening. 8...0-0 was much better.

9.♙xd7+ ♖bxd7 10.♖xd7 ♜xd7 11.♖d2

Probably 11.a5 seems more logical. However, now against 11...b6 the continuation 12.♜f3 ♜d5 13.♖e4 is strong; for instance: 13...0-0 14.♙g5 or 13...♖xe4 14.dxe4 ♜c6 15.♜g3! 0-0 16.♙h6 ♙f6 17.e5.

11...0-0 12.♖c4 ♖d5 13.a5

White's advantage is evident. Black's chances of starting anything active are very limited. His queenside pawns are paralysed, and on the kingside White controls more space.

Initially my plan was to create threats on the kingside so as to force Bednarski to place his pawns on dark squares; in this way he would be left with a 'bad' bishop which would be a handicap in the endgame.

13...♜fe8 14.♜e1 ♙f8 15.♙d2

♜ad8 16.♜e4 ♜c7 17.♜f3 e5??

The decisive mistake. The Polish master has not considered my next move. If he wanted to play ...e6-e5 he should have prepared for it with 17...f6 or, even earlier, 16...f6. The unrelenting attack on the h-pawn will force him to play ...h7-h6. As a result, all his kingside pawns will be on dark squares. My opponent would then be weak on the light squares.

18.♜e2! f6 19.f4 ♙e7!

A very pretty defence: 20.fxe5? f5!. However White steps up the pressure.

20.♜e1 g6 21.♜f3 exf4

After 21...♖xf4 22.♙xf4 exf4 23.♜e2 Black cannot evade the pin; a line that leads to victory is ♖b6, followed by c2-c4 and ♖d5; if 23...♜f8 the best move seems to be 24.♖h1, eliminating the possibility 24.♖b6 c4!?

22.♖b6!

This piece seems superfluous, taking into account the tactical threats posed by White. However Black's knight is protecting both the bishop and the f-pawn, thus it has to be removed.

**22...♖xb6 23.axb6 ♔d7
24.♚xf4!**

Black would survive after 24.♚e2? ♖f7. Now the threats on the kingside will be combined with an attack on the f-pawn. A convincing reply to 24...♖f7 would be 25.♙c3.

24...f5

Black has practically saved himself. For example: 25.♖4e2 ♙f6.

25.♙c3!

The sacrifice is irrefutable: 25...♙f8 26.♖xe8 ♖xe8 27.♚c4+ ♚f7 28.♖xe8.

25...fxe4 26.♚e5 ♙f8

Or 26...♙d6 27.♚h8+ ♖f7 28.♚xh7+ ♖e6 29.♖xe4+ ♖d5 30.♚xd7 ♖xd7 31.♖xe8, with an easily-won endgame.

27.♚h8+ ♖f7 28.♖f1+ ♚f5

Mate follows if this isn't played. Now the white queen will destroy the pawns; the first three captures being accompanied by checks.

29.♖xf5+ gxf5 30.♚f6+ ♖g8

31.♚g5+ ♖f7 32.♚xf5+ ♖g8

33.♚g5+ ♖f7 34.♚f6+ ♖g8

35.♚h8+ ♖f7 36.♚xh7+ ♖e6

37.♚xe4+ ♖d6 38.♚xb7

No check this time! Bednarski would probably have resigned here had I not been pressed for time. He continued:

**38...♖d7 39.♚xa6 ♖e6 40.b7+
♙d6 41.♚c4+ 1-0**

Game 42

Nimzo-Indian Defence

Mark Taimanov

Bent Larsen

Havana 1967

1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♙b4

4.e3 0-0 5.♙d3 c5 6.♖f3 d5

7.0-0 ♖c6 8.a3 dxc4

Taimanov spent the next fifteen minutes deliberating after this move. In the

meantime I strolled in the tournament hall and met Gligoric who, smiling, commented, 'You always win a few minutes thanks to that transposition'.

Six weeks earlier, in Dundee, I had played the same moves against him, and he had also spent a long time before he came up with the reply 9.♙xc4.

In my opinion, 9.axb4 cxd4 10.♙xc4 dxc3 is completely satisfactory for Black. Moreover, there is no particular reason for choosing this move order. The following is also perfectly acceptable: 7...♖c6 dxc4 8.♙xc4, because White hardly has anything better than 9.a3.

9.♙xc4 ♙a5 10.♚d3 a6

Now Taimanov started a deep analysis. This time, during my walk, I came across Smyslov, who smiled and said, 'It seems that Taimanov hasn't studied your games!'

He was obviously referring to the game Gligoric-Larsen in Dundee, in which 11.dxc5 was played instead of the usual theoretical move 11.♖d1. O'Kelly asked me afterwards what had I discovered? I showed him and he used that innovation in his game against none other than Gligoric, with whom he drew in the last round. Smyslov had probably gone over that game too.

Taimanov had published a study on the Nimzo-Indian. Could he trust it? In the end he decided to follow its recommendations.

11.dxc5 ♚xd3 12.♙xd3 ♙xc3

13.bxc3 ♖a5!

In his book Taimanov refers, among others, to the game Furman-Troianescu, Bucharest 1954: 13...♖d7 14.a4 ♖xc5 15.♙c2 ♖a5 16.♙a3 b6 17.♖fb1! ♖c4 18.♖xb6!, winning a pawn. Therefore the text move is an attempt to improve on the variation.

14. ♖b1

In Dundee, the game Gligoric-Larsen continued: 14. ♖c2 ♖d7 15. e4 ♖c6! 16. ♖e1 ♖fc8 17. ♖f4 ♖d7 18. ♖d6 ♖b5 19. a4 ♖c4 and at this point Gligoric offered a draw.

14... ♖d7?

Later I found out that 14... ♖d8 is better. I played it against Gligoric in Sousse, and a draw was agreed.

The idea behind ... ♖d8 is that White needs to decide between 15. ♖c2, ceding the c4-square to the enemy knight; 15. ♖e2, ceding the e4-square to the other knight; and finally 15. ♖d1, which leaves the rook open to an attack (... ♖d7-♖a4, ... ♖d5-♖c3).

15. c4 ♖a4

My first idea was to play 15... ♖fc8 16. ♖d2 ♖xc5 17. ♖b4 ♖h5, but I found this too risky. The text move plans to reply to 16. ♖b4 with 16... ♖c6, and White's rook momentarily obstructs his queen's bishop move against the knight at a5. But now Taimanov finds a beautiful continuation.

16. c6! ♖xc6

16... bxc6 17. ♖b4 ♖b3 18. ♖d2 seems very dangerous; on the other hand 16... ♖xc6 17. ♖xb7 ♖fd8 does not offer any compensation for the pawn.

17. ♖d2 ♖xf3 18. gxf3

This is the strongest then. However, in a later game, Gheorghiu preferred to play 18. ♖xa5 against Wade; one cannot criticize his decision since the Rumanian grandmaster won.

18... ♖c6 19. ♖c3

Of course 19. ♖xb7? was not possible because of 19... ♖fd8.

19... ♖ab8 20. ♖fd1 ♖fc8!

The automatic move 20... ♖fd8 proves to be much weaker as the following illustrates: 21. f4 ♖f8 22. f5 e5? 23. ♖c2

♖xd1+ 24. ♖xd1 ♖e7 25. ♖f3, thus winning a pawn.

With the text move the knight at c6 is protected, which is important in relation to the white bishop manoeuvring to a4 or f3. Furthermore, it is the first indication of Black's counterplay. The opponent's weak c-pawn is the best compensation Black has for White's strong bishop pair and active position.

21. f4 ♖f8 22. ♖g2

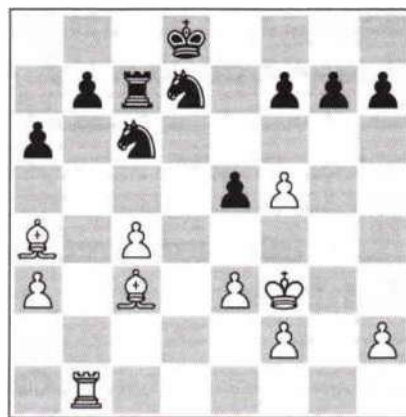
Also 22. f5 e5 23. ♖c2 ♖e7 24. ♖a4 ♖d7.

22... ♖e7 23. f5 e5

Opening up the position would favour the opponent as he would activate the bishops.

24. ♖c2 ♖c7 25. ♖f3 ♖d8

The following may give the impression that Black should play 25... g6. If White replies fxg6, the h-file may be used to launch a counter-attack after ... hxc6. However, 25... g6 26. ♖a4 ♖d7 27. ♖d5! is favourable to Taimanov.

26. ♖xd8 ♖xd8 27. ♖a4 ♖d7**28. h4**

At this point White may consider if it suits him to part with his pair of bishops: 28. ♖xc6 ♖xc6 29. ♖xb7 ♖xc4 30. ♖a5+ ♖c8 31. ♖a7 ♖c6 32. a4! and Black does not have a good move at his disposal. 32... g6 allows the strong reply 33. ♖e4! (33... ♖f6+ 34. ♖xe5 ♖c5+

35.♔xf6! or 33...♚c4+ 34.♔d5 ♚c5+ 35.♔d6).

But Black has something better. There's no time to waste over the weak c-pawn: much better to initiate a counter-attack immediately with 29...g6! or 29...♔c8 30.♚a7 g6! when White's extra pawn becomes a minor factor. For example: 31.fxg6 hxg6 32.♙a5 f5, and Black has good counterplay and should draw without trouble. Taimanov certainly plays for a win.

28...g6 29.fxg6

This is not a mistake. In his comments on the game, Gligoric gives the following variation: 29.♙c2 ♘f6 30.♙e4 ♘xe4 31.♔xe4 f6 32.fxg6 hxg6 33.♚g1. However Black can find a better line: 29.♙c2? ♔c8! 30.♙e4 ♘e7! and White will find himself in difficulty. The c-pawn is certainly weak in this line.

29...hxg6 30.h5 gxh5 31.♚h1 e4+!?

Now Black starts playing with victory in his sights. Taimanov has eight minutes left whilst I, in spite of having pondered over my move 31...e4+ for a long while, had three times more than him. Of course, I had this time difference in mind when I decided in favour of this sharp move. Moreover, I was sure that 31 ...♘f6 32.♙xc6 ♚xc6 33.♙xe5 ♔e7 was enough to draw.

32.♔f4

White only had four minutes to make the next eight moves.

The king move is correct. After 32.♔e2 ♘ce5 Black is better.

32...♘e7 33.♙a5!

White offers a draw! However he only has two minutes left to reach time control whilst I have twenty.

The text is the best move. I have read somewhere that 33.♚xh5 ♘g6+

34.♔g3 ♚xc4 35.♙b4 was feasible. But the two bishops do not warrant enough compensation for the pawn, and the rook and the two knights are a force to be reckoned with.

33.♙xd7 did not offer any clear drawing possibilities either, on account of 33...♚xc4.

33...b6 34.♙xd7 bxa5 35.♙a4

Unfortunately, I had previously commented that 35.♙f5 ♘xf5 36.♔xf5 ♚xc4 would have been very favourable for Black, because the opponent cannot reply 37.♚xh5 without exchanging rooks. But two readers of *Skakbladet* protested: in the king and pawn endgame they were not able to see a winning line. I must confess that I didn't find any either. Therefore, I have no refutation of 35.♙f5, although Black can play for a win in various ways.

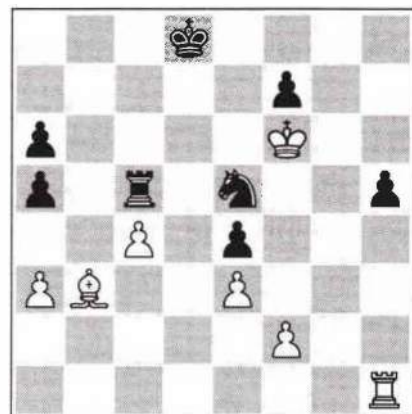
However, it was highly unlikely for Taimanov to make such a move as he was hard pressed for time.

35...♘g6+ 36.♔f5 ♚c5+

Looks risky, but after 36...♔e7 37.♚xh5 (37.♚d1 ♚xc4? 38.♚d7+) 37...♚c5+ 38.♔g4 ♚xh5 39.♔xh5 ♘e5 40.♙b3 ♘d3 41.♔g4 it's easy-going for White.

Moreover, even in time pressure, it is easy to see that 38.♔g3 is weak since it allows Black to save both his king's pawn and his king's rook pawn.

37.♔f6 ♘e5! 38.♙b3??



A mistake at long last! 38.♙d1 would have led to a draw.

38...♖e8! 39.♖g7?

White walks into a mating net; his position is now lost.

**39...♘g4! 40.♚d1 ♜g5+ 41.♖h8
♜f6 42.♙a4+ ♖e7 0-1**

Game 43

Sicilian Defence
Lothar Schmid
Bent Larsen
Havana 1967

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 g6 5.c4**

The Maroczy Bind. Currently it is not as feared as it used to be but some masters prefer to avoid playing it, for instance, 2...d6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 g6.

5...♙g7 6.♘b3

This had never been played against me. I knew that it used to be in vogue many years ago though now it is more usual to play 6.♙e3 and 6.♘c2.

Suddenly I had an idea and I couldn't resist the temptation to try it out.

6...d6 7.♙e2 a5!?

Here it is. I don't know if this has ever been played.

**8.a4 ♘f6 9.♘c3 0-0 10.♙e3 ♘d7
11.♚d2?**

Obviously, Schmidt feared ...♙xc3+; a move which had not even crossed my mind, as, after the move made with the a-pawn, Black would have difficulties in the b-file.

White had to castle. The text move is typical for those who think that such a move played with the white pieces may be enjoyable.

11...b6 12.♘d4

12.0-0 ♘c5 is not convincing because White would be forced to play ♘xc5,

thus strengthening the opponent's centre.

After 12.♘d4 I considered this interesting continuation: 12...♙xd4 13.♙xd4 ♘c5; the odd 14.♚a3 would be more or less forced, but it's not all bad.

**12...♙b7 13.♙d1 ♘c5 14.♘xc6
♙xc6 15.♙c2 ♚d7 16.0-0?**



An oversight. White should continue with 16.f3. The complications that arise can only favour Black.

16...♚e6! 17.♘d5 ♘xe4! 18.♚d3

If 18.♚d1 ♙xb2 is very strong and after 18.♙xe4 ♚xe4 19.f3 ♚e5 20.♘xb6 ♚ab8 Black's superiority is considerable.

18...♘c5 19.♙xc5 bxc5 20.♚ae1

The threat 20.♘c7 is artificial. The response would be 20...♚g4 21.f3 ♚d4+.

After 20.♚ae1 Schmidt calculated 20...♙xd5 21.♚xe6 ♙xe6 and rook, bishop, pawn and a strong position are ample compensation for the queen. I would prefer Black, but there is a great danger of arriving at a drawn position. This variation caused my opponent to overlook a much better continuation for Black.

20...♙e5! 21.f4

If 21.♘c7 ♚g4. Against 21.f4 Black has an instructive combination under the theme *desperado*.

21...♙xd5 22.cxd5 ♙d4+!

This was all there was to it. If 23.♖xd4 ♖xe1, winning the exchange.

23.♙h1 ♖d7

23...♖xd5 offers White more possibilities after 24.♙xe7. Now, in spite of the presence of opposite-coloured bishops, I am able to claim the extra pawn.

24.b3 ♖ab8 25.f5 ♙f6 26.♖e4 ♙b4 27.♖xb4 cxb4 28.♖e4

An alternative was 28.♙f4 ♙c8 29.fxg6 hxg6 30.♙c4 ♙xc4 31.♖xc4 ♖a7. Black's queen penetrates the opponent's position. Therefore, Black should win by playing on the kingside with threats against the weak b- and d-pawns.

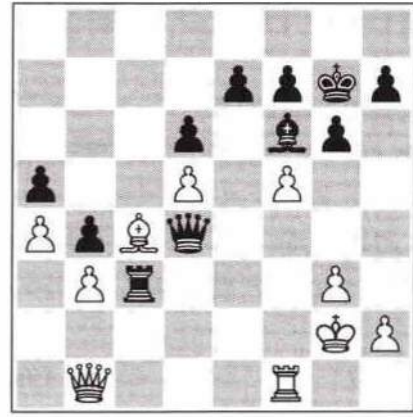
28...♙c8 29.♙d3

Against the desperate attack 29.h4 I had planned 29...♙c3 30.fxg6 hxg6 31.h5 ♖c8 32.♙d3 ♖f8 33.hxg6 ♖h6+ 34.♙g1 ♖xg6 35.♖xg6+ fxg6 36.♙c4 ♙g7 or 36...g5. Black would win thanks to the passive white bishop.

29...♙c3 30.♙c4 ♖a7 31.g3 ♙g7

32.♙g2 ♖d4 33.♖b1

The endgame would be easier to win following the exchange of queens since White would not have any counterplay. But now the game takes a new direction. The problem of having opposite-coloured bishops disappears and with it, the only hope of salvation for White.



33...♖xc4!

The quickest path to victory. There are other avenues: 33...g5 followed by an advance of the h-pawn would create threats against the white king and these, in combination with the constant threat of sacrificing the exchange, would be enough to win.

34.bxc4 ♖xc4 35.♖d1

After 35.♙d1 gxf5, 36.♖xf5 is not possible because of 36...♖e2+. If Black gets three pawns for the exchange he should win easily.

35...♖e4+ 36.♙h3

Or even 36.♖f3 gxf5 37.♖xe4 fxe4 38.♙e1 b3 39.♙xe4 b2 40.♙e1 ♙g5 41.♙b1 ♙c1, winning. However, White's king is now badly placed.

36...g5 37.♖f3

Against 37.g4, either 37...♙e5 or 37...h5 are possible, with the intention of 38.gxh5 ♖h4+ 39.♙g2 ♙e5

Winnipeg 1967												
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Darga,Klaus	*	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	6.0
2	Larsen,Bent	0	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	6.0
3	Spassky,Boris	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	5.5
4	Keres,Paul	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	5.5
5	Benko,Pal	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	5.0
6	Szabo,Laszlo	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	1	4.5
7	Gheorghiu,Florin	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	4.5
8	Matanovic,Aleksandar	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	1	4.0
9	Yanofsky,Daniel	0	½	0	0	½	1	½	½	*	½	3.5
10	Kagan,Shimon	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	*	0.5

40. ♖h1 b3 41. ♙xb3 ♙g4+ winning.

37... ♙c4 38. ♖e1

Another option is 38. ♖b1 ♙c2 39. ♖b3 h5.

38... b3 39. ♙d1 ♙xa4 40. ♖e3 g4+! 41. ♔g2 ♙a2+ 0-1

Game 44

English Opening

Bent Larsen

Florin Gheorghiu

Winnipeg 1967

1. c4 ♘f6 2. ♘c3 e6 3. ♘f3 ♙b4

This bishop move is certainly playable, and has been popular for several years, but I am still convinced that here it is less justified than in the Nimzo-Indian (1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3. ♘c3 ♙b4), because there the knight is pinned, and because with 1.d4, White has weakened the control of e4, which is the main objective for Black. White's pawn structure is more flexible without d2-d4. Therefore, if I am playing Black in this opening I do not like to abandon the bishop pair. My games against Taimanov in Havana, 1967, and against Fischer in Santa Monica, 1966, have given me some reputation of being carefree regarding the bishop pair; something which is not entirely accurate.

4. ♙c2 c5 5. a3 ♙a5

At the tournament in Monaco, half a year later, Damjanovic played 5... ♙xc3 – against Gheorghiu of all people! After 6. ♙xc3 b6 7.g3, the Rumanian grandmaster slowly built up a position in which the two bishops increased their power. He delayed moving his central pawns for a long time; this is very different from what happens in the Nimzo-Indian.

After this game I played 6.g3 against Darga. This is not weak but the following development is livelier.

6.e3 ♘c6 7.d4

Readers may wonder why this comparison with the Nimzo-Indian? White has achieved something important with 7.d4. In the Nimzo-Indian you would never reach this same position; it may be similar but without a2-a3 and ♙a5. 'Vive la bagatelle!' Here, among other things, the threat is 8.dxc5.



7... d6 8. ♙d3 e5

This move has its drawbacks. The main one being that it weakens the d5-square. However it resolves Black's problems in developing his pieces and I do not think that there's anything better.

9. dxe5 ♘xe5 10. ♘xe5 dxe5 11. 0-0 ♙xc3

After 11... 0-0 12. ♘e4! ♘xe4 13. ♙xe4 h6 14. ♙d5 White is better and can continue with e3-e4 and ♙e3. Also good is b2-b3 and ♙b2 followed by occupation of the queen's file. The strong ♙d5 ensures a small but lasting advantage.

12. ♙xc3 0-0 13. b3 ♖e8 14. ♙b2 b6 15. ♖ad1 ♙e7 16. ♙c2

I considered 16. ♖d2 ♙b7 17. ♖fd1, but 17... ♘e4 almost guarantees a draw for Black because of the opposite-coloured

bishops despite White dominating the only open file. After 18.♙xe4 ♙xe4 19.♖d7? (19.f3 ♙c6 and there is nothing worthwhile) 19...♚g5! is annoying.

The continuation of the game may presuppose that 16.f3 ♙b7 17.♙f5 is better (17...e4? 18.♖d7!). But Black simply plays 17...♙c6. For example: 18.♖d2 e4 19.f4 ♙f5 20.♖ed8 and the bishop at f5 is badly placed.

16...♙b7 17.f3 e4

This opens up the long diagonal for the opponent's bishop and queen. However, if this is not played it is doubtful whether Black can dispute the queen's file. If 17...♖ad8? 18.♖xd8 ♚xd8 19.♖d1 White dominates the only open file and can continue with ♚d2.

There is no way of refuting the text move tactically: 18.fxe4? ♙xe4 19.♙xe4 ♚xe4 20.♖xf6? gxf6 21.♚xf6 ♚xe3+ 22.♙h1 ♚e1+!.

18.f4 ♖ad8?

Immediately after the game, my opponent commented that this move, seemingly natural, is a grave error. Correct is 18...♖ed8!, for example 19.h3 ♘e8!. Black can now play ...f7-f6 and resolve his problems on the long diagonal.

In any case White has a certain advantage. He can prepare for a g-pawn advance and, once the rooks and queens have been exchanged, he would have winning chances in the endgame. The strength of the two bishops is unquestionable and Black's e-pawn is somewhat weak, but even so my opponent's position is hopeful.

19.h3

Apparently quite a modest move but one which is of great importance. The king has an escape route, it stops ...♘g4

and it may also support a g2-g4 advance.

**19...♖xd1 20.♖xd1 ♖d8
21.♖xd8+ ♚xd8 22.♚e5**

A difficult position for Black. My queen dominates the board.

22...♙f8 23.♙c3 ♘e8 24.b4!

Taking with 24.♙xe4? would be a grave error: 24...f6 25.♚e6 ♘c7 26.♚f5 g6, winning a piece.

The text move creates strong threats against the enemy's position. It is a direct attack on the c5-pawn and the possibility of ♙a4 may be reserved for later.

After 24...f6 25.♚h5 ♙g8 26.bxc5 g6 27.♚g4 f5 28.♚e2 White will be able to attack the dark squares. For example: 25...cxb4 26.♙xb4+ ♙g8 27.♙b3, and Black's position is not enviable. It comes as no surprise therefore that Gheorghiu thought it best to exchange the queens.

24...♚d6 25.bxc5 bxc5 26.♙a4!



White does not wish to take the initiative for the exchange of queens and it will be Black who will be forced to do it. In this way my queen's bishop will gain the excellent e5-square.

**26...♚xe5 27.♙xe5 ♙e7 28.♙b8
♘f6**

The intention is to constrict White's bishop. Actually, in doing so,

Sousse Interzonal 1967																									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2		
1	Larsen, Bent	*	0	½	½	0	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	15.5	
2	Kortchnoi, Viktor	1	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	0	½	0	0	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	14.0	
3	Geller, Efim	½	½	*	½	½	0	1	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	14.0	
4	Gligoric, Svetozar	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	14.0	
5	Portisch, Lajos	1	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	0	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	½	½	1	1	13.5	
6	Reshevsky, Samuel	0	½	1	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	0	1	1	13.0	
7	Hort, Vlastimil	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	13.0	
8	Stein, Leonid	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	*	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	13.0	
9	Matulovic, Milan	0	1	0	½	1	0	½	½	½	*	0	1	1	½	1	0	½	½	1	1	½	1	12.5	
10	Matanovic, Aleksandar	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	1	½	½	12.0	
11	Ivkov, Borislav	0	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	0	½	*	0	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	0	1	1	11.0	
12	Mecking, Henrique	0	1	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	0	1	*	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	11.0	
13	Gipslis, Aivars	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	1	½	0	1	½	1	10.0	
14	Kavalek, Lubomir	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	½	*	½	1	½	1	0	1	10.0	
15	Suttles, Duncan	1	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	0	0	1	½	*	½	1	0	½	1	½	1	9.5	
16	Bilek, Istvan	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	*	½	½	1	0	1	1	9.0
17	Barczay, Laszlo	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	8.0
18	Byrne, Robert	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	1	0	1	½	½	*	1	½	½	0	7.5
19	Cuellar, Miguel	0	0	½	0	½	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	½	0	0	0	*	0	1	1	6.5	
20	Myagmarsuren, Lhamsuren	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	1	½	½	0	0	1	½	½	1	*	0	1	6.5	
21	Sarapu, Ortvin	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	1	*	½	4.0
22	Bouaziz, Slim	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	*	3.5
	Fischer, Robert	½	-	-	½	1	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	½	-	-	-	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	8.5

Gheorghiu's own bishop will also be closed in.

However 28...a5 29.♙a7 ♘d6 30.♙xc5 also loses. For example: 30...♖e6 31.♙b3 ♙a6 32.♙xd6! ♖xd6 33.c5+ ♖xc5 34.♙xf7 ♙c4 35.♙xc4 ♖xc4 36.g4 ♖b3 37.f5 ♖xa3 38.g5.

**29.♙xa7 ♘d7 30.♙b5 ♖d6
31.a4 ♙c6 32.a5 ♖c7 33.a6 h5
34.g4 h4 35.♖f2 f6 36.f5**

There are various ways of winning. It seems that White gives up a good square to the knight, but after 36...♘e5 37.♖e2! ♘d3 38.♙xc6 ♖xc6 39.♙b8 ♘b2 40.♙d6! ♘xc4 41.♙f8! White quickly wins.

Black's choices are limited. Let's mention, in passing, the old trick: 36...♖d6 37.♙b8+! ♘xb8 38.a7.

**36...♘b6 37.♙xb6+ ♖xb6
38.♖e2 ♙a8 39.♖d2 ♖a5
40.♖c3 ♖b6 41.♖b3 ♖a5
42.♖a3 ♖b6 43.♖a4 1-0**

Of course 41...♖c7 42.♖a3! would get the same result. But, doesn't this triangular manoeuvre look much nicer, as it involves Black's king voluntarily giving way to White's?

Game 45

Alekhine's Defence

Aivars Gipslis

Bent Larsen

Sousse 1967

**1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6 4.c4
♘b6 5.exd6**

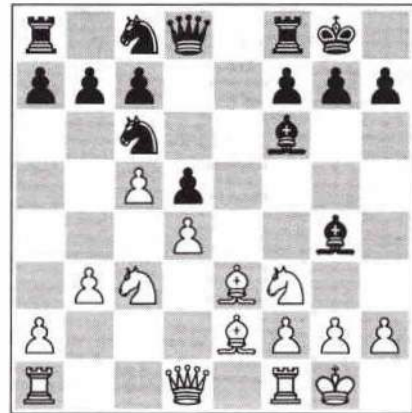
A rather quiet line. The main idea in this complex defence is that Black may now create problems for both sides with 5...cxd6. However this leaves White with a greater pawn majority on the queenside and this could be important later in the game. I have had a measure of success with the simple

5...exd6, which has surprised me. Consequently, why not try it again?

**5...exd6 6.♘c3 ♙e7 7.♙e3 0-0
8.♙e2 ♘c6 9.♘f3 ♙g4 10.b3
♙f6**

With 10...f5!? 11.♚d2 Black will probably only achieve a weakening of his own position. However Smyslov played just that against Rossolimo in Monaco, 1969, and if such a solid player as the ex-World Champion believes that weakening the e6-square is acceptable, perhaps it's worthwhile to consider this sometime...

11.0-0 d5 12.c5 ♘c8



13.b4?

Not consistent with the position. This advance is good in a similar position derived from 5...cxd6, ...g6 and ♙g7, which aims to create a passed pawn.

13.h3 is better here, 'urging' the bishop either to move or to be exchanged.

**13...♘8e7 14.b5 ♘a5 15.h3 ♙xf3
16.♙xf3 c6**

The best that can be said about Black's position is that it has no weak squares. His d-pawn is now solidly defended whilst White's will become a target in an attack. Furthermore he also controls the c4-square. Black now has some dominance. What's gone wrong then? Many believe that the Alekhine Defence is not a good opening. It may be so, but

if White is convinced that this is the case then I would like him to prove it. Sometimes, players with the white pieces can be careless.

On the other hand, in Sousse, the Alekhine Defence certainly didn't turn out to be weak! It was played five times throughout the tournament and Black won all five games.

17.♞d3 ♘c4 18.♙f4?

Seems to be a waste of time.

18...♘g6 19.♙h2 ♙g5!



Moves such as this one are difficult to explain. I mentioned earlier that Gipslis' d-pawn would be my target. Why then would I exchange my bishop, which is attacking the pawn, for White's bishop which is not defending it? The answer may lie in the fact that Black cannot win solely on the basis of threats against the d-pawn; he has to explore other ways. With the text move, Black will win space on the kingside; he gains a square for his queen and helps the knight at g6 to jump to f4 eventually.

20.bxc6 bxc6 21.♙d1

This came as a surprise, but I consider it to be a very good continuation. The bishop need not stay at f3. However, Gipslis commented afterwards that he was not happy in having moved it.

The loser is sometimes incapable of finding out the source of his errors in a game.

He is more prone to consider that the mistake came from an individual move rather than accept that it was due to an overall weakness in his strategy.

21...♙f4 22.♙c2?

If we had to place the blame on a single white move it would have to be this one. After 22.♙b3! White's situation is not too bad. The continuation 22.♙b3! ♘d2!? 23.♞fd1! (23.♙xf4 ♘xf4 24.♞xd2 ♞g5 winning the queen) 23...♙xh2+ 24.♙xh2 ♘xb3 25.axb3 ♞b8+ 26.g3 ♞xb3 27.♞ab1 ♞c4 28.♞xc4 dxc4 29.♞b4 leads to an end-game with drawing chances. Probably the best continuation is 22...♙xh2+ 23.♙xh2 ♘a5 but this is tantamount to admitting that 22.♙b3 is much stronger than 22.♙c2.

22...♙xh2+ 23.♙xh2 ♞f6 24.g3



In this way the knight will never make it to f4. So, there's the need for something new. Should the knight stay on g6? Or should it move to e6 via f8 so as to attack the d-pawn? However, the first thing to do is to gain control of the e-file. This is so because White needs to protect the f-pawn with his king before he can place a rook at e1.

24...♞fe8 25.♙g2?

Better is 25.♙b3, although Black would reply 25...♞ad8!.

25...♞g5!



Larsen at the Sousse Interzonal.

A most inconvenient move; perhaps even more so. It has been some time since the knight occupied the c4-square and since then there has been no mention of it. Now the other black pieces will begin to cooperate with that knight. After 26.f4 ♔e7! (weak is 26...♘e3+ 27.♔xe3 ♔xe3 28.fxg5 ♔xc3 29.♙xg6 hxg6 30.♖ab1 and Gipslis could defend the endgame) White has a major weakness on e3. However, there is nothing better than 26.f4. It is quite an unpleasant move and, as White does not play it, he must have overlooked my next move.



26.♔h2? ♘b2! 27.♔f3 ♔d2

The d-pawn cannot be defended. It surprises me every time I get into a win-

ning position against a grandmaster in such a simple way!

28.♙xg6 hxg6 29.♘d1 ♘c4

My knight is much more active than White's. Therefore I need to avoid exchanging it if I am going to win easily.

30.♔c3 ♖ab8 31.♔c1 ♔e4

32.♔c2 ♔xd4 33.♔xd4 ♖xd4

34.♔e1 a5!

Black has a strong position and an extra pawn. There is absolutely no need to try to grab another pawn if that is going to offer the opponent any chance of counterplay. 34...♖b5 wouldn't be bad, but after 35.♔e8+ ♔h7 36.♘e3 ♔xc5 37.♔e7 victory would probably be more laborious than with 34...a5.

Black's plan is ...a4-a3 and 35.♘c3 ♘a3 36.♔cc1 ♖b2 or 36.♔ce2 ♔c4 would not help White's cause.

35.♔g2 a4 36.♘c3 a3 37.♘a4 g5

Gipslis lacks any useful moves. Therefore why not safeguard the g6-square for my king?

38.♔e7 ♖b4 39.♘b6 ♖b2 40.♔c3

♔xa2

In this particular case Black prefers passed pawns which are not connected, since it seems more advantageous. Of course there were other ways to achieve victory.

41.♘xc4 dxc4 42.♔c7 ♔dd2

43.♔f3 c3

0-1

After 43...c3 follows 44.♔fxf7 (44.♔cxf7 c2) 44...♔xf2+ 45.♔xf2 ♔xf2+ 46.♔xf2 c2.

Game 46

English Opening

Bent Larsen

Borislav Ivkov

Palma de Mallorca 1967

1.c4 c5 2.♘c3 ♘c6 3.♘f3 ♘f6

4.g3 g6 5.♙g2 ♙g7 6.0-0 0-0

7.a3!?

The correct answer is probably 7.d4. I once saw Portisch play 7.d3 a6 8.d4!?. Of course, White can continue with 7.d3 d6 8.a3, but this is not exactly what I wanted to do. I was influenced by the course of the game Stein-Filip, in the Moscow tournament, half a year earlier.



Returning to 7.a3; it is also important to note that during 1967 Ivkov had played about 140 tournament games. He looked tired and made draws repeatedly. I assumed that he would continue with symmetry.

7...a6? 8.♖b1 ♖b8 9.b4 cxb4 10.axb4 b5 11.cxb5 axb5 12.d4

In the aforementioned game, the queen's pawns occupied d6 and d3 and Stein played 13.d4. Filip did not want to play a mirror image position and he broke the symmetry with 13...♕g4. Stein won, although Black's initial position was satisfactory. Ivkov is practically forced to accept the position Filip had rejected.

12...d5 13.♕f4 ♖b6

The rook is not well placed. As the game continues it is merely a passive spectator. Sooner or later, Black will have to break the symmetry and now it seems reasonable to do so. Ivkov voluntarily leaves his queen's bishop behind the pawn chain and will try to prove that my bishop at f4 is exposed.

Against 13...♕f5 there are a few good continuations; one of these is 14.♖a1 ♖a8 15.♖xa8 ♗xa8 16.♗b3.

14.♗b3 e6 15.♖fc1 ♕b7 16.e3 h6

Against 16...♘h5 I had planned 17.♕g5 f6 18.♕h4 g5 19.g4, which

		Palma de Mallorca 1967																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Larsen, Bent	*	0	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	13.0
2	Botvinnik, Mikhail	1	*	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	½	1	0	½	1	½	12.5
3	Smyslov, Vassily	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	1	1	0	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	12.5
4	Portisch, Lajos	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	11.5
5	Gligoric, Svetozar	0	0	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	10.5
6	Ivkov, Borislav	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	10.0
7	Matulovic, Milan	½	0	0	½	0	½	*	0	½	½	1	½	0	1	1	1	1	9.0
8	Toran Alberro, Roman	½	0	0	0	½	0	1	*	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	½	½	8.5
9	Lehmann, Heinz	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	8.5
10	Donner, Jan Hein	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	1	1	½	½	0	0	8.0
11	Diez del Corral, Jesus	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	0	1	1	1	½	1	8.0
12	O'Kelly de Galway, Alberic	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	0	1	*	½	½	1	½	0	6.5
13	Medina Garcia, Antonio	1	0	0	0	0	½	1	½	0	0	0	½	*	½	½	½	1	6.5
14	Damjanovic, Mato	0	1	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	1	1	0	6.0
15	Tatai, Stefano	0	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	*	1	1	6.0
16	Bednarski, Jacek	0	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	1	½	½	½	0	0	*	0	5.5
17	Calvo Minguez, Ricardo	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	*	5.5
18	Jimenez Zerquera, Eleazar	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	1	½	1	0	0	½	5.0

seems to offer a host of possibilities for White.

Now the bishop is hemmed in. But there is no cause for alarm! White is prepared to give up his bishop pair.

17. ♖e5 ♜h7

This move may not be bad. However it seems to be preparing to undertake a dubious plan: advancing the rook pawn.

18. ♖f1 ♜xe5 19. ♜xe5 ♜e4 20. ♖d1

Almost forced since Black was threatening ...♜d2 and ...♖xe5, followed by ...d5-d4. The queen move fits in well with my plans to initiate some action on the kingside.

20... ♜d6 21. ♜d3 h5?

As just mentioned, this idea is doubtful. Black will not succeed in attacking and this move only weakens the king's position.

In any case, White is a little better. Ivkov's queen's bishop is not in a good position, while my knights have good squares at their disposal.

22. ♜c5 h4 23. ♖d3

Perhaps the rook's pawn advance is – from the psychological point of view – the start of hostilities. Opening this file may induce White to move his bishop to g2. Studying this move from this perspective, it reminds me of some moves I have made in the past when I have found myself in difficult positions. But White ignores this and continues with his own plans of attack.

23... hxc3 24. hxc3 ♖h8 25. ♖a1

Against 25. ♖g4, the immediate 25... ♖c8 is quite an effective defence.

25... ♖c6

During the game I thought 25... ♖g5 to be stronger, but White can easily win a

pawn with 26. ♜d7. Black lacks any realistic attacking moves.

26. ♖g4! ♖e7 27. ♜e2 ♜c4

Ivkov's position is very difficult. The text move removes the knight from the kingside, but it forms part of an attempt to obtain counterplay. The knight could have been more directly involved in defending the king – for example, moving to f5, but then Black's position would be very passive. The advance 27...e5 would have corroborated the withdrawal ♜e2 so as to defend d4.

28. ♜f4 e5!



Passive play offers little hope. Against the defence 28... ♖e8, White could play 29. ♖a8, planning to transfer the other rook to a7. Similarly 28... ♖f6 could be answered with 29. ♖a7.

29. ♖xg6+!

Had it not been for this sacrifice, Black would still get good chances. Perhaps this move may not be considered to be a sacrifice since, if Black were to take, it is simply an exchange (rook and two pawns for bishop and knight). With deeper analysis we will find some beautiful variations, for example: 29...fxg6 30. ♜xg6 ♖f6 31. ♜xh8 and 32. ♖a7 or 30... ♖f7 31. ♜xh8 ♖xh8 32. ♜e6 ♖f6 33. ♜g2! with a decisive attack. Here, if 31... ♜xh8 then 32. ♖h4+ ♜g8 33. ♖xc4! dxc4 34. ♖d8+ ♜h7 35. ♖xb6 ♖f3 36. e4 winning.

Naturally, I also considered 29.♖xg6 fxg6 30.♙xg6+ ♔g8 31.♚c8+ ♙f8 and Black can defend himself.

**29...♔g8 30.dxe5 ♖xe5
31.♚c8+ ♙f8**

After 31...♚f8 White can play 32.♚xf8+ and 33.♙h5, but even stronger is 32.♚c7!.

32.♙h5

A nice variation was 32.♖cd3? fxg6? 33.♖xe5 ♚xe5 34.♚xf8+!, but Black has something better: 32...d4!.

32...d4 33.e4 ♚g5?



This allows an elegant finish. It would, however, be difficult to put up a tough resistance when one is short on time, a pawn down and with an inferior position.

Against a move like 33...d3 White has the strong 34.♚f5, which prevents any tactical tricks, and against 33...♚f6 one possible reply is 34.♚a7.

A heroic attempt would have been 33...♚xh5!? 34.♖xh5 ♙xe4 35.♖xe4 ♖f3+. However, White has a fine parry in which all his pieces take part: 36.♔g2 ♚xe4 37.♚a8!!.

34.♖ce6!!

For heaven's sake! Not the sacrifice 34.♙xf7+?? ♖xf7 35.♖ce6 ♚h6!, threatening mate.

**34...fxe6 35.♚xe6+ ♔h7
36.♚a7+ ♙g7 37.♚c5!**

All White's pieces are attacking and Black has no defence. In all variations he will lose material heavily. But of course, it is amusing to study the possibilities. I don't really know the reason why, but during the game I expected this finish: 37...♚b7 38.♚xb7 ♙xb7 39.♙g6+ ♚xg6 (39...♔h6 40.♚h3+) 40.♖xg6 ♖xg6 41.♚h5+ ♙h6 42.♚f7 mate.

**37...♙e8 38.♚xe5 ♚xf4
39.♚xg7+ ♔xg7 40.♚e7+ ♚f7
41.♚g5+ 1-0**

Game 47

Alekhine's Defence

Eleazar Jimenez Zerquera

Bent Larsen

Palma de Mallorca 1967

**1.e4 ♖f6 2.e5 ♖d5 3.♖f3 d6
4.d4 dxe5**

Theoreticians have described this move as erroneous, because the white knight takes a good central position. However, it can be played because it may recover the lost tempo (by exchange threats to this same knight).

5.♖xe5 g6

A novelty! In the Candidates' tournament in 1965 in a game against Tal, I played 5...♖d7, but the sacrifice on f7 offers good play to White, apart from the fact that it can quickly force a draw: 6.♖xf7 ♔xf7 7.♚h5+ ♔e6 8.♚g4+ ♔f7 9.♚h5+. However Tal did not sacrifice.

Both against Tal and Ivkov I played 5...e6, but Tal found the strong reply 6.♚f3.

6.♙c4 ♙e6 7.♙b3

I had already tried 5 ... g6 once, in Winnipeg, against Yanovsky. The grandmaster continued more energetically with 7.♖c3!, based on the mating threat 7...♖xc3? 8.♙xe6. The game continued

7...♙g7 8.♘e4 ♙xe5 9.dxe5 ♘c6
10.♘c5 ♘xe5 11.♘xb7 ♚d7 12.♘c5
♚c6 13.♘xe6 fxe6 with advantage for
White. 13...♚xe6? was not possible be-
cause of 14.♚xd5!.

I was pretty sure that Jimenez did not
know this game, but even if he had he
might not have followed it, fearing an
improvement that Black might have
prepared.

7...♙g7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♚e2 a5

Quite a useful move in such positions. If
White plays a2-a4 and later c2-c4, Black's
knight may move to b4. If White prefers
a2-a3, then there is the possibility of
...a5-a4 followed by an exchange of
light-coloured bishops, thus fixing some
of the white queenside pawns on the col-
our of the remaining white bishop.

10.♘c3 c6 11.♘d5?

I do not understand such moves! Black
gets a fine centre and his knight the
c6-square.

In case of 11.a3 or 11.a4, I would have
considered 11...♘xc3 followed by
12...♙xb3. Against 11.♘e4 the plan
was 11...a4 12.♙c4 ♘c7.

11...cxd5 12.a4?

12.c3 was much better, but in any case
Black had an excellent position.

12...♘c6 13.c3 ♚b6 14.♙a2



Now comes the move I am really proud
of!

14...♙xe5!! 15.dxe5 d4!

Advantage for Black! He has the initia-
tive in the centre, and White has weak-
nesses: his king's pawn and his queen-
side pawns.

It is not often advisable to give up the
fianchettoed bishop that forms part of the
king's defences. Jimenez was very sur-
prised and afterwards expressed his ad-
miration. White cannot organize any at-
tack; his bishop is not very 'flexible'
and Black gains control of the centre.

**16.♙h6 ♚fd8 17.♙xe6 fxe6
18.♚fe1 ♚d5 19.♙f4**

Losing the king's pawn in itself would
not constitute a disaster for White. But
it is difficult to find a way of giving it
up without Black gaining control of the
centre.

19...♚f8 20.g3

The weakness on f3 looks unattractive,
but after 20.♙g3 the bishop would be
cut off from the d2-square and the
queen's pawn may advance dangerously.
Besides, the bishop may want to return
to h6 later.

20...♚f5 21.♚ad1?

The Cuban master probably overlooked
my reply. However, the position was al-
ready tight.

Against 21.h4, which I mentioned af-
ter the game as being relatively the
best, one of Black's possibilities is
21...d3 22.♚d2 ♚d8! after which
White can do nothing against ...♘xe5.
If 23.♚ad1 ♘xe5 24.♙xe5 ♚fxe5
25.♚xe5 ♚xe5 26.♚xd3?? ♚d5 or
26...♚e1+.

**21...♚b3! 22.h4 ♚xa4 23.♚e4
♚b3**

A strong move threatening 24...dxc3. (I
had already calculated the exchange
that would take place on move 26.)

24.cxd4 ♚xb2 25.♚b1

Maybe 25.♔e3 is better; but with two connected passed pawns I should win. A good reply would be 25...♖d7, defending the b-pawn and leaving a square for the queen. Against 26.g4 ♗f8 27.h5 the simplest defence is 27...g5!.

25...♙xd4 26.♖xb7



If I exchange queens there will be plenty of drawing chances for my opponent. However,

26...♖dxе5! 27.♙b1

Now 27.♔xe5 ♙xf2+ 28.♙h1 ♖xe5 is decisive. So Black has two extra pawns.

27...♖xe1+ 28.♙xe1 ♙d5 29.♙c1

Or 29.♔h6 ♙f7 with the strong threat 30...♘d4. After the text move comes the same knight move. Now this is just as good as it forces the exchange of rooks.

29...♘d4 30.♖b8+ ♗f8 31.♖xf8+ ♙xf8 32.♔h6+ ♙e8

But not 32...♙f7? 33.♙c8 and White will probably draw.

33.♙c8+ ♙d8 34.♙c4 ♘f5 35.♔f4 ♙f7

The king is now completely safe. The winning method consists of a combination of threats against the white king and advancing the a-pawn.

36.♔e5 ♙d1+ 37.♙h2 ♙d2 38.♙c5 a4 39.♔c3 ♙c2 40.♙g1 ♙d1+ 41.♙h2 ♙d5 42.♙b4 ♙f3 43.♙g1 a3!

0-1

There will be no more fun when the pawn reaches the seventh rank! After 44.♙xa3 ♘d4! Black wins the bishop or gives mate; for instance: 45.♔b4 ♘e2+ 46.♙f1 ♘xg3+ and mate on the next move.

Game 48

Queen's Indian Defence

Svetozar Gligoric

Bent Larsen

Palma de Mallorca 1967

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 b6

This is a very old form of the Queen's Indian which hasn't been played in over thirty years. It was used by Chekhover in his game against Spielmann and probably since White won this game brilliantly, it was considered to be a dubious defence, though I would disagree. In fact I don't hesitate in using it with the likes of an opponent such as Gligoric, thus enriching my repertoire of rare variations.

3.♘c3 ♙b7 4.♙c2

White is quick to try to occupy the centre with e2-e4.

4...d5

An adequate reply which gives Black a valid game.

5.cxd5 ♘xd5 6.e4

The 'book' move is 6.♘f3.

It seems that Gligoric, unfamiliar with this unexpected opening, does not realize the true value of Black's counterplay.

6...♘xc3 7.bxc3 e5!

Thus obtaining a comfortable deployment of his forces.

8.dxe5

A compromising situation. Maintaining the centre with 8.♔e3 is not better because of 8...exd4 9.cxd4 ♙b4+. The best reply was 8.d5, although this would not pose a problem for Black.

**8...Qh4**

A move which is 'hypermodern'. It is most unusual for grandmasters to give the queen a very active role so early in the game.

9.f3

It is not easy to keep the pawn, for example:

A) If 9.f3+ d7! there's no fear of losing castling rights as the exchange of queens by 10...Qxe4+ would follow;

B) As for 9.f3, the reply would be 9...d7 10.f3 Qh5 followed by 11...0-0-0, with a very active game.

9...Qxe4+ 10.Qxe4 Qxe4 11.Qc4 c6

Black now has an excellent position which is exempt of any weaknesses, and so he can enjoy a lasting initiative.

12.0-0 0-0

Naturally, if 12...Qxf3 13.gxf3 Qxe5? 14.Qe1! etc.

13.Qe1

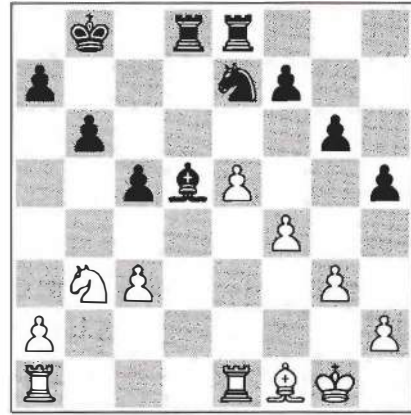
Gligoric pondered over this move for 55 minutes. If 13.Qxf7 Qxf3 14.gxf3 Qxe5 or 13.Qg5 Qd3!. In any case Black has the advantage.

13...Qd5 14.Qa6+ Qb8 15.Qg5 Qe7 16.Qxe7 Qxe7 17.d4 Qhe8 18.f4 g6 19.Qb5

Surely 19.a4 was better.

19...c6 20.Qf1 h5 21.g3 c5 22.Qb3

Trying to take control of the d2-square, so that the rooks cannot penetrate his position. However, 22.Qb5 was more active.

**22...h4**

Not so much to open the file but to create a weakness on g3.

23.c4 Qe6 24.Qad1 hxg3 25.hxg3 Qg4

Disputing the queen's file.

26.Qxd8+ Qxd8 27.Qf2 Qf5 28.Qe2

Due to time trouble White misses the best possible defence, which was 28.e6! fxe6 29.Qxe6 Qxg3 30.Qxg6 Qe4+ 31.Qe3 Qf5. This would have made my task more difficult.

28...Qxe2 29.Qxe2 Qd3

Strategically, White has a lost game.

30.g4 Qh6 31.g5 Qg4+ 32.Qe1 Qe3 33.Qd2 Qc2+ 34.Qf1 Qc7

Since White has no course of action, Black takes advantage of this to centralise his king.

35.Qf2 Qa3 36.e6

A desperate attempt.

36...fxe6 37.Qh2 Qxa2 38.Qh6 Qe3+ 39.Qe1 Qg2+ 40.Qd1 Qxf4

0-1

Chapter 13

1968: Another Busy Year

I had a rest from chess until the Monaco tournament in April, 1968. This tournament had a very strong entry with eleven grandmasters among the fourteen players. The Soviets were renewing their hopes that Botvinnik and Smyslov would restrain me. Botvinnik was close but the only loss I had was in the last round against Byrne; when I was assured of first place and maybe relaxed subconsciously. 1. Larsen 9½; 2. Botvinnik 9; 3. Smyslov and Hort 8½; 5. R. Byrne 8; 6. Portisch 7½, etc. (table next page). I was not satisfied with my play in three or four games but overall I had a good tournament. Game 49 has a certain charm although the main action involves the major pieces.

A month later I beat Portisch in the Candidates' Matches, but in June I lost the semi-final against Spassky. This match, with the unexplained approval of the FIDE president, was organised in very bad conditions in Malmö (Sweden) and it was a depressing affair.

With pleasure, I accepted an invitation to participate in the U.S. Open and the Canadian Open championships. It was fun, in a way: I won both tournaments. If these two are included – played under the Swiss System – I had won seven consecutive tournaments. There was also a small weekend tournament where I tied first place with Benko; so now we have eight!

Everyone knows that this kind of good luck cannot go on indefinitely and I was saying, half seriously, half in jest, that when disaster finally struck and I did not obtain first place in a tournament, I would end up in seventh place. However, this wasn't to be! Disaster struck in the Palma de Mallorca tournament in December and it was a defeat of small dimensions. Kortchnoi won, but I shared second place with Spassky, ahead of Petrosian, Gligoric, Ivkov, Benko, Pomar, Gheorghiu, Matanovic, etc. A strong tournament, where my 13 points from 17 games could be considered a very good score; however, Kortchnoi went well ahead and achieved 14 points.

Some of my games were quite good, but none was particularly special so, instead, I have chosen for this book my game against Unzicker which took place just before the Olympiad in Lugano. My performance was quite poor. When you play in excess there has to come a period of relaxation. It is really too much to play around one hundred games in a year as I did in 1967 and 1968!

English Opening

Bent Larsen

Florin Gheorghiu

Monaco 1968

1.c4 e5 2.g3 g6!?

Game 49

Unusual in this position, but in my opinion it is absolutely correct. If White continues quietly, the fact that Black is still unclear as to where to place his knights offers some interesting possibilities. There is also the choice be-

tween ...d7-d6 and ...c7-c6 followed by ...d7-d5.

In the Sicilian 1.e4 c5, 2.g3 is sometimes played. However it has never become very popular because of the lively reply 2...d5!. Now I have the excellent extra move g2-g3; therefore 3.d4 is possibly stronger than 2...d5.

3.d4!?

I also consider 3.d3 to be satisfactory.

3...exd4 4.♖xd4 ♜f6

There is nothing wrong with 4...♖f6. However the text move is also correct. I do not completely agree with a witty comment which appeared in Echecs Europe:

'It's always difficult to play against Larsen, and Gheorghiu spent five minutes to make his first move. After the fourth, he had already used up about forty-five minutes, and his position was hopeless.'

4.♜c3

5.♙g5? ♙g7 6.♖e3+ ♔f8 is quite favourable for Black.

5...♜c6 6.♖e3+ ♙e7?

This is a mistake. Black should play 6...♖e7. After, for instance, 7.♜b5 ♖xe3 8.♙xe3 ♔d8, the game is more or less balanced.



7.♜d5! ♜xd5

The alternative 7...0-0 8.♜xe7+ ♜xe7 would give Gheorghiu some advantage in development but his king's position would be too weakened on the dark squares.

My opponent had already used up one hour on his clock.

8.cxd5 ♜b8

Against 8 ... ♜b4 9.♖c3 is strong. After 8 ... ♜b8 White can get a slight advantage with 9.♙g2 0-0 10.♜h3; however, the pawn sacrifice is even better.

9.d6! cxd6 10.♜h3 0-0 11.♖h6

White's intention is to force the bishop at e7 to be exchanged for the knight. Of no use is 11...f6 because of 12.♙g2 ♜c6 13.♜f4 and White is threatening 14.♙d5+.

Monaco 1968

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	
1	Larsen,Bent	*	½	½	½	0	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	9.5
2	Botvinnik,Mikhail	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	9.0
3	Hort,Vlastimil	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	8.5
4	Smyslov,Vassily	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	1	8.5
5	Byrne,Robert	1	½	½	½	*	0	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	8.0
6	Portisch,Lajos	½	0	0	½	1	*	½	½	½	1	1	1	0	1	7.5
7	Gheorghiu,Florin	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	7.5
8	Benko,Pal	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	1	7.5
9	Forintos,Győző	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	*	½	1	½	1	1	6.5
10	Damjanovic,Mato	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	0	½	*	0	½	1	1	5.5
11	Uhlmann,Wolfgang	0	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	0	1	*	0	1	1	5.5
12	Padevsky,Nikola	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	1	*	1	½		5.0
13	Letzelter,Jean Claude	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	*	½		1.5
14	Zinser,Sylvain	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	*	1.0



Playing Viktor Kortchnoi in Palma de Mallorca, 1968.

11...♘c6 12.♘g5

This threat must be enforced immediately, because if 12.♙g2 ♘d4 13.♘g5 ♙a5+ Black has a very good game. After 12.♘g5 Black may exchange queens, but the ending after 12...♙a5+ 13.♙d2 ♙xg5 14.♙xg5 ♙xg5 15.♙xg5 favours White. Black cannot defend the d6-pawn, and two strong bishops and a weak black d7-pawn ensure a clear advantage for White.

12...♙xg5 13.♙xg5 f6 14.♙d2 b6 15.♙g2 ♙b7

I was willing to sacrifice another pawn after 15...♙a6 16.♙c3 ♖e8 17.0-0! ♙xe2 18.♙d5+ ♖h8 19.♖fe1, or 17...♖xe2 18.♖fd1 with powerful threats.

16.0-0 ♘a5 17.♙xa5 ♙xg2 18.♖xg2 bxa5 19.♖ad1 ♙e7

In order to parry 20.♙f4 with 20...♙e5.

20.♖d2 ♖ab8 21.♖fd1 ♙e4+

Prevents 22.♙f4.

22.♖g1 ♖b6 23.h4!

Black has got some respite thanks to the exchanges, but his pawn structure is very weak. Even without the presence

of the queens, the chances of victory lie with white.

The attack on the queen's file is combined with action on the kingside. Additionally, if more pieces are exchanged, it is important that the h2-square is available for the king so that the black queen may not give perpetual check on b1 and e4. My opponent was already in time trouble.

23...♙e5 24.b3 ♖c8?

Afterwards Gheorghiu was not happy with this move. Since he had to play quickly, he probably overlooked my next attack. He thought 24...♖c6! to be the best move. With this move White would not have the opportunity to start a direct attack but must play for the ending: 25.e3 ♖fc8 26.♙f4 (26.♖d5 ♖c1 27.♖xe5 ♖xd1+ 28.♖g2 fxe5 29.h5 probably only leads to a draw) 26...♙xf4 27.gxf4 ♖f7 28.♖xd6 ♖xd6 29.♖xd6 ♖e7 30.♖a6, winning easily. However, Black can make it more difficult with 25...a4. For example, 26.bxa4 (26.♖d5 ♖c1!) 26...♖fc8 27.♙f4 ♙xf4 28.gxf4 ♖f7 29.♖xd6 ♖xd6 30.♖xd6 ♖e7 31.♖a6. If Black now continues

passively with 31...♖c7, 32.♗a5 follows and sooner or later h4-h5 will be played. If Black captures he will be left with a 'collection' of weak pawns and, of course, White can use the threat of h5-h6 and the manoeuvre of the rook to the h8-square. If Black plays ...h7-h5, White's reply f4-f5 will shatter Black's pawn structure.

I foresee a victorious end, but it requires precision.

Instead of 31...♖c7 Black may play 31...♖c2, but the resulting position after 32.♖xa7 ♖xa2 33.a5 is won for White. The a-pawn makes its way to the seventh rank and if the black king remains on his wing to defend the pawns, mine will move to the queenside and take the d-pawn: White will then have another passed pawn on the e-file.

Similar positions with three pawns against three on the kingside do not win. However with four against four there are good chances. Furthermore, Gheorghiu has a weak d-pawn. That White also has a weak pawn is irrelevant.



This is the position after 24...♖c8?. If White takes time to play 25.e3 the reply 25...♖c5 makes it very difficult for White to break through anywhere. Among other things, Black is ready to continue with ...♗e6 and ...♗h5, reply-

ing to ♗f4 with ...♗e5. Later, his king will go to e7.

The position is critical in this sense: Black gets good drawing chances if White doesn't strike immediately. But, I can strike!

25.♖d5! ♗xe2 26.h5 ♖c2 27.♗f1 ♗e4?

Under time pressure and in a losing position, it is very easy to make mistakes. However, even with 27...♗e8 (the strongest move) it is still a hopeless position. After, for instance, 28.♖xa5 a6 29.hxg6 ♗xg6 30.♗h3 ♖c7 31.♖e1 or 29...hxg6 30.♖a4, threatening ♗h4 or ♖g2!, nothing can save Black.

28.♖xa5 a6 29.♖a4 ♗e8 30.♖g4 ♗f8 31.♗e3

Decisive.

31...♖bc6 32.hxg6 hxg6 33.♖xg6+ ♖f7 34.♖g4 ♖c5 35.♗d3 ♖e5 36.f4 ♖e8 37.♗d5+

Also possible is 37.♗h7+ ♖e6 38.♖e1+ ♖d5 39.♗h5+, but in this line there is no quick mate so I preferred opting to take the queen.

37...♖e7 38.♖e1+ 1-0

If 38...♖d8 39.♖xe8+ ♗xe8 40.♖g8.

Game 50

Queen's Gambit Declined

Bent Larsen

Wolfgang Unzicker

Lugano Olympiad 1968

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 e6 3.♘f3 d5 4.d4 c5

With a small transposition of moves we have reached the so-called semi-classical variation of the Queen's Gambit; also sometimes referred to as the Deferred or Improved Tarrasch Defence. The improvement is that Black can capture on d5 with the knight, and thus

avoid being left with an isolated d-pawn.

5.cxd5 ♖xd5 6.e3

Despite Spassky's beautiful victory against Petrosian in the fifth round of their 1969 match, most experts probably still believe that the line: 6.e4 ♖xc3 7.bxc3 cxd4 8.cxd4 ♖b4+ poses few problems for Black.

6...♖c6 7.♖c4 cxd4

In the first game of our match in 1969, Tal was not worried about the threat ♖xd5 and played 7...♖e7 8.♖xd5 exd5 9.dxc5 ♖e6, but I was satisfied with 10.0-0 (10.♖a4 ♖a5+ 11.♖d2 ♖b5 12.b3) 10...♖xc5 11.b3 0-0 12.♖b2, which is, in my opinion, slightly better for White. It is interesting to compare this position with a variation of the Nimzo-Indian Defence: 1.d4 ♖f6 2.c4 e6 3.♖c3 ♖b4 4.e3 c5 5.♖e2 d5 6.a3 ♖xc3+ 7.♖xc3 cxd4 8.exd4 dxc4 9.♖xc4 0-0 10.0-0 ♖c6 11.♖e3. This is the same position with colours reversed, but with a difference of two tempi!

8.exd4 ♖e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.♖e1
♖xc3 11.bxc3 b6 12.♖c2 ♖b7
13.♖d3 g6 14.h4?!



During the game, I suddenly had this idea and I could not resist it. White hopes to exploit the weakness of the dark squares after 14...♖xh4 15.♖h6

♖e8 16.♖xh4 ♖xh4 17.♖d2 but it is doubtful that with correct play the pawn sacrifice is sufficient. In practice, such sacrifices offer good chances: the element of surprise is an important psychological weapon. The 'book' move 14.♖h6 must still be seen as the best move.

Unzicker only thought for a few minutes and then declined the kind offer.

14...♖c8 15.♖d2

Now Black cannot take the pawn: 15...♖xh4? 16.♖h6 ♖f6 17.♖g5 ♖xg5 18.♖xg5 f6 19.♖xe6 fxg5? 20.♖xg6+.

♖d2 has been played several times, but on move 14. For example, in the game Bronstein-Pachman, Gothenburg 1955: 14.♖d2 ♖a5 15.♖e5 ♖f6? 16.♖a3 ♖e7 17.♖b2 f5 18.c4 and White was better; but then Pachman suggested that 15...♖c8 gave Black a good game.

Similarly, 15...♖a5 is a possible answer to 15.♖d2, but White retains good attacking chances with 16.♖g5. A manoeuvre worthy of mention in such positions is ♖ab1-♖b5 and suddenly this rook can assist in the attack on the kingside.

15...♖f6 16.h5 ♖a5?

In the previous review and Pachman's analysis of his own game against Bronstein, we can see a similar defensive plan. The advance of the h-pawn has essentially improved the chances of attack. Without doubt, 16...♖e7 had to be played.

17.♖e5 ♖xe5

Consistent with 16...♖a5, otherwise the black knight would be misplaced at a5. Strangely enough, though, my opponent took a very long time to make this move.

18.♖xe5 ♖c4 19.♖xc4 ♖xc4

20. ♖d3

Not 20. ♖h6 ♜xc3! 21. ♙g5 f6 22. hxg6 ♜c7!.

20... ♜c5??

The decisive mistake. In any case, the position is difficult for Unzicker: he has to watch out for my attacking chances along the dark squares. However, using a precise defence, he may hold his position.

Everyone knows that exchanges make life easier for the defender. However this is not always the case. Here we have a very specific reason why Black should refrain from exchanging the rooks. He will now have to weaken his castled position even more in order to prevent the loss of a pawn.

21. ♜xc5 bxc5 22. hxg6 fxg6

Taking with the f-pawn weakens the seventh rank (in effect, a white rook placed here would collaborate most effectively in the attack on the king). However, if instead, 22... hxg6 23. ♙a3 ♖d5 24. ♖g3 White wins a pawn. Now 23. ♙a3 is refuted by 23... ♜f5. Making this bishop move earlier would not have been good because of ... ♖g5 or ... ♖d5, for example: 22. ♙a3 ♖d5 23. ♖h3 ♖xh5 24. ♖xh5 gxh5 25. ♙xc5 ♜c8, with fine drawing chances.

23. ♙h6 ♜f7 24. ♜b1 cxd4 25. cxd4



Black will find it very difficult to defend both the seventh and the eighth ranks. White will pose many threats once all his pieces have been mobilized. Even the a-pawn will play an important role. It will advance to a5 and eventually chase the black bishop away from a6; the b8-square will then be available for White's rook. If Black plays ...a7-a6 my rook will occupy the b6-square.

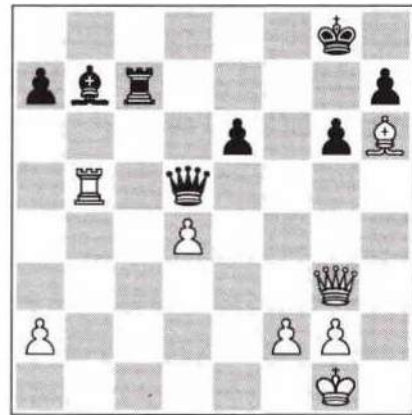
25... ♖d5

Unzicker had planned 25... ♖h4 26. ♖e3 ♖g4, but then realized that 27. f3 ♜xf3 28. ♖e5 wins at once for White since there is no perpetual check with 28... ♜f1+. Nonetheless 27... ♖f5 would have been much better.

White, however, has a better line: 27. d5! ♖f5 28. ♜b5 a6 29. ♜c5. The invulnerable d-pawn divides Black's position in two.

26. ♖g3 ♜c7 27. ♜b5!

After 27. a4 a6 it would not be easy to drive off the black queen.

**27... ♜c1+?**

Makes the win easier but it was difficult to find acceptable moves anyway. 27... ♖e4 is refuted by 28. d5! and if 27... ♖d7 28. ♖e5 ♜c8 29. ♜xb7! ♖xb7 30. ♖xe6+ ♙h8 31. ♙f4 or 28... ♖c6 29. d5 exd5 30. ♜xd5. Decisive combinations can be found in all variations.

28.♙xc1 ♖xb5 29.♗b8+ ♔f7
30.♙a3 e5 31.♗d6

The black king will not be allowed to escape. There's the threat of a mate in two and if 31...♗e8 32.♗c7+ Black loses the bishop.

31...g5 32.dxe5 ♗c6

33.♗f6+ had to be prevented.

33.e6+ ♔g6

If 33...♔f6 34.e7+!. I was considering promoting the pawn to a knight.

34.e7+ ♔h5

Or 34...♔f7 35.e8♗+!, winning the bishop.

35.f3 g4

The logical finish was 35...♗xd6 36.e8♗+ ♗g6 37.g4+ ♔h4 38.♗e1+ ♔h3 39.♗f1+ ♔g3 40.♙d6+ ♗xd6 41.♗g2+ winning the queen.

36.♗e5+

Black resigned.

Chapter 14

1969: About My Style

The next game belongs to the tournament in Büsum, May 1969, which I won. I did not, however, play very convincingly: 1. Larsen 11 points (out of a possible 15); 2. Polugaevsky 10½; 3. Gerusel 9½; 4. Gligoric 9; 5. Ivkov and A. Zaitsev 8½; 7. Bobotsov 8; etc. It is unusual to be the star of a miniature game at this level.

This was the only tournament I took part in during the first half of 1969. But in February I won a short match in Helsinki against Westerinen (6-2). In March I beat Tal in the Netherlands by no less than 5½ to 2½. This was the match for third place in the Candidates' and it entitled me to enter the next Interzonal directly. The 'wizard' of Riga played very badly although I have to admit that I did not play too well either.

So for two years I had been victorious most of the times and the lowest placing I had in all the tournaments was second place. I had established myself, therefore, as one of the world's leading masters.

What is my style? Much has been said and written about this, and I think some of it is spot on. But is it really possible to talk about a style? Does anyone ever play in the same style? It is difficult to find a common denominator to the games in this collection, and one reason for this is one's own development over the years. Perhaps the reader may pick up something about my ideas on chess if, for instance, I point out which of these fifty games I consider to be the best. Even so, it is difficult. I cannot select, say, only three of them. The result is a list of no less than fourteen: games 9, 13, 18, 19, 20, 28, 29, 34, 38, 39, 40, 46, 47, 50.

Polugaevsky has written that I like to push the rook pawns. Gligoric has stated that there are more flank attacks in my games than in those of other contemporary masters. There is probably some truth in this. One amusing characteristic that my flank attacks have is that they do not always lead to simplifications. If the attack is rebuffed there will usually be chances to initiate another course of action in a different sector.

I'm not noted as a player with fine combination skills. Of course, in this book there are many beautiful combinations: some of the games have been chosen precisely because of this. However, I am not too fond of tactical complications and I am not ready (as Tal is, for instance), to accept a bad position because it offers many tactical possibilities.

For the same reason, I do not deliberately play openings if they are weak. I prefer to use the element of surprise and, in some cases, this makes me play a variation without being absolutely convinced of its validity. However if I know or feel that a certain variation is bad I will discard it without further ado. Over the years,

I have played many rare opening variations; even those variations which were rejected by theoreticians a long time ago. But these learned gentlemen are sometimes mistaken. If you have discovered an improvement in a variation which has previously been regarded as poor, you can apply it with considerable psychological effect.

It has been said that I do not worry about keeping the bishop pair; this is something I cannot agree with. However, the Nimzo-Indian has always been one of my favourite defences and naturally, in this defence, Black often exchanges the bishop for the knight. Logically, I do not make such an exchange if I don't get any compensation.

I tend to hesitate more than other masters before accepting an isolated centre pawn even when there is compensation in the form of active play and attacking chances. Game 50 is a beautiful exception, even though the queen's pawn was not isolated for very long. This is one of the traits I may change, perhaps not in my judgement of the positions but at least in my habits.

To a certain extent, it is a question of opening repertoire. I may begin to practise more often those openings that offer more opportunities to provide an isolated queen's pawn. Using new openings and exploring new types of positions is one of the best medicines to combat stale routine play and boring grandmaster draws.

I wonder if I should be considered an aggressive player as I don't like draws. If you examine my scores in the tournaments I have participated in, you will find that I have had far fewer draws than the average player. I detest the tactic of playing for a draw with black and playing for a win with white. In my opinion, there is no sense in praising a master because he has not lost a single game, if he is classified, for example, in fifth place. In most cases he has played very cautiously and with little inspiration. His games have been uninteresting and many of his opponents have regarded the game against this 'peacemaker' as a blessed break during a long tournament. Naturally, it is not the same if the winner of the tournament has avoided losses. He has probably had to take some risks in other games in order to gather enough points for first place. In such a case, to finish unbeaten shows class. A good example was Kortchnoi's victory in the tournament in Palma de Mallorca, 1968. But, to remain undefeated or to lose a single game is just an accidental issue, as I mentioned in relation to my game in Havana in 1967.

In major tournaments, I have seldom remained undefeated; moreover, I have not lost many half-points. Only on very few occasions have I drawn half my games in a tournament. In order to make the competition interesting to the public the masters' attitudes cannot be peaceful. Undoubtedly, part of the problem lies in the fact that most of the top grandmasters play too much. They participate in as many tournaments as they desire, and also in those which their federations or other associations, to a greater or lesser degree, 'oblige' them to play in.

The number of serious games that can be played 'at full throttle' per year is a matter of stamina. In my opinion, the maximum acceptable is eighty; something which is not entirely consistent with my performance in 1967-1968.

This book ends (again, Larsen refers to his first book, *50 Udvalgte Partier*, here – ed.) at a time when I have only played one tournament and two short matches, that is, when I've been more or less on holiday respecting tournaments, but certainly not from chess. Simultaneous displays, lectures, articles, studies on theory and, of course, writing this book occupied all my time. I have heard somewhere that there is such a medical condition known as 'chess fatigue'; something which is alien to me. I am aware of another condition instead, which could be known as 'tournament fatigue'; one of the symptoms seems to be that I sleep an extra hour at night!

I have been unable to choose 'my best game' and likewise I find it difficult to choose 'my best tournament'. The reply lies in the fine old answer, 'I haven't played it yet!'. Given my lack of experience in 1956, my results that year were impressive. This was followed, for example, by the tournaments in Mar del Plata, 1958 and in Beverwijk, 1960. Yet the 1964 Interzonal should be considered 'better'. And Havana, 1967! And what about the first 13 rounds of the tournament in Palma de Mallorca in 1967? Am I contradicting myself now....? Perhaps I should also consider the last seven rounds in Le Havre, 1966....?

A chess master told me that I was a true professional who strives to win, even when I am not in good shape. Something like this happened in the tournament held in Büsum, Federal Republic of Germany. My victory felt 'lucky' because I was on the verge of losing several games. But this is not the case in this next game, where my readers will be invited to a dessert.

After writing the book *I Play to Win* I flew to Puerto Rico and I played horribly there. At the tournament in San Juan I finished sixth. There is a big difference between an office desk and a playing hall. As I was commentating over one of my sup-

		Palma de Mallorca 1969																	
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Larsen,Bent	*	½	1	0	0	1	0	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	12.0
2	Petrosian,Tigran	½	*	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	11.5
3	Kortchnoi,Viktor	0	½	*	1	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	0	10.5
4	Hort,Vlastimil	1	0	0	*	½	1	½	1	½	½	½	0	1	½	½	1	1	10.5
5	Spassky,Boris	1	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	10.0
6	Diez del Corral,Jesus	0	0	0	0	½	*	½	1	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	9.5
7	Mecking,Henrique	1	0	0	½	½	½	*	0	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	0	½	9.0
8	Panno,Oscar	0	½	½	0	½	0	1	*	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	0	1	9.0
9	Parma,Bruno	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	8.5
10	Najdorf,Miguel	0	0	½	½	½	1	0	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	8.5
11	Szabo,Laszlo	½	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	½	8.0
12	Unzicker,Wolfgang	0	½	0	1	½	½	½	0	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	½	8.0
13	Pomar Salamanca,Arturo	½	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	1	½	½	7.5
14	Bobotsov,Milko	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	0	1	6.5
15	Damjanovic,Mato	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	6.5
16	Penrose,Jonathan	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	1	½	0	0	½	½	1	½	*	½	6.5
17	Toran Albero,Roman	0	0	1	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	6.0
18	Medina Garcia,Antonio	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	½	1	½	½	½	5.0

posedly best games I realized that I had made a mistake and that the game was not a good selection: I lost all interest in it after that.

Later I participated in the annual tournament of Palma de Mallorca, this time it was by far the strongest competition held in 1969. I lost the first two games and I was also defeated in the fifth round. It seemed that the spate of ill fortune from San Juan still persisted. However, I emerged the winner. I have to admit that winning a tournament of this calibre after a bad start is an extraordinary achievement. (see table previous page)

Some of my games were very good; I have chosen four for this chapter. They may not be in the top four, but the games against Kortchnoi and Medina were important in relation to the final standings of the tournament.

Game 51

English Opening
Milko Bobotsov
Bent Larsen
 Büsum 1969

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 e6 3.♘f3 ♙b4

My main objections to this move – see my game with Gheorghiu in Winnipeg – are not so strong that they prevent me from using it.

I would not have played 4...c5, against 4.♙c2, but rather something like 4...0-0 5.a3 ♙xc3 6.♙xc3 b6, which gave me a very good result against Polugaevsky in this same tournament, a few rounds later.

4.g3 0-0

After 4...♙xc3 5.bxc3 the doubled pawns are not weak: White avoids d2-d4, which would transpose into a type of Nimzo-Indian with a weak c-pawn, and will later build up a pawn formation with d2-d3 and later with e2-e4 and f2-f4.

5.♙g2 d5 6.0-0?

This will cost him the game! Bobotsov should have played 6.a3! ♙e7 7.d4, transposing into a position typical of the Catalan. Although White has played the extra move a2-a3, it makes no real difference.

6...dxc4!

Black takes the pawn and keeps it. 6...d4 was not bad, but of course, it's better to win a pawn.

Now 7.♘e5 is not good due to 7...♙d4. Black may defend the pawn with ...♘bd7, ...♘b6 or ...♘c6, ...♘a5, and since neither the white b- nor the d-pawn have yet moved, the advanced black pawn may be exchanged for one of these.



7.♙a4

Unlike many variations in the Catalan System, this move neither gives check nor threatens the pawn.

7...♘a6!

Also 7...a5 was good; other moves are weaker. Now the reply to 8.♘e5 could be 8...♙d4 or 8...c6.

8.a3 ♙d7 9.♘b5

This looks crazy, and it is. But my opponent seems confused because of his

mistake on move 6. After 9.♔c2 ♕d6 White cannot recover the pawn.

9...♖e8 10.♘fd4

After 10.♘xc7 ♕xa4 11.♘xe8 ♕e7! 12.♘xf6+ ♕xf6 White will have won back the pawn, but can he develop the queenside? The alternative 10.axb4 ♕xb5 11.♖a5 ♘d5 does not offer much hope either. Now White is hoping for 10...c6 11.♘c7! ♘xc7 12.♖xb4. Although Black keeps the pawn, Bobotsov has some counterplay along the dark squares. I felt I had the more favourable position although it was not clearly victorious. I spent a long time looking for the most complicated line.

10...e5! 11.♕xb7 exd4 12.♕xa6

Another possibility was 12.axb4 ♕xb5 13.♖a5, and Black cannot keep the piece, but there are several lines which can be advantageous. The most interesting is 13...♘b8 14.♕xa8 c6 15.♖xa7 ♖xe2, winning quickly. This was foreseen on move 10.

After the text move the variation 12...♖b8? 13.♖xb4 ♕xb5 14.♕xb5 ♖xb5 15.♖xb5 ♖xb5 16.d3 only gives a small advantage to Black. Had this continuation been forced, I would then have preferred 10...c6.



12...♕h3!

This is the simplest way to win. Consider, for example, the queen sacrifice

on f3 after 13.♖e1 ♖c6 14.f3 ♖fe8!. If 15.axb4, disaster will strike: 15...♖xf3! 16.exf3 ♖xe1+ 17.♖f2 ♖f1+ 18.♖e2 ♖e8 mate. However after 15.♘c3! the variations are long and hard.

There is no reason, therefore, to sacrifice, especially when there is something as simple as 14...♕c5. After 13.♖e1 ♖c6 14.f3 ♕c5 15.♖xc4 d3+ 16.♖h1 ♖ae8 White is lost beyond hope: 17.♘d4 is answered with 17...♖xe2; 17.e4 con 17...♘g4 or 17...♘xe4 18.fxe4 ♖f6 19.♖xd3 ♖f2

Against the text move I only saw one possible defence when Black has no direct mating attack (13.♘c3). But a comfortable endgame with the exchange up is also very good – the only difference being that it would not have become a miniature!

13.axb4? ♖e4 14.♕b7

Or 14.f3 ♖xe2 and mate follows.

14...♖xb7 15.f3 ♕d7

0-1

This is the shortest game I have ever won against a grandmaster!

Game 52

Reversed Benoni

Bent Larsen

Viktor Kortchnoi

Palma de Mallorca 1969

1.g3 d5 2.♕g2 c6 3.c4 g6

This seems to indicate a calm attitude. The game could enter into a line that is regarded as 'highly drawable': 4.cxd5 cxd5 5.d4 ♕g7, etc... as in the game Mecking-Torán. I decided, however, to play something different, and thus complicate the position.

4.♖a4!? d4

'Why not 4...e6?', commented Najdorf later. However, Kortchnoi's move cannot be bad. In principle it does solve a problem: how to name the opening. It

will result in the same pawn structure as in the Benoni but with colours reversed. Therefore please allow me to use that name.

**5.♘f3 ♘g7 6.0-0 e5 7.d3 ♘e7
8.♘bd2 0-0 9.b4 ♘d7 10.♖b1**

A routine move which serves both to remove the rook from the enemy bishop's diagonal and also prepares for an advance of the b-pawn.

10...a5

Kortchnoi commented on this game in the magazine *Shakhmaty v SSSR* (1970), No. 3. He remarked that I played very well in such closed positions where there is a pawn chain. He said that he had been taken by surprise when I advanced with 11.b5; in any case he considered this to be the correct continuation. Other possibilities that he mentions are 11.♘e4 and 11.♙a3, but I think that Black would reach a very good position with 11...♘b6, followed by ...axb4.

11.b5 c5 12.e3 dxe3

The best. After 12...♖a7 13.exd4 cxd4? (13...exd4 14.♖e1 with some initiative) 14.♙a3 White has a clear advantage.

I really like the pawn structure with a majority of central white pawns, but in this case I do not think it provides any advantage.

Kortchnoi writes that at this stage he did not like his position much; this may have been the cause for him using up a great deal of time.

13.fxe3 ♖a7 14.♙c2

Inferior is 14.♘e4 f5 15.♘d6 ♘b6!.

14...b6 15.♘e4 ♘f6

My plan was ♘c3 followed by ♘d5 and, if necessary, e3-e4. But now 16.♘c3 ♘h5 17.e4 f5 gives Black very good play on the kingside. I do not know why the text move surprised me

since it is a very logical move and also the best in this position.

**16.♘xf6+ ♙xf6 17.♙b2 ♘f5
18.♖be1 ♖e8 19.e4**

The previous moves have been quite normal. Now 19.♘d2 would be refuted with 19...♙g5!.

19...♘g7



Kortchnoi believed his position was at least equal. He offered a draw, possibly because he had used up too much time: He only had half an hour's thinking time left. To quote Kortchnoi: 'But Larsen refused. Not because his judgment about the position was different. He just likes this kind of structure. In Mallorca he won several games of this



At Palma de Mallorca, 1969.

type, particularly against Bobotsov and Panno.'

Well, all this is true, but the clock was also one of the reasons for playing for a win: I still had one hour more than Kortchnoi. I am sure that masters like Petrosian and Smyslov would have been satisfied with a draw in this position and would have continued 19...♘d4 20.♘xd4 exd4. After 21.♙f1, White has a tiny advantage and Black should be able to put up a defence.

20.♘d2 h5!

The white knight has its eyes set on the d5-square, whilst Black starts counterplay on the kingside. In my opinion this is the best course of action. 20...♖d7? would have been a waste of time. For example: 21.♘b1 ♜xd3? 22.♜xf6 or 21...♙g5 22.♙h3 with a favourable exchange of bishops.

Kortchnoi mentions 20...♙e6 21.♘b1 ♘d4 22.♞f2 ♙g7 23.♘c3 f6 24.♘d5 ♜f7 with quite an even game. Possibly this is true, but I prefer White's game. There is a clear difference between the knights; whereas Black's is quite dormant, White's is attacking both b6 and f6.

Kortchnoi explains that this position requires time to find a plan and, since he had very little of that, he preferred the sharp text move, relying on his tactical skills. It is an interesting comment and something that weak players do not understand: masters generally spend more time constructing an overall plan than in calculating variations exactly.

21.♘b1 h4 22.♘c3 hxg3 23.hxg3 ♘h5 24.♘d5 ♙g5 25.♞f2 f6 26.♙c1 ♙xc1 27.♞xc1 f5

I was hoping that Kortchnoi would commit the classic mistake of playing passively in time trouble. After 27...♜f7 I would have very good chances with

28.♙f3 ♘g7 29.♙g2 followed by the occupation of the h-file.

Kortchnoi mentions another possibility that occurred to him during the game: 27...♙e6, and if White were to capture the f-pawn, in the endgame that follows after the exchanges he would be left with no winning chances whatsoever. However, White can make better moves: 28.♙f3! ♘g7 29.♙d1! and now:

A) After 29...♙xd5? 30.cxd5 ♜f7 31.♙b3 Black has to make use of his queen to block the d6-square (he does not have time to manoeuvre his knight and bring it to d6) and thus, his opponent will mount a strong attack along the h-file;

B) 29...f5 is better; however White answers 30.♞f3 (to prevent ...♞g5) and is now able to continue ♜c2-♞h2. True, my bishop is theoretically 'bad' but the opponent's knight is also misplaced. There is no doubt that I have better chances and that 27...♙e6 would not have been as strong as 27...f5.

28.♞e3 ♞h7 29.♞ce1 ♙h8 30.exf5 gxf5 31.g4!?

I was considering these options as my opponent was using up his own time. Another idea is 30.♞f2, with the intention of transferring my king to the queenside.



31...♘f6?

Certainly of no use is 31...fxg4 32.♙e4, but the text move is also bad. I suppose he was expecting 32.gxf5 ♘g4!. Here the knight defends the e-pawn and bestows great attacking chances. The need to protect the e-pawn is the main difficulty as Black has to be able to organize an attack against the enemy king.

The only good move is 31...♘g7!, to which I would have replied 32.♙f2 to give my king the escape route via f1. After 32...f4 33.♚e2 there is also the ♙f3 and ♖h2 manoeuvre; in this line, Kortchnoi's knight is misplaced. 32...♖h4! is better so as to force me to take the pawn, and after 33.gxf5 ♘xf5 34.♚f3 there would be equal chances.

32.♘xf6! ♚xf6 33.gxf5 ♙xf5?

I thought he would play 33...♖h5, which is slightly better, but after 34.♙f3 Black's position is difficult.

34.♚f3 ♙f7

Another surprise for me. 34...♙f8 is better but after 35.♙f2, Black's position worsens due to the control of the f-file by the bishop. After the text move White has a decisive advantage.

35.♚h5+ ♘g7 36.♙d5 ♙ff8 37.♙f2!

But not 37.♙e2? ♙g6!, since Black is saved after the exchanged of queens, only because ♙e2 is threatened.

So there remained no defence other than the game continuation, which only leads to a hopeless ending.

37...♙g6 38.♙xf6 ♙xh5 39.♙xb6 ♙f3 40.♙d6 ♙f4 41.♙xf3 ♙xf3 42.♙d5 ♘f6 43.♘g2 ♙f5 44.♙e3 ♙c8 45.♙f3

The simplest way. In this rook and pawn endgame, not only does White have an extra pawn but also Black's pawns are isolated and therefore weak.

45...a4 46.♙xf5+ ♘xf5 47.♘f3 a3 48.♘e3 ♙h8 49.♙xc5

Another line was 49.b6, the intention being to sacrifice the b-pawn in exchange for the c- and the a-pawns.

49...♙h2 50.b6 ♙xa2 51.d4 ♘e6 52.♙xe5+ ♘d7 53.♙a5 ♘c6 54.c5 ♙h2 55.♘e4 1-0

This was the sealed move which I showed to Kortchnoi. Some time later he resigned. Possible continuations are 55...♙h4+ 56.♘d3 ♘d5 57.b7 or 55...♙e2+ 56.♘d3 ♙h2 57.♘c4 ♙c2+ 58.♘b3 ♙e2 59.♘c3 ♙a2 60.♙a7.

This game was held in the 7th round, when Kortchnoi was leading with 4½ points. I had 2½ points and took *ex-aequo* 12th-16th. Before the game, one of the Spanish participants said that this game would be decisive to win the tournament. This hunch became reality. I started playing very well from here on, whereas Kortchnoi lost confidence. In the next round he saved a losing position; then he drew with Pomar and was defeated by Toran. Meanwhile, I beat Unzicker, Panno and Corral with good games.

Game 53

King's Fianchetto for White

Bent Larsen

Oscar Panno

Palma de Mallorca 1969

1.g3 g6 2.♙g2 ♙g7 3.♘c3 e5 4.d3 ♘c6 5.f4 d6 6.♘f3 ♘ge7 7.0-0 0-0



I'm not too sure what name I should give this opening. Had White played c2-c4 it would be an English or a Reversed Sicilian; and if it were Black who had played ...c7-c5, then we would have the Closed Sicilian after White's next move. Some of the moves that follow also seem to belong to one of these openings; the only difference being that the c-pawns are still in their original positions. It is not until move 18 that White advances the c-pawn.

8.e4 h6 9.♙e3 ♘d4 10.♚d2 ♖h7 11.♜ae1 ♙e6 12.♘h4

To provoke 12...exf4. Another good move which is nearly always useful in this kind of position, is ♖h1.

12...exf4 13.gxf4 ♘ec6 14.♘f3

This is necessary as both 14.♙f2 g5! 15.fxg5 ♚xg5 and 14.♚f2 ♘xc2 are good for Black.

14...♘xf3+ 15.♜xf3 f5

More exact may be 15...♘d4 straight away, 'asking' the rook whether it wants to go to f1 or to g3. At g3 it would not be of much use since Black may refrain from playing ...f7-f5, as it weakens g6.

I have often reached this type of position and I feel very comfortable with them. I cannot say the same for Panno as he used up a great deal of time to make these moves.

16.♖h1 ♚f6 17.♘d5

I was considering 17.d4? because this variation caught my eye: 17...fxe4 (better is 17...♘xd4! 18.e5 dxe5 19.fxe5 ♘xf3 20.exf6 ♘xd2 21.fxg7 ♜fd8 and Black has more scope) 18.♘xe4 ♚f7 19.d5! ♙xd5 20.♘g5+ hxg5 21.♜h3+.

17...♚f7 18.c4 ♜ae8 19.♚f2 a6?

Understandably, Panno, who was short of time, did not want to use it up calculating on each move whether White can

take the pawn at a7. But I think that 19...♘d8 was better.

20.b3 ♘b8 21.♙c1 c6 22.♘e3 ♘d7 23.exf5 ♙xf5

After 23...gxf5 the bishop would become passive. Therefore taking with the piece is better.

24.♘xf5 gxf5 25.♜xe8 ♜xe8 26.♙h3!

Prevents ♘f6, which would give Black a good position. Here we see why 19...a6 was doubtful. This move formed part of the plan ...♘b8-d7-f6, since 19...♘b8 was not much good because of 20.♙xa7. Therefore, it is very important that the bishop is at h3 at this time. But that it should remain here until the end of the game is quite odd! Its sole role is to attack the f-pawn. It seems logical that I should expect it to move back to g2 later to exert some pressure against Black's queenside.



26...♘c5 27.b4 ♘e6 28.♙e3 ♙c3 29.♜g3!?

A psychological move! If Panno had not been pressed for time, I would have played 29.a3. He had fifteen minutes left and he used up another five before deciding not to take the b-pawn. It is, of course, very dangerous for the bishop to abandon the long diagonal.

After 29...♙xb4 30.♚b2 there are two lines that Black must avoid:

A) 30...♙c5 31.d4 ♙a7 32.d5 ♙xe3 (32...♘c5 33.♙xf5+) 33.dxe6 ♚xe6 34.♙xf5+;

B) 30...♙e1? 31.♙xf5+ ♚xf5 32.♚xb7+ ♖h8 33.♙d4+!;

C) But with 30...♙a5! White's attack would not be so clear. However, there is probably some compensation for the pawn.

29...♚f6 30.a3

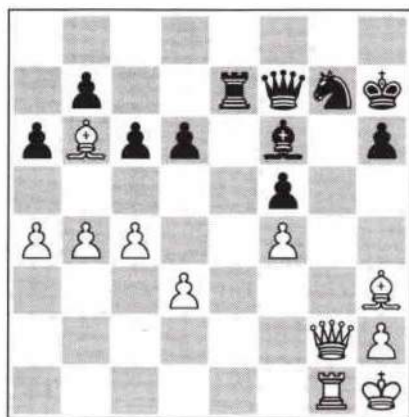
I made this move implying that I was wary of 29...♙xb4!.

30...♚e7 31.♚g1 ♘g7

Panno waits. Perhaps the best move was 31...♙d4, although 32.♙xf5+ ♚xf5 33.♙xd4 ♚xf4 34.♚e1 ♚xf2 35.♙xf2 ♘g7 36.♙g3 leads to an ending where White has some winning chances.

The text move threatens simplification with ...♚xe3, which is favourable for Black, therefore...

32.♙b6 ♚e6 33.♚c2 ♙f6 34.♚g2 ♚f7 35.a4!



White cannot break into the kingside, where all of Black's pieces are defending. He wants to open a file for his rook on the other flank, and also try to create new possibilities for his king's bishop. At d5 this piece would dominate the board, reinforcing the attack of the other pieces, on both wings.

35...♚e8 36.♚f3 ♙d8 37.♙f2? ♘h5

A serious mistake because White will dominate the long dark-squared diago-

nal, since if ...♙f6 then ♙xf5+. After 37...♘h5? Black is lost; his position was very difficult, anyway.

38.♙d4 ♚g8 39.♚b1 ♙h4

Perhaps he was hoping to start an attack with ...♘g3+, though such a possibility is non-existent. Moreover, Panno must play quickly as he is running out of time.

40.b5 axb5 41.axb5 c5 42.♙c3 ♚e8

Time control is now over but since I still had ample time we made a few more moves. It matters little what Black plays. One of my threats is ♚a1, ♚a7 or ♚a8, and the other is the manoeuvre ♙g2-♙d5.

43.♚g1



44.♚xh5 is threatened, so there is only one possibility to continue the game: 43...♚e7, when a very curious position is reached. Black's moves are limited, and after 44.b6 he only has one alternative: 44...♚d7 45.♚g2 (threatening ♙xf5+) 45...♚d8. The black rook has been forced to move away from the e-file. 46.♚e2 (renews the threat ♚xh5) 46...♚d7 and finally White wins following the beautiful sacrifice 47.♚e8. It is a marvellous line which I demonstrated straight after the game. However it is not that convincing as Black can defend better with 46...♚g8.

45.d4 is much stronger as it threatens 46.♔d3. For example:

A) 45...cxd4 46.♙xd4 ♖e7 47.♙c3! (zugzwang once again) 47...♗d7 48.♔d3;

B) 45...♗e7 46.dxc5 dxc5 47.♙e5 ♗d7 48.♔g2 ♗d8 49.♔c2 ♗f8 50.♙g4.

43...♗g8? 44.♙xf5+! 1-0

The final decision came a little earlier than I expected. Black has no defence.

The prize for the best game of the tournament was shared with Spassky, who beat Penrose.

Game 54

Nimzo-Indian Defence
Jesus Díez del Corral
Bent Larsen

Palma de Mallorca 1969

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♗c3 ♙b4
4.a3 ♙xc3+ 5.bxc3 c5 6.f3
♔a5?!**

Earlier in the same tournament, Díez del Corral had played the variation 6...d5 7.cxd5 ♗xd5 8.dxc5!? against Unzicker. Because of this I thought that I would introduce something he was unfamiliar with. I do not consider 6...♔a5 to be very good, though it is playable. As Black, I like the positions in which White is left with doubled pawns on the c-file.

7.♙d2 d6 8.e4 ♗c6

Perhaps the move that is the most consistent with 6...♔a5 is the development 8...♙d7!?. The game Forintos-Osnos, Debrecen 1969, continued 9.a4 ♗c6 10.d5? ♗e5 11.f4 ♗g6 and Black soon got a better position. White should play 10.♙d3, and even 9.a4 is possible though unnecessary. All these problems are still unclear; but 6...♔a5 cannot be considered a mistake.

9.♙d3 e5 10.♗e2

Another idea was 10.d5 on the basis that the knight cannot jump to a5.

10...♔c7 11.♙g5?!

This probably represents a waste of time for, in a defensive position, the black knight is better placed on the d7-square. Interesting was 11.dxc5!? dxc5 12.♗g3 ♙e6 13.♗f1 0-0-0 14.♙e2, with the idea ...♗e3-d5.

11...♗d7 12.d5 ♗a5

Now I consider Black's position to be very satisfactory and, indeed, I would not like to be playing as White. There is no chance of launching an attack quickly: given the relatively closed position, the pair of bishops is not very strong.

**13.♗g3 h6 14.♙d2 g6 15.h4 h5
16.♗f1 b6 17.♗e3 ♙a6 18.♔c2
0-0-0 19.a4 ♙b8 20.0-0-0 ♗df8**

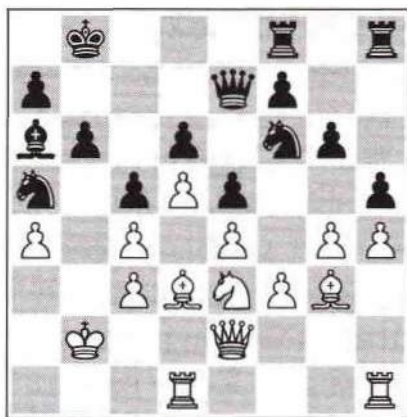
Black wants to combine threats against the c4-pawn with the advance ...f7-f5. If this is successful, the opponent will be reduced to a very passive position. It is not easy to prevent ...f7-f5: the two pieces that control this move (the bishop at d3 and the knight at e3) are overloaded, since they also protect the c4-pawn.

21.g4 ♔d8 22.♙e1 ♔f6!?

I cannot demonstrate that this is stronger than 22...♔e7, but the idea of removing the white queen from the protection of the a-pawn is very interesting. Later the move ...♔d7 can turn into an unpleasant double attack against the a-pawn and the g-pawn.

**23.♔e2 ♔e7 24.♙b2 ♗f6
25.♙g3?**

White has seen something but has also been careless. 25.♙f2 was absolutely necessary in order to defend the g-pawn with his rook at g1.



**25...♔d7! 26.♖a1 hxc4 27.fxc4
♜xe4!**

This exchange sacrifice took my opponent by surprise! He had calculated 27...♙c8 28.♖hf1! ♜xc4 29.♜xc4 ♔xc4 30.♔xc4 ♙xc4 31.♖f6, and White recovers the pawn with a level endgame.

28.♙xe4 f5 29.gxf5

Del Corral pondered on his move for a long time and decided that a bad position with some advantage in quality was better than a clearly inferior position with equal material.

**29...gxf5 30.♙xf5 ♖xf5 31.♜xf5
♔xf5 32.♖hf1 ♔g6 33.♖g1
♜xc4+ 34.♙a2 ♔e8**

Black has more than enough compensation for the loss of the exchange. Del Corral's king is in a precarious position; both his a-pawn and his d-pawn are weak and his bishop is quite useless.

**35.♔c2 ♜e3 36.♔e4 ♜c4
37.♔c2 ♙b7 38.♖ad1**

If the d-pawn falls, Black will have a very strong attack. Because of this, Del Corral decides to give back the exchange.

**38...♜e3 39.♔b3 ♙a6 40.♙a3
♙c4 41.♔b1 ♜xd1 42.♔xd1 ♔f7
43.♖g2 ♖g8!**

Black will lose his own queen's pawn if he takes the d-pawn. My opponent now has to face the problems which arise from the pin to his rook.

**44.h5 ♖g5 45.h6 ♔h7 46.a5 b5
47.♔f3**

This was not possible a move earlier because of 46...♔b1; now 47...♔b1? allows perpetual check.

47...♖f5 48.♔e4 ♔xh6

White's last trophy is eliminated.

**49.♙b2 ♖f1 50.♙e1 ♖f4 51.♖g8+
♙b7 52.♔g2 ♖f7 53.♙d2**

Or 53.♔g4 ♖f2+!

53...♔h5 54.♖g7 ♙a6

0-1

Four pawns will soon disappear!

Game 55

King's Fianchetto for White

Antonio Medina

Bent Larsen

Palma de Mallorca 1969

This game was played in the last round. Petrosian and I were tied on points but it was believed that he had a tougher opponent (Pomar) than I had.

1.e4 g6 2.♜c3 ♙g7 3.g3 e5!



Avoiding the Closed Sicilian, which happens to be one of Medina's favourites; this explains his second and third moves: he was hoping for the ...c7-c5 advance.

4.♙g2 d6 5.d3 ♙e6 6.h4?!

To a greater or lesser degree this is a waste of time. Probably better is 6.f4, which can lead to a very similar position to that in the game Larsen vs Panno (number 52),

although I wasn't sure whether castling kingside was the best move.

6...♟f6 7.♟h3?

The knight is misplaced. If White later plays f2-f4 and ♟f2 there will be a hole on g4. Therefore, if this is his plan, he should have omitted 6.h4 and played 6.♟h3 directly.

7...♟c6 8.♟d5?

This is the third of three seemingly aggressive moves, but they are weak. After move 15 you will see that due to 8.♟d5? Black will be able to attain a strong centre.

8...♟xd5! 9.exd5 ♟e7 10.c3

Looks very nice. After 10...♟exd5 (or ...♟fxe5) 11.♞b3 White recovers the pawn and will obtain an open position for his bishops.

10...h6 11.♞b3 ♞c8 12.♟e3

Castling queenside at this point is weak since Black's attack is imminent. Better was 12.0-0 followed by ♟h1 and ♟g1, but this is not in keeping with Medina's style.

12...0-0 13.0-0-0 a5!

Also 13...c6 was very good but the text move is even better.

14.a4 c6 15.dxc6 bxc6

This pawn structure, with a clear advantage in the centre for Black, is a direct result of Medina's blunder on move 8. However, due to the queenside castling, apart from superiority in the centre, I also have attacking chances against his king. The b-file is there to be utilised.

16.♞a3 ♟f5 17.♟d2 ♞b8 18.h5 g5 19.♟g1

White tries to correct his mistake with 7.♟h3? but now it's too late.

By that time Petrosian had already agreed a draw with Pomar and I felt that I was now able to win the tournament.

Najdorf told me later that if I lost the

game he would never speak to me again! I thought that the likelihood of this happening was very remote.

19...c5 20.♞a2 ♞a6 21.♟c2 ♟fc8 22.♟e2?

With 22.♟f3, Medina would probably have given more resistance.

22...e4 23.♟c1

The alternative 23.dxe4 ♞xe2 24.exf5 ♞xf2 would have been disastrous.

23...d5

This seems to be a normal positional move, but it is also preparing for the combination that follows.

24.♞he1



24...♟d4+ 25.cxd4 exd3+! 26.♞xd3

After 26.♟b1 dxe2 27.♞d2 c4 Black's attack is quickly decisive.

26...cxd4+ 27.♟d2 ♟e4+

Now the idea behind the move 23...d5 is obvious!

28.♟xe4 dxe4 29.♞a3

Or 29.♞b3 ♞c4.

29...♞c6 30.♞b1 d3 31.♟g1

If 31.♟c3 ♟xc3+ 32.♞xc3 ♞xc3+, winning the exchange, with an ending which is easily won.

31...♞c5!

Posing two threats: 32...♞xa3 and 32...♞xf2+.

32.♞a1 ♞xf2+ 33.♟d1

All White's pieces are on the first rank!

33...♟c3 34.bxc3 ♞xb1 35.♞xb1 ♞c2 Mate.

0-1

Chapter 15

Lugano to Solingen 1970

After many simultaneous displays in Spain, Denmark and Holland, I felt a little tired when I went to the Lugano tournament in March. This was a double-round tournament disputed by eight grandmasters. However, I started with five wins. The rest of the tournament I played quite badly, except for the game against Kavalek. Notwithstanding, I managed to maintain the top position; the final result was: 1. Larsen 9½ points, Olafsson 8½... (see table on page 193).

I then participated in the Match of the Century in Belgrade: Soviet Union versus the Rest of the World. I achieved 1½-1½ against Spassky and I defeated Stein who in the last round had replaced the reigning World Champion.

Following this, I participated in a four-player tournament held in Leiden (the Netherlands). I was too tired; I had been travelling for nearly five months: 1. Spassky 7 points; 2. Donner 6; 3. Botvinnik and Larsen 5½. None of my games in Belgrade and Leiden is good enough to include in this book.

After three weeks of vacation, I faced Kavalek in a small match played in Solingen. I won 6-2. I played very well; no doubt the rest had done me good, and I discovered very original opening lines in some of the games.

Game 56

Nimzowitsch/Larsen Opening

Bent Larsen

Lubomir Kavalek

Lugano 1970

1.b3

I have had very good results with this opening. In this game we reached a position, after eight or nine moves, which is usually arrived at in the English. There are, of course, many other lines possible for either side.

1...c5 2.♖b2 ♘c6 3.c4 e5 4.g3 d6 5.♗g2 ♘ge7 6.e3 g6

The pawn advance 6...d5 was also possible, which may suggest that White's order of play may not have been exactly right.

7.♘e2 ♗g7 8.♘bc3 0-0

Possibly better is 8...♗e6, since the reply 9.♘d5 doesn't work due to 9...♗xd5 10.exd5 ♘b4.

9.d3 ♗e6 10.♘d5 ♖d7

I think that 10...♖b8 is better. Black has given up control of the d5-square to his opponent. He must therefore activate his play quickly with an immediate ...b7-b5.

11.h4! f5?

Once the game had ended, Kavalek pointed out that this was a serious mistake. The correct move was 11...h5.

12.♖d2 ♖ae8?

The rook will be well-placed at e8 if White plays f2-f4. But perhaps the other rook should have been the one to occupy this square? During the course of the game the rook at f8 does nothing

apart from blocking an escape route for its king.

More consistent would have been 12...♖ab8 and eventually ...♖fe8 or ...♖fd8. Also feasible is 12...h5, although after 13.f4, White is better.



13.h5 b5?!

Kavalek considered this move for a long time; quite possibly he was not satisfied with his position.

After 13...g5 White has various good lines, for instance: 14.f4 or 14.h6 ♕h8 15.f4 (or 15.0-0-0). Castling queenside is probably the best move as the option of moving either ♖h4, f2-f4, e3-e4 or d3-d4 remains open.

14.hxg6 hxg6 15.♖ec3 bxc4 16.dxc4 e4

Kavalek's counterplay is based primarily on the manoeuvre ...♖e5-♖d3. However, in order to realize this he must open the long dark-squared diagonal and it is precisely this, together with the

h-file, what will turn out to have serious consequences for his king.

17.0-0-0 ♖e5 18.♖f4 ♖d8

The queen sacrifice cannot be accepted! Otherwise something like this would follow: 18...g5 19.♖xe6 ♖d3+ 20.♔xd3! exd3 21.♖xg7 with a winning position; for instance: 21...♔xg7 22.♖d5+ ♔g6 23.♕f3!!.

19.♔b1 ♕f7?

This move cost Kavalek sixteen minutes and now he only had twelve minutes left. He probably studied the sacrifice 19...♕xc4, but after 20.bxc4 ♖xc4 21.♔e2 there are no good continuations.

The move played is not very good since it blocks an escape square for the king. In my opinion, the best move in this unpromising position is 19...a6!?. This will at least eliminate the possibility of ♖b5.

The following pawn sacrifice opens up new avenues in the attack against the black king.

20.g4! ♖xg4 21.f3 exf3 22.♕xf3 ♖e5

All the white pieces participate in the attack. It is logical, therefore, that there is no satisfactory defence. Against 22...♖f6 a strong line is 23.♔h2 ♖fe8 24.♖b5 ♖c8 25.♕xf6 ♕xf6 26.♔h7+ ♔f8 27.♕d5.

23.♔h2 ♕xc4!?

Lugano 1970									
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1	Larsen,Bent	**	1½	10	10	½1	1½	11	½½
2	Olafsson,Fridrik	0½	**	10	½½	1½	½1	1½	½1
3	Unzicker,Wolfgang	01	01	**	½½	½½	½½	½½	1½
4	Gligoric,Svetozar	01	½½	½½	**	½½	½½	½½	½1
5	Byrne,Robert	½0	0½	½½	½½	**	½½	½½	11
6	Szabo,Laszlo	0½	½0	½½	½½	½½	**	½½	½½
7	Kavalek,Lubomir	00	0½	½½	½½	½½	½½	**	½½
8	Donner,Jan Hein	½½	½0	0½	½0	00	½½	½½	**

Despair. After 23...♖fe8 the attack would be similar to that in my previous comment: 24.♘b5 ♘c8 25.♚h7+ ♔f8 26.♙d5 with the enchanting possibility of 26...g5 27.♘g6+!!.

**24.bxc4 ♘xf3 25.♚h7+ ♔f7
26.♘cd5 ♙g8 27.♘xe7 ♜b8**



This was his last hope but White has two good replies: 28.♔a1 and 28.♔c1, the second option being the simplest; the combination that is made on moves 30-32 would have been unnecessary.

28.♔a1 ♚xe7

Or, for instance 28...♖xb2 29.♚xg8+ ♔f6 30.♘fd5+ ♔g5 31.♚xg7.

29.♚xg7+ ♔f8 30.♘e6+

Victory would have been simpler had the king been on c1, since then there would be no reply to 30.♘xg7+. With the king on a1 instead, 30.♘xg7+ may be answered with 30...♚xg7+!

30...♚xe6 31.♘xg7+

31.♚xe6?? ♘xb2+ with at least a draw: 32.♔b1 ♘a3+ 33.♔c2?? ♜b2+ winning!

31...♔e7 32.♘f8+!

The few white pieces that still remain on the board cooperate beautifully in the attack; the rook at d1 has suddenly become very important.

After 32...♙gxf8 33.♜h7+ ♜f7 34.♜xf7+ ♚xf7 35.♚xd6+ compared with the actual game, mate would follow two moves later.

32...♙bxf8 33.♜h7+ 1-0

Black resigns in view of 33...♜f7 34.♜xf7+ ♚xf7 35.♚xd6+ ♔e8 36.♚d8 Mate.

'That was the best game you have ever played!' commented my opponent. Perhaps it was, but it certainly was my best game in the tournament. What I liked most was the way that my pieces 'danced' on the board.

Game 57

King's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Lubomir Kavalek

5th match game, Solingen 1970

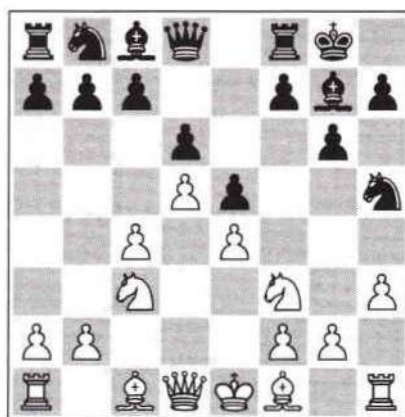
**1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 g6 3.e4 d6 4.d4
♙g7 5.♘f3 0-0 6.h3**

I have played this move much more often than the over-analysed 6.♙e2.

In the third encounter of the match, Kavalek continued 6...c5 7.♙e2 cxd4 8.♘xd4 ♘c6 9.♙e3 ♙d7 10.0-0 a6, and in this way reached a variation of the Sicilian which is very good for White (the Maroczy Bind). It does not amount to much that this has cost him a loss of tempo (6.h3).

This time, Kavalek, who has also played 6...h6 frequently, chooses 6...e5.

6...e5 7.d5 ♘h5



I had never confronted this move. Against the usual 7...♘bd7, I would

have continued 8.♙e3 ♘c5 9.♘d2 or perhaps 8.♙g5 h6 9.♙e3. However, many years ago, in the Munich Olympiad, 1958, when I urged my teammates to play 6.h3 (as opposed to 6.♙e2) they did not like it on account of the text move. The idea is quite simple: 8.g3? f5 9.exf5 gxf5 10.♘xe5?? ♚e8.

We now find that Pachman's recommended move 8.♘h2 is quite 'ugly'. Notwithstanding I later studied it carefully and I took a liking to it.

8.♘h2! ♙f6!?

This is a novelty. Black wishes to exchange bishops with ...♙g5 and I am not particularly fond of endgames in which I have a bad bishop.

It is not easy to advance the pawn to f5 in favourable conditions; see, for example, the line 8...♚e8 9.♙e2! ♘f4 10.♙f3 f5 11.g3 ♘xh3 12.♙g2 fxe4 13.♘xe4 ♙f5 14.♙e3 h6 15.♚d2 and White recovers the pawn, remaining with a positional advantage.

9.♙e2 ♘g7

The alternative 9...♘f4 would be weak due to 10.♙f3 followed by h3-h4 and g2-g3.

How then can ...♙g5 be avoided? To allow this would be tantamount to admitting that the move 6.h3 was an error, and this I am not prepared to do. 10.♘f3 ♙e7 (and ...f7-f5) permit a good game for Black and 10.♚d2 seems too foolish. So, therefore, there is only one playable move:

10.h4! ♙xh4

Otherwise White would have a very comfortable game with more space. Now comes the point of it all:

11.♚d2!!

My opponent started to think; taking forty minutes for move 11 and fifty for

move 12. I cannot see any better defence than that employed by Kavalek.

It only took me eight minutes to find the moves which I thought would constitute the only possible refutation against the idea 8...♙f6, and I wonder that I was able to find them so quickly. Had I considered 8...♙f6 in my 'home-made' analysis? I may well have done so, but I cannot recall.

11...h5 12.♚h6 ♙e7 13.g4 g5!?



Blocking the white queen! True enough, but Black now has so little space and his pieces are so badly developed that he cannot take advantage of this.

14.gxh5 f5

The line 14...f6 15.♚g6 ♚e8 16.♚xe8 ♘xe8 is favourable for White, because he can place his knights, for instance, at e3 and g3 and then play ♙g4. Following this he could reposition a knight on the strong f5-square and finally launch a queenside attack.

Now 15.exf5? would be weak because of 15...♘xf5 16.♚g6+ ♚h8. 15.♚g1 would be more adequate but the most precise move would be to mobilize the queen's rook. There's plenty of time for this.

15.♙d2!f4 16.0-0-0 ♘d7

This is the beginning of a plan that will cost him a pawn. Therefore, let's try to

find something better for Black: 16...a5 17.♖dg1 ♘a6. Now there is a very strong attack with 18.♘f3 g4 19.♘xe5!? (19.♘h2 ♖f6 20.♙g5 ♖f8 draws) 19...dxe5 20.♙xg4. But if this is not clear enough it is possible to play differently: 18.♙g6!? ♖h8 19.♘f3 g4 20 and now there is no relenting attack on the white queen in view of 20...♖f6 21.♙g5 ♖f8 22.♙h6+.

Thus, I can find nothing better for Black.

**17.♖dg1 ♖f7 18.♘f3 ♘f8
19.♘xg5 ♖f6 20.♙xg7+ ♖xg7
21.♘e6+ ♖h7 22.♘xd8 ♙xd8**



White has now won a pawn, which undoubtedly is sufficient advantage to emerge victorious. Now, as if echoing Black's eighth move, I exchange my bad bishop.

**23.♙g4 ♙xg4 24.♖xg4 ♖f7 25.f3
♘d7 26.♙e1 a6 27.♘d1 ♙f6
28.♘f2 ♖g8 29.♖xg8 ♖xg8
30.♘g4 ♖h7 31.♙f2 ♖f7 32.b4
b6 33.♘d2 ♙e7 34.♘d3 ♖h8
35.a4 ♖a8?**

It helps to see that the opponent is short of time. In fact he has had time trouble since move 15. Now Kavalek did not like the line 35...♖g7 36.h6+ ♖h7 37.♖a1! with the strong threat 38.a5!, but because of his rush he forgets something. I already had a winning position anyway.

**36.♘h6+ ♖f8 37.♖g1 ♖e8
38.♖g8+ ♙f8 39.♙h4 a5 40.b5
♘c5+ 41.♖c2 ♘xa4 42.♘f5 ♖f7
43.♖g1** **1-0**

The h-pawn decides the game. This is one of those games that are a rarity. Anyway... it is usually very dangerous to allow the queen to be enclosed!



**Playing Spassky In
the Match of the
Century.**

Chapter 16

The Palma de Mallorca Interzonal 1970

After the nineteenth round of the Interzonal of Palma, Brazil's young hope Henrique Mecking had good prospects for a splendid classification, as he was tied in fifth place, just half a point behind me. He was very optimistic, that afternoon, at the hotel where we were staying.

'I can win the tournament!' He cried out. 'I only have to beat Fischer!'

'And Larsen too!' retorted a Danish reporter. It seemed, however, that this did not constitute a problem for the Pelé of chess.

However, in my opinion, Mecking was very nervous and pretended to hide this behind a veil of unrealistic optimism. Perhaps he remembered the 1969 tournament in Mallorca when he had an excellent opportunity to attain the grandmaster title; thereafter he was extremely anxious during the last games. In the 20th round of that Interzonal he almost exhausted his chances to be among the top six.

Game 58

Nimzo-Indian Defence

Henrique Mecking

Bent Larsen

Interzonal Palma de Mallorca 1970

**1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 e6 3.♘c3 ♙b4
4.e3 0-0 5.♙d3 c5 6.♗f3 d5
7.0-0 ♘c6 8.a3 cxd4**

An unusual continuation, though very playable.

9.axb4 dxc3 10.bxc3 dxc4

Also playable was 10...♙c7 and if 11.♙e2, with 11...dxc4 or 11...♖d8 Black's game would be satisfactory. But not 11...♙d7, for 12.e4! would give White the advantage as in the game Taimanov-Tal.

**11.♙xc4 ♙c7 12.♙e2 b6 13.♙b2
♙b7 14.♙b3 a5**

Another possibility is 14...♗e5.

15.♙c4! ♙b8!!

Not 15...♖fc8? 16.b5 ♗e5 17.♙xc7 ♗xf3+ 18.gxf3! ♖xc7 19.c4 with advantage for White.



16.♙h4 ♗e5 17.♗xe5

After 17.c4? ♗g6! 18.♙h3 axb4 19.♗g5 h6 20.♙xf6 gxf6 White's attack would falter.

17...♙xe5 18.bxa5 bxa5 19.♖fb1

A mistake with serious psychological consequences, but in actual fact it wasn't that bad. After the game Mecking considered this move as a crucial mistake. In my opinion, however, this was unfounded.

19...♙e4 20.♖d1

Mecking used up ten minutes before he made move 19 and failed to see the

Palma de Mallorca Interzonal 1970																											
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4		
1	Fischer,Robert	*	0	1	½	1	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	½	1	½	1	18.5	
2	Larsen,Bent	1	*	½	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	0	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	½	15.0	
3	Geller,Efim	0	½	*	1	½	1	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	15.0	
4	Hübner,Robert	½	½	0	*	½	1	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	15.0	
5	Taimanov,Mark	0	1	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	½	0	1	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	14.0	
6	Uhlmann,Wolfgang	0	0	0	0	½	*	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	0	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	14.0	
7	Portisch,Lajos	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	1	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	0	13.5	
8	Smyslov,Vassily	0	½	0	1	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	13.5	
9	Polugaevsky,Lev	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	0	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	0	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	13.0	
10	Gligoric,Svetozar	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	1	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	0	½	1	½	1	1	13.0	
11	Panno,Oscar	0	0	½	1	½	½	½	½	0	0	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	12.5	
12	Mecking,Henrique	0	0	0	½	1	½	0	1	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	12.5	
13	Hort,Vlastimil	0	1	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	*	1	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	11.5	
14	Ivkov,Borislav	0	½	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	10.5	
15	Suttles,Duncan	0	½	0	½	0	1	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	*	0	½	½	1	½	0	1	½	1	10.0	
16	Minic,Dragoljub	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	½	0	½	1	*	1	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	10.0	
17	Reshevsky,Samuel	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	*	½	½	½	0	0	½	1	9.5	
18	Matulovic,Milan	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	0	½	1	9.0	
19	Addison,William	0	½	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	1	½	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	0	1	1	9.0	
20	Filip,Miroslav	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	0	8.5
21	Naranja,Renato	½	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	1	1	1	½	*	0	0	1	8.5	
22	Ujtumen,Tudev	½	½	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	1	1	1	0	1	*	1	½	8.5	
23	Rubinetti,Jorge	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	1	0	*	1	6.0
24	JimenezZerquera,Eleazar	½	½	½	0	0	0	1	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	½	0	*	5.5

continuation 20.f4 ♖b8!. At this point he spent a further 17 minutes: without doubt he was very nervous.

**20...♖fb8 21.♖d2 ♘d5 22.♗d4
♗g5 23.♙f1 ♘e4 24.♖c2 ♘d6
25.c4 ♘f5 26.♗d3**



As White was short of time, he would have been better off exchanging queens with 26.♗f4. This would give a comfortable ending for Black, though with good play White could have drawn. It is worth noting that, in this kind of ending, the bishop can be 'a good blocker'. The black bishop at c6 would block the white passed pawn, and at the same time it will do many other things: defend the black passed pawn, (once it gets to a4) and threaten White's kingside.

**26...♙c6 27.♙e5 ♖d8 28.♗c3 a4
29.c5?**

An appreciable loss of time. Black now prepares an attack with a very useful move, which also gives his king an escape square.

29...h5! 30.♖d2??

Mecking now had eight minutes left to make eleven moves and he also had a very difficult position. He quickly made this move which turns out to be a decisive mistake.

**30...♖xd2 31.♗xd2 ♘h4 32.♙g3
♗f6!**

Also possible was 32...♘f3+ 33.gxf3 ♗f6 34.♖e1 ♗xf3 35.e4 ♙xe4 36.♖xe4 ♗xe4, with good winning possibilities as the a-pawn is very strong.

Now if 33.♖e1, playing the simple 33...a3 will easily win. Useless is 33.♗d4 on account of 33...♘f3+!

33.♗d1

Mecking used most of the time he had left to make this move. The main line to follow was 33...♘f3+ 34.gxf3 ♖d8 35.♙d6 ♙xf3 36.♗xa4 ♖xd6 37.♙e2 ♙xe2!.

33...♘f3+ 34.♙h1 h4 35.♙f4

If 35.♙d6 h3 36.♙g3 ♘d2 37.f3 ♘xf3 etc.

35...♖d8 36.♙d6 h3 37.♖xa4

His resistance is useless and therefore desperate.

**37...♙xa4 38.♗xa4 ♘d2 39.♙g1
♗g6 40.♗d1**

If 40.♗a5 ♘f3+ 41.♙h1 hxg2+ and wins.

40...♘xf1 41.♗xf1 ♖d7!!

Accelerates the end; the rook is making its way to b1! One line is 42.g3 ♖b7 43.♗xh3 ♖b1+ 44.♙g2 ♗e4+ 45.f3 ♗c2#.

42.f3 ♖b7 43.e4 ♖b1 **0-1**

An Unusual Combination

Game 59

King's Indian Defence

Renato Naranja

Bent Larsen

Interzonal Palma de Mallorca 1970

My opponent in this game is R. Naranja, a Filipino player who beat Reshevsky and Matulovic in the VIIIth Interzonal Tournament held in Mallorca, from 8 November to 13 De-

cember last year. This is one of the games disputed in that event.

1.c4 g6 2.♘f3 ♘g7 3.d4 ♘f6
4.g3 0-0 5.♙g2 d6 6.0-0 c6
7.♘c3 ♙f5! 8.♚e1 ♘e4 9.♘g5!?
♘xc3 10.bxc3 h6 11.e4 ♙c8
12.♘f3 ♘d7

The game may be considered level.

13.♚b3 ♚c7 14.♙a3

Another option was 14.a4!?

14...♙e8 15.♙ad1 ♚b8?! 16.♘h4
c5 17.f4 ♘b6 18.e5 ♙d7
19.♙d5?

Possibly better was 19.dxc5 dxc5
20.e6! ♙xe6 21.♙xe6 fxe6 22.♙h3!,
creating some complicated tactics.

19...e6! 20.exd6 ♚c8 21.dxc5
♙a4 22.♚b4 exd5 23.♙c1
♘xc4!

Black could launch a very strong attack
against the white king with 23...♙f6
24.cxb6, but the resulting game would
not be very clear.

Here we have one of those instances
where more can be gained by attacking
the bishop instead of the king.

24.♚xa4 ♚c6!! 25.♚b4

After 25.♚xc6 bxc6 the bishop can free
itself with 26.♙xe8+ ♙xe8 27.d7, but
after 27...♙d8 28.♙e1 ♘f8 White
would be left with a difficult ending.

25...a5! 26.♚b3 b6 27.♙b1

If 27.♙xe8+ ♙xe8 is decisive.



27...♘d2 28.♙xe8+ ♙xe8
29.♚xd5 ♘xb1 30.c6 ♘xc3
31.♚f3 ♘e2+ 32.♙g2 ♘d4
33.d7 ♘xf3 34.dxe8 ♙+ ♙xe8
35.♘xf3 ♙c8 0-1

Game 60

Réti Opening

Bent Larsen

Wolfgang Uhlmann

1st match game, Las Palmas 1971

Apart from the six exhibition games I
played with Olafsson for an Irish TV
channel, I had not played any serious
game with a grandmaster for five
months. This was my longest idle period
in years, for I played a great deal during
1970: between tournaments and
matches I played 115 games. Therefore, I
needed to rest. In the first Candidates'
match, I tried to play calmly initially, so
as to get into the 'ambience'.

1.g3 d5 2.♙g2 c6

Uhlmann also seems to be in the same
frame of mind for solid play. He does
not want to play the aggressive 2...e5.

3.c4 ♘f6 4.♘f3 g6 5.b3 ♙g7
6.♙b2 ♙g4 7.0-0 0-0 8.d3 ♙xf3

Black builds up a solid centre and ex-
changing the bishop for the knight is
perfectly viable.

9.♙xf3 ♘bd7 10.♙g2

In most cases this move is necessary at
some stage but there was no reason to
play it now. Also valid is 10.♘d2, which
has been the variation I have chosen on
other occasions.

10...♙e8

More exact is 10...e6.

11.♘d2 a5 12.♚c2 e6 13.e3
♙e7 14.a3 ♘h5

This is a good move. If White is to keep
the bishop pair, Black will gain a com-
fortable position after 15.d4 f5.

15.cxd5 ♖xb2 16.♔xb2 cxd5

Not 16...exd5 17.b4 with a strong White initiative on the queenside.

**17.♖fc1 ♜ec8 18.♘f3 ♞hf6
19.♘d4 ♞e8 20.h4**

A useful waiting move! White obtains the h2-square for his king. Now I want to provoke 20...♘d6? 21.b4 axb4 22.♔xb4 with some pressure on the b7-pawn.

White's waiting move was immediately justified as Uhlmann took 31 minutes to find a reply; and his move was probably not the best.

20...♞e5? 21.♖c3 ♜c5!?



This seems to be the most natural, given that White is trying to double his rooks. But very soon this quiet game will enter a tumultuous tactical phase.

22.♜xc5! ♘xd3

Certainly not 22...♔xc5 because of 23.♘xe6.

23.♜xa5! ♘xb2

Not 23...♜xa5 because of 24.♔c3!, winning the piece.

24.♜xa8 ♖g7

The best. After 24...♘d3 25.♙f1 ♘e5 26.♜c1! (stronger than 26.♙b5) White has a clear advantage; although after the text move I still felt confident. I was at ease since I had better opportunities and Uhlmann was in time trouble.

25.♙f1 e5 26.♘f3 e4

Uhlmann only had fourteen minutes left as he spent 16 minutes on this move. He probably didn't like to leave the d4-square for my knight and devalue his pawn centre, but he had to rescue the knight from b2.

27.♘d4 ♘d6



28.♜a5!

White's only concern in this position is that the rook isn't trapped and left isolated from the rest of its forces.

**28...♔e5 29.♜b1 ♘d3 30.♜d1
♜f6**

This move cost Black 9 minutes. Now he only had 3 left. If Black had played sedately White would have won a pawn and an easy win would follow.

31.♙xd3?

31.♜d2 was much better, after which White wins a pawn. In some variations Black introduces a pawn on f3 (...♘e5-♘f3+), but with correct play White should win.

31...exd3 32.♖g2

After 32.♜xd3 ♘e4 Black gets a good attack and cannot lose.

32...♘e4

In a newspaper commentary the next day, Valcárcel gave the interesting continuation 32...♔e5 33.♘f3 ♔e4 34.♜a4 ♘c4!, where Black has very good options. A possibility is ...h7-h6 and ...g6-g5. But White can play better: 33.♜c5!.

33.f3 b6

Valcárcel sees that 33...♔d8 34.b4 b6 35.♖a6 ♕c8 36.b5 ♘c3 37.♗xd3 ♘xb5 38.♗xb6 ♘xd4 39.♗xd4 ♕c2+ 40.♚f1 ♕h2 offers Black good drawing chances although White may play to win via 41.♗f4 (another possibility that could lead to a win is 36.♗xb6 ♕c7 37.fxe4 ♕xb6 38.♗xd3). The white knight is very strong and the black queen is not very useful for blocking passed pawns.

34.♖a7

Better than 34.♖a8 ♘c5 35.b4 ♕e7 36.♚f2 ♕b7 37.♗d8 ♕a6.

34...♘g3

One minute left to make seven moves! This sacrifice was hopeful but there might have been drawing chances with 34...♘c5 35.b4 ♕e5 36.♚f2 ♕b8.

**35.♚xg3 ♕e5+ 36.♚f2 ♕b8
37.♖a4 ♕h2+ 38.♚e1 ♕xh4+
39.♚d2 ♕f2+ 40.♚xd3 h5
41.♖a7 h4 42.♗c7 ♕g3 43.♗c2
♕e5 44.♗g1 1-0**

Game 61

Semi-Slav Defence

Wolfgang Uhlmann**Bent Larsen**

6th match game, Las Palmas 1971

The first few moves were rapidly played; they were a replica of the fourth game. I was playing my beloved Meran Variation with which I have yet to lose a game.

**1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 e6 3.♘f3 d5
4.d4 c6 5.e3 ♘bd7 6.♗d3 dxc4
7.♗xc4 b5 8.♗d3 ♗b7**

I had used this same variation against Ivkov in 1965 and since then it forms part of my repertoire although I do not use it very often.

The old main line 8...a6 9.e4 c5 was not then popular on account of Reynolds' variation 10.d5.

**9.e4 b4 10.♘a4 c5 11.e5 ♘d5
12.♘xc5**

At this point I spent 5 minutes thinking about my next move. Usually I play it without hesitation but I was merely going over it in my head. In reality, this was a new line which I had employed in the match against Portisch (1968), and which I had also revised in Las Palmas.

'Why, then, didn't you use it in the fourth game?' asked Pierre Dumesnil after the game.

'I wanted it mostly as a solution in case of an emergency', I replied.

'You should play poker,' he said, 'I am sure you would win lots of cash!'

There are two possible continuations: 12.0-0, introduced by Portisch in our match in 1968, and 12.dxc5, which was played against me by Uhlmann in Monaco, in 1968. After 12.dxc5 ♕a5 13.0-0 ♗xc5!? 14.a3 ♗e7 15.♗d2 0-0 16.♗e1 ♗fd8 I had a good game (and won).

12...♘xc5

Against Ivkov I won with the doubtful 12...♗xc5; however against Uhlmann I ended up in a lost position in the 4th game after 12...♗xc5 13.dxc5 ♕a5?! 14.♕e2! ♘xc5?! 15.♗b5+ ♚f8 16.0-0 h6 17.♗e3! ♘xe3 18.fxe3. I managed

Candidates quarter-final, Las Palmas 1971

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
1	Larsen, Bent	2660	1	0	½	1	½	1	½	0	1	5.5
2	Uhlmann, Wolfgang	2580	0	1	½	0	½	0	½	1	0	3.5

to win the game but only because Uhlmann made a mistake due to time trouble.

13.dxc5 ♖xc5!?

This is truly an innovation. The books give 13...♖a5 as an example; a move which was played in an old game, where White obtained the better position. It is the only move in the match that is open to more theoretical analysis. Perhaps one day this (new) variation will come to be named the Las Palmas Variation.

14.♖b5+

Later some experts pointed out that 14.0-0 was better. Also interesting is 14.♘g5 although after the reply 14...♖c7 Black seems to have an even game.

14...♖e7!



15.0-0

The idea is that 15.♖g5+ f6 16.♖h4 (16.♖d2 ♖xf2+) 16...♖a5 or 16...♘f4 turns out to be very good for Black.

15...♖b6 16.♖d3?

Probably better is 16.♖e2.

16...h6 17.♖e2 ♖hd8

Black has an excellent position. White's queen's bishop is useless and this is why I think that the best move he has is 18.a3, to try to open up the game for his queen's bishop.

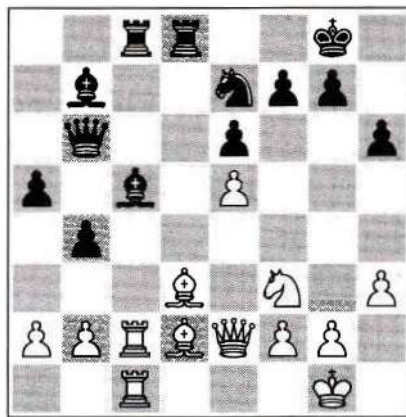
18.♖d2? ♖f8 19.♖ac1 ♖ac8

Good also was 19...a5!? with the idea 20.♖c2 ♘e7. Now 21.♖fc1 is not possible due to 21...♖xf2+.

20.♖c2 a5 21.♖fc1 ♖g8

Useful and secure; meanwhile White cannot do much.

22.h3 ♘e7



This knight defends the kingside very well. Black now has a clear advantage. I have studied this type of position extensively and conclude that if White does not get an attack on the kingside, his advanced king's pawn will only constitute a weakness and White's position will be unsustainable.

However, White will worsen his position because of his next move, which is a serious mistake.

23.♘e1? ♖d4 24.♖xc8 ♖xc8 25.♖xc8+ ♘xc8 26.b3?

It was better to try 26.♘f3.

26...♘e7 27.♘f3 ♖c5 28.♖e1 ♘f5!

If White plays 29.♖xf5 there is nothing to oppose Black's strong bishop. He is preparing an eventual ♖e4, which is not possible now due to ♘g3. It is obvious that Black's pieces are much more active than White's.

29.♖f1 ♖c6

Another attempt at ...♘d4.

30.♖b5 ♖c7 31.♖d3 ♘d4! 32.♘xd4 ♖xd4

White is lost. He has to give up his king's pawn.

33.f4?

He refuses to part with it! Of course, with correct play, Black should win; but this move makes it much easier.

33...♖c1 34.♗d2

The strength of the long diagonal would be appreciated after 34.g3 f6.

34...♗a1 35.♗c2

Uhlmann believed he had a defence but this was non-existent. Black is poised to win at least two pawns after ...♙c3 and ...♙xe1, followed by ...♗xa2.

Or 35.♙c2 ♙a6+ 36.♙d3 ♙c3.

35...♙c3 36.♗b1?



Otherwise White loses a pair of pawns. We will now see a beautiful move which wins a piece whatever White plays.

36...♙a6!

0-1

This game illustrates clearly the advantages that Black has in many variations of the Queen's Gambit, where White moves his e-pawn without being able to organize any kind of attack on the opponent's kingside.

Game 62

French Defence

Bent Larsen

Wolfgang Uhlmann

9th match game, Las Palmas 1971

The 'blind' chess which I had played in the eighth round weakened my confi-

dence a little. I wanted to play a relaxed game without taking unnecessary risks that would make a draw difficult. Did Uhlmann really want to play the French Defence again...?

1.e4 e6 2.d4 d5 3.♘d2 c5 4.exd5 exd5 5.♙b5+ ♙d7 6.♗e2+

In the end I played the book move instead of 6.♙xd7+, against which Uhlmann had played well in the 3rd and 5th games.

6...♙e7 7.dxc5 ♘f6 8.♘gf3 0-0 9.♘b3 ♖e8 10.♙e3 ♙xc5 11.♙xd7 ♘bxd7 12.♘xc5 ♘xc5 13.♗b5! ♖c8 14.0-0 a6

A novelty. The game Ivkov-Portisch, Hamburg 1965, continued: 14...♗d7 15.♗xd7 ♘cxd7 and the game was eventually drawn. However I am sure that White has an advantage in this line.

15.♗b4 ♖e4 16.♗d2 h6 17.♖ad1 ♘e6 18.♖fe1 ♗c7 19.c3 ♖e8 20.h3 b5

I do not think this is the best move, but in any case White will end up with a slight advantage. I just love to play against an isolated queen's pawn!

21.♘d4 ♘xd4 22.♙xd4 ♘h5



Certainly a mistake, but Uhlmann probably wanted to complicate matters in view of his match situation. With the

rooks out of the way he would have good drawing chances.

23.♖xe4 dxe4 24.♙e3

Controlling the only open file; White has a clear advantage.

24...♖e6 25.♜d8+

Probably the best. Not very clear is 25.♜d5 ♘f6 26.♜a8+ followed by 27.♖d8 (because of 27...♖d6!).

25...♜xd8 26.♖xd8+ ♖h7 27.g4 ♘f6 28.♖g2 g5 29.♖g3 ♘e8 30.h4 gxh4+ 31.♖xh4 ♖g6 32.b3 f5 33.gxf5+ ♖xf5 34.♖d5+ ♖g6 35.♖h5 ♖h7 36.♖g3 ♘g7 37.♖c5 ♖g6 38.c4 bxc4 39.♖xc4 ♘h5+ 40.♖h4 ♘f6 41.♖c5 ♖d6 42.♖a5 ♘d5 43.♙d2 ♖f7



The sealed move. The position offers White winning chances due to the three isolated black pawns, and also since a bishop and rook are stronger than a knight and rook in an open position.

44.♙c1 ♖c6 45.♙d2 ♖d6 46.♖h3 ♖g7 47.♙c1 ♘f6 48.♙f4 ♖c6 49.♖h4 ♖g6 50.b4 ♘g8

This came as a surprise, though it was probably the best defence. Had he not

done this, my next move 51.♖g3! would have been even stronger.

51.a3 ♖f6 52.♖g3 ♘e7 53.♙e5

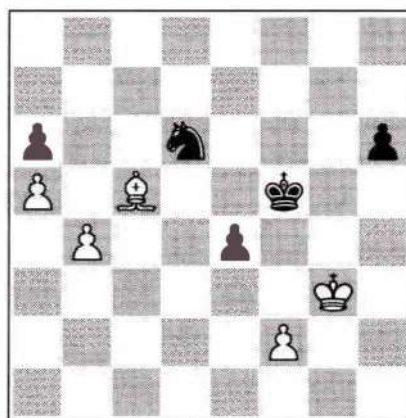
♘c6 54.♙xf6 ♘xa5 55.♙d4 ♘c4

After 55...♘c6? 56.♙c3 White has very good options. His king attacks the e-pawn and his a and b-pawns will create a passed pawn at the right moment.

56.a4 ♖f5 57.a5

A horrible move but probably the best one available.

57...♘d6 58.♙c5



58...♖e5??

Incredible once more! Uhlmann errs in his calculations! After 58...♘b5 59.♖h4 ♖e5 60.♖h5 ♖d5 61.♖xh6 ♘a3 62.♖g5 ♘c2 followed by ...♘e1-d3 Black would have drawn easily.

59.♙xd6+! ♖xd6 60.♖f4 ♖d5

If 60...♖c6 61.♖xe4 ♖b5 62.f4.

61.b5 axb5 62.a6 ♖c6 63.♖xe4 b4

Or 63...h5 64.f4 h4 65.f5 h3 66.♖f3 b4 67.a7 ♖b7 68.f6 etc. The white queen checks exactly one move ahead of Black's.

64.f4

1-0

Chapter 17

Palma de Mallorca 1971

I played badly and with little concentration in the last few rounds in the Las Palmas Tournament. However, I was successful in one of the games thanks to a psychological trap I played in the opening.

Most openings have been analysed extensively... The reason why I sometimes played 1.b3 is precisely to get away from the 'book'. In Palma de Mallorca there were several players who had this same idea, and that is why some games started with 1.b3 and others with 2.b3 (Andersson favours 1.♘f3 d5 2.b3). Poor Ruy Lopez! His opening was played only once in the entire tournament!

The move 1.b3 inexorably followed in the footsteps of many other openings; it was deeply analysed to such an extent that it seemed almost to have been dominated by theory. Young players from Siberia, Australia and Indonesia soon discovered my game against Bellón. As soon as that happened I started playing something else.

But... how come I played 1.b3 against Bellón? Precisely because he, himself, was an advocate of this opening and if at the time he had found a strong reply against it I would not have practised it so assiduously.

A Psychological Opening

Game 63

Nimzowitsch/Larsen Opening

Bent Larsen

Juan Manuel Bellón Lopez

Palma de Mallorca 1971

1.b3!? b6!? 2.♙b2 ♙b7

Symmetrical! It is not surprising; if he likes playing it as White, why not as Black? I had this same position in a game against M. Colon, in San Juan in Puerto Rico, 1969. That game continued 3.f4 f5 4.e3 ♘f6? 5.♙xf6! and I had a good game, developing the idea of 0-0-0, h2-h3 and g2-g4. Black could have avoided this with 3...e6. Now, which would be Bellón's next move? Surely 3...f5, because as White, he usually adopts Bird's Opening. Bearing this in mind, I laid the trap!

3.e3!? f5?

I could have played 3...e6 and if 4.f4, I would continue with the symmetry (I also like Bird's Opening!). Theoretically, White has a slight edge in symmetrical positions, though here it is not that easy to take advantage of the extra tempo. Such positions sometimes came about in Bird's games, a hundred years ago, when the English master used his opening.



4.♙e2!!

This is probably the first time that this position appears. At first glance it might look odd because Black may take the knight's pawn with 4...♙xg2, but this move would be a mistake due to 5.♙h5+! g6 6.♙f3 ♙xh1 7.♙xh1 ♘f6 8.♙xa8 and although the bishop is enclosed White's advantage is apparent and he may continue with 9.♚f3.

4...♘f6 5.♙xf6! exf6 6.♙f3

White has the better game because of Black's poor pawn structure on the kingside. Having the bishop pair is not enough compensation as this position is not the most suitable to be able to develop them to their maximum potential. For starters, one of them must 'hide' or accept being exchanged.

6...♘c6 7.♘e2 g6 8.c4 ♙d6 9.♘bc3 0-0 10.a3!

Black has no acceptable plan, so I quietly push my pawns, thus gaining more space.

10...♚e8 11.b4 ♚c8 12.d4 ♘d8 13.c5 ♙f8 14.♘f4 ♚g7!?

Probably not the best, but there's not much else.

**15.h4!**

This was my main plan. The other pawn moves were just complementary.

15...♘e6 16.♘xe6+ ♜xe6

It is obvious that taking with the pawn loses a piece after 17.c6 ♙a6 18.b5.

17.♘d5 ♚e8 18.h5 ♙xd5 19.♙xd5 c6**Palma de Mallorca 1971**

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Ljubojevic, Ljubomir	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	11.0
2	Panno, Oscar	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	11.0
3	Portisch, Lajos	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	½	1	10.0
4	Reshevsky, Samuel	½	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	10.0
5	Andersson, Ulf	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	1	½	1	½	½	0	½	1	1	9.5
6	Csom, Istvan	½	½	½	1	½	*	0	0	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	9.0
7	Larsen, Bent	0	0	0	0	0	1	*	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9.0
8	Benko, Pal	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	8.5
9	Donner, Jan Hein	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	0	½	1	1	1	½	7.0
10	Tatai, Stefano	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	*	1	½	1	1	1	1	7.0
11	Keene, Raymond	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	1	0	*	0	½	½	½	½	6.0
12	Pomar Salamanca, Arturo	½	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	*	½	0	½	½	6.0
13	Bisguier, Arthur Bernard	0	½	0	½	1	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	5.5
14	Garcia Martinez, Silvino	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	½	1	½	*	1	½	4.5
15	Medina Garcia, Antonio	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	0	*	½	3.0

20. ♖a2!

The best retreat for the bishop, threatening 21. ♖b3. As can be seen on many occasions, opposite-coloured bishops favour the attacker. What can the black bishop do to control the light squares?

20...d5 21.cxd6 ♖xd6 22. ♖f3

I saw that Bellón's desperate attempt to initiate some action on his next move, posed no danger. I could also have played 22. ♖c1 ♖a6 23. ♖b3 or 22... ♖d7 23. ♖f3.

22... ♖a6!?

It is logical that in a situation like Bellón's, one would try to complicate matters. The modest alternative 22... ♖d7 could have been answered with 23. ♖c1 ♖ac8 24. ♖h3 ♖h8 (if

24...g5 25. ♖b1 g4 26.h6+ ♖h8 27. ♖h5) 25.h6+ ♖f8 26.0-0 followed by a break in the centre with e3-e4.

23. ♖xc6 ♖ed8 24.b5 ♖xa3

25. ♖e2!?

The rooks are connected and the white king is secure; this, for the black king, is non-existent.

25... ♖b2+ 26. ♖f3 g5

Menacing mate!

27.g3 ♖h6

If 27... ♖ac8 28. ♖d5.

28. ♖e6 f4 29.gxf4 gxf4 30. ♖ag1 fxe3 31.fxe3

The black king cannot survive this onslaught where so many pieces are attacking.

31... ♖ab8 32. ♖e4 f5 33. ♖h4 1-0

Chapter 18

Teesside 1972

A couple of days before the start of this tournament, which was proclaimed to be the strongest in England since the one in Nottingham in 1936, a telegram was received from Moscow informing that due to unforeseen circumstances the Soviet representatives Tal and Vasiukov would not be able to participate.

This forced the organisers to make last-minute arrangements and contract international masters Ree (Netherlands) and Gyula Sax (Hungary); the latter being the winner of the European Junior Championships.

The reasons that led to the non-participation of the Soviets will probably never be known, but it may have something to do with the expulsion in Moscow of the *Times*' correspondent about two weeks later. The great majority of those who organise chess events do not wish to mix chess with politics, but sometimes this is not possible.

In the first round – I was playing White – my opponent was the young Yugoslav grandmaster Ljubojevic, who had beaten me in the last tournament in Palma de Mallorca. Once the tournament director finished with his short speech I made my first move....

		Teesside 1972																	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Larsen, Bent	2660	*	1	½	½	1	0	1	½	1	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	11.0
2	Ljubojevic, Ljubomir	2510	0	0	*	0	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	10.0
3	Portisch, Lajos	2630	½	1	*	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	0	½	½	½	1	½	9.5
4	Gligoric, Svetozar	2600	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	0	1	1	0	1	1	1	9.0
5	Tringov, Georgi	2490	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	½	1	1	½	1	1	½	1	9.0
6	Parma, Bruno	2530	1	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	8.5
7	Andersson, Ulf	2535	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	8.5
8	Gheorghiu, Florin	2530	½	½	0	½	1	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	1	½	½	½	8.0
9	Keene, Raymond	2465	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	0	½	0	1	½	1	1	7.0
10	Sax, Gyula	2400	0	0	0	1	0	0	½	1	1	*	0	½	½	½	1	1	7.0
11	Wade, Robert	2365	0	½	1	0	0	½	½	0	½	1	*	1	½	0	½	½	6.5
12	Bilek, Istvan	2485	½	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	1	½	0	*	½	1	½	½	6.5
13	Hecht, Hans Joachim	2470	½	0	½	1	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	6.5
14	Ree, Hans	2430	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	1	0	½	*	1	½	6.0
15	Bellin, Robert	2315	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	0	*	½	4.0
16	Cafferty, Bernard	2440	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	*	3.0

Game 64

Polish Defence

Bent Larsen**Ljubomir Ljubojevic**

Teesside 1972

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.g3 b5!?

I believe this to be perfectly acceptable. The funny thing is that it was my intention to play 2.c4 but... I forgot!!

3.♙g2 ♙b7 4.♘a3

A strange idea, but I don't think that there's anything to refute Black's play.

4...a6 5.c4 b4 6.♘c2 e6 7.0-0 c5**8.b3 ♙e7 9.♙b2 0-0 10.d4 d6****11.♘e3 ♘bd7**

The position is even. Probably the best continuation for White must be 12.♘e1. What I actually played is not justified; I knew it was very risky.

**12.d5?! exd5 13.cxd5 ♘b6****14.♙d3 ♘fxd5**

Of course, 14...♘bxd5? would be bad in view of 15.♘g5! ♘xe3 16.♙xf6.

15.♘f5 ♙f6 16.♙xf6 ♙xf6 17.e4**g6! 18.♘h6+ ♖g7 19.♙d2 ♘c3****20.♘g4 ♙e7 21.♙fe1 f6?**

Black loses his advantage with this move. Ljubojevic's mistake was in playing moves 15 to 24 far too quickly. Given the nature of the position, he should have taken more time to think out his moves.

22.e5! dxe5 23.♘fxe5 fxe5**24.♙xe5 ♙f7**

The best continuation was 24...♙d7! 25.♙xd7+ ♘xd7 26.♙e7+ ♙f7 27.♙xf7+ ♖xf7 28.♙xb7 ♙a7 and White has no advantage in the ending whilst Black will be active on the queenside once again, with ...a6-a5 and ...a5-a4.

25.♙ae1 ♘bd5

Let us study other alternatives:

A) It is too late now to play 25...♙ae8, as White would obtain a clear positional advantage;

B) 25...♘c8 would break the connection between the black rooks, which would allow the continuation 26.♙xb7 ♙xb7 27.♙h6+ ♖g8 28.♙e8;

C) If Black intends to sacrifice the queen with 25...♙xg2 26.♙e7 ♙d5? (26...♙e4 27.♙d6! and White gains material whilst Black is left with a very vulnerable position) there follows 27.♙h6+ ♖h8 28.♘f6! followed by mate.

26.♙xd5 ♘xd5 27.♙b2!

Black has gained a piece but I have the better chances since all my pieces are poised for action.

Following my last move, which may appear rather tame, Ljubojevic will not be able to prevent the loss of his queen.

27...♘c3 28.♙e7 ♙ad8**29.♙xf7+ ♖xf7 30.♙c1 ♙d1!?****31.♙f4+ ♖g8 32.♙e5 ♙xe1+****33.♙xe1 ♙e4 34.♙d2 h5****35.♘e5 ♙e8 36.♙d6 ♘xa2****37.g4 c4 38.♙f6 ♙f8 39.♙xa6****c3 40.♙c4+ 1-0**

What conclusion could I arrive at from this game? The answer was in the realisation that I might be able to win other games where the main idea was to take control of the long dark-squared diagonal: thus I continued to play the open-

ing move 1.b3 on six occasions... winning six points!!

I played 1.♘f3 only one other time and this game resulted in a draw. I won 50% of my games playing with the black pieces, losing against Parma in the last round, when I was already the winner of the tournament.

To summarize: I did not play well in the first half of the tournament, getting into losing positions against Gligoric and Ree; then I improved my performance and the game against Wade, in the 12th round, is probably the best of the tournament.

Game 65

Nimzowitsch/Larsen Opening

Bent Larsen

Robert Wade

Teesside 1972

1.b3

I played this opening move in Teesside on six different occasions – and I won all six! Andersson was the only one to play the sharp reply 1...e5.

1...d5 2.♙b2 c5 3.e3

No good is 3.♘f3 on account of 3...f6!. Everybody is aware of this now, after the Petrosian-Fischer match: even Nimzowitsch knew it!

3...♘f6 4.♙b5+ ♕d7 5.♙xd7+ ♖bxd7 6.♘f3 e6 7.c4 ♙e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♙e2 a6?!

This cannot be the best move. After the game Wade explained that he expected me to play e3-e4, to which he would have replied ...d5-d4 and then followed up with an attack on the queenside with ...b7-b5.

In quiet positions many players tend to play 'luxurious' moves, as here.

9...♖c8 was better.

10.♘c3 ♙a5 11.cxd5 exd5 12.d4

White's plan is simple: play against Black's d-pawn.

12...♖ac8 13.dxc5 ♘xc5 14.♘d4 ♘e6

Probably 14...g6 was better, but nobody wants to weaken their king's position in this manner.

15.♘f5!

The reply would have been exactly the same if 14...♘ce4 had been played. The threats along the dark-squared diagonal can now be appreciated and although the bishops may be exchanged, the queen will take over control of this diagonal.

15...♙a3 16.♖ac1

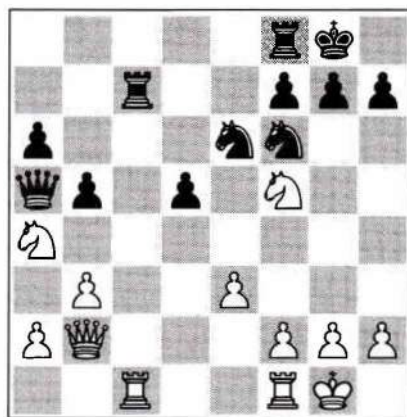
An important moment. So far Black has been a tempo ahead in development, but White catches up at this point and Black is not able to come up with any meaningful continuation. One could say, therefore, that White has an obvious advantage since he has a strong knight posted on f5 and Black has a weak d-pawn.

16.♘a4 would not have been good due to 16...♙xb2 17.♙xb2? b5.

16...♖c7

Possibly better is 16...♖h8 to avoid the check with the knight at e7.

17.♘a4 ♙xb2 18.♙xb2 b5



White is now in a position to control the only open file (with ♖xc7 and

♖c1). Black could not play 18...♖fc8 because of 19.♗e7+.

19.♗c5!

Surely Wade was hoping for 19.♗c3 ♖fc8 20.♗e2 with just a microscopic advantage to White, but there was a better continuation.

19...♗b6

The alternative 19...♗xc5 20.b4 ♗b6 transposes into the actual game.

20.b4 ♗xc5

Against 20...♗h8 the reply 21.♗e5 would be strong; for instance: 21...♗xc5 22.bxc5 ♖xc5 23.♗e7 ♖cc8 (23...♖fc8? 24.♖xc5 ♗xc5 25.♗d6) 24.♗d6.

If 20...♖e8 White would gain control of the c-file with 21.♗b3 and so have sufficient positional advantage to ensure a win.



21.♖xc5!

Good also is: 21.bxc5 (21...♖xc5? 22.♗d4!) and the passed pawn would be very strong. However, with 21.♖xc5! this pawn is even stronger, because Black only has one rook to stop it and White's rook will quickly enter into action. If Black avoids the rook exchange, White will be totally in control of the only open file.

21...♖xc5 22.bxc5 ♗e6

Black decides not to take the pawn. Why? Isn't it better to have a bad posi-

tion with the advantage of having an extra pawn than to have merely a bad position? Of course it would, but the fact is that there is no problem in recovering the material.

22...♗xc5 23.♖c1 ♗a7 (23...♗b6 24.♖c6! ♗a5 25.h3 ♗e8 26.♗e7+ ♗h8 27.♗xd5 and Black will have a miserable position – without the extra pawn) 24.♖c6 (threatening 25.♖xf6) 24...♗e8 25.♗a3! now threatens ♗e7+, ♗g6+ and ♖xa6.

23.♗d4 ♗e5 24.♗a3 ♗g4 25.♗f3

This knight is attentive to everything! It attacks the kingside, it defends its own king and, as we shall see later, it will play an important role on the queenside. This is possible because it has a secure base on d4. As Réti stated, the most unpleasant aspect of the weakness of an isolated pawn is that it gives the enemy pieces the square immediately in front of the pawn.

25...♗c7 26.♖c1 a5

Or 26...♖a8 27.c6 and Black has no hope.

27.♗d3 b4 28.c6

This pawn promises an easy win. It was also good to take the queen's pawn but this pawn is so weak that there is no immediate rush to do so.

28...♗f6 29.♗d4 h5

Wade is now seriously pressed for time. His position has been lost for a while: the white passed pawn is far too strong.

30.♗f5 ♗c8 31.c7 a4 32.♗xc8 ♖xc8 33.♗f5

1-0

Black resigned.

A good positional game which shows just how weak an isolated d-pawn can be. The game also shows the importance of having a centralised knight.

Game 66

Nimzowitsch/Larsen Opening

Bent Larsen**Bernard Cafferty**

Teesside 1972

Here's another game with the theme 'Controlling the long dark-squared diagonal'.

1.b3 e5 2.♖b2 ♘c6 3.e3 d5!?

Nobody had ever given me this reply before. However the same position was arrived at in the game Ljubojevic-Portisch in the 13th round: 4.♖b5 ♖d6 5.f4!? ♜h4+!? 6.g3 ♜e7, and although Ljubojevic had a good game, I do not particularly like White's structure since the light squares are weak.

4.♖b5 ♖d6 5.c4!? dxc4 6.♗f3!? ♗e7

After 6...cxb3 7.♜xb3 (7.♗xe5? ♖xe5 8.♖xe5 ♜d5!) White has a strong initiative in exchange for the pawn.

7.♖xc4 ♗f5

A strange manoeuvre, but the alternative 7...0-0 8.♗g5!? h6 9.h4!? was quite disagreeable.

8.♗c3 ♗h4 9.g3 ♗xf3+ 10.♜xf3 0-0



11.h4!? ♖e6?

White's position is very good. Needless to say, Black should not have despaired and made a move that not only leaves him with doubled pawns, but also cedes the e4-square to my knight.

12.♖xe6 fxe6 13.♜e2 ♜f6 14.♗e4 ♜f5 15.d3 ♖ad8 16.g4!? ♜f7

In case of 16...♖b4+ 17.♔f1 ♜f7 18.a3 followed by b3-b4 and ♔g2, White would have a clear advantage. The strong knight allows me to choose fearlessly where my king is to reside.

17.a3 ♖e7

Better was 17...♗b8, trying to place the knight at f6 or c5.

18.0-0-0! ♖d6 19.♔b1 ♜e7 20.♔a2 a5 21.h5 ♜d7 22.h6 g6 23.d4! exd4 24.♖xd4! e5

24...♗xd4 25.♖xd4 and after the impending exchange of rooks and queens, this would lead to an ending where the strong centralised knight will be imposing.

25.♖b2 b5 26.♔a1 ♖b8 27.♖d5 ♗e7 28.♖d3 ♜e6 29.♖hd1 ♖b6 30.♗g5

The beginning of the end.

30...♜c8 31.f4 ♗c6 32.♜g2 ♗e7 33.fxe5 ♖c5 34.♖d7 ♖xe3 35.♖xe7 ♖xg5 36.♖g7+ ♔h8 37.e6

Black resigned.

The long diagonal was opened up again!!

Chapter 19

My First Victory against Smyslov

The first time I played against Smyslov was at the Munich Olympiad in 1958, with a favourable result for the former World Champion. Later I had two other chances of beating him, in Moscow, 1959 and in the Amsterdam Interzonal, 1964, but both times I spoilt my chances and we shared the point.

Finally, in the first International Tournament in Las Palmas (1972), I clinched the first victory. We confronted each other in the 12th round, when he was ahead of me by half a point. That, in itself, was enough to make me determined to win. In order to do this, I started with a 'museum piece' in the opening.

Game 67

Smyslov would also avoid that variation since it is not in his style.

Vienna Game

Bent Larsen

Vassily Smyslov

Las Palmas 1972

1.e4 e5 2.♘c4 ♘f6 3.♘c3

3...♙b4 4.♙f3 d6 5.0-0 0-0 6.d3

In other games I have played 3.d3, avoiding the reply 3...♘xe4, which could lead to great complications after 4.♖h5. This time I was sure that

We now have a Ruy Lopez position but with colours reversed. White hopes to show that his opponent's king's bishop is not particularly useful. Instead of Black's next move I would have preferred 6...♙xc3 7.bxc3 ♙e6. In that case White would proba-

Las Palmas 1972

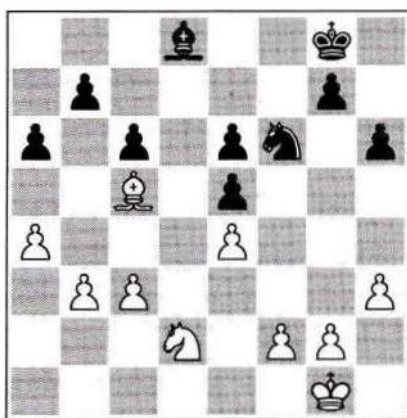
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Portisch, Lajos	2640	*	1	½	½	1	1	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	12.0
2	Larsen, Bent	2625	0	*	1	½	½	0	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.0
3	Smyslov, Vassily	2620	½	0	*	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.0
4	Bronstein, David	2585	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	10.0
5	Benko, Pal	2515	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	0	1	9.0
6	Tatai, Stefano	2460	0	1	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	9.0
7	Gheorghiu, Florin	2520	½	0	½	0	½	½	*	1	0	½	1	1	½	1	1	½	8.5
8	Andersson, Ulf	2535	0	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	8.0
9	Lehmann, Heinz	2395	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	½	*	½	½	0	½	½	1	½	7.5
10	Medina Garcia, Antonio	2380	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	1	½	*	0	0	½	1	1	1	7.0
11	Pomar Salamanca, Arturo	2460	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	6.5
12	Menvielle, Augusto	2365	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	1	1	½	*	0	0	½	1	5.5
13	Visier Segovia, Fernando	2365	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	5.0
14	Huguet, Bernard	2255	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	½	1	½	*	½	½	4.0
15	Dominguez Sanz, Juan	2200	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	3.5
16	Valcarcel, Juan	2200	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	*	2.5

bly have continued with 8.♔g3 (see also Game 25).

**6...♙e6 7.♙xe6 fxe6 8.♘e2
♘bd7 9.c3 ♙a5 10.a4 c6 11.♘g3
♚e7 12.♚e2 h6 13.d4 ♙c7**

Possibly not the best but after 13...exd4 14.cxd4 White may have good prospects.

**14.b3! ♚f7 15.♙a3 ♖fe8
16.dxe5 ♘xe5 17.♘xe5 dxe5
18.♖fd1 ♖ed8 19.♙c5 a6 20.h3
♖xd1+ 21.♖xd1 ♖d8 22.♖xd8+
♙xd8 23.♘f1 ♚d7 24.♚d2
♚xd2 25.♘xd2**



I refused a draw in this position as I thought that Black's doubled pawns are a liability, although perhaps not enough to lose the game.

**25...♙c7 26.♚f1 ♘d7 27.♙e3 b5
28.♚e2**

28.axb5 would have reduced my battle front.

**28...♚f7 29.♘f3 ♚e7 30.♘e1
bxa4**

It may have been more prudent for Black to avoid this exchange, since it leaves the c4-square unprotected. I certainly wasn't going to play axb5 as that would reduce Black's defensive front.

31.bxa4 ♙b6

31...♘b6? would be worse as in view of 32.♙xb6 ♙xb6 33.♘d3.

32.♙c1

Allowing this exchange would enable Black to defend more easily.

32...♙a5 33.♙a3+ c5

Success for White. If I could find a way of anchoring some of Black's pawns on dark squares, I could exchange the knights and the bishop endgame would offer excellent prospects.

**34.♘d2 ♘d6 35.♘d3 ♙c7
36.♘c2 ♘c6 37.♙c1 ♘b6
38.♘b2 ♙d8 39.♘d3 ♙e7
40.g3?**

This gives Black some counterplay.

Much better was 40.♙e3!.

40...♙d6 41.♚e2 c4!

The sealed move. The game was adjourned but would be resumed that same day. If Black remains passive White may be able to initiate some action on the kingside with ♚f3, ♚g4, h3-h4 and h4-h5.

**42.a5 ♘d7 43.♘xc4 ♙c5
44.♘a3**

The line 44.♙e3 ♙xe3 45.♚xe3 ♚b5 is excellent for Black.

**44...♙d6 45.♘c4 ♙c5 46.f3 ♚b5
47.♚d3 ♙f2?**

Smyslov forgets his own analyses! He had come to the conclusion that 47...♙e7 would rescue him by providing a means to a draw (against 48.♙e3 Black plays 48...♙c5!).

**48.♘d6+ ♚xa5 49.♘e8 g5
50.g4 ♚b6**

Some commentators pointed out that 50...♙c5 is stronger; for instance: 51.♘c7 ♘f8 52.♚c4 ♙e7 53.♙e3 ♙d6 54.♘e8 ♙e7. In these analyses the tactical trick 54.♘xe6!? ♘xe6 55.♚d5 was obviously overlooked. Also, probably even stronger is 53.♙e3 ♙a3 54.♙f2! ♙e7 55.♙g3 – or, again, 55.♘c7 ♙d6 56.♙c5! – and there is no hope for Black in this passive position.

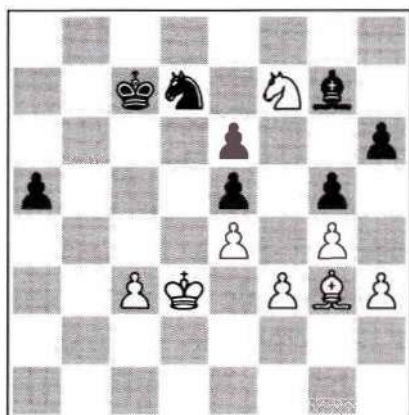
**51.♖d6 ♖c5 52.♗f7 ♖f8
53.♖e3+**

The position is quietly improving. The bishop ending after 53.♖d8 ♖c5+ 54.♖c4 ♖c7 55.♖e3 ♖xd8 56.♖xc5 ♖g7 is difficult to win (but with 56...♖xc5?? 57.♖xc5 ♖c7 58.c4 Black could lose).

53...♖c7 54.♖f2

54.♖c4 is simpler.

54...a5 55.♖g3 ♖g7



56.c4??

The position is very interesting. For the time being, the white knight is trapped, but cannot be attacked. Black's pieces are restrained in defending the e-pawn. Black is almost in zugzwang. It is strange that my two inaccuracies in this endgame came on the last move before the time control and the funny thing is that I was not under time pressure at all! My first idea was to play 56.♖c4, which is probably enough to win, but I was wary of the variation 56...♖b6+ 57.♖b5 a4 58.♖xe5 ♖b7, without giving enough thought to the fact that in the bishop endgame after 59.♖c4 ♖xc4 60.♖xc4 a3 61.♖b3 a2 62.♖xa2 ♖xc3 I had excellent chances of winning thanks to the weakness of the h6-pawn. I could also have played 56.♖c2 a4 57.♖b2 and Black is in serious trouble. 56.c4 was an important de-

cision, but it was wrong since it relinquishes the important d4-square and the c-pawn is within reach of an attack by the black pieces.

56...a4 57.♖c2 ♖b6??

Smyslov took more than forty minutes to come up with this move. (This was the second sealed move, at 1 am.)

The next day was a rest day and this allowed us to analyse deeply: 57...♖c5!. This move I studied for over twenty hours! In the end I did not find anything positive: 58.♖xe5+ (58.♖xe5 ♖b6 59.♖f7 a3 60.♖b1 ♖a5 61.♖d6 ♖b4 62.♖a2 ♖xc4 63.♖xa3 ♖d3 and Black draws without any difficulty) 58...♖xe5 59.♖xe5 ♖d6 60.♖f7+ ♖e7 61.♖xh6 ♖d6 62.♖f7+ ♖e7 63.♖e5 ♖d6.

Smyslov explained after the game that he had had some difficulty in deciding on his sealed move. He liked the idea of 57...♖b8 so as to take the knight to d4, but he did not fancy the reply 58.♖xe5 ♖c6 59.♖xc6+ ♖xc6 60.e5. For some obscure reason he did not think of taking the knight to d4 via b3.

58.h4 gxh4

After 58...♖f6 59.h5 ♖g7 60.♖c3 White will quickly win a pawn. White could also play 58.♖c3, but it's preferable to try and put the pawn on h5.

**59.♖xh4 ♖f8 60.♖f2+ ♖c6
61.♖c3!**

Not 61.♖e3? ♖g6 62.♖xh6 ♖xh6 63.♖xh6 ♖f4 and Black draws.

61...♖g6 62.♖b4 ♖f4

Or 62...♖d7 63.♖e3 ♖f4 64.c5.

**63.♖xa4 ♖d3 64.♖d8+ ♖d7
65.♖h4 ♖f8 66.♖b5**

With a pawn in hand and a superior position White will easily win.

66...♖e7

If 66...♖c5 67.♗f7 ♘d3 68.♙g3 ♙g7 69.c5 ♜e7 70.c6!.

67.♙xe7 ♜xe7 68.♗c6+ ♜d6
69.♜b6 ♗c5 70.♗d8 ♗d7+
71.♜b5 ♜e7 72.♗b7 ♗f6 73.c5 h5
74.gxh5 ♗xh5 75.c6 ♗f6 76.♜c5!

A triangulation manoeuvre. The idea is 76...♗e8 77.♜b6 ♗f6 78.c7 ♜d7 79.♗d6. The line after 76.♜b6 ♗e8 would have been somewhat longer.

76...♗g8 77.♗d6 **1-0**

And so, this was my first win against Smyslov. I am not happy with my 40th and 56th moves, but who can play 77 moves without a single error?

This certainly wasn't an ideal game from the spectators' point of view. However many did stay on to find out the outcome of this interesting struggle. Despite the inaccuracies of this ending, it may be considered more than satisfactory to win against such a prominent opponent, by making the most of such a microscopic advantage in the ending.

In our next game in Hastings, I was able to beat Smyslov again!

Editor's note: We conclude this chapter with two analysed games from tournaments in San Antonio and Hastings 1972, without introductions by Larsen.

Game 68

Queen's Indian Defence

Larry Melvyn Evans

Bent Larsen

San Antonio 1972

1.c4 e6 2.♗f3 ♗f6 3.g3 b6
4.♙g2 ♙b7 5.0-0 d5

In the main line of this opening, bishops circulating along the light-squared diagonal are often exchanged early in the game, thus simplifying the position. If Black wants to play to win, it is tempting to push the pawn to d5 and so avoid the simplification.

Nimzowitsch and Botvinnik used this opening, but according to modern theory, after 5...♙e7 6.♗c3 0-0 7.d4 d5 8.♗e5 Black ends up in an inferior position. Playing 5...d5 straight away then, offers better prospects; and it has not been analysed as much!

			San Antonio 1972																	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6		
1	Portisch, Lajos	2640	*	½	1	0	1	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	10.5	
2	Petrosian, Tigran	2645	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	10.5	
3	Karpov, Anatoly	2630	0	½	*	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	10.5	
4	Gligoric, Svetozar	2575	1	0	0	*	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	10.0	
5	Keres, Paul	2600	0	½	½	½	*	1	½	1	1	1	0	½	½	1	1	½	9.5	
6	Hort, Vlastimil	2600	0	½	½	½	0	*	½	1	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	9.0	
7	Suttles, Duncan	2470	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	9.0	
8	Mecking, Henrique	2570	½	0	½	½	0	0	½	*	1	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	8.5	
9	Larsen, Bent	2625	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	0	*	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	8.5	
10	Byrne, Donald	2470	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	*	1	0	½	1	1	1	7.0	
11	Evans, Larry	2545	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	½	0	0	*	½	0	½	½	1	6.5	
12	Browne, Walter	2530	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	0	1	1	½	*	1	0	0	1	6.5	
13	Kaplan, Julio	2470	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	*	1	½	0	5.0	
14	Campos Lopez, Mario		½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	1	0	*	1	½	3.5	
15	Saidy, Anthony	2425	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	1	½	0	*	1	3.5	
16	Smith, Kenneth	2395	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	½	0	*	2.0	

**6.cxd5 exd5 7.d4 ♘bd7 8.♘c3
♙e7 9.b3 0-0 10.♙b2 ♖e8
11.♘e5 ♙f8**

The simplest solution to all Black's problems was 11...♙b4 12.a3 ♙xc3 13.♙xc3 c6..., but this was too simple for me! I wanted to complicate the game and so I was hoping that White would weaken his position with f2-f4. Of course, it is not entirely clear that this move creates a weakness, but this is precisely what Black will attempt to demonstrate.

**12.f4 c5 13.e3 cxd4 14.exd4
♘e4!?**

A pawn sacrifice whose validity is somewhat unclear. More solid was 14...♙b4 followed by ...♙xc3 and ...♘e4.

**15.♘xe4 dxe4 16.♖e2 ♘f6
17.g4 ♘d5**

It is possible to play 17...♖d5 but if White is happy with a draw he could play 18.g5 ♘d7 19.♙xe4 ♖xe4 20.♖xe4 ♙xe4 21.♘xd7. In this ending White would have sufficient compensation for the pawn, but would find it difficult to play for a win.

18.♙xe4 f6 19.♖d3!?

White chooses a difficult line, which looks very compromising. Another possibility was 19.♖ad1, and after 19...fxe5 20.dxe5 Black cannot escape the pin. However, he can play the quiet move 19...♖c8 (with the idea ...♖c7 and then taking on e5 or playing ...♖a8). If the white knight retreats, Black will then have good compensation for the pawn: the position of the opponent's king is weak and the white queen's bishop is not very active.

19...g6 20.♙xg6 ♖e7!



21.♘f7

Some days later, Evans told me that he would have won with 21.♙e4. How-

Hastings 1972/73

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Larsen, Bent	2625	*	0	1	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.5
2	Uhlmann, Wolfgang	2530	1	*	1	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	11.0
3	Hartston, William	2420	0	0	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	9.5
4	Hort, Vlastimil	2600	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	½	1	1	1	9.0
5	Tukmakov, Vladimir	2560	½	½	0	½	*	½	1	0	½	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	8.5
6	Radulov, Ivan	2490	1	½	½	½	½	*	0	½	½	0	½	½	1	½	1	1	8.5
7	Browne, Walter	2530	0	½	½	½	0	1	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	8.5
8	Westerinen, Heikki	2450	½	1	0	½	1	½	½	*	0	½	1	½	1	0	½	½	8.0
9	Smyslov, Vassily	2620	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	1	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	7.5
10	Barcza, Gedeon	2465	0	½	0	0	0	1	½	½	½	*	0	1	1	½	1	½	7.0
11	Andersson, Ulf	2535	0	½	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	1	*	½	½	1	½	½	6.5
12	Rajkovic, Dusan	2390	0	0	½	1	0	½	0	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	½	1	6.5
13	Steane, Michael	2275	0	0	½	½	1	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	*	1	½	½	5.5
14	Wade, Robert	2375	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	1	0	½	0	½	0	*	½	1	4.5
15	Eley, Brian	2345	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	1	4.5
16	Mestel, Jonathan	2200	0	0	0	0	1	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	*	3.5

ever, after 21...fxe5 22.dxe5 ♖b4! this is not so clear. An interesting continuation is 23.♙c4+ ♕d5 24.♙xb4 ♖xe5 25.♕xd5+ ♙xd5 26.♙c3 ♕c5+ 27.♖f2 ♕xf2+ 28.♗xf2 ♖e2+!? (probably 28...♙c5+ is enough to secure a draw) 29.♗xe2 ♙g2+ 30.♗d1 ♖d8+ 31.♗c1 ♙h1+ 32.♗c2 ♙e4+ and a draw by perpetual check.

21.♕a3 hxg6 22.♕xe7 ♖xe7 is not convenient for White.

**21...♖xf7 22.♕xf7+ ♗xf7
23.♙xh7+ ♕g7**

White has a rook and three pawns against two minor pieces, but his bishop is poorly located and his light squares are dangerously weak.

**24.g5 ♙d6 25.g6+ ♗f8 26.♖ae1
♖b4**

At this point I chose to reject a draw offer! It wasn't an easy decision to make as, although I was happy with my position, my stomach had been playing up for several days. However I felt that my geographical location was such that I couldn't very well be a coward since I was a mere couple of hundred metres from El Alamo where David Crockett had fought so bravely...!

**27.♙h3 ♙d5 28.♖e3 ♖c8
29.♖fe1 f5**

Defending against the threat 30.♙xc8+!.

30.♖1e2 a5 31.♗f2 ♕a6



32.♖e5??

Disorientated. To relinquish control of the open file was not convenient, but nevertheless 32.♖d2 was necessary. Then 32...♖c2? 33.♖e5! ♕xe5 34.fxe5 is enough for a draw. But Black has something better: 32...♖c6!. One of the ideas is that after 33.a3 ♖c2 34.♖e5 ♕xe5 35.fxe5 ♙e4, White does not have perpetual check. I do not see any defence against 32...♖c6 though I cannot guarantee that I would have played this since I was rather pressed for time.

The worst thing about the text move is that it almost forces Black to win the game!

**32...♕xe5 33.♖xe5 ♖d3+
34.♗g3 ♖xe5 35.fxe5 ♕b7**

White does not have perpetual check and his passed pawns are not particularly dangerous.

**36.♙h8+ ♗e7 37.♙f6+ ♗d7
38.♙xf5+ ♗c7 39.♙f7+ ♙xf7
40.gxf7 ♕d5 41.♗f4 ♗d7 42.h4
♗e7 43.h5 ♗xf7 0-1**

A very difficult game.

Game 69

Nimzowitsch/Larsen Opening

Bent Larsen

Brian Eley

Hastings 1972/73

**1.b3 e5 2.♕b2 ♖c6 3.e3 ♖f6
4.♕b5 d6 5.♖e2 ♕d7 6.0-0 ♕e7
7.f4 e4**

My opponent played the first six moves very quickly but at this point he thought for a while. By then 1.b3 had lost all its novelty!

However I think that 7...0-0 is better (8.♕xc6 ♕xc6 9.fxe5 dxe5 10.♕xe5?? ♙d5).

8.♖g3 0-0

Just ten days earlier, in an exhibition match in Mexico, the game had continued 8...♙g4!? 9.♚e1 ♙d7 10.♘c3 ♘b4 11.♙xd7+ ♚xd7 12.♖c1 d5 13.a3 ♘c6 14.d3 exd3 15.cxd3 0-0-0 16.b4 ♖b8 17.e4, with a strong positional advantage to White (Larsen-Escombrillas).

9.♙xc6 bxc6

After 9...♙xc6 10.♘f5 the long dark-squared diagonal will be very strong for White, and Black's bishop at c6 rather inactive.

10.c4 d5 11.♘c3 ♖e8 12.♖c1 ♙g4

Black is trying to occupy the square d3 (...♘d7-c5-d3), That is, of course, if White allows it!

13.♘ce2 ♘d7 14.h3 ♙xe2 15.♚xe2 ♘c5?

Better was 15...♙f6 16.♙xf6 ♘xf6, although in this way Black would not have any compensation for the weakness created by the doubled pawns.

16.♚g4 g6

No good is 16...♙f6 in view of 17.♙xf6 ♚xf6 18.cxd5.

17.f5! ♘d3

He finally reaches this magnificent square! In the meantime, White has launched a winning attack.

18.fxg6 hxg6



19.♖xf7! ♖xf7 20.♖f1+ ♙f6 21.♙xf6! 1-0

I have played 1.b3 umpteen times but never has my queen's bishop been as strong as in this game! After 21...♚xf6 comes 22.♚d7+ ♖e7 23.♖xf6+ ♖xf6 24.♚xc6+, winning.

Chapter 20

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

In the Leningrad Interzonal, Euwe decided that apart from Karpov and Tal, only five of the players who had participated in the previous Candidates' Tournament would be allowed to take part in this one. The only person who considered this to be correct, was the FIDE President himself!

Euwe's justification was that the average 'Elo ranking' for both Interzonals was the same. What is also true is that placing the nine strongest players along with other nine lower-rated ones would also maintain the average. Portisch could very easily have been classified in Brazil, as also would Polugaevsky, who didn't quite make the 'Elo ranking' average.

Obviously, what Euwe did was not right, and I hoped that in the FIDE Congress in Helsinki, this would be discussed. I almost decided not to play in Leningrad, but finally, when I was less depressed but angrier, I decided to participate 'under protest': This is something that Fischer made fashionable. I started off winning three points from three games.

			Leningrad Interzonal 1973																		
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1	Kortchnoi, Viktor	2635	*	½	1	½	1	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	1	0	1	1	113.5	
2	Karpov, Anatoly	2645	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	113.5	
3	Byrne, Robert	2570	0	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	1	12.5	
4	Smejkal, Jan	2570	½	0	½	*	0	0	½	½	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.0	
5	Hübner, Robert	2600	0	½	½	1	*	0	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	0	1	10.0
6	Larsen, Bent	2620	0	½	0	1	1	*	1	0	0	½	0	1	1	½	1	½	1	1	10.0
7	Kuzmin, Gennadi	2565	½	0	½	½	½	0	*	1	0	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	½	9.5
8	Tal, Mikhail	2655	0	½	½	½	0	1	0	*	1	½	1	1	½	0	0	1	0	1	8.5
9	Glorigic, Svetozar	2595	½	0	½	0	0	1	1	0	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	0	1	1	8.5
10	Taimanov, Mark	2595	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	½	8.5
11	Quinteros, Miguel	2480	0	0	0	1	½	1	½	0	½	½	*	0	0	½	½	1	½	1	7.5
12	Radulov, Ivan	2510	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	1	*	1	1	½	½	1	1	7.5
13	Uhlmann, Wolfgang	2550	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	½	1	0	*	½	½	½	½	1	7.0
14	Torre, Eugenio	2430	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	1	0	½	½	0	½	*	½	1	1	1	7.0
15	Rukavina, Josip	2460	1	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	0	1	½	6.5
16	Tukmakov, Vladimir	2560	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	1	½	0	½	½	0	1	*	½	1	6.0
17	Estevez, Guillermo	2385	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	*	1	4.5
18	Cuellar, Miguel	2400	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	*	1.5

Game 70

Dutch Defence

Josip Rukavina**Bent Larsen**

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

**1.c4 g6 2.d4 ♖g7 3.g3 c5 4.d5
d6 5.♖g2 ♜a6**

This is partly a waiting game.

6.♞f3 f5!



Probably a surprise for my opponent, who thought we were playing the Benoni or a King's Indian. Against this transposition into the Leningrad Variation of the Dutch Defence, White's development of the king's knight to f4, via h3, is usually strong; I therefore waited for Rukavina to move his knight. I usually study different variations of the Dutch Defence as part of my 'openings preparation' so as to avoid the most popular lines in the Nimzo-Indian and in the King's Indian which almost everyone knows very well.

7.0-0 ♞f6 8.♞c3 0-0 9.♞e1

9.♞b1 seems more natural but the text move is a 'book' move, because Kortchnoi played it against Tal in the 10th round of their match in 1968.

9...♞b8 10.♞d3?

But here Kortchnoi had played 10.♞c2.

10...♞d7 11.b3 ♞e4 12.♞xe4?

Correct was 12.♞b2 ♞b4 13.♞e3 ♞xc3 14.♞xc3 f4!? and the game would be balanced.

12...fxe4 13.♞c2?

13.♞d2 ♞a5 14.♞b2 b5 would be good for Black, but the continuation of the game was even better!

13...♞h3 14.♞g2 ♞b4 15.♞d2



15...e3!

This destroys White's position.

16.fxe3 ♞xf1+ 17.♞xf1 e6

18.♞b2 exd5 19.cxd5

Or 19.♞xd5 ♞xb2 20.♞xb2 ♞xd5 21.cxd5 ♞e7 with a big advantage.

19...♞g5 20.e4 ♞g4 21.♞d1

♞e5 22.♞g1 ♞f8

The sacrifice at g3 was not possible, for instance: 22...♞xg3 23.hxg3 ♞xg3 24.e3 ♞f8 (...♞d3) 25.♞f1 ♞xf1+ 26.♞xf1 ♞d3 and White will have nothing better than 27.♞xd3 ♞xg2+ 28.♞e1 ♞xb2.

23.♞e3 ♞g5 24.♞g2 ♞h5

25.♞e1?



Due to time trouble White is unaware of the threat.

25...♙xg2! 26.♚xg2 ♖f2+!
27.♚xf2 ♜xh2+ 28.♚f1 ♜h3+ 0-1

Mate is unavoidable.

Game 71

Dutch Defence

Jan Smejkal

Bent Larsen

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

1.d4 f5 2.g3 ♘f6 3.♙g2 e6 4.♘f3
♙b4+

With this strange check I avoid the variation 4...♙e7 5.0-0 0-0 6.b3.

5.c3 ♙e7 6.0-0 0-0 7.c4 c6

My intention is to play the Stonewall System but I also want to stop 7...d5 8.b3, followed by ♙a3.

8.♘c3 d5 9.♜c2 ♘e4!?

The 'book' move is 9...♜e8, but in spite of Botvinnik's success with this variation a long time ago, I do not fancy the moves ...♜e8-♜h5 so early in the game.

10.♘e5 ♘d7 11.♘xe4 fxe4
12.♙f4 ♙f6 13.♖ad1 ♙xe5
14.♙xe5 ♘xe5 15.dxe5 ♜e7
16.♜c3 ♙d7

Black has a 'bad' bishop, but in this position, White's bishop does not fare any better. Smejkal tries to undermine the d5-square to give his bishop greater potential; but he overrates his position.

17.f3

17.c5 b6 would be satisfactory for Black.

17...exf3 18.exf3 ♜c5+ 19.♖d4

19.♜d4 would probably have led to a draw. The following line is a tentative attempt by White to win, but it fails: 19...♜xd4+ 20.♖xd4 c5 21.♖d2 d4 22.f4 ♙c6 23.♙xc6 bxc6 24.b4? cxb4 25.♖xd4 ♖fd8 26.♖fd1 ♖xd4 27.♖xd4 a5 28.♖d6 a4!.

19...a5 20.f4 ♜a7

20...♜b6 is also possible. There is no fear of c4-c5, since the eventual pawn advance ...b7-b6 would give Black a good game.

21.f5!?

Not as strong as it seems.

21...♖ae8 22.cxd5?

22.♚h1 looks better, although 22...c5 would leave Black in an enviable position.

22...cxd5 23.♚h1

If 23.fxe6 ♖xf1+ 24.♚xf1 ♙xe6 and now 25.♙xd5? is no good on account of 25...♖f8+!.

23...♖c8 24.♜d2 ♖c2! 25.♜xc2
♜xd4



Suddenly Black's position is much better! The e5-pawn is weak.

26.♜c3

The continuation 26.fxe6 ♖xf1+ 27.♙xf1 ♙xe6 28.♜c3 ♜xc3 29.bxc3 d4! leads to a winning endgame for Black.

26...♜xc3 27.bxc3 ♖c8 28.♖d1
♖c5

But not 28...♙a4 29.♖d4 ♖xc3 30.♙xd5!, neither 28...♖xc3 29.fxe6 ♙xe6 30.♙xd5, with a draw in both cases.

29.fxe6 ♙xe6 30.♚g1 ♚f7
31.♖d3

White defends the c3-pawn but there is another weakness at a2.

31...♖b5! 32.♗d2

32.a4 ♖b1+ followed by 33...b5, after which Black would have a strong passed pawn.

32...a4! 33.a3?!

White was short of time.

Nevertheless, even if he had played 33.♖f2, I do not see that there is any hope for him. For example: 33...a3 34.♖e2 ♖b2 35.♖d1 d4! winning.

33...♖b3 34.♙xd5 ♖xa3 35.c4 ♖b3 36.♖f2 a3 37.♖e2 ♖b2 38.♖xb2 axb2 39.♙e4 ♙xc4+ 40.♖d2 ♙a2 **0-1**

Game 72

Queen's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Ivan Radulov

Leningrad Interzonal 1973

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.b3 ♙e7 4.♙b2 0-0 5.♘c3 d5 6.e3 b6 7.d4 ♙b7 8.♙d3 c5 9.0-0 ♘bd7 10.♗e2



10...♘e4?!

Probably Black should not cross the 'demarcation line' so quickly.

11.cxd5 exd5 12.♗fd1 ♘xc3

The logical move was 12...f5, but after 13.♙a6, Black's d-pawn would be weak.

13.♙xc3 ♖c8 14.♖ac1 ♖c7

Prepares ...♗a8, but the rook at c7 is not well-defended.

15.dxc5 bxc5 16.♗c2! g6?

Better was 16...h6, although after 17.e4 the centre pawns are going to be questioned, since 17...d4? does not work because of 18.♙xd4.

17.e4 ♗a8?

Preferable was 17...dxe4.

18.♗d2! ♙f6

White would obtain a clear advantage after the following alternatives:

A) 18...dxe4 19.♗h6 ♘f6 20.♘g5 ♖e8 21.♘xh7!;

B) 18...♖fc8 19.exd5 ♙xd5 20.♙xg6 ♙xf3 21.♗h6!;

C) And finally, if 18...♖d8 19.exd5 ♙xd5 20.♙xg6 ♘f6 21.♗f4!.

19.♗f4 ♗d8 20.♙a5 ♘b6



21.b4!?

Quite good was 21.exd5, as the reply 21...♙xd5 loses a piece after 22.♙e4 ♖d7 23.♙xb6 axb6 24.♖xd5.

21...♙e7

I was now hoping for the desperate attempt 21...c4 22.♙xc4 ♖xc4 23.♖xc4 dxc4 24.♖xd8 ♖xd8 25.h4 and White wins easily.

22.exd5 ♙d6?

A bad position with very little time left: Black quickly succumbs.

23.♗h6 cxb4 24.♘g5 f5 25.♘e6 ♗d7 26.♖xc7 **1-0**

Chapter 21

Manila 1973

Asia was no longer a vast empty territory in the chess world. The continent where our game came to life now fights to regain the glory it deserves. We could say that the Philippines were, in 1973, at the forefront in this regard. Its federation controlled more than four thousand members, which compares favourably with many other countries. However the number of federated players is certainly not a true measure of understanding the rapid growth of chess in the Philippines. A better reference is in the 1700 players who participated in the Youth Championship that year.

It also had the enthusiastic support of the highest dignitaries of the nation and this was something that would allow them to look with the greatest optimism at the promotional programme that they had planned. To emphasize this last point it must be noted that it was none other than President Marcos who inaugurated the International Tournament in the Araneta Coliseum with the ceremonial moves against his special guest, the World Champion, Bobby Fischer. Three weeks later the President would hold the prize giving ceremony at the Presidential Palace.

This was the strongest tournament held in Asia to date, and the organisers now had new events planned. In other countries in that area, interest was still somewhat modest, but with good prospects. I had visited Japan, where the popular games are 'Go' and 'Shogi', but even here chess is booming.

An interesting point to bear in mind and which goes in favour of chess in the Philippines – compared to other sports like volleyball or basketball – is that height,

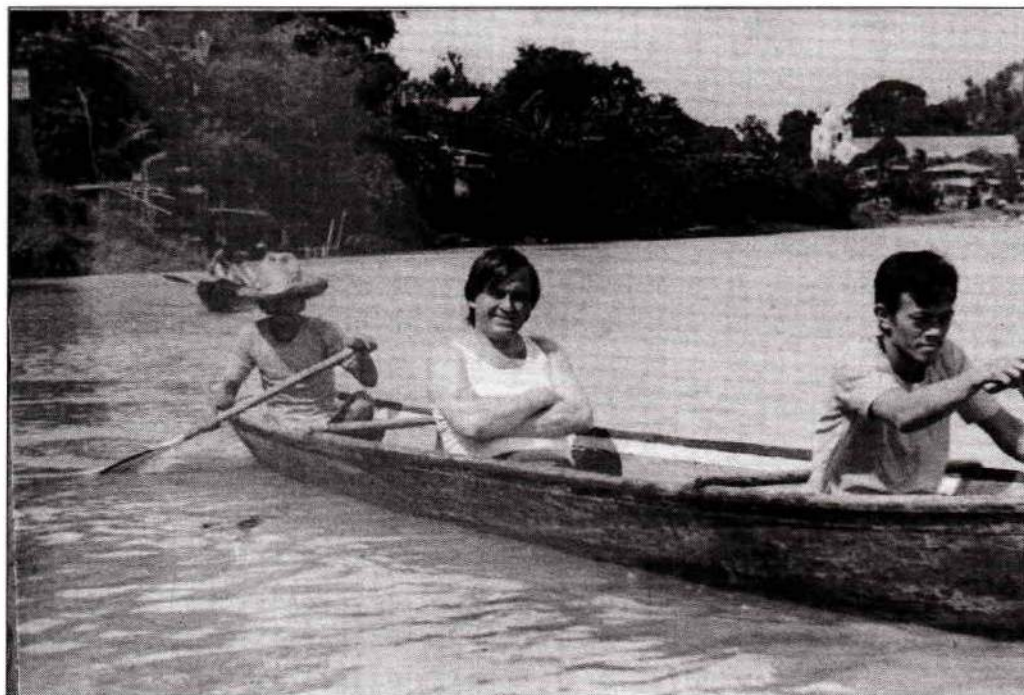
Manila 1973																		
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Larsen,Bent	2620	*	½	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	12.5
2	Ljubojevic,Ljubomir	2565	½	*	0	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	11.5
3	Kavalek,Lubomir	2565	½	1	*	½	½	½	0	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	11.0
4	Gligoric,Svetozar	2595	1	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	0	½	9.5
5	Lombardy,William	2520	0	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	½	0	½	1	1	9.0
6	Gheorghiu,Florin	2550	½	0	½	½	½	*	0	1	½	0	½	1	1	1	1	9.0
7	Tatai,Stefano	2430	0	0	1	½	0	1	*	½	1	0	0	1	½	1	1	8.5
8	Ivkov,Borislav	2520	0	½	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	8.5
9	Najdorf,Miguel	2525	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	½	*	½	1	1	½	½	1	8.0
10	Quinteros,Miguel	2520	0	0	½	0	0	1	1	½	½	*	½	0	1	1	1	8.0
11	Torre,Eugenio	2430	0	0	0	0	½	½	1	½	0	½	*	0	1	½	1	6.5
12	Cardoso,Radolfo Tan	2375	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	1	*	1	½	1	6.5
13	Naranja,Renato	2420	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	*	½	1	4.5
14	De Castro,Edgar	2285	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	*	½	4.0
15	Wotulo,Max Arie	2330	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	*	1.5
16	Ardiansyah,Haji	2350	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	½	1.5

in our game, plays no significant role. The average height of Filipinos is probably 4 inches lower than the Danes or Canadians and for most physical sports this will always be an obstacle. In chess, stature is unimportant, and the Philippines expected to produce their first Asian grandmaster soon. His name was Eugenio Torre, who played reasonably well in Leningrad (soon after, Eugenio Torre would defeat the then World Champion Anatoly Karpov). His opening repertoire would improve, and later he would be going to Europe to participate in as many tournaments as possible. In those two competitions that were held in his homeland he disappointed his countrymen somewhat as he did not defeat any of the grandmasters. However, on his birthday (22) he received his 'present' by beating the Italian IM Stefano Tatai.

The main impression which the Manila Tournament left was that which generally follows any major tournament. Some things were not one hundred per cent at the start, although generally, it could be said that it was a fine tournament. Rounds 5 and 6 were played in inadequate venues: no air conditioning in one and insufficient lighting in the other. The reason for such a change of venue was that Araneta Coliseum (capacity 40,000 people!) could not be used because an opera was to be staged there. This came as a surprise to the organisers – Campomanes was busy introducing Fischer everywhere – and everything was a bit chaotic for a couple of days.

No chess tournament ever had such TV coverage! Many days, 'home cinemas' had chess on their screens for five hours! Several giant screens were also installed in strategic locations in the city. These facilities, however, had a negative effect on the number of enthusiasts who actually attended, but ultimately it allowed the games to be seen by an invisible but innumerable number of spectators.

Once the tournament in Manila finished, we were invited to participate in a shorter one in Banang (a province situated 260km north of Manila), and it, too, received special attention from the media.



**Boat trip
during the
tournament in
Manila 1973.**

From the very beginning the tournament was an exciting race between three players. Italian readers may be interested to know that in the 8th round the leaders were: Ljubojevic, Larsen and Tatai, 6 points; Kavalek and Gligoric 5½ points.. But Tatai then lost the next three games and had to give up his hopes for the GM norm. Gligoric never appeared to be a contender for first place and his hopes of coming in second or third were definitely dashed when he tried to win a very difficult drawn endgame against De Castro, in the 13th round. In this same round Kavalek's chances of winning the tournament dissipated as he was unable to ward off a dangerous 'thrust' in the centre. His opponent Tatai won easily after destroying the Czech (now North American) grandmaster's desperate resistance: he was defending for a long time with a piece against the queen. Kavalek was always very close to the leaders and only half a point from Ljubojevic and me, but he had a very tight schedule.

In the 12th round Ljubojevic wasted a clear chance against Lombardy, and in the 13th, when he adjourned, he had good prospects for a win against Najdorf. However, when they resumed, he played so badly that he almost lost! Were nerves taking a hold among my closest rivals? Certainly my trajectory was difficult after losing in the 5th round. But then I won 9 consecutive games! Before the closing day I was heading the table one point ahead of Ljubojevic, precisely my opponent who was next in line. After 18 moves his position was so bad that he offered a draw.

Game 73

Sicilian Defence

William Lombardy

Bent Larsen

Manila 1973

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 d6 6.g4 h6
7.h3**

7.g5 is sharper but some American grandmasters favour the line proposed by Lombardy.

**7...♗c6 8.♙e3 ♙d7 9.♙g2 a6
10.♚e2 ♙e7 11.f4 ♚c7 12.♚f2!?**



A clever move which prevents 12...♗a5? in view of 13.♗xe6!. Black only has one good reply.

**12...♗xd4! 13.♙xd4 e5 14.♙b6
♚c4 15.0-0-0**

Lombardy rejects, with sound judgement, the advance of the pawn 15.f5, to which the reply was 15...♙c6! although for an instant I toyed with the wild idea 15...d5!?

15...exf4 16.♚he1 0-0

Typical of the Sicilian Defence. The struggle to get the initiative is so strong that later Black will not have time to castle. Now the king looks for a safe haven before the typhoon strikes the centre. The game is balanced though very difficult.

17.e5 dxe5 18.♚xe5 ♚fe8

It is difficult to choose between this and the other possible line 18...♚ae8. In this case a variation could have been: 19.♙xb7 ♙a3 20.♚xe8 ♚xe8 21.♚d4 ♚xd4 22.♙xd4 ♙xb2+! with a slight

advantage to Black. But White could play better with 19.g5 or 19.♙c5.

Now we arrive at the crucial point in the game. Lombardy has no advantage but refuses to admit it. He used up almost 30 minutes for his next move and a further 40 for move 20.

19.♖d4

To 19.♙xb7 the reply would still be 19...♙a3! (not 19...♖ab8 20.♖d4 ♗xc3 21.bxc3 ♙a3+ 22.♔d2 ♖xe5 23.♙c7!).

19...♗c8 20.g5?!

This is not as strong as it seems. White's minor pieces are not ready to attack the kingside; moreover he forgets to regain the f4-pawn. A solid continuation was 20.♖xf4 ♙c6 21.♙c5 with an even game.

20...hxg5 21.♖xg5



21...♘h7

The surest way forward. As my opponent was pressed for time, it was unreasonable to allow suicidal gifts on the castled position.

22.♖h5 ♙c6 23.♙e4?

This unfortunate affair cost Lombardy half the time he had left. Now he only had 3.5 minutes to complete the first control. Without a doubt, best was 23.♘d5. I was considering the reply 23...♗e6 24.♘c7 ♗e3+, but I would probably have decided on 23...♙xd5, and with correct play, Black should re-

tain the extra pawn, although White would have some tactical chances.

23...♙xe4 24.♘xe4 ♗e6

Also good was 24...♗c6.

25.♙c5 ♙xc5

Another alternative was 25...♖ad8. In any case, Black has a decisive advantage and an extra 15 minutes.

26.♘xc5 ♗g6

No more options left for White. 26...♗xa2?? would have been fatal due to 27.♖a4!.

27.♖h4

White must have been feeling sorry for not having taken the pawn earlier: 27.♖hd5 ♘f6 28.♖d6 f3!.

27...f3!

The same idea as the comment just made.

28.♖dg4

28.♗xf3 ♗g1+ forces White to resign.

28...♘g5 29.♘d3 ♖ac8 30.♗d2 0-1

White lost on time. 30...♖e2 wins immediately. A typical Sicilian: Black did not fully develop his pieces until move 29; by then, the battle was over!

Game 74

Ruy Lopez

Miguel Quinteros

Bent Larsen

Manila 1973

I did not submit any game for the 'Brilliant Prize'. The following, though, is probably my best game and one of the best in the tournament. I sacrificed two pawns, but according to the experts' criteria, it does not qualify to deserve the name 'brilliant'.

1.e4 e5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♙b5 ♘ge7

The Cozio Defence, which I have sometimes played with good results. It is totally justified to play it against Quinteros as he favours the exchange

variation (3...a6 4.♙xc6), against which it is difficult to play for a win.

4.c3 a6 5.♙a4 d6 6.d4 ♙d7

The game has reverted to the Steinitz Defence Deferred (or the Neo-Steinitz: 3...a6 4.♙a4 d6). However, with White's next move we move away from theoretical lines.

7.h4!?

A great idea, directed against ...♘g6 and ...g7-g6. I only saw one possibility in order to get a satisfactory game: ...exd4, although this is not usually done in this variation. I could have played it straight away but decided to wait one more move.

7...h6 8.h5 exd4 9.♘xd4?

I thought he would take with the c-pawn, e.g. 9.cxd4 d5 10.e5 with a complicated position. Exchanging knights is favourable for Black's development.

9...♙xd4 10.cxd4 d5 11.e5 ♙xa4 12.♙xa4+ ♘c6 13.♙e3

Possibly better is 13.a3.

13...♙d7

With the threat 14...♘xe5.

14.♘c3 ♙b4

White realizes too late that this is leading to a position with a bad bishop against a strong knight.

15.♙c2 0-0 16.0-0-0 ♙xc3!

Black now has a slight edge.

17.♙xc3 f6 18.f4?



Quinteros is still optimistic but the next move will make him think. 18.exf6 was preferable, although Black would have a good advantage.

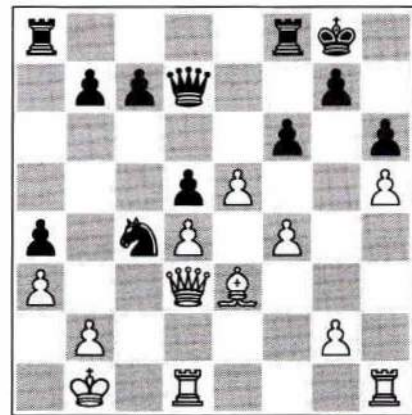
18...a5!!

A great move to increase the knight's potential. I hope this is also instructive to the student. To quote Nimzowitsch, *'Learning to create strong points for the knights is one of the most important things to be learnt'*. The ...♘b4 threat, combined with ...♙a6 and/or ...♙f5, is very strong. Also after 18.exf6 ♙xf6 19.g4!?, suggested by Ljubojevic after the game, 19...a5! would be favourable for Black.

Moreover, 17...a5 would also have been very good, but then, White would have realised the danger a move earlier!

19.a3 a4 20.♙b1 ♘a5 21.♙d3 ♘c4

What a great knight!



22.♙d2 fxe5!

Most of White's pawns have become somewhat more dangerous; however most of the black pawns opposing them are even more so!

23.dxe5

If 23.fxe5 ♙f2 would be depressing for White. Quinteros hopes to mobilize his kingside pawns but it is much easier for me to advance mine on the queenside. The knight's superiority is vital for Black's victory. You could say that Black

has a decisive advantage in this position.

23...♖ad8 24.♙c1 b5 25.♗he1 ♜fe8

Pressure on the e-pawn impedes any advance of the f-pawn.

26.♜f3 c5 27.♞d3?

This position is now untenable and this move is a waste of time – speaking of which, Quinteros had very little left.

27...d4 28.♞ed1 ♘a5 29.g4 ♘b3

White must have been tempted to sacrifice the exchange. However, after 30.♞xb3 axb3 31.♜xb3+ c4 32.♜f3 b4! 33.axb4 d3 Black wins outright.

30.♞e1 c4 31.♞dd1 b4 32.axb4 d3 33.♙d2 a3

Very strong but also very obvious. The game is now at that phase where the

only problem that Black has is to decide which of the various winning lines he is going to follow. I don't have the opportunity to do anything better to aspire for the 'Brilliancy Prize'.

34.bxa3 ♘d4

Or 34...♜d4.

35.♜f2 ♜a4 36.♙c3 ♘e2

With 36...♜c2+ I would take a rook but the text move is much stronger.

37.♙b2 ♜c2+

0-1

White lost on time. After 38.♙a1 c3 39.♞b1 ♞a8 40.♙c1 ♞xa3+ 41.♙xa3 ♞a8 mate is immediate.

A most instructive game with the theme being strong knight versus bad bishop.



Larsen, the tournament winner, congratulated by president Marcos of The Philippines. To the right Ljubomir Ljubojevic and Lubomir Kavalek.

Chapter 22

Las Palmas 1974

A Strongly Contested Tournament

The ‘City of Las Palmas’ tournament in 1974 turned out to be one of the most competitive of recent times. However, this was to a certain extent foreseen, since the organisers had taken pains to try to prevent players from agreeing draws early in the games as had been the case in the 1973 edition.

Only a handful of grandmasters actually agreed a quick draw this time round. Olafsson was playing very well and at the end of the 9th round he was clearly ahead of the field. However in the closing rounds his games deteriorated noticeably. There was a notable difference in his play during the first nine rounds and the latter six.

Probably very few of my readers have had sufficient time to view all the games played in the tournament. I will therefore be illustrating those which I consider to be the most instructive or interesting.

The game Ljubojevic-Olafsson in the 10th round turned out to be the most important – not because of the quality of play but because it was to prove instrumental for the Yugoslav eventually achieving first place. In subsequent rounds Ljubojevic played very well and was able to maintain the first position right until the end.

The winner’s best game was that which he played against Browne in the 9th round. This game also won the ‘brilliancy prize’ sponsored by Mr Turover. It is very difficult to determine whether the black sacrifice was totally correct. However it offers excellent possibilities in an actual game. Lady Luck also played her hand in favour of Ljubojevic on two other occasions which could have been crucial. One of these was in the game against Andersson. The other one was in my own game against Ljubojevic in the 8th round.



If instead of playing 53...♖c3? I had decided to play 53...♖a3!, the Yugoslav GM would have reached the final with two points less! Ljubojevic himself admits that his principal weakness lies in his impatience. It is this, together with a bit of luck (or sometimes bad luck) that forms part of his playing style.

There is something else I must mention in relation to Fridrik Olafsson, whom I have known for many years. There was a certain rivalry between us when we were both very young. Who would turn out to be the most promising Scandinavian player? Fridrik achieved international acclaim before I did. In 1955-56 he shared first prize with Kortchnoi in the Hastings Tournament. Later I beat him in a match and I achieved the GM norm two years before he did in the Chess Olympiad in Moscow in 1956. Olafsson, however, participated in the Candidates' Tournament before I was able to do so. Another interesting fact is that we drew only once in the first fifteen games we disputed.

Around the year 1956 there was as much interest in chess in Iceland as there was when they organised the Spassky-Fischer match years later in 1972. All his compatriots wanted Fridrik to play chess exclusively. When I say 'all' perhaps I may be prone to exaggeration since there was one main exception, who happened to be none other than Olafsson himself! He did not want to be referred to as a 'National Hero'; he was probably too timid. He therefore studied Law and later he found a job in the Ministry of Justice. A few years have gone by since that time and it seems that now he wants to return to the world of chess. To start with, he has taken a sabbatical, with pay, and after that..... who knows?

Having been almost inactive for a few years, Fridrik did not play very well in the last tournament held in Reykjavik in February. However in Las Palmas he has shown that he is still one of the strongest grandmasters. Unlike some of the favourites, both Beliavsky and 'Guillermi' García were classified in the top positions and achieved their GM norms. During the first round, in their own particular duel, the Soviet asserted his authority and, in spite of the harassment which he had to endure, he defended well. During the rest of the tournament García lost only one more game whilst Beliavsky remained unbeaten. They were both lucky but it is often said that luck favours the young. This luck may be due to the fact that it is a product of an aggressive and energetic style of play. García should have lost against Andersson and Polugaevsky, whilst Beliavsky had trouble when he played against me, against Kavalek in round 14 and against Hartston. What is important to note, however, is that although they *should* have lost, they never did! Both players will probably achieve the GM title very soon but it is too early to comment on any future progress they may make.

I personally have been more impressed with the Cuban's play rather than Beliavsky's. It is obvious that the Soviet has had a more in-depth study of theory. He has also played more games against grandmasters than García has, and he has had better coaching. Guillermo García was unknown internationally until a couple of years ago, but his progress has been astronomical. When he eventually obtains his GM title it will reflect to what extent chess has been promoted in Cuba over the past 12 years. A great talent has been discovered.

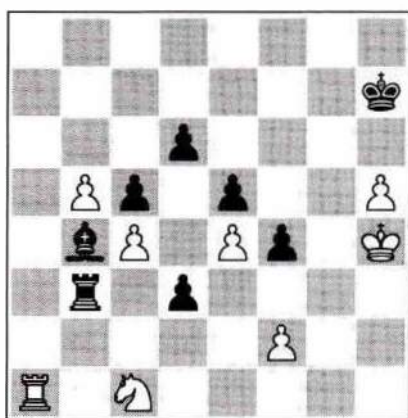
The most exciting games that these two young masters have disputed are: Beliavsky-Quinteros, 3rd round, where there was a rather dubious pawn sacrifice; García-Browne, 4th round; Beliavsky-Browne, 10th round; Olafsson-Beliavsky, 12th round; García-Bellón, 11th round, where Black would surely have drawn had Bellón played 42...g5!; Quinteros-García, 12th round, and García-Kavalek, 8th round, by virtue of its tragic ending.

Polugaevsky showed that he had not yet recovered from his match against Karpov. Although he did not lose a single game he slipped in some positions where he had great advantage. His best game was against Browne in round 7.

Andersson arrived in Las Palmas immediately following his great triumph in Camagüey (Cuba). He would have been better placed in Las Palmas had he not lost one and a half points on move 40, against García and against Ljubojevic. He was also lucky on some occasions. A very positive point here is that Andersson is learning to win games!

I don't think he would like me to mention the game he played against me in round 11. Although he managed to win it was on the basis of quite a poor position for him.

As far as my games were concerned, I must say that some were good whilst others were bad. I was rather demoralised at the start of the tournament, having lost two games. I still believe, however, that I could have won the tournament if I had not committed that grave error against Ljubojevic.



In this position I played:

53...♖c3??

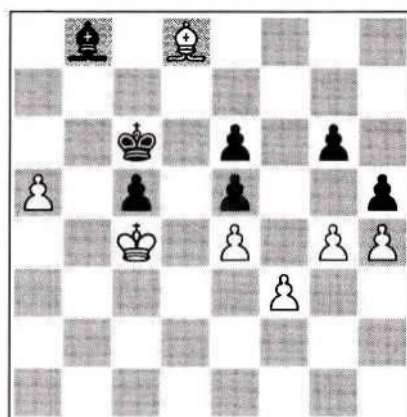
And after...

54.♟xd3! ♜xd3 55.♔g5!

... White's passed pawns proved to be more powerful than the piece. If we return to the diagram with Black to play...

After 53...♖a3! White would not now have much of a plan. For example, if 54.b6 (54.♖xa3 doesn't work because of 54...d2) 54...d2 55.b7 d1♔ 56.b8♗ ♔h1+ 57.♔g5 ♗g2+, and Black wins easily.

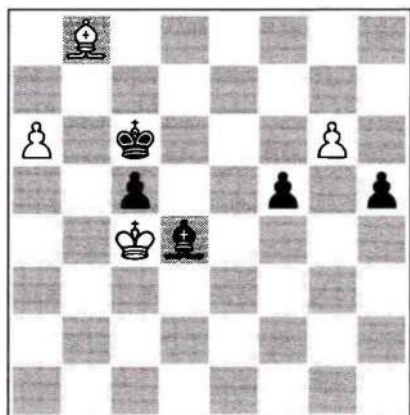
My best games were against Kavalek (round 1) and against Quinteros (round 5), although there is a much easier win:



51.a6! ♖a7 52.♖e7 ♖b6 53.♖f6 ♖c7 54.a7.

On the other hand I played

51.g5 ♖d6 52.♖b6 ♖e7 53.♖a7 ♖d8 54.a6 ♖a5 55.♖b8 ♖e1 56.♖xe5 ♖xh4 57.f4 ♖g3 58.♖b8 ♖f2 59.f5 exf5 60.exf5 gxf5 61.g6 ♖d4



62.♙d6 h4 63.♙xc5 ♙g7
64.♙g1 h3 65.♙d3 ♙h6 66.♙e2
h2 67.♙xh2 ♙b6 68.♙d3 ♙xa6
69.♙c4 ♙b6 70.♙d5 ♙b5
71.♙f4 ♙g7 72.♙e5 ♙h6
73.♙e6 ♙c6 74.♙f7 1-0

Another interesting game was against Menvielle, in round 14. I should also mention the endgame which I played against Olafsson. This actually obtained a prize for the Best Endgame.



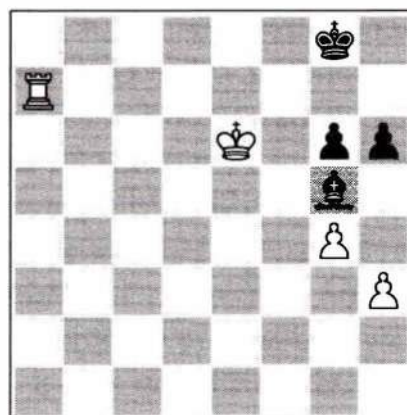
Olafsson played his sealed move in this position. It seemed to be the most natural, but turned out to be bad...

42.♙f3?

White would have had a winning position after 42.h4!. Now, however, I manage to build up a strong defensive position and one which proves to be most interesting as it does not appear in any book on endgames.

42...♙c5! 43.♙e4 ♙xe3
44.♙xd3 ♙xb6 45.♙xa3 ♙xf2

46.♙e4 g6 47.♙e5 ♙h4
48.♙a7+ ♙g8 49.♙e6 ♙g5



Although the game continued up to move 69, White lacks any possibility to force a win.

If you take a look at my game against Guillermo García, 3rd round:



You will see that with 10.♙xe5! I could have gained a pawn, because if 10...♙xe5 there follows 11.♙xd5 ♙xd2 12.♙f4!. I opted instead for the continuation 10.♙xd5 ♙xd5 11.♙xb4 ♙xb4 12.♙g5 ♙d7.

Quinteros is an interesting player, but he sometimes loses disastrously, as against Beliavsky and Olafsson. He played good games against Pomar, Menvielle, Andersson, and Ribli. He was in an inferior position in his game against Andersson; nevertheless he was able to create tactical problems that the Swede could not resolve.

Pomar's performance fluctuated. Would he have sufficient energy to withstand such a strong tournament? He fought admirably against Polugaevsky in the 2nd round and against Ljubojevic in the 4th. He also had a great win against Kavalek in the 12th round. In the 13th round against Hartston, he sacrificed a piece although it was insufficient to win. However, some of his games were not that impressive. I think he ought to prepare a more aggressive opening repertoire.

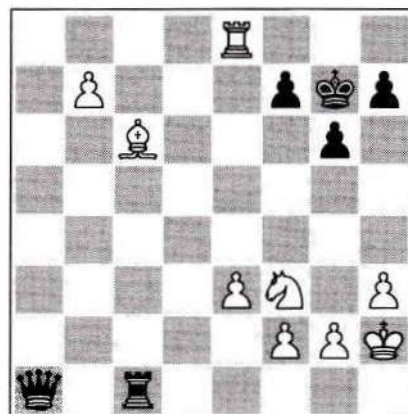
Ribli left some samples of fine positional play, in the Hungarian style. However he was not sufficiently incisive and he missed many tactical chances. His best game was against García in the 7th round and he also did well against Menvielle in the 3rd round.

The two Americans' play was disappointing; especially Kavalek, who had just come from tournaments where he had been playing well. On one occasion I told Pierre Dumesnil that with the likes of Kavalek, Ljubojevic and myself, there was sufficient 'material' to make the tournament most interesting as had been the case in Manila. But in Las Palmas, Kavalek was never 'in the running'. Many of his games were certainly interesting, although he may not have signed the score sheet as the winner. The opening in his game against Polugaevsky in the 11th round was the Sicilian Defence. Polugaevsky played a variation which led to Kavalek getting into a winning position by move 21. All he needed was an elementary combination to win: However, he missed it and drew!

On the other hand he played a good game against Hartston in the 7th round and another very good one against Bellón

in the 9th round. His game against Medina in the 15th round showed some interesting theoretical points.

Browne is an exciting player to observe in time trouble, although in such circumstances he usually makes many mistakes. He lost 4 or 5 games because of the clock: one of these was precisely against me.



In this position Browne played:

35...♖b1?

And after..

36.b8♙ ♖xb8 37.♗xb8 ♔a5

38.♗b7 ♔f8 39.e4 ♔c5 40.♕d5

f5 41.♘e5

Black resigned. However, Browne could have drawn in this way: 35...♗h1+! 36.♔g3 ♖b1 37.b8♙ ♖xb8 38.♗xb8 ♗f6!. But with only 8 minutes left to play 24 moves...

His victory over Ribli in the 1st round was probably his best game. What was significant in this game was the fact that the opening played was one that Browne knew perfectly well; as such, he was never pressed for time.

Bellón's play can be, at times, unemotional, and moreover he is not well-versed on modern opening theory. However, there are some variations that he knows very well, and Polugaevsky could not break that special variation

which Bellón plays in the Sicilian Defence, although I do not think that this line is advisable for Black. He also had a good game against Ljubojevic in the 1st round, and only lost by a serious oversight in the ending. His best game was against Quinteros in the 13th round, where he punished Black's artificial manoeuvres extremely well.

Menvielle does not know much opening theory either and, consequently, he was often left in inferior positions early in the games. He defeated Hartston in an interesting struggle in the 5th round, and also had a fine win against Bellón in the 7th round, after exchanging queens and maximizing his positional superiority. He sometimes missed good chances, as in the game against Kavalek in the 4th round. Surely Menvielle's excuse is his lack of practice in recent years. Both Medina's and Browne's main enemy is... the clock. This ruined many of their games.

Hartston's best games are almost always the ones he plays aggressively and those which are based on his good knowledge of the openings; but in Las Palmas, the game he played against me was the only one to be played in line with these observations.



Hartston knew that I had recommended 17...h6 for Black, and so, when I was stupid enough to play it, he obtained a very strong attack with 18.♖e3!. For those who are satisfied with half a point, Hartston-Ribli in the 6th round shows an easy way to achieve this with black.

To summarize: it was a hard-fought tournament, or, as appeared in the bulletin after the 10th round, *'the most disputed and beautiful competition we have ever seen in the Canaries'*.

Game 75

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Lubomir Kavalek

Las Palmas 1974

1.e4 c5 2.f4

This is the idea. In a small tournament in Bauang (Philippines) I played Bird's Opening against Kavalek (1.f4), but it is much easier to obtain more favourable lines in this opening starting with 1.e4.

2...e6 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.♙b5 ♘ge7 5.0-0 a6

Interesting is 5...d5 6.d3 a6, forcing 7.♙xc6+.

6.♙e2

Or 6.♙xc6 ♘xc6 7.d3, followed by ♖e1.

6...g6 7.d3 ♙g7 8.c3 0-0

Now Black could play 8...d5.

9.♙e3 d6 10.d4 cxd4

Very playable is 10...b6, and Black has a good game although I still prefer my position.

11.♘xd4

If 11.cxd4 f5 would be most annoying.

11...♘xd4 12.♙xd4 e5! 13.fxe5

**13...dxe5??**

13...♙xe5 was not good either in view of 14.♙xe5 dxe5 15.♖xd8 ♜xd8 16.♙c4, with a small advantage for White. But with 13...♘c6! 14.♙e3 ♘xe5 Black could get a level game. Much worse for me would have been 14.exd6 ♘xd4 15.cxd4 ♖xd6 16.e5 ♖b6! with Black obtaining the advantage.

14.♙c5 ♖c7

Another option is 14...♖xd1 15.♙xd1 ♜e8 16.♙b3. Or 14...♖e8 15.♖d6 ♘c6 16.♖c7. And finally, if 14...♙d7 15.♖d6 ♘c6 16.♙c4.

15.♖d6!

Very simple, but this is precisely the move that Kavalek missed during the game.

15...♖xd6 16.♙xd6 ♜e8 17.♙c4 ♙e6 18.♙xe6 fxe6

White has practically an extra pawn and should win the endgame.

19.♘a3 ♘c8

If 19...♜ad8 20.♜ad1 ♘d5?! 21.♙c5 b6 22.exd5 bxc5 23.d6!.

20.♙c5

Against 20.♙c7 there follows 20...♜a7!, but not 20...♜e7? 21.♜ad1!.

20...b6 21.♙e3 ♜a7 22.♜ad1

No good is 22.♘c4 due to 22...♜c7!.

22...♜c7 23.♜d3 ♙f8**24.♘b1**

The only counterplay at Black's disposal is that against the pawn on e4, which is why the knight has to go to its defence.

24...♜c6 25.♜d7

The rook exchange is useful since it prevents possible dangers for the king once I take it to the centre.

25...♘d6 26.♘d2 ♜e7 27.♜d8 ♜e8 28.♜xe8 ♘xe8 29.♙f2

The simplest. Also strong is 29.♘f3.

29...♘d6 30.♙e2 b5 31.♙d3

31.a4 would give Black some counterplay after 31...bxa4 32.♜a1 ♘b5 33.♜xa4 ♜xc3.

31...♘b7 32.♘f3 ♙g7**33.a4 ♘d6 34.axb5 axb5 35.♜a1 ♜c8 36.♜a6 ♘c4 37.♙c1**

h6 38.♔c2 ♖d8 39.♗xe6 ♔f7
40.♗c6 ♜d6 41.♗c7+ ♔g8
 41...♔f8 42.♜h4; or 41...♔f6 42.♜xe5.
42.♗c5 ♜xe4 43.♗xb5 ♖e8
44.♗b6 ♜f6? 45.♗xh6 e4
46.♗xg7 1-0

If 46...exf3 47.♗xf6. No good either is 46...♔xg7 47.♜d4 e3 48.♗e6.

Game 76

King's Indian Attack

Bent Larsen

Augusto Menvielle

Las Palmas 1974

1.e4 c5 2.♜f3 d6 3.g3

Deviating from the most analyzed variations in the Sicilian Defence. The positions normally arrived at after this move are quite well known. I have played this set-up several times, but I'm not sure I like it.

3...g6 4.♗g2 ♗g7 5.0-0 ♜c6
6.d3 ♜f6

The easiest solution is 6...e5, followed by ...♜ge7.

7.♗e1 0-0 8.c3 e5 9.a3

My favourite idea, though not very dangerous for Black. Anyway, I do not like the next two moves played by the Canarian as the position is transposing into a King's Indian where the loss of tempo for Black, due to ...d6-d5, is important.

9...d5 10.♜bd2 d4 11.♜c4 ♖e8
12.a4 ♗c7 13.cxd4 cxd4 14.♗d2



In my opinion White has the better game.

14...♗e6 15.♗c1 ♗xc4 16.♗xc4
a5 17.♗b3 ♜d7 18.♜g5

A rather tricky move. Also good is 18.♗ec1.

18...♗b6 19.♗a2 ♖e7 20.♗ec1
♗h6

Probably 20...h6 was better, but after 21.♜f3 White will have the advantage, firstly because the black rook at e7 will not be in a good position, and secondly, the advance of the pawn to h6 will weaken the castled position and White may play h2-h4 followed by h4-h5.

21.h4 ♔g7 22.♗h3 ♖ae8
23.♗xd7

Gaining an important square for the rook. Now I will be able to combine operations on both flanks. After the manoeuvre ♗c5-b5 and ♗b3 it will be extremely difficult for Black to defend his queenside pawns.

23...♗xd7 24.♗c5 ♗xg5 25.hxg5
♗d8 26.♗b3 f6 27.♗b5 ♗e7
28.gxf6+ ♔xf6



29.♗xa5

At this point I was attracted by the beautiful continuation 29.♗h6 g5 30.♗xb7, but then I realised that after 30...♜b4 there was no mating attack and Black would have strong counter-play. I also saw that the sacrifice

31.♖b6+ ♜d6 32.♜xd6+ ♔xd6
 33.♙xg5+ ♕xg5 34.♚f7 didn't work.
 Therefore the rather mundane continuation seemed to be the best way forward although the game could not now aspire to win the Brilliancy Prize.

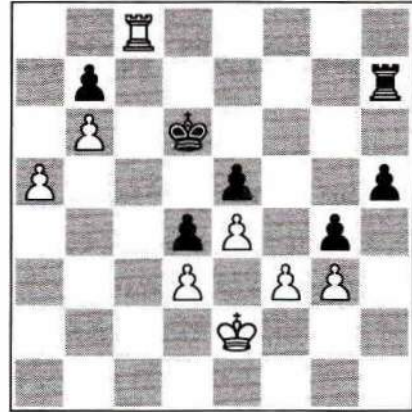
**29...♘xa5 30.♜xa5 ♖g7 31.♜d5
 ♜c7 32.♜xc7 ♚xc7 33.♚b5 ♜e7
 34.♚c5**

Forces the queen exchange. The rook endgame poses no difficulty.

**34...♚xc5 35.♜xc5 g5 36.a5 ♖f6
 37.b4 ♖e6 38.♖g2 g4 39.♜c8
 ♖d6 40.b5 h5 41.b6 ♜f7 42.♖f1
 ♜e7 43.♖e2 ♜h7 44.f3**

Another idea was 44.♖d2 ♜f7 45.♖c1 and the black rook cannot abandon the seventh rank because of a5-a6; neither can it stay permanently on f7 due to

zugzwang. This means that my king will get to the b5-square and victory will be assured.



**44...♜f7 45.fxg4 hxg4 46.♜g8
 ♖c6 47.♜xg4 ♖b5 48.♜g8 ♖xa5
 49.♜e8 ♖xb6 50.♜xe5 ♜d7
 51.g4 ♖c6 52.g5 b5 53.g6 ♜g7
 54.♜g5 b4 55.♖d2** 1-0

Chapter 23

The Spanish Team Championship 1974

The Spanish Team Chess Championship was held in Alicante in 1974. I played first board for the team CIDA from Las Palmas. This was my debut in a team competition in Spain, and it was a great experience, in the company of some of the best exponents of national and Canarian chess like José García Padrón and Fraguera.

This was the first time that the event would have two categories. This time my team CIDA was unable to claim the prize as they had done the previous year since the team Schweppes did not yield even a single draw. The fourth board in the Castilian team, Juan Manuel Bellón, was the main reason for this new triumph: he won the maximum of 9 points out of 9. Visier, playing second board for my team, did well to obtain 6 out of 9 whilst I achieved 7.5 points from 9 games.

There was good joint action of the Catalan teams: Spanish, Terrassa and UGA, who occupied positions 3 through 5 of the table.

Game 77

English Opening

Jaime Mora

Bent Larsen

Spanish Team Championship, Alicante 1974

Pedro Lezcano, President of the Inter-island Council of Gran Canaria: *'In this tournament there was a nice anecdote revealing Larsen's excellent humour. While Larsen was playing a game, one of the Club's officials had acquired some Danish newspapers at a newsagent in Alicante and gave them to Larsen in the playing hall. The Danish grandmaster was overjoyed to receive such news from his distant homeland and he browsed through the newspapers without delay.'*

The chief arbiter, always on the lookout to tackle any possible eventualities during the games, told one of the members in the Canarian team to make the chess reader aware that such a performance could be interpreted by his opponent as a slight. Once so informed, Larsen immediately put the newspapers away and

resumed the normal course of his game, which he ended up by winning. But, in the score sheet the grandmaster had written two witty comments:

Move 23: Larsen reads newspaper.

Move 19: My opponent has a large glass of brandy.

Thus leaving to the organisers' discretion to judge which of the two actions constituted the greater disdain against the opponent: reading a newspaper headline or entering an endgame under the influence of the Jerez delights!

1.c4 g6

A difficult move to make. Today is the last round and play has started at 9:30 am. At this time of day, any move is a difficult one.

2.♘f3 ♙g7 3.g3 c5

A most natural move with which I hope to control my temperament, as other much sharper, and therefore more dangerous, alternatives come to mind.

4.♙g2 ♘c6 5.0-0 d6 6.♘c3 ♙d7

Although the pawn formation may be symmetrical, placing the pieces symmetrically too is not an obligation.

7.d3 ♖c8 8.♙d2 h5

I have always liked to attack with the rook's pawn. When I noticed White's nervous reaction I realized that this move has a certain psychological value, although my main idea was to prepare the knight move to h6.

**9.h4? ♜h6 10.a3 ♙h3 11.♖a4
♙xg2 12.♙xg2 0-0 13.b4**

White has a small initiative on the queenside, but really it does not pose any serious threat.

13...♜f5 14.♖ab1 ♜e5 15.♜h2

Not very elegant. However some measures had to be taken as after 15.♜xe5 ♙xe5 the threat would be 16...♜xh4+!.

15...b6 16.f4?

Greatly weakens the g4 and e4-squares, but naturally the knight at h2 does not want to remain inactive.

16...♖b7+ 17.♙h3

If 17.♜f3 ♜xf3 18.exf3 and Black can make use of the d4-square indefinitely.

17...♜c6

Tempting was 17...♜g4; however, after 18.♜xg4 hxg4+ 19.♙h2! Black would not have gained much.

18.♜d5

Probably better was 18.b5 ♜cd4 19.e3 ♜e6 20.♜d5.

18...e6



19.e4?

A drastic decision with little time left and a somewhat inferior position. 19.♜e3 offered greater resistance.

19...exd5 20.exf5 dxc4 21.dxc4

If 21.bxc5 c3! would be very strong, followed by occupation of the e-file.

21...♖d7

The simplest. Originally my plan was 21...♜d4 22.fxg6 fxg6 23.♖be1 ♖f7, which also gives a very strong position.

22.♙g2 ♖ae8 23.♖be1 gxf5

24.♖d1 ♖xe1 25.♖xe1 ♖e8

26.♖xh5 ♖xe1 27.♙xe1 ♖e6 28.♙f2

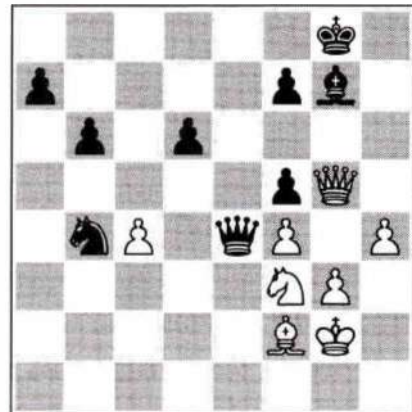
On 28.♖d1, 28...♜d4 would be strong.

28...cxb4 29.axb4 ♖e4+ 30.♜f3

♜xb4

If the game were to continue uneventfully, Black's passed pawn should be the deciding factor. Faced with this prospect, White plays his last card.

31.♖g5



31...f6

A very ugly move, but very precise.

32.♖g6

Against 32.♖h5, very strong would be 32...♜c2, with the threat ♖e2.

32...♜d3 33.h5 ♖e2 34.♜g5

Despair! If 34.h6 ♖xf2+ 35.♙h3 ♜xf4+! 36.gxf4 ♖xf3+ followed by the exchange of queens.

34...fxg5 35.h6 ♖xf2+ 36.♙h1

♖e1+ 37.♙h2 ♖d2+ 38.♙g1

♖c1+ 39.♙h2 ♖b2+ 0-1

Chapter 24

The Strongest Tournament of 1974 Vasiukov surprising winner in Manila

Three days after leaving Alicante I played with Ljubojevic in the first round of the strongest international tournament of 1974. I had also played against him in the last round of the Manila Tournament in 1973. On that occasion it was a decisive game where, with just a draw, I was able to take first place, whilst he had to be content with second place. I thought that this tournament would be a continuation of that previous one, but I was wrong; this time Ljubojevic got nowhere near the leaders. Many experts had considered him the favourite because of his victories in Las Palmas and in the Canadian Open. But it is always difficult to make predictions..... and it would have been crazy to predict a negative score for Portisch; in fact this has been his worst tournament in years.

After the excellent result of Eugenio Torre in the Chess Olympiad in Nice, many of his countrymen had high hopes for the first Asian grandmaster. However, as in the previous year, he disappointed them. Is it possible that Torre plays better abroad?

For most of the tournament there was a hard-fought battle between Vasiukov and myself whilst Petrosian waited in the sidelines for his chance in case we faltered. However, despite my good and most fortunate beginning, I felt that I was playing badly; I could not get used to the climate. In the middle of the tournament I lost a decisive game against Vasiukov, and soon after I lost two more against Kavalek and Pfleger. Goodbye to the \$ 5,000 first prize! (2nd \$ 3,000, 3rd \$ 2,000 and 4th \$ 1,000).

Vasiukov played his best tournament ever. He is usually very optimistic, but in this tournament he was able to control his temperament. He is 41 years old, and an interesting detail taken from his *curriculum vitae* is that he only learnt to play chess when he was 15 years old! There is probably no grandmaster alive today that learnt how to play chess so late! Many of Vasiukov's successes have been as a coach and analyst: for example, the good positions Taimanov reached with the white pieces in his match against Fischer in Vancouver, 1971, were due to his analysis.

With an average Elo of 2542 (Category XII), 7.5 points were enough to get the GM norm; but as we can see on the leaderboard, none of the three IMs came close. Pfleger is already a GM, although he has not yet received the title officially. Having met the norm requirements in Manila he confirms that he deserves the title as his first norms were quite easy: in Montilla-Moriles, 1973 and 1974 (in '74 all he needed was to win a single game) plus other results in the last Olympiad, where he stopped playing after obtaining the necessary points.

The tournament was sponsored by the tobacco company Marlboro. Interest in chess is so high in the Philippines that it is relatively easy to find patrons. I saw this

for myself during an exhibition tour accompanied by the two Soviets Petrosian and Vasiukov and where I, too, had private sponsors.

Probably my most exciting game was the one played in the first round.

Game 78

Polish Defence

Bent Larsen

Ljubomir Ljubojevic

Manila 1974

We had arrived the day before after a long and tiring journey. Kavalek and Petrosian agreed a draw in 12 moves even though they had arrived at Manila two days earlier. But Ljubojevic and I had to honour the image we had as fighters.

1.d4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 e6 3.g3 b5

Perfectly playable in this position. I've played it; and so has Karpov!

4.♙g2 ♙b7 5.0-0 c5 6.♙g5 ♚b6 7.a4?!



7...♘c6?!

'Ljubojevic is a grandmaster who does not take chess seriously', says Petrosian. 'See how lucky he is! He makes this move without seeing anything and, nevertheless, he doesn't lose!'

I'm not so sure that my last move was any good, and 7...b4 would have been an excellent reply.

8.dxc5 ♙xc5

Ljubojevic played this quickly, but now he is forced to play a series of 14 almost 'only' moves if he is to save himself!

9.axb5 ♚xb5 10.♘c3 ♚b4 11.♖a3!? ♘d4!

This is the only time when Ljubojevic was deep in thought (for 24 minutes). I studied the position for 52 minutes without reaching a clear conclusion. 12.♙xf6 gxf6 13.♘xd4 should give White a slight positional advantage, but most probably it does not offer definite winning lines after 13...♙xg2 14.♙xg2 ♙xd4. I then decided to play more sharply in search of victory. I was tired... but so was my opponent.

12.♘xd4 ♙xg2 13.♘db5!? ♙xf1 14.♖a4



14...♙xe2!

Once again the only move. 14...♚xb2? 15.♙c1? ♙xe2! is good for Black, but 15.♙xf1 gives White a clear advantage. Ljubojevic offered a draw at this point, but even though I only had 35 minutes left on the clock, I decided to go on.

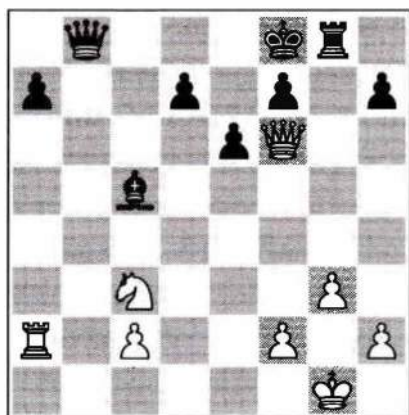
15.♚xe2 ♚xb2 16.♚f3!?

Now I only had 7 minutes left. Quite normal and simple was 16.♖a2 ♚b4 17.♖a4 and peace! And 16.♚d1 ♖b8 17.♙c1 ♚xb5 is very good for Black. The fact that White's e-pawn disappeared on move 14 makes all the difference.

16...♖b8 17.♖a2 ♚b4 18.♘c7+

With only 5 minutes left, this continuation is rather wild. There was a sure draw with 18.♖a4.

18...♙f8! 19.♙xf6 gxf6 20.♘a6 ♚b6 21.♘xb8 ♚xb8 22.♚xf6 ♖g8

**23.♘e4 ♚b1+**

1/2-1/2

There is perpetual check once Black takes the rook. Ljubojevic thought it over for ten minutes and then decided not to play for a win even though I had less than 2 minutes left to make 17 moves! The black king's position is so unsafe that having the extra pawn does not give any advantage.

Game 79

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen**Svetozar Gligoric**

Manila 1974

Why did I refer to the start of the tournament as 'fortunate'? This was especially on account of this next game in the 3rd round.

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3

I normally play strange variations in the Sicilian. In this tournament, I surprised my opponents quite a few times by playing 'normal' moves!

2...♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♙g5 e6 7.♚d2 a6 8.O-O-O h6 9.♙e3

**Manila 1974**

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	
1	Vasiukov, Evgeny	2560	*	½	1	1	½	½	1	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	10.5
2	Petrosian, Tigran	2640	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	½	9.5
3	Larsen, Bent	2630	0	½	*	½	1	0	½	0	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	9.0
4	Gheorghiu, Florin	2540	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	1	½	0	½	1	1	1	8.5
5	Gligoric, Svetozar	2585	½	0	0	½	*	½	½	½	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	8.5
6	Kavalek, Lubomir	2625	½	½	1	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	8.0
7	Ljubojevic, Ljubomir	2605	0	0	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	8.0
8	Pfleger, Helmut	2535	1	½	1	½	½	½	½	*	½	0	0	0	1	½	1	7.5
9	Andersson, Ulf	2580	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	1	1	7.5
10	Quinteros, Miguel	2495	½	0	0	½	1	½	0	1	½	*	0	0	1	1	1	7.0
11	Portisch, Lajos	2645	0	½	0	1	0	½	0	1	0	1	*	1	½	0	1	6.5
12	Torre, Eugenio	2450	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	1	½	1	0	*	½	1	1	6.5
13	Kraidman, Yair	2470	0	0	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	*	1	½	4.0
14	Cardoso, Radolfo Tan	2385	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	0	1	0	0	*	1	3.0
15	Naranja, Renato	2395	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	*	1.0

I did not feel very confident with the complications that arise after 9.♙h4!? ♜xe4!?

9...♙d7 10.f3 b5 11.g4 b4
12.♜xc6 ♙xc6 13.♜e2 d5
14.♜d4 ♙b7 15.e5 ♜d7 16.f4
♜c5 17.♙g2?

17.♙d3 is much better.

17...♜e4 18.♚e2 ♚c7 19.♙b1
♙e7 20.♚hf1 0-0!



21.♚f3??

This attack is too slow. 21.f5 was necessary and the game would have been more or less even.

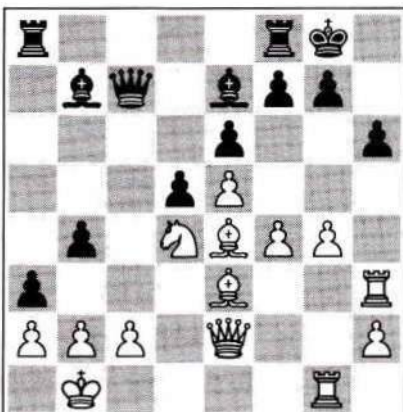
21...a5 22.♚g1?

Better is 22.♚h3 ♙a6 23.♚e1 a4
24.♙xe4 dxe4 25.g5.

22...a4 23.♚h3 a3

After the game Ljubojevic analysed 23...♙a6 24.♚e1 ♜c3+! and White would be defenceless.

24.♙xe4



24...axb2?!

Looks strong, but the simple 24...dxe4 is better. Right at this moment I realised the numerous dangers that the position was exposed to and I fervently studied all continuations possible.

25.♙h7+! ♜xh7 26.♚d3+!

I saw that 26.♜xe6 fxe6 27.♚d3+ ♜g8 28.♚xh6 ♚fc8 would give Black an easy win. After the text move Black maintains the advantage with 26...♜g8 27.g5 ♚a5, although White's position isn't all that desperate.

26...♜h8? 27.f5 ♚c4??

I couldn't believe my eyes! Perhaps now I could even win! What had Gligoric seen? He should have played 27...♚a5 28.♚b3 ♚fc8, although this gives White some counterplay.

28.♚xc4 dxc4 29.f6 gxf6

The best defence was 29...♙d8, but White wins the exchange with 30.fxg7+. Against 29...♙c5 I would have played 30.♜xe6 fxe6 31.♙xc5, winning sufficient pawns.

Firstly I saw that I could win a minor piece with 30.exf6 ♙xf6 31.♚xh6+ ♜g7 32.♜f5+, but later I realised that I could win a rook instead.

30.♙xh6 ♚fe8

If 30...♜g8 31.♜f5!.

31.♜f5!

1-0

So much luck!

Game 80

Sicilian Defence

Evgeny Vasiukov

Bent Larsen

Manila 1974

1.e4 c5 2.♜f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♜xd4 ♜f6 5.♜c3 d6 6.g4 h6
7.h4

In Manila 1973, Lombardy-Larsen continued 7.♙g2, but White lost.

7...♘c6 8.♙g1 h5

White threatened 9.g5 hxg5 10.hxg5 ♘d7 11.g6. Now the intention is to reply to 9.g5 with 9...♘g4, since 10.f3 ♘ge5 would give excellent play to Black.

9.gxh5 ♘xh5 10.♙g5 ♖c7 11.♚d2

If 11.♘db5 ♚b8 followed by ...a7-a6.

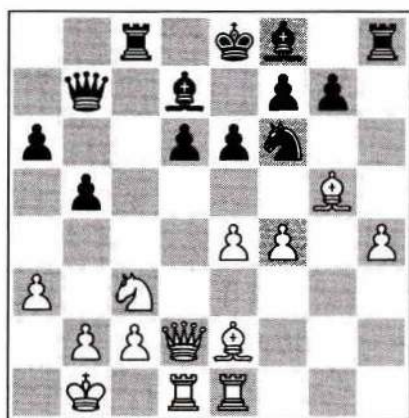
11...a6 12.0-0-0 ♘xd4 13.♚xd4 ♙d7 14.♙b1 ♖c8 15.♙e2 b5 16.♗ge1 ♚c5 17.♚d2 ♘f6

Why this retreat? Probably fearing an eventual ♘d5!.

18.a3 ♚c7

This move is possibly rather timid. Perhaps 18...b4!?

19.f4 ♚b7



20.e5! dxe5 21.♙f3!

Now White has a strong initiative. The normal move 21.fxe5 would have been answered with 21...b4!.

21...♚xf3

If 21...e4 22.♘xe4 ♘xe4 23.♖xe4!, which would immediately threaten 24.♖xe6+!.

22.♙xf6 ♚c6 23.♘e4 b4

If 23...gxf6 24.♘xf6+ ♙e7 25.fxe5, with the threats 26.♚xd7+ and 26.♚g5.

24.fxe5 bxa3 25.♖e3 ♚xc2+

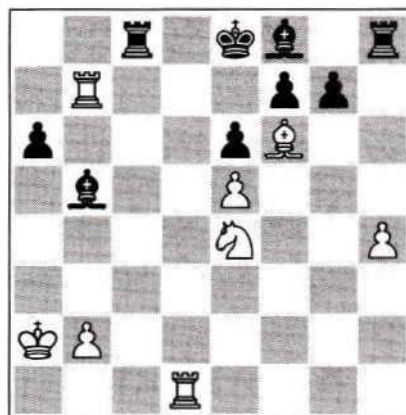
A tactical resource but one which will not be enough to save the game.

26.♚xc2 a2+ 27.♙xa2 ♖xc2 28.♖b3!

Taking the initiative in this case is a decisive factor.

28...♖c8 29.♖b7 ♙b5

No good is 29...♙c6 because of 30.♖c7!.



30.♙xg7! ♙xg7 31.♘d6+ ♙f8 32.♘xc8 ♙xe5 33.♖d8+ ♙g7 34.♖xh8 ♙xh8 35.♖xf7 ♙g3 36.h5 ♙e2 37.h6 e5 38.♘d6 ♙f4 39.♖e7 ♙h5 40.♙b3 ♙g6 41.♘f7+ ♙xf7+ 42.♖xf7 ♙xh6 43.♖a7 ♙g8 44.♙c4 ♙f8 45.♙d5 ♙c1 46.b3 ♙b2 47.♖xa6 ♙e7 48.♖h6 ♙c3 49.♖c6 1-0

Bishop or Knight?

Donner's Rule

Do you know Donner's Rule? 'In normal positions, the pair of queen and knight is stronger than queen and bishop, but rook and bishop is stronger than rook and knight'. Donner has told me quite a few times how players who were not aware of this principle, have made the wrong exchange in winning positions, and ended up losing the game.

But then, rules are rules and, naturally, there are exceptions. First let us have a look at a game in which the rook and bishop, in fact, turns out to be stronger than the rook and knight.

Game 81

Sicilian Defence
Eugenio Torre
Bent Larsen
 Manila 1974

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
 4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 d6 6.♕e2
 ♕e7 7.0-0 ♗c6 8.♕e3 ♕d7
 9.♗db5 ♜b8 10.a4 0-0 11.f4
 ♞c8!?**



Afterwards I saw in *Informant* that in this position, Polugaevsky had played 11...♞d8. Probably, my opponent, who was well-versed in opening theory, was prepared for this move.

**12.♖h1 ♗b4 13.♕f3 a6 14.♗d4
 e5 15.fxe5**

If 15.♗f5 ♕xf5 16.exf5 e4 is good for Black.

15...dxe5 16.♗f5 ♕xf5 17.exf5



17...e4 18.♕xe4

The withdrawal 18.♕e2 would give Black the advantage after 18...♕d6.

18...♗xe4 19.♗xe4 ♜e5

Weak is 19...♗xc2 because of 20.♕f4, followed by f6.

20.♜g4 h5 21.♜f3 ♗xc2

After 21...♞c4 White would play 22.f6 ♞xe4 23.fxe7, and would end up with at least a draw. Now the best continuation is 22.♕f4 ♜xf5 23.♞ad1, and if 23...h4 24.♞d7 recovers the pawn with a level game.

22.f6?



22...♗xe3! 23.♜xe3 ♕d6

An unexpected move for White.

24.♜g3 ♜xg3 25.hxg3

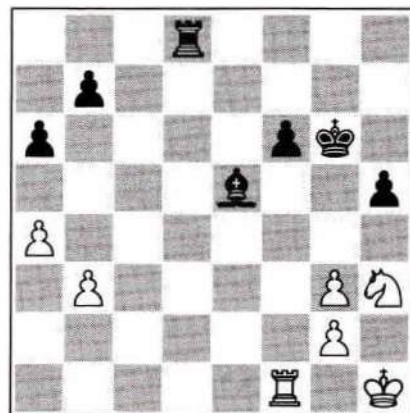
After 25.♗xg3 g6 Black would be much better.

25...♕e5 26.fxg7 ♖xg7 27.♞f5 f6

28.♞af1 ♞c6 29.b3 ♖g6 30.♞5f3

♞d8 31.♗f2 ♞c3 32.♞xc3 ♕xc3

33.♗h3 ♕e5



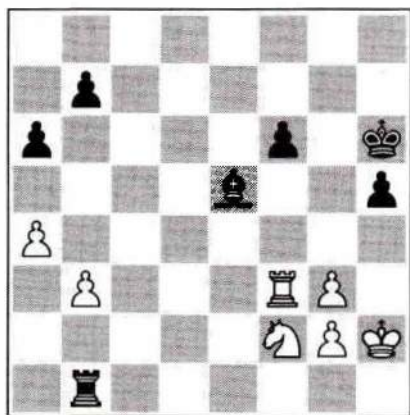
In this position the bishop is clearly superior to the knight. There are pawns

on both flanks and also, Black is the only one who has the option to get some action going on the queenside.

**34.♖f4+ ♔h6 35.♖h2 ♜d2
36.♞f3 ♞d1 37.♗d3 ♖g6**

If White now played 38.♗xe5+ Black would win thanks to the passed pawn and his more active king.

**38.♗f4+ ♖g5 39.♗h3+ ♔h6
40.♗f2 ♞b1**



Adjourned. I spent a very long time analyzing this position, particularly the move 41.♗d3. Finally I was satisfied with the possibilities which a rook ending offered: 41.♗d3 ♖g5 42.♗f2 ♖g6 (not 42...h4 43.♖h3!) 43.♗d3 a5 44.♗f4+ ♖g5 45.♗h3+ ♔h6 46.♗f4 b6 47.♗d3 ♖g6 48.♗f4+ ♞xf4 49.gxf4 ♖f5 (not 49...h4? 50.♞d3! ♖f5 51.♞d5+ ♖xf4 52.♞b5 with better defence prospects) 50.♖g3 ♞h1 51.♖f2 h4 and it seems that the activity of the black pieces guarantees victory. However, considering that rook endings are always a little 'suspect', I looked for something without the need to exchange the minor pieces, but I did not find it.

41.♗e4

All the hours spent in analysis gone down the drain! I would have been better off had I slept a few more hours. During the previous analysis I quickly

concluded that if White played 41.♗e4 I could easily win. The trouble now was, could I remember how....?

41...♖g6 42.♗d2

If 42.♗f2 h4! 43.♗e4 f5 or 43.♗h1 ♖g5!.

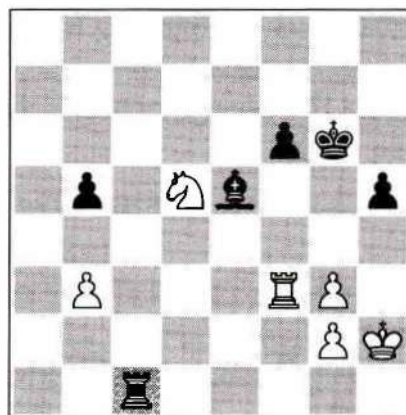
**42...♞d1 43.♗c4 ♞b8 44.♗e3
♞b1 45.♗f1 ♞e5?**

This is pure fantasy. Much stronger is 45...♞b2!, preparing the manoeuvre ...♞e5 followed by ...b7-b5, ...b5-b4 and ...♞c3, against which there is no satisfactory defence.

**46.♗d2 ♞c1 47.♗c4 ♞c7
48.♗e3 b5??**

Correct is 48...♞b1, and if 49.♗f1, then I would play the move I had forgotten to make earlier: 49...♞b2. As for the line 49.♗d5 ♞e5 50.♗f4+ ♖g5, we could then reach the rook endgame that I mentioned following the adjournment.

49.axb5 axb5 50.♗d5 ♞e5



51.♗e3??

51.♗f4+ gives good possibilities for a draw as, after eliminating a couple of the queenside pawns, the rook ending does not give much scope for anything else. Certainly there would still be a lot of play left but with very little prospects of finding a winning method for Black.

51...♞b1 52.♗f1

If 52.♘d5, then 52...h4 53.♘f4+ ♔g5
54.gxh4+ ♔g4.

52...♖b2!

This time I did not forget!

53.♔h3 ♔g5 54.♘h2 ♖b1

55.♖d3 ♔f5 56.♖f3+ ♔g5

Also very good is 56...♔e4, but the most important step to take at this stage was to pass the time control.

57.♖e3 ♔g6 58.♖f3 b4 59.♘f1

♔c3 60.g4 hxg4+ 61.♔xg4

♖xb3 62.♖d3 ♖a3 63.♔f3 ♔e5

64.♔e2 ♖xd3 65.♔xd3 b3

66.♘d2 b2 67.♔c2 ♔f5 68.♔d3

♔f4 69.♔e2 ♔g3 70.♔f1 f5

71.♘b1 ♔d6 72.♘c3 ♔b4

73.♘b1 ♔a5 74.♘a3 ♔c3

75.♘b1 ♔b4

A typical manoeuvre to place White in *zugzwang*.

76.♔g1 f4 77.♔f1 f3

And White resigned. After 78.gxf3 ♔xf3 79.♔g1 ♔e2, the unfortunate knight dies in his cell.

Every Rule Has Its Exception

Game 82

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Lajos Portisch

Manila 1974

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4

4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♔g5

This was the first time in my life that I played this position as White.

6...e6 7.f4 ♔e7 8.♖f3 ♖c7

9.0-0 ♘bd7 10.♔e2

The two fashionable lines are, naturally, 10.♔d3 and 10.g4. That, in itself, is enough for me to choose something different against the expert Hungarian grandmaster.

10...b5 11.♔xf6 ♘xf6 12.e5 ♔b7



13.♖g3

According to my analyses 13.exf6 fails to give White any winning options. It was played for the first time in the famous game Keres-Fischer in the Candidates' in 1959. Readers will probably recall that I was Fischer's second there.

13...dxe5 14.fxe5 ♘d7 15.♔f3

This move may well be new or ancient. Well-known is 15.♖xg7 ♖xe5, with a very agreeable position for Black. The problem that Black faces will be well-resolved by Portisch but at the cost of a lengthy amount of time.

15...♔xf3 16.gxf3 g6

The alternative 16...♖xe5 17.f4 ♖f6 18.♖hg1 is very unpleasant for Black. For example, 18...0-0? 19.♘c6, winning a piece. Another option was 16...b4 (considered to be the strongest by the grandmasters who participated in the tournament) with the idea of 17.♘e4? ♖xe5. However, after 17.♖xg7 ♖xe5 18.♖xe5 ♘xe5 19.♘e4, the ending would be very satisfactory for White because the black king does not have a safe haven, and the eventual advance of the king's bishop's pawn could create serious problems.

17.f4 ♖b7 18.h4 0-0-0



White has nothing.

19. ♖f3

Against the natural 19.h5 Black replies 19...♗xe5!.

19...b4 20. ♖e2 ♗c5 21. ♖g5

♗df8 22. ♕e3 h6 23. ♖f3 ♗d8

24. ♖ed4 ♗d7 25. ♖b3 ♖xb3+?

With 25...♕e4 Black's position would be good.

26. axb3 ♗hd8 27. ♗xd7 ♕xd7

28. h5 gxh5 29. ♕e2 ♕b5

30. ♕xb5 axb5 31. ♗xh5 ♗f8

31...♗c5 does not make Black's life any easier: 32. ♗xh6 ♗e3+ 33. ♖b1 ♗d1+ 34. ♖a2 ♗f1 35. ♖g5 ♗xf4 36. ♗h7.

32. ♖e1 ♗d5 33. ♖d3 ♖d8

34. ♖d2



34...f5

Doubtful. After the game, the Hungarian grandmaster was not happy with this move, saying that he had overestimated his position. Now Black will not be able to exchange pawns through a

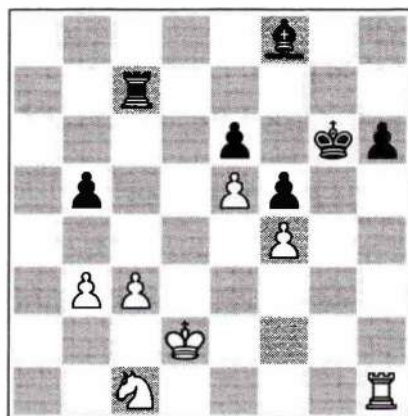
possible ...f7-f6 advance. This was bound to be important when a draw was at stake.

35. ♖e3 ♖e8 36. ♗h1 ♗d7 37. c3

bxc3 38. bxc3 ♗c7 39. ♖d2 ♖f7

40. ♖c1 ♖g6

Portisch still had 9 minutes, but he played too fast. After the game he said that he had not foreseen just how strong my next move would turn out to be. In any case, if Black had played 40...b4, after 41.c4, followed by ♖d3 and eventually c4-c5, White would have maintained excellent chances of winning.



41.b4!

Gligoric told me that when the white knight arrived at the d4-square it was the most striking thing he had seen in a long time. Naturally, the black bishop is not the classic bad bishop: it isn't blocked by its own pawns, but by those of his opponent. Now, depending on what defence Black adopts, the white pawn at f4 can be defended by the knight whilst the rook will try to penetrate; or perhaps the rook could defend whilst the knight takes charge of capturing the pawns.

41...♗d7+

The sealed move. If 41...♗c4 42. ♖e2 h5 43. ♖e3, and the rook will move to a1, breaking through decisively. Neither

is the following sufficient: 42...♖e4 43.♔d3 h5 44.♘d4 ♕h6 45.♗g1+ ♔f7 46.♘xb5 ♖xf4 47.♘d6+ ♔e7 48.b5, and this pawn would be very strong. In this last line, the following would not work either: 45...♔h7 46.♘xe6 ♕xf4 47.♘f8+ ♔h8 48.♘d7 ♕xe5 49.♗g5 ♖e1 50.♖xf5 ♖d1+ 51.♔c2 ♖xd7 52.♖xh5+ ♔g7 53.♖xe5 and wins.

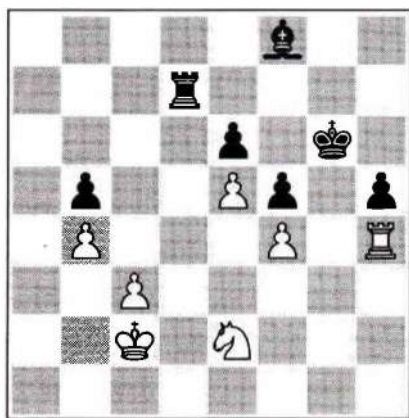
42.♔c2

But not 42.♔e3 ♕e7! 43.♘e2 ♕d8 44.♘d4 ♕b6, with a probable draw.

42...h5

Or 42...♖c7 43.♔b3 ♖c4 44.♘e2 ♖e4 45.♘d4 h5 46.♗g1+ (46.♘xe6 would also win) 46...♔f7 47.♘xb5 ♖xf4 48.♘d6+ ♔e7 49.b5, with a decisive advantage.

43.♘e2 ♕h6 44.♖h4 ♕f8



45.♖h3! ♖h7

In case of 45...♕h6 46.♖g3+ ♔f7 47.♖d3, and if there is an exchange of

rooks, White wins easily by taking the king over to the flank bearing his name.

46.♘d4 h4 47.♘xe6 ♕e7

As happened against Torre, my biggest problem at this moment was to recall my analyses because the fact was that my opponent did not choose what seemed to me to be the most resistant line.

Put simply, this was not a variation I had worked out in any depth. Now I cannot continue with 45.♘d4 because of 45...♕xb4 with some counterplay.

48.♔d3 ♔h5 49.♔e3 ♔g4 50.♖h1 ♔g3

If 50...h3 51.♗g1+ ♔h4 52.♘d4 h2 53.♘xf5+ ♔h5 54.♖h1, and White wins. Really, it is the knight that does everything.

51.♗g1+ ♔h2 52.♔f2 ♖h6

If 52...h3 53.♘d4 ♕h4+ 54.♔f1, and Black cannot escape the mate.

53.♘d4 ♖a6 54.♗g2+ ♔h1 55.♗g1+ ♔h2 56.♗g2+

Once the time control is over, the rest is easy.

56...♔h1

Before playing, Portisch had a good look at his score sheet to see if the same move had been repeated three times.

57.♗g7

1-0

Any reasonable continuations win easily for White. My idea was to reply to 57...♕d8, with 58.e6, etc.

Chapter 25

Report from Orense 1975

In my opinion, the Orense Tournament started badly, but then improved. I arrived convinced that it would begin on 15 January with 12 players. However it turned out that the opening had been postponed until the 16th and to top it all there were four more participants!

I was annoyed by the lack of information; moreover I do not consider it appropriate that a serious 15-round tournament can be played over 16 days. They finally added a couple of rest days and I stayed.

Initially I did not feel in good form. I lost against Cardoso (he played a good game), and against Hernando (I lost a piece on move 8 and I refused to accept a draw on the 12th). Then I woke up! In the early rounds the leaders were Cardoso, Díez del Corral and Guillermo García.

In the 7th round Ljubojevic rejected a draw offer on two or three occasions, virtually forcing Gheorghiu to win the game and take first place in the rankings. This obliged me to try and beat the Rumanian player, if I wanted to aspire to take the lead. When I played him in the 10th round my score against the grandmasters was very good with 6 out of a possible 7 points. So, that's how things were, and I think I deserved to win the tournament.

The tournament reached Category 10, with an average Elo of 2475.6. For Guillermo García, who aspired to get his 2nd GM norm, this meant that he needed to get 9 points. He did not succeed, as also happened earlier in Hastings. After Orense he travelled to Malaga (Costa del Sol tournament), looking for his 2nd norm. He will succeed one day! At present, grandmasters consider him to be a future colleague.

I do not understand Díez del Corral too well. Is it so terrible to lose a pawn against Pomar in the 6th round and for this to affect his play the rest of the tournament?

I do not understand Bellón either. Some of his games were good whilst others were really bad with amazing positional errors.

Keene is a master in strategy, but not so in tactics. When he gets into a good position, he seems unsure.

Pomar began with 5 draws. He had good chances to win in two of them, but he played without energy. His win against Díez del Corral boosted his morale and he finished the tournament with a good result. In the 11th round he made mistakes early in the game and Ljubojevic beat him with no difficulty. Now I am not so sure if Pomar lost through lack of energy or lack of ambition.

As to the others? There weren't any surprises. It had been some time since Andersson had played so well. It's not often that we see him win eight games in a tournament.

I finish by highlighting the strong fighting spirit that was evident in most rounds. This is shown by the low percentage of draws: 35%.

Game 83

Owen's Defence

Guillermo García

Bent Larsen

Orense 1975

1.♘f3 b6!?

The unforgettable Tartakower, which has its origins in the Karlsbad Tournament, as noted in the tournament book. Actually it is known that 1...b5 is preferable.

2.e4 ♘b7 3.♘c3 e6 4.d4 ♘b4
5.♘d3 ♘xc3+ 6.bxc3 ♘e7 7.0-0
d6 8.♞e1 ♘d7 9.e5!?



The young Cuban master wants an open position but now the black bishop works well on the long diagonal.

9...dxe5 10.♘xe5 ♘xe5 11.♞xe5
♘g6 12.♞h5 ♞d7 13.a4 a6!?

Probably better is 13...0-0.

14.♞a3!? f5!?

Once again 14...0-0 could be considered.

15.♘f1 h6



Black wants to play ...♞d8 before castling so as to hinder White's plan of advancing c3-c4 followed by ♞g3.

16.♞h3 0-0 17.a5

Offering a draw. García could no longer achieve the GM norm. The advantage I had over Ljubojevic and Andersson was only half a point. Agree to a draw? No way! I did not want to share first prize!

17...b5 18.c4 ♞ad8 19.cxb5 axb5
20.♞h5 ♞f6 21.♞hb3

21.a6! is better.

21...♘a6 22.♞a2?

The white rooks' manoeuvres are worthy of consideration but these last two moves have alleviated Black's position somewhat. There is also something else that has been alleviated.... my nervous tension. Andersson and Ljubojevic have just agreed a draw.

22...♞c6 23.♞g3 ♘f7!

An exception. Normally it is bad to 'walk into' a pin.

24.♞aa3 ♞xd4 25.♘b2 ♞h4
26.♞d1 e5



27.♞gc3

Playing the other rook is not any better. If 27.♞ac3 ♞c4 28.♘xc4+ bxc4 29.♞h5 f4 and Black would be better.

27...♞c4 28.♞xc4 bxc4 29.♘c3
♞d6 30.♞h5 ♘f6 31.♞a1 ♞e4
32.♞c1 ♘f4?

Black had 7 minutes left and White just over 3. With 32...♖d8 there would have been excellent chances of winning.

33.♖e8! ♕b7 34.♖f8+??

With 34.♖e1! ♖h3+ 35.♔h1 ♖xf2+ 36.♔g1 ♖h3+ we would have drawn.

**34...♔g6 35.♖e8+ ♔h7
36.♖xe5 ♖e2+ 37.♔h1 ♖xe5
38.♕xe5 ♖xc1 39.♕xd6 cxd6
40.♕xc4 d5 41.a6 ♕a8 42.♕b5
♖a2 43.♕d7 ♔g6 0-1**

A game full of errors, but also with original ideas from both players.

**9.g5 ♖h7 10.♖d2 f5 11.h4 ♖f8
12.c5 a6 13.b4 ♖d7 14.a4 0-0
15.a5**



Marshall once won a game only by moving his pawns. Of course, this was against a really weak player. Playing 12 pawn moves and only 3 pieces against a grandmaster normally leads to trouble. However, in this particular case, it is decisively advantageous.

In this position, the black pieces do not have much space due to White's pawn structure on the kingside. This deprives him of any counterplay. It may seem strange, but the great Petrosian once had to deal with this straight jacket on the kingside.

**15...♔h7 16.♖ge2 ♖f7 17.♖c1
♖f8 18.♕e2 c6**

Despair!

**19.cxd6 ♖xd6 20.♕c5 ♖d8
21.d6 ♖g8**

A rather inactive knight!

**22.♖b3 ♖e8 23.♕e3 ♖e6
24.♖d1 ♕d7 25.0-0 ♖d8 26.♕c4
♖f8 27.♕b6 ♖b8 28.♖e2 fxe4
29.fxe4 ♖d4 30.♖xf8 ♖xf8
31.♖bxd4 exd4 32.♖f1! ♖e8**

If 32...♖xd6 33.♖f7 there would be no hope for Black.

**33.♖f4 ♖e5 34.♕f7 ♖xd6
35.♕xg6+ ♔h8 36.♕xh5 d3
37.e5 ♕xe5 38.♖g6+ ♔g7
39.♖xe5 ♖xe5 40.♖xd3 1-0**

Game 84

King's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Miguel Quinteros

Orense 1975

**1.c4 g6 2.d4 ♕g7 3.e4 d6 4.♖c3
♖c6 5.♕e3 e5 6.d5 ♖ce7**



7.g4!?

Also good is 7.c5.

7...♖f6

Interesting is 7...f5!? for instance:
8.gxf5 gxf5 9.♖h5+ ♖f8 10.♕h3.

8.f3 h5?

There are many better moves like, for instance 8...c6, 8...c5 and 8...0-0. Quinteros told me after the game that once he had made this bad move he was on the point of resigning.

Game 85

Réti Opening
Bent Larsen
Arturo Pomar
Orense 1975

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.b3 e6 3.♙b2 b6
4.g3 ♙b7 5.♙g2 d5 6.c4 ♘bd7
7.0-0 ♙d6 8.♘c3 0-0 9.♚c2 a6
10.cxd5 exd5 11.d3 ♖e8
12.♞fe1 ♘c5

To oppose White's pawn advance e2-e4.

13.♞ad1 ♚d7 14.e3 ♞ad8

Better may have been 14...a5.

15.♘e2! ♘g4 16.h3 ♘h6 17.♘c3
f5? 18.b4 ♘e6 19.♚b3 ♚f7



20.e4 dxe4 21.dxe4 ♘f8?

Better is 21...f4 22.g4 ♙h8 although White would have the advantage.

22.♘d5 ♙h8 23.♘g5

Of no use is 23.e5? because of 23...♙xd5 24.♞xd5 ♙xb4!.

23...♚g6 24.h4 ♙xd5 25.♞xd5 f4

Loses straight away; Black's position now was poor anyway.

26.h5! ♚xh5 27.♘e6

This is the most precise. It gains a tempo, although 27.♙xg7+ was good enough.

27.♚g6 28.♘xg7 ♚xg7 29.♙xg7+
♙xg7 30.♚c3+ ♙g8 31.e5 1-0

Looking over this game and the one I played against Gheorghiu, I need to be grateful for the great job that my fianchettoed bishops did.

Game 86

Sicilian Defence
Bent Larsen
Florin Gheorghiu
Orense 1975

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.♘c3 a6 4.d4
cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♚c7 6.g3 ♙b4
7.♘e2 ♘f6 8.♙g2 ♙e7 9.0-0
♘c6 10.b3 0-0 11.♙b2 ♞d8

Also to consider is 11...♞b8.

12.♚d2 b5



13.♘d5!? exd5 14.exd5 ♙b7

In case of 14...♚d6 15.♚f4! recovers the piece with a small advantage. If Black now moves the knight, then the continuation would be 16.♙e5 and 17.d6.

15.dxc6 dxc6 16.♚f4 ♙d6

17.♚f5 ♙c8 18.♚g5 h6 19.♚c1

This retreat is now better than in move 16, where to 16.♚c1 Black could have replied 16...c5!.

19...♞e8 20.♚d2 ♙g4



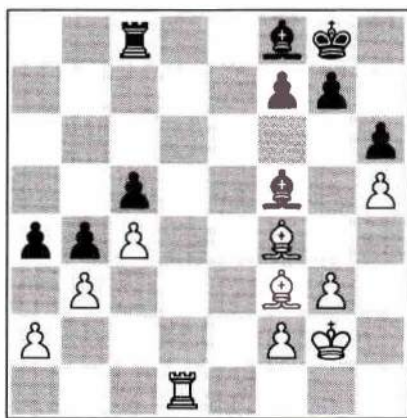
21.♙xf6! ♖xe2

If 21...♖xe2? 22.♚d4!.

**22.♜fe1 ♙h5 23.♙c3 ♜xe1+
24.♜xe1 a5 25.h4 b4 26.♙b2
♜d8 27.♚d4 ♙f8 28.♚c4 ♚d6
29.♙c1 ♙g6 30.♙e3 c5 31.♙f3
♚e5 32.♙g2 ♚f5 33.h5 ♙h7?**

It was possible to take the pawn:
33...♙xh5! 34.g4 ♚g6 35.♜h1? ♜d4!.
In this case White would do well to play
35.♙e2 ♚c6+ 36.♙f3 ♚g6 and draw.

**34.♜c1 ♚e5 35.c3 ♙d3 36.♚f4
♚xf4 37.♙xf4 ♜c8 38.c4 ♙f5
39.♜d1 a4**



40.g4!

A difficult decision with only one minute left.

**40...♙c2 41.♜d7 axb3 42.axb3
♙xb3**

The sealed move. The alternative was
42...f6 43.♙d1 ♙e4+ 44.♙g3 with
good possibilities for White, since
44...♜a8? would not work due to
45.♙f3. Also, after exchanging the
light-squared bishops, White's posi-
tional advantage would be obvious.

**43.♙d5 ♙a4 44.♙xf7+ ♙h8
45.♜a7 ♙e8 46.♙e6 ♙c6+ 47.f3**

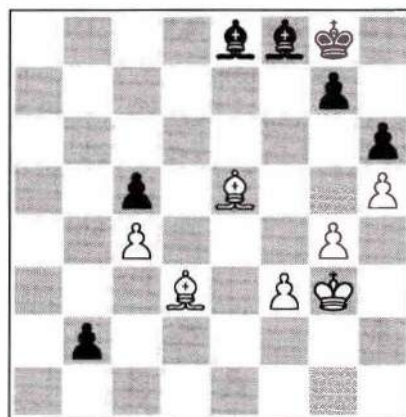
**♜e8 48.♙f5 ♙g8 49.♜a6 ♜e2+
50.♙g3 ♙e8 51.♜a8 b3**

If 51...♙f7 52.♙e4 winning. There is
an amazing difference between the
white bishops and the black bishops.

**52.♙e4 b2 53.♜b8 ♙f7 54.♙d3
♜e8 55.♜xe8**

The endgame will be more annoying
without the rooks on the board.

55...♙xe8 56.♙e5



56...♙e7

Black could also have played the inter-
esting albeit insufficient 56...g6!?
57.hxg6 ♙g7 58.♙f4 ♙a4 59.♙e3
♙b3 60.♙b1 ♙f8 61.f4 ♙xc4 62.f5
and White wins. For example, 62...♙g7
63.♙h4 ♙e2 64.♙h5 ♙f6 65.♙d2 etc.

**57.♙xb2 ♙f7 58.♙e5 ♙f6
59.♙f4 ♙e6 60.♙d6 ♙d4
61.♙e5 ♙f2 62.♙e4 ♙h4
63.♙e2 ♙e7 64.♙c7 ♙f7
65.♙e5 ♙c8 66.♙d3**

The game was adjourned. Gheorghiu
resigned without resuming play, the
very same day he drew against
Hernando; and this dashed his hopes to
become the leader. Either way the end-
game is easily won by White.

Chapter 26

Manila 1975

After organizing the super tournament in 1974, Manila again hosted another remarkable chess event. And it would not be the last! Chess in the Philippines is becoming very well supported and this will encourage the rapid development of their young players, such as Eugenio Torre.

This was an important victory for the Yugoslav grandmaster Ljubojevic. He remained unbeaten, obtaining 7 points out of 10. After him came a group of four players: Polugaevsky, Mecking, Larsen, Pfleger with 6. There was a poor performance from the American Kavalek and the young Filipino star Eugenio Torre was somewhat disappointing. His countryman Balinas was one of the revelations of the congress, defeating Polugaevsky and Larsen. His aggressiveness and good competitive spirit is reflected in the fact that he only signed two draws!

Game 87

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Lubomir Kavalek

Manila 1975

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4

Surprise! I nearly always play the less known variations in the Sicilian Defence. However on this occasion I sacrificed my d-pawn for Black's c-pawn, as the others do.

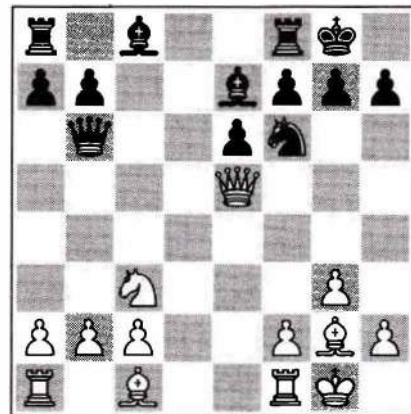
**3...cxd4 4.♗xd4 ♘f6 5.♗c3 e6
6.g3 ♗c6 7.♕g2 ♗xd4**

7...♕d7 looks more natural. The exchange may be considered a waste of time.

**8.♙xd4 ♕e7 9.0-0 0-0 10.e5
dxe5 11.♙xe5 ♙b6**

If Black gets to play ...♕d7 and ...♕c6 he will have no problems. In the *Encyclopaedia* I later found a correspondence match between two Russians with the continuation 12.♗a4 ♙a6 13.b3 ♕d7 14.♗c5, resulting in a balanced game, but with some practical

problems for White, because after exchanging the white bishops there will be weaknesses in the king's position.



12.a4!

It's good not to know the book! I had thought of this move when I advanced my pawn on move 10 (e4-e5) and I played it immediately, which probably impressed my opponent. It is the logical move to make since it is in line with White's intentions to create pressure on the queenside. The most important question is: can Black play 12...♕d7? If this were the case there would be two replies:

A) 13.a5 ♖a6 14.♗c7 ♜ab8 15.♙f4 ♜fc8 16.♗xb8 ♜xb8 17.♙xb8 ♙c6 and White would have two rooks for the queen, but Black would not be any worse since there is always the possibility of an attack against the white king;

B) 13.♞d1! ♜fc8 (13...♙c6? 14.♙f1) 14.♙f1 ♗c6 15.♙b5 ♗c7 16.♗xc7 ♜xc7 17.♙xd7 (17.♙f4 ♜xc3!) 17...♜xd7 18.♜xd7 ♞xd7 19.a5! and White would have the initiative. Black's a-pawn is weak and after 19...b6, 20.♞b5 will follow.

The continuation that Kavalek decides on does not solve his problems.

12...♙d6? 13.♗b5 ♗c7 14.a5 a6

15.♗b6 ♗e7 16.♙g5 ♙c5

Or 16...♙c7 17.♙xf6 gxf6 18.♗e3, threatening 19.♞d5.

17.♗b3 h6 18.♙xf6 gxf6

18...♗xf6 19.♞e4 ♗e7 20.♞xc5 ♗xc5 21.♞fd1 is not better for Black.

19.♞a4 ♜b8 20.♞fd1 e5

21.♞xc5 ♗xc5 22.♞d5 ♗e7

23.♗e3 ♞g7

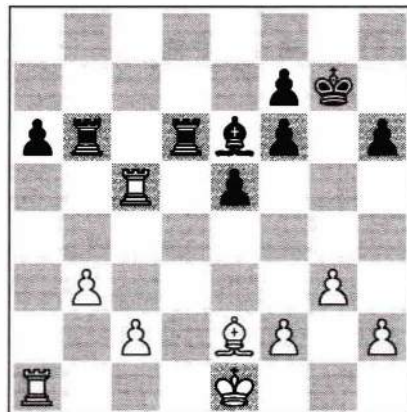
If 23...♙e6 24.♗xh6!.

Black is finally ready to develop his bishop. But either way, there are still serious weaknesses on his queenside, and his kingside pawns are not that strong either. Since there is no clear attack on the king, White decides to use his advantage in the endgame.

24.b3 ♙e6



25.♗c5! ♗xc5 26.♜xc5 ♜fd8
27.♞f1 b6 28.axb6 ♜xb6 29.♞e1
♜bd6 30.♙f3 ♜b8 31.♙e2 ♜bb6



Kavalek was very pressed for time. Black's position is 'in the air', as his a-pawn is a chronic weakness and any exchanges made are in White's favour. Even so, I decided to create another problem for him to resolve.

32.f4!? e4

Despair! After 32...exf4 Black's pawn majority on the kingside would not amount to much.

33.f5 ♙d7 34.♞aa5 e3 35.♜c3 ♙b5

Against 35...♞d2 I could play 36.♞d3 ♜xc2 37.♞xd7 ♜xb3 38.♞ad5! winning, since if 38...♜bb2 39.♙h5!.

36.♞xe3 ♙xe2 37.♞xe2 ♜bc6
38.c3 ♞d7 39.♞d3 ♜b7 40.b4
♜bc7 41.♞d2 ♞e7 42.♞ad5 ♞e5
43.♞3d4 h5 44.♞d3 ♞e1

The sealed move.



45.♖c5 ♜b6 46.♖c8 a5

The last resort. White could take, but I preferred the threat of mate with ♖d4-d8.

**47.♔d2 ♜h1 48.h4 ♜h2+
49.♔d3 ♜h1 50.♔c4 ♜xb4+
51.cxb4 ♜c1+ 52.♔b3 ♜xc8
53.bxa5 ♔f8 54.a6 ♔e7 55.♔b4
♜c1 56.♔b5 ♜a1 57.♜a4 ♜b1+
58.♔a5** 1-0

Game 88

Alekhine's Defence

Eugenio Torre

Bent Larsen

Manila 1975

**1.e4 ♘f6 2.e5 ♘d5 3.d4 d6
4.♘f3 ♘b6?!**

This was played by the German Lothar Schmid. It's probably not the best in this position, but Black avoids the most analyzed variations. The next move by Torre is not the best either.

**5.♙d3? ♘c6 6.exd6 ♜xd6 7.0-0
♙g4 8.c3 0-0-0!?**

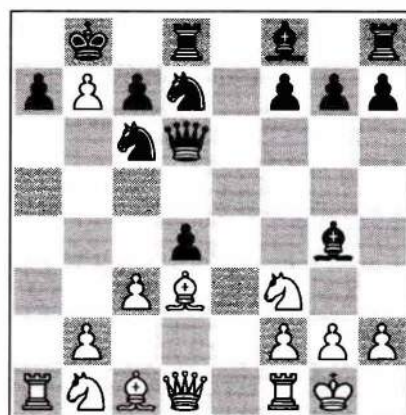
This was the last round. I needed a win; anything else did not make much difference to me. I saw that 8...e5 was playable, but the reply 9.♙e2 led to a clearly balanced position.



9.a4!? e5 10.a5 ♘d7 11.a6 exd4?

11...b6 was necessary, leaving an unclear position.

12.axb7+ ♔b8



13.♙e4!!

I had missed this strong move. Now 13...♘de5 would be refuted with 14.♘xe5. Following his last move White threatens 14.♙xc6 ♜xc6 15.♘xd4 ♜g6 16.♜a4.

**13...♙xf3! 14.♙xf3 ♘de5
15.♙xc6**

Against 15.♙e4 I would have tried 15...f5 16.♙xf5 ♜f6 17.♙e4 ♙c5.

**15...♜xc6 16.cxd4 ♙c5 17.♙e3
♙b6 18.♘c3 ♜he8 19.d5 ♜xb7
20.♙xb6 cxb6**

Black's position is very difficult though there is still some hope. Moreover, White is short of time.

**21.♜d4 ♜c7 22.♜a4 ♜e7
23.♜fe1 ♜de8 24.♜e4**



24...♜d7!

This was unexpected for White. Most of Black's difficulties have been sorted out.

**25.♖d4 f6 26.h3 ♘f7 27.♙xe7
♙xe7 28.♖b4? ♘d6 29.♖d4
♙e5 30.♙d1 ♖c8**

This was a surprising move for my opponent, who was now pressed for time.

31.♘a2 ♙e4

The manoeuvre ♘b4-c6 cannot be allowed.

**32.♙c1+ ♖b7 33.♖d2 ♘b5
34.♖d3**

White only has two minutes to get to move 40. If 34.♘b4 ♙d4 35.♖e1 a5. And if 34.♘c3 ♙d4 35.♖e3 ♘xc3!.

**34...♙d4 35.♖xh7 ♙xd5 36.♖e4
f5 37.♖a4 a5!**



A trap and also a good move.

**38.♘c3? ♘xc3 39.♖xd7+ ♙xd7
40.♙xc3**

After 40.bxc3 ♖c6, Black's a-pawn is very strong.

40...♙d1+ 41.♖h2 ♙d2 42.♙g3

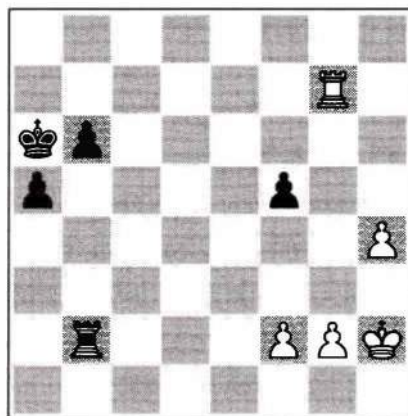
Torre played very quickly, since he was not sure if he had reached move 40. After 42.b3, there are two possibilities for Black:

A) 42...♙xf2 43.♙g3 ♖a6 44.♙xg7 f4 45.♙f7 f3! 46.♙xf3 ♙xf3 47.gxf3 b5!;

B) 42...♖a6 43.♙c7 ♙b2.

With any of these, Black would have had good chances to gain the advantage.

42...♙xb2 43.♙xg7+ ♖a6 44.h4!



44...♙xf2?

This was the sealed move. Much stronger was 44...♙c2, which wins easily after 45.h5 ♙c8!. If 45.♙g8 ♙c7, or 45.♙f7 a4.

**45.h5 ♙c2 46.h6 ♙c6 47.h7
♙h6+ 48.♖g3 a4 49.♖f4 ♙h5**

Manila 1975														
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	
1	Ljubojevic,Ljubomir	2615	*	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	7.0
2	Polugaevsky,Lev	2645	½	*	1	½	½	0	1	1	½	0	1	6.0
3	Mecking,Henrique	2610	½	0	*	½	1	1	½	½	1	½	½	6.0
4	Larsen,Bent	2625	½	½	½	*	½	0	1	½	1	1	½	6.0
5	Pfleger,Helmut	2540	0	½	0	½	*	1	½	1	½	1	1	6.0
6	Balinas,Rosendo	2335	0	1	0	1	0	*	½	0	1	½	1	5.0
7	Gligoric,Svetozar	2575	½	0	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	1	5.0
8	Karaklajic,Nikola	2445	½	0	½	½	0	1	½	*	½	0	0	3.5
9	Kavalek,Lubomir	2555	½	½	0	0	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	3.5
10	Torre,Eugenio	2515	0	1	½	0	0	½	0	1	½	*	0	3.5
11	Ogaard,Leif	2460	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	1	½	1	*	3.5

Not 49...a3? because of 50.♖g3! and certainly not 49...b5?? 50.♖g6+. But 49...♖h2! is a clear win, for instance 50.♕xf5 b5 51.g4 a3 etc.

50.♕e5 b5 51.♕f6?

51.♕d4 had better prospects as a defence. However, it seems Black could still win: 51...b4 52.♕c4 ♖h4+ 53.g4 (53.♕c5 b3 54.♖g6+ ♕b7 55.♖g7+ ♕c8 56.♖g8+ ♕d7 57.h8♖ ♖xh8 58.♖xh8 a3) 53...b3 54.♕c3 ♖h3+ 55.♕b2 ♖h2+ 56.♕c3 b2 57.h8♖ b1♖+!.



51...b4

Winning by just one tempo. I had planned 51...♖h2, but I forgot. After 52.g3 a3 or 52.♕g6 ♖xg2+, victory is easily achieved.

52.♕g6 ♖h2 53.♖g8 b3! 54.h8♖

It is most unusual to spend 42 minutes before deciding to promote to a queen. This, however, is what Torre did, even though he had previously played quickly. A beautiful line would have been 54.♖b8 f4!, when this pawn, apparently ineffective, becomes decidedly important in certain variations.

54...♖xh8 55.♖xh8 ♕b5!

If I were to continue 55...b2 56.♖b8 a3 57.♕xf5 a2 the ending is unclear.

56.♕xf5 a3 57.♖a8 ♕b4 58.g4 b2 59.♕f4 ♕b3

The easiest, although 59...a2 also wins.

60.♖b8+ ♕c2 61.♖c8+ ♕b1 62.g5 ♕a1!

0-1

Mecking is a master who studies hard and I'm sure that he receives magazines from the US Chess Federation, such as the *Chess Life & Review*. However, I'm sure he did not look at the games of the last U.S. Championship. Rogoff played some very interesting Caro-Kann openings.

Game 89

Caro-Kann Defence
Henrique Mecking
Bent Larsen
Manila 1975

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♖c3 dxe4 4.♖xe4 ♖d7

I'd never played this before. Possibly it may not seem appropriate to my style, but rather to that of Smyslov, Petrosian or Hort. But after some difficulty in the opening, Black often obtains a good position, with 4 pawns against 3 on the kingside, and this I find quite pleasant. I therefore decided to include this variation in my repertoire.

5.♖c4 ♖gf6 6.♖g5 e6 7.♖e2 ♖b6 8.♖d3 h6 9.♖5f3 c5 10.dxc5 ♖xc5 11.♖e5 ♖bd7 12.♖gf3 ♖xe5 13.♖xe5 0-0 14.♖d2

With the idea of castling queenside. 14.0-0.b6 leads to a balanced game.

14...♖d5! 15.f4



This is not in the book! Well, at least not for the time being. 15.0-0-0 ♖xa2 16.c3 has been played on various occasions. And 15.0-0 ♖d4 16.♗c4 ♖d7 does not bother Black.

15...b5!

Played with no hesitation whatsoever. At this point Mecking had a long think. 16.♖xb5 ♖b7 concedes a very good position to Black.

16.♖e3 ♖xe3 17.♖xe3 ♖b7 18.♖f3

The game Tarjan-Rogoff, played in the US Championships in 1975, continued 18.♖g1 ♖fd8 19.g4 ♗e4 and Black had a slight advantage although White managed to draw. Mecking's defence is not any better.

18...♖xf3 19.♗xf3 ♗h5 20.0-0 ♗xf4 21.♖xb5 ♖ab8 22.♖c4 g5 23.b3 ♖bc8



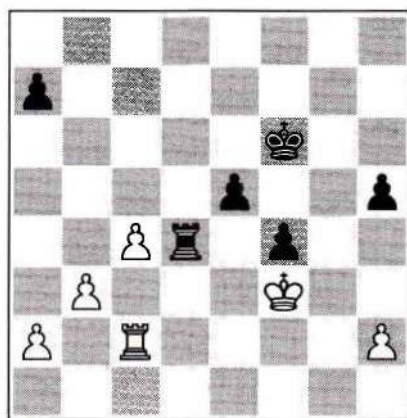
24.♗e1

Necessary because of the threat 24...♗xg2.

24...♖fd8 25.♖f2 ♔g7 26.♖f1 ♖c3 27.♗d3 ♗xd3 28.♖xd3 f5?

Both players thought this to be a winning position for Black. However, this is not so easy to demonstrate. Perhaps better is 28...♖d6, with the idea of ...♖a6.

29.g3 ♖d4 30.♖f1 h5 31.♖e1 ♖d5 32.♖e2 ♖e4 33.♖xe4 ♖xe4+ 34.♖d1 ♖xe1+ 35.♖xe1 ♖f6 36.♖d2 ♖c7 37.c4 e5 38.♖e3 f4+ 39.gxf4 gxf4+ 40.♖e4 ♖d7 41.♖c2 ♖d4+ 42.♖f3



42...♖d3+

If 42...♖f5 43.c5 e4+ 44.♖f2 f3 45.c6 ♖f4 46.♖e1! (46...e3? 47.♖c4!) – this is the critical line where Black would be one tempo away from victory. This tempo may have been lost on move 28!

43.♖f2 ♖e6 44.c5 ♖d7 45.♖e2 ♖e6 46.♖c2 ♖d7 47.♖e2 ♖e6

1/2-1/2

Chapter 27

Spanish Team Championships 1975

Schweppes won in Barcelona with no opposition. The team made up of Díez del Corral, Torán, Calvo and Bellón easily defeated the Español team composed of Antonio Medina, García Orús and Román Bordell. They also beat the team that was presumed to win the title, CIDA of Las Palmas, with the line-up Menvielle, Fraguera, Visier and the author of this book. But the first two boards were not in great form and the Madrid team did not fail. Terrassa, incidentally, had a fine performance, with Miquel Farré, Simón, Mora, Pablo (Spanish Youth Champion) and Pomés.

Game 90

Dutch Defence

Arturo Pomar

Bent Larsen

Spanish Team Championships,
Barcelona 1975

1.d4 f5 2.♘c3 d5 3.f3

White tries to get into a favourable variation of the Staunton Gambit, for example: 3...♘f6 4.e4. However, Black avoids this possibility.

3...c5 4.e4 e5!



An incredible position! I believe that, as I developed this idea, I was thinking of an old recommendation by Tartakower: 1.f4 (Bird's Opening) 1...e5 (From's Gambit) 2.e4 (King's Gambit) 2...d5

(Falkbeer's Counter-Gambit), and now, the great champion of paradox recommended 3.d4!?

5.♙b5+

This option is certainly not the most critical. 5.dxe5 d4 6.♘d5 fxe4 (6...♘c6!?) 7.♙b5+ ♘c6 8.fxe4 a6 9.♙d3 ♘xe5 10.♚h5+ ♘f7 is complex.

5...♙d7 6.♙xd7+ ♘xd7 7.♘xd5

Once again, interesting is 7.dxe5, and in case of 7...d4 White can play 8.♘d5 ♘xe5 9.♚e2.

7...cxd4 8.♘e2

Obviously bad is 8.exf5 due to 8...♚a5+. However, 8.♘h3 seems to be somewhat better. This knight will be better placed on f2 and may then be ideally located on d3.

8...fxe4 9.fxe4 ♘gf6 10.♙g5?

Better is 10.♘xf6+ although after 10...♚xf6 Black would then be much better.

10...♚a5+

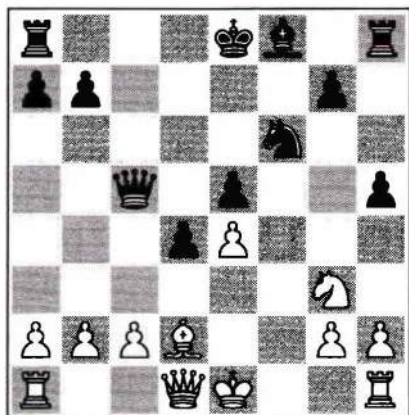
11.♙d2

♚c5

12.♘xf6+

12.♙b4 ♚c6 and White will lose the central e4-pawn.

12...♘xf6 13.♘g3 h5!



Now we shall see what problems
White's eighth move has got him into.

14. ♖f3?!

After 14.h4 Black will have a clear advantage as his knight is much more powerful than his opponent's.

**14...h4 15. ♘e2 ♙xc2 16. ♗f5
♙xe4 17. ♗e6+ ♙e7 18. ♙b4?**

18.0-0 seems to offer greater resistance although Black would win without too much difficulty with the continuation
18...d3 19. ♘c3 ♙d4+ 20. ♖h1 h3
21.gxh3 ♙d6.

**18...♘d5! 19. ♙xe7 ♘f4 20. ♗c4
♖xe7**

Also 20...♘d3+. White resigned.

Chapter 28

Biel Interzonal 1976 – Group compositions, possibilities, politics and technicians

The Interzonal is played, as was the case three years ago, in two groups. One started in Baguio, Philippines, on the 13th June; the other one will start on the 11th July in Biel, Switzerland.

Elo averages are: Baguio 2538 and Biel 2537. Naturally this is not very interesting. The important thing is that the favourites are evenly distributed between the two groups. Three years ago this was not the case: 5 out of the 7 strongest players (according to Elo) were in the same group. This time there is no such injustice. As for the favourites? Well then, whoever believes in Elo may look at the list and choose between the top three places or the top eight. I cannot see any favourites further down the list for Baguio. However, in Biel, there are two very interesting names: Byrne, participant in the last Candidates' Tournament, and Gulko, the new Russian star. It has to be said that the ratings are dated October 31, 1975. This means that they were posted after some very bad tournaments by Byrne, and before some very good ones by Gulko.

Surely more can be said about the 'form' and the recent results obtained by the theoretical candidates. But it is difficult. There are tournaments and there are tournaments. If Polugaevsky can call the Vinkovci tournament, training; or if Tal can call his match versus Andersson training, should these results then be taken seriously? If Hübner played the last five rounds badly in Las Palmas, is he now in good form? Maybe he will also play the first ten rounds badly in Biel. If Browne has played poorly in some open tournaments in the U.S., does this indicate bad form? It may also be the case that an Open is something completely different to a more serious tournament. We may find it difficult, therefore, to arrive at any tangible conclusion.

An important factor that makes predictions difficult is *Zeitnot*. Andersson is in time trouble in almost all of his games, and in some tournaments he lost many points on move 40 (and sometimes he gained points in the last moves before the time control).

Among the favourites are some who are very consistent, and others who are the complete opposite. Interesting cases of the latter type are Ljubojevic, Browne and Tal, three great competitors who often struggle with success. In Tal's case his fans, who are spread out all over the world, always ascribe his poor performances to bad health; and, at least sometimes, they are right. But these health issues are also questionable. I think I've heard many negative comments about the physical condition of all the grandmasters participating in the Interzonal: at least of all the favourites. On a Wednesday it is said that Geller is too old and that Petrosian and Larsen too fat; and on a Saturday a young grandmaster declares that he doesn't have the stamina of the aforementioned. The truth is that being in good shape will be important especially in July 1976. There are also 'weather' problems. Lovely Summer or unbearable heat?

The youth factor is important in many forecasts, and certainly surprises must come from the young. The public loves surprises and new names. They think something along these lines: whatever do the likes of Spassky, Petrosian or Tal want? Haven't they been champions already (or played in the Candidates' in 1953, 1959 and 1965)? In fact, Petrosian has occasionally mentioned that he plans to retire from the fight for the world title. But he still has the ambition to play good chess. If he does withdraw, many will argue that he cannot do so now..... The Soviet Federation requires its best players to fight for their country.

The reader always expects forecasts. Well then.... the top three in each group! Polugaevsky, Spassky, Ljubojevic; Petrosian, Larsen, Portisch. (The Elo for Ljubojevic and Mecking is the same; I would 'prefer' Ljubojevic because he won in Manila and also because Mecking has been totally inactive lately.)

Now for some more comments: none of the six is 100%, a 'fait accompli'. Regarding Biel: Petrosian will, perhaps, prove to be too complacent. Portisch did not impress in Las Palmas. Neither did I, but I achieved one more point, which always counts.

The same can be said about Andersson compared to Ribli in Baguio: if 12 points is enough for third place, then he's got options, but if more points are needed... Perhaps the same can also be said of Byrne. Petrosian is not usually one to step up the pace, but Portisch, Larsen and Tal could do so if they find themselves in good shape.

I don't give Hübner more than a 15% chance of winning since he is now concentrating on his academic studies, reading languages and lots of 'papyrus'.

I mentioned three, then eight, favourites. I could also say that in Baguio I see five favourites and a very dangerous outsider: in Biel I see six favourites. If I have to mention an outsider, I could say Hübner. But the typical outsider, the new man who has everything to gain and nothing to lose, who will be dangerous for all, who will have to take risks in order to have a very slim chance of winning; this man is clearly Boris Gulko.

We'll see. It won't be easy for anyone.

I am not very keen on the Elo system. But I have to admit that it is a good system when dividing the participants into two groups in the Interzonals. Figures are not political: you cannot protest against maths – two times four equals eight and the total plus one equals nine: that is final.

In 1973, the solution was a political solution. The president of the Soviet Federation arrived in Amsterdam and 'helped' Euwe. I protested vehemently at the result but the players do not have much say in FIDE matters and no voting rights whatsoever. But maybe I did have some success, because this time the work was done by the technicians. Meaning to say: by Elo and approved by a small committee. It's been done more or less correctly; number one here, two and three over there, four and five here, very simple. This was the way it was done as Euwe described in November 1972 and, to put it in the kindest way, only to be forgotten by him three months later on the arrival of Averbakh to Amsterdam.

In 1976, probably after having sorted out some of the favourites, a draw was held and Petrosian was sent to Switzerland. It was obvious that Torre had to play in the Philippines. Perhaps someone noted the Russians' wish that Tal played in Switzerland: something to do with health and climate and the confidence they had in Swiss doctors.

I don't know who gave the Spaniard Díez del Corral (classified in the Zonals) the impression that he was entitled to play in Switzerland. The information was incorrect, but this had an unfortunate effect in that he was 'drawn' to play in the Philippines group and he has therefore withdrawn. The date was inconvenient and his second would not go to the Philippines either. So a change was quickly organised; for the Hungarian Csom, travelling to the exotic Philippine islands looked attractive, and Díez del Corral would be able to go to Biel. However FIDE could not accept this change and there was no way that Díez del Corral could change his mind. The reserve then stepped in: Pachman! For him it was probably a pleasant surprise; it meant that the Russians now had to play against him, which is something they have refused to do several times, as they consider him a traitor to the communist cause.

In March, after a very difficult meeting, the FIDE 'bureau' arrived at a kind of solution to the 'Barcelona problem'. As you will recall, six players were withdrawn from the tournament by their chess federations, in a political demonstration. Now FIDE, in a statement, condemned the increasing frequency of political action against the statutes and regulations of FIDE, and against their slogan *Gens una sumus*. But this is purely political. You can almost say that chess politicians condemn politicians of certain governments. This statement may seem a victory for the 'West', but you need to read between the lines. The statement is a 'something for something', a political arrangement. The 'bureau' does not punish players for the actions of their federations. This resulted in a special Zonal in Yugoslavia, involving Uhlmann, Smejkal, Adorjan and Velimirovic (Ermenkov had participated in the Vratsa Zonal and the Romanians refused to contribute to the costs of this extra Zonal, probably because they did not consider that Ciocaltea had any chances). Velimirovic finished last and the other three players were tied. According to the rules the three would have to play another small tournament but they preferred to toss for it. And that's what was done! Adorjan lost (if anyone wants to snigger you may do so, albeit discreetly).

There's even more. It is very difficult to include two more players in the Interzonal. It is much easier to have four (*in a whisper*: 'and win more votes'). That's how Kavalek was able to participate (from an old list of 'reserves') and Lombard (who happened to be from the country of..... sorry, the host country). Initially Lombard was not sent to the Zonal. In Switzerland there was a feud between supporters of Lombard and those of Hug. Those who supported Lombard achieved a great victory (for those readers who do not take political games seriously, you may snigger again, but only if you are at home and alone!).

This is how Interzonals grow: it is now proposed that in the next cycle there will be six Interzonals with 16 players in each. Such proposals will automatically gain many votes, because many federations want to see one of their players in an Interzonal. I understand this very well, but I do not understand why they should be called Interzonals. Zonal is shorter.

A good idea from the Philippine Vice President Campomanes is to hold a World Championship every two years. Yes, that's a good idea. And FIDE will believe so too because it is precisely the World Championship which reinforces FIDE's prestige and offers much publicity.

Biel Interzonal 1976																					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0
1	Larsen,Bent	2625	*	0	1	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	12.5
2	Petrosian,Tigran	2635	1	*	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	0	1	1	12.0
3	Portisch,Lajos	2625	0	½	*	0	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	½	1	0	½	1	0	1	12.0
4	Tal,Mikhail	2615	½	½	1	*	0	1	1	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	12.0
5	Smyslov,Vassily	2580	½	½	½	1	*	0	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	½	11.5
6	Byrne,Robert	2540	1	½	½	0	1	*	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	½	½	1	1	½	11.5
7	Hübner,Robert	2585	½	0	½	0	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	11.5
8	Andersson,Ulf	2585	½	½	0	½	0	½	½	*	0	½	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	10.5
9	Csom,Istvan	2490	½	½	0	½	½	1	0	1	*	½	0	0	1	1	0	1	1	½	10.0
10	Geller,Efim	2620	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	0	1	1	1	10.0
11	Smejkal,Jan	2615	0	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	*	0	½	0	1	½	1	½	10.0
12	Sosonko,Genna	2505	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	1	0	1	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	9.5
13	Liberzon,Vladimir	2540	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	1	½	½	½	*	0	½	1	½	½	9.0
14	Rogoff,Kenneth	2480	½	½	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	½	1	½	1	*	½	0	½	1	9.0
15	Gulko,Boris	2530	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	0	1	0	½	½	½	*	½	0	1	9.0
16	Sanguineti,Raul	2480	0	0	1	½	½	½	½	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	*	½	½	½	8.5
17	Matanovic,Aleksander	2525	0	½	½	½	0	0	0	0	1	0	½	½	½	½	1	½	*	½	8.0
18	Castro Rojas,Oscar	2380	0	1	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	1	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	6.0
19	Lombard,Andre	2420	0	0	1	0	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	*	5.0
20	Diaz,Joaquin	2385	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	0	2.5

The Biel Interzonal

A Subjective Report

I played very calmly. It all started way before the tournament, with me deciding not to study openings. You could say that Mecking won in Manila because he was so well prepared; that Ljubojevic failed because he was too well prepared, and I won at Biel because I was not ready. Many things can be said. The fact is that I am always prepared! Maybe not to play the Najdorf variation or the Dragon, but surely to play certain openings that others do not study that much.

Surely I played far too calmly. During rounds 9 to 14 I lost several opportunities for making a whole point, and because I played 'safe', these games were drawn. I was in good positions against Sosonko, Csom, Geller and Smyslov but I only managed two points; when really I should have won 3 to 3.5 points. This is called 'strategy' but it does not deserve this name.

In the end my nerves got the better of me. I played badly against Petrosian and terribly against Byrne.

During this last game I felt unwell and unable to concentrate. I don't know why. One possible explanation could be the weather. The tournament began with unbearable heat; ten days later came a drastic change and it was very cold. Following this even more changes from cold to hot to cold again... In any case I felt nervous after the defeat against Byrne, but I recovered with two wins against Matanovic (easy) and Smejkal (very very hard). As the saying goes, *'All's well that ends well'*.

I did not play many good games; but the two losses were my only really bad games. I had a small percentage of serious errors. In this respect I think my main rival was Smyslov.

But in creating interesting games, however, Tal was number one (I played many more exciting games 'for the public' in the Amsterdam Interzonal, 1964, when I tied first position with Smyslov, Spassky and Tal). But Tal made more errors, and now he must eliminate Petrosian or Portisch in a tie-breaker (in case of a draw, the coefficient Sonnenborn-Berger will be applied. Petrosian has the best, Portisch the worst).

I don't know what happened to the Russians. They seemed to be nervous. Perhaps this was due to their poor results in Manila. Smyslov (who was substituting Kuzmin) was their only player who played well during the first half of the tournament. Not everyone believed that Kuzmin was that ill that he couldn't participate, but it is fair to say that Smyslov played and justified his participation.

Before the tournament I decided not to get annoyed at any lapses in the organization, but I must say that these failures were few and far between and some of them were due to FIDE intervention rather than to the Swiss organisation. Overall the

tournament was well organised. Of course there is always something that you can criticize; but before the tournament I decided....

I agree with Vasiukov, who said after the event that this group was stronger than that of Manila. 'The difference of one category,' he said. 'Those more likely to make it to the Candidates' means the more 'serious chess players.' Tal said something similar. But Mecking believes that the 'old' are not worth much, and that Manila was really the strongest group.

I am happy with the result but not with my play. I hope to play better next year in the Candidates' Tournament.

This was the decisive game:

Game 91

English Opening
Bent Larsen
Robert Hübner
Biel Interzonal 1976

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.c4 g6 3.♘c3 d5

A pleasant surprise.

4.cxd5 ♘xd5 5.e4 ♘xc3

If 5...♘b6 6.h3 followed by d2-d4 with a very favourable Grünfeld. 5...♘b4 is the main line and the sharpest.

6.dxc3

Naturally.



6...♙xd1+ 7.♔xd1 ♘d7 8.♙f4
♘c5 9.♘d2 c6 10.♙e3 e5 11.b4
♘a4 12.♙c2 b5 13.a3 ♙e6

Tal accepts a draw with Liberzon. I'm on my own!

14.♘b3 a6 15.♙e2 ♙e7 16.♖hd1
f5 17.exf5 ♙xf5+ 18.♙d3



18...♖g8!

A good move in a slightly inferior position. If 18...♙f7 19.♙xf5 gxf5 20.f4.

19.f3 ♙f7 20.♙e4

White is in control of the position, but the chances of a win are negligible. It's better to win the tournament without further ado.

20...♖gd8 21.g4 ♙xe4+ 22.fxe4
♖ac8 23.♖xd8!

The other open file is more important.

23...♖xd8 24.♖f1+ ♙e6 25.g5
1/2-1/2

I offer a draw and Hübner quickly accepts. Because of the threats ♘c5+ and ♖f3-h3 he must play 25...♖f8, allowing 26.♖xf8 ♙xf8 27.♘c5+ which closes the position indefinitely.

For me this last round was very peaceful. The same can be said of Portisch, who defeated the Colombian Oscar

Castro very convincingly. But the only option for Byrne was that Andersson's flag fell (he had less than ten seconds left), while Smyslov played another nervous game (with Sanguinetti).

Game 92

English Opening

Jan Smejkal

Bent Larsen

Biel Interzonal 1976

**1.c4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.♘c3 ♘f6
4.g3 b6 5.♙g2 ♙b7 6.0-0 e6**

6...g6 7.d4 is comfortable for Black but I do not like the symmetrical position arrived at after 7.b3.

7.e4 ♜b8!?

An important moment. The move is probably new, but not so bad. I prefer to create rather than to copy and now I feel good. Another thing is: Smejkal always takes the first opportunity that's offered him to use up lots of time!

8.d4

How disappointing! Only ten minutes.

**8...cxd4 9.♘xd4 ♘xd4 10.♜xd4
♙d6!**

The best move, but Smejkal expected 10...♙c5. Now he thinks for one hour!

**11.♙g5 ♙e5 12.♜d2 h6 13.♙e3
0-0 14.♙d4 ♙xd4 15.♜xd4 e5**



White has the bad bishop whilst Black has problems with his queen's pawn.

Over the board the game is level but on the clock: 'Black is better'.

**16.♜d3 a6 17.♞fd1 ♞c8 18.b3
♜c7 19.♞ac1 ♞ab8 20.♜e3 ♜c5**

Correct move but badly calculated.

21.♜xc5 bxc5 22.♞a4!



22...♞c7?

White's play is too slow and Black's is too fast. 22...♞c6 was necessary and soon comes ...♞f8, with a good position. Naturally, one of Black's options in this position is the advance of the a-pawn; another option is placing a strong knight on d4.

23.♞d6 ♞e8 24.♞b6?

Is this a trap? – 24...♞e6 25.♞xb7!. Much better was 24.f3, with advantage. Now Smejkal only has ten minutes and I have one hour more than him.

**24...♙xe4 25.♙xe4 ♘xe4
26.♞xa6 ♞g5**



27.♞d1

Or, in more detail, his finger shifts between ♖d1 and ♖c1. Smejkal want to play fast, touches the rook, sees that ♜g2 may be more accurate, thinks for another minute (now nine left) and moves the rook on d1. In this case of 'touched piece' we may consider that the *Zeitnot* drama has begun. But it is not a normal *Zeitnot*. Whilst White plays fast, Black plays extra slow and therefore breaks the rhythm. Naturally Smejkal tries to take advantage of these pauses to think out his plans, but this is always difficult. And showing who the rich guy is and who is the poor man has its psychological value (a good trick against the opponent with very little time is to 'forget' to press your own clock a few times!).

27...♘f3+ 28.♜g2 ♘d4 29.♞e1 f6

Difficult decision. Another good move was 29...h5, as will be seen after White's 32nd move. If White plays a quiet move, I can get a better position with ...♜f7 and then moving the kingside pawns. But in time trouble it is easier to make sharp moves, and perhaps we could say that 29...h5 was better, for psychological reasons.

30.f4! e4 31.♘c3 f5 32.g4! ♞c6!

The only good move. White has to exchange because of the threat 33...♞g6.

33.♞xc6 dxc6 34.gxf5 e3

Take it easy, take it easy. I'll ask for a lemon tea and I'll take a walk and watch the other games.

35.♘a4

He only has one and a half minutes left. Here comes my tea. Sugar. Lemon. I have my tea, giving an indifferent look at the spectators who are more exalted than I am. Petrosian is lost. It's great to have more than ten minutes!

35...♜f7 36.♘xc5 ♜f6 37.a4

Logical.

37...♜xf5 38.a5 ♜xf4 39.a6



39...g5!!

It's a good move anyway, but it's also a trap.

40.a7?

Too logical. He has fallen into the trap. Smejkal hasn't been able to leave the board for more than one hour. Now... off to the toilet with quick steps! I still have plenty of time; I think a while, but I am almost certain: the most important moment is at hand.

40...e2!

Smejkal again. The crowd is noisy. Hübner has lost! Smejkal has to make his sealed move. He takes 38 minutes to think it out. I go for lunch. I tell my Danish friends: I think he will play 41.♜f2. The only problem I see is 41.♘e6+. White's difficulty now is that he cannot defend the a-pawn with his knight and 41.♜f2 ♞a8 42.♞a1? ♘c2 loses immediately. Once my opponent sees all the difficulties, perhaps in despair he might even consider a knight sacrifice as his sealed move. I go to the hotel; to analyze. After 41.♘e6+ I think it would be difficult to win and, after 41.♜f2 it would be difficult to choose among various good continuations. I start to get nervous. I want a mathematical win. I analyse throughout the night

and I arrive at the hall at one o'clock and rather tired. I haven't slept at all (this 'decision' is a doubtful move which invariably loses).

41.♔f2

This was the most natural move. And you cannot say that 41.♘e6+!? is any better because with correct play Black wins, starting with 41...♘xe6 42.♙xe2 ♕f5 43.♙a2 ♘c7 44.b4 ♘a8! and now, for instance, 45.♙a6 c5! (but not 45...♙e6? 46.c5!! followed by b4-b5 and White is miraculously saved).

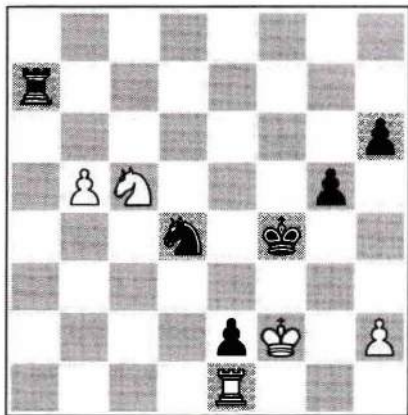
41...♙a8

Yesterday's plan. Sometime during sunrise I abandoned the easiest line 41...♕g4 with the idea ...♙f8-a8. It seems incredible, but the knight sacrifice 42.♘e6!! really would have drawn! My opponent also saw this during his analysis.

42.b4

Yes, admittedly, it is always better to get some sleep. I analysed this move very little since I considered that it was easily refuted. However, Smejkal had reached the conclusion that if 42.♘d3+ ♕e4 43.♘c1 ♙xa7 44.♘xe2 ♙a2 45.b4 (45.♕f1 ♘xe2 46.♙xe2+ ♙xe2 47.♕xe2 c5!) 45...♙b2 46.b5 c5 47.♕f1 ♘f3 it would not be difficult for Black to win. He is right, but I had looked for something even easier for many hours.

42...♙xa7 43.b5 cxb5 44.cxb5



44...♙c7!

The knight has no good squares to go to and so the blockage of the e2-pawn will be loosened.

45.♙c1 ♙f7!

Up to this point I was very sure of my moves since I had foreseen these quite quickly during my analysis. But I don't know what else I saw....

46.b6 ♕g4+ 47.♕g2

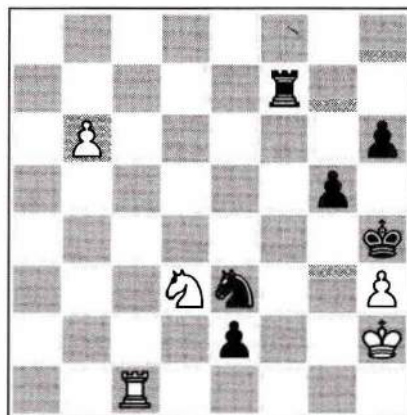
47.♕e1? would be a mistake because of 47...♙f1+; another easy line for Black is 47.♕e3 e1♙+ 48.♙xe1 ♘c2+ 49.♕d2 ♘xe1. For example: 50.♕xe1 (50.b7 ♙xb7) 50...♙f4.

47...♘c2 48.h3+

Some space for the white king.

48...♕h4 49.♘d3 ♘e3+ 50.♕h2

I still have to play with precision so as to avoid an exchange of the two passed pawns and an endgame that could well end in a draw with two against one on the kingside.



50...h5!!

All pieces must be mobilized!

51.b7

The idea is quite simple: 51.♙e1 g4 52.hxg4 hxg4 53.♙xe2 g3+ 54.♕g1 ♙f1#. Smejkal has less than ten minutes and he is thinking until the little flag almost drops. He now knows that he is completely lost.

**51...♖xb7 52.♗e1 g4 53.hxg4
hxg4 54.♖c3 ♖e7 55.♖a3 g3+
56.♔g1 ♔h3**

The flag hasn't fallen, but White has no more resources left.

**57.♖a8 ♗g2 58.♖h8+ ♗h4
59.♖f8 0-1**

And he resigns without waiting for a reply. Naturally the reply would have been one of the following: 59...♖a7, 59...♖b7, 59...♖c7 or 59...♖d7, with the threat of promoting the pawn.

Game 93

Sicilian Defence

Vladimir Liberzon

Bent Larsen

Biel Interzonal 1976

**1.e4 c5 2.♗f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♗c6 5.♗c3 ♖c7 6.♕e2 a6**

The author of the first chess book I had in my hands was a very romantic Danish player. He mentioned the Paulsen Variation, 'not believing that anyone would want to play it.' His favourite opening was the King's Gambit. How times change, and one's tastes.....

7.0-0 ♗f6 8.♔h1!?

It's in the books but I had no idea what the continuation was. It seems that Black should now play 8 ...d6, entering into the Scheveningen system.



8...♕b4?! 9.♗xc6! bxc6 10.f4!

That's it. This is what Parma played in a tournament in Israel earlier this year against Liberzon! Nobody knows all games played in all tournaments.

10...d5

10...♕xc3 11.bxc3 ♗xe4 12.♖d4 ♗f6
13.♕a3 seemed a little dangerous.

11.e5 ♗d7 12.♗a4!



White needs to play c2-c4 quickly. Otherwise Black will keep a more favourable central pawn formation.

**12...♗b6 13.c4 ♕e7 14.♕e3
♗xa4 15.♖xa4 ♕d7 16.♖c2
♖b7 17.♕d3 g6 18.♖ab1 a5!
19.♖f2 0-0 20.♖fc1**

20.♕c5 ♕xc5 21.♖xc5 ♖b4!.

20...♖fc8



In an almost identical situation Parma closed the position with c4-c5 so as to attack the kingside. Liberzon had trouble in saving half a point. Parma, who in Biel was Matanovic's second, com-

mented that Liberzon had probably forgotten that game....

21.b3? ♖b4 22.♞c2? a4

Now I start to play. The position of the white rooks – with the rook at b1 without protection – gives Black some tactical possibilities and very soon a passive position will explode into a very active one. The reader should note especially what the outcome will be with the modest ♖d7.

23.♙d2 ♖b7 24.b4 c5



25.b5 ♞ab8 26.♞e2?

Better is 26.♞cc1.

26...dxc4 27.♙xc4 ♙c6

Black is now better!

28.b6

Possibly the best move is 28.♞cc1, but 28...♙e4 29.♙d3 ♙xd3 30.♞xd3 ♞d5 is strong.

28...♞d8 29.♞c3?

Preferable is 29.♞cc1, but the position is now very delicate.

29...♙e4 30.♞b2

30.♙d3? ♞xd3!.

30...♞c6 31.♙b5 ♞a8

The combination 31...♞xb6 32.♞xe4 ♞d4 (with the idea of ...♞b4) is refuted with 33.♞f2!.

32.♙d3?

In a difficult position, the mistake always comes sooner or later. But 32.♙c4 a3 33.♞bb3 ♙xg2+ 34.♞xg2 ♞xg2+

35.♙xg2 ♞xd2+ 36.♙g3 ♞xa2 would probably lose as well.



32...a3! 33.♞b1

Other options were 33.♙xe4 axb2, 33.♞bb3 ♞xd3, or 33.♞b5 ♙xd3 34.♞xd3 ♞xd3 35.♞xd3 ♞a6.

33...♞xd3! 34.♞xd3 c4 35.♞d7 ♙xb1 36.♞xe7 ♞xb6 37.♞xc4 ♙xa2 0-1

If 38.♞xa2 then ...♞b2 wins.

In the next game against Lajos Portisch, 14...♙h5 is a mistake but then White plays with more care than energy and only the incomprehensible error 53...♞xd4 decides the game.

Game 94

English Opening

Bent Larsen

Lajos Portisch

Biel Interzonal 1976

1.c4 e5 2.♘c3 ♘f6 3.♘f3 ♘c6 4.d3 d6 5.g3 g6 6.♙g2 ♙g7 7.♞b1 a5 8.a3 ♘d4 9.♘d2 0-0 10.0-0 c6 11.b4 axb4 12.axb4 ♙g4 13.h3 ♙d7

13...♙e6.

14.♙h2 ♘h5?!

14...♞e7 seems preferable.

15.c5 d5 16.e3 ♘e6 17.♘a4 f5 18.♘b6 ♞b8



19.e4!!

White has thus broken up Black's strong centre.

19...fxe4 20.dxe4 ♘c7

If 20...d4 21.♘dc4 and the white knights dominate the board.

21.♘xd7

The following seemed better: 21.exd5 cxd5 22.♘xd5 ♙xh3 (22...♙b5 23.♘xc7 ♚xc7 24.♙d5+ ♔h8 25.♙c4) 23.♙xh3 ♘xd5 24.♘e4.

21...♚xd7 22.♘c4 ♚e6 23.♘b6 ♘f6 24.exd5 ♘cxd5

24...♘fxd5 would be very similar to that which was played.

25.♚b3 ♖be8

In case of 25...e4 26.♙b2.

26.♘xd5

26.♘c4!?

26...♘xd5 27.♙d2 ♔h8 28.♖be1

♚d7 29.♙c1 ♘c7 30.♚c4 ♘b5

31.♙b2 ♚c7 32.♙g1 ♚f7

Black decides not to postpone the exchange of queens: 32...♖d8 was another alternative.

33.♚xf7 ♖xf7 34.♖e4 ♖d8

35.♖fe1

In case of 35.♙xe5 ♙xe5 36.♖xe5 Black will become more active with 36...♖d2 37.f4 ♖b2 (37...♘d4) 38.♖e4 ♘c3 39.♖c4 ♘a2.

35...♖d2 36.♖4e2 ♖xe2 37.♖xe2 ♘d4 38.♖e4 g5 39.♖e3 ♖f8 40.♙e4 ♙f6 41.♙f1 h6 42.♖a3 ♖b8 43.♖a7 ♘b5 44.♖a1 ♘d4 45.♙e1 ♔g8 46.♖a7 ♘b5 47.♖a2 ♙f7 48.♙e2 ♙e6 49.♙e3 ♘c7 50.♙d3 ♖d8+ 51.♙c2 ♘b5 52.f3 ♘d4+ 53.♙xd4



53...♖xd4?

The logical move was 53...exd4 to give the black pieces more space – above all, to the bishop: 54.♙d3 ♙e5 55.♖a7 ♖d7 56.g4 ♖e7 57.♙f5+ (interesting is 57.b5 cxb5 58.♖a5) 57...♙f6 58.♙c8 ♖c7 and White doesn't make much progress.

54.♙b3 ♙e7 55.♖a7 ♖d7 56.g4 ♖c7 57.♖a8 ♙f7 58.♖b8 ♙f6 59.♙a4 ♖d7 60.♙f5 ♖e7 61.♙c8 e4 62.fxe4 ♖xe4 63.♖xb7+ ♙e7 64.♙d7 ♖e3 65.♙xc6 ♖xh3 66.♙d5+ ♙f6 67.♖d7 1-0

Chapter 29

Las Palmas Tournament 1976

A great victory for the Soviet player Geller, who was one of the favourites, along with the German Hübner, the Hungarian Portisch, and the other Soviet Tseshkovsky, the American Robert Byrne and the author, who finished second with 10 points. Portisch lost in the penultimate round, thereby putting himself out of the running. For my part, before the last round I was the only player at the top of the leaderboard but then I lost to Hübner after a terrible mistake in the opening, whilst Geller, playing Black, was able to beat Sigurjonsson in a very good game. It is only fair to say that he had surprisingly lost in the penultimate round against the Cuban Hernandez.

Only 44% of the games were draws, many of them after one or more adjournments.

Game 95 1.♘f3 b6

Réti Opening
Jose Miguel Fraguela Gil
Bent Larsen
Las Palmas 1976

Tartakower, when he commented on a game in the Carlsbad Tournament in 1929: 'The correct move is 1...b5!'.
1...b6 is a provocative move in the style of the master Cardoso. In fact, few of the players of 'Group 1.♘f3' have any ambition to play 2.e4.

Author's note: Comments by BENT LARSEN, assisted by Lasker, Tartakower, Nimzowitsch, Fischer and others.

			Las Palmas 1976																
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Geller, Efim	2620	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	1	0	1	1	1	½	1	10.5
2	Larsen, Bent	2625	½	*	½	0	0	1	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	½	10.0
3	Byrne, Robert	2540	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	1	½	½	1	9.5
4	Hübner, Robert	2585	0	1	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	0	½	1	1	9.5
5	Portisch, Lajos	2625	½	1	½	½	*	0	½	1	0	1	1	1	½	0	1	½	9.0
6	Tseshkovsky, Vitaly	2550	½	0	½	½	1	*	½	½	1	½	½	0	1	1	½	1	9.0
7	Gheorghiu, Florin	2540	½	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	1	½	½	1	1	9.0
8	Sigurjonsson, Gudmundur	2530	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	0	1	1	1	1	8.5
9	Rogoff, Kenneth	2480	½	½	0	½	1	0	½	½	*	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	8.0
10	Debarnot, Roberto	2350	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	1	0	½	1	1	1	7.5
11	Hernandez Onna, Roman	2460	1	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	*	1	½	1	1	1	6.0
12	Garcia Padron, Jose		0	0	½	0	0	1	0	1	½	1	0	*	0	½	0	1	5.5
13	Fraguela, Jose	2380	0	0	0	1	½	0	½	0	½	½	½	1	*	½	0	½	5.5
14	Rodriguez Vargas, Orestes		0	0	½	½	1	0	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	1	5.5
15	Bellon Lopez, Juan	2475	½	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	½	0	0	1	1	½	*	0	4.5
16	Menvielle, Augusto		0	½	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	1	*	2.5

2.b3

In case of 2.e4 ♖b7 3.♟c3 c5, thus entering into a dubious line in the Sicilian; I would prefer 3...e6 4.d4 ♖b4 5.♟d3 ♟xc3+ 6.bxc3 d6 followed by ...♟d7 and ...♟e7. White has more space but also a weakness in his pawn structure.

2...e6 3.♟b2 f5

The Dutch? I don't know. For me a Dutch Defence has something to do with White playing d2-d4. The editor of this book wants to know the name of this opening. What can I say? Cardoso Defence!

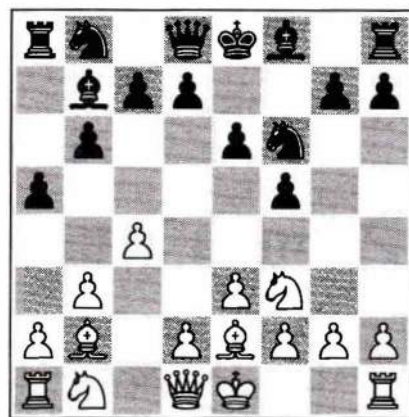
The reader who does not know the famous game Lasker-Bauer, played in Amsterdam in 1889, must fill in this huge gap in his knowledge right now! 1.f4 d5 2.e3 ♟f6 3.b3 e6 4.♟b2 ♟e7 5.♟d3!? b6 6.♟f3 ♖b7 7.♟c3!? ♟bd7 8.0-0 0-0



9.♟e2 c5?! 10.♟g3 ♖c7 11.♟e5 ♟xe5 12.♟xe5 ♖c6 13.♖e2 a6? 14.♟h5! ♟xh5 15.♟xh7+ ♟xh7 16.♖xh5+ ♟g8 17.♟xg7! ♟xg7 18.♖g4+ ♟h7 19.♖f3 e5 20.♖h3+ ♖h6 21.♖xh6+ ♟xh6 22.♖d7! with a decisive advantage.

4.e3 ♟f6 5.♟e2 ♖b7 6.c4 a5!?

On the sixth move, and perfectly playable.... But certainly not on the eighth! Why the rush to castle? According to Reti, 'Castling is a good move if there's no better one'.



As there is no danger in the centre, I preferred first of all to make my opponent aware of the problems with his rook's pawn. Fraguera only spent three minutes to think out such an important decision: how could he take this so lightly? I have to admit that it is somewhat a question of style, but to me it is more logical to play 7.♟c3 and if 7...♟b4, then 8.a3.

7.0-0? a4 8.d3

8.♟c3 a3 9.♟c1 ♖b4 is nice, but I don't think it's any good. At least you cannot lose the bishop as I did in my game against Hernando: 1.♟f3 e6 2.c4 b6 3.b3 ♖b7 4.♟b2 f5 5.g3 ♟f6 6.♟g2 ♖b4?! 7.0-0 0-0 8.d4 a5?? 9.c5! Hernando-Larsen, Orense 1975.

8.bxa4 is in keeping with Fraguera's style. Probably Black will recover the pawn; then the a2-pawn will become the target in the attack.

8...axb3 9.axb3 ♖xa1 10.♟xa1 ♟b4 11.♟c3 0-0

I am very happy with this position.
Thank you a-pawn!

**12.♖a2 ♘d6 13.♙c3 ♘c6 14.b4
♘e7**



Thank you, Lasker!

15.♘c1 ♘g6 16.♘b3 ♚e7!

I'm playing many of the moves that Lasker played, but I cannot play ...♘e4 on account of White's d3-pawn. However, on the positive side, I have the diagonals without the risk of the long white diagonal being blocked at any given time with d4-d5.

Part of the idea of the text move is to 'prohibit' White's c4-c5 advance. The other reason is to weaken the f3-square. Fischer once commented that Alekhine's games were based on..... 'a very simple strategy: move all the pieces to the kingside, and usually wait for the opponent to make a grave error.' Thank you, Bobby!

I was also thinking about the games played by my friend Olafsson (the 'Scandinavian twins' they called us 20 years ago) in the Wijk aan Zee Tournament in 1976. According to a reporter: 'Draws with the strong players; against the others, direct attacks on the king!'. In case of 16...♘g4 17.h3 ♘xf3 18.♙xf3 ♘h2 19.♚e1 (or 19.c5).

17.♚d2 ♘g4 18.g3

Now the following moves are obviously not possible: 18.h3 ♘xf3 19.♙xf3

♘h2, and also 18.c5 ♘xf3 19.cxd6 ♚xd6.



18...h5!?

The most difficult decision in the whole game (45 minutes). Naturally I would have loved to win with 18...♘h4 19.gxh4 ♚xh4!, but a good defence is 19.♘e1!.

Also interesting is 18...f4, but 19.e4 closes up the most important diagonal of this game. However, making a choice between the text move and 18...c5 was not easy. In the end I chose the sharpest continuation. Given the build-up of the black pieces on White's kingside, combinations will come automatically once ...h5-h4 is played.

19.c5

The reader now knows the idea 19.h4? ♘xh4! 20.gxh4 ♚xh4!, which may serve as a guide for future explosive acts.

19...bxc5 20.bxc5 ♙xc5



His next move surprised me, but in a pleasant manner.

21.h3?

I don't think that 21.♖xc5 ♜xc5 22.♙b4 ♜d5 23.♙xf8 ♘e5 is advisable for White either, for example: 24.e4 (the best continuation for White. If 24.♜d1 ♙xf8 25.♙g2



analysis diagram

25...♜a2! with decisive threats; and if 26.♙g1 ♜xe2 27.♜xe2 ♘xf3+, recovering the queen with a won ending. The move 25...♜a2 looks so pretty that I don't think I like the simple solution 25...♘xf3. In any of these lines White will be 'diagonal-less' and the value of the exchange will be questionable (what can a rook do on a diagonal?) 24...fxe4 25.♘xe5 ♘xe5 and an important detail: 26.♜g5 is not possible because of 26...♘f3+.

In the game continuation White's hopes are based on a similar theme; the threat against g7 at a critical moment.

After 21.♙xg7 ♜xg7 22.♘xc5 ♙a8 Black retains good attacking prospects (...h5-h4!), and 23.♜a5 is refuted by 23...♜b2!.

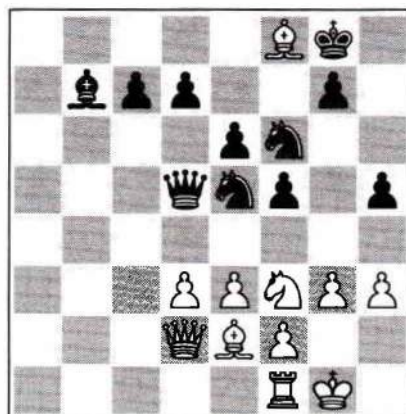
21...♘f6!

Overcoming the temptation to sacrifice pieces.

22.♘xc5

The knight disappears; he's moved around quite a bit.

22...♜xc5 23.♙b4 ♜d5 24.♙xf8 ♘e5



25.e4

Seduced by a mirage! However, the position is not pretty when seen from White's angle. The best defence should be 25.♜d1 ♙xf8 26.e4 (26.♙g2 is worse because of 26...g5 27.d4 ♘g6 28.♙h2 ♘e4! 29.♘e1 ♘xf2) but Black has two strong pawns and an attack and this is ample compensation for the exchange.

25...♘xe4

I thought that Fraguera hadn't seen 26.dxe4 ♘xf3+, but...

26.♜e3 ♘d2!

0-1

... his blind spot was only this square. It can be seen that in case of 26...♘g5?? 27.♜xg5 White would win due to the afore-mentioned threat of mate.

Thank you Diagonal! The bishop has only made one move. We can quote a comment made by Nimzowitsch: 'What a modern bishop! He doesn't do any work himself but he lets others do the work for him!'

Game 96

English Opening

Lajos Portisch

Bent Larsen

Las Palmas 1976

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 e6 3.♘f3 ♙b4
4.♜c2 0-0

Black gives up his bishops, preferring a lively development rather than the continuation 4 ...c5 5.a3 ♖a5, which is also playable.

**5.a3 ♖xc3 6.♔xc3 d6 7.b4 e5
8.♙b2 ♘c6 9.e3 ♘e4 10.♔c2 f5
11.♙e2 a5 12.d3 ♘f6 13.b5 ♘e7
14.c5 b6 15.cxd6 cxd6 16.♖c1
♙b7**



Now White can force the queen exchange, but without any advantage, after 17.♔c7 ♖b8.

**17.0-0 ♖c8 18.♔b1 ♔d7 19.a4
♘g6 20.♙a3 ♙h8**

A useful move, but the same can be said of 20...h6 and 20...♖fe8 (21.♘d2 d5!). A difficult decision.

21.♘d2!?

A provocation.

21...♘h4



22.f3!?

Another provocation. The gap on e3 looks bad.

Bad was 22.g3 f4, while 22.e4 ♘g6 23.g3 was rejected by Portisch since he believed that in various continuations, there was an attack by Black to achieve at least perpetual check. To serve as an example: 23...fxe4 24.dxe4 ♔h3 25.♙f3 ♖xc1 26.♖xc1 ♘h4!? 27.gxh4 ♘g4, but both sides have many other possibilities.

22...♘d5 23.♖xc8!

23.♘c4? ♖f6! with good prospects for Black.

23...♖xc8 24.♘c4



24...♖xc4?

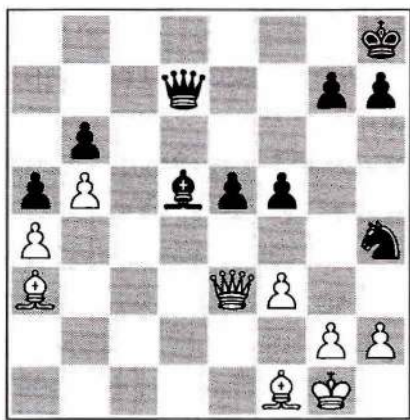
Played too quickly. However, the right move was 24...♔e6!, with major complications. One idea is 24...♔e6 25.♘xd6 ♖c3 26.♔b2? ♘xg2! 27.♙xg2 ♖c2!.

I don't know why I used 46 minutes for my first nine moves. It would have made more sense to use those minutes now!

25.dxc4 ♘xe3 26.♔d3!!

A mistake in my calculations. 26.♖f2 f4 27.♔d3 ♘hf5 would give Black a very strong position.

**26...♘xf1 27.♙xf1 d5 28.cxd5
♙xd5 29.♔e3**

**29...e4?**

Portisch still has 20 minutes. With the exchange sacrifice he had seen 29...♔c7 30.♔g5 ♔c3! 31.♔xh4 ♔xa3 32.♔d8+ ♔g8 33.♔xb6 ♔xa4 34.♔c5, thinking he had good winning chances. This, however, is incorrect in view of 34...♔b4! 35.♔xb4 axb4 36.b6 ♔d5 37.♔a6? b3!. However, much stronger would be 30.♔b2! ♔g6 31.h4! and Black has no defence. The extra pawn is not important: White wins because of the weakness of the black pawns on the queenside.

**30.fxe4 ♔xe4 31.♔xb6 h6
32.♔d6! ♔c8?**

Loses immediately, though after the queen exchange White would win easily on the queenside.

**33.♔b2 ♔h7 34.♔e7 ♔g8
35.♔xh4 ♔a2 36.♔f2 ♔xa4
37.♔a7** 1-0

Game 97

Caro-Kann Defence

Juan Manuel Bellón Lopez**Bent Larsen**

Las Palmas (6) 1976

1.e4 c6

Caro's and Kann's Defence, in my youth also known as the 'Poor man's Opening'. It was then named after Botvinnik, Smyslov, Petrosian, Karpov and some

others who likewise don't play badly either. However, it still renowned for its quietness and modesty.

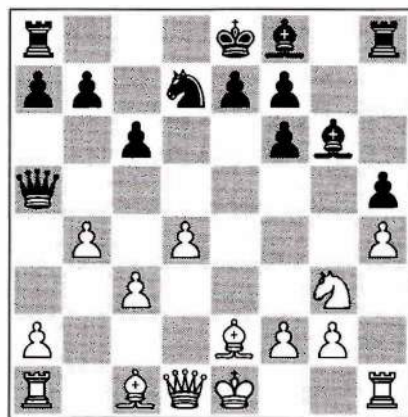
**2.d4 d5 3.♔c3 dxe4 4.♔xe4
♔f6!?**

The more tranquil lines are 4...♔d7 and 4...♔f5.

5.♔xf6+ gxf6

Some day I will try the variation 5...exf6 because it leads to a continuation that I do not understand. White has an extra pawn on the queenside. Why can't he win automatically? In fact, players like Flohr and Bronstein have played this with a modicum of success. However, my hand has still refused to make the move 5...exf6. In that I am too dogmatic: I need to capture towards the centre!

**6.c3 ♔f5 7.♔e2 ♔d7 8.♔g3 ♔g6
9.h4 h5 10.♔e2 ♔a5 11.b4**

**11...♔c7!**

In Birmingham 1951 (during the first World Junior Championship), the Swiss Bhend showed me the manoeuvre 11...♔d5 12.♔f3 ♔c4. However, I now consider that after 13.♔b3! White is better.

The years have gone by, and also the bad moments, like for example the one in San Antonio (Texas) in 1972 where I lost against Mecking with 9...h6. Later, my compatriot Jens Kristiansen

introduced a new line in the variation 9...h5.

12.♘h5 a5!

That's the idea.

13.♚h3?!

Neither 13.bxa5 ♖xa5 nor 13.b5 cxb5 are attractive, so really the a-pawn move undermines White's d-pawn! The idea was baptized in the game Sindik-Kristiansen in Nice 1973-74. After 13.♘f4 axb4 14.♘g6 fxg6 15.cxb4 e5 16.♚b1 0-0-0 they reached an obscure position. Kristiansen won, and his innovation was accepted by theoreticians. Bellón thought over his move for more than 40 minutes.

13...axb4 14.cxb4 e6!



The solid set-up of the Caro-Kann! Tempting was 14...e5, but it is also very dangerous for the black king.

Now probably White has nothing better than 15.♙d2 and then Black may recover the pawn with 15...♚b6, with a good game.

15.b5 c5 16.♙f4?

The decisive error. The only acceptable move is 16.♘f4; other alternatives are bad:

- A) 16.dxc5?? ♙xh5 17.♙xh5 ♖e5+;
 B) 16.♙e3? cxd4 17.♙xd4 ♙b4+ 18.♙f1 ♙xh5 19.♙xh5 ♜xh5 20.♖xh5 ♖c4+.

16...♙d6 17.♙g3?

In some bad positions there is always the possibility of coming up with a good move. This is not the case here. 17.♙xd6 ♖xd6 and Black recovers the sacrificed pawn, together with gaining great superiority in central pawns. Relatively better is 17.b6.

17...cxd4 18.♖xd4 e5

Forces an exchange.

19.b6

In case of 19.♖d1? ♙xh5 20.♙xh5 ♜xh5!.

19...♖c6 20.♘xf6+

If 20.♙f3 ♖xf3 21.♘g7+ ♙e7 22.♖xd6+ ♙xd6 23.gxf3 ♜ag8 24.h5 ♜xg7 winning.

20...♘xf6 21.♙xe5 ♙xe5 22.♖xe5+ ♙f8



White has three pawns for the piece, but this is something that does not fully compensate the exchange as the pawns are not very strong anyway. Worse still is the fact that Black now has the attack! At first glance it may seem that the opposite is the case, but the threat is 23...♜e8, and 23.♜f3 is no good because of 23...♜xh4!.

23.♙f1 ♜xa2

Very simple.

24.♜d1

24.♜xa2 ♖c1+ 25.♙d1 ♖xd1+ 26.♖e1 ♙d3+.

24...♖xb6 25.♖f4 ♖b2

Preparing the final settlement of an easily-won ending.

**26.♖e3 ♖a1 27.♔d6+ ♔g7
28.g3 ♘e4 29.♔f4 ♖xd1+**

White was in time trouble, but..... why look for something more than an end-game without problems?

**30.♙xd1 ♔d4 31.♙e2 ♘d2+
32.♔e1 ♔xf4 33.gxf4 ♘e4
34.h5 ♙f5 35.♙d3 ♘d6 36.♙xf5
♘xf5 37.♖b3 ♖e8+ 38.♔f1 ♖e7
39.♖b6 ♖d7**

The flag falls.

'I would like to know the Caro-Kann well', Robert Byrne had commented a few days earlier. The young Americans – for example Rogoff, Larry Christiansen and Commons – use the Caro-Kann not for a draw, but play it very aggressively. 'Well then, Robert, did you like this product that came from the Danish laboratories?'

Game 98

Benoni Defence

Bent Larsen

Orestes Rodriguez Vargas

Las Palmas 1976

**1.d4 c5 2.d5 ♘f6 3.♘c3 g6 4.e4
d6 5.♙b5+**

Naturally Black can play 5 ...♘bd7, but on many occasions when playing this opening the manoeuvre ...♘a6-c7 is necessary for Black's play on the queenside.

5...♙d7 6.♙xd7+

This bishop exchange suits White but 6.a4 is worthy of consideration.

6...♘bxd7 7.a4

Necessary so as to block the advance of the b-pawn.

7...♙g7

If 7...a6? 8.a5!.



8.f4!?

An ambitious scheme. Too ambitious perhaps? White has only developed one piece, whilst Black has three. However, if Black continues quietly, White will soon have a very aggressive position (♘f3 and 0-0). Perhaps this is a good time to practise the noble sport of self-criticism: I have to admit that I gave this move very little thought, expecting 8...0-0 9.♘f3. After the next move I thought for 20 minutes.

8...♔a5! 9.♙d2! 0-0

Now everything is in order. But what would have happened after 9...♔b4? White will have to sacrifice two pawns: 10.♔e2 ♔xb2 11.♖b1 ♔xc2 12.♖c1 ♔b2 13.e5.

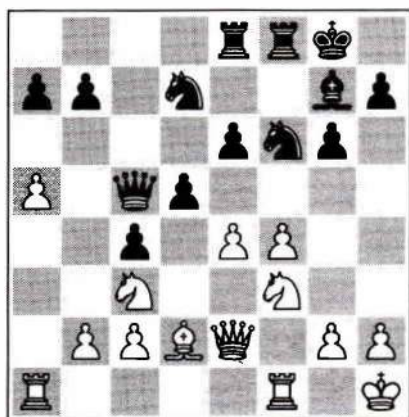


Surely there are options; the knight has to go back to g8, the whole position is disorganized. But two pawns is quite a lot..... Orestes is an attacking player, he wants to sacrifice pawns, not merely to take them.

10.♟f3 e6 11.0-0 c4?

A critical mistake. This pawn will be weak and White will gain the d4-square. 11...exd5 12.e5 gives White the edge. The move 11...♞c7 seems to be the correct one.

**12.♞h1 ♠ae8 13.dxe6 fxe6
14.♞e2 ♞c5 15.a5 d5**



Starts complications in the centre; trying to save a precarious position with some tactical measures.

**16.♞e3 ♞c8 17.♞xa7 ♟h5 18.g3
♞xc3 19.bxc3 e5?!**

Tempting, but both 19...♟hf6 and 19...♞c6 were better. In any case, Black does not have compensation for the pawn.

20.♟xe5 ♟xe5 21.fxe5



21...♠xe5?

Relatively better is 21...♞c6.

What seals Black's fate isn't just a matter of a lost pawn. In fact, Black will recover

it. The determining factor is the knight's position. White can play in such a way that the knight can neither enter the battlefield in the centre nor be sacrificed on g3.

22.♠xf8+ ♞xf8 23.♠f1 ♞e8

If the reader were to study the consequences of this move, he would ask himself: why not to e7? The commentator, then, must explain: 23...♞e7 24.♞g4!, for example: 24...dxe4 25.♞c8+ ♞e8 26.♞xc4+ with a decisive advantage.

24.♞c5 ♠xe4

Orestes Rodriguez is a good tactician, and I expected 24...dxe4. With 25.♠f8+ at least it is difficult to win: the e-pawn is strong. But 25.♞d4! ♠e6 26.♞xc4 should win without much trouble.

25.♞d2 ♞c6

25...♞d7 26.♞h6.

26.♞f2

1-0

Premature resignation? After 26...♞e8 27.♞f8+ ♞xf8 28.♠xf8+ ♟g7 29.♠b8 the a-pawn is the one who decides the game.

Game 99

Vienna Game

Bent Larsen

Efim Geller

Las Palmas 1976

1.e4 e5 2.♟c3 ♟f6 3.♞c4 ♟c6

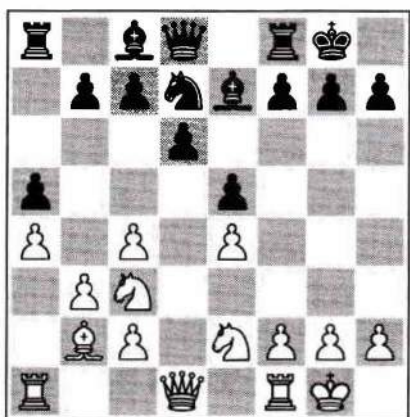
Geller actually thought out this move! Did he really want to play the complicated 3...♟xe4 4.♞h5 ♟d6 5.♞b3 ♟c6 6.♟b5 ? Well, you can add three things: First, nobody plays that against me; second, I am the author of this chapter in the *Encyclopaedia*; third, against players that could actually play this line I play 3.d3(!)!

4.d3 ♖a5 5.♗ge2

White's opening seems very modest. But in 1968 I won the crucial game of my match with Portisch in this manner! I like White's position; however, there are few examples of it in chess literature. In many games White attacked prematurely with f2-f4 and was stranded with a weak e-pawn. To summarize: I believe I understand these types of positions very well: slow aggression is no less aggressive!



**5...♗xc4 6.dxc4 d6 7.0-0 ♕e7
8.b3 0-0 9.♕b2 ♗d7 10.a4!? a5**



Only four minutes! This is probably the correct move, but with the two a-pawn moves, I have a position which is less flexible and less open. This is a position for knights and not for bishops.... If 10...♗c5 11.a5, after which White may play b3-b4 at any time.

11.♗d5 ♗c5

After forty minutes' thinking! Probably Geller wanted to play 11 ...♕g5. My reply would have been 12.♕c1!? (according to Nimzowitsch, 'There are few masters who understand the struggle against the pair of bishops, although it is very easy: you simply eliminate one of them!').

12.♗xe7+ ♖xe7 13.♗c3



I'm better! The reader who does not understand why does not have to hide in the midst of unknown chess players. Many grandmasters don't understand either. For example, Geller...

13...f5

A critical moment. Efim doesn't want a battle with lengthy manoeuvres which will give more space to White. White's reply is forced. What I mean to say is that, in all the other lines, I am admitting that Black has equalized.

14.f4! c6!



The only move! For the young student this phase in the game must be instructive. Black's move is saying something to the effect that White's third move was a mistake!

15.fxe5

Half an hour! Half an hour of studying, among others, the continuation 15...♙xe5 16.♖b1 ♔e7 17.♙d4, which I believe would give White the advantage. This half hour cost me the game. How stupid of me! I should only have thought for five minutes, then played 15.fxe5 and see what Geller would do. After just two minutes..... he took with the pawn!

15...dxe5?! 16.♙a3 b6 17.exf5

17.♙d2 also gives some opportunities; for example 17...f4 18.♖ad1 ♙g4 19.♙d6. But I did what, in practice, often turns out to be the best solution: decide quickly (3 minutes).

17...♙xf5 18.♙e2 ♙g6 19.h3 ♙g5

I thought that 19...♙h4 was better. I still think it's better!

20.♖ae1 ♖xf1+ 21.♖xf1 e4



We didn't analyze much after the game. But I had the impression that Geller was quite satisfied with this position. What a mistake! There's absolutely no question that Black is better! The passed pawn is weak and well and truly blocked. Really, the only thing that this

pawn does is protect White's c2-pawn. White has many chances against the black pawns, against the e-pawn and against Black's kingside. Precisely because of the presence of opposite-coloured bishops there is the chance of an attack. The rest of the game is an anticlimax. No logic, no justice. Well, that's practical chess!

22.♙c1 ♙e5 23.♙e3 ♖e6

And Geller offers a draw, thinking, at least, that he is not worse off.

24.♙b2 ♖d4??

What's up? Geller still has 18 minutes. An amazing error! After the game I think I convinced my opponent that an endgame after 24...♙d4 25.♖d1 still offered chances to White.

25.♖d5 c5

Now there are no more good moves left.

26.♖d1 ♙h5

I lost more than five minutes studying 26...♖f3+ 27.gxf3! ♙g3+ and Black's attack does not succeed (if 27...♙xb2 28.♖e7+, 29.♖xg6 and 30.♙xe4), although it wasn't that easy to calculate everything: 28.♖f1 ♙xh3+ 29.♖e1 exf3 30.♖e7+ ♖f7 31.♙f4+! ♖xe7 32.♙c7+ ♖e8 33.♙e5+ ♖f7 34.♙xg7+ ♖e8 35.♙h8+ ♖e7 36.♙f6+ ♖e8 37.♙c6+.



27.g4??

Now the easiest is 27. ♖xd4, with a decisive advantage. With little time left, the knight has to go! Then Black will not have any more tricks....

Editor's note: Also looking easy is 27. ♖e7+ ♔f7 28.g4 ♕h6 29. ♕xh6 gxh6 30. ♖xg6 ♖f3+ 31. ♔f2 hxg6 32. ♖d6!.

27... ♕h4

I had forgotten that now there's no possibility of 28. ♖e7+... Perhaps it was better to take the knight and then ♖xd4, leading to an easy endgame. I had the tournament in my pocket. What a fool I am!

28. ♔g2

1/2-1/2

Black is better but he doesn't want to take any risks in time trouble.

Game 100

Dutch Defence

Roberto Debarnot

Bent Larsen

Las Palmas 1976

1.d4 f5 2. ♖c3

Not very common but very good.

2...g6

An interesting gambit is 2...d5 3.e4!? dxe4 4. ♖g5. I played my next move without thinking of Debarnot's reply. A psychological error: I see Roberto as a 'positional' player.

3.h4!



Yes, very sharp but also very positional! 'Positional' does not always equate to 'calm'!

3... ♖g7

3... ♖f6 4.h5 ♖xh5 5. ♖xh5 is very dangerous for Black, but also strong is the simple 4. ♖g5.

4.h5 ♖c6 5. ♖f3 d5

Ugly, but the position is ugly.

6. ♖f4 a6

After 40 minutes! My first idea was to play 6... ♖xd4 7. ♖xd4 e5, but 8. ♖h2 exd4 9. ♖b5 cannot be played with Black, and the interesting piece sacrifice 8 ...f4 is not enough.

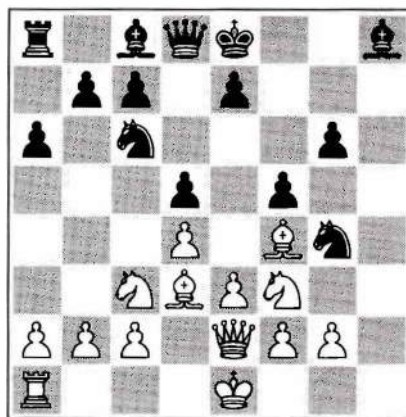
7.e3 ♖h6 8.hxg6

More exact is 8. ♖d3.

8...hxg6 9. ♖d3 ♖g4

Relatively better is 9 ... ♖f7 10. ♕e2 ♖f6 11.0-0-0 g5 12. ♖g3 ♖b4.

10. ♖xh8+ ♖xh8 11. ♕e2



11...e5

It is very difficult to defend the position. At a given point White may hassle Black with ♖a4, and infiltrate with the knight at c5 or, in case of ...b7-b6, win the a-pawn. However, and justly so, Black's problems cannot be resolved with a tactical blow. There's no solution.

12.dxe5 d4

12... ♖gx5 13.0-0-0 is not attractive.

13. ♖g5! ♕d7 14.exd4 ♖xd4 15. ♖xd4 ♕xd4 16. ♖f6



This is where the interesting part of the game finished.

**16...♙xf6 17.exf6+ ♔e5 18.♘d5
♙f7 19.f3**

White has now reached an ending which he should win. In these circumstances one could consider whether the little time I have left is a handicap (19 minutes for 19 moves, 4 minutes for 11 moves, 2 for 9 moves).

**19...♔xe2+ 20.♙xe2 ♘xf6
21.♘xc7 ♖b8 22.♖d1 ♙d7
23.♘d5 ♘h5 24.♙f2 ♙e6
25.♘b6 ♘f4 26.♙f1 g5 27.c4**

**♘g6 28.b4 ♘e5 29.a4 ♖g8
30.c5 g4 31.♖e1? ♙f6 32.f4 g3+
33.♙g1**



33...♘f7!

It is obvious that White wanted to win with the blow 34.♖xe6+ and overlooked 33...♘f7!.

**34.♙c4? ♙xc4 35.♘xc4 ♖d8
36.♘e3 ♘h8! 37.b5 axb5
38.axb5 ♘g6 39.♖d1 ♖xd1+
40.♘xd1 ♙e6 41.c6 bxc6
42.bxc6 ♘xf4 43.c7 ♙d7
44.♘e3 ♙xc7**

1/2-1/2

Chapter 30

Lanzarote 1976

Game 101

Irregular Queen's Pawn Opening

Jose Miguel Fraguera Gil

Bent Larsen

Lanzarote 1976

1.c4 ♘f6 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 ♙g4

How does the grandmaster defeat the master? He creates problems and throws the position off balance! One of the easiest methods is by exchanging bishop for knight.

4.♚b3 ♚c8 5.♘bd2

There's almost no theory but 5.h3 is recommended.

5...♘bd7 6.h3 ♙xf3 7.♚xf3

After move 5 one would expect 7.♘xf3, but the text move is just as good.

7...g6 8.e3 ♙g7 9.♙d3 0-0**10.0-0 e5 11.b3****11...♘h5! 12.♙b2 f5 13.♚d1! e4****14.♙e2 ♘hf6 15.♚c2 c6 16.f3?**

A bad mistake. Correct is 16.b4!.

16...exf3 17.♙xf3 d5 18.b4

Too late.

18...b5!

The bishop on b2 doesn't have much scope whilst the black knights will be able to occupy good squares.

19.cxb5 cxb5 20.♚d3 ♙h6 21.a4**♚e8 22.♞fe1 bxa4 23.♞xa4 ♞f7****24.♞a5 ♘b6 25.♙c1 ♙f8 26.♚b3****♞b8 27.♞f1 h5 28.♙e2?**

Hoping for ♘d2-f3-e5 or ♘d2-f3-g5. In any case White's position offered nothing to be optimistic about.

28...♙xb4! 29.♚xb4**29...♚xe3+!**

Not much good was 29...♘c4? 30.♚xb8! ♚xb8 31.♘xc4. But the se-

quence of moves 29...♔xe3+ 30.♚f2 ♘e4 31.♘xe4 ♔xc1+ 32.♚f1 ♔e3+ would be quite depressing for White. Fraguela avoided this with the continuation 30. Resigns!

Zero points out of three.... This score could perhaps be explained as a result of fatigue after the tournament in Las Palmas. Perhaps you could even say that with his move in the first round (8...♘xd5??) Fraguela lost three games!

Game 102

Indo-Benoni Defence

Bent Larsen

Orestes Rodriguez Vargas

Lanzarote 1976

1.c4 g6 2.♘c3 ♘g7 3.d4 c5 4.d5 ♘f6 5.e4 0-0 6.♙d3 e6 7.♘ge2 exd5 8.exd5!?



8.cxd5 would give us complicated positions in the Modern Benoni. The text move seems quieter but contains an ambitious idea: to exploit the advantage in space without giving Black any counterplay. Unpleasant for Black is the constricted mobility of his queen's bishop after 8...d6 9.0-0.

8...♘g4?! 9.0-0 ♘e5?

Seduced by that well-known desire to capture the pair of bishops. Necessary was 9...d6 10.f4 f5.



10.d6!

Almost decisive.

10...♘bc6 11.f4 ♘xd3 12.♔xd3 ♘b4

Another artificial move. Orestes' intention is 12...f5 and it was probably the best move here, although 13.♔d5 wins a pawn.

Lanzarote 1976

			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	
1	Larsen, Bent	2625	*	½	0	½	1	1	0	1	1	1	1	1	8.0
2	Darga, Klaus	2500	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	7.5
3	Garcia, Jose	2280	1	½	*	½	½	½	0	½	1	0	1	½	6.0
4	Pomar Salamanca, Arturo	2435	½	½	½	*	0	1	½	½	1	½	½	½	6.0
5	Rodriguez Vargas, Orestes	2435	0	½	½	1	*	½	½	½	½	0	1	1	6.0
6	Weinstein, Norman	2430	0	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	0	1	1	1	6.0
7	Bellon Lopez, Juan	2475	1	0	1	½	½	0	*	½	½	1	0	0	5.0
8	Hernandez Onna, Roman	2460	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	5.0
9	Haik, Aldo	2325	0	0	0	0	½	1	½	½	*	1	½	1	5.0
10	Sanz, Javier	2345	0	½	1	½	1	0	0	½	0	*	0	1	4.5
11	Betancort Curbelo, Juan	2360	0	½	0	½	0	0	1	0	½	1	*	½	4.0
12	Fraguela, Jose	2380	0	0	½	½	0	0	1	½	0	0	½	*	3.0

13.♔d2 a6 14.f5

Here comes the direct attack.

14...b5 15.a3 c6 16.d5 gxf5
17.g3 d4 18.e7+ h8
19.gxf5



19... xf5

I now wanted to give mate on h7 with ♖xf5-h5, but it's not so easy and after thinking a while I decided on the easiest line.

**20. ♖xf5 ♔f6 21. ♖xg7 ♔xg7
22. b4!**

Offering the Peruvian master a lost end-game (22...♔d4+).

22...♙b7 23.♙b2 f6 24.♖ae1
♙c6 25.cxb5 axb5 26.bxc5 ♖a4

The only active move that Black has at his disposal.

27.♖xf6! 1-0

This game was awarded the ‘Best Game’ prize. As I heard, the other two contenders were Darga’s games versus Fraguera and versus Bellón.

Game 103

King's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Aldo Haik

Lanzarote 1976

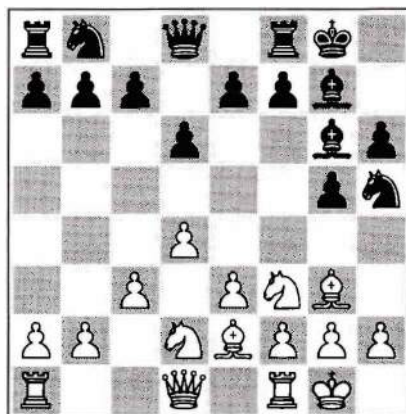
1.d4 f6 2.f3 g6 3.g5













In the Petrosian style. At the moment of writing I'm not sure if I will play like this in the Interzonal or whether I shall keep my secrets....

3...♙g7 4.e3 d6 5.♘bd2 h6
6.♙h4 g5 7.♙g3 ♘h5 8.♙e2 0-0
9.c3 ♙f5?

Of dubious value. White will now continue with Nimzowitsch's recipe for the neutralization of the pair of bishops: eliminate one of them and the pair ceases to exist!

10.0-0  g6



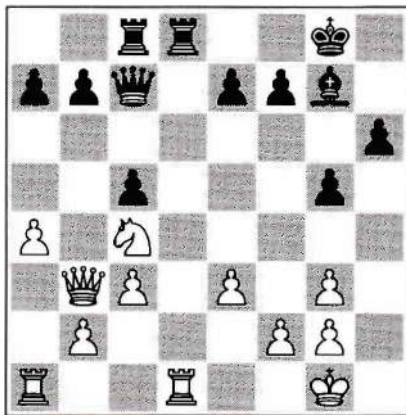
11. e1! xg3 12. hxg3 d7
13. d3 xd3 14. xd3 c5
15. b3 c7 16. a4 ac8
17. dxc5 xc5?

A serious mistake, allowing an exchange of the only white piece that, presently, wasn't too happy.

18. xc5 dxc5

18...♔xc5 19.♔xb7 would be very favourable for White.

19.♘c4 ♖fd8 20.♖fd1



20...e6?

Gives a possible entry square to the knight. Anyway, even without this mis-

Game 104

take, Black's position would be just as difficult.

After the inevitable exchange of the rooks, we have an illustration of what I call 'Donner's Rule': queen and knight is usually superior to queen and bishop, but rook and bishop is superior to knight and bishop. It's a good rule but, like every rule, it has its exceptions. However, in this case the black bishop is not doing much, and there is no reason to consider the position typical.

**21.e4 ♖xd1+ 22.♖xd1 ♖d8
23.♔h2 ♖xd1 24.♚xd1 ♚c6?!**

Faced with a passive defence, White can gradually and calmly obtain a better position.

25.♚d8+



25...♙f8?

This loses without putting up a fight. 25 ...♔h7 26.♚e7 ♚xa4 27.♘d6 ♚d1 28.f3 should also lose, although White's play would need to be very precise.

26.♘e5 ♚d6 27.♘d7

The rest is easy.

**27...f5 28.e5 ♚e7 29.♚c8 ♔f7
30.♚xb7 ♙g7 31.a5 ♔e8
32.♚c8+ ♚d8 33.♚xd8+ ♔xd8
34.♘xc5 ♙xe5 35.♘xe6+ ♔d7
36.♘d4 ♙xd4 37.cxd4 ♔c6
38.b4 a6 39.♔h3 ♔d5 40.b5
axb5 41.a6**

1-0

Sicilian Defence

Juan Manuel Bellón Lopez

Bent Larsen

Lanzarote 1976

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 d6 6.♙e2 a6
7.0-0 ♙e7 8.f4 0-0 9.♔h1 ♘c6
10.♙e3 ♙d7 11.♚e1 b5 12.a3**



12...♚b8!?

One of my specialities. Compared to ...♚c7, this move offers two advantages: the queen is defended (important in complications after ...♚b6 and e4-e5), and there's also the possibility of ...b5-b4.

13.♙d3

The game Kavalek-Larsen continued 13.♚g3 b4! 14.axb4 ♚xb4 15.♘xc6 ♙xc6 with a very good game for Black.

**13...♘xd4 14.♙xd4 e5 15.♘d5
♘xd5 16.exd5 f6 17.♚h4 g6
18.fxe5 dxe5**



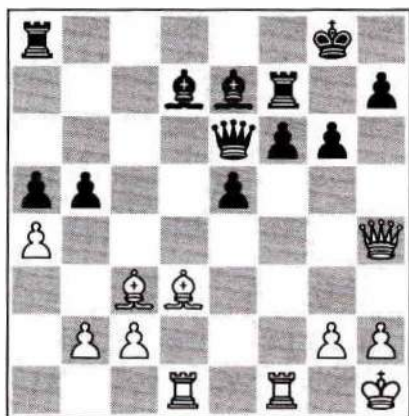
**19.♖ae1? ♜f7 20.♙c3 a5
21.d6?!**

The Spanish IM Román Torán, commenting on an extraordinary move, says, 'Giving a centre pawn is nothing fantastic.' However, I must say that Black already has a good game, and this may justify Bellón's decision to complicate it.

21...♞xd6 22.♞d1 ♞e6

Instead, a clear refutation would be 22...♞c7!.

23.a4!



23...♞b8

23...f5 24.♞e1 b4 25.♙xe5 ♙f6 with a level game. It was probably the most practical continuation considering the leaderboard placings (one point more than Darga and Weinstein).

24.♞g3! b4

24...♞g7 25.b3 allows White to recover the pawn with good play.

Now Bellón pondered over his move for half an hour, I don't know why since he has to accept the queen sacrifice.

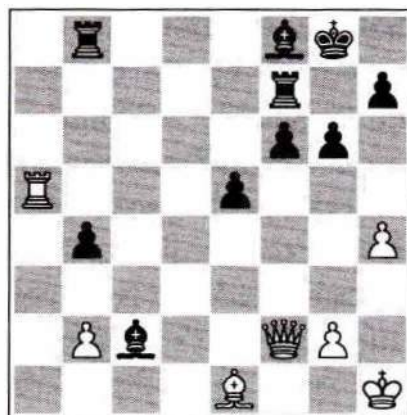
25.♙f5 ♞xf5 26.♞xf5 ♙xf5

27.♙e1 ♙xc2 28.♞d5 ♙xa4

Probably more unpleasant for White was 28...♙f8 29.♞xa5 ♞d7 with strong threats.

29.♞xa5 ♙c2 30.h4 ♙f8

31.♞f2



31...♞c8?

Much better is 31...b3, still with a clear advantage.

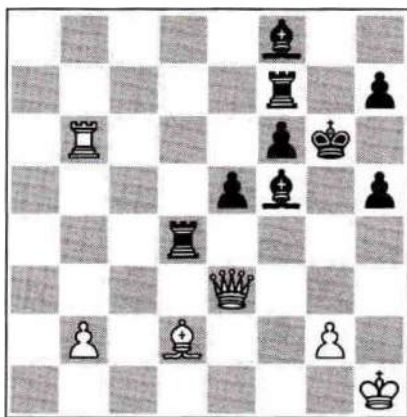
**32.♞b6 b3 33.♞e6 ♞c7 34.♞a8
♙g7 35.h5**

Quiet play does not offer White many chances.

**35...gxh5 36.♙d2 ♞ce7 37.♞b6
♙e4 38.♞c8 ♙f5 39.♞b8 ♞d7
40.♞e3 ♙g6**

I still had some time left and the game continued. Since I felt very tired, it would have been better to have sealed the next move.

41.♞xb3 ♞d4 42.♞b6



42...♞d3??

Black still had some chances and, at least, he shouldn't have lost after 42...♞g4. Another alternative was 42...h6.

43.♞g5

Mate.

Game 105

English Opening

Bent Larsen

Juan Betancort

Lanzarote 1976

1.c4 c5 2.g3 g6 3.♔g2 ♔g7
 4.♘c3 ♘c6 5.b3 ♘f6 6.♙b2 0-0
 7.d3 e6



8.♙xc6!?

Not a very popular idea. Who says goodbye to the bishop pair? But at least there will be no more symmetry.

8...bxc6 9.♚d2 d6 10.f4 ♚e7
 11.♘f3 e5 12.fxe5 dxe5



13.♚g5!

A good manoeuvre, avoiding a quick ...♘g4 and ...♙a6 from Black.

13...♞e8 14.0-0-0 h6

14...e4 15.♘xe4 leads to a favourable endgame for White.

15.♚e3 ♘g4 16.♚g1 h5
 17.♙b1



17...e4?!

17...♙h6 18.♙c1 is good for White. Betancort doesn't feel like playing passively. He has problems defending the weak c5-pawn, so he sacrifices a pawn, looking for tactical options.

18.♘xe4 ♙xb2 19.♙xb2 f5

The reply to 19...♙f5 would be 20.♘fd2!. The text move seems more logical but the bishop is almost left out of the game.

20.♘c3 ♘e3 21.♞c1 ♚f6
 22.♚e1 a5



23.♙a3!

I'm not afraid.

23...a4

A forced sacrifice. White was prepared to play ♘a4 and ♚c3.

24.♘xa4 ♘g2 25.♚d2 f4
 26.♞hg1 ♙h3 27.gxf4 ♘xf4
 28.e3 ♘e6 29.♞g3 ♙f5 30.♚c3
 ♚e7 31.♘e5?

After getting into a winning position, White makes life a little difficult for

himself by disregarding Black's next move.

**31...♘f8 32.e4 ♖xe5 33.exf5
 ♚xf5 34.♙cg1 ♜e6 35.♙g5 ♚f2
 36.♙5g2 ♚f7 37.♚d2 ♚b7
 38.♙f1! ♘d7**



Now Black has some threats but White assures a victory with his next move. Fortunately he still had a few minutes left whilst Betancourt had next to nothing.

39.♚b2! ♜xa4 40.♚h6 ♜xa2+

There's no remedy.

**41.♚xa2 ♚a8+ 42.♚b2 ♘e5
 43.♙d2 ♚d8 44.♚f4 ♚b8
 45.♚f2 ♜d6 46.♚c2 ♚a8
 47.♚xc5 ♚a2+ 48.♚c3 ♜xd3+
 49.♙xd3 ♚b2+ 50.♚xb2 ♘xd3+
 51.♚a3 ♘xc5 52.♙f6 ♚g7
 53.♙xc6**

1-0

Chapter 31

Costa Brava 1976

Game 106

Sicilian Defence
Laszlo Szabo
Bent Larsen
Costa Brava 1976

1.e4 c5 2.♟f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♞xd4 ♞c6 5.♞c3 d6 6.♙e2
♞f6 7.0-0 ♙e7 8.♙e3 ♙d7 9.f4

According to some experts, 9.♞b3 is the most exact continuation. However I am not entirely convinced.....

9...a6 10.♚h1 0-0

I delayed castling, but I think 10.♚h1 a little ‘slow’, and now I’m satisfied with the result of the opening.

11.♞e1 b5 12.a3 ♞b8!?

Also possible is 12...♞xd4 13.♙xd4 ♙c6 14.♞g3 ♞b8! and you will see that if both continue play as in the game Gyula Sax-Vlastimil Jansa in Budapest Tungsram, 1976, Black will have gained a tempo:

1.e4 c5 2.♞f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♞xd4
♞f6 5.♞c3 d6 6.♙e3 ♙e7 7.f4 ♞c6

8.♙e2 0-0 9.0-0 ♞c7 10.♚h1 a6
11.♞e1 ♞xd4 12.♙xd4 b5 13.♞g3
♙b7 14.a3 ♙c6 15.♞ae1 ♞b7
16.♙d3 b4 17.axb4 ♞xb4 18.♞e2
♞b7 19.e5 ♞h5 20.♞h3 g6 21.♞g3
dxe5 22.♙xe5 ♞g7 23.♙c3 f6
24.♙c4 ♙d5 25.♙xd5 ♞xd5 26.♞f3
♞f7 27.♞e2 ♞e8 28.♞d4 ♙c5
29.♞b3 ♙b6 30.♞d3 ♞c6 31.♞f3
♞xf3 32.♞xf3 ♞d8 33.g3 ♞d6
34.♞a1 ♙d8 35.♞c5 ♞a7 36.♞d3
♞xd3 37.cxd3 a5 38.♞b3 ♞d7
39.♞xa5 ♞xd3 40.♞c6 and Black resigned.

In this game, Black played ...♙b7-♙c6 instead of ...♙d7-♙c6 but that’s not important. The ...♞b8 move was not a new idea; I had already played it in my match against Kavalek in 1970. But it was new for Szabo. Now his studies of Sax’s game were useless and after thinking for a while, he made a move which he later admitted he was not happy with.

Costa Brava 1976													
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	
1	Larsen, Bent	2625	*	0	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	7.5
2	Castro Rojas, Oscar	2380	1	*	½	0	1	½	½	1	1	1	6.5
3	Zwaig, Arne	2475	½	½	*	1	0	½	1	1	0	1	5.5
4	Szabo, Laszlo	2525	0	1	0	*	1	½	1	0	1	1	5.5
5	Marovic, Drazen	2485	0	0	1	0	*	½	½	1	½	1	4.5
6	Visier Segovia, Fernando	2350	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	4.0
7	Pomar Salamanca, Arturo		0	½	0	0	½	½	*	½	1	1	4.0
8	Garcia Conesa, Gregorio		0	0	0	1	0	½	½	*	1	½	3.5
9	Sanz Alonso, Francisco		0	0	1	0	½	½	0	0	*	1	3.0
10	Ortega, M.		0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	0	*	1.0



13. Qf3 Nxd4 14. Qxd4 e5

Black is now in a very comfortable position. I cannot say that the next move is a mistake but, as he made it, the veteran Hungarian GM did not realize the dangers.

15. Nd5 Nxd5 16. exd5



16... exd4!

A surprise for Szabo.

17. Wxe7 Qf5 18. Rac1?

What else was there? 18. We2 Rc8 19. Rac1 (19. Wd2 Rxc2 20. Wxd4 Wa7 is also difficult for White) 19... Rxc2! 20. Rxc2 d3 21. Wd2 dxc2 22. g4 Qd7 23. Wxc2 is not very pleasant as it weakens the kingside. However White should have opted for one of those lines.

18... Re8 19. Wg5 Wc8 20. c3

20. Rf2 Qxc2!

20... h6 21. Wh5 d3!



Clearly that pawn may be strong and weak at the same time. However, if you consider the dominance on the king's file and the position of the white queen, and also the weakness of White's f and d-pawns, then you will be justified in thinking that, in this case, the advanced pawn is strong.

22. Rcd1 Re3 23. h3

Other possible lines are:

A) 23. Rfe1 Qg6 24. Wg4 Wc5;

B) 23. g4 Qg6 24. Wh4 Rxf3!;

C) 23. Wh4 Wc4.

All lead to serious consequences for White.

23... Ra7 24. Qg4

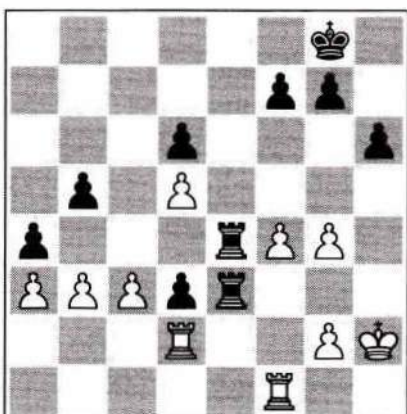
After any other move comes 24... Rae7 and at the right moment 25... Qe4.

24... Qxg4 25. Wxg4 Wxg4

A difficult decision, 25... Wc4 is also very strong.

26. hxg4 Rae7 27. Qh2 Re4

28. b3 a5 29. Rd2 a4



Perhaps easier is 29...♔f8.

30.♖b1

The only counterplay.

30...♙xf4 31.bxa4 bxa4 32.♖b6

In case of 32.♖b4 g5!; and if 32.♖b8+ ♔h7 33.♖b6 ♖xg4 34.♖xd6 ♖e2! 35.♖xd3 ♖exg2+ 36.♔h3 g5, threatening 37...♖g1.

32...♖c4?

Simpler is 32...♔f8 33.♖xd6 ♖c4. Also winning is 32...♖xg4 33.♖xd6 ♔f8! with the idea of ...♖e2 and ...♖c4.

33.♖xd6?

33.♖c6 creates more problems but, as I have mentioned, 33...♖xg4 34.♖xd6 ♔f8 wins.

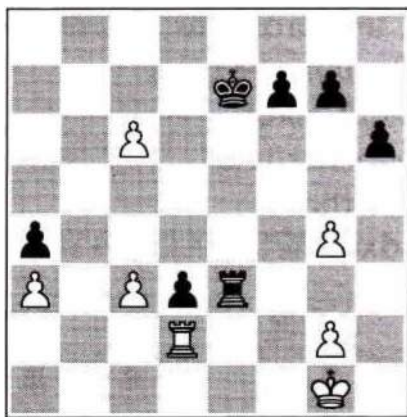
33...♔f8!

There is a curious position after 33...♖xc3? 34.♖d8+ ♔h7 35.d6 with the strong threat 36.d7 followed by ♖e8 or ♖c8.

34.♖c6

In case of 34.♖a6 ♖xc3 35.♖xa4 ♔e7! also wins, for instance: 36.♖a7+ (36.♔g1 ♔d6 37.♔f2 ♖e5) 36...♔d6 37.♖xf7 ♖e2 38.♖d1 d2.

34...♖xc6 35.dxc6 ♔e7 36.♔g1



36...♖g3!

The continuation 36...♔d6?? 37.♔f2 ♖e2+ 38.♖xe2 dxe2 39.♔xe2 ♔xc6 leads to a draw. Let us see: 40.♔d3 ♔c5 41.c4 g6 42.g3 f6 43.♔c3 f5 44.gxf5 gxf5 45.♔d3 h5 46.♔c3 f4

47.gxf4 h4 48.f5 ♔d6 49.♔d4! h3 50.c5+.

37.♔f2 ♖xg4 38.♖xd3 ♖c4 39.♖e3+

39.♖d4 ♖xc3 40.♖xa4 ♖xc6 41.g4 has the virtue of losing more slowly.

39...♔d6 40.♖f3 f6 41.♔e2 h5 42.♔d3 ♖g4 43.g3 ♔xc6 44.c4 ♖g5!

This last move was to answer 45.♔c3 with 45...♔c5. Szabo made his sealed move in this position, only to resign the following morning. Black may win by various means; my intention was 45.♔d4 ♔d6! with a nice *zugzwang*, for instance: 46.♖d3 g6 47.♖f3 ♖g4+ 48.♔c3 ♔c5 and White doesn't have a check on f5.

Game 107

Caro-Kann Defence

Bent Larsen

Arturo Pomar

Costa Brava 1976

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4

The Panov Attack. I am for, and against it. On the one hand it gives active play, but on the other the queen's pawn is isolated. I'm afraid of having an isolated queen's pawn.

4...♖f6 5.♖c3 e6 6.♖f3 ♔e7 7.cxd5 ♖xd5

7...exd5 8.♖b5+ is difficult for Black, as Alekhine demonstrated. The text move, in fact, transposes into a Queen's Gambit position.

8.♖d3 ♖c6 9.0-0 0-0 10.♖e1 ♖d7

Modest but solid. More usual is 10...♖f6. The more popular line now is 11.♖xd5 exd5 12.♖e5. But this doesn't give much.



11. ♖c2!?

Probably a novelty. Its value depends on the effectiveness of 11... ♘cb4.

11... ♘f6?

11... ♘cb4 is preferable.

12. ♙d3 g6 13. ♖b3

In similar positions this manoeuvre is only possible after a preparatory a2-a3.

13... ♖c8 14. ♖h6 ♖g7

If 14... ♖e8, then 15. ♘e4 would be very strong.

15. ♖xg7 ♖xg7



16. h4!?

Looking for something more than the minimum advantage I would obtain with 16. ♖xd5 exd5 17. ♘e5.

16... ♙a5 17. ♘e4 ♙c7!

This move was played quickly since Arturito had already foreseen 17. ♘e4. Now 18. h5 is not much good in view of 18... ♘f4 19. ♙e3 ♘xh5!.

18. ♖ac1 ♖fd8 19. ♖xd5

Not possible now is 19. h5, since with 19... ♖e8 Black would achieve his projected development.

19... exd5 20. ♘c3 ♖f5 21. ♙d2 ♙d6 22. ♘e5



Has White achieved more than what he would have had he played 16. ♖xd5 ? Perhaps a little more; the move h2-h4 is useful whereas ... ♖fd8 is not.

22... ♙f6 23. h5

The most aggressive line, but 23. g3 followed by ♖e3 wasn't bad either.

23... ♖xh5

23... g5 24. f4 g4 25. ♙f2 was very unpleasant for Black.

24. ♘e2 ♖g6

If 24... ♘xe5 25. dxe5 ♙xe5? (25... ♙h6 26. ♙d4 followed by ♘f4 gives Black quite a few problems) 26. ♙g5+ ♖h8 27. ♘c3 winning a piece.

25. ♘f4 ♘xe5

Possibly better is 25... ♘e7, but the position is difficult.

26. dxe5 ♙f5 27. ♖xc8 ♖xc8



28.e6 f6?

A suicide but, once again, the position after 28...fxe6 29.♖xe6+ ♔g8 30.♚d4 would not be very pleasant.

29.♚b4! ♜e8 30.♚xb7+ ♔h6

31.♖xg6 ♚xg6

If 31...hxg6 32.♚f7; and in case of 31...♜xe6 32.♜xe6 ♚xe6 33.♚xh7+!.

32.♚xa7 ♚g5 33.a4

33.♚e3 was sufficient. Black can do nothing.

33...f5

33...♜g8 34.♚e3!.

34.♚d4 f4 35.♜e5 ♚g7 36.e7

♜g8 37.♚xd5 f3 38.♚e6+

Black resigned.

Chapter 32

Spanish Team Championships 1976

The XX Spanish Team Championships were held in the splendid setting of the Palacio de la Lonja in Zaragoza. The Schweppes team missed its regular player Jesús Díez del Corral on the top board and this was felt (in spite of the strong contingent made up of Torán, Calvo, Bellón and Hernando). The team CIDA from Las Palmas obtained an average score of 6.5 out of 9 games on all boards, and was the well-deserved champion. Runner-up was the Unión Graciense from Barcelona, headed by Pomar, who was unbeaten with 6.5 points. The performance of the Peruvian Orestes Rodriguez, playing for the team Condal from the Canaries, also needs to be highlighted. They achieved a creditable third position overall with Rodriguez obtaining the best score of 7 points for the top board.

Game 108

Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Roman Torán

Spanish Team Championships,
Zaragoza 1976

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 e6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 a6 5.♙d3 ♘f6 6.0-0 d6
7.c4 g6**



A very modern line.

8.♗c3 ♙g7 9.♖e1

9.♙e3 0-0 10.♙e2 merits attention.

9...0-0 10.♙g5 h6

Probably better is 10...♗bd7.

11.♙e3 b6 12.h3 ♙b7?

Preferable is 12...♗bd7.

13.♖d2 ♔h7 14.♗ad1 ♗bd7

15.♗b3 ♖c7 16.♙f1 ♗e8



It's the best move, but at the same time he is admitting his error when he played 12...♙b7 because Black cannot defend the backward pawn in any other way.

17.♙d4 ♙xd4

17...♗e5 18.♖e3 is also favourable for White.

18.♗xd4 ♖d8?

Better is 18...♖c8.

19. ♖f3 ♜c8



20. ♞e3

A nice move. It defends both knights and prepares doubling on the d-file. White is now better owing to the advantage in space and Black's weakness in the pawn structure. The white bishop, however, is not very active, and it is not so easy to see where White can launch the attack. Torán, who now has some time trouble, makes his next move, which I believe is the crucial mistake.

20... ♞e5?

The trouble doesn't lie in the majority of pawns that White will have on the queenside. The trouble is that control of the open file stops any chance of counterplay.

21. ♖xe5 dxe5 22. b4! ♞f6
23. ♞d6 ♞c6 24. ♞xc7 ♜xc7



The question of the bad bishop needs to be understood. Philidor once wrote that when defending you should occupy the same colour square with your pawns as the colour of the bishops. This is so in many cases. Capablanca stresses the importance of limiting the actions of the opposing bishop with pawns.

25. f3 ♞a8 26. ♞ed3 ♔g7 27. ♞d8
♞cc8 28. ♞xc8 ♞xc8 29. c5

The bishop comes into play. Curiously, in the same match Visier also had a bishop on f1. Apparently it seemed very passive, but nevertheless it gave the whole position such security that it allowed the other pieces to play much more freely.

29... ♞b7 30. ♖a4 b5 31. ♖b6 ♜c7
32. a4 bxa4 33. ♖xa4 ♜d7
34. ♞d6



34... ♞f8?

Curiously 34... ♞xd6 35. cxd6 ♞d7 36. ♞c5? ♞xc5 37. bxc5 ♞f8 gives Black drawing opportunities. More efficient is 36. b5 a5 (36... axb5 loses a piece) 37. ♞f2 and the king makes its way to the queenside, which should win. White, however, would still need precision in his play.

35. ♞b6

1-0

After 35... ♞c7 36. ♞xa6, there's no hope.

Game 109

English Opening
Roman Bordell
Bent Larsen

Spanish Team Championships,
 Zaragoza 1976

1.c4 g6 2.♘c3 c5

White cannot now go into the Maroczy Bind, which would have come about after, for instance, 1...c5 2.♘f3 g6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 ♙g7 5.e4.

3.♘f3 ♙g7 4.d4

Naturally 4.g3 and 4.e3 are also possible.

4...cxd4 5.♘xd4 ♘c6



White has to decide on either 6.e3 (passive), 6.♘c2 (6...♙xc3+!?) or the text move:

6.♘xc6 bxc6 7.g3 ♖b8!?

I love centralised pawns, but I don't know what to play. In any possible complications it is important to bear in mind that White has the tempo (for the mere fact that he is White) as compared to openings such as 1.e4 ♘f6 2.♘c3 d5 3.exd5 ♘xd5 4.g3 g6 5.♙g2 ♘xc3.

8.♙g2 ♘h6 9.♙c2 ♘f5 10.0-0

10.e3 is not in Bordell's style.

10...h5!? 11.♙f4!?

The two players' joint forces are producing an explosive situation! Normal (and boring) would be 11.h3 c5 12.e3 ♙b7.

11...♖b4

11...e5 is ugly for Black's king's bishop.

12.b3 h4 13.♖ad1



It's always the 'fake' rook! That is to say, ♖fd1 has the advantage of leaving a square for the king but there is the inconvenience of leaving the other rook exposed to the opponent's dark-squared bishop along the diagonal.

13...hxg3 14.hxg3 ♙a5 15.♖fe1

Interesting is 15.♘e4 ♘d4 16.♖xd4 ♙xd4 17.♖d1.

15...♘d4



16.♙d3?

I am not so sure that my opponent envisaged my reply (he spent more than 20 minutes after my next move). Probably better would have been 16.♙d2 ♙h5, with a complicated game (one has to remember that Black still retains his right to castle...).

16...♘xb3! 17.♙e3!

Clearly favourable for Black would be 17.axb3 ♖xb3.

17...♖xc4

Other lines such as 17...♔c5 and 17...♘c5 18.♙d6 ♘e6 would also give an advantage.

18.♘e4

18.♙d6 e6 19.♘e4 ♘d4 is not very dangerous.

18...♖xe4 19.♔xe4 ♘d4

The two centre pawns are more than enough compensation for the exchange.

20.♙d2 ♔h5 21.♙c3??

Loses straight away.

21...♔h2+ 22.♔f1 d5

Against ♙h3 there is no antidote. It is odd that such a dormant bishop can exert such a strong influence in the battle. In the same round, Debarnot's knight stayed on its home square until move 27!

23.♙xd4 dxe4 24.♙xg7 ♙h3**25.e3 ♔xg2+ 26.♔e2 ♙g4+****27.♔d2 ♔xf2+**

And White resigned.

Chapter 33

Geneva 1977

A very strong tournament (Category XII, GM norm: 7 points). Dzindzichashvili met the norm in his first individual tournament after emigrating from the USSR last year. He already had one norm, which was approaching the time limit of three years (**Editor's note:** In those days FIDE imposed a time limit in achieving the norms). But some of the participants were a little tired. Five came from Bad Lauterberg. I arrived from Rotterdam once the tournament had started, after the second round. So I had to play 9 games in 9 consecutive days; and some with adjournments, which also meant lots of nocturnal analyses....

This is what happened during my game against Ivkov: by move 9 I had already spent 53 minutes! Later I woke up one minute before the flag fell! Fatigue cost me points, but even so, during the whole tournament, I did not commit such serious mistakes as I did in Rotterdam.

The news is that Andersson actually won four games whereas he had not won a single one in Bad Lauterberg! He almost won the tournament. In any case, it was a double Scandinavian triumph. Interestingly, it was the first time that all five Scandinavian grandmasters participated in a tournament.

In this part of Switzerland there is less chess tradition than in German-speaking regions; in Zürich you will find one of the oldest clubs in Europe. But the Hotel Méditerranée was pleased with the tournament and also with the 130 participants in the Open, which was won by the young Swiss Kaenel. The tournament will be repeated in 1978.

			Geneva 1977																	
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4				
1	Larsen,Bent	2615	*	½	½	1	0	0	½	½	1	½	1	1	1	1	8.5			
2	Andersson,Ulf	2565	½	*	½	½	0	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	½	1	8.0			
3	Dzindzichashvili,Roman	2535	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	7.5			
4	Sosonko,Genna	2530	0	½	½	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	½	1	1	7.5			
5	Pachman,Ludek	2485	1	1	½	½	*	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	½	7.0			
6	Torre,Eugenio	2550	1	0	0	½	½	*	0	½	1	½	½	1	½	1	7.0			
7	Liberzon,Vladimir	2550	½	½	½	0	½	1	*	½	1	½	½	½	0	½	6.5			
8	Ivkov,Borislav	2510	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	½	0	½	½	½	1	6.5			
9	Sigurjonsson,Gudmundur	2520	0	½	½	½	1	0	0	½	*	1	½	½	½	1	6.5			
10	Timman,Jan	2590	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	1	0	*	½	½	1	0	6.0			
11	Byrne,Robert	2580	0	0	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	½	*	1	½	½	6.0			
12	Olafsson,Fridrik	2560	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	½	½	0	*	1	1	5.5			
13	Hug,Werner	2445	0	½	½	0	½	½	1	½	½	0	½	0	*	½	5.0			
14	Westerinen,Heikki	2430	0	0	½	0	½	0	½	0	0	1	½	0	½	*	3.5			

Game 110

Owen's Defence

Heikki Westerinen

Bent Larsen

Geneva 1977

1.e4 b6 2.d4 ♖b7 3.♗d3 e6
 4.♘f3 c5 5.0-0 cxd4 6.♘xd4
 ♘c6 7.♘xc6 ♗xc6 8.♘c3
 ♗c5?!



9.♗e2

In case of 9.♗g4 ♗f6 10.♗g5 ♗g6
 11.e5 ♘h6!. But, instead, 10.♘b5! is
 strong. The weakness of the dark
 squares after 9.♗g4! g6 would give
 White a clear advantage.

9...♘e7 10.♗e3 0-0 11.♖ad1 ♗c7
 12.♗xc5 bxc5 13.♗e3 ♗a5



Black looks good.

The idea behind the text move is to fol-
 low it up with ...♖b8 as the reply b2-b3
 is not possible.

14.e5 ♘g6 15.♗e4?!

An incorrect plan, but very much in
 line with the Finnish grandmaster's
 temperament.

15...♘xe5 16.♗xh7+

16.♗xc6 ♘xc6 17.♖xd7 ♘d4 and
 Black is somewhat better.

16...♗xh7 17.♗xe5 ♗b4!

17...f5? 18.♘e2! and the knight joins
 the attack via f4, h3, and on to g5. Or it
 may get to b3 via d4.

With this last move Black effectively
 stops the knight from joining the attack
 (now the black queen would force the
 exchange on e4).

18.♖d3 f5 19.♖b1 ♖ac8 20.a3
 ♗b8

Without the queens, Black would
 clearly gain the advantage with a strong
 bishop and an impressive centre.



21.♗xc5!? ♗xg2!

21...♗e4? 22.♘xe4! probably leads to a
 draw.

22.♗e7 ♗c6 23.♖e1 ♗f4



After a long spell of thinking time. And now White has 24.♖xe6!? (24...dxe6? 25.♗h3+). Black has good winning chances with 24...♖ce8, but that was the only continuation that could create problems for Black. I don't know if Westerinen saw this move. He already had very little time left. Perhaps he confided in my calculations.

24.♖g3? ♖h6 25.b4 f4 26.♖g4 ♖f6

Black is no longer satisfied with a favourable endgame (26...♖f6).

27.♖e5 ♖g6 28.♖xg6 ♖xg6+ 29.♖g5 ♖h6 30.h4 ♖f3!



One way of describing this game is that it shows the difference between a very active bishop and a knight which is far removed from the battlefield.

31.♖c5 ♖xc5 32.bxc5 ♖g6+ 33.♖g5 ♖xc2 0-1

I won the 'Best Game' prize! I don't know if this was one of my best, though...

Game 111

Nimzo-Indian Defence

Gudmundur Sigurjonsson

Bent Larsen

Geneva 1977

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.exd5 cxd5 4.c4 ♘f6 5.♘c3 e6 6.♘f3 ♖b4 7.♖d3 dxc4 8.♖xc4 0-0 9.0-0 a6



And what do we have? A Nimzo-Indian! As the Icelandic grandmaster belongs to the 'party' of king's pawn players, I thought maybe he wasn't too keen on queen's pawn openings. But he will probably have seen many games with 9...b6, introduced in modern practice by Karpov. 9...a6 is less well-known. Many experts recommend 10.a4.

10.♖g5 b5 11.♖d3 ♖b7 12.♖e2 ♘bd7 13.♖fd1 ♖e7 14.♘e5 ♘d5 15.♖d2?!

Better is 15.♖xe7 ♖xe7 16.♘xd5 ♖xd5 17.♖e4. In this position Black would be better off if he still had his pawn on b7.

15...♘xc3 16.bxc3 ♘xe5 17.♖xe5 ♖f6 18.♖g3 ♖d5 19.♖e1 ♖d7 20.♖g4 ♖fc8



Now with a clear advantage for Black.

21.♖e3 g6 22.♖f4 ♖g7 23.h4 ♖c7!

Initiating a manoeuvre which culminates in move 28. For White, an exchange of queens is tantamount to admitting defeat.

**24. ♖g5 h6 25. ♖g4 h5 26. ♖g5
♜d8 27. ♖f4 ♜f6 28. ♖g3 b4!
29. ♖e5**

29.cxb4 ♜xd4 is very sad, so White tries out his last options with an exchange sacrifice.

29... ♜d8 30.cxb4 ♜xe5 31. ♖xe5

In case of 31.dxe5 ♜c4! 32. ♜xc4 ♜xd2 (32... ♖xc4 can also be played) 33. ♜xe6 fxe6 34. ♜xg6+ ♜f8 the white rook does not participate in the attack.

**31... ♜xh4 32. ♖f1 f6 33. ♖e3 ♖a7
34.f3 g5 35. ♖f2 ♖g3 36.a4 h4
37. ♜f1?**

White was very pressed for time.

**37... h3 38.gxh3 ♜xh3+ 39. ♜e1
♜g3 40. ♖e2 ♜g1+ 0-1**

Chapter 34

Las Palmas 1977

This year Las Palmas took the initiative of inviting the current World Champion, Anatoly Karpov, who has been very active in recent years.

The field included the talented Dutch GM Timman, former world champion Tal, the American Walter Browne, the Hungarian Adorjan and the brand new grand-master Anthony Miles, junior world champion. A very strong field, no doubt.

My performance was good, achieving up to nine victories, but Karpov went far ahead with his easy, practical though very technical style. He only yielded three draws in his fifteen games!

The Cuban Román Hernández and the Argentine Roberto Debarnot surprised us with their good performances whilst Pomar was the best of the Spanish representatives.

Tarrasch Defence
Bent Larsen
Fernando Visier
Las Palmas 1977
**1.c4 e6 2.♘c3 d5 3.d4 c5 4.cxd5
exd5 5.♗f3 ♘c6 6.g3 ♗f6 7.♙g2
♙e7 8.0-0 0-0 9.♙e3**

Game 112 The Tarrasch Defence. The main lines are 9.♙g5 and 9.dxc5 but the text move has frequently been played. Black has to decide between 9...c4, 9...b6, 9...♖a5, 9...♙g4, 9...♘g4 or the continuation chosen by Visier, after a long pause.
9...cxd4 10.♗xd4 ♖e8

			Las Palmas 1977																
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	Karpov, Anatoly	2690	*	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13.5
2	Larsen, Bent	2615	½	*	1	0	½	0	1	½	1	1	1	1	½	1	1	1	11.0
3	Timman, Jan	2590	½	0	*	½	½	1	½	½	½	½	1	1	1	½	1	1	10.0
4	Tal, Mikhail	2620	½	1	½	*	½	0	½	1	½	1	0	½	1	1	0	1	9.0
5	Browne, Walter	2545	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	1	½	½	½	0	1	1	1	9.0
6	Hernandez Onna, Roman	2435	0	1	0	1	½	*	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	9.0
7	Adorjan, Andras	2530	0	0	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	½	1	½	1	1	8.0
8	Debarnot, Roberto	2405	0	½	½	0	0	½	½	*	0	1	½	1	1	½	1	1	8.0
9	Miles, Anthony	2555	0	0	½	½	0	1	½	1	*	½	½	0	0	1	1	1	7.5
10	Tatai, Stefano	2480	0	0	½	0	½	½	½	0	½	*	1	½	1	½	½	½	6.5
11	Visier Segovia, Fernando	2355	0	0	0	1	½	½	½	½	½	0	*	½	0	½	1	1	6.5
12	Pomar Salamanca, Arturo		0	0	0	½	½	½	½	0	1	½	½	*	0	½	½	1	6.0
13	Martin Gonzalez, Angel		0	½	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1	1	*	0	0	1	5.5
14	Bellon Lopez, Juan	2415	0	0	½	0	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	½	1	*	½	1	5.5
15	Garcia Padron, Jose		0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	½	1	½	*	1	4.5
16	Cabrera, Gabriel		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	½	0	0	0	0	0	*	0.5

The variation 9. ♖g5 cxd4 10. ♗xd4 h6 11. ♖e3 ♜e8 is considered to be one of the most important.... We now have the same position, the only difference being the pawn on h7. This difference should be slightly in White's favour.

11. ♜c1 ♖g4 12. h3

Any of the following are worthy of attention: 12. ♖a4, 12. ♖b3 or 12. ♖d2, all preparing ♜fd1.

12... ♖d7 13. ♖h2 ♗xd4 14. ♖xd4 ♖c6 15. e3 ♗e4



Here I experienced a rare case of 'déjà vu': I'm sure I've seen this position and the sacrifice which follows. But where? A Russian game, a Yugoslav analysis, or my own studies for the Encyclopaedia, or perhaps a 'blind' analysis in the shower? I don't know. I'm not sure either whether the pawn was on h6 or h7. I had also forgotten if the result was favourable for White.... In any case, already knowing the idea, it was very hard not to play it. After 13 minutes I decided to go for it.

16. ♗xe4!? dxe4 17. ♜xc6 bxc6 18. ♖xe4 ♜c8

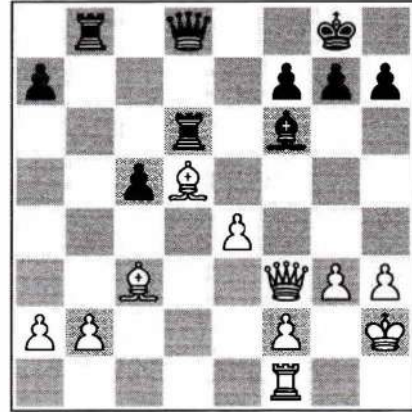
Almost the only move. If 18... ♖d6 19. ♖c2 at least gives a second pawn for the exchange and a strong position (this is why the pawn would be better on h6!).

19. ♖f3

Another possibility is 19. ♖h5!? h6 20. ♖f5 g6 21. ♖f3! (21. ♖e5 ♖f6!).

19... c5 20. ♖c3 ♖f6 21. ♖b7! ♖xc3

A surprising decision, but the position after 21... ♖b8 22. ♖c6 ♜e6 23. ♖d5 ♜d6 24. e4 cannot exactly be called attractive.

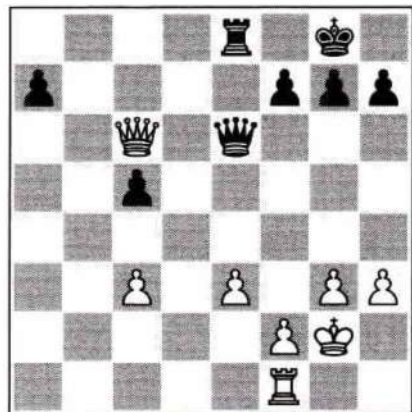


If Black survives the direct attacks he will most probably lose the c5-pawn.

22. ♖xc8 ♖xc8?!

The intention being to draw in an endgame with three pawns against four on the same flank. But 22... ♖xb2 was preferable although he would still have a difficult position on account of the 'loose' c5-pawn and the pressure on f7 with ♖a6-c4.

23. bxc3 ♖a6 24. ♖g2! ♖xa2 25. ♖c6 ♖e6



26. ♖xe6!

Fernando had calculated 26. ♖xc5 ♜c8 with good drawing chances.

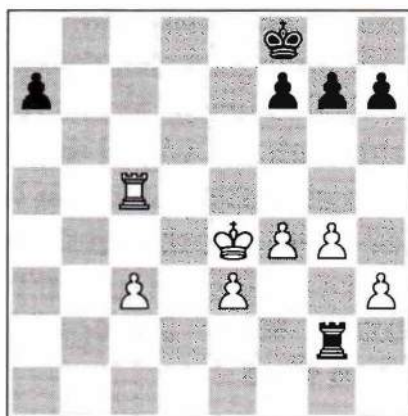
26... ♜xe6



Playing Mikhail Tal in Las Palmas 1977.

But the rook endgame is very bad for Black. For example: 26...fxe6 27.♖a1 ♖a8 28.♖a6 ♔f7 29.♔f3.

27.♖a1 ♖e7 28.♔f3 ♔f8 29.♖a5 ♖c7 30.♔e4 ♖d7 31.♖xc5 ♖d2 32.f4 ♖g2 33.g4 1-0



The position is lost and the flag is about to fall, but even so I was a little surprised when he surrendered.

Game 113

Caro-Kann Defence

Mikhail Tal

Bent Larsen

Las Palmas 1977

1.e4 c6 2.d4 d5 3.♘c3 dxe4 4.♙xe4 ♘f6 5.♙xf6+ gxf6 6.♙c4 ♙f5 7.♙f4!?

Tal values this move so much that the only time he played this defence as Black

he made the move 7...♖c7, after which he fared badly because of 8.♖h5!.

Against standard play such as 8...e6 and ...♙d6 White will play ♙g3. The bishop is well placed here, closing the g-file. That's why I tried to hinder the normal development of the white pieces.

7...♖b6!? 8.♙b3 a5 9.a4 ♘d7 10.♙f3 ♖a6!?

Preventing kingside castling.



11.♙h4 ♙g6 12.♖g4 e6 13.♙c7?! Preventing queenside castling! But

stronger was 13.0-0-0 0-0-0 14.♖he1, with some advantage.

13...f5 14.♖f4 ♙g7 15.h3?

Tal was already thinking about the resulting position following 15.0-0-0 0-0 16.h3 and..... he simply forgot to castle! Now 15...c5 would have been strong.

15...0-0? 16.0-0-0 ♖ac8 17.g4
c5 18.gxf5 c4 19.♙a2 exf5 20.c3
♖fe8 21.♖he1



21...♙c6??

Correct would be 21...♖xe1 22.♖xe1
♙c6 23.♙d6 ♘b6! with a good game.
For example: 24.♙e5 ♖e8!.

22.d5 ♙xa4 23.♙xc4 ♙xc4
24.♖xe8+ ♖xe8 25.♙xc4 ♖e4
26.♘g6 ♖xc4 27.♘e7+ ♙h8
28.♙xa5 ♙h6+ 29.♙b1 ♖f4
30.♘c8 ♖xf2 31.♘b6 ♘e5 32.c4
♙e3 33.d6 ♘c6 34.d7 ♙g5
35.♙c3+ ♙g8 36.♖g1 1-0

Game 114

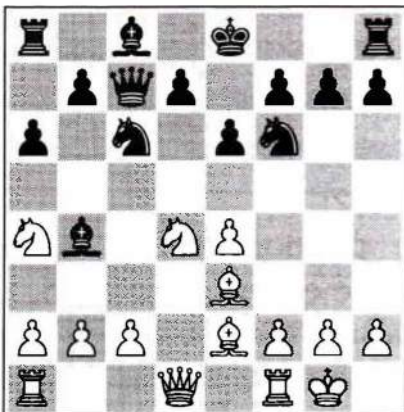
Sicilian Defence

Bent Larsen

Anatoly Karpov

Las Palmas 1977

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♘xd4 e6 5.♘c3 a6 6.♙e2 ♙c7
7.0-0 ♘f6 8.♙e3 ♙b4 9.♘a4



9...♙e7

In recent years the most popular line has been 9...0-0, and now 10.c4!? or 10.♘xc6 bxc6 11.♘b6 ♖b8 12.♘xc8 ♖fxc8 13.♙xa6 ♖d8 14.♙d3 ♙d6, but all that is a bit difficult for Black: Karpov had the 'pleasure' of experiencing this in his game against Smejkal in Leningrad 1973 (he ended up winning because of the Czechoslovak's *Zeitnot*).

10.c4?! 0-0?!

I played quickly and Karpov did too. I don't really know if there's any compensation after 10...♘xe4 11.♘xc6 bxc6 12.♙d4 ♘f6. 10.c4 is a novelty which can only be used once!

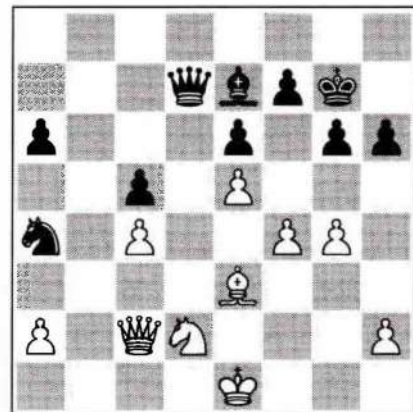
11.♘xc6 dxc6 12.♙c2 c5 13.f4

White is slightly better; for example if 13...e5? 14.f5 followed by ♘c3-d5.

13...b6 14.♖ad1 ♙b7 15.e5 ♘d7
16.♘c3 ♖fd8 17.♘e4 ♘f8
18.♙f3 ♖xd1 19.♖xd1 ♖d8
20.♖xd8 ♙xd8 21.♙d1 ♙e7
22.♙f2 ♘d7 23.g3 b5 24.♘d2
♘b6

Looking for some counterplay.

25.b3 bxc4 26.bxc4 g6 27.♙xb7
♙xb7 28.♙f3 ♙d7 29.♙e4 ♙g7
30.g4 h6 31.♙e1 ♘a4 32.♙c2



32...f5!?

Although there's no clear plan for White, Karpov doesn't want to wait any longer.

33.gxf5

According to Tal 33.exf6+ ♙xf6 34.♘f3 gave White good chances for a win.

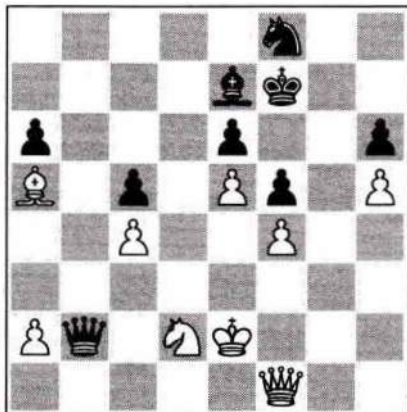
33...gxf5? 34.♘f3 ♖c6 35.♙f2 ♘b6 36.♖b3 ♘d7 37.h4! ♙f7 38.h5 ♙d8 39.♖d1 ♙e7 40.♙d2 ♘f8 41.♖b1 ♘d7 42.♖d3 ♖a4 43.♖b3 ♖c6 44.♙a5

White is making some progress but the position is too closed.

44...♙e8 45.♖c2 ♙f7 46.♖d1 ♖b7 47.♙g3 ♙e8 48.♖a4 ♙f7 49.♖c2 ♖c6 50.♖d1 ♙e8 51.♘d2 ♙f7

The sealed move. In case of 51...♙h4+!? 52.♙xh4 ♖g2 53.♘f1 ♖h1+ 54.♙g3 ♖g1+ it's a draw. But White could also play 52.♙h3.

52.♙f2 ♘f8 53.♙e3 ♖d7 54.♙c3 ♖c6 55.♙a5 ♖d7 56.♙e2 ♖d4 57.♖f1 ♖b2 58.♖b1 ♖d4 59.♖f1 ♖b2

**60.♙c7**

Interesting is 60.♖g1!? ♖xa2 61.♙c7 ♖a4 62.♙d6 ♙xd6 63.exd6 ♖c6 64.♘f3 ♖xd6 (64...♖e4+ is also sufficient) 65.♘e5+ ♙e8 66.♖g7, but all it leads to is a draw.

60...♖b7! 61.♙a5 ♖b2 ½-½

Four games against Karpov and four draws. I must also mention that I played White in all four games. I have had

some initiative in two of the games and a big advantage in another. Nevertheless it is probably much more difficult playing him when he has the white pieces!

Game 115

Sicilian Defence

Juan Manuel Bellón Lopez

Bent Larsen

Las Palmas 1977

1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 ♘c6 3.d4 cxd4 4.♘xd4 d6

Urging White to play the Maroczy Bind (5.c4). The fact is that with another move order (4...♘f6 5.♘c3 d6) I would have risked going into the Rauzer Variation (6.♙g5), which Bellón must have learned a lot of from the match Mecking-Polugaevsky.

5.♘c3 e6 6.♙e2 ♘f6

All's well: we have the Scheveningen.

7.0-0 ♙e7 8.♙e3 a6 9.f4 ♙d7

I prefer this move order to 8...0-0 9.f4 ♙d7 10.♘b3! a6 11.a4.

10.♖e1 b5 11.a3 0-0 12.♖g3 ♘xd4 13.♙xd4 ♙c6 14.♖ae1 ♖d7!?



In this position this is better than ...♖c7: the queen defends b5, preparing ...a6-a5. Moreover, in some lines she can play an important defensive role in the direction of g4-h3; it is also in-



Playing Juan Bellón
in Las Palmas 1977.

teresting that after e4-e5, ...dxe5 White would have to take with the bishop, so that the f-file will not be opened. My special weapon ...♖b8 is doubtful in this position, because White has not lost a tempo as compared to ♖h1 (my game with Szabo in the the Costa Brava tournament). For example, if 14...♖b8?! 15.♕f3! followed by e4-e5.

15.♖f3!? a5 16.♕d3 b4

This same position was arrived at, through a completely different move order, in the game Kupreichik-Langeweg, Dortmund 1975; a game which I had completely forgotten.



17.♘d5!? exd5 18.exd5 ♕xd5

I must have calculated very little since I had played 16...b4 after only 5 minutes.

My thinking was probably based on the main line: 19.♕xh7+ ♖xh7 20.♖h4+ ♖g8 21.♖h3? ♖xh3. But at this point White may have a draw (or even more) with 21.♖g3 ♕e6 22.♖xg7+. Kupreichik's continuation was 21.♖xe7 ♖g4 22.♖xg4 ♘xg4 23.♖g3 ♕e6 24.h3 ♖fc8, and Langeweg should have drawn. But 21...♖f5? 22.♖h3 ♘h7 23.♖g3 g6 24.♖h3 g5 25.♖g3 would give White the advantage, for instance 25...f6 26.fxg5 or 25...♖ae8 26.♖xe8 ♖xe8 27.♖xg5+ ♖xg5 28.fxg5 ♖e1+ 29.♖f2 ♖e4 30.♖h6 ♖xd4 31.g6.

But we still haven't seen anything. Black could play 19.♕xh7+ ♖h8!, for example 20.♖h4 (20.♖xe7 ♖xe7 21.♖e3 ♖xe3+! followed by 22...♘xh7) 20...♕xf3! 21.♕f5+ (21.♖xe7? ♖xe7 22.♕xf6 ♖e3+!) 21...♘h5!.

19.♖xe7

Surprisingly Bellón only spent 14 minutes thinking at this point, but he spent almost double the time on his next move.

19...♖xe7 20.♖e3

Now everything is easy for Black. The only way forward in White's attack was 20.♕xh7+. Black now has the op-

tion of playing 20...♔xh7? 21.♚h4+ ♕h5! (21...♔g8? 22.♚h3) 22.♚xe7 ♕xf3 23.gxf3 (slightly better for White) or better still 20...♔h8! (pointed out in my previous comment). Effectively I don't see anything worthwhile for White; for example 21.♚h4 ♕xf3!.

20...♕e6!



The bishop controls the h3-square. 21.f5 followed by fxe6 does not give White any compensation for the exchange and a pawn. So, there follows..... yet another sacrifice!

21.♕xh7+ ♔xh7 22.♚g5

22.♚h4+ ♔g8 23.f5 ♕d5.

22...♚h8 23.f5 ♔g8 24.♚g3 ♚h7 25.fxe6

25.♕xf6 ♚a7+! 26.♔h1 ♚f2.

25...♚xe6 26.♚xf6

There's nothing better because of the threat to the king.

26...♚e1+ 27.♚f1 ♚xf1+

28.♔xf1 bxa3 29.bxa3 ♚c8

30.c3 f6 31.h3 ♔f7 32.♕b6 ♚h5

33.♚d3 ♚b5 34.♕f2 ♔e6

35.♕g3 d5 36.♚e3+ ♔d7

37.♕e1 ♚b1 0-1

To summarize. I played well as long as there was no sustained attack from White. But I must say that I decided on this line without having seen much and that's why I think I have been extremely lucky.

Game 116

English Opening

Anthony Miles

Bent Larsen

Las Palmas 1977

1.c4 e5 2.♖c3 d6 3.e3 f5 4.d4 ♕f6!?

Possibly also correct is 4...♕e7. All this is ancient theory, from the last century (and with reversed colours): 1.e4 c5 2.f4 e6 3.d3 d5 4.♕e2.



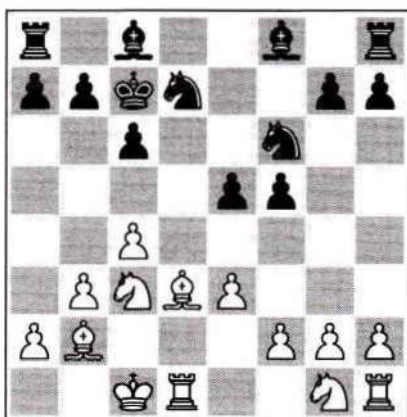
In Denmark it was known as the 'King's Gambit against the Queen's Gambit'.

5.dxe5 dxe5 6.♚xd8+ ♔xd8

Black has the better pawn structure, since the pawn on c4 is weak. White has to exploit his small advantage in development. The young English grandmaster probably didn't find the best continuation.

7.b3? c6 8.♕b2 ♔c7 9.0-0-0

♕bd7 10.♕d3



It opens up squares for the knights but it's a waste of time.

**10...e4 11.♔c2 a5 12.♘h3 ♔d6
13.♘e2 ♖e8 14.♘ef4 ♘e5
15.♗d2 ♙b4 16.♗d4 h6 17.♗hd1
♔d7**

17...g5? 18.♗d8!.

**18.a3 ♔c5 19.♗4d2 ♖ad8
20.♘g1 g5 21.♘fe2**



21...♘fg4!

This provokes a series of exchanges which are favourable for Black.

**22.♘d4 ♘xh2 23.♘xf5 ♘d3+!
24.♔xd3 ♔xf5 25.♔c2 ♖xd2
26.♔xd2 ♘g4 27.♔e1 ♘e5
28.♘e2 ♔g6 29.♘g3 ♘d3+!
30.♔xd3 exd3**



This passed pawn looks promising when combined with the possibilities that Black has on both flanks. One possibility is the creation of another passed pawn on the h-file. Pressed for time,

Miles does not offer much resistance, but the position is probably lost anyway.

31.♔d2 h5 32.♗h1? h4 33.♘f1 b5!

New dangers are lurking for White. A possible entry of the rook at c2 and threats against b3.

**34.cxb5 cxb5 35.♘h2 ♔e4
36.♖c1 ♔b6**



37.♘f3?

37.f3 ♔d5 38.e4 ♔xb3 would be most favourable for Black, but White has nothing better. Now Black should win with 37...h3, but the next move is even stronger.

37...♖f8!? 38.♔e1 h3 39.♔g7 ♖c8

White lost on time. Miles was moving 40.♘xg5, just at the moment when arbiter Medina stopped the fight. After 40...♙b4+ Black would soon have another queen. Curiously enough, this was my first game with Miles.

Game 117

King's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Jan Timman

Las Palmas 1977

**1.c4 g6 2.d4 ♘f6 3.g3 ♔g7
4.♔g2 0-0 5.♘c3 d6 6.♘f3 ♘c6
7.0-0 a6**

The Panno Variation, introduced in practice in the game Idigoras-Panno, Mar del Plata in 1955. The Argentinian grandmaster's idea was quickly adopted

by many masters, although the aforementioned game was an exception to the rule that a novelty wins the first time it's played!

8.h3 ♖b8 9.♙g5

Better known are 9.e4 and 9.♙e3, but I had already been playing the text move for twenty years.

9...b5

9...♙d7 has also been played.

10.cxb5 axb5 11.♖c1 b4



12.♙xf6 exf6 13.♘d5 ♘e7

Probably the best defence, but already in a difficult position.

After 14.♘xc7 ♖b7 the knight would be in difficulties.

A mistake is 13 ...♙e6? 14.♘xc7! with a clear advantage for White.

14.♘xe7+ ♕xe7 15.d5! f5

16.♘d4! ♖b6

16...♙xd4 17.♕xd4 ♕xe2 18.♖xc7 offers little hope to Black.

17.♕d2 ♙b7 18.♖c4 ♕e5

19.♖d1! ♖a8 20.b3



20...♙xd5!?

In a very compromising position, the talented Dutch grandmaster seeks salvation in tactical complications.

21.f4 ♖xa2 22.♕xa2

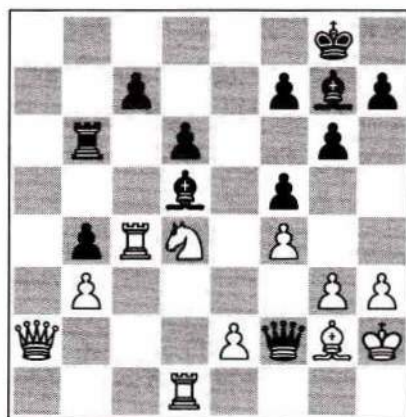
The best continuation. 22.fxe5? ♖xd2 23.♖xd2 ♙xc4 24.bxc4 b3 (or simply 24...♙xe5) was not advisable, but there may be some advantage in the obscure complications that occur after 22.♘c2 ♙xc4 23.fxe5 ♙xb3 24.♖c1, although it is possible that Black could prove to be quite strong with a rook and many pawns against a queen.

22...♕e3+ 23.♙h2??

Of course, the correct move was 23.♙f1 ♙xc4 24.♕a8+ ♙f8 25.bxc4 ♕xg3 26.♕f3. In this case, three pawns would not offer sufficient compensation.

23...♕f2

¡Ay! At this moment I was about to resign!



24.♖g1 ♙xc4?

24...♙xd4! 25.♖cc1 ♙e4 would give two pawns and a great position for the exchange.

25.♕a8+ ♙f8 26.♖c1! d5?

Afterwards, everyone thought they knew how Black could win the game. For example: 26...♙a6. But this is not so: 27.♖xc7! ♕xd4 28.♕e8! (28.♕a7? d5!) 28...♕f6 29.♙d5 with

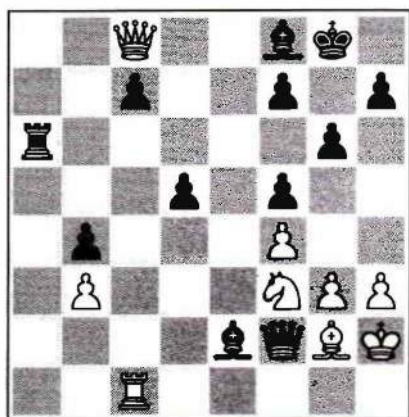
advantage to White! The only reply is 29...♖b7.

27.♘f3! ♜a6

The threat ♘e5-d7 was very strong; for instance: 27...♞e3 28.♘e5! ♜e6 29.♘d7 ♜e8 30.♘f6+.

28.♞c8 ♙xe2

Editor's note: Chess software suggests that 28...♜a2! 29.bxc4 ♜xe2 30.♘h4 ♜e3—+ would have been easier.



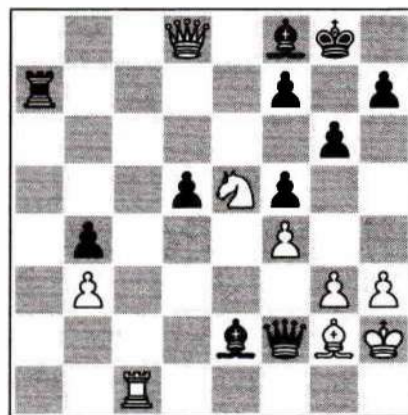
29.♘e5 ♜a2

With the idea of replying to 30.♘d7? with 30...♞xg2+!.

30.♞xc7 ♜a7

It was much safer to play 30...♞a7 31.♞d8 ♞e7 32.♞b8 ♞d6 33.♞e8 ♞e7, ending in a draw by repetition. Timman still had 17 minutes. I had much more and here I spent half an hour thinking.

31.♞d8



31...♙c4??

I saw no way to win after 31...♙g7! 32.♜c8 ♙c5 33.♞h8+ ♙h6 34.♜xc5 ♞xc5 35.g4 fxg4 36.hxg4 f5!. On the contrary, it seems that Black wins. My intention was 33.♞xd5, with good chances. Timman sacrificed almost instantly!

32.bxc4 b3 33.c5!

There are other winning moves. However a serious mistake would be 33.cxd5? (the queen needs this square) because of 33...♜a2 34.♜g1 b2 35.♞e8 ♞xg1+ 36.♙xg1 b1♞+ 37.♙h2 ♜xg2+ 38.♙xg2 ♞e4+ and 39...♞xd5.

33...b2 34.♜b1 ♞c2 35.♞b8! ♞xc5

Or 35...♞xb1 36.♞xa7 with a mortal threat on f7.

36.♜xb2 ♜a1 37.h4 ♙g7 38.♞e8 ♜a7 39.♘c6! ♜a3 40.♜b7 1-0

Chapter 35

Ljubljana/Portoroz 1977

19 years earlier the name of Bobby Fischer had revolutionized the chess world. In the Portoroz Interzonal in 1958 Fischer shared 5th place and qualified for the Candidates' Tournament. This was unprecedented for a 15-year-old. It was also my first Interzonal, but my performance was fairly discreet, with 8.5 points out of 20 games.

I did well in this tournament, finishing as the sole winner ahead of Hort, Savon, Tseshkovsky, Sosonko, Gligoric and Sax.

Game 118

Pirc Defence

Svetozar Gligoric

Bent Larsen

Ljubljana/Portoroz 1977

**1.d4 d6 2.e4 ♘f6 3.♘c3 g6
4.♘f3 ♙g7 5.♙e2 0-0 6.0-0 a6?!**

Naturally the main lines are 6...c6 and 6...♙g4, but the text move was well known in the '50s...



The participants of the Ljubljana/Portoroz tournament, 1977.

7.h3

I also played this line against Sosonko (Ljubljana/Portoroz 1977), with the small innovation 7.♖e1 ♘c6!? and after 8.d5 ♘e5 9.♘xe5 dxe5 10.♙e3 ♔d6 the move 6...a6 proved to be useful. The game continued 11.h3?! ♜d8 12.♔d3 e6 13.dxe6 ♙xe6 14.♔xd6 ♜xd6 15.♞ad1 ♜c6!! and Black had the advantage. I'm not saying that 6...a6 is very good (or 6...a5 either!) but I played it against Smyslov in Dortmund in 1960 and I didn't lose. There are also other ideas – 6...♘a6, 6...b6, 6...♘bd7 and 6...♘fd7, they all have an element of surprise value.

**7...♘bd7?! 8.e5 ♘e8 9.♙f4 c5
10.dxc5 ♘xc5 11.♔d2 ♘e6
12.♙h2 ♙d7**

Trying to complicate matters. 12...dxe5 would give White minimum advantage. Naturally Gligoric doesn't take the pawn: 13.exd6 ♘xd6 14.♙xd6 exd6 15.♔xd6 ♙c6 gives good compensation.



13.♞ad1 ♙c6 14.♘d5!

Threatens 15.exd6 ♘xd6 16.♘xe7+.

**14...♙xd5! 15.♔xd5 ♔b6
16.♔b3 ♔xb3 17.axb3 ♜c8
18.♙c4**

18.c3 dxe5 19.♘xe5 followed by ♙f3 is favourable for White, but Black may reply with 18...♘c5 19.b4 ♘a4.

**18...dxe5 19.♘xe5 ♘d6 20.♙xe6
fxe6 21.c3 ♜fd8 22.♘d3 ♔f7
23.♞fe1 ♘f5**



Gligoric realizes too late that he doesn't have the advantage.

**24.♘e5+?! ♙xe5 25.♙xe5
♜xd1! 26.♜xd1 ♜c5 27.♞e1 ♜b5
28.b4 ♜d5**

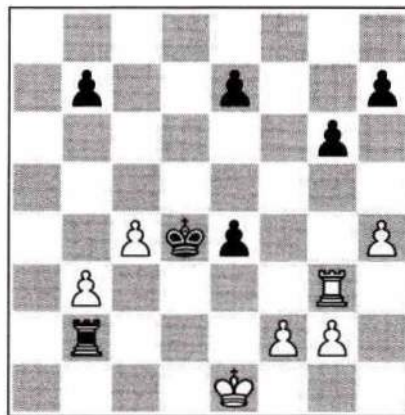
28...a5 29.bxa5 ♜xb2 allows White to draw without any hassle, by eliminating all the queenside pawns.

29.c4 ♜d3 30.♔f1 ♘d4

Not 30...♜b3? 31.♙c3 ♘d6 32.♔e2!.

**31.♙xd4 ♜xd4 32.b3 ♔f6 33.♞e3
33.♔e2?? ♞e4+ and the pawn end-
game is won for Black.**

**33...e5 34.♔e2 e4 35.♞c3 ♔e5
36.♞g3 ♜d6 37.b5! ♔d4
38.bxa6 ♜xa6 39.h4 ♜a2+
40.♔e1 ♜b2**



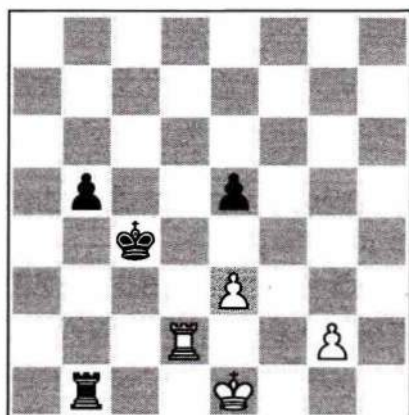
The time control has gone by and Gligoric does not want to give more than half an hour of his own time to get to the adjournment. The rapid play I

have practised in many games in this tournament has its advantages.

**41.h5 gxh5 42.♖h3 e5 43.♖xh5
♙xb3 44.♖xh7 ♖b1+ 45.♔d2
♖b2+ 46.♔e1 e3!**

All very nice, but insufficient to clinch a victory.

**47.♖d7+! ♔xc4 48.fxe3 b5
49.♖d2! ♖b1+**



50.♔f2??

50.♖d1 draws.

50...b4 51.♔f3

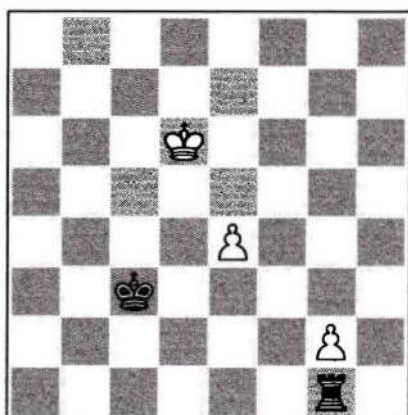
The sealed move. 51.♖d8 b3 52.♖b8
♔c3 also loses if Black plays well.

**51...b3 52.♔e4 ♖g1! 53.♔xe5
♔c3 54.♖f2 b2 55.♖xb2 ♔xb2
56.e4**

56.♔d4 ♔b3 57.e4 ♔b4.

56...♔c3 57.♔d6

The defence 57.g4 ♔c4! 58.♔d6 ♖a1
59.g5 ♖a6+ 60.♔e7 (60.♔e5 ♔c5
61.♔f5 ♔d6) 60...♔d4 is also insuffi-
cient.



57...♖d1+! 58.♔e6

58.♔c5 ♔d3 59.e5 ♔e4 60.e6 ♔f5.

58...♔d4 59.g4 ♖g1 60.e5

60.♔f5 ♔c5.

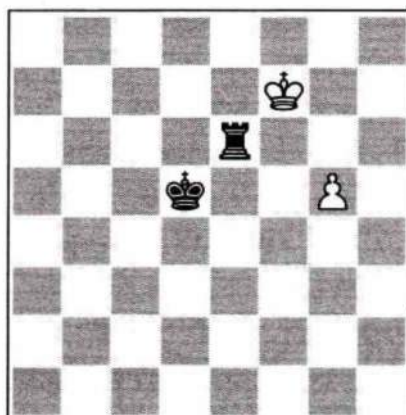
60...♔e4! 61.♔f6 ♖f1+ 62.♔e6

♖a1 63.♔f6 ♖a6+ 64.e6 ♔d5

65.g5 ♖xe6+

0-1

The game could have continued with
66.♔f5 (66.♔f7



66...♔e5 67.g6 ♖f6+! 68.♔g7
♔f5—+) 66...♖e1 67.♔f6 ♔d6.

An interesting endgame, for White's
idea to threaten with a pawn and draw
with the other. In all variations the black
king doesn't quite make it on time.
Lucky? The word is widely used among
chess players, but often it simply means
a bad move made by the opponent.
However, there are errors that don't lose.
50.♔f2 was a serious mistake, but to a
certain extent it was the product of fa-
tigue and a lengthy game. That I do not
call 'luck'. On the other hand, it cer-
tainly was lucky for Black that an error
did lose! In many lines it was a matter
of a single tempo.

Game 119

Queen's Indian Defence

Iztok Jelen

Bent Larsen

Ljubljana/Portoroz 1977

**1.♘f3 b6 2.g3 ♘b7 3.♘g2 c5
4.c4 g6 5.0-0 ♘g7 6.d4 cxd4**

7.♘xd4 ♙xg2 8.♔xg2 ♘c6
9.♘c2 ♚c8 10.♘e3 ♘f6 11.♘c3
0-0 12.♚b1 e6

Very sharp. Black's position is most satisfactory, but.... what must I do to win?

13.b3 d5 14.cxd5 ♘b4

14...♘e7 would recover the pawn but increases the 'danger of a draw'.



15.♙a3 a5 16.♚d2!

16.♚c1 ♘fxd5 would give Black good prospects.

16...♘g4 17.♘cd1 ♘xe3+
18.♘xe3 ♙c3 19.♚d1 ♚e8
20.♙xb4 axb4 21.♚d3

After 21.dxe6 ♚xe6 22.♚xd8+ ♚xd8 23.♚fd1 ♚a8 the ending would be more or less level but difficult....

21...♚c5 22.dxe6 ♚a8+ 23.♔g1
♚xe6 24.♚bd1!

With the positional threat of 25.♘d5.

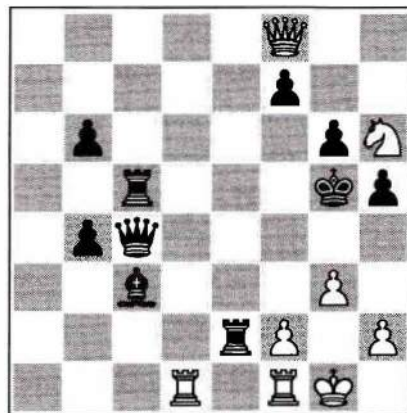
24...♚xa2 25.♚d8+ ♔g7
26.♘d5 ♚xb3 27.♘e7

The normal continuation is 27...♚xe7, usually leading to a drawn game. But I want to win the tournament! So I risk just a bit too much!....

27...♚c4?! 28.♚g8+ ♔f6
29.♚h8+ ♔g5 30.♚f8 ♚xe2
31.♘g8 h5?

A serious mistake. Better is 31...♔g4!!.

32.♘h6



32...♙d2!

It's the only move that doesn't lose outright!

With 33.♚xd2! ♚xd2 34.♚e1! White should win.

33.♘xf7+? ♔g4 34.♚xd2

After 9 minutes' reflection. Now he only has two minutes left!

34...♚xd2 35.f3+ ♔h3 36.♚c8+

Applause from the audience!

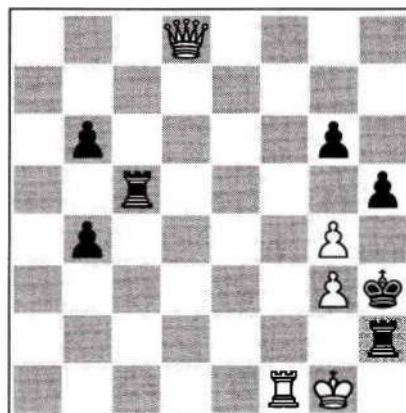
36...♚g4 37.♘g5+ ♚xg5 38.fxg4
♚g2+ 39.♔h1 ♚c5!

Now he rushes his last move before the time control! Jelen has very little time to think... what can he do? He has realised there's a check on h4....

40.♚d8??

Preferable is 40.♚d7! and also 40.♚e6! would give him a draw.

40...♚xh2+ 41.♔g1



41...g5!!

This wins! Jelen is deep in thought for more than 45 minutes. An arbiter ap-

proaches handling an envelope. Finally Jelen makes his sealed move,

42.♖b1

only to resign the following day. The sequence 42.♖b1 ♖cc2 43.♔d5 ♖cg2+ 44.♔xg2+ ♖xg2+ 45.♔f1 hxg4 46.♖xb4 ♖xg3 47.♖xb6 ♖f3+ 48.♔g1 ♖a3 wins easily.

On the other hand 42.gxh5 leads to an ending which doesn't offer White much hope: 42...♖cc2 43.♔d5 ♖cg2+ 44.♔xg2+ ♖xg2+ 45.♔h1 b3 46.h6 b2 47.h7 ♖h2+ 48.♔g1 ♔xg3 49.♖b1 b5.

What can I say? Incredible, miraculous, lucky...

Game 120

English Opening

Bent Larsen

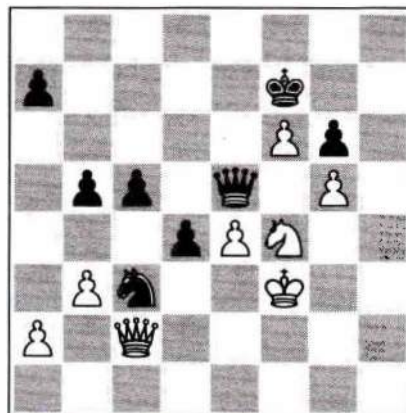
Vladimir Savon

Ljubljana/Portoroz 1977

In the next round, which was the penultimate in the tournament, and therefore very important, I did not play very well. Moreover, the Russian grandmaster was very lucky when, under time pressure, he made a good move 'without really seeing anything'. My position seemed very critical.

1.c4 e6 2.♘f3 ♘f6 3.b3 ♖e7 4.♖b2 0-0 5.g3 b6 6.♖g2 ♖b7 7.0-0 d5 8.cxd5 ♘xd5 9.♘c3 ♘d7 10.♘xd5 ♖xd5 11.♔c2 c5 12.♖ad1 ♖c8 13.♔b1 ♘f6 14.♘g5 h6 15.♖xd5 exd5 16.♘f3 ♔d7 17.♘h4 ♘e4 18.♘g2 ♖f6 19.f3 ♖xb2 20.♔xb2 ♘f6 21.e3 ♔d6 22.d3 b5 23.e4 ♖fe8 24.♘e3 g6 25.f4 ♔c6 26.e5 d4 27.♘g2 ♘d5 28.♖de1 f5 29.exf6 ♔xf6 30.♔d2 ♔g7 31.g4 ♖xe1

32.♖xe1 ♖f8 33.♖e4 ♖f7 34.h4 ♖e7 35.g5 hxg5 36.hxg5 ♔f5 37.♔c2 ♔c8 38.♔f2 ♖xe4 39.dxe4 ♘c3 40.f5 ♔c6 41.f6+ ♔f7 42.♔f3 ♔e6 43.♘f4 ♔e5



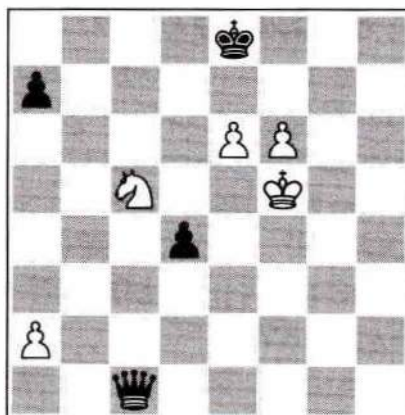
I played.....

44.♔d3

The only move, accompanied by a draw offer. Savon thought for a long time and at the end of the five hours he made his sealed move. The next day:

44...a6

Whether ...a7-a6 was played or ...a7-a4 makes no difference. But I'm going to take you through the main variation of my nocturnal analyses, in depth. It starts with 44...♔xg5 45.e5 ♔f5!? 46.♔xf5 gxf5 47.♘d3 ♘e4 48.♔f4 c4 (48...♔e6 49.f7!) 49.bxc4! bxc4 50.♘b2 c3 51.♘d3 c2 52.♔xf5 ♘c5! (52...♘f2? 53.e6+ ♔e8 54.♘e5!) 53.♘xc5 c1 ♔ 54.e6+ ♔e8.



55.♘d7! (a fantastic position. Black cannot win. Worse was 55.f7+?? ♖e7 56.♘d7 ♗h6!! 57.f8♗+ ♗xf8+ 58.♘xf8 d3) 55...♗f1+ 56.♖e4 ♗e2+ (56...d3 57.f7+ ♖e7 58.♖e3! ♗e2+ 59.♖d4 ♗f3 60.♖c3. Black wins if White forgets the exchange on c4 (move 49); for example, in this last variation there follows ...b5-b4+) 57.♖d5 ♗xa2+ 58.♖e5 ♗f2 59.♖e4 ♗e3+ 60.♖d5 ♗f4 61.f7+ ♖e7 62.♖c4!.

45.a4 ♗xg5 46.e5 ♗g1

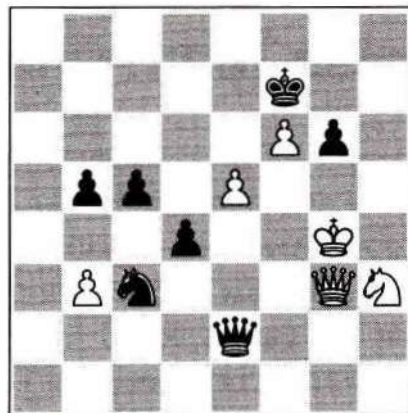
46...♗f5 we have seen before; 46...♗h6? may lose on account of 47.♖g4! threatening 48.♗f3.

47.axb5 axb5 48.♘h3 ♗h1+

49.♖g4 ♗g2+ 50.♗g3 ♗e2+

In case of 50...♗xg3+ 51.♖xg3 d3 52.♘g5+ ♖e8 53.e6 d2 54.f7+ ♖e7

55.♘h7 d1♗ 56.f8♗+ ♖xe6 57.♘g5+ ♖e5 58.♗g7+ ♖f5 59.♗f7+! ♖e5 and draws.



51.♗f3 ♗xf3+

51...d3 52.♘g5+ ♖f8 53.♘h7+ with perpetual check.

52.♖xf3 d3 53.♘g5+ ♖e8

54.♖e3 c4 55.bxc4 bxc4

56.♖d2 ♘d5 57.♘e4 ♖f7 1/2-1/2

Ljubljana/Portoroz 1977			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	0	1	2	3	4	
1	Larsen, Bent	2615	*	½	½	½	1	0	½	½	1	1	1	1	1	1	9.5
2	Hort, Vlastimil	2620	½	*	½	½	½	½	1	½	½	½	1	1	1	1	9.0
3	Savon, Vladimir	2540	½	½	*	½	0	½	1	1	1	½	½	1	1	½	8.5
4	Parma, Bruno	2535	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	1	½	½	½	½	7.5
5	Tseshkovsky, Vitaly	2590	0	½	1	½	*	½	½	½	1	½	0	½	1	1	7.5
6	Kurajica, Bojan	2530	1	½	½	½	½	*	½	½	0	½	1	½	½	½	7.0
7	Sosonko, Genna	2530	½	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	1	1	1	½	½	7.0
8	Bukic, Enver	2490	½	½	0	0	½	½	½	*	½	½	½	½	0	1	5.5
9	Gligoric, Svetozar	2565	0	½	0	½	0	1	½	½	*	1	½	½	0	½	5.5
10	Planinec, Albin	2475	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	*	1	0	1	1	5.5
11	Jelen, Iztok	2370	0	0	½	½	1	0	0	½	½	0	*	0	1	1	5.0
12	Sax, Gyula	2565	0	0	0	½	½	½	0	½	½	1	1	*	0	½	5.0
13	Barle, Janez	2450	0	0	0	½	0	½	½	1	1	0	0	1	*	½	5.0
14	Sigurjonsson, Gudmundur	2520	0	0	½	½	0	½	½	0	½	0	0	½	½	*	3.5

Chapter 36

Spanish Team Championship Alicante 1977

The Championship was played in Alicante, as in 1974. This time it was organised by the new and dynamic Peret Club, whose president was Jose Molina. Everything was in good hands as the director was José María González and the chief arbiter, Luis Escoda. I must also mention another detail: the bulletins. It was the very first time that the games could be studied the following day... or should I say most games, as some score sheets were impossible to decipher....

Both tournaments were won by the favourites. However, a bombshell fell in the First Division, during the second round: Terrassa 3.5-CIDA 0.5. This was depressing for our team but we managed to recover quite quickly. There was another surprise in the sixth round: Olot was defeated by Rey Ardid 3-1. The standings then were: CIDA 16, Olot and Schweppes 14; UGA 13.5; Terrassa 13. The other five teams were in danger: Rey Ardid, Barcinona and Condal 10.5; Maspalomas 9.5 and Español 8.5.

We saw a similar situation in the Second Division (where the 3rd to the 5th positions are important): Vulcano 18.5; Oromana (Seville) 16; Gambito (Valencia) 15; Peret (Alicante) 14; SEAT 13.5. The other five teams had enough reasons to be pessimistic. Málaga 10; Coruña 9.5; Hermandades de Trabajo 9; Madrid 8 and Santander 6.5

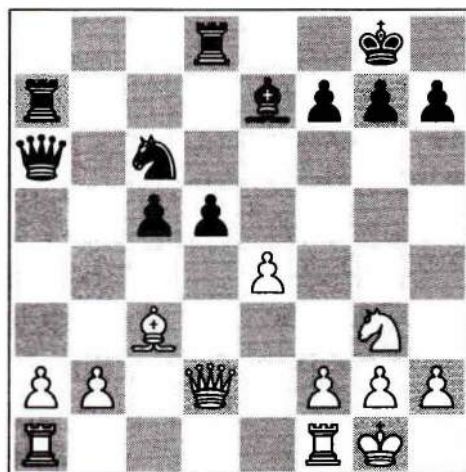
Several incidents occurred in the eighth (the penultimate) round. In the Second Division Aviaco lost three matches by default, since they did not turn up. Their players had to work the following day..... Fortunately the result wasn't of great importance, since their rivals Vulcano, were already promoted to the First Division.

For us, the day began with a very unpleasant surprise. Román Torán and Eduardo Pérez wrote in their daily column that our encounter with Maspalomas in the sixth round was very suspicious. This was incredible! That specific match had been difficult, nervous and hard-fought and the final result could well have been 4-0 either way or 2-2: the match actually finished around 2am, with the score 3-1 in our favour. Torán had written about 'subsidiary teams', but the three Canarian teams are, naturally, completely independent.

I find it hard to understand what the FEDA official is trying to gain with this kind of journalism. Does he really want to promote our sport? In his closing speech President Campoy's words on the subject were harsh. Torán was not in Alicante, although his name appeared as a player in the Schweppes team. The players from that team who were present (and who happened to be our adversaries the following day) gave no credence whatsoever to the article and our match was played amicably.

There was yet another incident! In the match Español vs. Terrassa, Eduardo Pérez resigned in his game against Pomés after 16 moves: even though he had the more favourable position!

1.d4 ♘f6 2.c4 c5 3.d5 b5 4.cxb5 a6 5.bxa6 e6 6.♘c3 ♘xd5 7.♘xd5 exd5 8.♚xd5
 ♘c6 9.e4 ♙xa6 10.♙xa6 ♚a5+ 11.♙d2 ♚xa6 12.♘e2 ♙e7 13.♙c3 ♖a7 14.♚d2
 0-0 15.0-0 ♜d8 16.♘g3 d5



and White resigned.....

The first reason Mr. Perez gave was something like: 'If others give away points, then I can do so too.' However, in a letter to the organisers, he wrote that it had been, 'as a protest against far too many draws and tactical scores of 2-2.'

Naturally these incidents caused some anxiety; however, this round also had its dose of mitigating circumstances. The third board, Franco, offered a draw to Visier. Directly to the captain! I then propose two draws! (Fraguela has an isolated queen's pawn against Sanz). The counter-offer by Franco was: four draws! No, no, never! I've got an easily-won endgame against Calvo. But during the conversation I was studying the position on the fourth board: Rubio and García Padrón had exchanged queens and rooks and were playing an endgame without much interest. I then proposed three draws!

Franco would have accepted but the others were against it. They wanted to play it out; and, miracle of miracles, Fraguela drew and the other two won! So, in this way we maintained our advantage of two and a half points over Terrassa. In the last round we only needed four draws against UGA to secure the Championship. (The UGA captain quite rightly asked the Terrassa team if they still had hopes of winning but by then they could only aspire to second place.)

You could say, as they do in Olot, that the runner-up placing was decided by Eduardo Pérez (when he resigned against Pomés)....

Game 121

Nimzowitsch Defence

Antonio Medina

Bent Larsen

Spanish Team Championship,
Alicante 1977

1.e4 ♘c6 2.♘f3

The main variation is 2.d4 d5 (used successfully by the Colombian Oscar Castro in this tournament), but..... what can be done against 2.♘f3 ? Probably, herein lies the reason why the Nimzowitsch Defence is not very popular. Nobody wants to make a study of the reply 2...e5 since it is absurd. We have 2...d6, which is passive, 2...e6, going into an inferior French, 2...d5 3.exd5 ♖xd5 4.♘c3 ♖a5, transposing into a bad Scandinavian (4...♖h5? 5.♘b5 is even worse), and, finally, 2...♘f6 3.e5 ♘d5 4.d4 d6 5.c4 ♘b6, a dubious line in Alekhine's Defence where White can choose between 6.e6!? and the quiet continuation 6.exd6 exd6.

2...g6?!

Playable, but 3.d4 ♗g7 4.d5 should give White a tiny advantage. However, Medina will not be provoked and after the third move we have a position that has probably never been seen in a game between grandmasters!

3.d3?! ♗g7 4.♘bd2 ♘f6 5.♗e2
0-0 6.0-0 d5 7.c3 a5 8.a4 e5

White has chosen the Hanham scheme, known in the Philidor Defence. Very solid, but the bishop on g7 defends the e5-pawn well and Black can maintain tension in the centre without much difficulty whilst at the same time obtaining a spacial advantage. The negative effect of 8.a4 should be noted; without it, White could expand on the queenside with b2-b3, a2-a3, ♗b2 and b3-b4.

9.♖e1 b6! 10.♖c2 ♗b7 11.♗f1
♖e8 12.♘b3?

A bad square for the knight. A more active plan would be 12.b3 followed by ♗a3 and b3-b4.

12...♖d7 13.♗g5 h6 14.♗d2
♖ad8 15.♖ad1 ♘h7 16.♗c1 ♖g4

Possibly better was the direct 16...♖c8. I wanted to provoke 17.h3, depriving the white bishop of this square.

17.♘bd2 ♖c8 18.g3 ♖a8!



In Réti's games, manoeuvres such as this were classified as original, innovative, sensational. More than half a century later they are normal moves, they simply form part of the repertoire!

19.♗g2 ♖d7

Black has a comfortable position although it is still premature to realize anything. The text move is played with the idea of doubling up the rooks on the d-file, but it is difficult to say whether this is the best play in this position.

20.♔h3 ♚d6 21.b3 ♖g8 22.♙a3
♚dd8 23.♙g2



23...♘b8!

Very strong. The knight wants to seek greener pastures and the pressure on e4 is very unpleasant for White.

24.♘h4 ♘bd7 25.♘hf3

After a great deal of thought, Medina doesn't find anything better. But now it is more favourable for Black to clarify the situation in the centre.

25...dxe4 26.dxe4 ♙f8 27.♙xf8
♖xf8 28.b4

28...♘c5 cannot be allowed.

28...♖g7 29.♘h4 ♘f8 30.f3



30...♚a7!!

The queen takes another small step.

31.b5?

Positional capitulation. There was a tactical concept hidden in the move 30...♚a7; for example: 31.♖h1 axb4 32.cxb4 ♘e6 33.♘c4 ♘d4 34.♚b2

♚xa4 35.♘xe5 ♚c2 36.♚xc2 ♘xc2
37.♚xd8 ♚xd8 38.♚b1 ♘xb4!. Better is
34.♚a2, but with a difficult position
anyway.

31...♘e6 32.♘b3

Once again back to the square where the knight is destined for an uncertain future.

32...c6 33.♙f1 ♚b8

Somewhat better is 33...♚xd1, but it's immaterial.

34.♘g2 ♘g5 35.♘h4 ♚c7
36.♚e3 ♚xd1 37.♚xd1 ♚d8
38.♚d3 ♚xd3 39.♚xd3 cxb5
40.axb5 a4 41.♘c1

With 41.♘d2 the following blow would be avoided, but 41...♚c5+ 42.♖g2 ♙c8 leaves no doubt whatsoever what the result will be.



41...♘fxe4!

Resigns. Obviously 42.fxe4 ♚c5+ loses the queen.

Game 122

King's Indian Defence

Bent Larsen

Roberto Debarnot

Spanish Team Championship,
Alicante 1977

1.♘f3 ♘f6 2.d4 g6 3.c3 ♙g7
4.♙g5 d6 5.♘bd2 h6 6.♙h4
♘bd7 7.e3 0-0 8.♚c2 e5 9.dxe5

**♖xe5 10.♘xe5 dxe5 11.♙c4 ♕f5
12.e4 ♙d7**



Everything quiet. Black wants to avoid the pin without having to play ...g6-g5, thereby creating a hole on f5.

13.0-0 ♖e7 14.♖fd1 ♖fd8

Perhaps better would have been 14...♙c6.

**15.♘f1 ♙g4 16.♖xd8+ ♖xd8
17.♘e3 ♙e6 18.♙b3! c6**



19.♕f1!

Very important. White prepares for the ending as it is not possible to avoid simplifications. The king approaches the queenside, and will play an important role on e2, keeping an eye on the squares which could be used by the black queen or rook to penetrate his position. From the psychological point of view, the importance of the move is that White prepares to maximize his efforts: a draw is not good enough for me!

19...♖d6 20.♖e2 ♖d7

Black has finally removed the pin.

**21.♙xf6 ♙xf6 22.♙xe6 ♖xe6
23.♖b3 ♖d7**

The continuation 23...♖xb3? 24.axb3 a6 25.♘c4 ♖d7 26.♖d1 ♖c7 27.♘b6 is very difficult for Black, and after 26...♖xd1 27.♖xd1 he cannot avoid the loss of a pawn.

24.♖d1

Also strong is 24.♘c4 ♖e6 25.♖d1 ♖c7 26.a4 with the idea ♖d3 and ♖d1.



24...b5?

Better was 24...♖xd1 25.♖xd1 ♖c7 (in the line 25...♖xd1+ 26.♖xd1 b5 27.a4! a6 28.axb5 axb5 29.c4! you may appreciate the difference in the two kings. White has the king closer to the queenside and can therefore open up the game on that flank and gain the advantage) 26.♘c4 ♙e7 27.a4 b6, but Black's position is very passive.

25.♖xd6 ♖xd6

Donner's Rule, that the pair of Queen and Knight is stronger than Queen and Bishop, is a good rule, but clearly it has many exceptions. In our case there are several details that favour White: he has the better king position and Black's central pawn is occupying a square of the same colour as the bishop.

**26.a4! a6 27.axb5 axb5 28.c4!
bxc4**



With teammate
IM Svend Hamann at
another team event,
the Clare Benedict
tournament in
Copenhagen, 1977.

Black doesn't want to surrender the d5-square to the white knight after $cxb5$ $cxb5$. Another possibility is $28...b4$, but after $29.\text{♟}c2$ $\text{♙}e7$ $30.\text{♚}e3$ followed by $\text{♜}e1-d3$ or $\text{♞}a1-b3$, it's difficult for Black to avoid the advance $c6-c5$ without losing the pawn on b4.

$29.\text{♜}xc4$ $\text{♚}d4$ $30.\text{♚}d3$ $\text{♚}c5$

After $30...\text{♞}f8$ $31.\text{♚}xd4$ $exd4$ $32.\text{♞}d3$ $c5$ $33.e5$ and $\text{♞}e4$, White's advantage should be sufficient to win.

**$31.b3$ $\text{♞}g7$ $32.g3$ $h5$ $33.\text{♚}c3$ $\text{♚}b5$
 $34.\text{♞}f3$ $\text{♚}a6$ $35.\text{♞}g2$ $\text{♚}a7$ $36.\text{♜}a5$**



White's advantage is the determining factor. After gaining the d5-square the white knight will be far superior to the black bishop.

**$36...c5$ $37.\text{♜}c4$ $\text{♚}b7$ $38.\text{♚}d3$
 $\text{♚}c6$ $39.\text{♞}f3$ $\text{♞}f8$ $40.h3$ $\text{♞}e8$
 $41.g4$**

Preparing for the idea $\text{♚}d5$, $\text{♚}xd5$, $exd5$ followed by $\text{♞}e4$, when the defence $...♙g7$ and $...f6-f5+$ is impossible.

**$41...hxc4+$ $42.hxc4$ $\text{♞}e7$
 $43.\text{♚}d5$ $\text{♚}c7$ $44.\text{♞}e2$ $\text{♙}h8$**

Black is now in *zugzwang*, for instance: $44...♙g7$ $45.g5$ with a new *zugzwang*.

$45.\text{♚}a8$ $\text{♙}g7$ $46.\text{♜}e3$

The knight finally gets to d5 and decides the battle.

**$46...\text{♚}d7$ $47.\text{♜}d5+$ $\text{♞}d6$
 $48.\text{♚}b8+$ $\text{♞}e6$ $49.\text{♚}b6+$ $\text{♚}d6$
 $50.\text{♜}c7+$ **1-0****

Chapter 37

Bobby Fischer

On the eve of the Fischer-Karpov Match, when it was still not known whether it would take place or not, the World Champion was more prominent in the news than ever before. It is worthy of interest, therefore, to talk about this chess personality and his games.

My First Meetings with Bobby

Firstly, I will mention Bobby with reference to the years 1958 and 1959, when he played his first Candidates' Tournament (where I was his second).

Naturally, I knew about the best chess game in history ever played by a 13 year old boy: Donald Byrne-Bobby Fischer, and also other games from the young player. However, in our first meeting I could still feel the dissatisfaction that a draw against a 15 year old boy would produce for me. This was in the Interzonal in Portoroz (Yugoslavia) in 1958, one of the worst tournaments in my life. The game with Fischer was probably the main reason for my failure. On move 15, in the Dragon Variation of the Sicilian Defence, I did not make the best move because it would allow White an endgame which would inevitably lead to a draw. Well, instead he got a mating attack and that particular game is now printed with a grand headline in his book 'My 60 Memorable Games'! That game is the one that now follows:

Game 123

Sicilian Defence

Robert Fischer

Bent Larsen

Portoroz Interzonal 1958

**1.e4 c5 2.♘f3 d6 3.d4 cxd4
4.♗xd4 ♗f6 5.♗c3 g6**

The Dragon Variation. Its popularity was waning and my defeats against Averbakh and Matanovic contributed little to recruit new followers.

**6.♖e3 ♖g7 7.f3 0-0 8.♚d2 ♘c6
9.♖c4 ♗xd4**

Years later the Dragon's popularity increased, though with 9...♖d7.

**10.♖xd4 ♖e6 11.♖b3 ♚a5
12.0-0 b5 13.♙b1 b4 14.♗d5
♖xd5 15.♖xd5**



Instead theoretical analysis recommends 15.exd5 ♚b5 16.♚he1 a5

17.♔e2, which gives White some advantage. However, in our game there were other critical lines; for example, I could now play 15...♘xd5 16.♙xg7 ♘c3+! 17.♙xc3 bxc3 18.♔xc3 ♔xc3 19.bxc3 ♖fc8 with a good ending and a possible draw.

Fischer later confessed that he was thinking of playing 16.exd5 ♔xd5 17.♔xb4, which would have been an excellent continuation for Black.

Now I can truly admit that I was over-ambitious and this contributed to my defeat.

15...♖ac8? 16.♙b3 ♖c7 17.h4 ♔b5 18.h5!

White needs to make the most of the extra tempo he has for the attack, but he must play with precision. For example: if 18.g4 a5, with a good game for Black.

18...♖fc8 19.hxg6 hxg6 20.g4 a5 21.g5 ♘h5 22.♖xh5! gxh5 23.g6 e5 24.gxf7+ ♔f8 25.♙e3 d5 26.exd5 ♖xf7 27.d6 ♖f6 28.♙g5 ♔b7 29.♙xf6 ♙xf6 30.d7 ♖d8 31.♔d6+ 1-0

The following year, in Zürich, I played the Caro-Kann Defence. In the endgame I was able to eliminate all the pawns on the queenside. Bobby kept the bishop pair and three pawns and I had the two knights and three pawns, all of these being on the kingside. I offered a draw, which Bobby refused. The game continued for another 40 moves and the armistice only came when Bobby was in danger of losing a piece. However, you cannot mate with two knights.....

In those days, Fischer over-estimated the value of the bishop pair; it's an American tradition that goes all the way back to Kashdan and Fine.

Game 124

Caro-Kann Defence

Robert Fischer

Bent Larsen

Zürich 1959

1.e4 c6 2.♘f3 d5 3.♘c3 ♙g4 4.h3 ♙xf3

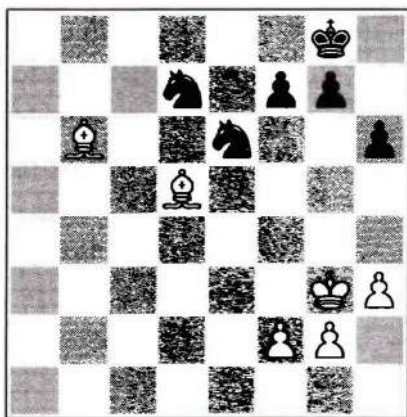


5.♔xf3 ♘f6 6.d3 e6 7.a3 ♙c5 8.♙e2 0-0 9.0-0 ♘bd7 10.♔g3 ♙d4 11.♙h6 ♘e8 12.♙g5 ♘df6 13.♙f3 ♔d6 14.♙f4 ♔c5 15.♖ab1 dxe4 16.dxe4 e5 17.♙g5



17...♙xc3 18.bxc3 b5 19.c4 a6 20.♙d2 ♔e7 21.♙b4 ♘d6 22.♖fd1 ♖fd8 23.cxb5 cxb5 24.♖d3 ♔e6 25.♖bd1 ♘b7 26.♙c3 ♖xd3 27.cxd3 ♖e8 28.♔h2 h6 29.d4 ♘d6 30.♖e1 ♘c4 31.dxe5 ♘xe5 32.♙d1 ♘g6 33.e5 ♘d5 34.♙b3 ♔c6 35.♙b2 ♘df4 36.♖d1 a5 37.♖d6 ♔e4

38.♖d7 ♘e6 39.♙d5 ♔e2
 40.♙c3 b4 41.axb4 axb4
 42.♙xb4 ♔xe5 43.♙a5 ♔xg3+
 44.♙xg3 ♔e7 45.♖d6 ♘ef4
 46.♙f3 ♘e6 47.♙b6 ♘e5
 48.♙d5 ♖d7 49.♖xd7 ♘xd7



50.♙e3 ♘f6 51.♙c6 g5 52.♙f3
 ♔g7 53.♙a4 ♘d5 54.♙c1 h5
 55.♙b2+ ♔h6 56.♙b3 ♘df4
 57.♙c2 ♘g6 58.♙g3 ♘ef4
 59.♙e4 ♘h4 60.♙f6 ♘hg6

61.♙f3 ♘h4+ 62.♙g3 ♘hg6
 63.♙h2 h4 64.♙g1 ♘h5 65.♙c3
 ♘gf4 66.♙f1 ♘g7 67.♙f6 ♘fh5
 68.♙e5 f6 69.♙d6 f5 70.♙f3 ♘f4
 71.♙e1 ♔g6 72.♙d2 ♘ge6
 73.♙e5 ♘c5 74.♙e3 ♘ce6
 75.♙c6 ♙f7 76.♙f3 ♙e7 77.♙b7
 ♘g6 78.♙c3 ♘gf4 79.♙a6 ♘d5
 80.♙e5 ♘f6 81.♙d3 g4+
 82.♙e2 ♘d7 83.♙h2 gxf3
 84.gxf3 ♙f6 85.♙e3 ♘e5
 86.♙e2 ♘g6 87.♙f1 f4+ 88.♙f3
 ♘e5+ 89.♙e4 ♘g5+ 90.♙xf4
 ♘ef3 91.♙g3 hxg3 92.fxg3 ½-½

This was a double-round tournament and he defeated me in the second round. Later we met in the Monaco Tournament in 1967 where, because of my refusal to accept the draw offer (hoping to replace him at the top of the leaderboard), I ended up losing!

Returning to Bobby in 1959, we must recognize that he played very well in Zürich. He was very close to the top position but he lost in the penultimate round against the Swiss master Keller. I remember the last round: Bobby arriving tearful but..... he played extremely well against Tal! The 'Wizard of Riga' managed to escape with half a point, after having encountered a great number of difficulties. However this half point was enough to secure him first place, followed by Keres, whilst Bobby had to settle for third place.

A month later I received a letter from Mrs. Regina Fischer. She wondered if I would be willing to be her son's 'second' in the Candidates' Tournament (later I was to learn that she had already asked Albéric O'Kelly, but without consulting with Bobby). She wanted a European grandmaster, simply to save on travel expenses.

I accepted the proposition. Bobby came to Yugoslavia and called me from Dubrovnik. He suggested meeting in Venice ten days later to prepare some openings. Fine. But when I got to Venice..... there was no sign of Fischer! Almost a week went by before I received information that he was in Munich. He didn't like Venice; Munich was better, but he had felt homesick and wanted to return to New York. His mother wanted him to stay in Europe. After a few days I accompanied him to the airport, with instructions to send a telegram to Mrs. Fischer only after the departure of the flight, so that his mother couldn't stop him! When we met again we were in Bled (Slovenia), just before the start of the tournament.

Fischer did not start very well, probably because he had a cold. Each day I insisted that we should call the doctor assigned to the tournament, but every time Bobby refused. Finally he gave in; I suspect that he may have been influenced by the fact that he only had half a point in four games. Why wouldn't he call the doctor? Bobby's feelings and opinions against Communism were such that he could not accept that the education received in that country could possibly produce a 'competent' doctor! One day he had a strong argument with the hotel waiter. I told him, *'Bobby, acting like this you will make lots of enemies unnecessarily.'* He replied, *'I want all communists to be my enemies.'* Remember that this happened during the 'Cold War' period only a few years after Senator Joe McCarthy had launched his campaign against anti-American activities. One of Bobby's idols was a radio commentator who was markedly anti-communist.

Well, the doctor arrived. A nice young man who seemed to know what he was doing. This was a pleasant surprise for Bobby. I acted as interpreter as the doctor only spoke German. Bobby wanted to know what university the doctor had obtained his qualification from.

'In Belgrade', he replied.

'Has he ever studied abroad?' Bobby asked.

The answer was negative. But the doctor also added that he had spent three months in Vienna once he finished the course.

'Ah!' cried Bobby, *'That's where he must have learnt everything!'*

The doctor prescribed three types of medication. Bobby took two of them without protest, but did not like the third one, which was something that had to be dissolved in boiling water and then inhaled for ten minutes. Bobby said that placing a towel over his head and inhaling those vapours was a waste of time. Finally I was able to persuade him, but only on condition that I read him a book so as not to waste time. Thus I found myself reading 'Tarzan's New Adventures' to.... an aspiring World Chess Champion!

My relationship with Bobby during the tournament was reasonably good. I think it was better than those with Lombardy in Portoroz, or with Saidy in Zürich (in Zürich, Bobby was not happy with the hotel that was designated for the participants, and when he finally found one to his liking it turned out to be very expensive. Saidy, who had to pay for his own expenses, was not able to afford staying in the new hotel. Bobby showed total indifference to the 'stupid' economic problem. During the '70s Saidy, was one of the few American chess players who had a personal contact with Fischer. Prior to the match with Spassky in Reykjavik, Bobby lived in Saidy's father's house in New York, besieged by journalists and photographers.)

Maybe my work was eased somewhat by the fact that Bobby soon realized he would not win the tournament. Only once did we work very hard analysing, though in my opinion it was a wasted effort. In one of the games with Benko,



Bobby was much worse off. This changed, though, when the Hungarian-American, being pressed for time (as usual) made a bad move. The game was adjourned in a not very interesting position. There were various ways whereby Bobby could reach a rook endgame with three pawns against two all on the queenside. An extra pawn, but totally drawn. I had to analyse this position, which offered no prospects whatsoever, with him throughout the night. Naturally, from the point of view of the 'second', that seems a little ridiculous. However, you have to realize that part of the work of the 'second' is also psychological.

With regards to Opening Theory.... young Bobby knew everything! By this I mean to say that he was extremely stubborn! The best example was his play against the Caro-Kann. Playing White he used the Two Knights Variation. (1.e4 c6 2.♘c3 d5 3.♘f3), but not very successfully. I therefore tried instead to make him play the Panov Attack because I thought it suited his style. However he insisted in using the same line and he gave me a reason which I liked: *'I cannot change until I win a game with it.'*

It was a terrible tournament. Eight players and four stages giving a total of 28 rounds. Two stages in Bled, one in Zagreb and another one in Belgrade. When we arrived in Zagreb, Bobby complained about the hotel, which was very new and

modern. Gligoric and the other Yugoslavs were in another. Bobby thought that the other hotel was probably better. So we transferred to this other one, which he liked, in spite of it being older and with rooms which were less comfortable. He particularly liked the restaurant and the service.

Several companies from Zagreb offered gifts to the players. There were packages on the tables in each round. Once there were two bottles, one of liquor and the other of plum brandy. Later that night I walked into Bobby's room and surprised him trying to open a bottle without a corkscrew.

He asked, *'Who's got a corkscrew?'*

'Probably the waitress', I replied.

'Call her.'

'Why, are you drinking that now?'

'No, no, what I want to do is flush it down the john.'

According to the young Fischer, alcohol was a poison; he had already emptied out the other bottle down the toilet. He didn't want to give away the bottle of 'Slivovica' because..... he could become responsible for the poisoning of a human being! Later I was able to take the bottle from him. The only reasons I believe he accepted this were that now he had been relieved of that responsibility or because he admired resolute men!

I don't know the motive Fischer had for this hatred of alcohol, but it's one of the subjects that has mellowed with age, as have also the cases of communism, the Caro-Kann and the bishop pair.....

Chapter 38

Bent Larsen's Extraordinary Personality

Las Palmas 1971

by Eligio Quinteiro

There is an ancient saying that goes: *'In the eyes of a serf there is no such thing as a great man....'* It may be so since most geniuses tend to disappoint you once you know them personally. This is not the case with Bent Larsen.

We first knew about his exploits as a chess player via specialised magazines. We knew that he was the top player in major tournaments; that it is usual for him to commence badly in tournaments only to win in the end; that his innovative opening lines touched the hearts of those who resisted change,and many other virtues. What we didn't know is that Bent Larsen could also be a World Champion in friendship, fair play and teaching without any airs and graces.

During a conversation, Larsen once remarked, *'The trouble with Grandmaster X is that he only knows how to play chess. You cannot play good chess if that is the only thing you can do in life....'*

His own philosophy is completely opposed to 'over-specialism': this is the reason why he can be such a great player and a man in the true sense of the word. We shall always remember his simultaneous displays not so much for the excellent results which he obtained, but also because of the most cordial comments he would make afterwards. Once the displays were finished, how was he able to answer questions which fifty players were asking him all at once? For Larsen it was not difficult; he could remember everything:

'You made a mistake when you moved your Rook on move 23'

'Your mistake was in choosing an inferior variation...'

'When you made that romantic move I thought to myself, "He cannot be very good in the endgame..." so I set about simplifying'

'You managed a draw because you realised better than me the true value of your bishop...' etc.

One of the players gave up in a position which was theoretically drawn. Larsen retorted, *'Why are you giving up? No, no.... draw.... This is a draw.'*

What was truly sensational was a simultaneous he played, with clocks, against ten of our top players (Larsen was a pioneer of the displays by Kasparov in the 80s). Our players were well and truly baffled.... they each had two and a half hours for the first 40 moves whilst Larsen had the same time control for all ten boards! Each player was allowed to play whenever it suited him, without the need to wait their turn. And if this weren't enough, Larsen allowed five out of the ten players to play with the white pieces.

'Let's complicate the games and in this way he will run out of time and lose', agreed our naïve players. Larsen asked for a chair to be placed in the centre of the ring. *'What on earth does he need a chair for?'* we would ask. The answer was simple: Larsen wanted the chair so that he could sit down and have some refreshment whilst, on some occasions, our ten players pondered on the moves using up their precious time...

What about the fifty children who played against Larsen in the club at Arucas? We have never seen so many kids together in such exemplary silence! Larsen won all fifty games. Afterwards they jokingly asked, *'Couldn't you at least have conceded a draw in a couple of games?'* To which Larsen replied giving a lesson in psychology:

'I do not believe in giving handouts in chess. Children have to learn to lose at games. Otherwise they will have to learn to lose in other things which are more serious and painful in their lives.'

Without a doubt, Larsen is not just a grandmaster at chess. It goes without saying that we really appreciate the friendship that we all feel towards our famous and modest Danish 'colleague'.

Chapter 39

Bent Larsen's Exhausting Curriculum Vitae

by Eligio Quinteiro

Bent Larsen abandoned his studies as an engineer in his final year. He was convinced that he would construct much better chess games than roads or bridges. However the 'profession' of a chess player is no bed of roses.

Talk to us about your tournaments during 1970.

Towards the end of March to the beginning of April I had the honour of playing first board in the match USSR vs. Rest of the World which, as you will recall, took place in Belgrade. I made two and a half points out of a possible four. My opponent in the first three games was Spassky, against whom I lost one, drew another and finally won the third. In the fourth game I played against Spassky's substitute, Stein, whom I beat. It must be noted that the game which Spassky lost against me was the only game he lost after becoming the World Champion, and naturally it was well-publicised. However in that same match there was another of my games that was even more talked about and that was the one in which I made a fatal error and abandoned after only 18 moves.

In May I was invited to play in a small quadrangular tournament in Holland. Incidentally, I finished very badly here, possibly resulting from fatigue, and also from the fact that I was uncomfortable with the high incidence of draws that were agreed. I have fond memories of that tournament, however, due to its exemplary organisation.

By the end of May to the first week in June I was on vacation and these were the longest I have had in many years. In June I played an 8 game match against the Czechoslovakian Grandmaster, Kavalek, in Sulinger, Germany. I was the eventual winner scoring 6-2. This GM left Czechoslovakia after the Russian invasion in 1968 and settled in Germany, where his father lived. He is currently studying in the USA. He will probably obtain his American Citizenship in around three years (*Editor's note: And so it was*).

Later, between July and August I participated, and won, in the Canadian Open and in the US Open held in Boston. Fischer did not take part in any of these since he does not usually participate in this type of tournament. Soon after the Interzonals in Palma de Mallorca, he was asked the reason for this by a reporter, and his reply was evasive. You may recall that he also commented that he would never take part in simultaneous displays and he is now doing just that quite frequently, although with a maximum of 20 boards. He had also pointed out in those days that were he to play in simulms' he would do so with a time control and against 5 players.

On one occasion he had commented that if he were to play in a city his opponents would be picked among the top players, thus making it difficult for him to do well. As far as I am concerned, I believe that the big simultaneous displays are very useful, particularly for promoting chess. In November/December I participated in the Palma de Mallorca Interzonal.

What happened in the Palma de Mallorca Interzonal?

Before the tournament began I thought I would end up 5th or thereabouts. Later, after beating Fischer, I thought I had a chance of winning it. However, two rounds later in a quite even game against Hort (although he was in time trouble) I complicated the game, missed something and eventually lost. After this game I reverted to my original forecast of 5th or 6th placing.

As for the tournament, I did not play well initially although the second part was better and I had some good games. I lost against the Russian Taimanov for the first time. In the game against the Cuban Jimenez, who came last, I was lost but I managed to draw by perpetual check.

In the game that you won against Fischer, did he comment on it in any way?

After playing a previously adjourned game, like me, the arbiter approached him and asked him if he wanted to rest for half an hour. All he said was, 'No, we are going to finish this stupid game' (or something similar). He said it calmly enough, though.

It is well known that Fischer always has a discordant note in whatever tournament he is invited to. Was this the case in Mallorca?

Well, actually no, since any of the problems that may have come up were quickly resolved beforehand by his second, the American Mr Edmondson.



Larsen's Achievements until 1973

ZONAL TOURNAMENTS:

- 1957 3rd/4th out of 18 with Donner in Wageningen.
- 1960 4th out of 10 in Berg en Dal (later annulled).
- 1963 2nd out of 20 in Halle.

INTERZONAL TOURNAMENTS

- 1964 1st/3rd out of 24 with Smyslov and Spassky in Amsterdam.
- 1967 1st out of 22 in Sousse.
- 1970 2nd/4th out of 24 with Geller and Hübner in Palma de Mallorca.
- 1973 5th/6th out of 18 with Hübner in Leningrad.

CANDIDATES' TOURNAMENTS:

- 1958 16th out of 20 in Portoroz.
- 1964 1st/3rd out of 24 with Smyslov and Spassky in Amsterdam.
- 1965 Won in a match against Ivkov (5.5 - 2.5) and lost to Tal (4.5 - 5.5).
 Won against Geller (5-4) for the third qualifier.
- 1967 1st out of 22 in Sousse.
- 1968 Won against Portisch (5.5 - 4.5) and lost to Spassky (2.5 - 5.5).
 Won against Tal (5.5 - 2.5) for the third qualifier.
- 1970 2nd/4th out of 24 with Geller and Hübner in Palma de Mallorca.
- 1971 Won against Uhlmann (5.5 - 3.5) and lost to Fischer (0 - 6).

INTERNATIONAL TOURNAMENTS:

- 1966 3rd out of 10 (double round) in Santa Monica.
- 1967 4th out of 16 in Beverwijk.
 3rd/5th out of 10 with Skold and Kinnmark in Stockholm.
 3rd/4th out of 10 with Geller in Monaco.
 2nd/3rd out of 9 with Olafsson in Dundee.
 1st out of 20 in Havana.
 1st/2nd out of 10 with Darga in Winnipeg.
 1st out of 18 in Palma de Mallorca.
- 1968 1st out of 14 in Monaco.
 1st in the U.S. Open in Snowmass (Colorado).
 2nd/3rd out of 18 with Spassky in Palma de Mallorca.

Bent Larsen's Best Games

- 1969 1st out of 16 in Būsum.
6th/7th out of 16 with Donner in San Juan de Puerto Rico.
1st out of 18 in Palma de Mallorca.
- 1970 1st out of 8 (double round) in Lugano.
First board for the team Rest of the World versus USSR:
drew with Spassky 1.5-1.5 and beat Stein.
1st out of 16 in Vinkovci.
- 1971 6th/7th out of 16 with Csom in Palma de Mallorca.
- 1972 1st out of 16 in Teesside (England).
- 1972 1st out of 16 with Smyslov, in Las Palmas.
8th/9th out of 16, with Mecking in San Antonio (Texas).
- 1973 1st out of 16 in Hastings.
1st out of 16 in Manila.

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Bent Larsen's Best Games

Bent Larsen (1935-2010) was one of the greatest fighters chess has ever seen. In his rich career the great Dane defeated all World Champions from Botvinnik to Karpov and he became one of the most successful tournament players of his time. His uncompromising style and his unorthodox thinking made him popular with chess players all around the globe.

In 1967/1968 Larsen won five international elite events in a row, a truly spectacular achievement. His successes were such that Bobby Fischer let him play first board in the legendary Soviet Union vs. the World match in Belgrade in 1970.

Bent Larsen also was a highly original chess writer and an extremely productive chess journalist. Not surprisingly the first chess book that Magnus Carlsen ever studied was written by the strongest Scandinavian player before him.

This collection brings together more than 120 of Bent Larsen's games, selected and annotated by himself. His comments are lucid, to the point, often humorous and always instructive. Together, these games are a tribute to his genius and a continuous joy to read and play through.



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