



COLUMNISTS

The Instructor

Mark Dvoretsky

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Supreme Technique

If I have ever made any valuable discoveries, it has been owing more to patient attention, than to any other talent.

Isaac Newton

In the game we shall now examine, three stages may be easily distinguished:

- 1) A lengthy theoretical variation. Here, we might well give no commentary at all - or, as I have chosen to do, we may survey the alternative possibilities, starting at a given moment, which will give an idea of the structure of this particular opening variation.
- 2) An opening novelty, sprung by Black. It did not confuse his opponent, who reacted strongly, energetically, and obtained the advantage. I will try to show that the novelty was nevertheless correct, just that Black immediately went astray.
- 3) The realization of the advantage. In my view, this is the most interesting and instructive phase of the game, so we shall devote special attention to it.

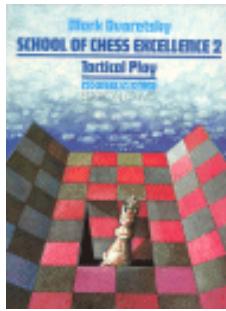
Bareev – Shirov Linares 1994

1. d2-d4 d7-d5 2. c2-c4 c7-c6 3. Ng1-f3 Ng8-f6 4. Nb1-c3 e7-e6 5. e2-e3 Nb8-d7 6. Bf1-d3 d5xc4 7. Bd3xc4 b7-b5 8. Bc4-d3 Bc8-b7 9. e3-e4 b5-b4 10. Nc3-a4 c6-c5 11. e4-e5 Nf6-d5 12. d4xc5

One of the most popular lines of the Meran Variation. White frequently plays 12. 0-0 cd 13. Re1 (or 13. Nxd4) instead of the game continuation; and if he does take on c5, he generally does so with the knight, not with the pawn. The reason is that here, Black has a decent alternative in 12...Qa5!? 13. 0-0 Bxc5, whereas after 12. Nxc5 Nxc5 (or 12...Bxc5) 13. dc, the reply 13...Qa5 is no longer so good, because of 14. Qe2, with the idea of 15. Bb5+ (the queen doesn't have to defend the knight on a4 now).

12...Nd7xc5 13. Na4xc5

13. Bb5+!? Nd7 14. Bg5 deserves serious attention.



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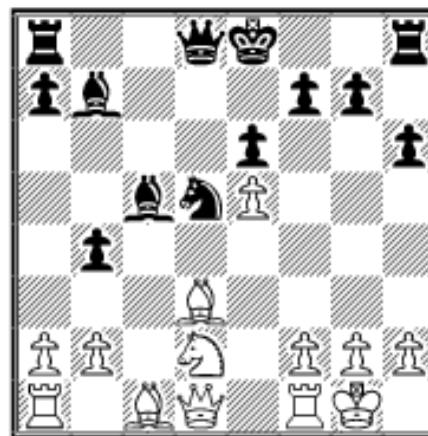
13...Bf8xc5 14. 0-0

Here the check no longer accomplishes anything: 14. Bb5+ Ke7 15. 0-0 (15. Bg5+ f6 16. Bh4 Qa5) 15... Qb6 gives Black a good game, as in the 6th Candidates' Match Game Uhlmann - Larsen (Las Palmas 1971). And on 14. Ng5, Black has the strong reply 14...Qc7!

14...h7-h6

At the moment, castling is impossible, owing to the standard bishop sacrifice on h7.

15. Nf3-d2



It is with this transfer of the knight to e4 that White generally hopes to seize the initiative in this line. As we shall see, he actually cannot gain any advantage like this. But 15. Qe2 Qb6 16. Bd2, as tried in Karpov - Polugaevsky (USSR Championship, Moscow 1973), also offers White nothing significant. Evidently, a strengthening of White's play will have to be found somewhere earlier.

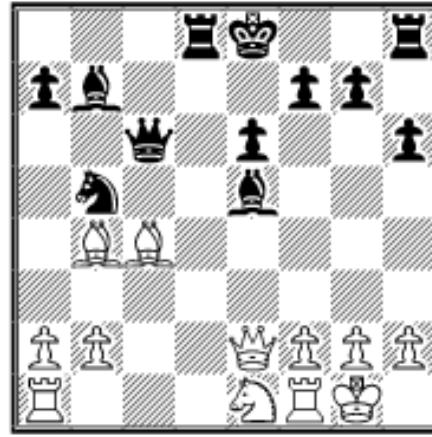
15...0-0

In the mid-Seventies, the theoretical discussion revolved around 15...Nc3. Let's examine the resulting complications!

16. Qc2! Qd5 17. Nf3 Rd8 18. Ne1! Bd4! 19. Bd2 (19. bc? is bad because of 19...Bxc3, threatening both 20...Bxe1 and 20...Bxa1) **19...Nb5** (19...Ne4 20. Bxb4 Bxe5 21. Qa4+ Bc6 22. Qxa7 Rd7 23. Qa3 is worse)
20. Bxb4 Bxe5 After the mistaken 20...Bb6? 21. Qc4 Nd4 22. Qxd5 Rxd5 23. Bd6, White's advantage was indisputable (Polugaevsky - Mecking, Manila 1975).

21. Bc4 In the game Magerramov - Bagirov (Baku 1976), the continuation 21. Rc1 a6 22. Qa4 Bd6 23. Bxd6 Rxd6 24. Qb4 0-0 led to equality; however, 21. Rd1!? is worth testing.

21...Qc6 22. Qe2



22... Ba6!? Vladimir Bagirov indicates the variation 22...Nd4 23. Qxe5 Qxc4 24. Qxg7 Qxb4 25. Qxh8+ Ke7 26. Qxh6 Ba6, rating this position as somewhat better for White. After 27. b3, Black is hardly likely to find sufficient counterplay to offset his two-pawn deficit.

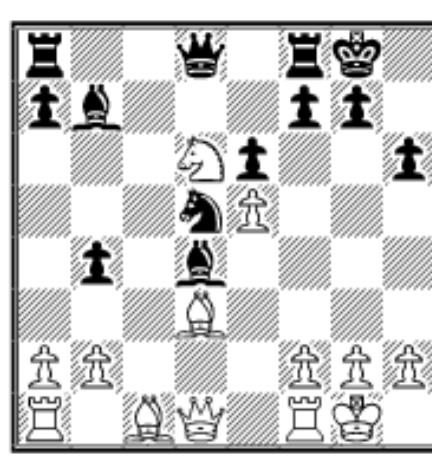
23. Nf3 23. Qxe5 Qxc4 24. Qxg7 is a mistake, giving Black the upper hand after 24...Qd4!

23...Nd4 24. Qxe5 Nxf3+ 25. gf Qxc4 26. Qxg7 Qxb4 27. Qxh8+ Ke7 28. Qxh6 Bxf1 29. Qg5+ Ke8 30. Rxf1 Qxb2, and White's position is preferable.

These last moves are taken from ECO. Unfortunately, the analysis contains a hole - in fact, more than one. 28...Rg8+! (instead of 28...Bxf1?) 29. Kh1 Bb7! 30. Qe3 Qg4! wins for Black. An even earlier win is 26...Qd4! So, instead of taking the g7-pawn, White must play 26. Bc5?!, with roughly even chances.

So the sally 15...Nc3!? turns out to be quite playable. Nevertheless, when after twenty years this variant once again began making frequent tournament appearances (the laws of fashion are unchanging!), Black would only castle. And in the game Epishin - Dreev (Tilburg 1994), Black demonstrated yet a third way (and not a bad one either, apparently): 15...Qc7!? 16. Re1 (after 16. Ne4 Be7, the e-pawn hangs; and on 16. Nc4, as Alexey Dreev showed, Black plays 16...Rd8 17.Qe2 Ne7!?) 16... Rd8 17. Ne4 Be7 18. Ng3 g6 19. Bd2 Kf8 20. Rc1 Qb6 21. Qe2 Kg7, with an even game.

16. Nd2-e4 Bc5-d4 17. Ne4-d6



17...Bd4xe5!?

A clever novelty, which Alexei Shirov had apparently prepared. He sacrifices the bishop, in the expectation that he will soon restore the material balance, since the knight has no retreat from b7.

18. Qe2 f5 19. Rd1 Qe7?! 20. Ba6! Bc5?! (20...Bb6) 21. Bd2! (intending

22. Rac1), when 21...Bxd6? 22. ed Qxd6 is bad, because of 23. Bxb4! Qxb4 24. Qxe6+ Kh8 25. Qxc6. But it's not clear whether White would have achieved anything of value against a more exact defense. And in Gagarin - Stripunsky (Russia 1995), Black obtained a good position with 18...Qh4!? (instead of 18...f5).

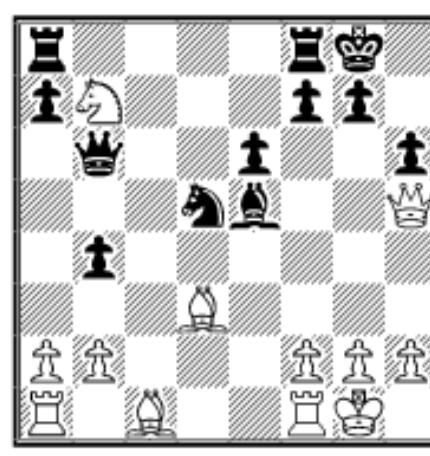
Matters are less tense after 18. Bh7+!? Kxh7 19. Qxd4. A possible continuation is 19...f6 20. Bd2 fe 21. Qxe5 Qd7 (Gagarin - Muhametov, Potsdam 1994); and here, according to Vassily Gagarin's analysis, 22. Nc4!? Rf5 23. Qg3 Raf8 24. Ne5 Qe8 25. Rfc1 Bb5 26. f3 retains somewhat better chances for White.

18. Nd6xb7 Qd8-b6

18...Qc7 19. Ba6! is unconvincing.

19. Qd1-h5!

Grandmaster Evgeny Bareev finds over the board the most energetic response to his opponent's novelty. White can expect nothing from 19. Qe2 Bf6 20. Qe4 Rfc8! for instance: 21. Bf4! Nxf4 (21...Qxb7? 22. Qh7+ Kf8 23. Bd6+ Ke8 24. Qg8+ Kd7 25. Qxf7+) 22. Qxf4 Qxb7 23. Be4 Qb8! 24. Qd2 (24. Qf3 Bxb2, with two pawns for the exchange) 24... Rd8 25. Qc1 (25. Qe2? Qe5; 25. Qc2? Qc8) 25... Rc8 26. Qb1 (26. Qd2 Rd8) 26... Qe5 27. Bxa8 Rx a8, and the b2-pawn falls.



The first critical point in the game - now how does Black continue?

With his last move, White not only threatens to take on e5, but also prepares to sacrifice his bishop at h6. For example: 19...Bf4?! 20. Bxh6! Rfc8 (20...gh 21 Qxh6 would be entirely bad) 21. Be3! Qxb7 (or 21...Nxe3 22. Qh7+ Kf8 23. fe Qxb7 24. Be4) 22. Qh7+ Kf8 23. Be4, with advantage to White (Bareev).

Since Black's choice, 19..Bf4, also failed to resolve his defensive problem, it might seem that his novelty is unsound, and leads to a difficult position. In any case, that's how the game was evaluated in the chess press and in the "Informant". But in fact, Shirov's idea was correct; he only needed to prepare it better at home, to analyze it deeper.

The correct continuation was found by GM Uwe Boensch: 19...Bd4! Now the bishop sacrifice is not dangerous: 20. Bxh6?! gh 21. Qxh6 f5, and White will be hard pressed even to draw. For instance: 22. Rae1 Rf6! 23.

Qg5+ Kf7 24. Qh4 Rg6! (Yusupov), and Black wins, since 25. Nd6+ Qxd6 26. Qxd4 Rxg2+! is bad, and meanwhile Black threatens 25...Rh8. Or 22. Nc5!? Qxc5! (22...Bxc5 leads to perpetual check) 23. Qxe6+ Kg7 24. Rc1 Nf4! 25. Qd7+ Rf7, and White must settle for the hard endgame after 26. Qxf7+ Kxf7 27. Rxc5 Bxc5 28. Bxf5.

20. Qg4 is stronger than 20. Bxh6?! 20...Nf6? would be a poor reply: 21. Qh4 (with the threat of 22. Na5) 21...e5 allows 22. Bxh6. 20...Bf6 21. Bxh6 Qxb7 leads to a complex position, with mutual chances. The riskier 20...f5 is also worth looking into, although after 21. Qe2 (21. Qg3 Qxb7 22. Bxh6 Bxb2) 21...Rf6 (21...Rae8?! 22. Rd1 Qxb7 23. Bb5) 22. Bc4 (22. Ba6 Nc7) 22... Qxb7 23. Rd1 Bb6 (23...Qb6? 24. Qd2) 24. Qf3 Rd8 25. Bf4, White gets good positional compensation for his lost (or was it sacrificed?) pawn.

19...Be5-f4?! 20. Nb7-c5!

Thus, White wins the exchange. The other tempting move, 20. Na5? is a mistake in view of 20...Bxc1 21. Nc4 Qd4 22. Rd1 Bxb2 23. Bh7+ Kxh7 24. Rxd4 Bxd4, with a won position for Black (Bareev).

20...Qb6xc5 21. Bc1xf4 Qc5-d4 22. Bf4-d6 Qd4xd3

22... Rfd8? 23. Rad1, threatening 24. Bh7+

23. Bd6xf8 Ra8xf8



Here, before he does anything else, White must neutralize his opponent's active possibilities, such as 24...Qd4 or 24...Nf4. In answer to 24. Qd1?! there would follow 24...Qc4!, when White would once again have to deal with the sally Nf4. Bareev chooses the best possible square for his queen.

24. Qh5-e5!

From this square, the queen defends the b2 pawn and takes control of the f4 and d4 squares. Here is how a grandmaster evaluates the resulting position:

"Formally, White's advantage amounts to only half a pawn; one might get the impression that the unassailable knight on d5 guarantees Black a quiet life. But the centralized queen on e5 (a favorite technique of Capablanca) shows that this is not quite true. The position contains an open file; and considering that an exchange of rooks is not good for Black, White can proceed to develop an initiative."

Bareev's commentary is instructive, for a number of reasons:

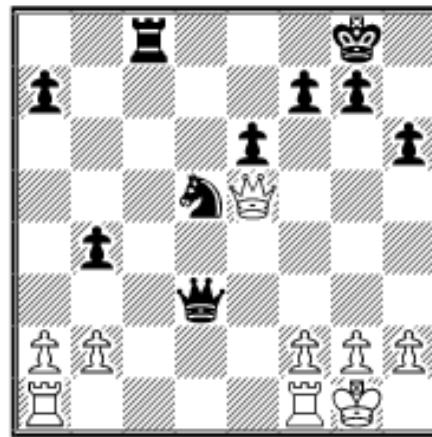
- 1) It is clear that he must have made a careful study of the chess classics, since he could, out of the whole range of Capablanca's work, note so specific a technique as the centralized queen;
- 2) The exchange of a pair of rooks (followed by the other rook's invasion via the open file) is a standard technique in positions with an exchange plus; and
- 3) Bareev does not give a conclusive assessment of the position. There's a reason for that. It was evidently clear to him that this position stands somewhere on the line between a win and a draw: White has realistic winning chances, but Black has no less of a reason to expect that he can draw this. That means the result of the game is not predictable - everything depends on the players' skill in the struggle which follows. Any little detail could tip the balance one way or the other; so the players will need exceptional accuracy and maximal resourcefulness.

When I first examined this game, reading Bareev's notes, I was powerfully impressed by the high level of technique displayed by the Muscovite grandmaster. This impression was, on the whole, not mistaken - Bareev did, indeed, play excellently. Yet still, the analysis which follows could cast doubt on a couple of his choices.

Immersing yourself in the variations and deductions given below, you will, I trust, see that I have included, under "supreme level of technical mastery" the level of difficulty of attaining it.

24...Rf8-c8

Shirov's move looks somewhat strange - White will now bring his rook to c1, when the exchange of rooks, according to the general evaluation given above, will be good for White. But it's not all as clear as it might seem at first glance. In fact, we are up against a deep and subtle technical task, with a simple formulation: which rook should go to c1?



A difficult, a most difficult exercise:
List the reasons “pro” and “con” for
each of the two possibilities, 25. Rac1
and 25. Rfc1; and then try to make a
choice.

Here, the first question to be asked is
also the most important: for if you have
not seen the source of the difficulties to
come, it will be impossible to make a
well-reasoned choice.

So - let's decide. If the rooks are traded on c1, there's no difference
between the two moves: the position after 25. Rc1 Rxc1 26. Rxc1 a5 27.
g3!? a4 28. Kg2 is lost for Black. White threatens 29. Rc8+ Kh7 30. Ra8;
and 28...a3 29. ba Qxa3 30. Rc8+ Kh7 31. Qe4+ is bad for him.

And if the Black rook retreats from the c-file, either one of the rook moves
looks OK, although 25. Rac1 appears more natural.

So let's restrict our search to Black's active possibilities. Although in
principle, the exchange of rooks is in White's favor, that assessment
become less clear if the Black queen prevents the remaining rook from
occupying the c-file. So therefore we must examine the replies 25...Rc4 and
25...Rc2.

Bareev only considered the first possibility, which is why he rewarded his
actual choice in the game, 25. Rfc1!, with an exclamation mark. Now
25...Rc4? would be useless, in view of 26. Rxc4 Qxc4 27. Qb8+ Kh7 28.
Qxa7, and Black obtains no compensation for the lost pawn (28...Nf4 is
met by 29. Qe3).

But for some reason, the GM did not examine the other reply: 25...Rc2! I
suggest that this was exactly what Black should have played. If 26. Qb8+
Kh7 27. Qxa7, then 27...Rxc1+ 28. Rxc1 Nf4 (with the primary threat
being 29...Ne2+) 29. Kh1 Qd5, with counterplay. And after 26. Rxc2 Qxc2,
Black's queen controls the c-file; White's rook does not get into play; and
after 27. Qb8+ Kh7 28. Qxa7 there follows 28...Qxb2, with tempo.

It's easy to see that, in the analogous position, but with the rook on f1,
which occurs after 25. Rac1 Rc2 26. Rxc2 Qxc2, then 27. Qb8+ Kh7 28.
Qxa7 Qxb2 29. Qxf7 (threatening 30. Qxe6) is now strong: White must
win. So after 25. Rac1, the reply 25...Rc2? fails.

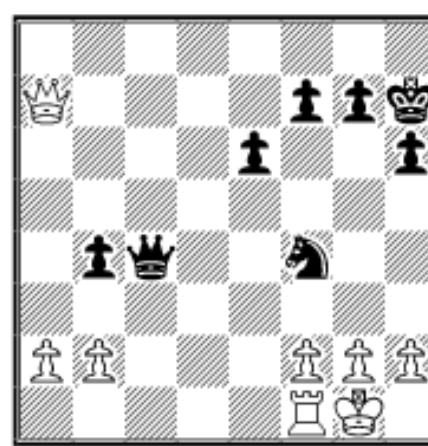
But then there's 25...Rc4?!, the move which bothered Bareev. On 26. Rfd1
Black has the excellent counterstroke 26...Nf4! (but not 26...Qd2? in view
of 27. Qe1!). Another attractive line is 26. Qb8+ Kh7 27. Qb5 Ne3! If 26.
g3, then 26...Re4! (26...a5? would be weak: 27. Rfd1 Rxc1 28. Rxc1) 27.

Qb8+ Kh7 28. Qxa7 (28. $\text{Rfe1 Re2!?$ or $28\dots\text{Qd2!?}) 28\dots\text{Nf4!}$ (also possible is $28\dots\text{Qf3!}$, intending Nf4) 29. gf Qf3 , and the perpetual check is unavoidable.

White must go in for 26. $\text{Rxc4 Qxc4 27. Qb8+ Kh7 28. Qxa7}$, but after $28\dots\text{Nf4!}$, Black has the direct threat of $29\dots\text{Ne2+ 30. Kh1 Ng3+}$; White would also have to consider $29\dots\text{Qe4}$ and $29\dots\text{Qd5}$. On the whole, the combination of queen + knight, in close quarters with the king, is known to give the opponent considerable discomfort.

So now we see that each of the two candidate moves for White's rook has its drawbacks. Which one do we prefer? Since there is no answer yet, we must continue our analysis.

Most likely, we should confine ourselves to the latter variation - after all, White has won a pawn there. If he can only find a way to parry the immediate threats, everything will become clear. Of course, accomplishing that won't be so easy.



First, let's look at 29. Qxf7 . From f7, the queen unexpectedly defends the rook, as can be seen from the variation $29\dots\text{Ne2+ 30. Kh1 Ng3+? 31.fg!}$ Black should reply $29\dots\text{Qe4 30. f3 Qe3+ 31. Kh1 Qd2 (31\dots\text{Nd3 32. h3 Nxb2 is weaker}) 32. Rg1 Ne2 33. Qxe6 Nxg1 34. Qe4+ Kh8 35. Kxg1 Qxb2}$, with good saving chances in the pawn-down queen ending.

A decent line is 29. $\text{Re1!? Qd5 30. f3 Qg5}$ (the pawn ending after $30\dots\text{Qd2 31. Qf2 Qxf2+ 32. Kxf2 Nd3+ 33. Ke2 Nxe1 34. Kxe1}$ is undoubtedly lost, since White must create an outside passed pawn on the queen's wing) 31. $\text{g3 Nh3+ 32. Kh1 Qd2 33. Qe3 Qxb2 34. Re2 or 34. Qe2}$. Here the unfortunate placement of the knight on h3 must tell - the threat of f3-f4, for example, is most unpleasant. Still, this variation is too complex - its consequences may be reckoned in analysis, but hardly over the board, with limited thinking time available. We should like to find something more convincing. The formula is well-known:
Before delving deeply into such variations, it's important first of all to restrict yourself to the examination of all the candidate moves.

For example, retreating the rook to a1, instead of e1, makes sense! But there is also the more efficient solution suggested by GM Patrick Wolff: 29. g3! One may easily verify that Black's attack is immediately snuffed out.

And if that is so, then there is no reason to object to the natural move, 25. Rac1!

25. Rf1-c1?! Rc8-d8?!

White's inaccuracy goes unpunished: Shirov does not play his best chance: 25...Rc2! On the whole, in fact, you will see that he defended poorly this entire game, demonstrating neither inspiration nor stubbornness. Evidently, the unfortunate outcome of the opening duel left too great a mark on the emotional, impressionable grandmaster's psyche.

26. h2-h3!

Obviously the king needs "air"; but why did Bareev choose this pawn to advance? After 26. g3, the f3 square is weakened, which could in some instances be exploited by the Black queen (the knight isn't likely to get there, considering the lengthy route from the d5 square). But this conclusion doesn't appear convincing. More importantly: It's impossible to tell yet whether White will succeed with piece maneuvers alone. If not (which is most likely the case), then he will have to crack his opponent's defenses in the center by means of f2-f4-f5. And there's where we see the shortcoming of g2-g3, compared to the text: the White king will be too exposed, giving Black chances to counterattack.

26...Kg8-h7

26...a5!? was preferable.



Clearly, now is the time to bring the queen's rook into the game - but how? Bareev decided against 27.a3?! because of 27...ba! 28. Rxa3 Qd2, when Black can hope for counterplay.

27. Rc1-e1?!

Bareev rewarded this move with an exclamation mark, because after 27. Rd1? Qc4! 28. Rac1 Qxa2 29. Ra1 Qb3, White doesn't have time to take the a-pawn, since the rook on d1 is en prise to the queen; therefore, White must first move it to e1, before playing 28. Rac1.

What I find objectionable in this line of reasoning is White's willingness to swap a-pawns. The rook's invasion of the 7th rank is not yet decisive - Black has sufficient resources left to defend his kingside. ***In such cases, the usual technique is to stretch the opponent's defenses by creating another weakness on the other wing.*** But the only thing left on the queenside will be the b4-pawn, which is securely protected by the knight. This is why it is important to keep the rook pawns on the board!

For this reason (among others), I would not have paid serious attention to the move 27. a3?! - not merely because of 27...ba!?, but even in the event of 27...a5!? 28. ab ab.

How should White have played, then? Very simple: 27. Rc5!, or 27. Rc6!, clearing the square for the queen's rook, while at the same time not giving up White's important control of the c-file (by the way, this is a standard technique for bringing a rook into play - one which I have seen used in many similar situations). For example, 27. Rc5 Rd7 28. Re1!, intending 29. Qe4+ (28. Rac1?! is less accurate, in view of 28...f6!, when White cannot play 29. Qxe6? Nf4).

27...Qd3-c4!

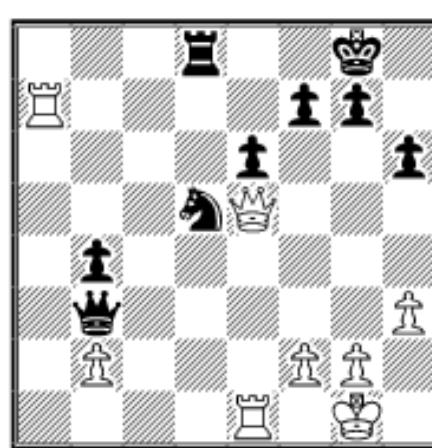
Black does not fear the trade of queens, since then he will seize the important c-file: 28. Qe4+? Qxe4 29. Rxe4 Rc8, threatening 30...Rc2.

28. Ra1-c1 Qc4xa2 29. Rc1-a1 Qa2-b3?

The decisive error: Bareev now reels off a string of accurate moves, which bring the game to victory. 29...Qc4! 30. Rxa7 Kg8 was necessary, when breaking down Black's defense will not be simple. Shirov probably did not want to give White a tempo for the transfer of his rook to the kingside with 31. Re4. But the endgame after 31...Qc1+ 32. Kh2 Qg5 33. Qxg5 hg may not be lost. For instance: 34. Re5?! is met by 34...Rc8!, with counterplay.

More likely, Bareev would have played 31. Rea1, aiming to trade rooks. But, first of all, this could be prevented by 31...Qc6!?; and secondly, even if this exchange is allowed, the outcome is still unclear. And all because Black's camp contains only one weakness - at f7, since White already traded off the other (the a7-pawn).

30. Ra1xa7 Kh7-g8



Here Bareev found the strongest plan (one in the style of Karpov!) - playing for domination. The two outstanding moves which follow take away every square from the enemy queen.

31. Qe5-d4!! Rd8-e8

The threat was 32. Rxe6!

32. Re1-e2!

An amazing position! Black's queen has nowhere to go; any rook move

loses the e6-pawn; and if the knight moves, he loses the b4-pawn (32...Nf6 33. Re3 Qc2 34. Qxb4 Nd5 35. Qb5). And if he makes waiting moves with his king (Kg8-f8-g8), White plays 33. Kh2 and then executes the decisive plan we spoke of earlier: f2-f4-f5. So Shirov gives up a pawn at once.

32...Re8-c8 33. Re2xe6 Nd5-c3!

Forking the rook and the b2-pawn. However, this shouldn't help him: after the fall of the vital pawn at e6, there must be a winning line - perhaps more than one.

34. Rxf7 immediately suggests itself. Bareev declined it, and not without reason: here he would have had long variations to calculate, requiring more accuracy from White. Black would have replied 34...Ne2+! 35. Rxe2 Rc1+ 36. Kh2 Qxf7 37. Qxb4 Qc7+ 38. g3 (38. f4? Rc4 39. Qb3 Qxf4+ 40. g3 Qf7, and Black can expect to draw) 38...Qc6. Now 39. Qe4? Qxe4 40. Rxе4 Rc2 would be a mistake; White must choose between 39. Qb3+!? Kh8 40. f3 and 39. Re1!? Qc2+! 40. Re8+! Kh7 41. Qf8. This is pretty complicated for a practical game - we should find a clearer path to our goal.

The simple 34. Re3!? is strong; or 34. Re5!? Qxb2 35. Qe3. But I like Bareev's way better. The grandmaster had calculated it to the finish.

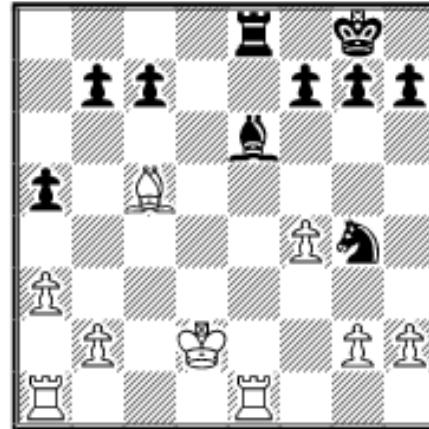
34. Ra7-e7! Qb3xb2 35. Re7-e8+ Rc8xe8 36. Re6xe8+ Kg8-h7 37. Qd4-d3+ g7-g6 38. Qd3-c4! Qb2-b1+

Of course, 38...Qa2 39. Qxb4 is also hopeless.

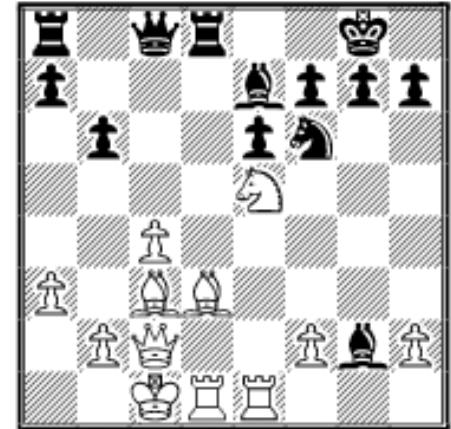
39. Kg1-h2 Qb1-f5 40. Qc4-d4

Black resigned

And now, I offer you two not-so-simple exercises: to solve them, you will need some of the techniques we talked about while examining the preceding game.



(1) White to move



(2) White to move

Answers

(1) Ivkov - Korchnoi Baden-Baden 1981

Ivkov played inaccurately, allowing his opponent to fortify his position.

22. Kc3? g6 23. Bg1 Nf6 24. Rad1 Ra8! 25. Re5 c6 26. Rd4 Nd5+ 27. Kd2 a4

The knight has reached an excellent central point, and White's rooks have nowhere to go, because all the lines are covered by Black's pieces. This game should end in a draw - which it did, though only after tremendous complications, brought on by mistakes from both sides.

The attempt to keep the knight from getting to the center by 22. Bd4!? Rd8 23. Kc3 is interesting. On 23...Nhx2, White plays 24. Rad1 or 24. Re5, when Black's position appears shaky. But this is probably what he should have played.

Instead of taking the pawn, we could try 23...c5?! On 24. Bxc5 Rc8 25. Kd4 Rd8+, the activity of Black's pieces allows him to hope for a draw: 26. Ke4 Bd5+ (26...f5+ is probably weaker: 27. Kf3 Rd3+ 28. Ke2 Bc4, and now not 29. Rac1?! Rd4+ with perpetual check, but 29. Rec1 Rd4+ 30. Ke1 Rxf4 31. Bb6, with the better chances for White) 27. Kf5 (27. Kd3!? Bxg2+) 27...Nh6+ 28. Kg5 Bxg2 (28...f6+ 29 Kh4 Bxg2 is possible too) 29. f5 (29. Be7? Rd5+; 29. Rad1 f6+ 30. Kh4 Rxd1 31. Rxd1 Nf5+ 32. Kg4 g6 33 Rd8+ Kf7 34. Rd7+ Kg8) 29..f6+ 30. Kf4 Nxf5!

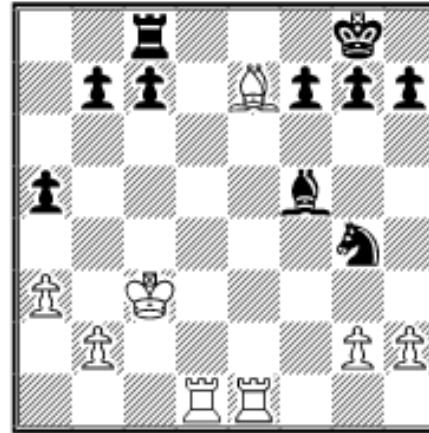
White doesn't have to take on c5 - the simple 24. Bg1! gives him a won position. The point is that the c-pawn has now gone past the d5 square, which it was supposed to be defending; and now the knight will no longer be able to maintain itself in the center. For example: 24...Nf6 25. Rad1

Nd5+ 26. Kc2 Rc8 27. g3 or 27. Re5.

The most efficient route to victory is a positional pawn sacrifice, demonstrated after the game by Viktor Korchnoi. Its point is to force the exchange of rooks (as you will recall, this is a typical technique for realizing the advantage of the exchange).

22. f4-f5!! Re8-d8+ 23. Kd2-c3 Be6xf5 24. Ra1-d1 Rd8-c8 25. Bc5-e7!

26. Rd8+ Rxd8 27. Bxd8 follows, and Black's queenside is defenseless.



2) Gelfand - Delchev European Junior Championship, Arnhem 1988/89

White should attack along the open g-file, exploiting the enemy bishop's recent capture of the g2-pawn to gain time. But what's the best way?

18. f3?! Bh3 is unconvincing, since 19. Rg1 is well met by 19...Bf5.

It should be noted that Boris Gelfand first saw this position six months earlier, when he was unable to find the correct solution. Look at the continuation of the game **Gelfand - Dimitrov**, which was played at the Junior World Championship of 1988 in Adelaide.

18. Rg1?! Qb7 19. f3. 19. f4?! Be4 is useless. On 19. Rde1, there follows 19...Bc5!, for instance: 20. b4?! Bd4 21. Bxd4 Rxd4 22. Re3 Be4 23. Ng4 Bg6 24. Nxf6+ gf. Stronger would be 20. Nxf7! Kxf7! 21. Bxf6 gf 22. Bf1! Be4! 23. Rxe4 f5 24. Rh4 Qf3! 25. Rxh7+ Kf6, with great complications.

19...Bxf3 20. Rdf1 Rxd3!

White had expected 20...Bh5? 21. Bxh7+! Nxh7 22. Nxf7. By sacrificing the exchange, Black neutralizes his opponent's attack.

21. Qxd3 (21. Nxd3 Rd8) **21...Be4 22. Qh3** (22. Qg3 Bg6) **22...Bf5 23. Rxf5??** (23. Qh6) **23...ef 24. Qxf5 g6!** (24...Rc8 25. Ng4 Nxg4 26. Rxg4! is weaker) **25. Nxg6 hg 26. Bxf6** Here, a draw was agreed, for

which the only possible explanation is that Vladimir Dimitrov did not fully trust his own abilities. With 26...Bxf6 27. Qxf6 Qe4!, he could have played on for the win, at no risk whatsoever.

Analyzing this game later, Gelfand worked out the proper way of prosecuting the attack. And soon he had the chance to confirm his analysis over the board.

18. Re1-e3!!

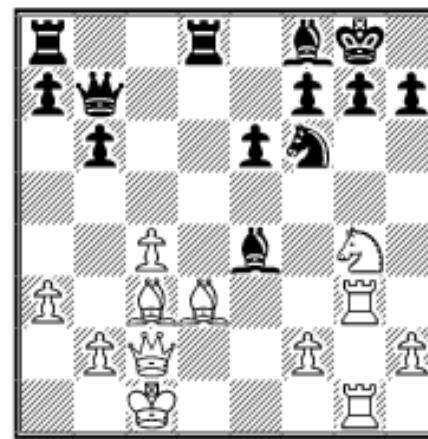
Recall the comments to White's 27th move in the Bareev - Shirov game. There, as here, one rook must clear a path for the other along the first rank, moving - not sideways, but forward, maintaining control over the file it stands on (and most of all, over the important square e4). White prepares 19. Rg1, followed by 20. Reg3.

18...Qc8-b7 19. Re1-g1

Now 20. Rg3 is threatened; 19...g6 is met by the decisive 20. Bxg6! fg 21. Nxg6. Black's only chance was probably to play 19...Rxd3!?, but here the exchange sacrifice is considerably less effective, in comparison with the similar sacrifice in the Gelfand - Dimitrov game.

19...Be7-f8 20. Re3-g3 Bg2-e4 21. Ne5-g4!

As you may easily see, Black is defenseless.



21... Bg6 22. Bxg6 hg 23. Bxf6 Rdc8 (23...gf 24. Nxf6+ Kg7 25. Rxg6+, or 24...Kh8 25. Rh3+ Kg7 26. Qc3) **24. Kb1 b5 25. Nh6+ gh 26. Rxg6+ fg 27. Qxg6+ Bg7 28. Bxg7 Qf7 29. Qxh6 Qf5+ 30. Ka1 Kf7 31. Bc3 Rf8 32. Rg5 Qe4 33. Rg7+ Ke8 34. Qh5+ Kd8 35. Ba5+. Black resigned.**

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Translated by Jim Marfia

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