



C O L U M N I S T S

The Instructor

Mark Dvoretsky

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Attack Training

We shall now study an interesting game, played 20 years ago, which was chosen the best of the tournament. White indeed played well - but as the following analysis will show, his play was far from perfect. The way he chose to prosecute his attack was not the strongest; his opponent might have warded it off. This is not surprising, for Anatoly Karpov has never been an attacking player; his enormous talent has shown itself chiefly in other spheres.

I recommend you use this game for your own training. Before familiarizing yourself with the analysis, try to answer the questions put to you - you will then be better able to appreciate objectively the complexity of the problems the two players had to resolve. Give yourself extra time - a minimum two to three hours for the game. In fact, nearly all the tasks are difficult ones, requiring both accurate calculation of variations, and a nuanced appraisal of the resulting dynamic positions. But even if your answers differ significantly from my conclusions - don't fret. Such work is exceptionally worthwhile, in any event.

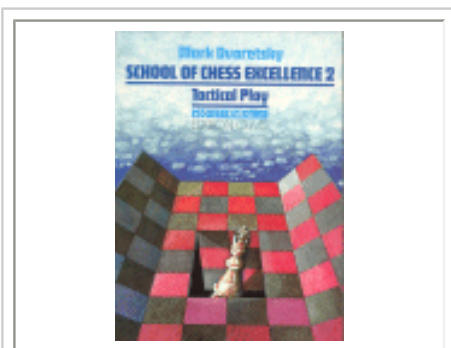
The main theme of the entire game (and consequently, of the greater part of the questions as well) is: "candidate-moves". After this training is completed, I hope that you will have a better feel for how important it is, at an early stage, to include in your examination of variations every likely possibility (both for you and for your opponent); this approach makes your play that much more accurate, deep and interesting.

Karpov - Sax Linares 1983

(Karpov's notes are given in italics.)

1. e2-e4 c7-c5 2. Ng1-f3 e7-e6 3. d2-d4 c5xd4 4. Nf3xd4 Ng8-f6 5. Nb1-c3 d7-d6 6. g2-g4 h7-h6 7. Rh1-g1 Bf8-e7 8. Bc1-e3 Nb8-c6 9. Qd1-e2!?

"The idea behind this somewhat unusual move is to

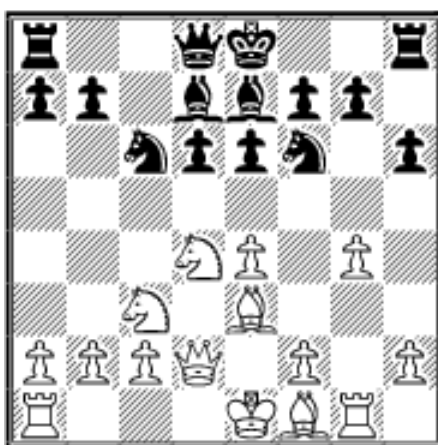


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castle queenside, and then to make the quickest possible use of the White rook and Black queen's opposition along the d-file."

9...Bc8-d7

Also worth considering was 9...Nxd4!? 10. Bxd4 e5 11. Be3 Be6 12. 0-0-0 Nd7 13. Kb1 (13. Nb5 Nb6! =) 13...a6 14. f4 ef 15. Bxf4 Bf6!, when the position is either unclear, or slightly favorable to White (Karpov-Andersson, Turin 1982).



1) What are White's choices here? What are the comparative pluses and minuses of each?

10. h2-h4 Nc6xd4 11. Be3xd4 e6-e5 12. Bd4-e3 Bd7-c6



2) What are White's choices here?

13. Qe2-d3

3) What continuations should Black be looking at?

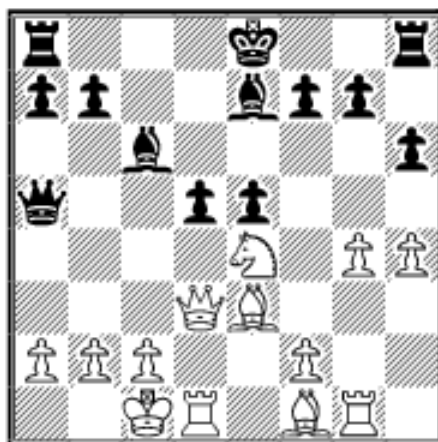
13...Qd8-a5 14. 0-0-0

Black could answer this by playing 14...0-0-0 as well.



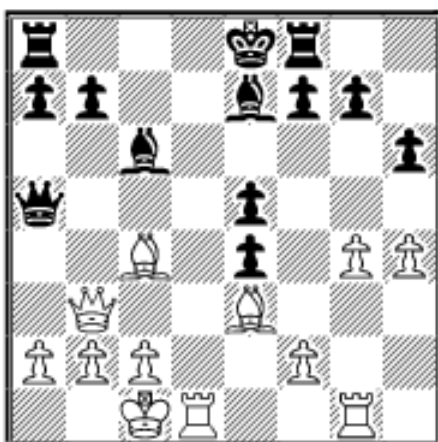
4) How then should White reply?

14...Nf6xe4 15. Nc3xe4 d6-d5



5) Select White's strongest continuation.

16. Qd3-b3 d5xe4 17. Bf1-c4 Rh8-f8

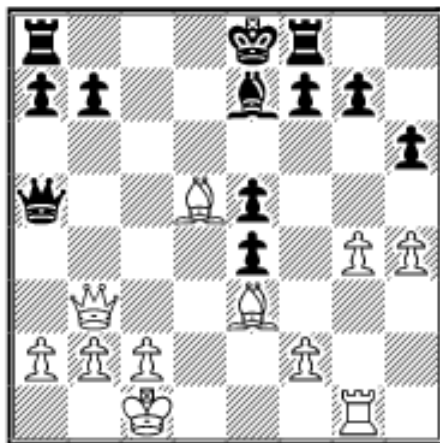


6) What means does White have to continue his attack?

18. Rd1-d5 Bc6xd5

18...Qc7 19. Bb5 Bxh4 20. Rgd1 (or 20. Bc5)

19. Bc4xd5



7) What defense should Black prefer?

19...Ra8-d8

8) How should White play?

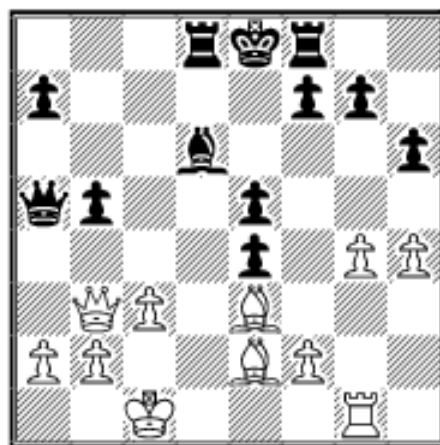
20. Bd5-c4 Be7-b4 21. c2-c3 b7-b5!

On 21...Bd6 22. Qxb7 Qc7, White could choose between the overwhelming endgame after 23. Qxc7 Bxc7 24. Bxa7, or continuing his attack with 23. Qxe4. And 22. g5!? hg 23. Rxg5 was very strong, also.

22. Bc4-e2!

22. cb bc (or 22...Qc7 23. Bc5 bc) 23. Qxc4 Qd5 works to Black's advantage.

22...Bb4-d6



9) What attacking resources does White have?

23. Qb3-d5

10) What defensive resources does Black have?

23...Ke8-e7 24. Be3-c5

Bd6xc5

Both 24...Qc7 25. Qxe5+ Kd7 26. Bxd6 Qxd6 27. Rd1, and 24...f6 25. Bc4! would be bad.

25. Qd5xe5+ Ke7-d7 26. Qe5xc5 Qa5-c7 27. Qc5-f5+ Kd7-e7?!

Much harder was 27...Kc6 28. Qxb5+ Kd6 29. Qb4+, and now Black has a choice:

A) 29...Ke5 30. f4+ Kxf4 31. Rf1+ Ke3. Karpov cuts this variation short after 32. Bb5, but he shouldn't have: Black has a successful defense in 32...Qd6 33. Re1+ Kf2=. 32. c4! would have been stronger, when Black's only defense was 32...Qg3! 33. Qc3+ Kxe2 34. Qxg3 Kxf1. White undoubtedly holds the advantage; but it's unclear whether it will be enough to win.

B) 29...Qc5!/? 30. Qb7 Ke5 31. Re1 (31. f4+?, expecting 31...Kxf4? 32. Rf1+ Ke3 33. Rf3+!!, does not work after 31...ef!) 31...Qxf2? 32. Qe7+ Kd5 33. Rd1+ Kc6 34. Qxe4+ Kc7 35. Qe7+ Kc6 36. Rf1 wins (Karpov). Unfortunately, by preparing a retreat for his king - 31...g6! - Black fends off the immediate threats.

28. Qf5xe4+ Ke7-d7 29. Qe4-f5+ Kd7-e7 30. Rg1-e1!

“After long thought, I was able to find the best means of keeping the tension, even after the Black king secures itself at d8.”

On 30. Bxb5 Rd6 (30...Rd4 31. Kb1 Rd2 32. Qe4+ Kd8 33. Re1 wins) 31. Qe5+ Kd8 32. Qxg7 Qe7, with 33...Kc7 to follow, White now has three pawns for the exchange; the battle, however, continues.

30...Rd8-d6 31. Be2-c4+!

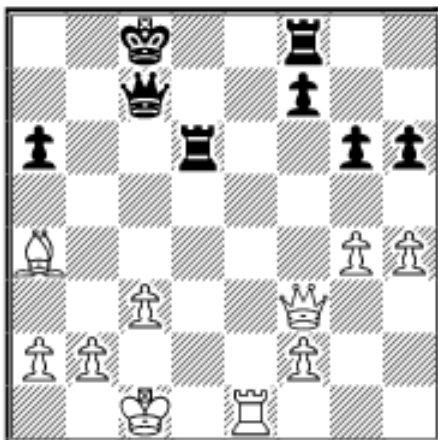
“It's important not to allow Black's rook to get to e6.”

31...Ke7-d8 32. Bc4xb5 a7-a6

After 32...Rf6 33. Qd5+ Kc8, White wins with the

same combination he plays in the game.

33. Bb5-a4 g7-g6 34. Qf5-f3 Kd8-c8



11) How does White continue the attack?

35. Re1-e7 Rd6-d1+ 36. Kc1xd1 Qc7xe7

On 36...Rd8+, White would have simply entered the won endgame after 37. Rd7!, since after 37. Kc1

Qxe7 38. Qa8+ Kc7 39. Qa7+ Kd6, there appears to be no mate: 40. Qb6+ Ke5, and the d4 square is under the control of Black's rook.

37. Qf3-a8+ Kc8-c7 38. Qa8-a7+ Kc7-d6 39. Qa7-b6+

Black resigned, in view of 39...Ke5 40. Qd4+ Ke6 41. Bb3 mate.

Answers

1) 10. 0-0-0 suggests itself; but then Black replies 10...Nxd4 11. Bxd4 e5 12. Be3 Rc8, threatening such things as Qa5 or Rxc3 and Nxe4.

On 10. h4 Nxd4 11. Bxd4 e5 12. Be3, 12...Rc8 is no longer effective, because of 13. g5; however, 12...Bc6 attacking the e-pawn is stronger now. White would also have to consider the move Nh7, attacking the h4-pawn. There is one more possible idea for Black: 10...h5!? 11. g5 Ng4 12. Nxc6 (12. 0-0-0!?) 12...Bxc6 (12...bc!?). On 13. Bd2?! Qb6! is unpleasant; therefore, 13. 0-0-0!, with a small White edge, would be correct.

On 10. f4, both 10...Nxd4 11. Bxd4 Qa5, preparing 12...e5 (even in response to 12. g5), and 10...g5!? (11. fg hg 12. Nxc6?! Bxc6 13. Bxg5 Nxe4) deserve consideration.

The attempt to avoid the exchange of knights by 10. Nb3!? is met by the blockading 10...g5! (unclear).

White's choice is not simple - every solution has its drawbacks. But still, **10. h4!** appears to have the greatest prospects.

2) The sacrifice of two pawns by 13. 0-0-0?! Nxe4 14. Nd5 Bxh4 is clearly dubious.

On 13. f3 Nh7 is an unpleasant reply, for example: 14. 0-0-0 Bxh4 15. Nb5 Be7 (unclear).

And White does not want to make his pieces worse by either 13. Bg2 or 13. Bd2 - although the latter move is actually acceptable. One possible continuation might be: 13. Bd2!? Nh7 (13...d5 14 ed Nxd5 15. 0-0-0 is weaker) 14. g5!? (14 h5 Bg5=) 14...hg 15. 0-0-0 Bf6!? with compensation.

A decent try is **13. Qd3!?**, retaining the possibility of attacking the d6 pawn, if Black continues 13...Nh7.

The consistent and strong continuation is **13. Qf3!**, after which Black would have to consider not only 14. g5 and 14. 0-0-0, but also 14. Bc4.

On 13...d5!? 14. ed?! Nxd5, Black equalizes, for example: 15. Bb5!? (15. 0-0-0? Nxc3!) 15...Nxe3! (15...Nb4 16. Qe4, or 15...Bxb5 16. 0-0-0 Bc6 17. Nxd5 Qa5 18. Kb1 Rd8 19. c4, with the better chances for White) 16. Bxc6+ bc 17. Qxe3 Bxh4 (17...Qd4!?) 18. Qxe5+ Qe7=.

The consequences of the line 14. 0-0-0 d4 15. g5 hg 16. hg Nd7 17. Bc4 Rf8 18. g6 fg 19. Qg4 are hard to assess. More than likely, the chances are about equal.

The most unpleasant reply is 14. Nxd5!, when both 14...Nxd5 15. 0-0-0 (great advantage for White) and 14...Nxe4 15. 0-0-0 Bxd5 (15...Nd6 16. Qg3 - great advantage) 16. Bb5+ Kf8 17. Bc4 (great advantage) lead to dire consequences for Black. 14...Bxd5! would be necessary. If now 15. 0-0-0 Qa5 16. ed Qxa2, with mutual chances. The most solid continuation would be simply 15. ed Qxd5 16. Bg2 (slight advantage).

On 13...Qa5, an interesting line is 14. 0-0-0 Nxe4! 15. Nxe4 Qxa2 (15...d5?! 16. Qf5 de 17. Bc4 Rf8 18. Qh7!? leads to a great advantage) 16. Nc3 Qa1+ (16...Bxf3 17. Nxa2 Bxd1 18. Bb5+! Kf8 19. Rxd1 Rd8 gives White some advantage) 17. Kd2 Qxb2 18. Qg3! is equal, or perhaps slightly better for White (but not 18. Nd5 Qa2!). A different try is 14. Bd2!?, renewing all the threats. The continuation 14...Qb4 15. Bd3 Qxb2 16. Rb1 Qa3 17. g5 looks promising for White, although objectively the consequences of 17...hg 18. hg Nd7 are not entirely clear.

3) The threat is 14. g5 hg 15. hg followed by 16. g6. The center break **13...d5?!** is misguided, in view of 14. ed Nxd5 15. 0-0-0! (15. Nxd5 Qxd5 16. Qxd5 Bxd5 17. Bb5+ Bc6 18. Bxc6+ bc 19. h5 gives White the more pleasant endgame) 15...Nxe3 16. Qxe3 Qa5 17. Bb5 0-0 (17...Bxb5 18. Qxe5, with a great advantage) 18. g5, when Black's position grows shaky.

The most natural move is **13...Nh7!** Then the tempting pawn sacrifice 14. g5!? hg 15. Nd5 is not clearly correct: 15...gh 16. Rxg7 Nf6 (threatening 17...Nxd5 18. ed Qa5+) 18. 0-0-0 h3.

And finally, **13...Qa5?!** is possible, when 14. 0-0-0 can be met by either 14...0-0-0 or 14...Nxe4 15. Nxe4 d5.

4) After the obvious 15. g5, White must consider the piece sacrifice 15...hg 16. hg Nxe4 17. Nxe4 d5, with 18...Qxa2 to follow.

The prophylactic 15. a3!? makes sense; White retains all his threats. Black would have to respond with 15...d5 16. ed e4 (16...Nxd5 17. Qf5+) 17. Qc4 Nxd5 18. Nxd5 Rxd5; but after 19. Bg2, White would have a tangible advantage. And by the way, if White played 15. Kb1?! instead of 15. a3, then in the concluding position of the previous variation 19. Bg2 would no longer be effective, since after 19...Rhd8, White can no longer take with the bishop on e4.

15. Qc4! Nxe4 16 Nd5! is much more energetic - White is winning here. The piece sacrifice would give Black nothing here: 16...Bxh4 17. Qxe4 Qxa2 18. Bc4, etc.

5) White has a number of tempting continuations here, selecting the right one is quite difficult.

16. Qd2? is bad: 16...Qxa2 17. Nc3 Qa1+ 18. Nb1 d4, with great advantage to Black.

On 16. Qc3? Qxc3 leads to interesting complications: 17. Nxc3 d4 18. Nb5 Bxh4! (18...de?! is weaker: 19. Nc7+ Kf8 20. Nxa8 ef 21. Rg3; or 18...0-0 19. Bd2 Bxh4 20. Bc4, with great advantage in either case) 19. Nc7+?! Ke7 20. Nxa8 de 21. Nc7 ef, with complications. But the simplest and strongest is 16...Qxa2! 17. Qxe5 de, with great advantage.

On 16. Nc3 d4 17. Bxd4 ed (but not Karpov's 17...Rd8? in view of 18. Qf5!, winning) 18. Qxd4 0-0 19. Bc4 Bxh4 20. Nd5 Bxd5 21. Bxd5 Bf6 or 19. g5 Rad8, Black

holds the balance.

Black must meet 16. Ng3!? with 16...Qxa2! (much weaker is 16...d4 hoping for 17. Bd2? Qxa2 with great advantage; White plays 18. Bxd4! ed 19. Nf5 Qxa2 20. Qxd4, with a powerful attack) 17. Nf5 Qa1+ 18. Kd2 Qxb2. The resulting position is not easy to evaluate, but it appears to favor White, e.g.: 19. Nxe7! Qb4+ 20. Kc1 Qxe7 21. Re1!? (preventing d5-d4), or 21. Bg2.

Viorel Bologan suggests the surprising and beautiful **16. Nd2!! d4 17. Nb3 Qxa2 18. Qf5!! de 19. Bc4 0-0 20. g5**, when White has a decisive attack. And 16...Qxa2 (hoping for 17. Nb3? a5! 18. Qc3 a4 19. Qxe5 ab, with great advantage) is met by 17. Qf5! also, when there's no good advice for Black.

Karpov's decision is also strong enough, although less convincing.

16. Qb3!? de 17. Bc4. White returns the piece in order to hold the enemy king in the center (17...0-0 18. g5 hg 19. Bxg5! Bxg5+ 20. hg g6 21. Qh3 wins), and then develops a dangerous attack.

6) 18. Bd5? would not be good, in view of 18...Qb4!, exchanging queens.

And 18. a3? is too slow, even though it takes away the b4 square from Black's queen. Black would continue 18...Bxh4.

The positional exchange sacrifice **18. Rd5!?**, as played in the game, has merit.

And finally, the natural kingside attacking move, **18. g5!** should be examined. After 18...hg 19. hg Qb4? is bad: 20. g6! Qxb3 21. gf+ Rxf7 22. Bxb3, or 20...fg 21. Qxb4

Bxb4 22. Rxc6 - in both lines, the g7 pawn is lost.
“Black’s only hope is 19...g6; and it was not clear to me whether I ought to induce Black to make this move.”

One would think that the inclusion of pawn moves on the kingside (considering their usefulness in other plans) could not possibly hurt White’s position, and would more than likely come in handy somewhere. For example, 20. Bd5!? becomes stronger, since after 20...Qb4?! 21. Bxc6+ bc 22. Qxb4 Bxb4 we now have 23. Rg4!, with great advantage to White. And there is now another interesting possibility (pointed out by Motylev) - 20. Rh1!, and if 20...Qb4? (20...Rd8 is better, with only a large plus to White), then 21. Bxf7+! Rxf7 22. Qe6 wins.

Instead of 19...g6, Black probably would have to prefer 19...Rd8!?, for example: 20. Rxd8+ Bxd8 21. c3 Be7, with some advantage to White (21...Bb6 22. Bxb6 Qxb6 23. Bxf7+!).

7) 19...Bc5? is bad: 20. Qxb7 intends Bc6+.

Black is in for an inferior endgame after 19...Qb4 - although White must still choose the most exact means of entering the endgame.

After 20. Bxb7 Qxb3 21. ab Rb8 22. Bxe4! (on 22. Bc6+ Kd8 23. Bxa7, Black has two unclear continuations: 23...Rb4!, and 23..Kc7!?) 24. Bxb8+ Rxb8 25. Bxe4 Bxh4) 22...Bxh4 23. Bxa7, White’s advantage is indisputable. However, Black could return the exchange at once by 21...Kd7! (instead of 21...Rb8) 22. Rd1+ Ke6! (22...Kc7 23. Bxa8 Rxa8 24. Rd5 is good for White: only the amount is in dispute) 23. Bd5+ Kf6 24. g5+ Kf5, and the outcome remains unclear.

This makes it sensible to avoid the doubled pawns by

playing 20. Qxb4! Bxb4 21. Bxb7 Rb8 (21...Rd8 22. c3 Bd6 23. Bxa7) 22. Bc6+ Ke7 23. Bxa7 Ra8 (23...Rbc8 24. Bxe4, with great advantage) 24. Bxa8 Rxa8 25. Be3 Rxa2 26. Kb1, when White's advantage is great, and may already be winning.

After the text, **19...Rd8!**, the game becomes more double-edged, and Black can rightly hope to ward off the attack, either by returning the extra material, or by keeping it.

8) Of course, White would like to take the pawn. But Black could answer this by exchanging off the dark-squared bishops (thereby securing the e7 square for his king), which drastically reduces White's chances of a successful attack:

20. Bxe4?! Bc5! (20...Bxh4 21. Qxb7 Rh8! isn't easy to refute, either) 21. Qxb7 Bxe3+ 22. Kb1 (22. fe?? Qd2+) 22...Rd2 23. fe Qb6;

20. Bxb7?! Bxh4! (here 20...Bc5!? leads to a draw after 21. Bc6+ Ke7 22. Qb7+ Ke6 23. Qb3+ Ke7=) 21. Bc6+ Ke7 (aiming for 22...Bxf2! or 22...Bg5) 22. Qb7+ Kf6, with great advantage to Black.

This is why Karpov preferred **20. Bc4!**, which prevents 20...Bc5 because of 21. Bb5+, and threatens 21. Qxb7.

And you will note that many of the variations examined above lend added credence to our earlier suggestion (obvious though it may be) that inserting the moves 18. g5! hg 19. hg g6 prior to the sacrifice would have been good for White.

9) 23. g5!? is an interesting try - on 23...hg? 24. Bxg5!?, or 24. Bxb5+ Ke7 25. Bxg5+ f6 26. Be3 Rf7 27. Bc4 Rb8 28. Qc2, Black's position looks shaky. But he could seize the initiative by 23...b4! 24. gh gh 25. Bxh6 bc.

“There is no point in playing 23. Bxb5+, since the reply 23...Ke7 gives the Black rooks freedom to maneuver.” Indeed, 24. Qd5 is met by either 24...Rc8 (intending 25...Rfd8 or 25...a6), or by the immediate 24...a6!? 25. Bc5 Qxb5 26. Qxe5+ Kd7 (but not 24...Qxc3+?! 25. Kb1).

What happens after **23. Qd5!?**, as Karpov played? See the next task.

10) In playing 23...Ke7?!, Sax evidently overlooked the powerful reply 24. Bc5!

The shot 23...Qxc3+?! leads to a difficult ending for Black after 24. Kb1! Qxb2+ 25. Kxb2 Ba3+ 26. Kxa3 Rxd5 27. Bxa7 Kd7 28. Be3.

Karpov recommends 23...Qc7!?, when the outcome remains unclear. For example, 24. Bxb5+ (24. Qxb5+ Ke7 25. g5 Rb8 26. Qa6 Qb7 27. Qxb7+ Rxb7 is unclear; 24. g5!?) 24...Ke7 25. Kc2!? (25. Qxe4 Rb8, intending 26...Qb7) 25...Rb8 (25...Ba3?! is inferior, in view of 26. Qc4! Qxc4 27. Bxc4 Bd6 28. Bxa7, with great advantage to White) 26. Rd1 Rfd8 27. Bc4 Kf8, or 26. g5 Qb7.

For some reason, the World Champion did not examine the natural **23...a6!?**, protecting the pawn and limiting the mobility of White’s lightsquare bishop. (Here again, the inclusion of the moves 18. g5 hg 19. hg g6 would have been good for White: his bishop could now get out via g4). The continuation 24. Rd1 Qc7 25. Qxe4 leaves White enough compensation for the exchange, but apparently no more than that.

By comparing the conclusions reached in this and the preceding question, we may deduce that, with accurate defense, White’s assault would have been snuffed out,

which in turn means that Karpov's positional exchange sacrifice was objectively not the strongest continuation of the attack.

11) The spectacular exchange sacrifice 35. Re7!!
decides: if 35...Qxe7, then 36. Qa8+ Kc7 37. Qa7+ Kd8
38. Qb8 mate.

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Translated by Jim Marfia

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