



A Game with Questions

Whenever I look at chess books or magazines, I always pay particular attention to the analysis of examples that also appear in my notebook. New publications help me correct my previous conclusions on developments in those games. As a result, I get the chance to show my new students a deeper and more accurate version and the lessons become more substantive and effective.

COLUMNISTS

The *Instructor* Mark Dvoretsky

Sometimes the opposite happens as well: comparing published material with my own, I can see that the authors either repeat errors made by previous annotators, or commit new ones themselves. And finally, there are in-between cases: suggestions by some authors will force me to return to work on my own notes, occasionally leading to unexpected and pretty conclusions.

An article by Alexei Yuneev, published in *Shakhmatny Peterburg*, examines the dynamic encounter between Leonid Stein and Vassily Smyslov, which I also once studied. For both of us, it would seem, the primary source was the rather lightweight commentary by Gufeld and Lazarev from their book devoted to Stein's games.

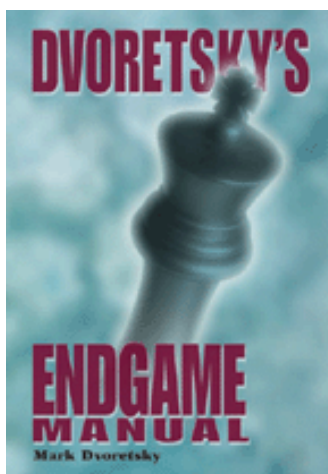
The result was a combination of the second and third situations given above: errors in some of Yuneev's conclusions (although not really significant) were already known to me; but some of his other suggestions required additional analysis, which deepened my understanding of the game.

I submitted a new version of the game to be printed in the Russian magazine *Shakhmatnaya Nedelya* (*Chess Weekly*), and that ended up being used by Garry Kasparov in his book *Garry Kasparov on My Great Predecessors: Part III*, which in turn allowed me to correct a few details.

The form in which I now present this entertaining game, both here and in classes with my students, can be labeled "A Game with Questions". When analyzing the game, you will be asked several questions. Some of them are uncomplicated; others are harder, requiring lengthy and accurate calculation.

Try not to accidentally peek at the move following the question. It will not be commented upon (you'll find the answers at the conclusion of the article), and isn't even necessarily the strongest. Still, it *might* be the strongest move; and by looking at it before solving the question, you would get a strong hint.

Some magazines regularly publish such exercises. As a rule, the authors will ask you to find every move in the game after a certain point. I'm not doing that,



because some of the moves are completely obvious; and in other cases, equivalent or nearly equivalent alternative choices are possible. Usually, the authors of those articles reward solvers with points for each correct answer; and at the end, they rate the readers' strength on the basis of the number of points they have amassed. I understand that this format is entertaining; but still, I would rather not play around like this, since I have no idea how many points correspond to any level of chess qualification. There are too many qualifying circumstances, chief and most obvious being that an objective evaluation can only be arrived at on the basis of several dozen experiments – which, of course, no one has yet performed.

And so, to our game:

Stein – Smyslov

All-Union Chess Olympiad (*Spartakiad*), Moscow 1972

1. c2-c4 Ng8-f6 2. Nb1-c3 e7-e6 3. Ng1-f3 b7-b6 4. e2-e4 Bc8-b7 5. Qd1-e2 Bf8-b4

5...c5!?

6. e4-e5 Nf6-g8 7. d2-d4 d7-d6

Not the best continuation. Theory recommends 7...Ne7 here, as in: 8. Bd2 0-0 9. 0-0-0 d5.

8. a2-a3

8. Bd2!? de 9. de, intending 10. 0-0-0.

8...Bb4xc3+ 9. b2xc3 Ng8-e7



1) How should White continue?

10. h2-h4 Nb8-d7 11. h4-h5 Bb7xf3?!

A risky decision – in order to win a pawn, Black allows his kingside to be broken up. 11...h6+/- was safer.

12. Qe2xf3 d6xe5

If 12...h6, either 13. Qg4 Nf5 14. Bd3 0-0! 15. Qf3 followed by g2-g4-g5, or 13. ed cd

14. Bd3, intending 15. Qg3.

13. h5-h6! g7xh6

After 13...g6 14. de, Black can't play 14...Nxe5? because of 15. Qf6+-.

14. Bc1xh6

14. Bd3! Ng6 15. Be4 Rb8 16. Bc6 was probably stronger (Kasparov).

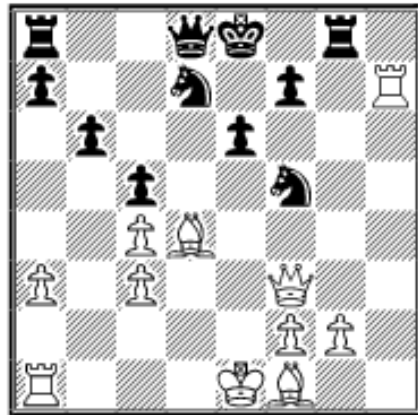
14...e5xd4

On 14...Nf5, Black would have to consider 15. Bg5!? or 15. d5!?

15. Bh6-g7 Rh8g8 16. Rh1xh7 Ne7-f5?

As Kasparov notes, he should have defended by 16...Nf8! 17. Bxf8 Rxf8 18. 0-0-0 (18. cd Qxd4 => 18...c5!

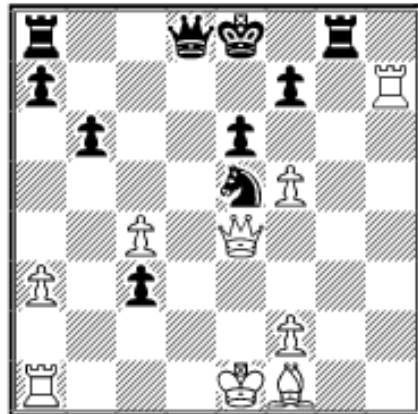
17. Bg7xd4 c7-c5



2) Now how does White continue?

18. g2-g4 c5xd4 19. g4xf5 e6-e5

Black could have tried 19...Ne5!? 20. Qe4 dc

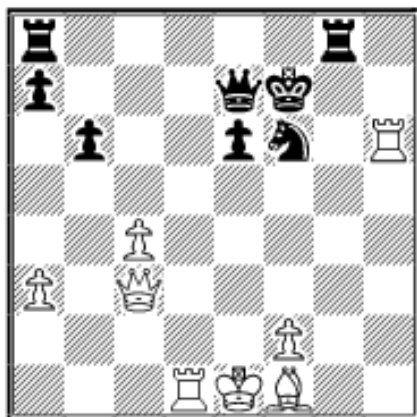


3) In this case, how should White have continued?

Yuneev suggested another defensive try: 19...Nf6!? 20. fe fe 21. Rh6 dc, when White would have had to choose between 22. Qxc3 and 22. Rd1. Let's look at both lines:

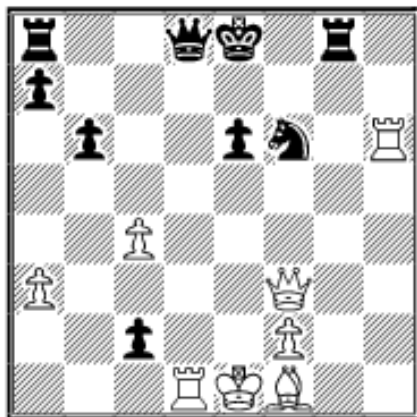
A) 22. Qxc3 Kf7 (here Yuneev stops, with the note: "Black has a very defensible position, although White has a distinct

advantage in the form of his more actively placed pieces.") 23. Rd1 Qe7



4) How does White continue his attack?

B) 22. Rd1!? c2!



5) What happens if the queen is taken?

20. Qf3-d5 Rg8-f8 21. c3xd4 Ra8-c8 22. Ra1-d1

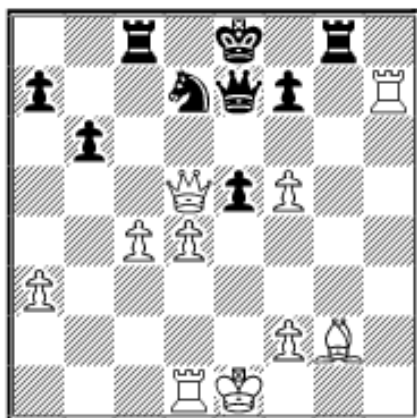
22. de? Rc5 would be a mistake, allowing Black to complicate. However, White had other tempting possibilities here, such as 22. Ra2!?, or 22. c5!? (intending 23. Bb5) 22...bc (22...ed 23. Ra2! Qg5 24. Bb5 Qc1+ 25. Ke2 Rc7 26. cb ab 27. Rd2 with an attack) 23. de

Qa5+ 24. Qd2, when White's advantage is indisputable. Alternatively, the text move is also very strong.

22...Qd8-e7 23. Bf1-g2!

Stein does not want the exchange of queens after 23. de Qxe5+ 24. Be2, even though the endgame is clearly in his favor. He clears the f1-square for his king, in the event of a discovered check along the e-file. After 23...ed+ 24. Kf1 Nf6 25. Qb5+ Qd7 26. Rh6! (even stronger than the simple 26. Qxd7+ Nxd7 27. Rxd4) 26...Rc5 (26...Qxb5 27. cb+-) 27. Qb2!, Black's position is hopeless.

23...Rf8-g8

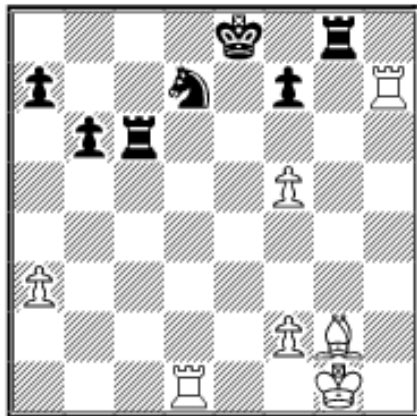


6) How should White continue?

24. Qd5-b7 Rc8xc4 25. d4xe5 Qe7xe5+ 26. Ke1-f1 Qe5-b5 27. Kf1-g1 Qb5-c6

Black does no better after 27...Rcg4 28. Qc8+ Ke7 29. Rxd7+! (or 29. Rxf7+!), or 27...Rxc2+ 28. Qxc2 (threatening 29. Qg8+).

28. Qb7xc6 Rc4xc6



7) How should White continue?

29. Rh7-h8 Rc6-g6 30. f5xg6 Rg8xh8 31. Bg2-c6 Rh8-g8 32. Bc6xd7+ Ke8-e7 33. Bd7-f5 f7xg6 34. Rd1-d7+ Ke7-f6 35. Bf5-d3 Rg8-a8 Black resigned.

Answers

1. Black wants to put pressure on the e5-pawn by developing his knights to g6 and d7. So, **10. h4!**, and 11. h5. In this way, White breaks up his opponent's plan, seizes space on the kingside, and also brings the king's rook into the game, which would be difficult for White to do by any other means.

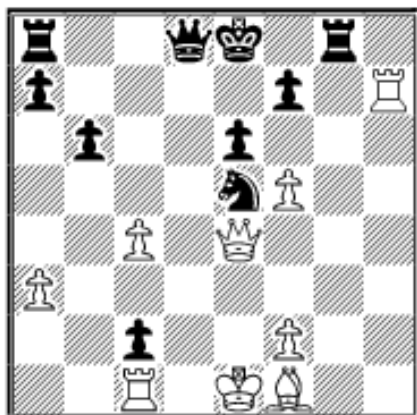
2. White would like to keep the bishop on the a1-h8 diagonal, but 18. Bh8? works poorly, because of 18...Ke7! The solution is the energetic move **18. g4!** White's better after 18...cd 19. gf, since the protection of Black's king is shattered. If 18...Nd6, then 19. Bg7! (19. Bh8 Ke7 20. Bg7 Ne8 is inferior) 19...Rc8 20. Qf4! (not 20. Rd1?! Qg5!) 20...e5 21. Qh6 Ne4 (only move) 22. Bg2 Nef6 (or 22...Ng5) 23. Rh8, with an advantage.

3. If White isn't careful, Black will whip up a counterattack. The only line to win here is **21. Ra2! f6** (21...Qb8 22. fe) **22. f4! ef** **23. Qh1!** (23. Qe2 Qd4 24. fe+-) **23...Nf7** **24. Qb7+-.**

The other tries have instructive refutations:

21. Bg2? Qd2+ 22. Kf1 c2! 23. Qxa8+ Ke7-+;

21. Rd1? c2! 22. Rc1!



Yuneev stopped after this move and, astonishingly, so did Kasparov, even though my article published in *Shakhmatnaya Nedelya* – with which Kasparov was familiar – showed a secure defense. The aforementioned book by Gufeld and Lazarev only mentions 22. Rxd8+ Rxd8 23. Qxc2 Nf3+ 24. Ke2 Nd4+.

Black would indeed be in big trouble, were it not for the spectacular shot 22...Qd4!! 23. Qxa8+ Ke7 24. Qb7+ Kf6, when it is White

who must now seek salvation:

25. Rxc2 Rd8-+;

25. Rh6+ Kxf5 26. Rh5+ Kf6 27. Rxe5! (27. Rh6+ Kg7 28. Rh3 Rd8 29. Qg2+ Kf6 30. Rh6+ Ng6-/+ or -+) 27...Qxe5+ 28. Kd2 Qf4+! 29. Kxc2 Qxf2+ 30. Kc3 Rg1-/+;

25. fe!? Qc3+ 26. Ke2 Qxc4+ (26...Qd3+ 27. Ke1 Nf3+?? 28. Qxf3 Qxf3 29. Rxf7+) 27. Ke1 Qc3+ 28. Ke2 Qd3+ 29. Ke1 Qxh7 30. ef Rf8 31. Qd5 (31. f4 Qh4+ 32. Kd2 Qxf4+ 33. Kxc2 Rxf7-/+ 31...Qf5! (preparing 32...Rxf7) 32. f4!? (32. Bc4 b5!) 32...Qxf4 33. Rxc2 Nf3+ 34. Kd1 Nd4 35. Bc4 Nxc2 36. Qc6+, followed eventually by Kxc2. White can continue fighting, but the advantage will remain with Black.

4. The exchange sacrifice is good only for a draw: 24. Rxf6+?! Qxf6 25. Rd7+ Kg6 26. Qg3+ (26. Bd3+ Kg5) 26...Qg5! (not 26...Kh6 27. Qh3+! Kg5 28. Be2 Qa1+ 29. Bd1 Qe5+ 30. Kf1 Raf8 31. Qh5+ Kf6 32. Qh6+ Kf5 33. Bc2+ Kg4 34. Rd3+-) 27. Bd3+ Kf6 28. Qf3+ Ke5 29. Qe4+ Kf6, and White only has a perpetual.

24. Rd3!? isn't too bad: 24...Rg6! (24...e5? 25. c5! Qxc5 (25...Kg7 26. Qc1+-) 26. Qb3+ Kg7 26. Rxf6! Kxf6 27. Rf3+ Kg5 29. Bc4!+-, or 29. Rg3+ Kf6 30. Rxc8 Rxc8 31. Qxc8+-) 25. Rxc6 Kxc6 26. Re3!? Black's position is shaky, but he still has a defense.

The strongest continuation was found by Ernesto Inarkiev.

24. c5!! This threatens 25. c6, for instance, after 24...Rad8 25. Rxd8 Rxd8 26. c6, with an overwhelming advantage (Black must not only protect his king, but also stop the passed pawn). And taking the pawn loses by force.

24...bc 25. Rxf6+! Qxf6 26. Rd7+ Kg6 27. Bd3+! Kg5

Now it's clear why White gave up the pawn: he has the queen check at c5 – just not at once: 28. Qxc5+ e5 29. Qc1+ Qf4.

28. Qc1+! Qf4

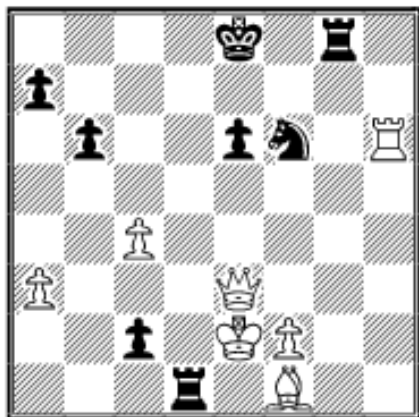
28...Kg4 is no better: 29. Be2+ Kf5 30. Qxc5+ e4 31. Qc2+ Kg5 32. Qh7!+-.

29. Qxc5+ e5 30. Qe7+ Qf6

30...Kg4 31. Be2+ Kh3 32. Qh7+ Kg2 33. Bf1+ Kg1 34. Rg7+.

31. f4+!

5. A tempting alternative is **23. Rxd8+?! Rxd8 24. Qe3! Rd1+ 25. Ke2**



Now the direct 25...c1Q? would lose to 26. Qxe6+ Kd8 27. Qxf6+ Kc8 28. Qe6+ Kb7 29. Rh7+! Ka6 30. Qxg8, when Black must deal with the mate threat (after 31. Qc8+), while being himself unable to mate, or even to check, the white king.

However, there is one move: **25...Rf8!!=**, which wards off all the threats. Now it is White who must find the hidden path to salvation. 26. Qxe6+? Kd8 27. Rh8 Re1+! is bad; so is 26. Bh3? Kd8! 27. Qd2+ Rxd2+ 28.

Kxd2 Ne4+ 29. Kxc2 Rxf2+, when Black has a healthy extra pawn for the endgame.

26. Rh8!, is necessary, with the following variations:

26...Kf7 27. Rxf8+ Kxf8 28. Qc3! (not 28. Qxe6? Kg7!! 29. Qe7+ Kg6 30. Bg2 c1Q 31. Be4+ Nxe4 32. Qxe4+ Kf6, and White has no perpetual) 28...c1Q 29. Qxf6+ Ke8 30. Qxe6+ Kd8 31. Qg8+ Kc7 32. Qg7+ Rd7 33. Qe5+, and with the white king's bishop still on the board, Black cannot avoid the perpetual check.

26...Ne4 27. Qxe4 (27. Rxf8+? Kxf8-) 27...Re1+ 28. Kxe1 c1Q+ 29. Ke2 Qb2+ 30. Kd1 Rxb8 31. Qxe6+, once again with a perpetual check.

Instead of taking the queen, 23. Rc1! is correct, for example: 23...Kf7 24. Rxc2 (threatening 25. Rd2) 24...Rh8 25. Rxb8 Qxb8 26. Qb7+ Kg6 27. Bd3+ Kh6 28. f4, with a winning attack; or 23...Rf8 24. Rxc2 (intending 25. Rd2; 25. Re2), and Black's in a tight spot.

Conclusion: both 22. Rd1 and 22. Qxc3 lead to a decisive advantage for White. Conversely, his task here would have been much more complex than in the game.

6. White chose the strongest and most energetic move, **24. Qb7!** On 24...Rb8 he plays 25. Qc7 or 25. Qxa7; on 24...Rd8 – 25. de or 25. Bd5 Rg1+ 26. Ke2 ed+ 27. Be6! Black's choice in the game, 24...Rxc4?!, could have been immediately refuted by means of a double attack (overlooked by the annotators): 25. Qa8+! Qd8 26. Qd5+-. Stein played less accurately, but still retained enough of an advantage to win.

7. The simple deflecting move **29. Rh8!** would have ended the game, for all practical purposes: 29...Rxb8 30. Bxc6+-. And, in fact, he could also have played this one move earlier – 28. Rh8!+-.

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